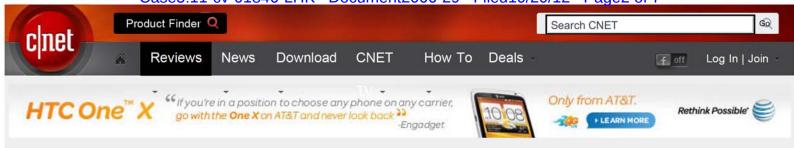
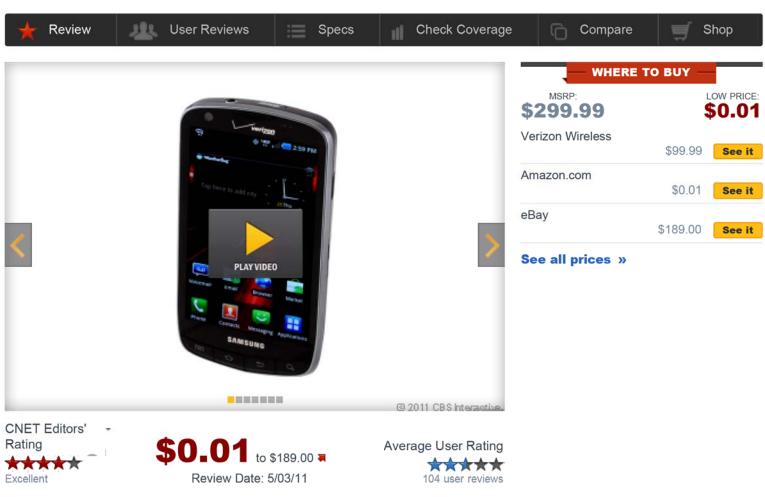
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Samsung Droid Charge review (Verizon Wireless)



The good: The **Samsung Droid Charge** has a gorgeous Super AMOLED Plus touch screen. Verizon's 4G LTE data speeds are superfast, and the smartphone offers longer battery life than the HTC ThunderBolt. Call quality and camera quality are also good.

The bad: The Droid Charge is large. It's also pricey, especially considering it doesn't have some of the latest features, like a dual-core processor.

The bottom line: It's not the prettiest or most advanced smartphone, but the Samsung Droid Charge takes advantage of Verizon's great 4G data speeds, while offering decent battery life.

EDITORS' TOP PICKS

QUICK SPECIFICATIONS Service provider Verizon Wireless Cellular technology LTE Talk time Up to 660 min Combined with With digital camera / digital player Weight 5.04 oz Sensor resolution 8 megapixels Diagonal screen size 4.3 in **Full Product Specifications**

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Apple iPhone 5 (AT&T, Sprint, Verizon)

Samsung Galaxy S III (S3) (T-Mobile, AT&T, Sprint, Verizon, U.S. Cellular)

Starting at \$49.99



HTC One X (AT&T)

Starting at \$99.99



LG Optimus 4X HD (Unlocked)





By Bonnie Cha

Bonnie Cha is chief

correspondent for Crave, covering every kind of tech toy imaginable (with a special obsession for robots and Star Warsrelated stuff). When she's not scoping out stories, you can find her checking out live music or surfing in the chilly waters of Northern California.

MSRP. \$299.99

LOW PRICE: **\$0.01**

Verizon Wireless

See it

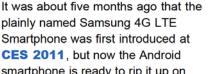
Amazon.com

\$0.01 See it

eBay

\$99.99

\$189.00 See it



CES 2011, but now the Android smartphone is ready to rip it up on Verizon's 4G network, and, thankfully, it's got a new name. The Samsung

Droid Charge joins the HTC ThunderBolt as the carrier's second LTE handset, offering a gorgeous Super AMOLED Plus touch screen, mobile hot-spot capabilities, and an 8-megapixel camera. However, it also comes with the high price tag of \$299.99 with a two-year contract. Given that it doesn't even have a dual-core processor, is it worth it? For some, it might be. Read on to see what



Photo gallery: Samsung Droid Charge

Design

Like most touch-screen devices, the Samsung Droid Charge has a slab design, but it comes to a slight point at the bottom and has a bit of a bump on back. The sloped back makes a nice place to rest your palm, but the Charge still is not comfortable to hold because it isn't a dainty smartphone. At 5.11 inches tall by 2.66 inches wide by 0.46 inch thick, it's a handful and perhaps too large for some, but a plastic construction helps keep it lightweight at 5.04 ounces, so at least you're not getting a double whammy of bulky and heavy.



The Samsung Droid Charge is quite a handful.

Similar to the Samsung Galaxy S models, however, the trade-off with plastic is that you get a phone that doesn't have quite the premium feel of some of its competitors, like the HTC ThunderBolt. At the very least, it would be nice if Samsung would add a soft-touch finish to the back so it wouldn't feel so slick, because as we've said many times before, if you're

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Stay put



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paying good money for a phone (and the Droid Charge is no drop in the bucket at \$300), you want a device that feels high-quality.

All that said, you might be willing to overlook some of the downsides when you get a glimpse of the 4.3-inch, 480x800-pixel Super AMOLED Plus touch screen. It has 50 percent more subpixels than the original Super AMOLED touch screens, so the display offers more clarity and better outdoor visibility. It really is stunning: the sharpness of the AMOLED Plus display really comes through when watching video, and colors are rich and pop right off the screen. Also, as promised, outdoor visibility is better than with a lot of smartphones, and we were able to read the screen at various angles.

The touch screen is responsive; applications launched as soon as we tapped on them, and moving through the various home screens and menus was smooth. For text entry, you can use Samsung's onscreen keyboard or Swype. The Droid Charge uses Samsung's TouchWiz user interface, which runs atop the Android OS. You get a total of seven home screens that you can customize with various widgets and shortcuts. TouchWiz now also has a feature similar to HTC's Leap screen where you can pinch the screen to get a thumbnail view of all your home screens or menu pages. The main menu of apps is shown in a simple grid layout with bold icons. It's a very simple presentation of Android and definitely makes the OS easier to use for newbies, but we're sure Android purists will have a very different opinion of TouchWiz.



@ 2011 CBS Interactive.

A soft-touch finish on the back would go a long way to mitigate the Droid Charge's plastic feel.

Below the display are four physical buttons for home, menu, back, and search. On the left side, you get a volume rocker and a Micro-USB port, and on the right are a power button and HDMI port. The 3.5mm headphone jack sits on top, and just below it on the upper left corner is the front-facing 1.3-megapixel camera. There's also an 8-megapixel camera on the back with a flash.

Verizon packages the Samsung Droid Charge with an AC adapter, a USB cable, a preinstalled 32GB microSD card, and reference material.

Features

The Samsung Droid Charge offers a standard set of voice features, including a speakerphone, speed dial, voice commands, conference calling, and text and multimedia messaging with threaded chat view. The smartphone can handle video calls using its front-facing 1.3-megapixel camera, but unlike a number of Verizon's other devices it doesn't support Skype Mobile. In fact, it doesn't come preloaded with any video chat clients at all. You can, of course, download such apps (such as Fring) from the Android Market, but making video chat easy right out of the box would have been nice.

Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, and GPS are all onboard, and as we mentioned at the beginning, the Droid

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Charge is Verizon's second 4G-capable smartphone. Verizon's LTE 4G network, which is, as of this writing, available in 45 markets and more than 60 airports nationwide, promises average download speeds of 5Mbps to 12Mbps and upload speeds of 2Mbps to 5Mbps. We experienced great data speeds with the HTC ThunderBolt, and the same was true here (check out the Performance section for more details), which made for painless Web browsing and media streaming. It's also great since the Droid Charge can be used as a mobile hot spot, and you can share a 4G connection on up to 10 devices and a 3G connection on up to 5 devices. Normally to use this feature you would need to sign up for a Mobile Broadband plan, which costs \$20 per month and comes with a 2GB data cap, but for a limited time Verizon is throwing in the feature for free, so enjoy it while it lasts!

The Droid Charge ships running Android 2.2.1 and not Android 2.3 Gingerbread, but you get the standard Google services, as well as the solid contact and calendar management, social networking integration, and full Web browser that come with Android. The handset comes preloaded with a healthy selection of apps, including some staples like an office suite (ThinkFree, in this case), a calculator, and more fun extras, such as the Amazon Kindle Android app and TuneWiki. Verizon also loads the Charge up with a handful of its services and you can't uninstall them, so you're stuck with them whether you use them or not.









EDITORS' TOP PICKS



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User Comments



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I bought the Samsung Droid Charge three weeks ago, within the first day of having it I began having problems with the camera. Everytime I tried to take a picture, the phone would shut off, and in order to turn the phone back on, I had to remove the battery. This is quite irritating, so I went back to verizon and they were able to replace my phone with another. But just a day later the new phone began doing the exact same thing. I went back to verizon yet again and they even tried giving me a new 4g card to see if that was the common denominator. But of course it wasn't so now I've gone through two phones within three weeks. needless to say

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I'm not happy with the camera part of this phone. Everything else is quite awesome. I wouldn't reccomend this phone seeing as its quite irritating having to remove the battery eveytime you try taking a picture, but instead the phone shuts down. even worse, it happens sparatically.

Posted by ninigeb (1 comment) July 21, 2012 7:44 AM (PDT)

I owned this phone for a year and a half after my old one got destroyed in a tornado (along with just about everything else). The most memorable element of my experience with this phone was learning that when they named it the Droid "Charge" they didn't mean rhino or bull. They meant you will have this phone plugged into the charger non-stop. It also came pre-loaded from verizon with a ton of bloatware apps that automatically loaded themselves into its modest memory unless you got ugly with the device and rooted it. Which leads to the third complaint: slow. 1.5 years I was stuck with this thing and I was counting down the days for my contract to be done. I'll miss this device like a hair in a sandwich.

Posted by drbtek (2 comments) October 12, 2012 12:03 PM (PDT)

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