



An Extended Guide · No. 1124

iPhone 17 Pro Max

Last year's big-screen
Pro, made simple

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Hello, and welcome

The iPhone 17 Pro Max is a phone a great many people own and enjoy. This guide walks you through it in plain English — and, near the end, tells you honestly what to buy instead if you're shopping for a new one today.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I've spent 30+ years helping folks get comfortable with their technology — patiently, in plain language, and at their own pace. Think of this guide as me sitting at your kitchen table, pointing things out one at a time.

You do not have to read this all at once, and you certainly don't have to memorize it. Skip to whatever you need, keep it in the drawer with your appliance manuals, and know that a real person is only a phone call away.

★ How to use this guide

Each page stands on its own. Read one, try it on your phone, and come back for the next when you're ready. If a step ever feels fuzzy, that's on the writing — not on you — and you can always call me at (330) 200-8042.

What makes the iPhone 17 Pro Max special

Here are the things worth knowing, in plain English — no need to remember the fancy names.

Outstanding battery life

Apple called it the best battery life ever in an iPhone at its 2025 launch — up to about 39 hours of video. In plain terms, it rarely needs a mid-day charge.

A big, easy-to-read screen

At 6.9 inches it's a large screen that's wonderful for reading and video, especially at bigger text sizes.

Three cameras with real long-distance zoom

The same strong three-camera system as the 17 Pro, including a zoom lens that reaches far without losing much quality.

A quick tour of the buttons

Just a handful of buttons run the whole phone. Here's what each one does.

- The **side button** on the right turns the screen on and off and, held down, powers the phone off or calls for help.
- The **Action button** on the upper-left edge is a shortcut you can point at whatever you like — silence, the flashlight, the camera. I'm happy to set it to something useful for you.
- The **volume buttons** on the left make sounds louder or softer.
- The **charging port** on the bottom is the modern USB-C shape — the same kind of cable many newer gadgets use.

Everything else happens by tapping the glass with a fingertip. A single, gentle tap is all it takes — no need to press hard or tap twice.

! The little camera button on the edge

This phone has a slim button on the lower-right edge called Camera Control. A firm press opens the camera — handy, but it's easy to trigger by accident when you pick the phone up. If it keeps surprising you, I can turn it off in Settings, or just show you the gentle touch it likes. Nothing's broken if the camera pops open.

Setting it up, step by step

Setting up your iPhone 17 Pro Max takes about twenty minutes, most of which is the phone doing the work while you sip your coffee.

- 1. Charge it up.** Plug it in for a bit so it has plenty of power for setup.
- 2. Turn it on and follow along.** Hold the side button until the Apple logo appears, then follow the friendly on-screen prompts. They walk you through picking your language, joining your home Wi-Fi, and setting up Face ID (a look).
- 3. Sign in with your Apple Account.** This is the email and password that ties your photos, apps and purchases together. If you've had an iPhone or iPad before, use the same one. If you're brand-new to Apple, the phone helps you make one.

✓ Write down your Apple Account

Your Apple Account email and password are the keys to everything. Write them on paper and keep them somewhere safe at home. If you ever get stuck, that little note saves the day — and I can help you set it up so you're not guessing.

Bringing everything from your old phone

The good news: your photos, contacts and messages can come with you. You don't start from scratch.

From another iPhone, Apple's **Quick Start** makes this almost magical. Turn on the new phone and set it next to the old one. The old phone notices and asks if you'd like to set up the new one — say yes, hold the old phone's camera over the swirly pattern on the new screen, and let them talk. Keep both plugged in on Wi-Fi; it takes anywhere from twenty minutes to an hour.

Coming from an Android phone (a Samsung, Motorola, or the like)? Apple has a "Move to iOS" app that carries a lot across, though it isn't perfect. This is one of the most common calls I get — I'm glad to sit with you and make sure your contacts, photos and messages all make the trip.

★ Don't want to risk losing anything?

Moving to a new phone is my single most-requested house call. For a flat \$99 I'll come to you, move everything over, get your email and contacts working, and make sure nothing's left behind before I leave. Call (330) 200-8042.

Making the screen easy on your eyes

Your iPhone can make everything bigger and clearer. These are the settings I turn on for folks most often.

Open **Settings** (the gray gear), then **Display & Brightness**. Tap **Text Size** and drag the slider until the words feel comfortable. Turn on **Bold Text** if you'd like the letters a little heavier and easier to read.

For even bigger text, go to **Settings > Accessibility > Display & Text Size > Larger Text** and switch on **Larger Accessibility Sizes**. That pushes the text much bigger than the normal limit.

Prefer bigger buttons and icons everywhere? **Display Zoom** (in Display & Brightness) enlarges the whole layout with one tap.

✓ One handy shortcut: Magnifier

Your iPhone has a built-in magnifying glass. It turns the camera into a magnifier for reading small print — a menu, a pill bottle, a warranty card. I'll show you how to keep it one tap away.

Making it easy to hear

A few settings make calls, videos and alerts easier to hear — and easier to follow.

The **volume buttons** on the left side raise and lower sound. During a phone call, press the top volume button to make the caller louder.

Turn on **captions** — words on the screen for videos — in **Settings > Accessibility > Subtitles & Captioning**. Wonderful for TV shows and family videos when the sound alone is hard to catch.

It also works with many modern hearing aids (look for "Made for iPhone" hearing aids), sending call and video sound straight to them. If you use AirPods Pro earbuds, recent models can even act as a clinical-grade hearing aid and can amplify the voice of the person right in front of you.

✓ Live Listen turns your phone into a helper

There's a feature called Live Listen that uses the phone's microphone to send nearby sound to your AirPods or hearing aids — handy across a noisy room. It's a nice trick worth knowing; I'm glad to set it up.

Unlocking with a look — Face ID

This iPhone unlocks when you look at it — a feature Apple calls Face ID. No password to type every time.

During setup you slowly move your face in a circle so the phone can recognize you. After that, just raise the phone, glance at it, and swipe up. It works with glasses, and you can add a second look (with or without glasses) in **Settings > Face ID & Passcode > Set Up an Alternate Appearance**.

Face ID also fills in passwords and approves purchases, so you're not typing long passwords all day.

✓ Always set a passcode too

Face ID is the quick way in, but the phone also has a numbered passcode as a backup — for instance, first thing in the morning before you've got your glasses on. Pick something you'll remember, write it on paper, and keep it safe at home.

The Home Screen, arranged your way

The Home Screen is the wall of icons you see first. You can make it calmer and put your favorites front and center.

To move an app, press and hold it until the icons wiggle, then drag it where you want and let go. Put the apps you use most — Phone, Messages, Camera, Photos — on the very first screen, close to your thumb.

To tuck away apps you don't use, hold one, tap **Remove App**, then **Remove from Home Screen**. It's not deleted — it's just filed away in the App Library, a swipe to the left — so your main screen stays tidy.

You can also add big, easy-to-read **widgets** — a large clock, the weather, your calendar, a photo that changes through the day. Hold an empty spot, tap the **+**, and pick one.

★ Let's make it simple together

Setting up a clean, senior-friendly Home Screen — big icons, only the apps you use, a large clock — is one of my favorite things to do on a visit. It makes the whole phone feel calmer. Call (330) 200-8042.

Want it even simpler? Assistive Access

If a full iPhone feels like too much, Apple has a beautifully simple mode built right in — no extra app to buy.

It's called **Assistive Access**, in **Settings > Accessibility**. It strips the phone down to big buttons and large text, with just the essentials — Calls, Messages, Camera, Photos, Music — in a clean, easy layout that's hard to get lost in.

It's a wonderful option for someone who finds the regular screen busy or worrying, or who just wants the phone to do a few things well without any clutter. And you can switch back to the full layout any time.

✓ Not sure if it's right for you?

Assistive Access is easy to try and easy to undo. If you'd like to see what it looks like before committing, I can set it up, walk you through it, and switch it off again if it's not your cup of tea.

Talking instead of typing

Typing on glass can be fiddly. The good news: you can just talk, and the phone listens.

Dictation turns your voice into text. Any time the keyboard is on screen, tap the little **microphone** and speak — your words appear as you talk. Grand for texts, emails, and notes without hunting for letters.

Siri is the helper you speak to. Say "Siri" (or hold the side button) and ask plainly: "Call my daughter," "Set a timer for twenty minutes," "What's the weather tomorrow?" or "Remind me to take my pills at eight." It's often faster than tapping.

✓ Speak naturally

You don't need special robot words — talk to Siri the way you'd ask a person. And if it mishears, just try again; nothing breaks. This is one of the most useful habits to build on a new phone.

The camera, made simple

Taking a good photo is easier than you'd think — the phone does the hard part.

Three cameras on the back — wide, normal, and a strong zoom lens. Great for far-away subjects and clean everyday photos alike. Point and tap; extra controls are there if you want them.

To take a photo: open the **Camera** app, point it at what you want, and tap the big round button. That's it. To see the photo you just took, tap the little thumbnail in the corner — or open the **Photos** app any time; every picture lands there automatically.

Pinch two fingers apart on the screen to zoom in, together to zoom back out. Tap the screen where you want the phone to focus, and it'll sharpen right up.

! The little camera button on the edge

This phone has a slim button on the lower-right edge called Camera Control. A firm press opens the camera — handy, but it's easy to trigger by accident when you pick the phone up. If it keeps surprising you, I can turn it off in Settings, or just show you the gentle touch it likes. Nothing's broken if the camera pops open.

Battery and charging

Keeping your iPhone charged is simple once you know the handful of things that matter.

Apple rated it up to about 39 hours of video — one of the longest-lasting phones of its year, so mid-day charging is rarely needed.

It charges with a cable or wirelessly, and it has MagSafe, so a magnetic charger snaps onto the back and lines itself up.

A good habit: top it up overnight on your nightstand, the way you'd charge a hearing aid or a watch. You do not need to run it all the way down first — that's an old idea from old batteries. Charge whenever it's handy.

✓ **MagSafe makes charging easy**

Because this iPhone has MagSafe, a magnetic charger snaps onto the back and lines itself up — no squinting to center it on a pad. A MagSafe charger or stand on the nightstand is the easiest habit of all.

Staying safe from scams

Your new phone is safe. The people who try to trick you come in by text, email and phone call — and a few simple habits keep you well clear of them.

Apple will never call, text or email to say your account is locked, your iCloud was hacked, or you owe money. Those are scams, every time. Don't tap the link, don't call the number, don't read out a code. Just delete it.

Nobody legitimate needs a code you were texted. If someone on the phone asks you to read back a number Apple, your bank, or Amazon just sent you, that is a scam in progress. Hang up.

Slow down. Anyone rushing you — "act now," "don't tell anyone," "buy gift cards" — is a scammer. Real companies never work that way. It is always okay to hang up and check with someone you trust.

! A family safe-word beats any scam

Agree on a private word with your family. If a "grandchild" calls in trouble asking for money, ask for the safe word. A real loved one will know it; a scammer won't. And if anything feels off, call me at (330) 200-8042 — I would much rather answer a "silly" question than help clean up after a scam.

Calls, texts and video chats

The whole reason for a phone: keeping close to the people you love. Here's the easy version.

To make a call, open the **Phone** app and tap a name in your Favorites or Recents. To add someone to Favorites, open their contact and tap **Add to Favorites** — then they're always one tap away.

To send a text, open **Messages**, tap the pencil (new message), type a name, write your note, and tap the up arrow. Remember you can tap the microphone and just speak instead of typing.

To video chat, use **FaceTime** — a face-to-face call with family, free over Wi-Fi. Seeing a grandchild's face is worth the tiny bit of setup, and I'm glad to help with that first call.

✓ Group texts with the family

When several family members are in one text conversation, that's a "group text." You can name it, mute it when it gets chatty, and still catch up later. A nice way to stay in the loop without being buzzed all day.

Help when you need it most

Your iPhone has real safety features built in. I set these up for every customer, because they can matter enormously.

Emergency SOS: press and hold the side button together with a volume button, and the phone helps you call 911 and can alert people you choose. It even shares your location with the responders.

Crash Detection: if you're in a serious car accident, the phone can sense it and call for help on its own — a comfort for you and your family.

Medical ID: you can store your medications, allergies and an emergency contact so first responders can see them even while the phone is locked. Set it up in the **Health** app under **Medical ID**.

★ Let's set up your safety features

Emergency SOS, Crash Detection and Medical ID take ten minutes to set up and can make all the difference. I include this on every setup visit — or call me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll do it together.

Never lose your phone (or each other)

Apple's **Find My** helps you locate a misplaced phone — and, if you like, stay aware of family.

Mislaid the phone in the house? From an iPad, a computer, or a family member's iPhone, open Find My (or go to iCloud.com) and make your phone **play a sound** — even on silent — so you can follow the chirp to the couch cushions.

Families often **share locations** so they can see each other on a map — a real comfort for adult children and parents alike. It's entirely optional and you choose exactly who can see you.

✓ Turn it on before you need it

Find My only helps if it's switched on ahead of time — it usually is by default, but it's worth checking. I'll confirm it's on and show you how to use it, so a lost phone is a five-minute worry instead of an all-day one.

Keeping it current and clutter-free

Two little housekeeping habits keep your iPhone happy for years.

Software updates keep the phone secure and add new features — for free. When the phone offers one, it's safe to say yes; do it overnight while it's plugged in. You can check any time in **Settings > General > Software Update**. This iPhone runs iOS 27 (updated for free from the iOS 26 it came with) and will get updates for years.

Running low on space? Usually it's photos and videos. Turn on **iCloud Photos** so older pictures live in the cloud, and delete apps you never open (hold the icon, Remove App, Delete App). The phone can even suggest what's safe to clear.

✓ Updates are good news, not a bother

It's tempting to ignore that little red badge, but updates are how Apple keeps your phone safe from the latest tricks. If you're ever unsure whether an update is real, it is — the fakes come by text, never from the Settings app.

A few favorite everyday tricks

Little things that make the phone genuinely more useful. Try one at a time.

- **Flashlight:** swipe down from the top-right corner and tap the flashlight. Perfect for a dark keyhole or a dropped earring.
- **Magnifier:** your camera doubles as a magnifying glass for small print — menus, labels, instructions.
- **Reminders & timers:** just ask Siri — "remind me to call the doctor at ten," "set a timer for the roast."
- **Scan a document:** the Notes app can take a clean picture of a paper form and even let you sign it — no printer needed.
- **Back Tap:** you can set a double-tap on the back of the phone to do a handy job, like a screenshot. I'll show you.

★ Want a tour of the good stuff?

There are dozens of these little helpers, and half the fun of a new phone is discovering the ones that fit your life. On a visit I love showing folks the three or four that'll actually make their day easier. Call (330) 200-8042.

When something's not quite right

Most hiccups have a calm, simple fix. Nine times in ten, it's one of these.

Frozen or acting strange? Restart it. The quickest cure for almost anything is to turn the phone off, wait ten seconds, and turn it back on. Hold the side button and a volume button until you see "slide to power off."

Won't connect to the internet? Check your Wi-Fi in Settings, or try turning Wi-Fi off and on. If your home internet is down, the phone isn't the problem.

Screen too dark or too quiet? Check the brightness and volume (Control Center, swiped down from the top-right corner) — it's surprising how often that's all it is.

★ Stuck? That's what I'm here for

Never wrestle with it alone or feel foolish for asking. A quick call often sorts it out, and if it needs a visit, I can often fix it right on your screen remotely for a flat \$49, or come to you for \$99. Call (330) 200-8042.

Is this the right iPhone for you?

A straight answer, the way I'd give it at your kitchen table.

Price: Apple no longer sells the iPhone 17 Pro Max new. If you find one refurbished or used, treat any price with care and buy only from a trusted seller with a warranty (see the buying note below).

This phone is a great fit for someone who already owns one — it's still excellent — or a bargain-hunter who finds a trustworthy refurbished one and wants a big screen with great battery.

Consider a different model if: If you're buying NEW today, get the current iPhone 18 Pro Max instead, or the regular iPhone 17 for less — both are sold new with full warranties.

If you already own an iPhone 17 Pro Max, you're in great shape — big screen, superb battery, latest software — with no need to rush an upgrade. If you're shopping NEW, get the current iPhone 18 Pro Max (or save with the regular iPhone 17), because Apple no longer sells the 17 Pro Max new. A refurbished one can be a good deal, but buy only from a reputable seller with a warranty and returns — never a stranger online.

✓ Shopping new? Here's the honest steer

Because Apple no longer sells this model new, my advice for a new purchase is the iPhone 18 Pro Max (the current big Pro) or the regular iPhone 17. If you already own this one, though, keep enjoying it — it's still a fine phone.

You don't have to remember all of it

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made your iPhone 17 Pro Max feel a little more like a friend and a little less like a puzzle. Keep it in a drawer, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and I can often help right on your screen remotely for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee.

★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

The iPhone 17 Pro Max at a Glance

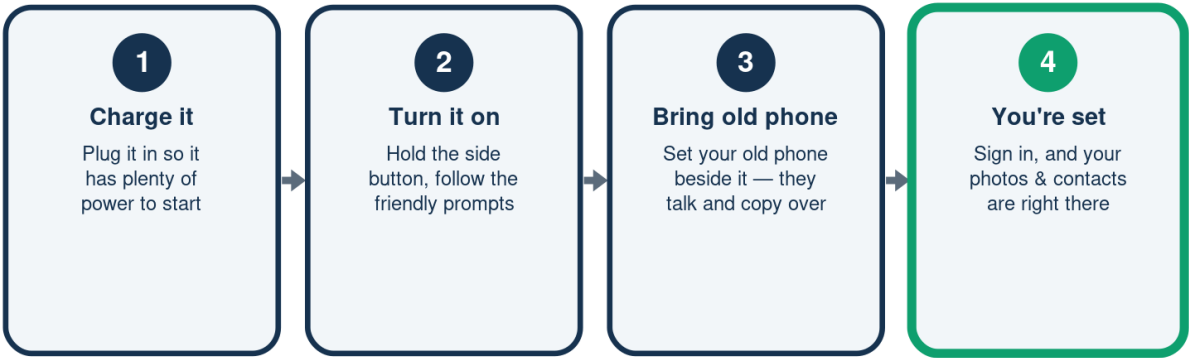
The plain-English version

	The short answer	Why it's nice
Screen size	6.9 inches	Big and readable
Battery	Up to ~39 hrs video	Excellent
Cameras	Three on the back	Strong zoom
Buying new?	Get 18 Pro Max	17 Pro Max retired
If you own one	Keep enjoying it	Years of life left

The iPhone 17 Pro Max is last year's big Pro — still great if you own one. Buying new? Choose the current iPhone 18 Pro Max.

Your First Day, Step by Step

Setting up your iPhone, the easy way



It's mostly the phone doing the work while you have your coffee.

Make It Easy to See & Hear

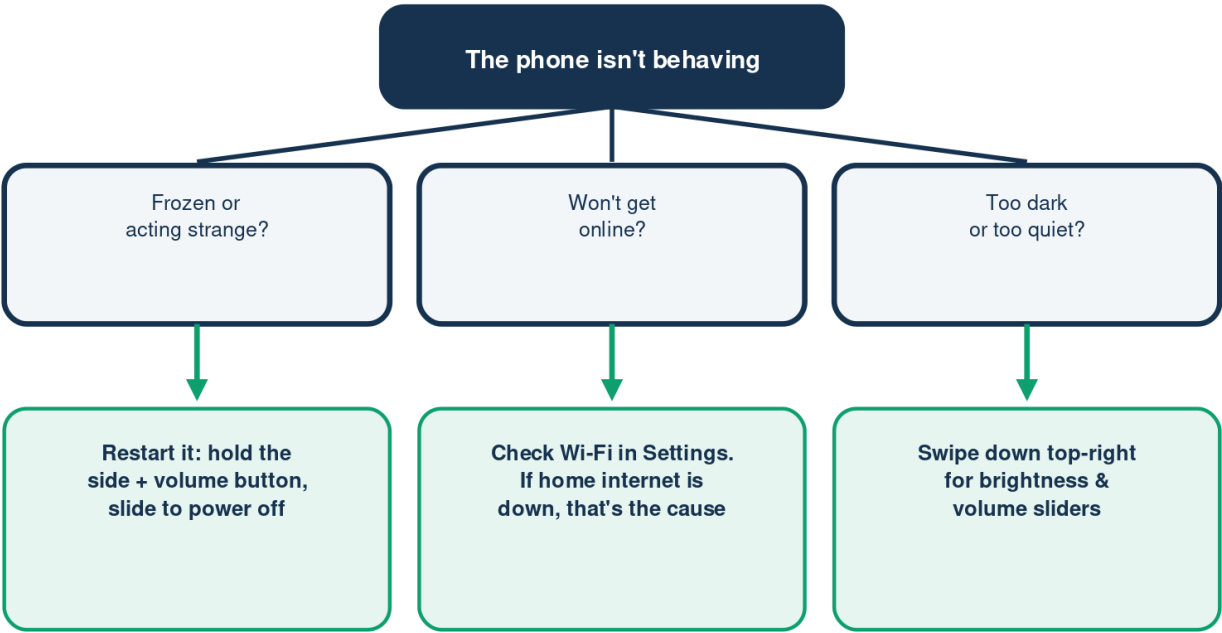
A few settings that help the most

	Where to find it	What it does
Bigger words	Settings > Display	Makes text larger
Even bigger	Accessibility >	Larger Text
Magnifier	Camera as a	magnifying glass
Captions	Accessibility >	Words on videos
Louder calls	Volume buttons	Hearing-aid ready

Prefer to have it set up for you? That's what a \$99 visit is for.

Something Not Right? Start Here

Three everyday hiccups and the calm fix for each



Still stuck? Never wrestle it alone — call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



Need a Real Person?

You do not have to remember all of it.
You just have to remember you can call.
Friendly, in-home tech help — I come to you.

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— Bill

Prefer help without a visit?

Bill can screen-share and fix many things remotely — a flat \$49, free for Support Plan members.



A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



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