

October 2012



This SIG provides more opportunity for sharing of experiences than the more typically structured classroom, lecture or formal setting.

Welcome to Volume 3, Issue 10 of iDevices (iPhone, iPod & iPad) SIG Meetings

To go to the iPhone, iPod & iPad **FORUM**, [click HERE](#).

To find Apps that cost money but are **FREE only today**, [click HERE](#)

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Why we live in Sun City ...





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NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

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[Here's the link to Apple iPhone5 Manual](#)

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Are you wanting to trade in your old iPhone in order to get a new iPhone 5?

This company, Technollo.com (1-888-242-1110) pays for your old phones, iPads, laptops & some digital cameras.

This is a local company (15508 Bratton Ln Austin, Texas 78728) so I took my iPhone4 to them instead of shipping it.

They pay the most I have found thus far. Ask for Armando Filoteo, tell him that I sent you, and you should get a great deal.

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How to create stunning panoramic photographs with your iPhone

By [Leanna Lofte](#), Friday, Oct 5, 2012 a 6:11 pm



With your iPhone you have one of the best 4:3 compact cameras in the world, but what happens when the world you want to capture isn't 4:3? What happens when you come across a gorgeous scene -- the Golden Gate bridge at sunset, the Manhattan skyline at

dawn, the crystal-clear island beach, the magnificent Old Port architecture, the rally that's filling the campus. You can still take a photo, or several photos, of part of it, but nothing can really compare to capturing the full breadth and majesty of such an image all in one shot.

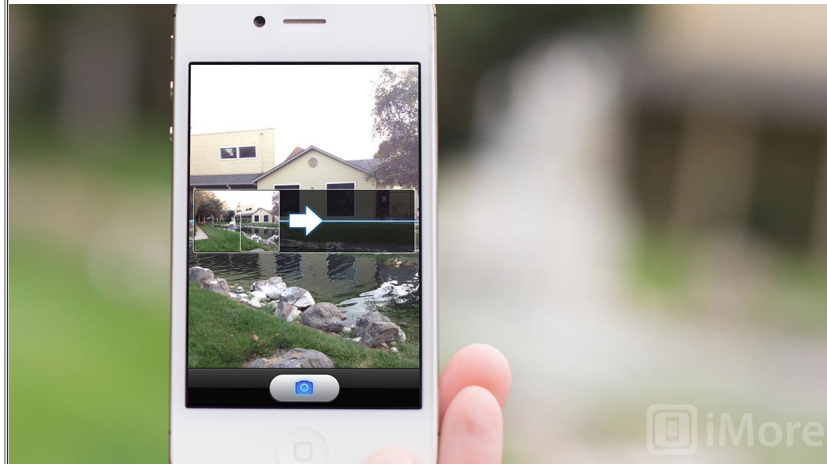
Enter the panorama.

The difference between wide angle and panorama

There's a fine line between what separates a photograph taken with a wide angle lens and a panoramic photograph. We're not going to get into the nitty-gritty details, so for the sake of simplicity, we'll say that a panoramic photo is one that has a wider field of view than the human eye, is at least twice as long as it is tall, and was created by using software (in our case, apps) to stitch together multiple images.

You've probably seen panoramas displayed and showcased at various places -- they're long and skinny and commonly have cityscapes, landscapes, and sports stadiums as their subject. With the release of [iOS 6](#), Apple has updated the built-in camera with the ability to take panoramas by simply panning the scene for the iPhone 5 and iPhone 4S.

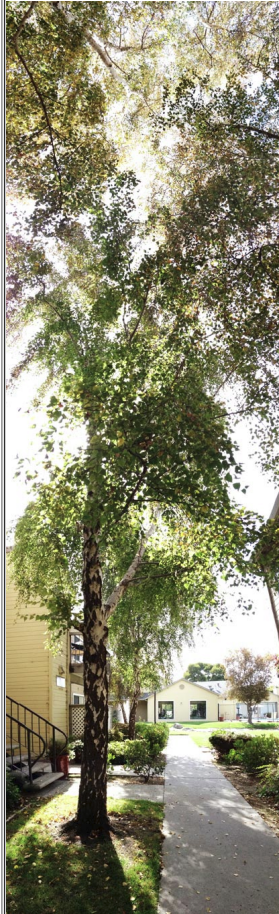
How to take a great panoramic photos with your iPhone 5 or iPhone 4S and the Camera app



The good news is that the panorama features in the built-in Camera app is super easy to use. First, open the camera app and tap Options, then tap Panorama. You'll then be forced into portrait mode and a horizontal bar will appear in the center of the screen that will show you what's being photographed and a small preview of your panorama as it's being built. There will also be instructions that tell you to "move the iPhone continuously when taking a Panorama". It is important that you obey this. If you stop moving part way, through, then continue again, you will not get as good of results.

The Camera will support panoramas up to 240 degrees so keep this in mind when planning your photo. If you don't want to use the entire 240 degrees, you don't have to. Remember, a longer panorama does not necessarily mean a better panorama. Also, the camera will always default to showing you an arrow that's pointing right, meaning that you pan from left to right, but a simple tap on the arrow will switch the direction from right to left.

Once you've planned out what you want included in your panorama, tap the shutter button to begin and start panning the scene in the direction you have chosen. Do your best to keep the arrow on the center line. If you don't do a perfect job at this, it's ok, but you'll need to follow up with a little cropping. Once you're captured everything in your panorama, tap the shutter button to end the recording.



Go vertical

Traditionally, panoramas are horizontally oriented, but this is by no means a requirement! Some of the most interesting panoramas I've ever seen were vertically oriented like the one shown to the right. To do so, just flip your phone so that the shutter button is on the right before starting your panorama. The UI will not adjust for you holding the phone in landscape, but that's ok. Just start at the bottom and pan upwards. When you're done, your panorama will be oriented correctly.

How to take a great panoramic photos with your iPhone with 3rd party apps

If your iPhone is a model older than the iPhone 4S, then you'll have to head to the App Store to take panorama photos. Luckily, there are many affordable apps in the App Store that do offer this functionality.

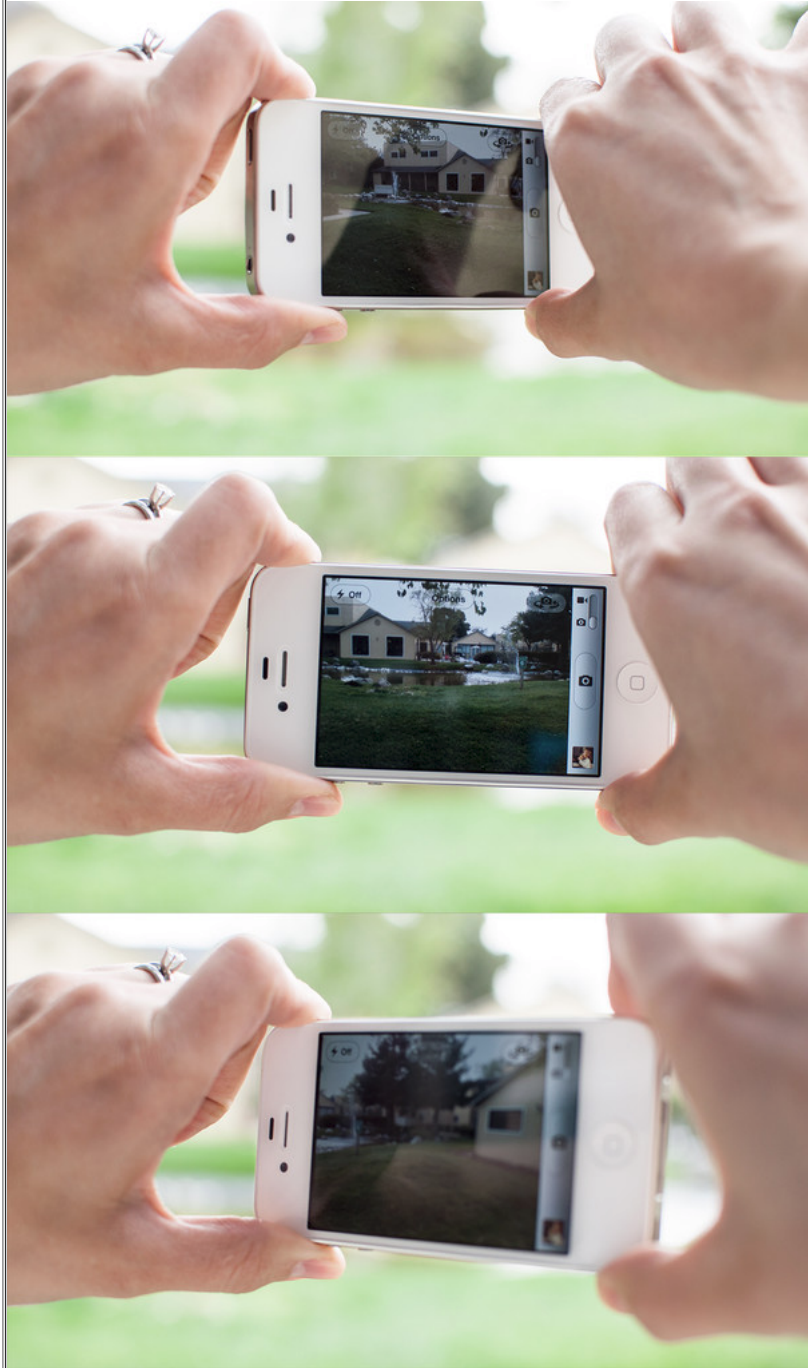
My personal favorite iPhone app for creating panoramic photographs is AutoStitch Panorama. The reason I like this one so much is because it lets you stitch any arrangement of photos. You're not limited to stitching photos to the left and right of each other -- you can also go up and down. It also supports high resolution creations up to 18 megapixels.

- \$1.99 - [Download Now](#)

While the software will take care of the stitching, it can only do as good a job as your image allow. There are several things you need to do to make sure the photos you take

images allow. There are several things you need to do to make sure the photos you take will come together into an amazing panorama, including maintaining a steady camera position, taking sufficient pictures, keeping focus and exposure consistent, and leaving enough room to crop the final image.

Pivot the iPhone around the camera lens



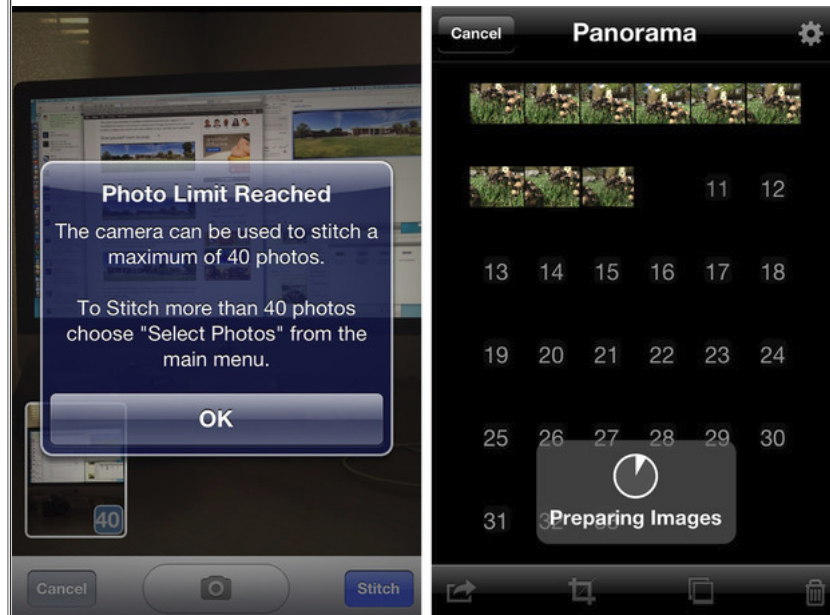
The biggest key to taking good panoramic photos is to make sure you don't shift the position of the iPhone while taking the photos. What I mean, is to imagine that there's a pole sticking out of the bottom of your iPhone (centered under the lens) and that the only motion you're allowed to do is to spin the pole so that the iPhone rotates. Since panoramic images are created by stitching multiple photos together, it should make sense that any shift of the camera's position will lessen the quality of results.

To prevent shifting your iPhone as you pan across the scene taking photos, I recommend holding your iPhone in the landscape position with two hands. To increase stability, you should also press your elbows against your torso. As you take the photos, do not to twist your body or move your feet. Place your left thumb and forefinger below and above the lens. Position your right hand similarly about the home button. The only movement you

want to make is with your right hand. Keep your body facing the same direction and just rotate the iPhone with your right hand -- pivot about your left hand.

The easiest types of panoramas to take are of landscapes or big open spaces. Since everything is far away, there's plenty of room for error. The app you use for stitching will still be able to produce great results even if you shift the camera more than you should have.

Err on the side of too many photos



Just about every iPhone app that's dedicated to panoramic photography will advise you to make sure that you have at least 30% overlap between your adjacent photos. Unless you're using an app that overlays the previous image while taking the next one, I recommend overlapping a little more than 30% to play it safe. I say this for two reasons: 1. you may not be correctly estimating 30%, and 2. the more photos you have, the better chance you have at completing a nice precise stitch job.

Use AE/AF lock to keep a consistent exposure and focus



If your scene has a lot of dark and light elements, or if you're close to something you want in focus, make sure you trigger the AE/AF feature of the iPhone's camera. To do this, simply hold your finger down on the screen until the blue focus box starts pulsating. When you release, "AE/AF Lock" should appear on the screen.

Give yourself room to crop



Make sure that you give yourself enough room to crop your your final image. In the photo above (a panorama of the school I teach at), I made sure to capture enough of the sky and grass to give me the flexibility of cropping it exactly how I wanted when the stitching was done. First, I cropped it like this, applying the [rule of thirds](#) to the horizon and giving the interesting sky the spotlight.



But it's common practice to critique every image that I take, and after looking at this one a bit, I wasn't happy with how the left building is underexposed and didn't feel it really added to the photo. Sure, including it makes the panorama longer, but my goal isn't to create the widest pano, but to create an interesting photograph. To further justify cropping out the building on the left, I noticed that the sky was least interesting on that part of the photo as well. Here's the final image after cropping off the left.



This is a much better photograph, in my opinion. It may not show off as much of the campus, but that's ok. I've instead brought the focus of the image to the properly exposed buildings and the interesting sky.

Panoramic macros



When I saw these mushrooms in the grass, I was dying to take photos of them, and since I was working on this panoramic iPhone photography article, I thought I'd try to get a close-up, macro-style panorama. Nearly 15 tries later, I settled on the above image.

Remember how I mentioned that if you shift the position of the lens while taking the photos that it increases the chance of a bad stitch job? This is a prime example of the truth of that statement and demonstrates why close-up panoramas are very difficult.

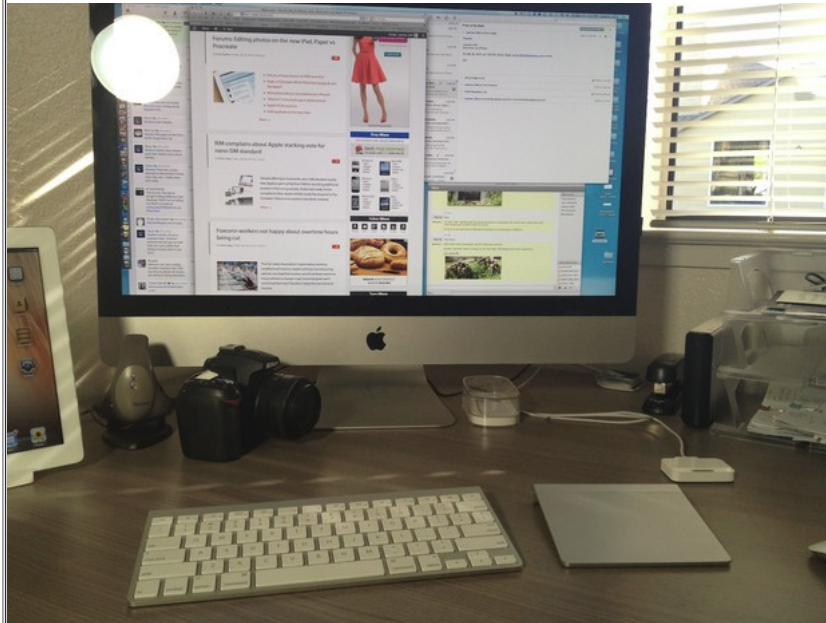
For each of my attempts, I took 35-40 photos in hopes of improving my results, but they

For each of my attempts, I took 50-75 photos in hopes of improving my results, but they still all ended up with a lot of unwanted distortion. The problem was that since I was laying flat on my stomach propped up on my elbows, keeping a perfectly steady rotation was extremely challenging. In the end, I created a platform with the knuckles of my right hand while also keeping it stable on the ground. Then I stabilized the iPhone with my left hand and used my thumb to press the volume buttons to trigger the shutter. I did my best to carefully pivot the iPhone on my knuckles without allowing it to slide around.

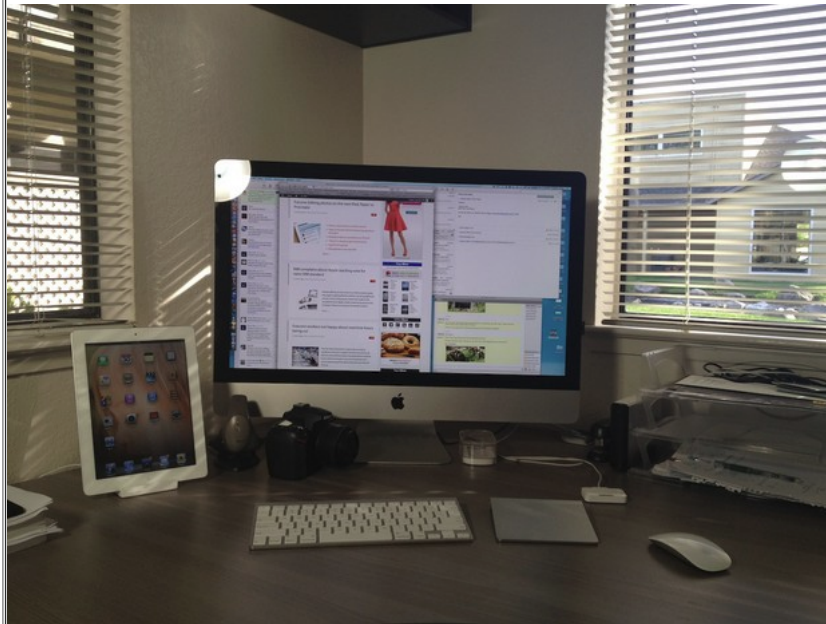
In the end, I got an OK panorama. You can see a lot of distortion in the background, though -- it looks like the background is moving (take a look at a [larger version](#) to better see what I mean). But I think this is something that's going to be associated with close-up panoramas.

Panoramas as substitutes for wide angles

In addition to creating traditional panoramic photographs, you can use apps like AutoStitch to give the illusion of having a wide angle lens. I'm going to use my desk as an example for this. Here's a photo of my desk from the view of me sitting in my chair.



Horrible photo. It's way too close and cuts off a lot of stuff on my desk. Why don't I back up, you ask? Ok, I will.



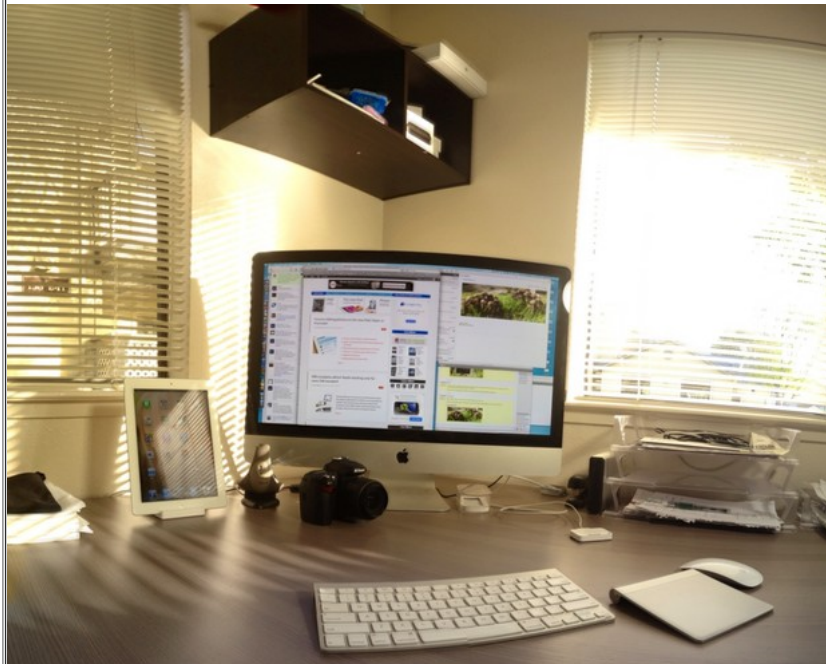
Better. This photo does show off more of my desk, and I could've backed up further to show even more, but it's still not giving the look that I want. When envisioning a photo of my desk, I pictured one of those wide angle photographs that actually have some distortion to the photo. I mean this is a photo of my desk for crying out loud -- it needs something special to make it interesting.

That's where thinking of this as a panoramic project comes in. Only instead of creating a long and skinny image, I'm going to stitch a bunch of photos together from all directions, and give it a traditional crop. Here's what I got before cropping -- and I did this while sitting in my chair, the same position as the first photo.





Now we're getting somewhere! Lastly, I rotated and cropped the stitched image to an 8"x10" and got this.



Bingo. This is exactly what I was imagining what an interesting photo of my desk might look like. It has the feel of a wide angle lens, yet I didn't need any fancy gear and a DSLR -- just a \$2 app and my iPhone!

Now go out and shoot!

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Surprise: iPhone 5's Camera Much Better Than 4S for Both Images

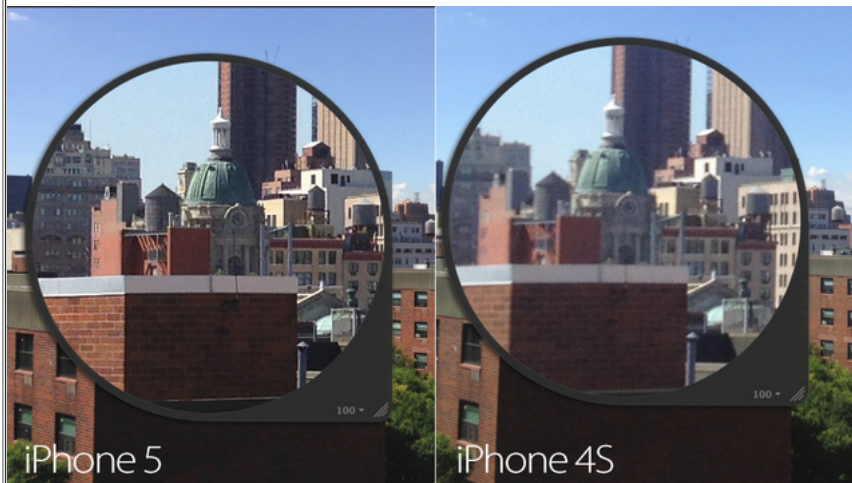
& Video



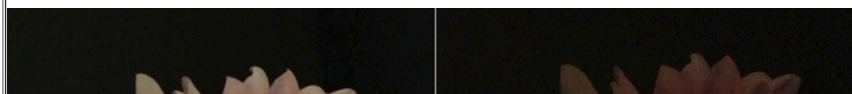
This actually does come as a surprise since iPhone 5 was largely reported, even by Apple, to have the same 8-megapixel camera on its rear as the 4S sports. There were some improvements noted, like a dynamic f-stop feature for better low-light performance and a sapphire lens cover added for increased durability, but that was where Apple's improvement list ended. Test results are in, and they are quite impressive for the one area of iPhone 5 that was not boasted about to be a major change.

In all conditions thrown at both cameras in side-by-side testing, it seems apparent just how much better iPhone 5's camera is, despite still being 8 megapixels. We want to point out a very significant statement in the world of cameras: megapixels are not the defining factor of a camera. 8 megapixels is more than sufficient unless you are planning on taking a shot for a huge billboard somewhere. What matters more to a camera is aperture, how much light it can let in, improving both daytime and especially nighttime shots.

A specification crucial to camera aficionados out there, iPhone 5 has a higher ISO of 3200 vs 800 on the 4S. In layman's terms, that means iPhone 5 is much less sensitive to light and can even produce a shot that is less noisy (reduced grain) than the 4S despite the higher ISO level. Let's allow comparison images (courtesy of [Gizmodo](#)) do the talking, though:



There is a significant amount of definition, detail, and sharpness in the 5's image of this cityscape, with much less noise to boot.





Darkness hides the flower to the point that it's an unusable shot, whereas iPhone 5 retains some color and definition in this low-light shootout.



Putting iPhone 5 up against the latest Android flagship phone, Samsung's Galaxy S III, yields some brag-worthy results, although these two are more on-par. Galaxy S III's shooter looks a tad dull in comparison.

Screenshots taken from 1080p video captured by both iPhones are just as telling:





iPhone 5 continues to show off its video prowess in this side-by-side video comparison. Daylight shots look lovely, though we would wish for less noisy indoor video.

Although it will not be replacing a DSLR anytime soon, iPhone 5 is certainly a big step ahead for cell phone-shooting. It can put up a fight against mid-range point-and-shoots, even besting or being comparable to all currently-available domestic phones (besides Nokia's internationally-available, 41-megapixel PureView 808). At this rate, the next iPhone could be a powerhouse mobile camera.

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Phil Schiller Speaks About iPhone 5's Tendency to Scratch



As our [concerns](#) over the initial impressions that iPhone 5's black coating has a tendency to develop scratches quite quickly have went on to be reinforced by users after just days, we do wonder how much of a conscious decision to ship such an easily-marrable phone was by Apple. Certainly, Phill Schiller, Apple's Senior Vice President of Worldwide Marketing and a recognizable figure from recent keynotes, has taken inspiration from Steve Jobs to answer customer emails as he speaks out on the issue.

Phil Schiller's official word on the matter is as follows -

"Any aluminum product may scratch or chip with use, exposing its natural silver color. That is normal."

Simple and to the point, Phil.

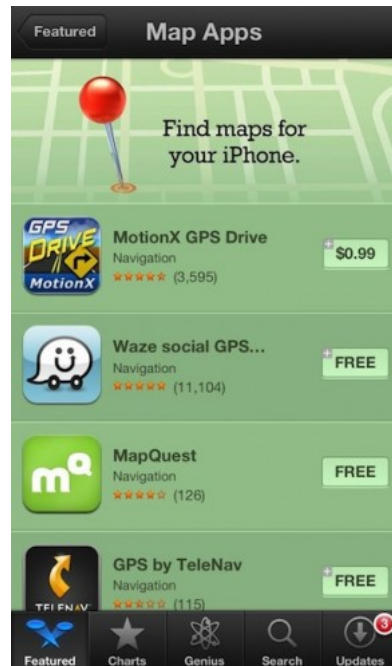
Nonetheless, a basic knowledge of anodizing leaves us with the impression that Apple could have utilized a method leading to a bit more scratch-resistance. Well, Apple's final decision leaves us with the option of overly-marred metal, a case, or extreme care.

The design flaw does make myself wonder whether some users do like the unique raw aluminum/black hybrid look that damage leads to. Do you see any damage your iPhone 5 incurred so far being ugly nuisances or a factor of distinction?

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Apple CEO Tim Cook Publishes Open Letter Apologizing for Maps



Tim Cook today published an open letter to all of Apple's customers addressing the wide criticism over iOS 6's new Apple-powered Maps application. The Apple CEO, through the [apology letter](#), which was posted on the company's website, says Apple is "extremely sorry" for any inconveniences the Maps app may have caused to customers, and it's doing everything it can to rectify these issues.

Most Apple releases are followed by some sort of glaring, widespread issue. There was antennagate, the issue of low battery capacity with the iPhone 4S last year, and now mapsgate. This doesn't mean, however, that Apple fails to thoroughly test its software before release, regardless of your beliefs. All technology has some sort of flaw that can usually be corrected.

"Everything we do at Apple is aimed at making our products the best in the world. We know that you expect that from us, and we will keep working non-stop until Maps lives up

to the same incredibly high standard," Cook said today in an open letter released to all of the company's customers.

Apple recently debuted a new update to its flagship operating system last week that replaced Google Maps with Apple's own map application. Promised to be one of the worthwhile features of iOS 6, the application has been under heat from users who have complained that the new maps lack details, are without public transit directions and misplace common landmarks among other issues. These same users have been roasting on the operating system all over the world's popular social network; these complaints are to which Apple has sincerely apologized to today.

The full letter is quoted below:

To our customers,

At Apple, we strive to make world-class products that deliver the best experience possible to our customers. With the launch of our new Maps last week, we fell short on

this commitment. We are extremely sorry for the frustration this has caused our customers and we are doing everything we can to make Maps better.

We launched Maps initially with the first version of iOS. As time progressed, we wanted to provide our customers with even better Maps including features such as turn-by-turn directions, voice integration, Flyover and vector-based maps. In order to do this, we had to create a new version of Maps from the ground up.

There are already more than 100 million iOS devices using the new Apple Maps, with more and more joining us every day. In just over a week, iOS users with the new Maps have already searched for nearly half a billion locations. The more our customers use our Maps the better it will get and we greatly appreciate all of the feedback we have received from you.

While we're improving Maps, you can try alternatives by downloading map apps from the App Store like Bing, MapQuest and Waze, or use Google or Nokia maps by going to their websites and creating an icon on your home screen to their web app.

Everything we do at Apple is aimed at making our products the best in the world. We know that you expect that from us, and we will keep working non-stop until Maps lives up to the same incredibly high standard.

*Tim Cook
Apple's CEO*

Following the publishing of the above letter, Apple has added a new featured section to the App Store highlighting optimal solutions to temporarily replace the native Maps application. These apps are available in many different forms, both premium and free. Considering Apple is endorsing these apps, which are essentially competition to its Maps app, it's truly apologetic for the plagued software it released last week.

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iPad Mini Event Invitations May Be Delivered October 10, Release in November



Are we already on the cusp of another Apple keynote event? Reportedly, iPad Mini is coming soon – and press will know about its keynote announcement date in a little over a week as invitations start rolling out.

CNN's Fortune Tech Apple 2.0 lays [claim](#) to having heard the date of October 10 for an iPad Mini keynote invitation to be sent to press. Coming from a source that is an Apple investor who has been able to confirm with fellow sources, they caution that the date may not pan out as they could not verify reliability. Nonetheless, an October timeframe is in-line with other reports so it seems like a likely possibility.

An October 10 invitation delivery date should lead to the keynote being the following week, with pre-orders going up days afterward. Conservatively, this would pin the release at before Black Friday although we expect it to precede the second week of November.

The iPad lineup's first expansion, in the form of iPad Mini, has been widely expected for months to be unveiled sometime in October, in all its' 7.85" glory.

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Shortcut sheets for iPhone, iPad and other computer related items.

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For those who cannot go without ...



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THE NEW IPAD BUYERS' GUIDE

FREE DOWNLOAD

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iPhones, iPods & iPads Class

This class meets in the CC ANNEX instead of the Cybercenter Classroom. Please bring your iPhones with you to class.

Four, three-hour sessions

Fee: \$20.00

Description: The iPhone is the latest generation of 'smart' mobile phones operating as a small, hand-held and entirely portable computer. The iPhone comes with twenty standard 'apps', including e-mail, maps, internet, calendar, contacts and much more. This course will introduce you to the functions of these apps and basic operations, such as navigating the device, folders, cut and paste, bookmarks and camera functions.

The examples used in the class are based on the iPhone 4, but approximately 90% of the content is germane to the iPad and 80% to the iPod Touch. If you have an iPhone, iPad, or an iPod, you will learn a lot in this class.

Objectives & Course Summary: Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Use the standard components of the phone.
- Understand the basic operations of the phone: touch scrolling, call answer and call dialing/return, apps location and function.
- Understand how to customize your phone in the settings menu.
- Understand the necessary requirements for installing apps.

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Free Reference Materials For your iDevices

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Select the one that is FREE. It will install on your device in the iBooks app.

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Go here to see if you qualify for an upgrade:

AT&T: dial 639# Verizon: Log into your My Verizon web page.

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Apps that might be of interest:

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Time for questions, observations and special apps from the audience

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The next meeting is on Wednesday, December 12, 2012
Now!

