

# Basics of OS Upgrades

---

Everything you need to prepare for macOS Sequoia  
and OS 18 with Jamf Now



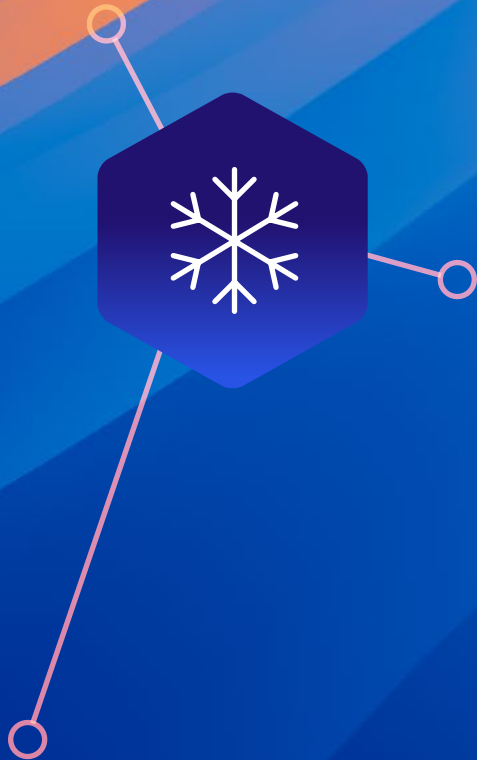


## **Apple OS upgrades are coming. Are you ready?**

Exciting new versions of macOS, iPadOS, iOS, tvOS, watchOS and visionOS are heading to a device near you. Your job is simple. Get these features into the hands of users, all without disrupting workflows or slowing productivity.

As most organizations know, this is often easier said than done, especially when factoring in the speed at which Apple users like to upgrade. Now for the good news. At Jamf, we've been doing this for more than 20 years, and are here to provide step-by-step guidance for successful Apple upgrades — first OS season, or you are a seasoned professional.

# Why an Apple upgrade is different



**Contrary to other ecosystems, major new versions of Apple’s operating systems are released annually. A combination of the simple upgrade path and zero cost help drive industry-leading adoption rates for consumers.**

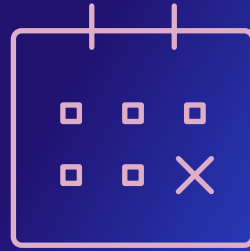
This trend is further accelerated by Apple’s vertical integration of hardware and software: any new Mac, iPad or iPhone will always ship with the latest OS version and can’t be downgraded. The same cannot be said for Windows and Android, where hardware and software fragmentation is a major challenge for organizations, IT and users.

When devices are running old software, consistency, security and user experience are all compromised. And this is especially true when organizations attempt to support

a variety of devices and OS platforms with a single management solution. Without the complications and cost of licensing, Apple’s user-initiated upgrades are easy for end users to carry out autonomously. This is one of the reasons Apple’s operating systems have the highest adoption rate of any ecosystem.

End users are so excited to access the new features; yet, you’re responsible for maintaining security controls and an accurate systems inventory at all times.

This guide provides you with a thorough understanding of the new operating systems, and ways to carefully prepare for and implement an upgrade. You’ll learn how to minimize disruptions and eliminate unplanned downtime, gaining the knowledge to deliver organizational value and walk users through their macOS Sequoia and OS 18 upgrades.



# The business value of same-day upgrades

There are four key reasons organizations should embrace upgrades and empower end users to update their device(s) when your environment, organization and team is ready:

## 1 Reduce security vulnerabilities

New operating system versions usually include improved security and privacy functionality. It's in your best interest to empower and encourage users to upgrade to the latest operating systems. This will help ensure your organization doesn't fall prey to data breaches and system vulnerabilities, all because devices are out of date.

## 2 Keep end users happy

New features and improvements to the user interface mean end users eagerly anticipate new operating system versions each year.

## 3 Keep users productive

The latest operating systems introduce new features that support greater efficiency and productivity. When users are unable to upgrade, they are unable to take advantage of helpful functionality.

## 4 Access new IT management features

Gain access to a wealth of new management features. Not only will you have access to new capabilities for Apple ecosystem management, but you can also customize and configure new end-user features based on the unique needs of your environment.

# Join the beta party



**The best defense is a good offense. Arm yourself with previews of upcoming releases through [AppleSeed for IT](#) to get an early look at how new OS versions and features will impact your organization.**

Apple is regularly updating its operating systems, which means participating in the beta program provides months of testing ahead of an operating system release.

## Why Beta?

- 1** The beta cycle for these operating systems typically occurs in multiple phases. Participating early and submitting feedback to Apple increases the likelihood that the features and issues that impact you most will be addressed before the update is generally released.
- 2** Participating in the beta not only gives you early access to test new features and compatibility, but it also offers a deeper understanding of how the end-user experience will be impacted.
- 3** Lastly, in addition to new OS settings and features, application infrastructure and management compatibility testing is critical for continuity with current software offerings in your environment. We recommend you run Apple's betas to test their deployed apps for issues. Reporting any issues to the associated vendors upon discovery will help ensure the apps work upon Apple's official release.

If you have not joined in [Apple's Beta programs](#), you always can for free and you will get benefits for future OS testing.

# Conduct strategic testing



STEP  
2

**For best results and to ensure the upgrade won't impact any unforeseen aspects of your end users' workflows, be sure to test your entire tech stack including:**

## **1 Applications**

Includes both web and non-web based applications. Prioritization is essential, especially in resource-strapped organizations. Take inventory of all applications used across your organization and rank them by critical business nature.

## **2 Management**

Jamf Now offers the ability to test new restrictions, management capabilities and features by creating new Blueprints and assigning them to your test devices, keeping your production devices stable.

## **3 Security**

Similar to your management provider, check that your security solutions offer the ability to test new security capabilities and features. You won't want to upgrade if security solutions are not compatible.

# Upgrading to the new operating systems



In addition to the testing guidance above, macOS Sequoia and OS 18 have differing sets of new features and unique impact on your environment.

Below you will find important information on how to update your operating systems in Jamf Now.

## Upgrading to macOS Sequoia



### Single Device

Admins can choose to update any single device as new devices are added to the ecosystem or on an as needed basis per device.



Find eligible devices by clicking on the Filter icon in the top-right corner of the main Devices tab. Select the Updates Available check box to view Jamf Now managed devices that have available updates.



You can then click on any device in the filtered list to view the different updates available for the device. When ready, you can click “Update” under the Operating System tile to push out the OS Update to the device.



### Group of Devices/Eligible Devices

Admins can also choose to update a group of devices or all the eligible devices in their ecosystem at one time.



- Click the search icon and use the filter options to select a group of devices.



- Click the More action pop-up menu in the upper right-hand corner of your screen.



- Click Install Updates.

# Upgrading to the new operating systems

## Upgrading to iOS 18 and iPadOS 18

Once you have decided to move forward with an upgrade, you need to determine if you want users or IT to be in charge of the upgrade.



### Software Update By User

The user simply goes to Settings on their device(s) and starts the installation — no IT interaction required.



### Software Update By IT

iOS and iPadOS devices enrolled via Apple Business Manager or Apple School Manager can be upgraded by sending a Jamf Now command to download and install iOS 18 or iPadOS 18. No user interaction required for this option.



**Learn about best practices and Jamf Now workflows surrounding OS updates.**

### Notes:

- If there is no passcode, you can perform the installation automatically. If the device has a passcode, Jamf Now queues the update and the user is prompted to enter their passcode in order to start the installation.
- The MDM command can be sent to individual or groups of devices.
- IT admins will be able to choose to let devices continue using iOS 17 or iPadOS 17 but still update them with the essential security settings Apple rolls out. This gives you the additional time you need to make the move when you are ready without the fear of missing out on security updates.

STEP



# Upgrades communications plan

**A deep understanding of the new operating systems, careful planning and insight into the potential impact for end users ahead of an upgrade can minimize disruption, help desk calls and unhappy end users.**

Next, consider the following stakeholders and conversations ahead of your upgrade.

## **Steps to preparing end users when it's time to upgrade**

- 1** Not every end user is aware of the time it takes to upgrade a Mac. Inform users of the average upgrade time, and provide tips on the best time of day to upgrade.
- 2** Recommend that your end users back up their device(s) before they update. This applies to local and iCloud backups.
- 3** Consider implementing a policy to require end users to update within 30 days, or let them know you will update for them. When it comes to upgrades, err on the side of over communication. Give users plenty of warning and recommendations prior to OS upgrades. They'll thank you for it (or if all goes well, they'll say nothing.)





## Go forth and conquer

**Apple's latest operating systems, —macOS Sequoia, iPadOS 18 iOS 18, tvOS 18 watchOS 11 and visionOS 2 — bring innovative capabilities to all organizations.**

A streamlined approach to Apple upgrades ensures security measures are met, accurate system inventory is maintained and downtime is eliminated. A purpose-built Apple ecosystem management solution equips you with the tools you need to take advantage of the latest Apple OSs without negatively impacting end users or putting abundant strain on IT personnel.

Jamf is committed to helping organizations succeed with Apple. We've offered same-day support for all Apple releases for more than a decade, ensuring organizations can take advantage of new Apple technology as it becomes available.

**Let Us Prove It**

Or contact your preferred authorized reseller of Apple devices to take Jamf for a test drive.