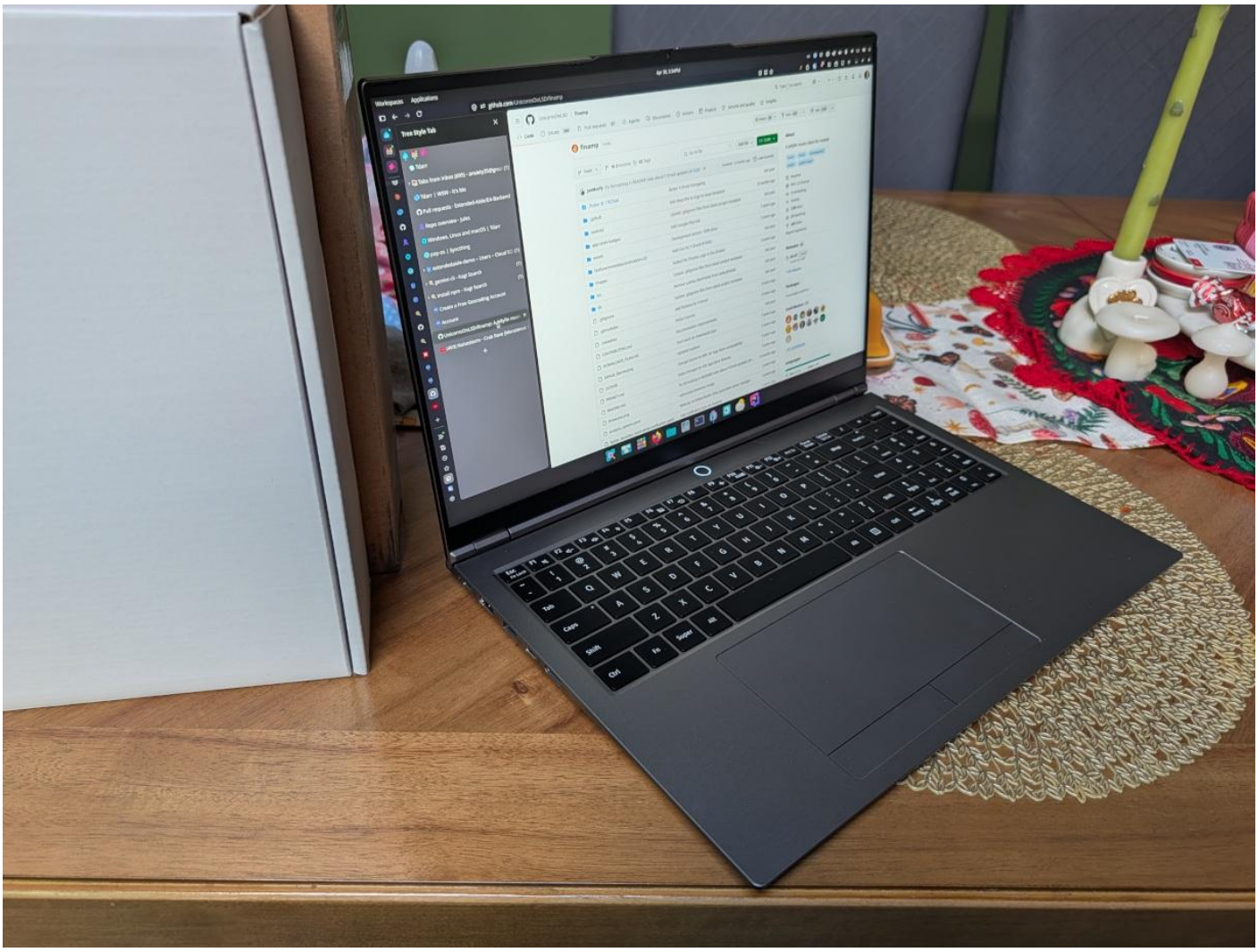
System76 Pangolin Pro (panp16) Review

The Pangolin Pro 16 is a new linux-first 16 inch laptop with an AMD Ryzen AI 7 350 processor and a 2K LTPS display at 16:10.

I will continue to expand this review as I use the laptop more.

Purchase Date: 2026-04-23

Review Date: 2026-04-30 (Review Updated 2026-05-26)



First Impressions

Build Quality

The build quality of the Pangolin Pro is good overall, but not super high end. In general the metal enclosure is solid, but the screen hinges feel so weak and wobbly that it affects the feel of the entire laptop. I am very confident in saying these hinges will be the first thing to fail on this laptop and will do so when it would otherwise have years of useful life left. This is a major bummer and I wish that System76 would focus on this more. I've had a previous System76 laptop hinge fail and it's obvious to me that it will happen again.

The track-pad is also underwhelming. It has separated left/right click buttons that are too stiff and the feel of the track-pad itself, while large enough, is nothing special.

Otherwise the case itself does feel sturdy and the keyboard is nice.

Battery

So far the battery life has been great. I can comfortably work all day on battery, or leave the laptop for a while and come back knowing I will still have plenty of battery to get me through my work. This is exactly what I was looking for.

Charging

The devices comes with a 100W charging brick that works well. However the device refuses to charge on anything slower. This is frustrating because I have plenty of 65W chargers around that work fine for everything else, but which I can no longer use with my laptop. The bottom sticker does warn about this, but I don't see any indication of this before purchase of the laptop.

Ports

I appreciate that the Pangolin Pro comes with an OCuLink port. I have not used or tested it, but it was a selling point for me as I hope to use it in the future.

While I don't use wired Ethernet very often, I love that it's included for when I want it requiring a dongle and having to use up a precious USB-C port.

Speaking of USB-C, I have another complaint. There are 2 USB-C ports and they are both on the same side of the device. It is **so** much nicer to have a USB-C port on either side and be able to pick the side that is more convenient for charging or a dock/monitor. Every System76 laptop is

inconsistent with USB-C port placement.

As for USB-A, I don't need 3 USB-A ports. Turn one of them into another USB-C port and all of my port complains go away. Even 2 C ports and 2 A ports would be great, one on each side.

Audio

With my minimal usage so far, the side facing speakers are on the low end of acceptable. They are at least better than the lowest end of laptop speakers, but significantly worse than what modern premium laptops provide (even the Dell XPS is better).

Screen

To me the screen looks relatively crisp and bright. It's a good screen. The brightness seems on par with average laptop screens which it can be used outside, but only under certain conditions. More brightness would have been appreciated. I have heard other complain about the colors, but I am not discerning enough to notice and issue there.

Software, Firmware, and Pop!_OS

I received this device with the latest Pop!_OS 24.04 with the COSMIC desktop. I've used Pop!_OS before COSMIC was introduced on other laptops. The feedback below may be related to COSMIC or related to the laptop and its firmware, I am not identifying the specific causes.

Wi-Fi

This laptop comes with a MediaTek MT7922 chip, which I can say from experience is trash, or the drivers are trash. My laptop was unusable for nearly a month while I worked with System76 support to identify a series of Wifi and sleep issues. In the end they were all caused by the MediaTek chip and I was eventually sent a replacement card, the Intel BE202. Good luck with the MediaTek chip, it may work for some Wifi networks but not others. This was not an acceptable situation for a laptop for me, but thankfully System76 support eventually came through with a warranty replacement card before I gave up and returned the entire laptop.

Sleep

The only sleep issues I have had occurred with the MediaTek MT7922 card.

COSMIC

While COSMIC is still a bit under-baked and missing some features, by the time I started using it the main bugs have been ironed out and I enjoy it. I'm glad to see System76 building a new option

in the desktop environment space.

COSMIC Files

The COSMIC Files app sometimes takes MINUTES to open and is pretty bare-bones. I will be eagerly awaiting improvements.

COSMIC Store

A good replacement for the older Pop Shop that solves some of the issues it had. However as this app is new it has it's own issues. The main one is that it can takes AGES to search for an app. Search for an app by name and you will see "No Results." But notice there's a loading icon in the upper right. When that finally completes you'll see the result you searched for. The speed and UX while things are loading could be improved here.

Coreboot

I naively assumed that all System76 laptops had open firmware and supported Coreboot. I thought that was one of their main selling points.

I was wrong, this device does not have open firmware and does not support Coreboot. It is possible it may get an update in the future, but there is no guarantee and I was shocked to find out this was the case.

Support

I've had great experiences with System76 support in the past with a previous laptop. Due to the Wifi and Sleep issues this new laptop had straight out of the box I've needed to work with their support again, which has been frustrating. While System76 claims they still use humans for support, I would put money on the support I received being an LLM, which had all the pitfalls of LLMs. It lead me down a pointless path of config changes and tests less and less related to my core issue. After several weeks of getting nowhere and being on the verge of returning the laptop my issue was escalated and they sent out a replacement Wifi card.

My support experience this time was a sad reminder of the AI times we live in.

Summary

I'm a bit disappointed with this offering from System76. I want System76 to succeed and I want more great Linux laptop options and support. I've begun to understand the common System76 complaint that they are just "rebranded Clevos." Yes, System76 does a lot of good work, but the physical build quality and software support of a brand new laptop from System76 is currently a

sub-par experience. I hope this laptop serves me well for many years to come, but I've experienced more negatives than positives with it in the first month of use.

As a quick review, these things don't work on a brand new laptop straight out of the box (with updates applied):

1. WiFi
2. Suspend/Resume
3. Files App

I bought a System76 Darter Pro back in 2019 and the hinge broke several years back, It's a shame the hinge quality has not improved since then.

View the official Pangolin Pro site: https://system76.com/laptops/pangolin-pro

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