

TABLETS *for* ARTISTS

The Definitive Shopping Guide To

THE BEST
Graphics Tablets
FOR ARTISTS

Welcome to the Pencil Kings Definitive Guide to the best graphics tablets for artists, in association with Tablets for Artists.

We hope this guide helps you find the right tablet for your needs, and helps you choose from the bewildering range of tablets on the market.

Vicky Rubin, founder of **Tablets for Artists**, is a professional children's book illustrator who has used and reviewed all the tablets listed in this guide.

First, you'll get an introduction to the different types of tablets available, and the different options available to artists.

Then, we'll dive into our comprehensive guide to tablets. We've split this up into sections according to price, so you'll be able to find the best tablet for you no matter how big or small your budget.

You'll also get a guide to the best styluses on the market, and an overview of the best art software programs and apps available.

So, enjoy this guide - we hope it helps you find exactly the right graphics tablet for your needs!

What are the Different Types of Graphics Tablet?

There are basically 5 types of graphics tablet on the market. These are:

Non-display Graphics Tablet

This type of tablet looks like a plastic slate and is connected to your computer usually via USB.

Example: Wacom Intuos Pro Pen & Touch



Convertible 2-in-1

These are tablets/laptops with detachable keyboards which can run a full operating system such as Windows 10.

Example: Microsoft Surface Pro 3



Tablet PC Slate

Tablets without a keyboard, which either run on Windows, Android, or iOS. You can connect a separate keyboard if required.

Example: Apple iPad Pro



PC Convertible (a Type of Slate)

A PC convertible is a type of laptop where the keyboard swivels round to create a flat stand with the screen facing up.

These tablets usually run a full version of Windows, which means you can also run your favorite art software, such as Photoshop.

Example: Lenovo Yoga



Tablet Monitor/Hybrid

These tablets are a combination of tablet and monitor. Some need to be connected to your desktop or laptop computer, but others can run completely independently.

These tablets are a favorite among professional artists.

Example: Wacom Cintiq Companion



Best Graphics Tablets for Under \$100

If you're a beginner artist, or just want an introduction to digital art, there is wide range of tablets available for under \$100, such as the [Amazon Fire](#).

This comes with:

- 7" IPS display (171 ppi / 1024 x 600) and fast 1.3 GHz quad-core processor. Rear and front-facing cameras.
- All-new Amazon Underground, a one-of-a-kind app store experience where over \$10,000 in apps, games and even in-app items are actually free - including extra lives, unlocked levels, unlimited add-on packs and more
- Enjoy more than 38 million movies, TV shows, songs, books, apps and games
- 8 GB of internal storage. Free unlimited cloud storage for all Amazon content and photos taken with Fire devices. Add a microSD card for up to 128 GB of additional storage.
- Updated user interface - Fire OS 5 designed for quick access to your apps and content plus personalized recommendations that make it easy to discover new favorites
- Up to 7 hours of reading, surfing the web, watching videos, and listening to music
- Stay connected with fast web browsing, email, and calendar support

Our verdict? While these tablets aren't really suitable for creating complex finished paintings, they're ideal for sketching or just having fun with digital art.

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Best Graphics Tablets for Under \$500

If your budget can stretch to more than \$500, you'll find the range of options available to you as an artist increases.

First of all, you could try looking at a non-display tablet such as the [Wacom Medium Pen & Touch](#).

Here are the main features:

- Paint, design and create directly on your computer
- Replaces your mouse and turns your computer into a digital drawing canvas
- Battery-free, pressure sensitive pen helps you to draw thicker and thinner lines depending on how hard you push on the pen
- Use your fingers to navigate, scroll, zoom your artwork with multi-touch gestures
- Comes with a free Art Pack including: Corel Painter Essentials drawing and painting software, online tutorials, a free 8x10 metal photo print, and a 8x8 Shutterfly Photo Album
- Four customizable Express Keys that put your favorite shortcuts like undo or copy/paste at your fingertips
- Connects to Mac (10.8.5 and above) or PC (Windows 7 and above) via USB cable or wireless - wireless kit sold separately (B006MRVFE) - and works with any software program.

Alternatively, take a look at some of the great alternatives on offer from other manufacturers, such as the [Huion H610 Pro](#).

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Wacom Medium Pen & Touch



Huion H610 Pro Tablet



Best Graphics Tablets for Under \$500

If you feel that getting used to a non-display tablet is not for you, then you might want to look at a convertible 2-in-1 tablet like the [Microsoft Surface Pro series](#).

Although this is an older model (the much more expensive Surface Pro 4 has just been launched), this is still a powerful graphics tablet. It comes with:

- Intel Core i5 (3rd Gen) 3317U / 1.7 GHz Max Turbo Speed: 2.6 GHz (Dual-Core) - 4GB DDR3 SDRAM Memory
- Microsoft Surface Touch Cover Included
- 16:9 Widescreen with 10-Point multi-touch touchscreen and Intel HD Graphics 4000
- Dual Cameras: 1.2 Megapixel (back), 1.2 Megapixel (front)
- Stylus Included - USB 3.0, Mini Display Port, Headphone output, MicroSDXC reader

Alternatively, you might want to check out a fairly high-spec slate tablet, such as an [iPad Mini 2](#), a [Samsung Galaxy Tab](#), or a PC Convertible such as the [Lenovo Yoga](#). Some of these can run a full version of Windows, whereas others can't. However, remember there is a great range of art apps available even if you can't run Photoshop on your machine.

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Best Graphics Tablets for Under \$1000

If you've got more than \$500 to spend, you can start looking at even more options for your creativity. For example, you can pick up a [13 HD Wacom Cintiq](#) for around \$799, which has these features:

- Enjoy the natural creative experience of working directly on screen
- Pressure (2048 levels) and tilt sensitive Wacom Pro Pen performs like traditional brushes, pencils and markers
- Premium, 13.3", HD Display (1920 X 1080) with wide viewing angle, get a HDMI to Mini Display Port adapter to connect the DTK1300 to a Macbook Pro
- 3-Position display stand (included)
- Comfortable, compact, lightweight design
- Simple set-up to PC or Mac with 3-in-1 cable
- Easy shortcut access with our four time-saving, customizable ExpressKeys, Rocker ring

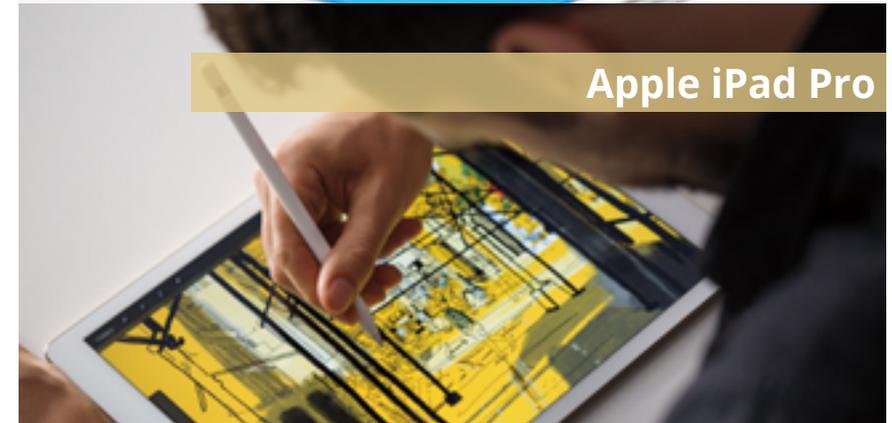
However, if you'd prefer a convertible 2-in-1, you'll find the [Microsoft Surface Pro 3 or 4](#) more than fit the bill. Or, take a look at new [iPad Pro](#). Although it can't run Photoshop, this is still an awesome creative tool with a wide range of apps to choose from.



Wacom Cintiq 13HD



Microsoft Surface Pro 3



Apple iPad Pro

Best Graphics Tablets for Over \$1000

If money's no object, you can start looking at the top-of-the-range models as owned (and coveted!) by many digital artists.

Probably the best-known tablet in this category is the [Wacom Cintiq 22-inch HD](#). Here are its features:

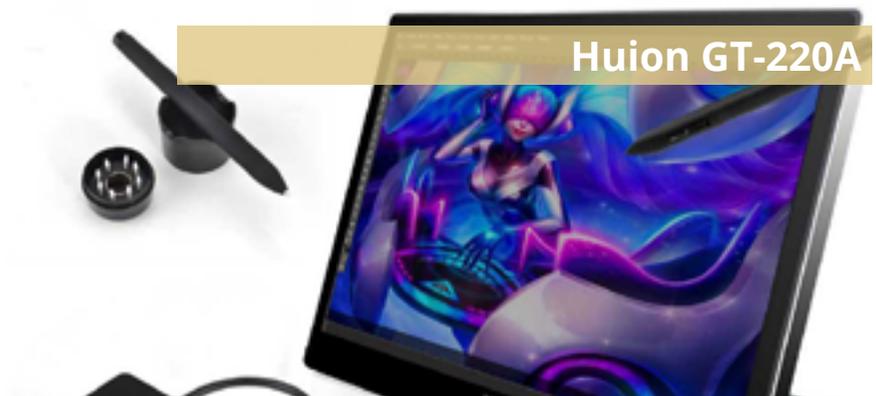
- 21.5" HD Display features a wide format, full HD resolution and extra wide viewing angle.
- Work naturally and intuitively directly on screen. Sketch, paint, design and edit directly on the surface of the screen.
- Wacom's most advanced pressure and tilt-sensitive pen technology replicates the natural effects and experience of working with conventional tools such as pens, markers, and brushes.
- Time saving Express Keys, Scroll Ring and Radial menus give you customizable, one-touch shortcuts and modifiers.

Alternatively, take a look at the [Cintiq Companion](#) - an amazing tablet that can be connected to your computer or used on its own.

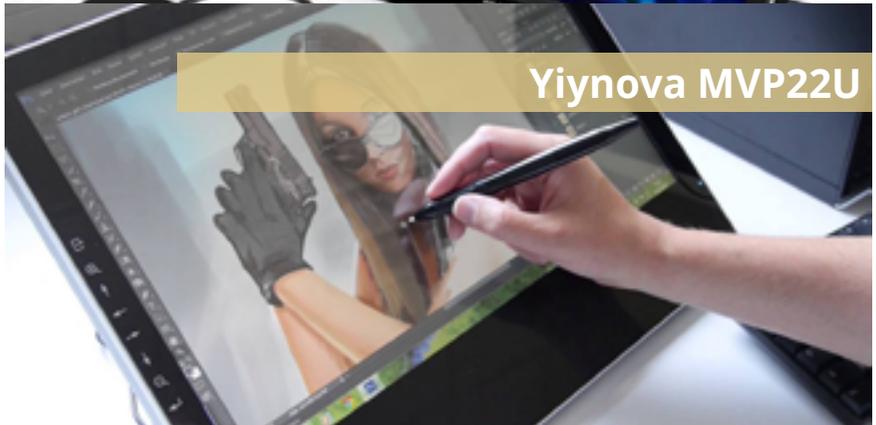
And, if you want similar specifications but can't quite stretch to a Cintiq, take a look at the high-end tablets made by [Huion](#) (like the GT-220A) or the MVP22U by [Yiynova](#).



Wacom Cintiq Companion



Huion GT-220A



Yiynova MVP22U

Best Styluses for Digital Artists

If you decide to go for a slate tablet under \$500, you may also need to buy a separate stylus to draw with. Tablets above this price range usually come with their own stylus.

In our experience, Bluetooth styluses don't necessarily give you a huge advantage over non-Bluetooth ones. In fact, with unreliability cited as a key issue, some reviewers say they are unable to recommend *any* of them with 100 per cent confidence. Therefore, we recommend saving yourself some money and opting for a non-Bluetooth stylus.

Here are two of our favorites:

[The Maglus Stylus](#). This has:

- Accurate conductive tip for precise control.
- Soft Silicone Surface for contact with device.
- Strong precision machined aluminium.
- Keyring capsule for storing your spare tips so you are never without the use of your Maglus.
- Maglus is magnetic and clings to the side of your iPad.

[Adonit Jot Pro](#). Features include:

- Creates a fine line: To write and draw with ballpoint precision.
- Works smoothly: Dampening tip cushions screen contact for fluid, quiet writing.
- Clips on to carry: For simple portability in a sleek profile.
- No need to connect: Just touch stylus to screen.
- Touchscreen Compatible: Works with most capacitive touch screen devices

Maglus Stylus



Adonit Jot Pro



Best Software for Digital Artists

If your tablet can run a full operating system such as Windows 10 , then you can install your favorite art software on it and have fun making art with all the features you're used to.

Here are some of our favorite programs:

[Adobe Photoshop CC](#)

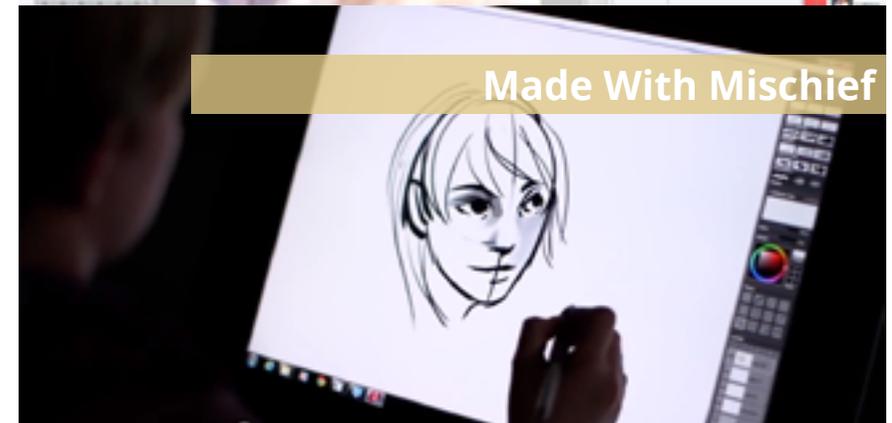
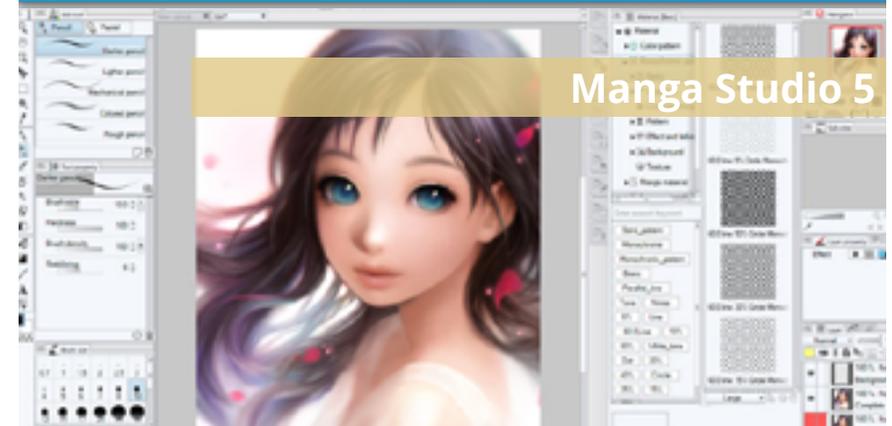
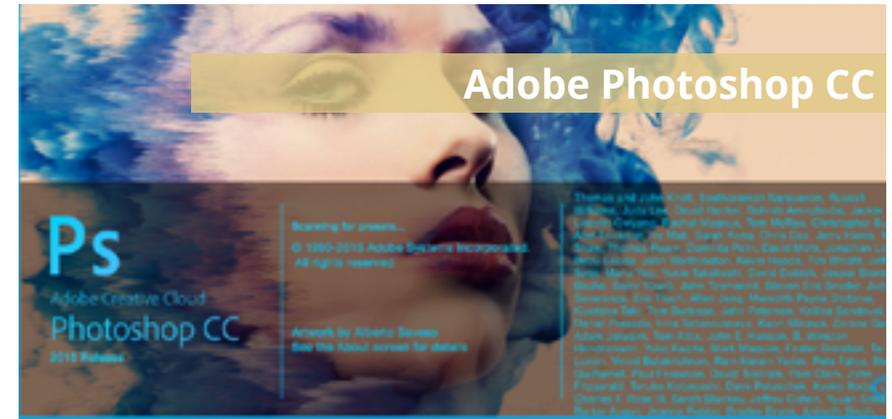
The industry standard for many artists, this amazingly powerful software gives you almost limitless options for your creativity. It's only available to own via a monthly subscription, but its reputation pretty much speaks for itself.

[Manga Studio 5](#)

A big favorite with comic artists and illustrators, this awesome program comes packed with features to help you get great results. Its powerful, fast interface means you'll be able to get your projects finished even faster than by hand.

[Made With Mischief](#)

Although it's a relative newcomer on the digital art scene, this powerful yet affordable software has been described as "a superb choice for all creatives" by leading digital art publication, Imagine FX. The full version costs just \$25, but you can also download a free 15-day trial from their website to try before you buy!



Best Apps for Digital Artists

Not running a full operating system like Windows 10 needn't get in the way of your creativity. There is a great range of art apps available, and here are some of our favorites:

[Procreate \(iOs only\)](#)

Developed by Savage Interactive, this app helps you create stunning drawings and paintings thanks to powerful features such as accelerated filters and 4K canvases. It's the app of choice for many digital artists, such as Goro Fujita.

[Autodesk Sketchbook Pro \(iOS/Android\)](#)

With pressure-sensitive controls and a vast range of professional quality brushes and pencils, it's easy to see why this app remains a firm favorite among many artists.

Just like in Photoshop, you can work in layers to build up your drawings and paintings, while there's even the option of exporting your work as a layered Photoshop file if you want to transfer your art to your desktop.

[ArtRage](#)

Put simply, ArtRage is just about the most fun you can have while painting...without getting a single splash of paint on your sneakers!

Choose from an endless array of brushes and drawing tools, and lose yourself in this app's incredibly powerful blending options, where you get to mix oils or watercolors on the digital canvas just as you would in real life.

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Thanks for Reading Our Definitive Guide to the best graphics tablets for artists, in association with Tablets for Artists.

Thanks for reading our Definitive Guide to the Best Graphics Tablets for Artists - we hope you found all the information in here useful.

For more information on any of the tablets in this guide plus many others, why not check out all the awesome resources at [Tablets for Artists?](#)

You'll find:

- A comprehensive guide to all the best graphics tablets on the market
- A handy comparison chart to help you choose the one that's right for you
- Reviews of tablets, styluses and the best art equipment for all your requirements

And, once you've chosen your ideal tablet, check out the [wide range of art video courses on Pencil Kings](#). Whether you're a beginner or a more experienced artist, you'll find everything you need to get the most out of your creativity and put the fun back into making art again.

For just \$19.95 a month, you'll get:

- Access to all the courses on the site plus two new courses each month
- Full access to our members-only community - a creative hub and a safe haven where you can meet other artists and share your work and ideas
- Access to regular drawing challenges and workshops to help you keep motivated, plus support and advice from us whenever you need it
- All the benefits of professional art tuition - in the comfort of your own home