

Android 17 Adds New Status Bar Controls for Pixel Phones

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In brief

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The update adds a dedicated Status Bar settings section where users can choose which notification icons appear and hide a few system indicators. Similar controls have been available on Android phones from several other brands for years, but Google's Pixel software has offered relatively few options in this area.

More control over notification icons

Android 17 QPR2 Beta 4 lets users choose how notification icons are displayed in the status bar.

There are three options:

- All
- Priority only
- None

Selecting "All" keeps notification icons visible as usual. "Priority only" limits the status bar to notifications marked as important, while "None" removes notification icons from the status bar.

This can help keep the top of the screen cleaner, particularly for users who receive notifications from many apps throughout the day.

Mute and vibrate icons can be hidden

Google has also added controls for some system icons.

Users can hide the mute and vibrate indicators when those modes are active. There is also an option related to displaying the battery percentage.

The choices are still fairly limited. Android 17 QPR2 Beta 4 does not provide individual controls for every status bar icon, and users cannot change the appearance of the icons themselves.

Still, the addition of a dedicated Status Bar menu gives Google a place to add more controls in future updates.

Android 17 QPR2 Beta 4 reaches Platform Stability

The latest beta also brings Android 17 QPR2 to Platform Stability.

At this stage, Google has finalised the APIs and other app-facing behaviour planned for the release. Developers can now complete compatibility testing and prepare their apps for the stable update.

Beta 4 also fixes a long list of problems reported in earlier builds.

These include overheating and unexpected restarts, Bluetooth call audio switching to the phone speaker, problems with the notification panel, screen recording blocking microphone access, gesture navigation issues and unusually long charging times when using the 80 percent battery limit.

Google has also addressed bugs affecting Face Unlock, the Recents screen, app search in the launcher, smart glasses and WebGL content in browsers.

Available first through the Android beta programme

The new Status Bar controls are currently part of Android 17 QPR2 Beta 4.

Pixel users enrolled in the Android Beta Program can receive the build as an over-the-air update on supported devices. The changes are expected to reach more users when the stable Android 17 QPR2 release becomes available.