

# How to turn your iPad into a plug-in Mac display

macOS Catalina and iPadOS include support for a new feature called Sidecar, designed to let you use your iPad as a secondary display for your Mac.

Sidecar is fast, easy to use, and can mirror content on your Mac or turn it into a secondary display for extra screen time no matter where you are.

This guide covers everything you need to know about Sidecar, from how to use it to Apple Pencil compatibility.

## What is Sidecar?

In short, Sidecar lets you use your iPad as a second display for your Mac, via a wired or wireless connection. You can place it to the left or right of your home screen and use it like any other screen, but that's not all it can do.



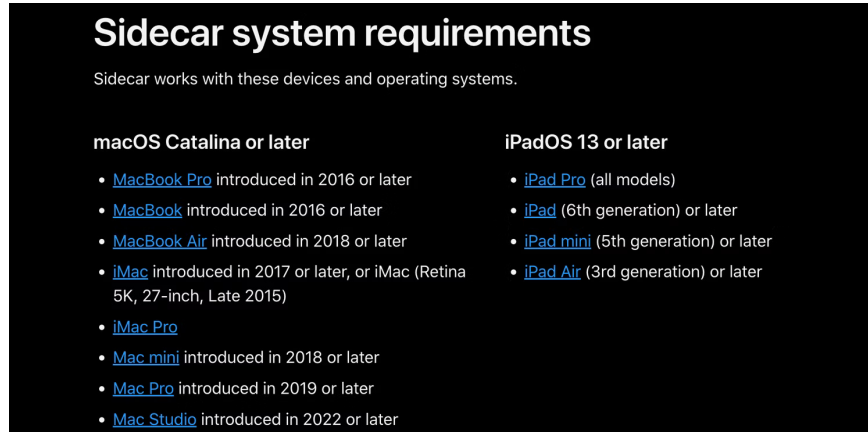
Notably, Sidecar takes advantage of the iPad's touch screen. It even supports Apple Pencil, which makes it a great addition if you're an artist looking to expand your creative options. If you're jealous of the touch screen on your Windows computer, this doesn't get you there, but it gets you a step closer.

## How to use iPad as a second Mac display with Sidecar

If you don't want to spend money on an external screen for your MacBook, you can use Apple's Sidecar feature to turn your iPad into a secondary screen.

### Set up Sidecar on your Mac

Because of Apple's confusing iPad naming, you should check the model, year, and age of your Mac, as well as the type of iPad you have. Once done, it's a good idea to check Apple's Sidecar requirements to make sure both devices support Sidecar.



**Sidecar system requirements**

Sidecar works with these devices and operating systems.

<b>macOS Catalina or later</b>	<b>iPadOS 13 or later</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">MacBook Pro</a> introduced in 2016 or later</li><li>• <a href="#">MacBook</a> introduced in 2016 or later</li><li>• <a href="#">MacBook Air</a> introduced in 2018 or later</li><li>• <a href="#">iMac</a> introduced in 2017 or later, or iMac (Retina 5K, 27-inch, Late 2015)</li><li>• <a href="#">iMac Pro</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Mac mini</a> introduced in 2018 or later</li><li>• <a href="#">Mac Pro</a> introduced in 2019 or later</li><li>• <a href="#">Mac Studio</a> introduced in 2022 or later</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">iPad Pro</a> (all models)</li><li>• <a href="#">iPad</a> (6th generation) or later</li><li>• <a href="#">iPad mini</a> (5th generation) or later</li><li>• <a href="#">iPad Air</a> (3rd generation) or later</li></ul>

## Use Wireless Sidecar

Before you begin, check that your Mac and iPad are signed into the same Apple ID and connected to the same Wi-Fi network. Also, make sure Bluetooth is turned on on both devices and place them about 30 feet apart.

To start using Sidecar wirelessly, click the **Control Center** icon on the menu bar and select **Screen Mirroring**. Now, just select iPad under the **Mirror or extend to** heading.



## Use Sidecar via USB

If you don't have Wi-Fi access or want to charge your iPad, you can also use Sidecar via USB. Simply plug iPad into your Mac using the included USB-C cable. Make sure iPad is set up to trust your Mac. Otherwise, you won't be able to connect.

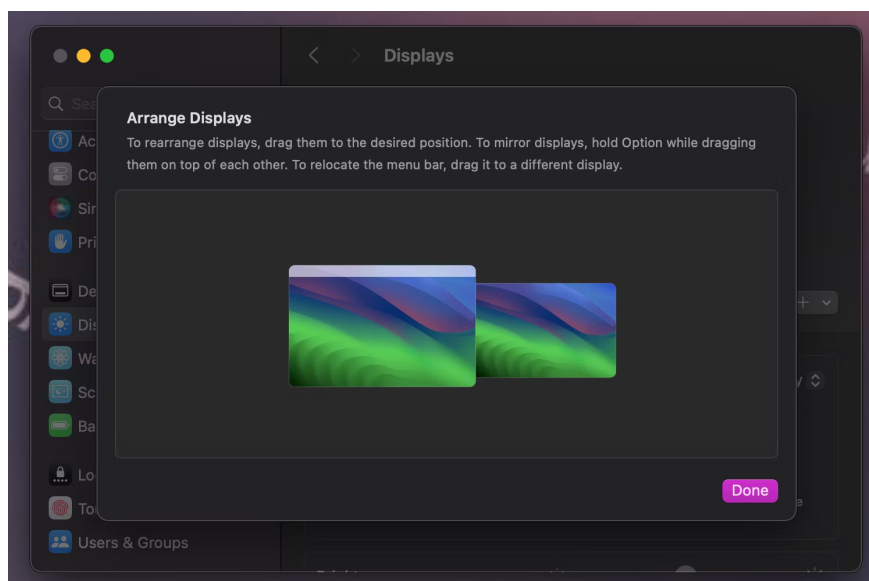
Now, all you need to do is go to Control Center on your Mac, click **Screen Mirroring** , and select iPad from the list of devices. If iPad doesn't appear in the list, check the cable in use.

You can use Sidecar wirelessly and still plug iPad into your Mac to charge if needed. This is often simpler than using the USB option.

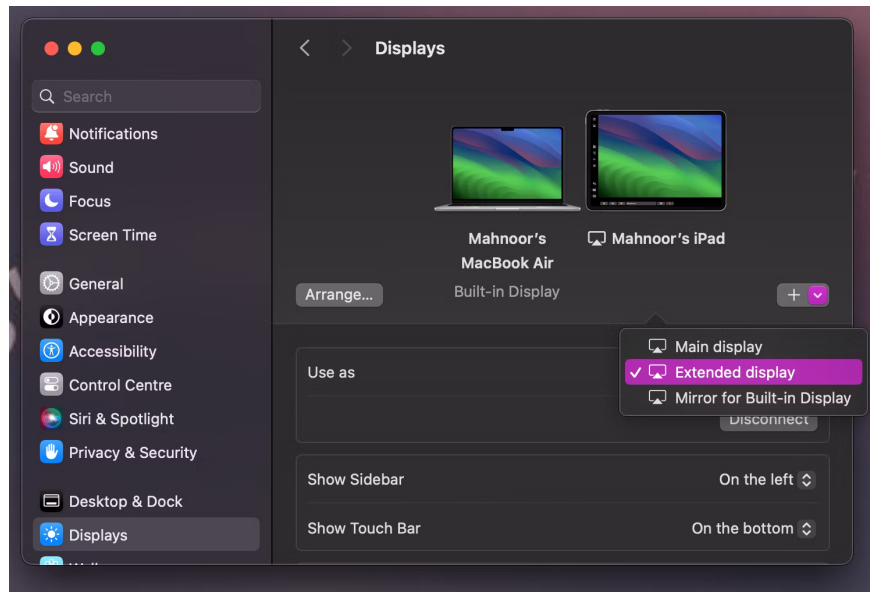
## How to use Sidecar on Mac

Once connected, you can choose to project or extend the screen. Most people will probably want to use the extend option on the secondary display, and that's what Sidecar uses by default. Just click the **Screen Mirroring** icon in the menu bar and choose between **Mirror Built-In Retina Liquid Display** and **Use As Separate Display** .

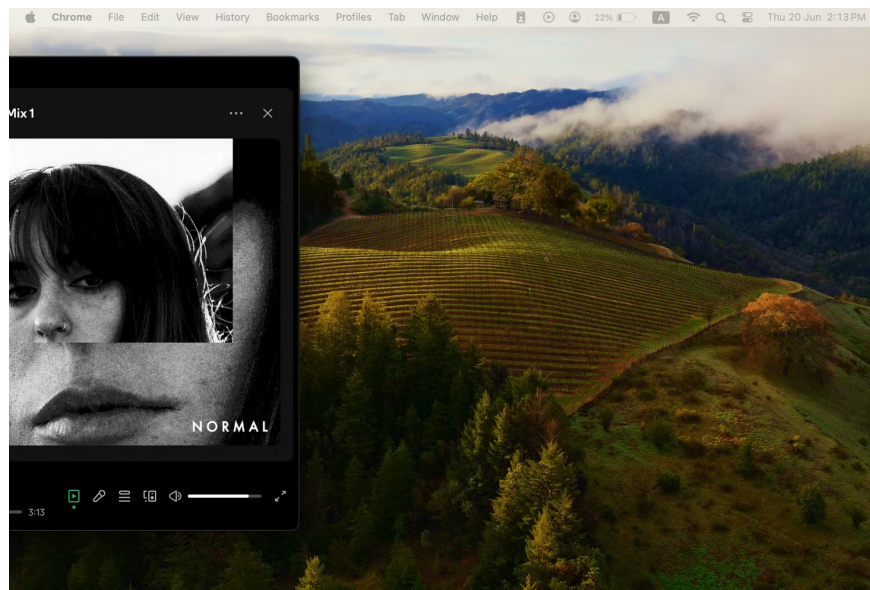
To change which side of your Mac your iPad appears on for convenient mouse movement, go to **System Settings** , then go to the **Displays** menu . Here, switch to the **Arrange** tab and drag the iPad to whichever side of the Mac screen you've placed it on.



On the same **Displays** page , you can also choose whether you want to use your iPad or Mac as your primary or extended display. For example, if you want to change your iPad's behavior, select it, then set the **Use As** option to **Main display** , **Extended display** , or **Mirror for Built-in Display** .

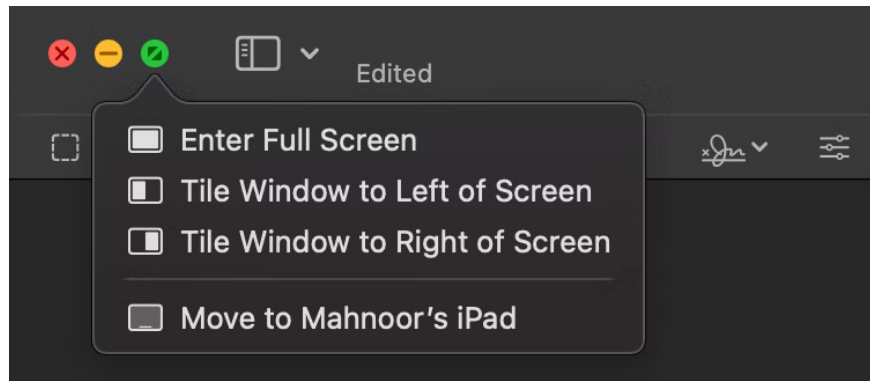


You can use your iPad as any other second display after connecting it via Sidecar. There are several options for moving windows from the home screen to the iPad. You can drag it to the edge of the screen until you see it appear on your iPad. It will look like the image below.

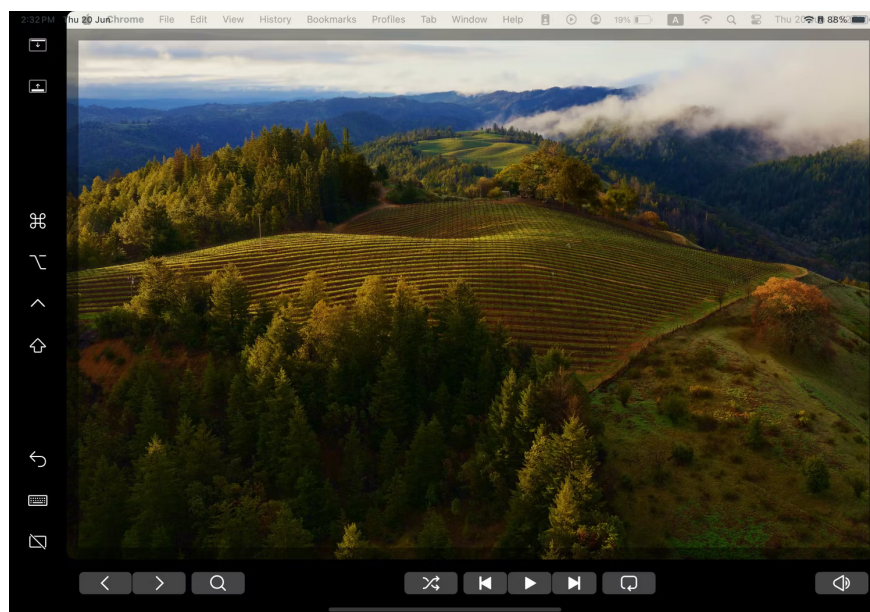


Make sure to keep dragging toward the edge of your Mac screen until you see the pointer appear on the iPad screen.

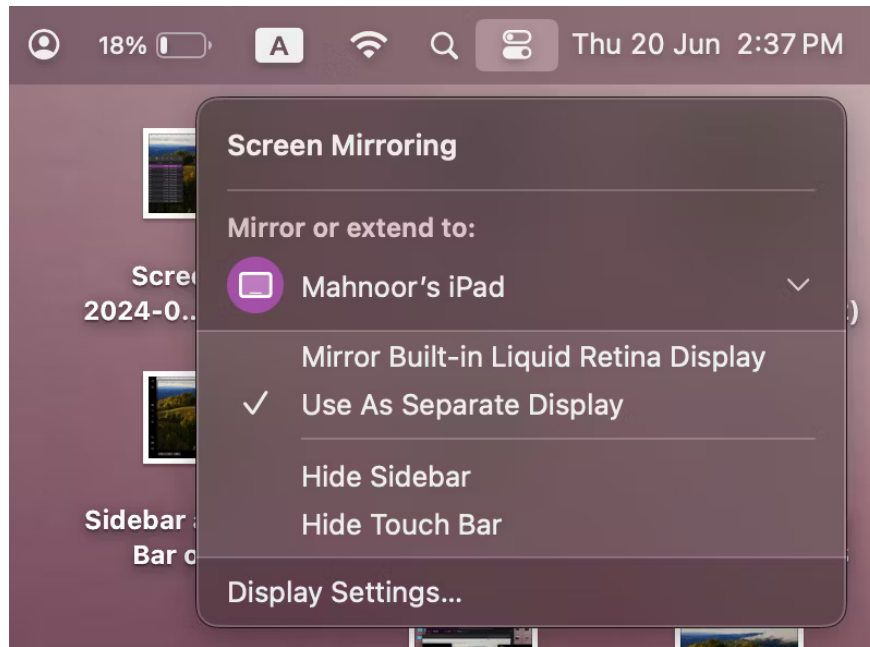
Alternatively, you can hover over the green full-screen button in the upper left of the window, then select **Move to [Your iPad Name]**.



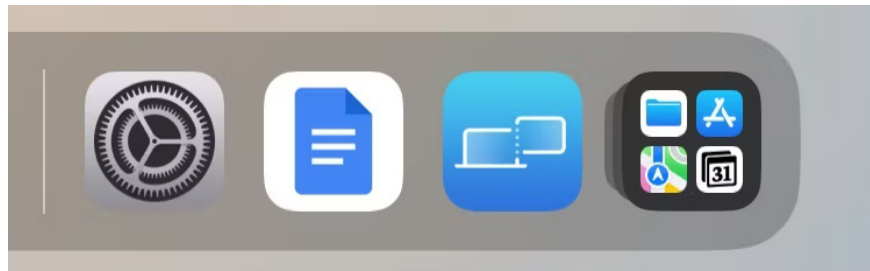
By default, iPad displays a sidebar with common controls like Command, Shift, and other modifier keys. These let you interact more easily with your Mac through the touch screen. You also get the Touch Bar at the bottom of the screen, which works like the Touch Bar on some MacBook Pro models.



You can disable both of these options by clicking the **Screen Mirroring** icon on the menu bar and clicking **Hide Sidebar** and **Hide Touch Bar** .



While using Sidecar, you can still use your iPad as usual by switching apps. Once converted, you'll see a new Continuity app icon on your iPad's Dock. Just tap this icon to go back to using iPad as a display.



Once you're done using your iPad as a second display for your Mac, all you need to do is tap the **Disconnect** icon at the bottom of the sidebar. Alternatively, you can go to **Control Center** on your Mac and turn off **Screen Mirroring**.

## Connect with Apple Pencil

When using Sidecar, the Apple Pencil (first or second generation depending on your iPad) serves as a mouse replacement for clicking, selecting, and other on-screen controls.



In apps like Photoshop and Illustrator, ?Apple Pencil? does much more. You can draw right in Photoshop or other similar Mac apps to turn your iPad? into a graphics tablet for your Mac, not unlike a Wacom graphics tablet. It's a great way to create art, edit photos, and more with the interactivity of an ?Apple Pencil? but the power of a Mac.

## Connect the keyboard

When using a keyboard like Apple's Magic Keyboard with ?iPad?, it serves as a replacement for your Mac keyboard, allowing you to type like you would on a Mac in any open window.



If you're on a tight budget and can't afford an external monitor, setting up the Sidecar feature is a worthwhile alternative to achieving a multi-monitor setup. While you can explore some more customization options by going to **System Settings > Displays** , everything the article discussed above should be enough to get you started.

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