

Summary

The article debunks common misconceptions about iPhones. It clarifies that iOS automatically manages app closures, so users don't need to worry about closing apps manually. The article also emphasizes that Face ID is secure and cannot be bypassed without your knowledge or consent.

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You shouldn't believe baseless claims you randomly come across online.

By [Mahmoud Itani](#) Contributor, Macworld DEC 19, 2025 3:00 am PST

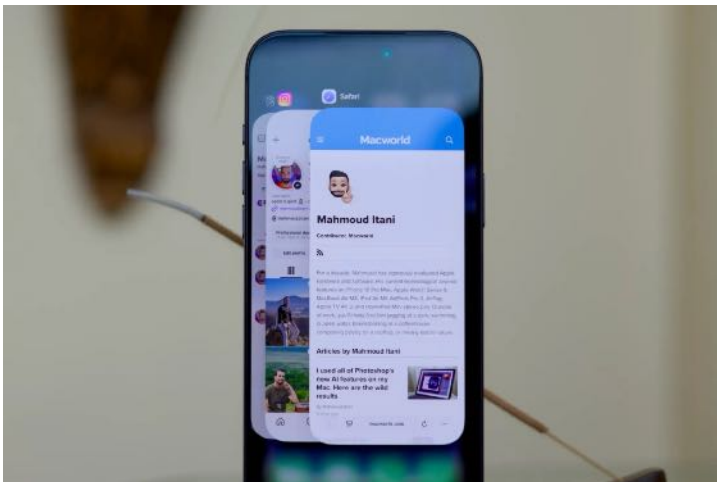


Image: Foundry

I'm known as the *Apple guy* in my social circle. Friends and family routinely ask for purchasing advice, and I often end up reviewing their iPhones to see whether they're missing useful apps, features, or settings. In many cases, I find people misusing their devices or disabling core functions due to unfounded worries.

You have probably heard at least one of

these 12 misconceptions before, and if you're new to iOS or simply unsure how the platform works, you might believe them. Let us give you a clearer understanding of how your iPhone operates.

1. App-closing assumptions

I frequently hear users—particularly recent switchers accustomed to Android—complain about needing to close iPhone apps manually. Many Android phones have

long offered a button to close all active apps at once, while iOS still requires you to swipe up on each app in the App Switcher individually.

Apple intentionally doesn't offer a Close All Apps button on iOS because the system automatically puts inactive apps to sleep. They're not constantly running in the background—even when they're listed among other open apps in the App Switcher.

In fact, repeatedly force-closing and relaunching everyday apps can actually drain your battery *more*, as initiating a fresh session consumes more power than reviving a hibernating one. You should only kill an app if it is misbehaving and requires a reset.

2. Network-killing nonsense

During the smartphone's early days, connectivity features like Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and GPS would consume significant power. For many users, the norm was disabling their respective toggles when not actively relying on apps that need them to minimize battery drain.

In modern phones, the relevant networking chips really use very little power when idle. As such, iOS has removed the ability to completely disable Wi-Fi and Bluetooth via the Control Center and instead disconnects accessories when toggled.

You shouldn't turn off Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and GPS in the Settings app, as essential features like Find My, Apple Watch sync, AirDrop, Universal Clipboard, and other Continuity features rely on them. You may want to stick to the Control Center toggles, as they disconnect your peripherals without affecting the ecosystem's underlying foundation.

Turning off Bluetooth or Wi-Fi when not in use simply won't extend the battery life of a modern iPhone a noticeable amount—it's just placebo effect and confirmation bias for those who think it does.

3. Eavesdropping rumors

No, a certain social media app is not secretly accessing your microphone and camera to deliver targeted ads. While developers are coming up with innovative (and arguably unethical) ways to track users' online activity, directly listening to your real-life conversations isn't one of them.

When an app accesses your microphone or camera, iOS displays a clear orange (microphone) or green (camera) indicator dot up near the front camera that developers cannot conceal. If you want to prevent an app from ever accessing these sensors, you can also deny microphone and camera permissions when prompted. It's not possible for an app to bypass these boundaries—assuming you haven't tampered with the operating system.



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You can open Control Center (swipe down from the upper-right edge of your display) and tap a little privacy indicator at the top of the Control Center screen to see which apps are currently and have recently accessed your camera, microphone, and location.

4. Charging chatter

It's widely believed that leaving your iPhone connected to a power source overnight can overcharge and damage its battery—that's not entirely true. Your iPhone carefully manages its power draw as the battery fills up to minimize excessive wear and damage. When the battery hits 100%, it only draws a small trickle to stay full.

Furthermore, features like Optimized Battery Charging and Charge Limit can optionally learn from your routines and prevent your iPhone from fully charging every day—unless you want it to. You can safely leave your iPhone on its charger all night long, especially after enabling these settings.

5. Dated OS delusions

Many users intentionally avoid updating to the latest iOS version, thinking it's going to slow down their iPhones or break features. While a major OS release may potentially run slower on a five-year-old iPhone, newer models tend to work just as fluidly after an update (and often faster). In fact, you're advised to download the latest iOS build available, as it packs critical security patches—beyond the user-facing additions. Keeping your iPhone on a dated operating system version increases the risk of vulnerability exploitation.

This myth persists because, immediately following a big new software update, your iPhone often performs a number of background tasks like indexing files and analyzing photos to recognize objects and people in them, all to make search and advanced features work properly. This can take a day or two, and much of it happens when your iPhone is plugged in and not in use, but the first few days after a big update can see slightly slower performance or shorter battery life. This will go away quickly.

6. Display disinformation



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The always-on display feature doesn't just *leave your screen on 24/7* and quickly drain your battery. The display drops to a dim 1Hz mode that barely consumes any power. Plus, iOS automatically shuts it down depending on certain factors, like your sleep routine and how you typically use your iPhone. While disabling it will save a bit of power, the impact is negligible—typically only a few percent per day.

7. Face ID fallacies

Newcomers often worry about Face ID's security and reliability. Contrary to common misconception, the TrueDepth camera system works in pitch-black environments, letting you securely unlock your iPhone even at night. Additionally, the biometric authentication feature doesn't work with photos of your face or when you're not making eye contact with it. As such, it's very unlikely for someone holding your iPhone to bypass Face ID without your knowledge or consent.

Face ID data is never sent to Apple or anyone else. It resides in a physically isolated section of your iPhone's processor called the Secure Enclave and cannot be accessed by any application, only by the core iOS system when a legitimate Face ID request is invoked.

8. Camera confusions



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Customers on an annual iPhone upgrade cycle sometimes complain about the lack of camera improvements in the latest model. Apple doesn't change every camera sensor every year. For example, the iPhone 17 Pro revamped the selfie and telephoto cameras only. The wide and ultrawide cameras, on the other hand, are pretty much identical to their predecessors. So, unless you're taking a selfie or a zoomed-in shot, you won't be noticing any major camera enhancements

this year.

Most people get a new iPhone after 2-4 years, though. Those incremental year-to-year improvements really add up, so if you're coming from an iPhone 14, the iPhone 17's camera will be much improved.

9. Resistance rumors

iPhones are, to an extent, very resistant to water and dust—but they're not actually *waterproof*. Depending on your model's IP rating, it will likely survive being submerged in water up to a specific depth and for a limited period of time. As your iPhone ages, it may lose some of its resistance and become more susceptible to water damage, especially if it has some mild damage.

It's best not to intentionally test the limits of its water resistance, but you should be fine washing it off with soap and water, for example, or accidentally dropping it in the sink.

10. iMessage illusions



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Some users turn off iMessage when they lose internet access, believing it's the only way to send SMS to their iPhone-using contacts. While iMessage is the default for conversations between iOS users, you can still bypass it whenever either party is offline or the service is down. Just tap and hold the pending text, then select Send as Text Message. This forces the message through your carrier instead of Apple's servers.

It's pretty uncommon these days to have cellular SMS service but not cellular internet access, but it can happen, especially if you're traveling somewhere remote or on a limited data plan.

11. App Store absurdities

Many users complain about Apple *randomly* charging their bank cards, despite them not making any recent App Store purchases. These are typically recurring subscription fees that they've opted for at some point in the past.

You can easily check all of your App Store spending—including subscription services, paid app downloads, and in-app purchases—using the Purchase History section of

the App Store. Open the App Store, tap your initials/icon in the upper right, then tap Subscriptions or Purchase History.

Any unwanted subscriptions can be canceled from the Subscriptions subsection found under your name in the Settings app.

12. iTunes inaccuracies

Apple Music and Apple TV don't require you to buy listed songs and movies individually. While you can access your separate iTunes purchases directly in the Music and TV apps, the company offers unrelated subscription services similar to Spotify and Netflix. For fixed monthly fees, you can listen to and watch any of the available content on all of your compatible devices.

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For a decade, Mahmoud has rigorously evaluated Apple hardware and software. His current technological arsenal features an iPhone 16 Pro Max, Apple Watch Series 9, MacBook Air M2, iPad Air M1, AirPods Pro 2, AirTag, Apple TV 4K 3, and HomePod Mini stereo pair. Outside of work, you'll likely find him jogging at a park, swimming in open water, brainstorming at a coffeehouse, composing poetry on a rooftop, or merely lost in nature.