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Apple SCSI Drives: Why Hard Drive Access Time May Vary

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TOPIC -----

What is the "average access time" of internal HD40 SC drives, especially the HD40 SC found in a Macintosh SE/30?

DISCUSSION -----

The hard disk drive specifications that Apple supports are those published in our literature. The Macintosh Internal Hard Disk HD40 SC is rated with an average seek time of 30 milliseconds in literature dated February 1989. This doesn't necessarily mean that all drives will be that exact speed -- just that we claim they'll be at least that fast.

Our computers may ship with different hard drives during their product lifetimes. In the case of the Macintosh SE/30, customers may have received a Quantum, a Seagate, or a Sony. Each of these drives performs similarly, but mild differences are detectable using certain benchmark tests. The most noticeable difference in actual day-to-day operation would probably be the unique sounds made by each drive: the overall performance should not differ all that much.

Many factors influence which drive a customer receives with their Macintosh. When a drive manufacturer is unable to produce adequate quantities for us, we'll use another manufacturer. Sometimes drives are dropped from our approved hardware lists for one reason or another, and others are added. It is almost impossible to predict which drive a Macintosh will have.

The service situation is also difficult to predict. Our pool of service hard drives changes over time, much the same as our pool of new product drives does. All that is guaranteed is that our customers will receive replacement drives that are compatible, and that will match or exceed our published specifications.

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