

# From iPhone OS 1 to iOS 15: A history of the system that powers your Apple smartphone

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A lot has changed since Steve Jobs first introduced the world to Apple's latest device in 2007: the iPhone.

Since its release, the iPhone has helped make smartphones the most important piece of technology in our lives, and created a new industry of app developers.

How we use our smartphones has changed dramatically, too. It's no longer just a fancy BlackBerry we use to make calls or send emails. Nearly every piece of our life is contained within that fancy slab.

Starting June 7, Apple will host its Worldwide Developers Conference, during which it will detail its latest mobile operating system, iOS 15, and new ways we can take advantage of our iPhones.

So, how much has changed since that first iPhone 14 years ago? Let's look back:

## iPhone OS 1

Release date: June 29, 2007

Key features: App Store? Still too soon. The original iPhone had basic apps including Mail, a mobile version of the Safari browser, a camera, and a built-in YouTube app with an icon resembling an old-school TV. There was even an app for iPod if you wanted your music.

## iPhone OS 2.0

Release date: July 11, 2008

Key features: The App Store makes its debut, ushering in a flashlight and fart noise app renaissance. There were other apps, too, such as Facebook, Pandora, and MySpace (when we still used it) which let you keep in touch with friends or listen to music. At the time of launch, the App Store had more than 500 apps. Other features included enterprise

support, contact search, the ability to bulk delete or move emails, parental controls and a scientific calculator.

## iOS 3.0

Release date: June 17, 2009

Key features: The cut, copy and paste functions finally arrive, as does support for MMS, which allowed users to send photos in text messages. The [software update](#) also allowed users to type on the keyboard while in landscape mode (holding the phone sideways).

## iOS 4

Release date: June 21, 2010

Key features: This software update supported multitasking, so iPhone owners could quickly switch between apps. The update also added folders for grouping apps together in one collection as well as the ability to customize home and lock screens with wallpapers, either included in iOS 4 or with photos.

## iOS 5

Release date: October 12, 2011

Key features: This year marked the arrival of iCloud, a variety of free cloud-based services for Apple devices. The 2011 software update also introduced a notification center to keep tabs on notifications, the new text messaging tool iMessage (which also let you know which friends had an iPhone based on the blue or green text bubble), and the debut of voice assistant Siri.

## iOS 6

Release date: September 19, 2012

Key features: Apple tries its luck in navigation with a Maps app. However, it couldn't compete with other services such as Google Maps or Waze. The software update integrated Facebook to contacts and calendar, and the Passbook, which would later become Wallet and house various items such as boarding passes or gift cards.

## iOS 7

Release date: September 18, 2013

Key features: An important software update for Apple, iOS 7 significantly overhauled the design of its mobile software. It also introduced AirDrop, for quick sharing of information between iPhones, and an iTunes Radio feature. The camera included new Instagram-style filters and better organizing in its Photos app, so you can sort by "moments" or timeframes. But it also suffered from major issues at launch such as quick-draining batteries and troubles connecting to Bluetooth and Wi-Fi.

## iOS 8

Release date: September 17, 2014

Key features: Touted as "the biggest release since the launch of the App Store," iOS 8 introduced several big features including the iCloud Photo Library, easier ways to share voice messages or photos through iMessage, long-awaited predictive typing for Apple's iPhone keyboard, and the Health app.

## iOS 9

Release date: September 16, 2015

**Key features:** The Notes app gets a big upgrade with the ability to sketch within a note or to quickly great checklists. The Maps app adds support for transit directions, while the News app made its debut. Apple also released Live Photos, which automatically captures a snippet of video when you take a picture. The software update also featured battery optimization and a low-power mode to get some extra juice from your iPhone.

## iOS 10

Release date: September 13, 2016

**Key features:** iMessage gets new animations like balloons flying on the screen to celebrate a birthday, while Siri opens up to support third-party apps when users make requests of the voice assistant. The update also introduced a new Home app to control smart home features.

## iOS 11

Release date: September 19, 2017

**Key features:** The App Store gets a major revamp, and iPhone owners receive support for augmented reality apps. The iPhone's Control Center is also overhauled, and allows users to customize which apps to include. The new iOS also adds screen recording.

## iOS 12

Release date: September 17, 2018

Key features: A Screen Time feature is added so users can view how much time they're spending on their iPhone as well as set moments for downtime. The iOS also streamlines notifications so multiple alerts from the same app are grouped together. There's also a new Measure app for measuring objects and upgrades to Do Not Disturb to eliminate notifications while you sleep.

## iOS 13

Release date: September 19, 2019

Key features: No more blinding white background light, as Apple introduces a Dark Mode. Maps also gets an update so users can view locations in 3D. The update also adds several tools to edit photos, such as adjusting the lighting in an image.

## iOS 14

Release date: September 16, 2020

Key features: iPhone owners finally get a way to customize their home screens with the introduction of widgets for apps. Users also get dropdown alerts when receiving a phone call that won't take them off the app they're using. An upgrade to iMessage lets users pin important messages at the top of the app, while an App Library option lets users keep apps on their phone without cluttering their home screens.

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