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Three years ago, Google introduced us to its new design language called Material Design. It was flat, graphic and colorful. It was a visual change that ushered in a new era for Android that focused less on the rapid expansion of Android's feature set, and more on refining what already existed and paving the way for the future. In many cases, Android's maturation period included the absorption of popular features that debuted elsewhere, whether in the manufacturer's skins, alternative launchers or through custom ROM scenes. More and more attention has been paid to battery life, security, performance stability, and fine-grained user control. Not as sexy as a complete visual repair, perhaps, but much more significant. Android 8.0 is the current pinnacle of this effort, the very tip of the spear, fresh from the Google workshop. Android 8.0 Oreo is a comprehensive version of Android as it has never been, and it's as stable, multifunctional and functional as ever. While on the surface it may lack great visual changes, what lies beneath is stacked with usability improvements and polish. This is an Android Body Android 8.0 review. Note: The version of the software I will refer to in this review of Android Oreo is the first iteration of Android Oreo found on Google Pixel, which I use for most of the week. Note that supported Nexus devices will have a slightly different experience, as will other manufacturers' devices when they receive an Oreo update. So while your Oreo experience may look a little different, the basic features described here will be fundamentally the same. The TL;DRAndroid 8.0 Oreo is the most acceptable basic version of Android yet. It is visually consistent, simplified, rich and polished. Oreo is clearly designed to appeal to as wide an audience as possible, from meeting a die-hard Android fan with its comprehensive feature set and advanced customization potential, to placing an iPhone switch or tech debutante with its simplified layout and intuitive user experience. OEM manufacturers are even on this list and we've seen more and more of them abandon the manufacturer's skin games in favor of what Google serves up. Oreo for all. The below view will be broken down into four key sections. The first will focus on the visual aspects of Oreo, the second section will look at those features offering more control, the third will explore the fast access side of Android 8.0 and the last part will cover the smarter side of Oreo. If you want to see the history of Oreo development, look down memory lane with our Android O developer preview tracker.1. Looking goodBetween Android Nouga and Android Oreo there are no major visual changes, but those that exist in the first place have been made to improve usability, increase consistency or add layer layer to everyone's favorite mobile OS. The Settings menu is the most obvious place to start, as this has been further refined from what we saw last year. In particular, the settings menu in Oreo has significantly decreased in size compared to previous versions of Android, with a much larger number of attachment options in larger categories. For example, the network and the Internet cover everything under this umbrella: Wi-Fi, mobile network, data usage, access point and tethering, VPN and airplane mode. The settings menu in Oreo has shrunk significantly in size, with a much larger number of attachment options under larger categories. The result of this is that the settings menu is much shorter - just a page and a half on Pixel - and perhaps more logical, even if it requires more taps now to access key settings like Wi-Fi or Bluetooth (both of which are of course readily available in quick settings and at the top of shadow notifications). The downside of this change is that in some cases the useful information shown below the main header in Nouga, such as the Wi-Fi hotspot or Bluetooth devices that you are currently connected to, has been replaced by a short summary of the settings in this category. However, some settings, such as battery and storage, still show this important information. Even in these categories, everything is simple. What Google considers more advanced options appears in the drop menu. In the settings of the display, for example, you will see only four options ahead: brightness, night light, adaptive brightness and wallpaper - the types of settings of a random Android user will be required. Click on caret next to Advanced, though, and you'll see the full range of display settings: time-out display, screen rotation, font and display size, screen screensaver, ambious display, and so on. For the most part, Oreo Settings look like Nougat (minus the slipping burger menu): a largely monochrome affair on a light background with a few strokes of the same color to draw your attention to key information like Google's offerings that sometimes appear at the top of the settings menu, or important features that have been activated as airplane mode, don't bother or data Saver.The same lightening of the user interface can also be felt in the lightening of the user interface. Swipe down once for shadow notifications and at the top you'll see six in/off switches on light gray ground to keep things more visually consistent with the white card notifications below them. Above the switches you will now see media information, status bar icons, battery information and time, while the date is now below the switches in a more legible font. Swipe down again and you'll see The area is a quick tweak that tab if you have more than nine options visible. As with Nouga, a few switches here just activate and deactivate to deactivate Like flashlight, Saver battery or airplane mode. But others, including Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and Don't Disturb, provide access to the mini menu, so you can make minor changes without leaving the area of Fast Settings. You can change the order of quick settings that will be reflected in the switches at the top of the notification shadow, and a long-pressed icon will lead you to a full settings menu for this feature. You'll also note that user icons, editing, and settings have now migrated to the bottom of the fast settings area to facilitate access on larger-screen devices. Note: A long-pressed Settings icon here will still allow the user interface system to tuner in settings, but it still only functions switches to status bar icons and some settings for The Do Not Disturb mode. Oreo has also simplified the notification maps. If you have more notification cards than you can fit on the screen, at the bottom you'll see a number of app icons showing the rest of the notifications. As you expand and contract the list of notifications you will see those icons pop up into full notification cards or pop back down to the little icon pan. Constant notifications, as for applications running in the background (password managers, weather, Tasker, etc.), will be displayed in more compressed notification cards that can be expanded for more information. Multiple notifications from the same app will still be bundled together, both in Nouga, and a quick response for supported apps is still on board. For fans of Google Play Music, media management in the shadow of the notifications now adopt the color palette of album art, and this will be reflected in the background of the lock screen as well. The launch experience (at least on Pixel) is pretty much the same, but when you run the app box, available just by swiping up anywhere on the home screen, you'll see the navigation buttons at the bottom of the screen switch from white to black for better visibility. A long tap on the home screen will bring up options for changing wallpaper, adding widgets, or accessing home screen settings. In home screen settings, you can turn on or off the app's offerings at the top of the app box, switch what we used to call Google Now or turn off, turn on the home screen rotation, decide whether you want to install a new app to add an icon to your home screen and access two new Oreo settings: adaptive icons and notification points (we'll cover the last one a little further). Adaptive icons are one of the easiest ways Google has come up with to increase the sequence of Android experience on devices from multiple OEMs, many of them use different shapes for Google.Developers just create more than necessary background for their app icon, which can then be disguised with different forms to create a more consistent look at the app icons on your phone. Best of all is that Oreo allows you to decide which shape you like the most: default system, square, round, rounded area, squircle or tears (like Allo and Duo icons). Of course, not every app developer has jumped on board yet, but Android Studio has a simple mastery for guiding developers through the process, so it shouldn't take long to catch on. If you want to know more about adaptive icons, read Gary's excellent explanation of downloadable fonts and adaptive icons. In terms of future android visual validation, Oreo also includes several new features to keep up with the times. In previous versions of Android, there was a maximum screen ratio aspect of 1.86:1, which is basically a widescreen cinematic standard. With higher and narrower aspects, including 18.5:9 on the Galaxy S8 and Note 8, and 2:1 on the LG G6, Oreo no longer has the default side ratio - it's just the default ratio of the device. Now we just need to get the app developers on board to properly adapt their applications to new formats. Oreo also has built-in support for broad-colored applications, essentially meaning that devices with the required HDR display technology can display a much larger range of colors. There aren't many phones out there with the necessary display hardware to take advantage of yet, but that number will increase significantly as Android 8.0 Oreo continues to roll out next year. And finally, all your favorites: Android Easter Egg and Emoticons. As discovered in the final Android O developer preview, Android Oreo Easter Egg ... Octopus. It floats around the screen, changes sizes when you rotate the device and can be dragged across the screen. And... that seems to be about it. Android 8.0 Oreo also officially delivers new circular emojis due to blob emojis that were loved and hated in equal measure. We've written about this elsewhere on the site, including Google reasoning for making changes, so I'll leave you to brooding. What I hope was evident in this section is that Google is finally paying attention to the little things. Lighting the user interface, introducing adaptive icons and new emojis may not seem like a big deal, but they make the Oreo experience more consistent. Condensing menu settings, moving icons and collapsing persistent notifications make Oreo more usable. And adding full color support when removing maximum ratio ensures that Android 8.0 will look great on devices that haven't even come out yet. Taking control of the Android 8.0 is also more about taking control than any previous version of Android. Be Google put the brakes on rampant resource-intensive app processes or users having more power to limit what apps can access and how notifications are handled, Oreo has it in the crowd. What's new in Oreo is the ability to defer notifications. Partly Partly notification away, and now you'll see two icons: one leading to notification channel settings for that app, and the other that sets the timer before the notification appears. The default is one hour, but you can also choose from 15 minutes, 30 minutes or two hours. Another key part of Oreo notification processing is the introduction of notification channels. Apps targeted at Oreo's API 26 should include notification channels (while apps that won't continue to behave the way they do now). App developers then identify as many different types of notifications in their app as they like and Oreo allows users to decide which app notification channels they want to be alerted to and how. Once you're in the notification settings for a particular app, you'll see several options. You can completely disable notifications, allow notification points (more on that in the next section) or flip the switch for each type of notification channel identified by the app developer. Some apps will have very few, but others, like the Google app, may have more than a dozen. Each notification channel gives you three options: disable it completely, take it as it is, or fine-tune it the way you like. For the first two, simply flip the notification channel on or off. For the latter, tap the channel's name, and you'll see a variety of options, including setting the importance for that notification channel (including the Urgent option, which uses a universal and thus more consistent, type of app application application alert), changing the sound of the notification associated with it, turning the vibration on or off, and so on. The benefit of notification channels is a gradual process - start with the default and limit certain types of notifications as they annoy you. Power users may want to devote their first weekend to Oreo to customize each notification on their phone, but everyone else can either ignore them or cherry pick as needed. Picture-in-Picture mode (PiP) is one of the flagship features of Android 8.0, previously available on Android TV, but not mobile. Primarily for video players and apps in which you watch content like Chrome, PiP lets you keep watching what you're doing in a small floating window otherwise going on about your Android business - it's a bit On the free video version of the split screen, which also returns to Android 8.0.In supported apps, clicking the home button will keep your video playing in a movable window in the bottom right corner of the screen. You can drag it across the screen and click on it to gain access control or make it full screen. Of course, you can also disable this feature based on the app if you don't like it. Simply go to the App Info page for the app in question, or visit the Special Access section of the app in apps and notifications to see all PiP.Background-enabled apps are one of the ways Google has developed to bar the amount of resources used by background processes. As you know, many apps love to keep different processes in the background, whether it's faster to serve you notifications or keep track of where you are. But you know what they're talking about giving someone enough rope, so with Oreo, Google said enough is enough. With Android 8.0, instead of letting apps run rampant with battery life in the background, Oreo limits its requests to scheduled window activities. Gary embraces how it all works in a great background performance limits to explain, but what it all means is a better battery for you and less load on the device. By default, these restrictions apply only by default to Android O-oriented apps, but you can turn them on for any app by driving into the battery usage section on the App Info page and turning off the switch for background activity. Several other features available before Android 8.0 Oreo are also aimed directly at keeping you in the driver's seat where your device's security is concerned. Google Play Protect lets you know before you install the app that it was certified safely by the Google Play team. Then They Protect scans billions of apps on the Google market daily to ensure things stay on up and up. As in Nouga, Oreo makes a note on the App Info page about where each app was installed from. Previously, the inclusion of unknown sources was a common time action, but now every app that wants to download another from anywhere, but Google Play must have the permission you provided on a case-by-case basis. This access, of course, can be revoked at any time. Android Device Manager is now known as Find My Device, much easier to understand the method of tracking, blocking or remotely destroying a lost device. You can access Google Play Protect and Find My Phone either through security and location, or through the Settings section of Google's Security.You still have detailed control over the app's permissions provided to each app on your phone, either in the permissions category, or by category per app. But now you can also control special app access settings, such as the ability to display on other apps, have unlimited access to use PiP mode or change system settings. Again, these settings won't appeal to everyone, but like everything else in Oreo, this user power feature is safely hidden where it's available but doesn't confuse the casual user. Which brings us to Vituy. Announced earlier this year, Vitals is another Google initiative to improve improvements productivity and stability. It includes security tools, OS optimization and various tools for developers to monitor the use of their app on your device. Again, all this analytics means that app developers can optimize their apps for your device, giving you the best battery life and performance of the app. Finally, Android availability options get an excellent new menu settings area where you can include an accessibility label - including with a lock screen. Simply select your preferred availability service, or Talkback, choose to speak or switch access, and tap and hold both volume buttons to activate and disable the service. You can even add a set accessibility button to the navigation area on the screen. The new settings have been kept largely out of sight to avoid cluttering what has traditionally been a sophisticated OS for beginnersLike most other options that we've seen so far, Oreo still provides users with the advanced tools and options they've come to expect from Android. But they again kept largely out of sight to avoid cluttering what has traditionally been a challenging OS for beginners. Google has also added a lot of material in the background to make you have better battery life and performance than ever before, and this is always a welcome addition.3. From Google Now to Google Assistant, Google wants to deliver the most relevant information when needed, if not only sooner. Each subsequent iteration of Android is becoming more intuitive, with more and more attention being paid to helping you make things faster. Nowhere is this more obvious than in Android Oreo.We will start with notification points. Notification points are Google's response to unread icons. A similar bit of code that comes with the app icon on which it appears will alert you to any notifications you may have missed. Points are visible in both the app drawer and home screen, and the app's long push will show a condensed version of the available notifications. They can swipe away according to normal or open to action. Notification points are Google's response to unread icons, nicely paired with applications of specific launcher shortcuts. With a long-term push app icon anywhere on Android 8.0, you'll also get application-specific launcher shortcuts for each app. They are available regardless of whether the notification point is present and whether it can go directly to different common actions. For Twitter it can be search, post a tweet or send a DM. For Gmail, you can compile an email or go straight to one of your Entries and photos will offer to make room or take you to search results for a specific set of your photos. Long-term clicking of the app icon is also the fastest way to access the App Info page for each app or add a widget. Another quick feature of Oreo is the intelligent choice of text. It will be pretty familiar to any that translates foreign words into Marshmallow or Nougat, but in Oreo it's even smarter. While Translate and Web Search have previously been relegated to the overflow menu when you've highlighted the text section, Android 8.0 not only anticipates the phrase you're trying to highlight, but it will also predict which app you'll probably want to use next and put it in front of the copy/paste menu. Based on this, Oreo can learn your sharing habits too. At the basic level, Smart sharing connects apps to action. So, for example, he will know to pair a photo receipt with an account app or a selfie with a messenger and social media apps. But Smart sharing will also start to learn about your habits and adapt to apps you typically share with certain types of content. It works with images, video, audio and text. Android Oreo also introduces an improved Ambient Display. Familiar time icons and notifications still breathe on the screen when you lift the device up, but now you'll get big notifications when the notification first arrives. Unfortunately, the ability to set up lock screen shortcuts, present in the first developer preview, does not do so in the final build. Further adding to the time-saving aspects of Android 8.0 is the new Autofill API, which promises to save you bucketloads of time online. Just provide a service like Google Autofill or a password manager like LastPass permission to collect passwords, credit card data and personal data and Oreo can offer to automatically fill out web forms and log you into different accounts in the future. Obviously keeping your device safe and locking your screen protected is important here, but it's a huge time saver. One of the least touted features of Android Vitals is the faster download time. On Pixel, the download process is noticeably faster - twice as fast actually. What used to take ages is being done in seconds, complete with powered by the Android logo. Whether it's through home shortcuts for popular app features, smart text selection, autocomplete forms or just downloading your phone twice as fast, Oreo will have you doing what you need to do in record time. Meanwhile, Project Treble, which separates the vendor's implementation from the Android platform, allows you to update yourself. This means that OEM manufacturers can simply update the Android portion of their phones without requiring anything from silicon suppliers, which theoretically means you get updates faster (I'll believe it when I see it). Treble will be part of all new devices launched with Oreo, although current Pixel phones are also supported. As with other recent versions of Android, Oreo wants to help you up to things that matter quickly. Whether it's through home shortcuts for popular app features, smart text selection, autocomplete forms or just downloading your phone twice as fast, faster, You will do what you need to do in record time.4. Being smarterAndroid 8.0 is also the smartest of all android versions, taking advantage of the impressive Google Assistant and all the machine learning software Google has done in recent years. But there's still room for some good old-fashioned man-made improvements too. Here are some of the smart solutions Google has made with Android Oreo.High performance Bluetooth audio was one of the first oreo features to attract the attention of the Android masses. Sony donated its LDAC to Google for inclusion in Oreo, opening a mobile OS for superior audio connectivity on supported hardware. I won't go into details here as The LDAC explanation of Rob's and Oreo audio features articles make the subject much better justice, but suffice it to say Oreo maintains a sound quality that excels at both what the human ear can discern or what the vast majority of high-end audio equipment can even reproduce. High performance Bluetooth audio was one of the first Oreo features to attract the attention of Android masses. Support for Bluetooth 5 is another widely advertised feature of Android 8.0. Offering such enticing advantages as doubling the bandwidth of data over short distances or four times the range with less bandwidth, Bluetooth 5 is a big deal. There's been a lot of confusion around technology though, so our own Gary Sims has published several articles outlining what Bluetooth 5 does (hint: it has nothing to do with streaming audio), how effective it is and how many devices can use it yet (hint: close to no). As HDR display support for the full range of color apps, Bluetooth 5 is an investment in the future. Fortunately, the first devices to run with Bluetooth 5 hardware and Oreo out of the box are most likely right around the corner. Oreo also provides a new multi-display mode that lets you pick up on the big screen everything you've just done on the small screen. Your phone will also be able to detect which display it needs to work and switch back and forth seamlessly. TextView's automatic dimensions will allow developers to automatically update text in their apps according to available on-screen real estate. Mouse pointer capture is another forward-thinking addition in Android 8.0 that opens Android devices such as Chromebooks and others to input the mouse (physical keyboard support, including for navigation, has also been added). I tried it on pixel and it absolutely works as advertised but as you can probably imagine, it's super weird to use a mouse with a smartphone. Android Instant Apps are another new introduction we more detail elsewhere, but being able to use a selection of feature apps that you don't actually install on your phone is a revolutionary idea. UIA will significantly reduce the need to retain those who from time to time On the device, freeing up space to store the things you want, like photography or music, while at the same time allowing you to access all the benefits of activity-based apps. Check out Adam's Great Video on the Meaning of MAU. Downloadable fonts are another under-the-radar Oreo feature that most people will never think about twice. The short version is that 800 font libraries supported by Google can now be accessed through the supplier app. This means that instead of each app on your phone requiring its own font library, which naturally leads to duplication, apps can now simply call the general library in the vendor's app, further reducing the size of the app's files. The best news is that this feature has been oversteeped on API 14 (Android 4.0). Upgradable graphic drivers will also debut on devices that ship with Android 8.0 Oreo out of the box. By tapping memory controls in a different direction now, Android 8.0 includes limiting the disk space for cached data too. Under this new system, each app on your phone gets a certain amount of storage space. But whenever the system has to free up disk space, any cached files above that threshold on the app will be cleared. The good news for users is the smaller cached file size as a whole. Android 8.0 Oreo expands OS capabilities by baking in add-ons such as Bluetooth 5 and Wi-Fi Aware - none of which are even supported by any hardware yet. On the Wi-Fi front, Oreo uses a service called Wi-Fi Aware, also known as the Neighbor Awareness Network. Wi-Fi Aware basically allows you to create micro Wi-Fi networks with other devices around you without using traditional Internet access points. Apps will be able to communicate in both directions between connected devices, although at the moment there is no supported hardware, so stay tuned. Android 8.0's Wi-Fi Assistant allows the assistant to automatically connect you to a high-quality public wireless network. The setting is disabled by default, but it can be reflected with a switch available through your Wi-Fi preferences in Settings.While some of these Oreo features are more behind the scenes, niche things like Sony's LDAC codec for high-quality Bluetooth audio connections, others, like Android Instant Apps, have the potential to dramatically change the way we think about apps. At the same time, Android 8.0 Oreo expands OS capabilities by baking in add-ons such as Bluetooth 5 and Wi-Fi Aware - none of which are even supported by any hardware yet. Android Oreo Features: Final Thoughts I Can With Confidence that I have never been impressed with the new version of Android as I am with Android Oreo. Even the bugs that usually plague the new update in the days immediately after its release have not settled on my trusting Pixel. Unlike some, I even managed to go through the developer previews with barely hiccups, hiccups, an encouraging experience for the now public version I have enjoyed these last few days. Many features are first introduced in Android Nouga and have previously found their true home in Oreo, which finally seems to get everything right. It certainly has its detractors, but even they will have to admit that it is easily the most polished and reliable version of Android Google has ever released. Like its namesake, Oreo is very keen to be an OS for everyone. Android finally seems to get it right. As we mentioned at the beginning, and like its namesake, Oreo is very keen to be an OS for everyone. I can easily see how an iPhone user can pick it up and run with it, just as easily as I see Android fans adore all new advanced features and customization options. The fact that HTC, OnePlus, Lenovo/Motorola and even the basic phone are all mostly using Android shares these days is testament to the great software. If you are in the market for a new phone this year and do not recommend this device or that, my suggestion will be to buy anything that will help you Android Oreo. Because for the first time in a long time, the software is a real star here, the hardware is just the stage at which it shines. Shines.