

Sharing Photos from Apple Photos

The best method depends on who you're sharing with and whether they use Apple devices. Here's how to think about it.

Friends (quick, casual sharing)

- **AirDrop** works well when you're together in person. It sends full-quality photos to nearby iPhones, iPads, and Macs.
- **Messages or Mail** are good for a few shots. For large batches in Mail, Mail Drop sends a download link instead of attachments.
- **Copy iCloud Link** (in the share sheet) creates a link to a set of photos that anyone can open, including Android and PC users. The link expires after 30 days, so it suits "here are the pics from Saturday" sharing.

Family (ongoing sharing)

- **iCloud Shared Photo Library** is the strongest option for close family. Up to six people share one library at full resolution, and everyone can add, edit, and organize. You can set your camera to add photos automatically, for example when family members are nearby.
- **Shared Albums** suit a wider circle, like grandparents, cousins, or a trip group. Each album is a themed collection. Invitees can like, comment, and add their own photos, and you get notifications. You can also turn on a public website for the album so non-Apple relatives can view it in a browser. One drawback is that photos are stored at reduced resolution, so these albums are better for viewing than for archiving.

Organizations (schools, clubs, employers, publications)

- **Export originals** with File > Export > Export Unmodified Original on a Mac. This gives full-resolution files you can upload to whatever system the organization uses, such as a website, a submission form, or a shared drive.
- **Shared cloud folders** in iCloud Drive, Dropbox, Google Drive, or OneDrive work better than Shared Albums for organizations. They keep full quality, and anyone can download the files regardless of platform.
- **Add captions and keywords** before exporting. Names, dates, and event details travel with the files and save the recipient time.

Habits that help with all of these

- **Check location data.** In the share sheet, tap *Options* and turn off *Location* when sending photos publicly or to people you don't know well.
- **Curate first.** Build an album or use a Memory to pick the best shots, then share that set instead of 200 near-duplicates.
- **Share Memories as videos** for family and holidays. They export as short slideshow movies with music.
- **Print photos** through photo-book and print services that connect to Photos, which makes good gifts for less tech-savvy relatives.

In Short

Use iCloud Shared Photo Library for your household, Shared Albums for extended family and friends, iCloud links for one-off sharing with anyone, and exported originals in a shared folder for organizations.