Google is boosting AR performance on Android phones with dual cameras

Google is updating its augmented reality SDK so that phones with dual cameras can capture better depth information. As noted by *Android Police*, the most recent update to the Google Play Services for AR app, which is how Google distributes ARCore features, now notes “Dual camera stereo depth on supported devices” in its changelog.

For now, it appears that the support will be limited to Google’s own Pixel 4 and Pixel 4 XL, which were both released in 2019. The list of compatible ARCore devices on Google’s developer site says that dual camera support will roll out in the coming weeks.

Notably, this means that the Pixel 5 and 4a 5G, both of which are 2020 Pixel phones with dual cameras, won’t see the benefits for now. That may be because their secondary cameras are ultrawides rather than the Pixel 4 and 4 XL’s telephotos, which would have implications for how they could produce more detailed depth maps.

In any case, it’s another consequence of Google’s indecision on Pixel camera lenses. The company long insisted that it only needed a single camera due to computational features like Super Res Zoom on the Pixel 3, then confusingly added a telephoto lens on the Pixel 4 anyway, then backtracked and swapped it out for an ultrawide on the Pixel 5.

https://www.theverge.com/2021/3/2/22308742/google-arcore-dual-camera-update-pixel-4-xl