

iPhone 11 review: The best iPhone for most people



By [Jason Cipriani](#) | September 27, 2019 -- 15:10 GMT (08:10 PDT) |
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A week after using the iPhone 11, I've concluded it is my ideal phone. It's affordable in today's market, where \$1,000 phones reign supreme. It's a perfect size. It's fast. It has an ultra-wide-angle camera and another camera that can capture stunning photos at night. The iPhone 11 is, without a doubt, the best iPhone for most users.

Now, before you head to the comments below, to remind me that [I already described by dream phone](#), and the

iPhone 11 isn't it, I know. But various facets of what I laid out as my dream phone will never exist, and iPhone 11 is as close as we're going to get to it right now.

Arguably, the iPhone 11 isn't the best iPhone that Apple makes. [On paper](#), that title would have to go to the iPhone 11 Pro ([read ZDNet's review](#)) or the iPhone 11 Pro Max.

But the main pieces and parts that make up the iPhone 11 -- Pro or not -- are nearly identical. So much so that it feels as if buying the iPhone 11 is somehow pulling one over on Apple, or as if you're cheating it out of a couple of hundred dollars of revenue.

What is it about iPhone 11 that makes it so dreamy? Let's take a look.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CAMERA

Looking at the iPhone 11 from the front, not a lot has changed compared to the iPhone XR. The notch is still there, centered on the 6.1-inch Liquid Retina LCD Display, with Apple's TrueDepth camera system that enables Face ID to unlock the phone or complete Apple Pay purchases.

The TrueDepth camera on the front of the phone now features a wide-angle mode that's triggered by rotating the phone sideways. Instead of a 70-degree field of view, as is the case when the phone is vertical, the FOV is increased to 85 degrees, making it easier to fit several people in your

selfie without having to stretch your arm too far. Apple also improved the slow-motion capabilities of the front-facing camera and dubbed the end product "slofies."

The side button, volume buttons, and mute switch are all in their normal spots. A headphone jack is still missing on the bottom, and Apple's proprietary Lightning port didn't get replaced with a USB-C port. Maybe next year.

Apple says the glass used on the front and back of iPhone 11 is the toughest glass ever used in a phone, and that it should be able to withstand more of our accidental drops and overall abuse, and I'll have to take its word for it. The iPhone 11 also has improved water resistance to 2m for up to 30 minutes.

It's not until you look at the back of iPhone 11 that you begin to see a difference. Specifically, the iPhone 11's camera array is now square and features two lenses -- instead of one like the iPhone XR had.



Ultra-wide photo taken with iPhone 11.

The second lens is an ultra-wide-angle camera with a 120-degree field of view. The added FOV means you can, essentially, zoom out on a subject, capturing more of the surroundings in the photo. This is a feature that many Android devices have added over the past few years, and it's one of my favorite features of any camera.

Another area that Apple caught up with camera features in competing against Android devices is with Night mode. Night mode is only possible with the wide camera on iPhone 11, so you shouldn't take ultra-wide-angle shots at

night with any phone expect the same results. But here's how it works: You open the camera app, and it detects whether there's enough light for a normal photo. If so, you tap the shutter button and take your picture.



(Image: Jason Cipriani/ZDNet)

If your iPhone decides it needs more light, a small moon icon shows up with an amount of time. Sometimes it's one second, nine seconds, or any number in between. When you see that is present, you press the shutter button and then hold still. How many ever seconds later, the iPhone 11 will capture a photo in a low-light environment, and more often than not, it looks as if it was well-lit room.

Google's Pixel phones were the first to have a similar feature, and in my test shots, the iPhone 11 has surpassed the Pixel 3 XL every single time.

PERFORMANCE



iPhone 11 camera bump.

The iPhone 11 is powered by Apple's A13 Bionic processor, has 4GB of memory ([according to iFixit](#)), and comes in configurations of 64GB, 128GB, or 256GB of storage. While 64GB is a decent amount of storage, [it's no longer enough](#). The starting point should be 128GB, if not 256GB, especially when you consider Apple's latest services push with Apple Arcade and Apple TV Plus, both

of which require storage space to play games or to view TV shows and movies offline.

But I've yet to feel like the iPhone 11 is underpowered, or that it suffers from performance issues not due to buggy software. I've downloaded several Apple Arcade titles, some of which are basic, while others, like Oceanhorn 2, are full of complex graphics and quick movements, and the iPhone 11 stayed one step ahead of me at all times.

Battery life on iPhone 11 has been superb. My days start around 6am, and I usually put my phone on the charger around 10pm. I've yet to see iPhone 11 have less than 34% charge left, and that's after close to five hours of screen-on time.

SOFTWARE

The iPhone 11 runs iOS 13, which itself includes a ton of new features for the iOS platform as a whole. Apple Maps, Reminders, Mail, and Safari are just a few apps that have received significant upgrades with the update.

In iOS 13.1, Apple also added a new feature called User Enrollment for BYOD scenarios. This allows the user to keep their Apple ID on the device, along with a corporate-managed Apple ID for things like configuring accounts, app-based VPN, passcode requirements, and remote wipe of corporate accounts and data. It's a huge boost for

BYOD users, right in time for an iPhone that's priced under \$700.

Overall, iOS 13 (and its iOS 13.1 update) is promising, but it needs more refinement. I still have issues with the Mail app, and right now, I have three or four apps that keep removing and then reinstalling themselves from my Apple Watch, without any interaction on my part.

We'll surely continue to see frequent updates from Apple, ironing out the rest of the bugs and issues, as is often the case after a big update from the iPhone maker.

TO GO PRO OR NOT?

The differences between iPhone 11 and iPhone 11 Pro are the display and a telephoto camera. The Pro line uses Apple's Super Retina XDR OLED display. It's a much brighter screen, capable of displaying more colors at a higher resolution.

Comparing the two screens next to each other, the differences are fairly obvious. However, after using iPhone 11 for a week, I've fully adjusted to the screen and don't feel like I'm missing out on anything. I'd wager that most users would have the same experience.

Then there's the additional camera on the Pro. It's a telephoto lens that boasts a 2x optical zoom. It's another tool on your iPhone belt, so to speak, and for some, that's an important factor.

At the end of the day, most people don't need the iPhone 11 Pro or even the iPhone Pro Max. The iPhone 11 is one of the best iPhones I've used, and it's half the price of the iPhone 11 Pro Max that will arrive at my door via UPS any minute now.

original article:

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