

Learner Handout: QR Code Basics

What is a QR Code?

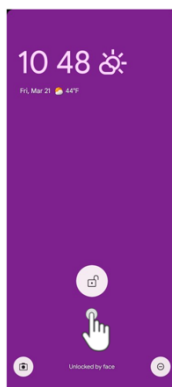
A QR code is like a barcode. You scan the QR code with your smartphone or tablet's built-in camera app, which connects you to a resource on the Internet, such as a website for viewing a food menu, an advertisement, or an application for making a payment, among other uses.

What can you do with a QR code?

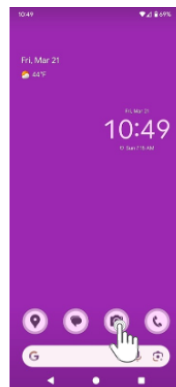
Examples include accessing a restaurant menu, checking in for a doctor's appointment, paying for parking, downloading an app, watching a video, taking a survey, and more.

How to Scan a QR Code

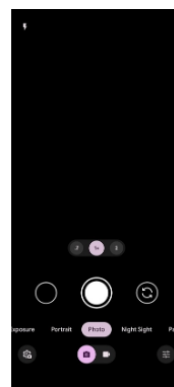
OPTION A



Step 1.
Tap the screen of your smartphone or tablet with your finger.



Step 2.
Tap the camera icon.



Step 3.
The camera app opens.

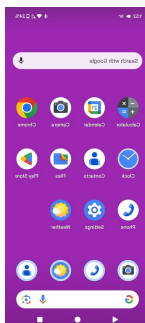


Step 4.
Hold the device so that the QR code appears in the camera's viewfinder, making sure the entire code is visible on the screen.

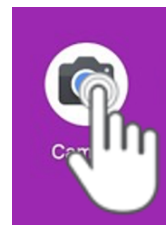


Step 5.
The device will automatically detect it's a QR code and display a link. Do not take a picture of the QR code! Tap the link on the screen, and the link opens.

OPTION B



Step 1.
From the home screen, navigate to the page with camera icon.
Step 2.
Tap on the camera icon with your finger.



Continue to Step 4.

Tips to Help You Successfully Scan a QR Code

- If you accidentally take a picture of the code, return to the camera app and **scan the code again!**
- Remember, **tap the URL** under the QR code in the camera app to open the resource.
- **Keep the camera steady.** The camera can't read the code if the image is moving or blurry.

- **Check your browser** if you tap the QR code link, but nothing opens.
- **Clean the camera lens** if the image is blurry.
- **Make sure the entire code fits on the screen** with a little space between the code and the edge of the camera screen.
- **Turn on the camera's flash** if it's dark.
- **If you have an older device**, you may need a QR scanner from your device's app store.

Using QR Codes Safely and Securely

Do

- **Do only scan codes from trusted sources.** The item that opens after scanning the code should match the organization promoting the QR code. How can you tell?
 - The QR code name or branding should match the organization's website.
 - Make sure the organizational name in the URL or logo is spelled correctly — if it's not, be suspicious.
 - The item the QR code opens should look professional, which means no misspellings, typos, or grammatical errors.
 - If it is too good to be true, it probably is!
- **Do go directly to the organization's website** address if you are unsure the QR code is legitimate.
- **Do make sure your device's operating system and applications are up to date** to ensure you have the most recent security updates installed.
- **Do make sure the URL starts with HTTPS.**
- **Do contact the organization to verify it's safe.** If you are at a store or restaurant and are unsure whether the QR code is safe, ask the staff.
- **Do: If you provide personal or financial information using a fraudulent QR code**, what can you do?
 - If you entered your username and password, change your password.
 - If you provided bank or credit card information, set up a fraud alert and credit freeze. Contact your financial institution for help.
 - Inform your bank and monitor your accounts for unusual activity.
 - Scan your device for malware and spyware.
- **Do watch the PLA DigitalLearn course Online Fraud and Scams** at www.digitallearn.org to learn more about using your mobile device safely and securely.

Don't

- **Don't scan QR codes that are damaged or covered by a sticker** of a different QR code. Someone may be trying to trick you by directing you to a different website.
- **Don't give sensitive information to a company or person you don't know** like your social security number, credit card, bank information, and passwords.
- **Don't scan it if you are unsure it's safe.**

Learn More

Visit <https://www.digitallearn.org> for more courses and to help build skills and confidence using technology.

Today's training is provided by AT&T and the Public Library Association.