

# Profile of a Wacom Tablet by Jason Welsh

If you are accustomed to writing or drawing with a pencil then this wondrous device adds a new level of control to your computer application.

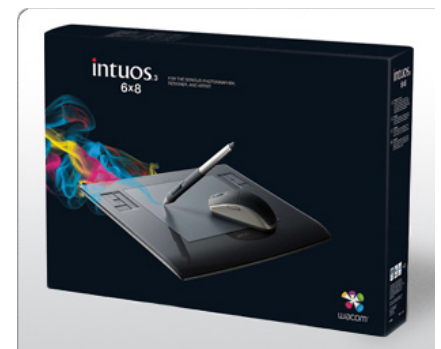
Its design was first placed into the CAD (computer Aided Design) environment and was a big bulking TV tray with a mouse that looked like a brick with cross hairs. Over the years this slowly turned into a sleek pencil and paper approach to controlling a mouse.

Wacom tablets are a brand of tablets for the PC. Other actual brands are out, but only Wacom has led the market for so long that they have truly worked out the bugs. And of course the Wacom comes in many, many sizes and features, which I will be going over.

## First off the Sizes

Wacom being a very sleek product comes in a humongous 12X19 format. I actually owned one of these TV trays because of course I am a total guy and I was thinking that owning a huge wacom tablet would make my artwork look totally fantastic. When in reality after painting on the computer for a few hours the large movements across the screen made my wrist feel like it was now broken. That and when it was placed on my desk, I truly had to watch not piling anything on the top of it in fear that I would never be able to dig its mass back out from underneath.

I now own a 6X8 at home and a 4X5 at work. The size is perfect for keeping a clean work environment, while not having worn out wrist carpals by the end of the day.



Wacom produces a lot of pens and can range in price from 80\$ to 300\$. So being a total guy and thinking "yes again I must collect them all". I slowly bought them from time to time trying to find the right pen for the right application. Which in truth, the pen that comes with the Wacom tablet does the exact same thing that the other 6 do. With a very small fraction of difference unless you owned special software that allowed you to use the one new feature that the pen was supposed to do. We'll take this airbrush for example, which is now one of my best tools for tracing out carbon paper.



Wacom Tablets are very universal to the student's needs whether they are left or right handed. They come with a warranty that is second only to having an elephant step on them, returning it in a beat up box to Wacom with a note with the words "I have no idea what happened". 7 days later they will rebuild it into a brand new refurbished Tablet that works 100% again.

So as a profile goes for the product I will use my technical experience with the product. Make sure you have USB 2.0 on your computer before you purchase the product. (most computers have it). Computers should have a decent OS on them Windows XP +. Of course they are both MAC and Windows Compatible. I would only stick to the INTUOS 3 brand myself unless you can afford the most sought after CINTIQ 12WX, which allows you to draw directly on the screen acting as a 2nd monitor to your computer. I do not own one of these yet. But I have used one. The nice feature is they sit in your lap also. They also make a much larger version that you can mount on an easel that is way out of my price range.



Second Most important feature is the Pressure sensitivity of the pen. Most Wacom Tablets come with a 1024 pressure range. But later on Wacom decided to make a lower cost version which only had 512 levels. The variations really make the difference between you using the product to fill in a coloring book image, to you using the product for matte paint a star-wars backdrop for George Lucas. So spend the extra money and get more sensitivity. Remember this is a one time only purchase item. You do not have to upgrade these every year. So buy the best and it will pay for itself later.