



This smartphone is mini in size but can still fit in two SIM cards and a microSD. Read more to find out what else it can also fit into its slim body.

Dual SIM

This dual SIM business is coming off as a trend for some phone makers; it certainly looks so with the CSL Mi322 smartphone. Easily sliding off the matte back cover, you can find the two SIM slots side by side under the battery. The microSD card is placed near the two SIM slots.

All around the side of this phone is a grey metallic looking band. On the top, you can find the power button and the volume rocker. The microUSB slot is on the left side. The earphone jack is also on the same side; unusual since most phones place it either on top or at the bottom. On the front, you'd find 5 round buttons, for Home, Menu, back, search and the middle camera button, which is unusual too. Android phones usually have the camera button on the left side. The display is only 3.2-inch. In portrait mode, you would find it long and narrow. Landscape mode seems the best position to use and to view images, videos and Web pages.

Two launch schemes

You can pick from two user interfaces. You just have to press the Home button and a window pops up telling you to 'complete action using GO Launcher EX or Launcher'. Long pressing on this button also shows the most recent eight apps used.

Choosing Launcher gives you the usual Android user interface. For Android 2.2 Froyo, the

homescreen has the search bar on top of the display, several app icons in the middle and the tiny dots to indicate the homescreen you are on plus a bar for calls, apps drawer and browser.

GO Launcher EX presents you with a search bar and the app icons in the usual places, but at the bottom are icons for calling, contacts, app drawer, messaging and browser. In this mode the Menu button brings up different layouts with two rows where you can make changes (Add, Wallpaper, Themes and Recommend, Edit, Preferences, Settings and More).

In the apps screen, pressing the Menu, you get a different set of options: Sorting, New folder, Hide app and Settings. Hide app acts like some kind of privacy setting. You can choose which apps you do not want displayed. The Settings here have many options, like blurring wallpaper to make the apps icon stand out, having a different wallpaper just for the apps screen alone, show or hide labels, grid size, scroll horizontally or vertically, and locking apps so that they cannot be 'killed' when closing all programs.

Apps

Whether you go to the apps screen via one or the other launch schemes or UI, the icon to press is still placed at the bottom, in the middle. From the normal Launcher, the apps screen scrolls up and down, which is as expected and normal for any phone running the older Froyo.

If you want a side scrolling apps screen, go for GO Launcher. When you side scroll on the apps screen, the brightening of the dashes indicate which screen you're now in. The home icon still remains at the bottom but now you have three app status icons on the opposite end, on top: All, Recent and Running. Pressing All shows you all the apps, including recent and currently running ones, while Recent shows you recent apps you've used, and Running shows you the apps now running. Long pressing on Home shows the recent apps.

As for the pre-installed apps, you are getting quite a bundle. Not counting those that come default with Android, you also get Currency, Facebook, Twitter, File Manager, FM Radio, MySpace, Opera Mini, Quickoffice, and StopWatch and Timer. There are also a few apps here that you can only find in CSL phones. Besides the usual Android Market to get more apps, there is another store called the BlueBerry Store for even more apps. The other BlueBerry app is the BlueBerry Messenger, which is a mobile messenger only on CSL phones, for chatting with

people in Facebook, Yahoo, MSN, Google Talk, QQ, AIM and others.

The CSL Fun Club is another CSL-only app that offers what is called infotainment. This 'info' part offers news, including football and motor racing, media downloads, horoscopes and more. And lastly, there is Sound Cube. This is an app that takes you to a free music store where the CSL phone owner can download up to 80 songs for free.

Multimedia

Running Froyo, this phone has the usual Android music player which when launched shows you top four tabs for Artists, Albums, Songs and Playlists. For some readers who haven't tried out an Android music player, pressing any of those tabs displays the results as rows. Pressing on a row, if for an album, brings up another set of rows of songs. Pressing on the row for a song to play brings up the display with album cover and three play options beside it. Below these are the details of the musician, the album and the song. Right at the bottom are the play buttons. Testing the audio, I plugged in the bundled earphones. The sound is actually loud enough – in fact I didn't even have to push the volume more than midway to get it very loud! The bass produced is quite thumping but sounds a little thinner. Overall, the sound is more than passable for a budget device.

Camera

Surprisingly, I got used to having to press the shutter release button located on the bottom front of the phone instead of on the side. In portrait mode, it's just a matter of holding the phone in one hand, with the thumb on the button. In landscape mode, you can never escape using both hands, but still, it's the same right thumb resting on the button. Like the rest of the phone, you cannot just touch or press lightly to start up the camera. Press a little longer till you feel a slight vibration. The default layout is landscape, and you see two columns of settings. In the far right are the icons for gallery, switch between stills and video, and the shutter release. On the second column are settings for EV, Scene mode, Picture size, Picture quality, Colour effect; Capture mode, Burst shot, Set timer, Face detection, anti-flicker; Store location; White balance and Zoom. For video, you have settings for EV, Video quality; Video duration; Color effect; Microphone, Anti-flicker and White balance. Even watching videos, from a file or from YouTube, is comfortable on the small screen as the details are sharp and clear.

Verdict

The touchscreen is based on what seems like older resistive technology which requires a bit more effort to use, compared to capacitive screens. For example, you can't pinch zoom when reading or looking at pictures; in such cases there is the magnifying button to help matters. The display is 240 x 400 pixels (WQVGA). Things look small on such a miniscule real estate. Even so, items, images and letters appear clear enough in the apps I tried, like Twitter, Facebook, Gmail and browser. Using other functions and apps work fine when you opt for landscape mode. By the way, there is an option to blur the wallpaper so that the app icons display better. As for the dual SIMs, 2 choices are displayed when you're messaging, calling and checking contacts. Definitely at this price, this phone has the advantage of having two SIM slots. Besides the abundance of preinstalled apps, you can choose how the UI looks by picking a launcher. As a phone running Android, even an older version, expect the versatility, convenience and grace you'd get using it.