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## Sony Ericsson W660 Review

### *Elegant and stylish, but overpriced*

Established in October 2001 the joint venture between Sony Corporation and Ericsson resulted in one of the world's leading mobile phones manufacturers – Sony Ericsson. As of lately, all new Sony Ericsson handsets belong to the 2 well-known series, Walkman and Cybershot, both having different target customers. Businesswise, Sony Ericsson's phones don't compete each other. While quality and design is almost the same, features are different and up until today I can't say that you'll be able to buy a high-end Sony Ericsson that would include at least 3G, 5 Megapixel camera and excellent music features. Just to prove Sony Ericsson's market strategy, the W660i model is just another version of the "older" W610i, except that it has lower camera and lacks EDGE, which was replaced with 3G connectivity instead.

Announced in March 2007, Sony Ericsson's W660i has been made available on the market in June for a rather stiff price of USD 500.

### **Design**

First of all Sony Ericsson W660 comes in two available colors: black (record black) and red (rose red). You might probably guess that the first color version targets men, while the second is more appealing for the ladies. As you can probably notice we had the latter version at our disposal, but it doesn't really matter as the features are the same. There's not too much to discuss about the design, especially if you're familiar with Sony Ericsson's latest handsets. The company hasn't changed its phones design in years and it seems they are simply centred upon technical specifications. What is different from the other SE's mobiles has only been included on the back of the model. The moment you look on the back of the phone you'll experience a strong feeling of "deja vu". Half of the back cover has been adorned with floral motives, while the black version has been encrusted with geometrical motives that look like concentric circles. This will probably be the moment when you remember Nokia's L'Amour or Samsung's Le Fleur collections which were the forerunners of the decorative motives encrusted in mobile phones.

Ladies will most likely enjoy the look of Sony Ericsson's latest W660 model, but men should probably stick to the black version, unless they wanna look pimpish with a red mobile phone encrusted with flower motives in their hands. The candy-bar form of the phone doesn't stand out from the crowd, but in a world of gray and black, the red and gold colors of the handset might lure plenty of (feminine) looks. Built to be used as an MP3 player more than a phone, W660 has external music controls on both gold colored sides. On the right side you'll notice the dual volume key and the camera button, while on the left side of the phone there's a Play key, the M2 slot card for memory expansion and the logo of the Walkman series, nicely engraved. The power off button has been placed on top of the phone and the charge port on the bottom. The 2 inch display covers half the front of the phone, while the rest represents the keypad. But before describing the keypad, bear in mind that Sony Ericsson's W660 is a 3G device, thus it features a front camera for video calls which is placed as usual right above the display.

If you haven't ever owned a Sony Ericsson branded mobile phone before, then it will take some time to get used with the keypad's layout. Forget about Nokia, Motorola, Samsung or other brands' keypads, 'cause this one is totally different. I'm not talking about the usual numerical keys, but about the control keys that help users navigate menus or access various features of the phone. There are 3 small circular gold colored buttons which have been stamped with various icons, so it may be easier to recognize it. The left one will give you direct access to the music player, while the gold colored button placed on the right displays a small secondary menu (which we will discuss later on). Obviously, the middle button will give access to the main menu, but can also be used as a Play button when the music player has been accessed. The middle button looks like a 5-way navigational key, but you will notice that it's not working like a joystick, instead it is surrounded by directional keys. The other 2 gold colored buttons have a soft key above and the one on the left has a "Back" key (see the sign stamped on it) and the one on the right has a "Delete" key under. This might be a problem for a frequent mobile phone user which has been accustomed to use the right button just like the End calls key. Now you have to be careful 'cause every time you push the right key (under the right gold colored button) you'll be asked if you wanna delete the object.

Other than that the rest of the keypad looks very nice in accordance with the rest of the design. Furthermore, it's easy to write messages as the buttons are well fit for women's fingers as well as for men's. The backlighting of the keys is pretty strong, but not too well balanced. If you turn the phone you can easily notice that the back cover has been parted in two halves. The one with the floral motives includes a 2 megapixel camera in the middle and an external speaker, both protected by a slim plastic. The other half is simply glossy and bears the Sony Ericsson green insignia and the Walkman series logo. Overall the phone might look a little bit flimsy at frequent use, especially the back cover which jogs a little the moment you pull out your phone from your pocket. Moreover, W660 doesn't inspire sturdiness at all, on the contrary, it looks fragile, like it will break any moment. Still, in this case it's a "lawful good" fragility that will make you love the phone rather than dislike it.

## Display and Camera

Sony Ericsson W660 features a 2-inch TFT display that supports 262k colors and 176 x 220 pixel resolution. This might be a problem for some possible buyers as these days newly launched handsets usually feature screens able to support 240 x 320 pixel resolution.

[Despite its lower resolution W660 model scored much higher than much better "reckoned" handsets \(see the screenshots\). The gaming experience exceeded expectations and proves that Sony Ericsson still has some aces up its sleeves. Depending on what kind of theme you use the screen can be perfectly visible in the sunlight or a little bit shadowy.](#)

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[The 2 megapixel camera embedded on the back of the phone lacks any flash and/or autofocus capabilities. Furthermore, the snapshots taken with the camera might give you headaches sometimes, as it is very tricky and depends 80% on the light conditions. Still, too much light might ruin your images, so you have to be very careful regarding the environment you choose to picture. The maximum 1600 x 1200 pixels resolution should be enough for all PC monitors to display any of your pictures, but sadly you can only record](#)

[clips with a maximum 176 x 144 pixel resolution.](#)

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While the camera is not as bad as you might think, you can observe that most pictures are out of focus and blurry. Even if you have a wide range of settings at your disposal like White balance (Daylight, Cloudy, Fluorescent, Incandescent), self timer, night mode, Effects (Black and White, Negative, Sepia) you won't be able to improve the quality of the pictures. Overall I can hardly say that this is an average camera, but bear in mind that this is not a Cyber-shot series handset. If you want a better camera at a loss of good music features, than go ahead and buy yourself a Cyber-shot phone. Sony Ericsson says you can't have both ... for the moment (market strategy reasons).

## **Menu and Software**

Sony Ericsson's fans would probably be happy to find that there is no obvious change in W660's menu or software. You get the same fully customizable main menu, depending widely on what kind of theme you use. You can even make your own themes by using the software called Themes creator, offered by the Sony Ericsson Development department. Besides the main menu you will be able to access a Quick menu (by simply pushing the right gold colored button), which contains shortcuts to various features of the phone (Bluetooth, Alarms, Radio, RSS reader, Calendar, Main menu), a quick access to Internet navigation, a report of various events (missed calls, alerts), as well as a list of running applications (if any).

Innovative in all its endeavors, Sony Ericsson made available for music lovers a very useful application that will enable the recognition of almost any track played, be it on the radio or in a car. You just need to record a fragment of the song that you'd like to be recognized and the application, called Track ID will search an online huge database and will most probably find your song in a matter of seconds. You can also play with some multimedia applications such as PhotoDJ, MusicDJ and VideoDJ. Most likely these will eat your free time faster than the 2 Java compatible games embedded: Snowboarding and Tower Bloxx.

Other helpful applications that you'll find very easy to use and access include: Organizer, Calendar, Text notes, Stopwatch, Countdown timer, Alarm, Calculator and Code memory. The File manager is also easy to use and has 3 different views where it will list every folder on both phone's memory and external memory, or just one of the two.

Users will be able to personalize their phone in detail by using the included themes. You can also attach any MP3 file format, no matter where it is located (phone memory or external memory), to any ring tone, alert or alarm. For those that like to surf the Internet on their mobiles, Sony Ericsson included a standard browser that can work in landscape mode or even make the pages fit the screen's size. The browser also integrates a RSS reader which works smoothly.

## **Communication**

Unlike its older brother W610, Sony Ericsson's latest W660 model doesn't feature EDGE connectivity, which fortunately has been replaced with the more powerful 3G technology. Now users can really choose what they would think will use more, W610's EDGE or W660's UMTS network. The 3G connectivity works almost at a max with data transfer speeds up to 314 Kbps download and 96 Kbps upload.

The handset features Bluetooth 2.0 with A2DP and transfer speeds reached a little bit over 100 KB/s. You can synchronize the phone with the PC through the USB cable, but be careful what kind of connection mode you choose if you want to transfer data from your memory card. Messaging capabilities are unlimited and the phone features full support for email client, which can easily handle POP3, IMAP4 and SMTP.

The tri-band (GSM 900 / GSM 1800 / GSM 1900) network compatible handset has a good GSM signal reception. Sound is pretty clear, but a little bit low when you're not using the earphones for calls.

### **Processor and Memory**

Sony Ericsson W660 features an ARM9 family processor which runs at speeds up to 118 MHz. The low power CPU insures low energy consumption, but it is also powerful enough to run any Java compatible application you can think of. Gaming experience is smooth and immersive with no lags or long loading times.

Those that are used with Sony Ericsson's market policy would've probably expected to have low internal memory at their disposal. The 16 MB user memory will surely force you to buy an expensive M2 memory card to expand the storage space. Fortunately the sales package comes with a 512 MB M2 memory card, but if you're not satisfied you'll have to buy another one.

### **Multimedia**

This is the part where Sony Ericsson's Walkman series excels and W660 is no different. While external speaker sound is not what it should be, the moment you put it in your earphones you'll immerse in a world of finely vibes. The earphones offered in the sales package are again some of the best on the market. In fact I don't think that you can find better earphones in any mobile phone package than those that come with Sony Ericsson's Walkman series. Because the earphones don't need too much volume to drive you crazy, the external speaker doesn't sound too loud with volume set to the maximum.

The phone comes with an integrated Walkman 2.0 music player that features a great equalizer, stereo widening function and different visualization effects. I have used the MegaBass mode with the equalizer and the sound is absolutely crazy. It is much better than Nokia's 3250 or 5700 Xpress Music, but hey, we're talking about a Walkman series phone. There's also a stereo RDS radio which can memorize up to 20 stations. Signal reception is very good, while the sound is even louder than the music player. Both music player and

radio can be run in the background. The music player is compatible with MP3, WMA AAC, AAC+ file formats (and many more). The earphones come with a remote control that offers the possibility of attaching any other 2.5mm jack headphones. There is a microphone on the remote control for use as hands-free and a Send/End key. One major drawback is the fact that it lacks any music controls, so you'll be forced to "extract" your phone from the pocket if you want to skip some songs, pause, stop or play.

## **Battery**

Sony Ericsson's W660 features a 950 mAh Li-Polymer battery that is more than enough to serve any heavy user of the phone. The official numbers states an autonomy of 360 hours in standby mode and offers something near 6 hours of talking time. It takes a little bit over 2 hours to fully charge the battery. We have continuously used the music player and the battery lasted around 15 hours, which is a little bit more than great. On a daily use of 10-20 minutes of talking and 1 hour of music playback the battery didn't last more than 3 days (including 2 nights). Built to last long, Sony Ericsson's batteries are much better than those made by Samsung, Motorola or even Nokia.

## **Impressions**

Even if this phone cannot be considered a fashion phone it still features some of its characteristics. Nothing new or out of the ordinary that you should expect from this model. There are no innovations and there are little drawbacks. My suggestion is to simply go see and try it in a specialized shop and buy it if you like it. There is no alternative to this handset as Sony Ericsson doesn't compete with its own devices.

## **The Good**

I'd say the best thing about this phone is the sales package and the music sound that it offers. There's also the battery, which lasts more than enough to satisfy any music lover's need. The 3G and Bluetooth connectivities are also nice to have, especially if you're using the Internet heavily and need fast data transfers.

## **The Bad**

You are probably fed up by the same old Sony Ericsson design which seem not to change, I know I am. The phone looks "unsure" and for a device that should be more used as an MP3 player than a phone, the device is not looking compact at all. The 2 megapixel camera shoots low quality pictures, but we should get used to have low cameras in Walkman series phones. Plus it lacks autofocus and flash capabilities. There's also the problem of the price, which seems to be a little stiff for what it has to offer.

## **Sales Package**

Sony Ericsson W660

Battery Li-Polymer 950 mAh  
Charger  
Stereo wired earphones with remote control  
USB Cable  
User Guide  
CD with software

*Photo: Tudor Raiciu for Softpedia.com*