

A Headphone Jack-Connected SonarPen Stylus

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Hong Kong-based startup Greenbulb takes to Kickstarter to launch a lower-cost alternative to the Apple Pencil-- the SonarPen, an iPad stylus users connect to the tablet via 3.5mm headphone jack.



Compatible with any iPad released after 2011, the SonarPen uses an interesting means to transmit pressure data to the iPad. It essentially turns pressure information into sound waves, which in turn are carried by the audio cable. The iPad then interprets the audio signals back into digital information.

Greenbulb says the system uses analog signals, allowing for a wider range of pressure sensitivity than standard Bluetooth styluses. The SonarPen also needs no batteries, and works immediately once the user plugs it in the audio jack. The Lightning port is also an option, meaning the SonarPen also works with current iPhone models.

However there is one issue with the SonarPen-- apps need to be updated in order for the pressure sensitivity (and perhaps required palm rejection) to work. So far two such apps exist, ZenBrush 2 and GoodNotes. Then again, the SonarPen is still an unreleased product, and since it already made over the initial \$25561 crowdfunding pledge goal, it might prove to be a fairly popular accessory once shipping starts on June 2018.

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