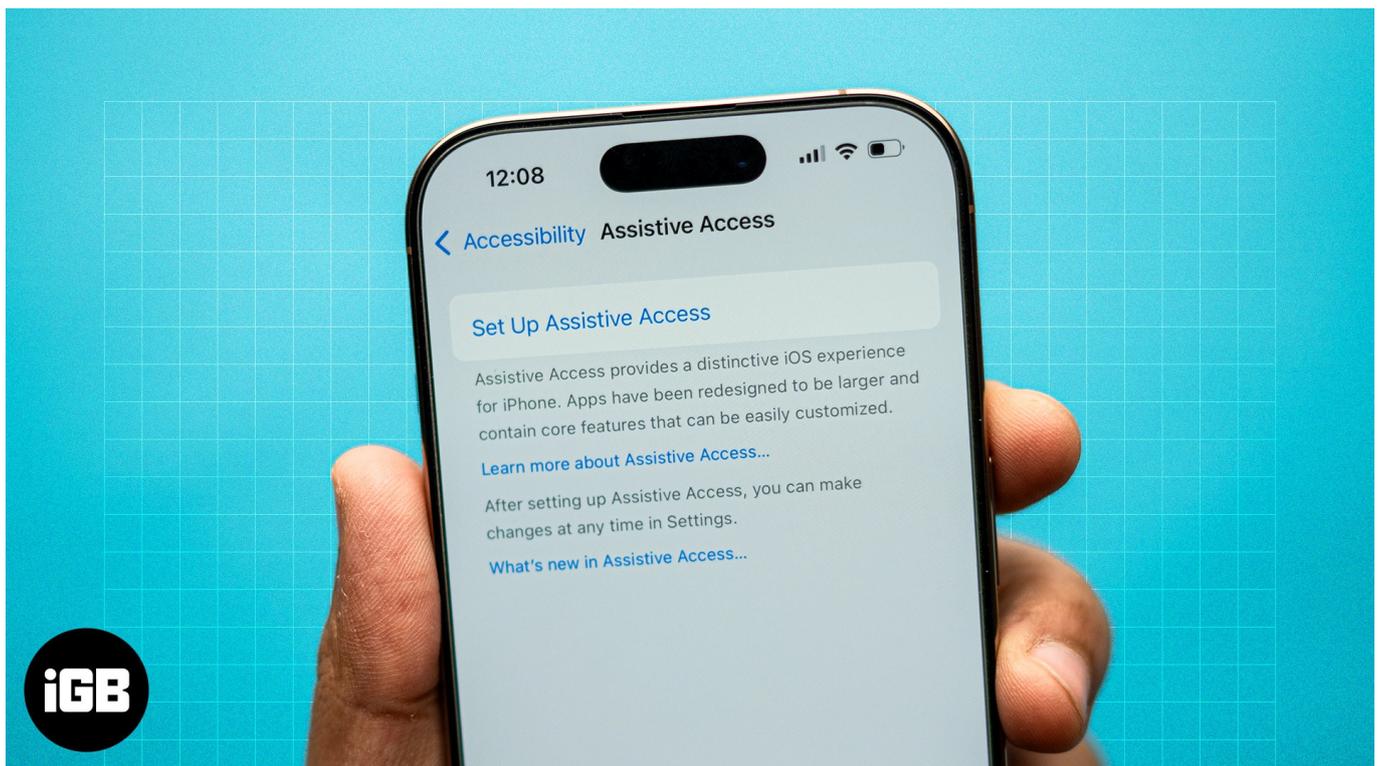


Apple has empowered elders and [cognitively disabled](#) people with Assistive Access. This feature simplifies the interface and highlights essential apps on your iPhone or iPad. It lets you operate your devices with gestures, voice commands, or other input methods. Interesting, right? This guide will show you how to set up and use Assistive Access on your iPhone running iOS 17 or iOS 18.



#image_title

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What is Assistive Access on iPhone?

Assistive Access is an accessibility feature introduced in iOS 17 to make the iPhone easier to use for individuals with cognitive disabilities. It lets users control their devices using simple gestures and visuals.

Moreover, there are easy-to-use tools like voiceover, magnification, and switch control for easier navigation. This creates a more streamlined and user-friendly experience, perfect for users who may feel overwhelmed by the standard iPhone interface.

Wherever Assistive Access is on, the iPhone interface looks quite different:

- **Simplified Home Screen:** The Home Screen shows only a few large-sized buttons for selected apps such as Phone, Messages, Camera, Photos, and Music. The presentation of these apps makes it very easy to navigate.
- **Customized interaction:** The menus and options within apps are reduced. It only shows what's necessary to perform specific tasks. So, navigation is less confusing for the user.
- **Enhanced readability:** The text and icons are larger and arranged in a huge grid. The layout is more spacious for better visibility. For example, regarding the Messages app, you can respond using either an emoji-only keyboard or a video selfie.
- **Limited access:** Only the essential features are available, which helps prevent accidental taps or confusion caused by too many options. It blocks system notifications, updates, and privacy-concerned information.

Therefore, Assistive Access helps users who need additional support to use technology independently. Apple also allows you to customize the apps and features that can be accessed to fit specific user needs.

Requirements to use Assistive Access

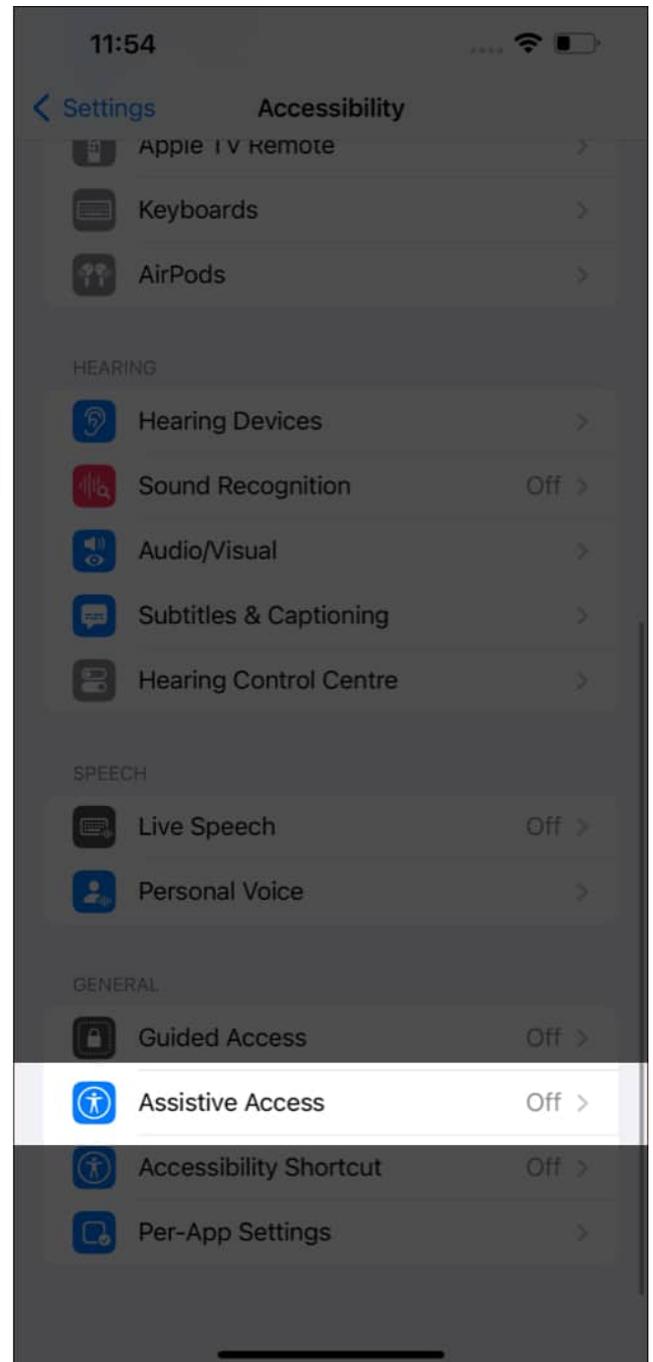
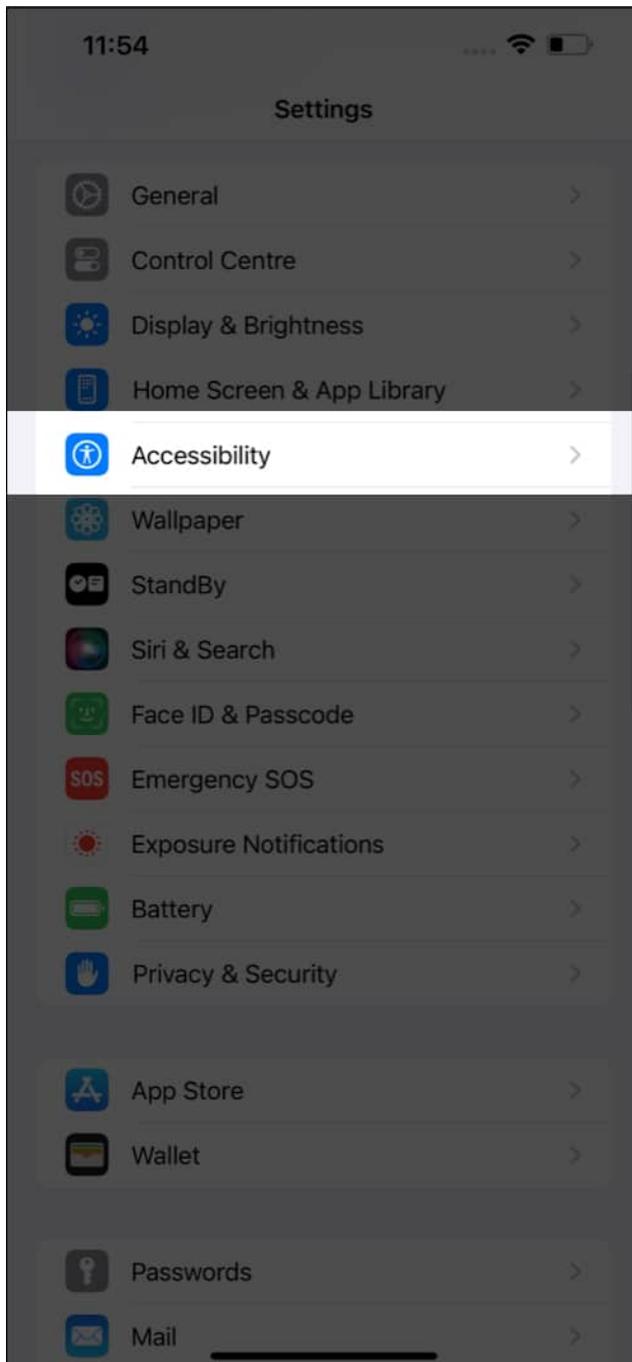
Before you turn on and use Assistive Access on your iPhone or iPad, meet the below requirements.

- Add the Face ID of the person who will be using Assistive Access.
- Install the required apps that the person needs to use during Assistive Access.

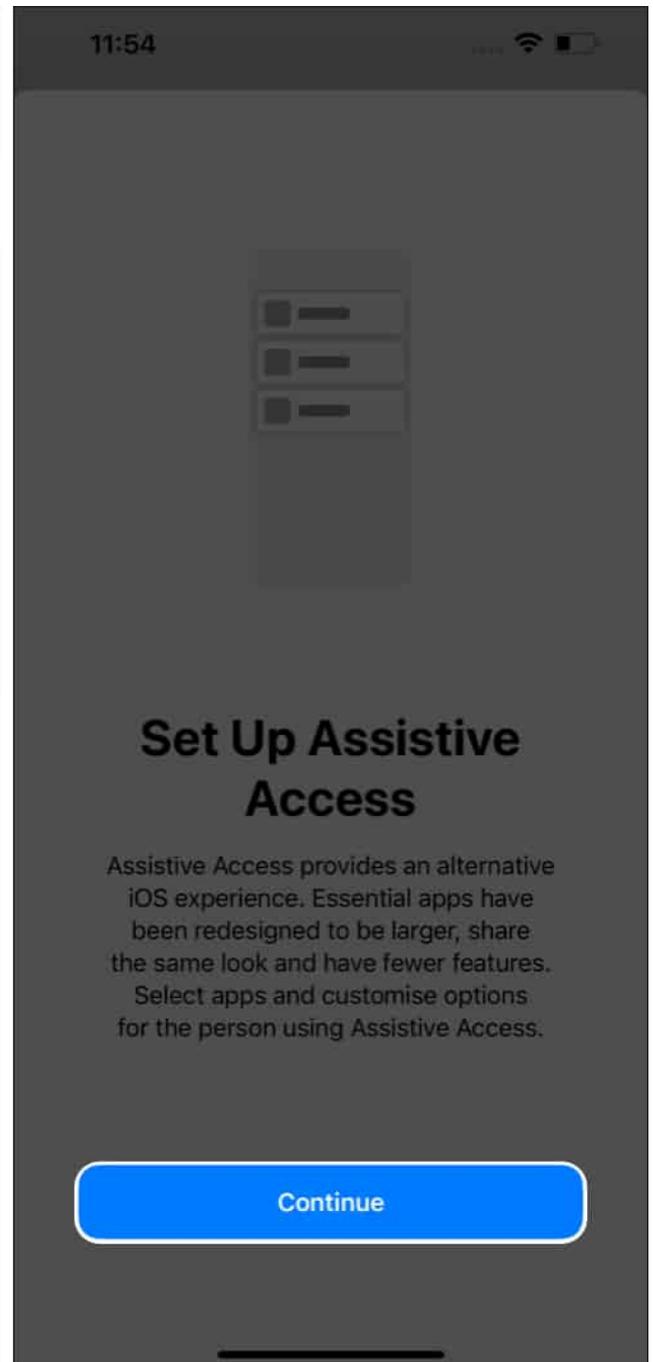
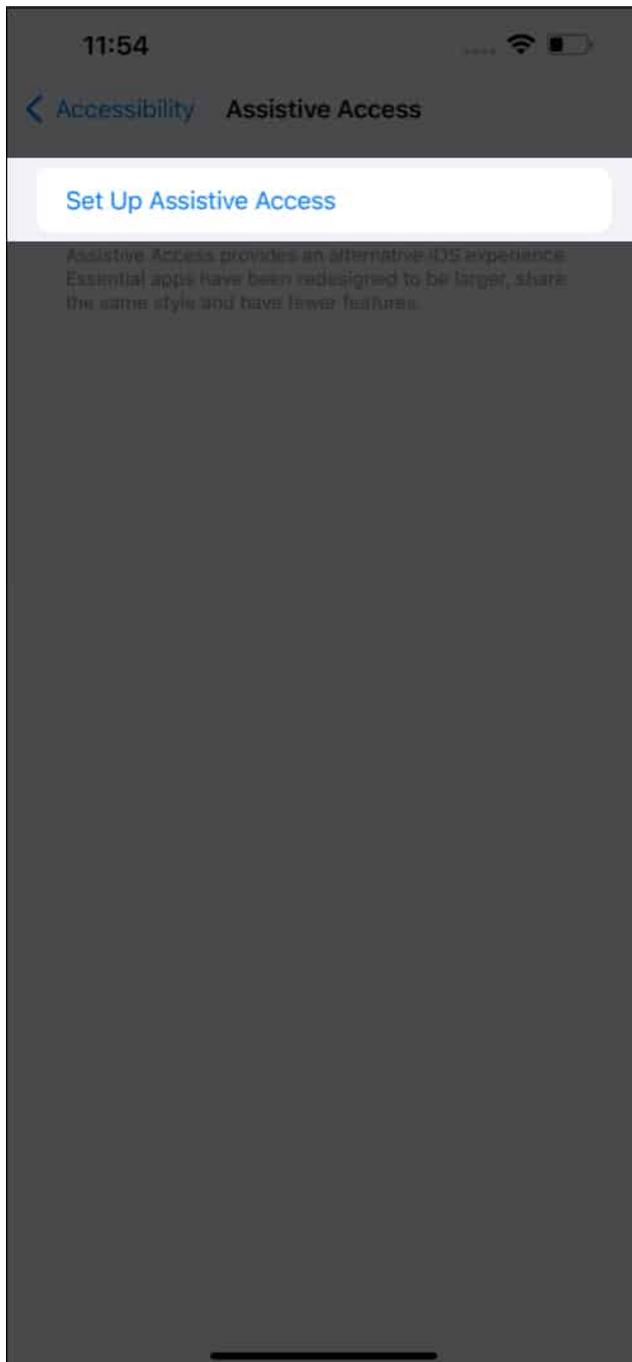
- Save the vital contact information so the person can quickly call or message them.
- Set up Siri so the person can use voice commands to control their device.
- Connect the device to Wi-Fi or cellular data so the person can access the internet and use apps that require an internet connection.
- Set a passcode for the device so it is protected from unauthorized access.

How to set up Assistive Access on iPhone or iPad

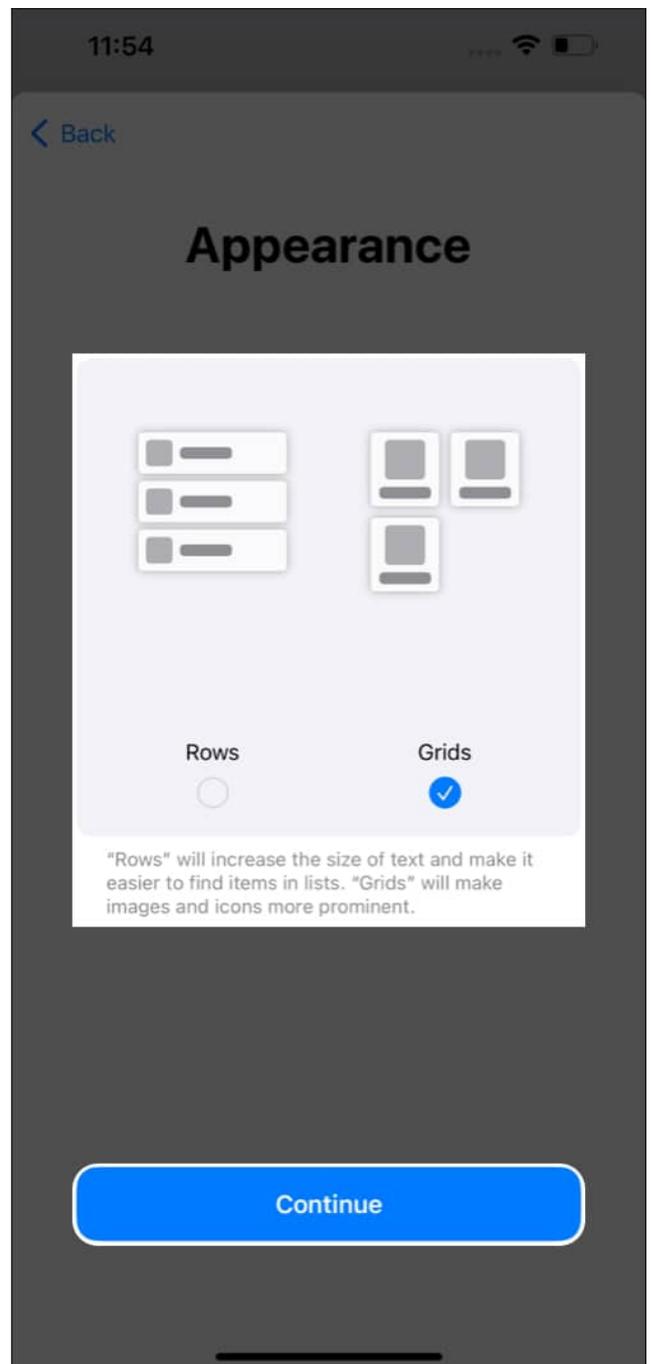
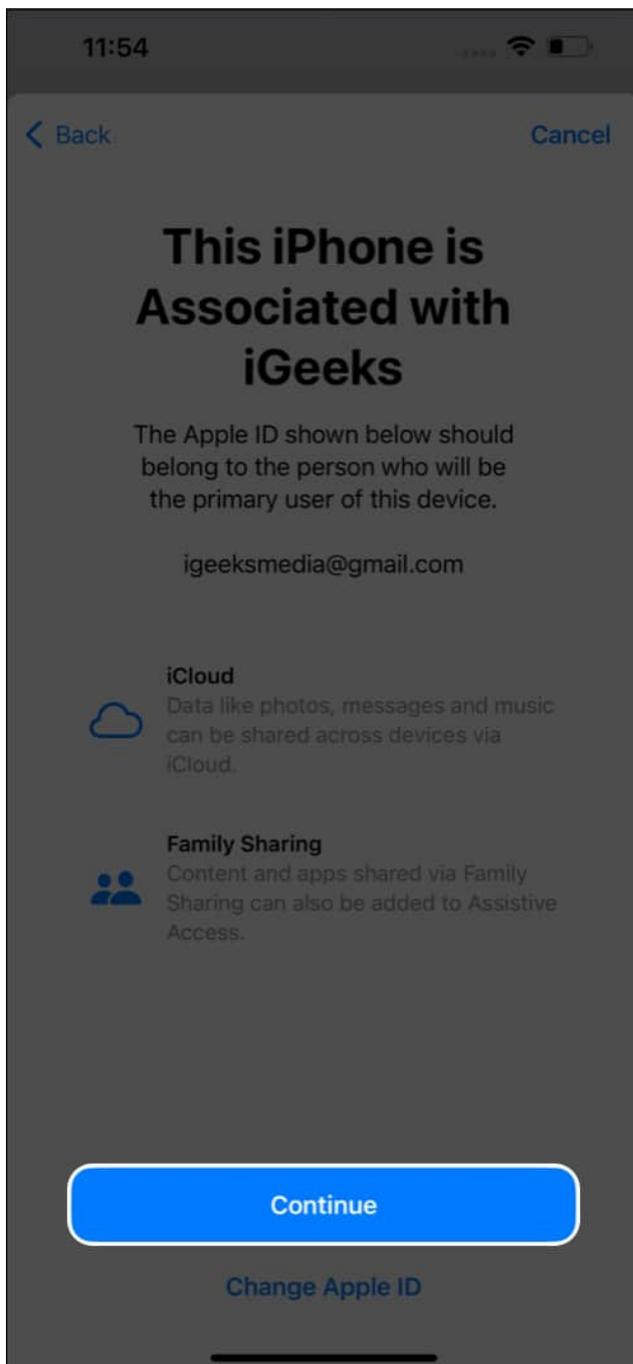
1. Launch **Settings** → Head to **Accessibility** → Select **Assistive Access**.



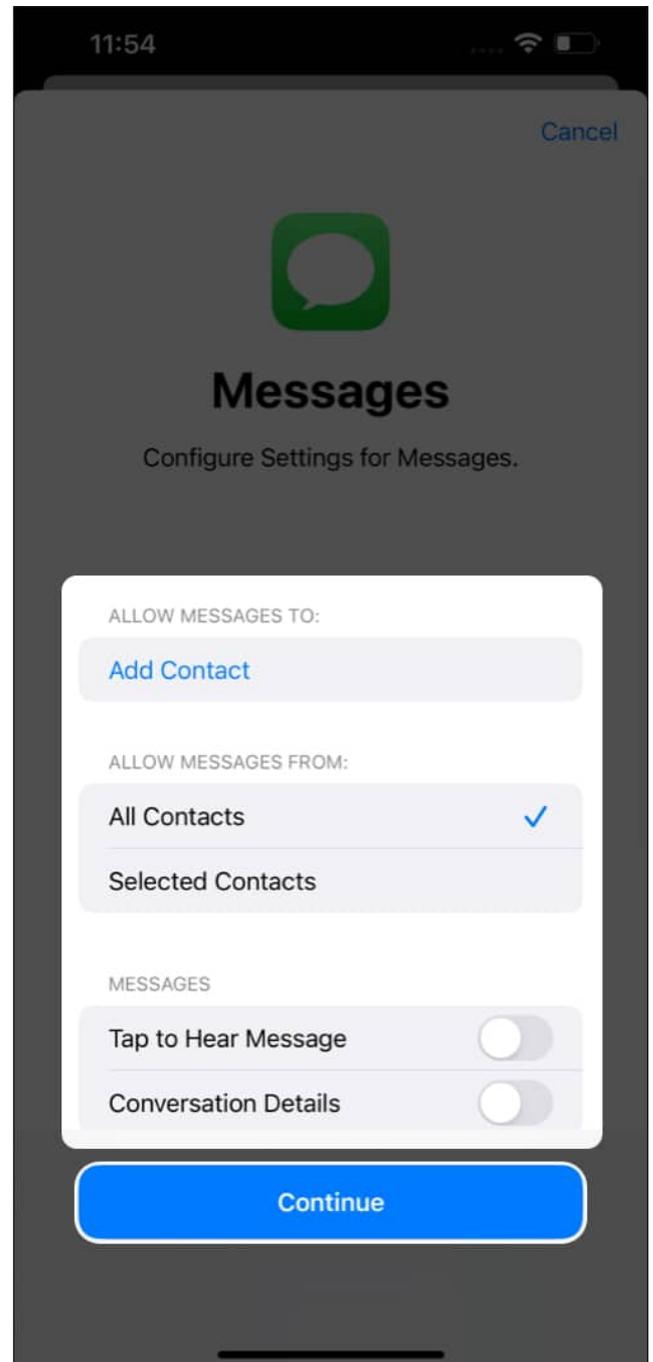
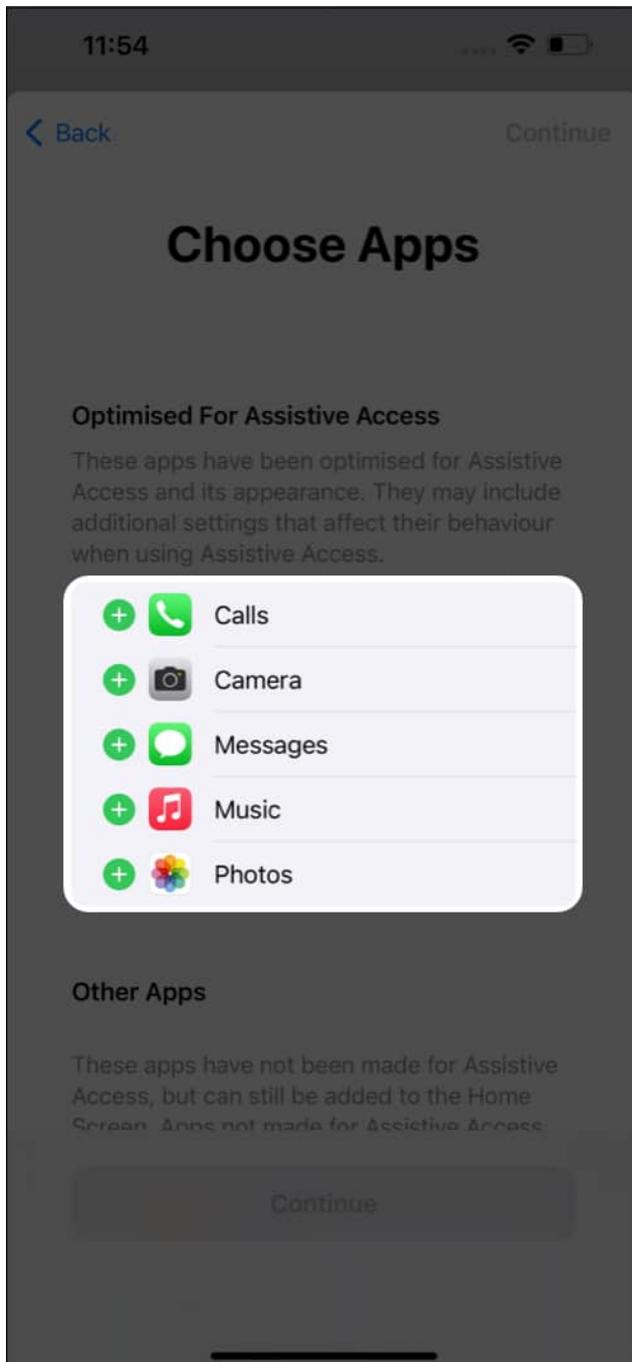
2. Choose **Set Up Assistive Access** → Tap **Continue**.



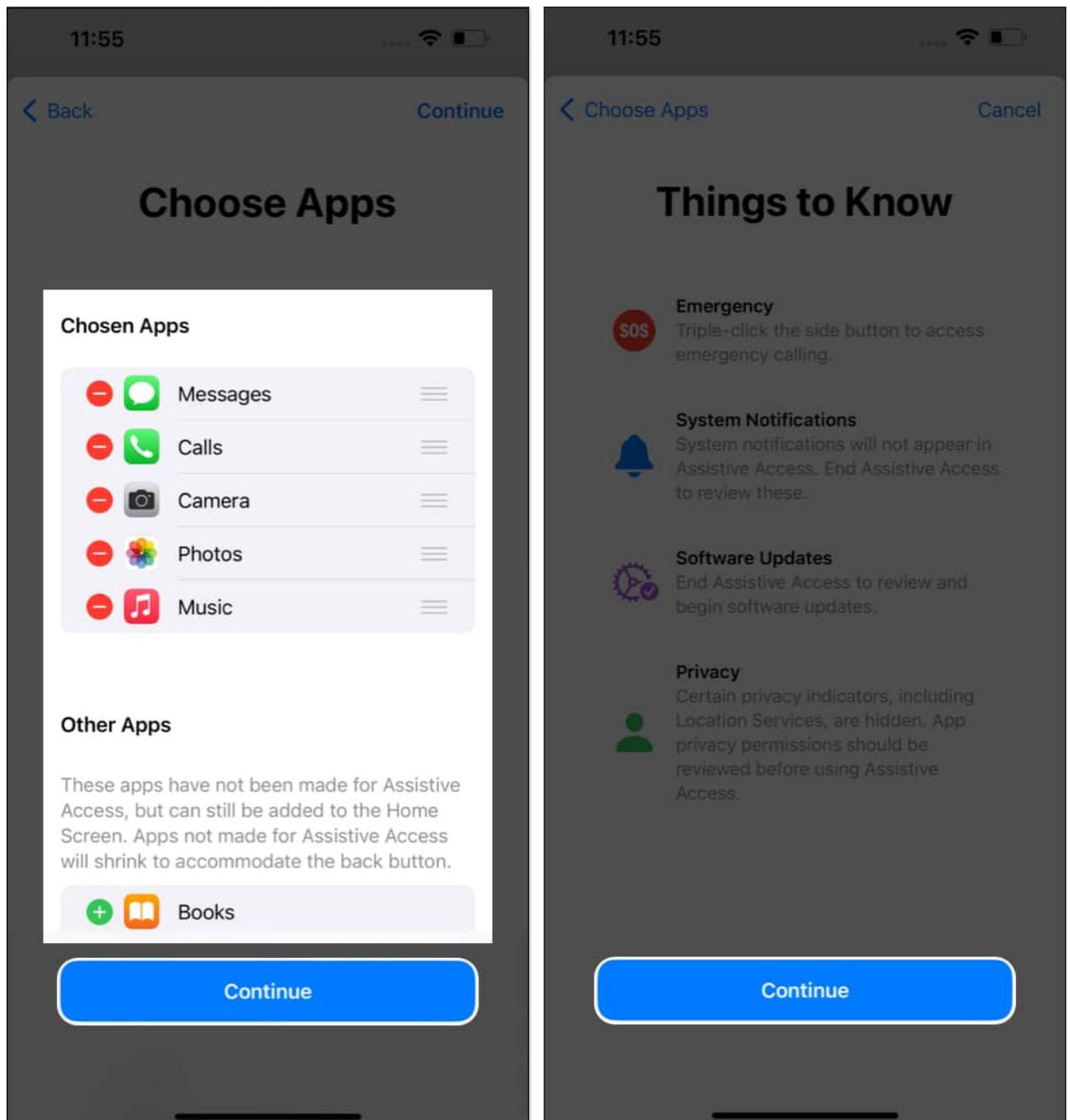
3. Select **Continue** if you wish to activate Assistive Access for the current logged-in Apple ID.
*You can also switch Apple ID by selecting **Change Apple ID**.*
4. Choose **Grid** or **Row** as the appearance of the Home Screen → Press **Continue**.



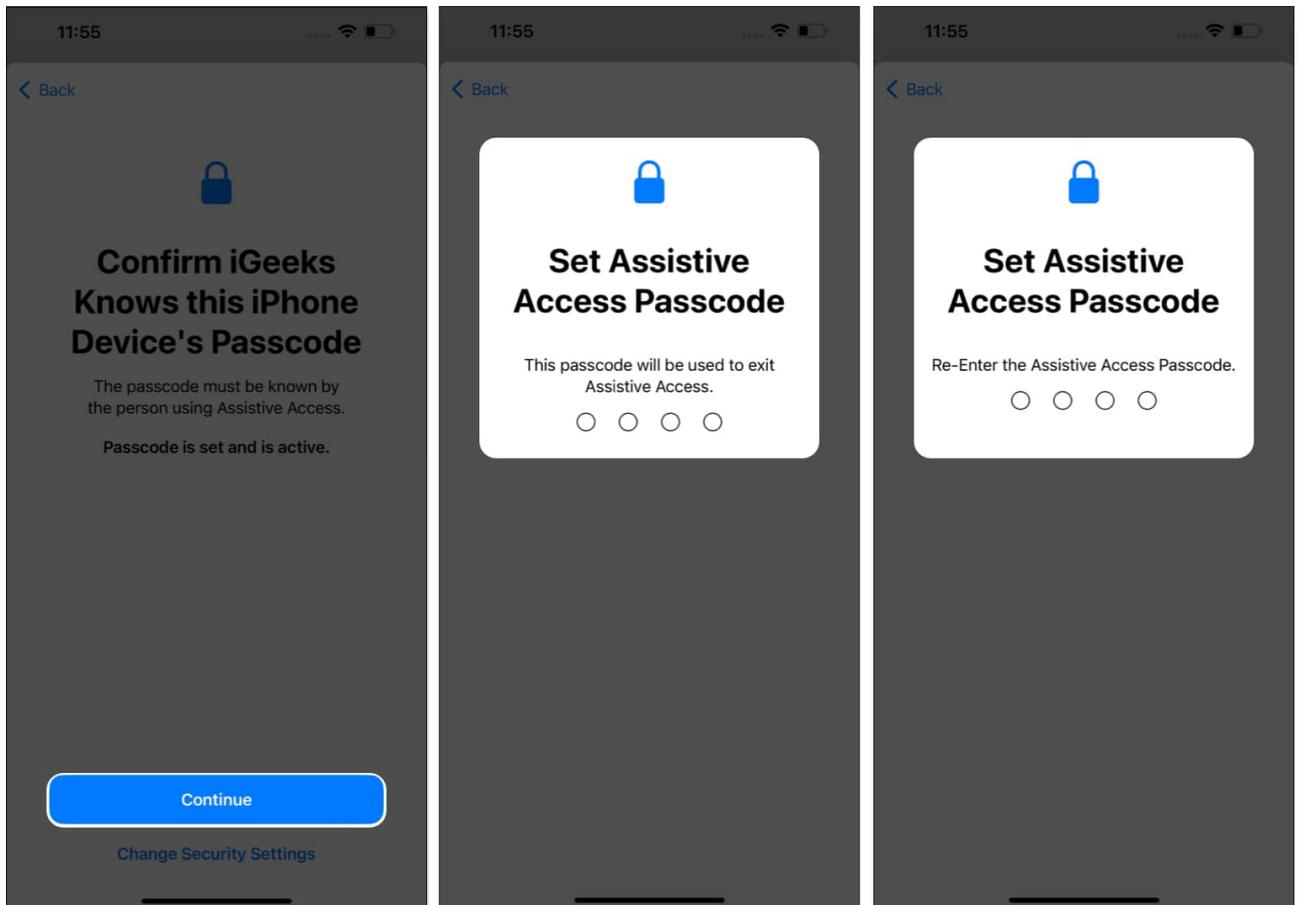
5. Tap the **plus icon** beside the apps you want to add → Customize the **app** and select **Continue**.
I'm using the Messages app here.



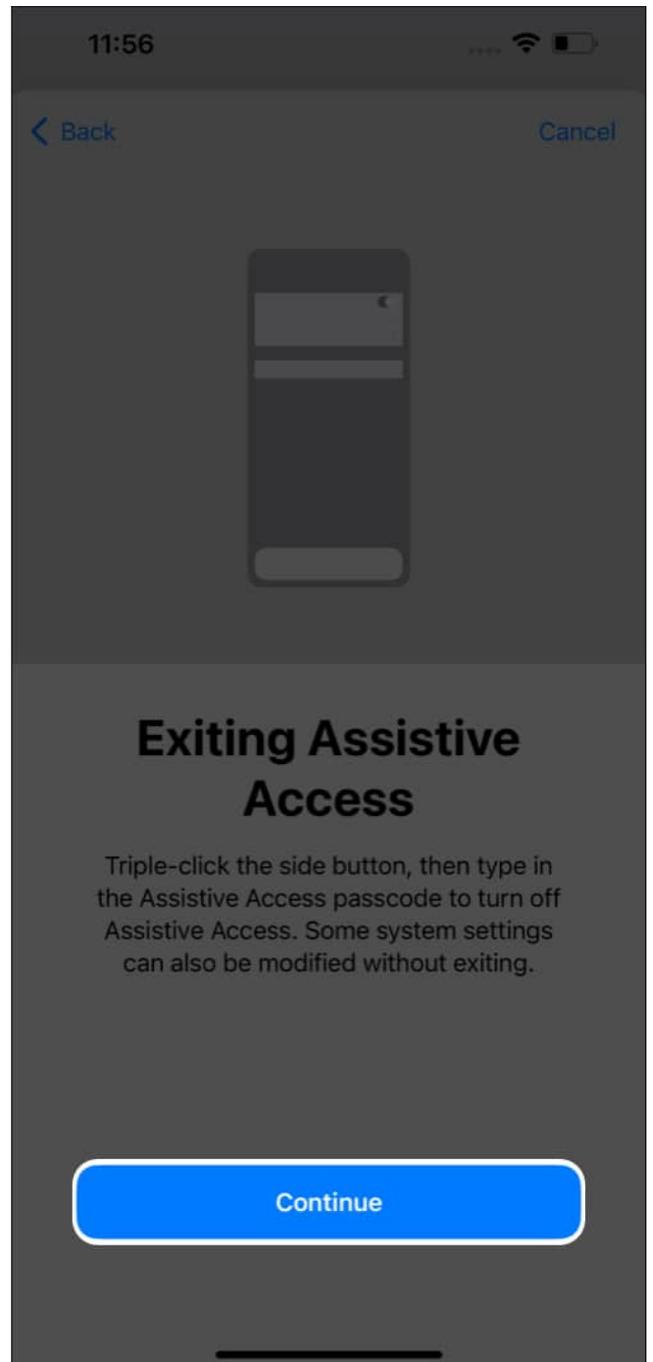
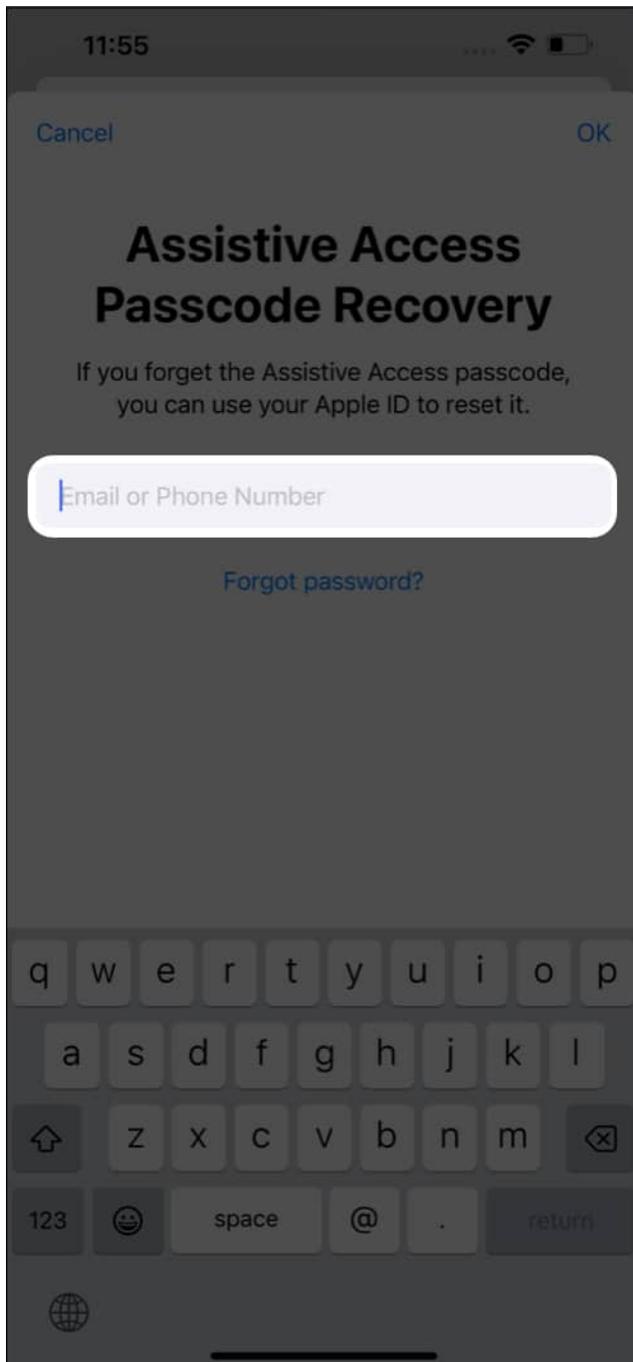
6. You can choose from the **Other Apps** not optimized for Assistive Access → Tap **Continue**.
7. Select **Continue**.



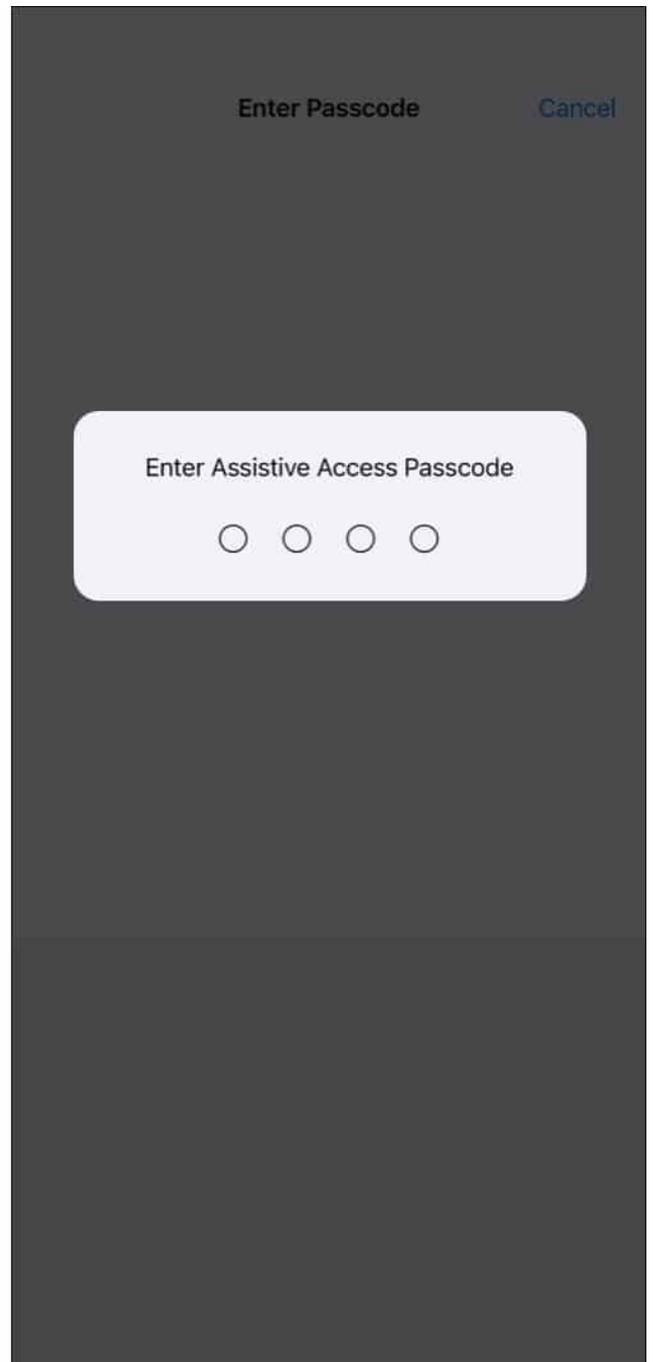
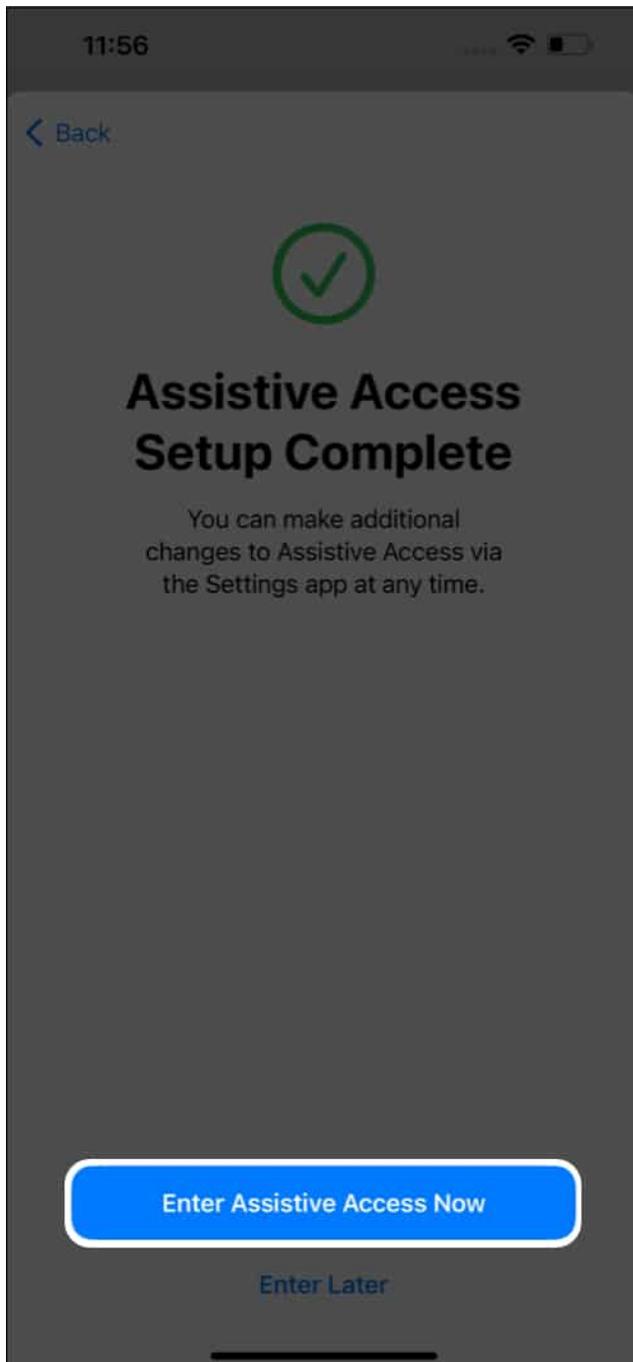
8. Tap **Continue** when you're sure that the person who will use this device knows the passcode of the device and their Face ID is added.
9. Enter a **password** for Assistive Touch → **Re-enter the password** to confirm it.
Note: The password can be different from the iPhone's password.



10. Enter your **Apple ID** and **Password** → Select **Continue**.



11. Choose **Enter Assistive Access Now** → Enter the **Assistive Access Passcode**.



Now, your device will enter into Assistive Access mode after a few seconds.

How to use Assistive Access on your iPhone or iPad

When Assistive Access is enabled, the apps you added while configuring Assistive Access will now have sizable icons on the Home Screen. Besides, the user interface will be condensed into more straightforward. There will also be simple action buttons and a large Back button.

1. Unlock your iPhone or iPad

1. Press the **Side Button** on your iPhone or the **Top Button** on your iPad to wake the device.
Alternatively, you can tap your iPhone or iPad screen to do so.
2. Press **Tap**.



3. Select **Tap**.



4. Tap **Open**.



5. Enter your **device password**.
You can also use [Face ID or Touch ID](#) to unlock your device.



To lock your device, press the **side button** or the **top button**.

2. Use apps in Assistive Access

Simply tap the **app icon** to open the app. You will see a persistent Back button and a more extensive interface.

For example, when I opened the Messages app with Assistive Access, the initial screen presented two columns of large contact cards, each featuring the contact's image and name.

3. Read new text messages

If you receive a new text message while on Assistive Access, the Messages app will show a **bell icon with the New alert** in the top left corner. Furthermore, if your device is locked, you will see the same icon on the top right corner of the **Open button**.

4. Change basic Assistive Access settings

1. Triple-press the **Side Button** or **Top Button** on your iPhone or iPad.
2. Tap the **Settings** in the top right corner of the screen.



3. You have the following options here: **Airplane Mode, Dark Mode, Bold Text, Volume, Brightness, and Text Size.**



Once you have made the desired adjustments, tap the **Back button** to return to the Assistive Access Home Screen.

5. Access emergency options during Assistive Access

1. Triple-press the **Side Button** or **Top Button** on your iPhone or iPad.
2. Select **Emergency** from the top left corner of the screen.
3. Use the **Dialpad** to call an emergency number.



Moreover, you can also check the user's health information by selecting the ***Medical ID** in the top left corner of the screen.

How to exit Assistive Access mode on iPhone or iPad

You may need to exit Assistive Access to add or remove apps, activate Siri, or change the auto-lock time.

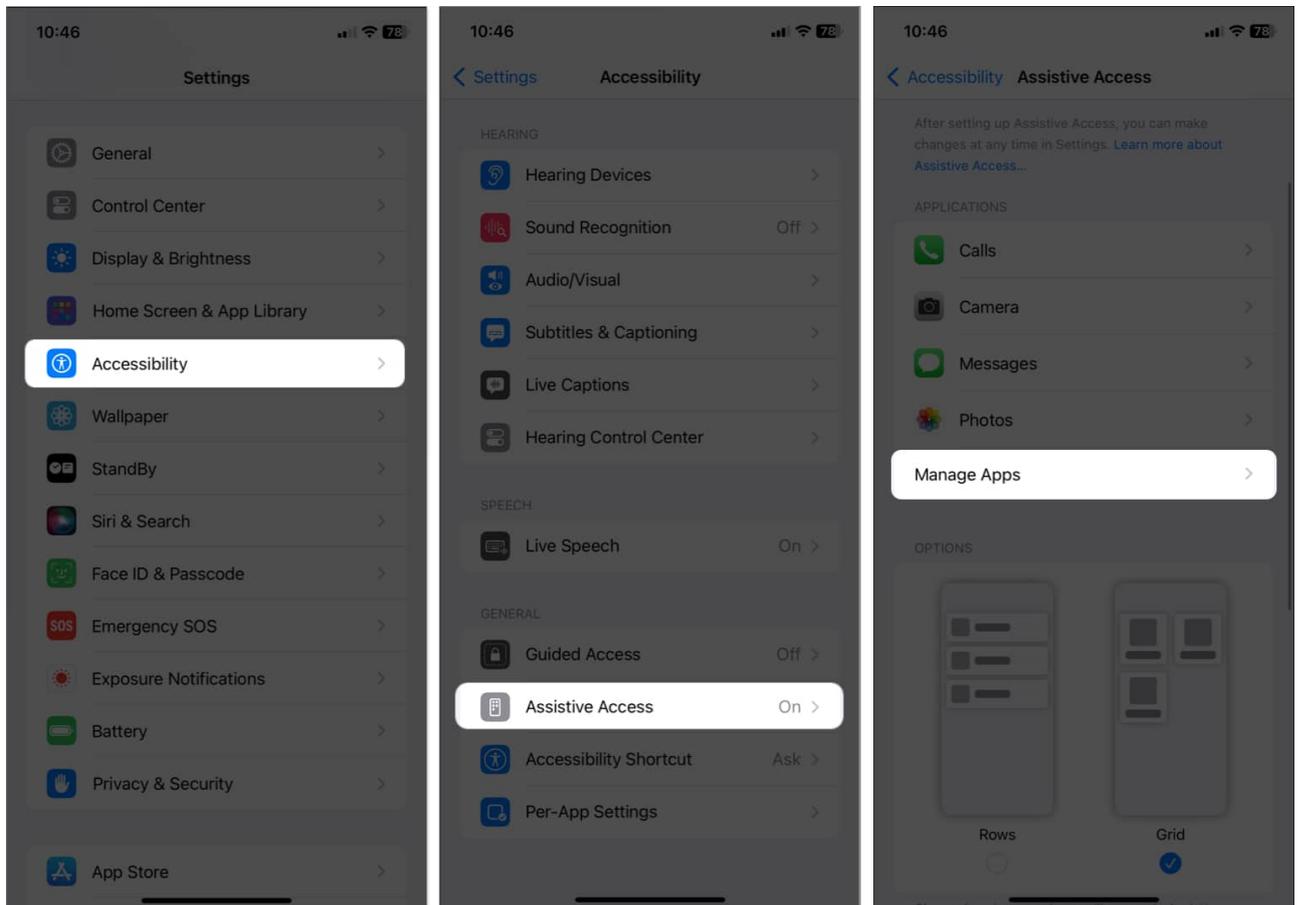
1. Triple-press the **Side Button** or **Top Button** on your device.
2. Enter the **Assistive Access** password.



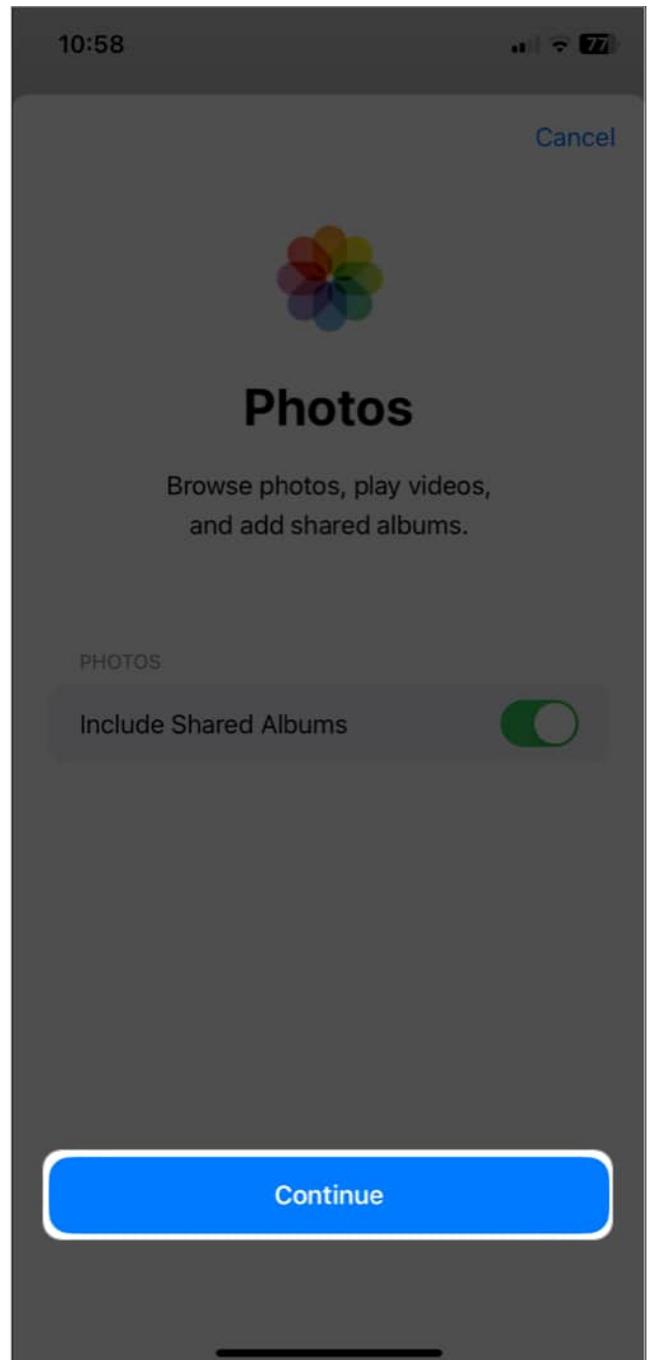
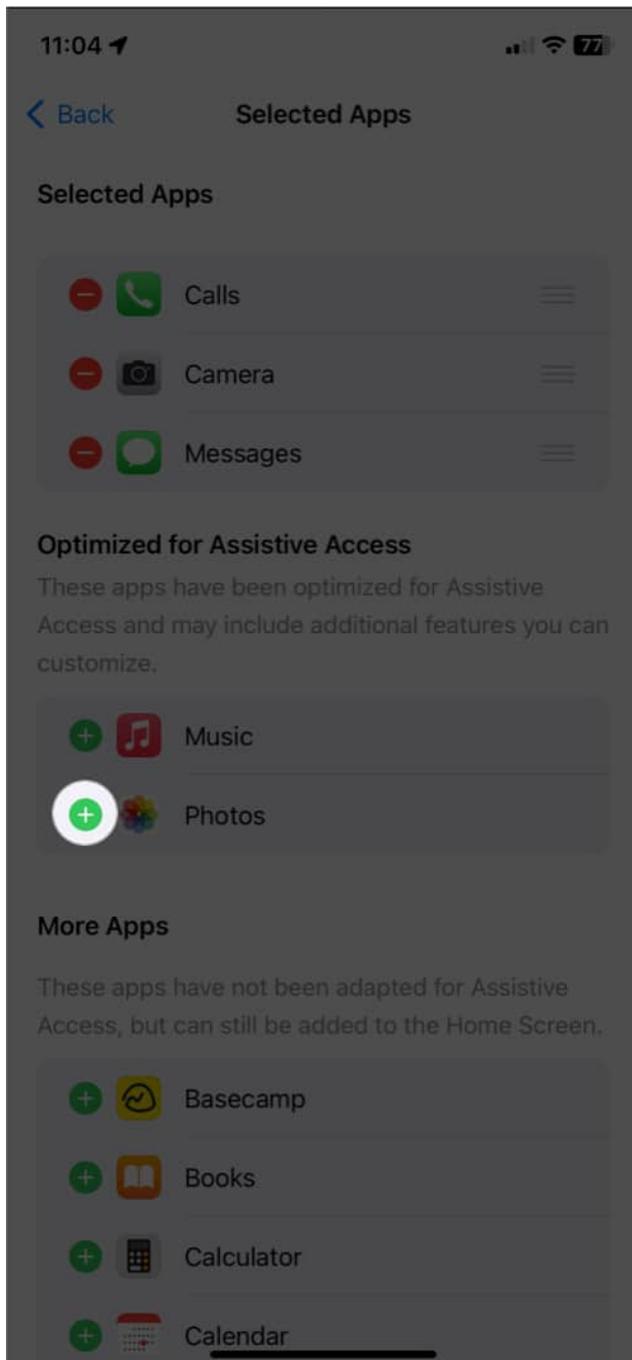
Now, wait a few minutes, and you'll be back at your iPhone or iPad home screen.

1. Add or remove apps

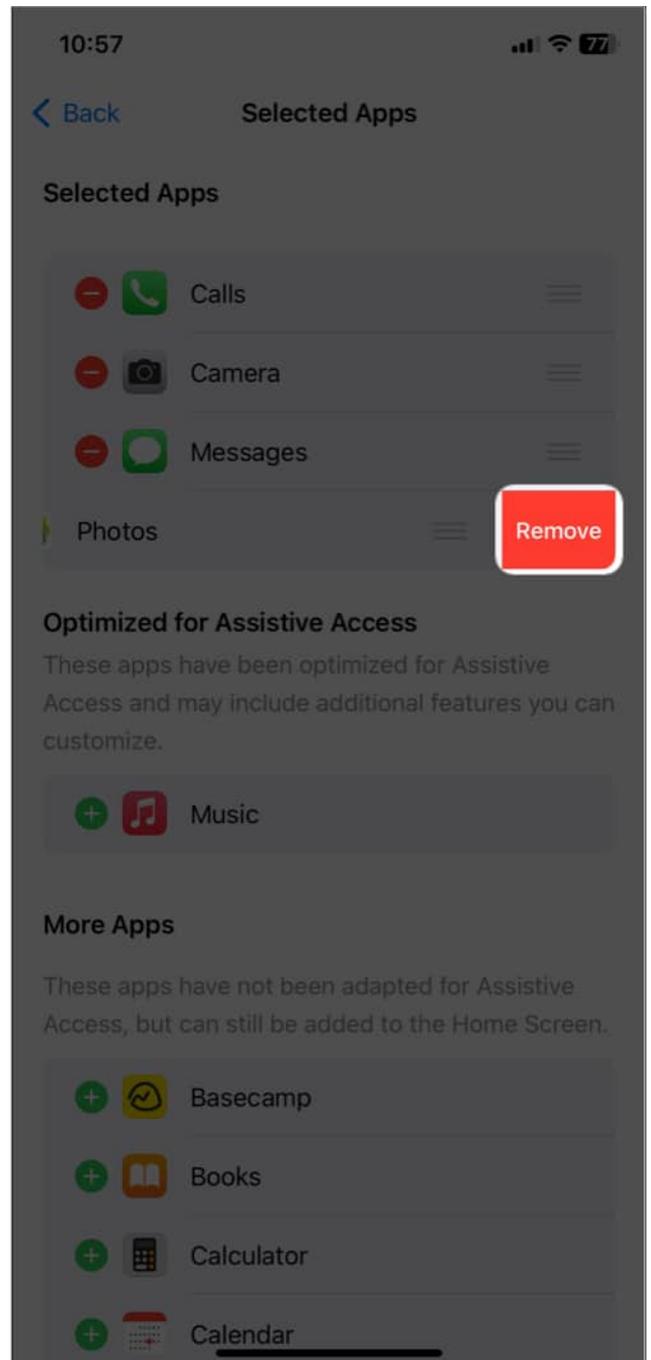
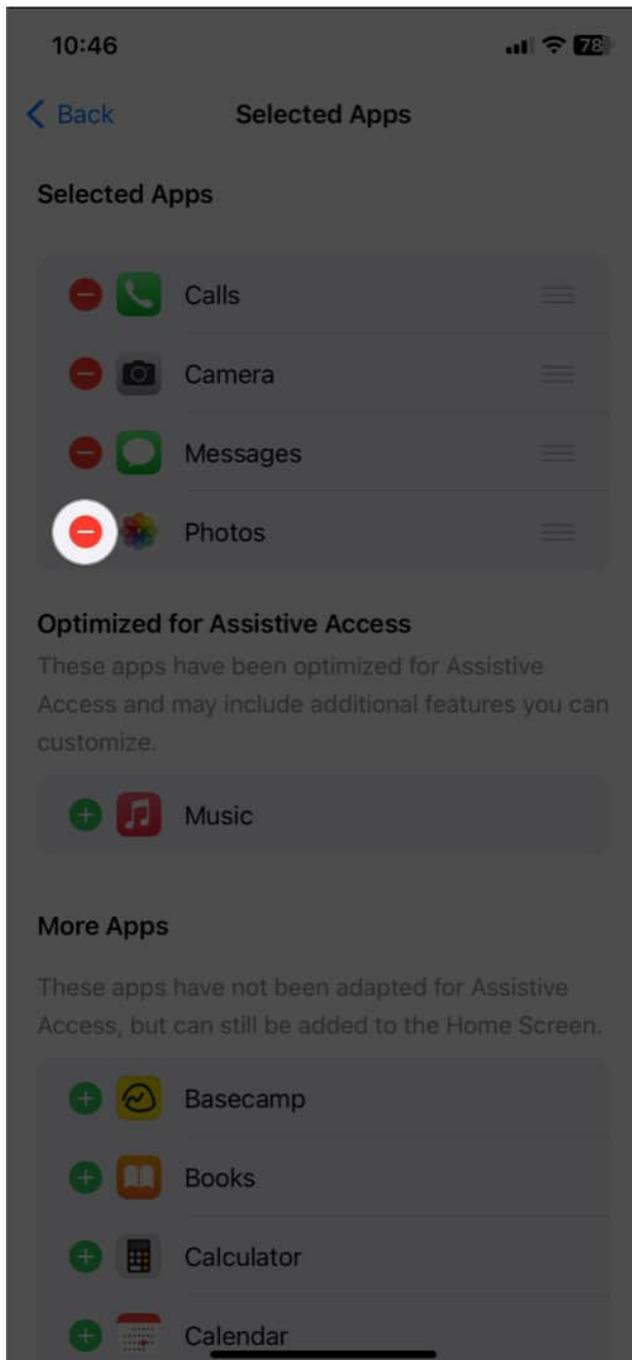
1. Open **Settings** → Head to **Accessibility** → Choose **Assistive Access**.
2. Tap **Manage Apps**.



3. **To add an app:** Select the **plus (+)** icon next to the app → Tap **Continue**.

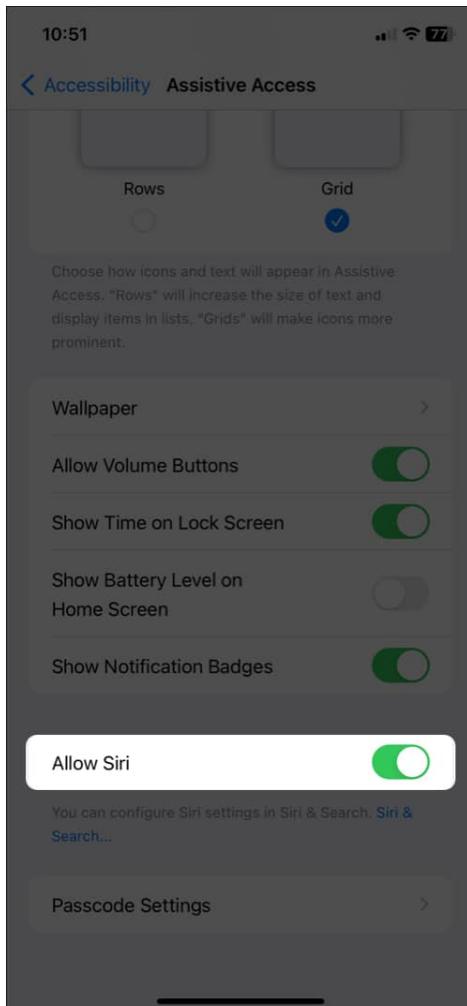


4. **To remove an app:** Tap the **minus (-) icon** beside the app → Select **Remove**.



2. Enable Siri during Assistive Access

1. Open **Settings** → Go to **Accessibility** → Tap **Assistive Access**.
2. Toggle **Allow Siri**.

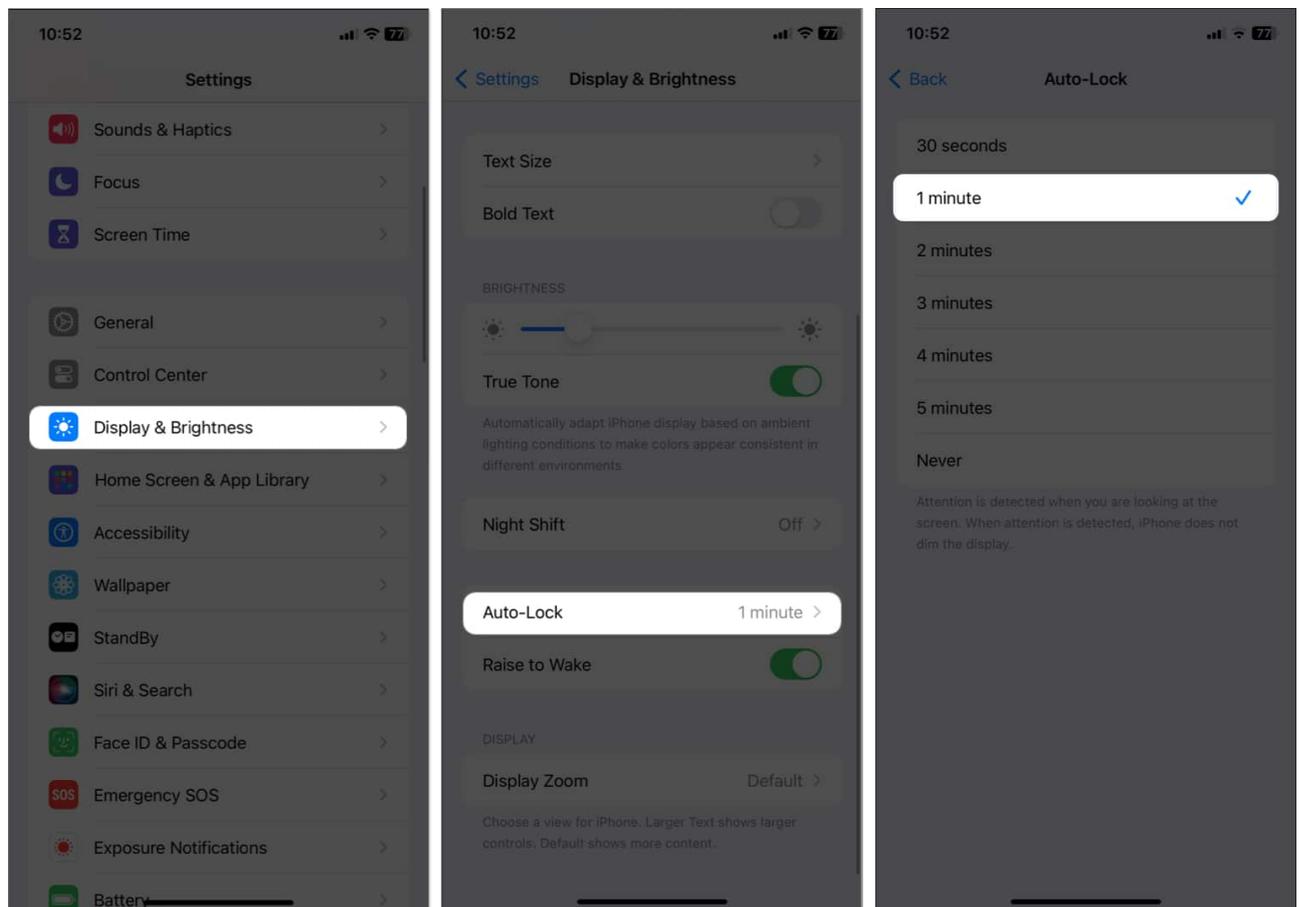


Note: You must set up Siri beforehand.

3. Change the auto-lock time of the Assistive Access screen

1. Launch **Settings** → Navigate to **Display & Brightness**.
2. Tap **Auto-Lock**.
3. Choose a **timestamp you want** from the list.

*You can also choose **Never** to always keep the display active.*



Wrapping up...

Though Assistive Touch is an excellent feature that helps users control their devices, it has a few limitations to remember. Despite this, Assistive Touch remains a valuable tool for people with disabilities. What are your thoughts on this? Let me know in the comments.

FAQs

What to do when Assistive Access shows a white screen after updating settings?

If you changed some settings in Assistive Access and now your screen is white, you can fix it by [restarting your iPhone or iPad](#). If that doesn't work, you can update your iOS or iPadOS to the latest version.

Can we make the icons on the Assistive Access screen bigger or smaller?

No, you can't change the icons on your Assistive Access screen.

What are the benefits of using Assistive Access on iPhone?

Assistive Access can increase independence for people with disabilities by improving accessibility. It makes device navigation easier and lets people access crucial features and apps.

Read more:

- [Best iOS 18 accessibility features you should know](#)
- [Best accessibility tips for iPhone users](#)
- [How to Use the Accessibility Shortcut on iPhone and iPad](#)