

Ask Apple Developer

Quick Links

- Events
- News
- Forums
- Sample Code
- Videos

All Downloads

Explore Support

Xcode
Featured

Overview

Help Guides

Developer Forums

Feedback Assistant

Contact Us

- Account Help
- App Review Guidelines
- App Store Connect Help
- Upcoming Requirements
- Agreements and Guidelines
- System Status

Platforms

Technologies

Community

Documentation

Downloads

Support

Attracting players | Engaging players | Measuring performance

Attracting players to your game

Establishing an engaged player base is important for your game's long-term success. Optimize your product page to help players find your game on the App Store, as well as build awareness for your game before it's launched. Take the time to create a thoughtful onboarding experience to help players get acquainted with your game and learn how to play.

Product page

Maximize your game's discoverability by making the most of your product page. Make sure your metadata — such as keywords, app name, icon, and screenshots — is compelling and accurately reflects your game. You can also add two subcategories in order to help players discover your game when searching the App Store or browsing subcategories on the App Store and in the Games and Apps tabs. Select the categories that best suit your game.

- Action
- Adventure
- Board
- Card
- Casino
- Casual
- Family
- Music
- Puzzle
- Racing
- Role Playing
- Simulation
- Sports
- Strategy
- Trivia
- Word

[Learn how to optimize your product page >](#)

[Learn how to choose a category >](#)



Pre-orders

Players can pre-order your game up to 180 days before it's been published on the App Store. Pre-orders can be placed from your product page, search results, and the Today, Games, or Apps tabs, if your game is featured. This can help you create excitement for your game and build an audience ahead of launch. Once your game is released for download, players are notified and it automatically downloads to their device within 24 hours. If you'd like, you can provide customers who pre-order your game an in-game gift — such as an exclusive item or free currency — to reward their interest and encourage engagement.



Promo codes

You can use promo codes to distribute your game or to offer in-app purchases for free to players. Promo codes can be created, distributed, and redeemed even before your game is live on the App Store, giving you opportunities to build awareness about your game ahead of launch. For example, you might share promo codes with influencers, journalists, or reviewers as a way to generate coverage about your game. You can provide up to 100 promo codes for each version of your app per platform, and up to 100 promo codes for each in-app purchase you offer.

[Learn about promo codes >](#)

[Learn how to offer your app for pre-order >](#)

[Download the 'Pre-order on the App Store' badge >](#)



Onboarding players

Create an onboarding experience that helps new players understand your game and makes them likely to return. Successful onboarding teaches players the core loop (the essential activities of your game), how to purchase items, and reasons to keep playing. Be sure to include your game's essential activities and allow players to start self-guided gameplay quickly. If your onboarding is too long or complex, you may lose players. Consider offering instructions on more complicated aspects of your game as multiple, short tutorials that are presented over time.

[Learn about onboarding for games >](#)



Promoting in-app purchases

You can also promote in-app purchases on the App Store for iPhone and iPad so that they appear on your game's product page and in search results, and may be featured on the Today, Games, and Apps tabs. This gives players a glimpse into the types of in-app purchases they're able to buy and can help encourage downloads of your game.

[Learn how to promote in-app purchases >](#)



Universal purchase

You can distribute iOS, iPadOS, watchOS, macOS, and tvOS versions of your game as a universal purchase to let players easily enjoy your game and in-app purchases across platforms. This allows players to easily access your game on all Apple devices that your game supports.

[Learn about offering universal purchase >](#)



Game controller support

Use the Game Controller framework to support the use of game controllers for iPhone, iPad, Mac, and Apple TV. You can also use this framework to support keyboard, mouse, and trackpad inputs for iPadOS games and to augment gameplay with additional motion and custom haptics. When you indicate in Xcode that your game supports controllers, an icon indicating controller support displays on your App Store product page. Players on iOS 14 and tvOS 14 or later can access controller input remapping options in their device settings. If your game requires a controller, make sure you clearly explain this in your product page metadata so players know they need additional equipment to play.

Keeping players engaged

In order to stay active within your game, players need to continue enjoying gameplay. Make sure to update your game with new content or challenges as well as feature enhancements to give players a reason to return.

In-app purchases

In-app purchases allow players to purchase digital items, such as currency and resources, to enhance their experience. You can offer four types of in-app purchases:

- **Consumables.** One-time use items that are spent or depleted — for example, in-game currency, equipment, or lives. Consumable in-app purchases often help a player progress more quickly in a game and can be purchased multiple times.
- **Nonconsumables.** One-time purchase items that do not expire — for example, a bundle of additional levels, skins, or outfits.

- **Auto-renewable subscriptions.** Players have recurring access to content — for example, a VIP tier with exclusive items that are replenished on a regular basis. [Learn about providing auto-renewable subscriptions.](#)
- **Nonrenewing subscriptions.** Limited-access content — for example, a seasonal or annual pass. This type of in-app purchase does not automatically renew, so players must manually renew each time their access expires.

When planning your in-app purchases, think about how each offering relates to the essential activities of your game. You can display contextually appropriate content to help enhance a player's gameplay — for example, if a player fails a level multiple times in a row, you might show them how a specific item can help them advance more easily and how that item can be obtained. You might also highlight any bonuses or savings to players to showcase the value of a particular in-app purchase. You can create up to 10,000 in-app purchases to offer in your game.

[Learn how to create and publish in-app purchases >](#)

Push notifications

Push notifications can help keep players engaged with your game by delivering relevant reminders and updates. For example, you might remind a player to complete a task or claim a daily bonus, which can encourage them to open your game. You can also use push notifications to market content, such as an in-app event currently taking place in your game or a sale on in-app purchases. Players must first explicitly opt in to receiving marketing push notifications via a method within your game that includes consent language and a clear way of opting out. To ensure a positive experience, be mindful of the frequency and timing of your notifications and make sure they're relevant, provide valuable information, and serve a clear purpose. Do not include sensitive personal or confidential information in your push notifications.

[Learn how to design great push notifications >](#)

[Learn how to implement push notifications >](#)



Game Center

Use Game Center, Apple's social gaming network, to allow players to enjoy your game



with friends. Take advantage of the Game Center in-game access point and dashboard, which includes the player profile, leaderboards, and achievements, to encourage deeper engagement with your game. You can also use the GameKit framework to build multiplayer experiences.

Games with Game Center integrated appear in the Friends Are Playing section on the App Store, where customers can discover and download the games their Game Center friends are playing. Customers can also see which friends are playing your game directly on your game's App Store product page.

[Learn more about Game Center >](#)



In-app events

In-app events are timely events in your game that encourage engagement by providing new ways to interact with your game and receive rewards. These are part of a larger live operations strategy within your game and can occur once or repeat after a certain duration, such as monthly or yearly. Make sure any in-app events you offer have defined goals and eligibility requirements. For example, a competition that challenges players to surpass a certain level in a set amount of time in order to encourage deeper engagement.

In-app events can be promoted on the App Store on iOS and iPadOS, giving you an entirely new way to showcase them and expand their reach. In-app events appear across the App Store as event cards that include images or video, the event name, and a short description. When you want to promote an in-app event, you can easily set up and manage it in App Store Connect.

[Learn about in-app events >](#)



Balanced gameplay and refunds

Monitor your in-game activities, such as in-app events and in-app purchases, to make sure gameplay is balanced and your in-game economy is fair for all players. App Store server notifications provide real-time refund notifications for all types of in-app purchases, so you can manage refunds and take appropriate action — for example, adjusting a player's currency balance in a game or restricting access to content unlocked by an in-app

purchase. For cases of refund abuse, you might consider temporarily suspending a player or banning their account. If you choose to take action, inform the player of any changes and let them know if there's anything they need to do in response.

For more information, see [Handling Refund Notifications](#).



Measuring performance

App Analytics in App Store Connect helps you evaluate the performance of your game with usage metrics, such as the number of sessions, active devices, and retention rates. This information can help you to evaluate the success of your onboarding efforts, as well as understand which acquisition sources result in more engaged players. You can use Sales and Trends to track the daily performance of your games and in-app purchases.

[Learn more about measuring performance >](#)



Maximize your game's potential

Create amazing gameplay experiences using the powerful suite of game technologies built to harness the full capabilities of Apple platforms. Spanning from high-level to low-level, these technologies offer a wide array of features to make your titles even better.

[Learn about Apple's game technologies >](#)



Submit

Prepare your apps and metadata for submission to the App Store.



Manage

Manage apps, analytics, sales reports, business information, and more.

[Learn more >](#)[Learn more >](#)

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Get marketing guidance and tools to help you promote your app on the App Store.

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Platforms

[iOS](#)[iPadOS](#)[macOS](#)[tvOS](#)[visionOS](#)[watchOS](#)[App Store](#)

Tools

[Swift](#)[SwiftUI](#)[Swift Playground](#)[TestFlight](#)[Xcode](#)[Xcode Cloud](#)[Icon Composer](#)[SF Symbols](#)

Technologies

[Accessibility](#)[Accessories](#)[AI & Machine Learning](#)[Apple Intelligence](#)[Audio & Video](#)[Augmented Reality](#)[Business](#)[Design](#)[Distribution](#)[Education](#)[Games](#)[Health & Fitness](#)[In-App Purchase](#)[Localization](#)[Maps & Location](#)[Security](#)[Safari & Web](#)

Resources

[Documentation](#)[Downloads](#)[Sample Code](#)[Videos](#)[Documentation Archive](#)

Support

[Help Guides & Articles](#)[Contact Us](#)[Forums](#)[Feedback & Bug Reporting](#)[System Status](#)

Account

[Apple Developer](#)[App Store Connect](#)[Certificates, IDs, & Profiles](#)[Feedback Assistant](#)

Programs

[Apple Developer Program](#)[Apple Developer Enterprise Program](#)[App Store Small Business Program](#)[MFi Program](#)[Mini Apps Partner Program](#)[News Partner Program](#)[Video Partner Program](#)[Security Bounty Program](#)[Security Research Device Program](#)

Events

[Meet with Apple](#)[Apple Developer Centers](#)[App Store Awards](#)[Apple Design Awards](#)[Apple Developer Academies](#)[WWDC](#)

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