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Tech > Services & Software

AirDrop for Windows? Check Out Android's New File-Sharing Tool for the PC

Nearby Share is Google's new AirDrop clone you can use to share files between your Android phone and Windows computer.



Nelson Aguilar

July 28, 2023 6:15 a.m. PT

3 min read



You can now more easily send files from your Android phone to your Windows PC.

James Martin/CNET

It's easy to send files to and from Apple devices, thanks to AirDrop, which is why Google now has its own wireless file-sharing tool for Android and Windows.

Google recently rolled out the Nearby Share app for Windows, which has been in beta since March. The new tool lets you easily send and receive files -- photos, videos, music, documents and more -- between nearby Android devices and Windows computers.

During the Nearby Share beta program, 1.7 million people downloaded the application, sending over 50 million files between their Android and Windows devices, according to Google.

Nearby Share isn't close to being the first file-sharing feature between Android and Windows. It's not even the only file transfer tool that Google currently has. You can transfer files via Google accounts, such as Drive and Photos, or even via USB.

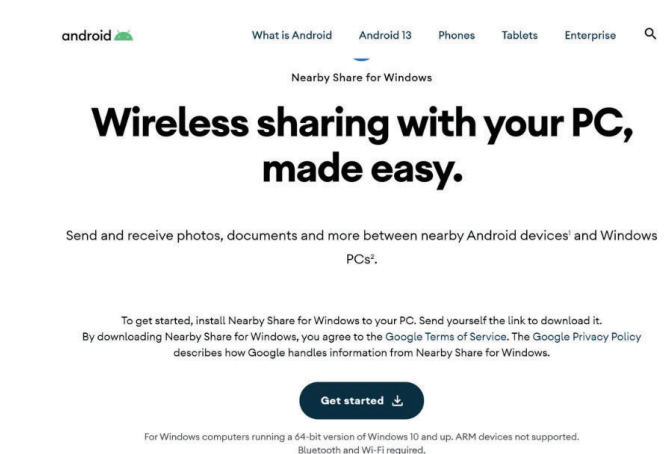
However, it's easy to use. Nearby Share doesn't involve cables, and it doesn't require uploading files to any existing accounts. Instead, much like Apple's AirDrop feature, you can quickly send a file from your Android phone to your Windows computer, as long as the two devices are nearby and connected. It's simply less complicated to use than other existing file transfer methods.

If you're interested in sharing files between your devices, here's how Nearby Share works.

For more, check out the [best Android phones you can get in 2023](#) and our comparison of the [Samsung Galaxy S23 vs. the Galaxy S22](#).

How to use Nearby Share on Windows and Android

On your Windows computer, go to the [Nearby Share website](#) and hit Get Started to download the tool. Install the Nearby Share application, give it access to your computer and wait for it to boot up.

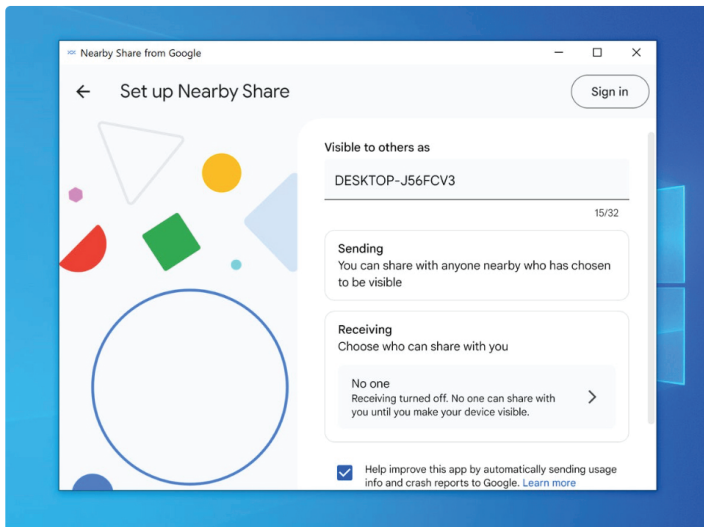


The whole download and install process should take less than a minute.
Nelson Aguilar/CNET

Once Nearby Share is up and ready, you can either sign in with your Google account or use it without one. If you sign in to your account, you can customize certain preferences that you can't do without an account attached to Nearby

Share.

The next page will show you a few settings to customize before you continue, such as the name of your device (which you can change) and who your device is visible to. By default, your computer will not be visible, but if you tap on No One, you can choose to make your device visible to everyone, your contacts or your devices.

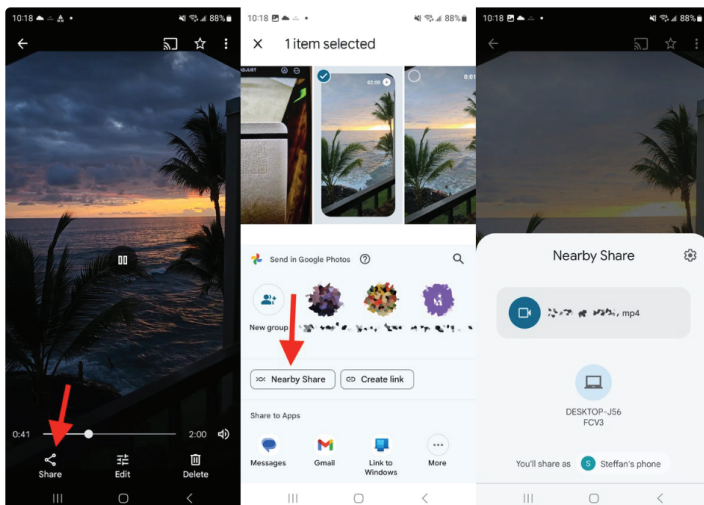


You can change your computer's name, like [your name]'s Windows PC.

Nelson Aguilar/CNET

Now that your device is visible, you can send files from your Android to your Windows.

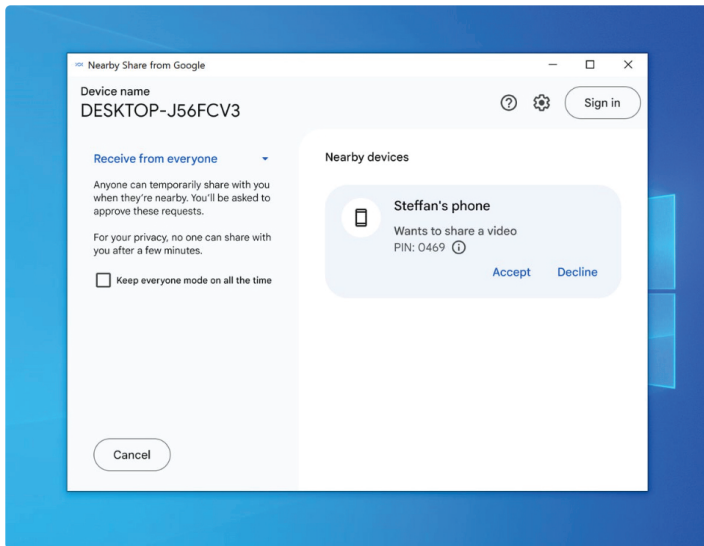
For this example, I'll be sharing a video from a Galaxy S23 Ultra to a Dell G7. To share the video, I went to the Photos app on my Android phone, hit the **Share** button, tapped **Nearby Share**, found my computer and then sent the video. Whatever file you're sharing, the process should be pretty similar: tap Share, find the Nearby Share option and then send it to your computer.



You can share videos, photos, documents, audio files and more.

Nelson Aguilar/CNET

On your computer, you'll then need to accept the file. Once you do, it'll download to your computer. You can access the file directly from Nearby Share, or from your download folder (default save).



You must accept the file before it can download to your computer.

Nelson Aguilar/CNET

If you want to share a file from your Windows computer to your Android device, drag and drop the file into Nearby Share, look for your device and send.

Also, check out [how to clean up your Android by deleting your browser's cache](#) and how you can [get Windows 11 for \\$40 right now](#).

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TECH SAMSUNG

Samsung confirms its AirDrop-like 'Quick Share' is launching on the Galaxy S20

The sharing feature will come to other Samsung devices over the coming months

By Chris Welch | @chrishwelch | Feb 11, 2020, 5:58pm EST

SHARE

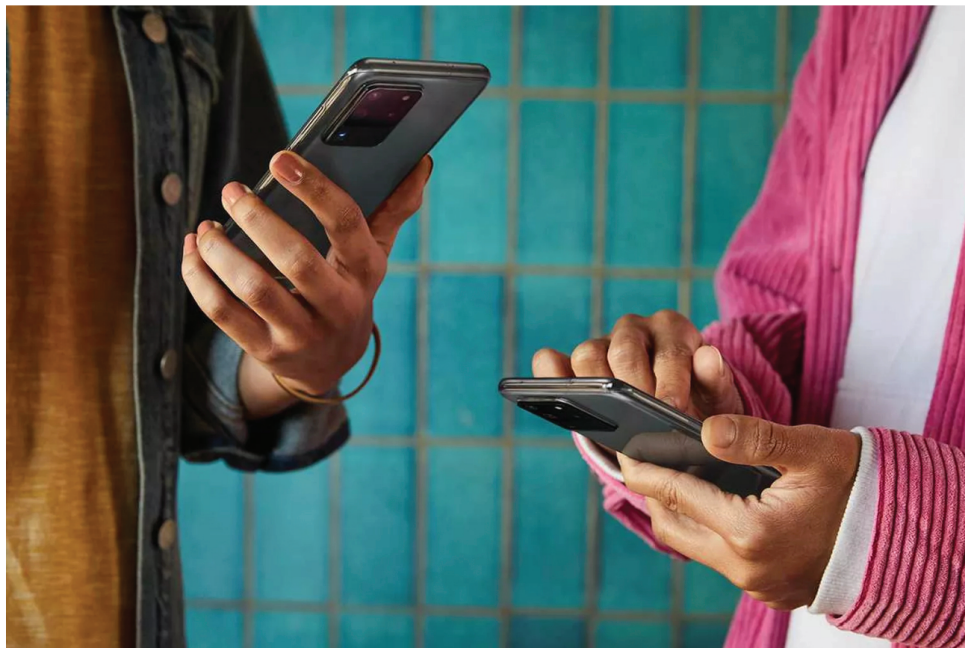


Image: Samsung

AirDrop has long been a handy convenience that comes with using Apple gadgets, but Samsung has finally come up with its own version. And it's debuting on the Galaxy S20, S20 Plus, and S20 Ultra. It's called Quick Share, and Samsung says it lets you "share everything with your friends instantly." Quick Share is detailed [toward the bottom of this page](#) that's about the S20's camera.

Similar to AirDrop, Quick Share can show "which of your contacts is nearby" so you can easily send files to them. But an interesting advantage over AirDrop is that Quick Share allows you to share with "up to 5 friends" simultaneously. AirDrop limits you to one recipient

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at a time.

Screenshots of the Quick Share interface [were published by XDA Developers](#) last month, revealing that it has similar options to AirDrop: you can choose to let anyone with a compatible Samsung phone or tablet send you content, or just your contacts.

The only compatible devices, however, are the Galaxy S20 phones — at least at launch. Samsung says Quick Share will make its way to the company’s other devices “soon.”

Samsung has offered device-to-device sharing before for certain scenarios like beaming content onto your Samsung TV. [That version is called Direct Share](#), but Quick Share is a bit more seamless.

Google is also working on its own AirDrop-like software feature [called Nearby Sharing](#) that should eventually arrive on Pixel phones. I think we can all agree that AirDrop is an excellent idea, and after some false starts that focused too heavily on NFC, it’s good to see Android catching up in the year 2020.

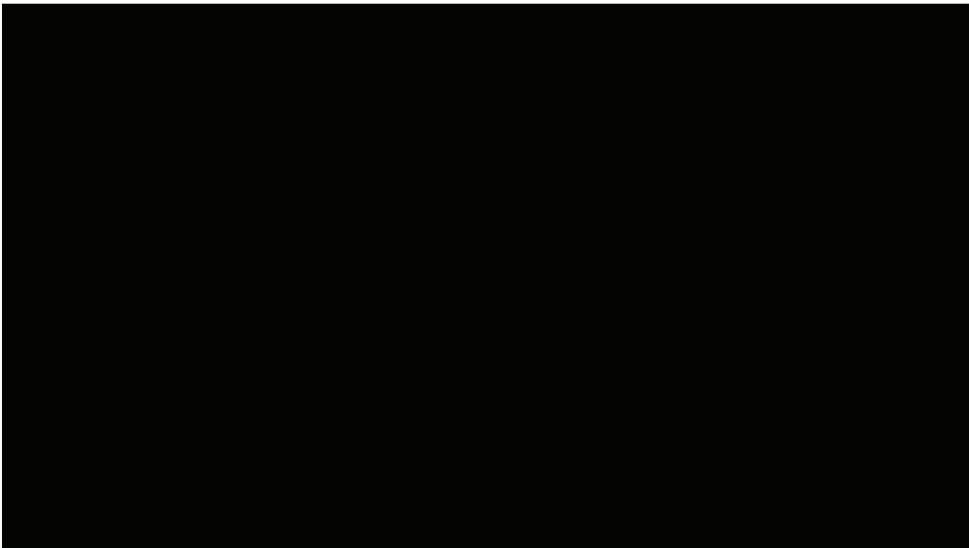
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Samsung Unpacked 2020 event: all of the latest rumors, news, and more

- [The Galaxy Z Flip's split-screen mode isn't just for Samsung foldables, says Google](#)
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Samsung reportedly working on Quick Share, an AirDrop-like sharing feature

The feature will allow videos, photos and other files to be shared between Galaxy phones, according to XDA Developers.



Steven Musil

Jan. 23, 2020 7:19 p.m. PT



Samsung is reportedly developing a feature that will allow files to be shared between supported Galaxy phones.

Angela Lang/CNET

If you're an Android user who has long envied [Apple's AirDrop](#), which allows file sharing between [iPhones](#), [Samsung](#) may have some good news for you. The Korean electronics giant is working on a [similar feature](#) called [Quick Share](#) that will allow files to be shared between [Galaxy phones](#), according to XDA Developers.

The feature will allow users to share photos, videos and other files between

supported Samsung devices, XDA Developers reported Thursday. The tech news site got its hands on the feature's APK but was unable to complete a transfer – probably because its device wasn't supported.

XDA Developers theorizes the feature will be supported by the [Galaxy S20](#), the forthcoming Samsung flagship handset expected to unveil on [Feb. 11](#) at its [Unpacked event](#) in San Francisco.

But unlike AirDrop, which Apple unveiled in 2015, Quick Share will include a cloud aspect, allowing files up to 1GB to be temporarily uploaded to the Samsung Cloud, XDA Developers reported. Files can then be streamed to Samsung Smart Things devices or downloaded to another device, according to the report.

Samsung didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Correction, 7:50 p.m. PT: This story initially gave an incorrect name for the sharing feature. It is called Quick Share.



Watch this: Galaxy S20 leaks continue, forget about a Twitter edit...

1:29

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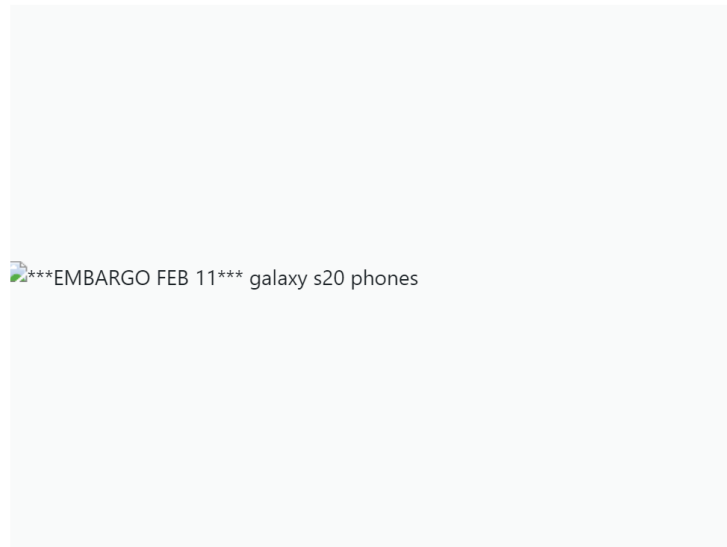
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Samsung just added 2 of the iPhone's most-coveted features to its new Galaxy S20 phones

Lisa Eadicicco Feb 12, 2020, 7:21 AM



EMBARGO FEB 11 galaxy s20 phones

Antonio Villas-Boas/Business Insider

- **Samsung's Galaxy S20 lineup will come with Google's Duo chat app directly baked into the phone app and a new feature for sharing files wirelessly with other Galaxy device owners called Quick Share.**
- **The two features serve as alternatives to features the iPhone has offered for years: FaceTime and AirDrop.**
- **Google is also rumored to be working on its own AirDrop-like feature for Android called Nearby Sharing.**

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Samsung's new [Galaxy S20 lineup](#) comes with two new features that may sound familiar to iPhone owners: video chatting that's built directly into the phone app, and the ability to quickly share files wirelessly.

That's because the phones, which Samsung unveiled on Tuesday, come with [Google's Duo video-chatting service](#) baked directly into the phone's dialer, and will also support a new feature called Quick Share for easily sharing files between Samsung devices.

RECOMMENDED VIDEO

Both additions fill a gap in [Samsung's lineup](#) that the iPhone has offered for years. Although Galaxy device owners have a variety of video-chat apps available to download, from Google's Duo to Microsoft's Skype and Facebook's Messenger, the new Duo integration means phone's dialer, messaging app, and contacts app. That should make it feel a lot more like Apple's FaceTime, which is built into the iPhone's phone and messages apps in addition to being available in a standalone app.

Samsung's Galaxy S20 devices will also come with a new feature called Quick Share, which allows users to share content like photos, videos, and files to other Galaxy device owners directly rather than through email or messaging. It sounds a lot like Apple's AirDrop, which uses Bluetooth and Wi-Fi to establish a peer-to-peer connection with other nearby compatible devices. Quick Share will work with other Galaxy devices, but the company has not yet said

which devices beyond the [Galaxy S20 lineup](#) will support it.

The announcement comes as Google is rumored to be developing its own AirDrop-like feature for Android more broadly called Nearby Sharing, as [XDA Developers](#) recently discovered.

Samsung announced its new [Galaxy S20 lineup](#) during an event in San Francisco on Tuesday. All three phones will officially go on sale starting March 6, with the Galaxy S20 starting at \$1,000, the Galaxy S20 Plus starting at \$1,200, and the Galaxy S20 Ultra starting at \$1,400.

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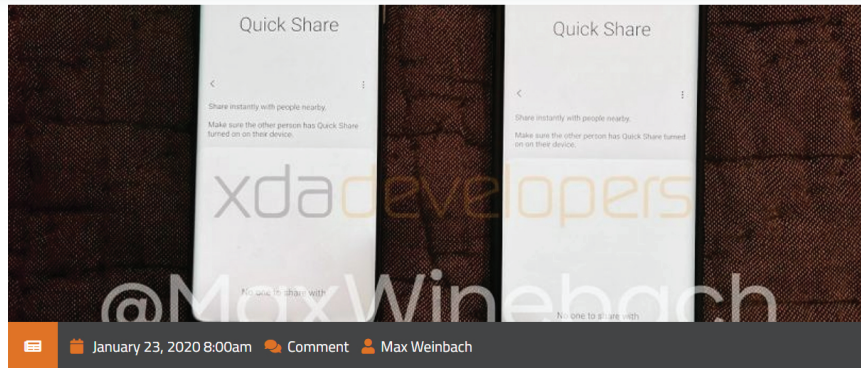
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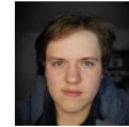
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Exclusive: Quick Share is Samsung's alternative to AirDrop for Galaxy phones

Competition is huge in the phone industry, as we all know. Previously, the competition used to be restricted to hardware and who could have the best hardware, but we've progressed from that era. The area of real competition now is with software, and the software experience can now make or break purchase decisions, as companies like Apple and Google very well know. Some would argue the exclusive features Apple has is why they are one of the biggest phone brands. Well, Samsung is trying to match Apple's features with some of its own implementations. The newest one of these features is Quick Share, Samsung's upcoming alternative to Apple's AirDrop.

Quick Share is slated to be a pretty simple and tool for quickly sending files between two Galaxy phones. We were able to get the APK running on a few different Galaxy phones but we were unable to get two files to transfer between the devices. The APK was not meant for our test devices so it's not surprising it's not working.

