

Comparing Exynos vs Snapdragon: Why Android Phones Still Need Samsung Chips?

Exynos is not the best option, but pausing its development will really hurt you as a consumer.

Quite a few Samsung users, especially those buying flagship Galaxy phones, complain that they don't want the company's original Exynos chips on their phones - and that's understandable. After all, Exynos chips have historically proven to be vastly inferior to their Snapdragon counterparts.

So should Samsung get rid of Exynos forever? Granted, Exynos is not the best option, but pausing its development will really hurt you as a consumer. Let's see why Exynos processors are important to both Samsung and Android.

1. Exynos makes Samsung phones more affordable

Samsung is one of the largest chip manufacturers in the world. Without the Exynos line of chips, the semiconductor industry would lose a major competitor. That would be bad news because as a consumer, you want as much competition as possible so you can enjoy cheaper prices.

If Samsung leaves the market, Qualcomm could charge more for its Snapdragon processors that go into flagship Galaxy devices. That would increase production costs for Samsung. In the end, users will have to pay more when upgrading to a new phone.

2. Exynos forces Qualcomm to innovate



Competition also gives Qualcomm the impetus to innovate and make chips faster and more efficient. Some would argue that Qualcomm's biggest competitor is not Samsung's Exynos but Apple's Silicon, but the competition will force it to continue to innovate anyway.

However, beating Apple Silicon is not the main reason why Qualcomm conducts so much R&D. Instead, it does so to maintain the best alternative in the Android space. This dominance is what helps the company justify its high prices and maintain its position as the default chip supplier for flagship Android phones.

Without Samsung, Qualcomm wouldn't feel the urge to innovate due to the lack of options in the market. This, again, will end up hurting consumers who have to accept chips with negligible improvements year after year.

3. Custom chip is more optimized

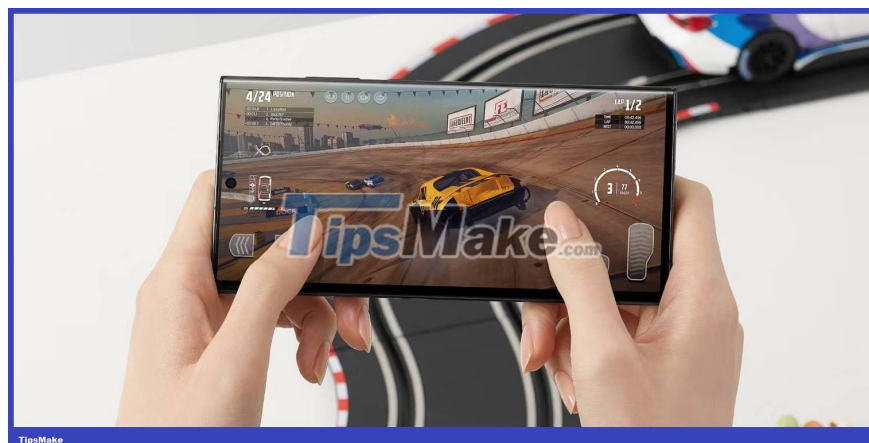
If you're a tech lover, you know that one of the reasons the iPhone works so well is the synergy of hardware and software. Since Apple Silicon is fully customized, the company has endless control over it and can optimize it to work best with iOS.

Similarly, the custom Google Tensor chip (actually co-developed with Samsung) is what makes Pixel phones unique. It enables computational photography, image and speech recognition, live translation, and great software features. So even though the Snapdragon chip is more powerful, no Pixel fan will give up Tensor for it.

The point here is that Qualcomm is an independent semiconductor supplier, which means it sells to all Android companies. So even though it's very powerful, it's still a safe out-of-the-box solution and cannot allow model-specific optimizations.

Ideally, smartphone manufacturers should design their own processors so that they can optimize them to work best with their software. Stopping Exynos development means that Samsung phones will never become as efficient and optimized as the iPhone.

4. Exynos can surpass Snapdragon in the future



Most smartphone companies purchase third-party chips instead of producing their own due to the large costs and expertise required to set up research and production facilities. And this is where Samsung has a clear advantage.

In fact, Samsung is the only major Android company in the world that not only designs its own chips, but also manufactures them in its own workshop. Apple also designs its own chips, but the actual production is done by TSMC.

Since Samsung is primarily a hardware company, it's not unreasonable to assume that within a few years it will be able to compete - if not outperform - with Qualcomm's Snapdragon chips. The company may even rename its chip line to move away from the bad reputation that Exynos has.

Why does Samsung need Exynos?

It's understandable that Exynos doesn't have a good image and Samsung has hurt its customers in the past by including it in several variants of its flagship phones. But it's good that Samsung is still developing this product line and it may even return in future devices.

Until Exynos can afford it, Samsung should continue to use Snapdragon chips for all of its flagship devices - as it did with the Galaxy S23 series. Once Exynos evolves, all Galaxy users can benefit from the improvements it brings. However, it is not yet clear when that will happen.

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