

Useful 3D Touch Gestures on iPhone

3D Touch is a feature that's been around since the 2015 release of the iPhone 6s, and it's become an integral gesture system on all of Apple's latest iPhones.

Though it's been around for a while, there are several hidden and less obvious 3D Touch gestures that you may have forgotten or might not be aware of, especially if you don't use the feature often. In our most recent YouTube video and in the guide below, we've highlighted some of the most useful and lesser known 3D Touch gestures.

3D Touch Cursor

Whenever you're typing something using the default iOS keyboard on the iPhone, if you 3D Touch, the keyboard turns blank and morphs into a trackpad that allows you to quickly move the cursor on the screen through the text you've written.

This is a useful gesture that allows you to make quick edits without having to reach up and tap the display



If you hold the cursor over a word for a short length of time, you can also use it to select text for deleting multiple words, copying and pasting, formatting, and other purposes.

You can use this cursor gesture in Mail, Notes, Messages, and more on 3D Touch-enabled devices running iOS 11.

Control Center

In Control Center on devices running iOS 11, you can 3D Touch on almost all of the included icons to get additional control options and shortcut access.



Some of the available options are listed below:

- **Wi-Fi** - 3D Touch the Wi-Fi/Bluetooth box to get additional options for AirDrop and Personal Hotspot.
- **Music** - 3D Touch for additional Music control options both for the iPhone and for connected devices that include HomePod and Apple TV.
- **Brightness** - 3D Touch the brightness control to see a larger slider and to access options for Night Shift and True Tone. **Volume** - 3D Touch to see a larger slider.
- **Flashlight** - 3D Touch to change the brightness of the rear flash, aka the "Flashlight." There are four brightness levels.
- **Timer** - 3D Touch to choose a timer length using a built-in slider bar.
- **Calculator** - 3D Touch to copy your last result.
- **Camera** - 3D Touch to access quick options for taking a selfie, recording a video, recording a Slo-mo video, or taking a portrait.
- **Home** - 3D Touch to access controls for your favorite scenes and accessories. **Screen Recording** - 3D Touch for options that include screen recording to camera roll or Facebook, turning the microphone on and off, and starting a recording.
- **Wallet** - 3D Touch for a shortcut to your default credit or debit card and an option to access your last transaction.
- **Notes** - 3D Touch to access shortcuts to create a new note, a new checklist, a new photo, or a new sketch.
- **Remote** - 3D Touch for a full Apple TV Remote interface.
- **Prioritizing App Downloads**

When you're downloading a bunch of updates from the App Store, if you 3D Touch on an app that's pending, you can force it to download first. This is useful if you're stuck with an app that's loading but need to access it quickly.



You can also cancel downloads and pause downloads with this feature.

Bonus: In the App Store itself, if you 3D Touch on the icon, you can update all of your apps with a quick tap that doesn't require actually opening up the App Store app and navigating to the Updates tab. There are also shortcuts for accessing your purchased apps, redeeming a gift card or promo code, and conducting a search. Note: The "Update All" icon doesn't seem to appear reliably at all times, which may be due to a bug.

Previewing, Sharing, and Saving Photos

In the Photos app, if you 3D Touch on a thumbnail, you can see a preview of the image without needing to tap to open it, which is known as a Peek and Pop gesture. Swipe up after the initial 3D Touch to get access to options to copy a photo, share a photo, favorite a photo, or show additional photos from the same day.

You can use this same gesture in Safari and other apps that have images, such as Messages, Mail, and Apple News. For example, 3D Touch on an image in Safari, swipe upward, and you'll see options to save the image to your camera roll or copy it. Make sure to 3D Touch and then immediately swipe, because if you continue to hold down it will initiate a full "pop" gesture which eliminates the quick save option.



Bonus: 3D Touch on the Photos app icon to get access some fun and useful shortcuts to your most recent photos, your favorite photos, photos from one year ago, or a search interface.

Third-Party App Shortcuts

Apple made 3D Touch available to third-party developers, and there are now hundreds of popular apps that have incorporated it, offering up new options on compatible iPhones.

3D Touch, for example, enables pressure sensitive drawing and writing in note taking and sketching apps, and it's even been incorporated as a control method in some games. [Blackbox](#), [Asphalt 8: Airborne](#), and [BADLAND 2](#) are all examples of games that incorporate 3D Touch in some way.

On a more basic level, most apps have Home screen shortcuts accessible using 3D Touch. Instagram, for example, lets you access the camera, create a new post, view activity, or switch accounts using 3D Touch options, while Facebook has shortcuts for things like scanning a QR code, searching, or writing a post.

Many apps also support 3D Touch gestures in app. For example, within Instagram or Facebook, 3D Touch on a thumbnail or a link for a preview of the content. These kind of Peek and Pop gestures have been built into quite a few third-party apps for a consistent usage experience on devices that support 3D Touch.

3D Touch-Compatible Devices

3D Touch can do a whole lot more than what's included in this guide, and the best way to discover everything is liberal use of the feature. 3D Touch on third-party app icons to see what shortcuts are available, 3D Touch within apps to see if there are built-in 3D Touch gestures, and give it a try in all of Apple's apps, most of which have been built with 3D Touch integration.

Use 3D Touch in apps Messages, Safari, and Mail on links and photos to preview content with Peek and Pop or to find new sharing options, and 3D Touch on notifications to get more information.

14 More iPhone Gestures Should Know

It doesn't take long to learn the swipes and taps you need to get around your iPhone. Its intuitiveness is a major selling point, but there are some lesser-known gestures that aren't immediately obvious that can be useful too. Here are 14 gestures you can use on your iPhone that you might not know about.

1) Pinch-to-zoom on videos

You're probably familiar with this gesture, but you might not be using everywhere it's available. You can pinch to zoom on photos and maps, and you can also use the same trick on videos being played from local storage. If they've been captured by your iPhone's camera, it's not problem and a great way to see more intimate details in your videos.

2) Tap and hold to bring up closed tabs in Safari

Want to get back to that web page you dismissed too quickly? Forgotten what you've just read already? In the Safari app, you can open the tab view via the icon in the lower right-hand corner, then tap and hold on the new tab icon (a plus) to see your recently closed tabs. You can also tap and hold on individual tabs to reorder them in the tab view.

3) Quicker zooming in Apple Maps

You can't always get your fingers in the right position for a pinch-to-zoom operation in Apple Maps, but there are alternatives. A double-tap will zoom you in and a two-finger tap will zoom you out. In Google Maps for iOS, by the way, you can double-tap and then hold, then move your finger up or down the screen to zoom out of or into the current map.

4) Swipe down to hide the keyboard in iMessage

If you're in an iMessage thread and you want to be able to scroll back through the conversation history without the distraction of the keyboard, swipe down on the message immediately above the keyboard to hide it. As soon as you tap back inside the text entry field, the keyboard reappears on screen and you can carry on with your typing again.

5) Tap and hold to switch keyboards

Here's an old one but a good one. If you tap and hold on the number symbol on the keyboard, rather than tapping, you can pick out a character and then jump back to the original keyboard without another tap. It works in reverse, and with the special character keyboard, too. It doesn't make a huge difference but should speed up your typing a little.

6) Shake to undo

This one's been around for a while, but still surprises most iPhone owners when they learn about it. You can shake to undo your last action in a multitude of apps, including Apple ones like Mail and Messages. It can bring back archived messages or remove the last bit of text you entered, for example. The feature can be turned off via Accessibility under General in Settings.

7) Swipe down to save email drafts

This is a more recent one Apple's added to the Mail app. If you swipe down while working on an email, you can get back to your inbox and refer to other emails without losing the message you're composing. Multiple drafts can be saved in this way, and can be recalled later by tapping and holding the compose button that appears in the lower-right corner.

8) Tap and drag to select photos

Selecting multiple photos for whatever purpose used to be a pain, but it's a lot more straightforward since the introduction of iOS 9 last year. Tap **Select** in the Photos app, and as well as tapping individual pictures, you can also tap and drag to highlight several at once. It's similar to holding down the **Shift** key on your desktop computer.

9) Tap and hold to archive messages

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Here's another one for Mail on iOS that's helpful. When you tap the trash icon underneath a message it gets deleted (with an option confirmation alert). If you tap and hold the trash icon instead, you get the option to delete or archive it. Of course you can also set the swipe actions to archive or delete messages from the main folder list in Mail's main settings.

10) Tap and drag to change scrubbing speed

The scrubbing speed is the speed at which you can skip through podcasts and music by tapping and dragging the playback bar. Tap and hold on the progress bar, then drag up first rather than left or right. This changes the scrubbing speed to give you finer control over the jumps, and you can then go left or right with your finger still pressed down.

11. Swipe down to hear text

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This one requires some extra preparation, but it's helpful to have available. In Settings, go to **Accessibility** in **General**, then choose **Speech** and **Speak Screen**. With the feature activated, you can drag down with two fingers on any screen to have the text read out to you. A floating control panel appears allowing you to adjust the speed of the reading.

12) Swipe right to go back

iOS has a back button that occasionally pops up in the top-left corner, but you can also ‘go back’ in multiple apps—including Mail and Safari—with a gesture, by swiping right from the left edge of the screen. It works in most native Apple apps and other major apps, with third-party developers free to implement or ignore it as they see fit.

13) Swipe left to see details in Message

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One quick swipe to the left is enough to bring up extra details about the colorful bubbles in Messages. You can see to see when messages actually arrived on the recipient’s device. Here’s another one for Messages. As with several other apps, you can pull down from the top on the main screen to reveal the search box and run a query on all of your messages.

14) Swipe left or right to delete digits in Calculator

A final one just for fans of the integrated Calculator app that arrives with iOS. If you swipe left or right on the main number display field, you can remove one digit at a time rather than pressing **C** and getting rid of everything at once. Bonus tip: if you want to copy your final answer to another app, press and hold on it to bring up a small **Copy** option above.