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# AppleUser

MAGAZINE

THE ALL NEW EDITION

ISSUE 27 | JULY 2021

9:41

Monday, June 7



## THE NEXT CHAPTER

iOS 15, iPadOS 15  
macOS Monterey  
watchOS 8



GADGETS & REVIEWS

COOL KIT  
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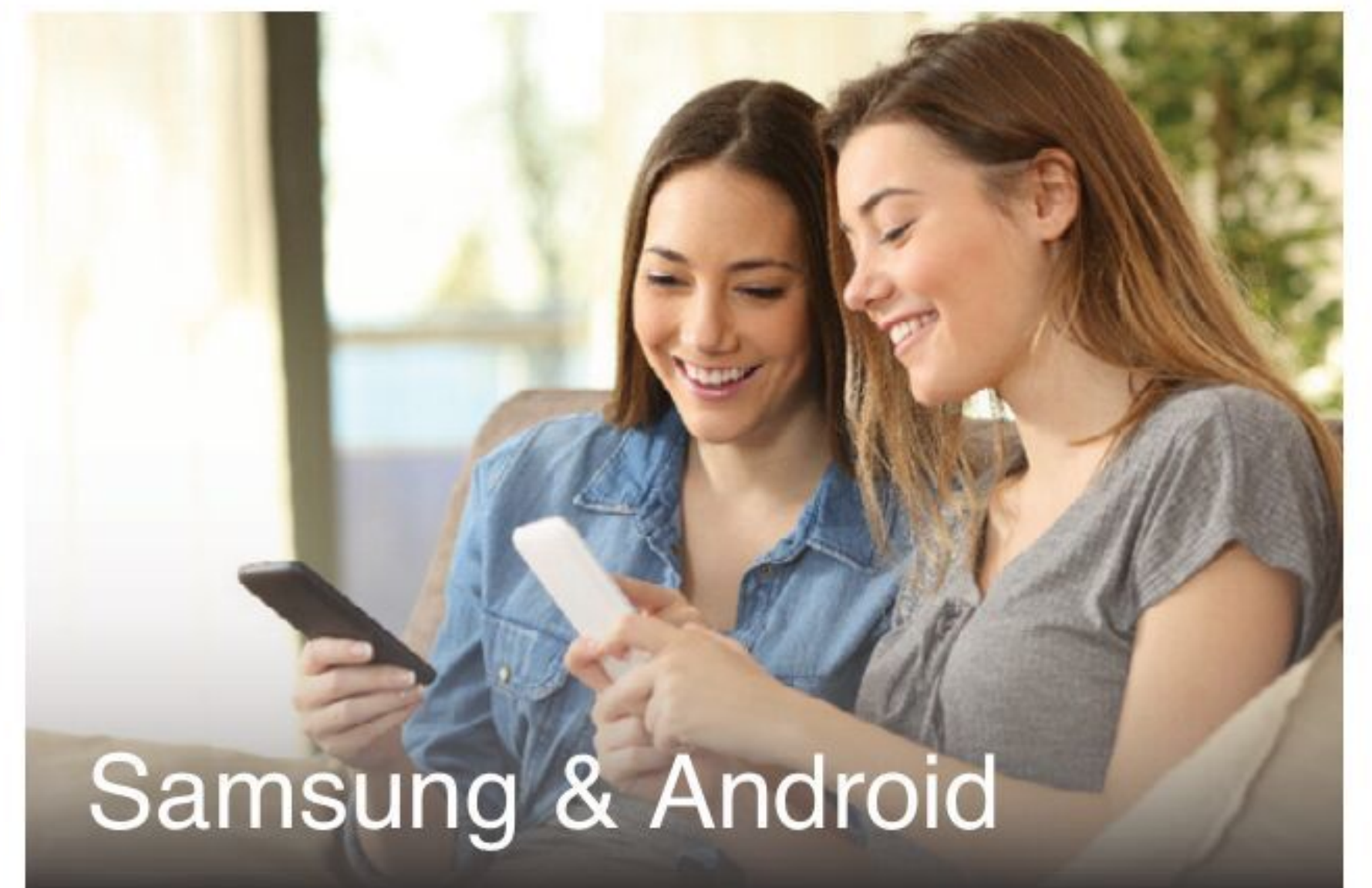
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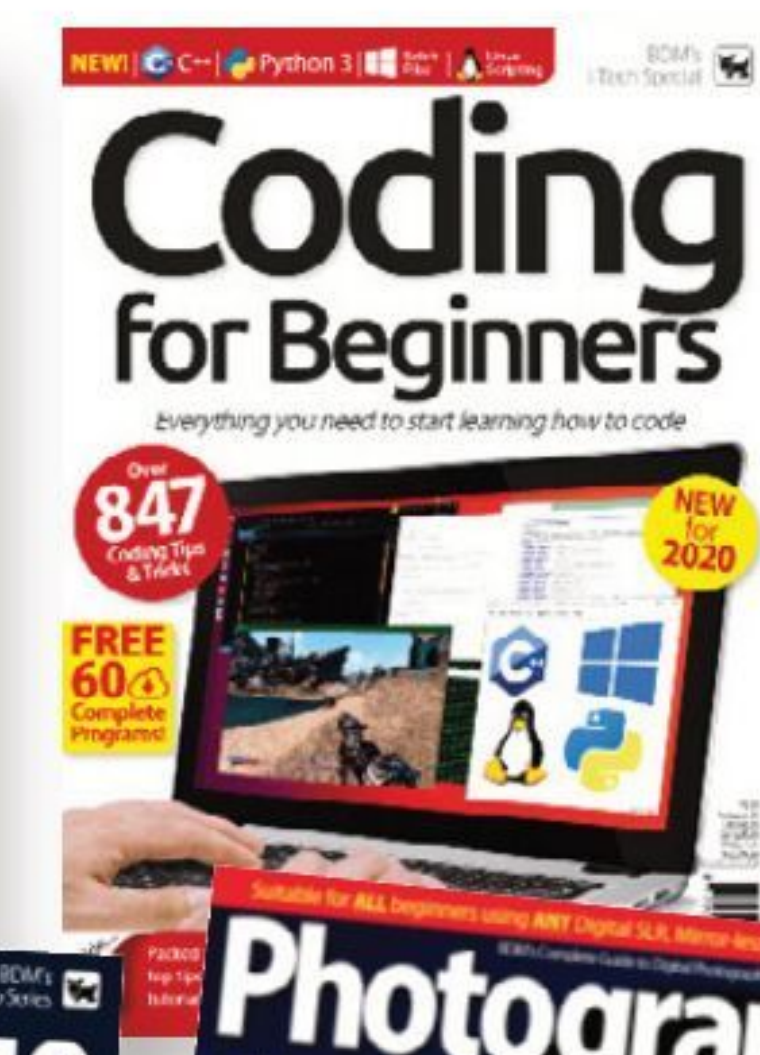
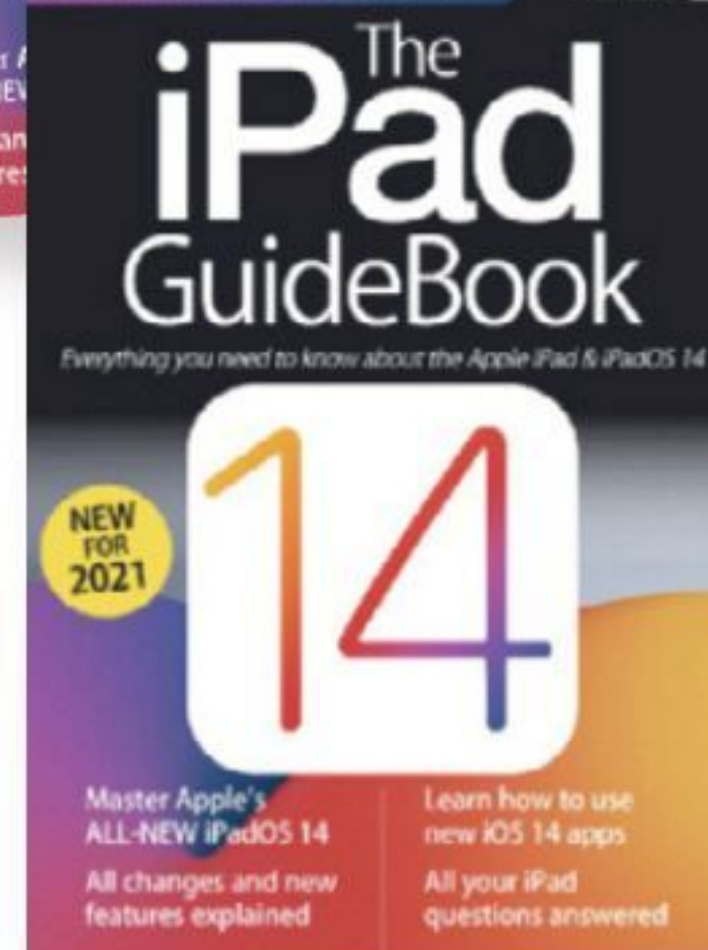
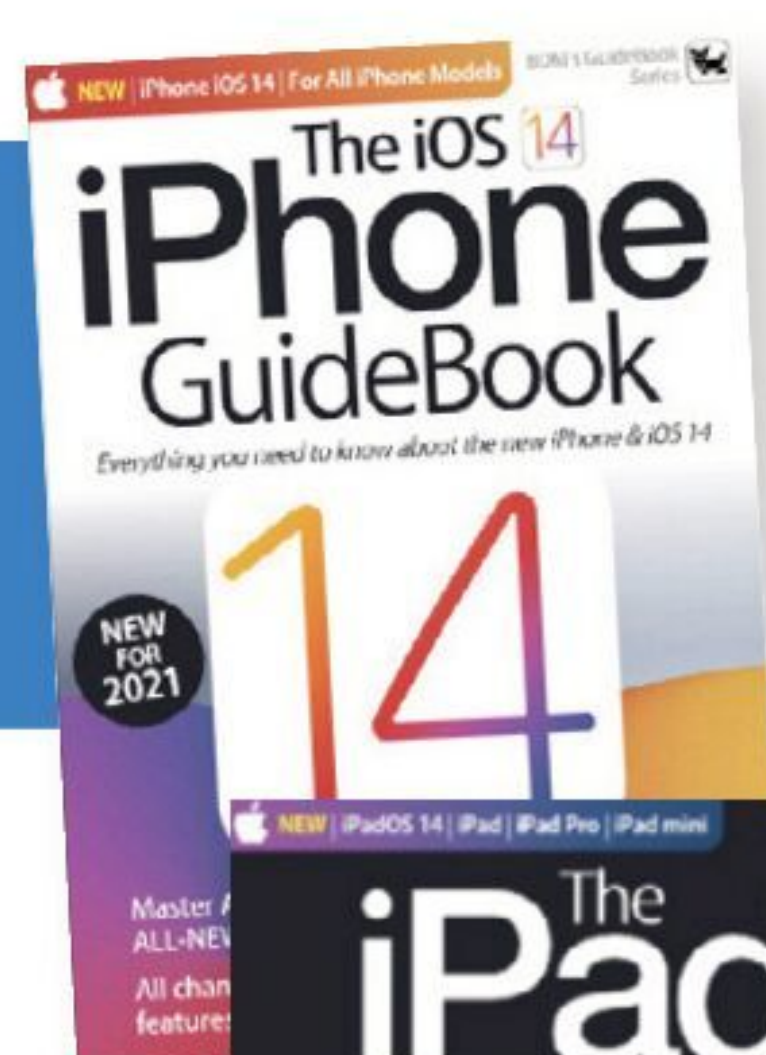


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People often compare Apple and its users to a religion, or at least a cult. Perhaps that's why this Apple Store, in Brooklyn, New York city, looks so much like a church when viewed from the front. It's an impressive structure; a far cry from most shops.

---



# Welcome

Now we've had the chance to take a look at the new iMac, we can confirm it's every bit as good as we expected. It looks a treat too. The new colours are a delight to behold, and the screens are the best yet seen in a Mac. In this issue, we review the new 2021 iMac, and also look at the next version of the operating system; macOS 12: Monterey.



The new iMac comes in seven different colours, with a vivid tone used for the computer's back, sides and stand, with the front in a lighter shade.

*“Ever since Apple first announced the new M1-powered iMac, we’ve been itching to get our hands on one. Now that we have, we’re very impressed. The new 2021 iMac is fast, feature-packed and a joy to use.”*

*2021 iMac review, Page 64*



# ESSENTIAL AppleUser MAGAZINE

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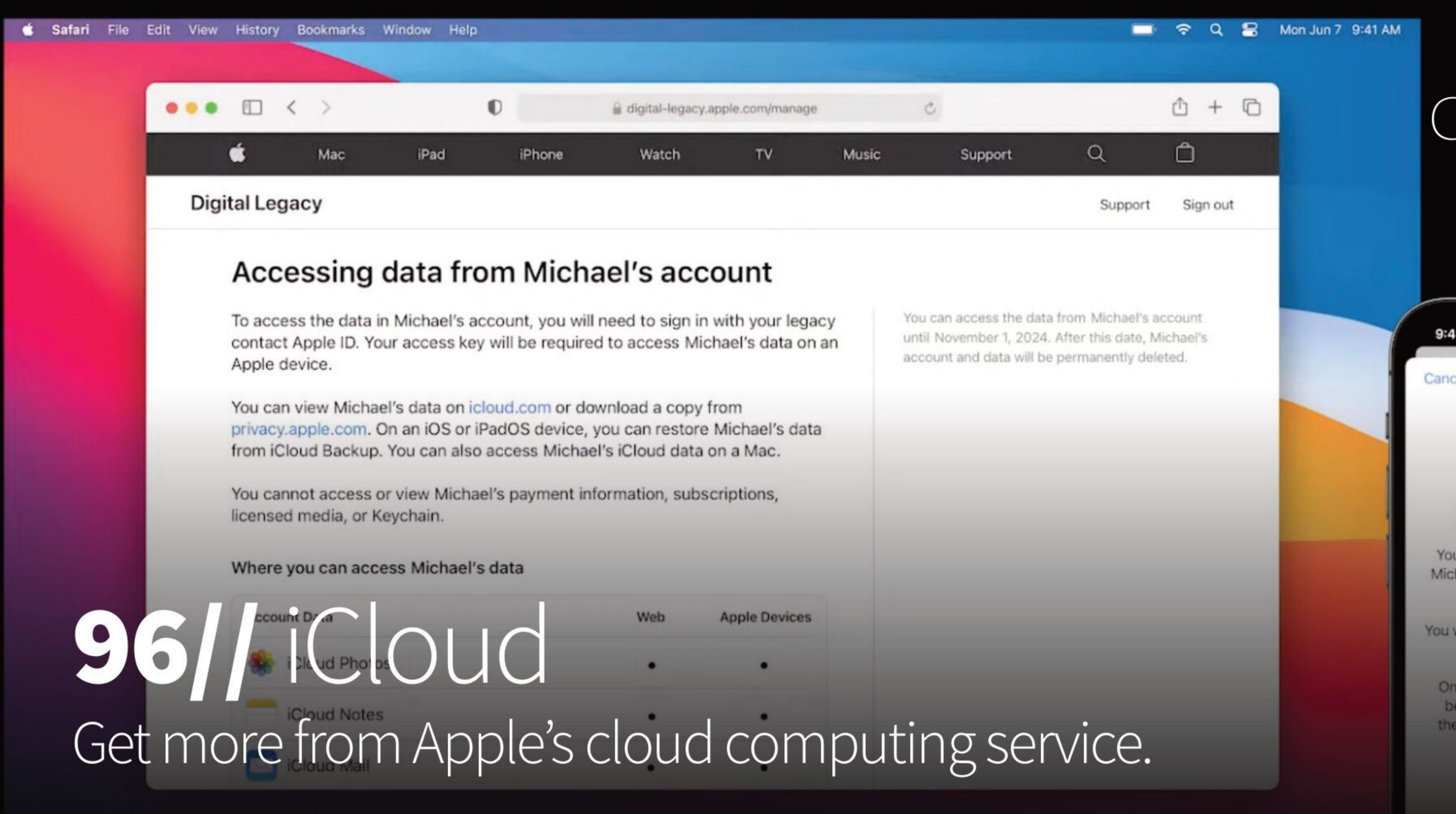
What does Apple have in store for its computing devices?  
Should we look forward to their autumn release?

### **64**// Apple iMac, 24-inch, M1, 2021

After spending a week with the latest  
iMac, we take an in-depth look at it and  
whether you should upgrade.





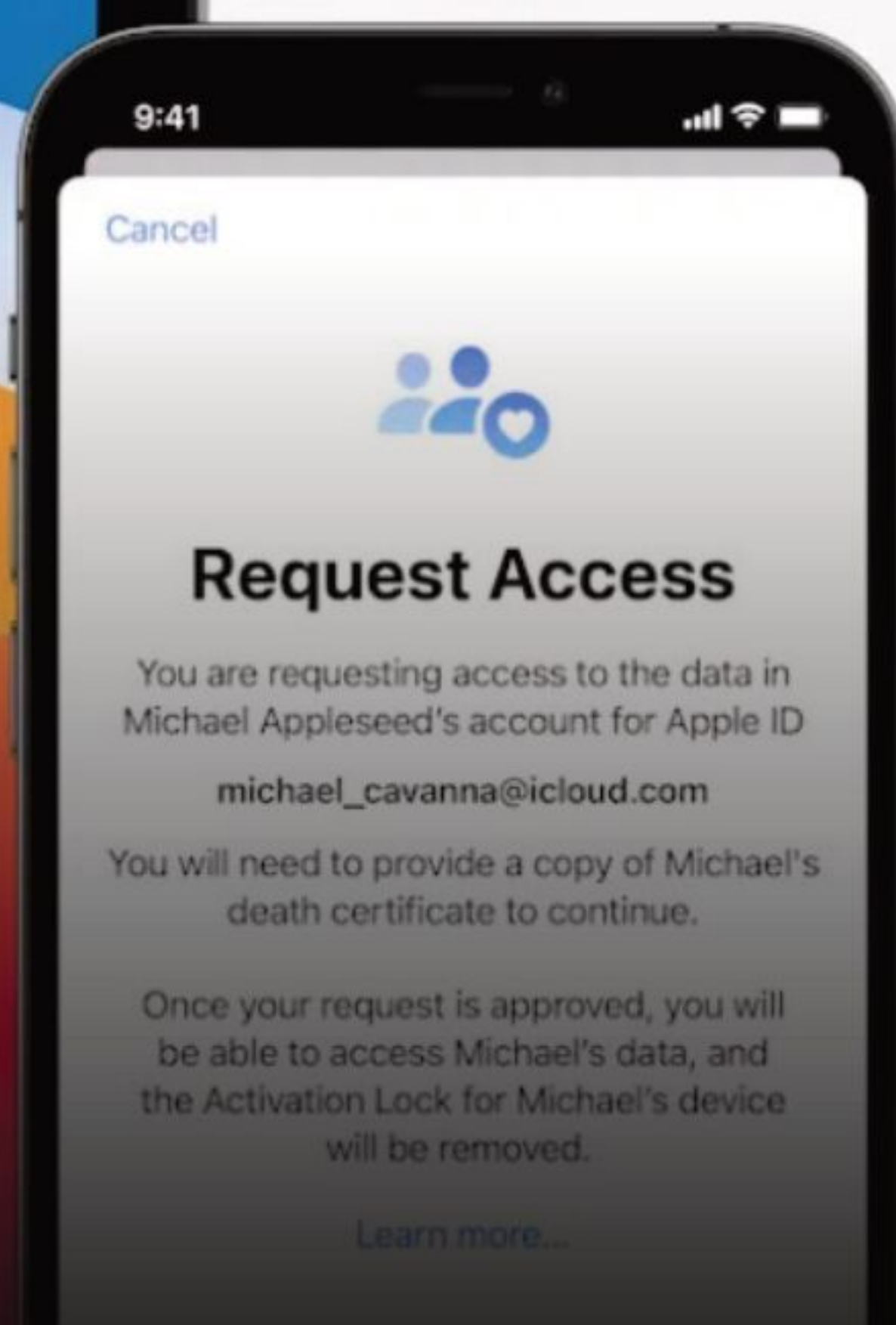


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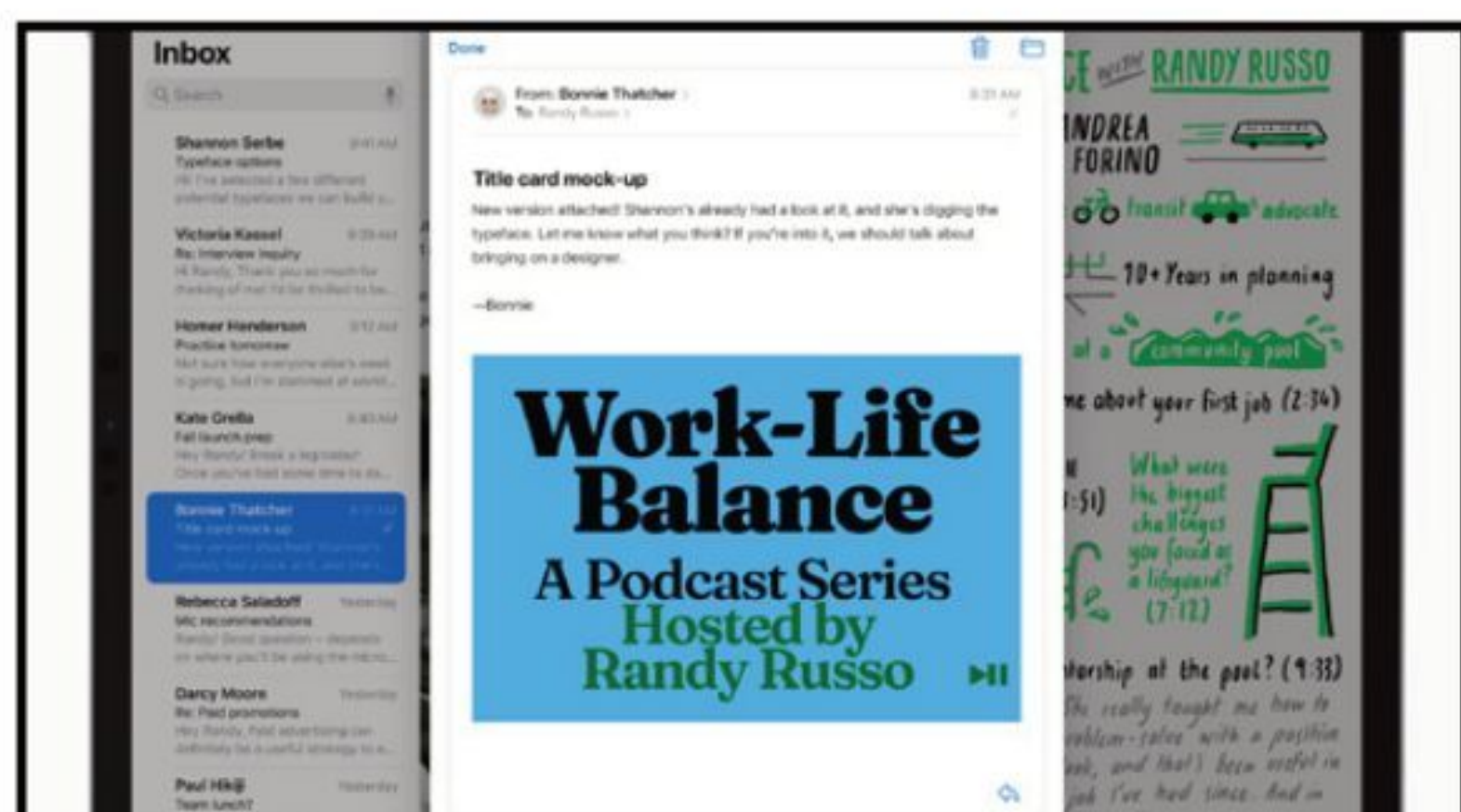
123// Next Month





# Team players//

Apple has lifted the lid on the next generation of Mac, iPhone, iPad and Apple Watch operating systems, but which of the forthcoming features excites our team the most? Let's go ahead and ask them...



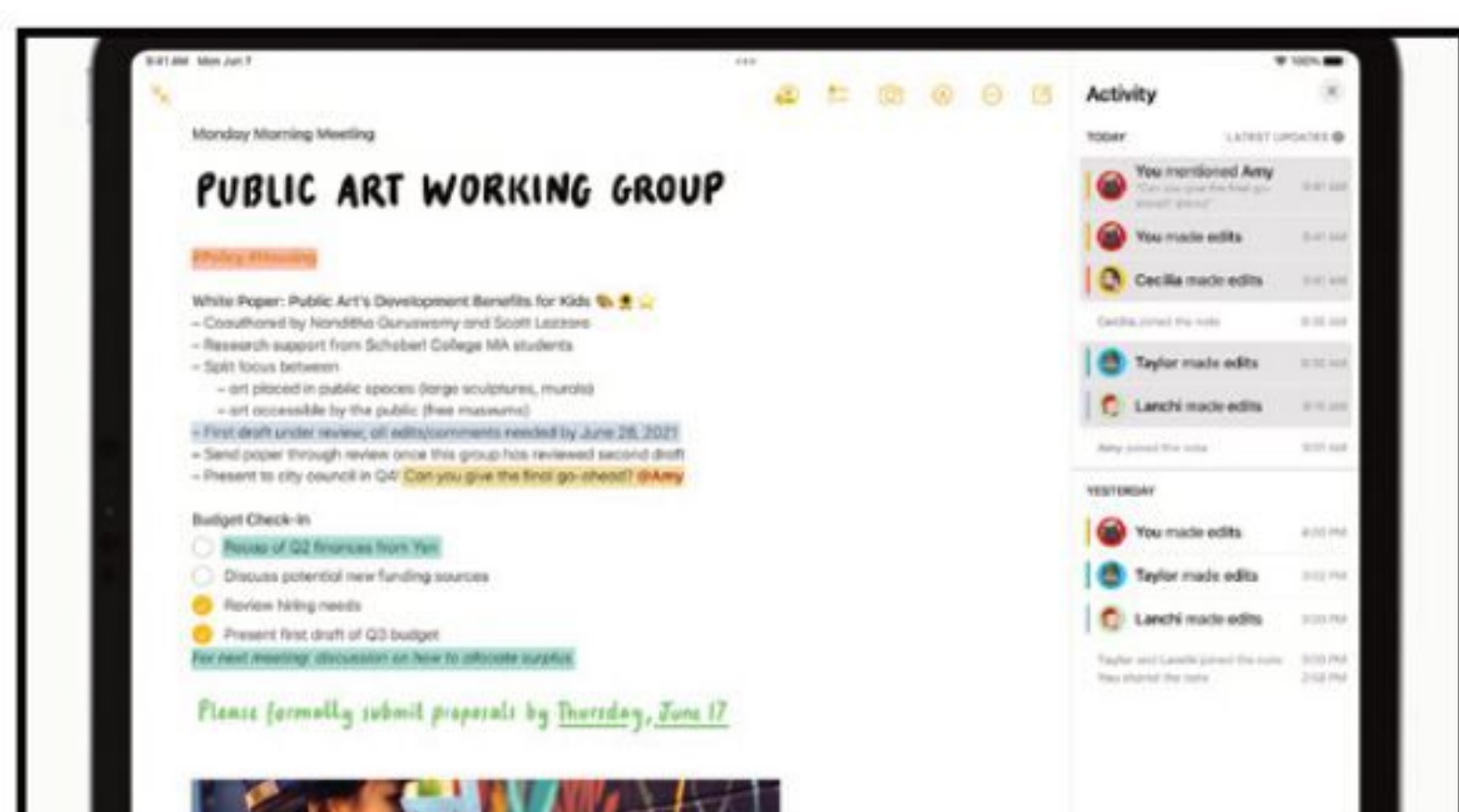
## James Gale Managing Editor

The iPad's multitasking features are potentially powerful, but currently too awkward to be useful. I love the new-look multitasking in iPadOS 15.



## Martin Smith Group Senior Designer

Can someone explain to me why Home screen widgets weren't added last year, alongside the iPhone? I'm glad they're coming soon, though.



## Alan Hulme Staff Writer

The new Notes features, across all the Apple devices, is what I'm most looking forward to. I make a lot of notes, so I'll enjoy the new app.



## David Hayward Staff Writer

I worked remotely long before the pandemic. This calls for a lot of video conferencing, and I'm impressed with the new FaceTime features.



## Ian Osborne Editor

Universal Control! Operate your iPad and even a second Mac using the keyboard and trackpad you use on your main Mac? Yes please!



## Alyssa Falcon Staff Writer

I'm an Internet addict, and spend way too much time on the worldwide web, so the new Safari features won me over. The new tabs look great.



## Karl Linstead Production Manager

I'm looking forward to the new Maps features such as the interactive globe, but I can't help feeling Apple is playing catch-up with Google there.



## David Anderson Staff Writer

I just love the new Portraits watch faces. They look so much better than a regular photo, and I'm looking forward to putting my partner on one.

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The articles in these pages that follow are intended as a guide only. We are not advising you to change your device, and would actually advise against it if you have even the slightest doubts.

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# Editor's Letter//

*At last! I got my new iMac only months after it was first announced, but it seemed like forever. As I mentioned last issue I ordered the purple model, matching my first ever Macintosh, a purple (or grape) G3 iMac I bought in the year 2000. When you read the review over on Page 64, you'll see I love it to bits. It's amazingly powerful; a real step up from previous generations.*

*I bought my new iMac to replace an ageing Mac Pro, which was still going strong despite being eleven years old, but couldn't run the latest versions of macOS. This just goes to show how long Macs last. Can you imagine using an eleven-year-old PC as your go-to machine? If my iMac lasts half as long as my Mac Pro did, I'll be very happy indeed.*

*Also in this issue, we take a look at the next versions of Apple's amazing operating systems; macOS 12, iOS 15, iPadOS 15 and watchOS 8. That's not all we have in store for us this autumn. Apple is also overhauling the Safari web browser, introducing new privacy features, making changes to its automated home range and even giving AirPods a boost. In this month's cover feature, we cover all these and more. When you check out our feature, you'll be itching to get your hands on the new operating systems for your Apple devices.*

*Elsewhere, we cover some great software and peripherals. FireCore Infuse 7 is an amazing video streamer that can play almost any video file. The perfect companion for your new iMac? Express VPN can hide your location when you go online, and we've some smaller apps that add productivity to your Mac or mobile gear such as TextSniper, Squash 3 and Transloader 3.*

*And, of course, we review some great games. It's been a long, hard summer for the Mac in this respect, but we've some interesting iOS titles to show you. Go motorbiking with Bike Baron, explore an old-school RPG with Final Fantasy VIII and feel the Force with Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes.*

*Before I sign off, this issue was once again put together under lockdown restrictions imposed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Wearing a mask every time you go shopping and foregoing your summer holiday isn't fun, but it's necessary if we're to stop this vile virus in its tracks. So wherever you are, make sure you stay safe, and keep those around you safe too. See you next month.*



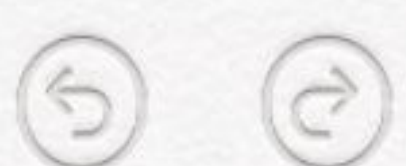
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# Apple's Operating Systems: The Next Chapter

**At the Worldwide Developers' Conference keynote in June, Apple's forthcoming operating systems and several other updates were unveiled. What can we expect when they're finally released, probably in September 2021? Let's take a look.**



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*“We’re excited to share our latest technologies with you, and with the incredible community of millions of Apple developers around the world.”*

*Tim Cook, CEO of Apple, at the Worldwide Developer’s Conference 2021 keynote.*

For the second year, the Worldwide Developer’s Conference was online-only due to the coronavirus pandemic. The keynote was delivered to an audience full of emojis.



# What's Coming with iOS 15?

The next version of the iPhone's operating system is on the way, and it's looking good. But what does it have in store for us?



**Craig Federighi, Apple's Senior Vice President of Software Engineering, introduces iOS 15 at the 2021 Worldwide Developer's Conference.**

The forthcoming update to the iPhone's operating system, iOS 15, is a big one! We can look forward to some great new features and enhancements for FaceTime, Messages, Notifications, Weather, Maps and more. Let's take a look at what to expect when the new iOS is released this September.



## FaceTime Enhanced

Video chat services such as FaceTime became increasingly important as the world locked down due to the global pandemic and meeting face to face became impossible. We hope everything will be back to normal by the time iOS 15 is out in September, but either way, we'll appreciate the great new features coming to FaceTime.

Apple's new FaceTime enhancements are designed to make the video chat experience 'more natural, comfortable and lifelike'. Spatial Audio is a new Group Chats feature which creates a sound field that lets 'conversations flow as easily as they do face to face'. Your friends' voices are spread out, making it sound as if they're coming from the same direction as their faces are found on your screen. If your mum is on the left, her voice appears to come from the left. If your friend is at the top of the screen, their voice sounds like it's above you. It's a seemingly small detail that makes FaceTime chat much more comfortable.

Two new microphone options are similarly aimed at making FaceTime calls more immediate, as if you were chatting face to face instead of using a video app. Voice Isolation stops the mic from picking up background noises, instead focusing on your speech alone. At the other end, the person you're chatting to hears only you, not the ambient noise going on around

you. During Apple's presentation, Voice Isolation successfully cut out the sound of a leaf blower in the room, cleaning up the audio and preserving only the speaker's voice. On the other hand, if you want every bit of sound to make it across the video chat, switch to Wide Spectrum. This does the opposite, picking up everything around you as well as your voice.

A new Grid View puts every person involved in a group chat on a grid, in tiles of the same size. This is useful if you want to see everyone's reactions as well as look at the speaker, as those who haven't spoken in a while no longer shrink in size.

To focus better on the person you're speaking to and not the room or scene behind them, use Portrait Mode. This blurs out the background while keeping faces in focus. This feature will only be available on the iPhone XS series, iPhone 11 series and iPhone 12 series.

FaceTime Links lets you generate a link for a FaceTime call and share it with others using AirDrop, Messages, Mail and more, making it easy for people to join a group chat. You can also make a Calendar event for a FaceTime call which invitees can use to log on, even if they're on an Android or Windows device. Yes, FaceTime is coming to non-Apple devices too!

Of course, FaceTime video chats are for more than just catching up. You can also share experiences like the latest chart



For the first time since 2001, the iMac is available in a range of colours.



Apple demoed Voice Isolation by having a FaceTime chat interrupted by a leaf blower. Switching on the new feature cut the ambient sound until only the speaker could be heard.



album or that movie you planned to see with your mates, but couldn't because of the pandemic. SharePlay is a new set of features that let you play music with Apple Music in sync for everyone on the call, while still chatting using FaceTime. You can also watch videos using a streaming app, also in sync, and talk about the movie while you view it. If you wish, you can extend the video display to your Apple TV without losing synchronisation with the other viewers. An API has been released that lets third-party developers bring their own apps into FaceTime. Disney+, HULU, HBO Max, ESPN+, TikTok and several others have already signed up.

Finally, Screen Sharing in FaceTime lets you share what's on your iPhone's screen while still remaining on the FaceTime Video call. Just the thing for showing your granny how to use her iPhone.



In Grid View, everyone gets the same size tile throughout the FaceTime chat.

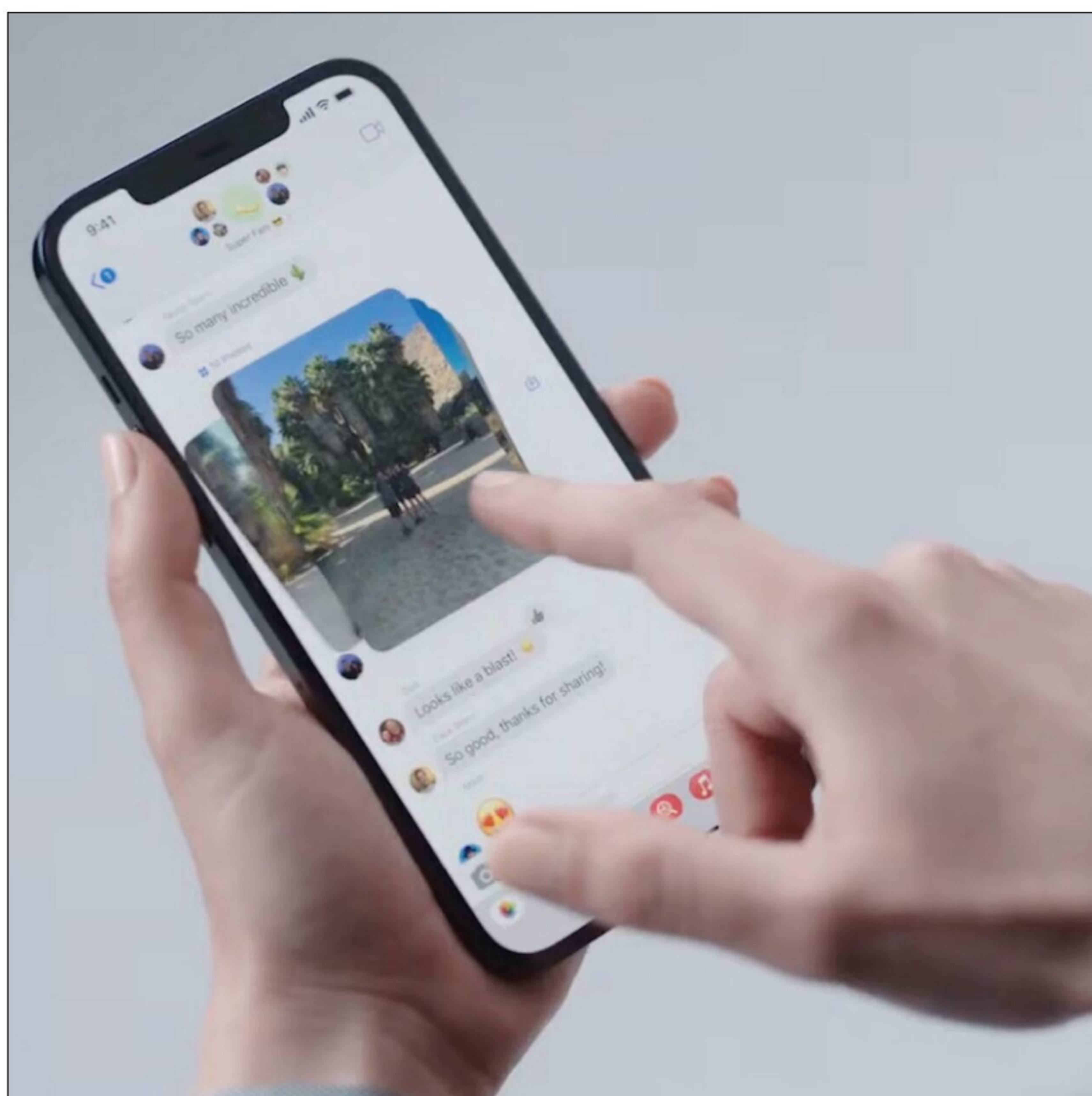


Invite others to join your call with FaceTime Links, which also make it easy for them to enter.

## Messages Marvels

iOS 15 introduces new ways to view content that's been shared in the Messages app. If you're sent a bundle of pictures via Messages, they appear in your chat as a collage or, if there's a lot of them, a stack. You can swipe through a stack of photos, and tap one to open it. Of course, incoming media isn't restricted to photographs. You might also get web links, Music playlists, articles from the News app and more. A new feature places a category called Shared With You in the News, Music and Photos apps, which collates shared articles sent via Messages and lets you look at them at your leisure. The sender is displayed on the screen so you can tap and resume your Messages conversation. The Photos app screens out stuff like screenshots and memes, to keep your app uncluttered. Shared With You is also built into the Safari, Podcasts and Apple TV apps.

**Bundles of pictures sent in the Messages app now appear as a collage or a stack.**





# Fabulous Focus

A whole series of features designed to help you concentrate on what's important at that particular time have been added. Collectively known as Focus, they can be set up for work time, personal time and more.

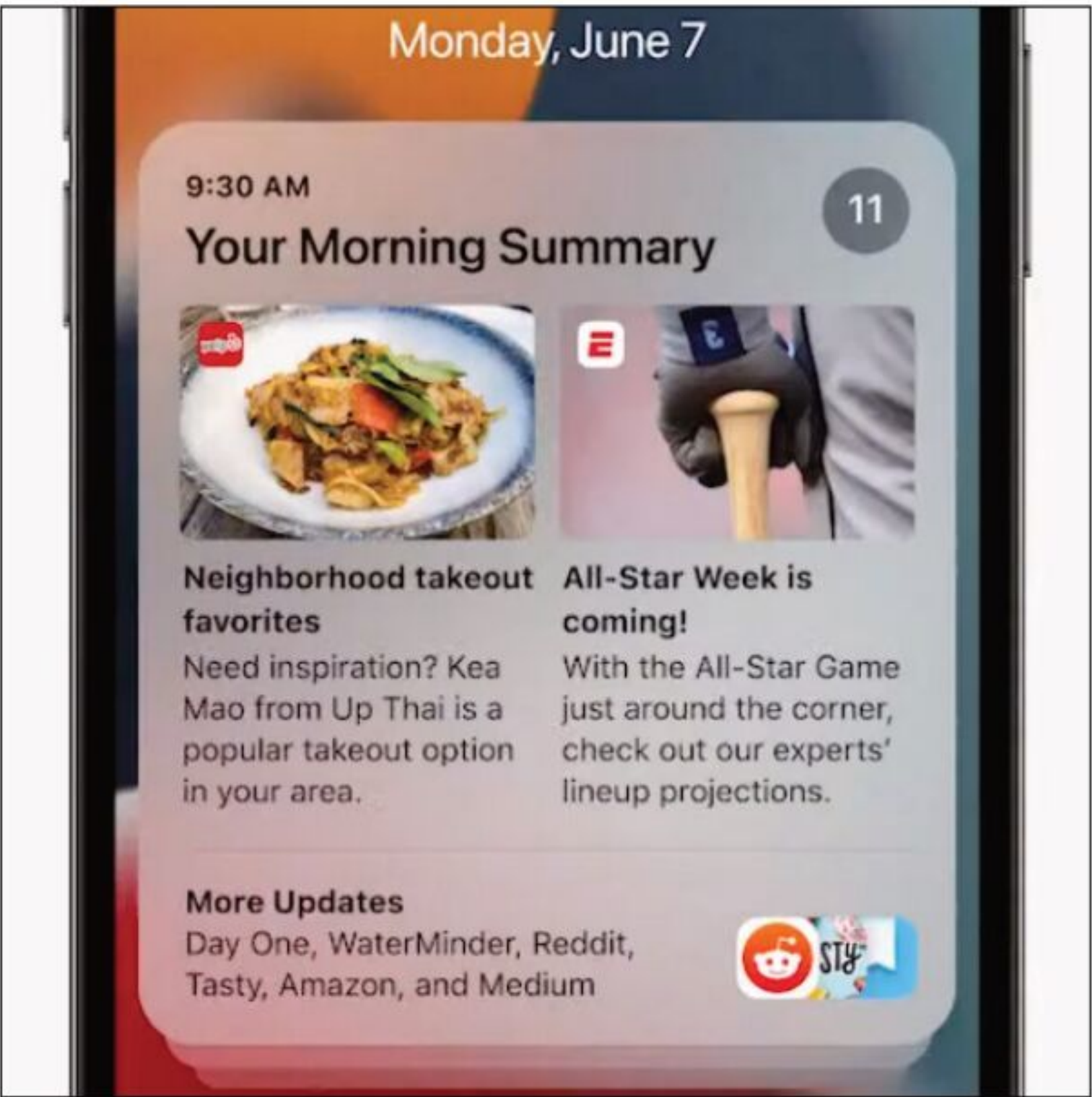
Notifications have a fresh new look, with contact photos for those sent by people and bigger app icons throughout. A new Notification Summary window collates notifications into a group. You can set a time when this Notification Summary is sent to you. Maybe during your lunch break or after work, when you've time to look at them? The summary is put together using on-device machine learning, which chooses which to prioritise based on previous use. Notifications from people are sent directly to your notifications screen, and won't end up in the summary.

In iOS 15, if you use Do Not Disturb to temporarily silence incoming data, anyone sending you a message is informed that you have Do Not Disturb on. If their message is particularly urgent, there's a way for them to get through.

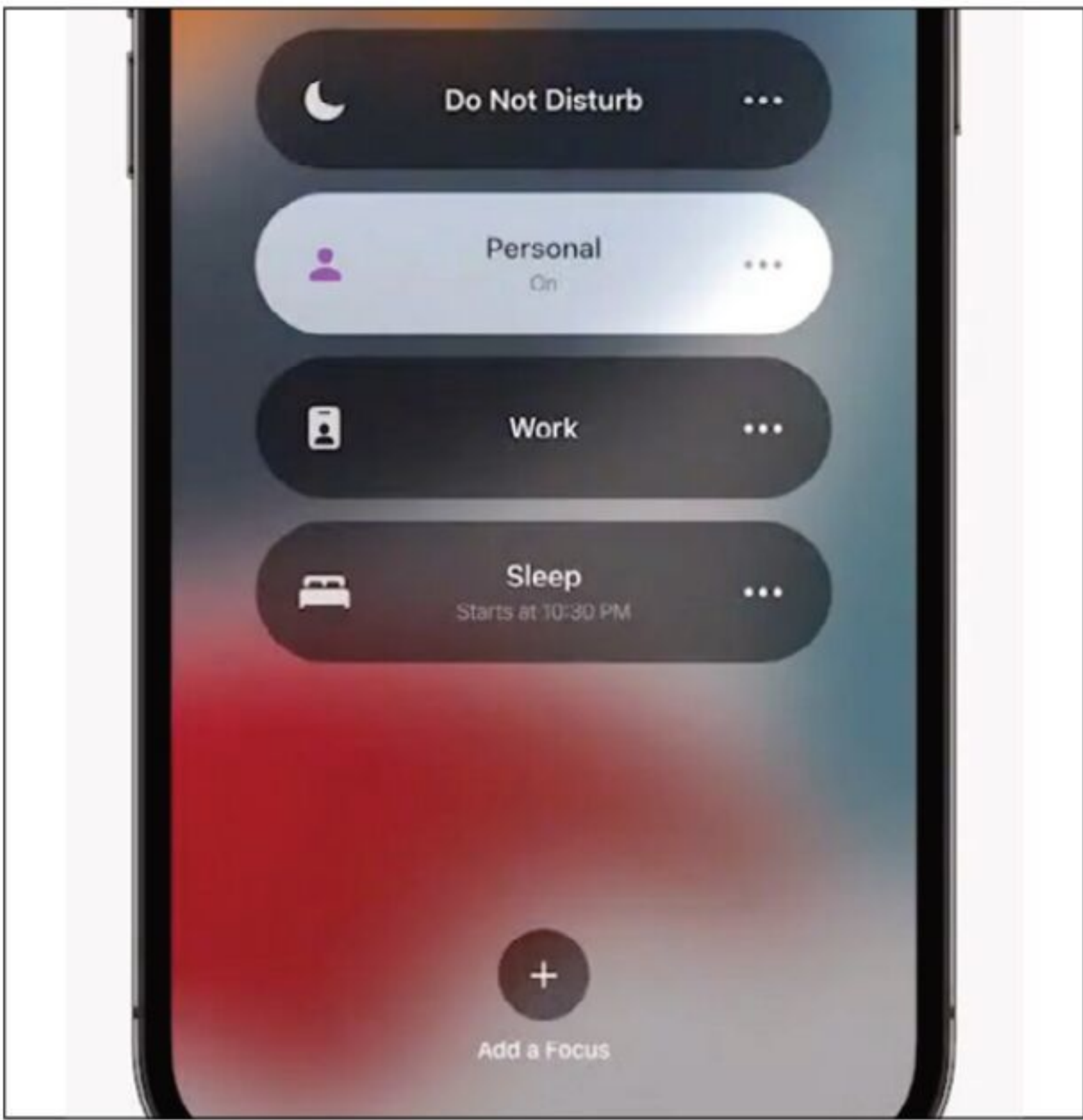
You can also set your phone to focus your notifications on certain areas of your life, such as Do Not Disturb, Personal, Work or Sleep. You can customise these categories to choose which apps are allowed notifications, for example, only your productivity apps might send you notifications when Work is activated, or for personal time, communication and social media apps can get through. Again, on-device intelligence is used to suggest apps and people you want to allow or restrict at certain times. These Focus categories can redesign your Home screen on the fly, to show or hide apps of your choosing.



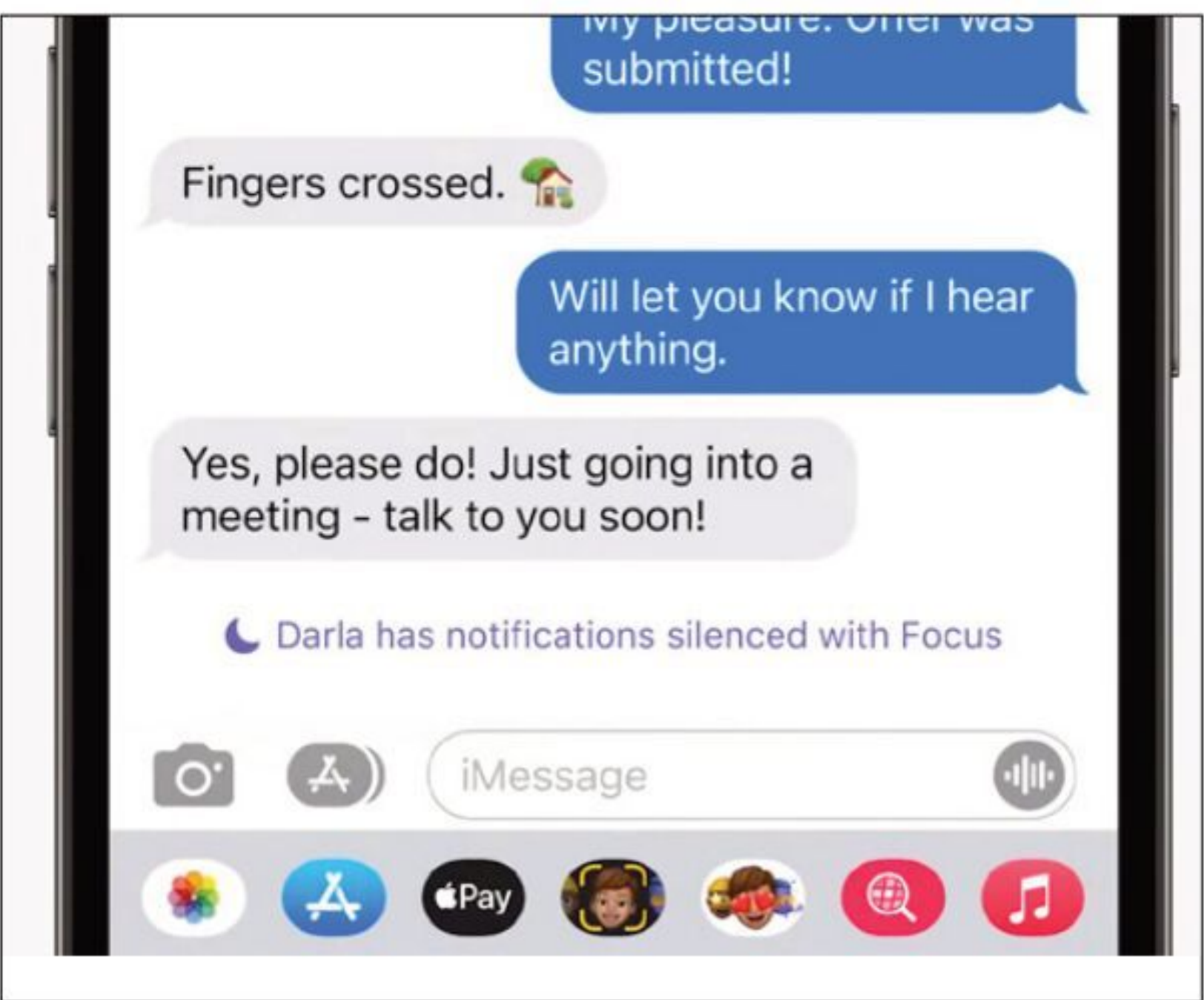
**NOTIFICATIONS:** Incoming notifications now show bigger app icons, and also a contact photo if it has come from a specific person.



**NOTIFICATION SUMMARY:** Your notifications can be collated and delivered at a time of your choosing.



**FOCUSING:** Select which apps can send you notifications according to Focus categories, then tap one to activate. You can add personalised Focus categories too.



**DND IS ON:** When you have Do Not Disturb on, anyone sending you a message is notified.

When you activate a Focus category on your iPhone, it automatically becomes active on your other Apple devices signed into the same iCloud account too, so your Mac, iPad and Apple Watch are similarly focused.

**FOCUS CATEGORIES:** Switch on a Focus category on one Apple device, and it's automatically activated on the rest of your Apple gear too.



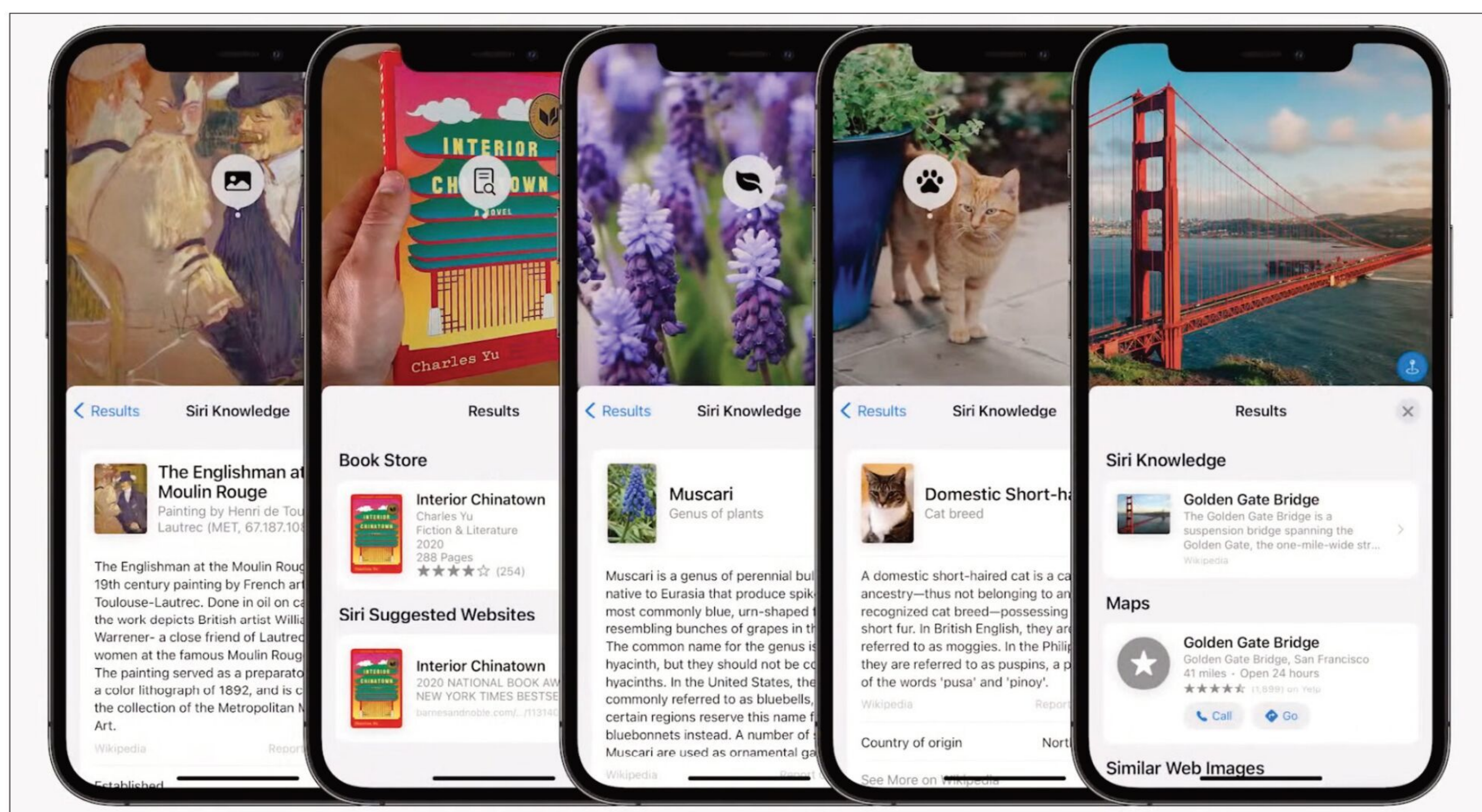
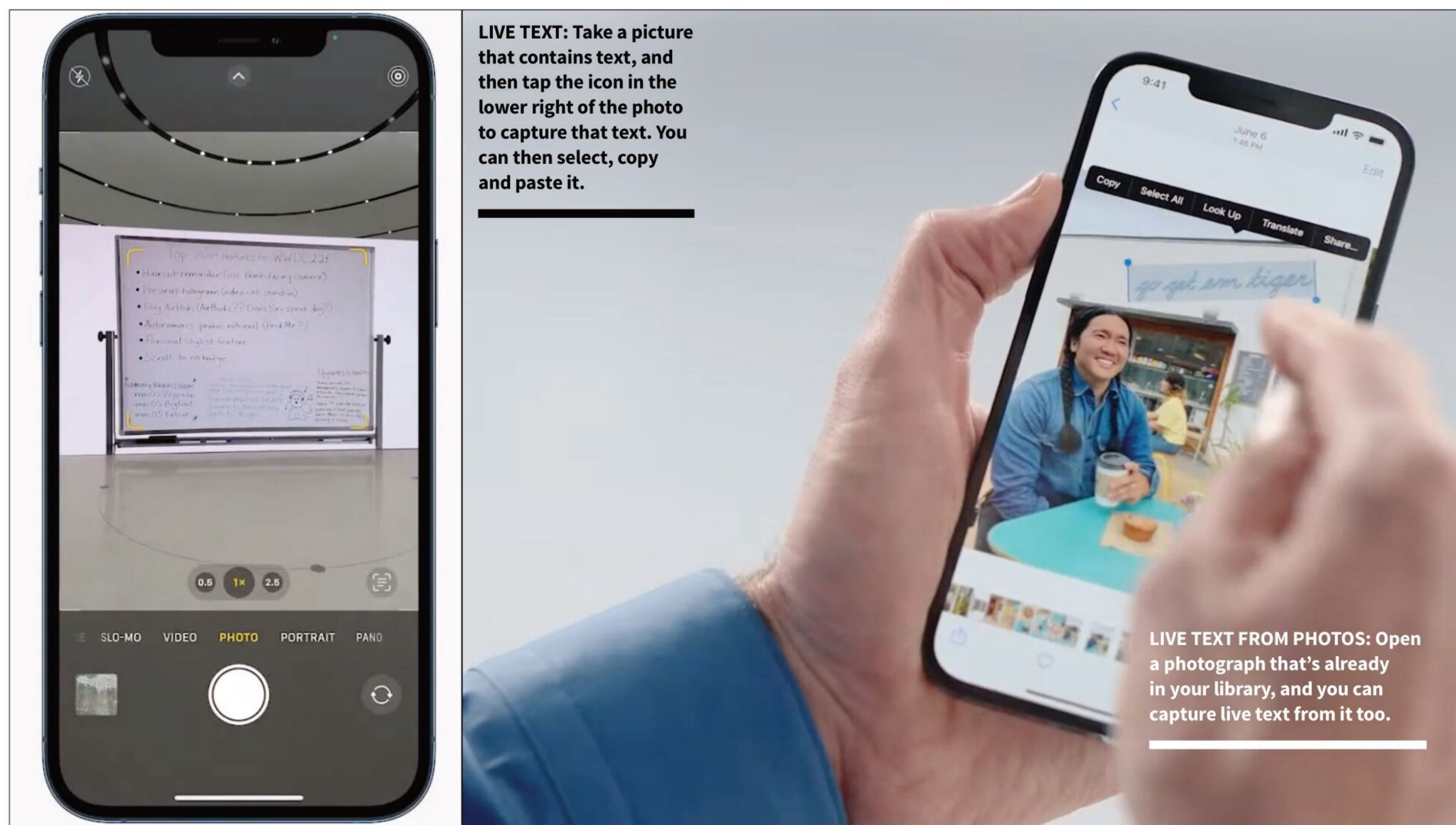


## Live Text

Live Text can capture words from a photograph. Just take a snap, and in-picture text can be selected, copied and pasted into another app like Notes, Mail, Messages or Pages. Telephone numbers are intelligently identified, and can be called directly from the photograph. Even handwritten notes can be captured in this way. Words in photos that are already in your library can be captured too, and it understands

seven languages to date; English, Chinese (simplified and traditional), French, Italian, German, Spanish and Portuguese.

As well as Live Text, you can also look up information based on what's in a photo. Tap the bubble that appears next to the object in question, and you can look up things like the name of a flower, the breed of a dog, an important landmark and more.



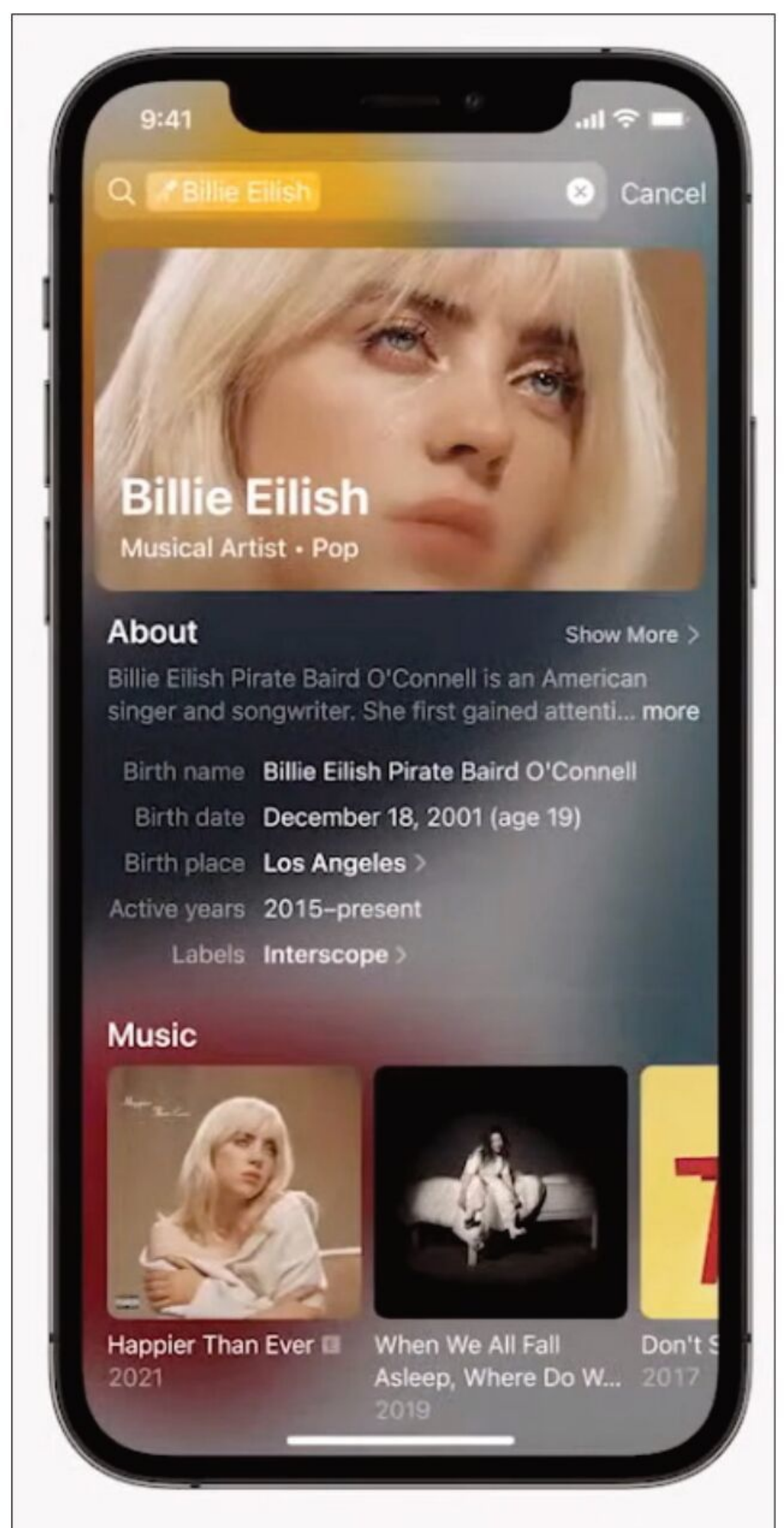


## New Spotlight Features

In iOS 15, Spotlight searches have been extended to photographs. Just type 'Photos' followed by whatever it is you're searching for in the Spotlight field, and results from the Photos app are included in your search results. For example, 'Photos Cats' would produce photographs of cats from the Photos app, alongside web pages, messages that mention both of those words, and more. You can search by location, content, people and even text found in the photos.

If you search for a person in Spotlight, you're given lots of new information related to them. This includes buttons to message, call, or otherwise get in touch, that person's contact card, photos with them in, their whereabouts if shared in Find My, recent conversations in Mail and Messages, shared Calendar events and more. Look up a celebrity, and programmes and movies that they have been in are offered, or maybe albums they've recorded. You can look for TV shows and movies in Spotlight and get similar information too.

**SPOTLIGHT PHOTOS SEARCH:** In iOS 15, you can search your Photos app alongside the rest of your Spotlight searches.

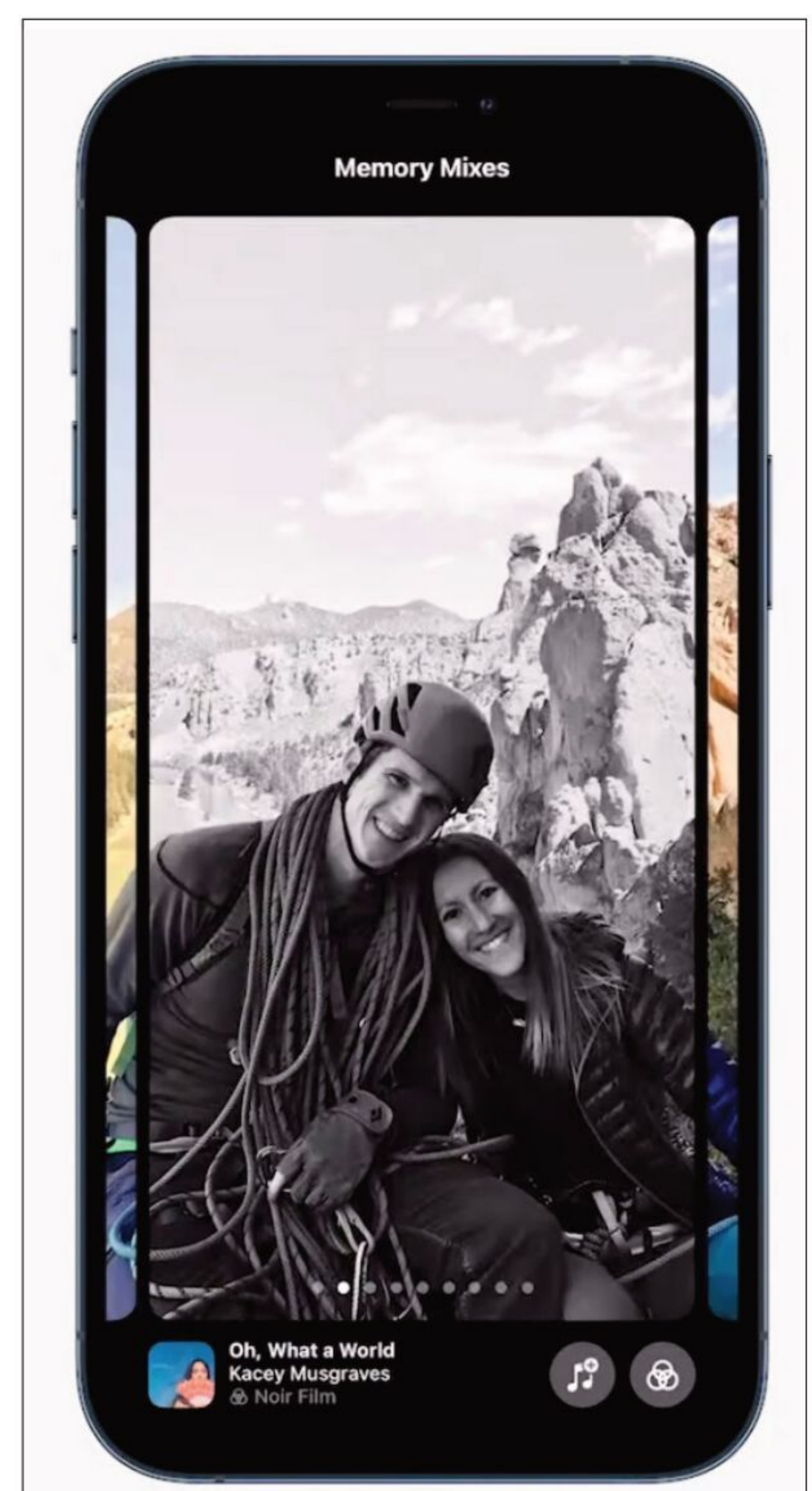


**CELEBRITY SPOTLIGHT:** Look for a celebrity, a show or a movie and all sorts of information is offered through Spotlight.

## Sweet Music with Photos Memories

The Photos app's Memories feature assembles your photos into a slideshow and presents them with music in the background. With iOS 15, it goes one better by choosing a song from Apple Music to run behind your Memories. New memories are calculated on the fly, and timed to match the music. You can tap a photo in a Memories slideshow to pause it, with the music continuing to play, and to go back to a picture you've just seen, you only need to swipe.

A new feature called Memory Mixes lets you customise your memories. By changing the song, you also change the pace of the slideshow; a slower, calmer tune, for example, leads to gentler transitions from one picture to another. The title card is animated too.



**MEMORY MIXES:** Memory Mixes lets you customise your Memories slideshow by hand, instead of having it assembled on the fly.

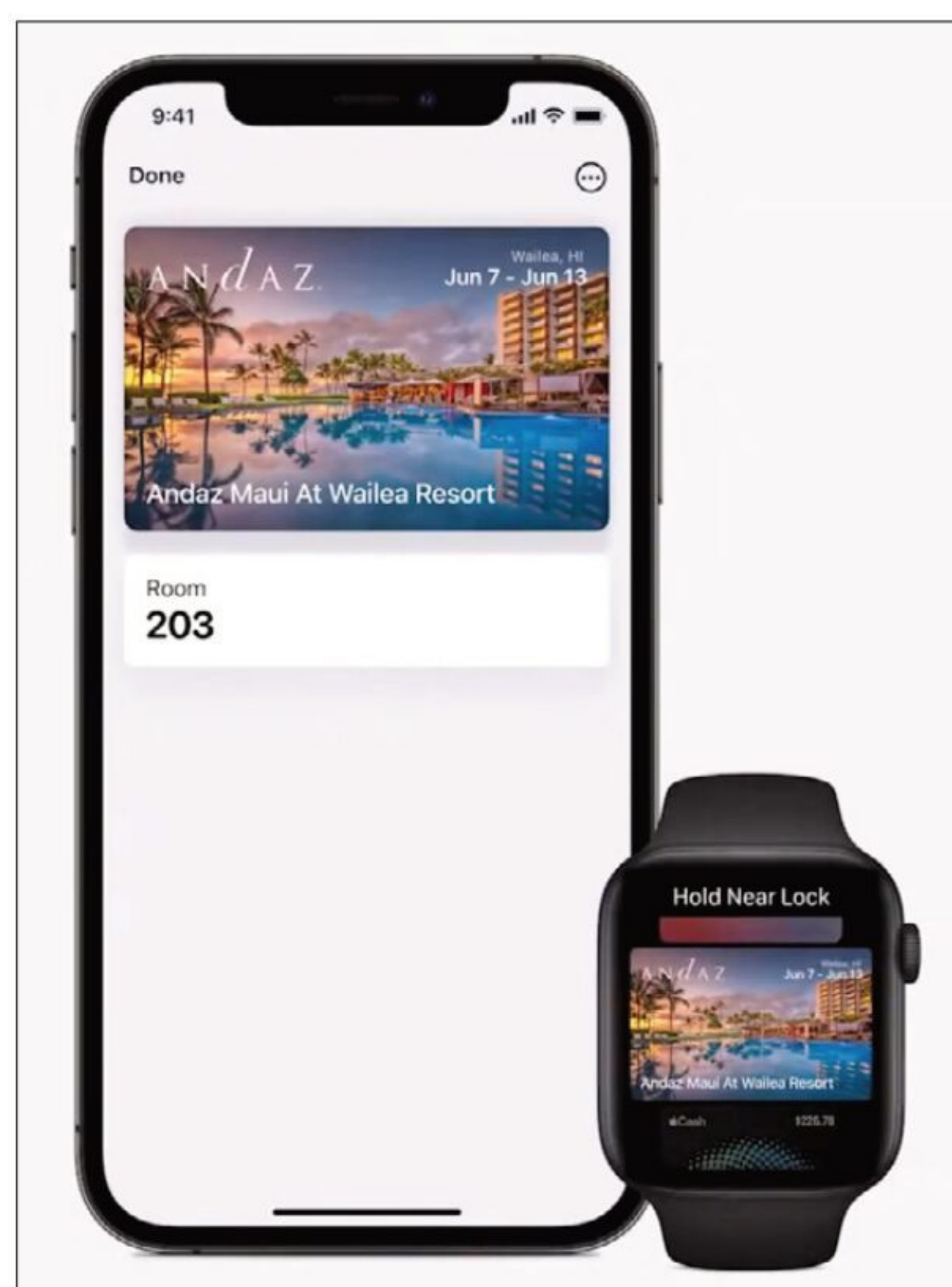


## The Wallet App

Let's face it. Apple's aim of replacing your physical wallet with the Wallet app never really happened. Sure, it's great to pay for your shopping with Apple Pay, but do you leave home without your wallet in your pocket? Us neither. But maybe that will soon change.

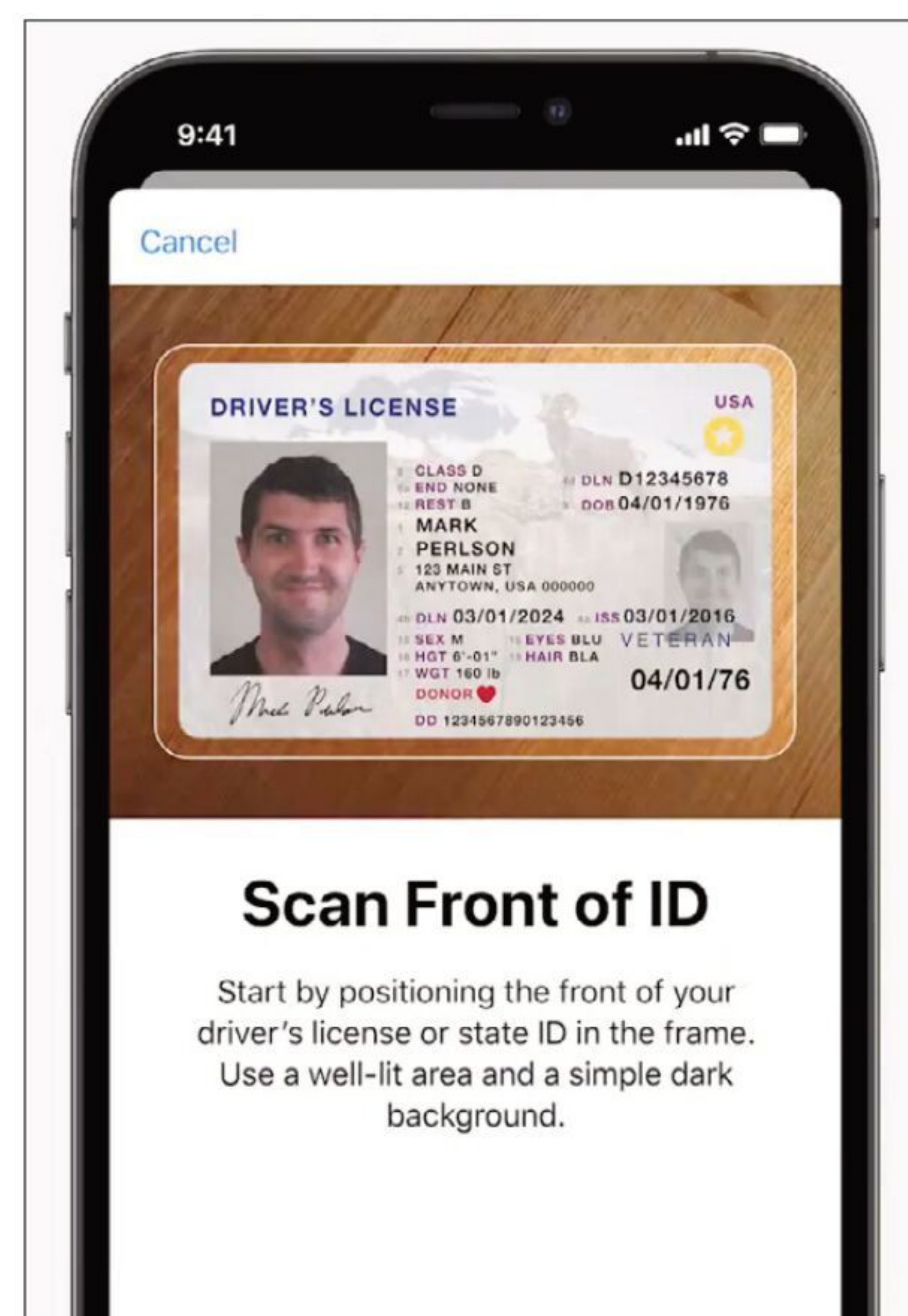
With iOS 15, Apple takes another step forwards with the virtual wallet by introducing a Keys feature. With a compatible lock, you can unlock a door by waving your iPhone or Apple Watch in front of a sensor. If you use a corporate badge or card to get into your office or other place of work, you can use the Keys feature for this too, but only if your employer makes the system Wallet-compatible. Your iPhone could also replace hotel key cards. Hive Hotels is already aiming to bring Apple Keys to over a thousand of its premises, starting this autumn. This service is especially welcome as the hotel can send you the virtual key card before you even arrive, so you don't have to queue in reception before going to your room.

The Wallet app is also getting an ID feature, whereby you can scan your drivers' licence or state ID and have it appear in Wallet. This is only applicable in participating



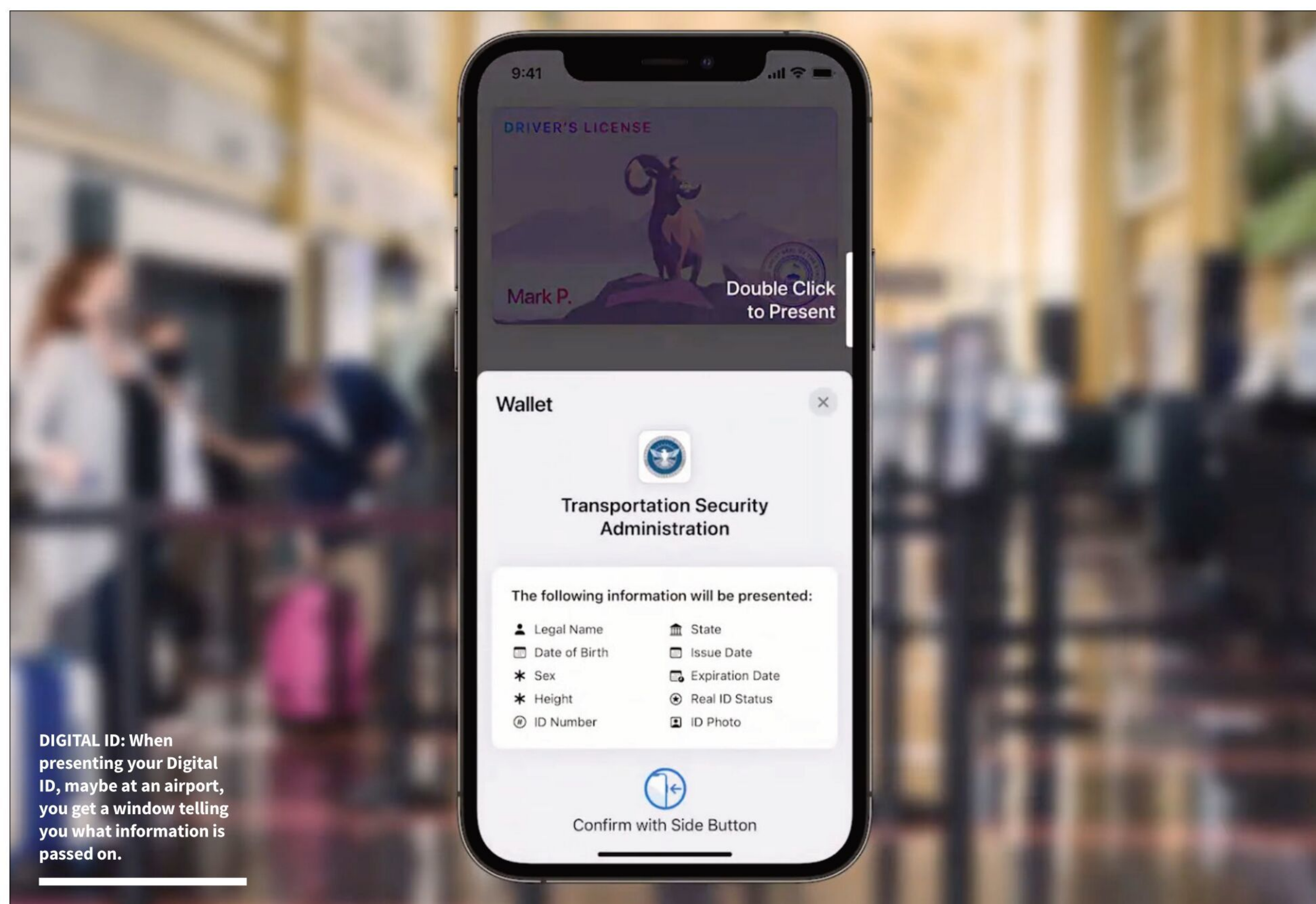
**KEYS:** Apple Wallet's Keys feature can replace hotel keycards. If you're staying at a compatible establishment, your room can be unlocked with your phone or Apple Watch.

US states at the moment, but it should catch on in other territories with time. When presenting your digital ID, the necessary information is securely and privately transferred. You get a window showing exactly



**DRIVER:** In participating US states, you can use the Wallet app to store your drivers' licence.

what this information is before you finalise the transaction and pass on the information. American airports are likely to be the first to accept digital ID, with more organisations and locations to follow.



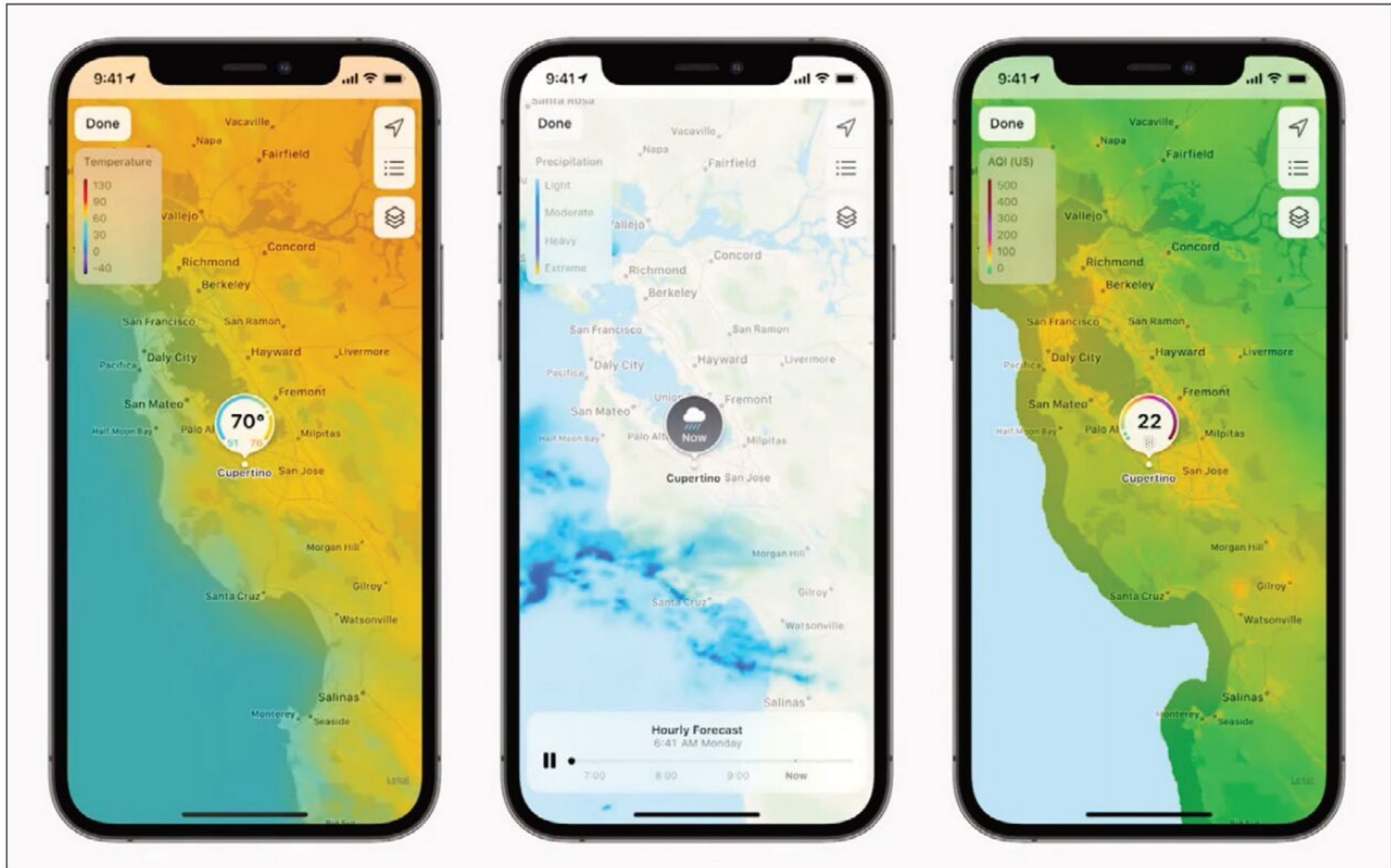
**DIGITAL ID:** When presenting your Digital ID, maybe at an airport, you get a window telling you what information is passed on.



## The Weather App, Come Rain or Shine

The Weather app gets a huge makeover with iOS 15. Its overall appearance and design is greatly improved. Data and layouts change based on current conditions, with sun, wind, rain and more displayed as the background when experiencing those weathers. If a piece of information is deemed particularly important, such as poor air quality or continual sunny skies, it's displayed at the top of the weather screen where you can't miss it. New graphics have been added for wind direction, air pressure and more, making this information easier to find and, indeed, understand.

Best of all, the iOS 15 Weather app includes full screen, high resolution weather maps. Centred on your chosen location, these maps show things like temperature, rainfall and air quality in the surrounding area. Just the thing if you're out and about locally.



**WEATHER MAPS:** These full-screen weather maps show temperature, rainfall, air quality and more, for your chosen location and the surrounding area.



**WEATHER:** Sunny skies all day? Time to get out in the garden.

## Mapping the World

Apple Maps also gets some great new features, making it even easier to get around in a strange town or city. An interactive globe has been added. Spin it on your screen and zoom in on a country of your choice. In a city map, iOS 15 offers more detail than ever before, with buildings, landmarks and features accurately drawn in a 3D view. In fact, a 3D view of a major city looks a lot like a turn-of-the-century flight sim. We wonder how long it will be before Maps data is used for exactly that? At night, the graphic is depicted with a beautiful moonlit glow that makes your virtual/actual city really shine.

For drivers, new road details have been added so motorists gets a better feel for where they are, with bus and bike lanes, taxi ranks and more all added. Flyovers and underpasses are accurately mapped in full 3D.

When using public transport, your favourite lines and routes can be pinned to the top of the screen, and progress reviewed on your Apple Watch so there's no need to keep reaching for your phone as you travel. Your route is followed too, and you're

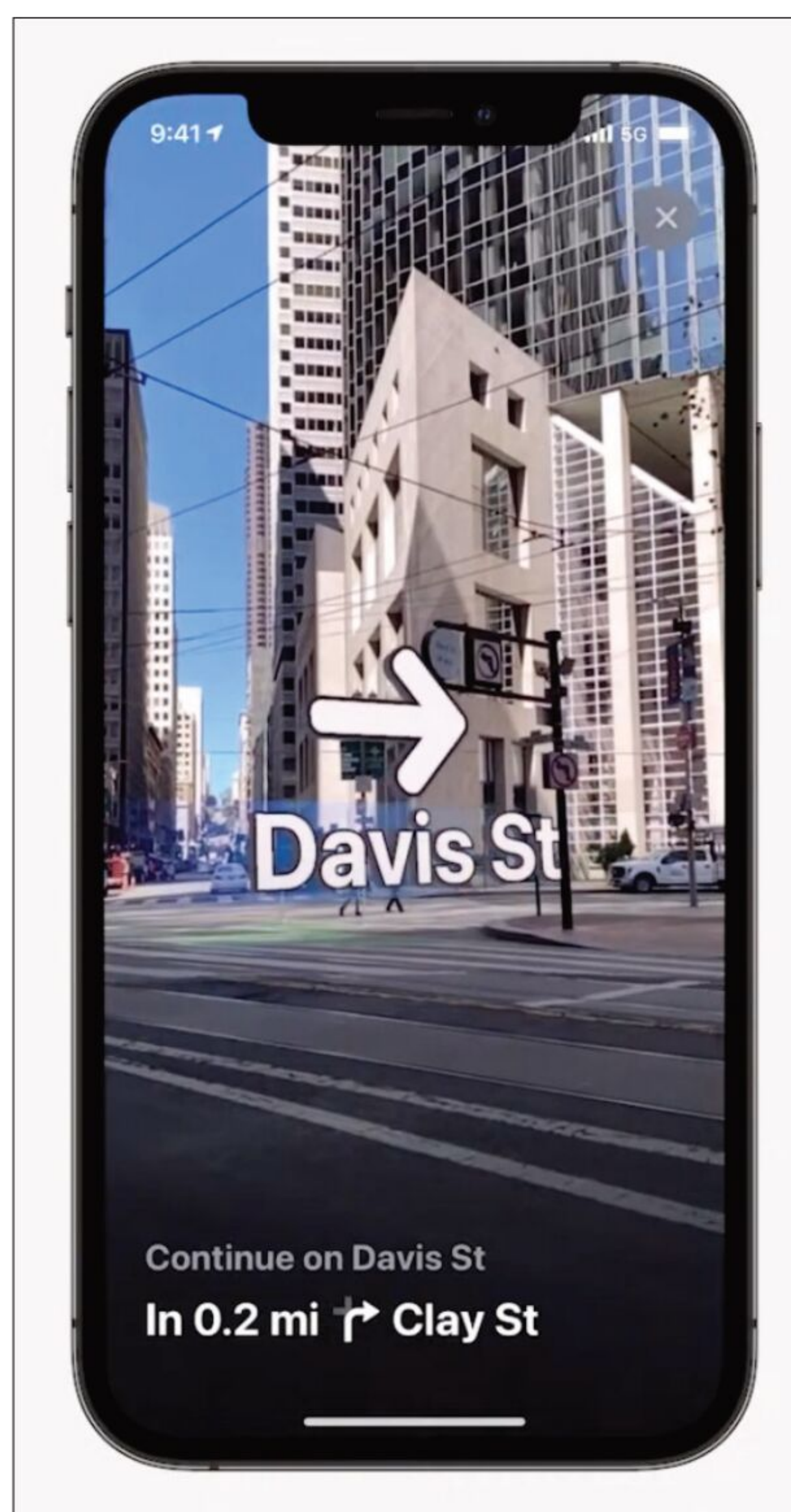


**GLOBE:** The Maps app now boasts an interactive globe for you to explore.

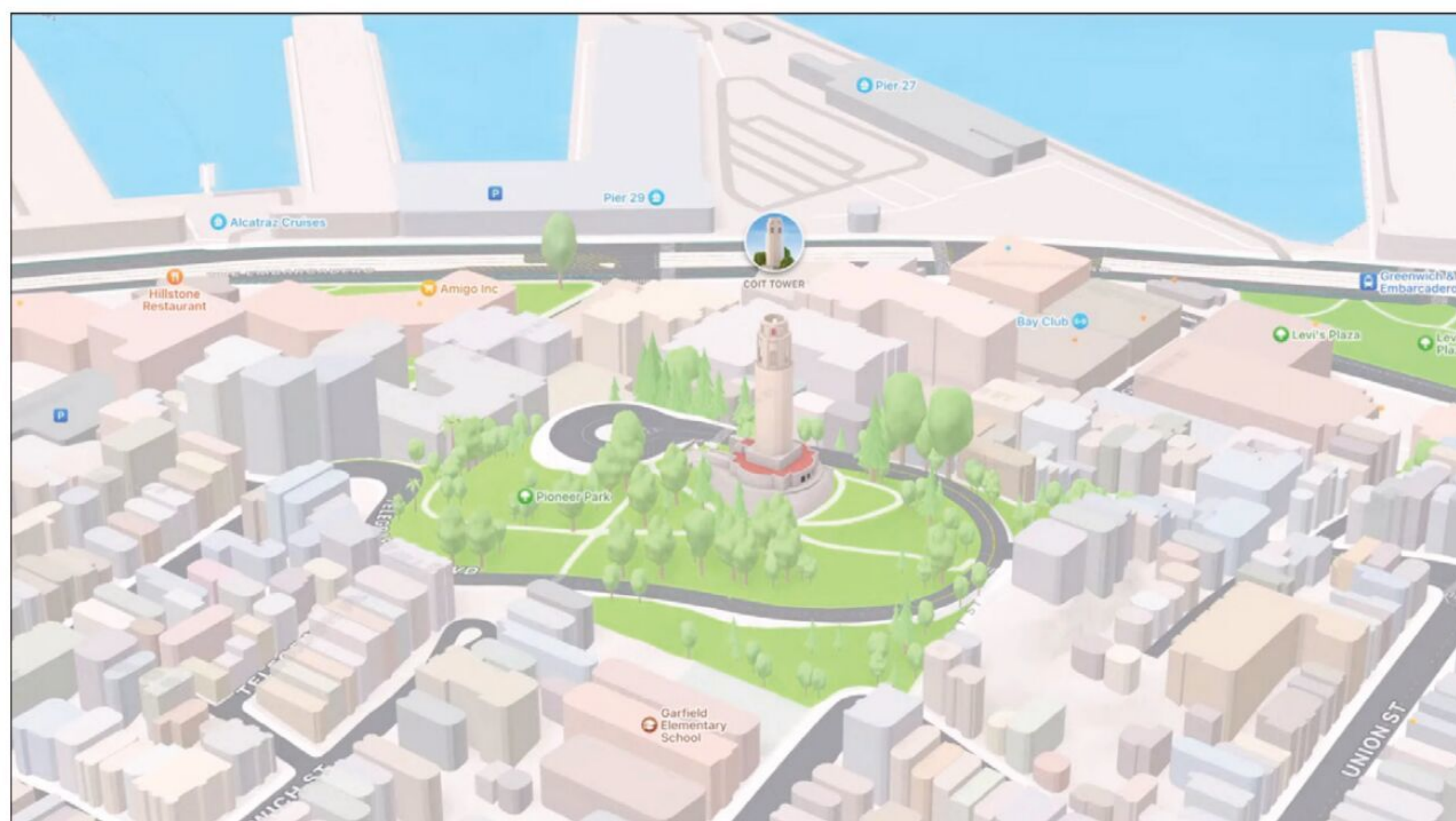


reminded when you've arrived at your stop and need to get off. Scan the area while on foot and Maps works out where you are and gives you directions to where you need to be, in augmented reality. Every step of your journey is superimposed over the local scenery, making it easy to find your way.

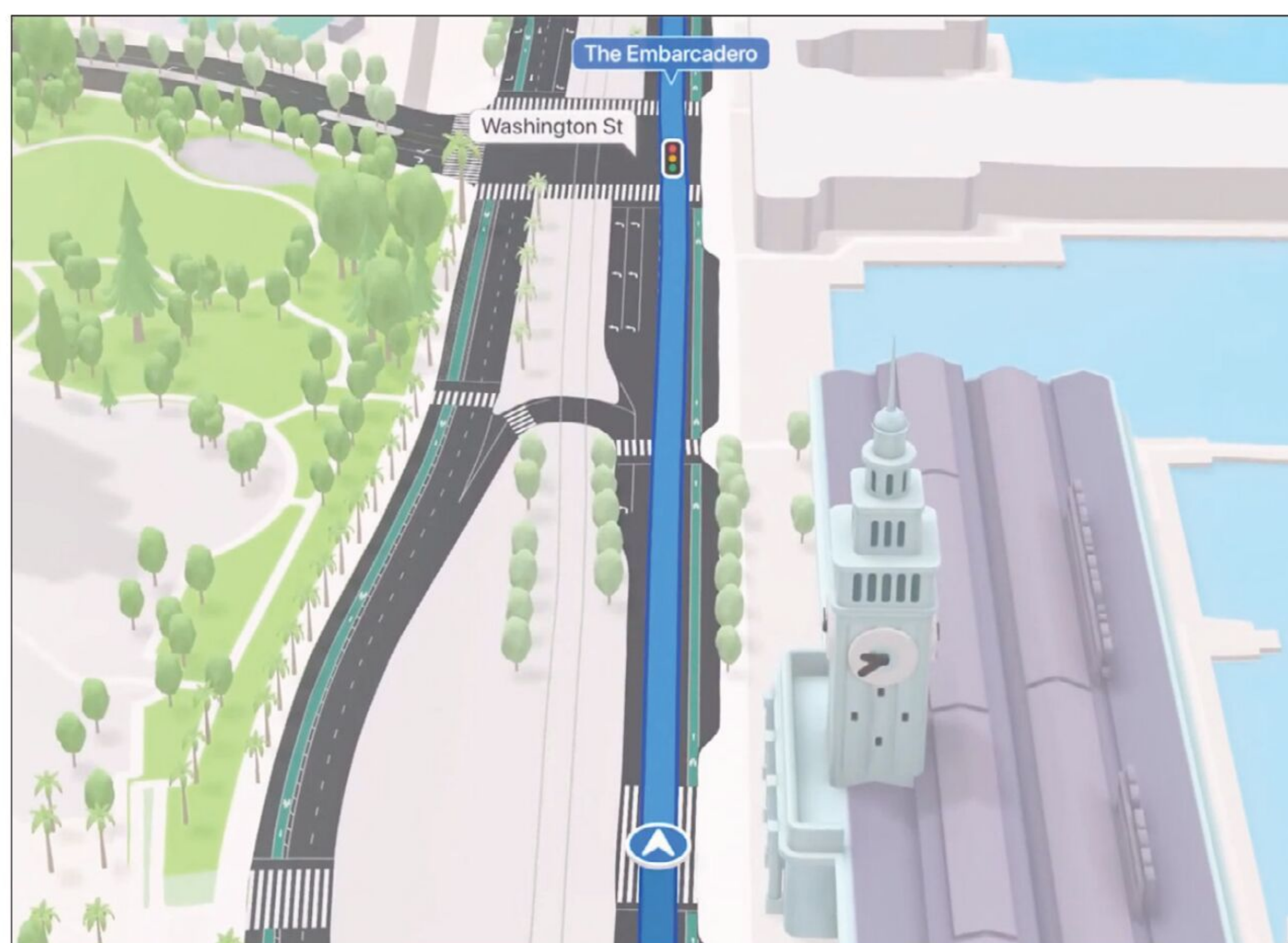
These 3D experiences are being introduced for London, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco Bay Area and Washington DC by the end of the year, with many more to come over time.



**MAPS AR:** Maps; augmented reality makes it easy to find your way around.



**MAPS CITY:** In 3D view, major cities are accurately drawn with buildings and features as well as streets.



**MAPS DRIVING:** When driving, the Maps app's improved detail gives you a better idea of where you are.

## Release Date

The exact release date for iOS 15 hasn't yet been announced, but expect it in September.



## System Requirements

All iPhones and iPod touches that can run iOS 14 can update to iOS 15. The full list of compatible models is:

- iPhone 12
- iPhone 12 Mini
- iPhone 12 Pro
- iPhone 12 Pro Max
- iPhone 11
- iPhone 11 Pro
- iPhone 11 Pro Max
- iPhone XS
- iPhone XS Max
- iPhone XR
- iPhone X
- iPhone 8
- iPhone 8 Plus
- iPhone 7
- iPhone 7 Plus
- iPhone 6S
- iPhone 6S Plus
- iPhone SE (first and second generation)
- iPod Touch (seventh generation)





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**NEW!** Eve Energy now also supports Thread. Thread offers a host of benefits, including making your smart home more responsive and robust – the only thing else you need is HomePod mini.

[www.evehome.com/eve-energy](http://www.evehome.com/eve-energy)





# What's Coming with iPadOS 15?

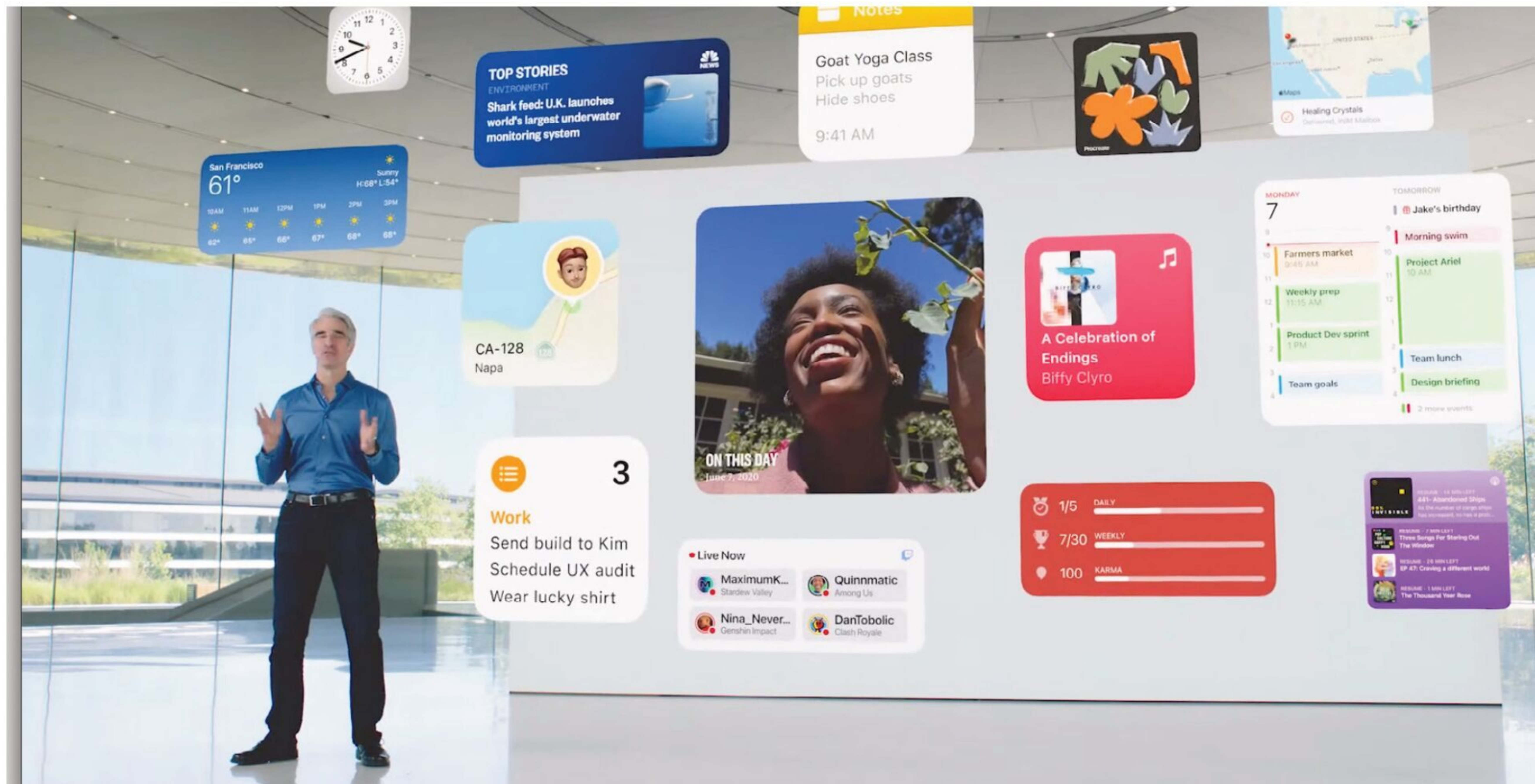
**This autumn, the iPad gets a brand new operating system; iPadOS 15. Why should we be excited?**

**A**s always, this autumn's operating system refresh brings new versions of iOS and iPadOS, and as usual, most of the new iOS features also find their way into iPadOS. The tablet's operating system also gets some brand-new exclusive features too.

## Home-Screen Widgets

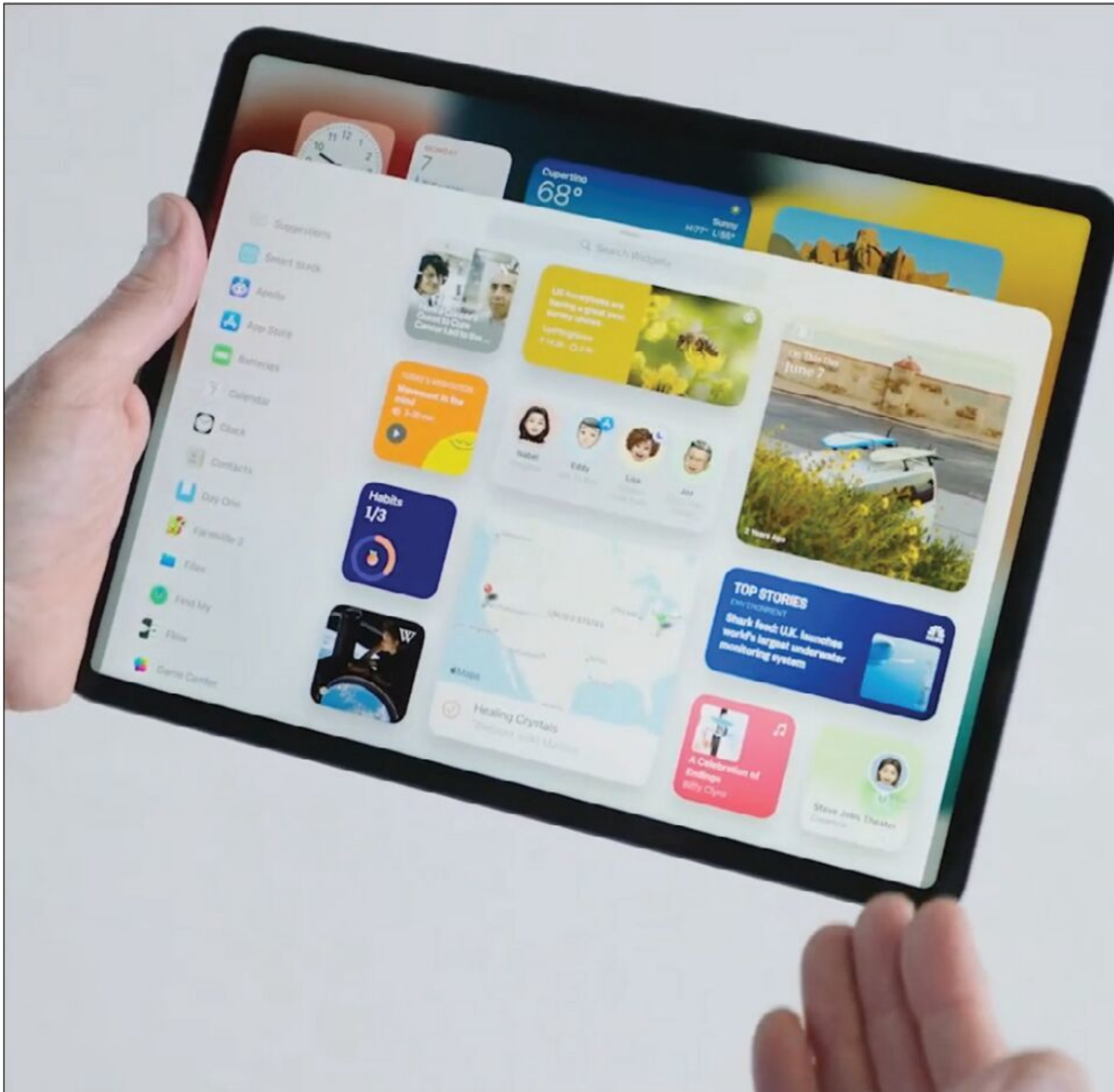
Home-screen Widgets have been improved in iPadOS 15. You can now place Widgets among the apps on your Home screen, just like you already can in iOS 14. Just open the Widgets Gallery and drag the Widget of your choice into place. Like Widgets on the iPhone, you can choose the size of your home screen

Widgets, with larger ones showing more information than the smaller sizes, but take up more room. Exclusively for the iPad, there's also an extra-large widget which is two app icons high and four icons wide. Apps that take advantage of this larger-sized Widget include Apple TV, Game Centre, Files and Photos.



**Apple's Craig Federighi shows us the iPad's new Widgets features.**





**WIDGET GALLERY:** Widgets are added to your Home screen using the Widget Gallery.



**LARGER WIDGETS:** On the iPad, you can use a larger-sized widget that takes advantage of the tablet's bigger screen area.

## App Library

Another feature that appeared in iOS 14 but was inexplicably missing in iPadOS was App Library, and this too is coming to the tablet with iPadOS 15. The App Library groups apps of a similar nature and places them on a page of folder-like icons. This is in addition to, not instead of, their presence on the Home screen. For example, a games library collates all your gaming apps. Tap one of the three icons on the folder to open that particular game, or the icon featuring four app icons to open the folder and choose from any of your games. You can access your App Library by swiping your Home screen as far as it will go, or by tapping the App Library icon in the Dock. Also like the iPhone, you can now hide Home screen pages you no longer need, to keep things neat and tidy.



**APP LIBRARY:** The iPhone's App Library finally makes it to the iPad with iPadOS 15.



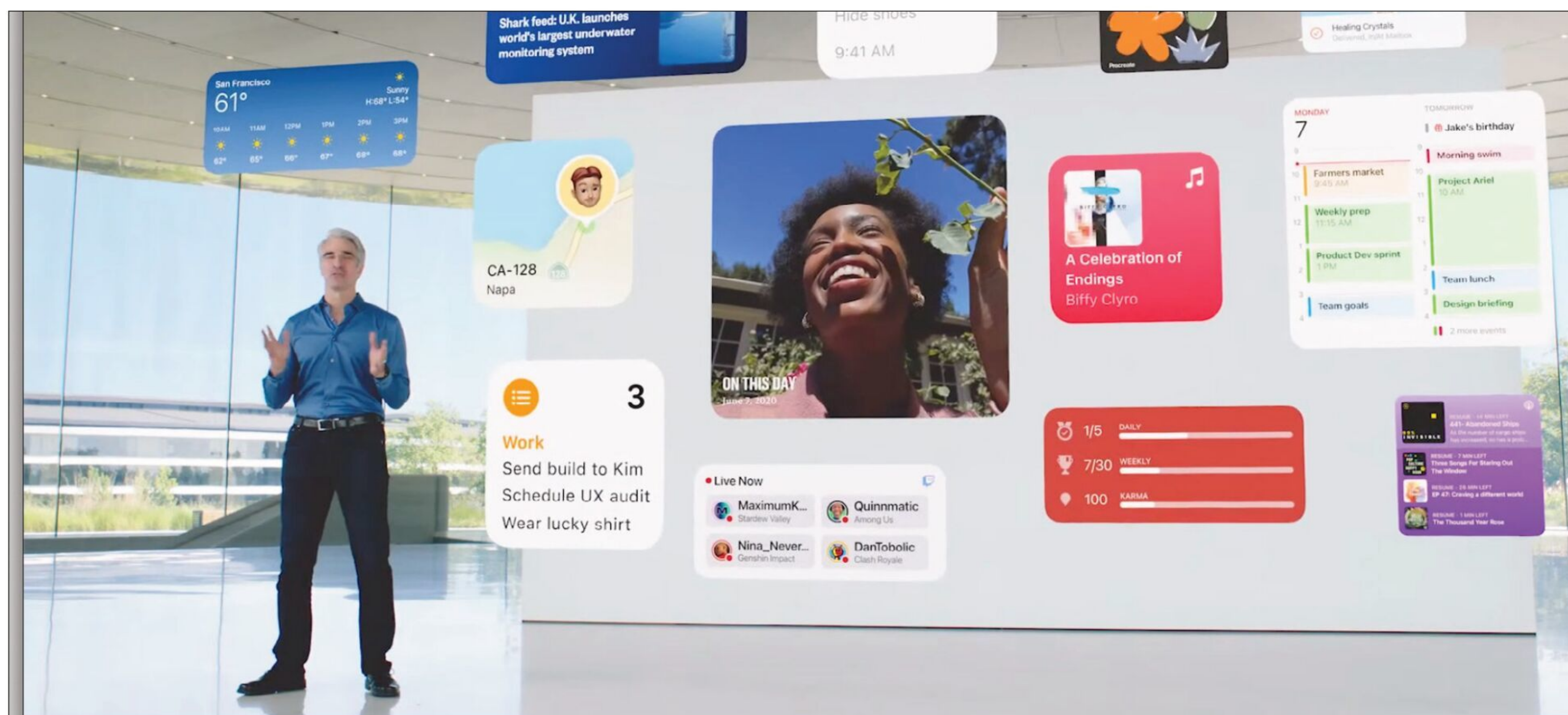
# Multitasking

The iPad has some great multitasking capabilities, but they're not as intuitive or easy to use as they should be. This all changes with iPadOS 15. A new icon appears at the top of your apps; tapping it reveals the multitasking menu. This offers a series of multitasking options. You can take an app full screen, or choose to work with two apps side by side with a Split View or a Slide-Over. These work in a very similar way to the iPad's current

multitasking options, but are much easier to find. Another way of opening two apps in Split View is by launching the App Switcher, and dragging one open app onto another, a great new feature that again makes multitasking easier to access.

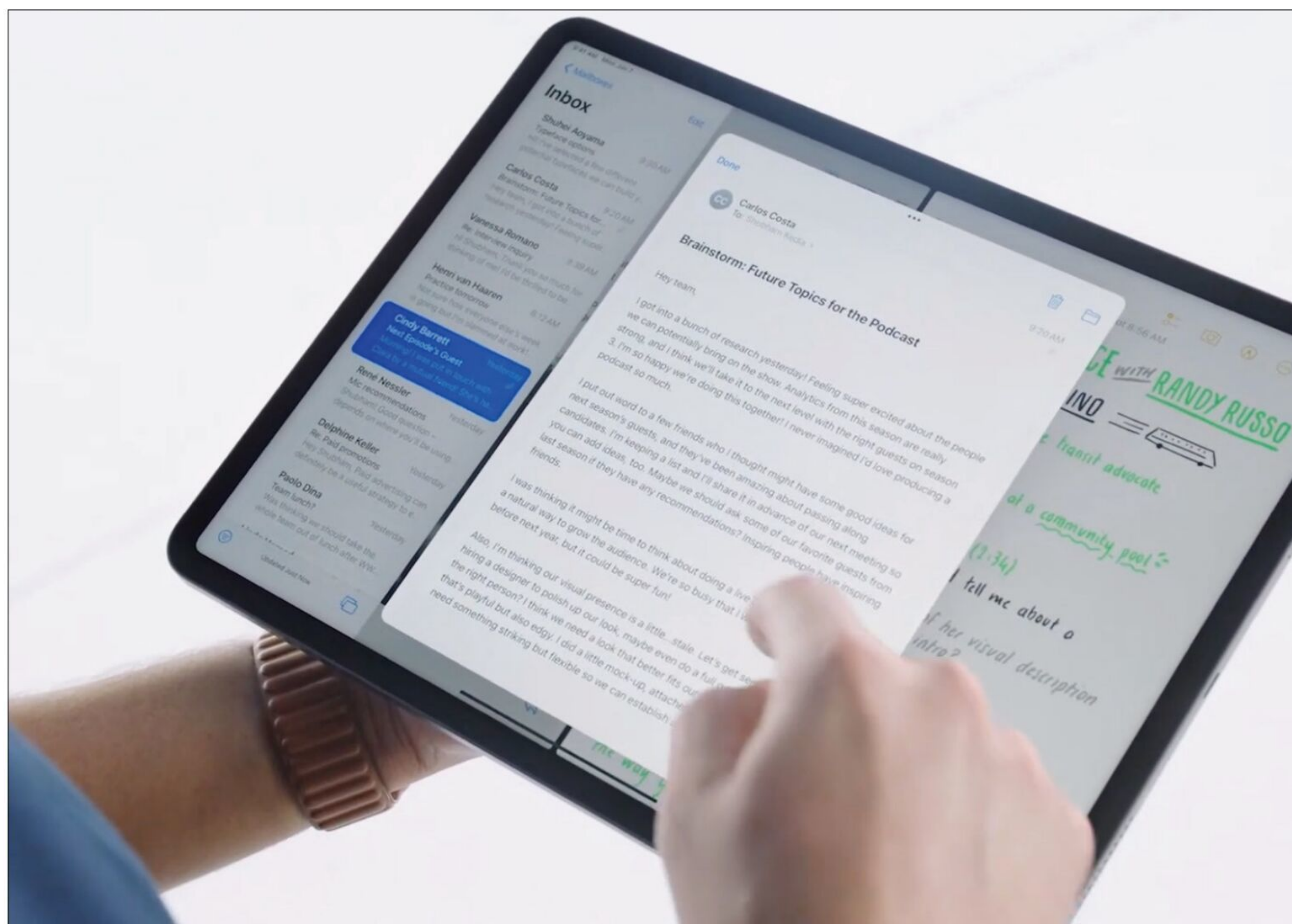
Something else you can do when multitasking is open a specific window in the centre of the split screen. For example, if Mail is one of the apps you're using in Split View,

you can tap and hold an email and have it open front and centre, from where you can deal with it. With multiple windows open, you can swipe one down and have it appear as an icon at the foot of the screen, in an area called the Shelf. You can then open it in the future by tapping this icon. It's a great way of saving something for later, and dealing with it when you're less busy.



**MULTITASKING MENU:** Tap the icon atop the app for the Multitasking Menu.

**SPLIT VIEW EMAIL:** In Split View, you can open an email in the centre of the screen, deal with it and then go back to using the split screen again.





# Notes Features

There's a few new features coming to the Notes app. They were announced at the WWDC as coming to the iPad, but we presume they'll arrive on the iPhone too.

Collaboration and organisation are the order of the day. If you mention someone in a shared note, for example, they get a notification with a link to the note in question. Look out too for an Activity View sidebar, which lets you know what's changed on a shared note since the last time you opened it. Just the thing when more than one person can edit it.

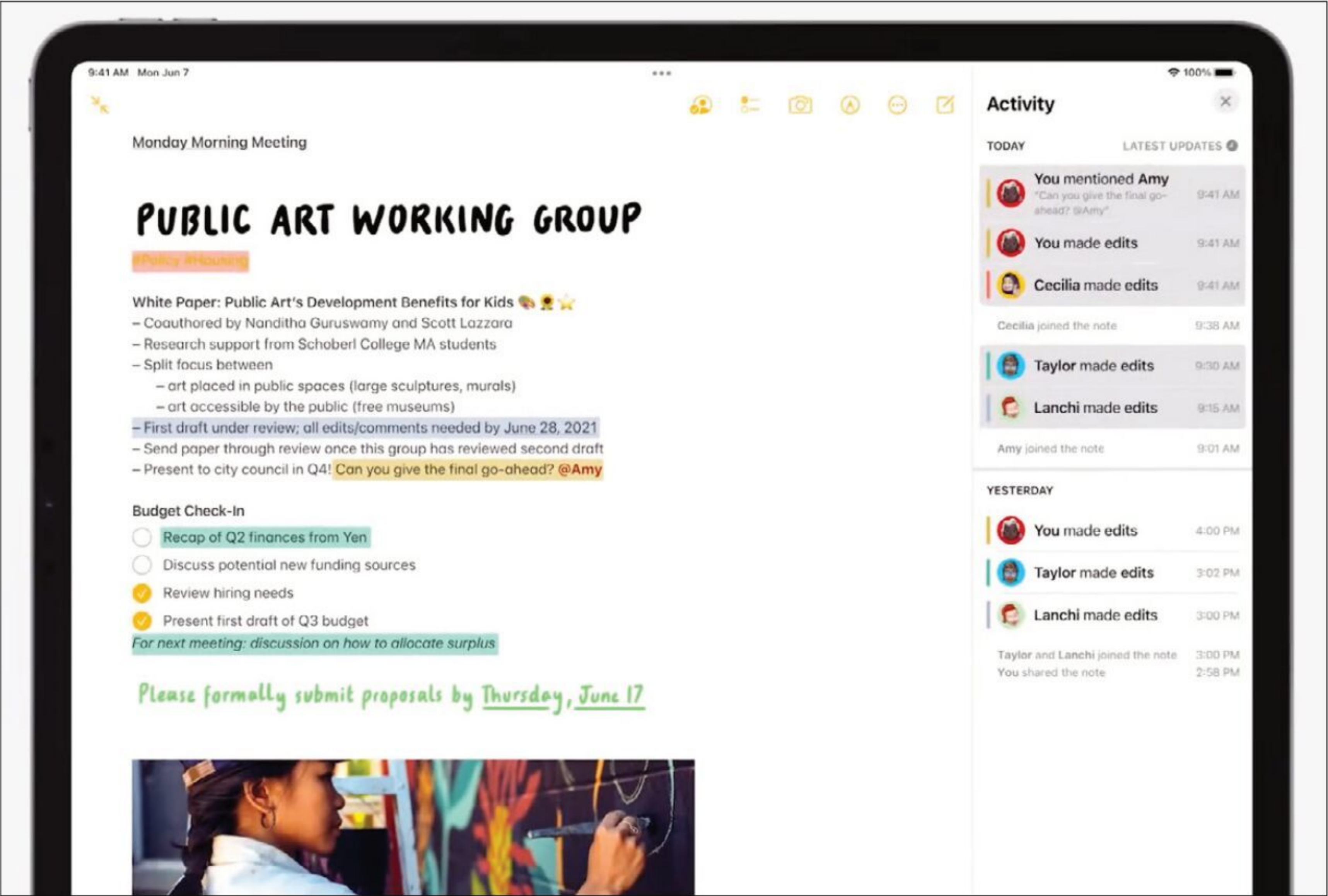
To help you organise your notes, you can add tags. A hashtag followed by a word anywhere in the note becomes a tag, listed in the new Tags section in the sidebar. Tap on a tag in the sidebar and you're shown all notes containing that particular tag.

A brand new feature called Quick Note lets you add a scribble from anywhere on your iPad. Just swipe in from the bottom-right corner of the screen and a note appears, on which you can type or write with your Apple Pencil. When you're done, swipe it away. Quick Note offers extra features depending on which app you were using when you opened the note. In Safari, for example, you can easily add a link to your currently open page. You can copy and paste text from an app to a Quick Note too. Swiping left and right cycles through your Quick Notes, and you can find them all in the Notes app.

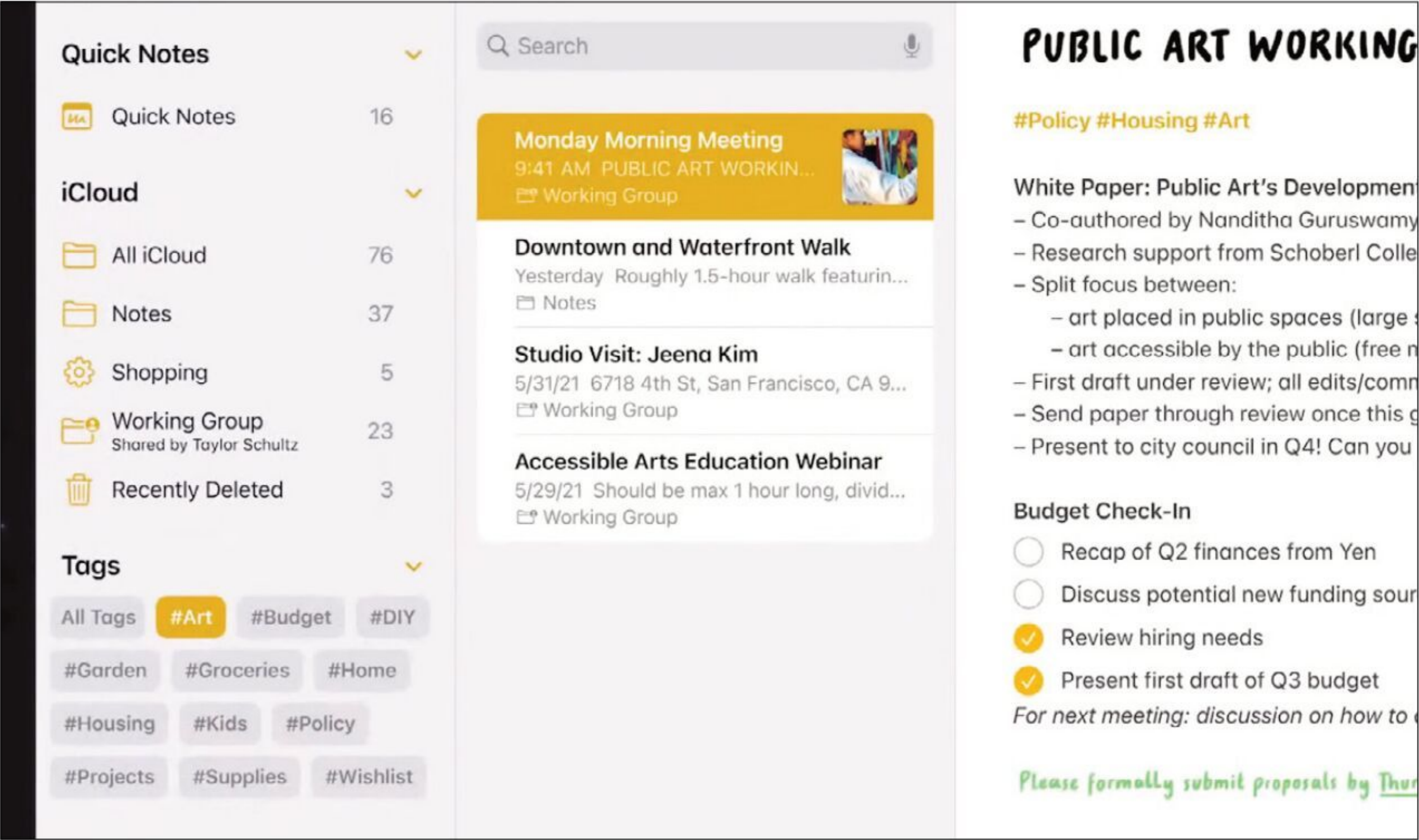
Quick Notes can be created on Macs and iPads, and accessed and edited on an iPhone.



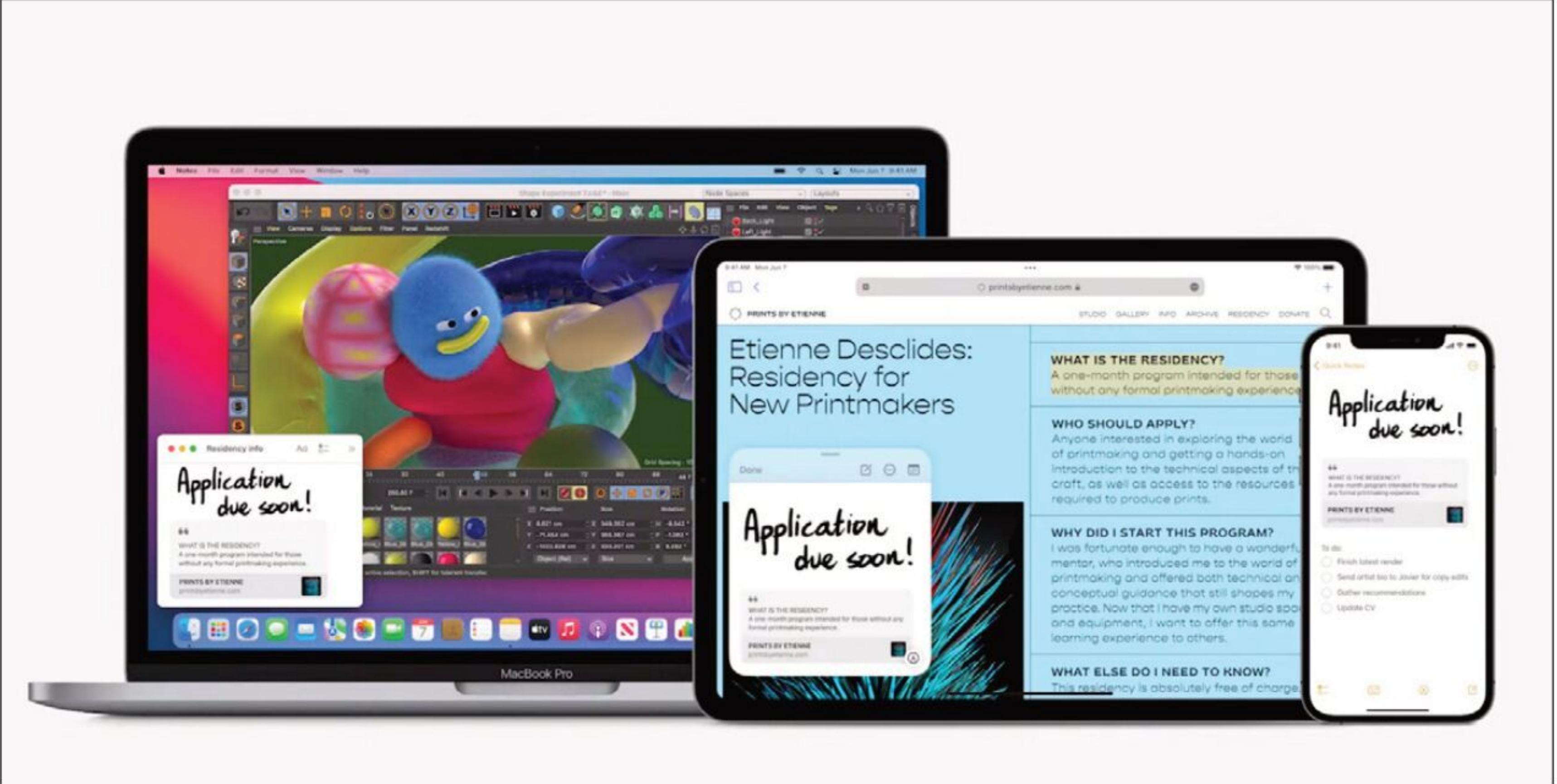
**QUICK NOTE:** Make a quick, back-of-an-envelope scribble, and access it later through Notes.



**NOTES MENTIONS:** Mention someone in a shared note (like @Amy here), and they get a notification linking back to the note itself.



**NOTES TAGS:** Tag your notes with a hashtag, then review your tags in the Notes sidebar.



**QUICK NOTES DEVICES:** Quick Notes are available on all your Apple devices, but on iOS, they can only be edited, not created.

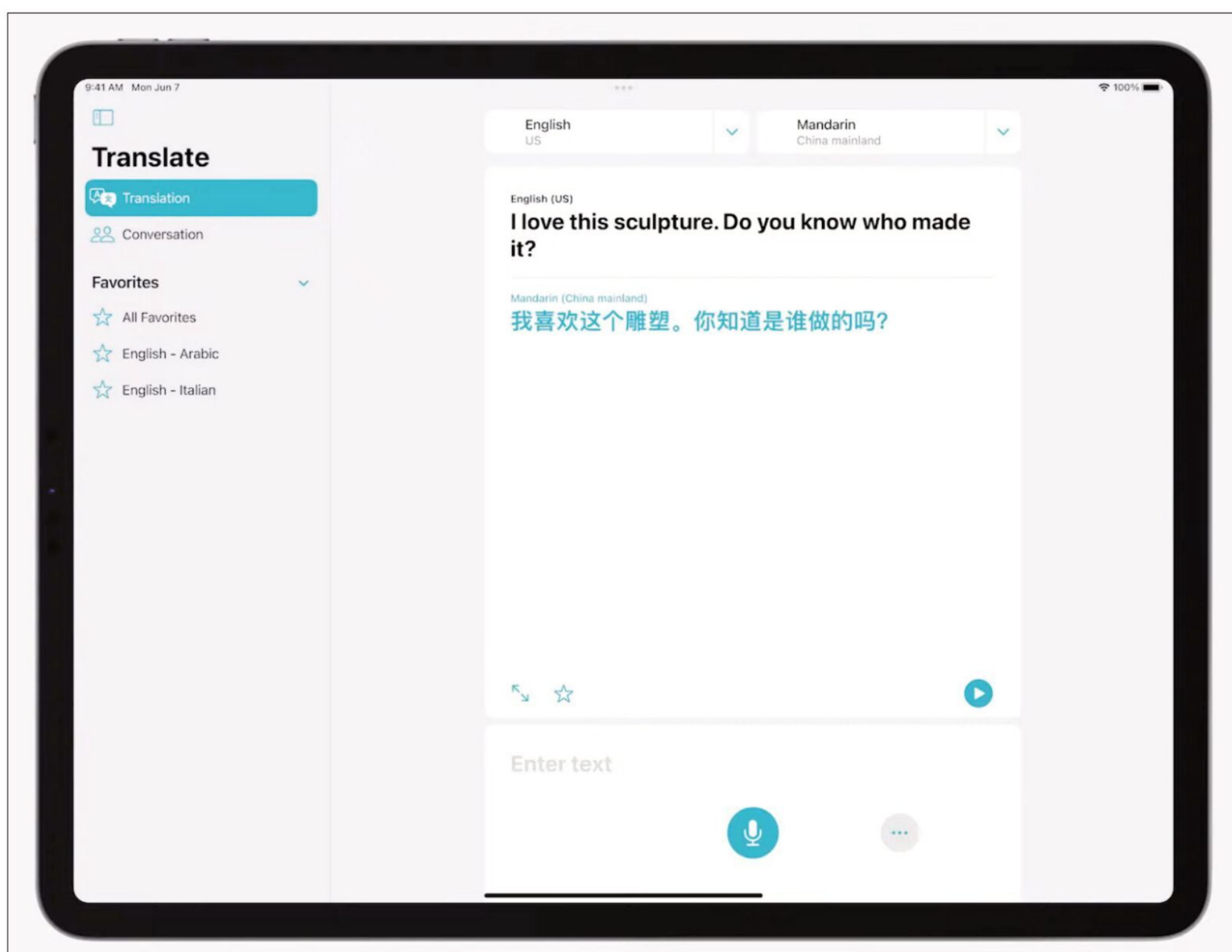


## Translate Gets a Feature Boost

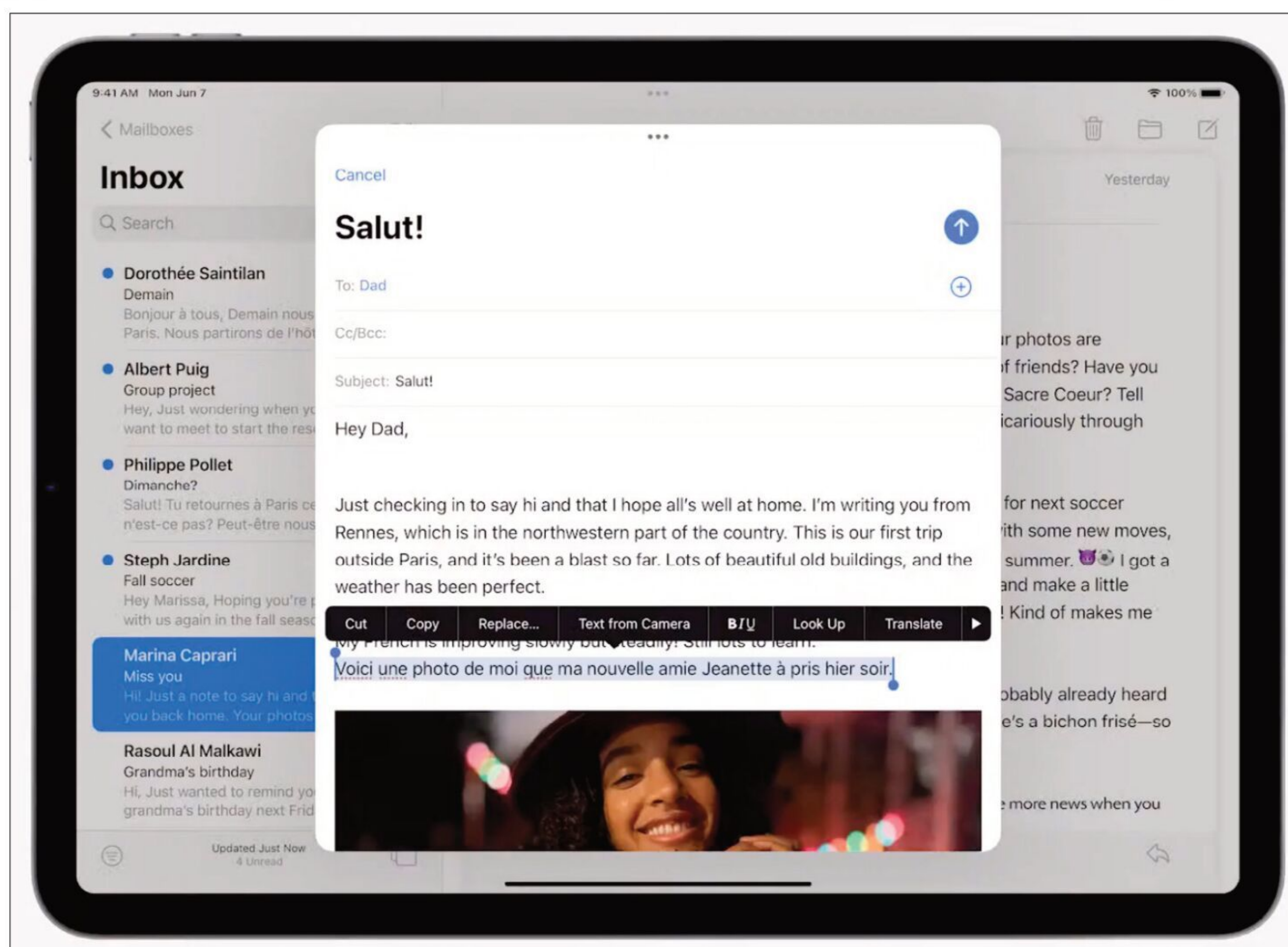
The Translate app has proven popular on the iPhone, and with iPadOS 15, it arrives on Apple's tablet with several new features. You can practice handwriting in a language that doesn't use our alphabet, like Chinese or Russian. You can use Translate in Split View, to keep it open next to a document you're translating, and the Auto Translate feature detects speech and which language is being spoken and then translates on the fly.

Translation is now system-wide. Highlight a piece of text in the usual way in any app, and the pop-up menu offers a Translate option. Tap it and a pop-up window offers a translation. You can also combine Live Text and Translate for a translation of words found in a photograph. These new Translate features are available on all Apple gear, that is Macs, iPads and iPhones, and you can download language packs to keep the translations on your device if you wish.

**TRANSLATE:** The Translate app comes to the iPad with iPadOS 15.



**SYSTEM-WIDE TRANSLATION:** You can translate text from anywhere on your iPad using system-wide translation.

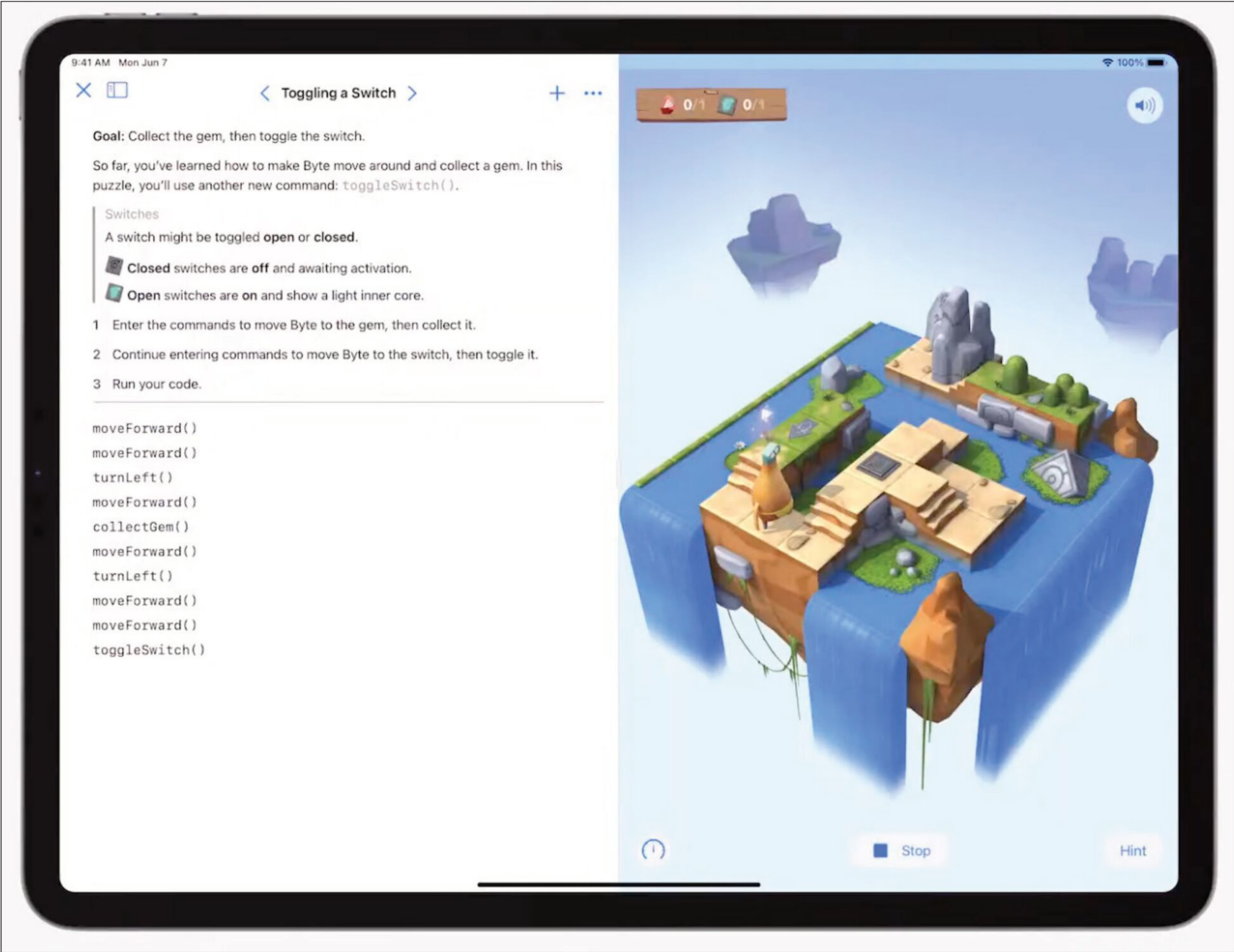




# Swift Playground

Swift Playgrounds is a great way to learn how to program, using interactive lesson plans made by Apple. With iPadOS 15, you can create apps for your iPad directly on the iPad itself. You no longer need to use a Mac. There are all sorts of tweaks and improvements to help with your coding, and when you're ready, you can submit it to the App Store, again directly from the iPad.

**SWIFT PLAYGROUNDS:** You can soon make apps for the iPhone and iPad directly from your Apple tablet.



## Release Date

The exact release date for iPadOS 15 hasn't yet been announced, but expect it in September.



## System Requirements

iPadOS 15 is compatible with the iPad Air 2 or later. Here's a full list of compatible devices:

- iPad Pro 12.9-inch (5th generation)
  - iPad Pro 11-inch (3rd generation)
  - iPad Pro 12.9-inch (4th generation)
  - iPad Pro 11-inch (2nd generation)
  - iPad Pro 12.9-inch (3rd generation)
  - iPad Pro 11-inch (1st generation)
  - iPad Pro 12.9-inch (2nd generation)
  - iPad Pro 12.9-inch (1st generation)
  - iPad Pro 10.5-inch
  - iPad Pro 9.7-inch
- iPad (8th generation)
  - iPad (7th generation)
  - iPad (6th generation)
  - iPad (5th generation)
  - iPad mini (5th generation)
  - iPad mini 4
  - iPad Air (4th generation)
  - iPad Air (3rd generation)
  - iPad Air 2



# What's Coming with macOS 12 Monterey?

The next version of the Mac's operating system was announced at the 2021 Worldwide Developer's Conference, but some of its new features are only available on Apple Silicon Macs.

The next version of macOS will be called Monterey, after a bay on the central Californian coast.



**A**s June 2021's Worldwide Developers' Conference keynote offered surprisingly little on the next version of macOS. It was introduced towards the end of the presentation, and it took up much less time than you'd expect. Perhaps this is due to the Mac team spending much of their time with the switch-over to the new Apple-made chips, and perhaps it's because a lot of the new features, such as Quick Notes, SharePlay and Focus, had already been discussed during the iOS 15 presentation. There's some interesting tidbits on offer, though some of them are only available on the very latest Macs that run Apple Silicon processors; if you're still on an Intel Mac, you won't get the full benefit of macOS 12.

As always, the new operating system was named at the WWDC keynote. We already knew it was going to be macOS 12, as macOS 11.1 and 11.2 were taken with Big Sur updates, but we now know it's to be called macOS 12: Monterey. Again, it's based on a Californian location, specifically Monterey Bay.



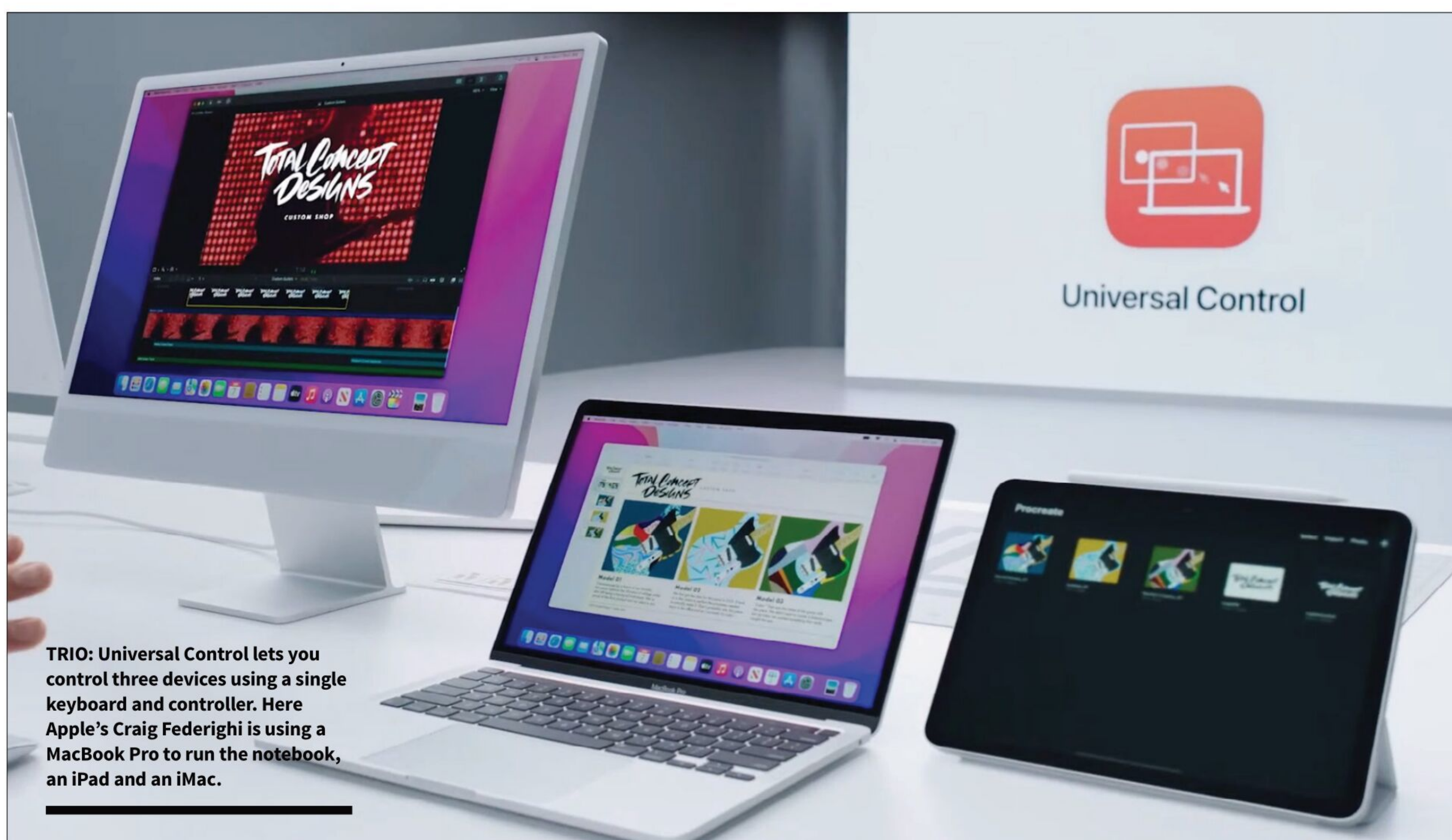
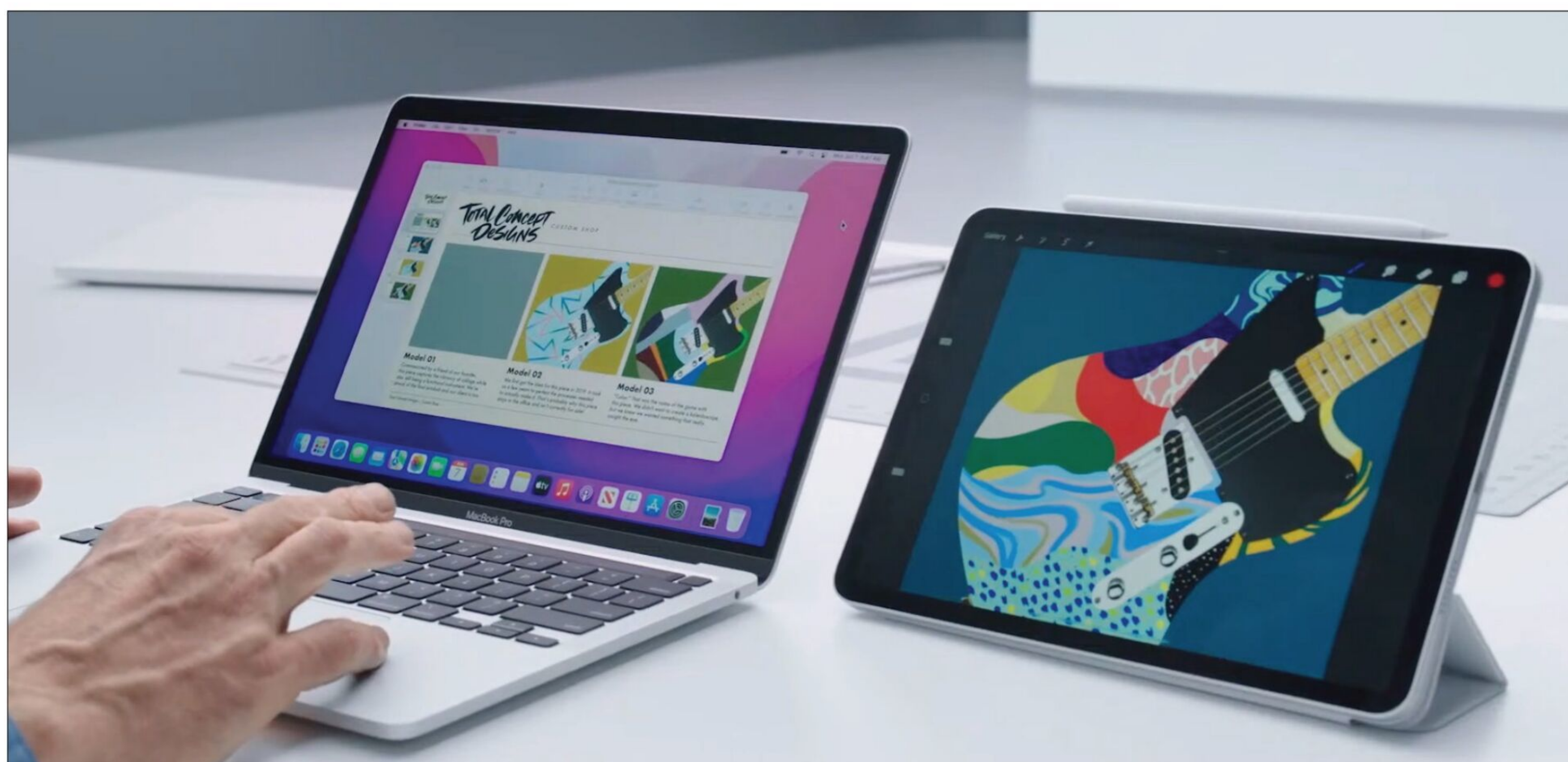


## Continuity Continues...

Monterey introduces a new Continuity feature on the Mac. Universal Control lets you use a single keyboard and mouse/trackpad across your Mac and iPad (iPadOS 15 required). Just place your iPad next to your Mac, and you can drag your pointer across from the Mac's screen and onto the iPad's via a direct wireless connection. You can move files between the two devices in this way too, and even add a third device. At the keynote, we were shown an iPad and an iMac with a MacBook Pro sat between them, and all three devices being controlled using the notebook's keyboard and trackpad.

This goes much further than Apple's existing screen sharing feature, Sidecar, which used the iPad as a second screen for your Mac. With Universal Control, you're actually operating your iPad as an independent device, not just a dumb screen.

**UNIVERSAL CONTROL:** With Universal Control, you can drag and drop items between your Mac and iPad using the Mac's keyboard and controller.



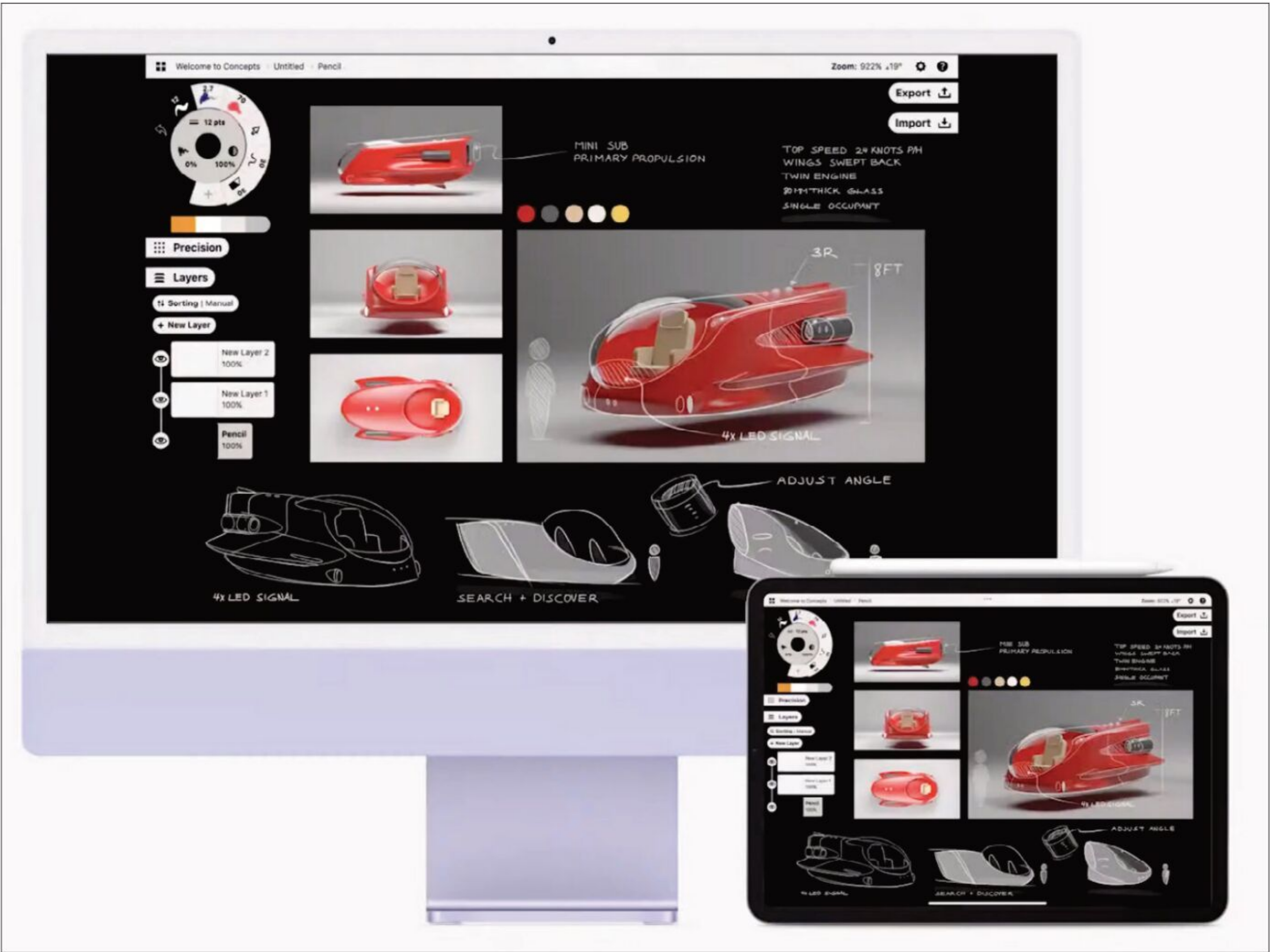
**TRIO:** Universal Control lets you control three devices using a single keyboard and controller. Here Apple's Craig Federighi is using a MacBook Pro to run the notebook, an iPad and an iMac.



# AirPlay to Mac

We've long been able to share our mobile device's screen to our television using Apple TV and AirPlay, but with Monterey, you can also play, present and share from an iPhone or iPad to a Mac's screen. Today's Mac displays are high resolution and very capable, so they're excellent for presentations.

Another enviable feature of today's Macs are their built-in audio. Again, you can take advantage of them using AirPlay, beaming your sounds directly to your Mac and playing them through its speakers; although we're not sure why you'd want to. After all, what audio do you have on your iPhone that you can't just install or stream to your Mac and play it directly from there? Even so, the feature is there if you want it.



**AIRPLAY TO MAC:** With macOS Monterey, you can share your mobile device's screen to your Mac's screen using AirPlay.



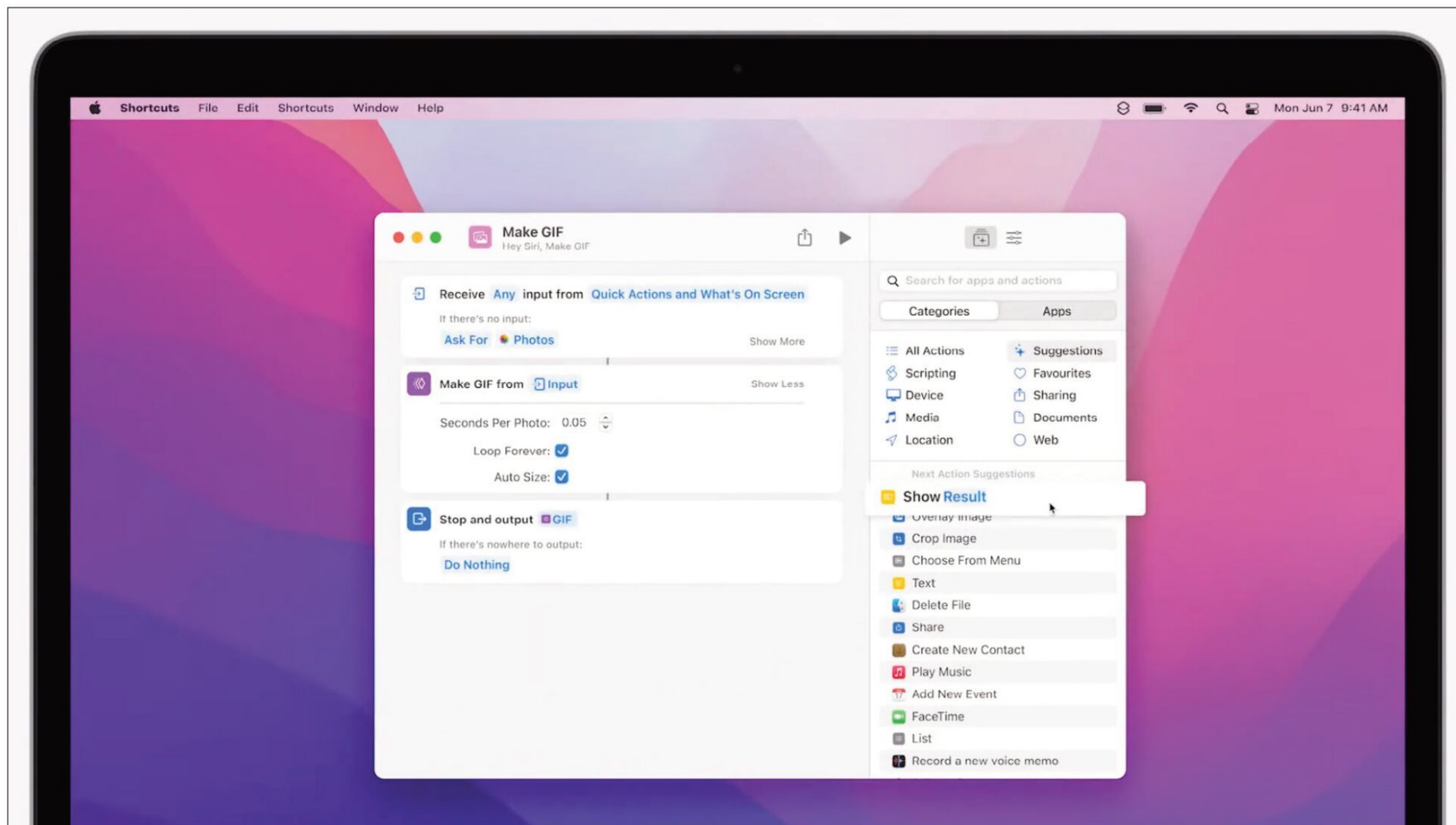
**AIRPLAY MAC MUSIC:** You can also play music and sounds from your iPhone through your Mac's built-in speakers.



## Shortcuts on Your Mac

On mobile devices, Siri Shortcuts combine groups of actions into a single command. For example, you might set up a homecoming Shortcut that switches on your Apple TV, turns on the lights, puts the kettle on and activates the heating when you say, “Siri, I’m home.” With macOS Monterey, this feature comes to the Mac too.

Open the new Shortcuts app and you can access a gallery of pre-built Shortcuts, which you can use right away or customise to fit your own requirements using the Shortcuts editor. When you’re feeling confident, you can design Shortcuts from scratch. If you regularly carry out repetitive tasks, or group the same inputs over and over again, Shortcuts will prove a real boon; and it works alongside, not instead of, Apple’s previous Mac workflow tool, Automator.



**SHORTCUTS:** With macOS Monterey, Shortcuts is coming to the Mac. Here’s the Shortcuts editor in action.

### Release Date

macOS 12: Monterey will arrive this autumn, with its exact release date to be announced.



### System Requirements

The following Macs can run macOS 12 Monterey:

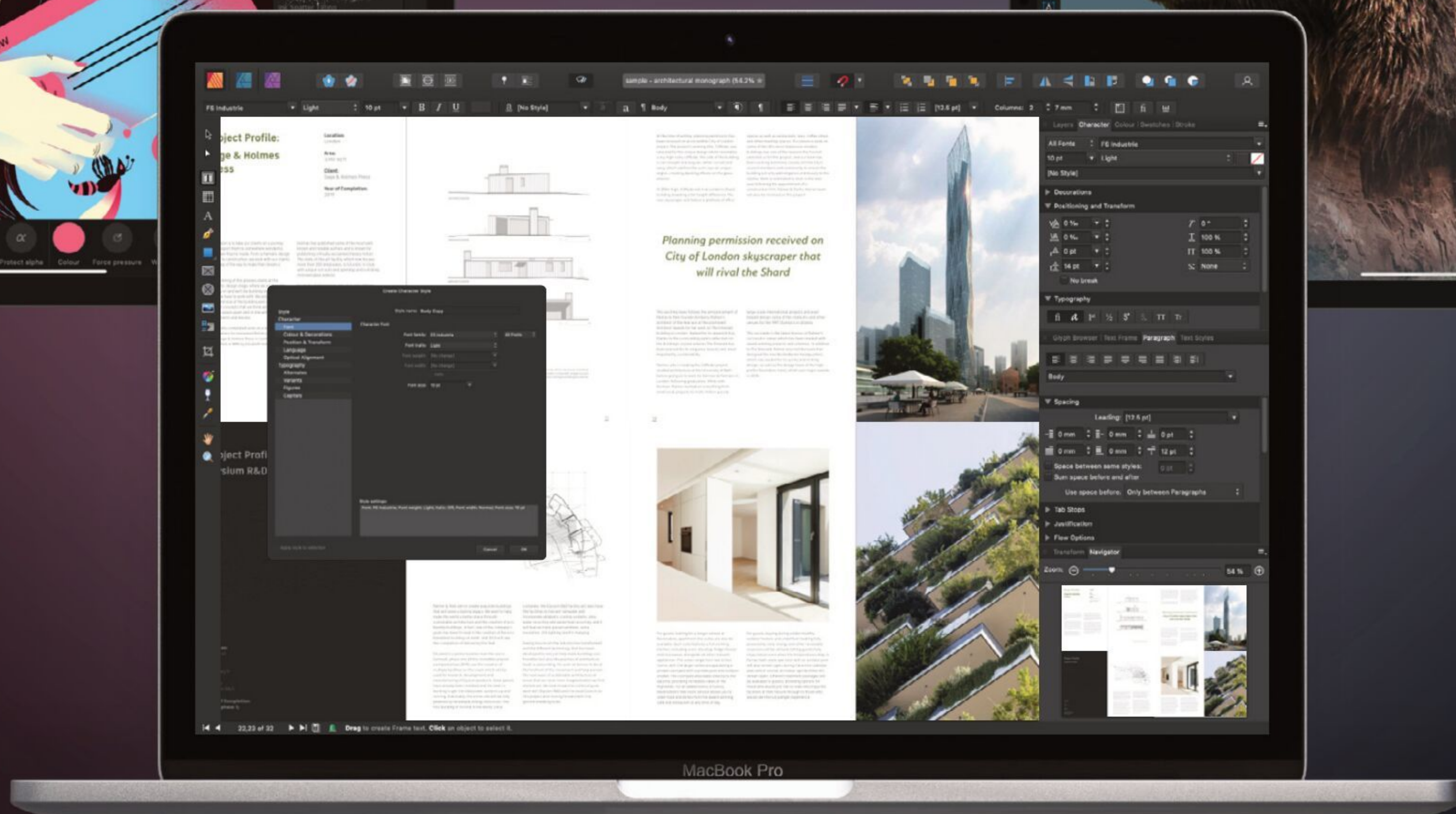
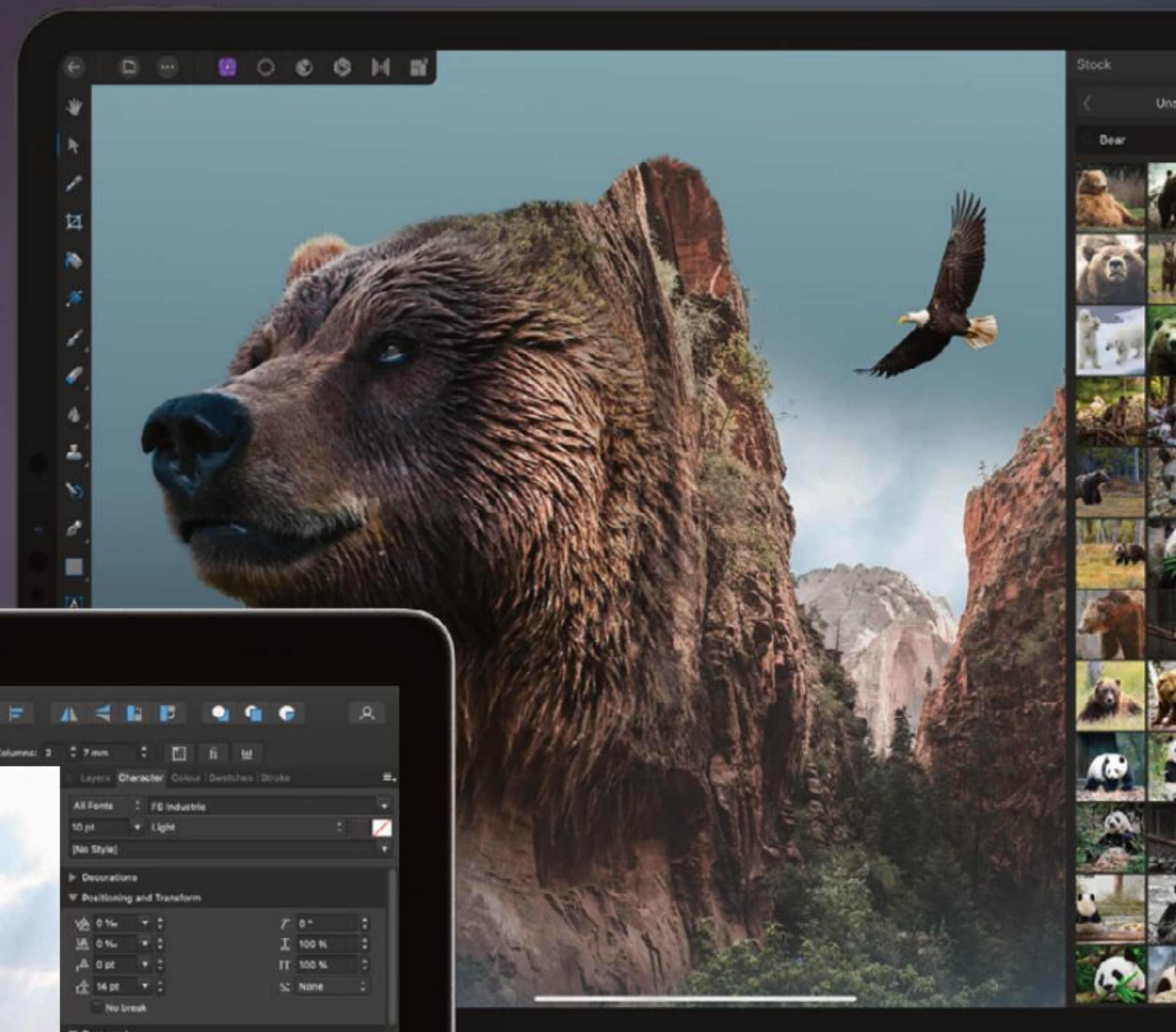
- iMac late 2015 and later
- iMac Pro 2017 and later
- MacBook Air early 2015 and later
- MacBook Pro early 2015 and later
- Mac Pro late 2013 and later
- Mac mini late 2014 and later
- MacBook early 2016 and later



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# What's Coming with watchOS 8?

It's not all about the iPhone, iPad and Macs. The Apple Watch is also getting a new operating system with some great new features in September.

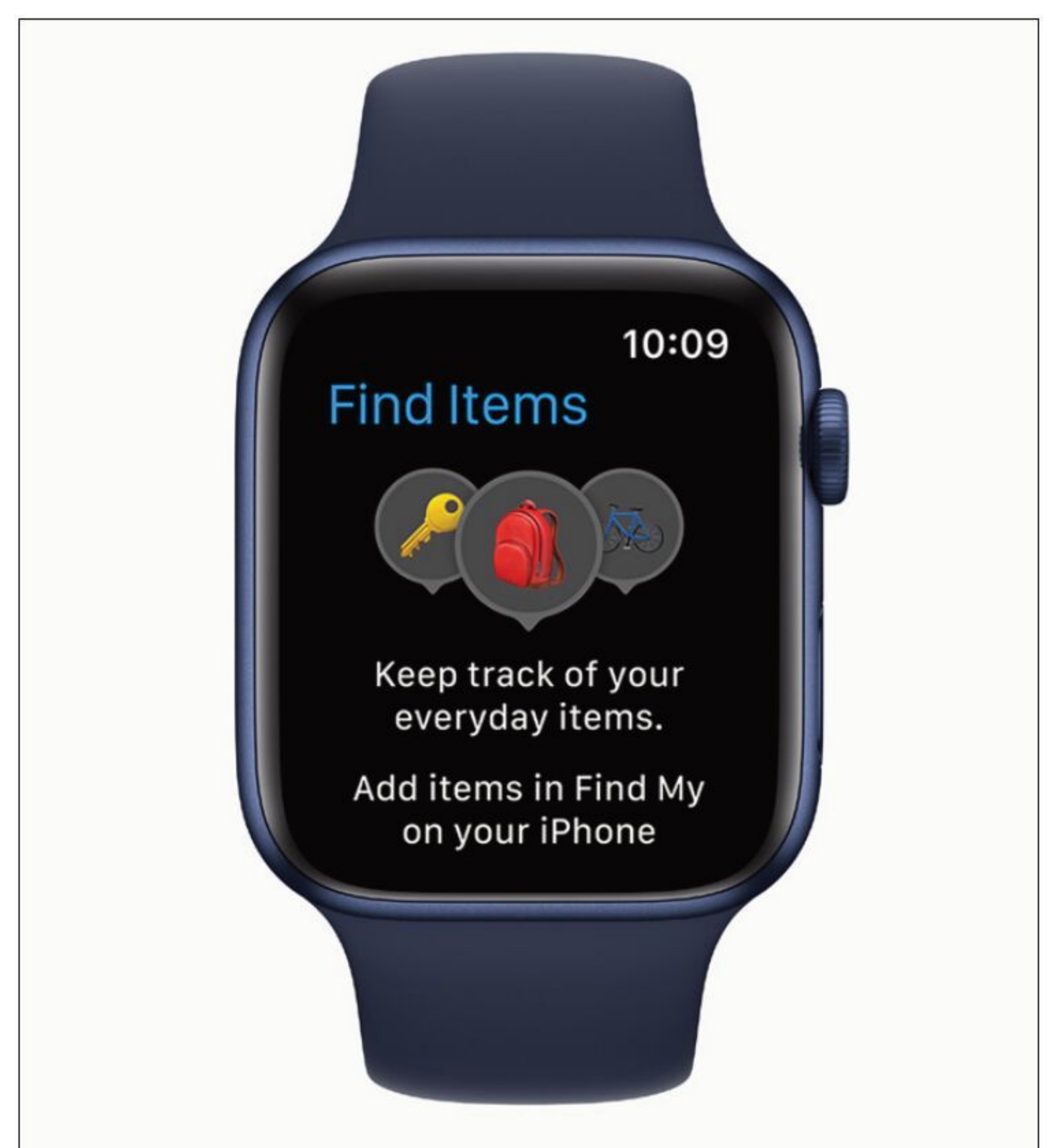
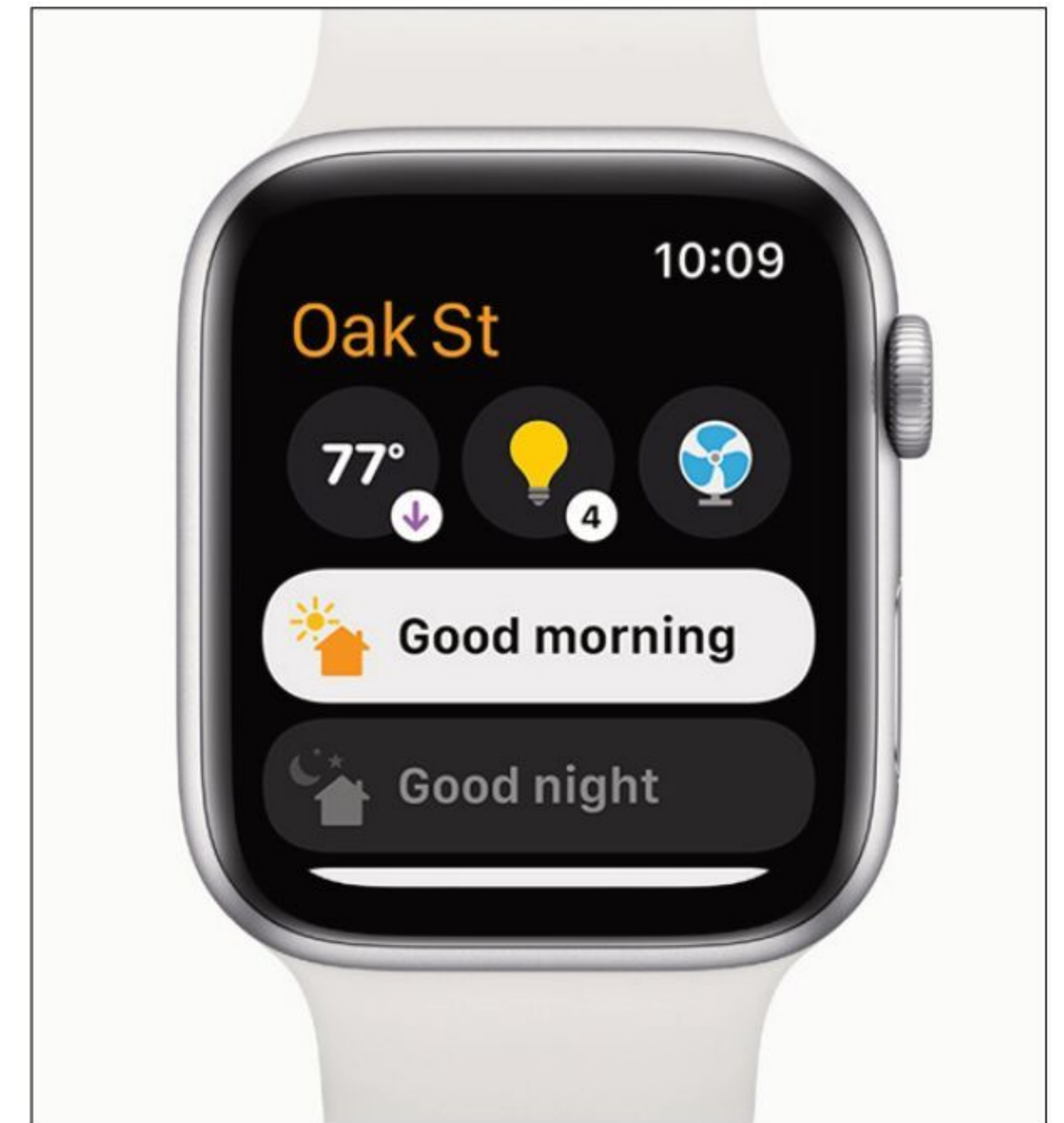




**L**ike Apple's other incoming operating systems, watchOS 8, for the Apple Watch, boasts a range of new features. For those who are into mindfulness, the Breathe app has a new animation, and a new Reflect feature that gives you nuggets of wisdom such as 'Think about something you love to do and why it brings you joy.' The Reflect and Breathe features are found in a new Mindfulness app, which debuts with watchOS 8. This should go down well with Californian hipsters, but we're not sure how useful it will be to everyone else.

With the eighth iteration of the watch's operating system, the Sleep app tracks your respiratory rate, recording it as breaths per minute. If there's a change in your rate, you get an alert. This should come in very handy with users that are tracking conditions such as asthma.

Workouts are a major feature of Apple Watch, and with watchOS 8, we get two more. There's Tai Chi, for fans of this ancient Chinese martial art, and Pilates, a yoga-like exercise that helps develop strength and suppleness. There's a new set of workouts for Apple Fitness+ subscribers too, and also Artist Spotlight, which groups exercises around a playlist from popular artists such as Lady Gaga, Keith Urban, Alicia Keys and more.





## Watch Gets a Facelift

According to Apple, the watch's Photos face is its most popular, and there's a new way to enjoy it in watchOS 8. The Portraits watch face takes the best photos taken using your iPhone Camera app's Portrait Mode and creates multilayered watch faces from them. It animates when you scroll the digital crown too. Obviously, this only works if your watch is paired with an iPhone that has Portrait Mode.

The Photos app itself has been redesigned, and now includes memories, just like the iPhone, iPad and Mac Photos app. There's an all-new collage layout for your pictures, and you can share photographs directly from the watch through Messages and Mail too.



**PORTRAITS:** Portraits setting creates multilayered pictures from your iPhone's portrait photographs and turns them into a watch face.



**MEMORIES:** Like other Apple devices, the watchOS Photos app will now offer Memories.





**MINDFULNESS:** Live in the moment with Apple Watch's mindfulness features.

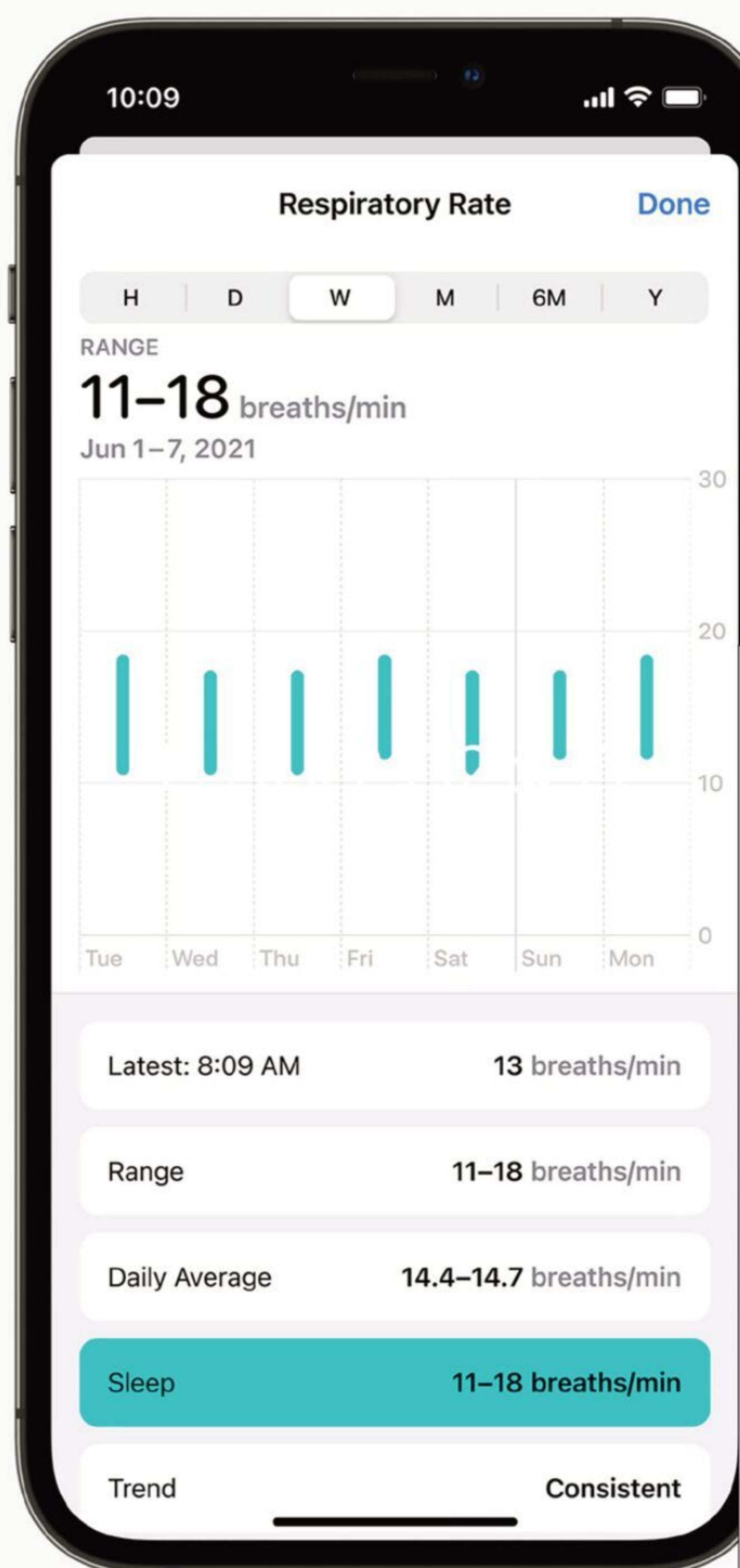
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**PILATES:** Apple Watch's Workout app gets two new exercises with watchOS 8; Tai Chi and Pilates.

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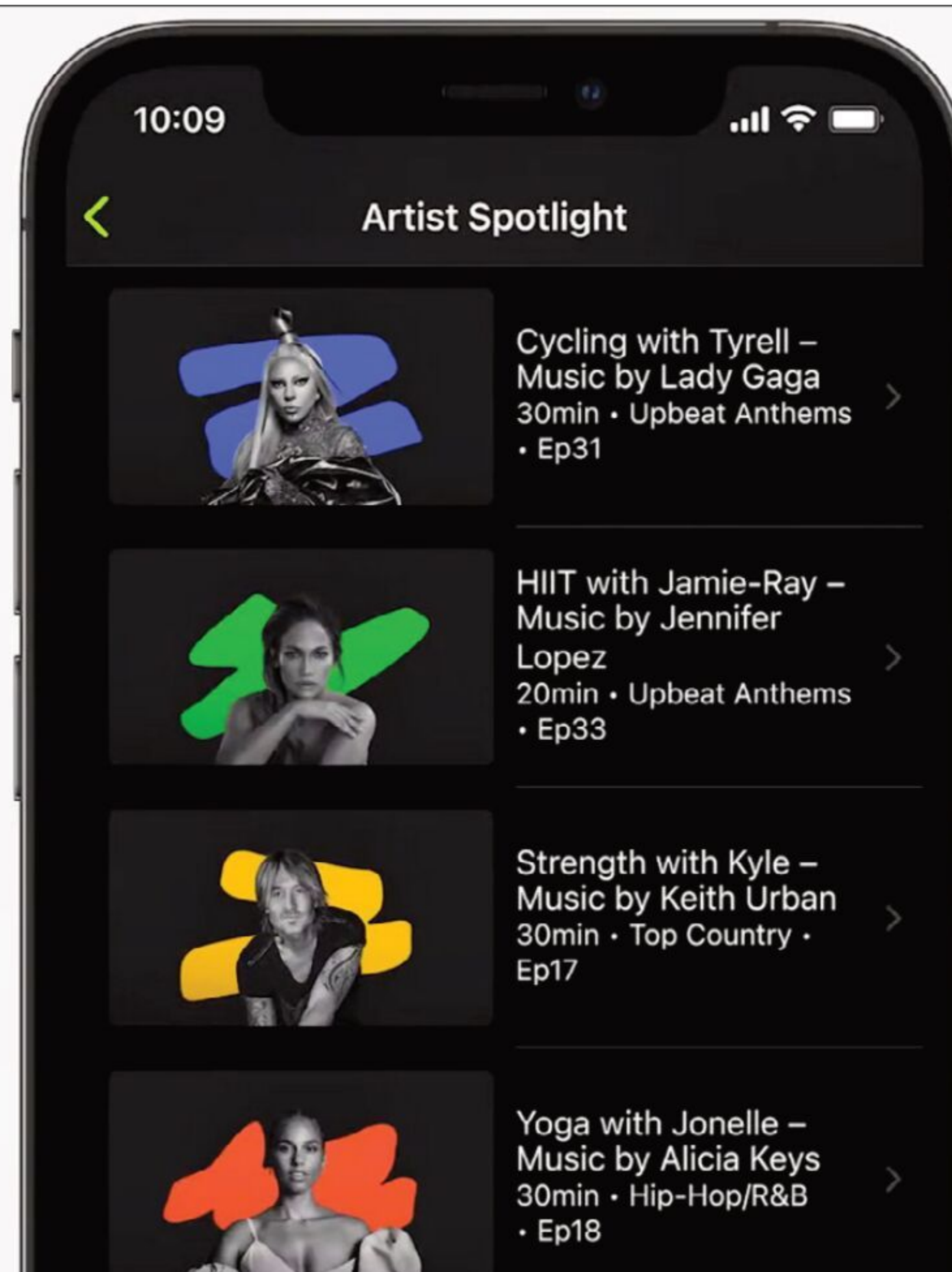
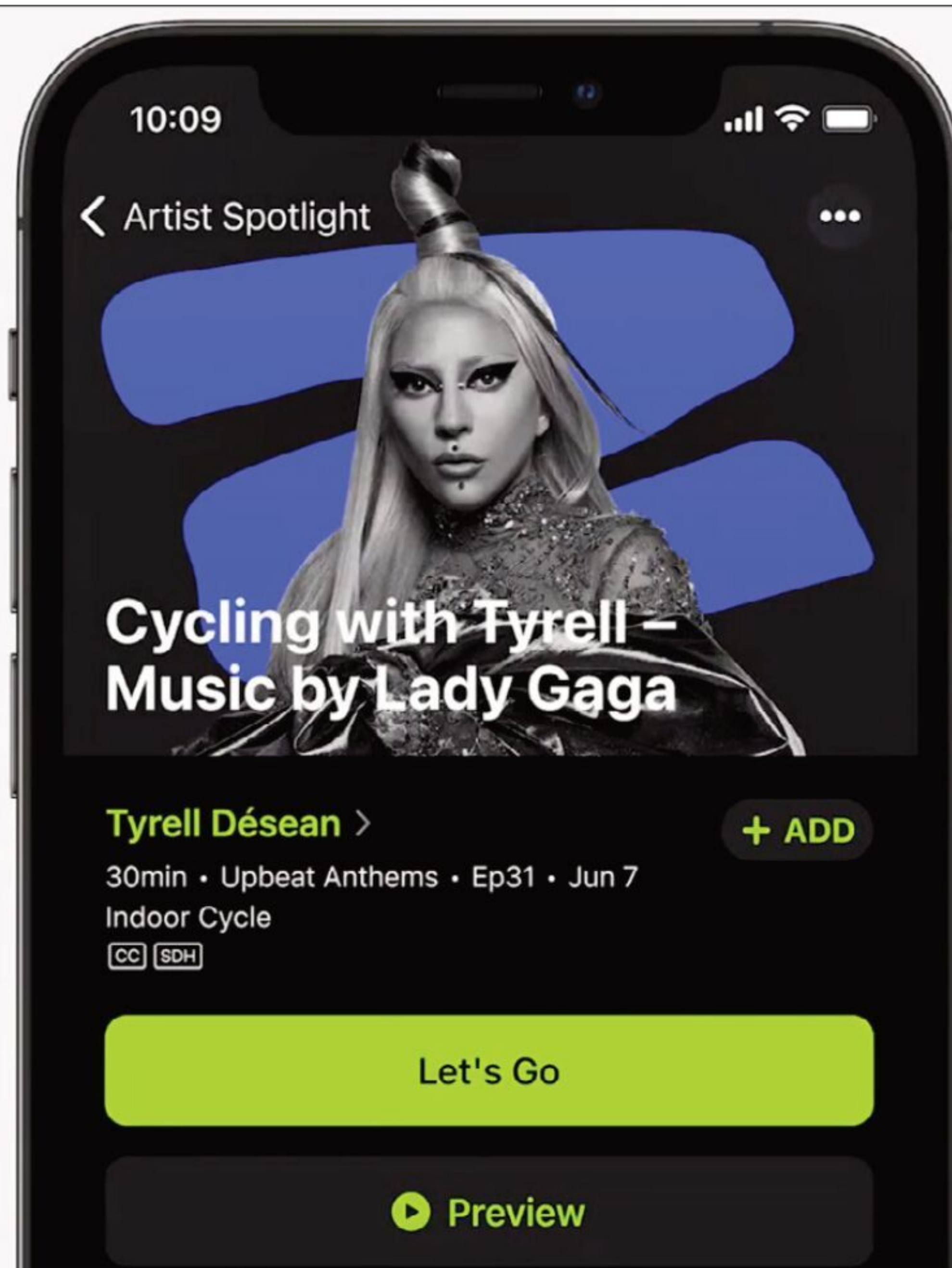




**SLEEP:** Your sleeping respiratory rate is tracked, and you're alerted if there's a change in your overall trend.



**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT:** Exercise with your Apple Watch and a playlist of your favourite artist's music.







## Release Date

watchOS 8 will be released in the autumn. No specific date has yet been set.



## World Timer

A new feature that wasn't announced in the WWDC keynote but has been found in the developers' beta of watchOS 8 is World Timer. Identified through a screenshot spotted during a developer-only online session, the new watch face shows a world map bordered by a ring showing the world's major cities and their time zones.

So how does it work? In short, we don't know. The feature has not yet been publicly announced or demoed by Apple, presumably due to it not being ready in time for the Worldwide Developer's Conference. We hope you can customise which time zones are displayed on the ring and switch between them using the digital crown, with the time shown by the watch being instantly adjusted to the newly selected time zone. This would be a huge asset for regular travellers.



## World Timer

## System Requirements

To upgrade to watchOS 8, you need an iPhone 6s or higher running iOS 14 or higher, and the following Apple Watch models:

- Apple Watch Series 3
- Apple Watch Series 4
- Apple Watch Series 5
- Apple Watch SE
- Apple Watch Series 6

This is the same system requirements as watchOS 7, so if you're running last year's update, upgrading won't be a problem.



# What's New in Home?

The automated home is growing in popularity, and at the Worldwide Developers' Conference, we got a heads-up on some great new Home features.



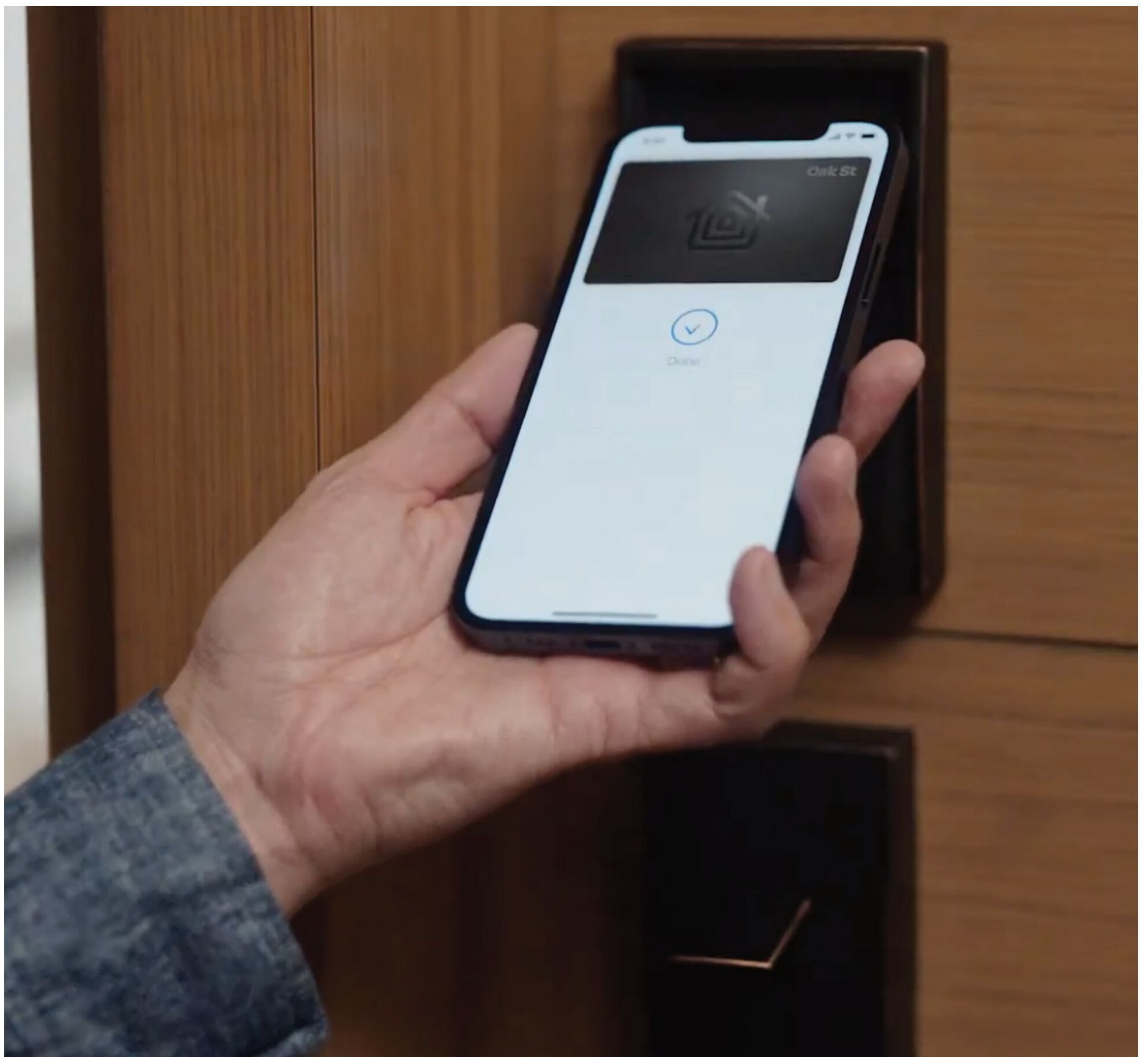
**Apple has some great things in store for Home and HomeKit.**



According to Apple, its Home technology and the HomeKit programming tools that underpin it are based around three key attributes. They must be easy to use; they should integrate well with your Apple devices and other Home tech; and last, but definitely not least, they should be private and secure. This is the philosophy behind Apple Home smart accessories, and it's the foundation on which the company's new tech is built.

A new feature called Home Keys means you need never lock yourself out of your house again. With a compatible lock, you can unlock your door simply by tapping your iPhone or Apple Watch. It's great if you're always losing your keys.

A feature coming to Siri this autumn is Apple TV integration. You can ask your HomePod or HomePod mini to play something on Apple's media streamer. Just say, "Hey Siri, watch the latest episode of [the show in question]" and it starts. Talking of Apple TV, you can watch it while FaceTime chatting with your friends, with the show in sync for all of you. When you scroll through the list of shows available on your Apple TV, any that your friends have brought to your attention using Messages are shown in a new Shared with You section, with icons to show who shared what.



**HOMEKEYS:** Unlock your front door or garage with your iPhone. This tech is coming to hotels too.



## For All of You

Another new section in the shows list is For All of You. This lets you select more than one user profile and get recommendations for shows you're all likely to enjoy, curated to your personal tastes based on previous viewing habits. Siri already curates programmes that it thinks you'll like on a per-account basis so the new section simply offers show suggestions everyone currently watching has in common. Just the thing if you're viewing with company.

In a further integration between HomePod mini and Apple TV, from the autumn, you can use the smaller HomePods as speakers, and even use two at once and set them up as left and right speakers. For music, the Apple Music streaming service now supports lossless audio, so your tunes sound even better.

For the first time, Siri is to be made available to third-party developers who use HomeKit to integrate their products with Apple's Home technology. Siri requests go through your HomePod, without being accessed by third-party servers, so there are no security or privacy issues. Look out too for Matter, a new smart home interoperability standard put together by several industry leaders, including Apple. This will be supported on the iPhone from iOS 15, and should greatly help you integrate your home tech, even if your devices are from different manufacturers.

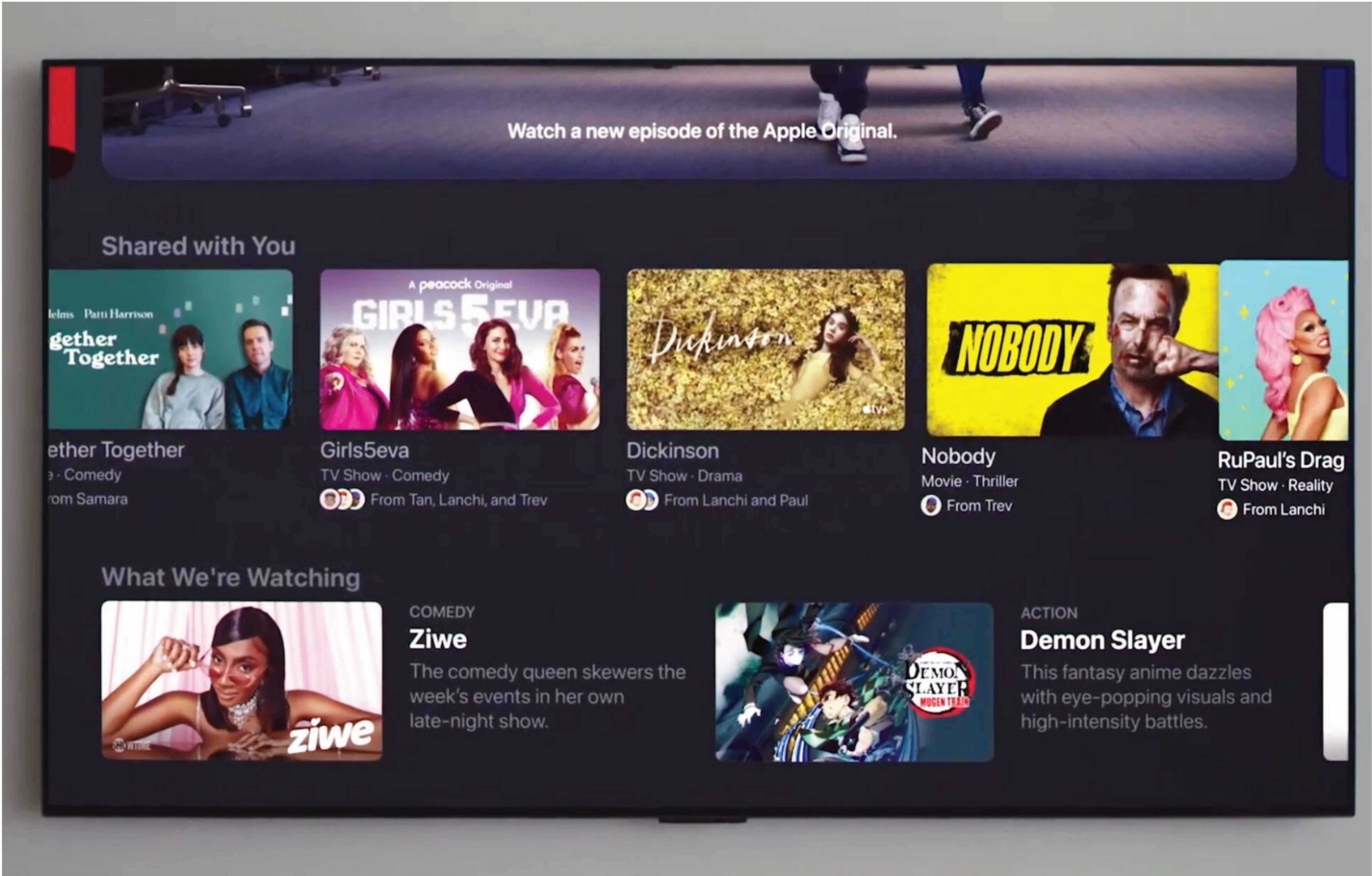


**SPEAKERS:** Use your HomePod minis as left and right stereo speakers for Apple TV.





HOME APPLE TV: From the autumn, you can ask Siri to play the latest episode of your favourite shows on Apple TV.



SHARED APPLE TV: If your friends have shared Apple TV shows with you in Messages, this will be indicated in a new Shared with You section on the menu screen.

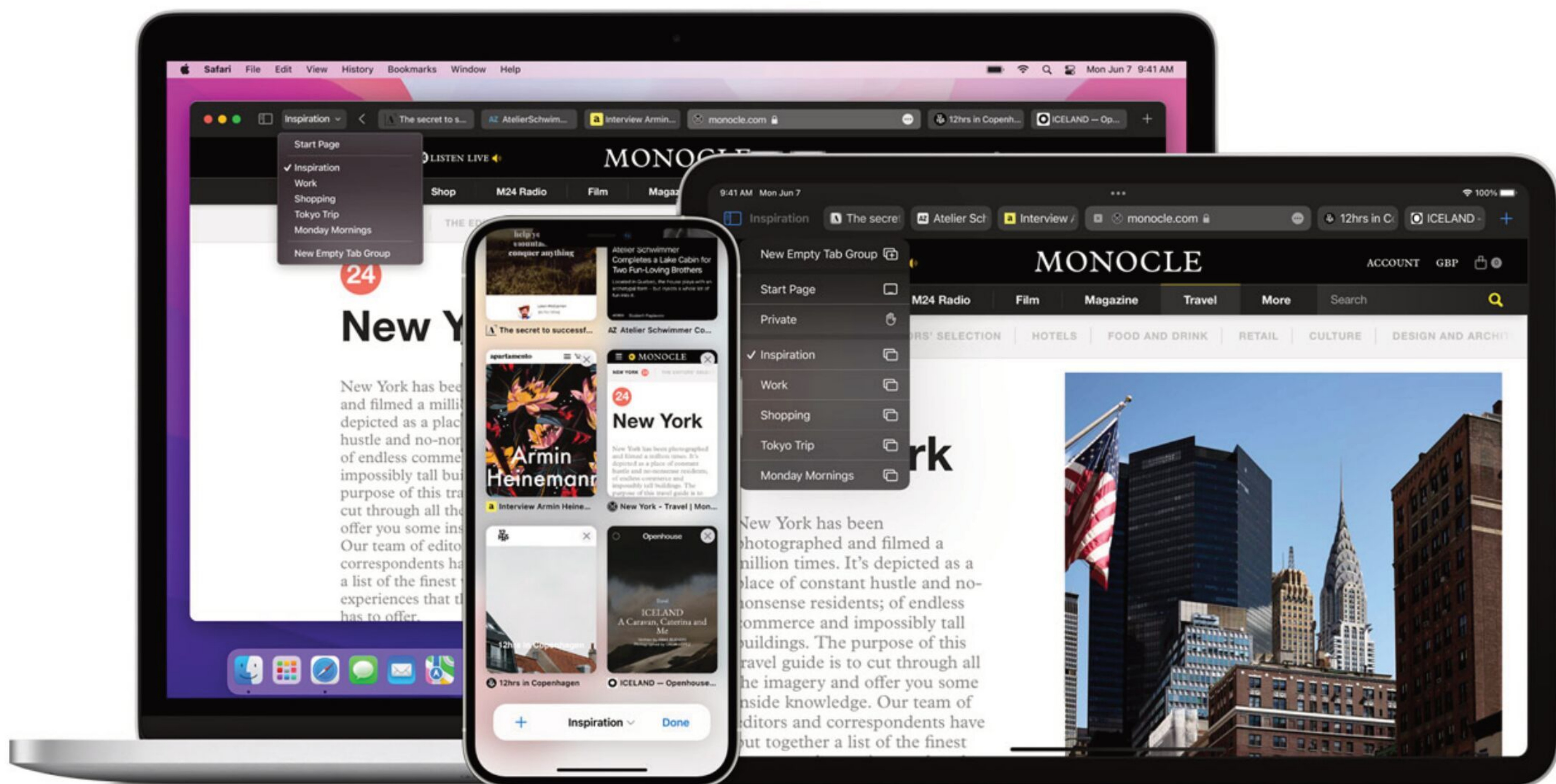


# Forthcoming Safari Features

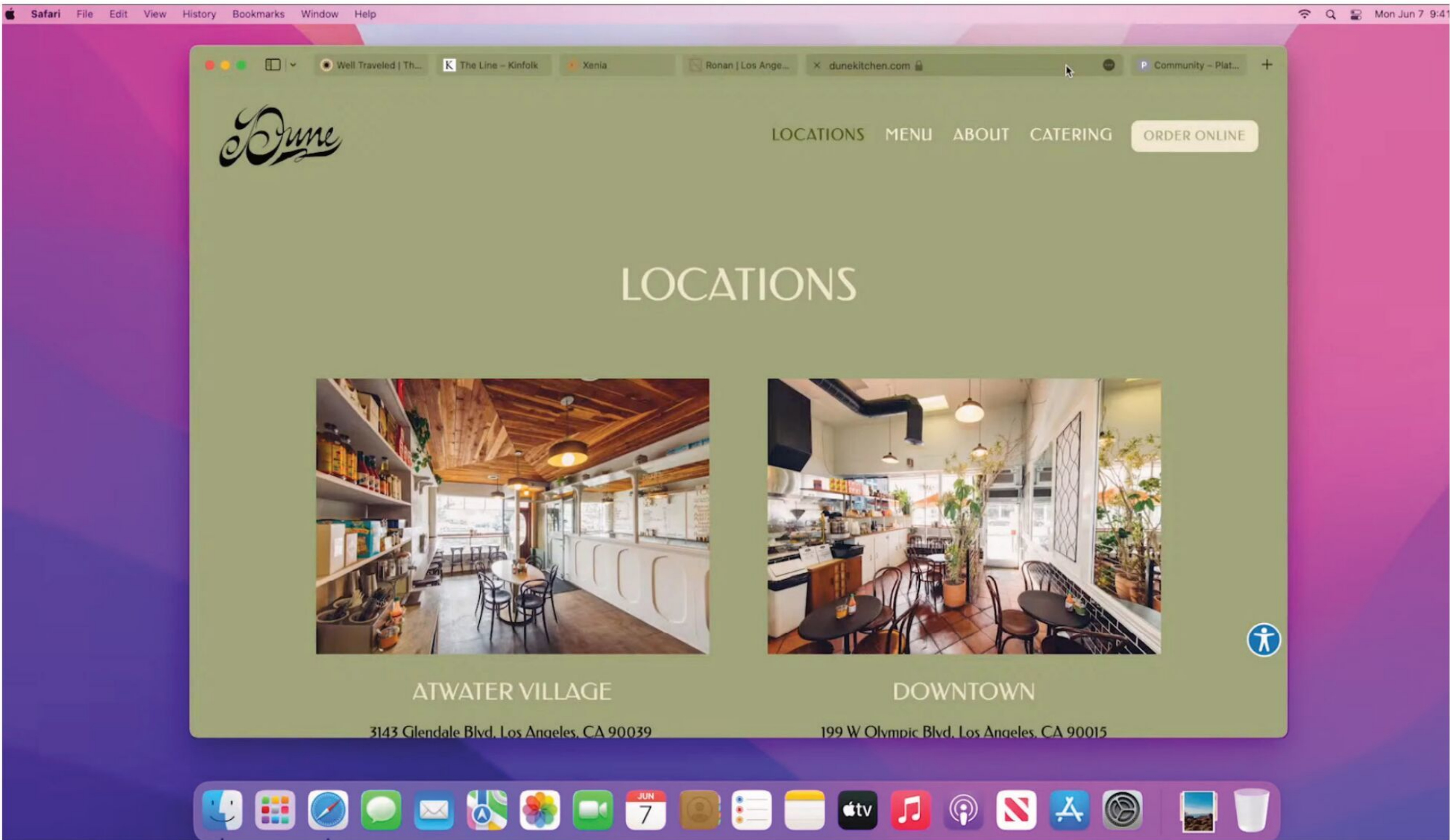
Safari is arguably Apple's most important app, and the popular web browser is getting some new features this autumn. Let's see what was unveiled at this summer's Worldwide Developers' Conference.

Safari is getting a makeover. The toolbar and the tabs bar have been reimagined, combining the two into a single space. Where before the toolbar's icons were spread out across the top of the browser window, they now reside in the URL field, as a pop-up menu opened by clicking a three-dots icon. You can still access all the controls you need, but they take up a lot less space. The URL bar (which, of course, is also the search field) has been incorporated into the currently active tab, and the rest of the new combined bar is taken up with your tabs; that is, your currently open sites arranged so you can click on them to take you straight to the page in question.

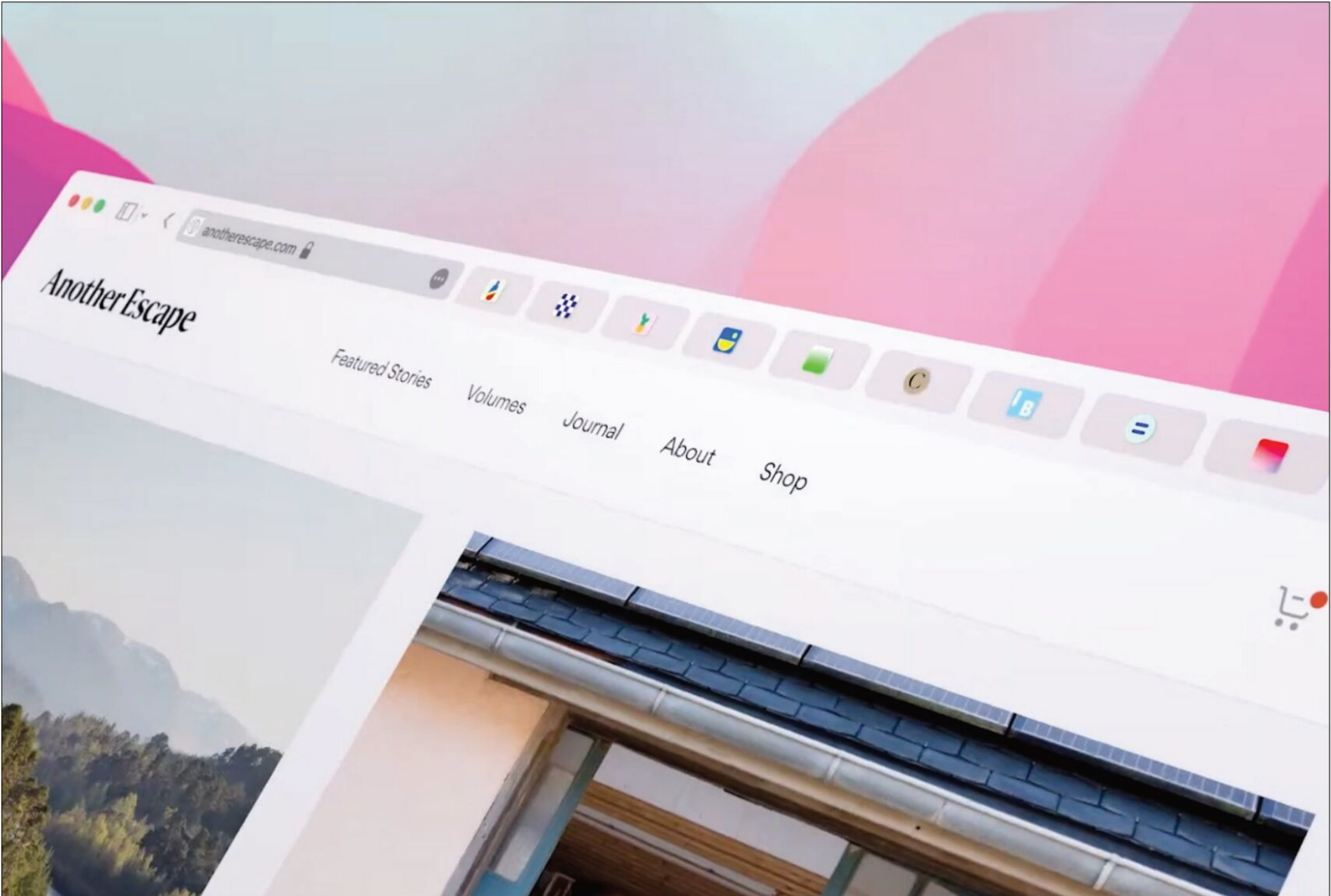
The tabs, which are more compact, can show only a site's icon instead of the name of the site too, and feature rounded corners that make them stand out very well. Best of all, you can combine tabs into Tab Groups. This allows you to save a series of tabs as a single bookmark, so when you open it again, all the tabs reappear. Tab Groups are found in the redesigned sidebar, which can again be opened and closed at the click of an icon. Tab Groups can also be dragged into an email, where they appear as a series of links, and they're synced between your Apple devices, just like Safari bookmarks.







**SAFARI COLOUR:** When a tab is clicked, the tab bar takes on the main colour of the website it opens for a more discreet look.



**TABS:** The new-look Safari app has a combined tabs bar and toolbar, which is neater, more space-efficient and better looking.

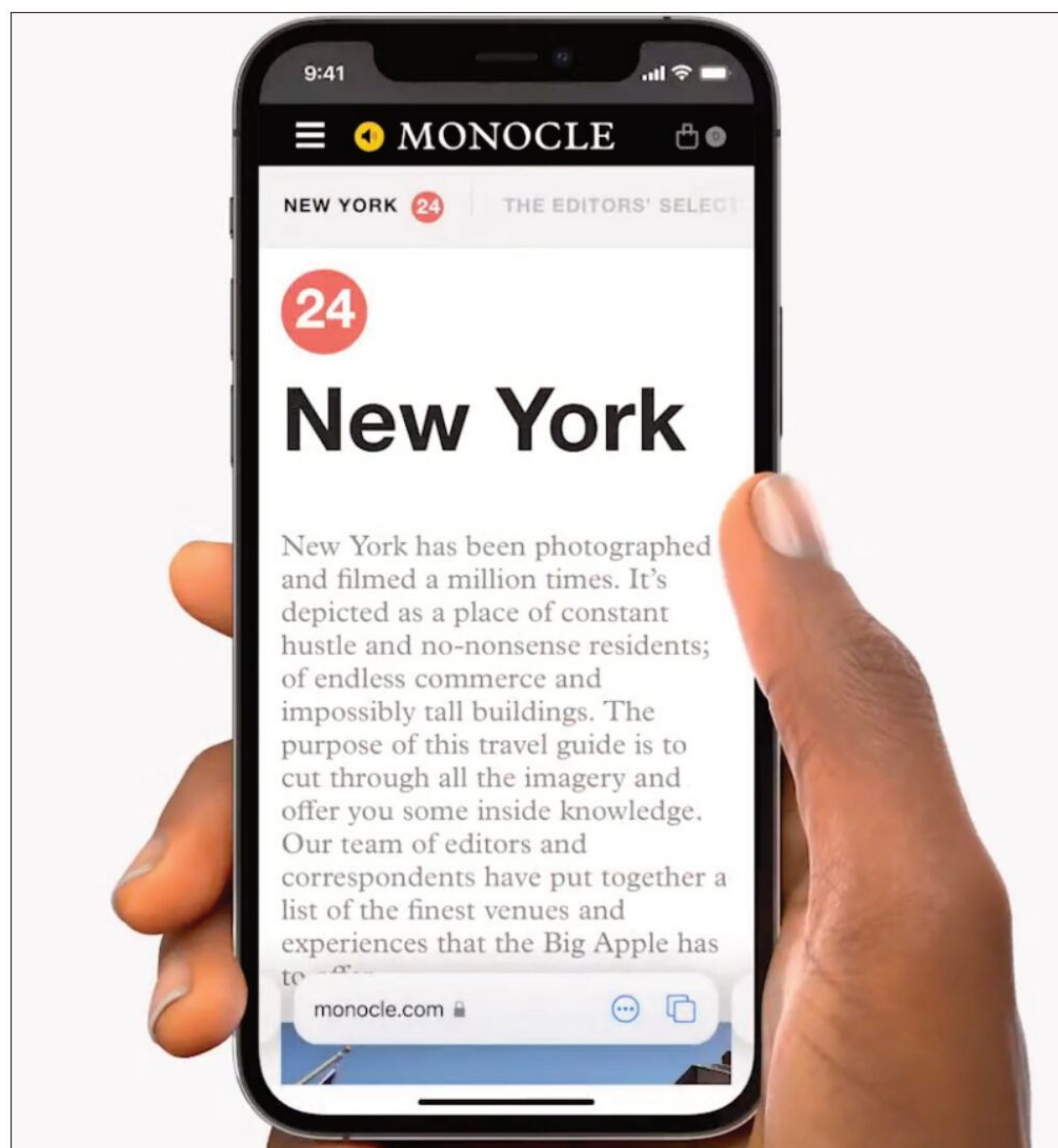


## Cross-Device Consistency

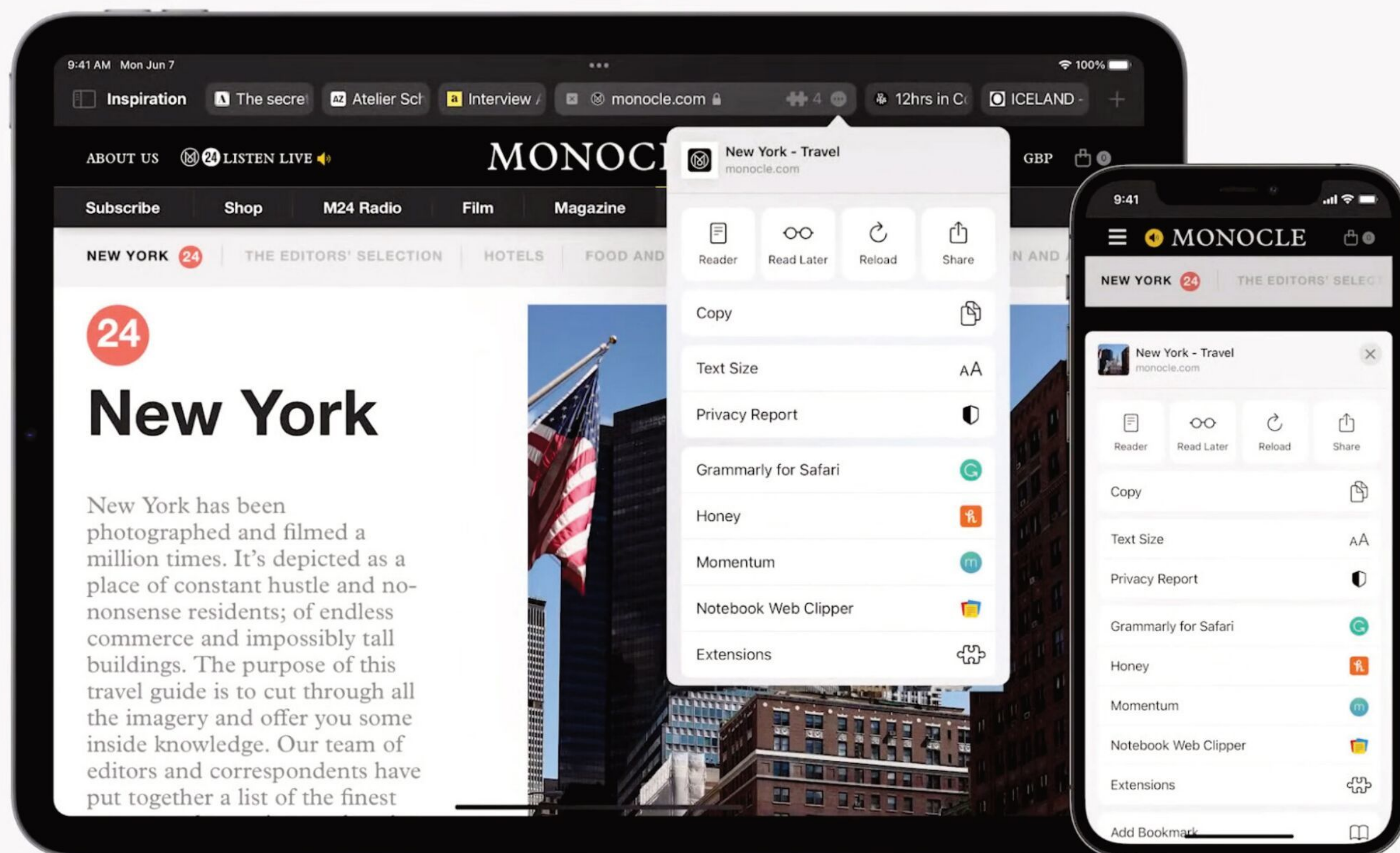
The new features are consistent across Apple's range of products. On the iPad, the new tabs and tab bar work exactly like they do on the Mac, and on the iPhone, the interface has been designed for the smaller device. The new tab bar appears with a tap at the foot of the screen, and gets out of the way when you scroll. You can move from tab to tab by simply swiping over the tab bar, or swipe up it for a page of thumbnails showing all your open tabs.

Safari Extensions have long been popular on the Mac, and they're now coming to the iOS and iPadOS versions of Safari. Extensions let you customise your Safari experience by adding plug-ins that are downloaded from the App Store. They can add all sorts of new functions and features to your web browser.

These forthcoming features are arguably the most significant to come to Safari in years, and they arrive this autumn with macOS Monterey, iOS 15 and iPadOS 15.

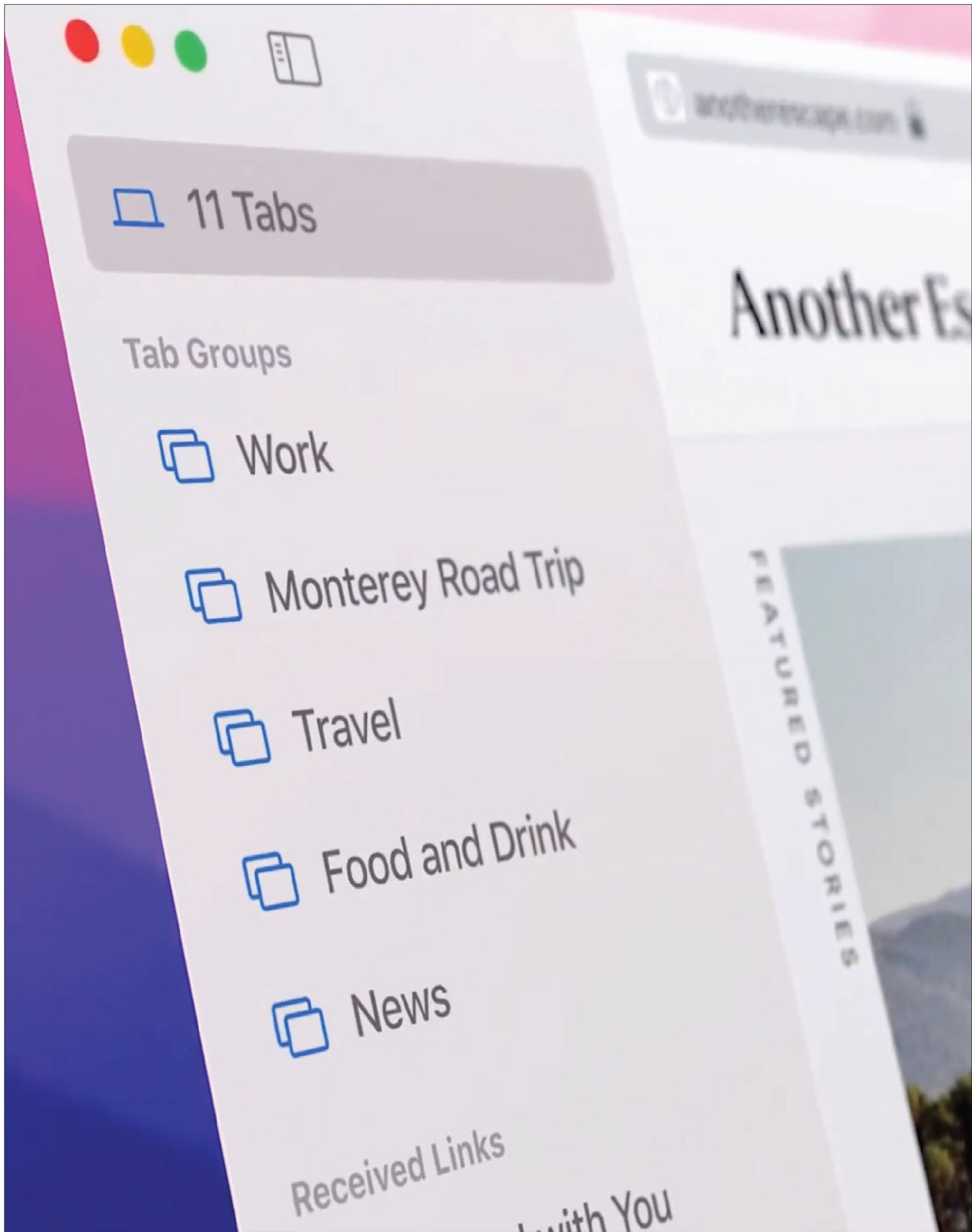


**IPHONE TABS:** Tap the foot of the iPhone's screen to access the tabs.



**EXTENSIONS:** Safari Extensions are popular on the Mac, and they're coming to the iPhone's and the iPad's version of Safari too.





**TAB GROUPS:** You can bookmark a group of tabs together, so they all reopen when you click that bookmark again.



# Keeping Good Health

Hi-tech health monitoring is a big thing for Apple, and some very interesting features were announced at the Worldwide Developers' Conference, 2021.

**WALKING STEADINESS:** Your Apple Watch analyses your walking movements, and lets you know if problems are likely.

Apple's range of health tracking features gets a boost in the autumn, with three significant updates to the ways your wellbeing is monitored through your Apple Watch.

Mobility data is already collected, but this is to be augmented with a new Walking Steadiness feature. When walking, the Apple Watch captures data on how long

each step is, how much time you spend with both feet on the ground, the time spent on each step and more. Walking Steadiness analyses this data and lets you know if your current walking is deviating significantly from your norm, which could signal an increased risk of falling. You're also given strength-building exercises that help improve your walking behaviour.





## Healthier Lifestyles

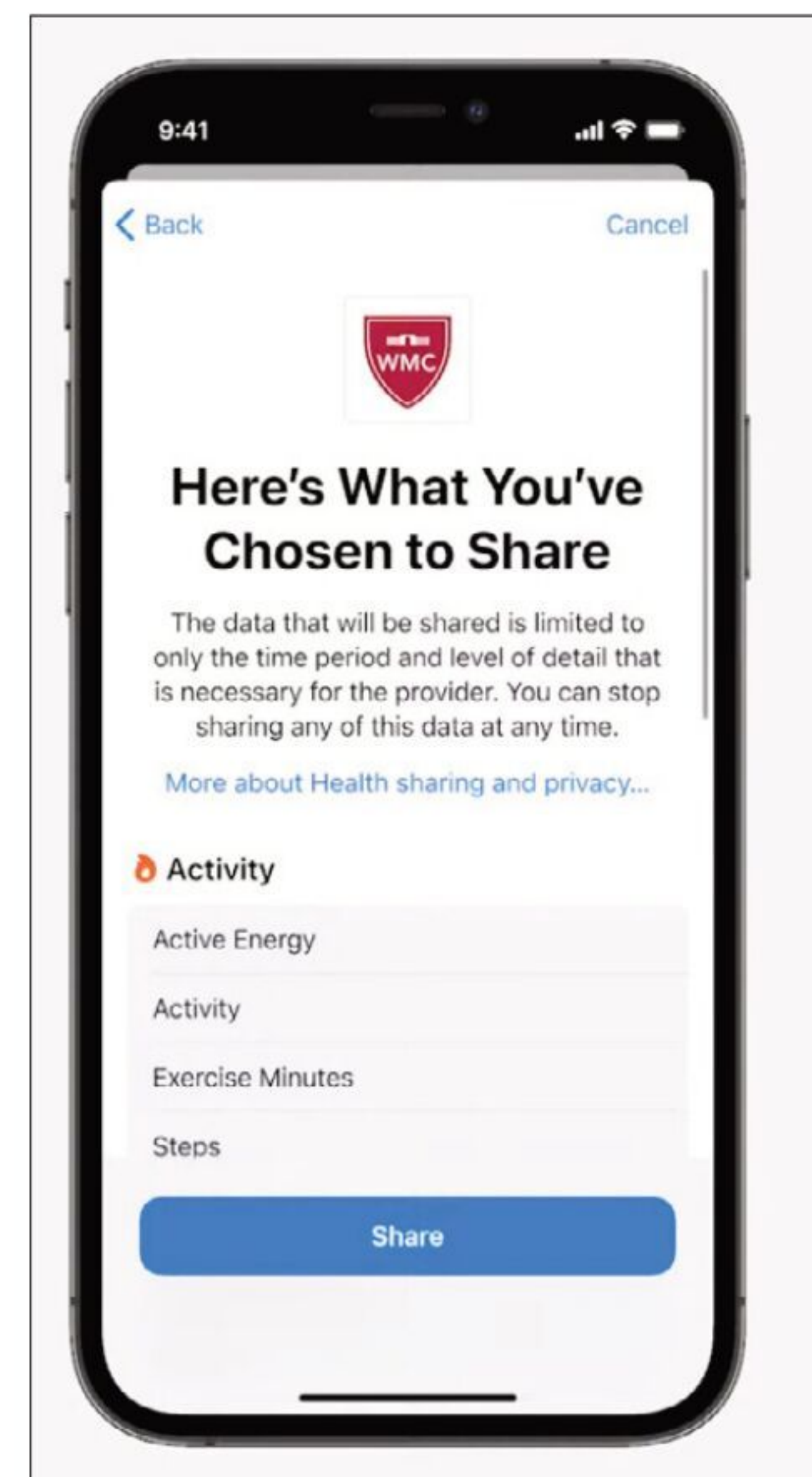
You can already input lab results such as cholesterol measurements into the Health app, but the forthcoming iOS 15 update also includes detailed explanations of these results that help you make necessary lifestyle changes and keep yourself in shape. A new feature called Trends records and sends alerts regarding long-term changes in data such as steps, resting heart rate, blood glucose (essential for diabetics), sleep and more. Changes in overall long-term trends are brought to your attention so you can, where necessary, do something about it.

Your Health app is packed with important and useful information about your overall wellness, and with iOS 15, you will be able to share this data with healthcare professionals. You can choose which

categories you wish to share, and can stop doing so at any time. It's all shared securely; no one else, including Apple, can see it. Your doctor can then review your data on their own computer, as long as they have a compatible electronic healthcare system. Several companies in the US are already on board, and we hope more join over time.

If you're looking out for someone else's health as well as your own, maybe your children or elderly parents, look out for Health Sharing. This means that with their permission, you can share their data and receive alerts about their health as well as your own. Everything is encrypted and private, and you can choose which data categories are shared.

Expect these great new features in the autumn, with iOS 15.



**SHARE DATA:** You can soon share data directly from the Health app with your doctor or other healthcare professionals.



**FAMILY SHARE:** Share data with your family, and get alerts about changes in their health as well as your own.



**TRENDS:** If there's a significant change in your overall wellness, the Trends feature sends you a notification.



# iCloud is Getting a Boost

Great new features for iCloud were announced at the Worldwide Developers' Conference this summer, but what are they and what will they do for us?

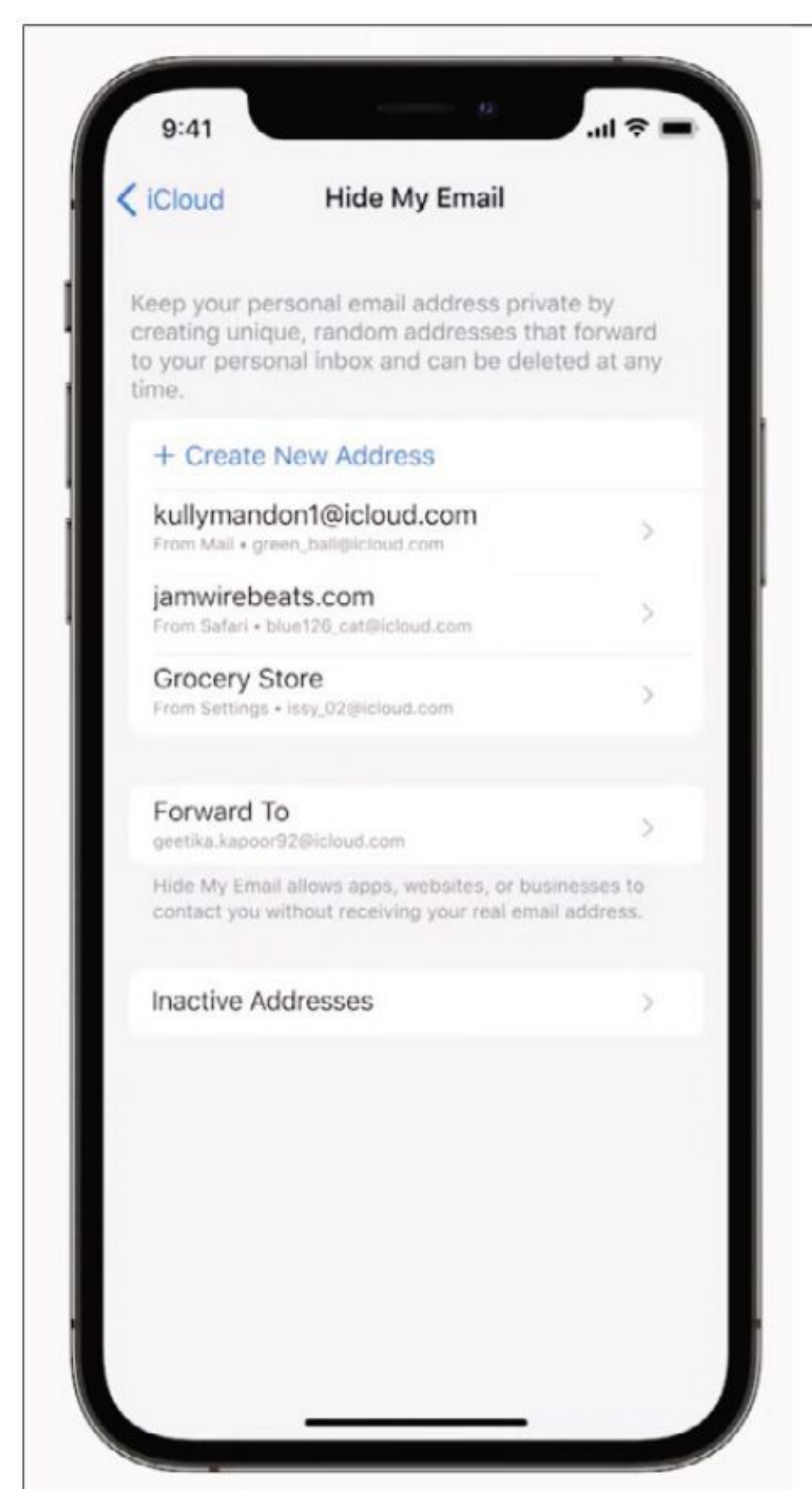
iCloud is Apple's celebrated cloud computing service, where you can store documents and access them from any of your Apple devices, and also from any web-connected gadget using a web browser. You can also keep data such as notes and photographs synced between your Mac, iPad and iPhone. With the release of the new operating systems this autumn, iCloud gains a few new features.

Forgetting your Apple ID password can be a real pain, so Apple is introducing a

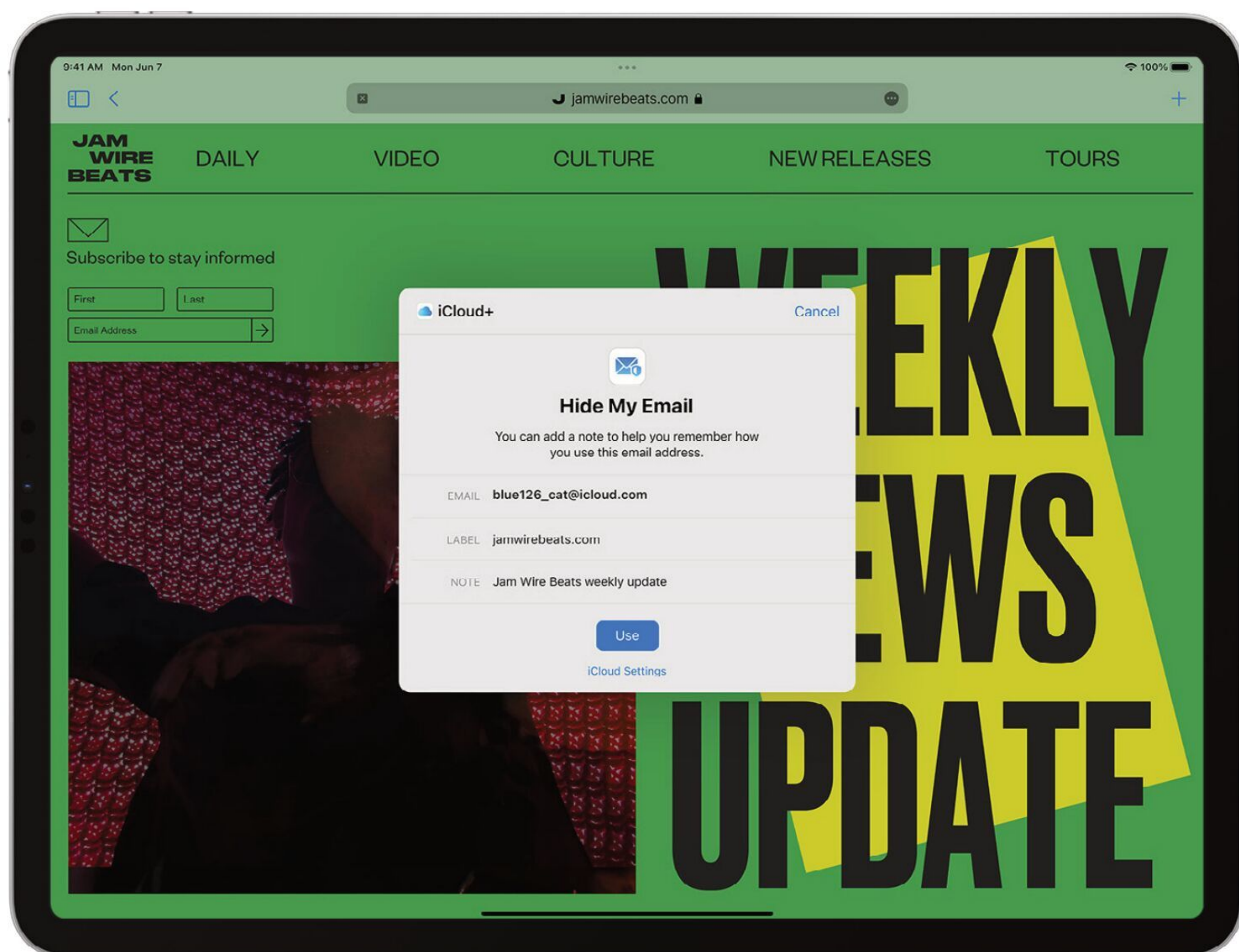
new service called Account Recovery as an easier way of getting back into your account. You can add people you trust to your iCloud as Recovery Contacts. If you ever forget your password, you can call one of these contacts and they can get a six-digit code which lets you back into your Apple account. These Recovery Contacts don't get access to your data or personal information; they're there purely to deliver the recovery code, should you need it.

Another new feature is iCloud's Digital

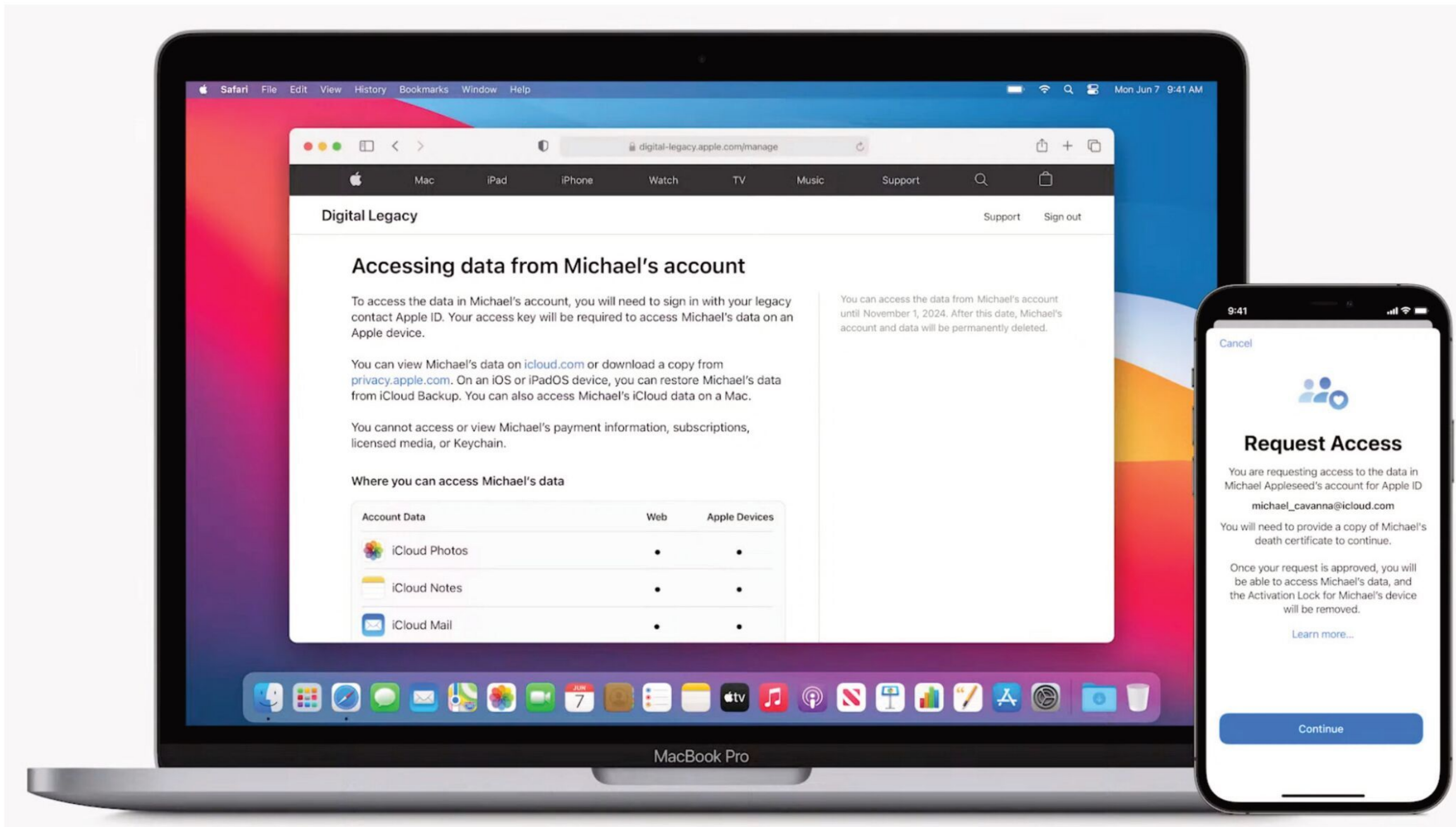
Legacy programme. This allows you to pass on your digital information when you die. You simply add Legacy Contacts to your account, and when you eventually pass, they can request access to your Apple ID directly through Apple. A copy of your death certificate is required, so there's no danger of their getting into your account while you're still alive. As well as access to your digital data, the passcode lock on your Apple devices are deactivated, so they can be passed on to friends and relatives.



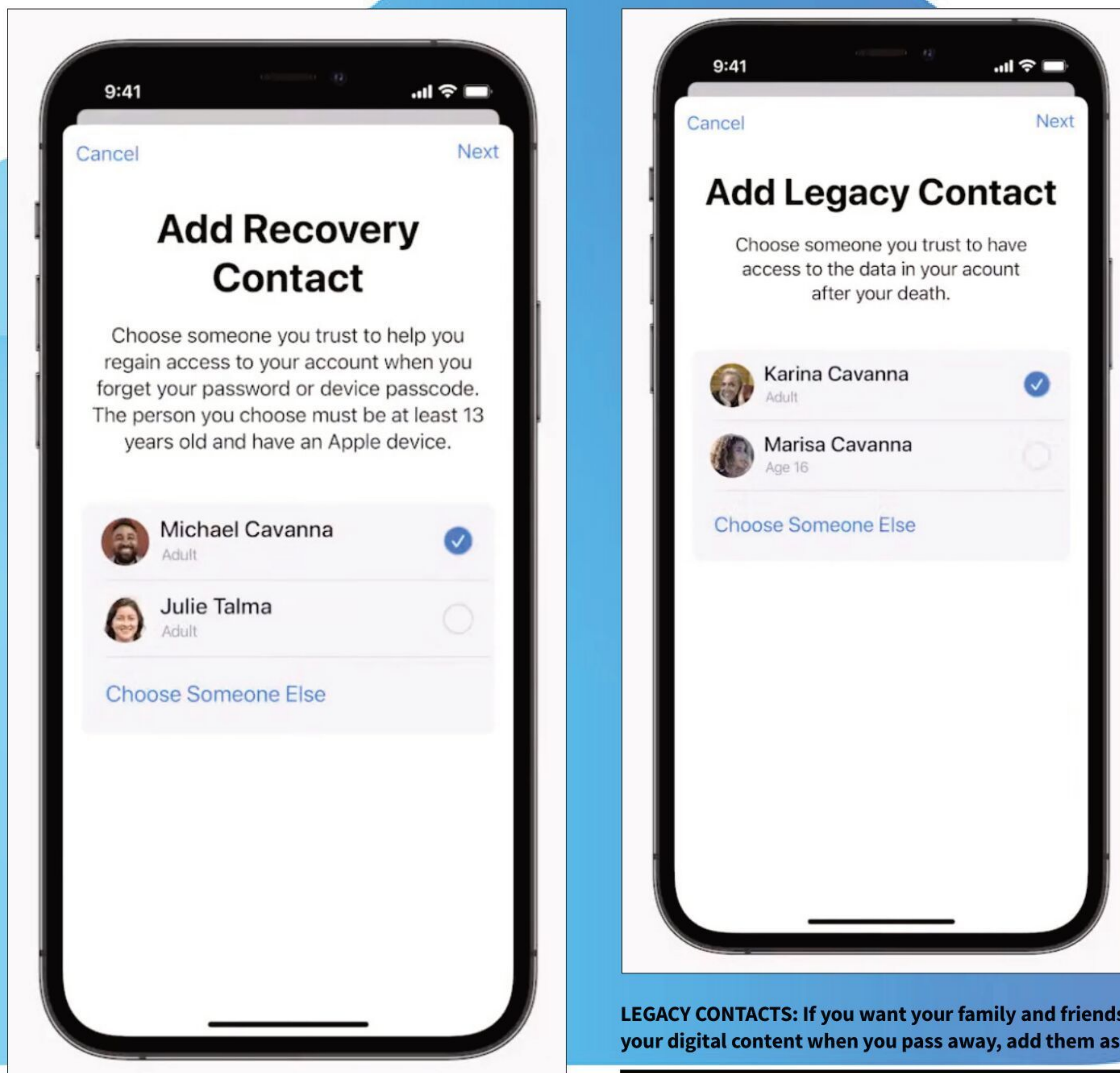
**HIDE MY EMAIL:** If you want to sign up for emails without giving out your regular email address, Hide My Email generates a randomly constructed email address and has it forward incoming mail to your inbox.







**WHEN YOU DIE:** When you die, a Legacy Contact can access your data and also remove the unlock code for your Mac, iPad or iPhone.



**RECOVERY CONTACTS:** Set up Recovery Contacts, and if you forget your Apple ID password, you can have a recovery code sent to them.

**LEGACY CONTACTS:** If you want your family and friends to have access to your digital content when you pass away, add them as Legacy Contacts.



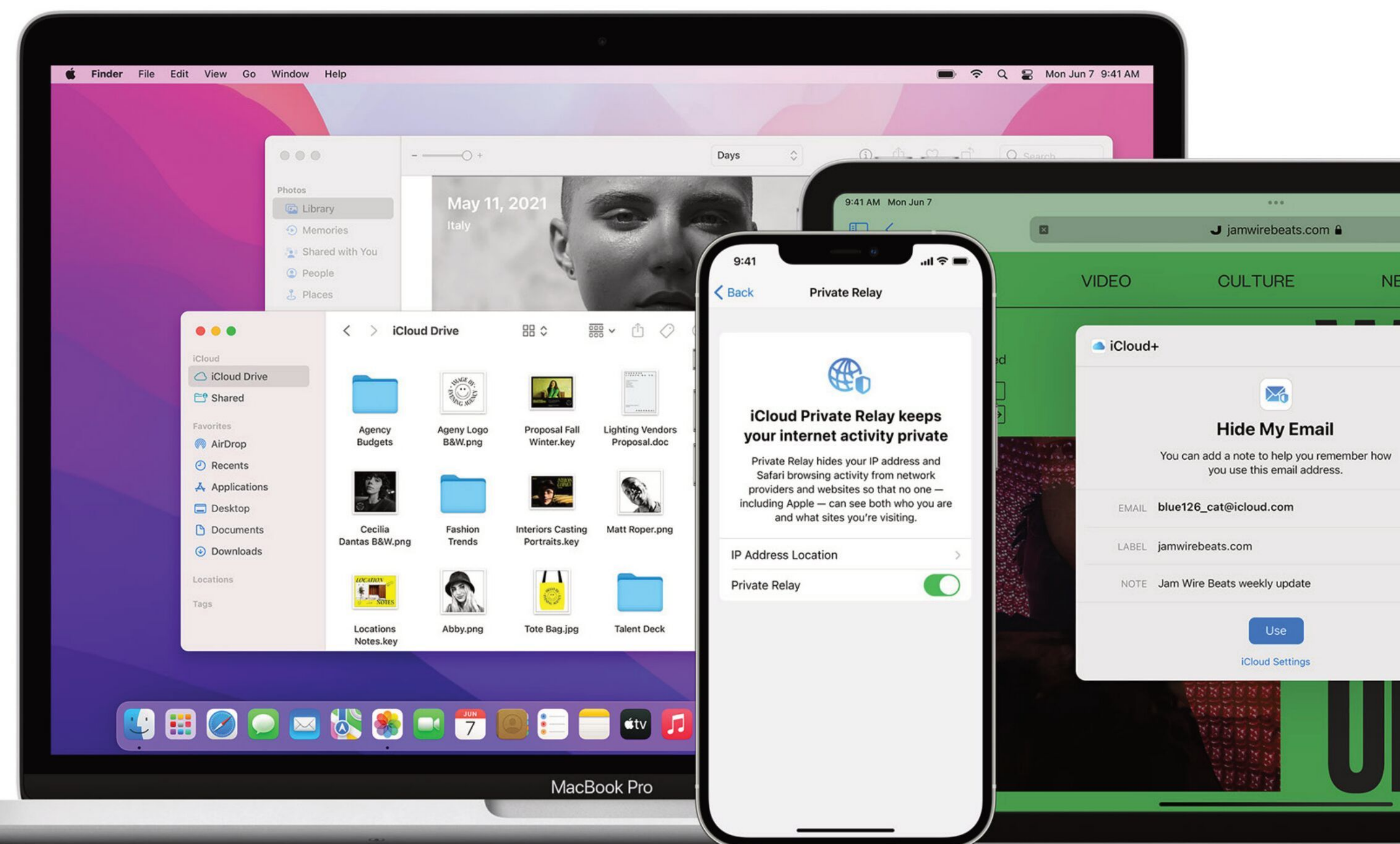
## iCloud+

As you know, when you open an Apple ID you get 5GB of iCloud storage for free, and can pay a monthly fee for more space if you need it. Some great new features are coming to this paid-for service, which has been renamed iCloud+. To preserve your privacy online when using public Wi-Fi services, a new feature called Private Relay encrypts any information sent from your device and passes it through two separate Internet relays. No one – including Apple – can see who you are and what sites you’re visiting.

If you’re reluctant to send out your personal email address, Hide My Email instead shares a unique email address that forwards emails to your personal inbox. If, for example, you want to enter a competition online but don’t want the spam that’s likely to result, use Hide My Email and when the competition is over, just delete the email address.

If you use Apple Home to connect security cameras to your iCloud, you can now use an unlimited number of cameras, and the video footage generated doesn’t count against your iCloud storage.

These new features come to iCloud this autumn. Prices for the iCloud subscription service remain the same.





# EDIFIER

## D12

Stereo Bluetooth Speaker

Explore



# EDIFIER

## TWS NB2

True Wireless Earbuds with  
Active Noise Cancellation

Explore





# AirPods Action!

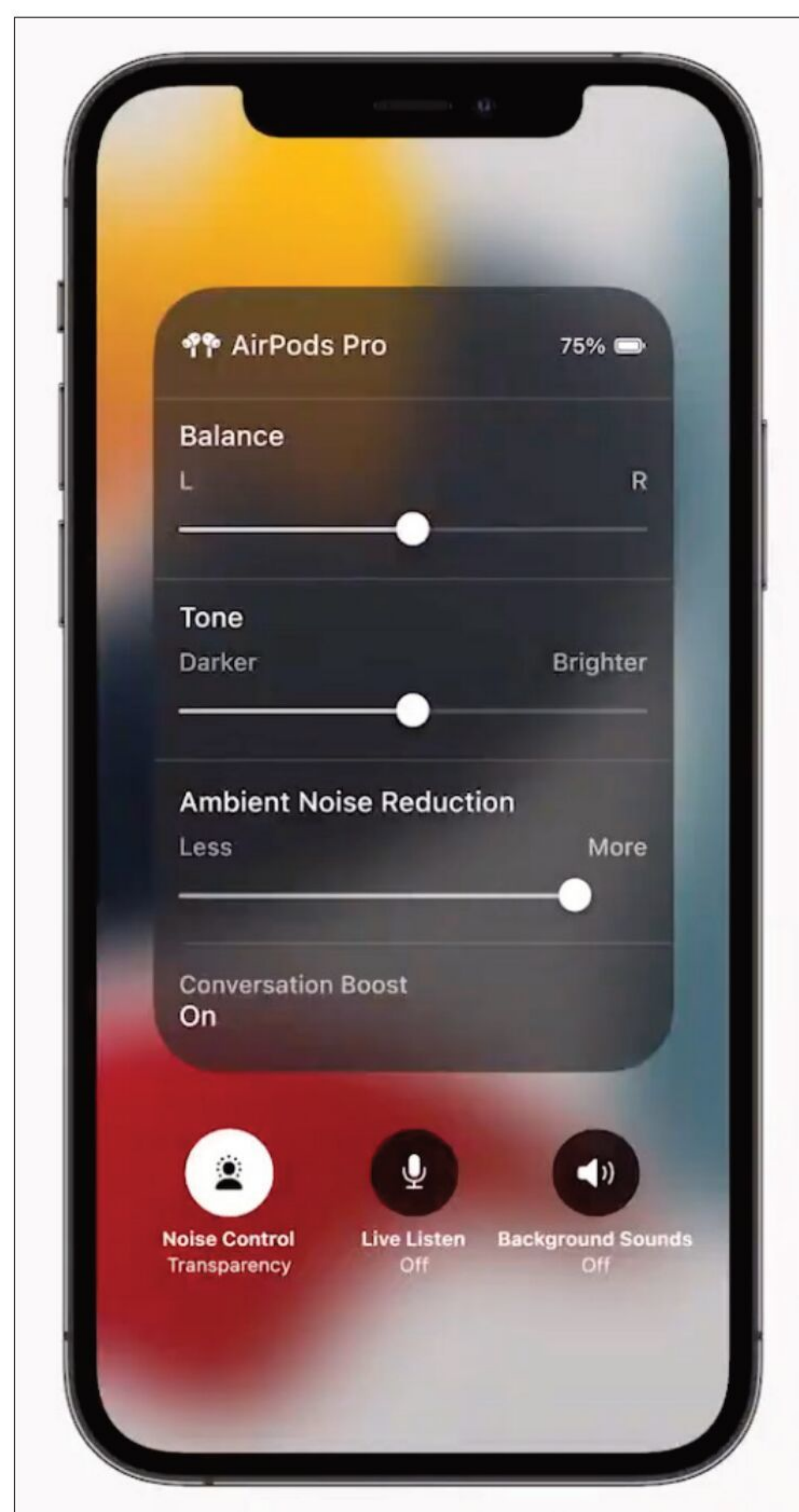
New features are coming to AirPods, and Apple told us all about them at the Worldwide Developers' Conference; and they're music to our ears...

The update to iOS 15 also brings some new features to Apple's AirPods, its popular brand of Bluetooth earbuds. Conversation Boost is designed to help people with mild hearing difficulties. Computational audio and beam-forming microphones focus your AirPods Pro on the person who's talking, making it easier to hear what they're saying by cutting out background sounds. On your iPhone, sliders let you set the level of Ambient Noise Reduction, and turn the Conversation Boost feature on and off.

A feature already present is Announce Messages with Siri, which reads incoming messages through your AirPods instead of making you reach for your phone. iOS 15 adds Announce Notifications, a similar service that lets Siri read important, time-sensitive notifications in the same way. You can choose which apps to enable, so you won't be constantly interrupted by notifications you'd rather deal with later.



**UBER EATS:** "Your Uber Eats has arrived." Siri can read such incoming notifications through your AirPods.



**iPhone CONTROLS:** On your iPhone, AirPods Pro controls let you switch Conversation Boost on and off, and also set the level of Ambient Noise Reduction.





## Find Your AirPods

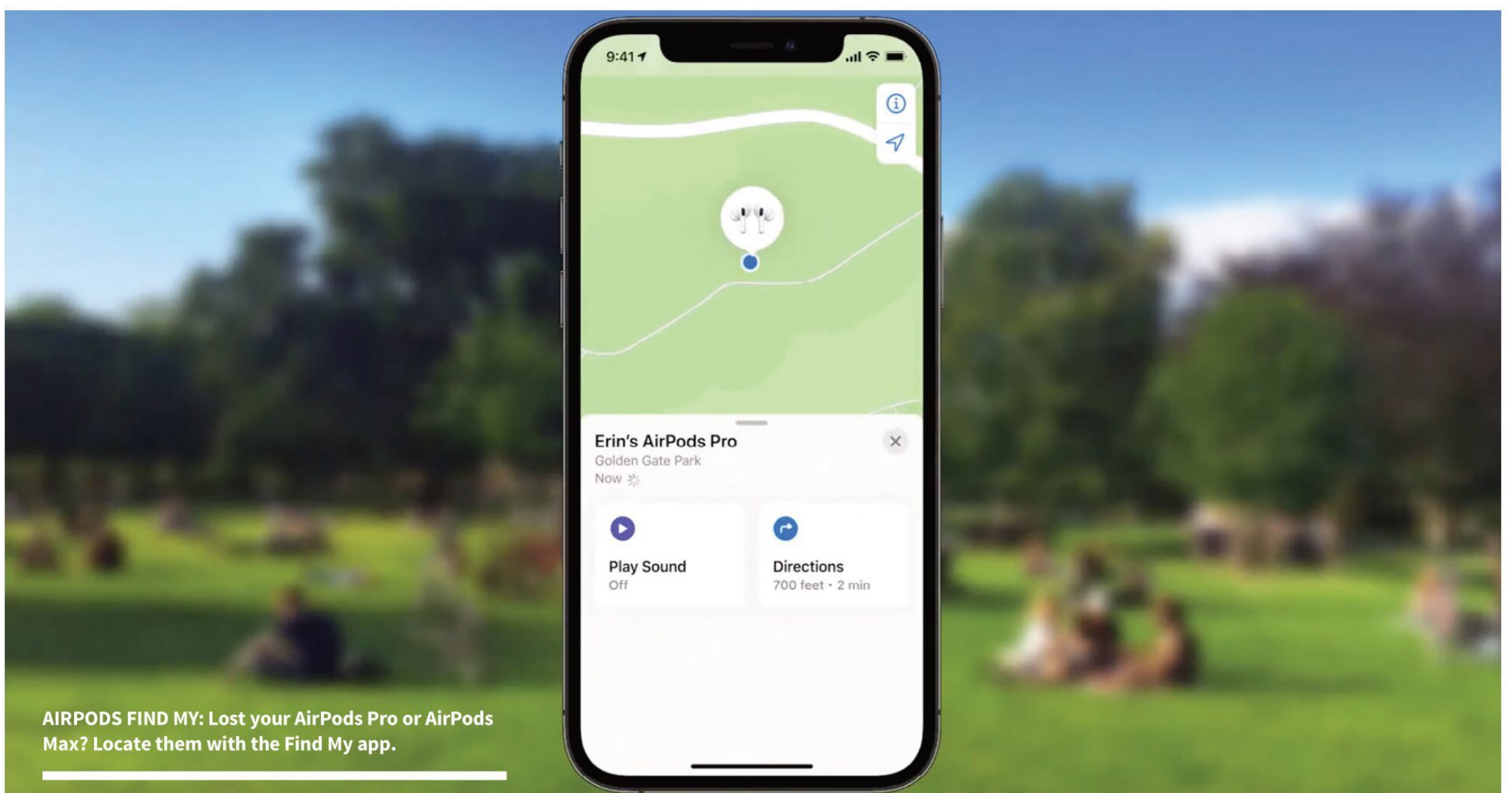
If you're lucky enough to own AirPods Pro or AirPods Max, the way they work with the Find My app has also had a boost in iOS 15. Missing AirPods send out a secure Bluetooth beacon, and when another Apple device – owned by anybody – is nearby, their location is reported and delivered to your Find My app. Tap a button to get them to play a tone, whether they're in their case or outside it. You can also get a separation

alert if you leave them behind accidentally when you're going out.

Last year's Spatial Audio feature is now being extended to tvOS and M1-powered Macs, so if you're watching Apple TV with your AirPods (Pro or Max), you get the full surround sound experience.

These great new features come to AirPods this autumn with the release of iOS 15.

**CONVERSATION BOOST:** Beam-forming microphones help focus the audio on the person speaking to you. It's great for the hard of hearing.



**AIRPODS FIND MY:** Lost your AirPods Pro or AirPods Max? Locate them with the Find My app.



# New Privacy Features

For the security-minded, Apple also announced a range of new features designed to protect your privacy.

According to Apple's Craig Federighi, "At Apple, we believe privacy is a fundamental human right. We don't think you should have to make a trade-off between great features and privacy. We believe you deserve both." This is the philosophy that underpins Apple's latest privacy features, coming to devices such as the iPhone, iPad and Mac.

Incoming emails sometimes use invisible pixels to report back on when you opened the email, giving the sender your location and even your IP address. The Mail app in macOS 12, iPadOS 15 and iOS 15 includes a new feature called Mail Privacy Protection. When active, it hides your IP address and your location, and also prevents senders from knowing whether you've opened their email.



**ON-DEVICE SIRI:** On-device speech processing makes Siri requests faster and more private.

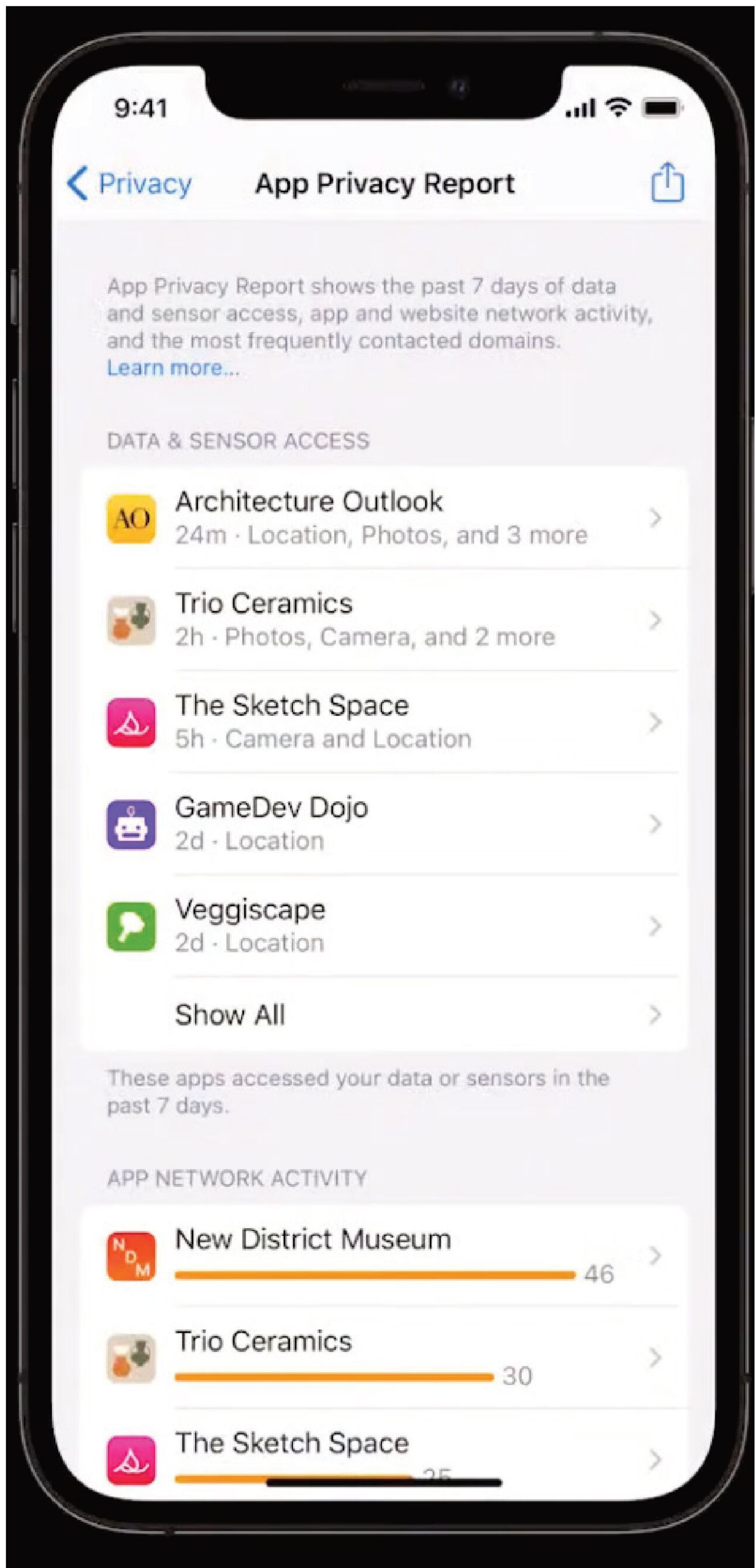


## Staying Hidden

In Safari, your IP address is hidden so trackers can't use it to link your activities across several sites. This feature is coming to apps too, with the App Privacy Report which shows what apps accessed what data or sensors (such as the mic or camera) over the last seven days. This includes location, photos, camera, microphone, contacts and more. It also shows all the third-party web addresses an app is contacting.

Siri also gets a privacy boost. Apple's multi-device digital assistant is already designed to process as much data on the device as possible, and with the powerful Neural Engine offered by Apple's latest gear, speech recognition is also to be processed on your Mac, iPad or iPhone without sending information to the cloud for analysis. It also speeds things up, and means you can make requests without an Internet connection.

These new privacy features will come to Apple's range of devices with the launch of the new updated operating systems in the autumn.



**APP PRIVACY REPORT:** We're soon to get an App Privacy Report, showing what our installed software has been up to.



# Gadgets Gallery

There are some great gadgets and gizmos out there that really help you get the most from your Apple gear. Whatever it is you want, from a handy carry bag to a CarPlay-compatible truck, we have it here.



## Ford F-150 Pickup Truck

URL: [www.ford.com](http://www.ford.com)

Price: Starting at \$29,290

If you're in the market for a CarPlay-compatible vehicle, and need something that offers a little more than the average family hatchback, what about this exciting Ford pickup truck? It includes Ford's new SYNC 4 infotainment system, an eight-inch or 12-inch touchscreen and it supports both wired and wireless CarPlay.

## Belkin Key Ring and Strap

URL: [www.belkin.com](http://www.belkin.com)

Price: £11.99, \$12.99, 13,99 €

Apple's AirTags are an awesome way of tracking your property, or even your children, but where do you put them? Belkin's Key Ring and Strap offer a handy caddy for an AirTag, which can hold your keys or be fastened to a bag or belt loop.



## Jackery Explorer 500

URL: [www.jackery.com](http://www.jackery.com)

Price: £499.99, \$449.99, 599,99 €

If you're into camping or generally outdoor living, this powerful rechargeable battery pack is great for charging your Apple gear. It boasts a 518Wh/144,000mAh battery, and you can buy an optional solar panel to recharge the Explorer 500 too.







### AZIO IZO Wireless Keyboard Set

URL: <https://bit.ly/2UugZ3j>

Price: TBA

Most people love the keyboard and mouse that comes with the Mac, but if you prefer a big-button keyboard and a more regular mouse design, check out this Kickstarter. If you're quick, there's still time to back it.

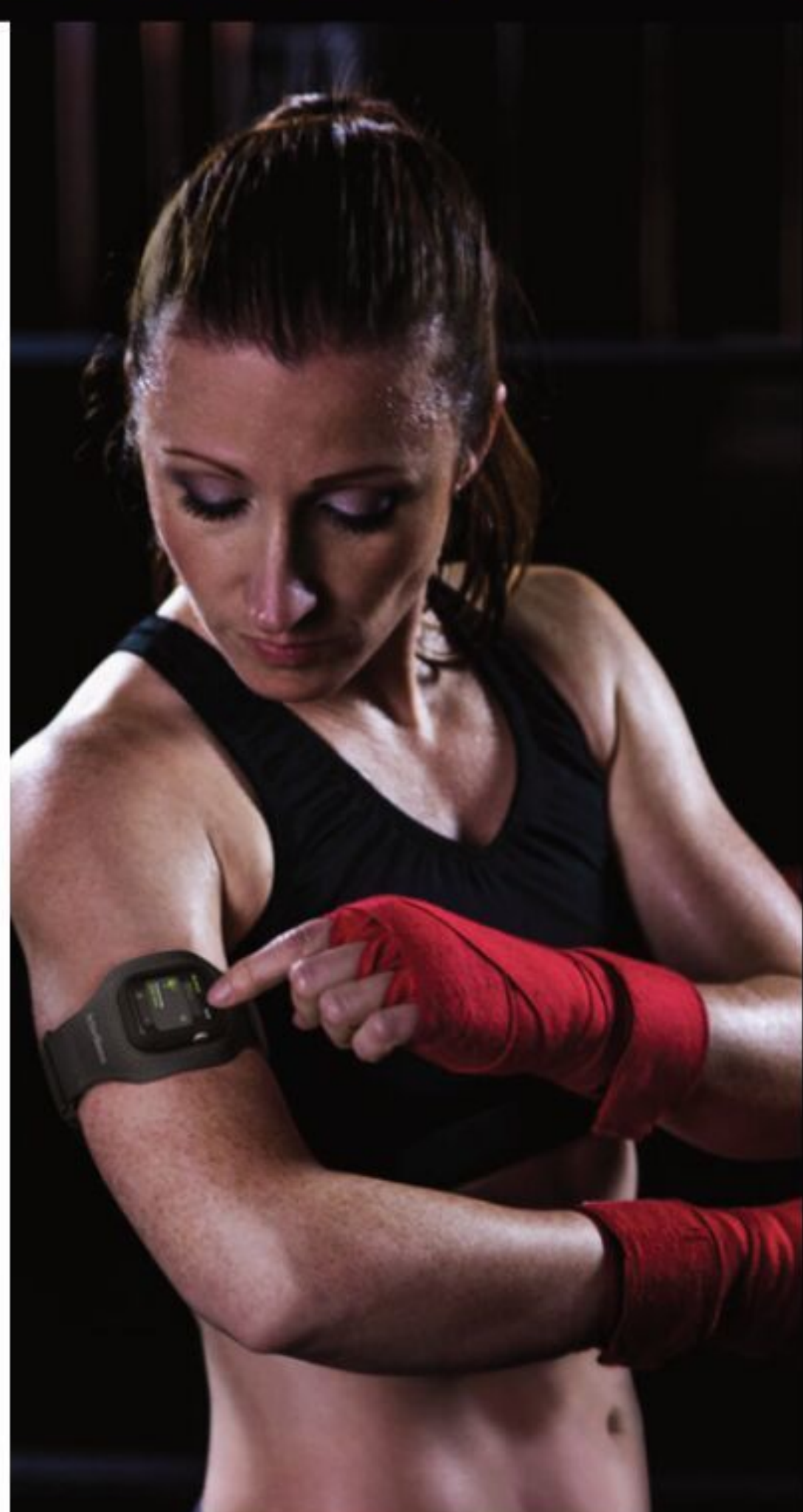


### Nanoleaf Essentials Light Bulb

URL: <https://nanoleaf.me>

Price: From £17.99, \$19.99, 19,99 €

If you want to brighten up your house, try this awesome multicoloured LED light bulb. It's available in bayonet or screw fittings, is controlled through an iOS app and has around 16 million colours.



### ActionSleeve 2 Armband for Apple Watch

URL: [www.twelvesouth.com](http://www.twelvesouth.com)

Price: £34.99, \$48.82, 40,97 €

When working out, ActionSleeve 2 holds your Apple Watch in place on the bicep while working out, freeing up your wrist. It's made from a hand-washable non-allergenic material that is soft against the skin, is compatible with Apple Watch Series 4, 5 and 6 and is available for both the 40mm and 44mm watch sizes.

### SKILLER SGS2 Jr Gaming Chair for Children

URL: <https://en.sharkoon.com>

Price: 129,00 €, other prices TBA

Kids need decent gaming tools too, and this comfortable, ergonomic gaming chair is designed especially for them. It's suitable for children and young people up to a weight of 65 kilograms, and is available in four different colour schemes.







## Packable Duffel Expandable Travel Bag

URL: [www.sfbags.com](http://www.sfbags.com)

Price: £93.00, \$129.00, 109,00 €

If you're going away for the weekend – or maybe on a shopping trip – this duffel bag, available in 24 litre or 30 litre sizes, can carry everything you need. And when not in use, it folds away small enough to fit in your coat pocket.



## Leather Key Chain and Luggage Tag for Apple AirTag

URL: [www.sfbags.com](http://www.sfbags.com)

Price:

Key Chain, £18.00, \$25.00, 21,00 €

Luggage Tag, £35.50, \$49.00, 41,00 €

The full-grain leather AirTag Keychain and AirTag Luggage Tag are Apple AirTag accessories that protect the trackers from scratches and discreetly hide them from potential thieves. Decorative perforations in the leather cases allow sound from the built-in AirTag speakers to escape. They're available in multiple colours.



## Razer Iskur X Gaming Chair

URL: [www.razer.com](http://www.razer.com)

Price: £399.00, \$399.00, 399,00 €

It supports up to 136kg, and features armrests to reduce wrist and shoulder strain and an angled seat edge to maximise upper leg and thigh support. For extra comfort, add an optional head and/or lumbar support. You can play your games all day in this chair.



## iFi ZEN Stream

URL: <http://ifi-audio.com>

Price: £399.00, other prices TBA

This unassuming little box is a very capable audio streamer designed to deliver flexible, high-quality network streaming to any audio environment. Acting as a bridge between your Wi-Fi network and your audio system, it connects to a router via Wi-Fi or Ethernet cable and outputs to an external DAC (or an amp with digital inputs) via USB or S/PDIF.







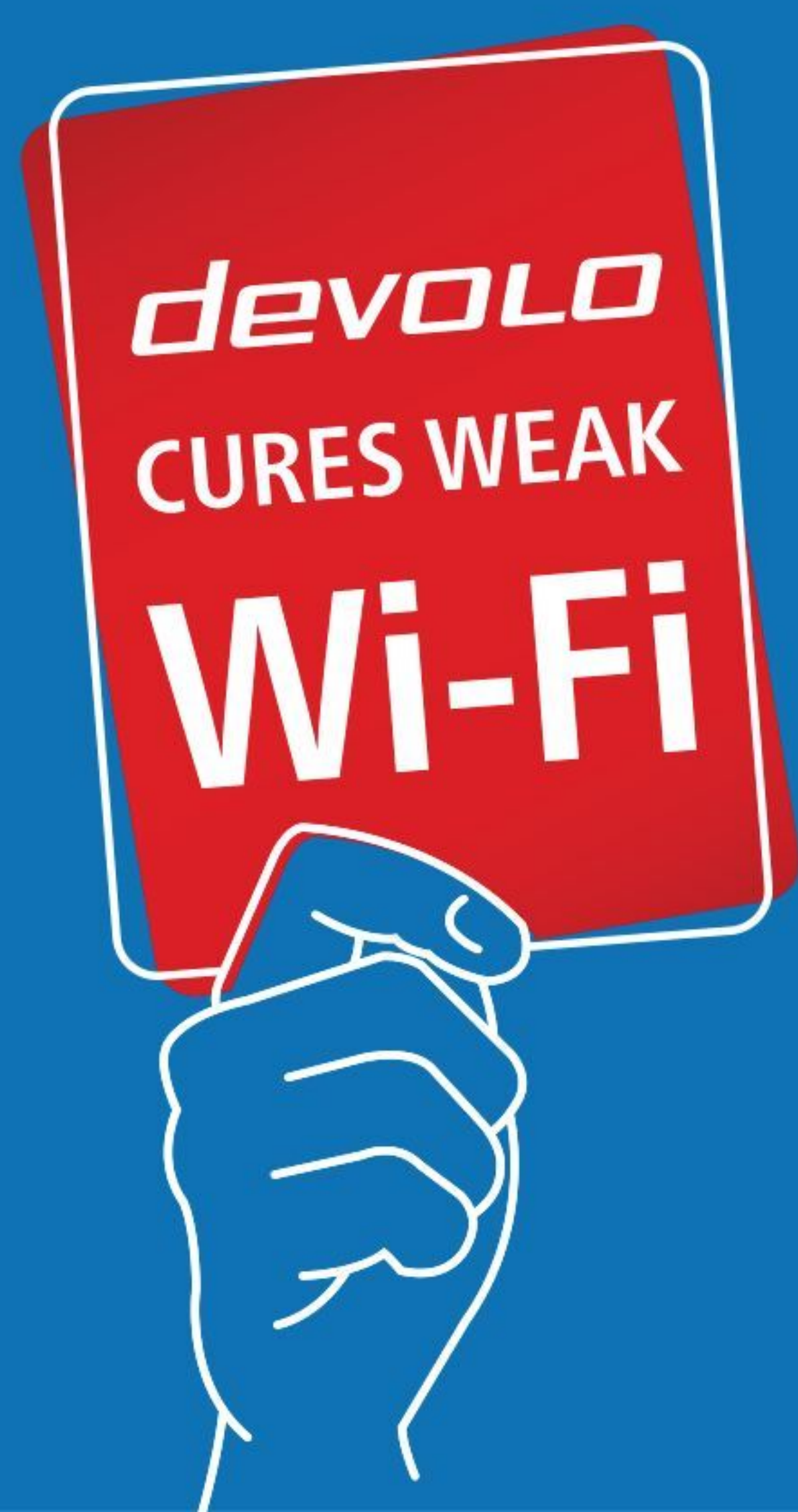
**MORE WI-FI  
POWER FOR  
YOUR HOME**

# devolo Mesh WiFi

For the best connection with full mesh coverage

- ✓ Optimum mesh tri-band: The combination of Wi-Fi ac with 2400 Mbps Powerline technology enables the best distribution of Internet throughout the home.
- ✓ More Wi-Fi power: The devolo units provide up to one-hundred end devices with stable, fast Wi-Fi over two frequency bands.
- ✓ The best mesh: For optimal performance, turn off the Wi-Fi of your router and browse in a pure devolo Mesh WiFi network.

**Wi-Fi in its best form!**  
More info at [devolo.co.uk](http://devolo.co.uk)



**devolo**



# Reviews//

It's not all about the iMac. In this issue, as well as covering Apple's latest desktop computer, we also review DJI's OM 4 Gimbal, the Nanoleaf Starter Kit for some awesome smart lighting effects, and Apple's own Bluetooth tracker, AirTag. Over in the software section, we get the lowdown on FireCore's Infuse 7 video streamer, ExpressVPN to keep your data and your surfing safe and private, and some useful Mac apps like TextSniper, Squash 3 and Transloader 3. Look out for some great games reviews too.

## Hardware Reviews

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- 94 Godzilla Battle Line





Are you sick of wobbly video footage? Do you wish you could hold your hand steadier when recording on your iPhone? You need a gimbal, like the DJI OM4 reviewed this issue.

## Scores//

Our ratings explained:

- 5 - excellent
- 4 - good
- 3 - average
- 2 - poor
- 1 - avoid

### Device Guide

While most of our reviews cover most devices, we have added these icons to give you a quick reference to what device is best suited for the product or software.





# Apple iMac

## 24-inch, M1, 2021



The M1 chip comes to Apple's popular desktop, but how does it perform?

### Info//

Apple Inc

[www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)

From £1,249, \$1,299, 1,449 €

Compatibility: N/A



One thing we didn't get with the new 2021 iMac was a range of sizes. While the previous generation offered 21.5-inch and 27-inch displays, the new M1-powered iMacs are available in just one screen size; 24 inches. The new iMac is only marginally larger than the older 21.5-inch model, with the larger screen achieved by reducing the bezel. We suspect this release is a replacement for the smaller Intel iMacs, with a larger version to follow, probably next year. Unless you need a huge screen, though, this 24-inch model is almost certainly enough.

And what a wonderful screen it is. A 4.5K Retina display, it has 11.3 million pixels at a 4480 x 2520 resolution, and over a billion colours. A TrueTone feature automatically adjusts the picture according to current ambient light levels, so it always looks natural. What this means for the average user is it looks breathtakingly good. Photographs are reproduced with impeccable colour reproduction, text is clear and vibrant and moving pictures are crystal clear with no fogging or ghosting. Go to your local computer store – not an Apple store, just a computer store that sells both Macs and PCs – and see. Take a

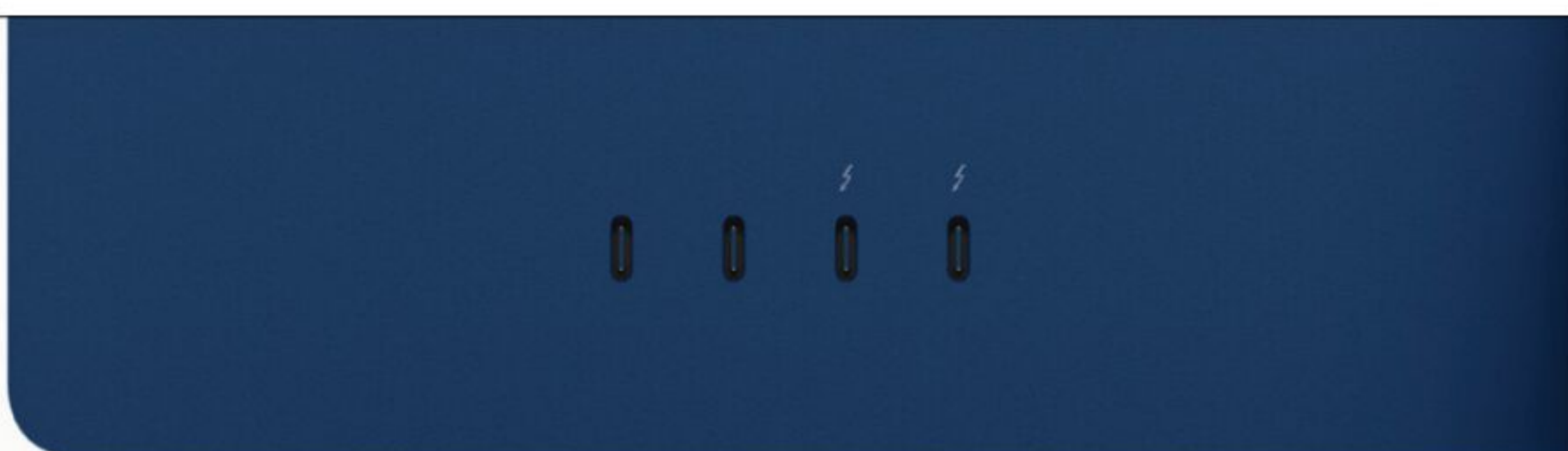




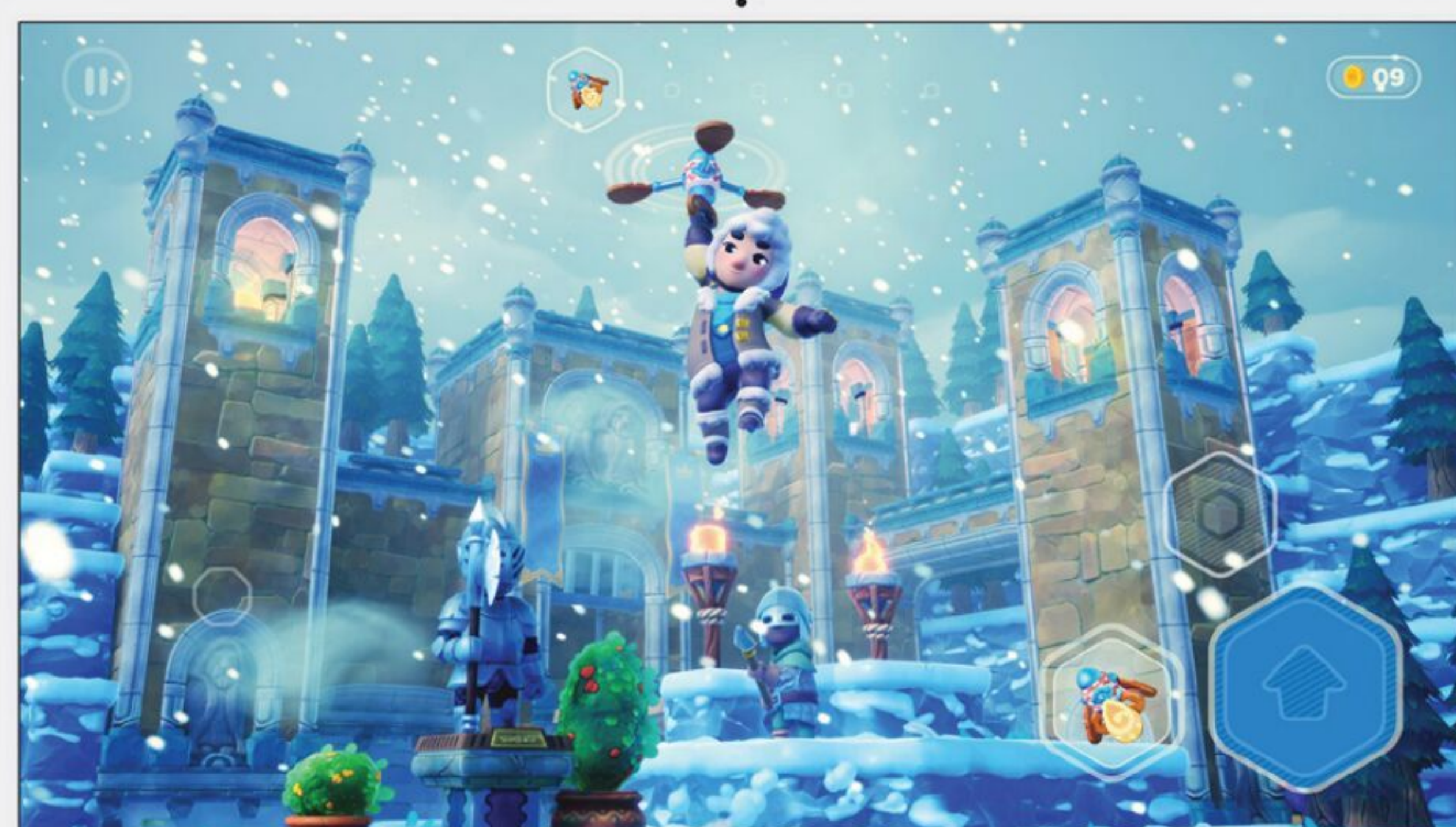
**The new iMac is available in seven colours. The back, sides and stand are an intense shade, with the front of the computer a lighter hue.**



**The new keyboards are colour-matched to the computer. Also note the Touch ID key in the top row.**



**The new iMac has two USB-C ports and two Thunderbolt 3-powered USB-C ports, though the cheapest iMac omits the regular USB-C inlets.**



look at the new iMac, then look at PCs running on regular monitors. Notice the difference? Of course you do.

Of course, there's more to a modern computer than a screen and circuit boards. The iMac's mic, camera and speakers have also had an upgrade. The webcam (or FaceTime camera, to use Apple's parlance) is a significant step up from its predecessor's rather mediocre offering. It's now 1080p, double the resolution of the last one. The M1 chip includes Apple's latest Image Signal Processor for even better image quality, and it has a studio-standard three-mic array which has been especially designed to reduce feedback from the computer, for crystal clear sound. When video chatting on the 2021 iMac, you really notice the difference. This would be a welcome upgrade at any time, but during the pandemic, when video conferencing is increasingly important, it's an awesome improvement.

For video editors, gamers and those who enjoy digital entertainment on their computer, the speaker system has been overhauled. There are actually six speakers built into the new iMac;

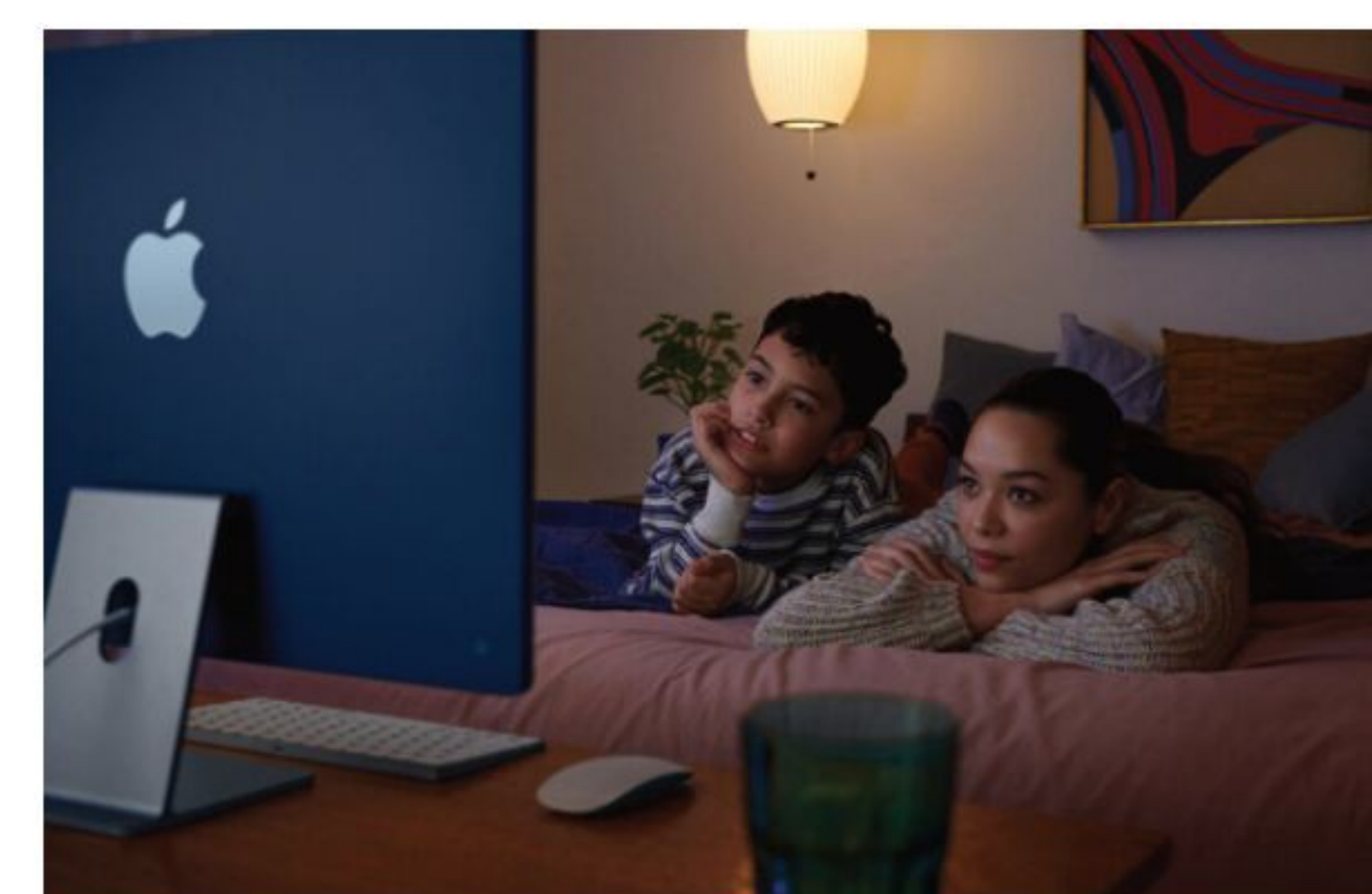
two pairs of woofers and a pair of tweeters. While internal drivers will never put a decent set of external speakers out of a job, the ones in the 2021 iMac do an excellent job.

## Think Thin

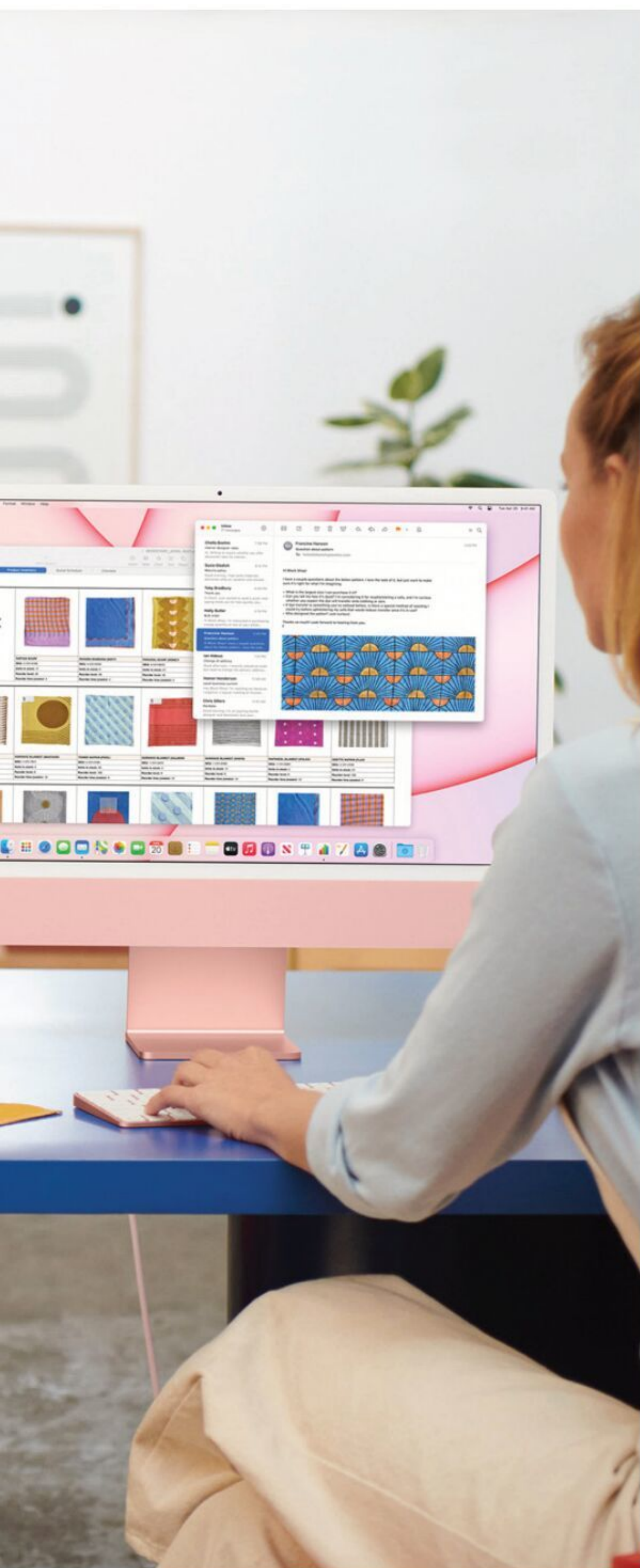
The M1 chip's five nanometer technology means each transistor is just five billionths of a metre large. Smaller transistors makes for greater speed and efficiency, and you can cram more of them onto a smaller area. The M1 packs in an amazing 16 billion transistors, the most Apple has ever put on a chip. The M1 also includes an integrated graphics processing unit (GPU) with eight cores capable of running nearly 25,000 threads simultaneously (note; the cheapest model only has a seven-core GPU).

The result? The new iMac is great at handling demanding, processor-heavy tasks. In our tests, we played four 4K video streams at the same time, without any stuttering or slow-down. Running games, it handled 3D graphics at the highest resolution and 60 fps with no loss of frame rate. Applications open extremely quickly, and everything is fast and responsive, whatever tasks

**Gaming is a real joy on the new iMac.**







you throw at it. In over a week of use, we’ve only ever seen the dreaded beachball of doom when using our local network or cloud storage; when dealing with things stored on the iMac’s impressive solid state drive, everything happened instantly and without any hang-ups.

Another advantage of having the entire system on a chip is the iMac’s circuit boards can be smaller. The entire computer is housed in the ‘chin’ section, found beneath the screen. This means the iMac as a whole can be very thin; the chin aside, it looks more like a display than a computer. It’s just 11.5mm deep. And as it uses very little electricity, it doesn’t take much cooling. Its two small fans make less than ten decibels of noise; that’s almost inaudible.

Remember back in the early years of the 21st Century, when the iMac came in a range of colours? Well, they’re back. The 2021 model is available in green, yellow, orange, pink, purple, blue, and for those who prefer a more traditional appearance, silver. The back and sides of the computer, along with the stand, are in a strong shade of the colour in question while the front is a more subdued hue. The rear of the iMac displays the traditional Apple logo. At the front, a single sheet of glass covers the entire surface, but unlike before, there’s no apple on the chin.

### Sizing it Up

One thing we didn’t get with the new 2021 iMac was a range of sizes. While the previous generation offered 21.5-inch and 27-inch displays, the new M1-powered iMacs are available in just one screen size; 24 inches. The new iMac is only marginally larger

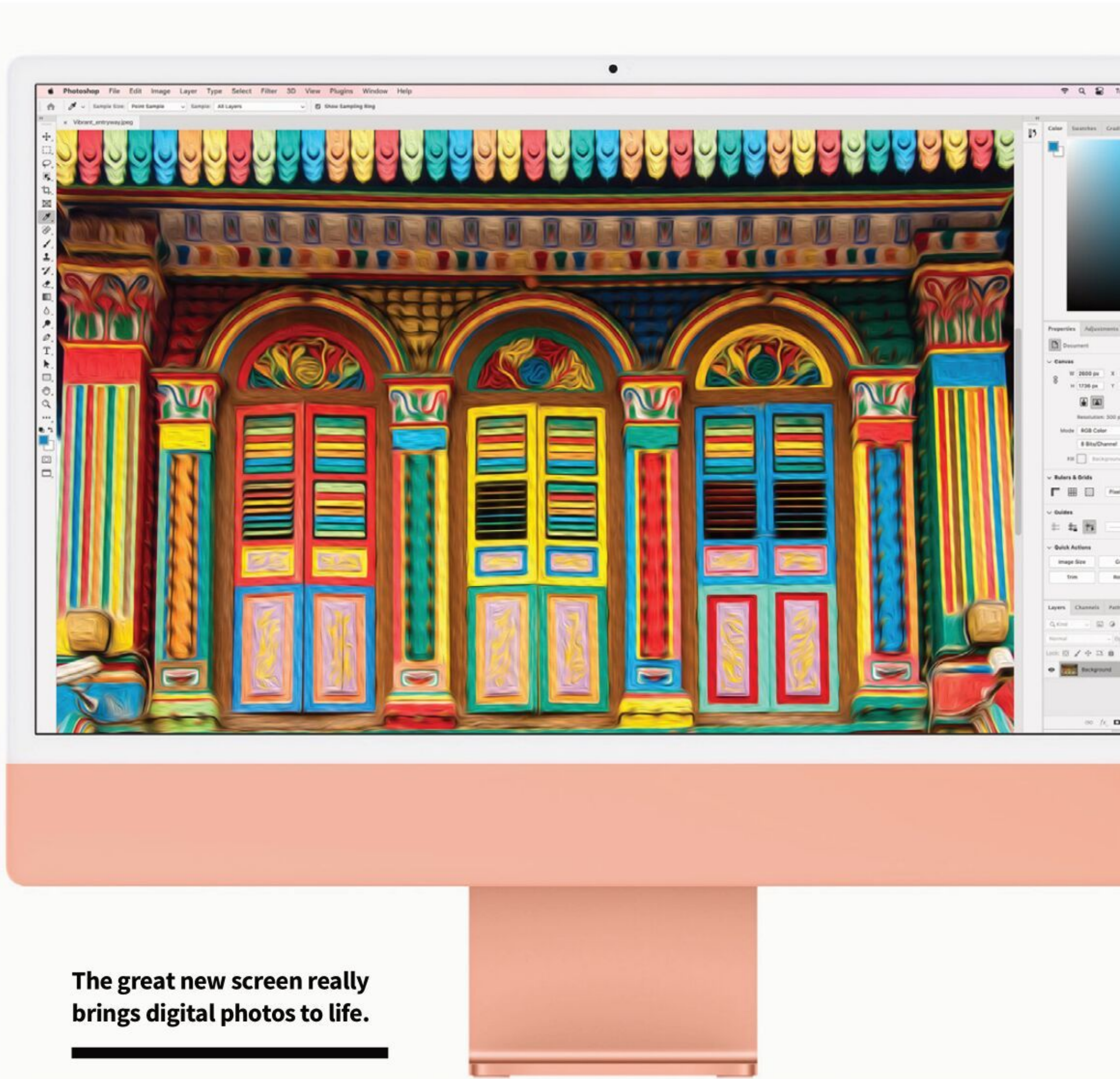
than the older 21.5-inch model, with the larger screen achieved by reducing the bezel. We suspect this release is a replacement for the smaller Intel iMacs, with a larger version to follow, probably next year. Unless you need a huge screen, though, this 24-inch model is almost certainly enough.

And what a wonderful screen it is. A 4.5K Retina display, it has 11.3 million pixels at a 4480 x 2520 resolution, and over a billion colours. A TrueTone feature automatically adjusts the picture according to current ambient light levels, so it always looks natural. What this means for the average user is it looks breathtakingly good. Photographs are reproduced with impeccable colour reproduction, text is clear and vibrant and moving pictures are crystal clear with no fogging or ghosting. Go to your local computer store – not an Apple store, just a computer store that sells both Macs and PCs – and see. Take a look at the new iMac, then look at PCs running on regular monitors. Notice the difference? Of course you do.

Of course, there’s more to a modern computer than a screen and circuit boards. The iMac’s mic, camera and speakers have also had an upgrade. The webcam (or FaceTime camera, to use Apple’s parlance) is a significant step up from its predecessor’s rather mediocre offering. It’s now 1080p, double the resolution of the last one. The M1 chip includes Apple’s latest Image Signal Processor for even better image quality, and it has a studio-standard three-mic array which has been especially designed to reduce feedback from the computer, for crystal clear sound. When video chatting on the 2021 iMac, you really notice the difference.



**The extra power offered by the M1 chip makes it perfect for video editing.**

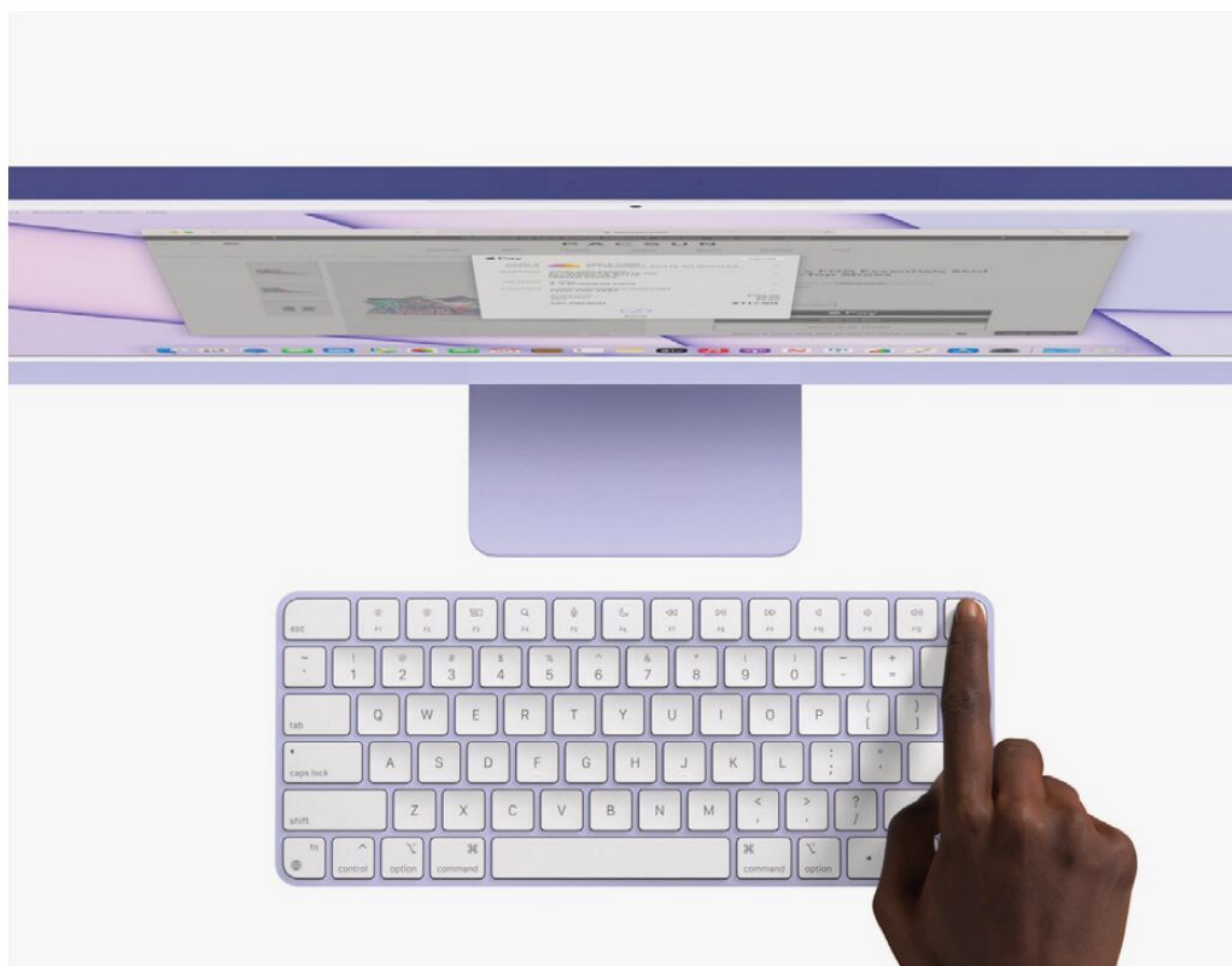


**The great new screen really brings digital photos to life.**





The headphone socket is on the edge of the 2021 iMac, but who uses it in this day and age?



Unlock your Mac and more with the long-awaited Touch ID feature.

This would be a welcome upgrade at any time, but during the pandemic, when video conferencing is increasingly important, it's an awesome improvement.

For video editors, gamers and those who enjoy digital entertainment on their computer, the speaker system has been overhauled. There are actually six speakers built into the new iMac; two pairs of woofers and a pair of tweeters. While internal drivers will never put a decent set of external speakers out of a job, the ones in the 2021 iMac do an excellent job.

## Wired for Sound?

If you like to plug in a set of cabled headphones for the audio the socket is now on the lower left-hand side of the iMac instead of on the back, where it was difficult to reach. While this is hardly a bad thing, we're frankly surprised it's still there at all. Who uses cabled earphones with a computer these days? You're much better off with Bluetooth.

Plenty of the iMacs' other ports have gone. You won't find a card reader slot, for example, or any rectangular USB 3.0 ports. In fact, the only expansion ports on the iMac are four USB-C ports, two of which are Thunderbolt 3-capable for extra speed and bandwidth (the cheapest iMac omits the two non-Thunderbolt ports). There's a Gigabit Ethernet port, but this is found on the power pack rather than the body of the computer, which is a far more convenient location anyway (the cheapest iMac omits this port too). If you have older USB peripherals (and you almost certainly have), you need an adapter of some sort to plug it in. We suggest you get a Thunderbolt 3 dock or a USB hub of some sort. That's all you need.

The latest iMacs' controllers are colour-matched with the computer. The keyboard's aluminium casing is the same colour as the

back of the iMac, as are the sides of the bundled Magic Mouse or Magic Trackpad. They look great and are extremely comfortable to use. Out of the box you get a Bluetooth keyboard without a numeric keypad and a Magic Mouse, but you can make alternative choices if you buy at the online Apple store. You can also, of course, customise the iMac itself with features such as more memory or a bigger solid state drive.

## Touch Me...

An additional feature that's present on all but the cheapest 2021 iMac is Touch ID. Sat on the keyboard next to the F12 button is a new key featuring a fingerprint sensor. Pressing it locks your Mac, while placing your finger on it without pressing unlocks it again. You can also use Touch ID to access passwords, or make App Store purchases and more. You still need your Mac password for unlocking your Mac after a restart, updating the operating system and a few more things, but the Touch ID saves a lot of typing in other circumstances. It's a welcome – and overdue – feature for which Mac users have been crying out.

So do we recommend you buy a new 2021 iMac? You bet we do, regardless of what model of Intel Mac you already have. The new processor, combined with the advantages of having the entire system on a single chip, mean it outperforms its predecessor in every area. Not just by a little either. The new Apple Silicon Macs are streets ahead of the Intel models.

A word of caution, though. Avoid the entry-level iMac. As we've discussed, it's missing key features like the Ethernet port, two USB-C ports and Touch ID, and it has one fewer GPU cores too. Given it's only £200 more for the mid-range model, the cheapest iMac is not good value for money. **IO**

## How Much Do They Cost?

There are three models of iMac in the 2021 range. These are their off-the-shelf prices, though if you order directly from Apple, you can pay for customisation options if you wish.

### Entry level:

£1,249, \$1,299, 1,449 €

### Mid-cost:

£1,449, \$1,499, 1,669 €

### High-end:

£1,649, \$1,699, 1,899 €



## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

+ Great new chip

+ Seven exciting colours

+ Excellent performance

- Weak entry-level model

### LAST WORD

An excellent desktop debut for the Apple Silicon M1 chip, and amazing addition to Apple's Mac range. Highly recommended.

**RATING: 5/5**



# DJI OM4 Gimbal

Could this handy and compact device take your action videos to the next level?

## Info//

DJI

[www.dji.com](http://www.dji.com)

£139.00, \$139.00, 162,60 €

Compatibility: Any iPhone



Let's get the obvious question out of the way right now; what on Earth is a gimbal? In a nutshell, it's a pivoted support that keeps a device such as a compass, clock, drinks holder or (crucially) a camera in a set orientation while on the move. If you record a video on your iPhone while jogging or cycling down the street, it's likely to look shaky due to the camera wobbling as you move. The DJI OM4 Gimbal tilts, pitches and twists your iPhone to compensate for things like hand movement, bumps in the road or other such inevitabilities.

Your smartphone fits comfortably in the spring-closed holder, which in turn is mounted on the quick-release magnetic clamp atop the gimbal. If you need a stand, the standard screw at the bottom of the device connects to any regular photographers'

tripod or monopod, including the supplied folding mini-stand.

The OM4 Gimbal makes a few advances on its predecessor, the Osmo Mobile 3. The motors are stronger to further steady the smartphone, and it has a wider reach along the X and Y axes. The aforementioned clasp magnetically fixes the phone holder to the gimbal, making it easy to remove and reattach. This magnetic connection held our phone steady and tight through all the bounces and bumps we put it through, without ever coming loose or falling off. If you prefer, you can use an optional magnetic ring (supplied) to stick to the back of your phone and connect it directly to the magnetic housing, foregoing the clasp, as long as you don't mind it being it permanently stuck to the back of your phone.





## Action Stations!

When in use, the OM4 Gimbal performs admirably. Its rechargeable battery has a 15-hour life, so it's good for a full day's shooting. It folds down neatly for transport, and you get a drawstring bag to keep the gimbal and all its accessories in. There's a companion app offering features such as Hyperlapse, ActiveTrack, Dynamic Zoom and Motionlapse, but it's not obligatory; if you just want to record stabilised video, you can use any video recording app you want. And, of course, it gives great results. The controls can be confusing at first, but with a little practice, you can record amazing stabilised

videos. The extra stability offered by the gimbal makes all sorts of action videos possible, bringing a whole new dimension to your movies. If you need to take your phone off the gimbal for a short break, maybe to answer a text message, make a call or upload your latest flick to social media, the new magnetic attachment makes this easy and convenient.

There are cheaper gimbals out there, but at under £150, this one is hardly expensive for a top-of-the-range device. If you're serious about making action videos and want the best in stabilisation technologies, this is the one to get. It combines excellent performance and great value for money. **10**



## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + Great build quality
- + Excellent stabilisation performance
- + Folds away neatly
- There are cheaper gimbals

### LAST WORD

A high-quality gimbal that's not the cheapest such device, but is definitely the best. Highly recommended.

**RATING: 5/5**



# Nanoleaf Triangle Starter Kit

Can this smart system bring a little light into your life?

## Info//

**Nanoleaf**  
<https://nanoleaf.me/en>  
**£179.99, \$199.99,**  
**199,99 €**  
**Compatibility: iOS 12.0**  
**or later**



**N**anoleaf is smart lighting with a difference. Instead of a light bulb that plugs into your regular lamp fittings, or a strip light you can bend around or hang on your furniture, these are shapes you can link together into exciting wall-mounted designs. So far, Nanoleaf has released hexagons, squares, small triangles and the standard triangles, with sides of 23cm/nine inches in length. These triangles have sharp corners, but the 'lit' area is rounded for a smoother effect when in use.

In this starter kit you get nine regular triangular panels, ten connectors to link the shapes together, a controller unit that clips onto the side of one of the panels, sticky pads to hold them to your wall and a mains plug to power your finished design. You can buy additional panels if you wish to expand your masterpiece, and even link panels of differing shapes.

It's easy to put up. Just snap the panels together using the connectors and stick them to your wall. It's wise to take your time planning your design first, though. The Nanoleaf app for the iPhone or iPad has a Layout Assistant that

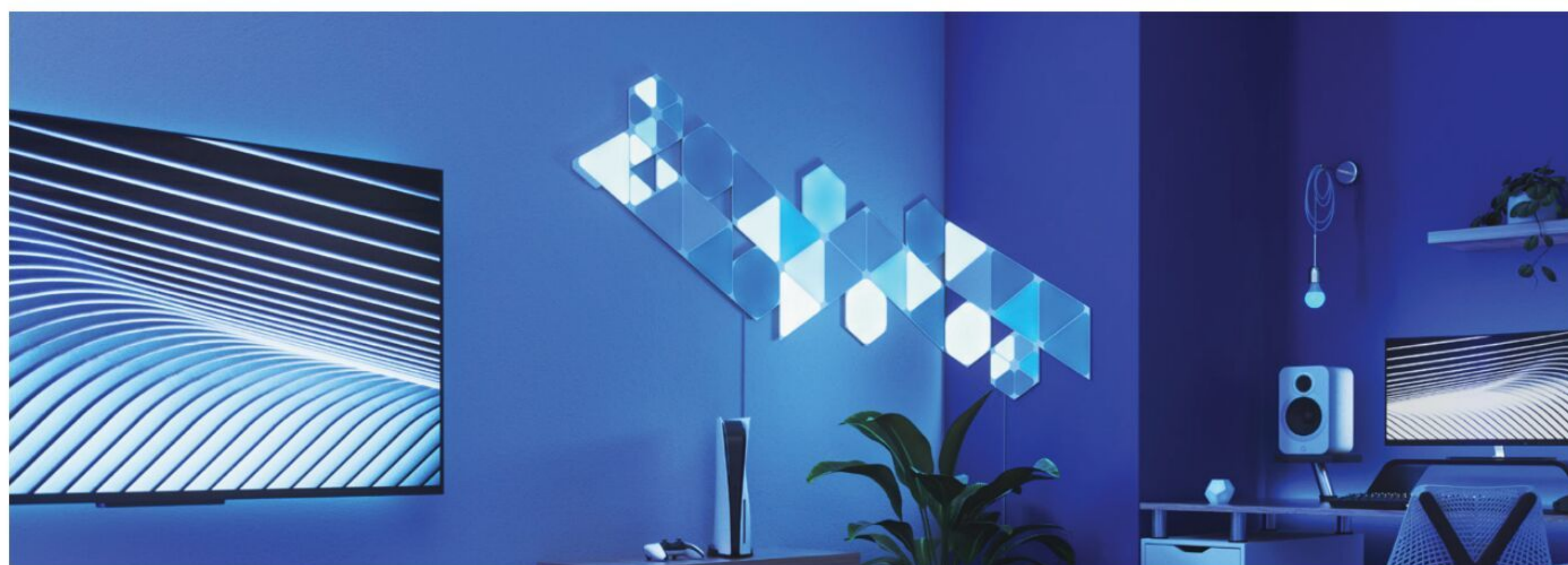
lets you experiment at will, regardless of which or how many shapes you're using. Although this app is optional (Nanoleaf is HomeKit compatible, and can be controlled from the Home app), we recommend you do just that. Laying out your panels on your mobile device is both useful and fun, and pays dividends when you eventually wall-mount them.

Each panel can display 16 million colours, including various off-white shades. Brightness is controllable, using the app or the controller connected to your panels, and can reach up to 80 lumens. You can assign a different colour to each panel using the app, and you can also set up touch actions, by which you can make changes to a panel by physically touching it. The lights can also be voice-controlled, using Apple HomeKit, Google Assistant, Amazon Alexa or SmartThings..

### And There's More...

And it doesn't stop there either. Screen Mirroring links your Nanoleaf setup to your TV or gaming monitor, adjusting the lighting to reflect what's

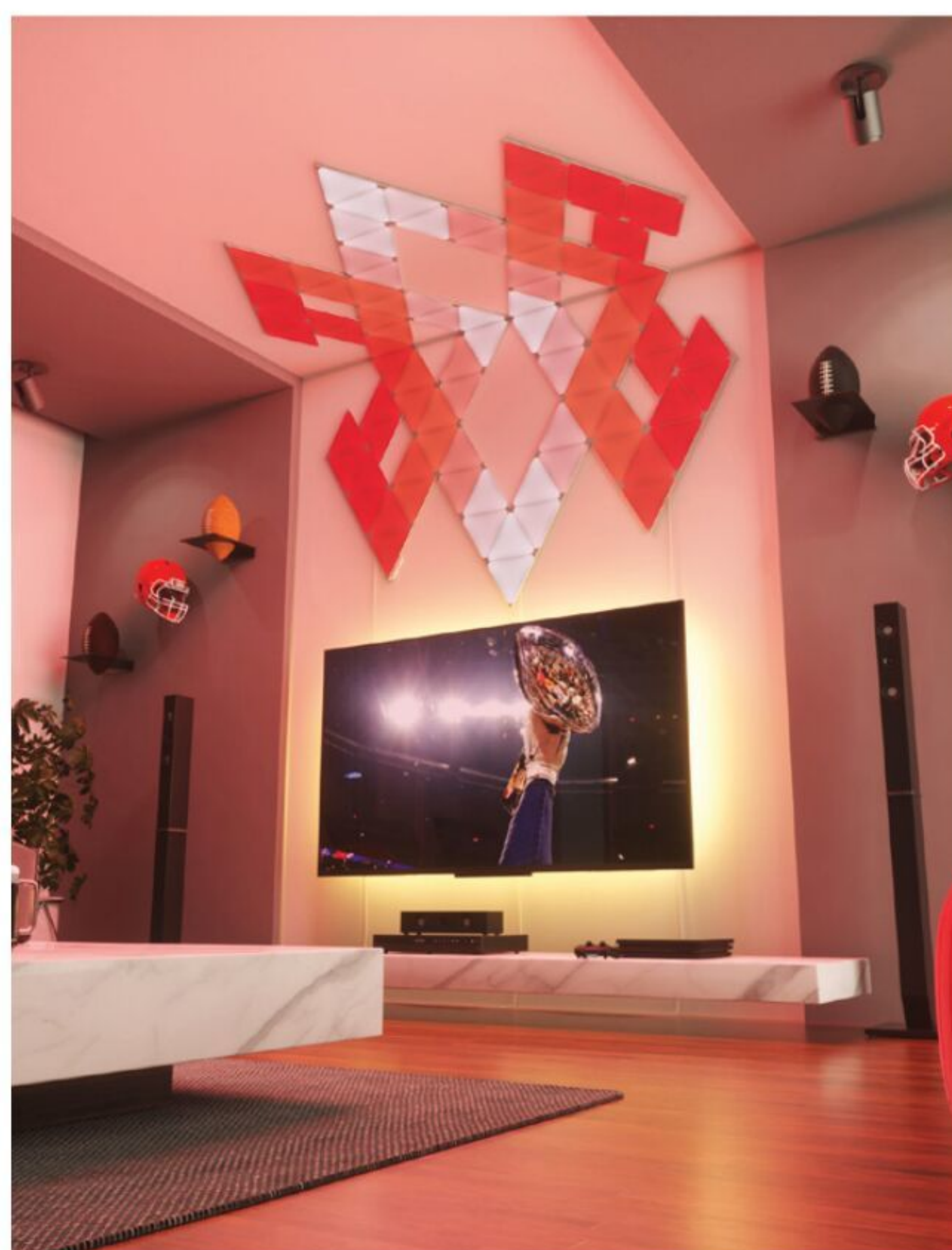




happening on the screen. You can have them sync with your music too. Four modes are available, which effect the way the panels react to the sound. This feature works much better for music than it does for TV and gaming, which can be difficult to set up and use.

Schedules can be set up with Nanoleaf, so you can have your panels light up and switch off at specific times of the day. Up to seven days of schedules can be set, and you can choose which actions, colours and more are used. You can even set it up so the lights appear when the first person enters a room, and go off again when the last person leaves.

It has to be said that a Nanoleaf setup isn't cheap. The version reviewed here costs £179.99/\$199.99/199,99 € for nine decent-sized panels, with even more to pay if you want to add more to your design. Even so, it's not overpriced for such a comprehensive, feature-packed product. It's easy to set up, fun to use and very versatile. We love it. **10**



ESSENTIAL  
**AppleUser**  
MAGAZINE  
**RECOMMENDS** **5/5**

## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + Easy to use
- + Very versatile
- + Great fun
- Not cheap

### LAST WORD

Versatile, feature-packed and fun, a Nanoleaf setup puts a new light on any room.

**RATING: 5/5**



# Apple AirTag

Getting warm... warmer... warmer... Boiling Hot!



## Info//

Apple

[www.apple.co.uk](http://www.apple.co.uk)

1 Pack: £29.00, \$29.00, 35,00 €

4 Pack: £99.00, \$99.00, 119,00 €

iOS 14.5 or later



**A**re you the sort of person who is forever losing track of where you've put your keys, your wallet, or anything else for that matter? Tired of hunting around the obvious places while stressing over the time? You could greatly benefit from the Apple AirTag.

Remember those key fobs that used to make a noise when you whistled? James Bond had one; his blew up if you whistled 'God save the Queen', mind. Apple's AirTags don't blow up. But both ideas are based around the common theme of helping you locate objects you've misplaced.

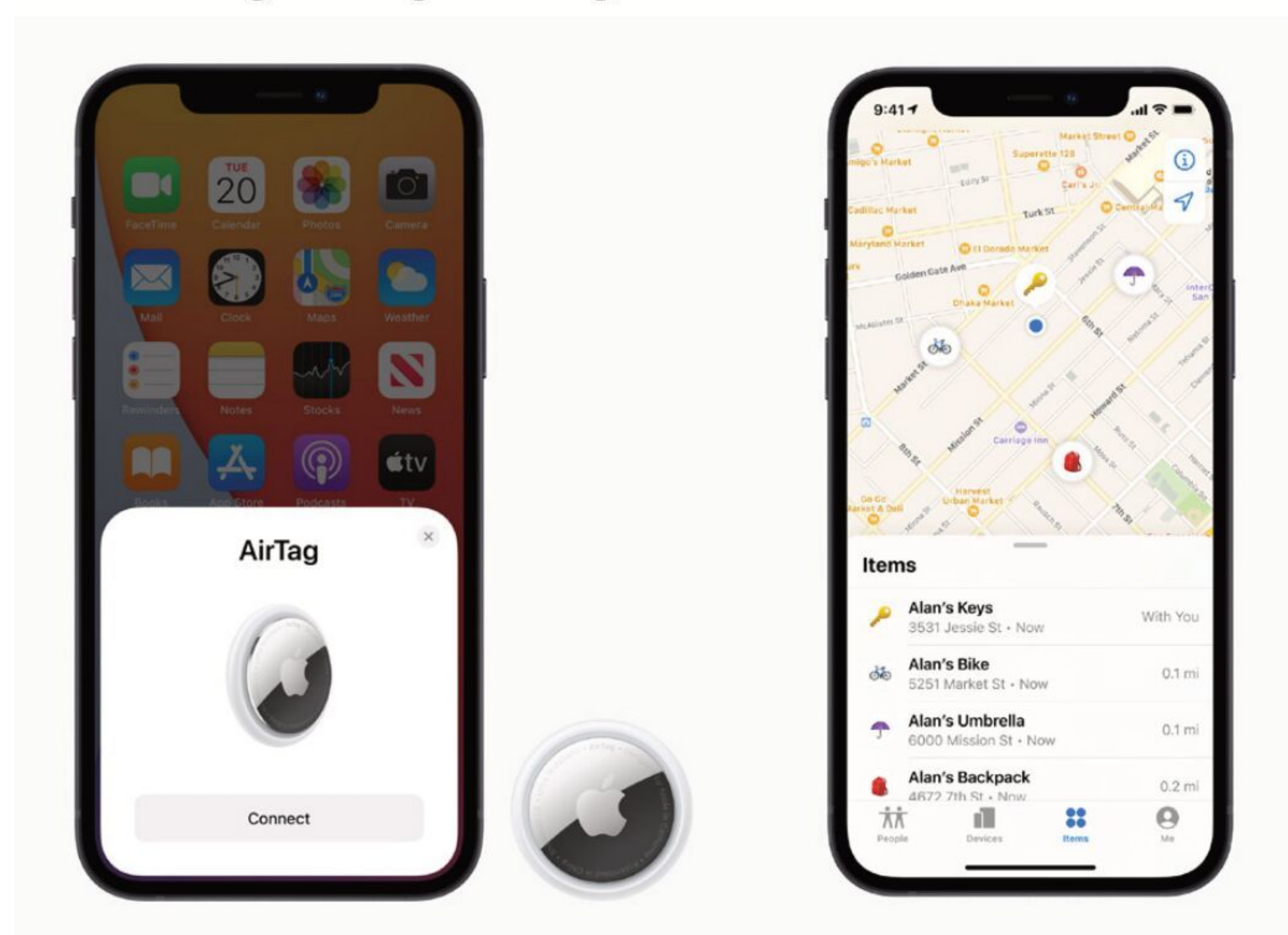
The technology has certainly moved on a bit since the whistling days. Now we use the magic of Bluetooth to help us located our lost items. Flag an AirTag as missing, and whenever it comes into

Bluetooth range of an Apple product it reports its location through the device in question, giving it much better range and accuracy than other Bluetooth locators.

Apple's AirTags are sold individually or as a pack of four, and each can be attached to an object, such as a set of keys. Once paired with your iPhone, iPad and so on, you can track the location of your AirTag using the Find My app, in the same way as you track a lost Apple device.

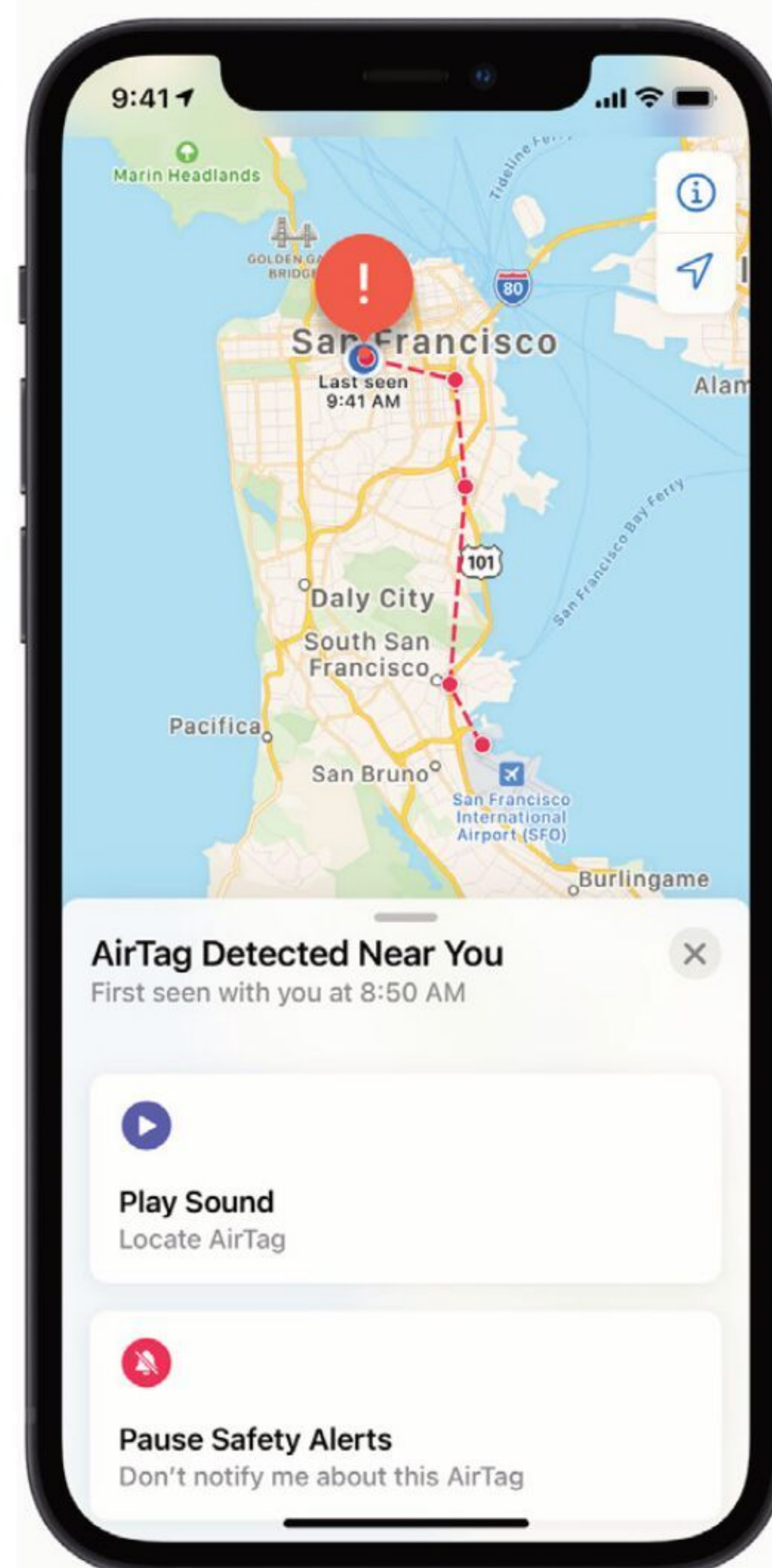
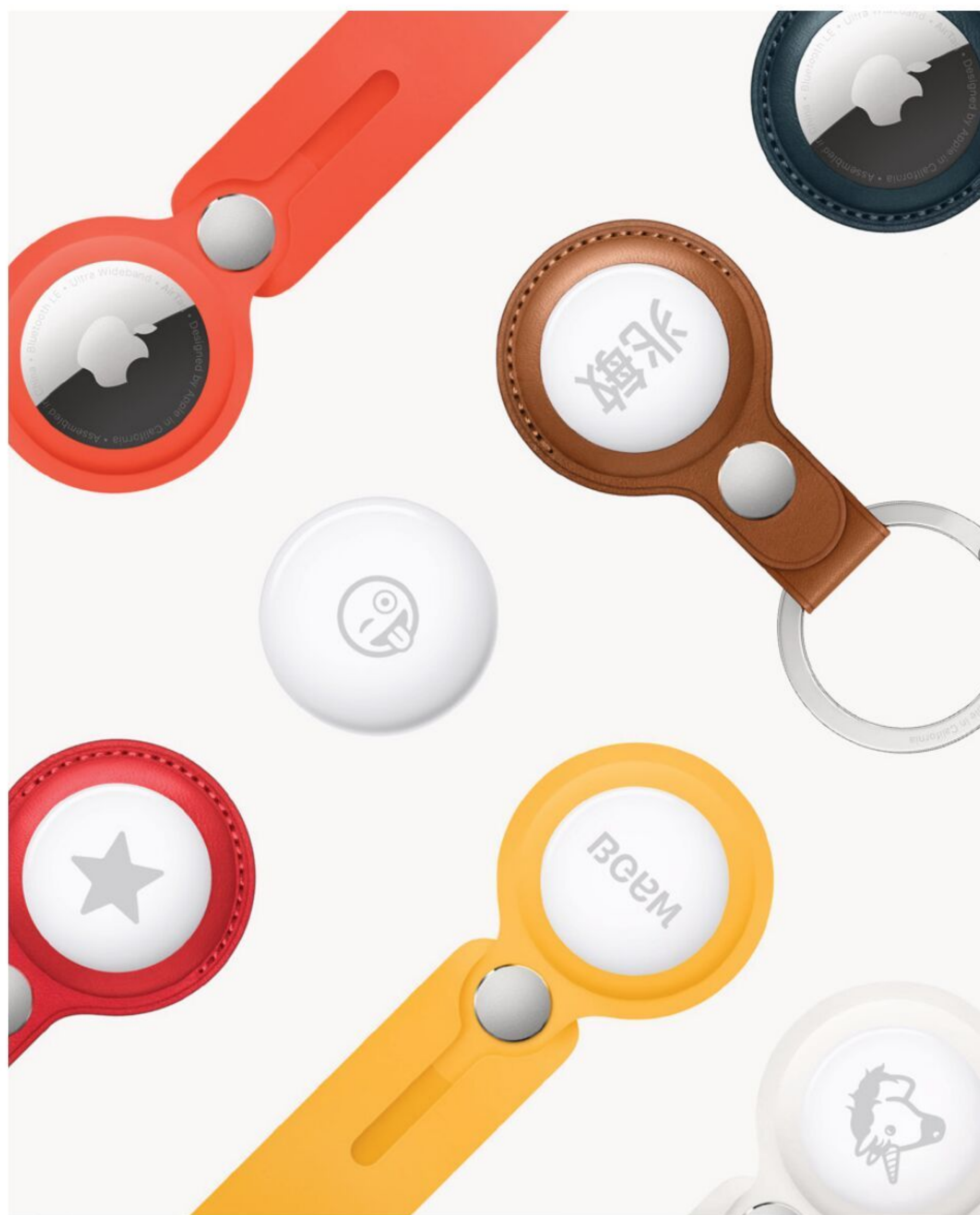
## Petite Package

They're remarkably small, circular devices, measuring just 31.9mm in diameter, with a thickness of 8mm and weighing just short of



Apple AirTags look great, can be personalised, and work perfectly.





**Apple has really embraced the personalisation, which we rather like.**

11g. As you would expect with anything from Apple, they're beautifully designed. Button-shaped, but not too awkward to fit into a wallet, for example, you'll find a polished chrome surface on one side, complete with Apple logo, and on the other side a stark white backing. The white side of the AirTag offers a little more, as you can opt for a personalised engraving such as a mix of emoji, text, or numbers up to four characters in length.

Beyond the aesthetics, AirTags are IP67 rated, which means they offer 'protection from contact with harmful dust' and are 'protected from immersion in water with a depth of up to one metre for up to 30 minutes', according to the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standards.

You're also able to assign a phone number to your AirTag, so if a member of the public finds it, they're able to tap it using any NFC-enabled device to display the phone number to call you up and tell you where it's located. And Apple has had the foresight to include a higher level of privacy. No location data or history are stored on an AirTag, and any devices that relay the location of the AirTag are anonymous and the entire communications between your devices and the AirTag are encrypted.

There's also one more element to the privacy features that we particularly enjoyed. If someone else's AirTag is in your baggage, for example, your iPhone sends you an alert. But the alert is only triggered if the other user is separated from their AirTag. This means that if you're travelling with

friends, or are around others with AirTags such as on a bus or train, the alerts won't be triggered. But if someone slips an AirTag onto your person to track where you are, you get the alert as it has been separated from its owner. It's a nice touch, and one that's greatly appreciated.

The battery, according to Apple, will last for 'more than a year'. Better still, Apple has allowed you, the user, to replace the battery when it finally reaches the end of its life. A simple CR2032 (watch-like battery) is the replacement, which can cost no more than 70p.

Overall, we really liked the Apple AirTag. The setup was easy, it's an elegant device and there's a lot of thought gone into elements such as privacy, ease of use and style. It can get scuffed quite quickly, but so can many other devices when they're frequently used. In short, while Apple's AirTags carry that Apple-reassuringly-expensive quality, they're a useful and helpful little device. Which is, let's face it, what technology was always supposed to be about.**DH**



ESSENTIAL  
**AppleUser**  
MAGAZINE  
**RECOMMENDS 5/5**



## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + Great looks, works like a charm
- + Very easy to setup and use
- + Very reliable
- A little expensive

### LAST WORD

Apple's done a good job here. If you're in the market for a device such as this, then AirTags won't let you down.

**RATING: 4/5**





# ExpressVPN



The need for a good VPN has never been more necessary than with today's Internet. Want to protect your online privacy? Read on.

## Info//

**ExpressVPN**  
**www.expressvpn.com**  
**From £6.16 per month**  
**(currently on offer)**  
**Compatibility: Mac, Apple TV,**  
**iPhone and iPad**

**D**emand for privacy while online, protection from prying eyes and the ability to bypass a country's restrictions are some of the top reasons why millions of Internet users all over the world are turning to VPNs. The problem is, there's just so many to choose from.

ExpressVPN protects the digital rights of users across the world with an impressive arsenal of security features. Running from 160 server locations in 94 countries, it can provide you with a solid connection wherever you're located. And since the company is registered in the British Virgin Islands, a privacy-friendly jurisdiction, there's no logging taking place. In fact, the company regularly welcomes third-party audits of its logging policies, to assure that all connections to and from the VPN are private. That includes IP addresses, browsing history, traffic destination and data, and DNS queries.

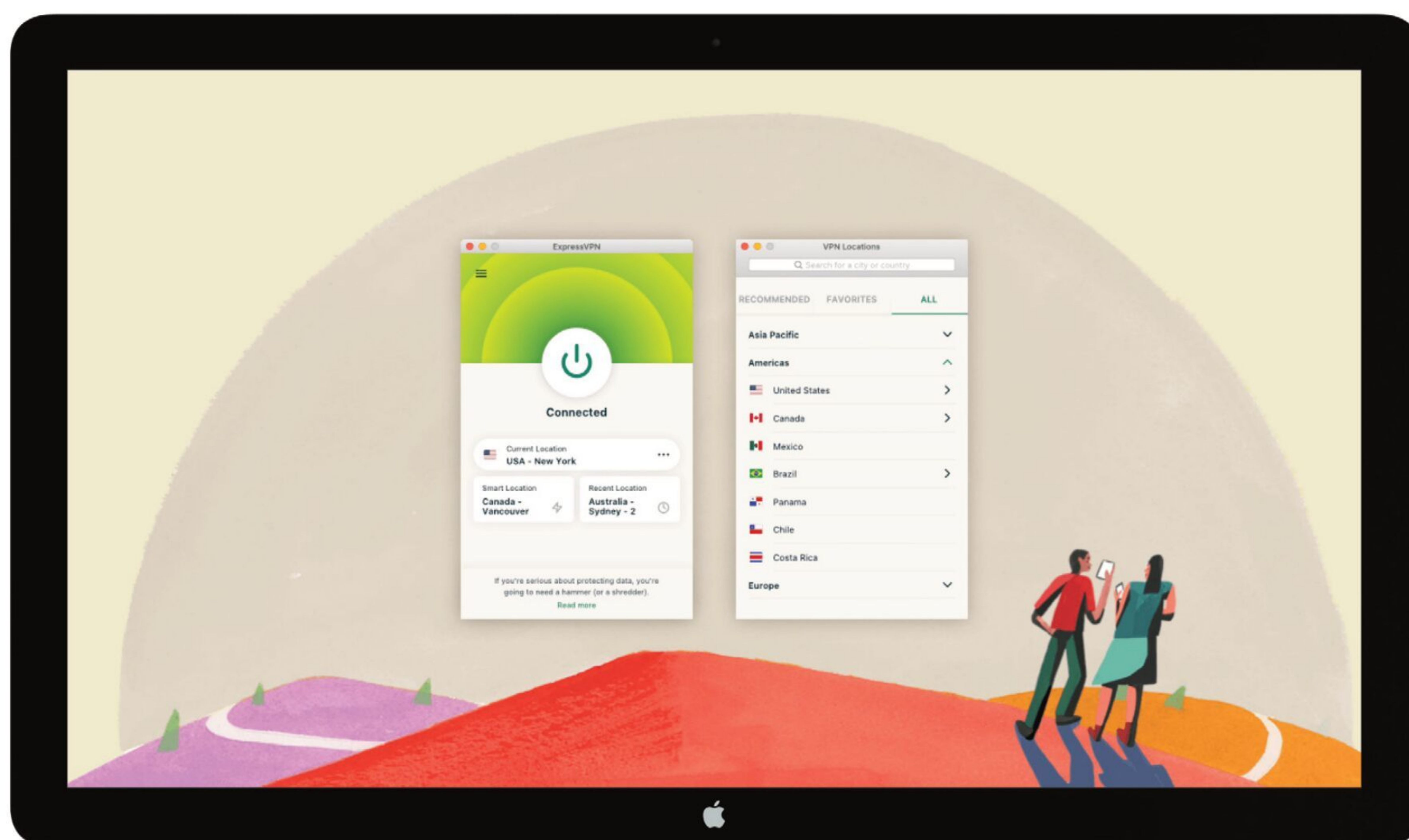
In terms of security technology, ExpressVPN offers some of the best VPN protocols we've ever tested. With an AES-256 bit cypher, RSA-4096 bit keys, and SHA-512 bit HMAC, it has quite possibly the highest level of security in any VPN available. The company also uses Certificate Authorities to prevent man-in-the-middle attacks, and Perfect Forward Secrecy, which means there's a new secret key issued every time you connect or every 60

minutes. All in all, it's impossible for any attacker to be able to view your connection information and transfer of data while you're connected to ExpressVPN.

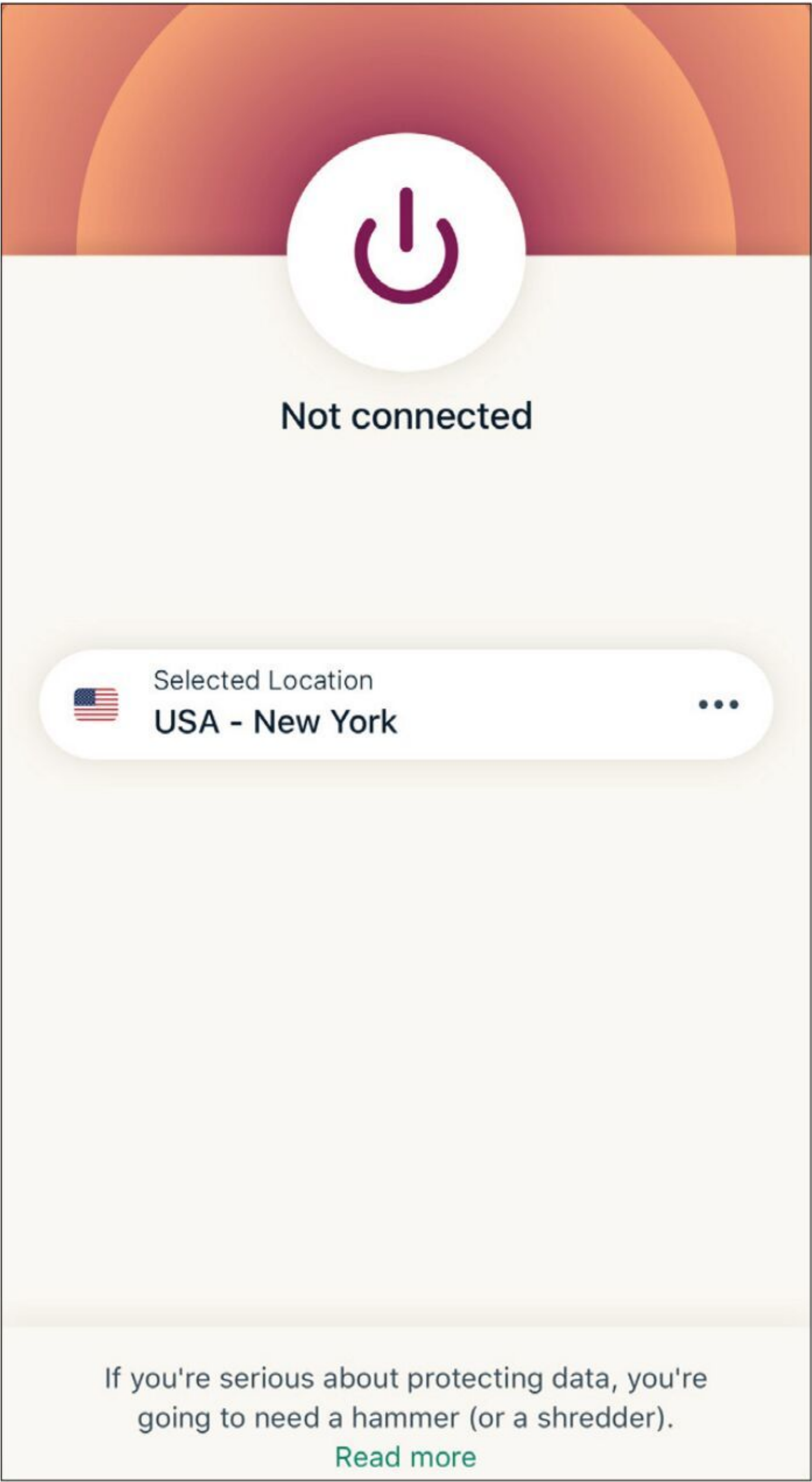
## Kill Switch

Other features include a network kill switch, which locks out all Internet traffic except your local network should you lose connection to the VPN; Split Tunneling so some traffic can be passed through the VPN while the rest can access the Internet normally; IP Address Masking, Unlimited Bandwidth, and the ability to connect up to five device simultaneously. Also, the Express VPN servers run in RAM mode, so once the power is removed from the volatile memory anything stored in it is gone forever.

One of the main bugbears with VPNs is the speed of the connection. While it's great to be able to connect and obtain an IP address from another country, speeds are often a let-down. However, that's not the case with ExpressVPN. Using the Ookla online speedtest, we recorded 38.25Mbps download and 13.17Mbps upload while not connected to the VPN. When we connected to ExpressVPN, we chose a local server, one based in London Docklands, and managed an excellent 35.64Mbps download with 12.11Mbps upload.







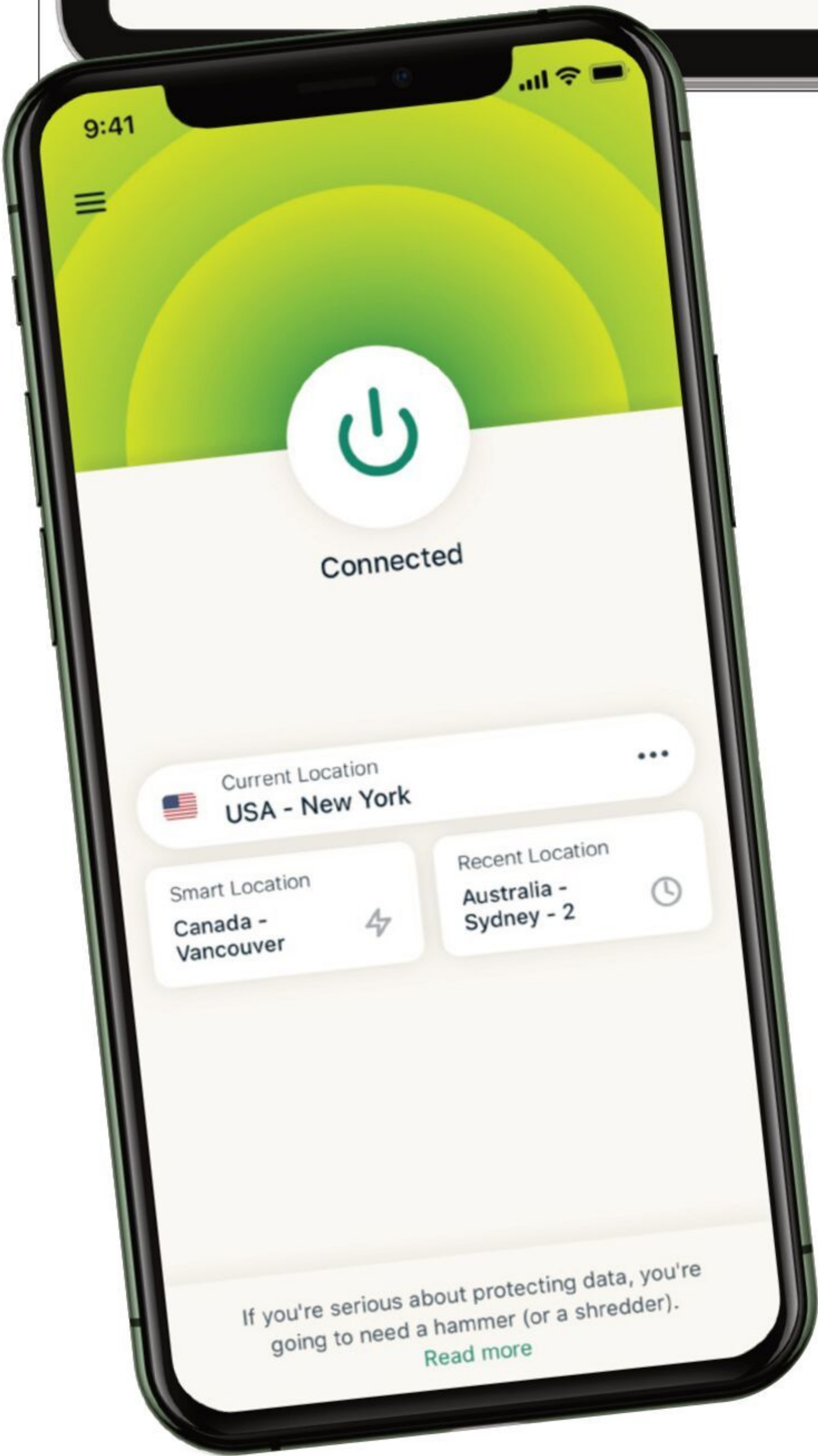
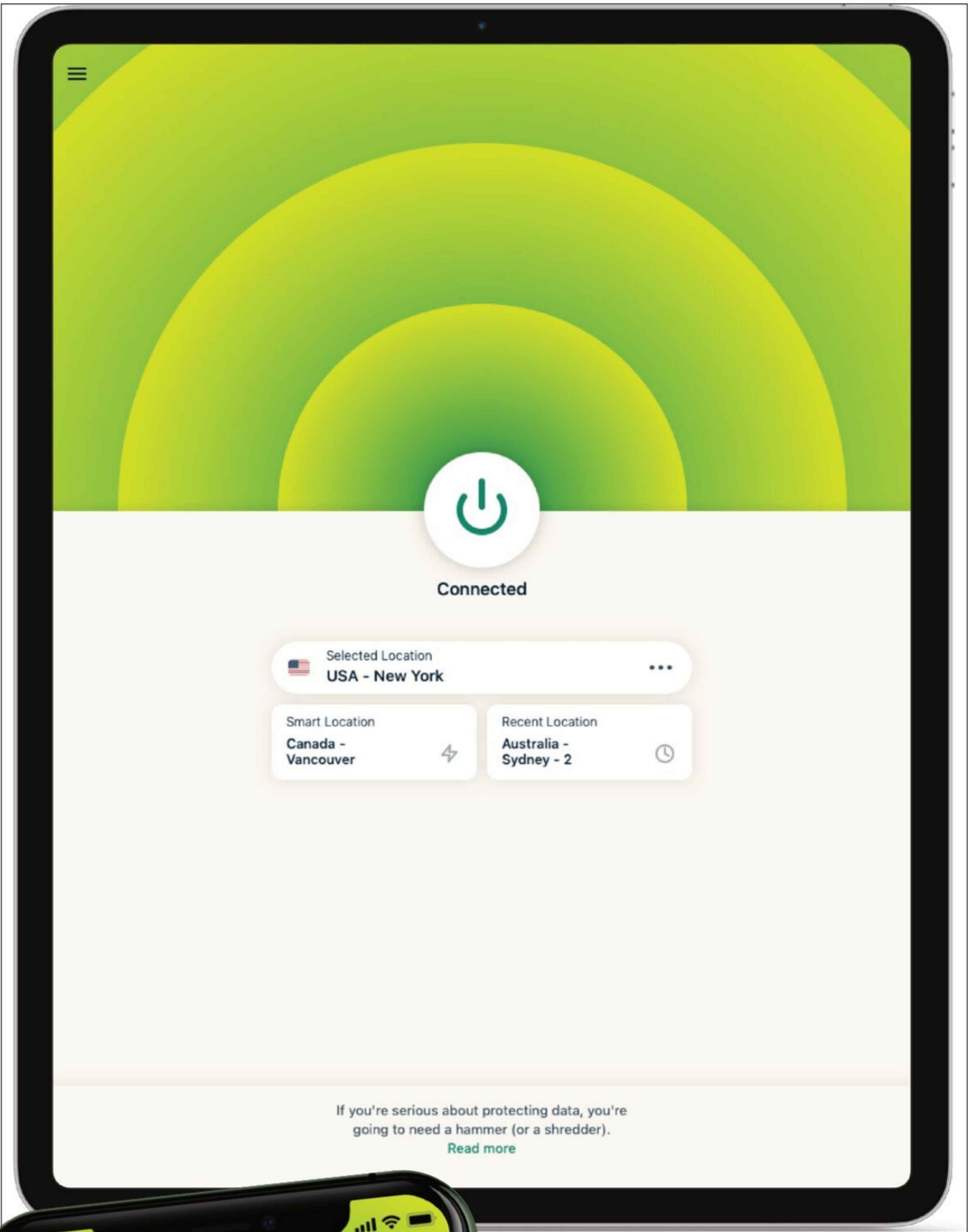
Furthermore, when we connected to a server on the other side of the planet, we were surprised to get a download speed of 26.56Mbps and upload speed of 11.55Mbps; not too much of a loss from our original test without the VPN altogether.

Easy to Use

Using the ExpressVPN software is extremely easy. Once installed, you can choose from a list of recommended servers, ones that are closest to your current location for maximum speed or by All Locations, which lists all the available servers across the 94 countries. Connecting and disconnecting can be done by clicking on the power button in the centre of the ExpressVPN app window, and there’s also plenty of options to fine-tune your experience, as well as installing the VPN as an extension to your web browsers.

Pricing is slightly higher than some VPNs we’ve reviewed in the past, but as the saying goes, you get what you pay for. As an added bonus, ExpressVPN are offering a 30-day free trial so you can try before you buy.

ExpressVPN has proved itself well above the competition in terms of security and privacy. Its policies are rock solid, and its features are more than enough for any sort of user who’s in need of secure Internet access. The connection speeds are the best we’ve seen from a VPN, and while the pricing may be slightly higher than some of the competition, we think it’s worth every penny. In short, simply the best VPN on the market and we highly recommend using it. **DH**



Verdict//

**PROS AND CONS:**

- + Secure and reliable connection
- + Support for multiple devices
- + Excellent connection speeds, and no data leaks
- + No logging, and a large global network of secure servers

**LAST WORD**

Superb security and privacy, good connection speeds and peace of mind when online.

**RATING: 5/5**





# Incredibox

Pump up the jam...



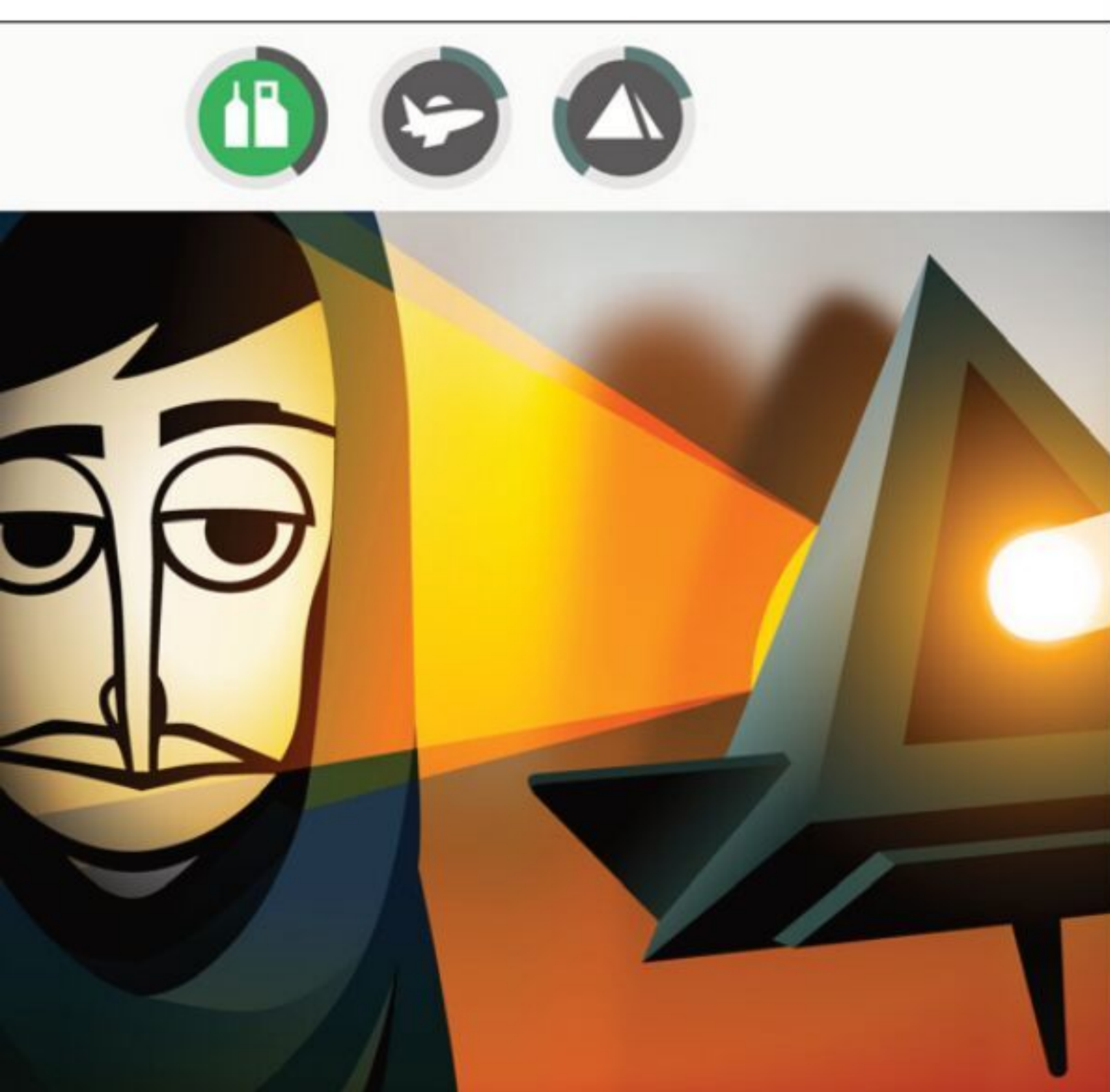
## Info//

**So Far So Good**

**www.incredibox.com**

**£3.99, \$3.99, 4,99 €**

**iOS 9 or later**



## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + Easy to create a musical masterpiece
- + Lots of beats, sounds and so on
- + Great fun to use
- Won't turn you into a rock star

### LAST WORD

Unlock your musical genius, no matter how well hidden it is!

**RATING: 4/5**

**M**usic creation tools are often difficult apps to master, especially if you haven't got a musical bone in your body. Why is someone with an obvious lack of musical skill playing around with a music creation tool in the first place? Well, why not? Just because this reviewer may be musically challenged doesn't mean I can't have fun creating music, right? Imagine my surprise, then, when I created something totally amazing; all thanks to Incredibox.

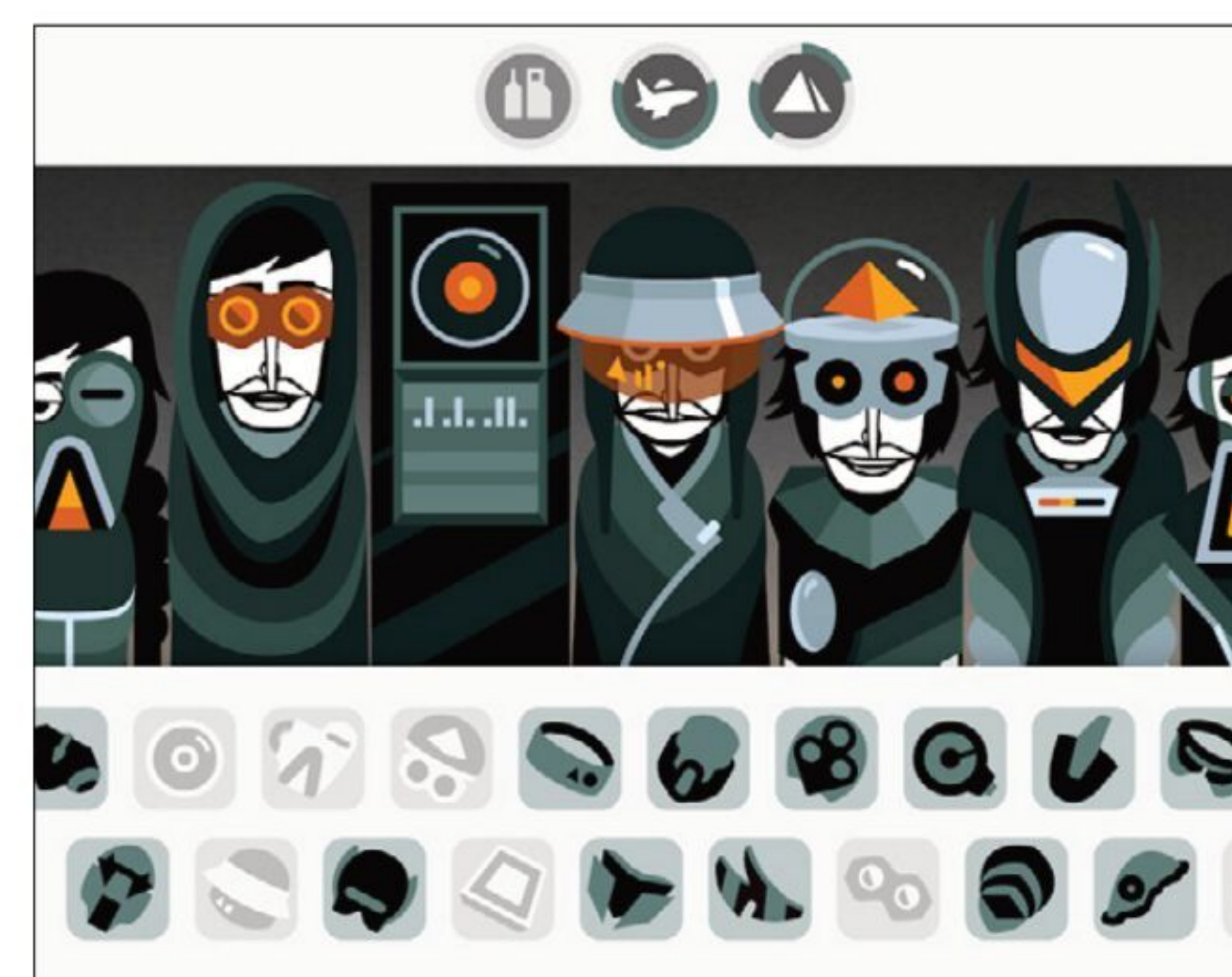
Incredibox is stylised as part tool, part game; an app that lets you create music using a choice of animated beatboxers. The setup is remarkably simple, but extraordinarily effective. You pick a version of a beatboxer to start making and mixing your own music, then you tap and drag icons on to a beatbox line-up to have them sing, perform a certain beat, or just make a noise.

As you progress through the line-up of

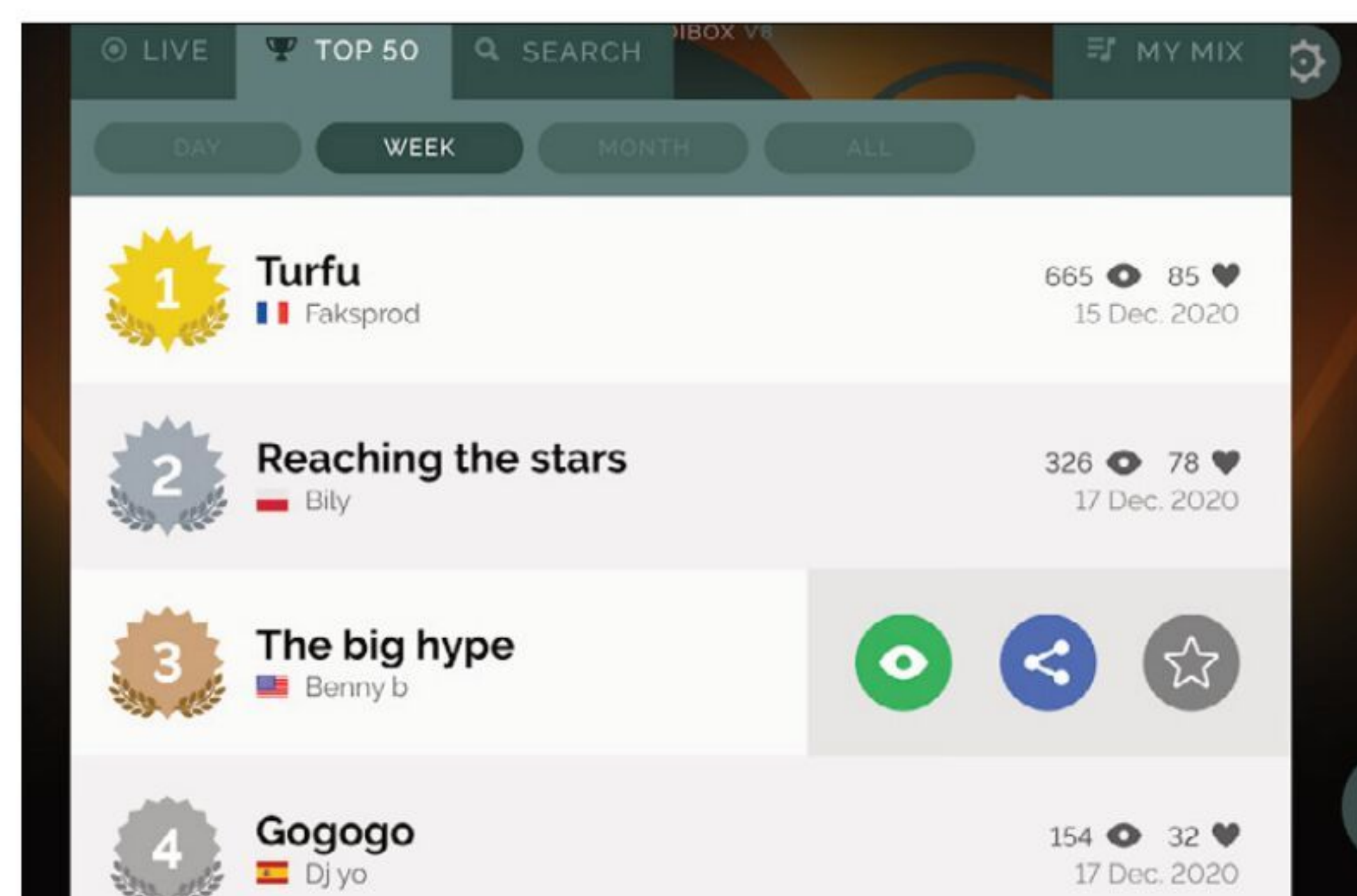
beatboxers, the app creates a beat based on your selections, and if you find the right sound combinations, you start to unlock unique animated choruses that greatly enhance your tune.

You can also opt to single out one of the beatbox avatars and change the sound they're making, or silence them for a few beats before activating them again. The end result is a complex composition that brings a smile to even the most hard-nosed of musical connoisseurs. From there, you can save and share your tune and even have it voted on. Earn enough votes, and it climbs the Incredibox charts.

There's a lot of fun to be had from Incredibox, and some of the examples that others have created – via the Incredibox website – are really impressive. Will I ever achieve such greatness? Probably not, but I'm certainly enjoying putting together my own unique musical compositions. **DH**



Add icons to your beatbox avatars and make them sing.



Think your composition is great? Put it to the vote.



# For writing. And writing. And writing.

Scrivener is the go-to app for writers of all kinds, used every day by best-selling novelists, screenwriters, students, lawyers, journalists, translators and more. Scrivener won't tell you how to write—it simply provides everything you need to start writing and keep writing.

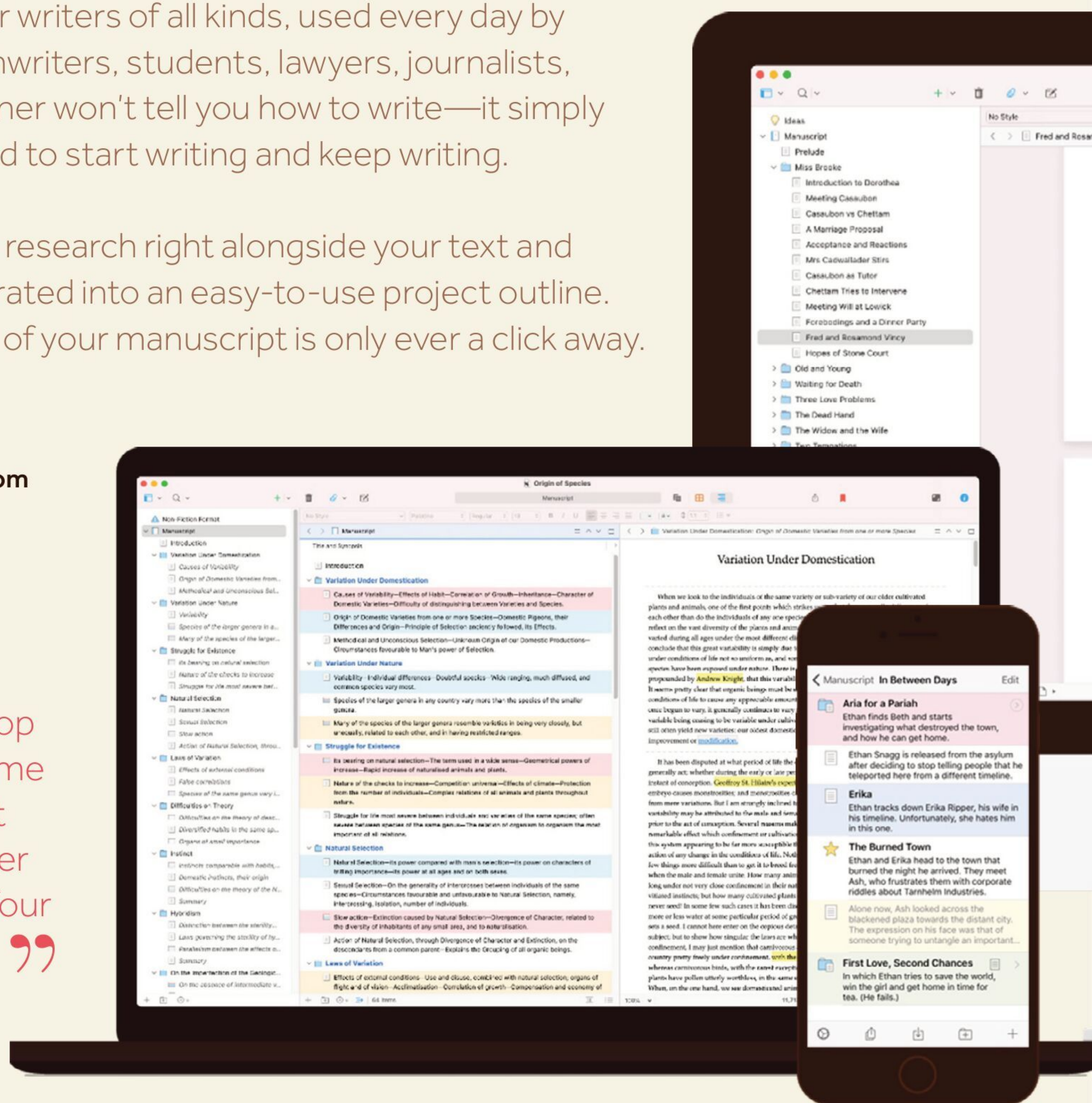
In Scrivener, you can refer to research right alongside your text and everything you write is integrated into an easy-to-use project outline. So working with an overview of your manuscript is only ever a click away.

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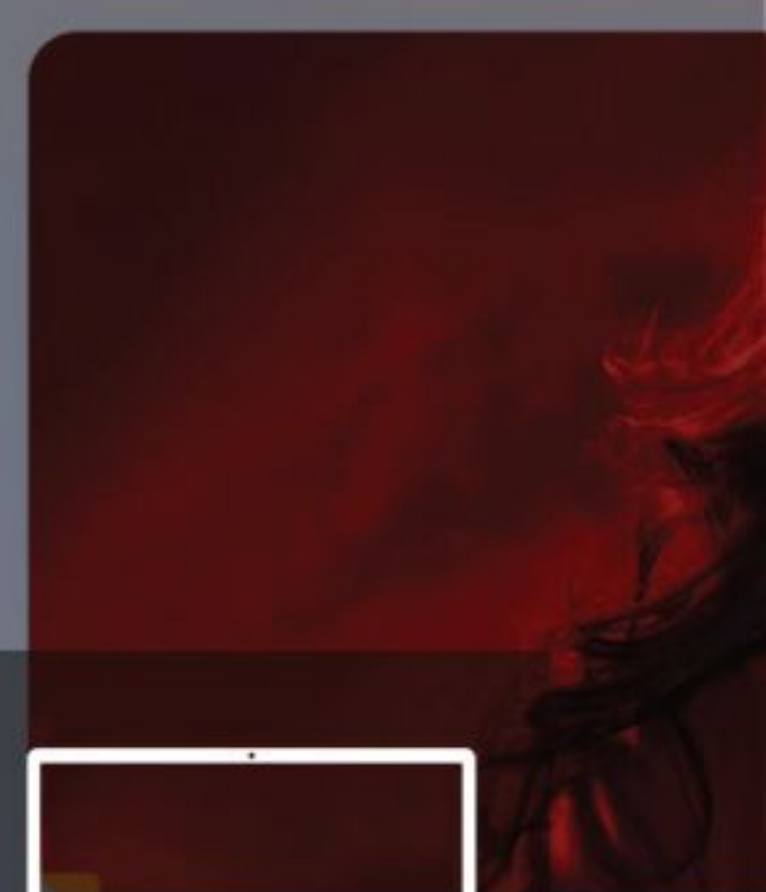
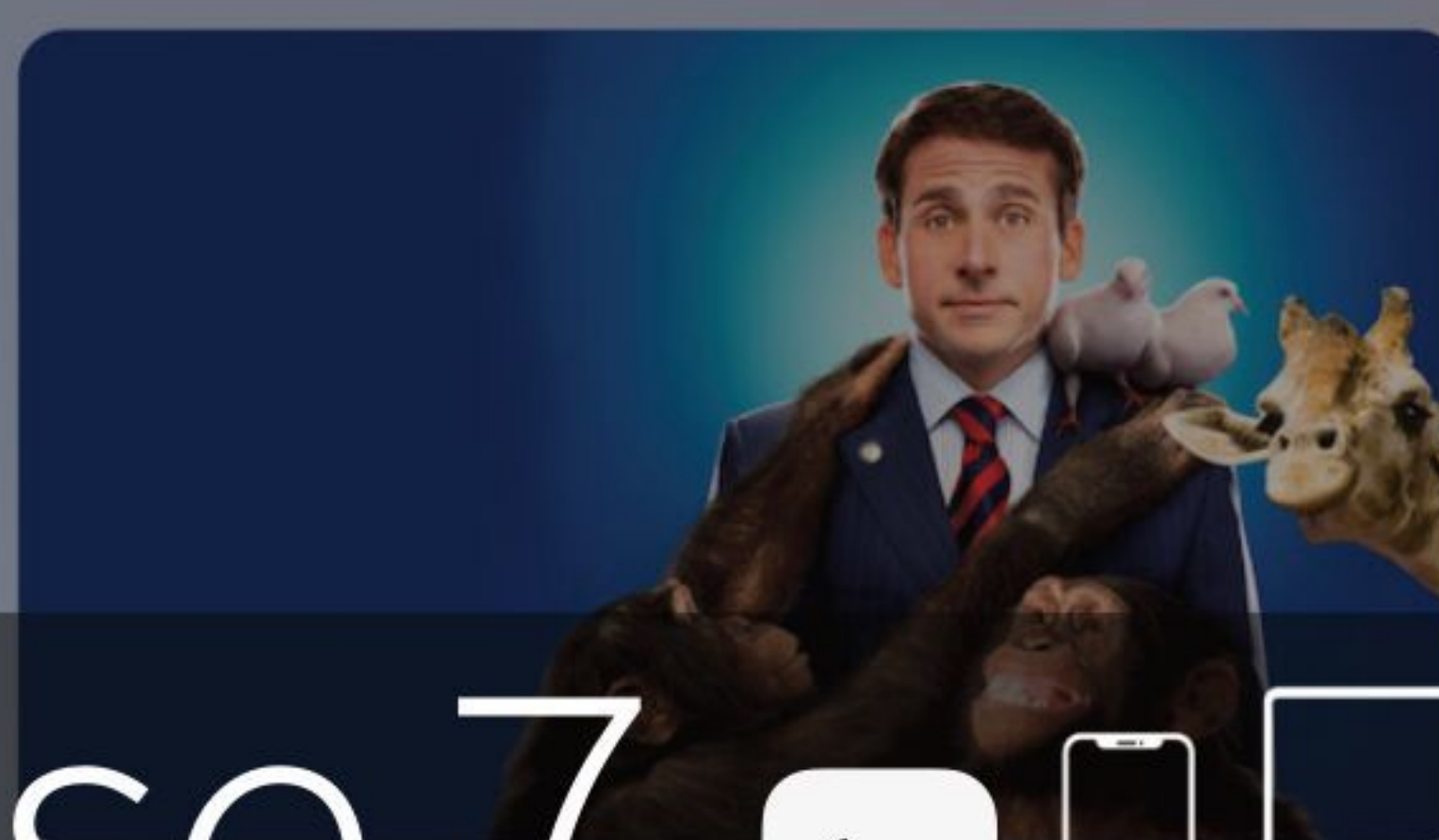
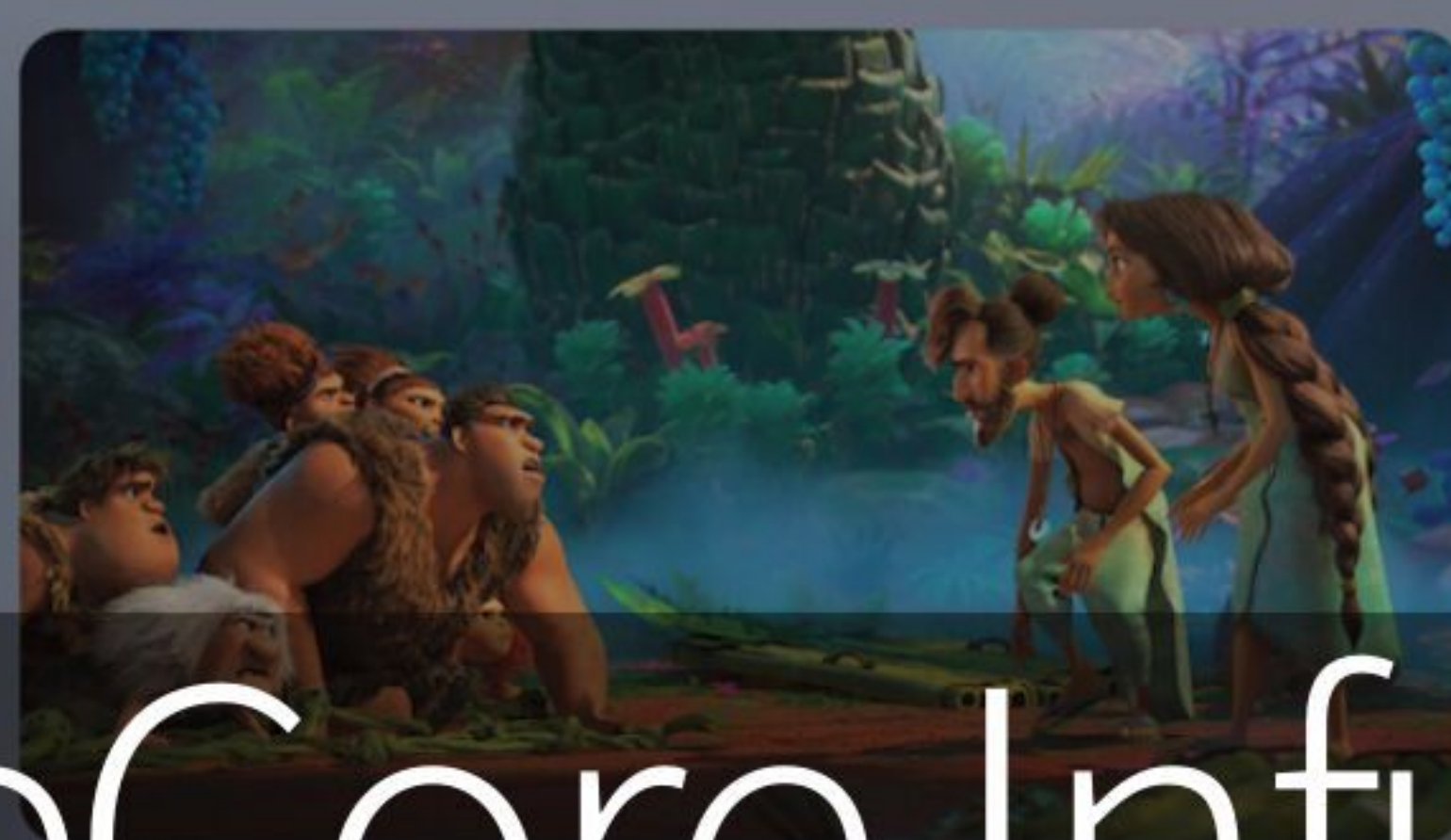
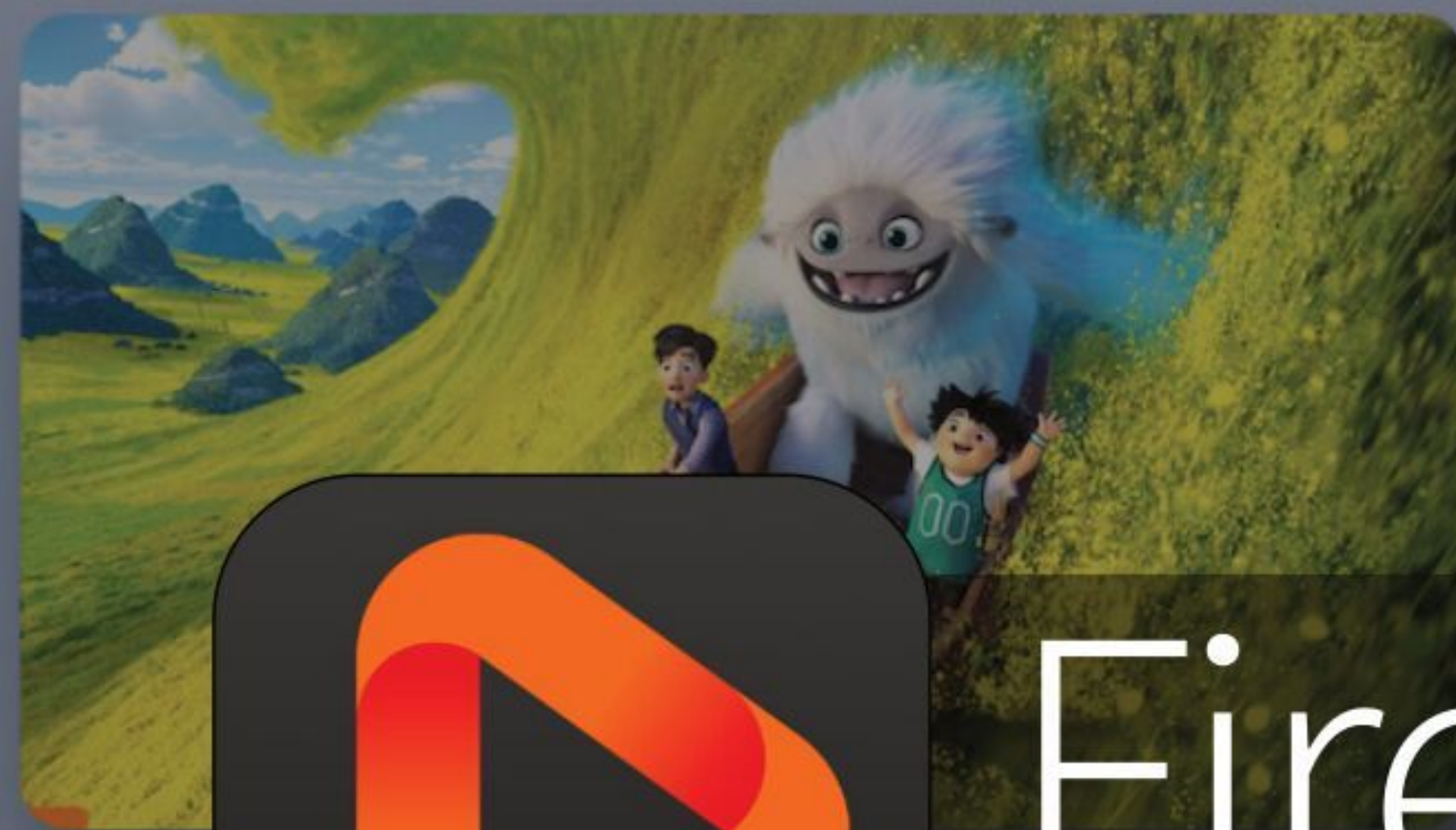
Get 10% off with the coupon code  
**APPLEUSER**

“If there was a list of the top five greatest apps of all time in the Mac App Store, it would start with Scrivener and then there would be four other things.”

Andy Ihnatko  
Technology columnist.







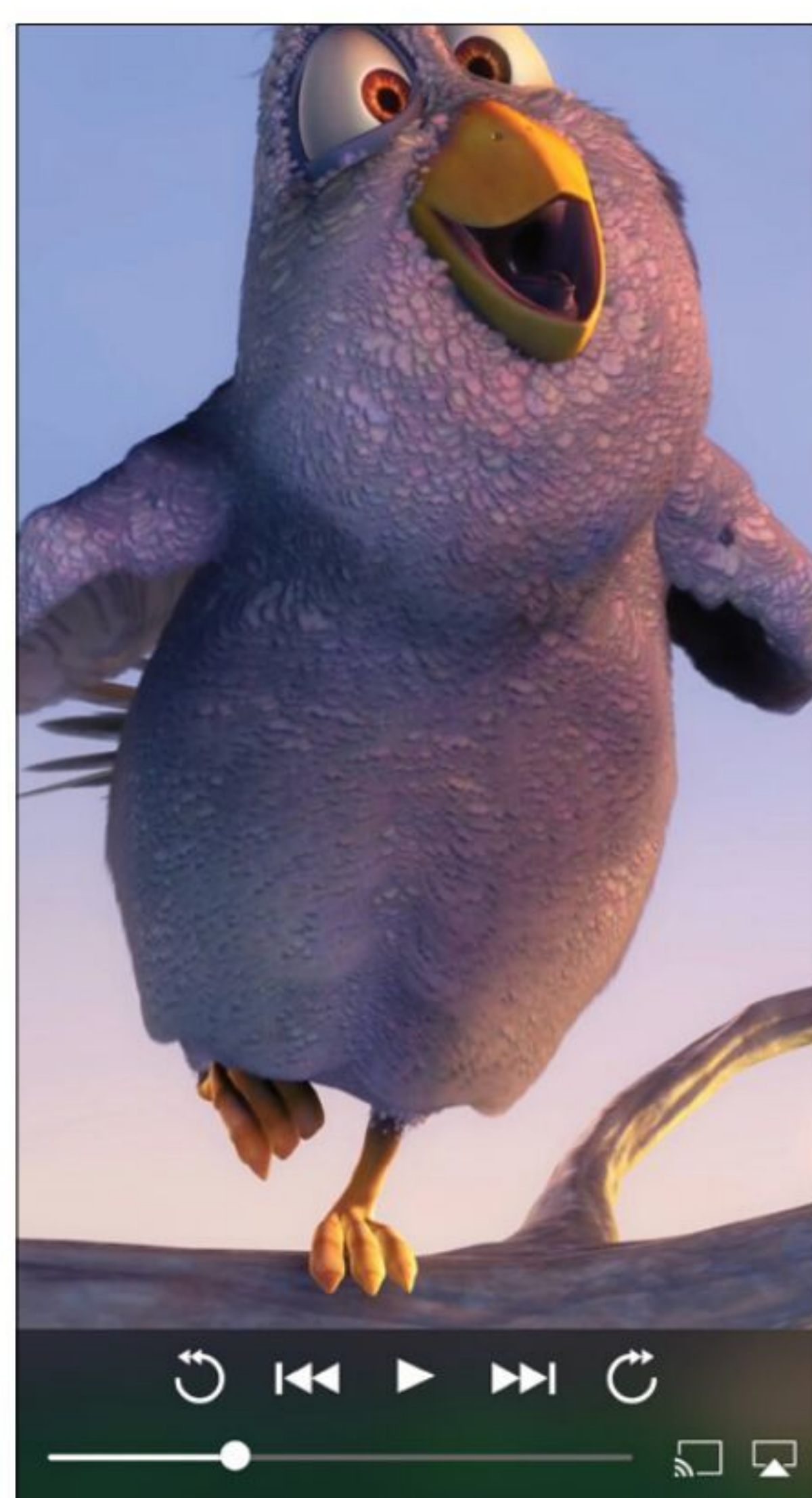
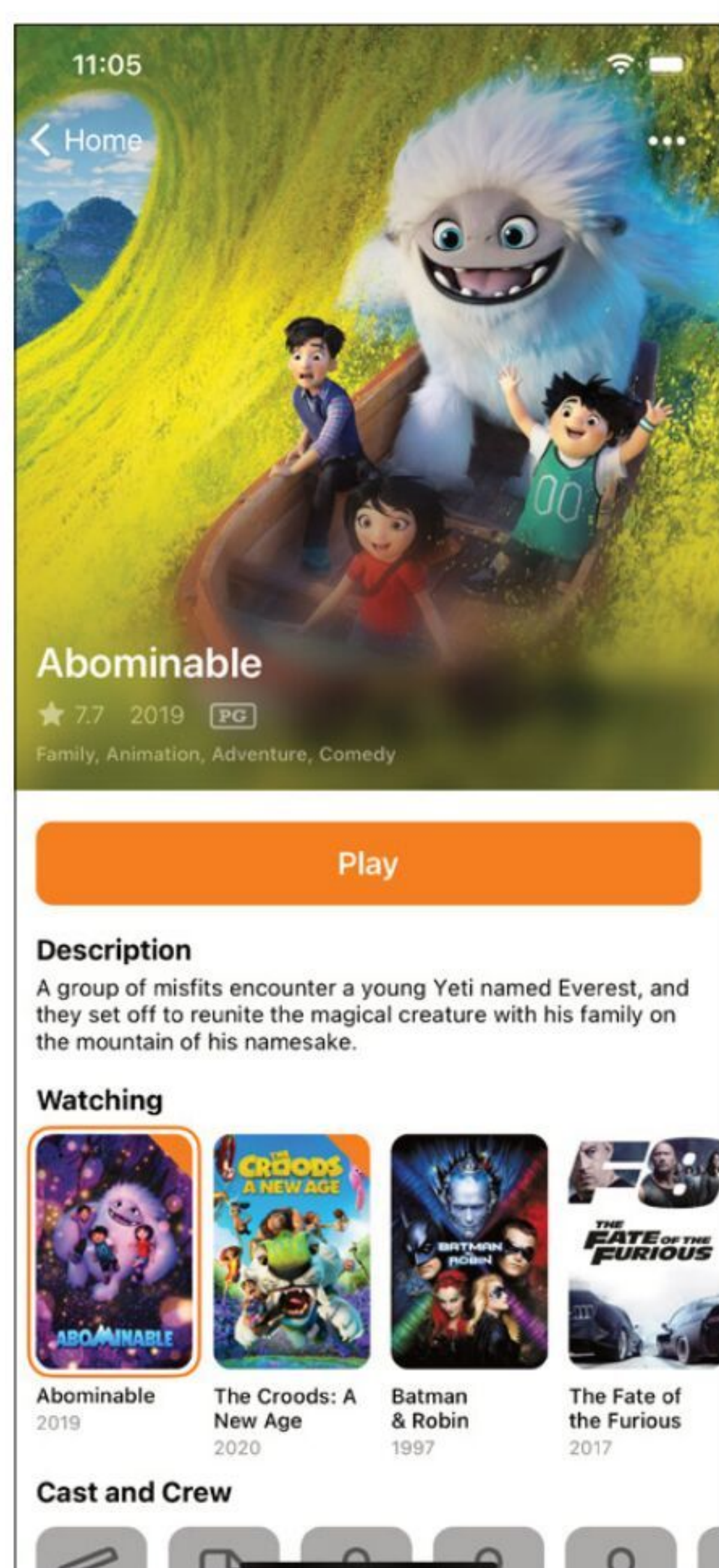
# FireCore Infuse 7



An awesome streaming app that's out on all Apple devices...

## Info//

**Firecore, LLC**  
<https://firecore.com>  
**Free (IAP)**  
**Compatibility: iOS 13.0,**  
**iPadOS 13.0, macOS 11.0,**  
**tvOS 13.0 or later**



Infuse is the video streaming app you never knew you needed. If you regularly re-encode video footage so you can enjoy it on your Apple devices, it's a real boon. It's capable of playing a massive range of video files, including 3GP, AVI, ASF, BDMV, DIVX, DVDVIDEO, DVR-MS, FLV, ISO, M4V, MKV, MOV, MP4, M2TS, MTS, OGM, OGV, TP, TS, VIDEO\_TS, WEBM, WMV and WTV. It can handle a huge range of audio formats too, as well as virtually any subtitle format. Basically, if FireCore's Infuse 7 can't play it, it's probably corrupted. 4K and HDR video is supported too.

As well as playing anything, it can also stream from anywhere. If you have files on a NAS drive, for example, or you want to use your iPhone or iPad to watch videos stored on your Mac or PC, you can. Just navigate your way to their location using the app's browser, and reach for the popcorn. The Pro version can play files stored on a Plex server too, or on cloud services such as Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive and more. Of course, you can also play movies stored on your local device.

## Syncing Sensation

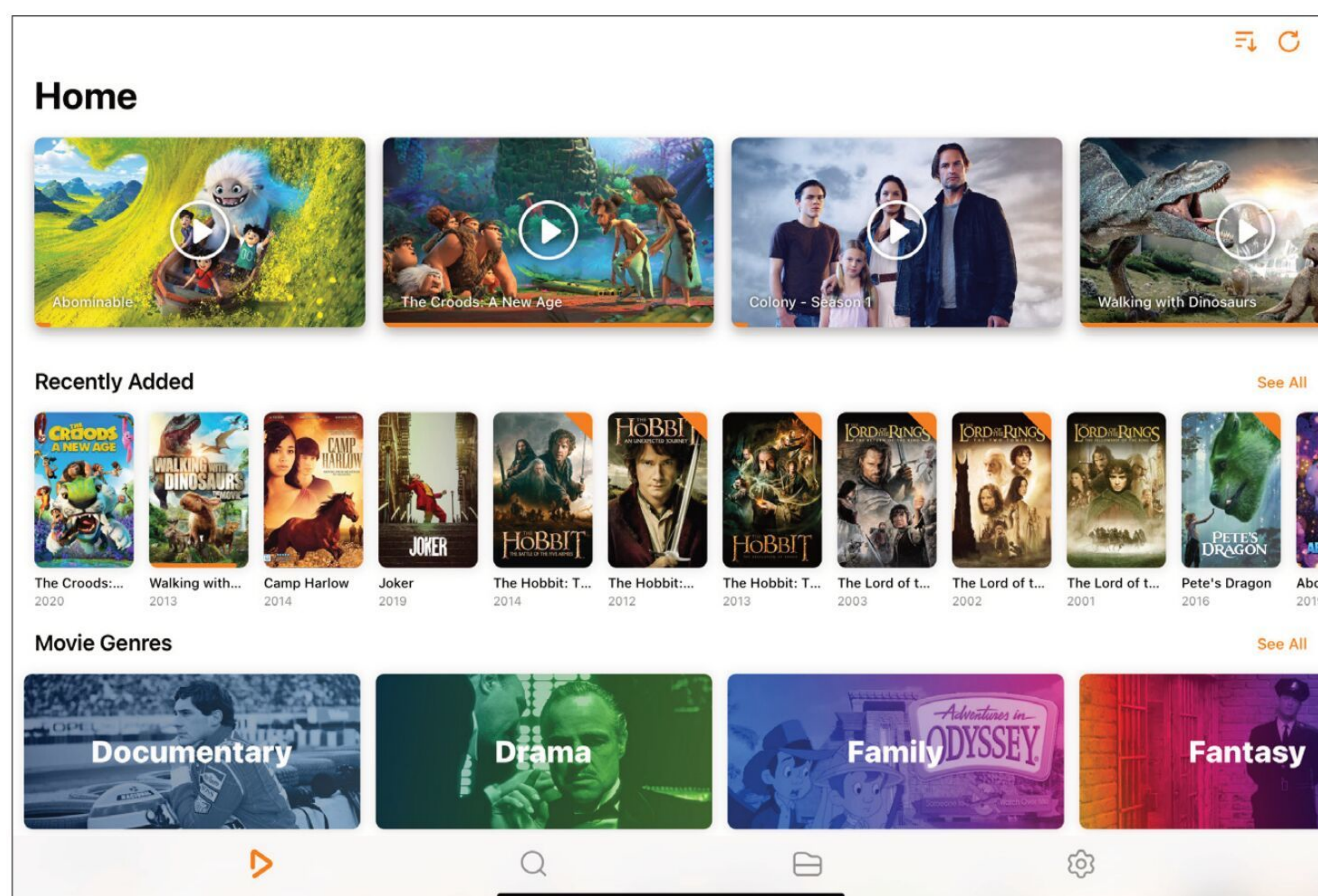
To keep your collection in order, Infuse 7 can automatically download metadata and artwork for movies and TV shows, so it can organise them into categories, such as genre and group sequels, so the entire series is easy to find. You can arrange

your files into a library, identify folders as favourites for easy access and with the Pro version, sync these settings across your Apple devices using iCloud. Infuse 7 Pro can also sync your playback. For example, you might be halfway through a movie on your iPad on the train home. When you get in, you can pick it up where you left off on your Apple TV. Having the same app on your Mac, iPhone, iPad and Apple TV is a real boon, though Infuse has one inevitable drawback; DRM-protected iTunes movies and shows can't be played.

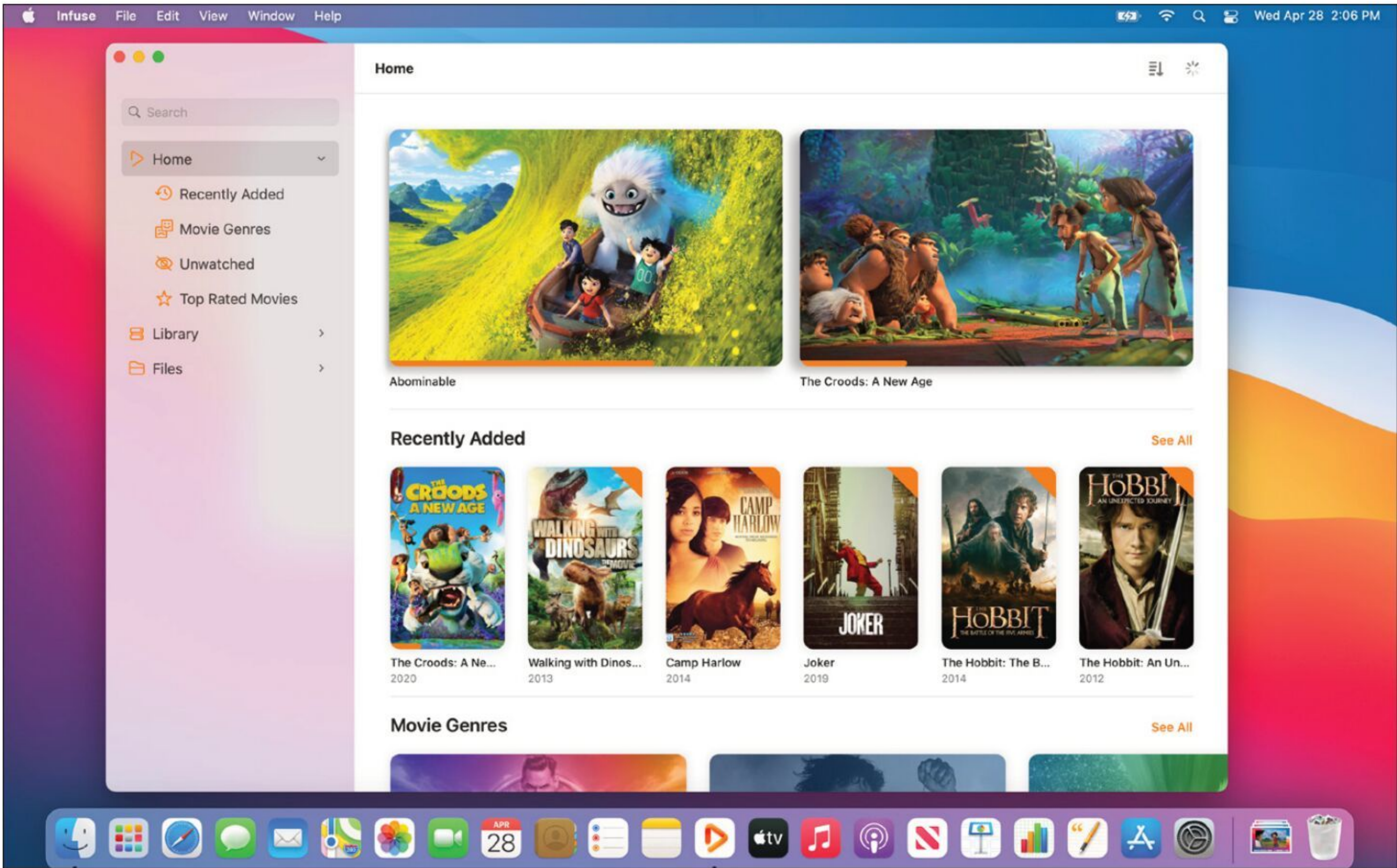
New features for the seventh release of Infuse include its launch as a Mac app, a new design including a great unified home screen, improved iCloud syncing, better image caching and lots more besides. It's free to download and use, with a Pro version offered as a subscription. The free version is very generous with its capabilities, but the features that must be paid for include extra video and audio formats, streaming over AirPlay and Google Cast, accessing videos stored in cloud services like Dropbox, Google Drive and OneDrive, and syncing libraries, settings, watched history and playback progress between devices.

## Free or Pro?

In our tests, Infuse 7 performed admirably. It can be a little slow to find a video source the first time you stream from it, but this is a very



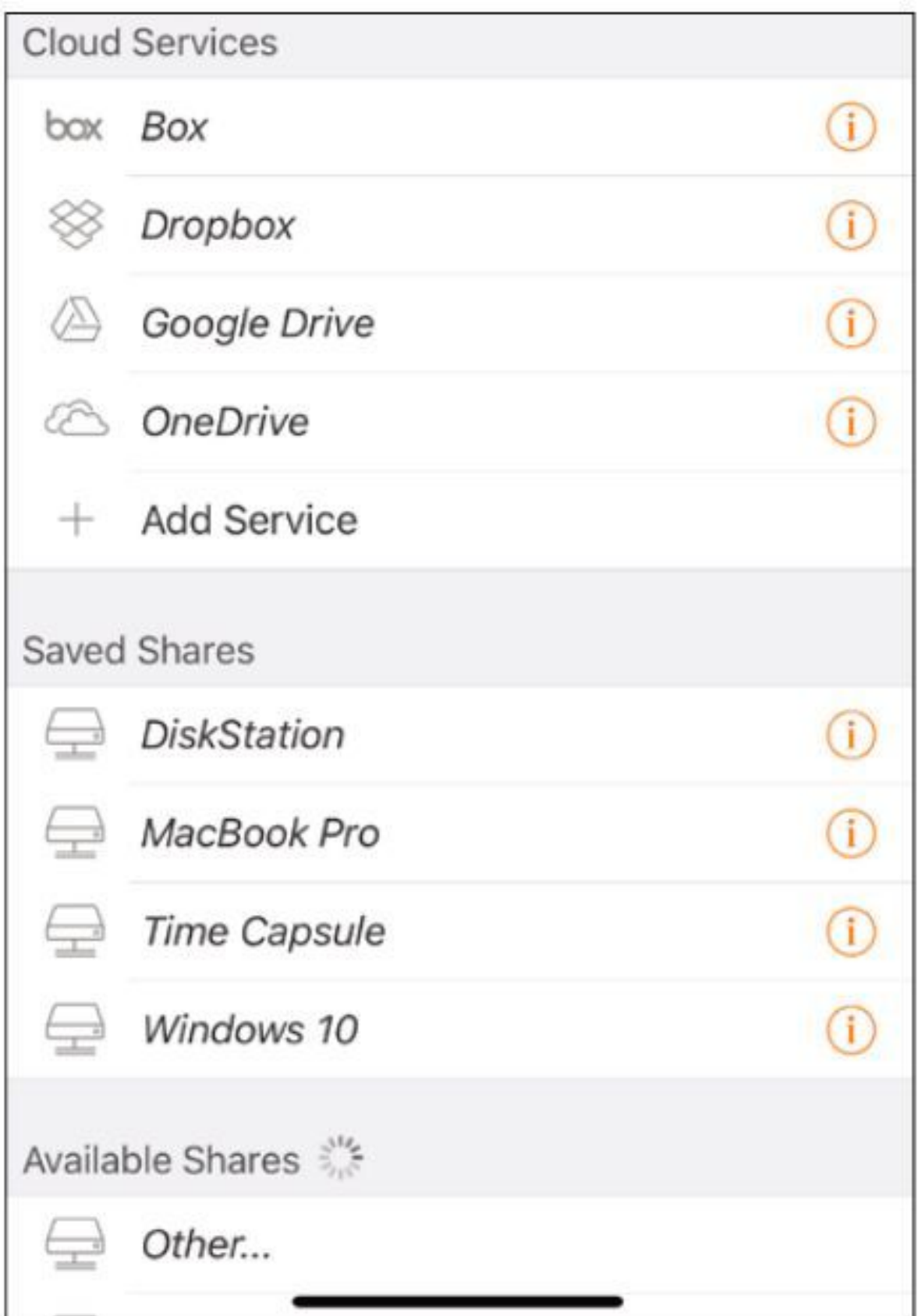
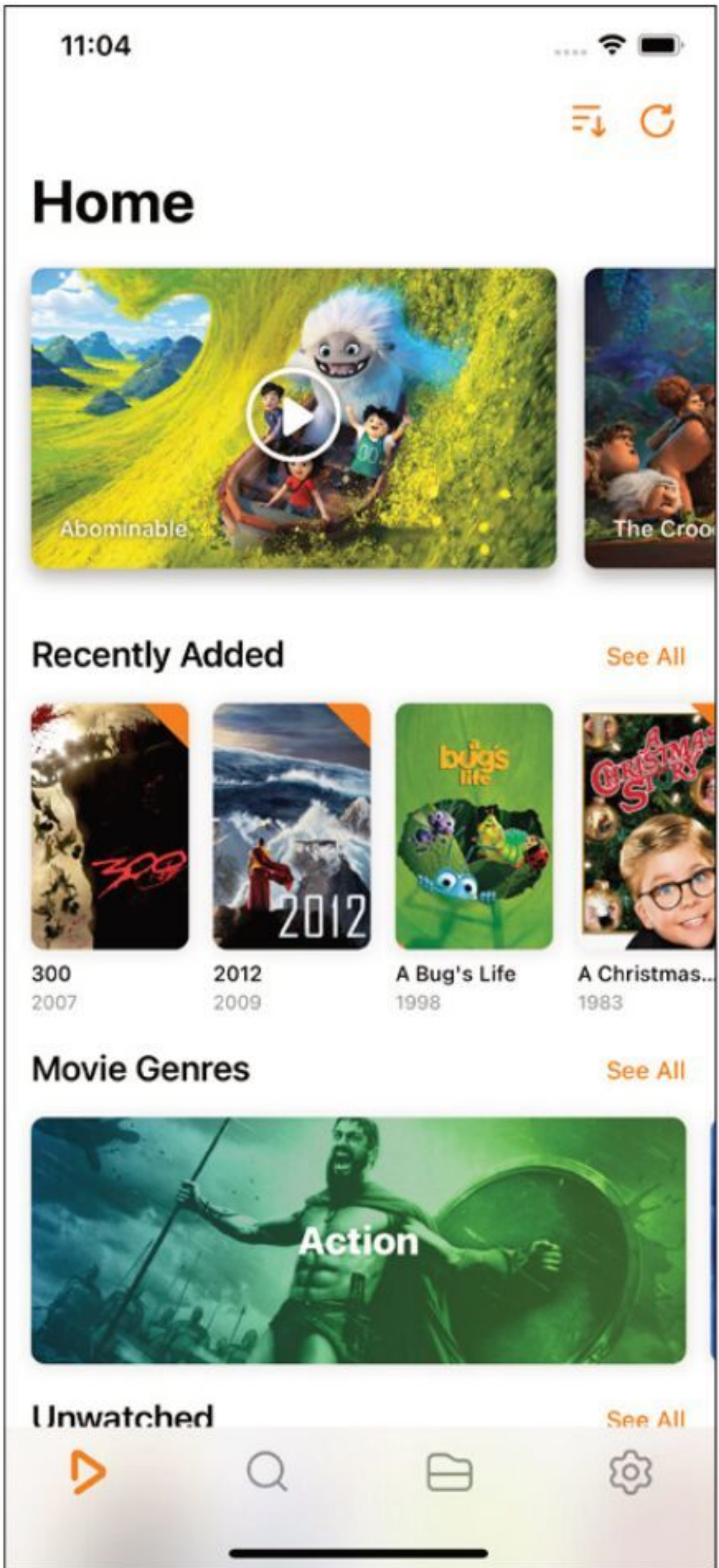
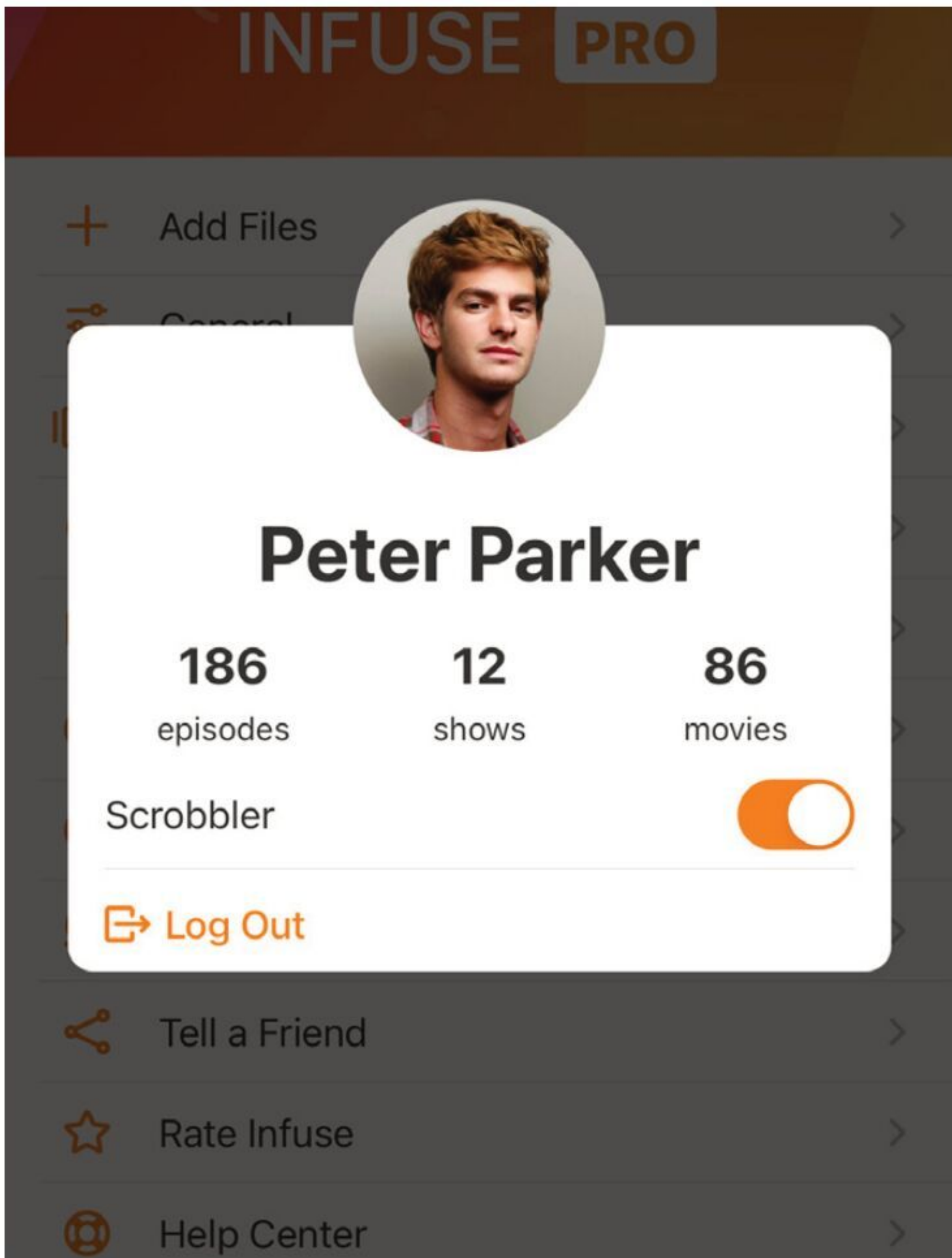




minor complaint. It played everything we threw at it, without stuttering, buffering or the video becoming misaligned with the audio. Organising movies and shows is easy, and the application as a whole is attractive, well put together and has a good user interface.

Should you buy it or stick to the free app? The Pro release has a trial version, so we suggest you play around with the free app for a month or two, then see what the subscription does extra and decide whether you want to continue with Infuse 7 Pro before you actually pay for it. And if you hate subscription software, you can buy a lifetime licence instead if you wish (though it isn't cheap). We reckon most users will manage with the free app, but power users who want the syncing and organising features offered through the subscription will go Pro.

FireCore Infuse 7 (Pro or otherwise) is an excellent app, and a must-get if you like to watch videos from a UPnP/DLNA network-attached drive or a media server. A generous free version and a free trial for the Pro app mean you have nothing to lose by downloading today. **10**



Verdict//

PROS AND CONS:

+ Play almost any file

+ App for all Apple devices

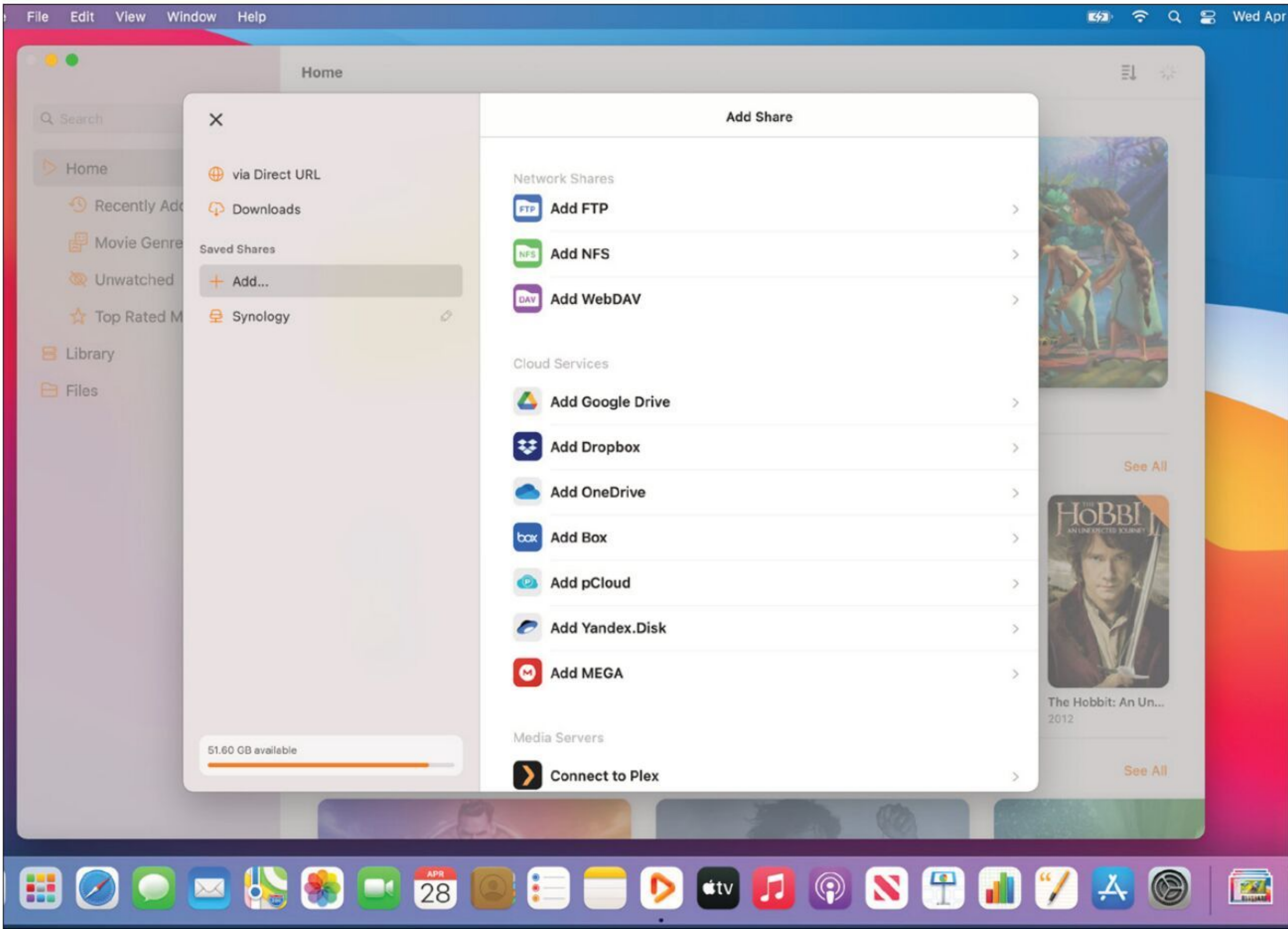
+ Extremely generous free version

- Can't play DRM-protected iTunes movies

LAST WORD

A very capable and efficient video streamer that gives a great unified experience across your Apple gear.

RATING: 5/5





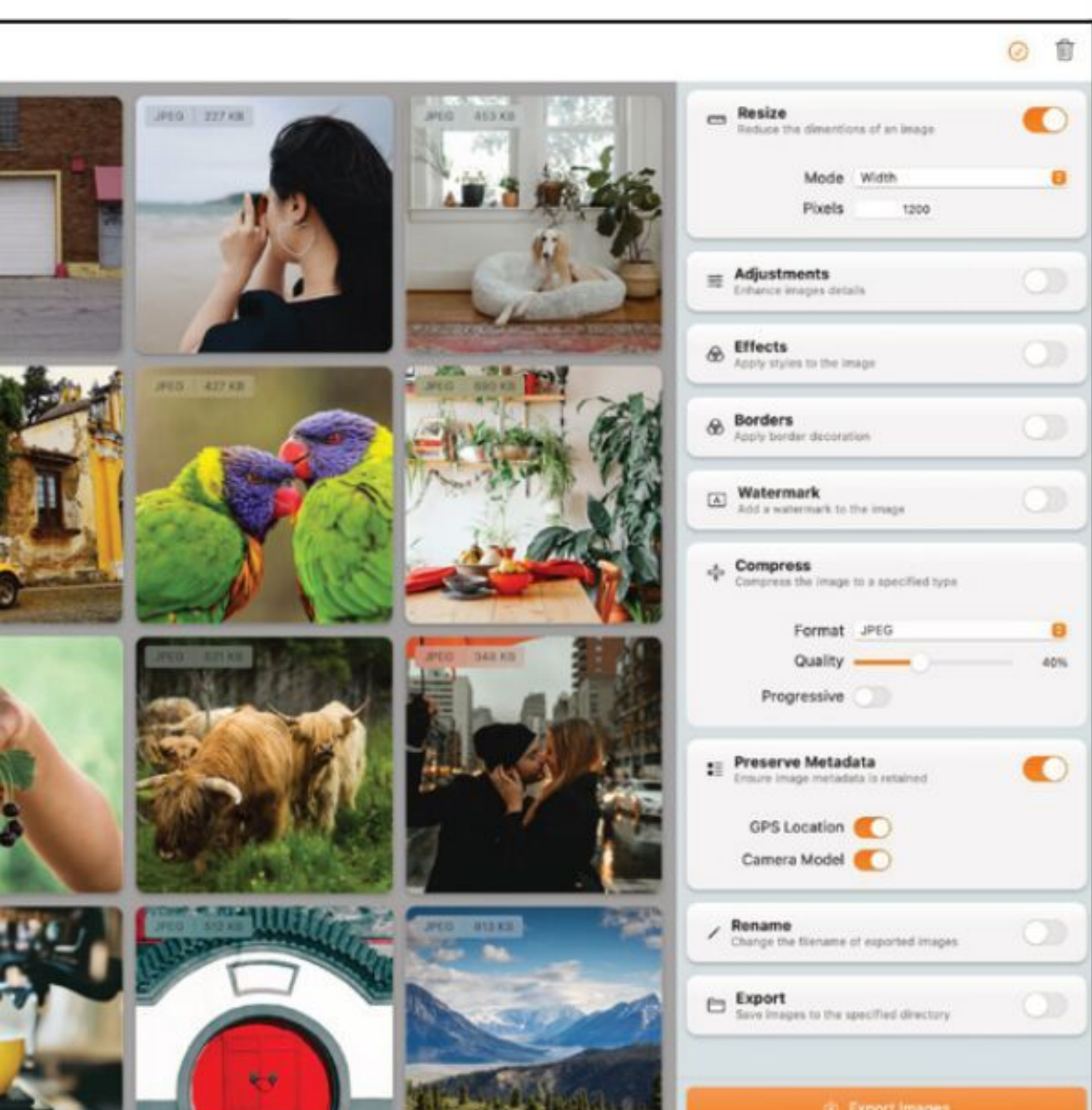


# Squash 3

Is the latest version of Squash a juicy upgrade?

## Info//

**Realmac Software**  
**www.realmacsoftware.com**  
**£18.99, \$24.99, 20.99 €**  
**Compatibility: macOS Big Sur or later**



## Verdict//

**PROS AND CONS:**  
+ Easy batch processing  
+ New UI is excellent  
+ Watermark pictures  
- Lacks advanced editing features

**LAST WORD**  
An excellent batch image processor with some useful editing tools.

**RATING: 4/5**

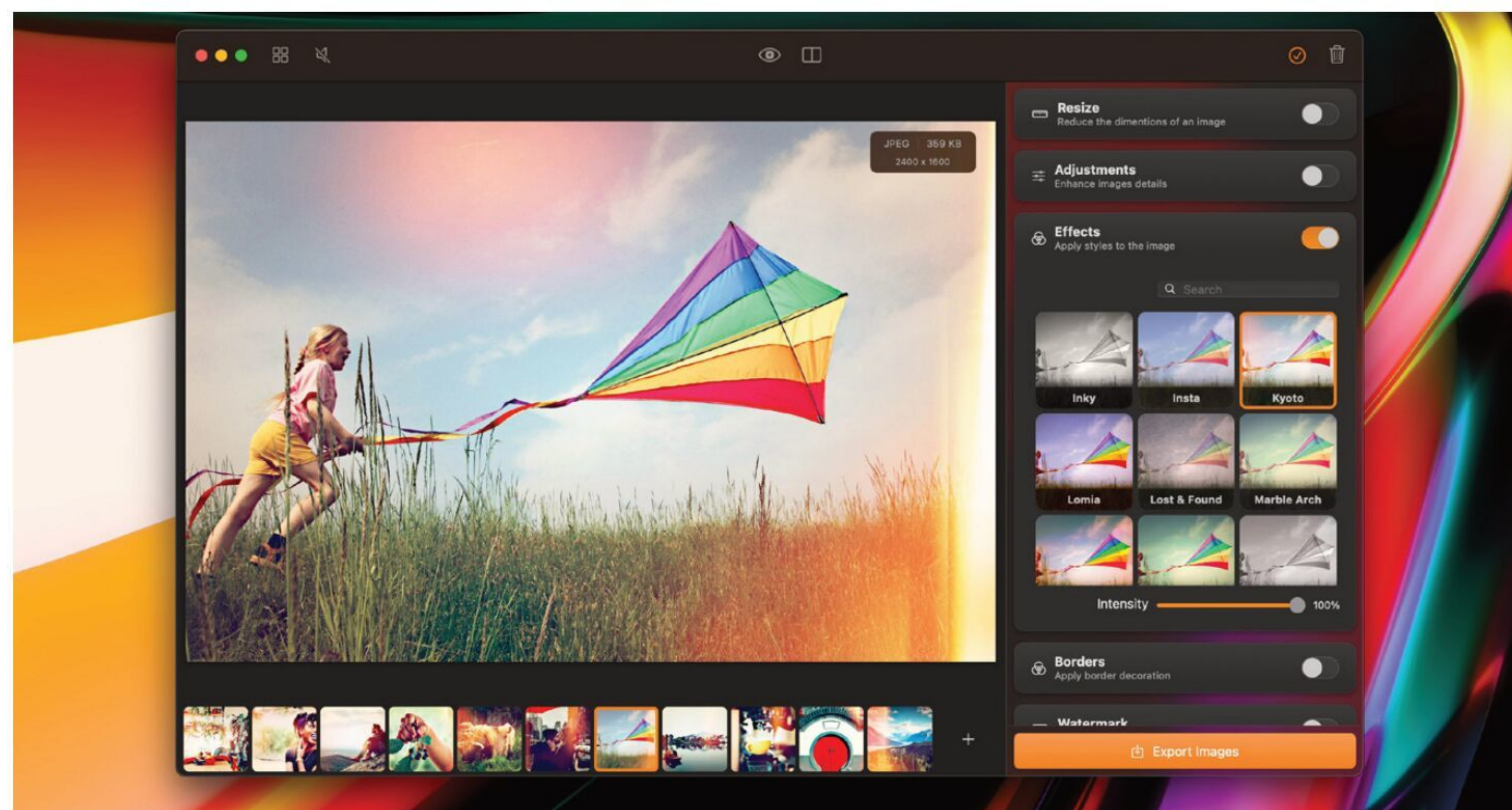
**A**fter six months in development and a complete ground-up rewrite, Squash 3 is here. It features a new interface and some great new features. The app's key capability is batch processing images. You can resize, convert to other picture formats, compress the files, rename them and add watermarks should you wish to sign your work in this way.

Both the user interface and the features offered by the app are very easy to use. There's no significant learning curve here. Your picture sits in the main window, while a sidebar on the right offers options such as resizing, adjustments, filters and more. Activate a switch to access that feature's options. When adding a filter or making adjustments, you can see what the picture looks like before and after editing by using a slider that bisects your image, or by clicking an eye icon which switches to the unadorned version while held. When you're done, choose where to save it and then export the edited picture.

## Renaming Roundup

As mentioned earlier, you can process and export a batch of pictures, and rename them too if you wish. Renaming is done by prefixing or suffixing the filename with something of your choice, or replacing it entirely. Use hash marks for numbers; Squash 3 will replace them with ascending digits. Resizing and/or compressing an image, along with changing its format, is especially useful for web builders who want to optimise a range of photos or other such images for a website. With Squash 3, there's no need to do them one by one; batch edit and do them all at once. Watermarking is another important feature. You can set what it's to say, place it in a variety of positions on the picture and choose its size, opacity and more.

Squash 3 isn't a comprehensive image editor, but for simple adjustments and straightforward filters, it's perfectly capable. It's the renaming, batch processing and watermarking features that photographers and webmasters will appreciate the most. **AH**

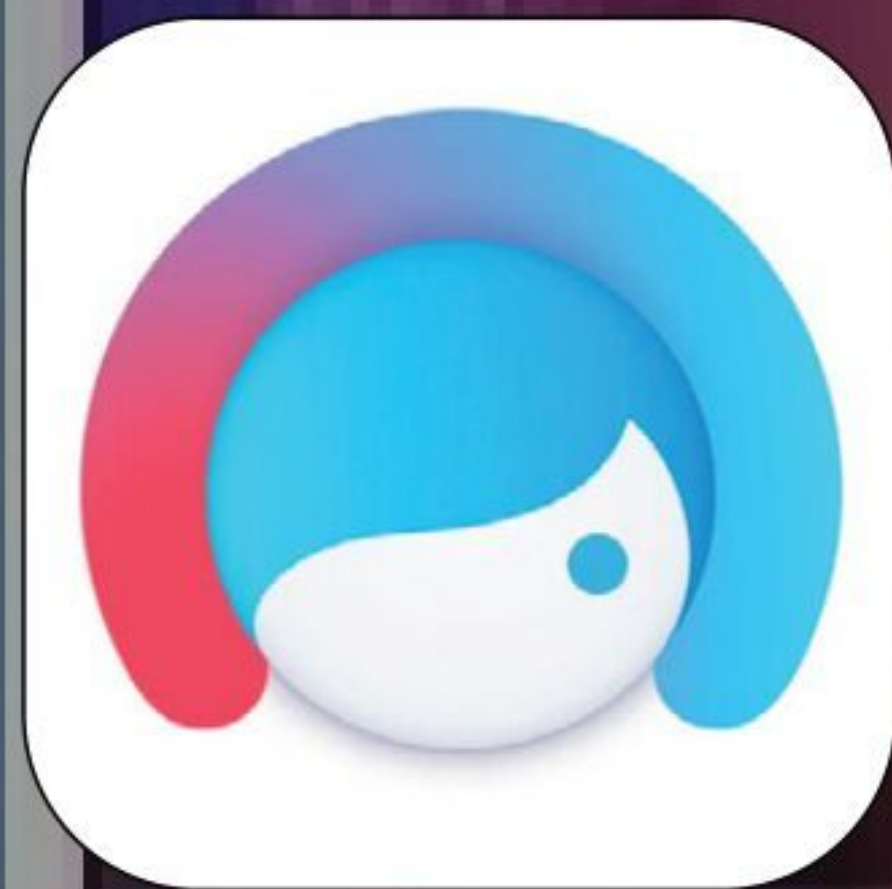


**Adding effects is a straightforward exercise.**

**Borders and extra filters are available as paid-for add-ons.**







# Facetune2

You're looking good...

**L**ove them or loathe them, selfies aren't going away any time soon. Those of you blessed with angelic smiles, flawless features and near-perfect photogenics can never understand the struggles the rest of us have when trying to take a selfie that doesn't make us look like someone you really, really wouldn't want to meet in a dark alley, or resembling one of the Walking Dead extras. We are the selfie challenged. However, not to despair, as Facetune2 is here to wave a magical, digital wand over the portraits we'd rather leave in the attic.

According to its developers, it's 'more than just the best selfie retouching app. Facetune2 is what you need for the perfect portrait'. Facetune2 touches up your flawed features to the point of Hollywood perfection. Removing blemishes, pores, wrinkles, or oily skin. The app has the ability to airbrush away anything the modern selfie enthusiast would consider normal human looks, to be replaced with a porcelain doll-like appearance.

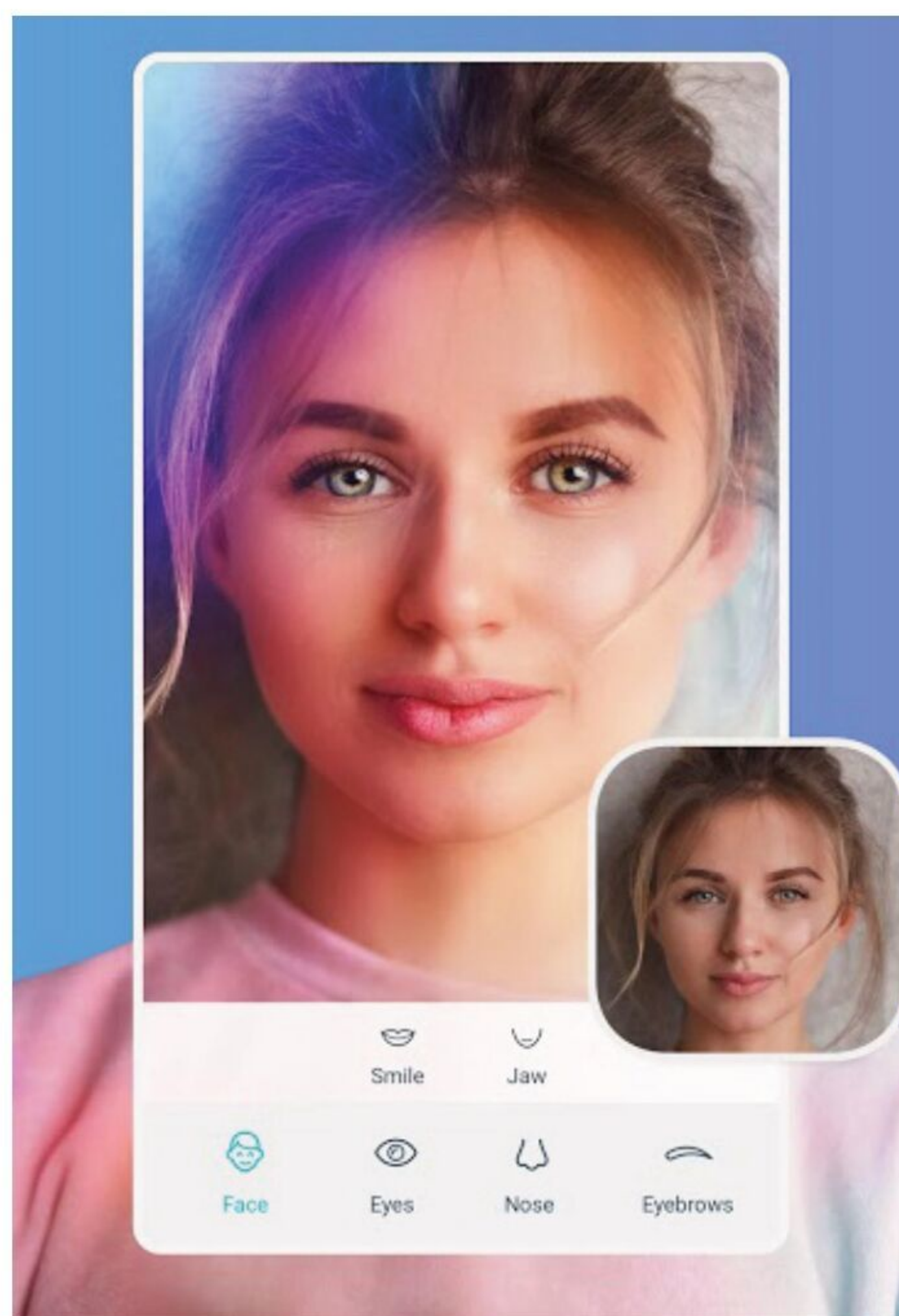
You can whiten your teeth, widen your smile, change the colour of your eyes, instantly lose weight off your face and even apply makeup on the fly. There are a multitude of enhancements available for free, ones that make your teeth white and give you a chiselled jawline of epic proportions, alongside being able to adjust the lighting levels, brightness and so on.

## Going Pro

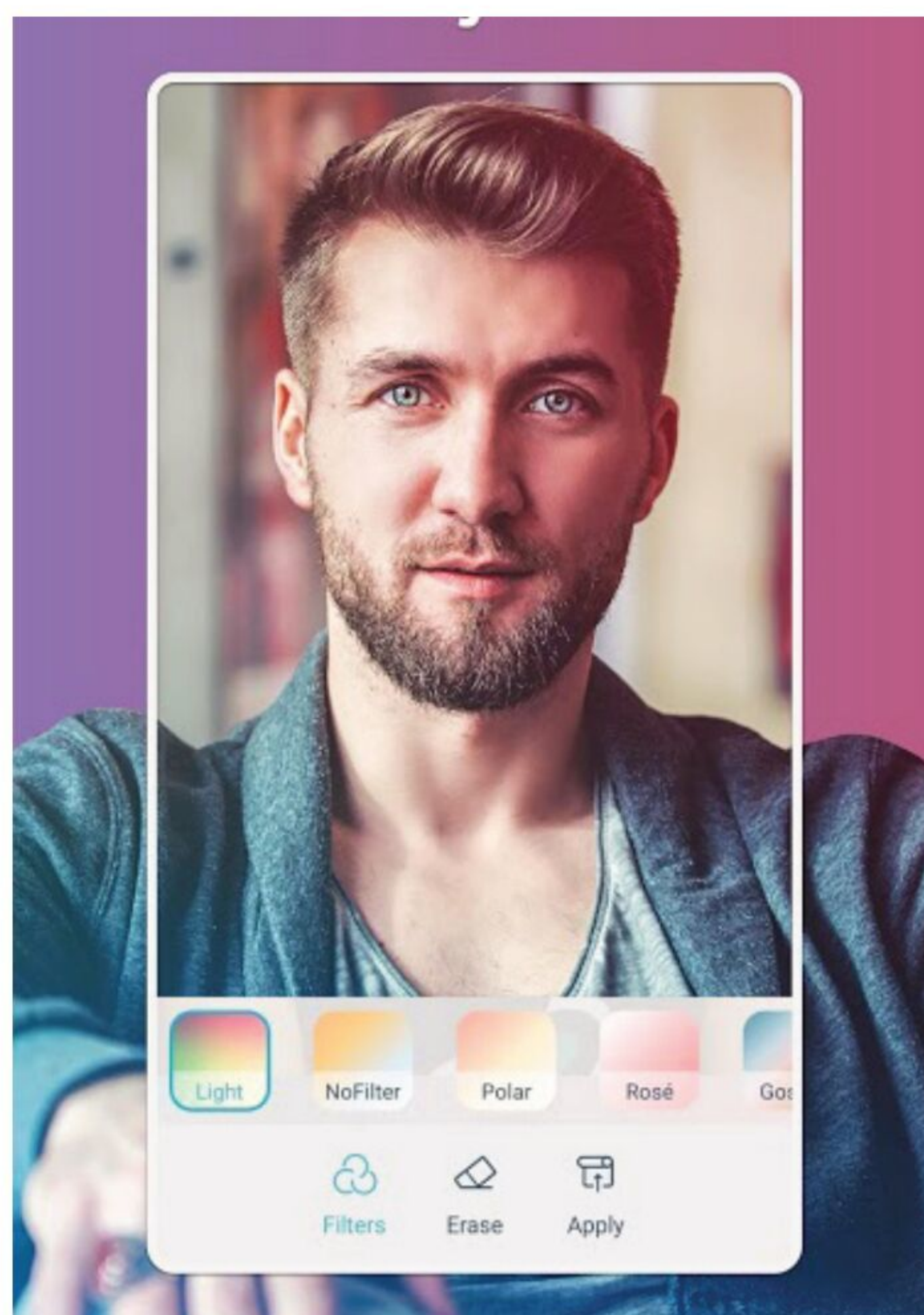
More professional adjustments can be achieved by paying for a subscription, or by buying various add-ons on a one-off basis. The prices vary, for both the in-app purchases to the subscription access to the more premium features. Expect to pay from 99p up to £32 plus, depending on what you want. All in all, it can become quite expensive for a simple re-touch app.

While there's nothing essentially wrong with touching up a photo of yourself, there is the elephant in the room that is body dysmorphia. Apps such as this have already been identified as helping to cause the mental disorder, where people strive to obtain a seemingly unobtainable plastic perfection look. This undermining of one's self image is the tragic cause of much unhappiness among young people, and apps such as these aren't doing enough to help those who suffer.

That being said, if you want to touch up your selfies, then the free version of Facetune2 will suffice. **DH**



Alter your features, whiten your teeth and more.



Lots of filters and extras to help get that plastic perfect look.

## Info//

Lightricks Ltd

<https://www.facetuneapp.com>

Free - with in-app purchases  
iOS 13 or later



## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

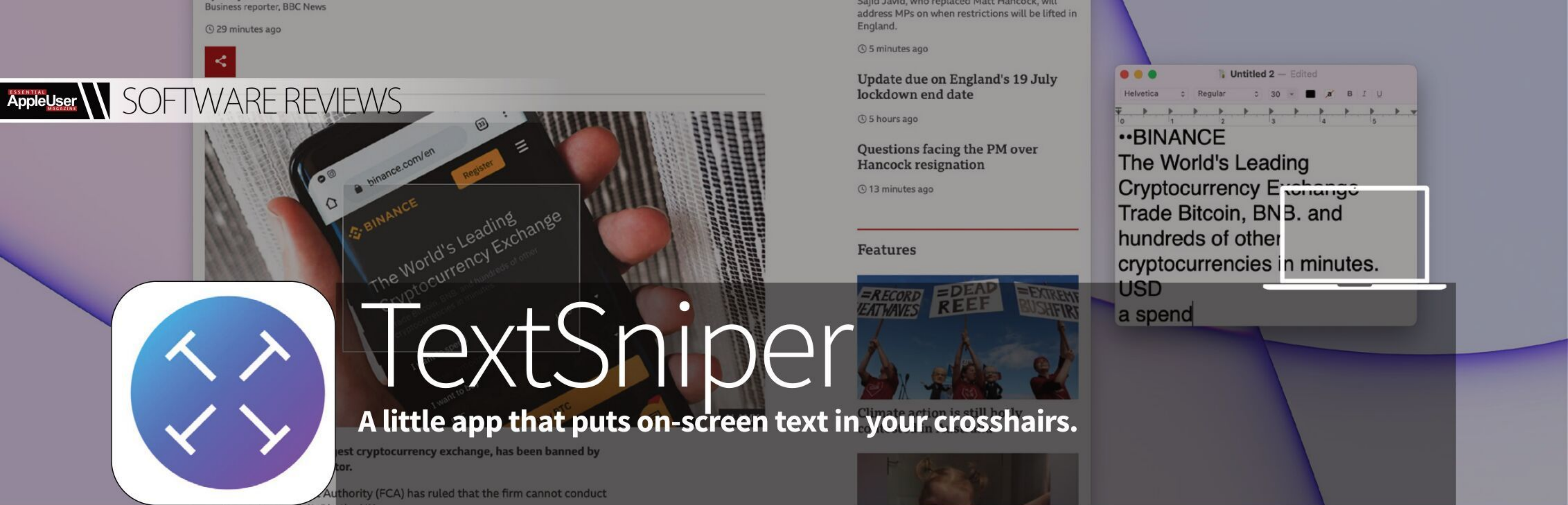
- + Lots of filters, and enhancements available
- + Free element works well
- Promotes low self-image, and body dysmorphia
- Can be expensive for premium tools

### LAST WORD

If you want to look like a porcelain doll, then this is the app for you

**RATING: 2/5**



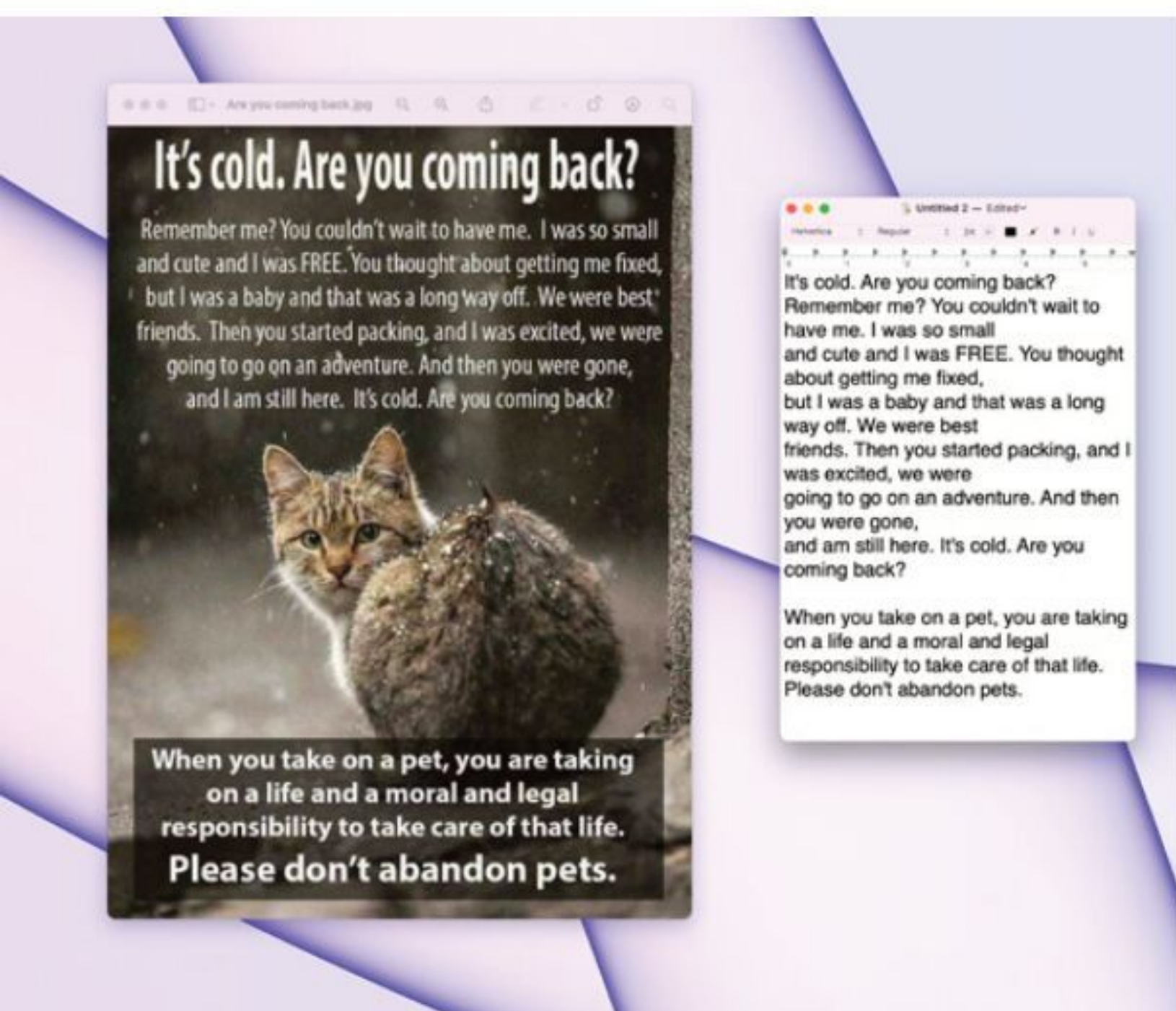
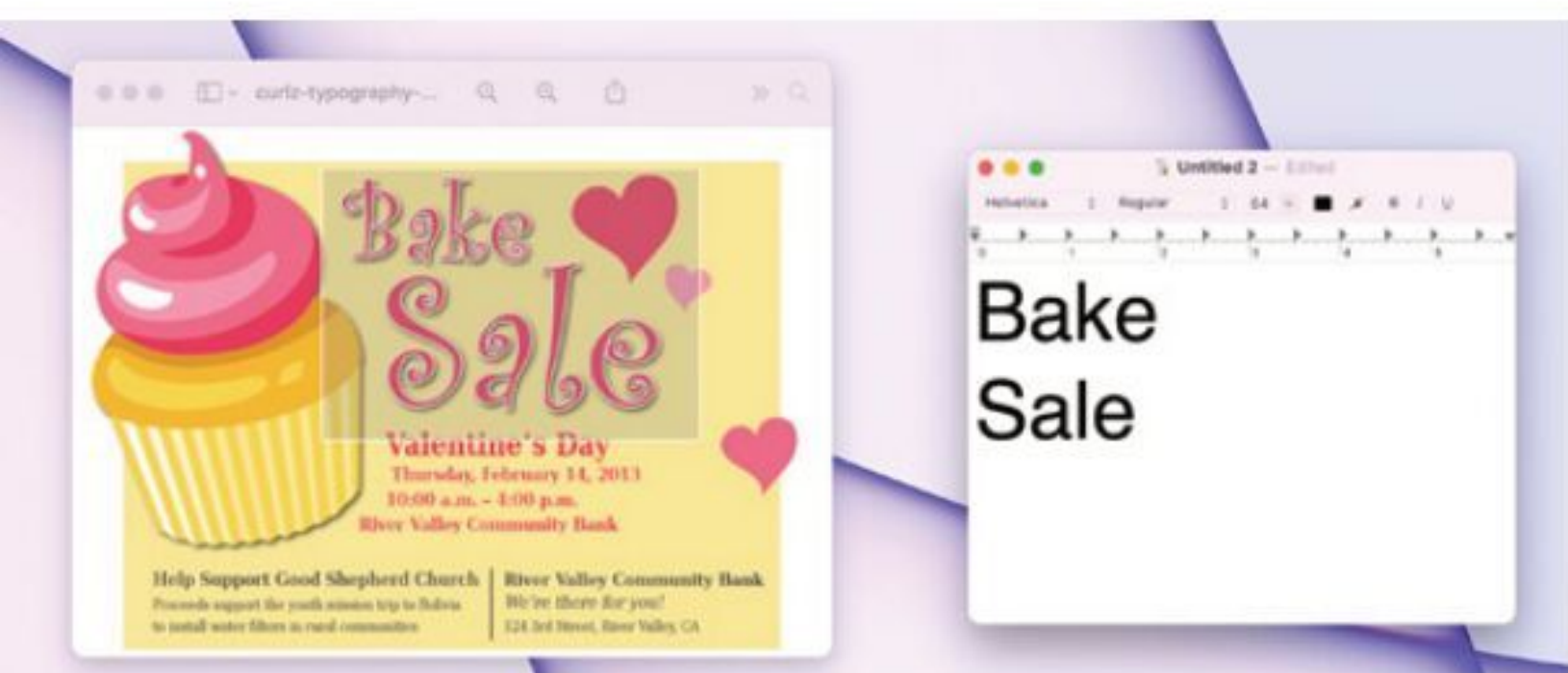


# TextSniper

A little app that puts on-screen text in your crosshairs.

## Info//

**Valerijs Boguckis**  
**<https://textsniper.app>**  
**£9.99, \$9.99, 10,99 €**  
**Compatibility: macOS 10.15 or later**



**T**extSniper is an OCR (Optical Character Recognition) app that can extract text from any document or window on your Mac, even if it's non-editable, non-selectable and non-searchable. You can then paste it into another app such as Notes or Pages, and use it however you see fit.

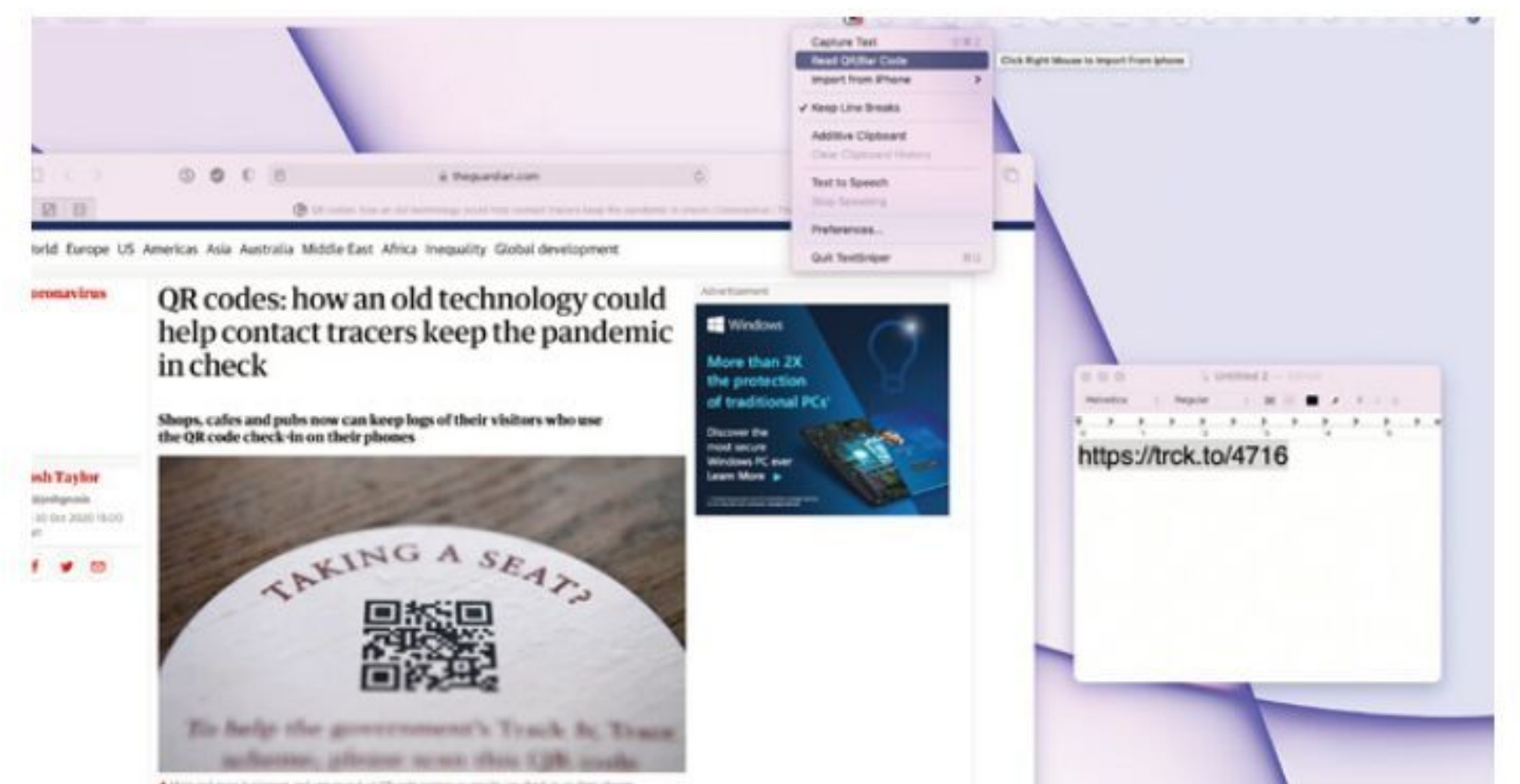
I know what you're thinking. 'Why would I spend money on TextSniper when macOS Monterey is on the way, with its built-in Live Text feature that does the same job?' In actual fact, TextSniper goes way beyond what Live Text can do. While Live Text is only for Monterey users on Macs with M1 chips, TextSniper works on any Mac running Catalina or later. It puts in a more comprehensive performance too. Live Text currently works only in Safari and with images, but TextSniper can take text from any application and file format. If you see text on the screen, TextSniper can capture it. It can also convert text to speech, which is great for the visually impaired, and it can even read QR and bar codes, converting them back into URLs and numbers respectively.

## Take Aim...

It's easy to use. Just select the TextSniper service you need from the menu bar icon, then drag the crosshairs over the text, and it's copied to the clipboard. From there, you can paste it into the app of your choice. You can customise TextSniper with keyboard shortcuts, add custom words

for jargon and specialisations that might not otherwise be picked up and set the speed of its text-to-speech service.

When you take aim with TextSniper, you almost always hit the target. In our tests, we were able to capture text from screenshots, app windows, photographs and more; with close to 100% success rate. It handled angled text, weird fonts, tiny words and fussy or partly obscured text with ease. Mistakes were few, and results were excellent. The only significant problems it had were with computer code and complex mathematical formulae, but perhaps this will be improved in a later update. Handwriting can be hit and miss too, but that's inevitable. Overall, TextSniper does an excellent job and is a real asset for those who often need to copy text. **AF**



**We used TextSniper to capture the QR code seen on this website, then pasted the URL into TextEdit.**



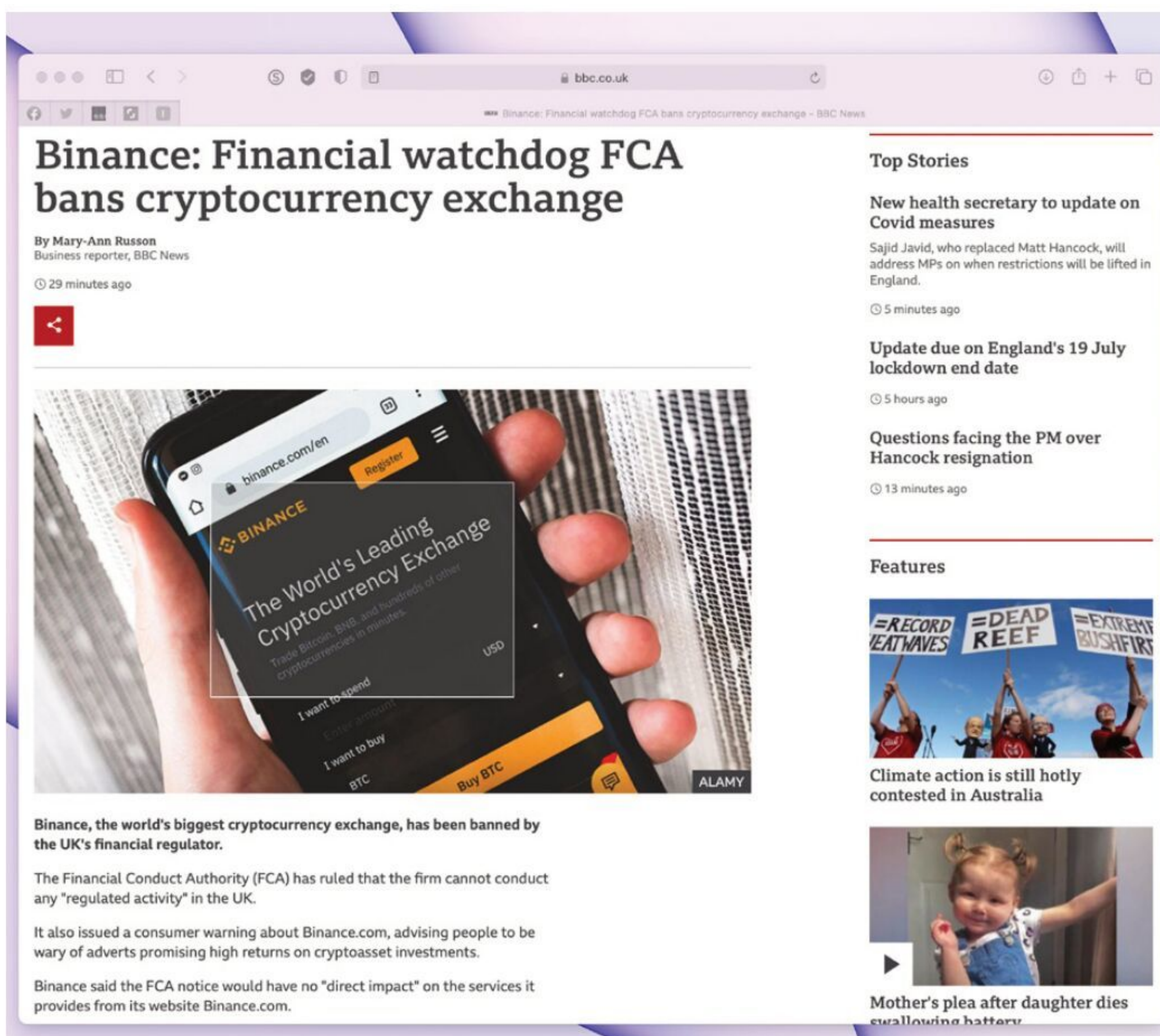
## Verdict//

**PROS AND CONS:**  
+ Comprehensive and versatile  
+ Excellent OCR  
+ Text-to-speech feature  
- Not great at symbols

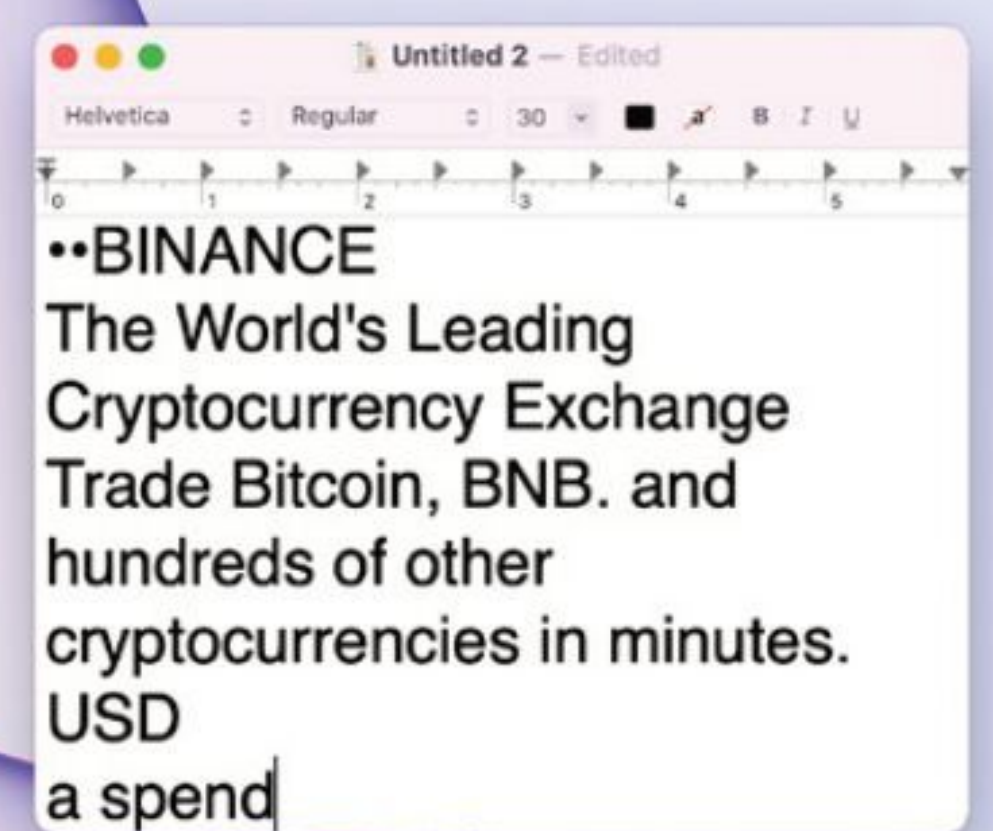
### LAST WORD

An excellent app that does exactly what it claims, and does it well.

**RATING: 5/5**



**It can handle a photo on a website with text set at an angle, though it did mistake a comma for a full stop.**

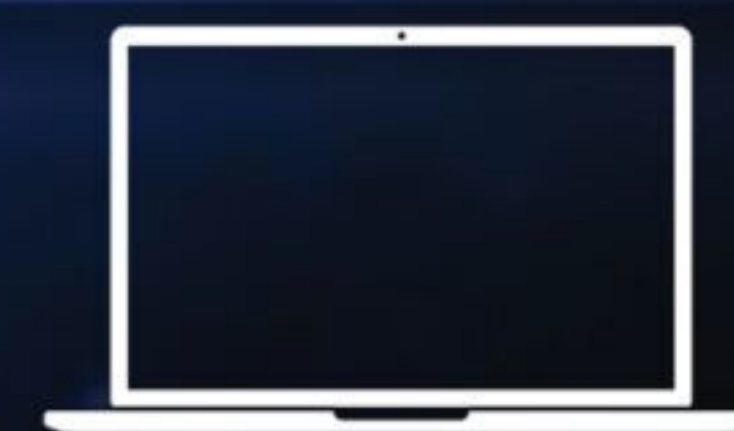






# AKVIS AliveColors

Does the Mac need yet another photo editor? Maybe...



**A**liveColors does a decent job of positioning itself between entry-level tools that need very little skill, and pro-level suites with comprehensive capabilities but steep learning curves. It has a good set of tools, which should be familiar enough to anyone who's used a photo editor before, and a great user interface that puts everything at your fingertips.

As well as improving your photographs, there are artistic brushes and filters that let you style your pictures, giving them a whole new look. It can also draw scalable vector graphics that can be resized without losing quality; if that's a feature that interests you.

There's an unnecessarily complicated payment tier, which ranges from a limited-functionality free app, a Home release with a few filters and effects missing and a Pro version which has all features present, but costs over three times as much as the Home release and you still have to pay extra for a year of updates. You can also get both versions on a subscription. Take

a look at the website for more information on what limitations go with which licenses.

## Look Alive!

The tools you get with AliveColors do a great job of lifting your photographs out of the realms of mediocrity, and styling them can be fun and rewarding. For example, there are masking tools that make it easy to cut out complex areas of a picture, such as the branches of a tree or a person's hair. Here you can do it automatically. Editable brushes are optimised for use with pressure-sensitive graphics tablets, and collage tools let you combine pictures quickly and easily. Batch processing lets you edit multiple photos with minimal intervention too.

All told, AKVIS AliveColors is a great app, and a good balance between comprehensive tools and ease of use. Recommended, but don't expect to master it in minutes. **AH**

## Info//

**AKVIS**

**<https://alivecolors.com>**

**Home: £36.00, \$49.00, 41,00 €**

**Pro: £120.00, \$160.00, 135,00 €**

**Compatibility: OS X 10.10 or later, 64-bit only**

## Verdict//

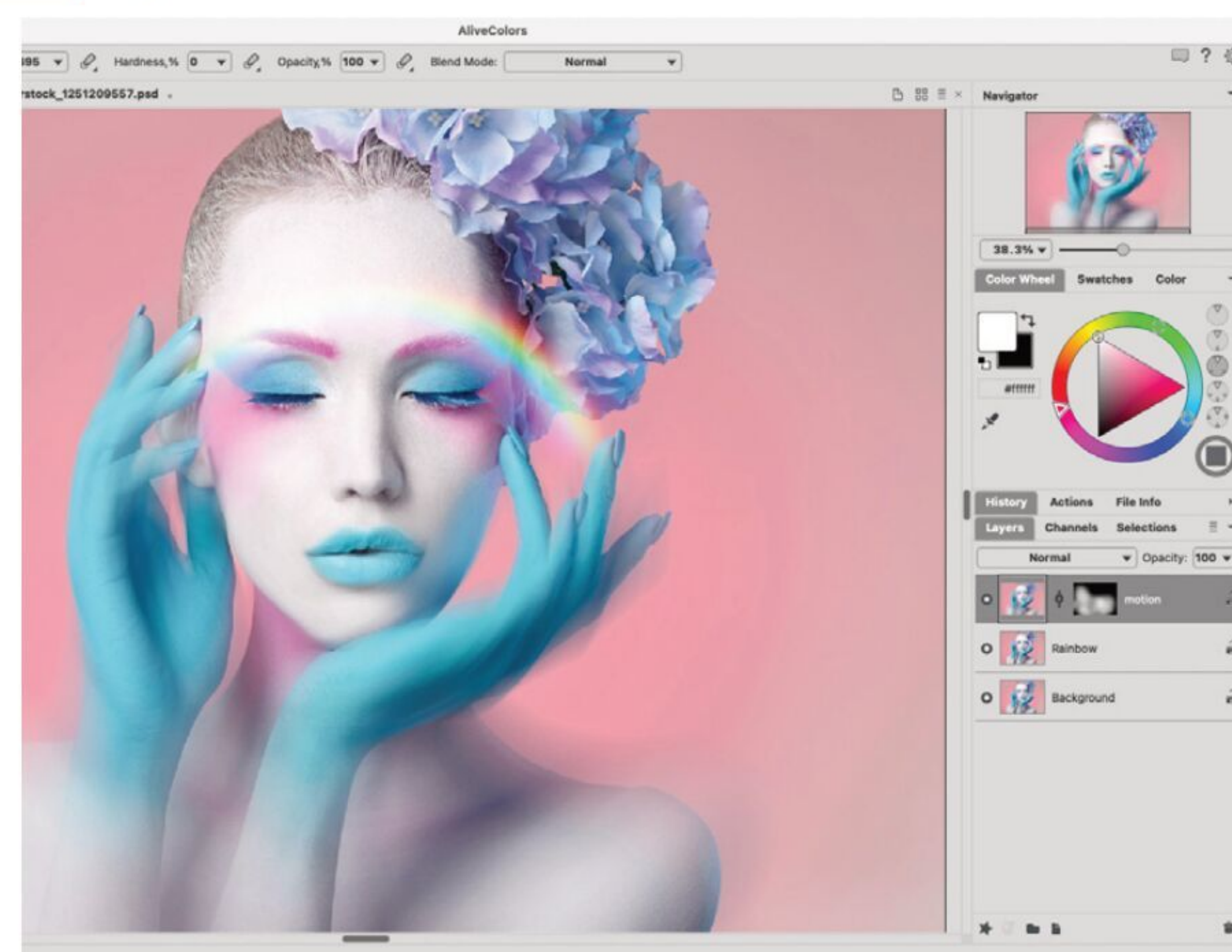
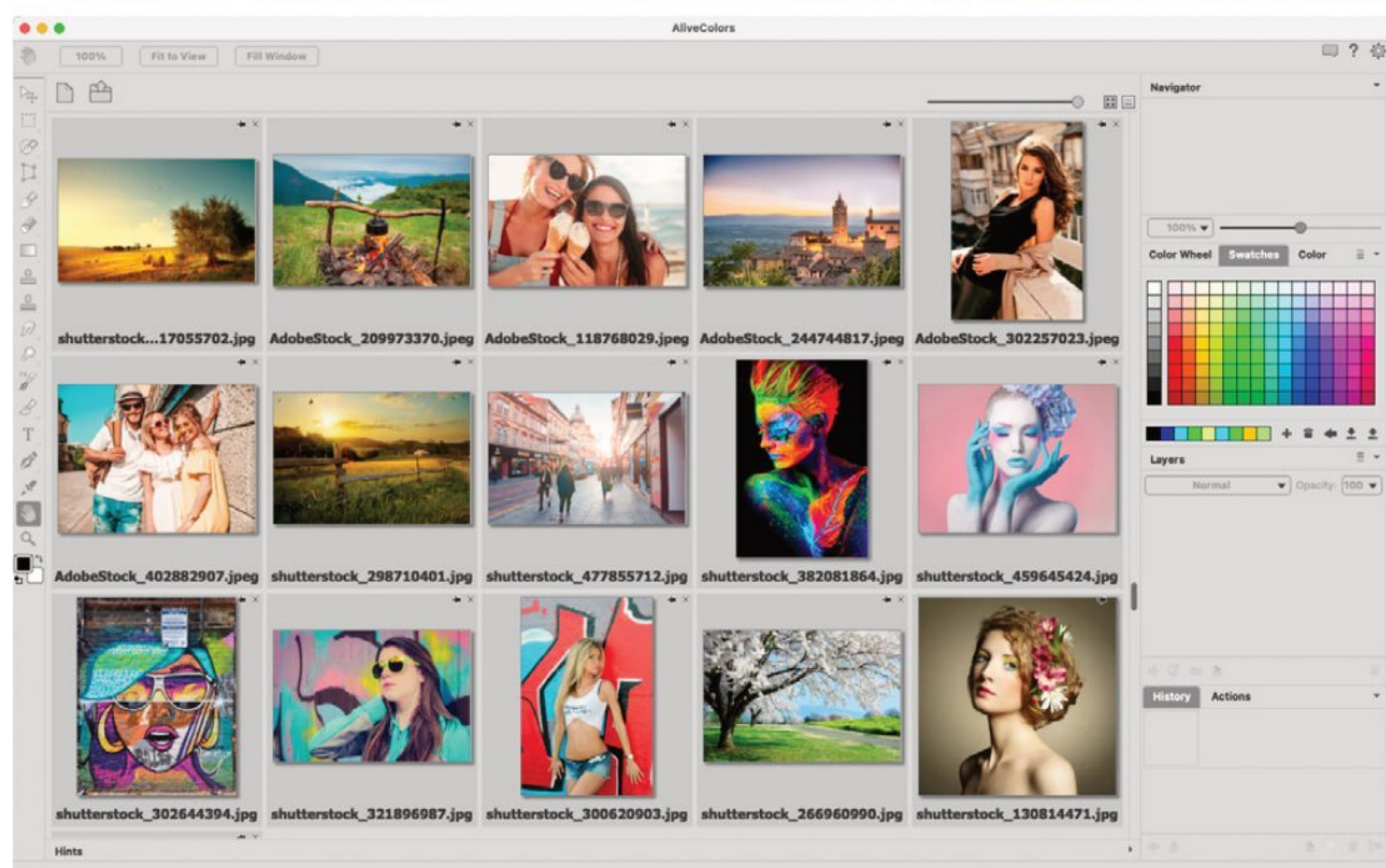
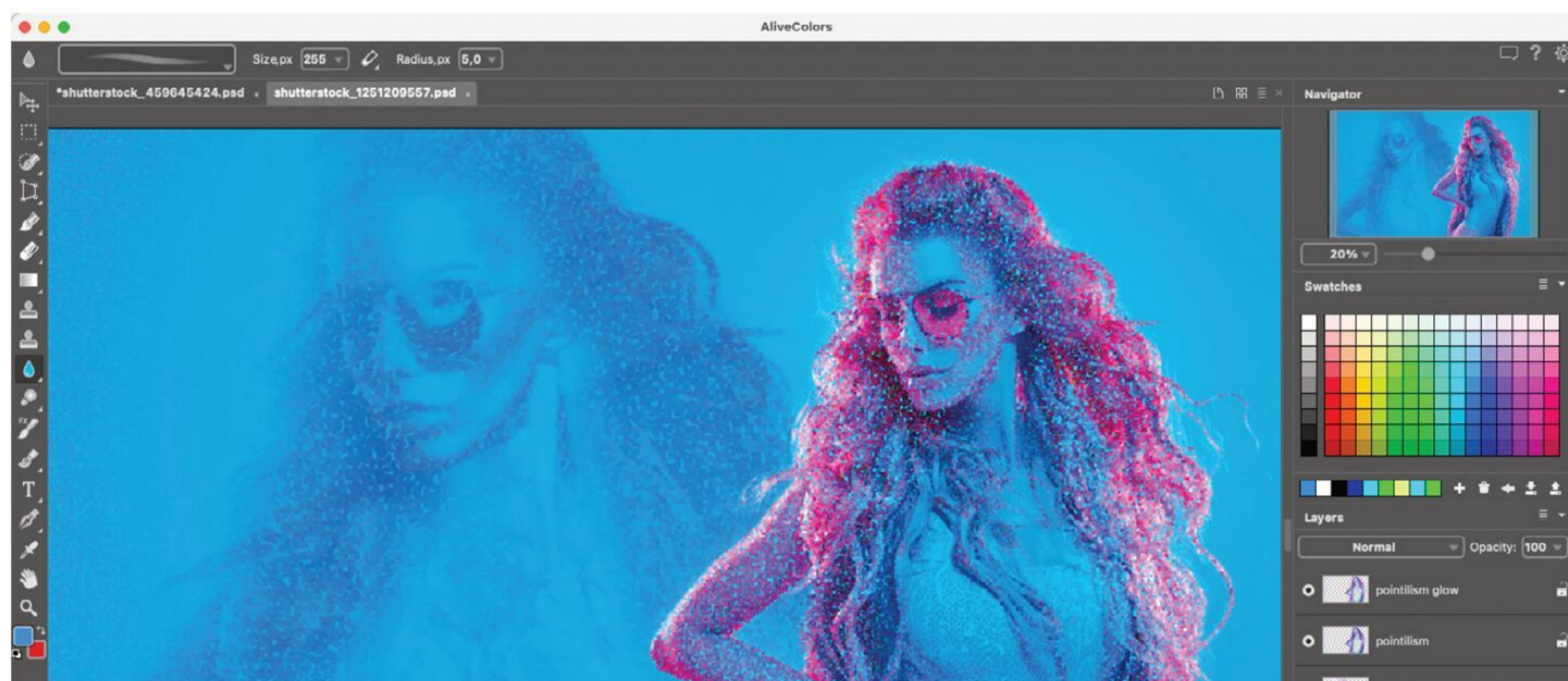
### PROS AND CONS:

- + Great user interface
- + Decent set of filters
- + Versatile tools
- Mediocre text editing

### LAST WORD

A solid photo editor that does more than lift your pictures, but the Pro version is a little expensive.

**RATING: 4/5**

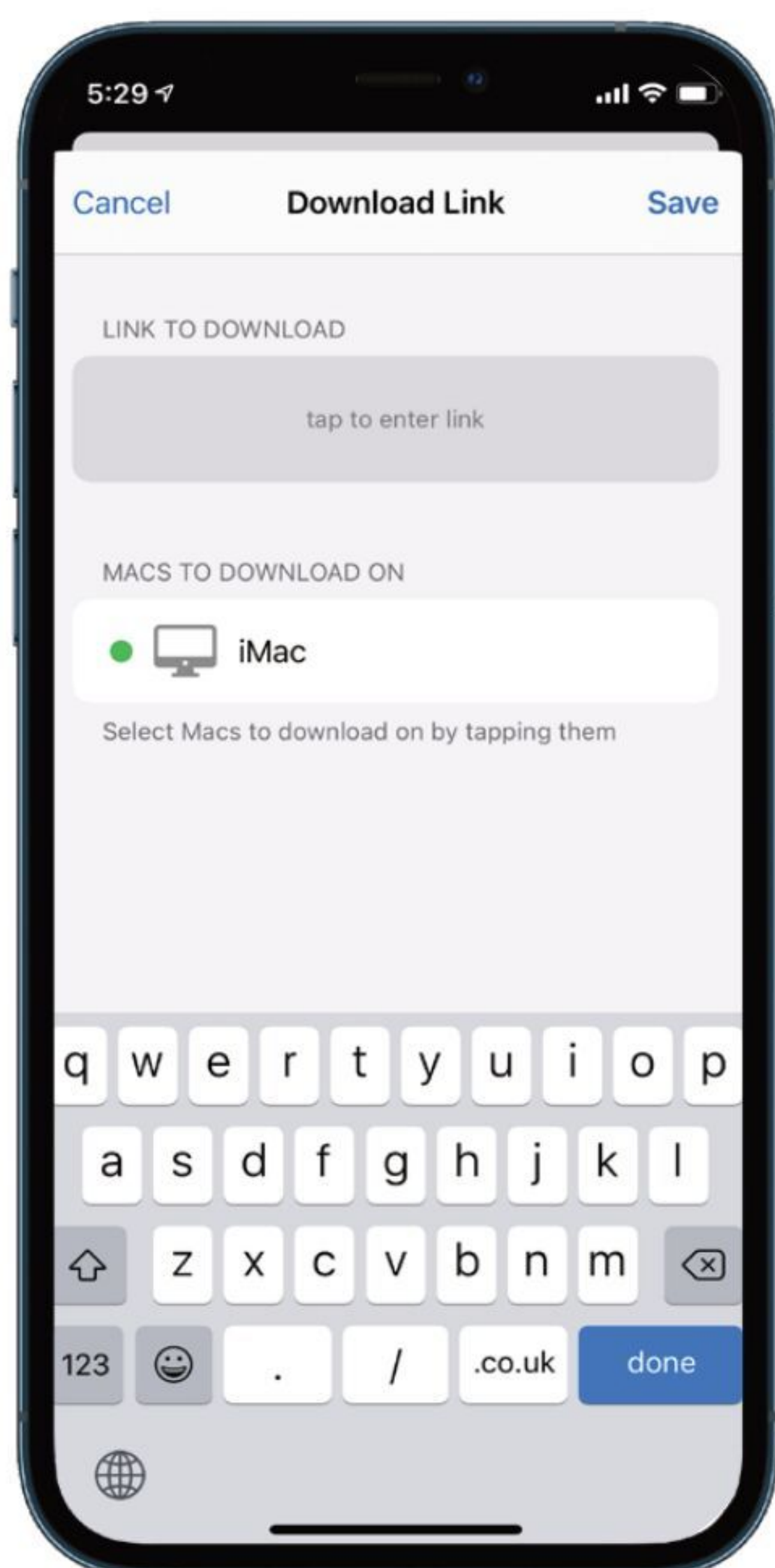






## Info//

**Eternal Storms Software**  
<https://eternalstorms.at>  
**Mac client: £4.99, \$4.99, 5,49 €**  
**iPhone/iPad app: Free**  
**Compatibility: macOS 10.14 or later, iOS 14 or later**



**W**e've all been there. Every Apple fan has found themselves surfing the web on their iPad on the train, or maybe in bed on their iPhone, and found something they'd like to download - on their Mac. You can use the Share button to email or message a link to yourself, of course, but Transloader 3 offers a more convenient option. Buy the Mac client and install the free iOS app, and you can initiate a Mac download from your mobile device.

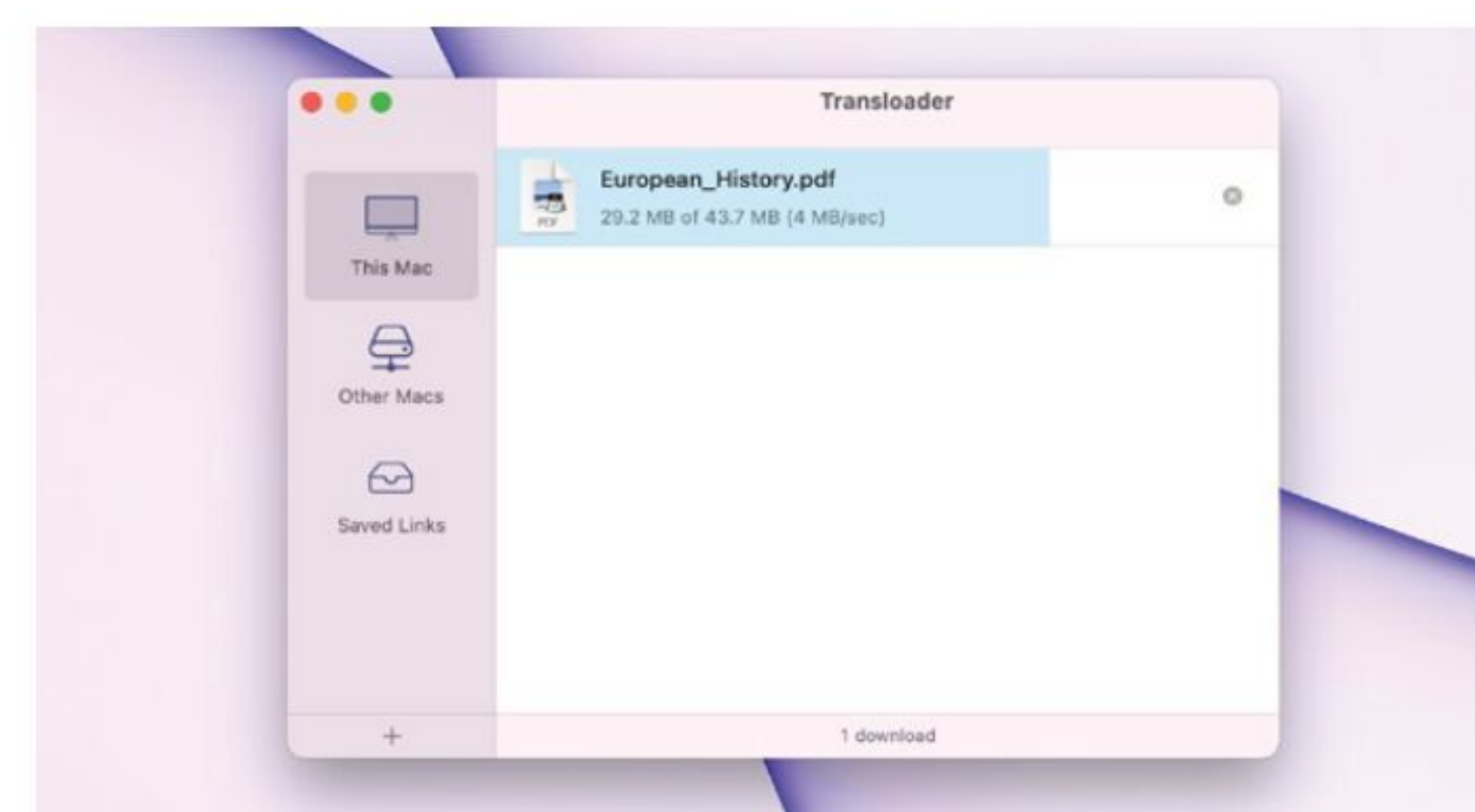
Transloader on the Mac sits quietly and waits for you to send it a download link via your iPhone, iPad or another Mac. When it receives such a link, it begins a download immediately. The file should be there next time you log in. Obviously, the Mac must be on and running Transloader, but you can set the app to open on launch and leave it running in the background. Equally, your Apple devices need to be signed into the same iCloud account.

## Easy Set-Up

It's easy to set up. Just install the apps, and when you open one on a mobile device, your other devices are listed. Open the Mac app and you're shown current downloads on the Mac you're on at the time and also on other Macs on which you've installed the client. Saved links are accessible

from here too. Once up and running, when you find a link for something you want to download to your Mac, just copy it, open Transloader 3 and tap the link icon in the top-right corner. The link you copied is already in the 'Link to Download' field, so just choose a Mac to download to and tap Download. It starts downloading straight away. Alternatively, if the Mac you want to download to isn't switched on, tap Save instead of choosing a Mac and it appears in the Saved Links section of the Mac's Transloader window for you to get next time you log on.

Transloader 3 is the sort of app you forget you have until you need it, and then it's a blessing. It's also cheap. At this price, you need never miss another download again. **DH**



Download a saved link when you're next on your Mac.



## Verdict//

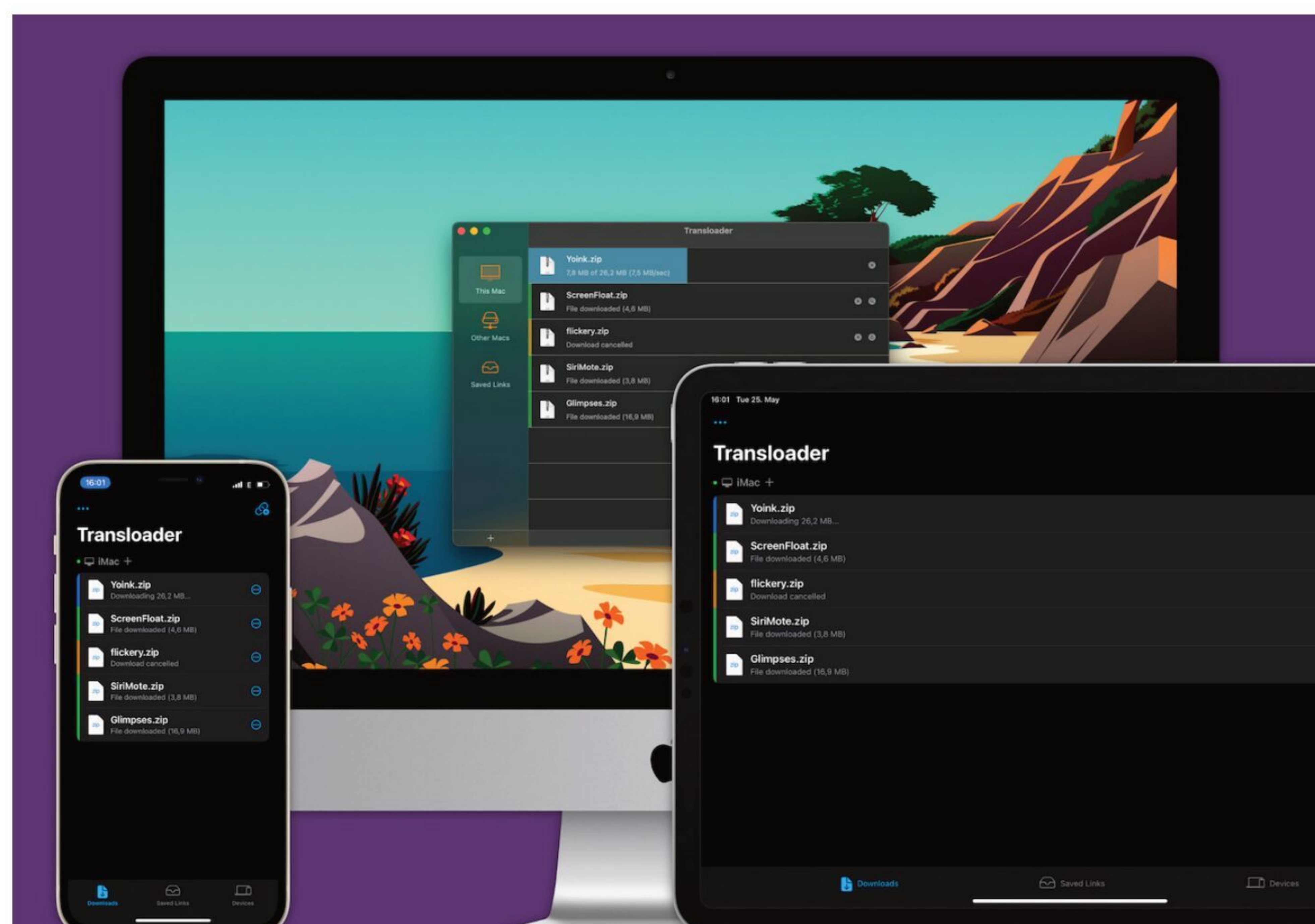
### PROS AND CONS:

- + Easy to set up and use
- + Very inexpensive
- + Useful downloading tool
- + Compact and convenient

### LAST WORD

A useful app that's easy to use and cheap to buy.

**RATING: 5/5**







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## Manage your iPhone. Your way!



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local backups  
via Wi-Fi



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Messages or  
WhatsApp chats



Advanced  
photo export  
tools



Device to device  
data transfers  
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[imazing.com](https://imazing.com)





# Bike Baron 2

A sequel to a motocross-inspired game with added charm but now with less customisation. Vroom vroom, crash!



## Info//

**Cornfox & Brothers Ltd.**  
**www.bikebaron2.com**  
**£3.99, \$3.99, 3,90 €**  
**Compatibility: iOS 11.0 or Later**



**R**eal-life motocross is amazing. The action is always accompanied by gasps of disbelief and awe, so one might hope the daredevil bike-flipping stunts and pants-soiling speed would translate into a decent game. Unfortunately this isn't always the case, and the App Store is littered with the twisted wreckage of potentially excellent two-wheel romps that promise a blend of tricks and racing, and fail on both counts.

One of the best games from this sub-genre was Mountain Sheep's Bike Baron, which took the basics of the gameplay and added overblown physics, platforming and some elements of puzzle-solving. The results were as memorable and addictive as they were innovative and inventive. This much-delayed sequel offers a visually enhanced return to the fantastic gameplay of the original, albeit with one major admission; more on that later.

Bike Baron 2 ramps up the stunts and speed, and also adds a coat of retro charm to the overall design. The improved animation style thankfully retains a cross between Looney Tunes and Aardman; a

seemingly inappropriate design fusion yet one that contributes to making this quite possibly the best franchise in the sub-genre currently available on the iPhone and iPad.

## Vrrrrmmmmmm...

The aim of the game remains the same; ride your bike over the jumps and obstacles of each level whilst collecting coins, all while trying to reach the finish line within the time limit to advance to the next level. This isn't as difficult as it sounds, because you're given limitless attempts to complete each task; the learning curve isn't as steep as the in-game ramps. The level design is as overblown as one might expect, but this is never at the expense of gameplay. While the general look is uniform, each level offers a slightly different set of challenges which adds to the addictiveness. Whether it's beating the clock, collecting the coins or simply making it through the entire stage without crashing, this latest addition elevates Bike Baron above its virtual two-wheeled kin.

With a total of three challenges per level, currently with a total of 50 levels to complete and with a star







awarded for each one beaten, the crippling lack of replay value we associate with this style of game is instantly forgotten. The control method is based around on-screen buttons (accelerate, brake, tilt forward and tilt backward) and works extremely well, complementing the total package. The standalone joypad controls required when playing via Apple TV is also very well implemented.

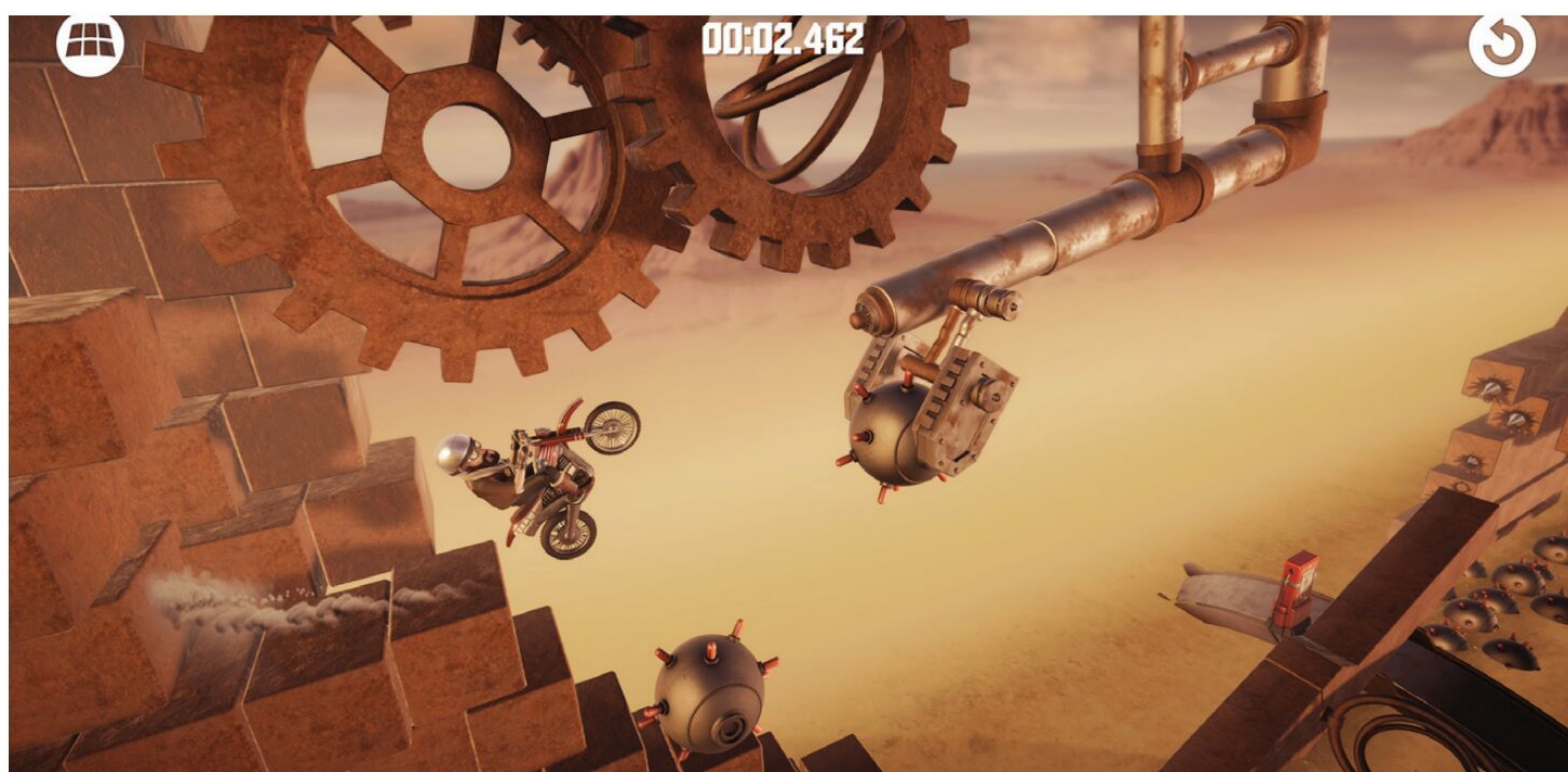
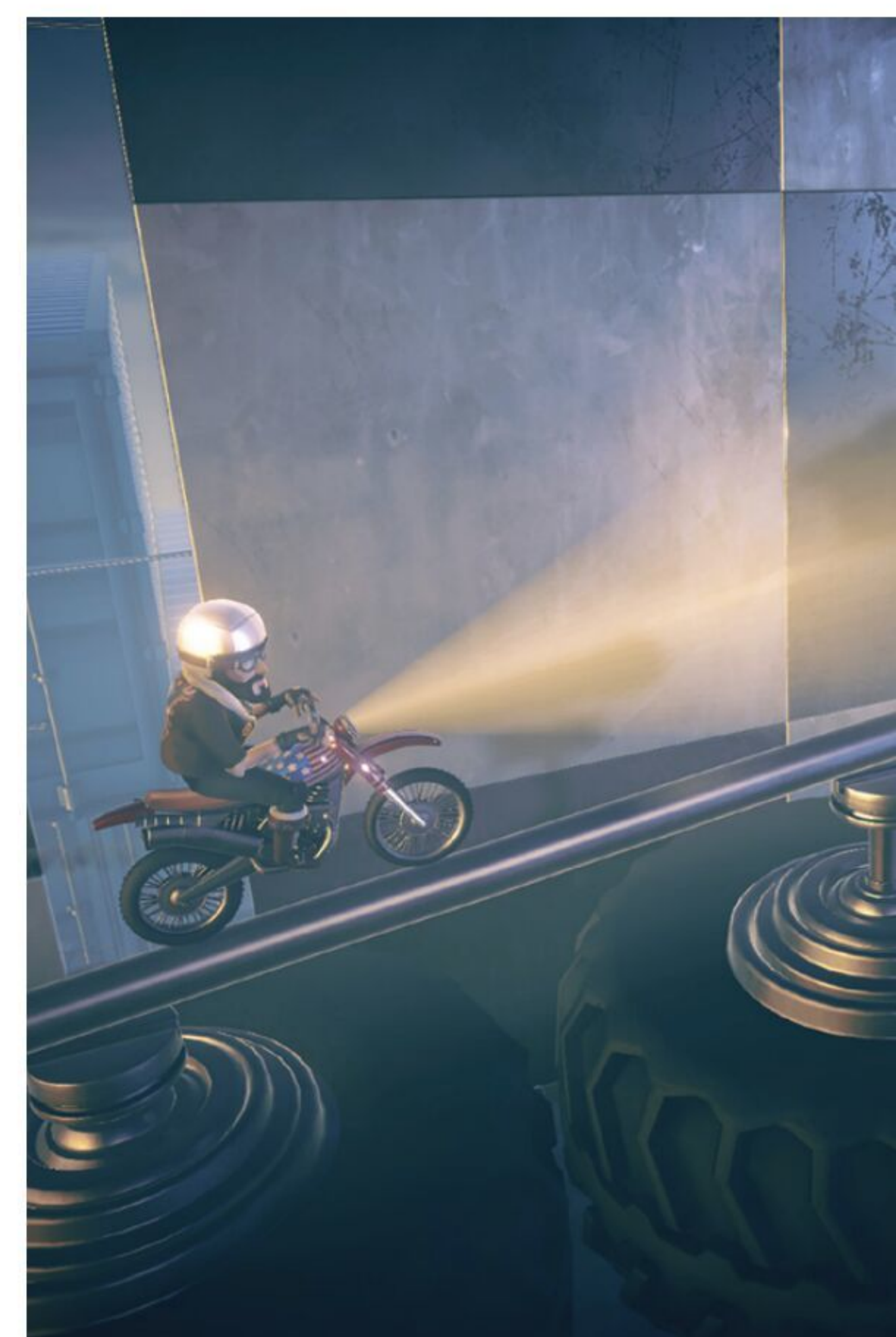
### No Sponsors

As stated the graphics are stunning, although heavily stylised, which may be off-putting for a serious motocross fan. There are no big-name sponsors or professional endorsements here, but this omission is easy to live with when you have 50 increasingly overblown levels with such instantly descriptive names as Rollercoaster or Free Fall to keep you entertained for days. Ironically, the physics used for the numerous crashes and dismounts, while in keeping with the cartoonish design, are far more realistic and wince-inducing than many licensed and reality-based rivals.

Sadly, there's a more significant omission. The original Bike Baron had a hidden ace up his sleeve; a

user-friendly level creator with a create-a-track option, allowing you to not only design your own stages, but also share them with other users via a download code found at the official website. The introduction of user-generated content sent this app beyond a hearty recommendation and into the realms of a must-have. Even if you weren't a fan of the sub-genre, the ability to create and share your fiendish creations with the world made this an essential purchase. Sadly, this fantastic design tool has been completely removed from the sequel. Its replacement is a limited selection of online Events where the player's time ratings are ranked against real-world players, which feels rather token and requires much more development and scope before it can add to the experience.

All in all, Bike Baron 2 is a very good and highly addictive motocross game, which replaces realism with retro charm and has a greater-than-usual depth to the gameplay. It still wins our endorsement if you're a fan of the original. But if you're new to the starting blocks, we recommend you slip down to a low gear and rush off to check out the first game in the series and leave this follow-up in your dust. **JG**



## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + Inventive visual flair
- + Retro soundtrack!
- + Smooth controls
- No level builder

### LAST WORD

Great visuals, great gameplay, great scope and a great game; but one that isn't as good as the original.

**RATING: 4/5**





# Touchgrind Scooter

Is this the best, safest and most legal electric scooter you could ever ride?

## Info//

**Illusion Labs**  
[www.illusionlabs.com](http://www.illusionlabs.com)  
**Free**  
**Compatibility: iOS 13.0 or Later**



## Verdict//

**PROS AND CONS:**  
 + Fantastic graphics  
 + An amazing soundtrack!  
 + Innovative controls  
 - Pay to play

**LAST WORD**  
 Another recommended instalment of the Touchgrind series that takes the familiar gameplay to new levels.

**RATING: 4/5**

Illusion Labs, the people that brought you the excellent fingerboarding games Touchgrind BMX, Skate and their sequels are back with a new twist on this finger-trickin' good concept. This time the fingerboards and bikes are replaced with a range of scooters and some crazy stunt tracks in which to hone and test your skills.

Anyone familiar with console extreme sports titles such as the Tony Hawk's skating games will be right at home with the trick-based gameplay on offer here. The gameplay is broken down into three core modes; Tricky, Freestyle and Versus. The aim is to hit the various ramps on each course and pull off as many cool tricks as possible while airborne to rack up points, and points mean bragging rights. They also mean new tracks, new scooters and custom paint jobs to make your ride fit your own personal style.

The controls are elegantly conceived to emulate the feel of the scooters. Two fingers are placed one in front of the other on the screen. The front finger controls the handle bars for steering while the rear controls your pedal power. The system is unusual and takes some getting used to, but when you get your head around it, it works great. When you catch some air, tricks can be performed. Swiping the back finger kicks the frame out, while moving the left finger hard locks the handlebars. More complex tricks can be performed by swiping in various ways, and as you grow more proficient, you can do spins, somersaults and more. Don't get too cocky, though,

as you have to land for your score to count. The areas you ride are massive and can be explored as you wish, and provide a real reason to continue playing to seek out the best score-friendly route.

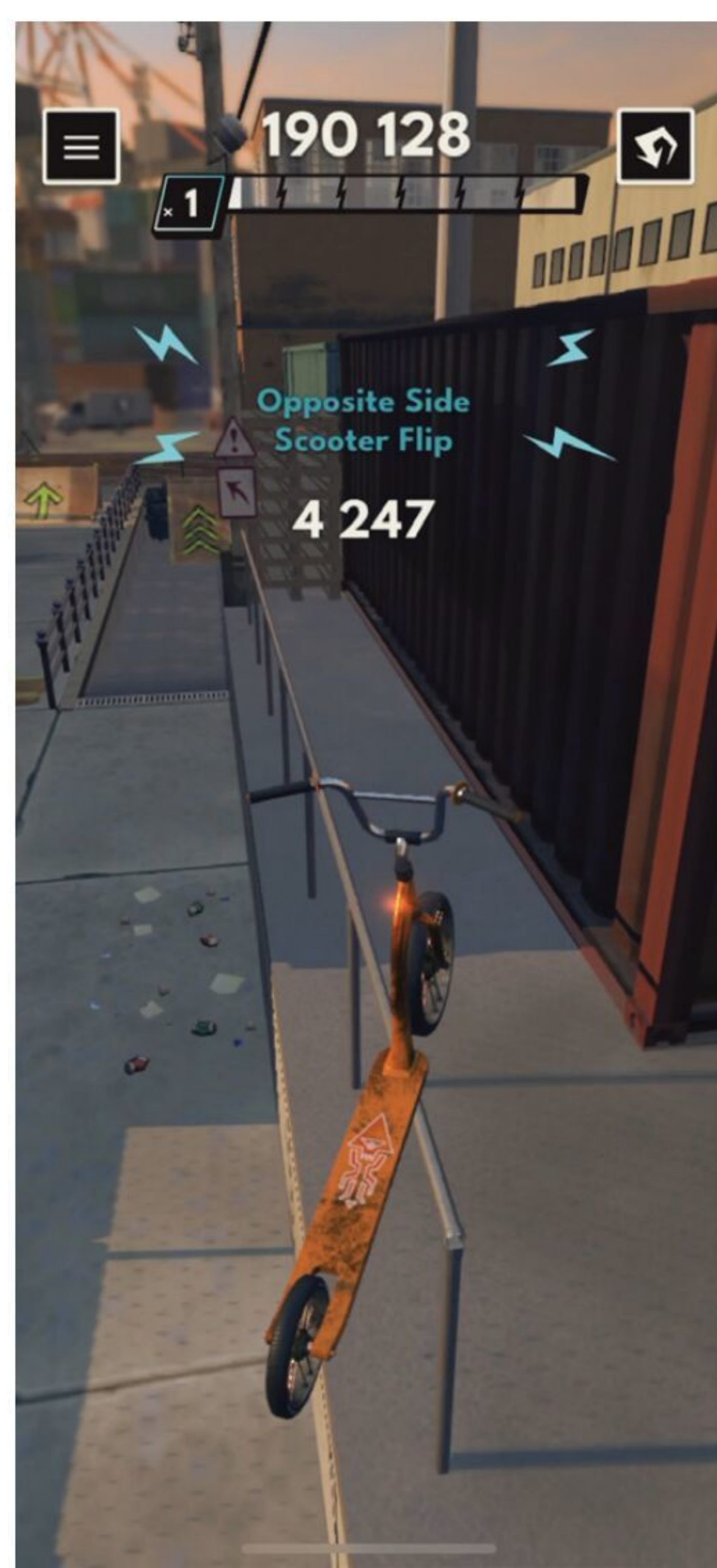
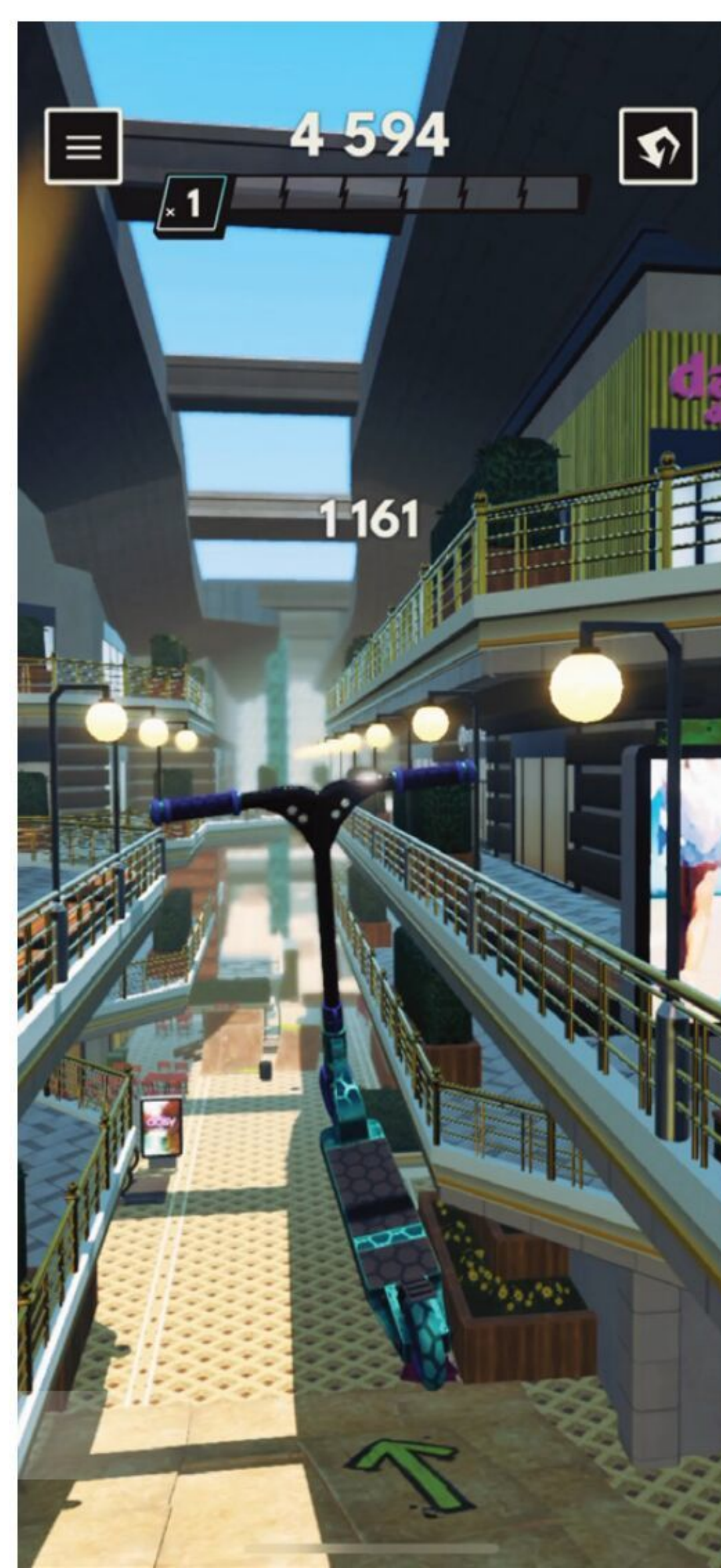
## Challenging and Addictive

Touchgrind Scooter hones the addictive high-score-building gameplay of the original Touchgrind games, and the result is an even more challenging and addictive game. The global ranking system is present and correct of course, but one of our favourite features is the ability to record entire runs then watch them back from a TV-style camera. Not only is it a cool way to show off your skills, but it also demonstrates the great-quality 3D graphics and textures. You can also customise your scooter or completely design your own.

All of the above is extremely well presented and accompanied with a pounding electro house score which adds to the intensity and the overall package massively.

There are few bumps during the ride, but thankfully not enough to send you off course completely. These pitfalls are most evident during the Versus Mode, which is a basic score comparison against local or global players. Also the inclusion of a pay-to-play model is a little disappointing, as always!

Brilliant presentation, great graphics and totally addictive gameplay really make this a complete package, and one you'll find yourself spending a long time with. An extremely excellent game all round. **JG**







# Blade Runner Rogue

Like tears in rain...



**S**et in the dystopian, bleak, and neon-drenched vision of a futuristic Los Angeles, Next Games' newest entry to the mobile gaming market has you filling the footwear of a Blade Runner. But does it pass the Voight-Kampff test, or does it have you dreaming of electric sheep?

Blade Runner Rogue isn't Next Games' first RPG, turn-based rodeo. The Finnish-based company already has an impressive stable of titles including the popular, *The Walking Dead: No Man's Land*. Releasing yet another turn-based RPG into an already over-saturated market is a brave move, but thanks to Blade Runner's cult heritage, Next Games looks like it may have another hit title on its hands.

The game takes place in the same Blade Runner universe as Ridley Scott's classic. You play a new Blade Runner, tasked with hunting down a variety of Replicants through the neon, rain-soaked and disturbingly cheerless Los Angeles. You amass a team of unique individuals, each equipped with abilities, weapons and so on to make your investigations easier. As always, the further you progress, the more difficult the enemy encounters become. You must spend the resources you win from each successful encounter on upgrading yourself and your team members. Over time, you begin to uncover a well conceived story, while also visiting locations made famous in the two Blade Runner movies.

**Gameplay isn't great, but despite that, we quite enjoyed it.**

## Animated Action

Graphically, Blade Runner Rogue is good. Next Games has captured the feel of the Blade Runner universe, with its dystopian atmosphere and brutal life choices. The animations are a little rough around the edges, putting us in mind of an early-to-mid-'90s PC title, but they're perfectly functional. Sound and musical score are spot-on, and enhance the atmosphere further through clever use and selective volume levels.

The gameplay, though, isn't great. It's absurdly simple, involving selecting a character, setting their ability (or skill), then selecting a target. Although this follows the base rules and dynamics of most, if not all, RPG turn-based titles, it is a little dull. Once you've won a round, you spend your rewards on upgrades and so on. This involves disappearing down a seemingly endless maze of menus and options which is as frustrating as hell and only adds to the inevitable boredom of the game.

But there's something here that keeps you playing long past what would normally have been the limit of your boredom. Perhaps it's the legacy that is Blade Runner, and with us being 40-something-bordering-on-our-50s gamers, geeks and movie addicts, we're invested in the lore of the Runner universe? Whatever it is, it's just enough to have us playing a little longer than we probably otherwise would.

To conclude, Blade Runner Rogue is an okay game. It looks good and sounds good, but can be repetitive and a little too simple in areas. Fans of the movies will probably like it more than a casual gamer browsing the App Store. **DH**

## Info//

**Next Games**

**[www.nextgames.com](http://www.nextgames.com)**

**Free with in-app purchases**

**iOS 13+**



## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + Good atmospheric graphics and sounds
- + Captures the spirit, look and feel of Blade Runner
- Gameplay is a little too easy
- Boredom levels quickly mount

### LAST WORD

While entertaining, Blade Runner Rogue may be retired early.

**RATING: 2.5/5**





# Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes

The Force isn't strong with this one.

## Info//

Electronic Arts

Free – with in-app purchases

Compatibility: iOS 11 or Later



The Star Wars franchise has been on the receiving end of some pretty hostile media over the last few years. It's hardly surprising really, considering the terrible new trio of movies, and the 'best forgotten' middle trio – we thought things couldn't get any worse with the introduction of Jar Jar Binks! Oh how wrong we were. However, the gaming side of Star Wars has proved to be a little more successful.

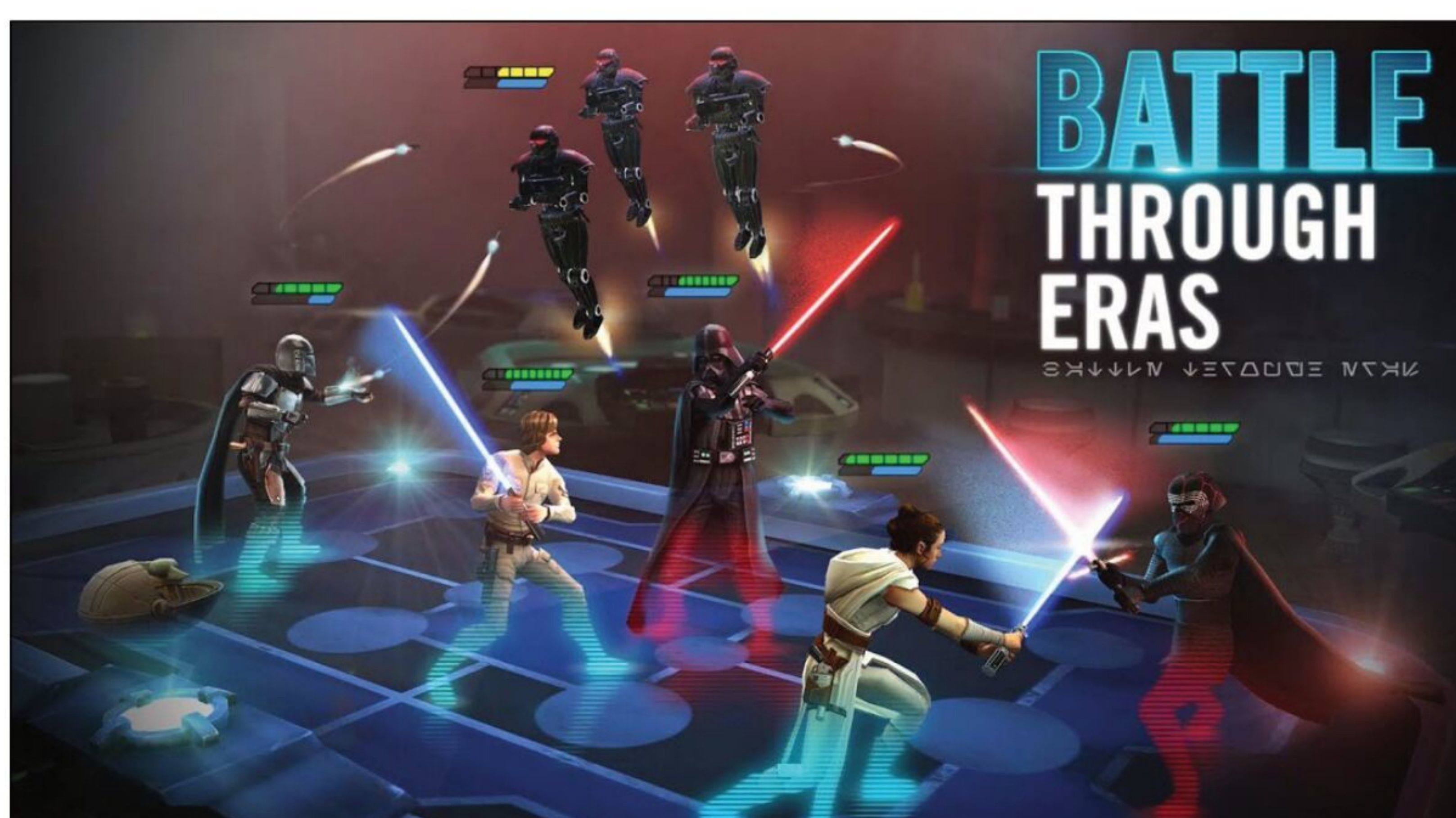
Take, for example, the older X-Wing series. Blooming marvellous games, those; and, the more recent Star Wars: Squadrons (basically, modern X-Wing series). Even the Battlefront games are of a far better quality and help keep the spirit of the Star Wars universe alive and kicking.

The exception, we feel, though, has to be the mobile side of Star Wars gaming. It's not for want of trying, either. We estimate there have been no less than thirty mobile titles associated with the franchise, and all of them have fallen a little short of the mark.

Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes, is the latest mobile developed game. Launched originally in 2015, and regularly updated since, the game is a turn-based RPG, gacha-style mashup of all your favourite, and beloved Star Wars characters and vehicles.

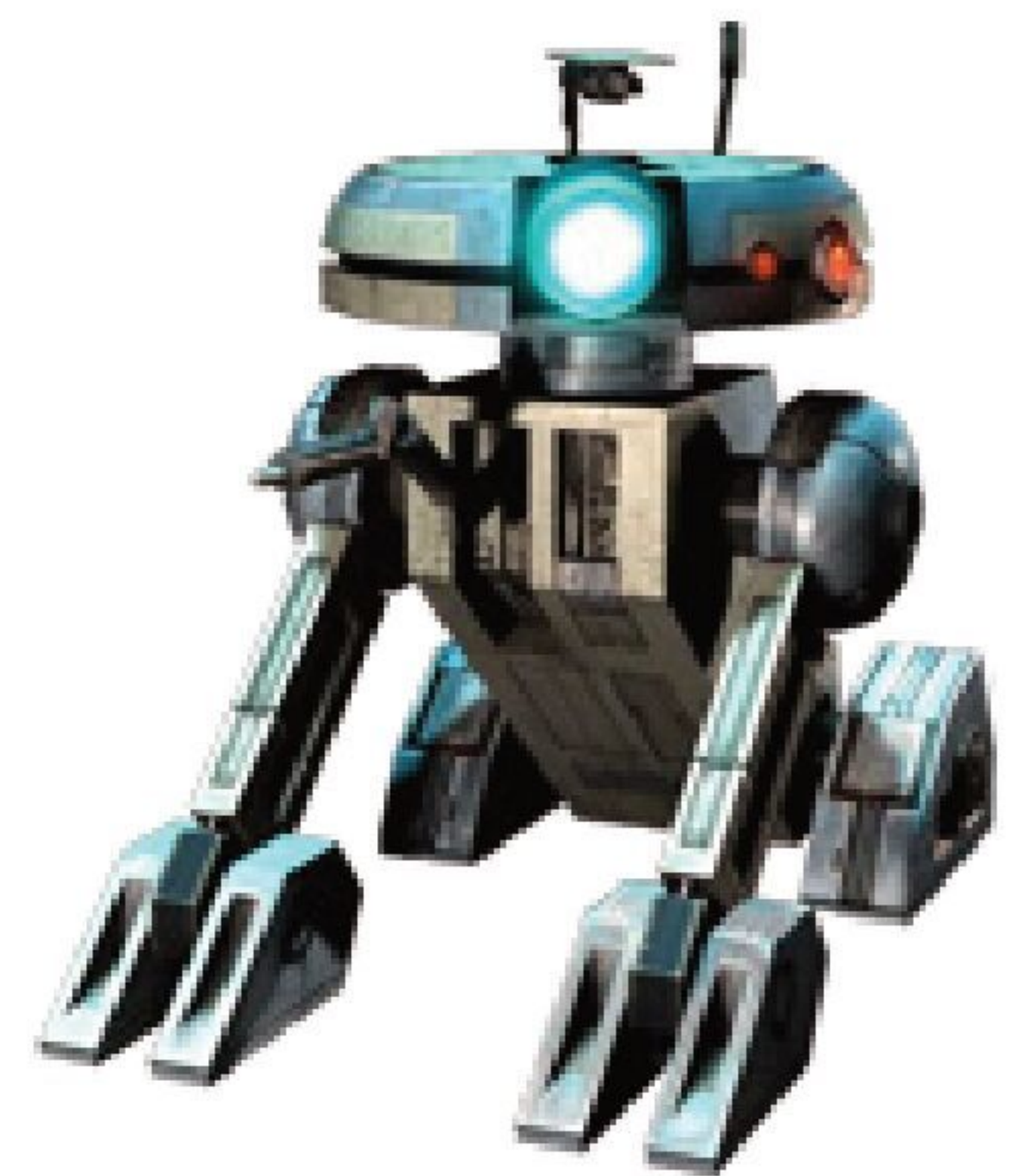
Rather than the usual format of turn-based RPG games, where you follow some quest to do something or other, Galaxy of Heroes instead has you gaming on Holo-Tables in a cantina. There are numerous campaigns available, depending on the table you're going to play at, such as Light Side Battles, Dark Side Battles, Cantina Battles, Galactic War and more, alongside a PvP Squad Arena battle. There are also guilds, challenges, events, and championships. In-game currency is spread across Crystals and Shards, which can be unlocked daily, and bought with real-world money.

The cast of characters and vehicles is impressive, with each character offering a unique set of battle-ready skills that you can upgrade and utilise when in combat. Mixing up, and having the



There are lots of iconic characters to unlock and fight with.





right team is the key to success – not all Force-using characters are great at combat – so, having some Force wielding users alongside heavy weapons, and say a multi-combat specific character, proves a better balance of your available power.

To be fair, beyond the initial gameplay area, it's a standard turn-based RPG affair. However, rather than immersing you in the Star Wars universe, and helping you want to better your characters, or even push your gaming to unlock those more elusive members of the team, the game instead pushes its marketplace on you from every conceivable angle.

Fair do's, the company has got to make money – developer's got to get paid – but the emphasis on pay-to-win is a little too much for our tastes.

Overall, Star Wars: Galaxy of Heroes, while an okay turn-based RPG with some unique elements, doesn't quite hit the mark. It's probably better than most of the other Star Wars mobile efforts, but it falls decidedly short compared to the other Star Wars gaming titles on other platforms. Fans of the universe will probably love it, but if you're a casual gamer, and not too fussed about Star Wars, there are better turn-based RPGs available. **DH**



Fans of the franchise will undoubtedly love it.

## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + Plenty of Star Wars characters and vehicles to choose from
- + Unique elements make it slightly more appealing as a turn-based RPG
- Ultimately, very dull
- Few bugs discovered, and slow-downs

### LAST WORD

Repetitive, dull, and far too much emphasis on the pay-to-win element

**RATING: 3/5**





# Final Fantasy VIII Remastered

Better late than never?

## Info//

SQUARE ENIX

[www.square-enix.com](http://www.square-enix.com)

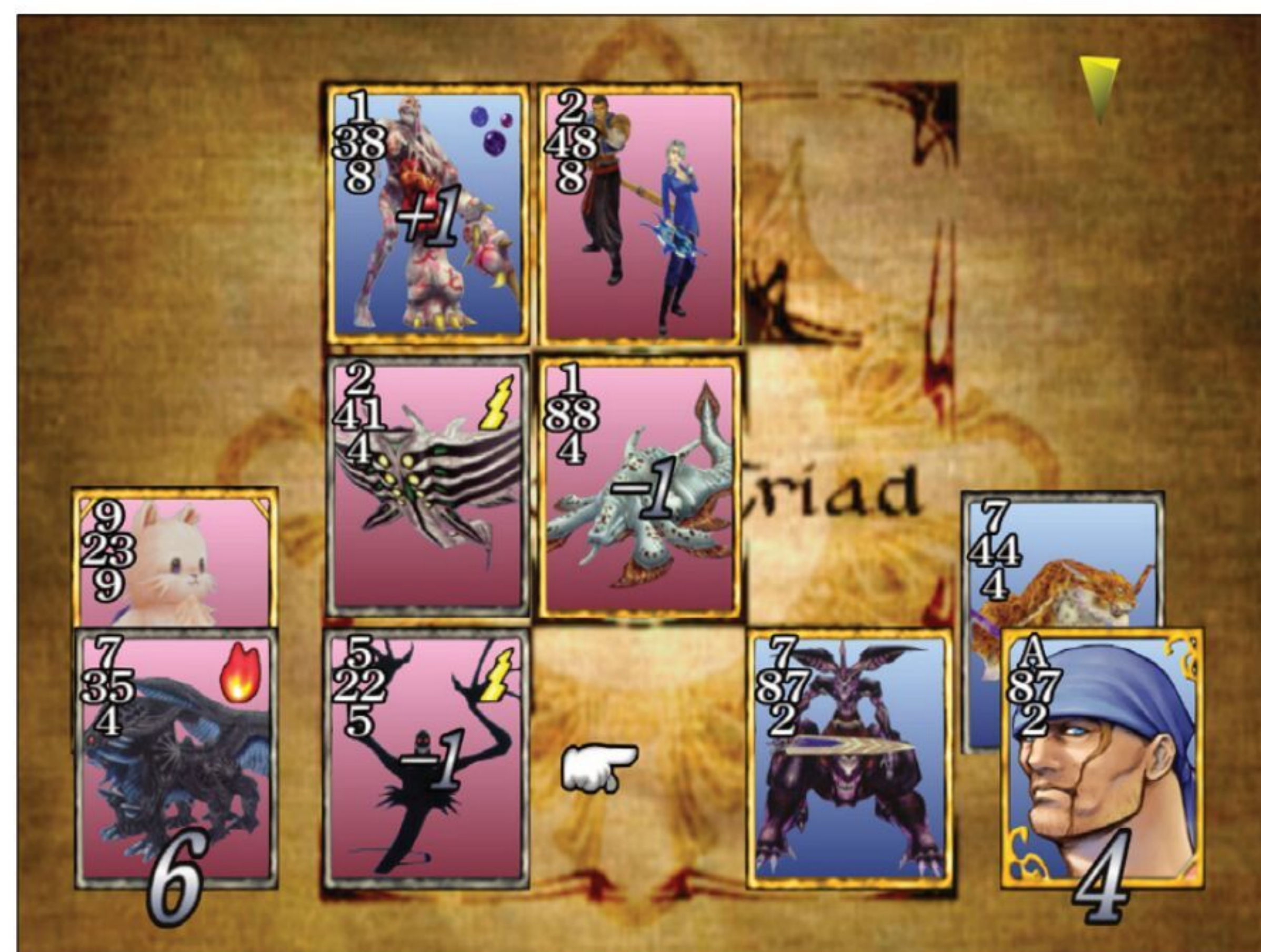
£20.49, \$20.99, 22,99 €

iOS 13 or later



**S**QUARE ENIX's mobile ports of its classic, Final Fantasy, have been a bit hit or miss. The first three titles of the series arrived with some elements missing. Final Fantasy VII in 2015 did a better job, but there were complaints that it felt more like it was running on an emulator than being a true port. Oddly, the company then released Final Fantasy IX the following year, along with different Final Fantasies over the next four years. However, fans of the series rejoice, for Final Fantasy VIII Remastered is now available from your favourite app store. But is it any good?

Final Fantasy VIII wasn't the most appreciated Final Fantasy release. Many of the changes the game implemented were frowned upon. But for some, Final Fantasy VIII remains one of the highlights of the series. This remastered RPG for iOS and iPadOS brings all that's great and glorious about Final Fantasy VIII to the small screen – including Triple Triad.



Changes to the mobile version include a Battle Assist, No Encounters, and a 3x speed option, so you can get through the immense storyline a bit quicker than previously. The changes are welcome, but the biggest flaw we found is again, the game feels like it's running through an emulator.

## Button Bashing

The buttons are overlaid, like any kind of emulated game on a mobile device, with a directional pad to one side, buttons to the other, and annoyingly, the shoulder buttons at the top of the screen. Usually the shoulder buttons aren't too much of a problem, but since they're used quite frequently throughout the combat sections, having to span over the screen to reach them can be extraordinarily frustrating. Sadly, we couldn't find any way to use an external controller, so for the time being we're stuck with virtual shoulder buttons.





Virtual buttons are annoying, with no external controller support.



There are also some warnings with regards to game-breaking bugs. The warnings are posted on the app's page in the App Store, and on a support FAQ page from the developer. In short, the advice is to save often, as you may need to revert to a saved game when one of these bugs strike.

But having said that, the game itself is well presented. It's a decent enough port of an under-appreciated game, in a very much beloved series. If you're new to Final Fantasy, you can happily play Final Fantasy VIII Remastered without having to know too much about the lore of the series. On the other hand, since there's nothing really new added to the mix here, if you've had your fill of Final Fantasy VIII back in the PlayStation days – or simply didn't like it – you're unlikely to want to play it on your mobile device.

Hats off to SQUARE ENIX, though. With these releases we're fast reaching a point where a lot of our gaming heritage is available in our pockets, which is always a good thing. **DH**



I forgot how much I disliked Squall in the first half of the game!

## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + A good addition to the FF series on the mobile platform
- + Triple Triad, enough said!
- Buggy and broken in some places
- Feels too much like an emulation

### LAST WORD

Final Fantasy VIII Remastered might not be the best FF game ever, but fans will appreciate it.

**RATING: 3/5**





# Godzilla Battle Line

RRROOOAAARRRR!!!!



## Info//

Toho Co. Ltd  
[www.toho.co.jp/en/](http://www.toho.co.jp/en/)  
 Free with in-app purchases  
 iOS 10+



In conjunction with the release of Godzilla vs. Kong, Toho was tasked with releasing a trio of mobile games: Run Godzilla, Godzilla Destruction, and this title, Godzilla Battle Line. Run Godzilla was terrible, Godzilla Destruction was better, so can Toho hit the mark with its third instalment?

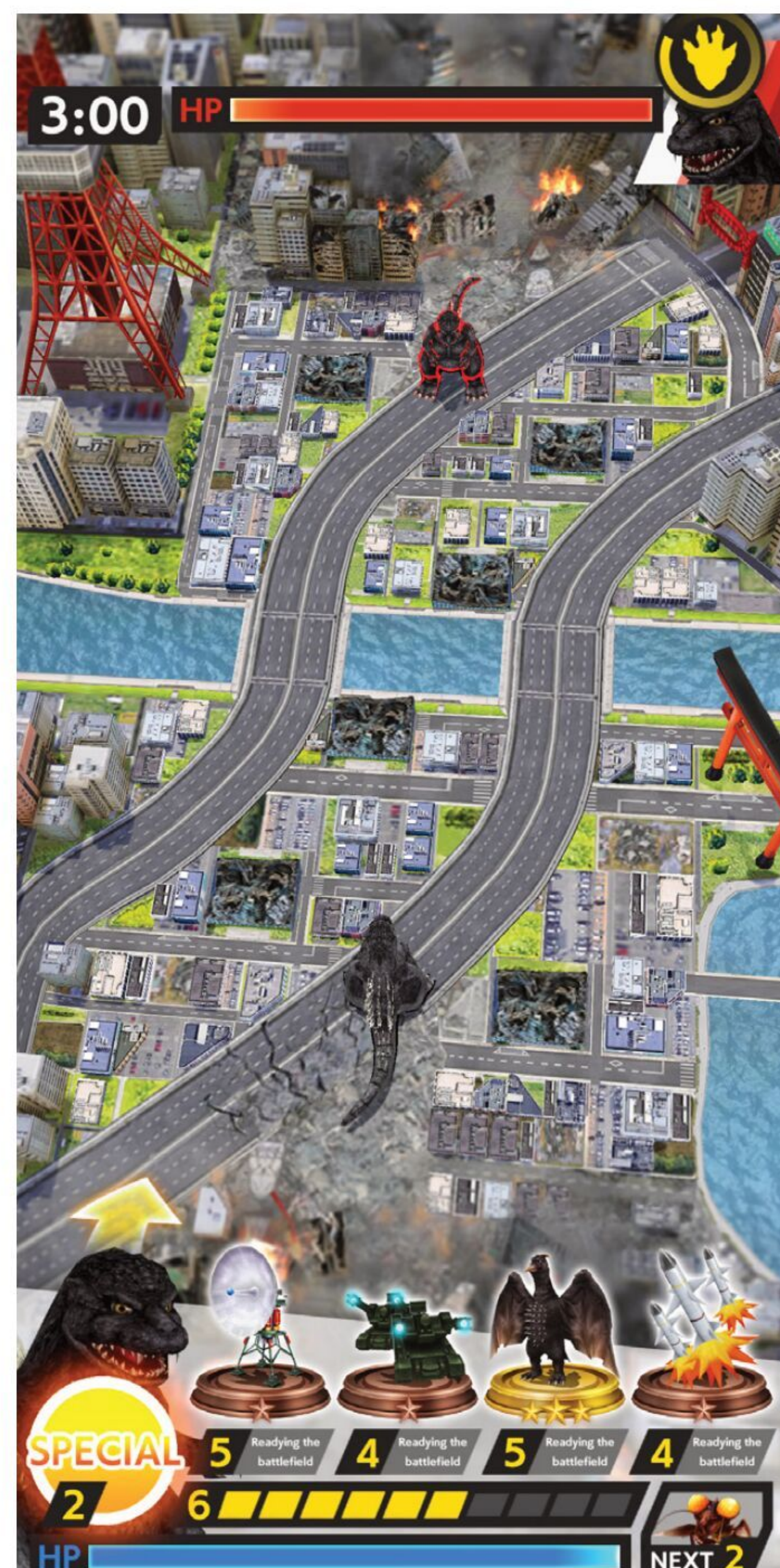
Godzilla Battle Line is a different Kaiju (Japanese giant monsters) to its sibling titles from Toho. The game involves you creating a team of monsters to duel with other players, ranked according to your current skill level.

Developed as a real-time strategy affair, where you battle in a three-minute round against an opposing player, Godzilla Battle Line has you aiming to take down the player's lead monster. The Kaiju available range from the titular King

of the Monsters himself, to the likes of Mothra, King Gidorah, Mechagodzilla and many more. Alongside your team of beasts, you can opt to unleash a destructive arsenal upon your opponent. Missile strikes, freezing weapons, cannon fire and bases are all available to help you gain an edge and win the fight.

## Go Go Godzilla

Your team selection and available weapons are displayed at the bottom of the gameplay area, along with your limited energy bar (which is drained when using special moves or deploying monsters and weapons). From there, you can swipe a new team monster onto the battlefield and place it strategically where it can do the most damage to the opposing



The two leaders square off against each other.



team, or help decoy fire away from your lead Kaiju.

The battlefield maps are neatly rendered, giving the player a selection of 3D buildings of various sizes to destroy as their monsters battle. Exploration of the maps, while in battle, can yield surprising results such as new monsters, power-ups and other useful items.

There's plenty to get your teeth into here: special moves, upgrading current monsters, unlocking more weapons; and there's a lot more on the way too, according to the developer. In short, you'll not lose interest any time soon.

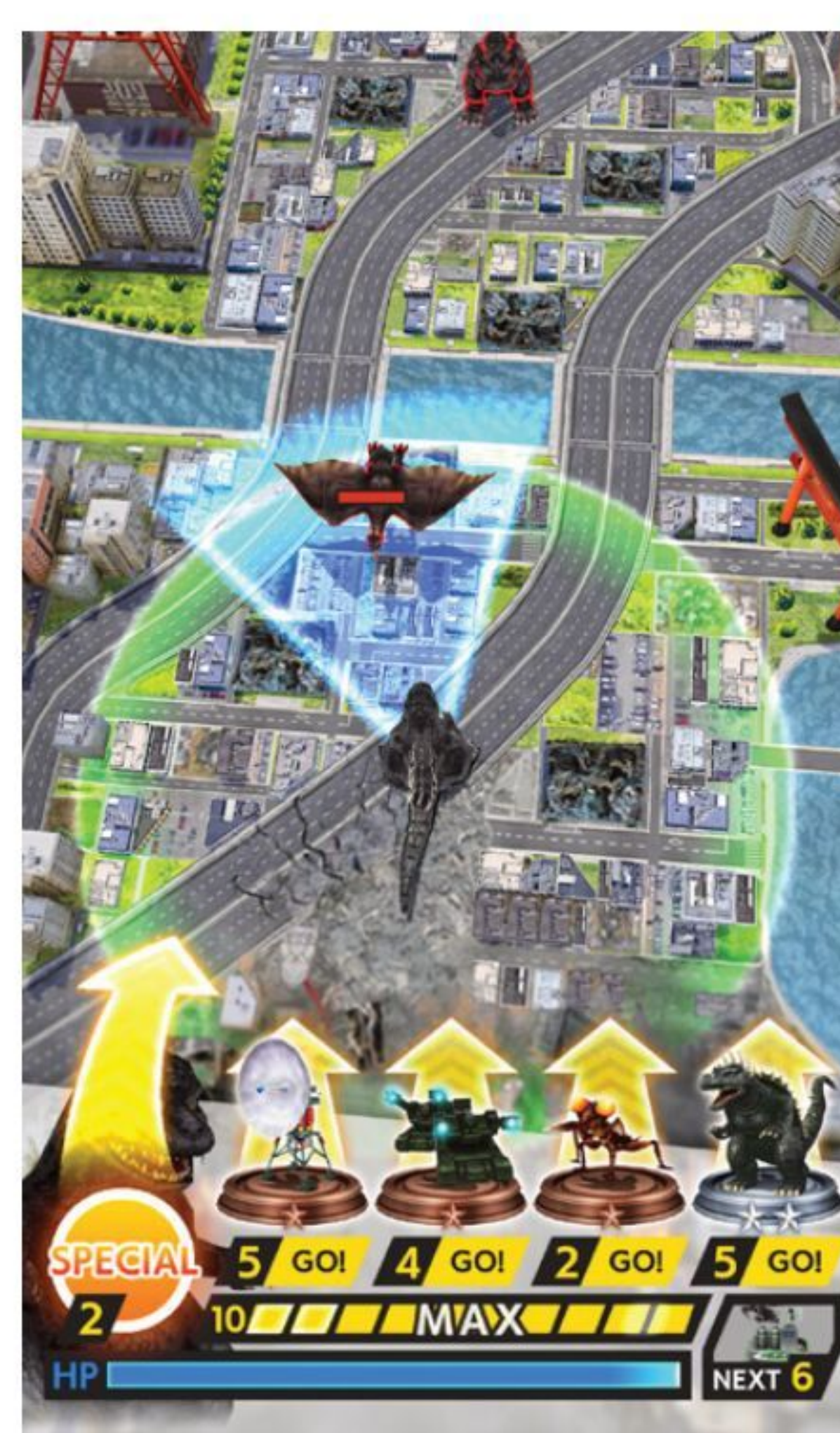
## Easy on the Eyes

Godzilla Battle Line is a great blend of graphics, iconic sounds and music, and fun gameplay. The duel element works very well indeed, as you're not matched against an opponent who is ridiculously more skilled than you; or, for that matter, one who has paid to unlock elements that you haven't. It's still a challenge, and the fights can become quite manic as your team is slowly decimated by the other player, but overall, it's glorious fun.

We liked Godzilla Battle Line. The choice of monsters available, power-ups, weapons, and the frantic fun of the three-minute battles all combine to create a mobile game that's not easy to put down. **DH**



Enjoy glorious destruction while beating your opponent!



## Verdict//

### PROS AND CONS:

- + Great animations & graphics sounds
- + Fun battles
- + Plenty to unlock over time
- Can be utterly manic at times

### LAST WORD

A surprisingly fun mobile game.

**RATING: 4/5**



# Masterclass

## Reaching for the Skies with iCloud!

iCloud is an awesome cloud computing service run by Apple. When you set up an Apple ID, giving you an iCloud email address, you also get 5GB of free online storage, and you can buy more if you wish. But what's it all for? What do you do with your online storage? How do you sync your data with iCloud? This month's tutorial section reveals all this and more.





# iCloud

## **Tutorials**

### **For the Mac**

**104// Using iCloud For Storage & Syncing**

### **For the iPhone**

**110// Your Apple ID - Set Up and Use it**

**112// iCloud Drive - Cloud Computing**

**116// Using the Files App - Its Secrets Uncovered**

### **For the iPad**

**118// Your Apple ID - How to Set it Up**

**120// iCloud Drive - Cloud Feature**

**124// Using the Files App - Data Management**





# Using iCloud

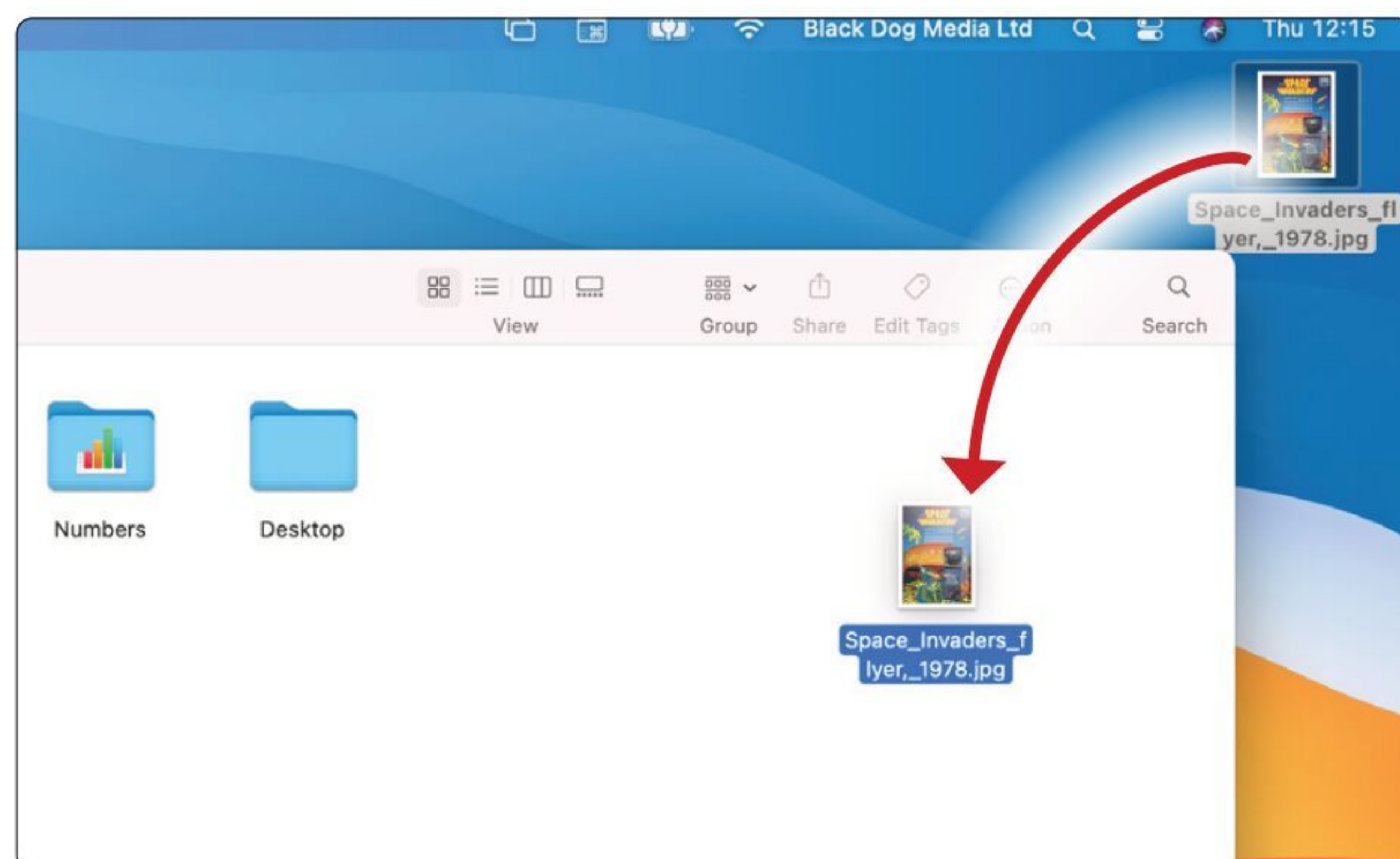
## For Storage & Syncing

iCloud is Apple's foothold in the modern cloud services market. It's robust and features excellent georedundancy (meaning if an iCloud server goes down, there's another somewhere in the world to pick up), and is more than capable to handle the average user's needs.

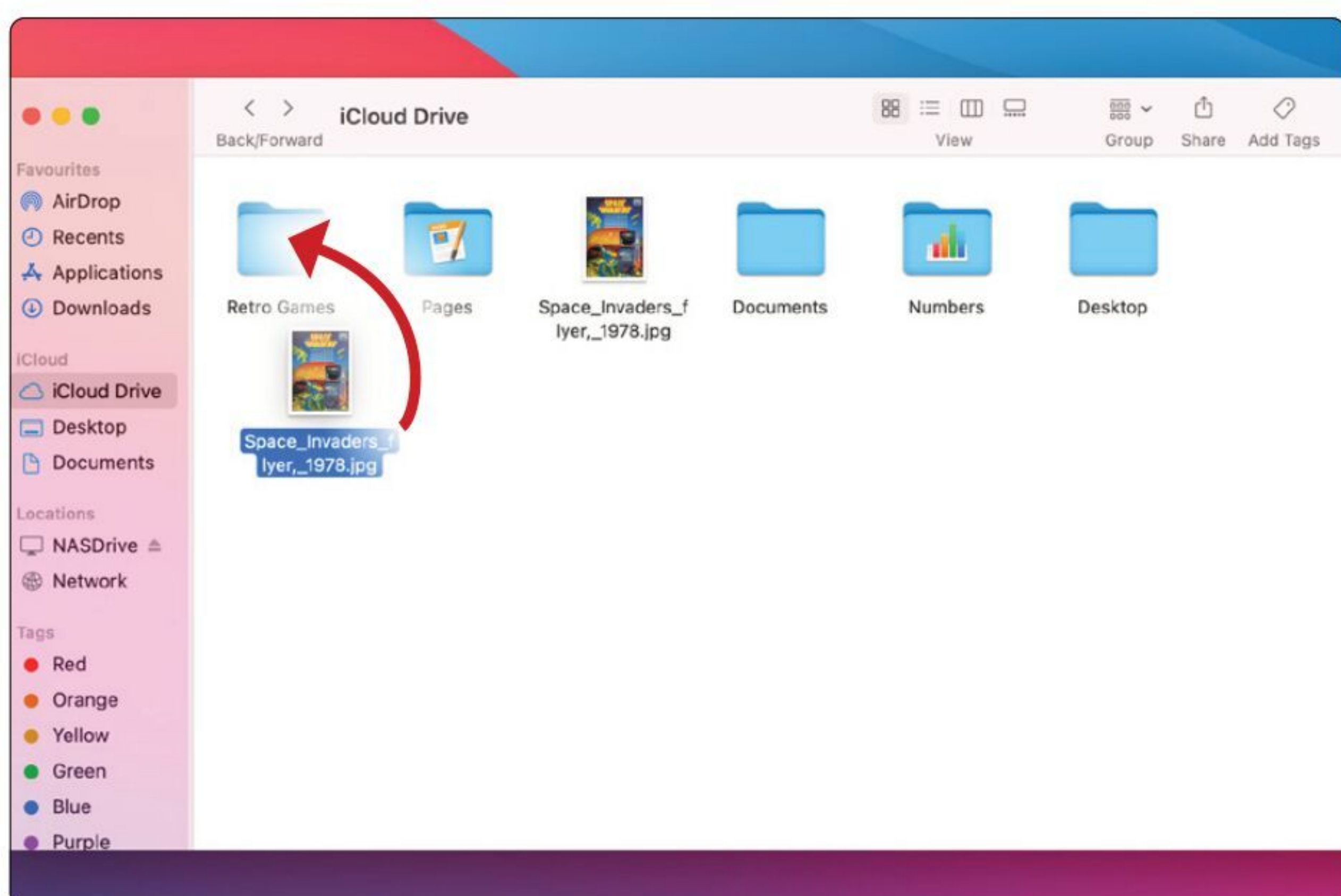
### Storing Your Documents in iCloud



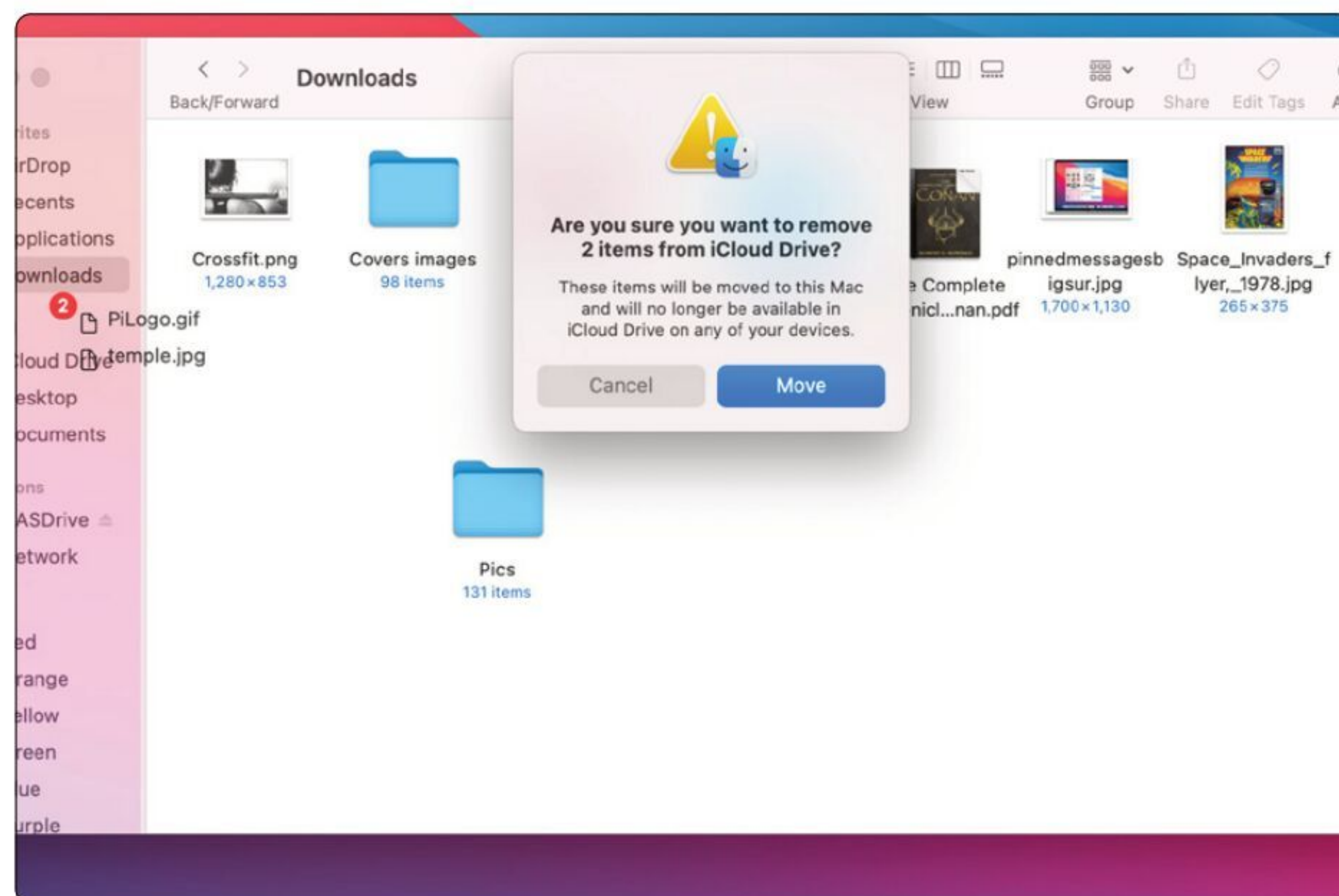
**1** Click on your desktop to open Finder, then open iCloud Drive from the Go menu. You may need to log into iCloud using your Apple ID. You'll see a Finder window showing the contents of your iCloud drive folder, with folders for some apps that store output in iCloud.



**2** To save files of any type into your iCloud Drive folder, simply drag them from their current location (in this screenshot, that's the desktop) and drop them in the open iCloud window. They are now stored remotely and accessible from any connected Apple device.



**3** You can organise your iCloud folder like any other folder, including creating new folders within it. To move files into a new folder in your iCloud Drive, just drag and drop them to where you want them, just like you would with any other Finder folder.



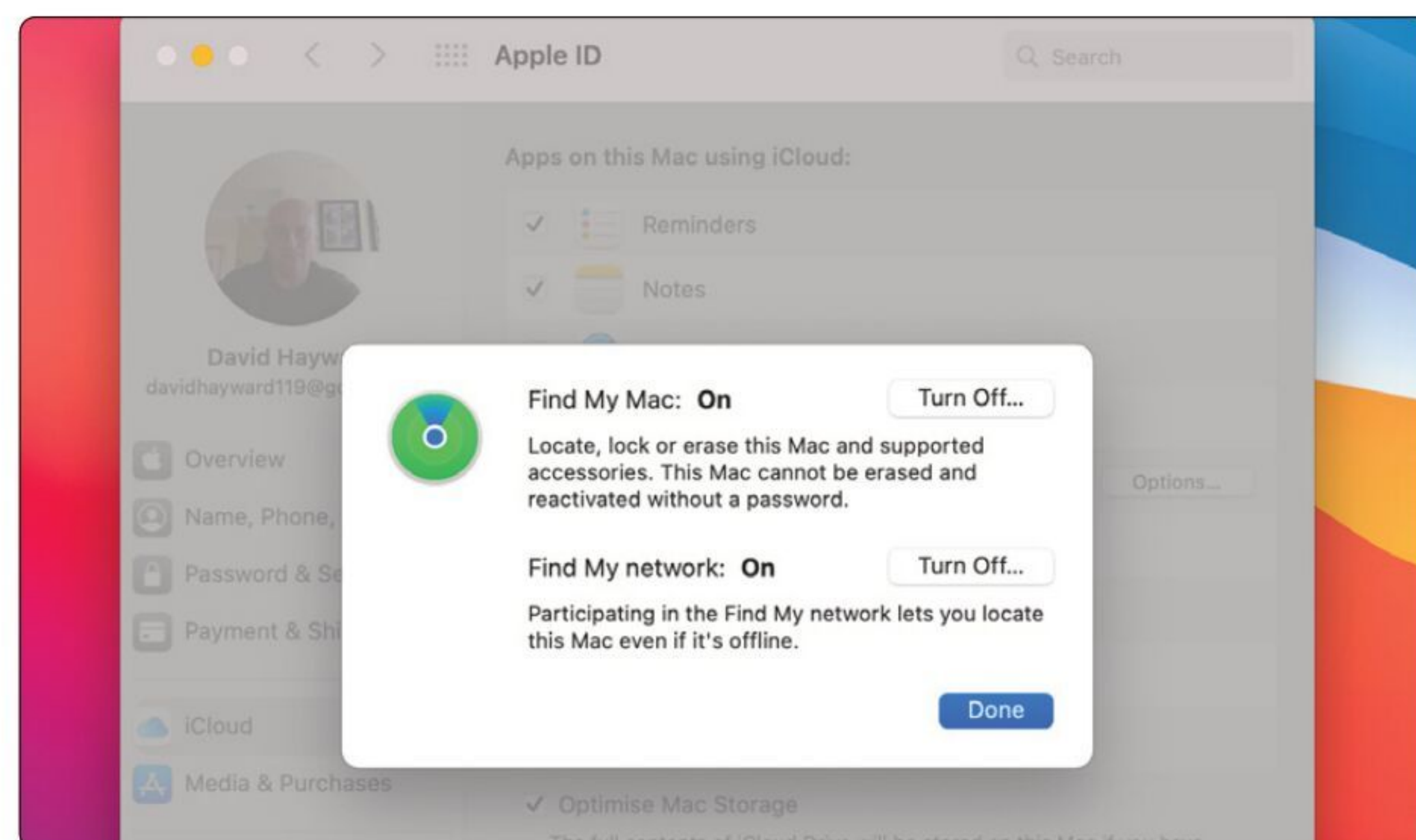
**4** To move files out of iCloud storage and back to your hard drive, drag them out of the iCloud folder and onto your desktop or into a folder that isn't in your iCloud Drive. Confirm the move when you're asked to and the files are removed from your iCloud storage.



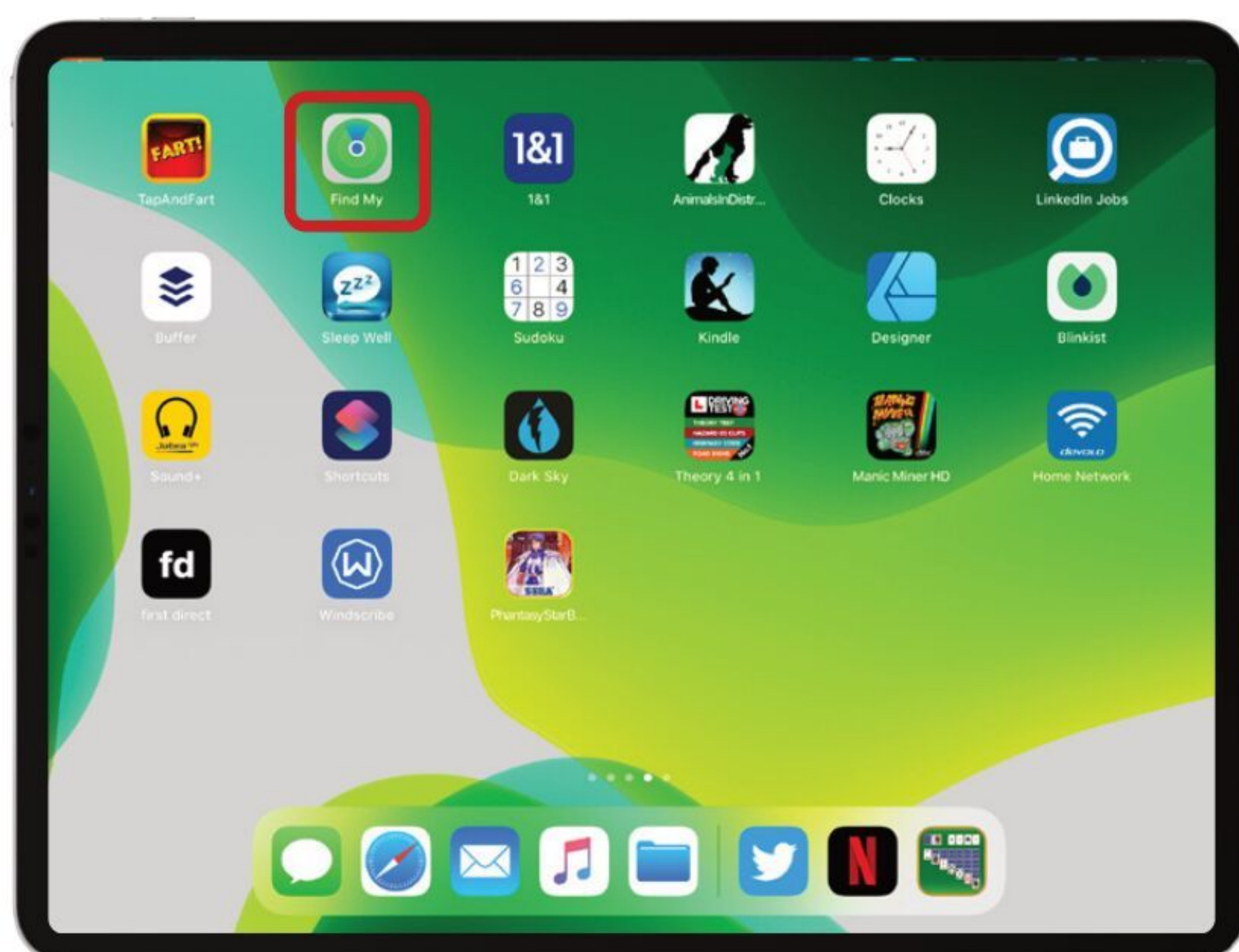
# Find My Mac



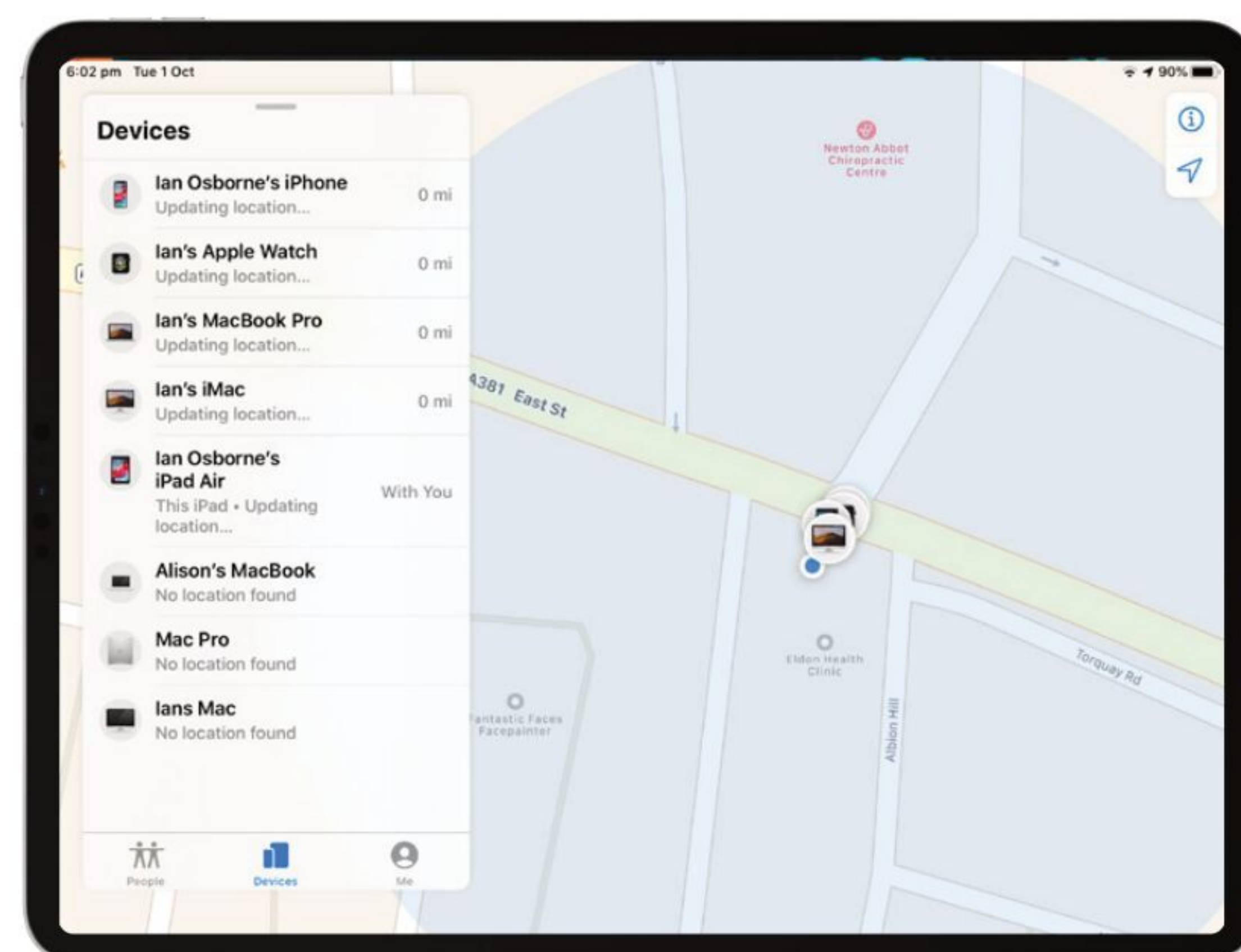
**1** Find My Mac is an excellent feature that could help you find a lost or stolen Mac, as long as it has recently been connected to the Internet. First, you need to set it up. Open System Preferences, either from the Apple menu or from the Dock or Launchpad.



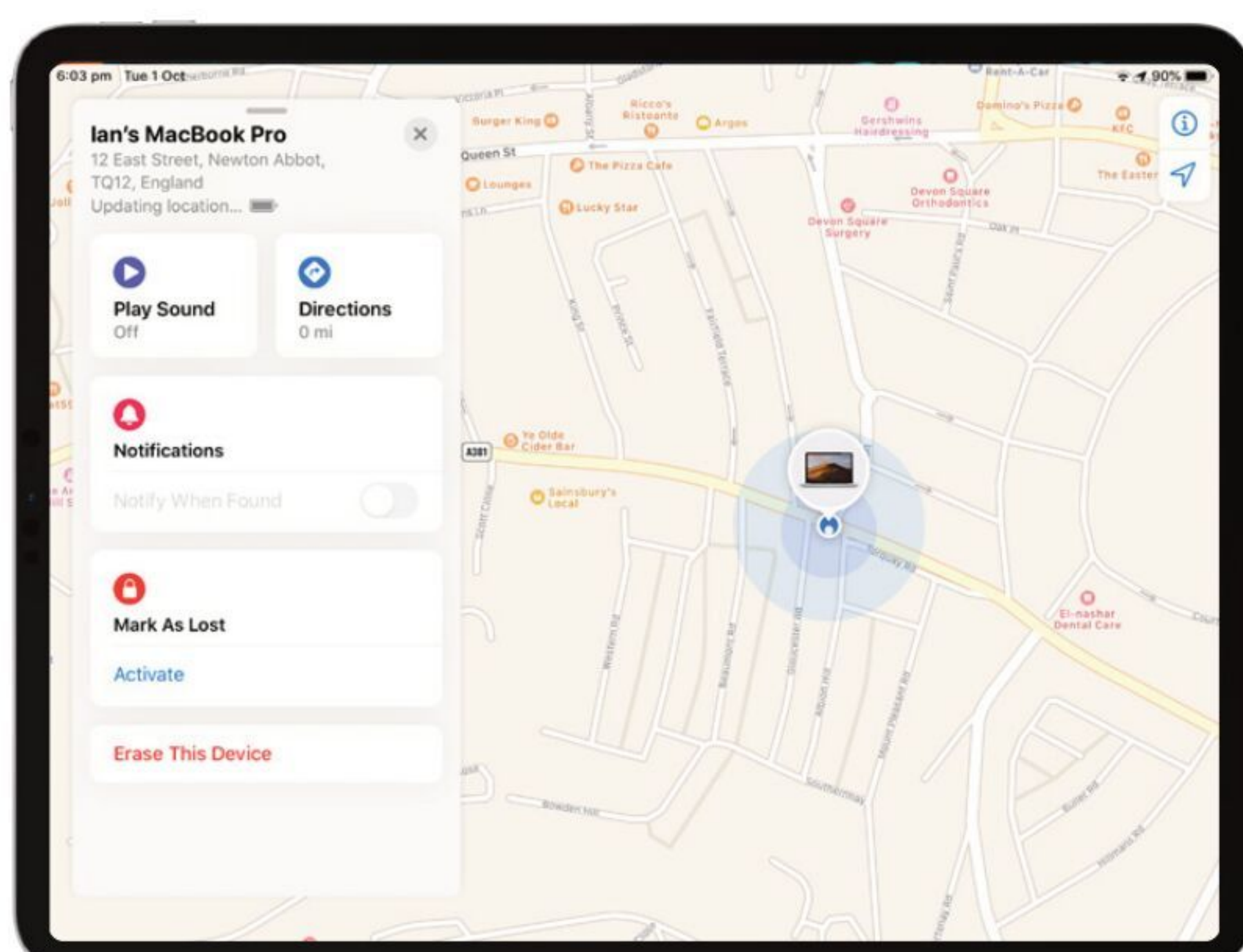
**2** Click the Apple ID preference pane and then the iCloud option in the left-hand toolbar. If you aren't already signed in, do so now. In the right-hand column, make sure the Find My Mac option is ticked. Click Options and make sure Find My Mac and Find My Network are both on.



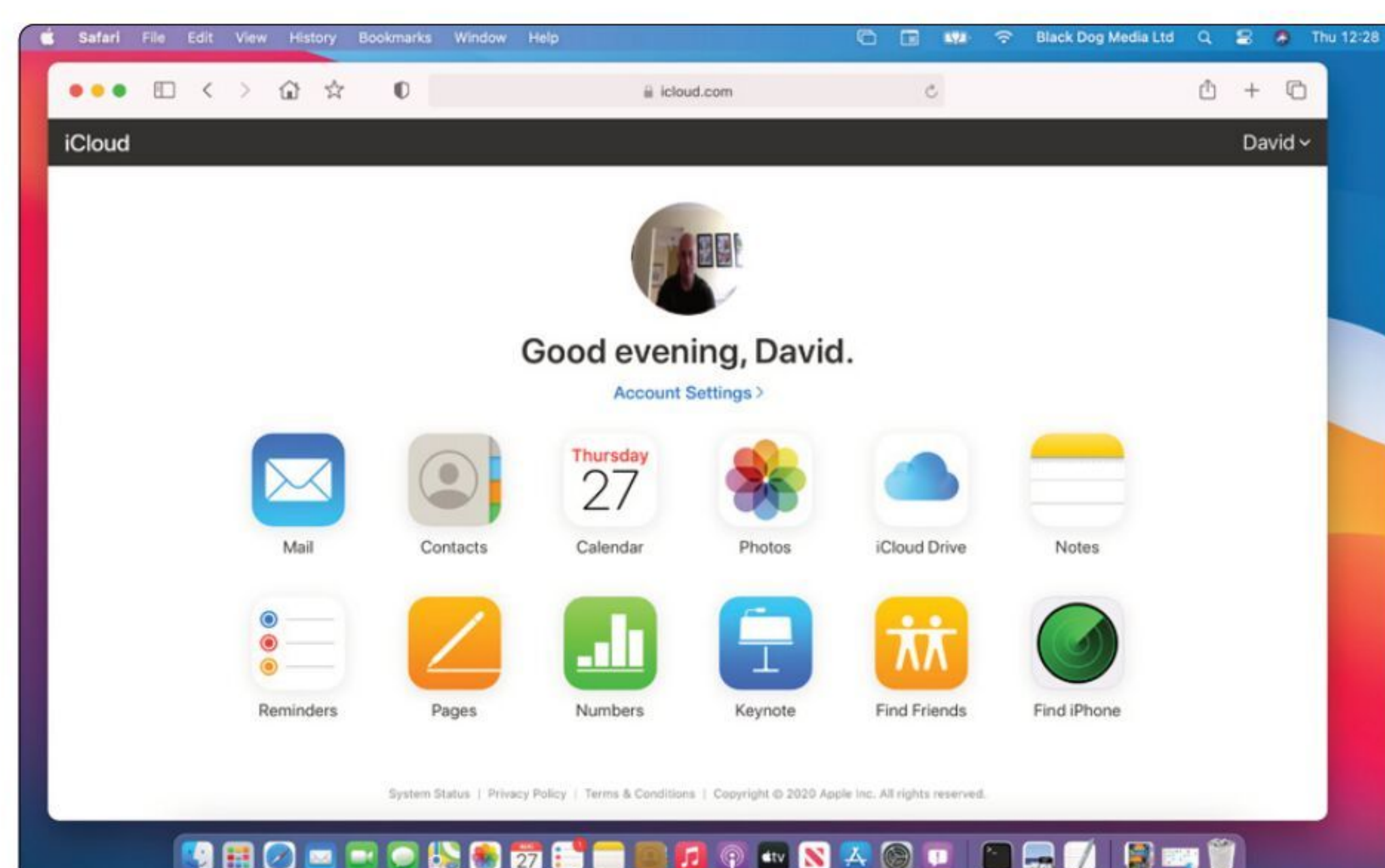
**3** To locate a stolen or mislaid Mac using an iPhone or iPad, open the Find My app or Find My iPhone if you're using iOS 12 or earlier. Again, you need to be signed into iCloud, with the same ID as the Mac you're trying to locate. You can use this app to find other types of Apple devices too.



**4** Tap the Devices icon in the bottom left corner and you're shown a list of Apple devices signed into the same Apple ID as the device you're using. The list is shown down the left-hand side. Tap an item to show its current location on the map.



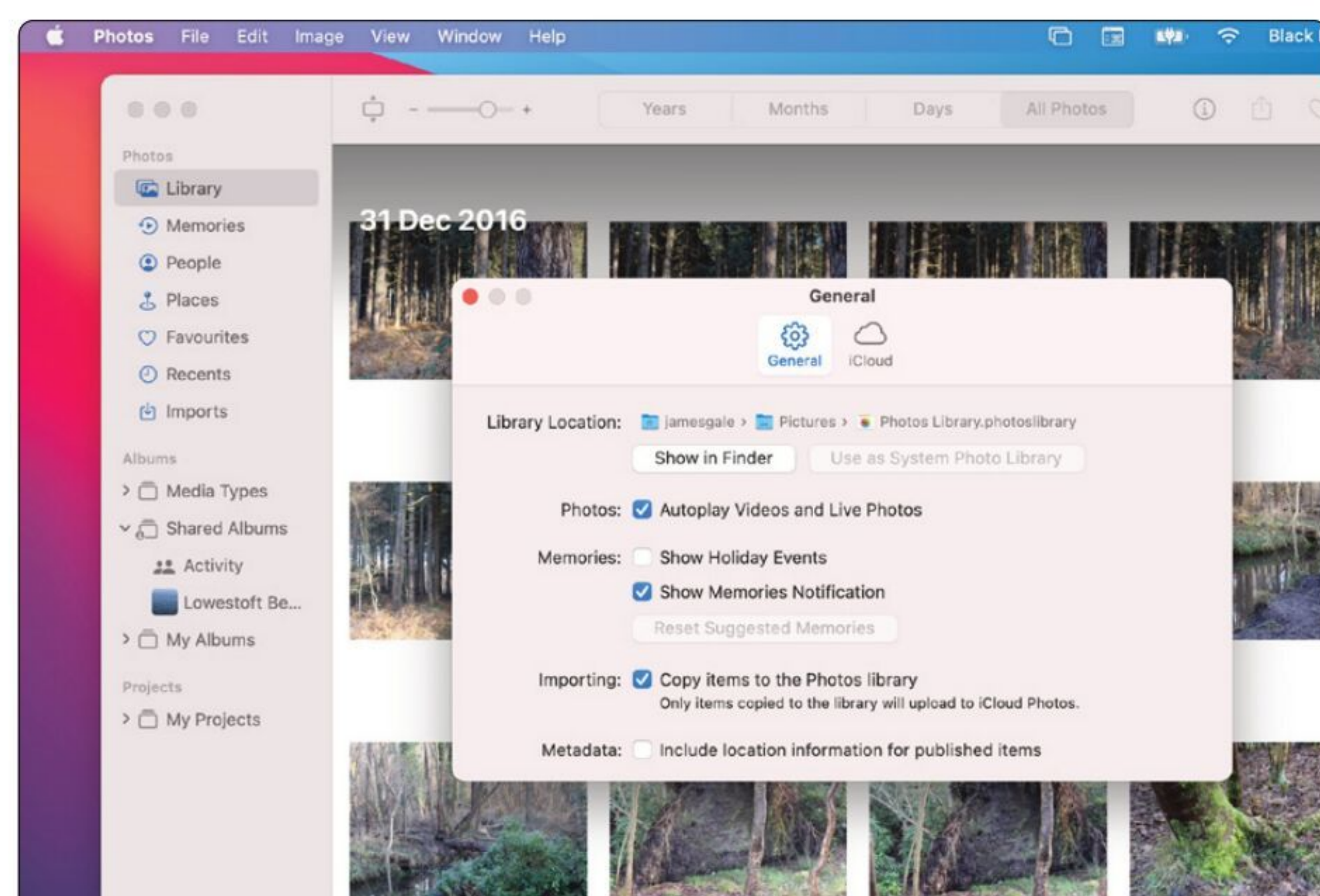
**5** Tap a device on the map for more options. Tapping a device that can't be located in the sidebar also gives you these options. You can make the device play a sound, lock it or wipe it remotely. If it's not located, you can get a notification next time it goes online.



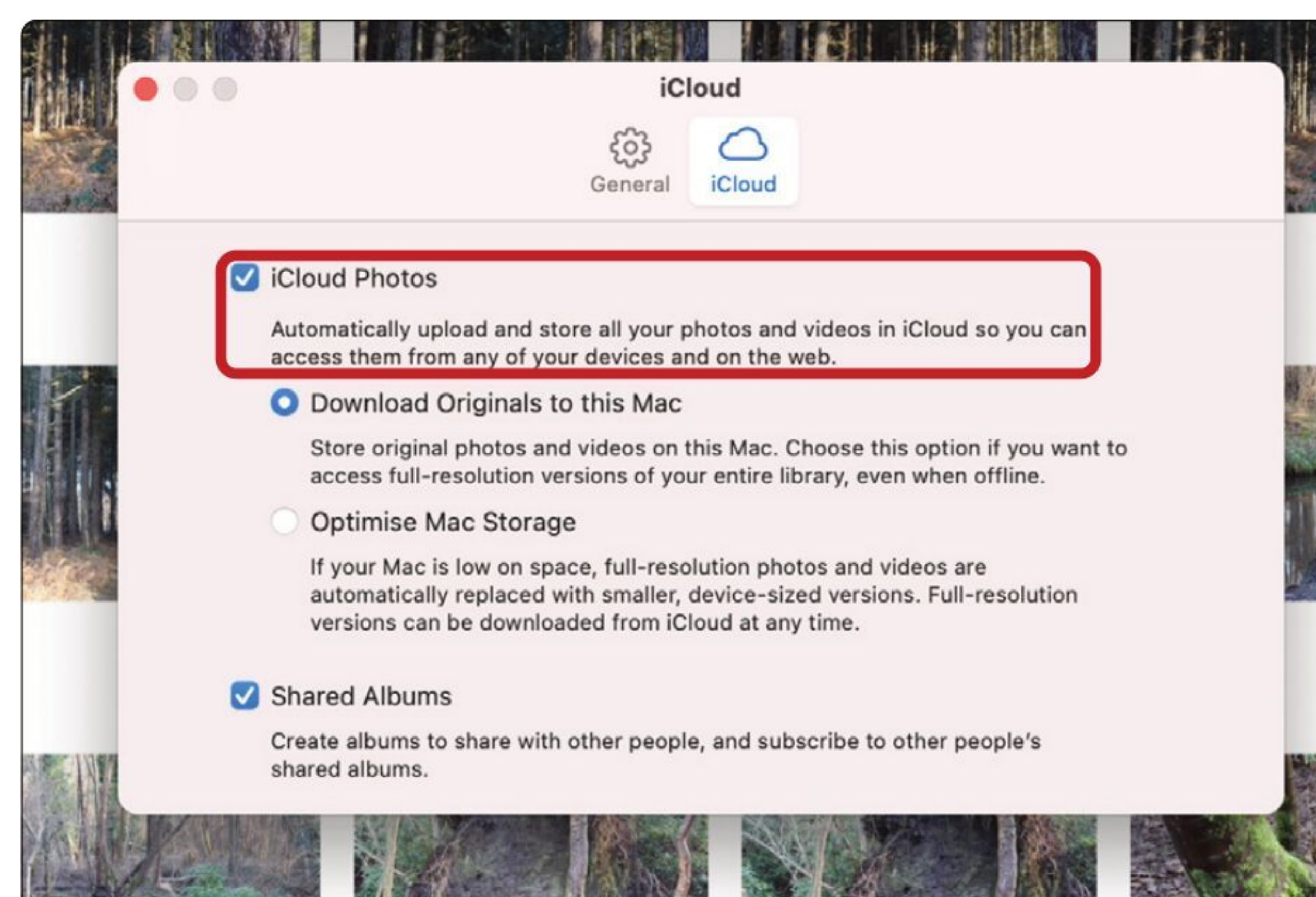
**6** You can also use Find My Mac from any device with a web browser and an Internet connection. Just go to [www.icloud.com](http://www.icloud.com) and sign in with your Apple ID. On the menu screen click on Find My iPhone and then use it just like you do on your iOS devices.



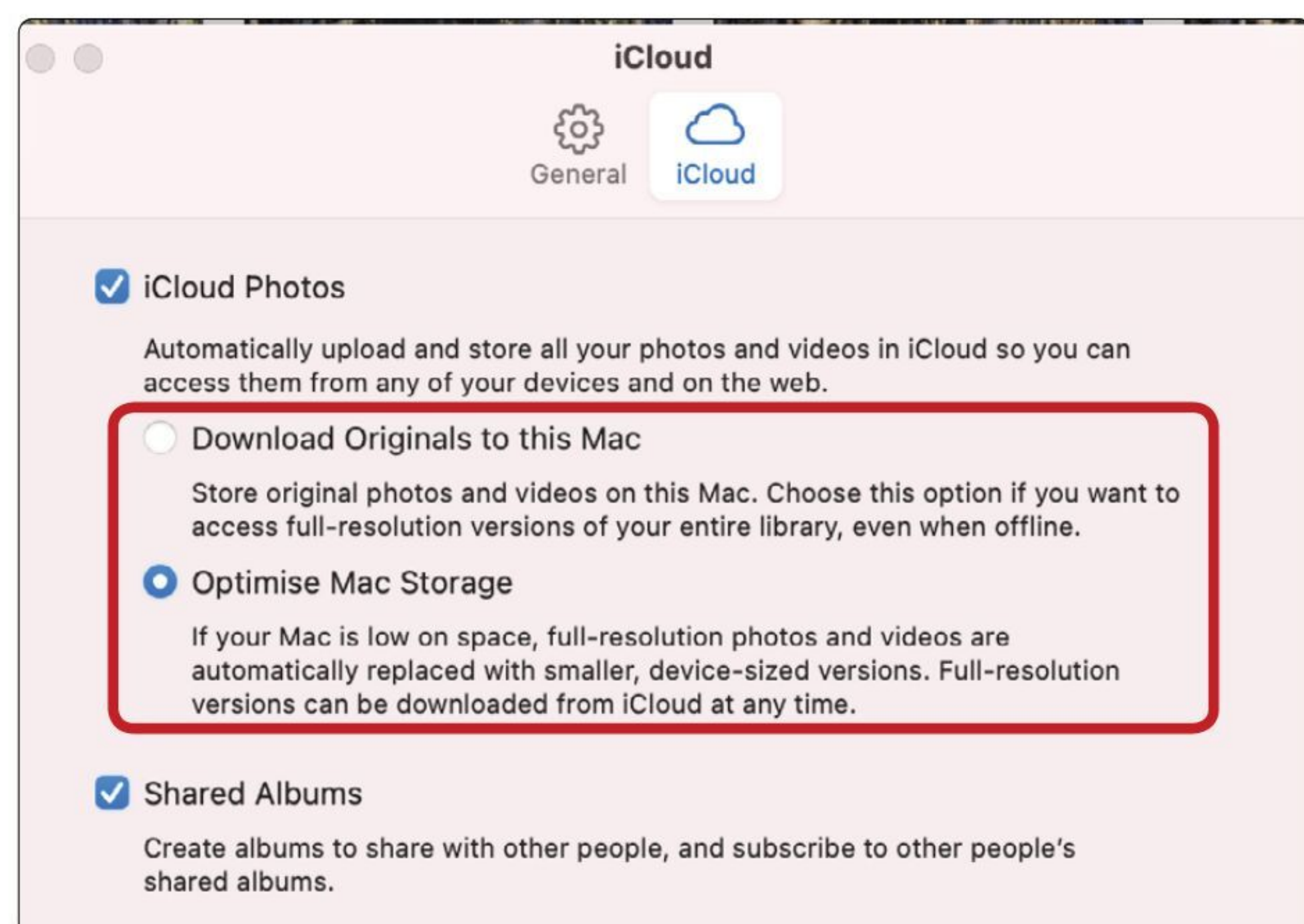
# iCloud Photos



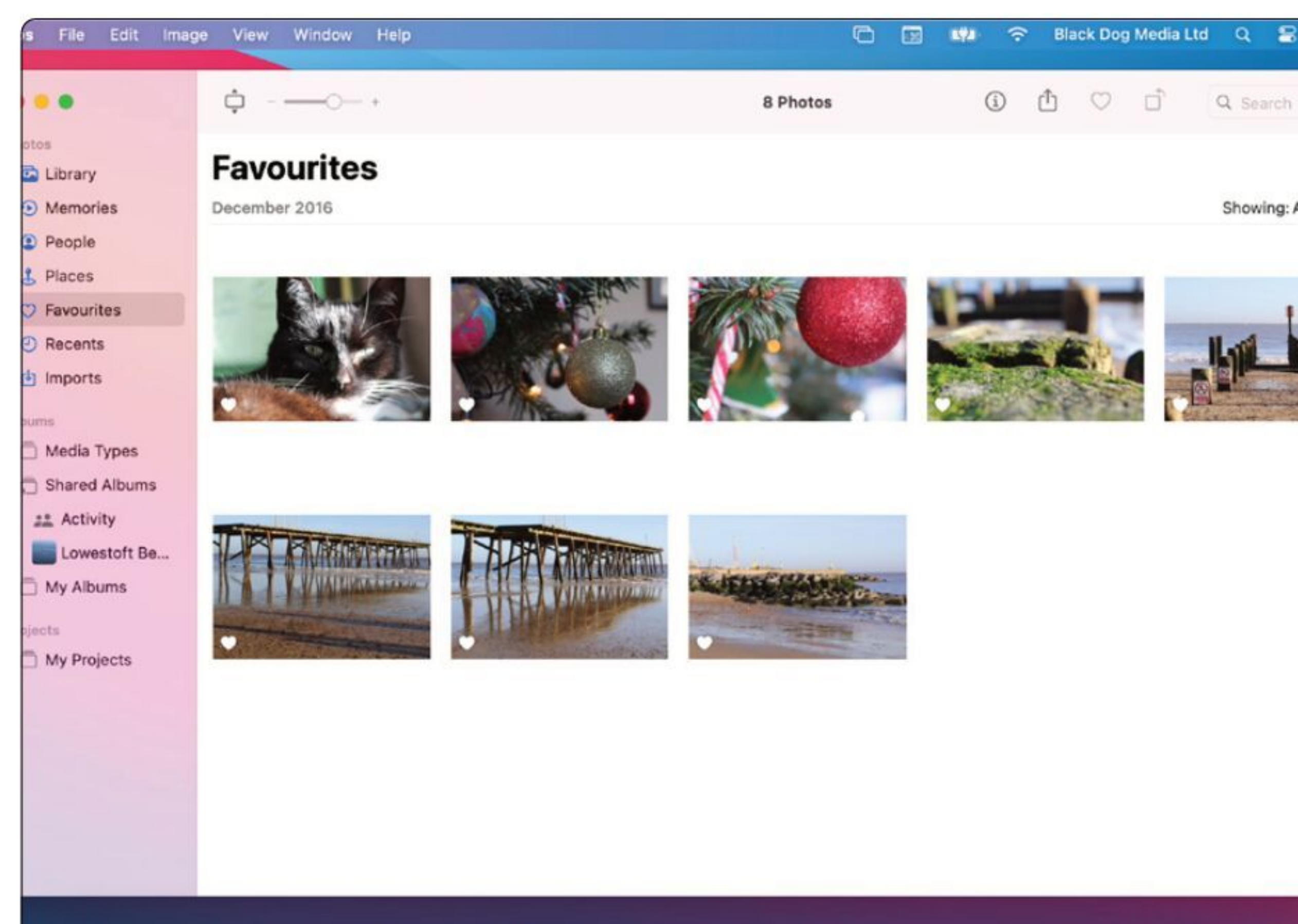
**1** To enable iCloud Photo Library on your Mac, first of all, open the Photos app and in the Photos pull-down menu, select Preferences as shown, to get the Preferences window.



**2** In the Preferences window, click on iCloud and then check the box labelled iCloud Photos. Your photos are uploaded to your iCloud. This may take some time.



**3** You can choose between 'Download Originals to this Mac', to keep a backup copy of your library on your Mac and 'Optimise Mac Storage' to leave it all on the cloud.



**4** Now do the same on any other Macs you have. Any duplicates should be resolved by iCloud as you go. Naturally, you only need a backup of your library on one Mac.

## Sharing an iCloud File.

You can share a file in your iCloud Drive just by sending someone a link. Right or Ctrl-Click on the file and select Share > Share File. From the window that pops up, choose a means of sending the link. You can select whether the people to whom you send the link can make changes to the file or only view it.

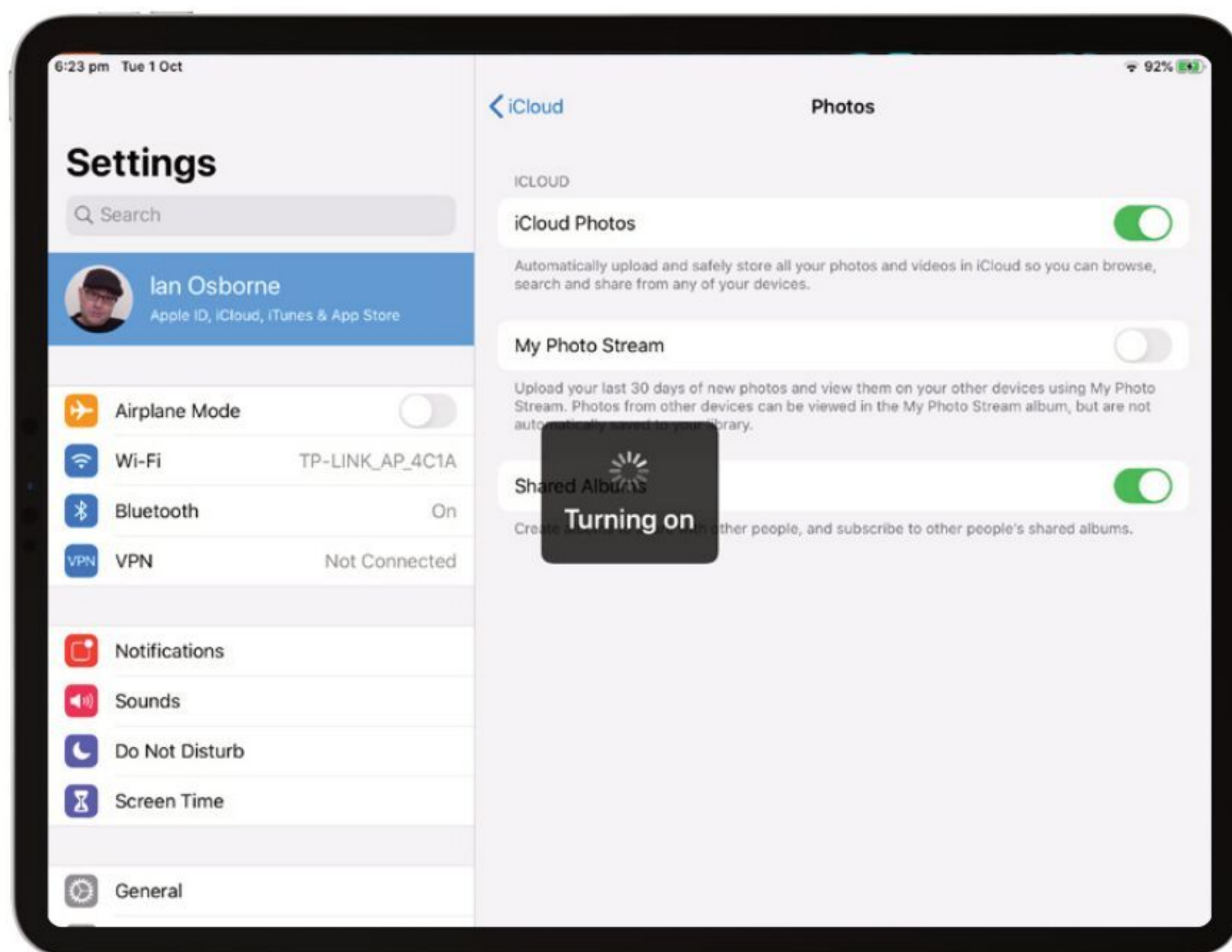


**5** To sync your iOS device's Photos app with your iCloud Photo Library, first open the Settings app from the Home screen. It's the one that looks like a machine cog.

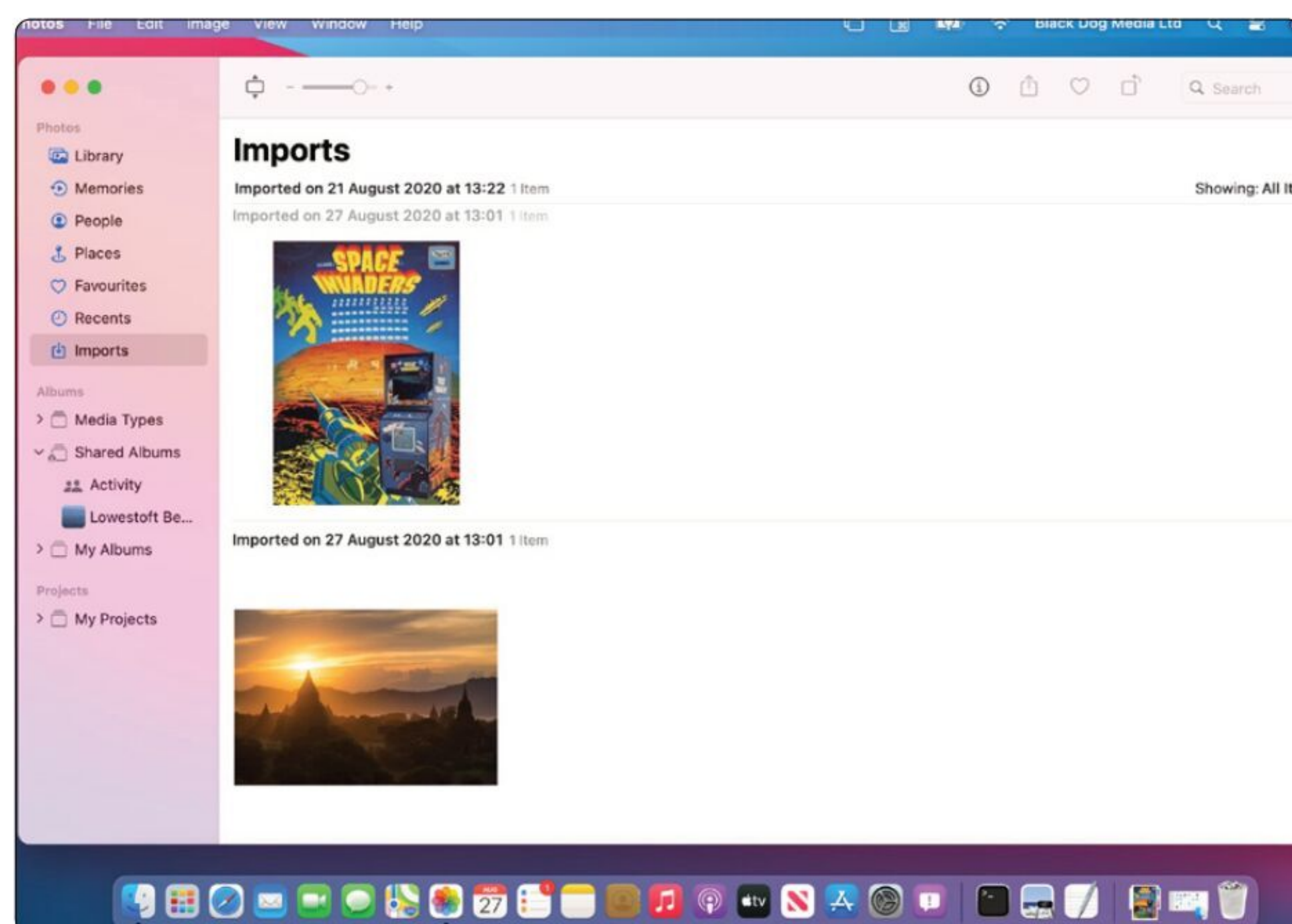


## Syncing Apps in iCloud.

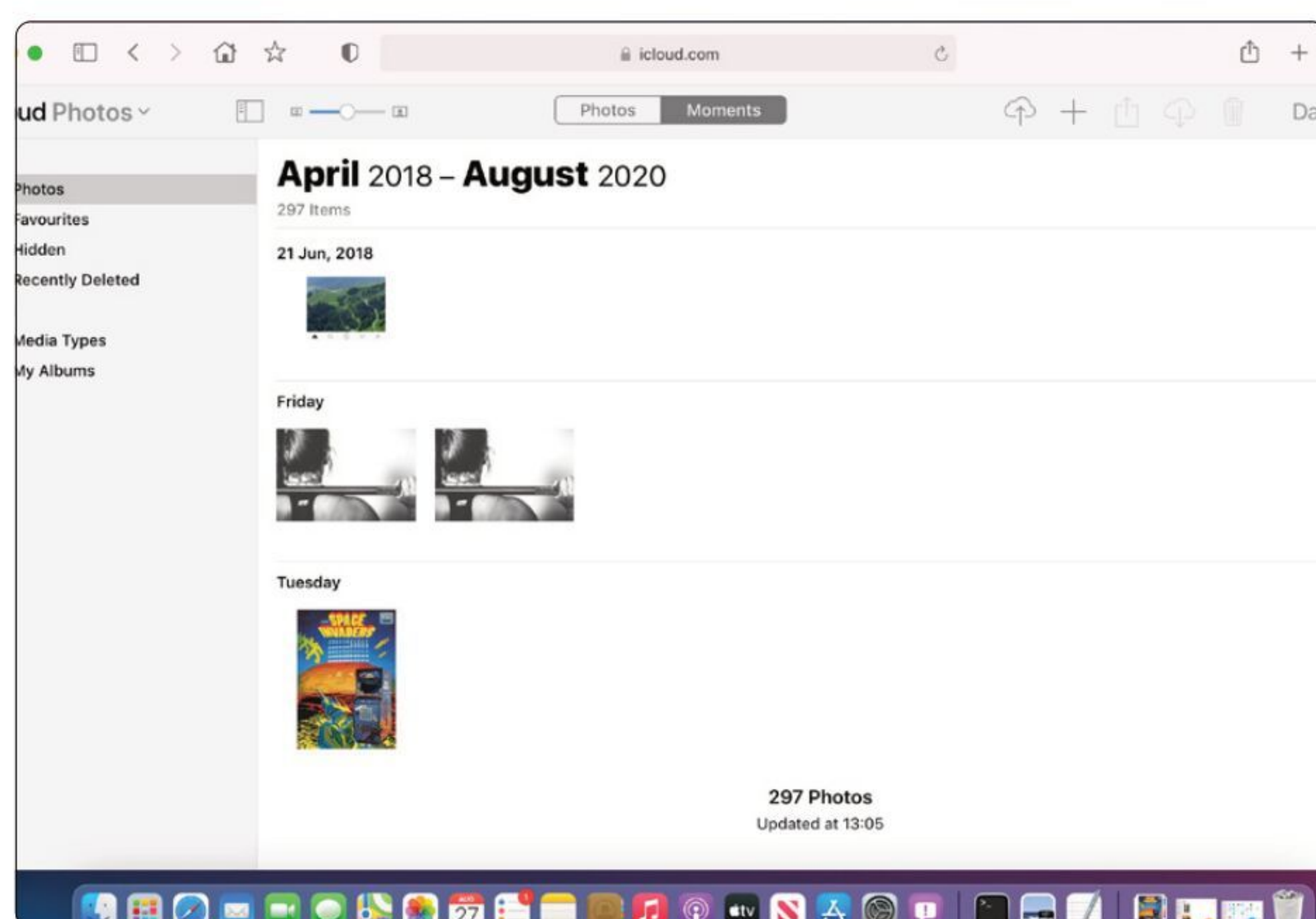
You can sync apps such as Mail, Contacts and Notes in iCloud, so edits made on one device also appear on others.



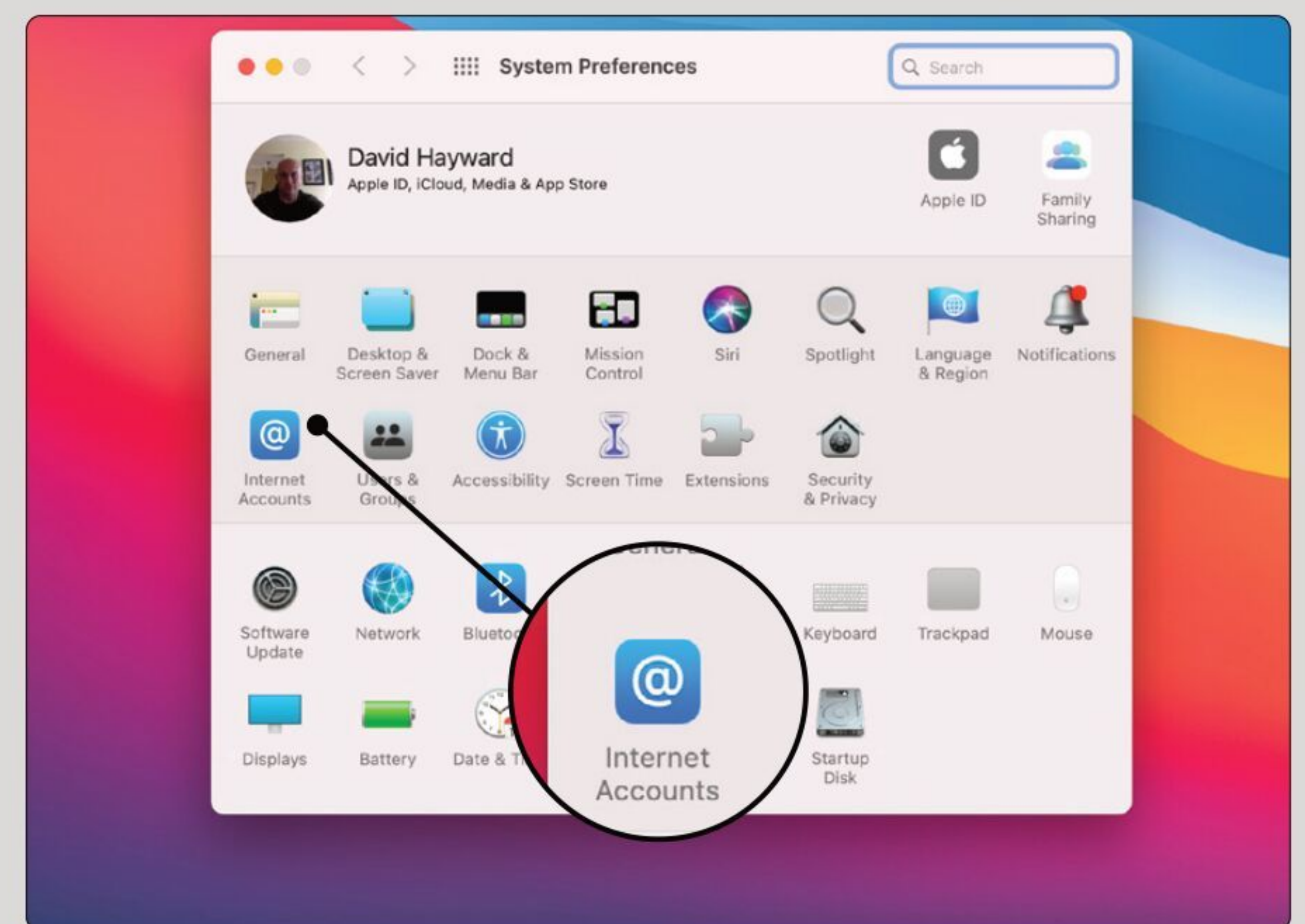
**6** Click your name at the top of the left column, then iCloud in the right. Click Photos and switch on iCloud Photo Library to enable syncing and upload your device's photos to iCloud.



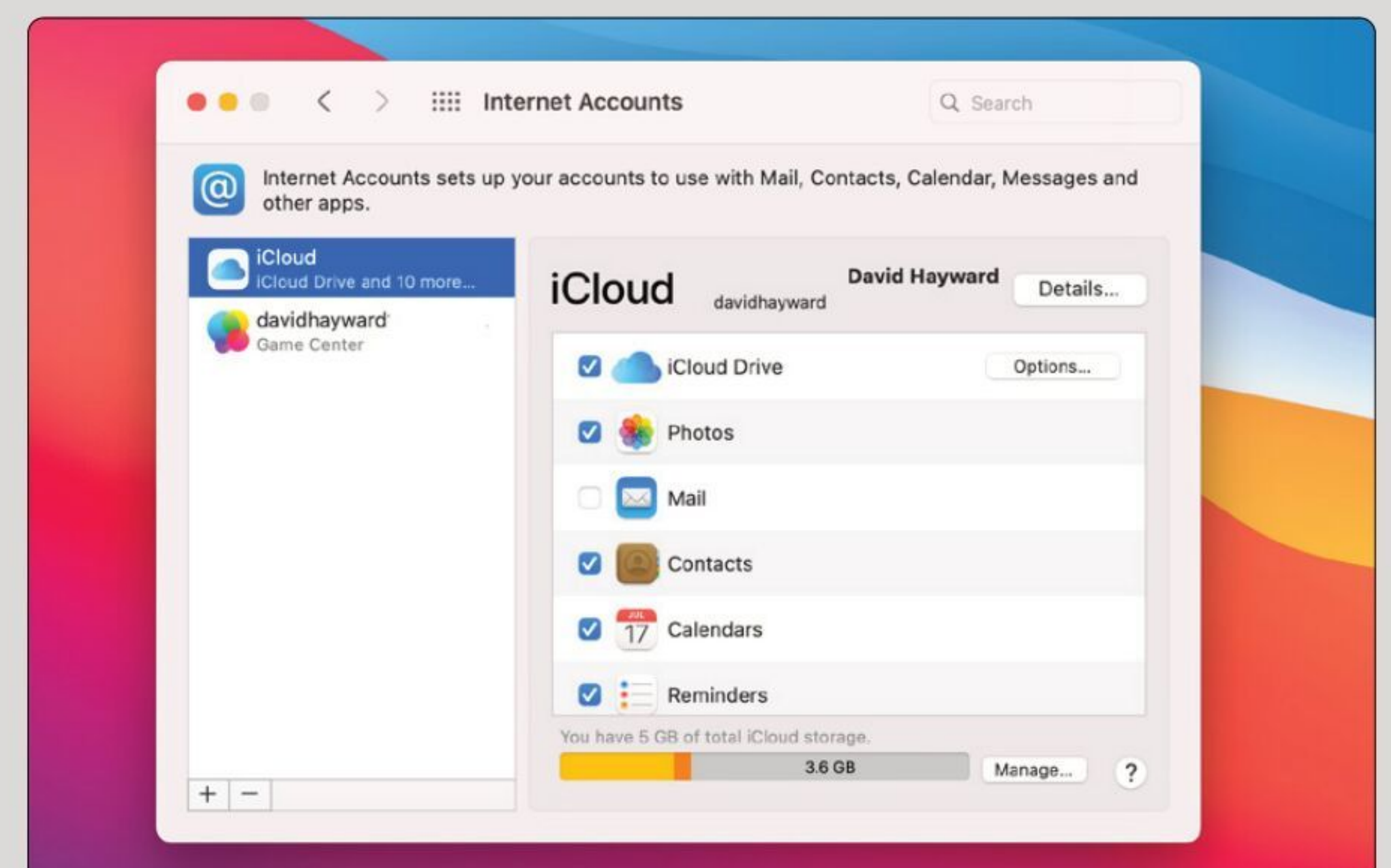
**7** All your photos are shown as thumbnails and you can select and import them. Here you can see a collection of photos imported to our Mac using iCloud Photo Library.



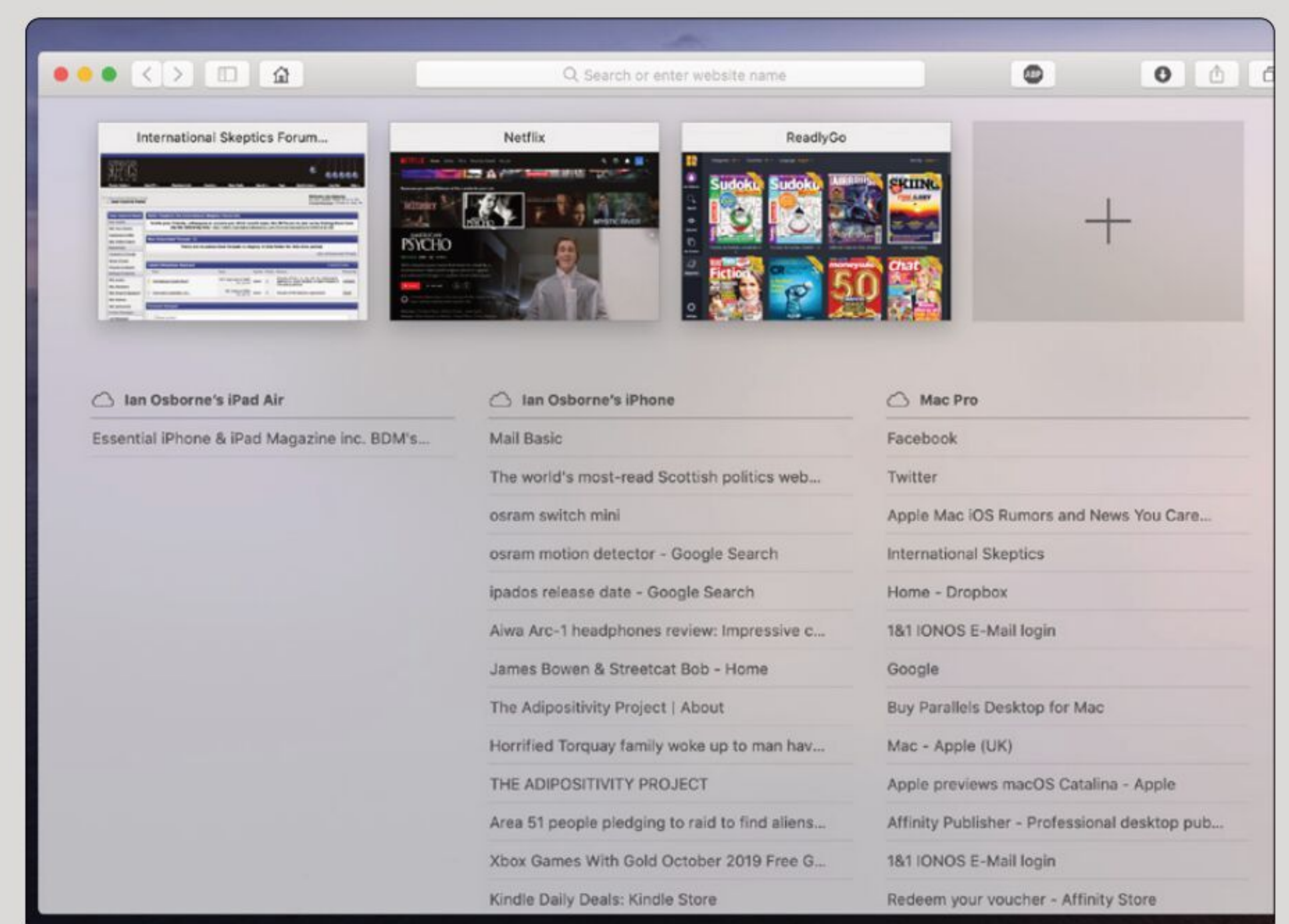
**8** You can also review your photos from any computer with a web browser. Just go to [www.icloud.com](http://www.icloud.com), log into your iCloud account and open the Photos web application.



Open System Preferences, through the Apple menu, the Dock or the Applications Folder. It doesn't matter which. Click on Internet Accounts, which is next to the iCloud icon.



Click on the iCloud option in the left sidebar to see which apps are currently set to sync via your iCloud account. If any are unticked that you want to sync, tick them.



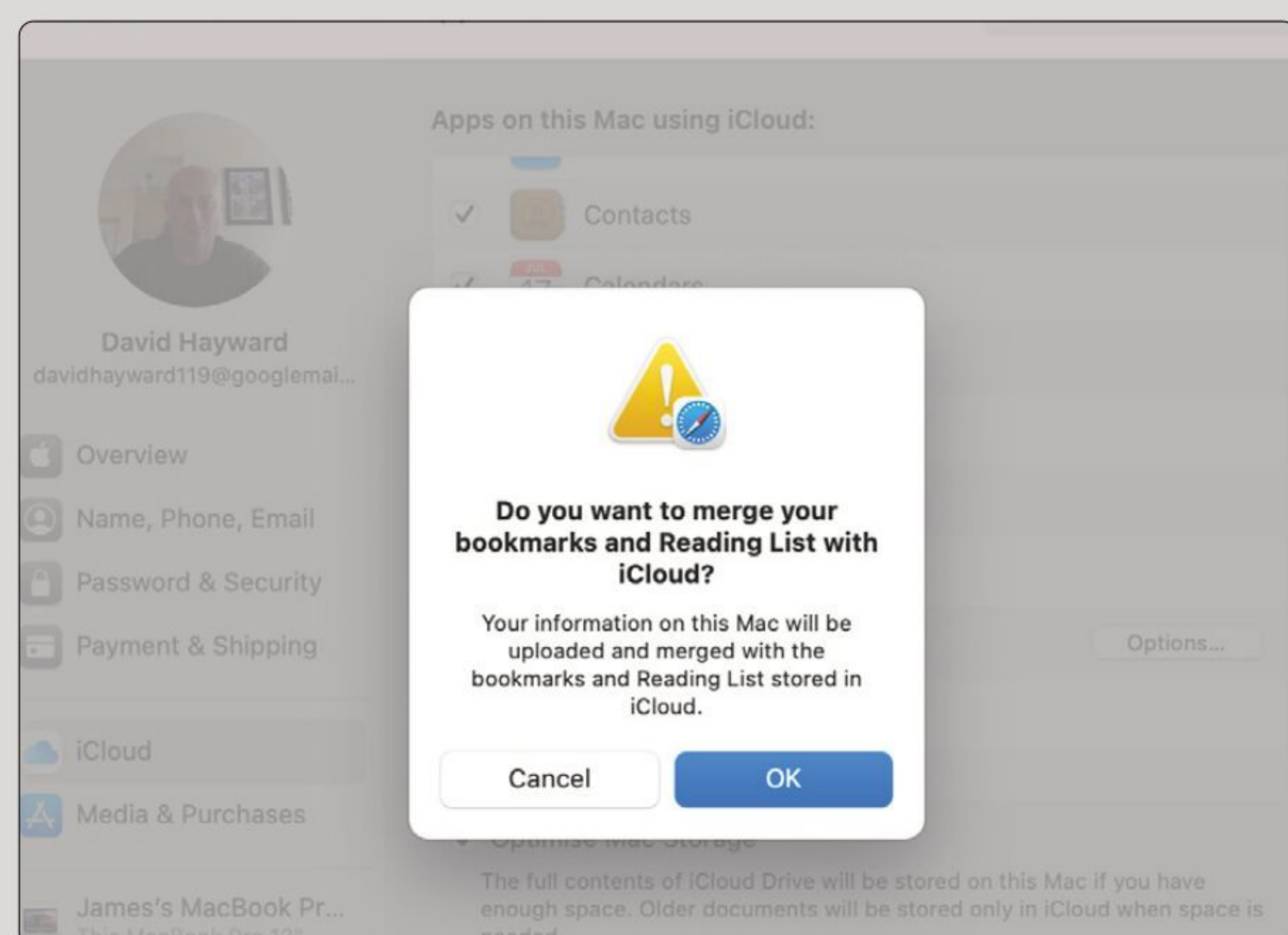
Your chosen apps are now synchronised across all your Apple devices signed into the same iCloud account, as long as those devices are also set to sync the same data.



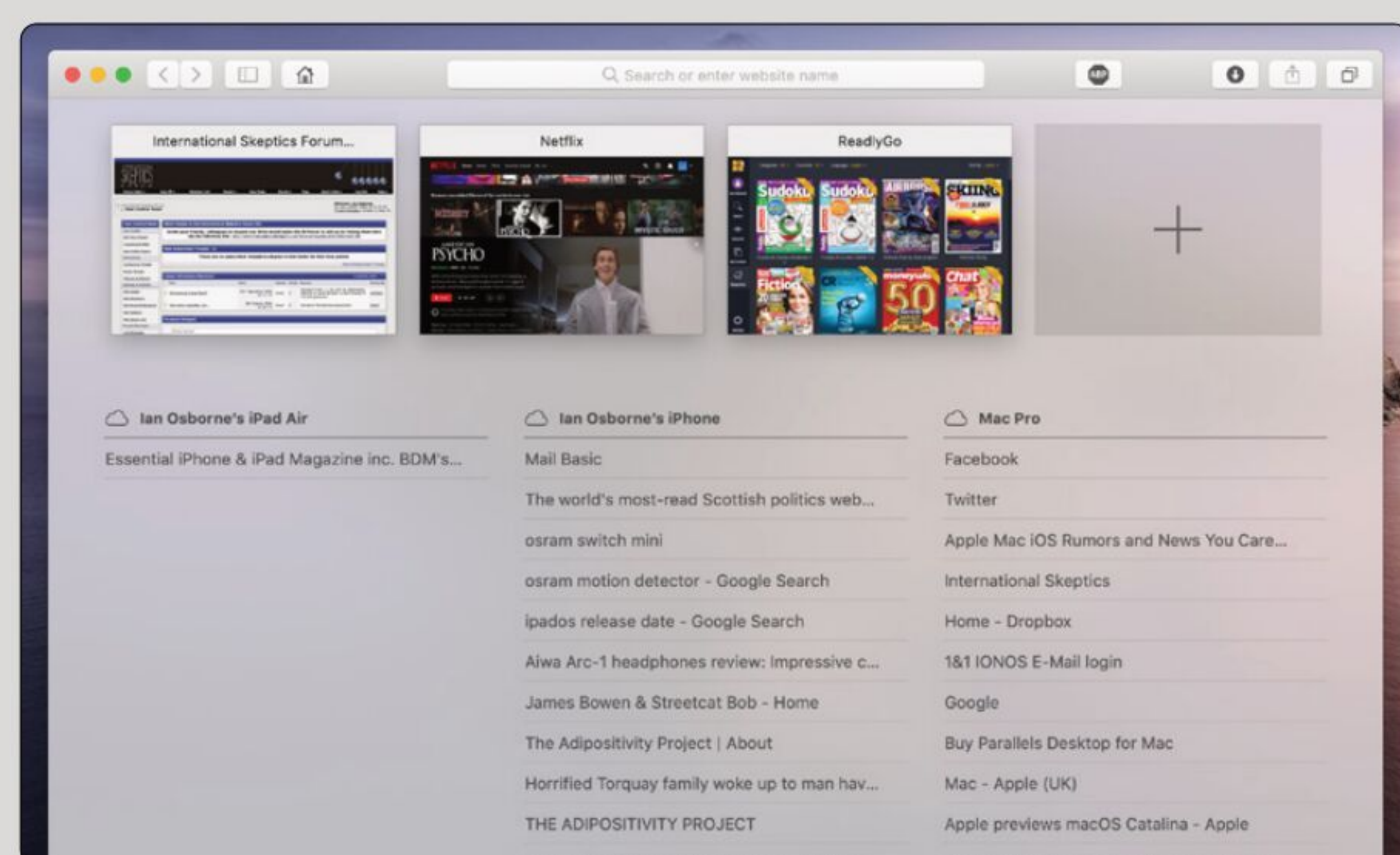
## Safari in iCloud.



To let iCloud share all your information from Safari across your devices, first of all, open System Preferences and click on the Apple ID icon in the top row. Now click on iCloud in the left-hand sidebar.

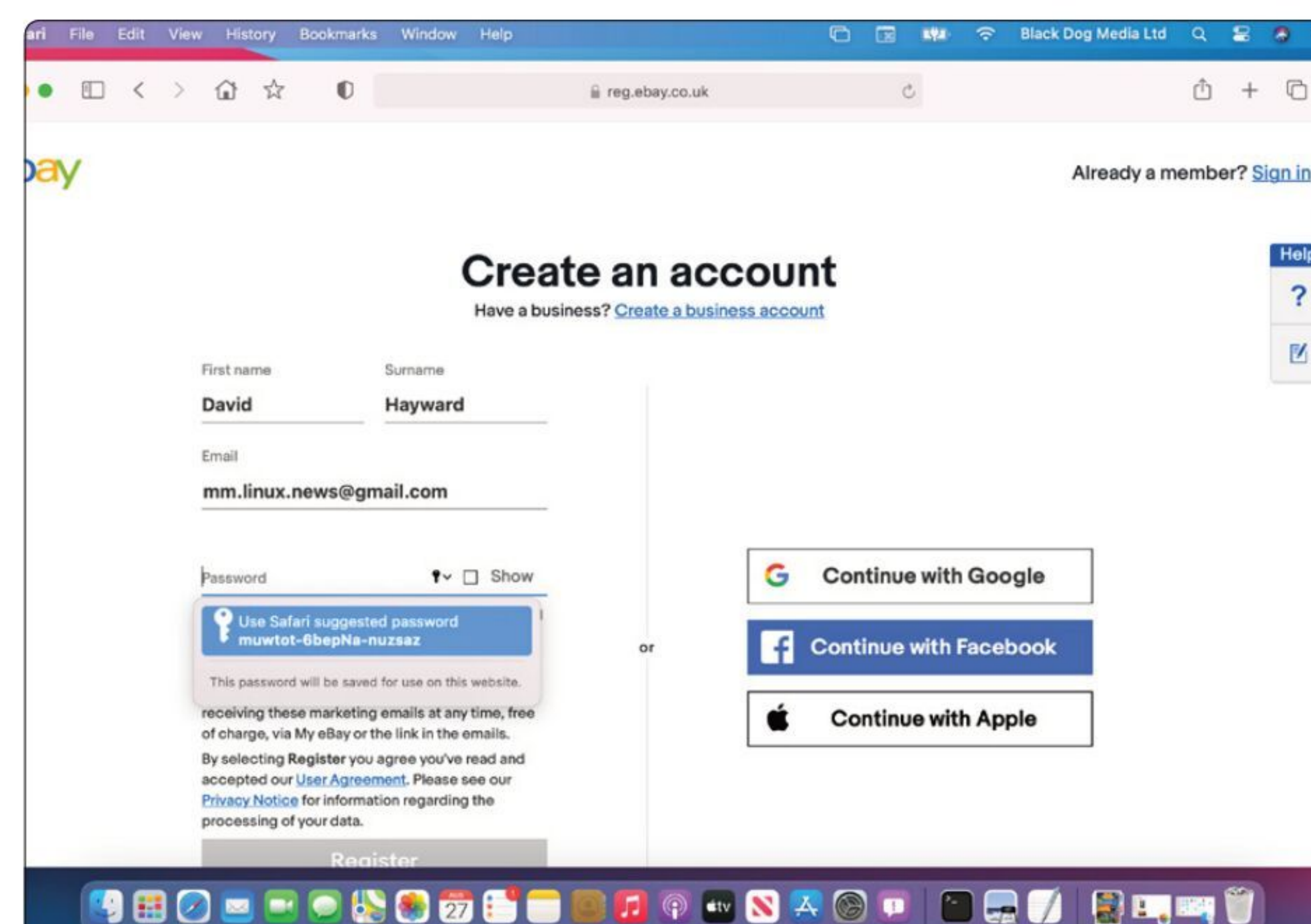


Find Safari and check its checkbox. You can now access your bookmarks and reading list on your other Apple devices, as long as they're linked to the same iCloud account and also have Safari ticked. Click OK to merge information, should the box appear.

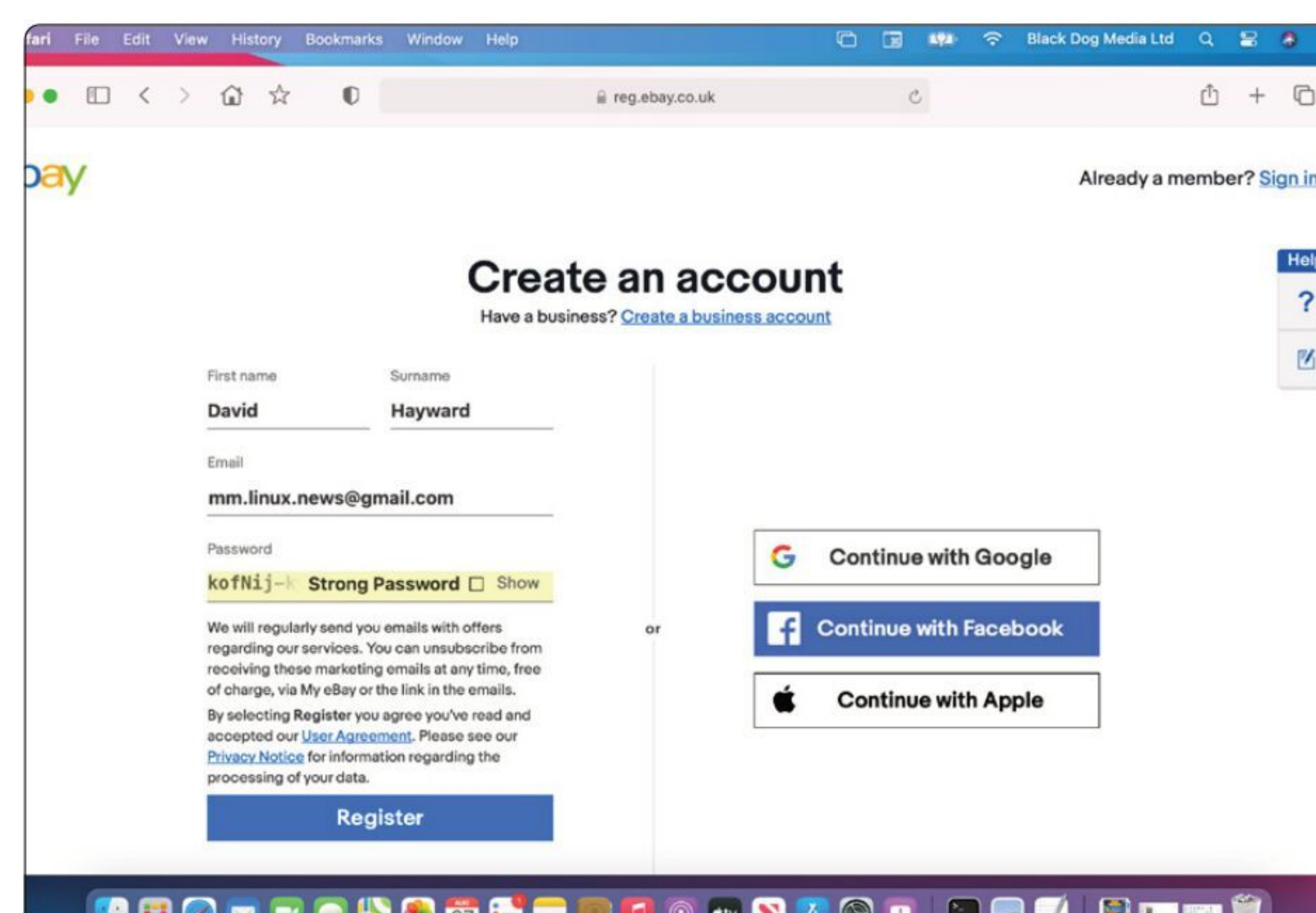


If you have tabs open in Safari on another Mac or iOS device, you can access them on your Mac via the cloud. In Safari, click the tabs icon (top right) and scroll down to see your other devices' open tabs.

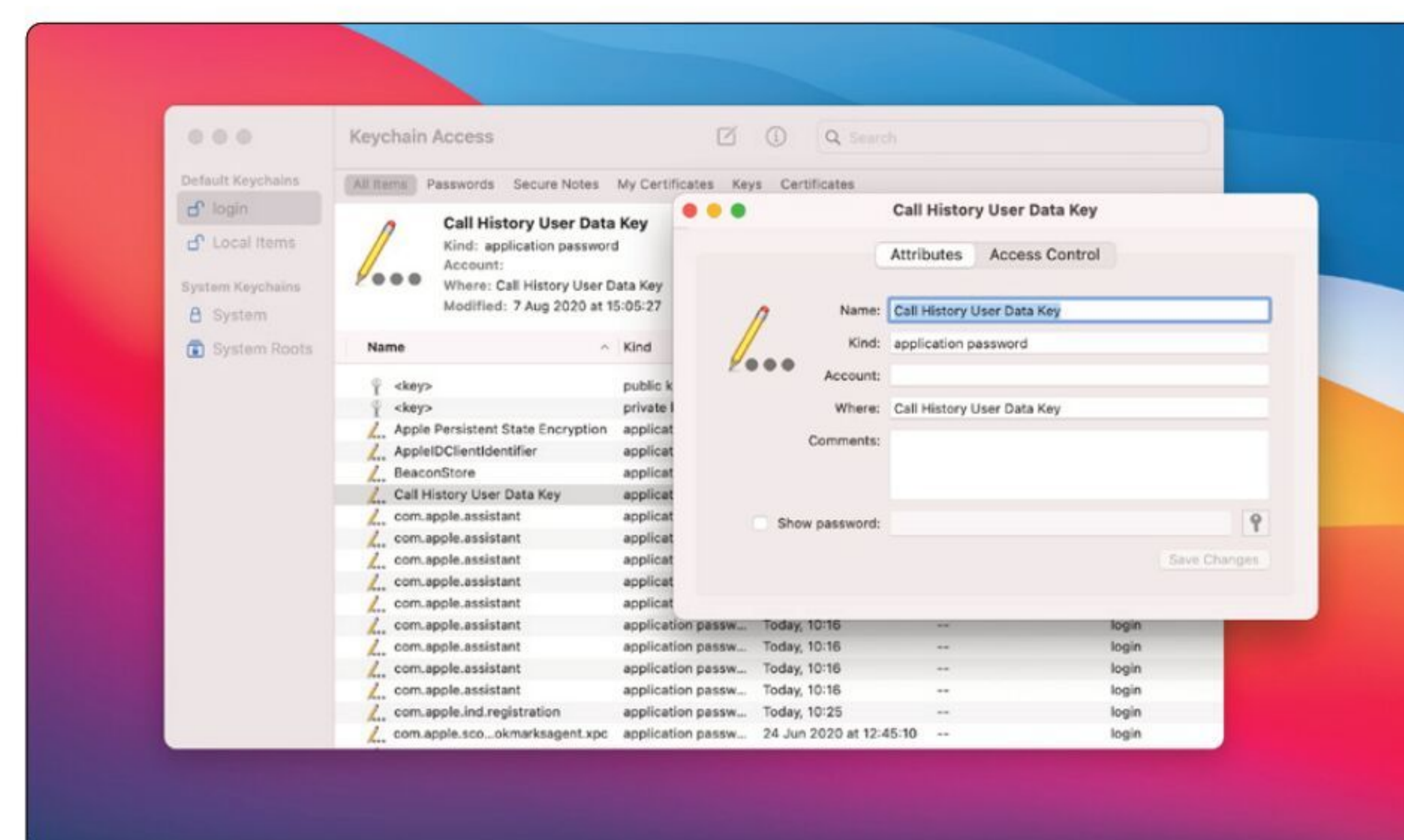
## iCloud Keychain



**1** When you sign up for an account on a website in Safari, maybe to join a forum or register for a newsletter, Safari suggests a password to use. You can use that password at the click of a button.



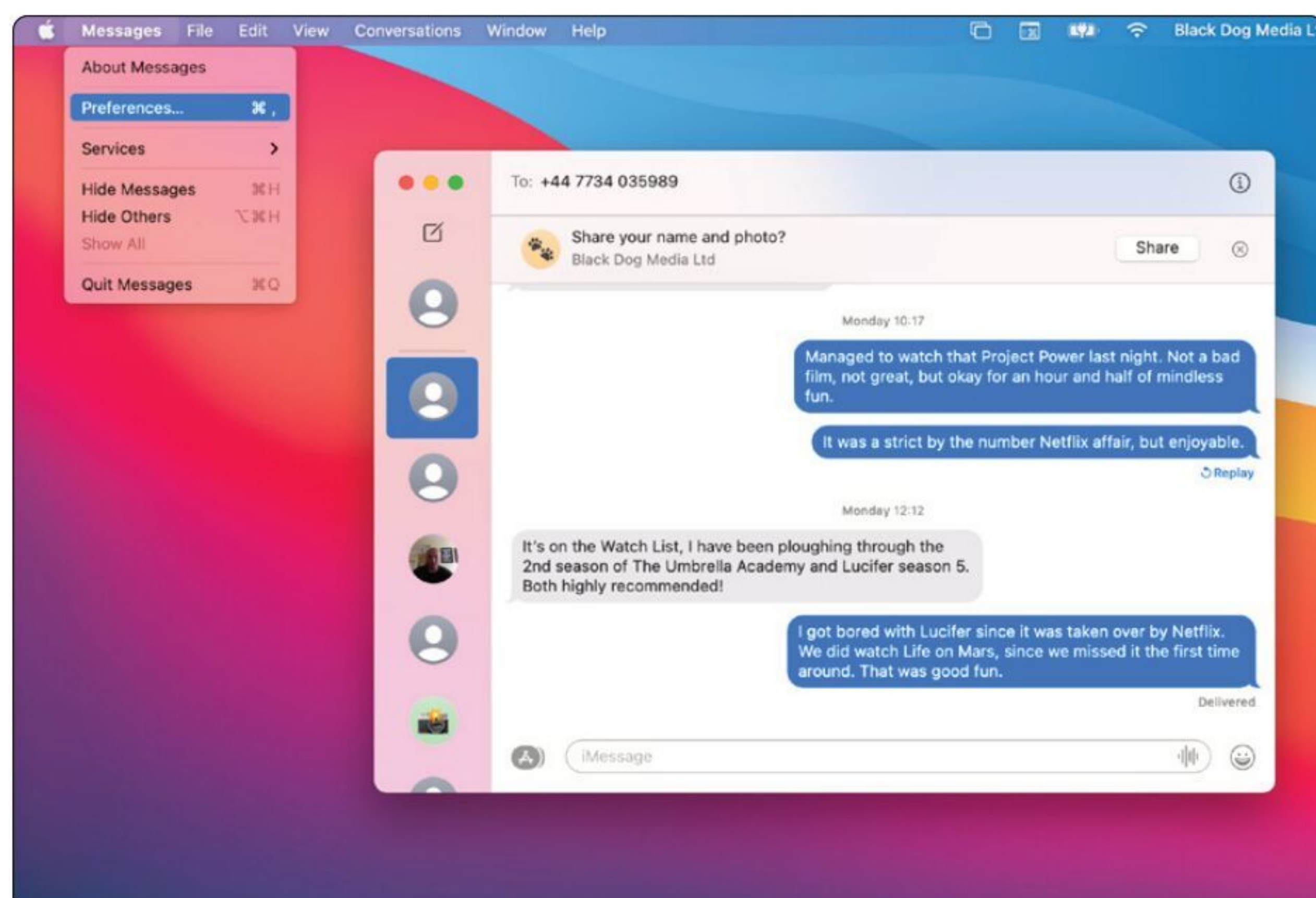
**2** It's then saved to your iCloud Keychain and synced across your Apple devices. If you ever need to see your password, open the Keychain Access app (it's in the Applications > Utilities folder).



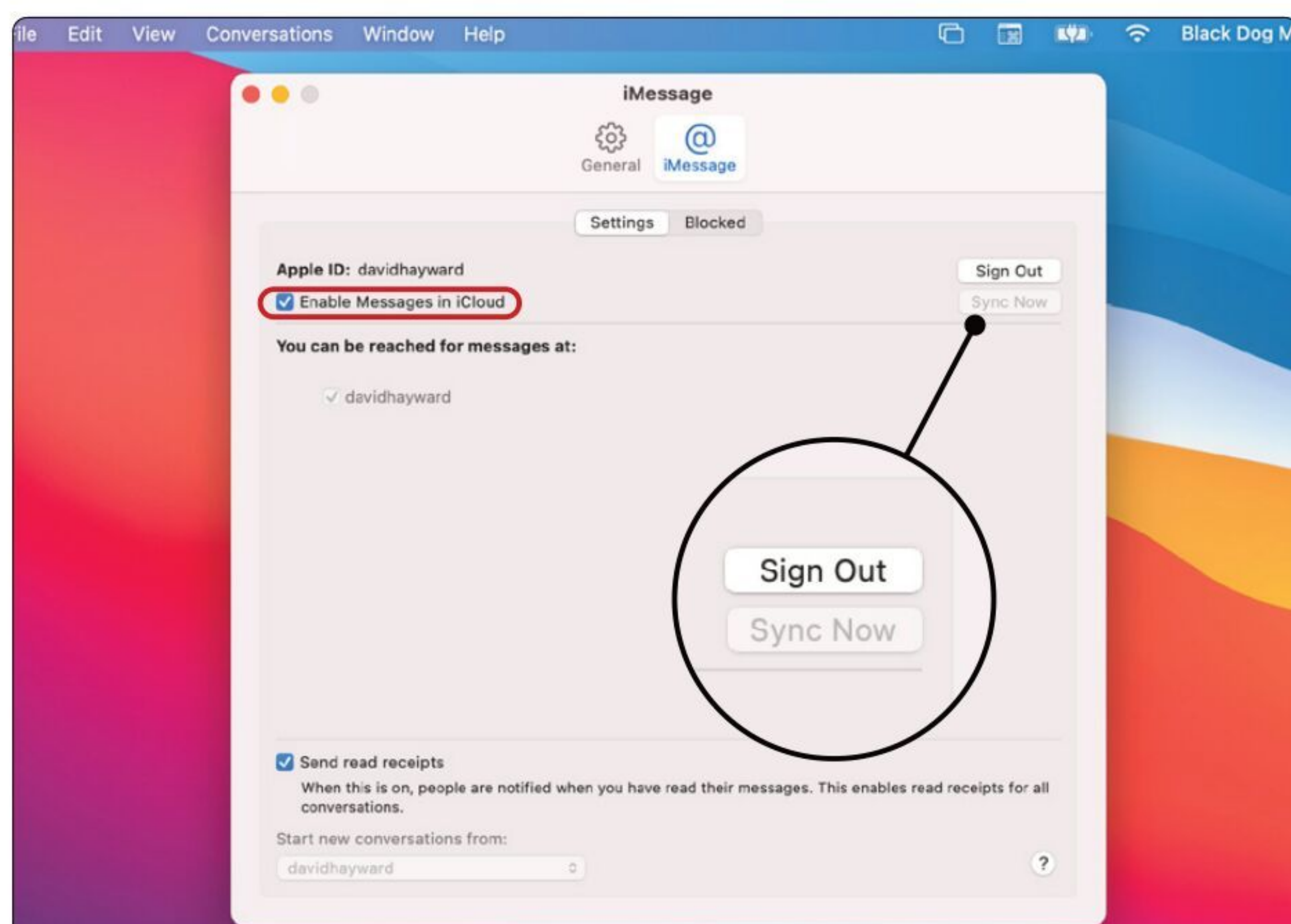
**3** Find and double-click on the account you wish to view, then in the pop-up window, click the Show Password box. Type your admin password in the next window and the password is shown.



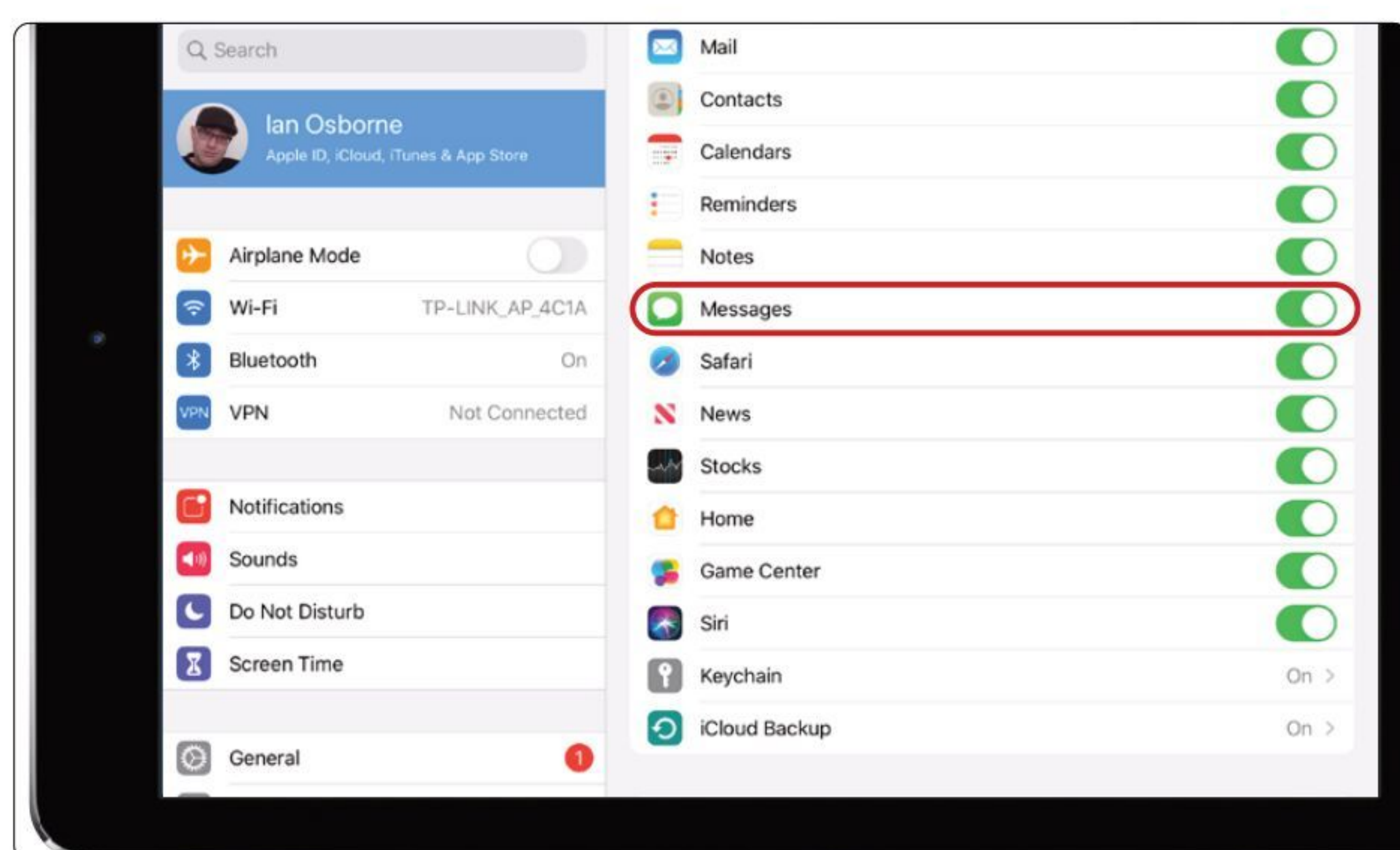
# Messages in iCloud



**1** Since macOS Catalina and the newest iPad's operating system, Messages can be synced over iCloud. To activate this on your Mac, open Messages. Under the Messages menu, select Preferences.

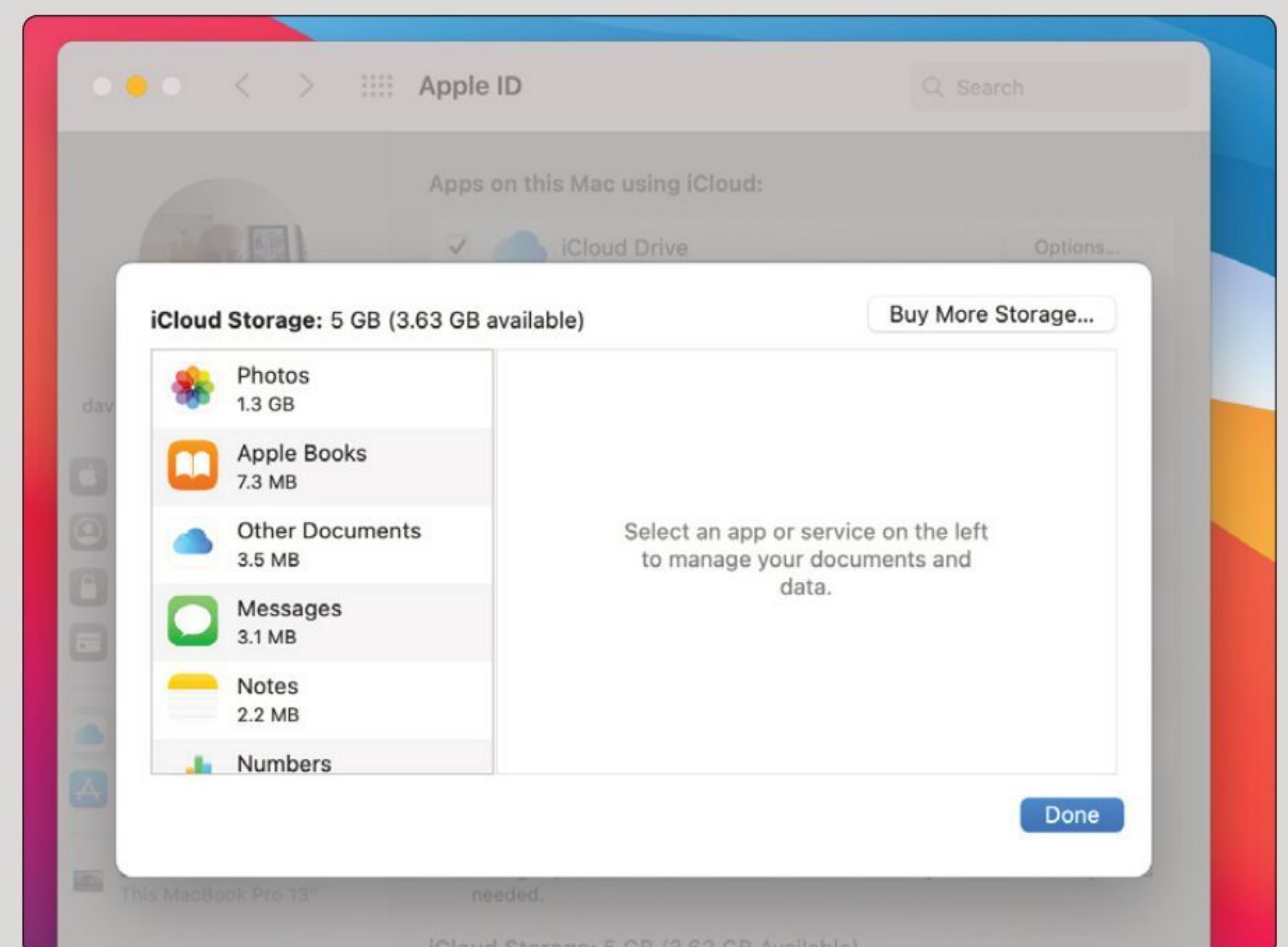


**2** In the Preferences window, click on the Accounts tab at the top of the window. Make sure Enable Messages in iCloud is checked. You can sync your messages from here by pressing the Sync Now button.

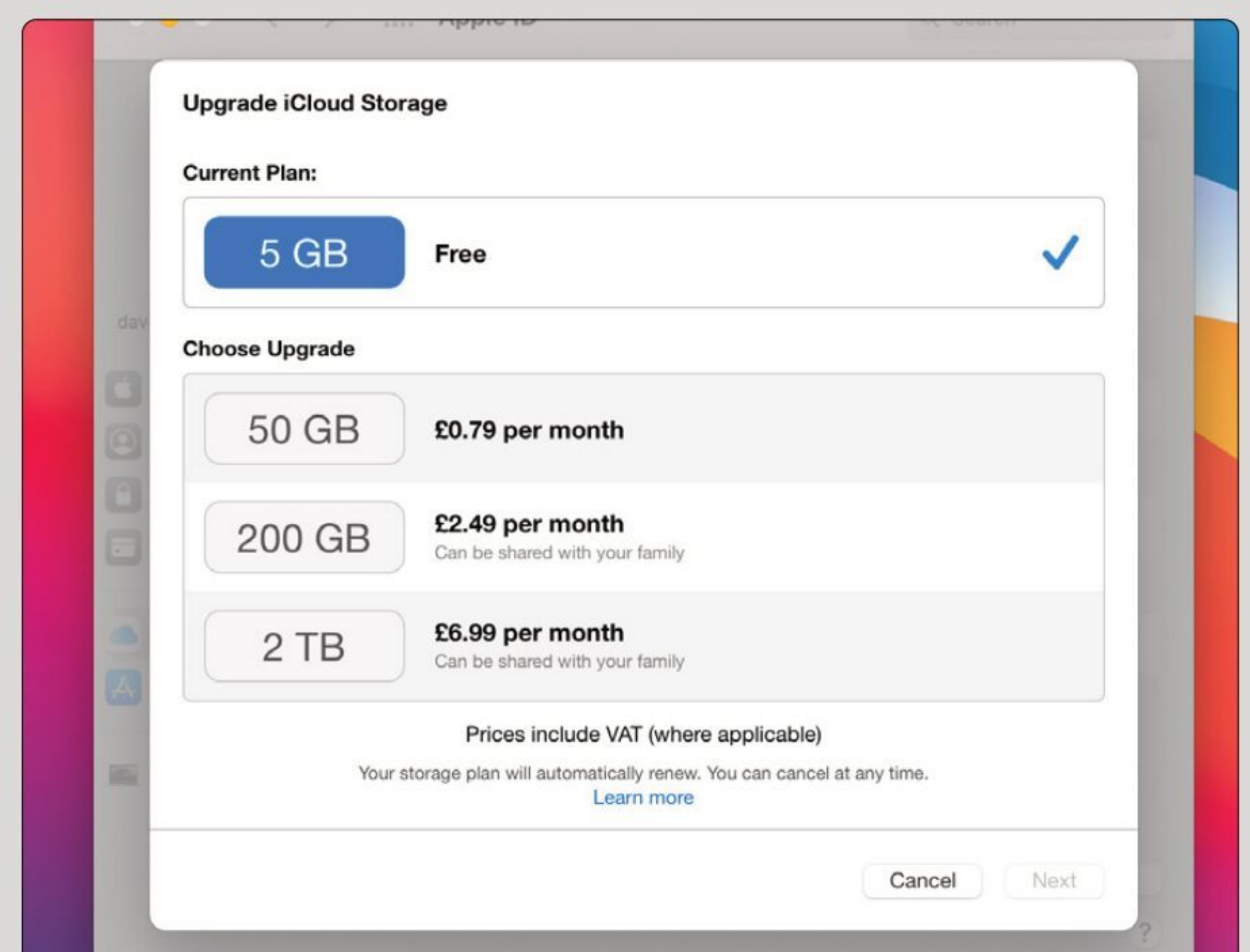


**3** On an iPad or iPhone, go to Settings > [Your name] > iCloud, and make sure Messages is switched on. Your messages are now stored on iCloud and synced between all your Macs and iOS devices.

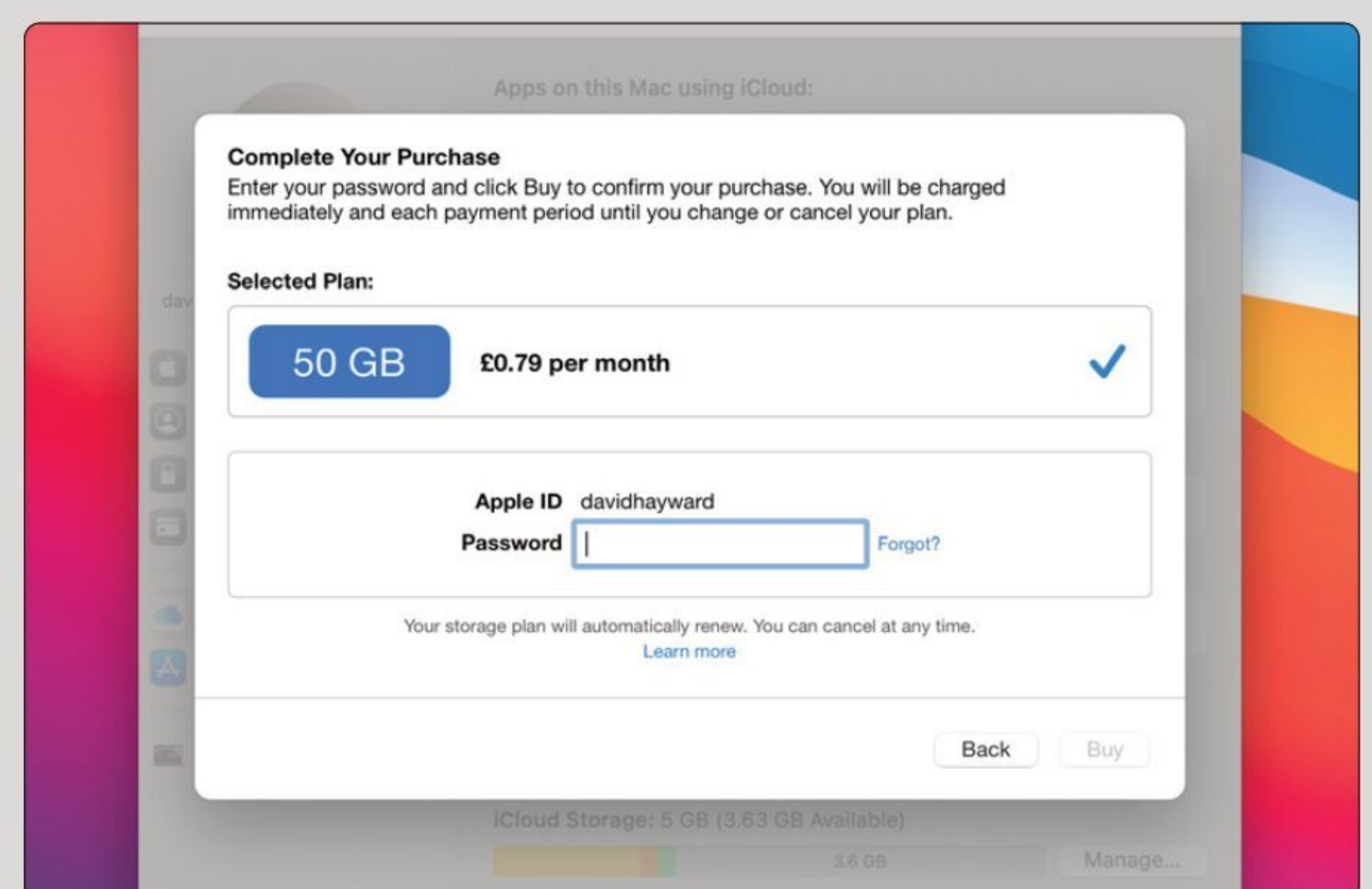
# Upgrade Your iCloud Drive.



To upgrade your iCloud storage, go to System Preferences > Apple ID > iCloud. Click the Manage button (bottom right). From the next screen, you can delete documents and data from your iCloud if you wish.



Click Buy More Storage, in the top right. On the next screen, you're shown your current plan and options to upgrade for a higher monthly fee. Click on one to choose and click Next.



You'll need to ensure that the amount per month is available from your Apple account or else you may end up losing access to the newly purchased storage plan.

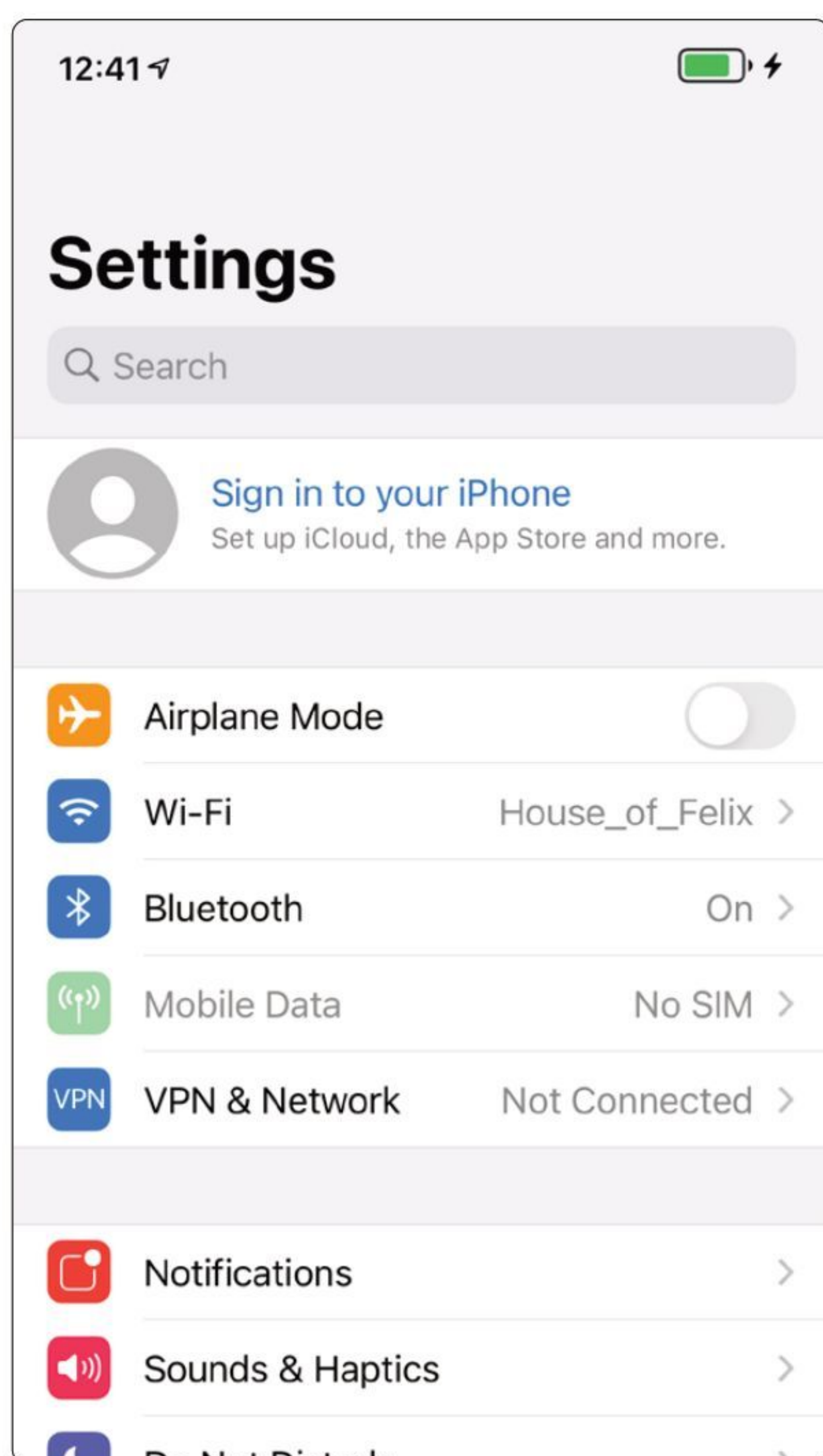




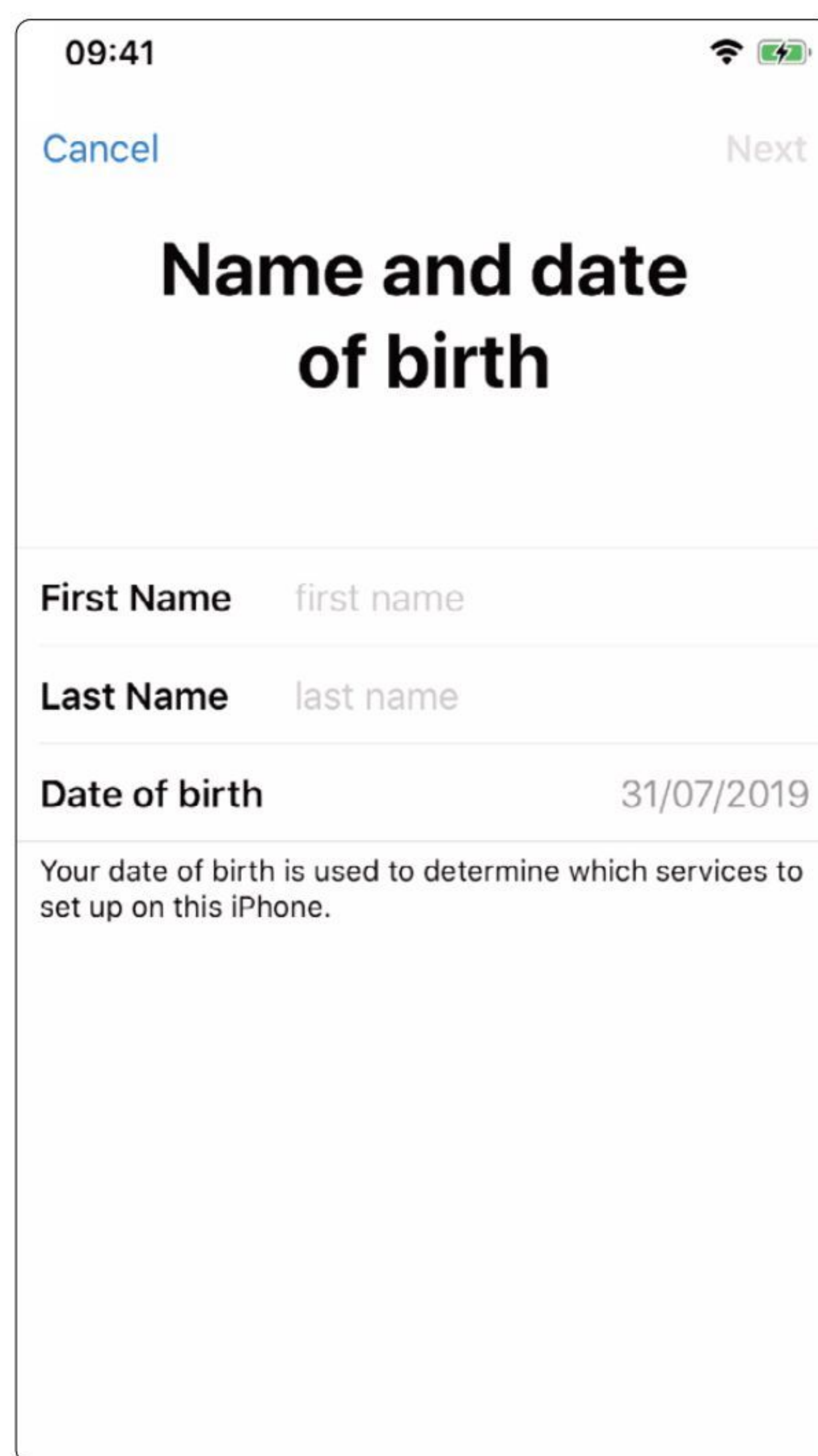
# Your Apple ID

## Set Up and Use It

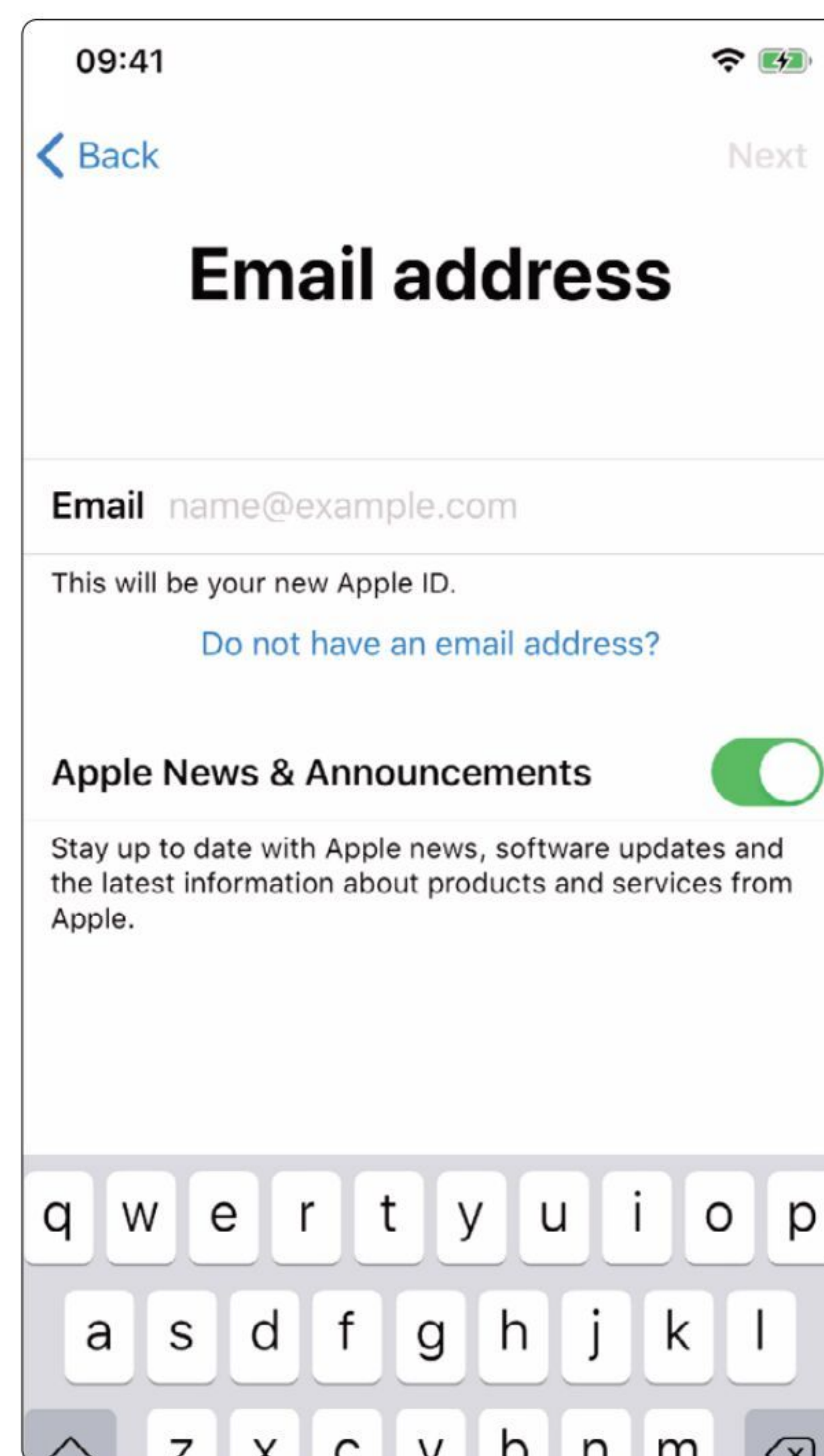
If you don't already have a working Apple ID, and you didn't register one while setting up your iPhone, you should do so now. With it you can download applications from the App Store, use FaceTime, buy music and movies from iTunes and use many of the iPhone's features and services. Without an Apple ID, you won't come close to getting the most from your iPhone.



**1** Open the Settings application from your iPhone's Home screen and scroll to the top of the screen. Tap the Sign in to your iPhone option right at the top of the list, then in the pop-up window, tap 'Don't have an Apple ID or forgot it?'.



**2** Tap Create Apple ID in the next window and, when instructed, enter your name in the fields provided. In the next field, Date of Birth, set your date with the wheels, and then tap Next to move on to the next step.



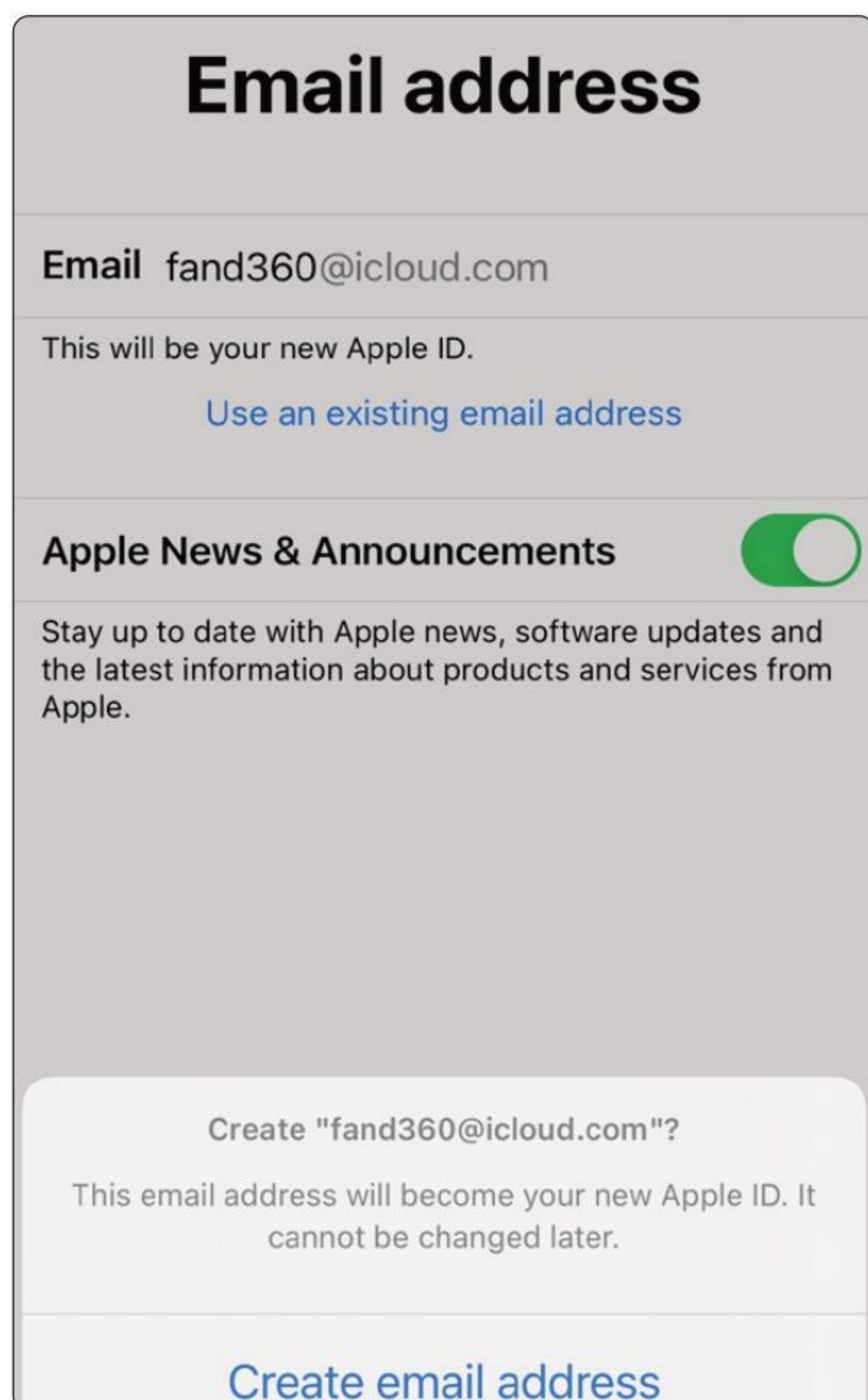
**3** Then, you're asked whether you want to use your current email address (if you have one) for your Apple ID. Tap Do not have an email address? if you want to use the free iCloud address that comes with your Apple ID.



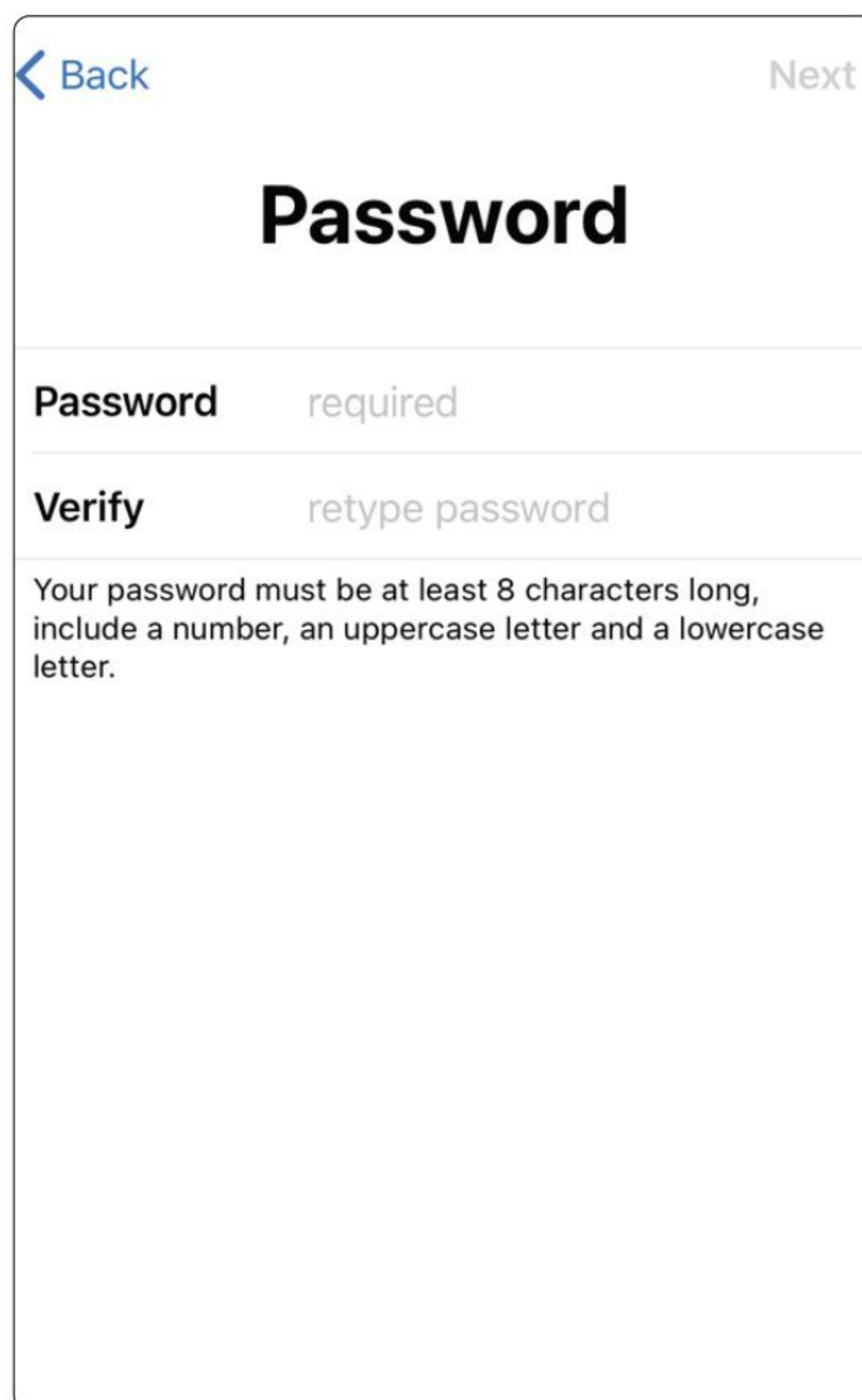
## iCloud email.

Your Apple ID gives you a free iCloud email address. You can use this email address on your iPhone and also on any other Internet devices you have, such as Macs, PCs or tablets, and through a browser at [www.icloud.com](http://www.icloud.com). Best of all, you keep your iCloud address even if you change your Internet provider.

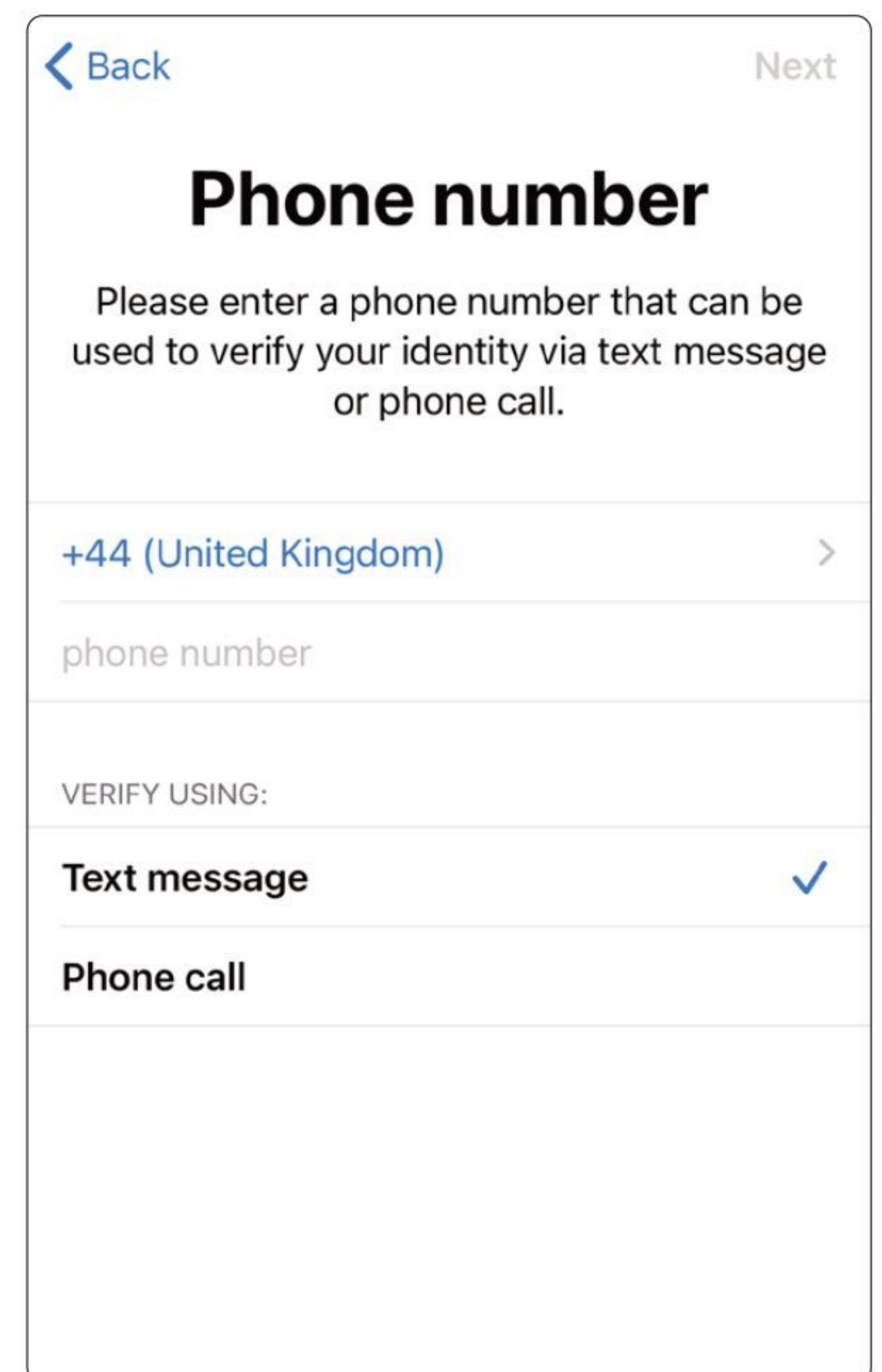




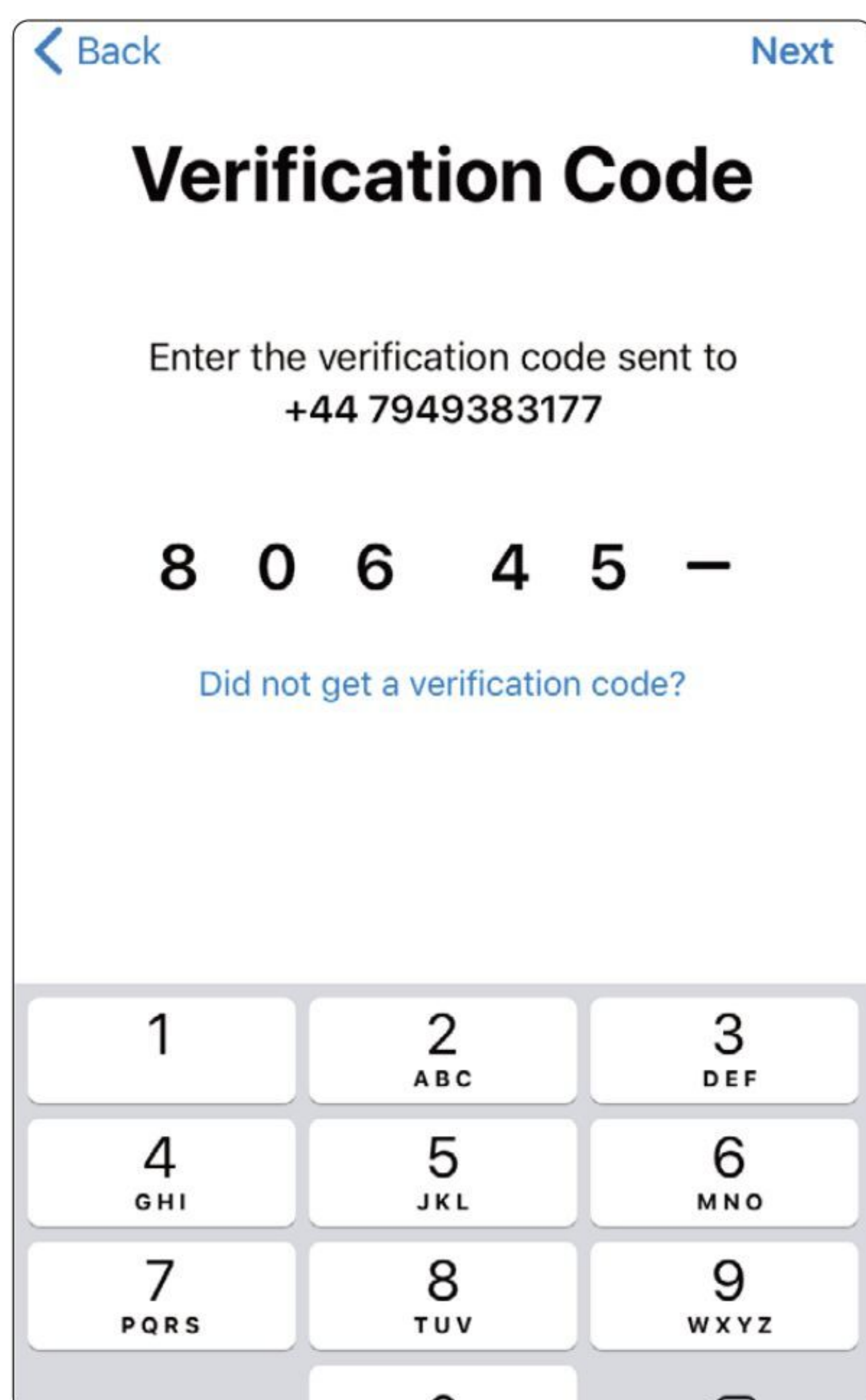
**4** If you choose to use your new iCloud address, you're asked to complete your email, which ends '@icloud.com'. It may take a few tries before you find one that hasn't already been taken but when you do, accept it by tapping Continue.



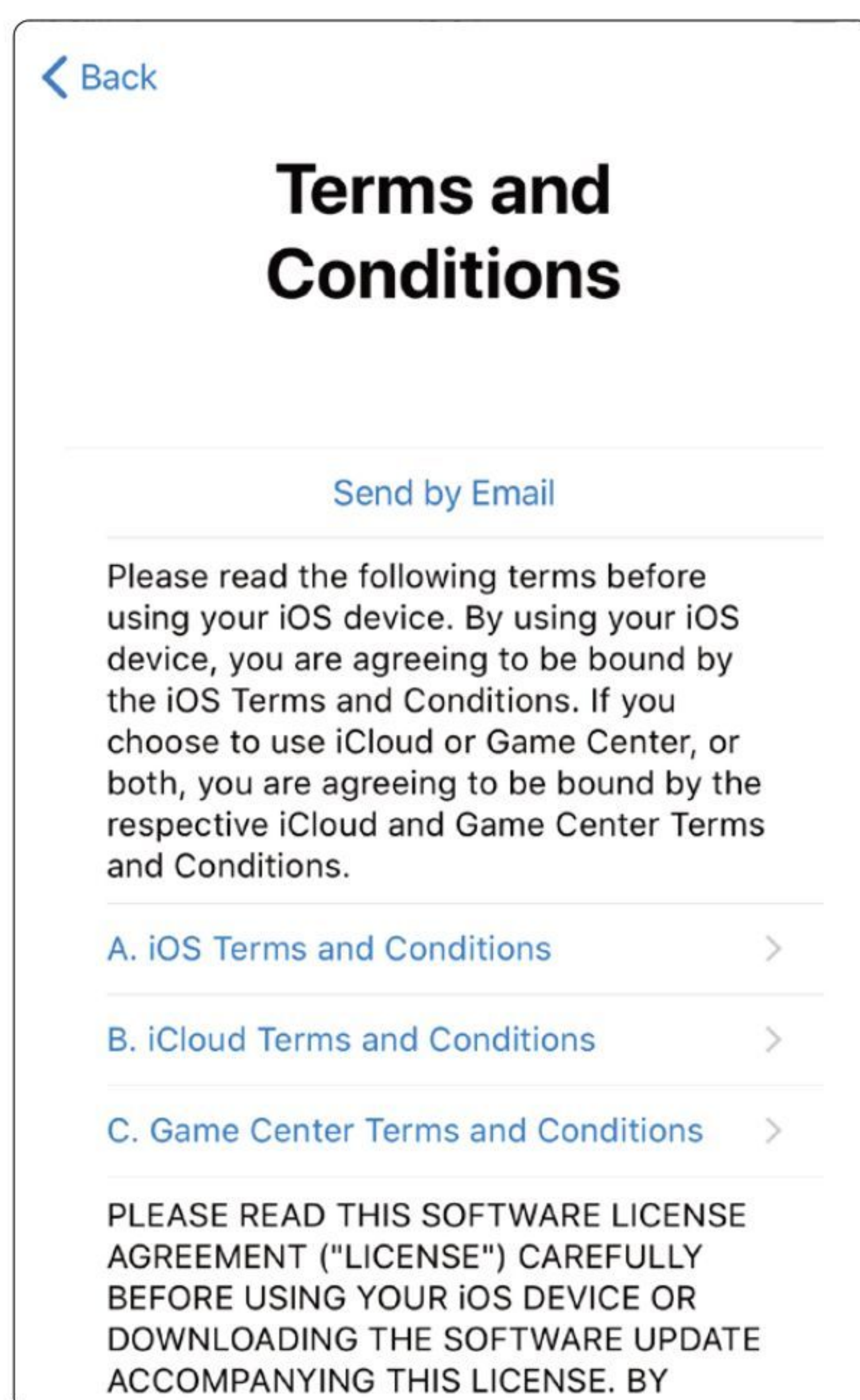
**5** Now you must choose your password. As stated on the screen, it must be at least eight characters long and include at least one number, one upper case (capital) letter and one lower case letter. Make it something you can easily remember.



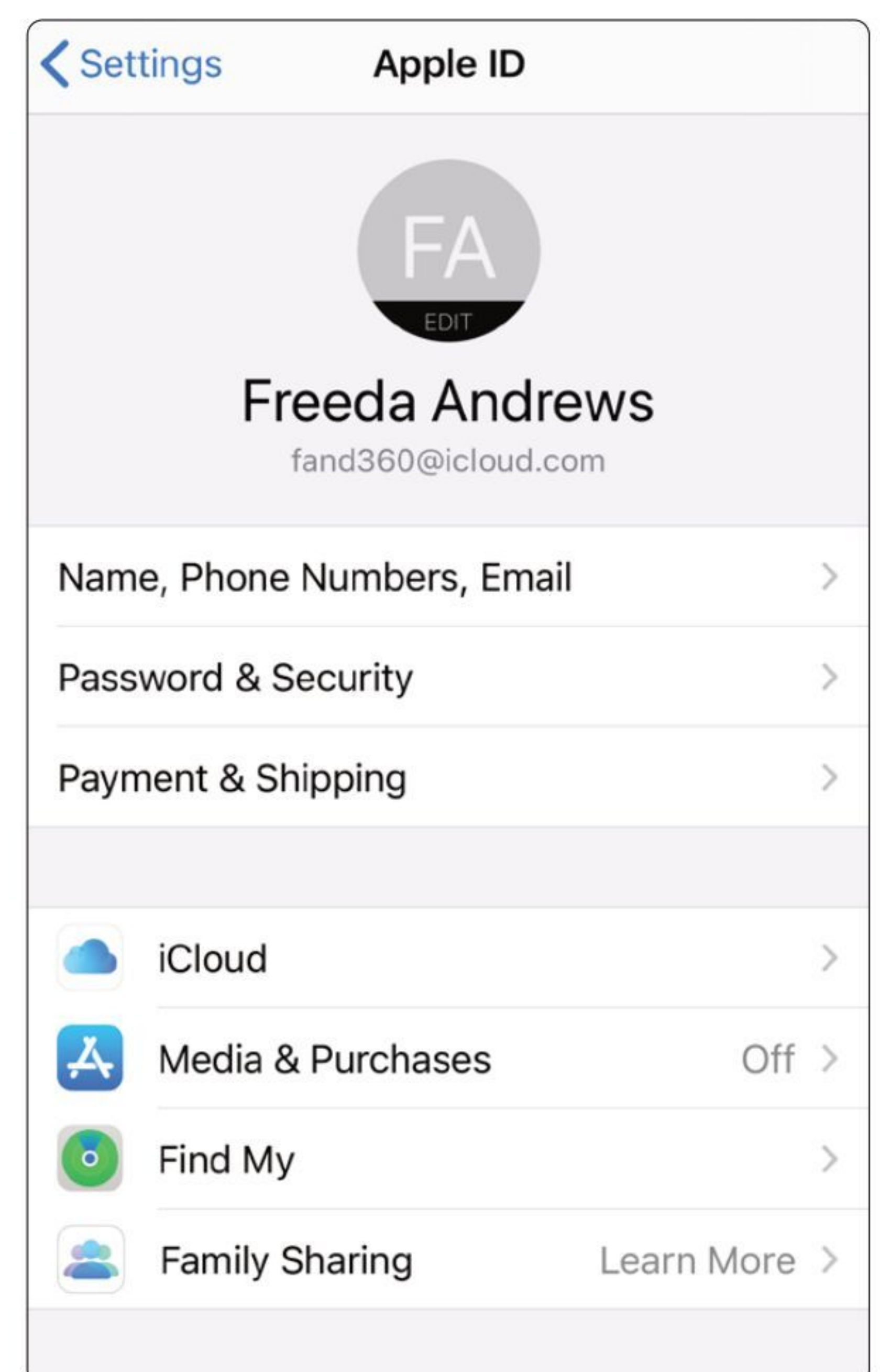
**6** Apple needs your phone number so you can be contacted, via a call or text message, to confirm your identity. Use the number taken from your SIM card, or tap Use a different number, to choose another number for them to phone or message. Tap Continue.



**7** After tapping Next, you should enter the six-figure verification code that's just been sent to your device (or given to you in a call, if that was your preferred choice). When you enter the last digit, you automatically proceed to the next step.



**8** Agree to the terms and conditions and your iPhone signs into iCloud with your newly created Apple ID. When it's done, you must enter your iPhone's passcode, the one you use to unlock it on the lock screen, to complete the sign-in process.



**9** When the sign-in process is completed, you're shown your Apple ID screen. From here, you can tap the initials at the top of the screen to add a photo, tap iTunes & App Store, to set up media and purchases, and set up services like Family Sharing and iCloud.



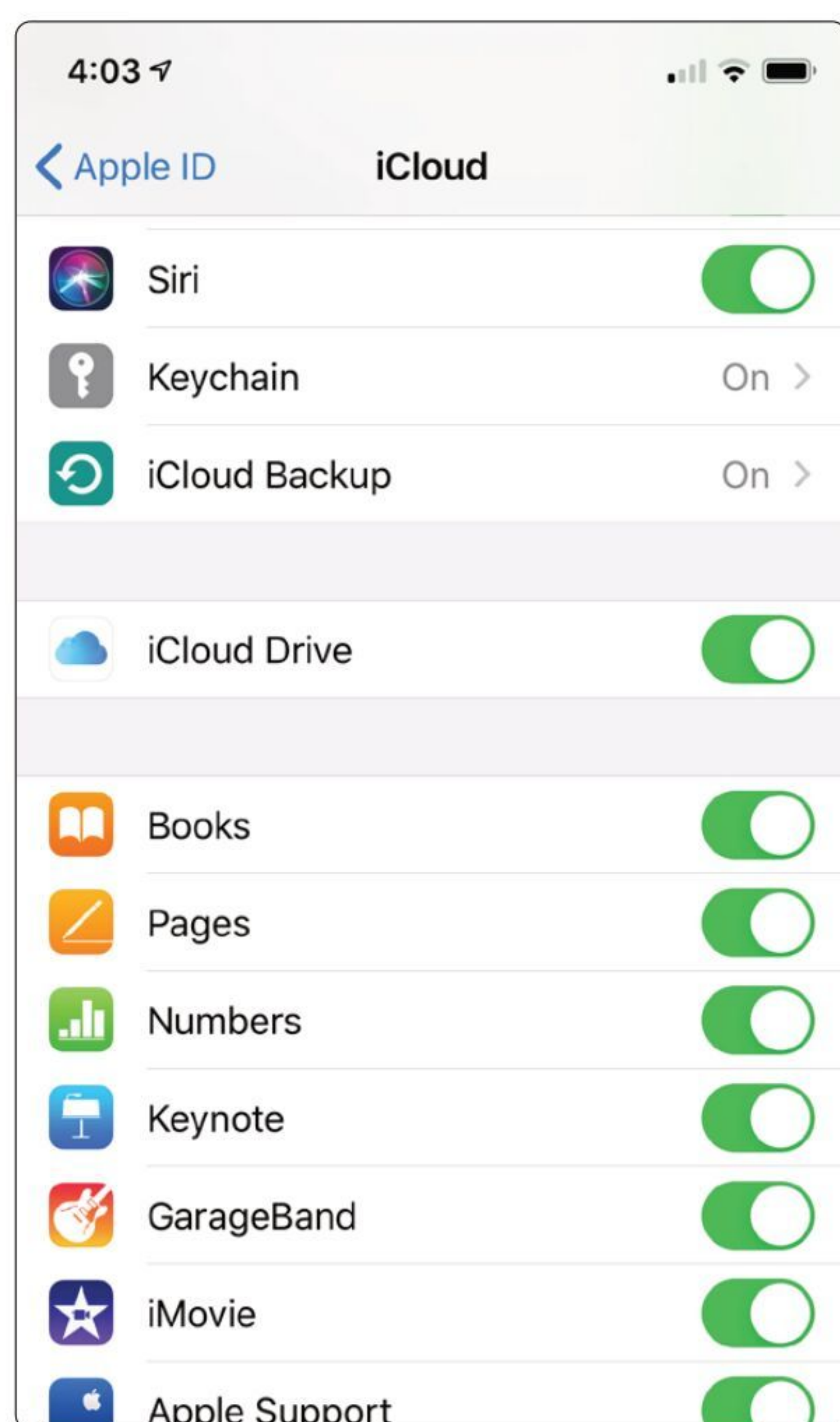


# iCloud Drive

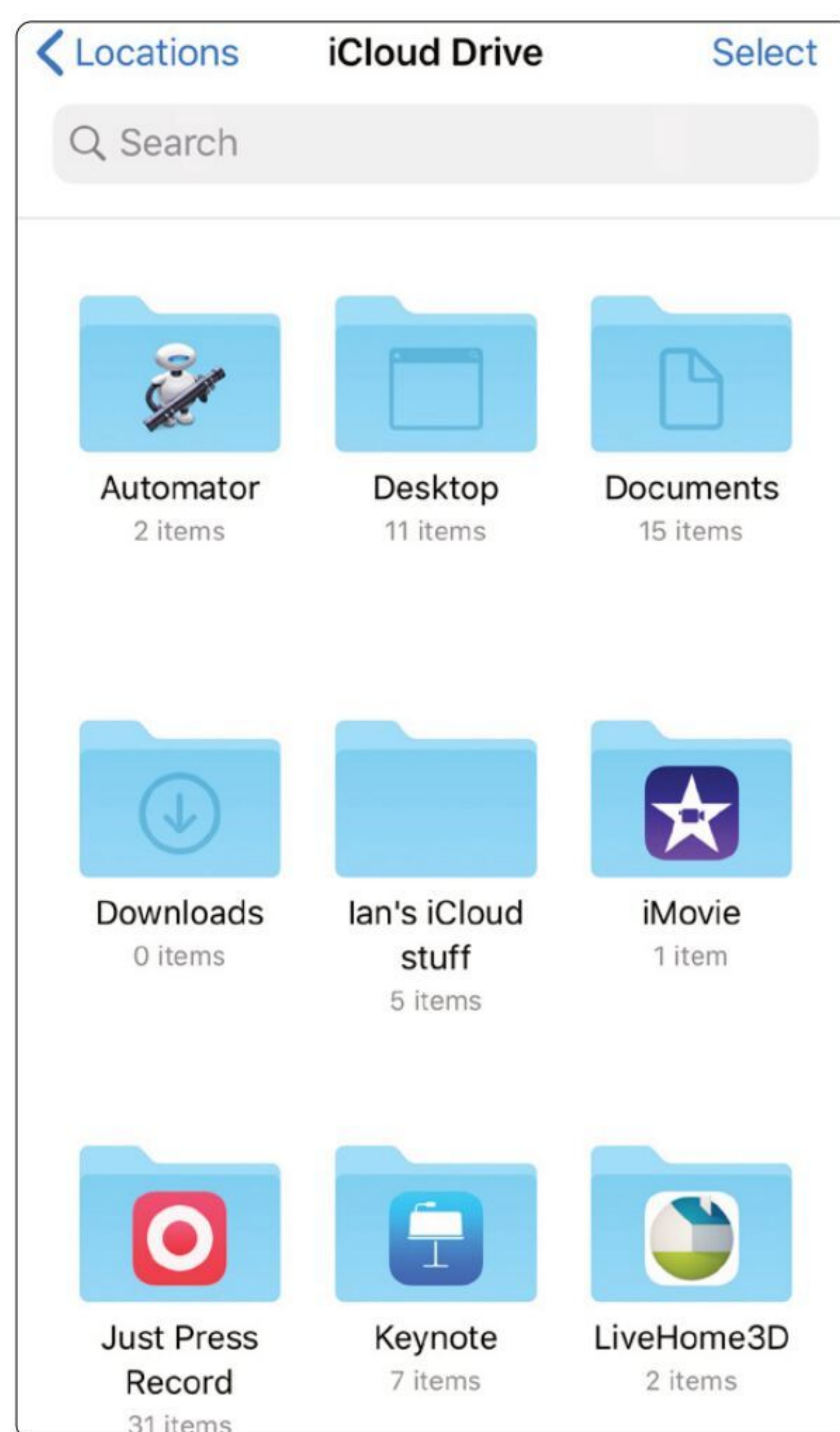
## Cloud Computing

iCloud Drive is Apple's own cloud computing service and it comes free with the iPhone. With iCloud Drive, you can sync your documents across all of your Apple devices and even access them through a web browser; they're all found on your iPhone in the Files application. If your free space isn't enough, you can buy more for a set monthly fee.

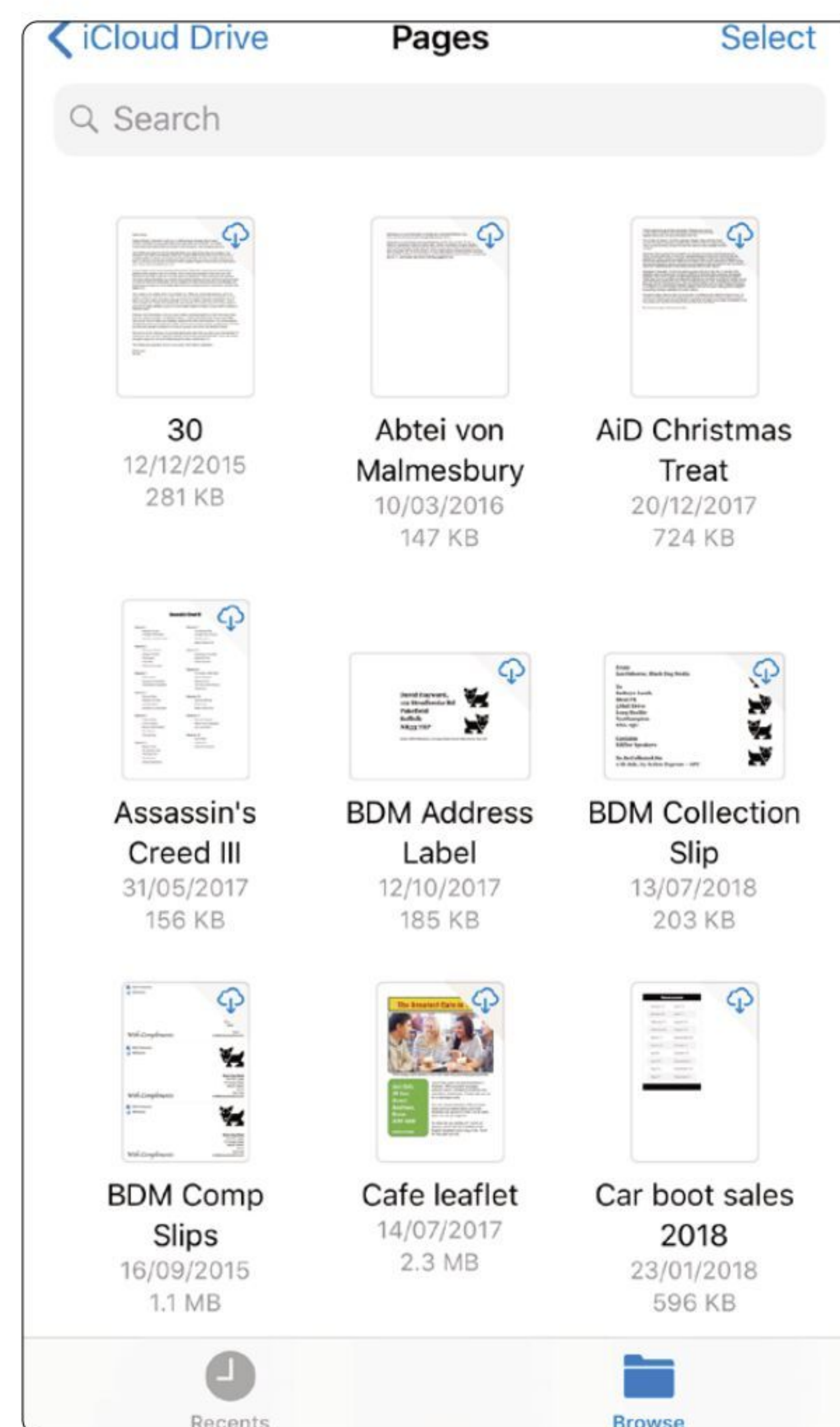
## An introduction to iCloud Drive and the Files app



**1** In the Settings app, tap your name at the top of the screen, tap iCloud and scroll down to iCloud Drive. If it isn't on already, turn it on. You can now save your files in the cloud and access them from any Internet device.



**2** Open the Files app and under Locations, tap iCloud Drive. Here you see the files stored on your iCloud Drive, arranged by their apps. iCloud Drive is also accessible through other Apple devices, and [www.icloud.com](http://www.icloud.com).

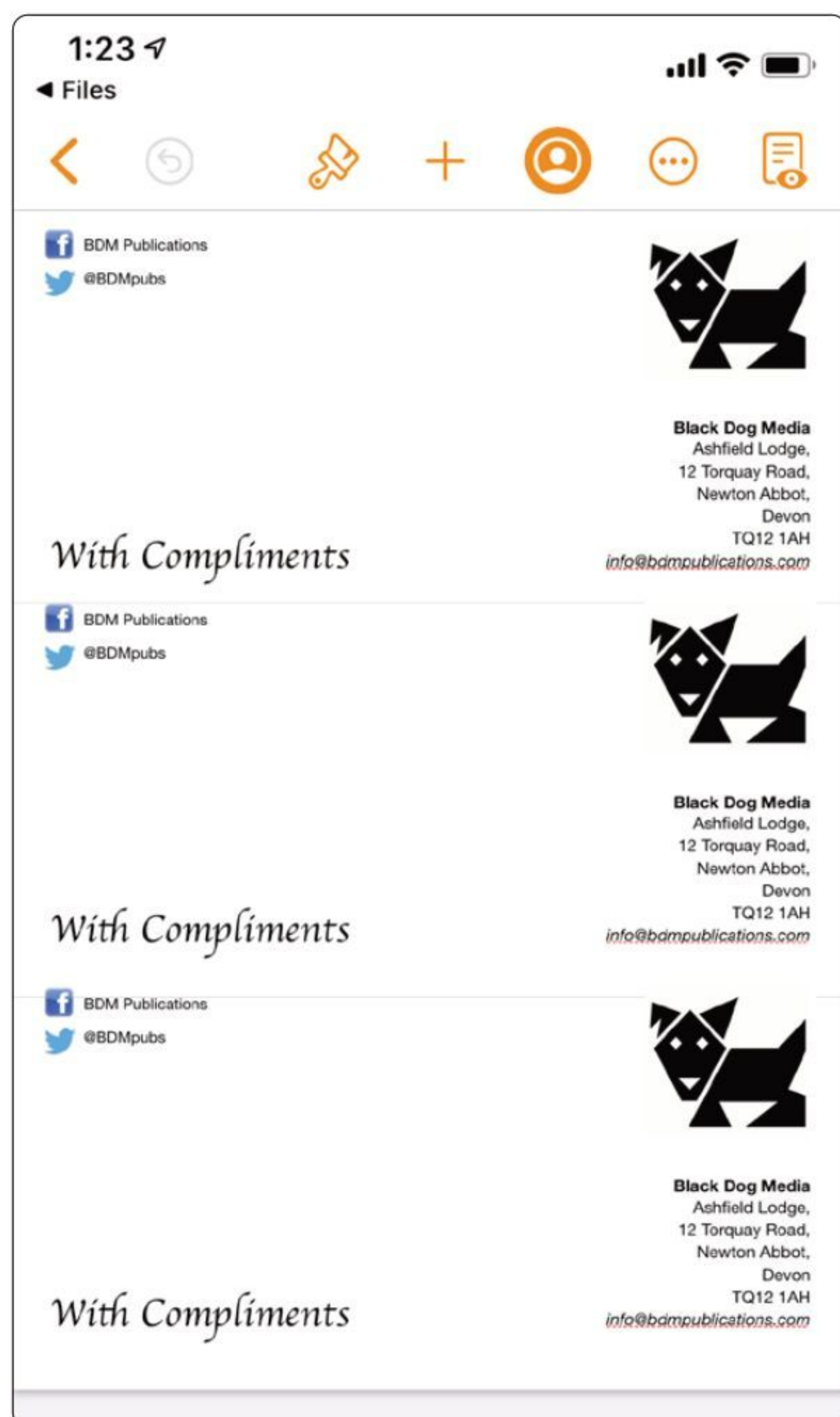


**3** You can open an iCloud document on your iPhone, if you have the iPhone version of the app that created it. Just open the folder for the app in question (here we're looking at Pages) and tap a document to open it.

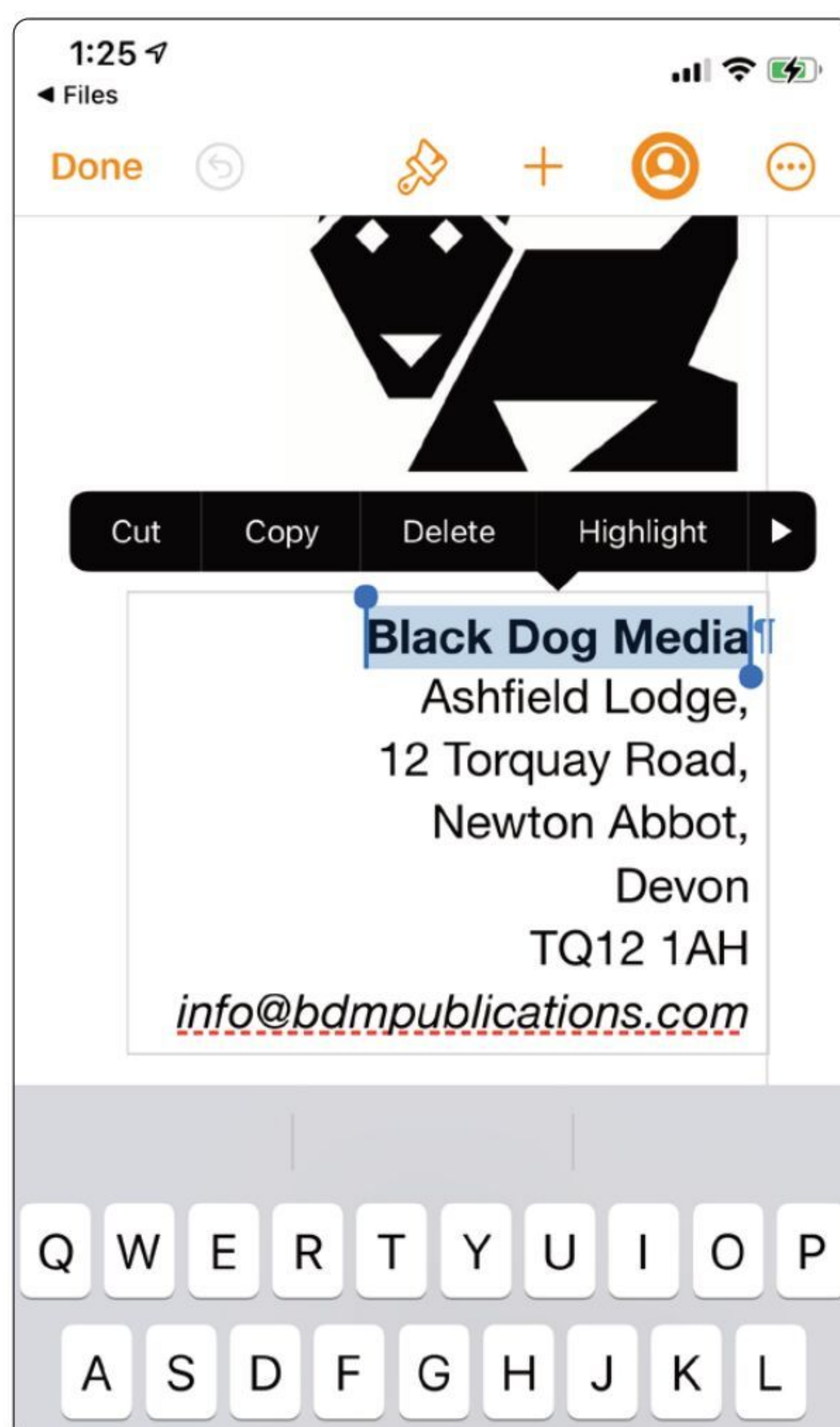


Documents contained in your iCloud Drive are kept in sync across your devices. If you make a change on one device, when you open that particular document on another, that change is already there. So, for example, you can work on a document on your Mac at home, then edit it on your iPhone on the bus.

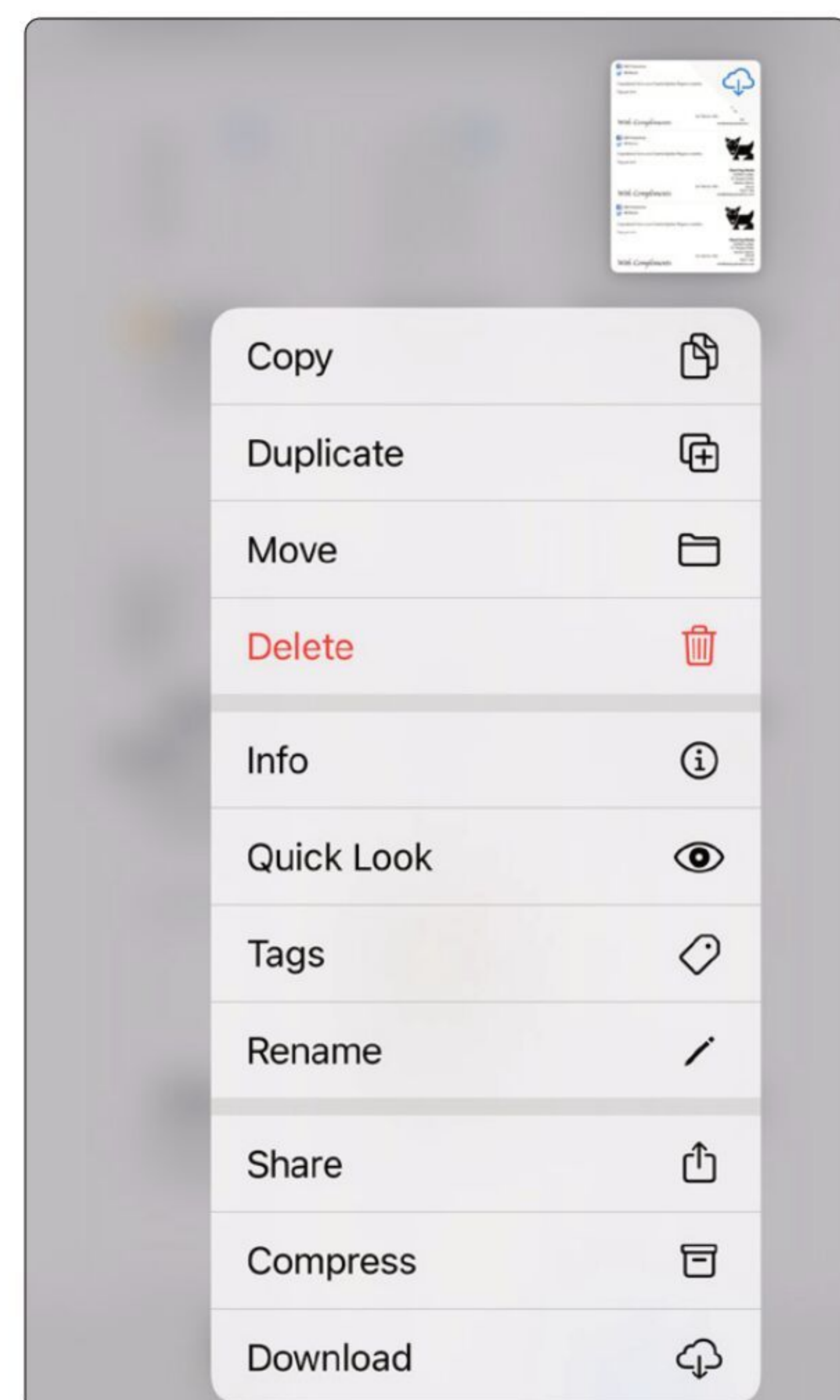




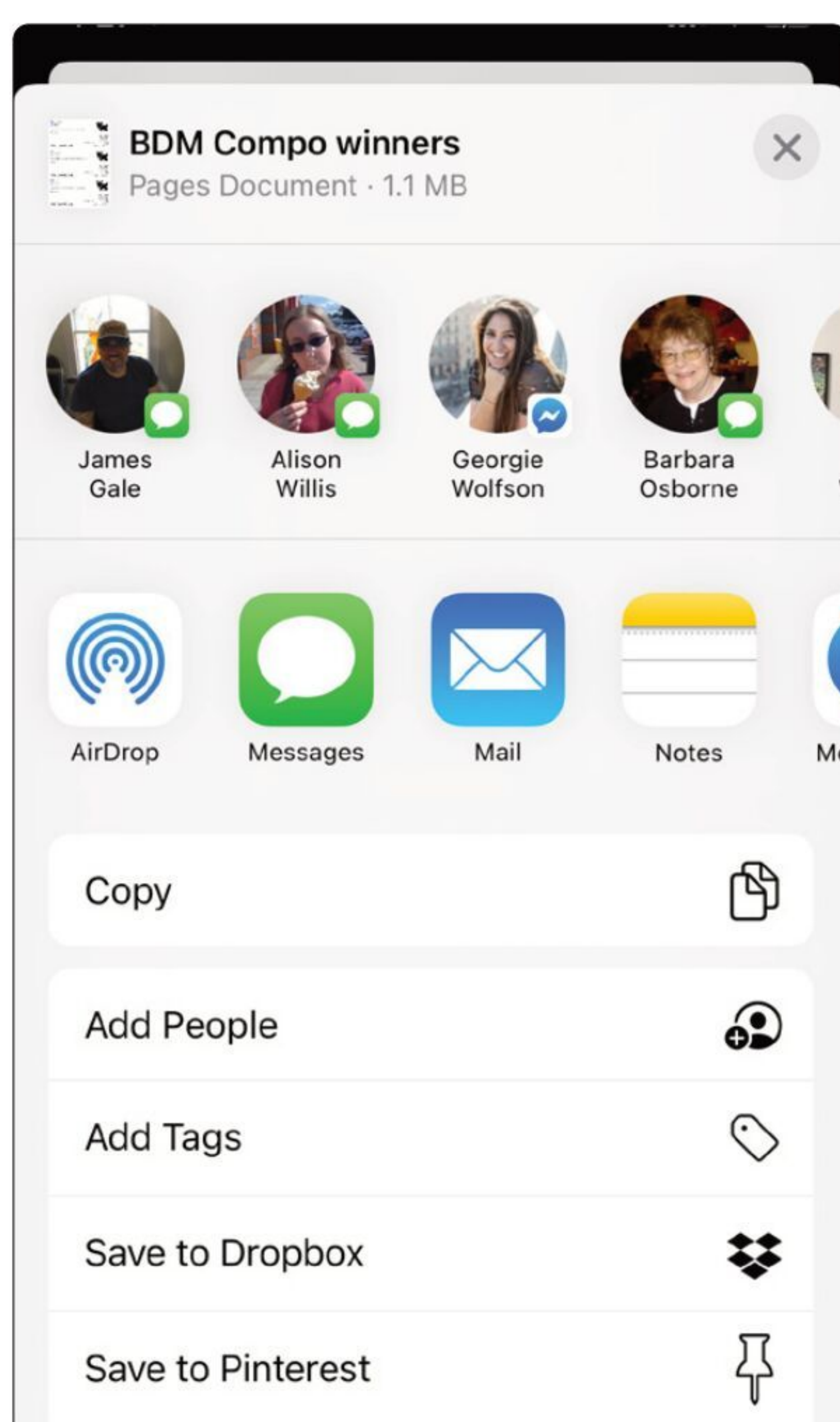
**4** When you open an iCloud document on your iPhone, it's downloaded to your smartphone. It then opens in the usual way, so you can edit, modify and generally work on the document on your iPhone.



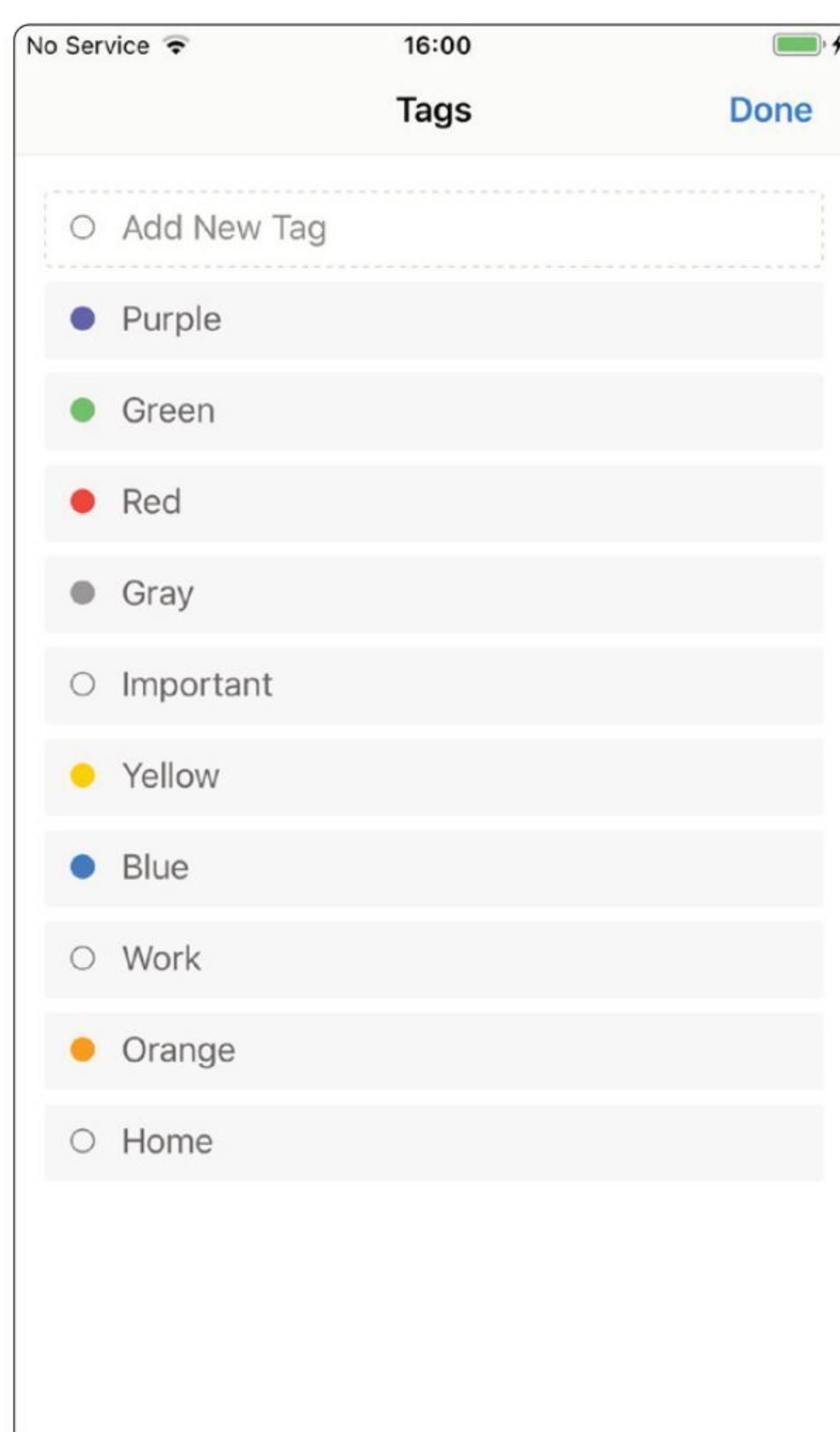
**5** Edits and changes you make on the iPhone are also made on the cloud copy of the document. This means if you edit it on the go on your phone, then open it on your Mac at home, the changes are there.



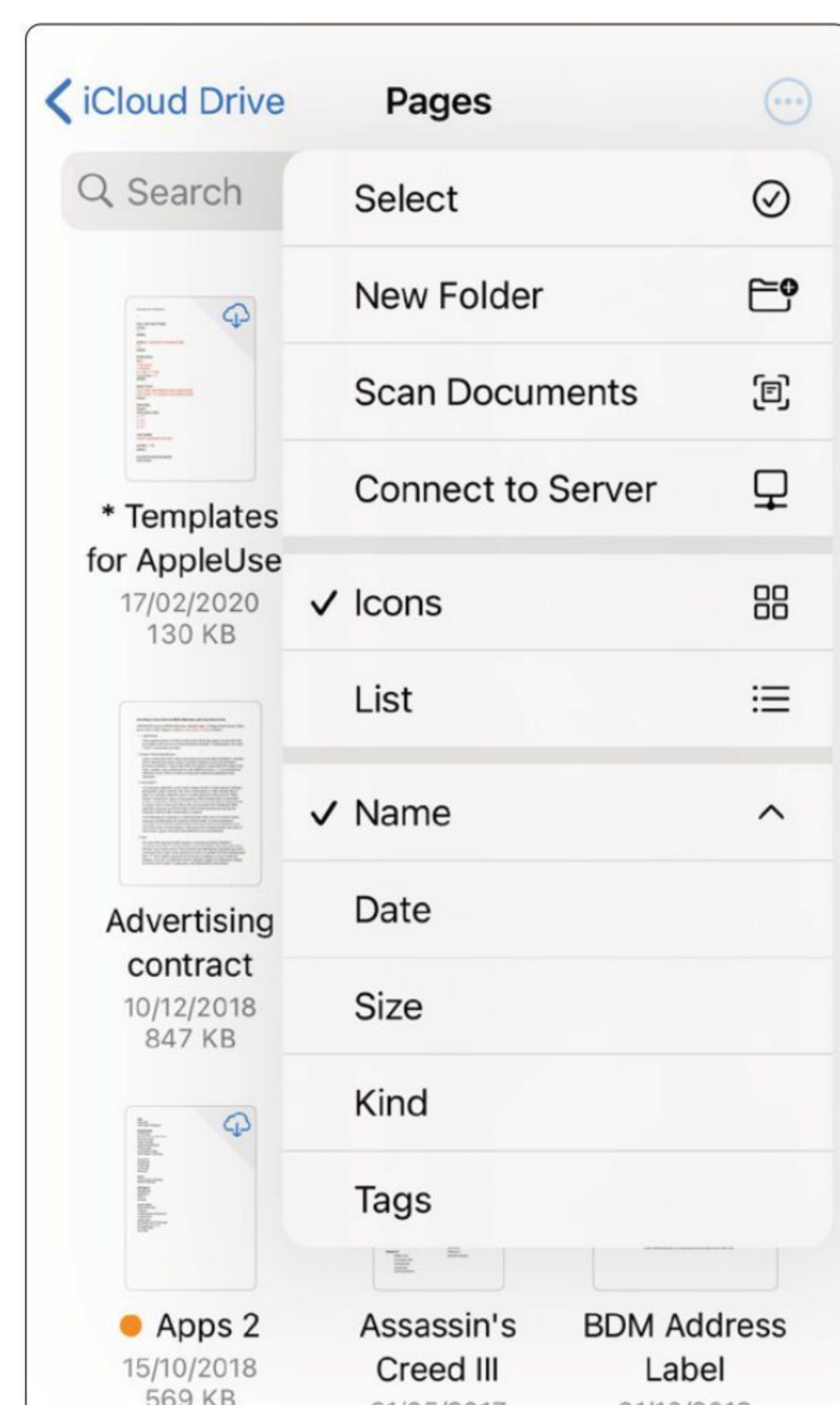
**6** Tap and hold a document until you get the pop-up menu. From here, you can copy the document, duplicate it, delete it, rename it, share it, move it to another folder, and more. The menu scrolls up and down to show more options.



**7** This pop-up menu also lets you share a document, right from your Files app. You can email it, add it to Notes, send it to another Apple device with AirDrop and let others collaborate on it using Add People.



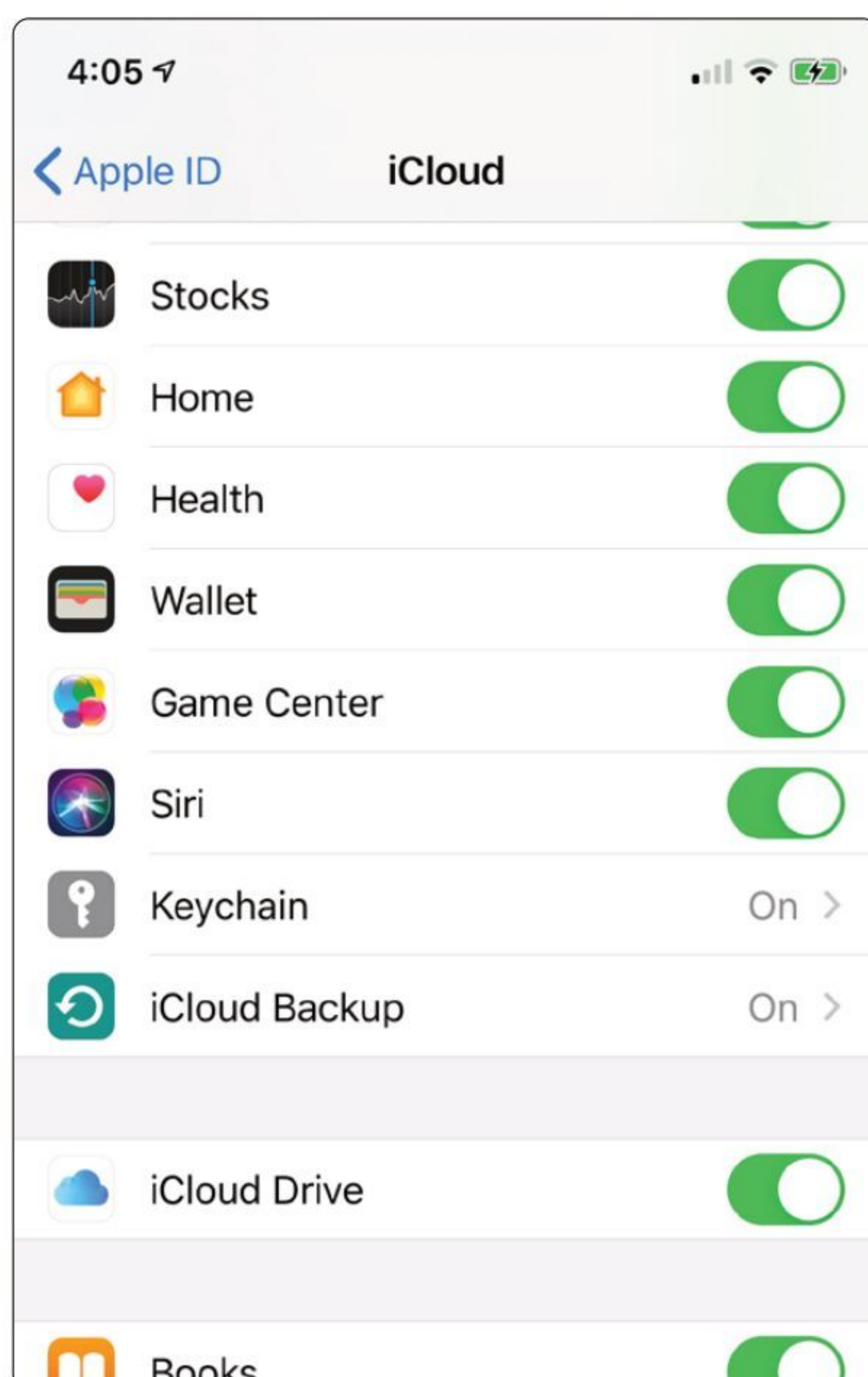
**8** The menu that pops up when you tap and hold iCloud docs also lets you tag a document with a coloured icon. Tagged documents can be found by tapping their colour in the Tags section in the Browse window.



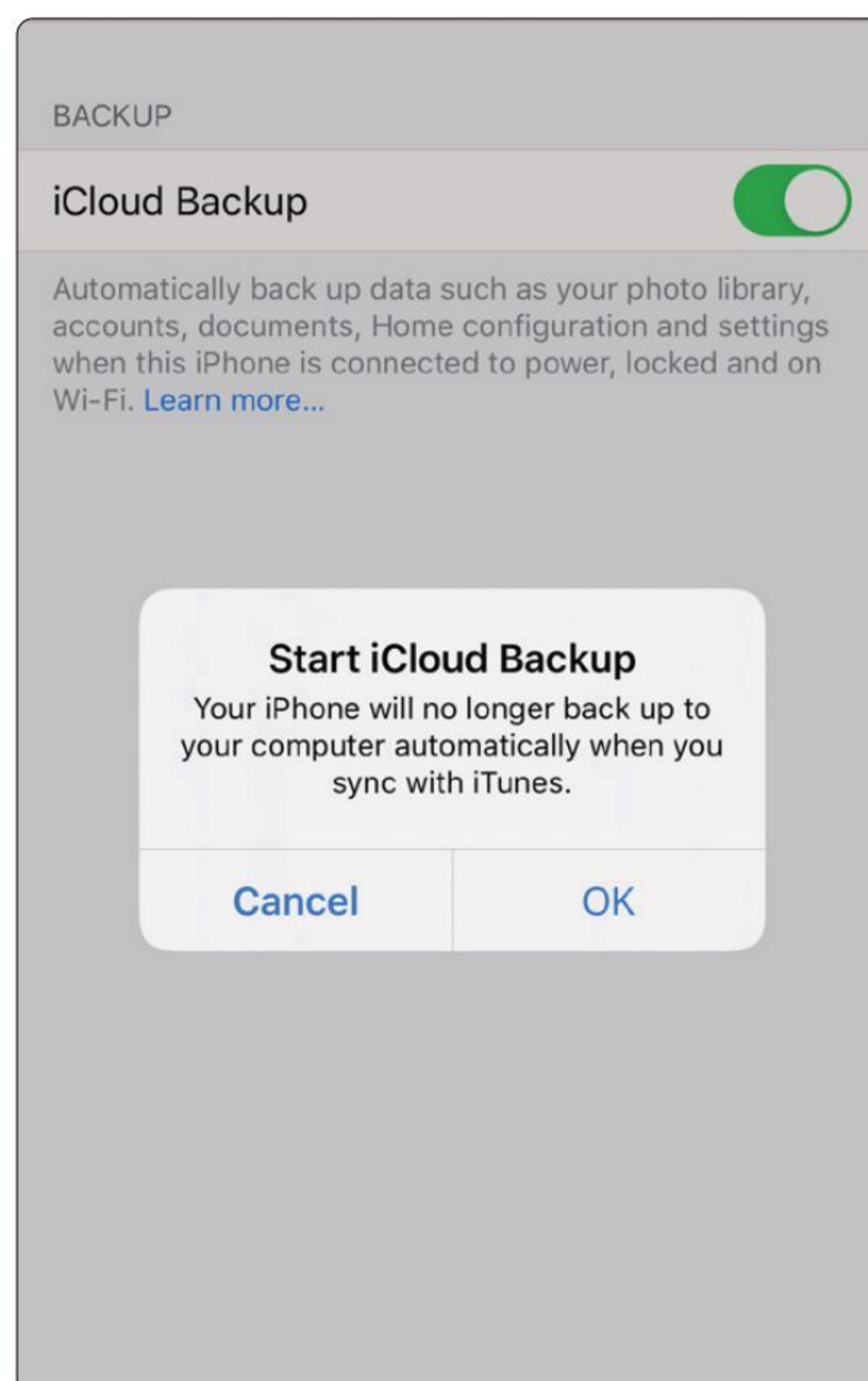
**9** Open an iCloud Drive folder and tap the three-dots icon in the top-right corner, above the search field. This opens a menu from where you can create a new folder, connect to an external server, change how document icons are displayed and more.



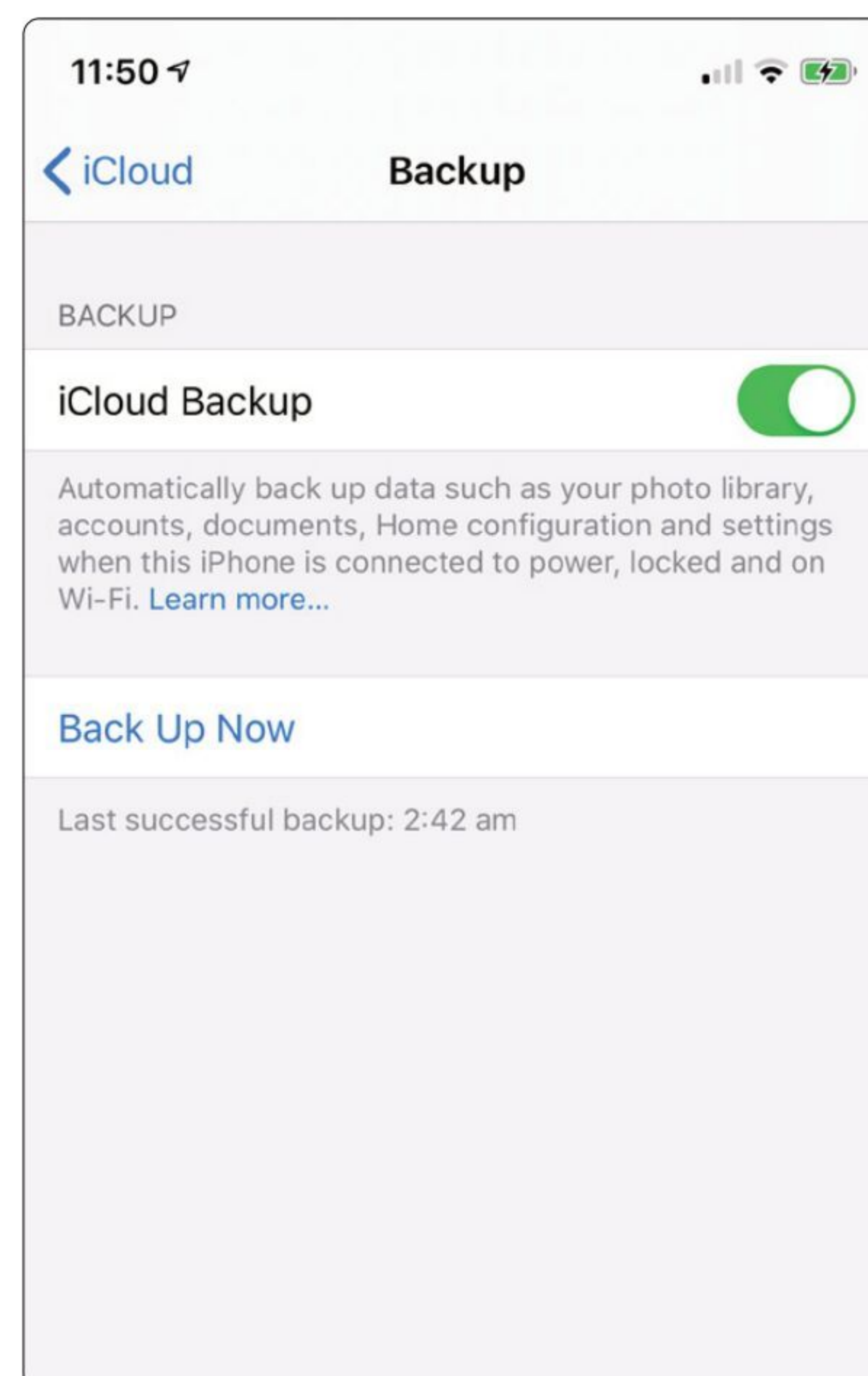
## iCloud backups



**1** Open the Settings app from your Home screen and tap your name at the top. Tap iCloud, then scroll all the way down until you see an option called ‘iCloud Backup’, found just above the iCloud Drive link.



**2** Switch on iCloud Backup. This means your computer no longer backs up your iPhone when you sync with iTunes. Tap OK in the pop-up window to confirm you want to use iCloud backups now instead.

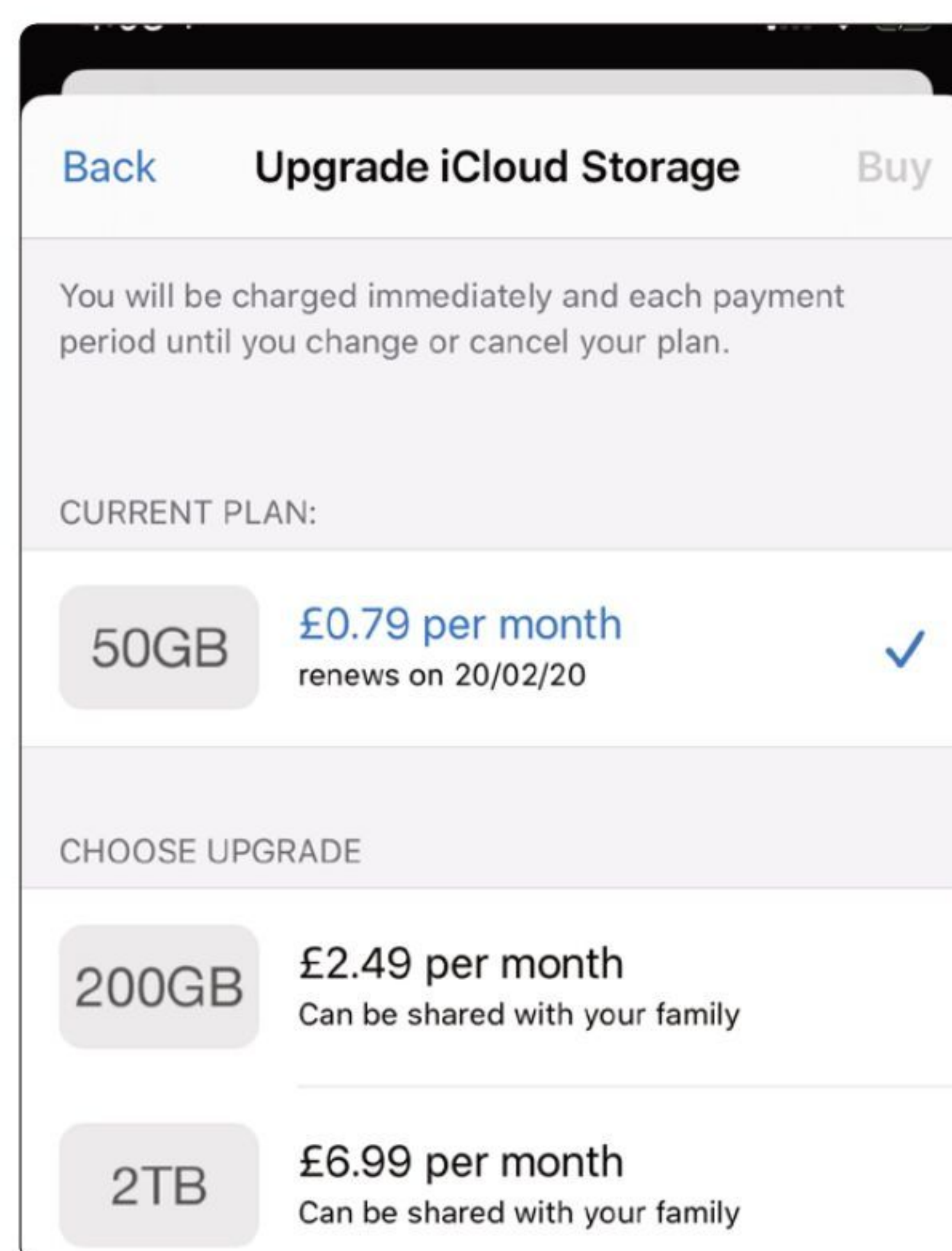


**3** Your iPhone now automatically backs up to iCloud when connected to a power source and on a Wi-Fi network. There’s also a link to Back Up Now. Tap it whenever you want to do an immediate back up.

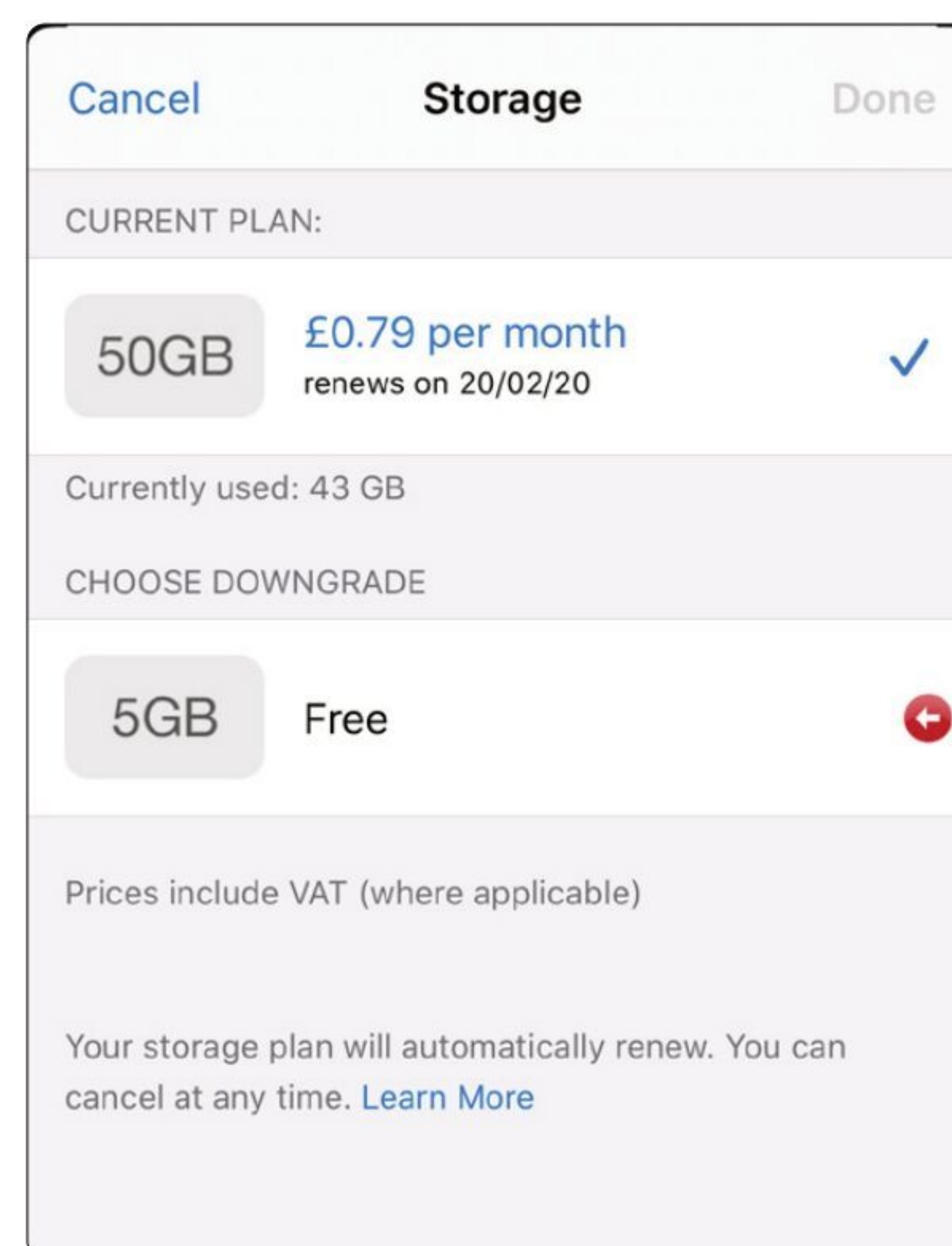
## Upgrading your subscription



**1** Open the Settings app, tap your name at the top of the screen, then tap iCloud. Tap Manage Storage. You’re told what iCloud storage plan you’re on. If you want to change your plan, tap the Change link.



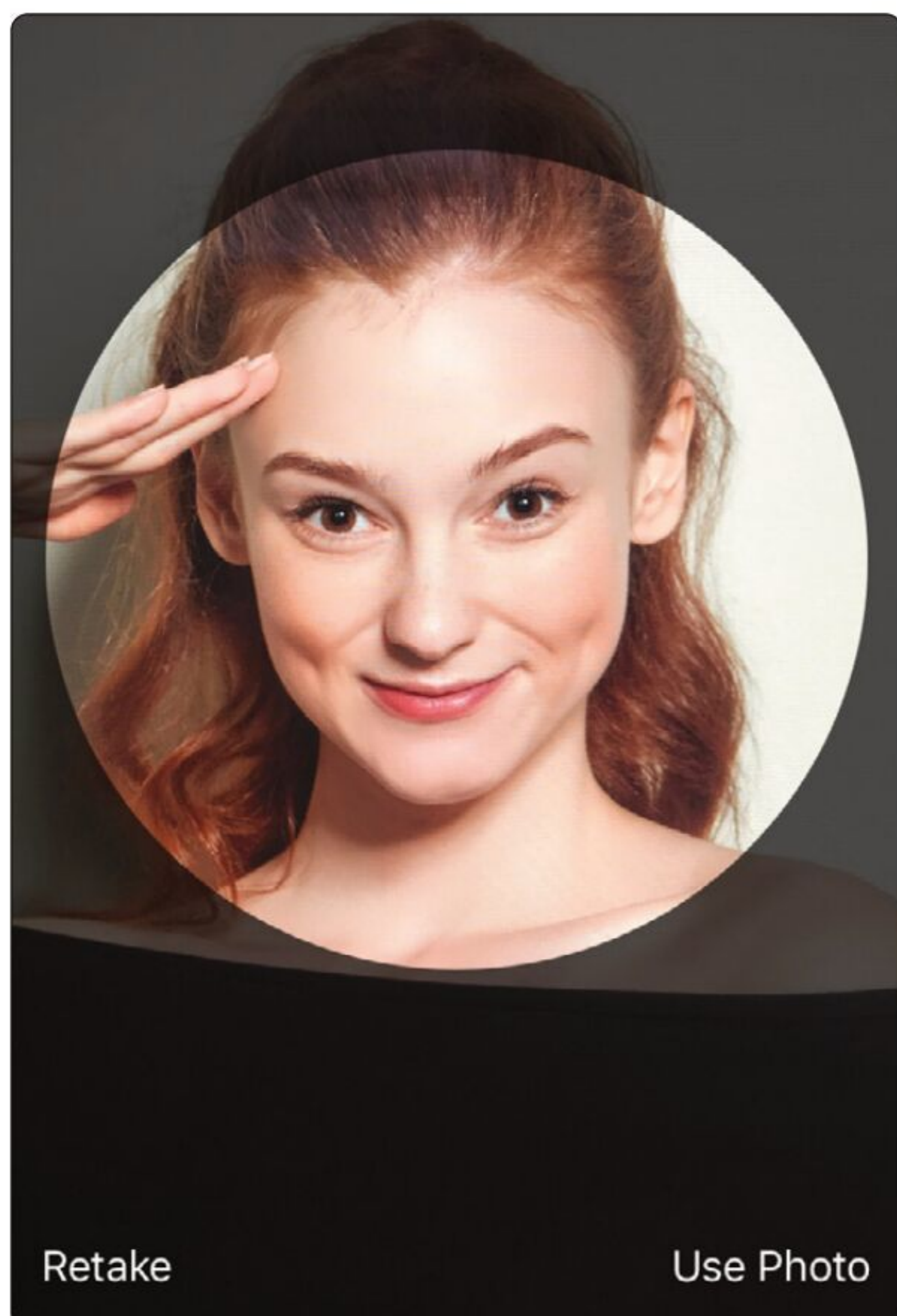
**2** A window shows your current plan and other available options. You get 5GB free of charge, but if you want more, there are plenty of paid-for plans that increase your total storage space for a set monthly fee.



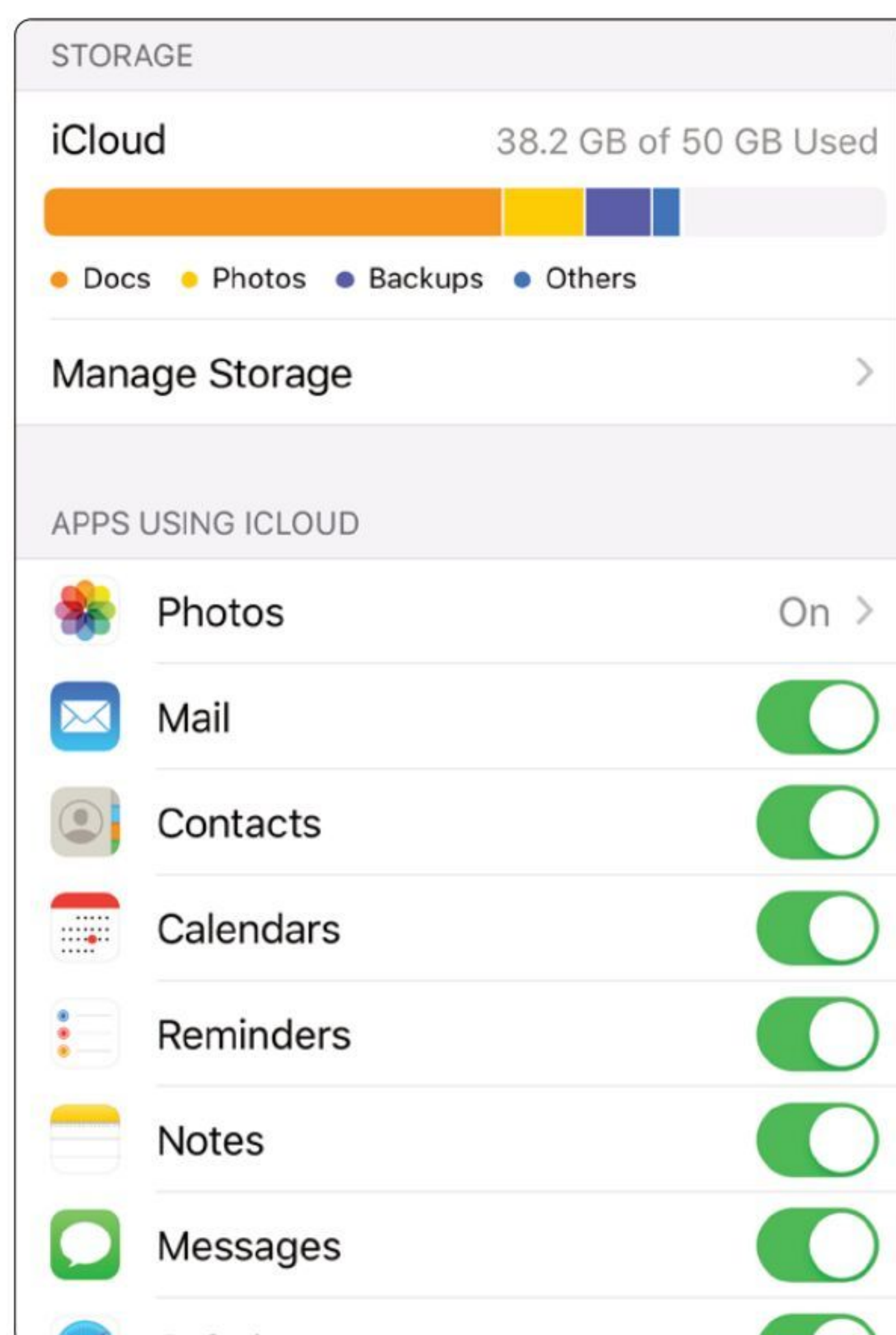
**3** If you find you have more storage than you need, you can downgrade by tapping Downgrade Options at the foot of the pop-up window. Either way, choose your new plan then tap Buy/Done (top right).



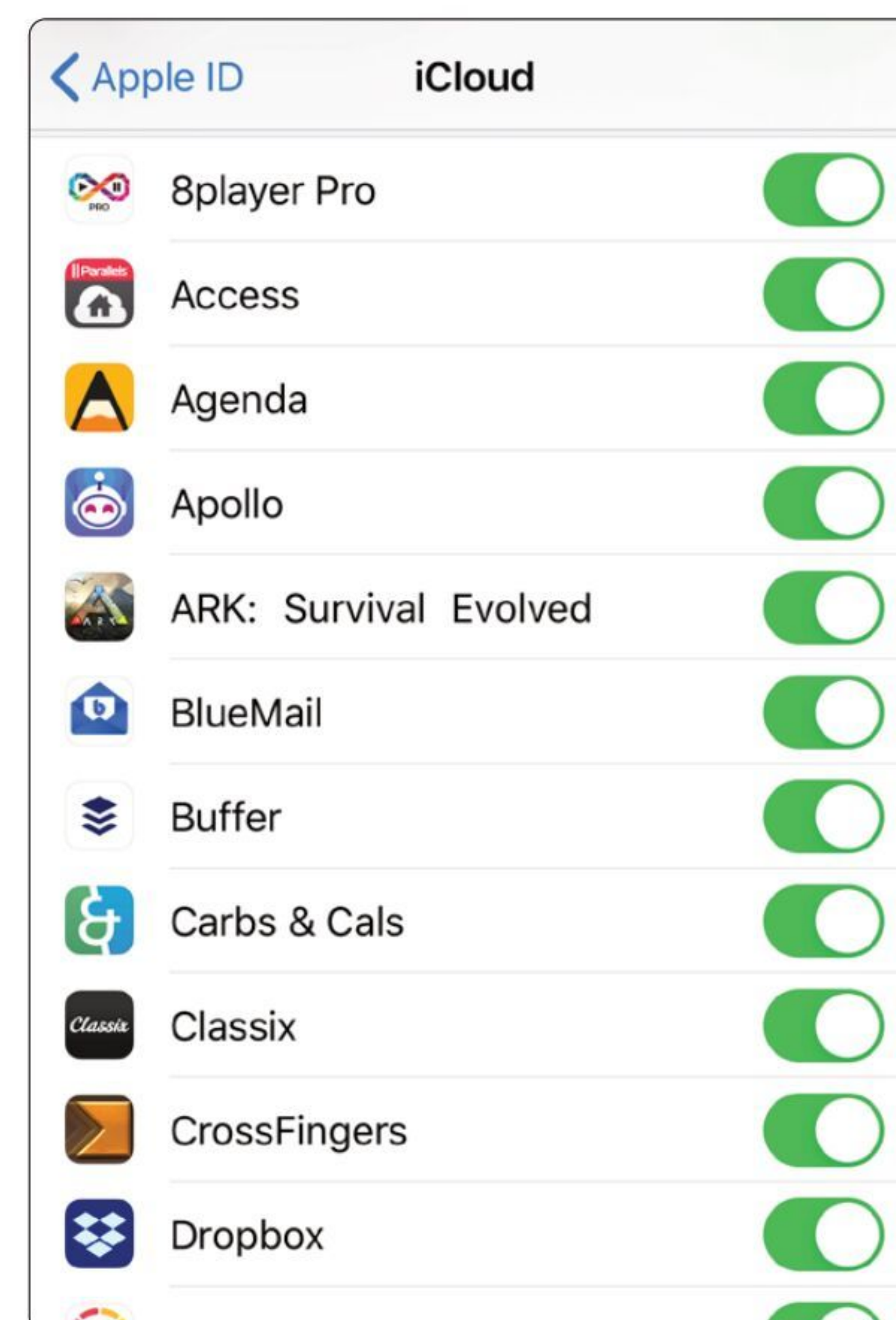
# Configuring iCloud



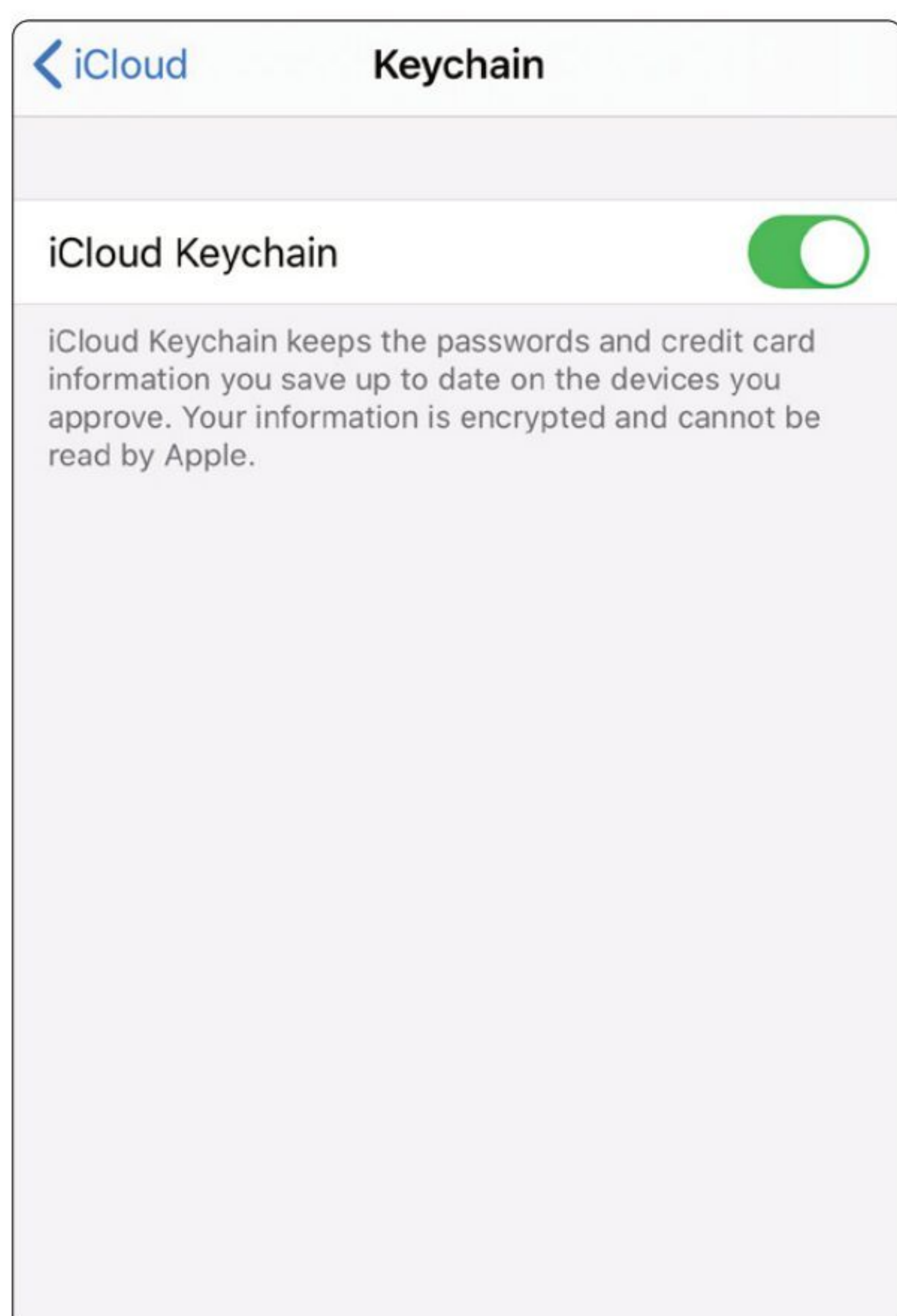
**1** To use a photo with your iCloud account, go to Settings > [your name] and tap the grey circle at the top. Take a photo or add one from your Photos library. If you don't have one yet, just leave it; you can come back and take or add one whenever you choose.



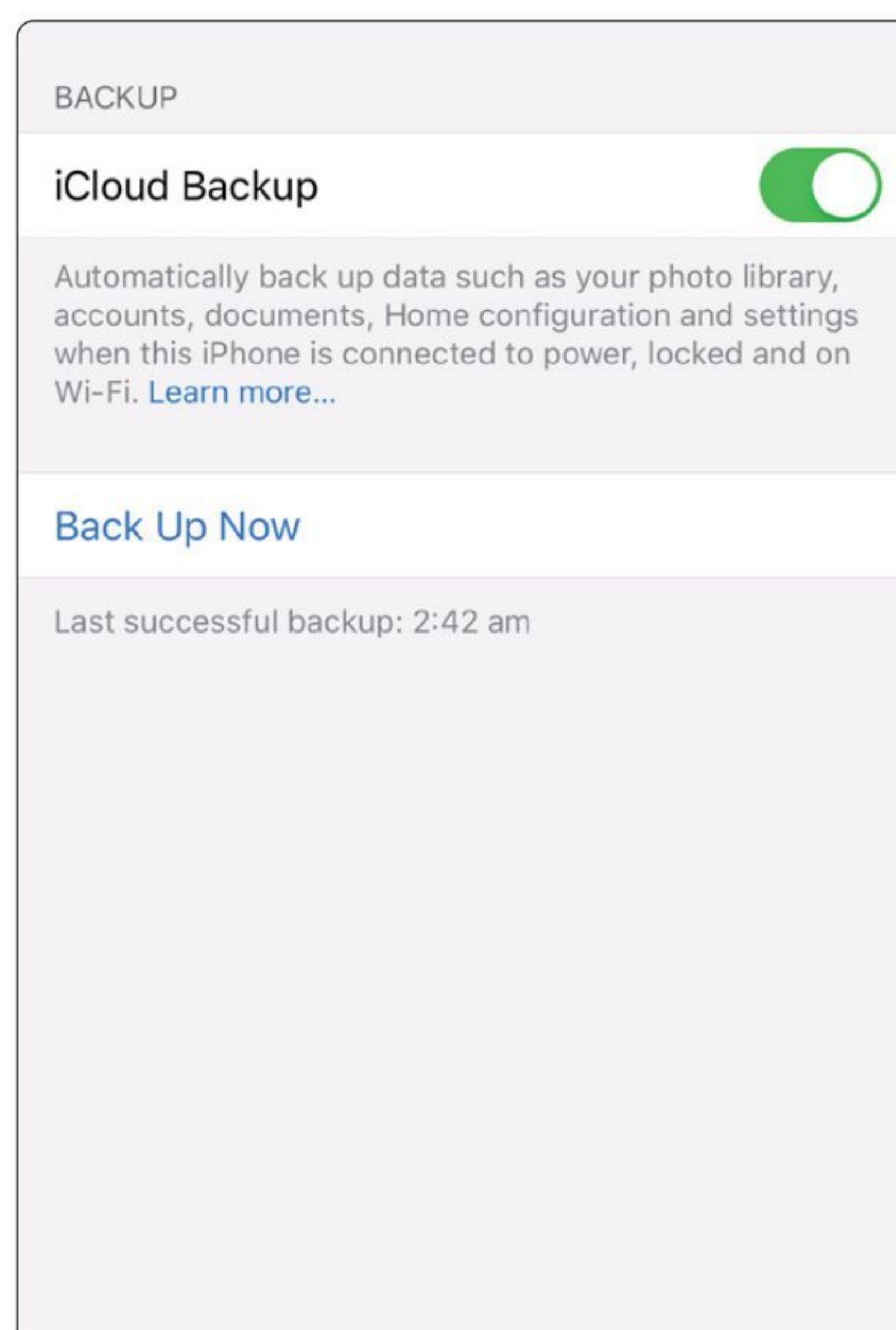
**2** In Settings > [your name], tap the iCloud link for a list of apps that can be kept in sync with iCloud. If an app is switched on in this list, it means changes you make on one Apple device are also made on all your other Apple devices signed into the same iCloud ID.



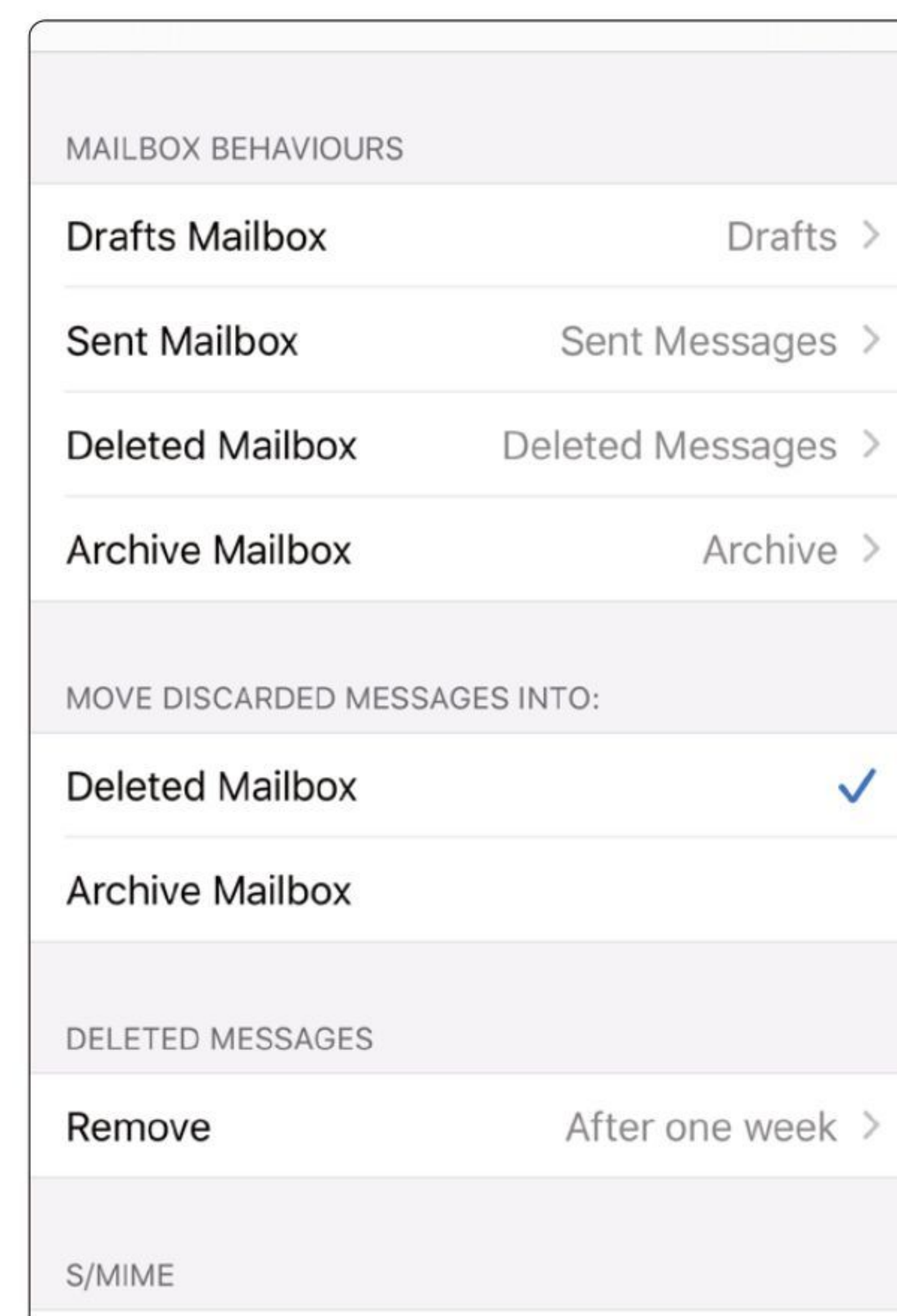
**3** In the Settings app, after tapping your name and then iCloud, scroll down the list of apps that you can sync in iCloud. After the preinstalled Apple apps, you see a list of all the apps you've installed yourself that can be synced. Switch this syncing on or off as you please.



**4** Tap the Keychain link and you can turn on the iCloud Keychain service here. This stores things like passwords, usernames and credit card information; for example, when you log on to an online forum, you won't need to keep typing your details every time.



**5** The Backup option lets you automatically back up your iPhone whenever it's switched on, plugged to a charger and connected to the Internet over Wi-Fi. Under Share My Location, you can show family and friends where you are in Messages and the Find My Friends app.



**6** The Mail option towards the bottom of the screen shows the details used for your iCloud email account; this is automatically configured in the Mail app. You can change some of the advanced settings relating to the mailbox behaviours; take a look and explore.



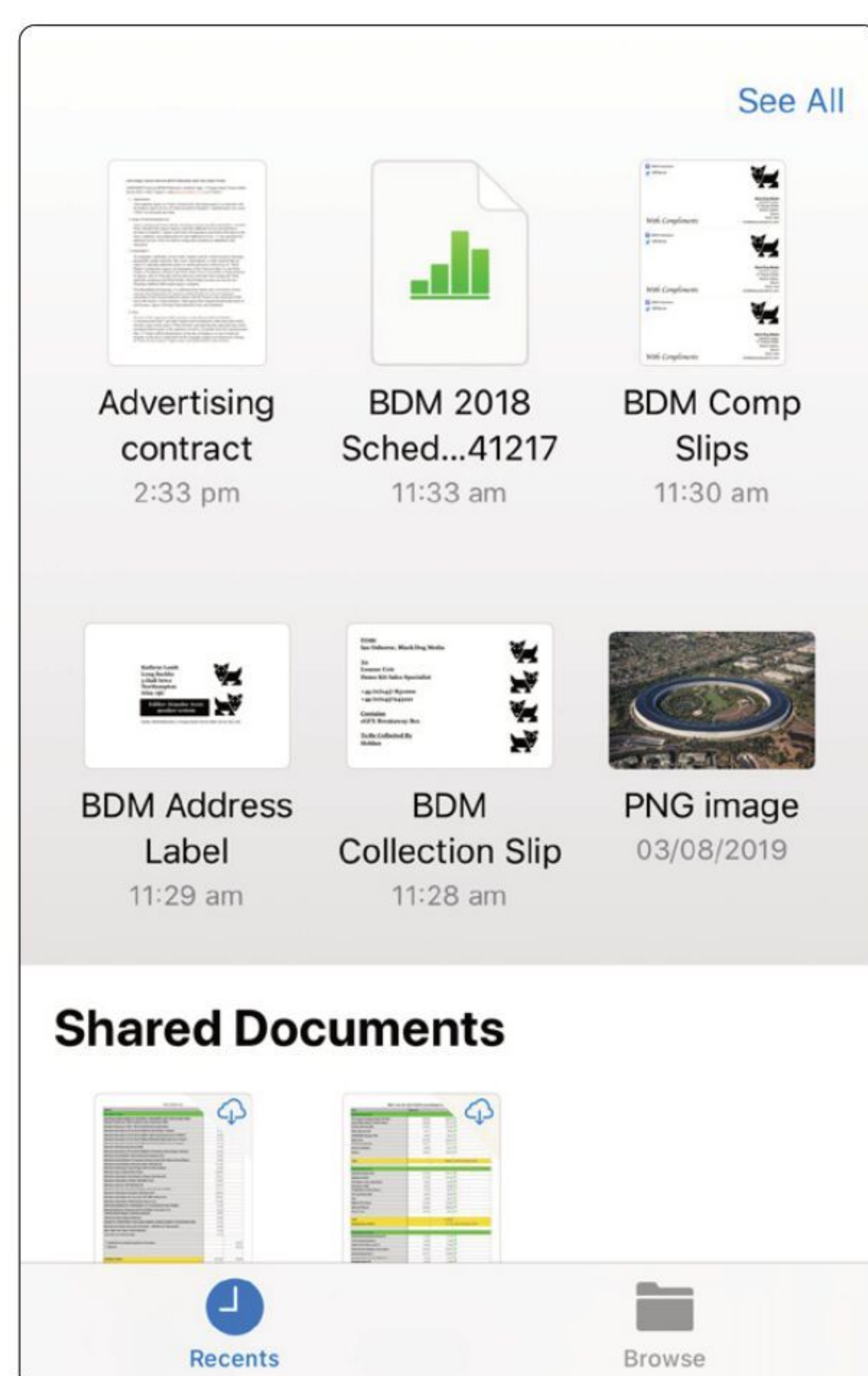


# Using the Files App

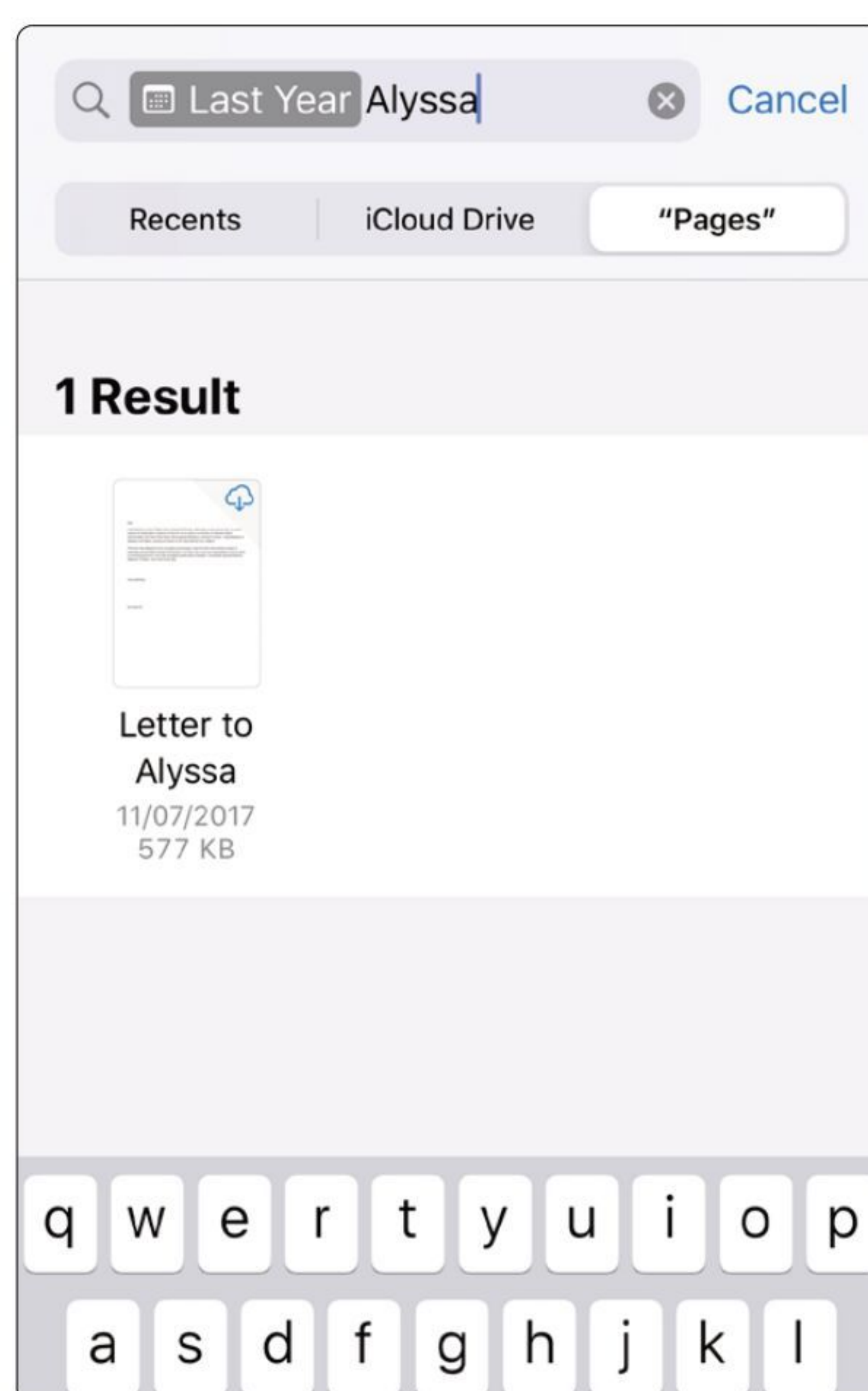
## Its Secrets Uncovered

We've already dipped into what the Files app can do in our iCloud tutorial, but now it's time to take a deeper look at its features and capabilities. The Files app boasts an impressive range of features. It now boasts better, Mac-like searches, the ability to read external drives, sharing folders and zipping and unzipping files, which is great for sending them by email.

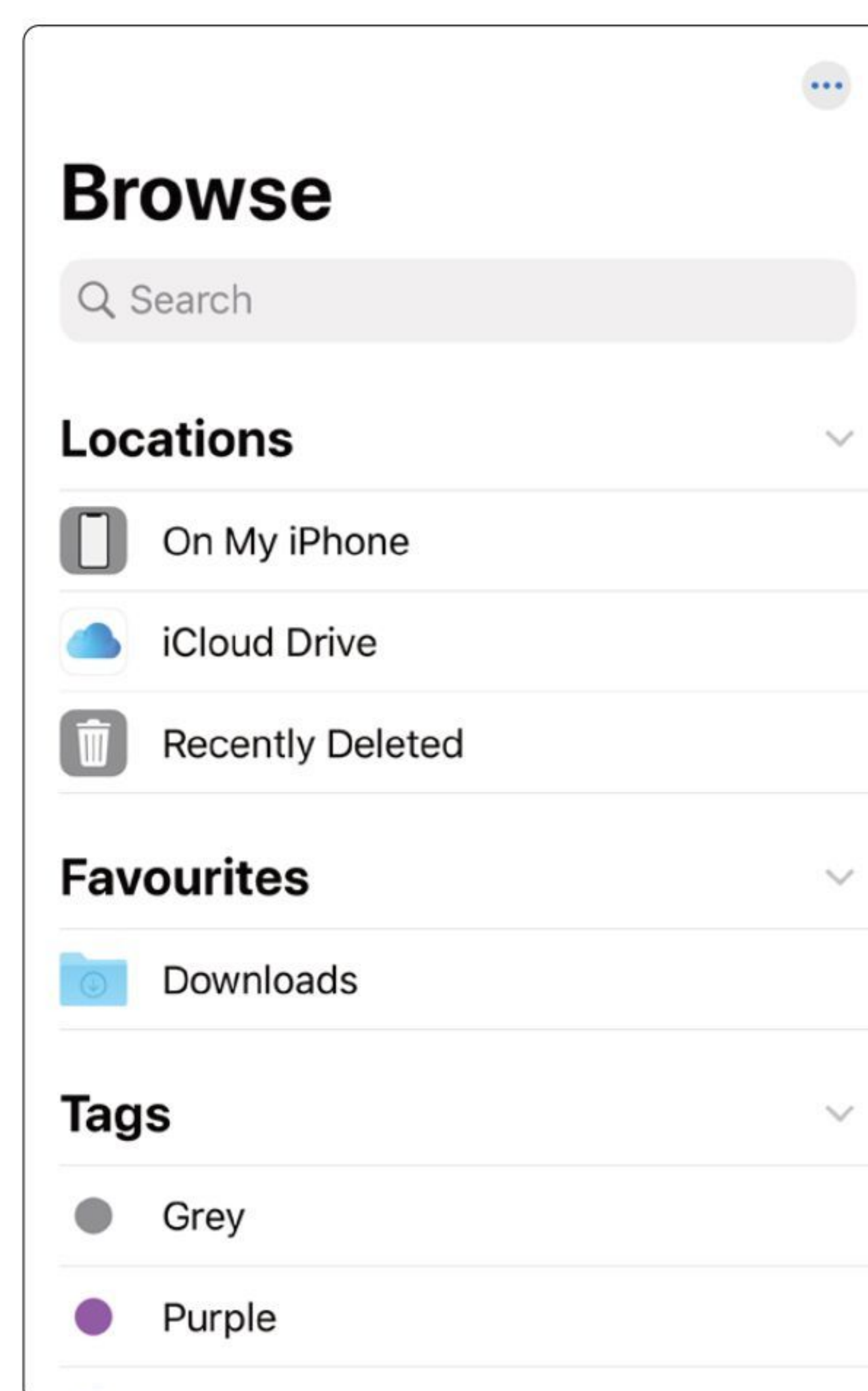
## Features of the Files app



**1** When you first open the Files app, you see two icons at the foot of the screen. The Recents icon shows you documents you've recently opened, and also gives access to those you've shared and tagged with a colour. The Browse icon lets you look through your files.



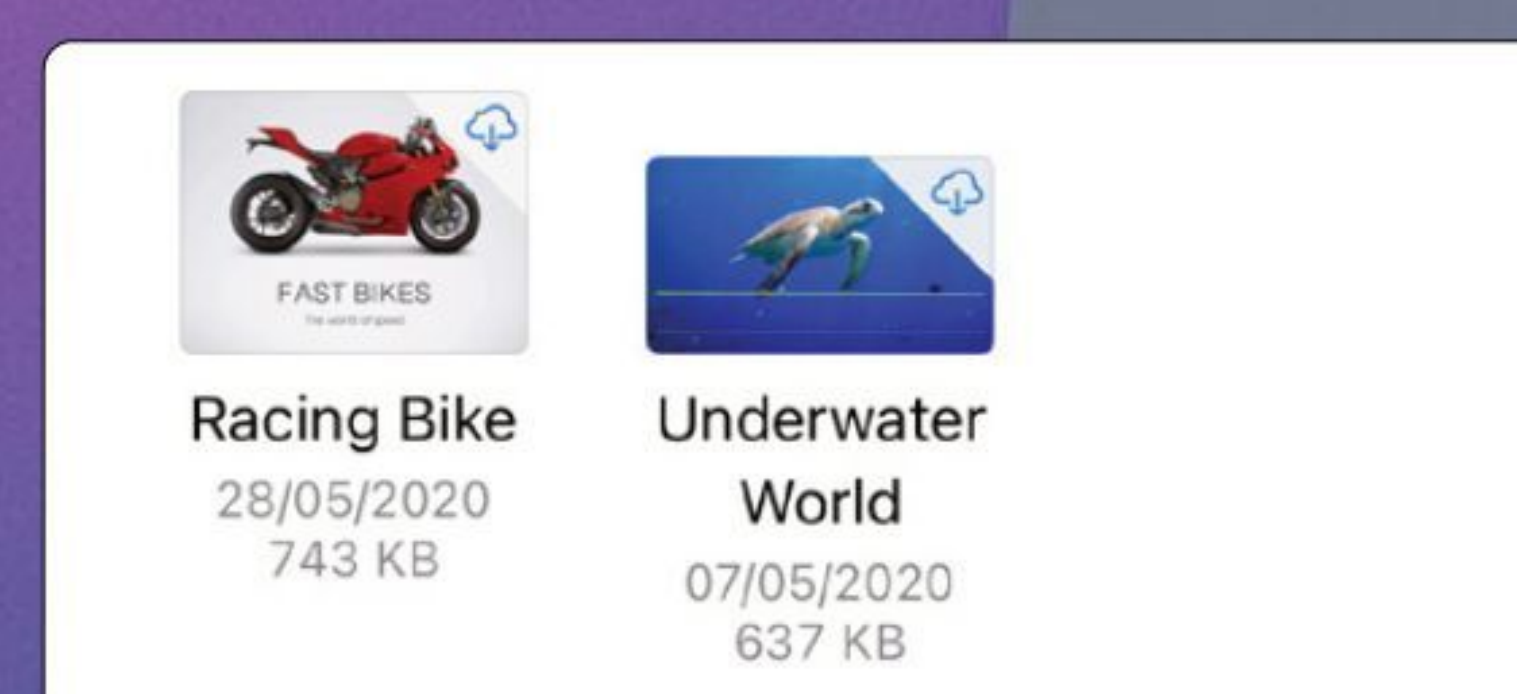
**2** The Files app has an improved search facility. You can restrict your search to recents, files on iCloud Drive, or the specific app whose folder you've opened, and can also add 'tokens' to restrict the search to (for example) specific file types or production dates (e.g. 'last week')



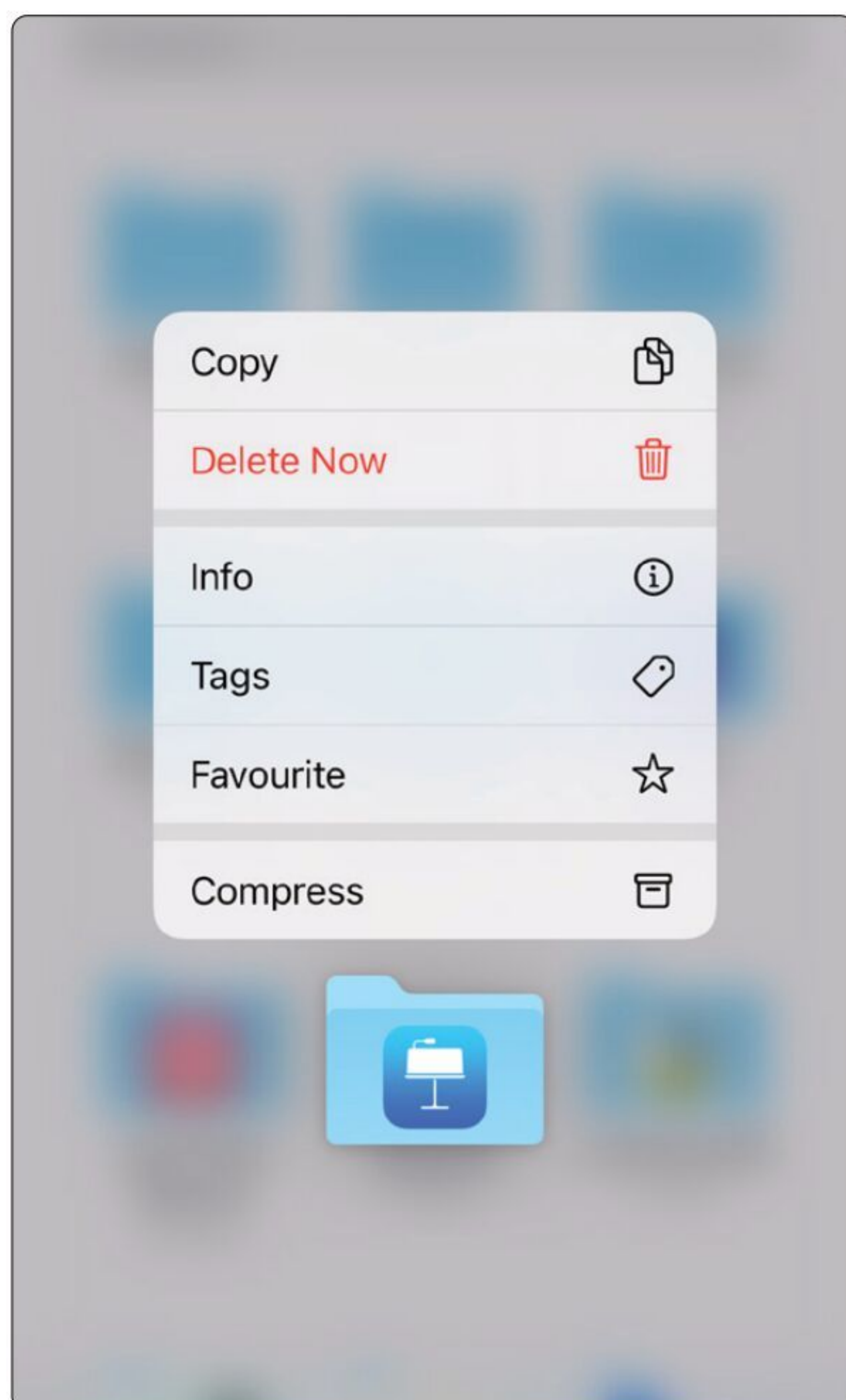
**3** The first four options on the Browse screen are On My iPhone (documents you've stored locally) iCloud Drive (documents stored on your iCloud service), Shared Documents (files shared with you) and Recently Deleted (recover things you've deleted in error).

## The Cloud icon.

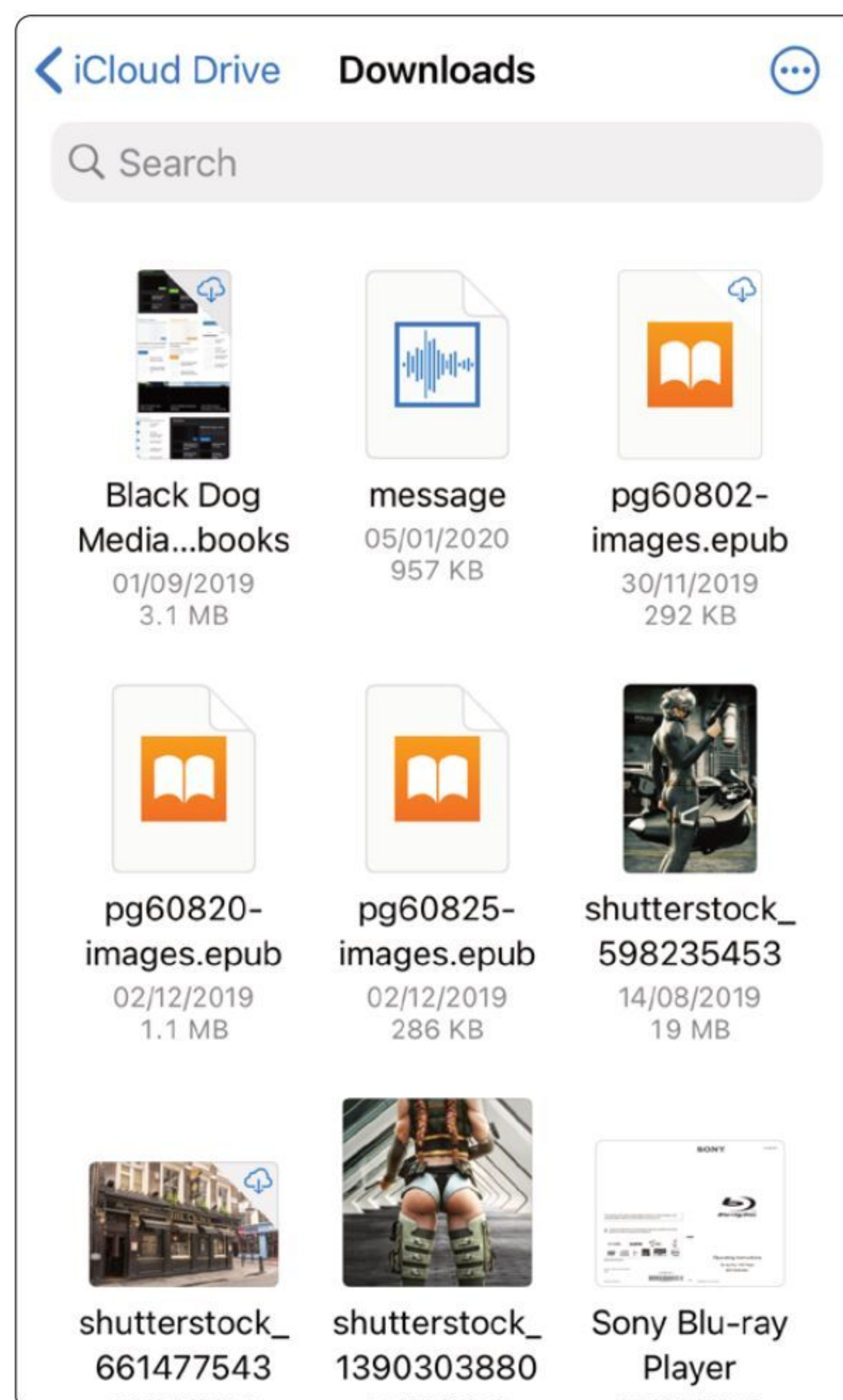
If a document is stored on your iCloud but not on your iPhone, there's a Cloud icon in the top right corner of its thumbnail. Tap the thumbnail to download the document to your iPhone, and then open it so you can edit and modify it on your phone, with your changes synced to iCloud.



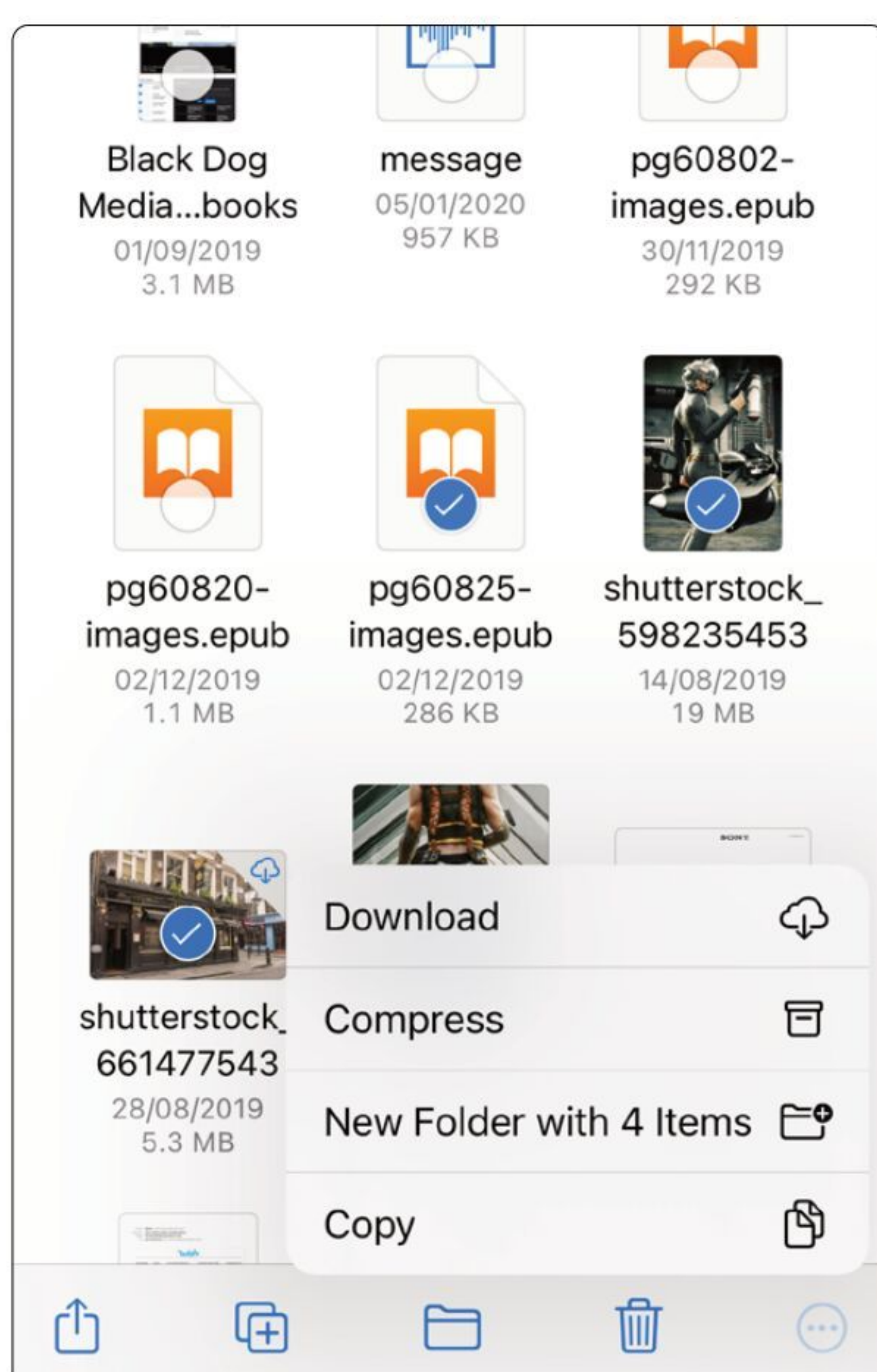




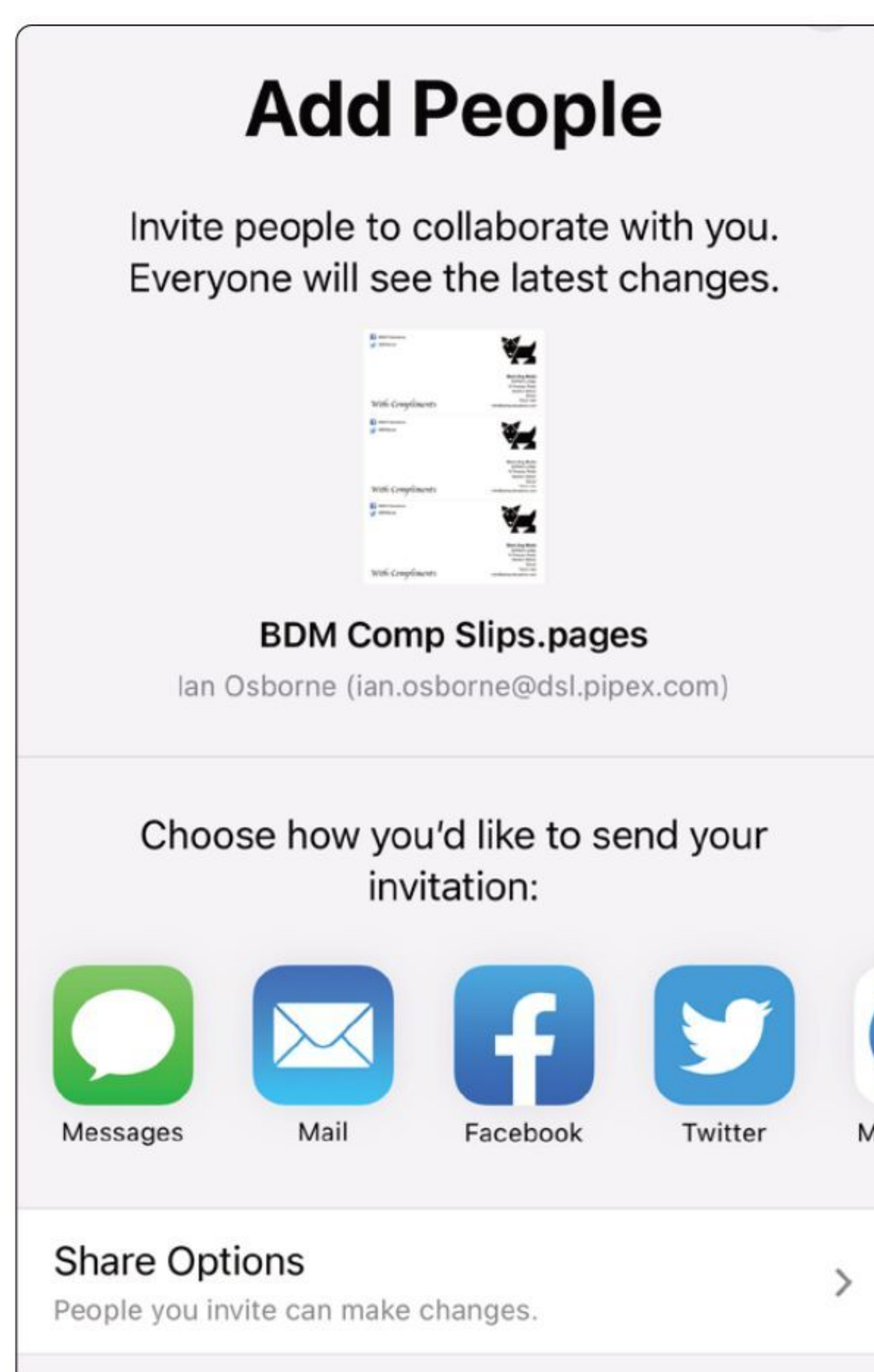
**4** Tap and hold a folder in the Files app for a pop-up menu. Tap Favourites to add the folder to your Favourites. These appear on the first page of the Browse page, for easy access. To remove the item from Favourites, tap and hold the folder in iCloud Drive and then tap Unfavourite.



**5** The Downloads folder, which is in iCloud Drive, and also your Favourites by default, shows items you've downloaded on your iPhone, from Safari for example. These items are, of course, synced with your Mac and other iOS devices, where they're also found in Downloads.

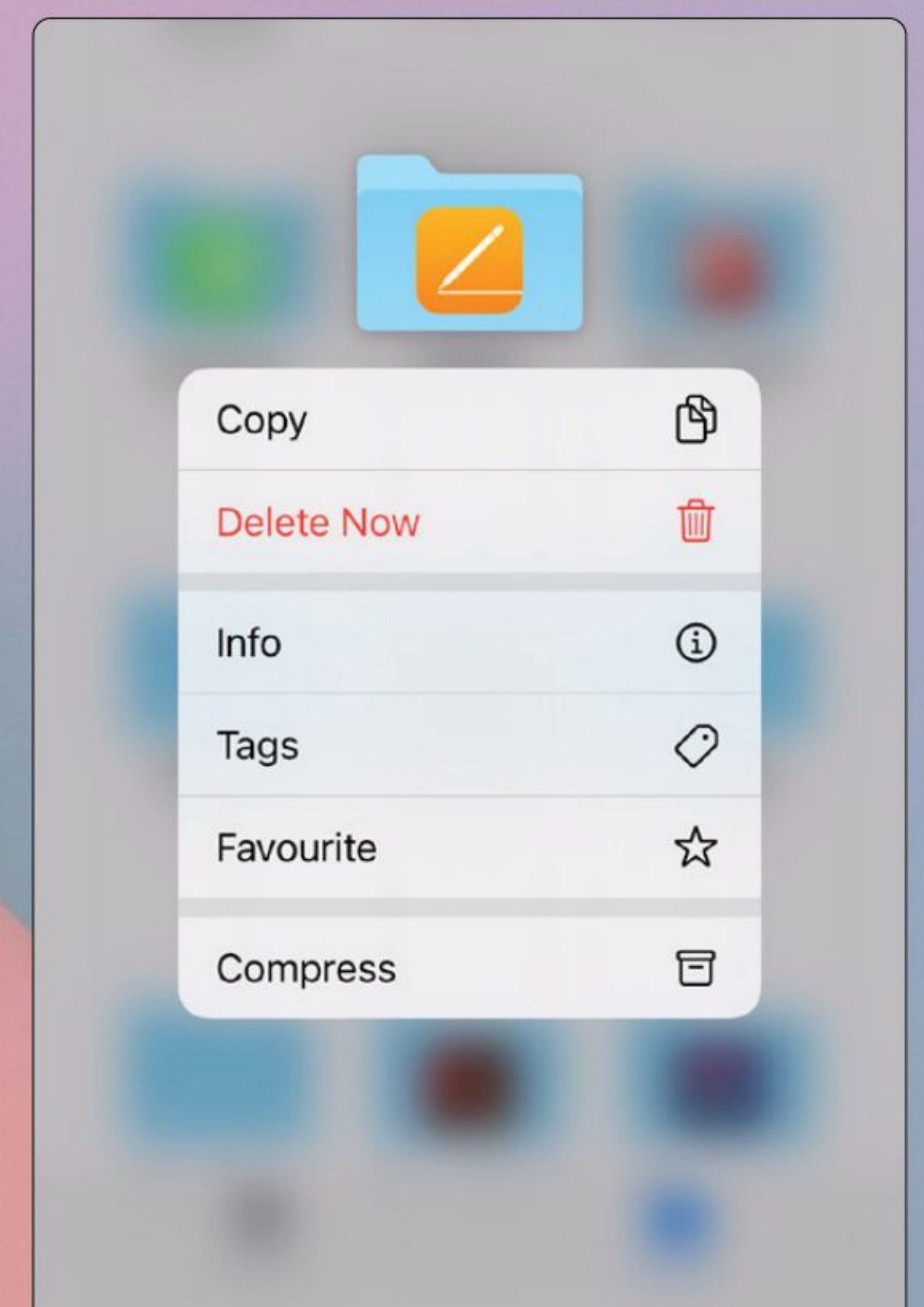


**6** Tap the three-dots icon (top right) then Select on the pop-up menu. Tap one or more items or folders. A group of icons appear at the foot of the screen. You can share, duplicate, move, or delete selected files. The new three-dots icon (bottom right) brings up a contextual menu.

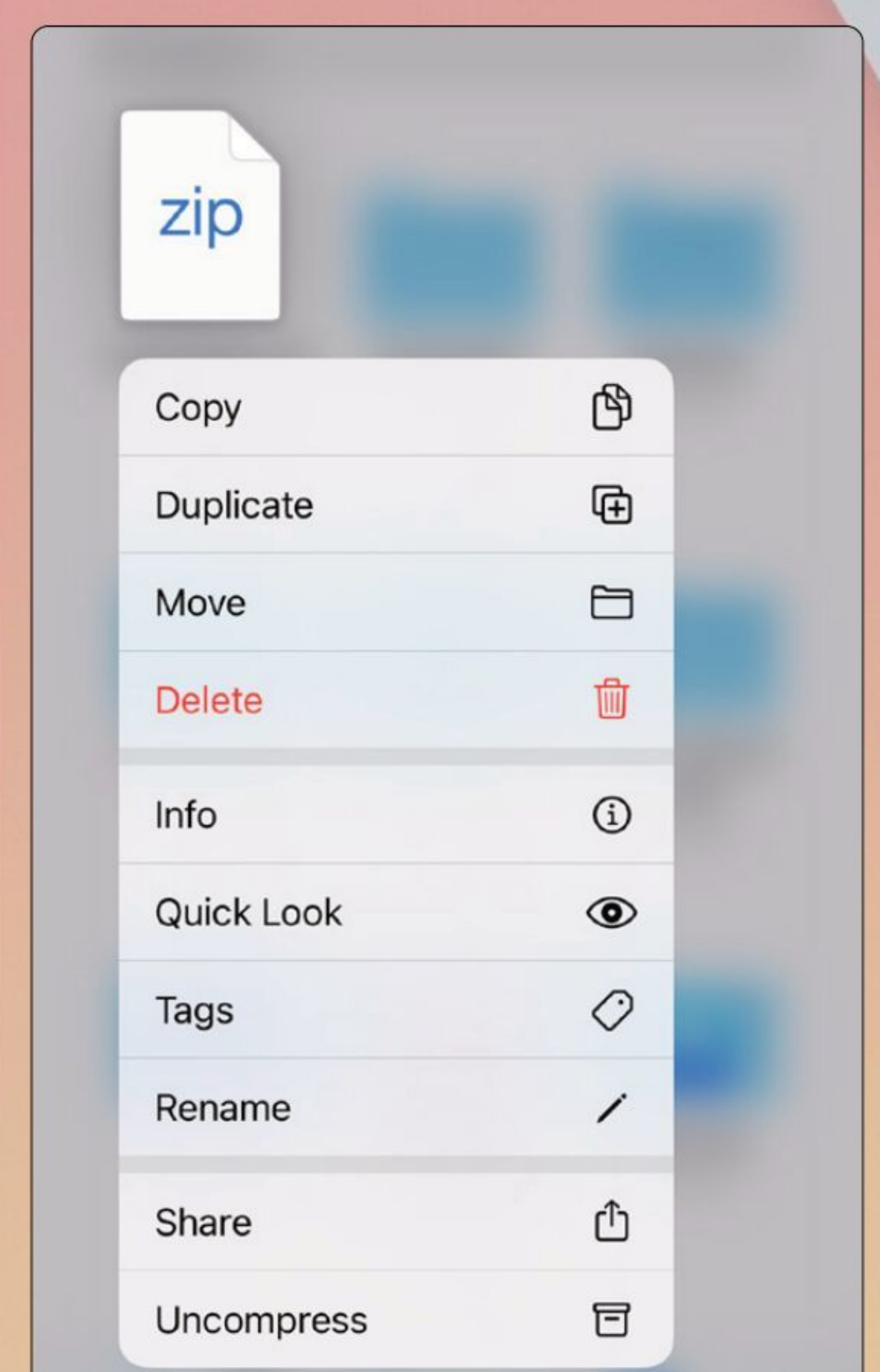


**7** To collaborate on a document that's stored on your iCloud, tap and hold it, then tap Share in the pop-up. Tap Add People, and choose how to share your document. Send it to the people with whom you want to collaborate, and all changes made are shared with the group.

## Compress files.



You can compress a folder by tapping and holding it and then selecting Compress from the pop-up menu. To compress a group of files, tap the three-dots icon (top right), select them, tap the three-dots icon in the bottom right, then select the Compress option.



A compressed archive is shown as a Zip file. Tap to uncompress it, or tap and hold it for the pop-up menu, which again lets you carry out a range of tasks. Zipping files and then tapping the pop-up's Share option is great for sending a group of files by Messages, email or more.

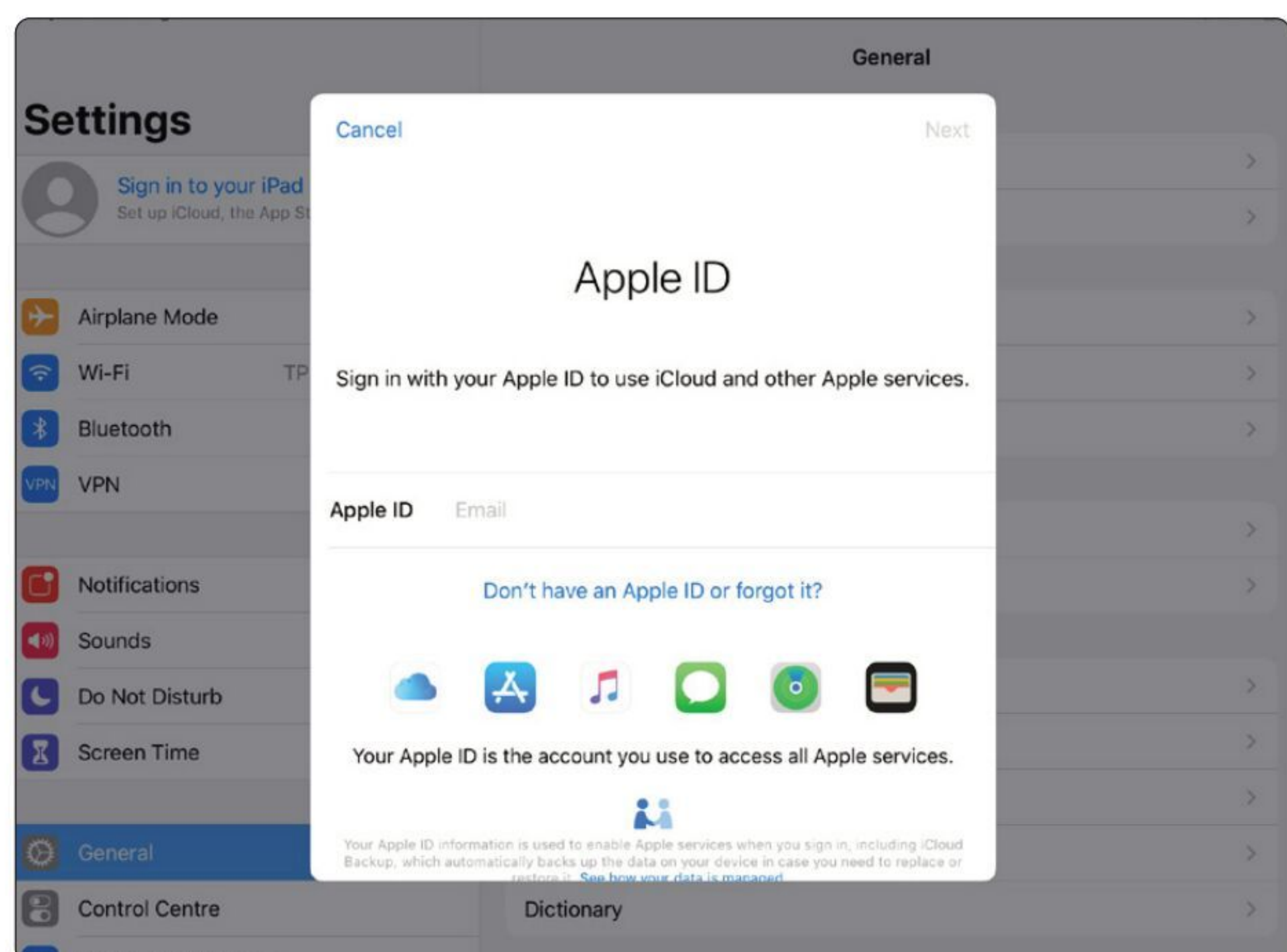




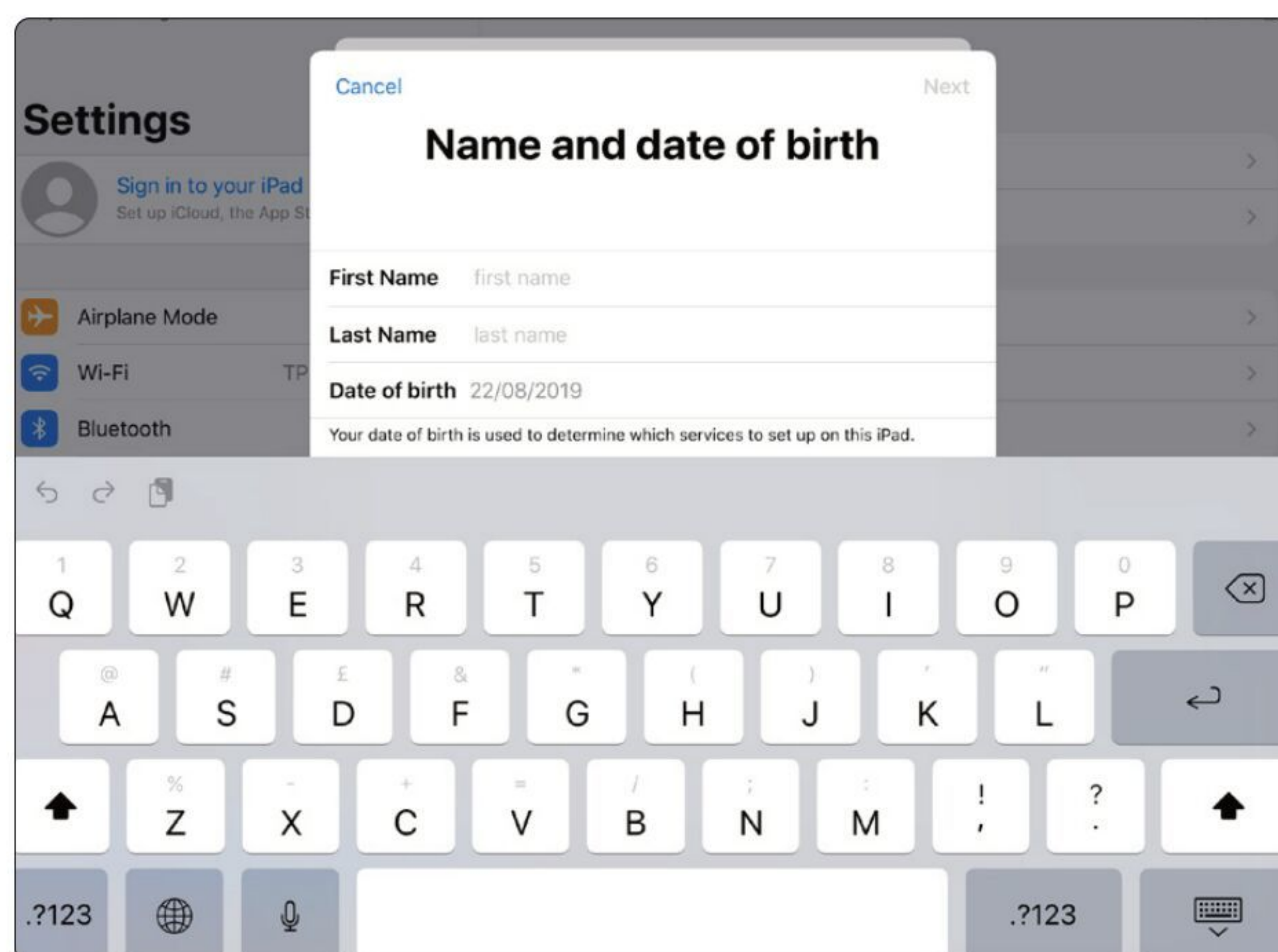
# Your Apple ID

## How to Set it Up

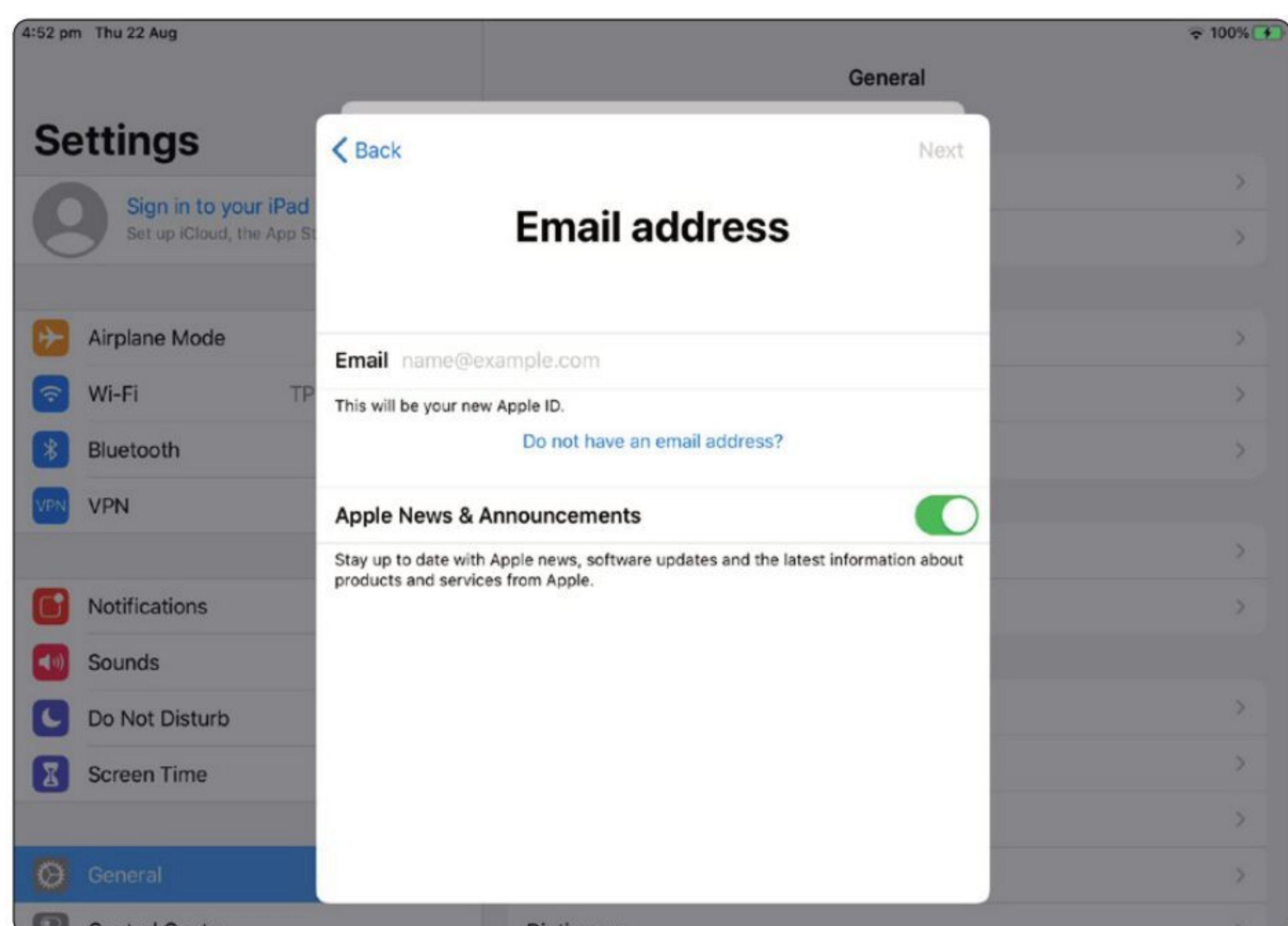
If you didn't register for an Apple ID during the initial setup of your iPad, you can set one up whenever you please, directly from the Settings app. If you want a new one, sign out with your old one and follow this guide. Either way, you'll soon be up and running with an all-important Apple ID.



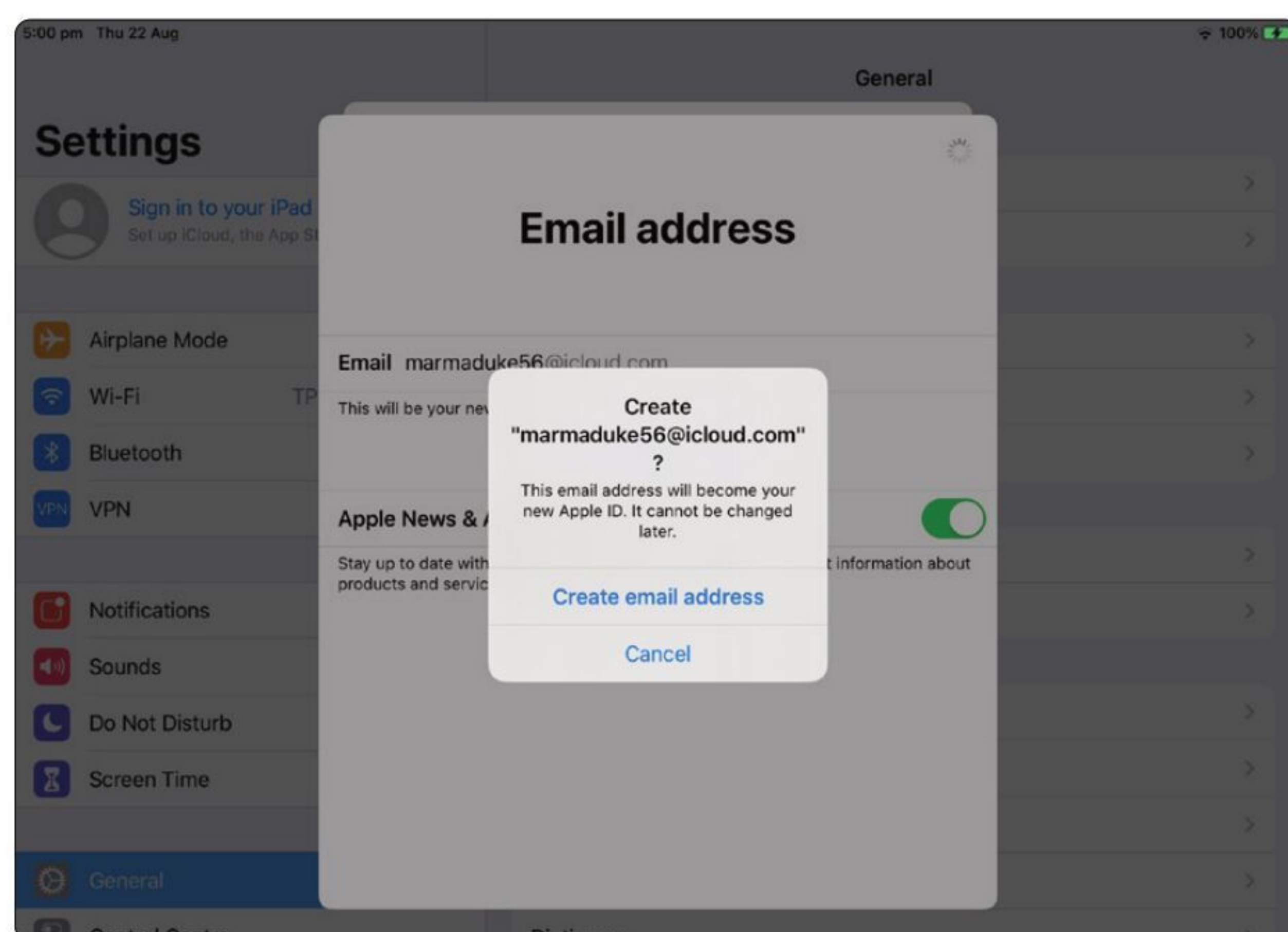
**1** Open Settings from the Home screen and scroll to the top of the left hand column. Tap 'Sign in to your iPad' right at the top of the list, then in the pop-up window, tap 'Don't have an Apple ID or forgot it?'



**2** Tap 'Create Apple ID' in the next window and then, when instructed, enter your first name, last name, and date of birth. When you've entered these details, tap Next in the top right to move on to the next step.

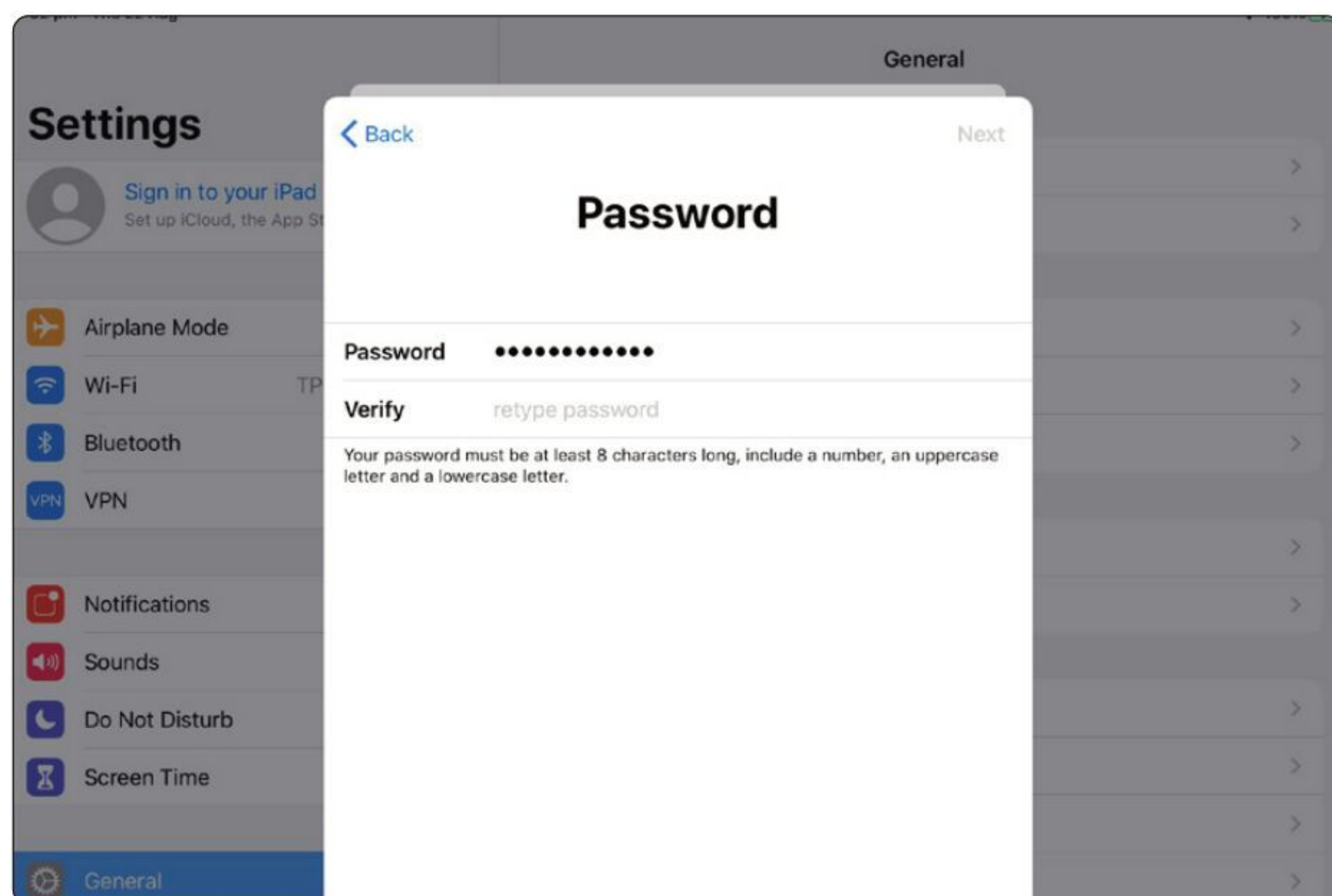


**3** Next, you're asked whether you want to use your current email address (if you have one) for your Apple ID, or get a free iCloud email address by tapping the 'Do not have an email address?' link. Choose one and tap Next to continue to the next step.

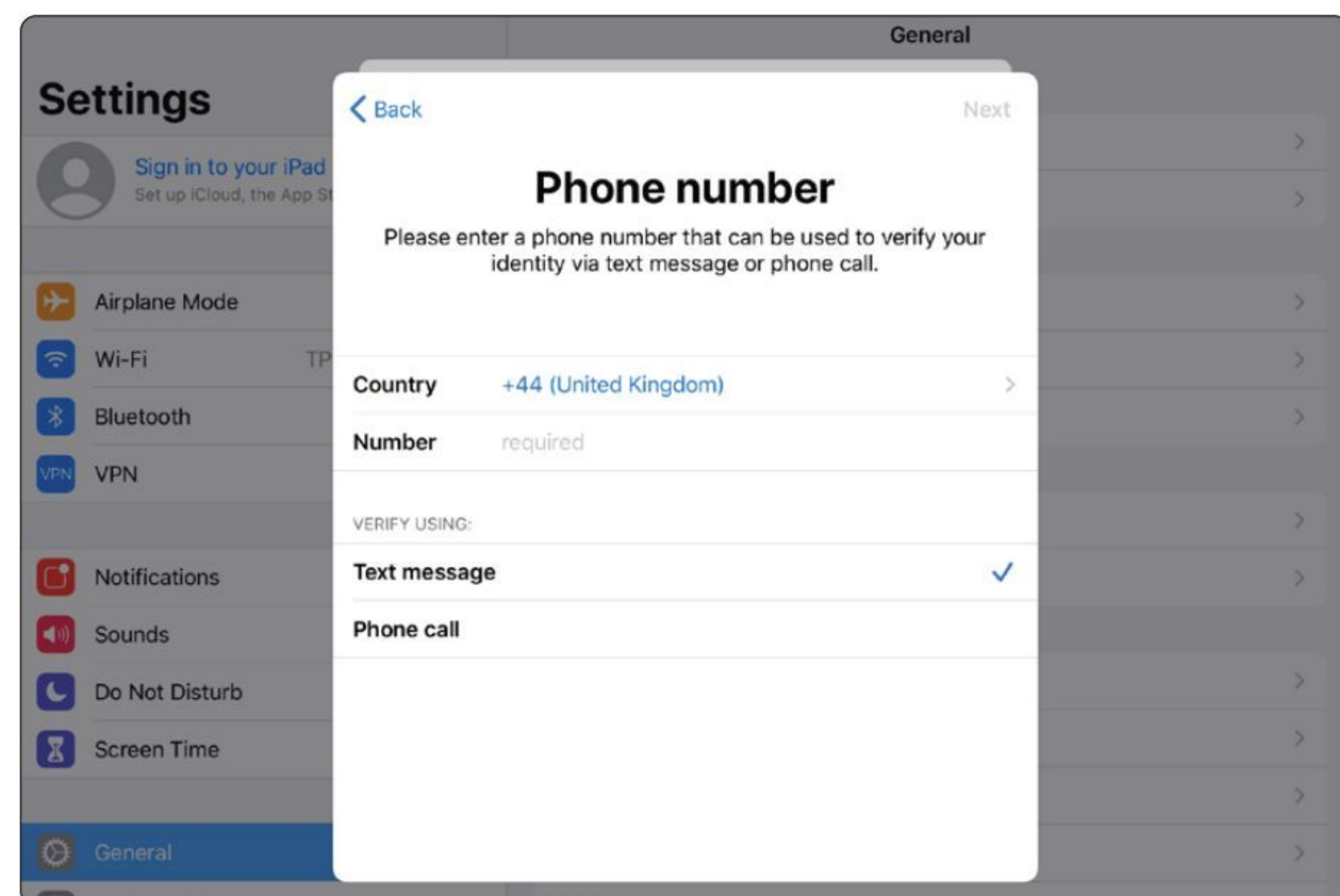


**4** If you chose to get a new iCloud address, you're asked to complete your email, which ends '@icloud.com'. It may take a few tries before you find one that hasn't already been taken by other Apple users but when you do, accept it by tapping Continue.

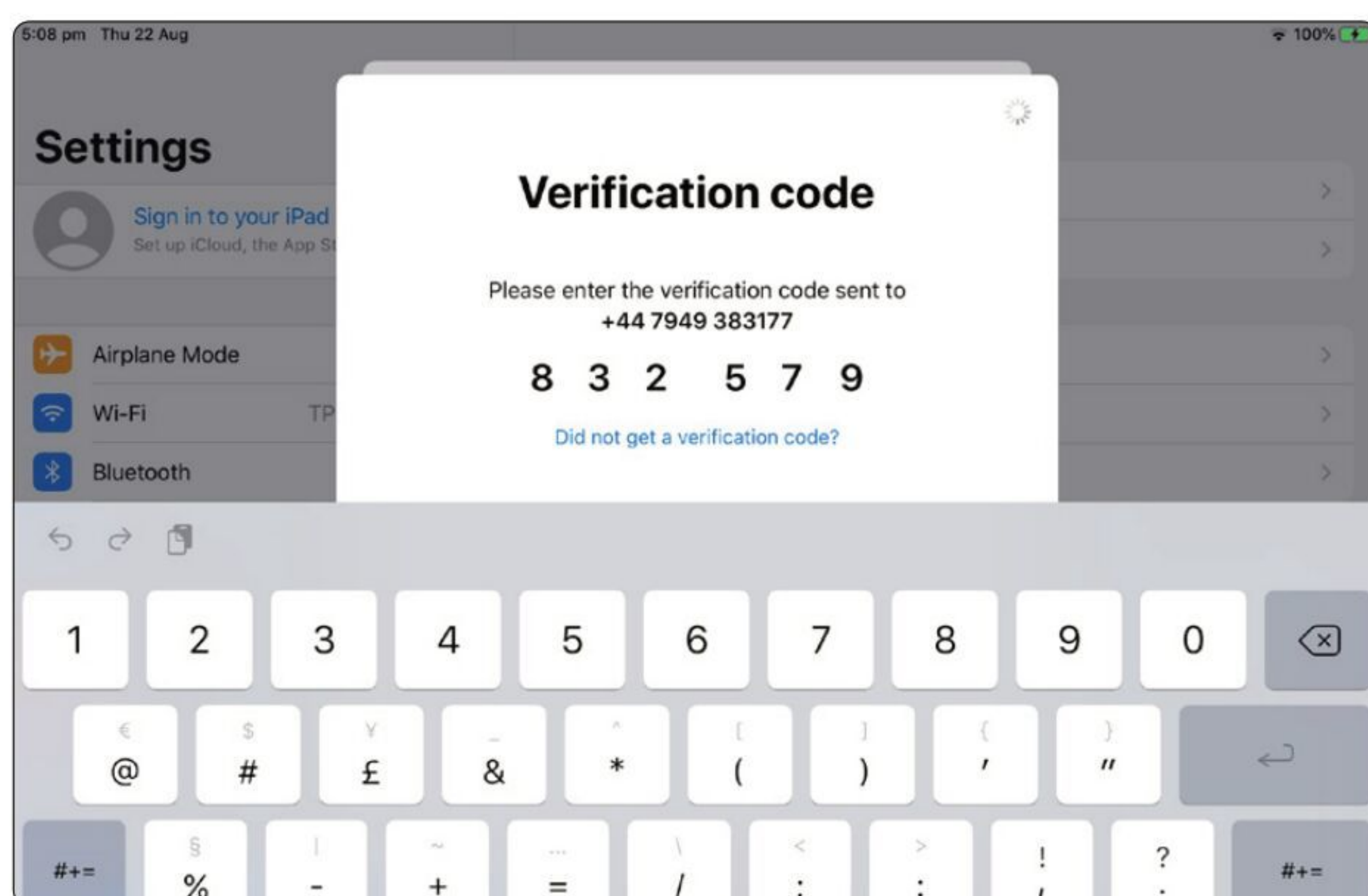




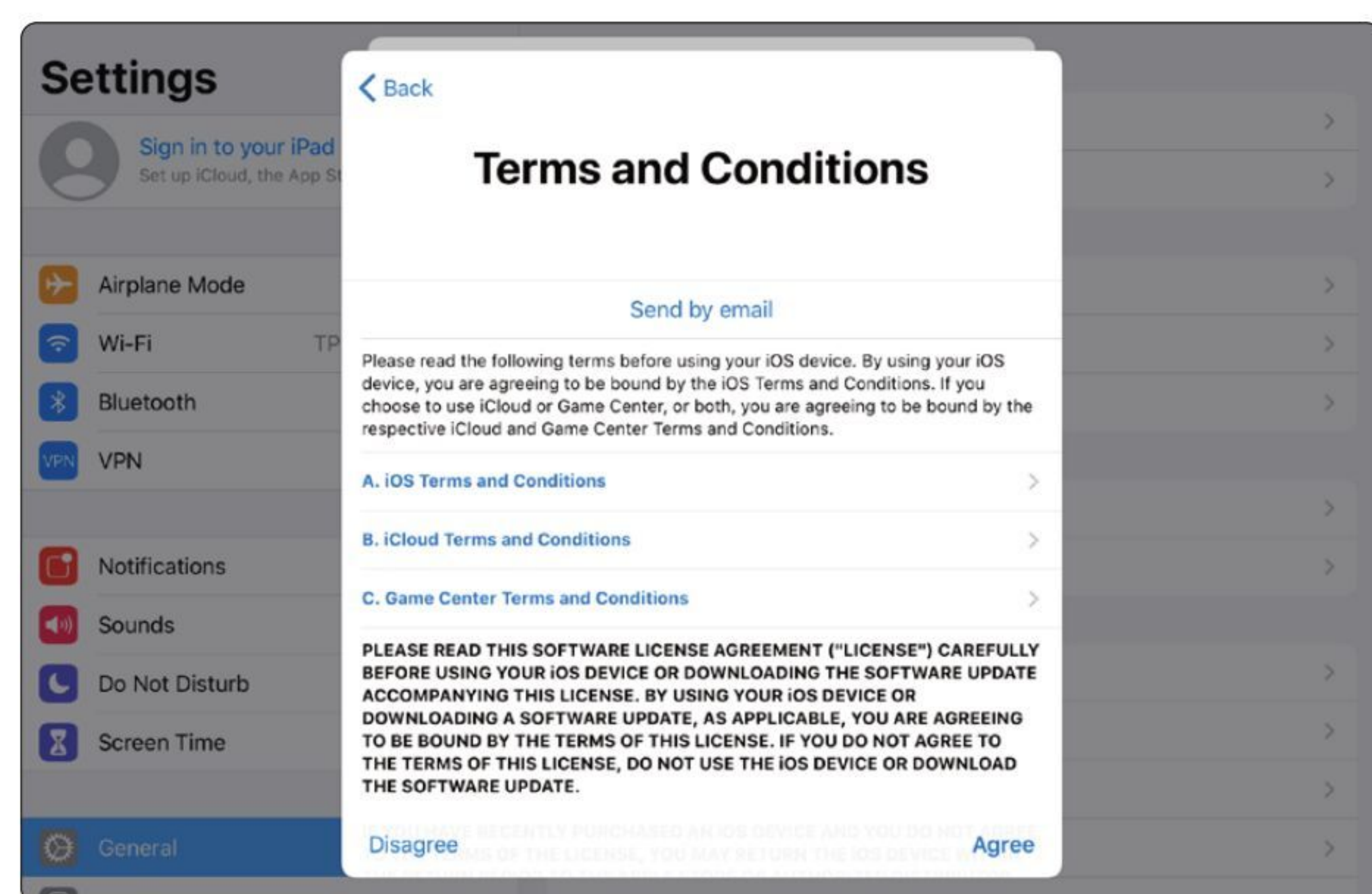
**5** Now choose your password. As stated on the screen, it must be at least eight characters long, and include at least one number, one upper case (capital) letter and one lower case letter. Make it something you can easily remember.



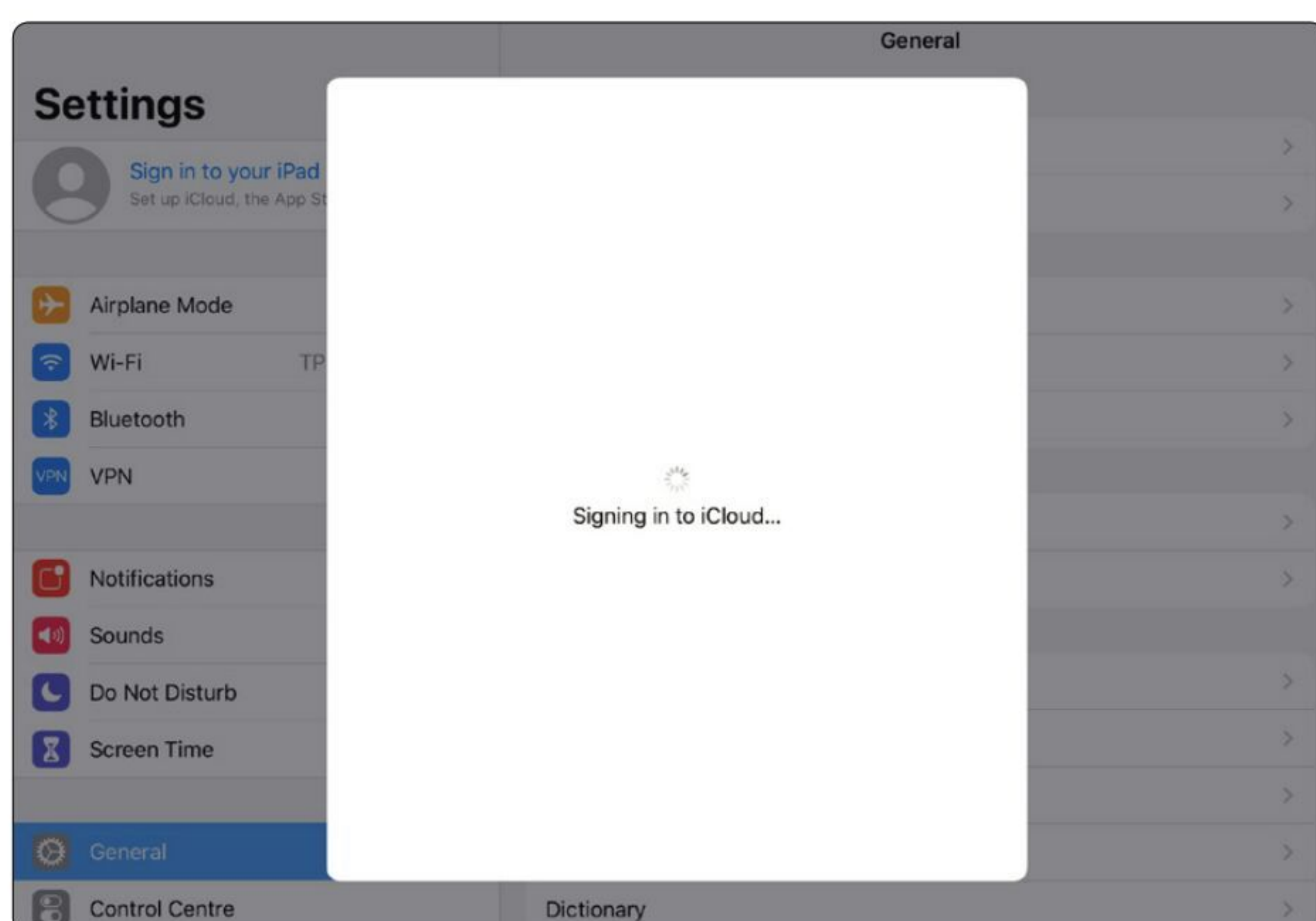
**6** Apple needs your phone number, so you can be contacted via a call or text message to confirm your identity. The country field should already be filled but tap it to change if necessary. Enter your number; we suggest you use your mobile.



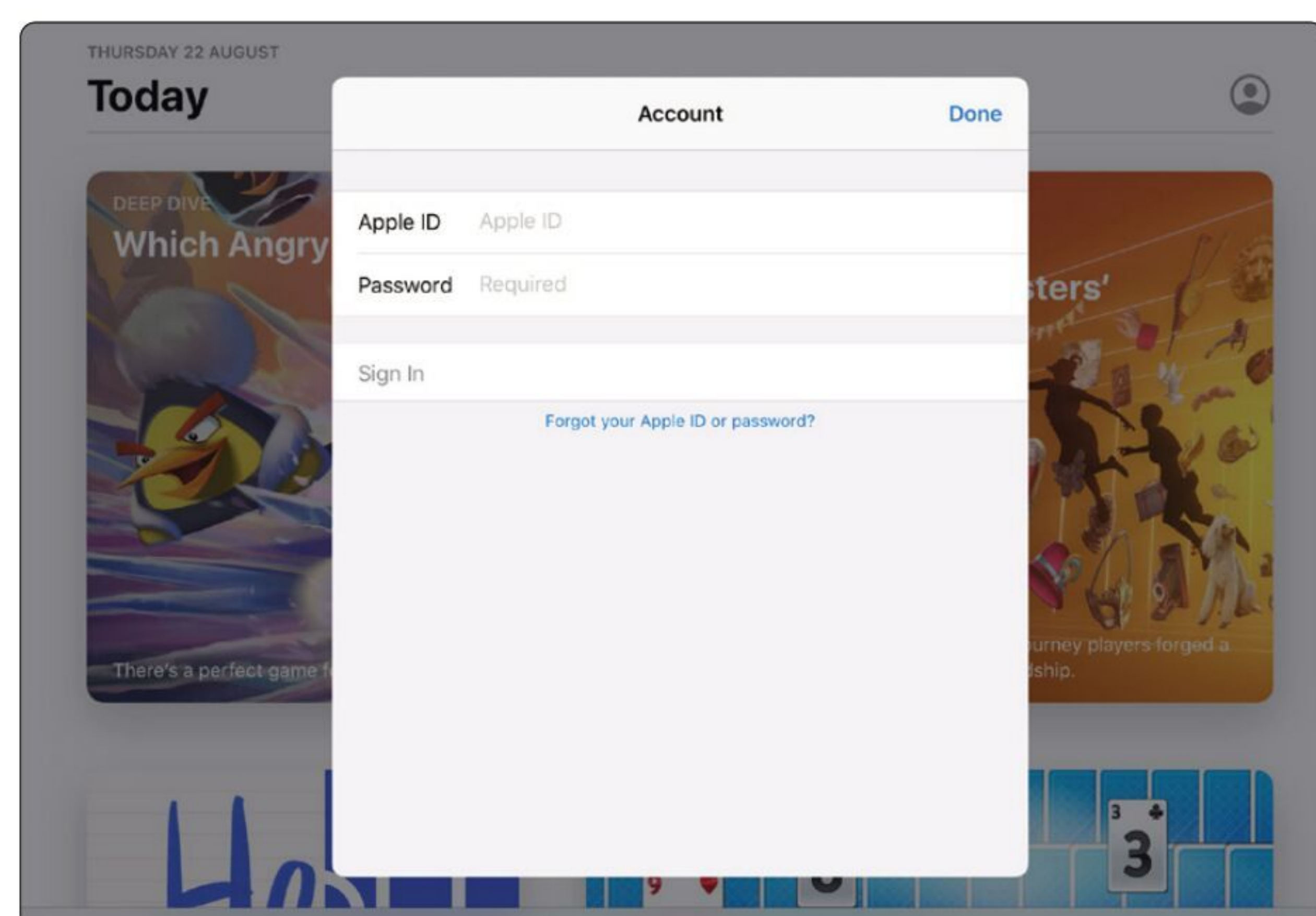
**7** Tap Next, then enter the six figure verification code that's sent to your mobile phone (or given to you in a call, if that was your preferred choice). When you enter the last digit, you automatically proceed to the next step.



**8** It's now time to agree to the terms and conditions. You can read them all if you want, or tap the 'Send by Email' link to have them emailed to you. You can just tap Agree, and again in the pop-up window, to continue.



**9** Your iPad now signs into iCloud with your newly created Apple ID. It might take a while. When it's done, you must enter your iPad's passcode, the one you use to unlock it on the lock screen. Your iPad is then signed into iCloud.



**10** Open the App Store app and tap the silhouette icon (or your account's photo, if you've added one) in the top right. A pop-up window invites you to sign in to the App Store using your new Apple ID: do so. In the next window, tap Review and enter your final details.



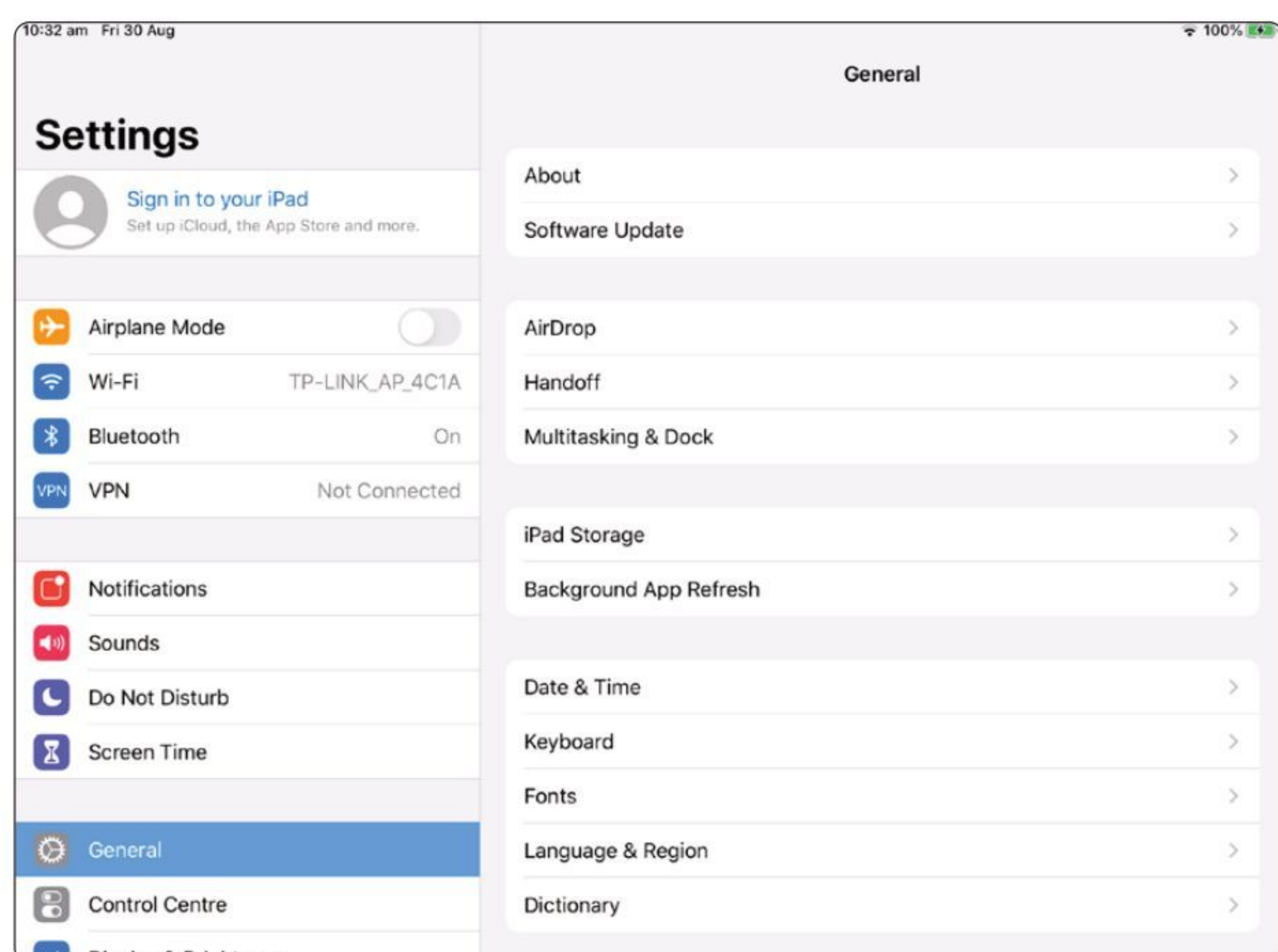


# iCloud Drive

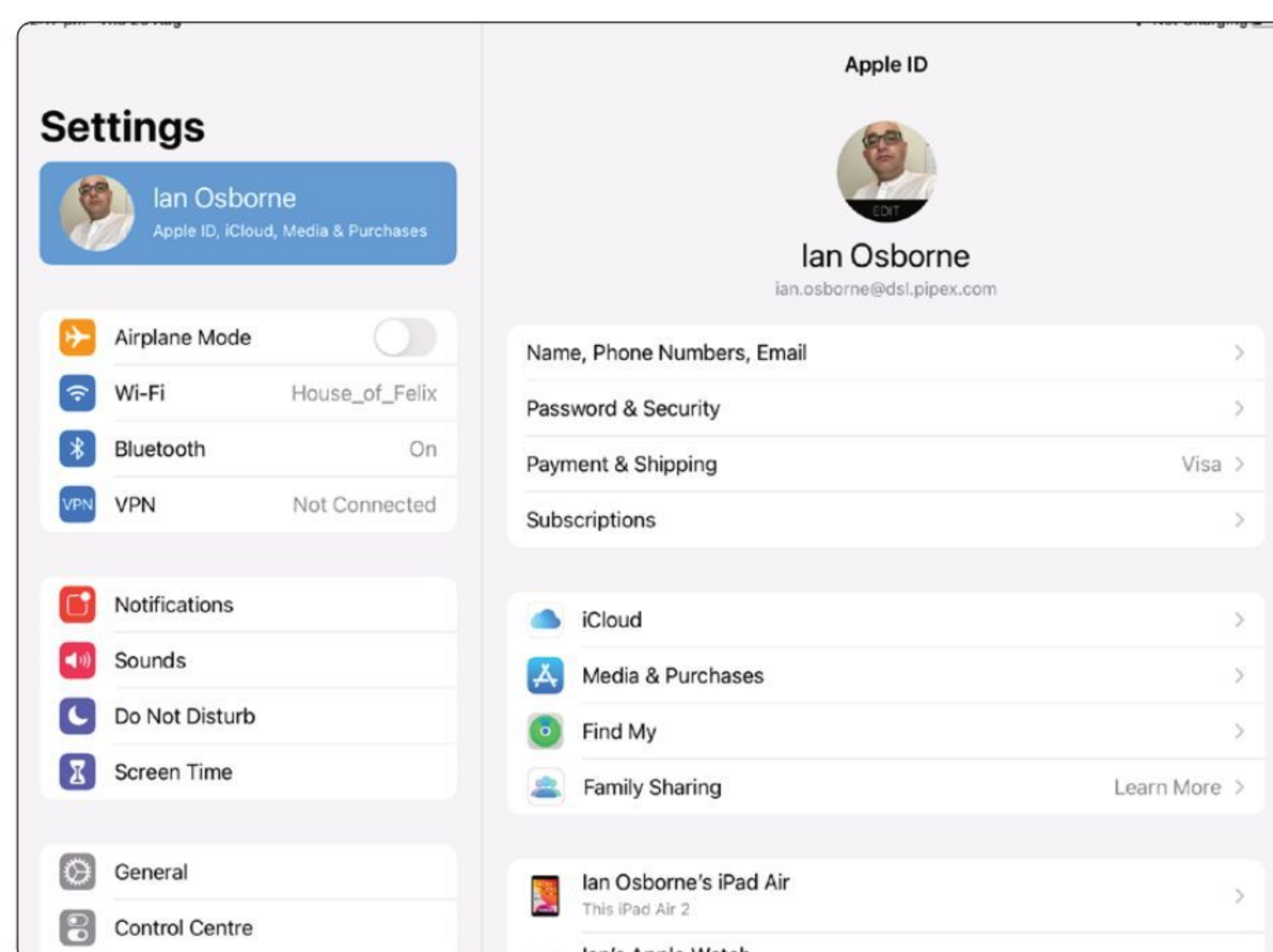
## Cloud Feature

iCloud is Apple's cloud computing service. You can sync information and files across your Apple devices using iCloud and even access some of them on the Internet. You can also use it to back up your iPad too. Here's how.

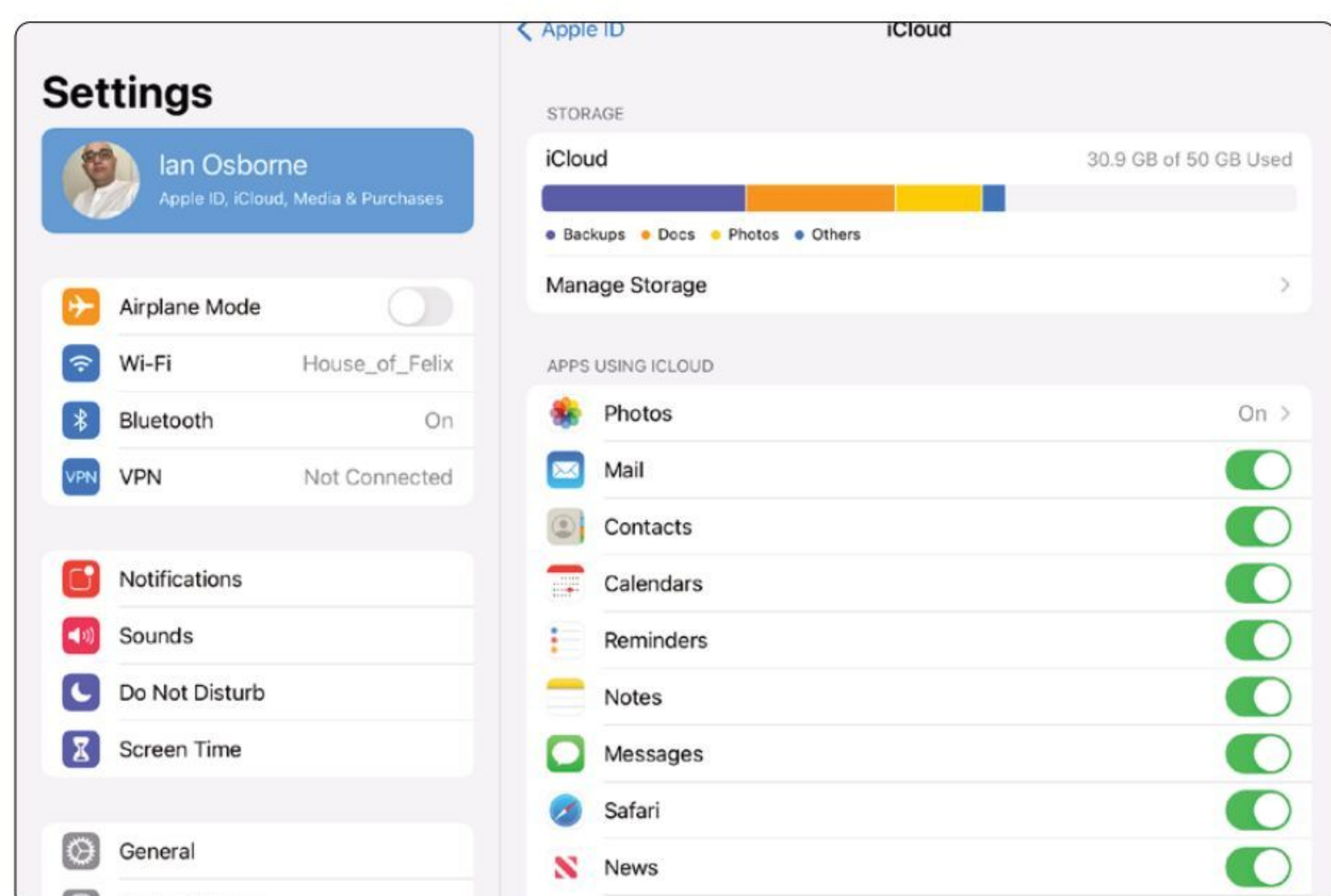
## An Introduction to iCloud



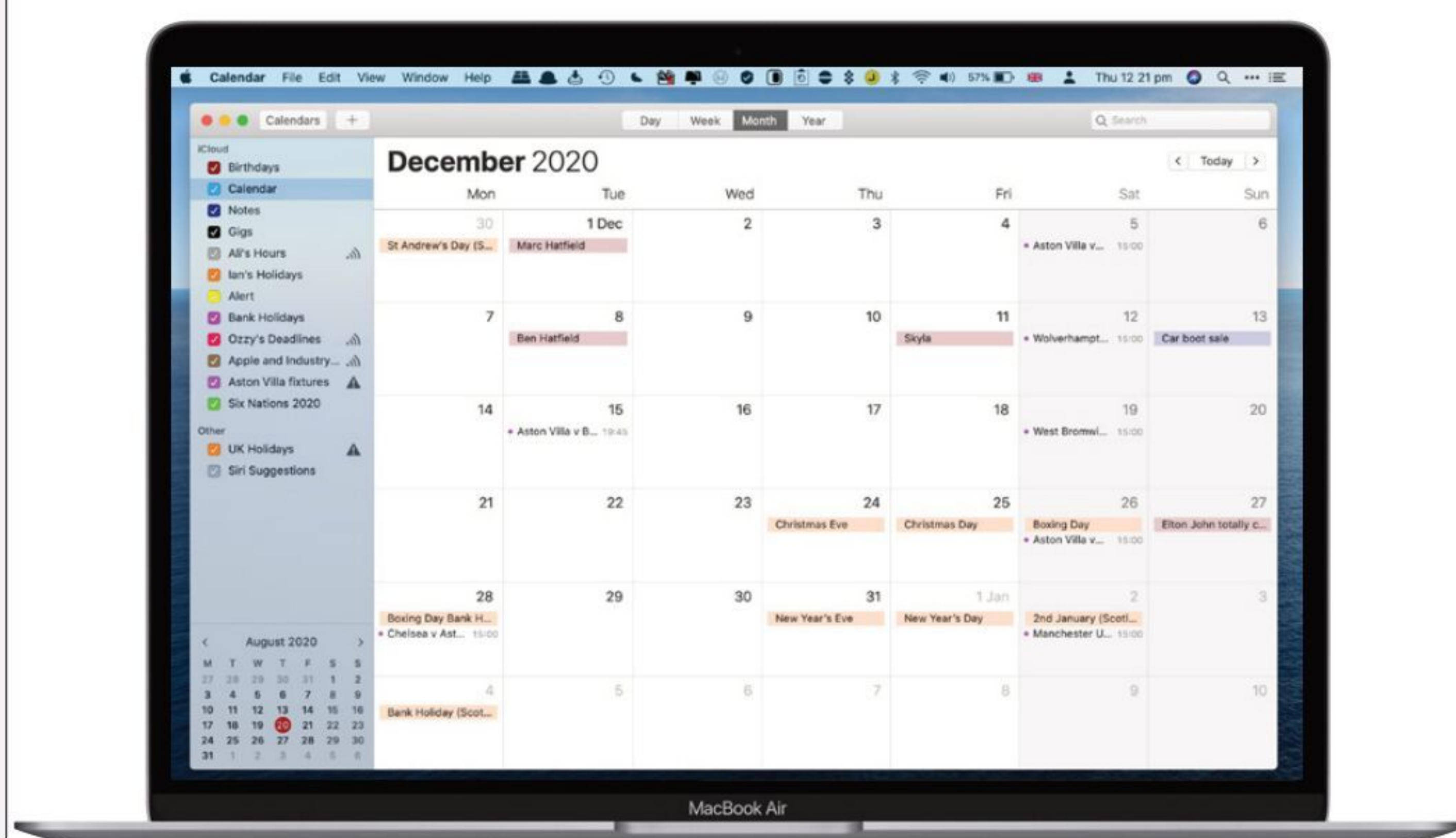
**1** You receive an iCloud account, with a complimentary 5GB of online storage space, with your Apple ID. Open the Settings app; at the top of the sidebar, you should see your name. If you don't, you need to sign in with your Apple ID; tap the Sign in to your iPad link to do so.



**2** To use a photo with your Apple ID and iCloud account, tap the grey circle at the top of the right hand column and then take or add one from your Photos library. If you don't have one yet, just leave it; you can come back and take or add one whenever you choose.

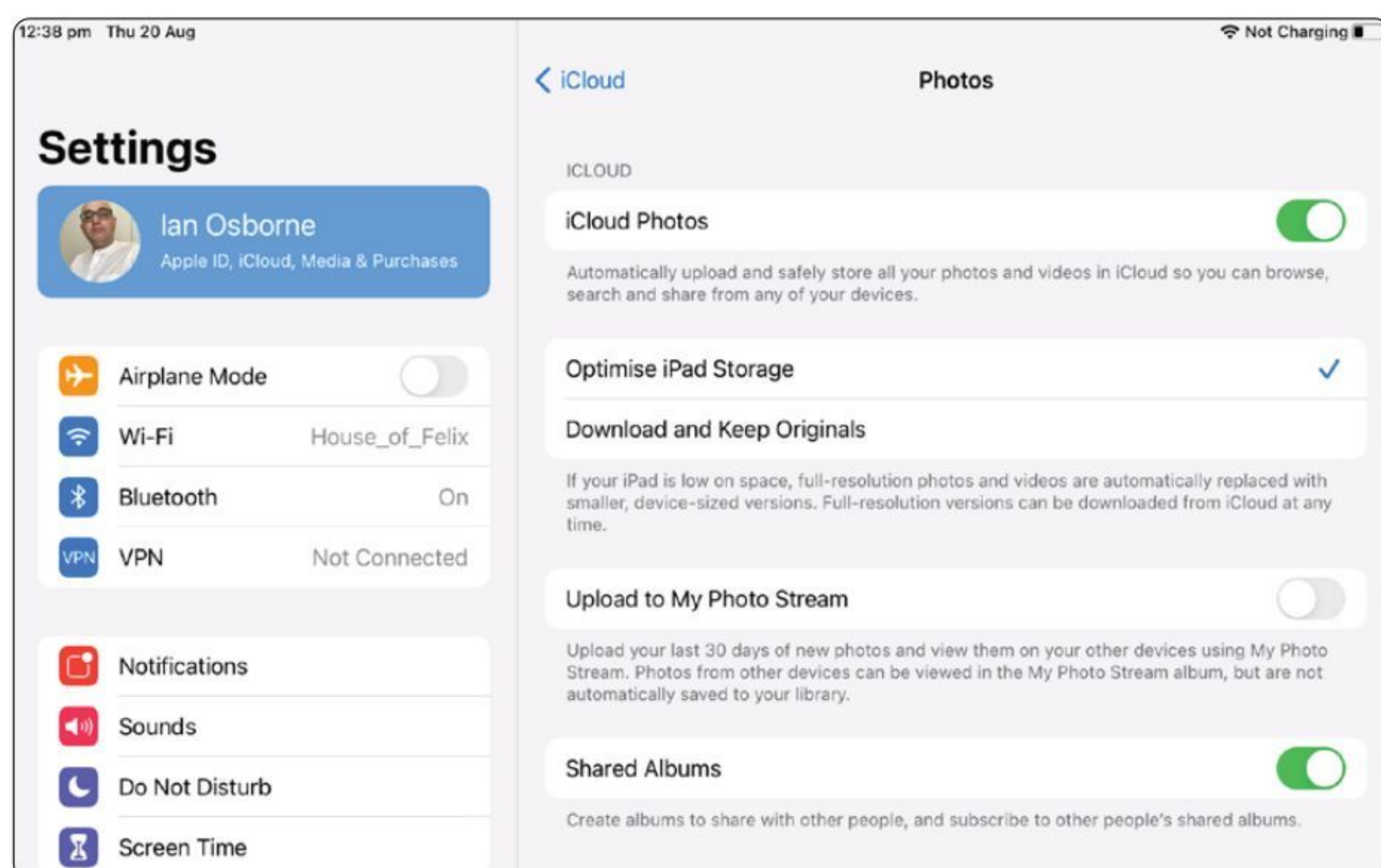


**3** In Settings > [your name], tap the iCloud link for a list of apps that can be kept in sync with iCloud. If an app in this list is switched on, it means changes you make on one Apple device are also made on all your other Apple devices signed into the same iCloud ID.

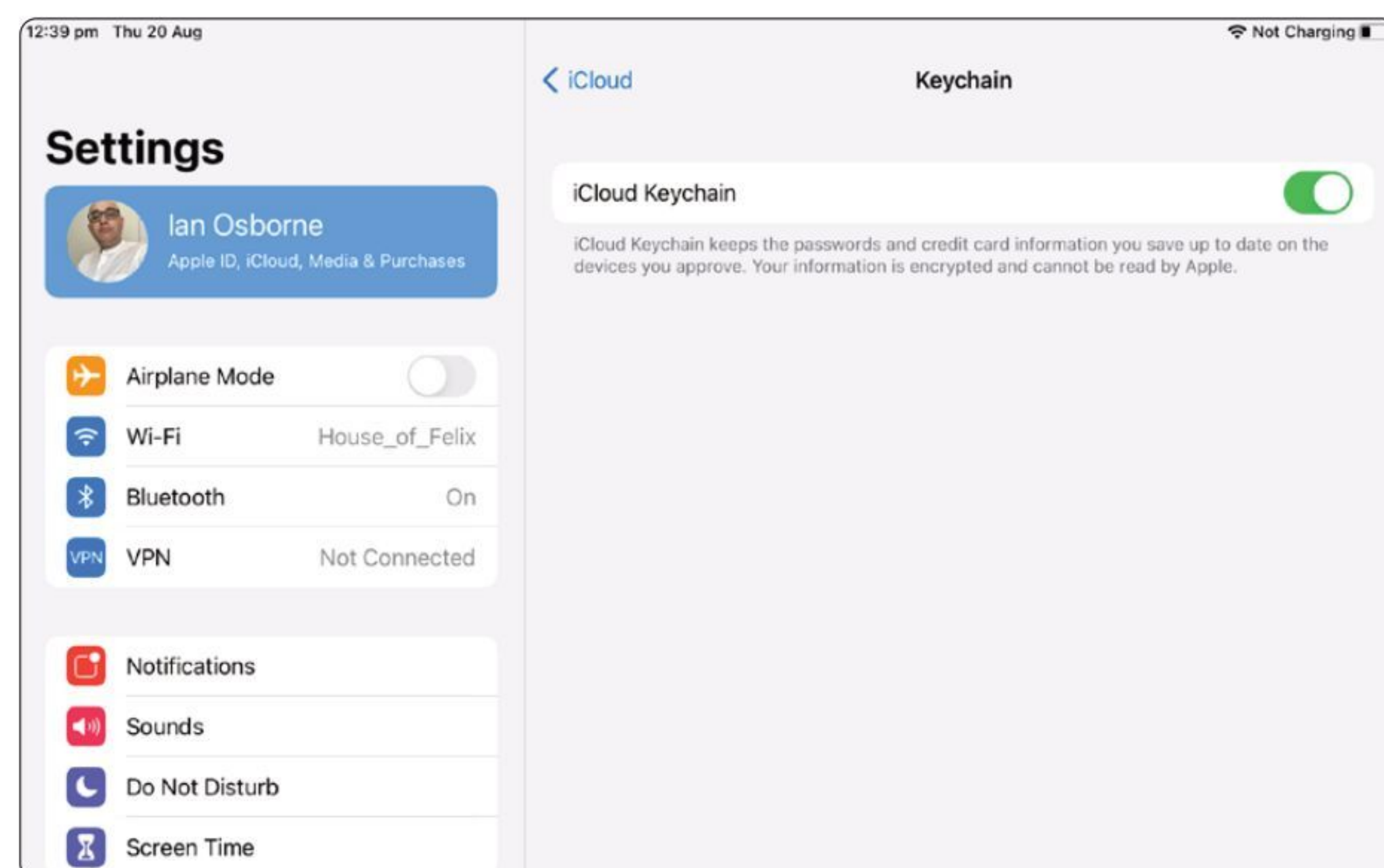


**4** For example, if you have Calendar switched on in this list, and then enter a new Calendar event using your iPad, it is also shown on your iPhone and Mac, if they're signed into the same Apple ID. In Calendar's case, it's also available online at [www.icloud.com](http://www.icloud.com).

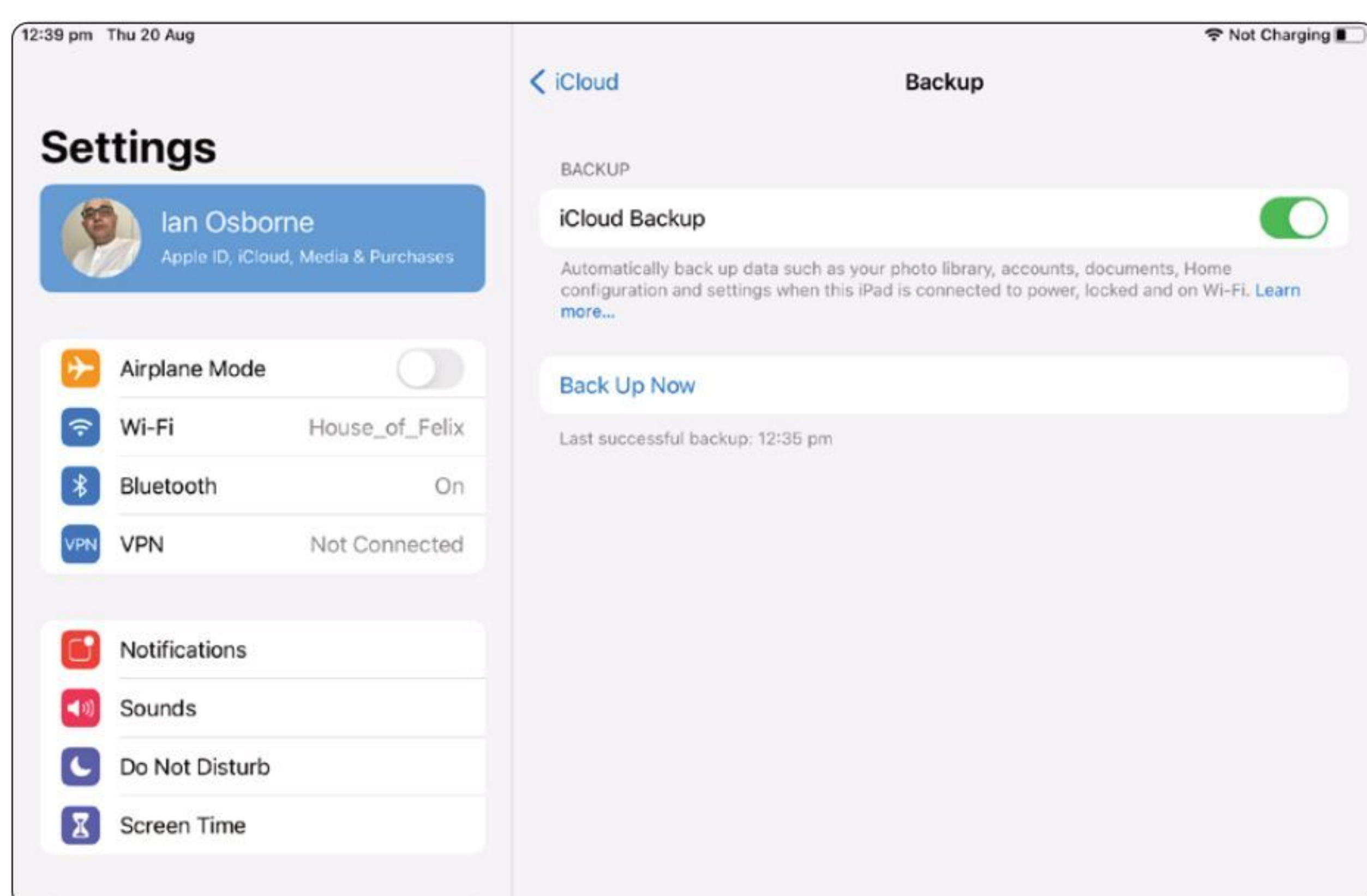




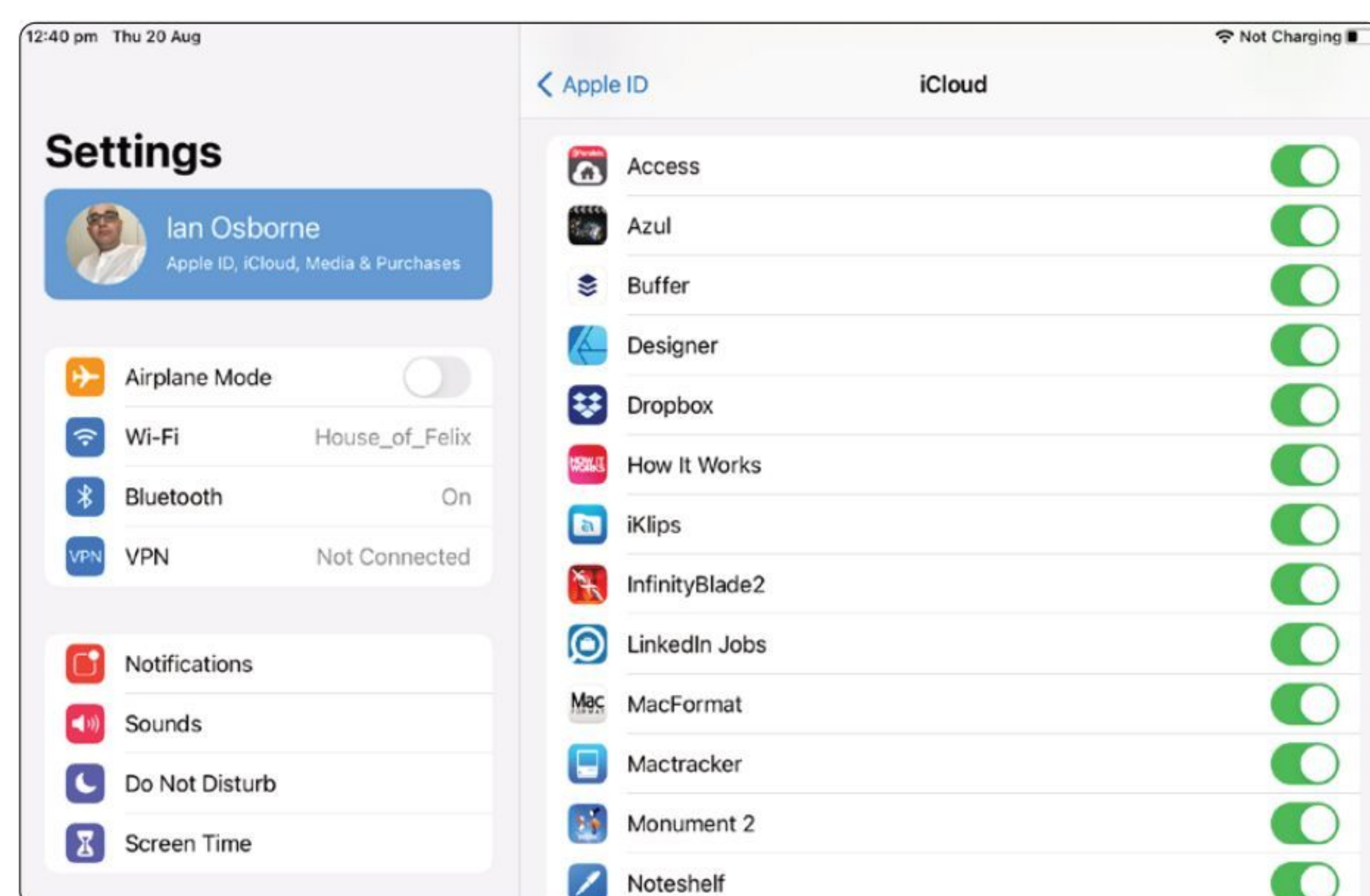
**5** iCloud Photos lets you sync your photographs over iCloud, and optimise storage space by keeping the full-resolution versions on the cloud while displaying smaller versions on your iPad. You can use shared albums too. If you wish to use iCloud Photos, switch it on.



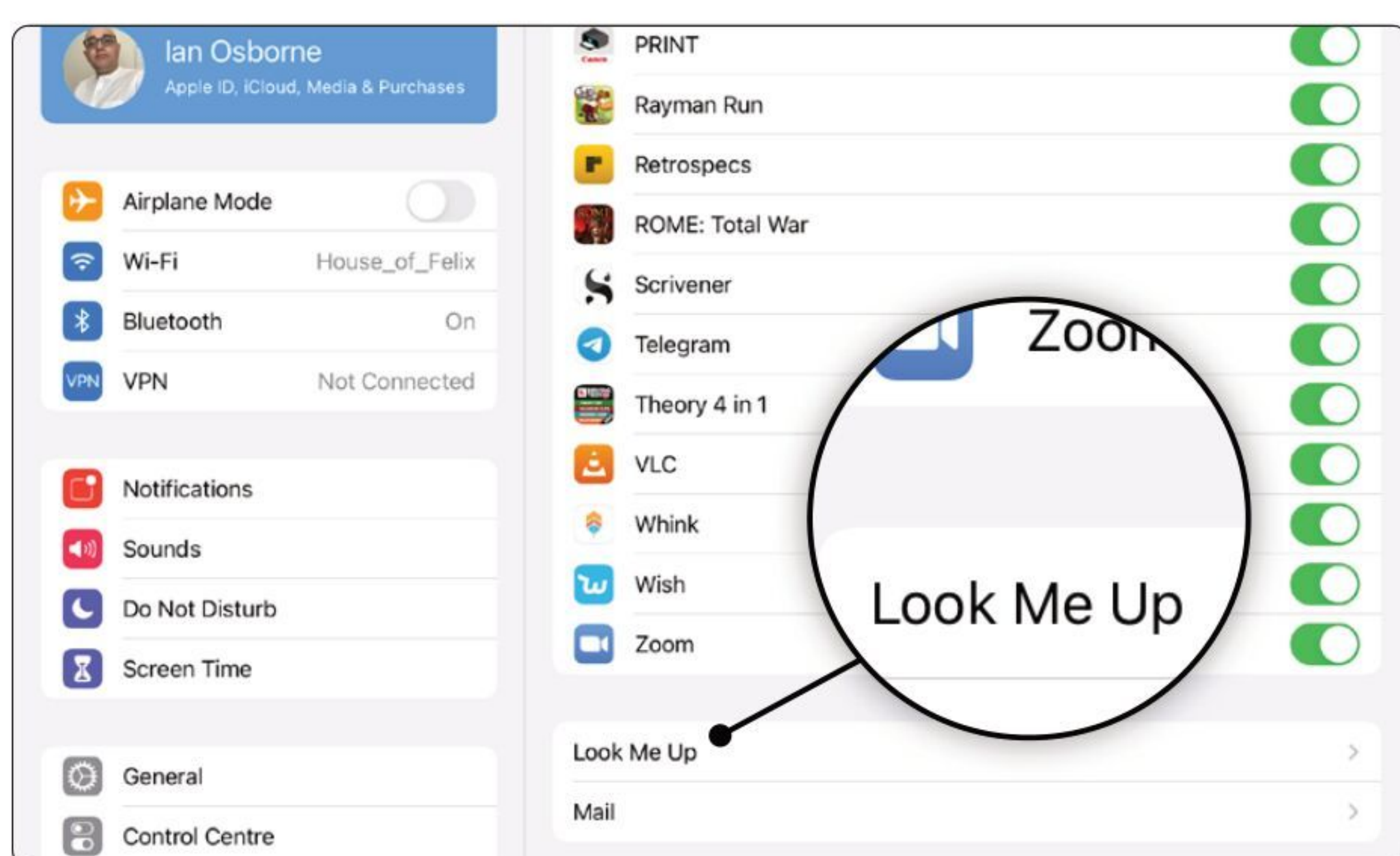
**6** Tap the Keychain link and you can turn on the iCloud Keychain service here. This stores things like passwords, usernames and credit card information; for example, when you log on to an online forum, you won't need to keep typing your details every time.



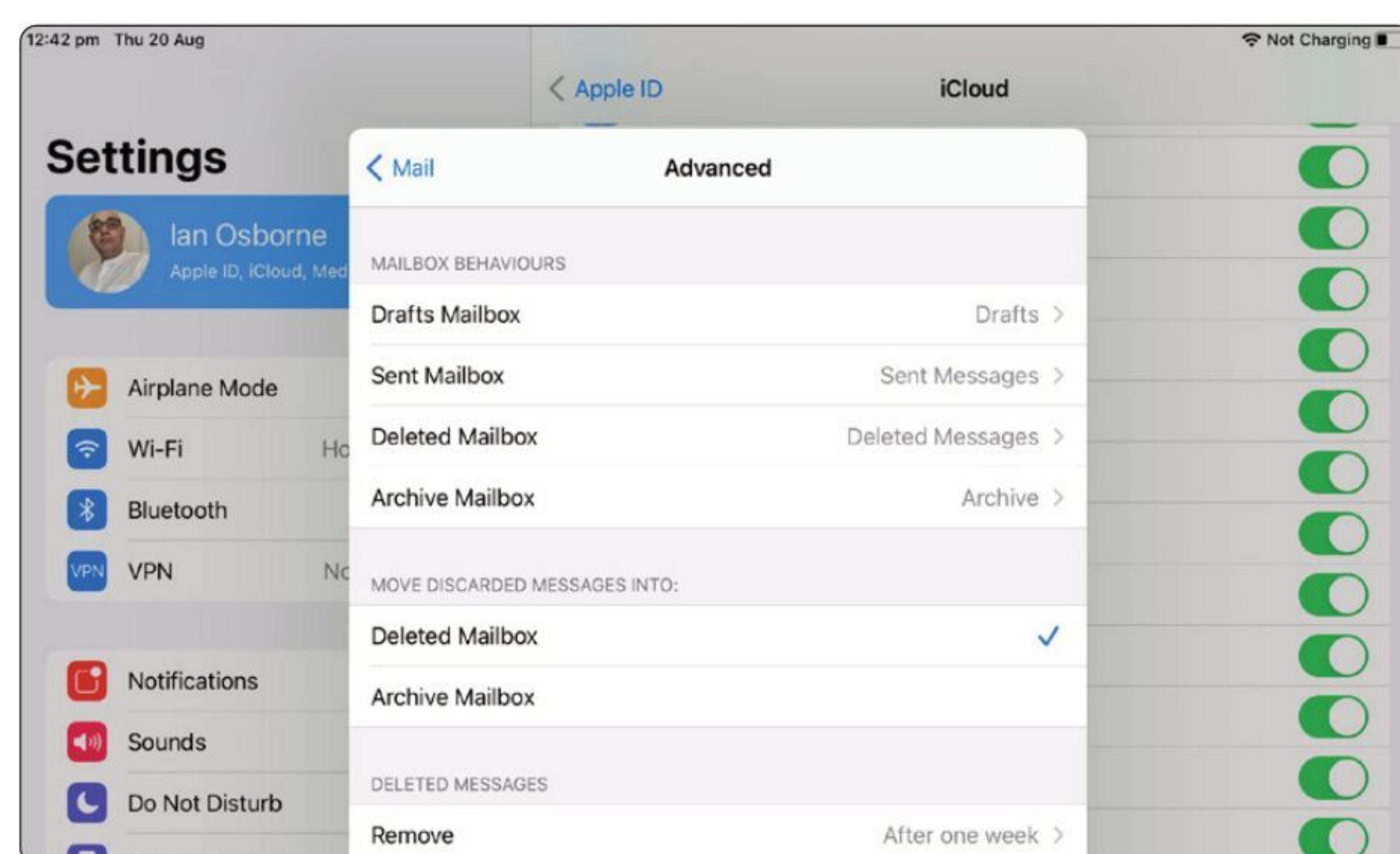
**7** The Backup option lets you automatically back up your iPad whenever it's switched on, plugged into a charger and connected to the Internet over Wi-Fi. It's a great option for hassle-free backups. You can also trigger an immediate backup on this screen too. Just tap the Back Up Now link and your iPad is backed up straight away.



**8** Further down the list, you see all of the Apple apps you've installed on your iPad, such as Designer, Dropbox and iKlips (assuming you have these apps, of course). You can sync these with iCloud too; once again, just tap their switch to turn syncing on. Further down still are third-party apps that can be iCloud-synced.



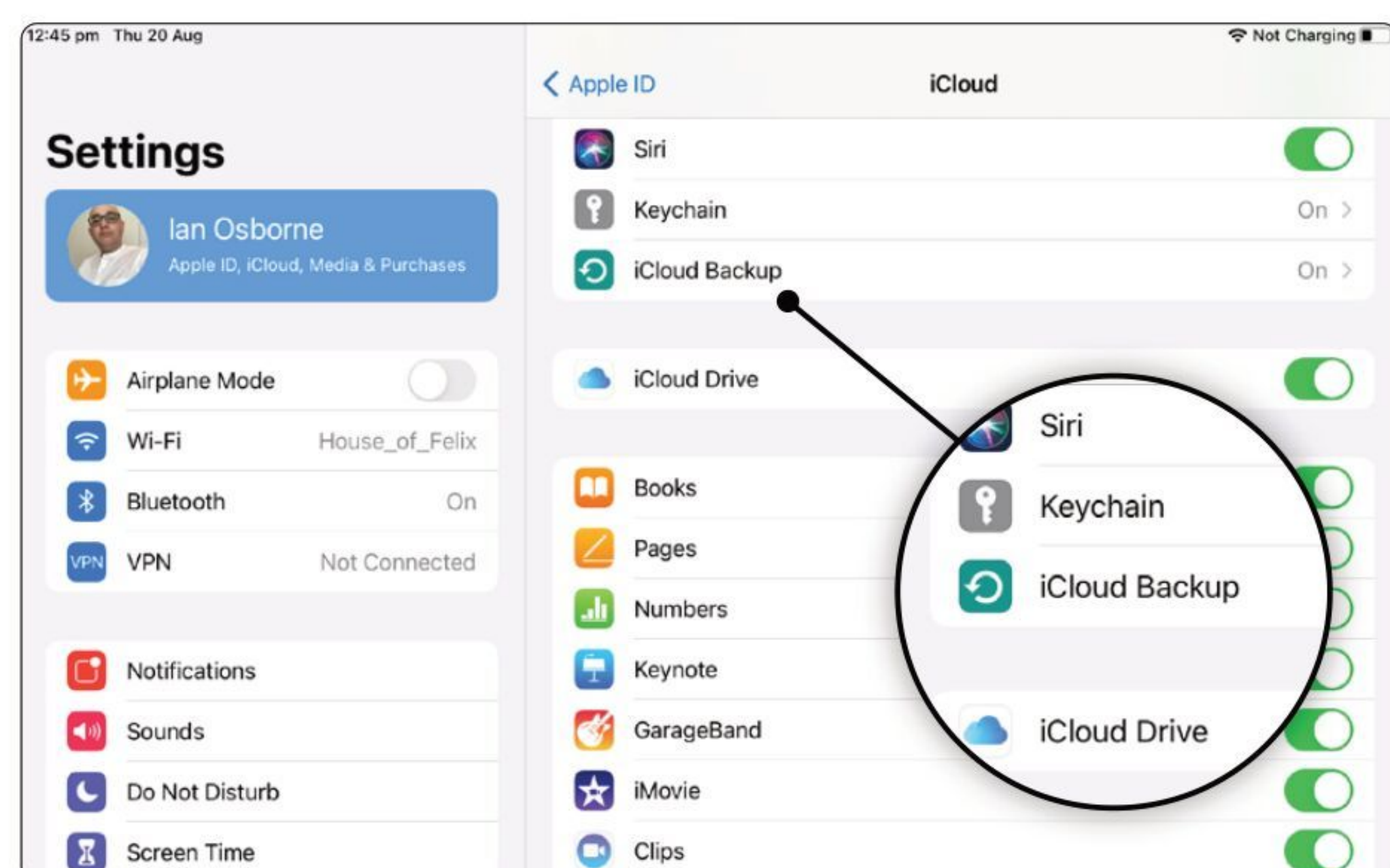
**9** Some apps allow other users to find you, using your Apple ID. If this applies to an app you have on your iPad, it will ask permission to do this, after which it can be found in this section, labelled 'Look Me Up'. Tap this link to edit the list of apps that can use this function on your iPad.



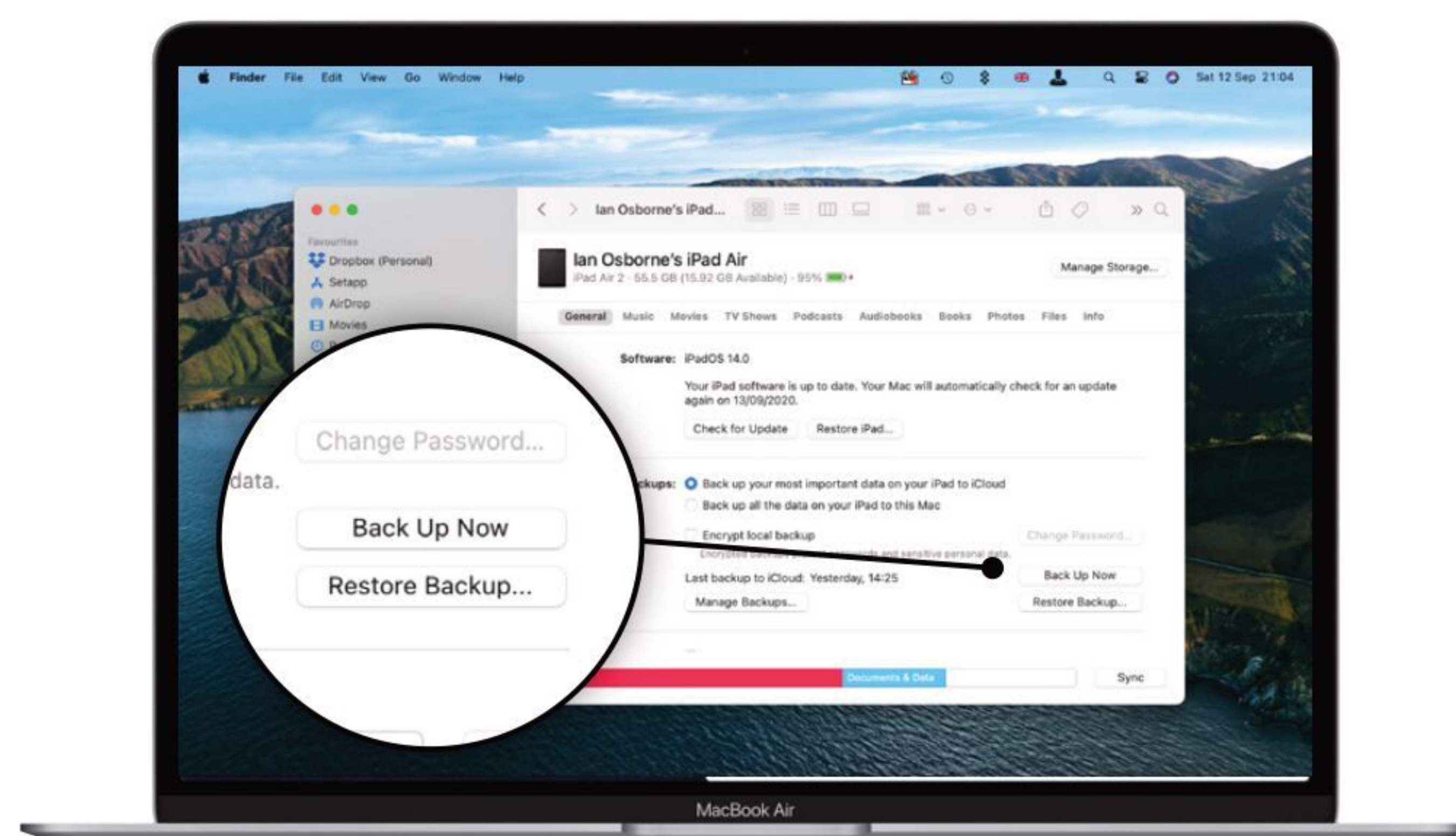
**10** The Mail option towards the bottom of the screen shows the details used for your iCloud email account; this is automatically configured in the Mail app. You can change some of the advanced settings relating to the mailbox behaviours if you wish; take a look and explore the options.



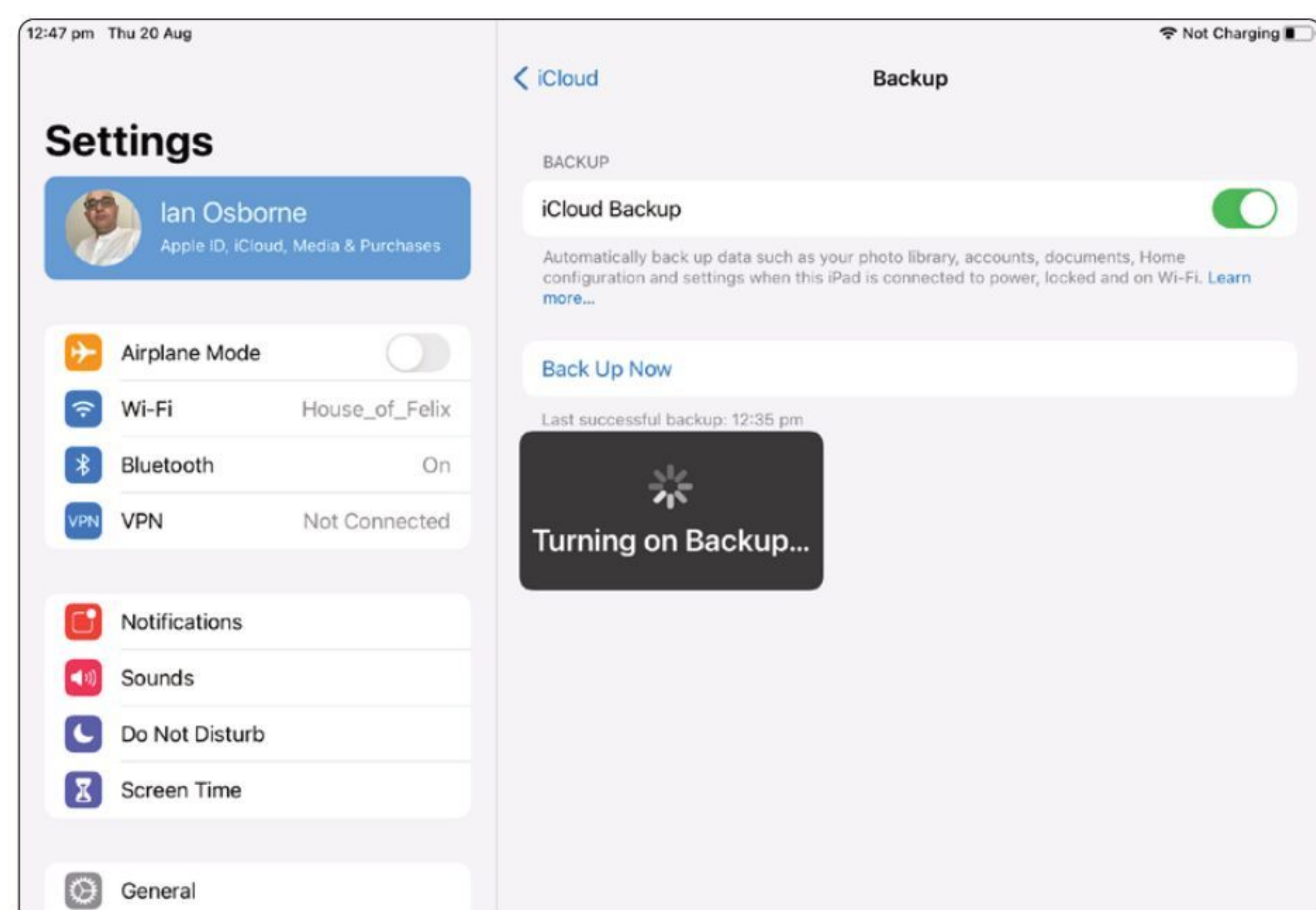
# iCloud Backup



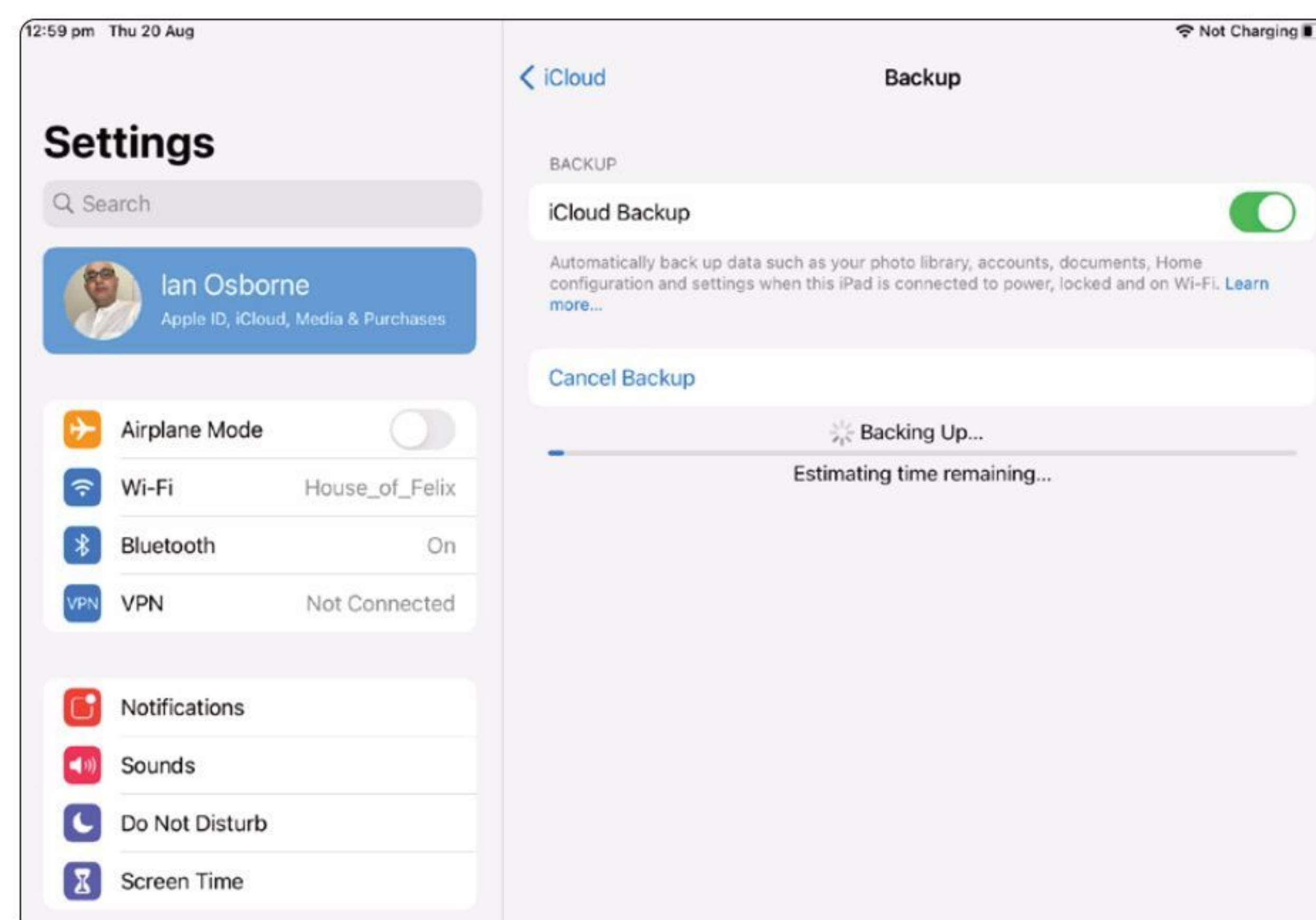
**1** You can back up your iPad to the cloud, if you wish. In Settings > [Your Name] > iCloud, scroll up until you see the iCloud Backup option, which is found at the foot of the 'Apps using iCloud' section. Tap it.



**2** If you want to back up to iCloud, your iPad won't automatically back up in Finder when you connect it to your computer and sync (though you can, of course, manually back up in Finder).

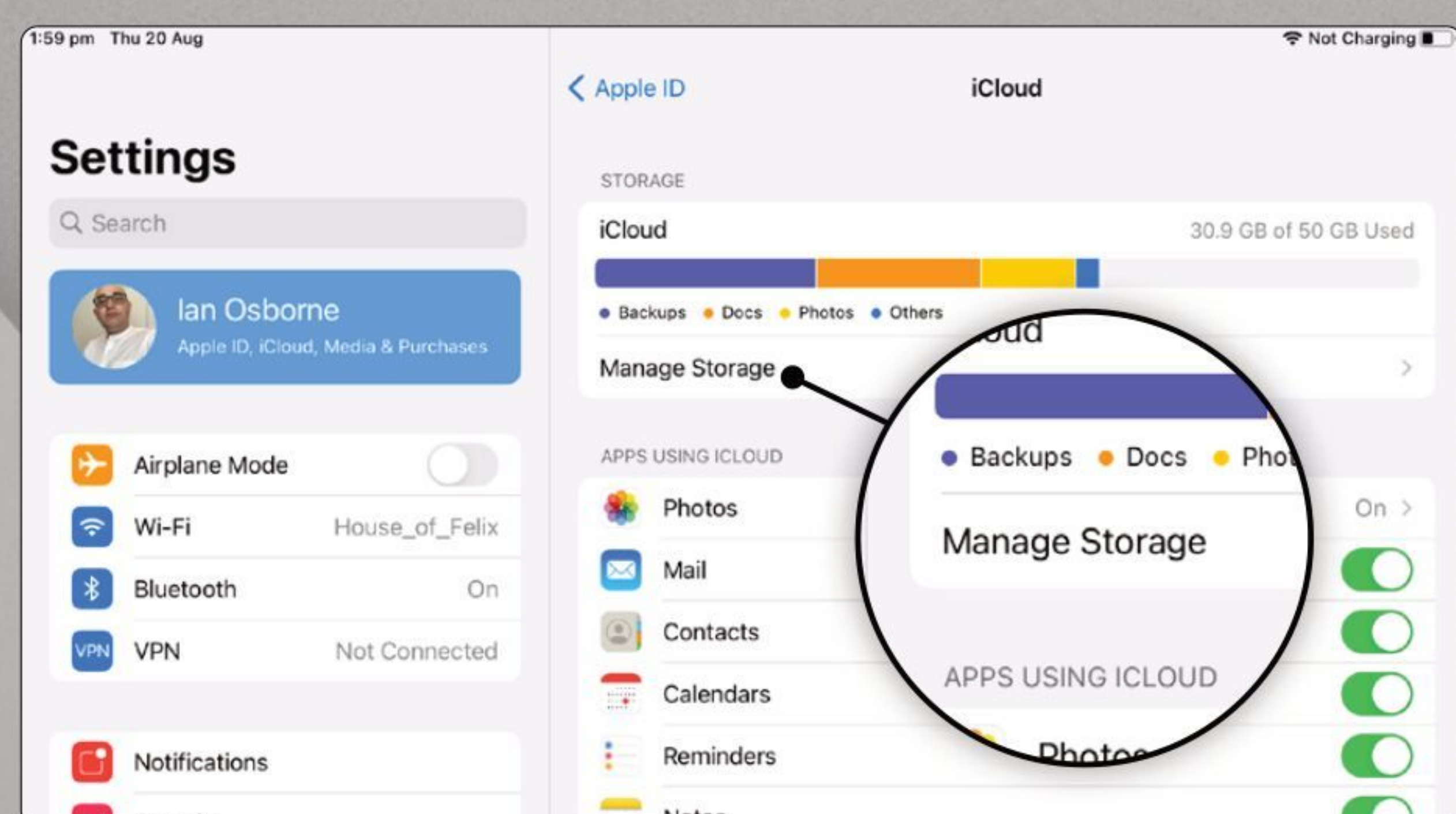


**3** This switches on the iCloud Backup feature. Now, when your iPad is: connected to an external power supply, like a computer or your charger, online with Wi-Fi, and locked, it automatically backs up.

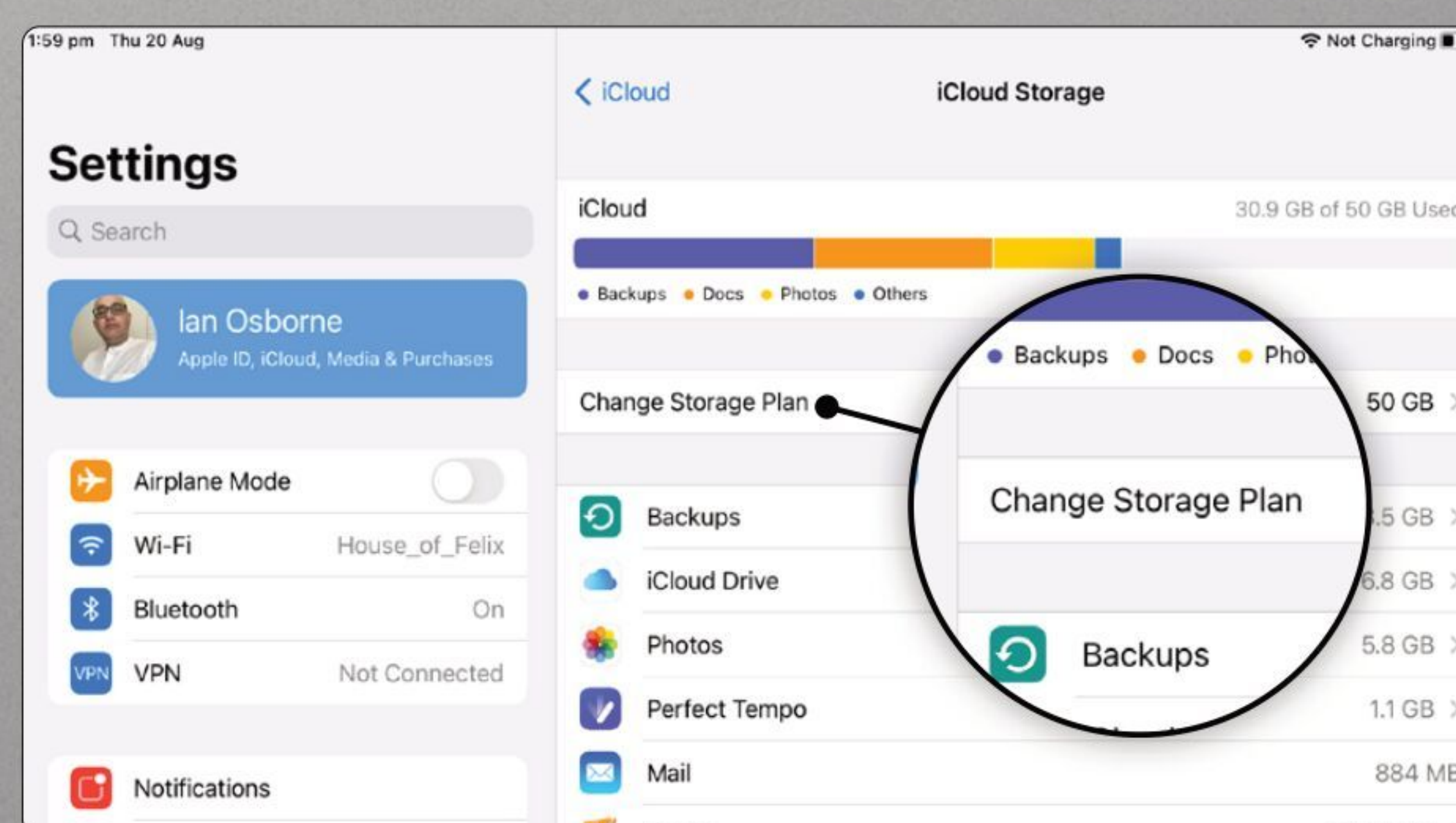


**4** There's also an option on this screen to Back Up Now. This backs up your iPad immediately, and is useful if you've not backed up in a while or are about to upgrade the operating system. Tap it to back up.

## Subscription Upgrades.



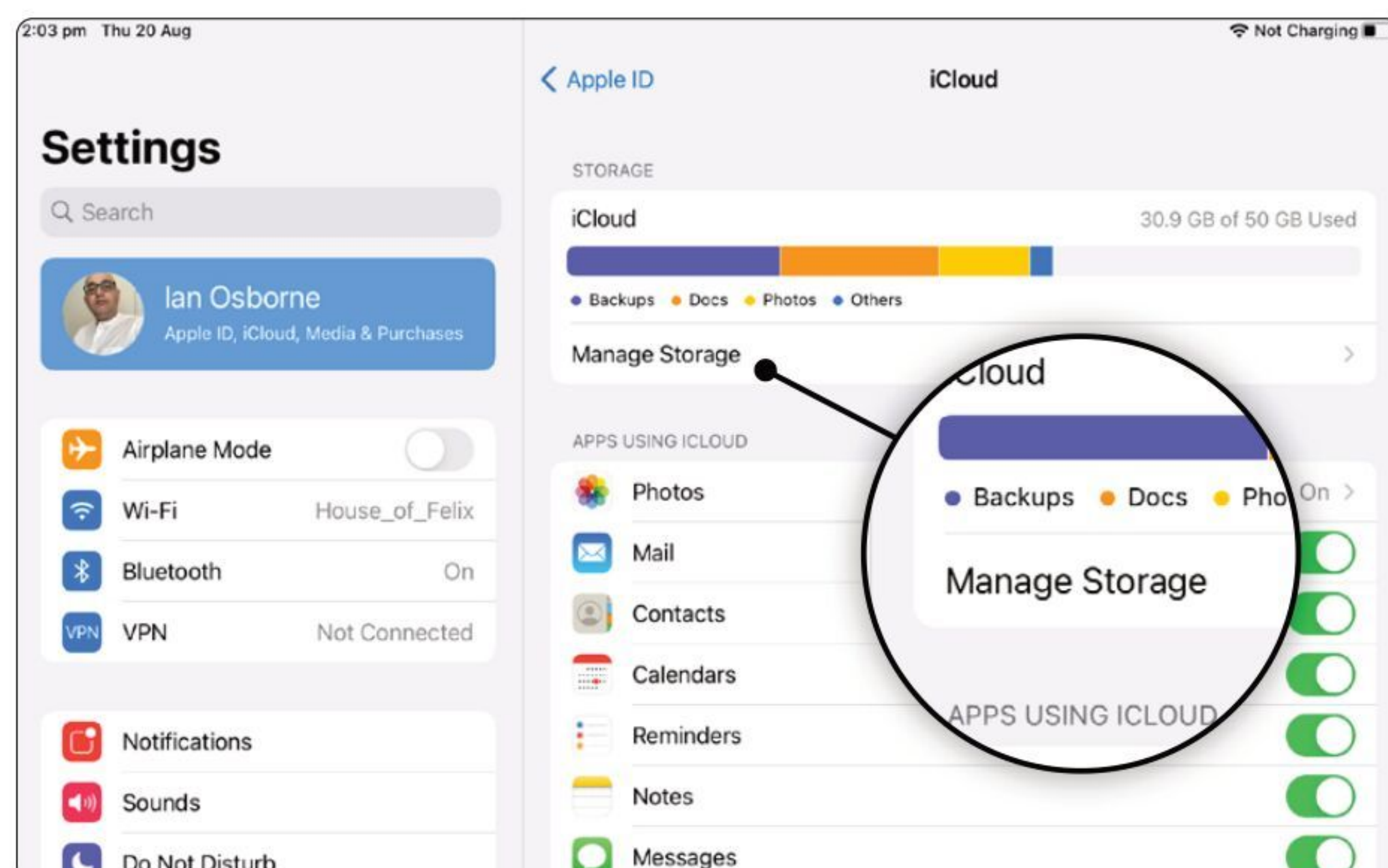
**1** Go to Settings > [Your Name] > iCloud; at the top of the screen, tap the Manage Storage link to take you to the iCloud Storage screen.



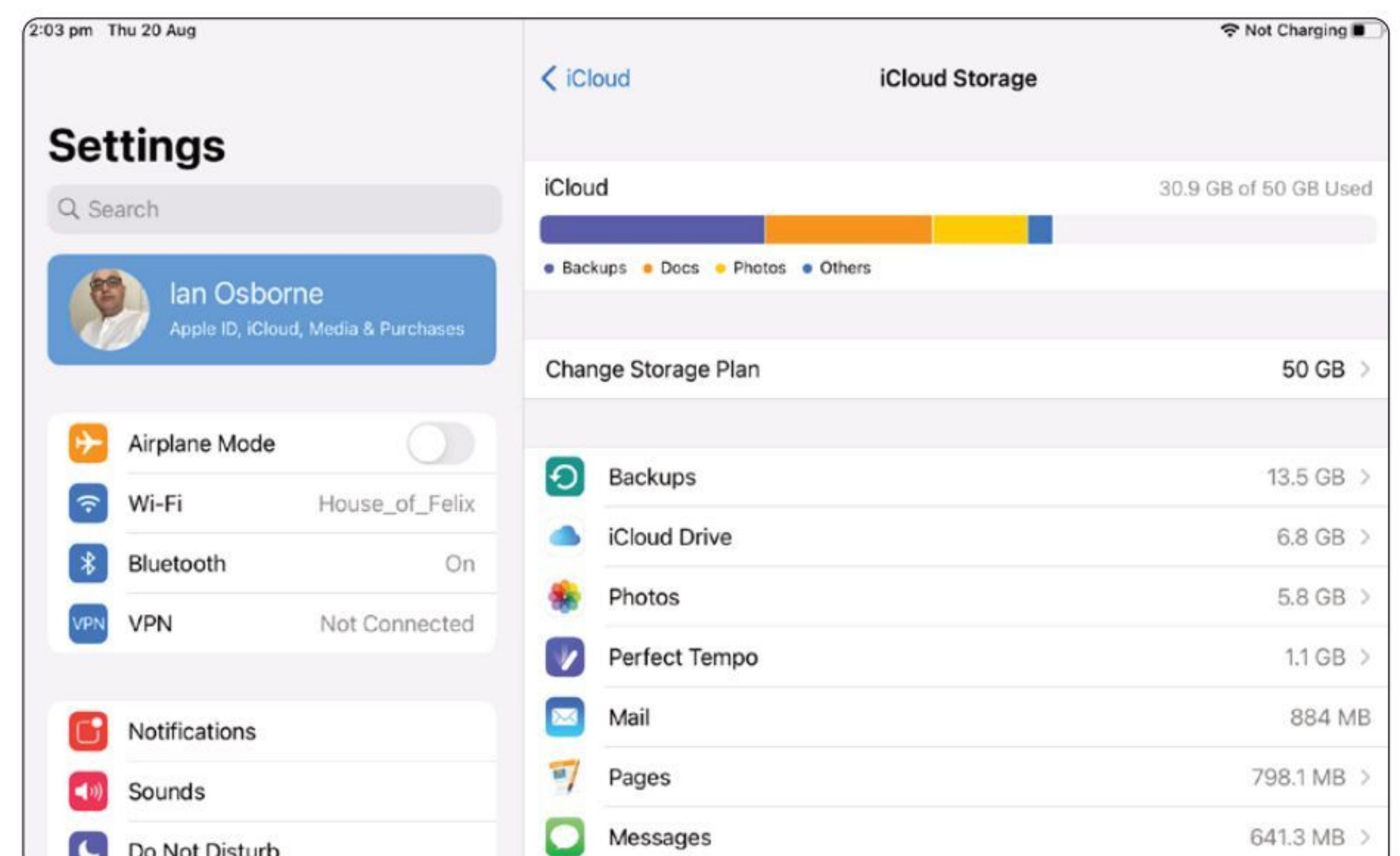
**2** At the top of this screen is a link titled 'Change Storage Plan', which also shows how much storage you have available at the moment. Tap it.



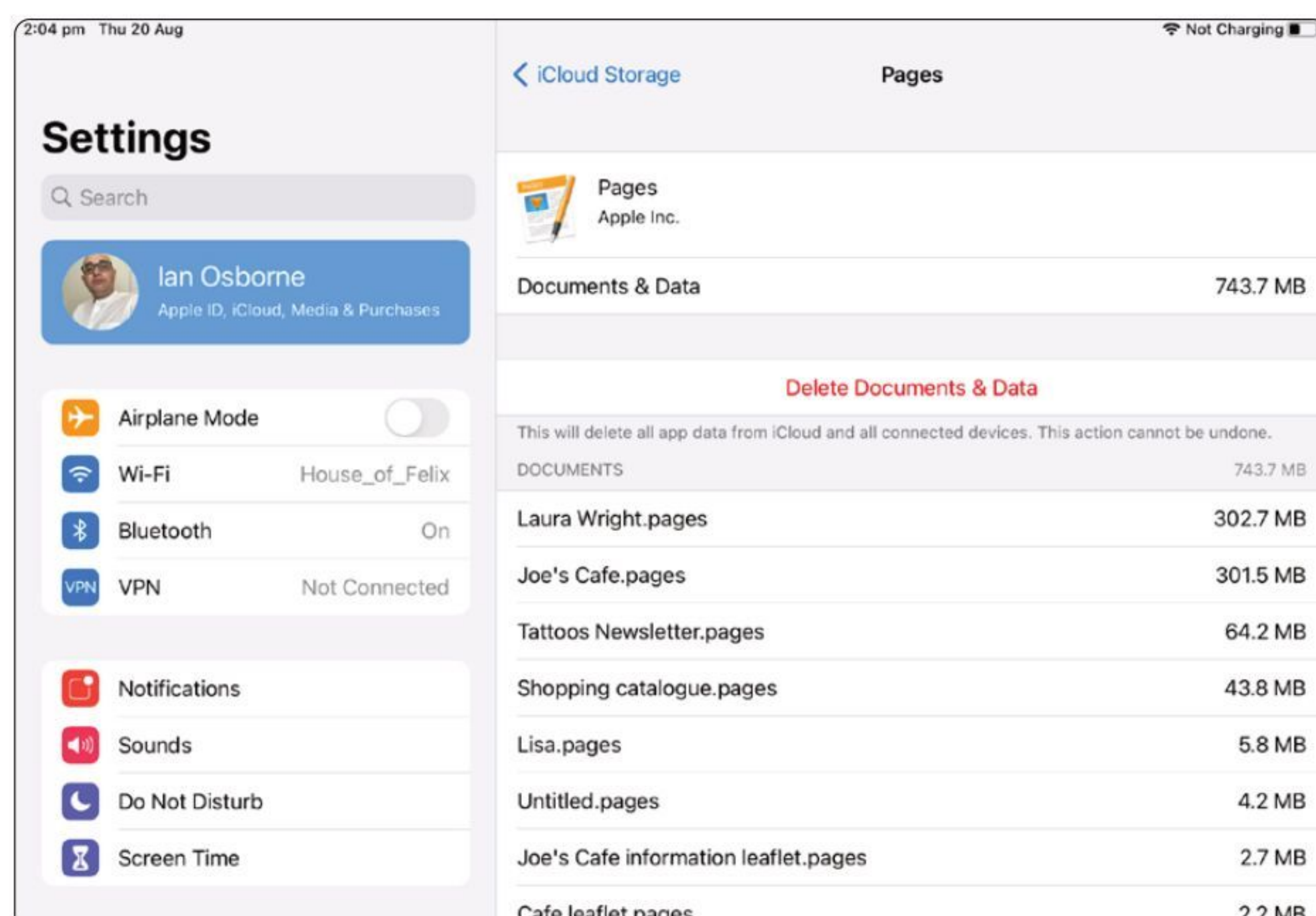
# Manage Storage Option



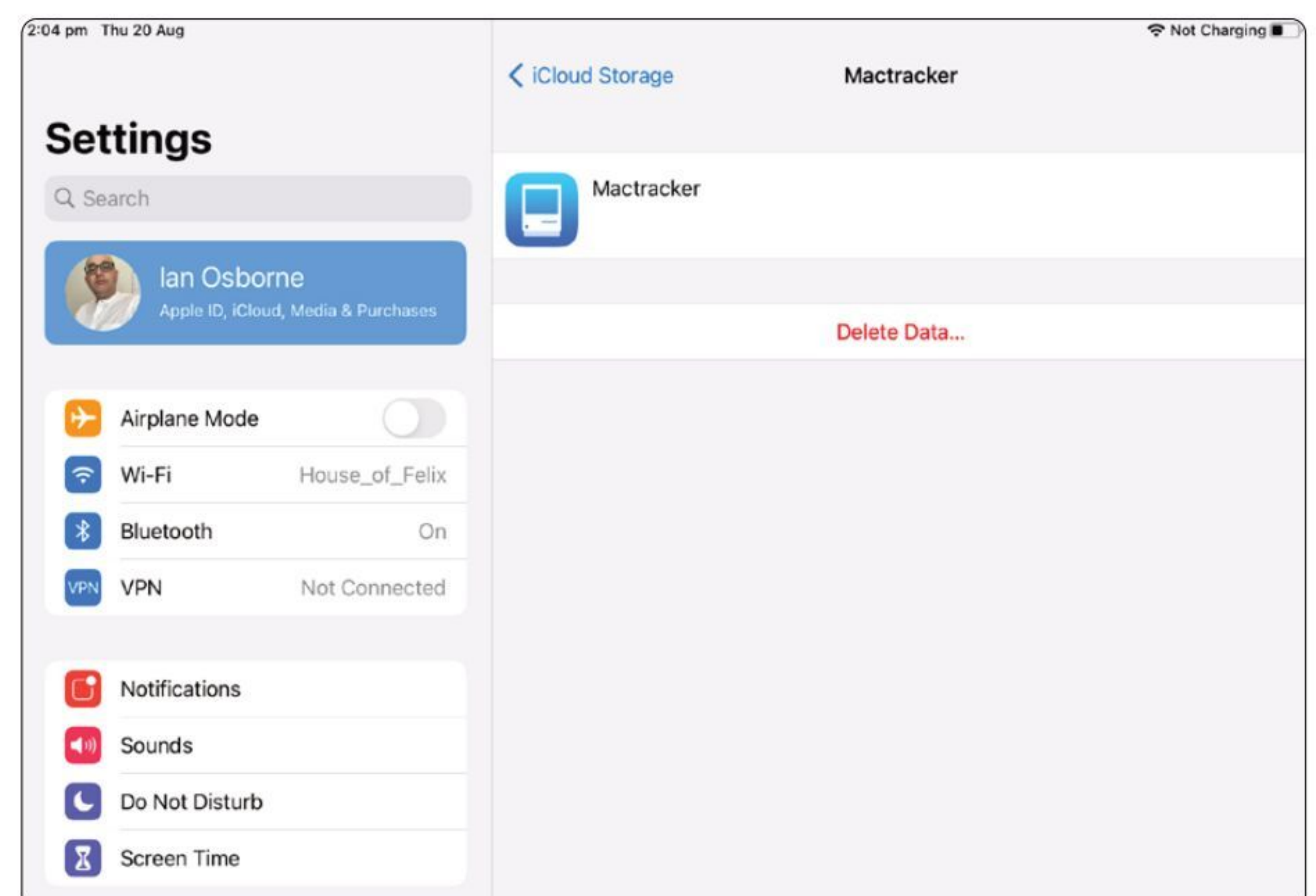
**1** In Settings > [Your Name] > iCloud, at the top of the screen is a line chart showing what your iCloud online storage is being used for, and how much space you've got left. Under this graph is a link labelled Manage Storage.



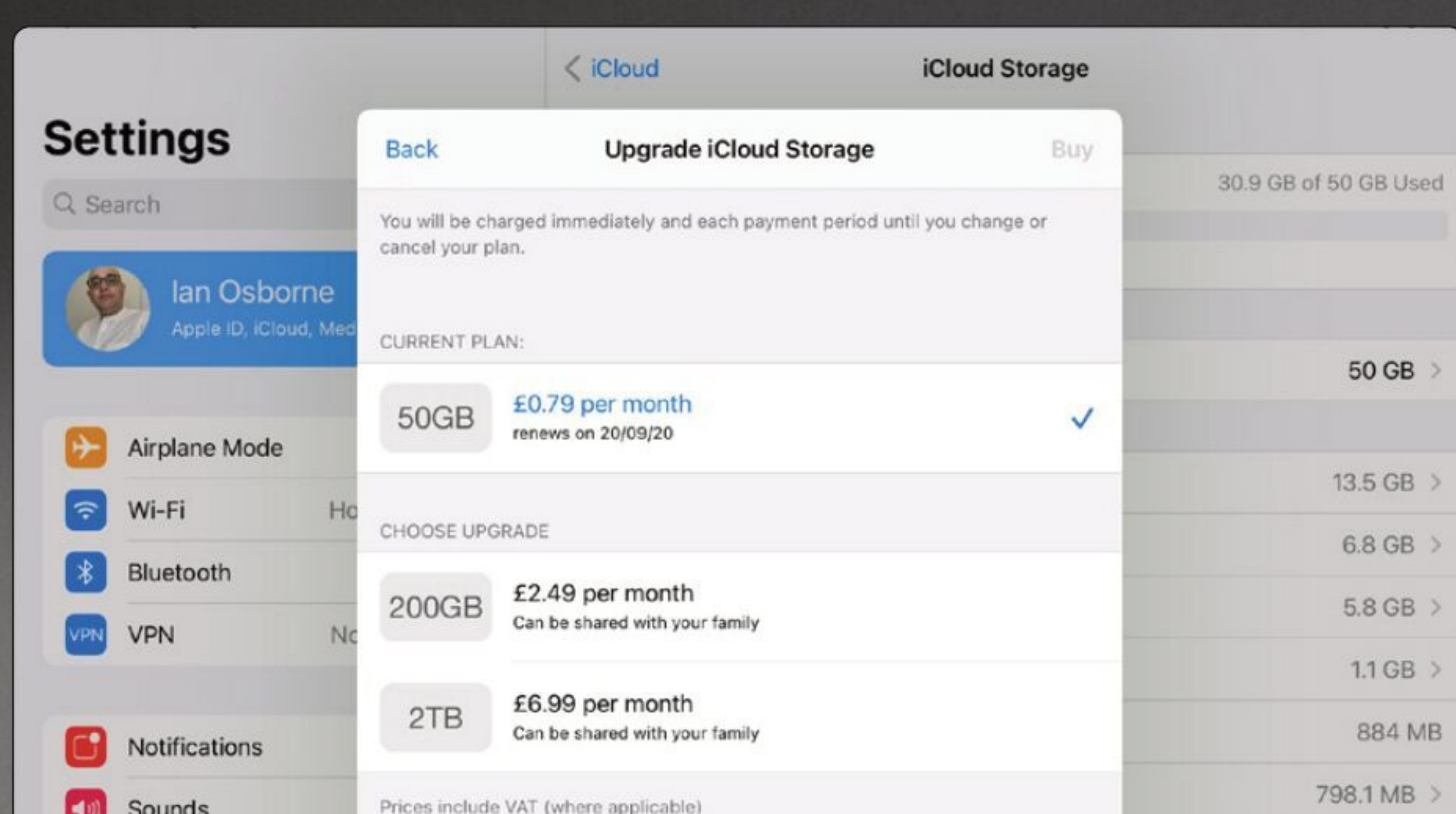
**2** Tap the Manage Storage option. You see a list of applications that are storing data on iCloud and how much space this data is taking up, as well as your iCloud Drive, and your Backups, if they're stored on iCloud.



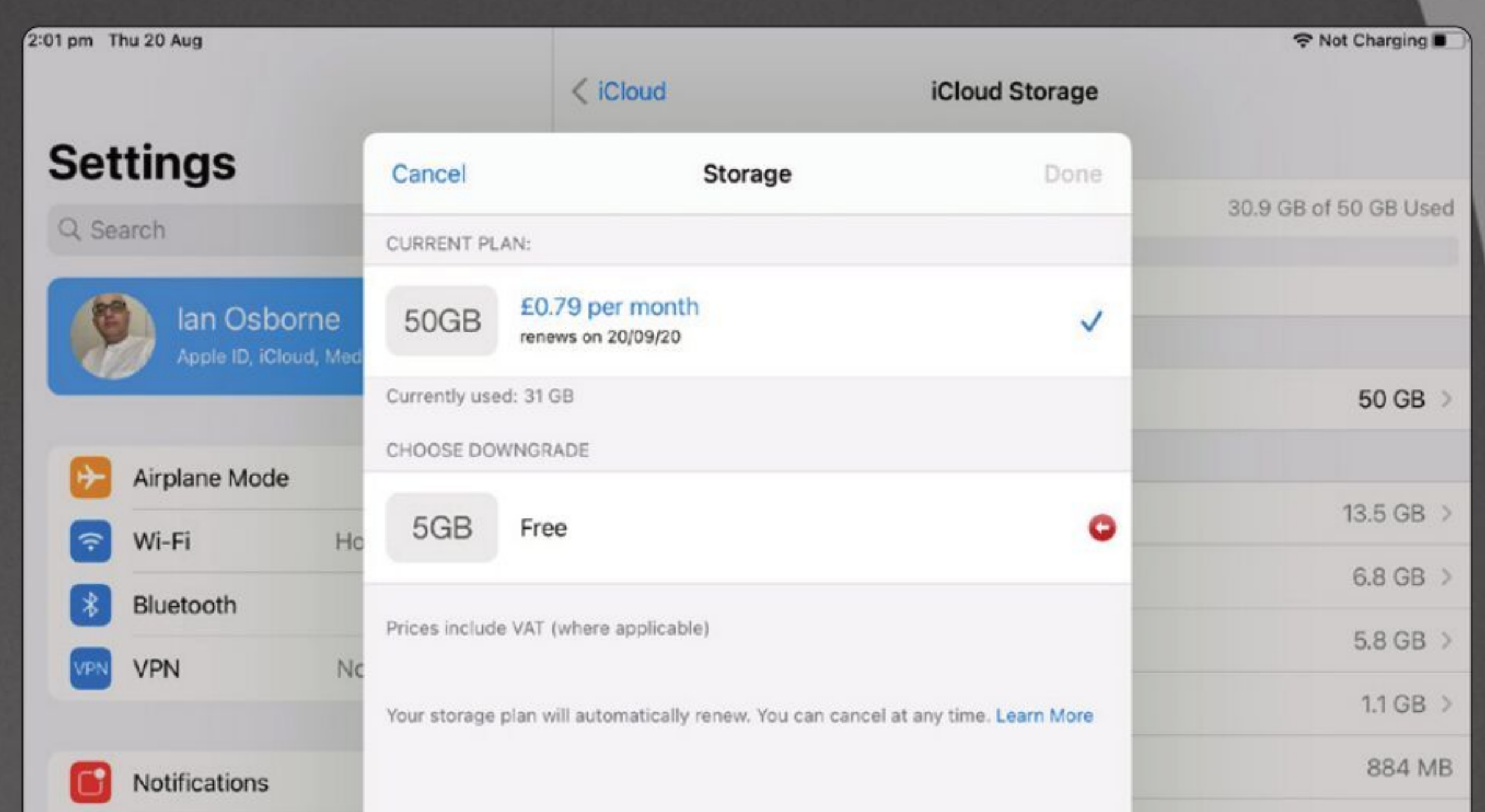
**3** Tap one of the apps. Many applications, such as Pages (seen here), show individual documents or files that you have stored on iCloud. You can delete them by swiping left and tapping the Delete button.



**4** Some apps don't split their data into individual files that you can delete individually, but rather let you delete everything at once (an option that's available in all apps). It's a great way of freeing up space.



**3** You get 5GB of online storage bundled with your Apple ID and it's free of charge but if you want more, you can upgrade to a paid-for monthly plan.



**4** If you've bought more storage than you actually need, you can also downgrade to a smaller, cheaper plan if you wish.





# Using the Files App

## Data Management

The Files app is where you can access documents stored on your iCloud Drive and synced across all your Apple devices. The Files app can read external drives, zip and unzip files and you can share files and folders.

### Files App in Focus



**1** To get this sidebar, tap the Files link in the top-left corner. To close it, tap the screen off the sidebar. In landscape mode, the sidebar is always visible.

**2** The three-dots icon gives you a pop-up menu that lets you scan documents using your iPad's camera, connect to an external server or edit what's available in your sidebar.

**3** The Files app has an excellent search facility, which lets you enter multiple search terms, just like on a Mac.

**4** Tap here to create a new folder in the currently open window. You can then give it a name – call it whatever you like.

**5** The icon found here toggles the current window between showing folders as icons or a list; and whether they're listed according to Name, Date, Size, Kind or Tags.

**6** Tap here then tap on files or folders to select them. You can then Share, Duplicate, Move or Delete them using the links that appear at the foot of the screen.

**7** At the top of the sidebar are options to view files you recently edited or documents you're sharing.

**8** Here you can access folders and files stored on your iPad, iCloud Drive or those you've recently deleted.

**9** These are your folders. Tap one to open it.

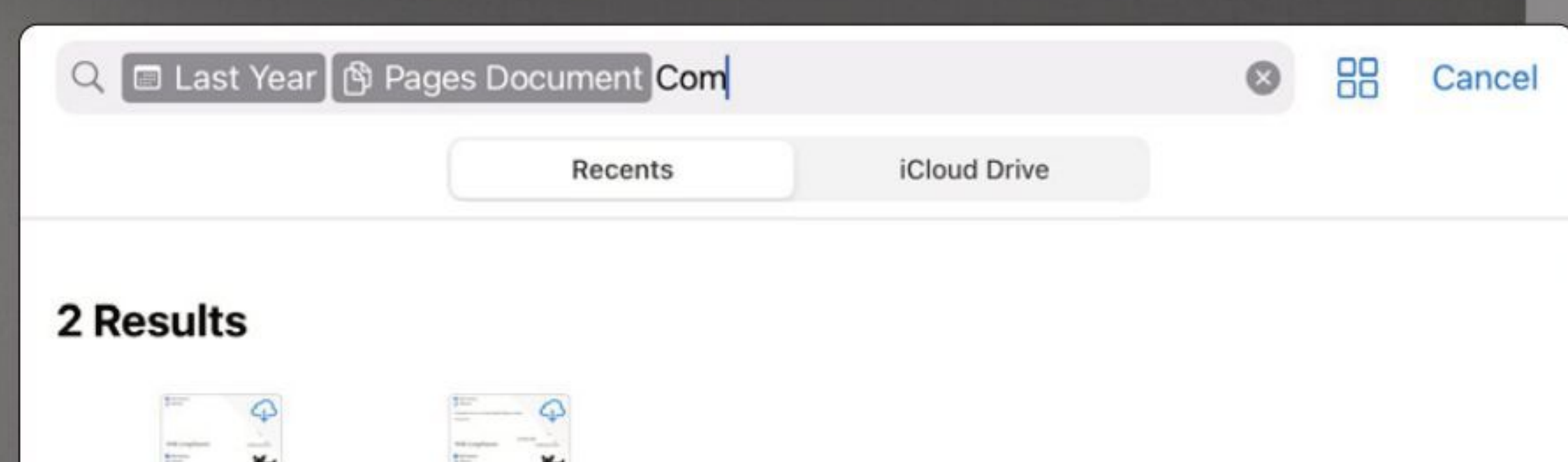
**10** Your favourites. If you edit the sidebar, you can drag other locations into this section.

**11** You can tag files and folders with colours, so they're accessible here.

**12** This information shows how many items are in your currently open window and how much space is left.

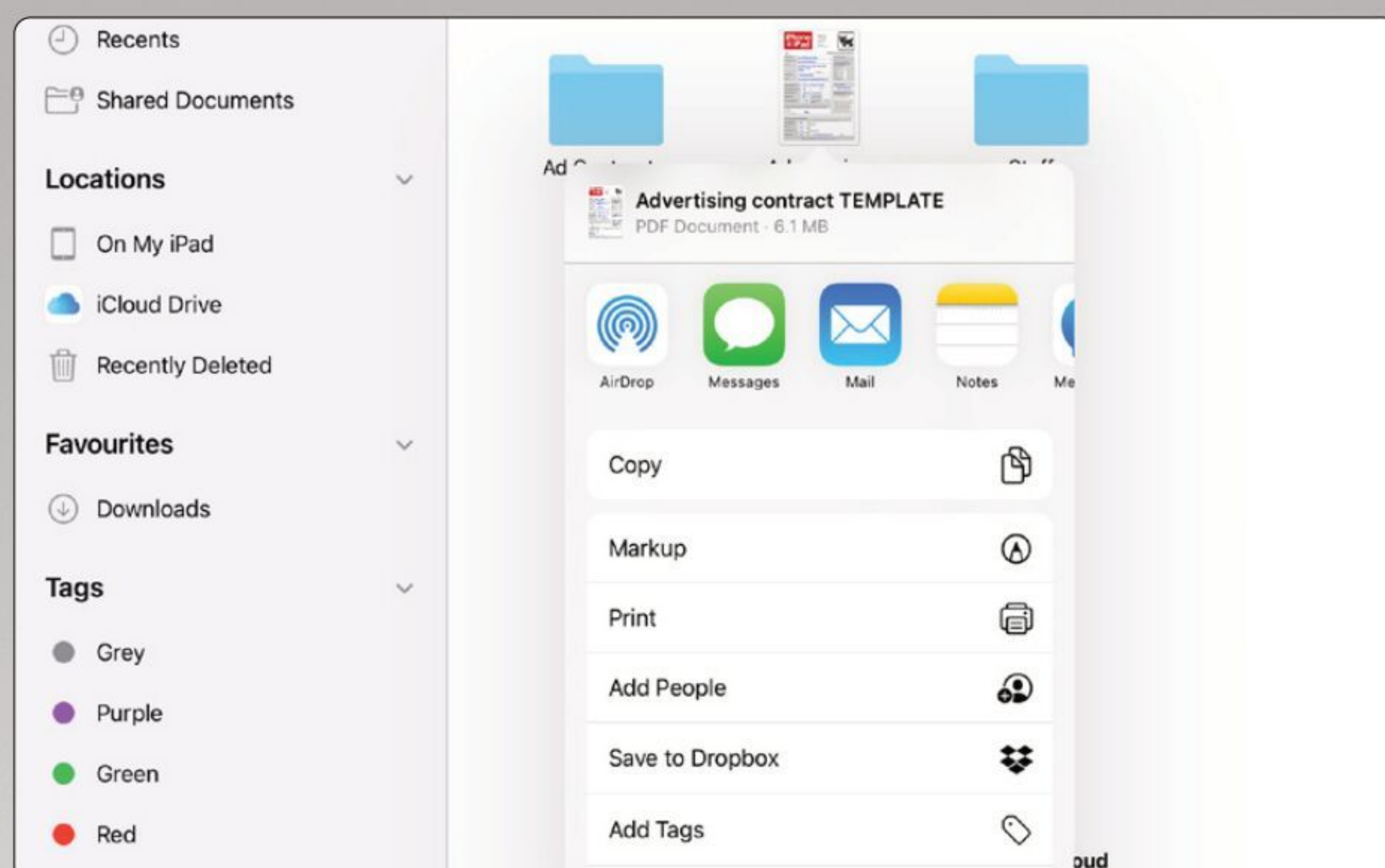
### The Search Facility.

You can add multiple terms in a Files search. Here we entered 'Last Year' for documents we've edited in the last 12 months, 'Pages Document' to limit the search to data created by that app and then typed what it is we're looking for.

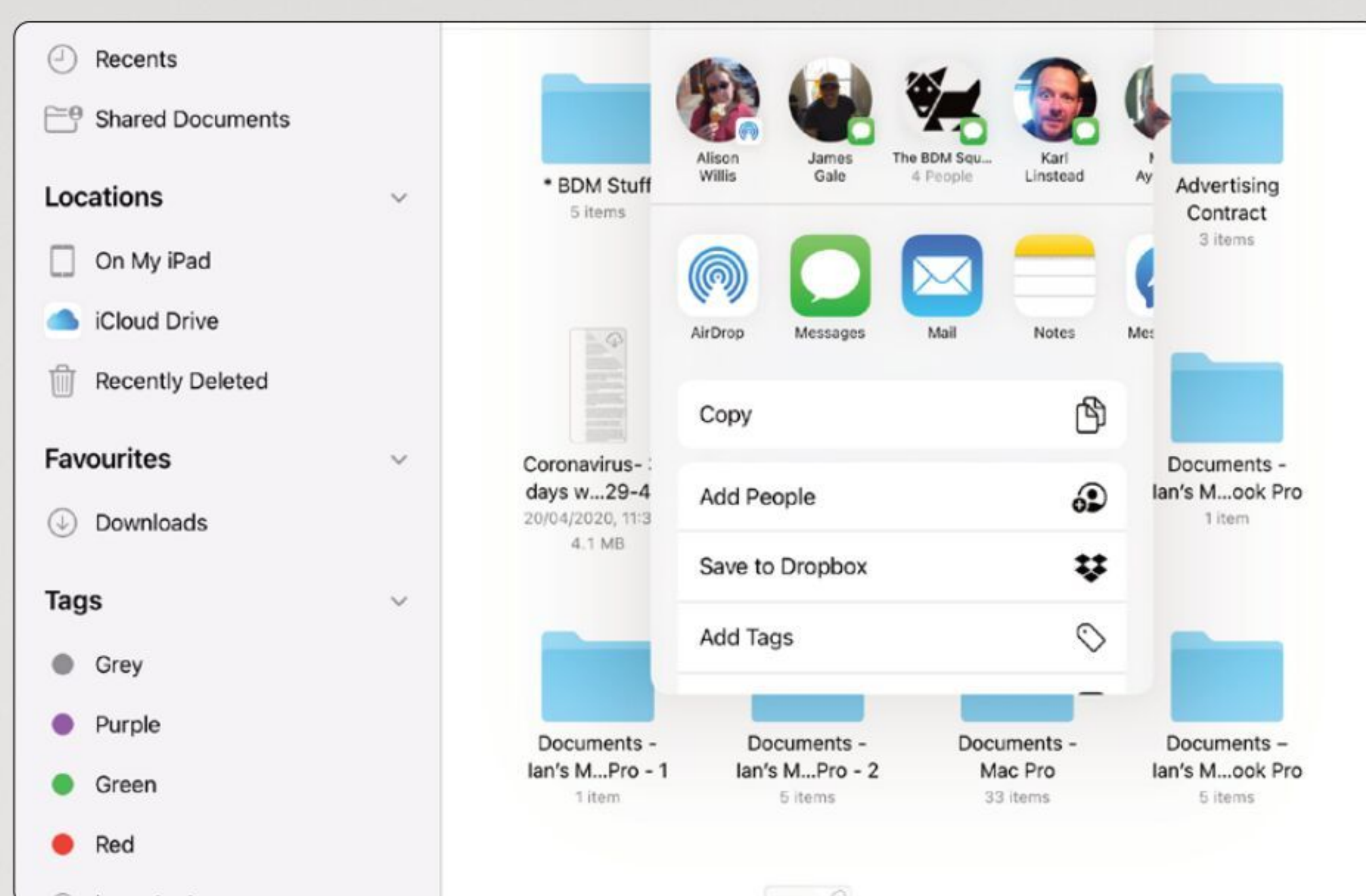




## Sharing & Collaboration



**1** To share an individual file, navigate to it in the Files app and tap and hold to get the pop-up menu. You can then share it using Messages, AirDrop, Mail and more. Scroll to Add People and tap it to invite someone to collaborate on it, with edits visible to all.



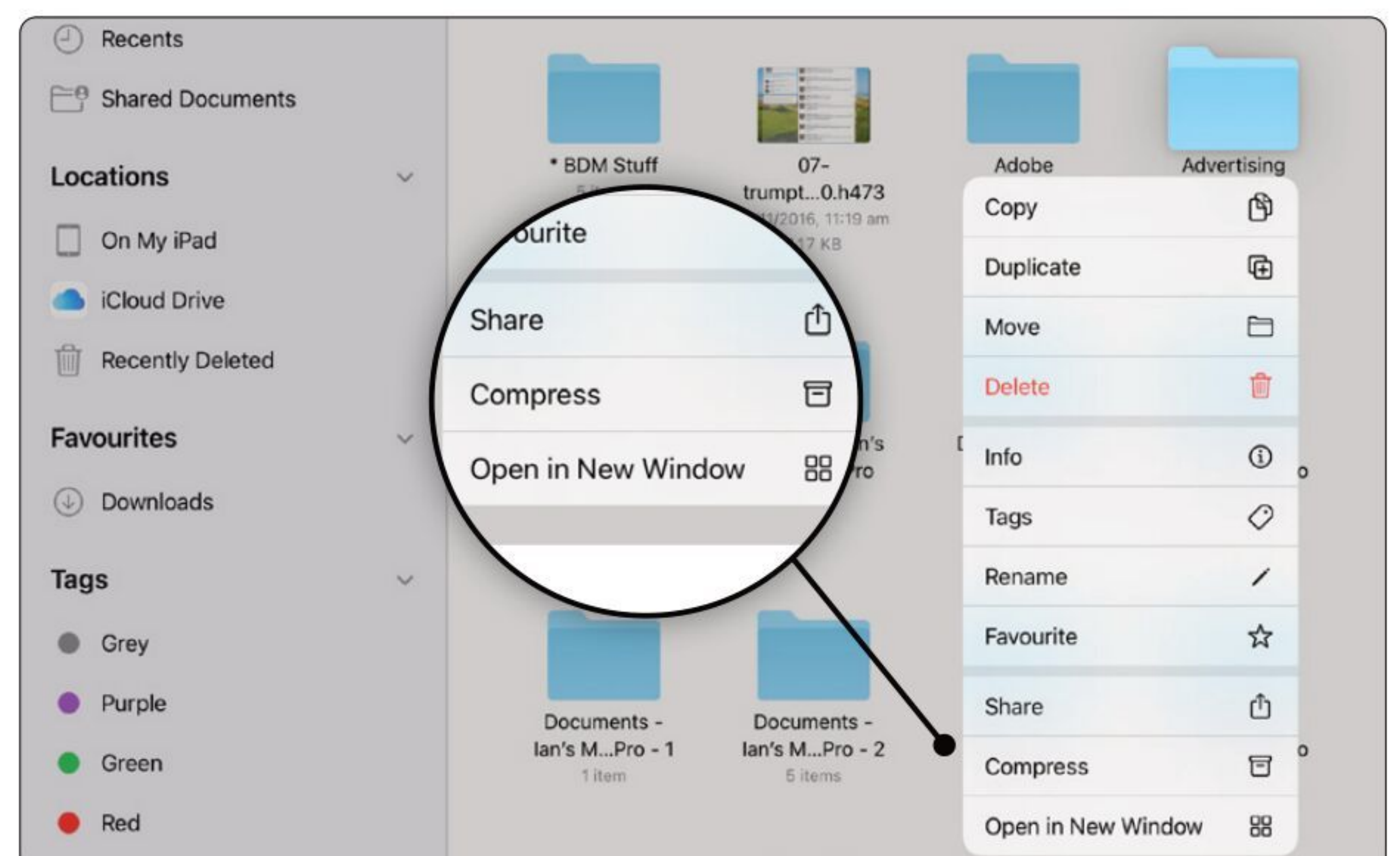
**2** You can share and collaborate on a folder as well as an individual file. To do so, tap and hold on the folder, choose the Share option and then either share the folder (so the recipient gets a copy of it) or Add People, which lets you invite people to collaborate on it.

## External Drives.

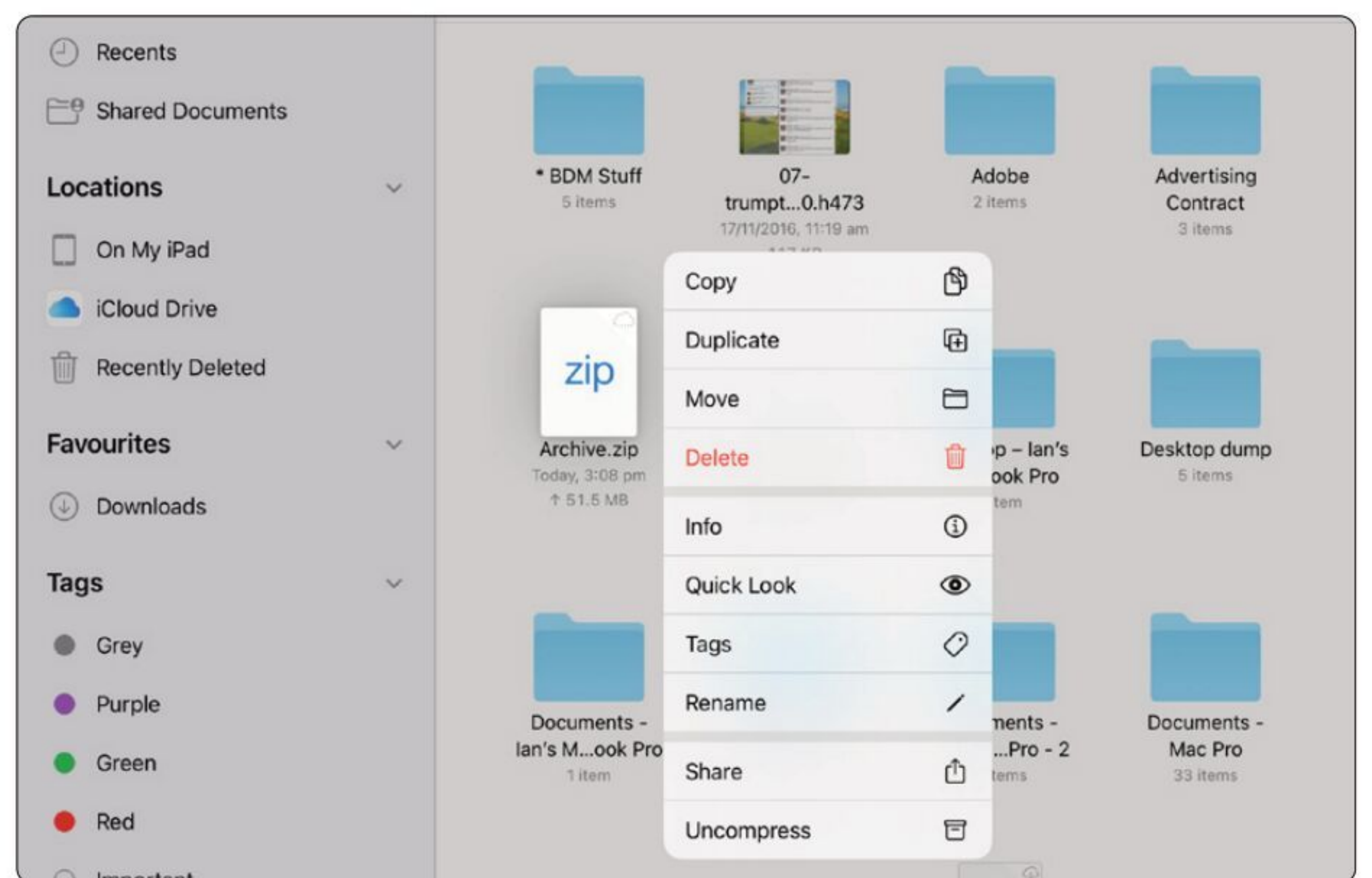
If you connect an external drive to your iPad, its contents are accessible through the Files app. With iPadOS 14, you can use a hard drive that uses APFS encryption. To access the hard drive's contents, you need to enter the password you used to encrypt it.



## Compressing Files



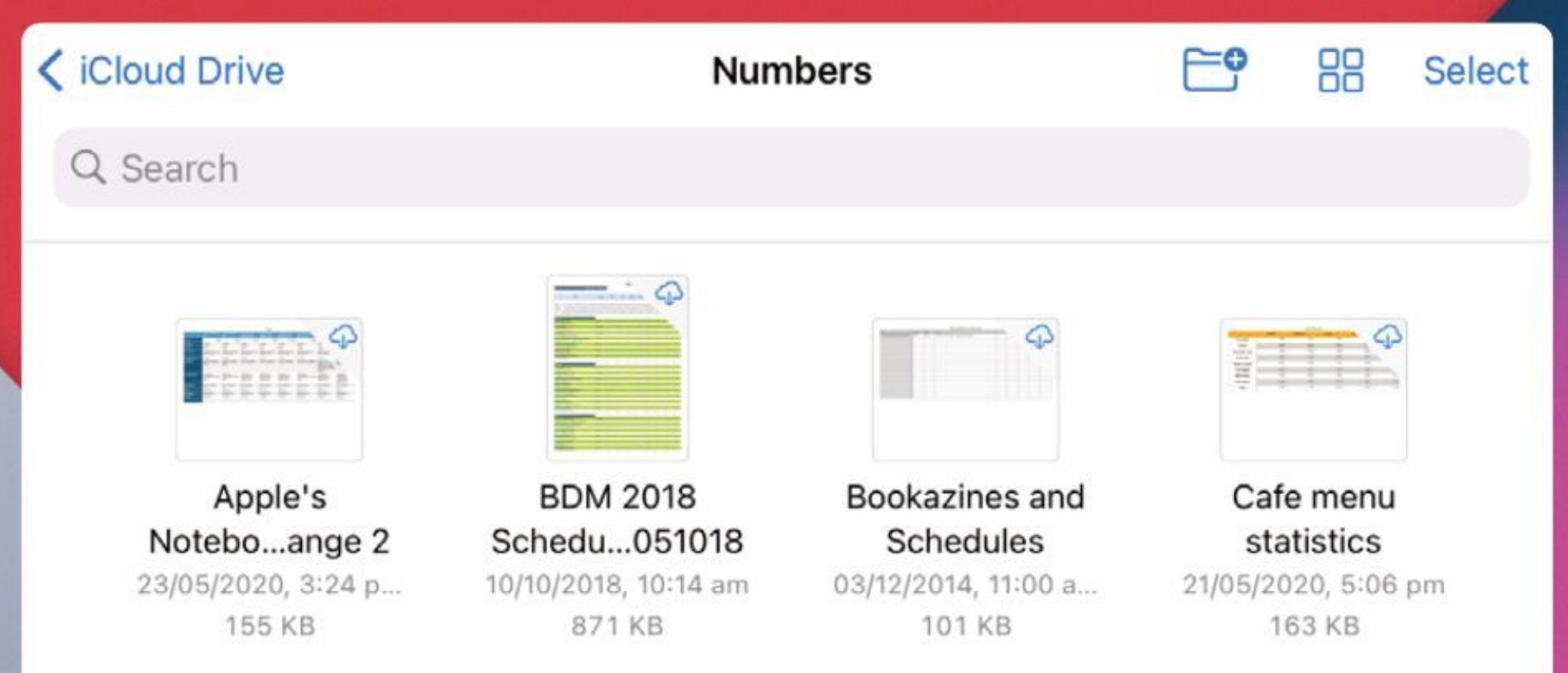
**1** You can compress a folder by tapping and holding it and then selecting Compress from the pop-up menu. You can compress a group of files by selecting them and then tapping the More link in the bottom right corner, then selecting the Compress option.



**2** A compressed archive is shown as a Zip file. Tap to uncompress it or tap and hold it for the pop-up menu, which again lets you carry out a range of tasks. Zipping files and then tapping the pop-up's Share option is great for sending a group of files by Messages, email or more.

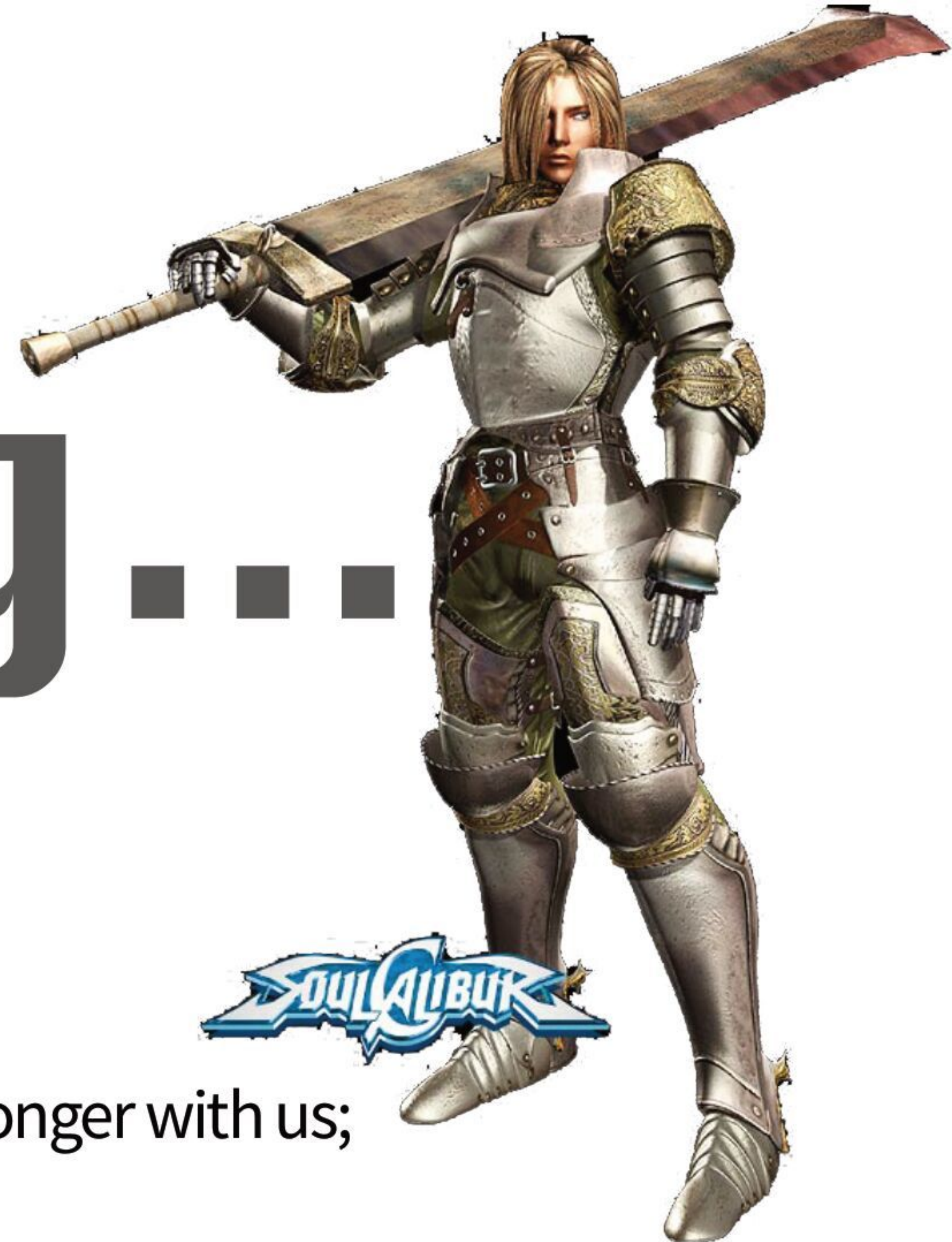
## The Cloud Icon.

If a document is stored on your iCloud but not on your iPad, there's a Cloud icon in the top right corner of its thumbnail. Tap the thumbnail to download the document to your tablet and open it, so you can edit and modify it on your iPad, with your changes synced to iCloud.





# Reloading... Soulcalibur



Remembering the App Store classics that are sadly no longer with us; welcome back to the stage of history.



**B**efore Soulcalibur became Soulcalibur it was called Soul Blade (or in Japan, Soul Edge). It was released on the PlayStation in Japan in 1996, and the North American and European versions hit the shelves in 1997. At the time it was going head to head with the established giants of the beat-em'-up genre; Mortal Kombat, Street Fighter and Namco's own Tekken series; which had usurped Virtua Fighter as the number one 3D beat-'em-up. Lateral movement wasn't included at that stage, but the camera would float around and zoom in and out to add a greater perception of depth.

Soul Blade also boasted one of the best video game intros of all time. Don't believe us? Go check it out on YouTube. It still gives us a shiver of

excitement all these years later! Unlike its predominantly martial arts-inspired rivals, Soul Blade was all about the weapons, which added another layer of depth. But it wasn't until the sequel, Soulcalibur, appeared on the Dreamcast that the game really came out from the shadow of its competitors, and since then it's gone from strength to strength, with the latest sequel, Soulcalibur VI, being released in 2018.

Back in 2012, Apple gamers had the chance to go almost back to the franchise's Dreamcast roots and experience what it was like to be smashed in the face with a giant sword, right on your iPhone or iPad. The game had most of the usual modes you'd expect from an arcade fighting title. The main mode was Arcade, where you fight your way





through to a final showdown with the boss character, Inferno. Ten characters were available from the start, and new ones are unlocked by completing Arcade Mode with each fighter for a healthy final total of 19 playable characters.

## On the Attack!

Time Attack Mode pitted you against the clock to win a set number of fights, while Survival Mode was about winning as many fights as possible with only a small health regeneration after each. The one mode that was missing was probably the most important for any one-on-one fighting game, and that was a two-player head-to-head. Gamers hoped this mode would be implemented in a future update, but alas, that never happened. It wasn't a game-breaking flaw as there were plenty of challenges for the single player and enough characters to take players a long time to get anywhere near mastering them all.

The familiar Soulcalibur control system was recreated using a virtual stick and buttons (no PlayStation or Xbox controller compatibility back then!), and this brought with it the usual associated problems. Without the feedback of an actual stick and buttons it was hard to tell if you were inputting the commands correctly. This obviously became more of a complaint as you tried to pull off the more complex moves and combos. In fairness, the controls worked as well as they possibly could, but you never got the same level of intuitiveness, feel and fluidity you have with the traditional controllers and arcade sticks, which is how this game was originally designed to be played.

The iOS version tried to make things easier by allowing you to set up your own button configurations. You could drag the buttons anywhere you want on the screen to design a layout that felt as comfortable as possible. There was also the option of adding an additional button that can activate a combo of any of the other buttons. Some characters had moves that required two buttons to be pressed simultaneously, which could be very tricky to do, so the ability to create your own multi-button button (if you will) was very handy indeed.



## Stick it to 'Em...

For those willing to struggle with virtual stick controls, Soulcalibur was a faithful conversion of this great fighting game on your iPad or iPhone. It was a near-perfect conversion of the original, which was extremely impressive almost a decade ago. The graphics looked great. What's more important is they moved smoothly and the game did an admirable job of keeping the frame rate high even when the action heated up.

Soulcalibur's weapons-based combat gave it a different feel to other beat-'em-ups, and really set it apart. You could learn each character's moves by entering Practice Mode from where you could call up a complete list of special moves and combos, and practice them to your heart's content. There were some crunching moves and awesome combos to be discovered.

The character roster was healthily diverse and well balanced, meaning the speedy, lightweight Xianghua can take on a lumbering behemoth such as the enormous battleaxe-wielding Astaroth. As with all fighting games, mastering a character is all about learning their strengths and weaknesses as well as the mechanics of actually executing their moves.

Technically this came as close to the original as anyone could possibly have hoped for. The touchscreen controls worked as well as could realistically be expected, the characters were all here, complete with all their moves, and graphics were tidy, fast and smooth. There was a problem with the menus, especially the in-game pause menu, particularly on the iPhone. Basically they were too small. This was not a problem on an iPad, but iPhone users would sometimes struggle to select the desired option.

The lack of a competitive Two-Player Mode was more serious because that's what fighting games are ultimately all about. There was still plenty of fun to be had from beating seven bells out of the computer characters, but this game had one more very serious problem, and that was the price. It was nearly twice as much as the awesome Infinity Blade, and cost nearly three times as much as the blockbuster conversion of Grand Theft Auto 3. Where on Earth Namco Bandai got the idea that this was an appropriate price to charge for a conversion of a 12-year-old game was baffling. Maybe this led to the game's failure, and its removal from the App Store? We'll leave you with a contradiction; this was a really good game with which we were a little disappointed, but one we would love to revisit on the contemporary iOS and iPadOS devices. **JG**



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# Next Issue

The background image shows an Apple Genius Bar. In the center, a staff member in a blue shirt is assisting a customer. To the right, another staff member is visible. In the foreground, the back of a person wearing a purple shirt is seen. The wall behind them features the 'GENIUS BAR' logo and several informational posters in Italian. The overall scene is brightly lit and professional.

What's the first thing you do when you've a problem with your Mac, iPad, iPhone or other Apple device? Go to your local Apple store's Genius Bar? That's not a bad idea, but why not try our tutorials first? You might be able to find exactly what you're looking for without leaving the house. Of course, we'll have all the latest hardware, apps and games to take a look at too!

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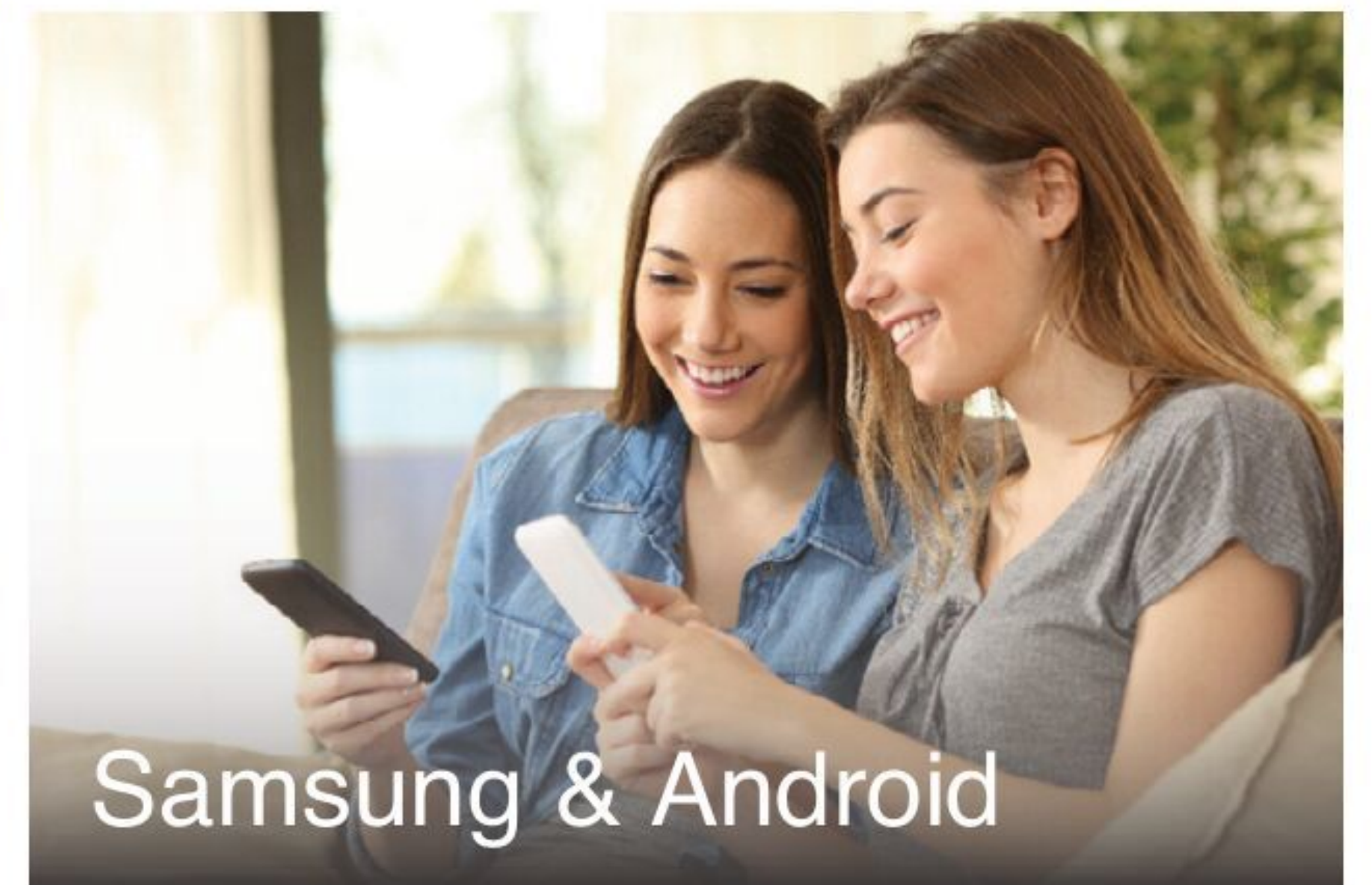
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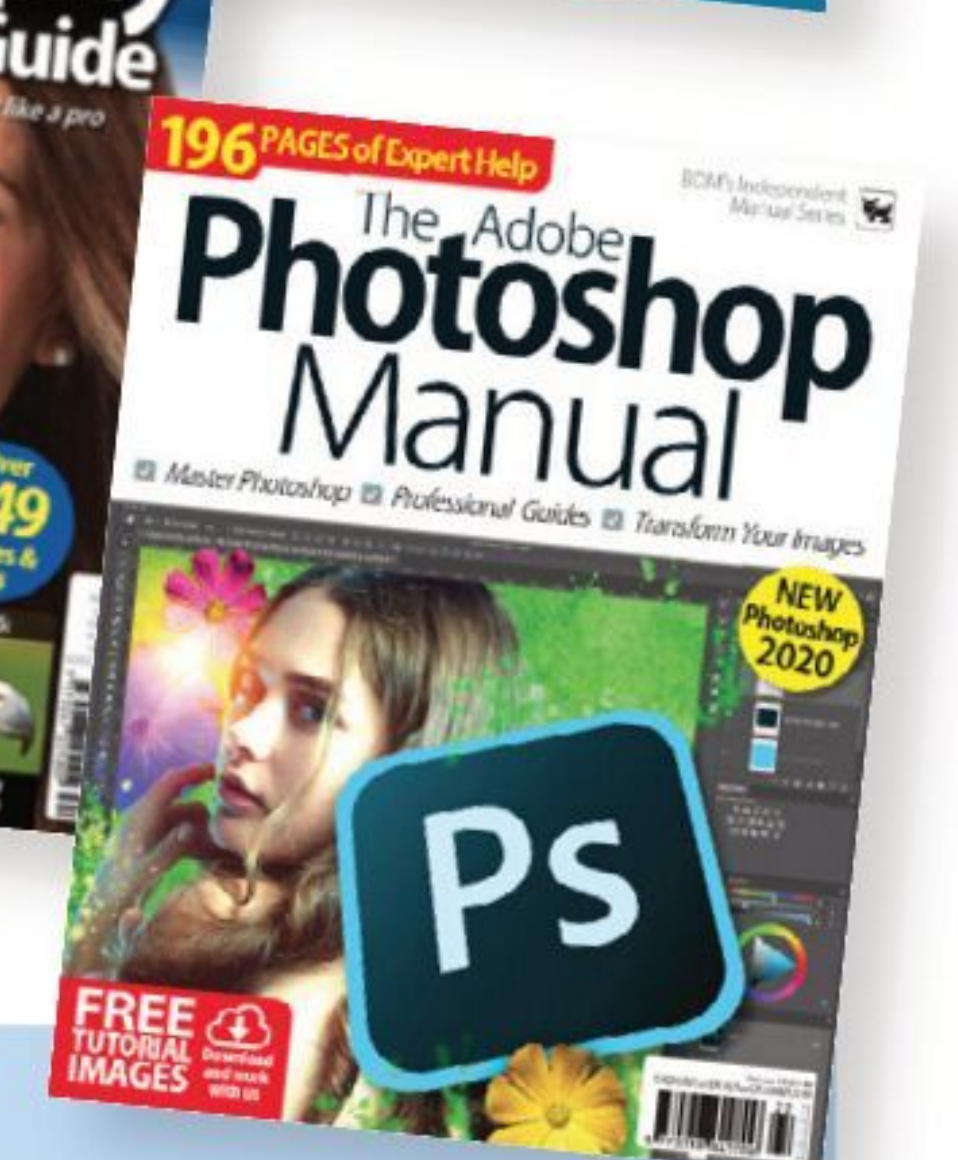
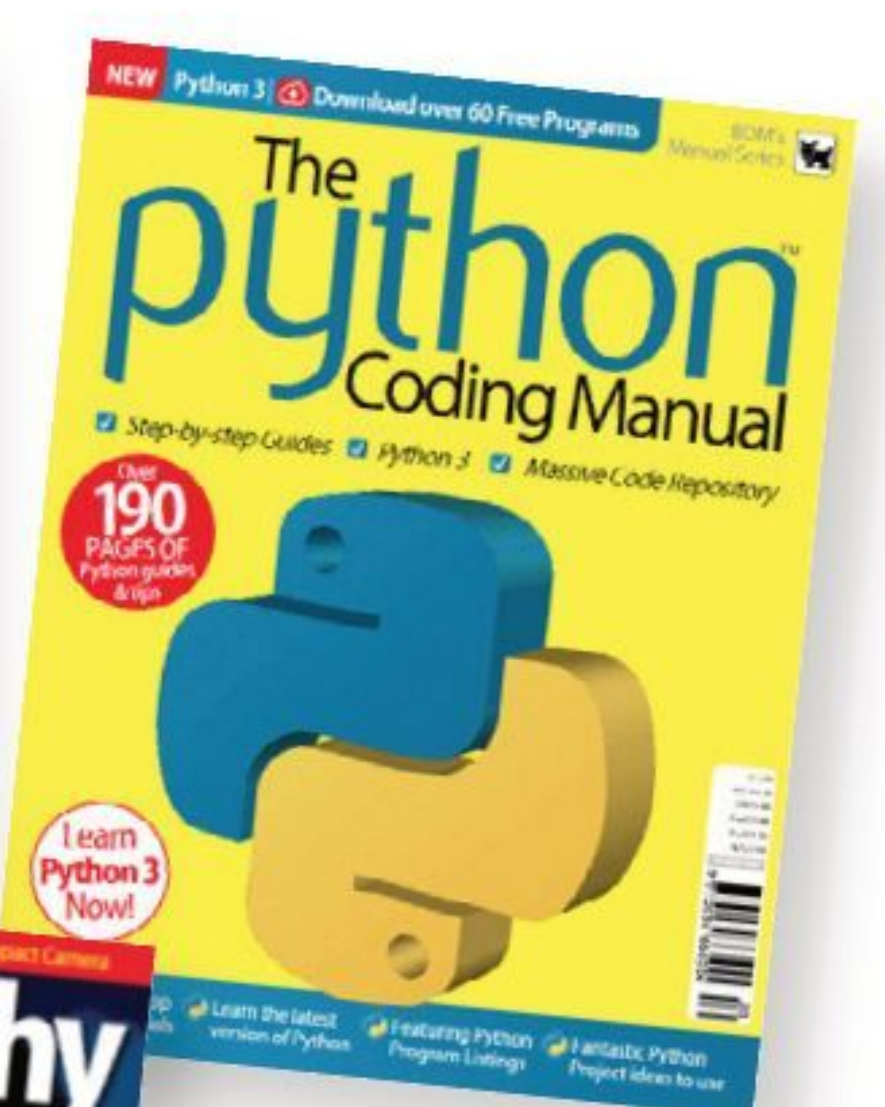
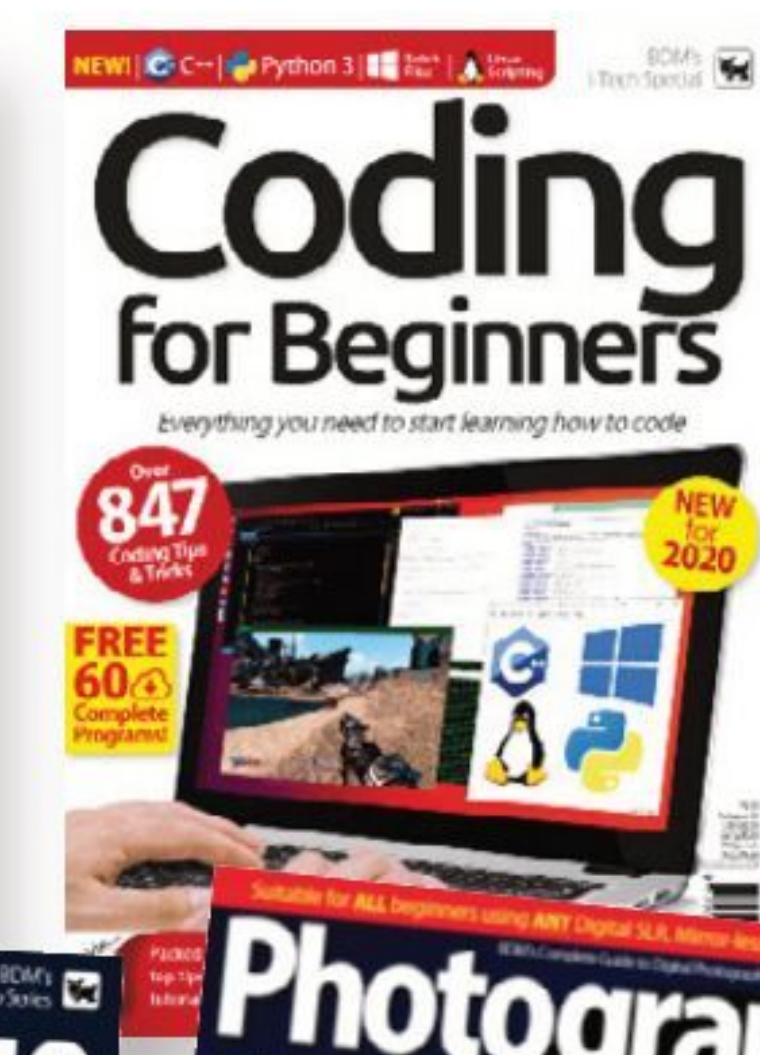
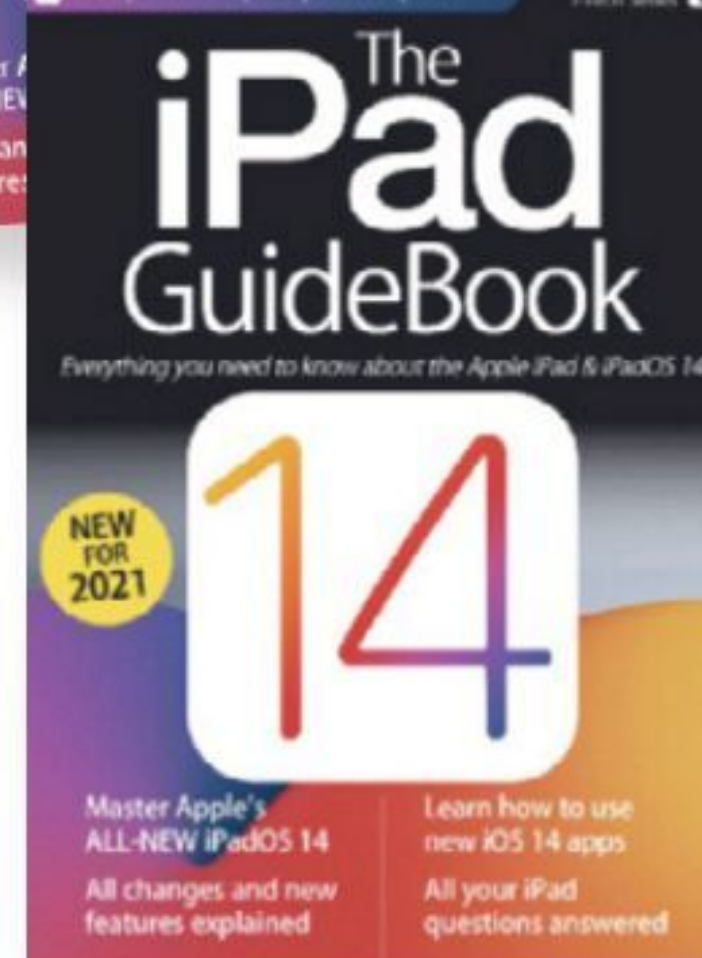
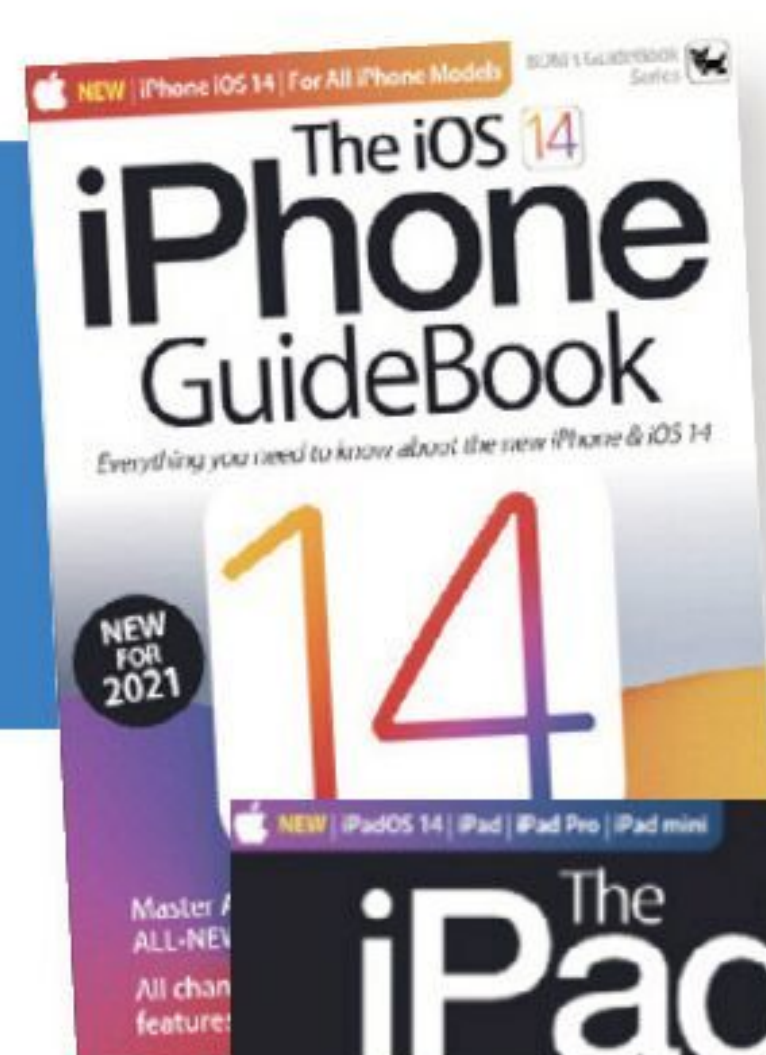


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