How to Use a Hotspot

IMPORTANT: Check with your phone provider to know how much data you have per month or if it is unlimited before setting up the hotspot.

A Personal Hotspot lets you share the cellular data connection of your iPhone or iPad (Wi-Fi + Cellular) when you don't have access to a Wi-Fi network.

iPhone or iPad

Set up Personal Hotspot on your iPhone or iPad

1.   Go to Settings > Cellular or Settings > Personal Hotspot.
2.   Tap the slider next to Allow Others to Join.

If you don't see the option for Personal Hotspot, contact your carrier to make sure that you can use Personal Hotspot with your plan.

Connect to Personal Hotspot with Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or USB

You can connect to a Personal Hotspot using Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or USB. And with iOS 13, devices that are connected to a Personal Hotspot will stay connected, even if the screen is locked—so those devices will still get notifications and messages.

Here are some tips for using each method.

When you connect a device to your Personal Hotspot, the status bar turns blue and shows how many devices have joined. The number of devices that can join your Personal Hotspot at one time depends on your carrier and iPhone model. If other devices have joined your Personal Hotspot using Wi-Fi, you can use only cellular data to connect to the Internet from the host device.

Use these steps to connect:

Wi-Fi

On the device that you want to connect to, go to Settings > Cellular > Personal Hotspot or Settings > Personal Hotspot and make sure that it's on. Then verify the Wi-Fi password and name of the phone. Stay on this screen until you've connected your other device to the Wi-Fi network.

On the device that you want to connect, go to Settings > Wi-Fi and look for your iPhone or iPad in the list. Then tap the Wi-Fi network to join. If asked, enter the password for your Personal Hotspot.

Bluetooth

To make sure that your iPhone or iPad is discoverable, go to Settings > Bluetooth and stay on that screen. Then on your Mac or PC, follow the manufacturer directions to set up a Bluetooth network connection. Learn more about using Personal Hotspot with Bluetooth.

Personal Hotspot supports Bluetooth connections with Mac, PC, and other third-party devices. To connect another iOS device, use Wi-Fi.

USB

Make sure that you have the latest version of iTunes on your Mac or PC. Then connect your iPhone or iPad to your computer with the USB cable that came with your device. If you see an alert that says tap "Trust This Computer?" tap Trust.

Learn more about connecting a device to your iPhone or iPad's Personal Hotspot.

Androids

Share a mobile connection by tethering or hotspot on Android

You can use your phone's mobile data to connect another phone, tablet, or computer to the internet. Sharing a connection this way is called tethering or using a hotspot. Some phones can share Wi-Fi connection by tethering.

Most Android phones can share mobile data by Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or USB.

Important: Some of these steps work only on Android 9 and up. Learn how to check your Android version.

Tether by Wi-Fi hotspot

Step 1: Turn on your phone's hotspot

1. Open your phone's Settings app.
2. Tap Network & internet ❯ Hotspot & tethering ❯ Wi-Fi hotspot.
3. Turn on Wi-Fi hotspot.
4. To see or change a hotspot setting, like the name or password, tap it. If needed, first tap Set up Wi-Fi hotspot.

Tip: If you don't want your hotspot to require a password, pick None under "Security."

Step 2: Connect another device to your phone's hotspot

1. On the other device, open that device's list of Wi-Fi options.
2. Pick your phone's hotspot name.
3. Enter your phone's hotspot password.
4. Click Connect.

Tip: You can share your phone's mobile data with up to 10 other devices via a Wi-Fi hotspot.

Tether by Bluetooth

1. Pair your phone with the other device.
2. Set up the other device to get its network connection by Bluetooth. Follow the instructions that came with the device.
3. Open your phone's Settings app.
4. Tap Network & internet ❯ Hotspot & tethering.
5. Tap Bluetooth tethering.

Tether by USB cable

Important: Mac computers can't tether with Android by USB.

1. Using a USB cable, connect your phone to the other device. A "Connected as a…" notification shows at the top of the screen.
2. Open your phone's Settings app.
3. Tap Network & internet ⟩ Hotspot & tethering.
4. Turn on USB tethering.

Extend battery life while tethering

- Plug in your devices while tethering.
- Turn off tethering connections when you're done with them.
- If your phone can turn off your hotspot for you when no devices are connected, turn on that setting.