Best Smartphones with Customizable Physical Buttons

Description

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In an era where touchscreens dominate smartphone design, physical buttons remain a cherished feature for many users. They offer tactile feedback, quick access to functions, and enhanced usabilityâ??especially in situations where touch controls may be inconvenient. Some smartphones take this a step further by allowing users to **customize physical buttons**, enabling quick access to apps, shortcuts, or system functions.

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Whether youâ??re a power user, a gamer, or someone who simply prefers physical controls, this guide highlights the **best smartphones with customizable physical buttons** available in 2024.

Why Choose a Smartphone with Customizable Physical Buttons?

Before diving into the best options, itâ??s worth understanding why customizable buttons are beneficial:

1. **Enhanced Productivity** â?? Assign frequently used apps (camera, flashlight, notes) to a dedicated button for one-touch access.
2. **Gaming Advantage** â?? Gamers can map controls to physical buttons for better precision in competitive titles.
3. **Accessibility** â?? Users with motor impairments can customize buttons for easier navigation.
4. **Quick Shortcuts** â?? Launch Google Assistant, screen recording, or split-screen mode without navigating menus.
5. **Durability & Tactile Feedback** â?? Physical buttons are less prone to accidental touches and provide satisfying feedback.

Best Smartphones with Customizable Physical Buttons

1. ASUS ROG Phone 8 / 8 Pro â?? Best for Gamers

Key Features:
â?? **AirTriggers (Ultrasonic Shoulder Buttons)** â?? Two pressure-sensitive buttons on the sides that can be fully customized.

â?? **AeroActive Cooler X Accessory** â?? Adds extra programmable buttons for gaming.
â?? **Snapdragon 8 Gen 3** â?? Top-tier performance for gaming and multitasking.
â?? **165Hz AMOLED Display** â?? Smooth visuals for competitive gaming.
â?? **6,000mAh Battery** â?? Long-lasting power for extended gaming sessions.

Customization Options:
â?? Assign **AirTriggers** to in-game controls, macros, or system shortcuts.
â?? **AeroActive Cooler X** adds two extra programmable buttons.
â?? **Armoury Crate** software allows deep customization of button functions.

Best For: Hardcore gamers who want **fully customizable shoulder buttons** and extra programmable keys.

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2. Black Shark 5 Pro â?? Best Budget Gaming Phone with Customizable Buttons

Key Features:
â?? **Physical Pop-Up Triggers** â?? Two magnetic pop-up shoulder buttons for gaming.
â?? **Snapdragon 8 Gen 1** â?? Strong performance for gaming and multitasking.
â?? **144Hz AMOLED Display** â?? Smooth visuals with low latency.
â?? **120W Fast Charging** â?? Quick recharge for minimal downtime.
â?? **Dual Liquid Cooling** â?? Prevents overheating during long gaming sessions.

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Customization Options:
â?? **Pop-up triggers** can be mapped to in-game actions, macros, or system shortcuts.
â?? **Shark Space** software allows button remapping for different games.
â?? **Pressure-sensitive triggers** provide adjustable sensitivity.

Best For: Gamers on a budget who still want **physical, customizable shoulder buttons**.

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3. Sony Xperia 1 V â?? Best for Multimedia & Productivity

Key Features:
â?? **Dedicated Camera & Google Assistant Button** â?? Can be remapped to other functions.
â?? **Snapdragon 8 Gen 2** â?? Powerful performance for multitasking.
â?? **4K 120Hz OLED Display** â?? Stunning visuals for media consumption.
â?? **Triple 48MP Camera System** â?? Professional-grade photography.
â?? **IP68 Water & Dust Resistance** â?? Durable build for outdoor use.

Customization Options:
â?? **Side Sense Button** (previously the Google Assistant button) can be reassigned to:
â?? Launch any app
â?? Open a specific setting
â?? Trigger a shortcut (e.g., screen recording, split-screen)
â?? **Camera Button** can be set to open a different app when long-pressed.

Best For: Professionals and multimedia enthusiasts who want **quick access to apps and shortcuts** without sacrificing premium build quality.

4. Samsung Galaxy Z Flip 5 â?? Best Foldable with Customizable Side Key

Key Features:
â?? **Side Key (Power Button) Customization** â?? Can be remapped to launch apps or Bixby.
â?? **Snapdragon 8 Gen 2** â?? Smooth performance for a foldable.
â?? **6.7â?³ FHD+ AMOLED Display** â?? Vibrant and immersive screen.
â?? **Flex Mode** â?? Unique multitasking capabilities when partially folded.
â?? **3,700mAh Battery** â?? Decent battery life for a compact foldable.

Customization Options:
â?? **Side Key (Power Button)** can be set to:
â?? Launch **Bixby** (double-press)
â?? Open **any app** (long-press)
â?? Trigger **Quick Launch Camera** (double-press)
â?? **Edge Panel** can be accessed via a swipe gesture for additional shortcuts.

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Best For: Users who want a **compact foldable with customizable button shortcuts** for quick access.

5. OnePlus 12 â?? Best Flagship with Customizable Alert Slider

Key Features:
â?? **Tri-State Alert Slider** â?? Physical switch for quick profile changes.
â?? **Snapdragon 8 Gen 3** â?? Top-tier performance.
â?? **6.82â?³ 2K 120Hz LTPO AMOLED** â?? Stunning display with adaptive refresh rate.
â?? **5,400mAh Battery + 100W Fast Charging** â?? Rapid charging and long battery life.
â?? **Hasselblad-Tuned Triple Camera** â?? Excellent photography.

Customization Options:
â?? **Alert Slider** can be customized to switch between:
â?? **Silent, Vibrate, Ring** (default)
â?? **Custom profiles** (e.g., â??Work,â?• â??Gaming,â?• â??Sleepâ?•)
â?? **Quick app launch** (via third-party apps like **Button Mapper**)
â?? **OxygenOS** allows further button remapping via **Settings > Buttons & Gestures**.

Best For: Power users who want **quick profile switching** and potential button remapping via software.

6. RedMagic 9 Pro â?? Best for Competitive Mobile Gaming

Key Features:
â?? **Built-in Shoulder Triggers (520Hz Touch Sampling)** â?? Ultra-responsive physical buttons.

â?? **Snapdragon 8 Gen 3** â?? Flagship performance.
â?? **6.8â?³ 165Hz AMOLED Display** â?? Smooth visuals for gaming.
â?? **6,500mAh Battery + 65W Fast Charging** â?? Long-lasting power.
â?? **Active Cooling Fan** â?? Prevents thermal throttling.

Customization Options:
â?? **Shoulder Triggers** can be mapped to:
â?? In-game controls (shooting, aiming, jumping)
â?? Macros for complex actions
â?? System shortcuts (screenshot, Google Assistant)
â?? **RedMagic Game Space** allows deep customization of button functions.

Best For: Competitive gamers who need **ultra-responsive, customizable shoulder buttons** for esports.

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7. LG V60 ThinQ (Discontinued but Still a Great Option)

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Key Features:
â?? **Dual Screen Accessory** â?? Adds a second display with a **customizable button**.
â?? **Snapdragon 865** â?? Still capable for daily use.
â?? **Quad DAC for Audio** â?? Best-in-class sound quality.
â?? **IP68 & MIL-STD-810G** â?? Rugged and durable.
â?? **5,000mAh Battery** â?? Long battery life.

Customization Options:
â?? **Side Button (Power Button)** can be remapped via **Button Mapper** (requires ADB).
â?? **Dual Screenâ??s Button** can be set to launch apps or shortcuts.

Best For: Users who want a **rugged phone with a unique dual-screen setup** and customizable buttons.

How to Customize Physical Buttons on Any Smartphone (Even Without Built-in Options)

If your phone doesnâ??t have built-in button customization, you can still remap buttons using third-party apps:

1. Button Mapper (Android)

- **Features:**
- Remap **power, volume, and Bixby buttons**.
- Assign **single, double, and long presses** to different actions.
- Works with **ADB (no root required)**.
- **Best For:** Users who want **deep button customization** without rooting.

2. Xposed Framework (Root Required)

- **Features:**
- Advanced button remapping (e.g., **volume buttons to skip tracks**).
- Works with **GravityBox** for additional tweaks.
- **Best For: Rooted users** who want **system-level button control**.

3. Macrodroid (Automation App)

- **Features:**
- Create **custom macros** triggered by button presses.
- Works with **ADB or root** for deeper control.
- **Best For:** Users who want **automated actions** (e.g., launch camera + enable flash).

Final Verdict: Which Smartphone Should You Choose?

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Smartphone	Best For	Customization Level	Price Range
ASUS ROG Phone 8	Hardcore gamers	â•â•â•â•â• (Ultrasonic buttons + extra triggers)	$$$$
Black Shark 5 Pro	Budget gamers	â•â•â•â• (Pop-up triggers)	$$$
Sony Xperia 1 V	Multimedia & productivity	â•â•â•â• (Side Sense button)	$$$$
Samsung Galaxy Z Flip 5	Compact foldable users	â•â•â• (Side Key remapping)	$$$$
OnePlus 12	Power users & quick profile switching	â•â•â• (Alert Slider)	$$$$
RedMagic 9 Pro	Competitive gamers	â•â•â•â•â• (Shoulder triggers)	$$$$
LG V60 ThinQ	Rugged phone with dual screen	â•â•â• (Side button + Dual Screen button)	$$ (Used)

Best Overall: ASUS ROG Phone 8

If you want **the most customizable physical buttons**, the **ROG Phone 8** is the best choice, thanks to its **ultrasonic AirTriggers** and **AeroActive Cooler X** accessory.

Best for Productivity: Sony Xperia 1 V

For **quick app launches and shortcuts**, the **Xperia 1 Vâ??s remappable side button** is a great pick.

Best Budget Option: Black Shark 5 Pro

Gamers on a budget will appreciate the **Black Shark 5 Proâ??s pop-up triggers** and strong performance.

Best Foldable: Samsung Galaxy Z Flip 5

If you want a **compact foldable with button customization**, the **Z Flip 5â??s Side Key remapping** is a great feature.

Conclusion

Smartphones with **customizable physical buttons** offer a **tactile, efficient, and personalized** user experience. Whether youâ??re a **gamer, power user, or multimedia enthusiast**, thereâ??s a device on this list that fits your needs.

- **Gamers** should look at **ASUS ROG Phone 8, Black Shark 5 Pro, or RedMagic 9 Pro**.
- **Productivity users** will benefit from **Sony Xperia 1 V or OnePlus 12**.
- **Foldable lovers** can opt for the **Samsung Galaxy Z Flip 5**.

If your phone doesnâ??t have built-in button customization, **Button Mapper and Macrodroid** can help bridge the gap. Ultimately, the right choice depends on your **usage habits, budget, and preference for physical controls**.

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Category

1. Uncategorized

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