HMD’s latest Nokia phone is designed to be repaired in minutes

HMD has worked to make what it says are the most common smartphone repairs — replacing a broken screen, charging port, or flat battery — a simpler process on its new Nokia G22, and it’s partnering with repair specialists iFixit to provide customers with the necessary replacement parts, tools, and guides. The Nokia G22 will be available on March 8th in the UK for £149.99 (€179 / around $180) and will be sold in select global markets like Europe but not the US.

The company joins a growing list of smartphone manufacturers that are making replacement parts more easily available to end customers. In the past couple of years, we’ve seen Samsung and Google partner with iFixit to sell replacement parts, while Apple launched its own Self Service Repair program. These companies are making spare parts easier to buy, but the actual ease with which you can repair their devices .

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That’s why it’s significant that HMD is boasting how quickly you can replace the G22’s battery or screen. To emphasize the ease of repair, Adam Ferguson, HMD’s head of product, successfully replaced the battery in the Nokia G22 during a press briefing about the phone. This wasn’t as easy as swapping out a removable battery — Ferguson had to open the phone with a guitar pick-style piece of plastic and detach a

delicate-looking cable to remove the battery — but the whole process took around five minutes. A similar battery swap on a previous-generation HMD phone or many competing handsets would take closer to 90 minutes, he claims.

For a screen repair “you’re probably looking at 20 minutes” for the Nokia G22, he says. Prices for the Nokia G22’s replacement parts from iFixit range from £18.99 (around $23) for a new charging port to £44.99 (around $54) for a replacement display.

It might be an improvement compared to its competitors, but HMD still has some work to do if it wants to catch up with Fairphone, which is currently in its fourth generation of sustainable, repairable phones. While the Nokia G22’s battery is easier to extract from the phone, it still requires tools — the Fairphone 4’s battery can be removed entirely by hand.

When I asked HMD why it didn’t equip the Nokia G22 with a removable battery, it said that doing so would (at this price point at least) either limit the total capacity of the battery or its maximum charging speed or result in a thicker phone. The Nokia G22 has a 5,050mAh battery that can be fast-charged at up to 20W and is 8.48mm thick, whereas the Fairphone 4 is thicker at 10.5mm, has a smaller 3,905mAh removable battery, but can also be fast-charged at the same 20W.

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Although HMD hopes user repairability will extend the lifetime of the Nokia G22 with replacement parts stocked for five years, it will nevertheless stop offering software support before the likes of Samsung and Google. The Nokia G22 will

receive two years of Android updates and three years of security updates. And in another unfortunate twist, it will ship with 2021’s Android 12. Meanwhile, Google and Samsung offer up to five years of security updates (and three and four years of Android updates, respectively), while Fairphone will have supported its 2015 Fairphone 2 for over seven years when its last software update releases in March 2023.

In a briefing, HMD’s Ferguson argues that this length of support is good considering the G22’s relatively affordable €179 price point. “I know there are larger numbers that fly around in the super premium tier,” he said. “Yes, it would absolutely be fantastic to be able to do that, but all of these things come with a cost.”

Beyond its repairability, the Nokia G22’s specs are less remarkable. It’s got a 6.52-inch 90Hz 720p display with a teardrop notch for its eight-megapixel selfie camera and a trio of rear cameras, including a 50-megapixel main, a two-megapixel depth sensor, and a two-megapixel macro. Internally, it’s powered by a Unisoc T606 processor and starts with 4GB of RAM and 64GB of storage. Unlocking is handled via a side-mounted fingerprint scanner, and it has an IP52 rating for dust and water resistance.

HMD is announcing the Nokia G22 alongside a pair of even more affordable C-series phones: the €109 (around $115) Nokia C22 and the €129 (around $137) Nokia C32. The C22 ships with Android 13 Go edition, which is the version of Android optimized for low-powered devices, while the C32 has regular Android 13. Both are equipped with 5,000mAh batteries, which HMD says should be good for three days of use before needing to recharge. Again, don’t expect US releases for these phones.

HMD’s final announcement today, which comes on the eve of this year’s Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, is that it’s taking the “first steps” to begin manufacturing select phones in Europe in a move it says will help with the security and

sustainability of its devices. However, the company was unwilling to share specific details of the initiative, including which specific models are impacted or in which European country manufacturing would happen. HMD’s Nokia devices have historically been manufactured through a partnership with Taiwan-headquartered Foxconn.

https://www.theverge.com/2023/2/25/23611844/hmd-nokia-g22-repairable-smartphone-ifixit-sustainability