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Plus look for some  
"Joy of Tech" cartoons

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# When Should You Upgrade to Apple's 2024 OS Releases?

by ADAM ENGST

As promised, Apple has released the initial versions of all its 2024 operating systems. If you aren't already running a beta of the X.1 releases that support Apple Intelligence (see "[Examining Apple Intelligence](#)," 17 June 2024), you could consider upgrading. But should you? Let's look at a few broad classes of users.

**Early adopters:** You know who you are. Early adopters are undoubtedly well into their installation process now, and that's fine. The betas have been stable in my testing, and while specific compatibility issues remain, such as with [Drafts dictation and transcription](#) and [external Thunderbolt SATA enclosures on a 2019 Mac Pro](#), it's unlikely that anyone upgrading today will find themselves dead in the water.

**Enthusiastic users:** Those who want to play with the latest features but aren't willing to tolerate significant problems can likely upgrade everything but macOS within the next few days. A brief delay will give Apple time to address any early issues with overloaded download servers. I recommend waiting a little longer with macOS to let the early adopters report bugs that slipped through beta testing. If you use your Mac to earn your living, the stakes are higher, and more caution is warranted.

**Cautious users:** Those for whom Apple devices are just tools should wait a few weeks or until the X.1 releases scheduled for October. [As Howard Oakley notes](#), they'll likely contain fixes for the highest-profile bugs that have appeared between now and then. Even then, it's safer to update everything but macOS. Anyone who feels trepidation about installing Sequoia could wait until macOS 15.2 comes out, likely in mid-December. The added benefit of upgrading after macOS 15.2 comes out is that you can do it over the holiday break when you may have more time to install carefully (after making at least two separate backups) and recover from any issues that arise. For full details and help with upgrading from my friends at Take Control, read [Take Control of Sequoia](#) by Joe Kissell and [Take Control of iOS 18 and iPadOS 18](#) by Josh Centers.

**Reluctant upgraders:** Even those with no interest in new features should upgrade eventually, perhaps in the last set of releases before Apple's Worldwide Developer Conference in June. After that, the only bugs likely to be fixed are security vulnerabilities, so all that waiting longer does is ensure you can't take advantage of any new features or platform compatibility. While you can put off macOS upgrades for as long as two years, thanks to Apple releasing security updates for the last two versions of macOS, my experience is that the longer you wait, the more likely you will have installation problems. You can't generally delay iOS and iPadOS upgrades for too long because Apple releases security updates only for the latest versions of those operating systems, along with older versions for obsolete devices that can't upgrade.

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## SIG NEWS

The Saturday SMMUG Special Interest Group (SIG) will meet from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Saturday, October 12, 2024, **via a ZOOM video conference.**

An email containing the Meeting ID and password will be sent to all members.

The October SIG will focus on using Message.

All are invited, but new users are especially encouraged to attend this meeting. Bring your tips and tricks, questions and suggestions.

Go to: <https://www.smmug.org/meeting-info> to find the instructions for attending our ZOOM meetings.

For more information about Special Interest Groups (SIGs), go to the [SMMUG website](https://www.smmug.org).

### Future SIG Zoom Meetings:

Oct 12, 2024 - Messages

Nov 9, 2024 - Reminders

**No SIG Meeting in December**

## ADVERTISING

You can advertise your business or service through the Silicon Summit.

### RATES

Per inch	\$10
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*A 10% discount is applied for ads that run in two or more issues, except for inserts.*

Sponsoring Memberships are also available to merchants who want to see their business name and address listed on the front page. Sponsoring Memberships are \$100 for one year.

## MEETING DATES

Our regular monthly meetings are on the second Monday of every month. Upcoming meeting dates are as follows:

October 14, 2024 (**Zoom only**)  
November 11, 2024 (**Zoom only**)  
December 9, 2024 - Election!  
January 13, 2025  
February 10, 2025  
March 10, 2025  
April 14, 2025  
May 12, 2025



Scan this QR code to be taken to our SMMUG web site

## SMMUG GENERAL MEETING

**The October and November meetings will be over Zoom only.** Most General Member Meetings are “hybrid” in-person and Zoom meetings. The in-person meetings are held at the East Library, 5550 N. Union Blvd, in the Community Meeting Room or Community Annex. Look for signs directing you to the room.

### October 14, 2024

5:40 Zoom Meeting room opens  
5:45 Zoom Q&A Session  
6:30 *ish* Break  
6:45 Program - iOS 18.1  
7:45 Adjourn

### Future Meetings

**November - Zoom Only** - Mac OS  
Sequoia and Voelker Presents

**December** - Hybrid Annual Business Meeting and Holiday Party with an extended Q&A

*Continued from page 1*

We'll be writing about new features in all these operating systems, as will many other Apple-focused publications, websites, and bloggers. For now, though, these links should whet your appetite for what's new:

- **MacOS 15 Sequoia**
  - [Announcement](#)
  - [Product page](#)
  - [Feature list PDF](#)
  - [Release notes](#)
  - [Enterprise notes](#)
  - [Security notes](#)
- **iOS 18**
  - [Announcement](#)
  - [Product page](#)
  - [Feature list PDF](#)
  - [Release notes](#)
  - [Enterprise notes](#)
  - [Security notes](#)
- **iPadOS 18**
  - [Announcement](#)
  - [Product page](#)
  - [Feature list PDF](#)
  - [Release notes](#)
  - [Enterprise notes](#)
  - [Security notes](#)
- **watchOS 11**
  - [Announcement](#)
  - [Product page](#)
  - [Release notes](#)
  - [Security notes](#)
- **visionOS 2**
  - [Announcement](#)
  - [Product page](#)
  - [Release notes](#)
  - [Enterprise notes](#)
  - [Security notes](#)
- **tvOS 18**
  - [Announcement](#)
  - [Release notes](#)
  - [Security notes](#)
- **HomePod Software 18**
  - [Release notes](#)

I particularly recommend the PDF feature lists for Sequoia, iOS 18, and iPadOS 18 because they're easier to scan than Apple's otherwise lovely product pages. Plus, they may be more comprehensive, and I often most appreciate the little features that don't merit mention on the product pages.

Finally, congratulations to our friends Jason Snell and Dan Moren of [Six Colors](#) on their site's [tenth anniversary](#). To celebrate, allow me to recommend their reviews of [macOS 15 Sequoia](#), [iOS 18](#), [iPadOS 18](#), and [Collections in Photos](#).

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## SMMUG Member Bits & Bytes



- **SMMUG is looking for a webmaster.** This volunteer job requires a in-depth knowledge of Word Press. The webmaster will report to the Board, but does not need to be a member of SMMUG. Please let one of the Board officers know IF YOU KNOW ANYONE who might be interested in the job. It could be a high school or college student who would like to bolster a resume.
- **Door prizes for the October meeting will be:** an Anker 15W pocket-sized 3-in-1 charger, a phone holder and a \$10 Apple gift card.. Winners must have a current membership for 2024 and be present at the Zoom or in-person meeting. Awarding of door prizes will no longer take place using e-mail responses. The door prize in December will be an OWC USB-c Travel Dock.
- **Treasurer's Report for September 2024:** Funds in the Checking, Savings and PayPal account total \$2,754.28. An application has been made to PayPal to qualify using our 501(c)(3) status for a fee reduction.



# Gary Rosenzweig's Tips



Gary is a good friend of SMMUG and has been a General Meeting presenter several times. He has graciously given SMMUG permission to use some of his content in our newsletter.

Each wonderful video on **MacMost** is brought to you ad-free thanks to its supporters! **Learn about the Patreon campaign and find out how you can join Club MacMost!** For \$5 per month you can become a member. Members of Club MacMost have access to member-only videos, extra posts & tips, and get discounts on MacMost courses.

Gary keeps a list of his recommendations for Backup programs, Software, Microphones, Displays and Accessories at: [https://macmost.com/recommendations?awt\\_a=2P.a&awt\\_l=aitain&awt\\_m=K1F44ZIS4h8I.a](https://macmost.com/recommendations?awt_a=2P.a&awt_l=aitain&awt_m=K1F44ZIS4h8I.a)

Here's a list of descriptions and links to some of Gary's recent videos, available to all, that you may find interesting.

## • Signing PDF Documents on Your Mac

No, you *don't* have to Print-Sign-Scan to get that PDF endorsed, even if you need multiple signatures! Gary shows you several different ways to get this job done without a printer: [https://macmost.com/signing-pdf-documents-on-your-mac.html?awt\\_a=2P.a&awt\\_l=aitain&awt\\_m=J\\_HPdfizah8I.a&nclcx](https://macmost.com/signing-pdf-documents-on-your-mac.html?awt_a=2P.a&awt_l=aitain&awt_m=J_HPdfizah8I.a&nclcx)

## • What's New in Mac OS Sequoia

Gary guides you through some of the interesting new features of the latest Mac OS, Sequoia - Window tiling commands, Math Notes, Audio Transcriptions, iPhone Mirroring and more!

[https://macmost.com/whats-new-in-macos-sequoia.html?awt\\_a=2P.a&awt\\_l=aitain&awt\\_m=IxVXAGh\\_0h8I.a&nclcx](https://macmost.com/whats-new-in-macos-sequoia.html?awt_a=2P.a&awt_l=aitain&awt_m=IxVXAGh_0h8I.a&nclcx)



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## • How to Use the Music App on Your Mac Without an Apple Music Subscription

You can ignore the Music App, you can disable it, you can still rip CDs. If you're confused about the difference between the Music app and Apple Music and don't want to pay for songs you've already paid for, take a look at this video.

[https://macmost.com/how-to-use-the-music-app-on-your-mac-without-subscribing-to-apple-music.html?awt\\_a=2P.a&awt\\_l=aitain&awt\\_m=J\\_HPdfizah8I.a&nclcx](https://macmost.com/how-to-use-the-music-app-on-your-mac-without-subscribing-to-apple-music.html?awt_a=2P.a&awt_l=aitain&awt_m=J_HPdfizah8I.a&nclcx)

## • 12 New Things to Try in iOS 18

Lots of new features in iOS 18, even before you consider Apple Intelligence. Check out Gary's video giving you some great tips.

[https://macmost.com/12-new-things-to-try-in-ios-18.html?awt\\_a=2P.a&awt\\_l=aitain&awt\\_m=IxVXAGh\\_0h8I.a&nclcx](https://macmost.com/12-new-things-to-try-in-ios-18.html?awt_a=2P.a&awt_l=aitain&awt_m=IxVXAGh_0h8I.a&nclcx)

## • 10 Creative Uses for Tables in Pages

In this video, Gary shows you how to use the table function in Pages to make game boards, graph paper, alphabetical lists and more!

[https://macmost.com/10-creative-uses-for-tables-in-pages.html?awt\\_a=2P.a&awt\\_l=aitain&awt\\_m=K5NOSkCH8h8I.a&nclcx](https://macmost.com/10-creative-uses-for-tables-in-pages.html?awt_a=2P.a&awt_l=aitain&awt_m=K5NOSkCH8h8I.a&nclcx)

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# Update on Apple Intelligence

Notes from SMMUG President JIM JOHNSON

Apple Intelligence is a set of AI-powered features available on select Apple devices starting this fall. It includes capabilities such as composing text and emails, automating actions across various apps, generating images, summarizing documents and texts, and more. It will be available on iPhone 15 Pro, iPhone 15 Pro Max, any iPhone 16 model, iPads with an M-series chip, and Macs with an M-series chip. It's currently available as a beta on iOS 18.1, iPadOS 18.1, and macOS Sequoia 15.1, with a full release expected later this year.

Mike Marus was the first to notice that the iPhone 15 Pro and Pro Max were no longer available in the Apple Store once the iPhone 16 series was released. The few new iPhone 16 features over the iPhone 15 Pro and Pro Max are not worth the money or the jump if you already have the 15 Pro series phones. For those with the base model 15 or an earlier version and who want to take advantage of Apple Intelligence, then the 16 series could be a good option to experience Apple Intelligence with all the improvements in the cameras and speed and reliability increases.

Apple Intelligence requires a Neural Engine capable of performing at least 11 trillion operations per second, which is available in the M1 chip and later models. Devices need at least 8GB of RAM to run Apple Intelligence smoothly.

These are the Apple Intelligence features you will be able to take advantage of when upgrading to a compatible iPhone:

**Writing Tools:** These tools help with proofreading for spelling and grammar errors, rewriting text to adjust the tone, and summarizing any text. They are integrated throughout the operating system, making them accessible wherever text input is possible.

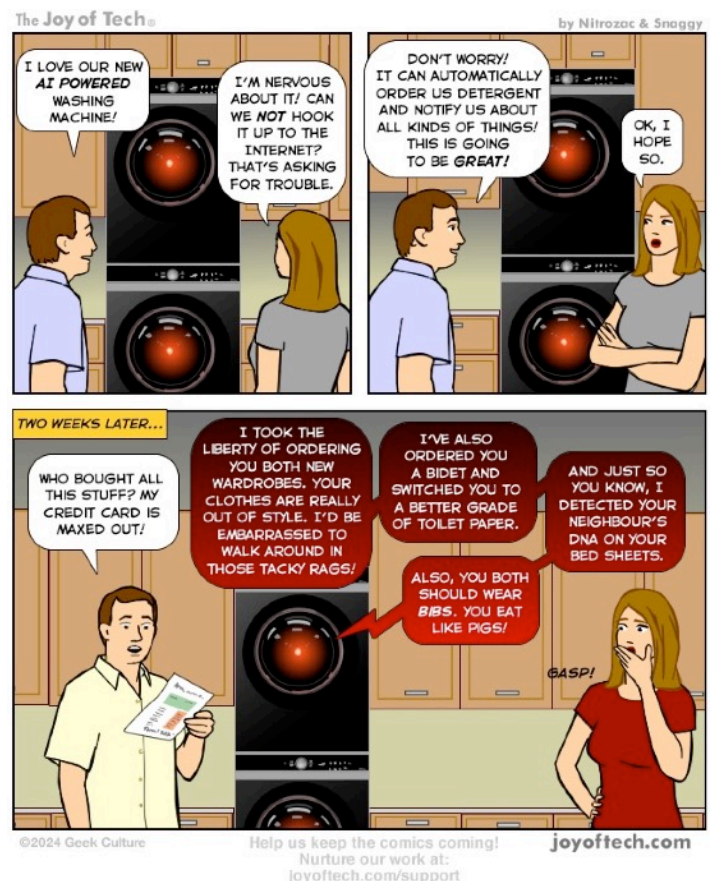
**Siri Enhancements:** Siri features a refreshed design with a glowing effect around the edges of the display when activated. It includes a new "Type to Siri" option for text-based interactions without speaking and can maintain context across multiple requests. Siri also integrates with Apple's product knowledge and support database to answer many questions about your devices.

**Image Tools:** Features like Image Playground and Genmoji allow users to create original images via a simple typed description. These will be available in later updates to iOS 18.

**Privacy:** Apple Intelligence is designed to protect your privacy at every step. It uses on-device processing and Private Cloud Compute to handle more complex requests without collecting personal information.

Apple Intelligence's focus on on-device (edge) processing and privacy is both a strength and a limitation, as it lacks the integration, third-party support, and developer tools needed to compete with cloud-based AI platforms. In addition, Apple's edge computing model faces challenges in balancing performance, parameter volume, memory, and power consumption, which leads to higher computational costs and increased resource consumption. Edge devices (iPhones using Apple Intelligence) have limited processing capabilities, making them ill-suited for complex information processing tasks without the support of more robust cloud-based models.

Apple must address all complications arising from on-device AI processing before releasing iOS 18.1 and macOS 15.1 into the wild. As mentioned above, if you're brave like your Presidente (replace "brave" with any other adjective that comes to mind), and you have an iPhone 15 Pro or higher, give the betas a shot to gain insight into what's coming down the road for Apple in the AI arena.



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# TipBITS: Use Trackpad Mode When Editing Text on the iPhone and iPad

by ADAM ENGST

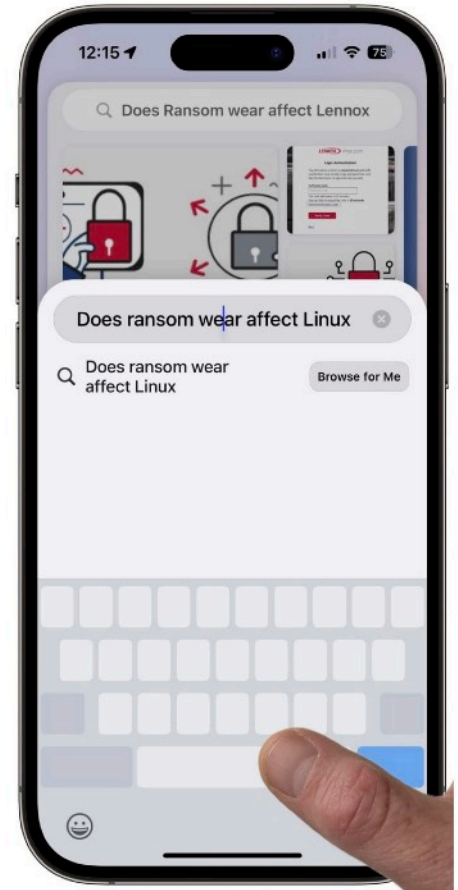
At a recent party, a friend watched me use [Arc Search](#) on my iPhone by tapping a widget and dictating a search, but iOS guessed wrong on an easily confused word. Slightly embarrassed at the voice recognition failure, I used trackpad mode to position the insertion point to tweak the incorrect word. My friend was amazed, partly by Arc Search's results but more because she had long struggled with positioning the insertion point on the iPhone. No one had ever told her about trackpad mode.

Trackpad mode isn't a secret; it has been around for years. Apple introduced it in 2015 with iOS 9 on iPhones with 3D Touch capabilities, enabling you to press the keyboard firmly to turn it into a trackpad. With iOS 12, Apple brought trackpad mode to all devices, embedding it in the Space bar on the keyboard, and it has been available ever since. But if you didn't hear about it back then, or if you got started with an iPhone more recently, like my friend, how would you ever discover it?

If that's you, now you know—just touch and hold the Space bar on the iPhone or iPad keyboard to turn the entire keyboard area into a mini trackpad. (You'll know you're in it when the key labels disappear.) Keep your finger down and move it around to reposition the insertion point in the text you're editing. On the iPad, you can also put two fingers down on the keyboard to put it into trackpad mode.

Scrolling can be quirky. If the text you want to edit is out of sight to the left or right in a single-line field, you can usually push the insertion point past an edge to scroll. With multiple screenfuls of text in apps like Notes or Pages, you can try pulling down to scroll, but my experience is that you'll only move a line or two at most. Instead, to scroll while moving the insertion point, touch and hold in the text and then pull down (or push up) while keeping your finger down.

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Yes, that's my thumb.

## Does Limiting an iPhone's Battery Charging to 80% Increase Lifespan?

by ADAM ENGST

Thanks to Juli Clover of MacRumors for her year-long experiment to test whether preventing an iPhone 15 Pro Max from charging above 80% would increase battery longevity. With the iPhone 15 line, [Apple added a feature](#) that allows users to prevent their iPhones from charging over a certain percentage. Clover locked the maximum charge at 80% for the past year and has now [reported her findings](#):

My iPhone 15 Pro Max battery level is currently at 94 percent with 299 cycles. For a lot of 2024, my battery level stayed above 97 percent, but it started dropping more rapidly over the last couple of months.

How much difference did it make? Several of her colleagues at MacRumors with the same iPhone model who charged normally reported slightly lower capacity numbers (87% for 329 cycles and 90% for 271 cycles), suggesting that limiting the maximum charge provided a slight benefit.



(Generally speaking, the more cycles a battery has experienced, the lower its maximum capacity. For reference, Apple defines a charge cycle as using an amount that represents 100% of your battery's capacity, regardless of how it's used over time.)

Curious, I checked Settings > Battery > Battery Health on my iPhone 15 Pro, too, and [Glenn Fleishman](#), [Nick Heer](#), and [John Gruber](#) have also reported the following capacities on iPhone 15 Pros with normal charging:

- John Gruber: 89% with 344 cycles
- Glenn Fleishman: 91% with 411 cycles
- Adam Engst: 92% with 346 cycles
- Nick Heer: 95% with 273 cycles

This anecdotal data suggests that the impact of limiting the maximum charge to 80% may be minor over a one-year period. It's possible that the benefit would be seen only after two or three years, when the iPhone might otherwise need a battery replacement. Apple presumably has better data that suggests that limiting maximum charge might be worth considering for those prioritizing battery longevity over convenience.

The problem with drawing conclusions about battery longevity is that it's a [multi-variable scenario](#). A few that come to mind include:

- Batteries are analog chemical systems, so no two batteries will be identical.
- Heat is a major contributor to battery degradation, so leaving an iPhone in a hot car while at the beach can speed up this process.
- The charging method may play a role, partly because wireless charging generates more heat. For instance, Juli Clover's charging was roughly 70/30 split between wired USB-C charging and wireless MagSafe charging, whereas the majority of my iPhone 15 Pro's charging was via MagSafe (see "[Going All in on MagSafe for the iPhone in the Office, Bedroom, and Car](#)," 6 May 2024). If you're concerned about battery longevity, favor wired charging when possible.
- Charging habits affect battery longevity. The existence of the maximum charging and Optimized Battery Charging options highlights the extent to which lithium-ion batteries don't like being charged to 100% and held there. They also don't like being completely discharged, so try to avoid that.

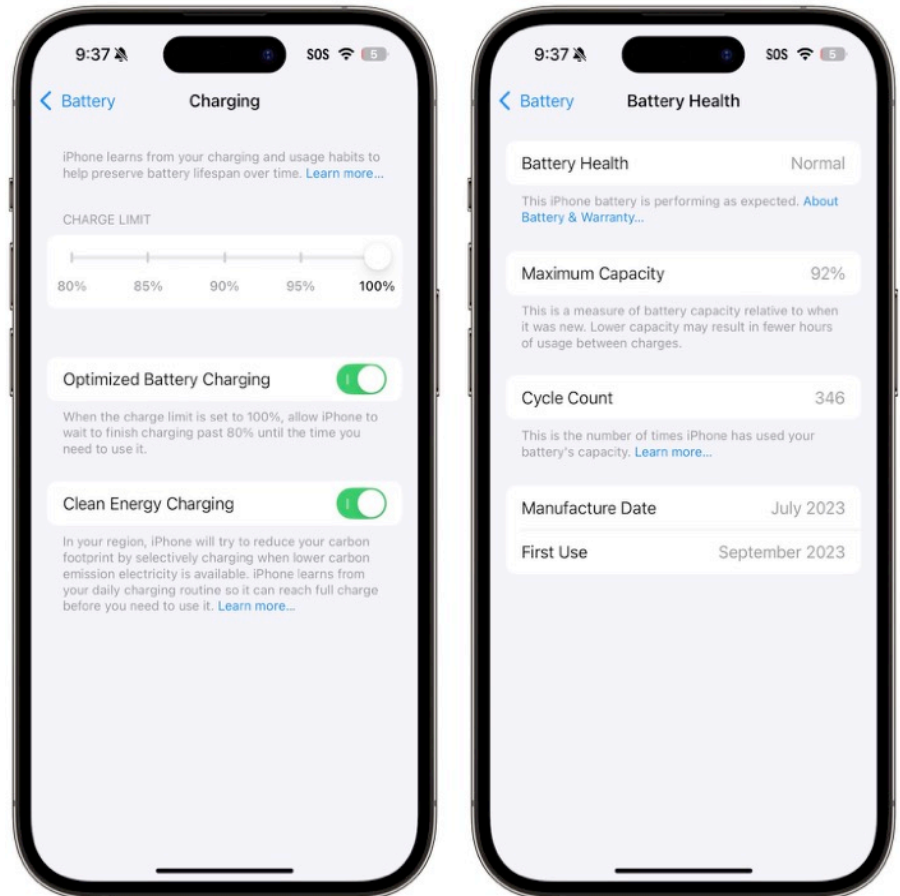
If you believe intentionally foregoing the top 20% of an iPhone's charge could be awkward, you aren't wrong. Juli Clover wrote:

"I left my iPhone at that 80 percent limit and at no point turned the setting off or tweaked it. There were some days when I ran out of battery because I was without a charger for most of the day, and there were other times that I had to bring a battery along to make sure I didn't run out of power. It wasn't always convenient to keep it at 80 percent, but there were days when it didn't have too much of an impact."

My takeaway is that it's seldom worth trying to outthink what Apple has done in iOS to optimize battery charging. For users who prefer convenience without sacrificing much battery longevity, Optimized Battery Charging automatically holds the charge at 80% and finishes only when necessary, making it a good alternative to locking the maximum charge at 80%. Turn it on in Settings > Battery > Charging.

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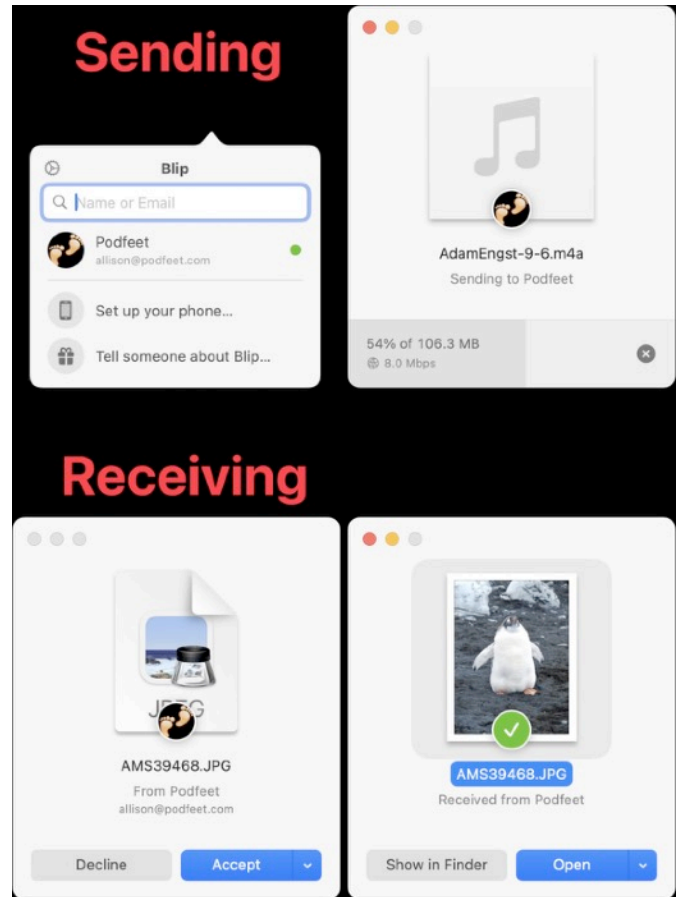


## AppBITS: Use Blip to Send Large Files Directly

by ADAM ENGST

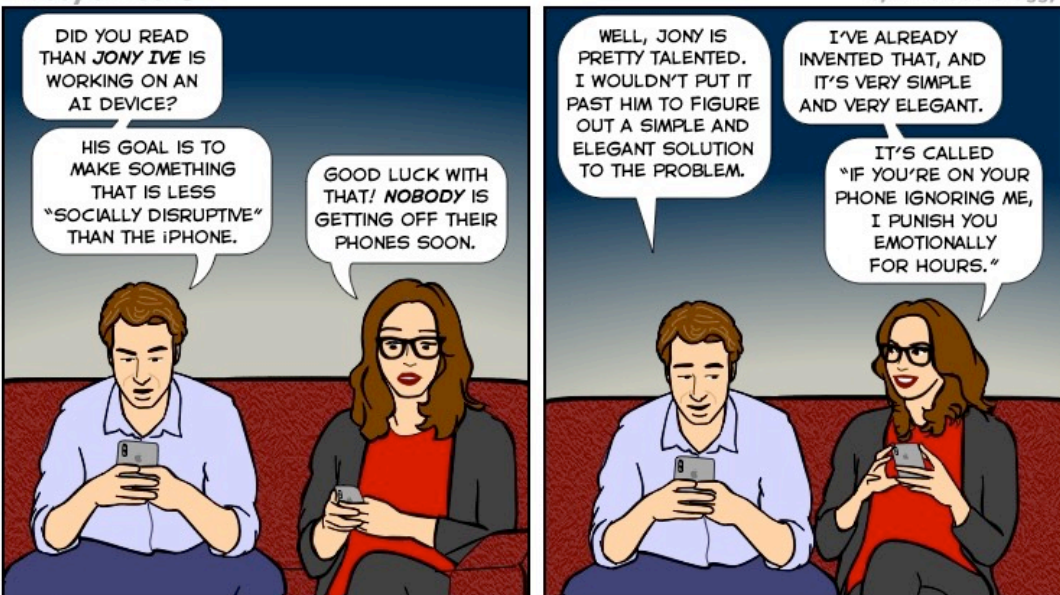
Each month, when I do a podcast with Allison Sheridan (see “[Adam Engst Joining CCATP Podcast Regularly](#),” 12 July 2024), she asks me to record my side of the conversation in QuickTime Player. That generates an M4A audio file that’s over 100 MB, large enough that it’s problematic to send to her using email or Messages. Services like iCloud Drive, Dropbox, and Google Drive would work, but she showed me something more straightforward and perfect for the job: [Blip](#). Instead of uploading to a shared location for later download, Blip transfers the file directly from my Mac to hers in a single step. I drag the file from the Finder to the Blip icon in my menu bar, pause briefly for the menu to appear, and drop it on her name in the list. (I could also choose her name from the list to display a window onto which I could drop files.) Then her copy of Blip asks if she wants to accept the file, and it transfers at the full speed of the connection between us.

There are no intermediate servers involved, files can be of unlimited size, it can send folders without archiving them first, it doesn’t mess with photo or video quality, and it encrypts files in transit. Blip even resumes automatically after network interruptions. When used between people on a local network, it bypasses the Internet entirely. Like AirDrop, Blip can share files quickly between your own devices, but it works in macOS, iOS, iPadOS, and Android, with Windows and Linux on the roadmap. Blip is free for now, and the team hopes to keep it free for personal use. In response to the FAQ “Will Blip show me ads?” the developers respond, “Absolutely not, don’t be silly ;-)” Blip requires a minimum of macOS 12.1 Monterey, iOS/iPadOS 15, or Android 9.



### The Joy of Tech

by Nitrozac & Snaggy



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## About Us

The Silicon Mountain Macintosh User Group, Inc. (a nonprofit educational corporation) was formed in Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1985, and is one of the oldest Macintosh User Groups in the United States. SMMUG, Inc. is dedicated to helping members enjoy and learn about their Macintosh computer, iPhone and iPad devices.

Club membership is open to everyone and you are cordially invited to visit our free monthly General Meeting (in-person or over Zoom) on the second Monday of each month, at 6:45 PM. For those new to the Apple Universe, we have a Question & Answer session at 5:45 PM prior to the general meeting, where our collective expertise can help answer your questions.

All members receive a quarterly newsletter, published on [our web site](#), and can participate in the monthly door prize drawing. Members may also participate in Special Interest Group meetings held monthly except August & December. Each member gets one vote during annual Officer Elections. No corporate memberships are granted.

Our officers are volunteers and receive no pay. All funds raised are used for the cost of operating the club and its meetings.

## Membership Application Form

**Membership entitles you to access to our online forums, participation in prize drawings, and access to the bargains in the members area of the ~~SMMUG~~ website at [www.smmug.org](http://www.smmug.org). SMMUG renewal membership dues (\$30) apply to the calendar year and are paid each December for the following year. Use the following table for **NEW MEMBERSHIP ONLY**:**

JAN 1 to MAR 31 - \$30.00

APR 1 to JUN 30 - \$20.00

JUL 1 to SEPT 30 - \$15.00

OCT 1 to DEC 31 - \$10.00

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