

Huawei's temperature-taking smartphone is the most 2020 phone of 2020

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- Point the phone at someone's forehead, get a temperature reading.
- The IR temperature sensor apparently lives in the bottom left corner of the camera block.
- It's interesting that there's no labeling for the IR sensor on the camera block. According to the previous image, it lives under the "40MP" text.
- A picture of the front.
- The back comes in black, a color-changing light blue/purple color, and a wild blue design.

Smartphones have always been the modern tech equivalent of a Swiss Army knife, combining a phone, a music player, a camera, a GPS, a PDA, and more into a single device. Now Huawei is pitching yet another device that can be integrated into a smartphone: a thermometer. Huawei's Honor Play 4 Pro has an IR temperature sensor integrated into the rear camera block that can measure the surface temperature of people and objects. In a year when containing the spread of the coronavirus pandemic is a major concern and a fever can be an early indicator of infection, the Play 4 Pro is an extremely 2020 smartphone.

In a video posted on the Chinese social media site Weibo, Huawei demonstrates how the feature will work. Just aim the phone at someone's forehead, tap through the app, and the phone will give you a temperature reading. Temperature checks aren't a guaranteed way to screen for COVID-19, but a fever is a symptom in the majority of hospitalized cases, and it's very easy to check for. The use of infrared non-contact thermometers is a common sight in Huawei's home country of China, and in the United States, employers like Amazon and Walmart are screening masses of warehouse employees for fevers as part of coronavirus control.

Huawei says its IR sensor can read temperatures from -20°C (-4°F) to 100°C (212°F). An IR sensor isn't as accurate as a thermal camera, and neither device, which reads a surface temperature, is as accurate as an internally taken temperature. An IR sensor is cheap, though, and they are already frequently integrated into a smartphone for face unlock and camera effects, so Huawei was able to quickly react to the pandemic.

Like any other phone in Huawei's "Honor" line, the Play 4 Pro is designed to bring a flagshippy feel to a cheaper device. The phone has a 6.57-inch, 2400×1080 LCD, Huawei's Kirin 990 SoC, 8GB of RAM, 128GB of storage, and a 4200mAh battery. It runs Android 10, but the US export ban means the Play 4 Pro doesn't have Google Play apps and services, so you'll be stuck with Huawei's ecosystem. The phone is only being sold in China for now, where the version with the IR sensor runs 2,999 yuan (~\$422).

Listing image by Huawei

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