

For the love of mini

The unexpected greatness of iPhone Mini

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People regularly ask me why I have a small smartphone, a modern iPhone 13 Mini. Often I simply reply that I like it. The smaller size offers more than just an easier fit in your pocket. I have come to appreciate its intangible greatness, read along for the love of mini!



iPhone Mini - fits in one hand

In my line of work I see a lot of big phones, as IT-guy people expect me to have one, too. Yet, I carry an iPhone Mini and wouldn't trade it for anything else! The iPhone Mini is very much on par with its larger cousins when you look at things like the camera, processor speed, software and features.

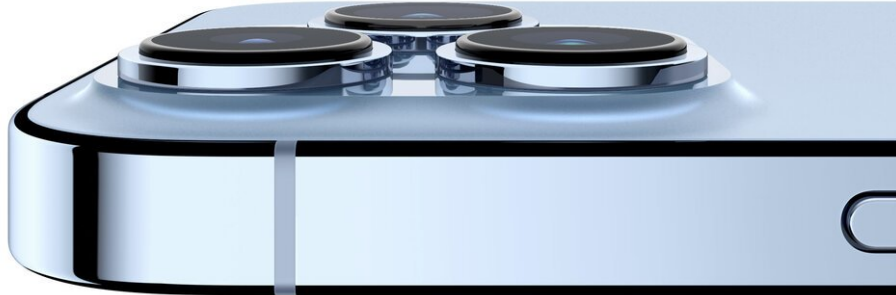


Mobile phones have been around in many different shapes and sizes, top left to right bottom: original iPhone, Motorola DYNA T-A-C, Sony CMD-Z5

Over the past decade smartphones have grown larger, offering more screen real-estate than their smaller predecessors. I understand why people are tempted by this "bigger is better" trend: More content, more pixels, "more of everything"!

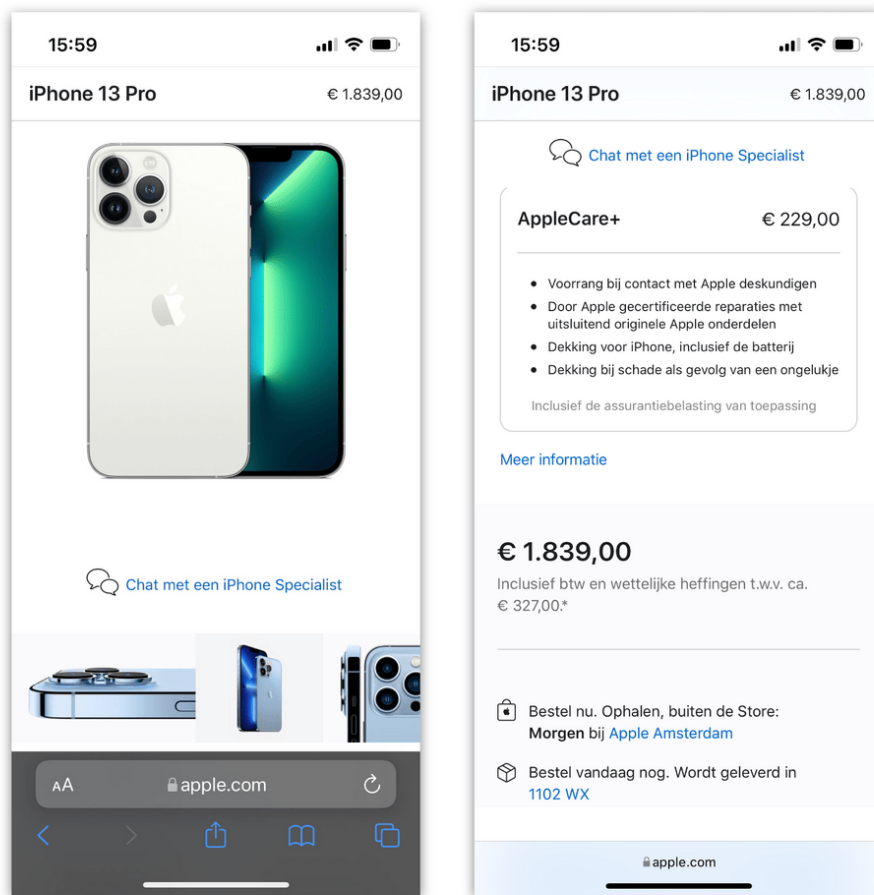
iPhone 13 Pro

Oh. So. Pro.



Larger, bigger, shinier, more powerful... Phones have grown - they're even called "Pro" now!

That "more of everything" includes costs: never *ever* have smartphones been as expensive as today's top of the bill flagship phones. The increase in price means an increase in significance - making even the wealthiest consumers consider insurance and financing plans.



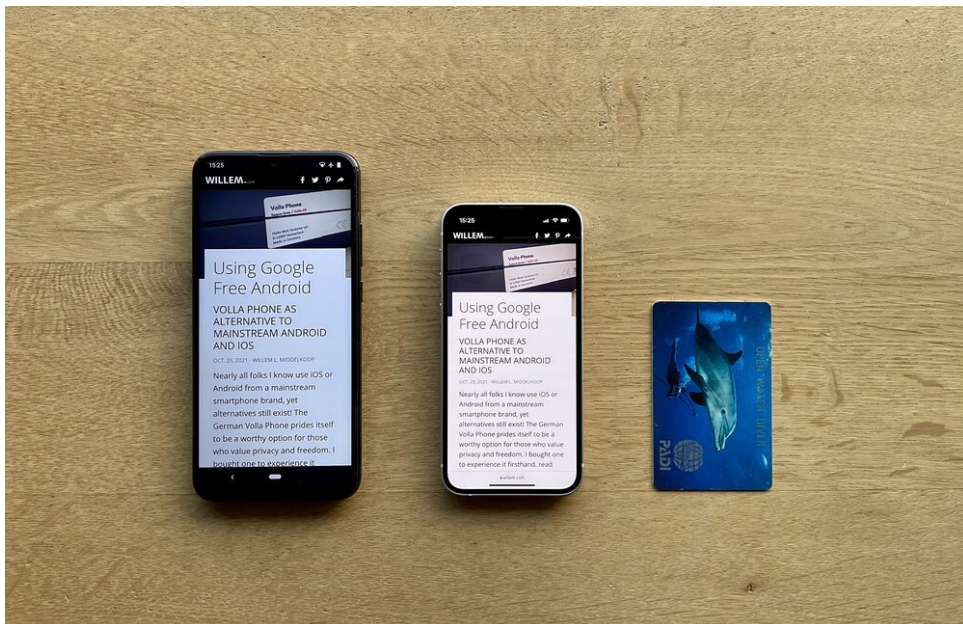
... "Pro Max" will cost you up to € 1839, without the recommended € 229 AppleCare insurance

If you have been following my blog, you know that I have a thing for [minimalism](#). You'd be mistaken to think that minimalism is just about having less or tinier things. Instead, I find it more useful to think about minimalism as reducing the influence all your stuff has on you - in terms of costs, space and clutter.

The iPhone Mini costs about half as much and weighs almost 40% less, yet it still performs as fast as its "Pro Max" brethren. It shares the same powerful chip. Make no mistake, the Mini's innards are very much high-end! It helps that iOS maximises the use of the smaller screens because of it being extremely optimised: the result of many generations of smaller screens.



Generations of small screen iPhones: iPhone 4S, iPhone SE, iPhone 12 Mini, iPhone 13 Mini



iOS maximises small screen usage: compare the commonly sized Volla Phone (left) with the iPhone Mini (center) - and a commonly sized card (right) for reference

The smaller size makes it easier to ignore the iPhone Mini, liberating you from distractions. I carry it in a compact leather sleeve which protects the display *and* acts as a barrier for me to use the phone. The package still comfortably fits in my pocket. The sleeve reminds me only to use the phone if I really intend to do so.

Large phones don't fit in most pockets, as a result people often put the phone on the table - or hold them in their hands. This diminishes any barrier to use the device. It maximises exposure to the dopamine loops that are built in most social media apps, news feeds and messaging services. The larger the phone, the more immersive the experience. People use their phones out of habit, they no longer control it.



My everyday carry: iPhone Mini, an analogue watch and keys

Conclusion

While there are many reasons to choose a particular smartphone, I think there are good reasons to choose a smaller one over an omnipresent mobile monstrosity. In the end it comes down to personal preference - just know about the unexpected greatness of a small smartphone!