

# Review: Recall aside, the Samsung Note 7 will impress you

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I like it when things are in order. Samsung has two Galaxy S models - the S7 and S7 edge. It also has a larger model with a stylus called the Note, which has always been one number behind. The last Note model was the

Note 5, so this year was due for a Note 6. But wouldn't you know it? Samsung skipped a number and named it the Note 7.

Now the three Samsung flagship phones are synced up numberwise.

The neat freak in me just did a little jump for joy.

Samsung has been moving the Galaxy S phones and the Note closer under the hood, and with the Note 7, they're all pretty similar from a processor, RAM and camera perspective.

The Note has always been the biggest of the Samsung phones, and the Note 7 is no different.

With a 5.7-inch Super AMOLED screen, the Note 7 has a resolution of 2560 x 1440 pixels, with a dual-edge screen (like the S7 edge) and Gorilla Glass 5.

The screen is flat-out the best I've ever seen on a [phone](#), with fantastic colors and sharpness, even in bright sun.

The processor is a quad-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 820 with 64 gigabytes of RAM and a microSD card slot for cards up to 256 gigabytes.

The Note 7's bump to 64 gb of storage is a welcome jump from the S7 edge's 32 gb.

The main camera has a high-quality 12-megapixel sensor with an f/1.7 lens and [optical image stabilization](#) - same as the S7 and S7 edge.

The Note 7 has a 3,500 mAh battery, which is a tad smaller than the S7 edge's 3,600 mAh, but the Note's stylus is stored internally, so there is

not as much room for the battery. I still had no problem getting a day's worth of use from the Note 7.

The Note also shared the IP68 water-resistant rating of its S7 cousins. It can take a dunk in the pool and not miss a beat.

You will see a small icon on the lock screen to tell you there was water contact, but it quickly disappears.

It has the expected connectivity of LTE, Wi-Fi 802.11ac, Bluetooth 4.2 LE and NFC for contactless payment systems.

Sync and charging is done through USB-C, which is a welcome upgrade. The S7's use microUSB.

The Note 7 can also be charged wirelessly with Qi or Powermat systems and has fast charging capabilities.

The hallmark of the Note series is the stylus, called the S-Pen.

The Note 7's S-Pen is thinner than previous models, and I found it a bit harder to hold in my big hands.

The S-Pen has 4096 levels of pressure sensitivity, and when you remove the stylus from its storage cavity in the Note 7's bottom edge, the phone automatically brings up a small launcher with various apps that can take input from the stylus.

Also, if you remove the pen while the phone is locked, you're presented an option to immediately start jotting a note, which can be saved without unlocking the phone.

That's handy for quick notes like jotting down a phone number in a

hurry.

Speaking of unlocking the phone, there's a fingerprint sensor in the home button and an iris scanner that can unlock the phone with a glance.

To set up the iris scanner, you're told to take off your glasses, which makes sense, but it made me wonder if I'd have to take off my glasses each time I wanted to use it.

My fears were eased. The Note 7 had no problem recognizing my eyes through my glasses, but Samsung says not to be surprised if glasses make iris recognition less reliable.

To invoke iris unlocking, you touch the sleep/wake button, do a quick swipe on the screen and then look at the screen, placing your eyes in two circles that appear on the screen. It took less than a second in my trials.

At 6.04 x 2.91 x 0.31 inches, the Note 7 is just a tad larger than the S7 edge, which measures 5.94 x 2.86 x 0.3 inches.

The Note 7 weighs 5.96 ounces, half an ounce more than the S7 edge.

I think Samsung's phone design is a step above Apple's iPhones.

The iPhone 6S Plus (which measures 6.23 x 3.07 x 0.29 inches and weighs 6.77 ounces) is larger and heavier than the Note 7, but the iPhone's 5.5-inch screen is smaller than the 5.7-inch Note 7 screen.

In my opinion, the Note 7 is the best Android phone for sale today.

My old pick was the S7 edge, but the Note 7 has a few things I like better.

It has a bigger screen (also with curved edges), twice the storage and the S-Pen. Plus, the Note 7 (\$879.99) costs only \$86 more than the S7 edge (\$794.99) when pricing the phones from AT&T.

You can pick up a Note 7 from the major wireless carriers, although availability may be tight for a while, as Samsung has halted shipments to do some quality testing after a few early Note 7's caught fire while charging.

I realize I'm recommending a phone that costs almost \$900, but that's what it'll take to get into a top-of-the-line flagship phone.

Apple's iPhone 6S Plus costs just \$30 less for a similarly equipped configuration, so people who are shopping for these phones should not be shocked.

The Note 7 checks all the boxes for me - even more than the iPhone 6S, which I've carried for a year now.

I want Apple to steal some of the Note's features, like wireless charging, water resistance and expandable memory - but I'm not holding my breath.

Apple's iPhone 7 will be announced Wednesday, so we'll have a new contender in the flagship phone wars, but for now at least, the Note 7 reigns supreme.

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