

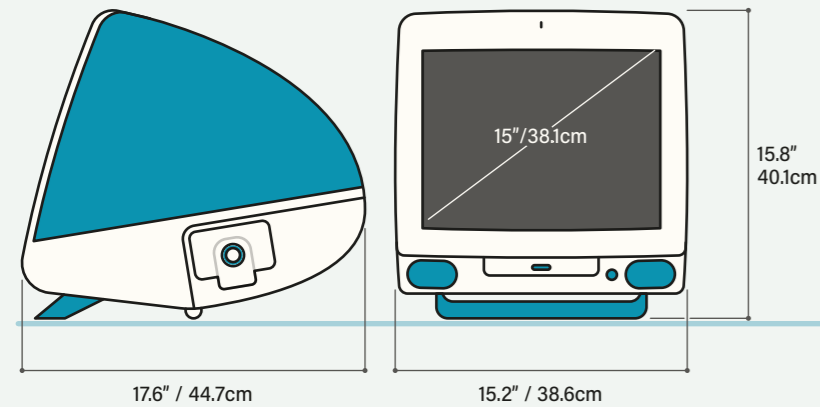
# iMac

*iMac is too odd to succeed. (...) Apple will never be the great company it could have been.*

Hiawatha Bray  
Lakeland Ledger May 17, 1998

May 2023 marks the 25th anniversary of the introduction of the very first iMac. And since in computing, 25 years is an eternity, I thought it would be fun to compare past and present.

I'm comparing the entry-level models of the first iMac (Bondi Blue iMac or iMac G3) with the current one (Apple Silicon iMac or iMac M1).



The iMac was Steve Jobs' first major achievement since he returned as CEO of Apple after an 11-year absence.

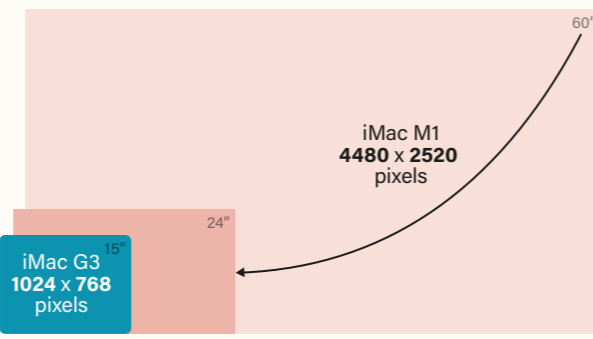
Fortunately the initial name, Macman, was replaced by iMac. A name suggested by Ken Segall, Apple's advertising director. iMac stands for Internet Macintosh. And that 'i' has lived on ever since in iPod, iBook, iPhone and dozens of other products.

The iMac G3 received mixed reviews upon release. The computer's appearance, designed by Jony Ive and his team, was generally praised, as was its ease of installation and use. Criticism focused on the lack of legacy ports and removing the beloved floppy drive. Another major complaint was the original mouse and keyboard; too small and annoying to use, an example of style over substance.

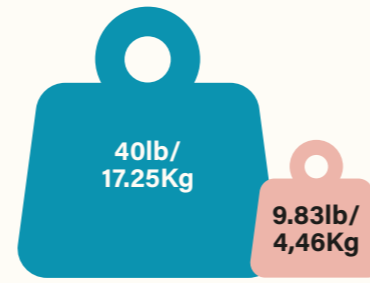
Despite the criticism, the iMac G3 was an instant success. Nearly 300,000 units were sold in the first six weeks. For months, it was the best-selling desktop computer in US shops.

*The Mac deserves to cost more because it is more technically elegant and easier to use than a Windows machine.*

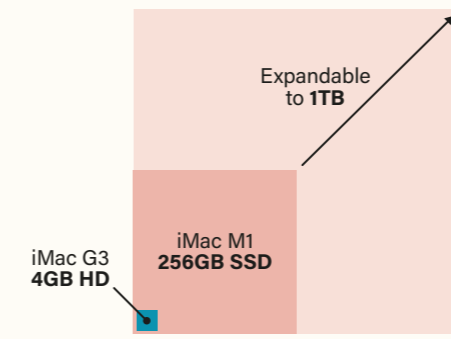
Peter H. Lewis  
The New York Times July 23, 1998



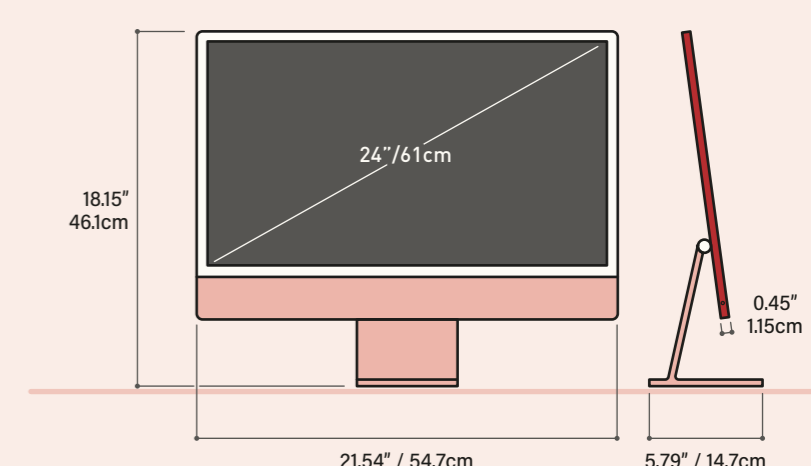
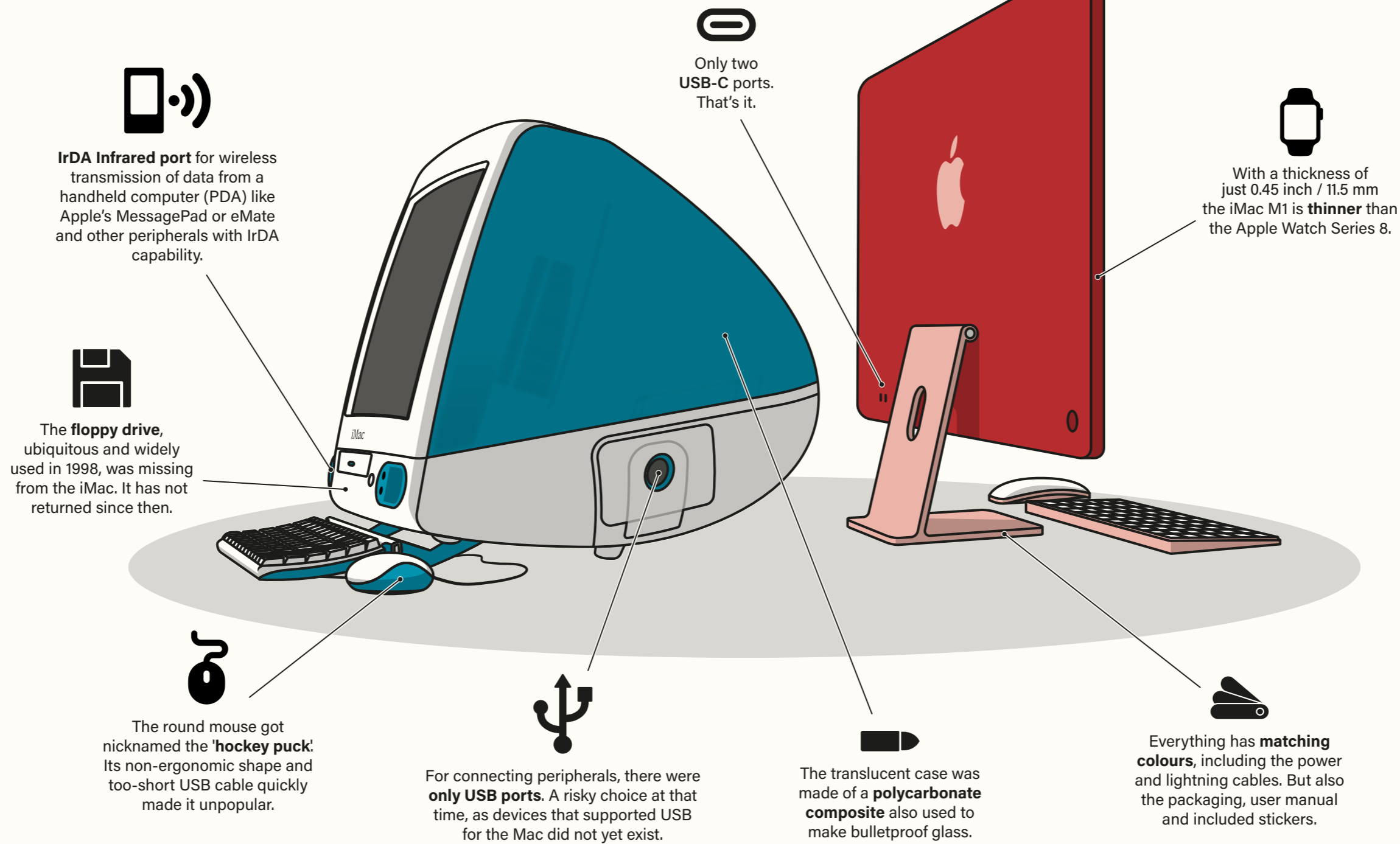
The display of the iMac M1 has over 14 times as many pixels as that of iMac G3. At the same resolution as the 1998 15-inch display, that would account for a 60-inch screen. Today, with higher image resolutions, all those pixels fit into the iMac M1's 24-inch screen.



The iMac G3 the heaviest iMac ever. The iMac M1, on the other hand, is the lightest.



The storage capacity of the iMac M1 entry-level model is 64 times that of the iMac G3 and is even expandable.



*The world's most beautiful desktop. (...) You choose this iMac because of its looks.*

Koen van Ekeren  
iCreate January 9, 2022

	iMac G3	iMac M1
<b>Processor</b>	G3 - 233 MHz	M1 - 8-core CPU 8-core GPU
<b>RAM</b>	32MB (max 128 MB)	Unified Memory 8GB (max 16GB)
<b>CD-ROM</b>	Yes	No optical drive
<b>Connectivity</b>	56 dial-up modem, 1 x ethernet, 2 x USB-1, IrDA Infrared port	Wi-Fi 6 wireless networking, Bluetooth 5.0, 2 Thunderbolt/USB-4 ports
<b>OS</b>	Mac OS 8.1	macOS 12 Monterey
<b>Camera</b>	No front camera	1080p FaceTime HD camera

**Comparison falls short: RAM** is a fast but short-term memory, while **Unified Memory** combines short- and long-term memory into one big memory pool accessible to all processes in a computer. A fundamentally different and faster technology.

The last iMac with an **optical drive** was the 2009 **Unibody iMac**.

The first iMac with a **built-in camera** was in the 2005 **iMac G5**. It also introduced the Front Row media centre interface (precursor to Apple TV) and an Apple Remote.

Incidentally, the price of the iMac G3 in 1998 and the iMac M1 now, is the same. Even though this is undoubtedly coincidental, it does show how computer technology has evolved and how our expectations have risen in equal measure. Consider this: the iMac M1 is superior to the iMac G3, while reviewers found both machines far too expensive for their capabilities. Tough audience.

At the time of producing this infographic, the iMac M1 has been on the market for almost 2 years and is now lagging behind the rest of Apple's line-up.

The wait is on for the next iMac.

*Comparing computers that were released more than 20 years apart is pretty silly, but here we are.*

Stephen Hackett  
512Pixels May 25, 2021