Apple Teacher at Your School

About Apple Teacher

Apple Teacher is a free professional learning program designed to support and celebrate teachers. It empowers all educators — those who are new to the profession and experienced faculty members — to feel more confident using Apple products for teaching and learning.
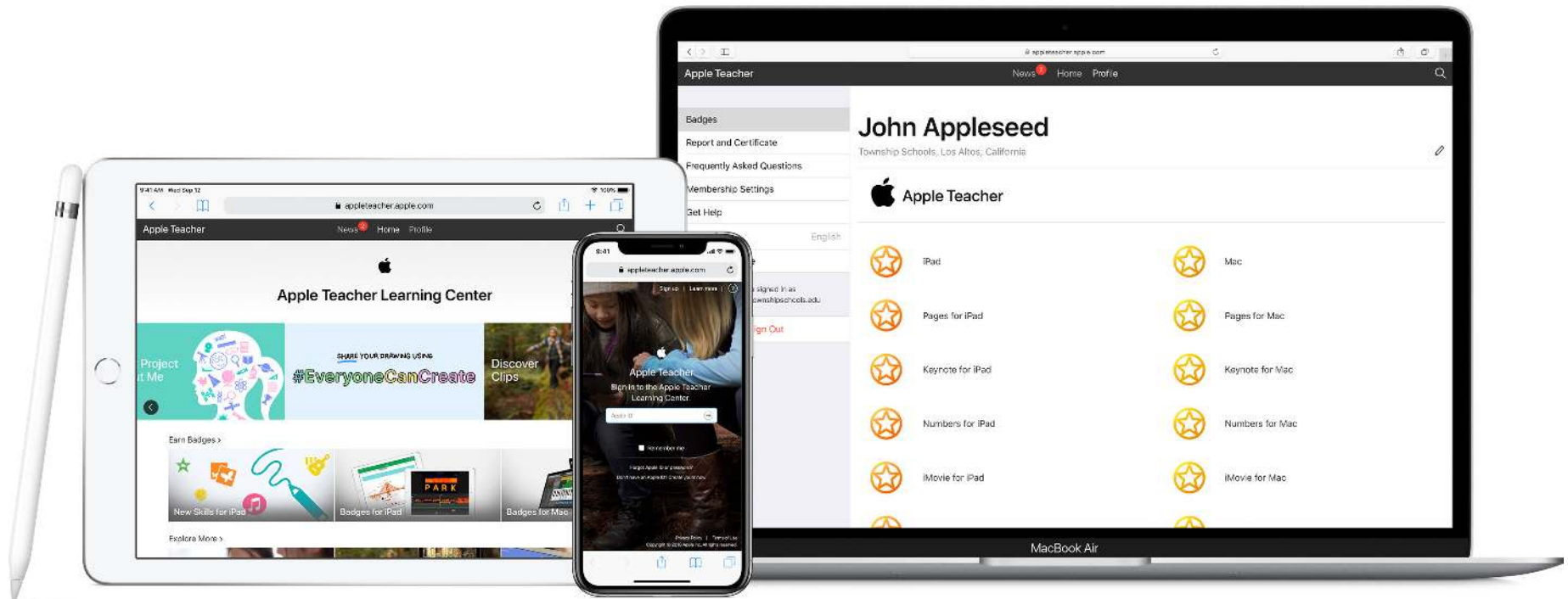
Thousands of school leaders and professional learning experts have embraced Apple Teacher as a great way to inspire a community of lifelong learners who create innovative learning experiences on iPad and Mac. And it gets educators engaged with the technology you've invested in.

You can encourage your teachers to begin their Apple Teacher journey by signing up and exploring the Apple Teacher Learning Center (ATLC).

The ATLC has everything teachers need to build a strong foundation for using iPad, Mac, and Apple apps like Pages, Keynote, Numbers, GarageBand and iMovie in the classroom. Discover more than 75 skill-building lessons that include guided tutorials, ideas on how to apply them, and inspiration on how to go further with each new skill.

After completing a set of lessons, teachers can take an interactive quiz. The quizzes are designed for self-paced learning, so teachers can take them as many times as they need to. Once they've passed all eight quizzes for either iPad or Mac, they earn recognition as an Apple Teacher.

Learn more about Apple Teacher.

Launching Apple Teacher with a Kick-Off Event

Schools across the country are holding fun kick-off events to introduce Apple Teacher in a group setting so that everyone can begin the learning journey together. The goal is to set aside dedicated time, free from distraction, where teachers can get excited about the program and support each other while building momentum for earning recognition. Here are some best practices to consider as you plan your event.

Participants

Think about who should attend the event. It could be a specific department or the entire faculty. Maybe a smaller group setting is better for your staff. Some schools have invited neighbouring schools to join them. Learning with teachers from other schools can be exciting and expand the potential of what's possible.

Location

A large room like a school hall or gym works well to accommodate all those attending. It provides plenty of space for opening remarks, the event and a closing celebration. You can use this generous space to set up stations for each badge. Individual classrooms work well too. Either way, teachers can focus on learning one app before moving on to another. Earning the badge becomes a plus!

Time

Deciding the length of your Apple Teacher event depends on your professional learning goals. Some schools use just one hour of a professional development day or staff meeting to introduce the program; some spend a full day learning together for a more immersive experience. You can implement Apple Teacher as a year-long, single-term, month-long or one day program.

Format

Choose a format that works best for your teachers. You can have them work independently, with a partner or in small groups. They can complete the lessons and quizzes at their own pace or during a friendly timed challenge.

It's helpful to provide guidance on a preferred learning sequence that aligns with the experience levels of each teacher or group. Educators who are new to iPad or Mac could begin with the iPad and Mac lessons to learn the basic features and built-in capabilities. They could then move on to the five core apps in any order, then close with the Productivity and Creativity lessons to help integrate their new skills and build a strong foundation.

No matter which format you choose, you want your sessions to focus on the benefit of teachers learning and practising together, then sharing skills they can use with their students.

Event flow

Establish an agenda for the day. Plan for an opening session, a portion of the day where teachers learn new skills and earn badges together, and then a closing celebration to acknowledge their achievements — whether they earned one badge or all 20.
See the sample agendas to the right for idea starters.

Opening session

We've created a presentation to guide you in developing an opening session for your event. It's designed to help you establish goals for the day, explain why the Apple Teacher program is important to your school's goals for teaching and learning, and set an enthusiastic tone for the day. Or use it as a starting point for preparing your own presentation.

Mentors

Teachers who are already Apple Teachers or have mastered a few apps can provide encouragement and support to others during the event. Read how Nikole Blanchard, Apple Distinguished Educator and Technology Director at The Dunham School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in the US, mobilised and energised her teachers to earn badges at her kick-off event.

Invitation

We've created the following text you can use to introduce the Apple Teacher program when inviting teachers to your event:

Apple Teacher is a new professional learning program designed to support and celebrate teachers. You'll learn new skills, earn badges and receive an official Apple Teacher logo, so you can share your achievement with the world. Join us for our Apple Teacher Program Kick-Off, where you'll learn more about the program, explore the learning resources, and have the chance to earn badges and Apple Teacher recognition.

Sample agendas

45-minute
- Opening session presentation
- Register for ATLC and sign in; choose iPad or Mac learning path
- Review lesson choices and identify a sequence
- Work on a skill individually, or find a study partner or group

90-minute
- Opening session presentation
- Register for ATLC and sign in; choose iPad or Mac learning path
- Review lesson choices and identify a sequence
- Find a study partner or identify a small group that wants to focus on learning the same skills
- Start the lessons together, and have each group add a new "Apply It" idea relevant to their subject area for each skill
- Have individuals or small groups share an idea with the whole group to close the event

Full day
- Opening session presentation
- Register for ATLC and sign in; choose iPad or Mac learning path
- Review lesson choices and identify a sequence
- Identify mentors and rooms or tables for each of the eight badge topics
- Schedule 75-minute rotations with a maximum of four rotations
- Have leaders introduce key features of an app to use in the classroom
- Choose some specific lessons to work through with teachers
- Ask individuals or small groups to share an idea with the group at the end of the day
- Wrap up with these questions:
  - What new thing did you learn that you want to try?
  - How can you use [app name] in your classroom to increase student engagement?

Maintaining Momentum

Once your event is over, it's a good idea to establish a plan for teachers to continue earning badges on their own. To keep the momentum going, consider setting a deadline for when they should earn their next set of badges. Here are a few other ways to keep faculty members interested and engaged.

Mentor Program

Once a core set of teachers have earned their recognition, launch an Apple Teacher Mentoring Program. This group would provide encouragement and support to others. Conducting frequent check-ins, sending school-wide communications or sharing visible displays of accomplishments — like posters and flyers — are great ways to encourage others.

Badge Challenge

Roll out an Apple Teacher Badge Challenge so faculty members can focus on earning one badge per week. Whether you choose an eight-week challenge that focuses on earning badges for iPad or Mac, or a 16-week challenge that focuses on both, a Badge Challenge is a great way to get your teachers engaged and build momentum. At your next professional learning day, a few teachers could share what they've learned — from something simple like a new feature they've discovered, to a new way of using an app in a lesson.

Study Partner Program

Create an Apple Teacher Study Partner Program in which two or three teachers team up to study for their badges. Bringing together teachers who work with the same year group or in the same department can inspire them to discover fresh ways to teach a particular subject. Or encourage diversity of thought and identification of best practices across subject areas, by inviting teachers from different departments to buddy up.

Apple Teacher Hour

Plan an event in which you set aside a specific amount of time for teachers to log in and work on earning badges. Finding time for professional learning can be challenging, so giving them the freedom to explore the program materials and strengthen their skills relieves them from the pressure of finding time to fit it in.

Celebrating Your Teachers

We know that teachers are motivated by their accomplishments. Once you've determined how you'll deliver the program in your school, consider a few of these ideas for acknowledging educators who've started earning a few badges or have finished earning their recognition as an Apple Teacher. Then make your own list. Be creative!

• Share your faculty members' achievements on your school's website or intranet, at school leadership meetings or through the school newsletter.

• Share photos of your teachers earning their badges and certificates on your school website, in the school newsletter, in your learning management system or on social media channels. Be inspired by the Saint Viator High School Educational Computer Technology Department in Arlington Heights, Illinois in the US, who used their school's Twitter account as a key motivational tool. Or see how Piedmont High School in Piedmont, Alabama, also in the US, used Twitter to honour their teachers.

• Announce your school's Apple Teacher milestones. A life-sized temperature chart is a great way to show the percentage of teachers who've earned their recognition. Update it weekly or monthly, and place it in the front office for everyone to see. Share this good news with your staff members, parents and community.

• Plan a celebration for your new Apple Teachers at the next staff event, back-to-school night, parent-teacher association meeting or school assembly.

• Have plenty of prizes and rewards to motivate and inspire your teachers — like holding a staff lunch in their honour, offering the principal's parking space or awarding gift cards. Encourage teachers to print and display their personalised Apple Teacher Certificate of Recognition outside their classroom doors.

However you celebrate, we encourage you to follow us on Twitter @AppleEDU, and use #AppleTeacher to connect with us and share your accomplishments with thousands of teachers around the world.

Awarding Professional Learning Credit

Depending on your local or state policies, many teachers may be able to get credit to meet professional learning hour requirements and potential pay-scale advancement for their participation in the Apple Teacher program. Consider qualifying the Apple Teacher program for 16 hours of professional development as the baseline for earning recognition. This conservative estimate includes the time an educator needs to complete the tutorials in the Apple Teacher lessons and to take each quiz to earn a badge. We calculated this estimate using this formula: two hours per badge earned, multiplied by the eight badges possible for either iPad or Mac path, equals 16 hours. However, you can value the credit for your faculty members based on their skill levels and your program setup.

You can offer additional professional development hours with activities that strengthen the skills learned in the program. For example:

- One additional hour for contributing to a professional learning community where educators meet and share their experiences applying the new skills in their teaching

- Two additional hours for acting as a peer mentor and helping another teacher with questions and developing ideas

- Four additional hours for developing, documenting and sharing a project from the teacher's own curriculum that demonstrates the core skills learned in two or more of the Apple Teacher lessons

- Additional time for designing and implementing a learning experience based on one of the lessons in Creativity or Productivity for iPad or Mac

- Additional time for modifying a lesson based on the needs of specific learners, using a variety of apps and built-in accessibility features

- Additional time for reflecting on the implementation of a new learning experience by collecting and analysing student work samples

- Additional time for demonstrating a lesson at a staff meeting or sharing new skills, and gathering feedback from colleagues during a team meeting

If you're in a school or state where professional learning hours are determined locally, or if you're in a private school, you can determine how many hours each badge is worth based on your expectations and how you execute the program. Choose an appropriate format for teachers to demonstrate further learning after they complete the set of lessons to earn each badge. See how teachers in Barrington 220 School District in Barrington, Illinois in the US were able to earn up to 10 professional hours with the Apple Teacher program.

If you're in a school where the state determines how professional learning hours can be earned, consider submitting a request for the Apple Teacher program to become an approved professional learning opportunity. Be inspired by educators at Berwyn South School District in Berwyn, also in Illinois, who successfully implemented this idea, and start a movement in your own state.

More Opportunities to Learn

Apple is committed to helping educators get the most from Apple technology at every point in their professional learning journey. Apple Professional Learning offerings provide teachers with many ways to build foundational skills with Apple products, integrate them into class activities and create innovative instruction that deeply engages students.

Apple Distinguished Educators

Teachers learn from mentor educators who share their expertise in integrating Apple products into teaching and learning. These ADEs regularly write and publish digital books created with Pages and iBooks Author, and speak at educational events. You can find ADEs on Twitter chats throughout the school year, where they answer questions and share ideas, tips and experience teaching with Apple products. Teachers can join the conversation at #AppleEDUchat.

Apple Professional Learning Specialists

Educators tell us that the most effective professional learning includes coaching and mentoring experiences from trusted professionals they work with. Once your teachers have acquired the core skills offered in the Apple Teacher program, they're ready to focus on instructional practice innovation with the help of Apple Professional Learning Specialists. These experts work side by side with teachers to build the confidence they need to make innovations in their instructional pedagogy. This approach reflects Apple's belief that instructional transformation depends on a relationship that's built over time. To learn more, email apls@apple.com.