

CHAPTER SIX

Independence apps: iPhone and Android

Independence and recreation

This book is about supporting Explorer independent living with smartphone technologies. It's not about smartphones for neurotypical users, there are lots of good books like that. It's also not about how an Explorer might use every app that ships with an iPhone or Android device, much less every app that could be installed. In this chapter I'll preview the apps that for iPhone and Android that support independent living. This book will explore these apps in depth.

Supporting independence isn't only about apps that are obviously useful, like location tracking, transit help, and calendaring. It's also about keeping the smartphone engaging so Explorers interact with the device and become familiar with it. Engaging — but not too engaging! Many smartphone users find their devices distracting, but some Explorers may be particularly susceptible to obsessive interests, online scams, or show poor judgment about publicly acceptable content.

It's not easy to balance function, fun and safety. In the next chapter we'll focus on managing recreational use and reducing misuse and abuse risks.

A focus on productivity and balanced recreation means I spend more time on Calendaring, Communications, Transit and Memory aides than on web browser use. For most Explorers apps are easier to use and manage than similar browser based tools; the web browser is more of a recreational tool that has to be managed. I omit discussion of YouTube for a different reason, I don't know how to make it safe for most Explorers to use.

Independence apps: the Apple Way and the Google Way

I previously reviewed the relative advantages of Apple's iPhone compared to Android phones from Google, Samsung and Motorola for Explorer use. The key advantage of Android is price at the low end of the market. The applications I discuss in this book don't require cutting-edge technology, they work acceptably

well on inexpensive devices from Motorola and other Chinese companies.

The key advantage of the iPhone for an Explorer is pretty much everything but price. In particular the base iPhone comes well stocked for Explorer use. There's setup to be done, and one or two apps to install, but Apple's stock apps are designed to be useable by a wide range of consumers. They are good enough, and some are excellent.

The "Google Way" is more complex. Every Android device manufacturer does things differently. Some brands, like Motorola, have sold low cost phones that are closer to Google's vision. Other brands, like Samsung or Amazon, do more of their own thing. Brands also change, familiar names like Motorola or Nexus are currently expected to disappear. Making an Android phone productive for an Explorer may require deleting most of the apps it ships with and installing replacements from Google's Play store. Often these replacements are from Google itself, others may come with advertising.

Independence apps: Overview

The tables below organize the apps we'll review. The first table is apps that directly support independence. These are grouped by the Function they support, like arithmetic, getting around, and memory. The second table is a partial list of "fun" or recreational apps that make a smartphone an appealing companion for many.

Apps that directly support independence

Function	i P h o n e Recommendation (Apple unless stated)	Android Recommendation
Arithmetic	Calculator.app	Calculator.app (varies by phone vendor)
Communication, texting	Messages.app, Messenger (Facebook)	Messaging.app (Google), Messenger (Facebook)
Communication, email	Mail.app	Gmail.app (Google)
Communication, video	Facetime.app	Duo.app (Google)
Communication, voice	Phone.app	Phone.app (varies by phone vendor)

Getting answers	Siri and Safari.app (with restrictions)	MMGuardian browser (MMGuardian)
Getting around	Google Maps.app (Google)	Google Maps.app (Google)
Memory, long term	Notes.app	Simplenote.app (Automatic)
Memory, long term	Camera.app, Photos.app	Camera.app, Gallery.app (varies by phone vendor)
Memory, short term	Reminders.app	No equivalent, can tell "Ok, Google" to create a reminder.
Password Management	Notes.app (secure note)	None
People (contacts)	Contacts.app	Contacts.app
Planning and schedule	Calendar.app	Calendar.app (Google)
Planning and schedule	Clock.app	Clock.app (Google)
Safety	Restrictions or MMGuardian	MMGuardian
Social networking	Facebook.app (Facebook)	Facebook.app (Facebook)
Weather	Weather.app	Weather (Yahoo)

Apps that promote engagement

Function	i P h o n e Recommendation	Android Recommendation
FM Radio	None	FM Radio.app (varies by phone vendor)
Music	Music.app with Apple Music	Spotify.app (Spotify)
Podcasts	Podcasts.app	None
Video (TV, Movie)	Video. app with Apple store	Play TV, Movie (Google)

W e b browser	Safari (with restrictions) or MMGuardian b r o w s e r (MMGuardian)	MMGuardian Browser (MMGuardian)
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