

Hundreds queue as iPad 2 hits Japan

April 28 2011, by Miwa Suzuki



Young Japanese women show their "iPad 2" tablet computers in Tokyo on April 28, 2011. Hundreds of Apple fans in have queued to snap up the device as the latest version of the popular tablet finally went on sale after a month-long delay caused by the March 11 quake and tsunami.

Hundreds of Apple fans in Japan queued to snap up the iPad 2 Thursday as the latest version of the popular tablet [finally went on sale](#) after a month-long delay caused by the March 11 quake and tsunami.

Customers in Tokyo waited patiently from early morning outside Apple's main stores in downtown Ginza and the shopping district of Shibuya, many killing time by playing on or reading from their previous-generation devices.

"I was determined to get the new model as it is thinner and lighter" than the original model, Masahiko Asakura, 40, said as he came out of the Ginza store, adding that he would now give his old [iPad](#) to his parents.

"The launch was a long time coming for me," said a 22-year-old physics student who only gave her surname as Kobayashi. "I thought the first model was a bit heavy, but the new one seems the right size for me."

As the spring sun heated the pavement, Apple distributed bottled water and black parasols with the Apple logo to many of those queueing up to spend 44,800-60,800 yen (\$548-\$743) on the latest gadget.

The iPad 2, which hit stores in the United States on March 11, had been scheduled to go on sale in Japan on March 25.

But the launch was pushed back as the country dealt with its worst disaster since World War II, which has left more than 26,000 people dead or missing and sparked a nuclear crisis at the tsunami-hit Fukushima atomic plant.

With many consumers in a jittery or glum mood since the calamity, data released Thursday showed household spending plunged by 8.5 percent in March from a year earlier, the biggest drop since records began in 1964.

Asakura said the disaster was no reason to stop spending, adding that "feelings will become bottled up in society unless we have fun like this."

Apple sold more than 15 million iPads last year worldwide and 4.69

million during the last quarter.

The success of the iPad has forced rival electronics makers to begin rolling out their own touchscreen tablet computers, and Japan's Sony this week unveiled its first tablet models, codenamed S1 and S2.

Apple iPad 2
The new tablet computer finally went on sale in Japan Thursday after a month-long delay caused by the March 11 quake and tsunami



Labels in diagram: Camera, On/off Camera, Silent, Volumes, Loudspeaker, 241.2 mm, 185.7 mm, 8.8 mm

Key features:

- ▶ 33% thinner (than first iPad version)
- ▶ 90g lighter
- ▶ New Apple A5 processor two times faster, graphics performance nine times faster
- ▶ Front and back built-in cameras for video chat (including FaceTime), movie-making and photography
- ▶ LED-backlit and multi-touch display, with fingerprint-resistant coating

Battery: 10 hours
Colours: Black, white

Models	Wi-Fi	Wi-Fi + 3G
Storage	Price	
16GB	\$499	\$629
32GB	\$599	\$729
64GB	\$699	\$829

Available from:

- April 28 Japan
- April 29 Hong Kong, India, Israel, Macau, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey and United Arab Emirates
- May 6 China (Wi-Fi version only)

Apple iPad 2 went on sale in the US, Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand and other European countries in March

Source: Apple 

Fact file on the iPad 2 which has gone on sale in Japan after a month-long delay caused by the March 11 quake and tsunami.

The larger S1 has a single screen while the pocketable S2 has twin screens, company officials told a news conference. Both devices use Google's Android operating system and are equipped with Wi-Fi for Internet access.

Competitors have rushed to cash in on soaring demand for tablets since the iPad was released in April last year, but Sony's devices are not due to go on sale globally until the northern hemisphere autumn, well behind its rivals.

Samsung's Galaxy Tab is the best-selling rival to the [Apple](#) gadget, and Research in Motion became the latest to join the fray, with the release last week of its Blackberry PlayBook.

The [iPad 2](#) will be launched as planned on Friday in Hong Kong, India, Israel, Macau, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

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Citation: Hundreds queue as iPad 2 hits Japan (2011, April 28) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-04-hundreds-ipad-japan.html>

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