Silverstone Strider Essential Series 500W PSU

Mainstream Strider Essential

By Muzaffar Ismail

Silverstone is heading into the mainstream market with its new Strider Essential Series Power Supply Units. One of the first units to reach our hands is the Silverstone Strider Essential Series 500W PSU, i.e. the SST-ST50F-ES which is up for testing this month.

At first glance, the PSU doesn't really stand out that much. The PSU is matte black with plenty of mesh vents all over the sides and it comes with a 120mm fan. Since the fan is larger than normal, it can go slower and thus operate at almost silent noise levels. Running with an Active PFC for even better performance, the PSU offers 80 Plus certification along with a number of security options. According to the company, the PSU uses a single rail at +12V with 34A for better stability and simplicity. While it has no specific SLI or CrossFireX certifications, what really makes the PSU stand out are its cables. The PSU offers a number of fixed cables, including one 24-pin connector for motherboard power, one 4+4-pin power connector for the CPU, four SATA power connectors, four 4-pin peripheral connectors and one 4-pin floppy. What sets this PSU apart from the rest is the fact that it also offers one 6+2-pin PCI-e power connector and one 6-pin PCI-e power connector, something which we've only seen in the higher-end range models like 700W PSUs and below.

This means that the Silverstone PSU can handle either a single high-end graphic card or two midrange graphic cards in SLI or CrossFireX configuration. You are still limited by the graphic cards’ PSU requirements, since you can only use graphic cards that have a minimum power requirement of 500W. This also limits what graphic cards you can choose as well, severely limiting the number of cards you can use in the NVIDIA line-up.

Thankfully, the new ATI HD 5000 series offers a number of low-power graphic cards which should make for a fairly powerful gaming system.

As mentioned earlier, the PSU is quite silent thanks to the large 120mm fan. The PSU does get a little warm under load but it is exceptionally stable. While the maximum output on the box is 500W, we noticed that we could push it up to more than 550W, almost nearing 600W so you have a little leeway when adding on more products. The PSU supports up to four SATA drives, so you can stick in three hard disk drives and an optical disc drive. The floppy cable is a nice touch, although you'll be hard-pressed to find anyone who still uses floppy drives these days.

What We Say

Utilizing a simple yet stable +12V single rail system, the Silverstone Strider Essentials 500W PSU is an exceptional PSU for the mainstream market. Granted, not many mainstream users will actually use the two PCI-e power connectors but it does offer mainstream gamers with a robust and flexible fixed cable PSU. The PSU is stable and powerful enough to support either SLI or CrossFireX configurations for the right graphic cards and can even be pushed a bit more than its standard 500W. Combine this with an affordable price and you have a winner on your hands, especially if your needs and requirements fit with what the PSU has to offer.

Silverstone Strider Essential Series 500W PSU

- SST-ST50F-ES
- Fixed Cables (1x 24-pin motherboard, 1x 4+4-pin +12V CPU, 1x 6+2-pin PCI-e 2.0, 1x 6-pin PCI-e 2.0, 4x SATA, 4x 4-pin peripheral, 1x 4-pin floppy)
- 500W maximum power output
- Single +12v rail with 34A
- Active PFC (PF>0.95 at Full Load)
- >80% at 20%~100% loading typical efficiency
- OCP, OPP, OVP, UV, SCP
- 120mm silent fan
- 80 Plus Certification
- RM239
- 3-years warranty
- Inter-Asia Technology Sdn Bhd
  - (03) 6276 6292
  - www.silverstonetek.com

The Silverstone Strider Essential 500W PSU is targeted at mainstream users but offers robust performance along with a few more cabling options than standard PSUs.

The two PCI-e power connectors offer more CrossFireX and SLI options for your system.