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Spy Story



The November Paris terrorist attacks shocked the civilised world. In the aftermath it seems entirely reasonable to grant the Government unlimited powers to keep tabs on those who would do us harm. Most of us now use and enjoy a smartphone or mobile phone capable of pinpointing our location and recording all our movements and communications. So it is easy to foil terror plots before they can be hatched. Unfortunately terrorists are not stupid. There is evidence that plotters are abandoning the internet for their communications and resorting to old-fashioned pen and paper communications. In the quest for total surveillance there is a danger that our right to privacy will be sacrificed on the alter of national security. Read the thoughts of our security expert Steve Lord on why too much knowledge by the Government can be a dangerous thing.

Christmas crackers



The festive season is upon us and no doubt you're wondering how to fill the stockings of your nearest and dearest. Our nine-page Christmas report has more than 30 great gift ideas ranging from hover boards and Star Wars robots to Bluetooth speakers and all manner of accessories. Great tidings of comfort and joy for every gadget lover.

The What Mobile team

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WIN AN iRIG PRO DUO

WORTH £150!!



The guys over at IK Multimedia have been kind enough to gift us with a brand new iRig PRO DUO, which we featured in this month's Christmas gift guide and gave a very positive review. We've decided to give it away so one lucky reader can get an early present of their own, simply answer the question below:

How many inputs does the iRig PRO DUO have?

- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3

Email your full name, address, contact number and answer to the address below:

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The winner will be contacted via email on the 5th January 2016.

Sweating the small stuff: 1. The promoter of this competition is Clark White Publishing Ltd. 2. The competition is open to all UK residents aged 18 years or over, excluding employees of What Mobile, all participating companies, its agents or families and any company associated with this competition. 3. By entering, all entrants will be deemed to have accepted these rules. 4. All entry instructions form a part of the terms and conditions. 5. Closing date: 5 January 2016. 6. Only one entry per email/IP address will be accepted. 7. The correct winning entry will be selected randomly by the administrator of the What Mobile Facebook page. The winner, who must be a UK resident, will be sent a PNY PowerPack. 8. No cash alternative or other device will be offered. 9. No correspondence will be entered into except that the name of the winner will be available upon written request. 10. You accept that the competition prize may be an open box item that was previously reviewed in the magazine by one of our reporters.

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OnePlus X

OnePlus has successfully taken the flagship range and now it wants a piece of the mid-range action.

Disregarding invite issues and controversy around the USB-C cables not adhering to the correct standard, the OnePlus 2 has done pretty well. While it never quite achieved the same lengths of the original, it was still a firm success, hitting more than 4 million reservations before it even went on sale. When the mysterious OnePlus X was announced, many were quick to think that the device would actually be an even more powerful handset that aimed to compete with the very best money could offer. Turns out that Carl Pei had other ideas and wanted not just the flagship market but the mid-range as well.

ATTRACTIVE SPECS AT BUDGET PRICE

The OnePlus X is the company's vision of what a powerful mid-range handset should function like and it continues its trend of attractive specifications for a budget price tag. Comparisons with the iPhone 4 and 5 series aside, the OnePlus X looks far more expensive than its otherwise cheap asking price would suggest. It has a full glass front and rear, with a machine-cut metal strip running around the edge to complete this premium sandwich. The screen is a pricier AMOLED variant, a surprise considering most handsets in this range opt for LCD technology. Resolution is a solid 1920 x 1080, delivering 440ppi across the 5-inch screen. If you're one of the people who thinks that 5.5-inch smartphones are simply too big, perhaps the OnePlus X would be worth a look. It has also been kind enough to throw in a microSD slot which supports up to 128GB; this is one feature that even the more expensive OnePlus 2 lacks.

Inside, you've got a Snapdragon 801 processor – a chip that not so long



ago would've been considered flagship level.

Even today, it still holds up incredibly well in benchmark scores and beats every current mid-

range chip out there. Pair this with 3GB RAM and it is a pretty potent combination for a device which is billed as 'mid-range'.

It will no doubt blaze through the benchmark scores, though real-world performance is a different thing. It will be interesting to see

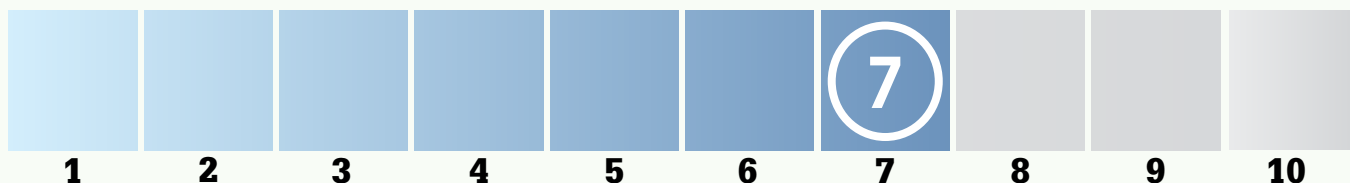
how the chip fares against more modern titles, especially with the ageing Adreno 330 as the GPU of choice. The camera is also nothing to be

frowned at, which is surprising for a budget handset. With a 13 megapixel rear sensor that includes an impressive f/2.2 aperture and phase detection autofocus, it should be able to take decent shots in most conditions. OnePlus has also included ISOCELL technology to help improve picture quality and ensure there is less crosstalk (basically noise).

The secondary camera is also worthy of mention, with a very high quality 8 megapixel sensor. The battery is rated at a decent 2,525 mAh, which sounds about right and keeps it mostly in line with similarly priced competition.

The OnePlus X should be on sale by the time you read this, with prices starting from £199 for the base model, though it is once again primarily available through invite only. The company is finally starting to open up the handset to outside resellers, though the quantity is extremely limited, so you will need to be extra quick if you want one.

WHAT MOBILE Excitement Meter



Powerful and well equipped, it is difficult to be disappointed on the raw specs alone. However, it remains to be seen if the ageing processor can keep up in the long term.

Acer Predator 8

Acer has expanded its Predator line to include a new Android tablet aimed at serious mobile gamers.

You may remember our IFA coverage back in September when Acer announced a series of new gaming devices including a tablet and smartphone. Aimed to compete against the likes of the Nvidia Shield, the Predator 8 is a gaming tablet that features the new Intel Atom x7. This chip came out at the beginning of the year and is not the newest SkyLake variant, but still holds up against the likes of the Snapdragon 810. As a matter of fact, this is exactly the same chip found in the base level Surface 3 (non-Pro model). It comes paired with 2GB of DDR3 RAM, which is good but perhaps not enough for something billed as a gaming device.

LOVE AND HATE

In terms of design, it is a bit polarising and definitely follows the Predator gaming heritage.

Acer has gone for a mix of sharp edges and industrial materials. It has a brushed gunmetal aluminium finish and rubber edges at the sides, which should help to make the device feel quite secure during extended gaming sessions. At 8.7mm thick and 350g in weight, it is very similar to other similarly sized tablets on the market, though the vertical and horizontal dimensions are somewhat larger. This is likely because of the four red grilles in each corner of the device which protrude slightly and also double up as speakers to provide virtual surround sound, with audio coming from different portions of the screen according to the action displayed on it.

FORCE FEEDBACK

The panel is an 8-inch 1920 x 1200 display, giving the tablet a 16 x 10 aspect ratio. According to Acer, the display covers 100% of the NTSC

colour gamut and features a zero air gap construction for less glare. It is not quite as impressive as Adobe RGB but it's still good for a budget orientated tablet. There are two cameras on board – a 5-megapixel primary camera at the rear and a 1.92-megapixel front shooter for your selfies. It also ships with a unique 'force feedback' feedback feature, essentially a rumble pack that allows the tablet to vibrate according to what's on screen. Acer has partnered with Gameloft to demonstrate the feature, which will support it in arcade driving simulator Asphalt 8: Airborne. It will be interesting to see if this is something that can manage to be more than just a gimmick, though initial feedback from critics is mixed. Battery is a decent 4420mAh, which isn't too bad on paper.

PRICE AND AVAILABILITY

Other features include expandable storage sizes ranging from 32GB to 128GB and a 2x2 MIMO Wi-Fi adapter for better internet speeds, though that's another feature we'd need to test before giving an

accurate assumption. It ships with Android 5.1 out of the box and there's no word on if it will be updated to Marshmallow at a later date. The UK by the time you read this issue with a retail price of £249.99, which puts it in a good position against the more mid-range-focused devices in that spectrum.



WHAT MOBILE Excitement Meter



Unique and slightly outlandish but with potential, the Acer Predator 8 has a lot to prove if it wants to be considered a serious gaming tablet.

BlackBerry PRIV

The beleaguered BlackBerry brand is aiming to turn over a new leaf with its first Android smartphone.

It is no secret that BlackBerry is going through some tough times – the CEO is open to pulling out of making hardware, profits are down and so is popularity. A few years ago BlackBerry could do no wrong as it catered well to its target demographic. But now demands have changed, consumers want more than just emails and a tight keyboard. The PRIV is BlackBerry's attempt at turning over a new leaf.

STANDARD ANDROID

No one was expecting BlackBerry to win a beauty pageant with its new device – the PRIV looks like a standard Android device – but on closer inspection there seems to be a cheeky S6 Edge curved screen included. The S6 Edge was the first to include an outward curving screen and it wasn't just to look different. We can expect the PRIV to make use of it, but what can it do? Well the S6 Edge didn't feature anything majorly revolutionary with the edge screen, so we can hopefully expect some new ideas from BlackBerry in using the curved screen. The screen itself will be 5.4 inches, distancing itself from the phablet category, and is doing so to most likely cut down the time it takes to get from your pocket to the home screen. In keeping with the theme of efficiency the screen will be an energy efficient AMOLED display. Energy efficiency will be present but we will have to see if the 3400 mAh battery will hold up to a full day of use. If not, well then let's hope the included quick charging makes up for it.

Now let's get to the part that's really unique in the Android market at the moment.

Not surprising for guessing a hardware accuracy vertical

from BlackBerry, there are no prizes what it is. Yes, that's right, there's keyboard for all you email nuts. The screen has a slide to reveal the keyboard.

Potentially this could be the most accurate keyboard you'll ever have on an Android phone, a bit unfair to say because it is an actual keyboard. It has a magical trick contained in it and that's the ability to delete with a light caress of the keys.

Further evidence that BlackBerry is thinking about functionality over everything.

To highlight this fact further, BlackBerry is not going for groundbreaking specs – opting for a Snapdragon 808 and a miniscule 2GB of RAM.

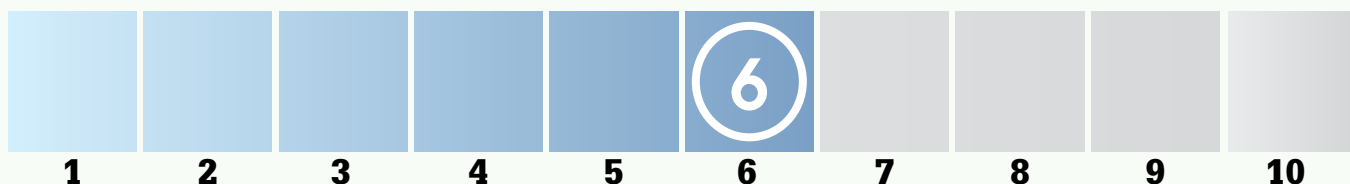
Internal memory is 32GB, with the option to expand expectantly via microSD.

Rumours are already circulating of a PRIV 2, but according to CEO John Chen it depends on sales of the PRIV. Chen has stated that BlackBerry can survive no problems as a software only company, doing what Sega did when it pulled out of the video games console race. We're not expecting the PRIV to walk into the scene to kick ass and chew bubble gum, but if the PRIV has a strong debut and proves that a physical keyboard is still a crowd drawer, then resurgence in the BlackBerry brand can be on the cards.

The future is fuzzy for BlackBerry. The PRIV is BlackBerry's throw of the dice. Let's hope the gamble pays off.



WHAT MOBILE Excitement Meter



Not really an exciting Android device but step in the right direction for Blackberry.

LG V10

We were expecting the announcement of the G5 but LG has instead slapped us with something new.

The G4 proved to be an impressive smartphone and what we have with the brand new V10 is a sexier and better G4. With the new V series LG is stepping into a more aesthetics angle. Recently Samsung has departed from its old design for a premium look with the glass-covered S6 line. Apple has always been ahead of the curve when it comes to design, so it is about time LG caught up.

FACELIFT

LG has done away with the plastic seen on the G4, going with a metal frame running along the edges of the V10. All over the back panel is duraskin, making the V10 probably one of the safest feeling phones on the market. Speaking of which, the V10 will be a tough phone – it won't be shatterproof or indestructible but it will survive a normal fall as it passed a MIL-STD-810G Transit Drop Compliant shock-resistance test. The V10 looks similar to the G4 except with the V10 you have a flat display instead of the G4's curved one. The flat display does come with a surprise, alongside the 5.7-inch display is a secondary screen along the top of the device, making the the entire display 6 inches. With the secondary display you can check

notifications without waking the entire device up. A very innovative feature, one that will be interesting to play with. It is a big device and isn't on the fence with whether it's a phablet or not. Having a duraskin back is a big bonus, it will minimise the problem all phablets have and that's being very awkward to use at times.

OLD TECH

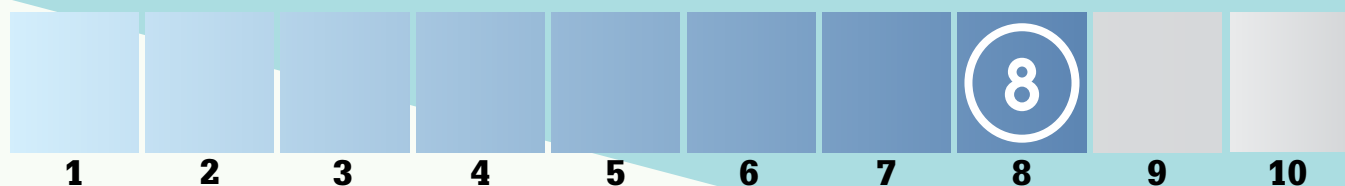
LG has confirmed the Snapdragon 808 processor we saw in the G4 will make a return in the V10, confirming pretty much that this isn't a sequel to the G4. It will have 4GB of RAM instead of 3GB, making multi-tasking a simpler task. LG has also caught up to everyone else with the inclusion of a fingerprint sensor on the back panel, which doubles as the power button. Android Marshmallow 6.0 is on the horizon, so we can expect an excellent fingerprint sensor when the software update is available. Just like the G4 the volume and power keys are on the back, further displaying LG is coming into the present era, as many OEMs have already started including this feature. What the V10 is offering that's different is 64GB internal memory, that can be expanded to... 2TB. Overkill, but a nice option to have.

Borrowing from the G4 again is the camera department – it seems to be exactly the same with 16 megapixels, optical image stabilisation and an aperture of F1.8. But what the V10 does have new is dual front-facing cameras, a first for an OEM. The extra camera will have a 120-degree wide angle lens to get some epic selfie shots. It remains to be

seen if the V10 will be released in the UK, currently the V10 is only available in the US.



WHAT MOBILE Excitement Meter



LG have surprised us with a line and it's deliciously premium, a worthy upgrade from the loveable G4.

Huawei Nexus 6P

The Nexus line is back and Google has picked Huawei to design its newest budget flagship. How does it compare with the competition?

Price: £449.00 Reviewer: Thomas Wellburn



SPEC SHEET

OS Android Marshmallow 6.0
Processor: Snapdragon 810 (1.5GHz Quad-core + 2GHz Quad-core)
Screen 5.7 inches
Resolution 1440 x 2560 pixels (518 ppi)
Memory 3 GB RAM
Storage 32GB/64GB/128GB
MicroSD compatible? No

Rear camera 12MP
Front camera 8MP
Video 4K
Connectivity 3G, 4G LTE
Dimensions 159 x 78 x 7.3 mm
Weight 178g
Battery 3450 mAh

AT A GLANCE

Speed



5¹/₅

Camera

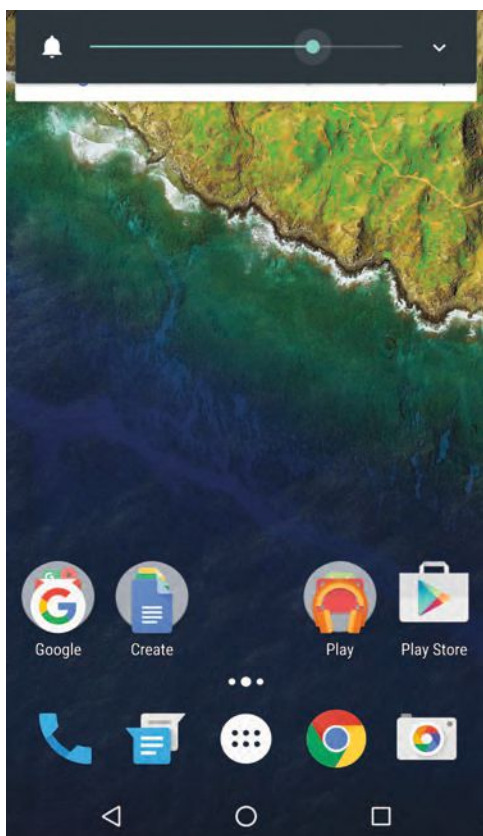


4¹/₅

Battery

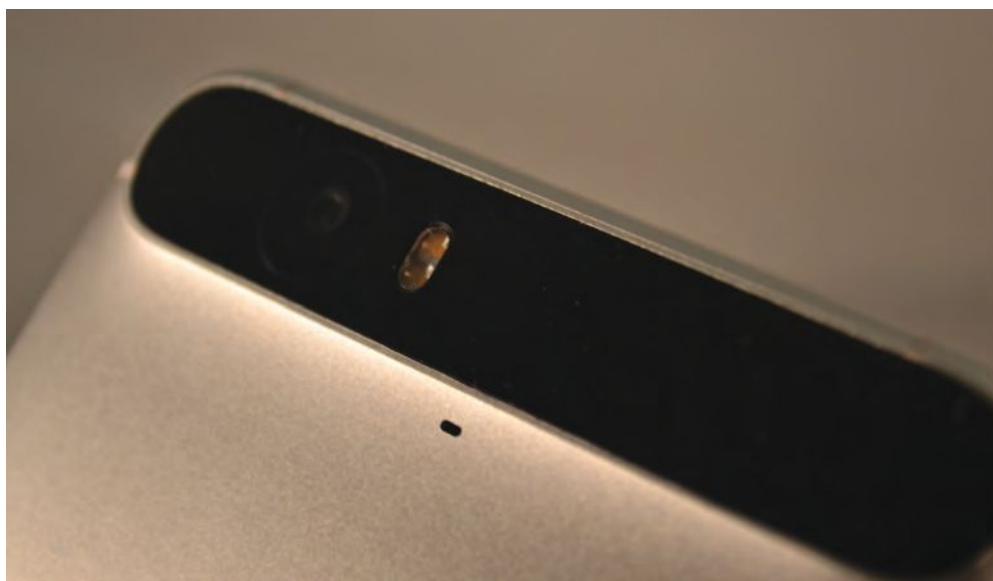


4¹/₅



It comes with Android 6.0 Marshmallow...

Whenever a manufacturer steps up to the Nexus challenge, you better believe that it is big business. Following the likes of HTC, LG and Motorola, Chinese brand Huawei has now been given the task of creating the next flagship for Google's premium smartphone range. Featuring a much sleeker design and slightly smaller pricetag than its phablet predecessor



The raised bump on the back where the camera is detracts from an otherwise stellar build

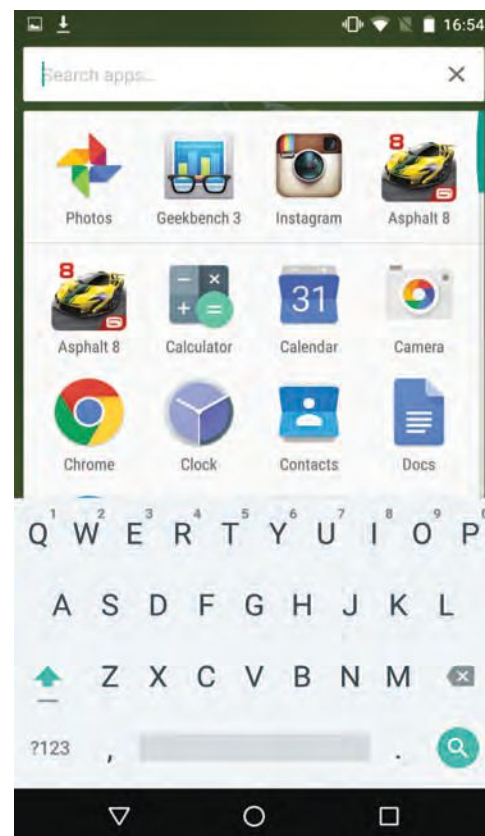
the Nexus 6, has it ticked all the boxes to become a worthy successor? Let's find out.

DESIGN

When you first pick up the Nexus 6P in your hand, you'll more than likely be very impressed with its sturdy yet lightweight feel. At only 178g, it weighs considerably less than other comparative devices that veer into the phablet territory. Featuring a full aluminium unibody with machine cut edges, there's no slippery materials here, with the subtle textured finish giving just about enough grip to make it feel comfortable in the hand.

On the front, it continues the minimal executive chic styling, with an all-black glass front and very little to discern it from other devices apart from the two very large stereo speakers which sit either side of the screen. On the sides we find a volume rocker and textured power button, which is a nice touch and helps to differentiate them apart when you instinctively grab the device. There's also a SIM slot that needs to be opened with the obligatory lock tool but no microSD slot, meaning you'll have to make do with the built-in memory this time round. This isn't really a surprise, as the last time we saw a Google device with expandable memory was way back in the very first HTC Nexus One.

Moving to the rear, the story is much the same. Business class styling with premium materials and very little to catch your eye. Aside from the hulking great Nexus logo on the rear, the device is pretty sparse besides



... and is totally free of bloatware

the fingerprint sensor above it. Or at least it would be if it wasn't for an enormous camera bump on the back... What were you thinking Huawei? It is quite possibly one of the ugliest additions we've ever seen to a smartphone and seriously detracts from what is an otherwise stellar build quality.

CAMERA

The Google Nexus 6P uses a custom Sony sensor with a resolution of 12.3 megapixels and while it's not perfect, this is still one of the best smartphone cameras you can get considering the price point. Positioning itself just underneath the flagships, the Nexus 6P manages to mostly keep up with the front runners, offering a perfect blend of all round performance.

Thanks to the larger pixels included on the sensor, image noise was very low. Pictures in daytime conditions were generally very good, with only a few subtle issues due to our choice of spot focus. On auto, the camera did an amicable job of selecting the most appropriate settings for the scene and creating a very balanced and evenly exposed image. Low-light shots were also pretty good, with a fair amount of ISO noise but plenty of detail retained in the fine areas. We were also impressed with the overall



The impressive 12.3 megapixel camera comes with a host of intuitive features including Photo Sphere and panorama effect

exposure in darker images, with the Nexus 6P able to carve out every last ounce of light to illuminate an otherwise pitch black image.

Unfortunately, the camera features a distinct lack of manual settings. HDR and flash modes are all you will get to adjust your image, which we always feel is a wasted opportunity when the quality of the sensor is so high. Huawei did include a

couple of custom shooting options, which manage to work mostly well and offer a bit of variety. Photo Sphere creates a Google Maps-style 360-degree field of vision and works incredibly well, while the panorama effect is equally intuitive. The lens blur effect was perhaps the standout feature, offering brilliant depth of field and bokeh without the need for a dual sensor.

The 8 megapixel front camera is also nothing to be frowned at, producing a perfectly usable selfie image in ideal lighting conditions. Low-light shots are a little noisier but overall the image quality is exceptionally good for a front-facing camera.

panels. Viewing angles are generally very good, though things did seem to take on a red hue when nearing 180 degrees. Still, it's a gripe that matters little as most people are hardly going to read their device on a side!

Outdoor readability is very good, with a high maximum brightness that only falls slightly short of front-runners such as the Galaxy S6 edge and Xperia Z5. Whether you're using this indoors or outdoors, you



Pictures taken in daytime conditions are good and everything is crystal clear

SCREEN

The Huawei Nexus 6P has an excellent 5.7-inch Samsung AMOLED panel with a resolution of 1440 x 2560, putting it on the same level as the best devices currently available (aside from the ludicrous 4K Sony Xperia Z5 Premium). This gives it an overall pixel density of 513 PPI which is well over the traditional printing standard of 300. As such, pixilation is nowhere to be found and everything is crystal clear even when viewed up close. It ships with Corning's newest Gorilla Glass 4 for added protection and features the oleophobic coating which has been passed down from previous generations of the Nexus. This helps it to repel water and oils such as sweat much easier, which should in theory help to keep your screen cleaner.

Our calibration software showed a pretty obvious green hue out of the box with over-vibrant colours typical of AMOLED



The Nexus 6P is able to carve out every last ounce of light

should only struggle under the most intense lighting situations.

PERFORMANCE

Featuring a range-topping Snapdragon 810 and 3GB of high quality DDR4 RAM, there's very little to complain about in the Nexus 6P when it comes to performance. For general UI swiping and web browsing, things are buttery smooth even under heavy use. We opened up multiple apps, ran a game and watched a 1440p video with little lag in the app switcher. Everything just works, which is largely down to the stock Android 6.0 and the choice of fast DDR4 memory keeping things snappy and optimised.

Gaming is about as good as it gets, with Asphalt 8: Airborne running flawlessly on the device. Benchmarks scores were equally impressive, with an average of 4093 for multi-core and 1310 for single-core over five tests. This puts it hot on the heels of the top Samsung Exynos powered devices and in the upper echelon of Snapdragon powered handsets. Single-core is perhaps the most impressive, with the Nexus 6P only narrowly losing out to the Galaxy S6 edge and jumping ahead of the Note 5. We're also pleased to report zero overheating issues with the Nexus 6P. This is a far-cry from similarly equipped devices such as the Sony Xperia Z5, which we reviewed last issue, that get very toasty indeed.

SOFTWARE

Launching with Android 6.0 Marshmallow straight out of the box, you'll be getting the latest and greatest Android experience currently possible. In what has become something of a theme now, the software is totally free from bloatware, giving a speedy and pure experience.

While Marshmallow isn't as big of a jump as Lollipop, it still offers several new features that are worth mentioning for those unaware. Google Now on Tap is here and fully functional, offering information for just about anything you allow it to



Gaming performance on the Nexus 6P is about as good as it gets

look at. Fingerprint scanning has gotten a huge improvement with native software integration making it blazingly quick, which should be the same for all fingerprint sensor equipped future devices. You can also use the built-in sensor to access the new Android Pay service, allowing you to purchase things with a simple tap of the finger.

Aside from this, you've also got new features such as Doze, which dynamically adjusts phone performs according to usage for maximum battery life and a Memory Monitor that finally allows us to see what's eating up all that RAM on our device. Usability is another factor that has gotten a bump in Marshmallow, with the ability to change things such as the system shortcuts and manage the various volume controls more intuitively. All-in-all, it's a worthwhile upgrade that doesn't feel much on first impression but definitely helps to further the OS and make it feel that little bit more complete.

BATTERY

The non-removable battery in the Huawei is quite a big talking point at a whopping 3,450mAh and in real-world usage it lasts

an age. You can easily manage two days of moderate usage on this device, even throwing in some light gaming. Oddly, our 30-minute gaming test contradicted this and dropped the battery by 15%, which was a little unexpected for such a high capacity. Our guess is that like with most things, the drain is highly dependent on the circumstances.

The new Nexus 6P doesn't support Quick Charge 2.0 but it does support Fast Charge, which is a different technology that pretty much achieves the same thing. It only works with the included charger but it's worth the effort, as we saw the battery capacity increase by 28% after only 20 minutes of juice. As a nice novelty, if one of your friends owns a Nexus 5X, it's also possible to charge the phone directly from the Nexus 6P, with the latter acting as a powerbank.

CONCLUSION

Even if the camera bump at the back looks a bit ugly, it's difficult to criticise the device as a whole when everything else is so damn good. It's a better size versus the Nexus 6, more comfortable and slightly cheaper for the base model. Without a doubt, this is easily Google's best Nexus handset to date.

VERDICT

The Nexus 6P is pretty much everything you could want in a smartphone, offering the perfect blend of performance and features. While it's a little on the expensive side, the device is still cheaper than the previous generation Nexus 6. If you can put up with its large phablet footprint and ugly rear camera fascia, there's little to moan about the actual device.

- + Great Camera
- + Solid performance
- + Stock Android
- That camera fascia
- No Quick Charge 2.0
- Quite big

OVERALL ★★★★★

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★	USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★	FEATURES ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★★★	VALUE ★★★★★

Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge +

The S6 Edge was already a pretty good phone, so how can Samsung improve it? By making it bigger. But is bigger really better? We find out by putting the S6 Edge+ through its paces.

Price: £549.99 Reviewer: Manny Pham



SPEC SHEET

OS Android Lollipop v5.1.1
Processor Quad-core 1.5 GHz Cortex-A53 & Quad-core 2.1 GHz Cortex-A57
Screen 5.7 inches
Resolution 2560 x 1440 pixels
Memory 4GB
Storage 32GB/64GB
MicroSD compatible? No

Rear Camera 16 megapixels
Front camera 5 Megapixels
Video 4K
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 154.4 x 75.8 x 6.9 mm
Weight 153g
Battery 3000 mAh

AT A GLANCE

Speed



4⁷/₅

Camera



4⁷/₅

Battery



4⁷/₅

Samsung is the forerunner in the Android market, releasing amazing devices year on year. The Galaxy S series has proven to be one of the best quality lines we have seen in the smartphone market. Samsung is always striving to do better than all its competition. With the S series you can bet that Samsung will be bringing frontline heavy tech to the battle, and that's exactly what we have here with the Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge+. Although we've seen this tech already, Samsung brought it to the party last time in the S6 Edge, so basically it made it bigger, following the trend many other manufacturers are doing. Hardware sees not much improvement, but we'll get to that soon.

DESIGN

The design is a significant jump from the S5. The S6 line is truly quality with Samsung listening to the criticism of the S5. The lead designer of the S5 was removed from his position, although Samsung did not comment on the reason why. Well, whatever the reason we benefited as the S6 line is truly glorious. Samsung has finally matched Apple in terms of design quality.

How did Samsung do it? It ditched the cheap plastic and went for it this year with classier materials. On the back of the device we have a translucent glass panel that gleams in the sunlight, giving off a striking incandescent look. It feels quality in your hand, but it's very prone to fingerprints. Just a few minutes of use is enough to cover the back panel with grease lines. The pearl white version can hide the smudges, the sapphire black we have is just covered in them. Those of you with OCD will suffer.

Surrounding the S6 Edge+ is a metal frame with chamfered edges, a very welcomed feature as it adds comfort. Compared with the S6 Edge, the chamfered edges are thinner to give the S6 Edge+ a more svelte look despite being larger. Running along the metal frame is the power button on the right and the volume buttons on the left. The buttons are very responsive and extremely satisfying to press. Oddly the volume buttons are not in line

with the power button making them very awkward to reach for. A small flaw but the Edge+ is of course a phablet and you will be using both hands to operate it most of the time.

On the top of the metal frame Samsung has omitted the IR blaster for reasons unknown. Surely with a bigger device there is space for more features, not take them away? The IR blaster could have been used as a TV remote control.

Quality is just emblazoned all over the S6 Edge+, almost justifying the humongous price tag. But with this new ethos of using high end materials on flagship phones, Samsung has created an extremely slippery device. The Gorilla Glass, glass back panel and metal chastity frame make the Edge+ a smartphone that is literally hard to get a hold of. But this shouldn't put you off. A decent case is recommended for the Edge+ to protect all that glass.

CAMERA

Samsung has a brilliant record when it comes to smartphone cameras and it's the same with the camera on the Edge. The Edge and Edge+ have 16 megapixels to snap with. In daylight, pictures come to life with in-depth detail and sharp images. The excellent image processing is apparent with the beautiful colour contrasts you'll be able to capture. To bring out more life in your pictures there is the HDR mode, which brings even more detail to pictures, especially when framing an image with high colour contrast.

Low-light situations do not suffer from noise and grain as much as you think. This is due to the wide F1.9 aperture included in the camera. In a near pitch black room our Edge+ sucked in the little light it could get, to produce a picture that's smooth and non-grainy after being processed. So for those all important birthday pictures with the candle illuminating the room, the Edge+ can capture the special occasion with majestic results.

The front-facing camera is 5 megapixels with the same aperture size contained in the main camera.

Producing the same kind of pictures in



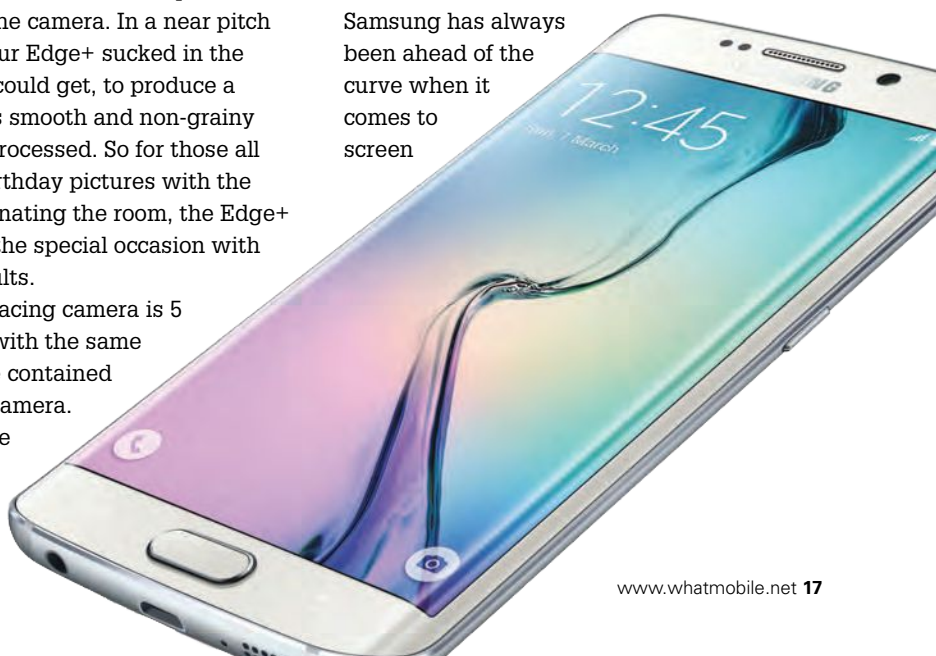
Low-light situations do not suffer from noise and grain

lower quality of course, but still of a high standard for a front-facing snapper.

Video collage is a nice addition to the modes, giving you a unique video recording mode that allows you to put four six-second videos together for some creative content. The main video recording mode is capable of 4k video, making the Edge+ one of the best smartphones out at the moment for video recording. Samsung has also included VDIS or video image stabilisation to ensure smooth video capturing.

SCREEN

Samsung has always been ahead of the curve when it comes to screen





An HDR mode brings even more detail to pictures

technology. It is the most striking feature on the Edge+, breaking the norm of flat screens. You will definitely get looks operating the 5.7 inch screen, flicking through the screen creates a delightful waterfall effect at the edge of the innovative screen. The screen does not go all around the edges as there is a small line of bezel separating it from the metal frame. This was most likely done on purpose to avoid annoying screen interfacing. By that we mean not accidentally having a thumb left on the edge



The Galaxy S6 Edge + offers 16MP of brilliant image processing in all conditions

of the screen, while you're trying to tap on an app. By keeping that thin bezel there Samsung has avoided a potential massive flaw – what good is a phone that is too awkward to use?

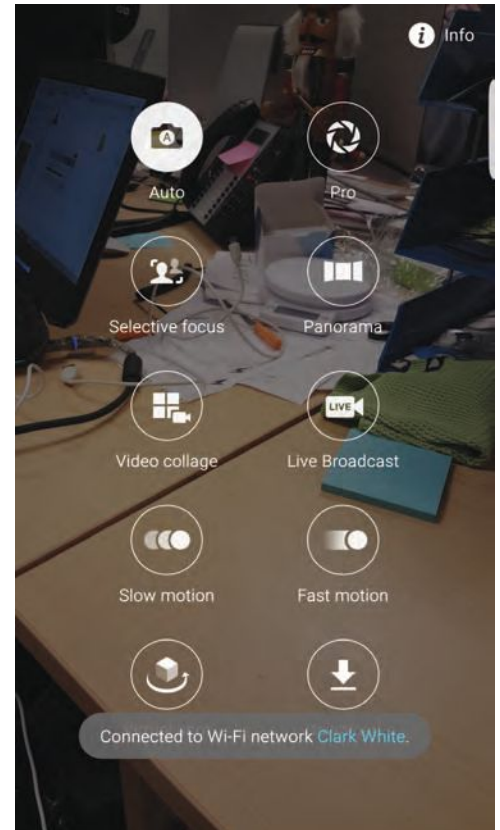
The screen is a super AMOLED display with 2560 x 1440 resolution with 577 ppi (QHD); offering vibrant saturated colours with excellent viewing angles. It also boasts one of the brightest screens you will see, faring very well in direct sunlight.

PERFORMANCE (BATTERY INCLUDED)

Samsung has gone for its own processor, the Exynos 7420. Its performance is without a doubt one of the best we have ever experienced with a smartphone. To complement it, Samsung has included 4GB of RAM instead of 3GB seen in the Edge.

To be honest you won't even notice the extra RAM unless you did what we did, and open every app and download as many things at the same time as possible. The Exynos 7420 and the RAM took it like a champ with no delay noticed until a mass amount were open. While the UI is very snappy, bending to your every touch, there is still the annoying delay when swiping to Flipboard. Swiping to Flipboard accidentally means waiting a few seconds before swiping out of it again. Flipboard hasn't been integrated properly in the ecosystem, despite being a massive part of the software.

Geekbench results are unsurprisingly off the charts with single-core results averaging to about 1480, beating almost every handset out there. Sony's Z5 uses Qualcomm's



Android Lollipop 5.1.1 is included

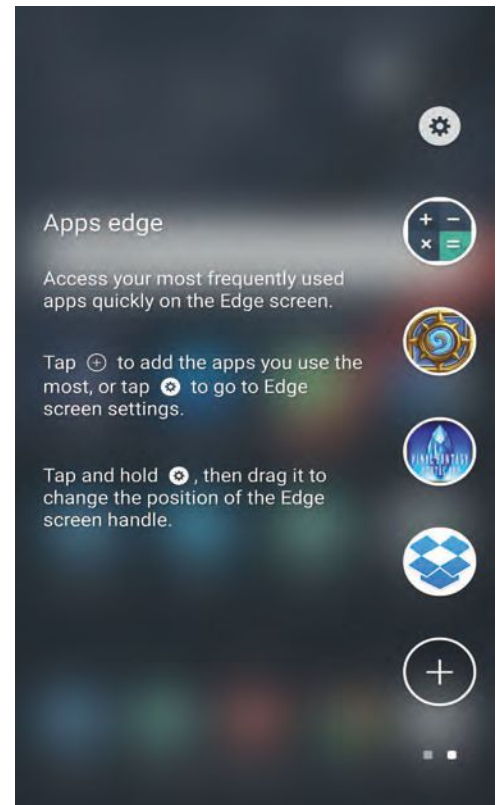
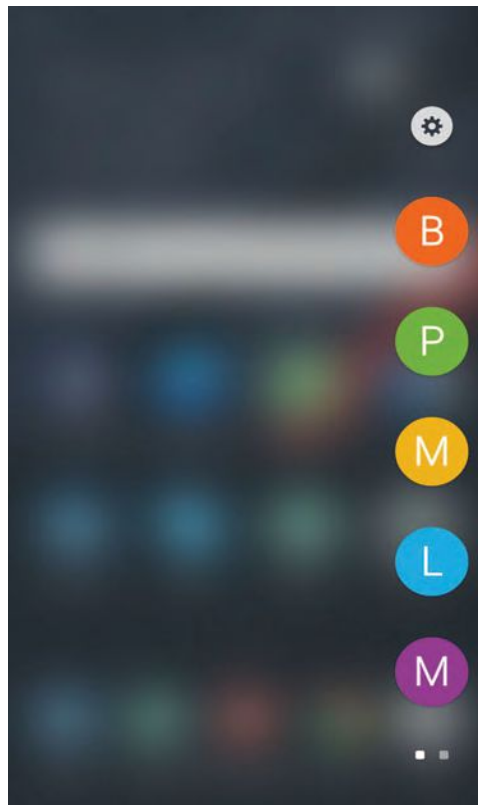
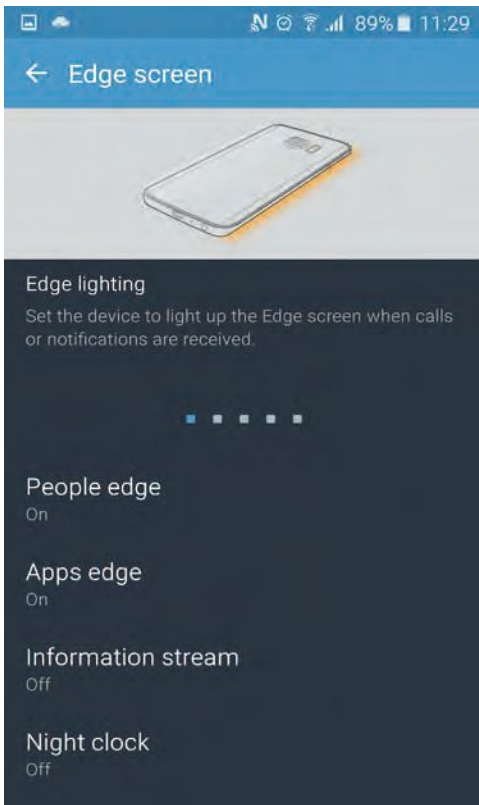
Snapdragon 810 with a score of 1223, a slight margin but it's clear who has the best processor. As for multi-core, the Edge knocks it out of the park with a score of 4601, making the Edge+ the most powerful device on Geekbench's chart at the time of writing.

The S6 and S6 Edge have a power issue, due to a powerful screen and a battery capacity to not match it. The Edge+ has a bigger 3000 mAh battery (S6 Edge: 2600 mAh) but it's not that big. It's enough to see you throughout the day with the percentage hitting the teens depending on use. Fast wireless charging is featured on the Edge+, Samsung claim fast wireless charging can fill up the device in about two hours, a long time but impressive for wireless charging. As for wired charging, it took the Edge+ just over an hour to get to 100%.

Now on to the bad, sadly removable batteries have been... well, removed from Samsung's S6 range. A benefit that will be sorely missed, especially when the battery eventually fails, forcing you to buy a new device.

SOFTWARE

Android Lollipop 5.1.1 is included straight out of the box, giving you a seamless experience that has been improved



The Galaxy S6 Edge + takes advantage of the screen's curved edges, with gimmicky features including Edge Lighting and People Edge

dramatically from the S5. The colour scheme remains the same but now there are less fiddly animations to slow you down. More deadweight was dropped as the Edge+ is included with less bloatware. More importantly the UI is extremely fast, bested only by the iPhone 6s.

The software, of course, uses the curved edges with new features, starting off with Edge Lighting, which enables the curve of the screen to light up in a chosen colour when receiving a call. If it is someone you can't talk to right now you can ignore the call by placing your finger on the heart rate sensor. The Edge+ will then send a pre-set apologetic message.

People Edge is a way for you to access five of your favourite contacts faster. There is a tab on the right edge screen (it can be set to left for lefties), which you pull out to access People Edge. While slightly useful it is a bit

awkward to reach for the tab to activate it; it's a lot quicker to tap the home button and open contacts.

Information Stream is a feature that lists notifications, tweets and the news all along the edge. When something piques your interest you can tap it, unlock the screen and read the content fully. At first it is quite cool but it will soon be forgotten like the bloatware of last year.

Lastly there's Night Clock, which is pretty self explanatory. The time and date will display on the edge of the screen but at dim lighting to avoid roasting your retinas. It drains more power, but Night Clock can be set to activate and deactivate at certain times. A seemingly gimmicky idea but one that definitely got used a lot and proved its usefulness.

The main issue with the Edge+ is how Samsung has not fully used the Edge screen

for more creative features and apps. Granted it is the first time Samsung has included an Edge screen and it is still learning. Big things are expected now with the S7's potential edged display.

CONCLUSION

With the S6 Edge+ we have a bigger and only slightly better S6 Edge. Still, we do love it, just look at it. It's an innovative device that's pushing Samsung's phone into another echelon of quality. We just wish Samsung had capitalised more on its curved screen. Much more could have been done with it instead of gimmicky features. With time we can expect to see the curved screen used for so much more. Samsung can do so by working with app developers and create unique original content that cannot be replicated on rival devices.

VERDICT

The S6 Edge+ is bigger and it has a striking design that will turn heads on the street and create new innovation for Samsung for years to come. But currently the innovation is in its infancy and has not been fully utilised. Battery life is also still a problem as seen on the smaller S6 and S6 Edge.

- + Eye-watering beautiful design
- + Powerful specs
- + Innovative curved screen
- Does not use curve screen to potential
- Non-removable battery

OVERALL ★★★★★

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★	USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★	FEATURES ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★★★	VALUE ★★★★★

WileyFox Storm

Following on from its bargain Swift handset, WileyFox has now unleashed a cheap mid-range killer, but does it have what it takes to storm the competition?

Price: £199.99 Reviewer: Thomas Wellburn

WileyFox is a fresh smartphone manufacturer straight out of Old Blighty that you probably haven't heard that much of. The company has only released two handsets to date and the Storm represents its attempt at conquering the mid-range. At just £199.99, it is already undercutting a great deal of the competition considering what you're getting for the money, but the real question remains... do all these parts come with any compromises?

DESIGN

Are we looking at the OnePlus 2 or do our eyes deceive us? That was our first thought when picking up the new Storm for the first time. Aesthetically, it is difficult to get over the fact that they both look very similar, right down to the dimensions. Not only are they almost exactly the same size but even the camera sensor and backplate look similar. You really have to wonder if they were both built in the same factory.

Comparisons aside, it is hard to argue that the Storm is still a pretty device. Understated and reserved, it wouldn't look out of place in a business meeting. On the front, there's little to see aside from the speaker grille at the top for calling. It is basically an attractive glass monolith much like every device out there. Custom Cyanogen buttons are aligned along the bottom, with the central one illuminating when charging or receiving notifications. It is a nice touch and is definitely sleeker



than the blinking lights HTC implements on its devices. The lack of a fingerprint sensor could be seen as disappointing but we were hardly expecting it at this price.

Moving to the sides, you've got the usual volume and power buttons wrapped in sturdy black plastic and a SIM tray, but no microSD slot. On the rear is a textured finish that actually feels better than the OnePlus 2, with just enough grip to feel comfortable but without that rough sandpaper feel. The orange etching around the camera sensor is also a nice touch, keeping in theme with the WileyFox brand and its trademark colour.

CAMERA

Coming equipped with a Sony IMX220 sensor, the WileyFox Storm should be a decent shooter on paper. Except that's not strictly true, as that sensor was part of a series. This means that it is as much about the smartphone software as the hardware itself and sadly the Storm turns out to be pretty average in most respects. With a mammoth 20 megapixel rear camera sensor, there's certainly plenty of pixels, though this doesn't always mean quality.

Daytime photos were decent with good colour reproduction and the auto setting did an admirable job of exposing the scene evenly. Some of the photos were a little blown out in the highlights, especially when subjected to a scene with heavy dynamic range. On closer inspection, there's also quite a bit of graininess to images. It seems to be mostly confined to

SPEC SHEET

OS Android Cyanogen 12.1
Processor: Snapdragon 615
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels (400 ppi)
Memory 3 GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 128GB
Rear camera 20MP

Front camera 8MP
Video 1080p
Connectivity 3G, 4G LTE
Dimensions 156 x 77 x 9.2 mm
Weight 155g
Battery 2,500 mAh

AT A GLANCE

Speed



3₅

Camera



4₅

Battery



4₅



The camera is as much about the software

the edges of objects and may be a result of the post-processing trying to sharpen things a little too much. While it's not immediately apparent, it really sets it apart from top-flight competitors

Low-light is another disappointment for the Storm, as it is pretty much black aside from a few scraps of detail. There's shot modes hidden within the settings that

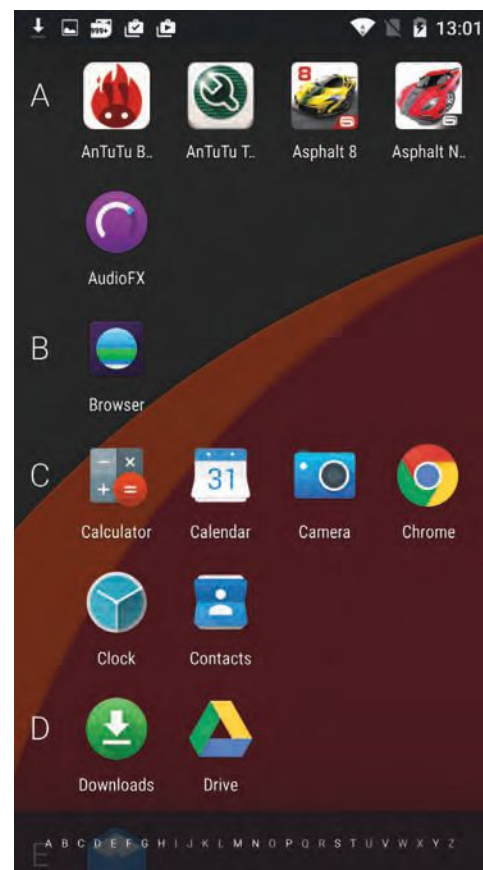
are designed to help but a lack of optical image stabilisation means things can get blurry when the shutter is held open for any extended period. When using the low-light settings, it did help with a lack of illumination but at the expense of grain. Images were incredibly noisy and, quite frankly, not really usable.

Manual settings are hit and miss, with quite a few to choose from but sporadically placed. ISO is buried within a settings menu, while exposure, white balance and various preset features can be accessed directly from the main camera screen. It's a bit confusing and definitely not intuitive.

Being slightly disappointed with the rear camera, we were surprised to find that the 8 megapixel front camera is quite decent, with a lots of detail and evenly exposed colour tones. If you're a regular selfie taker, this definitely wouldn't be a bad handset to have. The addition of a front LED lamp is also excellent and we really commend WileyFox for implementing this. We only wish more manufacturers would do the same.

SCREEN

The WileyFox Storm has a 5.5-inch 1080p IPS display, giving it an overall pixel density of 400. For the price, you really don't see many phones touting this sort of resolution, so we were surprised to see that the company hasn't compromised on the quality of the panel in order to meet expectations. Colours are vibrant and text is sharp, though a warm hue is immediately obvious. Our calibration test confirmed this and really brought out



The OS is Android Cyanogen 12.1

the best in the panel, with some of the fine detail lost due to the weird choice of default colour tone. Viewing angles are good for a decidedly budget device but there is evidence of some colour deviation at extreme angles. The black levels ramp up quite a bit and things get a little hard to see... But this is only at the most extreme angles.

Outdoor readability is decent, with a commendable maximum brightness but nothing significantly special. You should be able to get by with using it outdoors as long as you try to avoid direct sunlight. Indoors, we had no problem at all.

PERFORMANCE

The WileyFox Storm features a mid-range Snapdragon 615 and a highly generous 3GB RAM. Currently, there's very few smartphone devices at this price-point that feature the same level of hardware and this is heavily reflected in performance. In our overall Geekbench 3 result, it managed to score an average of 635 in single-core and 2130 in multi-core over five separate tests. This puts it roughly on a par with the HTC Desire 820, which features the same chip but with 1GB less RAM.



Despite its mammoth 20MP rear camera, the Storm is a pretty average shooter



Colour reproduction is good but fine detail suffers

While the extra RAM never seemed to make much of a difference in benchmarking, it almost certainly did in the real-world testing. Cyanogen is already a very smooth OS to handle but things just felt that bit better with the luxury of having 3GB. App switching was fast and snappy, with no discernible delay whatsoever. Things would occasionally stagger a bit on initial switching but it was rare and the sheer speed alone is enough to warrant praise.

Gaming on the device was also very good, with a mostly smooth experience when playing Asphalt 8: Airborne. Subtle frame drops were noticed at high setting on the more intense levels but it was nothing distracting. On medium, it was buttery smooth. One thing worth mentioning about the Storm is that it does seem to get a little toasty under extended load, as demonstrated in our gaming test above. After only about 10 minutes, it was starting to get hot to the touch. After our battery drain test, it really did start to cook. It's not quite as bad as the Sony Xperia Z5 heating issue but definitely noticeable.

VERDICT

The WileyFox Storm is a good device that can't quite punch into the great territory. Cyanogen and solid performance make it a worthwhile value handset but the average camera coupled with some suspect heat issues make it difficult to fully recommend. It's a good first try for the fledgling company and there really is plenty to build on in the inevitable future iterations.

- + Cyanogen customisation
- + Decent performance
- + Impressive front camera
- Average rear camera
- Mediocre battery life
- Gets a bit toasty

SOFTWARE

A unique selling point of the WileyFox devices is the fact that they run on Cyanogen, a modified version of the Android OS that has elevated into an entirely standalone OS of its own. Initially a custom launcher for the incredibly geeky, it has received heavy investment from Microsoft and continues to go from strength to strength. Running version 12.1, you probably won't be able to notice any difference between this and stock Android when you first turn on the device. The underlying architecture is Android Lollipop 5.1.1, which isn't the newest Marshmallow update but not too far behind. There are differences hidden away, however, besides the obvious such as a vertically scrolling app tray. Perhaps the biggest appeal of Cyanogen is its security improvements over stock. Individual app permissions can be controlled and there's a version of Caller ID built in to filter out those annoying spam calls about PPI insurance and 'free' solar panels.

The other big selling point of Cyanogen is customisability and we're pleased to say that the Storm has it in droves... kind

of. Themes can be downloaded from the included WileyFox Theme application or via the Google Play Store and many completely alter the look of the user interface. WileyFox claims there are hundreds to choose from and while that may be true, there certainly isn't hundreds worth using. Only a handful of the ones we checked out were really presentable, with many looking a bit like a college project gone wrong. Still, for those that do work, it's a very impressive experience and there's definitely room to improve on this unique feature in the future as more designers jump on board.

BATTERY

With a 2,500mAh battery, the WileyFox Storm is on a par with others in the price range, though performance doesn't really reflect this. On normal usage it will just about last a day, though intense gaming sessions will drain it pretty heavily. Our 30-minute Asphalt 8 battery test drained 22% of the overall life, which is not a great result. Cyanogen may be good for some things but battery isn't one of them.

The lack of any Quick Charge or Fast Charge technology is pretty disappointing on this handset, though it's likely a result of the aging Snapdragon 615 and its lack of support for the new standards. Going back to a device that needs several hours to fully charge feels archaic and it is a feature that newer handsets can't really afford to do without. The non-removable battery also means you'll need a powerbank for those long trips to nowhere.

CONCLUSION

A mixed device that has plenty of good points but several disappointing ones, the WileyFox Storm is a missed opportunity that feels like it could offer much more. While it is by no means a bad device, there's enough potential here for something much better.

OVERALL ★★★★★

PERFORMANCE

★★★★★

USABILITY

★★★★★

DESIGN

★★★★★

FEATURES

★★★★★

INNOVATION

★★★★★

VALUE

★★★★★

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Microsoft Band 2

Microsoft's newest fitness wearable is now on sale but is it a substantial improvement compared with its predecessor?

Price: £199.00 Reviewer: Manny Pham

Microsoft really believes that wearables are the future. It has banked quite heavily on fitness devices with lots of sensors and the Band 2 is its next iteration of this. Retailing at £199, it is by no means cheap but offers more sensors than any other device currently on the market. The main question is, has it solved the issues that plagued the original?

DESIGN

The first Microsoft Band was pretty awkward to wear, feeling more like a gauntlet than anything else. This new model has improved things significantly, though it is still far from comfortable.

The new curved OLED screen and flexible strap helps to make it fit around your wrist better, giving a tighter and snuggier fit, but the constricting nature is still there. There were times where it felt like we

SPEC SHEET

OS Custom Windows Phone OS

Number of sensors 11

Processor N/A

Screen 1.26 x 0.50 inches

Resolution 320 x 128 pixels

Memory N/A

Storage N/A

Connectivity Bluetooth

Dimensions 159 x 78 x 7.3 mm

Weight 56g

Battery 48 hours

AT A GLANCE

Speed



4₅

Comfort



2₅

Battery



3₅



were not wearing anything and others where it was becoming a literal nuisance. The huge bulge on the locking mechanism at the bottom of the band is a particular area of annoyance, as it contains the battery and digs into your wrist when you lean on anything such as a table or work-surface. In fact, even as we type this it is busy pressing on our wrist, making movement quite difficult.

We also have concerns over the long-term build quality of the product, as the back of the metal screen appeared to get scratched up pretty quickly at the sides after only a few days of solid use. That seems a little cheap considering this device retails for £199 in the UK.

PERFORMANCE

The 32x12.8mm OLED screen won't win any awards for its image quality but it is still more than functional enough, with clear text and a decent brightness levels. The ambient light sensor is also a nice touch, helping the battery life to stay within Microsoft's estimates.

Despite our attempts, Microsoft has been extremely quiet on what's inside the Band 2. The first version didn't exactly seem to struggle in the performance field and it's much the same here, with a smooth and fluid experience. It pairs to your device via Bluetooth and does so quickly with the Windows Phone app. Android

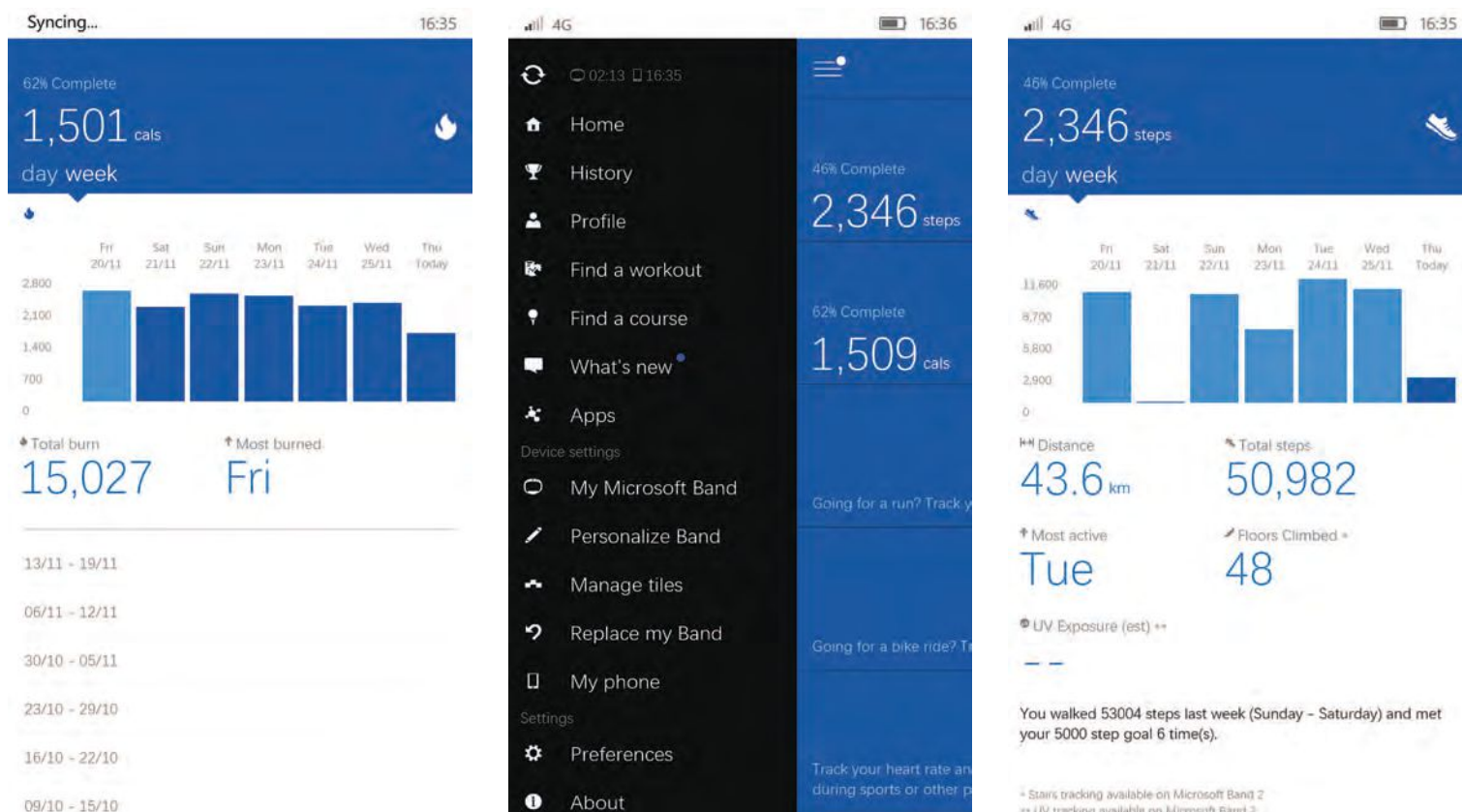
and iOS can be a little temperamental but it's much better than the first version. The standout feature with the Band 2 is of course its plethora of sensors, of which there are 11. This is only one more than the original band, though the added barometer is handy for cross-country travel and vertical climbing. The ability to download workouts directly to the band still remains, which an excellent feature that saves you lugging a smartphone to the gym.

SOFTWARE

The Microsoft Band 2 runs on a very simplified OS that shares its design themes with the Windows Phone operating system. In terms of the overall navigation, little has changed between this and the first version.

Two buttons are present on the bottom side of the device, one for locking/unlocking the screen and the other a more general purpose action button. Apps are represented by tiles and can be accessed by swiping horizontally across the screen. Most of the information shown on the Band itself is incredibly basic, with emails showing in a stripped back fashion and only the essential fitness data available.

Where the device really comes into its own is with the dedicated Microsoft Health service, where you can literally look at every minute detail of your average day. The partner app is your gateway to goals, gains



The device comes into its own with its Microsoft Health service, where you can monitor pretty much every aspect of your own personal fitness

and pretty much every aspect of your own personal fitness.

Seeing a detailed infographic breakdown of your sleeping patterns is a pretty eye-opening experience, as is the ability to view calorie burns on an hourly chart and track performance. This experience is further enhanced on the Microsoft Health website, which takes things even deeper.

If you're a true health fitness buff it is hard to complain. For mere mortals like us, it was all a bit too much.

BATTERY

The battery on the Microsoft Band 2 is pretty average by smartwatch standards and manages to get through a day of solid use or two days of light usage. Microsoft's claim of two days is pretty honest, though if you're busy sending

messages, answering calls and tracking your workouts with GPS, you'll be lucky to reach the morning without juicing up the battery.

Thankfully, it makes little difference as the device fully charges in around 15-20 minutes. Pop in the shower after a workout and by the time you get back, the thing will be topped up and ready to go.

A proprietary charger is included in the box which features a magnetic induction cable that snaps to the clasp on the back. It's a little bit annoying to use at first but soon becomes second nature. Just make sure not to lose it, as you'll have to cough up £15.99 for a replacement.

There's also no wall wart in the box, meaning you'll need to search around the house for a spare USB plug if you want to charge it; a little inconvenient.

CONCLUSION

For sheer hardware, the Microsoft Band 2 is still the ultimate fitness wearable with masses of sensors and some excellent software. Unfortunately, it is also pricier than its predecessor and doesn't necessarily offer any new killer features to justify the hike. The design is still dodgy and the battery needs improvement; two points which we think are pretty important for a fitness wearable to get right. You're on the right track Microsoft, just keep heading for the finish...

VERDICT

It is a definite upgrade compared with the first model but still very much a 'work in progress'. Plenty of sensors and some incredible software make the Microsoft Band 2 a comprehensive package for fitness fanatics but the overall design of the device still leaves a lot to be desired. Considering the price, there are other alternatives.

- + Tons of sensors
- + Deep software integration
- + Charges in minutes
- So-so build quality
- Still uncomfortable
- Average battery

OVERALL ★★★★★

PERFORMANCE

★★★★★

DESIGN

★★★★★

INNOVATION

★★★★★

USABILITY

★★★★★

FEATURES

★★★★★

VALUE

★★★★★

Samsung Galaxy Gear S2 Classic

Wearables are the latest trend with many smartphone manufacturers. The Galaxy Gear S2 Classic is Samsung's fourth wearable, taking over from the Galaxy Gear S. But is it a big improvement?




Price: £299.99 Reviewer: Manny Pham

What Samsung is going for here is to convince you that you don't need that classy Omega. I mean all it does is tell the time and has that tachometer you'll probably never use. Omega also does watches that work in space, yet again we ask, are you going to use that feature regularly? What Samsung has here is a watch that is much more practical, with a less jarring price. The wearables market is just coming to form, with the past couple of years being formation years. You know when a trend is serious when Apple decides to join in, having only released the Apple watch in April this year. Samsung has been in the wearables game longer, so will the Gear S2 Classic display its wisdom in the wearables game?

SPEC SHEET

OS Tizen
Processor Exynos 3250
Screen 1.2 inches
Resolution 360 x 360 pixels
Memory 512MB
Storage 4GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Connectivity Wi-Fi
Dimensions 43.6 x 39.9 x 11.4 mm
Weight 42g
Battery 250 mAh

AT A GLANCE

Speed	Comfort	Battery
		
4/5	4/5	4/5

DESIGN

The Gear S2 Classic may not be made of the rarest minerals on Earth, but it does charm wandering eyes with sophistication. With the Gear S2 Classic we have a respectful homage to those classic timepieces that were mentioned earlier, with a silver metal body and leather strap. There is also the Gear S2, the sportier brother of the Gear S2 Classic. While the Classic is looking to camouflage with traditional time pieces, the Gear S2 aims to be more minimalistic with a silicone band (much more comfortable).

Not saying that the Classic is uncomfortable, far from it. Coming off wearing the gauntlet that was the Microsoft Band, the Gear S2 Classic was welcomed on our wrist as it feels just right. The dimensions of the watch are perfect, not too big, not too small, Goldilocks approves.

Samsung is trying to reinvent the wheel with the rotating ribbed bezel along the edges. It is extremely responsive and makes the new wearable very unique. It suits well with the Gear S2's circular design, you wouldn't think at first that the bezel would make a difference but after continuous use, you start to ponder how you'd go without it.

Sticking with the edges there is a back and home button, accompanied by a mic to make use of S Voice for when you're on the move or in the middle of a run.

Straps are interchangeable with a spring mechanism as seen on traditional watches, making customisation something very open with the Classic – the Classic is compatible with any 20mm (Size L) strap. So to class it up you can get another leather strap or any third party one. The Gear S2 Classic only comes in black leather out of the box.

SCREEN

With the bezel and buttons what's the use for a touchscreen?

Thankfully Samsung didn't think like that as the 1.2 inch screen has a seamless interface with a decent 303 pixels-per-inch. Samsung has incorporated a sAMOLED ('s' is for super) screen into the Gear S2, understandable as with an AMOLED screen it'll be using less power and

spend more time on your wrist than the fancy wireless charging dock.

Speaking of power you do have the option of having the screen constantly on with the time displayed 24/7 like a real watch. But instead you can take advantage of a smart feature in the Gear S2, where you can wake





A magnetic wireless charger acts as a stylish stand when the Gear S2 Classic isn't being worn

the screen up by simply turning your wrist to look at it. A feature not only extremely cool, but damn useful.

The sAMOLED screen has vibrant colours as you'd expect from a Samsung AMOLED screen. Going with a sAMOLED screen is perfect for a wearable as it gives the Gear S2 excellent viewing angles. If it faltered there, it obviously would have been a death blow.

PERFORMANCE (BATTERY INCLUDED)

Powering the small nippy wearable is a Samsung Exynos 3250 with 512MB of RAM. You can immediately feel the power of the Gear S2 Classic as you flick through the Tizen UI without any stutter. Previous Samsung wearables have had noticeable stuttering but that has now been wiped out. Speed does not change going from using the bezel to the touchscreen, it all works in unison and both at the same speed of your touch.

Packed with the Gear S2 Classic is a homely looking magnetic wireless charger, which impresses as it displays a rather handsome watch on your desk and continue to do its job. As for the battery life itself,

you can expect it to be on your wrist more so than lot of other wearables. With 250 mAh packed inside it compares to the Apple Watch. With the aforementioned screen wake up feature, you can expect the Gear S2 Classic to last you up to two days (depending on use).

SOFTWARE

Samsung is using its own internally

developed OS, Tizen, which brings some very nice unique features that you'll definitely enjoy. You can reply to text messages with emojis, prepared messages and if you really need to go in detail there's a T9 keyboard available.

As nice as Tizen is, it also proves to be the Gear S2 Classic's weakest point as the app support for Tizen is just not there yet. If you're set in your ways and would only use Runkeeper for your morning runs, well you may just be put off having to move over to S Health or any other companion apps.

CONCLUSION

Samsung has brought to the table arguably the best smartwatch available now. The Gear S2 Classic is aesthetically pleasing, that will not look out of place with your chosen apparel, except for smartest of suits. The simple but innovative inclusion of the rotating bezel makes the Gear S2 truly unique. Gimmicky it is not, you'll find yourself using the bezel more than the as intuitive touch screen.

What lets it down is the lack of apps that was promised at announcement, but this will only get better with time. The OS was significantly improved recently with an update, which massively boosted the battery life and the overall UI.



The Gear S2 Classic comes in black leather but is compatible with any 20mm (Size L) strap

VERDICT

The Gear S2 Classic is a device you'll definitely wear daily and won't be bored of any time soon. But Samsung needs to make due on its promise of apps to establish itself as king of the wearables. That said, Samsung has provided us with an excellent smartwatch that is arguably the best on the market.

- + Innovative rotating bezel
- + Sophisticated look
- + Excellent battery life
- Lack of apps
- Expensive

OVERALL ★★★★★

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★	USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★	FEATURES ★★★★★
INNOVATION ★★★★★	VALUE ★★★★★

LeapFrog Epic

A kid friendly tablet is a welcome idea – but even discerning youngsters will find the Epic anything but.

Price: £99.99 Reviewer: Philip Brown

You may not have heard of Tom Kalinske, but if you're a parent of a certain age, there's a good chance you enjoyed the products of his work going up. As head of Sega America in the 1990s, Kalinske was largely responsible for the rise of the Sega Mega Drive games console. Now heading up LeapFrog, he's trying to use technology to merge toys and digital entertainment once again – and this time throwing education into the mix too.

The LeapFrog Epic is an interesting attempt at an Android tablet meant for kids, combining the security of its previous, much more walled off tablet computers with the potential of Android: a web browser and an app download store. Can it much all the freebies thrown in by Amazon's own Kids Edition Fire slate though? Let's find out.

DESIGN & BUILD

Anyone who's seen first hand how little it takes to crack the beautiful, polished veneer of an Apple iPad will appreciate that tablets meant for young children don't just need to be cheap, they need to be durable too. In this regard, the LeapFrog Epic is a winner for the simple inclusion of one accessory as standard: a case.

This is no mere polymer shell designed to prevent dust and scratches: this is the consumer tech equivalent of a bulletproof vest. With this on, you'd be hard pressed to even make a dent in the Epic, let alone fracture its screen (we found this out by chucking it around, within reason of



course). Handily, it's colourful too, which should help prevent toddlers from removing it out of boredom alone. It's clear LeapFrog has put some thought into this case: the micro USB charging port is still readily accessible through it, and you can't miss the screen/power through it either.

What you don't get: the peace of mind that comes with the similarly priced Amazon Kids Edition 6-inch Fire tablet, which not only comes with a bumper, but a pledge from the e-tail giant to replace it no matter what damage yours offspring may cause. The Epic ought to be tough enough that you won't need it, but you can never be too sure.

If your child has grown past the stage of

chewing and then throwing everything in the vicinity on the floor, you can of course remove the bumper case. Once you do, it starts to resemble something much more akin to a traditional 7-inch tablet. This too is solidly constructed, with curved edges that gave it less of a utilitarian vibe. It's an excellent size for kids who might be left struggling with something the size of an iPad Pro, or at the other end of the scale find the Kids Edition Fire HD 6 too cramped. That's not to say this is a thin and light device – quite the contrary – but that bulk does at least house an excellent speaker for watching Sesame Street clips (of which there are many, but we'll get to that).

SPEC SHEET

OS Android 4.4, proprietary skin

Processor 1.3GHz quad-core

Screen 7.0 inches

Resolution 1024 x 600 pixels

Memory 1GB RAM

Storage 16GB

MicroSD compatible? Yes

Camera 2MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing

Video VGA

Connectivity Wifi only

Dimensions 8.9 x 25.4 x 18.4 cm

Weight 1.6kg including bumper

Battery 6 hours

AT A GLANCE

Speed



2/5

Camera

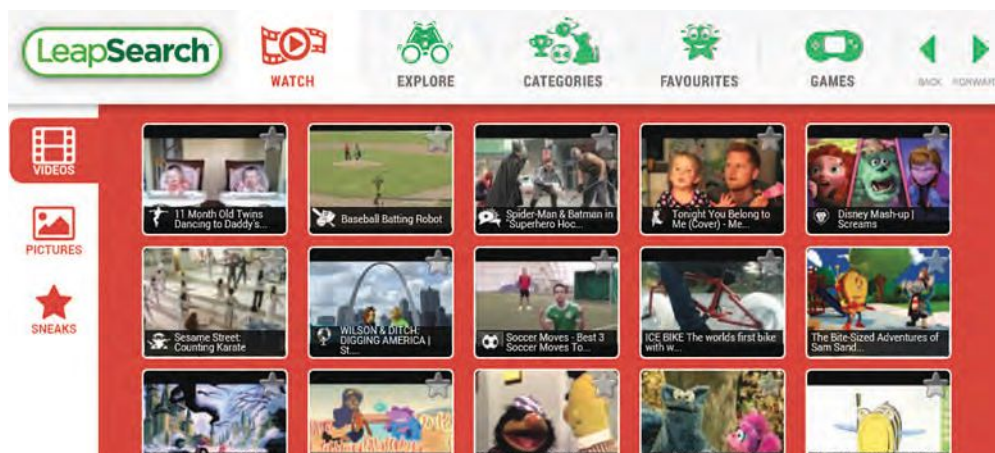


2/5

Battery



3/5



The LeapFrog Epic is a kids tablet, first and foremost, but it can't compete with Amazon

DISPLAY

Power on the Epic though and it becomes immediately clear where LeapFrog has cut corners in order to keep the price down. The display is a disappointment on multiple levels: the 1,024 x 600 resolution is too low res to make anything but basic games and brief video clips enjoyable. That's the entire purpose of the tablet, granted, but the colours and viewing angles are washed out too, which makes enjoying apps and clips together less fun. It seems a shame that LeapFrog felt the need to cut back here when Tesco's Hudl line has long proved that an Android tablet can have an excellent HD display and a low price.

Of course, unless your child has already become accustomed to Samsung AMOLED panels or Apple Retina Displays, there's a good chance they won't mind this one but. But it speaks volumes to a larger problem: this is not a well made tablet on the inside.

PERFORMANCE

Equipped with a run-of-the-mill 1.3GHz processor, the Epic does not live up to its name when it comes to performance. The best that can be said is that it's fast enough for the limited selection of apps available to download (good luck trying to run any recent games off the Amazon AppStore).

VERDICT

The LeapFrog Epic is a well thought out attempt to combine the benefits of the web and Android's open source nature with apps designed specifically for children – all in a shell that can withstand a drop from the table to the kitchen floor once or twice or 11 times. It's just a shame LeapFrog can't achieve the same scales of economy as the likes of Amazon and Tesco.

That doesn't sadly equate to a decent battery life: you'll get about six hours out of this tablet while connected to the web, and nothing more.

The two megapixel rear and front cameras on board are a disappointment too. While a 13MP selfie camera would be overkill for LeapFrog's audience, it's a pity that the rear camera is so awful as to be useless – there's a good chance that this will be the first photographic device many Epic users ever handle, so it's a shame that it has to be one that can't even take photos worth keeping (not that that would be an issue – the Epic comes with a healthy amount of storage which you can expand via microSD).

None of this would be a deal breaker if it weren't for the price. Unfortunately, LeapFrog just can't keep up with the competition here; at about £100, the Epic is more than twice the price of Amazon's cheapest 7-inch Fire Tablet, and the same price as the Kids Edition with its 'Go ahead, break me' guarantee. Granted, the former doesn't come with the built in Frozen apps, but you can still watch Frozen on it, over and over, and much more besides.

SOFTWARE

LeapFrog's USP, however, has always been the software on its devices. Until now, it's

been easy just to lock its games consoles, tablets and my-first-laptops down to its own software, but the Epic is a bit more ambitious. There's actually a web browser on here, even if it's one that provides total control for the parent over what is accessible, making this a tablet that will become more useful as its owner grows up.

It's still a kid's tablet first and foremost, mind. The home screen launcher revolves around a series of cutesy animals in a town, and the LeapFrog store is filled with educational apps and games starring recognisable cartoon characters (including, yes, Anna and Olaf). There are plenty of video clips from kids' TV shows to enjoy, and these are actually adjusted to suit the age of your child, something Amazon's Kiddy tablet does not do.

Parental controls are baked right in too. At set up, you can specify a pin code that has to be input to download any new apps or visit websites, which is helpful and much more convenient than other family control options on Android devices, which often involve setting up multiple accounts and adjusting various admin rights for each.

It has plenty of limitations, however. While a recent update does allow you to install third party apps via the Amazon AppStore, it's a fiddly process. And because the Epic is not Google-certified, you'll never be able to access the official Google Play store and its many apps aimed at kids. Lastly, LeapFrog just doesn't have the vast array of kids' TV available on demand via Amazon's video service and the excellent family mode on Netflix. Yes, you could install both of them on the Epic if you had a mind to, but why bother to go to all that trouble when Amazon's own Kids Edition tablet not only comes with one of them preloaded, but a year's subscription to suitable books and videos too? As ambitious as LeapFrog has tried to be with the Epic, it just can't match the scale of Amazon's own efforts.

OVERALL ★★★★★

PERFORMANCE

★★★★★

DESIGN

★★★★★

INNOVATION

★★★★★

USABILITY

★★★★★

FEATURES

★★★★★

VALUE

★★★★★

- + Drop proof and durable
- + Appealing apps for toddlers
- + Locked down for parental control
- Mediocre build quality
- Poor screen
- Heavily undercut by Amazon Fire tablets

BEST VALUE SMARTPHONES FOR CHRISTMAS

Christmas is just around the corner, which means you'll be spending quite a bit of your time picking out gifts for the family. With so many smartphones to choose from, it can be difficult to pick out the bargains. Online is really where it's at now, with the majority of retailers offering cheaper prices when compared with their high street equivalents. Still, that

doesn't stop companies like EE and Vodafone surprising us once in a while with some seriously cheap handsets. With this in mind, we've compiled a list of our top eight best-value handset picks for this Christmas, taking into account price-to-performance based on what they offer. Get ready for some serious stocking fillers people!



WileyFox Swift

Cheapest price: £129.99 Expansys.com

WileyFox is a brand new player in the market and has the intention of delivering quality smartphones for a fraction of the price (making the Swift perfect for this list).

Stock Android is what a lot of people covet, with the Swift you're potentially getting something better as it runs on Cyanogen. The modified OS is an improvement of the stock Android seen on Google's Nexus smartphones and arguably better with a lot more customisation. While it may not be as good as the Moto G (3rd Gen) specs-wise, it's still hot on the heels of Motorola's budget king. One for the smartphone geeks.



EE Harrier

Cheapest price: £209.99 Rakuten.co.uk

It seems everyone is making a phone nowadays and even carriers like EE are getting into the game.

The EE Harrier is impressive for a budget phone, with a 1080p full HD screen not seen in many cheap devices. To cover up the budget smartphone it is, there is a brushed metal look over the plastic that covers the back. Looking at the device you would be forgiven for thinking it's a throwback to the classic iPhone 3GS. Powering this Harrier is a Snapdragon 615 with 2GB of RAM, a lot more powerful than the Harrier Mini, making the difference in price not valid in deliberating. A perfect phone for those who want to experience 4G speeds without blowing half of their pay check. Only available through EE.





OnePlus X

Cheapest price: £199.99 OnePlus.net



OnePlus has consistently released devices that stand up to the big boys and do so with an amazing price.

Now OnePlus is going into the mid-range market with the OnePlus X and it comes with a price that will put a lot of mid-range phones to shame. What you're getting for the money is a comfortable 5-inch AMOLED screen with Gorilla Glass 3 and a Snapdragon 801 – a chip once reserved for flagships. This may be a mid-range phone but the design is far from it, OnePlus has slapped on a smooth glass back with a textured metal frame to give it a premium look. Bear in mind the OnePlus X requires an invite to buy, so you better apply for an invite ASAP and keep an eye on its social media. The effort will be worth it though, as with the OnePlus X you're getting bang for you buck.



Lenovo ZUK Z1

Cheapest price: £229.99 eBay and Amazon



Stepping on the heels of the OnePlus X is the ZUK Z1.

Slightly more expensive than the OnePlus X but much easier to buy, it shares the same Snapdragon 801 and 3GB of RAM. It's easily ordered on Amazon or through business sellers on eBay, whereas the OnePlus X is much more difficult to get your hands on with the invite-only system. Key differences are in the sizing – the ZUK Z1 nearly touches phablet territory with a 5.5 inch screen. However, the ZUK Z1 gets the additional benefits of a convenient fingerprint sensor and a massive 4100 mAh battery.



Nokia Lumia 640

Cheapest price: £89.99 Vodafone

Microsoft's cost-effective jump into the world of Windows Phone is an excellent choice if you are a fan of the platform but can't afford the more premium handsets.

With a competent (if ageing) processor, decent camera and solid battery life, it should be more than good enough for your average user. Nokia has always been known for its imaging tech and the Lumia 640 manages to inherit excellent price-to-performance for camera quality. Add to this 1GB RAM and it only helps to cement its position as a budget Windows king, ensuring that the device will be more than capable of running Windows 10 Mobile when it drops this December. Cheap and cheerful, great for mum and dad.



Huawei Ascend G7

Cheapest price: £183.59 Handtec.co.uk

Considering the price, you would be forgiven for thinking this device costs much more.

Huawei has always been at the forefront of unique design (see the Nexus 6P for that), and the Ascend G7 is an all-metal device with the price of a budget handset. With a Snapdragon 410 and 2GB RAM, it's still a powerful handset even by today's standards. Fast 4G speeds and a large battery also help it to stand out from the pack, with the only downside being a slightly lower-than-average pixel density. The included 4th generation Sony camera sensor is also a nice touch. You can still find these floating around the internet for £160-£190, which is good value considering what's crammed inside.



Vodafone Smart Ultra 6

Cheapest price: £115.00 Vodafone

The Smart Ultra 6 was something of a smartphone anomaly, having features that you'd expect in a £200+ device for only a fraction of the cost.

If you don't mind being locked to a specific network, this is the most cost-effective device currently available in the UK. It may look a little bland but the performance more than makes up for it. Inside is a Snapdragon 615 and 2GB RAM, a chip usually reserved for mid-range devices. Pair this with a decent 5.5-inch 1080p screen and a Sony camera sensor (of the cheaper variant mind you) and you have enough quality components to justify this costing a lot more. Even the battery hasn't been compromised, weighing in at a very large 3,000mAh.



Motorola Moto G (3rd Gen)

Cheapest price: £109.99 Carphone Warehouse

As this year's What Mobile Awards editor's choice winner, the Motorola Moto G had to be included on our list.

With two different configuration options available, you've got a bit of choice depending on whether you want a little faster performance for a small price increase. The base model can be picked up for just £99 and includes the trusty Snapdragon 410, 1GB RAM and 8GB expandable memory. The included 13 megapixel Sony camera sensor does a terrific job of taking photographs and offers perhaps the best image quality you can get in its class. The battery has gotten a small bump but manages to excel hugely over its predecessor, ensuring that every part of this device has been improved. Another massive hit for Motorola.





Lord of the Spies...

Steve Lord is a White Hat hacker and runs his own company, Mandalorian Security Services Ltd. With over a decade of experience on information security, he works for good and would choose to destroy the Sith, not join them. Join us every month as he gives his view on the world of privacy.

Why governments are exploiting the Paris attacks

You might wonder how low someone would have to sink in order to use a terrible attack on innocent people to push through laws that have little to no impact on the very things we're told they're designed to stop. But that's exactly what's happening. Following the horrific killings in Paris that left 130 victims dead and more than 360 injured, government leaders and officials, including Prime Minister David Cameron himself, told us that a Paris-style attack 'could happen here'. As a consequence of this, former terrorism legislation reviewer Lord Carlisle said that the Investigatory Powers Bill should be "expedited" and put into action "as soon as possible", rather than by the end of 2016.

SNOOPING

This bill, commonly referred to as the "Snooper's Charter", lets organisations from security services to the local police hack into your mobile devices for ... certain reasons. These are, of course, the same reasons used to justify the government collecting all of your Internet traffic. You might have nothing to hide, but there's no reason to compromise your mobile security to prove it.

Government officials also suggested the Paris attackers could've used Sony's PlayStation 4 to communicate. The only problem is that this isn't strictly true. Not only was there no evidence to support the claims, hackers quickly analysed

the PS4's communications and found it fairly easy to crack. Of course, no PS4 was found at the terrorists' base of operations.

SOCIAL SECRECY

Meanwhile in the US, the House of Representatives Homeland Security Committee Chairman said that there was strong indication the Paris attackers used encryption to orchestrate their plans, but this also turned out to be untrue. The attackers used Facebook and SMS messages to coordinate their attacks.

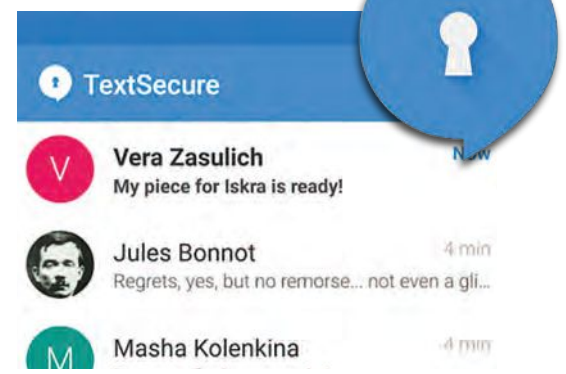
We rely on encryption to protect our emails, banking transactions and our own personal privacy. Without it, our online lives would become totally exposed to governments and cybercriminals. There simply isn't an option where we can provide encryption but also allow the government to step in when necessary. We either have privacy or we don't.

All of this leads to the things that government officials won't say. They won't tell you that the attacks were actually the fifth deadly terrorist attack in Paris' greater Ile-de France region this year. They won't tell you France already had "intelligence" powers far in excess of the UK's and still couldn't stop them. Most importantly of all, they won't tell you that statistically you're more likely to die from peanut allergies than terrorism in the UK. Encryption is a right, and it's a right worth defending.



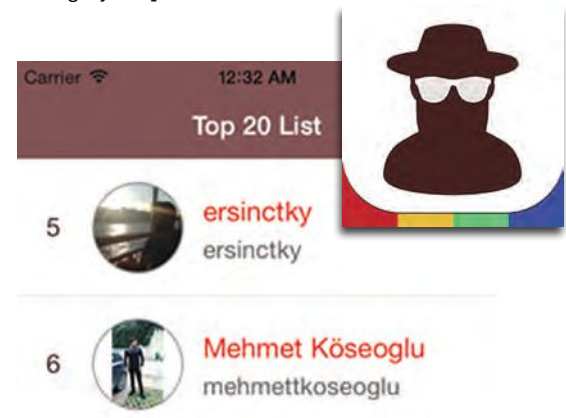
Android users get secure messaging app

iOS users have long had the luxury of using Signal, Whisper Systems' free secure encrypted voice and text messaging app. After a bit of a delay, the popular messaging tool is now available free for Android users too. Go grab it when you get a chance.



InstaAgent app yanked for stealing passwords

Fake Instagram apps are nothing new, but one rising app available for both iOS and Android has recently been pulled from both stores. InstaAgent claimed to tell users who viewed their profile, but also stole Instagram login details. If you have it, uninstall it and change your passwords now.



AT LAST – A SMARTPHONE FOR BEGINNERS

The amazing new

Doro Liberto® 82 Mini is a compact smartphone for beginners. With all of the functionality of other smartphones, it also comes with step-by-step guides on screen for all major applications.



You can buy this phone for just £1 on pay as you go at Vodafone shops nationwide and the Vodafone online store

Using the **Doro Liberto® 82 Mini** is the perfect way to join the smartphone revolution. The uniquely designed touch screen allows for easier choices and builds confidence to send messages, make calls, take photos, check the weather or even Google the crossword answers. There is also a remote helper function which means a trusted friend or family member can assist from anywhere, anytime, if needed. And when the battery is charging, the unique cradle also turns the Liberto® 820 Mini into an alarm clock, a radio, or even a digital photo frame. Smart, but simple.



Hearing Aid
Compatible



Loud and
clear sound



Built-in-
coach



My Doro
Manager



Android platform
and Google apps

doro 
www.doro.co.uk



vodafone

Now available in store and online from Vodafone

CHRISTMAS TOYS FOR LUCKY BOYS

Christmas is a time of cheer and merriment... well on paper and TV it is. What isn't mentioned is all the hard work involved to make Christmas as magical as we imagine. According to the lore, a beefy man name Nick is meant to drop down your chimney and shower all the good little boys and girls with gifts they've earned for a year of recycling, reading *The Guardian* and helping old ladies cross the street. Sadly Nick is stuck in his first chimmney waiting for the decimated London Fire Brigade to free him from a coaly hell. While we wait for that (and for someone to tell Nick to lay off the mince pies and get him a copy of *Insanity for Christmas*), we need to keep calm and carry on as usual. So that's where What Mobile comes in. We've put together a Christmas gift guide to ease your burden a wee bit. This

year we've seen a lot of cool new tech suiting different personalities and needs. It goes without saying that we've had a lot of fun making this guide, but what we really want to achieve is to make sure you, our loyal readers, have that magical Christmas you deserve! *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* is coming out on December 17 (squeal full of glee) and we got to grips with this year's most anticipated toy – Back to the Future promised us hoverboards but what we got instead is two-wheeled gliders in 2015. Not bad but we're all still waiting for actual hoverboards. We took one for a spin and included our honest opinion here. Will it be a passing fad? Or will it be our glide (sorry, well kind of sorry) to the future? Find out as we take you on a journey with our top mobile picks for the festive season.

1 Sky Drone Pro

Price £129.99 Available from Menkind

The Sky Drone Pro is M-Tech's premier drone and one of the cheapest ways to get HD recording and streaming onto your smartphone device with the included SYMA FPV software.

Surprisingly large out of the box, with a 500mm wingspan, you get a 2 megapixel camera capable of taking 720P HD and a controller with a little visual screen for showing information about the craft in flight. In practice, it took quite a bit of getting used to before we were comfortable with flying it, though after a few attempts it becomes a surprisingly simple experience. The addition of the app really makes flying a breeze once you get used to viewing the device instead of the drone itself, plus it's also incredibly cool to see your flight session being streamed in real time. Although it has a larger battery than the Sky Drone Plus, this doesn't necessarily mean it lasts longer. You'll be lucky if you get five minutes when you use the camera at the same time, something that could disappoint people.



2 Sky Drone Plus

Price £69.99 Available from Menkind

As the little brother of the Sky Drone Pro, the Plus is an even cheaper variant that misses out on the more impressive points but still manages to be a fun and cost-effective drone.

Featuring a camera capable of taking standard definition video, you'll still be able to fly it around and document your journey, albeit in reduced quality. You also have the ability to take snaps, which are saved onto the included microSD card for importing onto your computer at a later date. Flying the Plus was a little easier than the Pro, perhaps due to its smaller footprint. With an overall wingspan of 315mm, we even managed to comfortably weave it around our office with moderate success. The battery takes quite a while to charge and is good for about 10-15 minutes of stuttered flight. If you keep it in the air constantly, you'll get around five minutes on a full charge. It's a criticism that can be forgiven since the drone is so cheap in the first place.



3 PowerUp 3.0

Price £25.00 Available from Mobilefun.co.uk

If the drones above are a bit too much for the Christmas budget, fear not as the PowerUp 3.0 swoops in to save Christmas.

Basically a paper drone but one that can be controlled via Bluetooth with your phone. It was originally a Kickstarter project that has actually come to fruition. Setting up seems daunting, but fear not as there is a YouTube tutorial walking you through. The website offers different paper plane designs that can be downloaded and printed out to get yourself back in the air when it finally deteriorates. A 1200mAh portable battery is included for when you're not done having fun just yet. It only needs 10 minutes of charging before becoming operational and flight time is around 15-20 minutes depending on use. There is an app to control the plane, it handily displays how much 'fuel' you have left and signal strength. To make it an immersive experience the gyroscope of your phone is in use, tilting your phone controls the direction of the PowerUp 3.0. Bear in mind it runs on current-gen Bluetooth technology, so the range isn't suitable for long distances. Bluetooth SIG has announced new advancements in Bluetooth range, which we will most likely see in PowerUp 4.0.





STK: Explorer Camera

Price £129.99 Available from stk-acc.com

A new year also means new adventures and what better way to document it all than with a sturdy underwater camera?

The camera itself isn't waterproof, but the waterproof case included can keep water away up to 30m deep, perfect for scuba diving enthusiasts. Sadly it's a bit nippy for scuba diving but in our tests the Explorer Camera handles well in half a metre of bath water.

Video is shot in amazing high definition 1080p, while three photo modes are offered: single photo, burst photo and time lapse. There's also a wide angle lens built in to ensure you capture beautiful rolling landscapes, golden beaches and busy metropolises. While filming a sunset on top of Primrose Hill for a few hours, the time lapse mode captured every little detail, truly capturing all that you're seeing through your own eyes. What really impressed us is the interface with the STK app and the camera. By installing the app you can control the camera remotely to take pictures. You can hang yourself off a cliff, take a snap, view the snap while you're hanging and deliberate whether to delete it and take another (while your core strength can still hang on of course). For the price you're getting a lot of accessories with it a helmet mount, adhesive tape, seven different mounts and a spare battery. What it doesn't come with, sadly, is a SD card, but that doesn't matter as much seeing as SD cards are relatively cheap to pick up. We reviewed the Explorer Camera with a grade 10 write speed, an essential to take pictures efficiently.



Kaiser Baas Revo Glider

Price £399 Available from Casehut.com

Kaiser Baas has developed a glider that's truly quality. It may be all plastic but you get the sense of quality immediately.

Being new tech you're going to wonder whether it's safe to use, especially a device that requires a good amount of equilibrium from you. Give the Revo Glider a pick-up and straight away it can be felt that it'll be able to support even the most rotund of your mates. Getting on the Glider for the first time will scare you – remember the first time you rode a bike? Childhood memories of scraped knees and victorious glee will start flooding your mind in 10 minutes, which is all you need to get accustomed to your balance and the glider, before you start whizzing off to the corner shop. Charging the device takes up to three hours. Revo have stated more than three hours will over-charge the battery and is not recommended. A big technical oversight. For the sake of the review (and science) we tested whether it was possible to go to the toilet while still mounted to the board. The result was a resounding success with some admittedly scary moments. Bear in mind we had practiced with it for about an hour before doing something admittedly stupid (please don't try this at home, the majority of accidents happen in the bathroom). The Revo Glider has nothing to do with smartphones, though you could probably take a selfie video while riding it. However, we wouldn't recommend this unless you want a selfie with blood and a shattered ego.

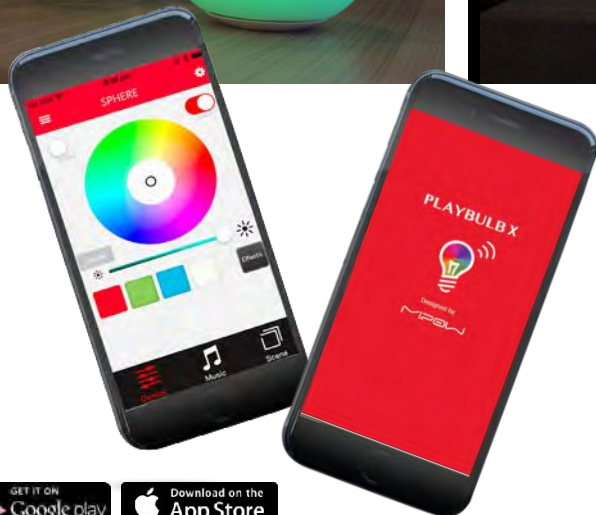


PLAYBULB™

Colour changing lamp for every mood

Bluetooth® Smart LED Colour Décor Lamp controlled from your smartphone


MobileFun.co.uk
Everything First



PLAYBULB™ sphere

Light up any room with the new PLAYBULB™ sphere. Made from real glass the sphere is a Bluetooth smart LED colour lamp that lets you choose the colour, whatever your mood. Simply control from your App and create the perfect atmosphere, all from your smartphone.

10m wireless range | 8 hours playback time | Bluetooth 4.0 | Portable design
Smartphone app controlled | Compatible with iOS and Android smartphone
Built-in battery | Includes wireless charging dock | Brightness and group control
Switch on/off with a slight tap





6 Storm Trooper Bluetooth Speaker

Price £39.99 Available from Menkind

When it comes to cheap Bluetooth speakers, you usually expect pretty cheap sound quality.

Imagine our surprise then, when we plugged in this Star Wars themed accessory and were actually treated to a pretty decent little speaker. While it won't blow you away sonically, there's plenty of treble in the top end and instruments cut through nicely. A distinct lack of bass was to be expected, but at this price point can you really grumble? For only forty quid, you're getting something that even the Empire would be proud of. Let's not forget all the TIE fighters were mass produced on a budget as well and they turned out to be good (sort of). The rated five-hour battery seemed reasonable during our testing and we left it running for several hours without any sign of it cutting out.

7 Star Wars BB-8

Price £115.00 Available from Mobilefun.co.uk

One of the hottest Christmas presents this year has arrived in our office and with a price tag to match.

To commemorate the launch of the new Star Wars film, Disney has produced a miniature model of the new BB8 droid. On initial impression, you'd expect it to be quite big given the size of the box. On closer inspection, it's actually a very small droid indeed. Not only that... but we would argue it's a little plasticky too. Still, it's the features that count and thankfully, BB8 is actually quite a fun little thing. After downloading the rather large companion app on your smartphone device (Android and iOS only), you're given the choice of several modes with which to control your new pet. You can set him to just roam around autonomously, or control him directly and watch him speed along the floor just like in the trailers. There's even a boost button to give him an extra burst of speed. Plus there's also voice activation modes for telling the little guy "it's a trap" and the ability to beam an augmented reality hologram with your mobile device. A great one to get for the kids, if a little expensive.



8 Olixar Anti-Lost Device & Key Finder

Price £14.99 Available from Mobilefun.co.uk

Got someone you know that's always losing their keys? Well here's something to help them with their day-to-day life. Olixar has produced a lightweight anti-lost and key finder fob that pretty much does what was mentioned. The fob is small, weighing 8 grams, and has a safe rubber grip on the front and back of it. We recommend attaching it with a sturdier key chain, as the one included is a bit flimsy. Setting up the fob is relatively easy, following the instruction will tell you to download Radarman to set up and use the device. You'd be forgiven for thinking that it's only an anti-loss device, but it's packed with extra features that's proved to be very handy. Once activated the fob will be on constant alert, sounding an alarm if you the connection with your phone is severed. In the app you can set how far you can go before the alarm goes off – the range is up to 30 metres maximum. You can also use it to take selfies by pressing the tactile button on the fob, giving you new angles for the perfect picture. Voice recordings are activated the same way, perfect if you're recording a lecture but you're stuck in a seat at the back.

9 Sound Wave Gear 4 Speaker

Price £25.99 Available from HMV

Another top budget performer, the Sound Wave Gear 4 has a surprisingly deep bottom end and managed to convey a very neutral frequency across the spectrum.

The top end is not as accentuated as other speakers we've tested and the mid-range can be a little condensed, but you get a pretty full-range speaker for under fifty quid that doesn't sound flat and boring. We nearly always find ourselves commenting on the muffled sound quality of budget speakers that punch above their weight, so it's nice to see a welcome change in this one and a return to form after the disappointing Street Party Wireless 3. The six-hour battery is also pretty modest for this price-point, offering plenty of time to keep the festivities raging on.



10 JBL Pulse 2

Price £169.99 Available from jbl.com

The JBL Pulse 2 is a brand new Bluetooth Speaker from the Harman audio subsidiary which also doubles up as a party light.

Sporting a large 6,000mAh battery that supports up to 10 hours of life, it should be more than enough for an extended listening session with your buddies. Frequency response is rated at a reasonable 85Hz-20kHz, which we found to be fairly accurate in testing. Mid-bass punches through well on most tracks, with the thud of each kick drum resonating our office walls. Tracks with lots of low end will suffer as there is a distinct absence of sub-bass but this is a problem with Bluetooth speakers in general, not just the JBL. Audio quality on the whole is excellent from this thing and it performs far better than its size would suggest. Once you've figured out the right way to have it placed, you'll notice a good amount of detail across the spectrum and plenty of snap in the transients. Clarity is top notch, which is always the sign of a decent Bluetooth speaker as most tend to be a bit muffled. The overall volume level is also decent, with enough power to really crank it up when you feel in the mood. Besides the sound, the other centrepiece of this speaker is the lights, which illuminate to the beat of the song and flow around the speaker grille almost like liquid. The included colour sensor works brilliantly, matching whatever colour you hold in front of it. This makes for some pretty trippy patterns when you start combining various shades. JBL has also handily included an optional 'Connect' application that can be downloaded on Android and iOS, allowing further customisation of your listening experience. Two speakers can be paired together and more for a true party experience.

11 60X-100X Microscope

Price £14.99 Available from Mobilefun.co.uk

Cheap devices such as this are usually pretty disappointing and gimmicky, so we were surprised to see that it actually works pretty damn well.

After a bit of fiddling to get the focus correct, you really do have a fully functioning microscope in your pocket. Capable of zooming in up to 100X, you'll be able to check out every speck of dust and hair on you brittle skin, or inspect that fly which died in the corner of the room. The addition of an LED lamp also makes it pretty useful in darker conditions... though we're not quite sure why you'd be using a microscope in the dark. Proof that even the silliest ideas can turn out to be quite fun!



12 LIFX Colour 1000 Smartbulb

Price £64.99 Available from Screwfix

A light bulb to end all light bulbs is the short and sweet of this review.

LIFX has produced the only light bulb you'll ever need. Another Kickstarter project that came through, what appealed to people to invest in the Color 1000 is the fact that it is the smartbulb of the future. In one bulb there is 16 million colours you can change it to with the LIFX app. Interface with the app is responsive and the app itself is clear and not complicated at all. A feature that really impressed us is the music visualiser. With access to the mic of your smartphone, it will listen to the music in the room and flicker according to the song. House party anyone? It has a lifespan of 27 years and only consumes 18 watts at its brightest setting. Set the mood from when you wake up to when you get home by scheduling certain colours for the right mood you're in. Easily done through the app or even your wearable.



13 Playbulb Rainbow, Garden, Candle

Price £14.99-£39.99 Available from Mobilefun.co.uk

Yet another Kickstarter success story from MiPow.

MiPow's Playbulb range are smartbulbs that can be manipulated through the app MiPow X. Playbulb Garden is self-sufficient, recharging its 650mAh battery with solar energy. It's also weather-resistant with a light sensor to switch itself on and off. Playbulb Candle is an evolution from your primitive candle with excellent features and smartphone compatibility. Set the light to any colour you want, add scented discs (included) to the base and switch it off by blowing it out like a real candle. Finally we have the Rainbow. It works like the Candle with colours being manipulated through the app. The Rainbow is built with aluminium alloy for better heat management and painted white to retain a classic ceramic look. With an A+ energy rating it's surprisingly bright. You'll be saving money in the long run with this investment.

14 iKettle

Price £99.00 Available from Mobilefun.co.uk

If you're the type of person who enjoys being ultra lazy, the iKettle could be right up your alley.

With a dedicated iPhone application allowing automated boiling from anywhere in your home network, making a cuppa has never been easier. We found the setup to be extremely quick and the kettle was discovered instantly. After this, you have various temperatures which can be selected to make your perfect brew, plus other options for green tea drinkers and the like. Boiling is as simple as hitting the big glowing button on your smartphone screen. From there, you'll bear witness to the kettle jumping to life on its own and hitting the desired temperature. It really is smarthome technology at its best. It's probably not the fastest kettle in the world, taking 15 seconds longer than our office unit, but who cares... you can make it boil from the other side of the room!





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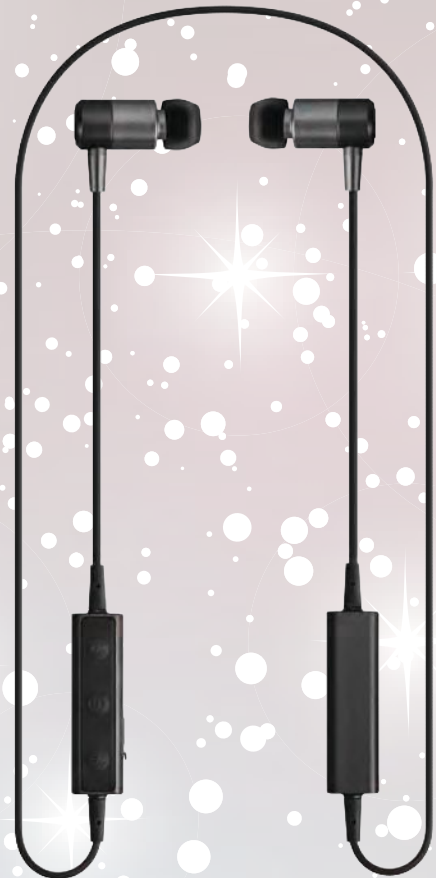
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15 Xqisit IE200 Bluetooth Earphones

Price £49.99 Available from Boots

Listen to music in style with the new IE200 Bluetooth headphones from Xqisit.

Featuring a pretty extended frequency response and natural sound tone, they won't look out of place hanging around your neck. Being that they are Bluetooth headphones, you'll also get the benefit of full wireless audio. Connecting was a bit of an issue, with several of our devices failing to see them at first. After a few attempts, we finally got them working and managed to get a glimpse of the audio quality they offer. The sound could definitely be described as more neutral, with a response that doesn't really drift either way. Clarity is decent and there's a nice representation of the soundstage... But wait, did we also mention they're also magnetic? Attached to the back of each speaker driver is a tiny magnet that allows you to conveniently stick them together while on the move. At first we thought it seemed like a gimmick but after a few uses it starts to make a lot of sense. Add to this a premium metal build quality and you have a very good set of in-ear cans for the money.



16 Classic Wraps

Price £19.99 Available from wrapswear.uk

Cheap and cheerful, these are a good quality pair of headphones that also have the advantage of doubling as a trendy wristband.

Simply wrap the cable around your wrist and pull the headphones tight for convenient storage access on the move. Sound quality is nothing to frown about either, with a pleasant if slightly forward sound. The 20hz-20khz frequency response means you'll get plenty of bass, though they definitely veer on the bright side, with cymbals and percussion at the forefront of the soundstage and a reserved but controlled low end. Still, we were very impressed with the stereo field and the presentation of the sound, something that is rarely found at this budget price point.



17 iRig Pro DUO

Price £140.95 Available from ikmultimedia.com

IK multimedia continues to produce quality devices for mobile recording and the iRig Pro DUO is the latest addition to its line-up.

Featuring a plethora of I/O capabilities, it is fully compatible with iPad, iPhone, Android, Mac and PC. The device has two XLR combo inputs, two jack outputs, independent gain controls and MIDI connectivity support. This is in addition to direct monitoring and phantom power. This puts it in the league of desktop level audio interfaces that you would usually find powering a home studio, except that it's a fraction of the size. We found the preamps to be of a high quality, with decent amounts of gain and a low noise floor. In fact, it felt very similar to the already excellent iRig Pro, just with more connectivity. This is not necessarily a bad thing, as the other device was already about as good as you can get for a mobile studio. It may be a bit on the pricey side compared with home interfaces but you're paying for the portability here, and in that instance it is very hard to fault.



18 GlocalMe

Price £106.00 Available from Amazon.co.uk

Roaming charges have finally been made illegal in Europe, but the law won't be in effect until 2017.

In the mean time you can pick up the GlocalMe, which offers a Wi-Fi connection wherever you go in the world. A sim card is built into the device, which you top up with credit bought on GlocalMe's official website. Setting everything up is a relatively quick and easy process. Simply connect to it like you would any Wi-Fi hot spot and off you go. There's not much to navigate on the screen. There's a simple interface displaying four screens: usage counter, information page, helpline and a QR code. It performs like a dream, loading up a HD YouTube video was instantaneous, with only a single hiccup. Making a call with WhatsApp was straightforward and the call itself had plenty of clarity. On a speed test the GlocalMe G1S gave us 5.5MB with upload speed not so far behind with 4MB. Meaning the GlocalMe is ideal not only for communicating but to also share photos and videos over social media (Snapchatters cheer away). The GlocalMe G1S features a micro USB and a USB port, to not only charge the device but also act as a powerbank for your device. There is a 6000mAh battery packed inside, enough for a day's use.



19 Muvi X-Lapse

Price £19.99 Available from Mobilefun.co.uk

Ever watched something on TV and thought "Wow that must have taken time and dedication to take that shot"?

Well most of the time yes, but for the lazier (or smarter) photographer there's tools like the Muvi X-Lapse. With the Muvi X-Lapse you can snap your smartphone into place and wind the timer for an immersive time lapse video recording. A smartphone with a time lapse mode is of course needed for the intended result. Unlike an egg timer it also has legs that fold out for increase stability, the clip-up top can also be taken off to be mounted with a hot shoe for your SLR camera.



20 Olixar Joystick-It

Price £9.99 Available from Mobilefun.co.uk



If you're one of those people who loves gaming on the move, the Olixar Joysticks are well worth a look.

Essentially an analogue stick with a suction cup on the bottom, they allow you to enjoy real force feedback rather than relying on the touchscreen. On paper, this should mean better control in your games, though that wasn't necessarily true all the time. Getting them to stick was quite difficult, as was making sure they were in the right place for optimal efficiency. Once you've figured this out though, things are actually not that bad. You will find yourself occasionally missing things or moving in the wrong direction but it's hardly a criticism considering the cheap price. They mostly work well which, for the money, is a decent effort.

21 **Xiaomi Mi Bank 10,000 mAh**

Price £12.62 Available from Amazon.co.uk

Xiaomi's Mi Bank is the best value for money power bank on sale. The only other power bank that tops this is the newer and bigger 20,000mAh Mi Power Bank also from Xiaomi. The displayed power bank capacity is usually not the amount you're going to get. Xiaomi has stated a charge of 6250mAh will be available to charge your devices. In our tests with an iPhone 5S, we found that we could squeeze out four full charges and a fifth charge up to 60%. Aside from performing pass expectations, the Mi Power Bank oozes quality with an aluminium alloy body that is smooth to the touch. With it's compact size you will barely even know it's even on you.



22 **Cobra JumPack CP7500**

Price £79.99 Available from Argos.co.uk



Here we have a power bank for someone that always has the solution. Phone battery dying?

Need a torch? You car battery died? Pretty sure that last problem caught your eye. Yes this power bank can solve all those problems and jump start your car's battery. Cobra states the battery has to be at full charge before attempting to do a jump start. The power bank is only 7500mAh, meaning it'll be less than stated, a standard for power banks. We managed to charge our S6 three times with a fourth time reaching over 50%. There's also the torch, extremely handy if you break down at night in the middle of nowhere. An excellent gift for petrol heads.

23 **Adidas and Diesel Cases**

Price £19.99-£24.99 Available from Adidas and Diesel

Cases are always great stocking fillers but these are far from that. Getting a new case feels like you're getting a new phone, slap on the famous brand with the three stripes – Adidas, you will feel your phone's vibe again. Adidas crafted this case with glossy premium plastic and clips onto your phone with ease. If that's not your thing Adidas also offers a smooth suede case, as seen on its iconic trainers, with a minimalist design. Diesel has sewn on that distinct denim feel on a case. Not only will you now be able to feel that soft denim on your thighs, but now across your fingers. You won't need a screen protector with this closed case. It also has slots for your cards.



24 **Dome8 Case**

Price £24.95. Available from Dome8.com

What is it that you have, that you're spending right now and will never geat a refund for?

Time. Time is what you lose every morning when trying to untangle that ball of mess you call earphones. Dome8 has come up with the solution and that's a case which can hold your earphones for you. With a malleable rubber ring on the back, your earphones can easily be tucked away, with the innovative wire management. Most importantly, they will not get tangled. There's also two mounts to slot your earphones in, making this a must have for neat freaks.



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Wherever you go, whatever you're into, Survivor rugged cases for iPhone make sure you're ready for anything.



WatchStand Charging Dock

WatchStand is the elegant way to charge and display your Apple Watch.



Shop griffintechology.com for the best in protective cases, innovative chargers, long-life cables and more.

Serial cliff-hanger

This month sees a season's finale plus some 8-bit nostalgia to help you while away the hours.

Reviewer: Thomas Wellburn – for full reviews, check out WhatMobile.net

Game of Thrones Episode 6: Ice Dragon

(Android and iOS) Free (in-app purchases)

Telltale's Game of Thrones title has now reached episode 6, as it continues to follow the story of House Forrester. After the big split between Asher and Rodrik, things have been in a bit of turmoil. Expect more uncomfortable decisions as the first season of this popular series concludes.



Mobile Strike

(Android and iOS) Free (in-app purchases)

An average base-builder/ RPG at best, Mobile Strike is neither pretty nor interesting to play and feels a bit convoluted for what it has to offer. Set in modern times, it's your job to upgrade your base and units by completing missions, though it never really feels fun in the menu-heavy user interface.



Real Boxing 2 Creed

(Android and iOS) Free (in-app purchases)

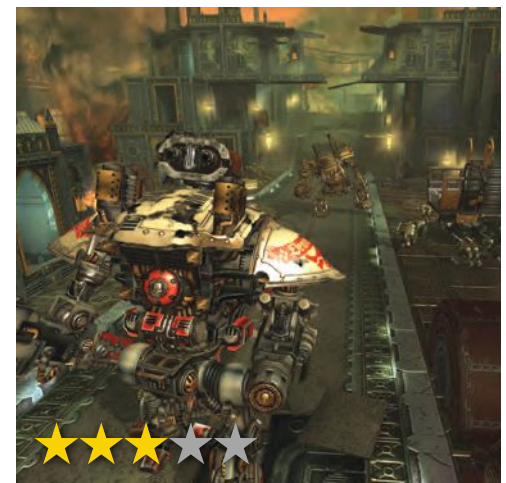
First of all, it's quite impressive to see a mobile game running on Unreal Engine 4. Second of all, this is actually a pretty good film tie in with some deep gameplay behind the initial bland combat. If you can spend the time with it, you'll appreciate the improvements made over the previous instalment.



Warhammer 40,000: Freeblade

(iOS only) Free (in-app purchases)

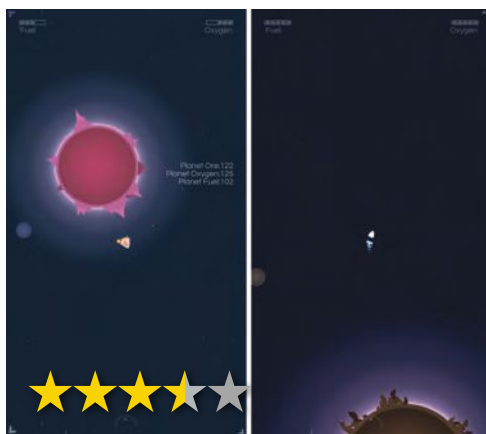
Finally, a game that actually supports 3D Touch! A fully three-dimensional RPG that has plenty of action and customisation. The only thing letting it down is the in-app purchases, which rack up quite a bit of money if you're willing to fork out for a 'gold package'.



Last Horizon

(Android and iOS) £2.39

A puzzler at heart, Last Horizon puts the player in control of a spaceship as it flies from planet to planet mining resources. Fuel and oxygen keep you alive, while ore can be used to repair any damage done to the ship. Avoid the obstacles and search for a new home world to inhabit!



Coin-Op Heroes 2

(Android and iOS) Free (in-app purchases)

If you're a fan of classic coin-operated clicker titles, then this might be worth a look. Although it can seem a bit repetitive and dull, the screen fills quickly and the 8-bit visuals can make it difficult to see things at times. There's also an interesting warrior system that features some strategic elements.



The Last Vikings

(Android and iOS) Free (in-app purchases)

Last Vikings is a cute little 8-bit RPG that tries to keep things simple. Controlling a small group of Nordic warriors, you plunder various camps for loot and use a longboat to traverse between the various islands. With new loot comes new weapons and upgrades to further enhance your power!



Wizards and Wagons

(Android and iOS) £3.99

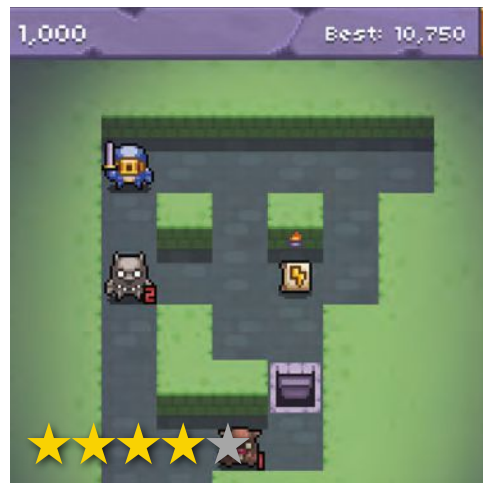
Wizards and Wagons puts the player in control of a merchant as he travels between towns selling and trading goods. Of course, the big wide world is full of monsters and you must defend yourself using a tower defence style battle mechanic. If you're after a slower paced title, this is worth a try.



Tiny Rogue

(iOS only) £2.29

Another game brimming with 8-bit nostalgia, Tiny Rogue is a turn-based dungeon crawler where you must get to the exit before the enemy inevitably hurts you first. Random objectives keep things interesting and a points scoring system means you'll always be going back to beat your previous best record.



LEGO Ninjago: Shadow of Ronin

(iOS only) £3.99

Carrying on the LEGO Ninjago series, Shadow of Ronin is the third title and carries the same excellent voice acting and witty script that stood out in its predecessors. Unfortunately, the implementation is poor. A good game let down by the basics.



New year resolution

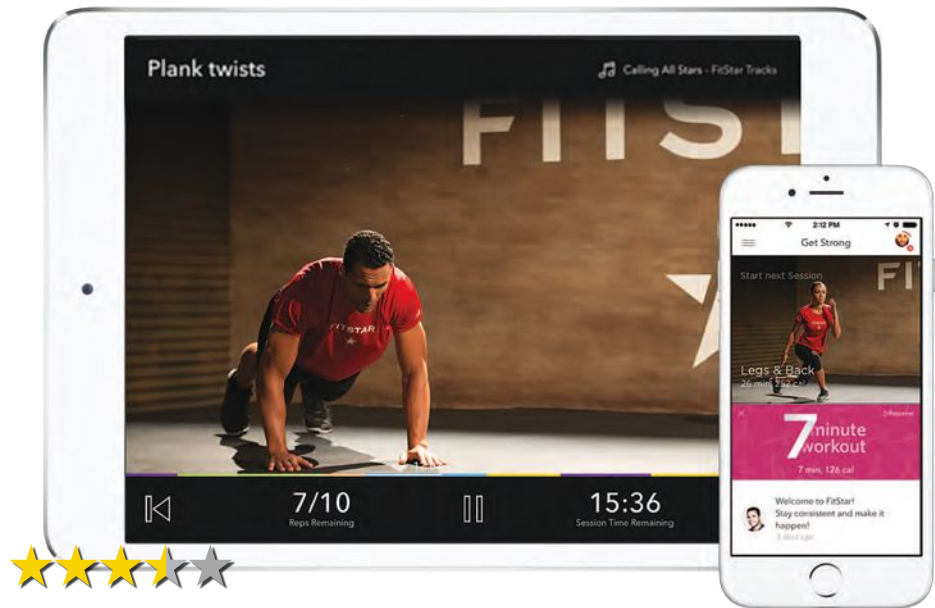
Banish the January blues with the latest iOS and Android apps to help you get more from your handset.

Reviewer: Manny Pham – for full reviews, check out WhatMobile.net

Fitstar Personal Trainer

(iOS and Android) Free

Thinking of joining a gym in the New Year to craft that new you? Well it looks like you can save yourself from that extortionate joining fee with FitStar Personal Trainer. FitStar Personal Trainer is now available for Android users too. Go on an intensive course of core building workouts with American football star Tony Gonzalez.



Postsnap

(iOS) Free

The holiday season is upon us and soon you will be inundated with mountains of Christmas cards. Save a few trees and send a personalised Postsnap instead. With Postsnaps you can get creative and send something that can be stored and looked back upon for years.



Depop

(iOS and Android) Free

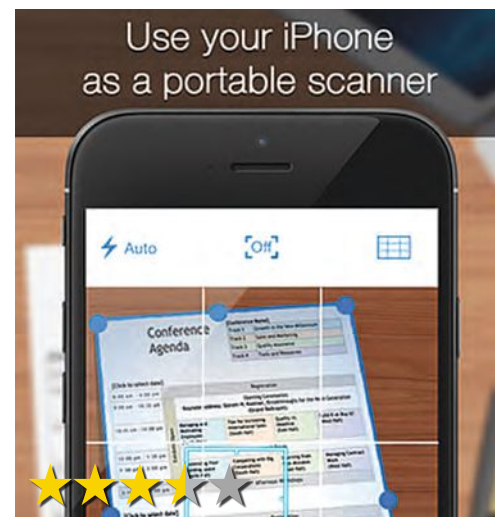
Imagine if Instagram and eBay had a baby, Depop will come... well popping out. Start selling your stuff by simply snapping a picture and listing it straight away. Depop boasts 18 million unique items on sale and you can also chat to the seller before making your mind up.



iScanner

(iOS) Free

An essential for those of you who ride a desk all day. Do away with primitive scanner and fax machines and step into the 21st century. With iScanner you can simply take a picture of a document and turn it into a PDF, ready to be attached to an email and send.



Tube Map London Underground

(iOS, Android and Windows) Free

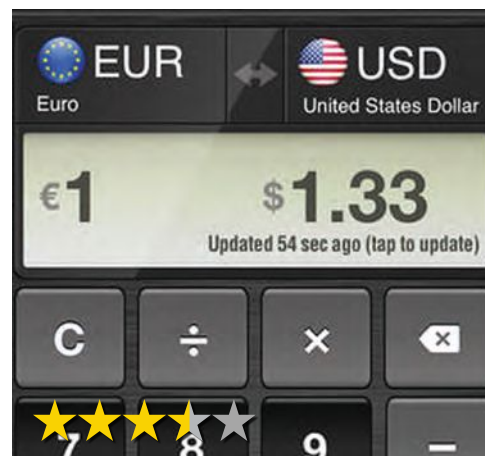
The London Underground can be confusing to those who are new to the city. With works to improve the historic tube, you can avoid disruption to your journey with Tube Map. It comes in multiple languages and also Apple watch compatible, so you can be regularly updated on the go.



Currency Converter HD

(iOS) £1.49

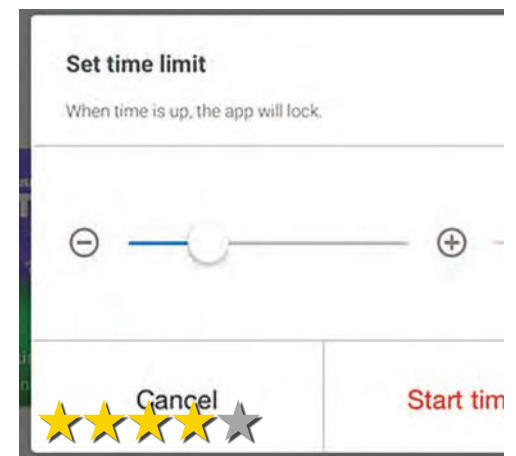
There are a lot of currency converting apps out there and not all are quality. We have another for you here, Currency Converter HD. Shopping in Madrid and don't know whether the Pound is strong enough at the moment? It usually is but cast doubt away by downloading this handy converter.



YouTube Kids

(iOS and Android) Free

Things have changed over the years, no longer are kids rushing home to catch their favourite cartoons on TV. Instead they're on YouTube watching all kinds of creative content. YouTube Kids filters content to ensure a child-friendly experience for the little ones. Terms such as "sex" and "kill" are moderated and blocked.



Fake Call

(Android) Free

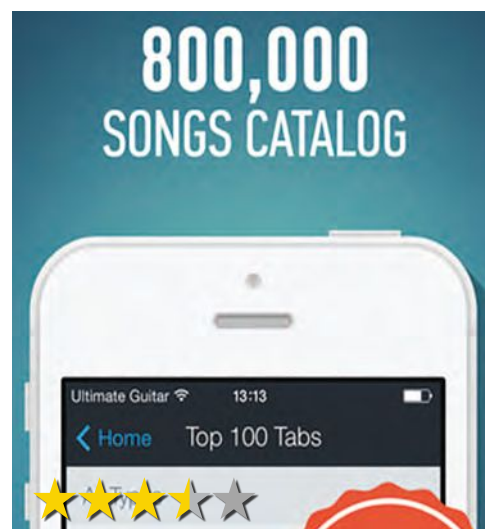
Got a date that isn't going well? All your friends are too busy to give you that get out phone call? Fear not as Fake Call is here to get you out of a really awkward situation. Customise a fake caller ID and schedule for that date that may go wrong, or get out of that meeting you don't need to be in.



Ultimate Guitar Tabs

(iOS and Android) £0.79

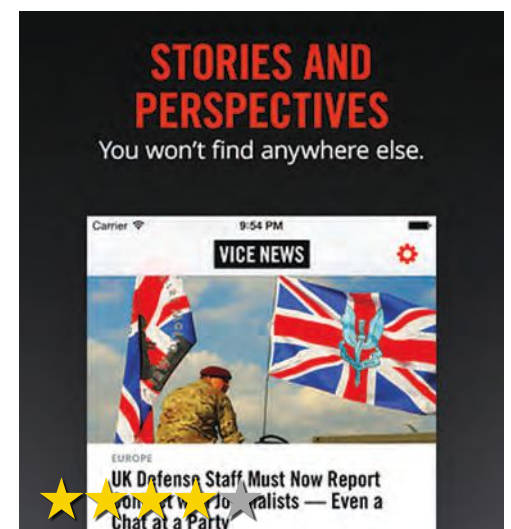
Ever said to yourself "this year is going to be the year I learn guitar and finally be cool?" Well first of all you're already cool, but if you really want to shred it Tom Morello style, Ultimate Guitar Tabs is for you. Learn the latest songs which are regularly updated. There's also left handed view for you lefties.



Vice News

(iOS and Android) Free

All news outlets write very similar things with a slightly different opinion. It's boring, Vice News offers stories from the bondage scene of Japan to blogs from outspoken transgender bloggers. A quick and easy app to use, one that will make you very interesting at lunch time.



Nintendo 3DS

Yet another remake of a Pokémon title on the 3DS is one for fans of nostalgia.

Reviewer: Manny Pham – for full reviews, check out WhatMobile.net

Pokémon Alpha Sapphire/ Omega Ruby ★★★★★

Developer: Game Freak **Publisher:** Nintendo

Where to Buy: In-Store **Price:** £34.99

Pokémon is back again bringing that classic RPG formula to our portable screens. What's changed you may ask? Not much, as we see another remake of a beloved Pokémon title. Pokémon Sapphire and Ruby were released back in 2002, introducing us to the Hoenn region and its new Pokémon.

Depending on which title you choose, you will face different adversaries. Alpha Sapphire has Team Aqua going all out testament on everyone, trying to flood the world to cleanse it. Omega Ruby are stuck with Team Magma who simply just want to burn everything.

What has changed is the graphics, both titles run on the Pokémon X & Y engine to bring life and beauty into the Hoenn region. Random battles aren't so bad now with the new look, but still they do get quite cumbersome after a while.

An even bigger burden is the need for HM moves, a flaw in Sapphire and Ruby highlighted all those years ago, but alas has not been addressed. There are six HM moves whereas X & Y had an improved 5 (X & Y is also better balanced). HM moves are required to access certain areas of the game, so this means having a Zigzagoon HM slave occupying your sixth slot.

Secret bases make a return, allowing you to smash open a cave

and create your very own hideout. You can customise it Animal Crossing style with furniture and truly make it your own. Want to be a gym leader? Customise your hideout to look like one and battle your friends for bragging rights. Once you beat them down and make them your cronies, you can then share your hideout for people to check out, via QR code.

More great features from X & Y are present here, our favourite being DexNav, a tool that displays all the Pokémon you've already caught in a certain route. Once you do "catch 'em all" a crown appears to notify you that you've caught all the possible wild Pokémon in the area. An excellent feature for those who intend on playing after the main adventure, and to "catch 'em all." The DexNav is also a scanner, every once in a while a Pokémon will appear physically and you can sneak up on it. The scanner will identify levels and hidden move sets that you may desire, before provoking it.

That's not the only extra goody to keep you playing – after defeating the Elite 4 an extra side story called Delta Episode unlocks. Delta Episode links the story to X & Y somewhat and more back story on mega evolutions. Delta Episode is definitely worth playing as you'll get to catch the legendary Deoxys, who proved to be an immense challenge, one maybe worthy of that one Master Ball you have.

Alpha Sapphire and Omega Ruby is one for nostalgia and for those who desire to fully complete their Pokédex with Pokémon from the Hoenn region. With modern features implemented the gameplay is much improved, but the original DNA of the game remains the same.



Chibi-Robo!: Zip Lash

Developer: Nintendo **Publisher:** Nintendo

Where to Buy: In-Store **Price:** £24.99 ★★★★★

Chibi-Robo was working at a space station when a distress call from Earth alerts his attention to invading aliens who are stealing natural resources. An unrealistic story as the US would have nuked them all before they'd have the chance. We're talking about a country that would probably annex Canada if they can't make Big Macs in time.

Guide Chibi-Robo as you traverse through levels in the sky, sea and land. With it being a Nintendo title you can expect platforming done right. The controls are sharp and responsive to your touch, with only three main controls you need to know being jump, whip lash and the titular zip lash. Again with it being Nintendo the controls are kept simple to let the level design speak for itself. The levels force you to be creative to solve puzzles and use the environment to your advantage.

An annoying feature Chibi-Robo!: Zip Lash has is selecting stages. Once you beat a stage in one tier, a numbered spinner will appear, determining how many spaces you move around the six stages. You can easily land on a stage you've already completed and will have to replay to access the spinner again. Stages can be bypassed with in-game currency 'moolah', which we used to only advance one space to ensure we play all of the stages without repeating. Rendering the spinner feature useless.

Chibi-Robo!: Zip Lash is a decent platformer but nothing groundbreaking. There are a lot of excellent platformers on the 3DS already. Chibi-Robo should be considered after you breeze through them.



Adventure Time: Finn & Jake Investigations ★★★★★

Developer: Viscious Cycle Software **Publisher:** Little Orbit

Where to buy: In-Store **Price:** £15.99

In this point and click adventure reminiscent of Monkey Island, there is more immersion as you can move Finn and Jake around unlike other click and point adventure games. The story begins with Finn and Jake discovering the Ticker Type, a device their parents used when they ran an investigation agency. Inspiring the delightful duo to start their own investigation agency – Finn and Jake Investigations.

There are five chapters to go through as you traverse Ooo, talking to it's citizens to find problems you can solve. Any click and point adventure game worth its salt has to be charming and interesting through dialogue and story. You can definitely expect this with Adventure Time: Finn and Jake Investigations as it's really well written with dialogue that'll keep you engaged. It also helps that the entire voice cast of the show, reprised their role for this game, retaining the authenticity and uniqueness of Adventure Time. This will definitely please fans who are known to go quite over the top with their obsession with the animated series.

Gameplay is focused mainly on exploration and puzzles. There is combat with team combo attacks from Finn and Jake. But this really feels like padding to add to the experience, there isn't really a challenge in pressing one button to overcome enemies.

PlayStation Vita

Strategic battle simulator makes its debut on the Vita and feels like it was made for the handheld.

Reviewer: Thomas Wellburn – for full reviews, check out WhatMobile.net

Dynasty Warriors 8 Empires

Developer: Omega Force **Publisher:** Koei Tecmo

Where to Buy: In-Store **Price:** £19.99



It's taken a while but Dynasty Warriors 8 Empires has arrived on the PlayStation Vita and boy, was it worth the wait. Everything has been carried over from the console versions, which means a fully strategic battle simulator complete with hack 'n' slash elements. To give a bit of background, Dynasty Warriors Empires is a popular spin-off of the franchise that focuses more on large-scale army management than the story-based progression found in the standard games. For players new to the series this can be somewhat daunting, though it's worth persevering as it adds a whole other dimension to the game.

Graphically, it's not exactly a looker and has been seriously toned down compared with its console counterpart. Textures are very low resolution and environments feel very empty, though the character models are mostly okay. These technical cut-backs were likely done to achieve a smooth frame-rate on the handheld, which we're glad to report has worked. Even during the more tensely packed scenes, there didn't seem to be any noticeable slowdown.

It's worth noting that there are still storyline elements in the game, they're just greatly reduced. The game begins with you creating your character and choosing their move set, before giving the opportunity to customise your army. Everything from their clothing to the banner

and even the horses can be altered, giving plenty of opportunity for some unusual designs. Cross-save functionality also means you'll be able to use PS4 characters on the Vita and vice-versa.

When you've finally finished having fun with the incredibly deep army creation tool, it's time to jump into the actual gameplay. Empires follows Chinese history to provide context for the battles but from there it's up to you. Depending on the outcome, you're essentially free to re-write things as you see fit. Things are played out in a month-by-month scenario, with time between major battles to plan strategies and manage your empire. The whole thing can get quite menu heavy and at higher difficulties really becomes an integral part of your pre-fight planning. When the battle inevitably arrives, you'll be glad you made those alliances.

In terms of the actual fighting mechanics, this is Dynasty Warriors through and through. Generals are assigned to their posts and areas must be captured to advance the battle further. From there, you'll likely be running around solo cutting things up in your path and chaining combos. Stratagem cards are back and grant a series of single-use special abilities on the field. The implementation of them on the Vita is so much better than the console versions, with the cards only needing a touch-tap to activate. Once a battle has ended, you get various rewards and bonus points for your performance, plus resources for upgrades. Koei Tecmo is making good strides with the series and Dynasty Warriors 8 Empires is one of their best additions yet, such is the perfect pick-up-and-play gameplay.



WRC 5



Developer: Kylotonn Games **Publisher:** Bigben Interactive
Where to Buy: In-Store **Price:** £19.99

The WRC franchise is back with a new developer and a new lease of life. Unfortunately, the graphics have also been seriously downgraded and this is perhaps one of the ugliest looking PS Vita titles we've experienced in a long time. It would probably look more at home on the original PSP than its newer equivalent. Textures are horribly low resolution and everything just looks a bit bland and empty. The draw distance is equally laughable, with fine scenery popping into view just a few metres in front. Car models are a little better but still nothing to write home about. The same goes for the sound, which seems to have taken another beating. Engine noises are not only drab but incredibly boring; they don't sound like the cars they're supposed to portray.

Thankfully, the gameplay is improved and has several modes to choose from. Everything from the previous games is carried over, including the impressive career mode where you start as a lowly junior driver and build up to the highest tiers. Driving mechanics are solid and feel robust, with plenty of customisation for seasoned veterans. There's also noticeable terrain feedback that alters the handling depending on the surface you're speeding over.

So the glaring question is, should we pick this up over WRC 4? Our answer is no, as it doesn't really offer enough substantial improvements to warrant a fresh purchase. It's a solid effort from French developer Kylotonn Games but far from perfect. Let's see what next year's title brings.



Super Star Wars



Developer: Disney Interactive **Publisher:** Lucas Arts
Where to Buy: PlayStation Store **Price:** £7.99

The newest edition to the Star Wars franchise is releasing in cinemas before Christmas... in case you somehow forgot. To commemorate the film, SNES classic Super Star Wars has been re-released on the PlayStation 4 and PS Vita complete with some fresh additions. Trophies can now be obtained for completing certain achievements, while the additional controller and display options allow a bit of customisation.

The game loosely follows the story of the fourth film, *A New Hope*, altering things here and there to fit with the gameplay formula. It's understandable why Lucas Arts chose to do this, as the few scenes at the beginning of each level are only meant for filler anyway. If you've ever played the Metal Slug titles, you'll probably feel at home here. It's essentially a 2D side scrolling shooter complete with some infuriating platforming sequences guaranteed to make you tear large clumps of hair from your scalp. The gameplay is fast and addictive, with enemies dropping power weapons and health which need to be collected.

Much like Metal Slug, the action is broken up by various vehicular sequences, be it piloting an X-Wing along the surface of the Death Star or manoeuvring a Landspeeder through the deserts on Tatooine. With roughly 14 levels at 10 minutes each, it's perfect for gaming on the go. Sometimes it's quite hard to tell where one level ends and the other begins but who cares? This is a faithful port of an absolute classic.

WHAT MOBILE

BUYER'S GUIDE

Buying a new device can be a difficult decision. Our comprehensive buyer's guide is here to help you.



55 Phone reviews

85 Tablet reviews

94 Wearables reviews



Acer Liquid Jade

Reviewed: April 2015, price: £199
www.acer.co.uk

A decent handset from a smaller brand, the Liquid Jade has all the components in place to be a much better handset than it actually is. What holds it back is Acer's lack of polish when compared with bigger brands such as Motorola. The end result is a handset that you could settle for, but probably shouldn't.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.3GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 720 x 1280 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8/16GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 140.5 x 69 x 7.5mm
Weight 110g
Battery 2,100 mAh

VERDICT: A decent low-end handset, but there are too many better alternatives.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Acer Z220

Reviewed: November 2015, price: £50
www.acer.co.uk

The Acer Z220 performs solidly as a communications device but anything extra-curricular is asking too much. Should you decide to purchase one, there are too many add-ons you have to buy externally, which defeats the purpose of a budget phone. If you're looking for a basic device that can connect to the internet, make calls and text, this could be for you.

OS Android Lollipop v5.0
Processor 1.2 GHz Qualcomm MSM8210 Dual-core
Screen 4.0-inches
Resolution 480 x 800 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM (8GB), 2GB RAM (16GB)
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes,

up to 32GB
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 720p
Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 125.3 x 64 x 9.6 mm
Weight 120g
Battery 1300mAh

VERDICT: A solid budget phone for calls and texts, but that's all it's really good for.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Alcatel One Touch Pop S3

Reviewed: September 2014, price: £80
www.alcatelonetouch.com/uk

The Alcatel One Touch POP S3 has its merits, especially taking into account the sub-£100 price of the device. The problem here is that by making room for 4G capability Alcatel has been forced to make cutbacks in crucial areas. However, if you are simply after the option to access faster web browsing and app speeds on the go, then the POP S3 offers you that at the cheapest price possible.

OS Android 4.3 Jelly Bean
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 480 x 800 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 4GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, VGA front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 123 x 64.4 x 9.9mm
Weight 130g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: Cheap, sure, but its poor quality renders its 4G capability near pointless.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★





Alcatel One Touch Idol Alpha

Reviewed: February 2015, price: £319
www.alcatelonetouch.com/uk

While it's good to see manufacturers branching out from the traditional black slab design, the Idol Alpha is a reminder of why the slab works. There are just too many compromises here, and the hardware does not make amends for them. Aside from the fact that Android itself is a powerful operating system that you can tailor to your heart's content, there's very little to redeem this phone.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 4.7 inches
Resolution 720 x 1280 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 1.3MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 138 x 66.6 x 7.5mm
Weight 117.4 g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: A decent camera is the only redeeming feature on this overpriced handset.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Alcatel One Touch Idol X+

Reviewed: June 2014, price: £TBC
www.alcatelonetouch.com/uk

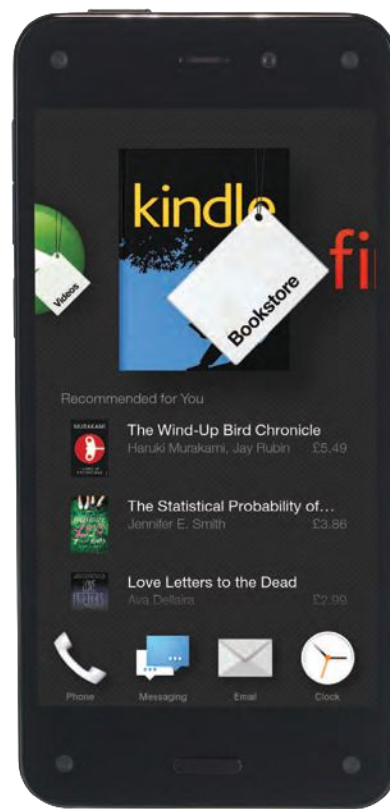
We usually greet lesser-known brands with open arms, but never has one disappointed as much as Alcatel with its One Touch Idol X+. Despite decent specs, it's the handset's flaws that hog the limelight. It's outperformed by other handsets in its price bracket in just about every respect. It's hard to envisage anyone patient enough to waste their time with it.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean
Processor Octa-core 2GHz
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1080 x 1920 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB or 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 140.4 x 69.1 x 7.9mm
Weight 130g
Battery 2,500 mAh

VERDICT: With such great competition the One Touch Idol X+ simply looks irrelevant.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Amazon Fire Phone

Reviewed: December 2014, price: £400

When we first learned of the 3D capabilities of the Amazon Fire Phone we thought it might be a gimmick. Instead, it turned out to be the feature we love the most. Its other interface aspects are riddled with hiccups which can add to some severe usability issues. Its design has some questionable choices, too. It has a lot of potential though, and we're eagerly looking forward to a sequel.

OS Android KitKat 4.4
Processor 2.2GHz quad-core
Screen 4.7-inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 64GB
Camera 13MP front-facing,

2.1MP rear-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 139.2 x 66.5 x 8.9mm
Weight 160g
Battery 2,400 mAh

VERDICT: A promising yet flawed debut effort, recommendable only to the curious.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Apple iPhone 5c

Reviewed: December 2013, price: £469 (16GB) £549 (32GB)

If you need a splash of colour in your life and you're already a massive fan of the iOS operating system, then the iPhone 5c is much the same as the previous iPhone 5. There's a slightly upgraded front-facing camera and 4G will work on any UK network, but other than that you're getting the exact same thing. The iPhone 5c is simply around for those of you who love great design without breaking the bank.

OS iOS 7
Processor Dual-core 1.3GHz
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 640 x 1136 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16/32GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 1.2MP front-facing

Video 1080
Connectivity 4G
Size 12.4 x 59.2 x 9mm
Weight 132g
Battery 1,510 mAh

VERDICT: It's the most colourful iPhone to date, but it's identical to the iPhone 5.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Apple iPhone 5s

Reviewed: December 2013, price: £549 (16GB) £629 (32GB) £709 (64GB)

With fingerprint identity, a 64-bit A7 chip and delivering up to twice the performance of the iPhone 4 and 5c, many people will opt to pay the extra £80 or so over the 5c. They'll also get an improved camera with 15 per cent larger sensor and improved low-light capabilities. The True Tone flash incorporates two flashes each matched to different light temperatures so flesh tones are more natural with flash pictures.

OS iOS 7
Processor Dual-core 1.3GHz ARM V8
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 1136 x 640 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16/32/64GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 8MP rear-facing,

1.2MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 123.8 x 58.6 x 7.6mm
Weight 112g
Battery 1,560 mAh

VERDICT: The gold standard in user-friendly smartphones, with a ton of power to boot.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Apple iPhone 6

Reviewed: November 2014, price: £539
www.apple.com/uk/iphone

Calling it 'the best iPhone ever' almost seems a little redundant. Of course it's better – it's more powerful, has a better camera, and NFC could soon become a huge deal. We're not quite as keen on the aesthetics of it versus older iPhone designs, but it's still got a wonderful premium build and a beautifully sharp display. The option for greatly expanded storage sizes shouldn't be undervalued, either.

OS iOS8
Processor Apple A8 1.4GHz
Screen 4.7 inches
Resolution 1334 x 750 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16/64/128GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 8MP iSight rear-facing, 1.2MP front-facing

Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 138.1 x 67 x 6.9mm
Weight 129g
Battery 1,810 mAh

VERDICT: Bigger and better than ever, just as you'd expect. The definitive iPhone.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Apple iPhone 6 Plus

Reviewed: November 2014, price: £619
www.apple.com/uk/iphone

It's the iPhone 6, but bigger. That's the only difference, and it comes with all of the ups and downs that you would expect from a phablet. You'll either love or hate the larger screen which, while still beautiful, is slightly less sharp than its little brother's. Similarly it might be tough for smaller hands to hold. But then you do get to see more things on screen at once. It's still a remarkable phone though, make no mistake.

OS iOS8
Processor Apple A8 1.4GHz
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16GB/64GB/128GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 8MP iSight rear-facing, 1.2MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 158.1 x 77.8 x 7.1mm
Weight 172g
Battery 1,810 mAh

VERDICT: A bigger iPhone 6 – it's really that simple. Prefer it or not, it's great regardless.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Apple iPhone 6s

Reviewed: November 2015, price: £539
www.apple.com/uk/iphone

The iPhone 6s may not offer that much to warrant an immediate upgrade but it still has enough new features to welcome new adopters to the platform. Force Touch genuinely works well and has plenty of future potential, while the hardware and low-light camera improvements make this more than just a simple cash cow.

OS iOS 9
Processor 1.84 GHz Dual Core Apple A9
Screen 4.7-inches
Resolution 1334 x 750 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16/64/128GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 12MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing

Video 4K at 30FPS
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 138 x 67 x 7.1 mm
Weight 143g
Battery 1,712 mAh

VERDICT: Plenty of new features make this another sure-fire hit for Apple.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Archos 50 Helium

Reviewed: July 2014, price: £199
archos.com

If the Moto G and Moto E are the gold standard of entry-level and low-cost smartphones, then the 50 Helium is certainly worthy of silver. It's got a nice big screen as well as invaluable 4G capability. It won't set the world alight, but it's a standout in a market awash with cheap, limited handsets.

OS Android 4.3 Jelly Bean
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G LTE

Dimensions 145 x 71.5 x 8.95mm
Weight 160g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: A capable alternative to the market-leading Moto G.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





BlackBerry Classic

Reviewed: April 2015, price: £330
uk.blackberry.com

BlackBerry diehards will love the modern touchscreen and keyboard – and even some actual apps, just like a proper smartphone. There are certainly worse handsets you could be issued at work. But there's nothing here to tempt an iPhone, Android or Windows user. For almost everyone other than BlackBerry fans, this phone is just a reminder of how far we've moved on in recent years.

OS BlackBerry OS 10.3.1
Processor Dual-core 1.5GHz Krait
Screen 3.5 inches
Resolution 720 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing

Video 1080p @ 30fps
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 131 x 72.4 x 10.2mm
Weight 177g
Battery 2,515 mAh

VERDICT: Difficult to recommend to all but the most ardent of BlackBerry fans.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



BlackBerry Passport

Reviewed: November 2014, price: £530
uk.blackberry.com

A premium device by anyone's standards – if you can look past the thoroughly odd design. Undeniably BlackBerry's most advanced device ever, it's still clearly angled towards the business crowd with a focus on productivity. The same old BlackBerry problems persist though, with an inferior OS and app store. It's just too impractical and limited for personal use.

OS BlackBerry 10.3
Processor 2.2GHz quad-core
Screen 4.5 inches
Resolution 1440 x 1440 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 128GB
Camera 13MP rear-facing,

Video 2MP front-facing
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 128 x 90.3 x 9.3mm
Weight 194g
Battery 3,450 mAh

VERDICT: Premium build and top specs are betrayed by off-putting, strange design.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



BlackBerry Z30

Reviewed: June 2014, price: £500
uk.blackberry.com

Perhaps if BlackBerry had focused on its efforts on making a phone like this five years ago we would be looking at a very different picture now. As it stands, a barren app store, odd features and a monster price tag may kill what could have been a competitive device. It's still surprisingly easy on the eye though, and its display doesn't look too bad either.

OS BlackBerry 10
Processor 1.7GHz dual-core Krait
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 140.7 x 72 x 9.4
Weight 170g
Battery 2,880 mAh

VERDICT: Possibly the best BlackBerry yet, but that's not saying an awful lot.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





BWC Stealth V2

Reviewed: August 2014, price: £300

www.bwcdevices.com

With good specs available at low prices there's never been a better time to pick up a rugged smartphone (if that's what you need). The Stealth V2 lives up to both the 'rugged' and 'smart' tags, with surprisingly capable insides. It also passed all of our stress tests, with countless drops, bashes and drownings failing to leave so much as a mark.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 854 x 480 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 1GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 1.3MP front-facing
Video 720p

Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 133 x 69 x 20mm
Weight 230g
Battery 2,800 mAh

VERDICT: As smart and tough as it promises.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



CAT B100

Reviewed: March 2014, price: £380

www.catphones.com

The CAT B100 withstands harsh conditions and jarring blows with a tough outer shell that absorbs the impact of falls, and impressive waterproofing. Beyond that, the phone lacks features games and apps – but chances are that's not why you're buying this phone. If you need a rugged handset to take adventuring, though, it's more than tough enough.

OS Nucleus 2.1
Processor 1GHz dual-core
Screen 2.2 inches
Resolution 240 x 320 pixels
Memory 512MB RAM
Storage 50MB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 3MP rear-facing, QVGA front-facing
Video QVGA

Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 122.94 x 55.88 x 7.6mm
Weight 136g
Battery 1,150 mAh

VERDICT: Tough enough to take into a warzone, if a little light on actual function.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Doro 820 Mini

Reviewed: May 2015, price: £169

www.doro.co.uk

The Doro 820 Mini's software is simple to use; first-time smartphone users and the elderly won't get confused by any cumbersome on-screen options. Unfortunately, this usability has been hampered by hardware problems. A slow processor creates annoying delays when navigating through the phone, while a poor build quality ruins what could have otherwise been a decent budget phone.

OS Android 4.1 Jelly Bean
Processor 1GHz dual-core
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 480 x 800 pixels
Memory 512MB RAM
Storage 4GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, QVGA front-facing
Video 720p

Connectivity 3G
Size 125 x 69.5 x 14.95mm
Weight 170g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: A rugged phone for those who need to rely on it in any environment.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Doro Liberto 820

Reviewed: February 2015, price: £186
www.doro.co.uk

It's easy to dismiss Doro phones as obsolete. This is to ignore that Doro isn't interested in attracting phone geeks and techno-fashionistas. These phones are for those value simplicity above processing power. Doro targets the 'senior' market. But with its SOS button and useful short cuts the Liberto 820 will appeal to those are not slaves to trends in consumer electronics.

OS Android 4.4 Kit Kat with Doro Wizard
Processor 1.3Ghz quad-core
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 940 x 560
Memory 1GB
Storage 4GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP
Video 720p

Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 13mm x 71mm
Weight 132g
Battery 1,900 mAh

VERDICT: A surprisingly well-featured phone for the more tech-savvy of seniors.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Doro PhoneEasy 624

Reviewed: February 2015, price: £100
www.doro.co.uk

The PhoneEasy 624 is Doro's best feature phone offering for those who want to keep things as simple, while making sure important contacts are only a button push away. It's got a 3G antenna, lengthy battery life, but a needlessly dire camera.

OS Custom
Processor N/A
Screen 2.4 inches
Resolution 320 x 240 pixels
Memory N/A
Storage N/A
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 2MP
Video 720p
Connectivity 3G

Dimensions 102 x 52 x 19mm
Weight 104g
Battery 800 mAh

VERDICT: A well featured phone for the price if you're in the market for that sort of thing.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



EE Kestrel

Reviewed: September 2014, price: £99
www.doro.co.uk

The EE Kestrel is the best entry-level 4G handset on the market and this is in no small part due to Huawei. The manufacturer has built a solid handset that consumers will use beyond its 4G-LTE capability. Although, its weak resolution is a major flaw, it has plenty of other positive attributes including a smooth UI, the ability to handle a vast range of games and decent web and app browsing speeds.

OS Android 4.3 (Jelly Bean)
Processor 1.2Ghz quad-core
Screen 4.5 inches
Resolution 540 x 960 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 1MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G, 3G
Dimensions 131 x 65.3 x 7.85mm
Weight 145g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: A reliable handset that boasts good usability, if underwhelming specs.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Google Nexus 6

Reviewed: March 2015, price: £499
www.google.com/nexus/6/

The Nexus 6 is a reminder of exactly what so many manufacturers are doing wrong by overly modifying Android. Google's flagship is a tremendous powerhouse – more of a media hub than a mere smartphone, and one of the best phablets on the market. Whether you'd rather it had a stylus is a matter of preference, though.

OS Android 5.0 Lollipop
Processor 2.7 GHz quad-core
Screen 5.96 inches
Resolution 2560 x 1440 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 32/64GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 4K

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 82.98mm x 159.26mm x 10.06mm
Weight 184g
Battery 3,220 mAh

VERDICT: Fast, fresh and tremendously powerful. A dream for Android purists.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Honor 7

Reviewed: November 2015, price: £250
www.hihonor.com/en/pages/products/honor7

The Honor 7 is a solid handset that has the looks and appeal to captivate many buyers. It's got a great screen and impressive camera that has a few unique features up its sleeve. Unfortunately, it also suffers from mixed performance that seems to be a result of the Kirin chipset. If you're a keen mobile gamer, this could be an issue.

OS Android Lollipop v5.0
Processor Kirin 935 (8 cores: 2.2 GHz quad core + 1.5 GHz quad-core)
Screen 5.2-inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 3GB
Storage 16GB/ 64GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 128GB

Camera 20MP rear-facing, 8MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 143 x 72 x 8.5 mm
Weight 157g
Battery 3,100mAh

VERDICT: Great looks and impressive camera but performance could be an issue.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



HTC Desire 626

Reviewed: October 2015, price: £150
www.htc.com/uk

The HTC Desire 626 is a solid handset that performs fine in most areas. Should you decide to purchase one, it will likely serve you very well under most conditions. The only problem arises from the £150 retail price, which puts it squarely in the firing line of budget superstars such as the Vodafone Smart Ultra 6. Had HTC priced it slightly cheaper, it may well have been worth more serious consideration.

OS Android 5.1
Processor 1.2 GHz quad-core Snapdragon 410
Screen 5.0-inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 512GB
Camera 13MP rear-facing,

5MP front-facing
Video 1,080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 147 x 71 x 8.2 mm
Weight 135g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: There are better deals out there. Still, this is a perfectly capable phone.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





HTC Desire 816

Reviewed: October 2014, price: £300
www.htc.com/uk

In a market lacking a viable midrange phablet the HTC Desire 816 stands out. It might have its flaws, but for the price you can certainly look past them. If you can't, then a midrange device probably isn't for you. For the rest of us, there's no better option for getting your hands on a jumbo screen on the cheap.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.6GHz quad-core
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 1.5GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 156.6 x 78.7 x 7.9mm
Weight 165g
Battery 2,600 mAh

VERDICT: A triumphant, large addition to a fantastic 2014 product line for HTC.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



HTC Desire 820

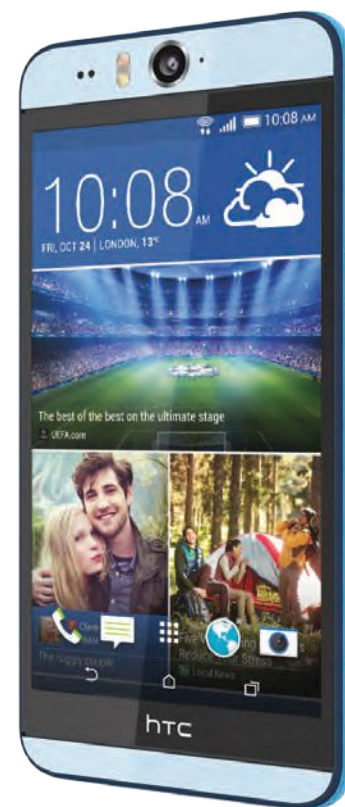
Reviewed: June 2015, price: £299
www.htc.com/uk

A large display, fantastic cameras and attractive design makes the HTC Desire 820 an ideal choice if you're after an affordable phone with plenty of features. It's only been let down by the fact that it doesn't pack an HD screen and that it doesn't run the latest Android software. It's also quite pricey compared to the OnePlus One; a phone that is a serious rival.

OS Android 4.4.2 KitKat
Processor Quad-core 1.5 GHz Cortex-A53
Screen 5.5-inches
Resolution 720 x 1280 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 8MP front-facing
Video 1080p at 30fps
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 157.7 x 78.7 x 7.7mm
Weight 155g
Battery 2600 mAh

VERDICT: Cheap, attractive and packed full of features.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



HTC Desire Eye

Reviewed: March 2015, price: £365
www.htc.com/uk

While we love the cameras (having a front-facer as highly powered as the rear-facer is a huge boon, particularly for selfie-lovers) the Desire Eye's build quality and price make it a tougher sell than you might think. It does look nice though, and is an interesting concept. Just not a 100% successful one.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 2.3 GHz quad-core
Screen 5.2 inches
Resolution 1080 x 1920 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 13MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 151.7 x 73.8 x 8.5mm
Weight 154g
Battery 2,400 mAh

VERDICT: A hard sell when the superior One M8 can now be bought for the same price.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





HTC One M8

Reviewed: May 2014, price: £530
www.htc.com/uk

The HTC One M8 is, in all probability, the best smartphone ever made. It both looks and performs better than almost everything else out there. Features like Blinkfeed and knock-to-wake are a joy to use. If Apple, Sony and Samsung weren't paying attention before, they certainly are now.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat	Connectivity 4G
Processor 2.3GHz quad-core	Dimensions 146.36 x 70.6 x 9.35mm
Screen 5 inches	Weight 160g
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels	Battery 2,600 mAh
Memory 2GB RAM	
Storage 16GB or 32GB	
MicroSD compatible? Yes	
Camera 4MP UltraPixel rear-facing, 5MP front-facing	
Video 1080p	

VERDICT: If you can afford it, buy it. There's no better Android handset on the market.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★



HTC One M9

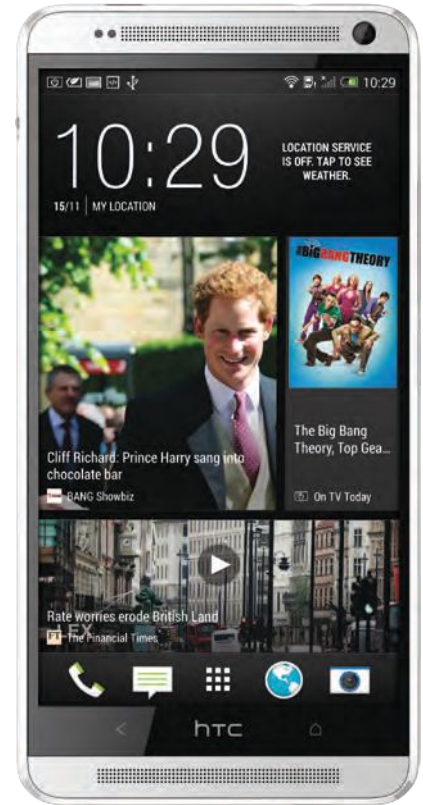
Reviewed: May 2015, price: £580
www.htc.com/uk

The One M9 is HTC's first major release of 2015 and its top-notch build quality, powerful processor and phenomenal battery life makes it one of our favourite phones of this year. However, it doesn't really provide anything different to what flagship rivals like the iPhone 6 already offers. Despite that, the HTC One M9 is still one of the best looking and most powerful phones on the market.

OS Android 5.0 Lollipop	Video 4k
Processor 4 x 2GHz + 4 x 1.5GHz octa-core	Connectivity 4G
Screen 5 inches	Dimensions 144.6 x 69.7 x 9.61mm
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels	Weight 157g
Memory 3GB RAM	Battery 2,840 mAh
Storage 32GB	
MicroSD compatible? Yes	
Camera 20.7MP rear-facing, 4MP UltraPixel front-facing	

VERDICT: It has no unique selling point but it's still one of the best devices out there.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★



HTC One Max

Reviewed: January 2014, price: £599
www.htc.com/uk

The HTC One Max piggybacks the reputation of the HTC One, although nothing much has improved. The high-quality display is present but HTC has failed to add processing power and the fingerprint sensor implementation is very disappointing.

OS Android 4.3 Jelly Bean	Video 1080p
Processor 1.7GHz quad-core	Connectivity 4G
Screen 5.9 inches	Dimensions 164.5 x 82.5 x 10.3mm
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels	Weight 217g
Memory 2GB	Battery 3,300 mAh
Storage 16GB or 32GB	
MicroSD compatible? Yes	
Camera 4MP UltraPixel rear-facing, 2.1MP front-facing	

VERDICT: The HTC One's design is still a standout but there's nothing new here.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★





HTC One Mini 2

Reviewed: August 2014, price: £360
www.htc.com/uk

Your opinion of the One Mini 2 will come down to what you mostly use your phone for. If you don't put too much strain on its struggling processor then you should be fine. It's got a magnificent pair of cameras, and that trademark HTC metal unibody build can't be beat. Day-to-day users will be more than satisfied – hardcore tech-heads should stick with the One M8.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 4.5 inches
Resolution 720 x 1,280 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 137.4 x 64 x 10.6mm
Weight 137g
Battery 2,110 mAh

VERDICT: Powered to match its stature, but still a very polished, attractive device.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Huawei Ascend G7

Reviewed: May 2015, price: £205
www.huaweidevice.co.uk

With a large screen and the gorgeous looks that remind us of the iPhone 6; the Huawei Ascend G7 might look good on the outside but the software is another story. Huawei has redesigned Google's vanilla Android operating system and reskinned it as something that looks both cheap and ugly. Despite that, the Ascend G7 is a decent choice if you want an iPhone 6-lookalike that runs Android software.

OS Android 4.4.2 KitKat
Processor 1.2 GHz quad-core
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 720 x 1280 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 153.5 x 77.3 x 7.6mm
Weight 165g
Battery 3,000 mAh

VERDICT: Its great performance is ruined by a cheap and ugly looking operating system.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Huawei Ascend P7

Reviewed: July 2014, price: £365
www.huaweidevice.co.uk

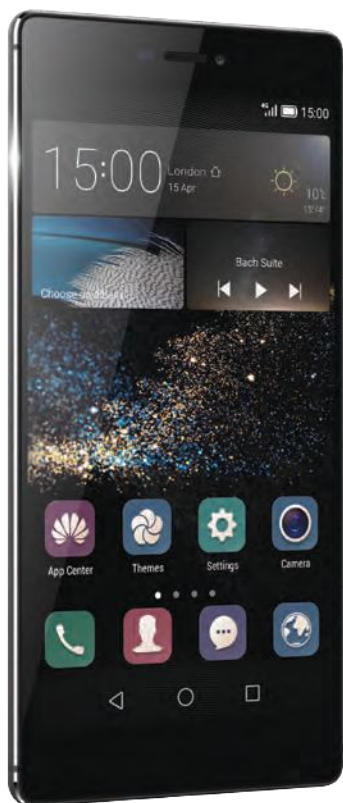
The Ascend P7 feels like a missed opportunity. Huawei should have put its full weight into creating a top-level flagship handset. However, its underpowered processor is its only real flaw. It looks premium and its front-facing camera is the best on the market. Its price could be a sticking point, but it's by no means a bad device.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.8GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 8MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G LTE
Dimensions 139.8 x 68.8 x 6.5mm
Weight 124g
Battery 2,500 mAh

VERDICT: It's not quite a market-leading flagship but at least it looks the part.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Huawei P8

Reviewed: August 2015, price: £395
www.huaweidevice.co.uk

An attractive device that gives you top-of-the-range specs and a fantastic camera for half the price of the Samsung Galaxy S6 or iPhone. The performance isn't as slick as its major rivals, but that isn't a deal breaker. Especially when the phone costs half the price of the iPhone 6 and Samsung Galaxy S6.

OS Android 5.0 Lollipop
Processor 2 GHz quad-core
Screen 5.2 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 16/64GB
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 8MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G

Dimensions 144x72x6.4mm
Weight 144g
Battery 2,680 mAh

VERDICT: Flagship specs for half the price of a Galaxy S6 or iPhone.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Huawei Honor 4x

Reviewed: August 2015, price: £144.99
www.huaweidevice.co.uk

An affordable phone that offers solid battery life and plenty of features. The build quality even feels better than the LG G4, a smartphone that costs double its recommended retail price. Honor isn't a big name over in the West, but phones like the 4X are helping it head in that direction. It's just a shame that the processor is a little on the weak side.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor HiSilicon Kirin 620
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 8GB
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G

Dimensions 153x77x8.7mm
Weight 165g
Battery 3,000 mAh

VERDICT: A solid phone at a bargain price, you'll be surprised at how good it looks.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Huawei Honor 6+

Reviewed: July 2015, price: £299.99
www.huaweidevice.co.uk

If you're after an affordable device with plenty of top-notch features, you can't really go wrong with the Huawei Honor 6+. The camera is unique, the performance is fantastic and battery life is better than more expensive phones. Its slow camera and inability to handle certain apps are only minor negatives – the Honor 6+ is well worth the money.

OS Android KitKat 4.4.2
Processor Kirin octo-core 925
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 32GB
Camera Dual 8MP rear-facing, 8MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G

Dimensions 151x76x7.5mm
Weight 165g
Battery 3,600 mAh

VERDICT: A flagship phone with excellent battery life that doesn't break the bank.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Kazam Tornado 348

Reviewed: March 2015, price: £247
www.kazam.mobi

Despite great looks and smooth performance, lack of 4G connectivity and storage makes the Tornado 348 something of a non-starter for serious users. The casual market will be plenty content with what's on offer here – particularly those eye-catching physical dimensions.

OS Android KitKat 4.4	Connectivity 3G
Processor 1.7Ghz octa-core	Dimensions 139.8 x 67.5 x 5.15mm
Screen 4.8 inches	Weight 95.5g
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels	Battery 2,050 mAh
Memory 1GB RAM	
Storage 16GB	
MicroSD compatible? No	
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing	
Video 720p	

VERDICT: Standout design and performance at an attractive price.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★



Kazam Thunder Q4.5

Reviewed: April 2014, price: £TBC
www.kazam.mobi

The Thunder Q4.5 is a sure case of style over substance, but in the lower-cost end of the market you'd usually be lucky to get either. While the phone lacks standout features it won't let you down when it comes to everyday smartphone functionality. If you're in the market and want to try something new, you could certainly do an awful lot worse.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean	Connectivity 3G
Processor 1.3GHz quad-core	Dimensions 136 x 64.6 x 8.9mm
Screen 4.5 inches	Weight 137g
Resolution 854 x 480 pixels	Battery 1,800 mAh
Memory 1GB RAM	
Storage 1.74GB	
MicroSD compatible? Yes	
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing	
Video 720p	

VERDICT: It may be flawed, but at this price point you'd be hard pushed to beat it.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★



LG G3

Reviewed: August 2014, price: £499
www.lg.com/uk

Only minor detractions stop the LG G3 from being the perfect smartphone. That said, there's no such thing as the perfect smartphone just yet, so the G3 is still a wonderful piece of kit. It has outstanding features, hardware, and form to boot. The best display around, a monstrous processor and a variety of little touches all make the G3 a special smartphone.

OS Android 4.4 (KitKat)	Connectivity 4G
Processor 2.5GHz quad-core	Dimensions 146.3 x 74.6 x 8.9mm
Screen 5.5 inches	Resolution 1440 x 2560 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM	Weight 149g
Storage 16GB or 32GB	Battery 3,000 mAh
MicroSD compatible? Yes	
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 2.1MP front-facing	
Video 2160p	

VERDICT: Want the best? The G3 is absolutely deserving of your consideration.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★





LG G4

Reviewed: July 2015, price: £500
www.lg.com/uk

The unique leather design and incredible camera certainly helps the LG G4 stand out against rivals like the iPhone 6. However, the fact it doesn't have the strongest processor on the market, alongside an average battery and awkward button placement, means it doesn't really stand up as a true iPhone and Galaxy smasher.

OS Android 5.1 Lollipop
Processor 1.4GHz quad core
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 2560 x 1440 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 32GB
Camera 16MP rear-facing, 8MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G

Dimensions 149 x 76 x 9.8mm
Weight 155g
Battery 3,000 mAh

VERDICT: A monster device let down by a weak processor. Not a Galaxy S6 killer.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



LG G4c

Reviewed: October 2015, price: £229
www.lg.com/uk

The LG G4c is solidly average, with a few fun gimmicks that don't quite make up for the photo quality. For those who simply want a day-to-day workhorse, it is not a bad option, but it's not for those who are looking for something heavy-duty.

OS Android
Processor Quad-core 1.3 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon
Screen 5.0 inches
Resolution 720 x 1280-pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 128GB
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1,080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 139.7 x 69.9 x 10.2 mm
Weight 139g
Battery 2,540 mAh

VERDICT: Solidly average for everyday use, but not for heavy-duty users.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



LG G Flex

Reviewed: April 2014, price: £570
www.lg.com/uk

The curved display may add very little, but with a state-of-the-art spec sheet and a fantastic display, the LG G Flex nails the basics of a high-end smartphone. However the £570 price and so-so camera make it difficult to recommend – at least when compared to its cheaper, better rivals. The Flex just isn't the innovation LG believes it to be.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean
Processor 2.2GHz quad-core
Screen 6 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 2.1MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 160.5 x 81.6 x 7.9mm
Weight 177g
Battery 3,500 mAh

VERDICT: A powerful phone held back by a steep price for an unnecessary gimmick.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





LG Spirit 4G

Reviewed: August 2015, price: £129.99
www.lg.com/uk

At only £129.99, there's little to criticise in this budget mid-range device that looks a lot like a shrunken down LG G4. It has enough performance for most users and comes with Android 5.0 right out of the box. The only problem is the weak front and rear cameras, which distract from an otherwise competent package.

OS Android 5.1 Lollipop
Processor 1.3 Ghz quad-core
Screen 4.7 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 1MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G

Dimensions 133x66x10mm
Weight 124g
Battery 2,100 mAh

VERDICT: A competent mid-range device with Android Lollipop and good specs.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Motorola Moto E (2015)

Reviewed: May 2015, price: £109
www.motorola.co.uk

Paying £109 for a full-blown, powerful 4G smartphone is seriously good value for money. This value is only increased by a high-quality camera, powerful processor and excellent battery life. The only major faults we found when testing the phone included no LED camera flash, a plastic body that easily picks up marks and a fiddly SIM-card slot.

OS Android 5.0.2 Lollipop
Processor Qualcomm Snapdragon 410, 1.2 GHz quad-core
Screen 4.5 inches
Resolution 540 X 960 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing,

640 x 480 front-facing
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 129.9 x 66.8mm, 146g
Weight 145g
Battery 2,390 mAh

VERDICT: After a smartphone that's seriously good value? This is for you.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Motorola Moto G (1st Gen)

Reviewed: January 2014, price: £135
www.motorola.co.uk

The Moto G is a budget smartphone done right. It makes smart and sensible sacrifices to slash its price to a point that puts its rivals to shame. For people who don't demand the highest specs and best camera from a phone, the Moto G's easy-to-use system and fast speeds make it an ideal choice.

OS Android 4.3 Jelly Bean
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 4.5 inches
Resolution 720 x 1280 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB/16GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 1.3MP front-facing
Video 720p

Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 129.9 x 65.9 x 11.6mm
Weight 143g
Battery 2,070 mAh

VERDICT: The best option for customers on a budget.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Motorola Moto G (2nd Gen)

Reviewed: November 2014, price: £150
www.motorola.co.uk

It's an updated version of the Moto G – nothing more, nothing less. The lack of 4G is extremely disappointing, and a processor upgrade would have been nice. Still, a bigger screen, a better camera and MicroSD compatibility is extremely welcome. When it comes to affordable phones that can actually perform, the Moto G is still untouchable.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB/16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 32GB
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 720p
Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 141.5 x 70.7 x 11mm
Weight 149g
Battery 2,070 mAh

VERDICT: A solid improvement on the best, but no 4G gives it a limited shelf life.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Motorola Moto G 4G (2nd Gen)

Reviewed: June 2015, price: £150
www.motorola.co.uk

One of the best value smartphones on the market, the large display, 4G connectivity and latest Android operating software makes it well worth the price. Combine all of this with the phone's fantastic build quality and the Motorola Moto G 4G is well worth keeping after your contract expires.

OS Android 5.0 Lollipop
Processor Quad-core 1.2 GHz Cortex-A53
Screen 5.0-inches
Resolution 720 x 1280 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8/16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 720p at 30fps
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 141.5 x 70.7 x 11mm
Weight 155g
Battery 2390 mAh

VERDICT: Priced between £200-£400, this smartphone undermines the competition.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Motorola Moto G (3rd Gen)

Reviewed: November 2015, price: £159
www.motorola.co.uk

Motorola has done it again with another device that punches above its weight and mostly improves on its predecessor. Every area is catered for here, offering impressive battery life, a brilliant camera and adequate performance. If you're looking for a solid Android device that won't break the bank, the Moto G is worth consideration.

OS Android Lollipop v5.1.1
Processor 1.4 GHz Snapdragon 410
Screen 5.0-inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM (8GB), 2GB RAM (16GB)
Storage 8/16GB
MicroSD compatible?
Yes, up to 128GB
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 142 x 72 x 11.6 mm
Weight 155g
Battery 2,470mAh

VERDICT: Solid device that offers perfectly fine performance across the board.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★





Motorola Moto X (2nd Gen)

Reviewed: March 2014, price: £380
www.motorola.co.uk

A rock-solid handset with helpful features. This is the best place to experience Google Now, making voice operation genuinely useful. Mix in a sleek design, great camera and long battery life and the £380 price tag is justified. If you can afford the extra £150 then it makes for a sterling upper-mid tier upgrade to the Motorola Moto G.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat	Connectivity 4G
Processor 1.7GHz dual-core	Dimensions 129.3 x 65.3 x 10.4mm
Screen 4.7 inches	Weight 130g
Resolution 720 x 1280 pixels	Battery 2,200 mAh
Memory 2GB RAM	
Storage 16/32GB	
MicroSD compatible? No	
Camera 10MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing	
Video 1080p	

VERDICT: For those looking to step up from the budget tier: your search is over.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★



Motorola Moto X (2014) (1st Gen)

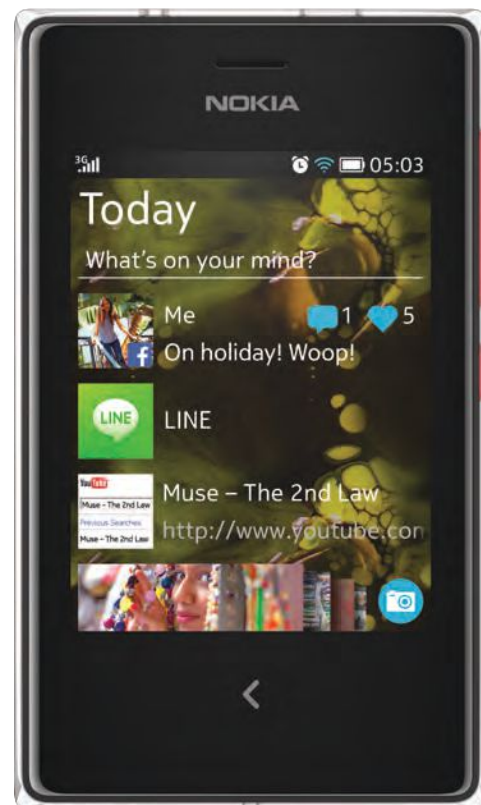
Reviewed: January 2015, price: £420
www.motorola.co.uk

Motorola's original Moto X was a nice idea executed a little too late. Competition from superior phones from manufacturers with a stronger recent track record was too great to overcome. But this latest version makes a much stronger case for your cash. It's got some excellent features and will surely be beloved by fans of stock Android.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat	Connectivity 4G
Processor 2.5GHz quad-core	Dimensions 140.8 x 72.4 x 10mm
Screen 5.2 inches	Weight 144g
Resolution 1,080 x 1,920 pixels	Battery 2,300 mAh
Memory 2GB RAM	
Storage 16/32GB	
MicroSD compatible? No	
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing	
Video 2160p	

VERDICT: The best Motorola ever, and arguably the best Android handset of 2014.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★



Nokia Asha 503

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £70
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

Nokia's Asha 503 is a brilliantly tiny handset that stays usable despite the smaller screen. If you want a dirt-cheap phone then you might be better off with a sub-£50 handset and its design is a little spiky. But anyone looking for a phone to keep them busy for five minutes on a bus will find plenty to love here.

OS Nokia Asha platform 1.2	Dimensions 102.6 x 60.6 x 12.7mm
Processor N/A	Weight 110.2g
Screen 3 inches	Battery 1,200 mAh
Resolution 240 x 320 pixels	
Memory 128MB RAM	
Storage 4GB	
MicroSD compatible? Yes	
Camera 5MP rear-facing	
Video QVGA	
Connectivity 3G	

VERDICT: A good entry into the budget market that offers more than the basics.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★





Nokia Lumia 435

Reviewed: September 2015, price: £40
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

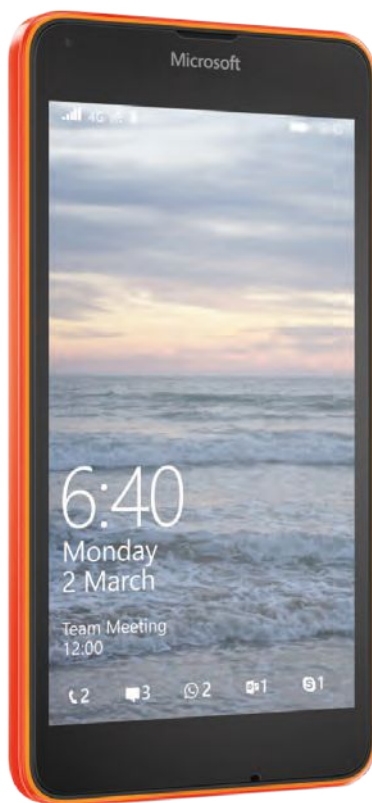
It won't shake the world but for 40 quid you can hardly expect it to. This is a very cheap phone that has all the features you would expect from more expensive handsets. While it doesn't excel in any particular area and the camera is pretty terrible, you'll be lucky if you find anything that performs this well for the price. A genuine bargain.

OS Windows Phone 8.1
Processor 1.2GHz dual-core
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 800 x 480
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Cameras 2MP rear-facing, VGA front-facing
Video 480p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 118 x 65 x 11.7mm
Weight 131g
Battery 1,560 mAh

VERDICT: A bargain-bin handset that still manages to run Windows Phone very well.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Nokia Lumia 640

Reviewed: August 2015, price: £109.99
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

It's incredible what Microsoft has managed to cram into such a cheap, inconspicuous phone. It has nailed all the major points internally, with a great camera, excellent battery and an adequate processor for the well-optimised Windows Phone OS. The only problem is Windows Phone itself, which still struggles to convince the sceptics.

OS Windows Phone 8.1 GDR2
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 1MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G

Dimensions 141 x 72 x 8.8mm
Weight 145g
Battery 2,500 mAh

VERDICT: A brilliant battery and solid performance make this a bargain device.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Nokia Lumia 640 XL

Reviewed: September 2015, price: £180
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

Although it is more expensive than the 640, you get the advantage of a much bigger screen and some seriously good battery life. The camera has also gotten a bump too, producing some excellent images for this price-point. It's just a shame that the processor hasn't been improved to complement them.

OS Windows Phone 8.1 GDR2
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 5.7 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 157.9 x 81.5 x 9mm
Weight 171g
Battery 3,000 mAh

VERDICT: Not a huge leap up but the camera and battery are worth the money.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Nokia Lumia 735

Reviewed: December 2014, price: £299
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

Microsoft has produced a genuine rival to the bestselling Motorola Moto G in the form of the Lumia 735. With the introduction of an HD display and 4G LTE this is much more than just another selfie phone. But if selfies are what you're after the Lumia 735 offers plenty of fun ways to snap images of you and your friends with its 5-megapixel front camera.

OS Windows Phone 8.1
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 4.7 inches
Resolution 1,280 x 720 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 6.7MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 134.7 x 68.5 x 8.9mm
Weight 134g
Battery 2,200 mAh

VERDICT: A Windows Phone to match the Moto G, the 735 is a selfie star.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Nokia Lumia 830

Reviewed: March 2015, price: £267
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

The Nokia Lumia 830 is not quite the swansong we were hoping for. It's not hugely affordable, and nor does the phone's hardware make full use of that 4G connectivity. Mid-range mobiles seldom convince us of their reason to exist and this final Nokia is no exception. It does look the part, and Cortana is improving, but there are simply better options out there.

OS Windows Phone 8.1
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 720 x 1280 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 128GB
Camera 10MP rear-facing, 0.9MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 139.4 x 70.7 x 8.5mm
Weight 150g
Battery 2,200 mAh

VERDICT: Underpowered and overpriced, the Lumia 830 is average and forgettable.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Nokia Lumia 925

Reviewed: August 2013, price: £479
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

With the Lumia 925 Nokia hasn't set out to reinvent the wheel, it has just built on its past achievements to put together a brilliant phone. A gorgeous slimmed-down design, high performance camera and responsive user interface all set this handset apart from the rest of the Lumia range and make it a top level device in the high-end smartphone market. One of the best out there.

OS Windows Phone 8
Processor 1.5GHz dual-core
Screen 4.5 inches
Resolution 1280 x 760
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16/32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 1.3MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 129 x 70.6 x 8.5mm
Weight 139g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: A fantastic camera, slick design and great user interface make this top dog.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Nokia Lumia 930

Reviewed: September 2014, price: £420
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

The plus side for those looking for something different is that Windows Phone has come along enough now that its mere presence on a handset isn't enough to relegate it completely. The Lumia 930 is the flagship that the range has been crying out for for far too long now, and if you don't mind having a relatively restricted ecosystem then you should have very few issues with it.

OS Windows Phone 8.1
Processor 2.2GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 20MP rear-facing, 1.2MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G LTE
Dimensions 137 x 71 x 9.8mm
Weight 167g
Battery 2,420 mAh

VERDICT: The closest to rivalling Android and iOS that Windows Phone has ever come.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Nokia Lumia 1020

Reviewed: November 2013, price: £639.99
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

The Lumia 1020 is an ideal smartphone for those of you who don't care about apps and it's perfect if you love to take great pictures. It might not be the slimmest device you can get your hands on but the 1020's powerful camera is well worth the extra bulk.

OS Windows Phone 8
Processor 1.5GHz dual-core
Screen 4.5 inches
Resolution 1280 x 760
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 41MP rear-facing, 1.2MP front-facing
Video: 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 130.4 x 71.4 x 10.4mm
Weight: 158g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: A top smartphone with an astounding camera – one of the best.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Nokia Lumia 1320

Reviewed: April 2014, price: £280
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

The Lumia 925 and 1020 were large enough, and the lack of software taking advantage of the big display, unlike with the Samsung Galaxy Note, means those extra inches just leave you looking faintly ridiculous when answering a call. You're better off spending your money on an Android phablet or Google's Nexus 5.

OS Windows Phone 8
Processor 1.7GHz dual-core
Screen 6 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 1GB
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, VGA front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G-LTE
Dimensions 164.2 x 85.9 x 9.8mm
Weight 220g
Battery 3,400 mAh

VERDICT: A good phone but the Nexus 5 simply undercuts the competition too well.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Nokia Lumia 1520

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £550
www.microsoft.com/en-gb/mobile/

Although the Nokia Lumia 1520 weighs in at a whopping £550 (SIM-free), it could cost you considerably more to purchase a standalone camera, camcorder, satnav, tablet and a laptop computer that can run Microsoft Office.

OS Windows Phone 8
Processor 2.2GHz quad-core
Screen 6 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 20MP rear-facing, 1.2MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G-LTE
Dimensions 162.8 x 85.4 x 8.7mm
Weight 209g
Battery 3,200 mAh

VERDICT: A great all-in-one device that mashes the best of Nokia together.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



OnePlus One

Reviewed: June 2015, price: £269
www.oneplus.net

If you're not bothered about Samsung, Apple or any of the other big brand names, then we highly recommend the OnePlus One. It offers class-leading specs for half the price of an iPhone 6 or Samsung Galaxy S6. That attractive price is topped off by excellent build quality and unlimited customisation options.

OS Cyanogenmod version of Android 4.4
Processor 2.5GHz quad-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 801
Screen 5.5 inches Gorilla Glass 3
Resolution 1920 x 1080
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 64GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Connectivity 4G, dual-band wi-fi, Bluetooth 4.0, NFC, GOS antenna
Video 1080 HD
Dimensions 152.9 x 75.9 x 8.9mm
Weight 162g
Battery 3100 mAh

VERDICT: A top-spec smartphone for half the price of the iPhone 6? Yes please!

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



OnePlus Two

Reviewed: November 2015, price: £289
www.oneplus.net

With only its second device ever, OnePlus has knocked it out of the park with the OnePlus 2. It has improved a lot on the OnePlus One with the seemingly endless battery life, souped-up specs and, of course, the incredible price.

OS Lollipop v5.1
Processor Quad-core 1.56 GHz and 1.82, Snapdragon 810
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 1080 x 1920 pixels (401 ppi pixel density)
Memory 4GB RAM
Storage 64GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 2160p@30fps, 720p@120fps
Connectivity 3G & 4G
Dimensions 151.8 x 74.9 x 9.9 mm
Weight 175 g
Battery Non-removable 3300 mAh

VERDICT: A phone so affordable for the specs on offer it would be foolish to pass up.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Panasonic Lumix DMC-CM1

Reviewed: October 2015, price: £799
www.panasonic.com/uk/consumer

This is by no means a cheap device but you most definitely get what you pay for. Considering when it first released, the Panasonic DMC-CM1 had flagship specifications and a true camera sensor to match even the best compact/bridge cameras. Fast forward to now and little has changed; this is still the best camera phone you can get and by quite some distance

OS Android KitKat 4.4.2 (upgradable to 5.0)
Processor 2.3 GHz Snapdragon 801
Screen 4.7-inches
Resolution 1,920 x 1,080 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes,
 up to 128GB
Camera 20MP rear-facing, 1.1MP front-facing
Video 2160p (15fps only)
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 135.4 x 68 x 21.1 mm
Weight 204g
Battery 2,600mAh

VERDICT: If you've got the wallet and pocket space for it, you'll be blown away.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Prestigio MultiPhone 5430

Reviewed: November 2013, price: £190
www.prestigio.com

The Prestigio MultiPhone 5430 is a bland piece of kit that lacks any real highlights, but is undoubtedly a capable and efficient smartphone. Perhaps its best feature is that it gets the core experience right, if not groundbreakingly so. The very basics of what you expect from a smartphone in 2013 are here but there isn't much else.

OS Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich
Processor Intel Atom 1.2GHz
Screen 4.3 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 4GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 0.3MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 126 x 64.7 x 10mm
Weight 140g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: Perfectly ordinary – but it's positioned as an everyday smartphone.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy A7

Reviewed: July 2015, price: £319.99
www.samsung.com/uk

The Samsung Galaxy A7 is an attractive proposition. But looks aren't everything. The cheaper £269 OnePlus One offers more power, a similar screen size and up-to-date software. And the £129 Vodafone Smart 4 Max with a bigger screen is less than half the price. If it's about power, not just looking powerful, perhaps look elsewhere.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.5GHz Quad-core
Screen 5.5-inches
Resolution 1080 x 1920 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
Camera 13MP
Video Yes
Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 151 x 76.2 x 6.3mm
Weight 141g
Battery 2,600 mAh

VERDICT: An attractive device but it has less power than similar devices.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Samsung Galaxy Ace 3

Reviewed: March 2014, price: £180
www.samsung.com/uk

The Samsung Galaxy Ace 3 is a good handset that's been made irrelevant by cheaper competition. While it packs a vibrant display and solid specs, similar phones sit well below the £180 benchmark set here. Samsung will have to rethink its pricing. If it weren't for the Moto G's release this would be an emphatic recommendation – unfortunately Samsung will have to settle for the silver medal.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean
Processor 1.2GHz dual-core
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 480 x 800 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB/16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, VGA front-facing
Video 720p
Connectivity 4G LTE
Dimensions 121.2 x 62.7 x 9.8mm
Weight 115g
Battery 1,500 mAh

VERDICT: Premium build quality and visuals at a good price – just not a great one.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy K Zoom

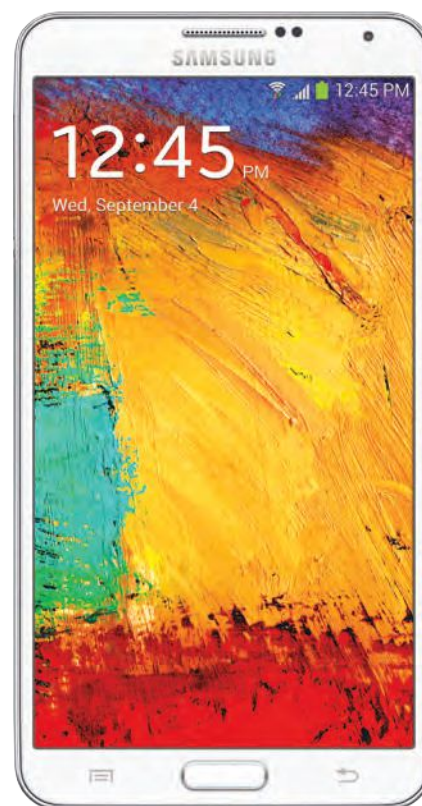
Reviewed: October 2014, price: £400
www.samsung.com/uk

We can see what Samsung set out to achieve with the Galaxy K zoom, and creating a solid Android smartphone with an optical zoom is no small feat. However, it looks like a dated digital camera at best – newer devices are much more compact. If you're after a smartphone with a solid snapper, we'd advise you to seek out the LG G3 or Sony Xperia Z2 instead.

OS Android 4.4 (KitKat)
Processor Hexa-core: 1.3GHz quad-core + 1.7GHz dual-core
Screen 4.8 inches
Resolution 1,280 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 20.7MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 137.5 x 70.8 x 16.6mm
Weight 200g
Battery 2,430 mAh

VERDICT: A decent smartphone and an excellent camera in a hideous body.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy Note 3

Reviewed: December 2013, price: £649
www.samsung.com/uk

The Note 3 steps over the competition with its large, engulfing display and great battery life, but it's the stylus that's the star of the show here, with great integration that makes it an ideal note-keeping device. This makes it ideal for business people on the move, although they'll have to make sure they keep an eye on the easy-to-lose pen at all times.

OS Android 4.3 Jelly Bean
Processor 2.3GHz quad-core
Screen 5.7 inches
Resolution 1080 x 1920 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 16/32/64GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP front-facing, 2MP rear-facing
Video 4K
Dimensions 151.2 x 79.2 x 8.3mm
Weight 168g
Battery 3,200 mAh

VERDICT: A fantastic portable business device with helpful, unique features.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Samsung Galaxy Note 4

Reviewed: December 2013, price: £498
www.samsung.com/uk

This year's effort ensures the Note remains top of the phablet pile, but unless you're particularly taken with the stylus and split-screen app combo, you shouldn't discount the latest flagship phones. The LG G3 and new Motorola Moto X are stunning devices, only slightly smaller in size and power. Unless you've got a thing for faux leather, that is, in which case the Note 4 is the best gadget ever made.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 2.7GHz quad-core
Screen 5.7 inches
Resolution 1,440 x 2,560-pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 16MP rear-facing, 3.7MP front-facing
Video 2160p at 30fps
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 153.5 x 78.6 x 8.5mm
Weight 176g
Battery 3,220 mAh

VERDICT: Still king of the phablets, but not by such a distance this time around.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy Note Edge

Reviewed: April 2015, price: £610
www.samsung.com/uk

The Samsung Galaxy Note Edge points to an exciting future when we no longer have to accept that a smartphone screen has to be rectangular. As is often the case with a new technology, though, it needs more work. As cool as the edge looks, it serves little purpose, other than to make this a more expensive Note 4. Call us when the screen wraps all the way around, Samsung.

OS Android 4.4.4 KitKat
Processor Quad-core
Processor 2.7GHz Krait 450
Screen 5.6-inches
Resolution 1,600 x 2,560 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 32/64GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 16MP rear-facing,
 3.7MP front-facing
Video 4K @ 60fps
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 151.3 x 82.4 x 8.3mm
Weight 174g
Battery 3,000 mAh

VERDICT: A worthwhile endeavour – for Samsung's engineers, not the consumer.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy S3 Mini

Reviewed: January 2013, price: £300
www.samsung.com/uk

Something of a misnomer, this is no relation to its bigger brother, the S III, despite the design similarities. The Mini is little more than a shrunk down Galaxy S II. If users want a budget Galaxy, they are better off pursuing that (former) flagship on a budget plan – this is extortionately expensive for what you get.

OS Android 4.1 Jelly Bean
Processor 1GHz dual-core
Screen 4 inches
Resolution 480 x 800 pixels
Memory 1GHz RAM
Storage 8/16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 0.3MP front-facing
Video 720p
Connectivity 3G
Dimensions: 121.6 x 63 x 9.9mm
Weight 111.5g
Battery 1,500 mAh

VERDICT: A cheeky move by Samsung to pass this off as a premium device. It's not.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Samsung Galaxy S4

Reviewed: July 2012, price: £550
www.samsung.com/uk

An impressive hardware offering with intriguing new software and camera features but these need to be perfected and integrated into the device as a whole before the S4 can really be called a knock out. While the phone's processor seemed to struggle with games and the design is pretty similar to the S3, this is a solid offering from Samsung in the flagship race.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean
CPU 1.6 GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1080 x 1920 pixels
Memory 512MB RAM
Storage 16/32/64GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Cameras 13MP front-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G LTE
Dimensions 136.6 x 69.8 x 7.9mm
Weight 130g
Battery 2,600 mAh

VERDICT: An impressive offering with interesting but not integrated new software.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy S4 Active

Reviewed: November 2013, price: £400
www.samsung.com/uk

The Active S4 is ideal for people looking for a more protected smartphone, although it does make some sacrifices. Its design is too rugged for mainstream appeal and its display and camera aren't great. But it's a great hybrid for an underwater camera and is perfect for adventurous lifestyles.

OS Android 4.2.2 Jelly Bean
Processor 1.9 GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1080 x 1920 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G LTE
Dimensions 139.7 x 71.3 x 9.1mm
Weight 151g
Battery 2,600 mAh

VERDICT: It may not be quite as good as its big brother, but it certainly has its purpose.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy S5

Reviewed: June 2014, price: £530
www.samsung.com/uk

The thing about Galaxy handsets is that their flaws are often matters of personal opinion. If you don't mind the samey design, plasticky build and irksome user interface, then the Galaxy S5 could be the best smartphone going. It's insanely powerful, has a blinding display and is even waterproof. If you care about substance over style then the Galaxy S5 is as good as it gets.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 2.5GHz quad-core
Screen 5.1 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16/32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 16MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G LTE
Dimensions 142mm x 72.5mm x 8.1mm
Weight 145g
Battery 2,800 mAh

VERDICT: Behind a cheap-looking build lies the beastliest smartphone around.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Samsung Galaxy S6 edge

Reviewed: June 2015, price: £760

www.samsung.com/uk

This is currently one of the best looking smartphones on the market. That dual-curved screen makes the iPhone 6 Plus and HTC One M9 look boring in comparison. An insanely fast camera and superb performance means that the Samsung Galaxy S6 edge isn't just about looks either.

OS Android 5.0 Lollipop
Processor octa-core Samsung Exynos 7420
Screen 5.1-inches
Resolution 1,440 x 2,560
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 64GB/128GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 16MP rear-facing 5MP front-facing

Video 4K
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 142.11 x 70.1 x 7mm
Weight 132g
Battery 2,600 mAh

VERDICT: A phone that grabs attention with both its looks and performance.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Sony Xperia Z1

Reviewed: December 2013, price: £475

www.sonymobile.com

It's a little on the large side, but Sony's latest handset is rock solid, with powerful hardware and a unique design. Fans of the company will be right at home with the software that stores movies, music and games you've bought across other platforms. Add in a great camera and you've got a phone that stops just short of best in class.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean
Processor Snapdragon 800 quad-core 2.2GHz
Screen 1080 x 1920 pixels, 5 inches
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB expandable up to 64GB via MicroSD
Camera 20.7MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing

Video 1080p
Wireless Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 4.0
Ports MicroSD, microUSB
Battery 3000mAh
Dimensions 144 x 74 x 8.5mm
Weight 170g

VERDICT: Software makes it great for Sony fans, hardware makes it good for the rest

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Sony Xperia Z1 Compact

Reviewed: March 2014, price: £449

www.sonymobile.com

If you hate giant displays and don't have the patience for Apple's iOS and its restrictive App Store, the Sony Xperia Z1 Compact is your only choice, and a great one at that. Sony has done well to make a phone with the power to rival the mighty iPhone in an equally small package. In-built Sony-branded apps such as Walkman and PlayStation is an inherent plus, too. Fingers crossed for a KitKat 4.4 upgrade soon.

OS Android 4.3
Processor Qualcomm Snapdragon 800
Screen 4.3-inch HD Triluminos
Resolution 720 x 1,280 pixels
Memory 2GB
Storage 16GB, expandable to 64GB

Camera 20.7MP Exmor RS
Video 720p
Connectivity Wi-Fi, 3G, 4G, Bluetooth 4.0, NFC
Dimensions 127 x 64.9 x 9.5mm
Weight 137g
Battery 2,300 mAh

VERDICT: The most powerful, best looking compact Android available. Simple.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Sony Xperia Z2

Reviewed: July 2014, price: £579
www.sonymobile.com

The Z2 matches its rivals' power and usability. A lack of design innovation and similar specs might deter Z1 owners from upgrading, though, and the large size might not appeal to fans of smaller devices. That said, superior imaging and a powerful processor and CPU means it excels in the right places.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 2.3GHz quad-core
Screen 5.2 inches
Resolution 1080 x 1920 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 20.7MP rear-facing, 2.2MP front-facing
Video 720p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 146.8 x 73.3 x 8.2mm
Weight 163g
Battery 3,200 mAh

VERDICT: An immaculate smartphone, if only a small step up from its predecessor.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Sony Xperia Z3

Reviewed: December 2014, price: £549
www.sonymobile.com

We were all a little bit surprised when Sony elected to release a new flagship a matter of months after the Xperia Z2 hit shelves. After reviewing it though, the company's reasoning is obvious. The Z3 is a true flagship as worthy of your attention (and cash) as any other in this Buyer's Guide. The Z3 has premium design, hugely powerful internals and an array of neat features. A very impressive device.

OS Android 4.4 Kit Kat
Processor 2.5GHz quad-core
Screen 5.2 inches
Resolution 1,920 x 1,080 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 128GB
Camera 20.7MP rear-facing, 2.2MP front-facing

Video 4K
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 146 x 72 x 7.3mm
Weight 152g
Battery 3,100 mAh

VERDICT: Sony's best full-sized offering yet, although the camera is aging a little now.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Sony Xperia Z3 Compact

Reviewed: December 14, price: £429
www.sonymobile.com

The Xperia Z3 Compact is indisputably the most powerful compact Android ever made. We can't really slight it for anything, and no other Android phone in its size bracket can come close to matching it. It's remarkable that Sony has managed to squeeze almost the exact same technology from the Z3 into a smaller body. Finally, Android power-users have a valid option in the sub-five inch display category.

OS Android 4.4 Kit Kat
Processor 2.5GHz quad-core
Screen 4.6 inches
Resolution 1,280 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 128GB
Camera 20.7MP rear-facing, 2.2MP front-facing

Video 4K
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 127 x 64.9 x 8.6mm
Weight 129g
Battery 2,600 mAh

VERDICT: The definitive small-sized Android smartphone. The most powerful yet.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★





Vodafone Smart 4 Max

Reviewed: July 2015, price: £129.99
www.vodafone.co.uk

If you crave a 6-inch 4G phablet for the equivalent of £2.50 a week over a year the Smart 4 Max is the only game in town. Purists will sneer at its elderly processor, low-res screen and lack of 'Lollipop'. You'll be the one with around £400 more in your bank account. Just bear in mind it can only connect to Vodafone 4G network and you can't remove the Vodafone embedded software.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor Snapdragon MSM8926
Screen 6-inches
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
Camera 13MP
Video Yes
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 164x83.4x7.9mm

Weight 170g
Battery 3,800 mAh

VERDICT: A great prices makes this worthwhile for first-time buyers.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Vodafone Smart 4 Power

Reviewed: February 2015, price: £79
www.vodafone.co.uk

The benchmark scores of a £79 phone were never going to impress anyone: the Smart 4 Power is not a handset for playing the latest taxing games on. That said, it's enough to deliver on the advantages of 4G. If instant information rather than instant gratification is what you're after, this phone delivers for the price.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.3GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 720 x 1280
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 4GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, VGA front-facing
Video 720p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 141 x 71.4 x 9.5mm
Weight 162g
Battery 3,000 mAh

VERDICT: Poor specs distract from what is an ergonomic and capable 4G starter.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Vodafone Smart Ultra 6

Reviewed: September 2015, price: £125
www.vodafone.co.uk

Packing a fast processor, excellent screen and plenty of battery life, you'll be hard-pressed to find a rival phone which offers quite this much for the money. Even the camera is pretty good, offering full manual controls and a high megapixel count. If you're after a true bargain Android device and are happy to forgo the big brands, this is well worth a look.

OS Android 5.0 Lollipop
Processor 1.5GHz quad-core
Screen 5.5 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1080
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p 30fps

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 154 x 77 x 8.4mm
Weight 159g
Battery 3,000 mAh

VERDICT: Excellent specs and great battery life make this seriously good value.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★





Wileyfox Swift

Reviewed: November 2015, price: £129
www.wileyfox.com

A good budget handset that struggles to stand out from the crowd, the Wileyfox Swift faces stiff competition from the likes of Motorola. Punch-for-punch, it has features to match similar handsets but the difficulty of being an entirely new brand will make it hard to claw loyal fans away from other devices.

OS Android (Cyanogen 12.1)
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 5.0 inches
Resolution 1280 x 720 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 13MP rear-facing
Video 1080p at 30fps

Connectivity Dual-SIM, 4G
Dimensions 141.15mm x 71mm x 9.37mm
Weight 135g
Battery 2,500 mAh

VERDICT: A solid performer that can't quite make itself stand out from the rest.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



YeZZ Andy A5

Reviewed: June 2014, price: £207
www.sayyezz.com

Camera phone fans on a tight budget should definitely seek out the Andy A5 for its affordable price and high-quality camera. If taking photos is not that important to you then you'll probably have seen the uninspired design and bland features a million times before.

OS Android 4.2 (Jelly Bean)
Processor Quad-core 1.2GHz
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 540 x 960 pixels
Memory 512MB RAM
Camera 13MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Connectivity 3G, wi-fi
Dimensions 144.1 x 73.5 x 8.6mm

Weight 106g
Battery 2,000 mAh

VERDICT: A great camera but the rest struggles against more bullish counterparts.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



YotaPhone 2

Reviewed: June 2014, price: £549
www.yotaphone.com/gb-en/

The YotaPhone 2 fixes almost all of the original's flaws, and turns the rear E Ink display from an impractical cherry on top, to one of the phone's main ingredients. There's no denying this quirky conversation-starter is for a niche audience, and a rich one at that. We can't wait to see what the YotaPhone 3 will bring – not least a price drop for this model.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor Quad-core 2.3GHz Krait 400
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 1,080 x 1,920 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 8MP rear-facing,

2.1MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 144 x 69.5 x 8.9mm
Weight 145g
Battery 2,500 mAh

VERDICT: If you're constantly reading on the go this is the best new smartphone in years.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★





ZTE Blade Vec 4G

Reviewed: February 2015, price: £153
www.ztedevices.co.uk

Once you've fixed all the software customisations present on the Vec 4G, you're left with a pretty respectable performer for the price. The large, sharp display does a great job of quickly rendering web pages over 4G. Unfortunately, the Vec 4G battery's small capacity and demanding hardware mean you'll often find the phone emptied by the end of the day. It also has storage issues – namely no SD card slot.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.2GHz quad-core
Screen 5 inches
Resolution 720 x 1280
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 1MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 142.3 x 70.4 x 7.8mm
Weight 155g
Battery 2,300 mAh

VERDICT: Solid specs for 4G at a reasonable price, but there are better options out there.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



ZTE Blade V

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £99.99
www.ztedevices.co.uk

A fantastic price makes the ZTE Blade V easy to recommend for first-time buyers. Anyone hoping to get the most out of a smartphone's apps and snaps should look elsewhere, but if you don't want to worry about a phone for the kids being broken or stolen, then this is for you.

OS Android 4.1 Jelly Bean
Processor Snapdragon S4 Play
Screen 480 x 800, 4 inches
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 4GB
Camera 5MP
Video Yes
Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 126 x 64 x 10.9mm
Weight 130g
Battery 1,800 mAh

VERDICT: A great prices makes this worthwhile for first-time buyers.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



ZTE Blade S6

Reviewed: August 2015 price: £169.99
www.ztedevices.co.uk

The ZTE Blade S6 is definitely more than just a cheap iPhone 6 rip off. A decent camera helps it stand out from the rest of the mid-range crowd, while performance is surprisingly decent for a phone of this price. It's let down by poor build quality and software that lacks certain features. The price is the most attractive, however, and those negatives shouldn't put you off this decent mid-range phone.

OS Android 5.0 Lollipop
Processor Snapdragon 615
Screen 5-inches
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
Camera 13MP
Video Yes
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 144 x 70.7 x 7.7mm
Weight 154g
Battery 2,400 mAh

VERDICT: An affordable phone with surprisingly decent performance.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Amazon Kindle Fire HD 8.9"

Reviewed: May 2013, price: £229/259
www.amazon.co.uk

A good looking e-reader with tablet capabilities, limited by Amazon's annoying operating system and app eco-system, and an annoyingly slow browser. This device will doubtless be a commercial success, with its branding and ease of use, but for the more serious user there are much better tablets out there.

Dimensions 240 x 164 x 8.8mm	RAM 1GB RAM
OS Customized Android 4.0	Storage 16GB/32GB
Screen 8.9 inch IPS LCD capacitive touchscreen	Cameras front facing 1.3MP with 720p video
Resolution 1920 x 1200, 254 ppi	Wireless 802.11 a/b/g/n, dual-band
Processor TI OMAP 4470 dual-core 1.5 GHz Cortex-A9	Ports USB 2.0, 3.5mm audio jacks, Bluetooth A2DP
GPU PowerVR SGX544	Battery life 10 hours (accurate)

VERDICT: A solid, functional tablet that is limited by its Amazon associations.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★



Acer Iconia Tab 8

Reviewed: April 2015, price: £140
www.amazon.co.uk

Acer has managed to do what manufacturers of every cheap tablet should aspire to: create a tablet that is priced extremely competitively, but which performs to a standard much higher than you'd expect for its cost. A few compromises have been made along the way, but this is still a budget slab that's well worth considering.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat	2MP front-facing
Processor 1.3GHz quad-core	Video 720p
Screen 8 inches	Connectivity Wi-fi only
Resolution 1,280 x 800 pixels	Dimensions 215 x 130 x 8.5mm
Memory 2GB RAM	Weight 360g
Storage 16GB/32GB	Battery 4,600 mAh
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 32GB	
Camera 5MP rear-facing,	

VERDICT: It has a few flaws, but for less than £150 you should look past them.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★



Advent Vega Tegra Note 7

Reviewed: April 2014, price: £140
www.nvidia.co.uk

It's a contender, alright. Aside from some clunky desing issues, the Advent Vega Tegra Note 7 is a powerful and punchy little machine. If you're after a compact and affordable tablet its speed sets it aside from its rivals as a device that's great for gaming, customising images and browsing the web.

OS Android Jelly Bean 4.3	Weight 320g
Processor Nvidia Tegra 4	Battery 8 hours
Screen 7 inches	
Resolution 1,280 x 800 pixels	
Memory 1GB RAM	
Storage 16GB	
Connectivity Wi-fi, Bluetooth 4.0	
Dimensions 119 x 199 x 9.6mm	

VERDICT: Its speed sets it apart from its competition. A cheap and capable device.

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USABILITY	★★★★★
DESIGN	★★★★★





Amazon Kindle Fire HDX

Reviewed: January 2014, price: £199-329
www.amazon.co.uk/kindle

The Kindle Fire HDX is around £100 more than the Fire but the improved screen and processor justifies the extra cost. The real human Help feature will be a boon to tablet newbies; experienced users will regard it as a gimmick. The HDX is a top-rate device – but if you're not a regular Amazon customer you're better off with a Nexus.

OS Amazon customised Android OS, v4.1.2
Screen 1902 x 1200 pixels, 7 inches
Processor Snapdragon 800 2.2GHz quad-core
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16/ 32/64GB versions available
Camera 8MP front-facing
Video 720HD
Wireless Wi-fi (optional Vodafone 4G version)
Ports microUSB
Dimensions 131.8 x 66.9 x 9.9mm
Weight 302g

VERDICT: A significant update to the Fire and ideal for Amazon users.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Apple iPad Mini

Reviewed: December 2012, price: £269
www.apple.com/uk

The iPad Mini represents Apple playing it safe, which is to say: disappointing. This is little more than an iPad 2, with all its limitations – a low-res screen and weak processor power – shrunk down to an odd 7.9-inch size. It is also overpriced, the Google Nexus 7 offers superior performance for £100 less. Despite its luxurious design, you really are paying for little more than 4G support and Apple's App Store. Average.

OS iOS 6.0.1
Screen 7.9-inch LED-backlit IPS LCD
Resolution 768 x 1024 pixels at 162 pixels per inch
Input Capacitive touchscreen
CPU Apple A5 1GHz dual core
GPU PowerVR SGX543MP2
Memory 512MB
Storage 16/32/64GB
Camera 5MP rear facing, 1.2MP front facing
Video 1920x1080 (1080P HD) at 30fps. Video stabilised
Wireless Wi-Fi 802.11 a/b/g/n, dual-band, Bluetooth 4.0
Ports 3.5mm audio jack, Apple Lightning port (USB 2.0)
Size 200 x 134.7 x 7.2mm
Weight 308g

VERDICT: Little more than a shrunken iPad 2 with 4G. Disappointing.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Apple iPad 3

Reviewed: April 2012, price: £399
www.apple.com/uk

The new iPad boasts the highest-resolution display of any tablet, as well as an improved 5MP camera and better connectivity. Not to mention a high-powered new processor which makes it the most powerful iPad ever, too. Though some may resist the upgrade path, the unrivalled Retina display is a subtle but deeply appealing feature that will become more and more desirable. The new iPad is by far the best tablet around

OS iOS 5
Screen 9.7-inch TFT
Resolution 1536 x 2048 pixels
Input Capacitive touchscreen
Processor 1GHz Cortex-A9
Memory 1GB
Storage 16/32/64GB
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 0.3MP front-facing
Flash No
Video 1080p HD
Wireless 802.11a/b/g/n Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 4.0
Ports 3.5mm audio jack, proprietary Apple connector
Standby time 720 hours
Use time 9 hours
Size 241 x 186 x 9mm
Weight 662g

VERDICT: There's simply no contest – the new iPad is the best tablet in the world.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Apple iPad 4

Reviewed: January 2013, price: £399
www.apple.com/uk

A rather cheeky move by Apple to release the iPad 4 (or 'iPad with Retina Display') just months after the iPad 3. All it really adds is a new processor (the iPhone 5's A6X) and Apple's new lightning connector. However, this means it remains as the best tablet money can buy – and Apple's App Store and its 300,000 dedicated tablet apps only make the proposition more enticing.

OS iOS 6.0.1, **Screen** 9.7 inch LED
Resolution 1536 x 2048 pixels at 264 ppi pixel density
CPU Apple A6X, Dual-core
GPU PowerVR SGX554MP4,
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16/32/64GB storage
Camera 5MP rear facing, 1.2MP front facing
Video 1080P HD at 30fps
Wireless Wi-Fi 802.11 a/b/g/n, Bluetooth 4.0
Cellular 4G, 3G, 2G
Ports Lightning Connector (USB2.0) and 3.5mm audio jack,
Dimensions 241.2 x 185.7 x 9.4mm
Weight 662 g

VERDICT: The best tablet money can buy.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Archos 79 Platinum

Reviewed: April 2014, price: £150
www.archos.com

With so many budget tablets to choose from the Archos 79 Platinum has no features or unique selling points to attract the consumer in a saturated market. Its hardware is woefully underpowered, its features are bog standard and it is at least £10 too expensive. Its attractive looks are not enough to redeem it. The bottom line is that it should have never been conceived.

OS Android 4.2 Jelly Bean **Weight** 366g
Processor Quad-core A9 **Battery** Lithium Polymer
 1.6GHz
Screen 7.85 inches
Resolution 1024 x 768 pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
Camera 2MP rear-facing
Connectivity Wi-fi, Bluetooth
Dimensions 201 x 137 x 8mm

VERDICT: There is no reason you ever would, or should, buy it. Avoid, avoid, avoid.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Archos 101 XS 2

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £250
www.archos.com

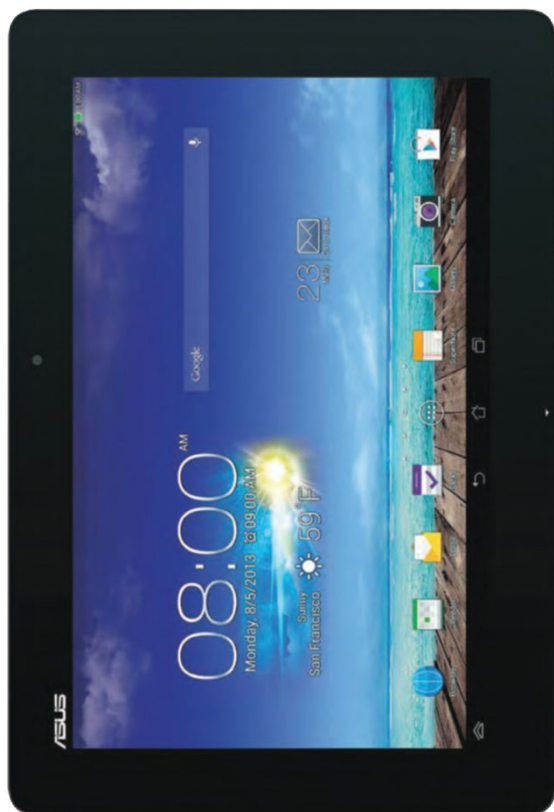
A couple of years ago, the 101 XS would have had us singing Archos' praises, but by today's standards its processing power and screen quality fall short. It might, though, find a home with users limited to spending £250 on a 10-inch tablet

OS Android 4.2.2 **Screen** 10.1-inch/1,280 x 800 pixels
Camera 2MP rear, 2MP front
Video Record/playback
Audio Music player/3.5mm jack
Memory 16GB expandable via MicroSD
Dimensions 273 x 169 x 10.1mm (tablet), 273 x 169 x 5mm (keyboard)
Weight 636g (tablet), 200g (keyboard)

VERDICT: A great price is let down by a poor screen and cheap build.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Asus Transformer Pad TF701T

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £429
www.asus.com

The Asus Transformer Pad TF701T packs a beautiful screen and the keyboard dock is well thought out. But dated software and the threat of a Google Nexus 10 sequel make this a niche device. Do you really need a keyboard? The iPad mini begs to differ.

OS Android 4.3 (via an over-the-air update)
Screen 10.1 inch/2,560 x 1,600 pixels
Input Capacitive touchscreen
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 1.2MP front-facing
Video Record/playback
Audio Music player/3.5mm jack

Memory 32/64GB
Battery Tablet 31Wh, dock 16Wh

VERDICT: It packs fast hardware but can't compete with the iPad Air or Nexus range

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Google Nexus 9

Reviewed: February 2015, price: £319
www.google.co.uk/nexus

The Google Nexus 9 is an impressive and welcome return to the tablet market for HTC, and a jewel of a gadget for Android 5.0 to debut on. The size is right, and if you know for sure you want an Android tablet, it's your best bet – it's certainly the best slate HTC has ever made – but for the money we'd still go for the quality build and thriving eco-system of an iPad.

OS Android 5.0 Lollipop
Screen 8.9-inch
Resolution 2048 x 1536 pixels
Processor Tegra K1 2.3GHz
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB/32GB internal
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 1.6MP front-facing
Flash No
Video 1080p HD

Dimensions 153.68mm x 228.25mm x 7.95mm
Weight 425g
Battery 6,700 mAh

VERDICT: The best tablet on the market – if you insist on Android, that is.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Google Nexus 10

Reviewed: February 2013, price: £319
www.google.co.uk/nexus

Finally, the Android tablet everyone's been waiting for – except Apple. This is a tablet that can go head to head with the best in the Apple iPad stable – it has a powerful processor, a Retina Display quality screen, the latest version of Android. Along with the Nexus 7, this is the best tablet Android users can buy. The only flaws are an uninspired body, and a dearth of tablet specific apps.

OS Android 4.2 (Jelly Bean)
Dimensions 263.9 x 177.6 x 8.9mm, 603g
Screen 10 inch
Resolution 2560 x 1600 pixels
Input Super PLS TFT capacitive touch-screen
CPU Exynos 5, Dual-core ARM Cortex-A15
RAM 2GB

Cameras 5MP (main), 1.9MP (front)
Wireless Wi-Fi, Bluetooth
NFC Android Beam
Storage 16GB/32GB
Connectivity Micro USB, Micro HDMI, 3.5mm headphone jack
Battery 9,000 mAh

VERDICT: The best Android tablet of 2013 slips behind the iPad only due to apps.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





HP Slate 7

Reviewed: October 2013, price: £125
www.hp.com

The steel frame makes the Slate 7 an impressive sight and its audio uses Beats technology to great effect. The fantastic price will help it to undercut some of its rivals, though the slow processor and low quality camera keep it from besting them elsewhere.

OS Android 4.1 Jelly Bean
Processor Dual-core 1.6 GHz Cortex-A9
Screen 600 x 1024 pixels, 7.0 inches
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB expandable to 32GB via SD card
Camera 3.15MP pixel rear-facing, VGA front-facing

Video 720p
Dimensions 197.1 x 116.1 x 10.7mm
Weight 372 g
Battery non-removable, 5h media time

VERDICT: Great audio and build, but corners have been cut to keep costs down.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Lenovo ThinkPad 8

Reviewed: September 2014, price: £424
www.lenovo.com

If you just want a device for general tasks then you can find better alternatives within Lenovo's Yoga range of Android slates, and elsewhere. If you're a fan of Windows and in search of a bulkier device that offers plenty of productivity tools, then the ThinkPad is an (almost) viable option.

OS Windows 8.1
Processor 2.4GHz quad-core
Screen 8.3 inches
Resolution 1200 x 1920 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 2.2MP front-facing

Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 8.83 x 5.2 x 0.35 inches
Weight 439g

VERDICT: Even with so few Windows tablets available the ThinkPad still fails to stand out.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Lenovo Miix 2

Reviewed: July 2014, price: £255
www.microsoft.com/surface

With solid performance across the board, frequently usable built-in apps and compact size the Miix 2 is a small but surprisingly versatile slate. Despite the limitations that come with the Windows OS, it performs general tasks well and, for the price, won't let you down. With 3G capability you can even connect to the internet on the move. Overall, it offers plenty of pleasant surprises to combat the weaknesses of its OS.

OS Windows 8.1
Processor 1.3GHz quad-core
Screen 8 inches
Resolution 1280 x 800 pixels
Memory 2GB
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 3G
Dimensions 8.3 x 215.6 x 131mm
Weight 350g
Battery 4,730 mAh

VERDICT: A small but substantial Windows offering that still trails its Android rivals.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Lenovo Yoga Tablet 2

Reviewed: March 2015, price: £249
www.lenovo.com

Lenovo certainly deserves credit for trying to break the 'black slab' mould. It's an interesting attempt at something different, but unless you have a real need to hang it up from the ceiling or to perch it upright on a train table every day its mediocre internals and display don't represent that much value for money.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.86GHz quad-core
Screen 10.1inches
Resolution 1920 x 1200 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 64GB
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 1.6MP front-facing
Video 720p
Connectivity 4G optional
Dimensions 255 x 183 x 7.2mm
Weight 619g
Battery 9,600 mAh

VERDICT: A nice idea, but one we don't fully buy into. Not quite up to scratch.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Microsoft Surface 2 Pro

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £720
www.microsoft.com/surface

We can't fault Microsoft's ambition for the powerful Surface Pro 2 to become your all-in-one portable work and play device. It's got a great display and solid hardware but a lack of dedicated apps, software compromises and stiff – cheaper – competition make it a tough sell.

OS Windows 8.1
Screen 10.6 inches/1920 x 1080 pixels
Input Capacitive touchscreen
Camera 720p resolution front and rear
Video Record/playback
Audio Music player/3.5mm jack
Memory 64GB/128GB/
256GB/512GB
Battery 48Wh

VERDICT: Price holds back what is an otherwise excellent work/play hybrid.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Microsoft Surface Pro 3

Reviewed: November 2014, price: £640
www.microsoft.com/surface

From software to hardware and even design, the Surface Pro 3 is a wonderful piece of kit. It's refreshing to come across a tablet with grander ideals than the norm, challenging us to rethink the notion of the medium. For most people this could genuinely replace their laptop. It's just a shame, and an almost inexcusable mistake, that the keyboard which is so integral to its function is sold as an expensive extra.

OS Windows 8.1
Processor 1.5GHz Intel core i3/2.9GHz Intel core i5/3.7GHz Intel core i7
Screen 12 inches
Resolution 2160 x 1440 pixels
Memory 4/8GB RAM
Storage 64GB/128GB/256GB/512GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 128GB
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 5MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity Wi-fi only
Dimensions 292.1mm x 201.4mm x 9.1mm
Weight 800g
Battery 42Wh

VERDICT: The first tablet with enough function to conceivably replace a laptop.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★





Nokia Lumia 2520

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £399
www.nokia.com

The Windows-run Lumia 2520 is a decent first effort from Nokia – and it's certainly one of the more attractive and solid pieces of tablet hardware on the market. It has a few issues with the weight and a lackluster camera but overall we have no trouble recommending this to Windows 8.1 and Lumia fans.

OS Windows 8.1
Screen 10.1 inches, 1920 x 1080 pixels, 218PPI
Processor Qualcomm Snapdragon 800
Memory 2GB
Camera 6.7MP with Carl Zeiss lens
Audio Music player/3.5mm jack

Dimensions 168 x 267 x 8.9mm, 615g
Battery 8120 mAh

VERDICT: A rock-solid first effort from Nokia in this market with powerful specs.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy Tab 3 Kids

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £250
www.nokia.com

The Tab 3 Kids is surprisingly robust, with a solid camera, great battery, fantastic educational apps and software to suit kids. But the premium design doesn't feel like it was meant to be enjoyed by young users and we'd suggest going with a company that specialises in the market rather than one that's testing it out.

OS Android 4.1
Processor Dual-core 1.2GHz
Screen 600 x 1024 pixels, 7 inches
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB/16GB, expandable up to 64GB
Camera 3.15MP (back), 1.3MP (front)
Video 720p@30fps

Wireless WiFi, Bluetooth 3.0
Ports micro-USB, MicroSD
Dimensions 188 x 111.1 x 9.9mm
Weight 306g
Battery Li-Ion 4,000 mAh

VERDICT: A little too premium for the market it is aimed at.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy Tab S

Reviewed: October 2014, price: £319
www.samsung.com/uk

While the Tab S may not be a radical departure from other Android tablets, it encompasses everything that is great about a top-notch Samsung product. It's enough to rebuild the Korean giant's brand image, and proof that the company can still surprise us with a fantastic all-round product.

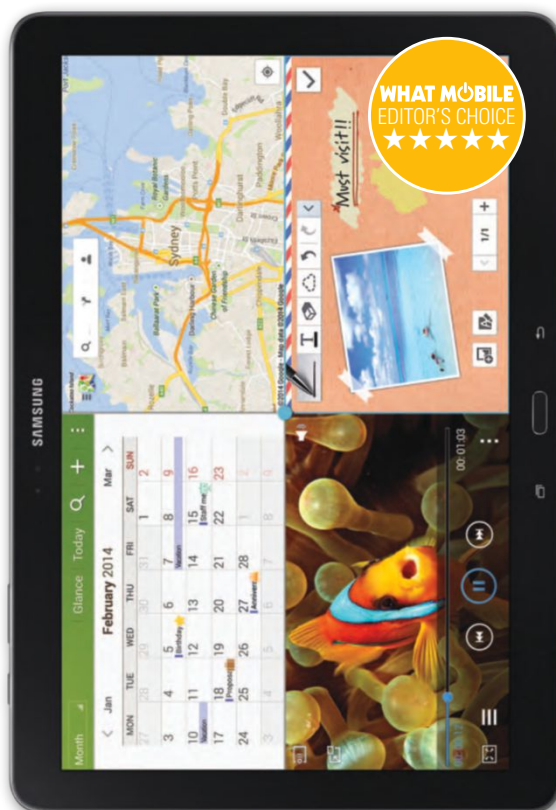
OS Android 4.4 Kit Kat
Processor 2.3GHz quad-core
Screen 8.4 inches
Resolution 2560 x 1600 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 16GB, 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 8MP rear-facing, 2.1MP front-facing
Video 1080p

Connectivity 4G
Dimensions 125.6 x 212.8 x 6.6mm
Weight 294g
Battery 4,900 mAh

VERDICT: Simply put, it's the best Android tablet on the market.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★





Samsung Galaxy Note Pro 12.2

Reviewed: May 2014, price: £649
www.samsung.com/uk

One of the biggest displays ever seen on a tablet – at no detriment to quality. Combine that with solid design and a super powerful processor to run loads of unique applications and the NotePRO 12.2 is arguably the best tablet on the market. It's certainly the best Android slate, although it's definitely priced as such.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor Octa-core (1.9GHz + 1.3GHz quad)
Screen 12.2 inches
Resolution 2560 x 1600 pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 32GB/64GB
Camera 8MP rear/2MP front-facing
Video 1,080p Full HD
Connectivity Wi-fi only
Dimensions 295.6 x 204 x 7.95mm
Weight 750g
Battery 9,500 mAh

VERDICT: Big, beautiful, functional and priced to match. Android's finest.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Sony Xperia Z4 Tablet

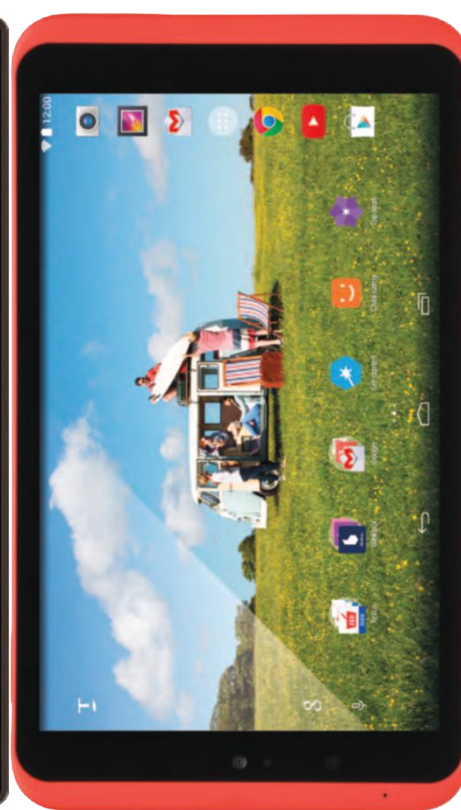
Reviewed: October 2015, price: £499
www.sony.co.uk

The Sony Xperia Z4 is a beautifully engineered tablet with more than enough power to run even the most demanding app smoothly. Unfortunately, while slimline and lightweight, its listed price of £499.00 is surprisingly high for its provided specifications. Powerful but pricey.

OS Android 5.0 (Lollipop)
Processor Octa-core 2.0 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 810, 64 bit
Screen 10.1 inches
Resolution 2560 x 1600-pixels
Memory 3GB RAM
Storage 32GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes,
 up to 128GB
Camera 8.1MP rear-facing, 5.1MP front-facing
Video 1080p
Connectivity 4G, Wi-Fi
Dimensions 167 x 254 x 6.1 mm
Weight 393g
Battery 6,000 mAh

VERDICT: Beautifully engineered, slimline tablet but pricey considering specification.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Tesco Hudl 2

Reviewed: January 2015, price: £129
www.tesco.com/direct/hudl

This is no Tesco Value attempt at a tablet. Make no mistake, the Hudl 2 is a fantastic Android slate that's great value for money. Sure, it's not on the cutting edge like Google's Nexus series of devices, but if all you want is a gadget to casually surf the web, watch some films or read a few comics, this device is every bit as capable as an iPad Mini.

OS Android 4.4 KitKat
Processor 1.83GHz quad-core
Screen 8.3 inches
Resolution 1920 x 1200 pixels
Memory 2GB RAM
Storage 16GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 1.2MP front-facing
Video 720p at 30fps
Connectivity Wi-fi
Dimensions 224 x 128 x 9mm
Weight 410g
Battery 4,900 mAh

VERDICT: Don't be fooled – Tesco is now a serious contender in the tablet space.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Toshiba Excite Pure

Reviewed: February 2014, price: £250
www.toshiba.co.uk

The Toshiba Excite Pure's £250 price is attractive but its display is far too faded. It means apps and the like don't look very good. It might appeal to families looking for a cheap way to keep the kids entertained but little else. Even so, the slow processor and useless apps force us to recommend you look elsewhere.

OS Android v4.2 (Jelly Bean)
Processor Nvidia Tegra 3
Memory 1GB
Storage 16GB
Screen 1280 x 800 pixels, 10.1 inches
Video HD
Audio Stereo
Dimensions 261.6 x 177.8 x 10.2mm

VERDICT: It's got a cheap price tag but the poor display and tech shows why.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Vodafone Smart Tab 4G

Reviewed: June 2015, price: £125
www.vodafone.co.uk

Attractive, cheap and feature-packed; the Vodafone Smart Tab 4G looks more upmarket than its affordable £125 pricing suggests. It's let down by a slow processor, but that shouldn't put you off what is basically well-designed and ideal family tablet.

OS Android KitKat 4.4
Processor 1.2 GHz Quad-Core
Screen 8.0-inches
Resolution 1280 x 800-pixels
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 8GB
MicroSD compatible? Yes, up to 64GB
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Connectivity GSM/EDGE/3G/4G/HSPA+/LTE
Dimensions 209 x 128 x 7.99mm
Weight 309g
Battery 4060 mAh

VERDICT: An affordable and easy-to-use tablet that offers something for everyone.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★



Vodafone Smart Tab 6

Reviewed: September 2015, price: £150
www.vodafone.co.uk

The Smart Tab 6 is definitely cheap but we'd suggest looking elsewhere for a good budget tablet. The screen isn't that great and performance can't quite keep up with more intensive tasks and games. It has a large battery and the build quality is definitely better than the price suggests, but these points aren't enough to redeem what is an average tablet at best.

OS Android 5.0.2 Lollipop
Processor Quad-core 1.3GHz
Screen 1280 x 800 pixels, 9.6 inches
Memory 1GB RAM
Storage 16GB, expandable up to 32GB
Camera 5MP rear-facing, 2MP front-facing
Video 720p
Wireless WiFi, Bluetooth 4.1
Ports micro-USB, MicroSD
Dimensions 146 x 244 x 7.9mm
Weight 406g
Battery Li-Ion 4,600 mAh

VERDICT: Cheap but not quite good enough to worry the competition.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 FEATURES ★★★★★
 USABILITY ★★★★★
 DESIGN ★★★★★





Asus ZenWatch

Reviewed: April 2015, price: £204
www.asus.com/uk

The Asus ZenWatch is handsome enough, but fails to stand out from the crowd of Android Wear devices. Google's wearable OS still feels like a solution in search of a problem – unless you have a specific use in mind for its features you may want to hold out for the next generation of devices.

OS Android Wear
Processor Snapdragon 400 1.2GHz
Screen 1.63 inches
Resolution 320 x 320 pixels
Memory 512MB RAM
Storage 4GB
MicroSD compatible? No

Camera N/A
Video N/A
Connectivity Bluetooth 4.0
Dimensions 51 x 39.9 x 9.4mm
Weight 75g
Battery 369mAh

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Nike+ Fuelband SE

Reviewed: June 2014, price: £89
www.nike.com

The Nike+ FuelBand SE is close to being the perfect sports tracker. It's social capabilities combined with its numerous features to keep you motivated ensure that it will be a permanent mainstay in any gym addict's kit bag. You might not be so keen on wearing it every single day, though, with its appealing design being more clearly tailored to a casual setting. Plus, its lack of waterproofing could be a deal-breaker for some.

OS N/A
Processor N/A
Screen N/A
Resolution N/A

Memory N/A
Storage N/A
Camera N/A

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Vector Smartwatch

Reviewed: November 2015, price: £80
www.vectorwatch.com

An ambitious attempt to inject some much-needed class into the smartwatch. It's beautiful. But the level of interactivity is minimal and its software lacking. Ultimately, we came away wondering what a Pebble Time with Vector's hardware and battery life might be like. We can only hope this becomes just that, but the company has a long road to travel first.

OS Custom
Storage No
MicroSD compatible? No
Camera No
Video No

Connectivity Bluetooth LE
Dimensions 44 x 44 x 11mm
Weight 142g
Battery 30 days

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



LG G Watch R

Reviewed: May 2015, price: £180.00
www.jawbone.com

The LG G Watch R may be one of the most mature-looking smartwatches yet, but not everyone will find it attractive – or appreciate Android Wear's limitations. The market's set to explode with the advent of the Apple Watch and the Pebble Time. Unless you're desperate for what the LG G Watch R does right now, it's hard to see the value in yet another second-generation Android Wear watch.

OS Android Wear
Processor Snapdragon 400 1.2GHz
Screen 1.3 inches
Resolution 320 x 320 pixels
Memory 512MB RAM
Storage 4GB
MicroSD compatible? No

Camera No
Video No
Connectivity Bluetooth 4.0
Dimensions 46.4 x 53.6 x 9.7mm
Weight 62g
Battery 410mAh

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy Gear 2

Reviewed: June 2014, price: £250
www.samsung.com

The design needs a rethink but the Samsung Galaxy Gear 2 provides decent fitness tracking features and a good music player. Trimming down on other functions, however, would have made for a slimmer and sleeker product. It would be unfair to say this is a needless addition as it packs a lot of functions, but it's an expensive product

Display 1.63-inch Super AMOLED (320 x 320)

Dimensions 36.9 x 58.4 x 10.0mm, 68g

Processor 1GHz dual-core

Memory 512MB + 4GB storage

Battery 300mAh; 2 to 3 days'

average usage

Connectivity Bluetooth 4.0, IR

Water resistance Rated IP67

Camera 2MP, 720p, 30fps video

OS Tizen-based OS

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Fitbit Flex

Reviewed: August 2014, price: £79.99
www.fitbit.com

Minor niggles aside, the Fitbit Flex is possibly the best fitness wearable on the market. Its features are so diverse, and its app so beautiful and intuitive, that it can be tailored to just about anyone's lifestyle. With interchangeable bands in a variety of colours, and a low price, the Flex is practically a must-buy.

OS N/A
Processor N/A
Screen N/A
Resolution N/A
Memory N/A

Storage N/A
Camera N/A

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Microsoft Band 2

Reviewed: January 2016, price: £199
http://www.microsoftstore.com/

Microsoft really believes that wearables are the future. It has banked quite heavily on fitness devices with lots of sensors and the Band 2 is its next iteration of this. Retailing at £199, it is by no means cheap but offers more sensors than any other device currently on the market. The main question is, has it solved the issues that plagued the original?

OS Custom Windows Phone OS
Number of sensors 11
Processor N/A
Screen 1.26 x 0.50 inches
Resolution 320 x 128 pixels
Memory N/A

Storage N/A
Connectivity Bluetooth
Dimensions 159 x 78 x 7.3 mm
Weight N/A
Battery 48 hours

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Samsung Galaxy Gear S2

Reviewed: May 2014, price: £649
www.samsung.com/uk

The Gear S2 Classic is a device you'll definitely wear daily and won't be bored of any time soon. But Samsung needs to make due on its promise of apps to establish itself as king of the wearables. That said, Samsung has provided us with an excellent smartwatch that is arguably the best on the market.

OS Tizen
Processor Exynos 3250
Screen 1.2 inches
Resolution 360 x 360 pixels
Memory 512MB
Storage 4GB

MicroSD compatible? No
Connectivity Wi-Fi
Dimensions 43.6 x 39.9 x 11.4 mm
Weight 42g
Battery 250 mAh

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★
USABILITY ★★★★★
DESIGN ★★★★★



Wearable compatibility guide



**LG
G Watch R**



**Pebble
Watch**



**Samsung
Gear Live**



**Sony
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