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Tips for Getting New Apps

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Are you still playing around with your new iPhone or iPad, and thinking you would like to explore and download some new apps to enjoy? Well, don’t be shy about doing it, it is easy and fun. Don’t forget to DELETE any app you do not like or use. That’s easy too. So here are my tips for helping you decide what apps to download and try:

Touch the “App Store” app on your device (it looks like a big uppercase “A” made out of white popsicle sticks). It will open and you will see on your screen some apps and news that Apple has decided you need to see. But look at the bottom of your screen and you will see “Today,” “Games,” “Apps,” “Updates,” and “Search.” I like to begin by touching “Search” and entering some words to search for an app I may think I would want. I can put in any search words I want, such as “golf game,” “solitaire,” “spreadsheets,” “blackjack,” or anything else. And presto, you will see many apps (scroll down) that are available for you to download. Of course you can look through the other options such as “Games” or “Apps,” but I really find the “Search” to be the most helpful.

So now what? How do you decide what app to download? Well, first scroll down (or swipe right) to look at the sample screen shots to see what the app will look like on your device. Sometimes the first screen shot is a video. At the top of each app article, to the right of the title, will be an oval box that will say: “GET” (touch this to download the app), “OPEN” (which means you already have this app on your device and you can open it here if you want), a “cloud” symbol (which means you have already downloaded this app but it is NOT on the device you are using), or a price, such as “$4.95” (which indicates the price of the app that will be billed to your Apple account if you download it). Some apps have a “free” or “lite” version for you to download to try their product and then you can buy the full app (hopefully with no advertising) for a price later.

After looking at the screen shots, look at the “Ratings & Reviews” to see how many people rated the app and their average rating. You will see a bar graph displaying the numbers for each star category. Beware of an app rated very high but only has a small number of people rating it! You need a few hundred people to get a good impression. Finally, read the comments submitted by some people who rated the app. You will get a good idea if their rating or comment would be important to you. For example, some people may say the app “locked up” their iPhone but you would only be using the app on your iPad – so that issue may not be a problem for you. This information will help you decide if you want to give the app a try – and if it is free, why not?

Once you have downloaded an app, it is yours forever. If you delete it from your device it will still be yours in the cloud waiting for you should you ever want it again. And all your apps will have to be updated eventually to fix bugs (or add new ads). I believe you can get a refund from Apple for an app (or music or movie) you have purchased that you don’t like – you can find out how to do this on the internet and it does not look like it is too difficult. But when most apps are under five dollars, I bet most people don’t bother.

There are very few apps I have purchased, almost all of them are free. Of course, I get ads but I guess I expect that now. It is also time to carefully review your apps (and your contact list while you are at it) to delete and clean out all those not needed anymore. Hey, it’s easier than cleaning out your garage! I recommend it.