

Glance: How Apple's iPad measures up

January 28 2010, By JESSICA MINTZ , AP Technology Writer



The Apple iPad is examined after its unveiling at the Moscone Center in San Francisco, Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2010. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

(AP) -- Apple Inc. says its tablet-style iPad computer represents a whole new category of consumer-electronic devices, ideal for watching videos, surfing the Web and reading electronic books.

Here is how it stacks up with other Internet-connected portable devices that consumers are already using:

- [iPad](#) vs. laptop

The iPad is easier to stash and carry than most laptops. The device weighs just 1.5 pounds, compared with a few pounds for the typical laptop. At a mere half-inch thick, the iPad is also thinner than most laptops, including Apple's super-thin Macbook Air. The entry-level iPad

is less expensive than most full-fledged laptops and claims to have a longer battery life at 10 hours, compared with three to four hours for a typical full-sized laptop.

But with a maximum of 64 gigabytes of [storage](#), the iPad can't hold as many photos, movies and songs as most laptops, which typically have hard drives that are several times that capacity. It doesn't come with a physical keyboard as laptops do, though Apple will sell an add-on dock with a keyboard.

- iPad vs. netbook

As Apple CEO [Steve Jobs](#) said Wednesday, smaller laptops known as netbooks are "not better than a [laptop](#) at anything - they're just cheaper." They use less-powerful chips than regular laptops, and as a result they don't handle video or other processing-intensive tasks well. The iPad uses a new chip that is custom designed by Apple. Jobs says the chip is extremely fast.

The iPad models that come with the ability to go online with AT&T's wireless network are more expensive than netbooks that can do that, as those netbooks are subsidized by wireless carriers. But unlike netbooks, the iPad doesn't require users to enter a long-term service contract with a carrier.

- iPad vs. smart phones

Browsing the Web, watching video and reading books are more comfortable on a big iPad screen, which measures 9.7 inches diagonally, than a tiny smart phone screen - the iPhone's display, for instance, is 3.5 inches diagonally. However, while the iPad has a built-in microphone and could work with Internet-based phone services such as Skype, it's not a telephone. And it definitely doesn't fit in your pocket, the way

Apple's iPhone does.

- iPad vs. e-readers

Using the iPad's touch screen to buy books and start reading seems fast compared with the navigation required on Amazon.com Inc.'s Kindle, which you navigate by pushing physical buttons on the device because it has no touch screen. Book covers are displayed on a "shelf" on the screen, and the reader software emulates the look of a paper book.

But the iPad has a glossy screen, so it might not be as easy on the eyes as the Kindle and other e-readers, which generally sport electronic-ink technology. And it probably won't be as easy to read outdoors on the iPad.

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Citation: Glance: How Apple's iPad measures up (2010, January 28) retrieved 12 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-01-glance-apple-ipad.html>

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