

# Apple III

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In spite of notable success of Apple II, there were still some areas that Apple felt could be further improved. This is the ideology that gave birth to Apple III. This machine was mainly aimed for business use.

To start with, Apple III had a processor that was twice as powerful as Apple II-2 GHz. This almost halved the processing time. In the end, desired operations saved users vital time. The 2 GHz CPU also made it possible to run programs and applications that were more advanced than those of Apple II.

Secondly, Apple III offered a much more pleasant viewing experience as compared to its predecessor, Apple II. The number of colors that could be used in the display was doubled to 16. This made the 'picture' more detailed.

The small RAM of Apple II-48 Kb max- was a major limitation as far as running sophisticated programs was concerned. Running applications which were optimized to deal with more complex tasks was virtually impossible. Apple III jumped in to take care of that with a 256 Kb RAM that could be further expanded to 512 Kb.

The Apple sauce just wasn't hot enough in Apple II. (That got you drooling, didn't it?) The Apple II system software (Apple SOS) could be considered 'primitive' in the way it worked. Peripherals were identified by location of the slots on the board rather than their names. For example, if you put a processor accelerator in slot 2, it wouldn't work! You had to put in the predetermined slot for it to function. The operating software of Apple III took care of this problem very well. Instead of identifying resources by location, they were now recognized by name. This meant that even if you put your processor accelerator in slot 2, it would work just fine!

In the bigger picture, Apple III was a commercial flop. The major reason behind this was that it lacked a cooling fan that would take care of the rising temperatures within the system. At some temperatures, chips would actually pop out and the computer would malfunction. Apple then suggested a fix for this problem. The computer was to be dropped from a height of 3 inches so that chips would settle back into their initial positions. This was, of course, considered ridiculous by the customers. Even though free upgrades were offered, Apple III tumbled down the hill of failure. Its high cost (\$4000) pushing it down even faster.

Computer collection hobbyists, even today, continue to look out for these 4 decade old computers. Apple III holds a special place because it was the only computer that didn't use a cooling fan at that time. Also an Apple III surely makes its owner stand out of the crowd at Vintage computer events. Everyone wants one but not everyone can have it!