

[< How to use a while loop to repeat work](#)[Summary: Conditions and loops >](#)

How to skip loop items with break and continue

[Paul Hudson](#) [@twostraws](#) October 5th 2021*Updated for Xcode 16.4*

How to skip loop items with break and continue – Swift for Complete Beginners



Swift gives us two ways to skip one or more items in a loop: **continue** skips the current loop iteration, and **break** skips all remaining iterations. Like **while** loops these are *sometimes* used, but in practice much less than you might think.

Let's look at them individually, starting with **continue**. When you're looping over an array of data, Swift will take out one item from the array and execute the loop body using it. If you call **continue** inside that loop body, Swift will immediately stop executing the current loop iteration and jump to the next item in the loop, where it will carry on as normal. This is commonly used near the start of loops, where you eliminate loop variables that don't pass a test of your choosing.

Here's an example:

```
let filenames = ["me.jpg", "work.txt", "sophie.jpg", "logo.psd"]

for filename in filenames {
    if filename.hasSuffix(".jpg") == false {
        continue
    }

    print("Found picture: \(filename)")
}
```

That creates an array of filename strings, then loops over each one and checks to make sure it has the suffix “.jpg” – that it’s a picture. **continue** is used with all the filenames failing that test, so that the rest of the loop body is skipped.

As for **break**, that exits a loop immediately and skips all remaining iterations. To demonstrate this, we could write some code to calculate 10 common multiples for two numbers:

```
let number1 = 4
let number2 = 14
var multiples = [Int]()

for i in 1...100_000 {
    if i.isMultiple(of: number1) && i.isMultiple(of: number2) {
        multiples.append(i)

        if multiples.count == 10 {
            break
        }
    }
}

print(multiples)
```

That does quite a lot:

1. Create two constants to hold two numbers.
2. Create an integer array variable that will store common multiples of our two numbers.
3. Count from 1 through 100,000, assigning each loop variable to **i**.
4. If **i** is a multiple of both the first and second numbers, append it to the integer array.
5. Once we hit 10 multiples, call **break** to exit the loop.
6. Print out the resulting array.

So, use **continue** when you want to skip the rest of the current loop iteration, and use **break** when you want to skip all remaining loop iterations.

SPONSORED Take the pain out of configuring and testing your paywalls. RevenueCat's all new, fully customizable Paywall Editor allow you to remotely change your paywall view without any code changes or app updates.

[Learn more here](#)



Code got you started. This gets you *paid*.

You don't need more tutorials, you need a *plan*. That's where this book comes in: it has everything you need to go from Xcode to App Store, from finding killer ideas, to launch strategy, to breakout success.

Learn how to design, price, position, and promote your app so it doesn't just launch – it *lands*.

[Get it here](#)



[< How to use a while loop to repeat work](#)

[Summary: Conditions and loops >](#)

Was this page useful? Let us know!



Average rating: 4.6/5

[Click here to visit the Hacking with Swift store >>](#)



Twitter



Mastodon



Email



Sponsor the site



You are not logged in

[Log in or create account](#)