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# Privacy. Iphone listening

Is your Iphone listening to you?  
why and how?



# How is your Iphone listening?

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If you have an iPhone, you may have come across coincidences on your phone in correlation to the conversations you have been having in real life. Through social media and word of mouth, it has come to the attention of iPhone users that they have noticed incidents in which their iPhone has exposed them to advertisements about things they have been speaking about causing speculations that Apple listens to your conversations.

This speculation has led to deep research and investigations on Apple's privacy agreements and their use of our information.

The question proposed, is Apple listening to your conversations? And if so, how?

Is your iPhone listening?

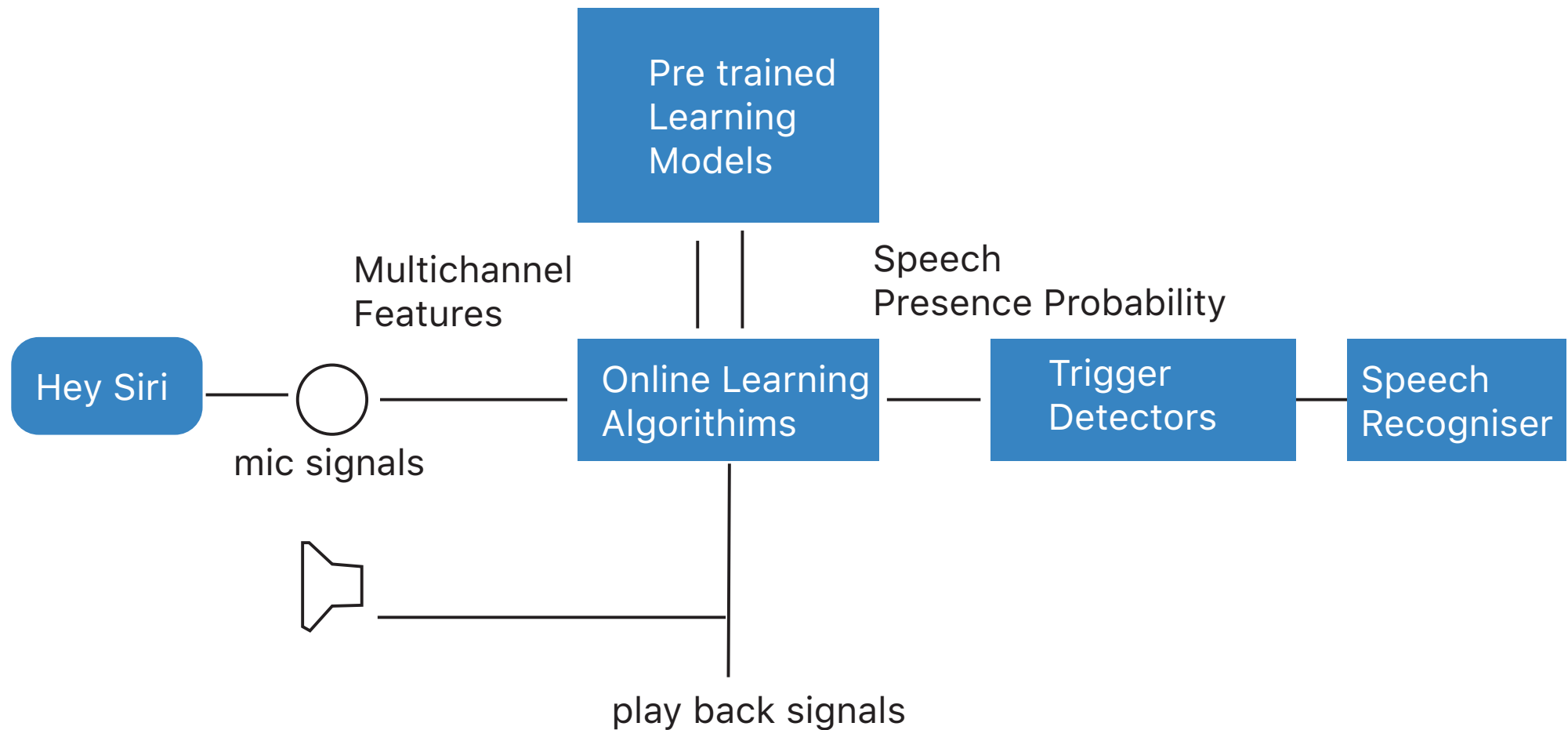
Through various interviews with Apple's privacy team it has come to the attention of customers and iPhone users, that yes, your iPhone is listening to you, but for the purpose of activating applications and features such as Siri. Your iPhone listens for trigger words such as "hey Siri". Without these triggers, your iPhone isn't recording anything the only thing happening is just the general things being sent to your service provider. This has caused speculations and concern amongst iPhone users as they question upon the trigger words for applications such as Facebook. According to Dr. Peter Hannay—The senior security consultant for cybersecurity firm Asterisk, snippets of audio do go back to other apps (such as Facebook) servers but there's no official understanding what the triggers for that are," explains Peter. "Whether it's timing or location-based or usage of certain functions, apps are certainly pulling those microphone permissions and using those periodically. All the internals of the applications send this

data in encrypted form, so it's very difficult to define the exact trigger.

The question posed after finding out that your iPhone is able to record your conversations is, how? Apple has a tracking algorithm in its system that looks for patterns to expose user behaviour and interests. Your information is able to determine specific things such as who you are with and your location. The way Apple is able to decipher this is by reading the sound waves to determine where you are.

Your iPhone listens for wake words or trigger words which are required for your iPhone to start recording. Without these wake words, Apple says that your information is processed but not sent anywhere. This Apple statement can be questioned as a former contractor has spoken to the Guardian and made statements that contradict Apple's privacy statement.

## Process of Siri's activation through trigger words



According to a former contractor, interactions from Siri are sent to workers that by listening to the recordings are asked to determine if the request was intentional, a false activation of Siri by an accidental trigger, or if the response given was helpful. In a statement to the Guardian, Apple has confirmed that some data is analysed in order to improve Siri dictation. Since this statement has been made, Apple has implemented changes concerning the Siri interactions and voice data, which is now only shared with Apple employees in order to inform and improve Siri.

So it is safe to say that your iPhone is constantly listening to your conversations waiting for these wake words meaning your data is always being recorded.

According to Apple's privacy team, some applications in your phone have the ability to record your screen to understand the way you interact with their application. Popular iPhone Applications allow session replay technology in order to allow

developers to record your screen while using the app and play it back to see the way you interact with the app and if there are any errors.

For most of us, our phones are with us most of the time, acting as a very accurate indication of our day to day lives. Our phones store most of our personal information and act as a good tool to determine useful things about us. Companies and marketers are applying tracking algorithms and reading into patterns to determine a lot about our behaviours and interests as the more they know about us the easier it is for them to continue to advertise to us.

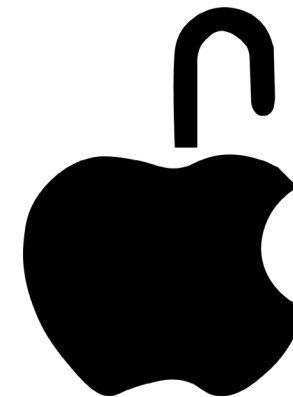
Certain things such as your audio data are more useful than you realise as it reveals many things such as who you're with, when you are awake, your environment, making it easier to advertise to you.

Other applications and softwares have access to your microphone and camera, such as Safari. This is said to have been put

in place to make your browsing easier and less of a hassle.

Once it has been brought to your attention that yes, your phone is tracking all of your moves and knows way too much about you, your question is, is this legal.

Surprisingly, yes, using tracking systems such as voice tracking is legal for marketing purposes as current laws allow it and you agreed to end user agreements. The basis of these tracking systems is the need for companies to effectively advertise to you.



#### References:

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# How to keep your phone from listening to you

To stop Siri from listening, open the settings app and find "siri and search" , turn off the toggles for listen for hey siri and then for allow siri when locked.

