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**Quick Takes–  
Apple's iPod Touch in  
Education**

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Hello! My name is Susan Brooks-Young. I spent 23 years working as a teacher and administrator in public and private education. Now I work with educators both nationally and internationally on various aspects of technology use in schools. This is one of a series of Quick Take presentations that provides a brief overview of one emerging technology along with examples of how educators are using this tool and further information available in the TICAL Resources Database.

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**This Quick Take  
Covers...**

- What is the iPod Touch?
- Examples of educational uses
- TICAL Resources

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There is growing interest in ways relatively inexpensive mobile devices can support student learning in the classroom and away from school. This Quick Take focuses on a mobile device that enables users to listen to audio files, watch videos, access the Internet, and use a variety of educational applications. We will answer the question, “What is an iPod Touch?” view examples of educational uses, and see a listing of resources found in the TICAL Resource Database.

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You are probably familiar with MP3 players like Apple’s iPod or Microsoft’s Zune. First available to the public in Asia in 1998, MP3 players originally supported audio files. Later, most also had the capability to play video and games and to allow users to record and playback voice memos using special headsets with built-in microphones. The iPod Touch does all this and more. Using its wifi capability, users can surf the Web and download special programs called apps directly from the iTunes store. Some apps, such as Evernote or MapQuest require an Internet connection to run, but others are standalone applications that can be used even when wifi is not available. Anyone can use special authoring tools provided by Apple to create apps for the Touch and there is growing interest in development of apps for education. In fact, the Touch closely resemble an iPhone with a few exceptions and even runs the same apps in most cases.

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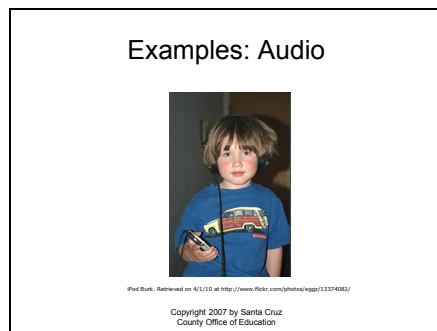
Pros	Cons
Affordable	Does not include a camera
Minimal learning curve	Quality of some education apps
Rugged enough for student use	iTunes documentation is difficult to follow

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The original iPod Touch was fairly costly, but recently prices have dropped to less than \$200 for a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation 8GB Touch and the 32GB Touch is now under \$300. This device is more intuitive to navigate than other iPod models—within 10 minutes users can learn the basics of navigating the Touch screen and accessing various preinstalled apps. The Touch can be used by your youngest students—even preschoolers. However, the screen needs to be protected from sticky fingers. Purchasing and installing a protective screen cover takes care of that problem. On the downside, one significant difference between the Touch and the iPhone is that the Touch does not

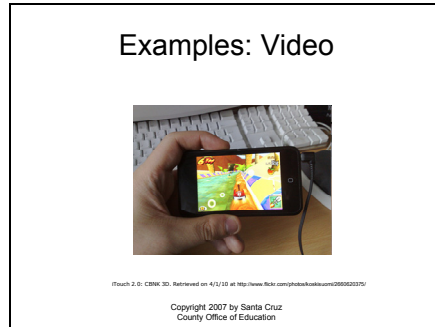
include a camera. Another issue is the quality of available education apps which run in price from free to four or five dollars each. It's easy to download and review free apps, and some paid apps offer free 'lite' versions for users to test before purchasing. But this is not always the case. And although inexpensive, the cost of higher quality apps can begin to mount up. Finally, to synchronize with a computer, you must use iTunes. There are restrictions on the number of devices that can be used with a single iTunes account and the documentation for using iTunes can sometimes be difficult to understand. Most users will spend far more time learning to navigate iTunes than they will learning to use the Touch.

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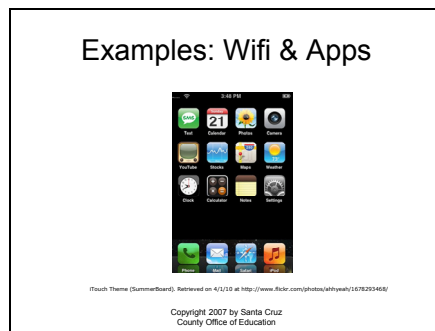
Like other MP3 players, the Touch is an excellent tool for listening to podcasts and music. Teachers can use iTunes to manage both types of files and use Touches in listening centers or with special speakers for whole class activities. Touch headphones come with built-in microphones making it easy for teachers and students to record voice memos that can be added to the iTunes library and shared. Teachers across the country are using this feature to extend the school day by recording lessons and other information that can be downloaded to the Touch so students can listen away from school.

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It's no secret that many students prefer video over audio files. Instructional videos can be downloaded from iTunes or other online resources like TeacherTube and added to the Touch's video library for students to view. It's even possible for teachers and students to use devices like the Flip camera to record and synch their own digital videos to the Touch.

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But the most exciting use for the Touch lies in the fact that it is capable of accessing the Internet and can be used to download free and low-cost educational programs called apps. Teachers and students are able to go online for instructional purposes anywhere there is wifi access without having to have a computer available. They can engage in a range of activities from practicing newly acquired skills to collaborating with one another on projects using various apps. For example, iFormulas is a comprehensive math reference guide for secondary level students. StoryKit enables elementary students to write and share electronic storybooks. Documents To Go allows users to access and edit Google Docs and files created with Microsoft Office applications.

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**Learn more**

- Why an iPod Touch in Education?  
[http://projects.minot.k12.nd.us/groups/chris/weblog/5ce29/Why\\_an\\_iPod\\_Touch\\_in\\_education.html](http://projects.minot.k12.nd.us/groups/chris/weblog/5ce29/Why_an_iPod_Touch_in_education.html)
- The iPod Touch Classroom  
<http://ipodtouchclassroom.ning.com/>
- Mobile Learning and iTunes U  
<http://www.apple.com/education/mobile-learning/>

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This slide and the next show items found in the TICAL Resources Database that will give you more information about the iPod Touch. The links provided on this slide lead to sites that provide general information about using the Touch in classrooms.

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**Learn more**

- Top 50 Free Education Apps  
<http://www.appstoreapps.com/top-50-free-education-apps/>
- iPod Touch Training and Reference Guide  
<http://www.nsu.edu/ipod/ipodpdfs/iPodTouchTrainingandReferenceGuide.pdf>
- iPod Touch  
<http://edcommunity.apple.com/ali/story.php?itemID=16472>
- Additional iPod Touch Resources  
[http://www.portical.org/boolean\\_results.html?all=iPod+iphone&limit=0](http://www.portical.org/boolean_results.html?all=iPod+iphone&limit=0)

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This slide provides links to additional resources. 50 Educational Apps for the iPod Touch helps educators narrow their search for quality apps. The iPod Touch Training and Reference Guide is produced by Norfolk State University and a great resource for new users. The last link takes you to Apple's education community. All of these resources can be found in the TICAL Resource database.

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**Thank you!**

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Apple's iPod Touch offers exciting opportunities for educators and students to work collaboratively and share information. I hope this Quick Take inspires you to learn more about this emerging technology.