The Google Home sequel, the “Nest Audio,” is official for $99.99



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- The new Nest Audio.
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- They can be paired in stereo mode.

Google has announced a sequel to the original Google Home, which released four years ago. Meet the Google Nest Audio, the company’s new mainstream smart speaker. The device is in stores now for $99.99, a price drop over the original $129 Google Home.

There’s not much reason to upgrade a speaker, but a big part

of the sales pitch here is that this should have better sound than the original Google Home. Google says the new speaker is 75 percent louder than the original Google Home, with 50 percent stronger bass. These speakers are packing some seriously beefy speaker equipment and are over double the weight of the original Google Home.

The speaker is also supposedly pretty smart. Google says, “Our Media EQ feature enables Nest Audio to automatically tune itself to whatever you’re listening to: music, podcasts, audiobooks, or even a response from Google Assistant. And Ambient IQ lets Nest Audio also adjust the volume of Assistant, news, podcasts, and audiobooks based on the background noise in your home, so you can hear the weather forecast over a noisy dishwasher.” Like the Nest Mini, this device features a next-gen, onboard version of the Google Assistant that “learns your most common music commands and responds two times faster than the original Google Home.”

“Nest Audio” is the new, third branding that Google’s smart speakers have gone through, and examples of all three are on the market. With this release, Google’s current small/medium/large smart speaker lineup is the “Nest Mini,” the “Nest Audio,” and the “Google Home Max.” None of these products really sound related. In the past, Google has had no problem rebranding an existing Google Home product, like when the company changed the “Google Home Hub” to the “Nest Hub.” It really feels like all the speakers should start with “Nest Audio,” with the “Mini” and “Max” flanking this normal version.

Cloth and buttons

Like the other recent Google smart speakers, the exterior of the Nest Audio is all cloth—designed to look more like a piece of laundry than a high-tech smart home object. It has four lights on the front to let you know when it’s listening or

speaking, there’s a mute switch on the back for the microphone, a DC power port, and a big rubber foot on the bottom.

The top half of the speaker is touch-sensitive, letting you do the usual Google speaker commands like tapping the left or right side to adjust volume. You can also tap the center, which will play and pause during music playback or interrupt the Google Assistant when it is speaking. Like every Google speaker, it’s packed with the latest Google Assistant smarts, letting you ask questions, play music, control smart home devices, set reminders, and do a ton of other things.

The Nest audio will hit store shelves in the United States on October 5 and will be for sale in 21 countries starting October 15. It’s up for preorder now on the Google Store and Best Buy.

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