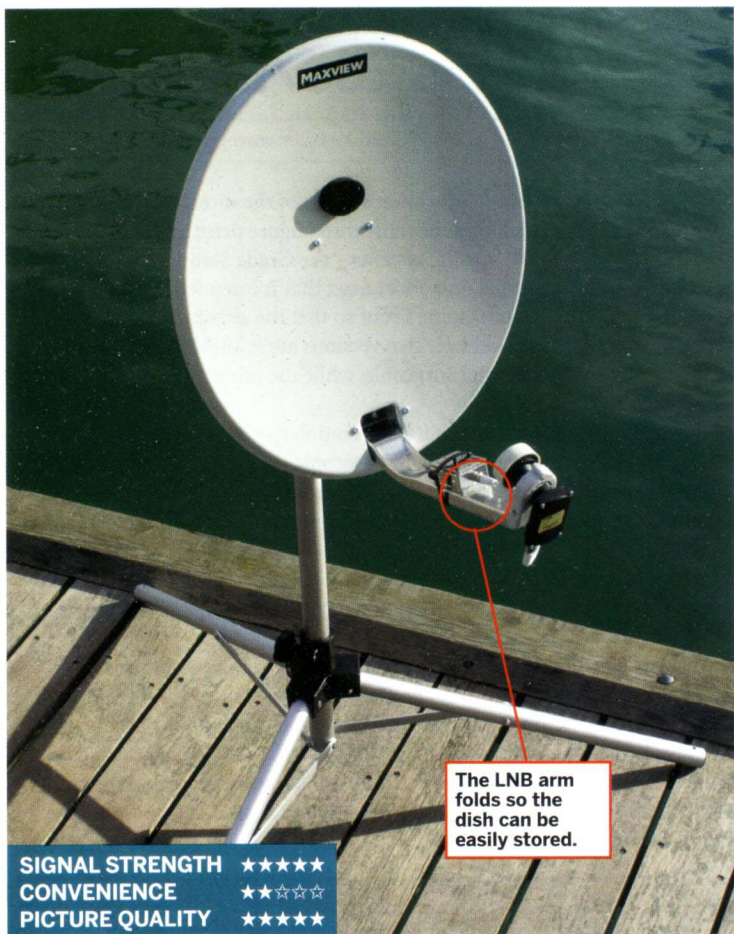


MBY star rating

- ★★★★★ As good as it gets
- ★★★★ Better than the norm
- ★★★ Average
- ★★ Could be improved
- ★ You're pulling my bow line!



The LNB arm folds so the dish can be easily stored.

SIGNAL STRENGTH ★★★★★
CONVENIENCE ★★★☆☆
PICTURE QUALITY ★★★★★

SATELLITE MANUAL

Omnisat 54 £174.00 (in kit form)

Contact: Maxview. Tel: +44 (0)1553 813300. Website: www.maxview.ltd.uk

As well as terrestrial antennas, Maxview also produce satellite receiving dishes, including the delightfully simple Omnisat 54 – either by itself (retailing at about £85) or as a complete kit, including a tripod and case, and a compass and ‘sat finder’ to help get it pointing in the right direction.

Assembling it for the first time was straightforward enough: just a matter of bolting the hinged LNB arm to the 21in (540mm) dish, fixing the LNB into its holder at the end of the arm, and clamping the whole assembly to the upright of the robust aluminium tripod. In practice, although you could stand the tripod on a flybridge, it would probably be better to do without it and contrive some alternative mount.

The size of the dish plays a key part in the reception of satellite signals: a bigger dish catches more signal, so it gives better reception at the edges of the spot beam. But a small dish is easier to store and is much more tolerant of movement. The Omnisat 54 certainly didn't seem to be particularly fussy: we set its tilt using the graduated scale on the mounting bracket, and its direction by using the compass provided and immediately found a weak signal. The ‘sat finder’ signal-strength meter included in the kit wasn't quite as useful as we had hoped, but it was easy enough to find a much stronger signal by having one person wobbling the dish slightly while the other watched the signal strength meter on the TV screen.

Verdict ★★★★★

Low price certainly doesn't mean low performance: this economical system outperformed all the others. Setting it up doesn't take long, but you probably wouldn't want to do it every evening.