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Jon Mamonski reviews the latest products to help you buy the best



SONY XPERIA XA2: THE ULTIMATE SELFIE SMARTPHONE

Xperia XA2 (dual SIM) available now, featuring a Sony 23MP Exmor RSTM for mobile rear camera and 8MP 120° super wide-angle Exmor R™ selfie camera

Australia, April 11: Sony Mobile Communications ('Sony Mobile') today announced its new addition to the popular super mid-range line, the Xperia XA2, is officially available in Australia.

The dual SIM variant of the device is priced at RRP \$549 AUD, now available online from JB Hi-Fi, and available at JB Hi-Fi stores and Sony Kiosks and online from 17 April.

"We're excited to bring such a strong mid-range product to the market that is packed with Sony Mobile's exceptional Xperia camera technology and impressive performance features, housed in a sleek, intuitive design," said John Featherstone, Managing Director, Sony Mobile Communications Oceania.

"This is just the first of several incredible devices joining the Xperia portfolio this year, and we can't wait for Australians to experience it."

Cutting-edge camera technology

The sleek new device boasts the latest Sony camera technology, including a powerful 23MP rear camera with Sony's large 1/2.3" Exmor RSTM for mobile image

sensor, an ISO 12800 sensitivity for clear low-light photography, 4K video recording, and 120fps slow-motion video capture. It also features the ultimate selfie-hack – a 120° super wide-angle 8MP front camera to capture more of your friends or beautiful surroundings in the frame.

Sleek but strong design

The Xperia XA2's beautiful, borderless design encases a 5.2" Full HD display of Corning® Gorilla® Glass, and features a one-touch rear fingerprint sensor in the smooth, metallic-back panel.

The device is composed of anodised aluminium on the sides and diamond-cut finish on the top and bottom, an evolution of the recognisable Xperia "loop surface" form.

Powerhouse performance features

As expected of Sony Mobile's super mid-range, the Xperia XA2 also packs a powerful performance thanks to its Android 8.0 Oreo software, 3,300 mAh battery, Qualcomm® Snapdragon™ 630 Mobile Platform, and Sony smart-charging technologies, including Smart Stamina for extended usage, and Battery Care and Qnovo Adaptive Charging for prolonged battery health. Quick charging capability also gives hours of power with just minutes of charging (requires Quick Charger UCH12W).

Smart and innovative Xperia accessories

■ The new leather-look Style Cover Stand launches alongside Xperia XA2 and matches form with function. Adjustable to stand independently for video playback it will automatically pause or sleep the device when closed. The Style Cover Stand will be available from 17 April in black and silver through Sony Kiosks and online for RRP \$53 AUD.

■ Power up in no time with the Sony Quick Charger UCH12W. Using Qualcomm Quick Charge 3.0 and MediaTek Pump Express Plus 2.0 technology you can plug in for a few minutes and get hours of phone use. The Quick Charger comes with easy-plug USB Type-C™1 and Micro-B cables, available now through Sony Kiosks and online for RRP \$49 AUD.

■ Xperia XA2 is available now in dual SIM online at JB Hi-Fi in black, and available at JB Hi-Fi stores in black 17 April. Xperia XA2 in dual SIM will also be available at Sony Kiosks and online (www.sony.com.au) 17 April in silver, black, blue and pink. Details regarding carrier ranging of the single SIM variant of the product will be shared once available. For more information, please visit: <https://www.sonymobile.com/au/products/phones/xperia-xa2>



FINE-TUNING YOUR PRIVACY ON FACEBOOK

Worried about your privacy on Facebook? If you think that there's too much of you, family and friends out there, you can restrict who sees what. Let's take a guided privacy tour.

Limiting who can see which of your posts is an easy first step.

On your computer, not your phone, go to the little dropdown arrow in the upper-right corner, and click 'Settings'.

From there, click on 'Privacy' on the left-hand side. This is where the magic happens.

Under 'Your Activity', click on 'Who can see your future posts' to manage your defaults. You can make public to anyone at all, limited to your friends, or exclude specific friends. Just remember that the next time you change it, the new group becomes the default. So double check every time you post.

The 'How People Find and Contact You', section contains who can look you up with your email address or phone number. We'd recommend not listing either in the first place, but if you do, keep the circle as small as possible. (If you do have to share one or the other with Facebook for account purposes, you can hide them by going to your profile page, clicking 'Contact and Basic Info', then 'Edit' when your mouse is over the email field. From there, click on the downward arrow with two silhouettes to customise who can see it, including no one but you.)

In that same Settings panel, head down to 'Ads'. As you probably realised, Facebook knows what you do pretty much everywhere online. So does Google, so do dozens of ad networks you've never heard of. You're being tracked pretty much all the time, by everyone, thanks to the internet.

You can still limit how Facebook uses that information though. Tired of that lawnmower you looked at following you to Facebook? Turn off Ads based on my use of websites and apps. Saying no to Ads on apps and websites off the Facebook companies does the same, except for all the sites Facebook serves ads to around the web. Which is most of them.

Lastly, for some fun insight into how advertisers think of you, click on 'Your Interests'. There you'll find all the categories Facebook uses to tailor ads for you. You can remove any you don't like and marvel at the ones that don't make any sense. This won't make the ads go away, but it will at least banish all those off-brand kitchen gadgets from your News Feed.

And you're good. Or at least, as good as can be expected. It's still Facebook, after all.

To test out your changes, go to 'Review what other people see on your timeline'. You can even see how specific people view your page, like your boss or your ex or complete strangers. It also never hurts to take stock of the way you present yourself to the world.

TESTED

BLUETOOTH EARPHONES

As more phones abandon earphone sockets, the Bluetooth market has blossomed. Our technology guru, Jon Mamonski puts eight of the most popular Bluetooth earphones, through their paces.



APPLE AIRPODS

Comfort ★★★★★ ½

Sound ★★★★★

Battery Life 5 hours

Customisable ★★★★★

Price \$229

Apple have delivered, the good, the bad and the ugly with their AirPods. The good – AirPods simply link to your iPhone with a prompt to connect and with two taps, Siri springs to action with excellent noise cancelling microphones built in, also making phones calls sound clear.

The bad – AirPods sound no different to the Earpods that come free with your iPhone.

The ugly – well, just look at them – like half a tooth brush hanging from your ear. The AirPods could have been designed alongside the first iPhone of 2007. If you don't have an iPhone, you'll still get sound but auto pairing and Siri will not work.



BOSE SOUNDSPORT FREE WIRELESS EARBUDS

Comfort ★★★★★

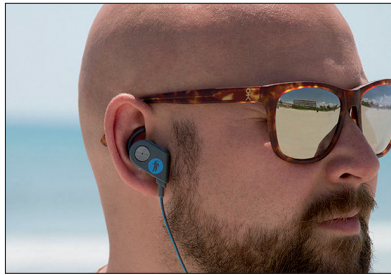
Sound ★★★★★

Battery Life 5 hours

Customisable ★★★★★

Price \$299

In the same price bracket as the great sounding Sony WF-1000X, the Bose buds stick out further than Apple AirPods and the Jabra Elite 65t's, however, the Bose SoundSport Free provide exceptional sound and a more secure fit. The SoundSport offer Google Assistant, are water-resistant and durable, with the charging case providing two extra charges on the go.



FRESH EBUDS PRO MAGNETIC EARPHONES

Comfort ★★
Sound ★★
Battery Life 8 hours
Customisable ★
Price \$49

While the price tag offers exceptional value, don't expect all the bells and whistles. Sound is ok and battery life good. Magnets hold them together around your neck which is also a design fault because they only switch off when joined together and that's a problem when you pop them in a bag and they come apart. Still, good value for the price.



GOOGLE PIXEL BUDS

Comfort ★★★★★
Sound ★★★★★
Battery Life 5 hours
Customisable ★★★★★
Price \$249

Ground up engineering has produced these innovative earbuds. There's high fidelity sound plus Google Assistant and other functions by swiping the earbud sides and all housed in a simple cloth covered charge case. If you own a Google Pixel 2 phone, they act as a live language translator to boot.



JABRA ELITE ACTIV 65T EARBUDS

Comfort ★★★★★
Sound ★★★★★
Battery Life 5 hours
Customisable ★★★★★
Price \$299

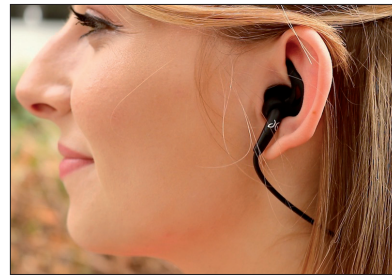
Jabra is a pioneer in the earphone business and the Active 65t's demonstrate the benefits with two mics per earpiece and voice assisting with Alexa or Google and fitness tracking. The phone app also allows refining the EQ and noise cancelling. All in all, a great all-rounder.



SONY EARBUDS WF-1000X

Comfort ★★★★★
Sound ★★★★★½
Battery Life 3 hours
Customisable ★★★★★
Price \$299

Sony has worked hard to give the WF-1000X wireless earbuds quality sound and a way to tune in to the music and tune out the noise with great noise cancelling technology. Rather than add dials on the headset, the controls like the equalizer are in the Sony Headphones Connect app where you can set up the Adaptive Sound Control's Sense Engine, so the earbuds adapt to your surroundings. Excellent earbuds.



JAYBIRD FREEDOM 2 EARPHONES

Comfort ★★★★★½
Sound ★★★★★½
Battery Life 5 hours
Customisable ★★★
Price \$139

Great value at this price with good sound and comfort. While the Jaybirds don't rival the heavy hitters like the Bose, Sony, NuHeara and Jabra, if you're on a tight budget, they will do very nicely.



NUHEARA IQ BUDS BOOST

Comfort ★★★★★½
Sound ★★★★★½
Battery Life 5 hours
Customisable ★★★★★
Price \$649

Unlike any other earbud, Australia's NuHeara - IQ Buds Boost, take you through an initial 15-minute setup with the National Acoustics Laboratory hearing test that will suit the 70 per cent of adults with some form of hearing problem. You get perfectly equalised and balanced sound to each ear and for that, there is a price premium. That said, The NuHeara IQ Boost are the only earbuds to get a five-star rating for 'customisable' and we can be all very proud of this Australian company that has been internationally recognised with a CES Innovation Award.

ABOUT THE TEST

All earphones were tested using the following tracks and mobile phones.

Music Boz Scaggs *Harbour Lights*, Phoebe Snow *Two Fisted Love*, Geelong Symphony Orchestra Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme*.

Phones Samsung Galaxy S9, LG V30 Plus and Sony Xperia XA2.