

## iCloud Photo Library & Backups - 1.30.17

It's been a long time since I've written my last blog but there are a few items that I have seen over the past year that I wanted to share with you.

A common question I get is, what is the best way to store my photos?

Apple, in the last year, has come out with iCloud Photo Library. I am sure you have seen this on your phone, and, if you've upgraded your computer's Operating System, on your computer when your pictures are now shown on Photos vs the old iPhoto.

iCloud Photo Library is Apple's way of providing its customers a way to store their photos on Apple's cloud server. You pay for this by purchasing more cloud storage, which is also done when you back up your phone on the cloud (Settings/iCloud/Backup/iCloud Backup).

### **There are a few things to consider when using iCloud Photo Library.**

1. If you choose it for BOTH your iPhone and your Computer using the same Apple ID - it merges all of your pictures into one large database - meaning if you should delete a photo on your phone - it will delete on your computer and vice versa. It is ALL connected. Also, you will not be able to discern what pictures on your phone are part of your camera roll (ones you took using your phone) vs ones that were loaded onto the computer using a different camera (Nikon, Canon, etc...)

*\*\*In addition, if one of your children is using the same Apple ID for syncing as you, then they also may have the option of permanently deleting a photo from your collection\*\**

2. If, when launching iCloud Photo Library, you choose to "optimize" your pictures on your computer and/or your phone THEN it means that the computer and/or phone ONLY keeps a thumbnail of your picture and the full resolution of your picture resides in the Cloud. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND YOU DO NOT DO THIS! It basically means that you do not own your pictures anymore and to download the full resolution pictures is an arduous process. (You can contact Apple and, for a fee, they will send you your pictures on a flash drive) I have a client that, after a month, is still trying to download her 6,000 full resolution pictures back onto her computer. In addition, if you want to watch a video that you shot on your phone, it will have to 'redownload' before you can watch it again. If you are tight for space on your computer or your phone, contact me and we will find a resolution. If you should turn it on, choose "Download and Keep Originals".
  - a. If you already turned iCloud Photo Library on your phone, you will NOT lose your camera roll by turning it off however, depending on how many videos are on it, you may not have enough space to redownload the pictures and videos.
  - b. If you already turned it on your computer, it will take a while to redownload your pictures and videos depending on how large your file was. Keep in mind that it continues to download even while Photos is not on.

## **There are other ways to move your pictures off of your phone to your computer and into a safer place.**

1. Direct connect your phone to your computer every so often, open up Photos and import pictures from your phone
2. Dropbox - I do use this for my phone as a backup but it is not consistent. (Settings/Dropbox/Photos - allow Dropbox to access). I have my photos on my phone linked to Dropbox but it doesn't capture everything and I just opened up Dropbox on my phone and it is now downloading over 800 pictures. It shouldn't work this way! In my opinion it should be automatic.
3. Google Drive - You can download this from the App Store and log into your google account (need to set up a gmail account first). Once open, choose the menu (3 lines) Settings/Photos/Auto Backup). I recommend you do this over Wifi. I am trying this out however it seems to only download the photos to my google drive when I actively open up the drive on my phone. After two weeks, I still don't have all my photos current. I think the key here is to leave it open for a while to make sure it downloads all of your photos (esp if you have a large library on your phone) and open it periodically when you have wifi.
4. iCloud backup. (Settings/iCloud/Backup/iCloud Backup). This backs up your entire phone and does so on a regular basis as long as your phone is being charged and is connected to Wifi. To double check what is actually being backed up, go to Settings/General/Storage & iCloud Usage/iCloud/Manage Storage. You can choose your device to figure out what is being stored. There should be a tab for "Photo Library" if the iCloud Backup is storing your photos too. *\*\*Keep in mind that if you have iCloud Photo Library chosen, then your iCloud backup of your phone will NOT store your photos - as that would be double dipping. Also the only way to retrieve these photos is to do a full restore on a phone from a specific date of backup.\*\**

## **What do I do?**

1. Photostream - I still love this feature. When I look at my photos, I grab those photos from My Photo Stream and dump them into Photos - although most times they all seem to get there on their own
2. Direct connect my iPhone to my Computer for import (which you can also do for Dropbox)
3. Time Machine backup of my computer
4. Backblaze Cloud backup of my computer

Which gets me onto Backups! My mantra is Back Up, Back Up and Back Up! You can never have too many sources for your data. Here is what I recommend:

1. Every Desktop should have a dedicated external hard drive backing up the desktop - this will come in handy if your hard drive should crash and you want to reinstall the entire computer onto a new hard drive - it captures not only your data but your operating system as well. It's also great for migrating your data to a new computer.  
*\*Watch out for backup errors - if so your external hard drive may be corrupt and need to be replaced\**  
*\*\*When I go on vacation, I eject my backup hard drive and put it in a safe - that way my whole computer is saved should something happen while I'm away.\*\**

2. Every Laptop should have a wireless backup system. If you are a family of laptops, this is the easiest way to back up all of your laptops. You can do this through Apple's Time Capsule or through a more advanced router that allows you to connect an external hard drive via USB. If you have just one laptop, you can purchase an external hard drive to connect to it, however most people don't remember to backup on a regular basis.
3. If you have data on certain computers, like photos and videos that are precious, I highly recommend you backup that Computer through a cloud server like BackBlaze. It's only \$49 a year per computer, unlimited data. It does NOT backup your operating system or programs, but it will backup your data, which is most important. I have two computers using BackBlaze - one has over a terabyte of data. Should I lose the data on my computer, BackBlaze will send me my data on a Hard Drive for \$189 - much cheaper than paying for Data Recovery - and will refund my money once I return the Hard Drive. BackBlaze also maps the location of your computer if it is stolen.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.