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Samsung Transform review (Sprint)

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WHERE TO BUY

MSRP: **\$249.99** LOW PRICE: **\$49.99**

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CNET Editors' Rating

★★★★★

Very good

\$49.99 to \$350.00

Review Date: 10/08/10

Average User Rating

★★★★★

89 user reviews

T-Mobile

ENTERTAINMENT AT WOW SPEEDS.

Introducing the new Samsung Galaxy S Blaze 4G

CNET Editors' Rating

★★★★★ Excellent

[READ THE CNET REVIEW](#)

The good: The Samsung Transform has an attractive design with a front-facing camera. The phone is comfortable to hold and has excellent call quality.

The bad: The Samsung Transform's battery life is short, and Sprint IDs take minutes to load. Our model lacked a music store.

The bottom line: With midrange features, the Samsung Transform is a solid choice for an Android smartphone. Clear call quality is a bonus, but the Sprint ID profile service isn't for everyone.

QUICK SPECIFICATIONS

Release date	10/10/10
Service provider	Sprint Nextel
Cellular technology	CDMA2000 1X
Talk time	Up to 360 min
Combined with	With digital camera / digital player
Weight	5.4 oz
Sensor resolution	3.2 megapixels
Diagonal screen size	4.3 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 G (AT&T) ★★★★★

MSRP: \$249.99

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Amazon.com \$350.00 See it

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For a phone claiming to be transformative, we were certainly hoping for a roster of more unusual features in Sprint's new Samsung Transform. What we get instead is a very decent midrange Android smartphone with a medium-size touch screen, a slide-out QWERTY keyboard, and serviceable front- and rear-facing cameras. However, the Transform does have one unusual feature that stands out, at least for now. It's one of the first three Android smartphones to launch with Sprint's new Sprint ID Packs, which are preset profiles that configure everything from the theme and widgets to the app shortcuts that appear on your home screens, and even e-mail settings.

Call quality was a winner on the appealing Transform, but a short battery life and extended moments of sluggishness after loading a Sprint ID were disappointments. The Transform ships with version 2.1 of the Android operating system, but Sprint told CNET it expects to upgrade the Transform to Android 2.2.

The Samsung Transform will cost \$149.99 after a \$100 mail-in rebate, with a new two-year service agreement.

Design

The Samsung Transform's design is easy on the eyes, but it doesn't bring anything new to the table. With its rounded corners and glossy, black finish (a silver seam on the periphery is the exception), the Transform is clearly the Samsung Epic 4G's smaller cousin. The handset is 4.6 inches tall by 2.4 inches wide by 0.6 inch deep and weighs 5.4 ounces, which imparts a solid feel in the hand. The presence of a slide-out QWERTY keyboard will make it a tad too thick for some pockets, but it should slide nicely into most and into purses as well.



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The Samsung Transform has an attractive design, with a 3.5-inch



By Jessica Dolcourt

Jessica Dolcourt reviews smartphones and cell phones, covers handset news, and pens the monthly column Smartphones Unlocked. She started at CNET in 2006, where she spent four years reviewing mobile and desktop software before taking on devices.

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



touch screen and a front-facing

VGA camera.

Samsung recently has poured energy into its touch screens, with the phones in the Galaxy S series serving as shining examples with their Super AMOLED displays. Unfortunately, you won't find those high-end specs here on midrange phones like this, and we wouldn't expect it. What you will find, however, is a 3.5-inch touch screen with an HVGA display supporting a 480x320-pixel resolution and 16 million colors. We have no complaints about the brightness or vibrancy, and the screen itself is smooth and responsive.

The Transform comes with a front-facing VGA camera, which is instrumental for video calling and self-portraits. Of course, still photo quality won't be great, but the theory is that you need a less powerful camera for close-up shots such as of your face. Below the screen are the standard Android touch-sensitive buttons that pull up the menu, go home, go back, and trigger search.

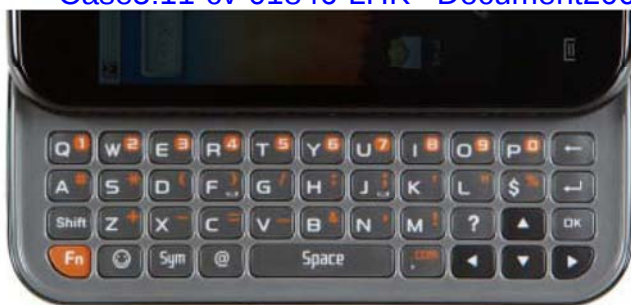
On the right spine there's a dedicated camera button, voice command control, and power button. On the left is the volume rocker, and a 3.5-millimeter headset jack and Micro-USB charging port make their home on the top side--we like the latter's sliding cover that snaps into place. On the back is the 3.2-megapixel camera with an adjacent flash; both are square-shaped for visual interest. The back cover has a soft-touch finish that makes the Transform comfortable to hold, and if you look closely you'll notice that the plastic is shimmery. There's also a microSD card slot that can hold up to 32GB of expandable memory. It's inconveniently tucked under the back cover, but you don't have to remove the battery to access it. Samsung gets you started with a 2GB memory card that ships with the Transform.

Stepping away from solid black, the Transform's slide-out QWERTY keyboard is gray with white and orange accents. The keyboard is indisputably spacious, with wide, rectangular keys. It was perhaps too wide for our tastes, and we placed it in a variety of hands. Reaching the keyboard's corner buttons took effort. The Transform's flush keys are harder to type on than domed keys that rise above the surface, but despite their flatness, pressing the individual buttons was easy and smooth. An emoticon button and four directional buttons are the only two with special functions.

Interface and Sprint ID

Sprint has kept most of the typical Android features in its user interface. There are five home screens, a Google search widget, and three onscreen buttons for navigating to your phone, opening the app tray, and launching the new, unique **Sprint ID**.

In an effort to differentiate from competitors, Sprint has built on Android's open-source home screens with Sprint ID. The Transform is one of three phones--and the only Samsung model--to support Sprint ID at launch. At its heart, Sprint ID is a profile that will preconfigure the wallpaper, shortcuts, widgets, and even e-mail and Wi-Fi settings, on the phone's five start screens. Instead of personalizing your start screens from scratch, loading what Sprint calls its ID Packs will easily install a set of tools, apps, and wallpaper in one go. A sports pack could set athletic-themed wallpaper, for example, and install a weather widget, shortcuts to live scores apps, a sports news ticker, and so on. There are 13 ID Packs at launch with more to come; you can store up to five in your gallery of favorites. ID Packs are developed by sources large and small, and range from hobbies to business to an ID Pack devoted to a city (it might include metro apps and localized deals), to branded experiences from companies like Disney and TV networks.



© 2010 CBS Interactive

The Transform's slide-out QWERTY keyboard is spacious and perhaps too wide for smaller hands.

The phone loads with a generic interface that you can customize as you would on any other Android phone by adding and removing widgets and shortcuts. Tap the Sprint ID button to see your gallery of favorite ID Packs, including the default home screen configuration that you're free to personalize (called "My ID"). There are also options to peruse the gallery of new IDs and add more. Read our [full review of Sprint ID](#) for more details.

Features

The Samsung Transform offers a speakerphone, conference calling, voice dialing, text and multimedia messaging, and the full range of wireless options: Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, 3G (EV-DO Rev. A), and GPS. The phone book is limited only by the internal memory, which is 256MB RAM and 512MB ROM. There's room in each entry for multiple numbers, e-mail addresses, IM handles, group IDs, photo caller IDs, and so on. The Transform supports visual voice mail to manage your voice mail box.

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Starting at \$49.99
★★★★★



HTC One X (AT&T)
Starting at \$99.99
★★★★★






LG Optimus G (AT&T)
★★★★★

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