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Google Launches Nest Wifi Pro Mesh Router With 6GHz, Plus a New Nest Doorbell

You'll be able to control everything from a newly redesigned Google Home app with new smart home capabilities and full support for Matter.



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Google announced several new smart home products, including a new Nest Wifi Pro Mesh Router. Google

Google's Nest team on Tuesday announced new hardware and software updates for its smart home lineup, including a new Nest Wifi Pro mesh router with full support for Wi-Fi 6E, as well as a new hardwired version of the Nest Doorbell. Their arrival helps set the stage for Google's Pixel launch event on Thursday, where we're expecting to see a new lineup of Pixel 7 smartphones along with the long-awaited debut of Google's Pixel Watch.

Taken together, Google's flurry of announcements this week represents the brand's latest effort to present a compelling pitch for a more unified smart home.

"We need to evolve the smart home outside of just thinking about the smart home devices that exist today," said Google Nest general manager and vice president of product Rishi Chandra, pointing to the importance of phones, tablets, watches and other primary interface devices as pillars of a cohesive connected home. "Thus far, as an industry, we've kind of separated those mobile computing ecosystems from the smart home ecosystems, and we've got to think of that as one holistic ecosystem. That's how users are thinking of it."

To that end, Google has big plans for the Google Home app, with an upcoming redesign that's built with expanded automation capabilities, better camera controls, automatic device grouping and better scalability. Many of the coming changes are structured around Matter, the soon-to-launch universal smart home standard that aims to make it easier for users to control smart home devices built by different brands or for different platforms.

"Millions of Matter devices will be available for software update later this year," said Kevin Po, a Nest product manager working on the brand's integration with Matter. "What that creates is this kind of scalable platform that device makers and a vibrant ecosystem can build on top of."

Nest Wifi Pro embraces Wi-Fi 6E, ditches the smart speakers

The new Nest Wifi Pro mesh router is available for pre-order today and comes in your choice of four colors.

Google

First up on the hardware front is the Nest Wifi Pro mesh router, a follow-up to the original Nest Wifi and Google Wifi routers that preceded it. With the Pro model, users get an upgraded, tri-band Wi-Fi 6E design that can connect with devices over the usual 2.4 and 5GHz bands, as well as on the recently opened 6GHz band, which offers more than twice as much bandwidth as 5GHz and a significant reduction in device congestion, as well.

Available for pre-order today in four colors (snow, fog, linen and lemongrass) and expected to hit retail on Oct. 27, the Nest Wifi Pro costs \$200 for a single device, or \$400 for a 3-pack. That positions it as one of the most

affordable Wi-Fi 6E routers available today.

See it at Google Store

The Wi-Fi 6E support isn't the only noteworthy change with Nest Wifi Pro. Most notably, the system no longer features Google Assistant smart speakers built into each extender, and it doesn't feature separate router and extender devices at all, so any Nest Wifi Pro device can connect to your modem over Ethernet and serve as the main router of your setup. That also means that you can use an Ethernet cable to connect two Nest Wifi Pro devices for a fully wired backhaul with faster performance than a wireless setup. With the original Nest Wifi, the extenders were smaller, separate, devices from the main router of the system, and they didn't offer Ethernet jacks at all.

Another change from the the first-gen Nest Wifi mesh router: Nest Wifi Pro isn't backward compatible with earlier-gen Nest and Google Wifi systems. Google Nest's director of product management for energy and connectivity Ben Brown chalked that up to the way the new Pro system leverages Wi-Fi 6E as a central part of the system, including as a wireless backhaul.

"To do that with Google Wifi and Nest Wifi generations that don't support 6GHz was not going to be a good experience for users," Brown explained.

As for specs, the Nest Wifi Pro is designed to work particularly well with Matter thanks to built-in Thread radios that allow it to communicate directly with other Thread-compatible Matter gadgets, a carryover feature from the original Nest Wifi. Range-wise, Google says that each Nest Wifi Pro can cover up to 2,200 square feet.

Google says that the combined top speeds of each of the Nest Wifi Pro's three bands is 5.8 gigabits per second, but actual speeds will be much lower than that since your devices can only connect to one band at a time, and since the WAN port caps incoming wired speeds at 1Gbps. That's a bit disappointing given the current trend towards multi-gig internet plans -- including from Google.

-10-2024, 17:30	Google Launches Nest Wifi Pro Mesh Router With 6GHz, Plus a New Nest Doorbell - CNET
Each Nest Wifi Pro device is in Google Assistant smart sp	identical and interchangeable and unlike before, none of them feature built- beakers.
Google	
A new wired	Nest Doorbell promises the best

picture quality yet

Google

Google's second hardware launch of the day is a new, hardwired version of the Next Doorbell. Available today for \$179, the updated doorbell cam comes in your choice of four colors and promises 24/7 access to your front door footage, two-way talk, customizable activity zones, object-specific alerts for people, packages, animals, and vehicles, and improved picture quality by way of larger-size pixels and new software updates.

See it at Google Store

Google points to independent analysis from DXOmark, which rated the new device as the top doorbell camera for picture quality. With a 960p feed -- the same as the existing, battery-powered Nest Doorbell, released last year --

- it isn't leaning on improved camera hardware, but rather, on new software updates that promise to enhance the image that's already there.

"What we really want to call out is that in terms of image quality it's not just about the pixel count, it's really about the ability to fine-tune the actual image, making the most out of the hardware," said Julie Zhu, a product manager on Google's Nest Doorbell team.

The Nest Doorbell comes in your choice of four colors: Snow, Linen, Ash and Ivy. Google

Like the battery-powered Nest Doorbell, the new wired version uses a 3:4 vertical aspect ratio for comfortable viewing on your phone and a better head-to-toe look at front door visitors or packages at your doorstep -- though CNET reviewer David Priest noted last year that the otherwise likable vertical-minded approach can lead to horizontal blind spots to the left and right.

With the Nest Doorbell hardwired at your door, you'll be able to receive motion alerts and respond to visitors in real time using live video and two-way talk. Add in a subscription to Nest Aware for \$6 per month and you'll

gain access to up to 30 days of event history. You can make that up to 60 days of event history and up to 10 days of 24/7 video history by upgrading to a \$12-per-month Nest Aware Plus subscription.

As for privacy and security, the Nest Doorbell uses encryption to protect video data in transit, as well as two-factor authentication, which makes it much harder for someone to break into your account. However, Google doesn't offer end-to-end encryption, which would block the company from accessing your footage. Earlier this summer, the company acknowledged that it reserves the right to comply with police requests for user footage during emergency situations, similar to Ring -- though Google added at the time that it had never done so.

Expect to see a new design for the Google Home app in coming weeks, complete with live video in the homescreen and new Spaces that automatically group your devices together.

Google

Google Home is getting a makeover just in time for Matter

On the software side of things, Google is currently prepping the Google Home app for relaunch, with a new redesign aimed at improving the app's automation capabilities, ease of use and scalability for an incoming flood of devices that support Matter. The update is scheduled to go live in the coming weeks, with sign-ups open now for a public preview of the new features.

Chief among them are new Spaces, which automatically group your devices at the top of the app's home screen for quick access. Next year, Google plans to roll out customizable Spaces, allowing users to create groups of devices pertaining to whatever they like -- pets, kids, you name it. The new app also features improved controls for smart home routines and automations, with a custom automation script editor for advanced users on deck for release in 2023.

Google also notes the app's improved camera features -- namely, a more intuitive timeline display of past camera events, as well as the ability to view the live feeds from favorited cameras straight from the center of the app's homescreen. Google Home's camera features are also heading to a new interface that users will be able to access straight from their web browser, and there's an entirely new version of the Home app for smartwatch users headed to WearOS, as well.

All of it comes as Google and other major smart home players like Amazon, Apple and Samsung prepare for the arrival of Matter, a new universal smart home standard expected to launch by the end of the year. Google is leaning particularly hard into the standard, offering developer tools that help put it to work and promising built-in Matter support in Android for easier device pairing and accessibility across devices. Meanwhile, the second-gen Nest Hub and Nest Hub Max smart displays and the Nest Wifi and Nest Wifi Promesh routers will all double as Thread border routers, helping to facilitate wireless, low-power connections between Matter devices.

To that end, it's probably a safe bet to expect that we'll hear a lot more about Matter and about Google's larger vision for the smart home this Thursday at the company's Pixel launch event. Expect to see plenty of coverage on that front later this week, and when we have hands-on first impressions of the new hardware to share, we'll pass those along, as well. Stay tuned.



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