BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS · NO. 9

Managing Phone Photos

Organizing, sharing, and backing up your pictures — and freeing up space when your phone says it's full

A plain-English guide for iPhone and Android

Take your time — your memories are safe

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

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For recent iPhone and Android phones · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your photo manual. Read it in any order and at your own pace — there is no test, and you can't fall behind. Keep it nearby and reach for whatever you need. Every feature comes with what it actually does *for you*, and slow step-by-step directions anyone can follow. Phones come in two main families — **iPhone** (which uses Apple's **Photos** app and **iCloud**) and **Android** (which uses **Google Photos**) — so wherever they work differently, I'll walk you through both. Apps change their screens from time to time, so if a button sits in a slightly different spot on yours, don't worry — I'll always tell you what to look *for*, and the idea stays the same.

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PART 1

How Phone Photos Work

Where your pictures actually live, what "the cloud" really means, and how iPhones and Androids handle photos. A gentle, no-jargon start — begin here.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Whoever is holding this book right now — this is for **you**. Maybe your phone is full of photos and you're not sure where they all go. Maybe you got a message saying "Storage Almost Full" and it worried you. Maybe you just want to send a picture of the grandchildren to your daughter without fuss. Wherever you're starting from, you've come to the right place, and I'm glad you're here.

I'm Bill. Helping folks feel at home with their technology is what I do every day, and I wrote this book the same way I'd sit down next to you at your kitchen table: patiently, in plain English, with no rushing and no fancy words. If I ever use a term you don't know, I'll stop and explain it right then — you won't have to look anything up.

Your photos are precious — let's treat them that way

The pictures on your phone are not just files. They are your grandchildren growing up, the trips you took, the people you've loved, the ordinary days that turned out to matter. That's exactly why a little know-how is worth your time: so those memories are **organized** enough to find, **backed up** so you'll never lose them, and easy to **share** with the people who'd love to see them. That's the whole job of this book.

This book is yours — read it any way you like

You do not have to read these pages in order, and there is no test at the end. Start on page one, or flip straight to the chapter that answers today's question — maybe that's Part 6, "My phone is full." Fold the corners, underline things, scribble in the margins. Keep it in the drawer by your chair and pull it out whenever you need it. It's a reference, not a race.

The big promise: you truly can't lose your memories by exploring

Here is the most important thing in this whole book, so I'll say it plainly. If your photos are **backed up** — and I'll show you exactly how to make sure they are — then tapping, swiping, and poking around to see what happens **cannot lose them**. Even deleting a photo doesn't remove it right away; it waits in a kind of "recycle bin" for weeks first, where you can get it back. Once you know that, the fear goes away, and the whole thing gets easier.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

When you stop worrying about losing a picture, you start actually using your phone's camera and photo tools — organizing, sharing, and clearing space with confidence. That's when your phone becomes a joy instead of a worry.

A promise about honesty

I'll always be straight with you. There is one place in all of this where real care is needed — deleting the *only* copy of a photo that was never backed up. I'll flag that clearly every single time it comes up, with a plain warning you can't miss. Everywhere else, you can relax. We'll spend a whole part of this book (Part 4) making sure your pictures are safely backed up, precisely so the rest becomes worry-free.

And I'm only a phone call away

This book will carry you a long way on your own. But if you ever get truly stuck, you are never stuck alone — that's not how I do things. Call me at **(330) 200-8042** and we'll work it out together, with no judgment and no eye-rolling. There is no such thing as a silly question. The only bad question is the one you talked yourself out of asking.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

Where Your Photos Actually Live

Before we touch a single button, let's answer the question that trips up almost everyone: when you take a picture, where does it *go*? Once this clicks, nearly everything else in this book makes easy sense.

Two places at once: your phone, and "the cloud"

A photo you take can sit in up to two places. First, it's saved **on the phone itself** — in its memory, the same way a photograph used to sit in a shoebox. Second, if you've turned on backup (most folks have, often without realizing), a copy is also kept **up on the internet**, in what everyone calls **the cloud**. We'll explain the cloud properly in the next chapter — for now, just picture a safe-deposit box that holds a second copy.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **One picture, possibly two copies**
>
> This is the single idea to hold onto: a photo on your phone and the same photo in the cloud are **two copies of one memory**. Having two copies is exactly what keeps your pictures safe — if you ever lost the phone, the cloud copy would still be there, waiting.

Why "on the phone" fills up, but "the cloud" doesn't (as fast)

Your phone has a fixed amount of room inside it — think of it like a cupboard that can only hold so much. Photos, and especially videos, take up a lot of that room. When the cupboard gets full, the phone complains: *"Storage Almost Full."* The cloud, on the other hand, is rented space on the internet, and you can have as much as you're willing to pay for (and a useful amount for free). That's why the fix for a full phone is almost always about the phone's cupboard — not your memories, which stay safe in the cloud.

The app that shows you all of it

You don't rummage through the cupboard yourself. Instead, every phone has a **Photos app** — a single place that shows you all your pictures in a neat, scrollable wall, whether they're stored on the phone, in the cloud, or both. On an iPhone it's called **Photos** (a little rainbow-colored flower). On an Android phone it's usually **Google Photos** (a colorful pinwheel). We'll find yours in Chapter 5.

TIP

You almost never deal with "files" directly

Unlike an old computer with folders to dig through, your phone's Photos app hides all that. You just open it and see your pictures. That's a blessing — it means you can forget about "where the file is" and simply look at your photos.

CHAPTER 3

The Cloud, Explained Simply

"The cloud" is one of those phrases that sounds mysterious and technical, and it needn't. Let me take the mystery right out of it, because understanding this one idea makes you far more confident with everything that follows.

The cloud is just someone else's computer, kept very safe

When people say your photos are "in the cloud," all they mean is this: a copy has been sent over the internet and stored on big, professionally-run computers in a secure building somewhere — owned by Apple (for iPhones) or Google (for Androids). Those computers are backed up, guarded, and kept running day and night. "The cloud" is simply a friendly word for "a safe building full of computers, far away, that holds a copy of your things."

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> **Why it's called a "cloud"**
>
> The name came about because the internet was often drawn as a little cloud shape in diagrams — a fuzzy "somewhere out there." It has nothing to do with the sky or the weather. Don't let the word fool you into thinking it's complicated.

What the cloud does for your photos

- **It keeps a second copy safe.** If your phone is lost, stolen, dropped in the lake, or simply dies of old age, your pictures are still there in the cloud, waiting.
- **It lets your photos appear on all your devices.** A picture you take on your phone can show up on your tablet or computer automatically, because they all look at the same cloud.
- **It frees up room on your phone.** Once a photo is safely in the cloud, your phone can keep only a smaller version to save space — the full one is a tap away when you want it.

Two clouds, one for each kind of phone

You don't choose a cloud — your phone comes with one built in:

Your phone	Its cloud
iPhone	Uses **iCloud** (Apple's cloud). The photo backup part is called **iCloud Photos**.
Android	Uses your **Google Account** and **Google Photos** for the picture backup.

You already have one of these, tied to the email address you set the phone up with. You don't need to create anything new. In Part 4 we'll simply make sure it's switched on and working.

HEADS UP

The cloud needs internet, and comes with some free room

Sending photos to the cloud happens over the internet — usually your home **Wi-Fi**, so it doesn't eat into a phone data plan. And both clouds give you a *free* starting amount (Apple gives 5 gigabytes, Google gives 15), after which you can pay a small monthly fee for more. We'll cover all of that gently in Part 4 — no surprises.

CHAPTER 4

iPhone vs. Android: Same Ideas, Different Apps

Phones come in two big families, and which one you have decides a few of the button names in this book. The good news: the *ideas* are identical. Pictures, albums, backup, sharing, freeing space — it all works the same way in spirit. Only the app and a few words differ.

How to tell which family your phone is in

- **iPhone** — made by Apple. If the back says "iPhone," or you bought it as an iPhone, that's you. Your photo app is **Photos** (the colorful flower/pinwheel icon).
- **Android** — made by Samsung, Google, Motorola, LG, and many others. If it's not an iPhone, it's an Android. Your photo app is almost always **Google Photos** (a four-color pinwheel). Some phones, like Samsung's, *also* have their own "Gallery" app — more on that in a moment.

GOOD TO KNOW

Samsung and other brands are all "Android"

Folks sometimes think "Samsung" and "Android" are two different things. They're not — a Samsung phone *is* an Android phone. So are Motorola, Google Pixel, and the rest. Whenever this book says "Android," it means your phone too.

A quick word on Samsung's "Gallery" vs. Google Photos

Many Samsung (and other) phones come with *two* photo apps: **Gallery** (the phone maker's own) and **Google Photos**. They both show your pictures. The important difference is backup: **Google Photos** is the one that safely copies your pictures to the cloud, so that's the one I'll steer you toward throughout this book. You can still use Gallery to look at pictures if you prefer it — just make sure Google Photos backup is on (Part 4).

How this book handles the two families

To keep things clear, whenever iPhone and Android do something differently, I'll give you **both sets of steps**, clearly labeled — look for the one that matches your phone and ignore the other. Where they work the same (and that's most of the time), I'll just describe it once.

TIP

Not sure which you have? Here's a five-second test

Open your phone and look for the photo app. If it's a single colorful **flower-like** icon simply called "Photos," you've got an iPhone. If you see a **pinwheel** called "Google Photos" (and maybe a separate "Gallery"), you've got an Android. Either way, you're in good hands here.

CHAPTER 5

Finding the Photos App on Your Phone

Everything in this book begins by opening your photo app, so let's make sure you can find it in a heartbeat. It's already on your phone — nothing to install.

On an iPhone

1. Look on your **Home Screen** (the wall of app icons) for an app called **Photos**. Its icon is a colorful flower or pinwheel of petals on a white background.
2. Tap it once. That's your entire photo library — every picture and video you've taken.
3. Can't spot it? Swipe **down** from the middle of the Home Screen to open **Search**, type "Photos," and tap it in the results.

On an Android phone

1. Look for **Google Photos** — a **pinwheel** of blue, red, yellow, and green. It may be on your Home Screen or in the **app drawer** (swipe up from the bottom to open that).
2. Tap it once to open your whole photo library.
3. If you also see a **Gallery** app, that's fine — but for this book, open **Google Photos**, because that's the one tied to your cloud backup.
4. Can't find it? Swipe up to the app drawer, type "Photos" in the search bar at the top, and tap Google Photos.

> TIP
>
> **Put it somewhere you'll always find it**
>
> If the photo app is buried, you can drag it to a handy spot. Press and hold its icon until it jiggles or a little menu appears, then drag it to the first Home Screen or the row of apps along the bottom. Now it's always one tap away.

The very first time you open it

The first time, the app may ask a question or two — permission to see your photos, or whether to turn on backup. It's safe to say **Yes/Allow** to letting the app see your photos (it's a photo app — that's its whole job). If it asks about **backup**, you can say yes; we'll double-check that it's set up correctly in Part 4 either way.

CHAPTER 6

The Taps & Swipes You'll Use

Your photo app runs on the very same finger-moves as the rest of your phone. If you've used your phone at all, you already know these. Let's name them so nothing feels mysterious — these few moves are all you'll ever need.

The handful of moves

- **Tap** — one light touch to open a photo or choose a button. You never need to press hard; the glass feels the gentlest touch.
- **Scroll** — rest a finger on the screen and slide it up to move down through your pictures (or down to go back up). This is how you travel through the years.
- **Swipe** — a quick slide left or right. When a photo is open full-screen, swipe left or right to go to the next or previous picture, like turning pages.
- **Pinch to zoom** — to make a photo bigger, put two fingers on it and spread them apart; pinch them together to shrink it back. Lovely for peering at a face.
- **Press and hold** — touch and keep your finger there a moment. On a photo, this usually lets you **select** it, or brings up a little menu of choices.

Two buttons that get you out of anything

- **The back arrow** (top-left corner, pointing left) — takes you back one step, the way you came. Lost? Tap it a few times to retrace your steps.
- **Done** or **the X** — closes whatever you've opened and returns you to the main wall of photos. Safe, familiar ground.

TIP

There's no wrong tap you can't walk back from

If you tap something and the screen changes in a way you don't recognize, don't panic and don't start pressing everything. Just look for the **back arrow** in the top-left corner, or **Done**, and you'll return to safe ground. Curiosity is rewarded here.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Confidence is the real skill

The folks who get the most from their photos aren't the ones who memorized the most buttons — they're the ones who relaxed and started tapping around. Once you believe your pictures are safe (and after Part 4 they will be), the whole thing opens up.

CHAPTER 7

One Big Reassurance: Deleting a Backed-Up Photo Is Safe

I'm putting this chapter near the front on purpose, because it's the single fear that stops folks from ever tidying their photos: *"What if I delete something I wanted?"* Let me settle it now, plainly, so you can relax for the rest of the book.

Deleting doesn't happen all at once

When you delete a photo, it does **not** vanish on the spot. Instead it moves into a kind of recycle bin — on the iPhone it's called **Recently Deleted**, on Android it's the **Trash** (or "Bin"). It sits there for weeks, and you can bring it straight back with a tap. Only after the waiting period does it actually go for good.

Your phone	Your safety net
iPhone — Recently Deleted	Deleted photos wait **30 days** before they're gone for good. You can recover them any time in those 30 days.
Android — Google Photos Trash	Backed-up photos wait **60 days** in the Trash; ones that weren't backed up wait 30 days.

And if it's backed up, there's a copy in the cloud too

Here's the part that lets you breathe out. If a photo is **backed up to the cloud** (which we'll set up in Part 4), then even deleting it from your phone just removes the phone's copy — the cloud still has it. In fact, on both iPhone and Android there's a special "free up space" tool that *only* removes the phone's copy on purpose, leaving the cloud copy untouched. That's how you clear a full phone without losing a thing.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why you can tidy with confidence

Backed up + a recycle bin that holds things for weeks = you have two safety nets under you whenever you delete. That's why, once your backup is on, clearing space and tidying up is genuinely nothing to fear.

The one time to take real care

I promised to be honest, so here it is — the single situation that calls for care:

HEADS UP

Deleting the ONLY copy of a photo that was never backed up

If a photo was **never backed up**, then your phone holds the only copy in the world. Delete it, let the recycle bin empty, and it's truly gone. This is the one case to be sure about. The simple protection: **turn on backup first** (Part 4), confirm your pictures are safely in the cloud, and *then* tidy to your heart's content. When in doubt, don't empty the recycle bin, and give me a call.

That's the whole truth of it. One situation to mind, and an easy way to avoid it. Everywhere else in this book, you can explore freely.

PART 2

The Photos App, Step by Step

Opening your pictures, moving through the timeline, looking closely at a single photo, starring your favorites, and playing videos. The everyday basics, slowed right down.

CHAPTER 8

Opening Your Photos & the Timeline

Open your photo app (Chapter 5) and you'll land on the main screen — a wall of little pictures, your whole life in thumbnails. Let's get comfortable here, because this is home base for everything else.

The wall of pictures is your "timeline"

Your photos are laid out **newest at the bottom, oldest at the top** — so the picture you took five minutes ago sits at the very bottom, and the app usually opens with it in view. As you **scroll up**, you travel back in time: last week, last month, last year, and on back to your very first photo. This running order by date is called the **timeline** (Apple calls this view your **Library**; Google Photos calls it **Photos**).

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> **No need to organize anything for this to work**
> You don't have to file or sort your photos for the timeline to appear — the phone does it automatically, using the date each picture was taken. Even if you never make a single album, your whole collection is always here, neatly in order by date.

Making the pictures bigger or smaller

If the thumbnails are too tiny to make out, you can change how many fit on screen:

- **iPhone**: pinch the screen with two fingers — spread apart to show fewer, bigger pictures; pinch together to show more, smaller ones. There are also little day/month/year buttons to zoom through time quickly.
- **Android (Google Photos)**: the same two-finger pinch works. Pinch together and it groups photos by month; spread apart for a close-up day-by-day view.

Scrolling quickly through many years

If you've thousands of photos, scrolling one screen at a time is slow. Both apps give you a shortcut: start scrolling and a little **slider or date bubble** appears at the right edge. Rest your finger on it and drag up or down to leap through months and years in a second. Let go when you reach the time you want.

TIP

Lost your place? Jump to the bottom

If you scroll up into the past and want to get back to your most recent photos, tap the little **Library** or **Photos** button at the bottom of the screen (sometimes twice) and it springs right back to the newest pictures.

CHAPTER 9

Looking Closely at a Single Photo

The wall of thumbnails is for browsing. When you want to really *look* at one picture — to admire it, show someone, or do something with it — you open it full-screen.

Opening and closing a photo

1. **Tap once** on any thumbnail. It opens to fill the screen.
2. **Swipe left or right** to move to the next or previous photo, like turning the pages of an album.
3. **Pinch with two fingers** to zoom in on a detail — a face, a sign — and spread to zoom back out.
4. To close it and return to the wall, tap the **back arrow** (top-left) or **swipe the photo downward** off the screen.

TIP

The hidden buttons: just tap the photo once

When a photo is open, the buttons around it sometimes fade away so you can enjoy the picture. If the top and bottom rows of buttons disappear, simply **tap the photo once** and they pop right back. Nothing has gone wrong.

Seeing a photo's details — when and where

Ever wonder exactly when a picture was taken, or where? Your phone quietly remembers both.

- **iPhone**: with the photo open, **swipe up** on it (or tap the little "i" in a circle). You'll see the date, the time, and often a small map of where it was taken.
- **Android (Google Photos)**: with the photo open, swipe up or tap the three dots, then look for the **info** panel — same thing: date, time, and a map.

GOOD TO KNOW

How your phone knows the "where"

Most phones quietly tag each photo with the spot it was taken, using the same location sense your maps app uses. That's how the app can later show you "photos from Florida" or group a trip together. If you'd rather it didn't, you can turn location off in the camera settings — but many folks love being able to search by place (Chapter 19).

CHAPTER 10

Favorites: Starring the Ones You Love

Out of hundreds of photos, a handful are the keepers — the ones you'd grab from a burning house. **Favorites** is the easiest way to mark those so you can always find them fast, without building a single album.

Marking a favorite

- **iPhone**: open a photo and tap the little **heart** at the bottom. It fills in to show it's a favorite. Tap again to un-favorite.
- **Android (Google Photos)**: open a photo and tap the **star** (or heart) near the top. Tap again to remove it.

Finding all your favorites in one place

Every photo you've starred collects into one tidy spot:

- **iPhone**: tap **Albums** at the bottom, then look for the **Favorites** album (a heart). There they all are.
- **Android**: tap **Collections** or **Library**, then **Favorites** (the star).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A no-effort way to find your best pictures

Favoriting takes one tap and needs no planning. Months from now, when you want "that lovely one of the whole family," you won't scroll forever — you'll open Favorites and there it'll be. It's the gentlest form of organizing there is.

TIP

Favorite as you go

The easiest habit is to tap the heart the moment you notice a photo you love, while you're already looking at it. A little star here and there, over time, builds you a wonderful "best of" collection without any work.

CHAPTER 11

The Bottom Buttons: Your Four Main Areas

Along the bottom of your photo app sits a small row of buttons — the four or five areas that make up the whole app. Learn these and you can get anywhere. The names differ slightly between iPhone and Android, so here's both.

On an iPhone

Button	What's there
Library	Your whole timeline of photos and videos, newest at the bottom. Home base.
For You	Suggestions the phone makes — memory slideshows, effects, sharing ideas.
Albums	Your albums, Favorites, People, and automatic groups (Videos, Screenshots, etc.).
Search	The magnifying glass — type to find photos by person, place, or thing.

On an Android (Google Photos)

Button	What's there
Photos	Your whole timeline, newest at the top. Home base.
Collections (or Library)	Albums, Favorites, People & pets, places, and the Trash.
Search	Type or tap to find photos by person, place, or thing.

TIP

When in doubt, tap "Library" or "Photos" to get home

If you ever feel lost in the app, the leftmost bottom button — **Library** on iPhone, **Photos** on Android — always carries you back to your main wall of pictures. It's your front porch. Tap it and start fresh.

Don't worry about "For You" or suggestions

The phone sometimes makes little slideshows or "memories" for you — a collage of last summer, say — and shows them in **For You** (iPhone) or at the top of your photos (Android). These are just friendly suggestions. You can enjoy them, ignore them, or hide them. Nothing there changes or deletes your actual photos.

CHAPTER 12

How the Timeline Groups Your Photos

As your collection grows, scrolling photo-by-photo gets slow. Both apps let you "stand back" and see your pictures bundled by **day**, **month**, or **year** — a wonderful way to find a particular time without endless scrolling.

Zooming through time

- **iPhone**: in Library, look along the bottom for **Years · Months · Days · All**. Tap **Years** to see one picture per year; tap a year to drop into its months; tap a month to see its days. It's like zooming a map in from the whole country to your street.
- **Android (Google Photos)**: pinch the timeline together with two fingers to group by month; pinch again for a broader view. Spread apart to zoom back into individual days.

> **TIP**
>
> **Looking for a photo from a known date?**
>
> If you remember roughly *when* a photo was taken — "that was around Christmas two years ago" — zooming out to Years or Months and tapping your way in is far faster than scrolling. The date is the strongest thread back to any memory.

Why the newest photos are easiest to find

Both apps keep your most recent pictures right where you land when you open the app — bottom of the screen on iPhone, top on Android. So the photo you just took is never more than a glance away. It's the older ones that benefit from the year-and-month view above.

CHAPTER 13

Playing Videos & Live Photos

Your photo library holds videos too, right alongside the pictures, and they play with a single tap. There's also a clever in-between thing called a **Live Photo** (iPhone) or **Motion Photo** (Android) worth knowing about.

Spotting and playing a video

A video looks like a photo in the wall, but with a small **play triangle** or a little **clock showing its length** (like "0:42") in a corner. To play it:

1. Tap the video to open it full-screen. It often starts playing on its own.
2. If it doesn't, tap the **play triangle** in the middle.
3. Tap once to show the controls — a slider you can drag to skip forward or back, and a **speaker** symbol to turn sound on or off.
4. Tap the **back arrow** or swipe down to finish.

> HEADS UP
>
> **Videos are the big space-eaters**
>
> A single minute of video can take up as much room as dozens of photos. That's why, when a phone fills up, long videos are usually the biggest culprits. We'll hunt them down kindly in Part 6 — for now, just know that videos are heavy.

Live Photos and Motion Photos — the little moving pictures

You may have noticed some pictures seem to *move* for a second when you open them — the baby blinks, the leaves rustle. That's a **Live Photo** (on iPhone) or **Motion Photo** (on some Androids): the phone quietly recorded a second or two of movement around the moment you pressed the shutter. It's charming, and it's nothing to fix.

- To see the motion, **press and hold** your finger on the photo; it'll play.
- They take a little more room than a plain photo, but far less than a full video.
- If you'd rather have an ordinary still picture, you can turn the Live/Motion part off — on iPhone, open the photo, tap the **LIVE** button at the top and choose **Off**.

GOOD TO KNOW

Live Photos don't need any special handling

You don't have to do anything differently with a Live Photo. It shows up, backs up, shares, and prints just like a normal picture — the little movement is a bonus, not a chore. Enjoy it and don't give it another thought.

CHAPTER 14

Deleting a Photo — and Getting It Back

Blurry shots, accidental pictures of your pocket, five nearly-identical snaps of the same sunset — everyone collects these, and deleting them is a normal, healthy part of keeping a tidy library. Here's how, and — just as important — how to undo it.

Deleting one photo

1. Open the photo you want to remove.
2. **iPhone**: tap the **trash can** at the bottom-right. **Android**: tap the **trash can** at the bottom.
3. It'll ask you to confirm — tap **Delete**. The photo moves to Recently Deleted (iPhone) or the Trash (Android). It is *not* gone yet.

Deleting several at once

1. From the wall of photos, **press and hold** the first one you want gone, or tap **Select** at the top.
2. Now **tap** each additional photo you want to delete — a check-mark appears on each. (You can also drag a finger across a row to grab several quickly.)
3. When you've picked them all, tap the **trash can**, then confirm.

Getting a deleted photo back

Changed your mind? As long as you're within the waiting period (30 days on iPhone, 60 on Android for backed-up photos), it's an easy rescue:

- **iPhone**: tap **Albums**, scroll down to **Recently Deleted** (you may need Face ID or your passcode to open it), tap the photo, then **Recover**.
- **Android**: tap **Collections** or **Library**, open **Trash** (or "Bin"), tap the photo, then **Restore**.

STAY SAFE

The one deletion to think twice about

Deleting a photo is almost always safe because of the recycle bin and your cloud backup. The **only** risky move is deleting a picture that was *never backed up* and then emptying the recycle bin — that removes the last copy for good. So: get your backup on (Part 4) first, and never empty the recycle bin in a hurry. If a photo truly matters and you're unsure, leave it be and call me at (330) 200-8042.

PART 3

Organizing So You Can Find Anything

Albums, smart search, finding every photo of one person, grouping by place, and shared family albums. Gentle ways to bring order to a big, happy jumble of pictures.

CHAPTER 15

Albums: Your Own Photo Drawers

Your timeline shows everything by date, which is grand. But sometimes you want a photo by *topic* — all the garden pictures, all the grandkids, the whole Florida trip — gathered in one place. That's what an **album** is: a labeled drawer you drop chosen photos into.

What an album really is (and isn't)

This is reassuring to know: putting a photo *into* an album does **not** move it out of your main timeline, and it does **not** make a second copy that fills up space. An album is just a *list* that points to photos. The same picture can sit in three albums at once and still be the one, single photo. Think of it like writing a name on a list, not like photocopying.

GOOD TO KNOW

Deleting from an album vs. deleting the photo

There's an important, calming difference. Removing a photo *from an album* just takes it off that list — the photo itself stays safe in your library. Only the **trash can** actually deletes a picture. So you can tidy albums freely without ever risking a photo.

The albums your phone makes for you automatically

Before you build a single album, your phone has already sorted some for you. Look in **Albums** (iPhone) or **Collections / Library** (Android) and you'll usually find:

- **Favorites** — everything you've starred.
- **Videos** — all your moving pictures in one place.
- **Screenshots** — pictures of your own screen (more on these in Part 8).
- **Selfies**, **Recents**, and often **People** and **Places** — which we'll explore in the next few chapters.

TIP

You don't have to make albums at all

Plenty of folks never build a single album and get along beautifully, leaning on the timeline, Favorites, and Search instead. Albums are there if you *like* organizing — a pleasure for some, a chore for others. No guilt either way.

CHAPTER 16

Creating an Album & Adding Photos

If you do fancy a tidy drawer or two — "Grandchildren," "The Garden," "Cruise 2026" — here's how to make one. It takes under a minute.

On an iPhone

1. Tap **Albums** at the bottom.
2. Tap the **plus (+)** near the top-left and choose **New Album**.
3. Type a name — say, "Grandchildren" — and tap **Save**.
4. It opens your library. **Tap each photo** you want in the album (a check-mark appears), then tap **Add** (or **Done**). That's your album made.

On an Android (Google Photos)

1. Tap **Collections** (or **Library**), then **New album** (or the plus).
2. Give it a name and tap the check-mark or **Done**.
3. Tap **Add photos** (or **Select photos**), tap each picture you want, then confirm.

Adding more photos to an album later

You can drop more photos in any time. The easy way from the timeline:

1. Select the photo (or several) by pressing and holding, or tapping **Select**.
2. Tap the **Share** or **three-dots/Add to** button.
3. Choose **Add to Album**, then pick the album. Done.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Albums turn a jumble into a story

A well-named album is a gift to your future self — and to your family. "Mom's 80th" or "The old farmhouse" means that years from now, those memories are one tap away instead of lost in ten thousand pictures. A few minutes of naming pays you back for years.

Renaming, reordering, or deleting an album

Open the album and look for a **three-dots menu** (or Edit). From there you can rename it, change its cover picture, or delete the album. Remember — deleting the *album* never deletes the photos inside; they stay safe in your library.

CHAPTER 17

Searching Your Photos (It's Smarter Than You Think)

Here's a small miracle that saves everyone hours: you can **search** your photos the way you'd search the internet — by typing what's *in* the picture. Your phone has quietly studied your photos and can find "dog," "beach," "birthday cake," or "snow" even though you never labeled a thing.

How to search

1. Tap the **Search** button (the magnifying glass) at the bottom.
2. Type a plain word for what you're after — a person's name, a place, or a thing like "flowers," "car," "Christmas," "receipt."
3. The matching photos appear as you type. Tap any one to open it.

Things worth trying in the search box

- A **place**: "Florida," "the lake," your town's name.
- A **thing**: "dog," "cake," "beach," "garden," "menu," "snow."
- An **event** word: "wedding," "graduation," "Christmas."
- A **document**: search "receipt" or "screenshot" to dig up that picture of a bill or a confirmation you snapped.

GOOD TO KNOW

How does it know what's in a photo?

Your phone uses clever picture-recognition to spot common things — faces, pets, beaches, food. It's done quietly and privately on your own account. It isn't perfect, so if a search comes up short, try a simpler or different word. But most of the time, it feels like magic.

TIP

Search beats scrolling, every time

Before you set off scrolling through years of photos hunting for one picture, pause and try Search first. "Grandkids snow" or "birthday 2024" will often land you right on it in two seconds. It's the single most time-saving trick in this whole book.

CHAPTER 18

People & Faces: Every Photo of Someone

One of the loveliest features in both photo apps: the phone gathers together **every photo of each person**, so you can see all your pictures of a grandchild, or a late spouse, in one tender collection. Here's how to use it.

Finding the People area

- **iPhone**: tap **Albums**, then find **People & Pets**. You'll see a row of faces the phone has recognized. Tap a face to see every photo of that person.
- **Android (Google Photos)**: tap **Search** (or Collections), and you'll see a row of faces at the top. Tap one to see all their photos.

Putting a name to a face

If you tell the phone who someone is, you can then search for them by name — "show me Sarah" — which is wonderful.

1. Tap a face in the People area.
2. At the top you'll see **Add Name** (or **Who's this?**). Tap it and type the person's name.
3. The phone may ask "Is this the same person?" about other photos — tap **Yes** or **No** to help it learn.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

All your pictures of one loved one, together

Being able to tap a name and see every photo of a grandchild from newborn to today — or to gather every picture of someone you've lost into one quiet place — is, for many folks, the most moving thing their phone does. It's worth taking a few minutes to name the people who matter most.

GOOD TO KNOW

This stays private to you

The face-grouping happens on your own account for your own eyes. You're not labeling people for the whole world — just helping your own phone help you find your own pictures. Nobody else sees these names.

CHAPTER 19

Places & Things: Searching by Where and What

Beyond people, your phone can sort your photos by **where** they were taken and **what's in them** — another gentle way to find a memory when you can't recall the date.

Seeing your photos on a map

Because each photo quietly remembers where it was taken (Chapter 9), both apps can show your pictures pinned to a map — a delightful way to revisit a trip.

- **iPhone**: in **Albums**, look for **Places**. You'll see a map dotted with your photos; tap a cluster to see the pictures from that spot.
- **Android**: tap **Search**, then **Places** (or the map), to browse photos by location.

Browsing by "things"

Both apps also offer ready-made groups of common subjects — look in Search for categories like **Food**, **Nature**, **Animals**, **Documents**, or **Selfies**. Tap one to see all your photos of that kind. It's a fun way to stumble on forgotten pictures.

> TIP
> **Can't remember when? Remember where**
> If the date escapes you but you recall the *place* — "that was at the cabin" — the map view or a place search will corner the photo quickly. Our memories are often tied to places more firmly than to dates, and your phone can work either way.

CHAPTER 20

Shared Albums: A Family Album Everyone Can Add To

A **shared album** is one of the best-kept secrets in both photo apps — a single album that several people can see, and add their own pictures to. Picture a family reunion where everyone's photos land in one place automatically. No more texting pictures back and forth.

What makes it special

- **Everyone contributes.** You invite family members, and they can add their own photos to the same album — so you get *their* pictures of the day too.
- **Everyone sees updates.** When someone adds a new photo, it simply appears for everybody.
- **It doesn't use your personal storage** the way your own library does — shared albums are handled separately, so they won't fill up your phone.

Creating a shared album on an iPhone

1. First make sure **Shared Albums** is on: open your phone's **Settings**, tap your name at the top, then **iCloud**, then **Photos**, and switch on **Shared Albums**.
2. In the Photos app, tap **Albums**, then the **plus (+)**, then **New Shared Album**.
3. Name it, then invite people by typing their phone number or email. They'll get an invitation to join.
4. Add photos by opening the album and tapping the **plus**, or by selecting photos and choosing **Add to Shared Album**.

Creating a shared album on an Android (Google Photos)

1. Open an album you've made (or select some photos), then tap the **Share** button or the **three dots**.
2. Choose **Share**, then pick the family members (by their Google account or contact), or tap **Create link** to get a web address anyone can open.
3. Turn on **Collaborative** (or "Joint album") so others can add their own photos too.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

The whole family's photos, in one warm place

After a wedding or a holiday, instead of a dozen people each holding their own scattered pictures, a shared album gathers everyone's into one album everybody can enjoy. It's the nearest thing to the old family photo album — except nobody has to mail prints around.

HEADS UP

Shared means the people you invite can see it

A shared album is visible to everyone you invite (and, if you make a *link*, to anyone who has that link). That's the whole point — but it's worth a moment's thought before you add anything you'd rather keep private. Only invite people you trust, and don't post a link somewhere public.

CHAPTER 21

Tidying Up: Duplicates, Blurry Shots & Clutter

Over the years, everyone's library grows a little weedy — ten near-identical snaps of the same moment, blurry misfires, accidental pictures of the floor. A gentle tidy makes your whole collection nicer to browse (and frees up a bit of room). No rush, no pressure.

The kinds of clutter worth clearing

- **Duplicates and near-duplicates** — several shots of the same scene. Keep the best one or two; let the rest go.
- **Blurry or dark misfires** — pictures that plainly didn't come out.
- **Accidental photos** — the inside of a pocket, a shot of your shoe.
- **Screenshots you no longer need** — that confirmation number from last year, a map you snapped and used once.

The phone can find duplicates for you

- **iPhone**: tap **Albums**, scroll down to **Utilities**, and look for **Duplicates**. The phone lists sets of matching photos and offers to **Merge** them — keeping the best copy and clearing the rest, safely.
- **Android (Google Photos)**: there isn't a one-tap duplicate finder, but the **Free up space** tool (Part 6) and a careful scroll through recent bursts will catch most of them.

TIP

Tidy a little at a time

Don't sit down to "sort all 12,000 photos" — that way lies a headache. Instead, clear a handful whenever you're already browsing: spot three blurry tries, delete two, move on. A little pruning here and there keeps the garden tidy without it ever feeling like work.

STAY SAFE

Tidy freely once backup is on

Everything in this chapter is safe to do *after* your backup is set up (Part 4) — your keepers are safe in the cloud, and deleted shots wait in the recycle bin for weeks. The only thing to avoid is clearing out photos that were never backed up. When backup's on, prune away with a clear conscience.

PART 4

Backing Up — The Most Important Part

Why backup matters more than anything else, how iCloud Photos and Google Photos keep a safe copy, how to switch backup on and check it's really working, and how much free storage you get.

CHAPTER 22

Why Backup Is the Most Important Chapter

If you read only one part of this book, make it this one. Everything else — organizing, sharing, freeing up space — rests on a single foundation: a safe, second copy of your photos kept in the cloud. With backup on, you can relax about all the rest. Without it, you're one dropped phone away from heartbreak.

The hard truth, told kindly

A phone is a small glass object that lives in a pocket. It can be dropped, lost, stolen, soaked, or simply wear out after a few years. When a phone is gone, anything stored *only* on it is gone too — including photos that can never be retaken. I don't say this to frighten you, but because the fix is so easy and so complete that there's no reason to carry the risk.

What "backed up" really means

Backed up means a copy of each photo has been sent to the cloud (Chapter 3) automatically, so there are now two copies: one on the phone, one safe in the cloud. If anything happens to the phone, you simply sign in on a new one and every picture flows right back. It's the difference between keeping your only family photos in one shoebox versus keeping a second set at a relative's house across town.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Backup turns worry into peace of mind

Once your photos back up automatically, you never again have to think "what if I lose my phone?" You can replace a lost phone and get every picture back. You can clear space without fear. You can hand the old phone down. That peace of mind is the whole reason this part exists — and it costs little or nothing to have.

GOOD TO KNOW

It happens automatically, in the background

The lovely thing is that backup, once switched on, needs nothing from you. Whenever your phone is on Wi-Fi (and often charging), it quietly copies new photos to the cloud by itself. You take pictures as always; the safety happens behind the scenes.

CHAPTER 23

iCloud Photos: How Apple Backs You Up

On an iPhone, the backup system for your pictures is called **iCloud Photos**. Let's understand what it does before we switch it on, so it isn't a mystery.

What iCloud Photos does

- It keeps a copy of every photo and video in **iCloud** (Apple's cloud).
- It keeps your pictures **in sync** across your devices — a photo taken on your iPhone appears on your iPad and Mac too, all looking at the same iCloud.
- It lets your phone store smaller, space-saving versions while keeping the full-size originals safe in iCloud — the heart of the "Optimize iPhone Storage" trick we'll use in Part 6.

HEADS UP

One thing to understand about iCloud Photos

Because iCloud Photos keeps everything *in sync*, deleting a photo on your iPhone also removes it from iCloud and your other Apple devices (it goes to Recently Deleted on them all). That's usually what you want — but it's why, to free up phone space, we use the special **Optimize Storage** setting rather than deleting. More on that in Part 6.

iCloud Photos vs. "iCloud Backup" — two different things

A quick clarification that trips people up. Your iPhone has a general **iCloud Backup** (which saves your apps, settings, and messages), and separately **iCloud Photos** (just for pictures). For your photos to be safe, it's **iCloud Photos** that matters most — that's the one we'll confirm is on in the next chapter.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your free iCloud space, and why photos fill it

Apple gives every account **5 gigabytes** of iCloud space for free. That sounds like a lot, but photos and videos eat it quickly — so many folks with lots of pictures end up buying a little more (as little as roughly a dollar a month). We'll cover that honestly in Chapter 28. There's no shame in it — it's the cost of keeping years of memories safe.

CHAPTER 24

Turning On iCloud Photos & Checking It's Working

Let's make sure your iPhone is safely backing up your pictures. This takes two minutes, and it's worth doing today.

Switching iCloud Photos on

1. Open your phone's **Settings** (the grey gear icon).
2. Tap your **name** at the very top.
3. Tap **iCloud**, then **Photos**.
4. Make sure **Sync this iPhone** (on some versions, "iCloud Photos") is switched **on** — the toggle shows green.

Checking it's actually working

1. Open the **Photos** app and scroll to the very bottom of your Library.
2. If backup is finishing up, you'll see a line like "Uploading 23 items" or a note with the date it last updated. If it says everything's up to date, you're safely backed up.
3. If it says something like "Not enough iCloud storage," that's your cue to free a little iCloud space or add a bit more (Chapter 28) — your photos can't finish backing up until there's room.

TIP

Leave it on Wi-Fi and charging overnight

The very first backup can take a while if you have thousands of photos — sometimes a day or two. The easiest way: plug the phone in, connect to your home Wi-Fi, and leave it overnight. It'll quietly catch up while you sleep, and after that it keeps up on its own.

STAY SAFE

Don't delete your only copies until backup has finished

Before you go clearing space (Part 6), make sure that first backup has fully completed — check for the "everything's up to date" message above. Deleting photos while they're still the only copy, mid-backup, is the one way to lose them. Patience here keeps everything safe.

CHAPTER 25

Google Photos: How Google Backs You Up

On an Android phone, the backup system is **Google Photos** — the same app you use to look at your pictures also does the safeguarding. (It's free to install on an iPhone too, if you ever want a second backup.) Here's how it works.

What Google Photos backup does

- It keeps a copy of every photo and video in your **Google Account** (Google's cloud).
- It lets you see those pictures on any device where you sign in with the same Google account — your phone, a tablet, or any computer at **photos.google.com**.
- Once a photo is safely backed up, it offers to clear the phone's copy to save room — the "Free up space" tool we'll use in Part 6.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your free Google space, shared three ways

Google gives every account **15 gigabytes** of free storage — but it's *shared* across Google Photos, Gmail, and Google Drive together. So a stuffed email inbox can eat into your photo room. When it fills, you can add more through **Google One** for a small monthly fee (Chapter 28).

A note for Samsung and other brands

If your phone also has its own **Gallery** app, remember: Gallery shows your pictures but **Google Photos is the one that backs them up to the cloud**. Some Samsung phones offer their own "Samsung Cloud" too, but it's more limited. For a dependable, universal backup that you can reach from any computer, Google Photos is the one I steer folks to.

CHAPTER 26

Turning On Google Photos Backup & Checking It

Let's switch on and confirm your Android backup. Like the iPhone steps, this takes a couple of minutes and is well worth doing right now.

Switching Backup on

1. Open the **Google Photos** app.
2. Tap your **account picture** (a circle, top-right).
3. You'll see a line about **Backup**. Tap it, and make sure **Backup** is switched **on**.
4. Check you're signed in with the Google account you want (shown right there) — usually your main Gmail address.

Checking it's actually working

1. Tap your **account picture** again. At the top it will say either **Backup complete** or how many items are left to back up ("Backing up 14 items").
2. Wait for it to say **Backup complete** — that's your all-clear that every photo is safe in the cloud.
3. If it says storage is full, that's your cue to tidy or add a little more room (Chapter 28).

A choice worth knowing: backup quality

In Backup settings you may see a choice of **backup quality** — "Storage saver" (slightly compressed, uses less room) or "Original quality" (full size, uses more of your free 15 GB). For most folks, "Storage saver" looks just fine on a phone screen and makes your free space stretch much further. If you're a keen photographer who prints large, choose Original.

> **TIP**
>
> **Wi-Fi and charging, overnight — same as the iPhone**
>
> By default Google Photos backs up over Wi-Fi so it won't touch your data plan. Plug the phone in on your home Wi-Fi overnight for the first big backup, and it'll keep itself up to date from then on, quietly, forever.

CHAPTER 27

How Much Free Storage You Get (and When to Pay)

Both clouds give you a useful amount of free room, and charge a small monthly fee if you need more. Let's lay it out plainly so there are no surprises on your phone bill.

The free starting amount

Your phone	Free cloud storage
iPhone (iCloud)	**5 GB** free. Used only for your Apple backups and photos. Fills fairly quickly with lots of pictures.
Android (Google)	**15 GB** free — but *shared* with Gmail and Google Drive, so your emails count against it too.

("GB" means **gigabyte** — a measure of how much room things take up. As a rough feel: a single gigabyte holds a few hundred ordinary photos, or just a few minutes of high-quality video. So videos are what eat it up fastest.)

When folks usually decide to pay

- When the phone keeps nagging "iCloud storage full" or "Google storage full," and backup has stopped finishing.
- When they have years of photos and videos — easily more than 5 or 15 GB.
- When they'd simply rather not think about it, and a dollar or two a month buys worry-free backup.

GOOD TO KNOW

Paying a little is normal — and worth it

There's no shame in paying a small monthly fee for cloud storage; most folks with a few years of photos end up doing it. For roughly the price of a cup of coffee each month, every memory you own is kept safe automatically. Compared to losing them, it's one of the best bargains there is.

STAY SAFE

If backup has stopped, your newest photos aren't safe yet

The danger of a full cloud isn't the old photos — those are already saved. It's that **new** photos can't back up until there's room. So if you see "storage full," don't ignore it for months: either tidy some space or add a little more, so your latest pictures of the family are protected too.

CHAPTER 28

iCloud+ and Google One: Buying a Little More Room

If you decide you need more cloud space, here's exactly how to get it — and roughly what it costs — so you can do it confidently and never pay more than you need. (Prices shift over time and differ by country, so treat these as rough ranges and check the figure your phone shows you before you agree.)

Adding iCloud space on an iPhone ("iCloud+")

Apple's paid storage is called **iCloud+**. The common tiers, as rough monthly ranges:

Plan	Rough cost (US, check current)
50 GB	Around a dollar a month. Plenty for most folks with a moderate photo collection.
200 GB	A few dollars a month. Good for a big library, or to share across a family.
2 TB (2,000 GB)	Around ten dollars a month. For very large collections or lots of video.

1. Open **Settings**, tap your **name**, then **iCloud**.
2. Tap **Manage Account Storage** (or "Manage Storage"), then **Change Storage Plan** or **Upgrade to iCloud+**.
3. Pick a plan — **50 GB is enough for most people** — and confirm with your Apple account password or Face ID. It's billed monthly and you can change or cancel any time.

Adding Google space on an Android ("Google One")

Google's paid storage is called **Google One**. The common tiers, as rough monthly ranges:

Plan	Rough cost (US, check current)
100 GB	A couple of dollars a month. Ample for most photo libraries.
200 GB	A few dollars a month.
2 TB (2,000 GB)	Around ten dollars a month. For large collections and video.

1. In the **Google Photos** app, tap your **account picture**, then look for **Google One** or "Buy storage."
2. Pick a plan — **100 GB suits most people** — and confirm.
3. You can also manage it any time at **one.google.com**. It's monthly, and cancellable.

TIP

Start small — you can always add more later

Don't let a salesperson or a screen talk you into the biggest plan. Choose the smallest tier that fits (50 GB on iPhone, 100 GB on Android suits the great majority), and only step up if it fills. You can change plans any month with no penalty.

SCAM ALERT

Only ever pay through your phone's own settings

Apple and Google bill you right inside **Settings** or the Photos app, charged to the account already on your phone. If you ever get an **email or text** saying "your iCloud is full, click here to pay" or "update your Google storage payment," **don't click it** — that's a common scam to steal your card. Go to your phone's own settings instead. When in doubt, call me at (330) 200-8042 before paying a cent.

CHAPTER 29

Making Sure It's Really Backed Up Before You Delete

This short chapter is your safety checklist — the one to run *before* you free up space in Part 6. Thirty seconds here is what lets you clear a full phone with complete confidence.

The before-you-delete checklist

On an iPhone

1. **Settings** > your name > **iCloud** > **Photos**: confirm sync is **on**.
2. Open **Photos**, scroll to the bottom of your Library, and confirm it says everything's up to date (not "Uploading…").
3. Only then is every picture safely in iCloud, and you can use Optimize Storage (Part 6) freely.

On an Android

1. Open **Google Photos**, tap your **account picture**.
2. Confirm it says **Backup complete** (not "Backing up 20 items").
3. Only then is every picture safely in your Google account, and you can use Free Up Space (Part 6) freely.

> STAY SAFE
>
> **"Backup complete" is the magic phrase**
>
> Make this a habit: before you ever delete photos to make room, glance at your backup status and look for **Backup complete** (Android) or the up-to-date note (iPhone). If you see it, your memories are safe no matter what you clear. If you don't, wait until you do. That one glance is the whole secret to fearless tidying.

A simple way to double-check with your own eyes

Want extra reassurance that your photos really are in the cloud? Sit at any computer, open a web browser, and go to **icloud.com** (iPhone) or **photos.google.com** (Android). Sign in with the same account as your phone, and you should see your pictures right there on the screen — proof they're safely off the phone and in the cloud. It's a comforting thing to see at least once.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Now the rest of the book is worry-free

With backup confirmed, you've built the foundation everything else stands on. Organizing, sharing, and especially clearing space can all be done without a flicker of fear — because your memories now live in two places at once. That's the peace of mind this whole part was for.

PART 5

Sharing Photos with the Family

The Share button, sending pictures by text and email, through Messenger and other apps, shared albums for everyone, making a link, and getting real prints in your hands.

CHAPTER 30

The Share Button: Your Gateway to Sending

Almost every way of sending a photo — text, email, Messenger, printing — begins with the very same button: **Share**. Learn to spot it once, and sharing anything becomes easy.

What the Share button looks like

- **iPhone**: a **square with an arrow pointing up** out of it. It sits at the bottom-left when a photo is open.
- **Android (Google Photos)**: usually the word **Share**, or three dots joined by lines (like a little "less-than" shape), near the bottom.

The basic move: share one photo

1. Open the photo you want to send.
2. Tap the **Share** button.
3. A panel slides up showing ways to send — Messages, Mail, Messenger, WhatsApp, and more — plus people you message often.
4. Tap the method (or the person) you want. We'll walk through each in the chapters ahead.

Sharing several photos at once

1. From the wall of photos, tap **Select** (or press and hold the first photo).
2. Tap each photo you want to send — a check-mark appears on each.
3. Tap **Share**, then choose how to send them. They'll all go together.

TIP

One button to remember

If you learn just one thing from this part, let it be the **Share** button — the square with an arrow on iPhone, the word "Share" on Android. Everything else here is just choosing *where* to send after you've tapped it. Find Share, and you can send a photo to anyone, any way.

CHAPTER 31

Sending Photos by Text Message

The quickest way to get a photo to one person is usually a plain **text message** — the same app you use to text "running late" or "happy birthday." Here's the whole thing, step by slow step.

Sending a photo in a text

1. Open the photo, tap **Share**.
2. Tap **Messages** (iPhone) or **Messages** / your texting app (Android).
3. Type the name or number of the person — or tap one of the suggested faces.
4. Add a few words if you like ("Thought you'd love this!"), then tap the **send arrow**.

The other direction: a photo arrived — how to save it

When someone texts *you* a photo, you'll want to keep it in your own library:

- **iPhone**: tap the photo in the message to open it, then tap **Share** and **Save Image** (or tap the little download arrow). It lands in your Photos.
- **Android**: tap the photo in the message, then look for a **download** or **Save** button (sometimes under three dots). It saves to Google Photos.

GOOD TO KNOW

A word on picture quality in texts

Texting is wonderfully simple, but some phone carriers *shrink* photos sent by traditional text (the green-bubble kind) to send them faster, so they can arrive a touch less crisp. For a few quick snaps that's fine. If you want someone to have the full-quality original — say, to print — email or a shared album (coming up) keeps it sharper.

TIP

iPhone to iPhone stays full quality

If both you and the person you're texting have iPhones, your photos travel as **iMessages** (the blue bubbles) and keep their full quality automatically. It's one of the nicest reasons families often end up all on the same kind of phone.

CHAPTER 32

Sending Photos by Email

Email is a fine way to send photos, especially to someone whose phone number you don't have, or when you want to send a batch with a proper note. It also tends to preserve quality well.

Emailing a photo

1. Open the photo (or select several), tap **Share**.
2. Tap **Mail** (iPhone) or **Gmail** / your email app (Android).
3. A new email opens with the photo already attached. Type the person's email address in the **To** box.
4. Add a subject ("Photos from Sunday") and a line or two, then tap **Send**.

HEADS UP

Email has a size limit — a handful at a time

Email can only carry so much in one message. A few photos are no trouble, but trying to attach fifty at once may fail or bounce back. If your email won't send, you've likely attached too many — send them in smaller batches, or use a shared album (next chapters) for big collections. Your phone may also kindly offer to shrink them to fit; that's fine for ordinary viewing.

Saving a photo that arrived by email

To keep a photo someone emailed you, open the email, tap the photo (or the little download arrow beside it), and choose **Save Image** or **Save to Photos**. It joins your own library, right alongside your own pictures.

CHAPTER 33

Sharing Through Messenger, WhatsApp & Facebook

If your family chats on **Messenger** (Facebook's messaging) or **WhatsApp**, those are grand ways to share photos too — and the method is, happily, the very same **Share** button you already know.

Sending a photo through a chat app

1. Open the photo, tap **Share**.
2. In the panel that slides up, tap **Messenger**, **WhatsApp**, or whichever app your family uses. (If you don't see it, swipe along the row of apps, or tap "More.")
3. Choose the person or group chat, add a word if you like, and tap **Send**.

Posting a photo to Facebook

To share a picture with all your Facebook friends at once (rather than one person), tap **Share**, then **Facebook**, and you can post it to your page with a caption. (My Facebook manual, No. 7 in this series, walks through all of that gently if you'd like more.)

TIP

The pattern never changes

Notice the rhythm: open the photo, tap **Share**, pick the app, pick the person, send. Whether it's a text, an email, Messenger, or WhatsApp, it's the same four steps. Once that rhythm is in your fingers, no sharing method can stump you.

SCAM ALERT

Be cautious sharing photos with people you don't truly know

Share freely with family and real friends. But if someone you met only online asks you to send photos — especially personal ones — be careful; that's a common setup for trouble. A good rule: only share pictures with people you'd happily hand a printed photo to in person.

CHAPTER 34

Shared Albums for the Whole Family

We met shared albums back in Part 3, and they deserve a second look here in the sharing part, because for families they're often the *best* way of all — no re-sending, no shrinking, everyone's pictures in one place that updates itself.

Why a shared album beats sending one by one

- **You set it up once.** After that, every new photo you add simply appears for everyone — no re-sending to each person.
- **It's two-way.** Family members can add their own photos, so you get the pictures from *their* cameras too.
- **Quality stays high**, unlike some texts.
- **It doesn't fill anyone's storage** the way a flood of texted photos would.

A quick refresher on setting one up

The full steps are in Chapter 20. In short: on an **iPhone**, Albums > plus > **New Shared Album**, then invite family. On an **Android**, select photos > **Share** > create a shared (collaborative) album or link, then invite. Add photos any time, and everyone sees them.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

One warm album the whole family keeps adding to

Imagine a "Family 2026" album where you, your children, and your grandchildren all drop in pictures through the year — birthdays, the garden, the dog, a snowy morning. By December it's a shared family album nobody had to assemble. That's the magic of a shared album, and it's free.

GOOD TO KNOW

Mixing iPhone and Android families

If some of your family use iPhones and some use Android, Apple's Shared Albums work best when everyone has Apple devices, while Google Photos shared albums (especially the **link** kind) work for everybody. For a mixed family, a Google Photos shared link is often the friendliest choice — anyone can open it, whatever phone they carry.

CHAPTER 35

Making a Link Anyone Can Open

Sometimes you want to share a batch of photos with someone who isn't set up for shared albums — or send "all the wedding pictures" in one go. The answer is a **shareable link**: a web address that opens your chosen photos in any web browser, on any device.

Creating a link

- **Android (Google Photos)**: select the photos (or open an album), tap **Share**, then **Create link**. The phone copies a web address you can paste into any text or email.
- **iPhone**: select the photos, tap **Share**, then **Copy iCloud Link** (Apple prepares a link; it may take a moment). Paste it into a message or email.

Sending and using the link

1. Once the link is copied, open a text or email to the person.
2. **Paste** it in (press and hold in the message box, then tap **Paste**) and send.
3. They tap the link and your photos open in their browser — no special app needed — where they can view and save them.

HEADS UP

A link works for anyone who has it

The convenience of a link is also the thing to mind: **anyone** who receives that link can open the photos, and could forward it on. So send links to people you trust, and don't post them anywhere public. For most family sharing that's no worry at all — just worth knowing.

TIP

Links expire or can be switched off

If you'd rather a link not live forever, both apps let you **stop sharing** it later (in the album's sharing settings), which makes the link stop working. Good to know you're always in control of what you've shared.

CHAPTER 36

Printing Photos & Ordering Prints

A photo on a screen is lovely, but there's still nothing like a **print** you can frame, mail in a card, or stick on the refrigerator. Your phone makes getting real prints easier than ever. Here are the three common ways.

1. Order prints delivered or for pickup

You can have prints made from your phone and either mailed to you or ready to collect at a nearby pharmacy or store.

- Many drugstores and big stores have a **photo app** (or website) where you pick your pictures and choose a store for same-day pickup — often cheap and quick.
- **Google Photos** has a built-in **Print store**: tap **Print store** (in Collections or the menu) to order prints, or even a bound photo book, sent to you.
- On **iPhone**, tap **Share** on a photo and look for a **Print** or photo-service option, or use a store's own app.

2. Print at home on your own printer

1. Open the photo, tap **Share**.
2. Scroll the options and tap **Print**.
3. Pick your printer from the list (it must be on the same Wi-Fi), choose how many copies, and tap **Print**.

3. Use a print kiosk at the store

Many pharmacies have a self-serve **kiosk** — a touchscreen machine — where you can print on the spot. The friendliest way is often to bring your photos on the store's app, or ask the clerk; they do it all day and are glad to help.

> **TIP**
>
> **Make a photo book for a gift they'll treasure**
>
> A printed **photo book** — the kind you design on your phone and have mailed to you bound like a real book — makes a wonderful, inexpensive gift: a year of grandchildren, a big anniversary, a lost loved one remembered. Google Photos and many store apps walk you through it. If you'd like a hand making one, that's exactly the sort of thing I'm glad to sit down and do with you.

PART 6

"My Phone Is Full"

The single most common worry — and the most fixable. What "storage full" really means, how to find what's hogging the room, and how to free up gigabytes safely without losing a single memory.

CHAPTER 37

"Storage Full": What It Means & Why It Happens

"Storage Almost Full" is probably the message that sent you to this book, and I want to start by taking all the fear out of it. It is one of the most common things folks call me about — and one of the easiest to fix. Nothing is broken, and nothing is lost.

What the message actually means

Remember the cupboard from Chapter 2? Your phone has a fixed amount of room inside it for storing things. "Storage full" simply means that cupboard is nearly packed — usually with photos and videos, because those take up the most room. It does **not** mean your phone is broken, dying, or out of memories. It means the cupboard needs a tidy.

GOOD TO KNOW

"Storage" vs. "memory" — don't let the words worry you

You'll hear "storage," "memory," and "space" used for the same thing: the room inside your phone for keeping photos, apps, and files. When something says you're "out of memory," it doesn't mean the phone has forgotten anything — just that the cupboard is full. A good clear-out fixes it.

Why photos and videos are usually the cause

Of everything on a phone, photos and especially **videos** take up far and away the most room. A few years of pictures, plus a handful of long videos of the grandchildren's recital, can quietly fill a cupboard that seemed enormous when the phone was new. That's normal, and it's exactly what this part is here to fix.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

The best part: once backed up, clearing is painless

Here's why this is such good news. If you did Part 4 and your photos are backed up to the cloud, then freeing up phone space doesn't cost you a single picture — it just removes the phone's extra copy while the cloud keeps the real one. You get your room back *and* keep every memory. That's the whole trick of this part.

CHAPTER 38

Finding What's Filling Your iPhone

Before clearing anything, it's worth *seeing* what's taking up the room — it's often an eye-opener, and it tells you where to aim. Your iPhone has a wonderful built-in chart for exactly this.

Opening the iPhone Storage screen

1. Open **Settings** (the grey gear).
2. Tap **General**.
3. Tap **iPhone Storage**.
4. Wait a moment while it adds things up. A colorful bar appears at the top, and below it a **list of what's using the most room**, biggest first.

Reading what you see

At the top of that list you'll almost certainly find **Photos** — often the single biggest item. The bar shows how full the cupboard is overall. Tap **Photos** and the phone will even offer suggestions, like turning on the space-saving setting we'll use next chapter.

TIP

Look for the surprises near the top

The list is sorted biggest-first, so glance at the top few items. Besides Photos, you might spot a video app, old podcasts, or an app you forgot you had, each hogging a surprising amount. Clearing one or two of those can free room without touching a single photo.

GOOD TO KNOW

"Offload" vs. "Delete" an app

On that screen, tapping an app may offer to **Offload** it — that removes the app to save room but *keeps your data and settings*, so reinstalling it later puts everything back. **Delete** removes it fully. Offloading is the gentle choice for apps you might want again.

CHAPTER 39

Finding What's Filling Your Android

Android phones have the very same kind of built-in chart, though the exact path varies a little by brand (Samsung, Google Pixel, Motorola, and so on). Here's how to find it on most phones.

Opening the storage screen

1. Open your phone's **Settings** (the gear).
2. Tap **Storage** (on some phones it's under **Battery and device care** > **Storage**, especially on Samsung).
3. Wait a moment. You'll see how full the phone is and a breakdown by type — **Images**, **Videos**, Apps, and so on.

Reading what you see

Images and **Videos** are usually near the top — your photos and films. Tapping a category often lets you dig in and clear things from right there. Many Samsung and Pixel phones also offer a built-in **"Free up space"** or cleanup button on this screen, which we'll put to good use next.

TIP

Don't let "cache" or "system" worry you

You'll see items like **Cache** (temporary files apps keep) and **System** (the phone's own workings). Clearing cache is harmless and sometimes helps, but leave System alone. For freeing real room, your attention belongs on **Images** and **Videos** — that's where the big space is.

GOOD TO KNOW

Some Androids take a memory card

Certain Android phones (many Samsungs, for one) have a slot for a small **memory card** (a "microSD card") that adds extra room for photos — a few dollars at any store. If your phone has one, it's another way to make space. If you're not sure whether yours does, that's an easy thing to check together on a call.

CHAPTER 40

Optimize iPhone Storage: The Magic Setting

This is the single most useful setting on an iPhone for a full phone, and it's wonderfully clever. Switched on, it lets your phone keep **smaller, space-saving versions** of your photos while the full-size originals stay safe in iCloud. You see all your pictures as normal, but they take up a fraction of the room.

How it works, in plain terms

When the phone starts running low, **Optimize iPhone Storage** quietly swaps your older, less-looked-at photos for lightweight stand-ins — small enough to glance at, with the full original a tap away in iCloud whenever you open or share one. Your recent and favorite pictures stay full-size on the phone; the dusty old ones slim down. You lose nothing; you simply stop carrying every full-size original in your pocket.

Turning it on

1. Make sure **iCloud Photos** is on and your backup has finished (Part 4) — this setting *relies* on that.
2. Open **Settings**, tap your **name**, then **iCloud**, then **Photos**.
3. Choose **Optimize iPhone Storage** (rather than "Download and Keep Originals").
4. That's it. The phone will gradually free up room on its own as it needs to.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Gigabytes back, every photo kept

For many folks this one setting frees up more room than anything else — sometimes gigabytes — without deleting a single picture. The originals are all safe in iCloud; the phone just stops hoarding full-size copies it doesn't need. It's the gentlest, safest fix there is.

HEADS UP

It only works once backup is complete

Because the full originals live in iCloud, Optimize Storage is only safe once your photos are fully backed up there. If backup hasn't finished (or iCloud is full and stuck), the phone can't safely slim anything down. So: confirm "up to date" first, add a little iCloud room if needed (Chapter 28), *then* this setting does its quiet magic.

CHAPTER 41

Freeing Space on Android with "Free Up Space"

Google Photos on Android (and iPhone) has the same idea in a button you press yourself: once your photos are backed up, **Free up space** deletes the phone's local copies of pictures that are already safe in the cloud — reclaiming room while the cloud keeps every original.

Using Free Up Space

1. First confirm **Backup complete** in Google Photos (Part 4) — this tool only clears photos it knows are safely backed up.
2. Tap your **account picture** (top-right).
3. Tap **Free up space** (sometimes under "Manage storage on this device").
4. It tells you how many backed-up photos it can remove from the phone, and how much room that frees. Tap **Free up** (or Allow) to go ahead.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Safe by design

Here's why you can press this button with confidence: Google Photos only removes copies it has *already saved* to the cloud. The pictures still appear in the app exactly as before — they just stream from the cloud when you open them. You free up real room and keep every memory. That's the safe way to clear an Android.

Clearing one photo's phone copy by hand

You can also do it one photo at a time. Open a backed-up photo, tap the **three dots**, and choose **Delete from device** (not plain "Delete"). That removes only the phone's copy and leaves the cloud original untouched — handy for clearing a big video you've just backed up.

HEADS UP

"Delete from device" vs. "Delete" — know the difference

This matters: **Delete from device** removes only the phone's copy, keeping the cloud one (safe). Plain **Delete** (the trash can) removes it from the cloud too, sending it to the Trash. For freeing space while keeping memories, you want **Delete from device** or the **Free up space** button — never a blanket delete of un-backed-up photos.

CHAPTER 42

The Biggest Hogs: Long Videos & Duplicates

If after the space-saving settings you still need more room — or you'd simply like a proper clear-out — go after the two biggest space hogs: **long videos** and **duplicate pictures**. A little effort here frees a lot of room.

Hunting down the big videos

- **iPhone**: in **Settings > General > iPhone Storage > Photos**, the phone can show your largest items. Or, in the Photos app, open the **Videos** album and look for the long ones.
- **Android**: in Google Photos, tap your account picture, then **Manage storage** — it often lists **large photos and videos** and **blurry photos** it suggests reviewing.
- Watch an old long video once. If it's precious, make sure it's backed up and leave it in the cloud. If it's a 20-minute accidental recording of the floor, that's easy room to reclaim.

Clearing duplicates

Burst shots and "let me take one more" leave everyone with sets of near-identical photos. On an **iPhone**, **Albums > Utilities > Duplicates** finds exact copies and offers to merge them safely. On **Android**, the **Manage storage** screen flags look-alikes and blurry shots to review. Keep the best; let the rest go (to the recycle bin, where they wait for weeks).

> **TIP**
>
> **A minute of video can equal fifty photos**
>
> If you remember nothing else: **videos are the heavyweight**. Clearing two or three long old videos (after they're backed up) often frees more room than deleting hundreds of photos. When you're hunting space, start with the videos.

CHAPTER 43

Emptying "Recently Deleted" / Trash to Reclaim Room

Here's a step folks often miss, then wonder why their phone is still full after deleting a pile of photos: deleted pictures don't give their room back right away. They sit in the recycle bin for weeks first — still taking up space — until that bin is emptied.

Why your phone stays full after deleting

Remember the safety net from Chapter 7? Deleted photos wait in **Recently Deleted** (iPhone, 30 days) or the **Trash** (Android, up to 60 days) so you can change your mind. The catch: while they wait, they *still use room*. To get that room back sooner, you empty the bin — but only once you're sure you want those photos gone.

Emptying the bin

On an iPhone

1. Tap **Albums**, scroll to **Utilities**, open **Recently Deleted** (unlock with Face ID or your passcode).
2. Look through it — this is your last chance to rescue anything.
3. Tap **Select**, then **Delete All** (or pick individual ones and Delete). The room comes back.

On an Android (Google Photos)

1. Tap **Collections** or **Library**, then **Trash** (or "Bin").
2. Look through it carefully — last chance to Restore anything.
3. Tap the **three dots** and **Empty trash** (or select items and delete). The room comes back.

STAY SAFE

Emptying the bin is the point of no return — look first

Everywhere else in this book I've told you deleting is reversible. Emptying the recycle bin is the one step that *isn't*: after this, those particular photos are gone for good from the phone. So always **look through the bin first**, make sure your keepers are backed up (and so still safe in the cloud regardless), and only then empty it. Never in a hurry. If unsure, leave it — or call me at (330) 200-8042.

CHAPTER 44

A Safe, Step-by-Step Cleanup Routine

Let's put the whole part together into one calm routine you can follow any time the phone fills up. Do these in order, and you'll reclaim room without ever risking a memory.

The seven-step clear-out

1. **Confirm backup is done.** iPhone: Photos is "up to date." Android: "Backup complete." (Part 4.) This is the step that makes everything after it safe.
2. **See what's using the room.** iPhone: Settings > General > iPhone Storage. Android: Settings > Storage. Note the big items.
3. **Turn on the space-saver.** iPhone: Optimize iPhone Storage (Chapter 40). Android: Free up space (Chapter 41). Often this alone does it.
4. **Clear a few big old videos** you've already backed up (Chapter 42).
5. **Merge duplicates** and delete obvious misfires (Chapter 42).
6. **Review and empty the recycle bin** — carefully, looking first (Chapter 43).
7. **If it fills again soon**, consider a little more cloud room (Chapter 28) or, on some Androids, a memory card.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Room back, every memory kept

Follow those seven steps and you'll typically free up a great deal of room — sometimes enough that the phone feels new again — without losing one photo, because everything of value is safe in the cloud. That's a clear-out you can do with a light heart.

FROM BILL

When the phone's full and you'd rather not go it alone

A full phone can feel stressful, especially if the backup status is confusing or the storage screen looks like a foreign language. That's a very common thing to call me about, and often a 20-minute call sorts it completely — backup confirmed, space freed, settings set so it doesn't happen again. Ring me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll clear it out together.

PART 7

Keeping Your Photos Safe for Years

Beyond everyday backup: a second safety net, copying photos to a computer or drive, downloading your whole collection, and making sure your memories outlast any one phone or account.

CHAPTER 45

The Three Places Your Memories Should Live

We've made sure your photos are in two places — your phone and the cloud. For your most irreplaceable memories, there's a simple, old-fashioned rule that photographers and archivists swear by, and it's worth knowing.

The simple rule: more than one basket

The whole wisdom boils down to this: **don't keep your only copy of anything precious in one place**. Phones get lost, accounts can get locked, even companies change their terms. The more separate places a memory lives, the safer it is. For most folks, aiming for a few sensible copies is plenty of peace of mind.

The three baskets to aim for

Basket	What it is
1. Your phone	The everyday copy you look at and share. Convenient, but the most easily lost.
2. The cloud	iCloud or Google Photos — the automatic safety net from Part 4. Your main protection.
3. A copy of your own	Every year or so, a copy on a computer, a USB drive, or an external disk — one *you* hold, not tied to any company.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why the third basket matters

The cloud is wonderfully reliable, but it belongs to a company and depends on your account staying open and paid. A copy you keep yourself — on a drive in a drawer — answers the question "what if something ever happened to my account?" For your truly irreplaceable pictures, that third basket is worth the small effort.

TIP

Don't let "perfect" stop you from "good"

You don't need a fancy system. Even one extra copy of your favorite photos on a cheap USB drive, refreshed once a year, puts you far ahead of most people. Start simple. A good-enough backup you actually do beats a perfect one you never get around to.

CHAPTER 46

Exporting a Copy to a Computer

If you have a computer — any computer, Windows or Mac — copying your photos onto it gives you that valuable third basket. Here's the gentle way, for each kind of phone.

iPhone to a computer

- **To a Mac**: connect the iPhone with its cable; the Mac's **Photos** app usually offers to **Import** your pictures. Or, since both use iCloud, the photos may simply appear on the Mac already.
- **To a Windows PC**: connect the iPhone with its cable, unlock the phone, and tap **Trust** if asked. On the PC, open **File Explorer**, find the iPhone under "This PC," and you can copy the photo files into a folder — or use the free **Apple Devices** / **iCloud for Windows** program.

Android to a computer

- Connect the phone with its cable. On the phone, a notice may ask what the connection is for — choose **File transfer** (or "Transfer photos").
- On a **Windows PC**, open **File Explorer**, find your phone, open its **DCIM** folder (where the camera saves pictures), and copy the photos to a folder on the PC.
- On a **Mac**, Android file transfer needs a small free helper program; or simply use **photos.google.com** in a web browser to download them (next chapters).

> **TIP**
>
> **The web is often the easiest route of all**
>
> Fiddling with cables can be fussy. An easier path for many: on any computer, open a web browser and go to **icloud.com** (iPhone) or **photos.google.com** (Android), sign in, select the photos you want, and click **Download**. No cable, no special program. We'll cover downloading *everything* at once in Chapter 48.

CHAPTER 47

Copying Photos to a USB Drive or External Disk

A **USB drive** (a "thumb drive" or "flash drive" — a little stick that plugs into a computer) or an **external hard drive** is a cheap, lasting place to keep a copy of your memories that doesn't depend on any company. Here's the plain how-to.

The basic steps

1. First get your photos onto a **computer** (Chapter 46) — into a folder you can find, like one named "My Photos" on the Desktop.
2. Plug the **USB drive** into the computer. It appears as a new drive (in File Explorer on Windows, or on the Desktop on a Mac).
3. **Drag** your photo folder onto the USB drive's icon, or copy and paste it there. Wait for it to finish copying.
4. **Safely remove** the drive (Windows: click the little eject symbol; Mac: drag it to the Trash/Eject), then unplug it and tuck it somewhere safe.

GOOD TO KNOW

How big a drive do you need?

Photos are small; videos are big. For most folks's pictures, an inexpensive USB stick is ample; if you have years of videos too, a larger external hard drive is worth the modest cost. A store clerk — or I — can point you to the right size without overspending.

HEADS UP

A drive in a drawer can fail too — so keep the cloud as well

USB drives and hard disks aren't forever; they can wear out or get lost, same as anything. So think of your own drive as an *extra* basket, not a replacement for the cloud. The cloud (Part 4) stays your main, automatic protection; the drive is your belt-and-suspenders copy for the truly irreplaceable.

TIP

Label it and note the date

Write the date on the drive with a marker, or name the folder "Photos through 2026." Next year, when you make a fresh copy, you'll know exactly what's on it and what's new to add. A tiny habit that saves confusion later.

CHAPTER 48

Downloading Everything from iCloud or Google

If you'd like to download your *entire* collection at once — to put on a drive, or just to have it all in hand — both Apple and Google offer a way to request the whole lot. It takes a little patience, but it's the most complete copy you can make.

From Apple (iCloud)

Apple's tool is called **Data and Privacy**. On a computer, go to **privacy.apple.com**, sign in with your Apple account, and look for **Request a copy of your data**. Choose **iCloud Photos**, and Apple will prepare everything and email you when it's ready to download (it can take a few days for a big library). You can also simply select and download photos directly at **icloud.com** for smaller batches.

From Google (Google Photos)

Google's tool is called **Google Takeout**. On a computer, go to **takeout.google.com**, sign in, and choose to include **Google Photos**. Google bundles everything into files and emails you a download link when ready (again, a big library takes time). For smaller batches, you can select photos at **photos.google.com** and click **Download**.

TIP

You don't have to do the whole lot at once

Downloading everything is grand for an annual "keep my own copy" session, but for everyday needs, downloading a chosen album or a handful of photos from **icloud.com** or **photos.google.com** is quicker and simpler. Use the big download when you want the complete archive; use the small one for day-to-day.

STAY SAFE

These are big files — mind where they land

A full download can be very large and arrives as compressed "zip" files you then open up. If that sounds daunting, it's a perfect thing to do together — I can sit with you (in person or over a screen-share) and we'll get your whole life's photos safely onto a drive in one sitting. No need to wrestle with it alone.

CHAPTER 49

Making Sure Your Photos Outlast You

This is a tender subject, and I'll treat it plainly and kindly, because it matters more than almost anything else in this book. Your photos are a gift to the people who'll come after you — and a little planning makes sure they can actually reach them.

The problem, stated gently

If all your photos live only in an account locked behind a password only you know, then one day your family may find themselves unable to open the very pictures they'd most treasure. It happens often, and it's heartbreaking — and entirely preventable with a few simple steps.

Three things that help your family later

- **Keep that third basket (a drive or computer copy).** A folder of photos on a drive needs no password and no account — anyone in the family can open it. This alone solves most of the problem.
- **Write your accounts and passwords down** and keep them somewhere safe and known — a sealed envelope with your important papers, or told to someone you trust. Not stuck to the computer.
- **Set up a "Legacy Contact"** — both Apple and Google let you name a trusted person who can access your photos if something happens to you. Apple calls it a **Legacy Contact**; Google has an **Inactive Account Manager**. Worth setting up once.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A lasting gift, quietly arranged

Taking an hour to make a drive copy and note down your accounts means your grandchildren, and theirs, can one day sit with your pictures and know you. That's not a technical chore — it's one of the kindest, most loving things you can do with an afternoon. Your memories become a gift that truly lasts.

FROM BILL

I'm glad to help with this, with no awkwardness

Folks sometimes feel shy raising this, and please don't — it's one of the most worthwhile things I help with. We can set up a legacy contact, make a drive copy of your photos, and write down what your family would need, all in one calm visit. Call me at (330) 200-8042 whenever you're ready.

CHAPTER 50

Common Ways People Lose Photos (and How to Avoid Them)

In my work I see the same few heartbreaks again and again — and every one of them is preventable. Here they are, plainly, so none of them ever happens to you.

The usual culprits

How it happens	How to avoid it
New phone, photos left behind	Not backed up before switching phones, so pictures stayed on the old one. **Fix:** confirm backup (Part 4) *before* giving up the old phone.
Deleted, then bin emptied	A photo deleted and the recycle bin emptied before realizing. **Fix:** never empty the bin in a hurry; keep backup on.
Account locked or forgotten	Lost the password to the only account the photos were in. **Fix:** write passwords down; keep a drive copy too.
Cloud full, new photos never saved	Storage filled up, so recent pictures quietly stopped backing up. **Fix:** don't ignore "storage full" — tidy or add room.
Only copy on a drive that failed	Trusted a single USB drive with no other copy. **Fix:** keep the cloud too; a drive is an extra, not the only.

STAY SAFE

Every one of these is prevented by the same two habits

Look at that list and you'll notice two habits defeat nearly all of it: **keep automatic backup on** (Part 4), and **keep one copy of your own** (a drive, refreshed yearly). Do those two things and you are about as safe as a person can be. The rest is details.

CHAPTER 51

A Once-a-Year Photo Checkup

Everything in this book settles into one gentle habit you can do in an afternoon, once a year — around a birthday or New Year's, so it's easy to remember. Here's the whole checkup on one page.

Your yearly photo checkup

1. **Confirm backup is on and finished.** iPhone: Photos "up to date." Android: "Backup complete." (Part 4.)
2. **Check your cloud isn't full.** If it is, tidy some space or add a little room so new photos keep saving (Chapters 27-28).
3. **Make a fresh copy of your own** onto a drive or computer — your third basket (Chapters 46-48). Label it with the year.
4. **Do a gentle tidy.** Clear obvious misfires and big old videos you've backed up (Part 6).
5. **Favorite the year's best** and perhaps make one shared album or a printed photo book for the family (Parts 3 and 5).
6. **Check your passwords are written down** somewhere safe, and your legacy contact is set (Chapter 49).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

One afternoon a year buys a lifetime of safety

Do this little checkup each year and you'll never have the sinking feeling of lost memories. Your photos stay backed up, your own copy stays current, and your family is looked after. It's the single best hour you can spend on your pictures all year.

TIP

Make it a pleasant ritual

Pour a cup of coffee, put the photos up on the big screen, and let the checkup double as a wander back through the year. It needn't be a chore — done right, it's an hour of happy remembering with a side of safety. And if you'd like company for it, you know my number.

PART 8

Odds, Ends & When to Call Bill

Screenshots, light editing, Live Photos, scanning old prints, quick fixes when something won't work, a plain-English glossary, your cheat-sheet, and an honest word about calling.

CHAPTER 52

Screenshots: What They Are & Managing Them

You've probably got a pile of **screenshots** in your photos without quite knowing how they got there. Let's demystify them — they're handy, harmless, and easy to tidy.

What a screenshot is

A **screenshot** is a photo of whatever is on your screen at that moment — not taken with the camera, but captured by the phone itself. It's wonderful for saving a confirmation number, a recipe, a map, or a funny message to show someone later. They land in your photo library right alongside your real pictures.

How to take one

- **iPhone (with Face ID)**: press the **side button** and the **volume-up** button together, quickly, then let go. The screen flashes.
- **iPhone (with a round Home button)**: press the **Home** button and the **side/top** button together.
- **Most Androids**: press the **power** button and **volume-down** together for a moment.

Keeping screenshots from cluttering things

Both apps gather screenshots into their own **Screenshots** album, so they're easy to find and clear out. Once you've used a screenshot (saved the number, shown the picture), it's usually safe to delete — it's a note to yourself, not a treasured memory. Tidying these is a quick, satisfying way to declutter.

> **TIP**
>
> **A screenshot is the easiest way to save "what's on the screen"**
>
> Can't figure out how to save something you're looking at — a ticket, a code, an address? Just take a screenshot of it. Now it's a picture you can find, zoom into, and share like any other. It's one of the handiest little tricks a phone offers.

CHAPTER 53

Light Editing: Crop, Brighten, Straighten

You don't need to be a photographer to make a good picture a little better. Both photo apps have gentle editing tools built right in, and — this is the reassuring part — **every edit can be undone**, even weeks later. You truly can't ruin the original.

Getting to the editing tools

1. Open the photo you want to improve.
2. Tap **Edit** (iPhone: top-right; Android: the **sliders** icon along the bottom).
3. A row of tools appears. Make your changes, then tap **Done** (iPhone) or **Save** (Android).

The three edits worth knowing

- **Crop** — trim the edges to cut out clutter or center the subject. Drag the corners inward. Great for straightening a tilted horizon too.
- **Brighten (or "Light")** — if a photo's too dark or too washed-out, nudge the brightness slider until it looks right.
- **Auto-enhance** — a single "magic wand" button that adjusts everything at once. Tap it; if you like the result, keep it; if not, tap again to undo.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Undo is always there — so experiment freely

Because the original is never truly overwritten, you can play with cropping and brightening with zero risk. If you ever dislike an edit, open the photo, tap **Edit**, and choose **Revert** (iPhone) or undo your changes (Android) to restore the original exactly. Nothing to fear — go ahead and make your pictures shine.

CHAPTER 54

Live Photos, Motion Photos & Little Extras

A few charming extras round out what your phone's camera and photo app can do. None of them are essential, but they're nice to understand so nothing surprises you.

Live Photos and Motion Photos

We met these in Chapter 13: pictures that hold a second or two of movement. Beyond simply pressing and holding to watch them, you can:

- **Pick a better still frame** — if the moment you captured blinked, iPhone lets you choose a different frame as the "key photo" (open it, tap Edit, tap the LIVE button).
- **Turn a Live Photo into a fun loop** — iPhone can make it bounce back and forth or loop, under the LIVE menu.
- **Make it a plain photo** if you prefer — covered in Chapter 13.

Memories and slideshows

Both apps quietly build little **slideshows** — "On This Day," "Last Summer," a montage set to music. You'll find them under **For You** (iPhone) or at the top of your photos (Android). They're a lovely surprise, and you can share one with family in a tap. They don't change your actual photos — they're just a pretty way of showing them.

TIP

Share a ready-made Memory with the family

When your phone makes one of those little music slideshows of a trip or a year, it's often nicer than anything you'd assemble yourself — and sharing it takes one tap on the Share button. A delightful, effortless way to send a bit of joy to the grandchildren.

CHAPTER 55

Scanning Old Printed Photos with Your Phone

Some of your most precious pictures may be old **printed** photos in shoeboxes and albums — the ones that exist nowhere else. Your phone can turn them into digital pictures, so they join your library, get backed up, and can be shared. It's one of the most rewarding things you can do with a quiet afternoon.

Two easy ways to scan a print

- **Just photograph it.** Lay the print flat in good, even light (near a window, no glare), hold the phone steady and square above it, and take a picture. Crop the edges afterward (Chapter 53). Quick and perfectly good for most.
- **Use a free scanning app.** Google's **PhotoScan** (free) guides you to move the phone over the print to remove glare and straighten it automatically — lovely results. Google Photos itself also has an **Import photos > From camera** scan feature on many phones.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Rescuing memories that exist nowhere else

A printed photo is one spill or one house-fire away from being lost forever. Scanning it into your phone gives it the same safety net as the rest — backed up in the cloud, copied to your drive, shareable with everyone who'd love to see it. Few afternoons are better spent.

FROM BILL

A wonderful project to do together

Scanning a whole shoebox of old family prints is a grand thing to tackle with help — we can set up a little production line, get them scanned and named, and have the whole family's history safely digital by teatime. It's one of my favorite kinds of visit. Call me at (330) 200-8042 if you'd like a hand with it.

CHAPTER 56

Quick Fixes When Photos Won't Load or Back Up

Now and then the photo app acts up — a picture won't load, backup seems stuck, the app freezes. Before you worry, try these simple fixes, which solve the great majority of everyday hiccups.

The five things to try, in order

1. **Check your internet.** Photos and backup need Wi-Fi or data. If other things won't load either, that's the culprit — move nearer your router.
2. **Make sure it's charging, on Wi-Fi.** Backup often waits until the phone is plugged in and on Wi-Fi. Plug it in and give it a few minutes.
3. **Close and reopen the app.** Fully close the photo app and open it fresh. This clears most little glitches.
4. **Restart the phone.** Turn it off and on again. It's the oldest fix in the book because it so often works — and it never deletes a thing.
5. **Check your cloud isn't full.** If backup is stuck, "storage full" is the usual reason — tidy some space or add a little room (Part 4).

TIP

"Backing up" that seems stuck is often just waiting for Wi-Fi

The most common "it won't back up!" turns out to be a phone that's off Wi-Fi, not charging, or low on battery — backup politely waits for better conditions. Plug it in on home Wi-Fi, leave it a while, and it usually catches right up on its own.

FROM BILL

When the quick fixes don't do it, that's what I'm for

If you've tried these steps and something's still not right — backup truly stuck, photos missing, a message you don't understand — don't spend your whole afternoon wrestling with it. That's exactly the moment to call me at (330) 200-8042. A fresh pair of eyes often sorts it in minutes, and you get your afternoon back.

CHAPTER 57

A Plain-English Glossary of Photo Words

Phones have a vocabulary all their own, and the words can make simple things sound harder than they are. Here's a plain-English dictionary of the terms you'll meet. Keep it handy for the first few weeks; soon you won't need it.

Word	What it means
Photos app	The app that shows all your pictures — "Photos" on iPhone, "Google Photos" on Android.
Library / Camera Roll	Your whole collection of pictures and videos, laid out by date.
The cloud	Safe computers on the internet (Apple's or Google's) that keep a copy of your photos.
iCloud	Apple's cloud, used by iPhones.
iCloud Photos	The iPhone feature that backs your pictures up to iCloud.
Google Photos	Google's photo app and cloud backup, used on Android (and available on iPhone).
Backup	A safe second copy kept in the cloud, made automatically.
Sync	Keeping the same photos matched up across your phone, tablet, and the cloud.
Storage	The room inside your phone — or your cloud — for keeping things. Fills with photos and video.
GB (gigabyte)	A measure of storage size. A few hundred photos, roughly, per gigabyte.
Album	A labeled collection of chosen photos. A list, not extra copies.
Shared album	An album several people can view and add to.
Favorite	A photo you've starred so it's easy to find again.
Optimize Storage	An iPhone setting: keep small copies on the phone, full ones in iCloud, to save room.
Free up space	A Google Photos tool that removes phone copies already safe in the cloud.
Recently Deleted / Trash	The recycle bin where deleted photos wait weeks before they're gone for good.
Live Photo / Motion Photo	A picture that holds a second or two of movement.
Screenshot	A picture of whatever's on your screen, captured by the phone.

Word	What it means
Share button	The square-with-an-arrow (iPhone) or "Share" (Android) that sends a photo anywhere.
Link	A web address that lets anyone you send it to open your chosen photos.
iCloud+ / Google One	The paid plans for extra cloud storage when the free amount fills up.

CHAPTER 58

Your Phone Photos Cheat-Sheet

Tear this page out, or fold its corner. These are the everyday moves, all in one place.

Everyday actions

To do this…	Do this
See a photo bigger	Tap it; pinch two fingers apart to zoom
Go to the next photo	Swipe left or right
Mark a favorite	Tap the heart (iPhone) or star (Android)
Send a photo	Open it → Share → pick a person or app
Find a photo	Tap Search → type a person, place, or thing
Make an album	Albums/Collections → New Album → add photos
Delete a photo	Open it → the trash can → confirm
Get a deleted photo back	Recently Deleted (iPhone) / Trash (Android) → Recover

Backing up (do this first!)

Phone	Turn on backup / check it
iPhone	Settings → your name → iCloud → Photos → turn on; Photos app says "up to date"
Android	Google Photos → account picture → Backup on; look for "Backup complete"

"My phone is full"

Step	What to do
See what's using room	iPhone: Settings → General → iPhone Storage. Android: Settings → Storage
Free space safely (iPhone)	Settings → your name → iCloud → Photos → Optimize iPhone Storage
Free space safely (Android)	Google Photos → account picture → Free up space
Get the room back	Empty Recently Deleted / Trash — after checking, never in a hurry

Staying safe

Situation	What to do
Before deleting lots of photos	Confirm backup is finished first ("up to date" / "Backup complete")

Situation	What to do
"Storage full" message	Don't panic — tidy space or add a little cloud room; nothing is lost
Email/text says "pay for storage"	Don't click — pay only inside your phone's own Settings
A photo that really matters, unsure	Don't empty the bin; leave it and call Bill

CHAPTER 59

When to Call Bill

I built this book so you could do most things with your photos yourself, at your own pace, with confidence. And you can. But part of doing things well is knowing when a task is worth handing to someone who does it every day — so you can spend your time enjoying your pictures instead of wrestling with them. Here's my honest take on when to pick up the phone.

Good reasons to call

- Your phone says **Storage Full** and the backup/storage screens are confusing — we'll clear it out together and set it so it doesn't keep happening.
- You're **getting a new phone** and want to be certain every photo comes across safely before the old one goes — a very common, very worthwhile call.
- You're **not sure your photos are backed up**, and you'd like someone to check and set it up properly, once, so you can stop worrying.
- You want to **make your own copy** — onto a drive or computer — and the download steps feel daunting.
- You'd like to **scan old printed photos**, make a shared family album, or put together a printed photo book, with a patient person beside you.
- You can't find photos you're sure you took, or something just isn't working the way this book describes.

What working with me is like

I'm Bill, and I run **Bill's Home Tech** right here in Portage County, Ohio. I've spent **30+ years** helping people feel at home with their technology, and I treat every call the way I'd want my own parents treated: patiently, in plain English, with no rushing, no jargon, and never, ever any eye-rolling. There is no such thing as a silly question with me.

How to reach me	
Call or text	(330) 200-8042
Book online	billshometech.com/book
Where I serve	Portage County, Ohio and nearby
What it costs	Fair, honest, and told to you up front — no surprises

FROM BILL

You're never a bother — that's the whole job

Some folks hesitate to call because they don't want to be a nuisance. Please don't feel that way. Helping you is not an interruption to my work — it *is* my work, and it's work I love. Whether it's a five-minute question about a full phone or a whole afternoon scanning the family shoebox, I'm glad to help. That's what I'm here for.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you reach my website, you may meet Sophie

When you visit billshometech.com, you might be greeted by **Sophie**, my friendly assistant on the site. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time with me. She's there to make reaching me easier — but a real person (me) always does the actual help.

Thank you for letting me be your guide through your phone's photos. Take your time, back everything up, enjoy seeing your people, and remember — with your memories safely in the cloud, you really can't lose them, and you're never stuck alone. I'm proud of you for learning something new.

— Bill