# DuckDuckGo slams Google's Android search engine auction as 'fundamentally flawed' after losing to Bing

Microsoft's Bing search engine has beaten out competitor DuckDuckGo and will now be offered as an option for Android users during setup in select European countries, according to the results of Google's most recent default search engine auction. DuckDuckGo, previously the most frequently offered alternative, was not pleased, and the company slammed Google's auction process as pay-to-play.

"This EU antitrust remedy is only serving to further strengthen Google's dominance in mobile search by boxing out alternative search engines that consumers want to use and, for those search engines that remain, taking most of their profits from the preference menu," DuckDuckGo wrote in a blog post published yesterday. "The auction model is fundamentally flawed and must be replaced."

Google hosts the auctions in response to a landmark 2018 European Union antitrust ruling, which fined the dominant search giant a record-breaking €4.3 billion ($5 billion) after finding Google was illegally tying its Chrome browser and Google Search tools to the Android operating system in various ways. Google now displays four search engine options randomly on a per-device basis if you set up a new Android phone purchased in a EU member state, but the ones displayed depend on companies bidding against one another for a right to appear in the list based on how much they're willing to pay Google

each time a user selects their respective platform.

*“We have been priced out of this auction because we choose to not maximize our profits by exploiting our users.”*
The auction is held quarterly, with the results of the first one taking effect back in March. The results of this most recent auction will take effect for the months of October to December. Competing search engines Bing (13 countries), DuckDuckGo (eight countries), Info.com (all 31 countries), GMX (16 countries), PrivacyWall (22 countries), and Yandex (eight countries) were among the winners.

DuckDuckGo, which failed to win more than eight countries after winning big in past auctions, criticized the process as an inherently unfair ploy to appease European regulators and not a legitimate way to increase search engine competition. The company said it was “priced out of this auction because we choose to not maximize our profits by exploiting our users,” which meant it makes less money per search and is therefore unable to bid as much as fellow rivals in the search engine business.

“This auction format incentivizes bidders to bid what they can expect to profit per user selection. The long-term result is that the participating Google alternatives must give most of their preference menu profits to Google,” the company’s blog post reads. “Google’s auction further incentivizes search engines to be worse on privacy, to increase ads, and to not donate to good causes, because, if they do those things, then they could afford to bid higher.”

https://www.theverge.com/2020/9/29/21494316/microsoft-bing-android-google-search-alternative-option-download