

iPad global rollout to start in Australia, Japan, Europe

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The touchscreen tablet device went on sale in the United States on April 3 and was due to hit the global market in late April, but unprecedented US demand forced Apple to push the date back a month.

Apple said earlier this month it sold one million iPads in the first 28 days in the United States, less than half the time it took for the company to sell the same number of iPhones.

Diehard Australian fans braved wind and rain to be the first to get their hands on the multimedia gadget, with self-confessed Apple fanatic Rahul Koduri staging a 30-hour vigil to secure his spot at the head of the queue.

Prepared with blankets, jumpers, chairs and a sleeping bag, Koduri took the day off work and established himself outside Sydney's flagship [Apple store](#) at 2:00 am on Thursday (1600 GMT on Wednesday), some 30 hours before the doors opened.

"I want to be the first to get it," said Koduri, a 22-year-old aerospace engineering student, as he waited in line.

"The experience of going to an Apple store and buying it -- there's just no other company like that. It's like a cathedral when you're inside there."

Hardcore fans gathered outside Apple stores worldwide for Friday's global release, with the [iPad](#) to go on sale for the first time in Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain and Switzerland.

A Wi-Fi version of the iPad, which allows users to watch video, listen to music, play games, surf the Web or read electronic books, went on sale in the [United States](#) on April 3 starting at 499 dollars.

A model featuring both Wi-Fi and 3G cellular connectivity appeared on US store shelves on April 30 for up to 829 dollars.

More than 5,000 applications have been developed for the iPad, according to an Apple spokesman, in addition to the 200,000 programs already available for the iPhone or the iPod Touch, most of which run on the iPad.

"The number of apps that this has is just amazing," said Koduri, who was second in line for the next-generation iPhone 3GS and sixth to nab the original iPhone when it went on sale in Sydney.

California-based [Apple](#) plans to bring the iPad to Austria, Belgium, Hong Kong, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Singapore in July.

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