

## **HTC One Delivers Apple-Level Design Quality To Rival The Samsung S4**

HTC begun their revamp of their exhaustive range of smartphones with the One series, which included the HTC One V and HTC One X. Now, they have returned with the flagship HTC One smartphone. How does it stack up against the competition?

### **Design & Specifications**

The unibody aluminum design of the HTC One is one of the stand-out features of the phone. It is already turning the heads of interested consumers who see a few of these beauties out in the wild.

A single piece of aluminum is used to carve out the shape of the phone, so there are zero gaps where dust can enter. The downside or upside, depending on your perspective, is that there is not plastic back that one can remove to swap out a battery (though admittedly this is also a bugbear of Samsung phone owners who complain about the flimsy nature of the rear panel of the Samsung Galaxy S3 & S4 phones).

The finish of the phone is simple stunning, something akin to an Apple Macbook Pro, but better. Add the impressively large, detailed display, and you really will be turning heads with this model.

A quad-core 1.7Ghz Qualcomm Snapdragon 600 processor coupled with 2GB of RAM, and the choice of either 32 or 64GB of internal storage ensures that the specs keep up with the demands of any phone user. For comparison, the Samsung Galaxy S4 has a 1.9Ghz version of the same processor and outperforms this model in tests just marginally.

At 143 grams, the phone is a predictable weight for the size, but it looks and feels far more luxurious and sturdy than a comparative phone like the plastic body of the Samsung Galaxy S4.

Front-placed Beats Audio speakers ensure good sound quality, though the volume can be a little low, so invest in a quality pair of earphones if you intend to listen to much music.

4G LTE in certain markets is available, and 3G and 2G elsewhere is supported. Wireless networking is provided for, even going up to the latest 'ac' Wi-Fi specification, which is the next step beyond the recent 'n' specification. Bluetooth 4 and NFC ensure good wireless communications beyond Wi-Fi, and wireless HDMI allows for the broadcast of HD video content to a large screen display of your choosing.

The battery is a non-removable 2300 mAh. This is enough to power the phone

for a good few hours.

A volume rocker, power button and micro-SIM slot round out the external areas of the phone, with a micro-USB on the bottom for recharging and syncing data.

That's the good news. The bad news is that like most of the HTC range of smartphones, this model lacks a microSD expansion slot, so the internal storage is all you get.

## **Display**

The 4.7-inch Super LCD 3 1080p display is vibrant, bright and easy to use. Wide viewing angles on the 468ppi screen ensure that several people can view a HD film standing next to each other. The image quality for photographs is good with more realistic colors with the Super LCD 3 as compared to the AMOLED display used in most Samsung smartphones, but the blacks are purer with the S4.

## **User Interface**

The standard three hardware buttons has been reduced to just two; the menu button has been removed. This is an attempt to make things easier, but for many consumers used to having three buttons, this will only serve to make things more confusing. Many apps use the menu button to bring up options, so the button's absence will be difficult to deal with.

The HTC One is delivered with Android 4.1.2 Jelly Bean, coupled with the HTC Sense 5 modified skin. This version of Android is one step back from the latest which is included in the Samsung Galaxy S4 and leaves out a few nice additions like the Quick Settings menu.

The Sense 5 skin has always been a bit of an acquired taste. Less popular than the Samsung TouchWiz skin, you either love it or hate it. Some people find it tough to get along with, so it is worth taking a look at the screen-shots first or trying it out in person to see how it feels.

## **Battery**

The 2300 mAh battery is better than supplied with the previous HTC Droid DNA, but hardly makes it a stand-out with a 1080p display sucking down so much juice. Watching a HD movie for a couple of hours can remove 30% of the remaining battery life. Therefore, for anyone who likes to leave their 4G connection on and uses email, apps and web browsing liberally, they may want to invest in a portable battery pack to top up the battery as needed.

## **Camera**

The 4-megapixel camera seems to be a throwback to a past era, however this

is deceptive. The wider lens lets in considerably more light, so is able to produce more balanced photos, yet at times you can see issues with the lack of depth in shots due to the lower megapixel specification. The rear-facing camera supports 1080p video at 30 fps and 720p video at 60 fps.

A 2.1-megapixel front-facing camera is good quality for Skype calls and supports 1080p video recording too.

There are options for a series of rapid shots which is useful when wanting to get just the right image. Image quality is unlikely to disappoint anyone but professional photographers.

## **Verdict**

The HTC One is a feat of engineering something akin to what Apple is able to design and have manufactured for them in Asia.

The phone is best-in-class and will suit many consumers looking to upgrade to a beautiful 1080p smartphone. The HTC Android skin takes a little getting used to and the one version back Android OS is a little disappointing, but possibly can be upgraded later.

Smartphone buyers will need to decide whether the lack of SD storage expansion is an issue or not. For many that will be a sticking point, whereas for others being able to connect to cloud storage via a 4G LTE connection is sufficient for their expanding storage requirements.