

## Apple iPhone 3G

Price: From free on contract  
www.apple.com

# iPhone goes turbo

Can the follow-up phone launch of the year possibly live up to all the hype? We put the new **Apple iPhone 3G** through its paces



**A** SEQUEL with this much razzmatazz is usually the stuff of Hollywood. However, the Apple iPhone 2 (aka the iPhone 3G) has made a heroic summer blockbuster entrance that competes with anything *Indiana Jones* or *Batman* could muster.

As we twiddled with our review sample a few days after the iPhone 3G's release, Apple announced that its new-look handset had just reached one million sales across the world; suggesting that it's as popular with consumers as it is with the technology media and the Apple PR machine.

One reason the iPhone 3G is selling faster than the original is almost certainly the price. Upon its UK launch, the first iPhone set you back £269 plus the cost of your O2 contract; however, the 8GB version of the 3G edition is available for free on £45 and £75 contracts and for £99 on the £30 and £35 tariffs. Meanwhile, the 16GB version is free with O2's £75 contracts, £59 with its £45 contracts and £159 with the others. In short, it's cheaper and it's still exclusive to O2.

The other attraction is the iPhone 3G's improved feature set, which we'll look at in a moment. But first let's examine its new design.

## Look and feel

As you look at the device face on, the iPhone 3G looks almost identical to the original. In fact, it's 0.5mm longer, 1.1mm wider, and 0.7mm thicker. Not that you'd really notice. Besides, it's also 2g lighter; which is down to the fact that it has a glossy black (the 16GB also comes in white) plastic rear casing, as opposed to the original's brushed stainless steel. Before handling the iPhone 3G, we thought the plastic

casing would diminish the handset's quality design, but it's actually very smart and robust, if not quite as satisfyingly tactile as the original.

As well as being a smidge thicker, the rear of the iPhone 3G is also gently curved which improves the ergonomics and helps to accommodate the new 3G and GPS chipset.

## Faster web browsing

A lot has been made of the 3G function on the new iPhone. Apple was criticised when it launched the original because of the lack of 3G, and the manufacturer responded by pushing the handset's Wi-Fi function, which is again present on the 3G version. Of course, Wi-Fi is all well and good when you're within hotspot coverage, but, when you're not, sub-3G speeds are painfully slow. So, we're pleased to report the satisfying experience on the iPhone 3G, whether you're within hotspot coverage or using the mobile network.

It's worth pointing out that the iPhone 3G is actually HSDPA enabled, which is faster than 3G. As with any HSDPA device, data speeds are reliant on network coverage. O2 says it has 80% population coverage for 3G, all of which has been upgraded to HSDPA with a max speed of 1.8Mbps. However, O2 has started further upgrades to a maximum speed of 3.6Mbps. Towards the end of this year and the beginning of next, O2 will start rolling out maximum speeds up to 7.2Mbps.

So why isn't it called the HSDPA iPhone? Well, Apple has taken the (probably sensible) view that consumers are only now beginning to understand the benefits of 3G, let alone HSDPA, so it has stuck

with the more marketable terminology. With these improved data speeds, the iPhone 3G has a justifiable claim to offering the best mobile web-browsing experience around.

The touch-screen interface works delightfully with the Safari browser, enabling you to scroll up and down with a swipe, and zoom in and out with a pinch or flick of the fingers. Because you're viewing real webpages, you'll need to zoom in to highlight and view specific stories. Entering new URLs using the virtual keypad can be a little tricky, but saving bookmarks for future visits is easy, so you'll only have to do it once.

## GPS and Google Maps

Google Maps features on the original iPhone, but without the benefit of satellite assistance. You can search for points of interest like restaurants and bars, and even find them on a map via an online connection, but the phone couldn't take you there because it didn't contain a GPS receiver. This has now been remedied. With the iPhone 3G, when you click on Google Maps, you're given the option of pinpointing your current location via satellite. Click on the icon in the bottom left of the screen and your exact position is shown on a map. From here, you can find your nearest restaurants, pubs, or petrol stations, etc, or begin a sat nav-assisted journey.

Both options are exceptionally easy. For example, if you want to find your nearest POI, just click on the search icon and enter the place you are looking for into the box at the top of the screen using the virtual keyboard. Similarly, if you want to plan a route with sat-nav assistance, you simply click 'Directions' and a box appears at the top of the screen



highlighting the start point as your current location and the end point as your final destination. I typed in Lusignac, a tiny and remote rural village in the Dordogne which usually only features on detailed local maps; however, Google Maps located it immediately and gave me a bird's eye view of the route plan, informing me that it was 587 miles and 10 hours 12 minutes from my house by car using the Dover-Calais shuttle.

By tapping the bottom right-hand corner of the screen and clicking on List, you can also see the complete route in numbered bullet-point form for your entire journey. Seeing a full planned route of your sat nav-assisted journey is perfect for those paranoid that they'll be taken the long way round for fun. Or worse still, the wrong place altogether.

Unfortunately, there's no voice guidance on the iPhone 3G when

you're using sat nav. As for the Map view, you can choose a regular map view, a satellite view or a hybrid of the two. It's quite fun to see your house and street from space, but there's no practical benefit.

## iPhone for business

Apple has been pushing the new business functionality of the iPhone 3G and, while it's not perfect, there's plenty here for corporate users.

The device carries iPhone 2.0 software that enables enterprise features not possible with the original. As well as being able to download a host of business applications from the iPhone App Store to help you organise your working life, you'll also get support for secure push-email, contacts, calendar and remote wipe, courtesy of Microsoft Exchange ActiveSync.

Email was, of course, possible with

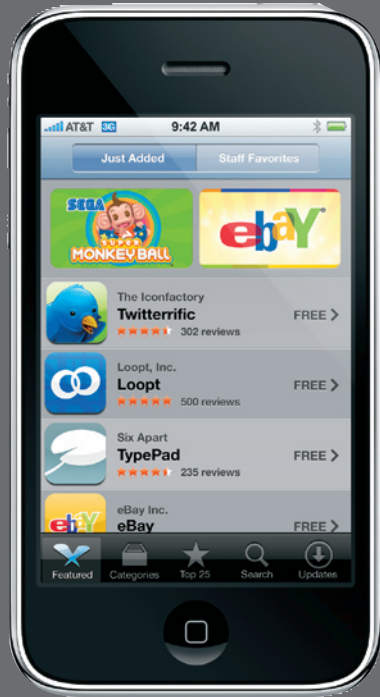
the original iPhone. However, you could only get access to internet-based accounts from the likes of Yahoo!, Google and AOL. The difference is that you can now get push-email directly from Microsoft's Exchange or Apple's MobileMe service. Unfortunately, if you don't have a Microsoft Exchange server in your office, you won't be able to set up your iPhone 3G for push-email.

When setting up your push-email account, if your company uses Microsoft Exchange 2007, the iPhone 3G sports an Autodiscovery feature which can automatically determine the address of your Exchange server. Thanks to the large touch-screen and simple user interface, using email on the iPhone 3G is extremely straightforward and you can also read, send and receive

Continued overleaf >>

# iPhone 3G

- **Size** 115.5x62.1x12.3mm
- **Weight** 133g
- **Display** 16-million colours
- **Resolution** 480x320 pixels
- **Camera** 2 megapixels
- **Video recording/playback/streaming** Yes/yes/yes
- **Video calling** No
- **Audio playback** MP3, AAC, MP3 VBR, Apple Lossless, AIFF and WAV
- **Ringtones** Polyphonic, MP3
- **FM radio** Yes
- **OS** Apple 2.0
- **Connectivity** Bluetooth, USB, Wi-Fi
- **Internal memory** 8/16GB
- **Memory card slot** No
- **Messaging** SMS, email
- **Internet browser** HTML (Safari)
- **Java** No
- **Games** Downloadable via App Store
- **Data speed** HSDPA
- **Frequency** Quad-band
- **Talktime** Up to 600 minutes
- **Standby** Up to 300 hours



### Features

- HSDPA data speeds
- Touch-screen
- Accelerometer
- Wi-Fi
- A-GPS



## Also consider Samsung Tocco

The Samsung Tocco is the nearest touch-screen competitor.

## Pros

Faster data speeds and A-GPS add to an already fabulous user experience.

## Cons

We expected better than a two-megapixel camera.

## MC SCORE



**Verdict** The best touch-screen smartphone just got even better.

<b>Look and feel</b>	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
<b>Ease of use</b>	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
<b>Features</b>	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
<b>Performance</b>	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
<b>Battery life</b>	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

attachments like photos, PDFs, JPEGs, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint files.

The Mail application is integrated with iPhone Contacts and the Safari application, so you can also call a contact or access a web link from an email. The calendar application, which works in much the same way as it does on the original iPhone, is very simple to use and lets you view your meetings and appointments in day or month format.

## The App Store

The original iPhone couldn't really be labelled a true smartphone because it didn't let you download third-party applications as Symbian and Windows handsets can.

However, that's all changed with the new Apple 2.0 software and the launch of the App Store. The App Store gives iPhone 3G owners access to hundreds of new third-party applications and games that you can download to your handset. Some applications are free, while others can cost anything between 59p and £20, with the majority of the better applications available for around £5. *Super Monkey Ball* – which costs £5.99 and uses the iPhone's accelerometer to control the gameplay – is our current fave.

The downloadable applications are categorised under headings like Business, Entertainment, Lifestyle, Health and Fitness, and Music, or you can choose to browse the Top 25 applications, chosen by Apple.

If you've used a smartphone before, the ability to download third-party applications is nothing new, but these are presented beautifully and you can be certain that they'll all be optimised to work with the iPhone 3G's user interface.

## Music and more

As we've focused on the new features, it's easy to forget that the iPhone also includes the fabulous iPod music player, which works in the same way as the original. The amount of music you can store is dependent on whether you choose the 8GB or the 16GB version. We'd recommend spending a few extra quid and grabbing a 16GB iPhone.

The one real improvement concerns the 3.5mm headset port, as you no longer need an adapter to plug in your specialist headphones. As you'd expect, music performance is top notch and you have the full functionality of any iPod player, with the added benefit of a touch-screen so you can scroll through your song lists and album art with a flick of the finger. Meanwhile, a tap on the screen when you're viewing an album cover lets you see that album's full-track listing.

As with the original, you have one-click access to YouTube videos, weather forecasts and stock information, plus the accelerometer, which lets you view, photos, videos, games or any multimedia in landscape or portrait by tilting the iPhone one way or the other.

## Nobody's perfect

There are a few niggles on the iPhone 3G. We really did expect an improvement on the two-megapixel camera, the virtual keypad is still not as reliable as a mechanical version, and there's usually a rogue menu icon lurking off-screen to the right which can easily be missed. In our case, it was the contacts option. However, as with the first iPhone, the good smotheres the bad and this is a real improvement on an excellent handset.



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