10 Cool Ways to Use Apple AirTags as NFC Triggers

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PUBLISHED July 8, 2021 - MakeUseOF

Apple AirTags can do much more than just help locate lost items.

Apple AirTags are designed to help you find important items that go missing. They're products you don't really want to have to use, and that might make them seem kind of boring most of the time.

However, that feeling disappears when you discover that you can have fun with AirTags while they're not locating lost items. You can use them as NFC triggers to automate many of your iPhone tasks.

Here are 10 cool ways to use AirTags as NFC triggers for Shortcuts on your iPhone.

10 Helpful Automations You Can Trigger With an AirTag

Many people already **use NFC tags** to create clever actions and simplify parts of their routines. Your AirTag is a great way to get started with NFC automations by using its built-in NFC capability.

It's easy to **set up an AirTag as an NFC trigger** for the Shortcuts app. Once you do that, the possibilities for automating your iPhone become numerous.

1. Load a List When You Grab Your Backpack

Whether you're commuting to work, toting baby supplies at a sports event, or carrying your laptop onto a plane, your bag is an important item to keep track of with an AirTag.

In everyday usage, you can use that AirTag to trigger personal or home automations. Just tap your iPhone against the AirTag when you grab your bag to activate one.

You can set up an automation that shows your groceries list in Reminders when you tap the AirTag as you leave work. Or, you can use it to start playing the latest podcast episode as you head out the door.

2. Check Your Commute When You Pick Up Your Purse

Of all the items you don't want to lose, your purse has to be near the top of the list. You can also use an AirTag attached to your purse to get a quick commute status update. Set up an automation that loads transit or driving directions to work to quickly make sure there are no train delays or traffic jams on your route.

3. Start a Workout When You Take Your Bike for a Ride

Have you attached an AirTag to your bike to remember where you've parked it? Use that same AirTag to trigger a workout automation on your Apple Watch when you're ready to ride.

By configuring the **Start Workout** action to **Outdoor Cycle**, you can simply tap your iPhone against the AirTag to start a workout **using the Apple Watch Workout app** and set off.

4. Queue Up a Favorite Playlist or Podcast for the Car

Whether you've attached an AirTag to your keys or you're keeping one in your car to help you find it in a parking lot, you can use it to quickly start the music.

Set up a Shortcut that plays your favorite playlist or shuffles all of the music in your library with one tap against the AirTag. Or, you can use it to resume playing your list of podcasts in apps that support Shortcuts.

5. Get Directions Home From Anywhere

Make your AirTag a one-tap way to get directions home from wherever you are. You can build a shortcut that quickly shows driving, biking, walking, or transit directions in Apple Maps when you tap your iPhone against the AirTag.

The **Show Directions** action in Shortcuts also supports third-party apps, such as **Google Maps**, **Waze**, and **Citymapper**, so you can easily show directions in your preferred app.

6. Set the Scene When You Leave Home

Keychains are among the most popular items to attach AirTags to, but AirTag automations aren't limited to car keys. If you have HomeKit devices like lights and plugs, why not control them by tapping the AirTag on your keys?

For example, put together a shortcut that sets your Away From Home scene and use the AirTag to trigger it when you're leaving to travel. For this one, you can choose **Home Automation** when you're setting it up in the Shortcuts app.

7. Let Your Suitcase Remind You of What You Need to Bring

There are always a few things that you simply cannot forget when traveling. Whether it's your passport, a

property key, or some important medicine, let the AirTag attached to your suitcase remind you.

You can tell Shortcuts to open your packing list when you tap the AirTag, but that requires unlocking your phone and waiting for the app to open. For a more immediate reminder that's visible on your iPhone's lock screen, set up a shortcut that sends a simple notification listing what you need.

8. Start a Timer When You Park at a Meter

Tap the AirTag on your keychain to automatically start a timer and never be surprised by a parking ticket again. If you regularly park in spots with specific time limits, configure that in the automation for one-tap access. Otherwise, add an **Ask for Input** action to manually enter the time limit each time you park.

9. Save Your Parking Spot Location

With an AirTag attached to your car keys, you can tap your iPhone to instantly save your current location to a note. Add the time, date, and city to better keep track of the notes you no longer need.

10. Start Focusing When It's Time to Work

Whether you need to study for an exam or focus on preparing a presentation for your coworkers, use an AirTag on your work bag to turn off distractions. Set up an automation that enables Do Not Disturb, starts playing your favorite focus playlist or ambient noise, and sets an alarm in one or two hours to promote a block of concentration time.

You can automate this even further by first creating a calendar event in the shortcut that matches the alarm. Then, configure the **Set Do Not Disturb** action's **Until** parameter to **Event Ends** and use the event your shortcut just created as the Magic Variable.

Have Fun With Your AirTag's Secret Superpower

Since it might be months or years before you have to use your AirTag to find a lost item, this device can seem fairly boring most of the time. But, its NFC functionality opens up a world of automation possibilities. Use the above ideas as inspirations to brainstorm your own clever uses for AirTags as NFC triggers.

While you're uncovering the possibilities of NFC automations, explore all of the different automation triggers in the Shortcuts app for even more ideas.

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