About MacBooks

When Apple Computers introduced their iMac range of desktop computers in 1998 it was a major breakthrough. To try and match the success of the iMac, Apple began working on a new range of Notebook computers. They first entered this market seriously with the Macintosh Portable in 1989. In 1991, Apple introduced the PowerBook range of laptops, which was essentially the forerunner to the MacBook range.

In 1999 a new range of Apple laptops was introduced. This was the iBook range aimed firmly at the consumer market. In May 2006 the MacBook range first appeared. The two main reasons for this consolidation were:

● Simplifying Apple's laptop range under one banner

● It was during this period that Apple were moving from Power PC processors for their computers to Intel processors

The MacBook range now consists of:

● MacBook Pro. This is the professional version of the MacBook and is aimed more at the market previously covered by the PowerBook range

● MacBook Air. This range pushes the idea of thin, light and portable laptops even further than the standard MacBook. It is billed as an ultraportable notebook computer and claims to be the thinnest on the market, currently at 0.68 inch

The MacBook Air comes in two sizes: an 11–inch and a 13–inch version. The MacBook Pro comes in three sizes: 13, 15 and 17 inches.

Although the MacBook is similar in design to its predecessor, the iBook, it is thinner, more rectangular and has smoother edges.

Don't forget

iBooks had a lot of media coverage in terms of appearing in popular TV shows and movies. This has continued with the MacBook range.

MacBook Specifications

All computing technology moves at a break-neck speed, and specifications are always getting better and better. However, these are the specifications for the range of MacBooks released in the summer of 2011. These are the MacBook Air and MacBook Pro.

MacBook Air

The specifications for the MacBook Air are slightly below those of the MacBook Pro, which is unsurprising given its revolutionary thinness. One of the main differences is that there is no inbuilt CD/DVD SuperDrive. However, an external SuperDrive can be used in conjunction with the MacBook Air.

MacBook Air 11–inch

- Display: 11.6–inch (diagonal) high-resolution LED-backlit glossy widescreen display with support for millions of colors

- Battery life: Up to 5 hours (wireless web)

- Height: 0.11-0.68 inch (0.3-1.7 cm)

- Width: 11.8 inches (30 cm)

- Depth: 7.56 inches (19.2 cm)

- Weight: 2.38 pounds (1.08 kg)

- 1.6GHz dual-core Intel Core i5 with 3MB shared L3 cache

- 64GB or 128GB flash storage

- 2GB or 4GB of 1333MHz DDR3 onboard memory

- 802.11n Wi-Fi wireless networking; IEEE 802.11a/b/g compatible and Bluetooth wireless technology

- Intel HD Graphics 3000 processor with 256MB or 384MB of DDR3 SDRAM shared with main memory

- One Thunderbolt port

- Two USB 2.0 ports (up to 480 Mbps)

- MagSafe power port

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MacBook Air 13–inch

- Display: 13.3–inch (diagonal) high-resolution LED-backlit glossy widescreen display with support for millions of colors

- Battery life: Up to 5 hours (wireless web)

- Height: 0.11-0.68 inch (0.3-1.7 cm)

- Width: 12.8 inches (32.5 cm)

- Depth: 8.94 inches (22.7 cm)

- Weight: 2.96 pounds (1.35 kg)

- 1.7GHz dual-core Intel Core i5 with 3MB shared L3 cache

- 128GB or 256GB flash storage

- 4GB of 1333MHz DDR3 onboard memory

- 802.11n Wi-Fi wireless networking; IEEE 802.11a/b/g compatible and Bluetooth wireless technology

- Intel HD Graphics 3000 processor with 384MB of DDR3 SDRAM shared with main memory

- One Thunderbolt port

- Two USB 2.0 ports (up to 480 Mbps)

- MagSafe power port

Both versions of the MacBook Air have a FaceTime webcam that supports dual display and video mirroring.

MacBook Pro 13–inch

- Display: 13.3–inch (diagonal) high-resolution LED-backlit glossy widescreen display with support for millions of colors

- Battery life: Up to 7 hours (wireless web)

- Height: 0.95 inch (2.41 cm)

- Width: 12.78 inches (32.5 cm)

- Depth: 8.94 inches (22.7 cm)

- Weight: 4.5 pounds (2.04 kg)

- 2.3GHz dual-core Intel Core i5 processor with 3MB shared L3 cache or 2.7GHz dual-core Intel Core i7 processor with 4MB shared L3 cache

- 4GB (two 2GB SO-DIMMs) of 1333MHz DDR3 memory; two SO-DIMM slots support up to 8GB

- 320GB or 500GB 5400-rpm Serial ATA hard drive; optional 750GB 5400-rpm hard drive or 128GB, 256GB, or 512GB solid-state drive

- Wi-Fi wireless networking (based on IEEE 802.11n specification); IEEE 802.11a/b/g compatible

- Bluetooth 2.1 + EDR (Enhanced Data Rate) wireless technology

- Intel HD Graphics 3000 with 384MB of DDR3 SDRAM shared with main memory

- 8x slot-loading SuperDrive

- MagSafe power port

- Gigabit Ethernet port

- FireWire 800 port (up to 800 Mbps)

- Two USB 2.0 ports (up to 480 Mbps)

- Thunderbolt port (up to 10 Gbps)

- SDXC card slot

Don't forget

All MacBook Pros have a FaceTime webcam that supports dual display and video mirroring.

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MacBook Pro 15–inch

- Display: 15.4–inch (diagonal) high-resolution LED-backlit glossy widescreen display with support for millions of colors

- Battery life: Up to 7 hours (wireless web)

- Height: 0.95 inch (2.41 cm)

- Width: 14.35 inches (36.4 cm)

- Depth: 9.82 inches (24.9 cm)

- Weight: 5.6 pounds (2.54 kg)

- 2.0GHz or 2.2GHz quad-core Intel Core i7 processor with 6MB shared L3 cache; or optional 2.3GHz quad-core Intel Core i7 processor with 8MB shared L3 cache

- 4GB (two 2GB SO-DIMMs) of 1333MHz DDR3 memory; two SO-DIMM slots support up to 8GB

- 500GB or 750GB 5400-rpm Serial ATA hard drive; optional 750GB 5400-rpm hard drive, 500GB 7200-rpm hard drive, or 128GB, 256GB, or 512GB solid-state drive

- Wi-Fi wireless networking (based on IEEE 802.11n specification); IEEE 802.11a/b/g compatible

- Bluetooth 2.1 + EDR (Enhanced Data Rate) wireless technology

- Intel HD Graphics 3000 with 384MB of DDR3 SDRAM shared with main memory

- 8x slot-loading SuperDrive

- MagSafe power port

- Gigabit Ethernet port

- FireWire 800 port (up to 800 Mbps)

- Two USB 2.0 ports (up to 480 Mbps)

- Thunderbolt port (up to 10 Gbps)

- SDXC card slot

MacBook Pro 17–inch

- Display: 17–inch (diagonal) high-resolution LED-backlit glossy widescreen display with support for millions of colors

- Battery life: Up to 7 hours (wireless web)

- Height: 0.98 inch (2.50 cm)

- Width: 15.47 inches (39.3 cm)

- Depth: 10.51 inches (26.7 cm)

- Weight: 6.6 pounds (2.99 kg)

- 2.2GHz quad-core Intel Core i7 processor with 6MB shared L3 cache; or optional 2.3GHz quad-core Intel Core i7 processor with 8MB shared L3 cache

- 4GB (two 2GB SO-DIMMs) of 1333MHz DDR3 memory; two SO-DIMM slots support up to 8GB

- 750GB 5400-rpm Serial ATA hard drive; optional 500GB 7200-rpm hard drive or 128GB, 256GB, or 512GB solid-state drive

- Wi-Fi wireless networking (based on IEEE 802.11n specification); IEEE 802.11a/b/g compatible

- Bluetooth 2.1 + EDR (Enhanced Data Rate) wireless technology

- Intel HD Graphics 3000 with 384MB of DDR3 SDRAM shared with main memory

- 8x slot-loading SuperDrive

- MagSafe power port

- Gigabit Ethernet port

- FireWire 800 port (up to 800 Mbps)

- Three USB 2.0 ports (up to 480 Mbps)

- Thunderbolt port (up to 10 Gbps)

- SDXC card slot