

makeuseof
presents

Using iOS 5

your guide to the latest
and greatest mobile system.



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Introduction

When Apple released the iPhone back in 2007, it was different to anything else on the market. It wasn't the first touch-screen phone, but it was the first one to be so *pretty*. But as gorgeous as the hardware was, that wasn't what made the iPhone so great, or what shook the cellphone industry. It was the *software* which made the iPhone what it was.

The iPhone OS was designed to be as easy to use as possible; to bring all the features of a smartphone together in a way that anybody could use them. *That* was what made the iPhone so popular.

But back then, the iPhone OS was very simple. You couldn't cut and paste, and it took multiple iterations for MMS to make it into the Messaging App. There was no App Store, and Angry Birds was little more than a twinkle in Rovio Entertainment's eye.

Each new iPhone provided greater processing power, affording more capabilities to the iPhone OS, which was dubbed iOS in 2010 after the release of the iPad.

Now iOS 5 has been released, providing updates, tweaks and brand new features to make the iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad even better and easier to use than before.

Want to know what it brings to the table? Keep reading to find out.

1. Presenting iOS 5



iOS? What's that?

In case you didn't know, iOS is the *operating system* (OS) which runs on Apple's mobile devices – the iPhone, the iPad and the iPod Touch.

The Apple TV also runs iOS, but this is a heavily modified version which has different features and functions and is updated on a different schedule to the main version.

The operating system is software which runs on the device and allows the user to utilise the hardware of the device as well as interact with other software which is installed. To users it is the user interface – in iOS, this is essentially the *Springboard* (the home screen) as well as the *Settings* app. The other default apps (Mail, Music, Videos, Notes and the like) are included with iOS but are applications which run on top of the OS rather than being part of the OS itself.

To developers, iOS provides a series of *Application Programming Interfaces* (APIs) which makes it much easier for the applications they build to talk to the hardware (and make use of its features), to other applications and to the OS itself.

iOS 5 is the latest version of iOS and was released to the public on October 12th, 2011.

Compatible Devices

The newest version of iOS 5 supports most of the devices supported by its predecessor, iOS 4. This means that the following devices are supported:

- iPhone 3GS
- iPhone 4
- iPhone 4S
- iPod Touch (3rd Generation)
- iPod Touch (4th Generation)
- iPad
- iPad 2

If you have one of these devices, you're good to go. If not, unfortunately you're out of luck. Notably, the iPhone 3G does not have support for iOS 5, and with good reason. If you have an iPhone 3G and upgraded to iOS 4, you may have noticed that performance on your phone was terrible. As iOS 5 adds a lot of new features on top of those introduced in iOS 4, it's a fair assumption that the iPhone 3G would simply be too slow to cope.

Upgrading to iOS 5

Upgrading to iOS 5 is really easy. All you need to do is plug your device in to the computer it is linked to. iTunes should start up automatically if it's not running already. If it doesn't, start iTunes manually.

The next step is to make sure that iTunes is up to date; Apple released a new version of iTunes specifically for supporting iCloud and to support updating devices to iOS 5.

Then you'll need to make sure that your device is backed up in the unlikely event that something goes wrong during the update. You can do this by either syncing the device (iTunes automatically backs up before every sync), or by right clicking on the device under the Devices section in the iTunes sidebar and clicking "Back Up".

By this point iTunes should have notified you that a new version of iOS is available for download. If it hasn't, you can select your device in the iTunes sidebar then "Check for Update" in the "General" tab. You can then choose to "Download and Install" the update.

If you wish to start from scratch and go from a clean install of iOS, you'll instead want to choose "Restore" in the "General" tab rather than check for updates; this will wipe your phone and install iOS 5. Beware, though – this does erase *everything* on your phone, so you'll want to make sure that you've backed everything up on your computer beforehand.

Now it's time to go and make yourself a coffee (or three), because it will take a very long time to download the update – the iOS 5 update weighs in at over 700MB! Once it's finished downloading, it will either update your device and keep all the data intact or wipe everything and resync your data, depending on the option you selected.

Once that's all done and dusted, you'll see the welcome screen and be ready to go.

2. New Features in iOS 5

PC Free

When you first bought your iOS device, you'll have noticed that you needed to connect the device to a computer before you could use it.

This is no longer the case in iOS 5. Once your device has been updated to iOS 5 it no longer *needs* to be connected to a computer, making it viable to have an iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad as your *only* electronic device. This has a few major implications.



First, updating your device can now be done on the device itself – no longer will you need to connect your device to a computer to download iOS 5.1 or iOS 6. Your device will update itself over WiFi (and Apple has been negotiating with some carriers to allow updates to be downloaded over 3G, too).

To cut down on the amount of data you'll need to send to your phone when updating, iOS now also supports *delta updates*. This means that updates will only consist of the data needed to make changes to the OS, rather than downloading the entire OS again just to make some minor changes. While updates are still quite hefty, they are now to the order of 250MB rather than 700MB. Interestingly, iOS 5 supports delta updates for all applications, which should cut down on data usage when updating all your other apps, too.

Second, when you do want to sync your data to your device, you can now do this wirelessly, too. You can enable wireless syncing so that whenever you connect your phone to a power source it will connect to your computer if it's on the same network and carry out the sync without ever being connected via USB.

Finally, to make iOS devices truly "PC Free", some functionality needed to be added which was previously only manageable via a computer. It's now possible to create different calendars within the calendar app. You can create albums directly on the device from pictures in the camera roll. You can also delete music from the device instead of having to "unsync" it using iTunes.

So if you don't have a computer managing your media, how do you get it on to your device? That's where iCloud comes in, which I'll talk about later.

Notification Centre

To many, Notification Centre might just be the most important update in iOS 5. Up until now any notifications would come up as a big blue badge sitting in the middle of the screen, locking the user out of whatever they might be doing at the time. If you got a notification in the middle of a phone call you'd have to dismiss (or follow) the notification before you could hang up the call.

This has been taken care of, thanks to the new Notification Centre. Those who have used Android phones in the past will feel right at home here, as it works in pretty much exactly the same way. The Notification Centre can be accessed at any time by swiping downwards from the status bar. If you're in a full-screen app which hides the status bar, don't sweat – swiping down once reveals a “pull tab” which you can then swipe downwards to open the Notification Centre.

When you receive a notification (whether it be a new email, text message, missed call or Tiny Tower letting you know it's time to restock the Mapple Store) a banner flips down at the top of the screen giving you a summary of the notification. You can tap on it to take you to the app in question, or ignore it; after a few seconds the notification will disappear and be relegated to the Notification Centre. However, you can set an app to use the old kind of notification (that is, the big blue box over the top of everything else) if its notifications are really important to you.

New notifications also show up on your lock screen, though they'll be cleared the next time you unlock your phone. However, it is possible to go straight to the app in the notification regardless of what you were doing prior to locking the phone; all you need to do is use the icon of the notification like the unlocking slider at the bottom of the screen. If you have a passcode you'll still need to enter it before you can go to the app.

The Notification Centre itself has two widgets: Weather and Stocks. Stocks pulls in and displays stocks selected in the Stocks app. The Weather widget, on the other hand, uses your WiFi connection and/or GPS coordinates (depending on your device's capabilities) to find your current location and display the weather data for the closest town or city. You can turn the location tracking off, however, in which case it will use the first city or town in your Weather app.

Unfortunately, there are a few things which could change the Notification Centre from being great to being perfect. Third party widgets are a no go for now, and it would be great to be able to use the Notification Centre to toggle some things like WiFi, Bluetooth or 3G. There's no way to tell from the status bar (or anything else, for that matter) whether there are any notifications at all, or how many if there are. Finally, there's no way to clear individual notifications – if an app has multiple notifications they can only be all cleared at once from the Notification Centre (although tapping on an individual notification will clear it, this can't be done without leaving the current application).

Despite these flaws, though, the Notification Centre is a definite improvement over the old, clunky notification system in previous versions of iOS.

You can read more about the Notification Centre over on the main [MakeUseOf site](http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/notified-revamped-notification-center-ios-5/). (<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/notified-revamped-notification-center-ios-5/>)

iMessage

SMS messages can be expensive. It doesn't take long for all those 160 character texts to add up, especially once a conversation gets going. Heavy texters wanting to avoid big bills have had a few different alternatives. They could pay extra money for “unlimited” texts, or they could buy a BlackBerry and use its messaging service, BBM.

But what about iPhone users who don't want to pay more in their contract? Not everyone wants a Blackberry. There



are a number of apps available which use your data connection to send messages to other people with the same application – a great example of this is [WhatsApp](http://itunes.apple.com/app/whatsapp-messenger/id310633997) (<http://itunes.apple.com/app/whatsapp-messenger/id310633997>), which is also available on Android, Blackberry and even some Nokia phones.

The main problem with apps like this is that they require other users to have the application installed for you to make use of its features. WhatsApp allows you to send text messages to contacts that don't have WhatsApp, but that defeats the purpose of using it in the first place.

iOS 5 attempts to tackle this problem with iMessage. It works in the same way as applications such as WhatsApp, using cellular data or a WiFi connection to send messages to other iOS 5 users. However, unlike other applications, there is no sign up necessary, no extra apps – iMessages are tied right into the “Messages” app. If you have an iPhone, Apple notes that your phone number is connected to an iOS 5 device. When somebody else with iOS 5 tries to send you a message, their device checks Apple's server to check if that number is also using iOS 5. When this is confirmed the colour scheme changes from green to blue to signify that messages will be sent as iMessages rather than as SMS or MMS messages.

You don't need an iPhone to use iMessage, though. iPod Touches and iPads also have the Messages app in iOS 5. Instead of using a phone number, these devices use your Apple ID. If you have multiple devices, messages are instantly sent to all of them (and your responses show up on all of them too), meaning that you can take your conversation wherever you go.

You can use iMessage to send pretty much anything – text messages, photos, videos, voice memos, contact details, even your location if you so wish. You can also see if and when your message has been read so you can ensure that you've got your point across.

But what if you're out and about, away from a WiFi connection and are out of range of a decent cellular data connection? In this situation iOS 5 sends the message as an SMS instead. These show up as green messages instead of blue ones in the same thread of messages. It's pretty seamless and works well, letting you keep the conversation going without switching apps.

Of course, iMessage has the same downfall as WhatsApp and other apps, in that iMessage only works with other iOS 5 users. However, the chances of someone running iOS 5 is decidedly higher than somebody having WhatsApp, eBuddy XMS or something similar.

As an aside, since iMessage is tied into the Messages app this seems like the best place to talk about Messages, too. While the Messages app has stayed largely unchanged there is one change that is most welcome. It is now possible to hide the keyboard in the Messages app – just scroll up in any text message. You can bring up the keyboard again by tapping on the text field at the bottom of the screen.



Reminders

To-do apps have been around for ages, ranging from simple checklists like [Wunderlist](http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/wunderlist/id406644151) to powerful GTD (Getting Things Done) apps like [Things](http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/things/id284971781). Now Apple is getting into the checklist game too with Reminders, one of the new iOS 5 apps. It may lean towards the simple checklist app, but it has a few nifty features that make it worth using.

When you start the app for the first time you're greeted with an empty list called "Reminders". You can add reminders by clicking on the "+" button in the top right hand corner. Tapping "Return" finishes naming one reminder and starts another one until you tap "Done". This is Reminders used in its most simple form – just tap on the check box next to the Reminder to tick it off and say that it's done.

However, there's more to Reminders than that. Each reminder has an arrow next to it; tapping that will take you to the details for that reminder. This view allows you to set your device to remind you after a certain event; at a certain time, for example, or when arriving or leaving a specified location using *geofencing* (which sets up a radius around the location which detects when your current GPS location crosses that radius). You can also tap "Show More..." to choose a priority for the reminder, change its list or add notes.

Finally, you can add new lists by tapping on the icon with 3 horizontal lines in the top left hand corner of the screen, which shows a list of all your lists, then tapping "Edit" in the right hand corner and finally tapping "Create New List..." at the bottom of the list.

Once you have multiple lists set up you can swipe between them like cards (similar to the way you swipe between pages in Safari).

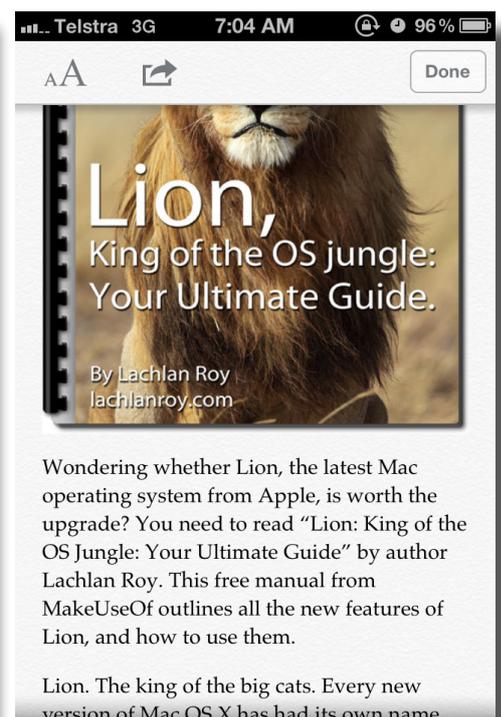
If you've assigned dates to your reminders you can also order your reminders by date, regardless of which list they're in.



Safari

Safari is by and large the same browser that you know and love (or hate) – iOS 5 hasn't changed it a whole lot. Having said that, there are a few new features which make it a little better to use.

First of all, there's Reader. This works in the same way that Reader works in the latest version of Safari for the Mac and PC – it takes the content from a webpage and strips it back to the bare minimum, presenting you with the text and any relevant images. You can then choose the font size to make it even easier to read. Best of all, Reader is



Wondering whether Lion, the latest Mac operating system from Apple, is worth the upgrade? You need to read "Lion: King of the OS Jungle: Your Ultimate Guide" by author Lachlan Roy. This free manual from MakeUseOf outlines all the new features of Lion, and how to use them.

Lion. The king of the big cats. Every new version of Mac OS X has had its own name.

able to detect multi-page articles and stitch the pages together into one coherent document. To use Reader, just wait for the webpage to finish loading. A button labelled “Reader” should appear in the address bar – just tap that button to enter the Reader.

Second is the Reading List. It’s an easy way to put aside web pages to read later by tapping on the “actions button” (the box with an outbound arrow), then “Add to Reading List”. Best of all, iCloud (which we’ll talk about later) can keep your Reading List synced across all of your devices, including Safari on your Mac.

Third, private browsing has finally made its way to Safari, allowing you to browse without saving your browsing history or any details that you might enter. You can enable it from the Safari section of Preferences. Once activated the Safari app changes from blue to black.

Finally, the iPad and iPad 2 have finally gained tabbed browsing, allowing you to change between open pages really quickly. Pages don’t need to reload, either, so swapping back and forth between pages is nice and snappy.

Camera

While it’s impos-

sible for a software update to make the physical camera take better photos, it is possible to add new features which make taking photos with your iOS device just a little bit nicer.

The saying goes that the best camera is the one you have with you. Sometimes it’s really important to get a picture really quickly, and while you’re likely to have your iPhone on you all the time (or your iPod Touch or iPad, for that matter), it can take a while to unlock your phone, go to your home screen, find the Camera app and wait for it to load before you can take photos.



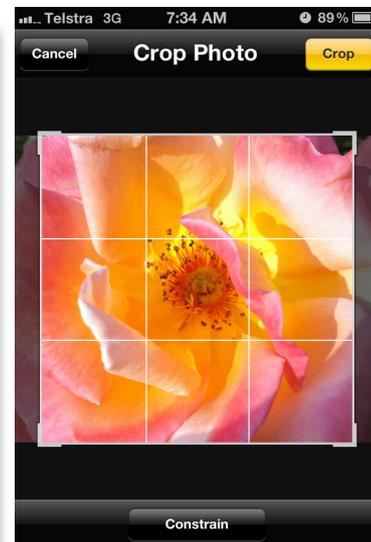
To make the process simpler, iOS 5 allows you to quickly access the camera app from the lock screen. Just press the home button twice (the same action you would use to access the iPod controls from the lock screen), and tap on the camera icon which appears next to the slider. The camera app loads up instantly regardless of what you were doing before, ready to take a photo. You can also view photos that you’ve taken from the lock screen, although the other photos and videos in your camera roll are locked away from view until you unlock the phone.

There are also some changes to the camera app itself. For one, it is now possible to take pictures using the volume-up button. You can also tap on “Options” to enable a grid which helps you to compose your image using the rule of thirds. Tapping and holding on a certain area will lock the exposure and focus to that point. Finally, it’s easy to zoom by pinching outwards in the same gesture used to zoom in Safari, Maps and the Photos app.

Photos

Photos has also received some new functionality. Besides being able to create albums from photos in the Camera Roll (as mentioned in the PC Free section), the Photos app has gained some modest editing abilities. It is now possible to crop and rotate photos, remove red-eye and auto-enhance photos to make them “pop”.

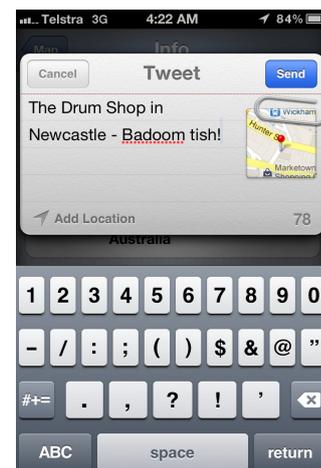
There’s also a new feature called “Photo Stream” which syncs your latest photos to all of your other devices. We’ll talk about that more in the iCloud section.



Twitter

Twitter addicts will be happy to find that iOS has integrated Twitter into the operating system itself, making it much easier to get your tweet on. There is now a Twitter section in the Preferences which allows you to log in with your account(s). Any apps which support Twitter can then use these login credentials, so you no longer have to authenticate your account in every single app.

Twitter has also been integrated into a few of the default iOS apps. You can tweet a webpage from Safari, a map from Maps, a video from the YouTube app, or photos from your Camera Roll the same way you'd email or MMS them. You can also choose to add your location regardless of what you're tweeting.



Newsstand

When it comes to reading on your iOS device you can buy eBooks to read using iBooks (or a third party book store like Kindle), or you can buy individual magazine apps which typically use in-app purchasing for subscriptions or individual issues.

Newsstand is a folder on your home screen which allows you to manage your magazine apps in the same way you manage books in iBooks. There's also a store just for Newsstand which allows you to get new publications.

The great thing about Newsstand is that it will automatically download the newest issue for publications you have subscriptions for. That way they are ready for you to read when you want to read them, without having to wait for them to download manually.

3. Device Specific Features

iPad 2

Multitouch Gestures

iOS 5 enables some extra multitouch gestures for the iPad 2 which makes it easier to swap between apps. Using four or five fingers, you can swipe left or right to switch between apps. If you just want to see the multitasking tray quickly, swipe up. You can also return to the home screen quickly by pinching inwards with four or five fingers, too.

AirPlay Mirroring

AirPlay Mirroring allows you to connect your iPad 2 to a TV using one of the video-out dongles (such as the 30-pin connector to HDMI adapter) and display whatever is on your iPad's screen on the TV, too. If you have the newest Apple TV and a WiFi network you don't even need the cables – everything can be done wirelessly.

Not only can you mirror the screen, but certain apps are able to take advantage of the second screen to show two different things. A great example of this is [Real Racing 2](http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/real-racing-2/id386568787) (http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/real-racing-2/id386568787), which can show the main game on the TV and the map and other HUD components on your iPad's display. You can even get 3 other players together with other iOS devices connected on the same WiFi network for a Party Play session – all of your screens show up on the TV.

Of course, AirPlay isn't just for playing games: it also works great for showing photos or videos to your TV from your iPad, or even just streaming music.

iPhone 4S

Siri

Siri is the latest feature introduced to the iPhone and currently exclusive to the iPhone 4S. It's like a personal assistant on your phone, but one that's much more advanced than anything else currently on the market.

Siri allows you to have a conversation with your phone to get things done. It's great for doing some simple things quickly; setting a reminder or timer, for example, or creating a new event in your calendar. You can say to Siri "Wake me up in an hour" and Siri will set an alarm for one hour's time, or "Remind me to feed the cat when I get home" and Siri will create a reminder to alert you when you arrive home (using Reminders' *geofencing*).

That's not all that Siri can do, though. Since your iPhone is nearly always connected to the Internet (Siri requires an Internet connection to work), it means that it can get a lot of information for you. You can search for a type of place (Italian restaurants, for example) or a specific location, and Siri can show it to you on a map. Siri also talks with [Wolfram Alpha](http://www.wolfram-alpha.com), (<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/wolfram-alpha-a-step-closer-to-star-treks-computer/>) so it's easy to convert anything to pretty much anything else. Siri can tell you the weather, or grab the latest stock market data.

What makes Siri really powerful, though, is that it can follow a conversation. You could search for Italian restaurants, for example, then ask Siri for directions to the one that you choose. Siri will then pull up that location in the Maps app and calculate a route to it from your current location. You can receive a text message, ask Siri to read it to you, and then dictate a response back to be sent. You can shuffle meeting schedules around, write an email or get a contact's details then use one of those details elsewhere.

Siri isn't only used as an assistant, though. You can also use Siri to dictate text anywhere you use the keyboard. Just tap on the microphone icon next to the space bar, and then dictate your text. It is then sent to Apple's servers, decoded and returned as text.

Siri isn't perfect yet. Performance tends to be fairly shaky outside of the United States, and Siri doesn't *always* understand what you're saying ([as this poor guy finds out](http://www.makeuseof.com/tech-fun/siri-vs-japanese/)) (<http://www.makeuseof.com/tech-fun/siri-vs-japanese/>). However, Siri is currently beta software. That means that it's been released to be tried by the public, but it's far from finalised. Siri has the potential to get better over time as it's used and receives feedback.

AirPlay Mirroring

AirPlay Mirroring isn't restricted only to the iPad 2 – it also works with the brand new iPhone 4S. Both devices make use of the Apple A5 chip to push all the pixels needed to show your screen on both your device and on another display.



4. iCloud

When Steve Jobs introduced iOS 5 he also introduced iCloud, a new, free service for all iOS device users. It is the latest in a long line of “cloud” products that Apple has offered, starting with iTools in 2000, followed by .Mac in 2002 and Mobile Me in 2008. In the past these have aimed almost exclusively at the desktop, providing an email address, online storage space (dubbed iDisk) as well as a web gallery for your home media.

Mobile Me was an abject failure, with major stability issues and problems porting people over from the older .Mac service. Apple was forced to supply unhappy customers with up to 3 months of free service. Many thought that Apple had dropped the ball and that it was finished with cloud based services (that is, services which rely on data stored in *the cloud*, or servers distributed around the world).

Then the news came that Apple was working on building a \$1 billion data centre in North Carolina. The rumour mill started turning again, and it wasn't too long after that Steve Jobs revealed iCloud to the masses.

iCloud is significantly different to its ancestors in a number of ways, not least of which is that iCloud is now completely free in its basic form.

iCloud is, for the most part, about keeping all of your information and media in sync between your devices. In this respect the computer has been demoted from being a content manager (which you synced your devices from) to being just another device. That's the other major difference - while Mobile Me and its predecessors were computer based, iCloud is very much iOS based.

When you buy a song on iTunes, it automatically turns up on all your other devices. You also have access to any of your previously purchased music, and can stream it or download it to a device if it's not already synced. The same applies to books purchased from the iBookstore.

When you take a picture on your iPhone, it automatically gets pushed to your computer and all your other iOS devices. An app you buy on your iPhone is automatically downloaded on your iPad, too. If you use Pages, Numbers or Keynote on your iOS devices your files are automatically updated on every device as soon as you finish editing them.

Your calendars and contacts are automatically updated on all your devices, too. You also get a free email address ending with @me.com. You have access to Find My Friends, Find My iPhone and Find My Mac, which help you pinpoint iOS devices (or iCloud enabled Mac) on a map as long as they're switched on and have some form of internet connection.

Finally, you're given 5GB of free storage (not including music, TV shows, apps and books), which allows you to backup photos, messages, ringtones and everything else on your devices. If you need more space you can set up a subscription. You can enable iCloud backups from within the Preferences app, at which point it will automatically update whenever the device is both plugged in to power and connected to a WiFi network.

Setting up iCloud on your devices is really easy – you should be prompted with plenty of easy to follow instructions once you finish upgrading to iOS 5. For more help, though, there's [this article](http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/set-icloud-ios-devices/) (<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/set-icloud-ios-devices/>) over on the main MakeUseOf site.



Conclusion

iOS 5 brings a lot to the table.

The new Notification Centre. Reminders. iMessage, which brings free messaging to all iOS 5 devices. Tweaks to Safari and the Camera and Photo apps. Twitter integration, Newsstand, and the ability to cut the cord and use iOS devices without needing to sync them to a computer.

iOS 5 brings Siri to the iPhone 4S, allowing you to have a conversation with your phone to achieve things right out of Star Trek. It brings iCloud, which means that you can get at any of your information from pretty much anywhere, and makes it effortless.

If you're looking for more information, there's plenty to find over at the MakeUseOf site:

Getting started with iOS 5: What to do after the update: <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/started-ios-5-update/>

Getting better notified with your revamped notification centre: <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/notified-revamped-notification-center-ios-5/>

7 amazing features to expect in iOS 5: <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/7-amazing-features-expect-ios5-mac/>

Apple will add earthquake alerts in iOS 5 for Japanese iPhones: <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/apple-add-earthquake-alerts-ios-5-japanese-iphones-news/>



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