

The iPod Study Buddy

Turn your player into the ultimate learning guide **BY DERIK DELONG**

Walk down the street in most cities—or through any college campus—and you're likely to see more iPods than you can count. But those iPods can do more than just pump up gym-goers as they work out, or enable students to rock out as they walk to class or watch videos during study breaks. The devices can also serve as powerful learning tools. Whether you're trying to pass Physics 101—or just learn passable French for your next business trip to Paris—the iPod can accommodate the eternal student in all of us.

Podcast Learning

Podcasts are a great educational tool, whether you're a student or you're out in the working world. Students can download course lectures, an easier way to recover from missed classes (or inadvertent in-class dozing). And the rest of us can learn on our own time, continuing our education without having to invest time or money in classes.

iTunes U Apple recently dedicated an area within the iTunes Store that it calls iTunes U—a program that enables higher-education institutions to share content with students via the iTunes interface. Accessible through the iTunes Store box on the Store's home page, iTunes U features audio and visual content from a number of schools, including MIT; Penn State; Stanford; and the University of Cali-



Online School Through iTunes U, colleges and universities offer up audio and video study materials through the iTunes Store.

fornia, Berkeley. You'll find lectures, special guest presentations, and even promotional materials aimed at attracting students. Some material is accessible only to enrolled students, but much of the content is open to the public. For instance, MIT makes some of its classes publicly available as part of its Open Courseware project (see "Five Great Courses" for our picks of cool classes on iTunes U).

Adult Learning Besides college coursework, the iTunes Store also features a multitude of training-based podcasts. Head to the Podcasts section of the store, and click on the Education link in the Categories box. Then, in the More Education box, select Training. Here you'll find tutorials on everything from graphic design to beer. Want to

learn about money? *Wallstrip* is a video podcast about investing and finances that started independently and is now backed by CBS. Or if you're looking to improve your writing skills, check out *Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing*.

Language Skills ¿Habla español? If you wish the answer were "sí," check out iTunes' language offerings. Language podcasts are a great way to supplement a course, or to bone up on some foreign phrases if you're traveling abroad. To locate language lessons, click on Podcasts in the iTunes Store box and then click on the Education category. Select Language Courses in the

playlist Want more tips on digital music?

For iPod- and iTunes-related expert advice and breaking news, as well as reviews of all the latest gadgets, check out Playlistmag.com.

FIND IT ONLINE Find more learning options at macworld.com/

More Education box. You'll find many different approaches to learning Spanish, French, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, and other tongues (including one podcast dedicated to Argentine slang).

Portable Notes

Podcasts are useful tools, but what if what you really need is easy access to class notes, minutes from a meeting, or a speech you're trying to memorize for your daughter's wedding? You can use the iPod's Notes feature to store lectures and other material that you can peruse at any time.

To start, you'll need to put your iPod into disk mode. Connect your iPod to your Mac, go to iTunes, and select the iPod from the Devices list on the left. Under the Summary tab, click on the Enable Disk Use option. Once you've turned on disk mode, your iPod should appear as a volume on your desktop. Double-click on the iPod icon and locate the Notes folder.

You'll then need to convert anything you want to show up in the iPod's Notes to plain text files, either by using a program such as Apple's free TextEdit or by saving your Microsoft Word documents as Text Only (File: Save As). Then, just drag each file you want to the Notes folder on the iPod. If you plan to store a bunch of notes, it's best to create folders—say, one for each class. You can help keep those lists further pruned by creating subfolders and organizing notes by week or topic, for instance.

Once you disconnect your iPod, you can find your files under Notes. If you don't see this option in your main iPod menu, look under Extras. If you want to promote Notes to your iPod's main menu, visit Settings: Main Menu, scroll

down to Notes, and click on the iPod's select button to turn this option on.

Hire a Tutor

Though you can certainly load your own notes files onto your iPod, third-party programs can also help boost your brain power. (In addition to the following tools, you can add flash cards and quizzes. Go to macworld.com/2968 to find out how.)

Prefab Notes There's no shortage of study guides available for the iPod. For students preparing for the SAT, the iPod Games section of the iTunes Store now offers Kaplan SAT Prep programs for math, reading, and writing at \$5 each. And eNotes.com offers vocabulary flash cards for the iPod (college.enotes.com), which are included with the \$30 SAT Prep Pass or \$50 College Prep Pass.

iPreppress (www.ipreppress.com) offers a full line of iPod materials, including dictionaries, encyclopedias, biographies, test-preparation help, charts, and study guides for popular pieces of literature and common science and math classes—for less than \$10 each.

Notes Helper If you're looking to build more-sophisticated notes projects, Talking Panda's \$30 iWriter 1.0.4 (www.talkingpanda.com) can help you organize a lot of data into a cohesive set of notes. Designed primarily for teachers, the program comes with templates for various types of projects, including Lecture Notes, Quiz, and Multimedia Teaching Tool. However, the program is useful for students as well. For instance, you can create one file that includes all your lecture notes, suggested reading lists, and problem sets, and even the audio of a lecture you've recorded on your iPod.

When you're done building your file, you connect your iPod and click on the Export To iPod button. Your file should appear in your player's Notes folder, complete with all your notes and links to any

iPod Note Maker

iWriter includes several templates to help you organize notes and information for your iPod.

audio. And if you want to send your

Five Great Courses

Wish you had paid more attention when you were in school? Visit the iTunes Store and check out these podcasts of some popular college classes.



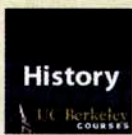
Astro C10: Introduction to General Astronomy If you're interested in the universe, start with this University of California, Berkeley, course (macworld.com/2938).



Ask a Biologist From Arizona State University, this podcast features Dr. Biology interviewing different scientists to learn about the living world (macworld.com/2939).



Electricity & Magnetism This MIT video series introduces you to the world of electromagnetism, and how it drives both everyday devices and not-so-everyday events (macworld.com/2940).



History 7B: From the Civil War to the Present Gain a new perspective on this period in U.S. history, courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley (macworld.com/2941).



Elementary Greek This Concordia Seminary course helps you learn Greek, complete with proper pronunciation (macworld.com/2942).

notes file to others, click on the Share Project button, and you can save and e-mail the file, or upload it directly to your .Mac account. ☒

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