

PRINTABLE GUIDE

Look for a missing phone photo

A missing photo may be in another account, folder or hidden collection. Avoid deleting items or restoring the whole phone while looking for one picture.

iPhone or Android | 2 min read | 5 steps

Before you start

- ☐ Your usual photo app
- ☐ Access to the account used for photo storage

1. Confirm the account

Open Photos, Gallery or Google Photos. In Google Photos, check the profile picture and account address. On iPhone, check the Apple Account used for iCloud if relevant. A different account can show a different library.

- ☐ Done this step

2. Search dates and collections

Look around the expected date, then try a place or subject search if supported. Downloaded images may have unexpected dates. Android photos from other apps may be under device folders or Collections rather than the main camera view.

- ☐ Done this step

3. Check hidden or archived items

iPhone: look for Hidden under Photos utilities and unlock it with your own device authentication. Google Photos: look in Archive and any relevant device folder. A hidden or archived photo is not necessarily deleted.

- ☐ Done this step

4. Inspect recently deleted items

Look for Recently Deleted on iPhone or Trash/Bin in your photo app. Recover the correct item if available. Retention periods vary by service and backup status; an item permanently deleted or past that period may be unrecoverable.

☐ Done this step

5. Check a known online copy

If you previously enabled cloud photo storage, use the service's genuine website or another signed-in device to look. Do not reset your phone or toggle several sync settings blindly. Ask the provider for help if an important image is still missing.

☐ Done this step

Try it for yourself

Find your account name and the location of your photo app's deleted-items collection.

☐ I tried the task.

My notes

Will a recovery app find every deleted photo?

No. Recovery is not guaranteed. Avoid paying or granting broad access based on promises that all lost pictures can be restored.

Official help and the online guide

Apple: missing photos - <https://support.apple.com/en-ie/118558>

Google: find missing photos - <https://support.google.com/pixelphone/answer/16999905?hl=en>

Read online: <https://plaintech-guides.pages.dev/guides/look-for-missing-phone-photos/>