[**Siri Tips**](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?H=EpeN7mhMsgn6R2qDykEzAiJFb0MRQizgdNnN4tbUMEeOcRqcZD%2Bvng4I5JFPt0%2FfDZbvYD5jcOrPj4gjUJzdhOSXkcC73N5nAlhKQaTsTUE%3D&G=562&R=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.makeuseof.com%2Ftag%2F8-things-you-probably-didnt-realize-siri-could-do%2F%3Futm_campaign%3Dnewsletter%26amp%3Butm_source%3D2012-07-19&I=%3C20130720211100.09AF4E0ED230%40mail6-09-ewr%3E&X=) by [Matt Smith](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?H=EpeN7mhMsgn6R2qDykEzAiJFb0MRQizgdNnN4tbUMEeOcRqcZD%2Bvng4I5JFPt0%2FfDZbvYD5jcOrPj4gjUJzdhOSXkcC73N5nAlhKQaTsTUE%3D&G=562&R=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.makeuseof.com%2Ftag%2Fauthor%2Fmattsmith%2F%3Futm_campaign%3Dnewsletter%26amp%3Butm_source%3D2012-07-19&I=%3C20130720211100.09AF4E0ED230%40mail6-09-ewr%3E&X=)

[](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?H=EpeN7mhMsgn6R2qDykEzAiJFb0MRQizgdNnN4tbUMEeOcRqcZD%2Bvng4I5JFPt0%2FfDZbvYD5jcOrPj4gjUJzdhOSXkcC73N5nAlhKQaTsTUE%3D&G=562&R=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.makeuseof.com%2Ftag%2F8-things-you-probably-didnt-realize-siri-could-do%2F%3Futm_campaign%3Dnewsletter%26amp%3Butm_source%3D2012-07-19&I=%3C20130720211100.09AF4E0ED230%40mail6-09-ewr%3E&X=)

Siri has become one of the iPhone’s defining features, but for many people, it’s not always the most useful. While some of this is due to the limitations of voice recognition, the oddity of using voice to command a device is also partly to blame. Users often assume Siri isn’t good for much more than finding directions or calling contacts.

That couldn’t be further from the truth. There are a ton of functions and features packed into Siri and, once you learn how to use them, you may be surprised how much you can accomplish without ever touching your phone.

Here are ten lesser-known commands.

**Call People By Relationship Instead Of Name**

Everyone knows Siri can be used to call people, but the usefulness of that feature can vary. If you want to call you father, and his name is John Smith, that’s easy. If his name is long, or not common, this isn’t quite so straightforward.

You can cheat by simply re-naming the contact to “Dad” or similar, but there’s a better way. All you have to do is add a “relationship” which can be done by telling Siri “John Smith is my father”.

Before this will work, you’ll need to ensure there is contact for yourself on your device and specify that contact as “you” in Siri. Your iPhone should have created one for you, but if you don’t have it you can do so in the Contacts app, then open the Settings app and go to General > Siri. Tap My Info and then choose your own contact information.

**Post To Facebook And Twitter**



You probably know Siri can handle texts, but did you know it can send messages to Facebook and Twitter as well? The process is almost identical: say “message”, then the social network’s name, then the message you want to send.

So if I want to tweet “It’s a beautiful day” I just need to say “Message Twitter, it’s a beautiful day.” I could also say send, post, or even just start by saying “Twitter”. Of course, your Facebook and Twitter accounts must actually be connected to your iPhone for this feature to work.

Hashtags can be entered by just saying “hashtag” followed by a word, the message can be changed by saying “change” and you can attach your current location to the update with the “add location” command.

**Figure The Tip (And Other Math Problems)**



Siri is hooked into [Wolfram Alpha](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?H=EpeN7mhMsgn6R2qDykEzAiJFb0MRQizgdNnN4tbUMEeOcRqcZD%2Bvng4I5JFPt0%2FfDZbvYD5jcOrPj4gjUJzdhOSXkcC73N5nAlhKQaTsTUE%3D&G=562&R=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.makeuseof.com%2Ftag%2F10-surprising-things-you-didnt-know-wolfram-alpha-could-do%2F%3Futm_campaign%3Dnewsletter%26amp%3Butm_source%3D2012-07-19&I=%3C20130720211100.09AF4E0ED230%40mail6-09-ewr%3E&X=), which has many uses, one of which is the ability to look up solutions to math problems. All you have to do is speak the problem you want solved. So, if you want to figure out an 18% tip on a bill that’s $55.04, you can simply say “What is 18 percent of $55.04?”.

You can also specify different currencies like Euros, Pounds and Yuan, and you can also convert money from one currency to another by asking “How much is (the currency you have) in (the currency you want to convert to)?”.

This feature isn’t just for calculating a tip. Siri, with Wolfram’s help, can handle just about any math problem you’re likely to need answered on the fly, including conversion between physical measurements and all the basic add, subtract, divide and multiply problems you could ever encounter.

**Make Restaurant Reservations**



Siri can do more than just find a nearby restaurant – it can make reservations, as well. To enable this feature you must install the [OpenTable app](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?H=EpeN7mhMsgn6R2qDykEzAiJFb0MRQizgdNnN4tbUMEeOcRqcZD%2Bvng4I5JFPt0%2FfDZbvYD5jcOrPj4gjUJzdhOSXkcC73N5nAlhKQaTsTUE%3D&G=562&R=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.makeuseof.com%2Ftag%2Falways-snag-a-table-with-opentable%2F%3Futm_campaign%3Dnewsletter%26amp%3Butm_source%3D2012-07-19&I=%3C20130720211100.09AF4E0ED230%40mail6-09-ewr%3E&X=) (it’s free). Once you’ve done that, you can tell Siri to book a reservation by saying “book a reservation for” and then the number of people, the restaurant’s name, and the time and date you’d like to book for.

If you’re feeling lucky you can just ask Siri to book a table based on cuisine or location, and the OpenTable app will automatically find a nearby restaurant that fits your criteria – if there are any, of course.

Also, this only works with restaurants that take part in [OpenTable](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?H=EpeN7mhMsgn6R2qDykEzAiJFb0MRQizgdNnN4tbUMEeOcRqcZD%2Bvng4I5JFPt0%2FfDZbvYD5jcOrPj4gjUJzdhOSXkcC73N5nAlhKQaTsTUE%3D&G=562&R=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.opentable.com%2F&I=%3C20130720211100.09AF4E0ED230%40mail6-09-ewr%3E&X=), so sometimes you’ll have to book reservations the old fashioned way.

**Play Movie Trailers**



Perhaps after dinner with friends, everyone decides a movie would be great. But what should everyone see? If no one has a good recommendation, deciding can be hard, and you don’t want to be that group standing outside the ticket counter trying to come to a consensus.

Siri can help. Just say “Show me the trailer for (movie name)” and provided it’s a fairly recent movie it’ll appear almost instantly. Siri can also handle some older movies, but not all of them. The trailers are pulled from a select few sites, so if they don’t have a trailer, you’re out of luck.

**Restart**

This is a simple one – just say “Siri restart” and [Springboard](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?H=EpeN7mhMsgn6R2qDykEzAiJFb0MRQizgdNnN4tbUMEeOcRqcZD%2Bvng4I5JFPt0%2FfDZbvYD5jcOrPj4gjUJzdhOSXkcC73N5nAlhKQaTsTUE%3D&G=562&R=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FSpringBoard&I=%3C20130720211100.09AF4E0ED230%40mail6-09-ewr%3E&X=) will re-boot. This isn’t a full reboot, but it’s a lot quicker, and may banish an annoying glitch without a full restart.

**Communicate With Subtlety**



Talking to Siri can be socially awkward to say the least, particularly when you’re alone in public. Shouting commands at your iPhone will earn just as many stares as loudly talking on a Bluetooth headset – heck, maybe even more.

But don’t worry; Siri can be discreet. Just open the Settings app, go to General > Siri, and then turn the Raise to Speak feature On. Now Siri will activate whenever you raise your phone and put it to your ear, which means you look like a normal person on a phone.

You can also turn off Siri’s voice during normal use by changing the Voice Feedback option to Handsfree only. Once this setting is changed you won’t hear voice feedback over the speakerphone again, but responses will still be delivered on-screen.

**Search Specific Web Pages**

You probably know that Siri can search the web, but most users only see this feature when a command isn’t recognized. Using voice commands for search can be useful, however, if you know what to say.

The key is to be specific. First, start whatever you say with “search the web for” or, if you’d like to use a specific search engine, say “search Bing for” followed by your search terms.

Another way to narrow results is to specify the site you want to search. The phrase “Search for the history of the American Revolution” will bring up a page of Google results, but “Look for American Revolution on Wikipedia” brings up the specific Wikipedia entry. And this tactic doesn’t just work with Wikipedia – it works with many websites, though you may need to specify the URL instead of just saying the site’s name.

**Conclusion**

Siri will have even more tricks up her sleeve once [iOS 7](http://link.email.dynect.net/link.php?H=EpeN7mhMsgn6R2qDykEzAiJFb0MRQizgdNnN4tbUMEeOcRqcZD%2Bvng4I5JFPt0%2FfDZbvYD5jcOrPj4gjUJzdhOSXkcC73N5nAlhKQaTsTUE%3D&G=562&R=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.makeuseof.com%2Ftag%2F7-reasons-youre-going-to-love-ios-7%2F%3Futm_campaign%3Dnewsletter%26amp%3Butm_source%3D2012-07-19&I=%3C20130720211100.09AF4E0ED230%40mail6-09-ewr%3E&X=) is released later this year. Some upcoming notable features include the ability to learn how to say names not already known to Siri, offline dictation (which can show the result of speech input as it’s entered), a new male voice option, the ability to launch apps or change system settings, and rather interestingly, the default search engine has been switched to Bing, as well.