Everything Apple just announced: iPhone 15, Apple Watch Ultra 2, AirPods

From the USB-C-fication of iPhones and AirPods to the successor of the Apple Watch Ultra, here's what's new from Apple.

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ZDNet

On Tuesday, Apple took the stage at its annual fall event to unveil some of its newest hardware, including iPhone 15, Apple Watch Series 9, and AirPods ahead of the quickly approaching holiday season.

The company also finally made the change from its Lightning port to a USB-C port with an emphasis on user convenience and environmental sustainability.

The last time Apple made a shift that monumental was with the release of the iPhone 7 in 2016 when Apple switched from a headphone jack to a Lightning port for audio, which makes this year's event a memorable one for Apple products.

Whether you watched the event and want a recap or missed it and need a full report, ZDNET has assembled a list of all the products announced, including their newest features, specs, and prices.

iPhone 15 Pro and iPhone 15 Pro Max

Jason Hiner/ZDNET

The iPhone 15 Pro and iPhone 15 Pro Max were this year's headlining act, with new and improved form factors, updated processors, and the latest advancements in the iPhone camera.

The biggest change, at least on the surface, is the slimmer and lighter design, which has new contoured edges,

Grade 5 Titanium, and the thinnest borders ever on an iPhone.

The iPhone 15 Pro features the fastest mobile CPU -- A17 Pro. The new CPU can run up to 10% faster than the A16 Bionic chip in last year's iPhone 14 Pro. Compared to Apple's previous iterations, the neural engine is up to two times faster, and the pro-class GPU is up to 20 times faster, optimizing overall smartphone performance.

As for the cameras, the Pro variants feature a 48MP main camera, which allows users to switch between the 24mm, 28mm, and 35mm focal lengths and supports 48MP HEIF images with up to four times the resolution.

The Pro Max also features a 5X telephoto lens, the longest optical zoom ever on iPhone.

Like on the iPhone 15 and iPhone 15 Plus, users won't have to switch to Portrait mode, but instead, the phone will detect the depth information of the photo's subject, allowing users to later turn any photo into a portrait.

The quality of photos in low light will also improve with a night mode that provides sharper detail and more vivid colors.

Besides the cameras, another major selling point is the Action Button which replaces the traditional alert slider. The Action Button will function as a ring and silent button by default but can be personalized to be a mappable quick key for turning on the camera app, flashlight, Siri, Shortcuts, and more.

In terms of safety, the phones feature Crash Detection, Emergency SOS via satellite, and a new Roadside Assistant that allows customers to comment to AAA when experiencing car troubles.

With the EU imposing a law for electronics makers to adopt USB-C by 2024, the new iPhones finally support charging and data transferring via USB-C, becoming Apple's latest major product to make the switch to the more universal power format.

The Pro and Pro Max will be available for preorder this Friday September 15 and available in stores on September 22.

The phones are available in black titanium, white titanium, blue titanium, and natural titanium finishes. The iPhone 15 Pro retails for $999, and the iPhone 15 Pro Max is $1,199.

iPhone 15 and iPhone 15 Plus

June Wan/ZDNET

Not to be left out, the standard iPhone 15 series, including the iPhone 15 and iPhone 15 Plus have some much-desired upgrades, including the USB-C port, improved cameras, and Apple's now-signature Dynamic Island.

Apple replaced the notch design with its Dynamic Island, the pill-shaped camera design from last year that fluidly adapts to the software and apps running on the device.

In doing so, Apple will finally standardize the new Dynamic Island interface across all of its flagship iPhone models, not just on the Pro.

The displays are brighter with up to 1,600 nits and come in the same sizes: 6.1-inch, and 6.7-inch.

This year's iPhone 15 also inherits a similar main camera sensor as last year's iPhone 14 Pro, improving from a 12-megapixel lens to a 48-megapixel lens. The camera will also have a 2X telephoto feature, the first time on an iPhone dual-camera system.

If you like shooting in portrait mode, the phone brings some features to elevate the portrait experience, such as the ability to adjust the blur and focus after the photo is taken, even if Portrait mode wasn't used.

In terms of safety, like the Pro series, the iPhone 15 and iPhone 15 Plus feature Crash Detection, Emergency SOS via satellite, and the new Roadside Assistant.

The phones are available in pink, yellow, green, blue, and black and retail at the same price as last year, $799 and $899

Apple Watch Series 9

June Wan/ZDNET

Apple Watch users who were hoping for anything drastically different with this year's model might be disappointed. As expected, the Apple Watch Series 9 features incremental upgrades from the Series 8.

The Watch Series 9 features a new S9 SiP, the most powerful watch chip Apple has ever made. The chip will boost the watch's performance and efficiency, giving the watch faster graphics, smooth animations, and a brighter display of 2,000 nits.

The neural engine will allow for Siri commands to be processed on the device instead of the cloud, making the commands faster and more secure, which is especially

important to log health data. Even with the new chip, it still sports its 18-hour battery life.

The watch also features a four-core neural engine that can power machine learning tasks almost twice as fast when compared to the Series 8.

WatchOS 10 also will elevate the smartwatch experience, bringing features like Name Drop to the Watch Series 9, which allows users to share their contact information with just one click.

The Watch Series 9 features a new gesture -- double-tap. -- that enables you to control your watch when your hands are busy. With the double-tap feature, users can tap their index finger and thumb to perform actions such as answering a call, scrolling through widgets, and more.

Another handy feature is the ability to track your iPhone with precise location and direction through a new Ultra Wideband chip.

The watch itself will be available in pink, starlight, silver, midnight, or Product(Red), as well as gold, silver, and graphite in the stainless steel cases.

The Watch Series 9 starts at $399 and is available for pre-order today and will begin to ship on Sept. 22. The Apple Watch SE starts at $249.

Apple Watch Ultra 2

Jason Hiner/ZDNET

The Apple Watch Ultra was the company's most innovative product last year. It was <u>durably built</u>, <u>multi-functional</u>, and tugged at the heartstrings of more <u>adventurous</u> Apple Watch users.

A year later, Apple has revealed its sequel, which sports the S9 chip, double tap feature, precision finding for iPhone, and on-device Siri processing like the Series 9.

The Ultra 2 also features a new, advanced display architecture with 3,000 nits (the brightest display Apple has ever made for a watch), a new Modular Ultra watch face that allows for the display of more essential information, a flashlight boost, and a customizable action button.

The Ultra Watch 2 retails at $799 and is available for preorder today and will begin to ship on September 22.

AirPods Pro (sort of)

Apple slyly slipped in the announcement of the newest AirPods likely because there were no changes other than the new USB-C charging port.

With the AirPods' switch from Lightning-based charging standard to USB-C, which is in line with its new iPhones, Apple pitched the two to be seamlessly connected devices that only require one cable type, even able to charge each other as seen by the photo above.

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