Meet the Google Pixel 3a: A midrange phone with a flagship camera for $399

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- The Pixel 3a. It looks just like a Pixel.
- This price is probably the biggest deal.
- The three colors. The back still has a two-tone look.
- Hey! That’s a headphone jack up there.
- A look at the top bezel.
- Google is very proud of the camera’s low-light performance.
- The Pixel 3a comes on these carriers.
- And in these countries.

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif.—It’s Google I/O keynote day, and as part of the slate of announcements, Google has taken the wraps off of the Pixel 3a and Pixel 3a XL. This device was heavily leaked in the runup to launch, and the past information has been pretty spot on: we have a cheaper version of the company’s flagship Pixel 3 smartphone. The only big question not answered by the leaks was “How much cheaper?” and with the official announcement, we have our answer: the Pixel 3a is $399, and the Pixel 3a XL is $479.

As expected, the cheaper Pixels get cheaper thanks to the switch to a plastic back instead of glass, a cheaper SoC

instead of the flagship Snapdragon 845, no water resistance, no wireless charging, and a downgrade to a single front camera instead of the normal + wide-angle dual front camera setup of the Pixel 3.

The smaller Pixel 3a has a 5.6-inch, 2220×1080 OLED display and a 3000mAh battery, while the bigger Pixel 3a XL gets a 6-inch, 2160×1080 OLED with a 3700mAh battery. Both devices have a 2GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 670 SoC, 4GB of RAM, 64GB of storage, and a USB-C port. You still get NFC, stereo speakers, squeezable "Active Edge" sides that call up the Google Assistant, an eSIM chip, and an always-on ambient display mode.

There are a few big positives for the Pixel 3a. First, you get the same 12MP single-lens rear camera as the flagship Pixel 3, which, with features like night sight and other Google processing tricks, make it one of the best cameras on a smartphone. This is the only Pixel phone on the market with a 3.5mm headphone jack, a feature lacking in the more expensive Pixel 3. This phone also gets three years of Google's Android updates, which should let you leave all of Android's fragmentation problems behind and have an iPhone-like day-one update program.

Both devices have identical designs and look a lot like the smaller Pixel 3. There are sizable top and bottom bezels with rounded display corners. The back features a two-tone design, just like the flagship Pixel 3, and still has a rear-mounted capacitive fingerprint reader. There are the usual black and white color options as well as a third-option called "Purple-ish" which looks just like the white option with only the slightest hint of purple.

Google is doing a bit better on the distribution front with the Pixel 3a, with T-Mobile, Sprint, and US Cellular jumping on board as carrier partners, in addition to Verizon and unlocked options.

The Pixel 3a is available today in 13 markets. As of this writing, orders are live at Verizon and Google Fi alongside Google’s online store and third-party retailers like Walmart and Best Buy.

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