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AUDIOVOX® DVR 300 HD GPS



Dashcam
Audiovox DVR 300 HD-GPS



TECHNIK ZU HAUSE.de
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very good

Dashcam < 150 Euro



AUDIOVOX®

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Everything at a glance

When a huge meteorite struck Russia in mid-February 2013, the images went around the world. The fact that we were able to see these images from several perspectives is down to the motorists who had fitted a small camera in their car to record every event. These so-called "dashcams", which are widely used in Eastern Europe, are now also increasing in popularity here. Technikzuhaue took a closer look at the DVR 300 HD-GPS from specialists Audiovox to see what else it's capable of other than simply filming...Our test model from Audiovox weighs in at just 76 grams and it is mounted onto the windscreen, just like a mobile navigation system, via a suction cup. The mount and a cable for supplying power via a cigarette lighter are conveniently supplied with the unit. The only thing else you need is a micro-SD card to record your journey. In order to handle the volume of data that is generated during filming, this should be a class 4 SD/SDHC card. The Audiovox Dashcam supports a maximum of 32 gigabytes. Besides recording a holiday trip or excursion, the safety aspect that is also offered by a dashcam is not to be sneezed at. An accident or critical road incident, for example, can be retraced and viewed again retrospectively. Ambitious film-makers should beware, however, if they intend to publish their film on a social network. Scenes in which other vehicles and their license plates or passengers are clearly visible are off limits for reasons of data protection.

Technology

What is this small, compact camera capable of? What is hard to believe, and would have been deemed virtually impossible a few years ago, is the fact that the DVR 300 HD-GPS is capable of generating a Full HD image with a 1080p resolution - just like we have come to expect from a modern TV. A 10 minute recording requires approximately 1 gigabyte of memory. If you want to use smaller cards with less memory, you can lower the resolution of the recording. In addition to Full HD with 1920 x 1080 pixels, you can also choose a 720p format with 1280 x 720 pixels or a VGA format with 840 x 480 pixels. You are also able to choose between 50 and 60 Hz for the frame rate, as well as select the PAL video standard, which we use here, or the American NTSC system. We recommend using the integrated contrast enhancement function when you are driving in the dark, and an exposure compensation function of up to two f-stops can also be selected if required. In our practical test, however, these weren't necessary. An automatic white balance ensures a natural colour is maintained. Of course you can also set this manually, but it would only be necessary to do so under very poor lighting conditions. The automatic setting functioned well in our test.

Practice

In practice, the Audiovox unit offers numerous advantages that we can't seem to do without after a short spell. Firstly, it is equipped with a 140 degree wide angle lens that captures every event with a wide field of view. Another feature is the ability to display distant objects on-screen in a full format thanks to the 4 x digital zoom. The resolution does deteriorate here however. A 2.7 inch monitor at the rear of the unit allows you to check what's being seen. A screensaver can be activated after one, three or five minutes. The monitor then switches off to prevent the image from distracting you when driving, while the camera continues filming undeterred. An intuitive menu navigation system allows you to quickly scroll through all of the settings. The menu is divided into basic settings and data that is relevant for recording. A particularly practical feature is the automatic switch on/switch off function, provided that the camera is powered via a cigarette lighter: When the engine is started, the dashcam switches on automatically. You should note that the car's outlet is only powered when the ignition is switched on. You can specify whether you want the recording to start simultaneously via the menu. If you do this, then you don't really need to worry about anything else. When the vehicle is started the recording also starts. The recording stops as soon as the ignition is switched off. For your journey we recommend you set the "continuous recording" option to Off. If not, the dashcam will seamlessly record the entire time. Depending on the capacity of your memory card, it will quickly become full. For daily documentation, continuous recording for three, five or ten minutes is very interesting. All of the action is always recorded in blocks for the selected period. When the 10 minutes is up, for example, the next clip will start automatically. If the memory is full, the oldest recording will be deleted automatically. This means you will always have the current events documented. In addition to the option to start recording when the power supply is activated, the Audiovox dashcam can also be operated in two other ways. One option is for the recording process to start when the camera detects motion. This functions flawlessly in operation.

When you come to a stop at a red light, the recording will stop; when you start again the recording will resume after a short delay. There is a disadvantage of this documentation option, however, as the recording will also stop if you come to a standstill in a traffic jam. A particularly interesting feature is the 3G sensor that responds to acceleration and/or braking, thereby enabling the unit to record a potentially critical situation. Three sensitivity levels can be set for this option in three stages. It doesn't take up any of the memory, yet it still documents the situation. The events directly preceding your emergency stop, however, won't be recorded on the memory card, because the camera only responds when your foot is applied to the brake. In addition to recording film, the dashcam is also capable of taking photos with a resolution of up to 12 megapixels. It features a self-timer mode and a multi-shot mode, which enables three photos to be taken at a time. This means you will always have a small camera available in the event of an accident or a minor bump. The dashcam also features a playback function, which enables you to quickly view your photos on the small screen at the rear of the unit. A small auxiliary light for emergencies comes in handy if you want to film or take photographs outside the vehicle. The integrated battery enables a short-term mobile operation of approx. 35 minutes. The unit's outstanding configuration and various options are complemented by its sound recording, however, this can be switched off if required.

GPS antenna

The optional GPS antenna is an exciting feature. This is simply connected to the dashcam and is best placed somewhere on the dashboard that offers a clear line of sight to the satellites. This means you are now not only able to record a journey, but also various data such as distance, speed, direction of travel and acceleration as well. The time and date are naturally also recorded. This data can then be evaluated on a PC running Windows XP, Windows 7 or Windows 8. Unfortunately, a Mac is not supported. Free GPS tracker software can be found on the Audiovox website. Depending on your computer's configuration, you may need to install the codec driver, which is also available from Audiovox free of charge. You will then see a map on the screen which highlights the route you have traveled in green. Your speed is also displayed, just like the speedometer in a car. The stylised compass indicates your direction of travel. Sporty drivers will find the analysis of the G sensor particularly interesting. The acceleration data for right/left, up/down and forwards/reverse is displayed separately here. Pressing the "Full" button displays the video in a full-screen format. In addition, the map display can also be switched from a pure road map to a satellite view. The additional GPS antenna is practically a must for anyone flirting with the idea of purchasing a dashcam.

Conclusion

The Audiovox Dashcam DVR 300 HD GPS really impressed us. Its excellent picture quality in Full HD mode sets the scene perfectly for any driving situation. The contrast enhancement feature ensures events are recorded well, even when driving at night. By using the GPS function in conjunction with the optional antenna, you can retrace your journey on a computer. You can have a bit of fun in the evening viewing your route again, as well as various data relating to location, time, speed and acceleration forces.

You've got everything at a glance with the 140 degree wide angle lens. Besides the date and time are recorded.



You can also record at night through the contrast stretching

