

Apple reverses on right-to-repair, will let customers fix iPhones, Macs

Article

The news: Apple [announced](#) Wednesday that it will allow customers to fix their own phones as early as 2022. This was surprising news coming from a company that's been notorious for

locking down its devices and requiring customers to pay for expensive repairs or enroll in its AppleCare extended warranty services.

Here's how it works: The program begins with the **iPhone 12** and **iPhone 13** in the US but is expected to expand to include **M1 Macs** and other countries throughout the year.

"In the past three years, Apple has nearly doubled the number of service locations with access to Apple genuine parts, tools, and training, and now we're providing an option for those who wish to complete their own repairs," said **Apple COO Jeff Williams**.

- Customers who want to fix their devices need to read Apple's repair manual then place an order for the required tools through Apple's Self Service Repair Online Store, which will offer more than 200 individual parts and tools.
- Following completed repairs, customers are urged to return used parts for recycling and can receive credit toward a future purchase.

The bigger picture: Apple seems to be preempting the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) [policy statement](#), which increases antitrust and consumer protection against manufacturers that make it difficult or unnecessarily expensive for consumers to repair devices they own.

- The FTC's July announcement came on the heels of President Joe Biden's executive order "Promoting Competition in the American Economy," which encouraged the FTC to address "anticompetitive restrictions on third-party repair or self-repair of items."
- [Half of all US states](#) have introduced right-to-repair bills.
- Apple is clearly getting ahead of the wave of right-to-repair enforcement as well as developing a business from selling tools and parts previously limited to certified technicians and repair shops. This reversal in Apple's policy could prod competitors to follow suit.
- By providing official tools and parts, Apple curtails various sellers of cheaper contraband or unofficial parts, such as batteries, digitizers, and cases.

What's the catch? Providing tools, parts, and instructions is just one part of the solution. Repairing the latest iPhones and Macs can be difficult, even for seasoned technicians. Any iFixit repair video shows one misstep could lead to a bricked device, which in turn could result in an even more expensive replacement.

- Apple said the self-service program is intended for "individual technicians with the knowledge and experience to repair electronic devices," not just casual users.

- Apple builds in various features that make it difficult for third-party repairs to take place. They recently made it impossible for [Face ID](#) to work after DIY repairs, a move they later reversed as well.

