



Mobile Phones Reviews

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Apple iPhone

Elegant, intuitive and fast - but the iPhone could do more

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For

- MultiTouch touchscreen controls
- Intuitive interface
- Good battery life
- Simplified syncing with iTunes
- Dazzling screen

Against

- No 3G
- Fixed focus camera
- Bluetooth works with phone headsets only
- Fixed battery
- Incompatible with 64-bit Windows

Verdict

The iPhone is a stellar debut for Apple in the mobile phone market



The Apple iPhone is available in 4GB or 8GB sizes at \$499 and \$599 respectively. Early sales suggest the 8GB version is the most popular

zoom

Can you recall your first encounter with a computer, and how empowered you felt? That feeling that one device could change your world. If you've yearned for that feeling, get an [iPhone](#). The iPhone demonstrates [Apple](#)'s ingenuity and keen sense of technical design. What the iPhone does right, it does outstandingly, so much so that it will lead you to overlook its considerable shortcomings.

The first feature that exemplifies the iPhone's excellence: Apple's MultiTouch touchscreen technology. MultiTouch will prove to be a model for touchface interfaces in the future. MultiTouch succeeds because it uses natural movements: a pinching motion for zooming in and out, a flick up or down for fast scrolling, single and double taps. MultiTouch avoids awkward movements.

The onscreen Qwerty keyboard, a concern for sceptics, has its learning curve but it's not unusable. You need to develop a sense of where your finger (skin, not your fingernail) touches the key. Some of us quickly adapted to the on-screen keyboard, while others will need days to learn the keyboard's nuances. Once mastered, you'll realise the concern was overstated.

The iPhone 3.5-inch screen dazzles. Colour pops on the screen, and the text detail may be some of the best seen compared to similar devices. Skin tones look realistic and smooth in photos and videos, and we didn't notice any ghosting.

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In fact, the image quality is so good that you can enjoy a two-hour movie, even if you believe that movies were made for big screens. A commercially-made DVD movie that we ripped to our [Mac](#) using [Handbrake](#) and formatted as an [iPod](#) movie played on the iPhone flawlessly.

iPhone management is done through a USB connection on Mac or Windows (the iPhone is incompatible with 64-bit [Windows Vista](#)) using [iTunes](#). Not only are your iPod files organised in iTunes, but you also determine your Calendar and Address Book settings there, too. The iPhone is compatible with Address Book, iCal under [Mac OS X](#), and [Microsoft Entourage](#) on the Mac. On Windows, iPhone works with [Microsoft Outlook](#).

Phone and Internet

Apple touts a web experience on the iPhone without the compromises you usually make with smartphones. In actuality, the iPhone web experience is glorious yet has its own set of compromises. You see web pages as you would on a computer, and text and pictures look spectacular.

However, load a site that requires plug-ins such as [Adobe Flash](#), and you see missing plug-in

messages. Apple won't comment on why the iPhone's [Safari](#) browser is crippled this way, but perhaps [AT&T](#)'s EDGE network isn't fast enough for streaming media.

That brings us to the greatest obstacle that prevents the iPhone from offering the best web experience in a mobile device. On AT&T's [EDGE](#) network and even on a Wi-Fi connection, the speeds feel modem-like.

Supported email services include [Yahoo](#), [Google Mail](#), [.Mac](#), and [AOL](#). You can also enter settings for IMAP, POP, and [Microsoft Exchange](#) (IMAP only, and the Exchange server must have update Rollup 3 installed). You can view HTML emails, but you can't mark emails as spam. We were able to set up accounts quickly, but we did have some performance lag while typing email messages.

The phone sound quality is clear but muted, and we didn't experience static or dropouts while using the phone in San Francisco. The music and video sound quality using earbuds is iPod-like, while the built-in speaker lacks richness and bass response but can get loud.

Like its iPod siblings, the iPhone battery can't be removed. In our continuous talk test, the battery lasted just over seven hours. The iPod played music for nearly 23 hours and videos for 6 hours, 15 minutes. All good tallies that fall short of each of Apple's specifications by about an hour.

The iPhone's OS

Underneath the iPhone software is Mac OS X, and the iPhone feel like it has the power of a super sub-compact Mac. Unlike the **MacBook** and other Macs, the iPhone doesn't use an **Intel** processor. It uses a **Samsung** -manufactured ARM chip and it has 512MB of SDRAM to run the OS. The ARM processor is quite snappy; you can zip through the iPhone interface without any delays. Some tasks, such as opening email attachments and Cover Flow, feel faster than on an Intel 2GHz Core 2 Duo MacBook.

Despite the Mac OS X underpinnings, customisation is limited. You can't change the display font or font size or reorganise the application icons on the home page. You can't create custom ringtones or use MP3 ringtones. Another limitation: Apple won't allow third-party developers to create true OS X applications. Instead, Apple allows development of Ajax-based web apps that run using Safari.

The SIM card is stored in a slot atop the iPhone. You insert a paperclip into a hole, and out pops the SIM card caddy with the card. You can't unlock the iPhone and use cards from other phones.

The iPhone headphone jack is recessed, which will prevent you from using some third-party earphones. The iPhone's Bluetooth can be used only with a phone headset and can't be used to transfer files, sync, or listen to the iPod via Bluetooth earphones.

Conclusion

The more we use the iPhone, the more our affection grows for it. You can't say that about many things you use in your life.

What makes the iPhone such a exciting device is its elegance. From its glossy exterior, to its intuitive interface, snappy response times, and sensible navigation, the iPhone simply works.

Yes, the iPhone has many shortcomings. Its slow EDGE connectivity is a deal breaker. The Safari web browser needs to be updated for plug-in functionality. Its limited Bluetooth capabilities make no sense. Perhaps iPhone 2.0's the better deal for you.

But if you're willing to make a few compromises, you won't be sorry. The iPhone has changed the mobile device landscape. For the better. *Roman Loyola*

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Full Specification

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 3G | No |
| E-mail Client | Yes |
| GPRS | Yes |
| HSDPA | No |
| Internet Browser | Yes |
| Java | No |
| Keyboard | Yes |
| Loudspeaker | Yes |
| Playable Formats | AAC MPEG-4 MP3 H.264 with AAC-LC Audible 3 Audible 2 WAV Audible 1 Apple Lossless AIFF |
| Video Capture | No |
| WAP 2.0 | No |
| Connectivity | 3.5mm Headphone Jack USB 30pin iPod Dock Connector |
| Data Link Protocol | 802.11b/g |
| Infrared | No |
| Smartphone OS | Mac OS X |
| MPN | MA712LL/A |
| Built-In Camera | Yes |
| Camera Resolution | 2.0 MP |
| Memory (GB) | 8 GB |
| Mobile Phone Camera Type | Megapixel |
| Audio Recording | No |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Headphone Details | Stereo earphones with built-in microphone / 20Hz - 20KHz Response / 32 Ohms Impedence |
| Speakers | Mono |
| EDGE | Yes |
| Mobile Phone Frequencies | GSM850/GSM900/GSM1800/GSM1900 |
| Quoted Standby Time | 250 Hours |
| Quoted Talk Time (hrs) | 8 hours |
| Dimensions | 61 x 115 x 11.6 mm (w x h x d) |
| Weight (g) | 135 g |
| Additional Information | 8GB \$599US / 4GB also available for \$499 |
| Touch Screen | Yes |
| Installed RAM (MB) | 512 MB |
| RAM Type | SDRAM |
| Accessories | Dock / Dock Connector to USB Cable / USB Power Adapter / Cleaning/polishing cloth |
| OS Requirements | Microsoft Windows Vista Microsoft Windows XP SP2 Professional Microsoft Windows XP SP2 Home Apple Mac OS X 10.4.10 or later |
| Required Software | Apple iTunes 7.3 or later |
| Smartphone Processor | 620MHz ARM 1176JZF |
| Colour Screen | Yes |
| Display Resolution | 480 x 320 |
| Display Size | 3.5 inches |
| Display Technology | TFT Touchscreen |
| Memory Card Compatibility | None |
| FM Radio | No |
| Battery Type | Rechargeable Lithium Ion |
| Alarm | Yes |
| Bluetooth | Yes |
| Handsfree Speakerphone | Yes |
| MMS | No |
| Phone Features | Contact List YouTube Weather Stock Ticker Safari Web Browser Photos Notes Music Library MP3/Polyphonic ringtones Google Maps Directory Search Call Waiting Call History Calender Calculator |
| SMS | Yes |
| Stereo Bluetooth | No |
| Vibrating Alert | Yes |

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User Reviews

No comments have been posted