

What is a Smartphone?

What is the difference between a Telephone, Cellular Telephone and Smartphone? Here's a comparison of features:

Function	Telephone	Cellphone	Smartphone
Send and receive telephone calls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Receive and store messages	Yes, with answering machine attached or built in	Yes	Yes
Camera	No	Some	Yes
Calendar	No	Some, but limited	Yes
Address Book	Some, but usually only names and telephone numbers	Yes	Yes
Music Player	No	No	Yes
Text Messaging	No	Some	Yes
Internet Access	No	Some	Yes
Email	No	Some	Yes
Voice Dialing	No	Some	Yes
Bluetooth	No	Some	Yes
Video Recording	No	Some	Yes
GPS	No	Some	Yes
Office Programs	No	No	Yes
Keyboard	No	Some	Yes

What do each of these functions mean on a Smartphone?

Telephone Calls

As its name implies, the primary function of these devices is to provide incoming and outgoing telephone calls. Most Smartphones also provide optional “speaker phone” calls. Just like a cellular telephone, Smartphones all provide a message service (i.e. an “answering machine”) for missed calls.

Camera

Smartphones all include a digital camera for taking fairly high to extremely high quality digital photographs. Photographs can then be shared with others directly from the phone (i.e. email, social media, text messaging, etc.) or copied to a computer via a USB cable or network sharing. Most Smartphones also provide video recording capabilities with sound.

Calendar

A calendar/scheduler is included in all Smartphones. Appointments can be entered and edited directly on the Smartphone, and are often immediately synchronized with your own personal on-line calendar. Changes made to your on-line calendar are also synchronized back to your Smartphone's calendar.

Address Book (Contacts)

Remember the days of paper address books, erasing, crossing-off or whiting-out an old address in order to update? And then when a page, or the entire Address Book is full, you buy a new one and transfer all the entries from the old book to the new one? Those days are gone. With a Smartphone, all your contacts can be added, deleted and edited just like on a computer. A Smartphone can even prompt you to automatically create a new contact in your Address Book after communicating with a new person. Pretty smart, huh?

Music/Video Player

Smartphones all have very clear viewing screens and can play many video formats with sound, as well as record video with sound. Smartphones also incorporate the same features of a digital music player (often called an "MP3 Player"), in that you can store music files on the Smartphone and listen to them like a conventional MP3 Player (through the headphone port or through the phone's built-in speaker).

Text Messaging

Smartphones provide for text messaging, just like most cellular phones do. One benefit many people appreciate on a Smartphone is that the built-in keyboard (either physical keys on the phone, or a software keyboard that is displayed on the phone's screen when needed) is designed just like a computer's keyboard (albeit much, much smaller!), and is thus easier to type with than a cellular phone's conventionally styled dialing keypad. This is a highly disputed topic, which is typically answered by someone's personal preference.

Internet Access & Email

Keep in mind that Smartphones act very much like a desktop or laptop computer. Smartphones include a Web Browser program just like a conventional computer. By way of their cellular tower reception, or their built-in Wifi abilities, Smartphone users can browse the World Wide Web just like a computer can. Due to the size difference between a computer's screen and that of a Smartphone, many web site developers now make their web sites automatically detect whether you are viewing their web site on a conventional computer, or on a Smartphone. If the latter is true, an alternate web site view is available, making the web site much more viewable and easier to navigate on the small Smartphone screen.

Voice Activated Dialing

Smartphones (as well as many cellular phones) are able to hear your voice and follow predesigned commands, such as “Dial John Smith”. A phone with this capability has a one-time initial training feature where you train the phone to understand your voice.

Bluetooth

Bluetooth is a wireless connection technology used to connect Bluetooth-capable hardware over short distances. For example, many mobile telephones include Bluetooth technology so a wireless earpiece can be worn for “hands-free” cell phone use.

GPS

GPS stands for “Global Positioning System”. A GPS enabled Smartphone makes it possible for your phone to detect its specific location on the globe by latitude and longitude coordinates provided by certain satellites. Conversely, it enables someone with a GPS seeking device to locate your Smartphone’s specific location, and consequently you. GPS enabled Smartphones also provide a way for the owner of the Smartphone to turn GPS off and on when desired (when GPS is turned off, your location will not be searchable by GPS, but also some Smartphone features will not work with GPS disabled). Fortunately, GPS can be turned on and off easily and quickly on the phone. This is a minor inconvenience to those who are privacy-conscious.

Office-type Programs

“Office-type Programs” refer to common computer programs used in office settings, such as Word Processing, Spreadsheet and Presentations (aka “Slideshows”). Smartphones usually include this kind of software so you can create, read and edit these types of files. Due to the size of the Smartphone’s keyboard and screen, most people find this kind of computing on a Smartphone very difficult, and use it sparingly.

Keyboard

All Smartphones include a full keyboard. Sometimes this keyboard is physical, either covering the lower half of the front of the phone,

or sliding out from under the phone.



Sometimes the keyboard is a software keyboard, only displayed on the screen when you activate it.



What are “Apps”?

“Apps” are the same as “Programs”, or “Applications”, on a computer. There are many “Apps” available for free and for cost for all the Smartphone brands and models. “Apps” can range from a simple checker game, to a complicated travel expense logging and calculation programs. “Apps” are downloaded directly to the Smartphone using a pre-installed “App” called “Market” (Android) or “App Store” (Apple). Some “Apps” are authorized by the Smartphone manufacturer, others are considered “Non-Market” and are not authorized. Non-authorized Apps are more likely to carry infections than Market Apps, and should be considered carefully.

What are the costs of Smartphone use?

Since most Smartphone service providers offer free (or significantly discounted) phones, let's set aside the cost of the Smartphone itself. The fee you pay each month for a Smartphone will include data charges, above and beyond what a regular cell phone user pays. Monthly data charges can cost from \$30-100, depending on how much data you plan to use. And remember that this charge is in addition to the Voice and/or Texting plans you choose.

How do I even start to use my new Smartphone??

Be sure to read all documents included with a new phone. Manufacturers typically provide a Quick Start Guide and a complete User Guide. This documentation is sometimes provided in printed format, sometimes on an included CD, sometimes on the phone itself. A Quick Start Guide will at least help you turn the phone on and find an included User Guide.



This training session was developed for the Public Computing Center (PCC) and Mobile Public Computing Center (mPCC) at Mid York Library System. The PCC and mPCC are funded by two Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) grants. These grants are part of \$9.5 million that was awarded to the New York State Library, a unit of the Office of Cultural Education within the New York State Education Department (NYSED) by the U.S. Department of Commerce National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) in order to increase access to computers in public libraries across New York State. Funding for this award is being provided by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program.