The iPad has landed and although you’ve likely been reading about it for weeks — if not months — now we can finally explore what Apple’s new device is capable of doing.

Given that the device is new to all of us, we thought it appropriate to walk you through the steps to set up your iPad. We’ve also included some basic tips for getting the most out of your device.

iPhone and iPod Touch owners will find the setup process and device mechanics familiar. If you’re new to Apple mobile devices, don’t fret. As long as your iPad anticipation doesn’t get the best of you, you can be up and running in no time.

Walkthrough: Get Your iPad Set Up
Once you unbox your iPad, you’ll immediately want to connect the iPad’s USB cable to your default home machine and open iTunes. When iTunes launches you’ll be asked to activate the iPad, agree to its Terms and Conditions, and register your device.

iTunes will serve as your iPad’s backup system and will suggest that you restore your iPad from a previous iPhone or iPod Touch backup if you have one of those devices or start with a clean content slate on your iPad. Given that there are now thousands of iPad-specific apps and a restore could take awhile, we recommend starting fresh.

Next, you can choose to automatically sync applications, photos, music and videos. Choose wisely — depending on your media inventory, the initial sync process could take awhile. We recommend deselecting the automatic sync options and customizing your iPad preferences via iTunes after this step (read the section below for further instructions).

You can also skip the iTunes process temporarily if your iPad was activated at the Apple Store. Simply fire up the App Store on the iPad to immediately immerse yourself in the app experience (here are a few we like). If you opt to download an app, you will need to enter your iTunes account information.

As for setting up your email, the process on an iPad is similar to the email setup process for the iPhone and iPod touch. Select your email program, enter your login credentials and you’re good to go.

Now you’re pretty much ready for action, but before you go app crazy in the App Store, take a few moments to manage your iPad via iTunes.
iTunes on your laptop or desktop will serve as your iPad’s home base. After the initial setup process, you will want to customize your iPad’s media content and configure your settings. Start by selecting your iPad in iTunes; it’s located under the Devices label in the left-hand menu bar.

This will initially pull up the Summary page. Tab through the top navigation menu items (each listed below) to tweak your settings for individual media types. Keep in mind that for each pre-selected option you tick or untick, iTunes will display an “Apply” button in the bottom right-hand corner. Clicking that will start the sync process, so hold off on that action until you’re ready.

**Summary:** Here you can view a basic overview of your iPad settings, review your capacity, check for updates, restore the default settings, opt to automatically open iTunes when you connect your iPad and select sync options.

Control freaks will want to tick the “Manually manage music and videos” checkbox to handpick music and videos to sync to the iPad. Otherwise, iTunes will autofill the iPad library with as much content as it can manage.
This is also where you will go when you need to reference your iPad’s Identifier (UDID). Click on “Serial Number” and iTunes show you your UDID. Should app developers provide you with a preview version of their app, they’ll need your UDID number to get you set up.

**Info:** From the Info tab you can choose to sync your address box contacts, iCal calendars, mail accounts, and Safari notes and bookmarks. In the advanced section you can elect to have iTunes sync your iPad’s contacts, calendars and mail accounts with your computer.

**Apps:** This is where you’ll go to manage your iPad apps. If you own an iPhone or iPod Touch, you’ll notice that all of the apps you already own are pre-populated here. Select the apps that you want to appear on your iPad from the left-hand menu, which can by sorted by name, category or date. You can then drag-and-drop the ticked apps to switch them from one iPad page to another. You can also drag-and-drop individual pages to rearrange them.

**Music:** The music tab will let you sync your entire music library or individually-selected playlists, artists and genres. Should you select the latter, you can manage those songs from the Music option below your iPad in the Devices section of the left-hand menu.

**Movies:** In this section you can manage the movies that will be synced with your iPad. Use the drop down menu to specify whether you want to automatically sync all movies or just some of them. You can also scroll down to select to sync individual movie playlists.

**TV Shows:** The TV Shows tab is very similar to the Movies section though, by default, all unwatched episodes of your shows will be loaded onto your iPad. To keep your iPad from reaching capacity too quickly, we recommend only syncing shows that you plan to watch in the immediate future. If you’re a frequent traveler, you should revisit this section prior to any trip and load the shows you want to watch before takeoff.

**Podcasts, iTunes U and Books:** Each of these tabs offers similar syncing options as the Movies and TV Shows tab. You can “sync all” or select specific content to load on to your iPad.

**Photos:** Photos will consume space on your iPad, so keep that in mind as you select between syncing all photos and individual albums and videos.
Here are a few tips to keep in mind once you start playing with your new toy.

**Location Services:** If you don’t want your iPad to register your physical location you can turn off Location Services in the General section of the native Settings app. Default is set to “on,” meaning that apps that show location data will ask you to share your location on launch.

**Email Signatures:** To create an email signature, select the Mail option within the Settings app. Scroll down, select “Signature” and type away. Just be forewarned that the default “Sent from iPad” signature might piss off your iPad-less friends.

**Taking Screenshots:** You can snap a shot of your iPad display by holding down the home button and the black power button at the same time. Screenshots are saved as photos in your iPad photo library.

**Push Notifications:** The iPad supports push notifications that you can manage via the native Settings app. You can universally turn notifications on or off, or customize notifications on a per-app basis in the “Notifications” section.
**Display Lock:** Slide the black button (right above the volume buttons) up or down to lock the display into landscape or portrait mode.

**Double-Size Apps:** All apps that are not iPad-specific can be double-sized by selecting “2x” after launching the app.