

Meshtastic iOS App

Overview

The Meshtastic iOS app provides core functionality for iPhone and iPad users, including messaging, node management, and configuration. Feature parity with the Android app has improved substantially in recent releases.

Installation

- **Apple App Store** - Search "Meshtastic". Requires iOS 17 or later (as of June 2026 the App Store listing lists iOS 17.5 or later). The minimum tracks the most recent iOS versions, so verify the current requirement on the App Store listing when you install.
- **TestFlight beta** - Beta versions available through Apple TestFlight for users who want early access to new features

Connecting Your Node

iOS Bluetooth handling differs from Android:

1. Enable Bluetooth on your iPhone/iPad
2. Open the [Meshtastic app](#) - it will scan for nearby BLE devices
3. On first launch the app presents a connection/Bluetooth screen listing nearby radios; select your node from that list to connect. (App menu labels change between releases, so the exact wording of this screen may differ from your version.)
4. Tap to connect. iOS may require granting Bluetooth permission on first use.
5. iOS typically prompts for the same 6-digit BLE pairing PIN as Android - a random PIN shown on the device screen for nodes with a display, or the default `123456` on screenless nodes. Enter it when prompted.

Important iOS difference: iOS does not allow background BLE connections to stay active when the app is not in the foreground. Your phone must be awake and the Meshtastic app must be active to send and receive *your own* messages over BLE and to view the mesh. This is an iOS system limitation, not a Meshtastic issue. Note that the node itself continues to relay mesh traffic over LoRa independently of the phone - the phone is only needed for your own messaging and to view the mesh, not for the node to relay packets.

EmComm caveat: Do not rely on an iOS-tethered node for unattended, always-on relaying or alerting. When the phone sleeps or the app moves to the background, BLE drops and your phone will not receive messages. For emergency-communications relays or always-on coverage, use a dedicated always-on node (or an Android phone / USB connection) rather than an iPhone in your pocket.

Feature Comparison: Android vs iOS

Feature	Android	iOS
Messaging	Yes	Yes
Node map	Yes	Yes
Full Radio Config	Yes	Yes (improving with each release)
Background BLE	Yes	No (iOS limitation)
USB Serial connection	Yes (with OTG)	Limited
WiFi TCP connection	Yes	Yes
Export/Import config	Yes	Yes
Range test module control	Yes	Yes
Apple Watch companion	N/A	Yes (basic)

iOS-Specific Tips

- **Keep the app active** - To receive messages in real time, keep the app in the foreground or enable background app refresh (Settings → General → Background App Refresh → Meshtastic)
- **Notifications** - Enable notifications in iOS Settings to get alerts for new messages even when the app is in the background
- **WiFi connection for always-on monitoring** - If your node is on the same WiFi network, the iOS app can maintain a TCP connection more reliably than BLE for long sessions

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