Adding images or videos to iPhone Simulator

Asked 15 years, 11 months ago   Modified 3 years, 1 month ago

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317

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I am trying to use `UIImagePickerController` with `UIImagePickerControllerSourceTypePhotoLibrary`, but it says, "No photos". Where does the simulator get the images from? Where should I copy the images so that they are displayed in the simulator?

MD

`ios` `iphone` `ios-simulator` `uiimagepickercontroller` `photo`

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edited Jun 4, 2020 at 14:27

iwasrobbed
46.7k ● 21 ● 151 ● 195

asked Jan 22, 2009 at 12:08

Vijayeta
5,645 ● 5 ● 22 ● 11

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59   Drag images to the iPhone simulator. Then right-click on the image to save it. – Fattie ⚙ Nov 3, 2013 at 23:32

3   I couldn't right click it with the current sim but I could click the "Share" icon and then save the image. – Scott Rowley May

1, 2014 at 15:39

Scott Rowley's response worked for me, and Joe Blow's didn't. I think this might be a Xcode 5.1.1 release difference. – erstaples Jul 15, 2014 at 20:32

35 Answers

Sorted by: Highest score (default) ⬍

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463

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Explain step by step of Airsource Ltd's answer for adding image to simulator:

1. Drag it to simulator, then Safari opens (or browse to the Image in the internet using Safari)

2. Hold your click on the image

3. When the pop-up appears, choose Save Image and enjoy ;)

Update: for iOS Simulator 4.2, do these steps twice to get it work. Thanks `kevboh` !

Update: This also works for iOS Simulator 6.1

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edited Mar 19, 2013 at 18:05

Khattab
737 ● 1 ● 10 ● 20

answered Jan 11, 2010 at 4:06

KONG
7,371 ● 6 ● 30 ● 27

1 This doesn't work for me with iOS simulator Version 4.2 (235). I can run through steps 1-3 fine, but when I go to "Photos" I don't see anything. – Mark Fowler Feb 28, 2011 at 7:58

2 This worked for me when I had no apps open, when I had an app open it went through the same steps but didn't actually work. – Tristan Warner-Smith Jul 11, 2011 at 9:25

image format should be .jpg only..it would not work for .png i think – Talktobijju Jul 13, 2011 at 7:33

1 Wow this was so easy it felt like I was cheating! BTW as noted by @KarenAnne, this works in iOS 6.0 simulator, with photos ending up in ~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/6.0/Media/DCIM/100APPLE and (it appears) no .THM files. In any case, great tip! – Dave Marley Oct 28, 2012 at 19:49 ✎

Works perfectly with iOS7 as well. Nice answer. – Craig Day Sep 11, 2013 at 13:40

284

The simplest way to get images, videos, etc onto the simulator is to drag and drop them from your computer onto the simulator. This will cause the Simulator to open the Photos app and start populating the library.

If you want a scriptable method, read on.

Note - while this is valid, and works, I think Koen's solution below is now a better one, since it does not require rebooting the simulator.

Identify your simulator by going to xCode->Devices, selecting your simulator, and checking the Identifier value. Or you can ensure the simulator is running and run the following to get the device ID `xcrun simctl list | grep Booted`

Go to

~/Library/Developer/CoreSimulator/Devices/[Simulator Identifier]/data/Media/DCIM/100APPLE

and add IMG_nnnn.THM and IMG_nnnn.JPG. You will then need to reset your simulator (Hardware->Reboot) to allow it to notice the new changes. It doesn't matter if they are not JPEGs - they can both be PNGs, but it appears that both of them must be present for it to work. You may need to create DCIM if it doesn't already exist, and in that case you should start nnnn from 0001. The JPG files are the fullsize version, while the THM files are the thumbnail, and are 75x75 pixels in size. I wrote a script to do this, but there's a better documented one over [here](-link no longer work).

You can also add photos from safari in the simulator, by Tapping and Holding on the image. If you drag an image (or any other file, like a PDF) to the simulator, it will immediately open Safari and display the image, so this is quite an easy way of getting images to it.

edited Dec 29, 2020 at 21:46

Anand Rockzz
6,638 ● 5 ● 72 ● 78

answered Jan 22, 2009 at 12:15

Airsource Ltd
32.6k ● 13 ● 74 ● 76

Under iPhone SDK 3.0, this has changed just a bit. Now, the thumbnail files (".THM") need to go under 100APPLE/.MISC. Otherwise, all the photos will appear as black boxes. – user73774 Sep 3, 2009 at 21:50

How do I update the icon on the Saved Photos cell in the main Photo Album table view? – Simon Woodside Nov 3, 2009 at 20:39

3   My location is at `~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/3.1.3/Media/DCIM/100APPLE` – gak Apr 7, 2010 at 3:26

3   For me with the 5.1 simulator, you don't need the .THM files and the directory needed to be ~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/5.1/Media/DCIM/100APPLE The script link in the answer was no longer working for me so I whipped up my own script here: gist.github.com/3738695 – Dav Yaginuma Sep 17, 2012 at 17:38 ✎

11   Unfortunately with iOS6, this technique no longer works. This little importing app which you can run in the simulator works well though - aptogo.co.uk/2010/09/importing-photos See the lower rated answers below this one. – Kenny Grant Dec 20, 2012 at 19:55

---

3 Simple Steps

131

1. Drag & Drop image onto simulator

   - this will open a browser with your image

2. Click & hold image

   - this will open options

3. save image

   - this will copy image onto simulator

[Watch YouTube Video (add images to iphone simulator)](#)

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edited Oct 28, 2013 at 9:17

Nicktar
5,585 ● 1 ● 30 ● 43

answered Jun 30, 2010 at 19:19

user380427
1,329 ● 1 ● 8 ● 2

Doesn't work for video. Because nothing happen when you long press the screen. – Bagusflyer Sep 9, 2012 at 8:30

I get a popup: The operation couldn't be completed. (PHPhotosErrorDomain error -1.) – conor909 Jan 4 at 21:31

66

With iOS 8.0, we added the ability to just drag and drop images into the iOS Simulator. You can drag a bunch of images into the window, and they should be imported into the photo reel for that simulated device. You can also do this with the simctl command line tool. 'xcrun simctl addphoto '

answered Sep 10, 2014 at 6:40

Jeremy Huddleston Sequoia

23.6k ● 5 ● 84 ● 91

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2 Thanks! Great feature. Note that you can't drag them to the Dock icon, you have to drag them into the Simulator window. Hope that's changed soon to allow dragging to the icon.
– Jordan H Sep 21, 2014 at 6:55

Dragging to the Dock icon should bring the app windows to the foreground (like if you drag to the Finder dock icon).
– Jeremy Huddleston Sequoia Sep 22, 2014 at 22:06

Hi @JeremyHuddlestonSequoia! Two questions: the command only works for pictures, not videos, right? Also, is there any way to input "moment"-style information to the simulator (i.e., create multiple moments, possibly backdated, etc.)? – julien_c Apr 21, 2015 at 14:46

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1 Correct. It is just for adding photos. It cannot be used for videos. I'm not aware of a way to backdate the events, but that may be possible through the Photos app. If not, it would certainly be worth filing a radar for at bugreport.apple.com
– Jeremy Huddleston Sequoia Apr 21, 2015 at 16:28

@JeremyHuddlestonSequoia, It doesn't preserve the original metadata of the assets. Please have a look at my project that helps you import your assets while preserving all the metadata (Including videos!)
github.com/matibot/MBAssetsImporter – Mati Bot Jul 27, 2015 at 18:26

55

Since Xcode 6 you can use the command line tool `xcrun simctl`.

Usage is very simple; to add a photo to the currently running simulator you use the `booted` placeholder.

```
xcrun simctl addmedia booted ./MyFile.jpg
```

To add it to any other simulator, you use its device id, which can be found by running `xcrun simctl list`.

```
xcrun simctl addmedia E201E636-CE6C-11E5-AB30-62566287
```

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edited Jan 27, 2017 at 8:58

Airsource Ltd
32.6k ● 13 ● 74 ● 76

answered Feb 8, 2016 at 14:07

Koen.
26.8k ● 7 ● 86 ● 80

The last command "xcrun simctl addmedia E201E636-CE6C-11E5-AB30-625662870761 ./MyFile.jpg" only seem to work if the simulator is running. I was hoping there would be a solution to add images without running i.e. to prepare before running a simulator. – StackUnderflow Dec 11, 2017 at 10:30
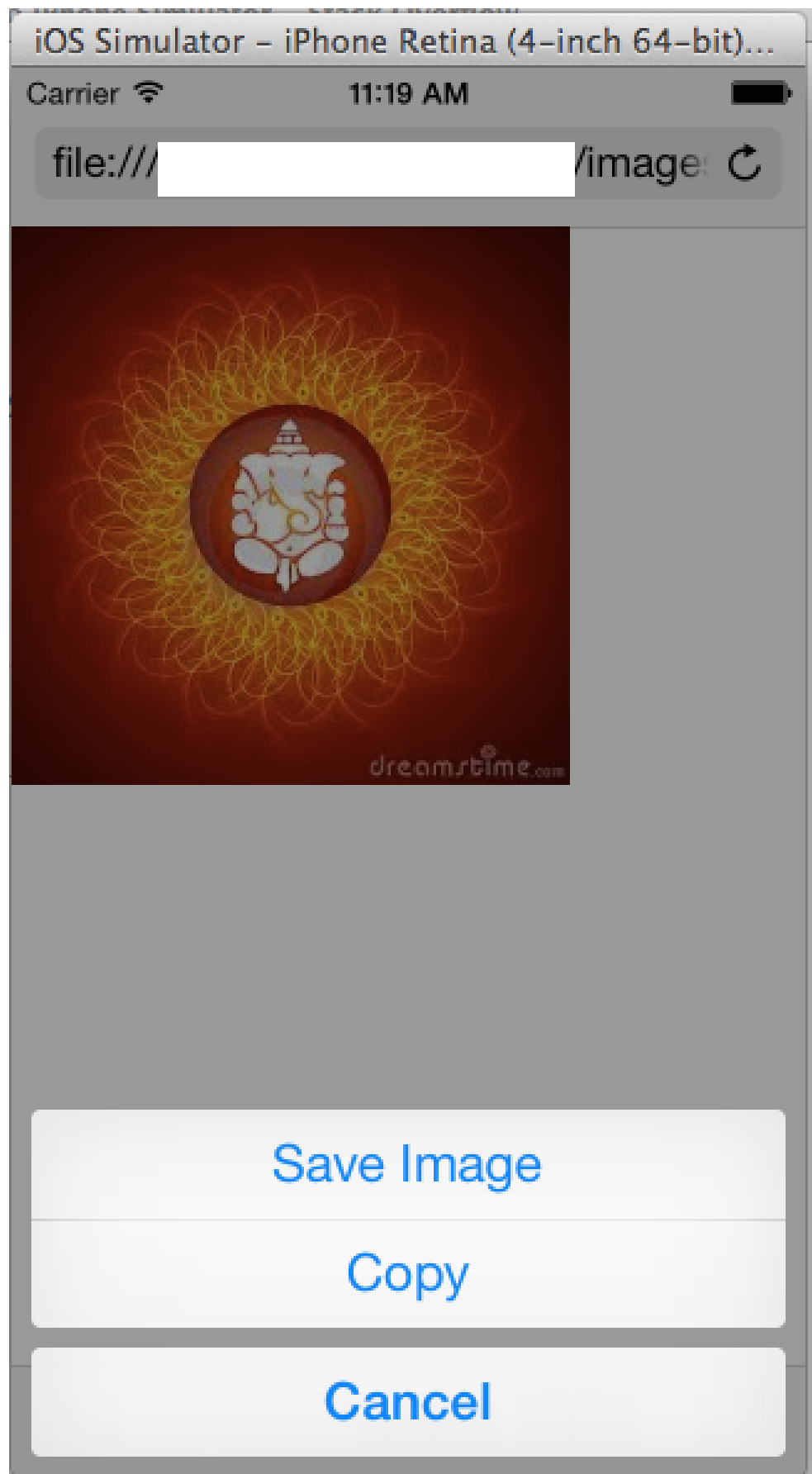

Its simple. Just follow these steps :

1. Drag and drop image onto Simulator

27

2. Now image opens into Safari browser (file://.../ImageName). Tap-and-hold on the Image.

3. This displays actionSheet with Save, Cancel option (Also copy in case of iOS 7 simulator).

4. Save the image. The image gets added into Library.

Share Improve this answer   edited Apr 28, 2014 at 5:53

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I just stumbled upon how to **bulk** upload images on the iOS Simulator. (I've only confirmed it on 6.1.)

1. Backup the folder:

```
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/6.1
```

2. Copy all your images into the folder:

```
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/6.1
```

3. **Move or delete the folder:**

```
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/6.1
```

4. Restart iOS Simulator

5. Open the *Photos* app

The simulator will restore all the images from the 100APPLE folder!

For iOS 7 I did the following:

copy photos to these two folders:

```
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/6.1/Med
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/7.0/Med
```

delete these 4 files only (to avoid duplicates on relaunch):

```
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone
Simulator/6.1/Media/PhotoData/Photos.sqlite-shm
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone
Simulator/6.1/Media/PhotoData/Photos.sqlite-wal
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone
Simulator/7.0/Media/PhotoData/Photos.sqlite-shm
~/Library/Application Support/iPhone
Simulator/7.0/Media/PhotoData/Photos.sqlite-wal
```

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answered Nov 7, 2013 at 19:53

user2966386
211 ● 2 ● 2

1   Deleting the `*.sqlite-` files worked for me. Thanks!
    – Zorayr Nov 30, 2013 at 22:19

    Excellent, it really helped me. I tried several methods and till
    now I was doing drag and drop. But it is more easier way
    when you need to copy too many images :) – Anand Aug 14,
    2014 at 11:29

5   With iOS 8, you can now drag photos onto the simulator :)
    – z2k Sep 16, 2014 at 18:00

    Unlike Arel's answer, movies moved into DCIM/100APPLE
    will not become available with this technique. – Steven Fisher
    Mar 31, 2015 at 18:42

Just drag images to the iPhone simulator.

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edited May 28, 2017 at 11:47

Eric Aya
70.1k ● 36 ● 188 ● 258

answered May 28, 2017 at 11:24

If you can not drag and drop your files because you experience the error:

One or more media items failed to import: : The operation couldn't be completed. (PHPhotosErrorDomain error -1.)

Move your files into the `Documents` folder and then drag them into the simulator. This will trigger the simulator to ask for permissions to access your files. Having them inside the `Downloads` folder, will not.

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answered Sep 23, 2020 at 13:03

thank you lol the documents folder was the key here – Evan Jan 22, 2021 at 4:18

1   Thank you so much! This saved me a lot of time! – Barb Aug 30, 2021 at 17:29

Also, it didn't work for my `~/Desktop` folder for some reason... Thanks! – cubuspl42 Sep 29, 2023 at 9:26

This is MUCH easier with the new iOS Simulator that comes with Xcode 6+ (iOS Simulator 8.1 and above.) Now all you have to do is drag *one or more* photos onto

16

the iOS Simulator window, and instead of opening Safari, the Photos app opens, and instantly adds *all* dragged-in photos to the device.

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Method 1 (Easiest Way): If you have your image on Mac

12

You can drag an image from the Finder on your Mac to Simulator, and it is saved to the Saved Photos album.

Method 2: If its on any URL

To save an image from a webpage to the Photos app

1. Place the pointer on the image you want to save, and hold down the mouse button or trackpad.

2. When the menu appears, click Save Image to save the image to the Photos app in an iOS simulator.

3. The image is saved to the Saved Photos album in the Photos app.

Incase someone looking for Apple Documentation regarding Copying and Pasting in Simulator.

Share Improve this answer   edited Nov 19, 2017 at 5:44
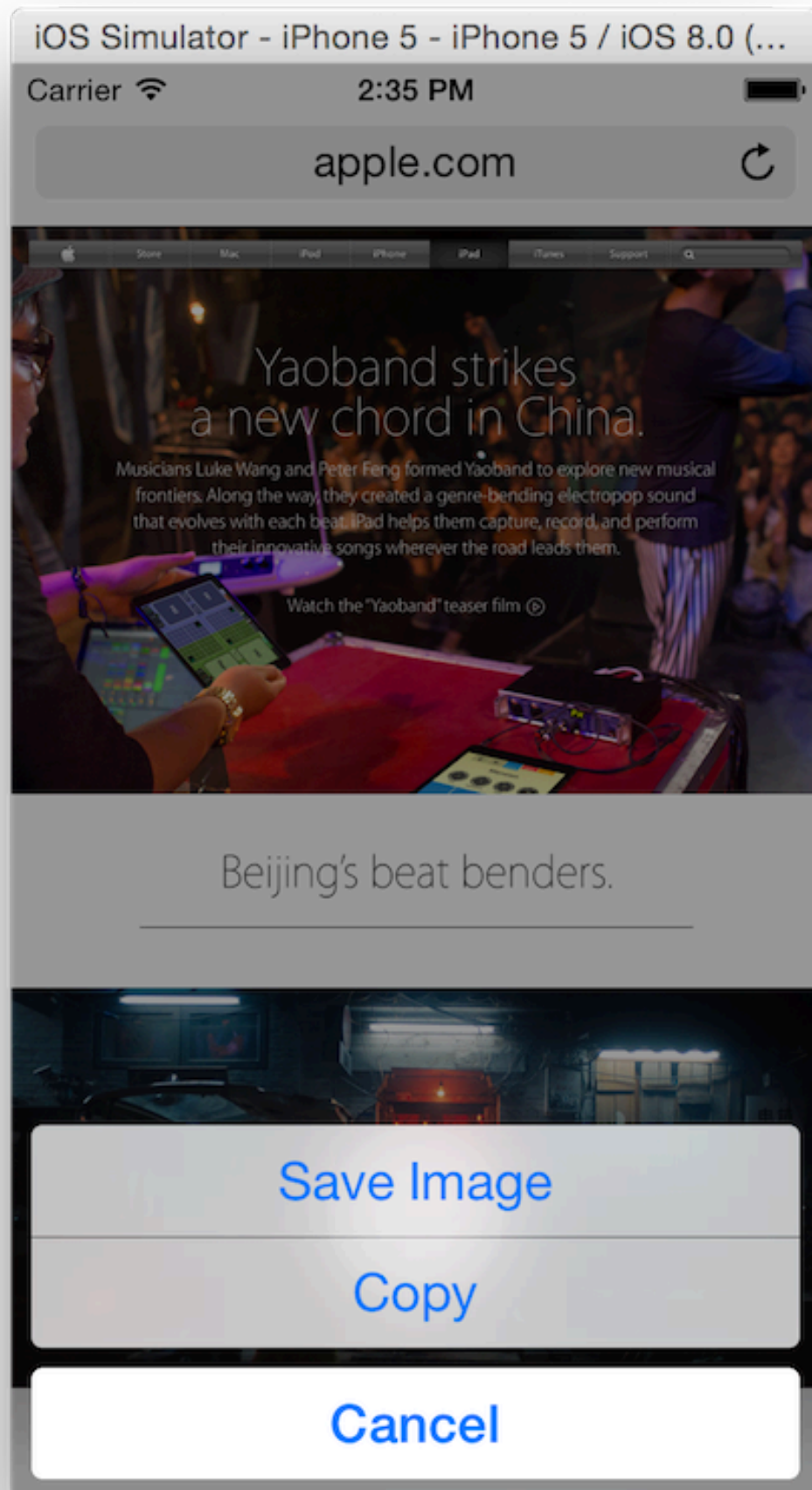
Follow

The only drawbacks is that it doesn't work with multiple images at once. – Antzi Dec 11, 2018 at 3:01

Works with multiple images fine. Can't believe I didn't know this sooner. – Dazzle Aug 8, 2019 at 22:23

9

None of the answers had the exact solution that I needed.

The steps I've found for myself working on iOS 5.0 and above simulator are as follows:

1. Close the simulator if it is running xcode project.
2. Run simulator from the dock by clicking on it.
3. Drag & drop the image into simulator.
4. Tap and hold the image (opened in safari) and select the save option.

You are done.

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edited May 22, 2013 at 12:47

answered Feb 5, 2013 at 14:42

The images end out thumbnailed to 552x668 resolution, which isn't the original image. In contrast, the image importer preserves the original image resolution. – Rob Jan 9, 2014 at 18:24 ✎

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7

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For iOS 5.1 this is further changed to new path

> ~/Library/Application Support/iPhone Simulator/5.1/Media/DCIM/100APPLE

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As of iOS 8, you can just drag all your photos onto the simulator window and they'll save to camera roll automatically. You can do as many at a time as you want.

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↺

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> This was super delightful to find out today, especially for testing performance of collection views with a huge amount of image data + NSCache optimization. – Eric G Feb 19, 2015 at 18:47

> This has stopped working on XCode 10 (tested on 10.1), iOS 12.1 :(– endavid Dec 11, 2018 at 13:36

None of the answers above worked for me on iOS 15.

I simply opened Files app and dragged and dropped the image there. It automatically imported the image to the Photos app and I was able to use everywhere through my simulator.

Cheers!

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answered Nov 2, 2021 at 15:03

paprika
330 ● 3 ● 11

If you need to import more than just one or two photos then take a look at this article that I wrote. It describes an easy way to perform a bulk import of photos and works for iOS 4.x.

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answered Sep 2, 2010 at 14:49

Robin Summerhill
13.7k ● 3 ● 42 ● 37

> This worked for me, but I needed to make a simple change to the app: Because I'm running the 4.2 simulator and this was designed to run on 4.0 (which I don't have), I went to "Project" -> "Edit Project Settings" and then under "Architectures" I changed the "Base SDK" to "Latest iOS".
> – [Mark Fowler](#) Feb 28, 2011 at 8:24

6

For iOS 8, If there is no need to retain photo capture date and location, just drop photo files to the simulator.

To retain photo meta data, do the following:

1. Copy photo files to: /Users/{USER}/Library/Developer/CoreSimulator/Devices/{UDID}/data/Media/DCIM/100Apple

2. Remove (or rename) folder: /Users/{USER}/Library/Developer/CoreSimulator/Devices/{UDID}/data/Media/photoData

3. Relaunch Simulator

Note: You need to replace {USER} with your user name and {UDID} with the UDID of the simulator. To find UDID for your simulator, from Terminal, run 'xcrun simctl list'.

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answered Nov 4, 2014 at 17:41

[Joe Smith](#)
1,920 ● 1 ● 16 ● 16

In OS X Catalina with Xcode 11 you have to do this differently.

4

First you MUST start the simulator. If you want to copy, say a photo to MULTIPLE simulated devices. Start all of them up. Then Right Click on a SINGLE (Multiple images will fail. ONLY does a single file.).

Share -> Simulator

A 'share sheet will pop-up. You must choose an active simulator in the combo box and hit send.

It will send one to many but NOT many to many of selected photos.

I hope this helps folks. Drag and drop was supported in the last versions of Xcode and OS X but not with OS X Catalina and Xcode 11.

While this IS in the directions it currently IS NOT working.

What DID work for me was to first import my images into iPhoto on OS X and then DRAG/DROP them from my OS X iPhoto and drop into the simulator. It would appear the drag/drop for photos into the simulator is CURRENTLY only working from OS X iPhoto. :-(

edited Nov 27, 2019 at 15:03

answered Nov 26, 2019 at 19:12

Waxhaw
829 ● 6 ● 10

3

```
quit the simulator.

Run simulator from the dock by clicking on it.

Drag & drop the image into simulator which you want to

it will open image in safari .

tap and hold the image and click the save option.

then open gallery and you will see the image which u h
```

edited Aug 6, 2014 at 6:44

answered Aug 6, 2014 at 6:04

C_compnay
133 ● 1 ● 4

3

Adding an image to the Iphone Simulation running IOS 8.0 is even easier.
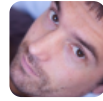
- Drag your image to the simulator

- IOS opens the Photo app and your image is now part of your collection.

No need to deal with Safari anymore

Share   Improve this answer   answered Aug 9, 2014 at 22:19

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Thomas
1,956 ● 14 ● 21

You can now also drag, in one go, multiple photos straight into the Camera Roll album. – Paul Ardeleanu Nov 10, 2014 at 14:43

1   @PaulArdeleanu, you are right. However, it doesn't preserve you original metadata of the assets. Please have a look at my projects that helps you import your assets while preserving all the metadata github.com/matibot/MBAssetsImporter – Mati Bot Jul 27, 2015 at 18:24

1   @MatiBot, MBAssetsImporter is great for bulk transfer of images - thanks very much! – user2067021 Apr 6, 2016 at 5:55

For iOS 4.2 I had to go and create the 100APPLE folder and restart the simulator, then it worked.

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2

try this app I've made. download the code and run it in simulator

https://github.com/cristianbica/CBSimulatorSeed

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2

Doesn't work out-of-the-box under iOS7 - says something about cocoaPods being out of sync. – Ash Dec 30, 2013 at 11:40

Well you must run pod install to install the pods as they are not in the repo. I've updated the README – Cristian Bica Dec 31, 2013 at 5:59

For iOS 8.0,the answer is out of date.I found the media resource in the following path:

2

~/Library/Developer/CoreSimulator/Devices/[DeviceID]/data/Media/DCIM/100APPLE

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1. Using your pc just Send the image via your email

2. Open the IOS-Simulator then open the email and download the image

3. just click and hold the mouse on the image, and from the options that will be displayed

2
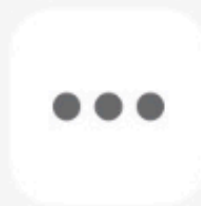
4. Then, it will be automatically saved to your iOS-Simulator's photo gallery

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answered Mar 1, 2019 at 9:18

Assegd
106 ● 1 ● 2 ● 18

This approach works for Big Sur if you get the following error while trying to drag and drop a photo onto the simulator: The operation couldn't be completed. (PHPhotosErrorDomain error -1.) – Ron Sims II Mar 23, 2022 at 13:59

1

Just Drag and Drop image into iphone simulator. browser will open to show your image. press on image until you not receive options to save Image. then Save image. thats it :). you will see your image in to Photo app in your simulator....

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answered Aug 24, 2012 at 11:18

Bhagirath
27 ● 1

1

I wrote a bash script to do this. Check the link[1]

```bash
#!/bin/bash

# Imports pictures into all iOS simulators.

path_to_pic="src/ios/pictures/"

mkdir -p /Users/$(whoami)/Library/Application\ Support
Simulator/{5.0,5.1,6.0,6.1}/Media/DCIM/100APPLE/
```

```
find ~/Library/Application\ Support/iPhone\ Simulator/
-exec cp /Users/$(whoami)/$path_to_pic/* {} \;
```

[1] : https://gist.github.com/firesofmay/5194901

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firesofmay
592 ● 1 ● 3 ● 16

Just to tell you : KONG's solution also works on iOS 7 beta.

His solution was:

Drag the image to simulator, then Safari opens (or browse to the Image in the internet using Safari) Hold your click on the image When the pop-up appears, choose Save Image and enjoy ;)

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mathgag555
39 ● 2

I just needed some random images for testing, so this is how I did it.

I have the simplest solution in the world. Just open Safari in the simulator, go to Google images (or your own web or Dropbox URL), view an image, hold down the mouse button for 2 seconds, and you'll see "Save Image" - it will save right into the Photos library. Rinse and repeat.

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answered May 23, 2014 at 17:54

Justin Schier
524 ● 5 ● 14

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an even easier way, is : open safari on simulator > tap www.google.com search for random photos "nature" open each image, press on it and save it.

1

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answered Sep 23, 2014 at 23:38

Blackmoon
362 ● 2 ● 11