

The Coolest Features in iOS 11

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By [Chloe Albanesius](#) 6/6/2017 9:40 AM



Apple kicked off WWDC on Monday with six key announcements, one of which was its latest mobile operating system, iOS 11.

Craig Federighi, Apple's senior vice president of Software Engineering, promised "hundreds of new features and incredible updates" for existing iOS apps. The company released a beta version of iOS 11 to

developers yesterday, and promised a public beta next month for those who like to tinker with new software. Everyone else will get iOS 11 in the fall, likely when new iPhones are released.

With hundreds of new features, not everything can be a winner. A new look for the App Store? Meh. Revamped Control Center? Better than before, but looks a bit cramped. But there were several things that caught our eye and will likely improve the iOS experience come September. Check out the things we're most looking forward to testing out in the gallery below.

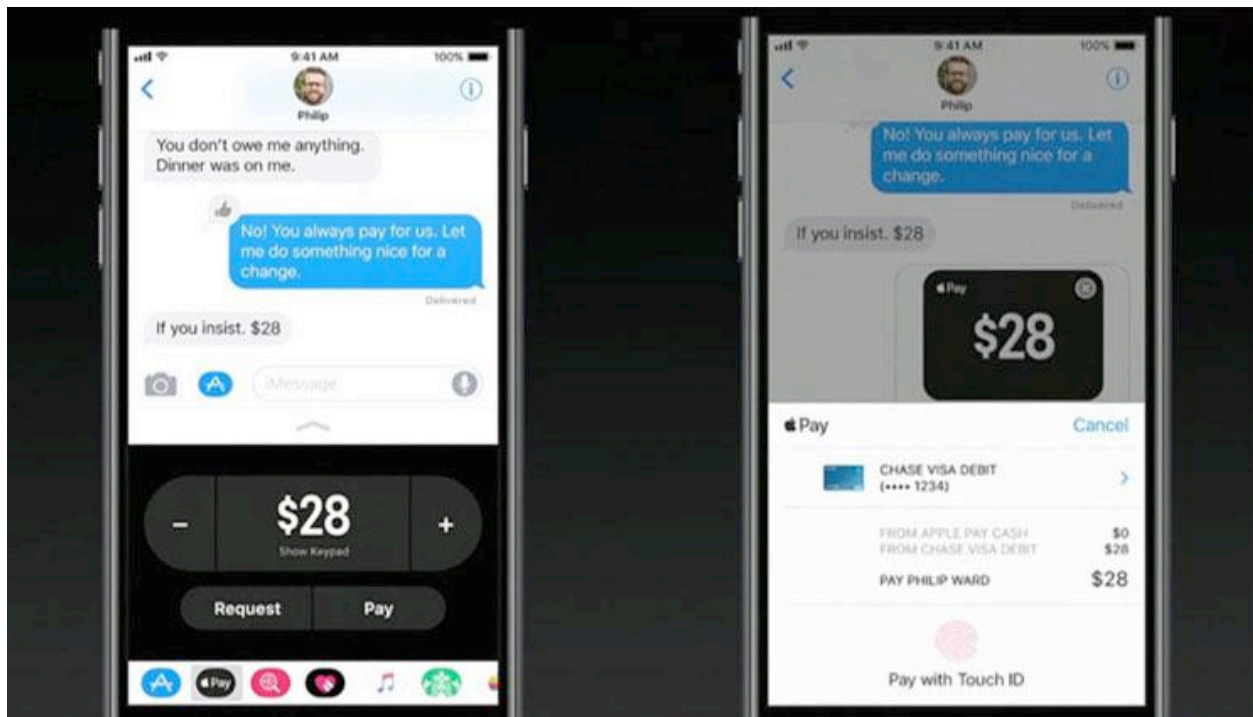


Augmented Reality

Though some of its biggest rivals have embraced virtual

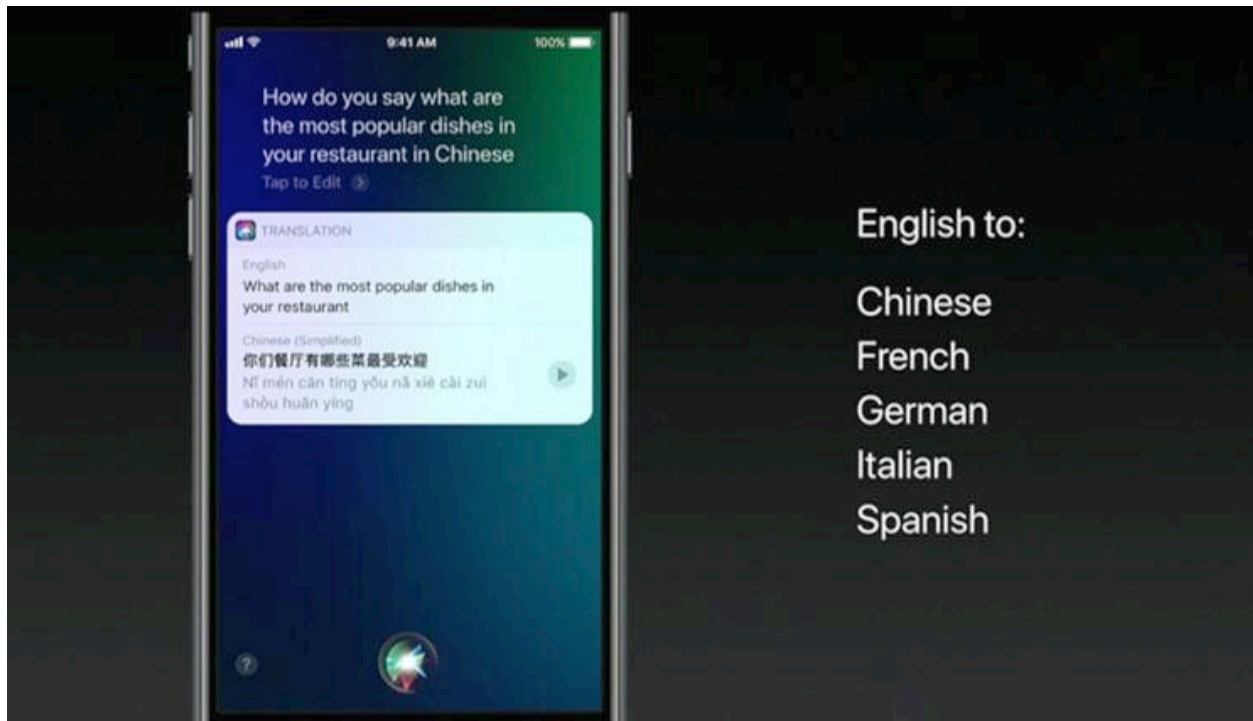
and augmented reality, from Microsoft's [HoloLens](#) to Samsung's [Gear VR](#), Apple has mostly observed from the sidelines. Last fall, [Tim Cook](#) said AR was "incredibly interesting," but that's all we've heard from Cupertino on the matter, even as millions of Pokémon fans ran around the country last summer catching AR creatures on their iPhones.

Now it appears Apple is finally [ready to embrace AR](#) with new tools for software developers that will allow them to bring augmented reality apps to iPhones and iPads. Using [ARKit](#), developers will be able to create AR apps that work with people's existing iPhones; you won't need a special phone to see AR tricks like you do with Google Tango. Apple just needs developers to [get creating](#).



Apple Pay Person to Person

Apple Pay is cool; I've used it to buy shampoo at Duane Reade and perfume at Sephora. What a world. But it doesn't allow for person-to-person money transfers, a la [Venmo](#). Until now. With iOS 11, you'll be able to send money via iMessages to friends who also have iOS devices. They can then add those funds to their Apple account, send it to someone else, or transfer to their bank accounts. No more hunting down friends for that \$20 they owe, or having to (gasp!) write a check.



Siri Translation

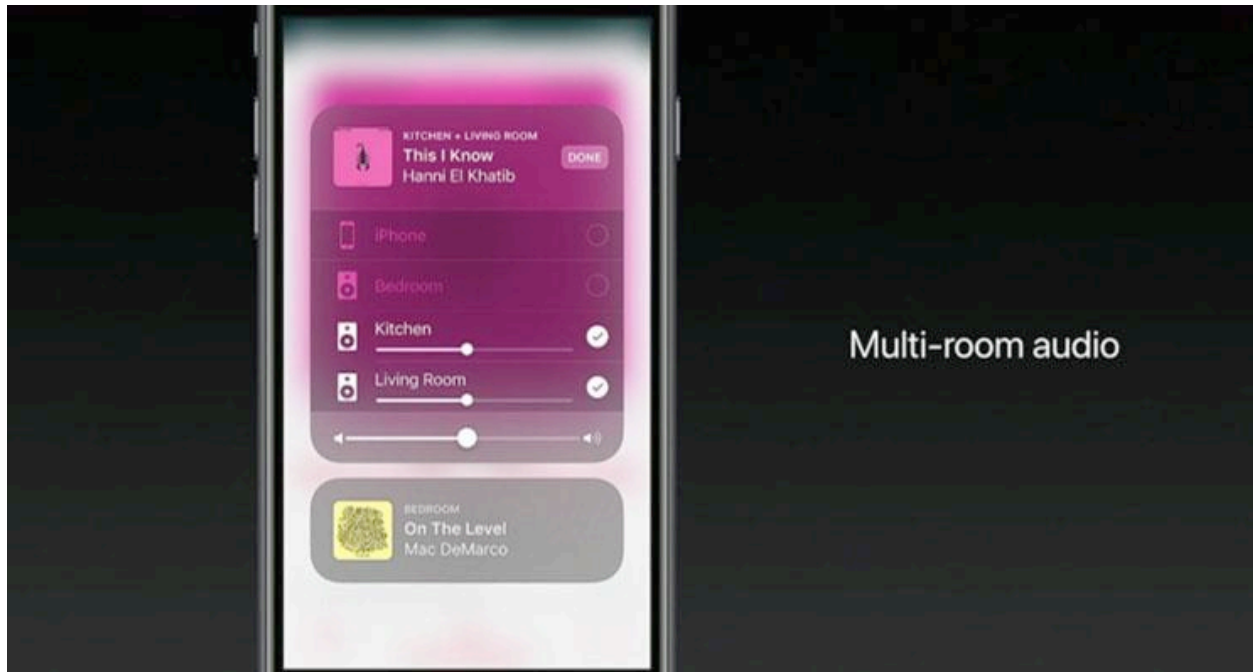
Siri has a lot going for her, but she's still a work in progress. At WWDC, Apple touted Siri's increasing smarts, including her multi-lingual capabilities. In iOS 11, Siri will give [Google Translate](#) a run for its money by translating things you tell her in English into Chinese, Spanish, French, German, or Italian. Apple's iOS 11 website notes that this feature is in beta, so be prepared for some iffy answers.

If something gets lost in translation, you can always try the universal language: music. A Personal DJ feature will let you ask Siri to play something you'd like, which she'll do based on previous music choices.

Multi-Tasking

Microsoft is going after Apple pretty aggressively with its [Surface Laptop](#) and [Surface Pro](#) devices, arguing in part that Windows is easier to use for business types. It has a point; iOS is beautiful, and the iPad Pro is sleek, but there are some productivity hiccups.

Apple wants to change that with the multi-tasking updates in iOS 11 for iPad. The Files app, for example, lets you "browse, search, and organize all your files in one place," Apple says. The Dock from the Mac, meanwhile, is also coming to iPad for easy access to apps. If you opt for Slide Over or Split View, both apps will remain active. And the most noteworthy addition? Drag and drop.



Multi-Room Audio

Music fans who want to keep the party going from room to room will appreciate AirPlay 2, which brings HomeKit support to speakers for multi-room audio. So you can play a song on the Bang & Olufsen speaker in the living room and the Bose in the kitchen. Or have a playlist play on every connected speaker you have in the home—including, presumably, Apple's upcoming [HomePod](#).



Apple Maps Do Not Disturb

Apple Maps has improved since its [disastrous debut](#), though it's not quite as robust as Google Maps. That could change in iOS 11, which adds features like lane assist, speed limit, and a "do not disturb" while driving mode. With "do not disturb" enabled, you won't get any notifications or messages while the car is in motion. If anyone texts you, they'll get an auto-reply that says you're driving and will get back to them at your destination. If it's an emergency, though, there is the option to break the "do not disturb." And if you're a passenger, you can select "I'm not driving" so you can still peruse Instagram on your commute.

Apple also promised detailed maps of hundreds of airports and shopping centers, for when you really need to track down that Shake Shack before your flight.



Live Photos

Apple's Live Photos, which arrived with the iPhone 6s lineup, attaches 3-second videos to your still photos. With iOS 11, Live Photos will add three new tricks: the Vine-like Loops; the Boomerang-esque Bounce; and a Long Exposure option, which will make your photos look like the one above.

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