

Keeping Devices Updated (Software Updates)

Why updates matter: Software makers (Microsoft, Apple, etc.) constantly find and fix security problems in their operating systems and apps. These fixes come in the form of **updates** or “patches.” If you don’t install updates, your computer or phone could have holes that hackers can exploit. In short, **updates plug security holes** and keep your devices running smoothly with the latest features. As a rule of thumb: *stop clicking “Remind me later”!* When an update is available, it’s important to allow it to install.

Enable automatic updates: The easiest way to stay up to date is to turn on **automatic updates** for your devices and apps. This way, you don’t have to remember to check – updates will install on their own (often at night or when you’re not using the device):

- **Windows 10/11 (PC):** Windows automatically installs most updates. Just ensure it’s on: go to **Start > Settings > Windows Update** and make sure it says updates will install automatically. You can click “Check for updates” periodically to be safe.
- **macOS (Mac):** Open **System Settings** (or “System Preferences” on older macOS) > **General > Software Update**. If an update is available, you’ll see an option to update. Turn on “*Automatically keep my Mac up to date.*”
- **iPhone/iPad (iOS/iPadOS):** Go to **Settings > General > Software Update**. Tap on **Automatic Updates** and make sure both iOS updates and App updates are toggled on. This ensures your iPhone/iPad installs the latest iOS version and app updates when plugged in and on Wi-Fi.
- **Android (smartphones/tablets):** The steps can vary by device, but generally go to **Settings > System > System Update** (or **Software Update**). Enable options like “Auto-download updates” if available. Also, in the **Google Play Store** app settings, turn on auto-update for your apps, so those stay current too.

Tip: When possible, **connect your device to power** during updates (some big updates won’t install on battery). Also, it’s a good idea to **restart your devices occasionally** – some updates only finish after a reboot.

Updates for apps: Don’t forget your apps! App stores (Apple App Store for iPhones, Google Play Store for Android, Microsoft Store for Windows, etc.) have settings to auto-update your installed apps. Keeping apps updated is just as important as updating the system.

What if an update seems to take forever? Larger updates (like a yearly Windows 11 feature upgrade or a macOS new version) can indeed take a while. Plan to run these when you won’t need the device for an hour or two. Many people start updates at night before



bed. If an update prompt pops up at a busy time, it's okay to postpone a little – just don't put it off indefinitely. The longer you wait, the more you risk security issues. **Regular small updates** are better than dealing with a huge backlog later.

Device Update Checklist: Use this mini checklist to stay on top of updates:

<input type="checkbox"/> Device Update Tasks	Done?
Automatic system updates are ON for my computer (Windows/macOS) and mobile devices.	
Automatic app updates are enabled (in Microsoft Store, App Store, Google Play, etc.).	
I install updates promptly when notified (don't ignore those prompts!).	

(Checking these boxes periodically will ensure your devices have the latest security patches.)

