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The best app developers remain iOS-first. It'll take a big success to change that.



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And so far I have no regrets. (Especially now that green text doesn't bother me anymore - more on that later). It may sound like I'm over-dramatizing, but that trip to Verizon changed a lot for me. I've always prided myself on not falling for Apple ads. Despite years of friends urging me to switch to an iPhone, I refused, stating that I like to stand out from the crowd. Everyone around me has an iPhone. It was nice to break the norm. And so, over the years, I stayed with my Samsung Galaxy devices, which I still consider to be amazing phones. But after talking to friends and family about what I could get from an iPhone that I could never get with my Android, I began to rethink my position. Yes, I loved my Galaxy S10 Plus and everything it offered: a top-notch camera, a customizable interface, and an object remover that removes unwanted people or objects from photos (Pixel phones havefunction). But in the end, it turned out that there was one great thing that my Android could never offer: seamless communication with all my friends using an iPhone. I've been told countless times that I'm ruining group chats by making all messages "green". This is because Apple refuses to adapt iMessage to Android phones, so when you send a message to someone who doesn't have iOS, you'll see green text bubbles instead of the standard blue ones. Since this seemed like a superficial complaint - and it's 100% Apple's fault - I brushed it off. Until I realized that I was missing out on other, more important benefits of owning an iPhone. Unless you're using a third-party app like WhatsApp, there's no easy way to send high-resolution photos and videos directly between your Android phone and iPhone. I didn't mind using WhatsApp...until I started envying my friends who AirDropped photos and videos right after our dates. Whatsapp also degrades video quality and takes much longer to upload videos to Google Drive. I was also frustrated that apps like TikTok degraded the quality of my Android camera. Comparing TikTok videos recorded on an iPhone—even an older version like the iPhone X—to videos recorded on my Galaxy S10 Plus is like night and day. In my Galaxy, TikTok distorted the colors and blurred everything in that unflattering and unrealistic way. On the iPhone, videos are crisp and clear and look exactly as they should. For someone who uses TikTok as often as I do, this was important. These reasons, plus the fact that I already own a MacBook and would therefore benefit from the Apple ecosystem, made me change my mind about buying an iPhone. Throw in features like the new always-on display on the iPhone 14 Pro models — something I really liked on my Galaxy devices — and cool new features like Dynamic Island, and I'm suddenly intrigued by the idea of a change. more: iPhone or Android? Your phone choice can affect your love life Yes, I've had to fight the feeling of being sold out. But I realized it's just a phone after all. And no matter what you do, people will have unsolicited opinions about the device you use. My Galaxy has served me well for many years. Now I was ready for something new. And so far I have not regretted. Watch the video above to learn more about my thoughts on switching from an Android phone to an iPhone. +8 more See all photos Comparing iPhone and Android is an endless debate about which is the best. There will probably never be a true winner, but we will still try to help you make your personal choice. The latest versions of both operating systems - iOS 16 and Android 13 - are excellent, but in a slightly different way. Many of their features overlap, but they look very different in terms of design, with the exception of the basic touchscreen oriented layout. Any of the best phones you can buy today will run one of these two operating systems. In our iPhone vs Android comparison, we'll look at the strengths of each mobile platform so you can choose the right one for your next smartphone purchase. If you want to see the current flagship Android and iOS phones, be sure to check out our Pixel 7 Pro vs iPhone 14 Pro Max and Pixel 7 vs iPhone 14 comparisons. And if you're convinced you want to ditch the iPhone, read up on the new Switch to Android app from Google to help you get through. For a more in-depth look at each new OS release, check out our iOS 16 review and Android 13 review. iPhone vs Android: Why the iPhone is Better (Image: Tom's Guide) They're investing in the Apple ecosystem. This may seem like a superficial reason, but Apple obviously produces a wide range of tech products, and if you already have a Mac, iPad, or Apple Watch, buying an iPhone makes sense. Apple has designed a number of continuity features that enable wearabilityWork and data from one device to another and these features save you time. Take Handoff, for example, which allows iPhone calls and Safari web pages to seamlessly switch between iOS and macOS. Thanks to the universal clipboard, text copied on one platform can be used on another. Another of our favorites is Continuity Camera, which lets you take photos and scan documents with your iPhone's camera, then view and edit them on your Mac. You can even make purchases on your Mac using the biometric authentication feature on your iPhone through Apple Pay. Only a handful of Android phone makers have hardware ecosystems that come close to Apple's, and even with some that come close, like Samsung, you don't get the depth of integration possible between the iPhone and other Apple devices. Microsoft is helping Google bridge the gap with its new Your Phone app for Windows, which lets Android users respond to texts and notifications on their PCs, though it's a little annoying and still a work in progress. other great examples of continuity between iOS, iPadOS, watchOS and macOS - and the iPhone is a key piece of the puzzle, especially now that iPhone apps can be seamlessly ported to macOS. Power users who are already immersed in the Apple ecosystem have a lot to gain by adding an iPhone to their repertoire. Not to mention friends and family members who prefer to use iMessage and FaceTime to stay in touch. Third-party apps are simply better. It certainly comes down to personal preference, but as someone who bounces between iOS and Android, I've always been blown away by the quality of apps from iOS developers and more often than not disappointed by their Android counterparts. Don't get me wrong - there are great Android software and developers out there, but in my experience they're harder to find. One of our favorite Twitter apps, Tweetbot 5 (opens in a new tab) is available for iOSfor example. In contrast, one of the best third-party Twitter apps we've found for Android, Fenix2, definitely pales in comparison. One of our contributors, Henry T. Casey, loves creating blog posts on Mac and iPhone using the Bear app (opens in a new tab), but we've had trouble finding an Android note-taking app that's as versatile and user-smooth. You might even find that apps from established companies, from banks to airlines, run a little smoother and cleaner on iOS than Android, with better integration with essential phone services like Wallet. A wider range of accessories is available. If you visit a Best Buy or Target store, you'll find a range of cases for every iPhone made by Apple — something that certainly can't be said for the Android contingent outside of the big company's flagship devices. Once you've looked at the reasonably healthy selection of products for the latest Galaxy S device, you're out of luck. Don't bother buying accessories for your new Pixel or Motorola phone at a brick-and-mortar store. Sure, you can go online and get a case for \$4 from Amazon, but then you're guaranteed to get what you pay for. The selection and availability of iPhone cases, screen protectors, car mounts, and other goodies is far greater than for any other phone, and that's more important than most people realize. iPhone owners will never have a problem finding a case they don't like. There are advanced privacy controls with app tracking notifications. One of the biggest recent iOS releases has introduced app tracking notifications, allowing you to opt out of apps that are tracking you on your phone. It was a big win for privacy advocates and a big blow to many third-party companies like Facebook. Android just doesn't have this feature, and we doubt it ever will. Don't be fooled into thinking that iOS is inherently more private than Android because Apple still collects a lot of data about you, but iOS hasinnumities of third parties. An app that refuses to track you is very satisfying. (Image credit: Tom's Guide) No bloating. No matter how you buy your iPhone, where you buy it from, or what iPhone you buy, it won't show up with pre-installed bloatware when you first boot it up. That means it's clean from the start, with no power or data sabotaging apps you didn't ask for to sabotage things behind the scenes. It's a relief if you've ever seen the arrival of a new Android phone, especially one you bought from a carrier. Even spending \$1,800 on the Galaxy Z Fold 3 won't save AT&T customers from annoyingly watching shows like CNN and DirecTV Now that fill their app drawers. And it can be even worse if you're buying a cheap phone heavily subsidized by a discount carrier. Android buyers who buy one of the best unlocked phones without a service contract are better off avoiding bloatware. It also depends on the company. For example, unlocked Pixel phones aren't locked by third-party apps; on the other hand, it is not uncommon for some unlocked phones to have strange unwanted sponsored software (or ads). You get faster software updates. Android phones receive fewer updates than iPhones and are less frequent and often delayed, with the exception of Google Pixels. The number of updates an Android phone will see in its lifetime depends largely on how expensive it is, what carrier you buy it from (or whether you buy it at all), and what the phone manufacturer's software support policies are. It's a far cry from iPhones, which are supported by major software updates regardless of years. Take the iPhone 6S, for example, which received iOS 15 even though it originally launched with iOS 9 in 2015. For comparison, consider the Samsung Galaxy S6, which launched the same year and started with5.0 lollipop. Not only is it missing the latest Android software, but it hasn't been updated in years. It didn't get to 7.0 Nougat until Samsung ended support, and when the S6 got Nougat it arrived in March 2017, eight months after Google introduced the update. Also when will the new version of iOS come out. released, it is available to everyone on the same day and can be installed immediately on all models that support it. In contrast, Android releases come in waves for individual phones, not just models. It has the best retail support. Suppose there is something wrong with your iPhone and you need to get it repaired. Or maybe you want a screen protector placed on top of it, and you'd rather have a professional take care of it and put a bubble wrap or dust patch on top of that. Whatever your problem, it's nice to have a place to turn to - and what better place for iPhone users than the Apple Store. Yes, Covid restrictions can make things difficult, but at least you have the option. Android phone owners don't always enjoy this luxury. If you need a new battery or screen replacement and you didn't purchase a protection plan from the retailer you bought it from, you may need to ship it back to the manufacturer. It's quite a time consuming task considering how much we all depend on our phones on a daily basis. Some reputable repair shops like uBreakiFix help close the gap a bit for things like Pixel phones. iPhone vs Android: Why Android is better (Image credit: Tom's Guide) Cell phones are available at all price points. Most smartphones in the world run the Android operating system, and since many companies make Android phones, they are available in all price ranges. There are cheap phones under \$500, like the Pixel 5a, as well as some of the best small phones and best big phones, and tablets and flip phones that cost well over \$1,000. No matter how much you have to spend, chances are you can find it a device that fits your budget or offers unique features. The same cannot be said for iPhones, which have historically been expensive at launch but have declined over the course of several generations. One of the cheapest new Apple phones is the iPhone 13 mini for \$699, but it has a small 5.4-inch display. The Galaxy S21 FE is the same price but has a larger and smoother 6.4-inch 120Hz screen, a telephoto lens and a much bigger battery. And then there's the amazing Pixel 6 for \$599 if you can find it in stock. The cheapest iPhone offered by Apple is the iPhone SE (2022), which despite its dated appearance is an amazing device with phenomenal performance for only \$429. , and for some its screen will be too small. It is more configurable. While both iOS and Android have evolved over the years, Android has always been a platform for users who love to tinker and personalize their devices. It starts with a home screen launcher that offers dynamic widgets and the ability to place apps anywhere on a page or in a drawer without being visible, which the iPhone only recently achieved in iOS 14. You can even trade. Launch your Android phone's launcher with an alternative program downloaded from the Google Play Store. Android also lets you download third-party replacements for essential services like web browsers, keyboards, and media players — and set them as the default versions if you prefer a third-party app over the one that came pre-installed on your phone. iOS has gotten better at this over the years, although the implementation is still a bit chunky. Finally, we need to talk about manufacturer skins, customized user interfaces, and Android software that has been customized by specific phone manufacturers to offer additional features and often the ability to customize the experience from top to bottom. Some Android fans prefer Google's interpretation of "standard" Android. However, many users like the orders of phone manufacturerslike Samsung's One UI or OnePlus' OxygenOS because of their extras, like the ability to take screenshots and hide photos and videos in password-protected folders. But Google changed things up with Android 12, which brought new language material with it. This direction is based on the look and feel of Android over the past few years and offers more customization options. There is a pseudo-theme system that adapts to your wallpaper colors and applies that tint to the entire system. How Samsung and OnePlus customize themselves remains to be seen. You can (sometimes) expand the memory. While expandable storage is a little less popular these days, some Android phones still offer it. This allows you to use a microSD card to store photos, apps, and other media that won't fit on your device's internal storage. Considering the exorbitant prices that Apple and other phone makers charge for doubling or quadrupling storage, this is a surprising benefit. Why drop the price of a new phone another \$100-\$150 for just 128GB or 256GB of extra storage (which you're not even sure you need) when you can shell out \$70 later and save on a 512GB card? While it's certainly becoming a rarity on high-end phones these days, some Android devices still come with headphone jacks, a highly desirable feature that Apple removed from its phones in 2016. This is very important for people who still love their old reliable wired headphones. (Image credit: Tom's Guide) USB-C is universal. These days, Android phones rely heavily on USB-C ports for charging and data transfer, which is handy if you're the type of person who really likes to pack and only carry one cable around. USB-C is also used on many computers today, as is the Nintendo Switch. This is a wonderful thing. While Apple's Lightning cable is a holdover from the days when every tech company was forced to design its own connector, USB-Cthe ideal single port solution that the industry is working on. It also opens the door to faster charging technologies. For example, OnePlus 9 Pro can charge the battery from zero to 61% in just 15 minutes. Wait 30 minutes and the battery will be 90 percent charged. Compare this to the iPhone 12, which still uses Lightning. And Apple no longer even includes a charger. There is a real file system (with drag and drop support on the computer). Most people don't need to get their hands dirty with a smartphone's file system. However, it's good to know that Android gives you that option if you want it. Even better, if you connect your Android phone to your Windows PC, you can drag and drop files into folders very easily, as if the device were just another drive. This means that your media libraries and documents can be easily transferred and stored locally. , and if you have a particularly large library, you don't need to subscribe to the cloud every month. The iPhone closes the user's file system for everything except photos, which can be very unwieldy when dealing with music, documents, and other types of media. Some Android phones, such as the Galaxy S22 Ultra, even have dedicated PC or display projection features that allow you to view and use the device on a desktop computer. One such example is the Samsung DeX interface. With this kind of versatility, a high-end Android phone can legitimately replace one of the best Chromebooks or similar ultraportable laptops. Innovative features are usually first used in Android phones. Of course, Apple's treasury is quite rich. However, this is only one company with one philosophy. As a result, iOS may be slow — or at least slower than the Android community — to adapt to new technologies. With so many companies making Android phones, it's no surprise that Android partners tend to beat Apple when it comes to innovation in the mobile space. Wireless charger,charging, NFC, 4G LTE, 5G, OLED displays, in-screen fingerprint readers, water resistance, and multi-lens cameras were all available on Android devices before the iPhone, along with revolutionary software like true multitasking, copy and paste, and many windows support. . Of course, that doesn't mean Apple hasn't made its own achievements. The iPhone X wasn't the first phone with facial recognition, but it was the first that worked reliably and securely. However, with more and more Android phones coming out from different vendors every year, it's just a matter of scale as hardware powered by Google's platform adapts faster. What to choose? (Image credit: Tom's Guide) So iPhone or Android, which to choose? Both platforms have their pros and cons, and as with many purchasing decisions, your choice will depend on what you value most. The iPhone is a simpler and more convenient experience. There's less to think about, and with Apple iPhone being the most popular smartphone brand, there's plenty of support everywhere, whether you need a battery replacement or just trying to get a new case. In this regard, getting an Android device is a bit more complicated. But at the same time, it gives you more freedom by offering you more choice - choosing how much you want to spend, choosing your hardware and software features, and choosing how to organize and personalize your experience. If you're very particular about the technology you use, Android can feel a lot more liberating—dare I say fun—though you'll also bemoan the relative lack of quality apps (like Twitter) and accessories. If you're wondering which particular device you should switch to, there's no better place to start than our lists of the best iPhones and the best Android phones. Whichever device you choose, make sure it matches your operating system settings. 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