

The Palm Treo Pro was first released in October of 2008. Available only as an unlocked model, the unlocked Treo Pro (see [review](#)) appealed to world travelers and business professionals who find great appeal found with a smartphone that will work with virtually any SIM card. The flip side of the coin is the lack of wireless carrier means there isn't a subsidy to drive down the cost of the phone. Thankfully, that's all changed with the Sprint release of the Treo Pro. With a 2-year contract agreement, the Treo Pro on Sprint is \$199.



Sprint Treo Pro Unboxing

With the advent of the Treo Pro, Palm has gone for a more eco-friendly form of packaging. The minimalistic design of the packaging mirrors the new hardware designs that we are starting to see from Palm.

[video:<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBCdvhRiks> 425x344]

Note: In the video, we incorrectly pointed a dedicated power button. The button actually cycles the wireless service on and off.

Included with the Sprint Treo Pro:

- Lithium Battery
- microUSB Sync Cable
- AC Phone Charger

The Sprint version does not include a Stereo headset or various international charging adapters

that came included with the unlocked version.

Hardware and Design

[Palm's Pre phone](#) has been the subject of much praise for it's design, but the Treo Pro was the companies first move towards a forward looking design. In fact, the back of the Treo Pro looks similar to the Palm Pre. The Treo Pro features a glossy black finish with curved edges and the device itself is surprisingly small. Palm's line of Treo phones has long been known for one-handed use, something that often gets lost in other manufacturers phone designs. If you are a person who uses their phone on the go, the Treo Pro excels at one-handed use. Typing messages, accessing your inbox or checking calendar appointments are easily accomplished using the Treo Pro.



Around the Device

Palm made the Treo Pro to be a productivity tool. Despite the overall sleek look of the Treo Pro, Palm has outfitted the device to allow for easy access of key features. The Palm ringer switch is at the top, making it easy to switch the Treo Pro into vibrate mode. A WiFi button is neatly hidden on the side of the device. It requires a fingernail to depress and this design was intentional to prevent users from accidentally turning on WiFi. Hidden on the right side below the WiFi is an IR port, for those who make use of IR compatible programs.



On the other side, you've got a standard volume jog button and a programable app button. By default, this allows for quick access to the camera app, although you can change this by accessing Start > Settings > Buttons. You'll need to hold the button to launch the app. A small, but useful feature to prevent users from accidentally hitting the button and launching an unwanted app.

At the top of the device, you can turn wireless service on or off. There is not actual power-off button on the Treo Pro. The Treo Pro comes with a standard 3.5mm jack, allowing you to use any stereo headset. We hoped Palm would have included the stereo headset that comes with the unlocked version, especially given the quality of accessories coming from Palm.



Gone is the Palm multi-connector in favor of a microUSB connector. Long overdue, but certainly an improvement. The sliver dot on the included USB sync cable makes it easy to connect to your PC or to the supplied AC charger.



In my [review of the unlocked Treo Pro](#) , I described the keyboard as “*a bit cramped*”. In the past few months, one of the devices I've been using is the BlackBerry Bold. The BlackBerry Bold is a very wide device, making for a larger keyboard surface. Coming back to the Treo Pro, I've changed my opinion of the keyboard on the Treo Pro. The keyboard on the Bold is the polar

opposite of the Treo Pro. Despite my thumbs being restrained to a smaller area using the Treo Pro, the actual process of selecting the “gummy-like” keys is very easy and the tactile feedback on the sheet key design is very well done. I found it to be a refreshing change to using the Bold. It would be improved if it were a smile layout of older Treo smartphones. If you have large hands, the small keyboard could be an issue.



The camera on the Sprint Treo Pro is 2 mega-pixels. The camera application also has slick look to it and offered advanced features such as “white balance” and an 8x zoom.



Download [sample photo 1](#) | [sample photo 2](#)
(photos taken with unlocked Treo Pro)

Sprint Treo Pro Enhancements

Our unlocked Treo Pro review focused on the specifics of the OS and we encourage readers interested in OS related specifics to read that review as it's still relative. For the purpose of our Sprint Treo Pro review, we felt it best to focus on what's new for the Sprint version.

YouTube Videos

You need to activate **Kinoma FreePlay** in order to use this app. They require an email address to activate. Not only do you have to enter your email, but you have to confirm it. I could imagine this being a hassle if the email got caught up in a spam filter. Either way, I activated in a matter of seconds and relaunched the app.

YouTube Videos worked well on Sprint's EVDO network. I'd surmise that YouTube connection

issues are highly dependent upon your coverage zone.

There is a nice feature set in Kinoma FreePlay. It brings up assorted top YouTube playlists, you can login into your YouTube account or view by category.

Sprint Music Store

This is an online music store powered by Sprint. Like most, I purchase my music through either iTunes or Amazon. The SprintMusic store is a website, more so than a native application. Browsing the store is clumsy and I cannot see this being an app that I would use.

SprintTV

SprintTV allows you view an assortment of live television directly on the Treo Pro. I've always found SprintTV to be a great app and it's no different on the Treo Pro. The SprintTV interface on the Treo Pro looks great and the service performs as advertised.

The free version of SprintTV offers a nice selection of channels including CNN, Disney, FOX Sports, NFL Network, USA, Bravo To Go, Access Hollywood, Sci Fi, Speed and mobile versions of the major networks among others. For an additional \$9.99 + tax, you can access Sprint's TV Xtra package which includes over 35 channels of live sports (including ESPN mobile).

For those who do not have a Slingbox, then SprintTV is a nice value add that comes standard with the Treo Pro.

Sprint Navigation

Sprint Navigation is essentially a branded version of TeleNav, the GPS app that shipped with the unlocked Treo Pro. It provides turn-by-turn directions and handy POI's. I was able to search for Coffee "near location" and the Treo Pro delivered a nice list of coffee establishments. You can choose to: Drive To (and the Treo Pro will offer turn-by-turn directions), Map It (brings up Google Maps like overview), Share (handy if you would like to send to a business client for a meeting) and Ratings. I couldn't find a wealth of existing ratings, but perhaps over time this will provide similar results as Yelp! Like more expensive GPS units, turn-by-turn directions includes street names. If you make a wrong turn, the app is quick to re-route and provide new directions on the fly. Sound levels could be higher and a speakerphone might be a good idea if you plan to use Sprint Navigation with regularity.

Pros:

- Beautiful design
- Feature rich (WiFi, GPS, Bluetooth 2.0)
- SprintTV offers good selection of live TV programs
- YouTube videos (Kinoma Free Play) offers easy browsing and viewing of YouTube videos
- Large selection of quality third party applications
- Easy set up process
- Price
- Robust software bundle includes Office Mobile and Sprite back up solution
- Google search on today screen offers location based searches
- *Sheet key design offers nice tactile response*

Cons:

- Screen not as vivid as Palm Pre, iPhone or BlackBerry Bold
- Windows Mobile starting to feel dated
- Video buffering issues in questionable coverage areas
- Does not include stereo headset
- Keyboard might feel cramped for some
- Internet Explorer is a major let down compared to webkit based browsers.

As we mentioned in our previous review, Windows Mobile 6.1 is starting to feel dated and display limitations hurt the Treo Pro's ability to stack up against displays found on comparable devices like [Palm's new Pre phone](#) . Windows Mobile is still a very robust OS with thousands of third party applications. Out of the box, the Treo Pro is very capable and a good match for business professionals who need the ability to read and edit Office documents on the go. If you are looking to upgrade to a Windows Mobile device, the Palm Treo Pro is an excellent option. Those looking for a more rich Internet experience should look at the [Palm Pre phone](#) , also available on Sprint sometime in the first half of 2009.