Huawei’s foldable P50 Pocket has a circular external screen that’s perfect for notifications

Huawei has officially announced the P50 Pocket, a clamshell-style folding smartphone that has a circular, 1-inch external display for quick access to notifications and widgets. The device launches in China today, though US sanctions (which mean Huawei can’t use key tech like Google’s Android OS) mean the P50 Pocket won’t make any impact in the West.

Huawei teased the handset earlier this month with a photoshoot focused on the P50 Pocket Premium Edition that appeared in *Harper’s Bazaar China*. This version of the device was created with Dutch designer Iris van Herpen. It has a gold or silver finish, and a 3D pattern on the exterior surface that’s typical of van Herpen’s work, resembling feathers or leaves.

The P50 Pocket is Huawei’s third foldable phone, but its first to use a clamshell design.

Huawei’s sales pitch for the P50 Pocket focuses, not surprisingly, on the pocketability of the device.
When unfolded, the Pocket’s OLED screen is 6.9-inches in size, with a 21:9 ratio and 120Hz refresh rate. The device weighs 190 grams and is just 7.2mm thick (Huawei compared it to the iPhone 13 Pro Max which weighs 238 grams and is 7.65mm thick). It has a Qualcomm Snapdragon 888 4G SoC, a 4,000mAh battery, and runs Huawei’s Harmony OS 2.

The P50 Pocket’s main camera array has a 40-megapixel main sensor, 13-megapixel wide angle lens, and 32-megapixel “super spectrum” lens which Huawei says captures a greater range of color. There’s a hole-punch camera built into the main display, but Huawei notes that the phone’s foldable design makes it more convenient to use the main camera for taking selfies, with the 1-inch cover screen doubling up as a viewfinder.

The P50 Pocket’s external circular screen can be used to display various apps and widgets.

Accessing basic information like turn-by-turn directions can be done more discreetly.
Huawei is positioning that same “cover screen” as a big part of the P50 Pocket’s appeal. As well as showing notifications or the time, the screen can be used for widgets, letting users control music, follow directions, and so on. So, for example, if you’re using your phone to navigate in a new city, the cover screen will show discreet, turn-by-turn directions, rather than forcing you to open up the large 6.9-inch main display to check your position.

The P50 Pocket also has a new hinge which leaves zero gap between the screens when folded. This compares favorably to devices like the Samsung Galaxy Z Flip3, which is another clamshell but has a slight tapering gap when folded. The P50 Pocket also has face unlock on both the main and cover screen, and a side-mounted fingerprint unlock sensor – handy when many people are still commonly wearing masks during the pandemic.

The P50 Pocket folds completely flat, while Samsung’s Z Flip 3

has a slight tapering gap.
A standard edition of the P50 Pocket has gone on sale in China today with 8GB of RAM and 256GB of storage for ¥8,988 (around $1,400), while the premium version, with 12GB of RAM and 512GB of storage, sells for ¥10,988 (around $1,700). The standard edition is available in black and white, while the premium edition comes in silver or gold.

[embedded content]

During a presentation, the CEO of Huawei's consumer business group, Richard Yu said the clamshell design offered a more refined take on folding devices. "It's very delicate and exquisite," said Yu. "We want to bring elegance to you, on the go."

https://www.theverge.com/2021/12/23/22851418/huawei-pocket-p50-foldable-clamshell-phone-specs-features