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Sony Ericsson F305 mobile phone - First Look

Is this handset game for a laugh?

by Chris Hall published on 18 June 2008

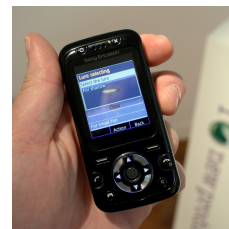
As speculated across the Internet, the "F" in the new series of Sony Ericsson phones seems to be for fun. With the launch of the F305, SE are looking to bring the fun back to mobiles and the 305 is the first in what should be a growing range. We got hands-on a prototype of the F305 at the UK launch in London.

Coming in the common slider form factor, the F305 is a compact mobile phone that is squarely aimed at the youth market, hence the emphasis on fun and the inherent "gaming" tag that has accompanied this phone.

In the hand the slider had a sort of indistinct feeling, not like the crisp action of the C905 launched at the same event. The slider also seemed to have a fair degree of wobble to it. The plastic body lacked the punch of some other Sony Ericsson phones, feeling as though it was designed to keep costs to a minimum. It is also fairly lightweight at 97.5g, which is perhaps no bad thing considering it contains motion sensors and you don't want to be waving a brick around.

The screen is a 2in LCD, which looked crisp and sharp and sitting around the screen are a number of control buttons. Below you'll find fairly standard controls, but above are an X and O button, reminiscent of the PlayStation, which is hardly surprising. The combination of these buttons means that gaming in horizontal is a realistic proposition, even if getting fingers and thumbs round a handset this small is something of a challenge. You'll also find a dedicated game button, with the icon of a console controller, to launch you into the action.

When opened, the keypad itself was surprisingly good quality - those with a penchant for texting should be able to bash one out in quick time. The



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other buttons, however, didn't quite seem to have the positive spring you'd expect - although this may be due to the fact we had a working prototype rather than a final retain edition.

The interface, although very brightly coloured was fairly standard Sony Ericsson fare, so you should have no problem navigating the menus. There is also an external stereo speaker and we found the F305 to be fairly noisy, something that younger users will probably prefer, whilst us boring old farts want everything to be silent. However, the intention here is very much to share your music and gaming experiences. In any event, you'll want to be playing the motion controlled games without the encumbrance of a set of headphones.

The handset will ship with a wrist strap to prevent Wii-type accidents when in full swing. We tested the motion controls with a quick blast at Bass Fishing ("blast" is hardly the right word). Well, it works and it certainly does mean a different approach to regular button pressing, although you also get standard games. Flicking out a line to catch a fish might not work on a crowded train, so it will be interesting to see how motion-controlled games develop across mobile phones.

The on-board memory offering is a measly 10MB, but there is an external slot for a Memory Stick Micro, which you'll need if you plan to blast off any quantity of photos or video with the 2-megapixel camera or transport and quantity of music. The camera isn't the most advanced offering on the market, but should be satisfactory for general sharing of images online. You'll also get the normal technology you'd expect, Bluetooth, media player and so on.

VERDICT

Overall, from our First Look, accepting that this was a prototype and not a final version, we did have some concerns about the build quality. The real thing that will work for the F305 is if it can deliver innovative and playable games to take advantage of the additional controls and the

At a glance

What is it?

Gaming mobile phone

Good

Additional gaming buttons, motion control, solid keypad

Bad

Some build quality concerns

Verdict

We did have some concerns about build quality. The thing that will work for the F305 is if it can deliver innovative and playable games to take advantage of the additional controls and the motion sensing

Price Dependent on contract

Your score

?/10

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motion sensing. This will not replace your PSP or DS, but hopefully, with increased activity in mobile gaming across the industry, the future will be bright for Sony Ericsson's F range.