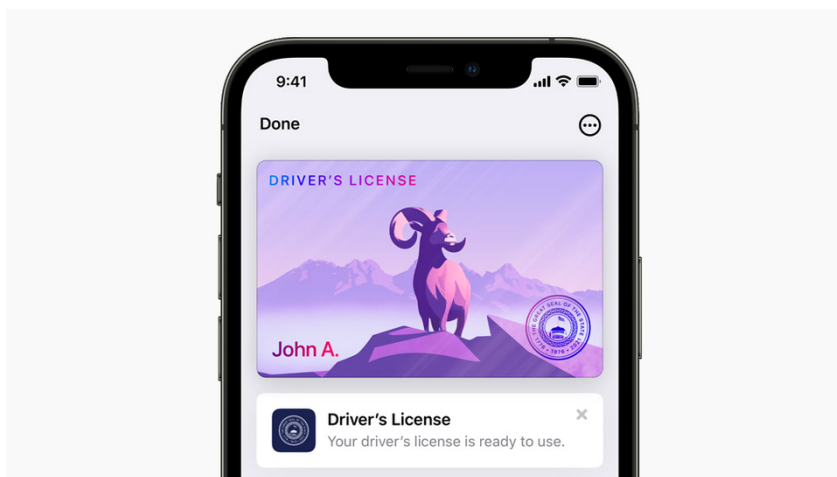


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It's About to Really, Really Suck to Lose Your iPhone

4-5 minutes



Screenshot: Gizmodo/Apple

The evolution of the phone as a do-everything device edged forward this week with Apple's announcement of [iOS 15](#). And while some of the new features seem handy, the real-world implications could create a world of hurt.

The main thing I'm worried about here is the growing capabilities within Apple's Wallet app, which is quickly becoming a little *too* useful. In addition to being able to upload your debit and credit cards to Wallet, iOS 15 expands the ability to [use Wallet as your car key](#) (by adding support for ultra-wideband tech, in addition to NFC), lets you open compatible smart locks for your home, and allows you to store your driver's license or other government-issued ID.

In short, if you use all the features Wallet offers in iOS 15, your iPhone would be your house key, your car key, your driver's license, your credit card, and your phone. No need to carry keys or a wallet anymore. Just grab your sunglasses and your phone, and you're good to go. Sounds great, right? Until you lose your phone or your phone gets stolen—and everything else with it.

Obviously, the smart thing to do here is to simply use your iPhone as a backup to all the things it can now ostensibly replace. Lose your wallet? It's a pain, but you can still pay for stuff with Wallet. Lose your phone? That sucks—but fortunately, you have your wallet with you, so you can still pay for stuff. But I'd bet a lot of people aren't going to use it as a backup. Instead, at least some people are going to load up their Wallet app with all the most important crap they lug around every day and leave the rest at home. And as a result, some of those people are going to lose the equivalent of their keys, wallet, and driver's license, and phone in one moment of grave misplacement.

Don't think it's likely to be that big of an issue? Let's remember that Apple has built an entire network—Find My—to help people recover the expensive shit they keep losing. In fact, with iOS 15, Apple just [expanded it to include AirPods](#). People lose stuff, and phones get stolen, all the time.

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Of course, if you have an Apple Watch, which is presumably more difficult to lose while out and about since it's strapped to your body, this isn't as much of an issue since you can use Find My iPhone from your watch. (But just because you can find your device doesn't mean you can actually get it back.) It may also not be a big deal if you can get to a computer, log into your Apple account, and use Find My from there. Or if you're with someone else who can use their phone to find your lost one. But that's a lot of ifs.

An equally believable scenario: You're away from home, can't find your phone, and don't have access to anyone or anything that can help you easily find it. You don't have the ability to call someone who can use Find My on your behalf. You can't drive anywhere because your key is in your phone, along with your driver's license. And you can't buy anything because your wallet is in your phone.

Yes, I realize that the number of people who will use Wallet to replace everything is ostensibly a small subset of iPhone users since the prevalence of regular car keys, door locks, and wallets make the full-replacement option unavailable to many, if not most, people. But the expanding usefulness of Wallet does appear to illuminate the path on which we're headed, where our phones are our lives in ways that are increasingly convenient until they become a nightmare.

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