

Forget AI – I just want the Pixel 8 to get four OS upgrades

If this year's I/O was any indication, we're going to hear about AI *a lot* at next month's Pixel 8 launch. AI for your videos, AI for your text to the babysitter, blah blah blah. Fine. But there's something else I'm hoping to see in the next generation of Pixel phones, even if it's not quite the attention-getting feature that AI is: four years of OS upgrades.

Samsung does it. Xiaomi just announced it's doing it. Even OnePlus is doing it. So why is Google – the *company behind Android* – still only offering three OS upgrades for its flagship phones when a growing number of other OEMs are promising four? Sure, most Pixel phones launch with the latest OS version, so in some cases, those three OS upgrades are actually even-stein with other phones playing OS catch-up. And Pixel phones get monthly security patches for a full five years, while other flagships drop to a less frequent software update cadence toward the end of their lifespan.

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To all of the above: sure. But also, can't Google afford to do better? Even if four OS upgrades is technically one more than the other guys? Not to compare oranges to... you-know-whats, but iPhones get upward of five OS version updates. Google, like Apple, now uses custom chipsets in its devices, putting it in control of the hardware *and* software. C'mon, guys!

There's hope: there's a rumor going around that the Pixel 8 will come with five years of OS upgrades. Big, if true! That would put it right in line with Apple. But honestly, I'd take any improvement at this rate. And I realize this isn't a zero-sum game: we can have longer software support *and* AI up the wazoo. All I'm asking is that Google doesn't forget about unglamorous details like OS upgrades while it puts Shakespearean generative AI texts onstage in October. Prithee, Google.

<https://www.theverge.com/2023/9/6/23861563/google-pixel-8-pro-rumors-android-os-software-support>