

The incredible shrinking, stretching iPhone

We've already heard rumblings about an iPhone Slim model taking the place of the iPhone Plus in 2025, making it the iPhone 17 Slim. Now, a new report from Apple supply chain expert Ming-Chi Kuo corroborates earlier claims, suggesting that the company's incredible shapeshifting non-Pro iPhone is about to evolve yet again.

Kuo agrees it will come with a 6.6-inch screen and adds that it'll have just one rear-facing camera along with the company's beleaguered in-house 5G chip. Kuo says that the Slim model won't be a direct replacement for the Plus; instead, it represents "new design trends beyond the existing iPhone lineup." That tracks with rumors that it might cost more than the \$1,200 Pro Max.

Apple has had one heck of a time trying to figure out what the second non-Pro iPhone in its lineup should look like. First, it was Mini. That didn't sell very well, so then it became Plus.

The answer now seems to be to ax it entirely. According to Kuo, the Plus "only accounts for 5-10 percent of new iPhone shipments," and Apple has deemed it redundant to the other high-end models it sells. Starting next year (potentially), the Plus is out, and Slim is in.

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It all feels like a yearslong “is this anything?” exercise. iPhone owners are holding onto older phones longer than they used to, and Apple very much wants us to upgrade our iPhones more often, so it keeps spinning the big *Price is Right* wheel to see which combination of size and features will kick the almighty upgrade cycle into high gear again. It wasn’t a small phone, and it wasn’t a big phone.

Personally, I’m all for a skinny iPhone. I’m excited about putting it in my back pocket, forgetting about it, and cracking it right in half. Or maybe I’ll brandish it like a Swiss Army knife the next time I’m at a birthday party and we’re looking for a knife to cut the cake. Maybe I’ll get two slim iPhones, tape them together on the long edges like a book, and make the world’s first foldable iPhone. I’m just saying we shouldn’t limit our imaginations here.

More realistically, the iPhone Slim would just be the latest manifestation of Apple’s fixation with slim devices. That’s cool! But I’m hoping this is a stepping stone toward an *actual* folding iPhone, which is coincidentally also back in the rumor mill. A clamshell-style folding phone like the Motorola Razr or the Samsung Galaxy Z Flip would come with meaningful benefits compared to a regular old iPhone. And if Apple expects me to upgrade my beloved tiny iPhone 13 Mini for anything less, it better think differently.

<https://www.theverge.com/2024/7/24/24205325/slim-iphone-17-rumor-plus-mini>