Prep & Wipe Your iOS Device

by Mike Sullivan | Cove Apple Club | December 9, 2015 | Some Rights Reserved

If you're upgrading your iPhone or iPad, whether it's to hand it down to a friend or relative or sell it, it's important to both completely wipe the device of all of your data, and prepare your device for the new owner.

These steps will guide you through the process, giving you peace-of-mind that all your data is erased and giving the new owner a "out-of-the-box experience" exactly as if they had bought the device new from Apple.

iPhone only: If you own an Apple watch that is paired to your iPhone, unpair Apple Watch

1. Keep your Apple Watch and iPhone close together as you unpair them.

2. Open the Watch app on your iPhone.

3. Tap the My Watch tab, tap Apple Watch, then tap Unpair Apple Watch.

4. Tap again to confirm. You might need to enter your Apple ID password to disable Activation Lock.

Your iPhone will create a new backup of your Apple Watch before erasing all content and settings on your Apple Watch. You can use the backup to restore a new Apple Watch. After your Apple Watch unpairs, you'll see the Start Pairing message.

Backup your device to iCloud and/or iTunes

You should make absolutely sure you have a current (last 24 hours!) backup of your iPhone or iPad before you proceed.

Apple provides two easy ways to backup your iOS device: via iCloud (automatic, via Wi-Fi every night when your device is asleep, connected to Wi-Fi and plugged in to power), or via iTunes (manually, by connecting your device to your Mac or Windows PC with the USB charge/sync cable.

I recommend the iCloud approach. Once you enable it, it's automatic, so you never forget to backup. Plus, the backup copy is kept in Apple's cloud datacenters, so even if your house burns down, you still have a current backup to rely on.

These steps assume you are using the iCloud backup. You can turn on iCloud backup in Settings ➔ iCloud ➔ Backup ➔ iCloud Backup ➔ On.

To force an iCloud backup before you proceed, follow these steps:

1. Make sure your device is connected to Wi-Fi and has a full battery, or plug it into power with the charge/sync cable.

2. Tap Settings.

3. Tap iCloud, then scroll down to Backup

4. Tap Backup.

5. Confirm that iCloud Backup is On. If not, tap iCloud Backup to turn it on.

6. Tap Backup Now.

7. Wait for the iCloud backup to complete.

For more information on backing up your iOS device to iTunes or iCloud, see

https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT203977

iPhone only: backup your voicemail messages

If you have important voicemail messages you want to keep, you can export them from your iPhone. See the Apple Support article link at the bottom of Page 2 for details.

Confirm your Apple ID and email credentials

Make **SURE** you know your **Apple ID and Apple ID password**.

Your Apple ID and password are what you use in all your interactions with Apple for purchases on the App Store, iTunes, Apple Support, the Apple Store Online, and your iCloud account.

1. *On your Mac or PC*, open your Web browser and go to **appleid.apple.com**

2. Sign in with your Apple ID and password.

3. If you can't remember your Apple ID or password, visit **iforgot.apple.com** to recover it.

4. *On your Mac or PC*, login to your email account's Webmail interface. For iCloud email addresses, go to **icloud.com**; for Gmail, AOL, Hotmail, Yahoo! or other email providers, go to the homepage of the email service and login.

Sign out of all online services and accounts

1. On your iOS device, tap Settings
2. Tap iCloud, then scroll to the bottom
3. Tap Sign Out. If you have Find My iPhone/iPad enabled, you will be asked for your Apple ID password or device passcode
4. After you have signed out, press the Home button
5. Tap App Store, then scroll to the bottom of the Featured tab
6. Tap on your Apple ID, then tap Sign Out
7. Press the Home button
8. Sign out of any other connected services or apps you use. Examples include Dropbox, Evernote, Waze, Gmail, Facebook, etc. Use the specific app for each service to sign out of each one.

Wipe the device

1. Tap Settings.
2. Tap General, then scroll down to Reset.
3. Tap Reset.
4. Tap Erase All Content & Settings, then confirm. You may be asked to enter your device passcode.
5. The wipe procedure will begin, and a series of progress bars will be displayed.
6. The device will restart when the wipe is complete.
7. When you see the white "Hello" screen, power off the device by holding down the Sleep/Wake switch for 5 seconds, then swipe to Turn Off.

For iPhone or iPad with Cellular: Remove & destroy the SIM card

1. With the device powered OFF (not just asleep), use a paperclip or thumbtack to eject the SIM card by inserting it into the SIM card ejector hole. See **https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201337** for information on locating and ejecting the SIM card on your specific device.
2. Replace the SIM card tray.
3. Shred or destroy the SIM card.

Update your Apple Support Profile

Apple provides an easy way for you to keep a list of all your Apple gear, which makes getting support and repairs for your products much quicker. Plus, it's a one-stop destination for all your product serial numbers and configurations, which could come in handy in case of loss or theft.

1. Visit **supportprofile.apple.com** and sign in with your Apple ID and password.
2. Find the device you're giving up and delete it from your account.
3. Now's a good time to make sure all your other Apple gear is listed.

For more information:

What to do before selling or giving away your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch

> **https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201351**

How to save Voicemail messages on your iPhone

> **https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT205012**

Unpair your Apple Watch and iPhone

> **https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204568**

How to back up your devices using iCloud or iTunes

> **https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT203977**