What is an iPad Widget? And How Do I Install One?
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Widgets are small apps that run on a device's interface, such as a clock or a widget that tells you the current weather. While widgets have been popular on Android and Windows RT tablets for a while now, they haven't made their way to the iPad... until now. The iOS 8 update brought "Extensibility" to the iPad. Extensibility is a cool feature that allows a snippet of an app to run within another app. This allows widgets to run on the iPad via the Notification Center. You'll be able to customize the notification center to show widgets and choose which widgets to show in the notification center. You can also choose to access the notification center while the iPad is locked, so you can see your widget without typing in your passcode.

How do I Install a Widget on My iPad?

Widgets can be installed into the Notification Center by opening notifications by sliding your finger down, careful to start at the very top of the screen, and then tapping the 'Edit' button located at the end of your active notifications. The edit screen is split into those widgets that will display in the Notification Center and those that are installed on the device but not currently showing with the other notifications. To install a widget, simply tap the green button with the plus sign next to it. To remove a widget, tap the red button with the minus sign and then tap the remove button that appears to the right of the widget. Yes, it's that simple. Once the widget is installed, it will be displayed when you open the Notification Center.

Will There Be a Separate 'Widget' Store?

The way Apple has implemented widgets is by allowing an app to display a custom interface within another app. This means a widget is just an app that allows part of itself to be shown in another app, which in this case is the notification center. Sound confusing? It's not. If you want to see sports scores in your notification center, you can simply download a sports app like ScoreCenter from the app store. The app will need to support becoming a widget in the notification center, but you don't need to install a special version of the app. Once installed, you can configure which apps to show in the notification center through the iPad's notification settings.

Can I Use a Widget to Replace the On-Screen Keyboard?

Another exciting benefit of Extensibility is the ability to use third-party keyboards. Swype has long been a popular alternative to traditional typing (or tapping, as we do on our tablets). An Android keyboard alternative, Swype lets you draw words instead of tap them out, which ultimately leads to faster and more accurate typing. (It's also amazing how quickly you can get used to the idea). For information on installing third-party

keyboards, we'll have to wait until third-party keyboards arrive in the App Store. Several have already been confirmed, including Swype.

What Other Ways Can I Use a Widget?

Because extensibility is the ability for an app to run within another app, widgets can expand almost any app. For example, you can use the Pinterest app as a widget by installing it into Safari as an additional way to share web pages. You can also use photo editing apps like *Litely* inside of the iPad's Photos app, which gives you a single place to edit a photo and use features from other photo-editing apps.

How to Reorder Widgets on the iPad Notification Center

Now that you have added a few widgets to the iPad's Notification Center, it might occur to you that widgets further down the page would be more useful towards the top. For example, the Yahoo Weather widget makes a great replacement for the default weather widget, but it won't do you as much good if it is at the bottom of the list. You can easily reorder widgets in the Notification Center by dragging a widget and dropping it in the order you want it to appear.

- First, you need to be in edit mode. You can enter edit mode by scrolling down to the bottom of the Notification Center and tapping the edit button.
- Next, tap the three horizontal lines next to the widget, and without removing your finger from the screen, drag it up or down the list.

This makes a great way of customizing the Notification Center and quickly getting at the information or widgets you want to see most. Unfortunately, Apple doesn't allow a widget to go above the Today Summary and Traffic Conditions or below the Tomorrow Summary.

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