

## Summary

iOS 26's new "Liquid Glass" design has polarized users, with some finding it visually appealing and others finding it difficult to use due to reduced contrast and legibility issues. While Apple has not provided a way to disable the Liquid Glass interface, users can improve legibility by adjusting accessibility settings like "Reduce Transparency," "Increase Contrast," and "Bold Text." However, these adjustments are not as effective as in previous iOS versions.

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**I**OS 26 introduces a completely new design schema called "Liquid Glass" that has more transparency, translucency, movement, and shininess. To say that iOS 26 Liquid Glass is polarizing would be an understatement, as opinions on the new look could not be more extreme, with some users thinking it's amazingly fantastic, and others like myself are really quite miserable with the new look and reduced usability on their freshly updated iPhone and iPad.

While Liquid GL-ass looks pretty great in Apple's manicured marketing images, in practice Liquid Glass means lower contrast, cramped UI elements and overlapped text, general legibility issues, excessive movements and unnecessary visual animations that are sluggish and distracting, weird looking icons that look askew or slanted, and a generally more distracting and confusing interface appearance and user experience that is harder to read and more difficult to interact with. Me personally, I hate it, and I'm not alone. It's no wonder that a good number of iPhone and iPad users are wondering if they can disable the Liquid Glass interface completely in iOS 26, because it's harder to use for many of us. While Apple should introduce a "Classic" iOS 18 look option for users who prioritize usability and accessibility on their devices, that's not happening yet (and let's be honest, probably never will), so in the meantime you can sort of tone down some of the most dramatic Liquid Glass interface changes and ploppy chunky animations with a handful of settings changes.

**Note:** If you have not yet updated to iOS 26 on your iPhone or iPad, you should know that looking at screenshots and Apple’s beautiful marketing images does not truly represent what the new Liquid Glass interface actually looks and feels like on your own device. If you’re at all concerned about legibility, usability, accessibility, and readability, you’ll probably want to [avoid the update and prevent your iPhone from auto-updating to iOS 26](#) and instead [update to iOS 18.7](#) and remain very cautious about installing future iOS updates. I wish I had stayed on iOS 18 myself, but my job here is to muck with this stuff so I am committed to the dizzying iOS 26 experience and boy oh boy am I going to whine about it while simultaneously trying to offer solutions to others who also hate Liquid Glass.

If your iPhone and iPad is already on iOS 26 and iPadOS 26 and you’re not enjoying the new visuals and user experience, I have collected some tips below to make it a bit more legible and usable.

## **8 Tips to Improve iOS 26 Interface Legibility & Usability**

Several accessibility settings can be toggled to improve the legibility and usability of iOS 26 but beware that these settings are much less effective at their stated functionality (like “Increase Contrast” and “Reduce Motion” both of which are insufficiently implemented) than they were in prior iOS releases.

### **1: Use Reduce Transparency to Improve Legibility of Everything**

- Go to Settings > Accessibility > Display & Text Sizes > Reduce Transparency > ON

### **2: Use Increase Contrast to Reduce the Blurry Smear Translucent Look**

- Go to Settings > Accessibility > Display & Text Sizes > Increase Contrast > ON

### **3: Use Bold Text to Improve Text Legibility**

Since contrast on text is diminished even with Increase Contrast enabled, using Bold Text helps improve text legibility on iOS 26.

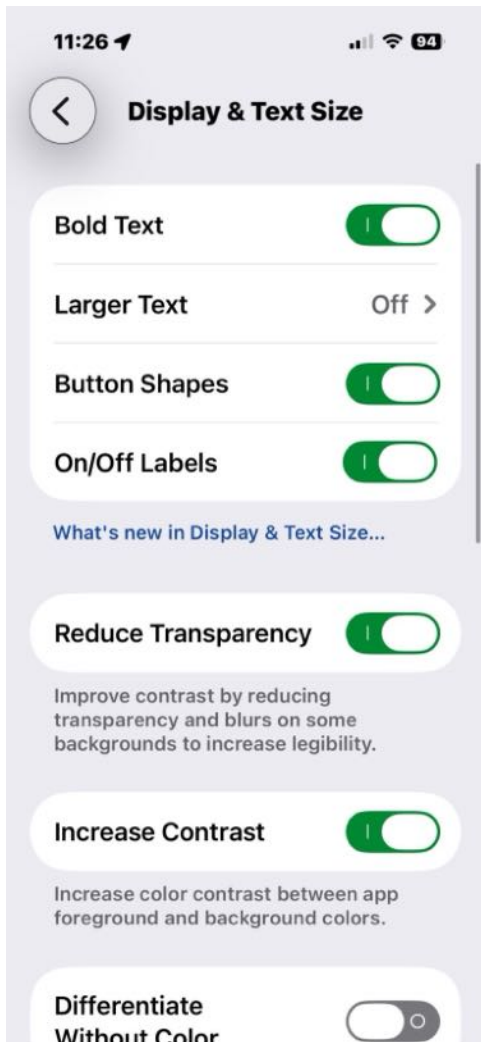
- Go to Settings > Accessibility > Display & Text Sizes > Bold Text > ON

### **4: Use Button Shapes to Make Visual Elements More Distinct**

- Go to Settings > Accessibility > Display & Text Sizes > Button Shapes > ON

### **5: Use On/Off Labels for Further Distinction**

- Go to Settings > Accessibility > Display & Text Sizes > On/Off Labels > ON



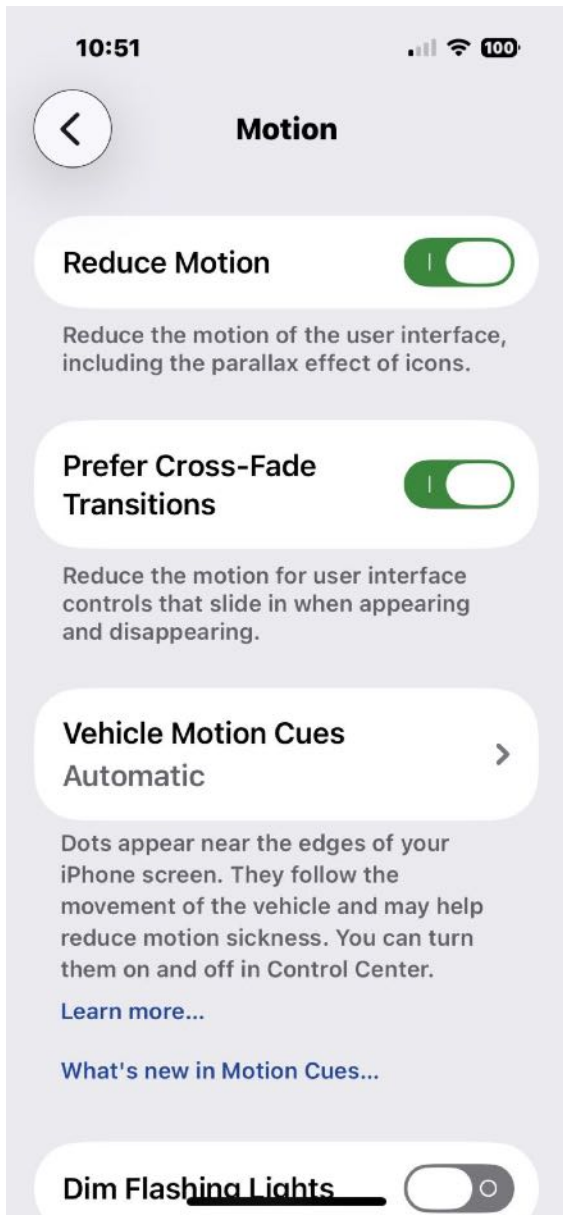
## 6: Disable Excessive Motion & Movements in the UI

iOS 26 introduces lots of excessive screen animations and transitions, many of which stutter and are clunky on otherwise great iPhone models that performed perfectly smooth with prior iOS releases. Disabling the excessive motion and ploppy choppy animations helps a bit if the new Liquid GLass experience bugs you:

- Go to Settings > Accessibility > Motion > Reduce Motion > ON

## 7: Enable Prefer Crossfading Transitions to Lessen Motion Further

- Go to Settings > Accessibility > Motion > Prefer Crossfade Transitions > ON



## 8: Tone Down and Customize the Home Screen & Icon Look

- Long press on the Home Screen of iPhone and then tap on “Edit” > Customize
- Explore the options available to customize Home Screen, including: Default (Light), Dark, Clear, Tinted, and the various settings and customizations associated with each

## How can I make text stop overlapping or being squished in iOS 26?



If you have noticed text is overlapping and looking squished and hard to read since updating to iOS 26, you're not alone. This is a fun one, because other than shrinking your text size to be smaller, you can't stop the overlapping text or squished text look.

Many of us use larger text size on iPhone in particular because the screens are small, and the text size is tiny. With iOS 26 Liquid Glass, the contrast of text is reduced as well, making it even more challenging to read, and to top it off, text areas are smaller and more compressed,

meaning text is often overlapping or squished in ways that make it not only look goofy, but more difficult to read.

### **Liquid Glass critics require a lot of tinkering to see what works best for them**

All in all if you don't like the Liquid Glass interface, or you outright hate it (like I do because I find it much harder to use), then you're going to need to engage in a lot of tinkering to try and make the interface work for you. The redesign is both subtle and dramatic at the same time, something that is hard to accomplish but Apple managed to do.

If you were wise enough to make a local backup before [upgrading to iOS 26 on your device](#) then you downgrade back to iOS 18 for a little while, so if you completely despise the new look that could be an option for you too. I'm stuck with iOS 26 because I did not do that, so I will be regularly voicing my opinion in articles like this and complaining about it, while hoping that Apple makes some significant changes and improvements in coming updates.

What do you think of Liquid Glass on iOS 26 for iPhone and iPadOS 26 for iPad? Do you love it? Do you hate it? Do you wish you could disable Liquid Glass completely and have the iOS 26 features but keep the classic iOS 18 interface?