

Everyone will want to try Apple's live translation this fall. Here's where to find it

Live translation runs entirely on device, and can translate text and speech across several apps.

By Jason Cross Senior Editor, Macworld JUN 18, 2025 4:15 am PDT



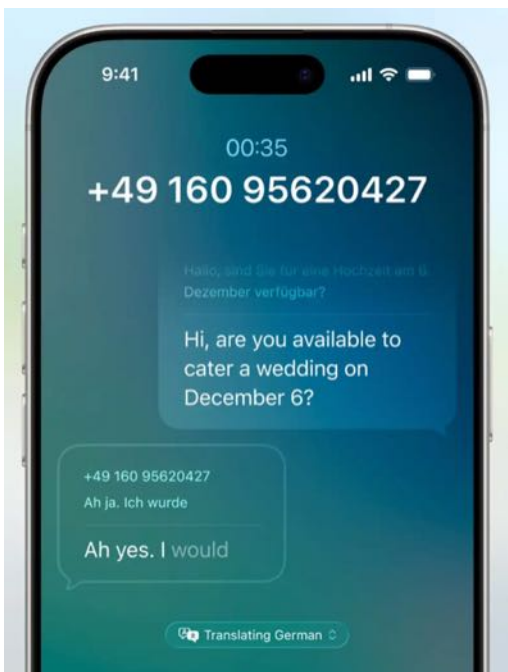
Image: Apple

When Apple releases its new operating systems this fall, it's going to imbue them with the ability to do live, real-time translation in its most critical communications apps. This new capability runs entirely on-device, so none of your sensitive communications go anywhere. And it works in multiple apps and even on multiple devices.

Live Translation in phone calls

The most obvious application is in the Phone app. When you call someone speaking a foreign language, your device can translate for you.

Your words are translated on screen in real time, and then spoken with a synthesized voice for the caller. When they talk, you'll see their words translated on your screen, and a spoken voice saying them in your language.



Apple

Since this all happens on *your* iPhone, the other caller can be on any device, even an old landline. And now that the Phone app is coming to [macOS 26](#) and [iPadOS 26](#), you get this experience on iPad and Mac, not just on iPhone.



Live Translation in Phone is available only for one-on-one calls in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.

The Phone app is coming to Mac, complete with Live Translation.
Apple

Live Translation in FaceTime Calls

In FaceTime calls, live translation works a little differently—there’s no voice translating what the other caller says. Since both participants are necessarily using Apple products with a display to look at, you’ll instead just get live captions (already an accessibility feature in FaceTime) that are translated to your language. And the other side will see the things you say, translated for them.

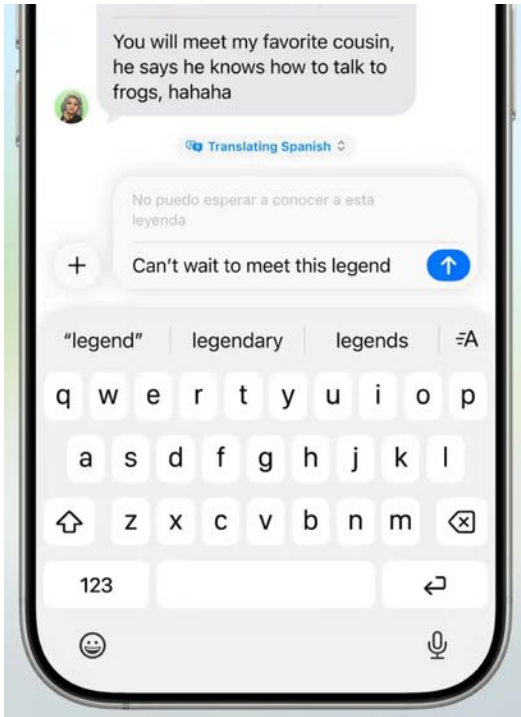


This will work on all devices that can make FaceTime video calls, so iPhone, iPad, and Mac. Live Translation in FaceTime is available only for one-on-one calls in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Apple

Live Translation in Messages

Apple is integrating Live Translation into Messages, too. The things you type are instantly translated into the recipients' preferred language when sent to them, and their responses are translated into yours.



Apple

Live Translation in Messages supports more languages that in Phone or FaceTime:

- English (U.S., UK)
- French (France)
- German
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Portuguese (Brazil)
- Spanish (Spain)
- Chinese (simplified)

Third-party apps too

Apple is building this technology into its communication apps, but it's enabling developers of third-party apps to do the same. A new Call Translation API will let developers tap into this same on-device translation for their calling, video, and messaging apps as well. That way, your WhatsApp messages or Zoom calls could have these same features, while maintaining the superior privacy of doing all the translation on your iPhone, iPad, or Mac.

Developers will need to modify their apps to use this new API of course, and we don't yet know which popular communications app will do so.

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Jason has written about technology for more than 25 years - first in the gaming press, then focusing on enthusiast PCs and general technology. He enjoys learning how complicated technology works and explaining it in a way anyone can understand.