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Kindle Fire Owners May Carry a Torch for iPads

By Quentin Fottrell

Those who purchased Amazon's Kindle Fire appear to be using it as a stepping-stone to the more expensive iPad, a new survey finds.



Getty Images

Some 53% of consumers who bought the \$199 Kindle

Fire – which was [released last November](#) – say they plan to buy the iPad 3 when Apple's newest tablet is expected to debut next month, according to a survey of 1,300 people by deal aggregation site [TechBargains.com](#). What's more, 85% of those Kindle Fire owners say they will buy an iPad 3 when it's finally released in order to upgrade their current tablet. (Amazon did not respond to requests for comment.)

The Kindle Fire is cheaper than the iPad 2 – which starts at \$499 – but analysts say it may be the “starter tablet” of e-readers. “You could call it starter home or starter husband,” says Yung Trang, president of TechBargains.com. “It would be a mistake to buy it because you think it's comparable to the iPad and maybe that's why people may be intending to upgrade to the iPad 3 so quickly after buying a Kindle Fire.” He says the Kindle Fire has two main advantages: it's cheap and it's sold by a strong brand, Amazon.com. It also has Wi-Fi, access to Android apps and games, and – [unlike the iPad](#) – it runs Flash video websites.

The Kindle Fire taps into a less tech-savvy segment of gadget users, who may now be feeling more adventurous, experts say. “The Kindle Fire has now given many consumers the confidence to use a device like the iPad,” says Rick Singer, CEO of [GreatApps.com](#). The \$199 price tag for the Kindle Fire helped to open the entire tablet market, says Peter Wahlstrom, senior analyst with Morningstar research. “It creates a halo effect for the entire space,” he says.

And the Kindle Fire has yet another possible foe: used iPads. Used iPads go for \$299 online, which is just a \$100 premium to the Kindle Fire. “The pressure is on Amazon to now come out with the Fire 2,” says Wahlstrom. Dallas-based blogger [Brian Hall](#) says the iPad has something Android tablets don't: plenty of apps: “I bought an HP TouchPad 32GB for \$149 on sale. It's fun, but there just aren't as many apps as there are for iOS devices.”

But based on the estimated four million Kindle Fire tablets sold during the holiday season, Kindle Fire has less reason to fear the might of the iPad 3 when it is finally released this year, says Todd Day, wireless industry analyst at Frost & Sullivan. “I find it very unlikely that customers who appreciated the attractive \$199 price tag will now throw aside that \$199 technology investment in order to buy a \$600 iPad 3 just months later,” he says.