

# Apple granted patent for all-glass iPhone, iPad building process

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The iPhone 5.

Apple has been granted a patent for a method to create all-glass shells for electronic devices, such as iPhones and iPads.

The method described in the patent, first reported by Apple Insider,

would allow Apple to create glass shells that are durable and lightweight. Glass shells would be created by fusing together separate glass pieces and then machining them down to the desired shape.

Consumers should not expect a glass iPhone or iPad in 2014, but the patent may be a clue to what's to come from Apple. The Cupertino, Calif., company is known for its high-caliber product design, but it frequently changes its style. For example, Apple has used several different materials to create the exterior of the past few iPhone models.

The iPhone 4 and 4s had glass front and back panels with metallic edges. The exterior of the iPhone 5 and 5s was the opposite, built predominantly out of metal with just a few glass panels. The iPhone 5c, meanwhile, has a plastic shell. Apple has never built an iPhone with an all-glass exterior.

For the next iPhone, expected to go on sale this fall, reports have said Apple will use a metal design with an extremely durable screen made out of "sapphire crystal [glass](#)."

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