

printout

Keystone MacCentral Macintosh Users Group ♦ www.keystonemac.com

Keystone MacCentral January 20th Meeting

Please see your membership email for the links
to this month's Zoom meeting or email us
at KeystoneMacCentral@mac.com.

During our program this month we plan to
discuss

- ☞ Apps you should have on your Mac
- ☞ How do you use your iPhone?



We will be having virtual meetings via Zoom on the third Tuesday of each month.
Just follow the directions/invitation each month –
that is, just click on the link.
They will be sent out prior to each meeting.

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Keystone MacCentral is a not-for-profit group of Macintosh enthusiasts who generally meet the third Tuesday of every month to exchange information, participate in question-and-answer sessions, view product demonstrations, and obtain resource materials that will help them get the most out of their computer systems. Meetings are free and open to the public. *The Keystone MacCentral printout* is the official newsletter of Keystone MacCentral and an independent publication not affiliated or otherwise associated with or sponsored or sanctioned by any for-profit organization, including Apple Inc. Copyright © 2026 Keystone MacCentral, 310 Somerset Drive, Shiresmanstown, PA 17011.

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How to Set Contact Avatars and Posters on the iPhone

While writing “[Comparing the Classic and Unified Views in iOS 26’s Phone App](#)” (10 November 2025), I commented that the Unified view’s Calls screen was more attractive if you had contact posters for your favorites.

Contact posters have been available since iOS 17, but few of my contacts have set them. Or, rather, relatively few of the iPhone users with whom I communicate via Messages have set them—posters are only shared via iMessage (blue bubble conversations) and when you explicitly share your contact card, including via NameDrop. Along with posters shared by others, you can also set preferred posters for your own contacts. Nevertheless, I suspect adoption of contact posters is weak—even in iOS 26, you’ll see them in relatively few places:

- Incoming calls: The main place you’ll see a contact poster, whether set by you or your contact, is when they call you, whether via the Phone app or FaceTime. Some third-party voice-over-IP (VoIP) calling apps may also display them.
- Calls screen: As noted in the article linked above, favorites are displayed as contact poster thumbnails on the iOS 26 Phone app’s Unified view’s Calls screen. As far as I’m aware, the Phone app in iOS 26, iPadOS 26, and macOS 26 Tahoe is the only place you’ll see contact posters in a list.
- Contact cards: When you’re viewing a contact’s card in the Contacts app or the Phone app, the contact poster appears as the background for the contact card, although you see only the top half of the image clearly, because Liquid Glass obscures the bottom half to start, followed by the rest of the image once you scroll.



Many more of my contacts have the circular contact avatars (sometimes inconsistently referred to in the iOS interface as contact photos) because those are much easier to acquire. Beyond those intentionally shared, a contact card may have acquired an avatar from Apple’s long-ago Facebook integration, CardDAV sharing, or third-party messaging apps that write to the Apple Contacts database. Using another contact management app or service, such as Outlook or Google Contacts, can also result in avatars appearing in your contacts. Contact avatars are fine, but they don’t look great when centered in a space designed for a contact poster. Plus, even those people who do have contact avatars often have an old, blurry photo, an image of their kid or dog (who you may not even recognize), or a random Memoji or emoji.

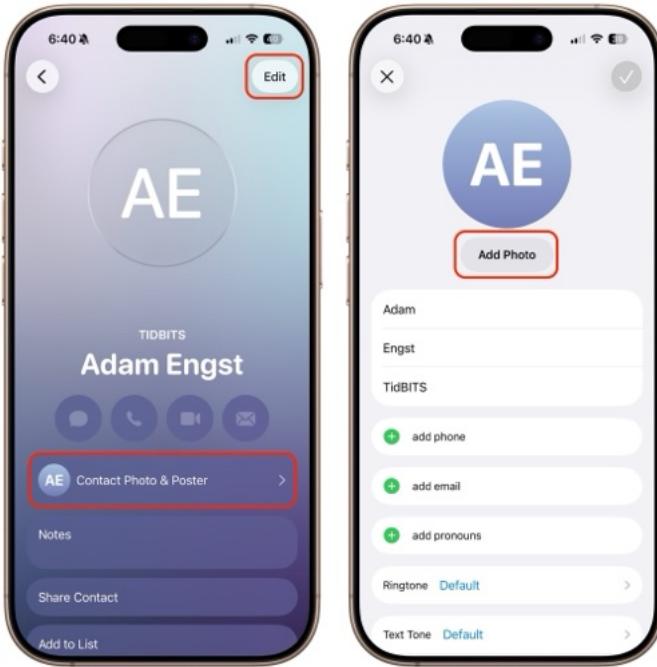
Unfortunately, setting contact avatars and posters is a fussy, inconsistent process that most people will probably do only for close family and friends with whom they communicate often and whose avatars and posters they see regularly. If you have a few minutes to make your iPhone experience more visually appealing, here’s how to go about it in iOS 26. iPadOS 26 is similar, but you can’t set contact posters in macOS 26 Tahoe.

adoption is accurate. In a quick Do You Use It? poll, please share your answer to this question: “[For how many people, including yourself, have you set a contact poster?](#)”

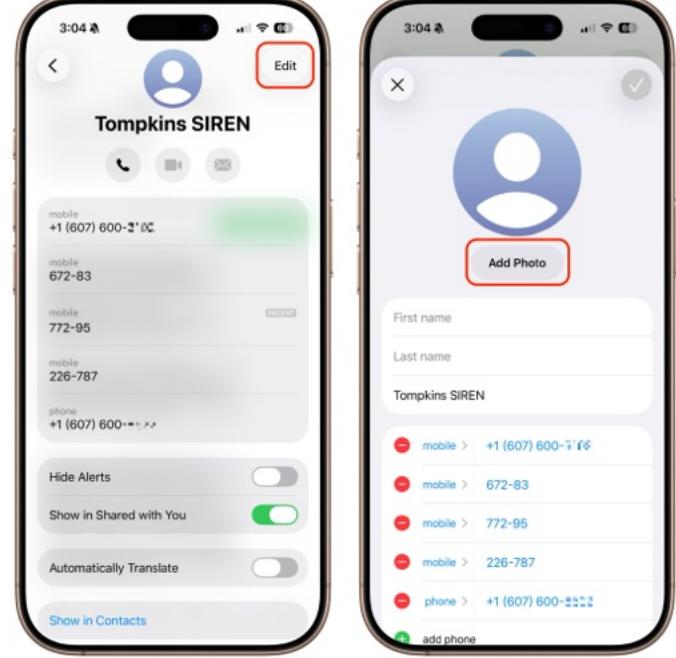
Navigate to the Avatar/Poster Edit Screen

The first task in setting up contact avatars and posters is to get to a spot where you can do so. Apple tried to make this easy by providing multiple paths, but that may have muddied the situation for some people. In iOS 26 (previous versions are likely similar), they include these three:

- **Contacts:** Open a contact card in the Contacts app and tap Contact Photo & Poster. You can also tap Edit, then Add Photo on the next screen.

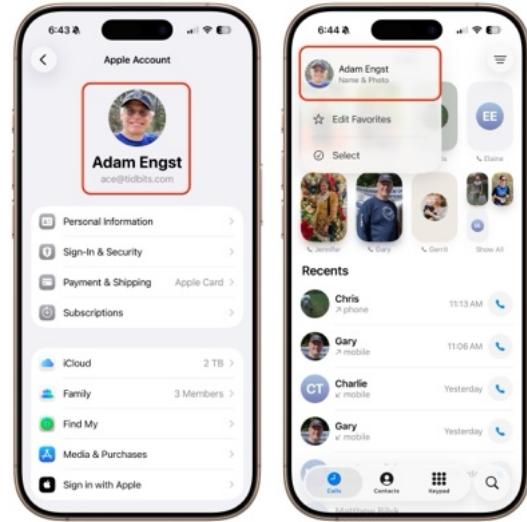


- **Phone:** In the Phone app, tap the Contacts button and select a contact to open its contact card. The subsequent editing experience is identical to that in the Contacts app.
- **Messages:** In a conversation, tap the other person's name/avatar at the top, tap the Edit button in the upper-right corner, and select Edit Contact Info from the menu. Then, under the person's avatar, tap Add Photo or Edit.



I also encourage you to edit your own contact avatar and poster, which you can access in ways beyond editing your contact card directly in Contacts:

- **Settings:** In the Settings app, tap your name, and on the next screen, tap your avatar at the top (below left).
- **Phone:** In the Phone app's Calls or Recents screen, tap the Edit button in the upper-left corner, then tap your name with Name & Photo under it (below right).



- **Messages:** The Messages app offers the same Edit button entry point in the upper-left as the Phone app.

To control when your name, avatar, and poster are shared with other people, scroll to the bottom of the avatar/poster selection screen. Make sure Name and Photo Sharing is enabled, and set your preferred first and last names. For automatic sharing with contacts, choose Contacts Only, or retain granular control by leaving it set to Always Ask. Contact posters are exchanged only via iMessage, not SMS or RCS.

Regardless of the starting point, you'll encounter one of two different interfaces, depending on whether the contact card already has an associated avatar. If it doesn't, you'll see the screen on the left; if it does, the screen on the right. The segmented selector at the top controls whether you're working on the Avatar or the Poster—be sure it matches what you intend to edit.



Choose a Photo

Although you're welcome to use a monogram, a Memoji, or an emoji, I won't be covering those. In either of the screens above, to move forward with photos, tap the Photos button. It lets you take a photo with the camera or find an existing image. We'll focus on that option, so tap Photo Library.

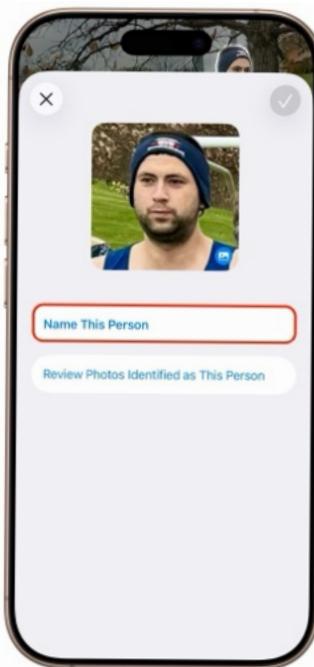
Here's where things start to get hard. iOS displays a photo picker showing featured photos picked out

by Apple Intelligence. A selector at the top lets you switch between Photos and Collections, and buttons underneath it let you switch the view to All, Live Photo, People, Nature, and Cities. There's also a Search button at the bottom right that you'd be forgiven for missing since Liquid Glass tends to hide it.



In the second row of buttons, All might be helpful if the photo you want is recent and will thus appear at the top of your photo library. The rest of the buttons in that row are worthless unless you're working with someone who happens to be in your Featured or People lists. Unfortunately, iOS does not intelligently filter photos to show images of the person whose contact card you are currently editing, which is a shame.

For a better approach, rely on Apple's facial recognition. If you haven't identified the person whose photo you want to add to their contact card, find a photo of them, swipe up to reveal information about the photo, tap the little face icon in the lower-left corner of the image, and then tap Name This Person to give them a name—or, more likely, select their existing contact card. You might think that once you've done that, Contacts would be able to display all the matched photos of that person, but you'd be wrong—another shame. Anyway, once Photos has a chance to work in the background, it will find additional images of that person, one of which is probably suitable for their avatar and poster.



After facial recognition has done its thing, you'll have better luck in the contact card's photo selector by using the Search button or by switching to Collections using the selector at the top:

- Search: First, tap the All button in the second row, since the search is limited to the current collection. Then enter enough of the person's name to cause it to appear in the auto-complete picker. Tap it to see all their photos.



• Collections: The Collections screen brings together Albums, Shared Albums, People & Pets, Trips, Memories, Recent Days, and more. Any of them will work, but your best bet is to tap People & Pets and then tap the person's thumbnail.



However you've found the photo you want, tap it to move on to the next step.

Move, Scale, and Manipulate the Photo

Remember that selector at the top of the screen where you tapped the Photos button, which let you switch between choosing an avatar photo and a poster photo? We left it set to Avatar, so that's our first order of business. Since the photo I selected isn't focused on my face, I must first tap the crop button ① under the preview and then move and scale the image by dragging and pinching until my face is centered. When you're done, tap the checkmark ✓ button ② to save your changes. (I don't like iOS 26's preference for the checkmark instead of Save or Done; I get that Apple likes to avoid words that must be localized, but a checkmark doesn't have that meaning to me.) In the Suggestions area below, you can pick a filter if you prefer its look, then tap Choose to save your work ③.



After tapping Choose, you end up back at the left screen below. Tapping Customize lets you redo the steps above, and tapping the ✓ button saves your new avatar photo. It may also save the photo as a contact poster—sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn’t—but if you want to customize it first, you must tap Poster in the selector at the top and tap Customize. You can also tap the Photos button to pick a different photo for the poster.



For posters, the customization features and controls are rather different. For one, instead of the X and ✓ buttons, we’re back to Cancel and Done. Why? Also, you can pinch to zoom and move the zoomed image, but it requires two fingers rather than the one you use to move and scale the avatar image.

At the bottom, tapping the image thumbnail lets you choose a different photo entirely, and tapping the ••• button may let you enable a depth effect (only on Portrait photos?) and “extend” the photo, which seems to be related to manual scaling. Instead of filter preview buttons, as we saw with avatars, you swipe left and right on the image to see how different filters change it. Perhaps it’s just me, but I find most of these filters, like the one on the right below, actively ugly.



Once you’re happy with your poster and tap Done, you’re returned to yet another preview screen. The big Contact Avatar/Contact Poster button at the bottom lets you switch between the poster you just customized and the avatar you made earlier, and the Edit button under each lets you make more customizations. If you want to save what you’ve done, tap the big Done button. Crucially, do not tap the Back < button at the top, or all your recent changes will be lost.



If you've become exhausted by trying to find and customize the right image, you're welcome to stop here, as shown on the left screen below. However, what if you decide, now or in the future, that you want a different avatar or poster image? On the right screen below, I've selected a different poster, but when I tap the Done button, it returns me to the screen with the Avatar/Poster selector, and tapping the ✓ button there prompts me to select my previous avatar or a new one based on the new poster photo. If I wanted a headshot from the new photo, I could tap anywhere outside the popover, tap Avatar in the selector, and proceed from there. Or I could just specify which of the avatar photos that I lie.



If I'm starting to sound a little frantic, it's because Apple's interface for working with these photos, while highly flexible, can quickly become overwhelming. (I had to monkey through this process numerous times to fully understand its mechanics, which speaks to its complexity.) You constantly have to choose between working on an avatar or a poster, and testing different photos requires repeatedly navigating the awkward photo picker—using the People & Pets collection helps, but it still requires numerous taps. Although the interface text next to the Photos button says "Once added, photos from your library will appear here," it's not true on my iPhone for anyone but me, and only a few of the photos I've selected are remembered. Plus, it's way too easy to lose what you've done by tapping the wrong button, and that button may be X, Cancel, or rse, iOS sometimes forgets your customization—I've tried many times move and scale an avatar headshot of my father, but it won't stick. No matter what I try, once I return to his contact card, after a few seconds the card blinks twice, and on the second blink his avatar reverts to the photo before I cropped it. I also saw that happen with my own avatar, though turning the Name and Photo Sharing switch off, cropping again, and then turning that switch back on finally made my avatar edits stick.

If ever there was a job for Apple Intelligence, simplifying the process of setting avatars and posters is it. Rather than forcing us to hunt through our photos manually, why can't we see all the photos associated with a contact through facial recognition, right in the contact? As with featured images on the Lock Screen, Apple Intelligence could suggest the best images for an avatar and for a poster and let the user choose which of each they like. Manual picking and customization could be available, but wouldn't be necessary in most situations. 

Incogni deletes your family's private info from the internet – here's why that matters



In today's world, everyone needs to have dozens, if not hundreds of different online accounts to keep up with their everyday life. That's a lot of potentially sensitive data in the hands of tons of different companies – and it's easy to not think about that. You and your family's data is incredibly valuable to data brokers, but it isn't too difficult to put a stop to it – and protect the online privacy of your family.

Protecting your online privacy

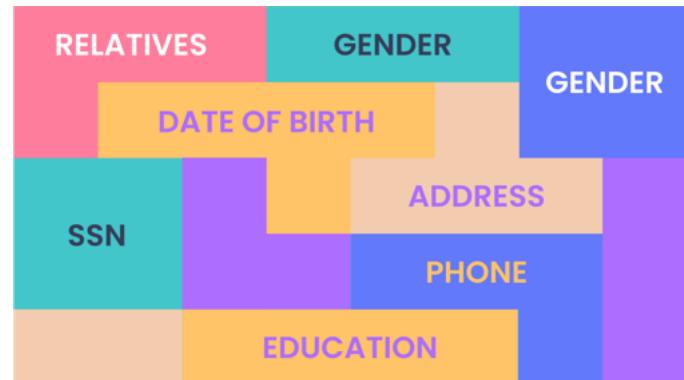
It can be hard to take control of your online data. Apple does provide some useful features to prevent your footprint from growing, like [App Tracking Transparency](#), [Hide My Email](#), and [iCloud Private Relay](#) – but this doesn't do anything for what data is already out there.

Right now, if you want to get your personal information deleted from the internet, you have to journey across the entire internet to find all of the data brokers with your information – then kindly ask them to delete it. Many of these people search sites do have procedures for data deletion, so it shouldn't be too complicated. It's just immensely time consuming, and you'd have to cycle through this procedure for every website and every family member.

Data brokers take it up an additional notch. They don't necessarily put your information up on Google in the same way people search sites do, but they do build up fairly extensive profiles on you,

then sell that information to marketing companies, scammers, and more. Data brokers are a leading reason for spam phone calls being on the rise.

You can opt out of these too, though it's a lot harder – and there's no guarantee that you won't end up in a database at a future date, since companies can continue to sell your data to them. The easiest way to stop this cycle is [by using Incogni](#), which automates the opt-out requests and continuously works to keep your data removed.



Remove the headache with Incogni

Obviously, everything mentioned above is extremely tedious. Making the effort to remove your personal information is important, but companies make it far harder than it should be – unfortunately. Luckily, [Incogni](#) makes it far easier – and streamlines the whole process into just a couple button clicks.

With [Incogni](#), all of the time consuming and repetitive processes are cut out. It automates the entire process, and reaches out to hundreds of data brokers on behalf of you and your family to get your data taken offline. Plus, it repeats this process every so often, making sure your data stays removed from these databases.

Why does this matter, though? Well, for one – you'll receive far less spam, junk mail, and robocalls. It can be a massive pain, especially when you have spam phone calls targeting older members of your family. On top of that, [Incogni](#) can prevent potential

identity theft and fraud, by making sure your key private information isn't readily available on the internet.

It's also great peace of mind, knowing you, your kids, and everyone else in your family are protected from potential bad actors online. Online privacy doesn't have to be a techie thing – you can take control.

Get 55% off Incogni now

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