

Simple Ways to Limit iPad Access

Mike Mann, MS, ATP ♦ mikemann@peoplepc.com
North Idaho Assistive Technology Loaning Library

PROBLEM: STUDENTS ARE OFTEN TEMPTED TO OPEN APPS NOT RELATED TO THE LEARNING OBJECTIVE.

SOLUTION 1: REMOVE ANY UNNECESSARY APPS THAT ARE CAUSING A PROBLEM.

The iPad was designed for quick, seamless, and unrestricted access by a single user. There are several ways to limit access to a student, but you will still have to decide what to install and what to remove from the device to make it more functional for learning than for recreation.

SOLUTION 2: MAKE APPS HARDER TO FIND WITHOUT REMOVING OR DISABLING THEM.

- Remove all the standard apps from the menu bar at the bottom of the menu screen, such as Safari, iTunes, and the Settings app.

To do this, press on an app in the menu bar until it vibrates. Drag it up onto the menu page. Continue to drag apps from the menu bar until it is empty.

- Combine the apps on the menu page(s) together into common categories for learning activities. I have used the following categories: Communication, Exploration, Reading, Writing, Authoring, Math, Music, Teaching Tools, and Standard Apps. This focuses attention on specific learning activities when you turn on the iPad and hides the pictures of apps in the categories. It also helps you to find all the apps you have for a given activity without having to open them to see what they do.

To do this, press on an app in the menu until it vibrates. Drag it onto another app you wish to put it with in the same category. The keyboard will open so you can name the category. Click on Done. Now you can drag any other apps you want in that category into the new black category icon. If you have several pages of apps, you can quickly move apps from one page to another by pulling them down into the empty menu bar at the bottom, change pages, then pull them back up to file them into categories.

- I placed Safari, Mail, Pictures, YouTube, Videos, Settings, iTunes, App Store, Camera apps, and anything else I don't want kids using into the Standard Apps category, in the top row right corner where your eye sees it last.
- Tap a category to open it. Flick upward to close it.
- This method still requires adult supervision, but it will simplify life considerably.

SOLUTION 3: TURN OFF THE IPOD'S WIFI ACCESS

To do this, find where you hid the settings application and open it. The easiest way is to turn "Airplane Mode" on, it is the first item on the left. This disables any signal in or out. You can also turn off the wi-fi radio, that does the same thing, but Airplane Mode is easier.

SOLUTION 4: SET APP RESTRICTIONS WITH A SECRET CODE TO TURN SOME APPS OFF

- Come up with a four-number code other than 1-2-3-4 and write it down somewhere. I keep all my codes in a single notebook, otherwise I lose track of them. The last 4 digits of your home phone number might be handy.

To do this, find where you hid the settings app, open it, and then open "General". Now open "Restrictions" about halfway down on the right. Press the button that says "Enable Restrictions" and enter your 4-digit pass code and confirm it by entering it a second time. Now you can turn off the following apps completely: Safari, YouTube, Camera, Face Time, iTunes, and Ping. You can also disable new app installs or permission to delete apps. You can turn off In-App purchases, which will prevent the offers from even popping up. You can't turn off downloaded apps, but...

SOLUTION 5: LEAVE THE INTERNET CONNECTED, BUT LIMIT CONTENT LEVEL

- You can leave access to the internet on but use this screen to set ratings for music, podcasts, movies, TV shows, AND YES – DISABLE INTERNET GAMING.

Same as above: Settings > General > Restrictions > 4 digit code > leave Safari on. Down at the bottom you can restrict access to apps by age rating: 4+, 9+, 12+, 17+; any combination of those. Flick down a little further and you can limit access to internet gaming (Multiplayer Games) and adding friends.