

COMPUTER GURU

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iPadOS

This fall, Apple is releasing a new operating system for its venerable iPad called “iPadOS.” Until now, the iPad has used the same operating system as its little cousin, the iPhone, but with some of the applications (“apps”) tweaked to take advantage of the iPad’s larger screen.

The iPad and its thousands of applications have evolved over the years to the point that some folks have ditched their “real” computer in favor of this Apple tablet, and computer pundits have argued that the iPad is becoming a bona fide laptop replacement. In fact, there are things an iPad can do that you can’t do on a MacBook—such as drawing and editing with the Apple Pencil. And the iPad (or any tablet) is wonderful for reading e-books and surfing the web. Add a keyboard, and the iPad can indeed serve many folks as a viable laptop computer.

But the iPad doesn’t use a mouse or trackpad (because it has a touch screen), has no file system (with folders and such), and no defined “home” screen that could display, say, your day’s events or the weather.

For those of you who eschew change, there’s no need to panic¹. Let me assure you the iPad will work the same—but it will have new features that you’ll probably like, including:

1. A real “home” screen with space to display the day’s calendar, or the weather, or the stock market, or a host of other “widgets” that you can select (or not).
2. A local file system with folders, just like a computer.
3. External drive support that lets you connect a flash drive (or even an external disk) to your iPad to copy documents and photos. This will be wonderful for archiving and transferring files to other computers.²
4. Better screen text selection that makes editing emails and documents easier.
5. More icons on the screen as iPadOS takes advantage of the tablet’s larger size.
6. Mouse support to help you select text and icons.

The new iPadOS should be available in September, along with updates to Apple’s iOS for its iPhones, MacOS for its MacBook computers, tvOS for its Apple TV streaming devices, and watchOS for its Apple Watch.

It’s critical that you keep your operating systems up to date. For help with your iPad (or any tablet), drop by the Technology Lab on Tuesdays or Wednesdays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. or Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



This guy is about to go over a waterfall while enjoying his iPad.



iPadOS lets you add “widgets” to its home screen, like a clock, calendar, weather, and photos.

1 If you opt to panic, please do so *before* you come to our tech lab.

2 You may need an adapter with either a USB-C or Lightning connector.