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# Samsung Nexus S 4G review (Sprint)

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**The good:** The **Samsung Nexus S 4G** offers a brilliant display, WiMax support, and agreeable performance. It gains a number of usability improvements from the Gingerbread OS, and its straight Google interface will appeal to Android purists.

**The bad:** The Samsung Nexus S 4G feels rather fragile, and it lacks a memory card slot and LED notifications. We were hoping for more new features over the Nexus One, and its 4G connection was spotty at times.

**The bottom line:** The Samsung Nexus S 4G offers a great combination of design, features, and performance. The 4G connection could be more reliable, but the Gingerbread OS, stock Android UI, and admirable call quality make for a satisfying smartphone.

**QUICK SPECIFICATIONS**

Service provider	Sprint Nextel
Cellular technology	CDMA/WiMax
Talk time	Up to 840 min (2G) Up to 402 min (3G)
Combined with	With digital camera
Weight	4.55 oz
Sensor resolution	5 megapixels
Diagonal screen size	4 in

[Full Product Specifications](#)

**EDITORS' TOP PICKS**





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 Kent German

Senior Managing Editor Kent German leads the CNET Reviews and Download editors in San Francisco. A veteran of CNET since 2003, he still writes about the wireless industry and occasionally his passion for commercial aviation.

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Editors' note: Sprint's Samsung Nexus S 4G only differs from T-Mobile's Nexus S in a few ways. As such, we will focus on those differences for this review. For CNET's full analysis of the Nexus S series, including design and features, check our review of T-Mobile's handset.



Photo gallery: Samsung Nexus S 4G

As it has a habit of doing, Sprint grabbed the CTIA spotlight early this year when it announced the Samsung Nexus S 4G the day before the annual wireless confab convened in Florida. Though the device was hardly new to the cell phone world--T-Mobile first introduced the Nexus S late last year--Sprint's handset was

nonetheless significant. Not only was it the first Nexus device to support a carrier's 4G network (hence the added "4G" in the phone's name), but also it was the first Nexus handset to land at a CDMA network (Verizon reneged on its promise to carry the HTC Nexus One last year).

Outside of the network changes and the integration of Google Voice, Sprint's Nexus S 4G is identical to the GSM Nexus S. You'll find the same design and internal features and (sadly) it also lacks a memory card slot and LED notifications. Of course, the added support for high-speed data gives the Nexus S 4G an advantage over its T-Mobile sibling, but the WiMax connection was shakier than we've seen on other Sprint devices.

Design

You wouldn't be able to tell the Nexus S 4G from the Nexus S if you put them side by side. And that's mostly a good thing. Like its predecessor, the Nexus S 4G is shiny and pretty with a gorgeous 4-inch display and a thin profile, but the device feels rather fragile in the hand. This isn't new in a Samsung phone--many of the company's Galaxy S phones also felt too slick--and we recommend taking good care of the handset just in case. You'll also recognize the "contour" design that gives the handset a slightly concave shape to complement the curve of your head, although we don't consider this much more than a gimmick.

TOP RATED T-MOBILE CELL PHONES

- Samsung Galaxy S III - 32GB - pebble blue (T-Mobile) Price: \$179.53 - \$565.00
HTC One S - gradient blue (T-Mobile) Price: \$139.53 - \$580.98
Samsung Galaxy S Blaze 4G (T-Mobile) Price: \$19.53 - \$309.99
HTC Amaze 4G - black (T-Mobile) Price: \$549.99 - \$549.99
Samsung Galaxy S II - black (T-Mobile) Price: \$4.25 - \$549.99

Stay put

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The Nexus S 4G is trim and sleek, but feels a tad fragile. Here you can see the dial pad interface.

The dimensions (4.88 inches long by 2.48 inches wide by 0.43 inch thick, weighing 4.55 ounces) are identical and the 4G version offers the same buttons, touch controls, and virtual keyboard. It Nexus S 4G also features a stock Gingerbread (Android 2.3) interface that's free of any manufacturer or carrier skins. This remains a device for Android purists. Five home screens are there for your customization needs.



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The Gingerbread OS brings a redesigned keyboard to the Nexus S 4G.

## Features

The Nexus S 4G offers the same feature set as its predecessor. It's a respectable one, though we still think Sammy could have offered us more goodies compared with the Nexus One. The list includes an NFC chip, a 5-megapixel camera, a front-facing VGA shooter, access to Google applications, Bluetooth 2.1 (with A2DP), Wi-Fi (802.11 b/g/n), PC syncing, GPS, USB mass storage, 16GB of internal memory, USB tethering, and a Wi-Fi hot spot. But on the downside, there's no external memory card slot or LED notifications.





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The Nexus S 4G's camera lens and flash sit on its rear face.

Sprint gives one bonus in the Nexus S 4G, however, with the Google Voice integration that it also **unveiled at CTIA** for almost all Sprint phones. This allows you to link your Sprint phone number with Google Voice in two different ways, giving the Nexus S 4G call forwarding and visual voice mail that you can read on the phone or online, and cheaper international calls. While we didn't experience any problems ourselves, **some people have**. It's clear that Google has a few growing pains to get past, but overall, the service is a great addition to the Sprint plan for those who are looking for some extra services, like visual voice mail, call forwarding, and plenty of customizations. Call screening, call blocking, and personalized greetings are just some of them. For more details, read our full **Google Voice review**.



The Nexus S 4G has admirable photo quality.

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**EDITORS' TOP PICKS**





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★★★★★



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Starting at \$49.99

★★★★★



HTC One X (AT&T)

Starting at \$99.99

★★★★★



LG Optimus 4X HD (Unlocked)

★★★★★

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