BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

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# Scan a Document With Just Your Phone (No App)

*Turn paper into a clean, crisp scan — no scanner and no extra app*

*Plain-English tech help from:*
Bill's Home Tech
*Portage County, Ohio*

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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**SUMMARY**

# The 60-Second Version

You do not need a scanner to scan a document — your phone has one built in. On iPhone, open the Notes app, start a note, tap the camera icon, and choose Scan Documents. On Android, open Google Drive, tap the plus button, and choose Scan.

Lay the page flat on a dark surface in good light; the phone finds the edges, straightens it, and sharpens the text. Scan several pages into one file, choose the black-and-white mode for crisp, small text, sign it on screen if needed, then tap Share to email or text it as a PDF. Clean, official-looking, and done in a minute.

# 1 The Short Version

Your phone can scan paper into a clean document using a scanner that is already built in — the Notes app on iPhone, Google Drive on Android. It is not the same as just taking a photo: the scanner finds the edges of the page, flattens it, and sharpens the writing so it looks like a real scan. You can scan several pages into one file and send it in a minute.

- No scanner and no extra app needed — it is already on your phone.
- A scan looks far cleaner and more official than a snapshot of the page.
- You can scan many pages into one single document.
- The result is a PDF you can email, text, or save.

**TIP**

Scan on a flat surface with good, even light and a dark background under the page — a wood table or dark placemat — so the phone can clearly see the paper's edges. That one habit gives you clean scans every time.

## 2 Why a Scan Beats a Photo

A plain photo of a document is taken at a slight angle, with a shadow from your hand, and the page looks tilted and curved. A scan corrects all of that automatically: it detects the rectangle of the page, straightens it to face-on, trims away the table around it, and boosts the contrast so the text is crisp black on clean white.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> Offices, doctors, and banks often ask for a scan rather than a photo because a scan is easier to read and print. Sending a proper scan the first time saves the back-and-forth of "can you send a clearer copy?"

## 3 What You'll Need

A minute of setup makes every scan come out clean. Gather these before you start.

- The paper you want to scan, lying flat (smooth out any folds).
- A dark, plain surface to lay it on so the edges stand out.
- Steady, even light — near a window or a lamp, avoiding harsh shadows.
- Your phone, charged enough for a couple of minutes of work.

> **TIP**
> If the page is curled from being folded, press it flat under a book for a minute first. A flat page scans far more cleanly than a curved one.

## 4 iPhone: Scan in the Notes App

On iPhone, the free Notes app has the scanner. It is the quickest route and needs nothing extra.

1. Open Notes and start a new note (tap the pencil-and-paper icon).

2. Tap the camera icon, then choose Scan Documents.
3. Hold the phone flat over the page; a yellow box snaps to the edges and it captures automatically.
4. Scan more pages the same way if you have them, then tap Save.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> If it does not capture on its own, tap the round shutter button to grab the page manually, then drag the corner handles to line them up with the edges of the paper.

## 5 Android: Scan in Google Drive

On most Android phones, Google Drive has the scanner built in, and it works much the same way.

1. Open the Google Drive app and tap the plus (+) button.
2. Tap Scan (the camera icon).
3. Hold the phone over the page; it captures and crops automatically, or tap the shutter.
4. Add more pages with the plus if needed, then tap Save to store it as a PDF.

> **TIP**
>
> Samsung and some other phones also have a document scanner right inside the Camera app — point it at a page and a "Scan" or document button appears. Either route gives you a clean PDF.

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# 6 Scanning More Than One Page

Multi-page forms are no problem — you keep scanning and the pages stack into one single document in the right order.

1. Scan the first page as above.
2. When it finishes, line up the next page and let it capture, or tap to add another.
3. Repeat until all pages are in; watch the little counter climb.
4. Save once at the end, and all the pages are together in one file.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Keep the pages in order as you scan them, since that is the order they appear in the finished document. If you scan one out of order, most scanners let you drag it back into place or delete and re-scan just that page.

# 7 Getting a Clean, Readable Result

A few small touches turn a good scan into a crisp, professional one.

- Use the auto crop, but check the corners snap to the real edges of the page.
- Choose the color mode to suit the page: color for photos or forms, black-and-white or "document" for plain text.
- Avoid your own shadow by lighting the page from the side, not from behind the phone.
- Hold steady — rest your elbows on the table if your hands are unsteady.

> **TIP**
>
> The black-and-white or "document" color setting makes text pages look crisp and keeps the file small, which is ideal for emailing a form. Use full color only when the page has photos or colored detail that matters.

## 8 Fixing the Edges and Angle

If the scanner grabs too much table or clips a corner, you can fix it in seconds before saving.

1. After capturing, tap the crop or adjust option.
2. Drag each corner handle to sit right on the corners of the page.
3. Use the rotate button if the page came out sideways or upside down.
4. Confirm, and the scanner re-flattens it to a neat rectangle.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Taking a moment to set the corners precisely is what makes a scan look professional rather than like a crooked photo. It is worth the extra few seconds on anything you are sending to an office.

## 9 Saving and Finding Your Scan

Once saved, your scan lives in the app you used, and you can get back to it any time.

- iPhone: the scan is saved inside the note in Notes; open that note to find it.
- Android: the scan is saved in Google Drive, in your Files or the folder you chose.
- You can rename it something sensible like "Insurance form — November" so you can find it later.

> **TIP**
>
> Give each scan a clear name the moment you save it. "Scan 47" tells you nothing in six months; "Water bill October" tells you everything.

## 10 Sending Your Scan by Email or Text

The whole point is usually to send it, and that is a couple of taps once it is scanned.

1. Open the saved scan.
2. Tap the Share button (a box with an arrow, or three dots).
3. Choose Mail to email it, or Messages to text it.
4. The scan attaches as a PDF — add the address, a short note, and send.

**WATCH OUT**

Before you send anything with personal details — an account number, a signature, a Social Security number — double-check you are sending it to the right, expected person, and that they truly need it. Scammers sometimes ask people to "scan and send" sensitive documents. If a request feels off, pause and call me.

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## 11 Signing a Form Before You Send

Often you need to sign the form first. Both phones let you add a signature right on the scan, so you do not have to print, sign, and re-scan.

1. iPhone: open the scan, tap the markup (pen tip) icon, then the plus, then Signature, and sign with your finger.
2. Android: open the PDF in a markup or PDF app and use its signature or draw tool.
3. Drag your signature to the right spot and resize it.
4. Save, then share as above.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Once you create a signature on an iPhone, it remembers it, so next time you just tap to drop the same signature on — no need to re-sign each time.

## 12 Common Snags and Easy Fixes

A few things trip people up the first time; each is quick to solve.

- The edges will not snap: use a darker background under the page so the paper stands out.
- The scan is too dark or washed out: improve the lighting and try the black-and-white mode.
- It will not capture on its own: tap the shutter button and set the corners by hand.
- The file is too big to email: use the document/black-and-white mode, which makes it much smaller.

**TIP**

If an email bounces back as "too large," a long color scan is usually the reason. Re-scan in black-and-white mode or send fewer pages per email, and it will go through.

## 13 A Word About Versions

Apple and the Android brands update yearly, and a menu may shift a little. The scanner has been part of Notes and Google Drive for years, so if a button is not exactly where described, it has only moved slightly.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

On iPhone, search "scan" in the Notes help or just look for the camera icon in a note. On Android, the plus button in Google Drive always leads to Scan. When in doubt, search Settings or the app for "scan."

## 14 Scanning Receipts, Cards, and Book Pages

The scanner is not just for letter-size forms. It handles small and oddly shaped things too, which is handy for keeping records or sharing a page from a book.

- Receipts: lay the receipt flat; the scanner trims it to a neat strip. Great for warranty or tax records.
- Business cards: scan both sides; some apps even pull the name and number into your contacts.
- Book or magazine pages: press the page as flat as you can and scan one page at a time.
- Handwritten notes or recipes: scan to keep a tidy, permanent copy.

**WATCH OUT**

Be thoughtful about scanning things with sensitive numbers — a credit card, a Social Security card, a passport. A scan is a real copy, so keep it somewhere safe and never send it to anyone you are not certain about. If someone asks you to scan an ID, pause and ask me whether that is a reasonable request.

## 15 Make It a Simple Habit

The scanner is most useful once it is second nature, so you reach for it the moment paper needs to become a file.

- Pick your one route — Notes on iPhone, Drive on Android — and practice it twice.
- Keep a dark placemat where you open mail, so a clean background is always ready.
- Name and file each scan right away so you can find it later.

**TIP**

Scan important papers as they arrive — a new insurance card, a signed contract, an appliance receipt — and you will have a tidy digital copy ready the day someone asks for it.

# 16 When to Call Bill

None of this is a test, and there is no prize for struggling. Most of these tricks take a minute once you know where to look, and this guide gets you there. But if a setting hides somewhere new on your version, or you would simply rather have someone set it up with you and show you once, that is exactly the kind of visit I make.

I come to you here in Portage County, sit down beside you, and set these up on your own phone or tablet so they work the way you want. I will show you each one slowly, write down the few steps that matter, and make sure you can do it yourself afterward. No rush, no jargon, and no question is too small.

- You tried to "scan and send" something important and want a second pair of hands.
- The scans keep coming out crooked, dark, or too large to email.
- You want signing and sending set up so the whole thing is a one-minute routine.
- You would simply rather have it set up correctly the first time, with someone showing you how.

CHEAT SHEET

# Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this handy. Flat page, dark background, good light.

| I want to... | Do this... |
|---|---|
| Scan (iPhone) | Notes new note camera icon Scan Documents |
| Scan (Android) | Google Drive plus (+) Scan |
| Scan several pages | Keep capturing in order, then Save once at the end |
| Make text crisp & small | Choose the black-and-white / document color mode |
| Fix crooked edges | Drag the corner handles to the page's corners, then rotate |
| Sign it | iPhone: markup Signature. Android: PDF app's sign tool |
| Send it | Open the scan Share Mail or Messages (goes as a PDF) |
| Get help | Call Bill: (330) 200-8042 |

**BEFORE YOU GO**

# 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 results.

HOW I CAN HELP

# Your Visit — and My Promise

*You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.*

**KEY SPECS**

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

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