

iPhone Security

Enable Auto-Lock.

One of the most basic iPhone security functions is the Auto-Lock feature, which locks the device's touch screen after not being used for a preset time period. Users can choose to set their iPhones to lock after not being used for one, two, three, four or five minutes. Auto-Lock can also be disabled altogether. Auto-Lock is turned on by default, but you can change the settings by first clicking the main iPhone Settings icon, tapping the General tab and then hitting Auto-Lock. Then select the desired time period by tapping the on-screen value. Finally, exit the Auto-Lock and Settings screens by tapping the box in the display's top left corner. Though Auto-Lock is not exactly a security function on its own, when combined with the Passcode safeguard described below, it's an essential iPhone security feature.

Enable Passcode Lock

The iPhone Auto-Lock disables the device's screen after a preset time period of non-use, but the Passcode Lock feature takes that a step further. Whenever the device's display locks, whether due to Auto-Lock or because you've hit the iPhone Sleep button--found on the top right of the device--Passcode Lock requires a four-digit code to be entered before the device can be employed again. To turn on Passcode Lock, simply click the main iPhone Settings icon again, hit General and then tap Passcode Lock. On the Passcode Lock menu screen, enable the function by tapping Turn Passcode On. You'll then be prompted to enter in a new passcode. Good passwords are completely random and should not be chosen based on birthdays or other dates or numbers that could be uncovered by would-be hackers. You can also specify when a passcode is required. To do so, tap Require Passcode and then choose whether or not you want to be prompted for a code immediately upon using the device, after one minute, five minutes, 15 minutes, one hour or four hours. Setting the passcode prompt to Immediately is the most secure, as users won't be able to access the iPhone at all without entering the appropriate passcode. The Passcode Lock screen also has options to Show SMS Preview and Erase Data. When enabled, the SMS preview function allows the first sentence of new text messages to appear on-screen even when a passcode has not been entered. If you'd like the highest level of iPhone security--or just some more privacy--you probably want to disable Show SMS Preview. The Erase Data function lets you completely wipe your iPhone after 10 failed passcode attempts. After six failed attempts, the iPhone locks out users for a minute before another passcode can be entered. And the device increases the lock-out time following each additional failed attempt--one minute, five minutes, 15 minutes, etc.--so an attempted passcode bypass could take miscreants hours.

Set Device Usage Restrictions

Though the iPhone has made some significant gains in recent days toward become a suitable business smartphone, its target user is still the consumer. And consumers come in all shapes, sizes...and ages. IT administrators and parents with little iPhone users have the ability to set iPhone restrictions to, say, block explicit content from being shown on the iPhone's music or video player. And they can block access to YouTube and stop third-party applications from being installed. Restrictions options can be located via the main iPhone Settings menu, within the General tab. Once you've clicked on Restrictions on that tab, you'll see a set of potential options beneath the words Enable Restrictions . Tap Enable Restrictions , enter in a four-digit code and then select the specific constraints you wish to impose by hitting the On/Off button next to each option. Selecting the iPod Explicit option, blocks the user's ability to sync any iTunes content that's branded "explicit" by Apple. If you disable Safari, block YouTube and iTunes, or say no to installing apps or using the gadget's camera, the phone user will not be able to access any of these functions until a passcode is reentered and the restrictions lifted.

