

# MacTechnics

BEWARE THE IDES OF MARCH

From 1918 to 1954 everyone was wary of it, because March 15 used to be Tax Day.



Weally it's OK to pretend you're Irish on St. Patrick's day!



BEWARE THE EYES OF MARGE

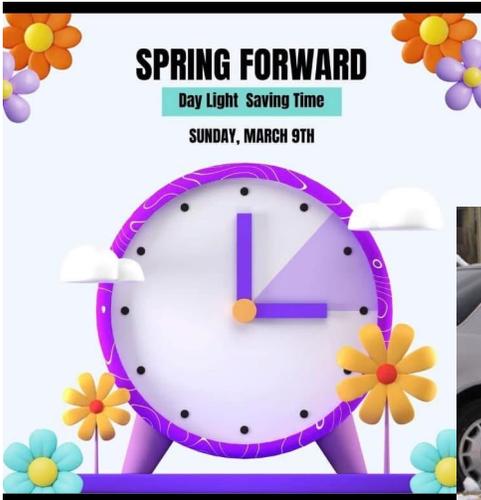


## Newsletter for March 2025

SPRING FORWARD

Day Light Saving Time

SUNDAY, MARCH 9TH



MARCH 20TH IS

THE FIRST DAY OF

SPRING



# **MacTechnics March Meeting**

**March 15, 2025**

**11:00am-1:00pm**

**How do I ...**

**“I’d rally like to know how I can do...”**

**“Why is this happening?”**

**“What can I do to stop this from happening....?”**

**Bring all your questions/Apple problems to the March meeting, we’ll all attempt to get you on the right path for success. This will be a Zoom meeting. If you don’t get a Zoom link from Cassie, PLEASE contact Cassie or me -[fseitz@mac.com](mailto:fseitz@mac.com)**

**Everyone/anyone is welcome to attend-this is an open invitation to all. Feel free to pass this invitation on to others.**

# ***I. Computing News***

## ***A. Microsoft Makes MAJOR***

### ***Announcement That Will Effect 2 Billion People!***

By Alan Hume | Saturday, 01 March 2025 12:00 PM



In a surprising move, Microsoft has declared the end of the road for its widely used video calling service, Skype.

After serving its 2 billion users for 21 years, **Skype will cease to be operational from May 2025.**

Microsoft, however, is not leaving its users in the lurch and is urging them to transition to its free Teams app.

According to the Daily Mail, Skype made a public announcement on X Friday, stating, "Over the coming days you can sign in to Microsoft Teams Free with your Skype account to stay connected with all your chats and contacts. Thank you for being part of Skype." This transition period will also allow users to export their Skype data. While Microsoft will discontinue selling monthly Skype subscriptions, users with existing credits can continue using them in Teams...

**B. Is Apple on a downfall?**

**C. Apple will spend more than \$500 billion in the U.S. over the next four years**

Teams and facilities to expand in **Michigan**, Texas, California, Arizona, Nevada, Iowa, Oregon, North Carolina, and Washington

Plans include a new factory in Texas, doubling the U.S. Advanced Manufacturing Fund, a manufacturing academy, and accelerated investments in AI and silicon engineering...

**D. Microsoft blew \$8.5 billion on Skype only to spend 14 years killing it**



William Gallagher | Feb 28, 2025

How we used to live. This is Skype on the Mac back in prehistory



## Bluesky

Skype will be closed down in May 2025, but it really died in 2011 when it was bought by Microsoft. It's just been a death by a thousand slow-motion cuts.

You didn't know Skype was still a thing, and in a few weeks' time, it won't be. Once a [revolutionary app](#) that brought free voice calls over the internet, it was important enough and valuable enough that in 2006, eBay bought it for \$2.6 billion.

If it seems peculiar that eBay would be the one that bought it, give the auction site some credit — it flipped the service and sold Skype on in 2011 for a huge profit. Five years is a long time to have it on "Buy it Now," but Microsoft eventually snapped it up for \$8.5 billion.

It's what Microsoft did next that set Skype directly onto its slow path to extinction. We will surely never really know, but it looks like that it originated outside the corporation was the problem.

For a firm that bought DOS and, ahem, was inspired by Apple to make Windows, Microsoft sometimes has a very strong Not Invented Here ethos. So Skype immediately gave Microsoft a massive presence in this conferencing technology, but that wasn't good enough.

What Microsoft seems to have wanted was its own in-house version, and it got it. Eventually.

For a time, Skype continued to be the one everybody used. Our Managing Editor Mike Wuerthele interviewed me over it more than a decade ago, and while prepping this piece also said that he played tabletop games over it. Podcasters also used in the earliest days, with the individual presenters recording their audio for best quality, much the same as FaceTime or Riverside are used today.

Five years after acquisition, though, Skype got sidelined by Microsoft as it [launched Teams](#) in 2016. Unofficially it was a replacement for the old, fiddly and unreliable application.

Officially it was nothing of the sort as Microsoft Teams was clearly and unquestionably an entirely different fiddly and unreliable service. Despite the difficulties of Teams, which have continued to this day, Microsoft was aiming it at that market which was willing to pay to get a chat, voice and then video service that worked.

Just by doing that, though, just by aiming at that market, Microsoft was saying Skype didn't work and wasn't worth paying for. Skype had reputational damage from its owner, and while there was [the odd update](#), what it didn't get was any attention.

"Skype pioneered audio and video calling on the web for many, many people," Microsoft's Jeff Teper told CNBC as the end of Skype [was announced](#).

"We've learned a lot from Skype over the years that we've put into Teams as we've evolved Teams over the last seven to eight years."

"But we felt like now is the time because we can be simpler for the market, for our customer base," continued Teper, "and we can deliver more innovation faster just by being focused on Teams."

"This is obviously a big, big moment for us," he said, "and we're certainly very grateful [to Skype] in many ways."

Skype was a transformative app and one that helped establish the internet as the ubiquitous necessity it is today. But Microsoft's slow strip-mining of it to make Teams was cruel.

It was also a bit ineffective. Back in the day, Skype was an amazing new use of the internet that only actually amazed a quite specific audience. Teams didn't amazed anyone.

But Zoom did.

Come the pandemic, Skype was nowhere to be seen and Teams was doing well with universities and corporations. But [Zoom exploded](#) with ordinary

users, even with [its own problems](#), and once regular people were exposed to Zoom, they stuck with it.

Microsoft should have owned video conferencing during COVID. Microsoft should have run with Skype or killed it off and stuck to only Teams in 2016.

Mind you, Apple should've made [FaceTime](#) the open-source standard that [Steve Jobs](#) said it would be when he launched it with the iPhone 4 [in 2010](#).

## **E. iPhone chip maker** **TSMC plans \$100** **billion US investment**

[Iam Gallagher](#) and [Mike Wuerthele](#) | Mar 03, 2025

TSMC investing \$100 billion in the US



Apple's iPhone processor supplier TSMC is reportedly about to announce a further \$100 billion investment in the United States.

**Following Apple's announcement of a \$500 billion for US manufacturing — even if the money is less new investment than Apple suggests — TSMC is said to be committing its own billions to the country. It's an expansion that comes on top of the chip maker's existing investment in creating processor foundries in Arizona.**

According to the Wall Street Journal, President Trump will announce the \$100 billion investment before the end of March 3, 2025. The money is to be used on chip-making production, though it is not known yet whether that means creating new factories or expanding the Arizona foundries.

What is known is that the \$100 billion is intended to be invested over the next four years. It follows TSMC's initial \$12 billion investment in Arizona in 2020, and also President Trump's drive to increase processor production in the US.

President Trump previously decried the CHIPS act that saw TSMC supported with \$6.6 billion by the Biden administration. Trump has instead declared that tariffs would prompt manufacturers to relocate

to the States, and at times has suggested imposing at least a 25% tariff on semiconductor imports.

While TSMC is building out two Arizona chip factories, those facilities are not completing the work. It's likely that

processors are currently [still being sent](#) to Taiwan or China for finishing, despite an Amkor finishing facility announcement [in late 2023](#).

TSMC's first Arizona plant has also been criticized for its unsafe construction methods, which have allegedly [led to fatalities](#).

Apple's main chip manufacturer is also accused of saying that US employees do not work [hard enough](#). This is a cultural gap, most likely, as the Taiwan employees making the claim routinely put in 60+ hour weeks, by their own admissions.

**F. [Apple, facing tariffs on Chinese imports, says it will](#)**

# *invest \$500 billion in US facilities*



By [Chris Isidore](#) and [Clare Duffy](#), CNN

5 minute read

Updated 12:17 PM EST, Mon February 24, 2025



A woman uses an iPhone as she passes a lighted Apple logo at the Apple store at Grand Central Terminal in New York City. Mike Segar/Reuters  
New York CNN —

Apple said Monday it will invest \$500 billion on expanding US facilities over the next four years, a move that could help it avoid new tariffs on goods imported from China.

Apple said the investment will create 20,000 jobs.

Earlier this month, President Donald Trump announced tariffs of 10% on all imports from China, from which Apple imports many products, including most of its iPhones. Trump signaled Friday that the company was planning to make this investment following a meeting with Apple CEO Tim Cook on Thursday. Trump attributed the investment to his tariffs.

“He’s investing hundreds of billions of dollars, I hope he’s announced it,” Trump said. “That’s what he told me ... But he’s investing hundreds of billions of dollars. And others, too, a lot of chip makers coming in, a lot of automakers coming in.”

However, the investment builds on Apple’s previous efforts to expand its supply chain outside of China in recent years, partly in response to production issues in China during the pandemic. Those investments include growing production for Mac Pro computers in Texas.

## **G. *9to5Mac Daily:* *March 5, 2025 – New Macs and iPads are here***



Seth Kurkowski  
8 hours ago



**Listen** to a recap of the top stories of the day from 9to5Mac:

## **H. *Go home, Apple, you're drunk: 5 recent decisions that make no sense...***

From the iPhone 16e to the M3 Ultra, we have to ask if Apple needs a home wellness check.



By [Michael Simon](#)  
Executive Editor, Macworld MAR 6, 2025 9:06 AM PST



Image: Foundry

It's an exciting time to be an Apple user. What was expected to be a spring event has turned into a string of announcements spread out over five days in February and March bringing a slew of new products: A new app! A new iPhone! Two new iPads! A new chip! Two new Macs!

But aside from the strangeness of the launches, Apple also made a few decisions that have us scratching our heads. While there is definitely a bunch of great stuff—the MacBook Air price cut, the iPhone 16e's processor, the Mac Studio's RAM limit—the announcements are littered with some truly strange decisions that leave the lineup in a weird place for the next 12-15 months. [Here are five moves that have us wondering what Apple is thinking.](#)

# I. [Apple Events 2025:](#) [When is the next Apple](#) [Event?](#)

Everything you should know about Apple's events in 2025, including keynote details and start times, and everything Apple could launch.



By [Karen Haslam](#)

Managing Editor, Macworld MAR 6, 2025 5:17 AM PST



Image: Apple

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- Will there be a Spring Apple Event?
- When is Apple's next event?
- What time will the next Apple event start?
- When does Apple usually hold events?
- WWDC keynote 2025
- ...

Apple doesn't participate in big industry-wide events such as CES or E3. The most valuable company in the world holds its own events, thank you very much. Several times a year, Apple invites the press and industry professionals to Apple Park to hear all about its latest products and services. Apple calls these 'events,' and streams them live online to millions of watchers.

So far in 2025 Apple hasn't held any events, however, it did launch a new [iPhone 16e](#) via press release on February 19 and [new iPad](#) and [iPad Air](#) via press release on March 4, and a new [MacBook Air](#) and [Mac Studio](#) on March 5. The next Apple Event isn't likely to happen until June when it kicks off WWDC with a keynote and shows off new features coming to iOS and macOS.

In 2024, Apple held three events: one on Tuesday, May 7, at which it launched new iPads, a keynote to kick off WWDC on June 10, where the features coming in the new operating systems iOS 18 and macOS Sequoia were revealed, and an event on September 9 at which Apple unveiled the [new iPhone 16](#), [Apple Watch Series 10](#) and the new [AirPods 4](#). In October 2024 there was no event, but Apple did announce new products (iMac, Mac mini and MacBook Pro) via press release.

In 2023 there were three such events: WWDC in June, an iPhone event in September, and Apple's second fall event on October 30 (or after midnight on October 31 if you weren't in the U.S.). Similarly, in 2022 Apple held three events: a spring event on March 8, WWDC on June 6, and the iPhone 14

launch on September 7. In other years Apple has held four events though and it may do so in 2025.

Read on to find out what events and **new Apple product launches** the company has in store for 2025.

**J.**

## ***II. Apple Hardware+***

### ***A. Here's When AirPods Pro 3 Are Rumored to Launch***

Monday February 24, 2025 9:14 am PST by [Joe Rossignol](#)

According to a post on X today from a leaker known as Kosutami, Apple plans to launch AirPods Pro 3 in May or June this year. The leaker also claimed that an AirTag 2 will launch around the same time. Kosutami is best known as a collector of prototype Apple hardware, but they have...

## **B. [Apple's Discontinued Line of AirPort Wi-Fi Routers Could Return in an Unexpected Way](#)**

Saturday March 1, 2025 10:00 am PST by [Joe Rossignol](#)

Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, Apple offered a line of Wi-Fi routers that it referred to as AirPort base stations. There was a standard AirPort Express, a higher-end AirPort Extreme with more advanced networking features, and an AirPort Time Capsule that doubled as an external storage drive for backing up a Mac with Time Machine...

## **C. [How Fast is Apple's First-Ever 5G Modem? The Results Are Surprising](#)**

Friday February 28, 2025 10:08 am PST by [Joe Rossignol](#)

iPhone 16e reviews are now out, and Apple's custom-designed C1 modem has been put to the test. The results so far are quite surprising, as the C1's speeds are not as slow compared to Qualcomm modems as originally expected...

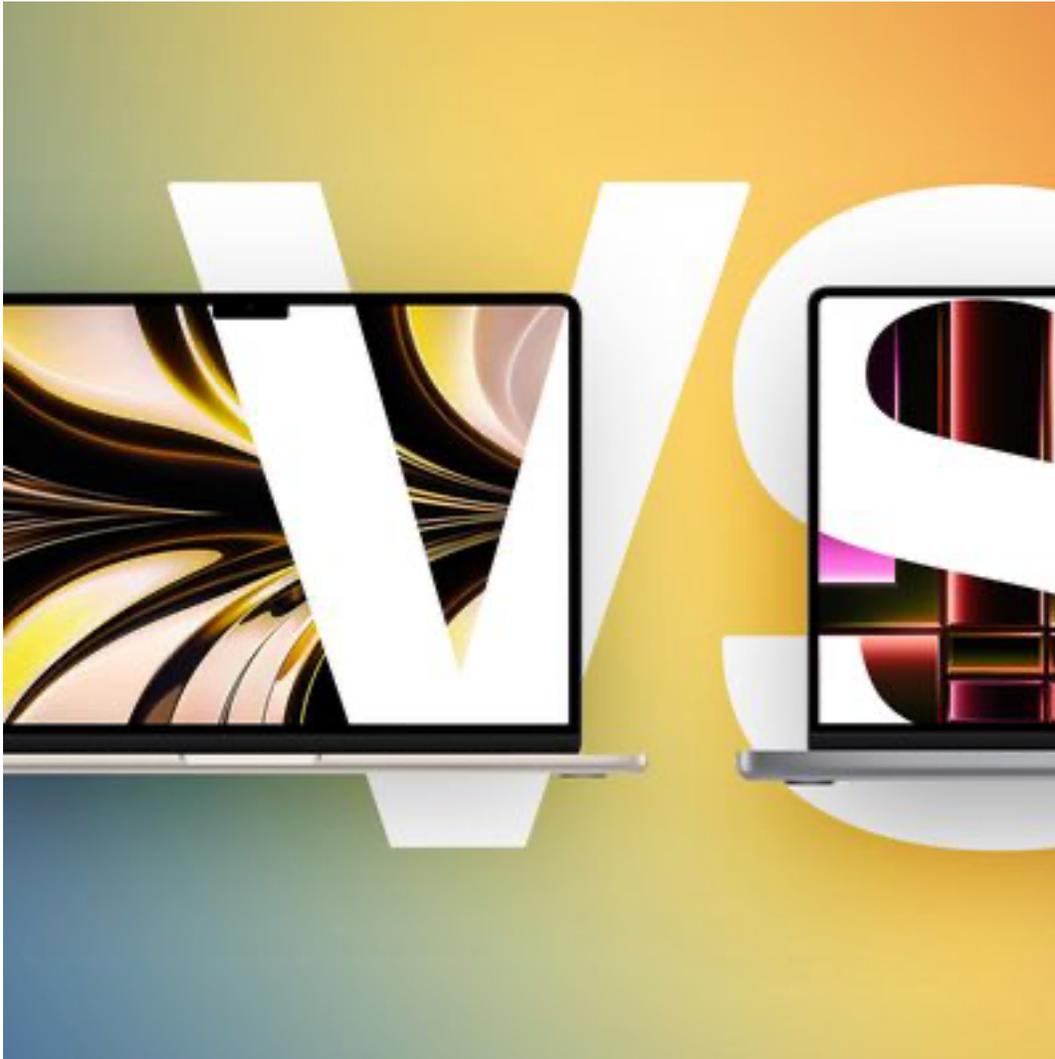
**D.**



## **Thunderbolt 5 in New Macs: Features, Benefits, and Is It Needed?**

Wednesday November 20, 2024 1:44 am PST by [Tim Hardwick](#)  
Apple's new Mac mini and MacBook Pro models powered by M4 Pro and M4 Max chips introduce Thunderbolt 5 connectivity to the Mac lineup for the first time, bringing the first major bandwidth increase since Thunderbolt 3 debuted in 2015. While this next-generation standard...

**E.**



## **[MacBook Air vs. MacBook Pro Buyer's Guide: 30+ Differences Compared](#)**

Thursday November 14, 2024 6:13 pm PST by [Hartley Charlton](#)  
Apple recently updated the MacBook Pro with the M4 series of chips and a series of other upgrades including a 12MP camera, a nano-texture display option, and Thunderbolt 5 connectivity. The new machines follow updated MacBook Air models with the M3 chip that...

## **F. M4 vs. M4 Pro vs. M4 Max Chip** **Buyer's Guide: Which Should You Choose?**

Thursday October 31, 2024 9:29 AM PDT by [Hartley Charlton](#)

Apple this week debuted its M4 Mac models, unveiling the M4 Pro and M4 Max chips. So how do the three latest-generation Apple silicon chips compare and which should you choose?



The MacBook Pro is the only product line currently available with a choice of all three M4 chips, but you will also have to choose between the M4 and M4 Pro chip when buying a Mac mini. All of the differences between the M4, M4 Pro, and M4 Max chips are listed below:

**G.**



## **[Apple Silicon Unified Memory: How Much Mac RAM Do You Need?](#)**

Tuesday November 5, 2024 8:42 am PST by [Hartley Charlton](#)

When choosing a new Mac, one of the most important decisions you'll make is how much memory to configure. This guide helps you to work out how much RAM you need. With the advent of Apple silicon and its unified memory architecture in 2020, the traditional understanding of...

H.



## **[AirPods Pro vs. AirPods Max Buyer's Guide: 30+ Differences Compared](#)**

Monday October 21, 2024 9:40 am PDT by [Hartley Charlton](#)

The AirPods Pro and AirPods Max are Apple's highest-end headphone options, so which should you choose? Almost three years after the launch of the first-generation AirPods Pro, Apple unveiled the second-generation model alongside the iPhone 14 lineup and several new Apple...

# **I. *Apple users prep for 24/7 survival mode for winter storm blackout, hurricanes & outdoor adventure***

Sponsored Content | Feb 27, 2025

Bluetti can help Apple users stay prepared for any emergency. Image source: Bluetti



Keep your Apple gear going through any storm with Bluetti's range of portable power stations and backup power solutions. Your iPhone, Mac, and

iPad can stay charged for days with these big batteries.

Winter storms, hurricanes, or backcountry adventures— when power fails, Apple users risk more than dead devices. Over 475k U.S. homes went dark this week: CPAP machines disconnected from Health app data, HomeKit cameras blinded during storms, MacBooks dying mid-Zoom.

Bluetti's portable power stations, fitting with Apple's ecosystem, turn chaos into control. Power AirTag-tracked gear through blackouts, sustain HomePod tornado alerts, or render wildfire maps offline.

Whether the grid crashes for hours or days, this is energy resilience reimaged.

## The Essentials Tier

Short term power needs include blackouts that last less than 12 hours, remote work away from outlets, and travel. Bluetti has you covered with its essentials tier of products...

# J. [Tim Cook teases the imminent launch of a new MacBook Air](#)



William Gallagher | Mar 03, 2025

"There's something in the Air" -- image credit: Apple



Apple CEO [Tim Cook](#) has once more taken to X/ Twitter to announce when the next new device is coming, and while he avoids saying its full name, it's the MacBook Air.

Just as he did with his announcement that the [iPhone 16e](#) was to be the next member of the

iPhone family, Tim Cook's Twitter feed has now added when to expect the next launch. With the iPhone 16e, he specified the actual launch date, but now he's saying only "this week."



**Tim Cook**



@tim\_cook

.

10:54 AM · Mar 3, 2025

**34.3K**

**Reply**

**Copy link**

Or rather, the only timescale he's sharing is "this week." He does also say that "there's something in the Air," with a very definite emphasis on that last word as it is sliced by a very fast-moving device.

It's just that Apple has both a [MacBook Air](#) and an [iPad Air](#) — and both of them are [expected soon](#).

Under Cook's "this week" message, the accompanying six-second video promo consists of a series of the strapline about there being something in the Air, set to a pop-rock riff. It's too short for even Shazam to identify the music, so if there's a clue in the tune, you have to already know the track to figure it out.

You also have to step through the video frame by frame to adequately see that the word "Air" has been cut through. Even then, the device that does it is moving so fast that it looks like a slab of metal.



Freeze frame of the promo, showing "Air" being sliced through by what looks like a MacBook Air

However, it's a slab of metal that appears to have a black line through it. Compared to the solid side of an iPad, this looks like a MacBook Air with its clamshell lid closed.

Plus, there is one slim clue in the use of this particular phrase. These words are the same ones [Steve Jobs](#) used on a slide for the 2008 launch of the [original MacBook Air](#).

Then, too, the last time the MacBook Air was updated was March 4, 2024, so a launch this week would be on the first anniversary of that [M3 edition](#).

Whereas the iPad Air was [last updated](#) on May 8, 2024, with the addition of a 13-inch model.

So the odds are close to certain that Cook's "Air" teaser is about the MacBook Air. But for a least a little while, Apple's happy to have us wonder whether we'll get both the MacBook Air and the iPad Air.

## What's expected in the new MacBook Air

The updated MacBook Air is presumed to be chiefly the same as the 2024 model, but for the addition of an M4 processor. Externally, the new version should have the same chassis design.

While it is expected to get the M4 processor, the new model is not believed to be getting either the

M4 Pro, or the M4 Max versions. Those are instead to be reserved for the [MacBook Pro](#) range.

## **K. [Apple announces MacBook Air with M4 chip and a price cut](#)**

Upgrades at a lower cost. I'll take it.

by [Antonio G. Di Benedetto](#)  
Mar 5, 2025 at 9:00 AM EST



It may look like silver in some cool-toned lighting, but it's actually sky blue.  
Image: Apple



Antonio G. Di Benedetto is a reviewer covering laptops and the occasional gadget.

Apple just updated the MacBook Air with an M4 processor, a new sky blue color option, and — most surprising of all — a lower price. The 13-inch starts at \$999, while the 15-inch begins at \$1,199. They're available to order now and launch on March 12th.

## **L. *Apple unveils new Apple Watch bands - here's what's in the Spring 2025 collection***



(Image credit: Future)

- Apple has released new Apple Watch bands for spring 2025
- There are new Sport Loop and Sport Band shades
- There are also new Solo and Braided Solo Loop options, and impressive new Hermès options

Alongside its new [M3 iPad Air](#) and [A16 iPad](#), Apple has quietly unveiled a series of new shades for many of its [best Apple Watch bands](#) just in time for spring (if you're in the US or UK that is).

Apple continually updates its [Apple Watch](#) band palette with various shades and colors throughout the seasons, and we've now got our first look at the Spring 2025 collection...

## **M. [Apple Announces a New iPad Model](#)**

By [JORDYN BRADLEY](#) Published March 04, 2025 02:24 PM EST



Sean Gallup / Getty Images

Apple's newest product isn't what everyone expected.

The tech giant on Tuesday announced a new iPad Air M3 tablet with a refreshed Magic Keyboard, closing the loop on a teaser video posted yesterday by Apple ([AAPL](#)) CEO Tim Cook on the social media platform X on Monday.

1

Today's news surprised some observers who thought the six-second video—which featured the words [“There's something in the AIR”](#)—presaged a new MacBook instead.

2

Several still expect such an announcement soon; Apple did not respond to Investopedia's request for comment in time for publication.

Apple said the iPad Air M3 will have twice the speed of the former M1 version, and is equipped with iPadOS 18, support for Apple Intelligence and other features.

# **N. *New M4 MacBook Air: Four tidbits you might have missed***



Chance Miller  
3 hours ago

[2 Comments](#)



Apple's new MacBook Air is here, headlined by an M4 chip upgrade and a lower price. There are a few other tidbits you should know.

## **External display support**

The M1 MacBook Air was a step back from its Intel predecessor insofar as it could only power one external display. The same was true for the next-generation M2

MacBook Air. With the M3 MacBook Air last year, Apple added support for two external displays, but only when the laptop lid was closed.

The M4 MacBook Air rights these wrongs once and for all. Apple says:

MacBook Air can easily power a multi-display setup to make viewing and interacting with content a breeze, for anyone from business professionals at the office multitasking across multiple windows, to students in a dorm room tackling a big project across several apps. For users who like to spread their work out, MacBook Air now supports up to two 6K external displays, in addition to its built-in Liquid Retina display.

And here are the details from Apple's tech specs page:

- Simultaneously supports full native resolution on the built-in display at 1 billion colors and:
- Up to two external displays with up to 6K resolution at 60Hz
- Thunderbolt 4 digital video output
- Support for native DisplayPort 1.4 output over USB-C

## Wi-Fi 6E support

Just like the M3 MacBook Air, the new M4 model supports Wi-Fi 6E connectivity, not the latest Wi-Fi 7 standard. This means the iPhone 16, iPhone 16 Plus, iPhone 16 Pro, and iPhone 16 Pro Max are still the only Apple products to support Wi-Fi 7 connectivity.

## MagSafe charger

The M4 MacBook Air comes in a new sky blue color that replaces space gray in the lineup. You'll get a color-matched USB-C to MagSafe cable in the box when you buy the sky blue MacBook Air.

Apple has also started selling a USB-C to MagSafe [charging cable separately for \\$49](#). Whether you need a spare cable for your new MacBook Air or want a sky blue cable to go with your current Mac, this is a nice option.

## Easier setup

With the release of the macOS 15.4 beta last month, [9to5Mac reported](#) on a new proximity setup feature that lets you set up a new Mac using a nearby iPhone or iPad. In today's press release for the M4 MacBook Air, Apple confirmed this feature:

Next month, macOS Sequoia 15.4 will make it easier than ever to set up the new MacBook Air with iPhone. By simply bringing iPhone close to Mac, users can quickly and conveniently sign in to their Apple Account to get their files, photos, messages, passwords, and more on their new MacBook Air.

## Pricing and availability

The new MacBook Air is available to order now, with the first shipments arriving on March 12. You can order from Apple's website or via retail partners like Amazon.

# O. [M4 MacBook Air vs M1 MacBook Air: No-brainer upgrade if you want it](#)



Ryan Christoffel  
4 hours ago

[9 Comments](#)



Apple's new M4 MacBook Air is an easy product to recommend to just about everyone—even M3 owners. But if you're currently holding on to an M1 MacBook Air, what exactly will the new M4 model get you? Here's what you should know.

# Design: Modern look will be an advantage for most



The MacBook Air hasn't changed its design since the M2 model debuted in 2022. You'll get that same modern design with the new M4 model.

The M1 MacBook Air, however, features the more classic tapered finish that dates back to the very first Air.

Depending on your preferences, the M4's design could either be a pro or con.

For me personally, while I appreciate a lot about the new design, I've always loved that classic MacBook Air look and feel, and the newer models don't hit the same way.

I'd love to see a next-gen design arrive in the future that's more like the classic 12-inch MacBook: inspired by the original MacBook Air, but significantly thinner and more modern...

## **P. *Every Apple silicon M-series chip, product, and release date***



Zac Hall  
4 hours ago

M-series Apple silicon chips tout impressive performance but unpredictable release cadence. That makes it hard to keep up with which chips are in which devices. Apple currently has four generations of M-series chips, up to four variations of each generation, and three product categories that use M-series chips. Here's the data to make sense of it all:

### **Products with M-series Apple silicon**

Within the three product categories, there are nine product lines that use M-series chips:...

## **Q. *Apple launches new Mac Studio, here's everything new***



Chance Miller  
11 hours ago

[9 Comments](#)



It turns out there's something in the air today, too. Apple has [unveiled](#) a new Mac Studio, the second revamp to the desktop powerhouse that it launched in 2022. The new Mac Studio is available in two chip configurations: the M4 Max and the M3 Ultra.

**R. *Every new Apple product coming in 2025***

We predict the upcoming Apple new product releases for 2025 and recap what's launched so far. Here are the new Apple products we expect to come out in 2025 and beyond.



By [Karen Haslam](#)  
Managing Editor, Macworld MAR 6, 2025 5:47 AM PST



Image: Foundry

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- New Apple products launched so far in 2025
- New iPhones
- New Macs
- New iPads
- New AirPods
- ...

Over the past few years, Apple has overhauled its entire product range, including transitioning the Mac from Intel to its own processors, introducing the tough Apple Watch Ultra, adding a new Plus model to the iPhone lineup, and introducing a brand-new product category – the Vision Pro headset.

In 2025 there's even more change coming, with a new 'Air' iPhone rumored, a much needed MacBook Air, Mac Pro and Mac Studio update, and much more. Read on to find out what's coming from Apple in 2025.

In this article, we take a look at what new products we expect Apple to launch throughout 2025 and beyond. We have investigated every rumor and trend we could find to bring you our predictions. Read on to find out what could be in store....

**S.**

### ***III. Apple Software***

#### **A. [macOS Sequoia](#)**

macOS Sequoia is the latest version of the software that runs on the Mac. Available now.

By [MacRumors Staff](#) on February 24, 2025



## At a Glance-**Complete Rundown**

- **macOS 15 Sequoia** is the newest version of macOS that adds iPhone Mirroring, a new Passwords app, and tons more.

## Features

- iPhone Mirroring
- Safari updates
- Window tiling
- New Passwords app
- Apple Intelligence features throughout

## **B.** [CarPlay](#)

# CarPlay puts your iPhone on your car's dashboard screens.

By [MacRumors Staff](#) on October 2, 2024



## At a Glance-**Complete Rundown**

- CarPlay brings iOS to the car. Widely available in 2015 and newer car models along with aftermarket systems.

## Features

- Siri voice control
- Apple Music
- Plug-and-play or wireless setup
- iOS-style interface
- Access to select Apple and third-party iOS apps

## c. **iOS 19**

Apple's next-generation operating system for the iPhone, coming in fall 2025.

By [MacRumors Staff](#) on February 24, 2025



### At a Glance-**Complete Rundown**

- iOS 19 is the next version of iOS that Apple will preview in June 2025 with a smarter, more capable Siri and other features.

### Expected Features

- Smarter LLM Siri
- Staggered feature rollout
- visionOS-style Camera app
- June 2025 preview
- September 2025 launch

## **D. [watchOS 11](#)**

The newest version of watchOS, available now.

By [MacRumors Staff](#) on February 10, 2025



At a Glance-**Complete Rundown**

- Launched on September 16, watchOS 11 adds a new Vitals app, updates fitness features, and refreshes the Smart Stack.

## Features

- New Smart Stack Widgets
- Live Activities support
- Vitals app
- Training Load
- Activity Ring pausing
- Translate app

## **E. Fingerprints and splatters: New emoji arrive in iOS 18.4 developer beta**



Malcolm Owen | Mar 03, 2025

Seven new emoji in the iOS 18.4 developer beta



Apple has included a number of new emoji in the iOS 18.4 developer beta, with characters proposed by the Unicode Consortium in May 2024 finally making their way for use in Messages.

Apple's [second developer beta](#) for iOS 18.4 adds a number of new features, including some new emoji characters. The eight graphical symbols are coming up in Messages and other text-based apps for those who install the developer beta's latest build, issued on Monday.

There are eight new characters appearing on the emoji list, consisting of:

- Root vegetable

- Face with bag under eyes
- Shovel
- Harp
- Splatter
- Leafless tree
- Flag of Sark
- Fingerprint

All appear under the emoji keyboard's search function under their designated names. While they appear in the developer beta, the public will have to wait until the formal release of iOS 18.4 for their iPhone, and other Apple operating system updates, in the future.

Apple also updated the Syrian flag Emoji to reflect the current de facto flag of the country. It has a green, white, and black stripe with three red stars across the center.

For the moment, it is possible for beta users to select and add the new emoji to messages, but only others using the beta can see them. Sending the new emoji to a user on an earlier iOS version will

result in squares with question marks, signifying a missing or "incorrect" element in a message.

## Long process for small symbols

The process of adding new emoji to the list is astoundingly long and oddly complicated for something so seemingly frivolous.

The eight emoji were proposed by the Unicode Consortium for inclusion in Unicode 16 in [May 2024](#). All the proposed symbols made it into the beta phase, and were approved later in the year.

However, after approval, Apple and its counterparts have to create their own designs based on the proposals, for use in iOS and other operating systems.

While eight emoji images are arriving onto public devices soon, more are on the way, with a much longer lead time.

In [November 2024](#), the Unicode Consortium's Emoji Standard & Research Working Group managed proposals for 164 emoji symbols. Those symbols include an orca whale, a Bigfoot-style creature, a distorted face, a ballet dancer, an apple core, a landslide, and a trombone.

If approved, that batch of emoji will form Emoji 17.0, released in September. Apple will probably include them in iOS 19 a few months later.

## **F. *iOS 18.4 brings RCS messaging to some of the last big carrier holdouts***



Ryan Christoffel



iOS 18.4 is currently in beta testing, and with the recent beta 2 debut, it brought long-awaited **RCS** messaging

support to not only Google Fi users, but also customers of some other big US carrier holdouts: Mint Mobile, Boost Mobile, and more. Here are the details:

## **G. [iOS 19: New features, release date, more](#)**



Chance Miller

Mar 4 2025 - 12:32 pm PT



Believe it or not, we're just three months away from the announcement of iOS 19. Ahead of that launch, rumors about new iOS 19 features, supported devices, and more have started to surface.

# H. Public beta 2 for iPadOS 18.4, macOS 15.4, more adds these new features



Ryan Christoffel

Mar 4 2025 - 10:10 am PT



Apple has released public beta 2 for a variety of its software platforms, including macOS Sequoia 15.4, iPadOS 15.4, tvOS 18.4, and more. These updates arrive just over one week after the first betas, and one day after developer versions.

# IV. DEALS

## **A. *Best Apple Deals of the Week: Save on AirTag, Apple Pencil Pro, Apple Watch Series 10, and Anker Accessories***

Saturday March 1, 2025 7:29 am PST by Mitchel Broussard



## **B. New Bundlehunt**

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# 40 Premium macOS Software Apps

Editor's Choice Best selling Priced low to high or Priced high to low

macOS & Windows macOS Windows



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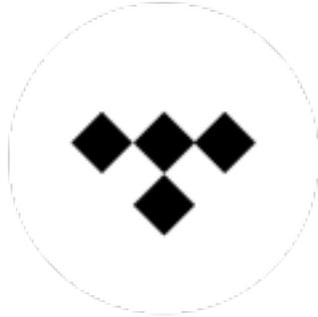
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**Windows Bundles**



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Sale Price

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C.



DEALS 9TO5TOYS 9TO5TOYS LUNCH BREAK

**Deals: iPad A16 50% off or M3 iPad Air up to \$650 off with trade, 48GB M4 Pro MacBook Pro over \$300 off, more**



Justin Kahn  
8 hours ago

0 Comments

Apple has just unveiled the M4 MacBook Air with a sweet new Sky Blue color no less, but we are now tracking some major savings opportunities on yesterday's reveals – the M3 iPad Air and the new iPad (A16). Best Buy is now offering \$50 off the new M3 Air for its members and trade-ins of an M2 can net you up to

\$650 off. The same goes for the iPad A16 – you can flip an iPad 10 to score the new model at 50% off. Those deals join Apple's 16-inch M4 Pro MacBook Pro with 48GB of RAM at over \$300 off, nearly 25% off the Apple Pencil Pro, and more. All of that and more awaits below in today's 9to5Toys Lunch Break.

## **D. Don't buy these MacBook Air models in 2025**



Zac Hall

9 hours ago



Apple brought the MacBook Air starting price back to the magic \$999 number with the introduction of the M4 MacBook Air. In recent years, Apple relied on selling an older version of the MacBook Air to stay below the \$1,000 price tag.

Having newer technology for a lower price is a double win for customers. It also means customers should expect even lower prices on previous generation MacBook Air models still being sold.

Considering an [M2 or M3 MacBook Air purchase](#) now that the M4 MacBook Air has arrived? **Keep these things in mind before making a buying decision.**

## **E. Best iPad deals this month**

Looking to save money on a new iPad? Here are the best sales, deals, and discounts in both the U.S. and the U.K.



By [David Price](#)  
Editor, Macworld MAR 5, 2025 9:04 AM PST



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Best iPad (A16 & 10th gen) deals
- Best iPad mini deals
- Best iPad Air deals
- Best iPad Pro deals
- Where to buy an iPad
- ...

With a [new iPad](#) and [iPad Air](#) launching in February 2025, now is the perfect time to grab a bargain on the iPad of your choice. As a general rule, you can find good savings on iPads at [Amazon](#), [Best Buy](#), and [Target](#) in the U.S., and at [Amazon](#), [John Lewis](#), and [Currys](#) in the U.K.

But if you're looking for the best price on each model of iPad, read on for our handpicked deals.

[For each one you'll find an automatically updated price comparison tool, so you can be sure you're getting the best deal at this exact second, and our pick of the best options.](#)

## **V. IOS Korner**

### **[A. Top Stories: iPhone 16e Launch, iPhone 17 and Foldable Rumors, and More](#)**

Saturday March 1, 2025 6:00 am PST by [MacRumors Staff](#)

With Friday's launch, the iPhone 16e has become the newest member of Apple's iPhone 16 family and the company's latest low-cost iPhone option, though it does come in at a significantly higher price point than the outgoing iPhone SE.

### **[B. These New Apple Intelligence Features Are Coming in iOS 18.4](#)**

Friday February 28, 2025 3:17 pm PST by [Juli Clover](#)

iOS 18.4 was supposed to bring new Apple Intelligence Siri features, but Apple ended up needing to pull those capabilities from the update to continue testing. There are fewer new Apple Intelligence additions now, but there are still some new features that will make the update worth installing when it comes out in April.

## **C. *Apple Says iOS 18.4 Will Be Released in April With These New Features***

Wednesday February 26, 2025 7:15 am PST by [Joe Rossignol](#)  
In a recent press release, Apple confirmed that iOS 18.4 will be released in April. From the Apple News+ Food announcement: Coming with iOS 18.4 and iPadOS 18.4 in April, Apple News+ subscribers will have access to Apple News+ Food, a new section that will feature tens...

## **D. *6 Features Coming to the Apple Watch Ultra 3***

Tuesday February 25, 2025 9:00 am PST by [Hartley Charlton](#)  
The Apple Watch Ultra 3 is expected to launch later this year, arriving two years after the previous model with a series of improvements. While no noticeable design changes are expected for the third generation since the company tends to stick with the same Apple Watch...

## **E. [Apple Provides Reason for iPhone 16e's Lack of MagSafe](#)**

Friday February 28, 2025 4:39 am PST by [Tim Hardwick](#)

Apple has offered a reason why the iPhone 16e doesn't include MagSafe, one of the more notable omissions from its latest entry-level smartphone. According to Apple representatives who spoke to Daring Fireball's John Gruber, MagSafe is not included in the

iPhone 16e...

## **F. [Latest iPhone 17 Series CAD Images in Line With Redesign Rumors](#)**

Friday February 28, 2025 2:51 am PST by [Tim Hardwick](#)

Apple is expected to embrace a new camera system design for some models in its upcoming iPhone 17 series, and the latest purported CAD images don't deviate from what we have been hearing lately about Apple's new lineup. If you do not like the sound of an iPhone with a...

## **G. [Apple's 2026 Foldable iPhone Has No Visible Display Crease - Report](#)**

Tuesday February 25, 2025 2:58 am PST by [Tim Hardwick](#)

Apple is making significant headway on its long-rumored foldable iPhone, with a new report suggesting the company has achieved a major breakthrough by effectively eliminating the screen crease that plagues current foldable devices. According to Korean publication...

## **H. [iOS 19 Rumored to Include These New Features for Your iPhone](#)**

Saturday March 1, 2025 11:00 am PST by [Joe Rossignol](#)

iOS 19 is still around three months away from being unveiled, but there are plenty of rumors about the upcoming update...

**I.**



## **[Apple Intelligence Image Wand: All the New Features in iOS 18.2](#)**

Friday November 15, 2024 3:34 pm PST by [Juli Clover](#)

With iOS 18.2 and iPadOS 18.2, Apple is adding support for three Apple Intelligence image generation features, including Image

Playground, Genmoji, and Image Wand. Image Wand lets you create visual aids for your notes on iPhone and iPad. This guide goes over all of the available...

**J.**



## **[Genmoji in iOS 18.2: Everything You Need to Know](#)**

Friday November 1, 2024 4:28 pm PDT by [Juli Clover](#)

If you've ever wanted an obscure emoji that the Unicode Consortium just hasn't gotten around to adding to the emoji lineup, Genmoji in iOS 18.2 offers a solution. In the iOS 18.2 beta right now, Genmoji lets you create custom emoji characters that can be used just like regular...

## K. iPhone buyer's guide early 2025: iPhone 16, iPhone 16 Pro, or iPhone 16e?



Malcolm Owen | Mar 03, 2025

The iPhone 16 range



The **iPhone 16e** launch has simplified Apple's iPhone lineup somewhat. Here's which iPhone is best for you in early 2025, depending on your budget.

When Apple updates its main iPhone releases, it causes massive changes to the overall catalog, with model pricing shifts and older models disappearing from view. In the spring of 2025, another launch affected the product range in a different way.

Apple's introduction of the iPhone 16e did away with the [iPhone SE](#) line in favor of something closer to the main iPhone releases. It also made it tougher for those in the market for an iPhone to go for the cheapest option, as the pricing is now much closer between the variants.

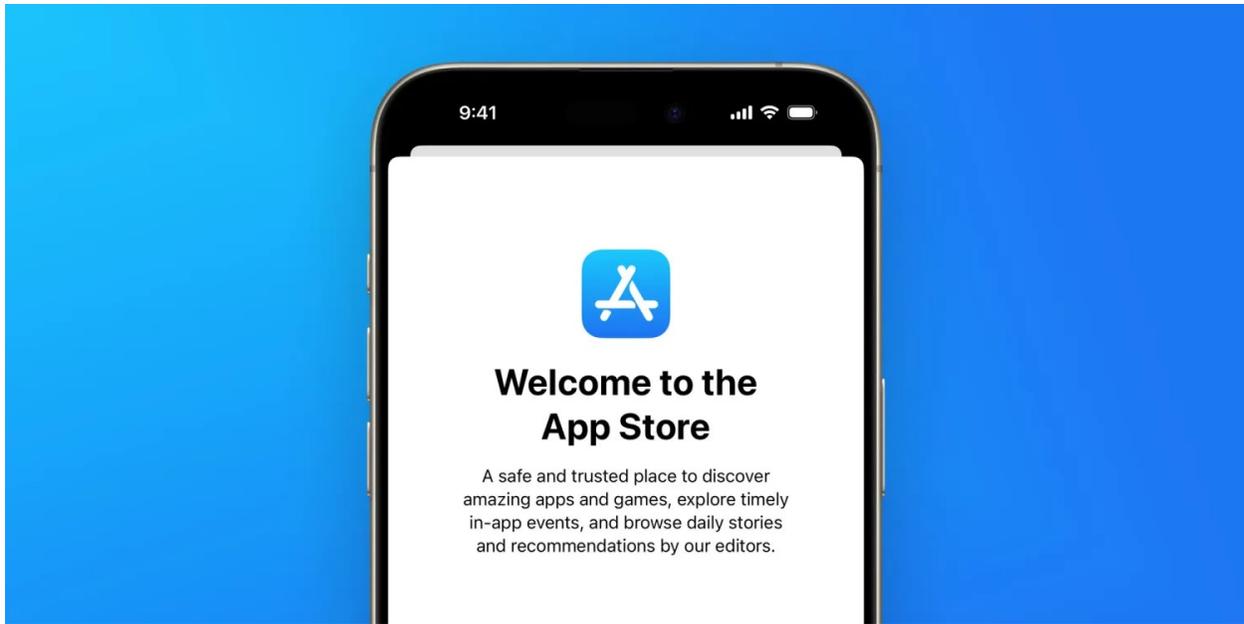
Even so, how much money you have available to spend is the first question. The second is what features are a must-have for you.

Here are AppleInsider's recommendations for the iPhone you should strongly consider buying, based on your budget...

## **L. [iOS 18.4 upgrades the App Store with these two new features](#)**



Ryan Christoffel  
6 hours ago



iOS 18.4 has been available in beta for less than two weeks, and following [beta 2's arrival](#) earlier this week we're still discovering updates and changes. The latest: there are two new App Store additions that should make downloading apps and updates just a little bit nicer of an experience than before. iOS 18.4 upgrades the App Store with these two new features

**M. Qualcomm**  
**swears it's not**  
**worried about Apple**

# *making its own iPhone modems*



Chance Miller  
6 hours ago

[19 Comments](#)



When we look back on the iPhone 16e years from now, the thing we'll all remember is that it was the first iPhone to use Apple's own modem.

Even though the two companies [have a testy relationship](#), Apple has historically relied on Qualcomm for modems.

[The C1 chip in the iPhone 16e](#) is Apple's first step toward breaking up with Qualcomm.

Qualcomm, however, says it's not worried about the competition posed by Apple's foray into modems...

# N.

## VI. *Tips and Tricks*

### **A. [21 Time-Saving iPhone Tips to Make You a More Efficient User](#)**

Friday November 1, 2024 4:11 am PDT by [Tim Hardwick](#)

If you're looking to cut down on the amount of time you spend performing certain actions on your iPhone, there's usually a solution hidden in Apple's mobile operating system. Here are 21 quick iOS tips that once you start using will make you a lot more time-efficient in the long run.

### **B. [6 iPhone Camera Tips Every User Should Know](#)**

Thursday December 19, 2024 4:14 am PST by [Tim Hardwick](#)

Apple's latest iPhones include several headline camera features that are worth using, such as Portrait Mode and Photographic Styles. But if all you want to use is the standard photo mode, there are still several tools and settings that can improve the composition of your pictures...

C.



## **[22 Tips to Make Your iPhone 16's Battery Last Longer](#)**

Friday October 18, 2024 4:28 pm PDT by [Juli Clover](#)

When Apple releases new iPhones and new operating system updates, there are often complaints about how long the battery lasts. Apple made improvements to battery life across the iPhone 16 lineup, and while these iPhones last longer than ever, some people are still seeing...

## **D. *Mac and Windows how-to:*** **Add widgets to your** **desktop**

Right on my Mac desktop, I can check my mouse battery (38% and dropping), see where my son Ian is (at work), get the latest weather update (hello, sunny Phoenix!), and even keep track of time with a world clock.

Widgets are like mini windows into your favorite apps, giving you instant info without the hassle of opening them up. Want to set yours up? I've got you covered!

### *For all my Windows pals*

These steps may vary if you've already played around with widgets. Windows displays widgets in a board you can access by hovering over the weather icon in your taskbar or pressing Windows + W.

- Click the + (plus) at the top to add new widgets, then Pin any you like. To see more options, follow Find more widgets.
- Click the three dots (top left) on any widget to remove or customize it. For the stocks widget, for instance, you can pick which stocks are shown.

★ Photos and Shopping are useful, but look around and see what works for you. To put widgets on your actual Windows desktop, not a pop-up panel, you'll need a third-party app, like the freemium [Widget Launcher](#).

# If you're using macOS

On your desktop, click the date and time in the top right corner. The notification center pops up. That's where you'll find widgets.

- Click Edit Widgets at the bottom of the panel to add new ones. You can also hit Cmd + click on the desktop, then pick Edit Widgets to add them directly. You'll get lots of choices, from news feeds to sticky notes.

Drag widgets down from the notification center to the desktop to move them. macOS will arrange them in a grid to keep your desktop tidy.

Pro tip: If you've got a MacBook, you definitely need the battery widget. It'll remind you how much juice is left in your laptop aka how quickly you need to find a charger.

😂 Why'd the pirate update his MacBook? His matey told him he needed an iPatch. (Sorry, had to.)

**E. Think your browser's password**

# *manager is safe?* *Think again.*

By [Kim Komando](#)

February 28, 2025



© Gmm2000 | Dreamstime.com

It's so easy to click and save your passwords right to Chrome, Edge, Safari or any other browser. Have you ever stopped to think about just how bad an idea it is to do this? Anyone with access to your browser can jump right into any one of your accounts. Yup, even your banking and investment accounts are up for grabs.

Google and Apple have free, built-in password managers. But do you really want a company that makes money collecting and selling data to be the one protecting your most sensitive info?

## Then there's one-password syndrome

I bet you're reusing passwords or have done this in the past. Reusing passwords is a cybersecurity disaster, and one I've warned you about for decades. Hackers love you. A shocking 81% of hacking-related breaches start with weak or stolen passwords.

- Credential stuffing: Hackers take a leaked password and try to sign into thousands of sites per second. If you reused the login, they'll find it.

- Dark Web sales: One criminal steals your passwords, then sells them to lots of others for fraud and identity theft.
- Financial risk: Your banking info and credit card are tied to more accounts than you realize. Identity theft and financial fraud takes years to stop, and you'll never get all that money back.

## The right way to protect your accounts

- ✓ Use a dedicated password manager. You want one with military-grade encryption, so even if hackers [breach your device](#), they can't access your stored passwords. Steer clear of free options. Those are almost always a scam.
- ✓ Don't be sloppy. Say it with me: Every single account, every login and every app gets its own strong, unique password that's at least 16 characters long, with a mixture of upper- and lowercase letters, symbols and numbers. A good password manager does it for you and autofills across all your devices because you won't remember a hard-to-crack password.
- ✓ Be smart when you update. Don't just change a letter, character or number at the end of your current password and call it good. Sure, that makes it easy to remember, but it's not hard for someone to figure out your pattern and crack your new logins.
- ✓ They know your tricks. Adding an exclamation point or question mark at the end of a password doesn't do much to stop hackers and their software from figuring it out. Use

numbers and special characters in a password. Replace an O (the letter) with a zero, like this k0mand0\_scholar or an A with an @ like kom@ndo\_f@n.

✓ Try a passphrase. They are longer and harder to crack. Mix in some characters and numbers. “My two cats are smart” becomes “my2c@tsrSmart.”

✓ Share the right way. Sending a password in a DM or text is dangerous. A password manager lets you share a login in its encrypted form instead of plain text anyone can read. Pro tip: If you ever do share a password in a message in a pinch, delete it after the other person has copied it down.

## There are so many options out there

I went looking for the very best for you. My [password manager recommendation](#), NordPass, is built with tech called zero-knowledge encryption. You set a master password, and everything stored in your vault is for your eyes only. Even NordPass can't access it, only you can.

I love that NordPass's exclusive data breach scanner shows if any of your credentials have been [exposed on the Dark Web](#). It helps you move fast because criminals do, too. With secure password sharing, breach detection and autofill capabilities, NordPass makes managing your logins easy and so much safer.

If you haven't started using a password manager yet, now's the time. NordPass is my go-to for keeping everything safe and organized, and [I negotiated a special deal just for you](#).

✅ Right now, get NordPass for only \$1.24 a month.\* When you sign up for two years, you get an extra three months free, too. Nice.

## ***F. True or false: You need antivirus protection for your phone***

By Kim Komando - America's Digital Goddess®, Kim Komando is one of America's most successful radio hosts and web entrepreneurs.

February 22, 2025

Photo 59825802 © Georgejmlittle | Dreamstime.com

I wrote about tech myths recently and missed a big one: “Phones can’t get viruses.”

Of course they can! Your phone is basically a mini-computer and a prime target for hackers. Let’s break down how these threats work and where they come from.

Red flags your phone is infected

The signs vary depending on what your device is infected with, of course. But these symptoms spell trouble:

- Data spike? Malware could be eating up your bandwidth.
- Sluggish phone, crashing apps? Not a good sign.
- Random pop-ups? That’s classic malware behavior.
- Battery draining fast? Something shady could be running in the background.
- Phone overheating? Malware might be overworking it.

- Weird charges on your bill? You may be signed up for something you never agreed to.
- New apps you didn't install? Hackers may have added them.
- Homepage or search engine changed? That's a red flag.
- Friends getting odd messages from you? Your phone could be compromised.
- Random restarts or shutdowns? Malware loves to mess with your system.

OK, how'd that happen?

Malware, adware, spyware and all the other types of malicious software generally come from a few places.

 You clicked on a malicious link that arrived through a phishing email, text, messaging or social media app, or spoofed website. Security 101: Never click on links or open attachments in unsolicited messages.

 You downloaded a bad app. Scammers are good at creating fraudulent apps that look like the real thing. While these can end up in the Google Play Store or Apple App Store, they're most often distributed through third-party app sites. Only download apps from official app stores, please and thank you!

 You connected to public Wi-Fi. Cybercriminals can use public Wi-Fi to spy on unsuspecting users. They could steal your bank password, credit card details or Social Security number and infect your device with malware.

So, do you need antivirus software?

The answer is clear: Yes! While your phone has some built-in safeguards to protect you, the more help you can get, the better.

If your phone isn't protected by antivirus software, or if you're depending on a free antivirus solution, or the price for your current antivirus has crept up, get [the antivirus software I use and recommend: TotalAV](#).

- It protects you wherever you browse: All your gadgets need equal protection. TotalAV has you covered, whether you're on your PC, Mac, iPhone or Android.
- It makes your tech run more efficiently: TotalAV can improve the performance of your smartphone, computer or tablet. It [removes junk files](#) to restore space, and it can reduce your background processes to improve battery life.
- It busts shady websites ahead of time: TotalAV stops you from landing on an [untrustworthy site](#) before that happens. Score.
- It gives you firewall protection: This is essential for protecting your device, or hackers could enter your system through an exposed networking port.

You can get this five-star protection for a steep discount. Right now, get TotalAV's real-time antivirus protection across five devices for [\\$100 off](#). An entire year of protection is just \$19. I know you won't find a better deal. I asked!

 Stop waiting for the worst to happen. [Save 85% now on](#)

protection you can trust. I don't get any kickbacks or residuals if you buy. Just want to keep you safe.

## **G. *Biggest hack in US history: How to encrypt your communications***

By Kim Komando - America's Digital Goddess®, Kim Komando is one of America's most successful radio hosts and web entrepreneurs.

December 6, 2024

© Michael Borgers | Dreamstime.com, © Stevanovicigor | Dreamstime.com  
I've been talking about it for weeks, and now it's all over the news: Communist Chinese hackers infiltrated telecommunications giants like AT&T and Verizon and wormed their way into government surveillance systems. The massive breach was detected over a month ago, but it's been going on for over a year.

These hackers even intercepted live phone calls from Donald Trump, J.D. Vance and Kamala Harris's staffers.

And what's our government doing about it? The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, or CISA, just released a "how-to" for secure communications ... a whole month later.

### Should you panic?

No. Now, it's not good Chinese hackers are snooping around, but their targets are typically high-profile individuals and politicians. If you're an average person texting friends and family and not sharing espionage information, don't worry. Spies, keep reading.

## What's the big deal?

Text messages sent using Apple iMessages are encrypted, but only between iPhones. Text from your iPhone to someone using an Android device, and that message (SMS or RCS) is unencrypted. Android-to-Android texts are generally encrypted through Google Messages, but texting on an Android phone to an iPhone? Not protected.

The same goes for email. Standard Gmail or Outlook messages are vulnerable once they leave that network. Gmail to Gmail? Safe. Gmail to Outlook? No. (More about this below.)

## There are tools that fix this problem

When you're texting about the latest Hallmark movie, privacy probably isn't at the top of your mind. But it needs to be if you're sharing financial info (including account numbers, Social Security numbers and PINs), login credentials or passwords, or private health info.

## Use a secure messaging app

The key here is end-to-end encryption. Popular picks include Signal, WhatsApp, Telegram, Session and Briar. These apps also have:

- Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP): Secure voice calls go through the app instead of vulnerable cellular networks.
- Multifactor authentication (MFA): An extra layer of security for your account.

✅ Trying to get your friends and family to download one of these apps? Send them this article so they know why it matters.

## Be smart about emails, too

For sensitive info, putting it in the body of a regular email won't cut it. [StartMail\\*](#) is my pick if you're looking for full encryption with just one click. You can also rely on your current email provider but send files as encrypted attachments.

- In Microsoft Office or Google Docs, click the Help button in the menu bar. Click Help again, then type in "Encrypt with password." Your program will walk you through the steps. Easy.

Don't count on telecom companies or government agencies to keep you safe — they won't. But you're already steps ahead just by reading my website and tuning in to my shows.

🎯 I've always got your back!

# H. 19 hidden iPhone features everyone should know

## How-to

By [Peter Wolinski](#) published March 17, 2023

How many are new to you?



(Image credit: Tom's Guide)

Your iPhone comes loaded with hidden features and hacks which can make your Apple device much easier and more fun to use. In our opinion, its this plethora of little-known features that help make iPhones some of the [best phones](#) out there.

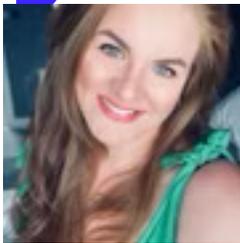
But do you know all of them? Well, there are so many that we'd be willing to bet you probably don't. [To help with that, we've rounded up 19 of our favorite iPhone hidden features and how to use them, with handy links to full tutorials wherever possible — hopefully at least one or two are new to you.](#)

# I. How-To....

*Cult of Mac* publishes Apple how-tos every day that will help you make the most of your iPhone, Mac, iPad, Apple Watch and other Apple gear.

Read *Cult of Mac's* latest posts on How-To:

## J. Mac tips and tricks: 33 helpful hints you might not know



By Britta O'Boyle & John Kanellakos  
Updated  
Jun 17, 2024



## SUMMARY

- macOS is a feature-rich operating system, but there are a lot of tips and tricks some people might not be aware of.
- Even if you've been a Mac user for years, you might not know about a lot of these features.
- These useful tips could elevate your Mac workflow to new heights.

You might consider yourself a complete whizz when it comes to [Apple's Mac](#), and you're here wondering if we can teach you something you didn't know. Or perhaps you would say you're a complete novice and you've only recently bought a Mac because they look pretty, but in reality, you have absolutely zero idea how to use it. Don't worry, you wouldn't be alone.



## Apple MacBook Air 15 (M2, 2023)

The MacBook Air 15-inch is a truly superb everyday laptop, with a solid and premium build quality, a stunning big display, excellent performance and a great battery life. There's nothing not to love here. It's the everyday laptop dreams were made of.

[\\$1249 at Amazon](#)

[\\$1299 at Best Buy](#)

[\\$1299 at Apple](#)

Either way, we are hoping there will be at least one tip on this list that's going to make your day-to-day use of your Mac a little more efficient. Whether you've used Macs for years, or you are new to **macOS** and all the features it offers - because there are loads just waiting to be discovered -- we have compiled our favorite tips and tricks to help you get the most out of your **MacBook** or **iMac**.

[Here are 33 tips for Mac you really should know about.](#)

## ***VII. Miscellaneous***

# ***A. The crypto investment scam that's all over social media***

By [Kim Komando](#) - America's Digital Goddess®, Kim Komando is one of America's most successful radio hosts and web entrepreneurs.

December 31, 2024

[ESET.com](https://www.eset.com)

I'm all about using AI to get stuff done. No kidding, I use ChatGPT every day to shortcut planning and organize my work and my life.

You know who else loves AI? Cybercriminals. A new scam powered by deepfakes is all over social media. Too many people have fallen for it and lost millions of dollars in the process. I've got the dirty details so you don't become a victim, too.

## It's not Elon

The tactic is called Nomani (yeah, that's "no money") and combines AI video, malicious ads on social media and email phishing. It started [spiking in May](#) and grew 335% by the second half of 2024. From May to November, ESET Cybersecurity says they blocked about 100 new scam URLs a day, adding up to 85,000 sites.

It starts with a video of Elon Musk or some other celebrity, politician or business leader endorsing a crypto investment on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram or X. Some videos look like news broadcasts. Others are "exclusive" interviews or look more like an infomercial. There's always a famous face you'll recognize.

Usually, the accounts posting this stuff have tons of followers. The graphics are snazzy, the info is compelling, and, wow, they promise a lot of tremendous gains with no risk. (You smell the scam, right?)

Say you fall for the bait and click over to their websites. At best, you're handing your info over to someone highly skilled at tricking people out of their money. At worst? The site itself is infected with money- or info-stealing malware.

## It gets nastier

Most of these tricks end with an "investment manager" calling to walk you through the process of transferring all your hard-earned money right to them. They pretend they're helping you put it into a crypto investment account. Nope.

If you've already fallen for Nomani, you're at even more risk. Scammers are going after victims a second time, pretending to be law enforcement trying to help recover your lost funds. Just awful.

## Here's what scammers don't want you to know

It's easier than ever to fake famous faces because of how much real video exists online. With affordable or free software, scammers no longer need advanced skills or a huge budget to create deepfakes. AI tools do the heavy lifting, stitching together eerily realistic fakes.

## Know the red flags

Even if you think, "This could never happen to me," read this list and store these tidbits away. They could save your butt someday.

- Hey, that's blurry: Deepfake videos are often in low resolution to hide glitches. If your internet connection is just fine and other videos are clear, move on.
- What if the video quality is OK? Look for strange speech patterns, unnatural breathing, poorly synced audio and video, jerky body movements, and robotic-sounding dialogue.
- Don't click: They want to get you off social media and over to their website to plant malware. Solid antivirus software can spy malware tricks you can't. Protect your

computer and phone with [my pick](#)\* for just \$19 for the first year.

- High pressure: If an ad says you can double your money by sitting on your butt, your scam radar should be going off. No legitimate investment opportunity is urgent. When they pull out the pressure tactics, move on.

No matter the form, get-rich-quick schemes end one way: With less money and more regret than you started with. You have to be smart! Remember what happened to the chicken: The chicken loses its job, the chicken goes broke, the chicken strips. 

**B.**



## **Will Apple Make a TV? What to Know as Rumors Resurface**

Friday November 22, 2024 11:59 am PST by [Juli Clover](#)

Between 2011 and 2014, there were a glut of rumors suggesting that Apple was working on an Apple-branded television set, which would disrupt the TV industry. No such product ever emerged, but now the TV rumors are back. Subscribe to the MacRumors YouTube channel for...

# **C. Retailers have so many ways to track you - Here's how to fight back**

By Kim Komando - America's Digital Goddess®, Kim Komando is one of America's most successful radio hosts and web entrepreneurs.

December 28, 2024

© Spoiala Dumitru | Dreamstime.com

If you have a pulse and an internet connection, companies want all the details they can get about what you're willing to buy. Now that your holiday shopping is done, it's time to take back control.

There's a bit of work you can do and then to reclaim your privacy, but if you're looking for a longer-term solution, I'll share [my secret weapon in the fight against tracking](#).

## **'The Way We Were'**

This appropriately titled hit song by Barbra Streisand, released in late 1973, was still a chart-topper in June 1974, when the [Universal Product Code \(UPC\)](#) hit grocery and department stores.

Before UPCs, retailers could decide prices based on things like race, gender, or whether the store clerk liked you or not. Could you imagine going to Walmart and hoping the cashier thought you were cool? Sheesh.

But the introduction of barcodes brought retailers an even bigger benefit: They could use them to track what you bought so they could influence your purchasing habits. Yep, Big Brother's been watching you in Aisle 5 for decades. UPCs were just the beginning.

## The methods are many

We love to blame the digital age for targeted ads, but retailers already had a ton of consumer data by the time the internet came around. It only helped them step up their game a ton.

- Loyalty programs collect data on your purchases, frequency and preferences.
- Mobile apps know when you're in their store. Nope, those perfectly timed coupon notifications aren't a coincidence.
- Wi-Fi and Bluetooth beacons map where you go and document your movements around the store.
- Point-of-sale systems document your purchase histories and connect them to your email address or phone number (if you've provided them).
- Surveillance cameras aren't just for catching thieves. Some retailers use AI to analyze your shopping behaviors and habits.

## Take back your (purchasing) power

Tracking is unavoidable, but there are ways to protect your privacy. Use these tips to feel less watched and more sane:

- Uninstall retail apps from your phone. If you can't part with them, disable your location permissions for each.
- Limit loyalty cards. The fewer you sign up for, the better your privacy. I find most cashiers are willing to let me use theirs in the checkout lanes.
- Switch off Bluetooth if you don't use it often.
- Know your rights. If you use a retailer's website or app, there's usually a section where you can opt out of specific data collection or sharing methods.

And finally, browse in Incognito mode to keep your website history from being stored and reported to ad networks.

- Use an Android? Open your Settings app > Google. Under Manage your Google Account, go to the Data & privacy tab > Ad settings and toggle off Ad personalization.
- On an iPhone, open Settings > Privacy & Security > Apple Advertising and toggle off Personalized Ads.

## Stop this info-selling at the source

I call Incogni my privacy secret weapon. This service finds all the sketchy [people-search and data-broker sites](#) where your personal information is listed and submits requests to remove it.

👉 Incogni has removed me from 981 sites and put me on 40 suppression lists so I stay off. All told, Incogni's saved me an estimated 735 hours and 45 minutes. If you go the DIY route, prepare to remove yourself from the same sites over and over.

# D. **Bank fraud is rising -** **How to protect yourself**

By Kim Komando - America's Digital Goddess®, Kim Komando is one of America's most successful radio hosts and web entrepreneurs.

December 12, 2024



© Dragan Andrii | Dreamstime.com

The scams don't stop — and here's another one you need to know about. Your phone rings. It's a rep from your bank, and they're warning your account has been compromised. You're smart, so you immediately suspect it's a scam.

Then, the guy on the other end reads off your Social Security number and account info. Only your bank could know that, right?

Some 300,000 people in the U.S. thought the same last year. People lost their life savings; one Virginia woman had a whopping \$700,000 wired out of her Wells Fargo account, and another in Los Angeles lost \$100,000 in minutes.



## Why banking scams are rising

**Bank scams** used to be a niche operation. Now, anyone can buy the tools to con you for a few bucks on the Dark Web. There are even guides to make a phone number look like it's from your bank, including phony customer service reps to answer all your questions.

Pro scammers rely on social engineering, too. That's the fancy name for mind games to gain your trust. They love jumping on video calls because seeing a face makes you more trusting. They'll keep chatting with you so you miss the security alerts warning you to stop.

## The big banks lost interest

Last year, the banks reimbursed scam victims at [pitiful rates](#). JPMorgan Chase reimbursed 2% of transactions disputed as scams, while Wells Fargo reimbursed 4% of scam claims. Bank of America, meanwhile, reimbursed 24% of its scam dispute transactions.

Federal law requires banks to reimburse you only under certain circumstances, like if someone steals your phone and accesses your account. But if you're the one to sign a wire form or agree to an online transfer and you find out it's a scam, you're screwed.

## Keep your money safe

- Slow down: If a caller claims to be from your bank or asks for your account details, hang up. Call the bank yourself. Do not Google your bank's number; find it on their official website or the back of your card.
- Beware of transfer scams: Never send money via wire transfer, crypto or gift cards in response to unsolicited calls or emails. Your bank or the government will never ask you to transfer funds to a "safe" account.

- Don't follow links: If you're told to visit a website, download an app or click a link, it's a phishing site or malware installation.
- Use a virtual phone number: I bet your real one has been leaked in a couple of data breaches this year. Use a [virtual number](#) tied to your finances scammers don't know.
- Set up alerts: In your banking app, you can turn on alerts for transactions over a certain amount or made in a foreign country, as well as notifications about suspicious activity like attempted logins from a new browser. I have all this set up. Some banks let you set transaction limits on withdrawals or purchases, too.

👉 This is serious stuff. I don't want to be a Debbie Downer, but if I can save one person from losing their life savings, I'm doing my job. Share this important intel using the icons below with someone you know who needs this warning. You can make a difference.

## **E. Your Wi-Fi was part of 2.7 billion records leaked**

Feb. 14, 2025

The records, including IP addresses, were just leaked by some random Chinese company. I'll tell you all about it, with steps you can take to protect yourself.

# F. Retailers, data brokers and ads, oh my!

By [Kim Komando](#)

February 17, 2025



Komando.com, [Image by freekpic](#)

Linda recently called my national radio show with a question that flooded my inbox. Clearly, a lot of you have experienced a similarly eerie moment.

“I was shopping yesterday at Walmart, looking at kitchen knives. I called my friend and told her where I was in the store. I didn’t buy the knives. Today, I received an email advertising the very knives I was looking at! How did that happen? I never looked knives up online.”

I hear you: “Kim, her phone was listening!” The answer isn’t that simple, but I can explain what’s really going on.

## Your digital trail

Even if Linda never searched online for knives, her smartphone was busy collecting data. Your phone tracks your location, not just through GPS but also Wi-Fi and Bluetooth signals.

If you’ve connected to a store’s Wi-Fi or walked in with Bluetooth on, Walmart and other retailers can track your movements. They know where you’re standing in the store. They also know you didn’t buy the knives.

Retailers sell this data to ad networks that then work with data brokers to get your email address. Bingo. Linda got an email from the knife company. I bet she starts seeing ads for knives and related items online, too.

## But wait, there’s more

Facebook, Instagram, Google and weather apps track your location, even when running in the background. If you’ve

granted them location access, they know where you are and later use that data to serve you ads.

## Throw AI into the mix

Odds are, Linda is now going to get email pitches and see ads on social media for new cutlery, charcuterie boards and cooking classes. This is how AI-driven advertising works. It takes one interest (kitchen knives) and expands it into related categories.

## How to protect your privacy

### Manage location tracking

- Turn off location tracking for retail apps in your phone's settings.
- Disable Bluetooth and Wi-Fi when not in use.
- Avoid public Wi-Fi, as retailers use it to log your visit.

### Erase your digital breadcrumbs

- Use private browsing or clear cookies on your phone. If you've never done that, [here are the steps](#).
- Don't stay logged into Google, Facebook, Amazon, etc., while shopping.

### Adjust your ad settings

- Visit [Google Ad Settings](#) to turn off ad personalization.
- Update ad preferences on Facebook, Instagram, Amazon and the rest.

## 🚫 Review app permissions

- Turn off microphone access for apps like Facebook and Google.
- Limit background app tracking in your phone's settings.

It's a creepy feeling when this sort of thing happens. Remember, this combination of retailers, advertisers and data brokers is trying to get you to spend a buck.

# **G. How to land the best flight deals**

By [Kim Komando](#)

February 16, 2025



© Asafta | Dreamstime.com

Spring break is around the corner, and Sundays are the best day to book trips, so let's talk travel hacks. My dad worked for

United Airlines, so I grew up on airplanes. I've explored 38 countries (and counting!) with plenty more on my bucket list. Let's get you the best deals!

## How to land the best flight deals



Check for 24-hour price drops: Booked a flight? Some airlines let you cancel within 24 hours for free. If you find a lower price, cancel and rebook. Easy savings.



Set up price alerts: [Google Flights](#) and [Kayak](#) will email you when prices drop. The best time to book? One to three months ahead for domestic flights and four to six months out for international. (Note to self: This means next week.)



Fly on the cheap days: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays are usually the cheapest. Red-eyes and early morning flights also cost less and are less likely to be delayed or canceled.



Be flexible: Try [Google's Explore](#) feature to spot budget-friendly dates. [Skyscanner's Cheapest Month](#) tool is neat. Instead of choosing a date, click Flexible Dates and watch the prices fluctuate.



Hidden-city ticketing (use with caution): [Skiplagged](#) finds flights where your destination is a layover, which can save you cash. Just don't check a bag. It won't follow you.

## VIP experience secrets

If “budget” is not in your lexicon, you can bypass many airport hassles.

### PS (Private Suite) at LAX and ATL

- Get private TSA screening and a terminal with no lines. Think velvet couches and chilled champagne. Board via a private car on the tarmac and have a similar arrival service.
- **PS costs** about \$4,000 for the first passenger. It’s an Amex Centurion cardholder perk, and that’s how I get to use it. I saw Kanye West and his wife about a month ago on my way back from Paris. Fortunately, she was clothed. I couldn’t bare it.

### Airport Butler/Royal Airport Concierge fast-track service

- **Royal Airport Concierge** meets you at the curb, handles your luggage, escorts you through security and takes you to a VIP lounge.

### Delta VIP Select

- Enjoy a private check-in lounge with champagne, canapés, private TSA screening and a ride to the plane on the tarmac.
- Costs \$500 for the first passenger and \$100 for each additional one. [Here’s a video](#) about it.

### United Global Services

- It’s invitation-only offering private check-in for United Airlines Global Services members.

### Hawaiian Airlines Premium Airport Service

- Check-in is completed before you arrive, with priority baggage handling, expedited TSA lines and an escort to your gate. You get access to a private lounge featuring a liquor menu, meals and showers.
- Prices start at \$500 for two with the option to use HawaiianMiles.
- (Check-out Kayak.com, too)

## Adios, beaches

I hope these hacks helped you. Now, where should I go next?

# **H. *Get everything* Amazon collects and tracks about you**

By [Kim Komando](#)

February 20, 2025



Devin Pickell | Unsplash

I was doing some research about Amazon and ran across a golden nugget I couldn't wait to share with you. We all know Amazon tracks everything including what you browse, buy, watch and even ask Alexa.

But here's the surprise: You can download all of it. I'll show you how.

## So, what kind of info are we talking about?

Tons. It's literally every single thing that you've done with an Amazon product or site.

- Your orders, addresses, payment options and subscriptions: Every single purchase you've ever made, including where it was sent and how you paid. Even if you tried to hide stuff by archiving it, it's still there.

- Search history: Everything you've ever searched for, clicked on, or added to your cart, down to the exact time and IP address. Yep, even those embarrassing searches are saved.
- Ad preferences: This is what Amazon thinks you're into, what groups they put you in to show you ads, and any ads you've clicked.
- Customer support: All the call recordings, chats, and email transcripts. They even keep all the photos you've sent and any messages to third-party Marketplace Sellers.
- Alexa and Echo: Details about your device and everything you've ever said to Alexa (with the date and time), plus any skills you've enabled.
- Kindle, Fire TV and Fire tablets: All the tiny details about your devices, like your preferred font size and brightness on Kindle, plus when and what you searched for on Fire TV.

How do I get it?

 [Hit the Privacy Central page](#). When you're logged in, you can choose one category of data or get 'em all at once as a ZIP file. Click the confirmation email you get, then ... don't hold your breath.

Amazon says they'll send over your info ASAP. "Usually, this should not take more than a month." If it's somehow even longer, they'll let ya know.

# Can I remove all my data from Amazon?

No, not all of it. Amazon will forever keep your Fire, Echo and other device data, customer service messages, order history and account information. Even if you delete your Amazon account, they keep your details. But here are steps to:

- [Remove Alexa recordings](#)
- [Turn off browsing and search history](#) (#4 on the list)
- [Disable ad tracking and preferences](#)

🤔 If there's someone in your life who might be interested in this know-how, use the icons below to share it with them now. You know, I once ordered a thesaurus on Amazon. All of the pages were blank. I have no words to describe how angry I am.

## **I spent a day on the Dark Web [Part 1]**

By [Kim Komando](#)

February 26, 2025



Kim Komando

When I say Dark Web, what comes to mind? A hacker in a hoodie? Digital drug deals and hitmen for hire? Usually what our imagination cooks up is a lot more dramatic than reality. But when it comes to the Dark Web, not so much.

I fired up the Tor browser and went digging into the underbelly of the internet. I'll show you what I found, but first, what the heck is the Dark Web?

## The sites you visit are the tip of the iceberg

Beneath the surface is a hidden part of the internet that isn't indexed by search engines. The deep web is everything inaccessible to the public for safety, security and privacy reasons, like your specific bank account page, medical records, company databases, cloud storage accounts, private blogs and social media pages, forums that require a login and

lots more.

Then there's the Dark Web, a hidden corner of the deep web that requires special tools to access. There are above-board uses, like covertly contacting journalists if you're in an unsafe situation. Whistleblowers often use the Dark Web to get their messages out.

## Then there are the shadier parts

Like hacking forums, illegal marketplaces and all manner of perverse content. The Dark Web is filled with malware and scams, and law enforcement is there, too, watching for funny business. Simply put: If you don't know what you're doing, stay out.

Note: There is absolutely child sexual abuse material on the Dark Web, and it's not hard to find. I stayed away.

### Guns, ammo and silencers

Throw a dart (digitally speaking) and you can find a gun for sale on the Dark Web. One site I landed on was hawking AK-47s for \$1,200. This site sells ammo (\$60 for 100 rounds to go with the AK-47) and silencers, too. Those start at \$600.

Standard shipping is included, express is an extra \$30 and "dead drop" shipping will cost you an extra \$50. If you're not familiar, that's when you have something you definitely don't want traced back to you sent to an empty building, a landmark or some other prearranged public location.

## 👉 “Your Secure Marketplace for Drugs”

I found it all — a big bag of Viagra for \$135, a gram of ketamine for \$60, MDMA for \$150 and 28 grams of “top-shelf indoor medical marijuana” for \$240. There’s less flashy stuff like Lipitor, Ecstasy and Cialis, plus a whole bunch of substances I’ve never even heard of.

Poison? You can get that, too. Heliotrope (marked as undetectable during an autopsy) is \$2,800 to \$14,000, ricin starts at \$2,500 and potassium cyanide is \$5,900.

## 👉 Faked celebrities

It’s not a Dark Web visit without this. Yes, naked people (women, mostly) are everywhere, and celebrities are the big draw. I didn’t care about seeing A-listers without their clothes.

What’s more interesting are scammers who put together deepfakes that can be used to con folks out of money. A video that sure looks like YouTuber MrBeast, aka Jimmy Donaldson, promises 10,000 lucky folks a free iPhone. It’s a ploy, of course, but these videos really are good enough to trick someone not looking for signs.

Video credit: Bitdefender

👁️ It’s one thing to read about all this stuff. Want to see it?

👋 I'm not done ... Tomorrow, I'll share the hacking and hitman services I found. Told you the Dark Web is wild!

# **J. *Dark Web deep dive: Hitmen, hacking and credit cards, (Part 2)***

By [Kim Komando](#)

February 27, 2025



Services

*Do you need someone taken care of? Insurance Purposes, Cheating Spouse or Lover? Can and will travel anywhere worldwide. If needed to look like an accident can do, if disposal of the remains is needed can do..25 years experience. No Back and Forth Emails*

*Once Down Payment and Email with pictures, location and any extra info(car driven and where they work phone number) is received the job will be taken care of quickly and efficiently.*

Yesterday I told you all about the Dark Web. Missed it? [Part 1 is here](#). As expected, so many of you asked me, “Why the heck would you even go on the Dark Web?”

## It's my job

No, really! The fine folks at the Daily Mail asked if I'd do a Dark Web deep dive and report back. The reason is probably the same one you had for opening this email: It's intriguing.

I've been doing this long enough that I can bring you all the Dark Web craziness without putting myself at risk. I'm not recommending you go digging around. I'm sharing for the curious among us who know better.

## Follow the links

There's a whole network of aggregators that list marketplaces, Dark Web versions of media outlets and everything else, with names like The Hidden Wiki, Onion.Live and Dark.fail. I started on Reddit with a search for ".onion search aggregators."

Finding live sites takes trial and lots of error since they refresh their URLs all the time to evade law enforcement.

Now, let's jump into what else I found.

## 👉 Are there hitmen for hire?

In theory, absolutely. In reality, you'd have to dig deep to find a real person willing to commit murder or another heinous crime on your behalf. I have to assume most of what pops up in Dark Web search engines are scams or honeypots meant to lure in someone up to no good.

One site I found had a list of rates posted for arson (\$10,000 to \$20,000), assassination (\$10,000 to \$50,000), assault

(\$1,000 to \$5,000) and kidnapping (\$15,000 to \$25,000). Wild that the starting rate for assassination is less than kidnapping.



## 👉 They'll hack anything

One full-service group I found says they've been around since 2007, and "we have worked hard every single day to improve our skills." If it can be hacked, they'll do it.

For a \$990 minimum service fee, they'll monitor someone in real life and digitally. Stealing a password from a specific target (a theft which they guarantee will be completed in 24 hours) is between \$200 to \$300.

A DDoS attack that shuts down a website for a certain amount of time starts at \$200. At the high end — think taking down a big site for an entire day — you're looking at up to \$6,500. But hey, that includes a week free as a bonus! They'll cut a deal if you want to DDoS more than one site, too.



They take Bitcoin and Monero, an untraceable cryptocurrency popular for Dark Web transactions and shady deals.

## 👉 Hacked financial info?

That's everywhere. I saw ads for credit card CVV dumps (that's the three-digit code on the back), hacked Western Union accounts, PayPal logins and Cash App credentials. One site was selling hacked bitcoin wallets at huge discounts, like \$899 for nearly \$96,000 in bitcoin. "In case of any trouble, we will refund your money back." Sure.

I also stumbled onto a site selling cash if you're willing to buy \$700, \$2,500 or \$6,000. "All bills are genuine and ready for any use. You can exchange them, spend money in store, deposit on your card through an ATM." Yeah, seems totally legit.

😓 Phew, buddy. Writing all that up makes me want to go take a shower. Hey, if you always wondered about the Dark Web, now you know. Share this with a friend who wants the inside scoop, too!

## **K. *How to remove personal data from data-broker sites (Spoiler: I use Incogni)***

By [Kim Komando](#)

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I'll never forget when my son, Ian, asked me where in Los Angeles I lived. I told him I couldn't remember — it was 30 years ago, and I lived there for maybe six months. A few minutes later, he called and had the address. It was available for free to anyone on the internet on an online people search directory.

There are an estimated 4,000 companies and sites that collect personal info, and they make it extremely hard to get your data removed. Why? Because they profit big time selling it.

Search for your name online and I bet you'll find yourself listed all over the place. It's not just public records like your name, address and phone number, either. (Though, yes, I did find my personal cell listed online, too.) Data breaches and leaks mean everything from your banking info to your Social Security number is floating around the internet.

## **My mission to remove personal information online**

It goes way beyond your contact info and personal details like your SSN. Data brokers capture exactly who you are by way of thousands of data points. We're talking about the car you drive, the places you go out to eat more often, your favorite coffee brand, who else lives in your house ... I could go on.

I got fed up with how much about me was out there, so I went on a mission to delete as much as I could. My first stop were [data broker sites](#) that collect, store and sell personal data.

Advertisers are one of their biggest customers, but they're not the only ones. It could be hackers, identity thieves, job recruiters digging for extra info, insurance companies, real estate agents, financial institutions or even nosy neighbors looking to find out more about you.

Here's a quick look at how to remove personal data from data broker sites:

1. Search for your data on people search sites
2. Request removal from each site
3. Track your removal requests and follow up
4. Regularly check that your data has been removed

You have to do this for each site. Yeah, it's a lot of work. I spent 36 hours emailing the scummy sites, filling out forms, making calls and even sending letters by USPS. I gave up when I had no real progress. That's when I researched services to do this for me.

I tried three, and I ultimately picked Incogni. The company finds and automatically pulls your info from 190+ data-broker companies and sites that sell it to anyone willing to pay.

## **How Incogni and data broker removal services work**

Sign up and create an account. (Heads up, [this link gets you a year of Incogni's privacy protection for 60% off.](#)) You'll need to give your full name, email address, home address, phone number and birthday. Sites require this info to remove your data, so you'd do that whether or not you use Incogni. You'll also grant Incogni permission to reach out on your behalf.

After you finish the setup process, you'll see your custom dashboard. It lists sites you've been removed from immediately along with pending requests. Be aware that by law, these companies have up to 45 days to respond to your removal requests. Most wait until the last minute and keep your info up as long as possible.

That said, I saw results almost immediately and lots more sites had removed me from their databases within 48 hours.

OK, that's it. Really. Now all that's left to do is check out the Incogni dashboard now and then to see your progress. Let's take a closer look.

## **What personal data Incogni removes from data broker sites**

- **Marketing data brokers:** These companies track details like your browsing history, purchases and interests to serve you targeted ads and other personalized marketing content.
- **Recruitment data brokers:** They gather personal information for background checks used by recruiters and HR teams. Unfortunately, even a minor error in these reports could impact your job prospects.
- **Risk-mitigation brokers:** These brokers compile background information, including criminal records and property details, to create reports for investment companies and other businesses evaluating risk.
- **People search sites:** They build public profiles from data they've scraped, offering basic info for free and full profiles for a small fee. They're the ones you've seen right at the top of search engine results.

## **See the nitty, gritty details**

Incogni's Detailed View tab is a goldmine of info. Here you can [see all the sites](#) Incogni has reached out to on your behalf, sortable by a few different metrics:

- Private or public databases: Some data brokers have publicly available databases, while others maintain private databases you must pay to access.
- Compliance score: An indicator of how quickly and reliably data brokers comply with removal requests.
- Severity score: Calculated based on the level of sensitivity and associated risks of the information held by a data broker.
- Request status: In progress or completed.

Click any listing to see a full status update. That includes dates when requests were sent, the associated risks and an overview of what that data broker does. DataStream, for example, has thousands of data points (like age, income and ethnicity) on 270 million consumers and 60 million households.

## **Top Incogni features for data privacy protection**

These are the ones that sold me.

It's easy to use: Going the DIY route in removing yourself from data brokers and people search sites takes a surprising amount of tech savvy. I can do it, sure, but it's a pain. Incogni is simple and intuitive. After you make an account, you're done.

It saves time and effort: My favorite part of the Incogni dashboard is the box that shows how much long it would have taken to do all this yourself. In my case, Incogni has saved me **471 hours and 45 minutes**. That's almost 20 days! Remember, these sites make it as difficult as possible to remove yourself so the process is a major pain. They dig through all the terms and conditions so you don't have to.

It's a simple way to take back your privacy: Putting in my cell number and primary email address has cut my spam and scam texts and calls down to zero. I didn't think the impact would be so big, but it really is. After all, all the scammers and spammers have to get your info somewhere. Think of Incogni's service as a way to stop it at the source.

They go above and beyond: Everyone I know has lived in multiple places and had different numbers and email addresses over the years. Data broker and people search sites have a trick: They can treat each set of data about you as its own profile. That means even if you get them to delete one, there may be another with different info attached. With Incogni, you can add three different email addresses, physical addresses and phone numbers.

Follow-ups on your behalf: Incogni doesn't just submit a one-time removal request and move on. It follows up with data brokers to make sure they comply. The **user dashboard** shows you exactly which companies have removed your data and which ones are still processing requests. This level of transparency stuck out to me from day one.

Affordable price and no scummy tricks: Similar services charge hundreds of dollars for manual removal. A couple are cheaper, but all they do is show you the page to go to to remove your info. No thanks.

With Incogni, it's clear up front how much you're paying and you can save even more by committing to an annual plan. More on that below.

## **Important things to know before using Incogni**

Not every data broker follows the law. Although many of them follow through with removal requests, some might refuse, citing their own terms or legal requirements. Incogni can't guarantee that every data broker will comply, but they do fight on your behalf.

One thing they can do is request to put your name on permanent data suppression lists, which is amazing. This means companies that agree can never legally sneak you back on.

It doesn't cover every type of data. Incogni is designed primarily to target data brokers and people search sites. It doesn't cover social media platforms or other services that might have your data. If your personal information is part of a search, social media or corporate database, you'll need to address those separately.

Finally, support is email only, at [support@incogni.com](mailto:support@incogni.com). That said, Incogni's team is responsive and none of my readers have ever had an issue getting help.

## How much does Incogni cost?

Monthly subscription: \$14.98 per month for one user

- This plan allows you to use Incogni's service month-to-month without a long-term commitment.

Annual subscription: \$89.88 per year for one user

- This option saves you 50% compared to paying monthly, a much better value if you plan to maintain ongoing privacy protection. It breaks down to \$7.49 per month.

For my listeners: [With code KIM60 you get an annual plan for \\$71.88](#) for the first year, which breaks down to \$5.99 per month. Hey, that's the price of a latte.

For even more savings, go in on a plan with your favorite people. With Incogni's friends and family plan, you can add up to four people. If you pay monthly, it's \$32.98 a month.

 [Use code KIM60 to get a year for just \\$158.30](#). That breaks down to \$13.19 per month for five people, or just \$2.63 per person.

Plan	Cost	Details
Monthly subscription	\$14.98/month for 1 user	Lowest commitment
Annual subscription	\$89.88/year for 1 user	Saves 50% compared to monthly \$7.49/

Annual with Kim's exclusive discount	\$71.88/year for 1 user	Use code KIM60; \$5.99/month (first year)
Friends & Family Plan (Monthly)	\$32.98/month for up to 5 users	\$6.60/month per person
Friends & Family Plan (Annual)	\$197.88/year for up to 5 users	\$3.29/month per person
Friends & Family Plan (Kim's exclusive discount)	\$158.30/year for up to 5 users	Use code KIM60; \$13.19/month total; \$2.62/month

Incogni stands behind its service and offers a 30-day money-back guarantee. If you're not happy, they'll refund you.

## Why an annual subscription to Incogni makes sense for privacy protection

You might think, well, this is one and done, right? I can just do it for a month and be done with it. If only. No data broker service is a one-time fix.

When I was doing it myself, I'd go back to a site and see they'd added me back in, even after I had wiped my profile. That's legal — as long as they get a new piece of data about you. For the life of your Incogni account, they'll continue to follow up on your behalf to keep you off the lists. If you cancel, there's a good chance sites will add you back. That's just how the data broker business works.

That said, I've been impressed with how many new features Incogni has added since I signed up to make that annual payment even more worth it.

✓ Right now, try Incogni for 30 days. If you're not completely satisfied, you'll get your money back. [Use this link to get 60% off when you sign up for an annual plan.](#) I don't get any residuals or kickbacks. I'm just glad you can stay safe with the service I use and recommend!

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