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Review Date **April 19, 2011**

# Samsung Galaxy Prevail (Boost Mobile)

●●●●○ EDITOR RATING: **EXCELLENT** [COMMENTS](#)

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MSRP **\$179.99**



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## PROS

Good set of features and performance for the price. Fantastic plan pricing. Free, built-in TeleNav GPS. Responsive UI (given the lower-end hardware). Good looking.

## CONS

Limited video codec support. Hardware not up to par with the latest Android devices. Screen is a little cramped for typing. Poor video camera quality.

## BOTTOM LINE

A worthy competitor to the LG Optimus line, the Samsung Galaxy Prevail gives Boost Mobile users a lot of Android-powered goodness for their buck.



**BY ALEX COLON** Don't let the name fool you: the Samsung Galaxy Prevail (\$179.99) is not a high-end Samsung Galaxy S [cell phone](#). It is, however, a wonderfully functional, inexpensive Android device for everyone who wants a budget smartphone. Just how inexpensive, you ask? Boost is charging \$50 per month for unlimited talk, text, and data on Sprint's nationwide 3G network. That price shrinks by \$5 every 6 months you pay your bill on time, until you reach \$35. It's not like this is breaking news, but it's a lot more relevant now that Boost finally has a device capable of taking full advantage of those rates. Sure, it may not have the same high-end specs as the latest and greatest Android gadgets, but it's an excellent choice for anyone looking to get in on the Android action on the cheap. That makes it our Editors' Choice for smartphones on Boost. It also makes the cut for our list of [The Best Android Phones](#).

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Design, Call Quality, and Pricing

The Samsung Galaxy Prevail measures 4.4 by 2.3 by .5 inches (HWD) and weighs 3.8 ounces. And while the phone is surprisingly light, it feels solid. It looks a bit like T-Mobile's Samsung Galaxy S 4G (\$199.99, 4 stars), with curved edges and a silver border that runs along the outside of the phone's face. The back is made of a soft-touch black plastic, which gives it a comfortable, luxurious feel in the hand. The 3.2-inch glass capacitive touch screen LCD has 320-by-480-pixel resolution, which is common on midrange Android phones. The display itself is a bit on the small side, but it was nicely bright and vibrant, and suitably responsive to touch. Typing on the on-screen keyboard felt predictably cramped, but still entirely doable. Four function keys sit below the screen on the face of the phone, and light up whenever the screen is touched.



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The Prevail is a dual band EV-DO Rev. A (800/1900 MHz) device, with 802.11b/g/n Wi-Fi. It connected to my WPA2-encrypted Wi-Fi network quickly and easily. Reception was average, and voice quality was good overall. Calls sounded bright and clear in the earpiece, if a bit thin. On the other end, calls made with the phone sounded fine, though voices were a touch muffled and fuzzy. The phone didn't completely block out the sound of a passing city bus while I was making a call, but I was still able to hear my voice above it just fine. Calls were clear through an Aliph Jawbone Icon Bluetooth headset (\$99, 4 stars), and voice dialing worked well. The speakerphone was also clear, but I couldn't hear it outside on a slightly noisy city street. Battery life was good at 6 hours and 33 minutes of talk time.

OS, Performance, and Apps

The Galaxy Prevail runs Android 2.2.2 ("Froyo"), which is a good thing; there are many feature and performance improvements over previous versions of Android that allow for better phone performance overall. Though the 800MHz Qualcomm MSM7627-3 processor certainly isn't top of the line, you'd never know that as you use the Prevail; performance never felt sluggish. It also bested its closest competitor, the LG Optimus V (\$199.99, 4 stars), in all but one of our benchmarking tests. That makes sense, as the Optimus V uses a similar processor clocked at 200Mhz slower.

The Prevail runs a mostly stock Android build, without a manufacturer overlay. The phone syncs e-mail, calendars, and contacts for Gmail and Microsoft Exchange accounts, and works with many other popular e-mail accounts. Android Market offers access to over 100,000 third-party apps, nearly all of which should work fine on this device, with its up-to-date Android 2.2 OS and normal screen resolution. Curiously, Facebook is not included on the phone, but it can be downloaded from the Market. Twidroyd, the preinstalled Twitter client, works fine, but I'd dump it in favor of the official Twitter app for Android.

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There are a few other free preinstalled apps, but on the whole, the phone is gloriously free of bloatware. Both Google Maps and TeleNav GPS Navigator deliver voice-enabled, turn-by-turn GPS directions for free, which also make the Prevail a great companion for your next road trip. The stock Android browser works well over Sprint's network, though I did experience a few hiccups in speed when I had weaker reception.

### Multimedia, Camera, and Conclusions

The side-mounted microSD card slot worked fine with my 32GB SanDisk card, and there's also 110MB of free internal memory. MP3 and AAC music tracks sounded perfectly clear through a set of [Altec Lansing Backbeat](#) Bluetooth headphones (\$99.99-\$129.99, 3.5 stars). Again, the music player is stock Android, and it was fast and responsive, and displayed album art when it was available. There is also a standard 3.5mm headphone jack, which means the Prevail can also double as a primary music player.

Video playback is another issue entirely. The Samsung Galaxy Prevail has extremely limited video codec support; files that play on other phones, won't play here. That said, the free PC/Mac program DoubleTwist (4 stars) will reformat desktop-sized videos for the Galaxy Prevail. As long as you download DoubleTwist, the codec issue is more of a minor annoyance than a major problem, so we suggest just considering the free DoubleTwist as part of any Galaxy Prevail purchase.

The 2-megapixel auto-focus camera has no flash. Photos were surprisingly decent, with a nice pop of color and fair detail, though indoor shots, while usable, weren't quite as good. Shutter speeds were reasonably quick. Unfortunately, video captured by the camera didn't fare as well; image quality was soft and grainy.

If you're a Boost user and looking to upgrade to a smartphone, the Samsung Galaxy Prevail is a no-brainer. It's even cheap enough, and packed with enough functionality, to attract users that hadn't ever considered Boost before. The [HTC EVO 4G](#) (\$199.99, 4 stars) and the [Samsung Epic 4G](#) (\$199.99, 4 stars) both have faster processors and nicer displays, but the monthly plan pricing on Sprint is much higher than on Boost. The LG Optimus V on Virgin Mobile is a good no-contract option, though the same unlimited pricing plan on Virgin costs \$60 as compared to Boost's \$50, and it doesn't come with Boost's shrinkage bonus. The [LG Optimus M](#) (\$149, 4 stars) and C on MetroPCS and Cricket, respectively, match Boost on price, but those carriers aren't available nationwide. So as far as performance for price is concerned, you really can't go wrong with the Samsung Galaxy Prevail.

### Benchmarks

Continuous talk time: 6 hours 33 minutes

[Compare the Samsung Galaxy Prevail to other similar cell phones.](#)

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**BY ALEX COLON**

**ANALYST, MOBILE**

Alex Colon is an analyst for the PCMag Mobile team. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in English Writing and Literature from Pace University and got his start editing books before deciding he wanted to write...

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