



GAMING MONITOR

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AOC AGON AG271QG

Have some 165Hz IPS awesomeness from AOC.

There's a lot going on in the monitor market right now. 4K, curved panels, the promise of HDR – it's all happening. But that doesn't necessarily mean the sweet spot for a high-performance PC monitor, with a bit of gaming in its remit, has changed.

The new AGON AG271QG is part of AOC's new high-end line of gaming-centric PC monitors, and it checks an awful lot of our boxes. For starters, it's a 27-inch model, with a 2,560 x 1,440 native resolution. That's a very nice compromise between size, detail, desktop space and GPU load.

In fact, it's probably the best all-round compromise right now, especially if you aren't a fan of multi-GPU gaming. Even Nvidia's latest Pascal graphics cards are marginal when it comes to driving 4K resolutions really smoothly. That's particularly relevant when you consider the AG271QG's support for refresh rates of up to 165Hz. There's zero

chance of playing the latest games at that kind of frame rate at 4K. So that WQHD resolution gives your GPU half a chance of punching out frame rates to do the 165Hz support something approaching justice.

On those occasions when your GPU can't crank out triple-digit frame rates, the AGON also has a solution in the form of support for Nvidia's performance-smoothing G-Sync tech. Factor in a few frills, such as the handy headphone hook on the right-hand side and the fully adjustable stand, and you have a very nice overall gaming package on paper. AOC even includes a handy mouse-sized programmable controller that helps you quick-jump between settings.

As if that wasn't enough, we haven't even mentioned the kicker – the IPS tech used in the LCD panel. Yup, that's 165Hz refresh and lovely IPS colours, just like the ASUS RoG Swift PG279Q, but for about \$200 less. Where do we sign up?

Fire the AG271QG up and initial impressions are good. The IPS panel has a super-smooth anti-glare coating, and thus clean, sparkle-free image quality. The viewing angles are pretty much impeccable, too. Gradients are ultra-smooth, and there's tons of detail in the white scales. Only a whiff of compression in the black scales spoils what would otherwise be a perfect score.

That 165Hz refresh is just to die for, and makes for a really responsive screen and solid-looking images. It's so nice, we'll forgive the fact that you have to dig into the OSD to enable a silly overclocking mode to get at the highest 165Hz setting. At least the menu is clear and simple to navigate.

One arguable downside of IPS technology in a gaming screen is pixel response. The AG271QG is rated at 4ms, which is a little off the pace of 1ms TN panels. But for most gamers, we doubt they'd notice the very slight increase in blurriness. What they will pick up on is those

gorgeous IPS colours and superior contrast. If you're looking for downsides, the AG271QG can't compete with its ASUS nemesis when it comes to perceived quality. The chassis feels relatively cheap, and the adjustable metal stand is a bit of a lash-up compared to Asus's slick efforts.

But then the AOC is quite a bit cheaper, and such shortcomings have doddly-squat to do with image quality, productivity, or gaming fun.

In all, the new AOC AGON AG271QG is certainly a very plausible new competitor in the performance 27-inch segment. ■ **Jeremy Laird**

Verdict

Features ★★★★★
Performance ★★★★★
Value ★★★★★

Gorgeous IPS panel, awesome 165Hz refresh, tons of gaming-friendly features.

