

Grandma Talks Tech: Baby Boomers Take to iPads, Too! The Senior's Guide to Getting the Most Out of Your iPad

Sheila "Grandma" Griffith

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Gone are the days when manufacturers provided written operating instructions for new electronic devices. That information now exists primarily in cyberspace, but many novice users still prefer printed instructions to guide them through the learning curve of new gadgets.

Sheila "Grandma" Griffith has written *Grandma Talks Tech: Baby Boomers Take to iPads, Too!* to address that need. The book explains how to optimize iPad performance and discusses features of the basic operating system, such as keyboard shortcuts and changes in the iPad's third generation and beyond. Griffith includes overviews of built-in applications and suggestions for convenient free and purchased apps. Illustrations of screen images provide visual enhancement of these processes, and a table of contents efficiently summarizes the topics covered. Concluding glossaries explain popular terminology used in electronic communication.

Not all new iPad owners use Apple computers. When explaining how to set up groups (to organize contacts into categories, e.g., family, friends, coworkers, etc.), Griffith thoughtfully provides guidance for exporting contact information from both Mac and Windows to iPads.

Many entertainment options, both free and purchased, can be downloaded to iPads. Griffith explains how to navigate each category tab within the sections devoted to music, movies, television shows, and audio books. Thoughtfully, she questions the logic behind the organization of the various categories and provides a balanced analysis of each phase of operation.

Griffith recommends that readers use Find My iPad, a computer feature that locates lost iPads, and she tells about helping one of her students set up this feature. The student misplaced her iPad later that same evening. Griffith writes, "I received a frantic call from the student telling me that they had lost their iPad and didn't know what to do with themselves." The narrative then goes back to referring to the student in third-person singular: "I calmly told her to go to her computer." This kind of grammatical inconsistency, as well as confusing syntax, recurs frequently, making the author's instructions difficult to follow at points.

Although this book's shelf life is limited due to rapid technological changes, the author succeeds in covering material pertinent to the current versions of iPads. Her casual, companionable writing style aims to put readers at ease, but frequent humorous asides sometimes miss the mark. Misplaced possessive apostrophes in plural nouns, such as "device's" instead of "devices," are present, as well as numerous incorrect or misplaced words. In item-by-item lists, all words except articles are capitalized, slowing reading comprehension.

Despite these drawbacks, *Grandma Talks Tech* fills a useful gap in today's electronics market by providing readers with a reference book that eases the pain of learning to "talk tech."

MARGARET CULLISON (March 7, 2013)

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