131 BEST NEW APPS REVIEWED & RATED

iPad&iPhone user

APP REVIEWS, TIPS AND BUYING ADVICE FOR iOS ADDICTS

50 BEST GAMES EVER

FOR iPAD & iPHONE

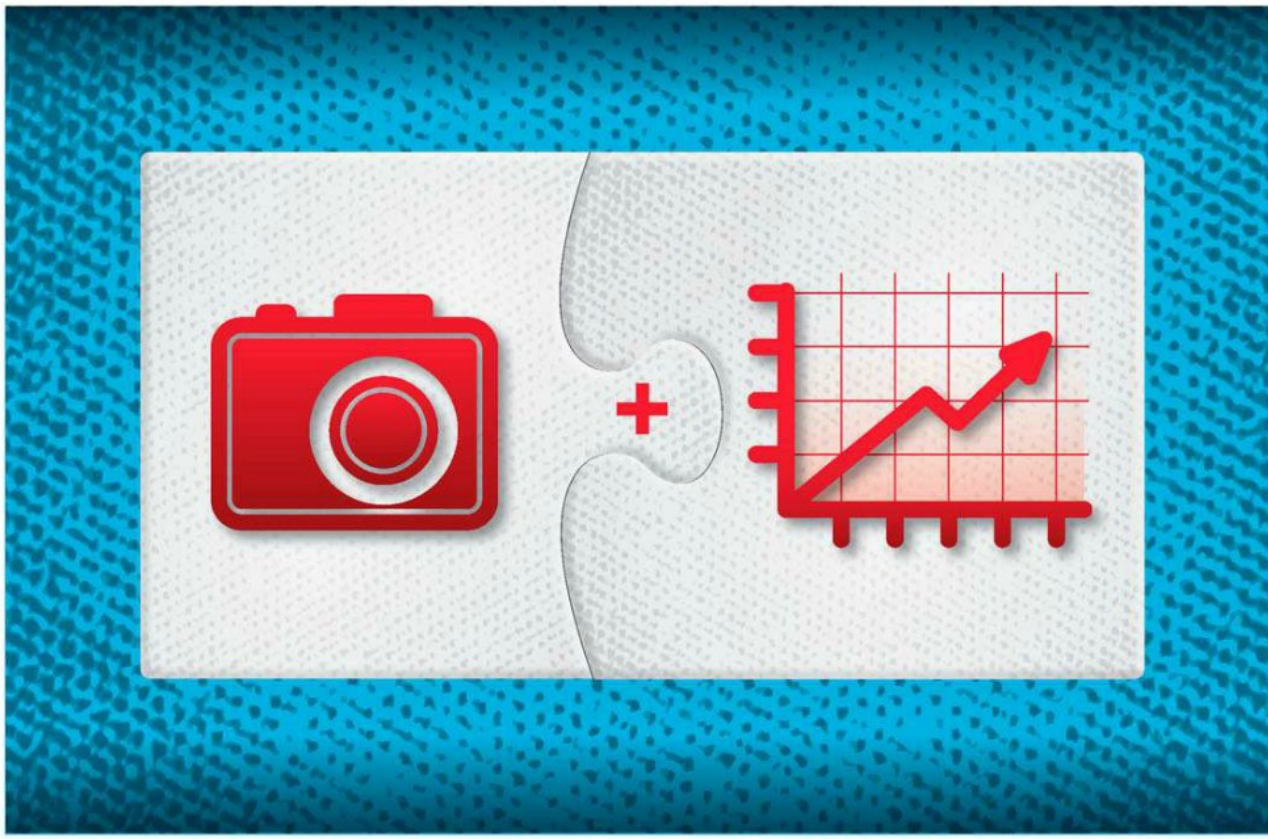
iPAD MOVIE MASTERCLASS



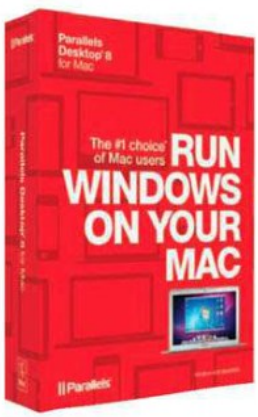
- Rip and convert films for iPad
- iMovie tutorials and techniques
- iPod film-making tips from the pros

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iPad&iPhone user

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WELCOME



Email me your thoughts: david_price@idg.co.uk
Or contact me on Twitter: twitter.com/pricivius

FUNNER THAN EVER

I can still recall a senior colleague's entertainingly righteous grammatical fury when Apple called a new release its 'funnest iPod ever' (aptly, Pages is refusing to accept that as a real word). Bad slogan, for sure. But good sentiment. iOS devices are fun: always have been, and always will.

Long before it earned its stripes as a practical work tool, the iPhone's first core audience was feckless gadget heads who didn't strictly *need* a smartphone, but just wanted one to mess about on and show off. And retro-hipsters will probably be killing time on Doodle Jump 38 long after the serious folk are managing spreadsheets on hologram brain chips.

This month we're indulging our inner idler with a feast of fun. For a start, we've rounded up the 50 greatest games ever to grace the screen of the iPhone, iPad and iPod touch – some of the funnest (ouch) we've played on any platform, they're also well written, funny and occasionally even emotionally involving. Take a peek on page 14.

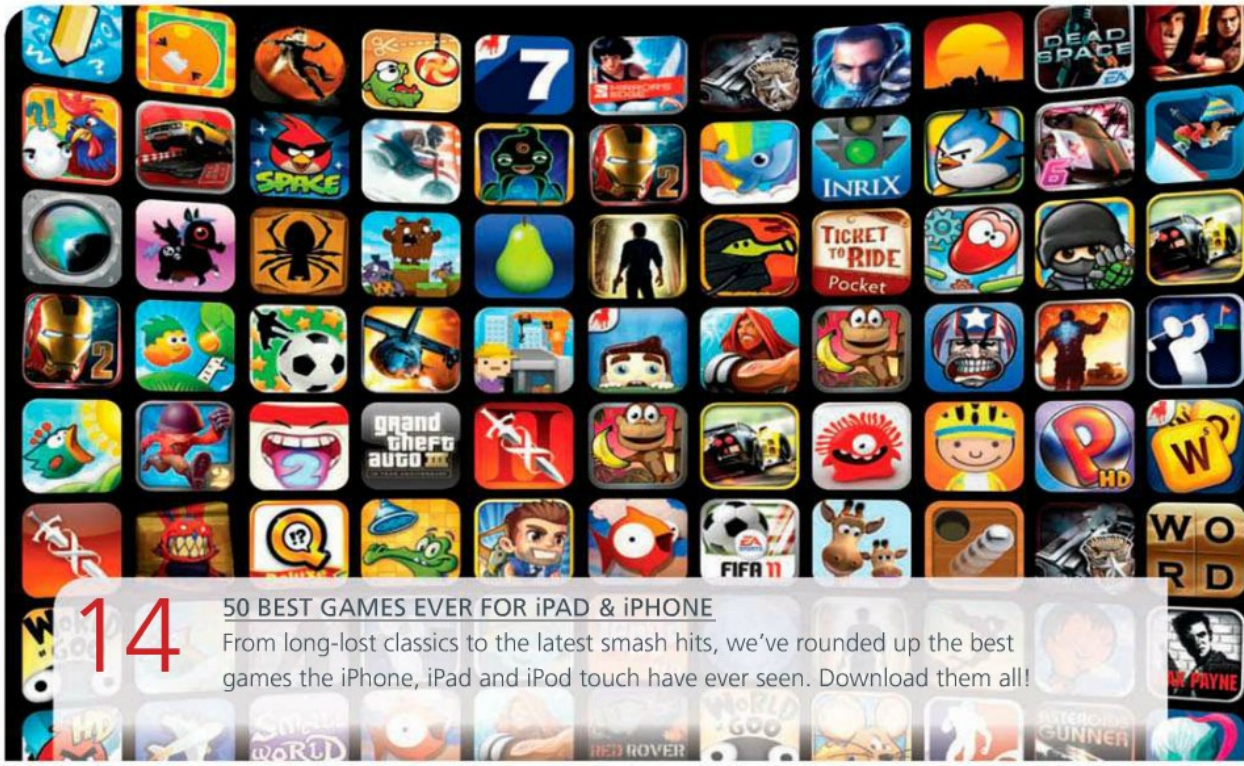
iOS devices are fun: always have been, and always will

Our second big theme this issue is video. Our ongoing iMovie masterclass continues with more complex film-editing tasks on page 44, and we've got a fascinating interview with a film-making team who work with an iPod touch and a mini projector (page 24). Finally, we reveal the best ways to enjoy movies on the iPad, whether streaming them or ripping and converting your DVDs, on page 50.

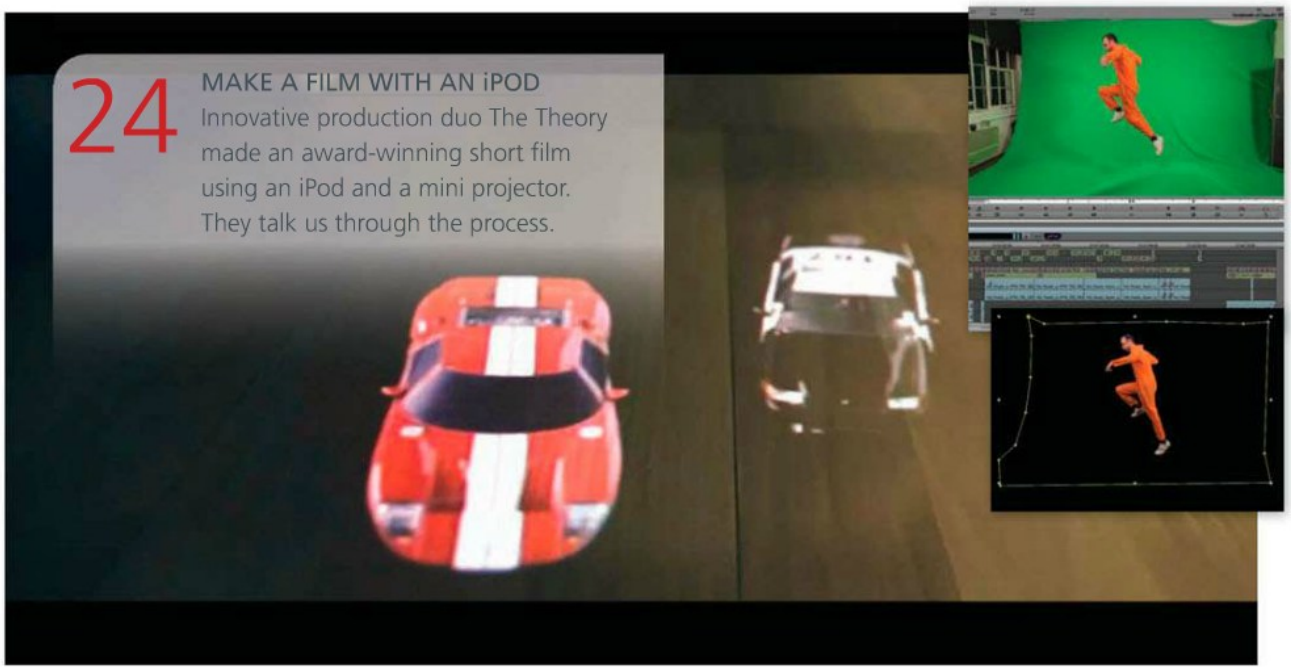
So that's the issue. Have, well, fun.

David Price
EDITOR

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‘Copycat’ Samsung to pay Apple $1bn

A California jury has found Samsung guilty of infringing iPad and iPhone patents

Samsung must pay Apple $1.05bn (about £660m) for infringing several patents in its smartphones and tablets, a California jury has decided. The verdict came after a month-long trial that had grabbed headlines around the globe.

The case saw Apple try to demonstrate that Samsung had wilfully copied the design of its iPad and iPhone, while the South Korean company tried to disprove Apple’s patents, claiming they were invalid. Highlights include a Samsung email that discussed the iPhone and a “crisis in design” at Samsung. The email said the difference between the two companies’ smartphones was like “the difference between Heaven and Earth”.

Samsung’s defence rested on proving that Apple’s patents were not valid, attemptiong to use ‘prior art’ to disqualify the iPhone maker’s patents. Apple, unsurprisingly, dismissed these early examples as not identical to its own patents.

At times it seemed as though Samsung’s legal team was grasping at straws, while at other times that they were inept. For example, it emerged at one stage that one of its lawyers didn’t have a licence to practise law in the court.

> It emerged that one Samsung lawyer didn’t have a licence to practise law in the court

Overall, the verdict is a big win for Apple, although the award was less than half of the $2.75bn (£1.73bn) in damages Apple was seeking. However, since the jury found Samsung guilty of wilful infringement of certain patents, presiding Judge Lucy Koh could triple this.

An Apple spokesperson said: “The mountain of evidence presented during the trial showed that Samsung’s copying went far deeper than even we knew.”

The Korean giant was quick to respond to the ruling, claiming Apple is engaging in an “abuse of patent law, not pursuit of innovation”. In a separate statement, Samsung said: “It’s unfortunate that patent law can be manipulated to give one company a monopoly over rectangles with rounded corners, or technology that’s being improved every day by Samsung and other companies. This is not the final word in this case or in battles being waged in courts and tribunals around the world, some of which have already rejected many of Apple’s claims.”



Seeing double
Infringement or innovation?

The separate verdict by a UK judge that Apple can’t claim that Samsung copied the iPad because “it’s not as cool as the iPad” will go to appeal this autumn.

The trial might be over, but the battle will rumble on for some time. Judge Lucy Koh has scheduled a hearing for 20 September, where the two sides will argue over removing the current injunction against the Galaxy Tab 10.1. And an Apple request for eight new injunctions isn’t due to be heard until 6 December. Samsung has confirmed that it will appeal.



Tim Cook
Steve Jobs’ successor is proving a hit with both staff and investors

Apple CEO Cook proves popular one year on

We reflect on Tim Cook’s first year in charge

Just over a year ago, on 24 August 2011, Steve Jobs resigned as Apple CEO. One year on and the company is going from strength to strength, with news that it has beaten Microsoft to become the most valuable company in history with a market cap of $623.5bn (£390bn). Back when Jobs resigned, there was some concern that Apple would lose its way.

Capping his first anniversary came the positive verdict of the US edition of the Apple vs Samsung court battle (above). Other highlights of his first year in charge have included the launch of the MacBook Pro with Retina display, the new iPad and OS X Mountain Lion. And within the next few weeks the company is expected to launch a new iPhone and iOS 6.

Cook has proven a hit with Apple staff, with a 97 percent approval rating, according to a survey. They have good reason to be happy: Apple Store staff received pay rises and he gave the whole workforce extra time off for Thanksgiving.

Tim Cook has also been popular with investors. In a recent poll, 78 percent said they believe that he’s performing excellently, although his decision to pay a quarterly dividend to shareholders may have swayed their opinion.

AIR VOLTAGE

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Revolutionise the way you charge your iPad 2...





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Continue to use your iPad 2 whilst it is charging, the base charger acts as an iPad 2 stand.



Available in Black and White Stand and Sleeve sold together

The MUST HAVE accessory for iPad 2 .

with Maxell Wireless Charging Set for iPad 2

Maxell is proud to introduce the unique "Capacitive Coupling wireless power transmission" technology developed by Murata Manufacturing Co., Ltd. Simply slide your iPad 2 into the AIR VOLTAGE sleeve, place on the AIR VOLTAGE stand and your iPad 2 will immediately start charging.

No need for wires or docking... Wireless charging really is that easy.

"Made for iPad" means that an electronic accessory has been designed to connect specifically to iPad and has been certified by the developer to meet Apple performance standards. Apple is not responsible for the operation of this device or its compliance with safety and regulatory standards. Please note that the use of this accessory with iPad may affect wireless performance. iPad is a trademark of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S and other countries.

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RUMOURS

iPAD MINI RELEASE 'CONFIRMED' FOR OCTOBER HTC TO LAUNCH TABLET THAT LOOKS LIKE A MINI iMAC iPHONE 5'S BATTERY TO HAVE 40 PERCENT LONGER LIFE DUE TO SLIMMER DISPLAY FUTURE iPHONE TO CHANGE SETTINGS DEPENDING ON LOCATION THE iPAD MINI COSTS JUST £120 TO MANUFACTURE APPLE TO INTRODUCE AIRPLAY DIRECT TECHNOLOGY IN FUTURE iOS DEVICES



GRAPEVINE

Apple has reportedly begun production of a 13in MacBook Pro with Retina display, which could launch in October alongside the iPad mini. It has been predicted that Apple will make up to two million units of the rumoured laptop ready for launch.



APPLE'S GENIUS ADS

Apple has been blasted for a series of new 'Genius' adverts, which have now been pulled from its YouTube channel and the Apple.com website after being deemed 'embarrassing', 'cheap, 'cringe-inducing' and 'dreadful'.

The creative director behind the ads, Scott Trattner, has also quit following the sustained criticism.





Apple's television plans could be an advanced set-top box

New reports suggest Apple has changed its plans

The latest speculation about Apple's plans to 'crack' the television market suggests that the company is working on an advanced set-top box, rather than the previously rumoured smart television. *The Wall Street Journal* has reported that such a device, featuring an iOS-like interface and cloud-based DVR functionality, could be in the works.

The box could provide the user with live television as well as on-demand services, with an iOS-like user interface and advanced cloud-based DVR functionality designed to "simplify accessing and viewing programming and erase the distinction between live and on-demand content".

Apple is also hoping to give viewers access to all episodes of television shows instead of the limited amount offered by most current providers, according to the article. Users may also be able to share TV shows through Twitter with the integrated social network features.

Former Apple CEO John Sculley has said a move into the television market is "Apple's game to lose", telling Bloomberg that he believes Apple's iPhone, iPad and Mac success gives the company an edge over its competitors in trying to take over the living room.

Thief steals iPads and iMacs from Jobs' home

Suspect could get seven years and eight months

The home where Steve Jobs' lived in California has been burgled. More than $60,000 (£38,000) worth of computers and personal items were stolen, including several iPads, iMac desktop computers and Jobs' wallet.

The suspect, 35-year-old Kariem McFarlin, is in custody and could face a prison sentence of seven years and eight months. In questioning, McFarlin admitted he didn't know whose home it was until he found a letter from Jobs.

Detectives were able to track down the stolen iPads. One of the iPads had been given to a clown who was using it to entertain kids during his routine.

Jobs' widow, Laurene Powell Jobs, and her children had moved out while the house underwent renovations.



AOC



myStage

ULTIMATE MONITOR

for iPod®/iPhone®-Fans

The AOC myStage monitor is an intelligent display providing the Apple® fan community with the ability to listen to music or view their pictures, videos and YouTube content from numerous iPhone and iPod devices on a stylish 23" (58.5 cm) monitor, with or without the need for a PC. Connect a PC to synchronise music, downloads and office applications or simply work on your PC applications and listen to great music through the powerful 5 W in-built speakers. A complete multimedia solution for Apple users.



Easy accessible menu/buttons



Stylish design with 1.29 cm profile



Dock your iPhone/ iPod directly into the socket

Monitor specification : e2343Fi, 23" LED backlight monitor, 50,000,000:1 contrast ratio, 5 ms response time
Connections : VGA, HDMI connection, audio input, audio output, USB 2.0, iPhone docking station

www.aoc-europe.com

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BEST NEW APP

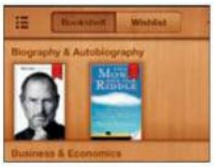


Pinterest for iPad

Pinterest, the popular social image-sharing service, has been available on the iPhone for a while. Now iPad owners can join in the fun.

They won't be disappointed, either, as the free app looks fantastic. It has a clean, simple interface, with smooth transitions and easy-to-access menus. The extra screen space also makes pinning and discovering photos a more satisfying experience. You can even browse the web from within the app to find content to add to your board. It's the update we've all been waiting for.

NEW APPS ON iTUNES



BooksWing
This £1.49 app allows avid readers to keep track of the books they are reading, create a list of all the books they own, make wishlists, share their thoughts and more.



Collage Art
Turn your photos into a collage-like image using filters and borders in this arty £1.49 app. There are 10 different filters to choose from, along with 49 built-in fonts.



Staccal
With 11 types of calendar to choose from, you'll have no excuse for forgetting a birthday. The £2.49 app has a vertical scroll view, so you can see upcoming events.



Posts
Blogging has never been easier. This £6.99 iPad app boasts a simple-to-use interface that lets you create blogs from scratch, or manage them from Blogger or WordPress.



Final Draft Writer
The bestselling screenwriting software has come to iPad, so you can write and edit Final Draft scripts on the go. You can also switch easily between desktop and iOS versions.



Synthesis Pro
Fancy adding a new dimension to your pictures? This £1.49 app removes the dark or bright colour from an image, and replaces it with a pattern to create an arty masterpiece.

BEST NEW GAME



Time Trap HdO

Lovers of hidden object games will enjoy this new game from Crisp App. You are tasked with exploring an abandoned town to find John Doe, a missing journalist who was investigating abnormal activity in the mysterious Forbidden Town. The game uses gorgeous graphics across 30 creepy locations, which players need to visit to find hundreds of clues to Doe's whereabouts. The challenging puzzles and fun soundtrack certainly kept us entertained for a few hours, and we felt it was worth the 69p price tag. It's available for both the iPhone and the iPad.

NEW GAMES ON iTUNES



Kingdoms & Lords
In this free strategy game, the Dark King has returned and your village is threatened with destruction. Your mission is to build up your village and raise an army to protect it.



Draw Breaker
Professor Blockowski and his block army are trying to make the world square in this challenging physics game. Your mission is to foil his plans to keep the world round.



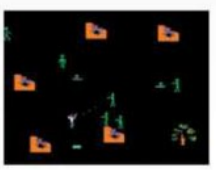
Sticky Linky
This quirky 69p puzzler challenges players to match five or more coloured globs to create faces, and then match these to globs of the same colour. There are 54 levels to play.



Chimpact
Collect bananas and keep your eyes peeled for hidden gems in this 69p game, while avoiding obstacles, finding secret jungle paths and timing your jumps to perfection.



DMBX 2 – Mountain Bike and BMX
This £1.49 app features mountain bike and BMX action. Play in QuickPlay or Career mode on 12 unique bike trails, with up to 36 challenges on each.

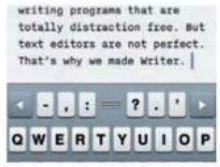


Organ Trail: Director's Cut
In this £1.99 retro-style zombie survival game, players need to search for supplies and protect themselves and the rest of their party from the undead. Bbuuurrains…



Glaze

Turn your photos into paintings using the universal Glaze app. For £1.99, you'll be able to transform and save high-resolution images, share them with friends and print them out.



iA Writer

iA Writer is a handy 69p app that lets you forget fonts and colours, and instead concentrate on what you're writing. It's a simple word processor that's a breeze to use.



Tachyon

Create music like never before with Tachyon. Use your touchscreen to play two sounds at once and then watch the stars change with your tunes in this £1.49 universal app.



Layover

This universal 69p app lets users blend up to five images to make a brand-new creation. Your masterpiece can then be shared via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



Magellan

This new £2.99 synthesizer app for the iPad allows musicians to use a full effects rack, six oscillators and other professional tools to create and record their tracks.



Day Planner!

Day Planner! is a simple and fuss-free 69p app that will help you keep track of your day's schedule. A handy list of daily activities will allow you to divide your time more efficiently.



Super Mole Escape

In this 69p game, players need to guide the mole out of the Big House using power-ups like hammers. Collect gems to get ability upgrades, and stay out of reach of the Warden.



Pitfall!

Thirty years on from his creation, Pitfall Harry is back in a 69p universal iOS app. Collect treasures as you escape the volcano in gameplay reminiscent of Temple Run.



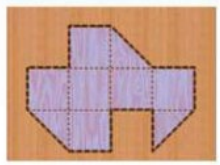
Shattered Minds: Masquerade HD

A new offering from Big Fish Games has hit iTunes for £2.99. Everyone in New Orleans has had their face wiped away by the evil Visage (not the band).



PipeRoll 3D New York

Put your logic skills to the test in this £1.49 universal game. Rotate the pipes beneath the bustling streets of New York to help clean up the city. There are 100 3D levels to complete.



Slice & Splice

This addictive 69p game challenges players with 144 levels of cutting and assembling. You'll need to use your puzzle-solving skills to cut, rearrange and fit the shapes together.



Cats Away

Save/abduct as many kittens as you can from the Planet of the Cats by beaming them up into your UFO. This crazy 69p game promises to be ridiculously fun.

NEW MUSIC ON iTUNES

Pink – *The Truth About Love*



Rock chick Pink is back with *The Truth About Love*, set to be released on 18 September. The first single from the new album, *Blow Me (One Last Kiss)*, was a big hit in charts across the globe.

Rita Ora – *Ora*



Rita Ora has been working on her debut album with a number of big stars, including will.i.am and Kanye. It's expected to repeat the success of her chart-topping singles *R.I.P.* and *Hot Right Now*. It's out now.

The Script – *#3*



The Script have just released their third album. It includes the single *Hall of Fame*, which once again features will.i.am – he appeared alongside the band's Danny O'Donoghue on *The Voice UK*.

Noisettes – *Contact*



London-based indie rockers Shingai Shoniwa and Dan Smith – aka the Noisettes – are aiming to match the success of their single *Don't Upset the Rhythm* with the release of their third album, *Contact*. It's out now.

Muse – *The 2nd Law*



Following their performance at the closing ceremony for the London 2012 Olympics, Muse are set to release their sixth studio album on 1 October. It will include the official Olympic song, *Survival*.



Stylish speakers

Denon Cocoon range

Both £499

www.denon.eu/cocoon/uk

Denon has launched the Cocoon Home (pictured above) and Cocoon Portable, two stylish streaming speaker docks that offer hi-fi quality sound. A wide range of audio formats are supported, and the speakers can access and play music stored on any network-connected PC, Mac or NAS drive. Both devices also use AirPlay technology, so you can stream music wirelessly from your Apple devices.

The Portable has an integrated handle and a rechargeable battery that Denon claims will last up to five hours, so you'll be able to relax and listen to your favourite tunes in the garden.

VERDICT: The unusual cocoon design offers a stylish audio experience.

Dual-purpose iPad stand



Ozaki Powow+

$189 (about £120)

www.ozakiverse.com

The Ozaki O!music Powow+ enhances the iPad experience by providing users with hi-fi sound quality. It can function as a standalone speaker, connecting to your iPad via Bluetooth, and doubles as a stand.

VERDICT: This could take your iPad audio experience to the next level.

Portable power

Soundmatters FoxL Platinum portable speaker

£209

www.soundmatters.com

This Soundmatters Platinum portable speaker might be small, but it's certainly no slouch when it comes to pumping up the volume. Producing a big, dramatic sound, the device has a claimed battery life of up to 20 hours. It also streams music wirelessly and doubles up as a hands-free speakerphone.

VERDICT: The ideal portable speaker that doesn't compromise on sound?



Stand to attention

Maroo Kaimata Stand for iPad

£39.99

www.maroo.com/uk



Mobile accessory designer Maroo has launched the Kaimata iPad stand, which is aimed at users with a keen sense of style. The sturdy aluminium stand holds Apple's tablet securely in place, using a padded metal bracket to avoid scratching your device. It also offers a wide range of viewing angles. Maroo includes a Waikawa cleaning cloth to keep your iPad's screen free from smudges and finger marks.

VERDICT: This stand could change the way you view your iPad.

Rugged headphones

Klipsch Image S4i Rugged

£89.99

www.klipsch.co.uk



Available in four vibrant colours, Klipsch says its latest in-ear headphones are designed to withstand the elements. Combining award-winning sound, weather resistance and advanced mobile technology, the Image S4i Ruggeds will suit even the most daring outdoor enthusiast, according to Klipsch. They also feature patented oval ear tips, which the company says allows for hours of comfortable wear.

VERDICT: Sounds like a hit with the sporty crowd.

GEAR GUIDE

PRACTICAL GADGETS: Useful devices to help make the most of your iPad and iPhone

Jabra Clipper

www.jabra.co.uk

£49.99



Jabra has introduced four new colours to its Clipper range. This tiny clip-on device plugs into your headphones, so you can listen to music wirelessly.

AviiQ Aluma Shield

www.aviiq.co.uk

$19.99 (about £13)



AViiQ has combined design and protection in the Aluma Shield for the new iPad. It promises to protect against scratches and bumps, while remaining thin and light.

QDOS British iPhone cases

www.qdossound.com

£19.99



QDOS has added six 'Best of British' cases to its Smoothie collection, including patriotic designs featuring London's skyline and the iconic red phone box.

iGrill cooking thermometer

www.apple.com/uk

£74.95



iGrill is a grilling/cooking app and thermometer that connects to your iOS devices via a secure Bluetooth connection.



50 BEST iOS GAMES EVER

Must-play apps for the iPad, iPhone and iPod touch

The iOS gaming landscape has seen a lot of changes in the past five years. Take pricing, for instance. When the iPhone came out, publishers thought nothing of charging a tenner for a half-hearted console port. But gamers soon cottoned on to the sub-£1 impulse purchase, and prices plunged. After a rash of ad-supported freebies and aggressive in-app purchases, things seem to be settling around the £1.99 mark for iPad and universal titles, and 69p for many iPhone-only games.

More importantly, perhaps, iOS is no longer considered the poor cousin of console and PC platforms. Angry Birds showed the world that mobile games can be astonishingly commercial, but they can be critical successes too. The games on this list are inspired, well-written, funny, and occasionally even moving. Sometimes you just want a two-minute puzzle for your bus ride, and the iPhone is perfect for that, but if you know where to look, iOS gaming has so much more to offer.

RATING: ★★★★★ = OUTSTANDING ★★★★ = VERY GOOD ★★★ = GOOD ★★ = FLAWED ★ = UNACCEPTABLE



Earth Defense Force

£1.49 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js3L2 • bit.ly/idgJ4Z

Like many arcade-style games, this fast-paced horizontal shooter is easy to learn yet hard to master, and features high-definition retro graphics with an awesome 16-bit soundtrack. You can choose from an iPhone-adapted mode (in which you drag your finger across the screen to move your fighter up, down, left and right) or a classic arcade-style, with a virtual joystick and a firing button. The joystick is harder to use than tap-and-drag, but it actually works quite well. With its improved graphics and iPhone-adapted playing mode, Earth Defense Force's iOS remake is even better than the classic game it's based on. **Sarah Jacobsson**



Starfront Collision

£2.99/£4.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jM543 • bit.ly/Nk0bxw

If the name doesn't ring a bell, the gameplay will; the designers definitely had Starcraft in mind. If you're going to imitate, you might as well imitate the best. The gameplay is typical of real-time strategy games – you mine minerals, construct buildings and train armies. Starfront does an excellent job with the interface, giving you instant access to controls and information, but you can hide menus when you want to enjoy the impressive visuals. As well as single-player mode, there are five multiplayer maps for online or local (Wi-Fi or Bluetooth) battles. The action is intense and smooth, and the game is fun and easy to pick up. **James Savage**



Ski Safari

69p ★★★★★

itun.es/ibJ62Q • bit.ly/MleWng

An avalanche is coming, and it's up to you to keep skiing mountain dweller Sven one step ahead of icy doom, while navigating hills, dips and other alpine obstacles. Tapping makes Sven jump, while tapping and holding causes him to flip – you get bonuses for successfully completing a backflip (or two). The app takes a page out of the Tiny Wings handbook by adding mini-challenges that you complete to boost yourself to a new level. Ski Safari lacks the sort of graphic embellishments you'll find in other iOS games, but then again, it really doesn't need them; this is an App Store offering that flourishes thanks to its outstanding gameplay. **Philip Michaels**



Jetpack Joyride

FREE ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js4jv • bit.ly/NnUcqz

Jetpack Joyride is a delightful and addictive cave flyer that keeps us coming back for more. You play the role of Barry Steakfries, a disgruntled individual who breaks into a top-secret research lab, steals a machine-gun-powered jetpack, and takes flight through the lab's never-ending string of long, tunnel-like rooms. As you jet or run along, ever forward, you try to avoid electrified barriers, lasers and missiles while collecting coins. The mix of responsiveness and acceleration is just about perfect, the comical graphics raise it above most offerings in the genre, and the extras – including a superb array of vehicles – make Jetpack Joyride a true standout. **Dan Frakes**



Uplink

£2.99 ★★★★

itun.es/isz3S2 • bit.ly/Nt6fCm

Now here's an old PC game that's perfectly suited to the iPad. Originally released in 2001, this hacking sim has managed to retain its tension and strange drama on iOS over a decade later. Rarely showing more than a blue map populated by nodes that can be hacked into with simple but precise actions, Uplink offers far more than even the spangliest graphics ever could, simply by dint of immersion. Trying not to be caught remotely invading banks and government offices, unravelling a wider conspiracy and upgrading your raft of hacking tools offers a taut, paranoid few hours. Even 11 years on, it remains a true original. **Alec Meer**



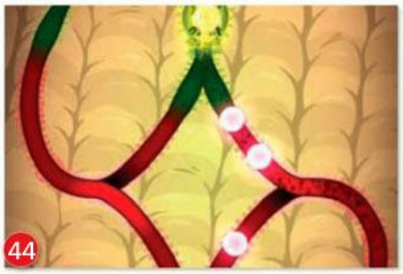
Super Stickman Golf

69p ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jG44r • bit.ly/eNnMdT

As a single-player game, Super Stickman Golf is great. The controls are easy to learn – adjust trajectory using large virtual buttons, tap the Go circle and tap a second time to choose power – and the physics feel just right. What pushes the game into stratospheric levels of excellence, however, is its multiplayer. You can challenge up to three opponents locally over Bluetooth or through Game Center, racing in real time and scoring points when you complete a hole first – adding a speed element to golf is a no-brainer that makes it laugh-out-loud funny. The retro look isn't as cute as Angry Birds, but the game is even more fun. **Lex Friedman**

For iPad only | For iPhone & iPod touch only | For all three devices



Tiny Invaders

69p ★★★★

itun.es/i6js46m • bit.ly/QG6bB8

A troop of space germs has been sent to take over the world, and your mission is to travel from host to host, taking control of their feeble human minds by navigating around track-like capillaries and changing them from bright red to sickly green. The minuscule aliens zip around by themselves, but you can speed them up with a tap, or tap one of the junctions to switch their path, a bit like a railway sim. This simple mechanic evolves smoothly as capillaries become more complex and additional hazards like defender white blood cells are introduced. Tiny Invaders' charm, challenge and clever design make it well worth a recommendation. **Sinan Kubba**



Zombie Gunship

69p ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jG7j4 • bit.ly/q5nYgS

From the cockpit of a heavily armed aircraft, circling above a bunker in which the last remnants of humanity have taken refuge from a zombie apocalypse, your job is to gun down zombies and save human survivors. There are some tactics involved in all this – your guns can overheat or be upgraded – but it doesn't get in the way of the blasting fun. The grainy, surveillance-camera-style graphics help create an intense atmosphere, and the sound effects are top-notch. The strategy, the graphics and sound, and the undeniable thrill of sending the undead back to the grave they crawled out of make for a compelling iOS game. **Philip Michaels**



Dead Space

£4.99/£5.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js42j • bit.ly/J22QJy

With Dead Space's pins-and-needles soundtrack and thrilling atmosphere, you're always on edge. Your weapons are nothing more than modified mining equipment, and you're always scrambling to find ammo: every shot counts. If the beasties reach you, there are touch-activated quick-time events you can initiate to push the enemy back a few feet, and you can gradually upgrade your armour and weapons. Aiming, shooting and initiating quick-time events by tapping is easy. This isn't just a great extension of the Dead Space franchise; it's a fine game in its own right, both technically solid and evocatively executed. **Chris Holt**

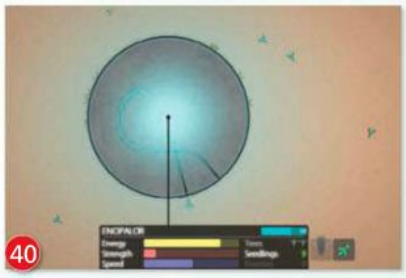


Mighty Fin

69p ★★★★

itun.es/i6jG9D4 • bit.ly/x0sreA

You're a fish bobbing through assorted aquatic settings and capturing valuable bubbles along the way. There's a multitude of levels, and the music is tailored to each setting; special attention has been paid to the sound effects, from the splash of Fin leaping out of the water to the flopping noise when he meets an unfortunate demise. Mighty Fin's graphics are also noteworthy, particularly the title screens. Side-scrolling games can get repetitive, but Mighty Fin varies things by unlocking new game modes whenever you complete a level. Great graphics, sound and gameplay all add up to a delightful iOS game. **Phillip Michaels**



Eufloria HD

£2.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6js3hQ • bit.ly/QB7S72

Eufloria pairs simple strategy with mood and style, offsetting tense gameplay with calming visuals and an ambient soundtrack. Your job is to conquer a pastel-hued pocket of space by directing armies of 'seedlings' from colony to colony, wiping out any enemies that lurk there and establishing your own trees to generate new seedlings. You'll face tough decisions about how many seedlings you need to defend your own holdings and how many should be sent out to battle. The push 'n' pull strategy is compelling enough, but it's the hand-drawn graphics and pretty soundtrack that really make Eufloria stand out as something special. **Alec Meer**



Jelly Defense

£1.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6js4FR • bit.ly/zZsGWO

Instead of making you resist a horde of soldiers, this tower-defence game opts for something quirkier: jelly creatures. But this game offers more than just cute critters, and the result is a refreshing take on the genre. Your job on each level is to defend a set of crystals from jelly invaders travelling predetermined paths. You defend yourself by placing battle towers (yes, jelly towers) along the path; each one has a specific weapon and attack range, and can only attack invaders of matching colours. What makes Jelly Defense enjoyable is that it successfully combines challenging gameplay, attractive graphics and a playful soundtrack. **Roman Loyola**



Brick People

£1.49/£1.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6jG2Py • bit.ly/OTEhkj

The backstory to this against-the-clock puzzler, inspired by a Japanese arcade sensation, is frankly indecipherable, but gameplay is easy to grasp: in each stage, with some variations, you stack bricks to help the Brick People get to the food. Every couple of levels, the Brick Monsters show up for a bonus game where you're forced to drag bricks to build specific objects. While not quite what you'd call a casual game, it's accessible to gamers of all ages and skill levels. In an App Store getting increasingly crowded with copycats – see page 66 for our thoughts on that – Brick People stands out as a weirdly wonderful original. **Philip Michaels**



Catan

£2.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6jG7Bs • bit.ly/Po8Dzn

Graphically, this is a faithful rendition of Klaus Teuber's superb and deservedly idolised tile-based island conquest game. Having the iPad handle those tiresome banking duties and victory point calculations makes things far more fast-paced than the board game, and you can view statistical tables at the end of the bout. The computer players can be absolute swines – they'll merrily gang up on you in a way that most human players would consider beyond the pale – but hardcore gamers may even consider this a plus. And the original game is such a work of genius that this couldn't help being great fun, even if it's not the perfect iOS port. **David Price**



N.O.V.A. 2

£4.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jG2Kv • bit.ly/LbeSSK

N.O.V.A. 2 wastes little time on a backstory or training, and drops you straight into the action. The controls are intuitive to use and, as with all first-person shooters, boil down to moving, selecting a weapon and firing. The game's AI is among the best we've seen; enemies are smart enough to actively duck for cover and use basic infantry team techniques to good effect. Both graphics and sounds are top-notch, and there's a multiplayer mode offering five different game types. N.O.V.A. 2 has it all: beautiful graphics, great gameplay, excellent controls and smart opponents. Casual gamers will, however, find it difficult to master. **Ryan Rigney**



Machinarium

£2.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jG2ht • bit.ly/w7uO73

This classic robotic point-and-click adventure offers a unique experience with more heart than the average tin man. Each room has a puzzle for you to solve, moving you forward as you try to find your ladyfriend and thwart a dastardly plot by some robo-bullies. You'll scan environments for items to interact with, combine objects in your inventory and solve a variety of brain-teasers. Machinarium manages to feel both electronic and organic. The hand-painted visuals feel both cartoony and believable, and the soundtrack blends ambient electronica, jazz and dubstep. Rarely has a game felt so thematically and aesthetically unified. **Jason Tocci**



Dungeon Hunter 2

£4.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js3Rh • bit.ly/NnxkIO

The backstory may lack originality – you play a prince whose villainous brother has taken over the kingdom – but Dungeon Hunter 2 is no run-of-the-mill game. Its graphics are beautifully drawn and detailed, but the star attraction is the gameplay: the developers have managed to keep things simple without compromising on the depth of characters' personality and abilities. The game's multiplayer capabilities also give you the ability to play co-operatively with up to three friends in real time over the internet, or via a local Wi-Fi or Bluetooth connection. This is a well-balanced title combining stunning graphics and great gameplay. **Jeff Meron**



Grand Theft Auto 3

£2.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6js3Rb • bit.ly/QKmJ19

GTA 3 is a violent, darkly humorous ode to mafia films that first sparked controversy (and accolades) in 2001 and burst on to iOS 10 years later. You play silent thug Claude, an amoral criminal who escapes from jail and then shoots, steals and joyrides his way up through the city's underworld. Aiming and firing can be tricky, but the touchscreen controls are otherwise surprisingly capable. Controversial subject matter aside, the game is stunning in its scale and brilliance. The artificial intelligence is believable and entertaining, and the city is vast and diverse, with humorous radio stations and even changing weather patterns. **Chris Holt**

For iPad only | For iPhone & iPod touch only | For all three devices



Max Payne Mobile

£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jG24N • bit.ly/LE7rST

This iOS instalment of the mighty third-person shooter franchise begins with Max finding his wife and newborn daughter brutally murdered and vowing to track down those responsible. Navigation is configurable, allowing you to choose onscreen locations for the controls. There are nicely animated intros to take you into key elements of the game, an optional auto aim and a cheat mode allowing quick progression to later levels if you so desire. All of which adds up to one of the best games to hit the App Store: it remains true to the original, and has all the addictive qualities present in the computer and console versions. **David Bradforth**



Words With Friends

£1.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6js3wz • bit.ly/No1Kum

Perhaps most famous for being so addictive that Alec Baldwin got kicked off a plane for refusing to stop playing, Words with Friends is a two-person crossword challenge that absolutely isn't Scrabble, so Hasbro's lawyers can serve their writs another day. Though there might be a few similarities. Enter an email address and search for an opponent using Wi-Fi or 3G, seek out a random player, or invite friends to play through Twitter and Facebook. There's also a live chat feature with a pair of animated googly eyes to show when a friend is online. The whole package is so enjoyable you might sympathise with Baldwin's point of view. **Ben Boychuk**



Unpleasant Horse

FREE ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jR3xi • bit.ly/MjvdJS

You play a cute little horse with wings and a very bad attitude, passing time by hopping from cloud to cloud. Occasionally a bird will fly by, and their feathers will help you stay afloat when there are no clouds nearby. What to do? Easy: pummel the birds and steal their feathers. And if you see any ponies floating about, feel free to hop on their backs and push them into the meat grinders waiting below, producing a glorious gush of blood, bones and horseshoes, then jump away at the right moment. This game requires a warped sense of humour, but it's disturbingly amusing and addictive. It's good clean pony-mangling fun. **Brian Beam**



Flight Control

69p/£2.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js3tb • bit.ly/ONTlEi

In Flight Control, you assume the role of an air traffic controller. As an ever-increasing number of planes approach the runways, your job is to guide them all in for safe landings. Planes travel at different speeds, and each is colour-coded to match the runway it must land on. You tap approaching planes and drag a flight path for them to follow for landing. As you progress, this process gets increasingly manic, and not surprisingly, it's loads of fun too. The game takes seconds to learn and mere minutes to play. What makes it even more impressive is that we've spent hours guiding planes in and can't wait to go and play again. **Lex Friedman**



Spider: The Secret of Bryce Manor

£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js3c4 • bit.ly/P5x0TZ

Heck, surely not another spider-in-an-abandoned-mansion simulator. Playing a hungry eight-legged detective, your job is to search for clues about the family who lived in Bryce Manor and why they left. You tap to the left or right to move along surfaces, flick to jump and tap to spin webs (you need to catch insects to complete levels). Featuring excellent use of the touch interface – controlling the spider is intuitive and viewing the large environments is a breeze – the game strikes a perfect balance of mystery, strategy and discovery in a beautifully designed world for you to explore. **James Savage**



Tiny Heroes

FREE ★★★★

itun.es/i6jG24H • bit.ly/Mva6zw

Fantasy gaming isn't just about heroes braving dungeons and slaying dragons. Equally important is the mad architect who bludgeons, shreds and perforates any would-be adventurer who dares to loot that dungeon's precious treasures. That's the premise of this appealing tower defence game: as waves of cartoonish heroes wander into your dungeon, you protect your treasure with spinning blades of death, concealed spikes and caged monsters. You'll have to plan for several kinds of heroes, from tough knights to trap-dismantling thieves, and balance between planning ahead and dropping explosives in the thick of a fight. **Jason Tocci**



New Star Soccer

FREE ★★★★★

itun.es/isz74V • bit.ly/PT3IhY

You're a striker starting out in non-league football and aiming for the big time. On the pitch, this means setting up chances and scoring wonder goals. Off the pitch, it means training, dressing for success and decking your house in so much tat that *MTV Cribs* would stage a tackiness intervention. Pull back on the ball to set power and direction, then tap at the right angle to set the curve, deftly placing the ball where you want. It's a testament to the brilliant gameplay that even football haters will get something out of this. While others strive for realism, New Star Soccer aims for the perfect mobile experience, and hits the back of the net. **Alan Martin**



Gets To The Exit

69p ★★★★★

itun.es/ibJ8nZ • bit.ly/Ovwp9c

Reminiscent of the 1990s classic Lemmings, Gets To The Exit is a puzzle game in which the player's aim is to guide the Tribesmen safely to the exit. You have to move platforms up or down to avoid game-over-inducing obstacles such as spikes and lava; there are bouncy platforms and other special features that help make this simple game extremely fun and addictive. It can also be rather frustrating, but that makes it all the more satisfying when you finally figure out a level. For 69p, it's definitely worth downloading, whether you're looking for a little time-waster or want to get stuck into a puzzle for the evening. **Ashleigh Allsopp**



Football Manager Handheld

£6.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jn5JX • bit.ly/QJ66qe

Football Manager fans should probably have mixed feelings about their obsession landing on iOS. Seven years after the Championship Manager team left to make Football Manager and ruin social lives all over again, this handheld version offers a streamlined management experience: in the iOS edition of the game, seasons fly by in a night and Aldershot can be Premiership champions in a week. That's not to say it isn't deep, serious and (of course) completely addictive. While only football stats fans need apply, that special breed will be enthralled. Don't forget to eat. **Alan Martin**



Quarrel Deluxe

£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jR8wM • bit.ly/S5xxHW

Quarrel Deluxe is a game of words, mixing the best of Scrabble and Risk. Players battle for control of 12 maps by spelling words and solving anagrams. You can only use as many letters to spell words as you have units on the chosen territory, making strategy and reinforcements an important element. But vocabulary is the true key to victory, with letter values enabling clever three- or four-letter words to trump longer but more pedestrian efforts. There are nine computer players for you to challenge, offering a diverse range of difficulty and play styles. Overall, Quarrel is one of the best options for wordsmiths on the go. **Scott Nichols**



9mm

£4.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js99q • bit.ly/GVtWSd

This hugely entertaining third-person shooter, starring detective John Kannon, is very much a case of 'shoot first, ask questions once the bad guys are dead'. The graphics are superb, the dialogue is hilarious and the optional gyroscope-based controls, while initially tricky, make those first few kills all the more satisfying. The buttons are conveniently placed, with crouch/stand and the virtual joystick on the left, and shoot and run bottom right, next to a cool button that allows you to dive in slow motion. There are numerous firearms to choose from, and a shop for upgrades. This is a funny, great-looking game that's kept fresh by the gyro controls. **Ryan Macro**



Peggle

69p ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jR8rr • bit.ly/JrLI0d

At first glance, Peggle looks like a pretty straightforward combination of pinball and Puzzle Bobble. But while the object is simple – clear the stage of orange pegs – the methods require clever strategies, knowledge of geometry and some lucky bounces. You launch a pinball at the screen below using a rotating cannon; the ball will clear any block or peg it bounces against. Green pegs unlock potent powers, purple pegs increase your score, ball catchers can award you additional balls to use, while obstacles constantly stand in your way. It's an instant classic and one of the most addictive puzzle games to come out in the past decade. **Chris Holt**

For iPad only | For iPhone & iPod touch only | For all three devices

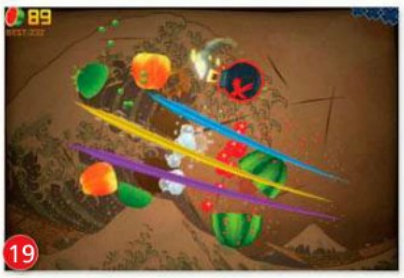


Bejeweled Blitz

FREE ★★★★

itun.es/i6jw5RS • bit.ly/PSfS3k

So moreish that they might as well plug it directly into your addiction centre, Blitz takes the 'match three' mechanic of a billion App Store puzzles and squashes it into minute-long blasts of dazzling colours and crazy point tallies. You have to swap coloured jewels within a grid (swiping intuitively with a finger) so that three or more line up; the matched jewels will disappear and more will drop down to replace them. But the tense gameplay, constant drip-feed of rewards (rare gems, boosts, coins and level-ups) and competitiveness-provoking Facebook integration combine to make a game that will expand to fill any time period you let it near. **David Price**



Fruit Ninja

69p/£1.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6jR9yv • bit.ly/PGK0db

This funny, quick game combines two ideal qualities: it's easy to learn and fun to master. Fruit (and the occasional bomb) appears on the screen, and you're tasked with slicing and slashing it up, ninja-style. If you let three pieces of fruit escape unscathed, or hit one of the bombs, your game is over. You slice by swiping your fingers across the falling fruit, and the game supports slashing with up to eight fingers at a time. Adding to the fun are great visuals, including lots of fruit juice flying with every slice, and a great, Eastern-infused soundtrack. The iPad version adds local multiplayer, which is hectic fun and highly replayable. **Lex Friedman**



Canabalt

£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js6Dh • bit.ly/OCM873

Run, bleak monochrome future man, run! There's something nightmarish about this sparsely elegant one-button platformer: you can't win, you can't escape, and eventually you'll miss a jump and die. The aim is simply to get as far across that endless crumbling rooftop as possible. (It's not even clear what catastrophe you're fleeing, although the giant figures stalking the landscape behind are probably a clue.) The automatic acceleration and hyperactive soundtrack ratchet up the energy levels beautifully, the super-retro graphics are gloriously evocative, and it's hard to imagine a more accessible or mobile-friendly game. **David Price**



W.E.L.D.E.R.

£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js4zY • bit.ly/HOJbvH

At its core, W.E.L.D.E.R. is a word search. You create words of four or more letters by swapping nearby tiles. If, for example, you've got the letters PUSN lined up, tap S and then N and the two letters change positions, forming PUNS. When this happens, the letters vapourise, earning you points, and any letters above drop down. The steampunk interface looks very cool, and just as unnecessary-yet-lovely are the ambient sounds that whoosh and tick along in the background. Taken altogether, W.E.L.D.E.R. is addictive, instructive and a pleasure for the senses. If you have the slightest interest in word games, you should own it. **Christopher Breen**



Doodle Jump

69p/£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js9Xw • bit.ly/Tjxzc5

Doodle Jump offers addictive, simple, addictive, mindless, addictive fun. And did we mention "addictive"? You control a hand-drawn creature whose only goal is to get higher. As you tilt your iPhone or iPad from side to side, the creature jumps towards various bouncy platforms. Most of these are stationary, but you'll also encounter brown platforms that break if you land on them, blue ones that move and springs that provide a boost. As you get higher you'll encounter monsters, UFOs and black holes that you can shoot (by tapping) or just avoid. This is the perfect micro-game: insanely addictive and deliciously replayable. **Lex Friedman**



Sword & Sworcery EP

£2.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6jR8ZL • bit.ly/RCX9u9

iOS games are supposed to be time-wasters: digital trinkets to distract and amuse for a few commutes. Not Sword & Sworcery EP, an ambitious, gorgeous and sonically impressive action title. The game feels like 1990s-era Zelda re-imagined as a point-and-click adventure, but it's so much more. The cryptic, foreboding dialogue and the fact that the game world is affected by the real world's lunar phases make the puzzles a real challenge, but tight social networking integration allows you to offer and receive guidance; and every step forward feels like a genuine accomplishment. An utterly unique experience. **David Wolinsky**



Real Racing 2

£2.99/£4.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js9qN • bit.ly/S4wAtN

The original Real Racing set the standard for racing games on the iPhone and iPod touch, but the sequel is even better. The most obvious addition is licensed cars, including BMW, Ford and Nissan models. You can race among 16 cars (up from six) across 15 locations in career, quick race, time trial, and local and online multiplayer modes. Fortunately, frame rates don't suffer from the detailed tracks, gorgeous environments and extra cars, which translate into more action and close calls. The action is buttery smooth; steering is precise when using accelerometer controls, and there are six other control methods to choose from. This is a winner. **James Savage**



Mirror's Edge

69p/£2.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6jR63b • bit.ly/OJ082U

Dystopian free running simulator Mirror's Edge isn't perfect, but it's an undeniably unique experience. Sprint, leap and slide as you attempt to escape the Orwellian government that oppresses the world. Swiping left or right will make your character run in that direction, and combinations of upward and downward flicks make her leap over and slide under obstacles. Well-timed taps and swipes allow you to run on walls, disarm trigger-happy baddies and grind down conveniently placed ziplines. EA somehow manages to retain the acrobatic charm of the console original, while making it minimalistic enough to work seamlessly on iOS. **Ryan Rigney**

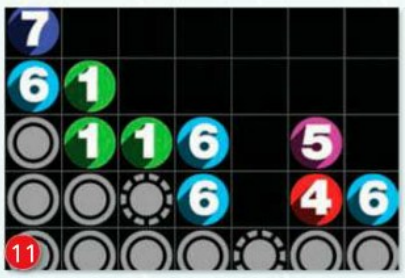


Draw Something

£1.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6js8Jn • bit.ly/NnmF2c

This might seem like a lofty ranking for a flawed game, but for a while this Pictionary-style social puzzler threatened to take over the world. After setting up a game with a friend or stranger (you can have several on the go at once), you are presented with three objects. You pick one, and then draw it. Later, your friend will see your drawing process as a video, and try to guess what it is. They'll then draw a picture, and you try to keep the game going as long as possible: it's collaborative, not competitive. The drawing interface can be a bit clumsy (we advise using a stylus), but the basic idea is economy-threateningly fun. **Lex Friedman**



Drop7

£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jc2vS • bit.ly/Ntl8Yx

Every so often a casual game comes along that's entirely simple, entirely original and entirely addictive. In Drop7 you need to deal with ever-rising rows of balls, each numbered from one to seven. In order to make a ball disappear, you have to use it in a row of exactly that number; if you're lucky this may spark a chain reaction, clearing the board in dramatic bursts and multiplying your score. Each new row of balls that appears, however, comes up grey and numberless, and has to be cracked open by eliminating others around it. Like Tetris or Bejeweled, it's easy to learn, difficult to master and even harder to put down. **Bonnie Ruberg**



Plants vs. Zombies

£1.99/£4.99 ★★★★

itun.es/i6jR5LY • bit.ly/O7qGCm

Finally: a game that combines gardening and undead slaughter. In this unusual and charming tower defence game, you're a home owner facing a zombie invasion. Your best defence is to plant mushrooms, squash and other deadly veg to fight back. The beautiful cartoon graphics are on the right side of zany and set a light-hearted tone: the zombies are silly-looking and distinctive. (Each type has a specific skill, as do the plants.) The game is addictive and surprisingly deep, with a terrific sense of humour: the zombies send you poorly spelled notes that will raise a chuckle. One of the cleverest and most original strategy games out there. **Chris Holt**



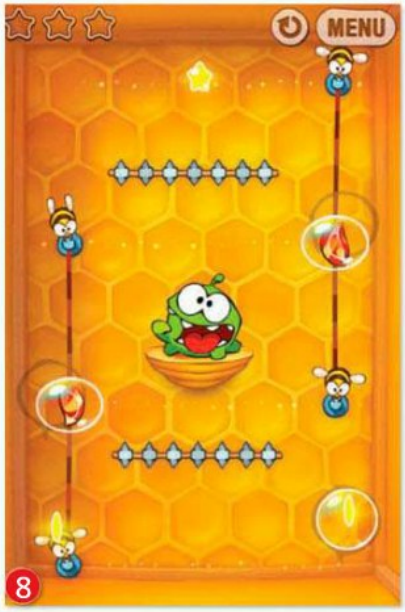
100 Rogues

£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jc3HZ • bit.ly/QJGZiA

Like Canabalt (page 20), this turn-based dungeon crawler takes sadistic pleasure in the inevitability of death. And, since it's part of the hardcore genre known as 'roguelike' (see page 39), that death is permanent: there are no precautionary saves. (You can leave a game and return later, though.) But don't let that put you off a fun and entertaining adventure. Playing as a knight, wizard, robot, skeleton or 'dinoman', you head off on a quest to defeat Satan and his minions. The game has strategic depth, and you'll be amazed how much it draws you into its odd little world – before kicking you out again when you make the smallest error. Lovably brutal. **David Price**

For iPad only | For iPhone & iPod touch only | For all three devices



8

Cut The Rope

69p/£1.49 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js9Y6 • bit.ly/NdyBHD

There's a sweet (or a few pieces of a sweet) dangling or floating somewhere in each level of this hugely popular physics-based puzzler, and you have to feed it to a monster called Om Nom. And if you can grab the three stars while you're at it, that'd be great.

Early levels begin with simple ropes and bubbles, and all you need to do is slice the rope with your finger or tap to pop the bubbles. But things get far more complicated later: some ropes only appear when the sweet is near them, and you have to deal with hazards like spikes or hungry spiders. Feeding Om Nom is usually fairly straightforward, but capturing all the stars on each level becomes a real challenge.

Cut The Rope has a neat concept and cute artwork, but the game's massive success is down to the level design, which is simply superb. Physics effects are intuitive, from basic but perfectly executed gravity and floating objects to bungee-action ropes, and the difficulty curve is expertly judged. The game also makes great use of the touchscreen, even requiring you to use multiple fingers at times. And knowing that a perfect solution exists keeps you replaying a level over and over to find a way to collect all three stars.

A simple premise, clean, beautiful graphics, responsive multi-touch controls, awesome physics and top-notch level design: Cut The Rope is a deservedly huge hit. **James Savage**



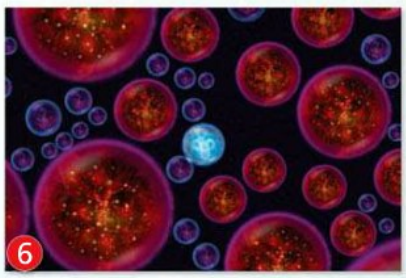
7

Waking Mars

£2.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jR5ks • bit.ly/R4UnwG

Essentially a puzzle game with a great concept and a touch of action, Waking Mars puts you in the boots of a jetpacking astronaut/scientist exploring the Red Planet for signs of ancient life. It's your job to find and plant seeds that spread vegetation around the caves, which in turn opens up new areas. You have to evade carnivorous plants and acid pits, and occasionally you'll need to kill off a plant to make room for another. But this is a game about creation rather than destruction. It's thoughtful and at times intense, not to mention incredibly pretty: your character a tiny spec against dramatic sweeps of red rock and vast open skies. **Alec Meer**



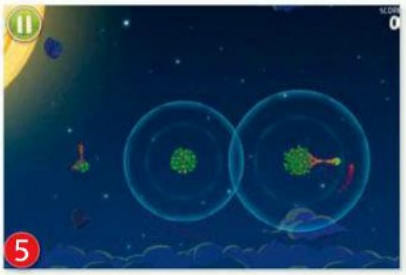
6

Osmos

£1.99/£2.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jr4jJ • bit.ly/Oa7Xz8

Osmos was originally a highly regarded 'ambient gaming' PC title, but the touchscreen suits it perfectly. It's a tranquilizing experience, with trippy visuals and music. You play a pulsating ball of light. The aim is to work your way up the food chain by moving around and absorbing smaller balls of light (making you expand) and avoiding bigger ones. Yet this simple concept produces an engaging experience like no other. Despite remaining utterly serene, some levels can get fiendishly complicated, with different balls of light acting in dramatically different ways. A classic that deserves a place in every iOS gamer's collection. **Mark Hattersley**



5

Angry Birds Space

69p/£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js8x9 • bit.ly/GFXBTu

Rovio intermittently releases film tie-in or holiday-themed versions of Angry Birds to consolidate its position as ruler of the mobile gaming roost. But this stellar effort was the first you could really call a sequel, adding far more to the franchise than new levels and a corny theme. Although both of those are included.

As before, your aim is to defeat some villainous green pigs by catapulting various kinds of bird at their houses, and mastering the intricacies of gravity and trajectory. The fun thing with Angry Birds Space, though, is that gravity has become a movable feast.

Taking its cues most obviously from the Mario Galaxy console platformers, the game introduces zero-G areas (in which birds follow an arrow-straight flight path, and debris drifts around) and planetoids with their own gravity. This allows for intricate trick shots where you bend a trajectory around two or even three planetary bodies to pick off a snoozing pig on the far side of a moon.

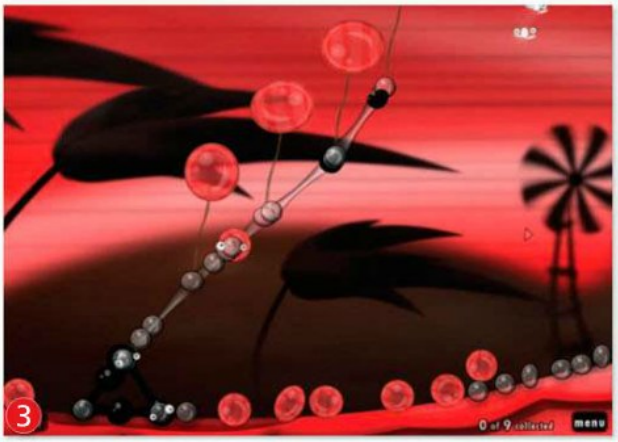
Visually the game is appealing – each of the birds has been given a suitably galactic costume – the space theme has been carried nicely throughout the level designs and there's a new ice bird to play with. This is a major step forward for the series, and Angry Birds was no turkey to begin with. **David Price**



4

Fieldrunners 2

A brand-new entry at number 4, pop pickers. Read our full review of this terrific tower defence game on page 36.



World of Goo

£1.99/£2.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jr3rW • bit.ly/NkCjiF

Probably the finest puzzle game in the App Store, World of Goo presents you with a pile of small goo balls (usually sitting dormant at the bottom of the screen) and an open pipe (generally up high) and asks you to introduce them to each other. Using your finger, you have to stack the balls up to reach the pipe: once you get your goo structure to reach the pipe, it will suck up all the balls not used to build the structure. Each level is a challenge and takes a great deal of thought (and structural consideration) to complete. There's a lot of strategy involved, and graphically, the game soars, its levels littered with canyons, water fountains and volcanoes. Few games are as fun, interesting and enjoyably complicated. **Sam Felsing**



Infinity Blade II

£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js6jZ • bit.ly/vO1SvJ

It adopts the trappings of a fantasy RPG, but Infinity Blade II isn't free-roaming and there's very little exploration. Yet that isn't a criticism. The genius of this game is that it captures and distills the essence of roleplaying games into something almost existential: an infinite loop of death and rebirth, fighting, learning, looting and starting all over again. Infinity Blade II offers breathtaking graphics – the backdrops are works of art – masses of collectible gear and a series of epic swashbuckling one-on-one battles with giant monsters, carefully packaged to suit gaming on the go. You tap to attack, swipe to parry, gesture to cast magic spells and so on. In the end you'll die, but that's okay: there's always another go. **David Price**

Tiny Wings

69p/£1.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6js5LD • bit.ly/MDWQYR

For those who haven't played it before, Tiny Wings is a side-scrolling game based on a single control. Touch the screen and your cute little bird furls her stunted wings and speeds downwards at a rapid lick. Raise your finger, and she flaps them and soars briefly, if you've gained sufficient momentum.

Racing against the sun (when it sets your bird goes to sleep and the game is over) you have to press and release at the right moments to navigate a series of hilly, undulating islands as quickly as possible, achieving 'flight' as much as you can.

The basic gameplay mechanics are simple but exquisitely crafted, and the game is an aesthetic delight, from the crayony backdrops to the charming music and effects. But it was the recent update that catapulted an already fine game to the top of our hit parade.

For a start, the game is now available for iPad, whose extra pixels do true justice to those psychedelic, procedurally generated landscapes. And two entirely new modes have been added. (It's tempting to suggest that most developers would have called it an entirely new game rather than a free update.)



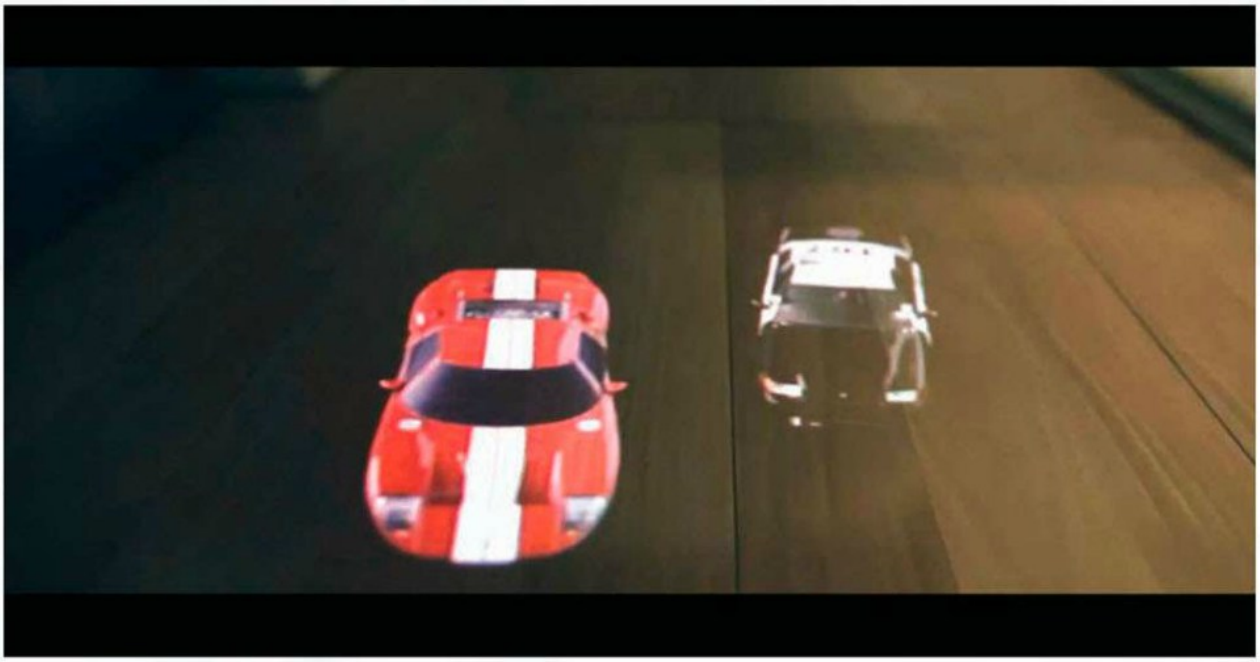
In Flight School you race against three rival baby birds, trying to earn a high placing and a record time, and avoid the new water hazards. But the real showstopper is Hill Party: a split-screen, knee-to-knee local multiplayer mode that's quite, quite brilliant (but only for iPad).

Wonderful, charming, inventive, simple, beautiful, fun: pick an adjective. Brought to iPad with a bang, and now featuring the finest party multiplayer we've seen on the device, Tiny Wings beats a superb field by a beak. **David Price**

"WHERE'S MONKEY BONGO?"

Disagree with our selection? That's okay. Send us your pick for the iOS gaming top 50:

letters@ipadiphoneuser.co.uk



MAKE A FILM WITH AN iPOD

Writing and directing duo The Theory explain how they made an award-winning short film, using an iPod touch and a micro projector

Film-making techniques are moving forwards all the time, most obviously in the costly 3D and digital special effects used by high-budget blockbusters. But at the other end of the scale, portable devices such as the iPhone and iPod touch are giving independent directors new ways to work.

Over the following pages, writer/director team Tom Jenkins and Simon Sharp (thetheory.co.uk) reveal how they created their award-winning short film *Speed of Light* (vimeo.com/43239312), using an iPod touch and a mini projector accessory. The film was a personal project; many of the techniques involved would be too risky for commercial work. *Speed of Light* was created after the duo had the idea of a developing a 'projection mapping' concept on a micro scale, using pico projectors that could be moved around easily.

The team came up with the concept of a classic car chase. They filmed against greenscreen backgrounds, then enhanced the footage in Adobe After Effects, before projecting the isolated images and filming the results.

VITAL INFO

DEVICE: iPod touch
DIFFICULTY: Professional
TIME REQUIRED: 9 months (working between jobs)

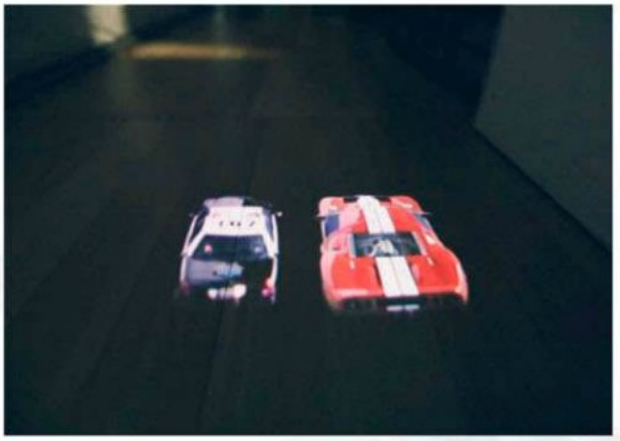
TOOLS USED:

- Canon EOS 5D Mk II digital camera
- iPod touch
- Microvision pico projector
- Avid Media Composer 5
- After Effects 5.5
- Red Giant Trapcode Particular



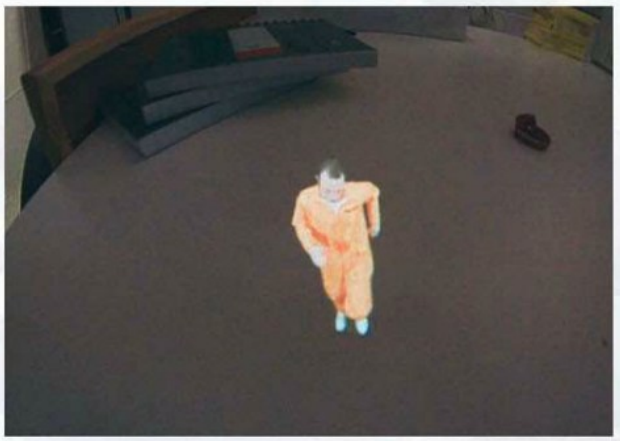










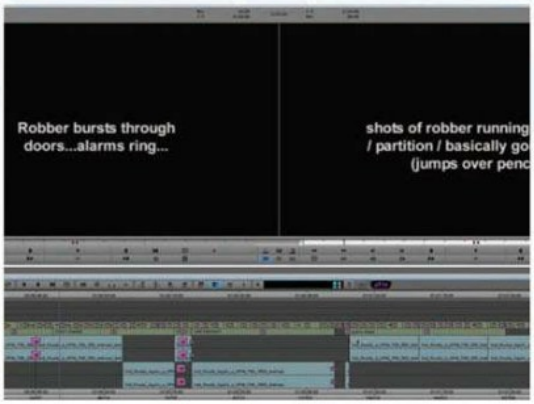



SPEED OF LIGHT
aka
THE WORLD'S SMALLEST CHASE

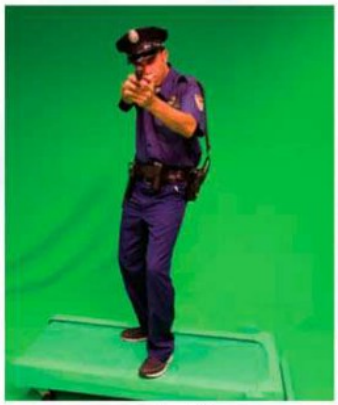
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE: LIGHTS, iPOD, ACTION!



1 Initial testing Testing is always the first part of our process, and often the most important. For *Speed of Light*, we tested to see whether the concept of projecting small isolated images (with a pure black background) on to various surfaces actually worked and looked good. Luckily, we found it did.



2 Text storyboarding For quick initial planning, we create a storyboard with text instead of visuals. In Avid Media Composer, we edited text descriptions of shots to the music, to get a feel of the sequence without having to spend time storyboarding. It's a really quick way to play around with ideas.



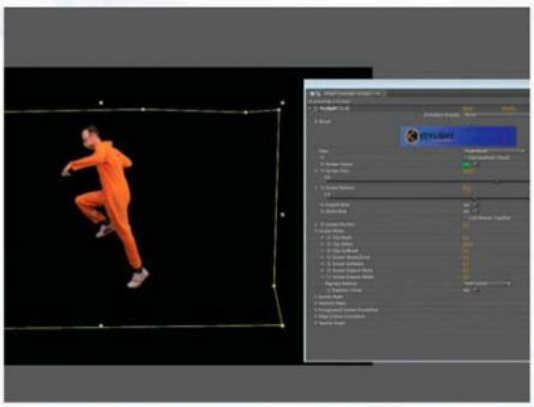
3 Greenscreen treadmill Next, we needed to film the raw elements that would be projected. We filmed everything against a greenscreen, so we could key out the backgrounds later. We hired a greenscreen treadmill for all the running shots, and drove the model cars on it as well to give it a realistic feel.



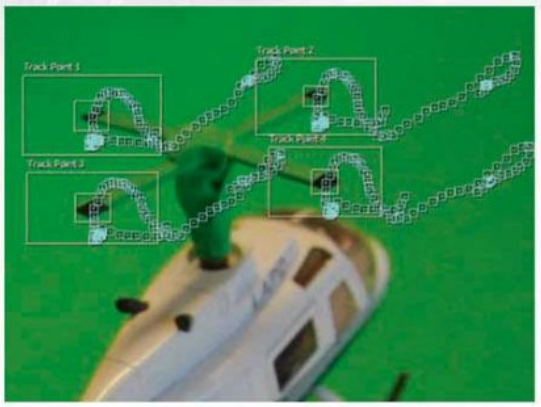
4 Greenscreen chopper We filmed a small model helicopter against a greenscreen, too. We wanted realistic spinning rotor blades, and the easiest way to do these is to create them as simple VFX in After Effects. We added four pins as very rough visual markers of where the blades would be.



5 Create a sequence of shots Once we had the greenscreen rushes, we imported them into Avid, replacing the 'scriptmatic' descriptions – the text substitutes for a storyboard – with the actual shots. This gave us a rough sequence of the best raw shots, which we individually exported to After Effects.



6 Remove the green We used the Keylight keyer in After Effects to remove the greenscreen backgrounds. Rough garbage mattes were used on some shots where the greenscreen wasn't lit perfectly, or where the edge of it could be seen. We added some extra skidding moves to the cars where needed.



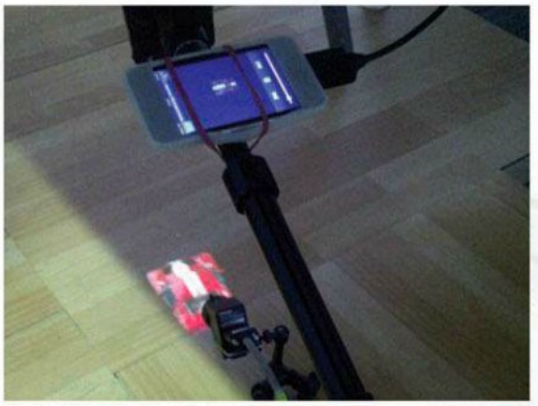
7 Rotor blades For the rotor blades, we created a simple square composition, with a white bar shape rotating quickly. We then turned on motion blur. Then After Effect's built-in Tracker was used to track each of the four points as the helicopter, and Perspective Corner Pinning to track the four marker points.



8 Missile trail For the trail on the heat-seeking missile, we used Red Giant's Trapcode Particular plug-in. We took one of the presets and tweaked it until it looked right, then we added an image of a missile to the front of the trail and comped it together with the helicopter footage. It's our favourite shot.



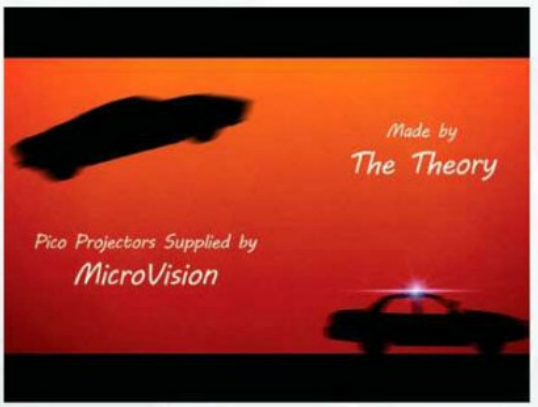
9 Refining and editing After importing the shots back into Avid, we recut the sequence using the comped shots to see how it looked. We refined the edits and reshot a few bits. Then we were ready to put all the shots on an iPod touch, plug in the MicroVision pico projector and start capturing the actual film.



10 Wheeled rigs Although it appears that the camera and projector are handheld, we built wheeled rigs to hold them in alignment. We had to distort the projected images, so when they were filmed at a certain angle, the distortion would be cancelled out – like the adverts painted on football pitches.



11 Setting up the camera Now it was time to film everything. On our little wheeled rigs, we clamped a tiny full HD camera with a massive wide-angle lens to give us a very large depth of field. This had the effect of making everything feel huge, and made any camera movement look much more dramatic.



12 Finishing up With filming complete, we went back to Avid to recut the sequence again, this time adding the final rushes. Then we took everything back into After Effects for polishing, and added subtle camera shake. Finally, we worked on the sound design in Media Composer and added a credit sequence.



B&O Play BeoPlay A3

NOVEL iPAD SPEAKER ACCESSORY FROM DESIGN PIONEER

Like many Bang & Olufsen designs, this angular one by Steffen Schmelling is stylish yet just a touch retro-looking. It's a novel iPad speaker and stand that embraces Apple's tablet snugly. Once fitted – which is a fairly painless process – the whole thing looks a bit like a picture frame.

The A3 sounds pretty impressive, especially considering its relatively small size. B&O points to an increased sound range compared to the iPad alone – which isn't saying much – but there's a significant step up in sound quality compared to the naked iPad. Music mostly sounds rich and more detailed, while TV and movie watching appears more punchy and involving, especially during action sequences.

B&O uses a technology it calls 'adaptive stereo orientation', which essentially means the sound stage adapts to the position of your iPad: whether vertical or horizontal, standing up or lying down. In practice this means the A3 sounds consistent in all positions, although we suspect most will opt for landscape mode for watching TV, catch-up services and films. For anyone using their iPad as a substitute telly this is the speaker's real appeal.

Build quality is good: solid yet not too weighty, at 1.5kg. It's made of plastic with an aluminium frame, which should withstand the occasional knock. A dedicated carry case or cover would have been nice, though.

The simple range of controls (on/off, volume and a battery indicator) are accessible to the user whatever the orientation, and battery life appears decent; we got five to six hours of use after each full charge. That's liable to run out before the iPad, admittedly (Apple's tablet is good for 10 hours), but it's still solid. Connect to the mains and the power supply will charge both iPad and A3.

At the time of writing, the A3 still isn't natively compatible with Apple's latest third-generation iPad. The manufacturer promises this will soon be remedied, but the problem reflects a wider concern. B&O, like other accessory manufacturers, is at the mercy of Apple here, and such a speaker, tightly integrated into the iPad design, could quickly become redundant should the iPad maker choose to radically change its designs. That tight integration also prevents the A3 from being much use to iPad gamers, the additional bulk making many games less tactile.

B&O Play is a subsidiary brand that's pitched as an affordable alternative to its high-end sister label, yet the A3 still costs a premium £449. That's a fair chunk of change, and this may limit the speaker's appeal.

VERDICT

The BeoPlay A3 is clearly a quality product from a quality brand, and it's especially suited to those who keep their iPad at home and close to hand. Great for desktops and bedside tables, the A3 is impressive for such a portable speaker, with a rich, detailed sound. The price tag, however, makes it a serious investment.

Nick Spence

READ MORE:
bit.ly/N1z2DT

£449
Bang & Olufsen • beoplay.com
Product page: bit.ly/NiESlv

RATING ★ ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- Quality sound and build
- Sound stage cleverly adjusts to landscape and portrait modes

DISLIKES:
- Price could deter many
- Battery life doesn't match that of the iPad
- No carry case or cover

A serious investment
The A3 has a premium price tag, but its portability and audio quality do a solid job of justifying this



RATING: ★★★★★ = OUTSTANDING / ★★★★ = VERY GOOD / ★★★ = GOOD / ★★ = FLAWED / ★ = UNACCEPTABLE

Logitech UE Air

AFFORDABLE BUT HIGH-QUALITY AIRPLAY SPEAKER SYSTEM

We've seen some impressive AirPlay speakers recently, but they've tended to be very expensive. Logitech's new UE Air isn't exactly cheap and cheerful, but at £299 it's far more affordable than most AirPlay rivals.

The UE Air has a distinctive design, with a flared, curving front panel that measures about 50cm wide. It's very easy to set up – in fact there are several different options here depending on how you want to use it.

A retractable dock allows you to quickly connect an iPhone or iPod and (using the UE app) enter the password for your Wi-Fi network. Once that's done you can close the dock and stream your music over the network. However, the UE Air also has an ethernet port for making a wired connection, or you can set it up using a web browser.

Sound quality is strong: it might not match the warmth of more expensive models such as the B&W Zeppelin Air (page 61), but it's clear and detailed, with a good, solid bass. The higher frequencies initially sounded a little muffled, but the UE app allows you to adjust the treble and bass settings, and it only took a few seconds to tweak the treble up a bit. The UE Air also packs quite a punch, volume-wise.

VERDICT

The UE Air's price tag is competitive, and while sound quality isn't up to audiophile standards, most people will find it more than adequate. And it's powerful enough to use as your main home speaker system. **Cliff Joseph**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OB4rwE

£299
Logitech • logitech.co.uk
Product page: bit.ly/O639XW

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Cheaper than AirPlay rivals
- Good sound quality
- Easy setup

DISLIKES:
- Lacks the warmth of some more expensive speakers



Give these people Air
Cut the wires with AirPlay

Orbitsound T9

POWERFUL YET COMPACT SOUNDBAR SPEAKER SYSTEM

Compact one-piece speaker docks are a popular and convenient option, but they often suffer from poor bass output. Orbitsound's solution is to provide its new T9 speaker with a separate subwoofer.

The company has form in this area, having done the same thing before with the popular T12 speaker system (**bit.ly/uEH4Ml**). But the T12 is big, designed to sit under your TV, and the subwoofer that comes with it is the size of a small coffee table. This is far more compact.

The T9 has a similar, rectangular soundbar design, with an iPod dock on the top. And, like the T12, it's also equipped with digital audio and video output connectors, so you can hook it up to your TV if you want to. However, it's just 11.5in wide, which means you can easily place it on a shelf in any room at home. The subwoofer's a lot more petite, too: just 13in high. So it won't be difficult to find room for that either.

Despite its more compact dimensions, the T9 is almost a match for its bigger brother. It produces an amazing 140W output, and we barely needed to push the volume level above 35 percent before we got worried about annoying the neighbours.

The audio quality is good, too. The bar unit fires sound out to the sides as well as the front, and produces an expansive, detailed sound that really fills the room. It's not the warmest of sounds, perhaps, but you can't really expect audiophile quality for just £199, and there's no doubt that the T9 is one of the most powerful and impressive speaker systems we've seen in this price range.

VERDICT

Some people will prefer a more compact all-in-one speaker dock. But we think the Orbitsound T9 will work a treat if you're looking for an affordable speaker system to enhance the soundtrack of a movie or even get a party going. **Cliff Joseph**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OLLhmh



You must be barking
Check out the powerful separate subwoofer

£199
Orbitsound • orbitsound.com
Product page: bit.ly/Q4kRh0

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Impressive volume
- Powerful bass

DISLIKES:
- Two-part speaker system takes up extra space



Sennheiser Amperior

LOOKS AND SOUNDS GOOD

£259.95
Sennheiser • sennheiser.co.uk
Product page: bit.ly/Ru3MxV

RATING ★ ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- Great audio performance
- Stylish looks
- Robust design

DISLIKES:
- Expensive and slightly uncomfortable

The Sennheiser Amperior headphones are 'inspired by DJs and designed for the streets', but we think their lightweight design would suit your average suit-wearing commuter just fine.

Sound-wise they are hard to fault: music is loud and refreshingly clear, vocals come through effortlessly and without blending into the mid-tones, while bass sounds have an almost arrogant pop to them. And the fit is fairly comfortable by the standards of over-ear headphones: we got through an album and a half before we experienced any discomfort, and that was mild.

The Amperiors come with two cables (0.92m and 1.2m), which can be joined together if required. Sennheiser has fitted one lead with Apple-compatible controls, so you can adjust the volume or take calls on your iOS device without taking it out of your pocket or bag.

In terms of value for money, these are probably a bit on the pricey side, but there's no denying that you get fantastic audio for your money. **David Court**

READ MORE: bit.ly/NE53NN



Maxell Air Voltage Wireless iPad Set

HANDY CHARGER/STAND

£129.99
Maxell • uk.maxell.eu/en • Amazon in near future
More info: bit.ly/qm8Lh4

RATING ★ ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- Convenient and easy to use
- Case is hard-wearing and unobtrusive

DISLIKES:
- Expensive
- Case is a bit plain-looking and bulky

Calling this a 'wireless' charging set requires mild suspension of disbelief, but it's neat and convenient.

The set comprises a plain plastic iPad 2 case and matching stand/charger, which is plugged into the mains. In other words, it's only the transfer of power from stand to iPad that's wireless: your charger needs to be tethered to mains power, and the iPad must maintain physical contact with the stand.

If you're willing to use the case full time – not a massive hardship, since it's sturdy and unobtrusive, if a little bulky – then you should find the charging setup convenient. Simply place your cased iPad on to the stand, and it'll start charging, while remaining accessible for use. The stand is fixed at 20 degrees from the vertical, which is fine for checking emails, surfing the web and looking out for incoming notifications. The iPad can sit in either landscape or portrait mode.

Finally, the charging process is pleasingly efficient – just as quick as powering from the mains. **David Price**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OLcmpU



Crosskase Solar 15

KEEP CHARGED UP WITH THIS SOLAR BACKPACK

£139.99
Crosskase • crosskase.com
Product page: bit.ly/KJE2eI

RATING ★ ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- Smart-looking
- Potential life-saver in battery emergency

DISLIKES:
- Topping up solar battery can be a time-consuming hassle

It's not been the sunniest of summers, and solar power probably doesn't seem like a great idea right now. But it could save the day in a battery emergency.

The Solar 15 is a sturdy, well-made rucksack with comfortable shoulder straps, plenty of pockets – you can safely carry a laptop and iPad as well as other gear – and a solar panel on the front. The panel is black with pale lines and blends in quite well: the only real giveaway is a small red light. So we felt inconspicuous, rather than a gadget freak with a solar panel on his back.

The slim battery pack can charge an iPhone 4S twice over. Filling the battery requires at least eight hours of solid sunshine; the reality is likely to be more, however, what with passing cloud, a moving sun and other unforeseen issues.

So don't depend on the sun as the solution to all your mobile power needs. But as a backup power supply, the Solar 15 is a nice option, not to mention a perfectly serviceable medium-sized backpack in its own right. **David Price**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OL5JUm



Taylor Smart Stand Sleeve for iPad

CLEVER FOLDABLE STAND

£49.99
Case Addict • caseaddict.com
Product page: bit.ly/LWnDPL

RATING ★ ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- Attractive and robust
- Clever design

DISLIKES:
- 'Video viewing' position could do with being more vertical

Quirky but clever, this smart, robust and partially stiffened sleeve is also a stand. A stitched triangular groove on each side lets you fold it into two neat tetrahedral structures: a shallow one for typing and a nearer-vertical one for viewing videos and similar tasks.

It's a cunning design, although the angular difference between the options is less than with most stands: 45 degrees (not *quite* vertical enough for optimal video viewing) and 22 degrees, compared to the Apple Smart Cover's 71 and 13 degrees. But it's still pretty functional.

Magnets are strategically sewn into the mouth of the sleeve, in such a way that it clamps securely shut when the iPad is inside, and also holds itself together well when folded into a stand. These sometimes wake the iPad when it's withdrawn from the sleeve, though.

Overall, we found this an appealing and unusual iPad sleeve and stand: it's strongly protective (when the iPad is inside, of course) and works pretty effectively as a stand. **David Price**

READ MORE: bit.ly/N4KFHL



STM Skinny 3

A TOUGH BUT RATHER SCRATCHY iPAD CASE

£39.99
STM • stmbags.com
Product page: bit.ly/NxkXsa

RATING ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- Good build quality
- Tough and protective

DISLIKES:
- Not particularly beautiful
- Closing and opening flap is tricky

First impressions of the Skinny 3 are pleasing: the toughened back is good-quality protective material, all ports and buttons are easy to use, the front flap (much like that of Apple's Smart Cover) has a microfibre interior for long-term screen cleaning and the iPad clicks, reassuringly snugly, into the case.

It's another thing getting your iPad out again, without damaging it or yourself; there's a definite knack. It's nice to know your iPad won't fall out unexpectedly, though. The Skinny 3 has a secure fastener, which is also used to hold the front flap in position when it folds back to make a stand.

We weren't convinced by the colour choices, which seem a little bland, and the material feels more like a scratchy picnic blanket than a luxurious gadget accessory. It's also hard to get iPads out and the fiddly closing flap is a big down side. The price tag's quite high, too. Still, the Skinny 3 provides good all-round protection, which is the priority for most buyers. **Stephanie Andrews**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OujuGv



Pong Soft Touch

iPHONE CASE DESIGNED TO REDUCE RADIATION EXPOSURE

£39.99
Pong Research • ponguk.com
Product page: bit.ly/Nz1O8b

RATING ★ ★

LIKES:
- Radiation reduction gives peace of mind

DISLIKES:
- Expensive and unattractive
- Lack of conclusive evidence (so far) that mobile phone radiation is dangerous

Do mobile phones cause cancer? The jury is technically still out, since we have very little data on risks beyond the first 15 years after initial exposure. But the numerous studies so far have not found conclusive evidence that they do.

If you're still worried, however, then Pong's case could be for you. A built-in antenna redirects the radiation away from your head when making a phone call (and theoretically improves your signal, although we didn't see a noticeable boost in anecdotal testing).

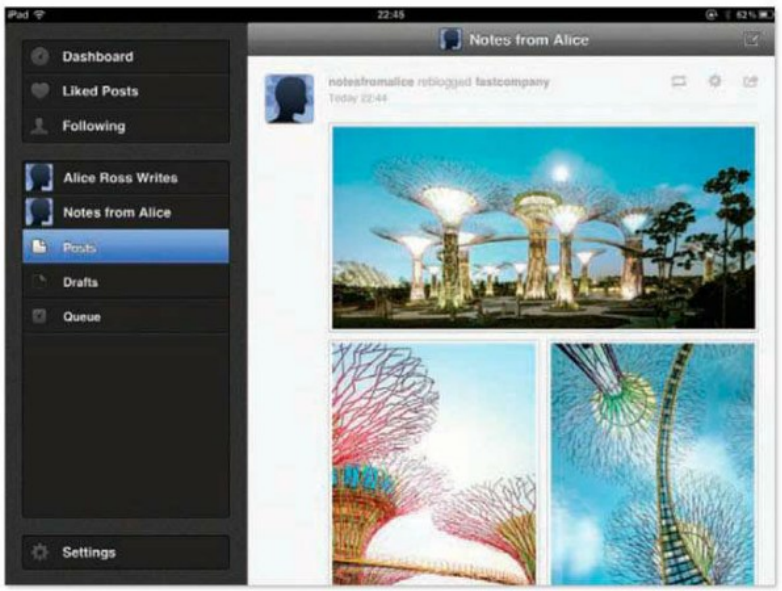
In other respects this is a tough case to recommend: expensive, ugly and in the case of our samples easily scuffed. All of that would be more than worth it if it genuinely reduced your chances of a tumour, of course, but most studies put the dangers somewhere between unproven and doubtful. Clearly you must consider the evidence for yourself.

We strongly advise further research if you are concerned about mobile phone radiation; the link below may make a good starting point. **David Price**

READ MORE: bit.ly/MqWJzU

TumbleBee

THE BUZZ ABOUT TUMBLR SUDDENLY MAKES SENSE



Best-known, perhaps, for hosting facetious photo memes (such as the admittedly brilliant *Kim Jong Il Looking at Things*), Tumblr actually has a lot more to offer. The simple, visually led social blogging platform is rapidly gaining a following among photographers, magazines and all sorts of other creative types.

Given this slant, it's baffling that there's no official iPad app. TumbleBee is a decent substitute, allowing you to post photos, quotes, links, video, audio – whatever takes your fancy – from within the app. You can even shoot video on your iPad and share it at once.

Following other Tumblrs turns your Dashboard into a kind of longform, picture-rich Twitter stream: you can reblog entries, sharing them on your own blog at the touch of a button. Reblogging is handy for sharing ideas and participating in a debate, but it's also brilliant as a lazy way to keep your site fresh if you're a post-a-week kind of blogger.

We would have liked a simpler way to find Tumblrs to follow – you can discover them by surfing what people in your Dashboard are reblogging, but this can be limited at first.

You can run several blogs from within TumbleBee, enabling you to keep restaurant tales separate from cat Gifs, if you'd prefer.

VERDICT

While TumbleBee lacks a few of the desktop version's advanced features, such as template editing, it's brilliantly snappy and intuitive. The best Tumblr app we've come across. **A Ross**

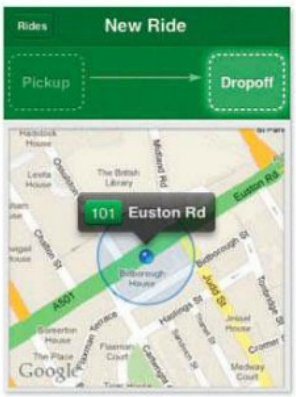
READ MORE: bit.ly/NjoXB2

£1.99
Version: 1.1.1
www.tumblebee.co
Download: itun.es/i6jt3Qh

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Smooth and speedy to use
- Varied posting options

DISLIKES:
- Hard to surf for new blogs
- No control over themes



Wheely

FREE ★★★★

itun.es/i6jw7Sn • bit.ly/PatdUs

London's big, and it's impossible to know a reliable minicab firm in every area. One option is to use Wheely, which lets you book a taxi directly from your iPhone. The fee is agreed before you step into the vehicle, and if you do get stuck in a jam, you can keep working (or emailing) as you wait – all of Wheely's vehicles offer free onboard Wi-Fi. **Matt Egan**



Chambers Deluxe Dictionary & Thesaurus

£6.99 ★★★

itun.es/i6jt9Jj • bit.ly/S49lzV

As well as dictionary and thesaurus search, this iOS incarnation of the venerable *Chambers* lets you store favourites and play word games. We'd like a more polished interface, but this is a lot cheaper than its rivals. Overall, it's a decent and reliable dictionary for your iOS device. **Mark Hattersley**

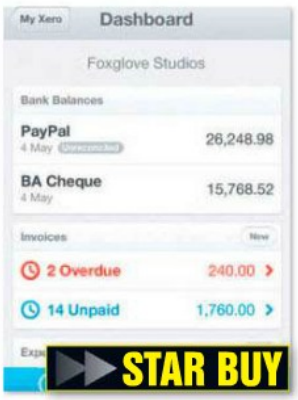


Scanner Pro by Readdle

£4.99 ★★★★★

itun.es/i6jt8f7 • bit.ly/MINOy5

It's been around for a few years, turning your iOS device into a funky portable scanner – ideal for scanning receipts for expenses, for example – but the latest update to the app adds a refined, intuitive interface and iCloud sync support. In a crowded scanner app market, it feels well ahead of the pack. **Nick Spence**



Xero

SUB-BASED

★★★★★

itun.es/i6jn9v9 • bit.ly/MDdMyP

You can view bank accounts, credit card and PayPal balances, outstanding invoices and expense claims, and create, approve and send invoices directly from this user-friendly accountancy offering. While the app is free, you'll need a monthly plan, starting from £12 per month for a modest package. **Nick Spence**

RATING: ★★★★★ = OUTSTANDING ★★★★ = VERY GOOD ★★★ = GOOD ★★ = FLAWED ★ = UNACCEPTABLE



Napster

CHANGES HAVE NOT BEEN RAPTUROUSLY RECEIVED

£10 per month
Version: 2.2.12
Download: itun.es/i6Dq5BT

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Flawless search and streaming
- Library still large, at six million tracks

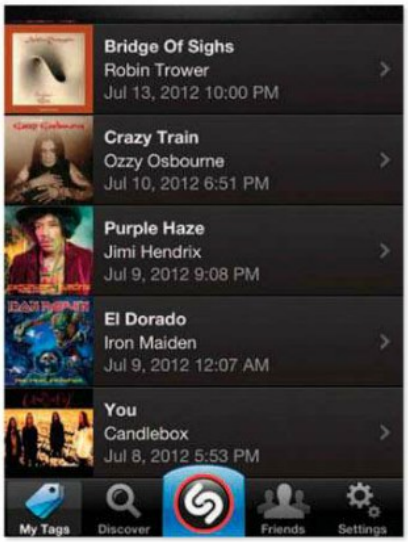
DISLIKES:
- Expensive to use on an iPhone
- Some older playlists will now have gaps

Until Spotify came along, Napster was probably the best-known music streaming service, with almost 10 million songs in its library, including lots of exclusive live recordings. US service Rhapsody bought out Napster in late 2011, with implications for track availability and the hardware it works on: Mac, PC, Android and iPhone. There's no iPad-specific version.

The 'Unlimited' service costs £5 per month, but to use Rhapsody's version of Napster on an iPhone you must pay £10 a month for Unlimited + Mobile, which matches Spotify's charges. This also adds the option to download tracks at 64kbps to a mobile device for offline listening. Watch out for your 3G data costs.

Great search and an extensive catalogue make Napster among the best services of its sort, but Rhapsody hasn't brought much to the party. We're also sure most people would sooner have the option to use Napster on their iPhone than a Wi-Fi streamer as part of their £5 monthly deal. **Rosemary Hattersley**

READ MORE: bit.ly/T2lbhj



Shazam Encore

SEPARATE YOUR NIRVANA FROM YOUR NICKELBACK

£3.99
Version: 5.0.5 • shazam.com
Download: itun.es/i6jt4wo

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Nice balance of information and activities
- Simple, user-friendly interface

DISLIKES:
- No playback controls within app; separate (free) app required for this

For the unfamiliar, Shazam listens to music playing around you and identifies it. In a quiet room, it accurately tagged songs in two to 10 seconds, and we got admirable results in noisy environments too. You can also search by typing the song title, artist or album.

Shazam Encore provides less of a flood of information than rivals such as SoundHound ∞ (right), but all the important stuff is there – title, album name, cover art, iTunes and YouTube links, lyrics where available – and it's presented in a simple, no-nonsense fashion. A MyTags link takes you to a list of songs you've recently tagged.

You can also share tagged songs via Facebook, Twitter or email, and follow other Shazam users and view their tagged songs. The app integrates nicely with Spotify, too.

It would be nice if Shazam supplied playback controls within the app. The free Shazam Player provides this, but we'd like to see those features merged into a single app. **Brian Beam**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OrA9Od



SoundHound ∞

IDENTIFIES AMBIENT MUSIC. LIKE SHAZAM, ONLY BETTER

£4.99
Version: 5.0.1
Download: itun.es/i6jt3yK

RATING ★★★★★

LIKES:
- Quick and effective identification
- Provides a huge amount of information
- iPhone version very easy to navigate

DISLIKES:
- iPad version can be overwhelming

Like Shazam (left), SoundHound ∞ lets you identify ambient music. Simply tap the big orange button and the listening process begins. The app will return its best guess after a few seconds, and this is usually correct. You can also type or speak a song title, artist name or lyric snippet, or even hum or sing, though the results were mixed for this.

Once the app has identified a song, it inundates you with information, such as the title, artist name, cover art and iTunes links. Music identification takes place on SoundHound's servers, but if you haven't got a signal, the app lets you tag songs for later identification.

You can share the songs you've identified via email, text message, Facebook or Twitter, with the option to post automatically to the latter two. You can also view songs that are popular among other users.

Finally, SoundHound provides a fully fledged music player that can play songs on your device and provide its usual features for those tracks. **Brian Beam**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OrA9Od

Stormfront

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WHAT'S THE BEST TO-DO APP?



Reminders

SIMPLE, EFFECTIVE AND YOU'VE ALREADY GOT IT

PRE-INSTALLED
Version: 5.1.1
bit.ly/PFK8xN

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Very simple to use
- Introduced location reminders

DISLIKES:
- You have to add locations to your Contacts list before you can use them

Do you wish you didn't have so much to keep track of, and would rather not have to spend more time working out how to use a to-do app than actually doing what you need to get done? If so, Apple's free Reminders app is for you.

In fact, that's selling it short: this is the app that introduced the great notion of location reminders. At first, it's just remarkable that your iPhone pipes up when you pass the shops, but soon you'll use it for everything and won't fathom why you haven't always had them.

Then there's Siri. Pick up your iPhone and tell it to remind you to look for a file when you get to work. You can now concentrate on other things in the knowledge that you'll be reminded at the right time and place – on your iPhone, iPad and Mountain Lion Mac.

Reminders' big feature is that it lets you make simple lists so easily that you'll keep making them and using them. But its true killer feature is that you've already got it on your iPhone. **William Gallagher**

READ MORE: bit.ly/SdIT75



Todo

FLEXIBLE, POWERFUL, SOLID MID-RANGE TASK MANAGER

£2.99
Version: 5.2.4
Download: itun.es/i6jn5Xt

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Quick to learn
- Easy to add ever more complex tasks
- Good for repeating projects

DISLIKES:
- Customisation can be overwhelming

All the pleasure of checking off a task when it's done (and that's a whole lot of pleasure) is soon sucked away if the next thing you have to do is add it back in again for next week.

It's in this middle range – where you find yourself repeating tasks, and a great many of them too – that you'll discover most to-do apps. Many are free, but Appigo's Todo, a well-supported app that's been around for a long time, is well worth a little expenditure.

It's very quick when you want to make a task repeat every month. Or say you have to do eight things for your weekly meeting: make one project and put the tasks in there. Then next week when someone does it for you, one tap marks all of them as complete.

You can give a task a project, a priority, a star or any number of tags to help you remember what it's for, and a context to say where you'll do it. We'd only warn that with great customisation comes the risk that you may be overwhelmed. **William Gallagher**

READ MORE: bit.ly/QYedpG



OmniFocus

A BRILLIANT TO-DO APP THAT WILL OWN YOUR SOUL

£13.99
Version: 1.14.2
Download: itun.es/i6jt88c

RATING ★★★★★

LIKES:
- Clever, handy Forecast & Map views
- Changes your very idea of what a to-do list can accomplish

DISLIKES:
- Too costly – and tricky – for casual users

If your red badge count of unfinished tasks never seems to go down, try OmniFocus. Although it takes some effort to learn – the iPad version is the easiest, the Mac app the hardest, with the iPhone offering in the middle – it's well worth it. Indeed, once you've mastered one, you'll soon buy them all.

First, you'll see how to add a start and due date. Next is the Forecast view, which is a one-screen look at all you've got on that day. Make a note that you want to send a parcel and the Map view will show you the nearest post office.

But eventually, OmniFocus changes you. You stop being tied to just getting that wretched list of tasks down, and instead look to see what you can do now. What calls and emails can you make on the way to the post office? What's the very next thing to do?

Eventually, you'll end up switching off OmniFocus' red badge entirely, knowing that it will remind you of everything, and you'll automatically do everything just when you need to. **William Gallagher**

READ MORE: bit.ly/Mri2q9



£1.99
Version: 1.0
subatomicstudios.com
Download: itun.es/i6jt9gB

RATING ★★★★★

LIKES:
- Brilliant graphics
- A fun, funny experience
- Maddeningly addictive

DISLIKES:
- A little expensive for an iPhone game

Fieldrunners 2

TOWER DEFENCE BRILLIANCE. MASS MURDER HAS NEVER BEEN SO MUCH FUN

Like most tower defence titles, Fieldrunners 2 is based on a pretty hideous premise when you think about it. You sit there, behind your machine gun emplacements, your missile launchers and flame-throwers, and wait for the cannon fodder: hundreds and hundreds of goons loping gamely forward, clambering over each other's carcasses. They're not even armed. What are you, some kind of monster?

One of the ways Fieldrunners prevents you from dwelling on thoughts like this is to keep your mind constantly occupied. There are always problems to address, threats to deal with, towers to upgrade or weak spots that need filling. It's a brilliantly frenetic game.

As the enemy assaults you with waves of troops, your job is to prevent them from getting to the other side of the screen by building gun towers in strategic combinations. Funnel the bad guys into bottlenecks and then shoot them to pieces. You have to last a given number of waves to finish a level, but it will then give you the option of playing 'Endless' mode, and carrying on for a laugh. It's a lot of fun, although surprisingly difficult when played on any but the easiest of settings.

The first Fieldrunners game had a decent range of weapon towers, but your options here – like the range of baddies – has expanded enormously. There are radiation, plague and poison gas towers (lovely), towers that generate a vicious laser ribbon between them and a tower that lobs beehives. And the fieldrunners now have medics who heal troops around them and hazmat specialists who are immune to your chemical warfare. That's right, Saddam, gun down the doctors.

And the graphics are vastly improved, too. Zooming in reveals cute, beautifully rendered towers, troop types and vehicles, and the backgrounds are stunning, in a cartoonish, painterly style. And everything is nicely animated, with all sorts of neat little touches such as ripples of static on the electric towers.

Not all the changes are skin-deep either. There are new puzzle levels and sudden death levels with different rules, one-shot items such as mines, and more 'furniture': trenches, bridges and roads that channel the enemy for you. These look great, although it could be argued that they reduce the satisfaction of moulding a lethal labyrinth from scratch. Just stick the flame-thrower in the centre of the road loop.

You sit there, behind your machine gun emplacements, your missile launchers and flame-throwers...

Finally, the overall structure of the game is much improved. The first game simply offered you a (quite small) range of levels and invited you to pick one, but now there's a pretty map with various zones of unlockable levels.

VERDICT

Subatomic has taken an addictive little iPhone game and sharpened everything up. Fieldrunners 2 is about as polished, well-crafted and enjoyable to play as the humble tower defence genre gets. **David Price**

READ MORE: bit.ly/NPVzTj

RATING: ★★★★★ = OUTSTANDING ★★★★ = VERY GOOD ★★★ = GOOD ★★ = FLAWED ★ = UNACCEPTABLE

Autumn Dynasty

BEAUTIFUL STRATEGY GAME THAT'S FRESH… AND FUSSY



Set in feudal Japan, Autumn Dynasty is the tale of a ruling warlord fending off rebels by recruiting and carefully deploying large armies. A distinctive, pseudo-handdrawn art style depicts squads of swordsmen, archers and horsemen as calligraphic ink-people: a simplicity not demanding much of your iPhone or iPad, but enabling large headcounts and an elegant look.

Unfortunately, the controls aren't quite so slick. It's a gesture system: draw a lazy loop around your men to select multiple units, then waft them at a location or set of enemies you want them to attack. Easy! If only the game didn't have a tendency to deselect everything if you don't tap just so, which can be infuriating when you need to quickly manoeuvre archers into cover or have horsemen flank approaching swordsmen.

Autumn Dynasty is surprisingly difficult, and that's because it's a true strategy game as opposed to the shallow grinds we so often see on this platform. The over-fussy controls hold it back from the greatness it deserves, but give it time and you'll adapt.

VERDICT

A thoughtful, distinctive and pleasingly non-boring take on historical strategy gaming, which has been entirely built with touchscreen controls in mind. Autumn Dynasty needs a little bit of fine-tuning in the interface and difficulty departments, but it's something fresh and attractive amidst hordes of copycat tower defence games. **Alec Meer**

READ MORE: bit.ly/RQeLkQ

£4.99
Version: 1.31
autumndynasty.com
Download: itun.es/i6jt9By

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Ink-scribble graphics
- Gently likeable plot
- It's thoughtful but demanding

DISLIKES:
- Finicky unit controls



SpellTower

£1.49 ★★★★

itun.es/i6jv58B • bit.ly/P5O9Du

With a simple design that hides diabolical challenges, SpellTower is great for people who love wordplay. Lettered tiles are scattered across a grid, and it's up to you to formulate words vertically, horizontally or diagonally, with various obstacles and alternative modes thrown in to keep things lively. A fun way to flex your vocabulary. **Philip Michaels**



Mole Kingdom

£1.49 ★★

itun.es/i6jN67Z • bit.ly/OsSCZN

Your underground kingdom is a blank slate to mould to your whim, and by creating chambers and attracting mole citizens, you unlock new elements. The problem is all of this costs in-game resources that are earned at a glacial pace – menial tasks like crafting potions can take anywhere from minutes to hours. A rather dull time-waster. **Nathan Meunier**



Robber Rabbits!

69p ★★★

itun.es/i6j56LF • bit.ly/PXUGo3

A pair of rascally rabbits are trying to shoot down an ice cream and make it hit three floating carrots as it falls neatly into their sack. The controls are deliciously simple, and different guns offer different firepower. This is mostly a fun physics-based puzzler, but later levels can feel like a tricky chore unless you pay for extra ammunition. **Lex Friedman**



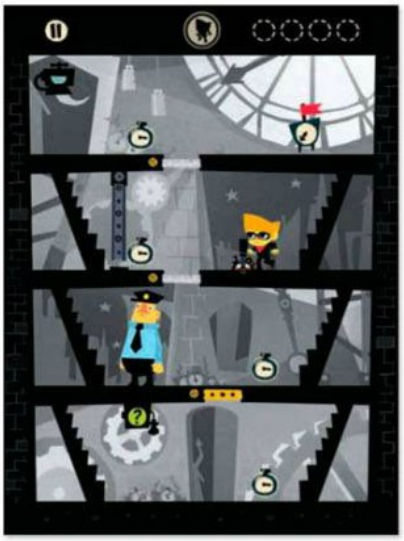
Bucketz

£1.49 ★★

itun.es/i6j55Wh • bit.ly/OYGEaV

If you love a screen filled with clutter, Bucketz is the game for you. You guide falling objects into buckets on a fulcrum, taking care not to overload either side. But the unpredictable physics and excessive onscreen activity make it feel like a random guessing game. It's frenetic and fast-paced, but too distracting to be much fun. **Philip Michaels**

For iPad only | For iPhone & iPod touch only | For all three devices



Beat Sneak Bandit

THIEVING TO THE RHYTHMIC BEAT OF THE iPHONE SCREEN

£1.99
Version: 1.0
Download: itun.es/i6jv249

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Lovely graphics and superb sound
- Thoroughly original, yet instantly playable
- Safer than real burglary

DISLIKES:
- A bit short and potentially frustrating

Some crooks are happy smashing a window and taking what they want, but where's the art, where's the grace?

Beat Sneak Bandit puts the emphasis on music and rhythm in a way that most organised crime syndicates don't have time for. Fortunately, our hero does have time on his hands… literally. He's breaking into Duke Clockface's mansion to recover a load of stolen timepieces.

Everything in the house follows a set rhythmic pattern, from trapdoors to security guards. Tap to the beat on the screen and the bandit will step forward. Hit a wall and he'll turn around. It's harder than it sounds, especially picking up the bonus clocks to open extra areas, but offers the same 'one more go' thrill that we imagine a real life of crime would. And every aspect of the presentation is immaculate, from the stylised cartoon backdrops to the music.

If you lack rhythm, prepare to be shown up. But Beat Sneak Bandit will charm everyone else with its stylish take on stealth platforming. **Alan Martin**

READ MORE: bit.ly/Ozplh7



Vorble

1980s-FLAVOURED PUZZLE GAME WITH HIDDEN DEPTHS

£1.49
Version: 1.2.1
Download: itun.es/i6jN5Fp

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Easy to get into
- Rewards careful planning
- Offers surprising depth

DISLIKES:
- Quite basic graphics

Multiplayer puzzle game Vorble looks for all the world like a lost toy fad from the 1980s. There's no way it could be anything but a videogame, though; if all the little pegs you need to move around were physical, there'd be an epidemic of hospitalised toddlers.

It's simple-looking but deceptively tricky. The 'board' is a football-shaped orb of hexagons and pentagons, with each of two players placing a peg into one facet of it per turn. Place a sixth peg in a pentagon or a seventh in a hexagon and it'll cause a 'cascade' – your pegs flying outwards into surrounding spaces and capturing enemy pegs lurking there.

Sounds easy, but the key to success is planning combined cascades far in advance. So placing a sixth peg in one square causes a seventh peg to leap into another, ideally snatching away four or five enemy pegs in the process. It can all be over in seconds, or turn into a bitter grudge match. Like all the puzzle greats, it's easy to learn but endlessly challenging to master. **Alec Meer**

READ MORE: bit.ly/NroEGs



Professor Pym and the Secret of Steam

STEAMPUNK ACTION PUZZLER

FREE (LEVEL PACK 69p)
Version: 1.2
Download: itun.es/i6j549Z

RATING ★★★

LIKES:
- Simple gameplay
- Interesting graphics

DISLIKES:
- No accelerometer support, even though it feels like there ought to be

Bumbling trier Professor Pym is investigating the world of steam, principally by leaping around a variety of puzzle levels. Springing uncertainly from revolving cog to revolving cog, your aim is to collect nuts (which you can swap for tools or skills boosts), but most importantly avoid the rising green gases.

Walls and platforms offer waypoints and sanctuaries – Professor Pym sticks to some walls and slithers down others – and you'll encounter spiked and moving wheels you must leap on at the right time in order to progress.

The first 10 levels (of 50) can be played for free, but you'll soon exhaust those. We think it's well worth 69p to keep on playing. A second character, Marie, comes alive once you start purchasing levels, and the final 10 include steam boxes that, once assembled, reveal the secret of the title.

It's nowhere near as engaging as Angry Birds, but the steampunk theme and easy-to-learn gameplay offer plenty of diversion. **Rosemary Hattersley**

READ MORE: bit.ly/Q7zzUi



£1.49
Version: 1.3.1
cardinalquest.com
Download: itun.es/i6jn5Sm

RATING ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- Instantly accessible controls
- Cheerfully brutal difficulty
- Randomly generated dungeons and foes

DISLIKES:
- Awful performance on older devices
- Over-simplified inventory interface
- Early levels can be samey

Cardinal Quest

FUN FACT: IN THIS ROLEPLAYING GAME YOU HUNT A MINOTAUR, NOT ONE OF THE POPE'S MATES

This dungeon-crawling adventure is quite possibly pure evil incarnate. That, in turn, is probably also why it's so devilishly compulsive. For what greater lure could there be than defeating evil itself?

It's what's known as a roguelike: a lo-fi trawl through randomly generated, maze-like tunnels battling monsters and collecting loot, where death is permanent rather than an inconvenience. Playing as a fighter, wizard or thief, you advance ever deeper in search of the murderous Minotaur who rules the dungeon. The chances are you'll never meet him, so suddenly and unexpectedly does death arrive.

It's remarkable how you always fall into the same thinking: this time, you can do it. This time you've found the right weapon, the right armour, the right spells, and will surely prove invincible. Then you stride blithely into a room with two golems, a teleporting snake-woman and a ghost, and it's all over before you've blinked. You lose your levels, your loot and your progress there and then. It's devastating.

Just one more go. This time, this time…

Traditional roguelikes – a long-running, often deeply sadistic genre of game – are far more complicated, and in turn the sense of loss is that much greater. Cardinal Quest finds a delicate balance of immediacy without feeling inconsequential, and is ideally suited to the snatched gobbets of time inherent to iOS gaming. The controls, too, are a natural fit: simply 'bump' into an enemy to attack, or click an appealingly chunky spell button. And inventory management, that tedious timesink, is handled by the game, with unwanted loot automatically sold if you find something better.

Cardinal Quest has undemandingly blocky, retro graphics, which makes it all the more confusing that it's so poorly optimised. On a first-generation iPad it stutters badly, lagging so much when large groups of enemies appear that you can die without even seeing the fight. Reports suggest it copes better on later devices, but it's simply not high-tech enough to justify this performance on older ones. So best steered clear of unless you have an iPhone 4S or iPad 2 or later, or an update appears soon.

This is a terrible shame, as Cardinal Quest is one of the best dungeon-crawling RPGs on iOS at the moment. It keeps the deadly spirit of roguelikes, while stepping up the immediacy and charm, and the randomly generated nature of its simple-but-fiendish levels ensures a fresh challenge every time.

Cardinal Quest finds a delicate balance of immediacy without feeling inconsequential

VERDICT

Fast, smart, brutal and surprising characterful for something so lo-fi, Cardinal Quest is exactly the sort of fully realised mini-experience we need more of. Shame about the performance problems, then. **Alec Meer**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OYwlzN

For iPad only | For iPhone & iPod touch only | For all three devices



£2.99
Version: 1.0
telltalegames.com
Download: itun.es/i6jN5Sj

RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Heartfelt storytelling
- Powerful and tense
- Expressive, distinctive graphics

DISLIKES:
- The actual game is (mostly) quite simple – even slight
- Not one for fans of high-octane, zombie-slaying action

Walking Dead: The Game

REMARKABLY HUMAN ADVENTURE GAME TURNS OUT TO BE MUCH-NEEDED ANTIDOTE FOR ZOMBIE ENNUI

Now here's a pleasant surprise. *The Walking Dead* has been zombie flavour of the past few months, but the hyper-sadistic comic and uneven TV show seemed unlikely to spawn a video game adaptation with this much heart. While many players will come for the extreme brutality towards the undead, they'll stay for the well-written and moving interplay between the human characters.

Pairing a distinctive faux-comic look with careful, character-driven storytelling, Walking Dead offers zombie-battling, though this takes a back seat to agonised decision-making. Playing as hero-with-a-dark-past Lee, how will you keep a small band of survivors alive in the midst of a deadhead pandemic?

Who will you side with when an argument breaks out? Who will you confide in? Will you shelter the orphaned child from the horror of what's going on, or violently demonstrate that you can and will protect her? And, inevitably, who will you save when things turn south and it's chillingly clear not everyone will make it out with brains still in their skulls?

Choices have deep-seated consequences in terms of how other characters treat you, and indeed who survives. The game is spread across five episodes, with only the first released so far, so some of the consequences may not make themselves known for months. Others are more immediate, and powerful.

What's odd is that the game underneath the drama is so slight – often little more than tapping items or choosing dialogue options, although more taxing puzzles do crop up on occasion. But this doesn't seem to matter, so wrapped up will you be in the story's tension, panic and fear. Sure, you don't get to headshot zombie after zombie, but you do get to make decisions that affect the fate of a group of people you quickly come to know and love (or in many cases hate). And rather than hampering your emotional engagement, the stylised, exaggeratedly expressive graphics actually make the characters seem more human.

You don't get to headshot zombie after zombie, but you make decisions that affect the fate of a group of people you quickly come to know and love

So a pleasant surprise indeed. And for all the sporadic scenes of violence and horror, this is a far cry from the icy cruelty and soap-opera meandering of the source material.

VERDICT

If you're after high-speed zombie-shooting, you'll need to look elsewhere. But Walking Dead offers affecting storytelling and painful decision-making in spades. Let's hope the next four episodes can maintain this level of quality and emotional impact. **Alec Meer**

READ MORE: bit.ly/NIXuG0

The Dark Knight Rises

FRANKLY HE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE STAYED IN BED



Christopher Nolan's third Batman movie is treated with breathless reverence in many circles, but this (admittedly good-looking) action game isn't quite so respectful.

TDKR borrows liberally – perhaps too liberally – from the acclaimed Arkham console games, but their sense of flow and freedom of movement is lacking. It's an impressive sight and starts well, suggesting an open-world Gotham City for Batman to roam, dishing out street justice and gliding gracefully from skyscraper to skyscraper. But before long it's developed into extreme linearity, repetitive fights, a silly hacking mini-game and a hilariously inept way of dealing with Batman's absence from a large stretch of the movie.

A mobile game was never going to match the drama of the epic superhero movie, of course, but what's frustrating is that there are glimmers of TDKR achieving a console-level action experience on a touchscreen device. Then it'll throw it all away with another tedious bout of hopping between ledges, a silly puzzle or a cutscene apparently voiced by people who usually work on washing powder commercials. Sure, it could have been a far worse disservice to the film than it is, but there's such a missed opportunity here.

VERDICT

Not a bad technical accomplishment (though it heats new iPads to the temperature of the sun) with bursts of decent thug-biffing, especially compared to the yet more lacklustre Arkham City Lockdown. But mostly this is an irritating, poorly paced trudge. **Alec Meer**

READ MORE: bit.ly/OeqIRX

£4.99
Version: 1.0.1
gameloft.co.uk
Download: itun.es/i6jN6Ih

RATING ★ ★

LIKES:
- Dramatic-looking combat
- Some impressive environments
- Batman looks great…

DISLIKES:
- …but Bane really doesn't
- Stingy with use of vehicles
- Disjointed, dispiriting flow



Air Mail

£1.99 ★ ★ ★ ★

itun.es/i6jN67K • bit.ly/PXUG7F

It shoots for a Disney-type feel, but Air Mail's humour and strange story make it a bit rougher around the edges – and perhaps more memorable as a result. You play as an upstart delivery pilot on an island chain who must use his skills to deliver cargo, fish, put out fires and eventually get involved in a war. (There's a surprising emotional impact when you see the town you flew over only missions before now in flames as bombs are dropped on it.) The core gameplay is built around simple aviation, and the cartoonish physics are forgiving enough to allow you to avoid most obstacles. While lacking in polish, this flight sim is a charming and original ride. **Chris Holt**



Spy vs Spy

69p ★

itun.es/i6j54b3 • bit.ly/PScGox

This two-player battles of wits/patience is a Retina-ised remake of a 1984 game spun out of the oddly toothless US satire institution that is *Mad Magazine*. While the graphics have been duly spruced up, the rest of the game hasn't been quite so lucky. What should be tense and thrilling – creeping around a labyrinthine mansion, setting traps for the other guy and chancing whether a door leads to treasure or death – is instead a battle against the unforgiving controls, and the humour remains blandly wit-free. It might have a certain pop-cultural heritage, but it's got about as much charisma as it has real strategy – which is to say almost none. **Alec Meer**



Swords and Soldiers

£2.99/£1.99 ★ ★ ★

itun.es/i6jN6jN • bit.ly/P0EDLF

S&S, an openly cartoonish clash of mythologies, has Norse gods facing off against Chinese monkeys, and giant *Indiana Jones*-style boulders pulping armies of Vikings in an instant. While you do need a decent tactical understanding of what counters what, especially in the later levels, the game's more concerned with being silly than clever. With S&S managing unit movement for you, you're left to ponder what or who to recruit, what spells to cast and how to counter enemy special abilities. It's fast-paced and occasionally frustrating, but it fits the platform well and has an infectiously cheerful nature, even if a few gags misfire. **Alec Meer**

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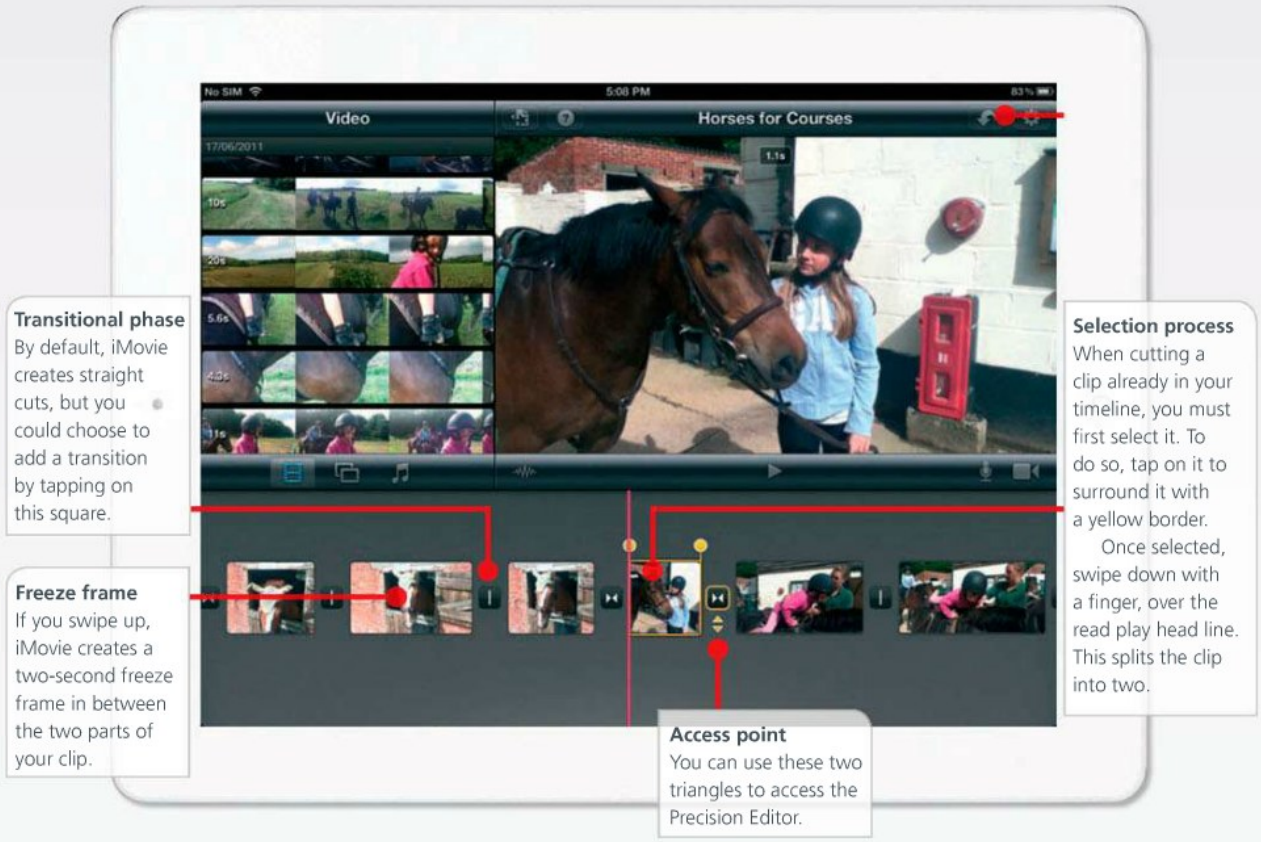
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Exploring iMovie's Precision Editor

If you want accurate edits, working with the Precision Editor is the only way to go

BY STEVE PARIS



VITAL INFO

DEVICE: iPad
DIFFICULTY: Intermediate
TIME REQUIRED: 20 mins

WHAT YOU NEED:
- iMovie (£2.99, **itun.es/i6Df5W8**)
- iOS 5.1 or later

When you get used to editing by touch, you'll find it an amazingly enjoyable experience. It's almost as if you have direct contact with your footage, which you can manipulate without having to depend on another input device like a keyboard or mouse. The responsiveness is also a bonus. Whatever you touch is immediately affected, removing any barriers to editing. You don't have to wait for anything to happen, it just does.

In the last issue, we explored some of the basics of editing on your iPad with iMovie (**itun.es/i6Df5W8**). This time, we'll delve a little deeper and check out the more advanced features that are available to you, and which you can take advantage of to make sharper edits in seconds.

One of those is called the Precision Editor, and the other is a gesture you can use to cut a clip in two. So grab your iPad and let's work on that edit.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE: PRECISION INSTRUMENT



1 Basic navigation Open your project and scroll through your clips in the Timeline by swiping one finger in that area to the left or the right. You can zoom in or out of your timeline by placing two fingers anywhere on the timeline, and moving them apart or closer together respectively.



2 Choose an edit point Locate an edit point – the gap between two clips represented by a small square. This square shows the type of transition between two clips: either none, a cross dissolve or a theme-specific one. Place two fingers together on that edit point and move them in opposite directions.



3 The Precision Editor Your timeline changes from a single layer to two – all the clips to the left of the edit point are above and all those to the right are underneath. Both clips on either side of the edit point have darkened areas. These are the parts of the original clip you had chosen to cut out.



4 The top clip Let's focus on the top clip. A thick yellow handle crosses it (that's the edit point). To the right is the darkened section of your clip (the frames you had chosen to cut out originally). You can drag that handle to the right to add more frames to your clip, or to the left to remove frames.



5 Preview section As you drag the yellow handle, the main preview section (top right) shows you the last visible frame to help you choose the right one. If you tap the bottom handle, the preview section will then show the clip to the right of the edit point, to help you select the right frame to start that clip on.

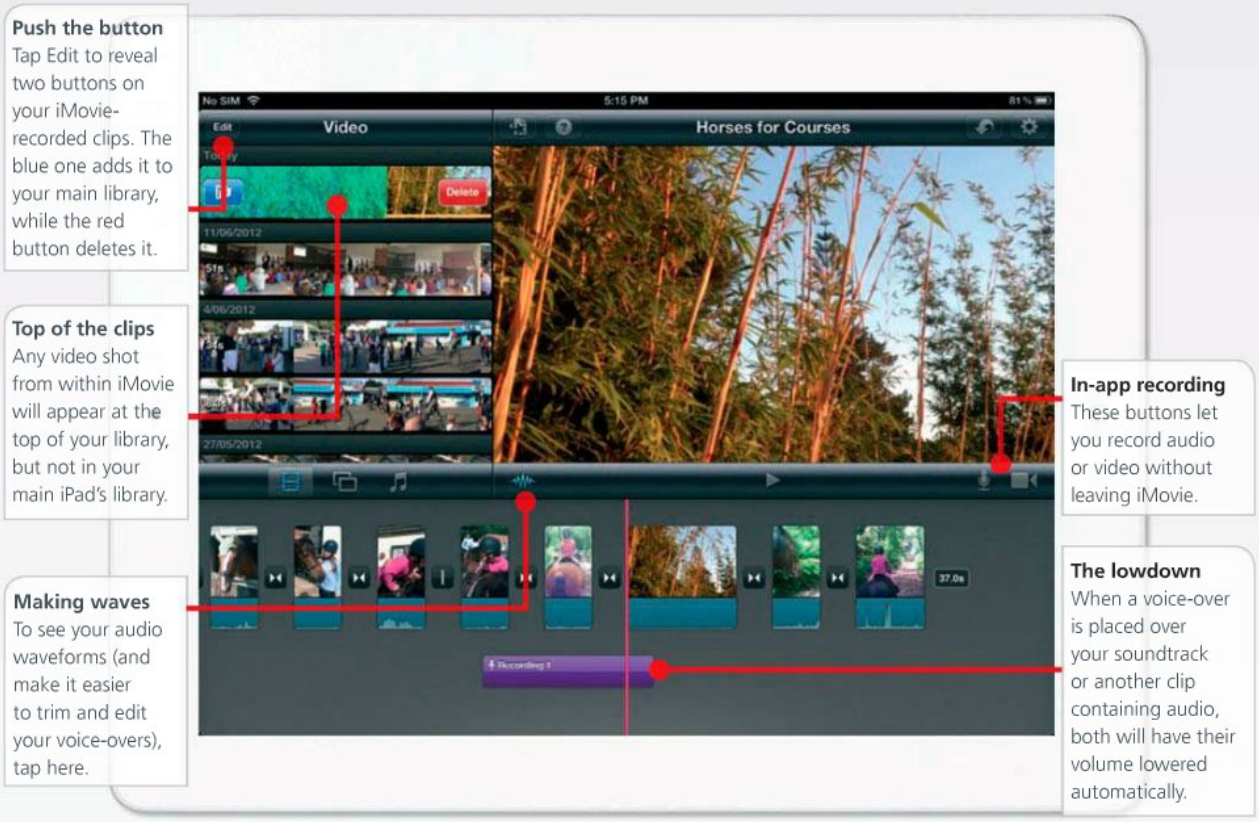


6 Alter both clips at once You can hold the middle of that yellow edit point to change both clips at once, although you probably won't use this often. To close the Precision Editor, move two fingers closer together from top to bottom, or tap on the two yellow triangles to the right of the edit point.

Record audio and video in iMovie

Film new footage without leaving the editing room

BY STEVE PARIS



VITAL INFO

DEVICE: iPad
DIFFICULTY: Intermediate
TIME REQUIRED: 20 mins

WHAT YOU NEED:
- iMovie
- iOS 5.1 or later

The editing process generally occurs after you've finished filming – you take the shots you need with your camera, import the footage into your computer and then start putting your project together.

But iMovie for iPad turns this notion on its head. Because your camera also happens to be your editing suite, you can do both at the same time – Apple wouldn't have put a good-quality camera in the new iPad if it didn't expect you to use it. It can, however, be quite frustrating to have to constantly go back and forth between the Camera app, to take a shot, and iMovie, to insert it into your project. Thankfully, iMovie itself now has a Record button.

Even better, you can use iMovie to record a voice-over, which is a great way to insert self-recorded audio into your project.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE: IS THIS THING ON?



1 Getting ready First, open an existing project and move the playhead until it's over the part you want to give a voice-over. Tap on the microphone button (top right of the timeline section) to bring up a floating window. The bars indicate your audio levels: green is good, yellow borderline, while red is too loud.



2 Recording Check that your levels remain in the green, and when you're ready, tap on the Record button. iMovie will give you a three-second warning and move your playhead back, so by the time the recording starts, the playhead will be exactly where you originally left it. When you've finished, tap Stop.



3 Review your recording You're then given four options. You can either Review your recording, delete the existing voice-over and start again with Retake, use Discard to get rid of the recording and close the voice-over option, or opt for Accept to insert your recording as a purple banner in your project.



4 Fine-tuning Even though it's a different colour, your voice-over clip will behave like any other audio file, so you can move it around and trim its edges. To get rid of it, drag it out of the timeline; to alter its volume, double-tap it. It's also possible to add multiple voice-overs to the same part of a project.



5 Recording video To the right of the mic is the camera icon, which lets you record video in iMovie. The interface is similar to the Camera app's, except that once you've stopped recording, you can choose to Retake your shot. Tap Use to add it to your project where your playhead is located.

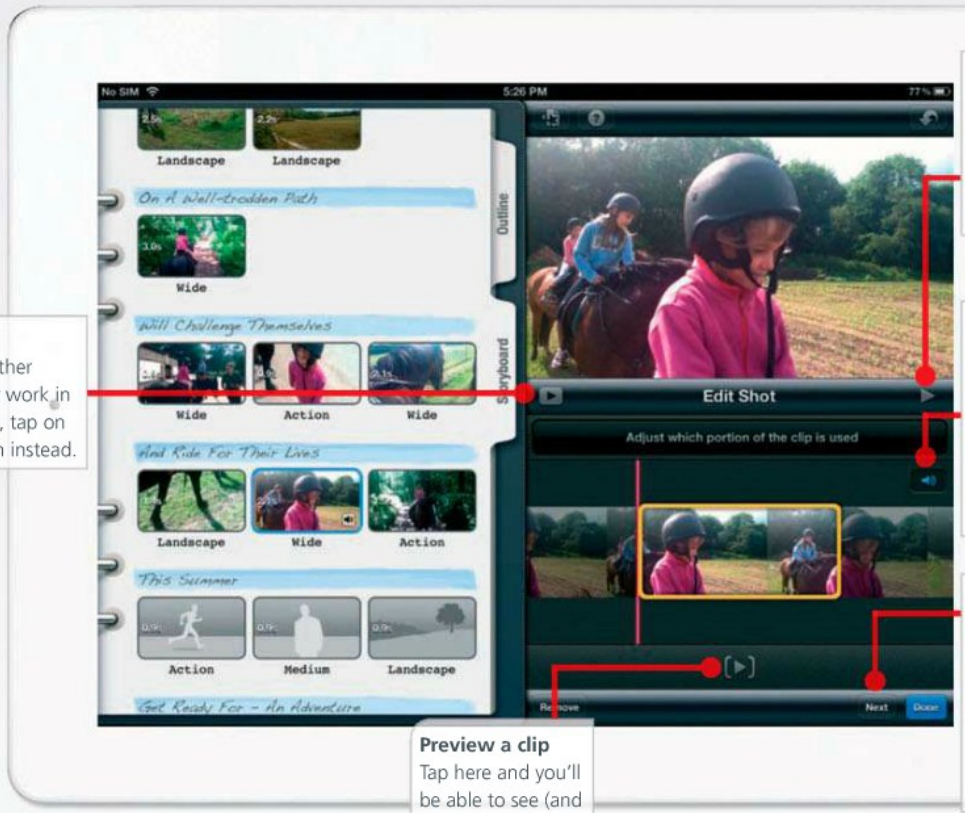


6 Higher quality There's also the option to record video at a higher quality. To access it, open the Settings app. Scroll down until you see iMovie and select it. The Record iFrame 720p is off by default. Turn it on and your clips will take up a lot more storage space, but the visual quality will be improved.

Create a trailer with iMovie

Promote your film by putting together a short trailer

BY STEVE PARIS



VITAL INFO

DEVICE: iPad
DIFFICULTY: Beginner
TIME REQUIRED: 20 mins

WHAT YOU NEED:
- iMovie
- iOS 5.1 or later

Trailers are exciting; they show us the best bits of upcoming movies and make us look forward to seeing them. So why not do the same for your own films? Well, because putting them together isn't as easy as it looks. Unless, that is, you have iMovie for iPad.

When you create a new film, you have two choices. Up to now, we've focused on the standard project where you have complete control over your creation. This time, we'll take a brief look at the trailer option. Here, everything is handled for you: you just have to add the correct clip in the right place and iMovie will build the trailer. It's also a fast way to make a quick short film if you don't have the time to take care of the fine details yourself.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE: TRAILER-BLAZING OPTIONS



1 Create a trailer In iMovie's welcome page, tap the '+' button and select New Trailer. The interface will change to look like the inside of a cinema. There are nine different themes. Select one and press Play to preview it. Choose the one you'd like to use and tap on Create in the top right of the interface.



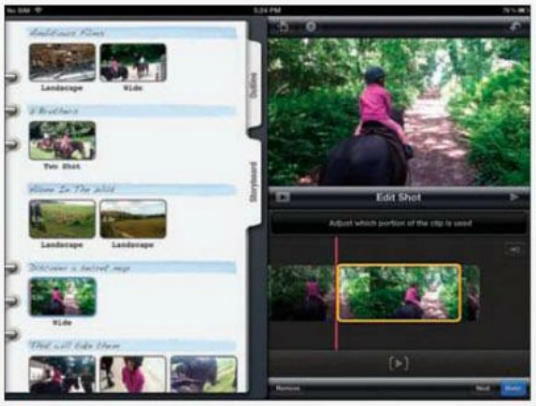
2 The outline The interface changes to a logbook where you'll be building your edit based on iMovie's suggestions. First, you need to name your film and studio (as well as choosing from a list of logos), along with the names of your crew. Fill in all the relevant information, then tap on Storyboard.



3 The storyboard The left side shows your currently selected clips (or thumbnails representing what iMovie needs to make the trailer). Ideally, you need to find shots that match the request. You can choose from your available clips, lower right of the interface, or record new ones with the Camera icon.



4 Choosing a clip Tap on the thumbnail you'd like to replace, then choose a clip from your library. You cannot resize the selection like you can in project mode: each thumbnail is of a specific length. Once added, the next thumbnail is selected, ready for you to find the right clip to replace it.



5 Fine-tuning It can be hard selecting the right section of a clip from the library's thumbnails. Tapping on the clip in the Storyboard replaces the library with a larger thumbnail of that clip. You can then slide the selection around to get a better shot or remove that clip to choose another.



6 Titles The titles – highlighted in blue – probably don't reflect your own movie's story. You can rename each by tapping on them. Tapping on Credits at the end brings you back to the Outline section. Once your work is completed, you can preview it by tapping the Playback button, middle right of the interface.

Enjoy films on an iPad

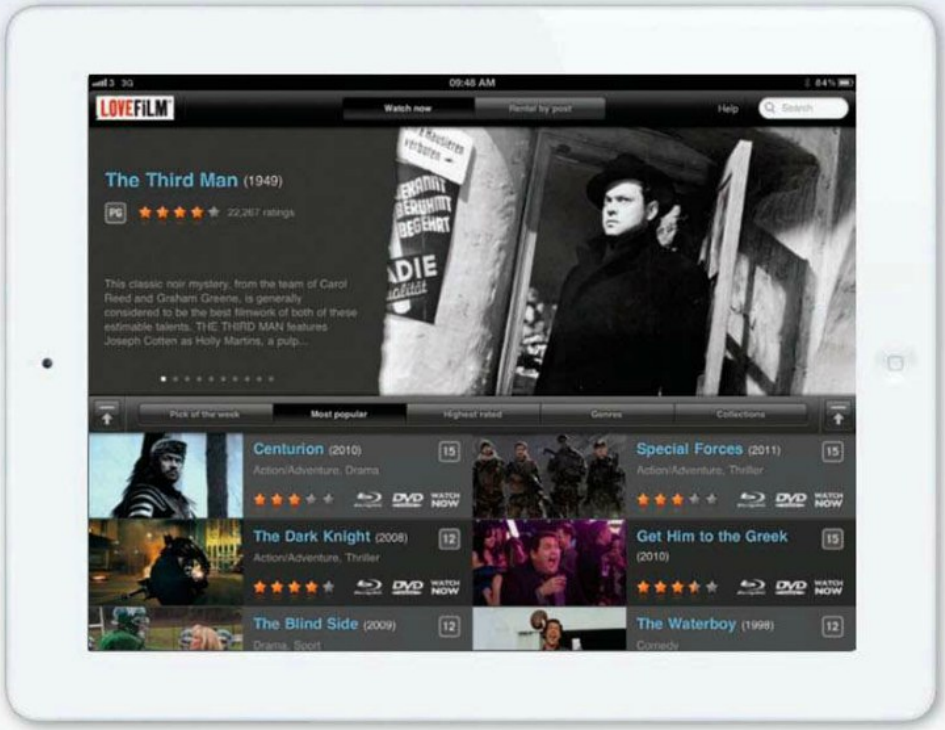
Avoid smelly humans by turning a tablet into your very own private cinema

BY STEVE PARIS

VITAL INFO

DEVICE: iPad
DIFFICULTY: Varies
TIME REQUIRED: Varies

WHAT YOU NEED:
- Video source/library
- Ripping/converting software as appropriate



LoveFilm
You can stream LoveFilm's catalogue of movies, TV shows and documentaries straight to your iPad using the LoveFilm Player app. There's another app just for managing your account

Cinemas are horrible places, really. With the talkers and the phone users, the noisy eaters and the loud breathers, all those *people*… How are you supposed to concentrate on the film you paid £13.50 to watch? It's impossible.

Admittedly, the screen is a little smaller, but watching the film on your iPad instead has a lot of advantages. It's more portable than your local Odeon, making it ideal for flights or train journeys; it's also cheaper on a film-by-film basis. Besides, the iPad has a terrific battery life and a wonderfully sharp screen.

Here are some ways you can go to the pictures from the comfort of your iPad.

VIEW VIDEO ONLINE

This method is easy, provided you can find the movies, short films or TV clips you want to watch on the web. The built-in Safari browser cleverly optimises almost any online video for iPad viewing.

YouTube has been compatible with iOS since the very first iPhone. Back then, you needed the dedicated YouTube app to access video content. Nowadays, although the app is still available, it has become largely redundant, since you can view the clips directly with Safari – YouTube detects that you're using an iPad and brings up an H.264 version of the video you wish to enjoy (as opposed to the default Flash-based one).

Furthermore, in response to the immense popularity of Apple's iOS devices, other video sharing sites that had based their network on Flash are now offering H.264 alternatives, which makes the experience seamless for iPad users. Suitable sites to try include Vimeo, Blip, Viddler and Dailymotion, to name but four.

The iPad won't let you download any video off the web, however (unless you've purchased it through the iTunes Store), so if you want to grab some online video for later viewing, you'll have to resort to your tried and trusted Mac or PC. Be aware, however, that downloading copyright-protected material without the owner's permission is illegal.

Be aware that downloading copyright material without the owner's permission is illegal

RIP AND CONVERT DVDs

If you'd rather not purchase a video from iTunes when you've got a perfectly good copy of the movie on DVD, it's time to convert your film library into iPad-compatible files. The process is a bit time-consuming, but well worth it; and the government has pledged to make it legal to make a copy of DVDs you own, as long as it's for your personal use.

Various applications can deal with a DVD's built-in copy protection. On Mac, check out the excellent RipIt (www.thelittleappfactory.com/ripit). PC users have more choice, and a search will reveal a host of options, such as DVD Decrypter (dvddecrypter.org.uk). All these packages make an unprotected copy of the DVD files on your computer.

The next step is to convert the video you want into one compatible with the iPad. In this case, the program you need is Handbrake (www.handbrake.fr). This free software is amazing. It has a host of presets if you're not comfortable with tweaking parameters: just select your DVD, choose a preset and you're good to go. Once the file has been converted, add it to your copy of iTunes where you can pepper it with metadata. All that's left to do now is sync your iPad with your computer.

STREAM VIDEO FROM YOUR PC

There's a problem with converting all your DVDs: your collection of films and TV shows is likely to be too big to fit on an iPad – even the 64GB version. Instead, why not keep the video content on a computer and stream it?

There's no built-in way to stream your videos from a computer to your iPad, but a few developers have come up with solutions to do just that. One of these is StreamToMe (£1.99, itun.es/i6jW2N4); as well as the app, you'll need to install the free ServeToMe software from www.projectswithlove.com.

The process is remarkably simple: launch ServeToMe on your computer and after a few seconds the server component will run automatically. Your iTunes library is now ready to be shared, so if your movies have already been catalogued within it, there's nothing else for you to do. You can, however, also specify other folders to share, if some videos are stored elsewhere on your machine.

Next, go to your iPad (or any other iOS device) and launch StreamToMe. Most video formats will work as is, but perhaps the best feature is the app's ability to play back DRM-protected files (those purchased from the iTunes Store). As long as such a video has been synced to your iPad in the past, StreamToMe will be able to play it directly.

Being able to access all your videos from your iPad is a huge boon; and you're not limited to your home Wi-Fi network, either. When running, ServeToMe displays an 'External address'. Type that value when setting up a server manually in StreamToMe and the setting should work wherever you are. Although it will obviously be more cost-effective to do this within range of another Wi-Fi network, as the cost of streaming large video files over 3G will be prohibitive.

STREAM VIDEO ON DEMAND

We've already looked at ways to stream videos from the web, but plenty of apps and on-demand services offer a wider and better-quality range of streaming options.

FilmOn Free TV Live (itun.es/i6jW7rM), for example, gives you access to the main British TV channels, along with many foreign ones, and lets you watch TV live. You could also try TVCatchup (itun.es/i6jW2zf). Both are free. Tap the channel you want to watch and after a few seconds, you've got a TV channel on your iOS device. Make sure you have a TV licence, as this live content requires one.

If this isn't enough for you, then check out the BBC iPlayer app (itun.es/i6jv4BF). With it, you gain access to all films and TV series available on that network, on demand. Although as you would expect, this service only works as long as you're in the UK.

LoveFilm offers a compelling alternative when it comes to mail order DVD rental. Along with its regular service of renting out DVDs for you to enjoy on your TV, you also gain access to its online streaming service via the free LoveFilm Player (itun.es/i6jW2zs). With it – assuming your subscription allows it – you can browse through a vast selection of movies, read their synopses, view trailers and ultimately stream them to your iPad.

THE FLASH DEBATE

Flash is a video format that's popular with lots of people – but not many of them work at Apple. Why doesn't the iPad support Flash?

Back in the Steve Jobs era, Apple took a public stand against Flash compatibility because of concerns over security and battery life, and a lack of touchscreen optimisation. Indeed, many rival tablets that did support the format were criticised for poor performance with Flash.

In any case, Adobe has stated that it will no longer be developing Flash for portable devices, making this something of a moot point. And if you desperately wish to view Flash video on your iPad, there are options: turn to page 54 for some help.

StreamToMe

With StreamToMe and its companion software, you can watch any video stored on your computer from your iPad. Tap on a movie to stream it from your computer on to your iPad. You can choose to have it full screen or with a sidebar on the left



Six alternatives to Instagram

These great apps also offer editing and photo sharing features

BY KARISSA BELL AND LEAH YAMSHON

VITAL INFO

DEVICE: iPhone
DIFFICULTY: Beginner
TIME REQUIRED: From as little as 5 mins

WHAT YOU NEED:
▸ Choice of editing app



It's Hip to share
Hipstamatic's sharing features include the ability to order prints of your favourite photos

It's still not clear what will happen to Instagram, the photo-sharing service, now that it's been acquired by Facebook for $1bn (about £630m). The social networking giant insists Instagram will be run as an independent, standalone service, but changes are always a possibility. The mere notion of Instagram adopting a Facebook-style privacy policy has some wondering if they should take their photo sharing elsewhere.

Fortunately, Instagram users who are concerned about the app's future have plenty of alternatives to choose from. One possibility, of course, is Facebook Camera (itun.es/i6jN7Nw), a free photo-browsing and sharing app, complete with a range of filters, that Facebook launched shortly after its acquisition of Instagram was announced (without any input from the smaller firm). But if the Facebook connection is what's driving you away from Instagram, that won't do.

Instead, here are six great Instragram-esque apps to consider, each promising mobility, social features, and filters and effects of their own. Consider these apps as alternatives to fill the potential Instagram void.

Instagram users unsure about the app's future have plenty of iOS options that promise mobility, social features and filters

CAMERABAG

Like lo-fi filters but want an option that's not affiliated with Facebook? Nevercenter's CameraBag (£1.49, itun.es/i6jW47T) offers an array of vintage camera effects that you can use without any social-networking obligation. Double-tapping one of the 15 available filters reprocesses the photo, sometimes subtly and sometimes dramatically; you can do this several times on each image for dozens of variations on the original filters.

You can share your photos with friends via email and save them to your Camera Roll. You can also interact with other CameraBag users in the CameraBag Flickr Group (bit.ly/weHr).

HIPSTAMATIC

Hipstamatic (£1.49, itun.es/i6jN24y) has been a staple of the App Store for years, thanks to its unique take on the vintage camera look, its incredible versatility and its controls.

Instead of applying filters, as with other apps, with Hipstamatic you get a variety of lenses, film and flash types to shoot with, which you can then augment with in-app purchases. The program also integrates sharing, both through social networks and with the Hipstamatic community.

In addition to sharing via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr and Flickr, you can interact with other users through contests and shared photo albums. Hipstamatic also has its own cloud service for saving images, and a print lab so users can easily order prints of their favourite shots.

MAGIC HOUR

Kiwiple's Magic Hour – Camera & Unlimited Filter (£1.49; itun.es/i6jN7tC) is definitely worth a look for hardcore filter lovers. The app gives you 40 filters to start with, plus access to an in-app Filter Market where you can download more filters at no additional cost. Magic Hour also lets you customise your own filters and share them with others through the Filter Market.

Social butterflies will like the way Magic Hour works seamlessly with a lot of social and sharing platforms – Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare, Flickr, Tumblr and Posterous, to be exact – and also offers easy uploading to Evernote and Dropbox. It doesn't have a standalone network or feed, though.

PHOTOTOASTER

If you like easy sharing options but dislike the washed-out vintage look, and would prefer higher-quality tools, East Coast Pixels' PhotoToaster (£1.49; itun.es/i6jN24Z) is a solid compromise.

The app focuses on general photo-editing features – you can crop, rotate and flip images straight from the Tools menu. Start with your basic edits, then choose between three sets of automatic filters: basic, supreme and deluxe. Each filter set has a handful of specific filters, with basic yielding the simplest filters and deluxe housing the most extreme. Once you've set your base, you can move on to tweak lighting, edit contrast, add a vignette and choose a complementary border.

PIXLR-O-MATIC

Known as the 'darkroom app', Autodesk's Pixlr-o-matic (free; itun.es/i6jN2WT) lets you combine photo effects to customise the image in different ways.

Your default film roll comes with 26 filters to choose from, and after you select your base effect, you can pick from 30 light settings and give it a border. A 69p upgrade promises complete access to a catalogue of effects and overlays. Pixlr-o-matic stands out for its built-in image-sharing service, imm.io. Each image you publish gets a link that you can share at your leisure. This gives you control over who sees your photo and how it gets used.

VIA.ME

Since it requires Facebook or Twitter integration to work, RadiumOne Labs' Via.me (free; itun.es/i6j43gB) may not be the first choice for users put off by Instagram's Facebook connection. But for the Twitter-happy crowd, it may be the way to go.

Once you've linked your Via.me profile to your Facebook or Twitter account, you can opt out of posting to these: just tap either button before you tap Post, and your photo will go to your Via.me feed. You can follow friends, keep track of everyone's posts on a centralised feed, explore other users' profiles and comment on photos from your iOS device. Additionally, you can upload video and sound clips – giving this app more of a Tumblr feel, but with Instagram-like features, including 17 filters named after major cities.



Fun with filters
If Magic Hour's included filters don't strike your fancy, you can download more from an in-app market



All-purpose editor
PhotoToaster has three sets of automatic filters, but mainly focuses on general image editing. It lets you adjust exposure and colour tone, and crop and rotate images

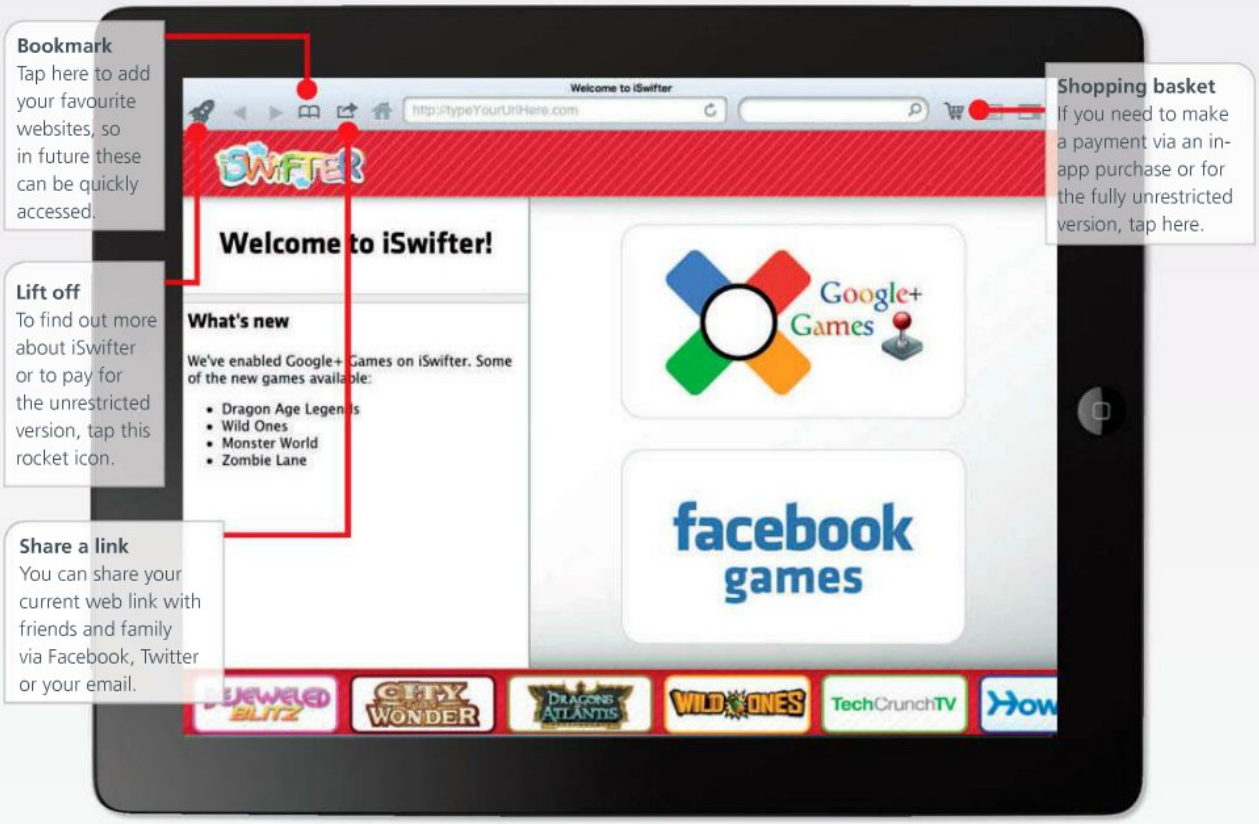


Pixl-perfect
Pixlr-o-matic has a wide range of filters for free. The 26 on offer have surprisingly human names

Enjoy Flash video and games on your iPad

If your favourite site uses Flash, then iSwifter may be the answer

BY DAVID BRADFORTH



VITAL INFO

DEVICE: iPad
DIFFICULTY: Beginner
TIME REQUIRED: 5 mins

WHAT YOU NEED:
- iSwifter (free, itun.es/i6Dq5gW)
- iOS 4.3 or later

It's no secret that Steve Jobs saw the future of the internet as one based around HTML5, CSS and other open standards; one reason for this is the power drain caused to mobile devices when using applications that place a heavy load on the processor. For whatever reason, the iPad and iPhone have not been compatible with Adobe's Flash standard since they were launched.

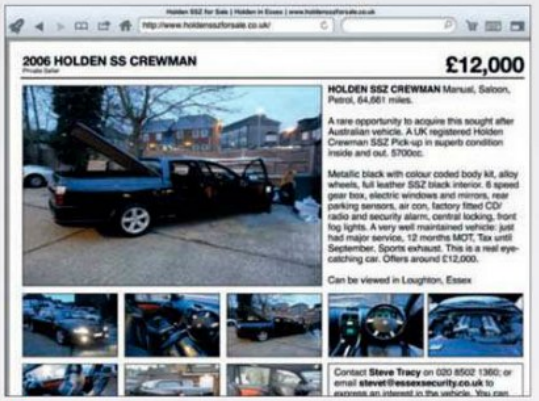
Unfortunately, there are a great number of websites on the internet that still use Flash, including some corporate websites, video streaming services and a fair number of games. Is there a way for the iPad to access these?

Fortunately, the answer is yes. iSwifter is a web browser for the iPad that allows full access to many Flash-based sites. It's not perfect, but you'll find very quickly that the end result is usable and good enough for you to enjoy your game, video or time on the internet.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE: WHO'S FEELING FLASH?



1 Video embedded in web pages Around 90 per cent of our online activity involves searching through websites, the majority of which contain video. If the video is from YouTube, the iPad's dedicated player should kick in. With iSwifter, you can play Flash-based video content within the web page.



2 Flash-based websites Flash can provide a quick and easy means of producing portfolio websites or, in this instance, an advertisement for a private vehicle sale. iSwifter correctly displays the website, though unfortunately the email link icon won't open up in the Mail application.



3 Multiple Flash components The publisher of *iPad & iPhone User*, IDG, has a home page that uses a Flash animation and a Flash video. iSwifter displays these without effort. If you wish to stop the video playing, you can do so by touching it (just as you would click the video on a desktop computer).



4 Play time Games such as PopCap's Bejeweled are available as downloads from the App Store, but started as web-based games via the firm's website (**www.popcap.com**). You can now play these Flash-based games on your iPad thanks to iSwifter. The response is a little slow, but still playable.



5 Chat clients Flash-based chat clients, such as Penguin Chat, appear to work. You should note, though, that the iPad's onscreen keyboard doesn't recognise a text box when it's been implemented in Flash, so you'll need an external wireless keyboard.

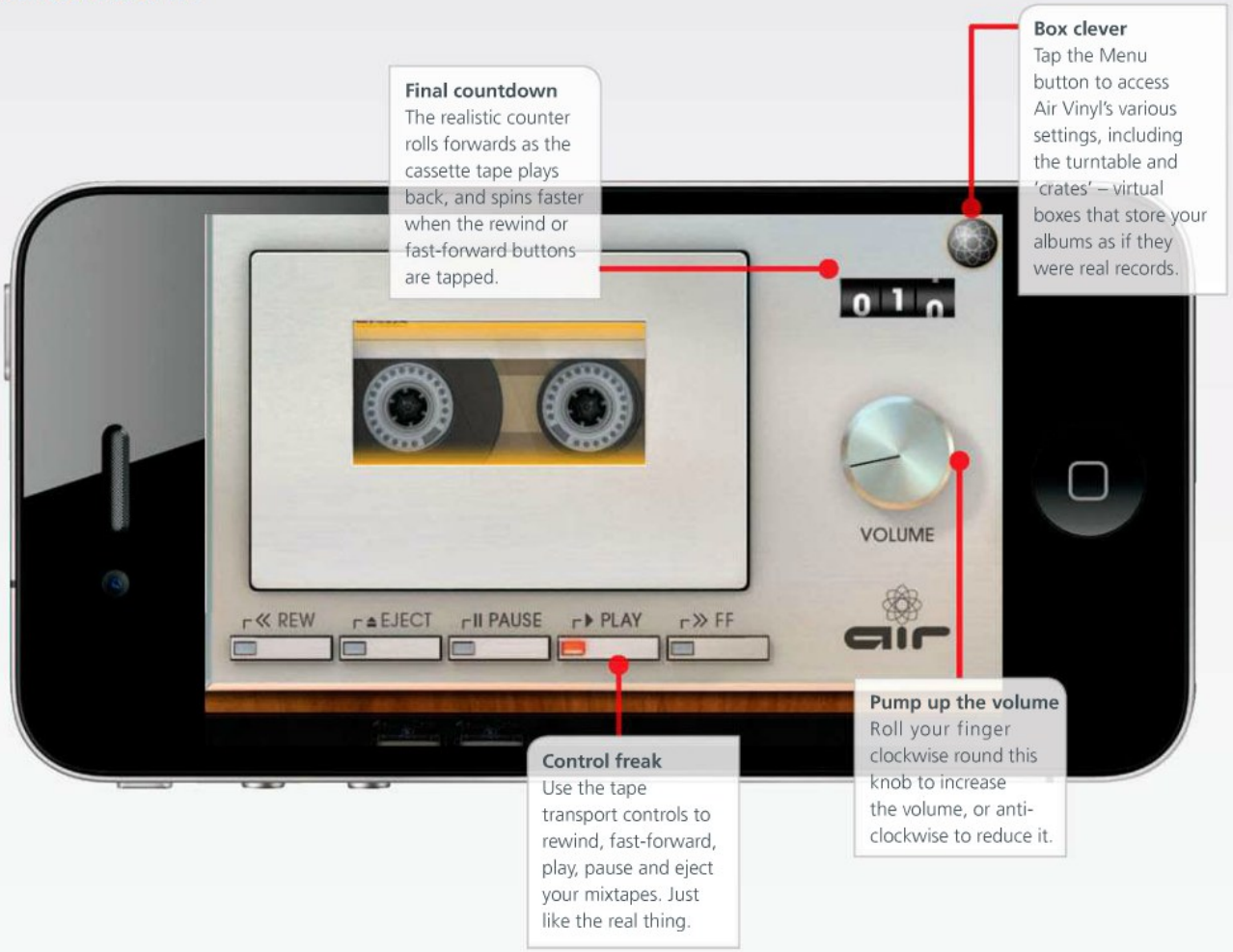


6 Cautionary tale Having Flash available on your iPad will not bring everything Flash-based to your tablet. Some of the games at **www.arcadepanic.com**, for example, rely on a mouse to be truly playable and don't adapt well to touchscreen control.

Mixing it up

Create a mixtape of your favourite tracks with the AirVinyl app

BY ROB BEATTIE



VITAL INFO

DEVICE: iPhone/iPad
DIFFICULTY: Beginner
TIME REQUIRED: 5 mins

WHAT YOU NEED:
- AirVinyl (69p/£1.99, **itun.es/i6Df6zJ**)
- iOS 4.3 or later

It's a peculiar state of affairs when part of the attraction of a gadget with its feet set firmly in the digital age is how it mimics something old-fashioned and distinctively analogue. AirVinyl is a perfect example of this: an app that looks backwards rather than forwards, and allows you to play back your digitally recorded iTunes library on a replica record deck, complete with turntable, balanced arm, stainless steel volume knob and glowing red light. Pick track two from an album, and the arm will even move across the vinyl and drop into the correct position.

As fun as this is, it's the cassette part of the app that concerns us here, because that makes it possible to create a mixtape – a compilation of tracks by different artists that can be put together for fun or to suit a specific occasion such as a party or road trip. Here's how it works.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE: HEY, WE MADE YOU A MIXTAPE…



1 Main menu First off, download and install AirVinyl from the iTunes Store. When the app loads, it will display a top-down view of an old-fashioned turntable. Tap the button at the top right (it has the symbol for an atom on it) and then, when this menu appears, tap the Mixtapes icon.



2 Create new mixtape AirVinyl will now load the cassette player part of the app. Since we haven't yet created a tape, swipe the screen up to reveal an electronic shelf set against some fancy flock wallpaper, where cassette tapes are stored. Tap the New Mixtape cassette box to create a new compilation.



3 Finding tracks Use the onscreen keyboard to type in a name for your mixtape and then click Done. At the next screen there's a search box that lets you filter the contents of your music library by Songs, Artists and Albums. Start typing in the name of a song and the app will immediately begin listing suggestions.



4 Adding tracks Found the first track? Tap its name and when the dialog box appears, tap the Add More button. If it's easier, switch to the filter at the lines tutorial steps text tutorial steps text tutorial steps by the same singer, so we've switched to the Artists filter. When all the tracks have been added, tap Done.



5 Choosing a mixtape The newly created cassette should now appear on the shelf, next to the New Mixtape cassette, which is always present. It's not immediately obvious how to play it – tap and hold was our first thought, but that's actually how you delete unwanted mixtapes, though not the original tracks. To listen to the tape, double-tap it.



6 Playing the tape The cassette loads into the player and starts immediately. Use the controls underneath to rewind and fast-forward (the counter at the top right moves realistically in sync), and play or pause the tape. Tap the Eject button to remove the tape so you can play another one. Finally, tap the cassette player to see a track listing.

Here at *iPad & iPhone User* we make it our business to bring you the finest gadgets the world has to offer. In our Hit List you'll find our picks of the best stuff, updated each month with the most favourably reviewed kit.

Hit List starts with Apple's devices themselves: on this page we look at the current iPad and iPhone line-ups, and the iPods are rated overleaf. Later you'll find the accessories most worth your hard-earned cash, from audio gear to cases, keyboards and stands. And finally we round up the best apps and games from the iTunes Store. Only the best buys make it into Hit List.



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BATTERIES & CHARGERS

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iPad (third-generation)

The new iPad features an amazing Retina display



Wi-Fi: £399 (16GB), £479 (32GB), £559 (64GB)
Wi-Fi + cellular: £499 (16GB), £579 (32GB), £659 (64GB)
www.apple.com/uk/ipad
RATING ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- Retina display
- 5-megapixel camera
- Dictation feature
- FaceTime integration
- Improved graphics
- A5X chip; video-mirroring
- Same launch price as iPad 2

DISLIKES:
- Some third-party apps not yet optimised for Retina display (apps that are will take up more space)
- 4G not available in the UK (see bit.ly/wZeXlk)
- Battery takes longer to charge

The runaway success of the original iPad and the iPad 2 – which is still on sale at a reduced price – meant the third-generation model had a lot to live up to. (It's just called the iPad, confusingly, but you may hear it referred to as the new iPad or the third-gen iPad in certain circles.) With this version of its tablet, Apple chose to focus on a few areas of improvement, while keeping the package largely the same.

By far the most important feature is the 9.7in Retina display, and its 2048x1536 resolution results in pin-sharp images. Photos reveal details that weren't there before, and watching an HD movie is just like having a home cinema in your lap.

To power the screen, Apple has added its A5X chip, which blows aways other iOS devices in graphics processing. It also comes with a 5-megapixel camera that's better than that of any other tablet, and while Siri didn't initially make the move to iPad as some expected, iOS 6 will correct that omission, and the dictation feature will prove a boon in the meantime. The new iPad isn't smaller or lighter, but it's got a remarkable screen and a much better camera.

READ MORE: bit.ly/yDCQHL

iPad 2

Reduced in price and a decent alternative to the new iPad



Wi-Fi: £329 (16GB); Wi-Fi + 3G: £429 (16GB)
www.apple.com/uk/ipad
RATING ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LIKES:
- £70 cheaper than new iPad
- Fast and user-friendly
- 3G model means you're not paying extra for 4G, which is not yet available in the UK
- Still a stunning device

DISLIKES:
- Now only available in 16GB capacity
- Camera is poor, especially compared to the new iPad
- No Retina display

Few Apple fans are going to spare a thought for the humble old iPad 2 now that its successor has hit the shops. But this is the same sparkling, all-conquering tablet we loved just a few months ago, and it's had £70 slashed off its price tag too.

A quick go on the iPad 2 and you'll understand just why it proved so popular. Instantly switching on, it enables you to access the internet and all your favourite apps with the kind of finger interaction that made the iPhone popular. The large screen makes it ideal for reading books and watching video, and gaming is on a whole new level. The third-generation iPad's A5X chip gives it the edge in gaming terms, but this is still a powerful platform with a wealth of games.

The two biggest differences between this and the third-gen iPad are the screen and the camera. The display here looks sharp, bright and clear – right up until the second you read some text on the new iPad's Retina display. The difference in non-text environments is less marked, but is likely to increase as developers take advantage of the extra detail.

The price is now £70 below the equivalent new iPads, but all but the lowest storage versions (of both Wi-Fi and 3G models) have been discontinued: it's 16GB or nothing. This is likely to fill up quickly if you watch films and play games.

READ MORE: bit.ly/QUaNGA

iPhone 4S

Fast, great at photos and gaming, and you can talk to it



Price depends on mobile contract;
SIM-free: £499 (16GB), £599 (32GB), £699 (64GB)
www.apple.com/uk/iphone
RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Fast
- Terrific camera
- Great at gaming
- Same smart design as iPhone 4

DISLIKES:
- Lack of noticeable aesthetic upgrades may put off some iPhone 4 owners from upgrading

The iPhone 4S is more of a good thing: it takes the successful look of the iPhone 4 and tosses in a dual-core processor for dramatically improved speed, a heavily upgraded camera, and some brand-new voice-command technologies with tremendous potential.

Despite having a name that implies only an incremental upgrade, it offers some major steps forward from the 4. The dual-core processor is one generation more advanced than the A4 processor that powered the iPhone 4 and the original iPad. Having two cores doesn't necessarily mean the iPhone 4S is twice as fast, but our benchmarking tests made it clear that the 4S's upgraded processor provides a large speed boost.

The 4S's camera, too, is definitely better, seeing a jump in spec from 5Mp to 8Mp; it's also significantly faster, letting you catch shots you would have missed.

Finally, the voice-recognition 'assistant' Siri is both intriguing and fun, and should grow in usefulness. And if you struggle with typing on your iPhone, the new dictation feature could also be a huge reason to upgrade.

The iPhone 4S has speed, a great camera, cool voice-recognition features, and the attractive design introduced in the iPhone 4. It deserves those enormous sales figures.

READ MORE: bit.ly/IPUuJW

iPhone 4

This older iPhone remains a solid, cheaper alternative



Price depends on mobile contract; SIM-free: £429 (8GB only)
www.apple.com/uk/iphone
RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- High-resolution Retina display
- 5Mp camera with LED flash
- HD video recording
- Vastly improved battery life over 3G and 3GS

DISLIKES:
- Antenna attenuation issues are a design flaw
- Not as quick as iPhone 4S

All eyes are on the iPhone 4S, but its predecessor the iPhone 4 – which has been reduced in both storage capacity and price, to an appealing £429 SIM-free for 8GB – remains an option. The iPhone 4 saw most of the major gripes about older versions addressed: it can multitask (kind of) and has a camera that's really rather good instead of woefully bad. It might be outshone by the iPhone 4S, but this is still an accomplished piece of kit.

But there's a caveat. The iPhone 4's design is such that the antennas are on the outside of the unit. If you cover up the gap between the antennas on the left-hand side with your hand, you seriously affect your signal. Apple admitted to the issue, and offered a free 'Bumper' case to all iPhone 4 owners. A case fixes the issue, but rather spoils the device's cool look.

All the controversy was a shame, because Apple got so much right with the iPhone 4. The Retina display, for example, which packs in four times as many pixels as older models, is astonishingly good-looking, while the A4 chip means that it's incredibly fast. Battery life, too, is a vast improvement on older models.

READ MORE: bit.ly/MIlRmz

iPod touch

An iPhone without the phone: better than that sounds



£169 (8GB), £249 (32GB), £329 (64GB)
www.apple.com/uk/ipodtouch
RATING ★★★★

LIKES:
- Speedy
- Excellent games machine
- FaceTime video calling
- Retina display
- Price cut

DISLIKES:
- Lacks the compass and GPS functionality of the iPhone
- Speaker is pretty weak
- Camera features are fine for FaceTime but otherwise poor

The iPod touch was already deservedly popular; the announcement of a price cut, a white version and iOS 5 pre-installed only added to that.

Conceived as an iPhone with everything but the phone functionality, this is an extremely versatile device: media player, pocket gaming machine, productivity tool, internet communication device, camcorder, stills camera, handheld recorder and FaceTime video phone. And while its two cameras fail to produce results as good as the iPhone 4S, they do make FaceTime possible, which lets us more easily forgive their less-than-pristine images and movies.

Despite the cameras' weaknesses, this is a very good device. If you have a third-generation iPod touch and haven't got an iPhone, this model's FaceTime capabilities may tempt you to upgrade.

And if you're without an iPhone or iPod touch and have been holding out for a device this close to the iPhone – without the incumbent data plan and two-year commitment – that realisation has never been closer. Plus, the iPod touch is about half as thick as the iPhone 4, so if you share Apple's obsession with thin, the iPod touch is impressive. It's hard to imagine what more Apple could do to tempt you. That price tag is now exceptionally appealing.

READ MORE: bit.ly/Hmdzip

iPODS

iPod shuffle

■ Apple
■ apple.com/uk/ipodshuffle
■ £40 (2GB)
RATING ★★★★★



The current shuffle is an improved version of the previous buttonless model – it's now a clip-on portable music player with an easy-to-use onboard control system. The economy of design means it's also a third smaller, and it boasts an improved battery life. There's no control lock, admittedly, but it's clear that the new design erases bad memories of the previous iteration.

iPod nano

■ Apple
■ apple.com/uk/ipodnano
■ £115 (8GB), £129 (16GB)
RATING ★★★★★
After gaining a touchscreen in its Christmas 2010 makeover, the nano sees less drastic adjustments in its current form. You can now display a single large icon



(instead of four smaller ones) and swipe between apps; there's a built-in pedometer to track your runs out of the box; and there are 16 new clock faces, including some Disney ones. Other than that, this is largely the same nano you know and love.

iPod classic

■ Apple
■ apple.com/uk/ipodclassic
■ £199 (160GB)
RATING ★★★★
The classic is a tried and tested way to carry your media around; it's brilliant if you want to take a large collection of music and video with you. The latest version is 160GB, which represents excellent value for money. It also offers superb battery life: it'll play your tunes for



almost two days before the battery dies. And the click-wheel is still a design classic.

HEADPHONES

Sennheiser RS 220

■ Sennheiser ■ www.sennheiser.co.uk ■ £349
RATING ★★★★



There are less expensive headphones that provide comparable quality – the RS 160s (**bit.ly/Ji9UXX**), for example, are half the price – but the extra input and output features built into the transmitter unit will appeal to audiophiles and home cinema buffs who want to integrate the RS 220s into their home entertainment system.
READ MORE: bit.ly/M85cNl

Klipsch Image S4i

■ Klipsch ■ www.klipsch.co.uk ■ £90
RATING ★★★★★



The Klipsch S4is are an in-ear set of headphones that offer exceptional sound quality, but at a premium price point. You also get full iPod or iPhone control thanks to an in-line remote control, which doubles up as a button for answering and hanging up calls on the iPhone. A cracking set of earphones.
READ MORE: bit.ly/LOYjyr

Shure SE215

■ Shure ■ www.shure.co.uk ■ £100
RATING ★★★★



The Shure SE215s are based on an inverted design – the cable runs over the top of your ear – and we found them a little tricky to put in at first. (The secret is to waggle them in like earplugs.) Once we'd mastered this, we were able to enjoy exceptionally rich sound quality, with a monstrous, thick bass punch to boot.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KoyQMJ

Denon AH-C560R

■ Denon ■ www.denon.co.uk ■ £70
RATING ★★★★★



Denon is known for its high-quality audio systems, but its earphones can be quite pricey. However, the AH-C560Rs cost £70, and still provide excellent quality. A high frequency range results in a very clean, clear sound with rich echoing bass and detailed higher frequencies. Includes a mic for making and taking calls.
READ MORE: bit.ly/IRSQKZ

MEElectronics Air-Fi AF32

■ MEElectronics ■ www.meelec.com ■ £70
RATING ★★★★



For a set of Bluetooth headphones in this price range, the Air-Fi AF32 on-ear stereo Bluetooth headphones are extremely comfortable and offer good sound quality. And you can't beat the feature set or the 12-hour battery life. Leaving aside minor quibbles about hot ears and not-quite-perfect audio, we really like them.
READ MORE: bit.ly/lEBITW

Shure SE315

■ Shure ■ www.shure.co.uk ■ £50
RATING ★★★★



The SE315s' design and ergonomics are as good as it gets for in-ear canal headphones without stepping up to custom-made models. The sound quality is almost as good as the design, with a neutral balance and great detail, missing only some bass impact and the superior amount of detail found in the best offerings on the market.
READ MORE: bit.ly/LaBuTB

Sennheiser CX 550 Style II

■ Sennheiser ■ www.sennheiser.co.uk ■ £80
RATING ★★★★★



Sennheiser's new noise-isolating headphones are a stylish and sturdy set. They're designed with a small arm that's tilted forward to help the cable stay in place and the headphones comfortably in the ear. Sound-wise, the CX 550 Style IIs are a strong choice – balanced and detailed. Pricey, but worth it for the quality and comfort.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KSNyXr

Etymotic HF2

■ Etymotic ■ www.etymotic.com ■ £99
RATING ★★★★★



A phenomenal set of earphones – the HF2s might be at the top end of most budgets, but they deliver the kind of sound that can cost a lot more. Etymotic has also teamed up with hearing experts ACS to offer a custom eartip service, which makes for a comfortable fit. This costs an extra £90. Moulds can be done at your local Boots.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KoA9Ly

SPEAKERS

Rechargeable Speaker S715i

■ Logitech ■ www.logitech.co.uk ■ £129
RATING ★★★★★



It may be bigger and heavier than most portable models, but the S715i is still practical as a travel speaker and should fit into a backpack or bag fairly easily. Its eight-hour rechargeable battery is great for music on the go, and the chunky design allows it to generate enough power and bass to really get things swinging.
READ MORE: bit.ly/MyYk6Q

iMT630

■ Altec Lansing ■ www.alteclansing.com ■ £100
RATING ★★★★



The iMT630 makes a fine travel speaker, with a good sound and long-lasting rechargeable battery. There's a space-saving retractable dock, and a secondary input source around the back for connecting another audio source. Altec Lansing's RRP of £100 is a bit steep, but you can find it for closer to £85 if you shop around on the web.
READ MORE: bit.ly/PCa89l

iDM12

■ iHome ■ www.ihomeaudio.com ■ £60
RATING ★★★★



Despite the over-enthusiastic bass, the iDM12 is still one of the better pocket-size speakers we've come across. It can't match the quality and power of the larger models from Altec Lansing and Logitech (above), but if you want a decent speaker that you can just pick up and drop into your pocket, then the iDM12 is hard to beat.
READ MORE: bit.ly/NJJRZ3

Luna5 Encore

■ Edifier ■ www.edifier-international.com ■ £179
RATING ★★★★



The Luna5 is a good mid-range speaker system. It's not massively loud, but the inclusion of a proper sub-woofer gives it an edge over less expensive models, while the £179 price tag ensures that it's a lot more affordable than luxury brands, which tend to cost £250 or more. (We've even seen it on Amazon for a tempting £120.)
READ MORE: bit.ly/x2noYZ

Lenco iPT-223

■ Lenco ■ www.lencouk.com ■ £230
RATING ★★★★



The tall but quite slender iPT-223 from Lenco is a good solution for anyone short on floor space or wanting a second speaker system – for a bedroom or study, perhaps – that isn't too sonically compromised. The one-box option isn't ideal, but with a good range of features this particular tower speaker is one worth considering.
READ MORE: bit.ly/NQZm2r

Go + Play Micro

■ Harman Kardon ■ uk.harmankardon.com ■ £230
RATING ★★★★



Somehow managing to look both modern and retro, the Go + Play Micro from Harman Kardon is an attractive speaker system with excellent sound. The unit's bulk is a factor when it comes to portability, and it's also pretty expensive at £230. However, the sound quality and the design make it worth checking out.
READ MORE: bit.ly/IRUX9H

Valve80

■ Logic3 ■ www.logic3.com ■ £293
RATING ★★★★



This strikingly designed iPod amp is a hybrid valve and transistor system. It uses the warm fuzzy sound of valve amplification as a pre-amp, before the sound signal goes through the main amp. It creates a lovely sound. It also has the valves externally mounted, so there are three glowing glass tubes on the outside.
READ MORE: bit.ly/IrgRkw

Sensia

■ Pure ■ www.pure.com ■ £250
RATING ★★★★★



This DAB radio and wireless internet radio streaming hub is a class act. It looks great, and the clear audio and large touchscreen display give it an edge over every other audio streaming device we've tested. The touchscreen interface also offers a number of mini-apps for posting to Twitter and Facebook and for checking the weather.
READ MORE: bit.ly/LP4ySG

AIRPLAY SPEAKERS

Zeppelin Air

■ Bowers & Wilkins
■ www.bowers-wilkins.co.uk
■ £499
RATING ★★★★★

The iconic Zeppelin speaker has been turning heads for a while; the latest model supports AirPlay, allowing you to wirelessly stream audio from an iOS device. Carrying on from its predecessor, the Air combines solid build quality with high-quality sound – tweaked from the already impressive original model – and great looks.



Beolit 12

■ Bang & Olufsen
■ www.bang-olufsen.com
■ £599
RATING ★★★★

We'd like to see AirPlay battery life longer than four hours, but overall the Beolit 12 is impressive: AirPlay functionality is great, and it's pleasingly portable. The only real doubt concerns the price. There are plenty of quality alternatives at a third of the price. Still, if you've got the money, this is the first system we've seen that offers this combination of quality sound, portability and AirPlay support.



Lower East Side Audio Dock Air

■ Audyssey
■ www.audyssey.com ■ £299
RATING ★★★★★

This wireless speaker appears more functional than stylish: a squat black box with minimalist controls and styling. But the unit uses what Audyssey calls Smart Speaker technology to create a best-in-class audio experience that the maker insists will outperform any similarly priced speaker, thanks to a mix of hardware and software design advances.



iPAD KEYBOARDS

iMage

■ Accuratus
■ www.ceratech.co.uk
■ £82
RATING ★★★★★

This high-quality faux-leather case ensures that your iPad is safely protected, but the real star of the show is the detachable keyboard – although touch typing will need some practice. Able to operate up to 10m away from your iPad, it reattaches via an embedded magnet. The iMage ships with a USB cable for recharging its lithium-ion battery.



Wireless Keyboard

■ Apple
■ www.apple.com/uk
■ £40
RATING ★★★★★

As a portable option that makes typing more comfortable, Apple's own Bluetooth keyboard complements any iOS device. You would need an additional case or stand for your iPhone or iPad to make typing truly convenient, but this is a lightweight and low-profile keyboard for iPad typists.



Portable Bluetooth Keyboard

■ iLuv
■ www.iluv.co.uk
■ £69.99
RATING ★★★★

If you've experienced other iLuv devices, you'll gravitate towards this. It's light and compact enough to fit into any bag, and can be up and running in seconds. We also liked the overall styling and the key layout. The typing experience still isn't great, but it's far better than with comparable keyboards.



STYLUSES

Snugg 2 in 1 Stylus & Pen

■ The Snugg ■ www.thesnugg.com ■ £9.99
RATING ★★★★



For professional artists looking for an advanced tool, this may not be the best choice. But at £9.99 it's perfect for the average touchscreen device owner who wants to use it for drawing, painting, playing games, taking notes and more. With the added ink pen and headphone jack attachment features, you can't go wrong.
READ MORE: bit.ly/IHTxEn

Cosmonaut

■ Studio Neat ■ www.studioneat.com ■ £15
RATING ★★★★★



The Cosmonaut is a novel-looking stylus which does a precise job of mark-making on your iOS device. Indeed, despite concerns over its size and shape, we were impressed. Ideally suited to more creative pastimes such as drawing, the Cosmonaut also proves an excellent all-rounder.
READ MORE: bit.ly/IKx9uR

AluPen

■ Just Mobile ■ www.just-mobile.com ■ £20
RATING ★★★★



Just Mobile has won a significant number of design awards, and the AluPen makes it easy to see why. Nicely weighted, the nib is a soft and spongy type that responds well to the iPad's LED screen. It's also well built and the nib doesn't look like it will drop off. This is an excellent choice for iPad users looking to get creative.
READ MORE: bit.ly/Kplsrn

Inscribe Stylus

■ Incipio ■ www.myincipio.com ■ £15
RATING ★★★★



This is a simple, no-nonsense iPad stylus that has a good feel and build. It also produces consistent results on all Apple handheld devices in a range of activities including note taking, game playing, drawing and painting. While not the most striking of iOS styluses, the Inscribe is a good all-rounder, for both work and play options.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KoSWq9

iPHONE CASES

Pro Slider

■ InCase ■ www.goincase.com ■ £29.95
RATING ★★★★



InCase's Pro Slider for the iPhone 4/4S is a hard shell case. The bottom slides off for docking. If you're looking for a simple but sharp-looking case that offers decent protection without too much bulk, then the Pro Slider case is one to consider, particularly if you have a dock accessory that makes easy case removal a priority.
READ MORE: bit.ly/LoGmDs

FlexiGel

■ Cygnett ■ uk.cygnett.com ■ £14.95
RATING ★★★★★



The FlexiGel strikes a great balance between protection and thickness. It's a simple gel case: soft (yet firm) and easy to put on and take off. It ships with an adhesive-film screen protector, a swipe card for removing bubbles and a microfibre cloth, providing a good measure of protection.
READ MORE: bit.ly/M5KqhC

Barely There

■ Case-Mate ■ www.case-mate.co.uk ■ £14
RATING ★★★★



The Barely There is a super-thin shell that fits like a glove, covering the back and sides of your iPhone 4 or 4S and protecting it from scratches and bumps. With more than 60 colours, designs and textures to choose from, as well as a do-it-yourself custom version, you're sure to find a rendition to fit your tastes.
READ MORE: bit.ly/zhu7E8

TANK

■ Case-Mate ■ www.case-mate.co.uk ■ £33
RATING ★★★★



Looking for an iPhone case that will stand up to some serious punishment? The Tank's hard, polycarbonate shell protects from impacts and drops, and there's a neat corrugated screen protector that can be retracted into a slot in the back when you're using the touchscreen. You're compromising on looks and slimness, though.
READ MORE: bit.ly/AjA5vH

iPAD STANDS

HoverBar

■ Twelve South ■ www.twelvesouth.com ■ £75
RATING ★★★★★



The HoverBar is a malleable metal arm with a clamp at one end and an iPad mount at the other. Attaching the clamp to an object, such as an iMac, lets you position your device at any angle or height you find convenient. A ball joint behind the iPad enhances flexibility, allowing the user to rotate and tilt the device with ease.
READ MORE: bit.ly/z8GU8l

Luxa2 H6

■ LUXA2 ■ www.gearzap.com ■ £39.95
RATING ★★★★★



The multi-legged H6 is unlike any other iPad stand we've seen. Those spidery legs can be adjusted separately so they can grip tablets of different sizes. It's not the cheapest stand on the market, but the flexible design means it's suitable for both work and play, at home and away.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KT5Urq

UpStand

■ Just Mobile ■ www.just-mobile.com ■ £41
RATING ★★★★



The UpStand is a real looker, with a solid circular base and arrow-shaped supporting bracket, all made of gleaming aluminium that complements the iPad beautifully. The stand is a bit on bulky side, but the aluminium design is surprisingly lightweight, so you can easily move it from room to room. Smart and convenient.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KDRZst

Chef Stand and Stylus

■ Belkin ■ www.belkin.com/uk ■ £25 (from Amazon)
RATING ★★★★



We like to use our iPad in the kitchen with recipe apps, videos and graphics, and Belkin's clever Chef Stand is ideal for that. It allows you to prop the iPad upright, or lay it almost flat, and has a non-slip rubber base to keep it steady on your work surface. The chunky stylus lets you tap the screen without getting sticky fingermarks on it.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KprBnJ

BATTERIES AND CHARGERS

Juice Pack Powerstation Pro

■ Mophie ■ www.mophie.com ■ £104.99
RATING ★★★★★



We like the Juice Pack Powerstation Pro. It holds a large amount of charge (it can charge an iPhone two and a half times), feels sturdy and offers protection from the wet and wild elements. Perfect for those outdoor camping trips or visits to festivals; indeed anywhere where you're likely to be away from a power source.
READ MORE: bit.ly/LL4HqJ

Air Voltage Qi Chargers

■ Maxell ■ uk.maxell.eu/en/ ■ Mat £60; sleeve £37
RATING ★★★★



These two products combine to form a convenient method of charging your iPhone. The sleeve is like a conventional hard case, covering the sides and back, but leaving the screen, volume buttons and camera free. Place the sleeved iPhone on the mat, and the phone starts to charge via wireless induction.
READ MORE: bit.ly/H1jNTB

powermonkey-explorer

■ Powertraveller ■ powermonkey-explorer.com ■ £65
RATING ★★★★



The powermonkey-explorer stores up power for topping up your gadgets on the road, but the device's main draw is its clamshell solar panel, which you could dangle out of your rucksack or put on the back of your car. If you're driven to despair by running out of juice when all you want is to zone out with your iPod, get one of these.
READ MORE: bit.ly/M243rh

Power Skin

■ Power Skin ■ www.powerskin.co.uk ■ £50
RATING ★★★★



This iPhone case incorporates an external battery. It's a great option for anyone who is frustrated with having to charge up their iPhone all the time. You first run down the iPhone's battery, then flick a switch when it's depleted to use the Power Skin's battery. It should give you a good 24-hour stint without charging.
READ MORE: bit.ly/M26ha9

iPAD CASES

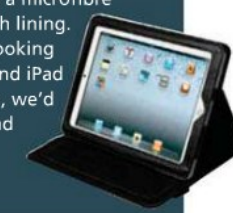
Flexi-Fold Smart Case

■ GGMM
■ www.thepadzone.co.uk
■ £35
RATING ★★★★
This is a smashing case and stand for the iPad 2 or 3. It's a bit of a tight fit, but that's not such a bad thing, and it looks smart and feels sturdy. And the folding stand idea (the covering flap can be bent into various supportive shapes, offering video-viewing and typing positions) is more than a gimmick: it's an effective concept that adds to the user experience. At £35 it's not super-cheap, but still manages to undercut Apple's similar Smart Case by a few quid.



Bergame Portfolio Case

■ Port Designs
■ www.portdesigns.com
■ $40
RATING ★★★★
The Bergame is a slim case: it really doesn't add much thickness to your iPad considering the amount of protection and functionality it provides. It's also an adjustable stand for the iPad 2, with a Velcro slot for the tablet and a microfibre anti-scratch lining. If you're looking for all-round iPad protection, we'd recommend checking this out.



iLuv Smart Back Cover

■ iLuv
■ www.iluv.co.uk
■ £9.99
RATING ★★★★
Designed to complement Apple's folding Smart Cover, which only protects the front of the iPad, iLuv's Smart Back Cover fits snugly to the rear of your tablet and protects it from scratches and marks. The unit is nicely finished in colours to match Apple's cover. It's a good, well-priced option, although Apple's new Smart Case now offers all-round coverage too – that's £39.



MUSIC SERVICES

iTunes Match

■ Apple
■ www.apple.com/uk
■ £21.99 per year
RATING ★★★★

Apple's service lets you access all your iTunes music from all your devices for a yearly subscription. If you've got more than one computer and several iOS devices, iTunes Match makes accessing music far easier. You could delete your iTunes library on your main PC and then reconstitute it with high-quality downloads from the cloud.



Spotify

■ Spotify
■ bit.ly/cbS2ze
■ Free app; subscription £10 per month
RATING ★★★★★

Spotify allows users to listen to 13 million tracks on their iPhone via the £10-per-month Spotify Premium service. Tracks can be stored locally, which means you can listen to them even when you haven't got a web connection or you don't want to waste 3G data. Music via Spotify tends to sound better than tracks you've ripped into iTunes.



TuneIn Radio Pro

■ Synsion Radio Technologies
■ itun.es/iL73zh
■ 69p; free subscription
RATING ★★★★

This offering is slightly different. Rather than playing specific tracks or artists, TuneIn Radio Pro streams – and lets you record – radio stations from around the world. We wish it was easier to browse for shows and stations, and bitrates are variable. But at just 69p for the ad-free app, this service is a great addition to your iTunes collection.



APPS

Bento 4 for iPad

■ FileMaker ■ itun.es/ibf9Gq ■ £6.99
RATING ★★★★



FileMaker should be congratulated for its all-new Bento for iPad database offering. The look and feel are both intuitive and pleasing to the eye, and there are 40 new themes and 25 templates. A major update which, despite some quirks, should make life easier for anyone needing to pull data together for a project or small business.
READ MORE: bit.ly/MshhO6

Flipboard

■ Flipboard ■ itun.es/iLN2p4 ■ Free
RATING ★★★★★



Flipboard displays content from all sorts of sources, from your Facebook and Twitter feeds to major publications. It's now available on the iPhone as well as the iPad. The app has also added Cover Stories, which assembles the best stories across all your sources.
READ MORE: bit.ly/wAovj1

GarageBand

■ Apple ■ itun.es/iPL6n7 ■ Free
RATING ★★★★★



We found it hard to imagine how GarageBand could work on any iOS device except the iPad, and while it works best on the larger device, the designers have generally done a good job of transferring it to the iPhone. There are also enough improvements to ensure that this remains a must-have app for musicians everywhere.
READ MORE: bit.ly/vva1UV

Google+ Local

■ Google ■ itun.es/iLV4dL ■ Free
RATING ★★★★



Originally named Google Places, this app is an easy-to-use method of searching your iPhone for nearby pubs, bookshops and other types of business. Select a category and it displays results, along with their distance and direction. It also shows them on an integrated map, but sometimes it takes you to the Maps app instead.
READ MORE: bit.ly/IKZyRs

Popsicolor

■ Tinrocket ■ itun.es/isz3st ■ 69p
RATING ★★★★



Popsicolor offers a way for iOS users to create watercolour-style paintings with minimal fuss: simply select a photo from your library and wait for the app to make a mess. Despite a few shortcomings – the tools and colour palette are both limited – it offers attractive, painterly results way above the standard set by most other art apps.
READ MORE: bit.ly/LobhQn

MotionX Sleep

■ Fullpower ■ itun.es/isz3st ■ 69p
RATING ★★★★



Place your iPhone on the bed, and the motion sensors will monitor your movements. When you wake, analytics show periods of light, moderate and heavy sleep, and offer a 'sleep efficiency' number to help you work out what's causing sleep problems. Genuinely helpful.
READ MORE: bit.ly/Mvh3DM

iTunes U

■ Apple ■ itun.es/iS25zw ■ Free
RATING ★★★★★



The iTunes U app has a clear purpose for pupils and teachers, students and lecturers. It has the potential to change classrooms everywhere, and it has appeal for people outside educaion too. With free access to course materials, audio, video and presentations, it's nothing less than a gift to iOS users.
READ MORE: bit.ly/wKQ22g

iBooks 2

■ Apple ■ bit.ly/dDwoLW ■ Free
RATING ★★★★



iBooks 2 does a superb job of getting out of your way as you read normal eBooks. And when it works, the app's handling of optimised eBooks is undeniably impressive. This experience is marred, however, by optimised eBooks' tendency to crash, massive file sizes and lack of iPhone support.
READ MORE: bit.ly/ydz5xg

AddLib

■ Wow ■ itun.es/ibD3Fm ■ £1.99
RATING ★★★★



According to the developers, addLib mixes the grid system, fractal theory, the golden ratio and facial recognition to add a little bling to your photos. Results can be samey, due to the low number of templates, but they're consistently visually appealing: at its best the app echoes vintage graphic design from the 1960s and 1970s.
READ MORE: bit.ly/OzHlTh

Monty Python: The Holy Book of Days

■ Melcher Media ■ itun.es/isM3Qg ■ £2.99
RATING ★★★★★



Holy Book of Days is a magnificent app that takes full advantage of the iPad's capabilities. It even syncs up with the Blu-ray of *Holy Grail* to provide information about the scene you're watching. If you have any interest in Monty Python at all, this is for you.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KRhckW

iPhoto

■ Apple ■ itun.es/iPL6n6 ■ £2.99
RATING ★★★★★



The beauty of iPhoto for iOS is that, at its core, it's iPhoto by different means – very easy to learn and use, while retaining the desktop application's best attributes. It does not match the Mac program feature-for-feature, but its overall functionality is so similar that users of the desktop version will instantly recognise the app's conventions.
READ MORE: bit.ly/ze4niv

Sky Go

■ BSkyB ■ itun.es/iS657f ■ Free
RATING ★★★★



Sky Go brings live streams of all the Sky Sports channels and 11 Sky Movies channels (depending on your subscription) to your iOS device. It costs nothing, adjusts the quality of your picture depending on your connection speed, and gives Sky subscribers another way of watching their favourite TV. It works well too. A fine effort.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KbMSTw

Cleartune – Chromatic Tuner

■ Bitcount ■ itun.es/iS22Hg ■ £2.49
RATING ★★★★★



Cleartune provides a convenient method of tuning whatever instrument you use. It works by getting the built-in mic on your iOS device to 'listen' to the note you play when instructed. As with an electronic tuner, the needle shows how far off key you are and everything is clearly labelled too, making it easy to use.
READ MORE: bit.ly/znzcf5

Avid Studio

■ Avid ■ itun.es/iS25ZX ■ £2.99
RATING ★★★★



Avid Studio may not be as elegant as iMovie for iOS, but it's incredibly simple to use, if a little light on features. If you own Avid for your desktop, you'll be able to transfer all your work from the iPad to it, which may well be a clincher when deciding which application to invest in.
READ MORE: bit.ly/HBSh0X

WhatsApp Messenger

■ WhatsApp ■ bit.ly/2IlNQt ■ 69p
RATING ★★★★★



WhatsApp lets you send messages to other mobile phones without incurring a charge like an SMS. There's no limit on the number that can be sent, and you can attach images or video clips. It's cross-platform too, which gives it one up on the iOS 5-exclusive iMessage, so you can stay in touch with friends no matter which smartphone they use.
READ MORE: bit.ly/NZmFsQ

Find My Friends

■ Apple ■ itun.es/iLV47r ■ Free
RATING ★★★★



Find My Friends is a brilliant concept. Launch it and invite your friends or family to install it and sign up for the service using their Apple IDs. If they 'follow' you, they'll know where you are and vice versa. There are privacy controls so you can 'hide' from your followers, and parental controls to lock down settings so your kids can't hide from you.
READ MORE: bit.ly/KVGdX7

iWORK FOR iPAD

Numbers

■ Apple
■ bit.ly/deRvtC
■ £6.99
RATING ★★★
Numbers is Apple's own spreadsheet app. An issue with the previous version was that it generated its own spreadsheet format, rather than .xls or .xlsx. Version 1.5 fixes this, and adds the ability to create folders, but it still has some way to go before it can replicate the full desktop spreadsheet experience. For simple spreadsheet creation or basic editing on the go, however, it's not bad for the price.



Pages

■ Apple
■ bit.ly/cm7LVY
■ £6.99
RATING ★★★★
Apple's word-processing app makes the easiest transition to the iPad, and after its 1.1 update it works a lot better in landscape mode. Pages works best with the keyboard dock, as the onscreen keyboard is functional but a chore to use. It's also now available in a fairly complete form on iPhone and iPod touch, and works surprisingly well in those formats.



Keynote

■ Apple
■ bit.ly/c5flzf
■ £6.99
RATING ★★★
Keynote is Apple's answer to PowerPoint. From a slide-design perspective, the iPad's touchscreen is perfect, and the app flashes up guides and rulers for maximum polish on your designs. However, there are problems with importing presentations from the Mac.





Alec Meer is games editor for *iPad & iPhone User*. Follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/bonzrat

BEYOND BATMAN

iOS gamers are missing out if they settle for naff movie adaptations and remakes, writes Alec Meer



Games have always been bought based on first impressions, but the move to mobile means it's no longer a matter of browsing the top 40 shelves at Woolworths (God rest its reasonably priced soul). And while the App Store may be many wonderful things, a separator of wheat from chaff it is not.

To gaze at the gaming charts is to gaze into the face of a business gone horribly wrong. A spew of hollow licensed titles, clones of clones of clones, quick 'n' dirty retro remakes and sinister exploitations of the free-to-play model: it's a cesspool of companies trying to take advantage of you. So many bad games, either functionally or morally. And it's not a fair representation of what's really going on in iPhone and iPad gaming.

> How many times have you clicked on a game purely because it's associated with a film you enjoyed?

A DEFICIT OF DISCOVERY

iOS has become a second home to some of the most talented and imaginative game developers in the industry. Low cost of entry, no necessity for complicated 3D graphics, anything-goes controls and, of course, an audience of such a colossal size that console makers must be tempted to give it all up and go live in the woods. These guys are doing great, boundlessly creative things. Trouble is, if they haven't got a known brand in the title or big backers who can market their way to mass awareness, they'll struggle to be noticed.

The App Store featured content and charts have become the first port of entry to finding new games for so many of us – how many times have you idly flicked through pages of it, looking for something to kill time *right now*? How many times have you clicked on something purely because it's associated with a film you enjoyed or a game you played decades ago? That's how lousy games shoot to vast success. That's how simply ordinary games become unassailable juggernauts.

This month's reviews illustrate the problem. The Dark Knight Rises piggybacks the cinematic flavour of the month, but is a flashy death march of a game, while Spy vs Spy offers nostalgia and little else (both page 41). Both are hugely profitable. Neither deserve it.

The problem is not a deficit of greatness, but one of discovery. A Waking Mars, 100 Rogues or Eufloria (all reviewed in our cover feature, starting on page 14) will lodge in your brain, and give you stories to tell and novel challenges to crack. But they simply don't have the marketing budget to force their way into the world's consciousness.

SALVATION

Apple isn't ever going to interfere with lowest-common-denominator games ruling the App Store: it's the same reason why Adele and Coldplay albums have a stranglehold on Amazon. Instead, salvation lies in consumers striving to research unknown pleasures. Baby steps can make a difference.

The next time you have a couple of quid to spare, don't default to the bestsellers. Better games from better creators are out there. And I promise you they're not noodling, navel-gazing nonsense.

Think carefully about what sort of thing you'd really like to play, rather than what will simply make bus journeys quicker, browse magazines (hello!) and websites to find reviews of games both present and past, ask friends for recommendations, and for heaven's sake don't buy something just because it's named after a superhero.

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