

Why should you buy the base iPhone 16 instead of the Pro model?

The iPhone 16 lineup is here, and of course most of the attention has been on the Pro models. But the base iPhone 16 and 16 Plus come with a number of improvements that mean you're not missing out if you don't buy the Pro.

1. iPhone 16 now has an Action button like the Pro models



Apple surprised everyone in 2023 when it replaced the Ring/Silent switch with an Action button on the iPhone 15 Pro models. Unlike power or volume buttons that are dedicated to a specific use, you can use the Action button for a variety of functions.

By default, this button still functions as the Ring/Silent switch, but you can customize the Action button to open apps, turn on the flashlight, record audio, activate Focus mode, launch the camera, and more.

This flexibility has been exclusive to the Pro models so far, but with the iPhone 16 lineup, Apple has added it to the base iPhone 16 models as well.

2. Camera Control isn't just for iPhone 16 Pro



Many thought Apple would keep the new Camera Control button exclusive to the Pro models, but surprisingly, the entire iPhone 16 lineup has it. The Camera Control button helps you in the photo-taking process by making it easier to use certain camera features like zooming in and out, adjusting focus, aperture, etc. Basically, it tries to minimize the learning curve associated with photography.

Most people take photos simply by pulling out their phone and pressing the shutter button, without using the many powerful camera features the iPhone has to offer. They don't tap to focus, adjust the zoom, use a grid, or switch between lenses.

But by taking just a few seconds to adjust your camera settings, you can take significantly better photos with your phone — which is exactly what the Camera Control button is trying to deliver, but in a more natural way.

You can tap the button to launch the camera and tap again to take a photo, or long press to start recording a video. A light tap brings up UI elements, then you can double tap to see more options.

3. Basic iPhone 16 models support Apple Intelligence

Apple Intelligence is a real utility for anyone who wants to get the most out of their Apple devices. It's similar to Gemini on Google Pixel phones, but Apple's implementation is better. Apple Intelligence isn't a chatbot, but a collection of system-wide AI features that span the entire operating system.

In addition to the usual AI features people expect, like proofreading and rephrasing emails or generating Generative AI emojis and images, you can also use Apple Intelligence to search for a specific photo in your photo library or view a specific moment in a video you've recorded via a text prompt.

This feature is also built into the camera app and can essentially replace Google Lens, identifying places around you and displaying relevant information.

Apple Intelligence makes Siri a lot smarter, and as a result, it has on-screen recognition. So if you come across a cool album cover, you can just ask it to play the song directly on Spotify. For those who aren't tech-savvy, it can also walk you through a certain action on your phone, so you don't have to look it up online or ask your kids.

4. AAA games can also run on basic models



Because the iPhone Pro models have faster chips, people often assume that you can't play graphically demanding games on the base models. That's not true this time, as the A18 chip in the iPhone 16 and 16 Plus is powerful enough to handle AAA titles like Resident Evil 7: Biohazard and Assassin's Creed Mirage without any problems.

The only notable difference is that the Pro models can sustain performance for a bit longer and more efficiently, which means the iPhone 16 Pro can actually play games for longer at max settings.

The base iPhone 16 and 16 Plus are both excellent devices, boasting a number of upgrades over their predecessors. With all their improvements, buying the Pro version doesn't seem to make sense unless you absolutely need the 120Hz ProMotion display, dedicated telephoto lens, or titanium frame.

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