

# Apple looks to mixed reality for future hardware expansion

## Article

**The news:** A research note from analyst Ming-Chi Kuo [viewed](#) by MacRumors provides an overview and timeline of Apple's expected mixed reality hardware offerings. Kuo focused on three rumored devices—a mixed reality headset, AR glasses, and previously unreported contact lenses.

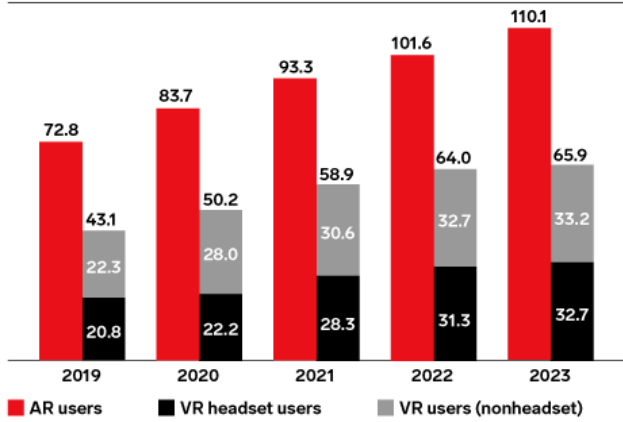
**What's coming:** Apple is exploring the next generation of devices.

- **Mixed reality headset (or “helmet”):** Apple is **working** on a mixed reality headset offering a 3D environment for gaming, video, and communication; multiple 8K OLED displays; dozens of cameras; and advanced eye-tracking technology, **according** to multiple **reports**. Previous reports estimated the headsets would cost around \$3,000 but Kuo’s note lowered that estimate to \$1,000. Kuo also claimed the OLED displays would be created by Sony rather than TSMC, as was previously reported.
- **AR glasses:** Rumors of Apple’s AR glasses project date back to 2017 and reports over the past year claim the first iteration of the glasses will work closely alongside a user’s iPhone to “display things such as text, emails, maps, and games over the user’s field of vision,” **per** Bloomberg. ” Echoing this point, Kuo claimed the glasses will provide an optical see-through AR experience and that the glasses could be integrated with the **rumored** Apple Car. While some analysts have predicted Apple’s AR glasses may come as early as **next** year, others don’t expect them to **arrive** until 2023.
- **AR contacts:** Kuo’s note reportedly claimed Apple is preparing to launch AR contacts lens sometime between 2030 and 2040 which he claimed would shift electronics into an era of “invisible computing,” though little else known of this product.

**Why it’s worth watching:** eMarketer **forecasts** US AR and VR users—defined as those who engage with XR content at least once per month via any device—to grow from 93.3 million and 58.9 million to 110.1 million and 65.9 million, respectively, between 2021 and 2023, making XR a prominent growth area for Apple and other tech companies. While **Facebook**, **Microsoft**, and **Samsung** are also reportedly racing to release their own mixed-reality devices, an entry by Apple could mark an inflection point for the XR industry given Apple’s proven track record of pushing technologies—like **smartphones**, **tablets**, and **smartwatches**—toward mass consumer adoption.

## US VR and AR Users, 2019-2023

millions



Note: individuals of any age who experience VR content at least once per month via any device; AR users are individuals of any age who experience AR content at least once per month via any device

Source: eMarketer, March 2021

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