

What is an iPad and do you need/want one?



Steve Jobs and Apple have done it again. In just one month they have already sold over [1 million iPad devices](#). So what is an iPad and do you need/want one? Well just as Steve Jobs and Apple did in 2001 with the iPod music player they have refined a whole new category of consumer electronic device. The iPad is not exactly a computer nor just an iPod. It is something between the two. For the most part think of it as a device for "sitting back" and consuming content rather than "leaning forward" and producing work.

With an iPad you can:

- Read, write and reply to emails
- Look at websites
- Read books, magazines and newspapers
- Listen to music, podcasts and audiobooks
- Watch movies and TV shows
- View pictures
- Play games
- Install "[Apps](#)", small programs created by Apple and third parties

With an iPad you can not:

- Install software you already own
- Make cell phone calls
- Take pictures
- Take videos
- Connect a printer (at least not easily)

You can also write documents and work on spreadsheets by purchasing the iWork for iPad apps (\$10 each) but these apps ([Microsoft Office is Just What the iPad Needs](#)) and the [optional keyboard](#) are not ideal for using as a full time computer to produce work. It also does not have a USB port so you can't use a USB drive to save documents to or any other USB device with it.

I could see this device in another room in your home (TV room, kitchen) other than where your computer is so you could pick it up at any time to see if someone has emailed you or look up something on the Internet. You could even sit in your comfortable chair and read a book or the New York Times or listen to some music (with headphones).

If you were going on a long trip I could see you use it to entertain yourself on the plane, train or bus. But if you are going to the grocery store I can't see you carrying it with you in your purse to see if someone has emailed you while you stand in line. If you commute to work and already carry some sort of bag then an iPad might fit in it nicely.

So if you already have a wireless network at home (the iPad uses your wireless network to retrieve emails and websites) and have \$500 burning a hole in your pocket go ahead and buy the least expensive model (The more expensive ones have greater storage and/or the ability to get the Internet all over town so you would really need to know ahead of time that you need one of the more expensive ones.) and enjoy the latest innovation from Apple.

[Apple iPad website](#)

[iPad Apps](#)

[Top 5 reasons you should get an iPad](#)

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Claude Kerno

719.650.9916

ckerno@pctutor.com - www.pctutor.com

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