



£82 PC CHASSIS

FRACTAL DESIGN NODE 804

VITAL STATISTICS

Price £82
Manufacturer Fractal Design
Web www.fractal-design.com
Motherboard support: m-ATX, m-ITX
Dimensions (WxHxD): 344x458x412mm
CPU cooler max height: 160mm
Graphic card max length: 320mm
Storage support: 8x3.5in, 2x2.5in, 2x3.5/2.5in

Fractal Design's Node 804 is the latest member of the Swedish case company's very successful Node family of cases. This particular Node has been designed to support mATX and mini ITX boards, but don't for one minute think this cube design case is compromised for space, just because it supports the two smallest motherboard formats. Not a bit of it: the space inside is positively TARDIS-like. Put it this way, how many cases for the smaller formats do you know that can support not one but four water-cooling radiators?

Compared to the last Node cube design, the 304, the 804 looks like it's been down the gym and swallowed fistfuls of steroids, as it's a fair old size for a desktop cube case. But it's this larger size and Fractal Design's clever design that make the 804 pretty much the perfect small platform case. The inside of the chassis has

been spilt into two sections so that one side houses the motherboard, while the other takes care of the power supply and storage.

Oddly, Fractal has opted for putting the power button and I/O ports on one side of the case, which may seem awkward, but those clever Swedes show you where it is by using the Fractal logo and the power LED. Just follow the line of these around the corner of the front bezel with your finger and hey presto, you hit the power button.

Fractal fits the case with three Silent Series R2 fans, which should be enough, but if there is a need for more cooling then don't fret – the case comes with mounts for a further seven (yes, seven!) 120mm fans. Going back to those water-cooling radiators, if you felt so inclined you could go water-cooling mad as the case supports 1x 240mm, 1x 280mm and two 120mm rads, all at the same time. ■

PCFormat Verdict

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

A small form factor case for the ultra-enthusiast crowd, but without the requisite price tag.



£115 PC CHASSIS

INWIN H-FRAME MINI

VITAL STATISTICS

Price £115
Manufacturer InWin
Web www.inwin-style.com
Motherboard support: m-ITX
Dimensions (WxHxD): 108x262x287mm
CPU cooler max height: n/s
Graphic card max length: n/s
Storage support: 2x 2.5in, 1x 5.25in Slimline

Funky, some may say downright weird, but always well designed PC cases are InWin's speciality. The D-Frame and X-Frame designs spring to mind and the H-Frame mini is another to add to that list. It's quite hard to describe what the case looks like, as it doesn't look much like its much larger H-Frame sibling. It still uses the H-Frame stacked plate design, but the nearest thing we can compare it to is a file folder with a row of file dividers in it. Well, it does to this reviewer.

The stacked aluminium plate design gives the Mini excellent through-flow ventilation and because of that there are no fans included, or even mounts for fans. Mind you, with a case this compact, there's nowhere to fit them anyway. This is also the only case in our roundup that comes with its own power supply, hence the high price. InWin provides an 180W 80 Plus Bronze low profile supply

which is neatly tucked away on the right of the case. That's not going to cope with a beefy GPU, but a low-end machine without a discrete card will be fine.

Build space is pretty tight inside the case, with around 20-25mm of space around the motherboard. Because of the space constraints, the choice of cooler and graphics card are down to using low-profile versions of each. The mounts for the hard and optical drives sit behind the motherboard plate with all the cables pre-installed. There are mounts for two 7mm 2.5in drives and a slimline optical drive, and all three use screws to hold the drives in place.

It may be odd to look at but it's a very well put-together case made from aluminium and tempered glass. InWin supplies two types of side panel for the Mini: the glass panel so everyone can admire your choice of motherboard, or an aluminium one to hide everything from prying eyes. ■

PCFormat Verdict

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

A somewhat bizarre-looking SFF chassis, but one that's ideal for tucking away on a bookcase.

