THE USEFUL TECH

The iPhone Travel Toolkit

Thirty small, easy-to-miss iPhone tricks that quietly smooth out a trip, plus a pre-flight checklist to set them all up before you leave.

The Useful Media Co.
TRAVEL LIGHT, TRAVEL SMART

Free companion guide

START HERE

Before you fly

Ten minutes of setup at home saves you the scramble at the gate. Run through this the night before, and every trick in this guide is ready when you land.

- [ ] **Scan your documents into Files**
  Passport, visa, insurance, and bookings in one offline folder, not lost in Photos.

- [ ] **Fill in your Medical ID**
  Key details and an emergency contact a stranger can open from your lock screen.

- [ ] **Install and pre-load your eSIM**
  Buy the local data plan before you fly, ready to switch on the moment you land.

- [ ] **Add every ticket to Wallet**
  Boarding passes and event tickets surface on your lock screen when you need them.

- [ ] **Download your maps offline**
  Save the area in Apple Maps or Google Maps so navigation works with no signal.

- [ ] **Turn on Calculator Convert**
  Set your home and destination currency so prices stop needing mental math.

- [ ] **Set up a Travel Focus**
  Choose who and what can reach you, so a work ping doesn't ambush your holiday.

- [ ] **Download entertainment offline**
  Music, podcasts, and shows for the flight and the dead zones in between.

THE TOOLKIT

On the move

GETTING AROUND & STAYING CONNECTED

Text a flight number

Type it into Messages with a space, tap it, and get a live map with gate, delays, and baggage claim. Share it and family can track the flight too.

Two eSIMs at once

Modern iPhones hold several. Run local data on one and keep your home number live on the other, no SIM-swapping over a sink.

Express Transit in Wallet

Add a transit card like Suica, Oyster, or Navigo and tap to ride without unlocking or even waking the phone.

Apple Maps Guides

Curated city guides built with publishers like Time Out, for a fast shortlist of where to eat and go.

Location-based Reminders

"Remind me when I leave the hotel" so you never leave the passport in the room safe.

TALKING TO LOCALS

AirPods Live Translation

Someone speaks to you in another language and you hear it in your ear, hands-free. Runs on-device with offline language packs. (iOS 26)

Live Translation on calls and texts

Real-time translation built into Messages, Phone, and FaceTime, for booking a foreign hotel or restaurant. (iOS 26)

Camera translate

Point the camera at a menu or sign, tap Live Text, then Translate. No app, no typing.

Conversation Mode

Lay the phone between you and someone in the Translate app and it works both directions, out loud.

Paperwork & money

DOCUMENTS & THE AIRPORT

iOS 26 boarding passes

On supported airlines, the pass becomes a live tracker with gate updates, an in-airport map, and a Track Luggage button.

Share your AirTag with the airline

If a bag goes missing, share its Find My location with the airline to help recover it.

A shared packing note

One Note or Reminders list you and your travel partner both edit, synced across every device.

Save pages for offline

Send booking pages to your Reading List and read them with no connection.

MONEY

Calculator is a converter

Turn on Convert for live exchange rates, plus temperature, weight, distance, and speed.

Spotlight converts even faster

Swipe down and type "3000 JPY" or "500 INR in AUD" for an instant answer.

The sneaky ones

THE SNEAKY COMFORT TRICKS

Vehicle Motion Cues

Animated dots that cut motion sickness when you read in a car, train, or plane. Hidden in Accessibility, Motion.

Measure app for luggage

Check whether a bag fits carry-on limits before you're at the gate. Doubles as a spirit level.

Visual Look Up

Photograph a landmark, dish, or plant, swipe up, and your iPhone names it for you.

Reduce White Point

Dim the screen below the normal minimum, for night flights and shared hotel rooms.

Live Listen

Leave your iPhone near a soft-spoken tour guide and hear them clearly through your AirPods.

Guided Access

Lock the phone to a single app before handing it to a child on a flight.

Magnifier

Read tiny menus in dim restaurants and zoom in on distant signs.

Share Wi-Fi by proximity

Hold two iPhones close to pass a hotel Wi-Fi password without reading a 20-character code.

Peace of mind

SAFETY & PEACE OF MIND

Check In

Have your iPhone tell a friend when you've arrived, and alert them if you don't.

Off-grid via satellite

Send messages, trigger Emergency SOS, and share your location with no signal. (iPhone 14 and newer)

Medical ID on the lock screen

Allergies, medications, and an emergency contact a responder can see without your passcode.

Find My People

Add your travel group so you can find each other in a crowded market or festival.

Border privacy options

Lockdown Mode, the hidden and locked Photos album, and erase-after-10-failed-passcodes for higher-risk crossings.

ONE LAST THING

The best trips barely touch the screen.

Every trick in here earns its place by doing its small job and getting out of your way, so your phone handles the friction and you get to pay attention to the trip itself. Set them up once, and they follow you on every journey after this one.

Want more where this came from?

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