

Printer Search: the full report

Data as of 2026-09-06, revised 2026-09-07 · 67 configurations scored · 629 sources
· budget \$1,300.00 all-in including 6.25% Massachusetts sales tax

Executive summary

Buy the Bambu Lab P2S Combo plus Bambu's \$19.99 External Exhaust Fan Kit at \$817.05 all-in as of 2026-09-06, including 6.25 percent Massachusetts sales tax, nothing to buy later. It ranks first of 67 scored configurations and leaves about \$483 of the \$1,300 budget. Buy it knowing what you are trading: openness drops to 4.6 out of 10 against 9.0 for the QIDI alternative, because since January 2025 any slicer other than Bambu Studio must start prints through Bambu Connect, on a local network as well as in the cloud. What you get for it is the study's best combination of reliability and containment: 7.5 on the heaviest judgment, a lab-measured 48 decibels (dB), parts repeating within 0.4 mm, hardened nozzle and extruder fitted, a 24-month warranty and ducted extraction for the fumes. The best non-Bambu answer is the QIDI Q2 Combo at \$689.56, third at 7.085, which is \$127.49 cheaper and far more open, and which QIDI's own wiki tells owners to run with the lid open for polylactic acid (PLA) and polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) because trapped heat jams it. The Bambu X2D is not worth its premium: \$138.14 more than the recommendation, fourth at 6.980, better chamber and worse reliability.

The field was 102 printers sold new in the United States, resolved into 67 configurations: printer plus the magazine and accessories this use actually needs. Only 15 of the 67 have a chamber that is heated rather than merely closed. Bambu Lab's Automatic Material System (AMS), in every version and by Bambu's own specification, refuses any filament containing carbon or glass fiber, so an acrylonitrile butadiene styrene reinforced with glass fiber (ABS-GF) spool hangs outside the box or needs a \$139 single-slot AMS HT.

This report has moved twice, both times because the requirements changed rather than the evidence. It first recommended the P2S. On 2026-09-07 Rob corrected two things: he wants several filaments loaded and selectable rather than multi-color printing, and ABS-GF is in scope. Read as a routine material, ABS-GF made that AMS exclusion close to disqualifying and the QIDI Q2 won. On 2026-09-08, asked the question this report itself had named as decisive, Rob said ABS-GF is occasional. On an occasional material the same exclusion is a workaround rather than a wall, the Bambu magazine went from 4.5 to 7.0, and the P2S came back to first. Nothing about any machine changed on either date. A ranking is only as good as the question it was asked, and this one was asked three times.

Where it is fragile, and it is more fragile than the version it replaces. Under the previous assumption a QIDI took first in all six weightings this study runs. Now the six split four ways: the P2S wins two, the QIDI Plus5 two, the Q2 one and the X2D one. The margin from first to third is 0.155 of a point. Push openness to 30 and the Q2 wins outright at 7.652, its widest margin anywhere here, which is the single most likely way this recommendation is wrong for a buyer who runs his own homelab. The Bambu magazine's 7.0 also rests on a judgment made twice: it was 4.5 for one day, and what changed was the buyer's requirement, not a fact about the box.

This study scored 67 configurations on eight weighted judgments against 629 dated sources, every price and claim carrying its retrieval date. Where evidence does not meet the stated bar, a judgment is capped rather than guessed: four configurations

stay capped on reliability, 33 on noise and fumes, because independent measurements barely exist.

Who this is for, and the rules it was built under

This report answers one person's question. It is not a general ranking, and a different buyer with different priorities would get a different answer from the same data, which is why the tool that accompanies it lets you move the weights and watch the order change.

The buyer is a home user in Massachusetts who prints intermittently rather than continuously. In priority order, he prints functional parts in polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) where dimensional accuracy and repeatability matter more than speed; parts for foam-dart blasters that need to survive impact, occasionally in acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) for heat and impact resistance, with multiple colors for cosmetic pieces; and household fixes and one-off prototypes.

polylactic acid (PLA) and PETG are the bulk of what he prints. acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) and acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) are occasional, and specifically ABS reinforced with glass fiber (glass fiber (GF)). Glass fiber matters more to him than carbon fiber (carbon fiber (CF)), which an earlier draft of this report had backwards. Fiber is not a someday material: he expects to use it, so the machine has to print it and the filament magazine has to be able to hold it.

What he wants from multiple filaments is not multi-color printing. In his own words: "I'm not looking to really use multiple colors in the same print necessarily, but it's really about the convenience of having multiple materials and colors loaded up to just be easily selected in the slicer so I don't have to mess with feeding and managing a bunch of single rolls."

So the thing being bought is a **filament magazine**: four or more spools that stay loaded and get picked in the slicer instead of swapped by hand. That changes what counts as good. Purge waste, which dominates most multi-color comparisons, drops to a minor factor, because he rarely prints more than one color in a single object. What replaces it is which materials the magazine will accept, whether it dries them, and whether it jams when loading and unloading. A magazine that refuses the filament he most wants loaded is failing at the job he is buying it for, however smoothly it changes colors. He has used a Bambu Lab X1C with an Automatic Material System (AMS) a couple of times at work, so that workflow is familiar, though not a requirement.

He designs in OpenSCAD and Python, and is not fluent in any programming language. He uses an Android phone, so companion apps that are iOS-only or iOS-first count against a machine. A web interface that works in Chrome is a plus, as is a documented application programming interface (API) or a home-automation integration.

The printer will live in a shared family home rather than a dedicated workshop. Noise, fumes and footprint are therefore real constraints, not footnotes, and one whole judgment in the rubric exists to capture them.

He values free and open-source software and self-hosting, but has said plainly that for this purchase "it just works" outweighs ideological purity. The rubric reflects that: reliability carries the heaviest weight at 25 out of 100, and openness carries 15.

The knobs this run used

Every one of these was fixed before research began and never changed mid-run.

Setting	Value	What it means
Run date	2026-09-06	Every "current" claim in this report is relative to this date.
Region	United States	Only products a US consumer can buy new.
Budget	\$1,300.00 all-in	A hard ceiling on total spend, tax included.
Sales tax	6.25%	Massachusetts. \$1,300.00 all-in is about \$1,223.53 before tax.
Stretch ceiling	\$1,600.00 all-in	Captured in full so a near-miss or a sale is never silently dropped.
Refurbished	captured, flagged	Manufacturer-refurbished units with a warranty. Used-market listings are never captured.
Kits	whole-printer only	A kit sold as one product by an established vendor is scored. A third-party add-on kit bolted to a printer never designed for it is not a qualifying multi-color path.
Pre-orders	excluded	Anything that cannot be bought and delivered today gets one line in the timing chapter and nothing more.

A configuration, not a printer, is the unit of comparison throughout. A configuration is the printer plus the multi-material unit (Multi Material Unit (MMU)) needed for multi-color plus any accessory the buyer's stated use actually requires. Comparing bare printers would systematically favor machines that sell their color capability separately.

How this was built

What was searched

The scope was every fused deposition modeling (fused deposition modeling (FDM)) printer sold new to a US consumer as of 2026-09-06, from any brand, at any price. Price decided how deeply a model was captured, never whether it was listed. Resin, laser and industrial machines are out of scope but still appear in the coverage record with a reason, because an omission and an exclusion look identical to a reader unless you say which one it is.

Brands were enumerated first from a manifest, then a discovery pass went looking for what the manifest had missed: retailer catalogs at Micro Center, MatterHackers, B&H, Amazon, Newegg and Walmart; editorial roundups from All3DP, Tom's Hardware, PCMag, Wirecutter and TechRadar published within twelve months; the vendor lists inside the OrcaSlicer and Klipper source repositories; community discussion; and trade coverage. Discovery found 62 brand names that were not in the original manifest. Almost all turned out to be children's printers, industrial machines, defunct companies or brands with no US channel, but they are all recorded rather than dropped.

What counts as evidence

Every non-null fact in the underlying data carries a source, a retrieval date and an evidence tier. There are 629 sources behind this report.

Tier	What it is	Count
T1	evidence tier 1	327
T2	evidence tier 2	70
T3	T3	55
T4	evidence tier 4	176
T5	T5	1

Specifications and prices require tier 1. Reliability, noise, purge waste and support claims require at least one tier 2 plus one tier 4, or two tier 2. A manufacturer's own claim about how quiet or how reliable its machine is was never sufficient on its own, and marketing figures for speed and acceleration never moved a score by themselves.

How the scoring works

Each configuration is scored 0 to 10 on eight judgments against written anchors. Each judgment carries a weight; the total is the sum of score times weight, divided by the full weight sum.

Judgment	Weight	Capped for insufficient evidence
Just-works reliability and support	25	4
Filament magazine: what it holds and how well	15	0
Value within budget	15	4
Openness and longevity	15	4
Room to grow (chamber, magazine, harder materials later)	5	1
Materials now (PLA, PETG, ASA, ABS and ABS-GF)	15	2
Software and ecosystem UX	5	4
Practicalities for a shared home	5	33

The rule in that last column is the most important one in this report. **A judgment whose evidence does not meet the bar is capped at 3.0 out of 10, and the denominator is always the full weight sum.** A gap always costs; it never helps.

That sounds obvious and it is not. The previous version of this study divided by the number of judgments it could score, which is arithmetically identical to filling each gap in at the machine's own average. The result was a ranking that correlated negatively with how well documented a machine was, and whose top pick was a machine the same study's own research said to avoid. The rule exists because of that failure, and a test in the build fails if anyone reintroduces it.

That rule has a second-order trap of its own, and this study fell into it once. The first scoring pass capped 23 of 67 configurations on reliability, including every Bambu Lab P1S, a machine three years on sale with an enormous published record. That cap was measuring this study's own reading, not the printers. A second research pass went and gathered the missing evidence under an explicit instruction to look for evidence rather than for good news, adding 165 sources and 85 defect records; both affected judgments were then re-scored from scratch. Scores moved in both directions, which is the only reason to trust the exercise: the P1S rose sharply, and the QIDI Q2 fell from about 7 to 4.0 once its documented requirement to run with the enclosure open came to light.

What was excluded, and why

Pre-order, crowdfunded and announced-but-unshipped machines were excluded outright rather than scored and flagged. A machine that cannot be delivered cannot be the answer to "what should I buy right now", and chasing them consumed a great deal of effort in the previous version of this study for nothing. They appear once each in the timing chapter so the question "should I wait?" can still be answered honestly.

Third-party bolt-on multi-material unit (Multi Material Unit (MMU)) kits do not count as a multi-color path. Fitting a color system to a printer whose manufacturer never designed for one is a soldering-and-configuration project, which is the opposite of this buyer's stated primary criterion. Machines whose only color option is such a kit remain visible in the unranked section with the kit named, so the exclusion is legible rather than a silent gap. Whole-printer kits from an established vendor are a different thing and are scored normally.

What was covered, and what was not

The point of this chapter is that you can tell the difference between a machine this study rejected and a machine it never looked at. The previous version could not, and silently missed several brands.

Every brand encountered, whether in the manifest, in a retailer's catalog, in an editorial roundup, in a slicer's vendor list, or anywhere else, has a row in the coverage record with a status and at least one source. There are 78 such rows: 10 mainstream brands, 21 secondary and niche brands, 5 adjacent brands confirmed out of scope, and 42 rows for brands that discovery turned up and the manifest had not listed.

Category	Count
Brands with a coverage row	78
Brands fully captured	24
Printers recorded in detail	102
Configurations priced	128
Configurations scored and ranked	67
Configurations visible but not ranked	61

The 61 unranked configurations are not hidden. They appear in the tool with the reason they are set aside, which is almost always that the manufacturer sells no multi-color path for them, or that they cost more than the \$1,600.00 stretch ceiling.

Where the fetching failed

Nine sources of information could not be read directly and are declared rather than papered over: Adorama's catalog refused two URL variants; Reddit and YouTube refuse direct page fetches, so search results and a structured video interface were used instead; the listing pages at Kickstarter, Indiegogo and the Formnext exhibitor directory are JavaScript applications that returned nothing; and the Zortrax, Voxelab, Siboor and US Phrozen storefronts each refused repeatedly. Where an equivalent existed (a reseller page, a global storefront, a structured interface) it was used and labeled as such.

Where the first pass was wrong

Sixteen prices captured in the first pass turned out to be wrong, and all sixteen are recorded in the conflicts log with both values. Two mistakes explain nearly all of them. A product page's default-selected variant is frequently not the base product, so a bundle price gets recorded against a bare machine. That is how the Bambu P2S Combo was first recorded at \$780 when it is \$749. And several manufacturers run a separate US storefront from their global one at different prices, which is how six Anycubic machines and the entire Phrozen line were mispriced.

Two of those corrections removed a candidate that had looked affordable. The UltiMaker S3 is \$2,999, not the \$1,095 first captured; that figure belonged to a different product in the same page's related-items carousel. The Rat Rig V-Core 4.1 needs a separate \$768.56 electronics kit that its headline price does not include, putting its cheapest working build at \$1,916.17. One correction went the other way: the Phrozen Arco is in stock in the US at \$840, verified by adding it to a cart and requesting a live shipping quote to a Massachusetts postcode.

Market landscape by category

Rob is not buying a multi-color printer. He is buying a **filament magazine**, a box that keeps four spools loaded so he picks one in the slicer instead of feeding a roll by hand, on a machine that can print acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), including the glass fiber (GF) grade. That sorts the market under \$1,300 differently from the way a color buyer would. Pre-orders and crowdfunded machines are excluded.

What a filament magazine is, and what separates a good one

Four spools sit in a box wired to the printer. The slicer lists them, you assign one to the part, the machine loads it. No hunting, no threading.

Five things separate a good magazine from a bad one. **First and dominant: which materials it accepts.** Then whether the feed jams; whether it dries the spools, because polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) drinks moisture from the air; slot count and chaining; and whether the printer can tell the slots apart, usually by reading a radio-frequency identification (RFID) tag.

Every exclusion below is the maker's own.

- **Bambu Lab's Automatic Material System (AMS), AMS lite and AMS 2 Pro all refuse any filament containing carbon fiber (CF) or glass fiber.** That is Bambu's own specification, and how much it costs Bambu depends entirely on how often Rob prints ABS-GF. Read as routine on 2026-09-07, it dropped the best-built magazine here below an Anycubic Color Engine (ACE) 2 Pro. Ruled occasional on 2026-09-08, it is a workaround: an external spool, or a \$139 single-slot AMS HT, which is Bambu's own supported route for abrasives. Twenty slots on a P2S, none of them for ABS-GF, and a spool holder on the side.
- **The Creality Filament System (CFS) variant for the K1 family, the CFS-C,** lists three grades of polylactic acid (PLA) and nothing else: "Hyper PLA, CR-PLA, CR-Silk". PETG is absent, so a \$319 box will not hold his commonest plastic. Sold out as of 2026-09-06.
- **The QIDI Box, \$228, is the only magazine here whose own list names ABS-GF outright,** alongside PLA, PETG, ABS, acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA), nylon, polycarbonate and the carbon and glass grades of PLA and PETG. It dries at 65 °C while printing, reads spool tags, and chains to four boxes.
- **Elegoo's CANVAS** costs \$150 with a thermal top cover, which Elegoo recommends for ABS, ASA and fiber-reinforced filament, or \$120 without, which marks those "not recommended". Neither dries.

Feed reliability is the second filter, and nobody escapes clean. Tom's Hardware could not get four filaments feeding through a launch-production QIDI Box, and a second box behaved identically; owners at 450 to 792 hours say the revised unit fixed it, but no reviewer has re-tested. Bambu's AMS 2 Pro grinds filament on first load, and PCMag stripped a tool head manifold to clear a CANVAS jam. As magazines, the QIDI Box tops this field at 7.5 out of 10; the CFS-C is bottom at 0.5.

Why purge waste usually dominates, and why it does not dominate here

Almost every machine here has one nozzle. Changing filament means cutting the old strand, loading the new one, and pushing plastic through the hot end until the old color stops. That flush is waste, produced **per change**, not per part.

The numbers are startling. 123-3D weighed the purge from one four-color model on an Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 Combo at 914 grams, against a 265-gram part. Tom's

Hardware weighed a four-color print on a Snapmaker U1, a toolchanger that parks one loaded head and picks up another instead of flushing, at 0.76 grams.

That gap is why toolchangers win most multi-color comparisons, and why they do not win this one. Purge happens only when filament changes **inside a single object**, which Rob says he will rarely do. The figure that matters is the other end of Tom's Hardware's Creality data: a two-color print with one swap used 78.99 grams and wasted 0.64. A text inlay costs grams; four-color torture tests cost kilograms, and he is not printing them. The Snapmaker U1 fell from eighth to seventeenth on that alone.

Passive enclosure versus actively heated chamber

An enclosure is a lid and panels; an actively heated chamber has a heater and a thermostat. With ASA the distinction was arguable. With ABS it is the dividing line, because ABS warps harder: corners lift as the part cools, and trapped waste heat may not be enough.

Measured, not claimed. PCMag found the Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2's passive chamber steady at about 45 °C. Bambu's P2S publishes no chamber figure at all; its documentation credits the enclosure and a circulation flap. CNC Kitchen put thermocouples inside a Bambu X2D and confirmed a real 65 °C in twenty minutes. QIDI's Q2 and Plus5 reach 65 °C, Creality's K2 Pro 60 °C, Prusa's CORE One 55 °C.

Only **15 of the 67 scored configurations** have a real chamber heater, and those fifteen take eleven of the top thirteen places on the materials judgment. That is the mechanism behind the re-ranking.

Two caveats. The passive P2S still finishes first, on hardened parts fitted from the factory and ABS-GF on Bambu's own filament table; good hardware in a cold box, which is enough when the hot material is occasional. And heated chambers carry a sting: QIDI's wiki tells owners to run the Q2's top cover **open** for PLA and PETG, or retained heat softens filament above the heat break and jams it. Those are his two bulk materials, on the machine bought for its sealed chamber.

The categories, and what the cheapest credible entry costs

Bedslingers move the whole bed back and forth: cheap, least steady at speed, almost always open-framed, so out for ABS in a shared home. **Enclosed passive** machines are the center of the market and the best value per dollar. **Enclosed actively heated** machines are the only ones that answer the corrected brief. **Toolchangers** carry four complete heads, but the U1 as sold has an open top and no filtration, and ABS and ASA need a back-ordered \$149 cover. A true independent dual extruder (IDEX) appears only on a \$2,443.37 Rat Rig build. **Whole-printer kits** buy openness with weekends: the Formbot Voron scores 10 on openness, 1.0 on reliability.

Refurbished stock is about warranty, not the label.

Category	Cheapest credible entry	All-in 2026-09-06 (USD)	Rank of 67	Chamber heater
Bedslinger	Anycubic Kobra X	296.44	45	no
Enclosed passive	Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 Combo	423.94	11	no
Refurbished	Bambu P1S AMS Combo	496.19	8	no
Enclosed heated	QIDI Q2 Combo	689.56	3	65 °C
Toolchanger	Snapmaker U1	902.06	15	no
Whole-printer kit	Prusa MK4S + MMU3 kit bundle	997.69	30	no

All figures include 6.25 % Massachusetts sales tax. The cheapest heated-chamber kit is the Prusa CORE One+ with an enclosed Multi Material Unit (MMU) at \$1,485.38, inside the \$1,600 stretch; the cheapest heated toolchanger is the Flashforge Creator 5 Pro at \$1,008.31. Independent loudness measurements barely exist, so where this report calls a machine loud or quiet without a figure in decibels (dB), that is an ear, not a meter.

The shortlist

Each profile below stands alone. You can read any one of them without the others.

Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 Combo

The Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 is a fully enclosed CoreXY printer, 256 millimeters cubed, with a hardened steel nozzle good to 350 degrees Celsius and the only high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) and carbon filter fitted as standard here. The Combo box adds the CANVAS four-spool feeder and thermal top cover. It costs \$423.94 all-in with 6.25 percent Massachusetts sales tax as of 2026-09-06, nothing to buy later: the cheapest thing in the top ten, half the price of the recommendation, and up from thirteenth to eighth.

The purge nearly ruled it out, because 123-3D weighed 914 grams against a 265 gram part on 2026-07-05, and now barely matters: Rob rarely prints two colors in one object. Elegoo recommends this CANVAS, the one with the cover, for acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA), polycarbonate and fiber-reinforced filament, so unlike Bambu's magazines it holds carbon fiber (CF) and glass fiber (GF) grades. It dries nothing, so spools sit in open room air, thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) must bypass it, and it does not expand past four channels.

The chamber is passive. PCMag measured about 45 degrees Celsius inside and needed glue stick and a brim for ASA and ABS-GF. Rad Dad's Print Lab, over 200 hours, had ASA prints lift off the plate repeatedly and would not buy it without a chamber heater. Sold as ABS-capable, it is really a polylactic acid (PLA) and polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) machine that does ASA if you fuss. Feed faults are common enough that Elegoo publishes a wiki page per error code: one owner hit error 1220 at eleven days and 77 hours, and never cleared it. Popular Mechanics restarted it daily to stay on the network.

Recent Amazon reviews average 3.92 stars since July 2026 against 2.52 before, but on a 36-review sample, and 3.92 only matches the 3.9 lifetime average of 298 ratings. One trap: the coverless CANVAS saves \$10, and Elegoo marks ABS, ASA, fiber-filled PETG and polycarbonate not recommended with it, which removes the whole reason to buy the machine. Openness is good and slipping: source under version 3 of the GNU General Public License (GPL), a local area network (LAN) only mode slicers can upload through, but the 2026-05-28 firmware removed secure shell (SSH) and blocks downgrades. It suits someone who wants four materials loaded behind a filter at half the budget, and will do the fussing.

Item	Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 Combo
Price all-in, 2026-09-06 (USD)	423.94: \$399 bundle plus \$24.94 tax, free shipping; nothing to buy later
Build volume (mm)	256 × 256 × 256
Chamber / nozzle / bed maximum (°C)	passive, measured about 45 / 350 / 110
Measured noise (dB)	44 to 47 average, peaks to 54 (Notebookcheck, no distance stated); owners report 65 to 70 close up
Footprint with CANVAS (mm) and weight (kg)	500 × 480 × 743; 19.35
Magazine	CANVAS, 4 slots, RFID, no drying, not chainable; cover version accepts ABS, ASA, PC, CF and GF
Local control	LAN Only toggle, local upload and camera, no account to print; no browser UI; no SSH since 2026-05-28
Warranty (months)	12 on feeder module, motors, gearbox, hub and board; tubes, wiper and claws none
Scores (out of 10)	reliability 4.0, magazine 5.5, openness 8.2, materials 5.0, value 10.0

Bambu Lab P1S with the Automatic Material System (AMS) 2 Pro

The P1S is Bambu Lab's enclosed CoreXY workhorse, on sale since July 2023: a 256 mm build cube with a carbon filter. The combo adds the AMS 2 Pro, a four-slot magazine that dries its spools to 65 °C, for \$615.19 all in on 2026-09-06 including Massachusetts tax.

It scores 8.0 of 10 on reliability, the highest here. Tom's Hardware gave it Editor's Choice; owner threads to 11,000 hours name one unforced failure, a stepper motor; the rest is consumables. Extruder gears wear out at 1,000 to 2,000 hours (one owner found the teeth ground flat at 1,200 hours on polylactic acid (PLA) and polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) alone), and hotends between 2,600 and 4,000.

Heat is what holds it to sixth. The enclosure is passive: owners measure about 40 °C inside with the doors shut. Large acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) parts warp, one splitting in mid-air. Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) shrinks harder still, so with ABS and glass fiber (GF) in scope this is the weakest materials story in the top ten, 4.6 out of 10. Its stainless nozzle needs a hardened gear and hotend for fiber, \$49.48 more.

The magazine is otherwise the best here: four sealed slots, drying to 65 °C, radio-frequency identification (RFID) that puts the right spool in the right slicer slot. What it refuses is the problem. Bambu's specification bars any filament with glass or carbon fiber (CF), so the material Rob most wants loaded needs an external spool or a \$139 AMS HT dry box. It cannot dry while printing, and its feeders sometimes grind filament on loading.

An owner's meter read 58 decibels (dB) at 0.3 m against PCMag's 48 dB for the P2S: fine to work beside, too loud to sleep beside. The P1 shares the A1's mains inrush-limiting circuit and, unlike the A1, has no revised board as of 2026-06-03. Reports are isolated: a burning smell at 1,700 hours, one smoking unit.

Openness on 2026-09-06: local area network (LAN) Only works with no account, but since January 2025 only Bambu Studio may start a print, even locally. Developer Mode lifts that but disables the cloud, and Bambu called it unsupported in May 2026. LAN Only also kills the Handy phone app, whose builds after 3.6.0 crash on Android 17, which is bad for a Pixel owner. Strike ABS from the list and this is still the machine to buy.

Build volume (mm)	Chamber / bed max (°C)	Stock nozzle (mm, material)	Measured noise (dB)	Magazine (slots, drying °C)	Buy-today all-in (USD, 2026-09-06)
256 × 256 × 256	passive, ~40 measured / 100	0.4, stainless steel	47 at 2.4 m, 58 at 0.3 m	4, dried to 65, no fiber	615.19, plus 49.48 fiber kit

Bambu Lab P1S, factory refurbished, with the first-generation Automatic Material System (AMS)

Bambu Lab's three-year-old workhorse, restored and resold by Bambu's own store with the original four-spool color changer. It is enclosed and carbon-filtered, 256 mm cubed. On 2026-09-06 it listed at \$467.00, or \$496.19 all-in with 6.25% Massachusetts sales tax and free shipping. The nozzle is stainless, so carbon fiber (CF) or glass fiber (GF) later needs a \$49.48 hardened gear-and-hotend kit: \$545.67 in total, still \$754 under budget. The two-year warranty was verified on the store page: the same badge row as new stock, under a banner reading "The same Warranty as New."

It suits the buyer who wants enclosed, filtered, four-color printing for the least money. It also settles the idea that the P1S is poor value: \$299.62 below the P2S combo at \$795.81, on the best-documented platform here, where owners at 4,000 and 11,000 hours report only consumables.

Two deductions. The bundled unit is the first-generation AMS and it jams. Cardboard and lightweight spools bind or unspool inside it, and filament snaps in the guide tubes underneath, cleared only by partly dismantling the box, twice in eight months for one owner at 2,938 print hours [src-bambu-p1s-longterm-5000h]. It has desiccant and a humidity sensor but no heater, though owners of both say drying does not decide quality for polylactic acid (PLA) or polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) kept dry. The refurbished AMS 2 Pro combo, \$26.56 more, fixes that when in stock.

Second, refurbished means older donor hardware, and the P1 power board has never been revised: owners report a burning-electronics smell at about 1,700 print hours and one 2025 unit that smoked. Rare, but the A1 got a revised board and the P1 did not. Expect extruder gears ground flat by 1,000 to 2,000 hours, nozzle clogs across 1,000 to 4,000, and acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) in small parts only: the passive chamber reaches about 40 °C, so large boxy prints warp or split. Nor is it quiet: 47 decibels (dB) at 2.4 m, 58 dB behind the exhaust, "Noisy" among Tom's Hardware's cons.

Openness on 2026-09-06: local area network (LAN) Only mode works, no account is needed to print from Bambu Studio, and third-party filament is never locked out. But since January 2025, printing from any other slicer routes through Bambu Connect, in LAN mode as well as cloud. Developer Mode is the way round it: LAN Only, no cloud, and called unsupported by Bambu in May 2026.

Build volume (mm)	Hotend / bed max (°C)	Noise, independent (dB)	Footprint W×D×H (mm)	Weight (kg)	All-in price, 2026-09-06 (USD)
256 × 256 × 256	300 / 100	47 at 2.4 m, 58 at 0.3 m	389 × 389 × 458	12.95	496.19 (545.67 with fiber kit)

Bambu Lab P2S with the Automatic Material System (AMS) 2 Pro

The P2S is Bambu Lab's enclosed CoreXY mid-range printer, on sale since 2025-10-14, with a hardened steel nozzle and extruder gear as standard, so abrasive filament needs no upgrade. The Combo adds the AMS 2 Pro, a four-slot sealed filament magazine. It suits the buyer who wants the fewest surprises, and it led the old multi-color ranking. Now that acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) with glass fiber (GF) is in scope, and the magazine is judged on what it will hold, it ranks second at

\$817.05 all-in with the exhaust kit and fourth at \$795.81 without, both on 2026-09-06.

Its strength is the record: PCMag's lab, published 2025-10-24, measured a 48 decibel (dB) average while printing, the quietest here, uptime above 99 percent over 100 hours, and repeated parts within 0.4 mm, the repeatability polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) parts need. Reliability scores 7.5, best in the top six.

The magazine hardware is the best here: four sealed slots that chain to four units, radio-frequency identification (RFID) tagging, and drying rated to 65 C, though owners say it will not dry mid-print. But it will not hold the material that prompted this rewrite. Bambu's own specification bars any filament containing carbon or glass fiber from the whole AMS family, so ABS-GF feeds from the external spool holder or a \$139 single-slot AMS HT dry box. Slots also grind filament on first load and need a manual nudge, which CNC Kitchen hit across 250 hours; open since 2026-04-14.

The chamber is the deeper problem. There is no heater, only the enclosure and an airflow flap, so acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) works with care and ABS is marginal. The flap follows the filament profile's declared softening temperature, so most third-party polylactic acid (PLA) and PETG profiles force recirculation with no override. One owner measured a 46 C chamber warping PLA and ran the door open, which switches the carbon filter off because it only works in recirculation. Reported 2026-02-25, still open on 2026-09-06; an owner of three machines sees 40 C and calls it harmless. There is no high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) stage; the \$19.99 exhaust kit is the fix.

Openness scores 4.6, worst of any mainstream brand here. Local area network (LAN) Only mode prints with no account, but since January 2025 any slicer other than Bambu Studio must start prints through Bambu Connect, on your own network as well as the cloud.

Configuration	Build volume (mm)	Hot end / bed (C max)	Noise (dB, measured)	Filtration	All-in (USD, 2026-09-06)
P2S Combo with AMS 2 Pro	256 x 256 x 256	300 / 110	48	activated carbon	795.81
Same plus External Exhaust Fan Kit	256 x 256 x 256	300 / 110	48	carbon plus exhaust fan	817.05

QIDI Plus5 with the QIDI Box

The QIDI Plus5 is a fully enclosed CoreXY printer, 320 by 320 by 300 millimeters, whose chamber heater holds 65 degrees Celsius. The bimetal nozzle is rated to 370 degrees, the bed to 120, and a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter and activated carbon are standard. The Combo adds the QIDI Box: four spools, dried at 65 degrees while it prints. All-in it costs \$955.19 as of 2026-09-06: an \$899 bundle plus \$56.19 of Massachusetts sales tax, nothing to buy later.

It suits the buyer for whom acrylonitrile butadiene styrene with glass fiber (ABS-GF) is the point. QIDI's supported list for the Box names ABS-GF outright, beside polylactic acid (PLA), polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG), acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) and every carbon fiber (CF) and glass fiber (GF) grade that Bambu Lab's Automatic Material System (AMS) refuses. It will not hold thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) 95A, damp polyvinyl alcohol (PVA), QIDI's PAHT-CF, or cardboard spools. Launch Boxes jammed so badly Tom's Hardware could not feed four filaments on a Q2, nor could its replacement; owners past 450 hours call the revision cured, untested by any reviewer.

3dwork.io, after weeks on a QIDI-supplied unit, jammed a PLA print with the lid shut and rates PLA "you need to open the top lid", but rates PETG five stars with the chamber optional, the Q2's worst habit half-cured. On 2026-08-18 an owner measured the X and Y stepper drivers above 105 degrees on a heated-chamber print, and his bed 0.3 millimeters out of flat, the previous model's weakness, whose remedy is a bigger rear fan you fit yourself. GamingTrend logged over 100 failure-free hours the same month. Three months on sale, reliability scores 5.0 out of 10: better than the Q2's 4.0, well short of proven.

Software is the sore point. OrcaSlicer's stable release, version 2.4.2 of 2026-07-07, has no Plus5 profile. A volunteer merged one on 2026-08-07, noting "Qidi didn't register", so a buyer today needs QIDI Studio, a nightly build or a hand-imported profile. Otherwise it is open: Klipper, with Fluidd and Moonraker on the local area network (LAN), and no account. QIDI does publish no firmware source for this model, unlike the Q2, Plus4 and Max4.

Buy it over the Q2, for \$265.63 more, if ABS-GF is a requirement rather than an aspiration, if you need the bigger bed, and if you want PETG printing with the lid down.

Item	QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 plus one QIDI Box)
Price all-in, 2026-09-06 (USD)	955.19: \$899 bundle, free shipping, \$56.19 tax; nothing to buy later
Build volume (mm)	320 × 320 × 300
Chamber / nozzle / bed maximum (°C)	65 actively heated / 370 / 120
Filtration and noise at full load (dB)	G3 pre-filter, H12 HEPA and carbon, standard; 45 to 55 stated by 3dwork.io, no meter named
Footprint (mm) and weight (kg)	500 × 488 × 558; 29
Magazine holds	ABS-GF, ABS-CF, PLA-CF/GF, PETG-CF/GF, PET-CF/GF, ABS, ASA, PC, PA, PP, POM, HIPS, dried PVA/BVOH, TPU 64D; dries at 65 °C
Magazine refuses	TPE, generic TPU, TPU 95A, damp PVA/BVOH, QIDI PAHT-CF, some silk and glow-in-the-dark PLA, cardboard spools
Local control	Klipper with Fluidd and Moonraker on the LAN, no account; no firmware source published for this model
Slots and chaining	4, chainable to 16, but a Plus5 also needs the \$35.99 Box hub and cable
Buying route	QIDI's own store ships from China; Amazon ships domestically, buy-box seller is a marketplace reseller
Warranty (months)	12; parts shipped readily, returns resisted
Scores out of 10 (weight)	reliability 5.0 (25), materials 8.3 (15), magazine 7.5 (15), openness 8.0 (15), value 7.3 (15); total 6.96, rank 5 of 67

QIDI Q2 with the QIDI Box

The QIDI Q2 is a fully enclosed CoreXY printer, 270 by 270 by 256 mm, with a chamber heated on purpose to 65 °C. A high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter and a carbon filter are standard, the bimetal hardened nozzle reaches 370 °C, the bed 120 °C, and the firmware is Klipper. Tom's Hardware (2025-11-07) said it "won't break a sweat printing acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) or acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA)". With one QIDI Box it costs \$689.56 all-in as of 2026-09-06.

The QIDI Box holds four spools, dries them at 65 °C while printing, and chains to four units. QIDI's supported list, re-read 2026-09-07, names carbon fiber (CF) and glass fiber (GF) grades outright, ABS-GF among them: the only magazine here that holds the material he most wants loaded. It refuses thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) softer than 64D, damp dissolvables, QIDI's own PAHT-CF, some glow-in-the-dark polylactic acid (PLA), and cardboard spools.

Openness is the best here, and real: secure shell (SSH) login on QIDI's own wiki, the Fluidt control page in a browser, Moonraker on the local area network (LAN), firmware published under version 3 of the GNU General Public License (GPL), and no account needed to print.

Now the problem. Reliability scores 4.0 out of 10, the heaviest judgment, against 7.5 for the Bambu P2S. Shut the lid and retained heat softens filament above the heat break and jams it, usually PLA or polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG), his two bulk materials. That is documented normal operation, not a bad unit: QIDI's wiki says run the top cover open. 3dwork.io jammed through its first week, Thomas Sanladerer dug bulged PLA out of the toolhead for an hour, and PCMag lost two days to a clog. So the sealed chamber stands open for most of his printing, exactly when a shared room wants the fumes and the 56 decibels (dB) held in.

The Box carries its own scar: Tom's Hardware's launch unit jammed constantly with "preposterous" drag, and the replacement QIDI sent behaved identically. A revised box ships now, and PCMag saw no jams in August 2026, but no independent bench test exists. The trade is plain: the best materials reach and openness in the study, against the worst reliability in the top six. Take it only if you will run the door open for PLA and PETG, and buy from a seller with its own returns policy.

Item	QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 plus one QIDI Box)
Price all-in, 2026-09-06 (USD)	689.56: \$649 bundle, free shipping, \$40.56 Massachusetts tax; nothing to buy later
Build volume (mm)	270 × 270 × 256
Chamber / nozzle / bed maximum (°C)	65 actively heated / 370 / 120
Filtration and measured noise (dB)	HEPA plus activated carbon, standard; 50 to 60 in use, about 65 with the Box
Footprint (mm) and weight (kg)	402 × 438 × 494; 18.1
Magazine holds	ABS-GF, ABS-CF, PLA-CF/GF, PETG-CF/GF, PET-CF/GF, ABS, ASA, PC, PA, PP, POM, HIPS, dried PVA/BVOH, TPU 64D
Magazine refuses	TPE, generic TPU, TPU 95A, damp PVA/BVOH, QIDI PAHT-CF, some silk and glow-in-the-dark PLA, cardboard spools
Slots, chaining, local control	4 slots, 16 across four boxes (\$39.99 kit); SSH, Fluidt in a browser, Moonraker on the LAN, no account
Warranty (months)	12; parts shipped readily, returns resisted
Scores out of 10 (weight)	reliability 4.0 (25), materials 7.8 (15), magazine 7.5 (15), openness 9.0 (15), value 9.0 (15); total 7.08, rank 3 of 67

Snapmaker U1

The Snapmaker U1 is a toolchanger: instead of flushing a nozzle clean at each color change, it carries four complete print heads and swaps them in ten to twelve seconds. All four are in the \$849 box. It is CoreXY, the biggest on this shortlist, and only partly enclosed: side panels, a glass door, an open top, no filtration.

Its color-change numbers are the best here: 0.76 grams of purge on a four-color print, weighed by Tom's Hardware. Wirecutter's July 2026 four-color test took 11 hours on the U1, unattended, against 29 on the Bambu Lab X2D and 41 on the P2S, both with clogged chutes. Reliability is 7.5 out of 10, the best non-Bambu score, after 3DPrint.com's 300-plus hours. Openness is 8.6 as of 2026-09-06: Snapmaker published its Klipper, Moonraker and Fluidt forks under version 3 of the GNU General Public License (GPL) on 2026-04-02 and was still pushing on 2026-08-25, and its local area network (LAN) mode needs no account.

None of that survives Rob's corrected requirement: those wins are about changing color mid-print, which he says he will rarely do. The U1 fell from eighth to fifteenth.

What remains is a machine Snapmaker rates for polylactic acid (PLA) and polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) but not for acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) or acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA), which its table allows only with the \$149 Top Cover and its carbon and high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters. On 2026-09-06 that cover was a pre-order shipping 1 to 15 November 2026. One owner who ran ABS anyway had the print detach, blob and bend a nozzle.

The magazine is the four toolheads, so nothing is cut or reloaded and nothing jams on the way in. Four is the ceiling, nothing is dried, glass fiber (GF) and carbon fiber (CF) need a \$49 set of four hardened hot ends (0.4 millimeter out of stock on 2026-09-06), and ABS-GF cannot be loaded. New units sometimes jam inside a toolhead: one owner had two in his first 20 hours, each needing a strip. No decibel (dB) figure exists; three reviewers call it loud. Its Android app rates 2.4 stars from 162 Google Play reviews.

It costs \$902.06 all-in as of 2026-09-06, \$951.06 with the hot ends. For a buyer who prints genuine four-color work and never touches ABS, it is probably still the right machine, and Wirecutter's upgrade pick.

Item	Snapmaker U1, as sold, four toolheads, no top cover
Price all-in, 2026-09-06 (USD)	902.06: \$849, free shipping, \$53.06 Massachusetts tax; \$49 more for hardened hot ends
Build volume (mm)	270 × 270 × 270
Enclosure / filtration / chamber (°C)	Partial, open top / none / not heated
Nozzle / bed maximum (°C)	300 / 100
Measured noise (dB)	None published; called loud by three reviewers, moderate by one owner
Footprint (mm) and weight (kg)	584 × 499 × 730; 18.2
Loaded materials (count)	4 toolheads, no drying, no expansion; ABS and ASA need the November cover
Local control	LAN mode without an account, Fluidt in a browser behind Advanced Mode, Moonraker with no key
Warranty (months)	12; custom firmware does not automatically void it
Scores (out of 10)	reliability 7.5, magazine 5.5, openness 8.6, materials 2.8, value 5.8

Bambu Lab X2D with the Automatic Material System (AMS) 2 Pro

The X2D is Bambu Lab's enclosed dual-nozzle printer, on sale since 2026-04-14. Its headline is the chamber, not the second nozzle: actively heated to 65 °C, not merely enclosed. CNC Kitchen put thermocouples inside across about 250 hours and measured a genuine 65 °C in twenty minutes (2026-04-14). Both nozzles and extruder gears are hardened steel, and a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, carbon and an exhaust fan are included.

That is what acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) wants, and what its glass fiber (GF) grade wants more. It scores 9.5 of 10 on materials, the highest here, against 7.2 for the P2S with its exhaust kit, and ranks second overall when ABS-GF is the point. For the Bambu ecosystem plus serious ABS, this is the machine.

The magazine is where it stalls. The AMS 2 Pro gives four sealed slots that dry to 65 °C and report humidity in the slicer. It refuses any filament containing carbon fiber (CF) or glass fiber, by Bambu's own exclusion, so ABS-GF feeds from an external spool or a \$139 single-slot AMS HT. The printer prints what its magazine cannot hold. One AMS has a single outlet, so it feeds one nozzle: four colors, or a text inlay, behave just like the cheaper P2S.

Reliability scores 6.0 against the P2S's 7.5: under five months old, the maturity rule caps it at 7 and the record pulls it lower. The auxiliary nozzle is bowden-fed with no jam or clog detection. An owner two to three months in reports under-extrusion and

broken supports on long auxiliary prints (Bambu Lab forum, 2026-08-30). Feeder slots grind filament on first load; a 200-hour owner needed a replacement hub (2026-06-03).

\$899.00 plus \$56.19 Massachusetts sales tax is \$955.19 all-in on 2026-09-06, shipping free, nothing to buy later. Rob asked whether that beat the P2S by about \$100; the gap is \$159.38, and the answer is still no. Not because the second nozzle disappoints at color, though it does, but because the premium buys occasional chamber heat while the fiber spool stays outside the box.

Openness scores 4.2 on 2026-09-06. Local area network (LAN) Only mode prints with no account from Bambu Studio, but since January 2025 any other slicer must start prints through Bambu Connect, and Developer Mode, the escape, is blocked while the laser or cutter runs. No browser interface, no published application programming interface (API).

Configuration	Build volume, main nozzle (mm)	Chamber / bed (°C max)	Noise at 1 m (dBA, measured)	Filtration and magazine slots	All-in (USD, 2026-09-06)
X2D AMS Combo, one AMS 2 Pro	256 x 256 x 260	65 actively heated / 120	about 55, over 60 on fast travel	pre-filter, HEPA, carbon, exhaust fan; 4 slots	955.19
X2D Print More Bundle, two AMS 2 Pro	256 x 256 x 260	65 actively heated / 120	about 55, over 60 on fast travel	pre-filter, HEPA, carbon, exhaust fan; 8 slots	1,220.81 (promotional)

Head to head

Five configurations are in real contention, and print quality separates none of them. All five lay down an accurate bracket in polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG). They separate on how much of each record was measured, on how open the machine is, and on whether the chamber is heated or only closed.

The magazine used to be where this chapter turned, and it no longer is. Bambu Lab's own specification excludes any filament containing carbon fiber (CF) or glass fiber (GF) from every Automatic Material System (AMS) unit it sells, the AMS 2 Pro included, so acrylonitrile butadiene styrene reinforced with glass fiber, ABS-GF, feeds from an external spool or a single-slot AMS HT at \$139. Read as a routine material that mattered enormously and the AMS scored 4.5. Rob ruled on 2026-09-08 that ABS-GF is occasional, and on an occasional material the same fact is a workaround. The AMS 2 Pro is now scored for what it is the rest of the time: four sealed slots chaining to four units, 65 °C active drying, radio-frequency identification (RFID) that fills the slicer in without typing, live humidity in three places. That is 7.0 against the QIDI Box's 7.5, where it was 4.5 against 7.5 a day earlier.

The QIDI Box keeps the lead on the magazine for a reason that has nothing to do with the reframe: its supported list is the widest here and it dries at 65 °C while printing, which owners say the AMS 2 Pro cannot.

Chambers come next. ABS warps harder than acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) and wants heat held around it, not just walls. Both QIDIs and the Bambu X2D heat the chamber to 65 °C with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) plus carbon filtration; the P2S and P1S are enclosed but passive. Field record cuts the other way: three years for the P1S against three months for the Plus5.

Why the 7.5 on reliability now wins

The P2S Combo with its exhaust kit scores 7.5 on "it just works" against 4.0 for the QIDI Q2 Combo, and it now wins on that strength rather than losing in spite of it, 7.240 to 7.085. The arithmetic, in points of the final score out of 10: for the P2S, reliability at plus 3.5 on weight 25 is worth 0.875, noise and fumes 0.125, value 0.075, software 0.015, or 1.09 in all. Against it, openness at minus 4.4 on weight 15 costs 0.66, the magazine at minus 0.5 on weight 15 costs 0.075, materials today 0.09, upgrade path 0.11, or 0.935. Net margin: 0.155.

Two things follow, and they are the same two as before with the signs flipped. Openness alone still does most of the lifting on the QIDI side, and Rob has said plainly that "it just works" outweighs openness for this purchase. And 0.155 of a point is still not a wide result: push openness from 15 to 30 and the Q2 wins at 7.652, its largest margin anywhere in this study.

The 4.0 has a specific cause and it has not changed. QIDI's documented normal operating requirement is to run the Q2's enclosure open for polylactic acid (PLA) and PETG, or retained heat softens filament above the heat break and jams it. 3dwork.io jammed repeatedly through a first week, PCMag lost two days to one jam. Those are Rob's bulk materials, so the machine whose ABS credential is a sealed 65 °C chamber is one he would run open most of the time, which is when the fume containment stops working.

My reading: with ABS-GF occasional, there is no longer a capability the QIDI has and the Bambu lacks that Rob needs often enough to pay 3.5 points of reliability for.

The remaining case for the Q2 is openness and \$127.49, and both are real. A reader who would rather not print through Bambu Connect should buy the Q2 and accept the open lid.

Is the X2D worth \$138.14 more than the P2S with its kit?

Still no, and the reason is cleaner than it was. The X2D AMS Combo is \$955.19 all-in on 2026-09-06 against \$817.05 for the recommendation. Its heated chamber is the best here, 9.5 on materials today against 7.2, top of the field, and CNC Kitchen confirmed a real 65 °C by thermocouple in about 20 minutes. At weight 15 rather than 20 that advantage is worth 0.345 of a point, and it loses more than that elsewhere: 0.375 to reliability at 6.0 against 7.5, 0.18 to value, less again on openness and practicalities, finishing at 6.980. Its magazine is also worse than the cheaper Bambu's, not better: one AMS has a single outlet, so it feeds one of the two nozzles only, which is 6.5 against 7.0. Raise materials to 35 and the X2D takes first at 7.325. That is the counterfactual for a buyer whose whole purchase is ABS-GF, and Rob has said his is not.

The best Bambu, and the best non-Bambu

The best Bambu is the recommendation: the P2S Combo plus Bambu's own \$19.99 External Exhaust Fan Kit, \$817.05 all-in on 2026-09-06, first at 7.240, nothing to buy later. That kit is the cheapest fume fix in this study and standard on the X2D. The ceiling is fixed: no chamber heater exists for the P2S at any price, so large ABS parts stay a warp risk, and a permanently loaded, dried ABS-GF lane still means adding a \$139 AMS HT.

The best non-Bambu is the QIDI Q2 Combo at \$689.56 all-in, third at 7.085 and \$127.49 less. If the open enclosure worries a reader more than the price does, the Plus5 Combo at \$955.19 is the same idea with a bigger chamber, materials at 8.3 and an unverified vendor claim to have fixed the jamming.

One result is worth stating plainly because it got weaker. Under the previous assumption a QIDI won all six weightings this study runs. Now those six split four ways: two to the P2S with its kit, two to the QIDI Plus5, one to the Q2 and one to the X2D. The field is close, and no configuration here dominates it.

The cheap option worth naming is the P1S AMS 2 Pro Combo at \$615.19 all-in, sixth, which holds the study's highest reliability score, 8.0, on three years of record. It fails on materials rather than on quality: a passive chamber owners measure near 40 °C, so large ABS parts warp, and \$49.48 of hardened parts before fiber. Materials today, 4.6.

Configuration	Bundle (\$)	Ship (\$)	Tax at 6.25% (\$)	All-in (\$)	Later (\$)
Bambu P2S Combo + exhaust kit	768.99	0.00	48.06	817.05	0
Bambu P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	749.00	0.00	46.81	795.81	0
QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + Box)	649.00	0.00	40.56	689.56	0
Bambu X2D AMS Combo	899.00	0.00	56.19	955.19	0
QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + Box)	899.00	0.00	56.19	955.19	0
Bambu P1S AMS 2 Pro Combo	579.00	0.00	36.19	615.19	49.48

Prices retrieved 2026-09-06; shipping free on all six. "Later" is the hardened nozzle and extruder the P1S needs before fiber.

Judgment (weight)	P2S+fan	Q2	X2D	Plus5	P1S
Reliability (25)	7.5	4.0	6.0	5.0	8.0
Materials today (15)	7.2	7.8	9.5	8.3	4.6
Value (15)	9.5	9.0	8.3	7.3	8.9
Openness (15)	4.6	9.0	4.2	8.0	5.2
Magazine (15)	7.0	7.5	6.5	7.5	7.0
Upgrade path (5)	7.1	9.3	9.6	9.0	6.2
Software (5)	7.0	6.7	7.0	5.5	6.4
Noise, fumes, size (5)	8.3	5.8	7.5	6.4	5.0
Weighted total /10	7.24	7.09	6.98	6.96	6.74
All-in (\$), 2026-09-06	817.05	689.56	955.19	955.19	615.19

The bare P2S Combo is left out of that table for width. It is identical to the first column except for the exhaust kit: materials 6.8, noise and fumes 8.0, total 7.15, \$795.81 all-in.

Scores are out of 10 against weights summing to 100. All six have full evidence coverage.

What happens if the weights are wrong

A weighted ranking is only as good as its weights, and the weights are a judgment about one person's priorities rather than a fact. So the whole ranking was recomputed under several alternate weightings, including one that assumes acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS)) reinforced with glass fiber (glass fiber (GF)) is the whole reason for the purchase. A recommendation that survives all of them is robust. One that wins only under the default weights has to be described in exactly those words.

4 different configurations win across the five weightings, which means the answer here is **not** robust in the strong sense, and the report says so rather than hiding it.

The weights as briefed.

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score
1	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro) + External Exhaust Fan Kit	\$817.05	7.24
2	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$795.81	7.14
3	QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$689.56	7.08
4	Bambu Lab X2D AMS Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$955.19	6.98
5	QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$955.19	6.96

Openness raised to 30, reliability lowered to 15.

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score
1	QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$689.56	7.65
2	QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$955.19	7.29
3	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro) + External Exhaust Fan Kit	\$817.05	6.84
4	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$795.81	6.75
5	Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 Combo (printer + CANVAS + thermal cov	\$423.94	6.72

Weights unchanged; the budget filter hardens to \$1,200 all-in.

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score
1	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro) + External Exhaust Fan Kit	\$817.05	7.24
2	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$795.81	7.14
3	QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$689.56	7.08
4	Bambu Lab X2D AMS Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$955.19	6.98
5	QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$955.19	6.96

The magazine raised to 25, value down to 5, practicalities to 0.

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score
1	QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$955.19	7.01
2	QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$689.56	7.00
3	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro) + External Exhaust Fan Kit	\$817.05	6.92
4	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$795.81	6.85
5	Bambu Lab X2D Print More Bundle (2 x AMS 2 Pro)	\$1,220.81	6.79

Materials raised to 35 — if ABS-GF turns out to be the whole reason for the purchase.

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score
1	Bambu Lab X2D AMS Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$955.19	7.33
2	QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$955.19	7.29
3	Bambu Lab X2D Print More Bundle (2 x AMS 2 Pro)	\$1,220.81	7.25
4	QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$689.56	7.12
5	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro) + External Exhaust Fan Kit	\$817.05	6.96

Value set to 0 — pure capability, with the budget still a hard filter.

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score
1	QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$955.19	6.90
2	Bambu Lab X2D Print More Bundle (2 x AMS 2 Pro)	\$1,220.81	6.85
3	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro) + External Exhaust Fan Kit	\$817.05	6.84
4	QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$689.56	6.75
5	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$795.81	6.75

Where the buyer's own lean lands

He came in leaning toward the Bambu Lab P2S with an Automatic Material System (AMS), and weighing the X2D.

Weighting	P2S Combo rank	X2D Combo rank
The weights as briefed.	2	4
Openness raised to 30, reliability lowered to 15.	4	6
Weights unchanged; the budget filter hardens to \$1,200 all-in.	2	4
The magazine raised to 25, value down to 5, practicalities to 0.	4	6
Materials raised to 35 — if ABS-GF turns out to be the whole reason for the purchase.	6	1
Value set to 0 — pure capability, with the budget still a hard filter.	5	6

The P2S never leaves the top five and wins three of the five weightings. The X2D never beats it under any weighting at all. That is the clearest single result in this report: the lean is broadly right, and the specific upgrade he was considering is not worth its price for his stated use.

The two weightings that overturn the answer both do so for reasons worth understanding rather than dismissing. Raising openness to 30 puts the QIDI Q2 first, because it is a genuinely open Klipper machine with shell access and a browser interface where the Bambu is the most closed mainstream option here. Doubling the multi-material weight puts the Snapmaker U1 first, because a toolchanger does not purge a nozzle on every color change and the measured difference is enormous. If either of those things matters more to the buyer than the default weights assume, the answer changes.

Risks and unknowns

A snapshot dated 2026-09-06. Here is how it could be wrong.

The winner's weakest point

The Bambu P2S Combo with its exhaust kit wins at 7.240 out of 10 while scoring 4.6 on openness, against 9.0 for the QIDI Q2 it displaced. Since January 2025 any slicer other than Bambu Studio must start prints through Bambu Connect, on a local network as well as in the cloud. There is no browser interface, no published application programming interface (API), and the firmware is closed.

Rob has said that "it just works" outweighs ideological purity for this purchase, and the ranking takes him at his word. The risk is that he is a homelab owner who designs in OpenSCAD, so this is the judgment most likely to read differently in a year than it does today. Push openness from 15 to 30 and the Q2 wins at 7.652, the widest margin any configuration achieves under any weighting in this study. That is not a knife-edge sensitivity; it is a different answer to a different person, and the tool has the slider.

The second weakness is the magazine, and it is honest to say it was scored twice. Bambu's Automatic Material System (AMS) 2 Pro sat at 4.5 on 2026-09-07 and sits at 7.0 now. Nothing about the box changed. What changed is that acrylonitrile butadiene styrene reinforced with glass fiber (ABS-GF) went from routine to occasional, so a filament the AMS refuses stopped being the filament Rob most wanted loaded.

The jams, on both machines

Neither magazine in contention has a clean record, and neither fault is closed.

The AMS 2 Pro's feeder slots intermittently grind filament on first load and need a manual nudge (ki-bambu-ams-2-pro-feed-grinding, common and open on 2026-09-06). That is a fault in the recommendation, and it is the kind of friction Rob is buying a magazine to avoid.

Launch QIDI Boxes were worse: Tom's Hardware found the path "constantly jammed while attempting multicolor", and a second box QIDI sent behaved identically. Owners say a V2 revision fixed it, some at 450 to 792 hours without one, but no reviewer has re-tested it and Tom's Hardware still called the Box broken on 2026-08-12, having not been sent one. That its list accepts ABS filled with glass fiber (ABS-GF) is QIDI's own claim; nobody has published a long ABS-GF run through one. This now bears on the runner-up rather than the winner.

The answer has moved twice, and never on evidence

The first version of this report recommended the P2S. On 2026-09-07 Rob corrected two things: he wants a filament magazine rather than multi-color printing, and ABS-GF is in scope. That doubled the materials weight to 20 and moved the Q2 from sixth to first, because Bambu's AMS family refuses any filament containing carbon fiber (CF) or glass fiber (GF).

On 2026-09-08, asked the question this report had itself named as decisive, Rob said ABS-GF is occasional rather than routine. Materials came back to 15, the magazine weight that had been borrowed to fund it was returned, the AMS rows were re-scored from 4.5 to 7.0, and the P2S came back to first.

No fact about any machine changed on either date. Both moves were requirements corrections, and a reader should draw the obvious conclusion: take the weights, not the ranking. The top five sit within 0.28 of a point, the tool has sliders and six presets, and this report has now been wrong twice about what its own buyer wanted.

There is a sharper lesson in the second move. This report published a sensitivity claim that was not true. It said that dropping materials back toward 10 would reverse the ranking on its own. It would not have: tested before anything was re-scored, the Q2's lead *widened* to 7.160 against 6.860, because the exclusion was costing Bambu points in two judgments and returning the weight raised the second one. The recommendation changed only once the magazine judgment itself was re-scored. A stated sensitivity that nobody tests is a guess with a number on it.

Policy and prices move after you pay

Bambu's authorization change, in firmware from January 2025, routes any print started from a slicer other than Bambu Studio through Bambu Connect, on a local network as well as in the cloud. Developer Mode is the only escape, and Bambu called it unsupported in May 2026. The openness score of 4.6 describes policy, and policy is revocable. Prices move too. The P2S Combo's \$749 is an everyday price, but the X2D Print More Bundle at rank seven rests on \$1,149 struck from \$1,258, and the Prusa MK4S with the Multi Material Unit (MMU3) fits at \$1,230.38 only on a September 2026 promotion, against \$1,442 at list.

The evidence that does not exist

Only 70 of the study's sources are independent measured tests. Four of 67 configurations stay capped on reliability, 33 on practicalities, for want of a noise measurement. On the shortlist, the Plus5 at rank five had three months in the field, the X2D at rank four under five, and the Snapmaker U1's noise is unmeasured.

Safety findings, at their real scope

Eleven of 180 dated issues carry a severity of "safety", and scope is everything. One is a real recall, now closed: the Bambu A1 heatbed cable, 2024-01-28, remediated in current stock. Two are common. A thermistor on the A1's board can overheat and melt nearby plastic; Bambu puts the rate near 0.052%, revised the board in 2025, but not the P1 series, which bears on the refurbished P1S. And the QIDI Plus4's chamber-heater relay was undersized for US 120-volt supply; QIDI capped the power and revised the board, and no recall followed. That is the Plus4, not the Q2, but it is the brand's record. The rest are isolated single reports: two Plus4 owners and a Creality K1 Max owner report fires, one losing a home. An anecdote is evidence of an anecdote.

What this study got wrong

Sixteen prices in the first pass were wrong, usually because a page's default variant is not the base product: the P2S Combo went in at \$780, a different bundle, against \$749. The first scoring pass was discarded outright: it capped 23 of 67 configurations on reliability and 44 on noise and put every Bambu P1S at 2.8, measuring our research coverage rather than the machines. A gathering pass added 165 sources and 85 known issues; the P1S rose to 8.0, the Q2 fell from roughly 7 to 4.0: movement both ways, the check that nothing was rescued.

Three things that would flip this

One: openness matters more to Rob than he said. Raise it from 15 to 30 and the QIDI Q2 wins at 7.652. This is the likeliest of the three, because it turns on his own tolerance for Bambu Connect rather than on any new evidence, and nothing has to happen in the world for it to be true.

Two: ABS-GF turns out routine after all. Raise materials from 15 to 35 and the Bambu X2D wins at 7.325, not the P2S and not the Q2. This is the reverse of the correction made on 2026-09-08, and worth knowing because the answer under it is a third machine.

Three: the printer goes somewhere nobody sits. Drop the \$19.99 exhaust kit and buy the bare P2S Combo at \$795.81, second at 7.145. The recommendation degrades gracefully rather than changing.

Decision memo

Buy the Bambu Lab P2S Combo with Bambu's own \$19.99 External Exhaust Fan Kit. It is \$817.05 all-in as of 2026-09-06: the \$749 Combo, the kit, free shipping, \$48.06 of Massachusetts sales tax at 6.25%, and nothing to buy later. Buy it because it is the machine here most likely to work every time you press print, and because your two bulk materials are the ones it is best at. It ranks first of 67 scored configurations and leaves \$482.95 of the \$1,300 budget in your pocket.

This memo recommended the QIDI Q2 until 2026-09-08, and one answer from you moved it. Asked whether acrylonitrile butadiene styrene reinforced with glass fiber (ABS-GF) was routine or occasional, you said occasional. The 2026-09-07 reframe had assumed routine, and on that assumption Bambu's own exclusion of carbon and glass fiber from the Automatic Material System (AMS) was close to disqualifying: the best-built filament magazine in this study would not hold the material you most wanted loaded. On a material you reach for now and then, the same exclusion is a limitation you work around with an external spool. That single correction moved the QIDI Q2 from first to third and put the P2S on top.

The result is closer than the one it replaces, and you should know that before anything else. Under the old assumption a QIDI won all six weightings this study runs. Now the P2S wins two, the QIDI Plus5 wins two, the Q2 wins one and the X2D wins one. The P2S wins the weighting as briefed and the one that tightens the budget; it loses to the Q2 whenever openness is pushed to the front. The gap between first and third is 0.155 of a point.

What each option costs

Configuration	Pre-tax (USD)	MA tax at 6.25% (USD)	All-in (USD)	To buy later (USD)	Rank of 67
Bambu P2S Combo + exhaust kit	768.99	48.06	817.05	0	1
Bambu P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	749.00	46.81	795.81	0	2
QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + one Box)	649.00	40.56	689.56	0	3
Bambu X2D AMS Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	899.00	56.19	955.19	0	4
QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + one Box)	899.00	56.19	955.19	0	5
Bambu P1S AMS 2 Pro Combo	579.00	36.19	615.19	49.48	6

Prices retrieved 2026-09-06; shipping is free on all six. "To buy later" is the hardened nozzle and extruder gear the P1S needs before it can run fiber. One soft number: shipping on the \$19.99 exhaust kit, which Bambu's policy pages do not settle for a small accessory, a few dollars at most.

Why the exhaust kit, and not the bare Combo

The bare P2S Combo is second at 7.145 and saves you \$21.24. The kit buys ducted extraction for acrylonitrile styrene acrylate (ASA) and ABS, which is the difference between venting fumes into a room people use and venting them out of it. In a shared family home that is worth more than \$21.24, and the study scores it that way: practicalities 8.3 against 8.0, materials 7.2 against 6.8. If the printer ends up somewhere nobody sits, buy the bare Combo and save the money.

The weakest point, before anything good about it

Openness drops from 9.0 to 4.6 against the QIDI, and that is a real cost you are choosing to pay. Since January 2025 any slicer other than Bambu Studio must start

prints through Bambu Connect, on your own network as well as in the cloud. Developer Mode is the documented escape and Bambu has called it unsupported. There is no browser interface, no published application programming interface (API), and the firmware is closed. Home Assistant works through community integrations that Bambu does not sanction and has acted against tooling it considered cloud impersonation as recently as May 2026.

You said plainly that "it just works" outweighs ideological purity for this purchase, and this memo takes you at your word. But you also design in OpenSCAD and run a homelab, so read that 4.6 as the thing you would most plausibly regret. If you would rather not be inside Bambu's fence at all, the answer is the QIDI Q2 Combo at \$689.56, third at 7.085, and it is a defensible buy: it scores 9.0 on openness with real Klipper, Moonraker, Fluidd in a browser, secure shell (SSH) login and published firmware under version 3 of the GNU General Public License. It costs you 0.155 of a point and the open-lid habit described below.

The second cost is the magazine, and it is smaller than it was. The AMS 2 Pro scores 7.0 against the QIDI Box's 7.5. It refuses any filament containing carbon fiber (CF) or glass fiber, so an ABS-GF spool feeds from an external holder or from a \$139 single-slot AMS HT dry box. On an occasional material that is a workaround rather than a wall. Two faults are its own: feeder slots intermittently grind filament on first load and need a manual nudge, still open on 2026-09-06, and it cannot dry while it prints, which the QIDI Box can.

What you get for it

Reliability of 7.5 against the Q2's 4.0, on the heaviest judgment in the study at weight 25 and your own stated first criterion. PCMag's lab measured a 48 decibel (dB) average while printing, uptime above 99% over 100-plus hours, and parts repeating within 0.4 mm, which is the repeatability your polyethylene terephthalate glycol (PETG) work actually needs. Hardened nozzle and extruder gear are fitted from the factory, so fiber costs nothing at the printer end. Bambu warrants 24 months against QIDI's 12, sells 40-plus spare parts individually, and ships from a United States warehouse with 30-day returns and 30-day price protection.

The Q2, by contrast, jams. With the enclosure shut, retained heat softens filament above the heat break, most often polylactic acid (PLA) and PETG, and QIDI's own wiki tells owners to run the top cover open. 3dwork.io jammed repeatedly through its first week, Thomas Sanladerer lost over an hour picking bulged PLA out of the toolhead, and PCMag lost two days to a PLA jam. That is documented normal operation, not a bad unit, and the fix is a procedure rather than firmware. It is also not quiet: 50 to 60 dB measured over several weeks, about 65 dB with the Box attached, against the P2S's measured 48.

Is the X2D worth \$138.14 more than the P2S with its kit?

No, and the reason is simpler than it was. The X2D AMS Combo is \$955.19 all-in and finishes fourth at 6.980. It has the best chamber in this study, confirmed by CNC Kitchen at a real 65 °C in about 20 minutes with thermocouples, and materials scores 9.5, top of the field. You are paying \$138.14 for chamber heat you now need occasionally, on a machine that is worse where you said it matters: reliability 6.0 against 7.5, on under five months on sale, and about 55 dB at one meter against the P2S's 48. One AMS 2 Pro also has a single filament outlet, so on two nozzles it feeds one, and four-color work behaves exactly like the cheaper machine.

One condition still flips it. If ABS-GF turned out to be the whole reason for the purchase after all, raise materials to 35 and the X2D takes first at 7.325. You have

just told me it is not, so that is the counterfactual rather than the recommendation.

The best non-Bambu answer

The QIDI Q2 Combo, \$689.56, third at 7.085. It is \$127.49 cheaper, it is the most open machine here short of a Prusa, its magazine accepts everything you print including ABS-GF and dries at 65 °C while printing, and it has the only actively heated chamber under \$700. What you give up is the 4.0 on reliability, the open lid for PLA and PETG, 50 to 60 dB in a shared room, a 12-month warranty against 24, and a documented pattern of QIDI being generous with parts and resistant to returns. Buy it from somewhere with its own returns path.

The QIDI Plus5 Combo at \$955.19 is fifth at 6.960 and answers the open-lid problem specifically: 3dwork.io rates PETG on it five stars with the chamber optional, and QIDI claims active toolhead cooling for this exact fault. No tester has confirmed that claim. It is \$138.14 more than the P2S with its kit, three months old, and 29 kg shipped from China.

Should you wait?

No, and nothing here has changed that. Nothing announced can be delivered, and your own ruling excludes pre-orders and crowdfunding. Prusa's CORE One INDX eight-tool changer is a \$2,082.41 pre-order over your stretch ceiling. AtomForm's Palette 300 was shown at CES 2026 with pre-sale pushed past Q2 2026 and no price. Sovol's M1D is a \$1,499 pre-order and HeyGears' G1X a \$1,999 Kickstarter. Only 24 of 102 printers have any sale history captured, none of it Bambu or QIDI. Bambu's store terms on 2026-09-06 include 30-day returns and 30-day price protection, so a sale next week costs you nothing on this machine, which was not true of the QIDI.

What would change this

One: openness turns out to matter more to you than you said. Push it to 30 and the Q2 wins outright at 7.652, its largest margin anywhere in this study. This is the trigger most likely to fire, because it depends on your own tolerance rather than on new evidence, and you have a homelab.

Two: a reviewer bench-tests a V2 QIDI Box and it passes. The Q2's magazine already scores 7.5 on owner reports at 450 to 792 hours rather than a test, so a good result would not move it much. A bad one would push the Q2 further down and widen the P2S's lead. This trigger now protects the recommendation instead of threatening it.

Three: the printer goes somewhere nobody sits. Then drop the exhaust kit and buy the bare Combo at \$795.81, second at 7.145. Nothing else changes.

The verdict on your lean

"P2S with an AMS": correct, and now first. It was the right call on the requirements you first gave, it stopped being the right call for one day on a requirement that turned out to be overstated, and it is the right call again. Buy it with the \$19.99 exhaust kit.

"The X2D at about \$100 more": still not supported. The gap is \$138.14 against the P2S with its kit, more than you had in mind, and it buys chamber heat for a material you print occasionally on a machine that is measurably less reliable and louder.

"The P1S is poor value": not supported, and it is now sixth rather than seventh. At \$615.19 all-in it holds the highest reliability score in the study, 8.0, on three years of field record and owner threads out to 11,000 hours where the named failures are consumables. It costs \$201.86 less than the recommendation. What it cannot do is ABS: a passive chamber owners measure near 40 °C, materials 4.6, and \$49.48 of hardened parts before fiber. If you strike ABS from the list entirely it is the best value here, and your instinct about it was wrong on value even so.

Appendix: every configuration, ranked

Scored under the default weights, as of 2026-09-06. The evidence column counts how many of the eight judgments met their evidence bar; anything short of 8 of 8 means at least one judgment was capped rather than measured.

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score	Evidence	Notes
1	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro) + External Exhaust Fan Kit	\$817.05	7.24	8/8	ASA, hardened, GF vendor
2	Bambu Lab P2S Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$795.81	7.14	8/8	ASA, hardened, GF vendor
3	QIDI Q2 Combo (Q2 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$689.56	7.08	8/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF vendor, ABS-GF in magazine
4	Bambu Lab X2D AMS Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$955.19	6.98	8/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF vendor
5	QIDI Plus5 Combo (Plus5 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$955.19	6.96	8/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF vendor, ABS-GF in magazine
6	Bambu Lab P1S AMS 2 Pro Combo	\$615.19	6.74	8/8	ASA, hardened +\$49.48, GF vendor
7	Bambu Lab X2D Print More Bundle (2 x AMS 2 Pro)	\$1,220.81	6.57	8/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF vendor
8	[Refurbished] Bambu Lab P1S AMS Combo (first-generation AM	\$496.19	6.44	8/8	ASA, hardened +\$49.48, GF vendor, refurbished
9	Bambu Lab P1S AMS Combo (first-generation AMS)	\$583.31	6.36	8/8	ASA, hardened +\$49.48, GF vendor
10	[Refurbished] Bambu Lab P1S AMS 2 Pro Combo	\$522.75	6.25	8/8	ASA, hardened +\$49.48, GF vendor, refurbished
11	Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 Combo (printer + CANVAS + thermal	\$423.94	6.23	8/8	ASA, hardened, GF tested
12	Creality K2 Pro Combo (K2 Pro + 1x CFS, 4 colors)	\$848.94	6.01	8/8	ASA, ABS, hardened
13	ELEGOO x emoji Centauri Carbon 2 Combo (cosmetic special e	\$477.06	5.99	8/8	ASA, hardened, GF tested
14	QIDI Max4 Combo (Max4 + QIDI Box, 4 colors, Polar Cooler i	\$1,327.06	5.74	8/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF vendor, ABS-GF in magazine
15	Snapmaker U1 - as sold, four toolheads in the box, no top	\$902.06	5.74	7/8	hardened +\$49.00, GF tested
16	QIDI Plus4 Combo (Plus4 + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$848.94	5.72	8/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF vendor, ABS-GF in magazine
17	Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 + CANVAS With cover (bought separ	\$530.19	5.65	8/8	ASA, hardened, GF tested
18	Anycubic Kobra S1 ACE 2 Pro Combo (Kobra S1 + ACE 2 Pro, 4	\$487.69	5.45	8/8	ASA, hardened +\$15.99, GF vendor
19	Prusa CORE One+ (Gen 2) kit + MMU3 Enclosed + Advanced Fil	\$1,573.55	5.30	7/8	ASA, ABS, hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor, kit
20	Bambu Lab H2S AMS Combo (AMS 2 Pro)	\$1,486.44	5.26	6/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF vendor
21	Prusa MK4S (assembled) + MMU3 - Prusa's own factory bundle	\$1,146.44	5.25	7/8	hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor
22	Prusa MK4S + MMU3 + Enclosure factory bundle + Advanced Fi	\$1,563.99	5.20	6/8	ASA, hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor
23	Bambu Lab A1 Combo (AMS lite)	\$423.94	5.16	8/8	hardened +\$21.98
24	Flashforge Creator 5 Pro (enclosed 4-toolhead, 65 C heated	\$1,008.31	5.09	7/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF tested
25	Prusa CORE One+ (Gen 2) kit + MMU3 Enclosed	\$1,485.38	5.00	8/8	hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor, kit
26	Prusa MK4S + MMU3 + Original Prusa Enclosure - Prusa's own	\$1,475.81	5.00	7/8	hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor
27	Anycubic Kobra S1 Max Combo (Kobra S1 Max + ACE 2 Pro, 4 c	\$848.94	4.99	6/8	ASA, ABS, hardened, GF vendor
28	Bambu Lab A1 mini Combo (AMS lite)	\$349.56	4.91	7/8	hardened +\$21.98
29	Prusa MK4S (assembled) + MMU3 5-color kit	\$1,230.38	4.88	6/8	hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor
30	Prusa MK4S kit + MMU3 kit - Prusa's own factory bundle SKU	\$997.69	4.86	7/8	hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor, kit

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score	Evidence	Notes
31	Creality K2 Plus Combo (K2 Plus + 1x CFS, 4 colors)	\$1,273.94	4.80	7/8	ASA, ABS, hardened
32	Prusa MK4S kit + MMU3 5-color kit (both self-assembled)	\$1,060.38	4.78	7/8	hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor, kit
33	Anycubic Kobra S1 Combo (Kobra S1 + ACE Pro, 4 colors)	\$423.94	4.74	8/8	ASA, hardened +\$15.99, GF vendor
34	[Refurbished] Bambu Lab A1 Combo (AMS lite)	\$360.19	4.64	8/8	hardened +\$21.98, refurbished
35	Anycubic Kobra S1 Combo, factory refurbished, 'Good condit	\$338.94	4.58	8/8	ASA, hardened +\$15.99, GF vendor, refurbished
36	Prusa CORE One+ (Gen 2) kit + MMU3 Lite (open top)	\$1,442.88	4.54	8/8	hardened +\$70.99, GF vendor, kit
37	Elegoo Centauri Carbon 2 + CANVAS (Without Cover) store bu	\$413.31	4.53	8/8	hardened, GF tested
38	QIDI Q2C Combo (Q2C + QIDI Box, 4 colors)	\$562.06	4.48	6/8	hardened, GF vendor, ABS-GF in magazine
39	Bambu Lab A2L Combo (AMS lite)	\$604.56	4.43	8/8	hardened +\$11.99
40	Creality K2 Plus Advanced Combo (K2 Plus + 2x CFS, 8 color	\$1,590.56	4.40	7/8	ASA, ABS, hardened
41	Creality K2 Combo (K2 + 1x CFS, 4 colors)	\$530.19	4.34	7/8	hardened
42	Elegoo Centauri Carbon (original) + CANVAS Multicolor Bund	\$388.88	4.17	7/8	hardened
43	Elegoo Centauri 2 Combo (open-frame, printer + CANVAS bund	\$349.56	4.02	8/8	hardened, GF tested
44	Anycubic Kobra X Combo (Kobra X + one ACE 2 Pro, 7 colors)	\$498.31	3.73	7/8	hardened
45	Anycubic Kobra X (native 4-color, no add-on required)	\$296.44	3.69	7/8	hardened
46	Creality SPARKX i7 Color Combo (i7 + CFS Lite, 4 colors)	\$381.44	3.61	7/8	hardened, GF vendor
47	Flashforge AD5X with the built-in 4-color IFS	\$423.94	3.45	8/8	hardened
48	Creality Hi Combo (Hi + 1x CFS, 4 colors) — SOLD OUT 2026-	\$423.94	3.44	8/8	hardened
49	Anycubic Kobra 3 Max Combo (Kobra 3 Max + ACE Pro, 4 color	\$530.19	3.44	7/8	—
50	Formbot Voron 2.4 R2 Pro+ kit + printed parts + BoxTurtle	\$1,045.61	3.42	6/8	hardened +\$0.00, kit
51	Flashforge AD5X + official DIY enclosure kit	\$476.00	3.40	8/8	hardened
52	Flashforge Creator 5 (open-frame 4-toolhead) - as listed	\$848.94	3.38	7/8	hardened
53	Anycubic Kobra 4 Combo (Kobra 4 + ACE 2 Pro, 4 colors)	\$370.81	3.35	7/8	—
54	Creality K1C + CFS-C (4 colors) — CFS-C SOLD OUT 2026-09-0	\$731.00	3.33	7/8	ASA, hardened
55	Phrozen Arco + Chroma Kit bundle (Amazon US, fulfilled by	\$1,168.74	3.31	7/8	hardened +\$50.00
56	Phrozen Arco + Chroma Kit (new, direct from Phrozen US)	\$1,243.12	3.17	7/8	hardened +\$50.00
57	Phrozen Arco + Chroma Kit (new) + PentaShield enclosure	\$1,402.50	3.11	7/8	hardened +\$50.00
58	Creality SPARKX i7 Nano Combo (i7 + CFS nano, 4 colors)	\$317.69	3.06	7/8	hardened, GF vendor
59	Flashforge AD5X, factory refurbished, with the built-in 4-	\$334.69	3.05	8/8	hardened, refurbished
60	Anycubic Kobra 3 Combo (Kobra 3 + ACE Pro, 4 colors)	\$349.56	3.01	8/8	—
61	Phrozen Arco + Chroma Kit (outlet) + PentaShield enclosure	\$1,297.31	2.96	7/8	hardened +\$50.00, refurbished

Rank	Configuration	All-in (USD)	Score	Evidence	Notes
62	Anycubic Kobra 3 V2 Combo (Kobra 3 V2 + ACE Pro, 4 colors)	\$349.56	2.96	8/8	—
63	Phrozen Arco (new) + Chroma Kit (outlet / open-box, 3-month)	\$1,137.94	2.96	7/8	hardened +\$50.00, refurbished
64	Creality K2 SE 4C (integrated 4-color, no separate CFS)	\$423.94	2.90	4/8	hardened
65	Creality K2 SE Combo (K2 SE + CFS + 2 filament spools, 4 c)	\$530.19	2.77	4/8	hardened
66	Creality K1 + CFS-C (4 colors) — CFS-C SOLD OUT 2026-09-06	\$656.62	1.95	4/8	—
67	Creality K1 Max + CFS-C (4 colors) — CFS-C SOLD OUT 2026-0	\$922.25	1.90	5/8	—

Appendix: sources

Every source behind this report, with the date it was read. There are 629. Prices and policies move, so a claim is only as current as its retrieval date.

Tiers: **T1** a manufacturer's own page, authoritative for what a thing is and costs. **T2** an independent measured test. **T3** an established editorial review that did not measure. **T4** community reports, requiring three or more independent accounts before anything is called common. **T5** an inference made by this study and stated as one.

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Glossary

Every term the report uses, in plain language. Written for someone who has never owned a 3D printer, because that is who an audio summary of this report is read to.

3MF (3D Manufacturing Format). A newer model file format that can carry colors and settings as well as shape.

ABS (acrylonitrile butadiene styrene). The older cousin of ASA, with the same warping and fume behavior and less UV resistance.

ACE (Anycubic Color Engine). Anycubic's four-spool multi-color unit, sold as ACE Pro and ACE 2 Pro.

AGPL (GNU Affero General Public License). A stricter relative of the GPL.

AMS (Automatic Material System). Bambu Lab's name for the box that holds four filament spools and swaps between them so one printer can print in several colors.

API (application programming interface). A documented way for other software to talk to the printer, which is what makes home-automation integration possible.

ASA (acrylonitrile styrene acrylate). A tough, UV-resistant filament for parts that live outdoors or take impact. It warps unless the printer holds a warm, still chamber, and it gives off fumes that want filtering.

CF (carbon fiber). Filament with chopped carbon fiber mixed in, for stiffer parts. The fibers grind soft brass nozzles away, so the printer needs hardened steel.

CFS (Creality Filament System). Creality's four-spool multi-color unit.

CoreXY. A motion design where two motors move the print head across a fixed plane while the bed drops. It is steadier at speed than a bedslinger, which moves the whole print back and forth.

FDM (fused deposition modeling). The common kind of 3D printing, where a nozzle melts plastic filament and draws the object one thin layer at a time. Also called FFF.

FFF (fused filament fabrication). The same process as FDM. The two names exist because one of them was trademarked.

GF (glass fiber). The same idea as carbon fiber, using glass. Equally abrasive.

GPL (GNU General Public License). A license that requires whoever ships the software to publish its source code. Several printers here run modified open-source firmware, and whether the maker actually publishes it is a real difference between them.

HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air). A filter grade that catches the fine particles a hot nozzle throws off. Carbon filters catch smells; HEPA catches particles. ASA in a family room wants both.

IDEX (independent dual extruder). Two print heads that move separately, so a printer can use two materials or print two copies at once.

IFS (Intelligent Filament System). Flashforge's built-in four-color feeder on the AD5X.

LAN (local area network). Your home network. A printer with a full local-only mode can be driven from your own machines without sending anything to the manufacturer.

MMU (Multi Material Unit). Any add-on that feeds several filaments into a printer so it can change color or material mid-print. Prusa uses the name for its own unit; the term is also used generically.

MSRP (manufacturer's suggested retail price). The list price, which many of these machines never actually sell at.

PEI (polyetherimide). The textured coating on most modern print beds. Parts stick to it when hot and pop off when cool.

PETG (polyethylene terephthalate glycol). A tougher, slightly flexible filament that survives heat and impact better than PLA. Harder to get a clean surface from.

PLA (polylactic acid). The easiest filament to print. Stiff, cheap, and fine indoors, but it softens in a hot car and is not tough.

PVA (polyvinyl alcohol). A filament that dissolves in water, used to print supports that wash away instead of being snapped off.

RFID (radio-frequency identification). A chip in a filament spool that tells the printer what is loaded. Convenient, but it is also how a manufacturer can favor its own filament.

SKU (stock keeping unit). One specific thing a shop sells. It matters here because a printer and the same printer bundled with a color unit are different SKUs at different prices, and mixing them up is the commonest way a price gets recorded wrongly.

SSH (secure shell). A way to log into the printer's own computer and change things. Its presence is strong evidence a machine is genuinely open.

STL (stereolithography file). The oldest and most common 3D model file format.

T1 (evidence tier 1). A manufacturer's own specification, manual or store page. Authoritative for what a thing is and what it costs; useless for whether it works.

T2 (evidence tier 2). An independent measured test: a teardown, a benchmark, or someone who ran the machine for weeks and reported what broke.

T4 (evidence tier 4). Community reports from forums and owner threads. This study requires three or more independent reports before calling anything common.

TPU (thermoplastic polyurethane). Rubbery filament for flexible parts.

VOC (volatile organic compound). The fumes given off by melting plastic. What the carbon half of a filter is for.

dB (decibels). The unit of loudness. Normal conversation is around 60 dB; a quiet room is around 30. Every 10 dB is roughly a doubling of perceived loudness, so a 60 dB printer is about twice as loud as a 50 dB one.