

Smooth operator

Go with the affordable Moto M if you are looking for a breezy, pure Android experience.

THE STAR 13/3/17 M/S 4

Moto M

(Lenovo)

Android smartphone

NETWORK: 4G

OPERATING SYSTEM: Android 6.0

DISPLAY: 5.5in Amoled (1,080 x 1,920 pixels)

CAMERA: 16 megapixels (rear), 8 megapixels (front)

CONNECTIVITY: Bluetooth 4.1 LE, WiFi Direct

PROCESSOR: Mediatek P15 octa-core 2.2GHz Cortex-A53

MEMORY: 4GB RAM, 32GB internal storage (expandable up to 256GB with microSD)

BATTERY: 3,050mAh

DIMENSIONS (W X D X H): 75.4 x 7.9 x 151.4mm

WEIGHT: 163g

PRICE: RM1,199

RATING: ★★★★★☆

Review unit courtesy of Moto Malaysia, 1800-81-7032

PROS: Runs on plain Android; decent camera and selfie modes; built-in Dolby Atmos; solid build quality.

CONS: You may or may not like the punchy colours; runs on older Android.

By LEE KAH LENG
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AFFORDABLE and mid-range smartphones are increasingly appealing today due to the challenging economic climate.

A flagship smartphone can easily set you back RM3,000 or more, so mid-range models like the Moto M we have on review today have found a new following.

Motorola phones are usually favoured by users who prefer a “vanilla” Android experience, as the company rarely tweaks the operating system.

This allows you to enjoy the phone as Google intended, just like with its own Nexus smartphone range.

With the Moto M you won't even find any of the company's apps installed on the phone – in other words, it has zero bloatware.

So you pretty much have to rely on Google's apps such as *Gmail*, *Photos*, *Messages*, *Calendar* and *Chrome* for most tasks.

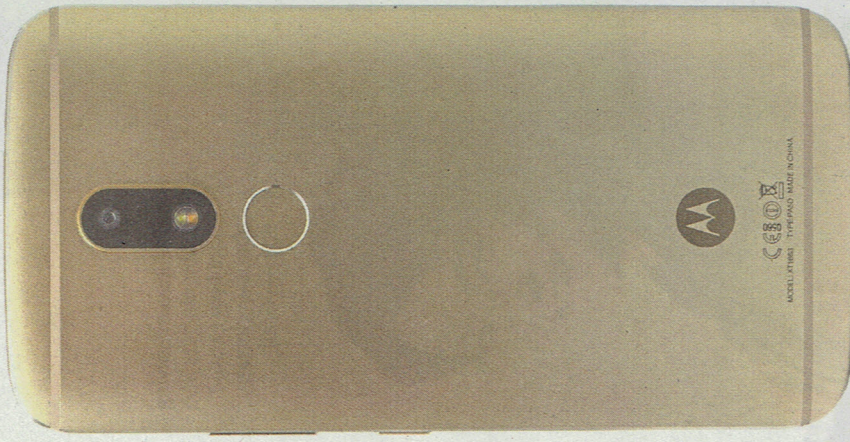
Some like this and some don't but it can't be denied that it results in a phone that generally runs faster and smoother.

One of the few additions Moto has made is Dolby Atmos which can tune the audio according to the content being played.

This feature only works with earphones and is great for watching movies and listening to songs.

Start shooting

The 16-megapixel rear camera performed



pretty well, especially compared to other phones in the mid-range category.

It was fast and produced images with good detail but occasionally some photos suffered from strong noise.

Also, it lacks OIS (optical image stabilisation) so you have to be steady when shooting photos.

Motorola has modified the stock camera app to offer a few extra features, including a “triaxial levelling” meter which helps you keep your shots aligned to the plane of view.

This is particularly useful for those who like to shoot landscape photos.

We were more impressed with the selfie camera, as it has a number of interesting modes such as Snap.

With Snap you just have to make a peace sign or tap anywhere on the screen to shoot a picture.

It also has a choice of two fill lights – pink and chrome (which is yellowish) – to give your selfies a different hue.

Also, as the selfie camera is 8 megapixels, you don't have to worry about the quality of the photos.

Amoled panel, the colours are quite punchy especially for green and red. If you are not a fan of that, you can tone it down by switching from Vivid to Standard mode to get more accurate colours.

Despite being a mid-range device, it has no issues running graphics intensive games such as *Banner Saga* and *This War Of Mine*, as well as casual games like *Alto's Adventure* and *Clash Royale*.

As it's running on mostly pure Android, the phone is fast so you don't have to worry about it slowing down when running apps.

The Moto M's 3,050mAh battery lasted around six to seven hours with heavy social media use (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and occasional photo taking.

Conclusion

The Moto M is reasonably priced for a mid-range device.

For RM1,199 you are getting a well-built smartphone with a full metal body and decent cameras.

If you are looking for a pure Android

