AppleSeed for IT
Program Planning Guide

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Overview

AppleSeed for IT is a program specifically designed for enterprise and education customers committed to testing each new version of Apple beta software in their organizations. This program provides IT professionals and technology managers with an opportunity to evaluate the latest prerelease software versions in their unique work environments, offer feedback directly to Apple engineering teams through a dedicated bug submission process, and participate in detailed testing plans and forum discussions with other participants.

Your feedback is critical because it helps to ensure that the new software works in your organization. By giving us feedback, you also give your users confidence that the technology will support them as soon as it's released.

Program Features

Prerelease Software
Apple leads the industry in delivering operating system updates to provide new enhancements and features to users as well as to address emerging security concerns. Updates are provided for all supported devices simultaneously. AppleSeed for IT allows your IT department to test beta software readiness for your organization before it's released to users. The feedback you provide on quality, usability, integration, and operation of features in your environment will help Apple identify issues, fix them, and make the final software release even better.

Test Plans and Surveys
The detailed test plans provided are designed to help you evaluate how well the beta software will work within your various workflows. Plans include a blend of regression tests to verify that the software behaves as it did in the previous release, as well as new-feature tests to validate the latest advances. You'll also receive surveys on specific topics and areas for focused testing. Your participation in these surveys will give you the opportunity to become familiar with the software features and evaluate the impact they'll have on your organization.

Dedicated Review Queue

Program participants are encouraged to test every software build and to submit feedback on any issues found during testing. All feedback submitted through the AppleSeed for IT program will be funneled to a dedicated review queue, which ensures that bug submissions, as well as enhancement requests, get to the right individuals at Apple as quickly as possible.

Discussion Forums

Members of the program have access to AppleSeed for IT discussion forums. You can post questions, share comments, and discuss a variety of IT topics with other AppleSeed for IT participants—from getting started to working with the latest beta software.

Choosing the Right Program

AppleSeed for IT is designed for IT administrators and managers who are looking to test Apple beta software in their network environment. The program is not designed to test app compatibility, nor does it offer capabilities for app distribution. Organizations looking to develop, test, and distribute iPhone, iPad, Mac, Apple Watch, and Apple TV apps should enroll in the Apple Developer Program. For enterprise in-house iOS, iPadOS, and Mac apps, enroll in the Apple Developer Enterprise Program.

For more information, visit the following websites:

Apple Developer Program: developer.apple.com/programs

Apple Developer Enterprise Program: developer.apple.com/programs/enterprise

Accessing the Program

Customers with Apple Business Manager or Apple School Manager are eligible to participate in AppleSeed for IT. Each participant must have a Managed Apple ID provided by their institution and an email associated with their Managed Apple ID. Managed Apple IDs with the Student role are excluded from participating.

Activate Your Account

Once you have an eligible Managed Apple ID, follow these steps to access the program:

1. Go to appleseed.apple.com, and click the "Sign in" button.
2. Log in with your Managed Apple ID.
3. Read and accept the program terms.

After completing these steps, you'll be active in the program.

Leaving the Program

If you want to remove your account entirely from AppleSeed for IT, delete or deactivate your Managed Apple ID. Once you leave, you'll no longer be able to submit feedback using Feedback Assistant or access program resources.

Setting Up Your Devices

All participants in the AppleSeed for IT program can sign in to the AppleSeed Software Customer Seeding website at appleseed.apple.com. From the program portal, you can access release notes, beta software, program announcements, and documentation, as well as manage your bug submissions.

Back Up Your Data

Always back up your files before installing any prerelease software.

iPhone

We recommend that you back up your iPhone before installing iOS beta software. You won't be able to use iCloud Backup if you go back to the current version of iOS.

iPad

We recommend that you back up your iPad before installing iPadOS beta software. You won't be able to use iCloud Backup if you go back to the current version of iPadOS.

Mac

Backing up files on a Mac is easy with Time Machine, the built-in backup utility in macOS.

Learn how to back up your Mac with Time Machine: support.apple.com/en-us/HT201250

Review Release Notes

Before installing Apple beta software, look to release notes for news and high-lights of new or changed features. You can find the most recent notes under the Info tab on the AppleSeed portal. Consider sending a communication to other beta testers on your team that includes notes on each prerelease, rather than requiring team members to find them on their own.

Install the Beta Software

Enroll your devices to receive the latest iOS, iPadOS, macOS, watchOS, and tvOS beta software.

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iOS

To install the iOS beta software, you'll need to install the iOS Beta Software Profile on your device. Once your device is running iOS beta, new versions of the beta software can be installed over the air. Your team will receive email notifications when new builds are available. You'll also get notifications on your device.

Make sure to delete the previous profile in Settings > General > Profiles & Device Management. Once you complete this step, log in to the AppleSeed portal from your iOS device and tap the Downloads tab to download the Beta Software Profile. Your device will prompt you to install it. Follow the onscreen instructions to allow installation, then restart your device.

You'll automatically receive the latest public beta software over the air. If you get a notification that an update is available, tap Settings > General > Software Update to download and install the latest version of the beta software.

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iPadOS

To install the iPadOS beta software, you'll need to install the iPadOS Beta Software Profile on your device. Once your device is running iPadOS beta, new versions of the beta software can be installed over the air. Your team will receive email notifications when new builds are available. You'll also get notifications on your device.

Make sure to delete the previous profile in Settings > General > Profiles & Device Management. Once you complete this step, log in to the AppleSeed portal from your iPad and tap the Downloads tab to download the iPadOS Beta Software Profile. Your device will prompt you to install it. Follow the onscreen instructions to allow installation, then restart your device.

You'll automatically receive the latest public beta software over the air. If you get a notification that an update is available, tap Settings > General > Software Update to download and install the latest version of the beta software.

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macOS

The macOS Software Update Seed Configuration Utility lets you enroll your Mac in the program so you can get the latest macOS Software Update seed build directly from the Mac App Store. Download the Configuration Utility from the Downloads tab in the AppleSeed portal. When your download is complete, double-click the Utility.dmg file to run the installer, then follow the onscreen instructions.

Once installed, the Feedback Assistant application and the Mac App Store will automatically launch. From the Mac App Store, click the Download button to install the latest macOS Software Update seed build.

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watchOS

To install watchOS beta, you'll need to install the watchOS Beta Software Profile; watchOS 6 beta requires Apple Watch Series 2 or later and iPhone running iOS 13 beta. Make sure your Apple Watch has at least a 50 percent charge and that your iPhone is connected to Wi-Fi. Keep your iPhone next to your Apple Watch to make sure they're in range.

Download the configuration profile from the Downloads section.

   On your iOS device: Download the configuration profile directly on your iOS device, and follow the installation instructions.

   On your Mac or PC: Save the file to your hard disk and email it to an account on your iPhone. Tap the configuration profile in Mail, and follow the installation instructions.

After launching the profile, tap Apple Watch as the installation location and reboot when prompted.

On your iPhone, open the Apple Watch app and tap My Watch > General > Software Update.

If prompted for your iPhone passcode or Apple Watch passcode, enter the passcode.

Wait for the Apple logo and progress indicator to appear. When the update is done, your Apple Watch will restart.

Support for Apple Watch

If your Apple Watch displays a red "!" icon, force restart your Apple Watch. Simultaneously press and hold the side button and Digital Crown for at least 10 seconds, then release when you see the Apple logo.

If force restarting your Apple Watch doesn't resolve the issue, or if your Apple Watch restarts in recovery mode or exhibits other issues that require it to be restored with the current version of watchOS, you may need to send it in to Apple to be serviced. Apple Authorized Service Providers and Apple Stores cannot perform this service. Once your device is received, it may take up to 3 business days to be serviced. You will get back the same device you sent in. This service is currently available in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

To start the support process, contact AppleCare.

tvOS

There are two different options for installing tvOS on your Apple TV 4K or Apple TV (4th generation).

Option 1: Automatic updates

1. From your Apple TV, log in to iCloud with the same Apple ID used in the AppleSeed for IT program.

2. Go to Settings › System › Software Updates, and turn on Get Public Beta Updates.

3. Follow the onscreen instructions to complete your enrollment.

4. Your Apple TV will automatically receive the latest beta software if you have Automatically Update turned on in the Software Updates settings. To manually check for updates, go to Settings › System › Software Updates › Update Software.

Option 2: Install using Apple Configurator

1. Download the tvOS beta software restore image (IPSW) to your Mac by clicking the AppleSeed for IT tvOS project from the menu in the upper-left corner of the web portal. Click the Downloads tab to view these downloads.

2. Install Apple Configurator 2 from the AppleSeed for IT download page or Mac App Store, and launch the app.

3. Connect your Apple TV to your Mac with a USB-C cable.

4. When your Apple TV appears in Apple Configurator, drag the tvOS beta software restore image to it.

5. Click Restore to reset to factory settings.

6. After installing the beta, your device will reboot; it will require a network connection to complete activation.

7. If you're testing device management features, install the Managed Configuration (MC) logging profile and use it throughout your testing. You can also drag this profile from a Finder window and drop it onto the icon of your Apple TV. The link to the logging profile can be found under the AppleSeed for IT macOS project from the menu in the upper-left corner of the web portal. Click the Downloads tab to view these downloads.

Activate the Feedback Assistant App

Once you've installed the beta software, activate the built-in Feedback Assistant app. It's the most efficient way to submit a bug report. Feedback Assistant automatically collects key diagnostic information to support your bug reports. It also submits your system attributes. On your iPhone or iPad, launch Feedback Assistant from the Home screen. You'll also report watchOS and tvOS issues using Feedback Assistant on your iPhone or iPad. On your Mac, launch Feedback Assistant from your Dock or by choosing Send Feedback from the Help menu of your app. Whether you're using your iPhone, your iPad, or your Mac, restart, select the app, and log in using your Apple ID.

Unenroll Your Device

When your Mac, iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, or Apple TV is enrolled in AppleSeed for IT, you'll automatically receive new versions of the beta software from Apple. You can unenroll your device at any time so that it no longer receives these updates.

iOS

You will not be able to perform a restore when your device is running software that's newer than what's distributed to the general public. To install the current shipping software, you'll need to place your device in recovery mode and restore from your iOS backup.

Learn how to put your iOS device in recovery mode: support.apple.com/HT201263

Learn how to restore your iOS device from a backup: support.apple.com/HT204184

iPadOS

You will not be able to perform a restore when your device is running software that's newer than what's distributed to the general public. To install the current shipping software, you'll need to place your device in recovery mode and restore from your iPad backup.

Learn how to put your iPad in recovery mode: support.apple.com/HT201263

Learn how to restore iPad from a backup: support.apple.com/HT204184

Mac

To unenroll your Mac, restore it using the Time Machine backup you created before you installed the macOS beta software.

Follow these steps to unenroll your Mac:

1. In the Apple menu, choose System Preferences, then App Store.

2. Click the "Change…" button next to "Your computer is set to receive beta software updates."

3. In the dialog that appears, select Do Not Show Beta Software Updates. Your Mac will no longer receive prerelease updates.

Learn how to restore your Mac to a previous macOS version: support.apple.com/kb/PH18846

Testing the Beta Software

While it's ideal to test beta software in your production environment, we don't recommend installing prerelease software on business-critical devices. If you prefer to set up a separate environment for testing, replicate your production environment and practices as closely as possible. Your Wi-Fi setup, VPN configuration, email server, mobile device management (MDM) solution, and other IT systems create a unique combination. Testing them will allow you to report bugs that other users might not encounter.

Complete Test Plans and Surveys

The AppleSeed team will periodically release test plans and surveys, which will include important testing for you to complete. Both test plans and surveys will be delivered directly to the Feedback Assistant inbox. You can also find them under the Surveys tab on the AppleSeed portal.

Start by taking the Infrastructure survey, which asks a series of questions about your IT infrastructure. This information will help Apple determine how your devices are being used.

Follow-up test plans will include questions for testing specific technology areas, including mail, calendar,, and device management. Follow these test plans and submit feedback for any tasks that fail to complete as expected.

Test Your IT Systems, MDM Solution, and Critical Apps
In addition to completing the standard test plans provided by Apple, assign beta testers to validate your core IT systems and services in each beta release.

• Test network connectivity both inside and outside your network, including Wi-Fi and VPN.

• Validate Exchange functions, including email, contacts, calendar, tasks, and notes.

• Include MDM beta testing as well as Apple Configurator testing. Check with your MDM vendor about their timetable for new iOS feature support.

• Test critical in-house and App Store apps.

• Validate back-end systems.

• Test Bluetooth device connections and accessories.

Submit Feedback
The preferred method for reporting bugs and/or enhancement requests is through the Feedback Assistant app on your iOS or iPadOS device or your Mac. The app lets you capture events right at the point of failure. Log in using the Apple ID associated with your AppleSeed for IT program enrollment to be sure your feedback is submitted to the AppleSeed for IT review queue. To report watchOS or tvOS issues, you'll also use Feedback Assistant on your iOS or iPadOS device. You'll need to pair your devices to file feedback on your Apple TV. Start a new feedback entry, then select your Apple TV under Other Devices to begin the pairing process. Make sure your Apple TV is nearby and running the latest beta and that your iOS device has Bluetooth turned on. For any issue you submit, make a note of the Feedback ID you receive. This ID number refers to your unique issue for follow-up with your team and Apple.

In addition to using the Feedback Assistant regularly, keep track of best practices as you experience the beta software within your various workflows. Your Apple systems engineer (SE) can help document these best-practice workflows with you by phone and in person.

Note: Bugs logged through bugreporter.apple.com and AppleCare will not end up in the prioritized queue for AppleSeed for IT.

View Your Feedback
In both Feedback Assistant and the AppleSeed portal, you can view your filed feedback, feedback that you've saved as a draft, and feedback that requires additional action on your part. You can also provide additional information about an existing bug.

Provide Additional Information for iOS, iPadOS, and macOS

In addition to submitting your form when you report an issue, it's important to provide console logs, device logs, and screenshots that illustrate the problem to Apple engineering teams. While you can submit a report from an iOS or iPadOS device, you might at times need to submit from your Mac so you can attach the correct files. Be sure to include necessary iOS, iPadOS, or macOS logs to expedite the investigation process. A Mac System Information Report is required for crashes or kernel panics as well as reports against hardware or issues with printing.

For information about logs and other details you may need to provide with your feedback, visit developer.apple.com/bug-reporting/profiles-and-logs.

Learn about logs, reproducible test cases, and other details at appleseed.apple.com/sp/help/feedback.

Write Precise Bug Reports

Submitting bug reports is the most effective way to get your bugs fixed. Be as specific as possible when submitting bug reports. Providing as many details as possible, such as the suggestions below, allows Apple to triage the issue more quickly and avoid requests for additional information.

- Give your bug a good title so that Apple engineering teams can find it more easily, quickly understand the nature of the bug, and reduce unnecessary duplicates.

- Indicate whether the problem occurred in previous releases or is new to this beta and if it can be consistently reproduced.

- Remember to use screenshots and video to capture on-device behaviors and UI examples.

- Provide details and versions of other software and systems involved, including Wi-Fi infrastructure, Exchange server version, MDM solution, and so on.

- Be explicit when providing descriptive summary information.

  - Describe what happened, what you were doing when it happened, and why you think it's a problem.

  - If applicable, provide a test case, sample app, sample project, sample link, and so on.

  - If you receive an error message, provide the content of the error message or an approximation of it.

  - Provide specifics and refrain from using vague language or colloquialisms.

- Provide exact steps for reproducing the issue and include any relevant logs.

- State clearly what you expected to happen and what happened instead.

- If you've found a workaround for this problem, describe it.

Get Assistance from AppleCare

You'll receive follow-up to feedback reports in the Feedback Assistant app, including requests for additional information and notification that an issue has been fixed in a new beta release. AppleSeed for IT release notes for each beta will include highlights of issues fixed since previous betas.

If you have an AppleCare for Enterprise or AppleCare OS Support Agreement, you can work with AppleCare to verify issues from previous software releases that are fixed in the beta. You can get testing assistance from the AppleCare Enterprise Support team or an Apple SE to further enhance AppleSeed for IT. The AppleCare team or SE should be familiar with your organization and your environment, so they can quickly guide you through testing, submitting feed-back, and tracking issues. Notify them of any deployment-blocking issues that you report through Feedback Assistant.

Participate in the Discussion Forums

The AppleSeed for IT program hosts a private discussion board for our seed participants to post important information about the project, share their experiences, and ask each other for help. We suggest you log in frequently to access the latest information. The Discussions link is at the top of the AppleSeed for IT page. If you have difficulties or questions, post them in the appropriate topic folders.

Summary

Your participation in the AppleSeed for IT program helps Apple find and fix problems before the public release of Apple software. Install the beta software, test your workflows, complete the test plans and surveys, provide feedback, and report any potential deployment blockers to your Apple Systems Engineer or AppleCare Account Manager. Your help is critical to the successful launch of each software release.