



Android Tablet: Introduction to an Android Tablet

Introduction

This instruction sheet describes what a tablet is, how to turn one on and off and do basic operations with it.

What is a Tablet?

Personal computing started when the *pc* or *personal computer* was developed. The first pcs were desk top computers. As electronics and battery technology progressed, it became possible to make smaller, more portable pcs—laptop computers and eventually notebook computers. In recent years there has also been very significant development in telephones resulting in *smart phones*. These smart phones not only allow one to make telephone calls, but also view text, web pages, pictures, videos and other data on their small screens. Most smart phones also include a camera which will take photos and videos.



A tablet computer is a combination of the pc and smart phone. They are very portable, typically have a much longer battery life than a laptop computer, have a larger screen than a smart phone. They can connect to the Internet either using wifi (local wireless network) or 3G or 4G (third or fourth generation cellular wireless). Some connect using wifi, some with either wifi or 3G or 4G.

The first tablet computer was the *iPad* from Apple. It is perhaps currently the most common tablet. However several other companies have developed tablets using the *Android* operating system. They are becoming more and more popular. The latest version of Android is Android 4 (called *Ice Cream Sandwich*). It replaced Android 3 (*Honeycomb*).

The tablet used for this instruction sheet is the *Asus Transformer Prime* using the *Android Ice Cream Sandwich* operating system. However most instructions should work for almost any Android tablet.

Basic Finger Operations

Unlike other pcs which use a mouse, tablets are controlled using ones fingers.

To select an object on the screen or pick an item from a list or to put the cursor somewhere within a text input box, gently touch the screen (a short tap) with your finger.

To do something other than select an object, touch the screen and hold the finger there (a long touch). A menu list will usually appear. Lift your finger and then use it to select some desired operation. Alternately, a box may appear around the object to let you know that you can move the object by moving your finger.

If you are showing a home screen or some other screen (say, containing icons, pictures or other objects) you can scroll by swiping your finger up/down or left/right on the screen.

If a screen is showing a picture or text you often can often enlarge the picture or text by putting your thumb and forefinger (or any other two fingers) on the screen and opening them up. Similarly you can close them to reduce the picture or text.

Apps (Applications)

The programs that you can run on the tablet are called *apps* (applications). A tablet comes with many apps installed already when it is purchased. But there are thousands of them available (some free some not) for downloading and installing on your tablet.

Turning the Tablet On

Hold the tablet in your hands and depress the power button for two seconds (you will feel the tablet vibrate) and release it. It will power up and show the log on screen (a closed padlock in a circle). To unlock the tablet, put your finger on the padlock (an open padlock will appear – see below) and drag the closed padlock to the open padlock and lift your finger. The *Home* screen will appear. (There are five home screens as described below.)



Sleeping, Waking and Turning the Tablet Off

If you do not touch the tablet screen for some time it will go into a *dim* mode to save the battery. If you still do not touch the screen it will pass into the *deep sleep* mode (the screen will go blank). You can also purposely put the tablet into the deep sleep mode by holding the power button down very briefly. To wake the tablet up from a deep sleep hold the power button down very briefly. Each time it is wakened, it will have to be unlocked.

To turn the tablet off, hold the power button down until a *Power Off* box appears. Briefly touch the *OK* button to turn the power off or touch the *Cancel* button to leave the tablet on.

The Home Screens

When the tablet is turned on, the middle of five *home screens* will show. At the top will appear five small icons, each indicating one of the screens. The one that is currently showing appears as a *rectangle* while the others show as *small squares*.



The home screens are used to display the icons for various apps installed on the tablet as well as *widgets*. A widget is like an icon in that it can be touched to start up some operation. However, it also shows information (eg, the time or date or current temperature) that changes on the screen to show up-to-date data.

To move from one screen to another, touch the screen then move the finger either left or right quite rapidly.

At the bottom of the home screens and most applications, appear icons for returning to the previous screen, going to the home screen and showing the current applications used. Simply touch any one of these to go to the appropriate screen.



Multitasking

When you use an app, it will usually continue to run even if you touch the home icon to return to viewing a home screen or start up another app. For example, if you start a music app to listen to some music, the music will continue to play even if you start another app. That is, it will run in the *background*. (To actually stop the music playing you would have to tap the Pause icon in the app.)

To show what apps are currently running in the background you can tap the multitasking icon.



The apps that are currently running in the background are shown as thumbnails at the left side of the screen. Touching any one of them in the list causes the tablet to return to using that app.



If you *long touch* any app in the list a menu list appears with *Remove from list* and *App info*. Touching the *Remove from list* causes that app to be removed from the list (but this does not necessarily cause the app to stop running). Touching the *App info* causes a new screen to appear which shows information about the app (eg, how much storage it uses) as well as buttons which when touched cause the app to stop or be disabled or uninstalled.

Running an App

Some of the apps installed on the tablet will have icons or widgets on one or other of the home screens. To run one of these apps simply touch the appropriate icon or widget. The app will start.

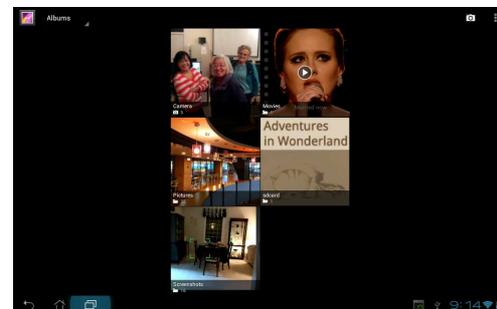
There will also be some apps installed in the tablet that are not shown on any of the home screens. These can be displayed by clicking on the *apps icon*  at the top, right of a home screen. The icons for the apps will show. If there are more apps than will fit on one screen, you will have to swipe the screen to see the others.



To run any one of these apps, tap on its icon with your finger.

An Example App (Gallery)

The *Gallery* app will let you view pictures and videos that are stored in your tablet. To start it, find its icon  (either on one of the home screens or in the apps screen) and touch it. It will start by showing various albums such as *pictures*, *videos*, *camera* and *screenshots* (as shown at the right). Each album is a folder in the tablet memory.



To view pictures stored in the tablet in its *Pictures* folder, tap the thumbnail on the screen labelled *Pictures*. To view videos stored in the Videos folder, tap the thumbnail labelled *Videos*. To view pictures or videos taken by the tablet camera, tap the thumbnail labelled *Camera*.

Once an album is selected by touching it, the screen will show all the pictures or videos in that album. (See below at the left.) If there are too many for one screen, you can swipe the screen to scroll the pictures. To view any one picture or video, just tap it. The picture or video will show, full screen, with small thumbnails of all the pictures shown below. (See below at the right.) Tap any one of the thumbnails to switch to show that picture or video. This strip of thumbnails will disappear after a short time. Tapping at the bottom of the picture will cause it to return. When a video is selected, it will show with an arrow in the centre to indicate that it is a video. Tap the picture to cause the video to play or pause. Make sure that the volume is high enough to hear any sound.

At any time the *Previous*  icon can be tapped to go back to the previous screen or the *Home* icon  to go to the home screen. Tapping the *Multitasking*  icon will let you return to where you were in the app.

