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[Nokia 7900 Prism Review](#)

Stylish black chocolate-bar handset with high-end features

Nokia is definitely the most successful mobile phones manufacturer in the world. It has been that way for a long time, and I believe that it will remain for at least that much time in the future. The main reason seems to be the fact that its handsets feature the most user-friendly interface, which practically "enthralled" most of the mobile phones market. Furthermore, once used with Nokia's interface there are few people that will look for other brands that use their own interfaces or operating systems. Slowly these people became fans of Nokia brand, and believe me, they represent a big chunk of the market. It has come to our attention that recently Nokia started working intensely on its handset designs. The results have been categorized as innovative, stylish, even odd by fans of the brand or simple mobile phone users. Nokia Prism series had by far the biggest number of votes that would categorize it as "odd" in what regards design. The moment Nokia 7500 and 7900 handsets' pictures and technical specifications leaked on the Internet, people divided into 2 categories: "haters" and "lovers" of the series... and that happened even before the handsets became available on the market. Nokia 7900 Prism handset has been announced in August 2007, but has been made available later than the first model of the series (Nokia 7500), in November 2007. The phone can be purchased for about 550 USD, but that may vary greatly depending on the location. **Design** At first glance, Nokia 7900 Prism looks very odd, especially if you're only looking at its picture and don't have it in your hands. Its keypad may seem very hard to use for texting because the keys have a triangular form and have little space in between. I was very skeptical before actually receiving the handset for review. My opinion has been turned 180 degrees the moment I managed to keep the phone in my hand. If you by any chance had the opportunity to own or use the 7500 model, then you will be surprised to find that Nokia 7900 looks much better. The plastic used doesn't give you the impression of cheap because it's glossy and very well polished. The candy-bar form has been cut straight upward, while the base of the phone kept the same style as its predecessor (Nokia 7500). The black version of the handset looks more like a chocolate bar and that can't be wrong, but I understand that Nokia intends to launch a brown color version also. Knowing that Nokia 7900 includes more advanced features than its 7500 brother, I thought it will obviously be bigger and bulkier. I was partly wrong because while Nokia 7900 is bigger (112 x 45 mm), it is surprisingly slimmer than the 7500 model with only 11.3 mm rather than 14 mm. Anyway it seems that the 3G technology included also made the 7900 Prism handset heavier (101 grams including battery rather than 83 grams). The candy-bar look of the device also comes from the fact that the phone doesn't feature any external keys or ports, except a microUSB port found on the upper side. This universal microUSB port tends to become standard for all Nokia handsets that don't feature an operating system. Users will be able to charge the phone, synchronize it or attach various headsets through the same microUSB port. You also find 2 LEDs on top of the phone that are blinking in the color of your choosing. It is very interesting, but these two LEDs will also alert the user in case of missing calls, by blinking faster than normal. The 2 Megapixel camera from the back of the phone has a weird rhombus form and features a triangular flash. The back of the device has all been divided into triangles to go with the theme and that includes the external speaker. The keypad of the device needs some practice before getting used to it. The big metallic D-pad button has the same rhombus form as the camera on the back. Actually there are only 2 forms that have been heavily used into this handset's design: rhombus and triangle. Obviously you don't need to be an expert to know that a rhombus is actually formed by 2 triangles, which may also look like prisms. That's a very interesting design, using only

the prism in different sizes and positions. I wonder if it has a mystical meaning:)

Display and Camera Nokia 7900 Prism features a 2" organic light-emitting diode (OLED) display, which is no better than 7500's TFT 16 Million color screen. Tests revealed that in terms of performance 7500's display scored a little bit better than 7900, but the latter obviously consumes less energy. The images displayed by the screen look amazingly sharp, pity that you won't be able to see much when outdoors in the sunlight. Moreover, the phone lacks brightness and you will be forced to concentrate hard to be able to see anything on the screen if you want to use it outdoors. The 240 x 320 pixel resolution makes the display even better for the user who will definitely enjoy playing games on this device. It's good that Nokia started to use more and more OLED displays into its mobiles, that will surely save battery energy and will offer longer talking time for the user. I also hope that future models will have a better brightness, because this one is simply awful. The 2 Megapixel camera can take snapshots in various resolutions ranging from 160 x 120 pixels to 1600 x 1200 pixels. I wasn't expecting too much from a fashion phone camera, and my "low expectations" have been met:)

Mediocre in quality, the 2 Megapixel camera will fulfill the standard needs of the owners, but will fail to meet any high expectations. Even with a whole range of settings such as: White Balance (Daylight, Tungsten, Fluorescent, Horizon) and Effects (False colors, Grayscale, Sepia, Negative and Solarize), you won't be able to improve the quality of the pictures. Furthermore, do not try to take night pictures (even with Night mode ON), unless the subject is very close to the camera, otherwise you won't be able to see anything. The phone can also record clips, but the small resolution (QCIF 176 x 144 pixels) doesn't recommend it as a true videocamera. Overall, Nokia 7900 Prism features a medium quality camera, perhaps exactly what a fashion phone usually needs to keep its price into some limits.

Menu and Software Number 1 strong point that has become typical for Nokia handsets, the user-friendly interface, does its job in this case too. Nokia 7900 Prism runs on a S40 5th Edition platform, which means that it lacks an operating system. The new Series 40 5th Edition is a full hardware, software and Application Programming Interface architecture, incorporating Java Platform Micro Edition technology with support for the latest version of the mobile information device profile (MIDP 2.1), and providing an enhanced UI that enables developers to build richer multimedia applications and services for mass market Nokia mobile devices. Nokia's new Series 40 5th Edition enables users to experience streaming videos, image rendering, mobile 3D graphics and scalable 2D Vector graphics. Series 40 5th Edition also supports the latest version of Adobe's Flash Lite 2.1, the interoperable platform that enables the accelerated development and delivery of rich graphical mobile content, and includes audio file playback and streaming capabilities that provide audio and music enhancements to both mobile gaming and multimedia experience. In addition, Series 40 5th Edition also enables Bluetooth and IrDA (Infrared) connectivity and synchronization capabilities. The platform's broad support for SMS text messaging and multi-media messaging (MMS) includes true interoperability for a variety of MMS content formats and classes. It seems that menu and software have been ported (copied) from its 7500 predecessor, because it has the same features and user-interface. Users will be able to take advantage of the Active Standby, which is the main feature of the S40 platform, but can also install Java compatible third party applications. You can also find other useful applications such as: Yahoo! Go, Alarm clock, Calendar, To-do list, Notes, Calculator, Countdown timer and Stopwatch. The menu is fully customizable and you can designate any MP3, MIDI or AAC file as ringtone. One of the most attractive features of the phone is the fact that you can change the lights of the keypad according to the theme you want to use. You can choose one of the 49 kinds of charming colors as in the paint palette.

Communications The high-end version of Nokia 7500, the 7900 Prism model, benefits from the UMTS network (3G) compatibility, as well as EDGE (Class 32, 296 kbps) and GPRS (Class 32, 107 kbps). I was able to attain pretty good speeds when testing EDGE and 3G connectivities: 150 Kbit/s download and 61 Kbit/s upload, respectively 306 Kbit/s download and 96 Kbit/s upload. Both EDGE and GPRS have been upgraded to version 32 from the

previous 7500 Prism model, which featured Class 10 EDGE and GPRS. The microUSB port enables users to synchronize the handset with any PC for data transfers. There's no surprise that the phone features Bluetooth 2.0 with A2DP support, which will offer you the possibility to listen to music through a Bluetooth connection. Data transfer speeds were more than satisfactory as you can see from the screenshot below (136 KB/s download). Email is fully compatible with POP3, SMTP, and IMAP4 protocols and is much faster and easier to use than any other S40 compatible handset. The phone accepts SMS, MMS, as well as sound messages. The quadband (GSM 850 / GSM 900 / GSM 1800 / GSM 1900) network compatible handset has a mediocre GSM signal reception, while the 3G signal reception is very weak. The sound is pretty clear and loud enough for you to be able to talk on the phone. Furthermore, the vibration is very low in intensity and cannot be changed to a higher level, which makes it almost useless.

Processor and Memory Nokia 7900 Prism most likely features an ARM9 family processor running at speeds up to 170 MHz. This is the same CPU used by its 7500 predecessor and is more than enough to fulfill any Java application needs. I have been "working" the device to see if it lags when opening more than 2 applications and I was very happy about the results. It works just fine and within the parameters, just like it should. Furthermore, the lack of a microSD slot card for memory expansion has been "covered" by the simple fact that it includes 1 GB internal memory, which should satisfy any user's needs... for the moment.

Multimedia This is a real disappointment as the phone can't even be compared to the mid-level 7500 model. While there's an obvious improvement regarding the actual music player, the sound has greatly dropped in quality. Even with the standard Equalizer (Pop, Rock, Jazz, Classical) you won't be able to improve sound quality. The upgraded music player (which looks like the XpressMusic series) is fully compatible with MP3, AAC, eAAC+ and WMA format files. Perhaps using another set of headphones would be more beneficial for music listeners, but I wasn't able to attach anything else as the microUSB port is quite new and I couldn't find a converter yet. Unfortunately, even if the phone has been listed as featuring FM radio, in fact it lacks any radio capabilities. It's a pity, but overall multimedia experience is less than expected for such a good looking device.

Battery Compared with Nokia 7500 Prism, the 7900 model features a superior 830 mAh Li-Ion battery, opposed to a 700 mAh it makes a big difference. Unfortunately, this is only in theory as even the manufacturer stated a standby time of only 240 hours and a talk time of only 3 hours, which is almost similar with Nokia 7500 model. Too bad that you'll be forced to charge your phone daily if you're a heavy user, or at least once per 2 days.

Impressions Nokia 7900 Prism is definitely a beautiful phone, even if its odd design might say otherwise. Before buying this handset bear in mind that it won't make you Albert Einstein and it will certainly not solve your inferiority complex. Instead this eye-catching phone will most likely attract everyone's looks be it "hater" or "lover" of the series. Besides its stylish design, Nokia 7900 Prism also has much to offer in terms of functionality, which makes it even more desirable.

The Good The second handset of the Prism series could be a real success, especially thanks to its good-looking design. I won't miss the goodies hidden under its "hood" like 3G connectivity, Bluetooth 2.0 with A2DP support, great display and 1 GB internal memory. Even if it's not a high-end handset Nokia surely managed to make it high-classy and very attractive fashionistas mobile phone.

The Bad The battery seems to be one of the weakest points of the handset, together with the whole multimedia "department", which drags down the phone's quality. Maybe a better camera, and I'm not talking about the number of Megapixels, would've make it more useful for those that rely on their mobile phone when going on a trip for taking pictures.

Sales package Nokia 7900 Prism handset
 Nokia BL-6P battery
 Nokia AC-6 standard charger
 Nokia HS-82 headset
 microUSB synchronization cable
 Cellphone bag
 Quick Guide
 User Guide
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