

Big queues for iPad 2 in Australia

March 25 2011

Hundreds of people queued for up to two days to get their hands on the iPad 2 which went on sale in Australia on Friday for the first time.

Apple's latest touchscreen [tablet computer](#) hit stores in the United States on March 11 but only went on sale here at 5:00pm (0600 GMT) and fans snaked round the company's flagship store in central Sydney.

First in line was Canadian backpacker Alex Lee who headed to the store straight from the airport after arriving from Singapore on Wednesday.

"I came straight from the airport. I arrived here Wednesday at noon and started the line," he said.

"At 5:00 pm today, I will have waited for over 53 hours."

But two nights sleeping on the pavement didn't dampen his excitement

"I feel good. I have queued before for the [iPhone](#) and the first iPad and every time I met heaps of cool people coming from all around the world," he added.

Tweeting from outside the store, Alex said he felt part of a community.

"In the line we help each other, we swap chairs and we bring back food. So many people are helping us, some even ask to take their picture with me," he said.

The [iPad 2](#), which is one-third thinner, nearly 15 percent lighter and faster than the model released in April 2010, was also available in 24 other countries Friday, but not Japan.

It was scheduled to go on sale there last Friday but was delayed because of the devastating earthquake and tsunami.

Number eight and nine in the Sydney line, high school students Will and Josh, both took a day off from the classroom -- with the blessing of their parents.

They arrived on Thursday afternoon and stayed overnight.

"It's the fourth time I've done this kind of thing," said Josh.

Further down the line, Apple fans were less hard-core.

"I really don't understand the excitement," said Sally, 73, from England.

"I just came here to have a look at the line for my son. Because he is working, I started queuing. The woman behind me gave me a chair."

Apple sold more than 15 million iPads last year and rival electronics manufacturers have been scrambling to produce their own touchscreen devices.

Blackberry maker Research In Motion recently announced that its iPad rival, the PlayBook, would shortly go on sale in the United States and Canada at a price identical to that of the iPad.

Besides the size and weight, the other major improvement to the [iPad 2](#) is the addition of front- and rear-facing cameras that allow users to take still pictures and video and hold video conversations.

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