

Commodore Compatible “Hard Disk Drive” Alternatives – Compared to the Original 1541 Floppy

Feature / Function	Original 1541	CMD HD	CMD RL	IDE64	MMC64	IECATA	1541EMU	64HDD
Type	Hardware	Hardware	Cartridge	Cartridge	Cartridge	Hardware	PC Software	PC Software
C= support:								
C64	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Menu Only	Yes	Yes	Yes
C128	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
C16/+4	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
VIC20	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Serial Cable (for compatibility)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes - special	Yes – X/XE
Parallel Cable Option Available	Aftermarket Modification	Yes – needs RL	N/a	N/a	N/a	No	No	Yes – Pwr/XE
Optional ROM Upgrade	Yes / carts	JiffyDOS US\$29	Built-in	Built-In	Built-In	No	Binary	PwrROM/cart from US\$15
Disk Image Support	No	Imported D64	Imported D64	Extracted D64 only	Transfer D64 to real 1541	No	D64 only	D64, D71, D81, D2M, T64, etc
File support:								
Read	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Menu Only	Yes	Yes	Yes
Write	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PRG, SEQ	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Menu Only	Yes	Yes	Yes
REL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Only OS v0.9	No	Not yet	Yes	Not yet
Direct Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Directory:								
Standard	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advanced	Yes	Yes	Yes	???	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Command Channel	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes - subset	Yes	Yes
Compatibility:								
Fastloaders	Yes	No***	No	No	No	No CPU	Depends**	No CPU
GEOS	Yes	Yes^	Yes^	Yes%	No	No	Yes – D64	Yes^
Cartridge	Yes	Mostly	No	No	No	Not many	Mostly	Mostly
JiffyDOS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Depends**	Tolerant
Max Capacity	166kb	2GB, 254 partitions	16Mb, 31 partitions	2GB, two drives (??)	MMC/SD Limit	Up to 128GB	166kb	Only limited by PC used
CDROM Drive Support	No	Yes – driver	N/a	Yes	No	Not yet	No	Yes
User Subdirs	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
User Partitions	nil	254	31	16 on v0.9	nil	nil	nil	990
Price US\$ (Specialised h/ware and s/ware)#	\$10 or less	\$249 + HDD	\$208 + RAM	\$149* + CF HDD / PSU	EUR50	Build yourself ~\$25 + HDD/PSU	Free	Free or \$59 for Professional

* US\$149 from Modernity in Canada, or EURO136,00 on-line at Go64!

** LPT port latency is critical. My personal experience suggests many fast loaders lose synchronisation

*** Despite having a 6502 CPU, it runs at 2MHz and most programs I've tried crash as they were written for a 1MHz drive

^ Disk driver required

% Drive / CF card must be dedicated to GEOS only and GEOS requires a disk driver.

Items which cannot be self-made or used for other purposes. XE1541 cables can be purchased from US\$20; the 1541EMU cable is slightly more. Shipping extra, except for 64HDD which includes worldwide shipping.