Google Fiber comes back to life with 5 gigabit service, plans for 8Gbps soon

reader comments

144 with

Share this story

Last year Google Fiber announced it was kind of coming back to life. For years, the service—which had Google roll into a town, lay down miles of fiber-optic cable, and start competing with the local ISP monopoly—had "paused" further expansion. Now, for whatever reason, Fiber is back, and the company is offering a new high of 5 gigabits per second.

Of course the downside to Google Fiber is always the very limited rollout area. Google says 5 Gig service is coming to "Kansas City, West Des Moines, and all our Utah cities," and that's it. Google Fiber announced plans last year to roll out to five new states eventually but has no plans to ever reach a wide rollout.

If you live in one of the blessed Fiber cities, the service sounds great, though. That's 5Gbps symmetrical, so 5Gbps download and upload speeds, which is a massive improvement over something like Comcast and its ~35MB upload speeds. If you're a content creator, developer, or, especially, someone who regularly generates 4K video, normal ISP upload speeds can be crippling. Google's 5Gbps service is $125 a month, which includes a professionally installed 10 Gig fiber modem and "a

Wi-Fi 6 router and two mesh extenders.”

Advertisement

Enlarge / The service tiers in Salt Lake City.

Typically Google Fiber’s equipment is Google’s own Nest WiFi package. The company notes you can bring your own equipment instead, and you probably should, since all models of Nest WiFi only have a 1 gigabit Ethernet port for the modem hookup, which will be a major bottleneck in a 5 gigabit Internet setup. Correctly feeding 5Gbps into a Wi-Fi setup—and even a wired setup—means you’re going to have to be really picky about your equipment.

The 10 Gig modem is a sign of Google’s plans to push Google Fiber even further. The company says “8 Gig is on the horizon”—a reference to a previously announced plan to launch

a $150 service tier in “early 2023.” The company publicly tested 20Gbps and says it’s now on a “journey to 100 Gig symmetrical Internet.”

https://arstechnica.com/?p=1917859