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By: Cosmin Vasile, Communications News Editor



## [LG KE500 Shine Review](#)

### *Cheap Shine series slider mobile phone*

I think that LG mobile phones are easily making it to top 3 best handheld designs, and that's because there are simply too few other brands that pay so much attention to their products' look. Fortunately, this has never happened with LG handsets in the last 2-3 years at least. No matter what targets LG mobiles are aiming for, the Korean company always develops stylish, good looking phones. If you're not an LG fan or simply aren't familiar with its handsets, then perhaps you will enjoy the pictures that we took of the new LG KE500. Not specialized in high performance handsets, LG Mobile offers mostly great looking mid-level phones at very convenient prices. I believe that LG KE500 is such a case, where design overpasses performance, but at least you can get it cheap. Announced in July 2007, LG KE500 has been available on the market starting September for the cheap sum of 240 USD.

**Design** LG's KE500 slider looks very exquisite and stylish, but I wouldn't have expected less. It strongly resembles the design of the Chocolate series and has been manufactured by using the same glossy and shiny material. The black color version that we tested was a real fingerprint catcher, thus a great disappointment. There's also a neat similarity with Shine, regarding its display which can be used as a mirror when it's not lighted. But this has been kept to a basic level and will not help you too much as the image reflected is not that good. The slider lacks the sensitive keypad system, but includes the same D-pad for navigation through menus and the same easy to use soft keys. Again there's no "End calls" key (Red button) placed near the D-pad, but you can find it on the right side of the phone. It's the same key that powers up/down the phone, so don't be afraid to use it when you want to reject calls. Instead of the End calls button, LG decided to include the same "Back" button (used in almost all of its latest sliders) for a more facile navigation. On the same right side of the slider, you can find the camera button and the usual universal port, which can be used to charge the device, to synchronize it with the PC or to simply attach the headset that comes in the sales package. The dual volume keys can be found on the left side of the handset, while the camera on the back cannot be noticed unless you slide-up the phone. LG KE500 is medium sized (97 x 47 mm) and sleek (14.9 mm) for a slider, and doesn't weigh more than 90 grams, including battery. The handset looks and feels like a pure LG mobile phone and doesn't have anything in particular worth mentioning. It doesn't look bad, but there's also nothing that will specifically catch your eye if you're used to LG's mobile phone designs. The phone doesn't look cheap at all, on the contrary, its only sin is the fact that it will look very dirty and greasy in less than 5 minutes of use, no matter how hard you try to protect it. The sales package doesn't have any accessories, except the usual LG headset which can be used for music or as a simple hands-free.

**Display and Camera** LG chose the same small sized TFT screen which won't display resolutions bigger than 176 x 220 pixels, but fortunately, is 262k colors compatible. The brightness of the display seems good, but it is unusable outdoors in strong light. Even if small KE500 scored pretty high when tested with different benchmarks and that was partly determined by the powerful processor included and by the Mobile XD technology that has been embedded by the manufacturer. Mobile XD technology has been originally developed for television and is meant to translate 4:3 aspect ratio images to 16:9 aspect ratio images with better clarity. This was only visible in tests, since using the device didn't make any difference with the older models that lack this latest technology. Moreover, we were unable to test the 3D capabilities of the display as the phone cannot run Java applications, which have more than 300 KB. The 2 Megapixel camera can go unnoticed if you don't slide-up the mobile phone. Near the camera, there's a LED flash and a self-portrait mirror. Users will be

able to take pictures with a maximum 1600 x 1200 pixels resolution or use the lower resolutions to simply use fewer storage space. Camera has basic settings such as: Color effect (Sepia, Mono and Negative) and White Balance (Daylight, Incandescent, Cloudy and Fluorescent). The quality of the pictures is medium, but if you take a look at the samples you'll see that there's a lot of noise, especially if you zoom the pictures. Furthermore, you can zoom any part of the picture you take, allowing you to even read some texts. There's no point in shooting in darker areas as the flash doesn't make any difference. If you want to record clips, then you should know that the maximum resolution usable is 176 x 144 pixels. Clips are saved in 3gp format and length is only limited by the amount of memory available (either internal memory or card memory). A serious drawback that I discovered was the fact that you cannot change the camera mode (from shooting pictures to recording clips) from its menu. You must navigate through the slider's menu and select what you want to use your camera for from the start, either for pictures or for clips. Overall, camera is good for taking panorama pictures, because it has a good color contrast, otherwise lack of focus and too much noise makes it less than mediocre for close-ups.

**Menu and Software** Same ol' LG firmware that limits its handsets functionality and ... personality has been also included in LG KE500. There are many glitches or bugs present in KE500's software that you can easily discover in only 1 day of use. First, there's no way you can tell that you missed a call if the phone is in standby mode. When display is in sleep mode, if you're being called and missed it, there's no way that you would know unless you check it manually by 'waking up' the phone. Secondly, Java emulator and Internet browser are simply reckless. There's a serious bug that won't let you continue to browse the Internet after you downloaded and installed a Java compatible application. If you "dare" close your browser, the phone will simply ... restart. You cannot run Java applications that are more than 300 KB in size; you can't even run all Java compatible applications, no matter the size (see sample with error). Then there are some display strange bugs that will appear the moment you get more messages than the phone can handle (110 SMS texts). You'll get a message icon (like an envelope) that will appear in the upper part of the display and won't disappear even after you freed up some of your SMS memory. Perhaps updates will patch some of these bugs, but there's no telling when LG will come-up with a flawless software for its mobile phones. In terms of menu and navigation, LG KE500 is pretty straightforward and features all the basic applications and capabilities that a mid-level phone needs to have. You get a basic WAP browser, Alarm clock (5 alarms max.), Calendar, Calculator, Memo, To do list, Stopwatch, Unit converter and World clock. You can also record up to 30 seconds of your audio memos, but no more, regardless of the memory available. There's also a video player, that cannot display movies in full screen, a music player, that can play MP3, WAV and AAC format files, as well as an FM Radio that can store up to 12 stations. Both MP3 player and FM radio can be run in the background, if you simply push the camera button. That's so strange and not that easy to discover:) Also the phone lacks any email client and multimedia messages are limited to only 300KB attachments. Surprisingly, the phone supports sending text messages via Bluetooth.

**Communication** LG KE500 supports GPRS and EDGE connectivity, both class 10. But alas! Data transfers are slower than expected with only 30 Kbit/s download and 40 Kbit/s upload. Unacceptable even for such mid-level devices, especially if we're looking at Nokia or Sony Ericsson handsets which are in the same class. Unfortunately, Bluetooth data transfers are even crappier as you can see in the sample below, the speed didn't surpass 17 KB/s. On the other hand, you get Bluetooth A2DP compatibility, which really works. Furthermore, when synchronizing your LG KE500 handset with your PC, you can kiss goodbye to receiving any calls until you unplug the phone. It seems that LG kept the same stupid process of synchronizing that won't let you receive or make calls - hmm, very smart. The triband (GSM 900 / GSM 1800 / GSM 1900) network compatible slider has a good GSM signal reception. Sound is very loud, but a little bit distorted.

**Processor and Memory** LG KE500 features a very powerful ARM9 family processor, which runs at speeds of up to 400 Mhz. The CPU is a wonder for such a

mid-level phone, but that can only make mobile gamers happier. Nevertheless, this comes at a price, because a powerful CPU sucks more energy and LG is not reckoned for its batteries. The phone comes with 60 MB of internal memory, but can be upgraded through the microSD slot card, up to 2GB. **Multimedia**The slider has the typical headsets included with all LG "Shine" or "Chocolate" series sales packages. Fortunately, this one comes with a 3.5mm adapter that will let you attach your own headphones. The MP3 player features a cool equalizer and users will be able to change its skin or minimize it (by pushing the camera button while MP3 player runs). It is compatible with MP3, WAV and AAC format files. Sound is mediocre with included LG headset, which is very uncomfortable to use. In addition, the low battery time won't let you play more than 2 hours of music. The FM Radio can store up to 12 stations, but lacks RDS. Reception is ok and sound is a little bit louder than music listened through the MP3 player. Perhaps with other headphones you will be satisfied with its vibes, but for how long (battery depletes fast). **Battery**LG KE500 features an 800 mAh Li-Polymer battery, which depletes faster than you might have imagined. 2 hours of music playback and 10 minutes of talking will almost totally drain your battery. This is one of its serious drawbacks, especially for those that are using the phone heavily and will have to charge the phone at least once every 2 days, if not daily. The official numbers stated by LG - 200 hours of standby mode and 3 hours of talking - are simply way overrated. **Impressions**One of the latest Shine series mobile phone, LG KE500 doesn't catch your attention more than its predecessors. Moreover, if you've seen the "older" models, then you've seen it all. This slider is a typical mobile phone for those that want a cheap and good-looking phone, but do not care too much about functionality. **The Good** Perhaps the best thing about the LG KE500 concerns the fact that it simply adds to the LG Shine series offer, at a price affordable to low budget users. Small things like 3.5 mm adapter and Bluetooth A2DP are worth mentioning, but these have become usual stuff long ago and are heavily included in other branded mobile phones. **The Bad**I had a bad feeling about the phone's firmware before testing it, and unfortunately I was right. Too bad that I was also right about the crappy low life battery. Furthermore, the phone is simply an anti-data transfer phone, because users will experience very, very low speeds when using EDGE or Bluetooth connectivity. **Sales package**LG KE500 Shine Battery Li-Po 800 mAh Charger 230V/EU Headset with remote control USB Cable 3.5mm adapter CD ROM with software User Guide *Photo: Tudor Raiciu for Softpedia.com*