

LG KC550 mobile phone

Can this offer PAYG customers something different?

by Stuart Miles published on 9 July 2008

While the biggest and normally best phones are available to contract customers looking to sign up to 18-month contracts, when it comes to PAYG offerings the choice can be limited. LG are hoping to capitalise on this with the 5-megapixel KC550; but does it? We get dialling to find out.

Large and rectangular, the camera's design is stylish but basic. The 262K colour 2.4-inch screen, which isn't touch-enabled, dominates the gloss black front and is bright, crisp and clear. Beneath that screen are the usual shortcut buttons for menus and calling, while the 12-key keypad (a mixture of gloss black and grey) slides out below that.

The keys are flat, well spaced out but a little spongy, although easy to use with no strange anomalies. The rest of the buttons around the phone are where you would expect to see them - volume, camera shutter button, etc, as well as a slot for the microSD and headphones/charger. There is no dedicated 3.5mm socket for music fans.

On the back is the lens for the 5-megapixel camera, complete with sliding cover to not only protect, but double as an on/off switch. The slider is strong enough in its design to hold up against most accidental openings in the pocket, but not completely so.

The lens is supplied by Schneider-Kreuznach and a flash is also present. Camera features include an image stabiliser and video recording.

Pictures can be viewed back on the handset's screen while the accelerometer acts to automatically rotates images vertically or horizontally for optimal viewing.

Like the company's newly announced LG Secret



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handset, the accelerometer also comes into play for a motion controlled gaming function, called "M-Toy", which reacts to the handset's movements.

By tilting or rotating the handset, users can throw darts, hook a fish or navigate a maze. The games are the same offering as on the Secret and are basic but will give you 5 minutes of entertainment on the train, however we would recommend holding on tight so you don't lose your phone.

The menu interface is traditional LG stuff with little done to rock the boat. All the usual applications that you'll find on any multimedia phone are here too: picture viewer, web browser, games, music player and so on, and on the whole it is inoffensive stuff.

If you've used LG before it will be plain sailing and if you haven't it shouldn't take you long to get to grips with the interface.

VERDICT

With no 3G capabilities this isn't a phone for the web surfer, however it will offer you a simple-to-use phone with 5-megapixel camera and a few extra tricks to boot.

The camera's performance is on the whole good working in a number of different situations and the use of a Schneider-Kreuznach lens (also used by Kodak from time to time) certainly helps.

This is one of those handsets best described as nothing special but won't disappoint.

At a glance

What is it?

5-megapixel camera phone

Good

Camera, simple, easy to use

Bad

No 3G, accelerometer games basic

Verdict

This is one of those handsets best described as nothing special but won't disappoint

Price £179.99

Our score

7/10

Your score

8/10