Exclusive: these are the new Sonos Era speakers

Sonos is continuing to finalize details for a pair of new smart speakers set to launch in the coming weeks, and *The Verge* has now obtained marketing images of the products and learned roughly how much they will cost. The spatial audio-focused Era 300 is expected to be priced in the ballpark of $450, making it less expensive than the company's flagship Sonos Five. As such, the Five will likely remain part of Sonos' lineup after the pending hardware announcements.

But the same cannot be said for the Sonos One, which is all but certain to be replaced by the upcoming Era 100. Sonos has discussed pricing that speaker around $250, a slight price increase compared to the $219 One. But customers should be gaining several improvements for the extra money.

Sonos has reportedly locked in the Era 300 and Era 100 for a simultaneous release in late March.

Through several people familiar with Sonos' plans and product roadmap, *The Verge* has learned comprehensive information about both speakers — including more details about how they fit into home theater systems.

There also appears to be a divide with Apple, which has positioned itself as the leader in spatial audio. Although the Era 300 was designed from the ground up to highlight music in spatial audio, Apple Music's tens of thousands of Dolby Atmos songs are unlikely to be supported at this time. And amid Sonos' ongoing legal battle with Google, Google Assistant could potentially be dropped from the company's latest smart speakers.

Much of what I reported back in August (including Bluetooth audio playback and USB-C line-in) can again be confirmed for

the Era 300. Additionally, I can now report that the Era 100 will *also* offer both of these conveniences, making it far more versatile than the Sonos One. You'll be able to run external sources like a turntable directly through an Era 100, which wasn't possible with its predecessor. You can see this in the below image, where a second cable is running into the speaker on the left.



a:hover]:text-black [&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a:hover]:text-gray-e9 dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-gray-63 [&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-13 dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-63″>*Both Era speakers will come in black or white finishes.*

As I've been saying for months, the Era 300 is designed to showcase spatial audio and Dolby Atmos by producing immersive, room-filling sound. The speaker's size falls in between the current Sonos One and Sonos Five. It includes a total of six drivers that direct sound forward, left, right, and up. When used with either the Arc or Beam (Gen 2) as rear surrounds, a

stereo pair of Era 300s will deliver immersive Atmos surround sound including upward-firing audio.



a:hover]:text-black [&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a:hover]:text-gray-e9 dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-gray-63 [&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-13 dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-63″>*The Era 100 is similar in size to the Sonos One, but now produces proper stereo sound.*

Up until now, less has been known about the Era 100. But the images and details I've learned tell a clear story. The Era 100 isn't geared for spatial audio and will not include upward-firing drivers. Rather, it's best to think of it as an evolved Sonos One with (ideally) better performance. The company has added a second tweeter to the new speaker for true stereo sound and enlarged the mid-woofer for more powerful bass response.

As you can see from the photos, *The Verge's* original mockup of the Era 300 remains accurate, and while the Era 100 borrows

design traits from the One, it has a rounder overall shape. Sonos has tweaked volume controls with a new, indented bar that should be easier to feel for and slide your finger across.

Both speakers will feature a new speech bubble button among the standard Sonos controls that lets you temporarily mute the built-in microphones; there's also a physical switch on the back of each that disconnects power to the mics completely. Voice assistant options should include Sonos Voice Control and Amazon Alexa; it is unclear at this stage whether Google Assistant will continue to be supported. Sonos' internal marketing materials directly mention Alexa, but not Assistant. Sonos Voice Control and Alexa can work concurrently, so it's possible that Sonos is giving Google's service less of a spotlight for that reason.

a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin [&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white">Trueplay on Android (sort of)

The Era 300 and Era 100 will mark the first time that Sonos supports Trueplay tuning on Android phones. But unlike on iOS, it will be the speakers themselves doing the room analysis and sound optimization using their built-in microphones. Internally, Sonos refers to this as "quick tuning," with the regular walk-around-the-room-with-your-phone still available as "advanced tuning" — and still exclusive to iPhone and iPad.