

Apple to let EU users download apps via websites

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Apple said Tuesday its users in the EU will be able to download apps directly from websites, bypassing app marketplaces, as it yields to a sweeping new law and pressure from developers.

Apple and five other global tech giants—Google's Alphabet, Amazon, TikTok's ByteDance, Meta and Microsoft—have been obliged to obey the EU's landmark Digital Markets Act (DMA) since March 7.

The DMA curbs how the six "gatekeepers" of the online world behave, in a bid to force them to open up to competition.

For Apple, that means opening up its closed ecosystem where the App Store had dominated as mainstay of the iPhone since 2008—with an initial raft of announcements in January including allowing rival marketplaces for the first time.

Apple announced the latest changes for developers to meet the DMA requirements after an avalanche of criticism from big and small digital firms, as well as EU officials who have warned they are ready to deploy all their tools to ensure compliance.

The first significant step is allowing developers to offer apps on Apple's iOS operating system directly to users via their own websites.

This effectively would mean users will not need to use Apple's App Store nor would they need to download an application via an alternative marketplace.

The change will come after a [software update](#) "later this spring", Apple said, but it may not be easy to put in practice.

Only developers that Apple has authorized "after meeting specific criteria and committing to ongoing requirements that help protect users" will be able to do so.

Apple also said individual developers will be able to create alternative stores to highlight their own apps—such as a stable of online games for

instance.

Under pressure, the iPhone maker said it wanted to make it easier for developers to exploit the changes resulting from the DMA after getting feedback.

Apple has been one of the DMA's most vocal critics and even in its compliance report to the EU last week, it hit out at the law over the dangers it said it posed.

But Brussels believes it has shown Apple that it means business.

When Apple got caught up in a tussle with Epic Games last week after blocking the Fortnite-maker from developing a competing European [app store](#) for iPhones, the EU said it would probe any legal breaches. Apple reversed course two days later.

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