

SPECIAL REPORT Smartphone INSIDER:

Smartphone Insider provides the inside scoop on today's hottest smartphones, including strengths and weaknesses, problems and solutions, user feedback, news, and tips & tricks.

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Samsung BlackJack

The Samsung BlackJack (available from wireless.att.com) is the latest offering from Samsung to the competitive “do-it-all” cell phone market. The BlackJack is quite similar to the Motorola Q in its look and functionality and appears to have been introduced as a direct competitor to the Q. While the initial consumer response to the BlackJack has been strongly positive due to its sleek design and powerful multimedia capabilities, it is less than ideal for business-intensive use because of its small keyboard layout and lack of built-in software to edit Microsoft Office documents. (The WM 6 update provides this capability.)

Here is a brief overview of some of the BlackJack's strengths and limitations along with some solutions.

Strengths

- Bright, clear screen
- Slim, sexy design—lighter and smaller than the Motorola Q
- 3G enabled, supporting simultaneous voice and data services which provide fast Web browsing, e-mailing, and video, music, and file downloading
- Multimedia: Cellular Video and AT&T Mobile Music
- 1.3 mega pixel camera with video recording capability
- Runs on the GSM Quad-Band world network
- Comes with extra battery

Limitations & Solutions

- Some users have complained that the device has a short battery life, particularly those who send large numbers of e-mails on a daily basis. Samsung seems to have foreseen the problem by providing an extra battery that can be used to swap out the drained one. To conserve battery life, set the functions to only what is absolutely necessary. Here are some suggestions: Always keep Bluetooth off unless you specifically need it; set your e-mail account to check for incoming mail at longer intervals, such as 20-30 minutes; set the screen brightness levels as low as possible; set a short device timeout time. There is also an extended battery available for \$49.99 from Samsung.com.
- 3G technology is not available everywhere, especially in rural areas. When it is unavailable, customers continue to receive service on the EDGE network, which is more widely available.
- There is no Wi-Fi built in. There is a microSD Wi-Fi card available from Spectec; that can be purchased at expansys-usa.com.
- Microsoft Office applications cannot be edited on the device. They can be viewed using the pre-installed program Picsel Viewer. A Smart-



phone word processing program called eText Word Processor is available from Handango.com for \$4.95, along with a variety of other programs in numerous different categories. For spreadsheets, PTab Spreadsheet (software.everythingq.com) is a feature-rich program available for both the Smartphone and Pocket PC. Also, DataViz's Documents To Go software can be used to view, edit, and create Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and PDF files (dataviz.com).

- A common issue expressed by users is the layout of the keys. Some have said that the direction pad and menu keys are too close and the keyboard is cramped, particularly for those with big fingers.
- In general, BlackJack users have reported that the device is a very good all-around tool for both fun (multimedia capabilities) and work (e-mail and contacts), but is geared more for personal use and play rather than professional use (because of its lack of fully-functional Microsoft Office tools [in WM 5] and limited battery life for high volume e-mailing). If you are a traveling professional, you might want to consider a Pocket PC Phone Edition device that includes mobile versions of Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

Tips & Tricks

(Courtesy of Steven Hughes)

- To save battery life by up to 40%, you can switch from 3G to GPRS/EDGE service. First, dial *#1546792*#. In the following menu, choose “Network & Call Settings.” then “Network Mode.” Now, highlight “GSM” and then select “Done.” You can also change the settings so that the phone will always check for the GSM service before switching to 3G if GSM is not available. Select “Network Order,” highlight “GSM first,” and select “Done.”
- To delete everything up to the “http://” in the Address Bar in Internet Explorer, hold down the back key.
- To bring up Task Manager, press and hold the Home button.
- To bring up a vertical list of applications to choose from, press and hold the scroll wheel. You can edit this list by selecting “Edit” at the top of the list.
- To bring up the “Quick List” which serves as a mini Settings menu to select basic phone settings, press the Power button.
- To turn off the backlight, press and hold the Messaging button (last button in the lower right-hand corner with the envelope icon).

Odds & Ends

- To download the WM 6 update, go to samsung.com/us/i607/windowsupgrade.
- Also available from Amazon.com for \$74.99 after rebates.
- A list of available cases is located at Cases.com.
- Intellisync Wireless Email Express push e-mail is available at usa.nokia.com/A4179071.
- An unlocking service is available for \$39.99 at gsmilberty.net.
- The 2 GB SanDisk microSD card is too thick for the slot. Kingston's card had no problems. ■