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## Sony Ericsson W900 mobile phone

The W900 is the 3G follow-on to the hugely successful and popular W800 from Sony Ericsson, but do we really need it? We get listening to find out.

by Dan Leonard published on 3 December 2005

The W900 is the 3G follow on to the hugely successful and popular W800 from Sony Ericsson, but do we really need it? We get listening to find out.

The W900 is billed as the latest and greatest in the 3G Walkman series. Spotted at the launch in black and in white, the latest news is that only the white version will be released in the UK. More of a concern is that the W900 will only be available in the UK via the Vodafone network for the first 3 months.

Even the early review models are all sim-locked to run on this network alone. Sure to be a disappointment for some, but the show must go on. Luckily, while we searched around our drawers for a Vodafone sim card, the music continued to play.

Not a fat lady singing, but a trip through a selection of real .wav tunes pre-loaded onto the phone. As with the W550, the W900 offers the user a choice at start-up - call or music only. Now I'm familiar with three handsets in the Walkman family, there are no big surprises here. The swivel open is the same as the W550, but the screen is larger and the rather odd handle that housed the antenna has been dispensed with. The exterior lacks the groovy metal speaker covers of the W550, but the contours of the phone are smooth and suit the white skin. Nevertheless, the speakers suffer as a result - the W900 has only one speaker, mounted on the back of the unit next to the camera.

The swivel flip opens the full 180 degrees, revealing a well-spaced keyboard, including a power button in the bottom right. This is a nice



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feature, preventing accidental in-pocket operation. The slide lock on the side helps too, there is a sensible navi-key as well, and all this helps build a "music player" identity about the phone. The headphones, with a lead mounted screen and roll control, fit very well in the ear. The soft rubber collars mean the earpieces fit very snugly and seal out a lot of background noise.

Memory-wise there is 470 MB of available internal memory, with a Memory Stick Duo port. Sony Ericsson has some larger sticks due for imminent release. This will help with the music storage- MP3 and .wav files are loaded via through the air transfer, or via the included software. Annoyingly, there is no drag and drop functionality. Copying music via the built-in tool between internal memory and card is slow. To copy 100Mb of music you will need approximately 15-20 minutes, so be sure to write the content direct to your preferred location.

Two cameras, one front mounted VGA and one rear mounted 2 megapixel with flash, adorn the W900, but there is no lens cover, as with the K600i and as we were originally shown at a first look briefing we had. The sliding keylock on the side of the phone doubles as a flash activator. Not too much of a problem as the keypad is covered during image capture - cameras can only be operated when the phone is closed.

One nice addition would have been a 3.5mm jack, allowing replacement headphones and the ability to output music to another device.

The screen is nice, the resolution is 240x320 pixels (31x40 mm) and 262k colours. Shame that for a larger chassis than the W600, there is little else done with the extra space. The buttons have been spread out which helps, but the lack of speakers lends weight to the rumours that the W900 was not originally planned to be part of the Walkman family.

## VERDICT

A good phone, but not as distinctly music

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Sony Ericsson 3G Walkman phone

### Good

3G, 2 megapixel camera phone, 470Mb built in memory

### Bad

Bigger than the W800i

### Verdict

Where the W800 will succeed is its bolting on of 3G to an already successful phone

**Price** Price dependant on contract

**Our score**

**8/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**

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orientated as others in the series. There are some good additions to the operating system, such as bookmarks to denote phone/card location and the spreading out of the keypad helps. The navi key and surrounding hotkeys give a dual layer of control and the earphones are comfortable, with an intuitive controller.

With the W800 the current king of the mobile music players crowd the W900 has a tough job ahead of it if it is to convince people to opt for this model over the GSM feature. The killer benefit here is that you get 3G connectivity on which to watch television, and get your emails, all while listening to your music.

Limiting the colour run and opting only for Vodafone, Sony Ericsson have limited the sales of the W900, but in 3 months time when the exclusivity runs out that could all change - and who knows, but then we might be talking about yet another model by then.