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Attack of the iClones

Fake iphones are everywhere, can you spot the difference?



Fake Apple

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Counterfeit mobilephones are everywhere and definitely a growing problem. Fake handbags, fake watches, fake news-these are all so familiar to us now that we don't give them a moment's thought and accept them as only a logical consequence. So it should come as no surprise to us that counterfeit phones are widespread. How widespread?

The **EU IPO** commissioned a study in 2017 and found that 180 million counterfeit mobile phones are sold globally per annum. This represents a potential loss of \$73bn to device manufacturers. This is particularly concerning for Apple as the iPhone X along with Samsung S8 is one of the most copied phones in 2017. This is a significant economic threat that undermines innovation and hampers economic growth.

The growing fake smartphones market does not only have a financial impact but also raises concerns for consumer protection and safety. While you can buy a counterfeit iPhone X for \$100, you're obviously getting a pretty janky device filled with bugs, broken features and malware.

Fake iPhones' are usually loaded with backdoors and malicious apps, meaning that owning such a device will likely result in the counterfeit seller or third party gaining access to your personal information.

Fake iPhones can also contain **pre-installed malware** on counterfeit devices. In some cases the device will sit quietly for a couple of weeks before reaching out to a command and control network to retrieve instructions. Users have experienced keyloggers, DDoS hosts and ransomware in addition to invasive ads. You really don't want these devices on your network unless you enjoy paying ransoms to regain access your family photos.

Counterfeit iPhones usually have **faked security implementations**, both hardware and software. As an example, the fingerprint sensors go through the motions of registering user fingerprints but in fact will unlock with any human touch. Users don't realise that they are unprotected. Counterfeit smartphones will continue to evolve in sophistication, performance, and be a threat to users

These fake iPhones look so impressive that they are fooling experts. The last few years has produced the highest-quality iPhone clones we've ever seen. But don't be fooled by its pretty face. This unashamed iPhone X clone is 'ugly' under the surface, and its lack of security system is even scarier.

Inside the fakes, there is a lot of plastic that seems to be included to take up space so that the interior components won't shift; there is **no Haptic Engine or Face ID sensor bar**. The battery looks like a standard smartphone battery rather than the dual cell battery that's in the iPhone X, and the logic board looks like a plug-and-play from something else. The chips on it are much larger, indicating that they're older and probably much less expensive than what's used in the iPhone X. These fakes are clearly a couple generations behind, as well as having a little bit of a dumbed-down front sensor and obviously not the same face-recognition software. It also doesn't have an OLED display.

The sheer volume of counterfeit iPhone can be explained by many reasons, particularly the authentic iPhones' steep price which is out of many consumers' price range. Newer technologies like Face ID are more expensive to implement and drive the price up. Interestingly the actual iPhone 11 Pro max production cost is shockingly low. Apple charges \$1099 for an iPhone 11 Pro Max, but the components for this high-end smartphone with assembly cost less than half the selling price.

If there is a product where people are willing to pay more for, it is one with a huge **brand name**, more so such than safety or quality. As long as Apple is one of the biggest names out there, fake Apple phones will continue to exist.



References:

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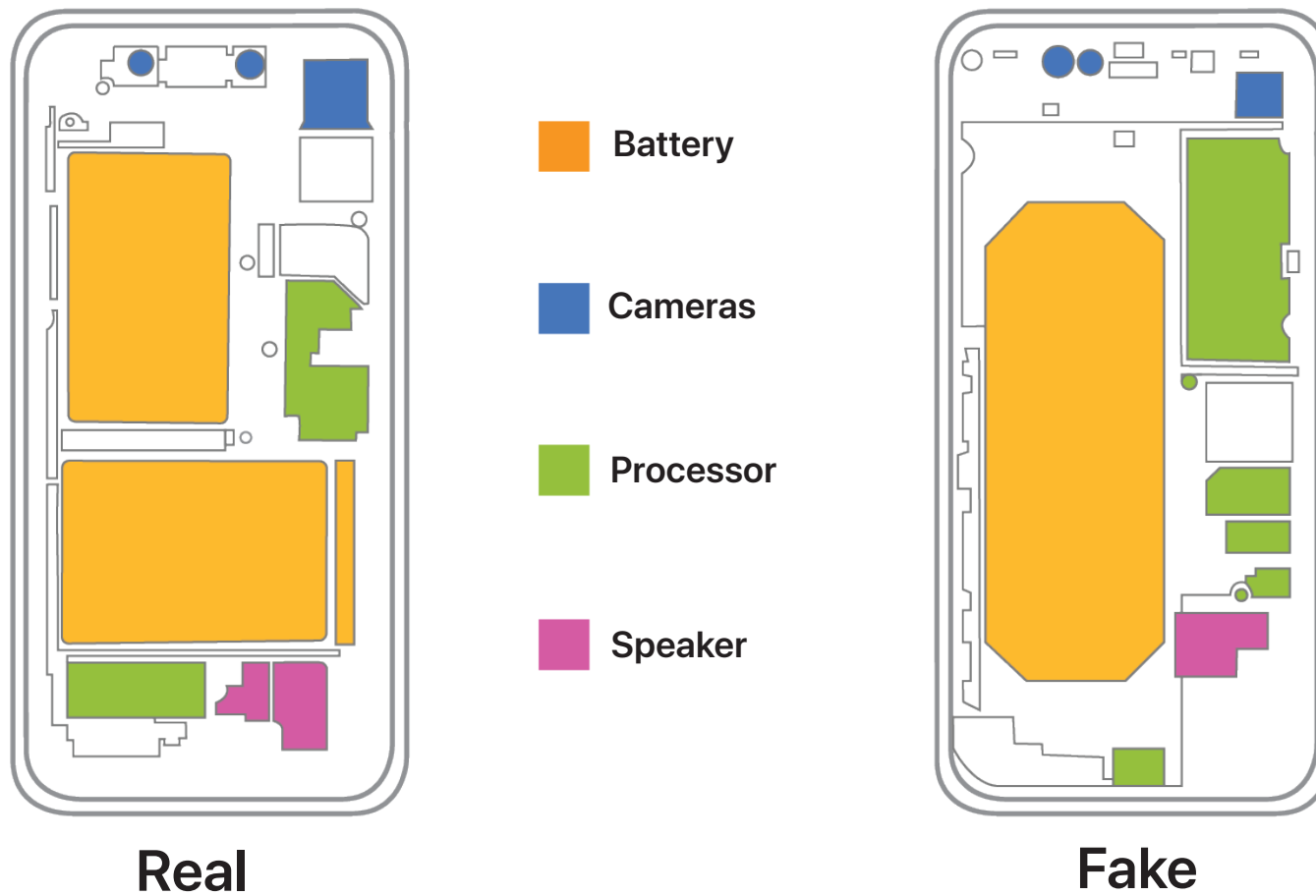
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Anatomy of fake iphone

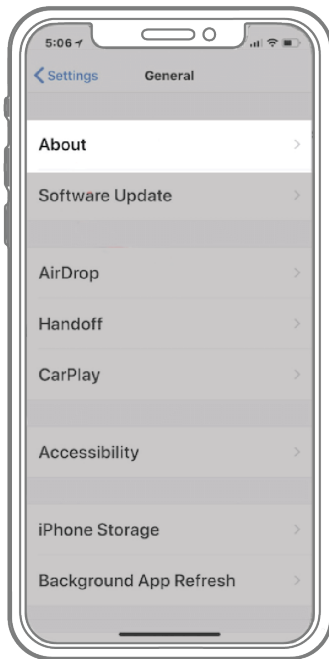


The inside of a fake and real Iphone x reveals many differences such as the swap from a dual to standard battery in the fake. The fake's interior parts is also missing the face id sensor and OLED display as it is more expensive to implement.

How to check authenticity

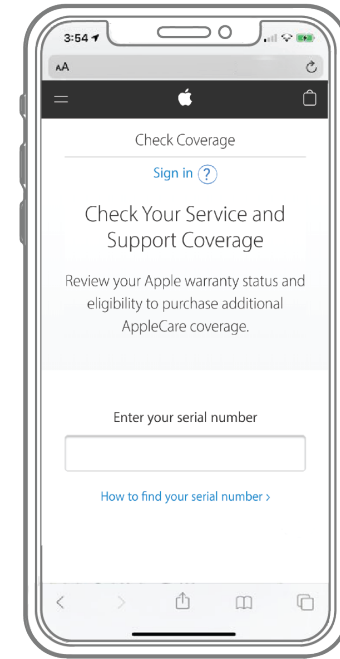
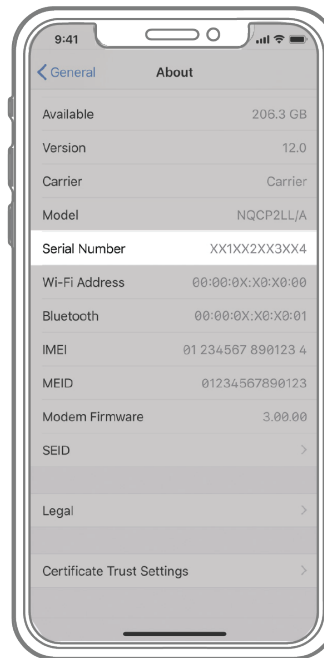
Check your serial number and copy it

2



1

Go to 'Settings' icon and on the very top tap on 'About'



3

Go to *checkcoverage.apple.com* and type in serial number. If it says it is invalid, your phone is fake