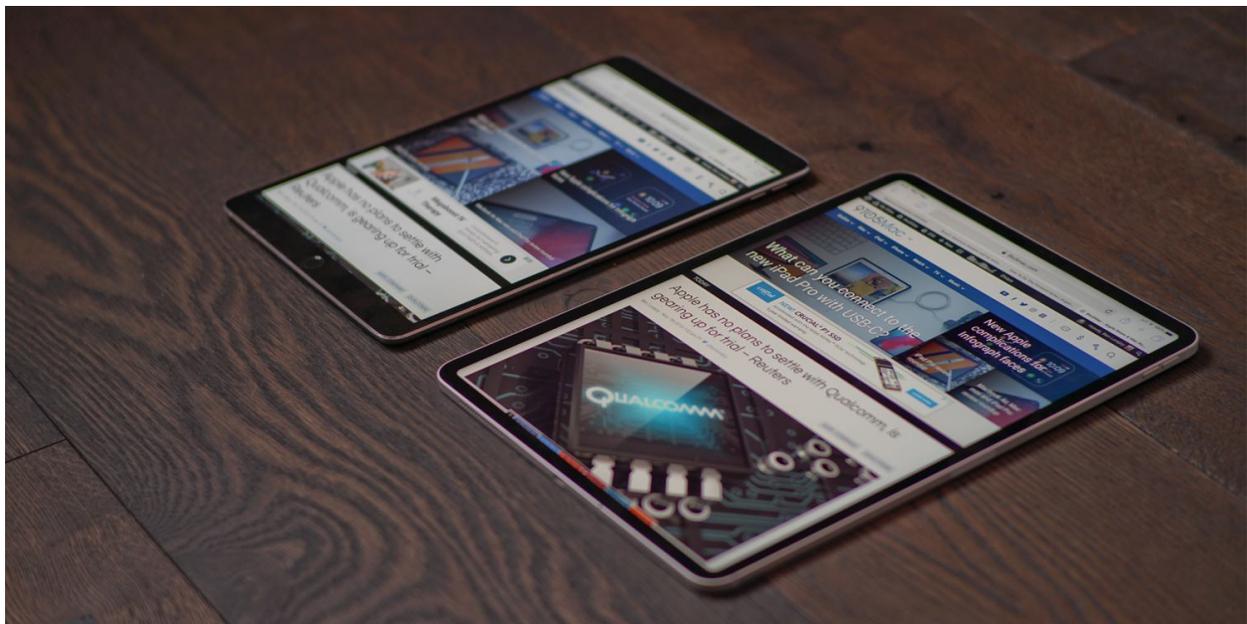


# iPad Pro Diary: I'm already in love with the new compact 12.9-inch iPad Pro

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I wrote earlier that I was hoping the 2018 12.9-inch iPad Pro was going to prove to be, as Apple claimed, ‘[the ultimate iPad.](#)’ All the [joy of that huge screen](#) in a form factor which didn’t prove too great a compromise when it came to comfort and portability.

When the folio case arrived ahead of the iPad, [I was encouraged](#): the size difference didn’t seem to me to be too

great. Since then, I've been waiting impatiently for my iPad to arrive – and today it has ...

I've literally only had it for a few hours, but my impressions so far can be summed up in one word:

*Wow!*

## Look

It looks absolutely gorgeous.

It's true that Apple's description of it as 'all screen' is hyperbole: there's still a significant amount of bezel remaining – which is necessary both to be able to hold it comfortably, and to allow room for the Face ID camera system et al without the need for a notch. But, honestly, 'all screen' doesn't seem like too ridiculous an exaggeration. It really does feel pretty close to that.

I also love the flat sides. Regular readers will know that I'm a huge fan of the slab-sided iPhone 4/5/SE design, much more so than the later rounded-side iPhones. So I love the design here. It's a little reminiscent of the first-gen iPad, but without the bulbous back, of course.

To me, there's an elegant simplicity to a slab-sided design that isn't present in the previous generation.

Once again, I'm in love with the screen size, as I was with the original 12.9-inch model. And once again, it's not so much that this size feels big, it's that going back to the 10.5-inch one (or 9.7-inch one last time) feels small. When using it, the 12.9-inch screen feels right.

Visually, it doesn't look thinner than the older 10.5-inch because that one pulls off a little optical illusion thanks to the way the top of it slopes back in, but you can just about see the difference.



## Feel

It feels light.

I was worried that it might feel noticeably heavier in the hands than my 10.5-inch model, and yet – despite being 40% heavier – it really doesn't. If I had to judge subjectively, I would have guessed something closer to 20%.

The one time I have noticed the additional weight is holding it in one hand in landscape mode, but even that doesn't feel terrible, and it's not something I do often.

I'm definitely not going to notice the extra weight carrying it around, and I've just tested the 'reading books in bed' position and it feels comfy there too. So my question about weight has been answered: it's not a concern at all.



## In use

I'll write more about the experience of using it later in the week. As always, if there are specific aspects you'd like me to cover, please let me know and I'll do my best. But first impressions are fantastic!

As with all Apple devices these days, I love the easy set up process: just bring it close to an iPhone or iPad and let it take care of most of the process on its own.

It's great having Face ID and gestures on the iPad. I've been waiting impatiently for the iPad to catch up with the iPhone X experience, and now it has.

One small detail: during the set up process, Apple refers to the power button as the 'top' button, and in landscape mode the on-screen illustration shows the iPad oriented such that the button is top-left. But the magnets don't align with the folio case that way up: you actually have to have it so that the power button is bottom-right in landscape mode. I don't care which way up it is, but it slightly disturbs my OCDness that this is one detail Apple didn't sweat.



Speaking of the folio case, I said before I was disappointed that Apple doesn't offer a simple smart cover for it, and that remains the case: I'm happy to leave the back open and don't want to add thickness to the device. However, I will say two

things. First, the folio case is extremely light, so I don't feel there's any weight penalty to having a back. Second, it snaps magnetically against the back so easily that it's actually less work to put on the folio case than it was the smart cover.

The magnets are, though, very strong: it takes more effort to remove it from the folio. But overall, I'm not grumbling too much about the change.

I'm happy to have USB-C in place of Lightning. It will be handy to be able to use my MacBook Pro charger for either device. The iPad – like its predecessor – also happily charges from my 15-inch MacBook Pro.

But most of all, I'm absolutely blown away by having this size screen in a device so small and light. I really, really didn't want to [return the original model](#). I was completely in love with the screen size. But it was just too big and heavy. This one is neither. Even in the short time I've had to use it so far today, it already feels a completely normal size and weight in my hands – but coupled to the wow experience of that screen.

Video is really great at this size, and the speakers are amazingly powerful. Magazines feel like you're looking at a full-size page in portrait mode. Ebooks let you see significantly more of the text on a screen, so less page-flipping. For websites, I've switched to portrait mode because the page-width doesn't feel cramped and you can see so much more at once. I'm not much of a gamer, but I just fired up XPlane, and it's clear that games too are noticeably more immersive on this size screen.

In short, I feel the same way about this display I did about the original one: I absolutely adore it. But this time I don't feel I'm having to compromise on size or weight.

Great as the speakers are for video, they still aren't what I would consider music-grade speakers. The amount of bass is as impressive as the volume, and the stereo separation is great, but they are still tiny built-in speakers, and the audio quality reflects that.

Ahead of the launch, I was unsure whether the 11- or 12.9-inch model would be right for me. I subsequently felt the larger iPad was probably going to win out, and there's already no doubt in my mind that this is the case.

I rarely feel excited about a new iPhone. I look forward to their arrival, of course, but I'm not generally peering impatiently in the direction of the front door. iPads are different. My MacBook Pro is my primary Apple device, simply because I do so much more with it, but if I had to identify my most-loved device, it would be my iPad. I was impatient for this one to arrive, and I'm excited to have it. This is the best iteration of my favorite gadget.

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