

Administrators

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Basic and Bright



The classic classroom projector takes a big step forward with NEC's NP-ME310W, a \$575 device that not only puts a large and bright image on-screen but is one of the least expensive classroom projectors to get and use.

At 6.4-pounds, it's a bit heavier than Optoma's 5.5-pound HD142X but is still small and light enough for a single person to install and maintain. It measures 3.9- by 14.5- by 11.5-inches and its white plastic body should blend right in to most classrooms. Underneath, the projector has three adjustable legs and five threaded attachment points allowing it to be set up in a variety of ways – from ceiling hardware to a shelf or nook.

It is conventional all the way with a standard-throw lens that has two control rings for adjusting the 1.7X zoom lens and focusing the image. It can be a little frustrating to use at first because it can be hard to get your fingers properly angled to precisely focus the projector.

Inside, the NP-ME310W has a 0.59-inch LCD panel and the device can fill up to a 25-foot screen. While its wide-XGA resolution is enough for showing the typical lesson, it can't compare to HD projectors, like the HD142X.

It has things that other projectors in its class lack: horizontal and vertical keystone correction as well as pincushion control, making it a snap to get a perfectly rectangular image. The figure 8 control panel might be off-putting at first but it is an improvement over a basic control panel, with a large on/off button and access to adjusting the volume, opening the Menu and adjusting the image. There're warning lights for overheating and when the lamp is reaching the end of its life.

Rather than skimping on ports, the NP-ME310W has everything you'll need for today and tomorrow's classroom. In addition to a pair of HDMI, VGA (in and out) and composite video connections, it has audio-in and -out jacks. The projector's 20-watt speaker sounds surprisingly good and is loud enough for most small and mid-sized classrooms. The USB port lets you directly open image files from a memory key, but neither videos nor .pdf Acrobat documents.

A big bonus is that the NP-ME310W includes wired Ethernet networking. Expanding its horizons to connect to the school's WiFi network requires an [\\$80 adapter](#) that fills up the USB slot.

It connects with tablets and phones wirelessly. Oddly, the company's Wireless Image Utility doesn't work with the projector. Instead, you can use NEC's Multi-Presenter, which allows up to 16 student screens to be projected.



You can also use NEC's Virtual Remote Tool to control the projector from a phone or tablet, but the remote control is a gem. It not only fits well in the hand, but lets you instantly pick the source and control things like volume, keystone correction and the projection mode.

To get started, the NP-ME310W took a long 23 seconds to put its image onscreen and another minute to get to full brightness, which can kill precious time at the start of a class. On the other hand, it shut itself off in 2-seconds. In between, the projector's fan was annoyingly loud at 47.4dB and variable with it changing its tone frequently as what was being projected changed.

Of its seven different projection modes (High-Bright, Presentation, Video, Movie, Graphics, sRGB and DiCom Sim), sRGB looks the best with lifelike flesh tones and saturated colors. At full blast in High-Bright mode put 3,330 lumens onto a screen, about 10 percent above its stated spec, but this drops to 2,700 lumens in sRGB mode.



While running, the projector used 272-watts of power. With its \$99 lamp (rated to last 4,000 hours), this translates into estimated annual expenses of \$69 if it's used for 6 hours every school day and electricity costs the national average of 12 cents per kilowatt hour. That's slightly higher than the [HD142X](#) but several times more than a Casio EcoLite XJ-V1, which doesn't require replacement lamps.

The projector comes with a four-year warranty for schools and can be had for \$575 with NEC's K12 Star educational discount. This makes it a small projector that's a big bargain for schools not ready to take the HD plunge.

A



NEC NP-ME301W
\$575

- + *Very bright*
- + *Large image*
- + *Input ports, old and new*
- + *Good price*
- + *Inexpensive*

- *Loud fan*
- *W-XGA resolution*

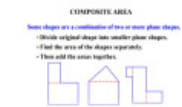
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May 16, 2017 | Posted At: 06:14 AM | Author: Brian Nadel | Category: [Math Software](#)
It's Elementary



Math is one of those subjects where there's a great range of abilities in primary classes, from those streaking ahead with fractions to those who are still working on the numbers and operations. [CTCMath](#) lets you target each with the right curriculum with a learn-at-your-own-pace system that not only is efficient but can build a student's confidence for the next module. With more than 1,400 lessons, ranging from the first five numbers to calculating harmonic motion, each takes less than 10 minutes to complete. Most of the lessons have an interactive element, audio and animations as well as a one-page summary that can help make the lesson's ideas and techniques stick. There are also fully worked out answers to problems to show how it's done. The online program produces detailed reports for staff and parents on how each child is doing along with where she is in the scheme.

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May 15, 2017 | Posted At: 06:30 AM | Author: Brian Nadel | Category: [Monitors](#)
Bigger Really is Better



When it comes to displays, bigger is always better and [BenQ's EX3200R](#) screen is among the best. Its 31.5-inch display is curved at a slight angle to increase your field of view and reduce the amount of refocusing your eyes have to do as you go from one corner to the other. Able to show full HD programming, it has a high 144-hertz refresh rate for flicker-free operation and you can set it up to suppress the blue light output of the screen. It lists for \$450.

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May 15, 2017 | Posted At: 06:22 AM | Author: Brian Nadel | Category: [Online Learning](#)
Freebie Friday: Sentence Helpers



We all need a refresher class in grammar and reducing our reliance on sentence fragments. [Hartford's Capital Community College Foundation](#) has a great interactive page that can help. It has everything from guides that explain the parts of a sentence to quizzes and lessons on how to use a dictionary. If you don't have 45 minutes to use it in a class, feel free to tell your students about it as a reference page for when they're (their) not sure which (witch) word to use.

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May 11, 2017 | Posted At: 06:43 AM | Author: Brian Nadel | Category: [STEM](#)
Day and Night

The best way to teach how day and night on earth works for young (and some older) students is to show it. [Elenco's Night'n Day Real Solar Time Rotating Globe](#) can do it and serve as a solar calendar and clock as well. The secret is inside the 11-inch world globe is a light that in conjunction with a geared mechanical clock underneath rotates the globe over the day and night, showing where it's dark and where it's light. It'll take some concentration to put it together but the Night'n Day globe comes with a lot of teaching aids, including a map of the world time zones, a glossary of terms and a way to teach about orbits and eclipses. It costs \$130.