



## Buying an iPhone 17e? How to Prep Your Old iPhone for Trade-In or Sale, Get the Most Cash

### Summary

The iPhone 17e, Apple's newest lower-cost smartphone, is priced at \$599. To prepare an older iPhone for trade-in or sale, back up data, disable Find My, sign out of Messages, unpair AirPods and Apple Watch, and sign out of iCloud. Wipe the iPhone, remove the SIM card, and consider selling it through Apple Trade In, Best Buy, eBay, GameStop, Swappa, or uSell.

When buying a new phone, you can trade it in for a discount or sell it to earn money toward a new one. Here's how to safeguard your data before you ship it off, and a few places that will take it.

Jason Cohen. Edited By Chloe Albanesius, Updated March 3, 2026



(Credit: René Ramos; Apple; Getty Images/Yevgen Romanenko)

Apple on Monday [unveiled the iPhone 17e](#), its newest lower-cost smartphone. If you've been hanging on to an older iPhone, but don't have an extra \$1,000 to spend on a new one, the \$599 iPhone 17e could be your best bet. Plus, you can save even more by trading in an aging device.

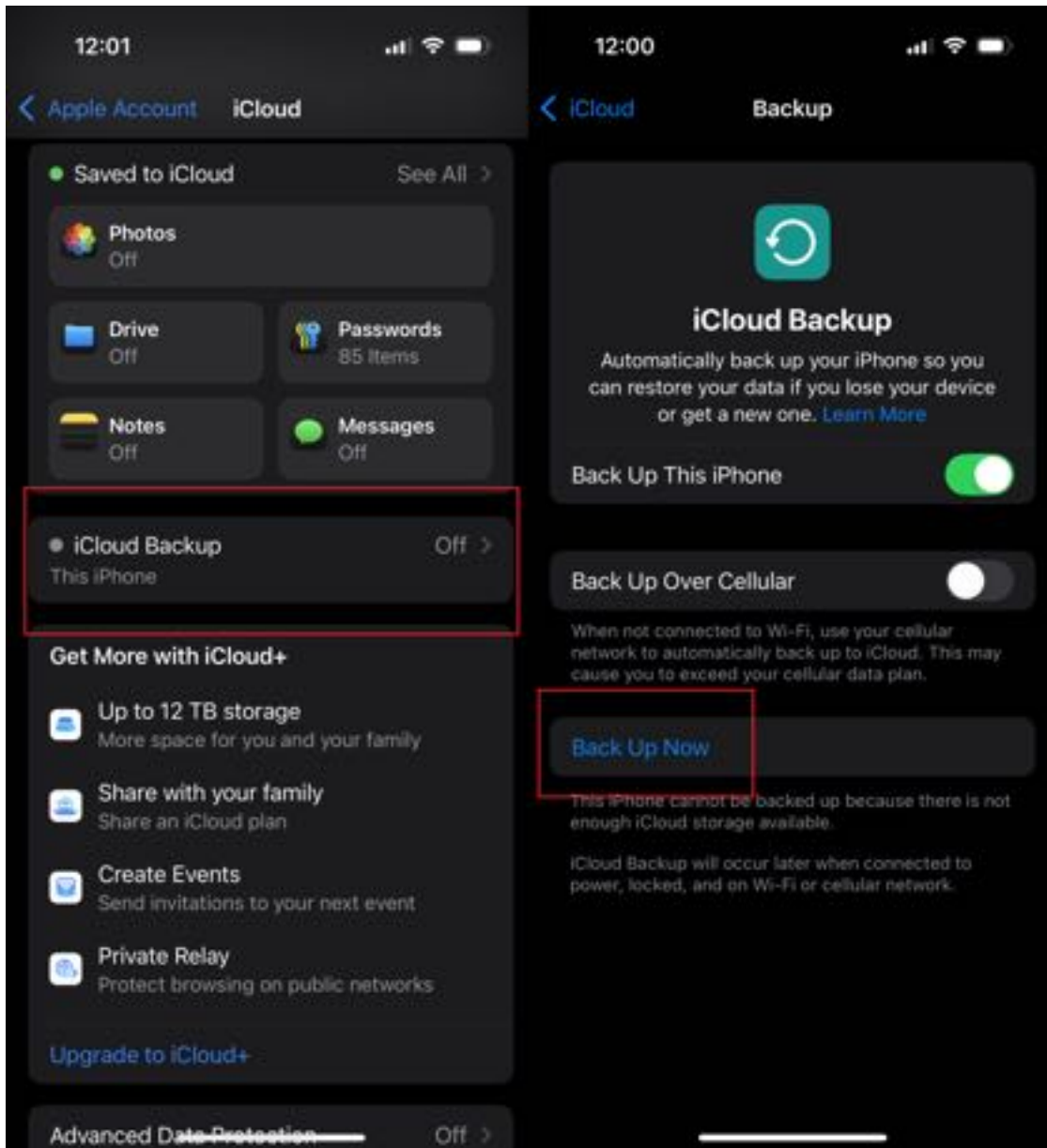
However, that requires more than just handing over your iPhone 11 or 13 and waiting for cash to hit your bank account. Wiping your phone is a must, as is backing up your data just in

case the transfer doesn't go as planned. Below is our step-by-step guide to properly preparing your phone for sale and where to sell it.

### 1. Back Up Everything

First, make sure you don't lose your data. Back everything up before you wipe it from your phone. To [back up to iCloud](#) from your device, go to **Settings**, select your name, and then choose **iCloud > iCloud Backup > Back Up Now**.

To back up to your Mac, connect your iPhone and your computer via a cable [or Wi-Fi](#). If you have macOS Catalina or later, go to [Finder](#), select your iPhone, and then choose **General > Back Up All of the Data on Your iPhone to This Mac > Back Up Now**. If you have an earlier version or a Windows PC, you'd use iTunes. Open the program, click on the image of your phone, then select **Summary > Back Up Now**.



(Credit: PCMag/Apple)

## 2. Unfind Your iPhone

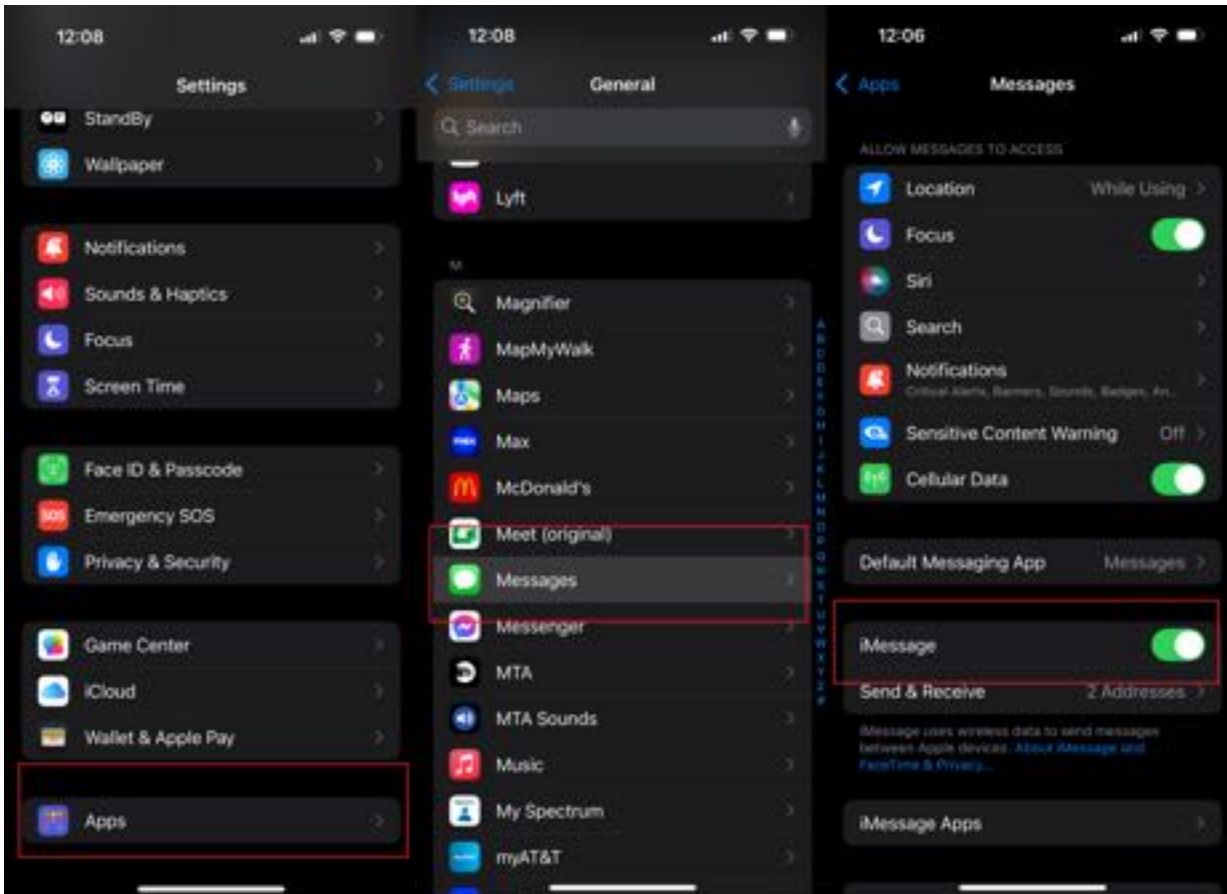
Apple's Find My app can sometimes block activation by a new owner, so you should deactivate the app before you ditch the device. Though Find My is automatically deactivated when you erase all content and settings, which you'll do below, this is still a good step to take as a precaution. Go to **Settings**, select your **name**, then choose **Find My** and disable it for that device. Enter your **Apple Account password** and tap **Turn Off**.



(Credit: Apple)

### 3. Sign Out of Messages

More than a decade ago, people who [switched from iOS to Android](#) without logging out of Messages on their iPhone found that texts were going to the old phone. The problem has since [been fixed](#), but those still scarred by "iMessage purgatory" may want to go to **Settings > Apps > Messages** and disable **iMessage**.



(Credit: PCMag/Apple)

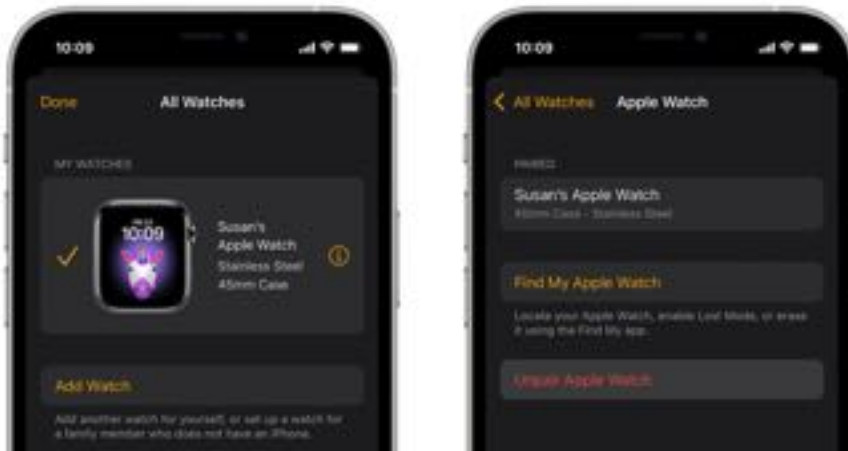
## 4. Unpair Your AirPods



(Credit: Apple)

Similarly, you can still connect your AirPods to a new iPhone without unpairing them from the old one, but it can't hurt to wipe the slate clean. Place your AirPods and iPhone near each other, then go to **Settings > Bluetooth**. Tap the information icon next to your AirPods, and select **Forget this Device**.

## 5. Unpair Your Apple Watch



(Credit: Apple)

If you have an [Apple Watch](#), save yourself a potential headache and unpair it from the iPhone you'll be selling. Place them near each other, then open the Apple Watch app on your phone. Go to **My Watch > All Watches** and select the info circle next to the watch you want to unpair. Tap **Unpair Apple Watch** and then confirm, which may require you to enter your Apple Account password.

With a GPS + Cellular model, you're asked whether you want to keep or remove your cellular plan. Since you're selling the iPhone, you'll want to remove it. (If you don't plan to pair your watch with a new iPhone, you might need to contact your carrier to cancel.) Tap to confirm; you might need to enter your Apple Account password to disable Activation Lock.

## 6. Sign Out of iCloud

You should sign out of iCloud, iTunes, and the App Store before selling your device. Tap **Settings**, select your name, and choose **Sign Out**. Enter your Apple Account password and tap **Turn Off**.



(Credit: Apple)

## 7. Wipe Your iPhone and Delete Data

When your new phone is set up and you're ready to trade in or sell your old iPhone, head to **Settings > General > Transfer or Reset iPhone > Erase All Content and Settings**, then approve all subsequent prompts.

## 8. Remove the SIM Card (If You Have One)

Apple [went the eSIM route](#) starting with the iPhone 14 lineup, but older devices will have a physical SIM card. In most cases, you can just deactivate your cellphone service on the device and trade it in with the SIM card intact. But that SIM card is the repository of your phone number, various bits of security data, and all the info needed for billing. It identifies you, your phone, and a lot of your activity on your phone. So you should remove it before you sell the phone.



(Credit: Apple)

Fortunately, it's simple. [Locate the SIM ejector](#) on your phone, then insert a paper clip until the tray pops out. Remove the SIM card, replace the tray, and say goodbye to your old iPhone.

## The Best Places to Sell Your Phone

I've also included some of the best sites for selling or trading in your phone. Some make it easy to send in your phone and get immediate cash, others let you control the price through bidding, and there are even options for receiving store credit from places you shop. To give you an idea of your trade-in power, I priced out what you can expect to get for an [iPhone 15 Pro](#) across all of them, and it varies wildly, as you'll see below.

You can also trade your phone in with your existing carrier or switch to a new one. Many offer compelling trade-in promotions, so be sure to check out [AT&T](#), [T-Mobile](#), [Verizon](#), and others.


## Apple Trade In

Get **\$35–\$685** when you trade in an iPhone.º

Your device	Estimated trade-in value*
iPhone 16 Pro Max	Up to \$685
iPhone 16 Pro	Up to \$550
iPhone 16 Plus	Up to \$455
iPhone 16	Up to \$435

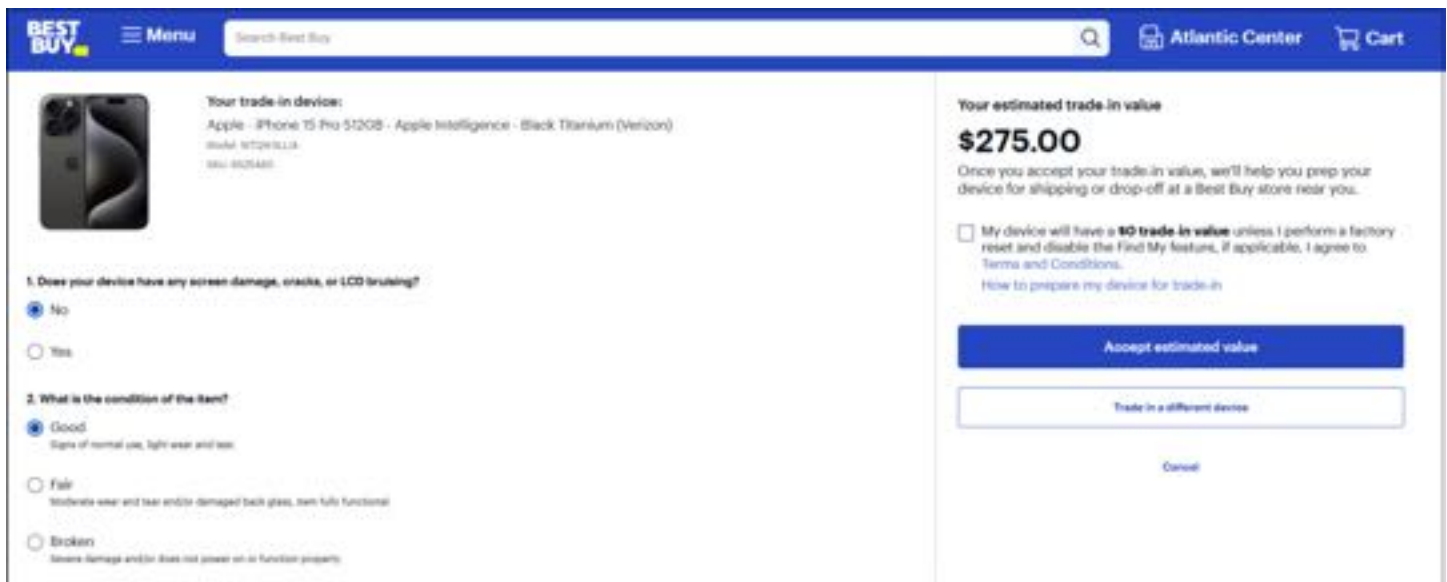
[See all iPhone values](#) Ⓡ

[Find your trade-in value](#)



(Credit: Apple)

The [Apple Trade In](#) program pays you with a credit or gift card. If you pay for an Apple device in full up-front, a credit will be applied to your payment card once Apple receives your trade-in device and verifies its condition. If you're paying on an installment plan, the credit will be applied right away. Turning in an iPhone 15 Pro can get you up to \$375 on a new iPhone.



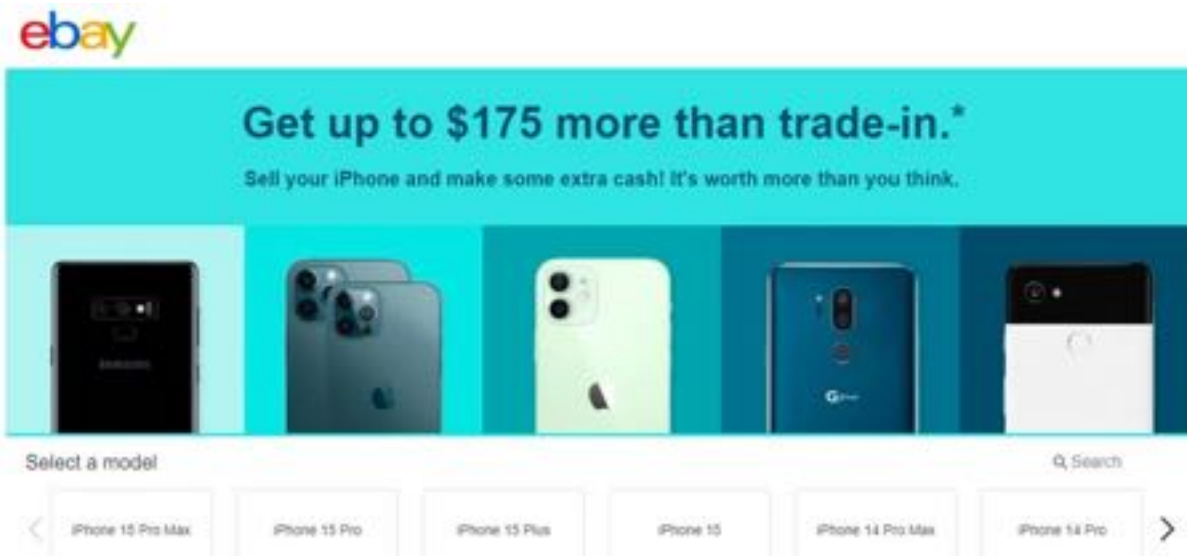
The screenshot shows the Best Buy trade-in interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the Best Buy logo, a menu icon, a search bar, and links for 'Atlantic Center' and 'Cart'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column displays 'Your trade-in device:' as an 'Apple - iPhone 15 Pro 512GB - Apple Intelligence - Black Titanium (Verizon)' with model number 'MT2N8LL/A' and serial number 'WU-802480'. Below this, there are two questions: '1. Does your device have any screen damage, cracks, or LCD bruising?' with 'No' selected, and '2. What is the condition of the item?' with 'Good' selected. The right column shows 'Your estimated trade-in value' as '\$275.00'. It includes a disclaimer: 'Once you accept your trade-in value, we'll help you prep your device for shipping or drop-off at a Best Buy store near you.' There is a checkbox for 'My device will have a \$0 trade-in value unless I perform a factory reset and disable the Find My feature, if applicable. I agree to Terms and Conditions.' Below this are buttons for 'Accept estimated value', 'Trade in a different device', and 'Cancel'.

(Credit: Best Buy)

## Best Buy

If you're selling your iPhone and just want cash to buy electronics, you can cut out a step at [Best Buy](#): Trade in your phone at a store or mail it in for a digital gift card. For a Black Titanium 512GB iPhone 15 Pro on Verizon in good condition, expect to get about \$275.

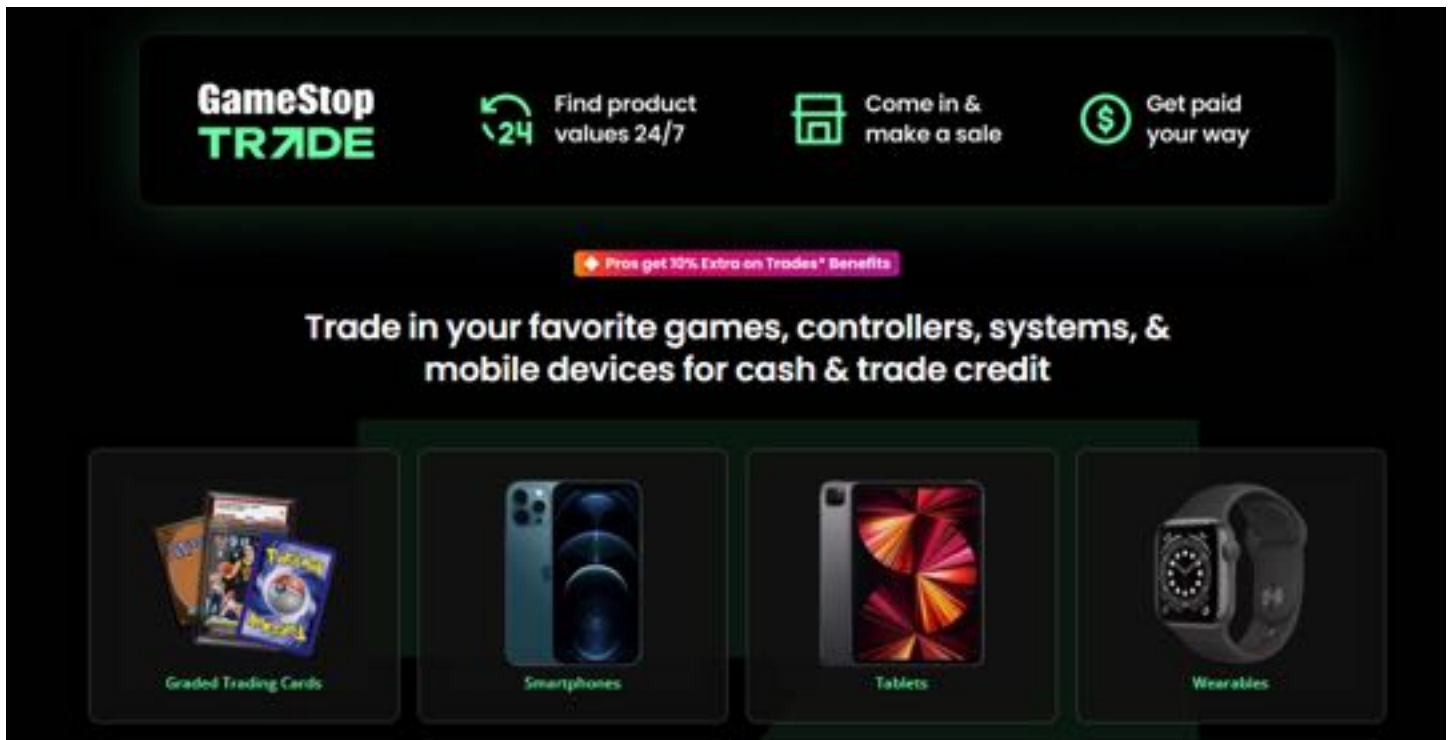
## eBay



(Credit: eBay)

To sell your device yourself, there's always [eBay](#). The site has a quick walkthrough where you can input your phone's stats. After entering my example device, a Black Titanium 512GB iPhone 15 Pro in good condition on Verizon, the page recommended that I list the phone at \$510.

## GameStop



(Credit: GameStop)

Are most of your iPhone apps games? Then you'll probably do well to turn in your iPhone in for some [store credit at GameStop](#). You can also get cold, hard cash for it there. Bring your device to your nearest GameStop, get a price quote from a sales associate, and then receive store credit or cash on the spot. I recommend getting an estimate on the site before you make the trip. I found that a 512GB iPhone 15 Pro from Verizon in very good condition will get you \$227.48 in cash or \$252.75 in store credit.

# Swappa

SWAPPA

Find a good deal

Apple iPhones Phones Laptops Watches Tablets Gaming More Sell

24/7/365 Support \$ Fair Fees No Junk, No Jerks

Swappa / Sell / iPhone / Apple iPhone 15 Pro

## Sell Apple iPhone 15 Pro

Get more for your iPhone 15 Pro trade-in when you sell on Swappa.

Create your **free** listing

More Money  
Fast Payments

avg price  
**\$544**

Login and Sell

See 209 offers

Less Work  
Trusted Partners

avg price  
**\$311**

Trade-In Offers

(Credit: Swappa)

Swappa is a marketplace where you can sell your iPhone directly. Select your phone model on the site, upload some photos, and set a price. Once someone buys it, you're paid immediately via PayPal. You're responsible for safely shipping your phone to the buyer. According to the site, an iPhone 15 Pro is selling for an average price of \$544, while a trade-in to one of Swappa's partners could get me \$311.

The screenshot shows the uSell website interface for selling an iPhone. At the top, there's a green navigation bar with the uSell logo and three steps: 1. Test your device, 2. Get cash offer to sell, and 3. Check out and get paid. The main heading is "Sell Your iPhone 15 Pro 128GB Verizon". Below this, there's a section titled "What condition is your product in?" with three radio button options: "Damaged", "Good" (which is selected), and "Flawless". To the left of these options is an image of the iPhone 15 Pro 128GB Verizon. Below the image, it says "iPhone 15 Pro 128GB Verizon". To the right of the condition options, it says "Condition: Good" and "Your cash offer: \$195.00". Below the cash offer, there's a small icon of a person and the text "Buyer: uSell.com see details". At the bottom right, there's a large red button that says "Get Paid". Below the condition options, there's a list of criteria for "Good" condition: "powers on and holds charge with battery health above 80%", "is fully functional, including all buttons and ports", "has no cracks on the screen or body or damage on the LCD", and "IMEI / ESN is clear for activation by a new user". At the bottom left, there's a note: "NOTE: Lost, Stolen, or iCloud locked iPhones are not accepted."

(Credit: uSell)

Want to sell your iPhone fast? One option is [uSell](#). Select your model, carrier, capacity, and condition to receive an offer. If you choose to accept it, you ship your iPhone to uSell for free. If your device is in the condition you said it was, you're paid by check or PayPal. A 512GB iPhone 15 Pro on Verizon in good condition is currently worth about \$268.

Editors' Note: Trade-in values were accurate at the time of publication. Your mileage may vary.

*Chandra Steele contributed to this story*

## About Our Expert



Jason Cohen, Senior Editor, Help & How To Experience

As PCMag's editor of how to content, I have to cover a wide variety of topics and also make our stories accessible to everyday users. Considering my history as a technical writer, copywriter, and all-around freelancer covering baseball, comics, and more at various outlets, I am used to making myself into an expert.

I believe tech corporations are bad, but you might as well know how to use technology in everyday life. Want more how to content delivered right to your inbox? Sign up for the [tips and tricks](#) newsletter that I curate twice a week.

My job as how-to guru means I use just about every gadget under the sun, so I can figure out how everything works. I work from a Lenovo ThinkPad running Windows 11, but also have a very large Dell Inspiron 17 3000 and Apple silicon MacBook. I also have a Google Pixel 6a for personal use and use a Galaxy Z Flip 4 for additional Samsung-related testing. For iOS coverage, an iPhone 13 mini works like a charm, though it's already becoming a little long in the tooth.

My desktop situation includes a dual monitor setup with a modest Acer monitor. I also use a Logitech mouse (who can use these ThinkPad trackpads) and a Havit keyboard (my first mechanical keyboard; I love it but my wife hates it!). I'm a recent convert from wired headphones; I have Anker Soundcore Liberty Air wireless earbuds for personal use and have taken to the Sennheiser HD 450BT headphones for work.

Whenever I have a second to myself, I'm probably gaming on my Nintendo Switch, Steam Deck, or Xbox Series S. I also still have a bunch of classic consoles lying around as well.