The iPhone 12 mini seems like the small iPhone I've been waiting for

This week, Apple unveiled the iPhone mini, the smallest iPhone it has debuted in years, and it looks like the iPhone I've been wanting for a very long time.

I haven't been a fan of the trend toward bigger smartphones. The first one I bought for myself was the iPhone 7 Plus. I returned it within a week because it was too big and got the iPhone 7 instead, which I loved. Last year, I upgraded from the iPhone 7 to the iPhone 11, but returned that within a week, too — even though the 11 is smaller than the 7 Plus, I still found it unwieldy. I then paid a $300 premium over the 11 to get the iPhone 11 Pro *purely* because it was the smallest available iPhone with the newest specs at the time.

The iPhone 12 mini stacked on the iPhone 12.
Image: Apple

I primarily use my phone for texting, reminders, jotting down notes, checking Slack, surfing the web, and occasional phone calls. I'm a really boring phone user! Being able to do all of that lightweight work one-handed is my most important criteria when selecting a phone, and the iPhone 7 Plus and the iPhone 11 didn't let me do those things easily.

The smaller iPhone 11 Pro has been a much better size for me, but it's not a perfect fit. I still have to stretch my thumb to the upper edges of the screen more than I'd like. And I haven't wanted to move back down to an iPhone 7-sized phone like the 8 or the SE because I like the iPhone 11 Pro's edge-to-edge OLED display too much.

The iPhone 12 mini, however, looks like it will offer exactly what I'm looking for in a modern iPhone without forcing me to compromise. It has a 5.4-inch screen that seems like it will be easy to use one-handed. That screen is also an OLED display that takes up most of the front of the phone. Those two things are all I really need.

Sure, if I pick up the iPhone 12 mini, I'll be losing out on a few other things. Some people like big-screened phones so they can watch movies or play games on a large display, and the iPhone 12 mini will likely feel cramped in comparison to the iPhone 12 Pro Max. But I can't remember the last time I watched a full-length movie on a phone, and I try not to play mobile games because my gaming backlog is long enough as it is. The larger screen real estate for those types of things just isn't that important to me. And the extra camera features that often come alongside bigger phones aren't that compelling to me, either, since I mostly just take auto-focused close-ups of my cat that I send to my wife.

The iPhone 12 mini's battery could be a concern
There are still some open questions about the iPhone 12 mini. We haven't tried the phone ourselves yet, so we don't know if it will be as easy to use one-handed as I'm imagining. Apple also says the iPhone 12 mini has a shorter battery life than the standard iPhone 12 when watching video and listening to audio, and until we can review the phone, it's hard to know if its battery could feel too small in day-to-day use.

But for me, the combination of the iPhone 12 mini's small size, its OLED edge-to-edge display, and other modern iPhone amenities like the A14 Bionic processor and cameras that can still presumably take great pictures of my cat might make Apple's newest small phone an upgrade that I can't pass up. Here's hoping that small phones are back for good.

https://www.theverge.com/2020/10/14/21515399/iphone-12-mini-phone-waiting-small-phone-smartphones