



Issued 4/1//17

Facial Recognition on Galaxy S8 Can Be Bypassed with a Photo

Samsung announced its newest flagship smartphone, the Galaxy S8 recently, making it the first Galaxy S smartphone to come with an iris scanner, aside from the fingerprint sensor, which was moved to the back of the device. The phone can also use facial recognition features to detect and compare facial landmark points to grant access to the phone. The iris scanner uses a special image filter to receive and recognize reflected images with an IR LED light. In addition, iris information is stored as an encrypted code in the Knox platform.

Only one person can register their iris information, and in case the device is stolen or lost, the information won't be compromised even if others gain access to the smartphone. However, industry sources stated recently for the Korean media that "the phones can be unlocked by the face of a sleeping person, or even just by a photo." They added that the feature shouldn't be considered a full proof security measure. Moreover, there's a video that demonstrates the fact that the iris recognition feature can be bypassed by simply using a picture of the device's owner. However, the video shows that it takes a few tries as the picture needs to be hovered on top of the smartphone.

People would also have to use a picture that's taken at the exact same angle and distance that the face would normally be at, when attempting to

unlock the phone using the iris scanner. It remains to be seen if Samsung intends to update the technology and provide safer features for Galaxy S8 and Galaxy S8+ users, but these reports do suggest that users should better enable the fingerprint sensor or a PIN code when locking their phones.