

Choosing an iOS backup method (Should I use iTunes or iCloud to back up my iOS device?)

Curious about how to best back up your iPhone, iPod touch, or iPad? Is [iTunes Backup](#) or [iCloud Backup](#) the best solution for you? Find the answers to these questions and choose a backup method that works for you.

Each backup method has its own advantages. In most cases, we recommend iCloud Backup.

When is iCloud Backup the best choice for me?

[iCloud Backup](#) provides an easy and reliable backup solution if you want to back up your iOS devices wirelessly and automatically without tethering to a computer. iCloud Backup is best for you if:

- You prefer that iCloud take care of backups for you automatically when you connect your device to Wi-Fi and power.
- You want to restore data to your device from almost anywhere via a broadband Wi-Fi connection.
- You don't connect your iOS device to a Mac or PC very frequently.
- You don't own a Mac or PC.
- You want an automatic backup solution to use together with iTunes Backup.

Your iOS device backup includes data and settings stored on your device. It doesn't include data already stored in iCloud. For example:

- Bookmarks
- Contacts
- Calendars
- Documents you save in iCloud using iOS apps and Mac apps
- Mail messages
- Notes
- Shared photo streams and My Photo Stream

iCloud Backup doesn't back up music, movies, and TV shows that you didn't purchase from the iTunes Store, or any podcasts, audio books, or photos that you originally [synced from your computer](#). iCloud Backup will restore your purchased music, movie,

and app content from the iTunes Store, App Store, and iBooks Store during the background restore process. Previous purchases may be unavailable if they're no longer in the iTunes Store, App Store, or iBooks Store.

When is iTunes Backup the best choice for me?

iTunes Backup is best for you if:

- You frequently use the computer that hosts your iTunes Backups.
- You don't have an iCloud account or don't want to use iCloud.
- The photos and videos saved in your device's Camera Roll exceed 1 GB in size, or you have very large backups.
- You want on-site and networked backups.
- You would like a manual or secondary backup solution to use together with iCloud Backup.

Keep in mind that iTunes Backup doesn't create a duplicate back up of your movies, music, podcasts, and apps. [When you back up](#), your media content is [synced from your primary computer via iTunes](#).

When to use iCloud and iTunes Backup together

For an extra level of backup for your data, you can use iCloud Backup and iTunes Backup together.

Using iCloud Backup doesn't disable iTunes Backup completely; it just turns off Automatic Backups via iTunes. You can trigger a manual iTunes Backup whenever you want to create a new one:

1. Plug your iOS device into your primary computer via the provided cable.
2. Open iTunes.
3. For iTunes 11:
 1. In iTunes, click the Devices button in the upper-right.
 2. In the Backups section, click Back Up Now under Manually Back Up and Restore.
4. For iTunes 10.7:
 1. Right-click (or Control-click) your iOS device in the Source list.
 2. Choose Back Up from the iTunes device shortcut menu.

5. Allow the backup to complete. You can monitor the status of the backup in the iTunes status screen.

For the best results, back up with iTunes on a weekly basis or more frequently if you need to back up important data. You might want to [create a reminder](#) to back up.

If you're using iCloud and iTunes Backup together and you want to speed up your iCloud Backup and restore, you can save iCloud storage by turning off iCloud Backup for very large data types. For example, if you have a 15 GB Camera Roll on your iPhone, you might not wish to back it up to iCloud because it's already being manually backed up to iTunes. You can disable back up of any iCloud Backup item in Settings > iCloud > Storage & Backup > Manage Storage > Backups > Backup Options. After doing so, you can back up these items when you manually back up to iTunes.

Additional information

Learn more about:

- [iOS device backup](#)
- [iCloud Backups](#)
- [iTunes Backups](#)
- [iCloud](#)