

DJI's new Mini II drone is light and cute

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The DJI Mini was the best-selling drone ever for DJI, which dominates drone sales.

So, what to do for an encore? How about higher resolution, as in the ability to shoot in 4K video, and a larger image sensor.

Like the original Mini, the new Mini II is about the size of a smartphone, making it an easy fit in a backpack. Based on an early look, the Mini II is certain to be another big seller.

Another change from last year: A higher list price, at \$449, up \$50 from the price of the original version. DJI says the added price is for the higher resolution sensor and 4K video. The Mini was heavily discounted during the holidays last year, to \$299.

In our tests at the beach, in early morning light and at sunset, we saw rich colors and even exposure.

One knock: We arrived at the beach at 5:30 a.m., and the drone wouldn't fly. An [error message](#) said it was just too dark. When we tried again at 7 a.m., once the sun was up, and there were no issues.

A big issue for many drone flyers is battery life. Once in the air, and cruising along, those nagging beeps to tell you're running low are never fun to encounter. DJI says the Mini II can stay in the air longer than the original Mini, at just over 31 minutes

And as good as the images look, the processing chip of the drone, even while larger, is still smaller than the 1/2 inch size of the step-up Mavic Air II [drone](#), which sells for \$799 and the full 1-inch chip of the Mavic Pro II, which sells for \$1,599.

The calling card of the Mini is its size. It's so small and light; it feels like it weighs practically nothing. That's great for slipping into a backpack and taking everywhere with you. And it just works.

Turn it on, it goes in the air, flies around and comes home. It's hard to put into words what a joy this is, but it just seems more seamless than some of the other drones.

If you're new to drones, or never got your hands on last year's Mini, the new Mini would be a great place to start. It would also make for nifty gift for your kid, due to the low cost and ease of use. Just remember to follow FAA guidelines that don't allow call for not flying higher than 400 feet, in crowded areas, over people's heads or oncoming cars.

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