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## Apple iPod touch (2nd Gen) - First Look

### Refresh adds new goodies but should you refresh?

by Stuart Miles published on 9 September 2008

The iPod touch has had its first refresh, so will the new 2nd generation model persuade those who haven't yet been assimilated into the Apple mantra? We managed to get a brief play with the new model at the "Let's Rock" event in London.

The quick and easy option would be to copy and paste the review of the first iPod touch here and be done with it. On the surface, and at a glance, the new iPod touch looks the same as the old iPod touch.

The software interface, although updated to version 2.1, is virtually the same and it still sports that easy to use 3.5-inch touchscreen display.

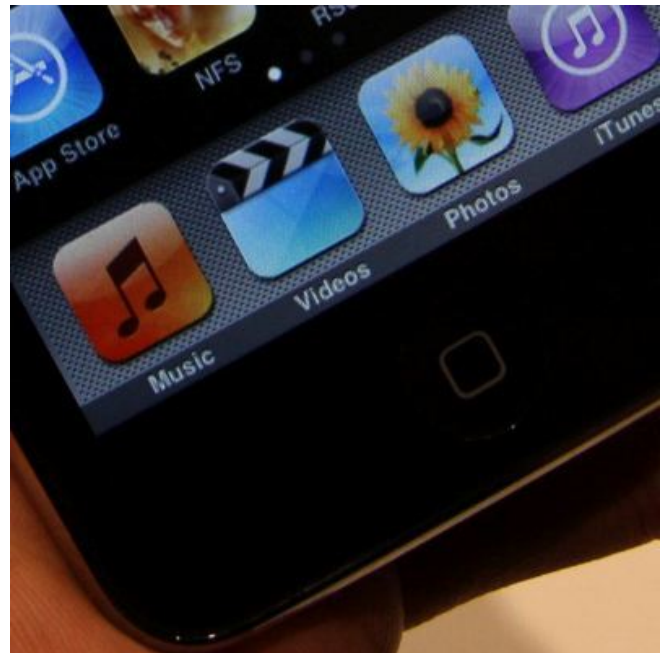
However, flip it over and you'll soon see that the new model has lost some weight, and it's not even January.

Thinner than before, Apple has once again managed to cram plenty into the slim device. Like the new iPhone, the MP3 player is curved on the back, although this time, it's metal rather than plastic.

The new 32GB model doesn't feel that bulky, without looking at the specs it actually feels the same as the current 16GB model, and finally Apple has got the iPod touch to a size where it will hold a decent amount of music.

Get past the new skinny look that any catwalk model is sure to be jealous of and Apple has also managed to cram in a speaker to boot so you can share the love. How much love though, is debatable.

Admittedly we were at a loud press event, however I believe that the move to add a speaker



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is not to share the love on a music front - even Steve Jobs admitted it's not for audiophiles - but so gamers can enjoy sound effects with games.

Pitching itself heavily as a games console (the advert is games, games, games) the new iPod touch finds itself as a wannabe games console up against the Nintendo DS and Sony PSP rather than just "yet another music player" and the speaker reflects that.

That said, volume can now be changed via a hard dual-switch (up and down) on the outside, a la iPhone.

Beyond the hardware and the iPod touch gets a slightly enhanced interface, moving to version 2.1.

The software adds Apple's new Genius playlist application (as found in iTunes 8.0) that scans your music collection and then creates playlists based on songs that sound like the song you've chosen. Users are able to do this on the fly based on the songs in the library and it's clever and simple to use.

Elsewhere and the device adds the Nike + iPod software as standard, with the ability to turn off the software and therefore transmitter at a slide of a switch from the settings menu.

The software, which we were unable to try at the event due to a lack of gym kit, gives you access to the Nike software found on previous Apple iPod offerings.

You can set music to run to, while the addition of a sensor (sold separately) that you attach to your shoe gives you running data so you can quantify the distance travelled, calories burnt and training performance and such like.

The interface looks good and easy to use (heavy on the red), although the big question will be whether or not you've got space to carry this on

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Touchscreen iPod

### Good

Touchscreen, built-in speaker, Wi-Fi, Nike + transmitter, thinner design

### Bad

Still only 32GB, large for memory available

### Verdict

If you are new to the iPod scene or looking for an upgrade, on the surface this will merely make the current offering a better one

**Price** **£**169 for the 8GB model, **£**219 for the 16GB and **£**279 for the 32GB offering.

## Your score

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your run. The iPod touch might have gone through a weight loss programme, but it's still big and you've still got to find somewhere to put it.

Beyond the Nike + iPod technology, the in-built speaker and a slightly tweaked interface, Apple is promising a 36 hour battery life from one charge. Wow.

With the "Let's Rock" event only lasting a couple of hours we will have to take this as true at the moment, although a spokesperson for the company at the event would only confirm this was playing music.

Start turning on the built-in Wi-Fi and speakers and we would expect you to drain the battery quicker than pulling the plug on a full bath.

## **VERDICT**

Apple has done here what it does best and created a device that is better than the last one, but no giant leap forward.

The addition of the speaker will appeal to gamers looking to hear the sound effects without wearing headphones and the new thinner model will be ideal for those looking to tuck away a bigger memory device in their pocket, avoiding those "are you pleased to see me" comments.

Users already iPod touch'ed shouldn't worry though. The software update for version 2.0 users is free (i.e., you get the Genius playlists) and the speaker, while appealing, isn't the be all and end all.

That said if you are new to the iPod scene or looking for an upgrade, on the surface this will merely make the current offering a better one.