



TAKE CONTROL OF
**iOS 18 AND
iPadOS 18**

by **JOSH CENTERS**
\$10.99

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Read Me First

Welcome to *Take Control of iOS 18 and iPadOS 18*, version 1.3, published in December 2024 by alt concepts. This book was written by Josh Centers, updated by Glenn Fleishman (version 1.3), and edited by Joe Kissell.

This book covers the new features of iOS 18 and iPadOS 18 to give iPhone and iPad veterans a quick start for all of the new features these operating systems have to offer.

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Updates and More

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What's New in Version 1.3

In iOS and iPadOS versions 18.3 and 18.4, Apple made small-to-significant changes and additions to features and apps. Here's what this update covers:

- **Apple Intelligence is now opt out:** Starting with iOS 18.3/iPadOS 18.3, Apple Intelligence is on by default on supported devices. See [Meet Apple Intelligence](#).
- **Apple drops Siri upgrades for now:** Promised Apple Intelligence improvements to Siri that would mine data on your device to give better answers and to interact with a device interface to perform tasks has been pushed back to late 2025 or 2026. See [Siri Remains Mired in the Past](#).
- **Visual Intelligence (iOS only):** Apple added a feature to several recent iPhone models called Visual Intelligence that can quickly access information about places, businesses, animals, and plants as well as read text aloud and other features. Features were added in waves from iOS 18.2 onward. See [Recognize the World Around You](#).
- **Change in AI-based notifications:** After complaints about accuracy with Apple Intelligence notifications summaries, Apple no longer summarizes headlines from news apps and italicizes other summaries. See [Summarize Notifications](#).
- **Image Playground adds a style option:** The Playground app now offers Sketch as a style option when creating images. See [Create Images with Playground](#).
- **Control Center adds an Apple Intelligence & Siri section:** This new section has buttons for Siri and Visual Intelligence. See [Apple Intelligence & Siri](#).
- **Photos:** A number of tweaks have been made in how files can be viewed, filtered, and hidden:
 - **New filters for All Photos:** You can filter by Shared With You (from Messages) and Not in Any Album. See [View Your Photos](#).

- **Sort images by date modified:** See [View Your Photos](#).
- **Reorganize Media Types and Utilities collection items:** See [Learn About More Photos Changes](#).
- *Disable Recently Viewed and Recently Shared collections:* See [Learn About More Photos Changes](#).
- *Blocks manual sync of hidden media if Face ID enabled:* See [Learn About More Photos Changes](#).
- **Visual indicator of verification code timer remaining:** In Passwords in iOS 18.4/iPadOS 18.4, a circular indicator next to Verification Code shows the remaining time for a generate code to be valid when logging in with two-factor authentication on a site. See [Add or Edit a Password](#).
- **Calculator restores its repeat-with-equals action:** From iOS 18.3/iPadOS 18.3 onwards, you can once again tap the equals sign to repeat the previous operation. See [Power Up Calculator](#).
- **iPadOS gains Mail Categorization:** The feature to enable categories in Mail for iOS became available for the iPad in iPadOS 18.4. See [Mail](#).
- **Child account setup improvement:** Apple is in the middle of revamping the Child type of Apple Account. iOS 18.4/iPadOS 18.4 has streamlined how this kind of account can be set up from scratch. See [Apple Account](#).

What Was New in Version 1.2

Version 1.2 covered the many changes introduced in iOS 18.2 and iPadOS 18.2. Here are the most significant of those:

- You can combine Siri with ChatGPT to open a wider range of queries and capabilities. See [Use ChatGPT Through Siri](#).
- Writing Tools, which uses Apple Intelligence to help you write and revise content, added two new features that let you manually de-

scribe the revisions you want and revise text with ChatGPT. See [Leverage Writing Tools](#).

- The new Playground app lets you use Apple Intelligence to create and remix original images. See [Create Images with Playground](#).
- The new Magic Wand tool in Notes lets you generate images based on the contents of a note. See [Make Images with Magic Wand](#) in the Notes app.
- The new Genmoji feature lets you create new emojis from a simple text description. See [Generate New Emojis](#).
- The individual Control Center shortcut for Satellite was removed—see [Connectivity](#). However, the Connectivity platter still has a Satellite shortcut.
- A new section in Control Center offers shortcuts to the Measure app and the Level feature. See [Measure](#).
- A new [Siri](#) section in Control Center provides a shortcut to the Type to Siri feature. See [Siri](#).
- The Find My app lets you temporarily share AirTag locations with others when something is lost or otherwise not at hand. See [Find My](#).
- The Mail app added quick message filtering. See [Mail](#).
- Apple added a central place to find all default app settings. See [Default Apps](#).

Introduction

Henry Ford famously said the Model T was available in “any color the customer wants, as long as it’s black.” Steve Jobs maintained a similar stance during the longer periods he was in charge of Apple. On the hardware front, the fewer models Apple could offer, the better. Apple software under Jobs was “opinionated.” Customization was set aside to focus on consistency and simplicity.

For better or worse, that philosophy went out the window with iOS 18 and iPadOS 18. Much has been spoken of Apple Intelligence, but after a whirlwind summer with these new releases, I’ve identified three key themes most users will experience: Customization, customization, and customization. Here are three major examples:

- The Home Screen is more customizable than ever. Icons and widgets are no longer constrained to a predefined grid. You now arrange them however you please. You can also apply color filters to app icons, completely overriding the designer’s vision.
- Control Center is now completely customizable. You can add and remove controls to your heart’s content, and if you run out of room, you can add multiple pages to swipe between.
- Even Photos has a certain degree of customization. You can customize the new single-screen interface to move things around as you like.

I worry that these changes will cause massive confusion for users because there’s no longer a shared, consistent experience. An individualized iOS experience is a more fragmented one.

However, this is clearly what the market is craving. iOS customization is one of the hottest topics on TikTok and other social networks. In many ways, it harkens back to the old days of computing when users skinned and themed software to suit their tastes. For better or worse, iOS 18 and iPadOS 18 are uniquely yours.

iOS 18 and iPadOS 18

Quick Start

iOS 18 and iPadOS 18's features can be split into three broad categories: increased customization, new intelligence features, and minor updates to existing apps and features:

Customize iOS 18 and iPadOS 18:

- [Tweak the Home Screen](#) with new theming and app-placement options.
- [Relearn Control Center](#), which is now 100% customizable.

Get smarter with iOS 18 and iPadOS 18:

- [Meet Apple Intelligence](#) and the AI features added to Apple's high-end devices, such as Visual Intelligence.
- [Surf Safari's New Reader](#) with new features like voice transcripts of articles and Apple Intelligence summaries.
- Check out new [Accessibility](#) features like Vocal Shortcuts, Eye Tracking, and Music Haptics.

Check out new and overhauled apps:

- [Make Sense of the New Photos](#) and its new single-screen interface.
- [Try the Passwords App](#), which is Apple's built-in password-management solution.
- [Power Up Calculator](#) with new features like conversions and Math Notes.

Explore updates to old favorites:

- [Do More with Messages](#) like adding Text Effects, custom Tapback responses, scheduling messages for later, and RCS messaging with Android phones.

- [Hike with Maps](#), taking advantage of its new hiking trails feature.
- [Journal with Journal](#) with new features to organize your journal and track your journaling stats.
- [Take Notes Further](#) with voice recordings, Math Notes, highlighting, and collapsible sections.
- Last but not least: [Discover Other App Changes](#) and [Discover Other System Changes](#) for other improvements that didn't belong elsewhere.

Upgrade to iOS 18 or iPadOS 18

Before you proceed with the upgrade, you should know if your devices can support iOS 18 and iPadOS 18, what to do before you update, and, of course, how to perform the update.

Check Your iPhone for Compatibility

iOS 18 runs on any of these iPhone models:

- iPhone 11 series or later
- iPhone XS series
- iPhone SE (2nd generation or later)

However, certain features require more than the bare minimum hardware:

- **Apple Intelligence:** Apple's new artificial intelligence features require an iPhone 15 Pro, iPhone 15 Pro Max, or later. This includes Visual Intelligence, which was a later addition starting in iOS 18.2.
- **Messages via Satellite:** This feature lets you send iMessages over satellite when you don't have an internet connection, and it requires an iPhone 14 or later.
- **Siri Interactions:** These let you shake or nod your head to respond to requests, and they require AirPods Pro (2nd generation) and later.
- **Personalized spatial audio for gaming:** Many newer games will support the personalized spatial audio feature, which is available on AirPods (3rd generation), AirPods Pro, and AirPods Max.

- **Live audio transcription in Notes:** You can record voice memos in Notes and have them transcribed on the iPhone 12 and later.
- **Enhance dialog:** This is a new feature in the TV app that makes it easier to understand what people are saying. It's available in compatible content using built-in speakers, wired headphones, AirPods, and other Bluetooth-connected speakers and headphones on iPhone 11 and later.
- **HomeKit guest access:** Home now lets you give guests access to automated locks. It requires a HomePod or Apple TV operating as a Home hub and a Matter lock that supports schedules.
- **HomeKit hands-free unlock:** You can now automatically unlock HomeKit locks as you draw near them with an iPhone 11 and later, and compatible Ultra Wideband locks.
- **Eye tracking:** This is a new accessibility feature that lets you control your iPhone with your eyes, and it's available on iPhone 12 and later, as well as the iPhone SE (3rd generation).
- **Music Haptics:** This feature vibrates the phone along with whatever music is playing, and it's available on iPhone 12 and later.

Check Your iPad for Compatibility

iPadOS runs on any of these iPad models:

- iPad Pro (M4)
- iPad Pro 12.9-inch (3rd generation and later)
- iPad Pro 11-inch (1st generation and later)
- iPad Air (3rd generation and later, including M2)
- iPad (7th generation and later)
- iPad mini (5th generation and later)

Meet Apple Intelligence

The hot topic right now is AI—that’s right, Apple Intelligence. On the one hand, it’s Apple’s marquee feature this season. On the other, it’s limited to only a handful of devices—see [Check Your iPhone for Compatibility](#) and [Check Your iPad for Compatibility](#).

There’s a lot of confusion and misinformation about Apple Intelligence, unfortunately due in part to the way Apple announced it. Apple Intelligence doesn’t depend on OpenAI’s GPT technology, though it can now optionally integrate with ChatGPT (and support for additional models is planned for the future). For much of Apple Intelligence, Apple uses their own internal technology, either processed on your device, or—when that isn’t possible—through Apple’s Private Cloud Compute technology, which privately and securely processes your requests on a remote server.

Apple Intelligence is baked into many aspects of iOS 18 and iPadOS 18, and Apple added features in versions 18.1 through 18.4 of both operating systems. The feature remains labeled “beta,” which is odd for a flagship deployment but reflects reality.

However, the company also couldn’t meet all the promises they made in announcing Apple Intelligence, and kicked the can down the road for some elements into “coming later” territory.

To use the features below, Apple Intelligence needs to be enabled on your iPhone or iPad. From versions 18.0 to 18.2 of iOS and iPadOS, Apple required that you enable the feature via Settings > Apple Intelligence & Siri. Starting in iOS 18.3/iPadOS 18.3, Apple Intelligence is turned on by default during the setup or upgrade process. If you want to disable it, go to the same location to turn it off.

Note: You can disable Apple Intelligence without losing access to Siri, even though the Apple Intelligence banner and switch appear prominently at the top of the Settings section.

Learn to Love Siri Again

The most obvious Apple Intelligence-related improvements come to Siri. First, the interface is slightly different. The now-familiar Siri orb is gone. Instead, with Apple Intelligence turned on, the edges of the screen light up with a multicolored glow when Siri is invoked.

Siri's improved intelligence is rather subtle. Siri can understand you better if you stutter or change your mind in mid-sentence. It can better follow multiple queries. For instance, you can ask how long it takes to drive to Yosemite, what the weather is like there, and what food places are nearby, and Siri can keep up with you and keep things in context.

Siri now also has product knowledge baked in. You can ask it things like “How do I turn off a Focus” or “How do I schedule a text message for later?” (**Figure 1**)



Figure 1: You can ask Siri how to use your Apple device.

Tweak the Home Screen

iOS 18 and iPadOS 18 introduce many new options to adjust your Home Screen. You can now lock and even hide sensitive apps from prying eyes. You can easily transform an app shortcut into a widget and back again. And there are many new options for customization.

Tip: You can now position apps and widgets anywhere you like on the Home Screen, without any forced arrangement.

Lock and Hide Apps

You can lock apps so they cannot be opened without authenticating with Face ID or Touch ID, which adds an extra layer of security to sensitive apps related to things like banking and journaling.

Additionally, you can also hide an app so that it doesn't appear on the Home Screen. Instead, it's moved to an obscured Hidden folder in the App Library that cannot be viewed without Face ID or Touch ID authentication (**Figure 22**).

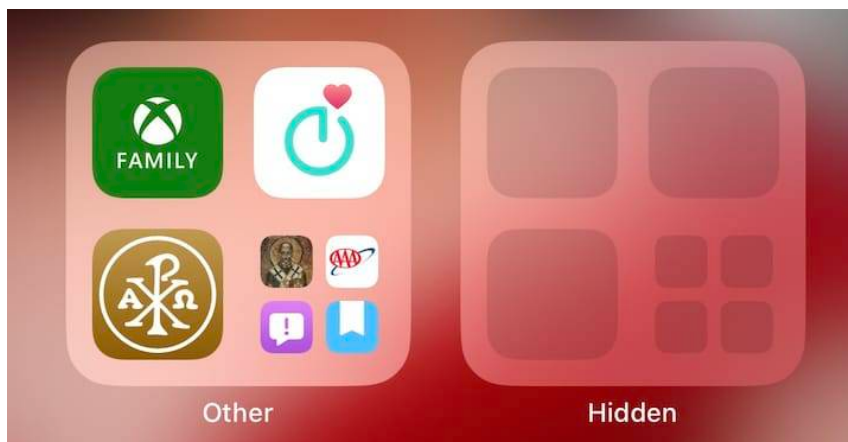


Figure 22: You can store sensitive apps in the mysterious Hidden folder of the App Library.

To lock or hide an app:

1. Touch and hold an app icon.

2. Tap Require Face/Touch ID.
3. Choose either Require Face/Touch ID or Hide and Require Face/Touch ID. The former merely locks the app; the latter hides it.
4. Authenticate with Face ID or Touch ID.
5. If you also chose to hide the app, tap Hide App.

To remove the lock or unhide the app:

1. Touch and hold the app's icon. Hidden apps are found in the App Library in the Hidden folder.
2. Choose Don't Require Face/Touch ID from the menu.

Turn an App Shortcut into a Widget

If an app has an associated widget, you can now quickly transform the app's icon into a widget and vice versa on the Home Screen:

1. Touch and hold the app's icon on the Home Screen.
2. Near the top of the menu, tap one of the icons for the app icon  or widgets   (**Figure 23**).

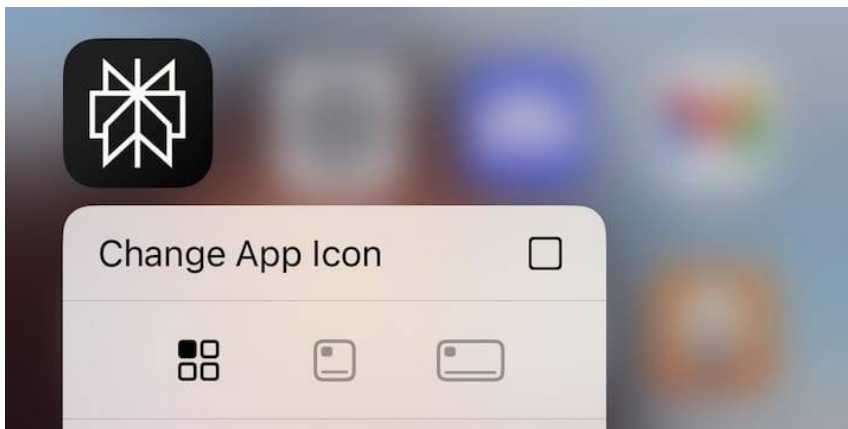


Figure 23: The icons in the second row let you choose whether to display the app on the Home Screen as an icon or one of two sizes of widget.

Relearn Control Center

Apple has completely redesigned Control Center in iOS 18 and iPadOS 18 to be 100% customizable. Previously, you could add and remove certain controls, but many were baked in—whether you used them or not. Control Center now has multiple pages you can switch among by swiping up and down on the screen.

In the long run, the new Control Center will be a blessing, but for now it means taking time to set things up how you want them and retraining your muscle memory.

To access Control Center on iPhones without Home buttons and on iPads, swipe down from the upper-right corner of the screen (**Figure 27**). On iPhones with Home buttons, swipe up from the bottom of the screen.



Figure 27: Control Center gives you quick access to network settings, brightness, audio controls, and more. To see additional options, touch and hold a control.

Tip: Tap the Power  icon in Control Center to reveal the “slide to power off” slide. This also temporarily disables Face ID and Touch ID.

Customize Control Center

Control Center is composed of three types of controls: buttons, sliders, and platters (groups of buttons). As you resize those controls, they may change shape. For instance, a slider might turn into a button.

You can touch and hold many Control Center controls to reveal a panel with more functions.

Control Center is completely customizable: you can add, remove, and rearrange any controls you want. Also, you can have multiple pages in Control Center you can swipe through—as many as will fit on the screen.

To customize Control Center, touch and hold an empty spot on the screen. Then you can:

- **Add a control:** Tap Add a Control at the bottom of the page and tap one of the controls.
- **Add a screen** : Tap the new screen  icon to the right of Control Center (or swipe to the bottom) and add a control.
- **Move a control:** Touch, hold, and drag the control to a new position.
- **Resize a control:** Touch, hold, and drag the drag handle in the lower-right corner of the control.
- **Delete a control** : Tap the delete  button on a control.
- **Remove a screen:** Delete all the controls from that screen.
- **Exit edit mode:** Swipe up from the bottom of the screen.

Make Sense of the New Photos

Oh boy. Apple has redesigned the Photos app practically from the ground up, and you're either going to love it or hate it. Apple seems to be going for two objectives here:

- Making the app more customizable, following the theme of iOS 18 and iPadOS 18.
- Eliminating tabs in Photos, at least on iPhones

On iPhones, everything in Photos is now contained in one long continuous screen. You open the app and see all your photos, then you have to keep scrolling down to access your albums. It's very similar on iPads, except the sidebar is still there to help you quickly jump to an album or collection.

Tip: Photos has long had premade albums based on the type of image, like panoramas and screenshots. These are greatly expanded in iOS 18 to include things like documents, photos with handwriting, illustrations, QR codes, and receipts.

To be blunt, I still find this interface confounding, but here I attempt to help you make sense of it. See [Take Control of Photos](#) for full coverage.

Note: If your device supports Apple Intelligence, you can use it to automatically assemble Memory Movies. See [Create Memory Movies with Apple Intelligence](#).

View Your Photos

When you first open Photos, everything seems normal. You see your standard grid of photos and videos, and tabs at the bottom let you switch between years, months, or all photos. However, this view now

has some new tricks: note the new sort  button in the bottom-left corner when you're viewing all media.

Tip: To quickly jump to the bottom of your media, tap the tab of the view you're in. So if you're in the Months view and have scrolled up, you can tap Months to jump back to the bottom—your most recent photos and videos.

Here are some tricks for viewing and filtering all media:

- **Zoom in and out:** Pinch in or out with two fingers to show more or fewer photos. You can zoom all the way into a single photo or video.
- **Filter out screenshots:** Tap the sort  button, tap View Options, and then deselect Show Screenshots. Poof, they disappear from view! You can go back and select Show Screenshots to make them reappear.
- **View only certain types of media:** Tap the sort button, tap Filter, and select the types of images you want:
 - ▶ All Items
 - ▶ Favorites
 - ▶ Edited (photos and videos you have edited)
 - ▶ Photos
 - ▶ Videos
 - ▶ Screenshots

Apple added two new filters in iOS 18.4/iPadOS 18.4:

- ▶ Shared With You (media shared via Messages)
- ▶ Not in an Album (any image or video not in an album)

Note: That last item has been the Holy Grail for Mac Photos users, as there's no way to figure out which photos or videos are *not* in an album on a Mac.

Do More with Messages

Messages receives incremental changes this year, with more text formatting options, more-flexible Tapback responses, message scheduling, satellite messages, and long-awaited support for RCS.

Tip: If you have a device that supports Apple Intelligence, you can also take advantage of Smart Replies in Messages. See [Take Advantage of Smart Replies](#).

Add Text Effects

You can style any individual letter, word, or emoji in an iMessage, or the entire message itself. While composing an iMessage in the Messages app, tap the new text effects  icon above the keyboard to reveal a panel (**Figure 28**, ahead) of effect options:

- Bold **B**
- Italic *I*
- Underline U
- Strikethrough ~~S~~
- **Big** enlarges the text for emphasis.
- **Small** shrinks the text for a subtle impact.
- **Shake** makes the text shake as if saying, “no.”
- **Nod** animates the text to nod in agreement.
- **Explode** makes the text expand in an arc and explode off the screen.
- **Ripple** creates a ripple effect starting from the first character.
- **Bloom** enlarges and bolds the text one character at a time.
- **Jitter** vibrates the text with nervous energy.

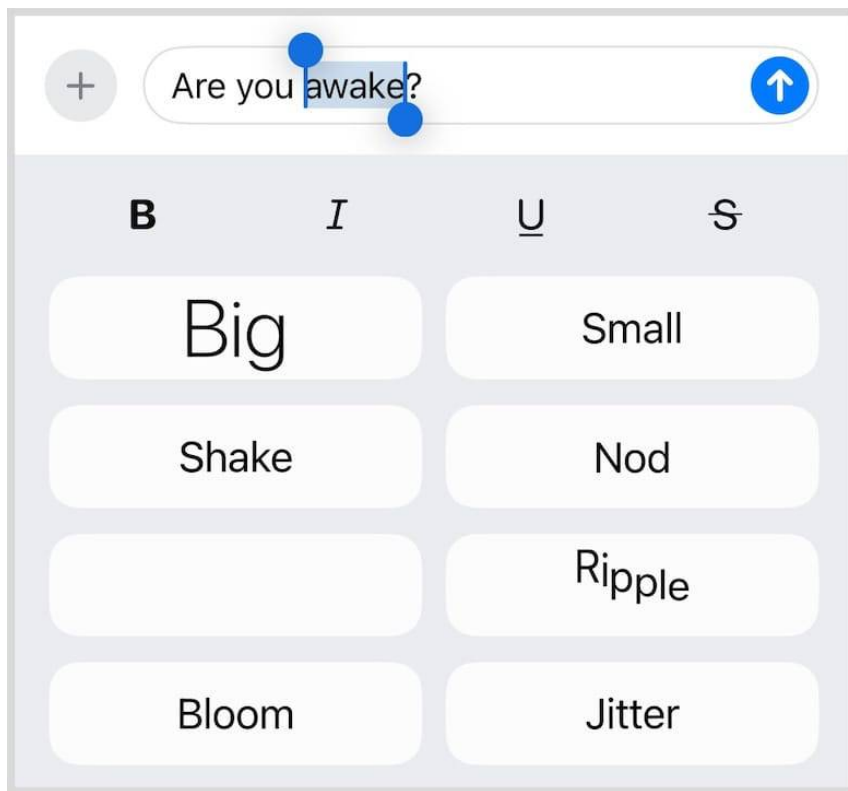


Figure 28: You can apply text effects to only the text you select.

There are two ways to apply these effects:

- Tap an effect to select it before you start typing.
- Select the text and then tap the desired effect. To select the text, double tap to select a word and then drag the blue drag handles to select what you want.

To remove the effect: select the text and apply the same effect again. To remove it from a single character, it's often easier to select the entire word, apply an effect, and then tap that effect again to remove it.

Use an Emoji or Sticker Tapback

Tapback responses were introduced with iOS 10 and let you offer quick, wordless responses to iMessages. It was a neat idea at the time, but the responses were limited to only: heart, thumbs up, thumbs down, "ha ha," exclamation, and question mark.

Surf Safari's New Reader

Safari sees only three notable, yet interconnected, changes in iOS 18 and iPadOS 18:

- A new Page  Menu for accessing content blockers, extensions, page search, text size, and other options, along with the new Page Highlights and Reader features
- Page Highlights, which uses artificial intelligence to summarize page content, offer audio versions of web articles, and other features
- A redesigned Reader that is part of Page Highlights and accessible from the new page menu

Explore the Page Menu

Tap the Page Menu  icon to:

- Listen to an AI-generated audio reading of the page or show the Reader
- Turn off content blockers (in case they present a problem viewing the page)
- Access settings for installed Safari extensions
- Search  the current page
- Decrease **A** or increase **A** the page's text size

While viewing the Page Menu, tap the more  button at the bottom to see additional actions:

- **Page Actions:** Things like the Privacy Report, requesting the desktop version of a site, and printing the page
- **Tab Actions:** Favorite a site, add a bookmark, and so on

- **Website Settings:** Set specific settings for that website that apply whenever you view a page from that site:
 - ▶ Request the desktop version
 - ▶ Automatically use Reader
 - ▶ Use (or don't use) content blockers
 - ▶ Open links in a specific profile
 - ▶ Set permissions for the camera, microphone, and location

Additionally, you can add shortcuts to anything on this screen to the Page Menu:

1. Tap Edit.
2. Tap the add  button by an entry to add it to the Page Menu.
3. Tap the remove  button to remove it from the Page Menu.

Peruse the Redesigned Reader

The Reader has been redesigned to accommodate new Apple Intelligence features. To access it, touch and hold the Page Menu  icon while reading an article.

While in Reader, tap the Page Menu  icon (which temporarily replaces the Page Menu  icon) to see options to change the font and color scheme (**Figure 34**).

Try the Passwords App

Apple has slowly been building up their password-management capabilities for years. With this round of operating system updates, Passwords is breaking out of the Settings app and moving to an app of its own for iOS, iPadOS, and macOS.

Passwords supports sharing password groups with friends and family, generating new passwords, storing two-factor authentication (2FA) codes, and managing passkeys.

Explore the Passwords Home Screen

The main difference between the Passwords app and the old settings menu is that it opens to a nice home screen with a search bar, entry categories, and access to shared password groups. Here's what each category contains:

- **All:** Tap this to see all of your password entries. On the All screen, tap the Sort  icon to reveal a menu of sorting options.
- **Passkeys:** This screen shows all your passkeys. A [passkey](#) is a secure token that takes the place of a password. Instead of typing a password, you authenticate with Face ID or Touch ID, which is easier and more secure.

Many websites now offer passkey login options, usually in addition to a password, though every site handles this differently. Often, you are prompted to create a passkey when you log in, and it's securely stored in Passwords.

- **Codes:** Many sites now encourage or require two-factor authentication (2FA), which usually equates to a constantly changing code that you have to enter alongside a password. The Codes screen shows all these codes, and you can tap the add  icon to create a new one from a provided code or by scanning a QR code.

- **Wi-Fi:** This stores the passwords of Wi-Fi networks you have connected to in Settings > Wi-Fi.
- **Security:** The Security screen lists passwords that should be changed, either because they're weak or reused or have been compromised. Tap a password to see the recommendation, which usually provides a Change Password button to send you to the page to reset that site's password (**Figure 36**).



Figure 36: Passwords can alert you about compromised passwords you should change.

- **Deleted:** This screen shows any passwords you have deleted, which are retained for 30 days before vanishing forever. To rescue a password on the Recently Deleted screen, tap it and then tap Recover.

Add or Edit a Password

Usually, iOS and iPadOS guides you through creating and storing a password when creating a new login in Safari. But you often need to return to edit that password to change it, add a note, or add a 2FA code. It's also good to know how to create a password entry from scratch:

1. Tap All.

Take Notes Further

Dedicated Notes users may notice a small change right away: the camera  icon in the toolbar has been replaced with a paperclip  icon, which reflects new features in notes: the capability to record audio and attach files directly to a note. There are some other goodies to explore as well...

Record Audio in Notes

You can now directly record voice memos inside a note. Here's how:

1. Tap the paperclip  icon.
2. Choose Record Audio from the menu.
3. Tap the red record  button to start recording.
4. You can tap the pause  button to temporarily stop recording. Tap Resume to continue.
5. While recording, you can tap the transcript  button to view a live transcript of your recording.
6. To name a recording, tap the more  button, choose Rename, and type in a new name. Tap outside the text field to set the name.
7. When you're finished with the recording, tap Done.

To play back a recording inside a note, tap Play on the note. Controls appear for pause , 15 seconds back , and 15 seconds forward .

Attach Files to Notes

It's now easy to attach images and files from your device's storage and iCloud Drive:

1. Tap the paperclip  icon.

2. Choose Attach File from the menu.
3. Browse for the file you want to attach.
4. Tap the file to insert it into the note.

Some file types work better than others. Images and PDFs neatly embed into a note, but other file types, such as EPUB, may prompt you to open them in a more appropriate app, like Books.

Use Math Notes in Notes

If you're like me and use Notes for everything, you might find yourself using it to write down financial information like bill amounts or taxes due instead of using a spreadsheet or calculator.

Thankfully, Apple has recognized us and our plight with a new feature called Math Notes, which lets you perform calculations inside a note, either by typing them out or even writing them freehand.

Let's examine some examples of what you can do with Math Notes.

Type Math Notes

Let's start with some very simple examples. Try typing something like this in a note: $4 \times 4 =$. After the equals sign (=), Notes autofills the answer in yellow (**Figure 37**). Tap Return on the keyboard to insert the answer into the note. If you tap outside the calculation, it will lose the result, so be sure to tap Return to insert it.

Hike with Maps

Apple is heavily emphasizing the new hiking features in Maps: topographic maps for hiking trails in the United States and Japan, along with custom hiking trails. However, most of us will better appreciate the small features that have flown under the radar. Apple has consolidated saved locations into a new feature called the Library, and it has finally made it easy to search near a location far away from you.

Understand the Library

Previously, Maps had a Favorites section that stored places you had saved. Then Apple added custom city guides, which made things a little messy. Now Apple has combined those two features into a new yet familiar one called Library that saves all of your saved places, guides, trails, and pinned locations.

To visit the Library, swipe up on the search panel to reveal the Library section. To see everything in your Library, tap where it says “X Places • X Guides • X Routes.”

To add a location to a map, after looking it up in Maps, tap the add  button on its navigation panel, which turns into a checkmark . After adding a location, an Add a Note option appears in the navigation panel. Tap it to add a short note about the place, which is displayed underneath its listing in the Library (**Figure 40**).

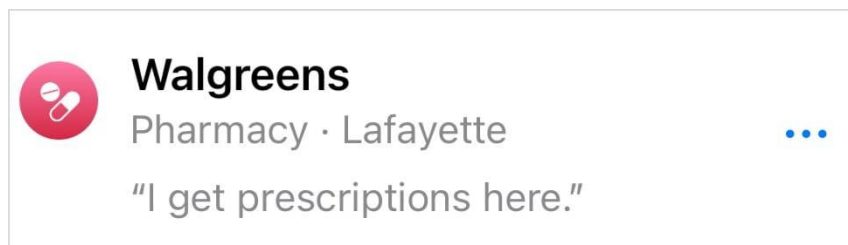


Figure 40: Notes you add to saved places appear in the Library. It’s a helpful reminder to yourself of why you added it!

Search Here

Here's an annoyance with Maps: you zoom in on a place you're traveling to and try to search for something nearby, like a restaurant, only for it to show results near your current location. Thankfully, iOS 18 and iPadOS 18 fix this.

Try searching for something nearby, like “sushi.” As you scroll around the map, results for your search pop up around the location you're currently viewing. A “Search here button” might also appear—tapping it gives more thorough search results in the area you're viewing (**Figure 41**). Likewise, if you “travel” to a distant location in Maps and search for a term, like “pizza,” it will show pizza joints near the place you are viewing in Maps.

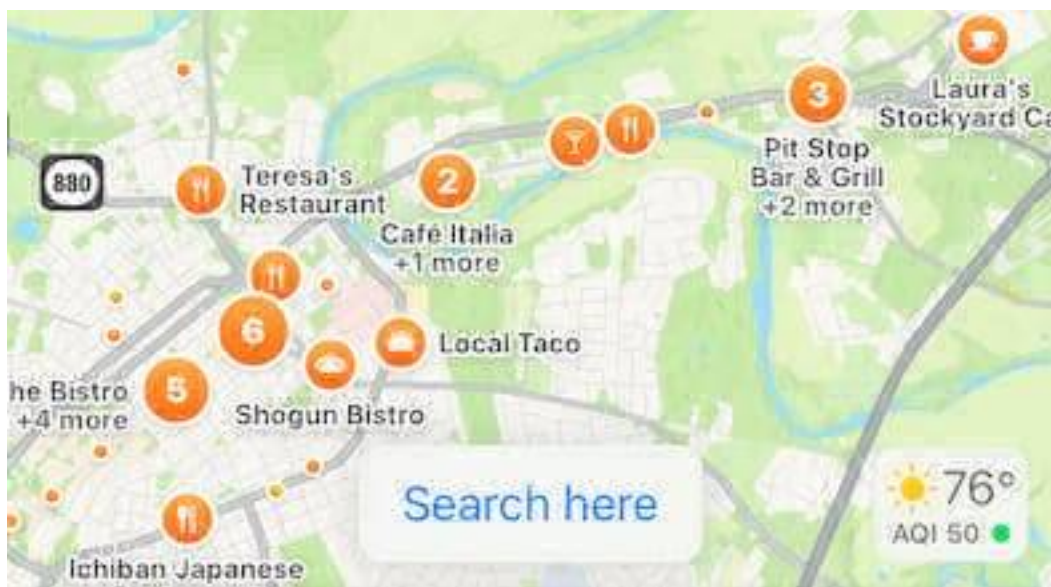


Figure 41: A “Search here” button often appears in a remote location to help you further refine your search.

Explore Topographic Maps and Trail Networks

Maps now features known hiking trails, and you can also customize your own trails. They're available all over Japan and the United States, including all 63 U.S. national parks.

Power Up Calculator

The Calculator app gets a love of love in iOS 18 and iPadOS 18 (yes, it's now on the iPad!) with a new Math Notes feature, a conversion calculator, a dedicated delete  key, and calculator history.

Tip: To switch among calculator types, tap the calculator  key to reveal a menu. This is how you now switch to the Scientific calculator on your iPhone, instead of rotating into landscape orientation.

Tip: Apple restored a much-loved feature in iOS 18.3/iPadOS 18.3 that had disappeared with the 18.0 release: You can once again use the equals sign to repeat the previous mathematical operation by tapping it again. For instance, if you added 4 to the sum and tapped equals, tapping equals again adds another 4, and so on.

Convert with Calculator

The Calculator app now has a built-in conversion function. To access it, tap the calculator  key, choose either Basic or Scientific, and then turn on Convert.

When in Convert mode, Calculator shows two numbers in the display (**Figure 45**, left). Just pick one and then tap the unit designation, denoted by double  arrows. This reveals a vast menu of conversion units separated by category, such as currency, data, energy, fuel, force, temperature, time, volume, and weight. You can also search conversion units, which is good because the menu is overwhelming (**Figure 45**, center and right).

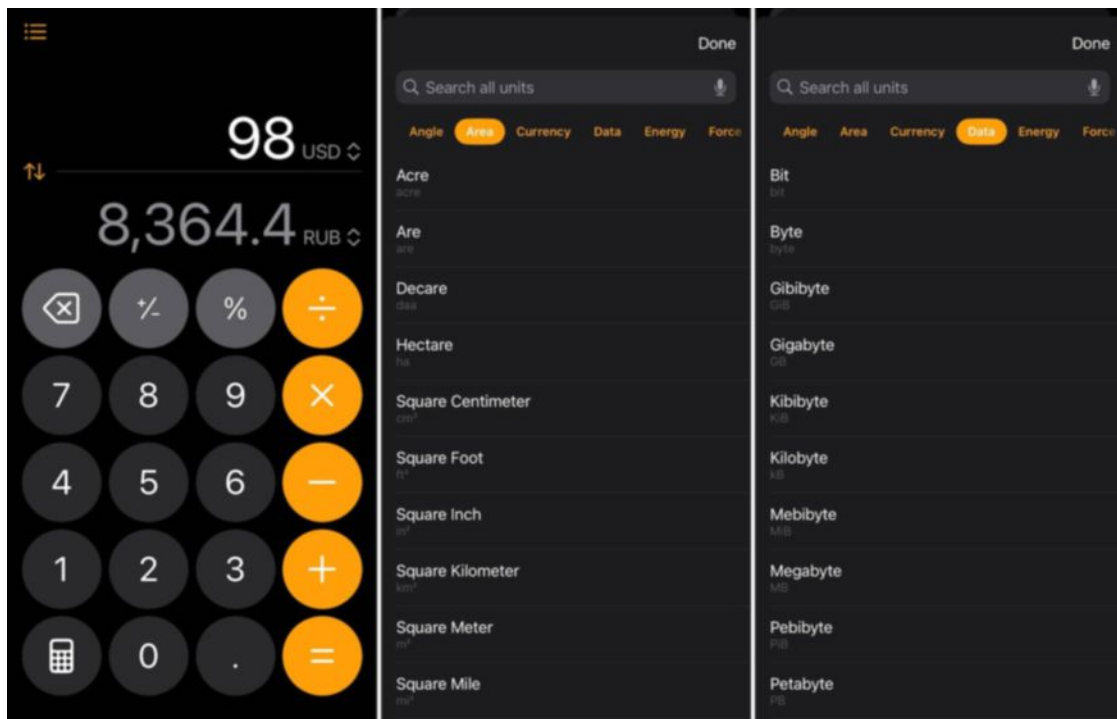


Figure 45: Left: The conversion calculator in action. Middle and right: Examples of the many units supported.

Once you select a conversion unit in one result field, repeat the same steps for the other field. Be sure to choose a unit in the same category, otherwise the category for the other field will change (you can't convert bytes to kilograms, come on now).

Once your units are set, tap the number in one result field to see the conversion in the other field.

Finally, you can perform calculations in either field. For example, let's say you're converting 30 days into minutes, but then want to see how many minutes are in 31 days. You can tap the **30**, tap **+**, and then tap **1** to transform that into 31 and then see the result in minutes as well.

Use Math Notes in Calculator

I won't cover Math Notes here in depth because it works the same as in the Notes app—see [Use Math Notes in Notes](#). However, I want to touch on how Math Notes in Calculator interacts with the Notes app.

Journal with Journal

The Journal app was introduced with iOS 17.2, but even with its late arrival, some key features were missing—like search! While there still isn't an iPad app, the Journal app gets some essential updates in iOS 17.

Sort and Search Journal Entries

Tapping the search  button reveals a Search field where you can search by title or content of a journal entry. Additionally, you can filter your journal entries by:

- **Bookmarked:** This only shows journal entries that have been bookmarked.
- **Photos:** Tap this to see only entries with photos.
- **Places:** This option shows only entries with map locations.
- **Text Only:** This filters out everything that has an attachment.

Add Journal Widgets to the Home Screen

The Journal app now has widgets for the Lock Screen and Home Screen for both writing prompts and quick access to the Journal app (**Figure 46**).

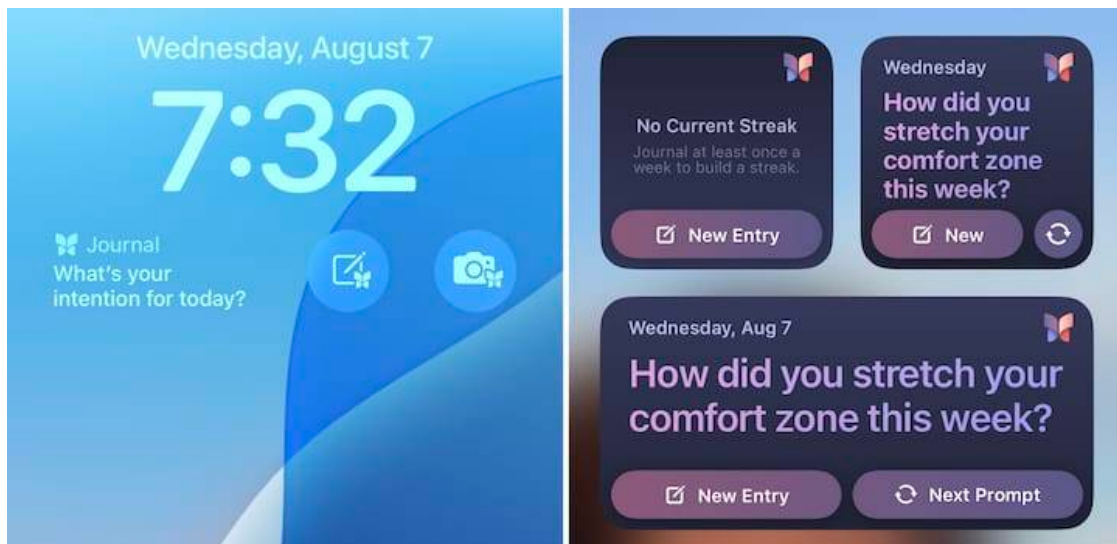


Figure 46: Journal offers Lock Screen and Home Screen widgets for quick entries.

To add a widget to the Home Screen:

1. Touch and hold an empty spot on the Home Screen until you enter “jiggle mode.”
2. Tap Edit in the upper-left corner.
3. Tap Add Widget.
4. Scroll down and tap Journal.
5. Swipe left to view the different widget options.
6. Tap Add Widget to add a widget to the Home Screen.

To add a widget to the Lock Screen:

1. Touch and hold an empty spot on the Lock Screen until it “shrinks in.”
2. Tap Customize.
3. Tap Lock Screen.
4. Tap the widget area under the time.
5. In the Add Widgets panel, scroll down and tap Journal.
6. Swipe left and right to cycle through the available widgets. Tap one to add it to the Lock Screen.

Discover Other App Changes

Many apps see important changes in iOS 18 and iPadOS 18, but not enough changes to warrant an entire chapter dedicated to them. This chapter covers those miscellaneous changes.

Calendar

Calendar for iPhone has a redesigned month view that displays the agenda for the selected day at the bottom of the screen so you can view the entire month and an individual day at the same time. The new month view also shows your scheduled reminders for that day (**Figure 49**). iPhone also has a new Multi Day mode to show two days side-by-side in portrait mode.

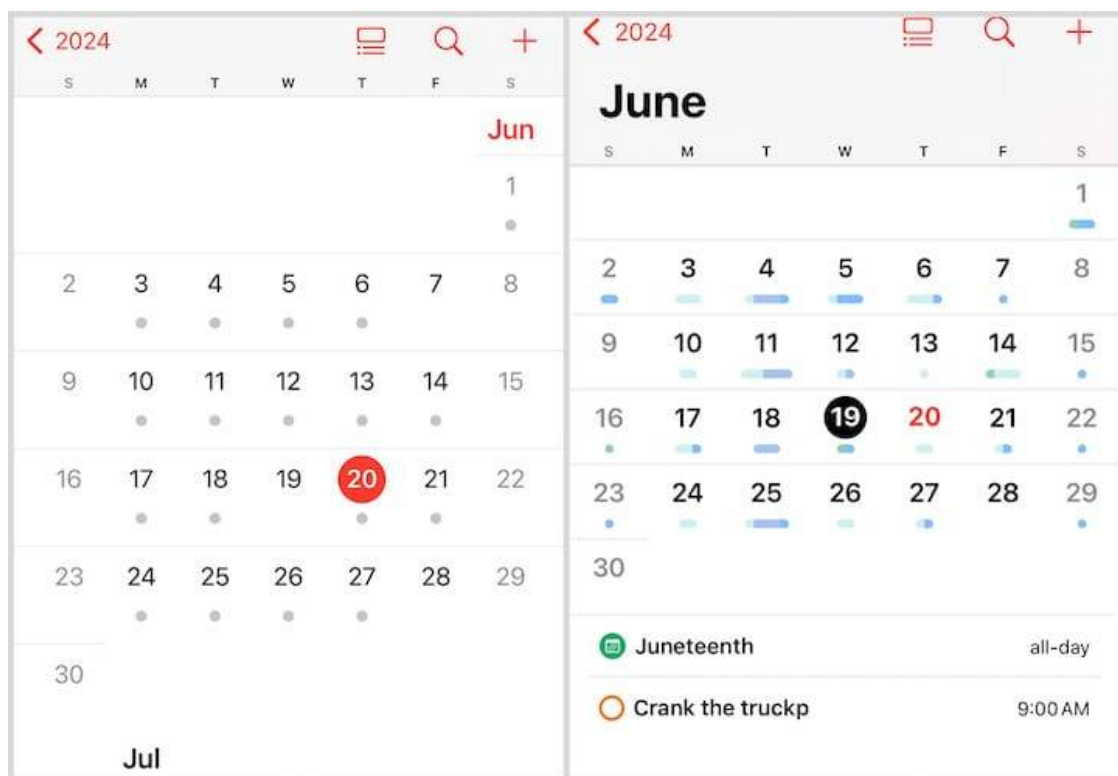


Figure 49: The old month view (left) vs. the new month view (right).

You can now also create reminders directly from the Calendar app by tapping the add  icon and then the Reminders tab.

Files

You can now erase an external disk using the Files app, including choosing the file system format:

1. With a storage device attached, touch and hold it in Files.
2. Choose Erase from the menu.
3. Enter a name, tap a format, and tap Erase.

You can choose from these formats:

- ▶ **APFS:** This is the best format, assuming you'll only use this device with Apple products. You can also choose to encrypt the volume with a password.
- ▶ **ExFAT:** Pick this if you need interoperability with Windows PCs.
- ▶ **MS-DOS (FAT):** This is the oldest but most compatible option. However, it has a lot of limitations: no files over 4 GB, partitions can't be larger than 32 GB, and spaces are not allowed in file-names.

Find My

You can now temporarily share an AirTag's location with others. The main use case here is sharing your lost luggage location with a stubborn airline. "No, my bag is in Cleveland. See?" Here's how to do that:

1. Open Find My and tap Items.
2. Tap the item you want to share.
3. Swipe up to reveal all options.

Discover Other System Changes

Here are other, smaller changes in iOS 18 and iPadOS 18.

Accessibility

Apple has always placed an emphasis on making iPhones and iPads accessible to everyone, and iOS 18 and iPadOS 18 add some next-generation features you can appreciate even if you don't need them right now. Make sure your device supports these features first—see [Check Your iPhone for Compatibility](#).

Control Your Device with Your Eyes

One of the coolest new features is Eye Tracking, which lets you control your iPhone or iPad with your eyes. How does that work? Basically, your iPhone or iPad shows a small round gray pointer on screen—just like the mouse pointer on an iPad—that snaps to tappable elements.

If you've used a mouse or trackpad with an iPad, it works pretty much the same. Frankly, I'm terrible at it, but I can at least show you how to set it up and give some tips.

Before you set it up, there are a couple of things to be aware of:

- It only works well if the device is on a flat, steady surface and you're about one foot away. Otherwise, the pointer wanders all over the place.
- Eye Tracking only moves the pointer around the screen, and it depends on other features for interaction, such as:
 - AssistiveTouch, which places a small button on the screen that opens to a menu of system shortcuts. Set this up in Settings > Accessibility > Touch > AssistiveTouch.

- ▶ Dwell Control, which lets you trigger onscreen elements by staring at them instead of tapping them. It can be configured in Settings > Accessibility > Touch > AssistiveTouch.
- ▶ The new Vocal Shortcuts feature described above.

To set up Eye Tracking:

1. Go to Settings > Accessibility > Eye Tracking.
2. Before enabling Eye Tracking, get ready. Place your device on a flat surface and get ready to spend a minute calibrating it.
3. When you enable Eye Tracking, the screen blacks out and a colored dot appears at various places around the screen. Stare at each dot as it appears.

Once calibration is complete, Eye Tracking is enabled and you can move the pointer around with your eyes. It also automatically enables AssistiveTouch and Dwell Control, so you can “tap” an item by continuing to stare at it.

Try Music Haptics

Music Haptics makes your iPhone pulse and vibrate along with the music. Try it out by going to Accessibility > Music Haptics and enabling Music Haptics. You can tap Play Sample to get an idea of what it's like, or just play a song in the Music app.

Try Vocal Shortcuts

Vocal Shortcuts is a new feature that lets you utter short phrases to perform actions, such as triggering a shortcut, returning to the Home Screen, or taking a screenshot. It pairs well with the new Eye Tracking feature because it can also do things like scroll up and down, which are difficult to perform with Eye Tracking.

To set it up:

1. Go to Settings > Accessibility > Vocal Shortcuts
2. Tap Set Up Vocal Shortcuts.

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Josh Centers is a Content Marketing Manager at [TextExpander](#) and editor-in-chief of [Unprepared.life](#). He is also the author of *[iPhone and iPad Basics](#)*, *[Take Control of Notes](#)* and *[Take Control of Apple TV](#)*, and coauthor of *[Take Control of Preview](#)* with Adam Engst. He has been featured in USA Today, Macworld, Scientific American, the Washington Post, Boing Boing, the Wirecutter, and other publications, as well as on Comedy Central, HuffPost Live, and Voice of America.

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About This Revision

Glenn Fleishman, the Executive Editor at Take Control Books, updated this book for iOS 18.3/iPadOS 18.3 and later. Glenn wrote one of the

first Take Control Books titles back in 2003, and has written dozens of books since. Two of his recent titles include [*Take Control of Apple Screen and File Sharing*](#) and [*Keep Safe Using Mobile Tech*](#). He's a journalist and historian whose two latest non-computer titles are *How Comics Are Made* (Andrews McMeel Publishing, June 2025) and *Six Centuries of Type & Printing* (Aperiodical LLC, June 2025).

About the Publisher

alt concepts, publisher of Take Control Books, is operated by [Joe Kissell](#) and Morgen Jahnke, who acquired the ebook series from TidBITS Publishing Inc.'s owners, Adam and Tonya Engst, in 2017. Joe brings his decades of experience as author of more than 60 books on tech topics (including many popular Take Control titles) to his role as Publisher. Morgen's professional background is in development work for nonprofit organizations, and she employs those skills as Director of Marketing and Publicity. Joe and Morgen live in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, with their two children.

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