

So, why are interactive computerised atlases like this still surprisingly rare?

The Cerefy Atlas of Brain Anatomy, by W L Nowinski, A Thirunavuukarasuu and R N Bryan. Published by Thieme, price €59.00.

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With the widespread use of digital multiplane cross-sectional imaging, it is surprising that only recently have interactive computerised explanatory anatomic texts been written and become popular. Possibly this is because most are cumbersome to run, require a high-powered computer and considerable training before useful information is acquired.

The Cerefy Atlas of Brain Anatomy comes on a single CD in a jewel case and requires either a PC with a minimum of 32MB RAM, Pentium II 166 MHz, and Windows 95, NT4 (or later) or a Mac with a similar RAM running PowerPC 120MHz, Mac OS 8.1 (or later). Obviously on higher specification computers it runs more smoothly and quickly.



It was easy to load on PC or Mac and was available for use within five minutes with no glitches or abstruse error messages. Unfortunately, the CD has to remain in the computer while browsing the data. It opens in a home page where a menu is offered, the most important being the overview, user's guide and start. All are intuitive and once start is clicked the programme offers explore or test sections.

The atlas is based on a Ti-weighted axial, coronal and sagittal orthogonal data set using the Talairach anterior-posterior commissure base line. Anatomical fea-

tures are identified with superimposed colour with adjustable transparency. These are defined by the click of the mouse in the three planes simultaneously with a label (which can be toggled on or off) in the image and in a list of anatomical features in the side panel. The reverse is also a feature - an item on the list can be selected and it is highlighted on the image. All the standard anatomical features are listed, including Brodmann's areas. These can be viewed in full or in summary in three planes. The individualised labelled images can be saved as bmp files.

In test mode only, a single plane is shown at a time and one answers a "where is?" or "what is" question. It lets you give three wrong answers and then shows you the correct one preventing frustration. A score is kept and can be recorded.

The help is adequate but, as the programme is user friendly and intuitive, it will be little used. Unfortunately, you cannot insert your own images but that is the domain of the authors' next publication "Brain Atlas for Functional Imaging" (reviewed JMRI 2002, 16: 328-329).

Overall, it is a simple and easy-to-use publication, at a reasonable price, that I would recommend for undergraduate neuroanatomy teaching, postgraduate radiology, neuroradiology department libraries and for any individual neuroscientist with an interest in the brain's detailed neuroanatomy.