

iCloud is the wireless glue that connects all of your Apple devices and services. Besides storing your documents and device backups, it's also responsible for syncing your device data, sharing your purchases with family, and so much more.



To make the most of Apple's online service, here are the 15 best iCloud tips and tricks to use it like a pro.

## 1. How to access iCloud on different devices

You can access iCloud through a web browser on any computer or mobile device, but the options for mobile use are significantly limited. Here's how to [access iCloud on Apple](#) as well as non-Apple devices.

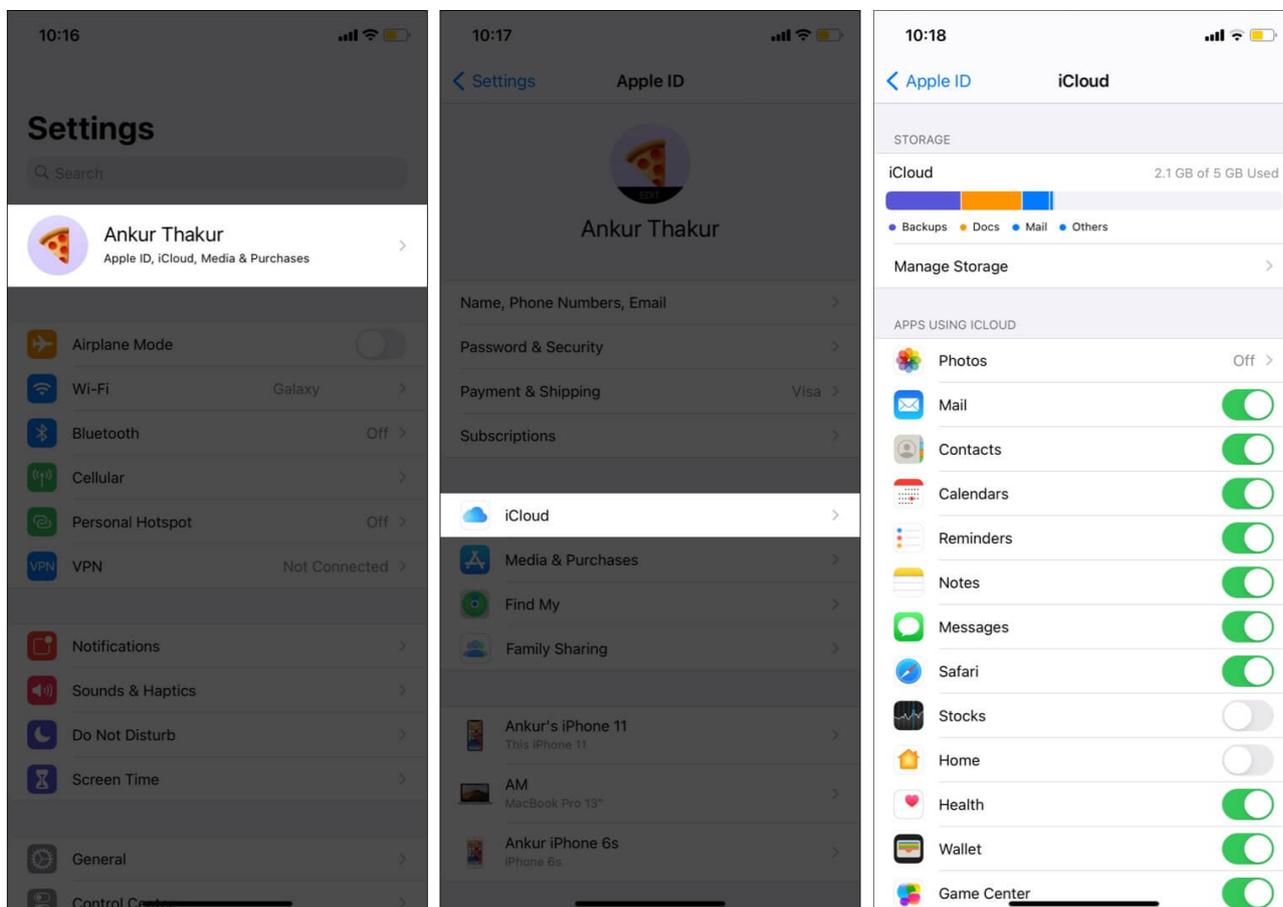
### On Mac

1. Click the **Apple logo** at the top left and choose **System Preferences**.
2. Click **Apple ID**.
3. Choose **iCloud**.
4. From here, enable the desired options.



## On iPhone and iPad

1. Open **Settings** and tap **your name** at the top.
2. Tap **iCloud**.
3. You'll see various options that can be toggled on or off.



On a Windows PC, download the [official iCloud app](#) from the Microsoft Store.

## 2. Control your iCloud backup

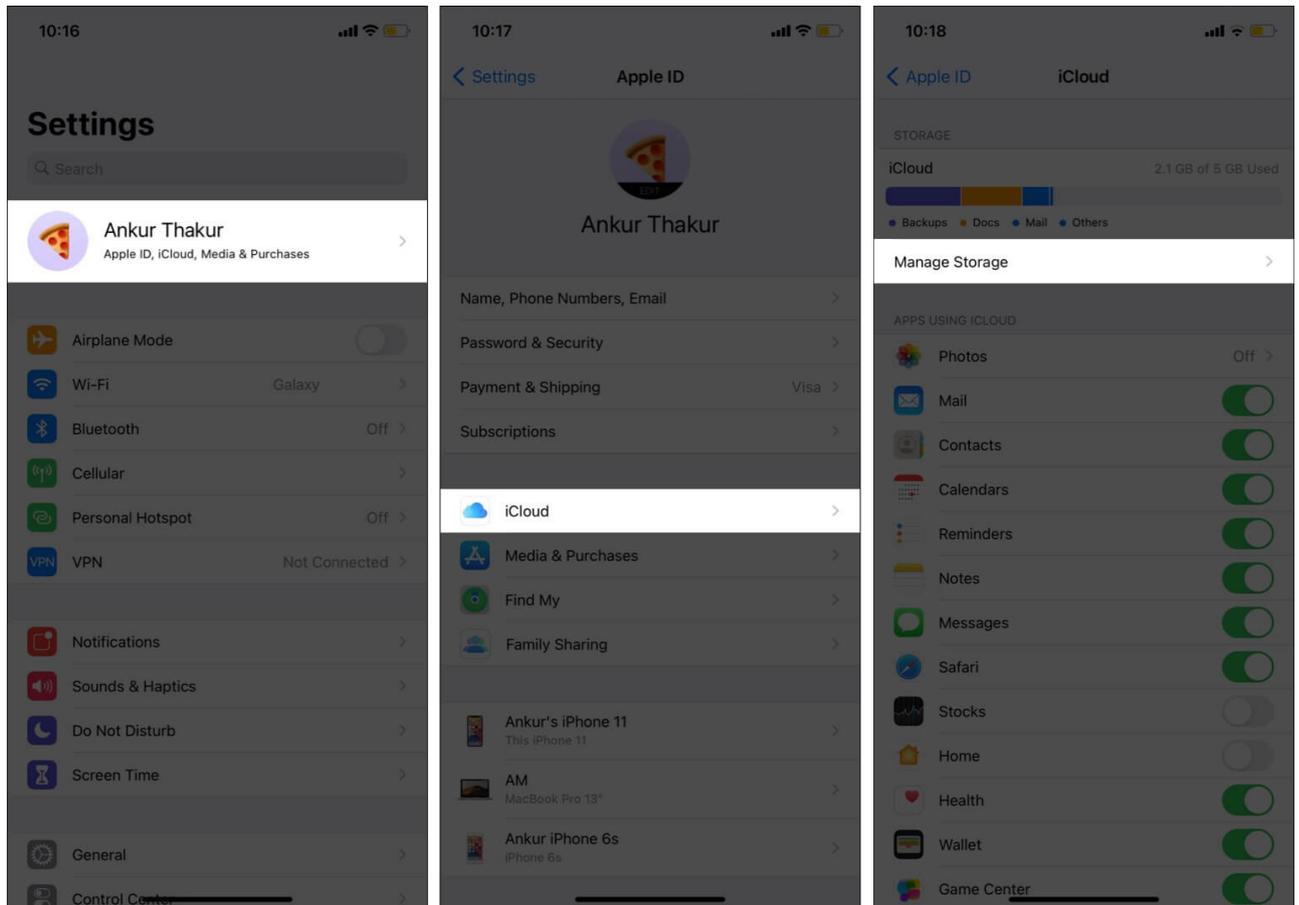
You probably already know that you can [backup your iPhone to iCloud](#) by going to **Settings** → selecting your **name** at the top → **iCloud** → **iCloud Backup**.

But did you know that you can choose exact apps to back up? This is especially useful if you're on the free 5GB plan and wondering how to save space on iCloud.

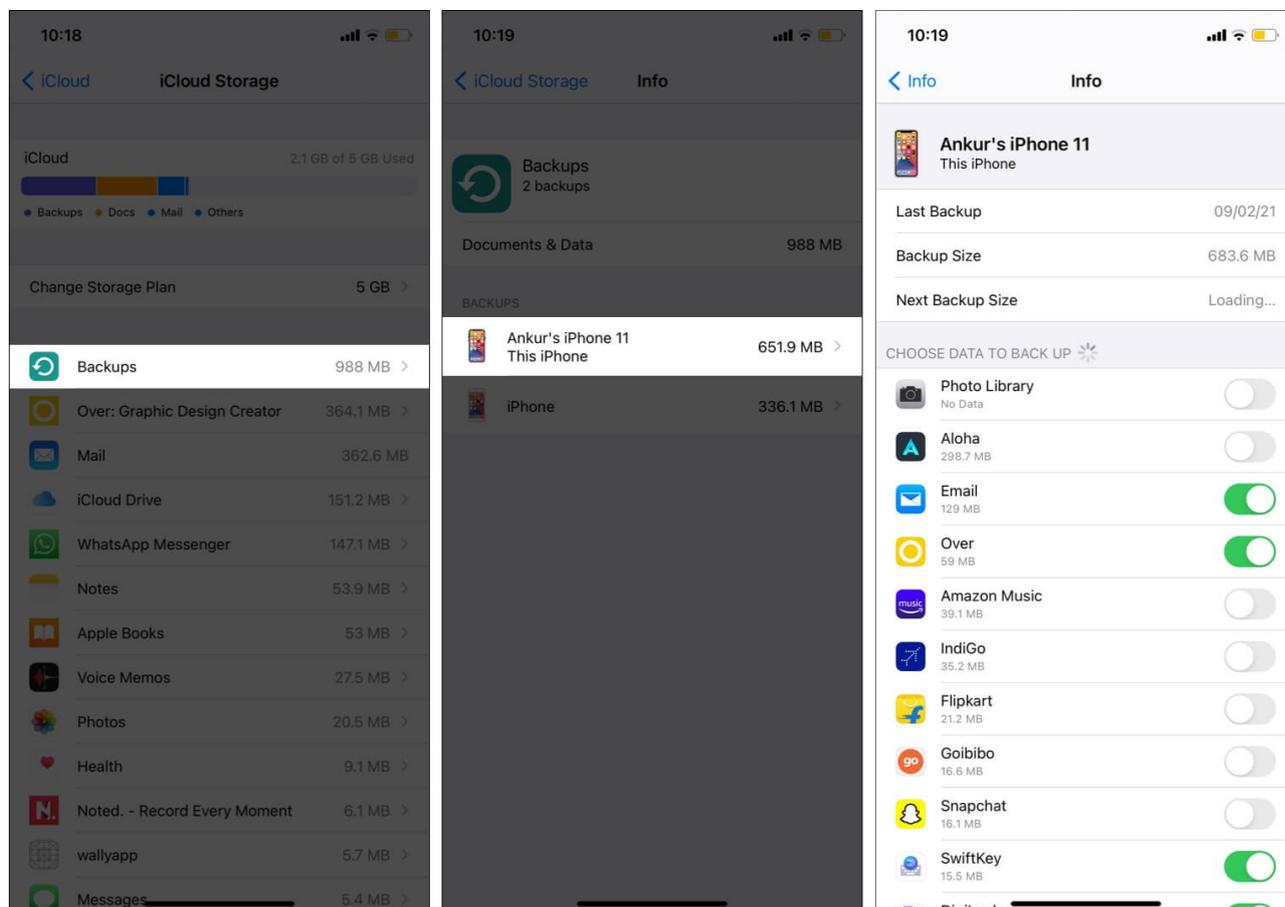
You can stop apps like Facebook, Instagram, etc., from backing up to iCloud and eating your space. There's no downside to it as Facebook, Instagram, and such apps already keep everything on their servers.

Here's how to disable unnecessary apps from backing up on iCloud.

1. Open **Settings** app and tap **your name** from the top.
2. Tap **iCloud** → **Manage Storage**.



3. Tap **Backups**.
4. Choose a **device** under BACKUPS.
5. From under **CHOOSE DATA TO BACK UP**, turn off unnecessary apps. The next iCloud backup won't have data from these apps.



## 3. Free up iCloud space

If you enable iCloud Photos and device iCloud backups, chances are you'll fill up 5GB in a couple of weeks! Now, you can either [free up space](#) or [subscribe to a paid plan](#).

If, like me, you're comfortable using iCloud alternatives to back up your photos, you may not need to buy the subscription plan. I [use Google Photos](#) to back up my pictures. It gives me 15GB (that comes with every Google account) of free storage, unlike Apple's 5GB.

Additionally, if you choose to backup only the essential apps to iCloud (method explained above), you can easily manage with the 5GB free iCloud plan.

## 4. Sync your passwords everywhere with iCloud

## Keychain

iCloud Keychain is magic! Sure, there are tons of [third-party password managers](#), but if I have something made by Apple, chances are I will rarely use one from a different developer.

iCloud Keychain encrypts and stores your username, email, passwords, etc., and makes them available on all your Apple devices.

You can enable it from iPhone **Settings** → tap **your name** at the top → **iCloud** → **Keychain**. On Mac, the same can be done from the **System Preferences** → **Apple ID** → **iCloud** → **Keychain**. You can [learn more about the iCloud Keychain here](#).

**Note:** There's an [iCloud Passwords Chrome extension](#) available for Windows as well.

## 5. iCloud Family Sharing

Apart from paid apps, music, and movies, Family Sharing also enables you to share iCloud storage with your family members who use Apple devices. This means that your family [doesn't have to pay](#) for an iCloud subscription more than once.

In addition to sharing purchases, you can also [share location](#), find each other's misplaced devices, [set Screen Time restrictions](#) and [communication limits on kid's devices](#) remotely.

To enable Family Sharing, open **Settings** → Tap on **Apple ID** Profile → **Set Up Family Sharing** → Follow on-screen **instructions**.

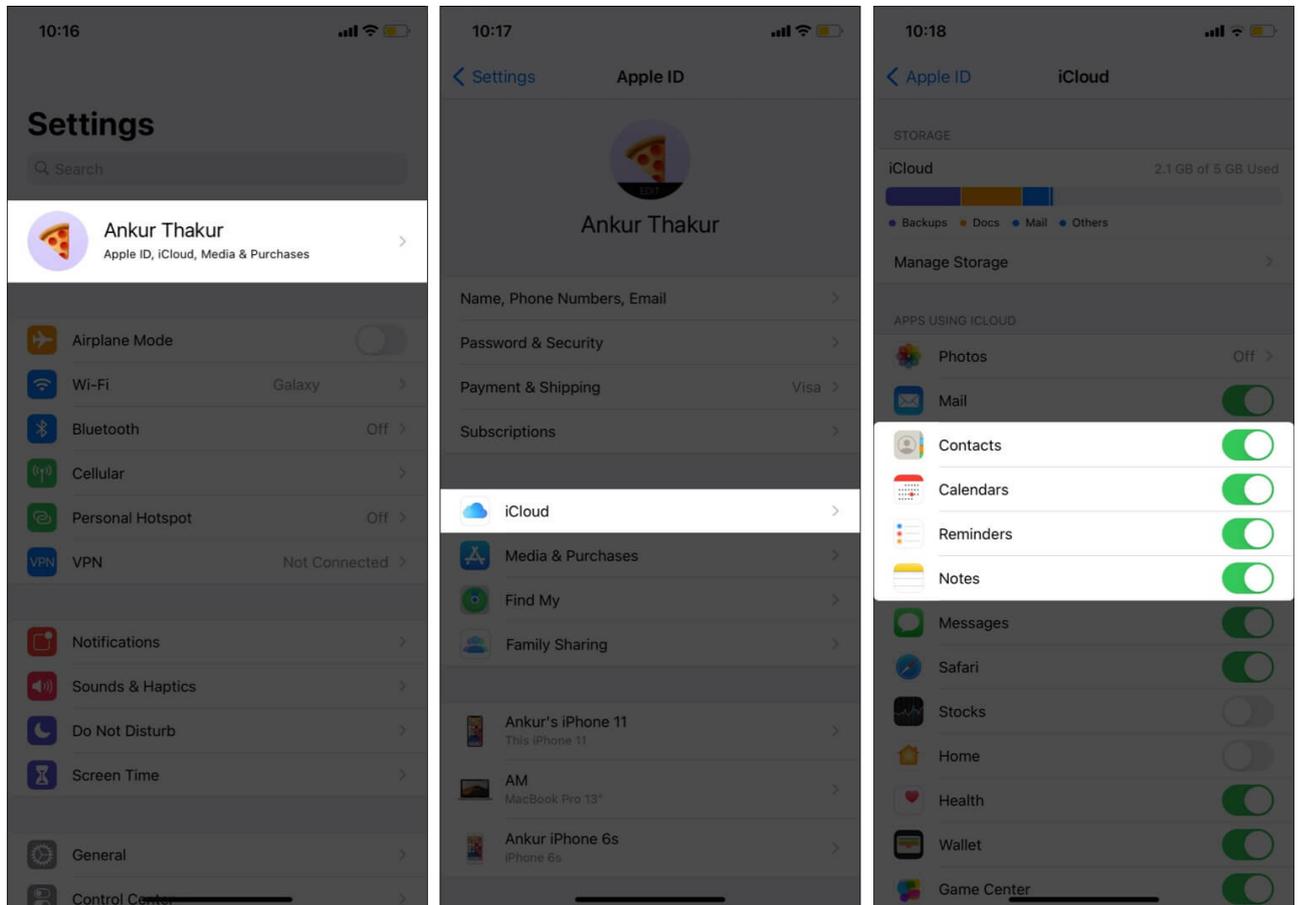
## 6. Access your iCloud content across multiple devices

iCloud is my go-to location for saving Contacts, Notes, Siri data, Photos, Wallet, Calendars, Mail, etc. I've enabled it on all my Apple devices. This lets me make changes on any device, and everything is synced effortlessly via iCloud on my iPhone and Mac.

To do the same, ensure you have the same Apple ID on your other devices, and follow the steps below.

1. Open iPhone or iPad **Settings** and tap **your name** at the top.
2. Tap **iCloud**.
3. Toggle on the apps you want to sync with iCloud.

4. On Mac, open **System Preferences** → **Apple ID** → **iCloud** and check these options.



**Tip:** You can add and sync contacts and calendars [from Gmail on your iPhone](#) too.

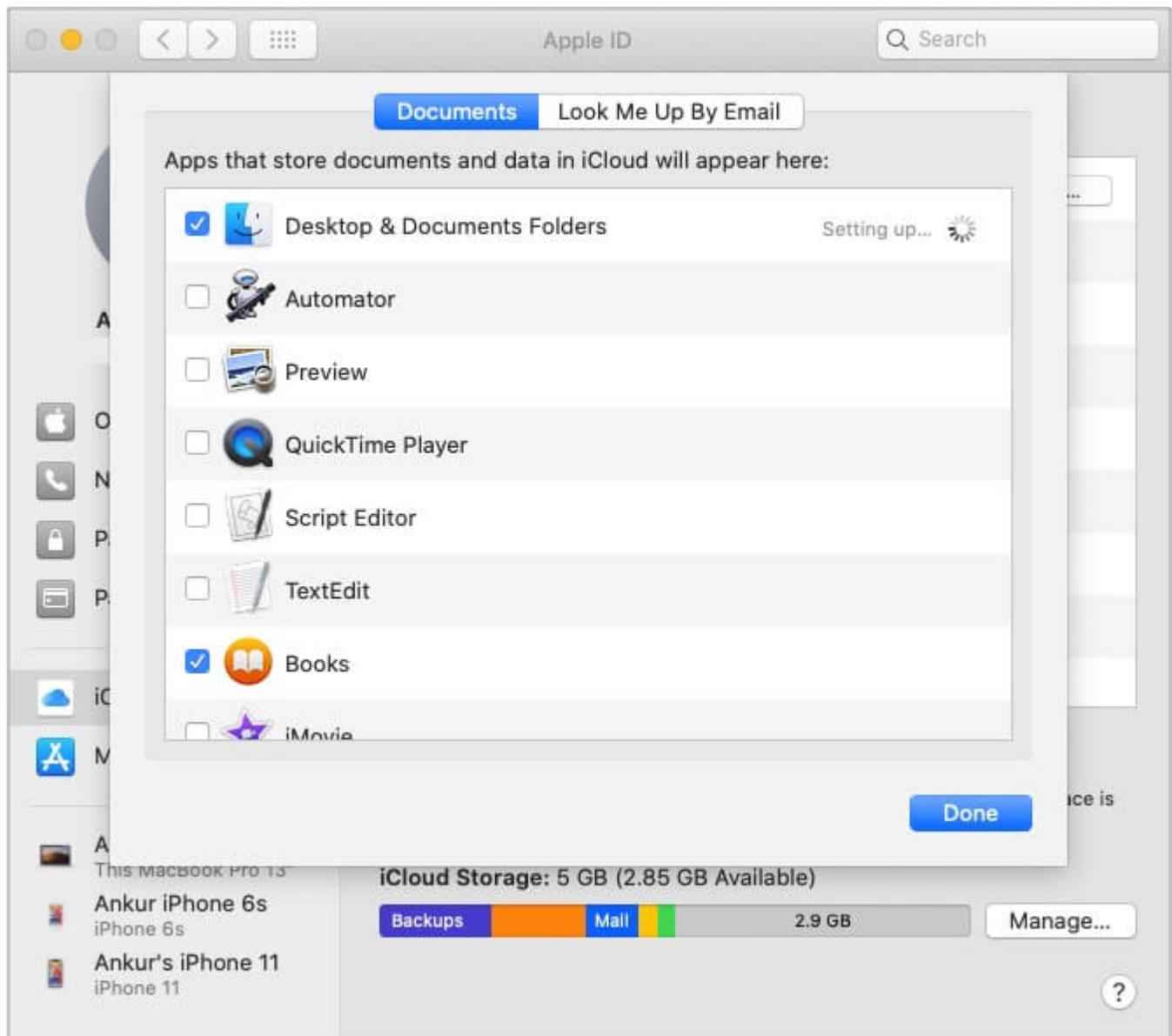
## 7. Share Photo albums with non-Apple devices

Did you know that iCloud makes it easy to [share photos and video albums with anybody](#)? It doesn't matter if they use an iPhone, Android, or a computer! This makes it perfect for sharing any office pictures you snapped on your iPhone with everyone on the team, regardless of which device they use.

## 8. Sync your documents and data from Mac with iCloud

You can configure iCloud on your Mac to store all your documents and files on the Desktop to the cloud.

To do so, launch **System Preferences** → **Apple ID** → **iCloud** → check **iCloud Drive**, and click **Options** next to it. From here, enable **Desktop & Documents Folders** if not already enabled.

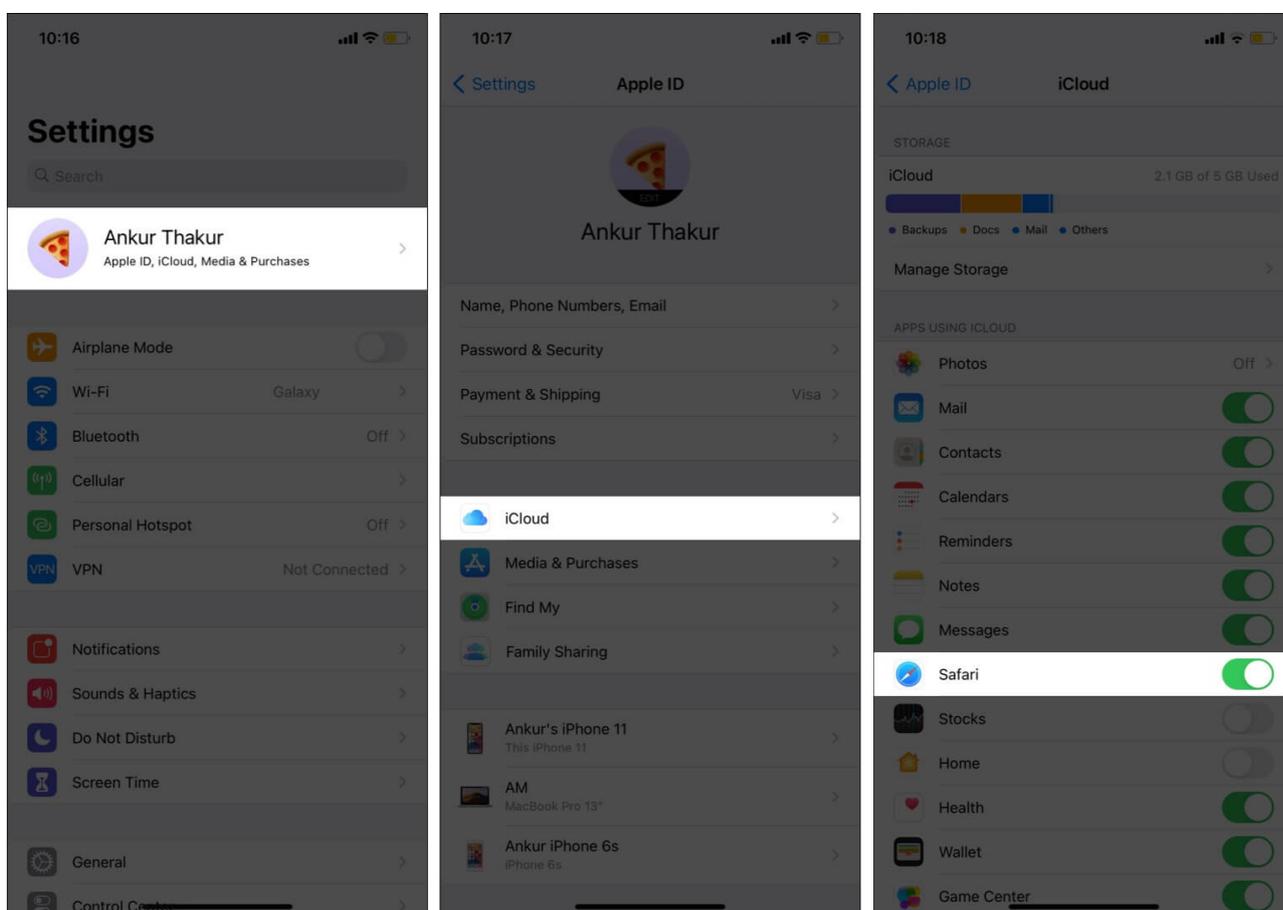


If you use apps like Pages, Keynote, Numbers, etc., you can check them as well. (I use Pages on my iPhone and Mac. Having iCloud Drive enabled syncs everything on both my devices!)

## 9. Sync Safari browsing and reading list across devices

Safari is one of the finest browsers, even when you [compare it to Chrome](#) or other popular choices. If you have multiple Apple devices, you can choose to sync your history, bookmarks, reading lists, etc.

- **On iPhone:** Navigate to **Settings** and tap your name. Tap **iCloud** and toggle Safari on.



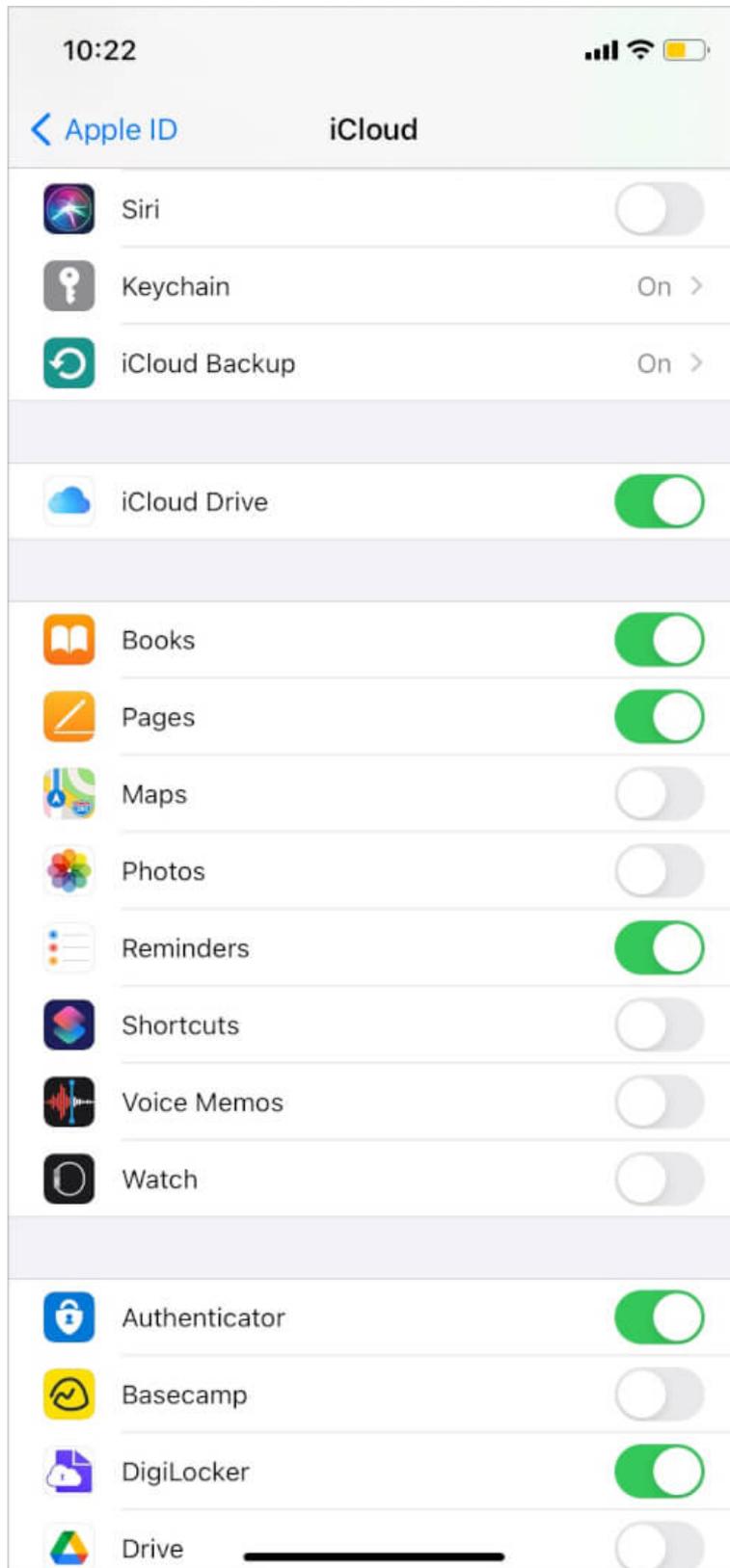
- **On Mac:** Open **System Preferences** → **Apple ID** → **iCloud** → check **Safari**.



## 10. Use iCloud Drive on iPhone and iPad

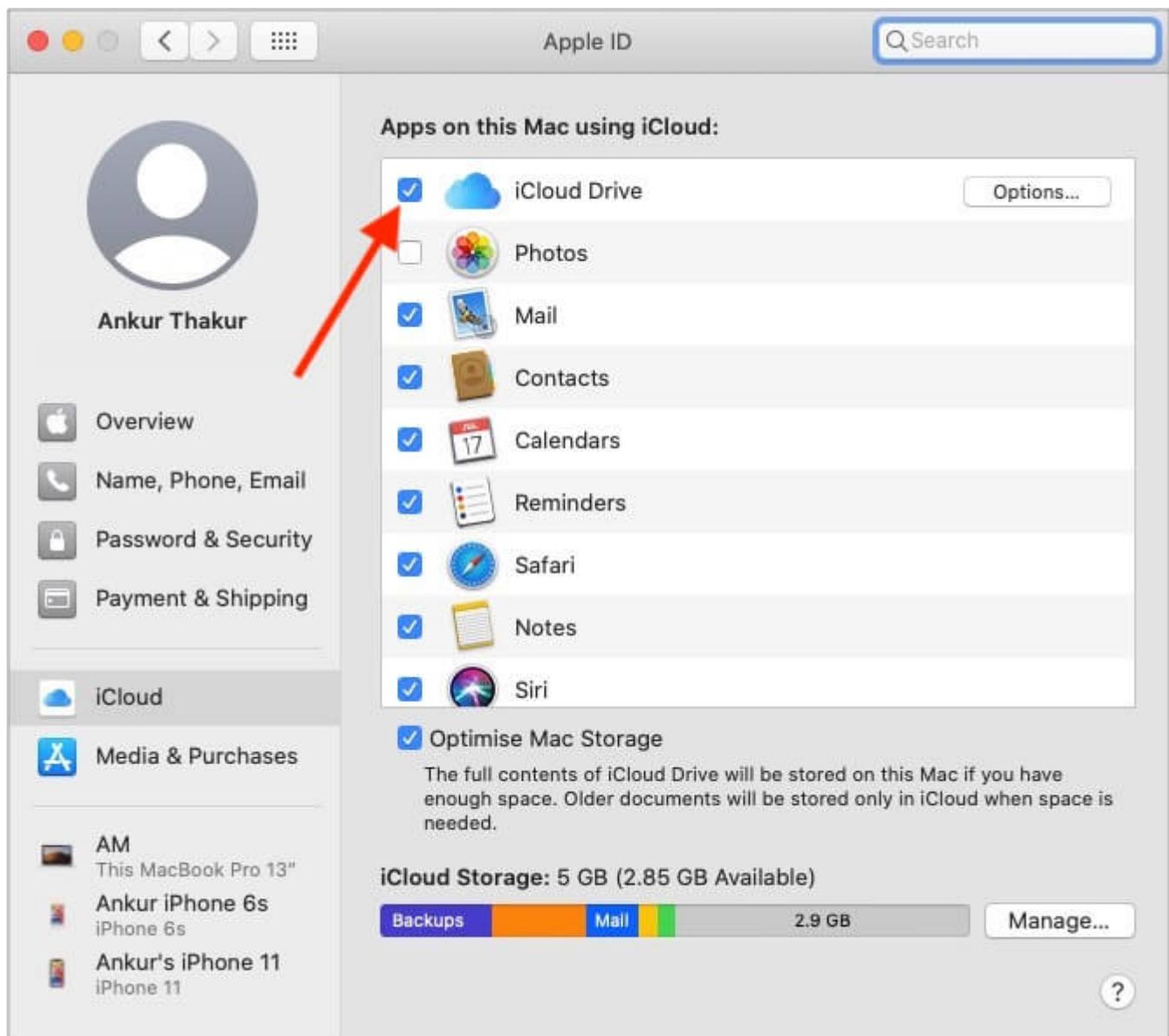
Are you familiar with Google Drive, One Drive, or Dropbox? iCloud Drive is a similar tool by Apple—an [online cloud storage service](#). You can use it to save files of any kind, including data from apps like WhatsApp.

To enable iCloud Drive on iPhone or iPad, open **Settings** → tap your name at the top → tap **iCloud** → scroll down and enable **iCloud Drive**.



Additionally, you can also choose which apps are permitted to store data in the Drive. For example, if you want access to your Voice Memos everywhere, enable iCloud Drive sync for it on all your devices.

To enable iCloud Drive on Mac, open **System Preferences** → click **Apple ID** → choose **iCloud** → enable **iCloud Drive** → click **Options** to fine-tune which apps are allowed to save data to iCloud Drive.

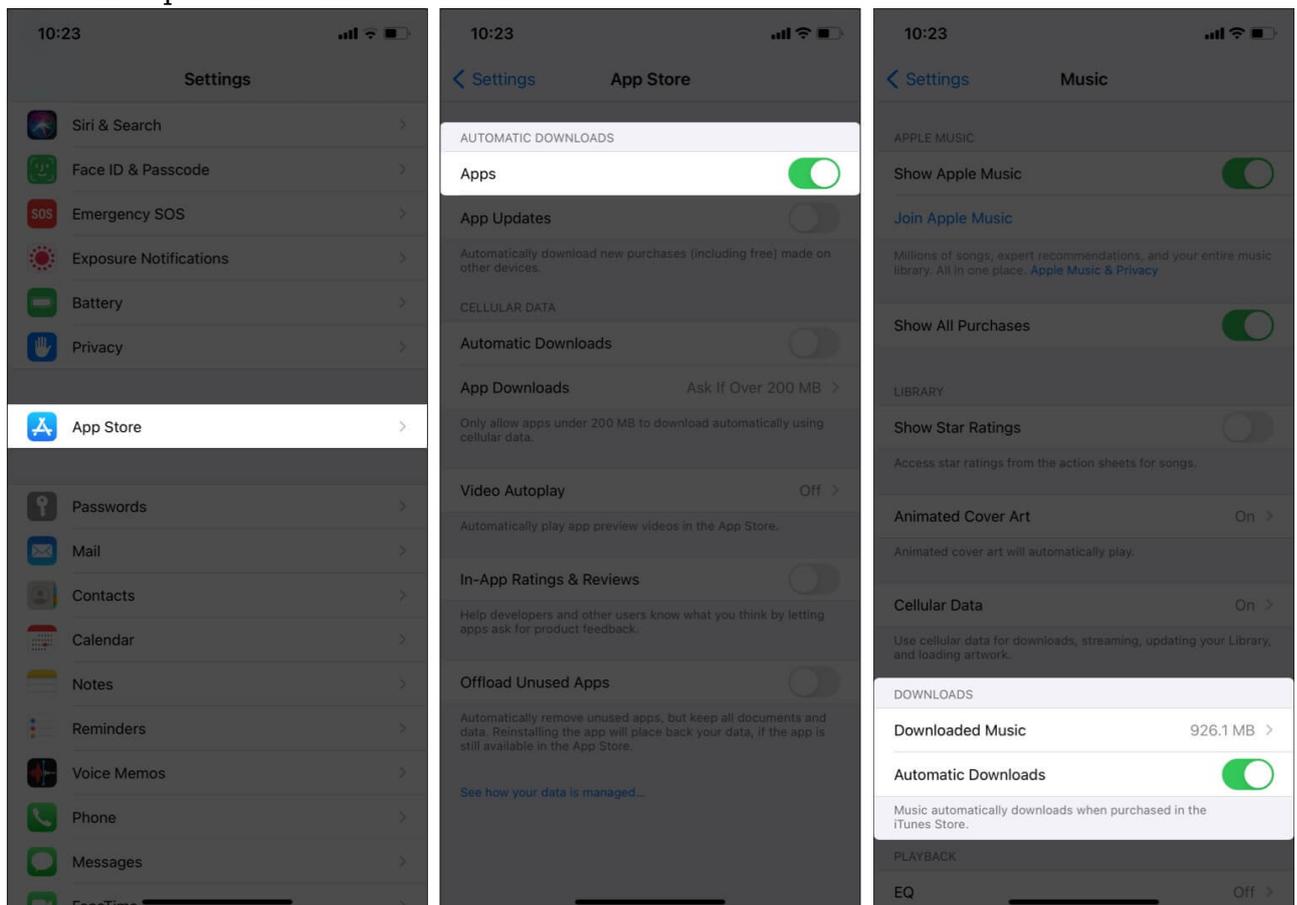


## 11. Use iCloud to automatically download your purchases

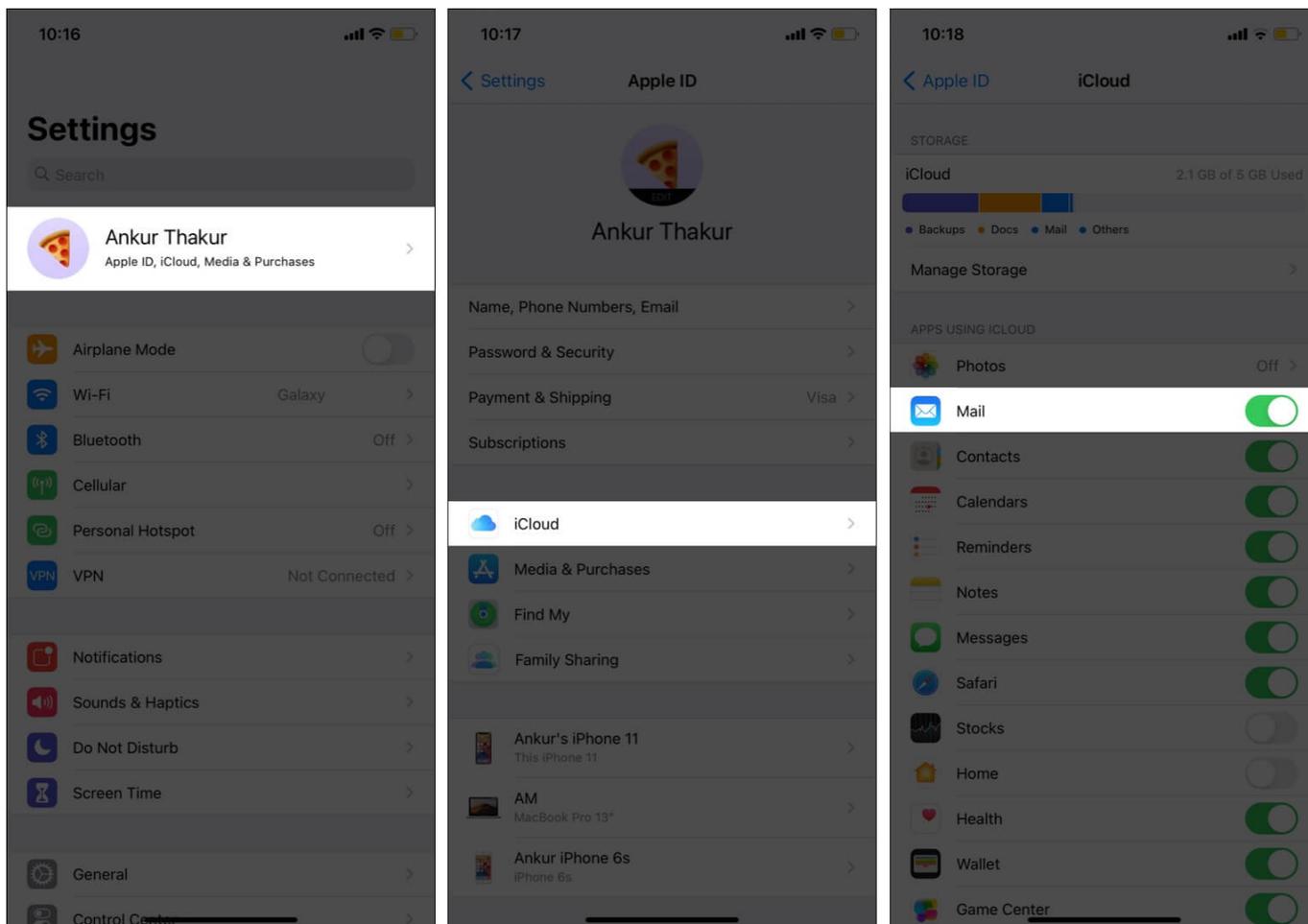
iCloud lets you automatically download music, books, apps, etc. This ensures that when you use a different iPhone, iPad, or Mac to purchase new apps or music, they download automatically on your other devices.

For this to work, you have to enable Automatic Downloads. Here's how to do that on your iPhone or iPad:

1. Open **Settings** and tap **App Store**.
2. Enable **Apps** under AUTOMATIC DOWNLOADS.
3. Go back, and tap **Music**.
4. Now, enable **Automatic Downloads**.
5. You can repeat the same for **Books**.



## 12. Use iCloud email on iPhone or iPad



Enabling iCloud email takes just a few steps! Start by launching iPhone **Settings** → tap **your name** at the top → tap **iCloud** → toggle on **Mail**. Finally, open the stock Mail app, and there you have it.

If you [enable two-factor authentication for your Apple ID](#), the same is enabled for your iCloud Mail as well, which adds an extra wall of security.

## 13. Configure a new iPhone with iCloud Backup

When you buy a new iPhone, you have the option to restore all your data from the previous iPhone via iCloud Backup. You can learn [step-by-step in our guide here](#).

## 14. Restore deleted files from iCloud

If you've accidentally deleted an important file, worry not, as in most cases, you can recover it from iCloud.com (if you act within 30 days).

## 15. Set up private iCloud libraries on Mac

Finally, let me tell you about a secret, useful trick if you wish to have multiple photo libraries in your Mac's Photos app. I'm not talking about albums, but separate libraries.

The sweet part is, only the main system photo library will sync to iCloud. The other library will stay discreet. You can use it to locally save some pictures you'd rather not sync on your other Apple devices.



For this, press the option (alt) key and open **Photos** from the Dock or [Launchpad](#). Keep holding the key until you see the above screen. Next, click **Create New**. Once that's done, in the future, click **Choose Library** to select it.

Now you know some iCloud tips and tricks to make you an iCloud master. Which one was the most helpful for you? Let us know in the comments below.

**Read next:**

- [How to turn off iCloud Private Relay](#)
- [Is Apple iCloud secure? Should you consider other options?](#)
- [30 Cool Chrome tips and tricks for Mac](#)