Samsung Galaxy S21 Plus Review: Still Worth Buying in 2026

Description

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The Samsung Galaxy S21 Plus, released in early 2021, was a flagship device that struck a balance between premium features and a more accessible price point compared to its Ultra counterpart. Now, in 2026, with several newer models in the market, is the Galaxy S21 Plus still a viable option? This review examines its performance, design, software support, and overall value to determine whether it remains a smart purchase.

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Design and Build Quality

The Galaxy S21 Plus features a sleek, modern design with a **Gorilla Glass Victus** front and back, paired with an **aluminum frame**. The phoneâ??s **contour-cut camera module** integrates seamlessly into the body, giving it a distinctive look. At **171g**, it feels substantial but not overly heavy, and its **IP68 water and dust resistance** ensures durability.

While newer Samsung models have refined designs, the S21 Plus still holds up well in 2026. The **6.7-inch Dynamic AMOLED 2X display** remains one of its strongest features, offering **Full HD+ resolution (2400 x 1080)**, a **120Hz adaptive refresh rate**, and **HDR10+ support**. The screen is vibrant, with deep blacks and excellent brightness levels, making it great for media consumption and gaming.

Performance and Hardware

Under the hood, the Galaxy S21 Plus is powered by the **Exynos 2100 (or Snapdragon 888 in some regions)**, a flagship chipset that was top-tier at launch. In 2026, while it may not match the latest processors, it still delivers **smooth performance** for everyday tasks, multitasking, and even moderate gaming.

- **RAM & Storage:** The base model comes with **8GB of RAM and 128GB of storage**, which is sufficient for most users. However, thereâ??s no microSD expansion, so storage upgrades arenâ??t possible.
- **Battery Life:** The **4,800mAh battery** remains a strong point, easily lasting a full day with moderate to heavy use. Fast charging (25W), wireless charging (15W), and reverse wireless charging are still competitive features.

- **Thermal Management:** The phone can get warm under heavy loads, but thermal throttling is manageable for most users.

Camera Performance

The Galaxy S21 Plus features a **triple-camera setup**:
â?? **12MP main sensor (f/1.8, OIS, Dual Pixel AF)**
â?? **12MP ultra-wide (f/2.2, 120Â° FOV)**
â?? **64MP telephoto (f/2.0, 3x hybrid zoom, OIS)**

In 2026, the camera system still performs admirably in good lighting, producing **sharp, well-balanced images** with accurate colors. The **3x hybrid zoom** is useful for casual photography, though it canâ??t compete with newer periscope lenses. Low-light performance is decent but not class-leading by todayâ??s standards.

Video recording remains strong, with **8K@24fps and 4K@60fps** support, along with **Super Steady stabilization**. While newer phones offer better computational photography, the S21 Plus still delivers **reliable results** for most users.

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Software and Updates

One of the biggest concerns when buying an older flagship is **software support**. Samsung has been generous with updates, and the Galaxy S21 Plus received:
â?? **Four major Android OS upgrades (up to Android 16)**
â?? **Five years of security patches (until early 2026)**

As of 2026, the phone is likely on its **final major update**, meaning it wonâ??t receive Android 17. However, it will continue to receive **security patches for a few more months**, ensuring a secure experience. The **One UI 6.1** (or later) interface remains smooth and feature-rich, with **Samsung DeX, Knox security, and Bixby integration**.

Connectivity and Extras

The Galaxy S21 Plus supports:
â?? **5G connectivity** (sub-6GHz and mmWave in some regions)
â?? **Wi-Fi 6, Bluetooth 5.2, NFC, and USB-C**
â?? **Ultrasonic fingerprint sensor** (fast and secure)
â?? **Stereo speakers (tuned by AKG)**

While newer phones have **Wi-Fi 6E and Bluetooth 5.3**, the S21 Plusâ??s connectivity remains more than adequate for most users.

Value for Money in 2026

In 2026, the Galaxy S21 Plus is **no longer a flagship** but can be found at a **significantly reduced price** in the used or refurbished market. For users who donâ??t need the latest specs, it offers:
â? **Premium build quality**
â? **Excellent display with 120Hz refresh rate**
â? **Strong battery life**
â? **Reliable performance for daily use**
â? **Good camera system for casual photography**

However, potential buyers should consider:
â•? **No microSD expansion**
â•? **No periscope zoom (limited to 3x hybrid zoom)**
â•? **End of major software updates**
â•? **Slightly outdated chipset for heavy gaming**

Who Should Buy the Galaxy S21 Plus in 2026?

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The Galaxy S21 Plus remains a **solid choice** for:
â?? **Budget-conscious buyers** looking for a premium Samsung experience.
â?? **Users who prioritize display quality and battery life** over cutting-edge specs.
â?? **Those who donâ??t need the latest camera features** but want reliable photography.
â?? **Refurbished phone shoppers** who want a high-end device at a fraction of the original price.

Final Verdict: Still a Smart Buy?

In 2026, the **Samsung Galaxy S21 Plus is no longer a flagship contender**, but it remains a **capable and well-rounded smartphone** for users who donâ??t need the latest innovations. Its **premium design, excellent display, strong battery life, and reliable performance** make it a **worthwhile purchase** at the right price.

If you find it at a **discounted rate (likely under $300 used or refurbished)**, itâ??s a **great value proposition**. However, if you demand **top-tier performance, the latest cameras, or long-term software support**, a newer model may be a better investment.

For those seeking a **balanced, no-frills flagship experience**, the Galaxy S21 Plus still holds up remarkably well in 2026.

Category

1. Uncategorized

Date Created
July 8, 2026
Author
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