GENERAL

how to transfer contacts from one iphone to another

Published: September 3, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Introduction

Moving from one iPhone to another can feel like a daunting task, especially when you're worried about losing precious memories, photos, and most importantly, contacts. Whether you're upgrading to the latest iPhone model, switching to a different device after a loss, or simply setting up a new phone for a family member, the process of transferring contacts can seem overwhelming. The good news is that Apple provides several reliable, built in methods to ensure that your address book travels smoothly from one device to another. In this guide, we'll walk through the most common ways to **transfer contacts from one iPhone to another**, cover troubleshooting tips, and share best practices to keep your data safe and organized.

Why You Might Need to Transfer Contacts

Before diving into the technical steps, it's useful to understand the scenarios that often require contact migration:

- Upgrading to a New iPhone: Moving from an iPhone 8 to an iPhone 15, for instance, means your contacts should be on the new device to keep communication seamless.
- Replacing a Lost or Damaged Phone: If your iPhone was stolen or broken, you'll want to restore your contacts to a fresh device.
- Setting Up a Family Member's Phone: Parents might need to transfer their own contacts to a child's phone, or vice versa.
- Switching Between iOS Versions: When you update to the latest iOS, the system may prompt you to migrate data.
- Backing Up for Peace of Mind: Regular backups that include contacts protect against accidental deletion.

In each case, keeping your contacts intact is essential for staying connected with friends, family, and business associates.

Pre Transfer Checklist

Before you start, make sure you're ready:

1. Update iOS: Ensure both the source and destination iPhones are running the latest iOS version to avoid compatibility issues.
2. Check Storage: The new device should have enough free space for all contacts and any additional data you plan to transfer.
3. Backup Your Source Phone: Even though the transfer methods are reliable, having a recent backup adds an extra layer of safety.
4. Sign In With the Same Apple ID: If you're using iCloud or iTunes/Finder, the same Apple ID on both devices simplifies the process.

Method 1: Using iCloud to Sync Contacts

iCloud is Apple's cloud based service that automatically syncs contacts, photos, and more across all devices tied to the same Apple ID. This is the most straightforward and wireless way to move contacts.

Step by Step Guide

1. Enable Contacts Sync on the Old iPhone:

   Open Settings.
2. Tap your name at the top, then select iCloud.
3. Toggle the Contacts switch to green (on).

1. During initial setup, choose to restore from iCloud backup or simply sign in with the same Apple ID.
2. If you're already using the new phone, go to Settings !' your name !' iCloud and toggle Contacts on.

Pros and Cons

- Pros: No cables, works over Wi Fi, keeps contacts updated automatically.
- Cons: Requires a stable internet connection; large contact lists may take time to upload/download.

Method 2: Using iTunes or Finder (Computer Backup)

For users who prefer a local backup, iTunes (macOS Mojave and earlier) or Finder (macOS Catalina and newer) offers a reliable way to transfer contacts via a computer. This method is handy if you're in an area with limited internet or if you simply want a full backup.

Step by Step Guide

1. Connect the Old iPhone to Your Computer: Use a Lightning cable and open iTunes/Finder.
2. Back Up the Device:

   Select the device icon.
3. Choose Back Up Now (ensure "Encrypt local backup" is checked if you want to save passwords).

1. Select the new device.
2. Choose Restore Backup and pick the most recent backup.

Pros and Cons

- Pros: Works offline, creates a full snapshot of your phone, useful for restoring other data.
- Cons: Requires a computer, cables, and sufficient storage space on the backup drive.

Method 3: Quick Start (Direct iPhone to iPhone Transfer)

Apple's Quick Start feature, introduced in iOS 11, allows you to transfer all data—including contacts—directly from one iPhone to another via a secure wireless connection. This method is ideal for a seamless handoff without external devices.

Step by Step Guide

1. Turn On the New iPhone: Place it near the old device and follow the on screen setup prompts.
2. Use Your Apple ID: When prompted, authenticate with your Apple ID on both devices.
3. Set Up Face ID or Touch ID: The new phone will copy your biometric settings.
4. Choose Data Transfer Method: Select "Transfer from iPhone" and choose "All Data." The devices will establish a secure Wi Fi connection.
5. Wait for Completion: The transfer may take some time depending on the amount of data.
6. Finish Setup: Once the process completes, your contacts will be available on the new device.

Pros and Cons

- Pros: No cables, instant transfer, includes apps and settings.
- Cons: Requires both devices to be near each other, both running iOS 12.4 or later.

Method 4: Using the SIM Card (Legacy Option)

Although less common today, you can still copy contacts stored on a SIM card from one iPhone to another. This method works only if your contacts are saved directly to the SIM, not to iCloud or your Apple ID.

Step by Step Guide

1. Insert SIM into the Old iPhone: Ensure contacts are saved on the SIM.
2. Export SIM Contacts:

   Open Settings !' Contacts !' Import SIM Contacts.
3. Choose the SIM card and wait for the import to finish.

1. Open Settings !' Contacts !' Import SIM Contacts.
2. Confirm the transfer.

Pros and Cons

- Pros: Simple, no internet required.
- Cons: Limited to SIM stored contacts, not all contacts may be present.

Method 5: Using Third Party Apps

Several reputable apps can help you transfer contacts, especially when you need to move between different ecosystems or need advanced filtering. Popular options include **My Contacts Backup**, **CopyTrans**, and **iMazing**. These apps typically export contacts to a vCard file that can be imported into the new iPhone.

Step by Step Guide (Using My Contacts Backup)

1. Install the App on the Old iPhone: Download from the App Store.
2. Export Contacts: Open the app, tap Backup, and wait for the process to finish.
3. Email the Backup File: Use the app's Email option to send the .vcf file to your email address.
4. Open the Email on the New iPhone: Tap the attachment and choose Import All Contacts when prompted.
5. Verify Import: Check the Contacts app to ensure all entries were imported.

Pros and Cons

- Pros: Works even if you're switching to a non Apple device later; can filter contacts before export.
- Cons: Requires installing a third party app, potential privacy concerns, and may not sync with iCloud automatically.

Method 6: Using AirDrop (Selective Transfer)

AirDrop allows you to transfer individual contact cards from one iPhone to another without affecting the rest of your address book. This is useful if you only need to move a handful of contacts.

Step by Step Guide

1. Enable AirDrop on Both Devices: Swipe up (or down from the top right on newer models) to open Control Center, press and hold the network panel, then tap AirDrop and select Everyone or Contacts Only.

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