



STAYING CONNECTED FROM HOME

A Course on Social Distancing with Your iPhone

Lesson 4: Essential Home Stay Apps

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LESSON 4: ESSENTIAL HOME STAY APPS

Virtual Tours

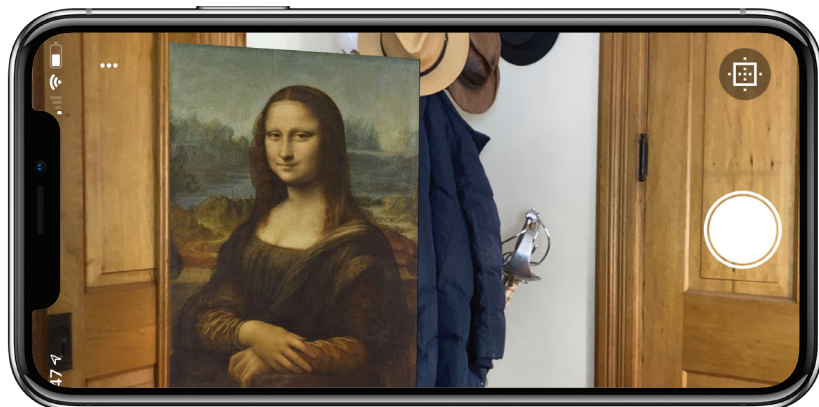


Figure 1

Google Art Project

(free)

Download this free app and dive into a whole different way to explore art. The Google Art Project (figure 01) offers images of artworks from dozens of major galleries around the world, with a growing portfolio. But that's just the start. Tap the camera icon to be offered a selection of surprising ways that your iPhone can bring art to life. You can place famous artworks in your house to see what they would look like if you were near them, you can blend your selfy with famous art styles, and you can virtually visit museums.

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

EXPLORE VIRTUAL EXHIBITS AS IF YOUR IPHONE IS YOUR EYES

Open the app and tap the camera button, then select Pocket Gallery. Choose a gallery (I found the Meet Vermeer gallery particularly interesting), calibrate your camera by pointing your iPhone at a nearby flat surface, and then tap Enter and your iPhone will become a virtual window into the art installation. Hold your camera up in front of you and walk around. Make sure to do this in an area with lots of space! If you need to, you can touch the virtual floor on your iPhone screen and drag to 'pull' yourself along in the virtual reality.

Virtual Book Clubs: A Book Opens a Thousand Doors

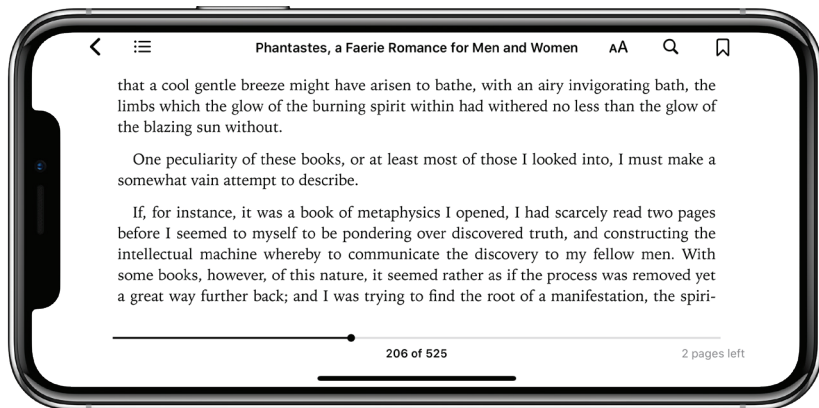


Figure 2

Books

Apple's built in Books app (figure 02) offers access to millions of titles and a clean reading view that makes it easy to keep your place and reduces eyes-strain while reading from a screen. They also offer audiobooks for keeping up while you're doing chores. If you haven't tried it, the navigation is simple, the interface intuitive, and it automatically sets and tracks reading goals.

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

BOOKS TIP: USE BOOKS TO STORE AND READ PDF FILES.

Open the PDF file in Mail, Gmail, Outlook, Safari or Chrome. Then tap the Share icon. Scroll to the right in the list of suggested apps. The link you want is called Copy to Books. If you don't see it, then tap the three dot more icon for a full list of apps, and you should find it there.



Figure 3

TURN ON DARK MODE IN THE KINDLE APP

Not everyone prefers the dark mode color theme, where the background is black and the text white, but for some it is a real eye-saver. If you want it in the Kindle app, then open the Kindle app and look in the bottom right corner of the Home tab for a More menu. In the More menu tap Settings, then tap Color Theme, then you can choose Light or Dark.

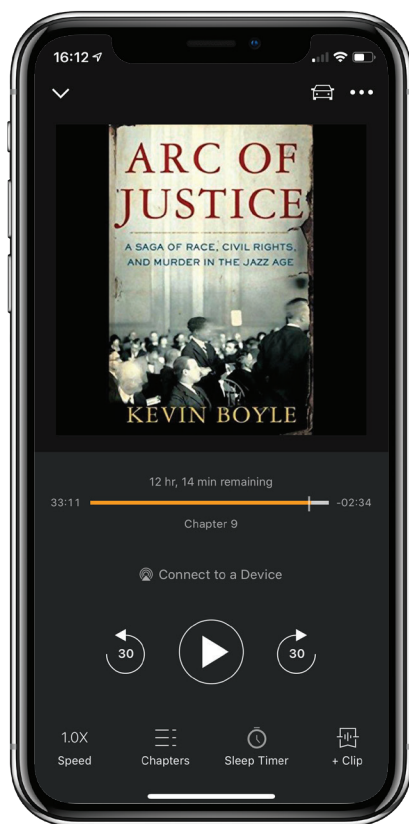


Figure 4

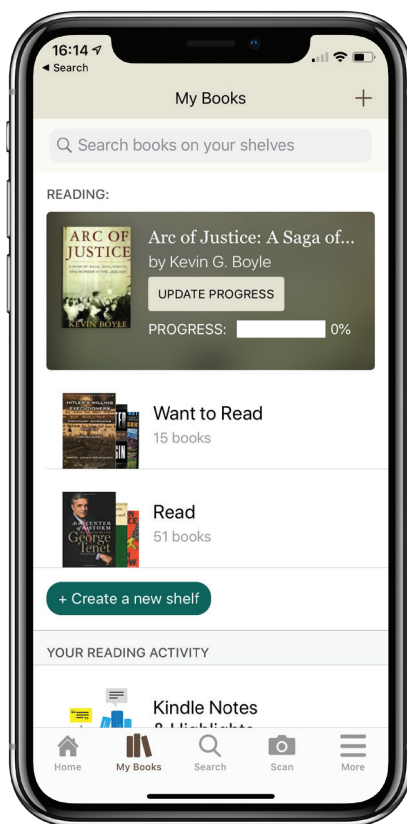


Figure 5

sharing. It's a fantastic community for figuring out what to read next, for following the thread of a subgenre looking for new authors, and for keeping something exciting at the top of your reading list.

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

Kindle

(Free)

Apple's major competitor in the e-books market has an app for the iPhone and iPad. Kindle (figure 03) for iOS (and iPadOS) offers access to the six million e-book titles available from Amazon. As e-readers go, it isn't quite as beautiful as the Apple app, but the vast library is more than sufficient compensation.

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

Audible

(Free)

Audible (figure 04) is Amazon's audio book service and, with two hundred thousand titles, the largest collection of audiobooks in the world. Audible continues to add more and more titles, but the iOS app does have a few quirks. For one thing, you can search Amazon's audiobook archives in the iOS app, but you can't buy books directly. You have to buy credits in the Audible store, and then spend those credits on books. This definitely gets in the way when you just want your next audiobook fix, but fortunately you can also buy audiobooks on Amazon.com and have them delivered straight to your iOS device, as long as both the app and the purchase were made using the same Amazon account.

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

GoodReads

(Free)

There are so many books, how do you decide what to read next? GoodReads (figure 05) is a website devoted to book reviews. You can track your progress, post updates, discuss books you love, and review the ones you think are worth

GOODREADS TIP: LOOKUP A BOOK WITH YOUR CAMERA.

Use your camera to quickly and effortlessly add a book to your list of books that you’ve read or the list of books you want to read.

On the main GoodReads app screen, tap the Scan tab. The app will ask for access to your camera, and you have to allow it. Then point your iPhone or iPad at any book cover, or even a picture of a book cover, and the app will find that book. You can then save it to your want to read list or your read list, to train the app to make better suggestions or to help you remember something you want to read in the future.

Exercising Aids: Apps to Keep You Moving

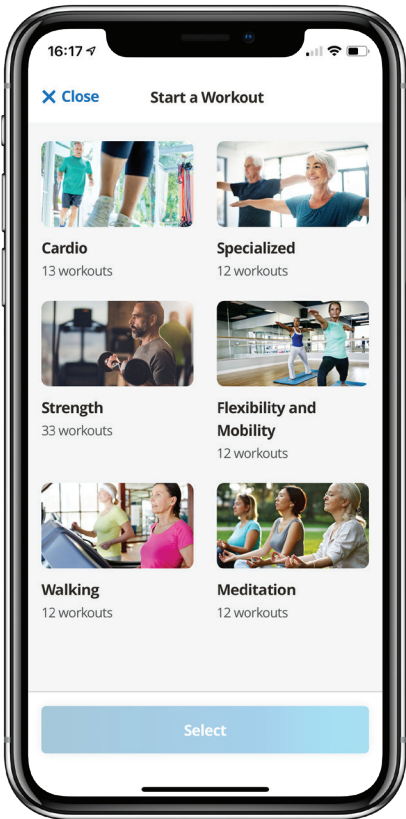


Figure 6

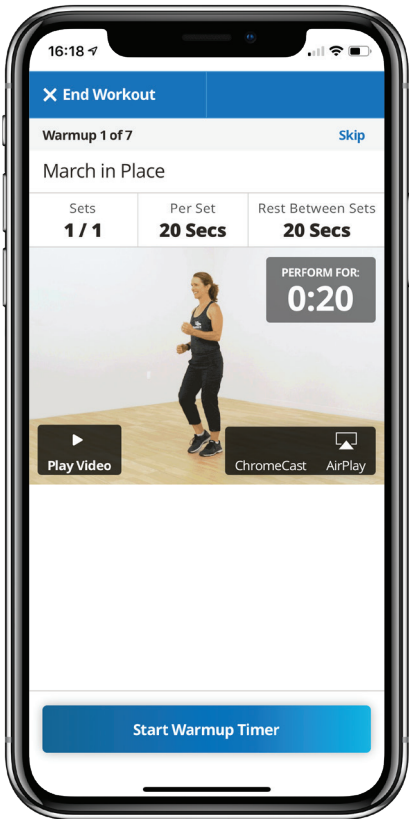


Figure 7

SilverSneakers GO
(Free)

SilverSneakers Go (figures 06 & 07) offers a variety of workout programs designed for seniors, as well as scheduled reminders for different fitness activities. SilverSneakers Go as a great walk-through when you first install the app, to make sure that you understand its features. When I signed up, I scheduled a cardio workout right away, and I was impressed with the diverse workout options, including many that require no equipment at all, for strength, walking, cardio, for athletes and for couch potatoes like me. This is a great choice if you want to get started doing light workouts in your own home.

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

Cooking

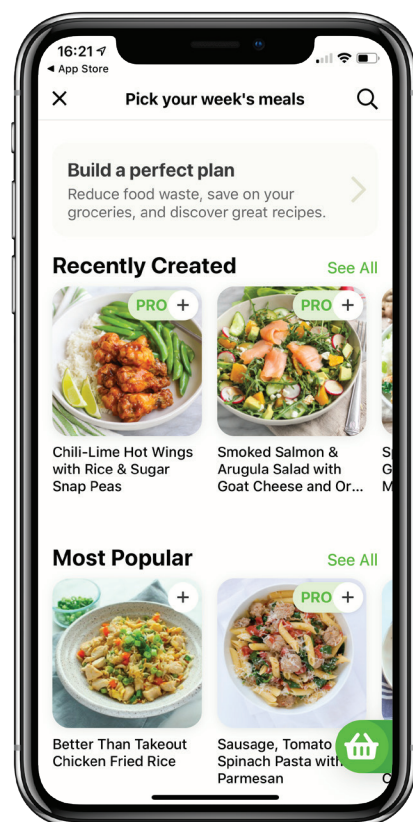


Figure 8

Mealime

(Free, \$5.99/month for premium)

I've tried Mealime in the past and shared my experience. It's one of the few practical daily meal planning apps, as it offers meals you can make within about 45 minutes. Every meal I've tried is super delicious, and my only real complaint is that there needs to be even more variety (though new recipes are added every week).

What It Does

Mealime is a meal-planning app with quick recipes that can be tailored to your personal eating preferences. The service offers various different menu types including Low Carb, Vegetarian, and Paleo. You can also exclude ingredients you're allergic to or don't like. Then, you select whether you need to make two or four servings with each meal.

[figure 08]

The free version of Mealime allows you to build a meal plan (a feature that most apps charge for), but you only get access to some of the recipes (figure 08). For unlimited access to recipes and nutrition tracking, you can upgrade to Pro for \$5.99/month. After you have a meal plan in place, the app will give you the grocery shopping list for the week. Once you've bought everything you need, return to your Meal Plan to follow each recipe and create quick and delicious meals.

Why We Love It

The app is meant for people who want to eat healthily without spending too much time preparing meals. When I tried out the app, I was impressed with how tasty each meal was. And compared to every other recipe app I've ever tried, the Mealime meals are fast to make, taking anywhere from 15 to 45 minutes.

Another great thing about Mealime is that it doesn't use weird ingredients that you can only find at fancy health food stores in big cities. Mealime has none of that. Most of the time, I already had about half of the groceries needed for a recipe and the rest were easily bought with a quick trip to any grocery store.

Overall, Mealime is my absolute favorite recipe app that I've tried. Everything tastes delicious and doesn't take too long to make. Plus, it's healthy and includes lots of options for all kinds of eating preferences and needs. If you need some help consistently making meals during the week, give Mealime a try.

Of the many meals I tried, the black bean burger was my favorite. It was one of the best vegetarian burgers I've ever had, much less made. However, since I can't browse through the available recipes, I also can't tell how many recipes there are. I saw a lot of repeat recipes when I wanted more variety. Ironically, you can browse some recipes on the Mealime website. So why that same feature isn't available within the app baffles me.

—Conner Carey, Former Web Writer



Figure 9

Hippy Lane

(\$2.99 - additional recipe packs start at \$.99)

I grew up on the standard American diet of canned and boxed convenience food, but when I discovered my first health food store in high school, I knew I'd found a new way of life. Hippy Lane's crunchy granola vibe is right up my alley (figure 09). The app offers over 100 whole-foods based, healthful recipes, most of which are dairy and gluten free, and vegan. There's something to please everyone, including allergy sufferers, and people on a Paleo or raw diet.

Since this resource began as a recipe stash for home cooks wanting a sweet treat without refined sugar and artificial colors, Hippy Lane offers more than 50 delicious dessert options. Baked Peaches with Vanilla Cashew Cream, Raw Peanut Butter Chocolate and Raspberry Layer Cake, Coconut Tahini Cookies; you'll want to try them all.

Savory recipes like crunchy Nut Bars, Red Lentil, Sweet Potato, and Spinach Dhal, Spicy Caponata, Corn Fritters, and Vegan Caesar Salad round out Hippy Lane's offerings. If you work your way through the whole app and want more, there are several paid recipe packs available.

—Leanne Hays, Writer at iPhone Life

Home Delivery Apps: Get Your Needs Covered

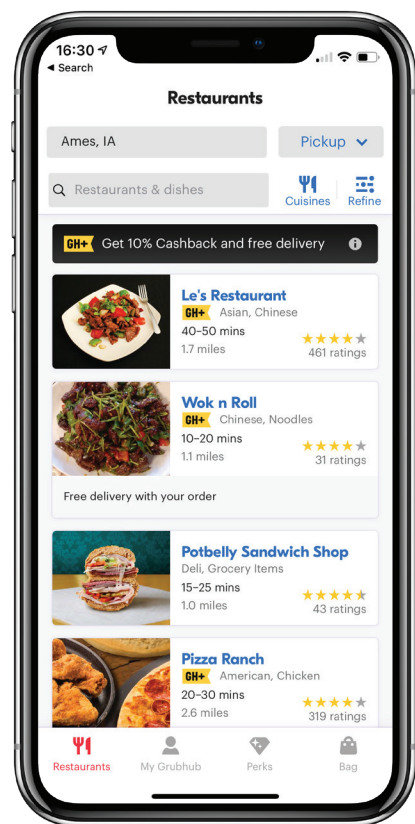


Figure 10

There are a variety of apps that connect with networks of local restaurants or grocers and employ shoppers or delivery car drivers. You can place an order through the app, and shoppers will go fill that order for you and deliver it to your house. All of these apps work better in some areas than others; they need local workers, restaurants, and grocers, but they're quickly growing, and you've probably got service with at least one of the following. Perfect for staying stocked up at home!

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

Instacart

(Free)

Instacart is for grocery stores. Simply check off the items on your shopping list and your local grocery store will either have the food waiting for you when you arrive, or deliver it for a fee. Shopping made so convenient, you'll wonder why you weren't doing it this way all along.

Postmates

(Free)

Another network of restaurants and also grocery stores, Postmates offers delivery options from businesses in its network. They offer pharmacy and other essentials in some areas, so this is a good alternative to Instacart in addition to doing restaurant delivery.

Grubhub

(Free)

Restaurants list their menus on Grubhub (figure 10) and you can then order and pay through the app and specify whether you want takeout or delivery. Sometimes has minimum order amounts.

Seamless

(Free)

Seamless and Grubhub started out as competitors but then merged. With the merger, the two apps offer the same list of restaurants in the same cities, and the same exact service, but the apps are different so you may like one app better than the other.

DoorDash

(Free)

DoorDash is a competitor to Grubhub, above. They often have service fees to DoorDash and to the restaurant you're ordering from, in addition to the tip, but they may service areas that Grubhub/Seamless do not.

UberEats

(Free)

Like Uber the car service except you place an order with participating restaurants and the Uber driver picks up your food. Fast and easy restaurant delivery!

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

Necessities

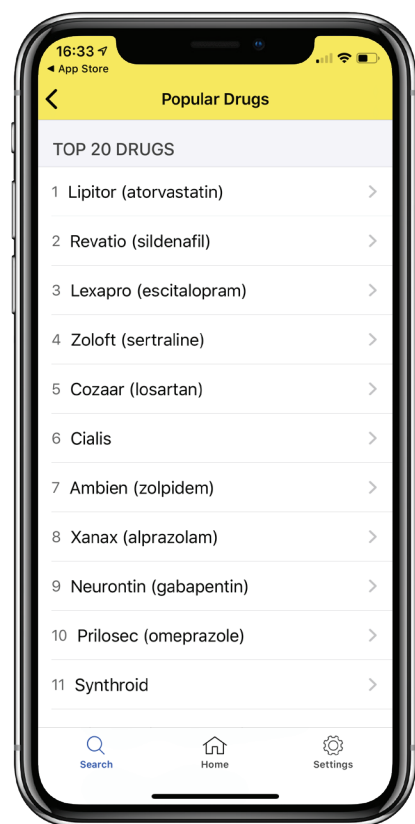


Figure 11

GoodRx

(Free)

GoodRx (figure 11) is an app that compares prescription prices between pharmacies and provides manufacturer prescription coupons. GoodRx can be used by anyone with or without insurance, including Medicaid, to help save money.

What It Is

GoodRx compares prices for medications between pharmacies in your location. Depending on the prescription, GoodRx could also provide a manufacturer coupon that you can save in the GoodRx app, as a text, or as an email to show before paying at the register. You can use GoodRx to compare the price of prescriptions not only between pharmacies, but also to see if paying out of pocket would be cheaper than paying through your insurance. Additionally, you can adjust the dosage and quantity, it might be a cost advantage to pay for more than one month's prescription at a time. GoodRx can't be used in combination with insurance, so if you use a GoodRx coupon, it will be considered an out-of-network payment. GoodRx coupons are accepted at most, if not all, pharmacies including independent ones. If a pharmacy refuses to honor a GoodRx coupon, it's recommended you call GoodRx's customer service line and speak to a representative. Pharmacies are not obligated to honor coupons for controlled substance prescriptions, such as opioids and Adderall.

Why We Love It

I honestly didn't know prescription prices vary depending on location and pharmacy, or that it might be cheaper to pay without going through my insurance. Being able to do price comparisons and decide if I want to use my insurance or the GoodRx coupon lets me have that much more control on how much I'm paying for medical expenses. If I use a GoodRx discount, I can send my receipts to my insurance company to see if I qualify for a reimbursement or have the paid amount count towards my deductible. GoodRx also includes a highly detailed profile of each drug. I can review what the medication is supposed to do, the side effects, and warnings. This is

especially helpful as I'll forget if I need to take the pills with water or food, and I can just review the information on the GoodRx app.

Find a Pharmacy

For GoodRx to find pricing and available coupons, it has to know where you are. You can allow the app to use your current location or enter your city and state or zip code. GoodRx seems to search around the 25-mile range and will include options to fulfill prescriptions by mail order.

Identify A Pill

Have some loose pills and can't remember what they are much less what they're for? GoodRx has a Pill Identifier feature in the app's Settings tab. You can type the imprint or text visible on the pill and select its shape or color. Even if you're taking your best guess at any of the descriptions, the Pill Identifier will present relevant matches. The results will show a clear picture and description of the medication with its title, dosage, and manufacturer.

It's good to be aware that prescription prices can vary so widely between pharmacies. If a medication is cheaper but farther away, you can decide if the savings is worth the trip. As complicated as insurance can be, GoodRx is a tool that aims to make at least drug prices easy to understand.

—Hallei Halter, former Web Writer

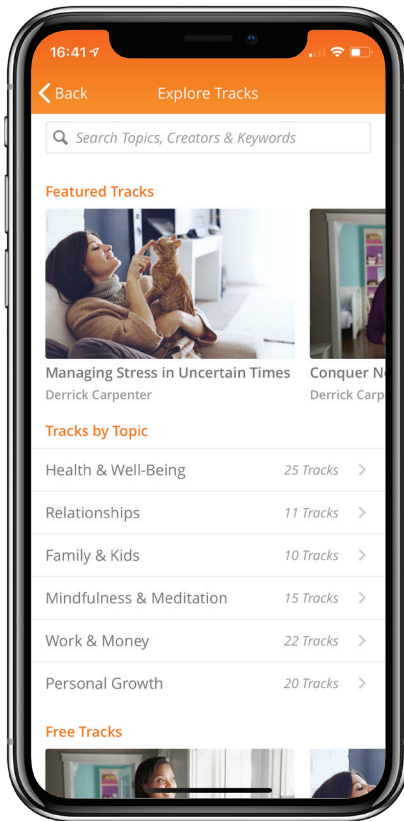


Figure 12

Meditation

Happify

(Free, \$14.99/month)

Happify (figure 12) aims to change the way you think and feel by using science-based games and activities to break negative patterns and build healthier emotional habits. I'm not sure whether the app made me happier or not, but it's a pleasant way to pass the time when I would otherwise be mindlessly scrolling through my phone. Full access requires a subscription, but there is plenty of good free content to get started with.

—Sarah Kingsbury, Chief Web Editor at iPhone Life

Tide

(Free)

I really appreciate the simplicity of this meditation app. There are four main ways to use Tide: for focusing, sleeping, taking a nap, and doing breathing exercises. Whichever way you choose to use it, you will be given options to customize the duration of the exercise, as well as set the background noise you would like to listen to. I use the free version of the app, which means I have four different sounds to choose from. However, if you get the premium version of the app you will have access to many more.

—Rheanne Taylor, Senior Video Producer

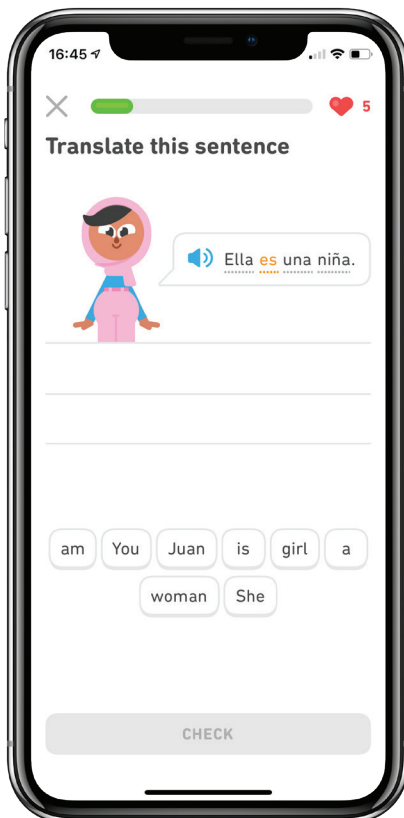


Figure 13

Education: Apps to Start Your New Adventure

Duolingo

(Free)

Duolingo (figure 13) makes language learning a game, with little games and positive feedback. I've been using it to learn a little Spanish, and I'm finding that the challenge of learning a language is made far easier by having a pocket full of reminders and short, engaging lessons. Duolingo offers lessons from 10 to 20 minutes a day, and when I first started I thought 20 minutes a day sounded pretty easy, but it's not! Pacing myself on these lessons has really gotten my brain going. Learning a whole new language can seem a daunting task, but Duolingo helps turn learning a language into a habit of building small and incremental successes into everyday life that quickly fades into routine: a routine that will yield substantial progress in due time.

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life

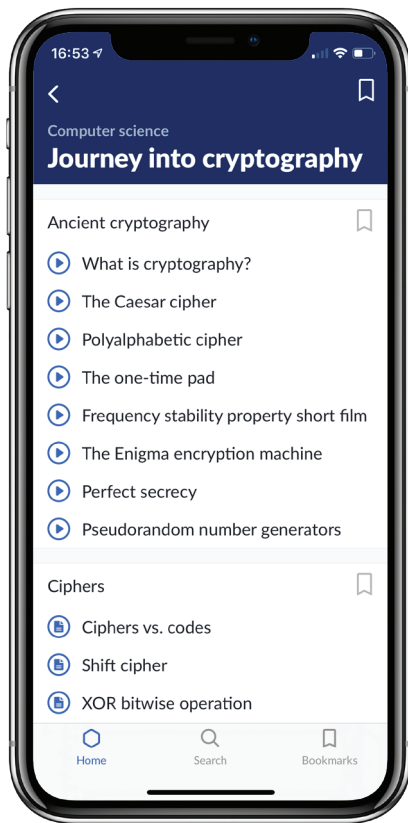


Figure 14

Khan Academy

(Free)

Khan Academy (figure 14) is a famous and wonderful non-profit online educational platform. It started out as just primary school math lessons delivered in short videos, but the uncommon skill of the teacher and the effectiveness of his explanations quickly expanded the demand to include game-like programs for working on the math, and then from that they kept expanding into other fields of study. Now they offer a curriculum of instruction to take anyone from addition and subtraction all the way up to computer science or advanced physics. When I first heard about Khan Academy about six years ago, I signed up and spent a Saturday afternoon working through all their basic mathematics lessons from addition up. I wanted to see how far through the primary school education I could get in one sitting. It turned out to stretch my brain in a way that I find incredibly pleasing and I've been addicted ever since. The lessons have helped me understand the math necessary to launch a video game company and master spreadsheets for my businesses. It's changed the way I think, and it's worth every minute. There's no recreation like education!

—Cullen Thomas, Writer & Producer at iPhone Life



Figure 15

Games: Play with Your iPhone and With Friends Too!

Animal Crossing Pocket Camp

(Free)

You've probably seen references to Animal Crossing: New Horizons all over the internet and you may be feeling a little left out if you don't own a Nintendo Switch. Fortunately for you (and me) there is a free alternative for your iPhone! You may not get the full Animal Crossing experience, but the iOS version of Animal Crossing (figure 15) is still lots of fun. You'll be able to collect the same resources as you would in New Horizons, as well as interact with some of your favorite villagers. I love how simple and fun this game is!

—Rheanne Taylor, Senior Video Producer

ASSIGNMENTS

Pick two:

1. Visit a gallery in the Google Arts and Culture app.
2. Write a book review on GoodReads
3. Do a workout with Silversneakers Go
4. Take a lesson on Duolingo or Khan Academy
5. Make a meal plan using Mealime
6. Order a meal with a meal delivery app

Extra credit: Post a screenshot of your app application to the iPhone Life Facebook group.