



TAKE CONTROL OF
SIRI

COVERS SIRI ON
iPhone • iPad • Mac
Apple Watch • Apple TV
HomePod

by **SCHOLLE McFARLAND**
\$14.99

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3RD
EDITION

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Read Me First

Welcome to *Take Control of Siri, Third Edition*, version 3.0, published in April 2025 by alt concepts. This book was written by Scholle McFarland and edited by Joe Kissell.

Siri is the hands-free, time-saving, and *fun* technology that ties everything together on your Apple devices. Whether you want to ask a question, make a call, find your iPhone, or set a timer, Siri is often the fastest way. And now with Apple Intelligence, it offers more shortcuts and capabilities than ever before. This book explores how to get the most out of Siri on your iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, Mac, HomePod, and Apple TV.

If you want to share this ebook with a friend, we ask that you do so as you would with a physical book: “lend” it for a quick look, but ask your friend to buy a copy for careful reading or reference. Discounted [classroom and Mac user group copies](#) are available.

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Basics

This book explores how to get the most out of Siri on your iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, Mac, and HomePod. Take Control has other books that can help you lock down the basics of using some of these devices, such as:

- To learn more about using your iPhone and iPad, see [*iPhone and iPad Basics*](#) by Josh Centers.
- To learn more about using your Mac, see [*Mac Basics*](#) by Joe Kissell
- To learn more about Apple Watches, see Jeff Carson's [*Take Control of Apple Watch*](#).
- To learn more about using Apple TV, see Josh Center's [*Take Control of Apple TV*](#).

Activate Siri

I cover all the ways you can activate Siri on all your Apple devices in the chapters [Activate Siri By Touch](#) and [Activate Siri with Your Voice](#), but here's the CliffsNotes version for the most commonly-used device—your iPhone: Press and hold the side button (iPhone X or later). Siri is listening when you feel a vibration, hear a chime (if your phone isn't silenced), and either see a pulsing orb or—if you have Apple Intelligence turned on—the screen's edges pulse with rainbow lights.

What's New in the Third Edition

The third edition of *Take Control of Siri* is updated for iOS 18.5 and iPad OS 18.5, as well as macOS Sequoia 15.5 and watchOS 11.2. Because of the big changes to Siri that arrived with these updates, some

of what I describe works differently, or not at all, in earlier versions of macOS and iOS. Note that new Apple Intelligence features—which Apple has said will roll out gradually this year—are also limited to newer iPhones and Macs (see [Which Devices Are Compatible with Apple Intelligence?](#)).

Along with hundreds of small changes in the book, larger revisions include:

- What you need to [Get Started with Apple Intelligence](#).
- Discover all the cool things you can do when you [Tap into ChatGPT](#).
- If you're using AirPods Pro (2nd generation) or later, you can now shake or nod your head to respond to Siri requests. See [Answer Siri Without Words](#).
- Trigger Apple's voice assistant by saying either "Hey Siri" *or* just "Siri." See [Activate Siri with Your Voice](#).
- With a supported iPhone or iPad, Siri now works—albeit with limitations—even when you don't have [An Internet Connection](#).
- Siri includes more diverse voice options. Learn about them in [Change Siri's Language and Voice](#).
- New accessibility options let you change how quickly Siri speaks and how long it waits for you to finish talking on your mobile device. See [Adjust Siri's Speed on an iPhone or iPad](#).
- Make follow-up requests without reactivating Siri (on [supported iPhones](#) running iOS 17 or later).
- Siri now lets you correct yourself if you misspeak. See [Correct Mistakes On the Fly](#).
- Siri can read articles to you. See [Read an Article Out Loud](#).
- Call your emergency contacts using Siri. See [Call for Help](#).
- Make group FaceTime calls by asking Siri to FaceTime a group name from Messages. See [FaceTime a Friend](#).

- Share what's on your screen—from a maps location to a webpage to a podcast—using Siri with Messages. See [Share What's on Screen](#).
- Send a message from third-party apps like WhatsApp with Siri. See [Send a Message](#).
- Skip the confirmation step after you dictate messages with Siri and send them automatically. See [Send a Message](#).
- Apple has enhanced Siri's privacy settings and policies, converting audio into words on your device instead of sending files to Apple servers; running most Apple Intelligence requests on your device; and offering a new Private Cloud Compute option so that your data is never stored or shared with Apple. See [Understand Siri and Your Privacy](#).

Introduction

What science fiction dreams, tech companies set out to do. Few inventions embody that more than Siri, Apple’s digital assistant. Following in the footsteps of 2001: A Space Odyssey’s HAL 9000 and Star Trek’s shipboard computers, Siri lets you find information and perform commands without touching a keyboard (or worrying about the pod bay doors).

Still, it hasn’t always been obvious what you can do with Siri—particularly with Apple adding (and subtracting) features all the time. Sometimes it’s been tricky to make it act like you expect. That was especially the case when it came out in 2011; many people who were disappointed by its early performance haven’t paid much attention to Siri since.

But with Apple’s new take on artificial intelligence—dubbed Apple Intelligence (well played, Apple marketing gurus)—there’s no better time to give Siri another look. The future of Siri holds exciting possibilities, and that future starts now as features begin to roll out—especially with the integration of Siri with OpenAI’s artificial intelligence chatbot ChatGPT.

In this book, we look at how to ask questions and do common tasks with Siri on your iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, Mac, and HomePod (with a little Apple TV thrown in for good measure). Let’s dive in and see all you can get done now with this hands-free, time-saving, and *fun* technology.

Siri Quick Start

Ready to explore all there is to do with Siri? Jump directly to a topic that interests you. I suggest starting with the first few chapters to make sure you've got the basics down pat.

Learn the basics:

- Find out what devices support Siri, how to adjust its voice and feedback, and how give Siri the information it needs to provide a personalized experience in [Brush Up on Siri Basics](#).
- Learn how to [Activate Siri By Touch](#) and [Activate Siri with Your Voice](#) on all your Apple devices, as well as how to avoid trouble with each method—like the wrong device answering “Hey Siri.”
- Get answers to common questions about what personal data Siri collects and what it does with your data in [Understand Siri and Your Privacy](#).

Ask questions:

- Sports stats, common conversions, weather forecasts, biographies of historical figures and celebrities, science facts, jokes—you can [Get Answers to Questions](#) with Siri.
- Ask more complex questions using Siri's new integration with the AI chatbot ChatGPT. Learn how in [Tap into ChatGPT](#).

Keep connected:

- Find out how to [Make a Call](#) with Siri, hands free, so you can stay safe in the car or keep doing your chores while talking on the phone.
- Learn how to [Send Messages](#) from any and all of your devices using Siri (and when it's best to send a text message rather than an email).
- Listen to email on the go and send out quick messages using Siri. The chapter [Send Email](#) shows you how.

Try not to forget:

- Never forget a chore again—use Siri to create reminders that sync across all your devices and can ping you at a certain time or place. See the chapter [Remind Yourself](#) for details.
- Check the day's events, make an appointment, or reschedule a meeting using Siri on whatever device is nearby. See the chapter [Make a Date](#) for details.
- Siri makes it easy to capture fleeting thoughts before they're gone. See the chapter [Take a Note](#).

Get more from your apps and devices:

- Got fairly new Apple devices? See what's possible so far—like taking action in and across apps with Siri—in [Get Started with Apple Intelligence](#).
- Siri can help you find, play, and enjoy music, as well as tap into many special Apple Music features. Learn how to take advantage of all it has to offer in [Control Your Music](#).
- But that's not all! Some of the best Siri tricks don't fall neatly into a certain category. See the [Grab Bag of Other Useful Tricks](#) to learn how to set a timer, find your Apple devices, retrieve passwords, use your HomePod as an intercom, translate a phrase, and more.

Brush Up on Siri Basics

Apple's digital assistant makes it possible to do an amazing variety of tasks using just your voice, but first you need to know the basics, including what devices support Siri; how to adjust its language, voice, feedback, and volume; and how to give it the information it needs to provide a personalized experience.

Tip: See [Understand Siri and Your Privacy](#) for answers to common questions about how Siri deals with your data.

What You Need to Get Started

To use Siri, you must have a compatible device and (in some cases) an active internet connection.

The Right Hardware

All current Macs, iPhones, iPads, Apple Watches, HomePods, and Apple TVs can use Siri. However, the new Apple Intelligence features I discuss in this book have stricter hardware requirements, as described in the sidebar ahead.

Which Devices Are Compatible with Apple Intelligence?

Only recent Apple hardware can tap into Apple Intelligence features as they roll out over the next year. You're in luck if you have:

- ✦ An iPhone 15 Pro, iPhone 15 Pro Max, or later.
- ✦ An iPad Pro or iPad Air with an M-series chip (most made in 2022 or later). This [Apple help page](#) can help you identify your iPad model.
- ✦ A Mac with an M-series processor. (Go to System Settings > General > About and check the Chip category.) M-series processors first became available in late 2020 with the MacBook Air. The following year an M1-based iMac debuted.

An Internet Connection

Processing voice data requires a lot of computing power. To make its magic, in the past Siri sent *all* your voice data back to Apple's servers, which meant it couldn't work without an internet connection—not even if all you were trying to do was ask the time.

For privacy reasons, most iPhones, iPads, and Macs now process many requests, from telling you the time to reading your email messages out loud to checking your calendar, on device whenever possible. Still, if it's answers you want—say, for any of the examples we walk through in [Get Answers to Questions](#)—most of those are to be found on the internet. Requests that use ChatGPT require a connection, too.

Here's how to make sure you've got one:

- **On an iPad or iPhone:** Tap Settings > Wi-Fi to see whether the Wi-Fi switch is toggled on and you're connected to a network. To check your cellular connection, tap Settings > Cellular and make sure the Cellular Data switch is toggled on.
- **On an Apple Watch:** Press your watch's digital crown, tap Settings > Wi-Fi, and make sure the Wi-Fi switch is toggled on. Your Apple Watch connects to the internet through your paired iPhone using Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, but it uses a known Wi-Fi network—or a cellular data connection on watches that support cellular—if your iPhone is out of Bluetooth range. Swipe up from the bottom of your watch's screen to see the Control Center and look for telltale icons (**Figure 1**).

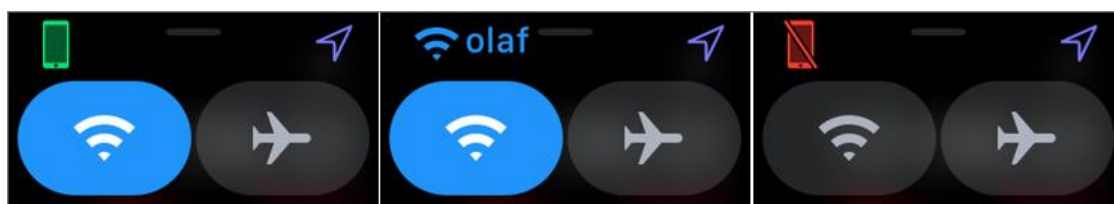


Figure 1: Icons in Control Center let you know whether your watch is connected to the internet through a paired iPhone (left), through Wi-Fi (middle), or not at all (right). If you're connected via cellular, the cellular icon  highlights and green dots indicate signal strength.

Activate Siri with Your Voice

All current Apple devices, including Apple Watches and HomePods, make it easy to get your digital assistant's attention using only your voice. Apple TV is the outlier and does not support voice activation.

With most new Apple devices, you can choose to start your request with “Hey Siri” or simply the word “Siri.” I use “Hey Siri” in this book to refer to either way of triggering Siri by voice. (See [Which Devices Recognize “Siri” Requests?](#) to see if you have the shorter option.)

Use “Hey Siri” on Your iPhone or iPad

To enable “Hey Siri” or the newer, shorter option, “Siri,” on your iPhone or iPad, tap Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri and tap Talk & Type to Siri. Choose “Siri” or “Hey Siri” if you want your device to respond to either prompt or “Hey Siri” for only that longer prompt.

Next, tap Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri and turn on Allow Siri When Locked (**Figure 6**).



Figure 6: Adjust a few of your mobile device's settings to make it possible to hail Siri with your voice. (iPhone 16 Pro shown here.)

You must leave the Allow Siri When Locked setting on to trigger “Hey Siri” or “Siri” when you’re not actively using your mobile device. (This setting is also required for a feature that lets Siri [Announce Messages \(and More\)](#).) See [Should You Enable Siri from the Lock Screen?](#) for a discussion of how to handle the security tradeoffs.

Tip: There are many things you can’t do with Siri even if you enable access from the lock screen. For instance, you must unlock your device to use Siri to reveal a password, unlock a HomeKit-enabled door lock, or read an email out loud.

Once you’re set up, just say “Hey Siri” or “Siri” followed immediately by your question or request and your device snaps to attention. If you can’t get your mobile device to listen, make sure it’s face up and its case is open.

Which Devices Recognize “Siri” Requests?

In 2023, Apple added the option to hail your iPhone or iPad by simply saying “Siri” followed by your request instead of saying “Hey Siri.” Now this trick has spread to most Apple devices, but which ones?

As a general rule of thumb, iPhones and iPads introduced in 2019 or later can respond to either command. (For iPhone details, check this [Apple support document](#); for iPad details see this [Apple support document](#).)

Apple Watches (Series 4 and later) and all HomePods can respond to either “Siri” or “Hey Siri.”

The option appears on your Mac only if you’re running macOS 14 or later and (critically) have an Apple Silicon Mac. These include:

- ✦ the MacBook Pro introduced in 2021 or later, plus MacBook Pro (13-inch, M1, 2020)
- ✦ the MacBook Air introduced in 2022 or later, plus MacBook Air (M1, 2020)
- ✦ the iMac introduced in 2021 or later
- ✦ the Mac mini introduced in 2022 or later
- ✦ the Mac Pro introduced in 2023 or later

Activate Siri By Touch

If you want a straightforward, surefire way to activate Siri that always works on the device you intend it to and isn't affected by how noisy the room is, do so manually. All you have to do is touch or click something and Siri responds. This way of interacting with Siri is enabled by default on all Apple devices.

Trigger Siri Manually on an iPhone or iPad

To activate Siri by touch on your mobile device, you either press and hold the Home button at the bottom of your phone (iPhone SE 2nd generation or later, and iPads with Home buttons), the side button (iPhone X or later), or the top button (all other iPads).

Siri is listening when you hear a chime, see the outer edges of your screen pulse with a rainbow glow and your device vibrates. (If Apple Intelligence isn't turned on, you see a pulsing globe instead of the rainbow glow.) If this doesn't work, check your settings by tapping Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri. Tap Talk & Type to Siri. The "Press Side Button for Siri" or "Press Top Button for Siri" button should be set to on.

It's possible to access Siri this way even when your device is locked by tapping Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri and setting Allow Siri When Locked to on. If the option is dimmed, tap Settings > Face ID & Passcode (or Touch ID & Passcode), and then enter your passcode. Scroll down to the Allow Access When Locked header and set Siri to on (see [Should You Enable Siri from the Lock Screen?](#)).

If you're running iOS 18.1 or later and hardware that supports Apple Intelligence, there's also a new option for triggering Siri when you're in a noisy environment or want some privacy (see [Type Questions to Siri](#)).

Should You Enable Siri from the Lock Screen?

Being able to access Siri straight from your mobile device's lock screen makes it convenient to use Siri to call someone in your contacts, play or control your music, perform a quick search, start a timer or alarm, send a text message, ask about the weather or news, and turn on the flashlight. Ask Siri to perform tasks beyond that, like sending a text message or reading or sending an email, and it tells you that you need to unlock the device first. Still, if any of this makes you nervous, you can turn off the option. Go to Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri and toggle off Allow Siri When Locked.

Trigger Siri by Touch on Your Watch

To invoke Siri on your Apple Watch, press and hold the digital crown. You see pulsing colors on the screen and the message “What can I help you with?”

Note: Once upon a time, the Siri watch face let you invoke Siri with one tap and displayed information based on what it anticipated you might need. Apple removed the Siri watch face in watchOS 11.

Trigger Siri by Touch on HomePod

Because a HomePod is buttonless, you might not realize you can activate Siri by touch with it, too. Just touch and hold the top of the device. When you see the multicolored spinning lights, release and ask your question (**Figure 10**).

Get Started with Apple Intelligence

From understanding you even when you stammer to being able to draw answers to your questions from information in your calendar, email, and contacts all at once, the future of Siri lies in Apple's new artificial intelligence technology, Apple Intelligence. Think of it as Siri 2.0.

The first substantial features arrived with iOS 18.2, iPadOS 18.2, and macOS 15.2. Namely, Siri added integration with OpenAI's artificial intelligence chatbot, ChatGPT, making it possible to ask much more complex questions—with actually useable results—than ever before. Apple has said other much anticipated Siri features will roll out later in 2025—or now perhaps as late as iOS 19 and macOS 16. That includes Siri being able to access personal data and take action across apps.

Be forewarned, though: Only the latest hardware supports these whizzy new features. (See [Which Devices Are Compatible with Apple Intelligence?](#) for details.) Here's what you need to know to get started.

Enable Apple Intelligence

As of macOS 15.3, iOS 18.3, and iPadOS 18.3, Apple Intelligence is on by default for supported devices. Still not seeing it? Here's what to check on a Mac:

1. Go to System Settings > General > Language & Region and put a supported language, for example English (US), at the top of the list of Preferred Languages (see [Which Languages Support Apple Intelligence?](#)).

2. In System Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri, choose a supported language, for example, English (United States), from the Language pop-up menu.
3. Now toggle on Apple Intelligence (**Figure 13**).

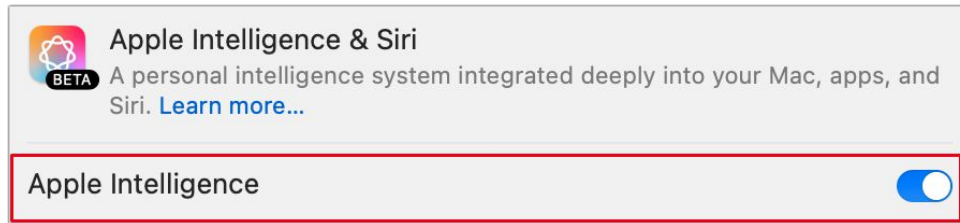


Figure 13: Toggle on Apple Intelligence (boxed) on your Mac.

Here are the steps to follow on an iPhone or iPad:

1. Tap Settings > General > Language & Region, put English (US) at the top of the list of Preferred Languages.
2. In Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri, choose English (United States) from the Language in the list.
3. Toggle on Apple Intelligence.

Which Languages Support Apple Intelligence?

To support Apple Intelligence, your device's language must be set to a supported language. Currently, that's nine varieties of English, as well as French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Brazilian Portuguese, and Spanish. Apple says they will roll out support for more languages throughout 2025. (See [this Apple support document](#) for the latest additions.)

Set Up ChatGPT Integration

Although Siri can already do many amazing things with your Apple apps and devices, it's traditionally been limited to answering one question at a time and has used many predefined scripts. (That's where those knock-knock jokes come from, after all.) Starting with iOS 18.2 and macOS 15.2, however, the integration of Siri with OpenAI's chat-

Tap into ChatGPT

Gone are the days of fumbling to figure out how to word a Siri question just right so it can understand and answer. With ChatGPT integration, Siri can do more than answer—it can synthesize and analyze. You can ask it to brainstorm ideas with you, quiz you on a topic, fashion images based on your requests, or even analyze data and turn out charts. It can also learn from your feedback and improve over time.

How Does ChatGPT Know What It Knows?

OpenAI's artificial intelligence chatbot was trained on massive amounts of information from the internet to learn patterns in language. The goal was to create a conversational assistant capable of generating complex, context-aware responses to requests.

Not everyone is happy about that. In 2023, a group of 17 authors, including George R.R. Martin and John Grisham, sued OpenAI for "systematic theft on a mass scale" for allegedly mining copyright-protected work. Other lawsuits have followed from newspapers and artists. On the other hand, it's not just high-quality copyrighted and public domain texts that trained ChatGPT, it also digested everything from random forum posts to all sorts of misinformation. Though, OpenAI says it works to filter out things like hate speech, adult content, and spam.

One thing worth noting: Though ChatGPT is trained with information from the internet, if you're using a free version it doesn't always directly search the internet when you ask it a question. That can lead to some surprisingly out-of-date answers if you ask it something requiring knowledge of current events.

So, what does this actually look like when it comes to Siri integration?

Here's an example: You could ask yesterday's Siri where the Cotswolds are, what the weather was like in that corner of England, or even for great places to stay—all very useful. But with ChatGPT integration, you can also say (or type) something like this:

“Pretend you are a travel agent. Make me an ideal 10-day itinerary for visiting the Cotswolds. I will be hiking between villages and need recommendations for services that can transport my bags between stops.”

Siri asks if you'd like to use ChatGPT to answer your question and if you say yes, it gives you a lengthy reply (**Figure 16**).

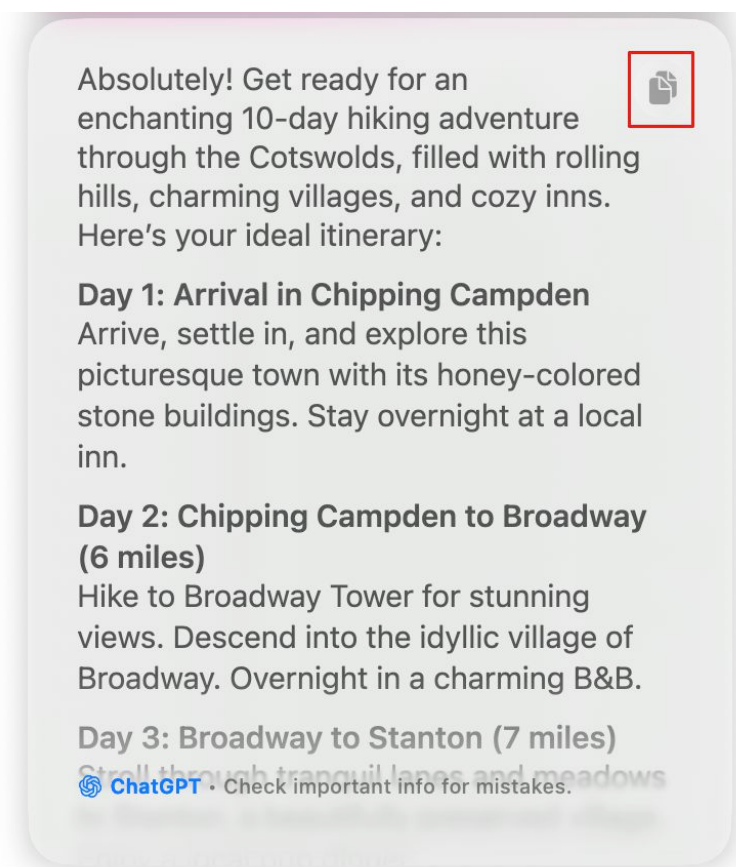


Figure 16: Siri can tap into ChatGPT to get answers to far more complex questions than ever before. Notice the copy icon (boxed), which makes it simple to save a response in another app, like Notes.

With ChatGPT, Siri doesn't read the answer aloud. Instead, it makes it easy to copy the information—tap or click the Copy  icon—and paste it into another app, like Mail, Notes, or Pages. An even quicker way to

Get Answers to Questions

One of Siri's notable accomplishments has always been eliminating the friction that comes between friends when they disagree about a random fact. Besides workaday inquiries like "Who starred in Groundhog Day?" or "How many teaspoons are in 10 milliliters?" Siri can also delve into arcane, like "What makes a rainbow?" "How many teeth do great white sharks have?" or even "Is Steve Wozniak married?"

Siri can answer many questions by itself, but if your question gets too complicated—and you're set up to use Apple Intelligence—it asks if you'd like to kick your query out to ChatGPT. (See [Tap into ChatGPT](#) for more on how that works.)

Tip: Dismayed by Siri's misspellings or misunderstanding of your question? Tap the pencil  icon to edit your query.

Ask About Sports

If you've got sports questions, Siri has answers, with detail rivaling what your most sport-crazed of friends could supply. Here are some types of questions to experiment with, from scores to schedules to standings.

Schedules

Wondering what's coming up next? Prepare your face paint and ask Siri: "When do the next Olympic Games start?" "What WNBA teams play tonight?" "When do the Raiders play next?" "When is Wimbledon?" "When is the next NASCAR race?" "Show me the season schedule for the Timbers." "What NHL games are on?" "When is the next Oregon State football game?"

Scores

Siri knows about scores from games both in progress and past (**Figure 19**). Though, you might find it has less historical information about sports like tennis at its virtual fingertips than it does about football and baseball. Ask it questions like: “How did the Celtics do today?” “Did the Cubs win last night?” “Who won the Super Bowl in 1979?” “Tell me the women’s soccer scores from yesterday.”

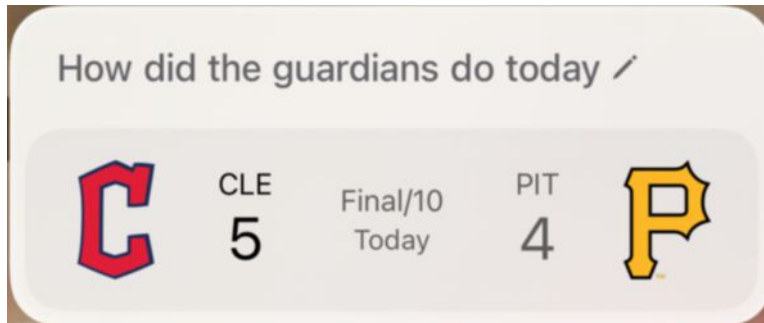


Figure 19: Use Siri to keep up with the latest scores.

If Siri needs more information to home in on your answer, it asks a clarifying question like “Which league?” with options to choose from.

Standings

If you want to know how your favorite team is doing, Siri can help. Say: “Show me NHL standings,” “How are the Warriors doing?” “What are the NCAA standings for women’s basketball?” “What’s the best college football team?”

Team Info

Ask Siri: “Show me the roster for the Golden State Warriors.” “Who is pitching for the Yankees this season?” “What schools are in the Big 10 now?”

Player Stats

Siri can answer questions about individual players, too (**Figure 20**). Try: “How tall is Caitlin Clark?” “Which baseball player has the best batting average?” “Which quarterback has the most passing yards?” or

Control Your Music

Since Apple introduced the iPod and iTunes in 2001, music has been a key part of the company's amazing transformation from underdog to the world's first \$1 trillion company. So much so, that it's hard to believe Apple once settled a trademark dispute with the Beatles' Apple Corps by agreeing never to enter the music business!

Whether you're on a run, in the car, or at home listening to your HomePod, Siri helps you play and enjoy your tunes. Combined with the [Apple Music service](#), Siri also serves as the gateway to Apple's huge library of more than 100 million streaming songs.

Note: Apple's rebellion against their deal with music company Apple Corps included small gestures like the inclusion of an alert sound cheekily named sosumi or "so sue me." (Hear more of the story in this [CNBC video about former Apple sound designer Jim Reekes](#).)

Work with Your Music

Want to hear a favorite song? Siri can do all the basics. Ask it to play, pause, or skip a certain song in your library. Say "Go back" to move to the previous song in an album or playlist.

You can ask Siri to play songs by an artist ("Play some Kacey Musgraves"), from an album ("Play the album Deeper Well"), or musical genre, too ("Play Americana songs"). Or, say "Shuffle all songs" to move through your entire library at random.

If you want to hear a song or album over and over, tell Siri "Repeat this track" or "Repeat this album." Once the charm of this fades, tell Siri "Turn repeat off."

You can't create playlists with Siri, but you can ask for them by name: "Play Warm Up playlist." "Shuffle Warm Up playlist."

Tip: If you don't have an Apple Music subscription, Siri sticks to music from your library, including your iTunes Store purchases and [iTunes Match](#) songs. See iMore's [Apple Music vs. iTunes Match: What's the Difference?](#) if you're confused by Apple's music options.

Control the Sound

Siri can control the volume, too. Say “Turn up the volume” or “Turn down the volume.” On your iPhone, iPad, HomePod, and Mac, control the volume more precisely by using Siri to adjust it on a scale of 1–100, for example “Hey Siri, set volume to 10 percent” or “Siri, turn up the volume by 30%.”

Adjust Your Sound Quality

You can't use Siri to change sound quality, for example, by boosting the bass to make your floor vibrate or increasing the treble to make up for high-frequency hearing loss. To do that on your mobile device, go to Settings > Apps > Music > EQ and choose from settings like Treble Booster or Small Speakers. On a Mac, open Music, go to Window > Equalizer and choose a preset from the pop-up menu. This setting impacts only what you play through the Music app. It won't have an effect on your listening in Podcasts or your phone calls, for instance.

Pick Where the Music Plays

If you have multiple HomePods in your house, you can tell Siri where you want the music to play. Say: “Play R&B in the family room.” “Play Bill Monroe everywhere.” “Play Chappell Roan in the dining room and the kitchen.” To switch from one room to another, say something like: “Move this music to the living room.”

Find New Music

Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the digital music revolution is how easy it makes it to find new songs and artists. Siri can help you discov-

Make a Call

Why search for friends' numbers when you want to make a call? As long as the person is in Contacts, Siri dials for you. This is especially helpful when you're in the car, but can also save you time if you want to make a call from your Mac. If you prefer to see your friends' faces, Siri can help you FaceTime them, too. You can make calls with Siri on your iPhone, iPad, Mac, Apple Watch, and HomePod.

Note: To make and receive phone calls on HomePod, you must turn on [Personal Requests](#). To update HomePod's software, open the Home app on your iPhone, tap the More  icon in the upper-right corner, tap Home Settings, and then tap Software Update. Toggle on Install Updates Automatically.

Make a Phone Call

You can make calls on your iPhone, Apple Watch, HomePod, and (if you [Set Up Calling on Your Mac or iPad](#)) your Mac, too.

- **Dial a number:** To dial a 10-digit phone number (in the United States or Canada) you don't often call, tell Siri "Dial *phone number*" or "Call *phone number*."
- **Call someone in Contacts:** If a person is listed in your contacts, it's even easier. Just tell Siri "Call *name*." If you have more than one phone number for that person, Siri asks which number to call. Or, specify which number from the get-go by saying "Call Joe at work" or "Call Joe at home." If there's more than one person with that name in your contacts, Siri asks which one to call. Say their full name to specify. Or, make this clear in your original request by saying something like "Call Joe Kissell at work."

Tip: If Siri has trouble understanding a contact's name, spell it out. For example: "Call K-i-n-n-a-r-i."

Use the Speaker

Instead of fumbling for the speaker button after you ask Siri to make a call in the car, say "Hey Siri, call dad *on speaker*."

Note that a HomePod, with its booming, wrap-around sound, makes a great speaker phone, whether the whole family is calling grandma or you're talking to a friend while washing the dishes.

Tip: If you hear your iPhone ringing, but you're closer to your HomePod, say "Hey Siri, answer my iPhone" to answer it there.

Redial a Number

If you get cut off or don't catch someone the first time, tell Siri to "Redial that last number" to call back again. If you just missed a call, ask "Who just called?" Siri tells you the number, when they called, and then asks if you'd like to call back.

Tip: Siri can announce calls as they come in if you're using CarPlay or wearing supported headphones. See [Announce Messages \(and More\)](#).

Call for Help

Siri can call emergency services on your iPhone, Apple Watch, and HomePod. Say "Call 911" or "Call emergency services" and Siri starts a countdown (**Figure 35**). (On a HomePod, Siri asks you to confirm.) If you do nothing, Siri dials. If you made the call by accident, tap Cancel. If Location Services is turned on (see [Location, Location](#)), your device

Get Directions

When you're on the go, Siri is usually the quickest and safest way to ask for directions. You don't have to stop, open Apple Maps or Google Maps, and tap in your destination. (Or, heaven forbid—ask a person!) Siri can guide you home.

Tip: You must have location services turned on to get directions based on where you are or receive turn-by-turn instructions. See [Location, Location](#).

Ask for Directions

Asking for directions with Siri is as simple as saying “Get directions to *address*” or even something as vague as “Do you know the way to San Jose?”:

- **On your iPhone or iPad:** Siri opens Maps and previews its suggested route. You don't need to tap the Go button, just wait a beat and Siri begins to speak turn-by-turn directions. If you miss a turn, Maps reroutes and gives directions from wherever you are.

Tip: Ensure your safety by handing your iPhone over to a passenger or using hands-free “Hey Siri” commands in the car. (See [Activate Siri with Your Voice](#).)

- **On your Apple Watch:** When you ask for directions on your Apple Watch, it displays your ETA and one step of the directions at a time. (It automatically chooses walking directions if the destination is close by.) Swipe through to see the entire route. As you near a turn, your watch doesn't talk to you. Instead, a few feet before the intersection, it sounds and taps your wrist to let you know which way to go. A low tone followed by a high tone signals a right turn. A high tone followed by a low tone means turn left (**Figure 37**).



Figure 37: Although your watch doesn't speak directions, it displays the next turn and signals which way to go with sounds and taps.

- **On your Mac:** When you ask for directions on your Mac, Siri opens Maps and displays the route.

Tip: Your HomePod can't give you step-by-step directions, but it suggests the fastest route (for instance "via I-84 East" or "via NW Front Avenue") and lets you know how long it takes to get to your destination. Ask it: "What's the traffic like on the way home?" "How long will it take to get to Kate's Ice Cream?"

Ditch the Car

By default, Siri usually gives directions by car, but you can ask for directions via transit, walking, and now—in a handful of cities—bike, too. Here's how:

- **Go on foot:** Say "Get walking directions to *address*." On your iPhone, tap Go to begin; directions start automatically on the Apple Watch. On your Mac, Siri opens Maps and displays the route.

Remind Yourself

Whether you enjoy checking off items on your to-do list or you need a backup brain to remind you of all the random tasks that come your way, the Reminders app can quickly become an important part of your daily routine. Walking the dog when you remember you're out of coffee? Need to remember to buy gas as soon as you get in the car? Reminders has got your back. If you sync reminders using iCloud (see [The iCloud Advantage](#)), it's easy to add a reminder using Siri with whatever device is at hand. Once that's done, the app can alert you when a reminder is due, or even when you arrive or leave a location, like your home, work, or car.

Use Siri to create reminders on your iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, Mac, or HomePod (if you've turned on [Personal Requests](#)). Make no mistake, this is a killer Siri feature. If you want to wow a relative who just got a new Apple device, show them how easy it is to make a reminder.

Tip: Our Apple devices give us a bunch of different ways to remember things. Get the rundown in [When to Use What: Reminder, Calendar, Timer, or Alarm?](#).

Create a Reminder

Creating reminders with Siri is so quick and natural that you may never do it any other way.

Add Basic To-Do Items

Say something like: “Remind me to buy coffee,” “Remind me to call Jon,” or “Remind me to look up Italian pastry making” and your item is added to the default iCloud Reminders list (see [Organize Your Reminders](#)).

The iCloud Advantage

If you take advantage of iCloud syncing, your reminders are available on all devices connected to the same account. On your iPhone or iPad, make reminders sync through iCloud by going to Settings > *your name* > iCloud > See All and toggling the Reminders switch on. (Your Apple Watch mirrors your iPhone.) On your Mac, go to System Settings > *your name* > iCloud, click the See All button, and then scroll down and toggle on Reminders.

Create a Time-Based Reminder

If you need to remember something at a certain time, include that information, too: “Remind me to take out the garbage at 9 A.M.” “Remind me to cancel my trial subscription in 14 days.” (**Figure 39**).

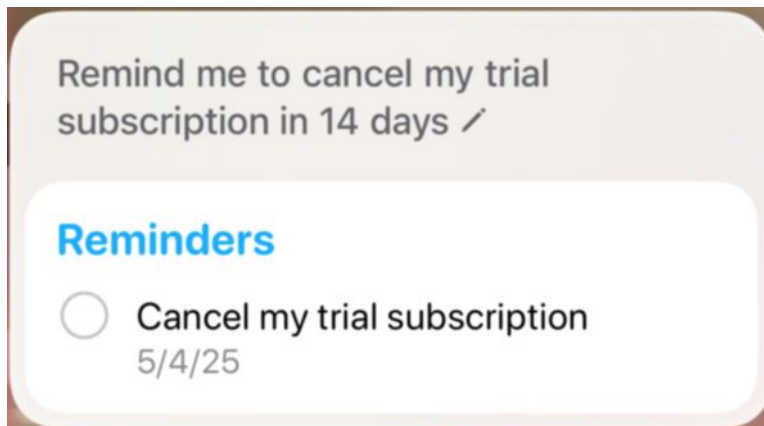


Figure 39: Use Siri to create a reminder that tells you to do something at a certain time.

By default, when you specify a day but not a time for a reminder—“Remind me to call Mike Price tomorrow”—you’re notified at 9 A.M. If you’d prefer another time, go to Settings > Apps > Reminders on your iPhone or iPad, and under “All-Day Reminders,” pick something else.

If you ask Siri to remind you about something “in the morning” it sets the alarm for 7 A.M. Likewise, if you ask it to remind you “at night,” it sets the alarm for 7 P.M.

Make a Date

Like a good personal assistant, Siri can keep up with your calendar, briefing you about the day as well as adding, changing, and cancelling events. Use Siri to work with your schedule on your Mac, iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, and HomePod (with [Personal Requests](#) on).

Check Your Schedule

Get the gist of the day by asking: “What do I have today?” or “What does the rest of my day look like?” On iPhones, iPads, and Macs, Siri displays all of your appointments; say “Read them” to hear the events out loud. An Apple Watch can only display events. HomePod tells you the first three events and then asks whether you’d like to hear more.

Look ahead with a question like: “What do I have scheduled for this Friday?” “What’s on my schedule for April 30th?” “What do I have this weekend?” “What’s on my schedule tomorrow? (**Figure 41**).

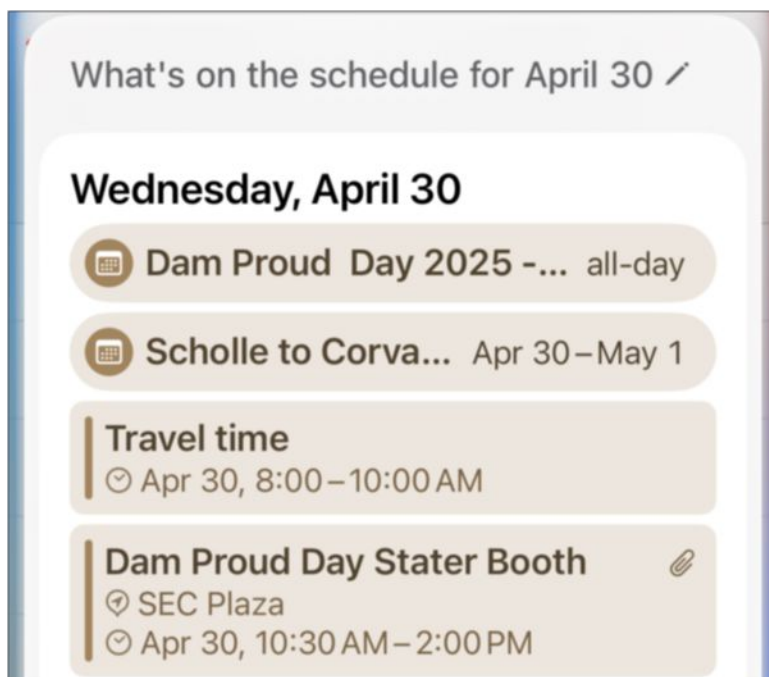


Figure 41: Siri can fill you in about what’s coming up.

Tip: Your Apple Watch has access to the past six weeks of events and events up to two years in the future. That’s more than enough for most situations; you need to use your iPhone, iPad, Mac, or HomePod to take the longer view.

Siri can also fill you in on the who, what, when, and where of your schedule by scanning the calendar for locations, times, and meeting participants. Ask: “When is my next appointment?” “Do I have a meeting at 9 A.M. on Tuesday?” “Where is my meeting?” or “When am I meeting with Mr. Big?”

Create an Event

Creating a Calendar event with Siri is quick and easy—much easier than digging around in the Calendar app. Just fill Siri in on the basics by saying something like “Set up a meeting with Kelly for Friday at 3:00.” It creates the event, invites participants, and warns you of any conflicts (**Figure 42**).

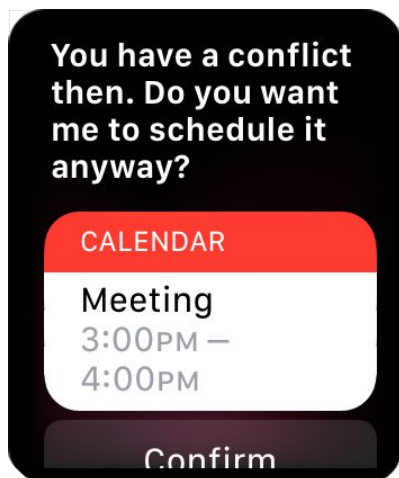


Figure 42: Siri warns you of conflicts when you create an event.

Say yes to confirm and no to cancel. If Siri points out a conflict (or you realize you misspoke), you can say “Change the time,” instead. You can also say “Change the date” and “Change the title.”

Note that although Siri can see the events in all of your synced calendars, it can add events only to your default one. On your iPhone or

Send Messages

You're in the car and need to tell your spouse you forgot a critical ingredient for tonight's dinner. Do you pull over to dash off a text? Do you attempt to text at the next red light? Neither is a good option when Siri can help you compose SMS and iMessages without taking your eyes off of the road. Siri can send, read, respond, and search for messages in the Messages app on your iPhone, iPad, Mac, and HomePod (if you've turned on [Personal Requests](#)) as well as through CarPlay. Siri can even send audio messages, too.

When to Use What: Text or Email?

Use Messages when you have a brief message that you need someone to see right away, but be aware that text messages used for business are often considered intrusive. Use email if you have a lot to say, your timeline is longer, you need to keep a record of your correspondence, or you don't know the person well. You might also use email if it's late at night or very early in the morning, in case the person has forgotten to turn notifications off. Which device you have closest at hand makes a difference, too—Siri can help you send email with your iPhone, iPad, and Mac.

Send a Message

To send a message, say “Send a message to *phone number*” or “Text *phone number*.” (You must include all 10 digits.) If a recipient's info is in Contacts, tell Siri “Send a message to *name*” or “Text *name*.” Siri creates a new message and waits for your words—you don't have to activate it again.

If there's more than one person by that name in Contacts, Siri asks which one to message. Say their full name to specify. Or, make this clear in your original request by saying something like “Message Dave McFarland.” If you've included relationship information in Contacts

(see [Give Siri the Information It Needs](#)), you can tell Siri “Message my spouse” or “Text my boss.”

Speed things up by including the text of your message along with your original request. For example, say: “Siri, text Kate I’ll pick you up after mock trial at 7:30” (**Figure 43**).

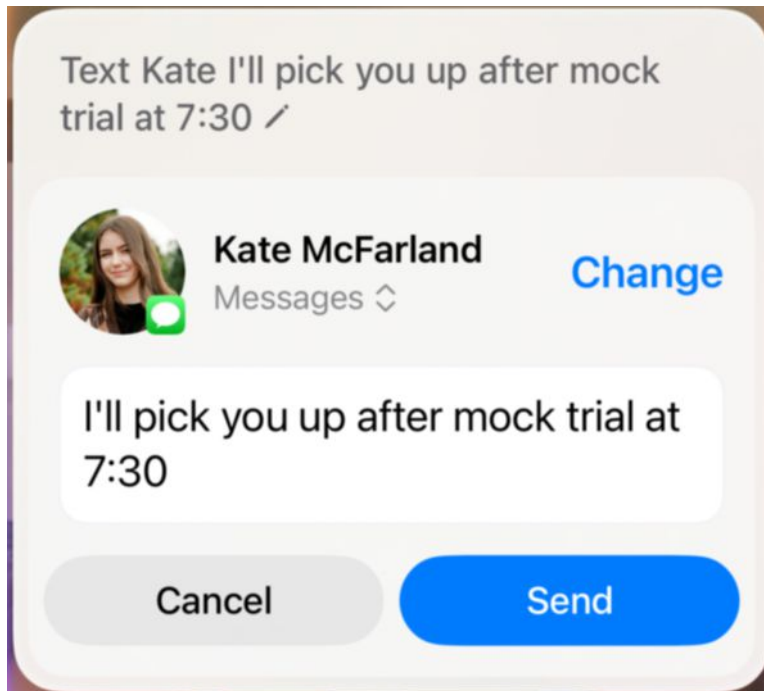


Figure 43: To speed things up, skip the back and forth with Siri and include the message body with your request.

Tip: Spice up your Siri-sent messages with emoji. Simply include one’s name—for example, “exploding head emoji” for 🤪 or “hot pepper emoji” for 🌶️—in your message.

Siri sends message from your iPhone automatically unless you say “Cancel.” (The Send button turns into a subtle progress bar, showing you how long you have until the deed is done.) If you’d rather this didn’t happen automatically, go to Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri > Messaging with Siri and then toggle off Automatically Send Messages.

Alternatively, fine-tune when Siri messages send automatically by taking advantage of the settings here. For instance, automatic sending might be handy when you’re in the car, but overly hasty when you’re using headphones.

Send Email

Don't sweat it out in the car when you're waiting for an important email. Siri offers a quick way to check, send, or search for email messages when you can't get to a (non-virtual) keyboard or don't feel like using one. Siri works with email on iPhones, iPads, and Macs.

Tip: Wondering whether you should send a text message instead? See [When to Use What: Text or Email?](#).

Write an Email Message

With one request, Siri starts a new email message and fills in the To and Subject fields. For instance: "Email Suki about the roller derby this weekend." If there's more than one person by that name in Contacts or the person has more than one email address, Siri asks you to pick. Then, it waits for details.

Tip: If Siri has trouble understanding a friend's name, include their last name or try to spell their name out—"Email S-a-s-k-i-a."

Tip: You can address emails to "my boss" or "my son" if Siri knows about your relationships. See [Give Siri the Information It Needs](#).

Speed things up by including the text of your message in your request, too: "Email Ariel and Tanya Kapka about cards and say 'Next Tuesday looks good!'" This usually works best if the message is fairly short and sweet.

When you stop talking, Siri asks whether you're ready to send your message. Say yes to send or no to cancel.

If the email includes mistakes, say “Change message” or “Change subject.” (See [When Mistakes Happen](#).) If you realize you forgot something, say “Add” and start dictating your addendum.

When Mistakes Happen

If you use Siri to dictate long emails—especially if they include jargon—it’s going to make mistakes. Here’s how to correct them:

- ✦ **Type it:** Tap or click Siri’s higgledy-piggledy translation of your words. Mail opens to your message. Type to fix.
- ✦ **Say it:** If you see (or hear) a mistake, say “Change message” or “Change subject” to try again.

Siri learns from its mistakes, so its accuracy should improve the more you fix errors.

Read Email Messages

If you’re waiting on an important email, say “Check email” or “Any new emails from Tanya?” Siri checks, reads the first message, and then asks “Do you want to hear the next one?” Respond with “Read it” or “Next.”

Reply to Email Messages

When Siri reads you an email message and asks whether you’d like to hear the next one, you can say “Respond” or “Reply” instead of yes or no. Siri prompts you to begin dictating.

Find Email Messages

To find a particular message, try: “Find emails I received yesterday.” You can also ask for emails from a particular person—“Show me emails from Joe”—or emails about a particular subject—“Find emails about book club.”

Take a Note

Hit with a great idea for a novel or a sudden inspiration for getting your budget in the black? Combine Siri and Apple's Notes to capture fleeting thoughts that might otherwise get away, as well as snippets of information you want to remember, like promo codes or favorite quotes. You can use Siri with Notes on your iPhone, iPad, Mac, and HomePod (if [Personal Requests](#) are turned on).

Sync Notes Through iCloud

When you take advantage of iCloud syncing, you can access your notes on your iPhone, iPad, Mac, HomePod, and on [iCloud.com](https://www.icloud.com), when signed in to the same account. On your iPhone or iPad, make Notes sync through iCloud by going to Settings > *your name* > iCloud. Tap See All and then toggle the Notes switch on. On your Mac, go to System Settings > *your name* > iCloud. Click the See All button and toggle the Notes switch on.

Create a New Note

To get an idea down, say “Take a note.” Siri asks you what you want to say (**Figure 48**) and waits for your words. When you're finished dictating, pause. Siri creates a new note with your text, using your default Notes account (usually iCloud).

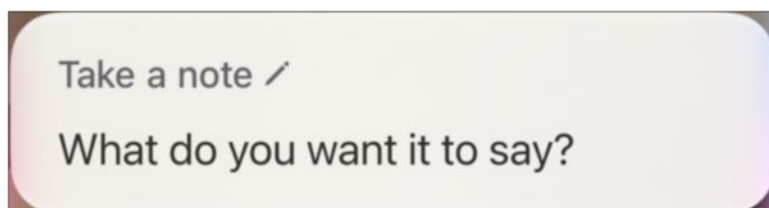


Figure 48: Tell Siri to “Take a note.”

To save yourself some time, say “Take a note” or “Note to self” and then *keep talking*. Include punctuation as you speak (see [Punctuate Your Notes](#), next).

Siri can't delete a note, so you need to do so by hand on your iPhone, iPad, or Mac if you decide you don't want one anymore.

Punctuate Your Notes

When you dictate a note using Siri, you must speak all punctuation you want included:

- ✦ Say the name of common punctuation like "period" or "semicolon."
- ✦ Say "Cap" to capitalize the next word.
- ✦ Say "Caps on" to capitalize the first character of each word in a phrase and "Caps off" to turn that formatting off.
- ✦ Say "Quote" and "end quote" to enclose text in quotation marks.
- ✦ Say "New paragraph" to start a new paragraph.
- ✦ Say "New line" to start a new line.

Give a Note a Name

If you're a prolific note taker, it can be helpful to give new notes names, so that they're easier to find later. For instance, say "Create story ideas note" (**Figure 49**).

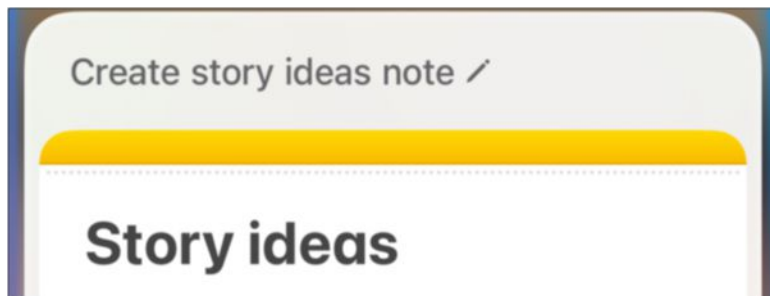


Figure 49: Create a new note and give it a new name all at once.

Tip: Wondering when to use Notes versus Reminders? It's easier to keep track of something that you add to frequently, like a grocery list, using Reminders. Then you can easily say "Add pickles to my grocery list."

Grab Bag of Other Useful Tricks

Answering questions, making telephone calls, and (perhaps) telling jokes may be some of the main things you think of when you think Siri, but Apple's digital assistant has many more tricks up its sleeve. Here's a collection of some of the coolest things it can help you do that don't fit into a particular category, from retrieving passwords to using your HomePod as an intercom.

Tip: Need a flashlight? Just activate Siri and say "Turn on flashlight" or "Open flashlight."

Find Your Apple Devices

It can get tiring opening Find My and scanning the map for your Apple device, just so you can end up, as always, wandering around the house listening for a muffled ping. (In my case, that ping once came from the freezer where my iPhone sat, carefully wrapped in tinfoil. Ah, toddlers).

Siri lets you cut to the chase. Try "Ping my watch" or "Find my iPhone." Siri tells you whether any of the devices signed in to your iCloud account are nearby and can play a sound to lead you to it.

I find this particularly useful with my HomePod as I can just call out "Hey Siri, where's my phone?"

Set a Timer

Whether you're timing a test or keeping track of when to take something out of the oven, Siri can help you count down a few minutes or a

few hours on your iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, or HomePod. It's as simple as saying: "Set timer 20 minutes" (**Figure 51**).



Figure 51: Use Siri to start a count down.

To check how much time is left, tell Siri: "Check timer." To cancel it, say "Stop timer."

Tip: Confused about when to use the timer versus an alarm? See [When to Use What: Reminder, Calendar, Timer, or Alarm?](#).

Your HomePod has an extra trick up its sleeve—you can use it to set *multiple* timers, which is particularly helpful when you're cooking. Name them so you know which one is which. Say: "Hey Siri, set pasta timer to 45 minutes." "Hey Siri, set sauce timer to 5 minutes."

To see how much time is left on a particular timer, say "Hey Siri, check pasta timer." To cancel it, say "Hey Siri, cancel pasta timer." To clear all your timers, say "Hey Siri, cancel all timers."

Set an Alarm

Love them or hate them (oh, the horror of the default [Radar](#) sound!), alarms help us wake up on time and get out the door.

Use Siri to set an alarm on your iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, or HomePod. Say: "Wake me up tomorrow at 6 P.M." or "Set an alarm for 5 A.M."

Understand Siri and Your Privacy

How does Siri make its magic? In the past, it sent everything you asked it to Apple where servers processed your speech to return an answer. Now Apple says Siri uses on-device processing whenever possible. (Hot tip: It's most frequently possible on the newest devices). They've also rolled out new privacy features for Apple Intelligence. Here are answers to some common questions about what that means for your privacy.

Is Apple Keeping Track of What I Say?

Apple used to store Siri voice recordings—assigned a random, device-generated number, or identifier, as opposed to being associated with your name or Apple Account—in order to improve Siri's performance. After six months, that data was disassociated from the identifier and then stored for up to 18 months more for testing.

However, in the summer of 2019, [a whistleblower revealed](#) that Apple contractors regularly heard short snippets of sometimes very private conversations as part of their job providing quality control for Siri. The culprit was typically accidental activation of Siri on an Apple Watch or HomePod.

As a result, Apple made a number of changes to their policies. Now only Apple employees “subject to confidentiality obligations”—rather than contractors, as was the case before—review audio interactions. And most importantly, Apple no longer gathers Siri audio recordings by default. Instead, users must *opt in* to help improve Siri.

You're asked what you want to do when you first set up your device, upgrade to or enable Siri. On a Mac, go to System Settings > Privacy &

Security, select Analytics & Improvements in the list, and take a look at the “Improve Siri & Dictation” setting.

On an iPhone or iPad, go to Settings > Privacy & Security > Analytics & Improvements to check your settings (**Figure 58**). The “Improve Siri & Dictation” setting should be off, by default.

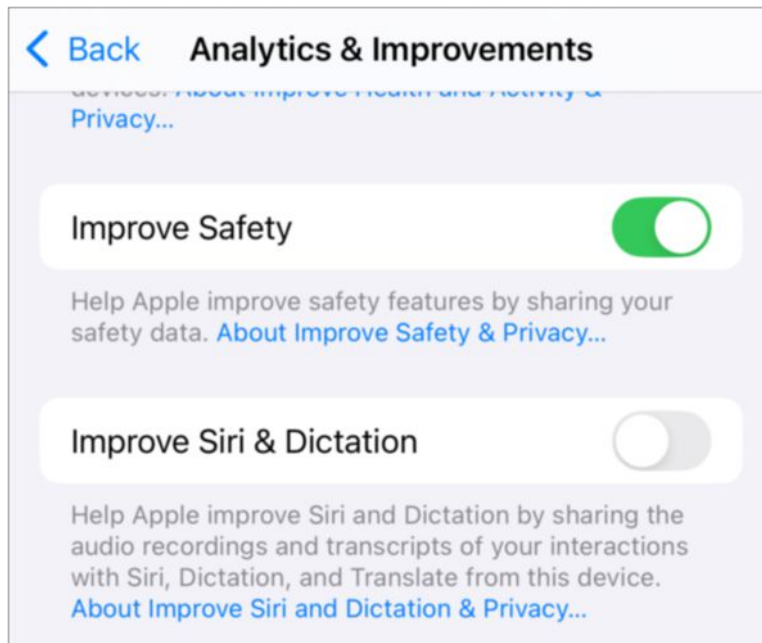


Figure 58: By default, Apple does not store recordings of your interactions with Siri unless you opt in by toggling the “Improve Siri & Dictation” switch on.

So how does Apple improve Siri’s accuracy if they don’t listen to its exchanges? While audio of your requests is processed entirely on your device unless you choose to share it, Apple now uses computer-generated transcripts of your interactions with Siri instead. Those transcripts are associated with a random identifier, rather than your name or Apple Account username, for six months and then disassociated with the identifier and kept for up to two years.

To delete what’s still associated with the random identifier, you must take action on each of your devices.

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