The TV you should buy for your living room

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[00:00:09] **Lucia Ariano:** Is your TV on the blink? Has your fridge freezer suddenly packed in, just moved house and need to buy something quickly? That's where I'll just buy this. Recommendations come in. Welcome to this podcast from Witch. Hello, it's Lucia Ariano here in the Witch Studio for this episode of Just Buy This, a podcast featuring our experts and their buying advice.

[00:00:31] **Lucia Ariano:** I'm sure you'll have seen our Best Buy. Great value and eco buy endorsements before, but with over 650 of them on our website, we know that it can sometimes feel overwhelming to search for the product that best suits your needs. That's where just buy this comes in exclusively available. To which members.

[00:00:50] **Lucia Ariano:** Uh, these are handpicked recommendations that our product testing experts think tick the most important boxes and will work well for most people most of the time. And on today's episode, we're at home with our resident TV's expert, Martin Pratt. Hello Martin. Hello. Thank you so much for joining us. Oh, my pleasure.

[00:01:08] **Lucia Ariano:** Well, shall we cut to the chase? Which TV have you given a, just by this recommendation. So.

[00:01:15] **Martin Pratt:** This one is the Hisense 55 U seven NQT uk, which is a 55 inch TV from Hisense

[00:01:22] **Lucia Ariano:** Slips off the tongue that,

[00:01:24] **Martin Pratt:** yeah, most TVs have. Pretty challenging names to remember. I've done it, worked on them for so long now that I, I do sort of get them, understand them, but yeah, if you're new to it, they just seem like gibberish.

[00:01:35] **Lucia Ariano:** Yeah. So you've obviously got the 55 at the start. Yes. For the size, and then go on. Just tell us in a nutshell, if you can, if that's possible, what the rest means.

[00:01:43] **Martin Pratt:** So most of it is down to. Sort of where it sits within high senses range. So the more basic a model will be, the lower the that, that second number will be.

[00:01:53] **Martin Pratt:** So the seven and also the U denotes what range it's in as well. So High Sense also has an A range and an E range. Mm-hmm. And then the U range. So that sort of tells you that it's sort of mid to high end. It's not their top of the range model, but it's getting there. And then the NQT uk. That is relevant to what year it's been released, and also the country as well.

[00:02:11] **Martin Pratt:** So if you saw that TV in, you know, Holland, it would have a different suffix. So that's kind, and that's pretty similar for, for all TVs actually, once you kind of understand that pattern. You'll be able to tell quite a lot.

[00:02:22] **Lucia Ariano:** I put you on the spot there. A great pub quiz knowledge for anyone listening.

[00:02:25] **Martin Pratt:** Oh, yes.

[00:02:26] **Lucia Ariano:** Oh yeah. So, um, obviously shopping for a TV can be a bit of a minefield. There are so many to consider, so many different types. So, I mean, what's the headline here with this one? You know, does it stand out for something in particular?

[00:02:37] **Martin Pratt:** Yeah, it does. I think, and predominantly actually, it's, it's, it's one thing that High Sense is really known for, and that's just the value that they offer with their TVs.

[00:02:45] **Martin Pratt:** They, they are often undercutting. Brands that people are more familiar with, like LG or Samsung, and you can see that this is actually, it's a Best Buy TV and a great value tv, which is really rare. Normally it's one or the other because TVs tend to be quite expensive. The best ones are usually high end and expensive, but this one has managed to kind of.

[00:03:07] **Martin Pratt:** Undercut those bigger brands while still maintain a really high level of quality.

[00:03:10] **Lucia Ariano:** Well, should we talk about some of that quality then? Yeah. You know, what, what are we talking about when you say high quality? Because I actually, I haven't bought TV now for a few years, so I probably, I'm not really, uh, you know, up to speed with what, what people are looking for.

[00:03:23] **Martin Pratt:** Yeah, sure. So the, the, the main thing, I mean, it hasn't really changed since TVs were invented really, but it's, it's picture and sound quality. Those are the key, the key things that we're looking for. When we test a TV and accounts for the majority of the score. So in terms of picture quality, which is definitely the most important thing, you're looking for a really high level of detail, very crisp, precise picture.

[00:03:43] **Martin Pratt:** But that's quite common. What, what, what you get with a Best Buy actually is translating that into, into movement so that that precision and detail and clarity is retained when something's moving very quickly. Or actually one good way of telling a good TV from a bad TV is if. You know, like a slower pan across something.

[00:04:01] **Martin Pratt:** Mm-hmm. If it just, whatever's on screen, just like streaks, like someone spread it across the screen, that's, that sort of marks out quite a bad tv. So, yeah, that this TV in particular, it handles motion well, it's got a very high level of detail. Uh, and the colors in contrast are also sort of very vibrant and balanced.

[00:04:17] **Martin Pratt:** So yeah, they've gotta tick a lot of boxes actually, in terms of picture quality. There's, there's really a lot of factors that they have to get right. Uh, particularly, uh, detail, clarity, color.

[00:04:27] **Lucia Ariano:** And you mentioned sound as well.

[00:04:29] **Martin Pratt:** Yeah. Sounds also really important and it's something that TVs tend to struggle with actually, especially now that they're so thin.

[00:04:35] **Martin Pratt:** When we used to have the big, they're called CRT, the ones with a really big back, um, there was a lot more space there. For speakers, and now some of them are, you know, thinner than a couple of credit cards stuck together, so there's not a lot of room there for speakers. So yeah, sound quality is, is is a place where they tend to suffer.

[00:04:52] **Martin Pratt:** But this one, it does sound pretty good actually. It's got good depth. There's a decent amount of base there, which is often what's missing on a thin tv. It's very hard to sort of generate base from a thin speaker, but this all manages it and, and dialogue carries very well as well. A lot of people complain that they can't really hear.

[00:05:09] **Martin Pratt:** Dialogue on, on modern TV for many reasons. We can get into if you want. There's a lot of reasons why that might be. Mm-hmm. Um, but yeah, this one you can hear dialogue very well and it's got some good sort of depth, which gives sound some nice atmosphere.

[00:05:19] **Lucia Ariano:** I mean, I feel like we have to go into it now, just briefly then.

[00:05:23] **Martin Pratt:** Uh, so the problem with sound now is that sound is so often tuned for a cinema. If you think about like a Christopher Nolan film mm-hmm. Where it's just so loud when you're in cinema, and then that's translated onto a tv, which doesn't have 15 speakers over your head and 30 down the side of you. So what they do to make something very loud, seem very loud, they make everything else much quieter.

[00:05:45] **Martin Pratt:** So the dynamic range between the quietest and the loudest point can't be wide enough because the TVs can't cope. So instead they just make quieter things much quieter. So that loud things sound louder, and that means you can't hear, you can't hear someone speaking. But then as soon as like a, a gunshot happens, like, God, what the heck?

[00:06:04] **Martin Pratt:** That's very loud. Like it's, and that's why, 'cause the dynamic range is all messed up.

[00:06:07] **Lucia Ariano:** That's so interesting. So I feel like in music they. They remove that dynamic range, like on, you know, Spotify or Apple, like, you know, you'll, you'll find, you don't hear, they're super, super quiet a lot of the time. Yeah.

[00:06:16] **Lucia Ariano:** Like

[00:06:16] **Martin Pratt:** classical music on Spotify is a nightmare. You really, sometimes you think it's even plain and it's just, yeah. They're just, it's just so quiet.

[00:06:23] **Lucia Ariano:** Silence. It's golden. Yeah. Um, coming back to the, the high sense 55, well this particular one that's not the full name. Um, you also mentioned it's a great value.

[00:06:32] **Lucia Ariano:** Yeah. It's got that, that great, uh, award we give. Yeah. So why is it great value and, and you know, what is. Kind of the top, re top of the range costs we are looking at in this area.

[00:06:42] **Martin Pratt:** So this is another, another benefit really of this is it's, it's, it's quite high end in terms of its specs. So you wouldn't expect it to be this cheap.

[00:06:50] **Martin Pratt:** If you were looking at a TV which had similar sort of attributes and similar features and software at this size of 55 inches, you could easily be looking at sort of 1500 maybe, uh, especially if, if this doesn't have an alled screen. But if one that did. Which, you know, some will, all edges will get a similar score at this.

[00:07:10] **Martin Pratt:** You could easily, uh, add, add a thousand pound Woods price. Currently it's 589 pounds, which iss still a lot of money, obviously, but compared to, yeah, like I said, all the TVs of its spec.

[00:07:21] **Lucia Ariano:** Mm-hmm. And

[00:07:22] **Martin Pratt:** with its features, it's, it's much, much cheaper. It's worth not as well actually that this TV probably won't be on sale for very much longer.

[00:07:27] **Martin Pratt:** So it's, it's, it's one that came out in 2024. Which is why the price is is now quite low because TV prices tend to get lower and lower and lower until they go off sale. Mm. Around 18 to 20 months after they were launched. So that's one of the reasons this is so cheap. But even when it launched, it was much cheaper than its competitors.

[00:07:44] **Lucia Ariano:** I know that we look at a number, a number of other things on where testing. Mm-hmm. So should we just whiz through some of those, you know, smart features for example, and you know how easy that might be to use?

[00:07:53] **Martin Pratt:** Yeah, those, those are really important factors as well. 'cause you're gonna be interacting with TV all the time, so.

[00:07:58] **Martin Pratt:** We check to make sure the remote is easy to use. Is the the button layout good?

[00:08:02] **Lucia Ariano:** Mm-hmm.

[00:08:02] **Martin Pratt:** We want to see how responsive the TV is to any press buttons. Are the menus easy to navigate? Is it clear what all of the picture settings and sound settings do? 'cause there's so many things you can tweak on a TV and a lot of people don't know what a lot of the terms are that are in a, a picture settings menu.

[00:08:19] **Martin Pratt:** So we want to make sure that sometimes there's, uh, clear information about what's, what's being tweaked, or even diagrams in some cases. And yeah, you mentioned smart features, which is also really important. You're gonna be on that smart menu a lot, which is where you see all of the apps that you have installed or maybe shortcuts to previously used apps or previously watched channels.

[00:08:41] **Martin Pratt:** And we also know as well how many ads there are on these smart menus, which there's usually far too many. And that's also true of, I sense, but it's true of every brand, really. Mm-hmm. But we even, we even get down into things like, you know, how, how easy it's to use if you're blind or partially sighted, and no one else really does that.

[00:08:57] **Martin Pratt:** It, it's unique to us really. So you can look at our review and see whether it's actually gonna be useful for you, if you need a screen reader or something like that. And yeah, there's, there's more. I mean, it takes about, it takes about five weeks to test the tv. Wow. So it's very, very in depth. We really leave North Stone unturned with these things.

[00:09:16] **Lucia Ariano:** Mm. And this is your favorite? I mean, is it your favorite, uh, kind of one size fits all, or would you say it's particularly good for, uh, gamers or film watchers or, you know, any other particular type?

[00:09:28] **Martin Pratt:** It, it, it stands out to me because of its price. And because of the high level of quality, it's maintained.

[00:09:34] **Martin Pratt:** If I, if I was gonna recommend it to someone, I mean, firstly it's someone who has a reasonably, like a reasonable size living room. If you've got a very small living room and not a lot of space, a 55 inch TV is probably gonna be a bit too big.

[00:09:45] **Lucia Ariano:** Hmm.

[00:09:46] **Martin Pratt:** But I think, yeah, it is a really good jack of all trades actually.

[00:09:49] **Martin Pratt:** It sounds good. It looks good. You mentioned gaming features, which, I mean, this has about as high end gaming features as you can get on a tv, which is another sort of surprising element. Mm. That you'd expect to pay a lot more money for the less, for 600 pounds. Yeah, exactly. It's got a very, very high refresh rate screen, which is perfect if you've got like a PlayStation five or an Xbox Series X.

[00:10:07] **Martin Pratt:** 'cause you, the action's gonna look so much smoother when you're playing a game. But yeah, it's really just. Just really a great all rounder. I I can't really imagine anyone who, who this wouldn't be suitable for unless, like I say, they've got a small, a small living room. Otherwise, it's, yeah, it's fantastic.

[00:10:24] **Lucia Ariano:** Well, that is a high endorsement. Um, you mentioned that it's been on the market for a while, you know, just to touch on, you know, how quickly tech evolves. Could that be an issue? You know, could, could it be, uh. Outdated, uh, in a few months, or you are the expert here. How quickly does tech in in t in TV world, uh, evolve?

[00:10:43] **Martin Pratt:** Not that fast, honestly.

[00:10:45] **Lucia Ariano:** Mm-hmm.

[00:10:45] **Martin Pratt:** Brands like to tell you that it, that there's, there's a compelling reason to upgrade pretty regularly, but, but we don't see that, to be honest. Our sort of test processes doesn't, doesn't change a great deal year on year because it doesn't need to react to very much.

[00:10:59] **Martin Pratt:** Honestly, the, the big shift in TVs happen when. You see a launch of, you know, a, a new resolution. So we do have eight K TVs at the moment, but they're so expensive and they're so little to watch on them. There's no point buying one. So realistically, there's not a great deal of pointing upgrade in the tv.

[00:11:17] **Martin Pratt:** You could probably keep it from six, seven years, to be honest, maybe eight years before you'd, you'd see a real improvement in picture quality. So no, there isn't if you, if you've got a 4K TV that you are happy with. Then there's really not any point in upgrading until there's something like. Mass eight K content for you to start enjoying otherwise no.

[00:11:37] **Martin Pratt:** There, there's, there's no reason to upgrade a lot

[00:11:39] **Lucia Ariano:** and we've been very positive so far, but, you know, famously witches unbiased and we're not being paid to say any of this stuff. So Is there anything you don't particularly like about this tv?

[00:11:49] **Martin Pratt:** Yeah, for sure. It's, it's not perfect. I think when, when you get to sort of the, the, the upper tiers of TVs and you start, you're starting to get into the, you know, sort of 70 to 80% kind of range.

[00:11:58] **Martin Pratt:** It is sort of fine margins that separate. A good TV from, from an absolutely brilliant one. And I think it's small things like you'll find that on a superior tv, maybe like a a 79, 80% scorer. You'll see things, the colors will just look that bit more punchy, that bit more balanced. Mm. On this TV we noticed.

[00:12:18] **Martin Pratt:** The skin tone sometimes is a little bit paled, especially in 4K content. So characters on the screen look a little bit, sort of sal, a little bit sickly. Mm-hmm. Uh, and the contrast could sometimes be a bit too dark. Mm-hmm. Which is a shame because then you lose some of that really lovely detail.

[00:12:32] **Lucia Ariano:** Mm-hmm.

[00:12:33] **Martin Pratt:** So there's not like one, this is, its glaring weakness.

[00:12:37] **Martin Pratt:** It's like, oh, watch out for this. It's like, no, it's lots of little small things that just hold it back from being the very best, but then. You would never expect a TV like this to be the very, very best because it's so much cheaper than the very, very best. Mm. So that's, that's where you know, the great value is so useful.

[00:12:54] **Lucia Ariano:** Well, this TV is obviously a sterling example, and Martin, before we wrap up, can you give us a little taster of some of the other things that have our, just by this recommendation?

[00:13:04] **Martin Pratt:** Yeah, absolutely. We've got a budget laptop, which has really smooth performance for lighter tasks, and it's got plenty of ports as well.

[00:13:11] **Martin Pratt:** There's an iPhone that really sort of hits that sweet spot between really high performance and great value. We've got a fitness tracker with the highest goal we've actually ever given, which combines really impressive performance with, with a great range of features as well, and an excellent medium sized power bank that you can just fit in your pocket or a small bag.

[00:13:28] **Lucia Ariano:** Nice little teasers there. Very bite size. I mean, these recommendations are exclusively available to witch members, so to find out what they are and to read more about the more than 50 other products that have our, just buy this endorsement, just head to witch.co uk slash just buy this. And thank you so much, Martin, for joining us today.

[00:13:47] **Lucia Ariano:** Thank

[00:13:47] **Martin Pratt:** you very much. It's been great.

[00:13:58] **Lucia Ariano:** Thanks for listening to this podcast from which the UK's consumer champion. You can find plenty more advice about what we discuss today in the show notes. There. You'll also find a link to become a witch member for 50% off the usual price, an offer exclusively available to you, our podcast listeners joining, which will not only give you access to our product reviews, our app, one-to-one, personalized buying advice, and every issue of which magazine across the year, but you'll also be helping us to make.

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