

A Minimalist's iPad 2[©] Case Made from Old Jeans

By R. G. Sparber

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The engineers at Apple spent a huge amount of effort to make my iPad 2[©] as thin as possible. I then spent a huge amount of money to buy it because it was so thin. So on the one hand, I want to protect my new toy but on the other hand I don't want to bloat it out with a case that makes it indistinguishable from my old laptop.

No matter what case I buy, there will be a limit to how much abuse it will take before the contents is damaged. I prefer to have a "reasonable" amount of protection and take a "reasonable" amount of care.

For the way I use my iPad 2, the largest risk is a scratched screen. To address this risk, I bought Ghost Armor². I've used this plastic screen and back protector on my iPod touch 4th Generation for almost a year and have been very happy with it. The product does not add perceptibly to the thickness of the unit. This is good news because I get a measure of scratch resistance without added bulk but bad news because it certainly does not protect the iPad or iPod in any other way.

¹ You are free to copy and distribute this document but not change it.

² See <http://www.ghost-armor.com/>

The idea of trying to carry my iPod 2 under my arm brings forth visions of glass shards around my feet. No thanks. I much prefer a case with a handle. The handle should have enough room to permit my wrist to pass. Yet I also want a case that is easy to remove. A magnetic latch would be OK but Velcro is just too noisy in some situations. In the end I went with no latch at all.



My original idea was to run a dowel across the top of the case to give some stiffness to the handle. But due to limitations in my sewing ability, I went with some plastic mesh and heat glue. This provides strength in the handle but no stiffness. The next iteration will have dowels.

Note that the top 2" of the case is open on the sides. This has two benefits. It permits me to have those dowels without getting in the way of sliding the iPad 2 in and out. It also exposes 1" of the iPad 2 for easy access. This works well.



Less obvious is the taper in the case. The opening is about 1" wider than the width of the iPad 2 starting at the side slits. This width decreases for 2" of the length until it is about 1/4" wider than the iPad 2. I can then slide the iPad 2 into the generous opening yet all is snug by the time it hits bottom.

This is a "proof of concept" model so although it had to be functional and not hideously ugly, it didn't have to be completely finished either. I saved a lot of hand sewing by starting with the lower end of a worn out jeans pants leg. The only downside was that the lower seam was rather thick which prevents the iPod 2 from hitting bottom. I did have to overcast the edges to prevent the edges from unraveling. The next iteration will be made with new fabric on a sewing machine so should look much nicer.

Your questions and comments are welcome.

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