



## Lite-On SOHW-832S

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### Company:

Lite-On Technology Corp., [www.liteon.com](http://www.liteon.com)

### Price:

\$150 list

### Spec Data:

Internal, dual-layer, dual-format; 8X DVD-R speed, 4X DVD-RW speed, 8X DVD+R speed, 2.4X DVD+R DL speed, 4X DVD+RW speed, 40X CD read speed, 40X CD-R speed, 24X CD-RW speed; ATAPI

### Pros:

Fast MP3 ripping. DivX support. Blazing CD-R and DVD±RW burning speeds.

### Cons:

Unlimited MP3 encoding requires SW upgrade.

### Bottom Line:

The SOHW-832S combines superior performance with good functionality and performs especially well when burning rewritable DVDs and CD-R media. But it suffers from the same lingering compatibility problems that still plague most double-layer drives.

### Review

The Lite-On SOHW-832S did as well on our testing as any of the DVD+R DL drives in the roundup. The drive exhibited some of the same compatibility problems as the other dual-layer recorders, but it also turned in some of the best performance numbers. Click here to read our full review of the [Lite-On SOHW-832S](#)

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### Lite-On SOHW-832S

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One reason for this could be its unique SMART-X technology, which continually adjusts the drive's rotational speed to provide optimal performance when playing or ripping audio CDs, Video CDs, and DVDs. Our evaluation unit produced outstanding CD-ripping and -recording figures, easily outpacing any other drive we tested. It also did well burning rewritable media, turning in the best DVD+RW time we measured, and falling only 4 seconds behind the first-place LaCie d2 in our DVD-RW test. On other performance tests, the SOHW-832S almost always produced at least average results.

The SOHW-832S ships with an abbreviated version of Ahead Software's Nero digital-media suite, which lacks several modules but includes key components, such as the InCD 4 packet-writing utility and the powerful Nero Vision Express 2 SE video editor. The package also provides full DivX support and 30 free MP3 encodes (an online upgrade adds unlimited MP3 ripping), and it supports Ahead's MPEG-4-based Nero Digital file format through the Nero Express disc-mastering module. A copy of CyberLink's PowerDVD utility handles DVD-Video playback chores.

The SOHW-832S ranked just below the BenQ DW830A on our compatibility tests. It produced Video CDs that worked in two of our three test players, and its baseline double-layer discs performed perfectly across the board. But the drive failed our more advanced DVD+R DL compatibility test, producing discs that none of our playback devices could recognize.

There's a lot to like about the SOHW-832S, and once the last few glitches are resolved, we'll have no problem giving it an enthusiastic thumbs-up. We do, however, advise potential buyers to take a look at the BenQ device—our dual-layer Editors' Choice—which also did well on our tests but costs much less.