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Gigabyte GSmart Guru Review

Posted: 12 Dec 2013, 07:59, by Victor H.

 TAGS: [Android](#) +

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Introduction

The [Gigabyte GSmart Guru](#) is a phone from a brand you've actually heard of yet coming for a very affordable price, while offering almost top-shelf specs and a very sleek and sturdy design. Not a bad combination, is it?

Unlike most Gigabyte devices we've seen recently, the Guru skips the dual SIM functionality and only supports one SIM card. Dual SIM phones are popular in emerging markets where people switch between cards to save on their monthly bills, and the lack of dual SIM here signals to the fact that this targets a slightly different audience.

With a 5-inch 1080 x 1920-pixel display, a quad-core chip (it's a MediaTek one, but still), and a 13-megapixel rear camera, the GSmart Guru ticks all boxes for premium phone on paper, but does the well-rounded spec sheet translate into an actually good real-world experience? Let's find out.

In the box:

- Wall charger
- USB cable
- In-ear headphones
- User manual






Design







GIGABYTE GSMART GURU

OS: Android 4.2

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Display	 5.0 inches, 1080 x 1920 pixels (441 ppi) IPS LCD
Camera	 13 megapixels
Hardware	 MediaTek MT6589T, Quad core, 1500 MHz, ARM Cortex-A7 processor 2048 MB RAM
Size	 5.79 x 2.84 x 0.28 inches (147 x 72.1 x 7.2 mm) 5.57 oz (158 g)
Battery	 2500 mAh, 10.5 hours talk time

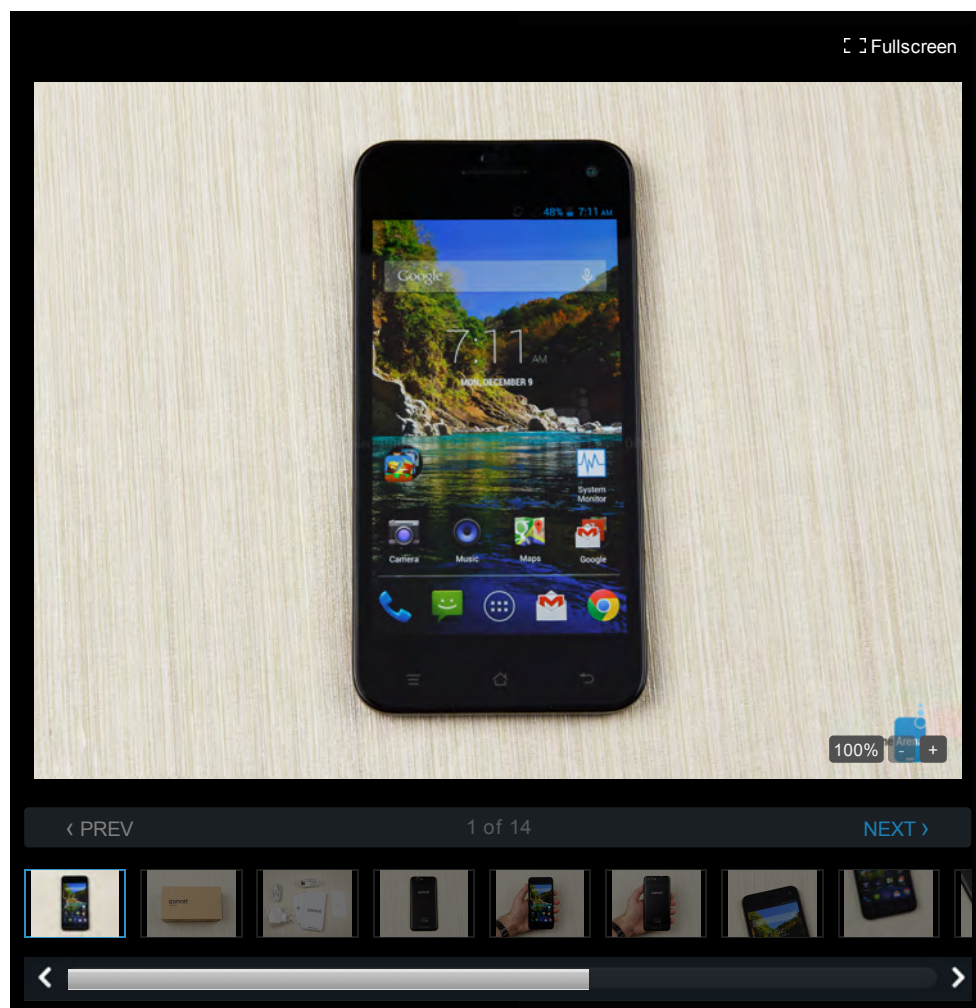
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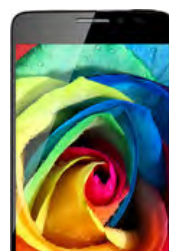
The GSmart Guru is a surprisingly sleek and svelte device for its price. It impresses with its just 7.2mm thin body that despite its slimness feels very solidly put together. The non-removable metal back back cover contributes to that feeling of rigidity. The Guru weighs a reasonable 0.35 pounds (158 grams) - neither too light, nor excruciatingly heavy. It's a device that easily fits most pockets unlike larger screen phablets, but it's too large for comfortable single-handed use and typing in particular.

On the front, there are three capacitive Android navigation buttons that are located right below the display (these are not on-screen buttons and do not take up any screen space). All physical buttons are located on the left hand side - the lock key is around the middle and the volume rocker just above it. This positioning and the fact that the buttons are a bit recessed makes them just slightly less comfortable to press and find than we'd like. Still, one gets used to it after a while. There is a SIM card tray on the right and a microUSB and 3.5mm headset jack on top.



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[Front view](#) | [Side view](#)



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5.79 x 2.84 x 0.28 inches 147 x 72.1 x 7.2 mm 5.57 oz (158 g)	5.43 x 2.72 x 0.34 inches 137.84 x 69.17 x 8.59 mm 4.59 oz (130 g)	5.3 x 2.63 x 0.39 inches 134.5 x 66.7 x 9.88 mm 4.59 oz (130 g)	5.53 x 2.66 x 0.27 inches 140.4 x 67.5 x 6.9 mm 4.23 oz (120 g)
GIGABYTE GSmart Guru	Google Nexus 5	HTC Desire 601	Alcatel One Touch Idol X

To see the phones in real size or compare them with other models, visit our [Visual Phone Size Comparison](#) page.



Apple iPhone 5s vs Samsung Galaxy S4

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Display

The GSmart Guru features a reasonably large 5-inch display with a resolution of 1080 x 1920 pixels, as sharp as the latest and greatest smartphones out there. We were instantly impressed with it not just because it's a very sharp IPS LCD display with pixel density reaching 441ppi, but also because of the fairly accurate and pleasing colors. It's surprising how well calibrated a screen can be even on such an affordable device with only slightly niggles like a bit blueish white point and cyan vaguely out of balance. These are details not many

people will notice, but if you are looking for a device with good color reproduction, this phone would be a good fit.

The GSmart Guru gets fairly bright and reflections are also not terrible, which makes the phone fairly convenient for outdoor use. Having an IPS screen, the GSmart Guru can brag about having some very decent viewing angles as it retains a lot of its original brightness and contrast at an angle.

We usually do not mention things like minimum brightness, but in the case of the Guru it does not drop low enough, so if you are reading in bed at night, it would definitely be too bright. This is not a huge disadvantage as you can grab an app from the Google Play store like Screen Filter or Screen Dimmer, but we wish Gigabyte had this figured out out of the box.

Display measurements and quality

Screen measurements							
	MAXIMUM BRIGHTNESS (nits) HIGHER IS BETTER	MINIMUM BRIGHTNESS (nits) LOWER IS BETTER	CONTRAST HIGHER IS BETTER	COLOR TEMPERATURE (Kelvins)	GAMMA	DELTA E RGBCMY LOWER IS BETTER	DELTA E GRAYSCALE LOWER IS BETTER
HTC DESIRE 601	503 (Excellent)	19 (Poor)	1:1752 (Excellent)	8011 (Poor)	2.06	5.54 (Average)	6.48 (Average)
GOOGLE NEXUS 5	485 (Good)	10 (Average)	1:1004 (Good)	6418 (Excellent)	2.05	3.29 (Good)	4.54 (Average)
ALCATEL ONE TOUCH IDOL X	431 (Good)	35 (Poor)	1:2189 (Excellent)	6865 (Excellent)	2.28	4.1 (Average)	2.75 (Good)
GIGABYTE GSMART GURU	426 (Good)	53 (Poor)	1:719 (Poor)	6988 (Excellent)	2.34	5.26 (Average)	9.81 (Poor)
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Interface and Functionality

Android 4.2.1 Jelly Bean is on board with very slight modifications made by Gigabyte, so we're looking at an almost pure version of Google's idea of what Android should look like. The only slight modifications we found are the G logo that appears when you unlock the device, some custom widgets, a licensed TouchPal keyboard and a few toggles here and there. Nothing too heavy to slow down performance, no bloatware, and that's a good thing.

Basic functionality is still well covered and there is nothing here out of the Android ordinary. The phonebook features a dialer, call log and contacts panels that you can conveniently swipe between. The TouchPal keyboard is a nice addition with very large keys that are easy to press and with support for swipe gesture word recognition a la Swype.

Processor and Memory

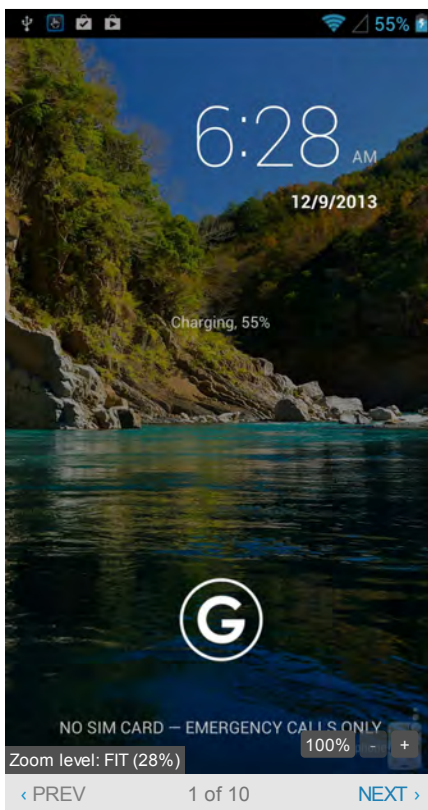
Quad-core processors can be very different, but most devices released in 2013 feature either a Qualcomm Snapdragon or a MediaTek chip. Qualcomm is a name we usually associate with top-shelf devices, while MediaTek used to denote a slower but cheaper processor, but the difference between the two has gone smaller with time.

The GSmart Guru uses a MediaTek chip of that new kind that approaches Snapdragon chips closer than before. It's the quad-core Cortex A7-based MT6589T with the T standing for turbo, paired with 2GB of RAM. This chip indeed is an overclocked modification of the wildly popular MT6589 quad-core chip. Still, in daily use, there is a bit of an occasional stutter just navigating around the menus and it is noticeable, but it's not terrible.

Each core on the Guru can run at up to 1.5GHz. Now this might seem a bit too low compared to current cream of the crop 2.3GHz processor smartphones with chips like the Snapdragon 800, but we would not count on clock speed alone to understand the performance of a chip. That same 2.3GHz on Qualcomm's chip for instance throttles down to 1.2GHz in just a minute in most games, so it indicates a peak rather than the regular processor running speed. In reality, the MT6589T behaves itself just differently than the Snapdragon chip. In contrast, the MediaTek chip in the GSmart Guru tends to run for much longer periods of time at its absolute peak 1.5GHz

frequency under heavy loads, with much less variance.

The GSmart Guru is not a bad device for gaming as it easily runs casual games and can run even more intense games like Asphalt 8 and Modern Combat 4, but it is out of the league of the top performers. It features a PowerVR SGX544 graphical chip running at up to 357MHz, and it's a GPU that starts to struggle




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GIGABYTE GSMART GURU

OS: Android 4.2


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Display	5.0 inches, 1080 x 1920 pixels (441 ppi) IPS LCD
Camera	13 megapixels
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when it has to push all the pixels in a 1080p display like the one in the Guru. The slowdown is especially noticeable in 3D games where newer graphics chips can easily score triple the performance.

It's worth mentioning that - quite admirably - Gigabyte does not cheat on the benchmarks like others (cough, Samsung, cough, LG, cough, HTC!) and the scores you see below happen with no artificial boost of clock speeds.

Internal storage comes in at the very generous 32GB, but that greater out of the box allowance has translated into a lack of microSD card. It's a trade-off we are willing to make for Gigabyte to achieve the slim profile and sleek design of the Guru, but it's a limitation worth noting. Out of the 32 gigs, around 27GB are available to the end user.

PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

QUADRANT HIGHER IS BETTER	Google Nexus 5	8455
	HTC Desire 601	6092
	Alcatel One Touch Idol X	5802
	GIGABYTE GSmart Guru	4639
ANTUTU HIGHER IS BETTER	Google Nexus 5	26340
	HTC Desire 601	15520
	Alcatel One Touch Idol X	15648
	GIGABYTE GSmart Guru	15107
GFXBENCH EGYPT HD 2.5 ONSCREEN (FPS) HIGHER IS BETTER	Google Nexus 5	52
	HTC Desire 601	31
	Alcatel One Touch	12
	GIGABYTE	11
VELLAMO METAL HIGHER IS BETTER	Google Nexus 5	1166
	HTC Desire 601	578
	Alcatel One Touch Idol X	578
	GIGABYTE GSmart Guru	547
VELLAMO HTML 5 HIGHER IS BETTER	Google Nexus 5	1524
	HTC Desire 601	2289
	Alcatel One Touch Idol X	1604
	GIGABYTE GSmart Guru	1513

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Internet and Connectivity

The GSmart Guru features 4G connectivity with HSPA+ support (up to 42 Mbps), but there is no LTE on board. Given the fact that it's a phone destined to markets where 4G LTE infrastructure is not yet widely spread (or existing at all), this is not a huge a drawback.

To browse the web, the Guru comes with a pre-installed custom browser and mobile Chrome. We like Chrome for its cross-platform syncing capabilities, and we were impressed with the zippy speeds it opens with and rendering pages is also very quick. Scrolling around and zooming in and out happens almost without a stutter, but there is a very annoying tremble when you zoom in. That seems to be a software issue as we have not seen it in other Android phones, and we hope Gigabyte fixes this with an update.

Other connectivity options include single-channel 2.4GHz Wi-Fi b/g/n and Bluetooth 4.0. NFC and MHL are not supported.

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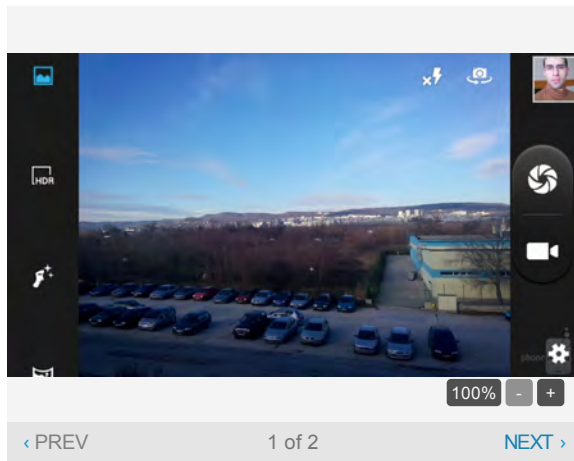
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Camera

With a 13-megapixel main auto-focus camera and a 5-megapixel front shooter, the GSmart Guru looks like an aspiring cameraphone on paper.

It comes with a camera interface typical for white-box Android smartphones with two separate buttons for image stills and video recording on the left and a scrolling list of easily one-tap accessible shooting modes on the right. Finer settings like exposure, ISO and white balance are also there, but require a bit more fiddling and a deeper dive in menus. There are HDR and panorama modes, but no burst shot option. The camera app itself opens at an average speed and taking a picture could have been a bit faster.

The actual images turn out fine a lot of times with good amount of detail and nice colors, however occasionally the phone would underexpose scenes a bit. Indoors, colors preserve their natural tonality and the flash kicks in earlier than in most smartphones lighting up a sufficient amount of detail.



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GIGABYTE GSMART GURU

OS: Android 4.2

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Sample Images

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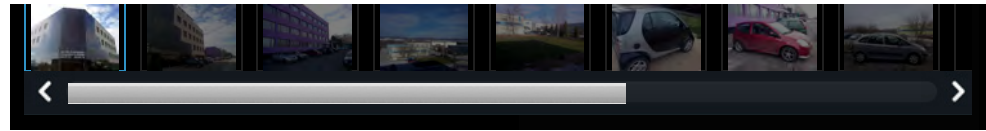
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Color poster

ISO Chart

Image size:

Original

GIGABYTE GSmart Guru

Google Nexus 5

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	<div>TAKING A PIC (sec) LOWER IS BETTER</div>	<div>TAKING AN HDR PIC (sec) LOWER IS BETTER</div>	<div>CAMSPEED SCORE HIGHER IS BETTER</div>	<div>CAMSPEED SCORE WITH FLASH HIGHER IS BETTER</div>
HTC DESIRE 601	3.2	No data	546	359
ALCATEL ONE TOUCH IDOL X	3.5	No data	No data	No data
GOOGLE NEXUS 5	3.5	4	406	347
GIGABYTE GSMART GURU	4.3	8.3	No data	No data
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Video footage we captured on the GSmart Guru is underwhelming, though. The handset is capable of shooting 1080p videos, but the frame rate comes in at the very low 20 frames per second. The camera also lacks optical image stabilization (it has digital one), and with no stabilizer every little hand shake, shakes the recorded video as well. This means that video looks choppy rather than smooth. Another issue is the audio recording quality that is poor with everything sounding very tinny and wind noise easily getting picked up.



Apple iPhone 5s vs Samsung Galaxy S4

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Sample Videos

Fullscreen

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The 5-megapixel front camera is better than what we are used to seeing from other front shooters. It captures good images when there is plenty of light, but has trouble in low light as it picks very low shutter speeds and images appear blurry. If you manually select a higher ISO, you can unleash its full potential even in low light.

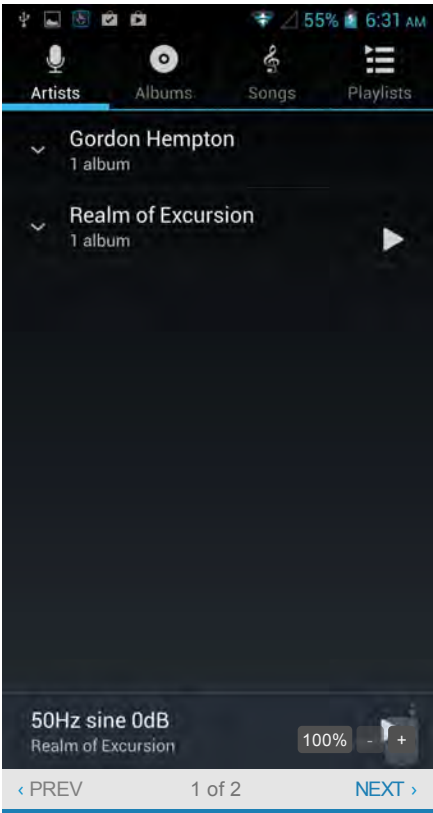
Multimedia

The vivid, accurate and sharp 5-inch display is a great asset for enjoying videos or images on the go. It plays back all video formats in all popular codecs out of the box, so you'll have no problem loading up your video collection and watch it without bothering installing third-party players. The video player is the stock Android affair.

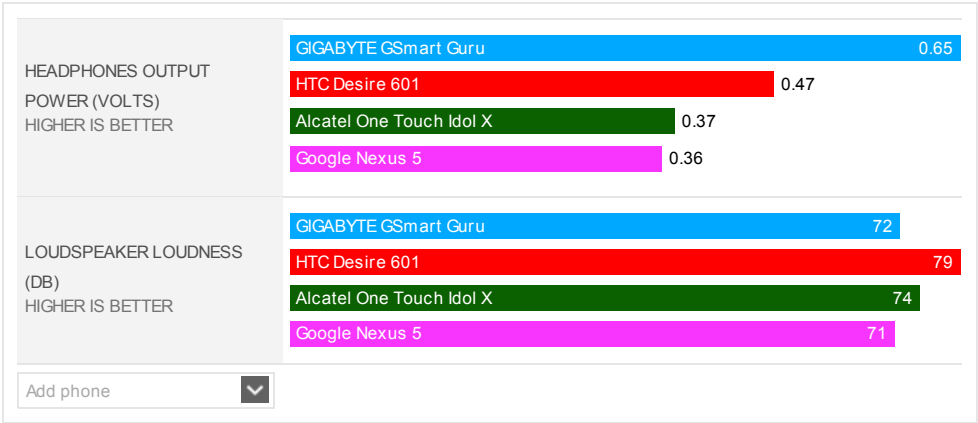
For images, you actually have both the Gallery app and the new Photos application. The latter is a tool that organizes your images in a neat light-themed interface and allows you to create short highlight videos for the day with some neat effects and transitions.

The Google Play Music app is on board for your aural pleasure and it's the stock Android app that breaks down your collection by artists, songs, albums and genres, plus it comes with an equalizer and sufficient amount of manual controls.

Sound output via the loudspeaker gets very loud for a smartphone and output via the headphone jack is pretty powerful. The phone ships with white earplug headphones that are actually quite decent and stylish, and we enjoyed clear and fairly loud sound from them.



AUDIO OUTPUT



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Call Quality, Battery and Conclusion

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Posted: 12 Dec 2013, 07:59, by Victor H.

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Call Quality

Call quality is just around average on the GSmart Guru. It features a dual-microphone setup that filters out side noises in calls, but our callers reported hearing our voice on the hollow side, a bit blank. The earpiece, though, is sufficiently loud and sounds much cleaner so you'd be able to easily recognize the voice of your callers.

Battery life

With a 2500mAh battery, the GSmart has way more juice than your average 5-inch smartphone, and that's hugely appreciated. It also uses a Lithium-Polymer (LiPo) battery rather than the most common Li-Ion one. This is likely because LiPo batteries usually come in flatter and thinner shapes, and are lighter, all things that make the razor slim design of this handset possible. The actual differences between the two include a typically faster discharge rate for LiPo as well as more fragile build and less tolerance to extreme conditions. These are likely things that you won't need to consider in real-life - even more so that the battery in the GSmart Guru is sealed - but you might find it interesting to know.

In our experience, the battery easily lasted us two days of use, which is great. The Guru ranks at the top of our battery tests.

BATTERY LIFE

We measure battery life by running a custom script, replicating the power consumption of typical real-life usage.

NAME

TIME

HIGHER IS BETTER

GIGABYTE GSMART GURU	6h 53 min
HTC DESIRE 601	5h 19 min
ALCATEL ONE TOUCH IDOL X	5h 16 min
GOOGLE NEXUS 5	4h 50 min

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GIGABYTE GSMART GURU


OS: Android 4.2

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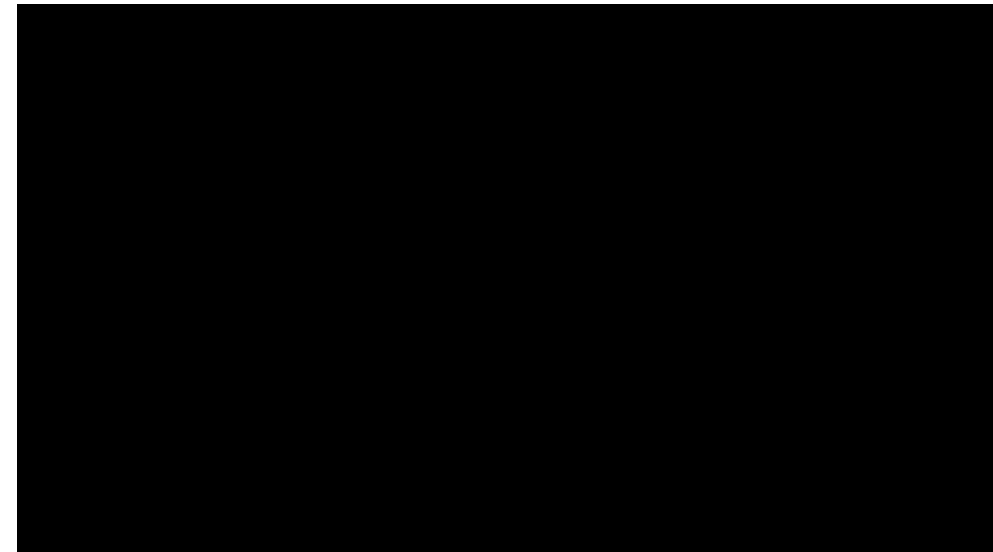
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comparing the GSmart Guru with the slightly more expensive [Nexus 5](#). However, the Nexus 5 price jumps much higher in markets outside the United States and that's where the Guru competes. Its real competitors seem to be Chinese devices that are readily available at those same markets. Phones like the ThL W200 and ThL W11 offer the same large and sharp screen and good design at even lower prices. If you're looking for a brand name device, the [HTC Desire 601](#) is another option with its slightly 4.5" display, but still great looks and similar price.

Overall, if you don't obsess over absolute smooth performance and care about having a good display and design, the Gigabyte GSmart Guru is definitely worth considering.



PROS

- + Great display
- + Affordable price
- + Sleek design

CONS

- Laggy
- Janky video recording

PhoneArena rating:

8

How we rate

User rating:

Not rated

<

1

2

3

4

SHARE:

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posted on 12 Dec 2013, 08:45

Conclusion


With an off-contract price of around \$320, the [GSmart Guru](#) has a lot going on for it. The spacious and surprisingly good 5" 1080p display and the sleek design are two features we are used to seeing on pricier handsets. Still, some corners had to be cut and the device feels a bit underpowered, especially in games where it can play most, but is not very smooth with more demanding titles.

Looking for an alternative, you inevitably end up


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
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Camera Comparison: Google Nexus 5 vs iPhone 5s, Sony Xperia Z1, Samsung Galaxy Note 3, Galaxy S4, LG G2, Nokia Lumia 1020, HTC One



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