

How to Use Your iPhone as a Personal Hotspot for Your MacBook



Most of the time, your MacBook connects to the internet through Wi-Fi at home, at work, or in a public place. But what happens when Wi-Fi isn't available? If your iPhone has a cellular data connection, you may already have an internet connection sitting in your pocket.

Apple calls this feature **Personal Hotspot**. It allows your iPhone to share its cellular internet connection with your MacBook—or with another computer, tablet, or Wi-Fi device. It can be especially useful while traveling, during a home internet outage, or whenever you need to get your MacBook online and there is no trustworthy Wi-Fi network nearby.

Turn On Personal Hotspot on Your iPhone

On an iPhone running iOS 17 or later, open **Settings** and tap **Cellular** (called **Mobile Data** in some regions). Select **Personal Hotspot**, then turn on **Allow Others to Join**.

You will also see a **Wi-Fi Password** on this screen. This is the password another device may need in order to use your iPhone's internet connection. You can change it if you want something easier to type, but choose a password that someone nearby cannot easily guess.

If your MacBook has difficulty finding or maintaining the connection, try turning on **Maximize Compatibility**. This may improve compatibility with some devices, although it can reduce hotspot performance.

Connect Your MacBook

Now move to your MacBook. Click the **Wi-Fi** symbol in the menu bar at the upper-right corner of the screen. Your iPhone should appear among the available networks or under Personal Hotspots. Select the iPhone and, if prompted, enter the hotspot password shown on your iPhone.

After a few seconds, the MacBook should be online using the iPhone's cellular connection. Your iPhone will also indicate that another device is using its Personal Hotspot.

Once your MacBook and iPhone have been connected successfully, Apple's **Instant Hotspot** features may make subsequent connections even easier, particularly when both devices use the same Apple Account. Your Mac may be able to reconnect to the iPhone without requiring you to enter the password again.

Remember: You're Using Cellular Data

A Personal Hotspot is convenient, but it isn't free Wi-Fi. Your MacBook's internet activity is being carried over your iPhone's cellular data plan. Streaming movies, downloading large files, installing software updates, and synchronizing large photo libraries can consume a substantial amount of data. Your cellular carrier may also impose separate limits or restrictions on hotspot use.

The hotspot also uses additional iPhone battery power, so for extended sessions it's a good idea to plug the phone into a charger.

A Handy Tool When Wi-Fi Isn't Available

Personal Hotspot is one of those iPhone features you may rarely need—but when you do, it can be invaluable. A few taps can transform your iPhone into a small wireless router and give your MacBook an internet connection almost anywhere you have cellular service.

For a visual demonstration, see this [YouTube video](#).