

## Summary

The article describes the best Macs to buy in 2025. The article recommends the Mac mini as a great value for money, offering a powerful processor and affordable price. The article also highlights the Mac Studio as a powerful desktop Mac with a competitive price, offering a great balance between performance and cost.

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Wondering whether to buy an iMac, MacBook Pro or Air, Mac mini, Mac Studio or Mac Pro? We look at Apple's whole range of Macs to help you decide which MacBook or desktop Mac to buy.

By [Karen Haslam](#) Managing Editor, Macworld OCT 20, 2025 4:03 am PDT



If you're wondering which Mac to buy, you've come to the right place. In our Mac buying guide, you'll find everything you need to know about the MacBook Air, MacBook Pro, Mac mini, iMac, Mac Pro, and Mac Studio, with expert buying advice to help you choose the machine (and configuration) that's right for you.

Apple makes six different types of Mac:

MacBook Air, MacBook Pro, Mac mini, iMac, Mac Studio, and Mac Pro, but within each of those categories there are variations in the size, specs, and features, so things can get pretty complicated. That's where this guide comes in, helping you make the right decision so you can find the Mac that matches your needs, whether its the best value for money, the most powerful, the most portable, or a combination of all those things.

## Best Mac 2025: Mac & MacBook Buyers Guide

Our top choice of Mac in 2025 is the MacBook Air because it offers a great combination of value for money in a compact package that will appeal to the typical Mac user. However, that may not be the best Mac for you if you need the most powerful Mac, in which case we would recommend the MacBook Pro which brings you all the power you could need in a portable form.

If you don't need a laptop Mac there are some excellent options in Apple's desktop range, with the Mac Studio providing the best value for money and saving thousands compared to a similarly specced Mac laptop. If a low budget option is what you are looking for then look no further than the Mac mini, which is the cheapest Mac at just \$599/£599.

Below we'll take you through each Mac currently available from Apple, to give you an overview of what's on offer and what you've got to choose from. We also have additional advice for choosing the best Mac laptop in our [comparison of the MacBook Air vs MacBook Pro](#).

### 13-inch MacBook Air, M4 (2025) – Best Mac for most users



Price When Reviewed: \$999

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**What is it?** The 11-inch MacBook Air is Apple's most affordable laptop, designed with portability in mind.

**What's new?** Apple introduced the M4 version of the MacBook Air in March 2025. As well as the M4 chip it features an improved camera, Thunderbolt 4 support, support for 32GB RAM, and a new Sky Blue color.

**Who's it for?** If you are always on the go, don't want to be bogged down by a regular-size laptop, and need a versatile computer that looks good, it's a great choice at a great price. If you want a larger screen there is a 15-inch MacBook Air, which we discuss below.

**How much does the 13-inch MacBook Air (M4) cost?** The entry-level 11-inch M4 MacBook Air costs \$999/£999, which is great news because in previous years to get the latest chip you had to spend \$1,099/£1,099. There are three configurations and you can create build-to-order models with even more memory or storage.

**What are the specifications?** The specs for the M4 MacBook Air offer an improvement on the previous generation. The MacBook Air now ships with at least 16GB RAM and we recommend avoiding older stock with just 8GB RAM.

- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 8-core GPU, 16GB memory, 256GB SSD, two Thunderbolt 4 ports: \$999/£999.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 512GB SSD, two Thunderbolt 4 ports: \$1,199/£1,199.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 24GB memory, 512GB SSD, two Thunderbolt 4 ports: \$1,399/£1,399.
- Additional options: Up to 32GB memory, 2TB storage.

What are display specifications?

- The 13.6-inch Liquid Retina on the M4 MacBook Air display has a native resolution of 2,560×1,664 and 500 nits brightness.
- The MacBook Air M4 can support two external displays.

**How do I connect stuff?** The M4 MacBook Air models are the first MacBook Air models to support Thunderbolt 4, which means that they can now [support a dual monitor set up](#). If you want to connect USB-A devices, you need either a USB-C to USB adapter, like Apple's [\\$19 / £19](#) one, or a USB-C hub that has USB-A ports. See our round-up of the [best USB-C hubs and adapters](#).

The MacBook Air has Wi-Fi 6E (802.11ax) for connecting to a network. It provides built-in Bluetooth (5.3) for wirelessly connecting a mouse or other peripherals. If you want to connect to an ethernet network, you need an adapter.

**How fast is it?** When we tested the M4 MacBook Air we were impressed by the Geekbench 6.4 results. It was much faster than the M3 MacBook Air and the M4 chip even beats the M3 Pro in some tests as you can see in our [Mac processor benchmarks](#). If you are upgrading from an old Mac – especially if it is one with an Intel chip – you will see a big difference.

**Any other considerations?** The MacBook Air should be more than fast enough for general-purpose use. The only issue is that, because it doesn't have a fan, it may slow down during long processing sessions to keep cool. So if you are likely to be video editing or compiling code the MacBook Pro with its fan is a better choice. Also note that (as with almost all Macs) it's impossible to upgrade the storage or memory after

purchase, so you should buy the model with the largest amount of storage and memory you can afford.

**Why we recommend the 13-inch MacBook Air:** The MacBook Air is a great choice for someone who does general-purpose work and moves around a lot, such as a student or a self-employed person.

We compare the [MacBook Air vs MacBook Pro](#) separately.

## Apple 15-inch MacBook Air (M4, 2025) – Best value big screen



Price When Reviewed: \$1,199

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**What is it?** The 15-inch MacBook Air is essentially identical to the 13-inch model above aside from the bigger screen and six-speaker system rather than four speakers. Surprisingly, battery life isn't better on the 15-inch, despite the bigger battery.

**What's new?** The M4 MacBook Air arrived in March 2025. Like the 11-inch version it features an improved camera, Thunderbolt 4 support, support for 32GB RAM, and a new Sky Blue color.

**Who's it for?** The 15-inch MacBook Air is ideal for anyone who wants a big-screen laptop without having to spend a fortune. The 14-inch and 16-inch MacBook Pro models cost considerably more than the 15-inch MacBook Air does. It's a great choice for anyone who is always on the go due to its lightweight design.

**How much does the 15-inch MacBook Air (M4) cost?** With the introduction of the M4, Apple reduced the price of the 15-inch model to \$1,199/£1,199 from \$1,299/£1,299. There are three configurations and you can create build-to-order models with up to 32GB memory and 2TB storage.

**What are the specifications?** The specifications of the 15-inch M4 MacBook Air are generally the same as the 13-inch model, except there is no 8-core GPU option here. You are essentially paying \$200/£200 more for the bigger screen.

- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 256GB SSD, two Thunderbolt 4 ports: \$1,199/£1,199.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 512GB SSD, two Thunderbolt 4 ports: \$1,399/£1,399.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 24GB memory, 512GB SSD, two Thunderbolt 4 ports: \$1,599/£1,599.

- Additional options: Up to 32GB memory, 2TB storage.

What are display specifications?

- The 15.3-inch Liquid Retina display has a native resolution of 2,880×1,864 and 500 nits brightness.
- The MacBook Air M4 can support two external displays.

**How do I connect stuff?** The M4 MacBook Air models support Thunderbolt 4 and can now [support a dual monitor set up](#). For USB-A devices you need a USB-C to USB adapter (Apple sells one for [\\$19 / £19](#)), or a USB-C hub with USB-A ports. See our round-up of the [best USB-C hubs and adapters](#).

There's a Wi-Fi 6E (802.11ax) for connecting to a network and Bluetooth 5.3. If you want to connect to an ethernet network, you need an adapter.

**How fast is it?** This is the same M4 as found in the 14-inch MacBook Pro, so you can expect similar performance. Indeed, in our tests we found the M4 to be faster in some benchmarks than the M3 Pro.

**Any other considerations?** The Air doesn't have a fan to keep the computer cool, so it may throttle down its speed during long processing sessions, such as video editing or compiling code. If that's the kind of work you intend to do, a MacBook Pro would be a better option. Also note that you won't be able to update RAM or storage later, so get as much as you can afford.

**Why we recommend the 15-inch MacBook Air:** Starting at \$1,199/£1,199, the 15-inch MacBook Air is a much more affordable Mac laptop than the 14-inch MacBook Pro, which starts at \$1,599/£1,599, so if you want your screen to be bigger than 13 inches, and you don't need the power of a MacBook Pro for the kind of work you do, the 15-inch MacBook Air is a great option.

Read our full [Apple 15-inch MacBook Air \(M4, 2025\) review](#)

## Apple 14-inch MacBook Pro (M5, 2025) – Powerful Mac laptop for the masses



Price When Reviewed: \$1,599

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**What is it?** There are three distinct types of MacBook Pro, the M5 model discussed here, and the M4 Pro and M4 Max models we look at separately. Like its more powerful siblings, the M5 MacBook Pro has an HDR ProMotion display, which the MacBook Air lacks. The MacBook Pro

offers more ports than the MacBook Air: HDMI and SDXC slots. The 14-inch MacBook Pro offers 24 hour battery life – which, along with the 16-inch MacBook Pro with M4 Pro chip, is the best battery life ever on a MacBook.

**What's new?** In October 2025 Apple updated the 14-inch MacBook Pro with the M5 chip . There are no other major changes, aside from the new option to add 4TB storage at point of sale (for \$1,000). Bigger changes came with the launch of the M4 MacBook Pro in October 2024, back then we saw RAM increase from 8GB to 16GB as standard, camera improvements, and Thunderbolt 4 support.

**Who's it for?** The 14-inch MacBook Pro is for a more demanding user than the MacBook Air. Its main benefit is the design allows for better cooling, which means that if you push the machine it won't slow down to avoid overheating. However, there are other MacBook Pros available from Apple (including a 16-inch model) that offer faster processors, so if you really need a powerful machine one of those might be more suitable—we discuss the M4 Pro and M4 Max models below. (Note: Apple didn't update the [MacBook Pro with M5 Pro or M5 Max chips](#) when it introduced the M5 MacBook Pro, we expect to see those models launch in the spring of 2026).

**How much does the 14-inch MacBook Pro (M5) cost?** The entry-level 14-inch MacBook Pro starts at \$1,599/£1,599. There's another model available with twice the storage (1TB) for \$200/£200 more and a model with 24GB Unified Memory for another \$200/£200.

**What are the specifications?** Aside from the processor upgrade, the specifications of the 14-inch M5 MacBook Pro are similar to those of the M4 MacBook Pro.

- Apple M5, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 512GB SSD, three Thunderbolt 4 ports, SDXDC, HDMI, \$1,599/£1,599.
- Apple M5, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 1TB SSD, three Thunderbolt 4 ports, SDXDC, HDMI, \$1,799/£1,799.
- Apple M5, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 24GB memory, 1TB SSD, three Thunderbolt 4 ports, SDXDC, HDMI, \$1,999/£1,999.
- Additional options: 32GB memory; up to 4TB storage

What are display specifications?

- The 14.2-inch Liquid Retina XDR display has a native resolution of 3,024×1,964 and 1,000 nits brightness, 1600 nits peak, 600 nits SDR brightness, and ProMotion for adaptive refresh rates up to 120Hz.
- The notch at the top of the display conceals the 12MP FaceTime camera which now features Centre Stage.

**How do I connect stuff?** There are three Thunderbolt 4 ports (up from just two on the older model). These are compatible with USB-C (if you have wired devices that aren't USB-C or are an older version of Thunderbolt, you'll need an adapter, we have a separate [MacBook Pro Thunderbolt adapter guide](#) to help you decide which ones you'll need). The 14-inch MacBook Pro also comes with an HDMI port for connecting an external display or projector, and an SDXC Card slot for plugging in memory cards from cameras, audio recorders, and other devices. The HDMI port also supports multichannel audio output. The 14-inch MacBook Pro also has Wi-Fi 6E (802.11ax) and Bluetooth 5.3 for wireless connectivity.

**How fast is it?** Apple described the M5 chip in the MacBook Pro as offering a “big leap” in AI performance thanks to a Neural Accelerator in each core. It also offers 4x better graphics performance compared to the M4, according to Apple. We'll be verifying this once we have a unit for review. Eventually the [MacBook Air will gain the M5](#) chip, though probably not until spring 2025. When it does, we expect that the Air will match the specs of the M5 MacBook Pro, but the Pro will still outperform the Air due to the inclusion of a fan for cooling (the MacBook Air doesn't have the space for this). The M5 will no doubt see some impressive benchmarks, outperforming some older Pro chip, however, it is unlikely it will match the power of the M4 Pro or even the M4 Max, so if you need a really powerful Mac you should look to the MacBook Pro with M4 Pro or Max, or await the M5 editions of those chips.

**Any other considerations?** As usual our advice is to max out the RAM (aka Unified Memory) and storage when you buy a Mac because you can't update it later on. At least Apple no longer sells an 8GB version.

**Why we recommend the 14-inch MacBook Pro (M5):** The 14-inch MacBook Pro costs \$1,599/£1,599, which is much more than the 13-inch MacBook Air at \$1,099/£1,099. However the \$500/£500 difference is misleading: when comparing like for like, the 15-inch MacBook Air with 16GB RAM and 512GB SSD costs \$200/£200 less than the 14-inch MacBook Pro with the same 16GB memory and 512GB SSD. For that extra \$200 you get a machine that is better suited to processor intensive work – and while we await the M5 MacBook Air, you are also getting a better processor.

## **14-inch MacBook Pro (M4 Pro/M4 Max, 2024) – The most compact, portable workstation**



Price When Reviewed: \$1,999 | \$2,399

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**What is it?** The 14-inch MacBook Pro can also be configured with an M4 Pro or M4 Max chip, which are much more powerful than the standard chip in the M4 MacBook Pro. The Pro and Max MacBook Pro can

support up to 16-core CPU, 40-core GPU, 128GB memory and 8TB storage, for a seriously fast Mac laptop. There's a larger 16-inch MacBook Pro with similar specs that we discuss below. Note: Apple updated the entry-level MacBook Pro to an M5 in October 2025, but the M5 Pro and M5 Max chips are yet to launch.

**What's new?** The 14-inch MacBook Pro with M4 Pro or M4 Max was introduced in October 2024. As well as more powerful chips, it brought better battery life, 24GB RAM as standard (up from 18GB), improved camera, and Thunderbolt 5. Battery is up from 18 hours to 22 hours for the M4 Pro (still 18 hours on the M4 Max). A fast charging feature allows the laptop to charge to 50 percent in 30 minutes, but you need to have the proper power adapter to do this.

**Who's it for?** When Apple called these "Pro" laptops, they weren't kidding. If your work is very demanding processing power, these laptops are happy to handle it. Work in pro-level software all the time? Get a 14- or 16-inch MacBook Pro. With either the M4 Pro or M4 Max processor, they're the fastest laptops Apple has ever created. The 14-inch MacBook Pro is cheaper than the 16-inch model, so it's a more budget-friendly choice, and if you pair it with an external monitor the screen size isn't important.

**How much does the 14-inch MacBook Pro cost?** There are three configurations starting at \$1,999/£1,999. The ultimate option is the M4 Max version with a 14-core CPU, 32-core GPU, 36GB memory, and 1TB SSD, which costs \$3,199/£3,199.

**What are the specifications?** Here are the standard configurations for the 14-inch MacBook Pro

- Apple M4 Pro, 12-core CPU, 16-core GPU, 24GB memory, 512GB SSD, three Thunderbolt 5 ports, SDXC, HDMI, 70W Power Adapter, \$1,999/£1,999.
- Apple M4 Pro, 14-core CPU, 20-core GPU, 24GB memory, 1TB SSD, three Thunderbolt 5 ports, SDXC, HDMI, 96W Power Adapter, \$2,399/£2,399.
- Apple M4 Max, 14-core CPU, 32-core GPU, 36GB memory, 1TB SSD, three Thunderbolt 5 ports, SDXC, HDMI, 96W Power Adapter, \$3,199/£3,199.
- Additional options: M4 Max, 16-core CPU, 40-core GPU; 36GB (now possible with Pro chip) 48GB, 96GB or 128GB unified memory; up to 8TB SSD (with Max).

What are display specifications?

- The 14.2-inch Liquid Retina XDR display hasn't changed from its native resolution of 3,024×1,964, 254 pixels per inch, 1,600 nits of maximum brightness and 1,000 nits for HDR content, but it now offers 1000 nits for standard content, up from 600. You'll also get a 1,000,000-to-1 contrast ratio and ProMotion support with a refresh rate up to 120Hz.

- The notch at the top of the display conceals the 12MP Center Stage camera with support for Desk View and 1080p HD video recording. The notch does not affect the available screen area—the work area is a 16-by-10 space, while the screen surrounding the notch is considered extra space and is used to display the menu bar.

**How do I connect stuff?** The 14-inch MacBook Pro has Wi-Fi 6E (802.11ax) and Bluetooth 5.3 for wireless connectivity. There are three Thunderbolt 5/USB C ports, an SDXC slot for plugging in memory cards from cameras, audio recorders, and other devices, and an HDMI port for connecting an external display or projector (the HDMI port supports multichannel audio output).

**How fast is it?** Apple built the 14-inch and 16-inch MacBook Pro models with pro users in mind and it shows in the performance. Now that Apple has introduced the M4 Pro and M4 Max you can enjoy the fastest Mac laptops Apple has ever made, although when it comes to graphics prowess the Max will always beat the Pro. So if you need the fastest then you'll want to upgrade to the M4 Max which beats the M2 Ultra, only the M3 Ultra is faster than the M4 Max.

**Any other considerations?** Our advice would be that if you are considering the 14-inch MacBook Pro because you need a powerful Mac then, ignore the \$1,999/£1,999 model in favor of the \$2,399/£2,399 model that has more CPU and GPU cores. If you don't need 1TB storage, save money by adding the M4 Pro with 14-core CPU, and 20-core GPU as a build-to-order option to the \$1,999/£1,999 model for an additional \$200/£200, bringing the price to \$2,199/£2,199. Also note that for fast charging you need a 96W adapter. We expect that Apple will introduce the M5 Pro and M5 Max chips in spring 2026, so only buy now if you can't wait until then.

**Why we recommend the 14-inch MacBook Pro (M4 Pro or M4 Max):** If you want a laptop that can handle any task you throw at it—and you don't have a constraining budget—you want a MacBook Pro. The only reason not to buy the 14-inch M4 Pro or M4 Max MacBook Pro would be if you saw a good deal on the M3 Pro/M3 Max version—we've been seeing some [excellent deals and price cuts](#) on the older models, just remember that there was less RAM in those model (18GB rather than 24GB at the entry-level).

## 16-inch MacBook Pro (M4 Pro/M4 Max, 2024) – Ultimate big screen workstation



Price When Reviewed: \$2,499 | \$2,899

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**What is it?** The 16-inch MacBook Pro offers a similar set of specs and configuration options as the 14-inch MacBook Pro

(above), but it has a higher price, a bigger screen, and better battery life (24 hours, up from 22 hours on the predecessor).

**What's new?** The 16-inch MacBook Pro with M4 Pro or M4 Max was introduced in October 2024. Along with more powerful chips, it offers better battery life (up to 24 hours), minimum 24GB RAM (up from 18GB), improved camera, and Thunderbolt 5. The M5 Pro and M5 Max models are expected to launch in spring 2026.

**Who's it for?** This is Apple's largest 'pro' laptop and it's designed for people who need a portable Mac to do work that demands extreme processing power. You could save some money with the 14-inch MacBook Pro, but if you need a big screen on your laptop this is the Mac for you. You'll also benefit from longer battery life. Configured with the M4 Max this is the fastest and most powerful laptop Apple has ever created.

**How much does the 16-inch MacBook Pro cost?** There are four standard configurations starting at \$2,499/£2,499 for the 16-inch MacBook Pro M4 Pro with 14-core CPU, 20-core GPU and 24GB RAM, 512GB SSD. The ultimate option is a \$3,999/£3,999 M4 Max with 16-core CPU, 40-core GPU, 48GB RAM and 1TB SSD. You can also add more RAM and up to 8TB SSD.

**What are the specifications?** Here are the standard configurations for the 16-inch MacBook Pro introduced in 2024.

- Apple M4 Pro, 14-core CPU, 20-core GPU, 24GB memory, 512GB SSD, three Thunderbolt 5 ports, SDXC, HDMI, 140W power adapter, \$2,499/£1,299.
- Apple M4 Pro, 14-core CPU, 20-core GPU, 48GB memory, 512GB SSD, three Thunderbolt 5 ports, SDXC, HDMI, 140W power adapter, \$2,899/£2,899.
- Apple M4 Max, 14-core CPU, 32-core GPU, 36GB memory, 1TB SSD, three Thunderbolt 5 ports, SDXC, HDMI, 140W power adapter, \$3,499/£3,499.
- Apple M4 Max, 16-core CPU, 40-core GPU, 48GB memory, 1TB SSD, three Thunderbolt 5 ports, SDXC, HDMI, 140W power adapter, \$3,999/£3,999.
- Additional options: 48GB, 64GB, or 128GB unified memory. Up to 8TB SSD.

What are display specifications?

- The 16.2-inch Liquid Retina XDR display has a native resolution of 3,456×2,234, 1,600 nits of maximum brightness, and 1,000 nits for HDR content, but it now offers 1000 nits for standard content, up from 600. You'll also get a 1,000,000-to-1 contrast ratio and ProMotion support with a variable refresh rate of up to 120Hz.
- The notch at the top of the display conceals the 12MP Center Stage camera with support for Desk View and 1080p HD video recording. The notch does not affect the available screen area—the work area is a 16-by-10 space, while the screen

surrounding the notch is considered extra space and is used to display the menu bar.

**How do I connect stuff?** The 16-inch MacBook Pro has Wi-Fi 6E (802.11ax) and Bluetooth 5.3 for wireless connectivity. There are three Thunderbolt/USB 4 ports that are compatible with USB-C. If you have wired devices that aren't USB-C or are an older version of Thunderbolt, you'll need an adapter. We have a separate [MacBook Pro Thunderbolt adapter guide](#) to help you decide which ones you'll need.

Unfortunately, be prepared to shell out a good amount of extra cash. These laptops also come with an HDMI 2.0 port for connecting an external display or projector, and an SDXC Card slot for plugging in memory cards from cameras, audio recorders, and other devices. The HDMI port supports multichannel audio output.

**How fast is it?** The 16-inch MacBook Pro models were built with pro users in mind so you can expect excellent performance. Your software will be able to take full advantage of the CPU's multiple cores. If you are a professional, you'll benefit from the M4 Pro. If you want the ultimate Mac, the M4 Max beats the M2 Ultra, only the M3 Ultra in the Mac Studio is faster than the M4 Max.

**Any other considerations?** Look out for [deals and price cuts](#) on the M3 Pro and M3 Max models, but note that there is more RAM in the newer models (24GB up from 18GB for the entry-level M4 Pro).

**Why we recommend the 16-inch MacBook Pro (M4 Pro or M4 Max):** The 16-inch MacBook Pro is a powerful workstation that will meet the needs of the most demanding user.

Read our full [Apple 16-inch MacBook Pro \(M4 Pro, 2024\) review](#)

## Mac mini (M4/M4 Pro, 2024) – Small and mighty, the best Mac desktop



Price When Reviewed: \$599 | \$799 | \$999

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**What is it?** The Mac mini was already Apple's smallest desktop Mac, but 2024's M4 and M4 Pro models are even smaller following a redesign that means it now measures 5 inches by 5 inches, down from 7.75 inches by 7.75 inches. It offers a nice combination of speed and, at just \$599/£599, affordability. It's more than fast enough for general-purpose use, in fact, its multi-core speed is so

good that if you use a professional app like a video editor, 3D software, or developer tools, the Mac mini can handle it, no problem.

**What's new?** The Mac mini with M4 and a Mac mini with M4 Pro were introduced in October 2024. Along with the faster processors Apple redesigned the Mac mini, so it's now even smaller.

**Who's it for?** Because of its price and performance, the Mac mini is a great Mac for just about anybody. It makes for an ideal primary Mac for a home or small office. Professionals on a budget will be satisfied with the Mac mini. If you're switching from a PC, you can use your PC's keyboard and mouse with the Mac mini. The Mac mini is also ideal as a secondary Mac in your home, and it can integrate into your home entertainment center.

**How much does the Mac mini cost?** There are three standard configurations starting at \$599/£599 for the Mac mini M4. At the top of the range is an M4 Pro Mac mini with a 12-core CPU, 16-core GPU, 24GB unified memory, and 512GB SSD which costs \$1,399/£1,399. The price is about \$1,000/£1,000 less for a similarly specced MacBook Pro, although, in each case, the MacBook has a bigger SSD.

**What are the specifications?** Apple sells three Mac mini models.

- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 256GB SSD, three Thunderbolt 4 ports, 2 USB-C, HDMI, \$599/£599.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 512GB SSD, three Thunderbolt 4 ports, 2 USB-C, HDMI, \$799/£799.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 24GB memory, 512GB SSD, three Thunderbolt 4 ports, 2 USB-C, HDMI, \$999/£999.
- Apple M4 Pro, 12-core CPU, 16-core GPU, 24GB memory, 512GB SSD, three Thunderbolt 5 ports, 2 USB-C, HDMI, \$1,399/£1,399.
- Additional options: M4 Pro with 14-core CPU, 16-core GPU; 48GB or 64GB unified memory; up to 8TB SSD.

The Mac mini does not include a display, keyboard, or mouse, so you'll have to provide your own, or you can customize your order to include these devices as extra-cost options.

**How do I connect stuff?** Like Apple's other Macs, the Mac mini has Wi-Fi and Bluetooth. The M4-based Mac minis have three Thunderbolt 4/USB 4 ports, while the M4 Pro-based Mac mini has three Thunderbolt 5 ports. All Mac minis also offer an additional two USB-C ports, an HDMI 2.0 port, a headphone jack, and a gigabit ethernet port. They no longer offer USB-A ports. To [connect a display](#), you can use the HDMI port or a Thunderbolt port. You might have to buy an adapter if your display doesn't have either HDMI or a port that can connect to Thunderbolt.

**How fast is it?** The M4-based Mac minis are very fast, and offer the best performance-to-price ratio of any Mac that Apple offers. The Mac mini with M4 Pro offers the same 12-core CPU and 16-core GPU, 24GB memory, and 512GB storage that is found in the M4 Pro MacBook Pro for \$1,399 rather than \$1,999 which represented a huge saving and a great way to get a powerful Mac without spending a fortune.

**Any other considerations?** The Mac mini, since it doesn't include a screen, also doesn't feature a camera, so you will need a separate webcam for conference calls. There is also no microphone integrated.

**Why we recommend the Mac mini (M4):** The Mac mini is an excellent machine for most Mac users—new or experienced, professional or general consumer. Plus the price is excellent: if you're on a budget, it's a great choice, especially if you already have a spare keyboard, mouse, and display.

Read our full  
[M4 Pro Mac mini review](#)

## Mac Studio (M4 Max, 2025) – A powerful desktop Mac



Price When Reviewed: \$1,999

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**What is it?** The Mac Studio is the perfect compromise, offering the ultimate in power for less money. It's a desktop Mac that offers the workstation-quality chips of the MacBook Pro for a fraction of the price. All it lacks are the Mac Pro's expansion options.

**What's new?** In 2025 Mac Studio gained an M4 Max and M3 Ultra option. This was a leap from the M2 Max and M2 Ultra in the predecessor. There isn't a M4 Ultra option (Apple may be reserving this for the Mac Pro).

**Who's it for?** The Mac Studio with M4 Max is for the user who wants a lot of processing power in a desktop Mac for a bargain price. It is the cheapest way to get M4 Max chip – the equivalent MacBook Pro costs \$3,199/£3,199, albeit with 1TB instead of 512GB storage, while the Mac Studio starts at \$1,999/£1,999. That's a huge \$1,200 leap between machines, and even if you spent the extra \$200 on storage you'd still have a lot of money left over.

**How much does the Mac Studio cost?** There are two standard configurations, an M4 Max and M3 Ultra (we'll look at the Ultra below). Prices start at \$1,999/£2,099 for the Mac Studio M4 Max with 32-core GPU and 512GB SSD. There are also build-to-

order options for the M4 Max that include a 40-core GPU, up to 128GB Unified Memory, and 8TB SSD.

**What are the specifications?** The Mac Studio uses either the M4 Max or M3 Ultra processors. The standard configuration for the M4 Max is:

- Apple M4 Max SoC with a 14-core CPU, 32-core GPU, 36GB of memory, 16-core Neural Engine; 512GB SSD, \$1,999/£2,099
- Additional options: M4 Max SoC with a 16-core CPU, 40-core GPU, up to 128GB unified memory, and up to 8TB SSD.

The memory bandwidth of the M4 Max is 546GB/s compared to 400GB/s in the M2 Max model.

**How do I connect stuff?** The M4 Max Mac Studio has the following ports:

- M4 Max: Four Thunderbolt 5 ports on the back; two USB-C ports on the front.
- SDXC Card slot on the front.
- Two USB-A ports.
- 10Gb ethernet.
- HDMI 2.0.
- 3.5 mm headphone jack (with advanced support for high-impedance headphones, a feature lacked by the M1-series models)
- 802.11ax Wi-Fi 6E
- Bluetooth 5.3

The Mac Studio does not include a display, keyboard, or mouse, so you'll have to provide your own, or you can customize your order to include these devices as extra-cost options. To connect to a network, you can use the built-in ethernet port, or you can use Wi-Fi, which comes standard. To connect a display, you can use the HDMI 2.0 port or a Thunderbolt port. You might have to buy an adapter if your display doesn't have either HDMI or a port that can connect to Thunderbolt. You can connect up to eight 4K displays, eight 6K displays or four 8K displays thanks to Thunderbolt 5 on the 2025 model.

**How fast is it?** The M4 Max is a fast chip and the Mac Studio with M4 Max is a powerful Mac at a very competitive price point. If you want something even faster you need to look to the Mac Studio with M3 Ultra (below).

**Any other considerations?** The main disadvantage is that the Mac Studio relies on external connections for expandability. If you want a pro-level Mac with the ability to swap expansion cards you should look at Apple silicon-based Mac Pro below.

**Why we recommend the Mac Studio (M4 Max):** The Mac Studio is ideal for users who use processor- and graphics-intensive apps, such as media production, software development, graphics software, and more. If you find yourself spending a lot of time watching progress bars while you work, you'll benefit from the power of the Mac Studio. Read: [Why Mac professionals should switch to a Mac Studio](#). The Mac Studio is the perfect compromise, offering the ultimate in power for less money. It's a desktop Mac that offers the workstation-quality chips of the MacBook Pro for a fraction of the price. It's more powerful (and more expensive) than the Mac mini, but lacks the Mac Pro's expansion options.

Read our full [Apple Mac Studio \(M4 Max, 2025\) review](#)

## Apple 24-inch iMac (M4, 2024) – A style icon for receptions and living rooms



Price When Reviewed: \$1,299 | \$1,499 | \$1,699 | \$1,899

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**What is it?** The iMac is what Apple is famous for, although the current design is as far removed from the original as you can get. It's the Mac to have in a living room or an office reception – somewhere you can show it off.

**What's new?** In October 2024 Apple introduced the M4 version of the 24-inch iMac. Little has changed since the redesign of 2021, which represented the first major update in more than a decade, with a cleaner design and a choice

of seven bright colors (slightly lighter shades for 2024).

**Who's it for?** The iMac is great for both novices and demanding users. It can handle general-purpose and heavy-duty tasks equally well, although those after a replacement for a 27-inch iMac or iMac Pro might want to wait to see if the rumored [iMac Pro](#) ever materializes, or settle for a Mac mini Pro (above) or Mac Studio (below). It's ideal for someone who needs to buy a complete computer setup (keyboard, mouse or trackpad, and display) and wants to maximize workspace efficiency. The 24-inch iMac is a design icon that will look great in any office.

**How much does the iMac cost?** When the M4 iMac Apple dropped prices outside the U.S. The three standard configurations start at \$1,299/£1,299 for the entry-level model, \$1,499/£1,499 for the mid-range, and \$1,699/£1,699 for the top of the range.

**What are the specifications?** The 24-inch iMac uses Apple's M4 chip, the same M4 that features in the 14-inch MacBook Pro, but in each case, there is half the storage and the price is \$100 less. There are several configurations available as well as build-to-order options:

- Apple M4, 8-core CPU, 8-core GPU, 16GB memory, 256GB SSD, two Thunderbolt 4 ports, \$1,299/£1,299.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 256GB SSD, four Thunderbolt 4 ports, \$1,499/£1,499.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 16GB memory, 512GB SSD, four Thunderbolt 4 ports, \$1,699/£1,699.
- Apple M4, 10-core CPU, 10-core GPU, 24GB memory, 512GB SSD, four Thunderbolt 4 ports, \$1,899/£1,899.
- Additional options: 32GB memory; up to 2TB storage

**What are the display specifications?** The 24-inch 4.5K Retina display has 11.3 million pixels and supports the P3 wide color gamut, over a billion colors, 500 nits of brightness, and True Tone. Apple treats the display with an anti-reflective coating to help with readability. The display hasn't changed since the M1 model launched.

**How do I connect stuff?** The \$1,299 24-inch iMac 24 has two Thunderbolt 4 ports that also work with USB-C devices. The \$1,499 and \$1,699 iMacs have four Thunderbolt 4 ports (the previous generation had two Thunderbolt/USB 4 and two USB 3 ports). If you have a USB-A device, you need to buy an adapter, such as Apple's (\$19 / £19). If you have multiple USB-A devices and other items, consider a [Thunderbolt hub](#). The 24-inch iMac also has a headphone jack on the side.

Wi-Fi 6E and Bluetooth 5.3 are built-in. Apple doesn't put a gigabit ethernet port on the 24-inch iMac—instead, it's on the power adapter. But that ethernet-equipped power adapter comes standard with the \$1,499 and \$1,699 models. It's *not* included with the \$1,299 model, but you can select it as an option at the point of purchase—and yes, that means you'll have to pay extra for it.

**How fast is it?:** Since the 24-inch iMac has the same M4 as the entry-level 14-inch MacBook Pro, its speed is very similar. That means it's fast. It's got all the speed general consumers need, and it can handle pro applications with no problem. However, the \$1,299 model has only one fan inside its body, while the \$1,499 and \$1,699 models have two fans. That means the high-priced models do a better job of keeping the internals cool. The \$1,299 model may need to slow down its performance on heavy-duty tasks in order to maintain a proper temperature.

**Any other considerations?** We feel that the iMac price is high compared to the specs on offer, but we do admire the design. We are holding out for a bigger screen.

**Why we recommend the iMac (M4):** The iMac was greatly improved when Apple introduced the 24-inch model back in 2021, from the design to the display to its performance. But, we hope rumors that Apple may launch an [iMac Pro model](#) are true. If you are buying one the sweet spot is the \$1,499/£1,499 model, which gets you more ports, Touch ID, and ethernet.

Read our full [Apple iMac \(M4, 2024\) review](#)

## Mac Studio (M3 Ultra, 2025) – The ultimate desktop Mac right now



Price When Reviewed: \$3,999

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**What is it?** There is a configuration of Mac Studio that, like the Mac Pro, runs on Apple's Ultra chips. The Ultra chip combines four of the standard M-series chips on one die for a super fast and ultra powerful system. Note that the Mac Studio features an M3 Ultra, not an M4 Ultra, and the M3 Ultra is faster and more powerful than the M4 Max.

**What's new?** In March 2025 Apple updated the Mac Studio to run on an M3 Ultra chip. The surprising thing about this is that Apple didn't jump straight to the M4 Ultra. No doubt Apple has a reason to choose to sell an M3 Ultra Mac Studio rather than an M4 Ultra Mac Studio (probably it doesn't want it to overshadow the Mac Pro when that model gets the M4 Ultra). The M3 Ultra is the fastest Mac processor Apple makes (until the M4 Ultra arrives at least).

**Who's it for?** The Mac Studio with M3 Ultra is for the user who wants the maximum processing power. It lacks the expansion options of the Mac Pro, but it brings all the power usually reserved for the ultimate Mac in a smaller and cheaper package.

**How much does the Mac Studio cost?** The Mac Studio M3 Ultra with 28-core CPU, 60-core GPU, 32-Core Neural Engine and 1TB SSD costs \$3,999/£4,199. There are also build-to-order options that include a 32-core CPU, 80-core GPU, up to 512GB Unified Memory, and 16TB SSD. Fully maxed out a Mac Studio would cost \$14,099/£14,299.

**What are the specifications?** The Mac Studio with M3 Ultra processors offers these specs:

- Apple M3 Ultra SoC with a 28-core CPU, 60-core GPU, 64GB of memory, and a 32-core Neural Engine; 1TB SSD, \$3,999/£4,199
- Additional options: M3 Ultra SoC with a 32-core CPU, 80-core GPU, up to 512GB unified memory, and up to 16TB SSD.

The memory bandwidth of the M3 Ultra is 819GB/s compared to 800GB/s in the M2 Ultra model.

The Mac Studio does not include a display, keyboard, or mouse, so you'll have to provide your own, or you can customize your order to include these devices as extra-cost options.

**How do I connect stuff?** The Mac Studio has the following ports:

- M2 Ultra: Six Thunderbolt 5 ports.
- SDXC Card slot on the front.
- Two USB-A ports.
- 10Gb ethernet.
- HDMI 2.0.
- 3.5 mm headphone jack
- 802.11ax Wi-Fi 6E
- Bluetooth 5.3

To connect to a network, you can use the built-in ethernet port, or you can use Wi-Fi, which comes standard.

To connect a display, you can use the HDMI 2.0 port or a Thunderbolt port. You might have to buy an adapter if your display doesn't have either HDMI or a port that can connect to Thunderbolt. You can connect up to eight 4K displays, eight 6K displays, or four 8K displays to the M2 Ultra.

**How fast is it?** The M3 Ultra Mac Studio is the fastest Mac Apple sells as of March 2025 and it does so at a very competitive price point. However, when the M4 Ultra arrives in the Mac Pro that will take the lead. We'll be testing the M3 Ultra as soon as we can get our hands on the new Mac Studio.

**Any other considerations?** Sharing the same chip as the Mac Pro made the Mac Studio the obvious choice for anyone who wanted a powerful Mac without having to remortgage their house. Now that the Mac Studio runs on an M3 Ultra while the Mac Pro still only offers the M2 Ultra (for now) the Mac Studio is the fastest ever Mac. Those who might have chosen the Mac Pro may opt instead for the Mac Studio, it's one disadvantage being that it lacks the Mac Pro's expansion options.

**Why we recommend the Mac Studio M3 Ultra:** The Mac Studio with M3 Ultra is ideal for users who use processor- and graphics-intensive apps, such as media production, software development, graphics software, and more. If you find yourself spending a lot of time watching progress bars while you work, you'll benefit from the power of the Mac Studio.

The only reason not to buy is if you want to wait to see what the Mac Pro with M4 Ultra offers, when, if ever, Apple launches it.

## Apple Mac Pro (M2 Ultra, 2023) – The monster Mac



Price When Reviewed: From \$6,999

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Note: This model hasn't been updated since 2023. An update is expected at some time in 2025. See: [M4 Ultra Mac Pro rumors](#).

**What is it?** The Mac Pro is Apple's workstation. It's designed for professionals who need a powerful and flexible machine. Apple took its time to update the Mac Pro with its own silicon, but in June 2023, three and a half years after the previous update, the company finally came up with the goods. We are now waiting for Apple to update it from the M2 Ultra to the M4 Ultra.

**Who's it for?** The Mac Pro is designed for professionals who work with applications that use as many processing cores as possible—video-editing applications, image-editing software, 3D programs, audio editing, software developers, and the like.

**How much does the Mac Pro cost?** The Mac Pro starts at \$6,999/£7,199 (which is up from the previous generation's starting price of \$5,999/£5,499). That's for the Tower version, there is also a Rack mount version that starts at \$7,499/£7,699. Those are the starting prices, you can choose various configuration options, such as the 76-core GPU and the 192GB unified memory and 8TB storage – just as with the Mac Studio. A fully specced out Mac Pro Tower costs \$11,799/£11,999.

**What are the specifications?** The specifications on offer are identical to the Mac Studio with M2 Ultra:

- Apple M2 Ultra SoC with a 24-core CPU, 60-core GPU, 64GB of memory, and a 32-core Neural Engine; 1TB SSD
- Additional options: M2 Ultra SoC with a 76-core GPU, up to 192GB unified memory, and up to 8TB SSD.

**How do I connect stuff?** Mac Pro has the following ports:

- Six Thunderbolt 4 ports on the back; two USB-C ports on the top.
- Two USB-A ports.
- 10Gb ethernet.
- HDMI 2.0.
- 3.5 mm headphone jack (with advanced support for high-impedance headphones, a feature lacked by the M1-series models)

- Wi-Fi 6E (802.11ax)
- Bluetooth 5.3

To connect a display, you can use the HDMI 2.0 port or the Thunderbolt ports. You might have to buy an adapter if your display doesn't have either HDMI or a port that can connect to Thunderbolt. You can connect up to eight 4K displays, six 6K displays, or three 8K displays.

To connect external devices, the Mac Pro has six Thunderbolt 4/USB-C ports, two USB-A ports, two HDMI ports, and dual 10Gb Ethernet. But the real draw for creative pros will be the seven full-length PCI Express gen 4 slots, one of which comes with an Apple I/O card installed.

**How fast is it?** When it announced the model, Apple said the 2023 Mac Pro was up to 3x faster than the previous-generation Intel-based model. It was impressive at the time, but the M2 Ultra has been superceded by the M4 Max in our tests, and now that Apple has updated the Mac Studio with the M3 Ultra you can expect even better performance from that model, which has the benefit of costing much less.

Apple says the M2 Ultra Mac Pro can plan an “unprecedented 22 streams of 8K ProRes video.” Just imagine what the new Mac Pro M4 Ultra will be capable of.

**Macworld's buying advice:** The Mac Pro provides the processing power that the most demanding users need. We're talking about production environments, like TV and audio recording studios, animation houses, and software developers. If you feel like you can never have enough power, you're probably the professional the Mac Pro is aimed at. But if you don't need the expandability then the Mac Studio will probably be adequate.

If you're more of a “prosumer” than a professional—someone who is an expert Mac user, but doesn't use high-end apps—the Mac Pro is overkill. You're probably not going to be able to take advantage of what the Mac Pro has to offer.

Our recommendation is to wait until June 2025 for the long overdue M4 Ultra.

For buying advice on the [best Windows laptops](#), see our sister site PCWorld.

## FAQ

### 1. What's best, MacBook Air or MacBook Pro?

We address this question in detail in our [comparison of the MacBook Air vs Pro](#). It's really a question of price versus power. The Air is sufficient for most people's needs, the Pro will give you that extra boost in terms of what the Mac is capable of.

Buying an entry-level MacBook Air for \$999/£999 will get you an excellent Mac laptop for less than a grand. If you want to spend less than that you may be able to find a discounted MacBook Air – we round up the [best MacBook Air deals](#) regularly.

If you want a larger screen, the 15-inch MacBook Air is a great option that is a lot cheaper than the smaller 14-inch MacBook Pro.

The price of the Pro and Max MacBook Pro models is high, but these models offer the kind of specs professional users, especially creatives, need, including support for more RAM, and more CPU and GPU cores. If you can afford to stretch to the Max you will get the ultimate Mac without a doubt, but you need to be willing to make a significant investment.

The choice between the 14-inch and 16-inch MacBook Pro is all down to the screen size. The 16-inch models are more expensive, but once you spec them out in such a way to be comparable the price difference is minor. The bigger difference is between the Pro and Max processors. Other than speed, MacBooks with Max processors can connect up to four external displays (three over Thunderbolt and one over HDMI), while since the M4 all models allow two external displays in addition to the laptop screen. (There are workarounds if you need to connect more screens).

## **2. Should I upgrade from my Intel Mac?**

We are now more than four years into Apple's transition from Intel processors to its own silicon that includes CPU, GPU, and unified memory. The transition began with the introduction of the M1 in November 2020. Since June 2023 every Mac Apple sells uses Apple's own chips rather than Intel processors.

If you've yet to upgrade your Intel Mac to one powered by Apple's silicon what are you waiting for? If you are concerned that a must-have app doesn't run on an M-series Mac, consider finding a new app because the performance gains are tremendous.

Another good reason to update your Intel Mac is that Intel chips will not be supported by Apple for much longer in terms of security updates. With the arrival of macOS Tahoe, the number of supported Intel Macs is fewer than ever, and Apple has confirmed that the next version of macOS will not support any Intel powered Macs. This doesn't mean that in fall 2026 Intel Macs will be out in the cold, because Apple continues to support older versions of macOS with security updates for a couple more years, but with only a few of the most recent Intel Macs supported by 2024's Sequoia the days of Intel Macs are certainly numbered. Read: [The Intel Macs that can run macOS Sequoia](#).

## **3. Where can I get the best price for a new Mac?**

If you're simply looking for a great offer, visit our [MacBook Pro deals](#), [MacBook Air deals](#), [iMac deals](#), [Mac Studio deals](#), and [Mac mini deals](#) pages which are regularly updated.

#### 4. What specs do I really need for my Mac?

**Chip:** The specs necessary for you depend on what you need the Mac for. If you do the usual everyday tasks and work, which includes web browsing, light productivity apps, then an M3, M4 or M5 chip will probably suffice. If you are working with complex Excel spreadsheets or multi-layer images, using Photoshop or other graphics apps, producing video or audio, or serious gaming then look at the Pro versions of the chips. Those who make a living as a media producer, software developer or anything that requires multitasking should consider the Max (or possibly Ultra) version of the M-series of chips.

**GPU:** One key difference between the chips is the number of GPU cores, and the number of GPU cores you require goes in tandem with the outline above, with the Ultra having the most GPU cores, then the Max and so on. For example, the Pro chips provide the required GPUs for those doing moderate to serious media production and gaming, while the Max is for professional-level media production and hard-core gaming.

**RAM:** When it comes to RAM, in 2024 Apple dropped the standard 8GB RAM (aka Unified Memory) from the line up, so now all Macs come with 16GB or more, which with the arrival of AI is really necessary. Should you upgrade beyond 16GB RAM? If you can we recommend it. 24GB or 32GB is a good amount for moderate media production, graphic work, podcasting, and gaming. Any more than 32GB is for professional-level graphics and media production, software development, hardcore gaming.

**Storage:** Even with the opportunity to store music, photos and more in the cloud, it seems you can never have enough storage inside your Mac. Trying to decide how much to get? For typical work 256GB will probably be enough, but if you are using media production apps like iMovie we'd recommend 512GB and for another in professional media production 1TB or more is advised.

For more information to help you decide which Mac to buy see our [Mac processor comparison where we compare Apple silicon and Intel](#). We also offer advice about how much storage, RAM, and cores in [How much MacBook RAM, SSD, GPU, and CPU do you really need](#).

#### 5. When were the Macs last updated?

The M5 MacBook Pro M5 was introduced in October 2025. The Mac mini and MacBook Pro M4 Pro and M4 Max arrived in October 2024. The MacBook Air was last updated in March 2025, as was the Mac Studio. The only Mac that hasn't been updated in the past couple of years is the Mac Pro.

## **Why you can trust Macworld's advice**

Macworld has been covering everything Apple related since our first issue which arrived alongside the original Mac in 1984. Nobody knows Apple better, except probably Apple, but the difference is that we are completely impartial. We are made up of a team of experts with decades of experiences with Macs and other Apple products, and between us we have reviewed every Apple product meaning we are uniquely positioned to provide buying advice.

**Author:** [Karen Haslam](#), Managing Editor, Macworld

Karen has worked on both sides of the Apple divide, clocking up a number of years at Apple's PR agency prior to joining Macworld more than two decades ago. Karen's career highlights include interviewing Apple's Steve Wozniak and discussing Steve Jobs' legacy on the BBC. Having edited the U.K. print and online editions of Macworld for many years, more recently her focus has been on SEO and evergreen content as well as product recommendations and buying advice.