

# WiFi Phone options for Skype

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Being the webmaster of [www.SkypeTips.com](http://www.SkypeTips.com) and the author of 'Skype Me!' by Syngress Press I am often asked "What handheld options are there for Skype?" or "What non-computer solutions are available for Skype?" or "What do you think of the new WiFi Skype Phones?". My friend Jason just got the NetGear WiFi phone and so I thought I would write an article to help people understand the options for Skype WiFi Phones. Another point to make here is that these devices do not require a computer in any way so they are the first computer-less Skype solutions for those of you that do not like leaving your computer one 24x7, though you will need a WiFi access point to use these phones.

There are a few things you should understand before you plop down \$200 USD or more for one of these WiFi Skype phones. I will discuss in this article three types of WiFi Skype phone options, offer you a few solutions and then you can research and decide what you want or need. The three types of Skype WiFi phones are:

- Typical Skype WiFi phone
- PocketPC SmartPhones with built-in WiFi
- Hybrid WiFi device capable of Skype

## Typical Skype WiFi Phones

There are several new WiFi Skype Phones available today from NetGear, SMC and Belkin. The Belkin and SMC devices are the same OEM device from Accton so as you read reviews and articles, know they are the same device with possibly slightly different firmware and features. These devices range from \$200 USD to \$250 USD so they are not cheap toys.

## Pocket PC Smart Phones

These devices are your typical Windows Mobile version 5 or 2005 Pocket PC Cell phone PDA devices. Many of these PDA's have Cell, WiFi and Bluetooth capabilities and so very powerful. Since they are Pocket PC's they also have MS Office synchronization capabilities, Windows Pocket Media Player so they can store a lot of MP3's and Videos like an iPod and even play solitaire and many other applications. These devices range from \$249 USD to \$599 USD and differ from each Cell provider contracts and features.

## Hybrid WiFi Device capable of Skype

Theses devices can be Pocket PC's running Windows Pocket PC, but without Cell capability, but do have WiFi like the HP iPaq rx1955, Dell Axim X51 and others. These two devices are around \$299 USD so in the same range as the typical WiFi Skype Phone. Or they can be a WiFi capable device that is capable of running some version of Skype like the Sony Mylo.

## So what are the differences?

Price, features and maturity are going to be the main differences between these devices. This is where you will have to decide what to use based on your needs. Do you want a Cell Phone with WiFi ? Do you want just a WiFi device ? Do you want the features a Pocket PC provides with a Cell Phone and WiFi ?

Device	Cheapest Price	WiFi	Cell	MP3	Pocket PC OS	Standard Headset Microphone	Speaker Phone	Movies & other apps	Office Sync
WiFi Skype Phone	\$200	X				X	X		
Windows Mobile Smart phone	\$250	X	X	X	X	X (1)	X	X	X
Hybrid Device	\$400	X					X		
Pocket PC	\$200	X			X	(1)		X	X

(1) Pocket PC's that do not have cell phones tend to use a special 4c connector headset. This also includes some Pocket PC Smart Phones.

## So what do I use?

So what do I use? Earlier I mentioned a device from my book "Skype Me!" called the SkiPod that was a combination iPod and WiFi Skype Phone that is my #1 wish list item for Skype. Why? Because I regularly carry two electronic devices with me. One is my Pocket PC 6700 Verizon Windows Mobile Phone with WiFi and a Gig storage card and the other is my iPod video. When I am home and work I only have my PPC 6700 which gives me what I need, but when I travel I also carry my iPod for the sheer volume of music, video and pictures I carry on it for the plane, hotel etc. An iPod is one cool device and if Apple adds WiFi and Skype to an iPod, you can bet I will own it real fast!

I feel most people will have and use two electronic gizmos, a Cell phone of some sort and their 'cool device' like an iPod, MP3 player, Mylo or whatever. My friend Jason has a Cell Phone the same as mine, just with Sprint and a NetGear WiFi Skype Phone that he loves. The reason ? Battery life on the PPC goes fast with WiFi and the Cell enabled, by design due to size, weight and battery cost reasons, cell batteries do not last long enough. I use my Cell for both Cell and as a WiFi Skype Phone, but I also carry three batteries so this is not an issue with me, but is for many.

So if I had my choice I would carry a SkiPod and my PPC 6700 so I could have Skype with me anytime there is an available WiFi signal and also my Cell phone so I can have two methods to communicate and two battery devices designed for a specific purpose.

So the choice is yours. The table I provided should give you a comparison and is slanted by cost and features alone to look at a Pocket PC Windows Mobile device. But some people might like their electronic gizmos to have a specific function.

## Skype WiFi Phones:

### **NetGear SPH101**

\$299 USD Retail, \$212 USD at several online stores

- <http://tools.netgear.com/skype/>



### **Belkin - F1PP000GN-SK (Accton)**

\$199 USD Retail, \$179 USD at Amazon

- <http://www.belkin.com/skype/howitworks/>



## **SMC – WSKP100 (Accton)**

\$199 USD Retail

- [http://www.smc.com/index.cfm?event=press.pressRelease&localeCode=EN\\_USA&pid=4807](http://www.smc.com/index.cfm?event=press.pressRelease&localeCode=EN_USA&pid=4807)



## **Sony – Mylo**

\$349 USD Retail

- <http://www.learningcenter.sony.us/assets/itpd/mylo/prod/index.html>



The Sony Mylo is WiFi PDA type device that does IM and acts as a Skype Phone.

## **Accton – VM1185-T (SMC & Belkin)**

OEM only

- See SMC or Belkin



## **Other WiFi specialty Phone:**

### ***UTStarcom – F1000***

\$99 USD Retail

- [www.Vonage.com](http://www.Vonage.com)



The UTStarcom WiFi phone that works with Vonage. I suspect that they will release a Skype version at some point.

## Cell / WiFi Phone options

I recently found this table from Network World magazine and thought it would be good to see what is coming in the space of WiFi enabled Cell Phones.

**A sampling of dual-mode cellular/Wi-Fi handsets**

Vendor/device	Ships with Vo-Fi support‡	Ships with voice handoff enabled	Carrier OEM support	Availability status
<b>Fujitsu-Siemens</b> Pocket LOOX T800 series	Yes	No	None	Q4 2006, initially in Europe
<b>G-Tek</b> PWG-600	Yes	No	None	2007**
<b>HP</b> iPAQ hw6900	No	No	Vodafone; expected from Cingular* in United States	Shipping in Europe, Middle East and Africa and Asia-Pacific regions
<b>HTC</b> 8125	No	No	Cingular	Shipping
<b>Intermec</b> 760 (rugged)	No	No	None	Shipping
<b>LG</b> CL400	No	No	Cingular*	Unknown
<b>Motorola</b> GN620	Yes	Yes	None	In beta; commercial availability of redesigned version expected 2007**
<b>Motorola</b> A910	Yes	Yes	BT (United Kingdom)	Q4 2006
<b>NEC</b> N900IL	Yes	Yes	NTT DoCoMo	Shipping in Japan
<b>Nokia</b> 9500	No	No	None	Shipping
<b>Nokia</b> 9300i	No	No	None	Shipping
<b>Nokia</b> N Series	No	No	None	Shipping
<b>Nokia</b> E Series	Yes	No	None	Shipping
<b>Nokia</b> 6136	Yes (voice only)	Yes	Orange (United Kingdom)	Shipping in Europe only
<b>Samsung</b> T709	Yes	Yes	T-Mobile*	Q4 2006 or Q1 2007**
<b>Samsung</b> i730	No	No	Verizon	Shipping
<b>Sony Ericsson</b> P990i	No	No	None	Shipping in select countries outside United States
<b>Symbol</b> MC70	Yes	No	None	Shipping
<b>UTStarcom</b> GF210	Yes	Yes with Wi-Fi/ cell operator cooperation	None	Q4 2006

‡ Programmable dual-mode handsets can gain Vo-Fi capabilities if customer installs.  
\*Unconfirmed by the carrier. \*\*Status at press time.

SOURCE: HANDSET MAKERS, MORGAN STANLEY RESEARCH

### UTStarcom – PPC6700

\$249 USD Retail

- [http://www.utstar.com/pcd/view\\_phone\\_details.aspx?mcode=PPC6700&bid=30&sAct=0](http://www.utstar.com/pcd/view_phone_details.aspx?mcode=PPC6700&bid=30&sAct=0)



The UTStarcom PPC 6700 is a SmartPhone that runs Windows Mobile 2005 and has built-in WiFi and capable of running the PPC version of Skype. This device is a Pocket PC PDA, a Cell Phone and a WiFi Skype phone. It is offered by both Verizon and Sprint. It is what I use for my Cell and Skype WiFi phone and occasional MP3 and movie player when I do not carry my iPod video.

## **HP iPaq – 6920/6940**

\$599 USD Retail

- <http://h10010.www1.hp.com/wwpc/us/en/sm/WF04a/215348-64929-215381-314903-f92.html>



The HP iPaq is offered by Cingular and is a fully functional Pocket PC Phone with built-in WiFi.

## **HP iPaq – rx1950/1955**

\$299 USD Retail

- <http://www.shopping.hp.com>



The HP iPaq is offered by Cingular and is a fully functional Pocket PC Phone with built-in WiFi.

## **ASUS – P525**

\$249 USD Retail

- <http://www.asus.com/products4.aspx?l1=8&l2=0&l3=0&model=1172&modelmenu=1>



The ASUS Pocket PC Phone comes with Skype installed and includes WiFi.

## **E-ten – M600**

\$499 USD Retail

- <http://www.eten.ch/DescriptionEtenM600EN.htm>



The E-ten Pocket PC Phone is another Pocket PC device that includes WiFi.

For a fairly complete list of Pocket PC Phone devices, visit the following website.

- <http://www.windowsfordevices.com/articles/AT2468909181.html>