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Toshiba Portege G500 review: Toshiba Portege G500

The Toshiba Portege G500 may be a touch on the stocky side, but there's plenty going on inside its bulky frame -- it offers a full range of connectivity options, including HSDPA and Wi-Fi, and it has a fingerprint scanner on the back

Andrew Lim

June 11, 2007 8:03 a.m. PT

3 min read

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Considering this is Toshiba's first attempt at making a Windows Mobile smart phone, it hasn't done too badly -- the Portege G500 has a full range of connectivity options and a really nifty fingerprint scanner on the back. If you need to stay in touch with the office wherever you are, then it's worth considering.

6.5

Toshiba Portege G500

THE GOOD

HSDPA and Wi-Fi connectivity; fingerprint reader.

THE BAD

Audio quality during calls; chunky design.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The Toshiba Portege G500 comes packed with connectivity options, making it great for keeping in touch. Speaking of

touch, there's a nifty fingerprint scanner on the back for unlocking the phone and scrolling through emails or Web pages. Our only niggles are that it's a little on the portly side and the audio quality during calls isn't fantastic

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The Toshiba Portege G500 is currently available at eXpansys for about £270.

Design

Compared to a standard mobile phone, the Toshiba Portege G500 is a rather chunky device. Nokia N80 users might not notice any difference in their pockets, but most other people will -- it's like carrying around a big bar of soap.

The G500, however, is slightly more high-tech than a bar of soap. It comes with a relatively large colour screen on the front and slides open to reveal an easy-to-use keypad. The round navigation key and soft keys on the top section are easy to press.

The Toshiba G500 is packed with features but it's a tad on the chunky side

Unusually for a phone, there's a fingerprint scanner on the back, which doubles up as a touchpad for scrolling through emails or Web pages.

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We found the fingerprint scanner worked well and provided a quick and secure way of accessing the phone. Using the scanner as a touchpad, however, proved less easy to do, and while it's well placed, the scanner

however, proved less easy to do, and while it's well placed, the scanner was unfortunately not always very responsive to our finger's movements. In the end we reverted to using the four-way navigation key on the front.

Features

While the G500 is short, stout and a little boring to look at, it compensates by packing loads of features: there's Bluetooth, Wi-Fi and HSDPA (3.5G) connectivity, giving you high-speed Internet, VoIP and video calling access on the go.

We've already mentioned the fingerprint scanner, but another feature on the back of the phone is the 2-megapixel camera. This doesn't have autofocus, and the sensor's resolution is relatively low, so don't expect to take print-quality shots with it, but it's fine to use for stills and video for MMS messages.

There's a secondary 0.3-megapixel (VGA) camera on the front for video calling. Video calls worked as expected and displayed the other person as clearly as is currently possible on most 3G video calling handsets.

The G500 runs on Windows Mobile 5.0 so it can be set up to instantly send and receive emails via Microsoft Exchange. You have the option to view a variety of documents using Picsel viewer or installing a third-party app like Documents To Go. Windows Mobile 5.0 also lets you install third-party maps, dictionaries and other applications.

You can listen to music using the media player, which supports a variety of formats including MP3, AAC, MPEG4 and WMV.

Performance

Audio quality during calls wasn't great. There was noticeable feedback and the mic annoyingly picked up every sound, including our fingers touching the casing. The loudspeaker sounded tinny and wasn't particularly audible in loud environments.

On the plus side, data speeds were fast over HSDPA and Wi-Fi, with no noticeable problems. Applications were also smooth to run and we didn't notice any major lags or crashes during the testing period.

On the back there's a fingerprint reader, which doubles up as a touch-sensitive scroll mechanism

Battery life was acceptable and lasted for over two days when we didn't use Wi-Fi or HSDPA, otherwise it only lasted a day. Toshiba quotes it at 290 hours (3G) or 250 hours (GSM) on standby, and 140 mins (3G) or 280 mins (GSM) of talk time.

Conclusion

This isn't the most attractive or the slimmest handset out there but it has a lot going on inside. From the connectivity options to the fingerprint scanner, it's great if you want to stay connected and keep your data secure.

Our only niggles with the G500 are its chunky size, which won't suit everyone, and the audio quality on calls, which isn't great. Those points aside, it's worth checking out if you need email access on the move.

If the G500 doesn't do it for you, similar devices worth considering are the Motorola Q 9 for its HSDPA connectivity and full, easy-to-use keypad, and the BlackBerry Pearl, which is a slim, email-ready handset that has a nifty trackball.

Edited by Jason Jenkins
Additional editing by Kate Macefield

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Deals

Early July 4th Deals: Act Fast to Get Bargain-Friendly Deals Under $25 in Tech, Home and More

You don't have to spend a bunch of cash to get a great deal in the July 4th sales, and these discounts prove it.

35
curated items on sale

By Aashna Gheewalla

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Fourth of July doesn't officially start until Friday, but the deals have already begun at retailers like Best Buy and more. The CNET experts are on high alert and out looking for deals all the time, and keeping this article updated with all of the best Fourth of July deals under $25.

These deals are a great chance to save big and dodge the rising costs of living and tariffs. There are some big brands here as well, so no matter what you're after, it's worth checking out the best Fourth of July deals under $25 we've listed below.

Early July 4th tech deals

Amazon Fire TV Stick 4K: $25

Details

Save $25

$25 at Amazon

INIU 10000mAh power bank: $20

Details

Save $13

$20 at Walmart

SanDisk 128GB Extreme Pro SD card: $22

Details

Save $4

$22 at Amazon

More early July 4th tech deals:

- Sony ZX Series wired on-ear headphones: $10 (save $10). Now you can snag a pair of ultra-affordable headphones from a trusted brand like Sony for just 10 bucks.
- TP-Link AC1200 Wi-Fi Extender: $20 (save $10). A range extender can make your connection more reliable even when you're far from your modem.
- Surge protector power strip: $8 (save $2). Surge protectors are essential for keeping your most important electronics safe.
- Soundcore by Anker P20i True wireless earbuds: $20 (save $5). Earbuds can be super convenient for commutes or working out, and these won't break the bank.
- Amazon Echo Pop: $22 (save $18). Amazon's tiniest speaker, but still pretty powerful.
- Anker USB-C charger, two-pack: $12 (save $7). Get two cables and charging blocks for just $6 per set.
- HP X3000 G3 wireless mouse: $12 (save $7). Made with a contoured shape to give your hands all-day comfort.

Early July 4th home and kitchen discounts

Dash Deluxe rapid egg cooker: $25

Details

Save $5

$25 at Amazon

Roku Smart Home smart light strip SE: $15

Details

Save $8

$15 at Walmart

Chefman electric kettle, 1.8L: $22

Details

Save $6

$22 at Amazon

More early July 4th home and kitchen deals:

- HiLife portable travel clothes steamer: $24 (save $22). This handy steamer is easier than ironing and a lot more portable.
- Roku Smart Home smart bulb SE (two pack): $14 (save $4). Smart bulbs can help you customize your space and give you better control.
- Berkshire Shine Velvetsoft throw blanket: $25 (save $5). The softest throw blanket, and it's fairly large at 60 by 70 inches.
- Bedsure comforter duvet insert: $24 (save $26). This queen-size duvet insert comes in tons of colors; price varies by color.
- KitchenAid ribbed soft oven mitts: $13 (save $4). These ribbed gloves help you get a good grip so you won't drop what you're holding.
- Kasa Smart Plug HS103P2, 2-pack: $15 (save $5). Control your plugs from your phone and save on your electric bill.

Early July 4th outdoor deals

Thermacell rechargeable mosquito repellent: $25

Details

Save $5

$25 at Best Buy

Soft-Sided 6-quart portable barrel bag cooler: $15

Details

Save $10

$15 at Target

Cuisinart 13-piece wooden handle tool set: $24

Details

Save $16

$24 at Best Buy

More early July 4th outdoor deals:

- Sun Squad inflatable chair: $18 (save $2). Stay comfy this summer with this inflatable chair for your backyard.
- Miracle-Gro water soluble tomato plant food: $7 (save $3). Works best on tomatoes and vegetables.
- Scrub Daddy BBQ Daddy grill brush: $25 (save $5). Make it easy to clean up with a grill brush.
- Govee Bluetooth hygrometer thermometer: $13 (save $2). This device measures both temperature and humidity levels.
- Joeys yard sprinkler: $20 (save $8). This rotating sprinkler is sure to keep your entire lawn watered with 360° rotation.

Early July 4th health and wellness offers

Cyrico resistance bands, three-pack: $13

Details

Save $8

$13 at Walmart

Amazon Basics extra thick exercise yoga mat: $17

Details

Save $5

$17 at Amazon

More early July 4th health and wellness deals:

- SWTRoom Pilates bar with foot loop and exercise resistance band: $20 (save $20). This kit helps you get a full-body workout, while being easy to store when you're all done.
- Light up jump rope: $6 (save $2). Kids will enjoy the bright twist to this old classic.
- FitBeast grip strengthener: $10 (save $7). Improve your grip strength with a tool that offers customizable resistance.
- Cap 20 pound rubber hex single dumbbell: $25 (save $8). This premium cast iron dumbbell has an easy-grip handle and hexagon-shaped heads to prevent rolling.
- Blume Superfood Latte, Reishi hot cacao powder: $16 (save $4). This low-sugar, gluten-free mix helps with stress support and can be added to your coffee, oatmeal, smoothies and more.
- Beskar foot massager roller: $10 (save $5). Relieve tension in your feet, great for those with Plantar Fasciitis.

When do July 4th sales start this year?

While Independence Day falls on July 4 every year, holiday sales often tend to hang around for a few days before and after. Amazon also announced that its next Prime Day will take place from July 8 to 11, so the two sales may blend into one massive shopping event.

Where are the best pre-July 4th sales?

Fourth of July sales offer some of the best prices on tech, appliances, mattresses and fashion, making it a great time to snag stellar prices on must-have items, and there are a ton of retailers participating in the holiday savings. Unsurprisingly, Amazon is usually one of the best places to buy because it sells products from almost all major brands across these popular categories, making it a tremendous one-stop shop for all of your Fourth of July buys.

Outside of Amazon, we recommend checking out appliance and tech sales at Best Buy, Home Depot and Lowe's, as well as holiday sales on a large variety of categories at Target, Nordstrom and Walmart, among others.

Should I shop July 4th sales or wait for Prime Day deals?

There's no definitive way to say whether Fourth of July sales or Prime Day deals are best. Both sales offer plenty of deals, including some of the best prices we'll see all year. Plus, it's likely the two sales will blur into one big discount extravaganza, given their proximity.

Fourth of July sales offer more variety in retailers, although much of your shopping may take place on Amazon anyway. There are also plenty of non-Amazon retailers that will keep their sales rolling through mid-July, often directly competing with Amazon Prime prices. Because you'll be able to shop so many Fourth of July sales, grab what you need and then keep tabs on Prime Day deals later for anything you miss out on. It's worth noting that outdoor or home improvement deals may be more readily available for Fourth of July, while electronics savings, especially on Amazon's own devices, will see lots of discounts during the Prime Day event.

How to keep up with the best July 4th sales

There are a lot of ways to ensure you're getting the latest scoop on Fourth of July offers. The CNET Deals team covers all the best price drops, discounts and deals every day from across the web, highlighting the best offers. We'll be tracking all the major retailer sales following the Fourth of July holiday and sharing the promotions you need to hear about, and there are plenty of ways to hear from us.

One option is to bookmark CNET.com/deals to check out our latest coverage. You can also follow @CNETDeals on X to see everything we publish or sign up for our CNET Deals newsletter for a daily digest of deals delivered to your inbox. Another great option is to sign up for CNET Deals text alerts for curated deals during major shopping events. Remember to install our CNET Shopping browser extension to help ensure that purchases you make all year round will be at the lowest price available.

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