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iPhone ^{+iPad}



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IPHONELIFE.COM
WINTER 2021 VOL. 13, NO. 4



BUYER'S GUIDE

TOP TECH



FOR APPLE FANS



The iPhone 13 Rundown

Apple Released Four New iPhones. Should You Upgrade or Skip This Year?

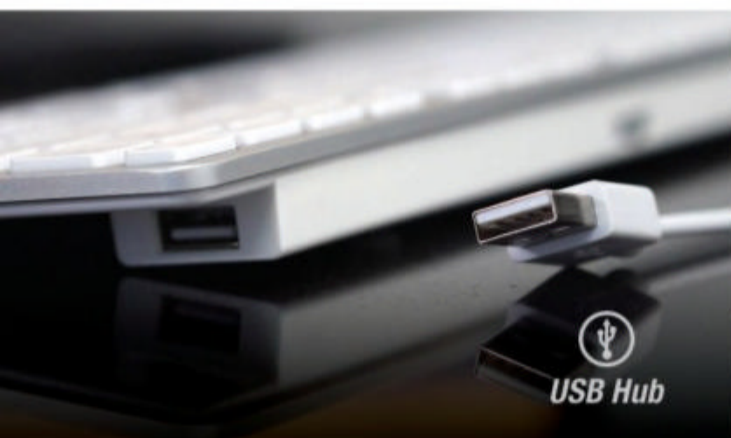
PG 10



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Smart Keys

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ONLINE HOW-TOS AND SUPPORT

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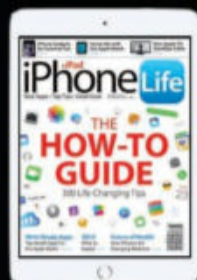
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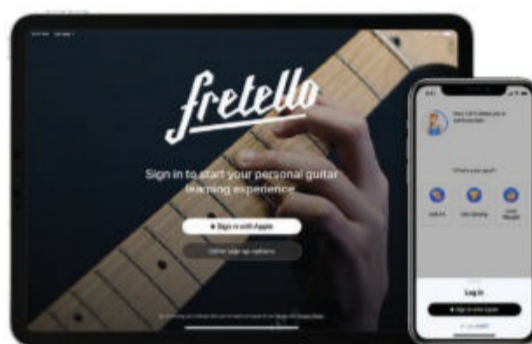
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IS YOUR IPHONE SPYING ON YOU?

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IS THE NEW IPAD MINI FOR YOU?



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Editor's Message

Why I Opted for the iPhone 13

Every year, Apple fans swap rumors and eagerly anticipate the September iPhone event. This fall, many of us felt let down when Apple delivered a lineup of devices that were decidedly lackluster. Apple leaker Jon Prosser took to Twitter with a meme of clowns standing in line with a caption that read, "All the iPhone 12 users lining up to pre-order iPhone 13." Ouch (see page 44 for more on the Apple leakers).

I knew it was bad when my dad, who usually can't resist a new Apple product, called me to say he was passing this year, adding, "They didn't announce anything new!" To be fair, that's not an entirely accurate statement. The iPhone 13 line lacks new hardware features, it's true, but that doesn't mean it's devoid of practical hardware improvements you'll feel. The battery life is getting a hefty bump across the board, which is nothing to scoff at, considering poor battery life is the biggest complaint we hear from readers.

The 13 line also includes new computational photography features, an exciting new field of on-device machine learning that Apple's been leveraging to deliver things like Night mode in the iPhone 12 line. This year, the iPhone 13 includes Cinematic mode, a computational photography feature that's essentially Portrait mode for video and shifts focus like you see in the movies. Other photography improvements include smart filters that adjust for skin tone called Photographic Styles; and Macro Photography, which captures detail in close-up shots in the Pro line. While cool, Cinematic mode is targeted at professional content creators more than your everyday user (page 10).

Considering where I work, it will come as no surprise that I usually buy the best new iPhone every year. This year, however, I passed on the Pro and bought the iPhone 13. Why? Because, for the first time, I don't believe I'll be missing much.

Now let me clarify. I'm upgrading to the 13 from the second-generation iPhone SE, a placeholder I picked up after losing my iPhone 12 Pro in Mexico this spring (it's a long story). If you own an iPhone 12 Pro or even 11 Pro, I'd recommend sitting tight over buying the 13, otherwise you'll actually lose a few features in the process.

But for everyone upgrading this year, there are fewer differences between the base and Pro models than ever before, making it harder to justify the at least \$200 price difference. With the 13, I get the edge-to-edge OLED display, longer battery life, MagSafe charging, and improved 5G support. Not to mention I get most new camera features including Cinematic mode, Photographic Styles, and bigger sensors for brighter low-light shots. Plus, it'll support all iOS 15 features including Live Text (which requires a XS or later).

I've made my peace with the fact that I'll miss out on things like Macro Photography, the LiDAR scanner, and a bit of graphics processing power. I feel the most pinched about foregoing ProMotion, which delivers higher refresh rates for real-time, buttery smooth graphics. I may live to regret this decision if the difference is as noticeable as when Apple switched to OLED displays a couple years ago.

Even if that's the case, though, I'll console myself by using the money I saved to buy the new Apple Watch Series 7, another release that didn't get a full redesign but that comes with useful upgrades like fast charging, an on-screen keyboard for easier texting, and a bigger and flatter display (page 20). Who knows, I may even buy a purple iPad mini too (page 16). While I respect any of you who, like my dad, are sitting out this product cycle, I'm looking forward to the everyday improvements this year.

Donna Cleveland
Editor in Chief at iPhone Life



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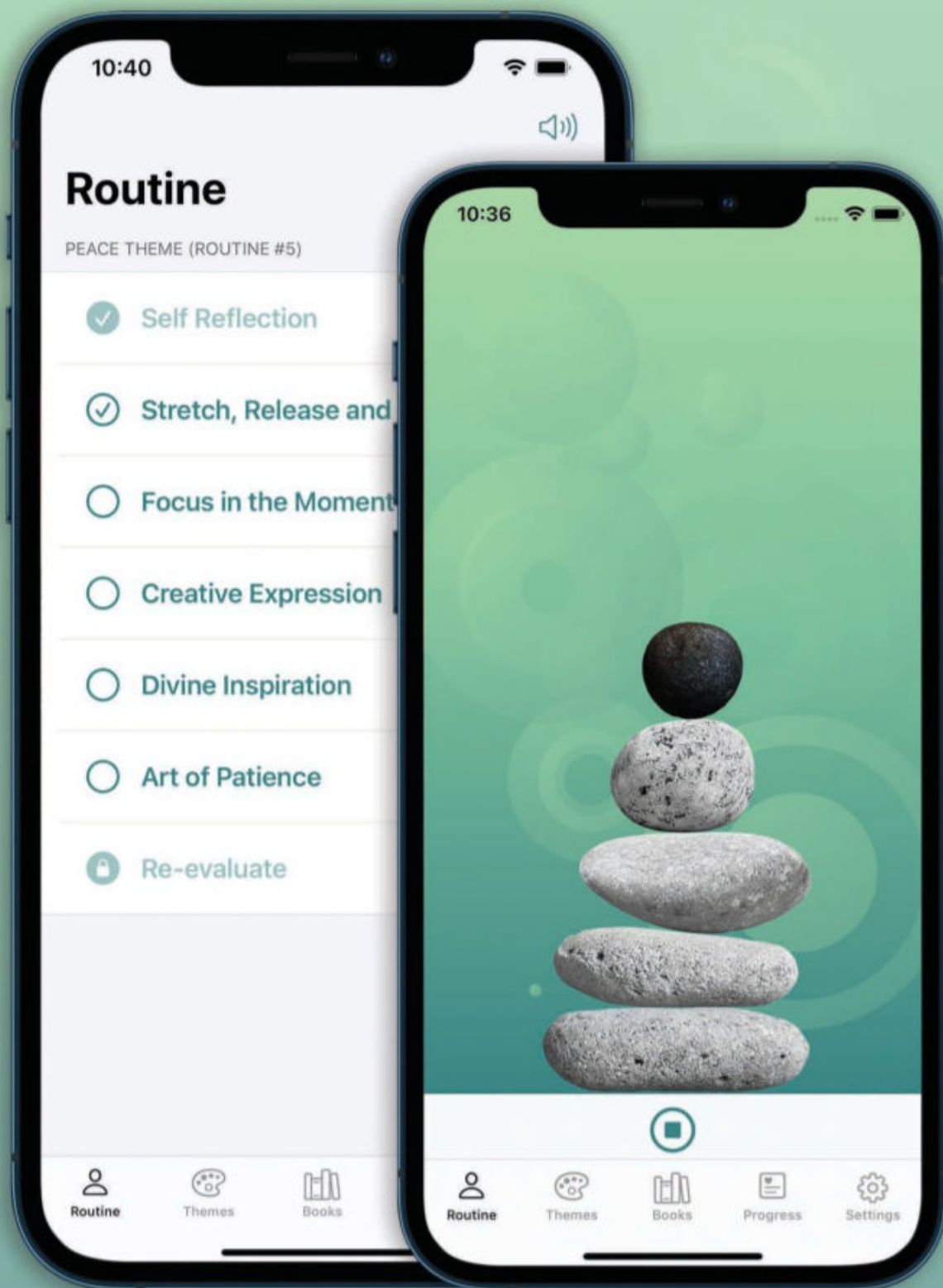
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STUFF THE IPHONE LIFE TEAM IS LOVING



Erin MacPherson, Web Editor
Apple Watch Series 6
(\$399)

I can honestly say my Apple Watch 6 is the best tech purchase I've ever made. It supports my daily health goals by tracking my workouts and calories. I use the various heart-related functions, including the Blood Oxygen Monitor, to help stay on top of a mild heart condition.

various heart-related functions, including the Blood Oxygen Monitor, to help stay on top of a mild heart condition.



Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer
LIFX Clean A19
(\$59.99)

I'm loving my LIFX Clean A19. It's an ordinary color-changing HomeKit lightbulb with a hidden superpower: You can set this lamp to disinfect its environment. When on a clean cycle, it emits UV light to wipe out viruses and bacteria—a tool for the times.

a hidden superpower: You can set this lamp to disinfect its environment. When on a clean cycle, it emits UV light to wipe out viruses and bacteria—a tool for the times.



Rheanne Taylor, Senior Video Editor
Go Daddy Studio: Graphic Design
(Free)

This app (previously titled Over) has become one of my favorites lately. I like to combine my photography with my creative writing to create fun graphics that I can easily share on social media.

favorites lately. I like to combine my photography with my creative writing to create fun graphics that I can easily share on social media.



Elisabeth Garry, Feature Writer
You're Wrong About Podcast
(Free)

If you love humor combined with thorough research, you might love You're Wrong About. Hosts Sarah Marshall and Michael Hobbes break down topics you've heard of, but you just might be wrong about. From the Ford Pinto to Anastasia Romanov, you'll definitely find something you'd like to be right about.

but you just might be wrong about. From the Ford Pinto to Anastasia Romanov, you'll definitely find something you'd like to be right about.



Ashleigh Page, Feature Writer
Pinterest Widget for iOS (Free)

With the Pinterest widget, I get regular doses of creative inspiration right from my iPhone Home screen! I simply pick a board, such as photography, cooking, or fitness, and set the widget to display a new image every hour.





Sarah Kingbury, Senior Web Editor

Eggtronic Einova Power Bar (\$149.99)

This power bank is ideal for topping up multiple devices while you're on the go. It can not only wirelessly charge an iPhone, AirPods, and an Apple Watch simultaneously, but also charge an iPad via the 30-watt USB-C power delivery outlet.



Olena Kagui, Feature Writer

Accell Power UV Sanitizer with Wireless Charging (\$49.99)

Finding out that my phone is dirtier than a toilet seat was shocking. Since regular wipes can damage electronics, I prefer to safely sanitize my devices using UV disinfection. Plus, it wirelessly charges my phone and doubles as an aroma diffuser!



Amy Spitzfaden-Both, Associate Editor
***The Morning Show* on Apple TV Plus** (\$4.99/month)

I'm currently obsessed with *The Morning Show* on Apple TV Plus. Dark, emotional, and thought-provoking, it offers a dramatized look at the corruption behind the scenes of morning news shows. A cast of comedy actors playing serious drama tops off this show's unsettling allure.

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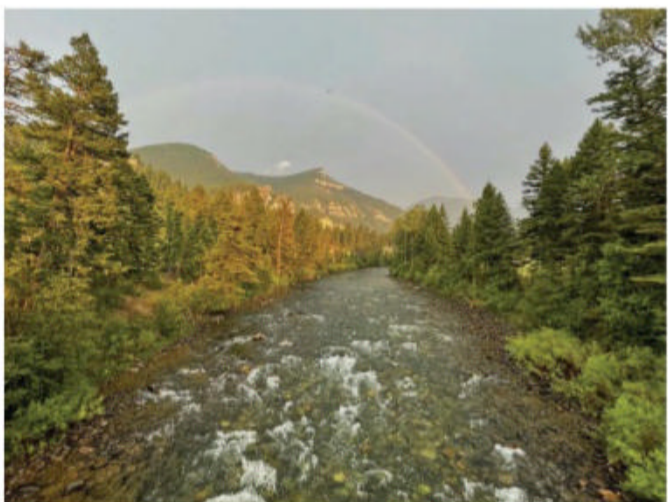


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#

TRENDING

SHOT ON THE IPHONE



iPhone Life Feature Writer Olena Kagui took a cross-country road trip from Rhode Island to Seattle over the summer and documented it all with her iPhone 12 Pro Max. She captured these images solely on her iPhone—no extra fancy equipment needed!

Most Popular**The Most Successful Smartphone... Ever!**

The best selling smartphone was the iPhone 6, which sold around 220 million units during its production years. The upgraded camera was a big draw, as was its improved battery life. Funnily enough, two non-smartphones have the iPhone 6 beat for best cellphone sales. The Nokia 1100 and 1110 saw 255 million and 250 million sales respectively during their production years.

IN THE NEWS**El Salvador Becomes the First Country to Make Bitcoin Legal Currency**

Time to spend your Bitcoins! In what could be a major economic shift, El Salvador is now accepting Bitcoin as a national currency. Better yet, they're giving every citizen \$30 in Bitcoin through a digital wallet app. In support of this, Bitcoin fans around the world have been buying \$30 of Bitcoin to help bolster it in the markets. We'll be watching this one closely!

APPS TO DOWNLOAD



Voice Dream Reader

(\$19.99)

This 2021 Apple Design Award winner expands narration options on your iPhone in a major way.

Its capabilities include ePub books, web articles, Google Docs, PDF, Plain Text, MS Word and PowerPoint, and RTF. You can also scan text for Voice Dream Reader to convert and narrate. Your original purchase will get you one narrator voice, while additional purchases give you more options.



JustWatch – Movies & TV Shows

(Free)

With so many video streaming services out there, it can be hard

to figure out what show is where. JustWatch tracks over 100 streaming providers, tells you which TV shows are on which platforms, and offers other goodies like movie showtimes near you. A search function allows you to find the movies and shows you're looking for, and you'll be presented with options from renting, to buying, to subscribing to the streaming service (if you haven't already), to finding out if you can watch it for free!



SPOILER ALERT!

Apple Won't Let the Bad Guys Use iPhones

Wondering who the villain is in a mystery/thriller film? Just look at the characters' phones! According to *Knives Out* director Rian Johnson, Apple allowed the use of iPhones in the hit murder mystery, but with the caveat that none of the bad guys could use one. Assuming Apple continues with this strategy, you might have a new superpower to predict the outcome of the next whodunnit.

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THE ULTIMATE IPHONE 13 BUYER'S GUIDE

*WHICH NEW FEATURES ARE WORTH
SHELLING OUT FOR?*

BY LEANNE HAYS, ASHLEIGH PAGE & AMY SPITZFADEN-BOTH





he Apple 13 Line is here with four shiny new models: the iPhone 13, iPhone 13 mini, iPhone 13 Pro, and iPhone 13 Pro Max. We as a team were underwhelmed by the lack of standout new features, but there's still plenty to be excited about in the 2021 lineup. Camera advancements are the highlight of this year's iPhone, with Cinematic mode (a.k.a. Portrait mode for video) and Photographic Styles that let you create a consistent look in all your photos. Add brighter screens, bigger batteries, and faster refresh rates, and we're looking at a solid upgrade this year.

iPhone 13 Pricing, Storage & Availability:

Availability: Available now

Price:

- iPhone 13: Starts at \$799 for 128 GB
- iPhone 13 mini: Starts at \$699 for 128 GB
- iPhone 13 Pro: Starts at \$999 for 128 GB
- iPhone 13 Pro Max: Starts at \$1,099 for 128 GB

“BOTH THE NEW CINEMATIC MODE AND PHOTOGRAPHIC STYLES WILL GRACE EVERY MEMBER OF THE IPHONE 13 LINE. THIS BEGS THE QUESTION—IS IT WORTH GOING PRO THIS TIME AROUND AT ALL?”

CAMERA UPGRADES: EVERYONE'S A PRO!

One of the most interesting things about this year's iPhone line isn't that there are exciting new camera features—this is

Apple after all—but that two of the main improvements are on all four models. Typically, the headlining camera features are reserved for the Pro models, while the budget models get reliable yet less exciting upgrades. But both the new Cinematic mode and Photographic Styles will grace every member of the iPhone 13 line. This begs the question—is it worth going Pro this time around at all? Perhaps. We'll tackle that in a moment. But now, let's take a closer look at Cinematic mode and Photographic Styles.

CINEMATIC MODE

Cinematic mode is a new feature that automatically adjusts the focus of your iPhone camera while you are shooting video. Much like the Center Stage feature available on the iPad, it adapts to how many people are in the frame and can even change focus based on who's talking. Because artificial intelligence isn't perfect at deeming what should be the focus of a shot (we've all had funny Portrait mode mishaps), Apple also lets users control the depth of field and focus manually, and even edit them after recording the video.

PHOTOGRAPHIC STYLES

Another feature coming to all four models is Photographic Styles. This basically allows you to set preferences—either customized or one of the four pre-made options from Apple—for things like exposure, contrast, and more. It's more customizable than a filter and gives photographers the chance to ensure continuity between photos. If you know what you like, why change it?

PRO ONLY

Of course, Apple saved some gems for the Pro models. Here's what's coming to these heavyweights:

MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY

The iPhone camera changes seem to be all about precision, so it's natural Apple chose to expand the Pro line's macro capabilities. The new macro feature on the Pro line's Ultra Wide camera allows you to take photos of subjects just two centimeters from the camera. I've struggled with macro photography on my iPhone in the past, so this is an exciting development. Smile, tiny bugs! You can also now take slo-mo macro videos, opening us up to a whole new genre of bizarre.

EXPANDED NIGHT MODE

Low-light situations have always been among the most frustrating for iPhone photographers and videographers. The new iPhone 13 Pro models address this by adjusting the apertures on each of their three cameras and offering Night mode on each. This expands what the photographer can do in low-light situations, though glorious moon pictures may still just be a daydream.

WHICH IPHONE SHOULD I BUY?

Which iPhone you decide to buy will likely depend on your budget, your required storage space, and the features you consider most important. If the iPhone 13 line isn't speaking to you, you can always save money and buy an iPhone 11, iPhone 12, or iPhone SE, all of which are still available, or get a refurbished older model.



IPHONE 13 PRO MAX

- **Size & Display:** 6.7-inch Super Retina XDR display with ProMotion
- **Camera:** Ultra Wide, Wide, Telephoto
- **Colors:** Silver, graphite, gold, sierra blue

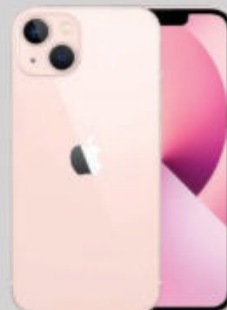
Once you upgrade to the Pro Max, it's hard to go back! The iPhone 13 Pro Max is the most expensive iPhone model, but it brings a bevy of fun and practical features to compensate for the heavy price tag. The iPhone 13 Pro Max has the largest screen of the 13 line. With a muted and professional color palette, both the Pro and Pro Max models offer a storage capacity of up to 1 TB (the largest amount of storage available on any iPhone ever!). If you love having the highest quality camera features, a larger phone, and a nearly inexhaustible amount of storage space, this iPhone is for you!



IPHONE 13 PRO

- **Size & Display:** 6.1-inch Super Retina XDR display with ProMotion
- **Camera:** Ultra Wide, Wide, Telephoto
- **Colors:** Silver, graphite, gold, sierra blue

If you love having the best camera and cinematography features while sticking to a more portable option, the iPhone 13 Pro might be your match. With a smaller screen than the iPhone Pro Max, this iPhone model has the telephoto lens offered only with the iPhone 13 Pro and Pro Max for a 6X optical zoom and superior Portrait mode. If you love photography or videography, or need a lot of storage capacity, it is worth shelling out the extra bucks to upgrade to the iPhone 13 Pro.



IPHONE 13

- **Size & Display:** 6.1-inch Super Retina XDR display
- **Camera:** Ultra Wide, Wide
- **Colors:** Starlight, midnight, blue, pink, (PRODUCT)RED

The base model iPhone 13 has twice the storage capacity of the iPhone 12, with faster processing speeds. The 13 costs \$200 less than the iPhone 13 Pro, making it a less expensive option for those who still want fast processing speeds, most of the premium camera features, and longer battery life.



IPHONE 13 MINI

- **Size & Display:** 5.4-inch Super Retina XDR display
- **Camera:** Ultra Wide, Wide
- **Colors:** starlight, midnight, blue, pink, (PRODUCT)RED

With the small size relished by many dedicated iPhone users, the iPhone 13 mini packs a punch for the price! With up to 512 GB storage capacity (nearly double its predecessor), the iPhone 13 mini has the new A15 Bionic chip, making for faster processing speeds. It is also enabled for 5G streaming and supports up to 17 hours of video playback. Essentially, the iPhone 13 mini offers a longer battery life, twice the storage, and upgraded camera features for only \$100 more than the iPhone 12 mini, which makes for a strong argument to upgrade to the latest mini model.

PRORES

ProRes is coming to iPhone 13 Pro models. ProRes is a video format first introduced in Final Cut Pro 6 in 2007 and is

considered ideal for editing. It's easy on your CPU, allowing your computer to run smoothly while you're editing video. The files are smaller than uncompressed videos, even at its highest quality, enabling you to take more high-quality videos without using up your storage. Though 1 terabyte (TB) will be hard to fill!

(Continued on page 14)

HIGH PERFORMANCE STORAGE IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

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OWC Envoy Pro Elektron

Get ready for the fastest, smallest and lightest drive from OWC. But that's not all that the OWC Envoy Pro Elektron has to offer. The OWC Elektron is a storage powerhouse that comes equipped with military grade toughness. We're talking crushproof, dust-proof and waterproof, so you'll never have to worry about your data when you're on the move. OWC Elektron is ready to edit and save wherever, whenever... with virtually any Mac or PC. More compatibility. Shocking durability. Only from OWC.

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1. Sequential read/write (max) performance based on testing an OWC Aura Pro P13 equipped Envoy Pro Elektron connected to an iMac Pro Late 2017 (iMacPro1,1) with 32GB RAM and 3.2GHz processor running AJA System Test (4K-Full resolution, 64GB file size, 10bit RGB codec, single file test) and Diglloyd DiskTester (fill-volume test).

(Continued from page 12)

BATTERY LIFE

The new chip, in combination with a larger battery, give the iPhone 13 what Apple calls all-day battery life. The iPhone 13 provides up to 2.5 more hours in a day than the 12, and the 13 mini provides up to 1.5 more hours in a day than the 12 mini, according to Apple.

“THE A15 BIONIC CHIP CAN PROCESS 15.8 TRILLION OPERATIONS PER SECOND, IMPROVING POWER AND EFFICIENCY FOR EXTENDED BATTERY LIFE, AS WELL AS BETTER GRAPHICS AND DISPLAY APPEARANCE.”

The iPhone 13 Pro and Pro Max also offer all-day battery life, and feature improvements of 1.5 hours longer in a day than the iPhone 12 Pro, and 2.5 hours longer than the iPhone 12 Pro Max.

A15 BIONIC CHIP

An upgraded chip is included in all four iPhone 13 models but with slightly different features for the Pro models.

The A15 Bionic chip can process 15.8 trillion operations per second, improving power and efficiency for extended battery life, as well as better graphics and display appearance. The chip also enables faster machine-learning capabilities to improve iOS 15 features like Live Text in the Camera app, as well as third-party app experiences.

The Pro version of the A15 Bionic differs from the standard in just one way: a 5-core GPU vs. a 4-core one. This makes a significant difference, though, and Apple claims it’s the “fastest chip ever in a smartphone.” This means that the iPhone 13 Pro and Pro Max offer up to 50 percent faster graphics than any other smartphone on the market!

NEW PROMOTION DISPLAY

We’ve been hearing rumors about ProMotion coming to the iPhone for some time now, and the iPhone 13 line has made it a reality. ProMotion display technology means your iPhone’s

refresh rate is fast, and, therefore, your screen is very responsive. The standard refresh rate is 60 times per second (60Hz); ProMotion refreshes at a rate of 120 times per second (120Hz), making it twice as fast. It also adjusts according to your use, saving battery life in your downtime. You can also enjoy greater responsiveness in games, leading to a better gaming experience.

In response to Apple’s ProMotion announcement, Samsung took to Twitter to state, “We’ve been refreshing at 120Hz for a while now...” While it is true they’ve been using a 120Hz refresh rate since March 2020, they don’t offer the variable refresh rate, meaning it’s either/or with 60Hz and 120Hz, which could really drain your battery if you use the latter.

BODY, DURABILITY & DISPLAY

The composition of the iPhone 13 line is nearly identical to that of the iPhone 12. Apple introduced the Ceramic Shield display last year and called it “the biggest jump in durability ever on iPhone.” All iPhone 13 versions are water-resistant at a depth of up to 6 meters for up to 30 minutes, also the same protection the iPhone 12 line offered.

A few things that have changed include the rear camera layout for the iPhone 13 and 13 mini, as well as the sensors and lenses on the iPhone 13 Pro and Pro Max cameras.

Display features between the iPhone 12 and 13 lines remain largely unchanged, except for improvements in Super Retina XDR OLED contrast and brightness. All four of the iPhone 13s offer a 28 percent increase of maximum outdoor brightness, a higher peak brightness for HDR content, and an improved contrast ratio between colors. One more small difference that many may appreciate is a smaller “notch” at the top of the display. The notch is 20 percent smaller on iPhone 13 models than on their iPhone 12 equivalents!

Whether you’re jumping at the chance to get your hands on one of these new models or waiting until next year, it’s hard to deny that the A15 Bionic chip, new camera modes, and ProMotion display move the iPhone forward in a solid way. 🔄



Leanne Hays is an SEO Content Strategist at iPhone Life. She loves reading and blogging, and is never without a book in her backpack or an audiobook on her phone. Short-term goals include finishing painting her house and starting an aquaponics farm, long-term goals include a bike tour of Italy and writing a novel.



Ashleigh Page is a Feature Writer for iPhone Life. With a background in computer science and creative writing, she loves blending aspects of the technical and creative. An avid technology enthusiast, she adores Apple products and keeping up with the latest innovations. When she’s not working, Ashleigh is often found crafting whimsical short stories, hiking, and playing sand volleyball.



Amy Spitzfaden-Both is the Associate Editor at iPhone Life, an award-winning novelist, and an iPhone enthusiast. She lives in New Hampshire with her husband and daughter. When she’s not writing or glued to her iPhone, she enjoys hiking, traveling, and creating her own tea blends.

WITHINGS

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INTRODUCING THE NEWEST GENERATION IPAD & IPAD MINI

UPGRADES TO AN OLD FAITHFUL
& A PINT-SIZED HEAVYWEIGHT

BY CULLEN THOMAS



A new generation of iPads is here. The ninth-generation iPad and sixth-gen iPad mini are optimized for video use, including features like increased brightness, better color with True Tone, and movement tracking in videos with Center Stage.

iPad Pricing & Availability:

Availability: Available now

Price:

iPad (Ninth Generation): Starts at \$329; Starts at \$299 for Education pricing

iPad (Ninth Generation) with Cellular: Starts at \$459

iPad Mini (Sixth Generation): Starts at \$499

iPad mini (Sixth Generation) with Cellular: Starts at \$649

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE NINTH-GEN IPAD?

The latest generation of iPad didn't change much about the winning formula. It still has a Home button and a 10.2-inch display. It actually offers one less color; the eight-gen came in gold, but the ninth doesn't offer that option, only space gray and silver. Both generations will run iPadOS 15, with all its exciting new features.

“THE NINTH-GEN DISPLAY HAS TRUE TONE, APPLE’S COLOR ACCURACY AND VIBRANCY TECHNOLOGY, WHICH MAKES THE COLORS POP NO MATTER YOUR LIGHTING ENVIRONMENT.”

You're sure to notice that the ninth-gen display has True Tone, Apple's color accuracy and vibrancy technology, which makes the colors pop no matter your lighting environment.

This subtle feature is a favorite among our editorial staff, so it's cool to see it finally come to Apple's most popular iPad.

The ninth-generation iPad processor did get an upgrade from the A12 Bionic to the A13 Bionic. The A13 premiered in 2019 with the iPhone 11 series, so while it is a powerful mobile processor, it lands the newest iPad at the budget end of Apple's fleet of new devices.

Another huge improvement is the front camera, which can capture 12 megapixels, compared to its predecessor's 1.2 megapixels. That's a drastic increase, and it comes with an Ultra Wide angle lens designed to capture a very wide field of view. This lets the camera automatically focus on you as you move around your environment—a feature Apple calls Center Stage.

THE MINI: GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

The iPad mini has a whole new look! With an edge-to-edge screen and no Home button, the sixth generation of the iPad mini looks more like a Pro model. It features a bigger screen size—8.3 inches over the older generation's 7.9 inches—even though it's very slightly smaller and lighter. The sixth-generation iPad mini will ship with iPadOS 15 and all its sweet new features, but owners of the older fifth-gen iPad minis can grab those just by updating their operating system.

The iPad mini rocks Apple's A15 Bionic processor and Neural Engine, new in 2021 and released alongside the iPhone 13 series. This is Apple's top mobile processor, for first-rate mobile gaming, graphics, art and design apps, and data-processing applications.

“THE NEW IPAD MINI ADDS A SLEW OF FEATURES INCLUDING ONE WE’RE PARTICULARLY EXCITED ABOUT: USB-C CONNECTIVITY!”

The new iPad mini adds a slew of features including one we're particularly excited about: USB-C connectivity! That's right, the iPad mini now has a USB-C port instead of the traditional Lightning! That means it can connect to all kinds of peripherals, including keyboards, cameras, mice, and hard drives.

Those other new features include 5G connectivity in the cellular models, Touch ID built into the Sleep/Wake button, 4K video recording, stereo speakers in landscape mode, and

support for the Apple Pencil (2nd generation). But the main updates are video-focused: the display is higher quality with 2266-by-1488 resolution and True Tone, which will adapt its colors to your lighting environment for accurate color representation.

THE 12-MEGAPIXEL CAMERA & CENTER STAGE

Both the ninth-generation iPad and the sixth-generation iPad mini feature front-facing Ultra Wide cameras capable of capturing 12 megapixels of detail. That number—12 megapixels—is a measure of the amount of detail contained in the images the camera can capture. For comparison, the eighth-generation iPad's front-facing camera could only capture 1.2 megapixels. At 12 megapixels, the iPad's camera now has the same resolution as the iPhone 13 Pro series. Both of these front-facing cameras feature HDR for photos, but if you want Smart HDR you'll need the full-sized iPad, not the iPad mini.

“CENTER STAGE IS ONE OF THOSE FEATURES THAT DOESN'T NECESSARILY SOUND LIKE A BIG DEAL BUT COULD ACTUALLY BE A GAME CHANGER FOR VIDEO PRODUCERS.”

The flagship feature of this series, besides the A13 Bionic chip, is Center Stage, which zooms in on that ultra-wide field of view to focus on your face and body while you talk, and dynamically follows you when you move around in front of the camera.

Center Stage is one of those features that doesn't necessarily sound like a big deal but could actually be a game changer for video producers. In today's world of TikToks, Boomerangs, Zooms, and whatever those kids will be doing next, Center Stage is going to help a lot of people capture better content more easily (not to mention ordinary old video chat).

WHO SHOULD BUY THE NINTH-GENERATION IPAD?

This iPad is the workhorse of the tablet world and remains the appropriate option for anyone interested in entering that world for the first time, or for general use in most applications. It's especially appropriate if you don't want to spring for the higher-end models such as the Pro series, the iPad Air, or the iPad mini.

“I LIKE THE IPAD MINI FOR THE SAME REASONS I PREFER PAPERBACK-SIZED BOOKS OVER MAGAZINE-SIZED BOOKS.”

WHO SHOULD BUY THE IPAD MINI?

The iPad mini is the smallest iPad, but with the A15 Bionic, it's actually faster than the larger iPad Air and iPad. The iPad mini will appeal to anyone who wants to be able to put their iPad in a pocket or on a wearable strap, or hold it comfortably in one hand. For example, I like the iPad mini for the same reasons I prefer paperback-sized books over magazine-sized books: It's a little device with a lot of power and a loyal following of enthusiastic fans. 🔌



Cullen Thomas is a Writer and Producer at iPhone Life, creating tips and guides to help users unlock the full potential of their iOS and iPhone. Cullen spent nine years as an instructor in media and communications at Maharishi University, lecturing on a wide range of technical and artistic subjects. Cullen is a film-maker, a game designer, a sci-fi author, a coffee connoisseur, and an obsessive nerd for all things tech.

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APPLE WATCH SERIES 7: FAST CHARGING, FULL KEYBOARD & RUGGED

BY OLENA KAGUI



The redesigned Apple Watch Series 7 gives the newest addition to the watch family a softer shape with rounded corners and a larger, brighter display. Other changes include new and improved fitness metrics, a full keyboard, faster charging, a higher dust resistance, new colors, and more! Let's dive into what the Series 7 has to offer.

Apple Watch Series 7 Pricing & Availability:

Availability: Available now

Price:

Apple Watch Series 7 (GPS): Starts at \$399

Apple Watch Series 7 (GPS + Cellular): Starts at \$499

Compatibility: iPhone 6s or later running iOS 15 or later

A REDESIGNED LOOK WITH A LARGER DISPLAY

Ahead of Apple's September announcement, rumors had us envisioning a Series 7 with flat edges to match Apple's other newly released iPhones and iPads, and I was terrified because I much prefer a round design. Instead, the Series 7 has a softer shape with more rounded corners. The new, brighter display has a refractive edge that results in a full-screen look. The larger display was made possible by reducing the size of borders rather than increasing the watch's size—a celebration for those with small wrists!

“DESPITE MY SKEPTICISM AROUND EASE OF USE, I’M HOPEFUL THAT A FULL KEYBOARD ON THE APPLE WATCH WILL OFFER MORE AUTONOMY FROM THE IPHONE.”

The larger display means bigger, easier-to-tap buttons and menu titles so you don't accidentally stop your alarm when you're trying to snooze it. It also makes room for up to 50 percent more text to appear on your screen than on the Series 6 so you can spend more time reading emails and texts than scrolling through them. This alone is a game-changer in my book because I want to use my Apple Watch more independently from my iPhone.

A FULL KEYBOARD

With the new larger display also comes a full keyboard and two larger fonts. From my experience using full keyboards created by third-party app developers, it is tough to tap accurately on the tiny digital keys.

“WHILE I WISHED FOR A BIGGER BATTERY, I’M STILL EXCITED TO SPEND LESS TIME CHARGING AND MORE ON THE GO.”

This new keyboard could be a game changer with Quick-Path though, the feature that gives users the ability to swipe to type. Even if you aren't precise, the on-device machine learning should figure out what you are trying to say and even suggest the next word based on context. Despite my skepticism around ease of use, I'm hopeful that a full keyboard on the Apple Watch will offer more autonomy from the iPhone.

QUICKER CHARGING WITH USB-C

I was disappointed that the new Apple Watch has the same all-day 18-hour battery life as the Series 6. However, the Series 7 has what Apple describes as a new fast charging architecture and comes with a brand-new USB-C cable for quicker charging. Although fast charging is only possible on the Series 7, you can still use the cable with other models. With the USB-C charger, the Series 7 can charge up to 80 percent in just 45 minutes. Apple also touts that spending just 8 minutes charging the watch is enough to track your sleep reliably all night long. While I wished for a bigger battery, I'm still excited to spend less time charging and more on the go.

NEW CASE COLORS & BAND OPTIONS

The new watch comes in five new aluminum colors: green, blue, red, starlight, and midnight. There are also stainless steel options available in silver, graphite, and gold. Plus,

there's a titanium case and new Nike and Hermes editions for even more diversity.

In addition to new watch colors, there is also an impressive color variety coming to the bands. The excellent news for band collectors is that the new watch model will be compatible with older bands in their respective sizes. While I'm surprised (and a little sad) that there won't be a purple Apple Watch to match the other new purple products, I am excited to explore the new accessories and will rely on them for the much-needed splash of color.

MORE DUST & CRACK RESISTANCE

The Apple Watch Series 7 doesn't just look better, it is also way more rugged. Although the watch is water resistant up to 50 meters (same as the Series 6), the new watch is more dust resistant and crack-proof. With an IP6X certificate for dust resistance, you can safely take your Apple Watch on even more adventures.

The Series 7 also boasts a more crack-resistant front crystal. This makes it harder to damage your screen, although I personally recommend using a screen protector when there's an expected risk of scraping or falling, which leads me to the next development!

NEW APPLE WATCH SERIES 7 FITNESS FEATURES

The Apple Watch Series 7 doesn't have any new fitness- or health-related sensors, but watchOS 8 brings many fitness features to the Apple Watch.

MAJOR CYCLING IMPROVEMENTS

The Apple Watch has long been able to track and map the popular activity of cycling. What is new is that advanced algorithms will be used to analyze GPS, heart rate, accelerometer, and gyroscope data to provide more metrics to cyclists. These include detecting that a ride has begun or has paused or that the rider fell and is unresponsive.

The Apple Watch is also better at measuring calories accurately even when the user is riding an e-bike. Plus, voice feedback will be given through AirPods, third-party Bluetooth headphones, or the watch's built-in speaker to announce workout milestones and the status of the Activity ring.

OTHER NEW ACTIVITY METRICS

Apple is adding more metrics to its fitness tracking repertoire. During the September announcement, we saw visuals of the Series 7 tracking the speed of a hit tennis ball, the distance of a golf swing, and the number of waves caught while surfing! I find these metrics truly impressive, but I

hoped for more new water sports. Especially since the Apple announcement showed off California's beautiful ocean landscapes, I'm sad that activities like paddle boarding, snorkeling, and kayaking are still lacking.

APPLE FITNESS PLUS

Some notable changes are coming to Apple Fitness Plus, Apple's fitness subscription for Apple Watch users. There are new workouts, instructors, and time and difficulty options. One of the newest workouts is a series of weekly guided meditations based on themes such as gratitude or calmness.

A new feature lets you participate in Group Workouts with up to 32 other people via FaceTime's new content-sharing feature called SharePlay, even if they are scattered all over the world. Plus, your metrics and Activity rings can now be more easily seen on the screen and through voice feedback. As someone who finds motivation in competition, I'm excited about Group Workouts and can't wait to challenge my friends!

TWO NEW WATCH FACES

Two new watch faces are explicitly designed with the larger screen of the Series 7 in mind. They both take advantage of the larger display with refractive edges and are practical as well as aesthetically pleasing.

The Contour face offers a fluid animation of time throughout the day. The dial and numbers extend right to the edge of the display, bringing focus to the large display of the Apple Watch Series 7. The Modular Duo face lets you put not one but two large complications to the center of the watch face, even if both are data rich. I can't wait to add extra complications to my watch face as I prefer it to be informative rather than beautiful, although both is best.

Personally, I'm bummed about the lack of battery life improvement and new health-tracking sensors. I was also hoping to see a purple option. But I am thrilled about the faster charging and a larger display that doesn't change the watch size so that I can still use my collection of Apple Watch bands when I upgrade. 🔋



Olena Kagui is a Feature Writer at iPhone Life who lives in Hawaii and is obsessed with her Apple Watch. Despite having a BA in International relations from AAU, her passion is writing. When she's not typing, testing the latest tech, studying SEO, crafting, foraging for wild mushrooms, or loving on her dog, she is traveling the world while occasionally visiting her home countries Ukraine and the Czech Republic.



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CASEBUDI Crossbody Lanyard

(\$20, Gobudi.com)

No pockets? No purse? No PopSocket? No problem! CASEBUDI's crossbody adjustable lanyard for the iPhone is stylish, versatile, and perfect for all your favorite activities. You can use it when you go long-distance hiking, rock out to your favorite band at a concert, or sightsee around the globe! Find the balance between not feeling glued to your phone yet having it accessible to capture memories on the fly or take important calls. You don't have to worry about dropping or losing your phone ever again! You can attach the lanyard to your PopSockets PopGrip of your choice or use the CASEBUDI Disc with an easy slide-in and turn-lock mechanism, now included with every lanyard purchase.



The Crossbody Lanyard comes in black and brown, but you could always get both to match every outfit. This hands-free solution to adventuring with your iPhone can change the way you take on the world. Try it today!



Matias Aluminum Wired Keyboard

(\$59, Matias.ca)

The original Apple wired keyboard was a fan favorite for years. Now that Apple has gone wireless, Matias has stepped in with the wired keyboard that Apple should have made. If you prefer a wired option, you're going to love this product from Matias, modeled after Apple's iconic aluminum keyboards. And, because it's wired, you never have to worry about running out of power while you type. The Wired Aluminum Keyboard mimics the smooth precision of Apple's vintage keyboard.



Matias includes two USB ports to connect your mouse, flash drive, or other devices through the keyboard. You also get a full numeric pad and Mac-friendly function keys, so your shortcuts stay the same. Matias even added a volume dial, giving you precise control of your sound. Matias has beautifully picked up where Apple left off with the wired aluminum keyboard. Get plugged back in and never worry about battery life again with this classic design, only from Matias.





2021's Smartest Hearing Aid Just Launched: Meet Eargo 5

(Eargo.com)

Bring your world to life with our fifth generation virtually invisible hearing loss solution. Eargo 5 features our most powerful, comfortable hearing aids yet. Plus, they sport richer, more natural sound quality, and smarter feedback cancellation, so you can hear life to the fullest. And now active and retired federal employees may qualify for Eargo at little to no cost through their FEHB insurance plan. They'll take care of everything, even the paperwork. See if you qualify today at Eargo.com.



One in eight people in the United States over the age of 12 suffer from hearing loss, but many shy away from bulky hearing aids. Eargo creates award-winning hearing aids that are comfortable and discreet, letting you say hello to a world of sound without shouting it from the rooftop. Eargo Hearing Aids have rechargeable batteries that power up in their case, just like AirPods. The iPhone-compatible app lets you personalize settings for different listening environments with the click of a button.



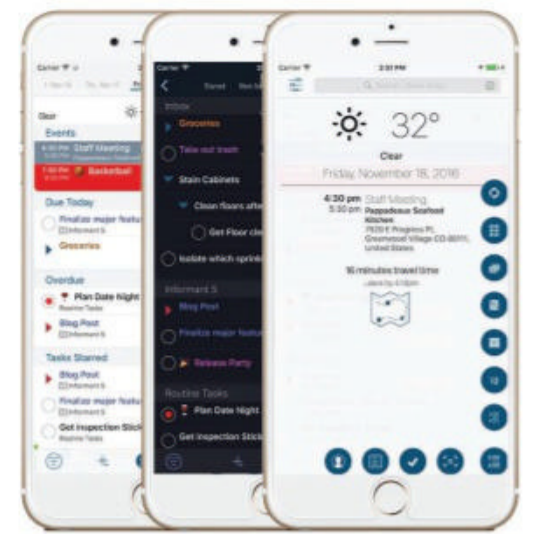
WITHINGS ScanWatch

(\$279.95-\$299.95, Withings.com)

Meet ScanWatch, a watch like no other! Created by WITHINGS, known for their award-winning, smart medical devices, this new hybrid smartwatch may just be the world's most advanced health wearable. With a medical-grade electrocardiogram sensor and an oximeter to measure blood oxygen levels, ScanWatch monitors vital parameters to detect heart conditions and help improve overall fitness. In addition to its medical features, ScanWatch tracks your heart rate, sleep, steps, and workouts. Plus, you'll rarely need to take it off because ScanWatch is scratch-resistant, water-resistant up to 165 feet (50 meters), and has an exceptional battery life of up to 30 days!



All of the data collected by ScanWatch syncs automatically via Bluetooth to the free Health Mate app, where you can send a Health Report instantly through the app to your medical professional. You also have the option of syncing your data to 100+ partner apps, including Apple Health and MyFitnessPal.



Informant 5

(7-day free trial, \$24.99/year, PocketInformant.com)

You need a calendar app that can do it all—a one-stop place for reviewing everything on your to-do list and schedule. Whether you're managing a multi-part work project or planning a dinner date, Informant 5 keeps your life organized.



Informant 5 has a 30-day calendar view that allows users to create events, to-dos, projects, and tasks to help keep track of everything that life throws your way. The 7-day view in Informant 5

is the favorite at iPhone Life, as it lays out everything beautifully, and is even color-coded for an easy glance at the week ahead.

Other features include weather and email integration, a Travel Assist setting that automatically manages any potential time zone confusion, and Dark Mode that makes your schedule more comfortable to see in low-light situations. With these features and many more, we highly recommend checking out the calendar app Informant 5. It's free to try and well worth it.

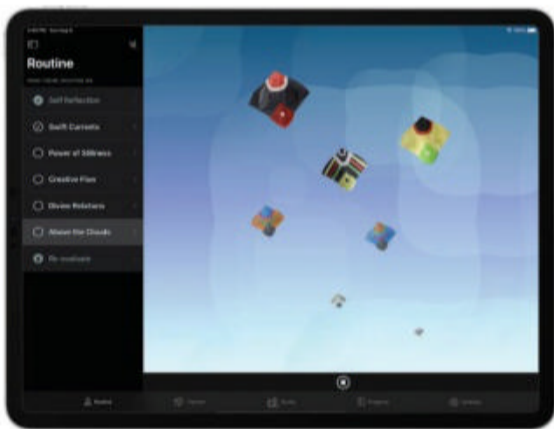




Spiritual Me: Daily Meditation App

(Free, Spiritualme.app)

The popular mobile app that has helped users meditate and achieve a refreshed spirit has been completely redesigned! The new and improved Spiritual Me app is a powerful tool for self-reflection, relaxation, and spiritual development. Do you feel stressed? Overwhelmed? Feeling negative emotions? This app can help! It will guide you through exercises that enable you to ease into meditation with various prompts. You'll find yourself engaged and inspired by nature, art, and scripture of your choice, whether it's the Bible, Torah, Quran, or Lao Tzu.



The combination of stretching, analyzing your feelings, listening to natural sounds, contemplating quotes, and playing games will help you uniquely explore meditation. The free app comes with one theme, but four more are available for purchase for \$8.99. Reviewers claim that this app changed their lives in a positive way; download it today and see if it can do the same for you!



OWC Envoy Pro Elektron

(Starts at \$99, macsales.com)

Bigger is not always better. The OWC Envoy Pro Elektron is a pocket-sized external storage drive that is crush-proof, dustproof, and waterproof. It can store up to 2 TB of data, which translates to 400,000 high-quality photos, 500,000 songs, 48 PS4/Xbox games, or over 83 hours of GoPro 4K footage! Not only does the Envoy Pro Elektron by OWC fit in the palm of your hand, but its universal USB compatibility means that you can use it with Macs, PCs, iPads, Chromebooks, and Android tablets that are newer and older. At the same time, it comes with a USB-C cable and USB-A adapters, meaning it will work with legacy Macs and PCs going back almost a decade.



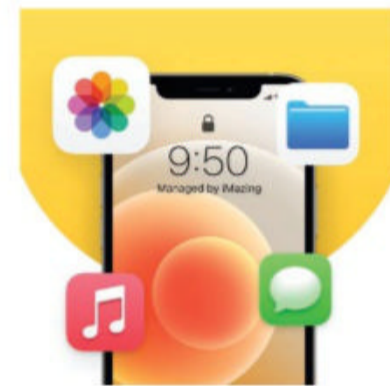
Despite being half the size of an average smartphone, with up to 1,011 MB/s performance, the OWC Envoy Pro Elektron is two times faster than other portable SSDs! Prices start at \$99 for 240 GB, including a 3-Year OWC Limited Warranty.



iMazing – iOS Device Management

(Starts at \$33.49. Claim 30% off at iMazing.com/iphonelife)

iMazing is the world's favorite iOS device manager for Mac and PC. Millions of users every year leverage its powerful capabilities to make the most of their personal or business iPhone and iPad. Often called "the Swiss Army Knife of iPhone Management," it offers a wide variety of features.




With iMazing, you can set up automatic backups via Wi-Fi and main-

tain a history of backups. You can safely store iPhone messages and WhatsApp chats (including all attachments) on your personal storage. Browse conversations and export and print them in the right format. Easily transfer media and documents to any iPhone or iPad. You can save and export favorite pictures, videos, and music without transiting through any cloud storage service.

Go to iMazing.com/iphonelife to redeem your 30 percent off discount for iPhone Life readers. Take control over your mobile devices now and get full access to your personal data through a beautiful and dependable app.





THE IPHONE LIFE BUYER'S GUIDE

Discover the best gear for all your devices. We've hand-tested hundreds of products to bring you our top recommendations for your iPhone, iPad, Mac, Apple Watch, and beyond.

THE HIGHLIGHTS

Essentials

Keep your devices safe, scratch-free, and—of course—stylish with these essentials for the iPhone, iPad, and Mac (page 28).

Audio Gear

Audio equipment can be a big investment. See our recommendations for the best headphones (page 34) and speakers (page 36), whether you want to go big or so small it'll fit in your ear.

On-the-Go Gadgets

For those on the move, you need gear you can easily take along for the ride. From AirTag keychains to cases for your AirPods, we've found the best devices for when you're on the go (page 41).

THE ESSENTIALS

CHARGE, CARRY, PROTECT & STREAM

BY LEANNE HAYS

Incase Accessory Organizer w/BIONIC (\$34.97) ▶

My charging accessories are all in one place and easy to access due to this organizer. This soft clamshell case fits easily in one hand and features an exterior pocket perfect for iPhone charging cables. Three interior compartments, one zippered, offer padded storage for bulkier items like my MacBook power adapter and iPhone power bank. There are even gear loops for an Apple Pencil, AirPods case, and more. Best of all, the case is made of yarn fabricated from plastic debris recovered from our oceans.



Mophie Powerstation Pro (\$104.95) ▶

Tired of your iPhone battery dying while you're out and about? Keep your phone charged for up to 107 hours with this 19,500mAh rechargeable power pack. The Mophie Powerstation Pro can deliver a fast charge of up to 30 watts and has both USB-A and USB-C ports. You can charge just your iPhone or add a second device, including a MacBook or iPad (although simultaneously charging will reduce the number of hours the Powerstation will support your iPhone). This battery pack includes smart-charging circuitry that adjusts charging speeds for each device to the fastest, safest levels.



Belkin 2-in-1 Wireless Charger Stand with MagSafe 15W (\$99.99) ▲

Belkin's wireless charging stand is super easy to set up and use. Just plug the charger into an outlet, then place any iPhone 12 model (with a compatible MagSafe case) on the charging plate. The charger delivers 15 watts of power to your phone regardless of its orientation. Your AirPods (second-generation and later) can simultaneously charge in the wireless charging tray. Available in black or white, the modern design would work perfectly on a desk, nightstand, or entryway table.



LifeProof NEXT Clear Case (Starts at \$79.99) ◀

This case keeps your iPhone safe from dirt, snow, and falls of up to two meters, perfect for clumsy people like me! Made from 55 percent recycled plastic, the case features a transparent back with the option of teal, black, or lavender sides. A MagSafe-compatible option is available for iPhone 13 and 13 Pro. Remember to register your case online after purchase; LifeProof will donate one dollar per case to your choice of four nonprofit partners working to provide safe drinking water to developing nations and protect the earth's oceans, rivers, and wildlife.

Belkin Magnetic Phone Mount with Face Tracking (\$64.99) ▶

If you like to create videos and stream them to social media from your iPhone, you've got to check out this accessory! This phone mount makes it easy to record high-quality content; just download the accompanying app and magnetically attach your iPhone 13 or 12 to the stand. Select your filming angle, position the mount, and begin filming with the Camera app or livestreaming with Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, or Twitter. The mount will track your face as you perform, tilting and rotating up to 360 degrees to keep you front and center.



IPHONE CASES

SLEEK, STYLISH & STURDY

BY ASHLEIGH PAGE



Nomad Rugged Case (\$59.95) ▲

Crafted from Horween leather, this case feels professional and durable. With an internal shock absorption bumper, the Rugged Case is equipped to protect your phone from drops of up to 10 feet. It's MagSafe compatible, allowing for the ease and convenience of wireless charging while maintaining a slender design. Like any leather product, this case develops a patina over time, a soft sheen that naturally develops through use and exposure, making it a case that ages beautifully. If you're looking for a protective-yet-understated phone case, this option is hard to beat.

Pela Seashell Pink Peaks (\$49.95) ▶

Two things stand out about Pela: their colorful and nature-inspired cases, and their commitment to eco-friendly and ethically manufactured products. Created from plant-based materials (not plastic), this case is 100 percent compostable and yet still durable enough to protect your phone from drops and scratches. It's soft and flexible, slipping easily onto your phone and adding a layer of well-designed protection without the bulk. If you're looking for a sleek case that feels great and protects the planet and your phone, this is the case for you.



BEST
WALLET
CASE

Smartish Wallet Slayer Vol. 2 (\$24.99) ◀

Based in Austin, this small company crafts quirky, affordable, and practical cases with next-level protection. Everything about this case screams thoughtful design, from its Austin-themed color (shoutout to Blues on the Green) to its protective features. With the ability to secure three cards plus cash and high-grip textured sides to reduce accidental drops, this card case also has air-pocket corners that add an additional layer of drop protection. Even with these durable features, the case construction feels ultra-light and minimal, allowing me to easily slip this wallet/phone combo in and out of my pocket. After a few days of carrying this case, you'll never again return to standard wallets.

CASETiFY Ultra Impact Clouds (\$70) ▶

With whimsical prints and an array of protective features, Casetify effortlessly combines fun and practicality. With 360-degree impact protection and a 9.8-foot drop protection, this case feels sturdy while maintaining a slim design. With sustainable practices, this case is created from 50 percent recycled materials and is compatible with wireless chargers. We all know we're supposed to clean our phones on a regular basis, but few of us actually do, so I was highly impressed with the antibacterial coating this case offers, eliminating 99 percent of bacteria.

FAMOUS
DURABILITY



OtterBox Defender Series Pro XT (\$69.95) ▲

This tough and durable iPhone case delivers with its ultra-protective features and a slim design so it still fits easily in your pocket. Made with 50% recycled plastic, this case has an antimicrobial layer to protect you from germs. It's also MagSafe compatible, allowing for the convenience of wireless charging. Ever dropped your phone in dirt and been dismayed to find a lot of dust in your charging port? A standout protective feature offered here is the removable shield protecting your charging port. This allows you to effectively block snow, dirt, and debris, making for a case that is not only drop-protected, but also engineered to withstand the indoor and outdoor havoc of daily life.



IPAD GEAR

CASES, KEYBOARDS & MORE

BY AMY SPITZFADEN-BOTH

QWERKYWRITER Typewriter-Inspired Mechanical Keyboard (\$289.99) ▶

This Bluetooth keyboard was the final touch on my home office. I was taken in by its quirky design, and once I sat down with it, I was sold. Its large keys are not only satisfying to press (that old typewriter feel!) but also more visible and easily accessible than many other iPad keyboards. Despite its appearance, it's easy to set up and use, and helps me transition into a creative headspace every time I prop my iPad in the tray as if it were a piece of paper. The only downside is there is no Command key, so many keyboard shortcuts are a no-go with this one.

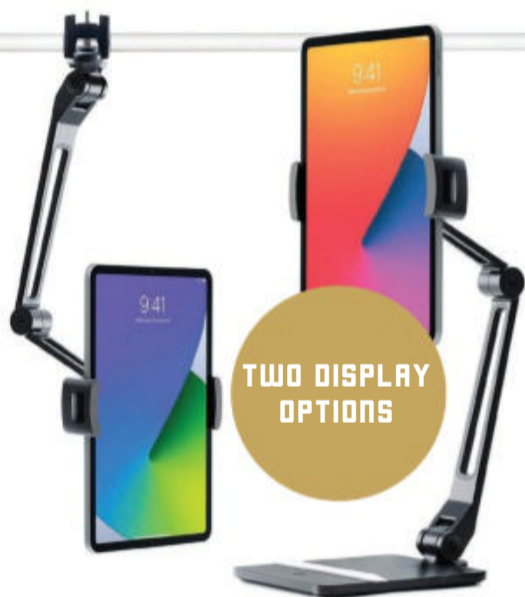


Ecosusi Sombre Vintage Suitcase (\$79.00) ▲

If you're a frequent iPad user, you're going to want something reliable to carry your device around in. The Sombre Vintage Suitcase from Ecosusi is a stylish and versatile solution, offering different size compartments for not only your iPad, but also other gear and personal items, allowing this to become your go-to bag. Four color options let you choose your style. The straps offer three ways to carry the bag: shoulder bag, backpack, or briefcase. Choose the carrying style that best matches your personal needs, load up your iPad, and you're good to go!

Twelve South HoverBar Duo (\$79.99) ◀

This iPad stand lets you prop up your device while saving space in your home. Equipped with two options, it lets you either set the stand on a flat surface like a table or clip onto something like a cabinet. This is perfect for my household, where we like to use our family iPad to display recipes while keeping our counter space clear. It also offers fun options for FaceTime, letting you adjust the angle to your preference without having to hold your iPad through the whole call.



Apple Pencil 2 (\$129) ▲

While I feature a lot of great third-party iPad accessories here, when it comes to a stylus, my recommendation has stayed with the Apple Pencil 2. While many of the features Apple brags about aren't exclusive to the Pencil, it's still a solid, comfortable, and reliable choice. Plus, it can be covered by Apple's support network, which I learned when I had to send mine in for repairs and seamlessly got a replacement in a few days with no extra charge. This stylus is not an insignificant investment, but you can rest easy knowing you have the best.

DTTO Premium Leather Business Folio (\$14.98) ▶

If you're looking for a solid, useful iPad case that covers all your bases and doesn't break the bank, look no further. Lightweight yet protective, it's easy to carry around and has a helpful compartment to store your Apple Pencil or other stylus. It can flip into a stand for your iPad, and does an excellent job protecting your device from the detritus of whatever case you might be carrying. It comes in a variety of colors, giving you the option to add a little personal twist, or to tell apart whose iPad belongs to whom. It comes in many sizes, so you can find the one that fits your model.

BEST CASE SCENARIO!

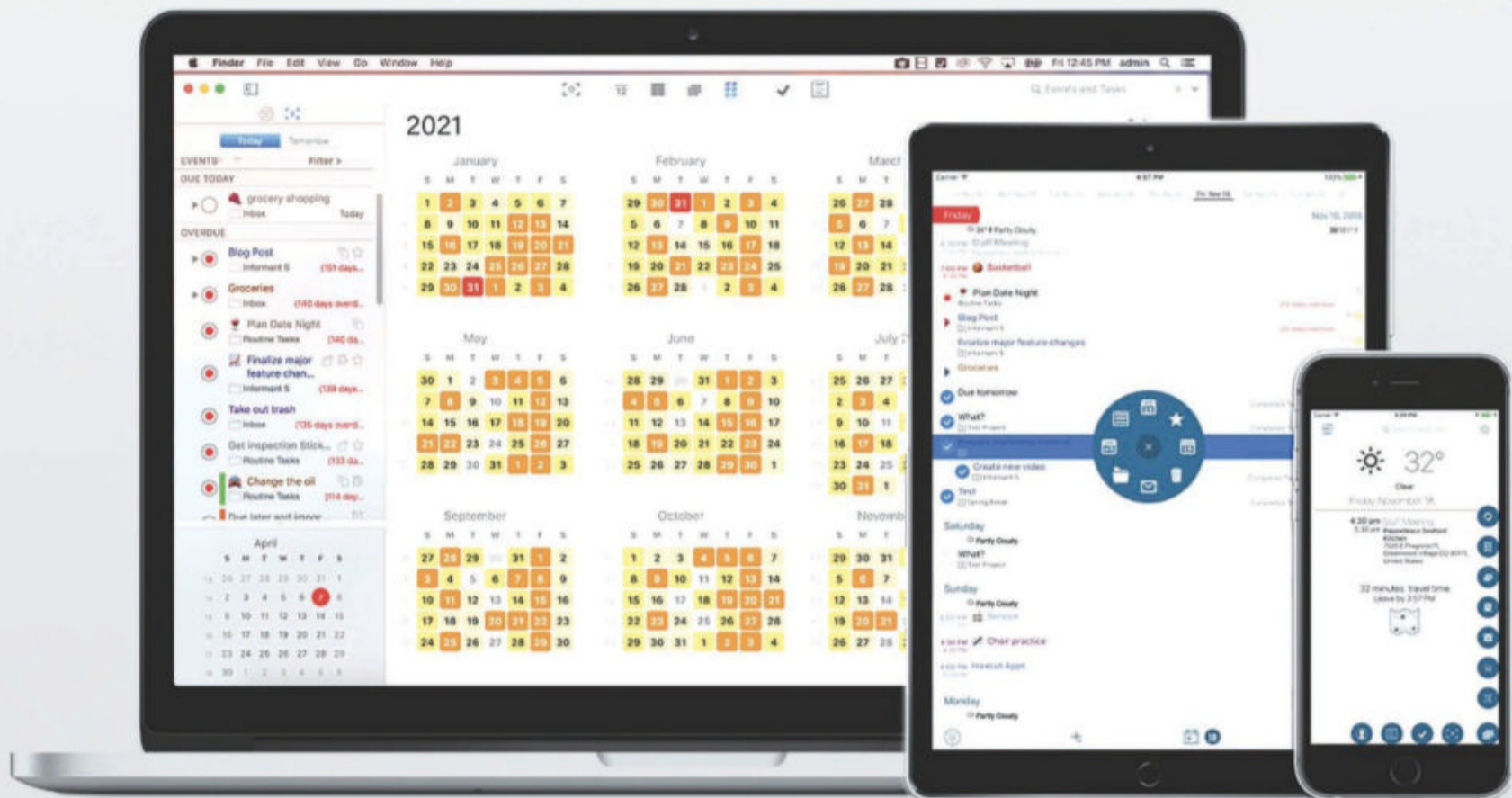




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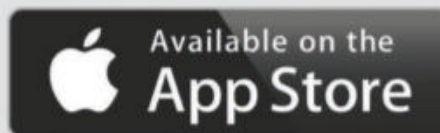
Overall Winner

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APPLE WATCH

STYLISH YET FUNCTIONAL ACCESSORIES

BY OLENA KAGUI

Linq Band for Apple Watch (\$49) ▶

Business cards are quickly becoming outdated, yet exchanging numbers often feels too intimate for a potential business acquaintance. Linq solves this problem by bringing NFC tap-to-share technology directly to your wrist. How does it work? You create a customizable webpage with your credentials, websites, contact info, and anything else you'd like to share with a business connection. Any time you wear the waterproof Linq Apple Watch band, you can quickly share your page with 95 percent of smartphone users in a single tap.



PACMAXI Watch Band Organizer (\$29.90) ▲

There are too many Apple Watch bands out there to choose from, and now you don't have to! PACMAXI offers a great way to store and organize up to 84 straps in a compact design, easy to bring along when traveling so you have the right material and color for every occasion. This affordable organizer comes in black, dark grey, and purple. It even has a handle for easy carrying and a mesh pocket with a zipper to store your other Apple Watch accessories!

Wristcam (\$299) ▶

Does the Apple Watch have a camera? Year after year, the answer is still no. Wristcam is the ideal solution, bringing two cameras to your wrist at no expense to the size or battery life of the Apple Watch itself. This unique band takes 4K photos and 1080P HD videos via its 8MP World-Facing and 2MP Self-Facing cameras. Control them easily using pre-set Siri voice commands for a hands-free experience. A water resistance rating of IP68 opens up a world of underwater photos and videography. Plus, the 8 GB of storage can hold 2,000 photos or 1 hour of video.



Nomad Modern Band (\$69.95) ▲

Like a fine wine or cheese, Nomad's Horween leather improves over time as it interacts with the elements around it, changing in color, sheen, and texture. Nomad Apple Watch bands are known for their high-quality materials and luxurious styles. If leather is not your jam, Nomad also offers a wide selection of bands made of metal and rubber. Not only does Nomad make comfortable and elegant bands, but they even sell matching cases for your iPhone, AirTags, and iPad for the perfectly coordinated look (see pages 29 & 41).



i.VALUX Portable Wireless Charger (\$24.99) ◀

Low-battery anxiety is real, and with the Apple Watch being such an essential part of many users' lives, it is natural that staying charged is a priority. The portable wireless charger by i.VALUX is a dream come true, offering an emergency charge in a nightmare scenario. The 1,000mAh lithium-ion battery is compact and lightweight, the perfect keychain! It may be small, but it can fully charge your watch in 3 to 4 hours. Although it is significantly slower than a plug-in charger, it will offer a much-needed battery boost when you need it most!

MAC GEAR

SPLIT TIME BETWEEN OFFICE & REMOTE WORK

BY SARAH KINGSBURY

Mophie Powerstation Go

(\$159.95) ▶

If you've ever struggled to find an outlet in a coffee shop or planned to work on the plane only to realize that your laptop is close to dead, you'll understand why I love this power bank. It has a Qi wireless charger, 2 USB-A ports, a 65-watt AC outlet, and a 44,000mAh capacity, which means it can charge your MacBook more than once, along with any other devices or accessories you bring along. Plus, while it is powerful enough to jump-start a car, its sleek design means it looks right at home in any on-the-go work setup.



Incase Commuter Backpack

(\$99.95) ▲

While slim in appearance, the Commuter backpack holds an astonishing amount of gear, including a 16-inch laptop. Web Editor Erin MacPherson recently put this backpack and the matching Accessory Organizer (\$44.95) to the test when she used them to transport her entire remote work setup to the iPhone Life office for a week on site. She found this well-constructed backpack comfortable to wear, even when loaded to capacity with a MacBook, iPad, mouse, full-size keyboard, laptop stand, and other essentials. Impressively, the bag still zipped shut with ease.



Belkin USB-C Multimedia Hub (\$99.99) ▲

Apple's obsession with eliminating ports makes a good USB-C hub an essential MacBook accessory. I've tried larger hubs, reasoning the more ports the better, but they take up a lot more space in my bag and on my desk and I rarely find myself needing more than the ethernet port, USB-C and USB-A ports, SD slot, and HDMI port in this six-in-one hub. This hub should work with any USB-C laptop.



Cyezcor LED Video Light (\$19.99) ▲

For a lot of us, remote work has meant endless video calls. And I'm surely not the only one who quickly tired of looking like a poorly lit zombie on-screen. My solution? This inexpensive ring light that clips on the top of my laptop screen, bathing me in an attractive glow without shining too brightly in my eyes. The USB-powered light can be adjusted to be cooler or warmer and brighter or softer, making it effective in most types of ambient lighting.



Satechi Slim X2 Bluetooth Backlit Keyboard (\$79.99)

M1 Wireless Mouse (\$29.99) ▲

This backlit keyboard is compact enough that I can fit it in my computer bag without a problem when I'm working away from the office, but still large enough that it has a number pad and is easy to type on. The M1 mouse is comfortable to use and small enough to slide right into my accessory bag. And because the mouse and keyboard come in the same space gray as my MacBook Air, they look great as part of my work setup.

HEADPHONES

FIND THE PAIR THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

BY AMY SPITZFADEN-BOTH

EarFun Free Pro (\$59.99) ▶
Marketed as the “World’s Smallest Active Noise Canceling True Wireless Earbuds,” the tiny size of the EarFun Free Pro offers solid sound and makes them a great fit for smaller ears. A variety of earbud tips means they can fit anyone looking for something less cumbersome though. They also offer an impressive battery life of up to 32 hours and fast charging options. The volume controls are fairly intuitive, and you can listen with just one earbud or share with a friend with Single Earbud Mode.



Anker Soundcore Liberty Air 2 Pro (\$128.99) ▲
It’s hard to find a flaw in these earphones. Perhaps the best overall model, every feature these earbuds offer comes through in a big way. The overall sound is smooth and balanced, and you’re treated to a very customizable experience through the Soundcore app. The earbuds keep track of your sound preferences and create a profile specifically for you, modifying settings as they see fit, but you can always go in and adjust them yourself. Add in the fact that they’re lightweight and comfortable, and you have a winner.

Riwbox BT05 Bluetooth Kids Headphones (Starts at \$23.98) ◀

Finding the right headphones for your kids is an important task, especially considering their auditory health could be at stake. Riwbox offers many cute and affordable headphones for children, but the BT05 was our favorite. The design is delightful, but their best feature is the ability to switch from regular mode to kids mode, which has an 85 decibel limit, meaning your child can’t turn up the volume high enough to damage their ears. They were a little big on my two-year-old, but even so she enjoyed many Raffi songs without them falling off.



Jabra Elite 45h On-Ear Headphones (\$99.99) ◀

Confession: I don’t always love noise cancellation. While I think it’s a great feature, sometimes I want my sound to blend more organically with my environment, especially if I’m keeping an ear out for my toddler. The Jabra Elite 45h offers beautiful, immersive sound with passive noise reduction and a comfortable fit without blocking out the world around me. The large size fits comfortably without being too big, and the option to go wireless makes it perfect to use with my iPhone. The associated app offers customization options, and the battery is long-lasting and quick to charge.



Sennheiser MOMENTUM True Wireless 2 Earbuds (\$299.95) ▲
These earbuds are my personal favorites. They fit snugly, offer a sealed-off sound without the need for constant readjustment, and don’t hurt my ears even after hours of use. The sound itself is good quality right out of the box—no need to adjust any settings. You can, of course, choose your preferred settings in their app, but so far I haven’t needed to. At seven hours, their battery life isn’t quite as long as many competing brands and they don’t support fast charging, but these guys are worth the wait.



ONLINE HOW-TOS AND SUPPORT

MASTER YOUR IPHONE

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Get Personal Expert Help.

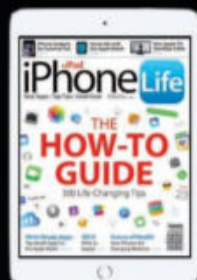
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BONUS
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SPEAKERS

THE BEST SOUND FOR YOUR SPACE

BY NICHOLAS NAIOTI



Klipsch The Three (\$574) ▲

This speaker not only has great sound quality but also has a lot of character. I was surprised by the potent bass response considering the speaker's small size. Pairing to my iPhone was a cinch. The Three comes with a remote control for adjusting the volume from across the room. The retro design is charming, and the physical controls are satisfying. While this unit's classic appearance might not be everyone's bag, the hi-fi sound, Bluetooth compatibility, and reasonable price make this a great home speaker, especially for bedrooms and home offices.



Bowers & Wilkins 606 S2 Standmount Loudspeaker (\$898) ◀

These award-winning speakers live up to their reputation. The audio quality is crisp with a comforting, organic warmth in the low end. Music, podcasts, TV, and movies will sound better than you would've thought possible with these high-fidelity speakers. Bowers & Wilkins recently re-released these beloved 25-year-old speakers with some improvements. These are passive speakers, meaning you will need an amplifier or receiver to use them. If you're looking for the gold standard in home sound systems for your entertainment center, I can't recommend these speakers enough.

Ikea Symfonisk Picture Frame Speaker (\$199) ▶

There's nothing else on the market quite like the Symfonisk. I should clarify—this is not an actual picture frame. It's a piece of art that doubles as a home speaker with Wi-Fi. You can choose from a few different designs and can stock up on replacement designs for \$19.99 in case you wanted to have a few on hand. The Symfonisk is a collaboration with Sonos, meaning it has top-of-the-line compatibility with Apple AirPlay. The sound comes in mono, but you can pair it with another Symfonisk to create a stereo system.



Marshall Stockwell II (\$199.99) ▲

I enjoy this speaker so much. The first thing I noticed is the included brass and treble knobs, which seem to be very rare on portable speakers. They give you the freedom to quickly adjust your sound to fit any space. The bass response is exceptional for a speaker of this size, and the audio quality excels even at high volumes. The 20 hours of battery life and space-efficient design make this great for travel. The rustic design harkens back to Marshall's vintage guitar amps, but don't let the look deceive you; this speaker is an innovative piece of modern audio technology.





House of Marley Get Together Duo (\$149.99) ◀

There is more than meets the eye with these bookshelf speakers. They are designed to live in a stationary location like a desk, but one of the speakers is portable! I also appreciated that these speakers are made with natural bamboo and eco-friendly materials, plus they are packed in 100 percent recycled materials. Pairing wirelessly to my iPad was simple and quick. These speakers sound great, look attractive on the bookshelf, and are very reasonably priced for the quality.



Turtlebox (\$374) ▲

This impenetrable speaker is designed for rugged, outdoor use. It's completely waterproof, dustproof, shockproof, and UV resistant, meaning you can throw it in the lake and then toss it into the sand with no fear of damaging it. The tough construction and 20-hour battery life make it perfect for tailgating or a day on the river. The sound employs a high-frequency curve designed to pierce through wind and distance. For that reason, I found this speaker sounded a lot better outside than inside. If you're looking for a gift for outdoorsy friends or family members, look no further!



Teenage Engineering OB-4 (\$599) ▲

This beautiful little machine is the most unusual device I've ever reviewed. As a musician, I've been a fan of Teenage Engineering's synthesizers for years. The company calls the OB-4 the "Magic Radio," and it's an apt name to be sure. To my surprise, this device is not only a Bluetooth speaker with incredible sound quality, but also includes an FM radio, a looper, and a host of ambient effects. Hidden beneath its minimal Nordic design lies dozens of controls and functions best learned through playful curiosity. While it's clearly on the pricey side, this device would make a perfect gift for teenagers and young adults interested in electronics and musical performance.

Soundboks 3 (\$999) ▶

If you want the biggest, loudest Bluetooth speaker on the market, look no further than the Soundboks 3. This portable speaker is massive in size and sound, making it an excellent wireless sound system for outdoor parties and big events. I'm particularly in love with the rechargeable battery and the futuristic way it slides in and out. The controls are easy to use and the connection panel offers input and output to more speakers. The removable front can be custom painted, which is a fun and thoughtful detail. You can even connect a microphone via XLR for karaoke!



Best Vector Elements/shutterstock

HOMEKIT GEAR

GIVE YOUR SMART HOME AN UPGRADE

BY CULLEN THOMAS



Linksys Velop AX4200 Tri-Band Mesh WiFi 6 System (\$499.99) ◀

A router that's optimized for use with Apple HomeKit is an absolute must-have as the backbone of your smart home. This system's HomeKit integration lets you limit the ability of your individual smart devices to access the internet—forcing all traffic through your encrypted HomeKit—while also putting an end to almost all “device not responding” errors. The three-node mesh network also extends your Wi-Fi well beyond what a single router could, bringing reliable connections to distant devices like a garage door opener or outdoor smart outlets.

Ecobee Comfort & Savings Solution Kit (\$329.99) ▶

Not every HomeKit device will pay for itself, but an Ecobee smart thermostat might. Sensors included in the kit detect which room you're in and tune the temperature to save you money every month. You can use those same sensors to trigger home automations, like turning on the kitchen lights when you get up for a midnight snack. We featured the Ecobee thermostat last year, but it's still the best, and of all the HomeKit gear we tested, this kit was the most impressive for making the smart home feel responsive, alive, and helpful.



Meross MSG200 Smart Wi-Fi Garage Door Opener (\$49.99) ▶

This simple device will make basically any garage door voice-controlled. Setting it up only took me about 20 minutes, on a garage door that didn't even have a remote control, no less! Setting aside the satisfaction of saying “Open Sesame” to my iPhone and watching the door rattle up, it's quite handy to be able to check my phone to see whether the garage door is open or closed. This is especially useful when lots of people are coming or going, or if worried about losing air-conditioning out the open door of an attached garage.



Nanoleaf Elements (\$299.99) ▶

These hexagonal lights didn't seem like they were going to be a show-stopper, but once we had them set up, we fell in love. They emit a rich warm light that feels downright magical. The synthetic woodgrain has an organic quality that looks luxurious on the wall in a tasteful living room. Most statement lights in the HomeKit catalog create a sci-fi techie vibe like the movie *Tron*, but not these. The Nanoleaf Elements bring elegance to the room, but they can also pulse when you touch them or along with your music, so they'll still get the party started.



Philips Hue White and Color Ambiance Starter Kit (\$199.99) ▲

The menu of HomeKit smart bulbs is long and getting longer, but reliability is still the most important metric and nobody beats Philips Hue for reliability. With the included hub, you can control up to 50 lightbulbs. Simply plug the hub into your router and add it to HomeKit—the bulbs pair with the hub and appears in the Home app just like any other device. The responsiveness, flexibility, and reliability of this system leave me saying: for smart bulbs, accept no substitutes.

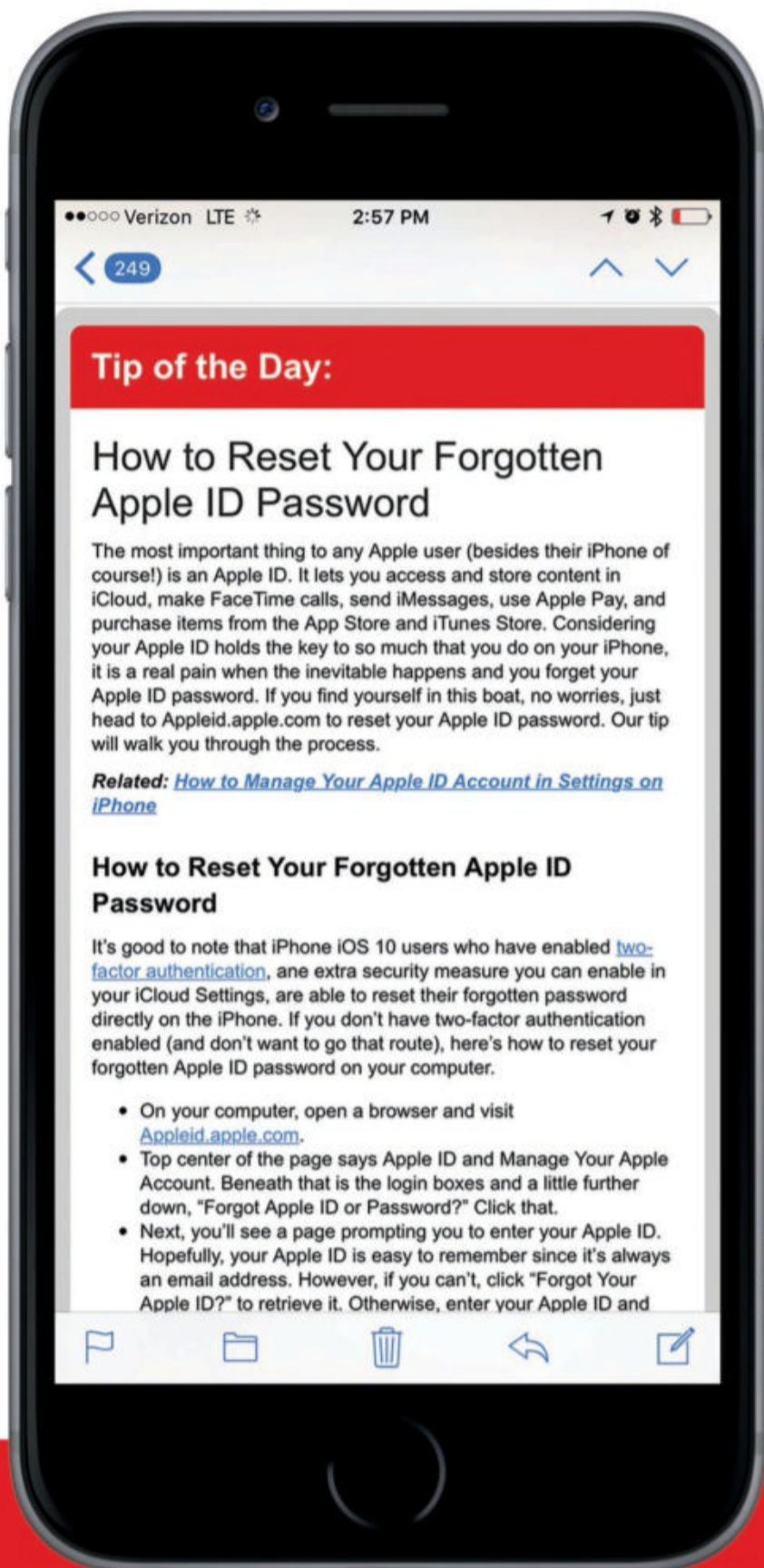
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HEALTH GADGETS

OUR TOP PICKS FOR EVERYDAY WELLNESS

BY ERIN MACPHERSON



K-TOR Power Box 50 Pedal-Powered Generator (\$375) ▶

Whether you're a person who spends a lot of time camping or you simply want an excuse to be more active at your desk all day, this innovative generator is pretty nifty. It's easy to assemble, easy to use, portable, and can bring a dead iPhone battery back to life in less than five minutes of pedaling! Just plug in a universal 12-volt car adapter, connect your standard USB charger cable, and use it to charge your devices or other batteries while burning a few extra calories.



Withings BPM Connect Smart Blood Pressure Monitor (\$99.95) ◀

I love that this Wi-Fi- and Bluetooth-enabled blood pressure cuff is flexible, comfortable to use, and completely portable. I'm also incredibly surprised at how easy it was to set up and use with the accompanying **Health Mate** app. Plus you can take measurements and store health profiles for multiple users, get easy-to-read, color-coded feedback about your health, and even share your metrics with your doctor!



Etekcity ESF-551 Smart Fitness Scale (\$29.99) ◀

Being an experienced personal trainer, I'm very skeptical about scales that claim to measure things like muscle mass, water weight, and other hard-to-pinpoint metrics. I was pleasantly surprised by this scale! It's affordable; syncs measurements for multiple users to individual profiles in the accompanying app; and has special modes for kids, pregnant users, and even for measuring a baby or a pet while holding them in your arms. My family even uses mine to measure tiny foster kittens since the scale can take measurements as low as 100 grams with accuracy!



EyeQue Vision Monitoring Kit (\$159) ▲

At-home vision testing? Yes please! Thanks to COVID-19, I'd rather not take unnecessary trips to healthcare offices right now, and the eye doctor is no exception. This kit allows you to test all of the metrics needed to order new contacts or glasses from online vendors and will save your results in a corresponding app. Each test feels like playing a game and is easy to use, making it ideal for use even with kids. I can test my entire family's vision with this kit for no additional cost, which is a huge benefit!

Upright GO S Posture Trainer (\$59.95) ▶

My posture just isn't what it used to be, and my back and neck ache as a result. I was thrilled to give the Upright GO S a try, but skeptical that it'd work, and even more skeptical that I'd make a habit out of better posture. I now wear the device every day, whether I use the gentle adhesive sticker to stick it to my back (I truly forget it's even there) or pair it with the stylish device-supporting necklace instead! The app is simple to use, the soft reminder vibrations aren't annoying, and I find myself more than willing to practice healthier posture as a result.





ON-THE-GO ACCESSORIES

KEEP YOUR AIRTAGS & AIRPODS SECURE

BY ELISABETH GARRY

Speck Presidio Clickflip AirPods Pro Case (\$39.95) ▶

One of the things that grosses me out about AirPods protective cases is the grime that accumulates in them. Luckily, this case has an IP5X rating, which makes it dust-proof. It also has four-foot drop protection. I thought it would be hard to remove the case because of the hard sides, but the AirPods case slides out easily. It is also easy to charge via cable or wirelessly despite the thickness of the case. It has a carabiner that I've attached an AirTag to as well. I gave this case an iPhone Life Best of CES 2021 award because I like it so much.



Nomad Leather Loop for AirTag (\$24.95) ◀

I like Nomad's sleek, stylish Leather Loop AirTag keychain better even than Apple's leather options. The Nomad Leather Loop is minimalist and adds very little bulk, making it easy to carry my keys attached to my belt loop. You can even change your AirTag's battery while the keychain is attached to it. The Leather Loop comes in black, rustic brown, and natural (a paler, almost cream-colored leather), and Nomad also offers matching iPhone cases and Apple Watch bands.



Comply Foam Tips 2.0 for AirPods Pro (\$24.99) ▲

I'm sensitive to silicone and the tips that came with my AirPods Pro make my ears hurt. Apparently, that's true for a number of people. Like Apple offers, Comply gives you three sets of tips in small, medium, and large sizes. Because these tips are made of foam, they solve that problem and also mold better to my ears, which means they stay put and create more of a seal for improved noise cancellation.

Nomad Glasses Strap for AirTag (\$34.95) ◀

I lose two to three pairs of sunglasses over the course of a normal summer, so I was very excited to try out Nomad's Glasses Strap. The strap features a slot that you can easily pop your AirTag into, so even if you do manage to lose the glasses and the strap, you can easily track them down. It comes with several different attachments to fit the stems of your glasses, and while it might not be a seamless fit, it's pretty secure. So far this year, I'm still on my first pair of sunglasses.



Catalyst Waterproof AirPods Case (\$24.99) ▶

At first this case made me nervous: It hangs upside down from its attached carabiner, and the top of the case is open. But I just traveled across the country with this case in tow, and my AirPods didn't escape once. I also verified that the case is drop-proof to a height of four feet when I dropped it on asphalt and my AirPods came out without a scratch. While advertised as waterproof, I didn't test it in the water: after peeling the top back to access my AirPods on a regular basis, the case got loose at the top. The case leaves access to the Lightning port and is compatible with wireless chargers.





KIDS' GEAR

SMART TOYS CHILDREN WILL LOVE

BY LEANNE HAYS

Universal2Go Personal Planetary – Ages 12+ (\$50) ▶

I love stargazing apps, and this Personal Planetary improves the experience by blocking out the external world, leaving users to enjoy the night sky with an AR overlay of constellations and facts. I prefer using the **Star Chart** app instead of the recommended Universe2Go option; it's more artistically rendered. You can also use this device to watch TV shows and movies on road trips, airplanes, and more. Get the kids one each to prevent backseat squabbles!



Shifu Orboot Earth Interactive AR Globe (\$54.99) ▲

In place of text or national borders, this 10-inch augmented reality globe features cartoon icons of landmarks, animals, and food. Download the associated app, hover your iPhone or iPad over an icon, and you're off on a trip around the world. Your child can play games, solve mysteries, and take quizzes in one of nine language options! Kids will learn from hundreds of lessons about world cultures, inventions, cuisines, geography, and more. An included passport book and stamp lets kids take notes and give themselves a star for each country visited.

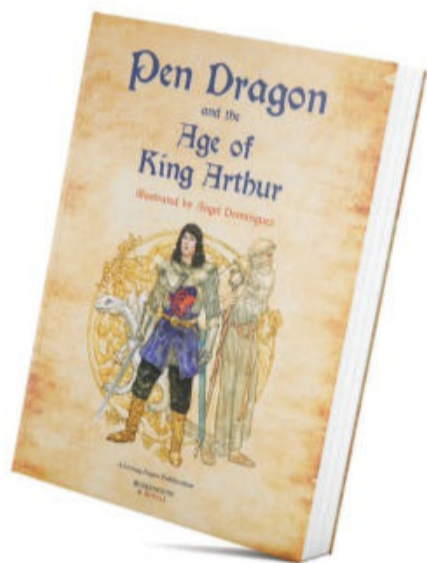
Sharper Image Smart Pixel Art Creator – Ages 7+ (\$99.99) ◀

Remember Perler beads? The Sharper Image rebooted that fine motor skills-building pastime for the 21st century! Kids can use the tray and beads the old-fashioned way or download the **smART pixelator** app on an iPhone or iPad, which connects to the toy via Bluetooth. It offers step-by-step instructions for creating both 2D projects and 3D items like bracelets and model ships! The board is backlit to show where each bead should go, and best of all, you can take or download your own photos, then pixelate and make custom Perler bead images!



King Arthur Retold Augmented Reality Book – Ages 8+ (\$14) ◀

This AR book from Uncommon Goods retells the age-old story of King Arthur and his knights with an interstellar twist. Lavishly illustrated and cleverly told, this picture book is readable and worth the price even without the interactive component. Kids and grownups alike will enjoy hidden animations and memory games revealed by downloading the **Pen Dragon AR** app and hovering an iPad or iPhone over six unique puzzle pages.



Shifu Tacto Laser – Ages 5+ (\$49.99) ▶

This iPad accessory set works with an app to teach the science of light via four games with more than 200 levels. Players explore, solve mysteries, and improve their logic and critical-reasoning skills while using a prism, laser, mirror, and flashlight. Along the way, kids learn that mirrors can reflect and direct light, light can split into seven component colors, and much more! My daughter's favorite game, Space Quest, challenges her to destroy asteroids by correctly angling and firing her laser to bounce off her carefully positioned mirror.



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WHO ARE THE APPLE LEAKERS?

THE FACES BEHIND THE RUMORS

BY AMY SPITZFADEN-BOTH



IF you keep a close eye on rumors of upcoming Apple devices and events, chances are you'll see the same names and publications come up again and again. But who are these so-called leakers and where do they get their information? Why do we consider them trustworthy sources? I did some digging on the people we put our trust in and learned some surprising things.

Rumor tracking site AppleTrack ranks 18 different people and websites by their Apple rumor accuracy. Here you'll find the four most compelling leakers and their track records, strengths, and weak points. Each has an impressive history of accurate predictions and has their own method of gaining and sharing rumors. Let's get to know these leakers!



Image source: Twitter

MARK GURMAN ACCURACY: 88.8%

Mark Gurman joined the tech scene as a teenager, starting off working for 9to5Mac. Since then, he's rapidly climbed the ladder all the way up to Bloomberg, where he regularly posts reports on what may be coming down the Apple line. He holds an impressive fourth place overall in terms of accuracy, and is the most prolific of all the leakers. Where he gets his rumors is somewhat of a mystery, but we have to give the guy props for keeping his sources anonymous!



Image source: Twitter

JON PROSSER ACCURACY: 74.3%

Jon Prosser is the reigning king of tech Twitter and YouTube, amusing and intriguing his followers with leaks, jokes, and wild antics. Last spring, he swore to his followers he would shave his eyebrows if Apple didn't hold an event on March 23. Apple didn't, and sure enough, Jon's eyebrows went bye-bye. Interestingly, his accuracy has been tanking lately, leading some to suspect his sources may have gotten a talking-to. His Twitter makes it clear he is open to messages from anyone with information, so we can assume he gathers most of his intel that way.



Image source: 9to5 Mac

MING-CHI KUO ACCURACY: 76.6%

Ming-Chi Kuo is an analyst for TF International Securities who gets his info from Apple's Asian supply chain, where the company produces its devices. While his reports aren't always 100 percent accurate, he tends to stay in the ballpark of what we will or won't see with any given release. Two areas of strength for Kuo are scheduling and price point; look to him to find out when you'll see new devices and features and how much you'll be spending.



Image source: Harri.com

MAX WEINBACH ACCURACY: 68.8%

While Max Weinbach comes in last for accuracy in our roundup, he has another noteworthy accomplishment: he is only 20 years old. His leaks focus more on Android-related content, to the point that he contributes regularly to blog Android Police. He gets his info by poking around on his own, seeing what info he can glean from just knowing where to look. In February of last year, he told Tom's Guide: "Every time I tweet or publish an

article about a device, I expect an email or phone call from the company about it." But at the time of interview, he still hadn't.

THE MAN BEHIND THE RENDERS

When Apple leakers release new information, they often accompany it with a render of what the new device might look like. One of the most well-known render leakers is Steve H. McFly, who shares from his account OnLeaks. According to AppleTrack, as of June 2021, OnLeaks had a 78.6 percent accuracy rate, including correct renders of the iPhone 11 Pro.

THE DARK SIDE OF LEAKING

One of the most accurate Apple leakers up until this point is a blogger called Kang who writes for Chinese site Weibo. Back in June of 2021, however, he posted that Apple's lawyers had contacted him telling him to stop. This brings us to one important fact: Apple doesn't like leaks.

While leaks can create buzz around new product releases, no company wants their products and plans released verbatim to the public. While some hints and half-truths can be beneficial, actual leaking of confidential information can be a serious matter. Recently, Apple reportedly sent a letter to a leaker warning them that misinformation prior to a launch could mislead third-party accessory creators, leading to incompatible product development.

This past spring, Apple actually sued a former employee for using inside information for his own personal gain, citing the employee "had used his seniority to gain access to internal meetings and documents . . . and he provided these trade secrets to his outside media correspondent." A lawsuit leveled by a company as big as Apple could be potentially devastating to an individual, which shows just how serious the exchange of information can be.

Still, rumors are an exciting and important part of the Apple world, and many come from honest channels. Back in the spring of 2020, Apple accidentally confirmed the release of AirTags through a support video that included AirTags in a screenshot of a Settings menu. Eagle-eyed enthusiasts caught it, and thus we knew about AirTags well before their 2021 launch.

Leaking is tricky business. If you're wrong too much you lose credibility, but being right too much could spell legal trouble. But I believe leaking is a fundamental part of Apple's grand plan, as long as they can keep us guessing. Will these four champs continue to master the game? We'll be keeping an eye out, but I have a guess that no one leaker will stay on top for too long. 🔄



Amy Spitzfaden-Both is the Associate Editor at iPhone Life, an award-winning novelist, and an iPhone enthusiast. She lives in New Hampshire with her husband and daughter. When she's not writing or glued to her iPhone, she enjoys hiking, traveling, and creating her own tea blends.

IS YOUR IPHONE SPYING ON YOU?

NAVIGATING THE MYSTERIOUS WORLD OF SMARTPHONE PRIVACY

BY ELISABETH GARRY



Many of us have had a conversation with a friend, only to be scrolling on our phones later and come across an ad for the very thing we thought we'd been discussing in private. My colleague, Erin MacPherson, told me this story: "My mom was talking to me about wanting a side-by-side double trash can for under her breakfast bar, and a few days later, I was seeing Amazon ads for exactly those. It was... freaky. Up until then, I had pretty much assumed that I'd forgotten about Googling something or looking it up on Amazon, but I was sure I hadn't with that one." Stories like this raise the question—is your iPhone spying on you?

In 2021, the debate over iPhone privacy has been blowing up on a major scale. Apple's new initiative to scan material on users' phones for potential child sexual abuse material (CSAM) was delayed after pushback from individuals and organizations concerned about the new policy's privacy and security implications. Edward Snowden, among others, spoke out on Twitter and published an article about Apple's plans to start scanning images intended for upload to iCloud and information exchanged using the Messages app for CSAM in collaboration with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).

While this might sound like a noble pursuit—I think we can all agree that reducing the proliferation of CSAM online is of paramount importance—Snowden and others were concerned that, with this initiative, Apple would open a "back door" to abuses of privacy. If Apple were to scan and share your photos and encrypted messages, who's to say where this sharing would stop? What other types of images and messages might Apple decide are dangerous? Who else might the company be compelled to share your data with?

As Snowden writes, "...it really doesn't matter what Apple's claimed process protections are: once they create the capability, the law will change to direct its application. . . . The bottom line is that once Apple crafts a mechanism [for] the mass surveillance of iPhones (no matter how carefully implemented), they lose the ability to determine what purposes it is used for."

The battle over privacy concerns regarding Apple's child safety protections comes in contrast to its efforts to stand out as the tech company most dedicated to preserving users'

privacy. With the rollout of App Tracking Transparency in iOS 14.5, Apple threw the gauntlet at Facebook's feet, forcing the notorious data miner to announce its intention to track users and give them the option to opt out of tracking. The results weren't pretty for Facebook and other apps: 96 percent of iPhone users in the US refused to surrender their data. Since then, Apple has only continued to build its privacy protections with iOS 15, introducing iCloud Private Relay to help users browse more securely and expanding its Hide My Email feature to protect users' email addresses from spam and scammers.

So, which is it? Is Apple truly dedicated to protecting your privacy, or is it opening you up to data mining and intrusive governmental overreach?

“IF APPLE WERE TO SCAN AND SHARE YOUR PHOTOS AND ENCRYPTED MESSAGES, WHO’S TO SAY WHERE THIS SHARING WOULD STOP?”

The answer to that question is: It's complicated. While Apple's plans to start doing client-side scanning to search for CSAM on users' iPhones has been delayed, the initiative has not been cancelled. According to a statement Apple made to Gizmodo: "Based on feedback from customers, advocacy groups, researchers and others, we have decided to take additional time over the coming months to collect input and make improvements before releasing these critically important child safety features."

If your iPhone can soon scan your iCloud-bound images and messages, what can it do now?

You should know that both native Apple apps (like the Camera app or Apple Maps) and third-party apps frequently collect data such as your location and can access your microphone and camera, depending on the permissions you set. Third-party apps may also use third-party trackers to collect data about users. Many apps will even collect information like your name, age, location, interactions on the app, and even your outside internet activity.

Apple's App Tracking Transparency feature makes it easier to limit the data third-party apps can collect on you, but depending on the terms you agreed to when you signed up for the app, it may not stop apps from collecting all of it. Keep in mind that many apps require permission to use your camera, microphone, and location to function. What good would navigating with Google Maps be if it didn't know where you were? Wouldn't it be a lot harder to post a story to Instagram if it didn't have access to your camera? Well, according to a lawsuit filed in September 2020, Instagram (which is owned by Facebook) was sued for allegedly accessing users'

cameras even when the users were not actively using Instagram.

This lawsuit, filed by Brittany Condit on behalf of herself and other Instagram users, alleges that Instagram accesses users' cameras even when the Instagram camera feature is not in use "for one main reason: to collect lucrative and valuable data on its users that it would not otherwise have access to." The suit goes on to say, "By obtaining extremely private and intimate personal data on their users, including in the privacy of their own homes, [Facebook is] able to increase their advertising revenue by targeting users more than ever before."

According to The Fashion Law, a media company following (you guessed it) legal aspects of the fashion industry, Condit dropped her lawsuit in 2021, which The Fashion Law claims is "likely the result of a confidential settlement between the parties." This means that we may never know what Facebook admitted to in the settlement and what they denied, but earlier in 2020, Facebook did address an Instagram "bug" that gave the app access to users' cameras even when they were not using the app.

Interestingly, Condit's suit specifically credits Apple's iOS 14—which sends notifications to users when a third-party app accesses their cameras or microphones—with exposing Instagram's alleged improper use of users' cameras. That's a point in Apple's favor, and so is Security.org's rating of A+ for Apple's data collection policies. According to Aliza Vigderman, tech journalist and Security.org's Content Manager, your data is much safer with an iPhone than with an Android phone. "Google collects much more information than Apple," she says.

But what about my colleague Erin MacPherson's story of suddenly receiving ads for a product she'd only spoken privately with her mother about? The ads Erin saw appeared on Facebook. How could Amazon and Facebook have known that Erin talked to her mother about fancy new side-by-side trash cans unless her phone told them?

Well, there is a (somewhat) innocent explanation. According to Rex Freiburger, CEO of the tech publication Gadget Review, "This is the result of advanced algorithms that definitely do track your online activity but aren't listening in on you." You see, Erin is Facebook friends with her mom, and while Erin may not have searched online for side-by-side trash cans, her mother did. As we've gone over, apps like Facebook can pinpoint your location, so they might be able to see that Erin and her mother are friends who are frequently in the same place—maybe the same house. So, if Facebook knew to serve Erin's mother ads about side-by-side trash cans based on her search history, it might have known to serve Erin those ads as well, as she also spent a lot of time in a household that

was in the market for said trash cans.

Freiberger goes on to say that noticing ads for things we were just talking about is also likely "a result of confirmation bias." How many conversations do we have daily, and how many ads do we see? Every time there's an overlap, we might jump to the conclusion that it's the result of our iPhones recording our conversations, especially if we're already concerned about our phones spying on us.

If this explanation doesn't satisfy you, you're not alone. It doesn't help that, of course, companies like Facebook don't want anyone to know the breadth of the data they collect and how they're doing it. For its part, Facebook has been very clear that it does not use your phone's microphone to listen in on your conversations. Apple also denies using iPhone microphones or cameras to spy on users, but this is cold comfort for those who worry about their privacy when they have an iPhone in the room with them.

The good news is, you're not totally helpless when it comes to protecting your data. If you want to minimize the

amount your iPhone apps can track you: Turn off tracking for apps using the App Tracking Transparency feature and turn off Location Services either for your entire iPhone or on an app-by-app basis. Mask your email address with the Hide My Email feature when you sign up for apps. Check to see which apps have permission to use your microphone and camera and disallow those you don't trust. Most importantly, do your research on the apps that you install on your iPhone.

Most of the more mysterious and intrusive data mining comes from third-party apps, not Apple apps. Before installing a new app from the App Store, make sure to look the developer up, read reviews, check the permissions it requires, and read the terms of service (yes, I know). Vigderman

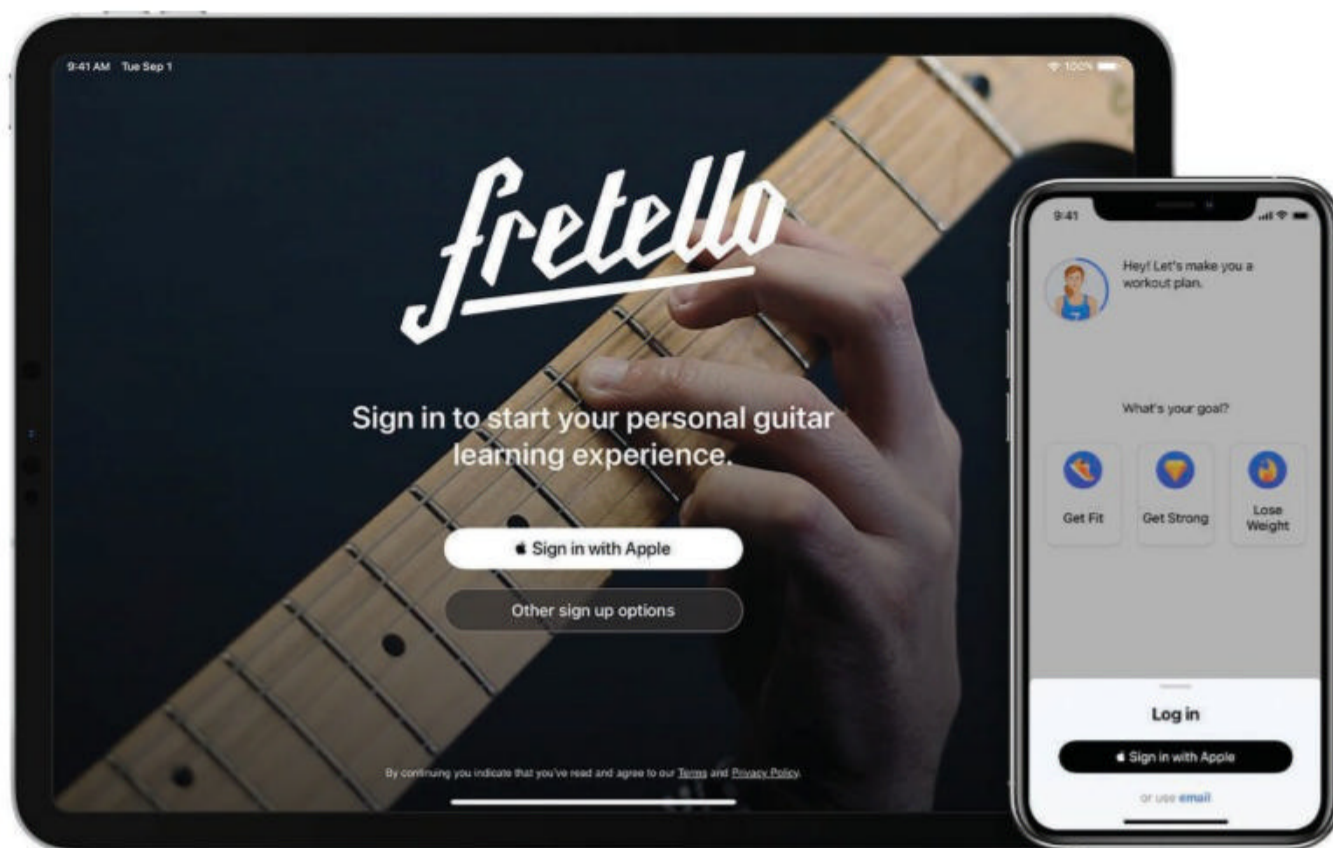
stresses the importance of managing which apps you allow to track you: "Whenever you are asked if an app can track you, decline it."

You should also remember: If you're not paying for a product, you are the product. Nowhere is this truer than in the world of apps. 🔌

**“REMEMBER:
IF YOU’RE NOT
PAYING FOR A
PRODUCT, YOU
ARE THE
PRODUCT.”**



Elisabeth Garry is a Feature Web Writer for iPhone Life. Formerly of Gartner, she has four years' experience writing about technology. As a former college writing instructor, she is passionate about accessible communication, which is perhaps why she loves helping people make the best use of the strongest communication tools they have available: their iPhones. She has a degree in Russian from Reed College.



TOP 4 REASONS WHY I DON'T USE SIGN IN WITH APPLE

THERE'S A BETTER WAY TO CREATE AND MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNTS

BY CULLEN THOMAS

When Apple debuted its Sign in with Apple service, I wrote about how excited I was to use it. With Apple's new single sign-on service, you just push a button and easily log into that site without the hassle of a username and password. Apple stakes its brand on security, and all indications were that Sign in with Apple would be another great offering in a lineup of solid security and privacy-oriented services. That's all still true. It is secure, private, and when it works, convenient. Nevertheless, I don't use it and I believe there's a better way. Here's why:

1 YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER YOU USED IT

A year and a half after Sign in with Apple launched, I'm sitting at my desk staring blankly at a sign-in page for an old messenger platform I used briefly last year. What was that password? I just want to recover a cat pirate meme that would be perfect for today's Twitter rant.

Just as I set my fingers to the keys, I notice the buttons to sign in with Google, Facebook, or Apple, offered like three cups upside down on a table. My access to this cat meme is

behind one of those buttons, but I can't remember which. Is it just my imagination, or is someone in the background shuffling those cups around with a wink and a smirk? "Pick a cup, any cup, which hides the ball?" I'm in a hurry. This isn't that important. I tap the email and password option hoping that iCloud keychain has my credential stored, but it doesn't. Then I take a shot at the Google button. I use Google a lot. It seems like a safe bet. At first, it appears to work: the sign-in page gives way, its doors open, admitting me into the chat app, but something's wrong.

2 YOU CAN MISTAKENLY CREATE MULTIPLE ACCOUNTS

Instead of signing me in, Sign in with Google created an entirely new account. No memes here. If you're experiencing confusion at this stage, let me assure you, so was I. What happened was actually simple: I'd never used Sign in with Google with that chat app. So, instead of logging me into an existing account, the button created a new account for me. There was text on the screen during my sign-in process that told me I was creating a new account instead of logging in to an old one, but I didn't read it. I was in a hurry. Aren't we always in a hurry when we're trying to log in? With a sigh, I log out and return to the sign-in page.

Alright, no problem, I've used Sign in with Facebook too. Tap that button, and three clicks later, I'm the annoyed owner of a second blank new useless profile.

The third time's the charm? Finally, I try out Sign in with Apple. It doesn't work either, but at least this time I go slowly enough to notice the text telling me that I'm making a new account.

I'm still not logged in, and now I'm annoyed. Single sign-on services are designed to be more convenient than a regular username and password, but, like a password, a button is only as functional as my ability to remember which one to use. With hundreds of websites and services to log in to, I will not remember which button I pushed to create my account. I'm the first problem with Sign in with Apple. I'm playing my own cup game scam, and I'm the victim; I've hidden my credential from myself.

The second problem is how logging in to an existing account and creating an entirely new one are practically identical processes. There are some indicators that you're making a new account, but I was in a hurry, so I got two new accounts instead of a cat meme.

They could make it a little easier on me by popping up a banner right away saying: "We don't detect any account associated with this service, would you like to create one?"

3 IT ISN'T UNIVERSALLY AVAILABLE

The solution to this game is to use the same single sign-on service every time. That way, you will always know which button to push to get in. But there's a problem: some websites offer Sign in with Apple, but most don't. On some pages you see it, on most pages you don't.

To be fair, this isn't just Apple's problem: no single sign-on

service is available on every site or app, so you cannot use any of them every single time. But Apple's version is even less available than the rest. As of this writing, the number of services that offer Sign in with Apple is still limited to the most popular apps, and not even all of them. That means even if you pick Sign in with Apple as your one true solution, it's likely to stand you up just when you need it most. You'll still be using other options more often than not.

There's another disappearing act related specifically to Apple's service. I thought that when I created my account with Sign in with Apple, it would store an email and password combo in iCloud Keychain, but it doesn't. To clarify the difference between the two: iCloud Keychain is Apple's password manager, which will suggest and store secure passwords for websites. Sign in with Apple is the button that skips the whole username password process by linking your account with your Apple ID. Apple says that the two services are connected, and that is true in a technical way, but not in the practical way I expected. If you've created an account with Sign in with Apple, then that account will not appear in your list of saved websites and services in iCloud Keychain. Meaning, if you put your cursor in the email and password boxes on that website, then iCloud Keychain will not suggest your username and password. The only way to get back in to that account is to click the Sign in with Apple button. You can use iCloud Keychain and Sign in with Apple side by side, but then you'll be back to guessing which one you used every time you're asked to sign in.

4 A PASSWORD MANAGER WORKS BETTER

Fortunately, there is a much better option that's always available and won't let you down.

Use a password manager. Password managers like OnePassword, LastPass, Keeper, Microsoft Authenticator, Chrome, and Apple's iCloud Keychain all work fantastically to create and store unique (and secure, if used correctly) username and password combos. You will only need to sign on once in a single place: your password manager. This fulfills the concept of a 'single sign-on,' except it's always available and it won't create a new empty account in three clicks. Your password manager should always be by your side. It might take a little extra work to go copy and paste a password, but it's worth it. 🔑



Cullen Thomas is a Writer and Producer at iPhone Life, creating tips and guides to help users unlock the full potential of their iOS and iPhone. Cullen spent nine years as an instructor in media and communications at Maharishi University, lecturing on a wide range of technical and artistic subjects. Cullen is a film-maker, a game designer, a sci-fi author, a coffee connoisseur, and an obsessive nerd for all things tech.

CLIMATE SMART IPHONE APPS

ADVOCATE, CHANGE HABITS
& MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY

BY LEANNE HAYS



THE PROBLEM

My heart sank when I read the 2018 special report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) about the impacts of climate change on global temperatures. The takeaway was bleak. In addition to rising sea levels and effects on wildlife, a rise in global temperatures is changing our weather patterns and causing increasingly violent and destructive natural disasters. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), "Scientific studies indicate that extreme weather events such as heatwaves and large storms are likely to become more frequent or more intense with human-induced climate change."

In March of 2019, the UN General Assembly President María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés warned the world that, "We are the last generation that can prevent irreparable damage to our planet."

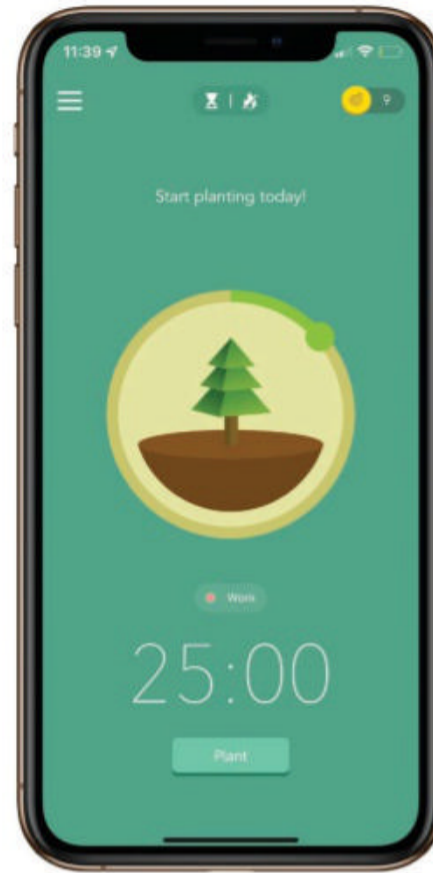
SOLUTIONS

It's tempting to bury our heads in the sand on this one. The problem's too big; it's too far out of hand; we're all busy with our day-to-day lives, let alone trying to solve the climate crisis. But what if I told you there are lots of ways to make a difference without drastically changing your budget or lifestyle? Here are some websites and apps for your Apple devices that can help you do just that.

BROWSE

Let's start with something we all do every day; browse the internet. Did you know there's a search engine called Ecosia

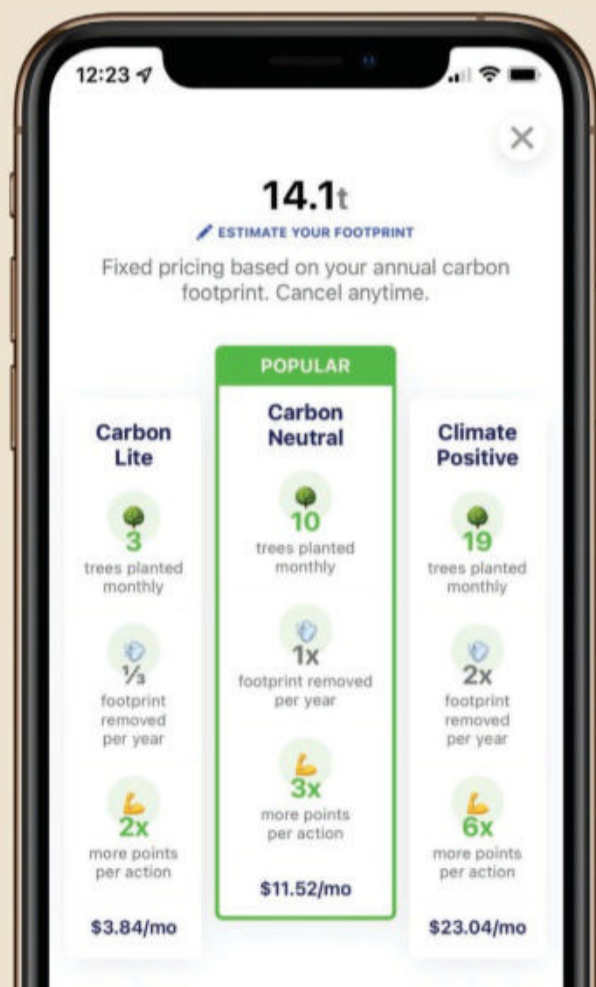
that runs entirely on renewable energy and donates 80 percent of its profits to green investments and planting trees? Just add the Ecosia extension to Chrome, and suddenly, you're re-greening deserts, fighting wildfires, and helping build solar installations!



WORK

Getting distracted at work is such a pain, so wouldn't it be cool if you could reduce your carbon footprint while staying on task? Good news! **Forest** (\$1.99) lets you do just that. Whether you're working, studying, or spending time on a favorite hobby, Forest helps you stay off your iPhone by encouraging you to leave the app open and timing your focused time. The more uninterrupted time you spend in the app, the more coins you earn, and the more coins you earn, the more trees you can plant in real life! With 4

million users and counting, Forest has planted over a million trees so far!

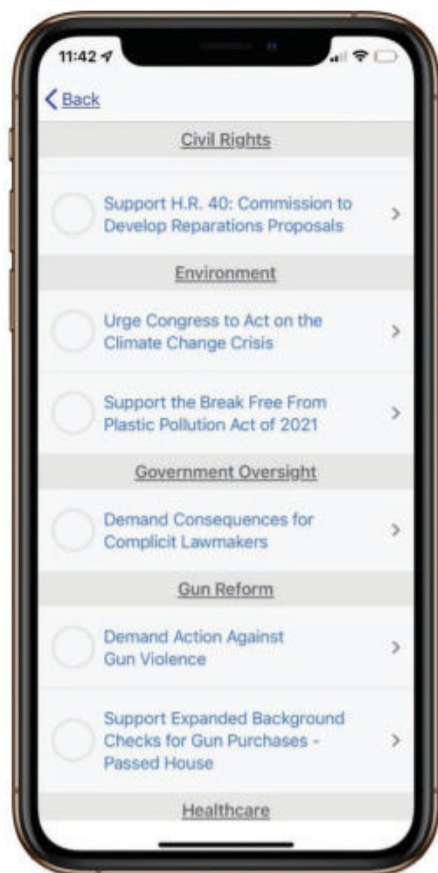


YOUR SUSTAINABLE LIVING COACH

If you're feeling unsure of yourself and want daily guidance as you work to reduce your carbon footprint, **LiveGreen Daily Carbon Tracker** (starts at \$3.84/month) is for you. LiveGreen's monthly subscription fee offsets your annual carbon footprint in a choice of 33, 100, or 200 percent. You can log your household's utility usage, as well as diet, clothing, technology, and other expenditures to find and reduce your most significant sources of carbon pollution.

The app automatically tracks flights and car trips with your iPhone's GPS and syncs with Apple's Health app to track miles walked and biked. You'll earn points that you can dedicate to reforestation projects with every mile you bike or walk!

LiveGreen also serves businesses and corporations, so if you'd like to get your company working toward greener practices and a reduced carbon footprint, they're here to help.



CALL

We all have a few minutes of downtime here and there. Why not put those gaps in your schedule to good use by making a few quick phone calls? The **5 Calls** app lets users enter their location and choose political issues that matter to them. The app then provides scripts for advocacy and even dials your elected representatives for you! In just a few minutes, you can make your views on the climate change crisis heard.

HowGood ranks more than 200,000 products on metrics, including whether ingredients were grown humanely and sustainably, how the item was processed and if it contains unhealthy additives, and how the company compensates and treats its employees.

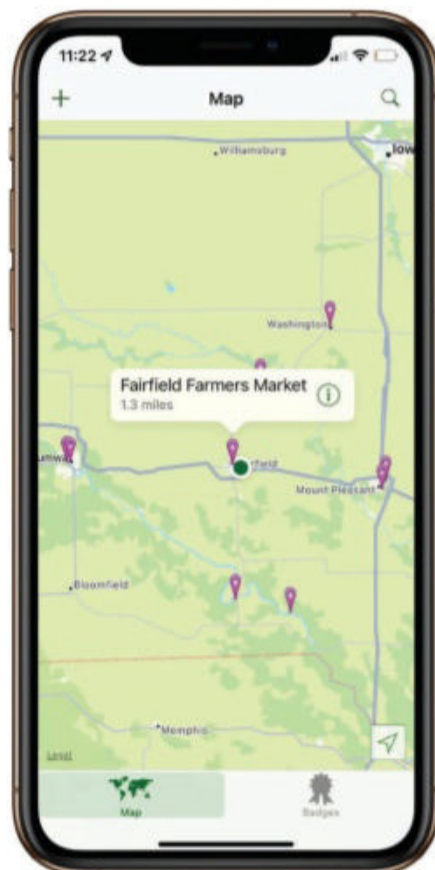
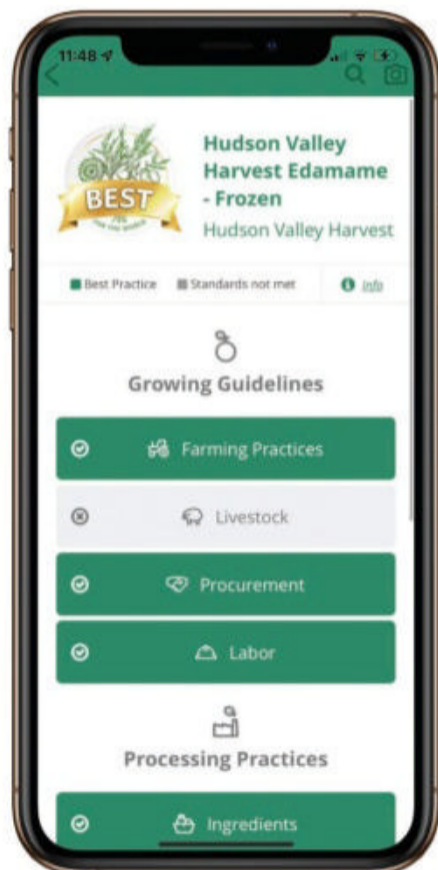
For an even further step along the path to a sustainable diet, download the **American Farmers Markets** app (free). It offers a map with farmer's market locations across the United States, so wherever you are, you can support local agriculture. Buying locally grown and produced food keeps your friends and neighbors in business and keeps healthy, fresh options available to your community in the event of climate-change-related supply chain disruptions.

CONCLUSION

Imagine how good you'll feel when you take charge, do your part, and start changing your carbon footprint with these tools and lifestyle tweaks. Add them to your day a bit at a time or all at once. Tell your friends and family about the steps you've been taking and encourage them to join you! With enough of us making these efforts, we can influence corporate policy, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, slow climate change, and keep our planet livable for future generations. 🔌

EAT

Everybody has to eat, and consumers working together have a lot of power over how our food is grown and processed. Download **HowGood** (free), and you'll be able to see at a glance just how sustainable your favorite grocery items really are. You can use your iPhone camera to scan barcodes and learn whether your potential purchase is rated Good, Great, Best, or Standards Not Met.



Leanne Hays is an SEO Content Strategist at iPhone Life. She loves reading and blogging, and is never without a book in her backpack or an audiobook on her phone. Short-term goals include finishing painting her house and starting an aquaponics farm, long-term goals include a bike tour of Italy and writing a novel.



Get an iPhone tip
every day.

iPhoneLife.com/dailytips

FEATURED iUSER:

MATTHEW DIGATI



Location: Buffalo, New York

Bio: Matthew is a professional real estate photographer who runs his own photography company, Buffalo Homes. He works with real estate agents and firms to provide marketing content.



Instagram: As a professional photographer, there is no better social media platform to display my work. Some of my longest running clients found me here and messaged me to see if I would photograph for them.



Google Calendar: Photographing two or three homes per day means that I need to keep my schedule in order at all times. Google Calendar syncs across all my devices and computers, making it indispensable to my job.



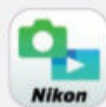
Zillow: This one helps me do my homework. I can see what my competition is up to and scout houses where I've scheduled a shoot. I can see how to improve on the existing photos.



DJI Fly: Every time I use my drone, I use this app. It turns my iPhone into the view screen for my drone and controls all of the settings.



Kitty Hawk: Kitty Hawk is great for serious drone pilots. It tells you everything you need to know about weather conditions, the type of air space you are flying in, and whether there are any reported incidents.



Nikon WMU: This app allows me to use my iPhone as a viewfinder for my camera. I can move furniture or change lighting and see how it looks on my phone. It's excellent for photographing multiple floors.



Matterport Capture: Matterport is a growing trend in real estate photography. It captures a 3D walk-through of the space you are photographing. Without this app, I wouldn't be able to use my Matterport camera.



Moza Assistant: This app helps me set up and run my gimbal, which is a device that I use to capture steady video. Moza makes great gimbals, and the app allows me to program its movements.

NEW IPHONE?

HERE'S HOW TO SET IT UP

11 STEPS TO GET YOUR NEW IPHONE UP AND RUNNING

BY OLENA KAGUI



Between the holidays and the new iPhone line, people around the world are purchasing new devices. Getting a new iPhone is super exciting, but it can be a little intimidating, especially if you haven't owned one before. If you have an old iPhone that works, the setup tends to be much simpler, but if your old one is out of commission or if you're making the switch from Android, you might want some guidance on this daunting process. I'll walk you through the steps to getting your new phone up and running, including how to activate a new iPhone and set up a carrier or provider.

SET UP YOUR CARRIER & SERVICE

Remember, your phone won't be able to make calls right out of the box. Calls require a SIM card from a carrier (or a digital SIM). You may have purchased your phone from Wal-Mart or Best Buy; the Apple website; an online store like eBay; or directly from the carrier of your choice.

If you've already set up an account with your carrier to establish your cellular service, then you can visit your carrier's store or call them to have them assign you a phone number and activate your account. Learning how to activate an iPhone without a SIM card is possible, but it is unnecessarily difficult.

Note: The iPhone X series or later, including all of the iPhone 13 line, supports Dual SIM using a nano-SIM and an eSIM. This means your phone can support two separate data plans. To learn more about your eSIM and set it up, talk to your cell carrier company.

POWER UP!

The very first thing you'll want to do is power on your device.

- 1 Turn on your iPhone by pressing down and holding the Side button (unless you have the iPhone SE, in

which case you will press and hold the Sleep/Wake button along the top of your device).

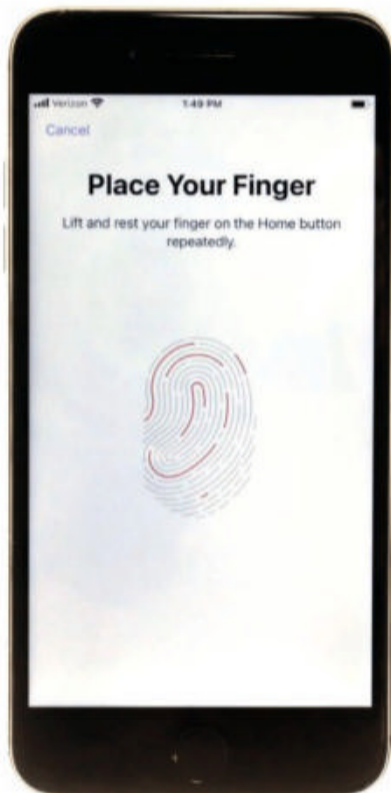
- 2 You'll see "Hello" in many languages appear on your screen. If it doesn't, that means you need to charge your phone first.

START THE SETUP



When the Quick Start menu pops up (after you've selected the language you want to use and the region where you live), you will need to select Set Up Manually, unless you have another working iPhone nearby with your Apple account all set up. Enter your Wi-Fi information to continue the process and review the Data & Privacy disclaimer.

SET UP TOUCH ID OR FACE ID



1

gussed it—your face! Set this up by holding your iPhone in

Depending on which iPhone model you have, you will then have one of two authentication options to set up: Face ID or Touch ID. Newer iPhone models have Face ID while older models have Touch ID.

- 1 If you have a model with a Home button, you will have the option to set up Touch ID, a feature that allows you to unlock your iPhone with your fingerprint. Set this up by repeatedly placing your finger on your Home button.

- 2 If you have an iPhone without a Home button, you will have the option to set up Face ID, which allows you to unlock your phone with—you

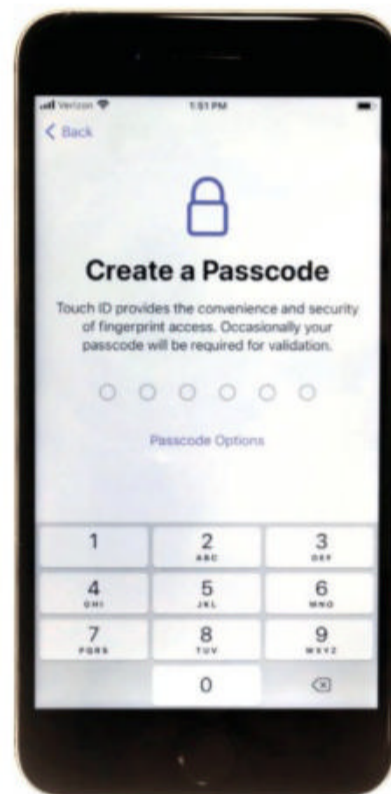
front of your face and following the prompts.

If at any time your iPhone doesn't register your fingerprint or your face, no worries. You can still enter a passcode, which you will set up after you've set up Touch ID/Face ID.

Touch ID and Face ID do more than just unlock your device. You can use them to make purchases with Apple Pay and even open apps with sensitive information, like your banking app or journaling app. It's a great feature that we definitely recommend. However, you can also opt out of Touch ID/Face ID and just use a passcode.

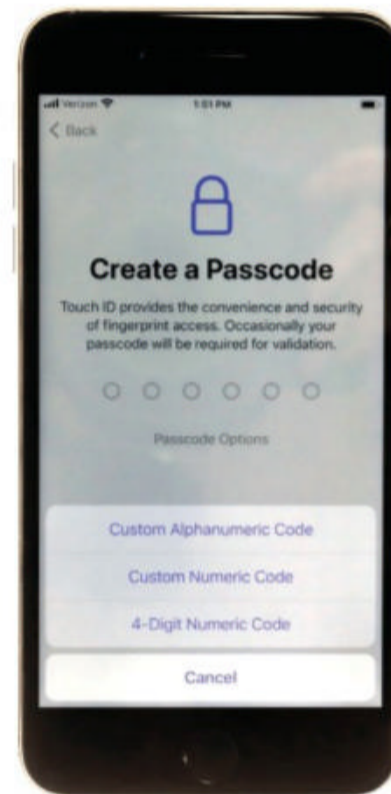
CREATE YOUR PASSCODE

When it's time to create your passcode, you'll be given the option to create a six-digit passcode. If six digits is too many for you to remember or seems too few for your preferred security level, then you can choose another option.



1

- 1 Tap **Passcode Options**.



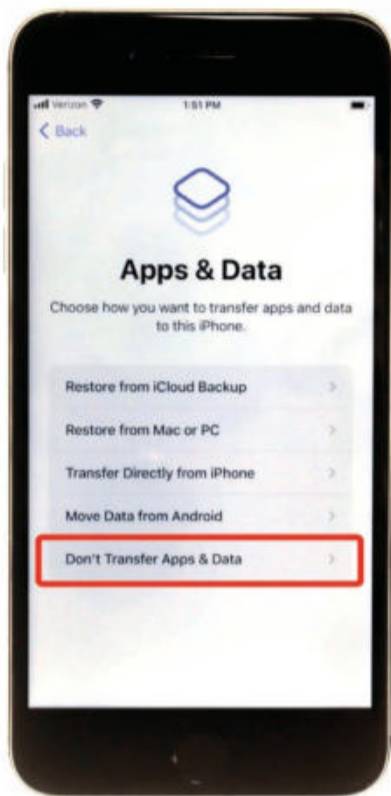
2

- 2 Select one of the following:
 - Four-Digit Numeric Code (the least secure)
 - Custom Numeric Code (this is the same six-digit code)
 - Custom Alphanumeric Code (the most secure)

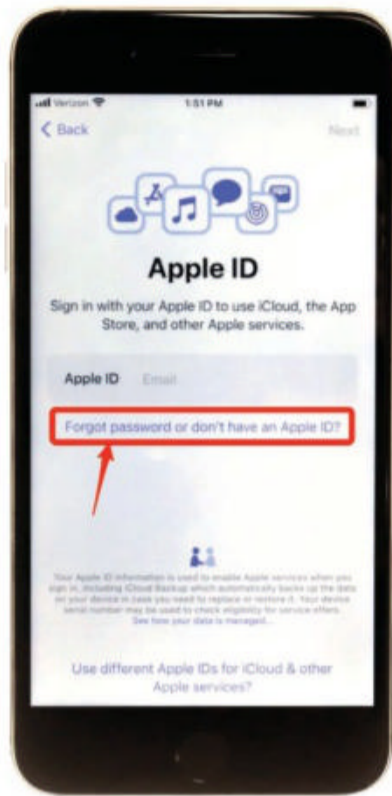
I recommend choosing an at least six-digit code. Especially if you've enabled Touch ID or Face ID, you won't need to enter it often and it will provide increased security. Whichever passcode option you pick, you'll be prompted to re-enter the passcode on the next screen.

SET UP YOUR APPLE ID

It's time to log in to your iPhone with an Apple ID. If you don't have one, then we'll create one.



1



2

1

On the Apps & Data screen, you'll see a few different options. If this is your first iPhone, you will need to select **Don't Transfer Apps & Data**.

2

You'll be prompted to enter your Apple ID and password. If you don't have one yet, select **Forgot Password** or **Don't Have an Apple ID**.

Creating an Apple ID and an Apple ID password are essential parts of being an iPhone user. It is the account that gives you access to all of Apple's services, including the iTunes and App Store, Apple's free text and video messaging services (iMessage and FaceTime), and the Find My network to help you locate your misplaced or stolen phone. It also allows you to access Apple's cloud storage system, iCloud.

1

Select **Create a Free Apple ID**.

2

After entering your name and birthday, choose your Apple ID, which is always an email address. I recommend choosing an email account that you use frequently and won't forget.

3

When picking a password, choose something with a combination of upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols. This password is for your Apple ID, which is shared across Apple devices.

4

Once you've set it up, a verification text will be sent to your phone. Enter the code from the text and enter your Apple ID and password to complete the process.

Later, once your iPhone is set up, you'll be asked to enter your Apple ID and password on your iPhone. Then you'll see your ID account located along the top when you open your Settings app.

While it's simple to retrieve a forgotten Apple ID or password, it's inconvenient, and you'll be asked for both frequently. Make sure to store your login credentials in a password manager (see page 76 for recommendations).

HOW TO ENABLE SIRI & OTHER SERVICES

Finally, you'll be asked to enable a few more of Apple's services:

- Apple's password manager: iCloud Keychain
- Apple's digital assistant Siri
- Apple Pay
- Screen Time
- Automatic app updates
- And more!

Set up whatever features you like. You can enable or disable any of them later if you change your mind. And that's it! You've set up your new iPhone. You'll see your Home screen and all the built-in apps. Some of Apple's apps may have to download from the App Store, which they'll do automatically. They'll appear dark as they download, but in a few short minutes, your iPhone will be ready to go.

Now you've activated your new iPhone and set it up. Next, you can begin personalizing and using it as you please. Enjoy your new iPhone! 🔌



Olena Kagui is a Feature Writer at iPhone Life who lives in Hawaii and is obsessed with her Apple Watch. Despite having a BA in International relations from AAU, her passion is writing. When she's not typing, testing the latest tech, studying SEO, crafting, foraging for wild mushrooms, or loving on her dog, she is traveling the world while occasionally visiting her home countries Ukraine and the Czech Republic.



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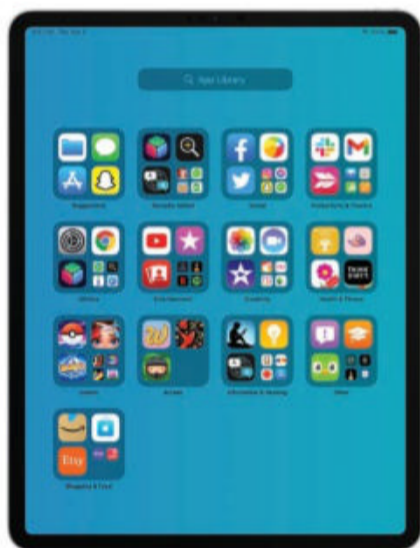
Top iOS 15 & iPadOS 15 Tips



The Best New Things You Can Do on Your iPhone & iPad

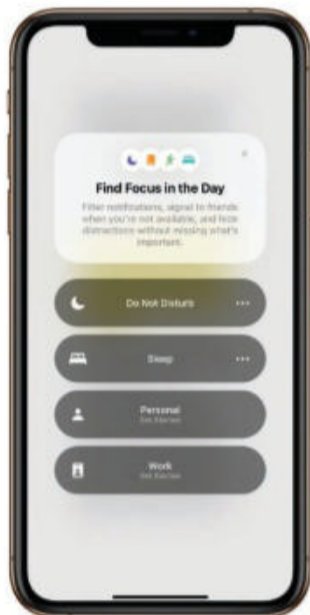
by Amy Spitzfaden-Both

When a new operating system comes out, it can be hard to know where to start! We all want to get the most out of our iPhones, but exploring an unfamiliar interface can be daunting. I've combed through all the new features and picked out 10 of the best ones to get you started with iOS 15. Let's have some fun!



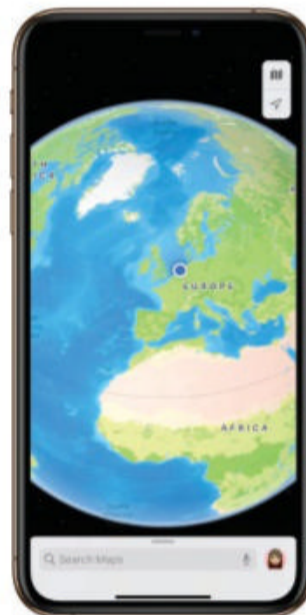
Use the App Library on Your iPad

The App Library has come to the iPad! Access it just like you would on your iPhone: swipe to the last of your Home screens, then swipe left one more time. This will get you to your App Library. Use the Search bar to find an app by name, scroll through the list alphabetically, or choose one of your App Library's pre-selected app groups.



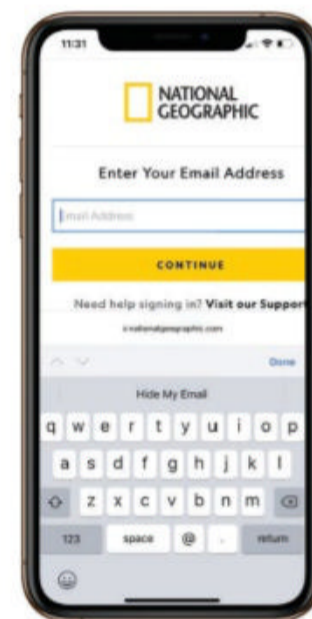
Get into Focus Mode

Focus Mode allows you to set up custom Do Not Disturb settings across your Apple Devices and comes with preset options like Work, Sleep, and Personal. You can also create custom versions. A handy bonus is that when enabled, people who try to contact you via Messages will be able to see that you're focusing and in that mode!



Explore the World in 3D

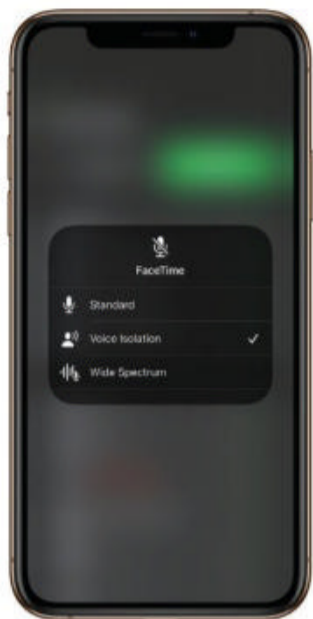
Apple Maps has an exciting new update this time around. If you zoom all the way out, you'll see a 3D map that you can explore with your fingertips! Just pinch your fingers toward each other to zoom out, then pinch out on any area you want to explore. Drag your finger to rotate the globe.



Hide Your Email from Websites

Have you been seeing Safari suggestions or notifications about hiding your email address? If you're an iCloud storage plan subscriber, you now have automatic access to the Hide My Email feature. Just tap Hide My Email when it pops up and you'll see a randomized email address to use as a "shell"

address. Tap continue or the refresh icon to choose a different one. Tap Use and you're good to go!



FaceTime Your Non-iPhone Friends

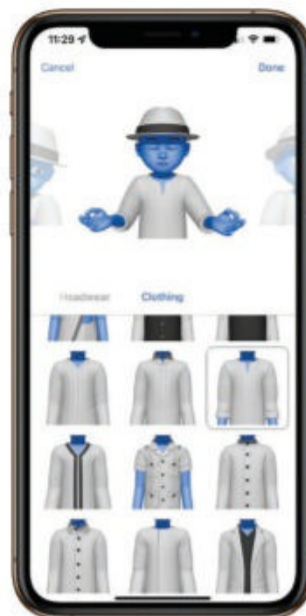
FaceTime is a great way to talk to family and friends, but if you've ever wanted to video chat with an Android user, up until now you've had to look into other apps. iOS 15 has solved this problem! Just open FaceTime, create a link to send to your non-Android contact, have them open it, and start your chat. Simple!



Swipe Through Safari

iOS 15 is bringing a ton of improvements to Safari, but one of the easiest, most intuitive changes is you can now navigate between

Safari tabs just by swiping left or right at the bottom of your screen. Swiping left of your last tab will open your Safari Start page.



Update Your Memoji

iOS 15 lets you update your Memoji to include things like over 40 new outfits, stickers with new poses, two different colored eyes, and three new accessibility options: cochlear implants, oxygen tubes, and a soft helmet. Just update your Memoji as you would in the past, and enjoy all the new offerings!



Add Widgets to Your iPad Home Screen

Home screen Widgets

were a popular addition to the iPhone in iOS 14, and now they've come to the iPad! To add one to your Home screen, just long press on a blank part of the desired page, then tap the plus button when in jiggle mode. Choose your desired widget, select its size, then tap Add Widget to put it on your Home screen.



Use Live Text in Photos and Your Camera

The new update allows you to select text on your camera or in a photo as if it were text on a webpage or note. All you have to do is point your camera at text or open a photo with text in it, tap on the Live Text button, and enjoy the options of copying, pasting, searching, and even translating! 🔌



Amy Spitzfaden-Both is the Associate Editor at iPhone Life, an award-winning novelist, and an iPhone enthusiast. She lives in New Hampshire with her husband and daughter. When she's not writing or glued to her iPhone, she enjoys hiking, traveling, and creating her own tea blends.



APPLE PRIVACY TIPS

TOP 10 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR IPHONE SECURE

BY AMY SPITZFADEN-BOTH

Apple has been making a visible effort to up its privacy game, now requiring app developers to list what data they track and how they use that data in the App Store, and even allowing you the option to opt out of ad tracking entirely. While these improvements are exciting and add to every iPhone user's peace of mind, there's actually a lot more you can do to keep your data safe. Here are some of the best ways you can increase your iPhone privacy just by switching some settings.

1. Change Your Facebook Privacy Settings

Facebook is notorious for tracking its users. Still, many of us like to use the social platform to stay in touch with friends and loved ones, so even though we might feel conflicted, many of us still use it on a regular basis.

Fortunately, Facebook offers a Privacy Checkup that lets you see things like who can see what you share, your data settings, your ad preferences, and more. By performing this checkup, you can adjust any settings to what feels right to you.

2. Deactivate or Delete Facebook

For many, even with the Privacy Checkup, Facebook is too big a privacy concern. Deleting Facebook entirely can certainly address this, but just deleting the app from your iPhone won't do the trick. You're going to want to delete your Facebook account entirely or deactivate it if you suspect you might want to come back later. Deleting it will erase your account completely, while deactivating it will take it down until such a time as you decide to reactivate it.

Get Step-by-Step Instructions Here!

For step-by-step instructions on how to change each of these privacy settings, check out the full online version of this article by scanning this QR code.



3. Hide Notification Previews

When notification previews pop up on your iPhone, frequently people around you will be able to see them as well. If you're having a sensitive conversation, or perhaps trying to surprise a friend or family member, you might not want people around you to see your texts or other notifications. Turning off notification previews can save you this worry, and give you an added level of privacy.

4. Opt Out of Ad Tracking

Your apps are always tracking you, trying to figure out what you like and don't like so they can deliver you the most targeted ads possible. Fortunately, Apple now allows you to opt out of ad tracking on apps, so they cannot track you across your other iPhone apps and the web to find out what makes you tick. While Apple has made this a standard for everyone, some app developers have yet to roll out this option.

5. Turn Off Personalized Ads

Whether or not you have personalized ads enabled on your iPhone, Apple will show you the same amount of ads, so some people actually prefer to have personalized ads enabled so what they see is of more interest to them. However, others don't like the feeling of Apple tracking their iPhone habits and using that information to try to sell things to them. If this is the case, you can turn off personalized ads, giving you a bit more anonymity in the cyber world.

6. Set Up Two-Factor Authentication

Two factor authentication makes it so when there is a sign in attempt using your Apple ID on a new device, a notification will be sent to one of your other devices. You will have to verify that sign-in attempt, otherwise the new device won't be able to sign in using your ID. This means that if you get a new iPhone you'll be able to sign in easily (as long as your old device is nearby) but others won't be able to log into your Apple ID on their device without your knowledge or permission. Newer iPhones come with this automatically enabled, but if you have an older iPhone or iOS, it's good to

manually set up two-factor authentication.

7. Use iCloud Keychain to Create & Store Strong Passwords

iCloud Keychain is Apple's native password manager, offering an easy way to maximize your personal security. Many of us use the same one, two, or three passwords for pretty much everything just because it's so difficult to remember more than that. iCloud Keychain not only stores your passwords so you don't have to remember them but actually suggests strong, unique passwords so you don't have to think of them yourself. All you have to do is remember your Apple ID passcode and/or enable Face ID or Touch ID and you'll be able to access all your passwords at any time.

8. Turn Off Location Services

Location services on your iPhone can have all sorts of handy features, like helping you navigate and letting you map where photos were taken. But, if privacy is your goal, it's not a great thing to have on. Luckily, you can turn off location services pretty easily, and turn it back on if you change your mind later. You can also go through app by app and choose which ones you will allow access to your location, and when (Always, When using the App, or Never), allowing you to customize your GPS experience.

9. Erase Text Messages Automatically

Not only can text messages take up our storage space, they can also provide privacy risks if they stick around too long or end up in the wrong hands. You can set your iPhone to automatically delete text messages after 30 days or one year, freeing up storage and giving you peace of mind if you forget to remove any conversation that you don't want to keep forever.

10. Update Apps Automatically

This one may seem counterintuitive, but hear me out. Letting apps update without your explicit consent might feel like a privacy violation, but the truth is updates frequently address privacy issues and can patch certain holes in security. By setting up apps to update automatically, you can rest easy knowing that you always have the latest privacy features the app has to offer. If you don't update, you might find yourself at risk of security breaches, and other malicious happenings. Plus, if the app isn't worth updating, it might be worth deleting. 📴



Amy Spitzfaden-Both is the Associate Editor at iPhone Life, an award-winning novelist, and an iPhone enthusiast. She lives in New Hampshire with her husband and daughter. When she's not writing or glued to her iPhone, she enjoys hiking, traveling, and creating her own tea blends.

MINI GUIDE! TRACK YOUR STEPS ON YOUR APPLE WATCH FACE

THIS STEP COUNTER WATCH COMPLICATION WILL HELP YOU REACH 10,000 STEPS EVERY DAY!

BY OLENA KAGUI

Does your Apple Watch track your steps? Yes! While you can see your steps in the Apple Watch Activity app, unfortunately, your step count doesn't automatically appear on your watch face, which can be demotivating. Learn how to track steps via the Activity app on your Apple Watch and add them to your watch face too!

CHECK STEPS IN THE ACTIVITY APP

Your Apple Watch has a simple step tracker that also lets you track walking distance. You can see the steps and distance on the Apple Watch pedometer.



3

- 1 Press the Home button (Digital Crown) to see all your apps on your Home screen.
- 2 Open the Activity app.
- 3 Scroll down using the Digital Crown or with your finger and see your steps under TOTAL STEPS. You can also see the distance you have traveled under TOTAL DISTANCE.

Now you know how to check steps on Apple Watch! Next, I'll show you how to view them on your Apple Watch face.



ADD STEPS TO YOUR APPLE WATCH FACE

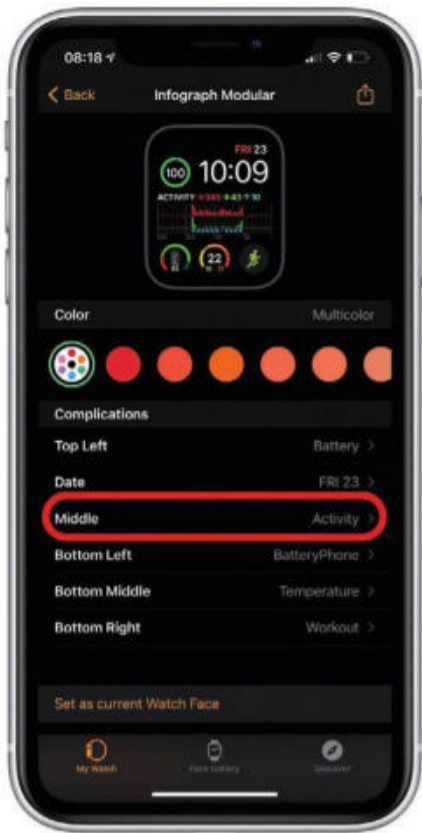
To see your steps directly on your watch face for quick reference and the extra boost of motivation, you need to use an Apple Watch complication. Unfortunately, the Activity app complication doesn't include your Apple Watch steps, only your activity rings that reflect your Move, Calorie, and Stand goals.

You'll have to download a third-party app to do this; my favorite is **Pedometer++** (free). Other pedometers may have similar complications, but this one is free and easy to navigate. It also offers several ways to see your steps on your Apple Watch face.

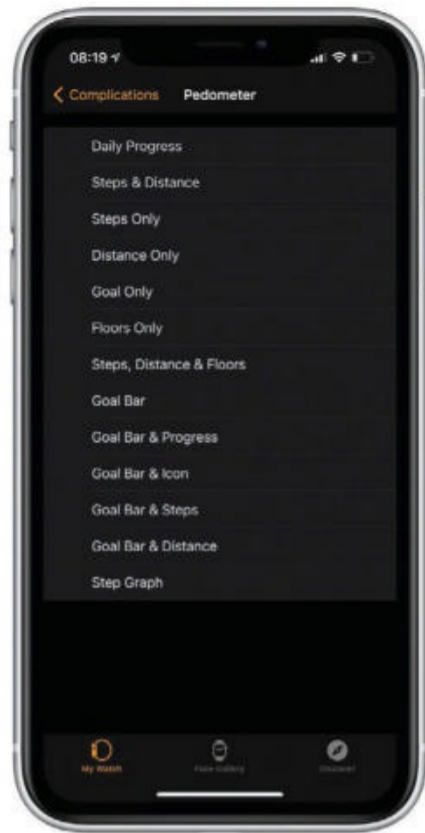
DOWNLOAD THE PEDOMETER++ COMPLICATION ON YOUR IPHONE

If apps downloaded on your iPhone are set to appear on your Apple Watch automatically, you can download the Pedometer++ using your iPhone. Here's how:

- 1 Open the App Store.
- 2 Tap Search.
- 3 Type Pedometer++ in the search bar.



7



9

4 Tap GET.

5 Once it is downloaded, open the Watch app.

6 Under the My Watch tab, tap on the watch face you want to add the complication to.

7 Under Complications, select the location you want the complication to go. Pedometer ++ offers complications in various sizes so they can go in almost every spot.

8 Scroll down to PEDOMETER and pick the data you want to see. Steps & Distance is a great choice.

9 If you tap More... you will see many other types of complications. There may be different options depending on the size of complication the particular watch face allows.

Keep in mind that not all watch faces can have complications. Infograph Modular is my go-to, but you can browse other Apple Watch faces too.

DOWNLOAD THE PEDOMETER++ COMPLICATION ON YOUR APPLE WATCH

You can use your Apple Watch to download the **Pedometer++** app and set up the complication to show steps on your watch face (though I think it's a little easier to do from your iPhone!). Here's how:



7



9

1 Press the Digital Crown on your Apple Watch to see all your apps on your Home Screen.

2 Open the Apple Store app.

3 Search for Pedometer++.

4 You can use your voice to speak the app name or write it using scribble.

5 Scroll down until you see Pedometer++ and tap GET. Since I have the app's data saved on iCloud, I see the download from the iCloud symbol instead of GET.

6 Return to your watch face. You can do this by pressing the Home button.

7 Tap and hold the display until it zooms out and you see two buttons at the bottom.

8 Tap Edit.

9 Depending on the watch face, you may need to swipe left or right to get to the complications options. On Infograph Modular, you can tap the area where you want to put the complication.

10 Scroll down to Pedometer and pick the option you want to see. I prefer Steps & Distance.

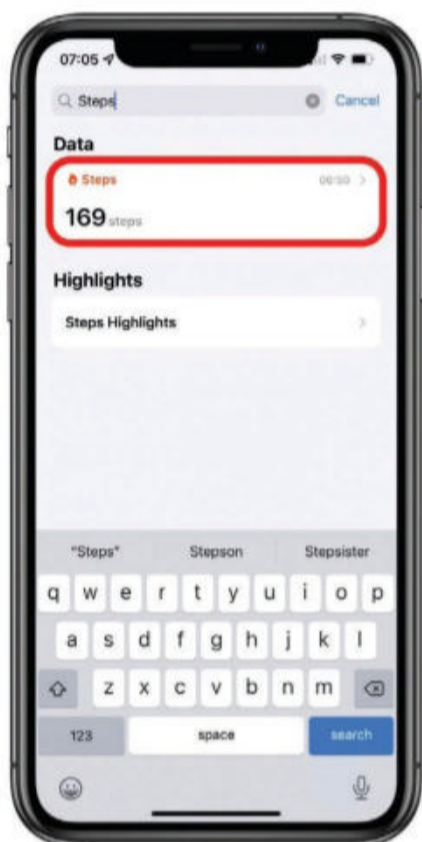
11 It will save automatically, or you can press the Home button.

DID YOU KNOW?

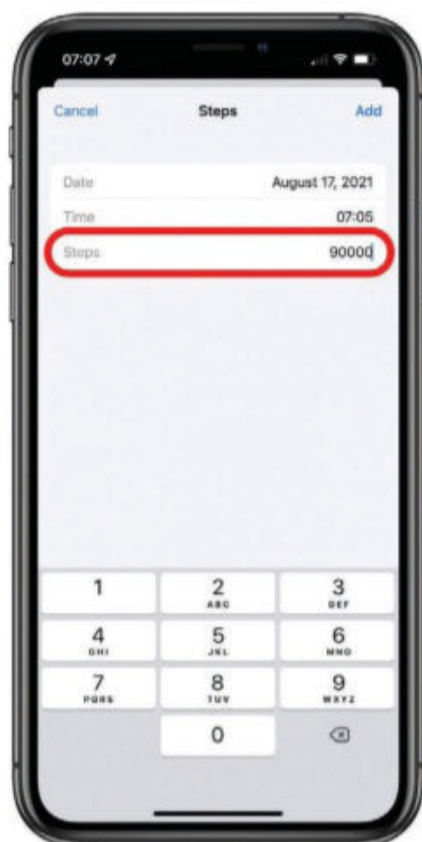
If your watch runs out of battery on a walk, your iPhone step counter will continue to count your steps using the Pedometer++ app.

HOW TO MANUALLY ADD STEPS TO APPLE WATCH

“Help, my pedometer app is not working!” Unfortunately, even the best step counter app or your Apple Watch itself will glitch and may not record your steps accurately. Even if you use a third-party step tracker app, there may be times when you want to manually add your steps to the Health app on your iPhone:



3



5

1

Open the Health app.

2

Tap Browse.

3

Search for Steps and select it.

4

Tap Add Data.

5

Type the number of steps you want to add. You can also change the date and time of your entry.

6

Tap Add and then Confirm.

PRO TIP

The maximum number of steps that you can manually add at once is 90,000. Depending on the step counter app you use, these steps may not sync up and show on your Apple Watch face.

So does the Apple Watch count steps? Yes, and now you know how to count walking steps on Apple Watch and see them directly on your watch face! Even though your built-in iPhone pedometer can measure steps, it does not offer a complication for your watch face. Pedometer++ is not only a step counter, it is also a distance tracker app. It can help you reach 10,000 steps every day and track the miles (or kilometers) you walked! Next, learn how to see total calories on Apple Watch! 🔌



Olena Kagui is a Feature Writer at iPhone Life who lives in Hawaii and is obsessed with her Apple Watch. Despite having a BA in International relations from AAU, her passion is writing. When she's not typing, testing the latest tech, studying SEO, crafting, foraging for wild mushrooms, or loving on her dog, she is traveling the world while occasionally visiting her home countries Ukraine and the Czech Republic.



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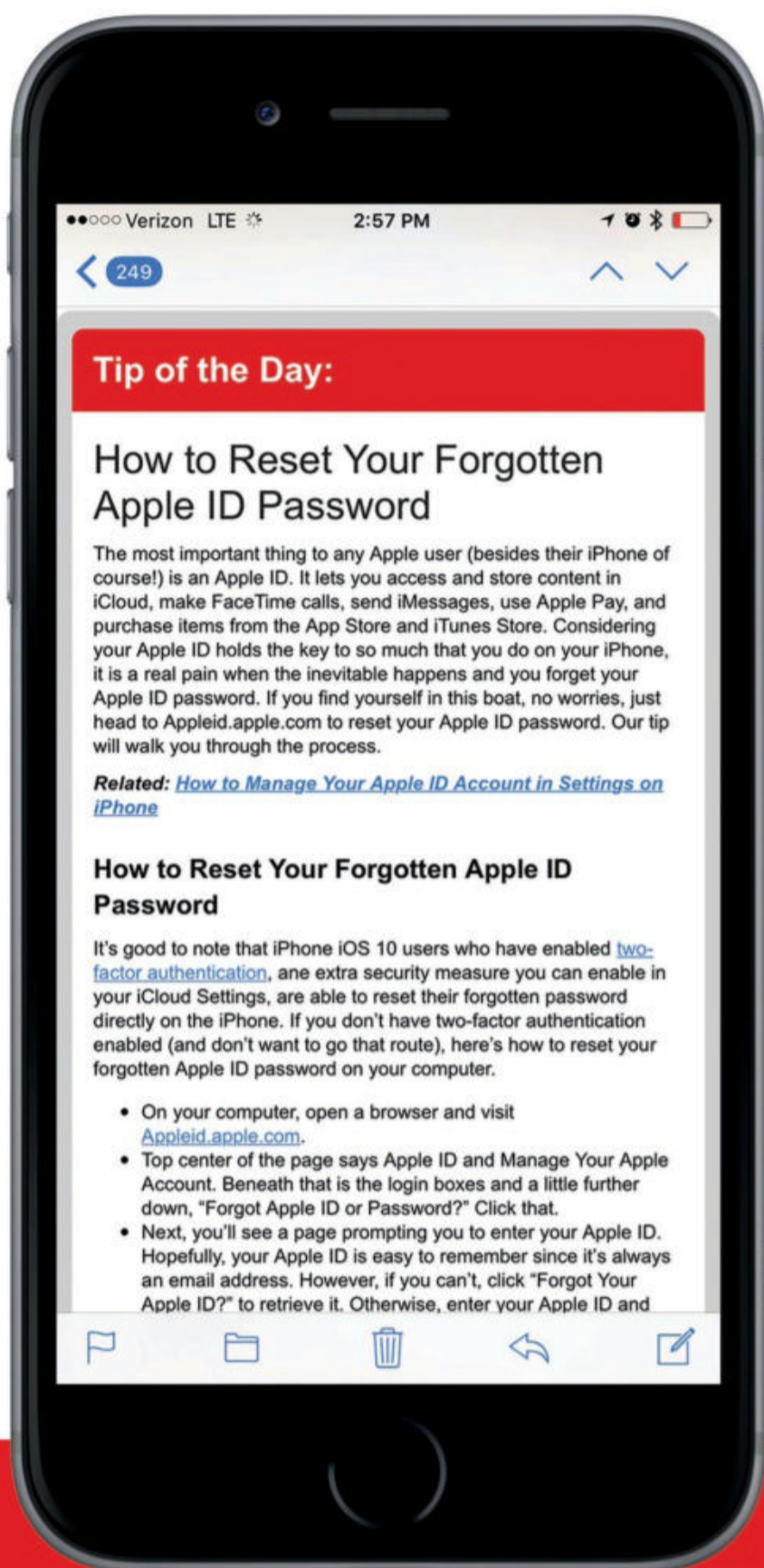
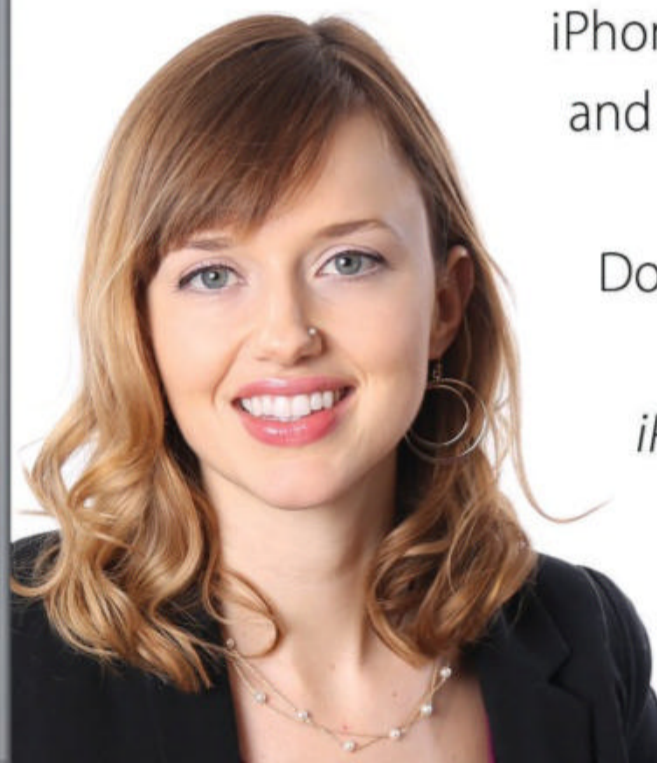
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HOW TO CHECK RAM ON A MAC TO SEE WHICH APPS ARE SLOWING IT DOWN

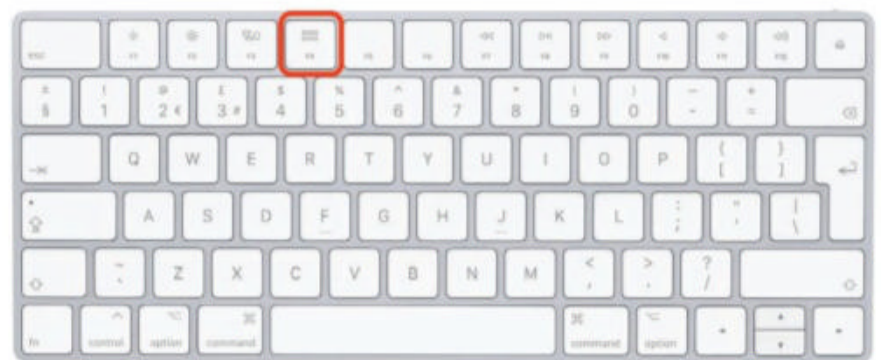
**IS YOUR COMPUTER RUNNING SLOWLY?
CHECK YOUR RAM USAGE TO DETERMINE THE
CAUSE AND FIX IT.**

BY ASHLEIGH PAGE

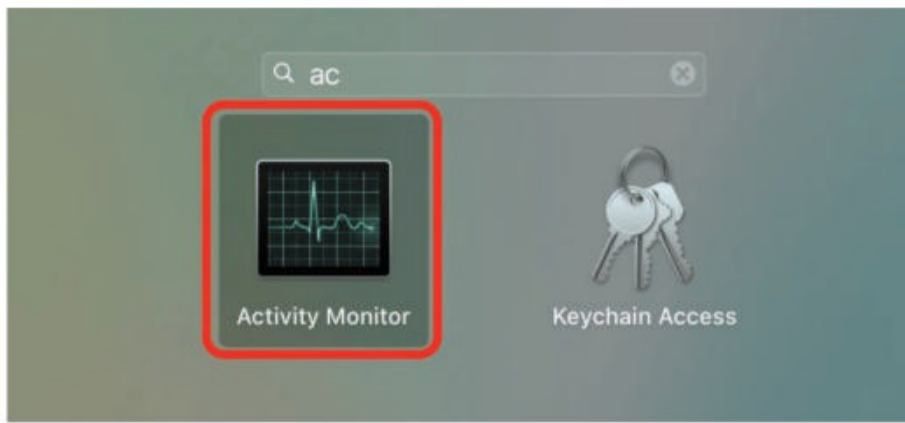
We all like to blame Wi-Fi when our computers are lagging, but when did you last check your Mac RAM usage? Seemingly innocent apps running in the background can consume large portions of your Mac's active memory. We'll cover how to check RAM usage with the Activity Monitor, plus a few tips on how to free up RAM.

Simply put, RAM (Random Access Memory) is short-term memory, where active processes occur. This means the many Safari tabs and apps you probably have open (like I do) are all using some amount of active memory. When your RAM usage is close to its limit, your computer will struggle with tasks and run more slowly.

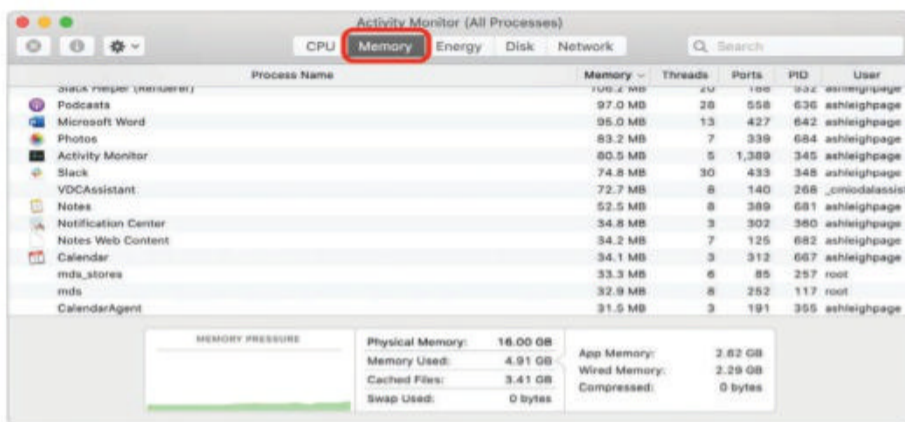
Let's walk through how to check how much RAM you're using with the Mac Activity Monitor.



1. Press F4 on your keyboard or click on the Launchpad to open it.



2. Search for the Activity Monitor app or find it in your apps list and click to open it.



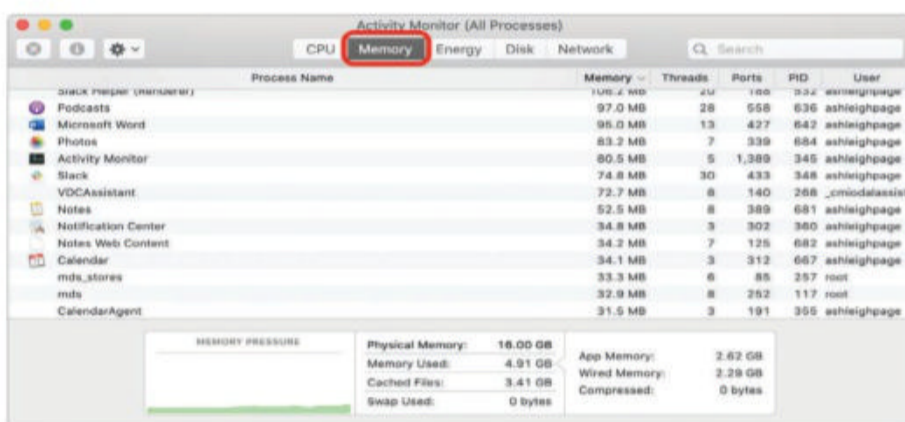
3. Select the Memory tab at the top.

4. The display at the bottom of the screen will show a breakdown of total RAM usage.

Physical Memory: The amount of RAM installed.

Memory Used: The amount of RAM currently in use.

5. If you find an unused app that's still open and you want to close it to free up memory, select the app and click the X button in the upper-left corner of the screen.



6. Click Quit to confirm, and the file or app will be closed.

QUICK TIPS TO REDUCE MAC RAM USAGE

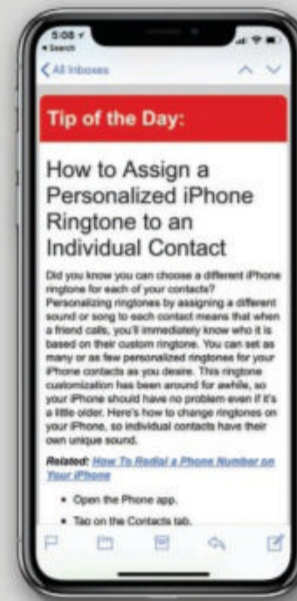
While there are memory-cleaner apps available, checking your RAM usage from time to time and taking the simple ac-

tion steps below should be enough to keep you from exceeding your RAM limit.

- Declutter your desktop. Did you know your Mac treats each item saved on your desktop as an active window? Saving on your desktop implies the need for quick access. You might be surprised at the difference when you move many of those files into folders!
- Quit inactive apps. This might seem obvious, but have you ever closed a file only to realize later that the application itself is still running? (I'm looking at you, Microsoft Excel!) Check to make sure the application has actually closed and isn't running in the background.
- Close unnecessary browser tabs. Do you have a lot of web resources that you frequently open and use? So do I! Bookmarking these pages and opening them only when needed will make you feel more organized and can also significantly reduce your RAM usage. 🔄



Ashleigh Page is a Feature Writer for iPhone Life. With a background in computer science and creative writing, she loves blending aspects of the technical and creative. An avid technology enthusiast, she adores Apple products and keeping up with the latest innovations. When she's not working, Ashleigh is often found crafting whimsical short stories, hiking, and playing sand volleyball.



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FAMILY TREE APPS TO FIND YOUR ROOTS

THE BEST RESOURCES TO CONNECT TO YOUR HERITAGE

BY AMY SPITZFADEN-BOTH

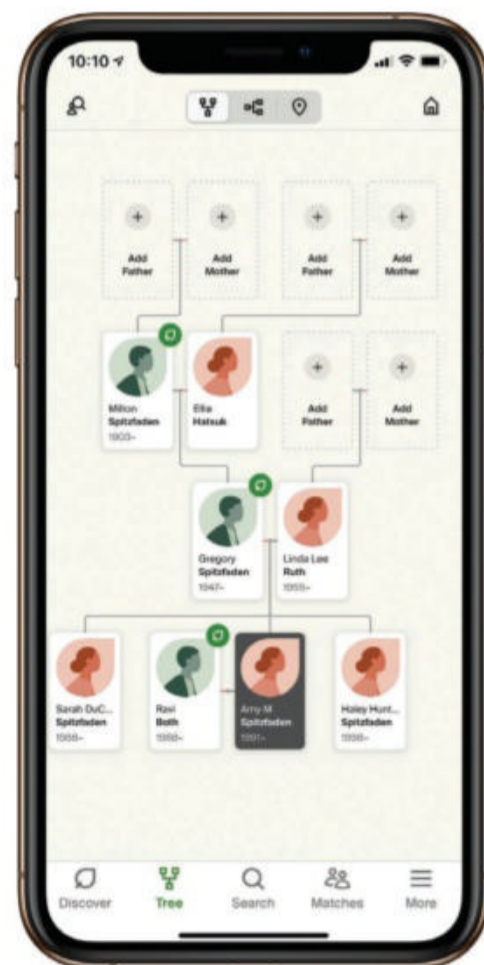
During the pandemic, I started a poem-a-day challenge via email with my grandmother, and it quickly snowballed into an extended-family affair, with cousins of every level, great-aunts, and relatives I wasn't even sure I knew the word for joining in. The past year or two certainly challenged us to find new ways to connect, but more than that, it highlighted the importance of connection. Creating a family tree can serve a similar purpose as my family's poetry challenge, reaching out through a family's different branches, discovering people we may not have known about, and providing an activity to bond over. As families continue to reunite, family trees offer practical value as well, helping manage guest lists and reminding you of your third-cousin's name and who their parents are.

Over the years, family tree and heritage tracking technology has not only progressed at a rapid pace, but it's become increasingly widely available. More information is recorded than ever before, and these records are getting more and more accessible. While you may have heard about a friend paying for an extensive DNA test to find out more about their ancestry (or even done it yourself!), there are many more options for those searching for their roots. A lot of them are free, or much less expensive than ordering a whole DNA test, though many do partner with those kinds of tests if that's up your alley.

With so many resources out there, it can be hard to find the best fit for you. We've found the five best apps for the family-minded researcher. All of them have a free version, though many offer premium options, so you can decide your own investment level. If you need help getting started with your family tree, lots of these have step-by-step instructions that can guide you through an otherwise complicated

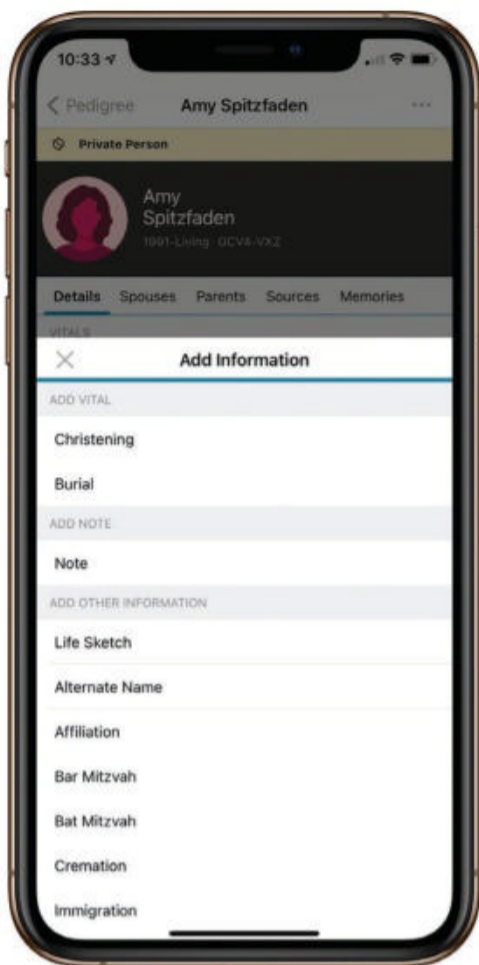
process. Many are linked to genealogy websites that offer additional resources and options.

BEST FAMILY TREE APPS



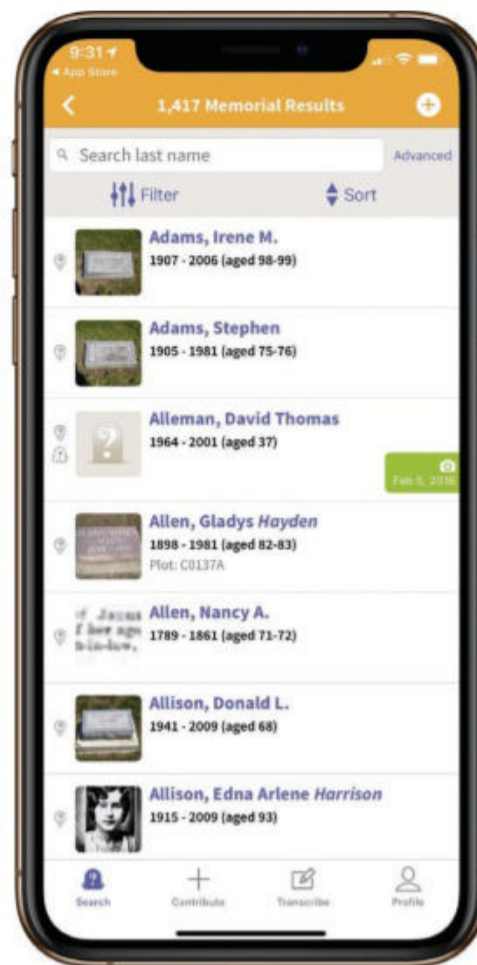
Ancestry: Your Family Story (Free)

Perhaps the most comprehensive of family tree apps, Ancestry gives you the option of building a family tree by connecting your family member entries to public records, building an in-depth picture of your ancestry. Ancestry also offers a send-in DNA test (starting at \$99) that pairs with the **AncestryDNA** app, which can tell you even more about your genealogy and heritage. There's plenty to do with just the basic app, though!



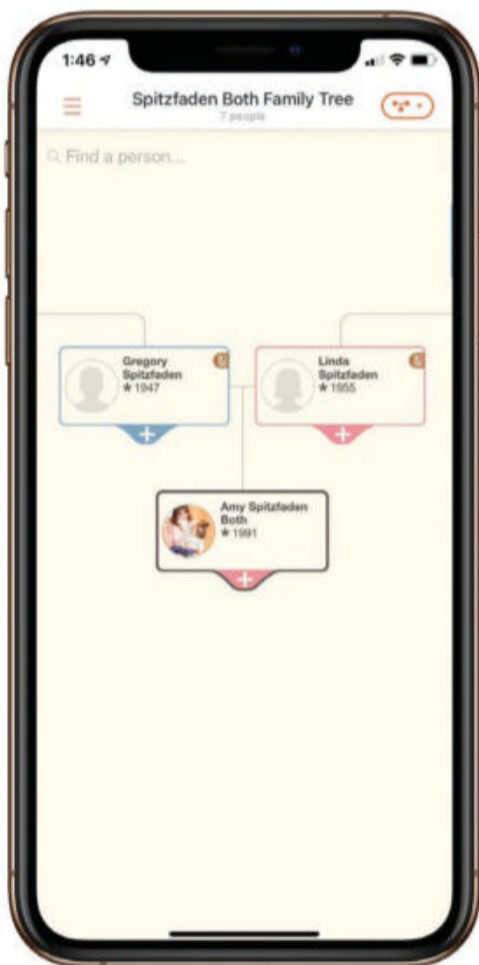
FamilySearch Tree (Free)

FamilySearch Tree allows you to build a family tree in a similar way to Ancestry. However, it relies a lot on users entering information manually and does not offer the same extensive database as Ancestry, but you do have the option to add memories to people or relationships you enter. You're able to add photos, written memories, and voice recordings to an entry, giving your family tree an even more personal twist. For an app entirely focused on personal memories and family stories, check out its sister app, **FamilySearch Memories**.



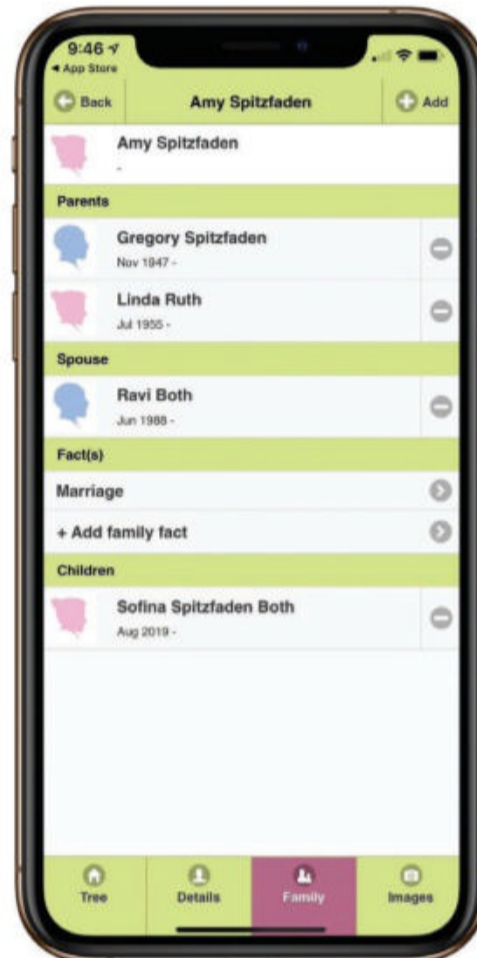
Find A Grave (Free)

While this isn't strictly a family tree-building app, this app created by Ancestry is a great resource for those looking to connect with their ancestors. Find A Grave allows you to search for family members' graves all throughout the US, and possibly discover ones you didn't know about. It seems to be mostly sourced from members, so you can upload your own pictures of headstones. You can also create memorials for loved ones who have passed away.



MyHeritage - Family Tree (Free)

MyHeritage is another app that lets you build your family tree through manual entries. The premium version (starting at \$129/year with a first-year discount of \$89) offers public records to help you find family members, but the free version relies on you doing it yourself. A very cool feature of the free version is the photo colorization and animation feature. Upload a photo of any family member and see it turned into a blinking, moving video, which can offer a new richness to old photos. MyHeritage also offers a DNA evaluation (\$79) for those interested in learning more about their roots.



TreeView (Free)

If you're looking to create a family tree that lives outside its app of origin, such as for a school project, a website, or even something just to hang on your wall, TreeView is the way to go. Each entry has the option to add facts, notes, and images, and it is the most easily shareable, whether on social media or if you want to print it. I would recommend Treeview to anyone who wants a physical family tree, for personal purposes or bigger projects, like for school or work. 📄



Amy Spitzfaden-Both is the Associate Editor at iPhone Life, an award-winning novelist, and an iPhone enthusiast. She lives in New Hampshire with her husband and daughter. When she's not writing or glued to her iPhone, she enjoys hiking, traveling, and creating her own tea blends.

PLAN A VACATION ON YOUR IPHONE

TRAVEL SMARTER WITH THESE APPS & TIPS

BY TODD BERNHARD



travel a lot, for both work and pleasure. I attend industry trade shows and take trips with my family everywhere from Europe to the Middle East to Asia. I'm writing this from my hotel in Disney World, where I'm visiting my daughter who works at the park. With my role as my family's unofficial travel agent, I do a lot of research and have found that I can plan an entire vacation on iOS.

BOOKING THE TICKETS

Booking tickets can be a hassle, especially if you aren't confident that you're getting the best service or deals. If you have a preferred airline you like to stick with, their app frequently will offer extra goodies, as well as a smooth way to manage your booking. My family tends to make a lot of changes when we travel, so **Southwest** is our preferred airline, with no change fees and two free checked bags.

I prefer the mobile site to the app. One "gotcha" to be aware of when logging in to the app is that it defaults to your identity as the traveler, so you'll have to be diligent about changing the name, birthday, and gender for each traveler.

Another airline website I've been using recently is Frontier (FlyFrontier.com). They have rates that can be so low, you might pay more for parking at the airport! Seriously, I booked my last flight for \$52 and most of that was taxes.

I will often use an aggregator service like **Kayak** or **Priceline**. Priceline has proven valuable several times because they let you cancel within 24 hours, regardless of the carrier's policy. I have found they let you cancel until midnight the next day, so that could really be 28 hours or longer, depending on what time of day you made your reservation

ONCE YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY

Once the planning is done, you can now look forward to the trip itself. That's more fun to plan, anyway! On travel days, I'm paranoid about my phone running out of battery life. Bring a power bank so you don't end up without your mobile boarding pass.

Your next step is to make sure you have all of your movies downloaded on your mobile device. On this most recent trip, I forgot to do that and they had expired on my **Netflix** download queue. I ended up using the Southwest app to watch a movie from their in-flight selection of movies, and it was one that wasn't yet available on any streaming service, so that actually worked out. But make sure you have the app from the airline installed before you board!

Make sure you have a compatible set of headphones, ideally with noise cancellation. Now that Apple has abandoned the headphone jack, you either need the right adaptor or a wireless headset. Make sure it's charged too. I bring a portable battery pack and these days I need to be sure I have one that can charge my Lightning devices and my USB-C devices. One day we'll have a consistent cable format but

we're not there yet. We don't even have a universal wireless charging format, so I have to bring a different charger for my Apple Watch, too!

When you do finally get to your destination, you may need the use of other apps for transportation and navigation. Because I travel so much, I was a Hertz Gold Club member for decades, but I can't remember the last time I rented a car. Now that we have Uber and Lyft, I don't think I'd go back. Obviously, you'll want to download one or both of those apps, but consider **CityMapper**. In the cities it supports, it can give you all of the options available on one app, with expected timing. This way you can see which ridesharing service is more affordable as well as see bikes, scooters and public transportation, which helped me navigate the subway in New York City and "The Tube" in London. Unfortunately, at press time, the service doesn't support Orlando.

If you're heading to a destination like **DisneyWorld**, as I often do, you will definitely want, and dare I say, need, their official app. You can use it for everything from opening your hotel door to ordering food for pickup (which has been the only way to dine, during COVID times) to seeing theme park wait times and making ride reservations. You can even pay for goods and services with the app, which is important as Disney has halted free MagicBands, their wrist-based Near Field Communications based identifier. You can always buy MagicBands to pay for merchandise and open your hotel door but the app is becoming your "Key to the Kingdom!"

The dependence upon apps and therefore your phone is another reminder to keep your phone well-charged. FuelRod is a handy offering found in numerous destinations and airports. These kiosks let you purchase a fully charged compact battery pack, with cables for most smartphones, but more importantly, you can swap your depleted FuelRod with a fully charged one. My daughter depends on her FuelRod to keep her phone charged after working a long day at Disney and then enjoying the parks at night.

I remember graduating college in 1988 and driving across the country to visit a friend. I had nothing but a Thomas Guide to navigate with. Now, a friendly voice can tell us where and when to turn, and if we need an umbrella! I wouldn't go back to the old ways, and I'm amazed I made it across the country, twice, without even a flip phone, let alone an iPhone with all of these amazing travel apps. Then I think of Lewis and Clark and Sacagawea and I'm even more humbled. It's a new world and thanks to the iPhone and travel apps, we can see and enjoy more of it! 🔌



Todd Bernhard is founder of No Tie Software, an app development company specializing in ringtones and sound effects including AutoRingtone. Bernhard has owned an Apple Newton, a Motorola Marco, an HP 95LX, a Compaq iPaq, a Palm Treo, and a Nokia e62. In addition to writing for iPhone Life, Mr. Bernhard has written for its legacy publications, PocketPC Magazine and The HP Palmtop Paper.

FEATURED iUSER:

NICHOLAS LEMON



Location: Toronto, Ontario

Age: 42

Bio: Nicholas started his first company at the age of 14 by performing with puppets. Today, the company is a world-renowned hub for creativity, innovation and—well—still puppets! He uses his iPhone for hiring talent, editing scripts, planning, and more.



Day One: The number of times I've needed this journal for personal and professional reasons is incalculable. I highly recommend it!



Apple Books: As a voracious reader who used to carry around books as a kid, this app not only adds to my library but also takes the load off of my back.



Alarmed: Alarmed is an easy-to-use and free app that helps me keep my life organized digitally. Indispensable!



Erol Singer's Studio: I use Singer's Studio daily, because as a performer and creator I need to keep my voice limber.



CameraBag 2: As a shutterbug, I'm always on the hunt for easy-to-use but creative apps for post-production work. This gives me a ton of filters, frames, etc., which I have yet to find in any other app.



Procreate: What can be said about this art and drawing app that hasn't already been said? A must-have for the digital artist!

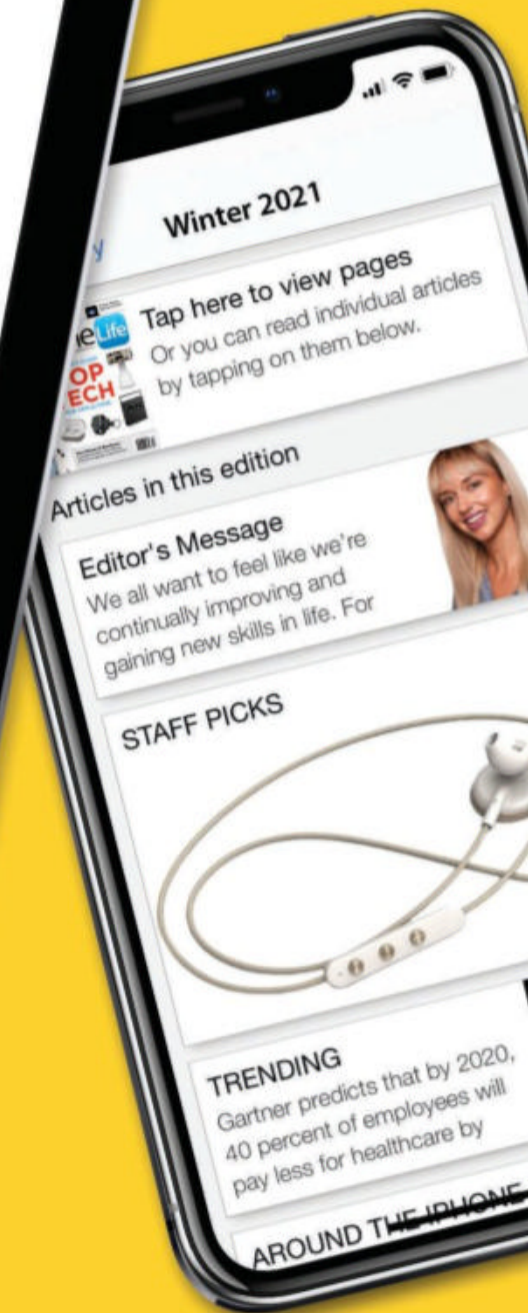
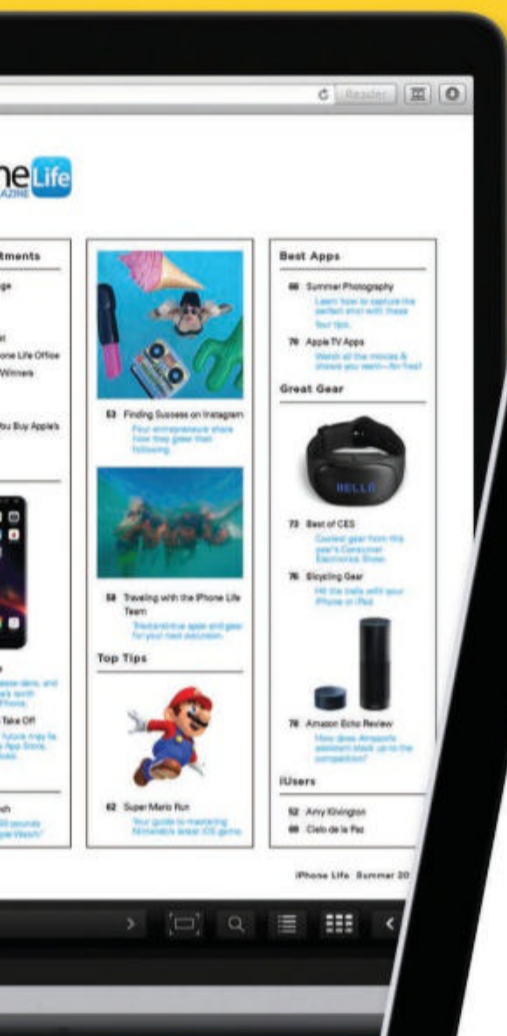


TikTok: A fun app that allows me to create and distribute my work with the world. I highly recommend it for the creative minded!



80 Days: Gaming has reached a whole new level and this app takes advantage of all of the tools available. An exciting and modern version of the classic Jules Verne novel!

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PROTECTING PRIVACY WITH PASSWORD MANAGERS

THE TOOLS YOU NEED TO GUARD YOUR DATA

BY MIKE RILEY

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Creating and monitoring unique passwords for different websites used to be a major hassle. Writing down confidential account information on sticky notes, paper notebooks, or unprotected spreadsheets used to be the norm. However, as the world has become more sophisticated and bad-actor hacking efforts have raised the vigilance bar, using a password manager not only makes security sense, but is practically a requirement. With that in mind, I've broken down the best password managers available for the Apple platform to help find which ones best suit your digital security needs.



BEST FOR APPLE ECOSYSTEM

Apple iCloud Keychain
(Free)

iCloud Keychain, Apple's native password manager, comes built into all the latest iOS and macOS. It is the default password manager that pops up in Safari, Apple's browser, when you navigate to a login screen. If you elect to use it, it generates and stores your encrypted password to Apple's iCloud service. Doing so automatically

synchronizes your login information to all your iCloud-enabled Apple devices also running Safari.

If you live entirely within the Apple ecosystem and have no need or intent to access your passwords from non-Apple devices, then iCloud is the best choice. It's free, easy to use, and built into all of Apple's operating systems, so there is nothing to download. Like most Apple products, iCloud Keychain masks the complexity normally associated with computer operations such as strong cryptography, multi-step authentication, and secure storage behind a consumer-friendly interface that makes password management effortless... as long as you exclusively use Apple Safari on iOS and macOS for your web-surfing needs.



1Password
(\$3.99/month; \$35.99/year)

This application used to be my primary password manager before Apple and Microsoft chose to bake password protection into their

products. It still is an excellent product, but since they migrated their business model from a flat-license fee to a subscription model, I only use it now for legacy password purposes. I personally am not a fan of most subscription-based services, as the costs tend to add up over time, and with something as important as passwords, I would prefer not to have to pay for access to my accumulated security information. Now that companies with much larger, well-funded teams of security specialists are offering their products for free, I don't find 1Password's subscription option that compelling. They do have some neat features that the mega software companies don't offer (yet), like password monitoring and reporting of compromised credentials, but unfortunately for 1Password, competitors will eventually offer these features as free built-in options as well. If you are a long-time 1Password user willing to fund the company's ongoing efforts, then its product is a worthy investment, but unfortunately, it's no longer worthy enough for me.



RISING STAR

Microsoft Authenticator
(Free)

Microsoft has made notable strides in its support for iOS and macOS in the past few years. Nowhere is this more apparent than in its Microsoft Authenticator application, which recently added password management to the application's multi-factor authentication capabilities. Of course, Microsoft gives this app away for free because, just like Apple, Microsoft's password management and synchronization features only work with Microsoft's own Edge web browser. But unlike Apple's solution, these passwords will synchronize across any platform that Edge runs on, including Microsoft Windows, Android, Linux, macOS, and iOS. Configuring Microsoft Authenticator as the default password-management app and Microsoft Edge as the default web-browsing app on iOS take some effort, but both applications walk you through the process. Once the apps are configured, automatic password generation, protection, and syncing take place automatically. If you need a highly polished, free, multi-platform password manager with built-in multi-factor authentication capabilities and you don't mind using Microsoft Edge as your default browser, then Microsoft Authenticator is an excellent option to consider.



BEST OPEN-SOURCE OPTION

KeePassium Pro
(\$44.99)

At \$45, KeePassium Pro is one of the most expensive password managers available on iOS, but it is a one-time, lifetime-license purchase. Given how frequently developer Andrei Popleteev updates the app, this is a bargain. KeePassium also offers a free version with in-app purchases that allow you to upgrade to a more premium version, but the

Pro version has everything you need when it comes to password management.

KeePassium really just offers front-end access to the free, open-source KeePass project. KeePass is one of the best, most secure open-source password managers available. Free KeePass clients are available for Windows, macOS, Android, Linux, and other operating systems. Several other KeePass clients exist for iOS, but KeePassium Pro is the best one I've seen, even though it is also one of the most expensive. What I like most about KeePassium Pro (and KeePass in general) is its single-file storage of passwords and other secure notes (just like old-school 1Password), its ability to import 1Password files, and the fact that I can control where the single KeePass file lives. If I want the convenience of synchronizing it via iCloud, I can choose to do so. If I want to be extra security-conscious and only share my encrypted KeePass files among selected devices connected to my personal local area network, I can do that too. Given how critically important and sensitive my password data is, I like the fact that I can decide where that data is stored.

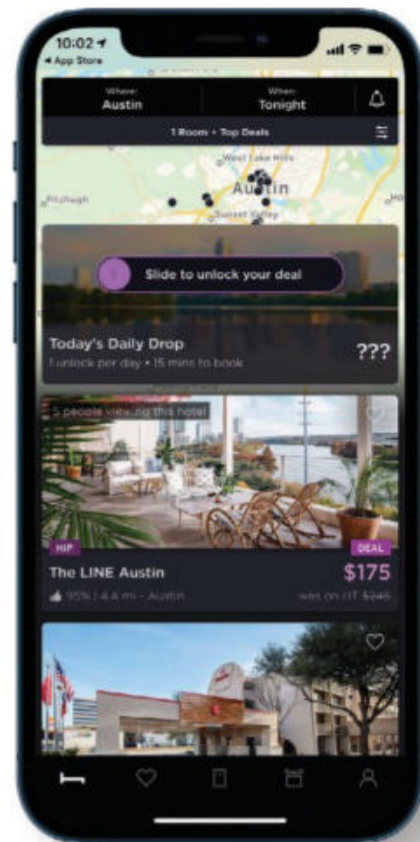
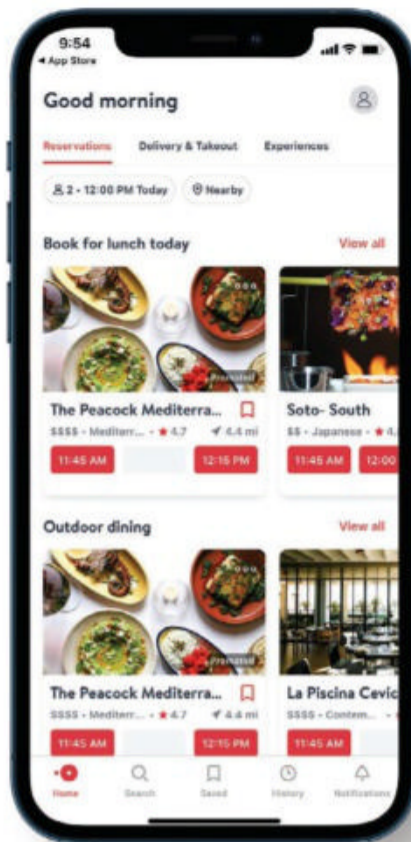
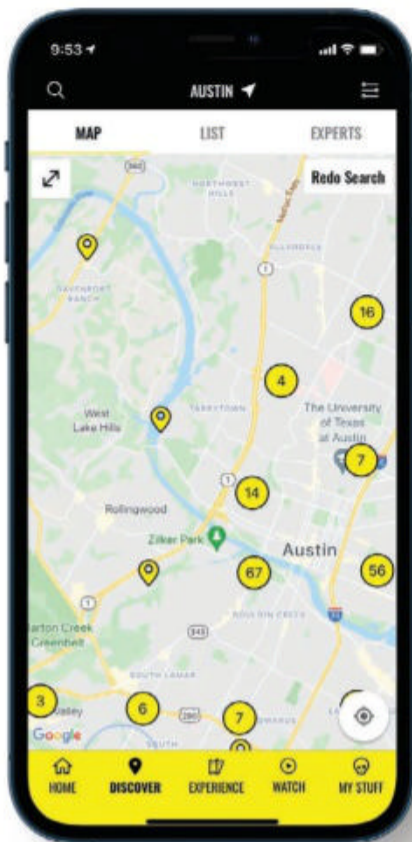


OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

As I mentioned earlier, if you are entirely dedicated to living within the Apple ecosystem and have no intent to access your passwords beyond Apple's products, iCloud Keychain is the answer. It's free, easy to use, and all Apple. However, if you are like me and regularly interact with a broad range of operating systems and don't mind using Microsoft Edge as your default browser on iOS and macOS, then a combination of Microsoft Authenticator and KeePass-based products work best. I use Authenticator to store passwords for low-importance websites like my logins for news sites, scheduling services, and some e-commerce websites. However, for those websites that need ultimate security, such as banks, healthcare, and other highly sensitive areas, I use a self-managed KeePass file that I manually copy to only those devices that absolutely need access to that information. It's a bit more overhead, but given how critical those passwords are, I would prefer to keep them fully under my control so as not to worry about any potential leak or vulnerability that could impact cloud-managed password stores. 🔒



Mike Riley, a professional software developer and emerging information technologist, is the author of *Programming Your Home*, published by Pragmatic Bookshelf. Mike is also a contributing editor and author of hundreds of technical articles and reviews for a number of popular technology publications. For more information, contact Mike via email at mike@mikeriley.com and follow him on Twitter @m Riley.



PLAN DATE NIGHT ON YOUR IPHONE

FOOD, ACTIVITIES & TRANSPORTATION FOR A SPECIAL NIGHT OUT

BY ELISABETH GARRY

In the past year or two, many of us have gotten out of practice when it comes to going on a real, out-on-the-town date. It's about time you got to celebrate a romantic night out with that special someone, but has it been so long that you've forgotten how to plan a date in the first place? That's the spot I found myself in when I recently started trying to plan a date night for my partner and me. Luckily, I had plenty of tools at my disposal to plan a great night on the town, and you will too, once you know where to look.

DECIDING WHERE TO GO

The first thing you'll want to do is decide where to go. The past year and a half has been rocky for the service industry. Several of my favorite date spots closed during the pandemic. I decided it was time to turn back to the apps for answers.

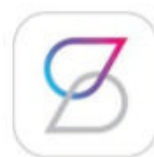


Cobble
(Free)

If you're in New York City, a fun, novel way to plan a night out is with Cobble. This app

depends on you and your significant other to use the app together, so if you want to plan a surprise outing, skip this option. Otherwise, Cobble's format mimics that of Tinder: you swipe left or right on date ideas, and when both you and your partner swipe right on one, you've got a match.

If you're not in NYC, you can opt for Cobble's "Stay In" date options, but I kept getting suggested NYC restaurants, which was less than helpful, as I live in Austin. I did find some options, like cooking garlic-parmesan wings from Kitchn and watching Space Jam on HBO Max, but my partner and I burned through those pretty quickly without finding any activities we agreed on (probably because most of them would have necessitated a trip to New York).



Skorch
(Free)

Skorch describes itself as a "heat map of cool spots." You can use this app to see which restaurants, bars, and clubs are popular right now, either in a list from hottest (most popular) to coolest (less frequented) or a map view. This app is only available in a handful of cities, so you'll want to check if yours is on there.

Austin's map seems so barren at the moment, but even with this drawback and the off-putting lingo the app insists on using (places are "Skorch worthy," users gain "clout" by using the app), it's still a fun way to find a place to visit. I like seeing how popular a given restaurant or bar is, both at the moment and more generally.



Yelp
(Free)

You probably know this one. If you want to know what other people think about the places you're considering, Yelp is where you want to be, if for no other reason than to giggle at the often-ridiculous reasons reviewers give for one-starring a place.



ChefsFeed
(Free)

I'll admit it; I think ChefsFeed is cool. A big bonus for me is that you don't have to create an account when you download the app, and you still get access to its restaurant maps, experience links, and guides to the best locations in major cities. My favorite feature is its local expert recommendations: scroll to the bottom of the app's main screen to find a list of dishes that local chefs recommend.

ChefsFeed is equally helpful in planning a date night-in. Its Experience tab offers links to livestreams of cooking workshops, recipes, and specialty cocktail tutorials. In one evening, you and your sweetheart might mix a cocktail with a Manhattan bartender, move on to cooking Spanakopita with a Greek chef, and finish up baking dessert with a pastry chef from Calgary. What better way to get a globetrotting culinary experience right from home?

MAKE YOUR PLANS HAPPEN

By now, you should have your plans set: where you're going for drinks, where you're getting dinner, and what other entertainment you'll be taking in on your big night. So, how do you make it all happen? It would be pretty embarrassing to show up to that chef-recommended sushi restaurant, only to find they're full up. To avoid spoiling your plans, use these apps.



OpenTable
(Free)

OpenTable lets you make reservations without having to make a call. Not all restaurants use it, though, and while you can alter your reservation from the app, if you do so, I'd recommend confirming directly with the restaurant because things can get lost in translation from the app to the restaurant occasionally.



Eventbrite
(Free)

Find a plethora of ticketed events, from concerts to plays to haunted houses (am I the only one who thinks this is a great date night activity?). I always purchase early because my biggest fear is being turned away at the door. Eventbrite tickets will show up straight on your phone, so all you have to do is open the app

for the venue's ticket-takers.

TAKING CARE OF THE KIDS

Okay, your night is planned and booked. You're ready to go, but what about the kids? If you have children, you probably don't want to bring them along on your romantic night out, but they can't very well be left in the dog's care, either (unless you're Mary and George Darling and your dog's name is Nana). Don't worry; you can solve this problem from your iPhone, too.



Sittercity: Find Child Care
(Free)

The Sittercity app connects you with local babysitters. You can post jobs for free and wait for babysitters to contact you, and you can set up interviews after reading the sitters' reviews and checking their qualifications.

GOING OUT & GETTING HOME

You've planned the night, booked your reservations, and the babysitter is on the way. Now, how are you getting there and back? We all know about Uber and Lyft, but let's talk about a couple of lesser-known options for getting you safely to and from your night out.



Transit • Bus & Train Times
(Free, In-app Purchases)

If you live in a city with public transportation, Transit can help you plan your trip, so you won't miss the last bus home or the train that will get you to your concert on time. You'll be able to see when your bus or train is arriving, as well as a map that shows its progress along its route. If public transportation fails you, you can even order an Uber or Lyft from the app or book a bikeshare.



HotelTonight
(Free)

What happens when you've enjoyed a few too many cocktails or time has gotten away from you? Open up HotelTonight and see what rooms are available in hotels near you. You might just stumble into a great deal on your last-minute booking.

I hope that these apps will help you as much as they helped me. One last tip from me: use the phone ahead of time; put it away during the date. Our phones can do a lot for us, but they can't replace real human interaction. 📵



Elisabeth Garry is a Feature Web Writer for iPhone Life. Formerly of Gartner, she has four years' experience writing about technology. As a former college writing instructor, she is passionate about accessible communication, which is perhaps why she loves helping people make the best use of the strongest communication tools they have available: their iPhones. She has a degree in Russian from Reed College.

Slow Internet, Fast Games



Illustration by Mikaila Maidment, mikailamaidment.com

Note: This column is a follow-up piece from Hal's Summer 2021 iView, where he chronicles his home renovation and smart home journey. While he's hit some delays, here's what he's up to in the meantime.

Slow internet really sucks. My wife and I spent 18 months rebuilding our home on our wooded property in the country. The smart lighting, smart surveillance, smart garage door opener, smart doorbell, smart heating and AC, and smart TV with the usual streaming services all depend on decent internet connection. Unfortunately, in my corner of rural America with one available service provider, I have a perpetual open support ticket. Nothing much changes as I routinely complain of speeds of about 100 kilobytes per second despite the 10 Mbps contract. Slow internet is why I'm not keeping my promise to report on my smart home progress.

Fortunately, it looks like SpaceX headed by Elon Musk will be coming to the rescue. I'm on the waiting list alongside 500,000 others for Musk's Starlink due for the Midwest later this year. For unaware city dwellers, Starlink has launched low-flying satellites for the benefit of rural internet users throughout the world. Current Starlink customers get on average between 50–150Mbps with faster speeds promised to come.

A Simple Smart Home Update

While I wait for StarLink, the one smart device I will report on is the **Kasa HS103P3 Smart Plug** (\$20). I use the Kasa app to schedule and control when a device plugged into the smart plug receives power. For example, the light from our master bathroom's electric toothbrush proved bothersome at night. It took just a few minutes to download the app, sync the plug with my Wi-Fi network, and schedule the toothbrush to turn off at 9 p.m. and back on at 6:30 a.m. (Wi-Fi speed has not been an issue).

What I'm Enjoying in the Meantime

Since I can't share much about my smart home, I'll revert to an old favorite topic. I've been playing games on handheld computers ever since we started writing about them in 1991, beginning with Tetris. My favorites tend to reflect my childhood love for board games, plus some computer gaming classics: **Solitaire City**, **Backgammon**, **Fieldrunners**, **Plants vs. Zombies**, **Conquest (Risk clone)**, **SmartGo Kifu**, **Finger Arts Sudoku**, **Wildcard Cribbage**, **2048**, **Chess Pro**, **Moxie**, **Niggle**, **Word Solitaire**, and **Scrabble**.

Currently, **Banana & Co's Spider Solitaire**, a card-based game that is a cross of **Klondike** and **FreeCell**, occupies most of my game-playing time. I move cards from one tableau column to another in sequence, with the idea of removing all the dealt-out cards. I like Spider because it's difficult but not impossible to win, and it has easier modes if I need a quick victory.

I recently discovered that a way to improve my play in almost any game is to search for it on YouTube. Inevitably I will find an expert who models strong game play while providing strategy tips.

My choice of games reflects my boomer age. There is a whole new world of possibilities for the next generation of realistic, visual, multi-dimensional iPhone games thanks to faster processors, better cameras, OLED screens, integrated graphics platforms, augmented reality, and Apple game developer tools. What fun. 🕹️



Hal Goldstein founded iPhone Life's original publishing company, Thaddeus Computing, in 1985. You can contact him by email at hal@thaddeus.com or [@halgoldstein](https://twitter.com/halgoldstein) on Twitter. You can find the print, digital, and audio versions of his book *Meditating Entrepreneurs- Creating Success from the Stillness Within* at Amazon.



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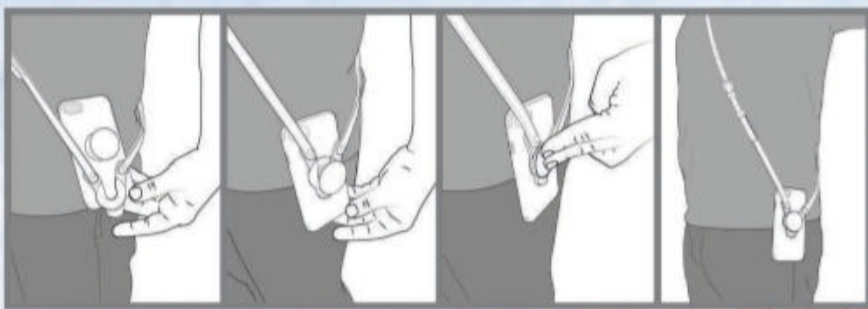
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