

Apple buried these 5 secret productivity tools in iOS 26, and you should use them every day

By [Kaycee Hill](#) published April 25, 2026

5 iOS 26 features that make your iPhone a true workhorse



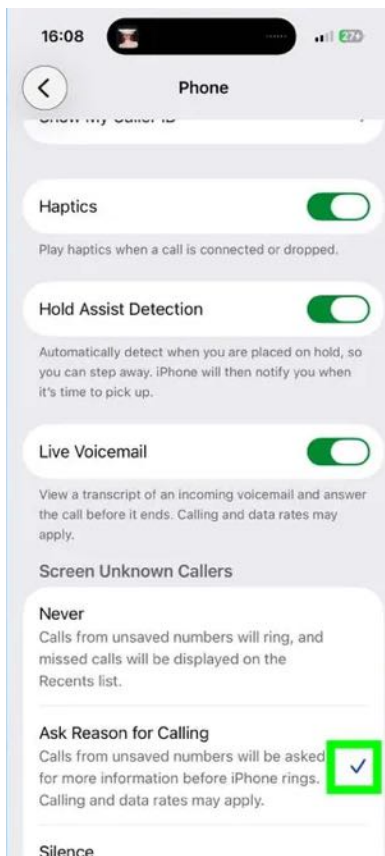
(Image credit: Tom's Guide)

Buried beneath the [Liquid Glass](#) redesign are features that handle the small, annoying jobs you've been doing manually for years — screening spam calls, creating calendar events from screenshots, waiting on hold with customer service so you can go do literally anything else.

This isn't the stuff that gets a slow-motion demo on a big stage. This is the stuff that actually makes your phone

more useful on a day to day basis. Here are five iOS 26 features worth enabling before you forget they exist.

1. Let your iPhone screen unknown calls for you



Unknown numbers either need to be answered immediately or ignored completely, but you don't know which until you pick up. Call Screening solves this by having your iPhone answer for you, ask who's calling and why, then report back so you can decide whether to take the call.

The feature plays a message asking the caller to identify themselves and state their reason for calling. Once they respond, your iPhone alerts you with their answer. Accept the call if it's important, or send them to voicemail if it's spam.

Go to Settings, Apps, Phone and find "Screen Unknown Callers." Next, choose your screening level: "Never" disables it entirely, "Ask Reason for Calling" collects their name and purpose before alerting you, or "Silence" sends all unknown numbers straight to voicemail.

This eliminates the need to answer spam calls while ensuring legitimate callers from unknown numbers can still reach you.

2. Create calendar events from screenshots



Event invitations arrive as images, email attachments, social media posts, website graphics, and so on. Manually typing event details into your calendar from a poster is tedious and error-prone.

iOS 26 extracts event information directly from screenshots and adds it to your calendar in seconds. Take a screenshot of any event invitation and iOS detects the date, time, location, and event name automatically.

With the event invitation visible on screen, press the volume up and power buttons simultaneously to screenshot it. You'll see an "Add to Calendar" button below the screenshot. Tap it.

A popup shows the extracted event information. Tap "Create Event" to add it to your calendar. The event appears in your Calendar app immediately with all details filled in.

This works for conference invitations, concert posters, meeting announcements, or any image containing event details.

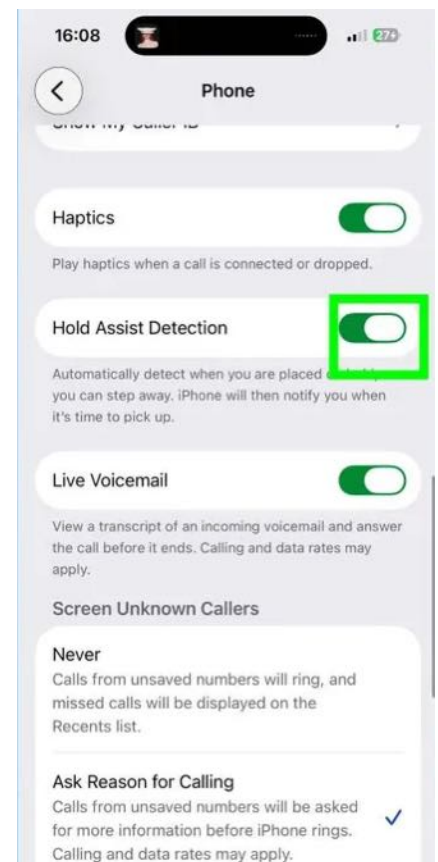
3. Make your iPhone wait on hold for you

Customer service hold times waste productive hours. You can't hang up because you need to talk to someone eventually, but you also can't work effectively while listening to hold music and periodic "your call is important to us" messages.

Hold Assist waits on hold for you. When you're put on hold, tap the "Hold" button that appears on your iPhone's dialer screen. Your iPhone monitors the call and alerts you when a real person picks up.

Enable Hold Assist in Settings by going to, Apps, Phone and turning on "Hold Assist Detection." Now when you call any number and get placed on hold, tap "Hold" on the dialer screen.

Your iPhone continues monitoring the call while you put the phone down and return to work. When someone finally answers, your iPhone rings to notify you it's time to pick up.



4. Add your signature to documents



Your iPhone's built-in Markup tool lets you sign documents for free — no apps, no accounts, no subscriptions. It's also faster than dedicated signature apps: instead of downloading, importing, exporting, and sharing, you screenshot, sign, and send in seconds.

To do it, open your document and take a screenshot, tap the Markup icon (the marker-in-a-circle), then hit the plus (+) button and select Signature. If it's your first time, sign with your finger on the screen, this gets saved for future use.

Your signature will appear as a draggable element. Simply position it on the signature line, pinch to resize, and twist with two fingers to rotate if needed. Tap Done when it looks right.

The signed document saves automatically to Photos as a standard image. From there, tap the share icon to email it, upload it, or send it via Messages. If you need a PDF instead of an image file, save it to Files first, then use the three-dot menu and select Convert to PDF.

5. Customize your folders in Files

iOS 26 lets you customize folders with colors, symbols, and emojis so you can identify them visually instead of reading text labels. Client folders get one color, internal projects another. Urgent folders get warning symbols, archived folders get different icons.

Open the Files app and long-press any folder. Then tap "Customize Folder & Tags" from the menu. Select "Tags" and choose a color, then tap the checkmark.

Choose a symbol from Apple's library of hundreds of options, or tap "Emoji" to use an emoji instead. When you're finished, tap the blue checkmark.

Your customized folder style syncs across all devices using iCloud Drive, so folders look the same on your iPhone, iPad, and Mac.

