

First look

Galaxy smartphone joins Android universe

The Samsung i7500 Galaxy is the latest Android handset to reach the UK, and allows users access to download a host of fun applications from the online Android Market.


While we haven't tested the Samsung Galaxy in our labs yet, we were able to get our hands on the device at the 2009 IFA technology show.

Its large 3.2-inch touchscreen uses AMOLED technology, so it's extra thin and bright. It looks great, and proved responsive to swipes and taps.



The menus are well laid-out, and while it does have a handful of buttons, it's like the HTC Hero and Magic Android phones in that it doesn't have a Qwerty keyboard.

It features a 5Mp camera and supports Wi-Fi, GPS and Bluetooth, but doesn't have an FM tuner. It costs £245 on O2 pay-as-you-go.

 To see our video of the Galaxy, go to www.which.co.uk/ifa2009mobiles.

VERDICT Smooth and easy-to-use interface, with an impressive-looking screen, but lacks a radio tuner.

PANASONIC MOVES TO MICRO FOUR-THIRDS


It's been more than two years since Panasonic announced its second DSLR, but if we're to believe what the company is saying about the remarkable uptake of micro four-thirds (MFT) cameras, which are lighter than DSLRs but able to take different lenses, then this shift seems to make perfect sense.

The 12.1Mp Lumix DMC-GF1 is Panasonic's third MFT camera. It's great looking and has a pop-up flash as well as a hot-shoe mount that can be used to attach an electronic viewfinder. The GF1's viewfinder will work with any lens that can be fitted to the camera – of which there are about half a dozen.

This camera is tooled up with a range of manual controls, which sit alongside the automatic



settings. It features Panasonic's latest face-recognition technology, and can record video in HD. It costs £700 and is widely available.

 Go to www.which.co.uk/ifa2009cameras to see our video first look review of the GF1.

VERDICT Compact and attractive, it can capture full HD video but lacks an external microphone socket.

JUST OUT

A peek at what's new on the shelves

LG SL9000 42 and 47-inch TVs

Pricing and availability yet to be announced

With no borders and a depth of less than 3cm, this LED HDTV claims clearer images, deeper blacks and more realistic colours. To save on energy use, LG's Intelligent Sensor 2 adjusts the image brightness according to the light levels in the room – we've been impressed with this feature in the past, so we're keen to see how it performs with the LED backlighting.



AEG Super Eco washer £519

Available at Currys, Independents and JohnLewis.com



AEG-Electrolux claims the Super Eco is the world's first dedicated cold-wash washing machine. Due to hit shops in

November, the Super Eco L64580LE is claimed to use 83% less energy than average 40°C easy-care washes, and 72% less than 30°C easy-care washes. We'll be testing the Super Eco and its energy claims as soon as it's launched – look for the results at www.which.co.uk/washingmachines.

Gordon Ramsay appliances £25-£299

Available from Argos


TV chef Gordon Ramsay has launched a range of kitchen appliances. The smart-looking stainless-steel range includes a kettle, toasters, a mini oven, health grill, coffee maker and milk frother, as well as food prep appliances such as a blender and food processor. Prices aren't the cheapest, ranging from £25 for a hand blender up to £299 for a kitchen machine. We'll be testing some of these over the next few months as part of our appliance test program – visit www.which.co.uk/appliances.



Sony Ericsson Xperia X2

Pricing and availability yet to be announced

The Sony Ericsson Xperia X2 mobile phone is packed with features, including an 8Mp camera, GPS and Wi-Fi connectivity. It lacks an FM radio but – unlike the iPhone – it supports Flash content. The 3.2-inch touchscreen is slightly larger than the previous model's (the X1) and the X2 weighs slightly more. The Xperia X2 also has a TV-out socket, which allows you to view photos, videos, the web and documents on a regular TV.

 See www.which.co.uk/ifa2009mobiles for our video first look at the X2.



Kenwood rises to the challenge

With its sleek stainless steel body and black glass lid, the Kenwood BM450 looks good and performs well. It's the first Kenwood to be rated a Which? Best Buy – since we began testing



breadmakers in 1997, models made by Morphy Richards and Panasonic have performed so well in our lab tests that they dominate our Best Buys.

This model is similar to the BM250 we've tested previously, but with a slightly different design, more features and different recipes – which clearly make a difference.

It's one of the best performing breadmakers we've put through our labs, scoring well across the board for all the programs we tested. It makes excellent light and airy white bread with a firm crust, and a tasty, rustic-looking wholemeal

loaf. Seeded loaves are no trouble either, and for those wanting a bit more, it's also good at making jam and baking cakes. If you're bored of oblong loaves, you can buy a round bread pan accessory, which we think is great.

However, good looks and great performance come at a price. The BM450 costs around £120, and is one of the heaviest breadmakers we've tested, at 9kg.

It's available from John Lewis and Lakeland. For our full review, see www.which.co.uk/kenwoodbm450.

VERDICT This is a well-built and stylish machine that will be a welcome addition to your worktop, but it is heavy.

Camera-projector combo

The £400 Nikon S1000pj is both a digital camera and a projector – the idea being that you can take a shot and then share it with friends by projecting it on to a wall.

The image can be projected at a range of sizes – depending on the distance the S1000pj is from the wall – and there's a slider button

on the top of the camera for adjusting the sharpness of the projection. The camera has a 12Mp sensor, a 5x zoom, and a 2.7-inch LCD screen.

Go to www.which.co.uk/ifa2009cameras for our video first look review of this Nikon camera.



VERDICT We found that the optimum projection distance was around 15 inches, and even then, the quality was only average.

Wireless broadband on the move

MiFi wireless broadband from 3 (£99.99 with 3GB credit pre-loaded or £69.99 with a capped, £15 a month contract) can connect multiple devices to mobile internet simultaneously.

The mobile-phone-sized MiFi dongle needs pre-charging, and claims to last for up to five hours' active use. Despite some unclear instructions, we got online in

about 10 minutes using a Dell laptop. We easily connected an iPhone and MacBook, too.

Surfing speed didn't slow noticeably with three devices connected, though downloading software on two laptops at the same time slowed things down. MiFi download

speeds averaged 0.4Mbps across six ThinkBroadband speed tests – some with three devices connected, others with just one.

VERDICT Handy for connecting multiple devices to mobile broadband at home or on the go, but it's fairly slow, with limited battery life. See www.which.co.uk/mifi for more.



FUTURE TECH Sky's 3D TV



The English National Ballet is captured in 3D by Sky

Sky has announced that it will broadcast 3D TV in the UK in 2010 – so we visited Sky studios recently to see what 3D TV may have to offer.

First impressions were good, though the footage we saw was likely designed to show 3D TV at its best.

We watched the English National Ballet perform Swan Lake, and it looked impressive, though the images had a slight pop-up-book appearance at times, preventing us from being fully immersed in the action.

While the seat right in front of the 3D TV offered the best viewing angle, side-on viewing angles were also pretty good.



For a video review of 3D TV see www.which.co.uk/sky3dtv.

What 3D TV kit you'll need

You will need a Sky+ HD box to access the service. You'll also have to update your television to a 3D model and get yourself a pair of 3D glasses – there's talk about fashion house Gucci working on a pair of 3D specs, and prescription 3D glasses are also in the pipeline.

TV manufacturers including JVC, LG and Sony are working on 3D TV sets, some of which are due to hit the shops in 2010. Sky says that you can watch 3D TV on a 26-inch screen, but the larger the screen, the better.

VERDICT The 3D effect was surprisingly engaging, though you will need a new TV and have to wear 3D glasses.