

**HDMI CABLES
VAN DEN HUL HDMI FLAT**

The full picture

As high-definition hardware becomes increasingly popular (and more affordable), the demand for HDMI cables is also increasing. HDMI is an acronym for High-Definition Multimedia Interface, and it promises the digital delivery of sound and picture data with a single, convenient cable.

Of course, HDMI sounded too good to be true when it was first unveiled, and it initially turned out to be just that: an interface that promised what it couldn't quite deliver. Fortunately, it's been through a number of iterations since it was first launched, and in its current v1.3 state, does provide much of what it's supposed to offer.

However, important to consider in the case of HDMI is the restrictions on cable length, and the impact that length may have on colour depth, data transfer rates, and resolution – even if the cable is nominally v1.3 compliant.

The Van den Hul HDMI Flat cable is just two slots down from the marque's flagship HDMI design, The HDMI Ultimate and offers the convenience of a flat, thin cable that is particularly pliable and easy to use.

VDH claims it is fully compliant with the HDMI 1.3 standard, as long as cable length is restricted to no more than 12,5 m, and even then, it says the cable will still deliver full 1080p signal at lengths of up to 15 m.

As we've come to expect of VDH's cables, the Flat is nicely put together, with an overall feel of robust quality, and gold-plated HDMI Type A connectors that promise solid, reliable electrical connections with the host components.

Internally, the coated oxygen-free copper conductors feature a high-density coating to protect them from environmental interference, while VDH's characteristic, halogen-free Hulliflex jacket is said to effectively protect the mechanical and electrical properties of the cable.

The flat shape isn't just for convenience's sake, either: VDH claims it reduces crosstalk, and thus improves signal integrity when longer cable runs are employed.

The Flat cable is offered in runs of up to 15 m, with VDH warranting full compatibility with the HDMI 1.3 standard at lengths of up to

VITAL STATS

TypeHDMI 1.3
ConductorHigh-density, high-purity coated oxygen-free copper
InsulationPolyethylene internal, Hulliflex jacket
CompatibilityHDMI 1.3a for lengths up to 12,5 m. Resolution of up to 1080p at up to 15 m.
Data transmissionUp to 10,2 GB/sec
Dimensions14,6 x 6,0 mm (test cable length 2.0 metres)
PRICER1 755

VERDICT
 Crisp, clear and natural imaging from this flat, user-friendly HDMI cable. Connector quality particularly admirable. Will carry 1080p at up to 15 m.

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12,5 m, although it also states that full 1080p resolution is retained up to 15 m – despite, one suspects, a slight drop-off in bandwidth.

Be that as it may, the test length of 2 m performed faultlessly at all resolutions, and provided a clean, crystal-clear picture with rich, yet natural colours. There was a crispness to the detail, and a depth to multi-dimensional scenes, that was particularly impressive, while motion-related artefacts were notable only by their absence.

A quick word on colour: the VDH's rendition of colour was bright and realistic, but with an approach best described as natural rather than outright vivid. In the company of my Hitachi plasma, it allowed tonal graduations and hue progressions that were particularly lifelike, and completely unfatiguing.

The sonic part of the Flat's signal transmission was handled with equal aplomb: there was no sign of digital jitter or noise, and signal retention was as one would expect of a quality digital signal transmission system: faultless, with no discernable audible flaws.

The Van den Hul The Flat HDMI cable is a fine example of the current state of the HDMI art. Its flat configuration makes it easier to deal with, especially on longer runs, while its ability to deliver full performance at lengths of up to 12,5 m without repeaters is also laudable.

Deon Schoeman



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