TAKE CONTROL OF

iCLOUD

by JOE KISSELL

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Welcome to *Take Control of iCloud, Ninth Edition*, version 9.0.1, published in February 2023 by alt concepts. This book was written by Joe Kissell and edited by Glenn Fleishman.

iCloud is Apple’s suite of internet services. This book helps you make sense of iCloud, configure it for your needs, and choose the best ways of using each feature.

If you want to share this ebook with a friend, we ask that you do so as you would with a physical book: “lend” it for a quick look, but ask your friend to buy a copy for careful reading or reference. Discounted classroom and Mac user group copies are available.

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### Updates and More

You can access extras related to this book on the web (use the link in *Ebook Extras*, near the end; it’s available only to purchasers). On the ebook’s Take Control Extras page, you can:

- Download any available new version of the ebook for free, or buy any subsequent edition at a discount.

- Access the book in both PDF and EPUB formats. (Learn about reading on mobile devices on our [Device Advice](#) page.)

- Read the ebook’s blog. You may find new tips or information, as well as a link to an author interview.

If you bought this ebook from the Take Control website, it has been added to your account, where you can download it in other formats and access any future updates.
Settings vs. Preferences

In macOS Ventura, Apple replaced System Preferences with System Settings, and in most apps, the Preferences window became a Settings window. In this book, I sometimes use a shorthand like “go to Mail > Settings/Preferences” or “open System Preferences/System Settings” to reflect both possibilities; when the details are significantly different, I spell them out separately for Ventura or later, and Monterey or earlier.

What’s New in Version 9.0.1

Version 9.0.1 is a minor update to address the following:

• Added two sidebars, About Card Verification Numbers or CVVs and Apple Pay, Safari-Store Cards, and Safari Settings, which clarify Safari’s use of CVV codes for credit cards

• Made another clarification about credit cards in Use iCloud Key-chain with Another Password Manager

• Corrected a misleadingly worded statement and a typo in the sidebar iCloud Drive and Backups

• Removed a few lingering references to two-step verification

What Was New in the Ninth Edition

This edition added coverage of Ventura, iOS 16, and iPadOS 16, plus recent changes to the iCloud website. Besides detailing the many adjustments to settings and apps in the latest operating systems, I made the following changes:

• I covered new and significantly changed features for Windows users; see Set Up iCloud for Windows, Use iCloud Music Features, and Manage Your Photos.

• You can disable Private Relay for a single webpage; see Enable and Configure iCloud Private Relay. Apple also removed the “beta” label from Private Relay toward the end of 2022.

• I added an overview of how to Share a Photo Library in Ventura, iOS 16, iPadOS 16, or later, as Apple created a newer system than the one in place for years.

• The topics Share Files and Folders on a Mac or PC and Use the Files App for iOS or iPadOS were fully revised to cover interface changes in Ventura, iOS 16, and iPadOS 16.

• Starting in iOS 16 and iPadOS 16, you can create and edit groups of contacts (which can then be used as distribution lists in Mail). See Work with Contact Groups.

• Apple redesigned the iCloud website, so I made the appropriate adjustments in the chapter Use the iCloud Website.

• macOS, iOS, and iPadOS support hardware security keys for two-factor authentication; I mentioned these in Use a Security Key.

• The Protect Your Privacy topic is now divided into a revised discussion of how to Take Basic Privacy Steps and a new topic, Use Advanced Data Protection.

Note: Due to significant iCloud changes since their release, this edition removes details related to iOS 14 and iPadOS 14.
iCloud, Apple’s collection of online services, offers a simple way to keep all your important data in sync across your devices. iCloud’s mission is to propagate your documents, music, TV shows, movies, photos, contacts, calendars, passwords, and other data to all your devices so immediately and automatically that you never think about where your data resides anymore.

But iCloud goes far beyond the concept of syncing. Many features you use on a Mac, iOS/iPadOS device, Apple TV, or Apple Watch want to involve iCloud in some way. You can use your Apple device without an iCloud account, but many common tasks will be more awkward or even impossible. And, from Apple’s point of view, why would you want to use a device without iCloud? A basic account for syncing, email, and locating devices and people is free, and the iCloud infrastructure makes everything work together much more smoothly.

That’s not to say iCloud always works as advertised! When it does, it’s great, but the set of services is so complex that problems are bound to occur—and frequently do. Since Apple has made so much of your experience dependent on iCloud, a network outage, software bug, or server malfunction can make the simplest tasks frustrating.

And what about privacy? You can sync your photos and videos instantly across all your devices—great! And the data from your iOS devices is automatically backed up to the cloud—great! And you can share anything with a couple of taps or clicks—great! But storing your private data in the cloud could mean that if someone cracks your account, your private visual moments, your home address, and tons of other personal details could be accessible to identity thieves, financial criminals, and people with prurient interests. You must learn about and take additional steps to address these threats.

And while iCloud is pretty good at keeping your own data in sync, it’s poor at sharing data between users. Features like Shared Photo Library, Shared Albums, and Family Sharing point in the right direction,
and they’re useful as far as they go. But you still can’t easily share a whole address book with your spouse, or a keychain containing usernames and passwords with your family.

There’s also the question of hardware support. Apple provides ever-greater support for many of iCloud’s features in Windows, but only a smaller subset can be used (after a fashion) on Linux and Android devices. Since Apple is in the business of selling hardware, it stands to reason that iCloud works most fluidly and fully on Apple devices. Macs, iOS and iPadOS devices (iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch), Apple TVs, and Apple Watches offer the best support for iCloud.

In this fully revised ninth edition of Take Control of iCloud, I focus on what I consider the interesting parts of iCloud. I show you what iCloud is capable of, how to think about it, and how to put its key features to good use. In the process, I hope to expose you to useful capabilities you never knew existed. But I also tell you how to keep private information secure (even if it reduces iCloud’s utility), point out cases in which iCloud may not be the best tool, and occasionally mention other options you can consider.

This version you’re reading, 9.0, incorporates the very latest updates to iCloud, including a revamped website, significant improvements to Windows support, a new way to share photos, and major new cloud-storage privacy features. (Apple made some of the largest changes to iCloud in the last several months than they have in years!)

In the pages ahead, you’ll find out all you need to know to master iCloud to your best advantage and troubleshoot services when things go awry.

Note: While book covers iCloud features that may work across a range of operating systems, the significant changes in recent years, including the addition of the paid iCloud+ service, require that I focus on macOS 10.15 Catalina and later, iOS 15/iPadOS 15 and later, Windows 11, and tvOS version 15 and later.

Click here to buy the full 243-page “Take Control of iCloud” for only $14.99!
Although you can skip around freely in this book to learn about the topics that interest you most, I encourage you to read (or at least skim) two early chapters before moving on to the rest: Get to Know iCloud and Set Up iCloud. Those chapters provide important foundational information, which help make sense of material later in the book. If you already read an earlier edition, start with Catch Up with iCloud Changes and then skip those foundational chapters.

**Get started:**
- Discover what’s new in the last year or so—and do a quick Storage Checkup of your iCloud online data storage needs and costs—in Catch Up with iCloud Changes.
- Learn about iCloud and iCloud+ features in Get to Know iCloud.
- Set up all your devices to use iCloud. See Set Up iCloud.
- Get your family set up to share purchases, calendars, location data, and more. See Use iCloud Family Sharing.
- Become familiar with iCloud+, Apple’s new name for a collection of storage and services offered with paid tiers. See Use iCloud+.

**Keep your data in sync across devices:**
- Apple has two cloud-based music services: Apple Music and iTunes Match. Learn how these services work and interact, and find details about iTunes Match in Use iCloud Music Features.
- Use iCloud Photos to sync all your photos among Macs, iOS and iPadOS devices, and the cloud, and use Shared Albums to share photos with other people. See Manage Your Photos.
- Keep your documents and app data current everywhere using iCloud Drive and other forms of in-app syncing. See Keep Documents and App Data in Sync.

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• Make sure your major forms of personal data (email, contacts, and calendars) are automatically mirrored across all your devices. See Keep Mail, Contacts, and Calendars in Sync.

• Learn about syncing data from other apps, including Messages, News, Safari, Siri, and more. See Sync Other iCloud Data.

• Keep usernames, passwords, and credit card numbers in sync across devices, generate new random passwords, and edit your saved credentials as you Work with iCloud Keychain.

**Use the other iCloud features:**

• Cut, copy, and paste from one device to another when you Use Universal Clipboard.

• Access web-based versions of the core iCloud apps on nearly any platform. See Use the iCloud Website.

• Locate a wayward Apple device, find a friend or family member, and track AirTags and Find My items. See Find My Nouns.

• Learn how iCloud can back up and restore crucial data from your iOS devices in Back Up and Restore iOS/iPadOS Data.

• Own an Apple TV? Find out which iCloud features your streaming box can use and how. Read Use iCloud on an Apple TV.

• Update your iCloud account details. See Manage Your Account.

• Keep your account safe and protect your private data, including deciding whether to enable Advanced Data Privacy (ADP) for extra protection. See Manage iCloud Security and Privacy.

• Understand and configure account recovery options for yourself and with the help of trusted people while you’re alive, as well as appointing helpers after you’re gone. See Manage Account Recovery.
Catch Up with iCloud

Changes

If you’ve been using iCloud for a while, the bits that have changed recently will be of most interest to you. This chapter highlights major changes to take advantage of, points you to chapters where I discuss those features in detail, and offers a suggestion about managing your iCloud data storage.

iCloud Feature Changes

Apple sometimes makes changes to iCloud when it suits them, but significant changes commonly appear alongside with updated versions of Apple’s operating systems—particularly macOS and iOS/iPadOS. Since the eighth edition of this book (version 8.0) was released, the following changes were made and incorporated into the ninth edition you virtually hold in your hands:

- **Higher prices:** Apple raised the cost of Apple Music and Apple One; see Apple One, Use iCloud Family Sharing, and Understand Apple’s Music Services.

- **Private Relay improvement:** You can disable Private Relay for a single webpage; see Enable and Configure iCloud Private Relay.

- **New Windows features:** Windows users gain access to several features. A Windows user can access iCloud Photos in the Microsoft Photos app (see Manage Your Photos); sync iCloud bookmarks with Edge, Chrome, or Firefox; and sync iCloud passwords with Edge or Chrome (see Set Up iCloud for Windows). Plus, Apple has previewed new apps to take over some of the duties of the increasingly out-of-date iTunes for Windows; see Use iCloud Music Features.

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• **Shared Photo Library:** In addition to sharing individual albums and photos, you can now share an entire Photo Library with up to five other people. See Share a Photo Library.

• **Sharing iCloud Drive data:** In Ventura, iOS 16, and iPadOS 16, Apple completely revamped the user interface for sharing files and folders. See Share Files and Folders on a Mac or PC and Use the Files App for iOS or iPadOS.

• **Contact groups:** Although not a change to iCloud as such, iOS 16 and iPadOS 16 now support creation and editing of groups in Contacts, which can be used as distribution lists in Mail (and sync across devices using iCloud). See Work with Contact Groups.

• **Revamped iCloud website:** The iCloud.com website was redesigned, so I’ve updated Use the iCloud Website accordingly.

• **More privacy:** Apple added an Advanced Data Protection feature that can encrypt more of your data end-to-end...if you can meet the stringent requirements. See Use Advanced Data Protection.

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**Storage Checkup**

Some iCloud features (especially Desktop and Documents folder syncing) eat into your iCloud storage quota quickly, but the cost of extra storage is low enough that it shouldn’t be a hardship for most users to store as much data as they want. If you’re still trying to make do with the 5 GB Apple offers for free, my professional advice is to give up! It’s no longer worth the effort to avoid what could be as little as a 99-cent monthly charge for a 50 GB iCloud+ upgrade.

A backup of a single iOS or iPadOS device almost always surpasses 5 GB, after all, and by the time you add saved email, files in iCloud Drive, and other smaller bits of information, you’re in for some frustration if you try to whittle the figure down to avoid paying a dollar a month. With upgraded storage, you can freely back up your iOS and iPadOS devices, add files to iCloud Drive, and so on, without worrying that you’ll bump into your limit.
Get to Know iCloud

Before you dive in and start setting up and using this mysterious thing called iCloud, you should take a few moments to get your bearings and understand what you’re dealing with.

In addition to explaining what you can and cannot do with iCloud, this chapter discusses what you need to know about iCloud System Requirements, About Your Apple ID, and About iCloud Storage.

What Is iCloud?

The cloud is a general computing concept: a set of software, services, and storage located (gestures broadly) out there somewhere. Companies that offer cloud services maintain all the hardware, and you don’t need to know where any of it lives. Your access to the cloud is mediated by the service provider.

iCloud follows this notion precisely: it’s a cloud-based set of services and storage defined and controlled by Apple that exists as a collection of servers in data centers around the world. As presented to you, it’s a bunch of services you can just use with no server knowledge.

In some respects, iCloud has much in common with services like Dropbox, Google Docs, and Microsoft 365. Yet because of iCloud’s tight integration with Apple’s hardware, iCloud is designed to achieve specific goals that Apple has in mind as opposed to the general availability of stuff. Google Photos doesn’t work only on Android phones, while Apple’s iCloud Photos is deeply tied in to iPhones, iPads, and Macs.

Note: Amazon (via Ring) and Google (via its own brand and Nest) integrate home-security hardware and services with their cloud, a little more Apple-like.
Apple uses the label iCloud to cover an ever-growing broad collection of features, services, and settings. The common thread is that they rely on communication among Apple devices (Macs, iOS and iPadOS devices, Apple TVs, HomePods, and Apple Watches), Apple’s servers in the cloud, and the broader internet (for anonymized browsing).

Here’s what iCloud does for you:

- **iCloud lets iOS and iPadOS devices stand alone.** Originally, the only way to move certain kinds of data on and off your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch was to connect it to a Mac or PC—at first, with a USB cable, and later, via Wi-Fi. A computer was required to activate the device; to back up or restore its data; to sync photos, music, movies, books, and apps; to transfer documents to and from certain apps; and to install operating system updates.

  With iCloud, your iOS or iPadOS device can operate as a completely standalone product. iCloud lets you transfer data to and from Apple’s servers using either a Wi-Fi or cellular connection.

- **iCloud integrates your devices with each other.** If you have more than one device—say, two Macs; or a PC and an iPhone; or an iPhone, an iPad, and an Apple Watch; or an iPad and an Apple TV—it’s only natural to want all your devices to share data.

  iCloud syncing encompasses many kinds of data. In fact, the word “sync” almost becomes an anachronism; for the most part, iCloud pushes new or changed data almost instantly to all your devices. You can switch between devices with impunity, knowing your data is always wherever you need it.

- **iCloud replaces (some) local storage with streaming.**

  iCloud reduces the need to keep all your important media on all your devices. As long as you have a good internet connection, your Mac and iOS/iPadOS devices can now do what the Apple TV has done for many years: fetch the content you want from the cloud in near real time. This makes it practical to get by with less storage space. You also no longer have to decide which content to put on which device; in a sense, everything can be everywhere, automati-
Set Up iCloud

iCloud setup, in and of itself, is easy and largely self-explanatory: you enter your Apple ID and password, and click a few buttons on each of your devices. There’s no software to install on a Mac or iOS/iPadOS device and it includes only a few options you can turn on or off. You have to go through a few more steps under Windows.

However, you may encounter questions about certain settings, wonder how to handle multiple iCloud accounts, or need help disabling iCloud. So in this chapter I walk you through those topics for Macs and iOS/iPadOS devices.

Note: The Apple TV is covered later, in Use iCloud on an Apple TV. And, for help with the iCloud website, see Use the iCloud Website.

If you’ve already set up iCloud, you can skim most of this chapter, starting with Set Up iCloud on a Mac—just to make sure you’ve enabled all the features you may want to use.

Update Your Software

If you want to access all the latest iCloud features, make sure the Apple software that uses iCloud is up to date on each platform you use. Here’s what you need to do:

- **iOS/iPadOS:** For any iOS or iPadOS device you haven’t already upgraded, tap Settings > General > Software Update and follow the prompts to install the latest update.

- **Mac:** Choose Apple  > App Store and click Updates. If newer versions of macOS, Photos, or the iWork apps (Pages, Numbers, and Keynote) are found, follow the prompts to install them. In particular, be sure to install macOS 13 Ventura—a free upgrade—if you have not already done so and your Mac supports it.
• **Windows:** Download and install [iCloud for Windows](https://www.microsoft.com/store) from the Microsoft Store.

**Note:** If you had a much older version of iCloud for Windows installed, and if you downloaded that version directly from Apple, Apple Software Update may *not* update it to this new version. Be sure to install the latest version from the Microsoft Store.

• **Apple TV:** For information on updating the Apple TV software, see Apple’s article [Update the software on your Apple TV](https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204771).

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### Set Up iCloud on a Mac

Your Mac may already have prompted you to set up iCloud—in which case, just skim this section to make sure everything is configured to your liking. If not, you can set it up manually. The exact sequence of steps depends on your circumstances.

**Note:** Each user account on a Mac can have its own iCloud account, although only one account per Mac can use Find My Mac at a time. In addition, you can set up multiple iCloud accounts within a single user account with some limitations; for more on such configurations, see [Work with Multiple iCloud Accounts](https://takecontrolbooks.com/icloud), later in this chapter.

To begin, I’ll show you what to do if you ignored any prompts to set up iCloud earlier (or if you subsequently signed out completely). Follow these steps:

1. Go to System Settings > *Account Name* (Ventura or later) or System Preferences > Apple ID (Monterey or earlier); if you haven’t yet signed in, that pane may be marked “Sign in” ([Figure 1](#)).
Use iCloud+

Apple rebranded the paid tiers of iCloud storage as iCloud+ in 2021. This made sense as Apple has already added more than just storage to those levels. Apple refers to the free storage and sync 5 GB tier as “iCloud.” Everything above that—all paid tiers—is “iCloud+.”

Each iCloud+ tier includes the same set of services, although in the case of HomeKit Secure Video, the number of cameras you can use varies by tier. All other features are identical.

Let’s look at what iCloud+ encompasses.

Increase Your Storage

One of the key reasons to subscribe to iCloud+ is to increase your storage beyond the 5 GB included in the free iCloud tier. In the United States, you can pay $0.99 per month for 50 GB of storage, $2.99 per month for 200 GB, and $9.99 per month for 1 TB.

Family Sharing users can share that storage with other family members; see Share iCloud+ Features.

You can also opt to get more storage by subscribing to Apple One. Each of the three Apple One subscription levels include a tier of iCloud+: Individual has the 50 MB tier; Family, 200 GB; and Premier, 2 TB. Apple lets Apple One subscribers purchase additional iCloud storage on top of what the bundle provides, allowing a maximum of 4 TB.

Note: Both Glenn (this book’s editor) and I both meet the criteria to upgrade to 4 TB, but while I see the option to do so, Glenn does not. We believe it’s an account bug.
To buy more storage on a Mac or PC:

1. Go to System Settings > Account Name > iCloud (Ventura or later), System Preferences > Apple ID > iCloud (Monterey or earlier), or the iCloud app (Windows).

2. Near the iCloud Storage indicator, click the Manage button (Mac) or Storage (Windows).

3. Click Change Storage Plan (if you’re already paying for extra storage and want more) or Add Storage/Buy More Storage (if you’re not yet paying for extra).

4. Click the plan you want to purchase, and click Next.

5. Enter your password when prompted and click Buy, and Apple upgrades your storage level.

To buy more storage on an iOS or iPadOS device:

1. Tap Settings > Account Name > iCloud > Manage Account Storage (or Manage Storage).

2. Tap Change Storage Plan (if you’re already paying for extra storage and want more) or Add Storage/Buy More Storage (if you’re not yet paying for extra).

3. Tap the plan you want to purchase, and tap Buy.

4. Confirm your purchase when prompted and Apple upgrades your storage level.

No matter the method you used to upgrade, your subscription to additional storage will be renewed automatically each month unless you cancel it before the renewal date.

**Note:** Follow the same procedure to decrease or remove your iCloud+ plan; if you’ve subscribed to Apple One, click or tap Change Apple One Plan.
Use iCloud Family Sharing

If you live in a household in which multiple family members would like to share the music, movies, TV shows, books, and apps they purchase from Apple—and especially if your family includes children who use Apple devices—you’re the target audience for iCloud’s Family Sharing feature. (If not, there’s nothing to see in this chapter—skip ahead to Use iCloud Music Features.)

Here’s what you’ll get for up to six family members (including you):

• All family members’ purchases of media from Apple are charged to the credit card of the person designated as the family organizer. The exception? Family members who have enough credit in their own Apple ID accounts can use that credit to buy something without using the shared card.

• Kids can request media purchases from a parent, who must approve each one individually. (You can register special Apple IDs for kids, even if they’re under 13.)

• All family members can access each others’ media, although you can hide particular items of your own that you don’t want to share.

• Family members can download and use apps, in-app purchases, and subscriptions made by someone else in the group as long as that other person enables purchase sharing.

Note: App developers choose whether to allow Family Sharing for apps; it seems like most do. They can also opt to allow Family Sharing for in-app purchases and subscriptions. That varies a lot more by app.

• iCloud automatically creates a shared family photo album, calendar, and reminder list. (You don’t have to use them.)

• Family members can more easily share their locations and locate their devices (with Find My).
• A family can join Apple Music as a group for $16.99 per month instead of paying $10.99 per person per month.

• With an Apple One subscription at the Family or Premier level, all subscriptions are shared. See Apple One.

• If the family organizer is paying for iCloud+, the organizer can turn that into a shared pool of storage. Family members also gain access to iCloud Private Relay and Hide My Email.

• Parents can limit their kids’ screen time on iOS/iPadOS devices and Macs.

Note: Every family member’s individual settings and data for Apple services remain private, and all files stored in their portion of the shared storage are inaccessible to all other family members unless explicitly shared. The only exception is Find My, where other members’ devices are always shown in your Find My app.

I won’t pretend Family Sharing is perfect—for example, can’t add someone with a billing address in another country, and Family Sharing offers no way to share data like contacts, bookmarks, and passwords within a family—but it’s definitely helpful for what it does.

Child Safety Provisions in iCloud
Apple added a feature they call “communication safety” in iOS 15.2/iPadOS 15.2 that lets a parent enable a warning for Family Sharing members under the age of 18. With this feature enabled, the Messages app warns the child before they see or send an image that Apple’s machine-learning system has identified as containing nudity.

Parents must choose to opt in to this system; it is not enabled automatically. Apple’s system does not notify parents if their children were warned, nor if they bypass the warning.

For more about the ins and outs of this feature, see Glenn Fleishman’s book, *Take Control of iOS & iPadOS Privacy and Security*.
Use iCloud Music Features

Apple has two different services—iTunes Match and Apple Music—that enable you to sync music to the cloud and share it across your devices, among other capabilities.

The two services have a simple relationship: all the capabilities of iTunes Match are incorporated into Apple Music, which includes many more features. Thus, if you subscribe to Apple Music, iTunes Match becomes irrelevant to you.

In this chapter I help you understand the differences between the two services and decide whether either works for you. I also walk you through setting up and using iTunes Match—but not Apple Music, because Apple Music isn’t part of iCloud.

About iTunes for Windows

Several years ago Apple replaced iTunes for macOS with separate apps for Music, TV, Podcasts, and Books, and turned to using the Finder for syncing iOS/iPadOS devices. However, iTunes for Windows has stuck around as the all-purpose tool for dealing with Apple media on PCs. That’s about to change, as Apple has developed Windows 11 versions of the Apple Music and Apple TV apps, as well as an Apple Devices app for syncing and backing up iOS/iPadOS devices. At publication time, preview versions were available in the Microsoft Store. Apple said they would release the software in 2023.

Once those apps are finalized, they’ll take over their respective duties from the iTunes for Windows app. However, I haven’t heard whether or how Apple will enable users to sync books or podcasts to a PC in the future, or whether iTunes for Windows will be discontinued—or simply remain as another option.

In any case, for the time being, I assume that Windows users will continue to use iTunes for Windows as they have done for years, so throughout this chapter I say things like “use Music (or iTunes for Windows) to do this or that.”
Understand Apple’s Music Services

iTunes Match and Apple Music are optional add-on services. With either service, you pay a fee to subscribe, and then activate the service on each of your devices. After you subscribe, there’s one additional setup step:

- On a Mac, turn on the feature (open Music, go to Music > Settings/Preferences > General and select Sync Library).
- On an iOS or iPadOS device, go to Settings > Music and turn on Sync Library.

After that, your device, the iTunes Store, and iCloud collaborate to make the following happen with both services:

- Music (or iTunes for Windows) scans the music library on your computer and compares what you have to Apple’s vast iTunes Store selection—with tens of millions of tracks. This process should take just a few minutes unless you have a huge music library.
- Whenever Music (or iTunes for Windows) finds a track in your library that wasn’t purchased from the iTunes Store but matches a track in Apple’s library, it makes Apple’s version available for download or streaming on all your devices (including your Apple TV and HomePod). The files aren’t downloaded automatically.

The music in Apple’s library is stored as high-quality 256 Kbps AAC files. So, if the song already on your Mac was stored at a lower quality, the version now available to all your devices will be superior. Furthermore, any matched (i.e., previously owned) tracks that you download come without DRM (digital rights management), commonly known as copy protection. And you get to keep those upgraded, DRM-free tracks, even if you later cancel iTunes Match or Apple Music.

Note: When you download a higher-quality track from Apple, it maintains your existing metadata (such as play count).
Manage Your Photos

As we’ve seen, iCloud’s main modus operandi is “just put all my data everywhere,” and you’ll undoubtedly want to include your photos and videos among that data.

iCloud has three separate features you can use with your Photos library in iOS/iPadOS, macOS, and Windows:

• **iCloud Photos syncs media across devices.** iCloud Photos keeps your entire Photos library in sync automatically across your devices via the cloud. Synced photos and videos count against your iCloud or iCloud+ data storage quota.

• **iCloud Shared Photo Library lets you share a library with a small group.** Use this for your family or another group of up to six people (including yourself). The person sharing a Photo Library has its contents count against their iCloud storage.

• **Shared Albums shares and pools items with others.** Set up albums that contain media you share with other people. You can optionally let them comment or add their own images and videos. These items don’t count against your or their iCloud storage, and you don’t have to use iCloud Photos to use Shared Albums. (This feature was previously called iCloud Photo Sharing.)

This chapter helps you understand the advantages and limitations of iCloud Photos, and how best to use Shared Albums or iCloud Shared Photo Library to allow others to view media, add their own, or interact with your images and movies.
**Apple Slowly Kills My Photo Stream**

My Photo Stream preceded iCloud Photos as a way to have access to your images (but not videos) across all your iCloud-linked devices. Apple began to phase out My Photo Stream a few years ago. (In version 8.0 of this book, I said it had been entirely eliminated, but it turns out that some users can still see it.) As far as I can tell, if you enable iCloud Photos, all mention of My Photo Stream disappears from all your devices: you can’t enable, configure, or view it. Apple also notes in a support document that “newer” Apple IDs—apparently, those created since 2018—can never use My Photo Stream. So, many if not most users are unable to access My Photo Stream today, and it appears to be on its way to complete removal.

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**Sync with iCloud Photos**

iCloud Photos synchronizes your photos, videos, albums, and people across all your devices as well as storing all of that in the cloud. The cloud-stored version is available via your account on the [iCloud website](https://www.icloud.com) and accessible from an Apple TV HD or later.

**Note:** Smart albums, ones that have criteria that are matched to assemble at set of matching media, can be created and viewed only in Photos for Mac. You can’t create or view them in iOS, iPadOS, or Windows, and they don’t sync via iCloud Photos.

Apple always stores the full-resolution original versions of images and movies in the cloud no matter what option you choose in macOS, iOS, iPadOS, or Windows. But because Photos libraries can be enormous, Apple offers a choice in iOS/iPadOS and macOS between holding a full-resolution copy of everything or optimized versions.

If you choose optimization, your device retains thumbnails of every piece of media, which dramatically reduces the space required to hold the library. When you add items to Photos on other devices, only the thumbnail is retrieved to this device. Images added locally are uploaded to the cloud and the full-resolution version deleted as storage space on the drive is required. However, Photos always downloads the
Keep Documents and App Data in Sync

iCloud Drive is Cloud’s online file storage component, which includes mechanisms to sync files and folders among your devices and apps.

To learn all about iCloud Drive, read the next topic, Use iCloud Drive. In addition, you’ll want to read Use In-App Data Syncing, later in this chapter, for information on working with apps that don’t rely on documents but do need to sync data across devices.

Use iCloud Drive

iCloud Drive is cloud-based storage you can access from any of your devices. That includes in the Finder in macOS, in the Files app on an iOS or iPadOS device, in Windows, on the iCloud website, and from within apps that support it.

With iCloud Drive, an authoritative copy of each of your documents—called the “truth” or the definitive version among multiple versions—is stored in the cloud. Your Mac normally maintains a local copy of each document, too, and any changes you make to the contents of your iCloud Drive on one device immediately sync to the others via Apple’s servers so long as you have an internet connection.

Warning! When you’re offline, you can make changes to locally cached copies. If changes are made to those files anywhere else—on other devices or at iCloud.com—you could wind up with conflicted copies. iCloud syncs conflicted copies and names the versions it thinks aren’t the “truth” with the date of the problem. When you open a file that has conflicted versions, the app prompts you to select the correct version.

Click here to buy the full 243-page “Take Control of iCloud” for only $14.99!
That sounds simple enough, but iCloud Drive has quite a bit of hidden complexity and doesn’t always make sense. You’ll be able to use iCloud Drive more effectively if you understand at least some of Apple’s logic. After I tell you how to turn on iCloud Drive (next), I’ll give you a quick overview of what you’ll see there (see Explore iCloud Drive on a Mac or PC). Later I delve into how you can use it in various environments, including within Mac and iOS/iPadOS apps.

**Activate iCloud Drive**

For most users, iCloud Drive was already activated at some point within the past few years, typically while upgrading to a new version of macOS, iOS, or iPadOS. If you deliberately skipped enabling iCloud Drive for some reason, you can activate it whenever you’re ready by turning on iCloud Drive in System Settings > Account Name > iCloud (Ventura or later), System Preferences > Apple ID > iCloud (Monterey or earlier), or Settings > Account Name > iCloud (iOS/iPadOS). In Windows, open the iCloud app and check the iCloud Drive box.

There are a few other iCloud settings you can change. While the default settings are fine for almost anyone, you should be aware that they exist, just in case.

First, you can prevent a particular app in macOS, iOS, or iPadOS from using iCloud Drive (for added security or to save space):

- **Mac:** Go to System Settings > Account Name > iCloud > iCloud Drive and click the Options button (in Ventura or later) or go to System Preferences > Apple ID > iCloud and click the Options button next to iCloud Drive (in Monterey or earlier). Then uncheck any app you want to prevent from using iCloud and click Done. This hides that app’s folder in iCloud Drive on this Mac, but does not affect the data already saved to iCloud Drive or its appearance on other devices. This setting doesn’t prevent you from manually selecting iCloud Drive as a destination for unchecked apps.
Keep Mail, Contacts, and Calendars in Sync

Email, contact, and calendar data work together to help you with many day-to-day tasks, and those sets of details are the ones you’ll most likely want to keep in sync across your Macs and iOS and iPadOS devices. Behind the scenes, they rely on different technologies to do their work. But the end result is that when you change email, contact, or calendar data on one device, iCloud immediately pushes those changes to your other devices.

This chapter discusses these three data types. In the interest of simplicity, I’ve left out most of the boring instructions for tasks you already know how to carry out or can figure out easily, as well as anything for which Apple offers detailed instructions via the Help menu on your Mac or visiting the iCloud User Guide).

In this chapter, I also explain how to Use Mail Drop, an iCloud feature that simplifies sending large attachments.

Work with iCloud Mail

An iCloud account includes an email address in the icloud.com domain, at least 5 GB of storage (shared with other iCloud services), and a lovely web interface for checking your email (see The Mail Web App).

Note: Apple also lets you still use account@me.com if your Apple ID account dates back to MobileMe; and account@mac.com if it dates back even further. These addresses are all interchangeable, though you can use filtering at the iCloud website or in Mail to distinguish among messages sent to them.

In most respects, iCloud Mail is a conventional IMAP account. (For more on what that means, read my article FlippedBITS: IMAP Miscon-
Your email host’s mail server stores all the messages in your inbox, messages you’ve filed in folders, and your sent mail. The server also tracks which messages you’ve read, replied to, or forwarded. Because mail is stored remotely, you can access your email on any device (even with a third-party email client) or in a web browser, and see exactly the same messages, in the same locations, with the same status. (iCloud offers no POP support at all.)

**Note:** You can choose to move any messages out of the server’s folders in any macOS mail client and some iOS/iPadOS ones to store them just on a single device, removing them from the server.

With default settings, as soon as you enable Mail in iCloud’s settings on each device, your iCloud Mail stays in sync across devices without any manual intervention—not because iCloud does anything special but because that’s the way IMAP works. However, iCloud Mail differs from run-of-the-mill IMAP accounts in several respects:

- Setting up an iCloud Mail account on any Apple device is as easy as it gets: all you have to do is make sure Mail is turned on after entering your iCloud username and password.

- When used with iOS and iPadOS devices, you can choose push updates, which send messages to your device the instant they come in, rather than having to wait for the next scheduled check.

- iCloud Mail has a good webmail interface that supports searching message contents, setting up auto-responses, forwarding email to another account, uploading attachments with Mail Drop (see Use Mail Drop), and creating rules that automatically sort messages.

- Apple’s mail servers provide basic spam and malware filtering. *However,* when iCloud Mail encounters an incoming message that matches certain criteria that Apple doesn’t disclose, it doesn’t merely label the message as Junk or move it to a Spam mailbox; instead, the iCloud server summarily deletes it without any notice to the sender or recipient. (You can read about this in Silent email filtering makes iCloud an unreliable option at Macworld.) I disagree with this approach because all spam filters make mistakes.
Sync Other iCloud Data

In much the same way that iCloud delivers immediate push updates to your email, contacts, and calendars, it syncs numerous other types of information, among which are Safari bookmarks, iCloud Tabs, and your Reading List; data from the iPhone’s Health app; Siri data; Reminders (a.k.a. tasks or to-do items); Notes; iMessage conversations; and data from built-in Apple apps such as News, Stocks, Home, and Voice Memos.

**Note:** I discuss yet another type of data syncing in the next chapter, Work with iCloud Keychain.

These features aren’t at all flashy and there’s not a great deal to say about them, but in this chapter, I give you an overview of how they work—and point out a few cool things you may not have noticed.

**Work with Browser Bookmarks, Tabs, and Reading List**

The list of iCloud services on your Mac, PC, or iOS/iPadOS device includes either Safari (Mac, iOS, and iPadOS) or Bookmarks (Windows). Either way, this item, when enabled, syncs the following items.

**Note:** Apple enables end-to-end encryption for Safari history, tab groups, and iCloud Tabs. No one—even Apple—can inspect those synced items except with access to your devices. Bookmarks lack this extra protection, however.

**Bookmarks and History**

When Safari enabled, iCloud syncs Safari bookmarks and your browser history among your Apple devices. In Windows, iCloud syncs bookmarks with Edge, Google Chrome, or Firefox.

Click here to buy the full 243-page “Take Control of iCloud” for only $14.99!
Note: iCloud won’t sync Edge, Google Chrome, or Firefox bookmarks on a Mac.

Reading List

For Macs and iOS/iPadOS devices, iCloud syncs the Reading List, which comprises webpages you’ve saved to read later by choosing Bookmarks > Add to Reading List (Mac) or by tapping the Share icon and then Add to Reading List (iOS/iPadOS).

Tab Groups and iCloud Tabs

Safari lets you create *tab groups*, essentially browser “desktops.” A tab group is a named set of tabs, each open to a given webpage or the Start Page. You can switch any open Safari window among available tab groups. With Safari syncing enabled, tab groups sync across all applicable devices. Apple explains how to use these features on their [Group tabs in Safari](https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT212115) page.

Note: Tab groups require iOS 15/iPadOS 15 or later or macOS 10.15 Catalina or later.

Unrelated to tab groups are iCloud Tabs, Apple’s name for a list of all tabs in open windows that syncs across all your Macs and iOS/iPadOS devices. (The feature has sported various names, but it dates back several years.) You can find iCloud Tabs in macOS in two places:

- **Show the Start Page:** Choose File > New Window or New Tab (if the option in Safari > Settings/Preferences > General for “New windows open with” or “New tabs open with” is set to Start Page), or choose Bookmarks > Start Page on any page. iCloud Tabs appears as a popup menu listing your device names and the tabs open on that device. If it doesn’t appear, click the Start Page customize button in the lower-right corner and select iCloud Tabs. Use the popup menu to switch among your devices.

- **Add an icon to the toolbar in Safari for macOS:** Choose View > Customize and drag iCloud Tabs onto the toolbar. You can
Work with iCloud Keychain

iCloud Keychain allows you to sync a keychain containing passwords, credit card numbers, and other sensitive data across your Apple devices securely via the cloud. This lets Safari autofill usernames and passwords on any of your devices no matter which device you initially created the login with. It also syncs Wi-Fi passwords among all your devices, avoiding the need to reenter them.

Apple’s keychain lets you do the following on any single device:

• Store and enter credit card information in web forms.

• Create multiple sets of credentials per site and credentials that can be used across subdomains of the same site.

• View and remove passwords within Safari for macOS, System Settings/System Preferences on a Mac, and the Settings app for iOS/iPadOS.

• Enable and use one-time codes that are used for second-factor authentication and have them available from all your devices.

• Create private notes you add to password entries.

Note: Apple also offers to generate strong passwords within Safari.

That’s great, but you don’t want to re-enter information and keep it up to date across your equipment. When iCloud Keychain is enabled, that information is synced across your devices and available within Safari and other locations. iCloud keychain can also sync the history of your iMessage and SMS communications (see Sync Messages).

In addition, the following items sync automatically amongst your other Macs (but not, alas, iOS or iPadOS devices):

• Settings for the accounts listed in the Internet Accounts pane of System Settings/System Preferences, such as email accounts.
• Signatures you scanned or wrote in Preview (see *Take Control of Preview*, by Josh Centers and Adam Engst), or using the Markup feature of Mail

• Entries in the default macOS login keychain—viewable via the Keychain Manager app—that can be used across Macs but aren’t relevant to iPhones or iPads

iCloud Keychain offers great utility to those who use Apple devices exclusively, and who use only Safari in macOS—you can’t access iCloud Keychain entries in other browsers in macOS. However, iCloud Keychain entries can also be accessed from several places across apps and operating systems:

• Apple and third-party apps on a Mac and iOS/iPadOS devices

• Settings > Passwords in iOS/iPadOS

• System Settings/System Preferences > Passwords in Monterey or later

• iCloud Passwords in Windows

• Cloud extension for Edge or Google Chrome in Windows (even though you can’t do this with Edge or Chrome in macOS)

Go Beyond iCloud Keychain Features

Some third-party password managers, including my favorite, 1Password, offer additional features such as greater flexibility in password creation; rich support for web browsers other than Safari on a Mac and support for Android, Linux, and Windows; password vaults you can share with family members or within a company; and storage of other types of information, like bank accounts, Social Security numbers, and software licenses.

If you’re interested in using 1Password instead of, or in addition to, iCloud Keychain, start with *Use iCloud Keychain with Another Password Manager*, at the end of this chapter. To look more deeply at 1Password, you might enjoy reading my book *Take Control of 1Password*. For a thorough introduction to password security, read *Take Control of Your Passwords*.
Use the iCloud Website

iCloud is mostly about keeping data in sync across all your devices, but several key types of data can also be viewed and edited on the iCloud website in robust web apps—Mail, Contacts, Calendar, Photos, iCloud Drive, Notes, Reminders, Pages, Numbers, Keynote, and Find My. (If you’ve enabled it, there’s also a News Publisher web app, which appears only on the iCloud website, with no Mac or iOS/iPadOS version.)

The native apps running on the Mac and in iOS/iPadOS are more powerful and convenient. But there are several reasons you may want to use the iCloud website:

- **Non-Apple platforms:** If you use Windows, Linux, Android, or other operating systems where these apps aren’t available natively, the iCloud site can make crucial features available to you. (iCloud Drive is the only exception: you can use it in Windows.)

- **On someone else’s computer:** When you use someone else’s computer (or a public computer), the iCloud website is the best way to access your iCloud data.

- **Exclusive settings:** A few features are exclusively available only in the website’s Settings (notably, the option to Data Recovery.) These options are not found in any native app.

- **Find My for a lost device:** If you lose your iPhone or other devices or they’re stolen, you may have to use Find My iPhone on the iCloud website—on someone else’s mobile device or computer, even—to report it lost, trigger a sound, or erase it.

Because Apple updates the iCloud website features and user interface regularly and on no fixed schedule, I can’t provide detailed instructions for each of the ever-changing iCloud web apps. Instead, this chapter offers a general overview of what’s on the site as of February 2023 and how to navigate it. I then offer a few tips for getting the most out of the web apps and locating obscure features.
Check Your Website Access
Before you can do much on the iCloud website, make sure you haven’t turned off your own access—something that became possible in Ventura and iOS 16/iPadOS 16. To check, go to System Settings > Account Name > iCloud (macOS) or Settings (iOS/iPadOS) > Account Name > iCloud, scroll to the bottom, and make sure Access iCloud Data on the Web is on. If you Use Advanced Data Protection you will need to take additional steps described in that section.

Navigate the iCloud Website

When you visit the iCloud website and click Sign In, you can enter your Apple ID, press Return, and enter your password. There’s also an optional “Keep me signed in” checkbox, and a few informational links.

Note: If you visit the site on a Mac with Touch ID configured, you’ll instead see a Touch ID authentication dialog.

Once you are signed in, keep in mind just a few things:

- Opening and switching apps: On the home screen is a tile with app names (Figure 37); click an icon to go to that app.

![Figure 37: Click an icon on the home page to go to the web app.](image-url)
Find My Nouns

Apple offers three overlapping services that let you find hardware and people in varying combinations and with varying degrees of permission and consent.

Loosely, these can be categorized in the way that Apple breaks them out as views in the native Find My apps for iOS, iPadOS, and macOS:

- **People:** You can share your location with friends, family, and others, and view the location of people who have shared theirs.

- **Devices:** All your iCloud-linked computing and audio hardware appears here, as well as all the devices logged in by members of your Family Sharing group (if any). You can track any iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, Mac, or Watch, and AirPods (nearly, via Bluetooth only), AirPods Pro, AirPods Max, and a variety of Beats audio hardware.

- **Items:** AirTags and other items paired with an iPhone or iPad that make use of the crowdsourced Find My network appear in this view. This includes third-party licensed devices, such as Pebblebee and Chipolo’s trackers and Knog’s bike tracker.

**Note:** Apple once let you see people’s locations via the Find My Friends web app on the iCloud website, but disabled that in late 2021. Find My items are designed around security and privacy, and can be tracked only via a native Find My app in iOS, iPadOS, or macOS.

For people, devices, and items, you can view or ask Siri for their current location. For all devices and some items, you can cause a sound to play. With a Mac, Watch, iPad, iPhone, or iPod touch, you can lock the device (to keep it from being used) and display a message with a phone number (or reward!), or erase it, rendering its data inaccessible. You can even see your wayward hardware’s battery level.

For devices, tracking works more reliably when they have an active cellular connection. That works with all iPhones, iPads with cellular
modems, and Series 3 or later cellular Apple Watch models. These devices are likely to have a network connection at all times—cellular access is pretty ubiquitous—whereas Wi-Fi is spotty, and may require a login and even payment.

**Note:** Series 2 and later Apple Watch models, iOS devices, and iPadOS devices (only those with cellular support) also have GPS receivers, so their reported location over Wi-Fi is more precise than for Macs and for earlier iOS or iPadOS devices that lack satellite positioning circuitry.

Apple has increasingly made device “sleep” more of a “nap with one eye open.” The iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, and Watch maintain their mobile connections even when seemingly in a standby mode. Macs with SSDs—most of them these days—send updates even while ostensibly asleep.

Most newer Apple hardware also uses a clever technique to rely on nearby Apple devices to securely pass along their location by broadcasting a special Bluetooth signal if they have no internet connection.

In this chapter, I explain how iCloud acts as the pivot around which location information, actions, privacy, and security rotate.

**Tip:** For vastly more detail on Find My and Apple’s AirTags and third-party trackers that use the Find My network, see Glenn Fleishman’s *Take Control of Find My and AirTags*.

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**Activate Find My**

Find My *Device* and Find My *Item* can track a broad array of devices and items, but the service works only when that device or item has Location Services enabled and then Find My *Device* or the Find My network is also turned on.
iCloud can automatically back up most of the important data from your iOS or iPadOS device to Apple's servers. This feature is usually invisible once you've set it up, but there are a few options you may want to adjust, and you'll want to know how to **Restore an iOS or iPadOS Device from a Backup** should the need arise.

**Note:** As I mentioned in the sidebar *iCloud Drive and Backups*, iCloud is *not* designed to back up data from Macs. For that, you should use a local option (such as Time Machine or Carbon Copy Cloner) or a cloud service such as Backblaze. For more details, see my book *Take Control of Backing Up Your Mac*.

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**Understand How iCloud Backup Works**

Backups are as important on an iOS or iPadOS device as on your computer—after all, your mobile device stores lots of crucial personal data, including photos and videos that may be irreplaceable. If it dies or needs replacing, backups can also save you time and aggravation.

But backing up an iOS or iPadOS device is a lot different from backing up a Mac or PC. Conventional backups methods won’t work, because each app is *sandboxed*—prevented from interacting with other apps’ data—and because iOS/iPadOS devices have no browsable file system. (Yes, there’s the Files app, but that app only provides access to a small portion of all the data on your device.)

It’s possible to back up your iOS or iPadOS device by connecting it to your Mac or PC via Wi-Fi or with a USB cable and clicking Back Up Now in the Finder (or iTunes for Windows). But with iCloud, you can back up over Wi-Fi directly to Apple’s servers.
This means:

- **Back up on the go:** You can back up your data while away from any computer; you’re not tethered to a machine for backups.

- **Restore without a computer:** You can restore an iOS or iPadOS device—such as one whose data was corrupted, or that had its data wiped as part of a repair—or set up a new device to use your existing data without a computer.

- **Differential backups:** When you back up via iCloud, only the first backup copies *all* your personal data. Subsequent backups upload only information that’s new or different since last time, making iCloud backups faster on subsequent backup runs.

For all these reasons, I generally recommend using iCloud Backup. But, as I said in About iCloud Storage, backups can consume lots of space. To solve this problem, you can buy more storage, limit which types of data are backed up (as I describe ahead), or delete old backups. But if you’re short on space and unwilling to buy more, you might stick with backups using the Finder (or iTunes for Windows).

**Note:** For the privacy implications of iCloud Backup, flip ahead to Protect Your Privacy.

What does iCloud Backup back up, anyway? It covers the following:

- The photos and videos you’ve taken on your iOS or iPadOS device if you haven’t enabled iCloud Photos

- Photo albums you’ve created *on the iOS or iPadOS device* (but not those created on and synced from your computer)

- Documents and app settings, including Health (on an iPhone)

- All account data and iOS/iPadOS settings, which includes those configured in the Settings app, HomeKit configuration, and your Home screen and folder organization

- Conversations in the Messages app (iMessage, SMS, and MMS) if Messages in iCloud is not enabled
Use iCloud on an Apple TV

The Apple TV is a small box that gives your TV access to media from Apple and other providers, Apple Arcade and third-party games, media stored on other Apple devices on your network, and other categories of apps. It also acts as a hub for HomeKit-connected devices, extending certain features and adding remote access.

**Note:** Although the third-generation Apple TV supports several iCloud features, this chapter covers HD and 4K models only.

In this chapter I talk briefly about Apple TV features that involve iCloud, but not about the rest of Apple TV. For a full look at Apple TV, consult *Take Control of Apple TV* by Josh Centers.

## Set Up iCloud on an Apple TV

There are two main places to set iCloud-related preferences on your Apple TV. Depending on the choices you made when you set up the Apple TV, either or both of these may already be configured, but it doesn’t hurt to check.

### Set Up iCloud Account Features

To configure an Apple TV to work with iCloud Photos, Family Sharing, and the AirPods paired with your iPhone (if you have them), navigate to Settings > Users and Accounts > *Account Name* > iCloud. If your Apple ID isn’t already listed, select Sign In.

If you’ve already entered your Apple ID for the iTunes Store, you may be asked if you want to use that same Apple ID for these other features. If you do, select Yes (and enter your password); if not, select No, Use a Different Apple ID (and enter both the Apple ID and password for a different iCloud account).
The Users and Accounts screen shows two additional options related to iCloud:

- **One Home Screen:** When enabled, your Home screen will be the same on every Apple TV signed in to your iCloud account.

- **Photos:** Turn this on to provide access to your personal iCloud Photos library via an Apple TV. You can also separately enable or disable Show Memories and Shared Albums.

After that one-time setup procedure, to view your photos, follow the steps ahead in Use iCloud Photos on an Apple TV.

**Set Up iTunes Store and iTunes Match**

To set up your Apple TV to stream purchased media from iCloud, navigate to Settings > Users and Accounts > Account Name > Store. If your Apple ID isn’t already listed, select Sign In and enter your credentials. Then select Yes, if prompted, to remember your password for rentals and purchases.

**Tip:** You may want to avoid storing your password if your Apple TV is accessible by kids or guests who might rent or buy things on your account without your permission.

You may enter more than one Apple ID (for example, if multiple people in your household have purchased content from the iTunes Store that you want to view), and switch between them easily. To enter an additional account, once again go to Settings > Users and Accounts, select Add New User, and follow the prompts. (To switch between accounts, return to the Users and Accounts screen and select a different account.)

If you subscribe to iTunes Match, it’s automatically enabled when you add your iCloud account, though you will need to turn on Sync Library in the Music app the first time you use it.
Manage Your Account

Your iCloud account has a handful of settings you may want to adjust, including your photo, default language, and time zone. And, if you’ve inadvertently deleted something from Bookmarks, Contacts, Calendar, or iCloud Drive within the last 30 days, you can restore it using the Settings app on the iCloud website; see Data Recovery. You can also use account-level controls to Increase Your Storage.

Use the iCloud Website Settings Page

The iCloud Settings page shows you a few settings related to your use of the iCloud website as a whole, as well as data recovery tools and links to other Apple ID resources. To use these features, log in to the iCloud website, click your name at the top, and choose iCloud Settings from the menu. The iCloud Settings page includes a navigation bar at the top, and you should be in the Settings category by default. You can now change settings in any of several categories. Any changes you make take effect immediately.

Settings

The Settings category is the main place for making changes.

Change Personal Information

You can adjust certain pieces of personal information:

- **Photo:** Your iCloud account can have a photo or picture associated with it, which other iCloud members will see in certain contexts (such as in email messages). To add or change a photo, first click Change Apple ID Photo under the Photo heading. Then, to replace the image, click “Browse your device for a new image,” locate the graphic you want, and click Upload. You can also drag the slider to adjust the zoom level, drag the photo around to reposition it, or change the rotation in 90° increments. When satisfied, click Save.
• **Manage your Apple ID:** To make changes to your Apple ID settings (such as choosing a new password or changing the security settings), click the appleid.apple.com link under Apple ID Settings. This opens the Apple ID site in a new tab or window.

**Sign Out of All Browsers**

If you think you may still be signed in to iCloud on another browser and you want to be sure all browser sessions (including the current one) are closed, click Sign Out of All Browsers.

**Manage Apps That Can Look You Up**

You can use the Settings category to choose which apps let other people find you by your email address for the purpose of sharing documents. (This is just like the iCloud settings/preference pane in macOS after clicking the iCloud Drive Options button). To do so, click Manage Apps under the Look Me Up by Email heading.

**Your iCloud Storage**

Click Your iCloud Storage in the navigation bar at the top to view a multicolored graph, as well as a high-level breakdown of major storage categories. That graph’s color corresponds to a breakdown by major storage category below it. Apple provides more information when you view your storage details from a desktop computer or iOS/iPadOS device, and I talk about that in Check and Modify Your Storage Usage, later in this chapter.

**Data Recovery**

iCloud keeps a copy for 30 days of several kinds of data: Contacts entries, Calendar events, Safari bookmarks, and iCloud Drive files. If you deleted a create item in one of those categories, you can recover it within that period.

Click Data Recovery in the navigation bar at the top of the iCloud Settings page, then click a tile: Restore Files, Restore Contacts, Restore Calendars, or Restore Bookmarks.
Throughout this book I’ve mentioned security and privacy issues connected to iCloud. But because of high-profile incidents involving data theft from iCloud users and increasing privacy concerns overall, I want to end the book with some advice about protecting your data.

In the digital world, the words security and privacy are often used interchangeably, but even though they’re related, they’re not the same. *Security* is freedom from danger or harm, whereas *privacy* is freedom from observation or attention. Someone can harm you by impersonating you, taking over your account, stealing or deleting data, and so on; security makes such harm less likely to occur. On the other hand, if someone reads your email messages, sees your photos, or learns your location without your permission, you’ve lost your privacy.

It’s possible to have security without privacy and vice versa. But when it comes to a service like iCloud, it turns out that all the steps you might take to improve your security also protect your privacy. For example, choosing an excellent password reduces the likelihood that a stranger might log in to your account and thereby obtain access to your private data.

Start by enhancing your security with a good password and two-factor authentication, discussed just ahead. If you plan to buy a used Mac or iOS/iPadOS device, read Check Activation Lock first to make sure you aren’t buying a locked device—potentially one that was stolen. And you can take additional steps to Protect Your Privacy, such as turning off syncing for sensitive data and using a passcode on your iOS and iPadOS devices.
Choose a Good Password

The password associated with the Apple ID you use for iCloud is incredibly valuable. With your username and that password, someone can see all your email, contacts, calendar events, backed up photos—even your current location. And, using Find My Device, anyone with your password can remotely lock or wipe your Macs and iOS/iPadOS devices!

So, choosing a good password is a big deal. You don’t want a password that any other person can guess, or that an automated cracking tool could uncover by brute force. For complete details on what makes one password stronger than another, how an attacker might go about guessing your password, and techniques for increasing password strength while not overtaxing your memory, read my book Take Control of Your Passwords. If you don’t have time to read that whole book, at least follow these tips:

- **Make your iCloud password unique.** Don’t use your iCloud password for any other site or service, because if your password for one site is compromised through a database breach or other leak, every account that uses the same password is at risk.

- **Choose a good password.** Apple requires that your iCloud password be *at least* eight characters long and include uppercase and lowercase letters and at least one digit. But I strongly suggest choosing a password that improves upon the minimum requirements: pick either a long, memorable one with dashes or punctuation between words, or a randomly generated one that has a lot of variation, including some punctuation. Better still, use a password...
Thank you for purchasing this Take Control book. We hope you find it both useful and enjoyable to read. We welcome your comments.

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If you bought this ebook from the Take Control website, it has been automatically added to your account, where you can download it in other formats and access any future updates.
Joe Kissell is the author of more than 60 books and hundreds of articles about technology. In 2017, he also became the publisher of Take Control Books, when alt concepts—the company he runs along with his wife, Morgen Jahnke—acquired the Take Control series from TidBITS Publishing Inc.’s owners, Adam and Tonya Engst. Before he began writing full-time in 2003, Joe managed software development for a living. He holds a bachelor’s degree in Philosophy and a master’s degree in Linguistics.

In his hypothetical spare time, Joe likes to travel, walk, cook, eat, and practice t’ai chi. He lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, with Morgen, their sons, and their cat. To contact Joe about this book, send him email and please include Take Control of iCloud in the subject. You can also sign up for JoeMail, his low-volume mailing list, follow him on Mastodon (@joekissell), or visit his blog at JoeKissell.com.

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*Take Control of Your Online Privacy*: Learn what’s private online (not much)—and what to do about it.

*Take Control of Your Paperless Office*: With your Mac and scanner, you’ll clear the chaos of an office overflowing with paper.

*Take Control of Your Passwords*: Overcome password overload without losing your cool.

Click here to buy the full 243-page “Take Control of iCloud” for only $14.99!
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