



Cheat Sheet

iOS 26.5

The Secret Features You Missed

iOS 26.5 CHEAT SHEET

THE SECRET FEATURES YOU MISSED

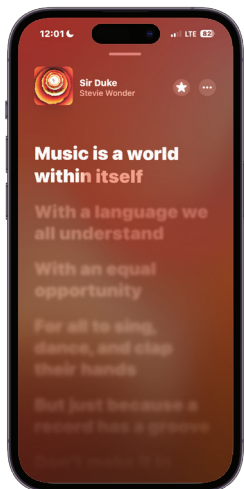
BY JIVAN HALL

iOS 26 introduced big design changes, but not all of them landed for everyone. The good news is, Apple has quietly been making improvements along the way. Here are 15 practical features Apple has released since introducing iOS 26.

1 Take Control of Your Workouts with Manual Updates

Did you know your iPhone now has a Fitness app? You can use it on its own for basic workout tracking or in tandem with your Apple Watch for advanced tracking. And now with iOS 26.1, you can manually log a workout if you forgot to track it on your watch or iPhone! Open the Fitness app. Tap Workout, the search icon, then tap Activity. Tap Workouts, and then tap the + button in the upper corner of the screen. Enter your workout details. If you want to earn Move credits, or exercise credits, be sure to enter the total calories burned and the start and end time for your workout. This will update your activity rings!

(iOS 26.1)

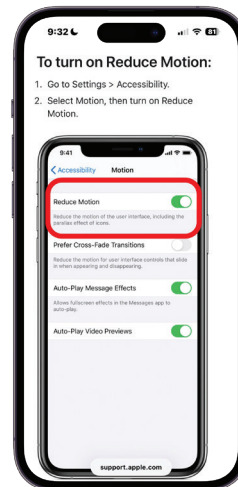


2 Sing Along to Any Song with Offline Lyrics in Apple Music

This is one of the areas where Apple Music has a solid leg up on Spotify. You can now download a song to your device and it will include the lyrics, which you can view with or without an internet connection. Just download a song to your device as usual from Apple Music and go offline. Play

the song, open the full-screen player, and tap the speech bubble icon at the bottom left hand of your screen. Just keep in mind that you need an active Apple Music subscription for this to work.

(iOS 26.2)



3 Make Your Phone Feel Faster in 10 Seconds with Reduce Motion

Switching this on will replace those long app opening and closing sequences with much faster ones. Technically this doesn't change the processing speed of your apps, but by cutting down on the transition delays, your navigation feels much snappier. Go to Settings, Accessibility, and click on

Motion. From here you can toggle this feature on or off.

(iOS 26.4)

4 Use Better Controls with Swipe to Skip Tracks in Apple Music

Spotify has had this feature for years, and Apple finally came around. In the Music app, you can now easily skip tracks by swiping left or right in both the Now Playing screen and the Mini Player. It's a small tweak but it makes the listening experience feel more fluid and natural.

(iOS 26.1)

5 Turn on Live Translation in Messages

Live Translation launched with iOS 26 and expanded to even more languages

in iOS 26.1. This is an incredible feature that uses the power of Apple Intelligence, so first make sure Apple Intelligence is turned on. To do this go to Settings and then tap Apple Intelligence and Siri. Then tap to turn on Apple Intelligence. Go to the Messages app and open any message you want to translate. Long press any portion of the message and then choose Translate. You will have the option to translate just that portion or the whole conversation. Next you will be prompted to pick which language you wish to translate to and from. Now when you go back to the message and type, it will show both languages and translate in real time.

(iOS 26.1)

6 Tame Liquid Glass

Liquid Glass was a great design concept, but it received a lot of backlash among users. It just made things harder to read. Apple got the message and quickly added more settings to customize how much of the Liquid Glass effect you would like on your device. You can now choose between the default clear look or a more readable tinted look. Simply long press on the Home Screen and a button will appear in the upper left-hand corner of your screen. Tap edit and then choose Customize. From here, a pop-up window will allow you to play around with different variations on the Liquid Glass display.

(iOS 26.1)

7 Turn on the New Background Security Feature for Added Peace of Mind

Apple explains that by toggling on this feature you will get background security improvements in between the larger software updates. These are software updates that contain important fixes for security vulnerabilities. Go to Settings, Security and Updates, and then toggle on this feature to opt in.

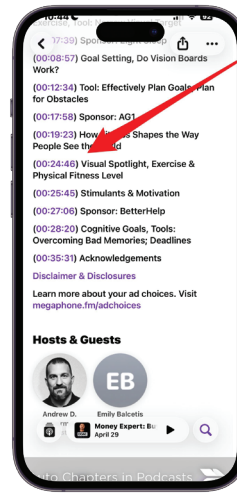
(iOS 26.1)

8 Stop Accidentally Opening Your Camera App

Years ago, Apple added a swipe gesture to open the camera from the Lock Screen. This sounded great in theory for easily accessing the camera, but it quickly became a nuisance for people who were accidentally triggering it. You can now disable the gesture by going to Settings.

Scroll down to Camera, and then toggle off the Lock Screen to Open Camera option.

(iOS 26.1)



9 Enjoy Smarter Podcasts with Chapters and Clickable Links

Now when you listen to a podcast, Apple Intelligence automatically generates chapters (if the creator hasn't supplied their own), which makes it easier to navigate episodes. Simply scroll down on any podcast to see the auto populated chapters with timestamps and sub headers. Also, if there are any links

mentioned in the podcast, Apple Intelligence will make them clickable so you can access them directly from the player and transcript.

(iOS 26.2)

10 See Your Notifications from Afar with Front and Back Flash Notifications

If you're in a loud area, are hearing impaired, or your phone is across the room, this is a great way to avoid missing a beat with your notifications. Go to Settings, tap Accessibility, scroll down to the Hearing section, and tap Audio & Visual. Then scroll to the very bottom for Flash for Alerts. From here, you can trigger the back LED, front screen, or both. Your phone will now flash when you get a message.

(iOS 26.2)

11 Toggle on the New Enhanced Safety Alerts

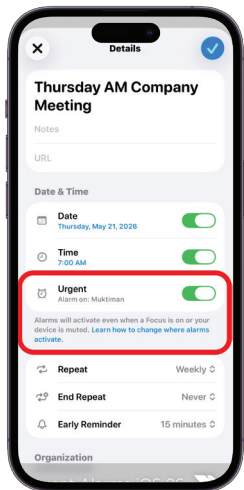
Enhanced Safety Alerts can inform you about imminent threats such as floods, natural disasters, and other emergencies (in the US). You'll find it in your notification settings. Scroll all the way to the bottom until you get to Government Alerts. Tap on Emergency Alerts to opt in.

(iOS 26.2)

12 Send Safer AirDrop files with New Verification Codes

No more accidental spam AirDrops! Apple has added an additional layer of verification when using AirDrop to people who are not in your contact list. This will ensure that it goes to the right person. In order to do this, the receiver must first open their control panel and long press the Connectivity controls. Then tap AirDrop, and choose Everyone for 10 minutes. Once this is set, you can then choose the file or picture you want to send and tap the Share button. Then tap AirDrop and choose the other person under People. If both devices are running iOS 26.2 or later they will be prompted to use an AirDrop code. Ask the other person to tap Get AirDrop code on their device and then have them tell you the code which you will enter on your phone.

(iOS 26.2)



13 Stay Organized with Urgent Reminders and trigger an Alarm for Important Meetings

This new feature is incredibly useful. Alarms for Reminders help you stay on top of urgent tasks. Open the Reminders app and tap New Reminder or select an existing task. Tap the info button (the i). Name the reminder and then enter the date and time you need to be alerted. Finally, toggle

the Urgent button to on. This will trigger an audible alarm on the date and time you selected.

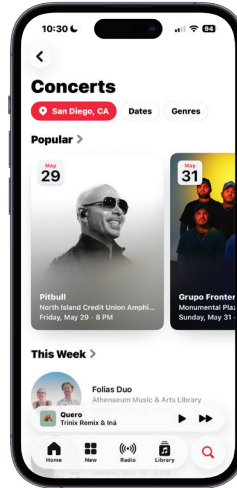
(iOS 26.2)

14 Send Messages to Android Users with End-to-End Encrypted RCS Messaging

Have you ever received a video from an Android user that was so degraded you could barely watch it? Apple fixed that with RCS Messaging, and then made it super secure with End-to-End Encryption. No one, including the phone company, or even hackers can read those messages now. If you have iOS 26.5, just make sure it's turned on. Go to Settings, and scroll down to Apps. Tap Messages, scroll down and tap RCS

Messaging. Toggle on RCS Messaging and End-to-End Encryption. End-to-end encrypted RCS messaging is currently in beta and available with supported carriers.

(iOS 26.5)



15 Use Apple Intelligence to Find Local Concerts in Apple Music

Concerts helps you discover nearby shows from artists in your library and recommends new artists based on what you listen to. Open the Apple Music app and tap on the Search tab at the bottom of the screen. Scroll down and tap on Concerts. If it's your first time, you will be prompted to set your location.

(iOS 26.4)



Jivan Hall is an online instructor at iPhone Life and a longtime Apple enthusiast. With a background in business and technology and a degree in Business Administration, he enjoys breaking down everyday tech into clear, approachable guidance.