

5 Ways to Save Money on Brand Name Smartphones

by Annie Margarita Yang

Today I want to talk about saving money on smartphones.

[The Samsung Galaxy Fold is being listed for sale at the price of a whopping \\$1980!](#) Cellphones have become unaffordable. They cost more than computers, which can do so much more. But people are willing to pay for it.

Brand name smartphones retail for \$800 to \$1000. On top of that, cell phone service providers no longer subsidize these phones like they used to. Instead, what they do today is they sign you up for a 24-month interest-free loan with no money down. You pay off this phone over the course of 24 months.

People are not looking at how expensive these phones are in the end. Rather, they look at the price of the phone on a month-to-month basis. They find it affordable if it costs only \$30 to \$45 per month. This is absolutely ridiculous because you shouldn't need to take out a loan for a phone!!!

Here are the five strategies that I use to buy a brand name smartphone and not pay full retail price for it. I save a couple hundred dollars every few years when I buy a new cellphone.

1. Consider Needs And Usage

I have an iPhone SE and it's a little over two years old now. When I bought it at the time, I figured I wouldn't use it for photos, videos, and music. I needed a smartphone to help me with navigation and for calling and texting people.

Due to my minimal cellphone usage, I went ahead and I bought an iPhone SE with the least amount of storage. It's been two years and my needs have definitely changed. I have a YouTube channel now. I record all my videos using my iPhone and I don't have enough storage for my videos. In the middle of recording, I upload the clips to my computer, delete them off my phone, and resume recording. Not efficient at all. For my next purchase, when this phone breaks down, I'm going to buy a phone that has a great camera and with more storage.

Don't buy a new fancy phone with awesome features, because it's the latest one and because it's cool. Consider your needs before you buy your next phone.

2. Buy Unlocked Phones

An unlocked phone is a phone that is not tied to any carrier. I can buy service for that phone from any company that I want. I'm not locked into Spring, T-Mobile, AT&T, or Verizon.

I told my boss the other day that I buy unlocked phones. He asked me, "Why? You can buy a phone from a service provider on a payment plan. In the end, it's going to cost the same because it's an interest-free loan."

The answer is that I'm not tied to any provider. I can use a prepaid plan that is cheaper in the long run. And I don't have to pay activation fees or upgrade fees that T-Mobile, Verizon, Spring, or AT&T might charge you either.

3. Buy Older Models

Oftentimes, when a new phone comes out, I hear people something along the following...

"Oh my God, I'm so excited. The new Samsung is coming out and I've had my phone for two years. I can't wait to finally upgrade my phone."

-My Bhangra Dance Teacher

Smartphone technology is actually quite advanced by now. Each new model released only has slight innovations or improvements. An older model is perfect for my needs.

4. Buy Certified Refurbished Phones

I used to buy secondhand phones off of eBay. I don't recommend it because they would break after a few months or the battery would die quick.

A certified refurbished phone is okay, especially when purchased from a reputable seller. All it means is a customer bought it, didn't like it, and returned it. Because it's an open box, the manufacturer had to

check the product again to see if there were any defects and fix it up. Or it could mean it's already perfect and they did a double check and then it's sold again to a consumer. Certified refurbished phones are a great deal that many consumers are missing out on.

5. Keep Phones Longer Than Two Years

The longer that I can put off buying a new phone, the better! I can definitely use that money for something else right now. I like to keep my phone looking as new as possible by using a good case, like OtterBox brand. I use a glass screen protector too.

My phone is over two years old now and there are almost no scratches on it. I've dropped it a few times but the screen has never cracked. It is in excellent condition because I like to take good care of my stuff.

Price Chart for Brand Name Smartphones

Here are some prices I found online for three brand name smartphones. The prices are as current as April 2019. I compared the latest model in brand new condition, to older models in refurbished condition. You can see the price difference is between \$400 and \$500 if you choose to buy an older model in refurbished condition.

Apple Model	Condition	Price
iPhone XR 64gb	New	\$749
iPhone 8 64gb	New	\$599
iPhone 8 64gb	Refurbished on Amazon	\$443
iPhone 8 64gb	Refurbished on eBay	\$390

Samsung Model	Condition	Price
Galaxy S10 128gb	New	\$900
Galaxy S9 128gb	New	\$770
Galaxy S8 128gb	New	\$500
Galaxy S8 128gb	Refurbished	N/A for Unlocked

Google Model	Condition	Price
Pixel 3 64gb	New	\$799
Pixel 2 64gb	New	\$549
Pixel 2 64gb	Refurbished on Amazon	\$330
Pixel 2 64gb	Refurbished on eBay	\$300

If you want to see how I got these prices, you can watch me do online window shopping in my YouTube video below. It starts around 6:30 minutes into the video.

Further Reading

Also, here are some other resources I thought you might be interested in reading:

[Unlocked Phones vs. Locked Ones: Everything You Need to Know](#)

[Why Keeping Your Phone Is the New Cool](#)

[We're No Longer in Smartphone Plateau. We're in the Smartphone Decline.](#)

[Swappa: Buy and Sell Used Phones, Laptops, Video Games & More](#)

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