

CELL OUTS

Embarrassed to be seen in public with your current phone? Try one of these mobiles—the latest and greatest models available. | BY JOSHUA GOLDMAN

Not sure how to pick a network or service plan? Here's a five-step plan of attack:

PLAN AHEAD

1. Pick the right network.

CDMA (Sprint, Verizon) networks tend to have better U.S. coverage. GSM (T-Mobile, Cingular) is better for world travelers. As for iDEN (Nextel), a favorite of business users, it offers good U.S. coverage and is a must for in-network "walkie-talkie" service.

2. Regional or national coverage?

Frequent travelers should go with national, but if all your contacts are in the same place as you are, stick with regional.

3. Don't stand out from the crowd.

Ask your friends and family what they use. If most of them are on the same carrier, going with an in-network calling plan means you'll spend less on minutes.

4. Plan accordingly.

When it comes to data usage, get only what you need. If you don't know what a multimedia message is, chances are you won't be sending one.

5. Avoid contracts.

Want basic phone service but don't want to be saddled with contracts and fees? Try prepaid services like our favorite, Cingular GoPhone, which offers flexibility plus three great phone choices.



Motorola SLVR*

Motorola is following up its hit RAZR V3 flip phone by packing the same features into a candy-bar-style phone—the ridiculously thin (and appropriately named) SLVR. It's less than half an inch thick and includes Bluetooth (to connect to other devices wirelessly), a camera, a company-estimated battery talk time of 6.3 hours, and a standby time of more than two weeks. motorola.com



Samsung SCH-i730 \$599 (Verizon)

With its Windows Mobile PDA functionality, it's easy to forget the SCH-i730 makes phone calls as well. It's a tad bulky, but that's the price you pay for being able to connect to just about anything wireless, including Wi-Fi networks. samsung.com



LG F9100 \$99 (Cingular)

Text-message and IM fanatics take note: This phone's bottom slides forward to reveal a full keyboard that's actually comfortable to use. There is no built-in camera, but you'll probably be too busy typing to notice or care. us.lge.com

*Price and carrier pending.

**Nokia 8801***

Made from materials typically used for watches, such as specially reinforced glass and laser-cut stainless steel, the 8801 has more in common with a luxury timepiece than with a typical phone. Under its shell you get great features like a camera, Bluetooth, speakerphone, and an FM radio. Even without the features, this is a phone to covet. nokiasusa.com

**Sony Ericsson W800i***

Sony Ericsson is no stranger to feature-packed, stylish phones. The W800i is a perfect example: It's a phone, MP3 player, and a 2-megapixel (MP) camera. And with its memory-card slot you can have up to 1 gigabyte of storage. sonyericsson.com

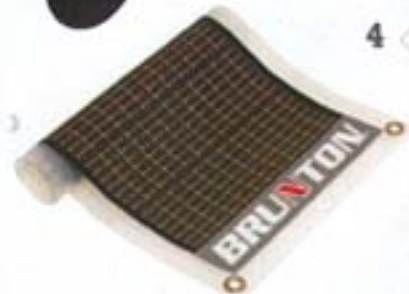
**Nextel i836 \$250**

Nextel's phones have an all-business image. The satellite-navigation-enabled i836 is no exception, offering workforce features such as multimedia messaging, voice recorder, storage for 600 contact entries, and, of course, the capability to use Nextel's walkie-talkie service. nextel.com

**Samsung MM-A800 \$499 (Sprint)**

The first 2-MP camera phone to hit U.S. shores can connect directly to a printer, taking you from shot to printout as efficiently as a digital camera. It can even scan business cards—so you never have to punch in those numbers again. samsung.com

accessories

**1. Sony Ericsson HCB-700**

Bluetooth makes *Star Trek*-like hands-free conversation possible. This car unit features a caller-ID display and voice dialing—just say the phone number, and it'll dial it for you. \$259, sonyericsson.com

2. Aquapac Phone Case

Kiss your phone goodbye if it comes anywhere near water. If you're lake or ocean bound, protect it in this 100% waterproof case. You can even hear and talk through the plastic. \$45, aquapacusa.com

3. Cardo Scala Headset

Get rid of the unsightly dangling wire with a wireless Bluetooth headset. The Scala series offers great noise canceling. A version for motorcycle riders is available (shown). \$149, cardowireless.com

4. Brunton SolarRoll

A dead battery sucks, but a dead battery with nowhere to recharge sucks even more. Unroll this portable solar panel, plug in your phone, and, presto, the sun charges the phone. From \$169, brunton.com