

The Latest on Apple: 4-inch iPhone SE unveiled for \$399

March 21 2016, by The Associated Press



Media and invited guests wait for the start of an event to announce new products at Apple headquarters, Monday, March 21, 2016, in Cupertino, Calif. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

The Latest from Apple's product announcement in California (all times local):

10:55 a.m.

Apple is rolling out a fancier 4-inch iPhone to replace a similar-sized model released in 2013.

The iPhone SE will rely on the same processor and have many other features in the larger 4.7-inch iPhone 6S, which came out six months ago. That's something that was missing from Apple's older 4-inch iPhone 5S.

The new iPhone comes as sales taper off for the device that generates the bulk of Apple's profits. Some iPhone users prefer the smaller size and have resisted upgrading to the larger models that Apple has shifted to in recent years to compete against Samsung.

Like the iPhone 6S, the iPhone SE will be able to take pictures at 12 megapixels. By comparison, the iPhone 5S's camera is limited to 8 megapixels.

The iPhone SE will also be equipped with a longer-lasting battery than the iPhone 5S and have faster wireless connections. It will also work with Apple Pay, the company's digital wallet.

Prices for the new iPhone will start at \$399 for a model with 16 gigabits of storage. That's less than the \$450 price tag for the 5S. It will be free if customers commit to a two-year contract with their wireless carrier, as was the case with the 5S.



The exterior of Apple headquarters is seen before an event to announce new products at the company's headquarters Monday, March 21, 2016, in Cupertino, Calif. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

Orders for the iPhone SE will start Thursday. The phone will begin shipping March 31 in the U.S. and several other countries.

— Michael Liedtke, AP Technology Writer, San Francisco

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10:40 a.m.

Apple is cutting the price of its smartwatch and introducing an array of new bands in an attempt to spur more sales of a gadget that hasn't won a big following yet.

Prices for the Apple Watch will start at \$299, down from \$349. Apple is also releasing a new type of wristband made of woven nylon, along with more colors for existing types of bands.

The expanded variety is designed to appeal to the roughly one-third of Apple watch owners who like to switch bands.



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The highly anticipated Apple Watch was released a year ago, but sales haven't met some of analysts' more bullish predictions. While Apple hasn't released figures, IDC's analysts estimate the tech giant shipped 11.6 million watches last year.

— Michael Liedtke, AP Technology Writer, San Francisco

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10:20 a.m.

Apple CEO Tim Cook is reiterating his pledge to resist the U.S. government's demands for the company's help to unlock an encrypted iPhone used by one of the killers in the San Bernardino mass shootings.

Cook opened a product event in California on Monday by saying that Apple owes it to its customers to protect their privacy and the personal information they store on iPhones. He says he is "humbled and deeply gratified" by the outpouring of support he has received.

He has vowed to fight a federal magistrate's order requiring Apple to create special software that would override the iPhone's security features and allow the FBI to hack into the device used by the San Bernardino killer in a suspected case of terrorism.



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Apple says that doing so could leave all iPhones vulnerable to future hacking attempts, although federal prosecutors contend they're only asking Apple to write code that would work with one phone to protect national security.

Federal magistrate Sheri Pym, who issued the order, will hear arguments from both sides in a Riverside, California, courtroom on Tuesday.

— Michael Liedtke, AP Technology Writer, San Francisco

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9:30 a.m.

Apple product events typically spark anticipation among tech bloggers and the company's hard-core fans. Monday's event, though, is drawing less excitement than some previous product launches.

Apple is expected to announce a smaller, 4-inch iPhone and a smaller version of the iPad Pro tablet.

But there's been no hint of any blockbuster developments, such as last year's highly anticipated Apple Watch debut. Despite speculation that Apple is working on a self-driving car or some new virtual-reality device, those are likely years away.

The event starts at 10 a.m. PDT at Apple's Cupertino, California, headquarters.

Gartner tech analyst Brian Blau says it's not unusual for Apple to save major announcements until the fall. He says the company's spring events are often focused on products that Apple considers important, but which may not be its biggest sellers.

— Brandon Bailey, AP Technology Writer, Cupertino, California.

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