

# Notch On a Budget

## ET REVIEW Realme C1

PRICE ₹7,999



### SPECIFICATIONS

6.2-inch IPS display, 19:9 aspect ratio, 1520 x 720 pixels, octa-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 450 processor, 2GB RAM, 16GB storage, dedicated microSD slot, dual SIM slot, 13MP f2.2 + 2MP f2.4 dual rear camera, 5MP front camera, 4G with VoLTE, WiFi, Bluetooth, Android 8.1, Face Unlock, 4,230mAh battery, 168 grams

- +** Big display on a budget, premium design, above average camera performance in daylight, loud audio, fantastic battery life
- No fingerprint scanner, slow face unlock, no option to hide notch, weak low light camera performance, sometimes sluggish interface



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Hard to believe that Realme launched in India just a few months back (May 2018). Within a span of just six months, they've launched four phones in the mid-range and budget segment. The Realme C1 is their cheapest offering at ₹7,999 and it was available for as low as ₹6,999 during festival sales.

The first thing you notice about the Realme C1 is that it does not look like a budget phone from any angle. It has a large, 6.2-inch notch-style display (that's quite rare at this price). Around the back, it has a glossy finish with a dual camera setup — this adds to the overall premium appearance and feel of the smartphone. Kudos to Realme for the smart design.

The 6.2-inch screen has a 19:9 aspect ratio and a fairly wide notch. We were impressed by the brightness levels as well as colour reproduction of the screen. However, sunlight legibility is an issue. Screen resolution is 1520 x 720 pixels which is OK considering the asking price. We liked that the phone has slim bezels on all three sides. The chin is slimmer than the popular Redmi 6 Pro, one of the direct competitors for the C1. That being said, Realme does not provide a way to hide the notch from the settings. Hopefully, they will add this with a software update. You won't find phones offering this large a screen at this price — that's what gives the Realme C1 a big advantage in our opinion.

Hardware includes an octa-core Snapdragon 450 processor, 2GB RAM and 16GB storage. While the processor is good for the price, we found the RAM to be a limiting factor. At any given time, over 70% of the RAM is being used by the system which leaves little for running apps in the background or playing games. This often causes the phone to get slow and sluggish — we ended up closing background apps multiple times in a day. Even waking up the phone was slow at times — it takes a second or two for the display to come on after pressing the power button. As long as we stuck to basic apps and kept cleaning background process, the phone ran smoothly.

This also impacts the unlock process of the phone. Since face unlock is the only unlock option (apart from PIN/pattern etc), one has to wait for the screen to power on and then wait for the camera to scan and unlock. Face unlock typically takes between 2-3 seconds to unlock the phone. It does become marginally better as you use the phone, but we found ourselves using pattern unlock a lot more, just because it was so much faster.

Camera performance with the C1 is a mixed bag. It has a 13MP + 2MP dual rear camera setup which offers good images in daylight. However, there is a big issue with exposure and dynamic range. If we captured a subject in the frame with proper exposure, the background would often be overexposed. We noticed this even on the front camera. With favourable lighting, the

### A big 6.2-inch notch display accompanied by a large battery makes the Realme C1 stand out at this price

camera captures nice detail and colour. The portrait mode adds a good amount of blue in the background and edge detection is above average too. Unless, you zoom-in on the photo, the portrait photos appear good enough for sharing on social media. However, like most budget phones, low light images suffer from excessive noise and soft details. Front camera delivers selfies with good details and also has a portrait mode — since this is software based bokeh, the edge detection is not that great.

After the big display, it's the battery life which is a strong point of the Realme C1. The 4,230mAh battery regularly lasted a day and half. Even with heavy use, the phone will give you a full day with 20-25% battery to spare. For users who demand good battery life and a large screen without spending too much, the Realme C1 is the best option in this price. For ₹1,000 more, you can get the Realme 2 which has similar features but offers a fingerprint scanner and better performance with 3GB RAM, 32GB storage and an 8MP front camera.