



Smart Phones - Verizon Wireless - Droid 2



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We have always had only the most basic cell phone service, just phones, no texting, no photos. Naturally, our children had phones far advanced from ours. Was it peer pressure that sent me to the Verizon store to upgrade to a Smart Phone? We found our new phone at Costco in Enfield. We stayed with Verizon as they have possibly the best coverage in the country. Our phones work at home, at PYC, and everywhere we have travelled in New England including at anchor in Coecles Harbor. The Droid phones are closely tied with Google, and have a number of interesting features because of that.

From the lineup of Droid phones, I chose the Droid 2 for it's more compact size, slide out keyboard, and memory capacity (8Mb internal and 8Mb micro SD chip (upgradable to 32Mb). It has GPS, Wi-Fi and Cell phone input (similar to most Smart Phones).

- Jim



TIP: Do you have an iPod? You may find that your Smart Phone does many of the same tasks as your iPod.

SOME BASIC STUFF [top](#)

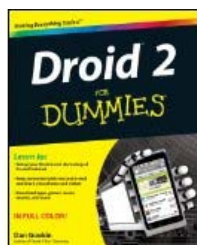


Motorola DROID 2

Here is my new phone, a Motorola Droid 2.

When you get the phone you have to set up a Google GMAIL account. The salesman at Costco did this for us, but you should be ready with a new email ID and a password. We also had to select a favorite food as our secret password.

There are a jillion different plans to sign up for. First, you pay the normal phone fee which is \$29.99/month. Then you add whatever features you want above that. For my phone I choose to add unlimited data transfer for \$30/month and the most basic text plan which is \$5/month for 250 messages. (Pricing as of Dec 2010).



When I left the store I barely knew how turn the phone on/off and answer a call. (Luckily my son was home for the holiday and kept me moving forward). It takes a week to get used to the new phone. To accelerate your knowledge of your new phone, I would strongly suggest purchasing a book. **Droid 2 for Dummies** is available locally and on Amazon. Dan Gookin is an excellent author and makes the reading easy. Many of the tips I learned came from this book. If this is your first Smart Phone, the book will be especially helpful.

Phone Home

The association with Google gives you access to many online capabilities that I am afraid I have no experience with. I am reluctant to put a lot of personal information up on the internet, no matter how secure, so I have not taken advantage of the many data synchronization options available. In a nutshell, you can use Google Gmail, Contacts, Calendar, etc. on your PC at home and synchronize all the data with your Droid 2. I have not done this. I chose to enter my contacts on the phone manually (Verizon loaded all my old contacts from my previous phone), and keep my calendar on my PC alone. I am watching for third party software that will let me sync to my Outlook Calendar without putting it on line.

Ring Tones

If you are a ring tone freak, you will love the Smart Phones. There is a long list of ringtones available. If you choose, you can use any song you have downloaded to your phone as your ring tone.

Cameras

A 5 MB still camera with flash and Video camera are standard. These are not fantastic, but considering that you do not have to carry an additional camera they are handy.

Music

Music playback via headphone jack or internal speaker.

Video

Video playback onscreen (854 x 480 resolution, same as most new videos).

Wi-Fi Playback

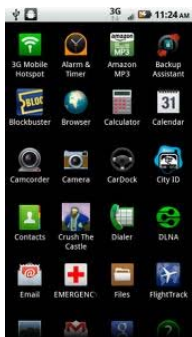
You can also link playback to Wi-Fi capable electronics in your home. I have not tried this yet.

"Home" Screens

The Droid 2 has (7) home screens. The 'main' one is in the middle and is the screen you get to when you press the soft key for the home screen. The other screens are (3) to the left, and (3) to the right, which you can get to by swiping your finger across the screen, or if you are quick there are shortcut buttons when you press the home key. You can put apps on these screens to keep them organized by type if you like.



Here is a Droid 2 held horizontally, and with the keyboard slid out. The screen turns horizontally automatically when the keyboard is pulled out. It also flips horizontally automatically when turned sideways, unless the app you are using is set to work only in portrait mode.



Here is the screen that shows all the loaded apps. From this page you can copy the icon to any of the (7) main screens.

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APPLICATIONS [top](#)

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Applications are the meat of utilizing a Smart Phone to its greatest potential. Apps, as they are abbreviated, are everywhere. For the Droid phones, there is an [Android Market](#) where you can browse the list on line. The same market is available for browsing (and download) through your phone. Many apps are free. The ones that are not are priced at only a few dollars.



TIP: Many apps are loaded on the phone already. You can copy them to one of your (7) main screens.

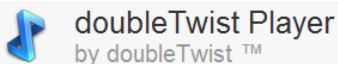
Music, Photo, and Video Management

After phone calls; music, photo, and video are my most often used apps. There are many ways to handle this but as it turns out there is one app that really simplifies everything: [double Twist Player](#). First, we need to discuss where your music, photos, and videos are stored.

Music

iTunes

If you want to rip, store, and manage a lot of music, then you cannot beat iTunes [software](#). You do not have to own an iPod to take advantage of iTunes management skills. The only glitch is that songs you purchase from iTunes will not be transferred to your Droid due to copyright infringement. (Yes, you can get around this, but that is not a topic for this paper). Playlists that you set up (on your computer) in iTunes can be selected for transfer to your Droid 2. If you choose, *double Twist Player* will automatically sync your iTunes lists with the ones you select in double Twist.



Using this software consists of two parts: 1) Software that you download to your PC, and 2) an app that you download to your Droid 2. (Note: there is also a PAID version called

AirSync that will link your media via your home Wi-Fi.)

Video



I have not used *double Twist* to transfer photos or videos. I connect my Droid 2 to my PC and use Windows Explorer to drag photo and video files. When you hook up your Droid 2 to your computer, open Windows Explorer to see this set of "drives" and folders.

CD Drive (G:) Motorola — This is your internal memory, DO NOT FOOL WITH THIS!










Removable Disk (N:) — This is where I click and drag photos and videos to .

Music — This folder was created by double Twist .



If you need to rip DVDs to your computer, there are various products available. One of the easiest is [DVDfab](#). This software is not inexpensive, but limited editions are available at local computer shows. See the show schedule at [Cogan Shows](#). At the show, look for the Flashlight King table to get this software. *DVDFab* will rip a DVD movie to a file that can be used on your iPod or Smart Phone. It will automatically add the movie file to your iTunes list. Using *DVDFab* is not hard, but some tips are useful. Be sure you own all the media you copy.



	<p>GPS Status Gives a very nice summary of the GPS information that the phone is receiving.</p>
	<p>Google Sky Just hold your phone up to the section of the sky to see the names of the heavenly objects and the outline of the constellations. Very cool, if not particularly useful.</p>
	<p>AccuWeather Save a number of favorite cities and you can flick thru them on screen to see their weather status.</p>
	<p>Google Maps Similar to Google maps on line. You can view maps, choose a location and then select Navigation right from the map. You can set up "shortcuts" on your main menus for frequent locations (takes up some room, see Compass to save location that you have actually visited). Use Google search to jump right to a location.</p>
	<p>Compass Various compass formats. Can calibrate. Good for recording a location that you visit often. Can be used with Navigation to get you back to a saved location. Hint: record a location close to your home and use this location to "break out" of spots when you are (almost) lost. Tip: do not use your actual home for security reasons.</p>
	<p>Navigation Works like a GPS in your car or on foot. Buy the car adapter for hands free use. Will give you a list of driving directions, or will display live map and direction like a "Garmin" GPS.</p>
	<p>Marine Charts Lite (Free version, restricted use and includes ads.) Have not played with this yet. Claims to do some navigation?</p>
	<p>Fast Local Do a quick search for local services in broad categories.</p>
	<p>Barcode Search Scan barcodes on products then look up prices and reviews. You can also scan Data Matrix and QR Codes containing URLs, contact info, etc. Not always accurate.</p>
	<p>Bubble Screen changes from normal level to bulls eye level automatically as you rotate the phone. Set it next to a known level and push calibrate. Handy (for a very short level).</p>


MEMORY UPGRADE [top](#)

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The Droid 2 comes with 8Mb of internal memory, and an additional 8Mb of memory on a Micro SD chip (same as found in many photo cameras). Note: it is *Micro* SD (not Mini SD).

Your contacts and other data are stored on the internal 8 Mb of memory. You cannot expand this.

The Micro SD chip is the where you will store your music and videos. You can expand this to 32 Mb.

 TIP: Micro SD chips are classified according to read/write speed. The 8 Mb chip that comes with the Droid 2 is class 4. If you replace the chip, you might want buy the same class (could affect video playback).

I bought a 16Gb Micro SD chip from Amazon for \$35 plus shipping.



This particular chip comes with an adapter so it can be used in cameras and other devices that use full sized SD chips.



For the Droid 2 we install only the micro chip. Note that it is marked with a "C4" for Class 4 speed.

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