Back up and recover account credentials using the Microsoft Authenticator app

Applies to:

- iOS devices, running version 5.7.0 and later
- Android devices, running version 6.6.0 and later

The Microsoft Authenticator app backs up your account credentials and related app settings, such as the order of your accounts, to the cloud. After backup, you can also use the app to recover your information on a new device, potentially avoiding getting locked out or having to recreate accounts.

Each backup storage location requires you to have one personal Microsoft account, while iOS also requires you to have an iCloud account. You can have multiple accounts stored in that single location. For example, you can have a personal account, a work or school account, and a personal, non-Microsoft account like for Facebook, Google, and so on.

Important

Only your personal and 3rd-party account credentials are stored, which includes your username and the account verification code that is required to prove your identity. We do not store any other information associated with your accounts, including emails or files. We also do not associate or share your accounts in any way or with any other product or service. And finally, your IT admin will not get any information about any of these accounts.

Back up your account credentials

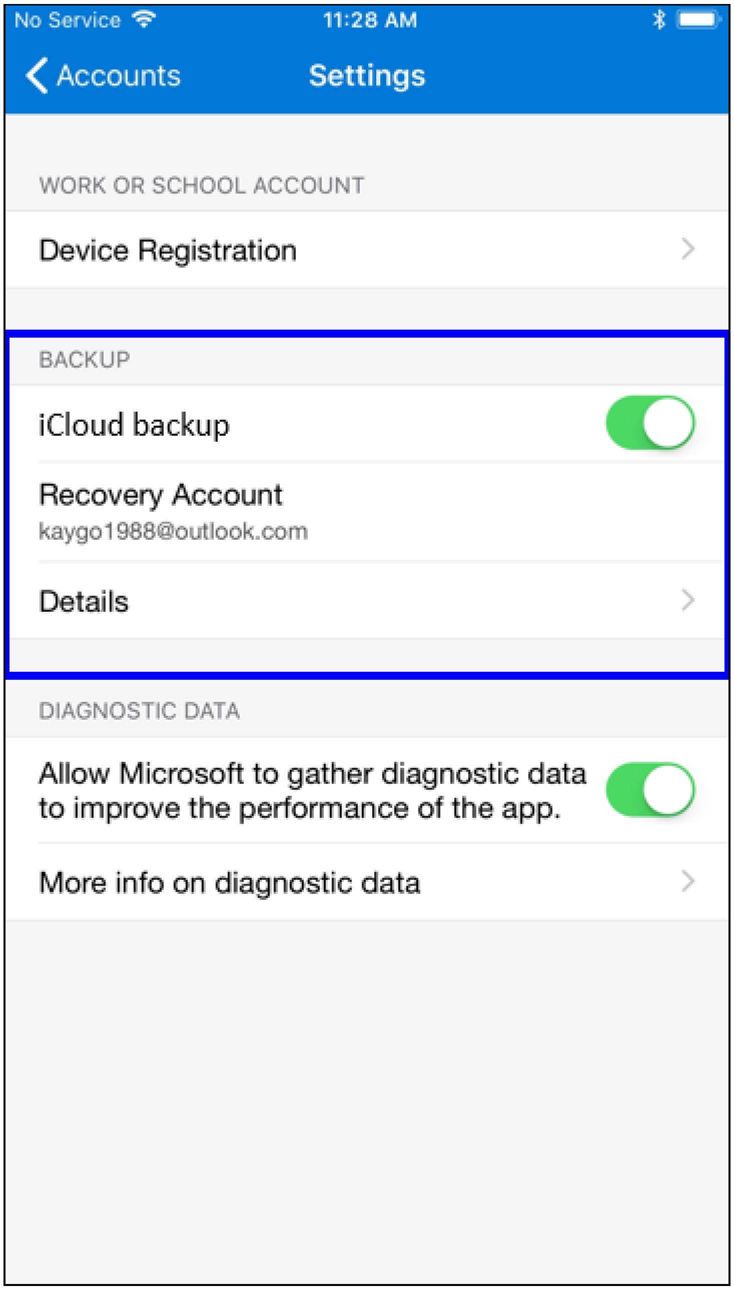
Before you can back up your credentials, you must have:

- A personal Microsoft account to act as your recovery account.
- **For iOS only,** you must have an iCloud account for the actual storage location.

To turn on cloud backup for iOS devices

- On your iOS device, select **Settings**, select **Backup**, and then turn on **iCloud backup**.

Your account credentials are backed up to your iCloud account.



WORK OR SCHOOL ACCOUNT

Device Registration

BACKUP

iCloud backup

Recovery Account
kaygo1988@outlook.com

Details

DIAGNOSTIC DATA

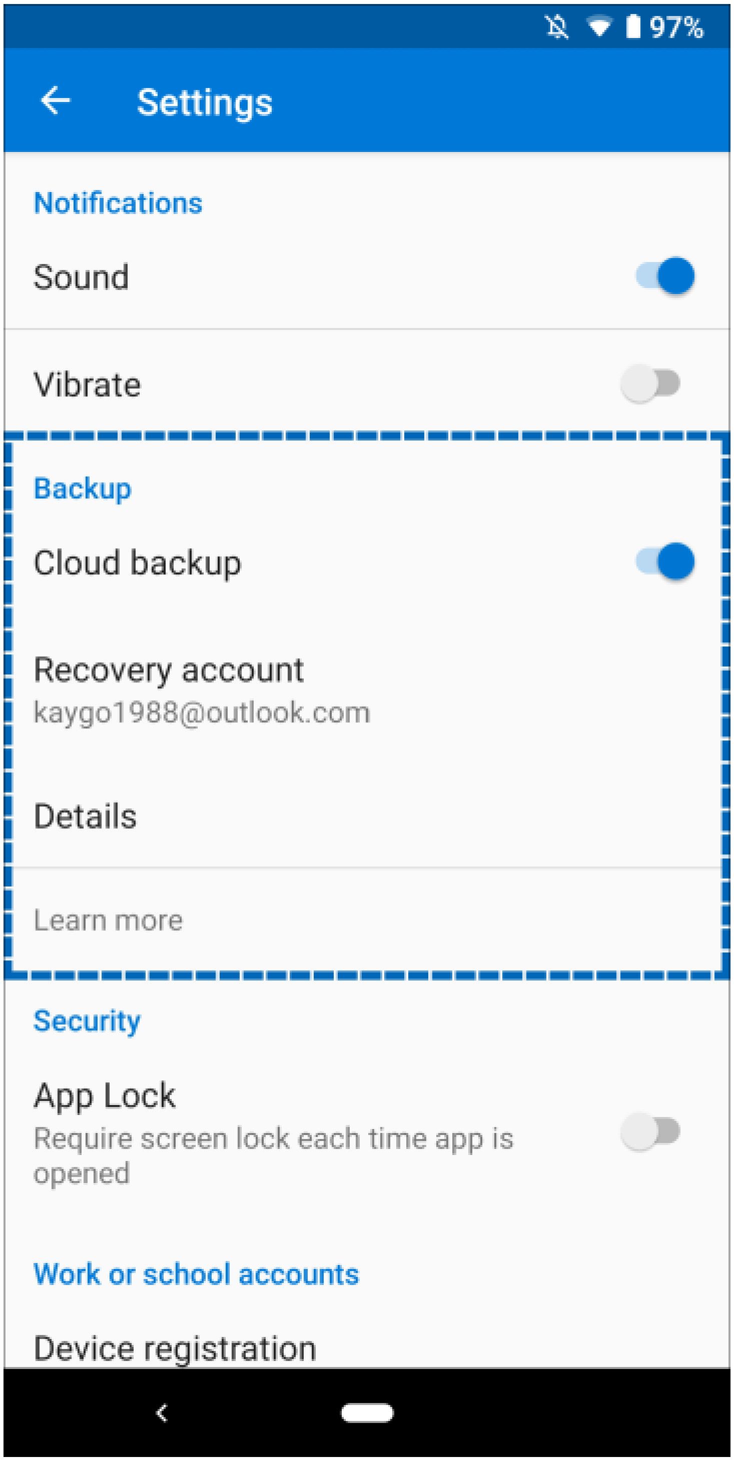
Allow Microsoft to gather diagnostic data to improve the performance of the app.

More info on diagnostic data

To turn on cloud backup for Android devices

- On your Android device, select **Settings**, select **Backup**, and then turn on **Cloud backup**.

  Your account credentials are backed up to your cloud account.


97%

Settings

Notifications

Sound ●

Vibrate ○

Backup

Cloud backup ●

Recovery account
kaygo1988@outlook.com

Details

Learn more

Security

App Lock ○
Require screen lock each time app is opened

Work or school accounts

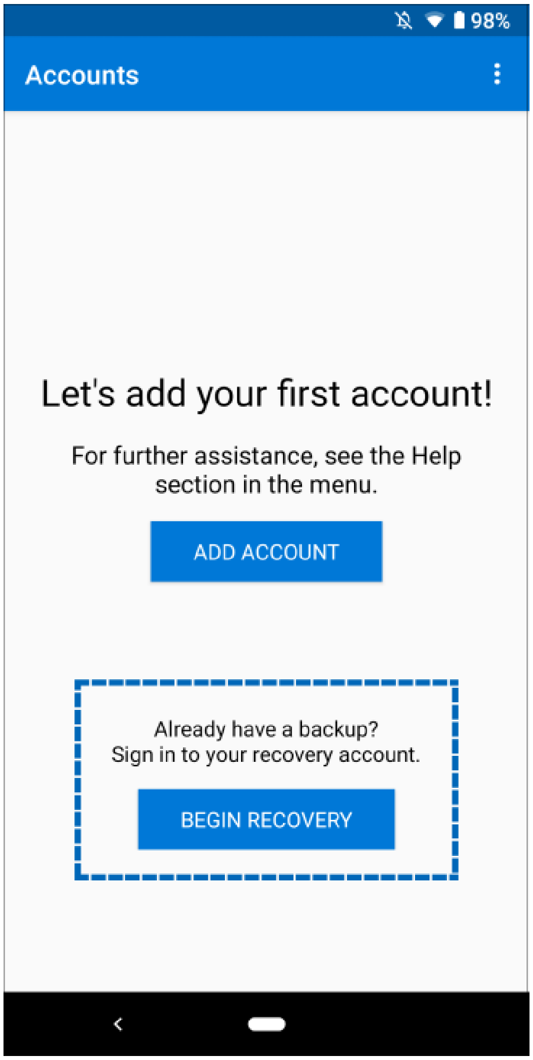
Device registration

Recover your account credentials on your new device

You can recover your account credentials from your cloud account, but you must first make sure that the account you are recovering does not exist in the Microsoft Authenticator app. For example, if you are recovering your personal Microsoft account, you must make sure you do not have a personal Microsoft account already set up in the authenticator app. This check is important so we can be sure we are not overwriting or erasing an existing account by mistake.

To recover your information

1. On your mobile device, open the Microsoft Authenticator app, and select **Begin recovery** from the bottom of the screen.



Let's add your first account!

For further assistance, see the Help section in the menu.

Already have a backup?
Sign in to your recovery account.

2. Sign into your recovery account, using the same personal Microsoft account you used during the backup process.

   Your account credentials are recovered to the new device.

After you finish your recovery, you might notice that your personal Microsoft account verification codes in the Microsoft Authenticator app are different between your old and new phones. The codes are different because each device has its own unique credential, but both are valid and work while signing in using the associated phone.

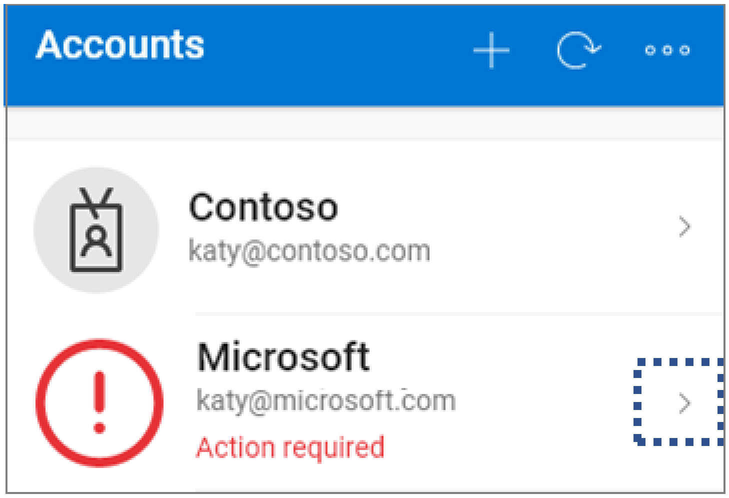
Recover accounts requiring more verification

If you use push notifications with your personal or work or school accounts, you will get an on-screen alert that says you must provide additional verification before you can recover your information. Because push notifications require using a credential that is tied to your specific device and never sent over the network, you must prove your identity before the credential is created on your device.

For personal Microsoft accounts, you can prove your identity by entering your password along with an alternate email or phone number. For work or school accounts, you must scan a QR code given to you by your account provider.

To provide more verification for personal accounts

1. In the **Accounts** screen of the Microsoft Authenticator app, tap the account you want to recover to open the full screen view of the account.

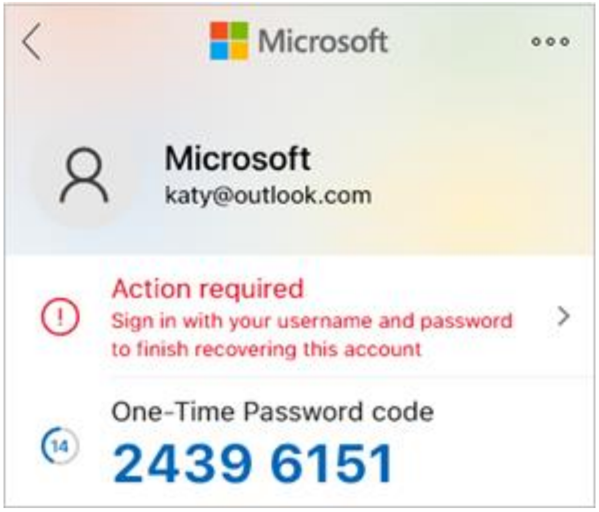


Accounts

Contoso
katy@contoso.com

Microsoft
katy@microsoft.com
Action required

2. Tap the tile for the account you are recovering and then tap the option to sign in to recover. Enter your password and then confirm your email address or phone number as additional verification.



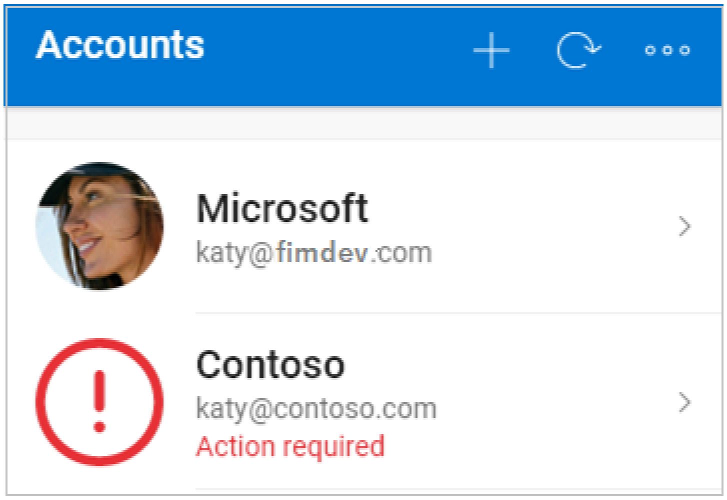
Microsoft
katy@outlook.com

Action required
Sign in with your username and password to finish recovering this account

One-Time Password code
2439 6151

To provide more verification for work or school accounts

1. In the **Accounts** screen of the Microsoft Authenticator app, tap the account you want to recover to open the full screen view of the account.

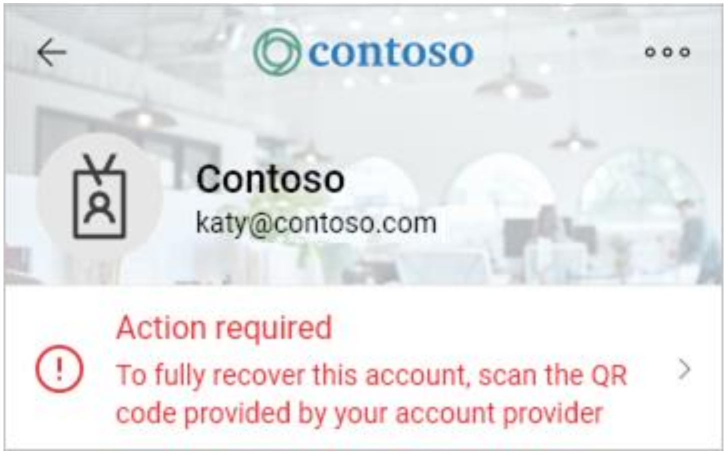


Accounts

Microsoft
katy@fimdev.com

Contoso
katy@contoso.com
Action required

2. In the full screen view, tap the option to scan a QR code to fully recover.



Contoso

katy@contoso.com

Action required

To fully recover this account, scan the QR code provided by your account provider

Note:

For more info about QR codes and how to get one, see **Get started with the Microsoft Authenticator app** or **Set up security info to use an authenticator app**, based on whether your admin has turned on security info.

If this is the first time you're setting up the Microsoft Authenticator app, you might receive a prompt asking whether to allow the app to access your camera (iOS) or to allow the app to take pictures and record video (Android). You must select **Allow** so the authenticator app can access your camera to take a picture of the QR code in the next step. If you do not allow the camera, you can still set up the authenticator app, but you will need to add the code information manually. For information about how to add the code manually, see **Manually add an account to the app**.

Troubleshoot backup and recovery problems

There are a few reasons why your backup might not be available

- **Changing operating systems**: Your backup is stored in the iCloud for iOS and in Microsoft's cloud storage provider for Android. This means that your backup is unavailable if you switch between Android and iOS devices. If you make the switch, you must manually recreate your accounts within the Microsoft Authenticator app.
- **Network problems**: If you are experiencing network-related problems, make sure you are connected to the network and properly signed into your account.
- **Account problems**: If you are experiencing account-related problems, make sure that you are properly signed into your account. For iOS this means that you must be signed into iCloud using the same AppleID account as your iPhone.

- **Accidental deletion**: It is possible that you deleted your backup account from your previous device or while managing your cloud storage account. In this situation, you must manually recreate your account within the app.
- **Existing Microsoft Authenticator accounts**: If you have already set up accounts in the Microsoft Authenticator app, the app will not be able to recover your backed-up accounts. Preventing recovery helps ensure that your account details are not overwritten with out-of-date information. In this situation, you must remove any existing account information from the existing accounts set up in your Authenticator app before you can recover your backup.
- **Backup is out-of-date**: If your backup information is out-of-date, you might be asked to refresh the information by signing into your Microsoft Recovery account again. Your recovery account is the personal Microsoft account you used initially to store your backup. If a sign-in is required, you will see a red dot on your menu or action bar, or you will see an exclamation mark icon prompting you to sign into finish restoring from backup. After you select the appropriate icon, you will be prompted to sign in again to update your information.

Next steps

Now that you have backed up and recovered your account credentials to your new device, you can continue to use the Microsoft Authenticator app to verify your identity. For more information, see Sign in to your accounts using the Microsoft Authenticator app.