

Samsung leans heavily on foldables to help reclaim market leadership

Article

The news: Now that **Xiaomi** has [surpassed](#) **Samsung** as the No. 1 smartphone vendor, its competitors are under pressure to reclaim the crown. Samsung's response came yesterday, at its pre-recorded Unpacked event, where it announced a previously [leaked](#) product roadmap and revealed its future direction.

As expected, it's focused on its foldable flagship products, as well as smartwatch and wearable lines. The latter products are a timely move from Samsung, considering its rival **Apple's unprecedented** growth in this segment..

Products unveiled at Unpacked include:

- The **Galaxy Z Fold 3 5G**, which starts at **\$1,799.99**, now has a more functional cover screen which allows regular smartphone use when the phone is closed. Unfolding the Galaxy Fold 3 5G reveals a **7.6-inch tablet-like display** with an under-the-screen camera that disappears when not in use. The Z Fold now also takes **SPen digital pen input**, carried over from Samsung's discontinued Note line. Samsung said the new fold is 80% more durable than its predecessor, and is now also water-resistant.
- The **Galaxy Z Flip 3 5G**, which starts at **\$999.99**, is Samsung's smaller flip-style smartphone, featuring a redesigned cover screen on the exterior. The foldable flips up to reveal a **6.7-inch** touchscreen. While more affordable than the larger Fold 3 5G, the Galaxy Z Flip 3 5G is being marketed as a fashion phone, which might limit broader appeal.
- **The Galaxy Watch 4 Series**, which starts at **\$249.99**, is the first Android-powered Wear OS **smartwatch** created in tandem with **Google**. Samsung is focusing on unique health experiences for its wearable—including a feature that registers blood oxygen levels and uses connected smartphones to track breathing and snoring while sleeping. Samsung also unveiled new noise-canceling headphones.

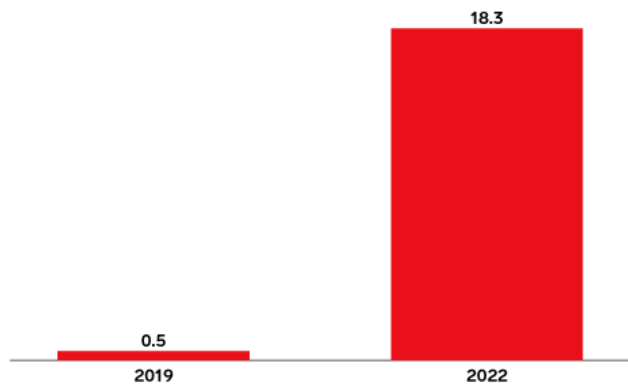
Why it's worth watching: Samsung is the only manufacturer with multiple generations of foldable smartphones in the market, and it will likely **persist** to push these new form factors.

While Samsung has ostensibly solved folding devices' issues with **fragility** and **durability**, the products are still **too expensive** to appeal to most consumers. But if, despite their high price, the foldables segment does take off as predicted, Samsung will be the industry leader.

What if it doesn't work? Samsung's heavy bet on the premium smartphone market—an area that is reaching saturation in various markets—could cost it more ground to competitors.

Foldable Smartphone Shipments Worldwide, 2019 & 2022

millions



Source: Counterpoint Technology Market Research as cited in press release, April 20, 2021

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