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[Samsung SGH-E590 Review](#)

True stylish camera phone

Another mid-level Samsung handset makes its way on the market and by means of its technical features it appears that it addresses a specific target segment – camera phone fans. Strictly following its new market strategy, the Korean company continues to develop new models that have a specific target, thus making it harder to compete its own devices. Samsung SGH-E590 tries to be as small and basic as it could be, but embeds a high quality camera module, which is the main attraction of the phone. As we all know medium priced handsets are most likely to attract more buyers than high-end phones, which are more expensive, thus Samsung will surely make a lot of sales with the E590 model. Announced back in February 2007, Samsung SGH-E590 is available in 2 colors, "Noble Black" and "Snow Silver", starting June 2007. The price of the device ranges between USD 220-280 depending on the location, but in case you opt for a plan you will get this beauty much cheaper.

Design Samsung's E590 design is the result of the cooperation between the Korean company and Jasper Morrison, a leading industrial designer. Through this partnership with Jasper Morrison, well known for his talents in various areas of industrial design, the E590 is designed to touch customers. While there is no resemblance with the slim U100 model, I can definitely say that this time Samsung worked hard on the height and width of the phone. The measures of the phone 94 x 42 x 13.5 mm make it one of the smallest phones on the market. So, it's not about slimness after all. Moreover, with only 65 grams (including battery) weight, the handset is almost "imperceptible" in your pocket. The bar form factor decisively contributes to the exquisite design of the phone and recommends the phone to both sexes: white color for women and black color for men. Samsung SGH-E590 is definitely a camera phone, thus it includes many dedicated external keys that must help the user take high-quality snapshots with ease. All camera controls are placed on the right side of the phone: dual Zoom button, Camera key and Mode key. The left side of the handset includes the microSD slot card for memory expansion, the universal port for charger, USB connection or headset and dual volume key. On the back of the phone you will easily notice the powerful 3.0 Megapixel camera with autofocus and the Samsung logo together with a small icon that surely defines this device as a camera phone. The phone is really small, thus the display is even smaller measuring only 1.8 inches. The keypad looks standard except that it has a 5-way joystick controller which makes it easier for users to navigate through menus or simply for gaming. The Delete ("C") key has been placed right under the 5-way joystick. The keypad is very easy to use as the spaces between keys are large enough to ensure that any finger, no matter how thick, will be able to type a SMS message or dial a number fast and with no troubles. There's no external speaker, so you'll be stuck with the in-call speaker if you want to listen to music without any headphones. The only drawback I could find is the polished material used at the manufacture, which scratches easy enough as to ruin the beauty of the phone. The handset's sales package contains a rather peculiar bean bag, whose only purpose seems to be that of a tripod for taking self pictures.

Display and Camera The small TFT 1.8 inch screen supports 262K colors and has an unusual resolution of 220 x 220 pixels. Even if small the display looks to be a little better than U100's or E200's, at least those are the test results. There's no Sunlight mode found in the phone's software, so the visibility of the screen when exposed to intense sunlight is a little bit low. Overall Samsung made an excellent screen that displays high contrast colors and look very vivid, but this is no wonder if you look back on older models which also have nice and reliable displays. The reason that one may want to buy Samsung's E590 is also the main feature of the handset – the camera module. If you are

more attuned to the picture stuff than to music, this is a viable and cheap solution to fulfill your needs. The 3.0 Megapixel camera features auto focus and 4x digital zoom capabilities, but lacks flash. While many users consider this a major drawback I find it rather unimportant as most of the camera phones cannot make good pictures when using the flash. Anyway, the camera can shoot pictures to a max 2048 x 1536 pixels and has a wide range of settings, which are accessible in the dedicated camera setting menu. Besides the usual features like picture quality, scene modes, exposure metering (matrix, center-weighted and spot), shutter sound, zoom sound, brightness sound, there's also a macro mode. Quality of the images is above average as expected, but a little bit too sharpened. Clips can be recorded in CIF (max 352 x 288 pixels resolution) mode at 15 fps and saved in .MP4 format. There's also the small bean bag which can be inserted in the small universal slot, just like a tripod. Even if it has low usability it still looks pretty fancy. Overall the camera module is worth all the money and with no doubt I can say that this is by far the strong point of the handset.

Menu and SoftwareThe basic Samsung menu has been kept untouched and you will hardly find any difference between E590 and last years' old models. If you have never had a Samsung mobile phone, then let me tell you that the usability learning curve is pretty straight forward and takes little time. You can see the main menu in 2 styles (block and list), but I strongly recommend first time users to use the "block" style. The "Mode" external key placed on the right side of the phone will give you quick access to camcorder, gallery or settings. You can also attach MP3 files as ring tones to any of the contacts you desire, but unfortunately you'll be stuck with only 4 pre-installed tones for message alerts. This is rather strange and annoying especially for those that are heavy SMS users, as the sound is pretty low. You can store up to 1000 contacts in your phonebook and 1000 SMS messages. There is a whole range of pre-installed applications frequently used in any handset: World clock, Alarm (limited to only 3), Calendar, Memo, Converter and Calculator. Extra-settings include features like: Auto redial, Anykey answer, Voice clarity and Auto keypad lock. Unfortunately, the latter cannot be set to any time you want, the feature is simply there so you can check and use it or leave it unchecked, but then you'll have to lock your keypad manually. The phone can read Word, Excel, PowerPoint or PDF file formats and can run Java compatible applications. The only restriction to the latter is the fact that it can only install Java applications through WAP and the application's size cannot be larger than 300 Kb. Again the integrated web browser is too basic and doesn't offer a seaming Internet experience. NetFront 3.2 web browser is at least mediocre and has big difficulties opening large size pages and can display many glitches when loading images.

CommunicationSamsung SGH-E590 is limited to GPRS and EDGE class 10 connectivities in terms of Web data transfers. The speed is rather poor with only 65 Kbps download and 22 Kbps upload for the EDGE technology. Fortunately the phone supports Bluetooth 2.0 with A2DP and data transfers through Bluetooth are very fast with speeds up to 110 KB/s. For synchronization purposes the USB connection can be set to 3 different modes: Modem, Mass storage and Pictbridge. There is no included software in the sales package but you can download Samsung's PC Studio which will help you synchronize your handset. Messaging capabilities are limited to SMS, EMS, MMS and Email. The phone features full support for email client POP and IMAP and can be set up to check emails at regular intervals. The tri-band (GSM 900 / GSM 1800 / GSM 1900) network compatible handset has an average GSM signal reception. Sound is pretty clear with the "Voice clarity" option turned on and loud enough.

Processor and MemorySamsung's E590 handset features a medium ARM9 family processor running at speeds up to 144 MHz. Most likely this is the same CPU type that has been embedded in the E200 model. I haven't experienced any lags navigating through various menus or long loading times, so there's nothing much to say about it, it's pretty standard. The phone has about 90 MB internal memory which can be expanded through the microSD slot card up to 2 GB.

MultimediaThe handset has all the standard multimedia features such as: music player, FM radio and video player. With that size of memory the phone can be easily used as an MP3 player, especially as it can read MP3, WMA, AAC,

eAAC and eAAC+ format files. The music player is standard and features an equalizer and the Stereo widening feature. You can even make your own playlists if you want, a feature that lacked in many previous models (D900). The usual wired stereo headsets that are shipped with every new Samsung mobile have been included in E590's sales package. Still, do not put high hopes on the quality of the music because you'll be disappointed. This is not a music phone, moreover it's a medium class mobile phone, so its price and features are not to be compared with high-end phones. The FM radio lacks RDS and it can memorize up to 30 base stations. Sound and reception are standard. This time both radio and music player can run in the background with no problems. **Battery** This is a little better than I anticipated. I was used with Samsung's low talking time batteries, but this phone is an exception. Don't get me wrong, you still can't compare it with Nokia's batteries, but at least it's better than most of other Samsung newly launched models. The 800 mAh Li-Ion battery has an official stated autonomy of 300 hours in standby mode and about 4 hours of talk time. Usually I was forced to recharge the battery every 3-4 days (not counting the nights) with about 20-30 minutes of talking every day and 2-3 MB of data transfers. This is pretty good, especially that we're talking about such a small phone. **Impressions** At first glance Samsung SGH-590 looks just like a little toy inviting you to play with it. I was delighted to discover its "powers", but also its weaknesses. This is one little toy that you won't be bored with. **The Good** The first thing you notice before taking the E590 phone in your hand is its small sizes and stylish design. Jasper Morrison's touch breathes from all the phone's "pores" and makes you wonder how come that simplicity can be so beautiful. Apart from its design the improvement on the battery life and the powerful 3 Megapixel camera could not go unnoticed. Overall this phone can easily be considered a bargain for all that it has to offer. **The Bad** Actually the only negative points of the phone are software related. The very basic web browser that has been integrated ruins the Internet experience. Also the possibility of installing Java applications only through WAP (Internet connection) looks pretty bad for most of the users, as well as for those developers that don't have their applications listed on a WAP page. **Sales package** Samsung SGH-E590 Handset 800 mAh Li-ion Battery USB Cable Wired Stereo Handsfree Travel Adapter User Guide Bean Bag Tripod *Photo: Tudor Raiciu for Softpedia.com*