

Tech review: LG G Flex all about the curve

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I've been carrying the new LG G Flex smartphone for a few days, and the first word I want to use is "wow."

The second word would be "huge," as in this is the biggest [phone](#) I've ever used.

The first thing you notice about the G Flex (aside from its 6-inch screen) is that the display is curved. I haven't decided yet if I like the curve or it's just a gimmick.

The curve does serve a purpose, to put the phone's speaker and microphone closer to your face. It looks a bit more like a phone and less like I'm holding a paperback book up to my face.

But it's still huge.

My iPhone 5 looks like an iPod Nano compared with the G Flex. In fact, the G Flex seems a lot closer in size to my iPad Mini than it is to the iPhone 5.

If ever there was a phablet, the G Flex is it.

I tried to put the G Flex in my jeans pockets, and it was a tight fit.

I first tried my front pocket. It fit, but when I sat down, I was very aware there was a large phone in there. I also tried the back pocket of my jeans, and it was the first phone that didn't entirely fit.

I slipped it in the pocket of my dress shirt, and a good half-inch was visible.

The pocket tests were done without any type of case.

I'm constantly patting down all my pockets to see if I still have my iPhone. I don't think I'd need to do that with the G Flex. It's pretty conspicuous.

The back of the G Flex is a "self-healing" plastic that is designed to minimize scratches.

The G Flex is available from AT&T - which provided the review phone - for \$300 with a two-year contract. The price without a contract is \$694.

Sprint and T-Mobile also carry the G Flex.

The G Flex has a fairly radical design.

There are no buttons on the sides of the bezel. All the phones I've used in the past few years have had buttons on top or on the side.

The G Flex has volume and sleep/wake/power buttons on the curved back, near the camera lens. The power button serves as a stabilizer, of sorts, to keep the phone from rocking like a rocking chair when you set it down on a flat surface.

LG also has a feature I've not seen on any other phone called KnockON - double tap anywhere on the screen to wake the phone and double tap again to put it to sleep. I really wish all phones had this feature.

The 6-inch curved POLED screen really is flexible. The P in POLED stands for polymer, meaning the screen is plastic, not glass.

If you put the phone screen side-down on a desk and press on the back, the entire phone will straighten out and flex back to its curved shape.

The resolution of the G Flex's display is 1280 by 720 pixels (245 pixels per inch), which isn't near the "retina" resolution of the iPhone 5S (326 ppi), but it still looks nice.

The G Flex runs on a Qualcomm Snapdragon 800 2.26 GHz quad-core processor with 2 gigabytes of RAM and 32 gigabytes of storage. There is no microSD card slot.

The battery is a 3,500 mAh lithium-polymer curved cell, and the G Flex runs Android 4.2.2 Jelly Bean.

The website GSMArena did a battery test and found talk time at just over 25 hours, Web surfing at 9.5 hours and video playback at just under 20 hours.

Physical dimensions are 6.3 inches by 3.2 inches by 0.34 inches, and it weighs 6.25 ounces.

The main camera has a 13-megapixel sensor.

I found a lot to like about the G Flex.

I'm a big guy, so I liked the size, but I also learned to like the curve of the screen. I didn't find the lower screen resolution took away from watching videos. The sound from the small speaker on the back was plenty loud but lacked depth - no surprise.

The G Flex ships with the new Beats Music app, which I look at separately.

The volume buttons on the back took some getting used to, but I don't access them all that often.

The screen is so big, users can run two apps on the screen at the same time, which could be handy.

The rear button for sleep/wake/power can also be assigned a shortcut and lights up to notify you of certain events.

I like the G Flex. It seems to have a little more soul than some other Android phones I've tried lately.

I also like the design and the fact that LG isn't afraid to change things up a bit, but I am bummed about the lack of external storage.

LG G FLEX SMARTPHONE:

-Pros: Nice design, stellar battery life.

-Cons: No external storage, battery not user replaceable.

-Bottom Line: Tons to like about the G Flex. Put it on your short list.

-Price: Available with contract through Sprint, T-Mobile and AT&T (prices vary); \$600 and up without contract

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