

## TECH

## Google just announced a new Wi-Fi router that's made to blanket your home with internet

Jeff Dunn Oct 4, 2016, 6:54 PM CEST

Google on Tuesday unveiled Google Wifi, a Wi-Fi router that takes after aspects of recent "mesh" networking routers like the eero.



**The Google Wifi router and its companion app.** Google

It'll be available for preorder in November and ship in December. One router will go for \$129, while a three-pack will cost \$299.

Details of the router were first reported by [Android Police](#) last month.

Like the eero and Google's own OnHub before it, Google Wifi puts some emphasis on looks. It's a small white cylinder, a bit more cleanly designed than your usual antenna-laden internet box. The idea is to make you more comfortable displaying it in an open area, which will in turn bolster your connection strength.

Also like the eero, Google Wifi's headline feature is its ability to connect to other access points and create a sort of "mesh" network, expanding your connection to hard-to-reach areas of your home.

This'll naturally work better in larger homes that are more prone to dead spots. Google says one Google Wifi will work with homes up to 1,500 square feet, while a set of three will work with homes up to 4,500 square feet. (Though companies tend to overstate estimates like these — your

connection quality will always be affected by the layout of your house — so take them with a grain of salt.)

To help maintain a robust connection, Google says the Wifi will also utilize a feature called Network Assist, which automatically transitions a connected device to the strongest Wi-Fi point and channel in your setup, depending on where you are.

The router is managed through the OnHub's current Google On app, which will soon be rechristened "Google Wifi" as well. If the OnHub is any indication, it should make setting up the device fairly simple. Beyond that, it'll allow you to see the various devices connected to your network, and selectively pause each one's internet access. Google says it'll notify you if an access point would benefit from being in a different location, too, and that it'll break down your data usage.

These are all features we've already seen in the many routers Google Wifi is going after, but they have their utilities nonetheless.

One obvious thing to note here is that this is not an OnHub device. Google pitched the Wifi as building on what the company has learned

through that partner program — and says OnHubs will work as part of the Wifi's mesh network — but didn't announce any new OnHub hardware at its San Francisco event on Tuesday.

It does promise to add unspecified features to "all of its Wi-Fi devices" with future updates, though — Google says the first of those will arrive on OnHubs when the Wifi ships in December. The company also wouldn't rule out the possibility of new OnHub devices in the future, so the line might not be totally dead.

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Nevertheless, the new device is clearly the focus. It's also an AC1200 router, which puts it closer to the entry-level side of the market in terms of maximum power. It supports 802.11ac connections, WPA2-PSK keys for security, and can work over 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz bands simultaneously. If you ever want to go wired, Google says there are two Gigabit Ethernet ports on the back of each point. A USB-C port is also on there for power.

These are all fairly normal features, and the fact that the Wifi uses AC1200 speeds could make it a bit trickier to keep your connection fast while extending it around a house. Still, we'll reserve judgment until we're able to test the device in the coming months.

If nothing else, it'll be one of the more affordable options in the growing mesh router market. The eero, for one, goes for \$199 on its own and \$499 for a three-pack.