

Private Chat

The complete guide, A to Z

📱 **Android app** 💻 **Computer app (Windows)**

Version v1 · November 2026

Every button, every menu and every feature, step by step, with real screenshots.

How to use this book

This book explains **every function** of Private Chat on **Android phones** and on the **computer (Windows)**. The two versions work the same way and talk to each other, so most chapters show both.

You see	It means
📱 **Android**	This part is for the Android phone app.
💻 **Computer**	This part is for the Windows computer app.
1	A red number on a picture. The list next to the picture says what that button does.
Tap / **Click**	On the phone you tap with your finger. On the computer you click with the mouse. In this book they mean the same.
Long-press	Keep your finger on something for about one second. On the computer: right-click or click.

In the pictures, three friends use the app: **Anna** (Android phone), **Ben** (computer) and **Dara**. They share a group called **“Family & Friends”**.

> 💡 **Tip**
> Short on time? Read Chapter 1 (what Private Chat is), Chapter 2 or 3 (install), Chapter 5 (keep it running) and Chapter 6 (the main screen). Everything else you can look up when you need it. The last chapters have a quick reference and answers to common problems.

Contents

1. What Private Chat is
2. Install on Android
3. Install on the computer
4. First start and your profile
5. Keep it running: permissions and background
6. The main screen
7. Start a chat, invite people, join a chat
8. The chat screen
9. Writing messages
10. The message menu
11. Photos, videos, camera and files
12. Voice messages
13. Polls, contacts, events and stickers
14. Video links and the floating player
15. Voice and video calls
16. Groups and admins
17. Location sharing
18. The browser
19. Appearance
20. Settings, connection check and About
21. Notifications
22. Going back and keyboard keys
23. Privacy and safety
24. Safety tools
25. Privacy tools
26. Ask-first protection
27. Problems and answers

28. Quick reference

29. Words used in this book

CHAPTER 1

What Private Chat is

A private messenger with calls, groups, photos, location sharing and more, that works **without any server, account or phone number**.

How it works, in simple words

- **No sign-up.** No phone number, no e-mail, no password. You choose a name and you start.
- **A chat is a secret key.** When you create a chat, the app makes a long secret. The secret is shown as a **QR code** or a **link**. Whoever has it can join that chat. That is how people find each other.
- **Encrypted on your device.** Messages are locked (AES-GCM 256-bit) before they leave your phone or computer. Public relay servers pass them on but **cannot read them**.
- **Calls and big files go directly** from device to device (WebRTC), at full quality.
- **History stays on your device.** Each phone or computer keeps its own copy of the chats (the last 300 messages of each chat, and files up to 500 MB each). Nothing is kept on any server.

> ⚠️ **Important**
> Because there is no server that stores messages, **a message reaches you only while Private Chat is running on your device**. That is why the Android app runs in the background and the computer app starts with Windows. Chapter 5 shows how to make sure it always runs. If a device was switched off when a message was sent, that device will not get that message later.

The versions

Version	For	Name in Settings › About
Android app (APK file)	Android phones and tablets	Android - v1
Computer app (ZIP file)	Windows 10 and 11	Windows - v1
Browser file (one HTML file)	Any browser, any computer	Browser - v1
iPhone / Mac web app	iPhone, iPad, Mac (Safari)	iPhone - v1

All versions can be in the same chats and call each other. This book covers the **Android** and **computer** apps. The browser and iPhone versions look and work like the computer app.

What you need

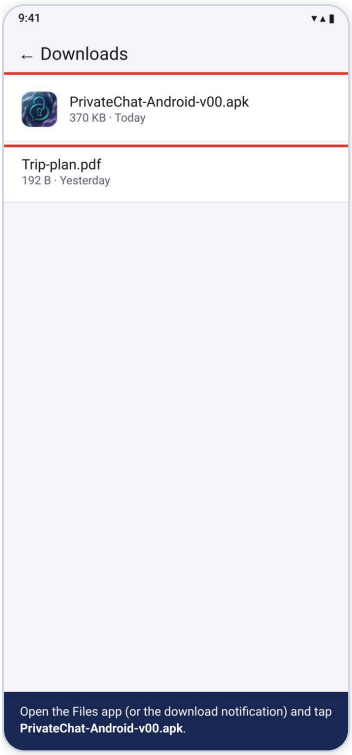
- Internet (Wi-Fi or mobile data) on every device.
- For calls: a microphone, and a camera for video calls.

- For location sharing: location (GPS) turned on.

CHAPTER 2

Install on Android

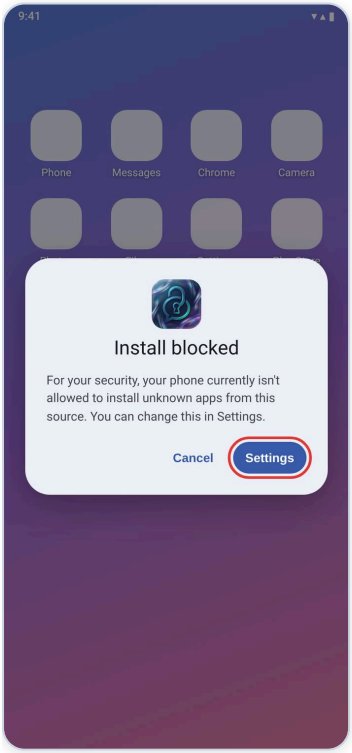
The Android app is a file called **PrivateChat-Android-v1.apk**. It does not come from the Play Store, so Android asks a few extra questions the first time.



Open the APK file

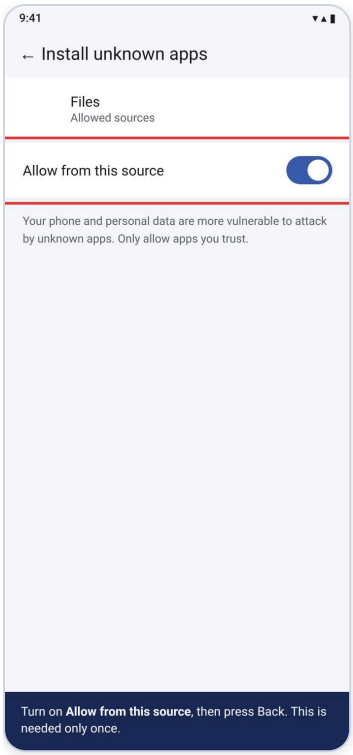
1. Copy **PrivateChat-Android-v1.apk** to the phone (download it, or send it by chat, e-mail or USB cable).
2. Open the **Files** app (or tap the download notification).
3. Tap **PrivateChat-Android-v1.apk**.

> 💡 **Tip**
> If you received the file in another app (Telegram, LINE, Gmail…), you can tap it there too.



Android blocks unknown apps first

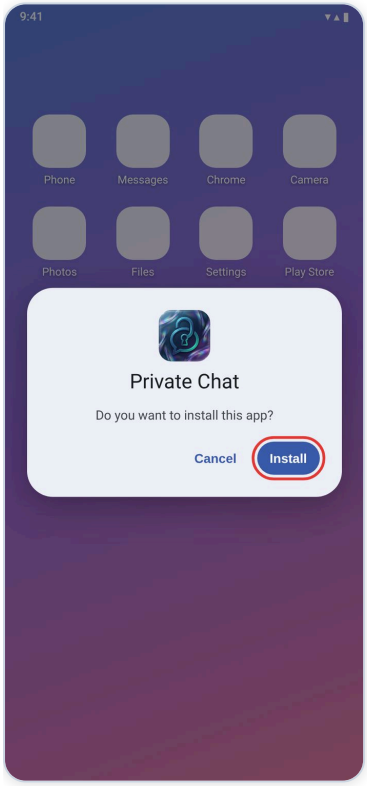
1. The first time, Android says **Install blocked** (or “not allowed to install unknown apps”).
2. Tap **Settings**.



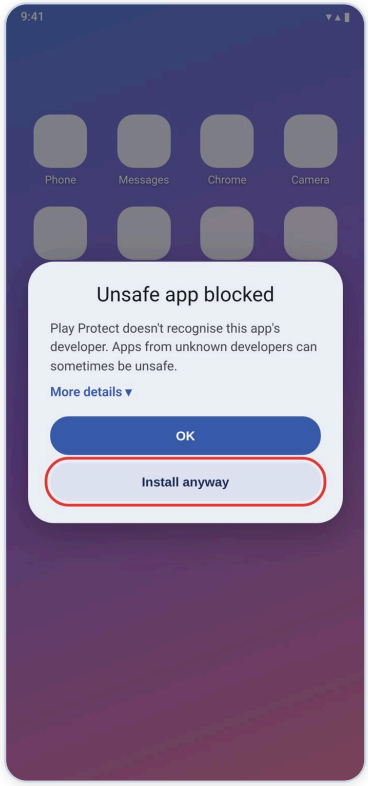
Allow this source once

1. Turn on **Allow from this source**.
2. Press **Back**. The install window comes back.

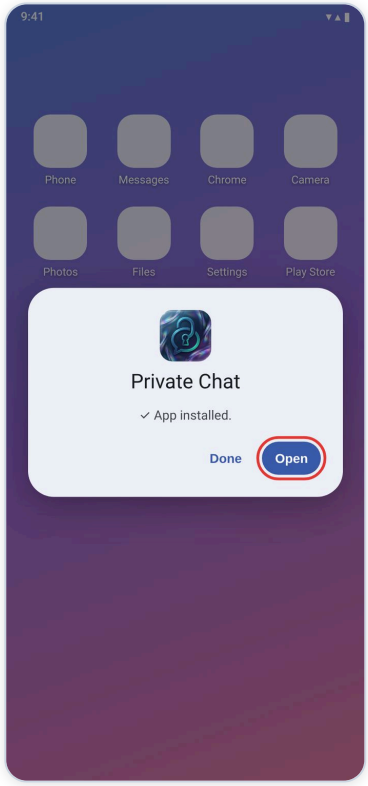
> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> This is asked only once for the app you opened the file from (for example Files).



Tap **Install**.

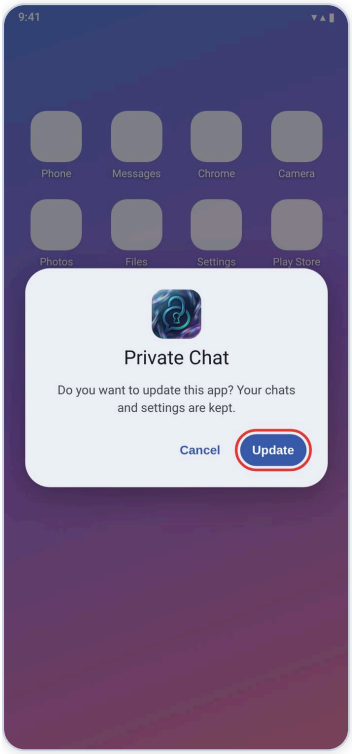


If Play Protect warns: tap **More details › Install anyway**. It warns because the app is not from the Play Store.



Tap **Open**.

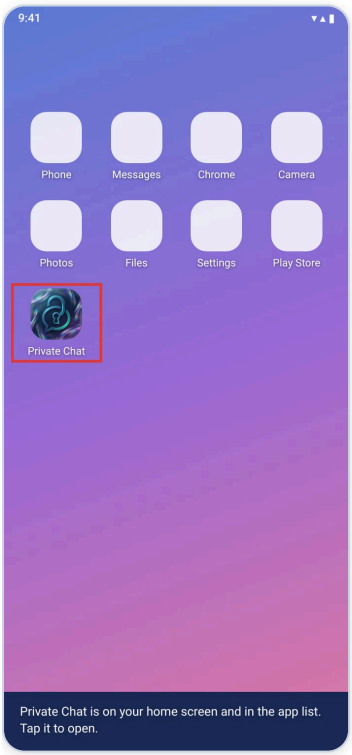
Updating to a new version



Update keeps your chats

Open the new APK the same way. Android says **Do you want to update this app?** Tap **Update**. Your chats, photos and settings stay.

> ⚠️ **Important**
> Always install the new file **over** the old app. Do not uninstall first: uninstalling deletes the chats saved on the phone.



Private Chat on your phone

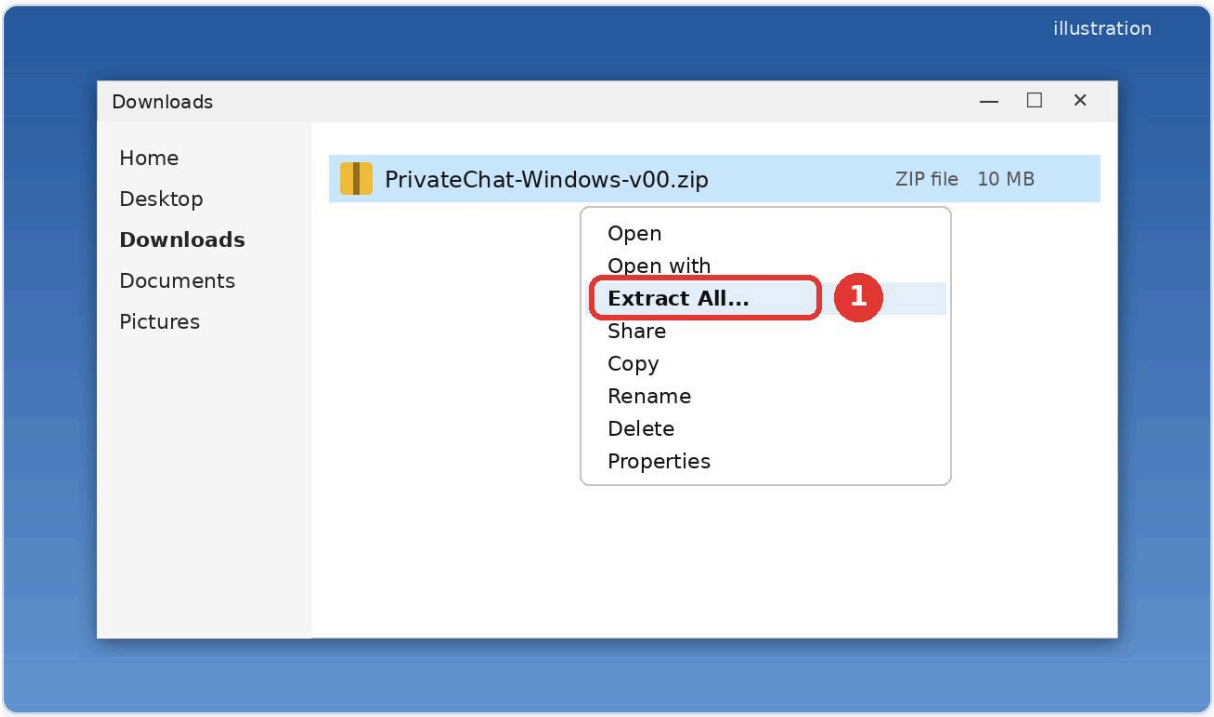
Private Chat is now on your home screen and in the app list. Tap it to open.

Next: Chapter 4 (first start) and Chapter 5 (keep it running).

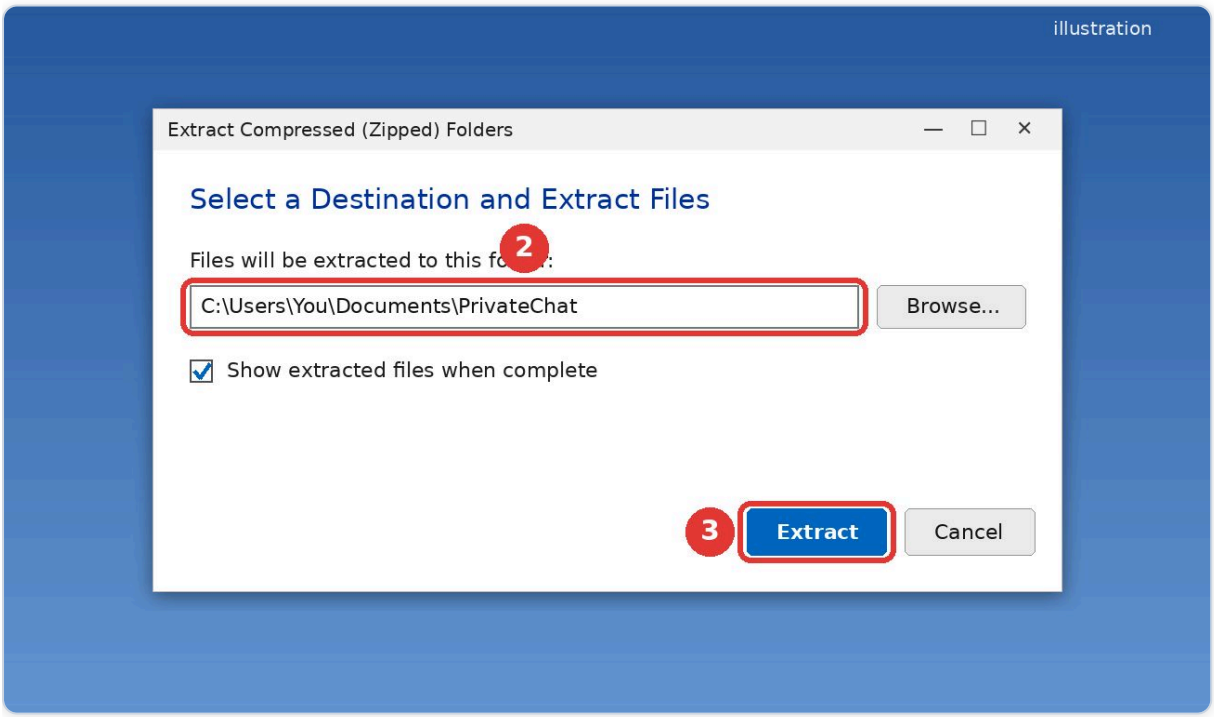
CHAPTER 3

Install on the computer

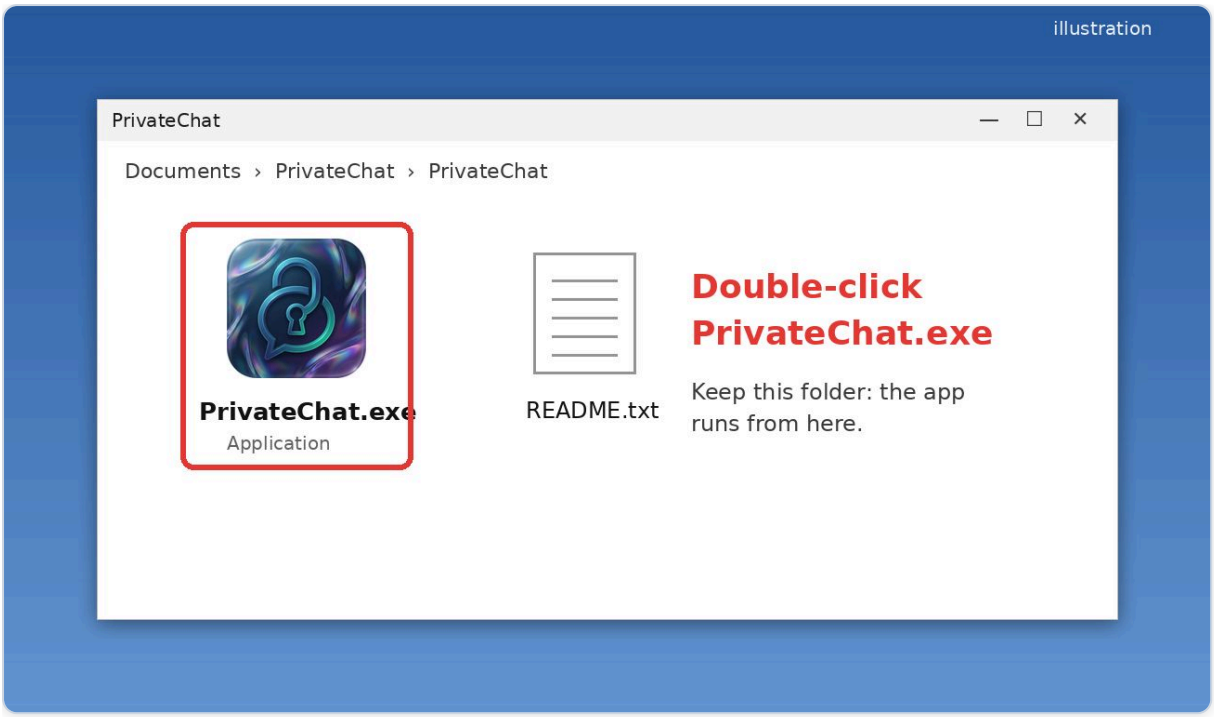
The computer app is a ZIP file called **PrivateChat-Windows-v1.zip**. Inside is **PrivateChat.exe**. It needs no installer.



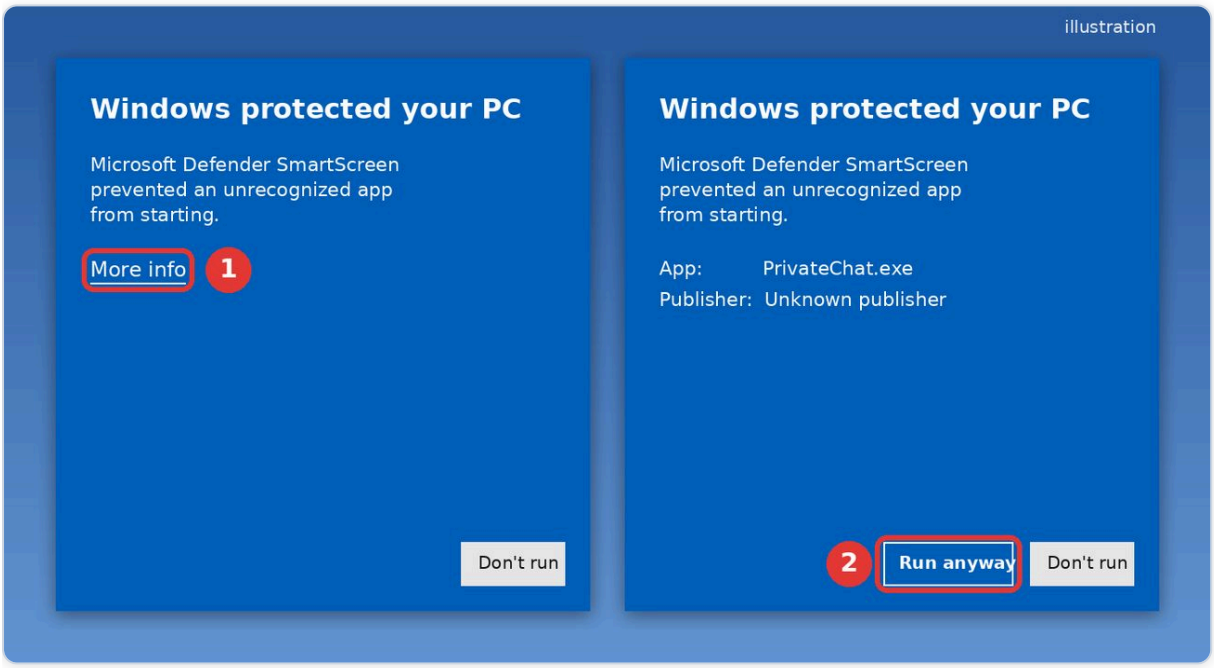
1 Right-click the ZIP file and choose **Extract All...**



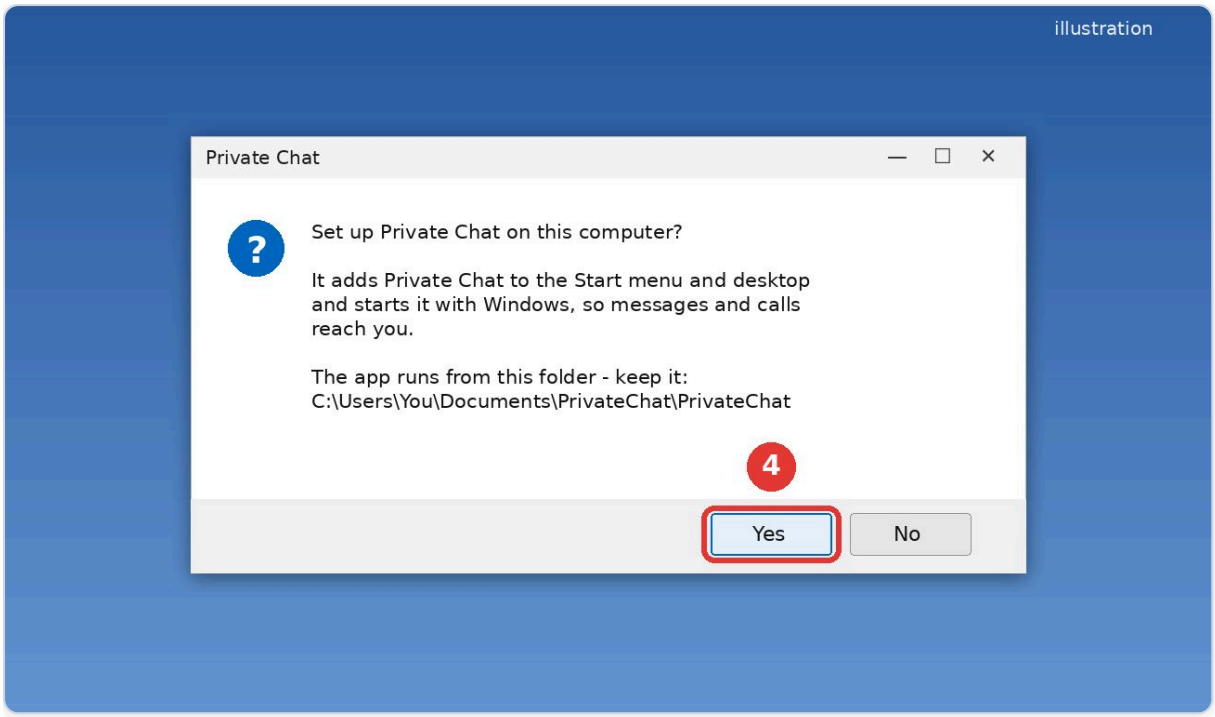
2 Choose a folder you keep (for example Documents) and **3** click **Extract**.



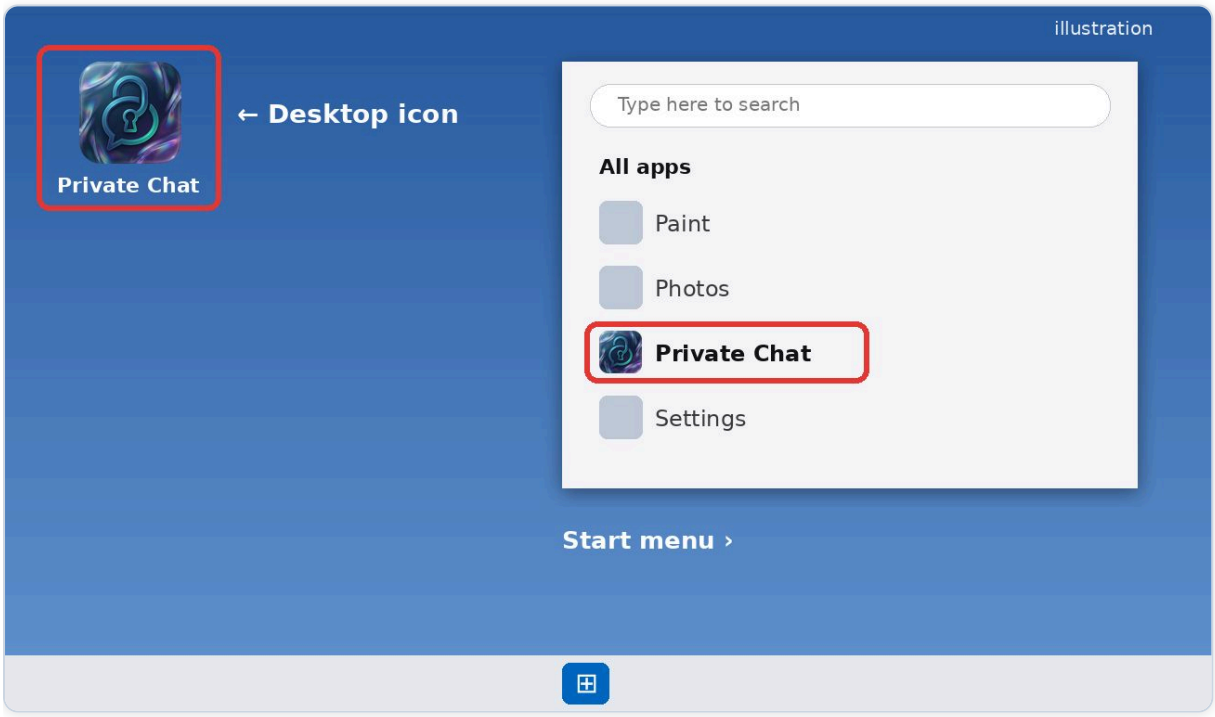
Open the new folder and double-click **PrivateChat.exe**. Keep this folder: the app runs from here.



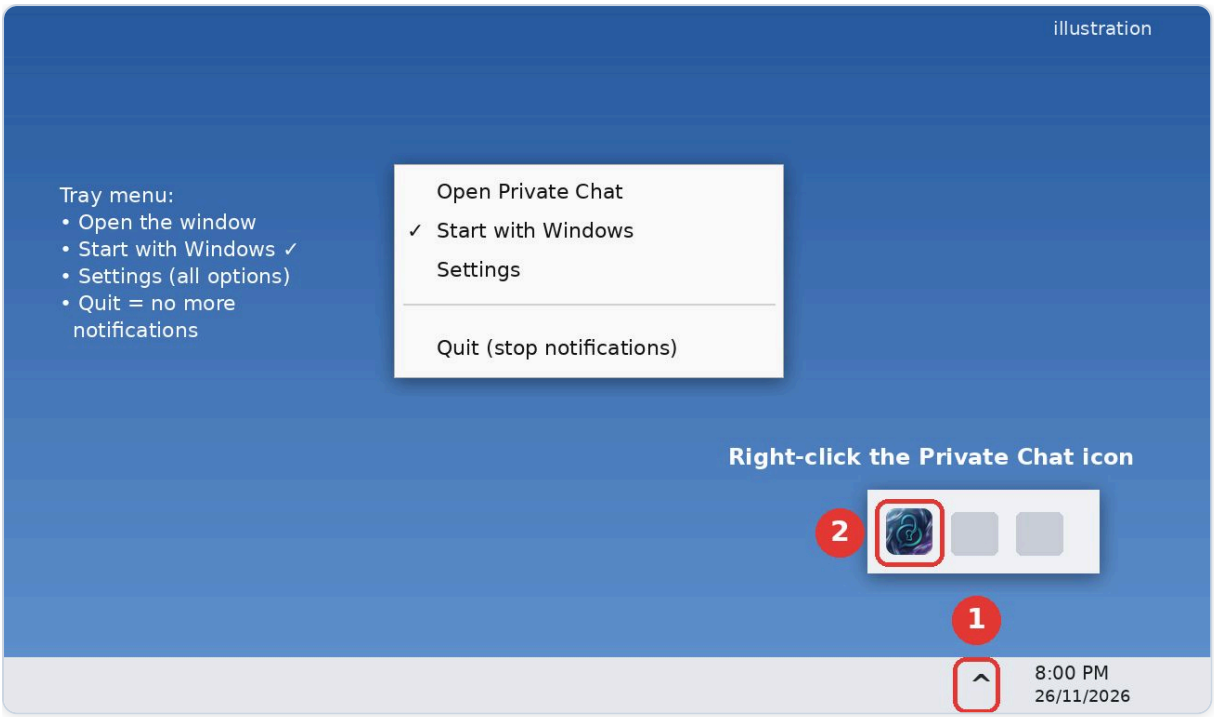
If Windows shows **“Windows protected your PC”**: click **More info**, then **Run anyway**. Windows shows this for new apps that are not from the Microsoft Store.



The first time, Private Chat asks to set itself up. Click **Yes**: it adds Start menu and desktop shortcuts and starts with Windows, so messages and calls reach you.



Private Chat is now on the desktop and in the Start menu.

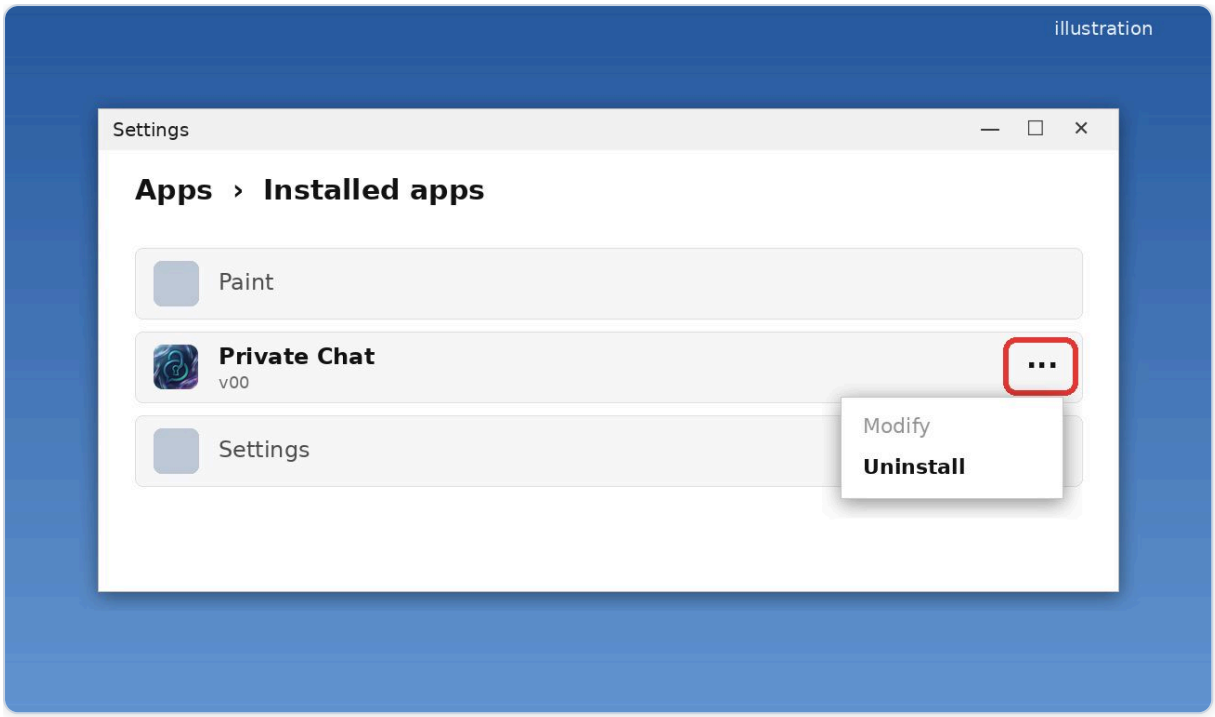


Private Chat lives in the **tray** (bottom-right, near the clock; maybe under the ^ arrow). Right-click its icon for: **Open Private Chat**, **Start with Windows** (✓ = on), **Settings**, and **Quit**.

> ⚠️ **Important**
> Closing the window with × does **not** stop Private Chat: it keeps running in the tray, so you still get messages and calls. **Quit** in the tray menu really stops it (then no notifications until you start it again).

Updating and removing

- **Update:** Quit Private Chat from the tray, extract the new ZIP **into the same folder** (replace the files), and start PrivateChat.exe again. Your chats are kept.
- **Remove:** Windows Settings › Apps › Installed apps › Private Chat › Uninstall, or Quit and delete the folder.

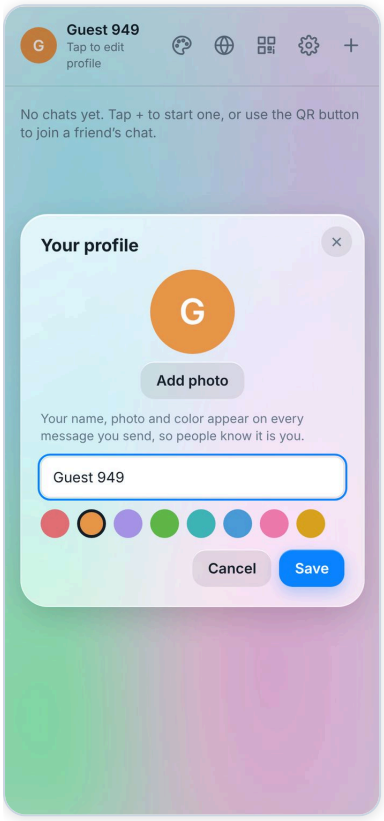


Windows Settings › Apps › Installed apps.

CHAPTER 4

First start and your profile

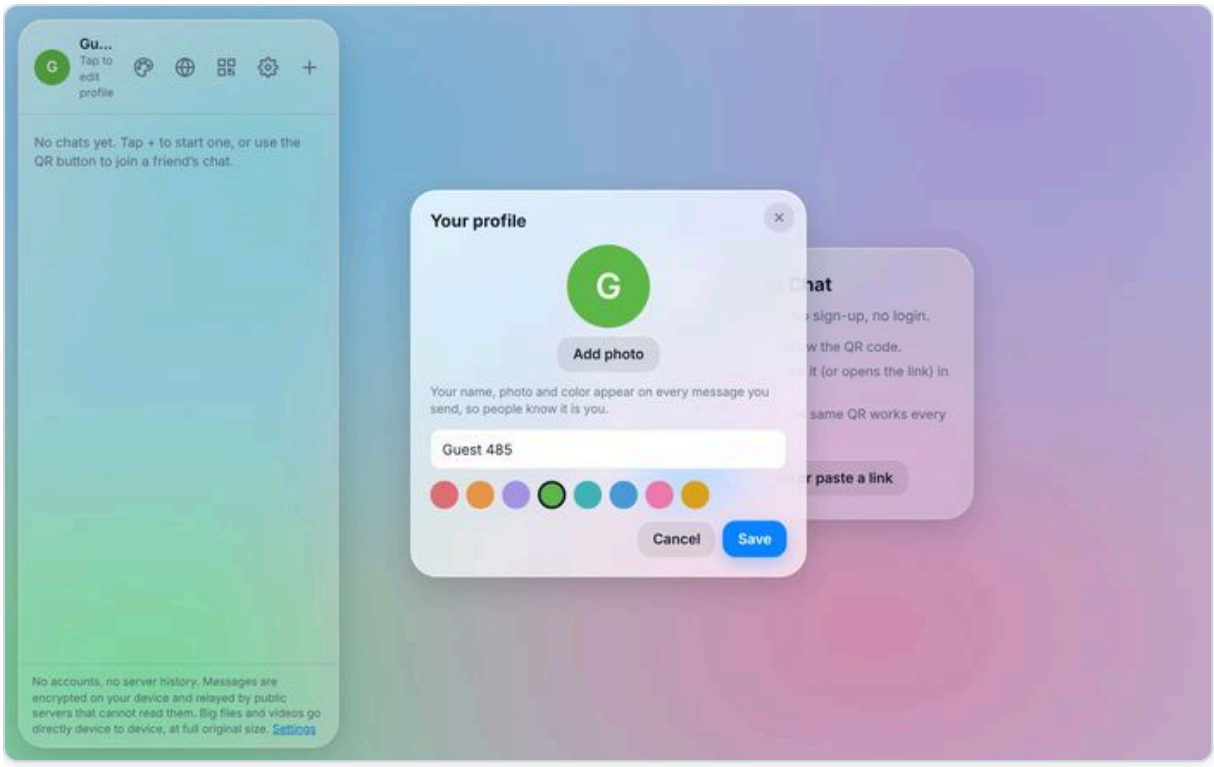
The first time you open Private Chat it asks for your name. Your name, photo and colour show on every message you send.



📱 First start: type your name and tap **Save**.

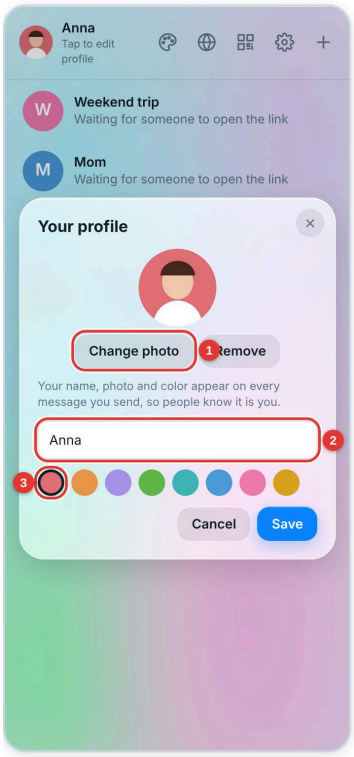


Then the main screen is empty until you create or join a chat (Chapter 7).



💻 The same on the computer.

Change your profile at any time 📱 Android 💻 Computer



Your profile (tap your name, top-left)

1. **Add photo / Change photo**: choose a picture from your phone or computer. **Remove** deletes it.
2. **Name**: what others see on your messages.
3. **Colour**: the colour of your name and of your letter when you have no photo.

1. Tap your name or picture at the top-left of the main screen.
2. Change what you like.
3. Tap **Save**.

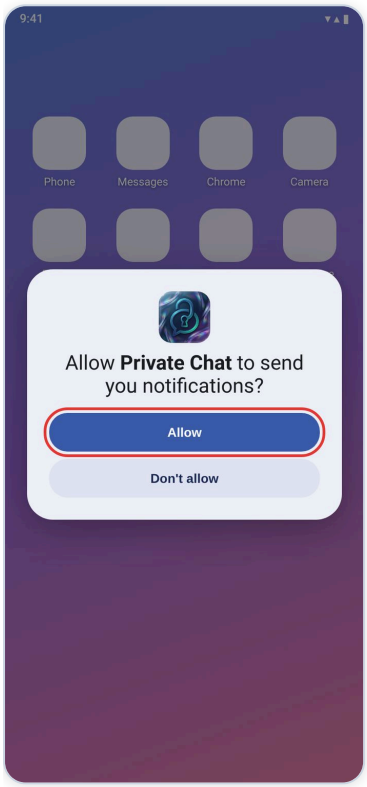
> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> Your photo is sent to the people in your chats the next time you are online together.

CHAPTER 5

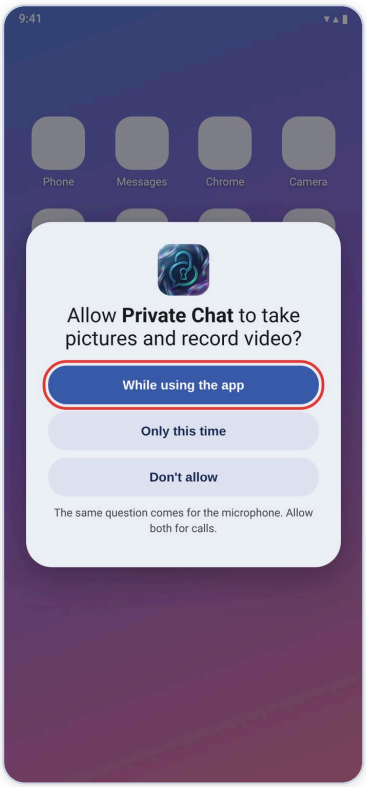
Keep it running: permissions and background

Private Chat has no server, so **your device must keep the app running** to receive messages and calls. This chapter makes sure it does.

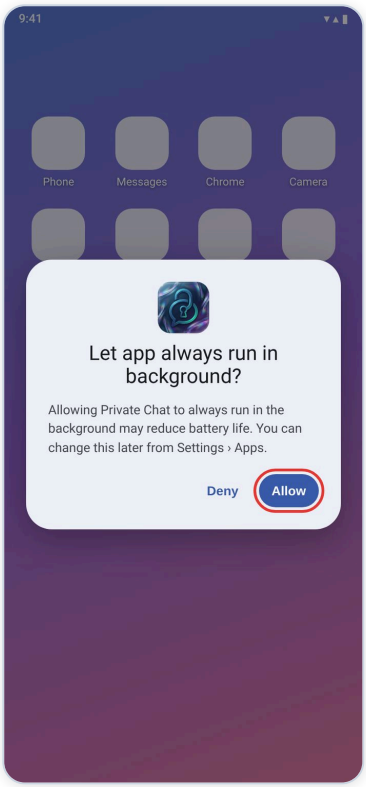
Android: allow what the app asks 📱 Android



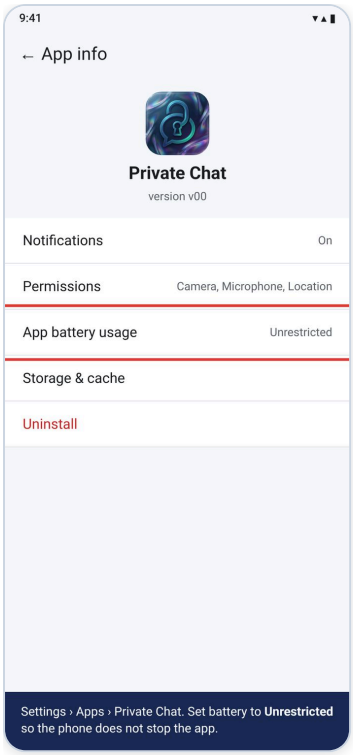
Notifications: tap **Allow**, or you will not see messages and calls.



Camera and microphone: needed for calls, voice messages and the camera. Choose **While using the app**.



Run in background: tap **Allow**, so Android does not stop Private Chat to save battery.

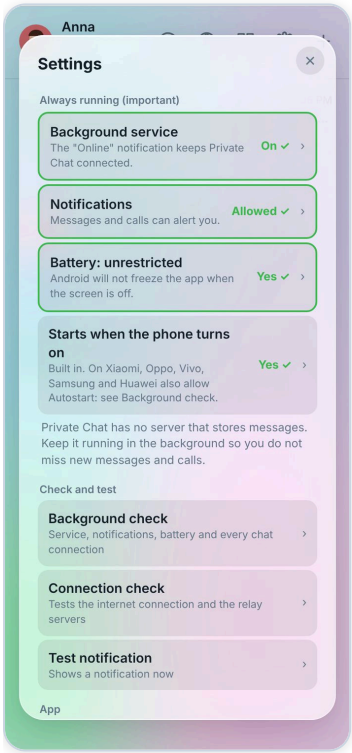


Settings › Apps › Private Chat

If you tapped “Don’t allow” by mistake, fix it in the phone settings:

1. Open **Settings › Apps › Private Chat** (or long-press the app icon › App info).
2. **Notifications**: On.
3. **Permissions**: Camera, Microphone (and Location if you share your location).
4. **App battery usage**: **Unrestricted**.

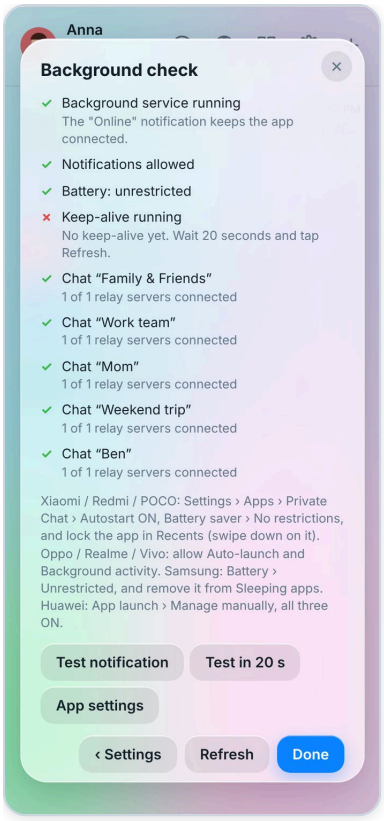
> ⚠️ **Important**
> Some phones (Xiaomi, Oppo, Vivo, Huawei, Samsung…) have extra “auto start” or “sleeping apps” lists. Allow Private Chat there too. The Background check (below) tells you if something is wrong.



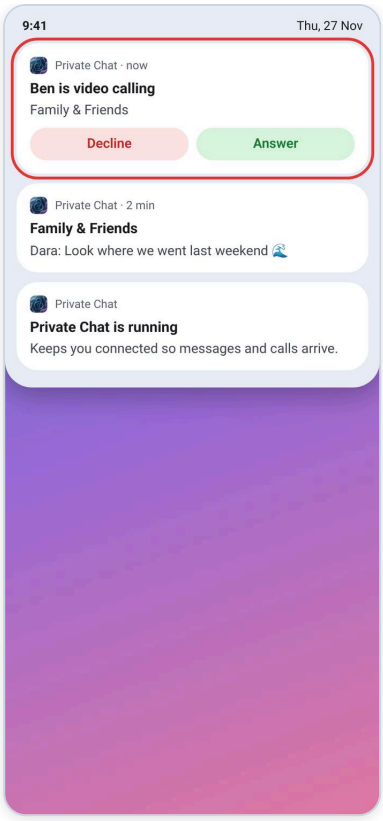
📱 Settings window (gear button)

Tap the **gear** on the main screen. Every row shows its state and opens the fix:

Row	What it means
Background service	The “Online” notification keeps the app running. Keep it on.
Notifications	Whether messages and calls can alert you.
Battery: unrestricted	Android will not freeze the app.
Starts when the phone turns on	Built in: after a restart the app starts by itself.
Background check	Checks all of the above at once.
Connection check	Tests the internet and the relay servers.
Test notification	Shows a notification now (and one 20 seconds later, to test the locked phone).
App settings	Opens Android’s settings for Private Chat.
Appearance / About	Look of the app (Chapter 19) / version details.

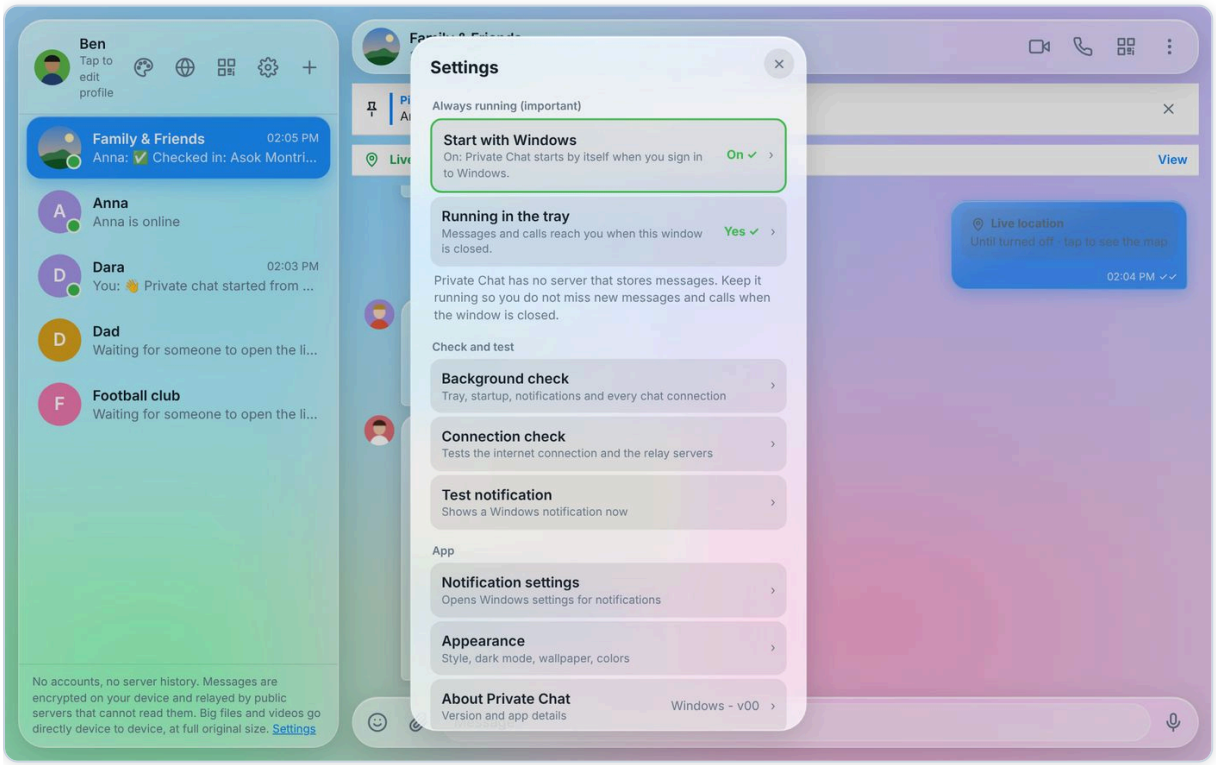


📱 **Background check**: every line should have a green ✓. A red ✗ has a button that fixes it.



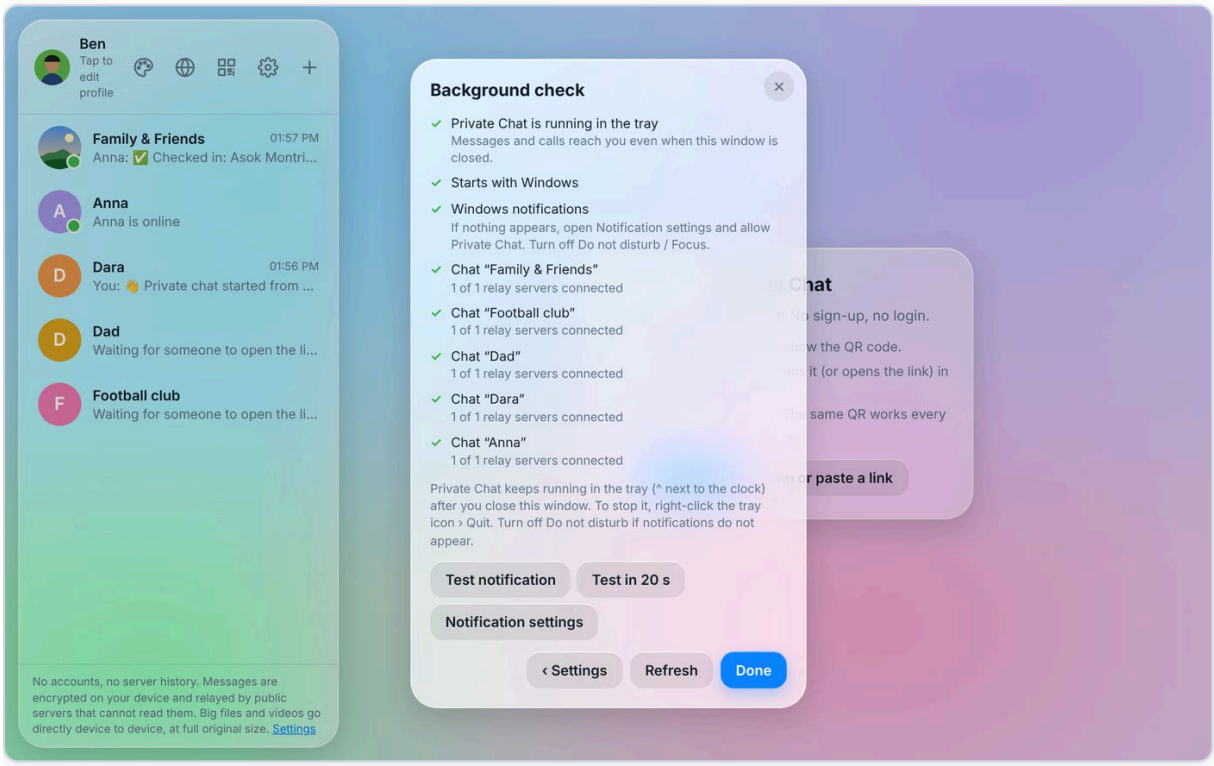
While it runs you see a quiet “Private Chat is running” notification. Messages and calls arrive as notifications.

Computer: starts with Windows 💻 Computer



💻 Settings window. Click the **gear** (or **Settings** at the bottom, or the tray menu › Settings).

Row	What it means
Start with Windows	**On**: Private Chat starts when the computer starts. Keep it on.
Running in the tray	Messages and calls reach you even when the window is closed.
Background check	Checks tray, start-up and notifications.
Connection check	Tests the internet and the relay servers.
Test notification	Shows a Windows notification now.
Notification settings	Opens Windows settings, to allow notifications.
Appearance / About	Look of the app / version details.

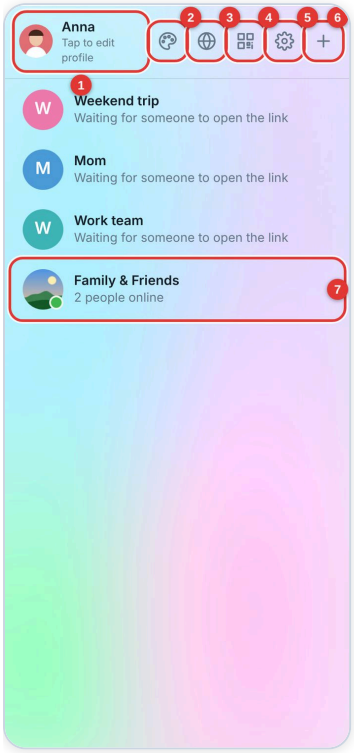


💻 Background check on the computer.

CHAPTER 6

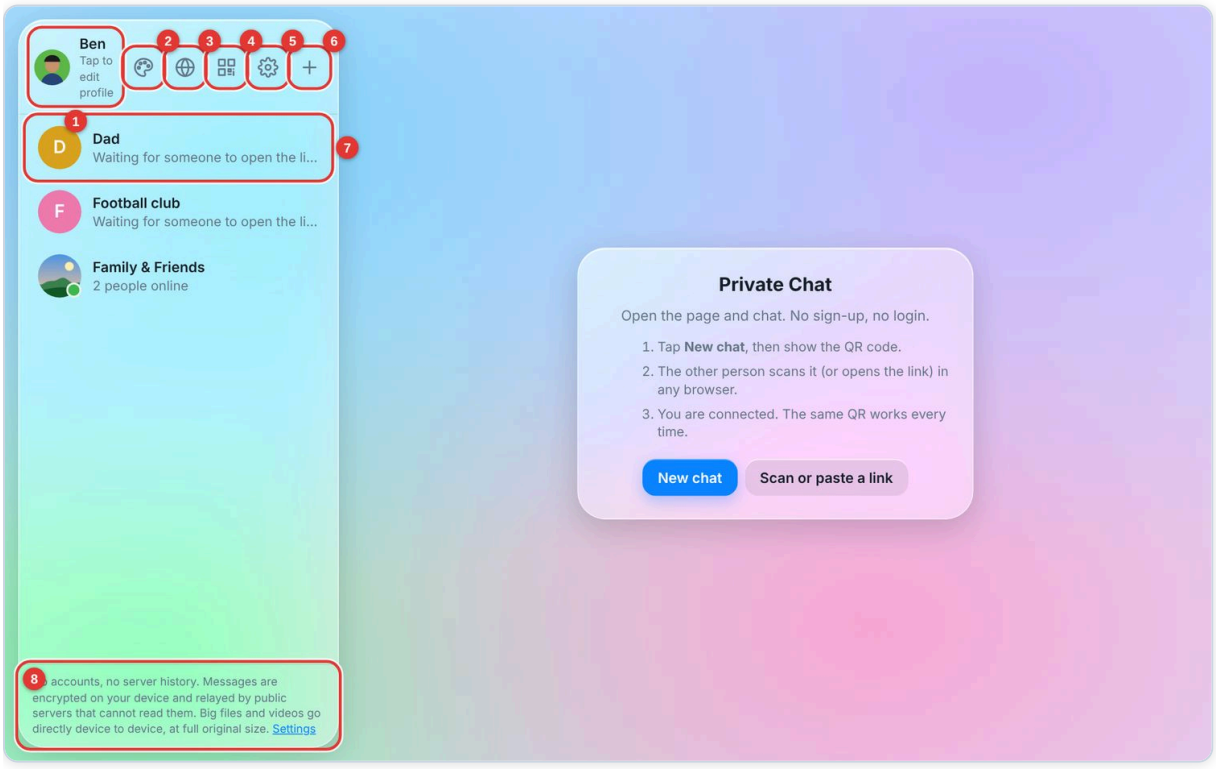
The main screen

The main screen is the list of your chats.



1. **Your profile**: your name and photo. Tap to change (Chapter 4).
2. **Appearance**: themes, colours, wallpaper (Chapter 19).
3. **Browser**: search and open websites (Chapter 18).
4. **Join**: scan a QR code, paste a link, or type a friend’s code (Chapter 7).
5. **Settings**: keep the app running, checks, About (Chapter 20).
6. **New chat**: create a chat and invite people (Chapter 7).
7. **A chat**: tap to open it. The green dot means someone in it is online now. The line below shows the last message, “online” or “typing…”.

📱 Main screen



💻 The computer shows the chat list on the left and the open chat on the right. **8**: the note at the bottom, with a link to Settings.

- Chats with new messages show a **number** (unread messages) and move to the top.
- A chat that says **“Waiting for someone to open the link”** has nobody else in it yet: send its QR code or link to someone (Chapter 7).
- On the computer, the window title also shows the number of unread messages.

CHAPTER 7

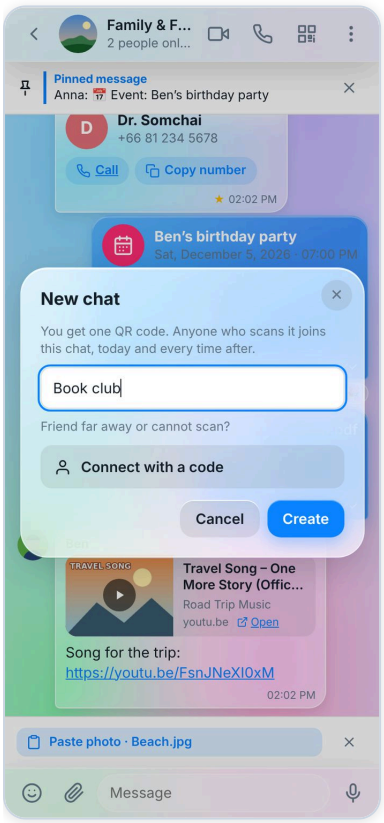
Start a chat, invite people, join a chat

Everybody who has a chat’s **QR code or link** is in that chat. There are four ways to connect.

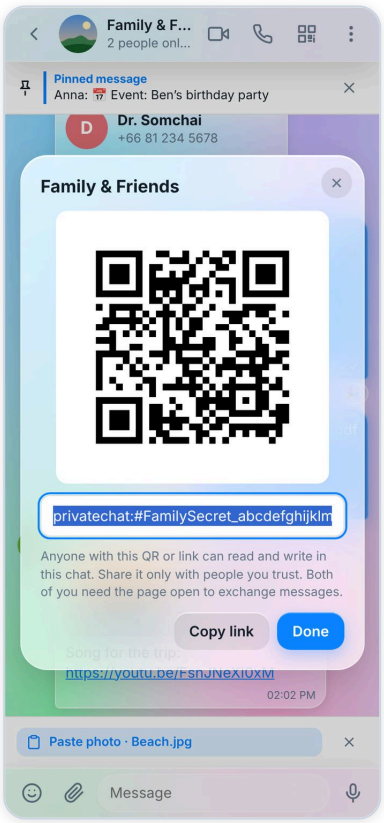
Way	Best when
A. New chat + QR code	You are together, or you can send the link by another app.
B. Join (scan / paste / picture)	Someone gave you a QR code or link.
C. Connect with a code	A friend has the app but you cannot share a QR: you tell a 12-letter code by phone or SMS.
D. Message privately	You are in a group and want a one-to-one chat with someone from it.

A. Create a new chat and share its QR code

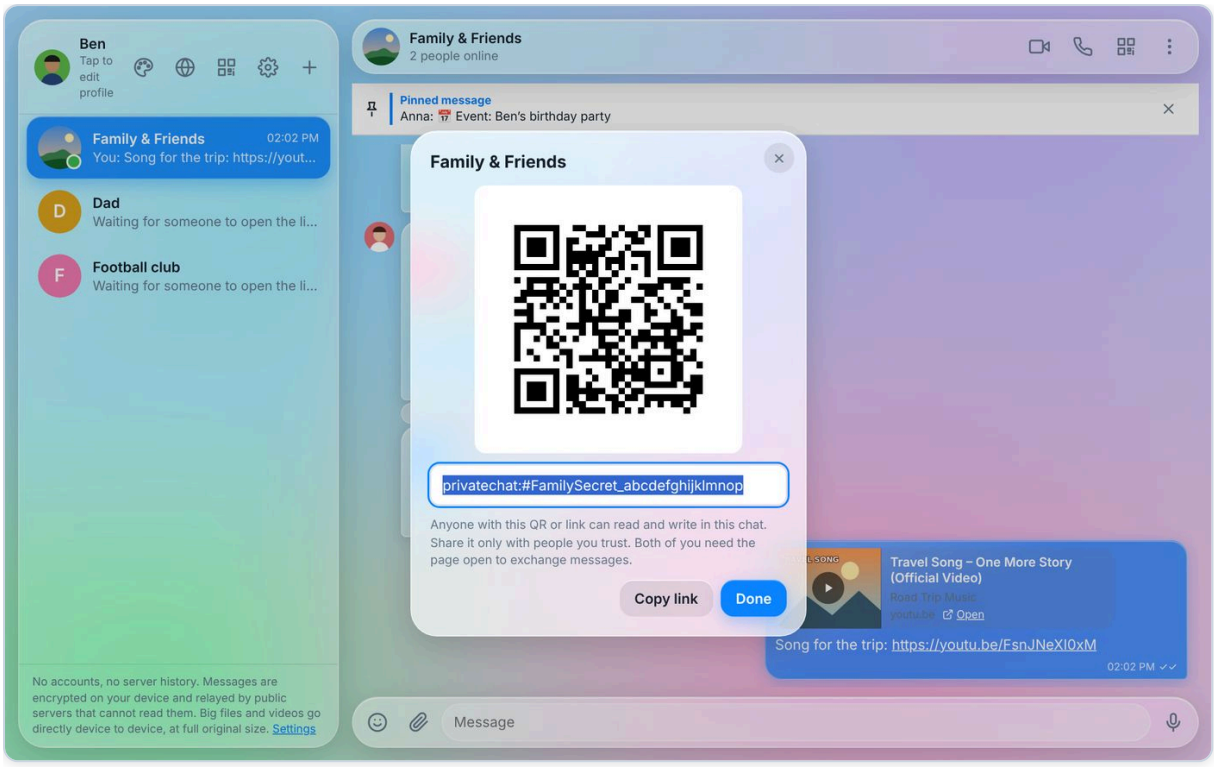
📱 Android 💻 Computer



1 Tap **+** (New chat). Type a name, for example “Family”, and tap **Create**.



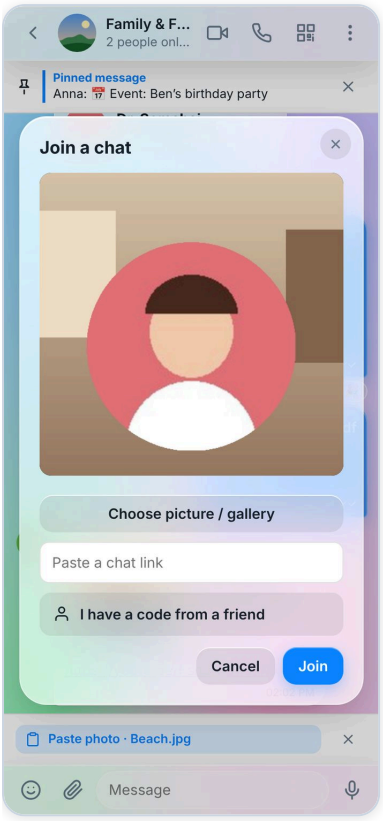
2 The QR code and link of the chat appear. The other person scans it, or you tap **Copy link** / **Share…** to send it.



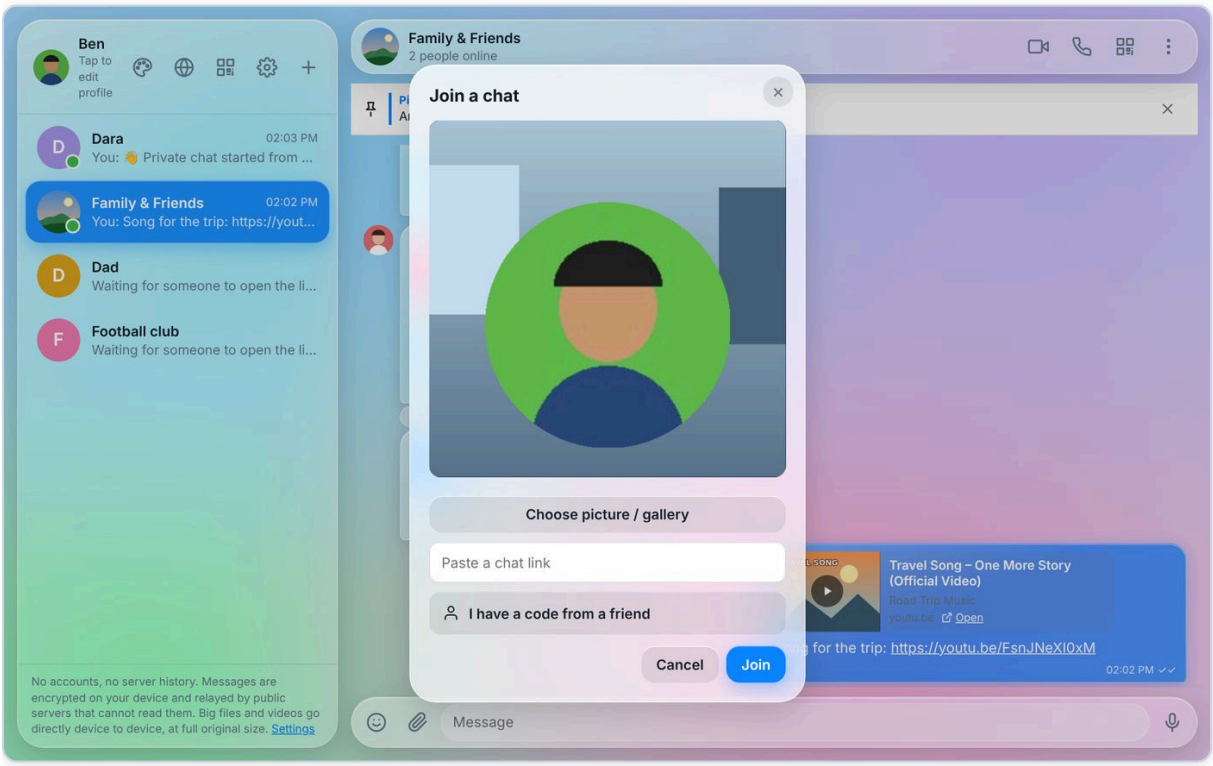
💻 On the computer: the same window. **Copy link** and paste it into an e-mail or another messenger.

> ⚠️ **Important**
>
> The same QR code works **every time**, for everyone: anyone with it can read and write in that chat. Share it only with people you trust. To show it again later: open the chat and tap the **QR button** in the top bar, or ⋮ › **Show QR code**.

B. Join a chat: scan, paste or picture 📱 Android 💻 Computer



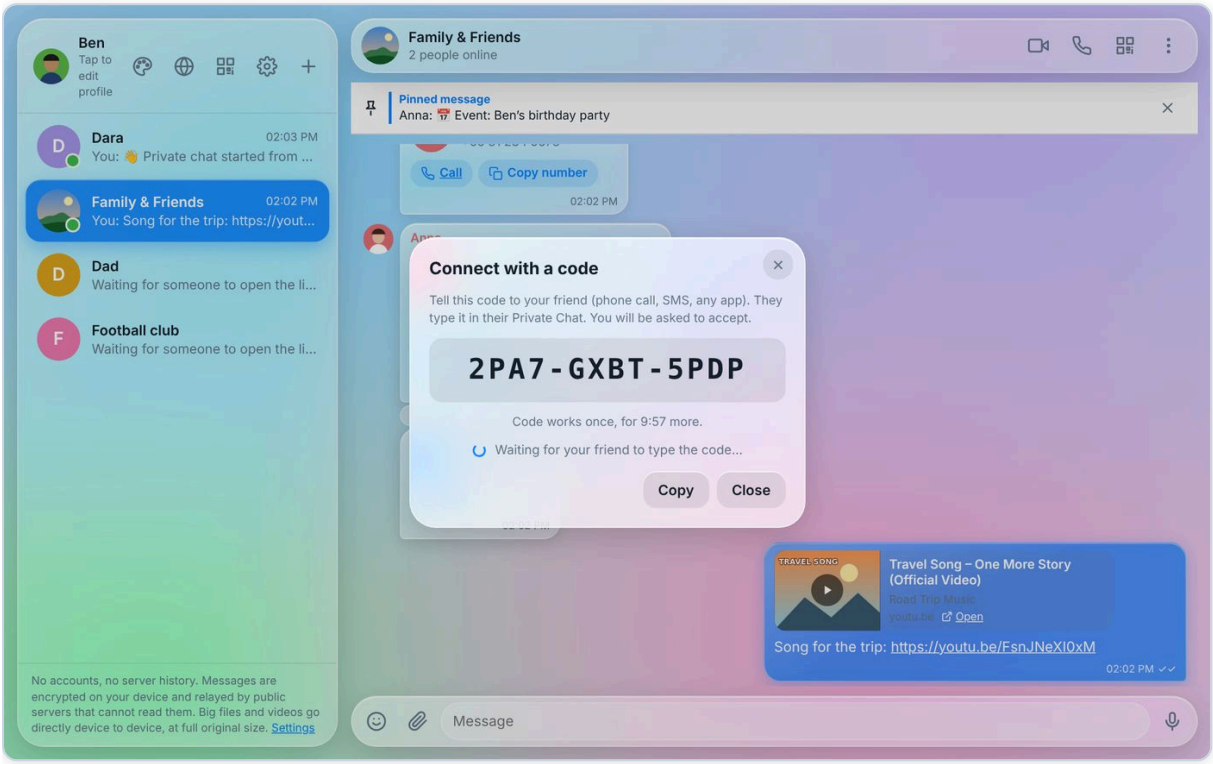
📱 Tap the **QR button** on the main screen. Point the camera at the QR code. Or **Choose picture** (a screenshot of a QR), or paste the link.



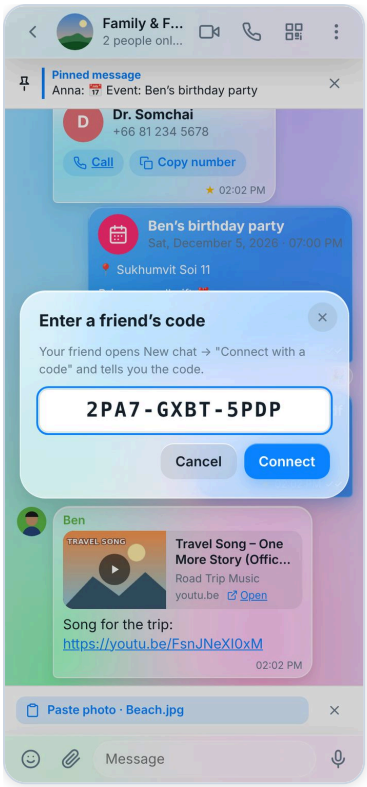
💻 The computer uses its webcam to scan, or paste the link in the box and click **Join**.

C. Connect with a code (no QR needed) 📱 Android 💻 Computer

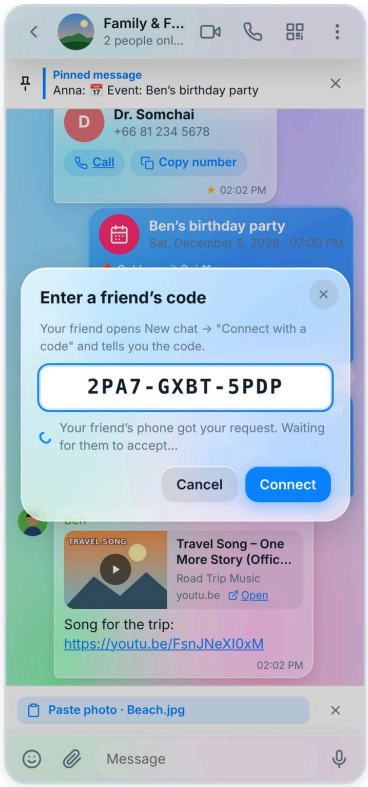
Use this when your friend is far away. It works in a few seconds while both of you have the app open.



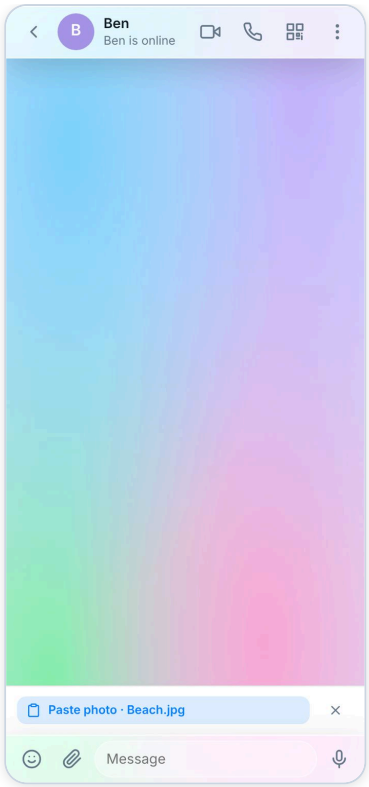
1 Person 1: **+ New chat › Connect with a code**. A 12-letter code appears, for example **K7QM-4XP9-ZT2A**. Tell it to your friend (call, SMS, any app). It works **once**, for **10 minutes**.



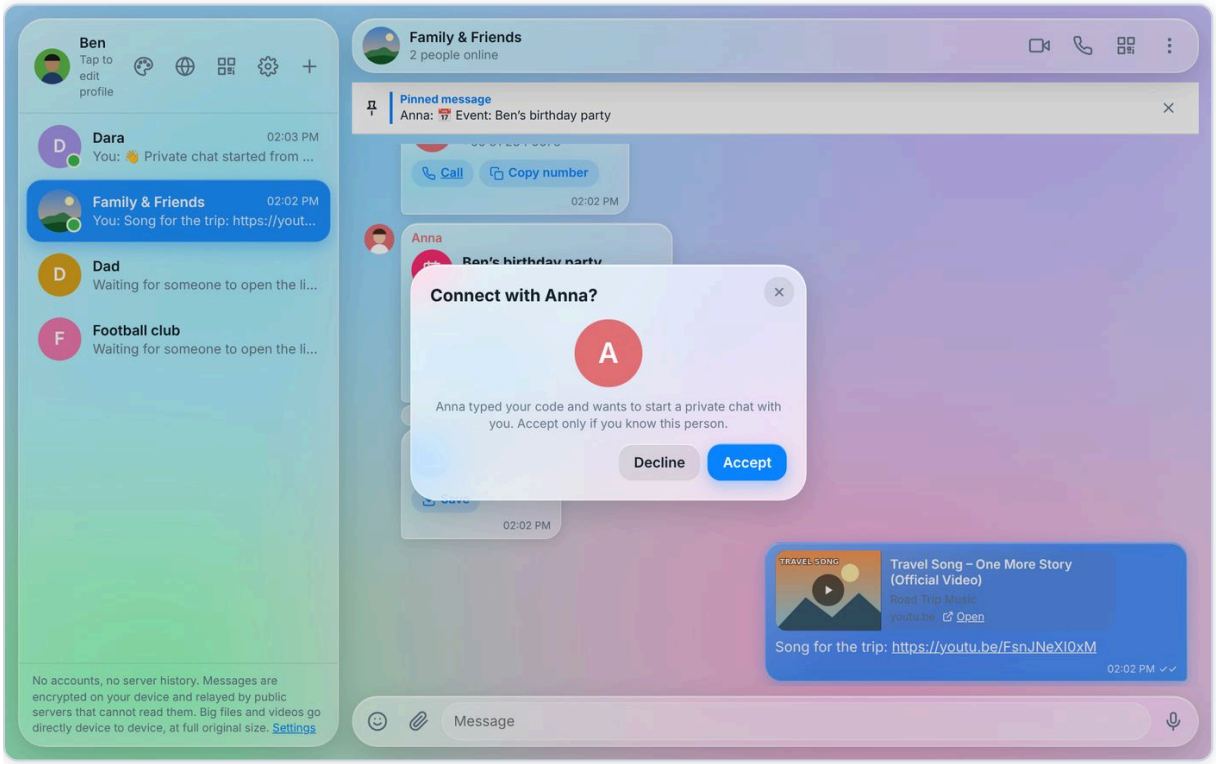
2 Person 2: **QR button › I have a code from a friend**, type the code and tap **Connect**.



3 It waits: "Your friend's phone got your request…"



5 The new private chat opens on both devices.

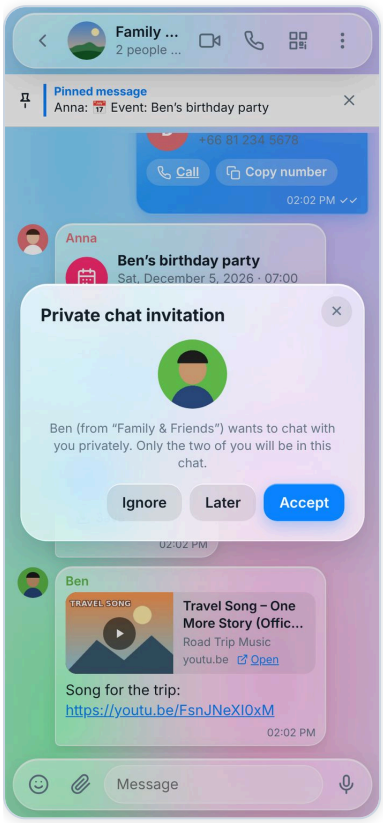


4 Person 1 is asked **"Connect with …?"**. Tap **Accept** only if you know this person.

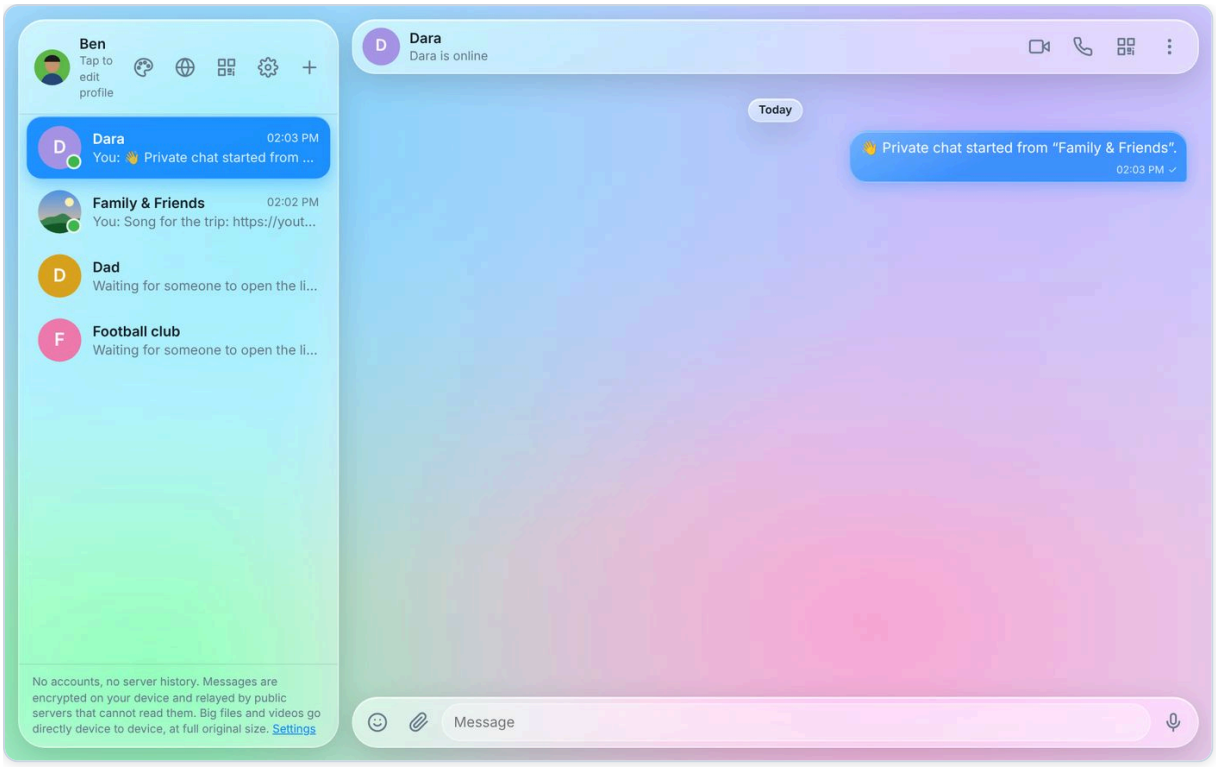
> ℹ️ **Good to know**
>
> A wrong code shows "No phone is waiting with this code" after about 45 seconds. Ask for a new code.

D. A private chat with someone from a group 📱 Android 💻 Computer

In a group, **tap a person’s message** › **“Message (name) privately”**, or open **Group info** and tap **Message** next to their name. They get an invitation that the rest of the group cannot see:



The invitation on the other person’s screen: **Accept**, **Later** or **Ignore**.



After Accept, both have a new one-to-one chat. If the person was offline, the invitation is sent again when they next open the app.

CHAPTER 8

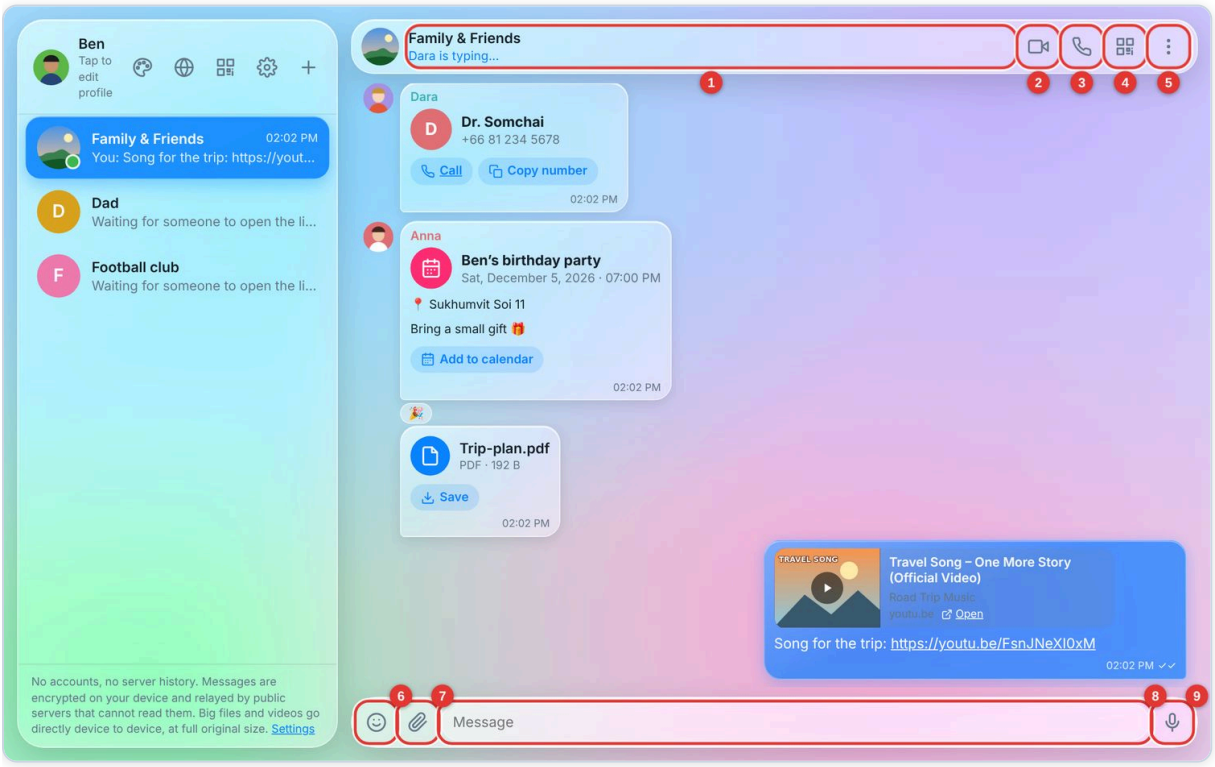
The chat screen

Tap a chat to open it.

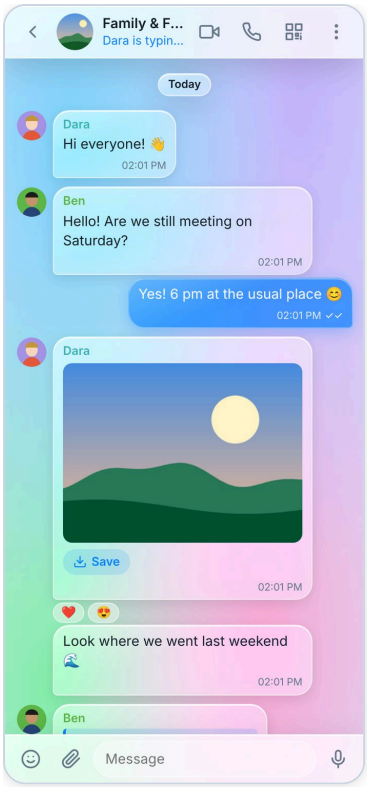


📱 A chat

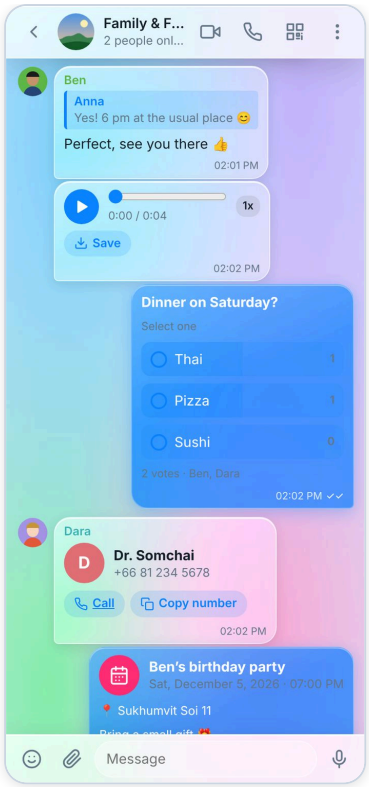
1. **Back** to the chat list.
2. **Chat name and status**: “2 people online”, “Dara is typing...”. Tap it for **Group info** (Chapter 16).
3. **Video call** (Chapter 15).
4. **Voice call**.
5. **QR code** of this chat: invite more people.
6. **Menu** ⋮: group info, QR, location map, starred and selected messages, appearance, settings, clear history, leave.
7. **Emoji**.
8. **Attach**: photos, camera, files, location, contact, poll, event, sticker (Chapter 11).
9. **Message box**: type here.
10. **Microphone**: voice message. When you type, it becomes the **Send** button.



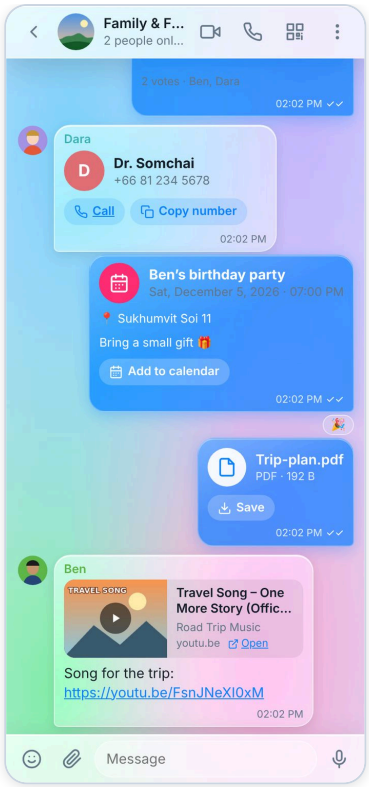
💻 The same on the computer: 1 name and status, 2 video call, 3 voice call, 4 QR, 5 menu, 6 emoji, 7 attach, 8 message box, 9 microphone.



Messages from others are on the **left** with their name and photo. Yours are on the **right**.



Voice messages, polls, contacts…



…events, files and video links.

The ticks on your messages

Mark	Meaning
🕓	Waiting: not sent yet (no connection). It is sent automatically when you are back online.
✓	Sent to the relay servers.
✓✓ (blue)	Seen by the others. Tap the message › **Message info** to see who saw it.

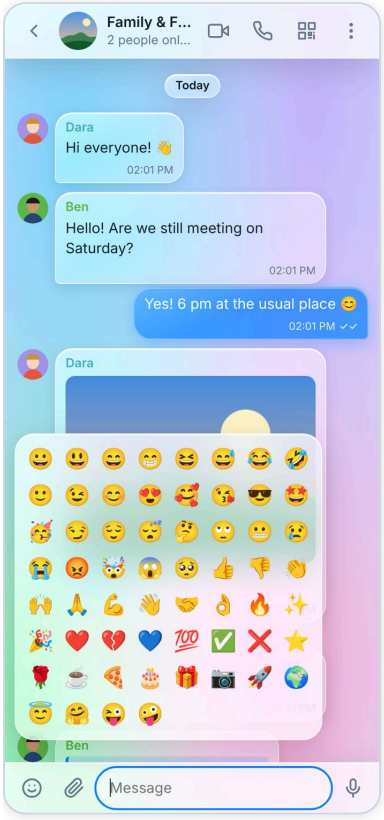
CHAPTER 9

Writing messages

Send a message 📱 Android 💻 Computer

1. Tap the message box and type.
2. Tap **Send** ➤. On the computer you can also press **Enter** (**Shift + Enter** makes a new line).

Emoji 📱 Android 💻 Computer

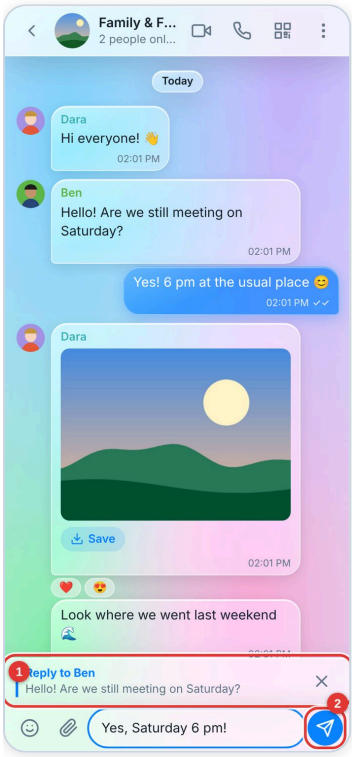


📱 Tap 😊 for emoji. Tap one to add it.



💻 The emoji panel on the computer.

Reply to a message 📱 Android 💻 Computer

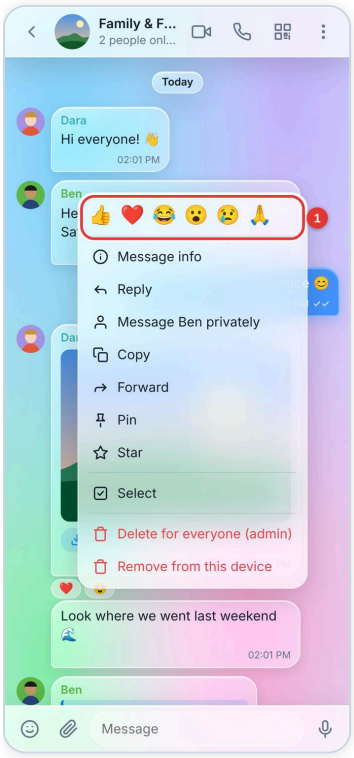


Replying

1. Tap the message you want to answer › **Reply**.
2. **1** A bar shows what you reply to (× cancels).
3. Type and tap **2 Send**.

Your answer shows the quoted message. Tap the quote to jump to the original.

React with an emoji 📱 Android 💻 Computer

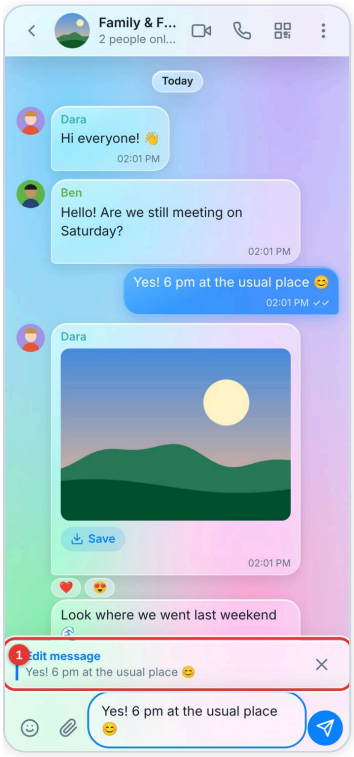


Quick reactions

Tap a message. **1** The top row has quick reactions: 👍 ❤️ 😂 😮 😢 🙏. Tap one. Tap it again to take it back.

Reactions show under the message with the number of people.

Edit your message 📱 Android 💻 Computer

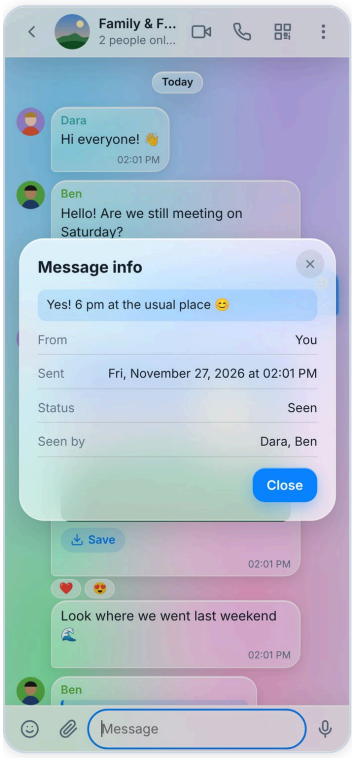


Editing

1. Tap your own text message › **Edit**.
2. **1** The bar says “Edit message”. Change the text.
3. Tap **Send**. The message shows **edited** for everyone.

> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> Only text messages can be edited, and only your own.

Message info: who saw it 📱 Android 💻 Computer



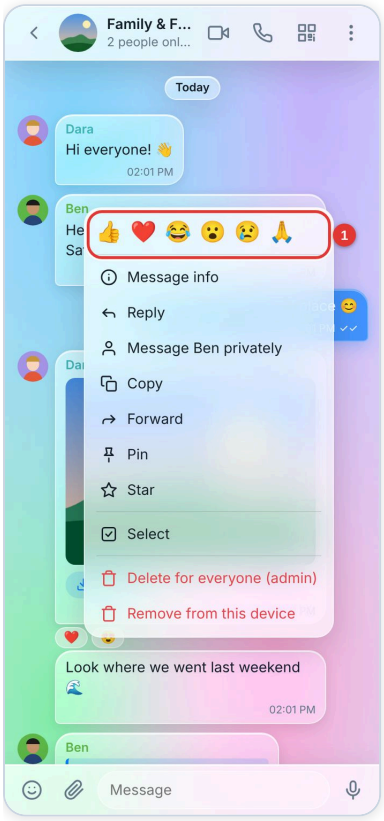
Message info

Tap a message › **Message info**: who sent it, when, the status, and who has seen it.

CHAPTER 10

The message menu

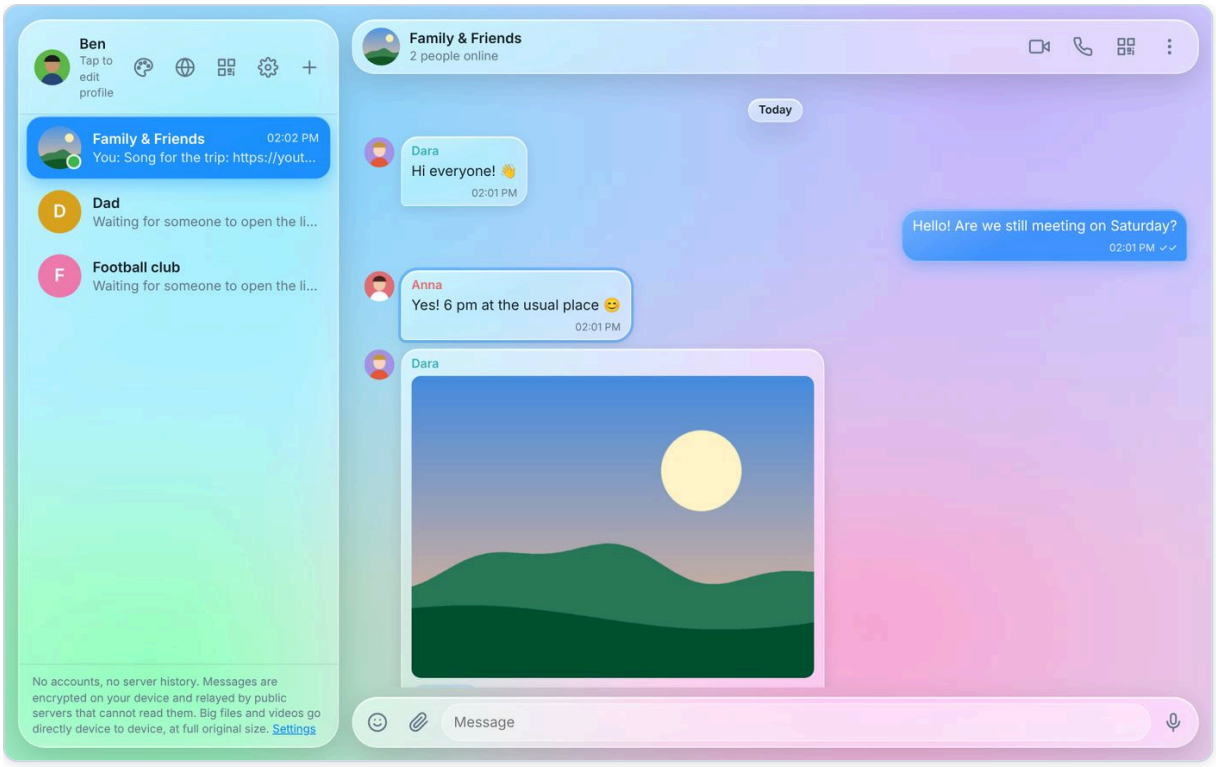
Tap any message (on the computer: click it) to open its menu. The menu is a little different for your own messages.



Menu of **someone else's** message.



Menu of **your** message: also **Edit** and **Delete for everyone**.



💻 The same menu on the computer.

Menu item	What it does
Quick reactions	👍 ❤️ 😂 😮 ☹ 🙏 under the message.
Message info	Sent time, status, who has seen it.
Reply	Answer this message (Chapter 9).
Message (name) privately	Start a one-to-one chat with the sender (Chapter 7 D).
Copy	Copies the text, or the photo/file. Paste it in any chat with the **Paste** bar.
Forward	Sends it to other chats.
Pin / Unpin	Keeps it at the top of the chat for everyone.
Star / Unstar	Saves it in **Starred messages**, just for you.
Select	Choose several messages to copy, star, forward or delete at once.
Save as / Download / Share	For photos, videos and files: save to the device, download a big file, or share to other apps.
Edit	Your own text messages.
Delete for everyone	Your own messages (admins: any message). It asks **“Delete for everyone?”** first, then it disappears for everybody.
Remove from this device	Someone else’s message: removes it only from your device.

Forward

📱 Android 💻 Computer

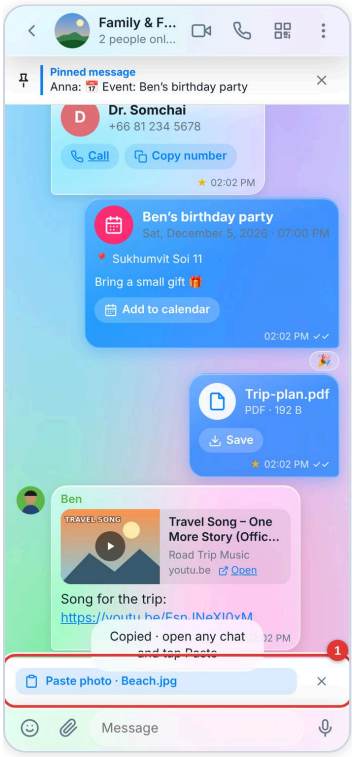


Forward to other chats

1. Tap the message › **Forward**.
2. Tick one or more chats.
3. Tap **Send**. It shows “Forwarded” in the other chat.

Copy and paste

📱 Android 💻 Computer

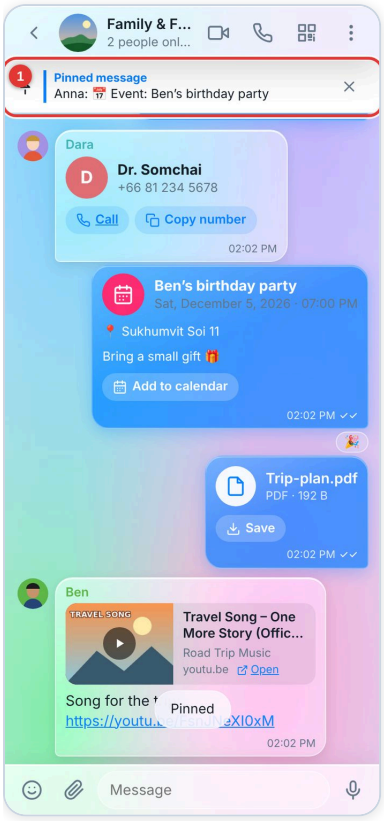


The Paste bar

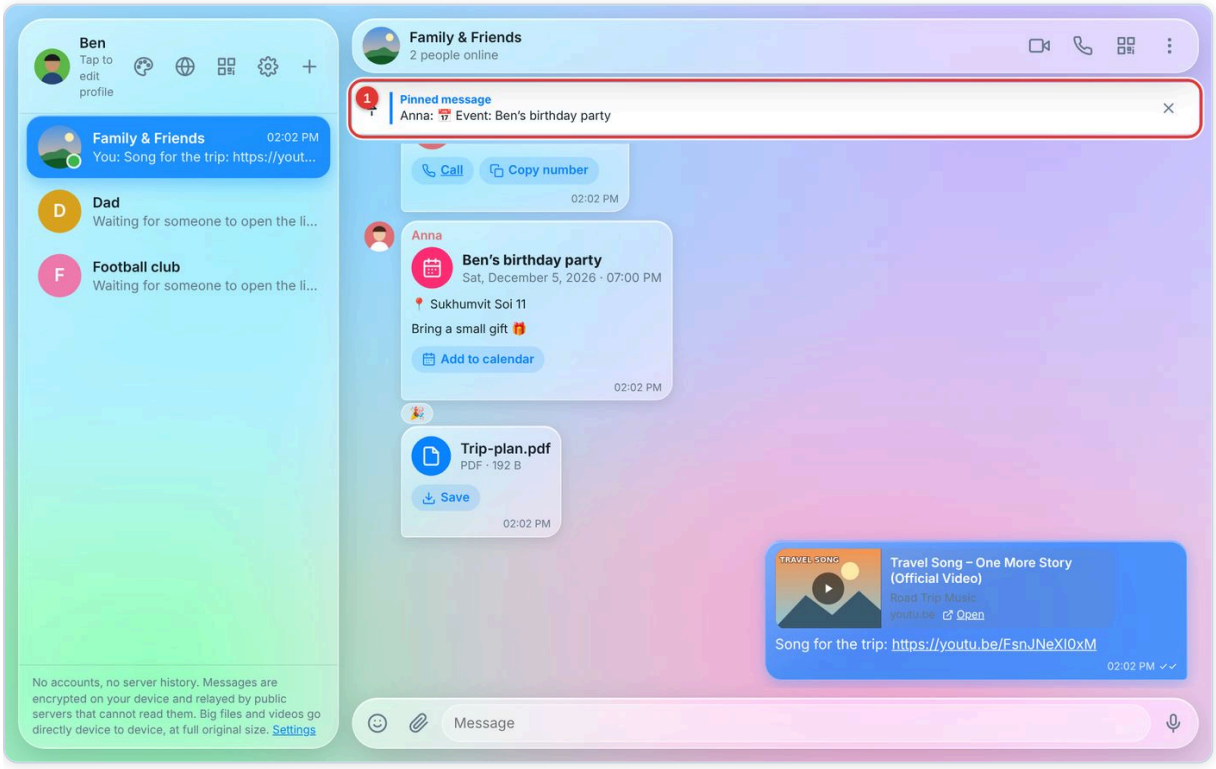
After **Copy** on a photo or file, **1** a **Paste** bar appears above the message box in every chat. Open another chat and tap it to send the same photo or file there. ✕ hides it.

Copied text can be pasted normally into the message box (long-press › Paste, or Ctrl + V on the computer).

Pin a message 📱 Android 💻 Computer



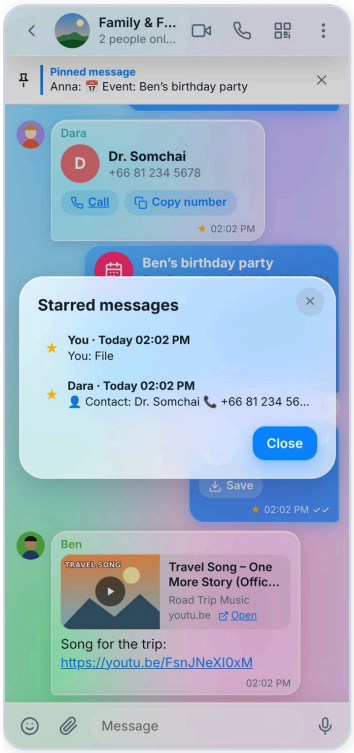
📱 **1** The pinned message stays at the top. Tap it to jump to it. × unpins.



💻 Pinned bar on the computer.

> ℹ️ **Good to know**
>
> If the group admin locked the chat (“only admins can send”), only admins can pin.

Star and Starred messages 📱 Android 💻 Computer



Starred messages (⋮ › Starred messages)

Tap a message › **Star**. A ★ shows next to its time. See all starred messages of a chat with ⋮ › **Starred messages**; tap one to jump to it.

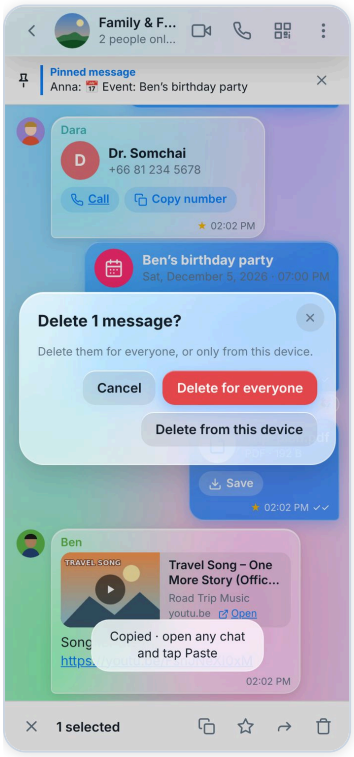
Select several messages 📱 Android 💻 Computer



Selecting

1. Tap a message › **Select** (or ⋮ › **Select messages**).
2. Tap more messages to tick them.
3. **1** The bar at the bottom: Copy, Star, Forward, Delete. ✕ ends selecting.

Delete 📱 Android 💻 Computer



Delete window

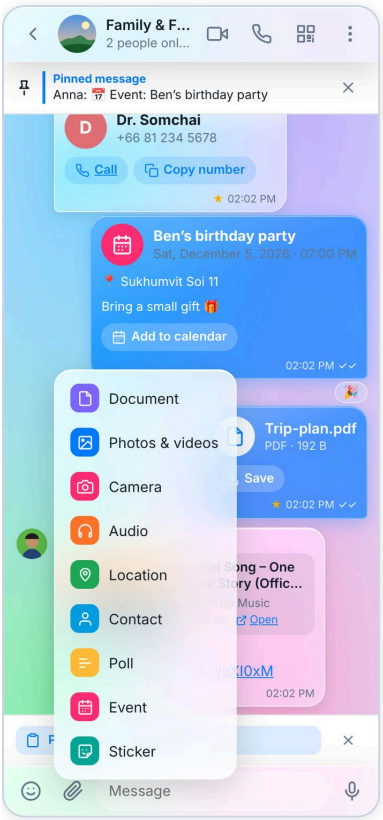
- **Delete for everyone**: removes it on all devices (your own messages; admins: any).
- **Delete from this device**: removes it only on your device.

> ⚠️ **Important**
> Deleted messages cannot be brought back.

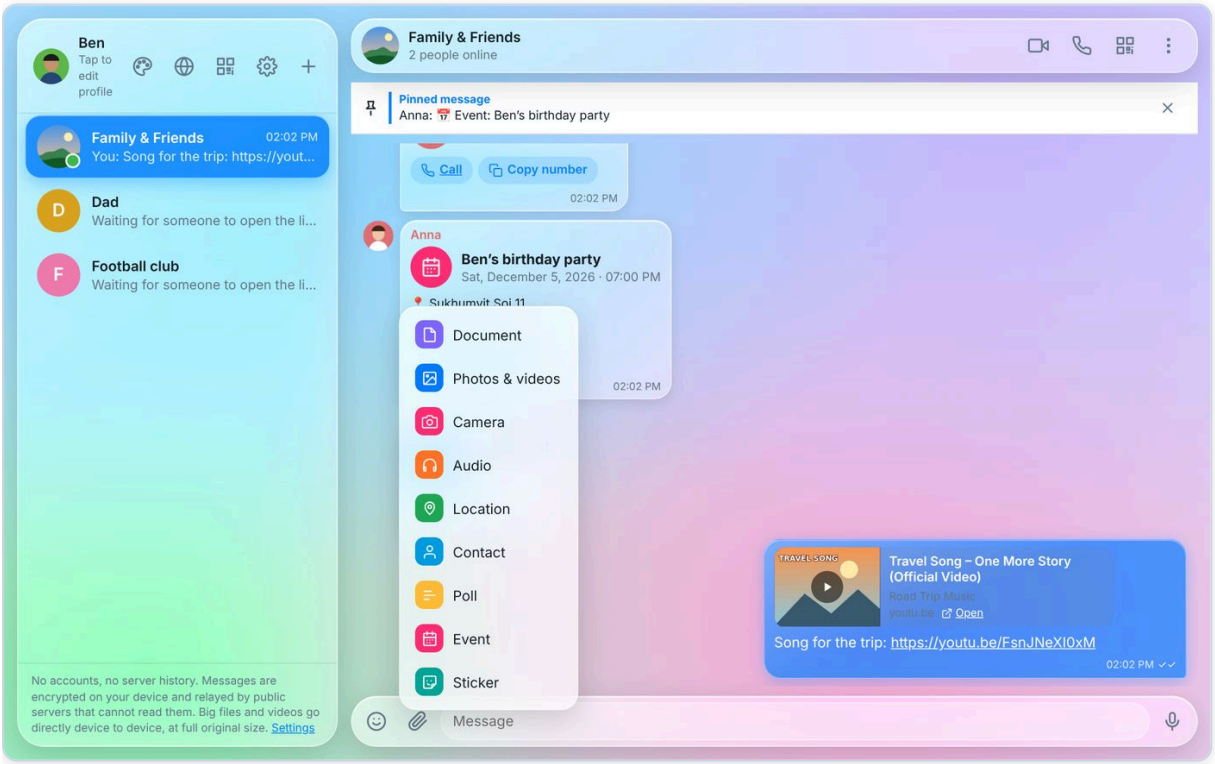
CHAPTER 11

Photos, videos, camera and files

Tap the **paperclip** 📎 next to the message box.



📱 The attach menu.

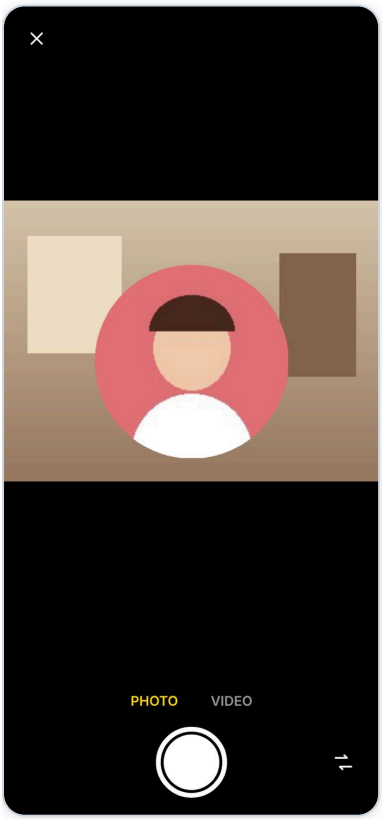


💻 The attach menu on the computer.

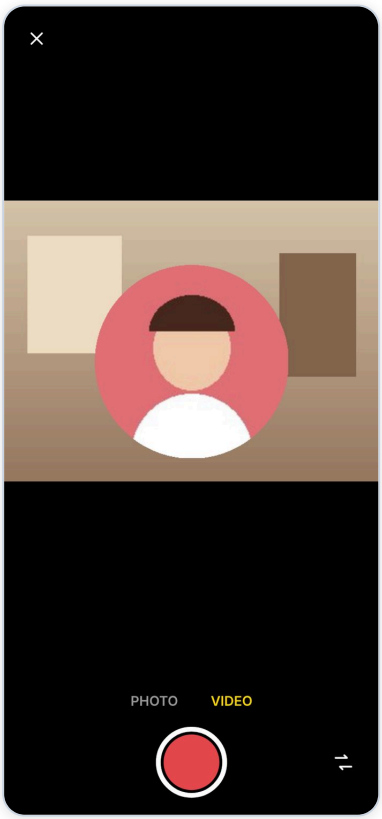
Item	What it sends
Document	Any file: PDF, Word, Excel, ZIP, APK… up to **4 GB**.
Photos & videos	Pictures and videos from your gallery, at **full original quality**.
Camera	Take a photo or record a video right now (below).
Audio	Music or audio files.
Location	Your location now, or live location (Chapter 17).
Contact	A name, phone number and e-mail as a card.
Poll	A question with answers to vote on (Chapter 13).
Event	A date, time and place with “Add to calendar” (Chapter 13).
Sticker	A picture sent as a sticker, without a bubble.

> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> Small files (under 900 KB) travel with the message. Bigger files and videos go **directly** from device to device, so **both devices must be online** until the file arrives. If the receiver was offline, they see a **Download** button to get it later while you are online.

Camera 📱 Android 💻 Computer



Tap **Camera**. Choose **PHOTO**, tap the round button. ⇄ switches front/back camera.



Choose **VIDEO**: tap the red button to start and again to stop.

After taking it you see a preview: **Send** or **Retake**. × at the top closes the camera.

See, save and share photos 📱 Android 💻 Computer

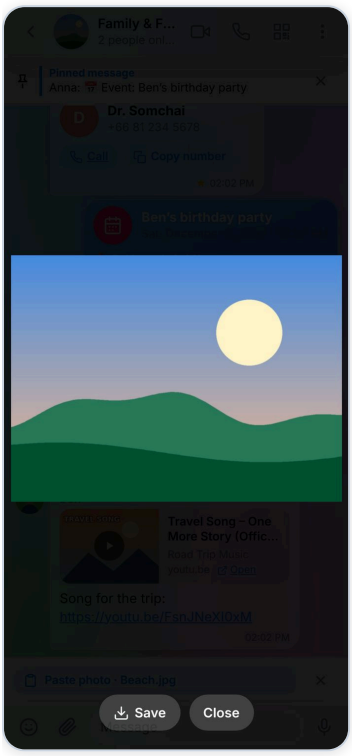
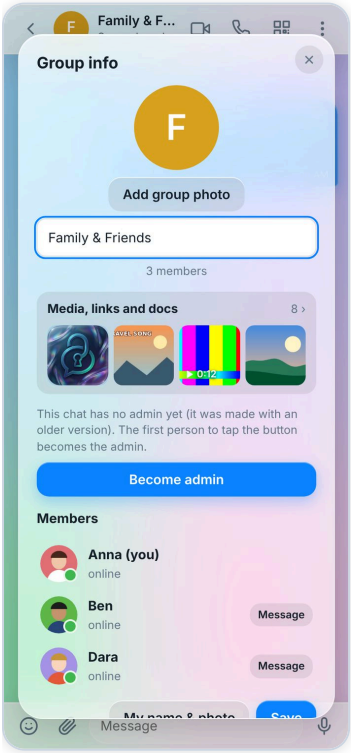


Photo viewer

Tap a photo to see it full screen. At the bottom: **Save** (to the phone or computer), **Share** (to other apps) and **Close**.

Saved files go to **Download/Private Chat** on Android and to **Downloads\Private Chat** on the computer.

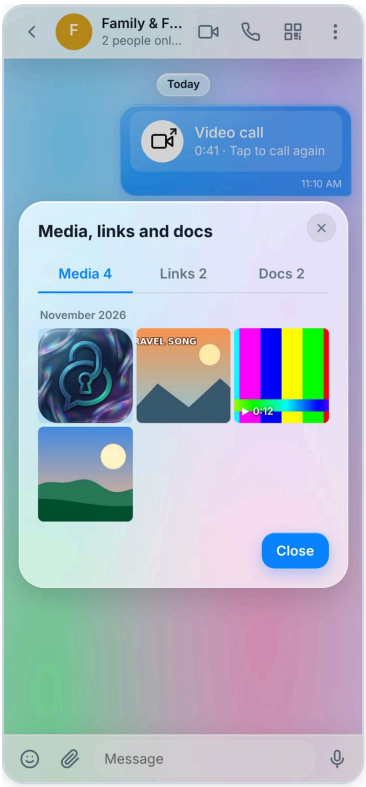
Media, links and docs: find everything again 📱 Android 💻 Computer



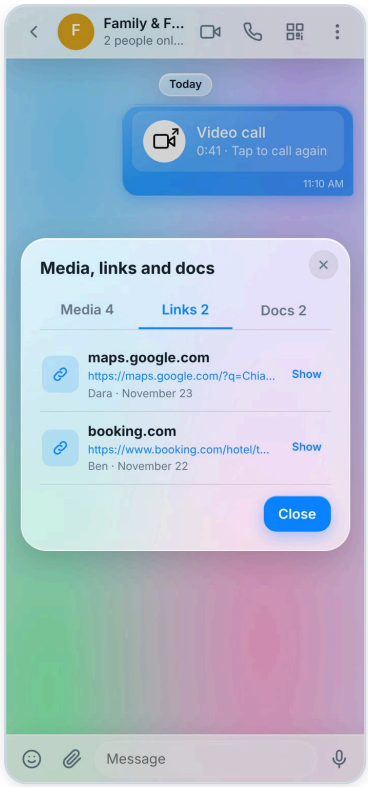
📱 Group info

Open the chat ⋮ › **Group info**. Under the name you see **Media, links and docs** with the newest photos and the number of items.

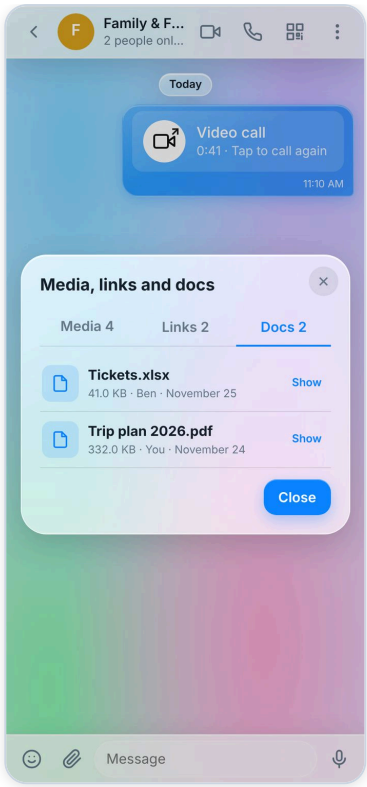
Tap it, or ⋮ › **Media, links and docs**, to open the gallery with three tabs.



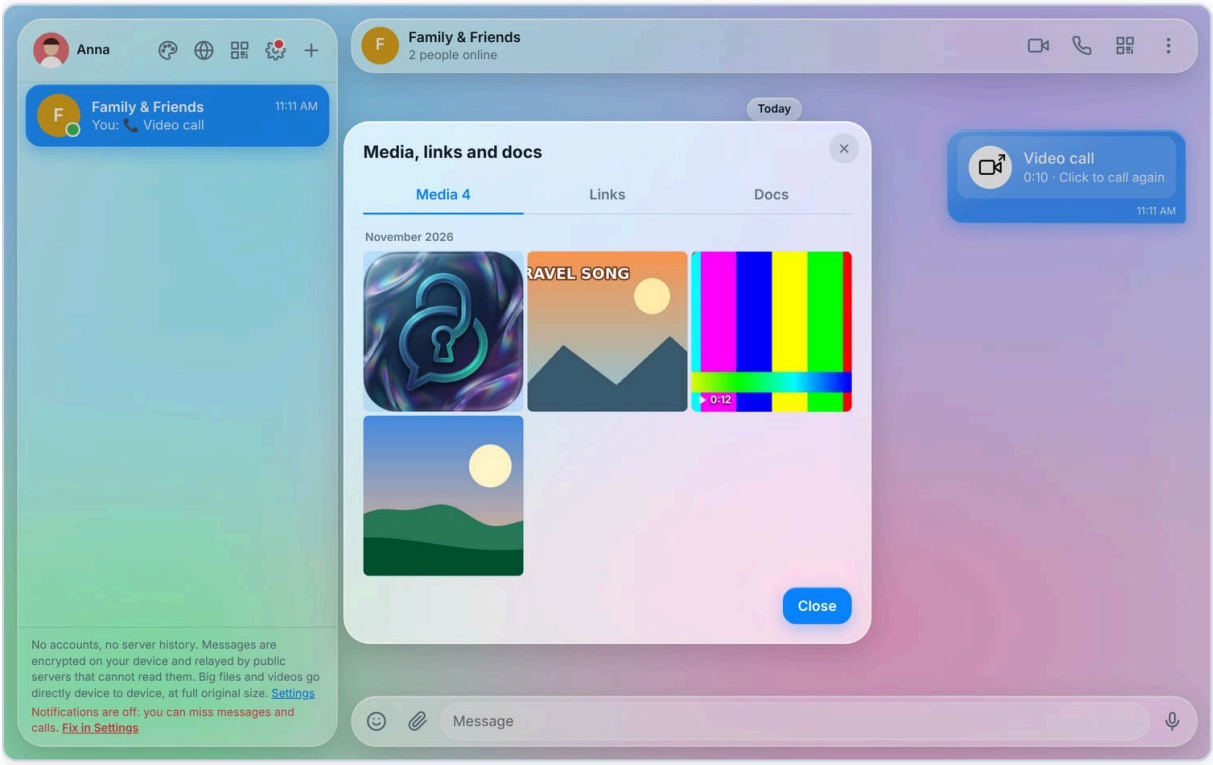
Media: all photos and videos, by month. Tap one to see it big or play it.



Links: every link sent in the chat. **Show** jumps to the message.



Docs: all files. Tap one to save it.

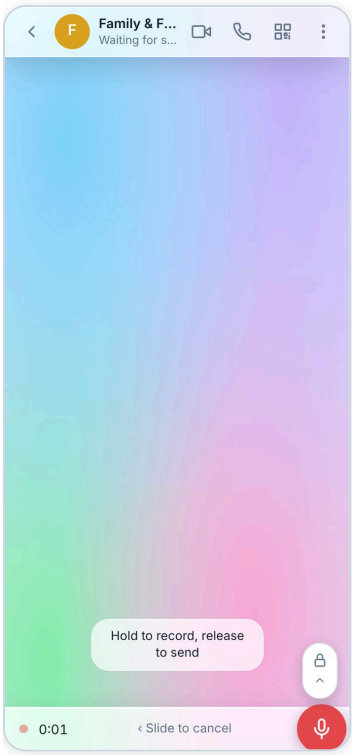


💻 The gallery on the computer.

CHAPTER 12

Voice messages

Like WhatsApp: hold the microphone, talk, let go.

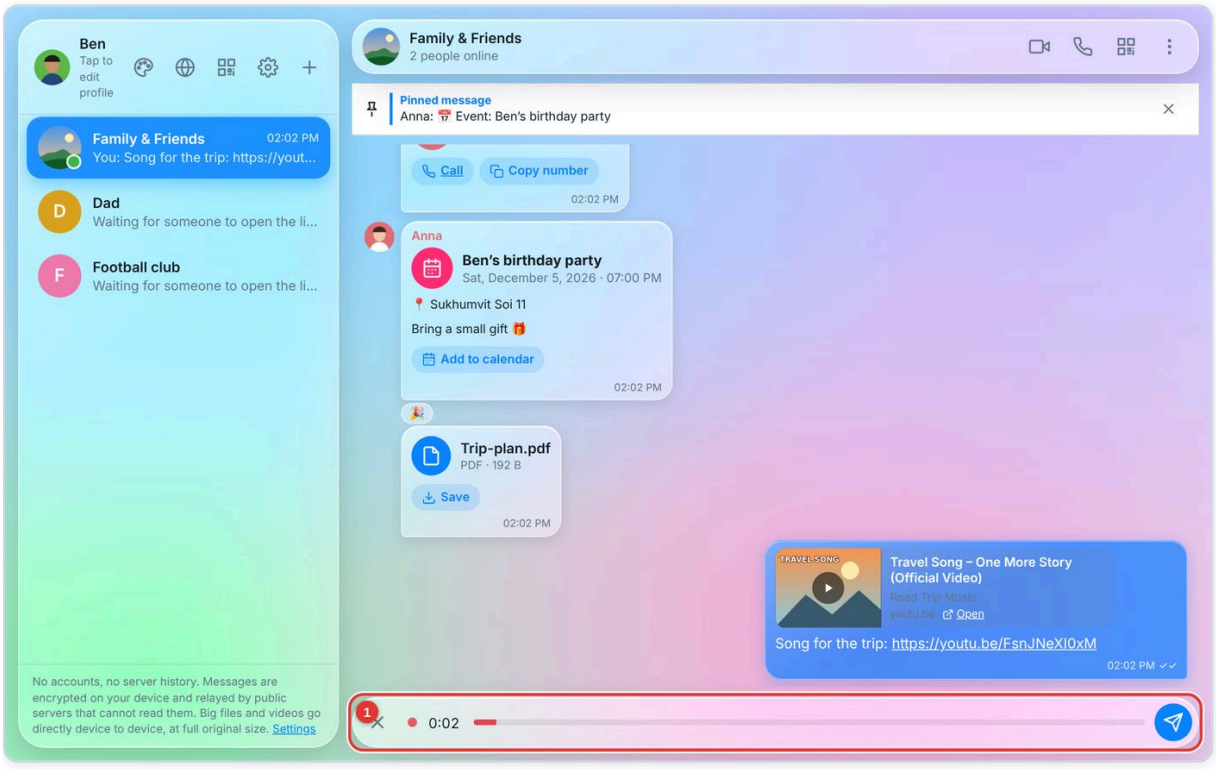


📱 Holding the microphone

1. **Press and hold** the microphone 🎤 (when the message box is empty). Recording starts at once: a red dot, the time and your voice level.
2. Talk while you hold it. **Let go** to send.
3. **Slide left** to cancel: the recording is thrown away.
4. **Slide up** to the 🔒 lock: now you can let go and keep talking hands-free. Tap **Send** ➤ or 🗑 when you are done.

> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> A quick tap only shows the hint “Hold to record, release to send”. Nothing is sent by accident.

To play a voice message, tap ▶. Tap **1x** to switch the speed to 1.5x or 2x. **Save** keeps it as a file.

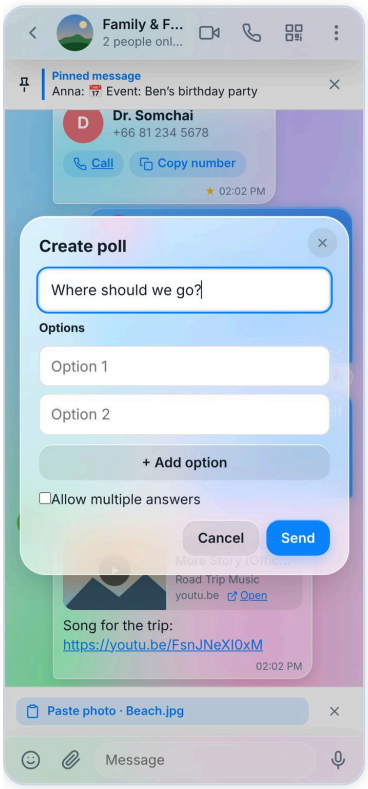


💻 On the computer you **click** the microphone once to start, then click **Send** ➤ or ×.

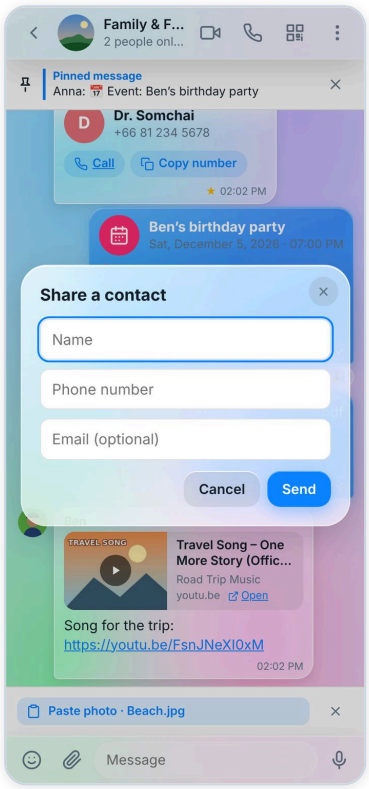
CHAPTER 13

Polls, contacts, events and stickers

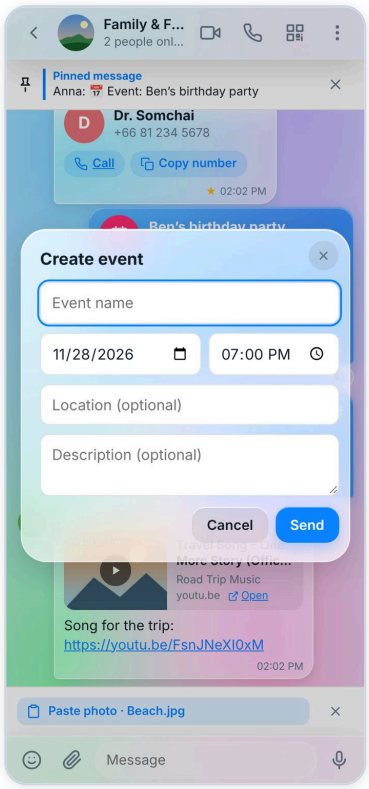
Special messages from the attach menu 📎.



Poll: type the question and at least two answers (+ Add option). Tick “Allow multiple answers” if people may choose more than one. Tap **Send**.



Contact: name, phone, e-mail. The card has **Call** and **Copy number** buttons.



Event: name, date, time, place, description. The card has **Add to calendar**.

- **Voting:** tap an answer in a poll. Tap it again to remove your vote. Everyone sees the counts and who voted.
- **Add to calendar** saves the event as a calendar file that your phone or computer calendar opens.
- **Sticker:** 📎 › Sticker › choose a picture. It is sent big, without a bubble.

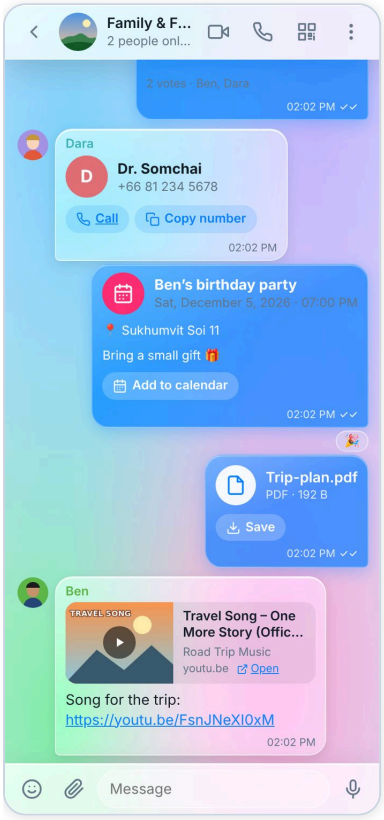
> ℹ️ **Good to know**
>
> Older versions of the app show polls, contacts and events as normal text, so nobody misses them.

CHAPTER 14

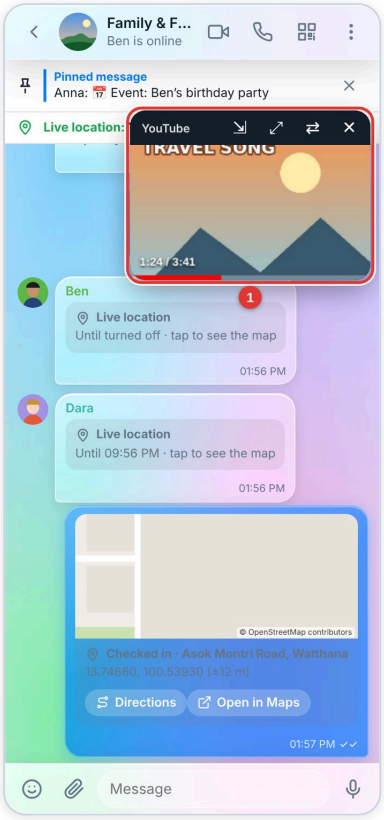
Video links and the floating player

Send a video link and it plays **inside the chat**, in a small window, while you keep chatting.

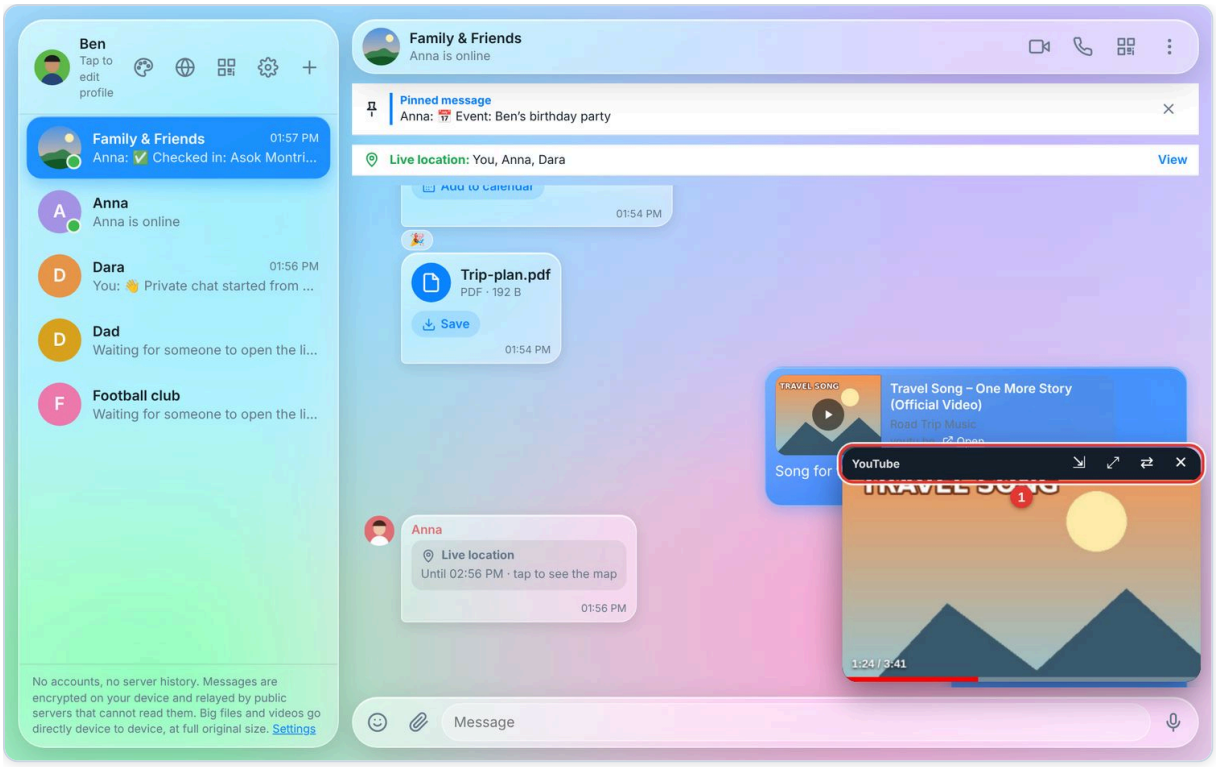
Works with **YouTube** (also Shorts), **Facebook** (videos, Watch, Reels, fb.watch), **TikTok**, **Instagram** (Reels and video posts), **Vimeo**, **Dailymotion**, **Streamable**, and direct video files (.mp4, .webm, .mov, .m4v).



A video link shows a card with picture, title and channel. Tap the card to play. “Open” opens the website instead.



📱 **1** The small player floats over the chat.



💻 The floating player on the computer. **1** Its top bar: drag it to move the player anywhere.

Button	What it does
Drag the top bar	Move the player anywhere on the screen.
⇲	Drag this to make the player bigger or smaller.
⤢	Full screen / back to small (on the computer also double-click the bar).
⇄	Jump to another corner.
×	Close the player.



Full screen. Press ⤢ again to go back to small.

> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> Private or age-restricted videos may refuse to play outside their website. Use **Open** under the card for those.

CHAPTER 15

Voice and video calls

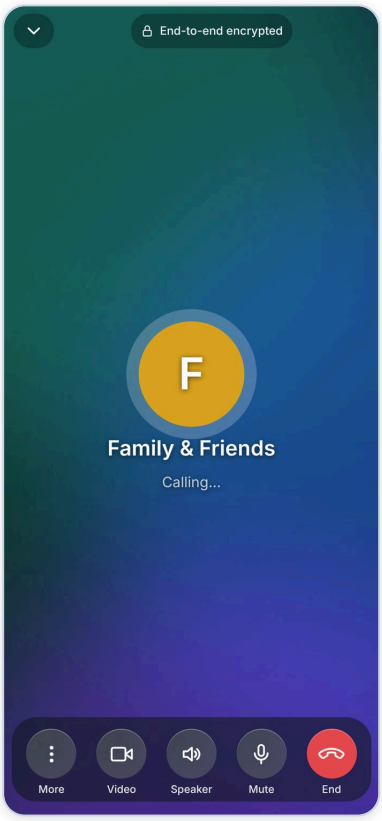
Calls go directly between the devices, end-to-end encrypted, in HD. Groups can call with many people.

Make a call 📱 Android 💻 Computer

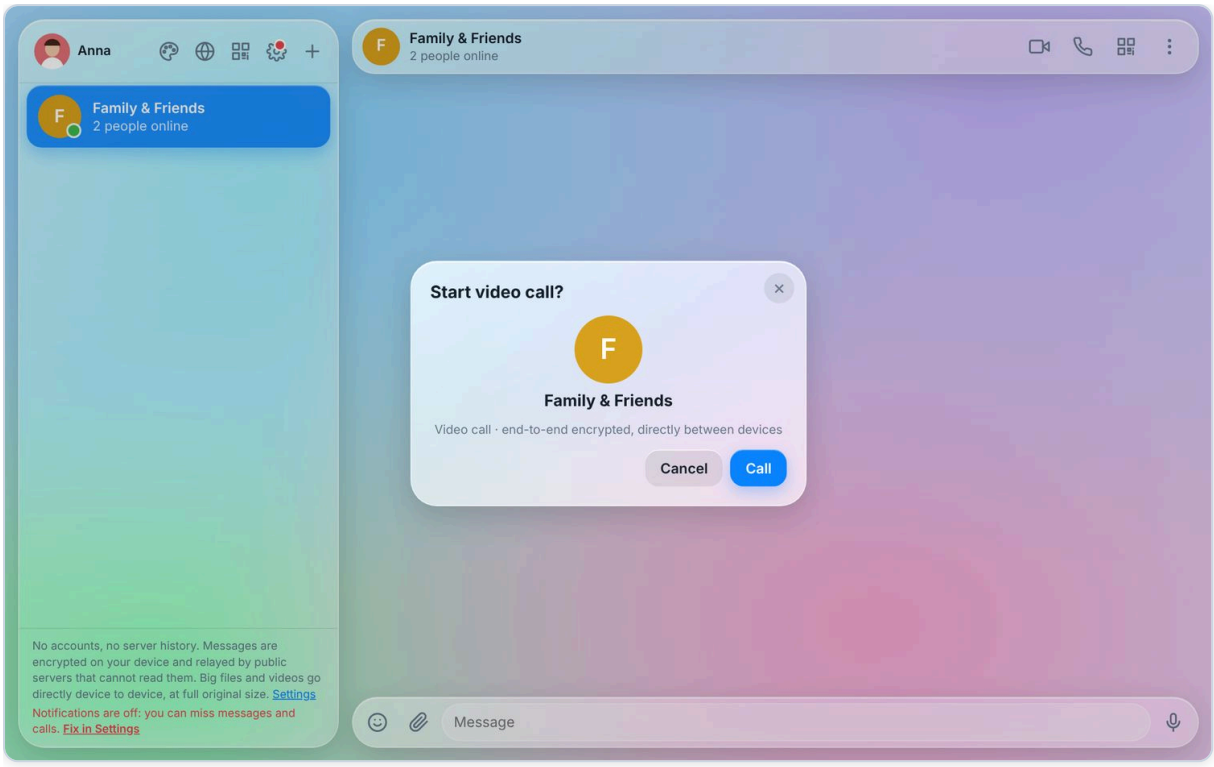
1. Open the chat.
2. Tap 📹 for a **video call** or 📞 for a **voice call** (top bar).
3. Private Chat asks **“Start voice call?”** or **“Start video call?”**. Tap **Call**. (Cancel if you tapped by mistake: nobody is called.)
4. Everyone in the chat is called. In a group, people can join while the call is going: they see a green **Join** phone button in the top bar.



Asks first, so a call never starts by accident (for example a child’s hand).

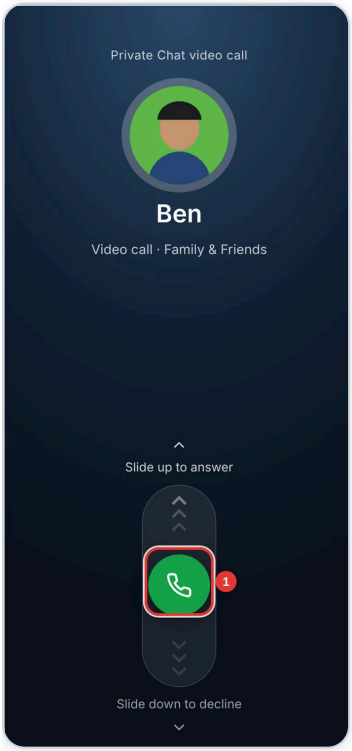


Calling… The photo pulses while it rings.



💻 The same question on the computer.

Answer: slide, do not tap 📱 Android 💻 Computer

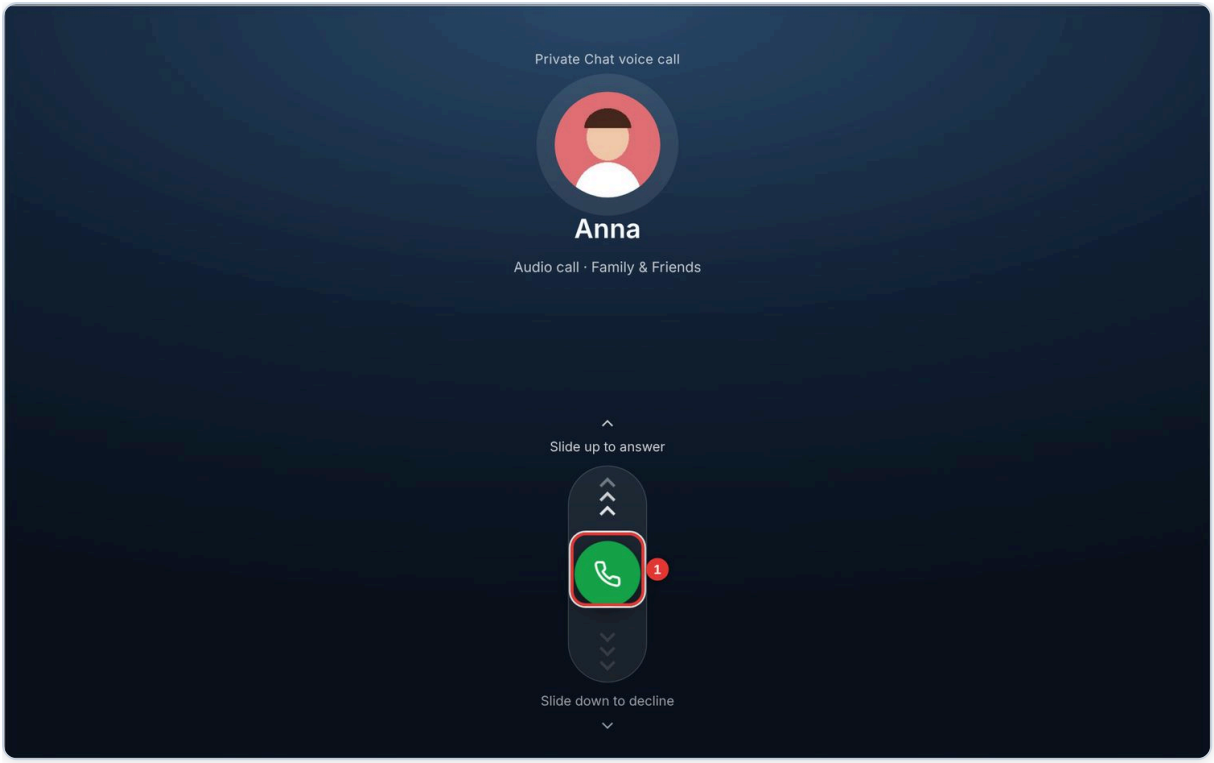


📱 Incoming call

An incoming call fills the screen. **1** Slide the green phone button **up to answer**, or **down to decline**. A tap does nothing, so you cannot answer or hang up by mistake.

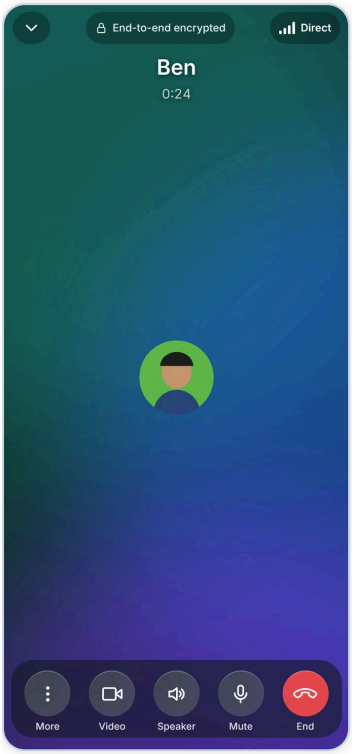
On a locked phone you also get a call notification with **Answer / Decline**.

> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> Not answered in about 45 seconds = missed call. You see “Missed call from …”.



💻 On the computer: drag the button up or down with the mouse, or press the arrow keys ↑ **answer**, ↓ **decline**.

The call screen 📱 Android 💻 Computer



📱 Voice call

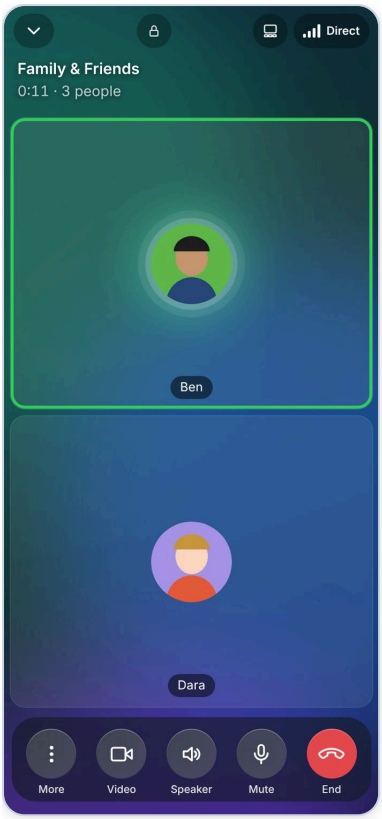
At the top

- **Minimize**: the call keeps going and you can use your chats (see below).
- **End-to-end encrypted**: tap to see the call security code.
- **Signal**: the bars show the quality. **Direct** = device to device. **Relay** = through an encrypted relay because a direct path was blocked.

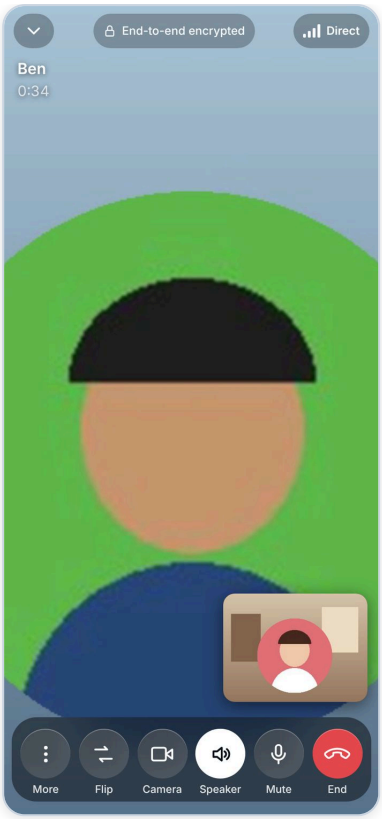
At the bottom, every button has its name under it:

- **More**: reactions, message, noise cancellation, record and more.
- **Video**: switch this voice call to video.
- **Speaker** (phones): loudspeaker or ear speaker.
- **Mute** / Unmute.
- **End** the call.

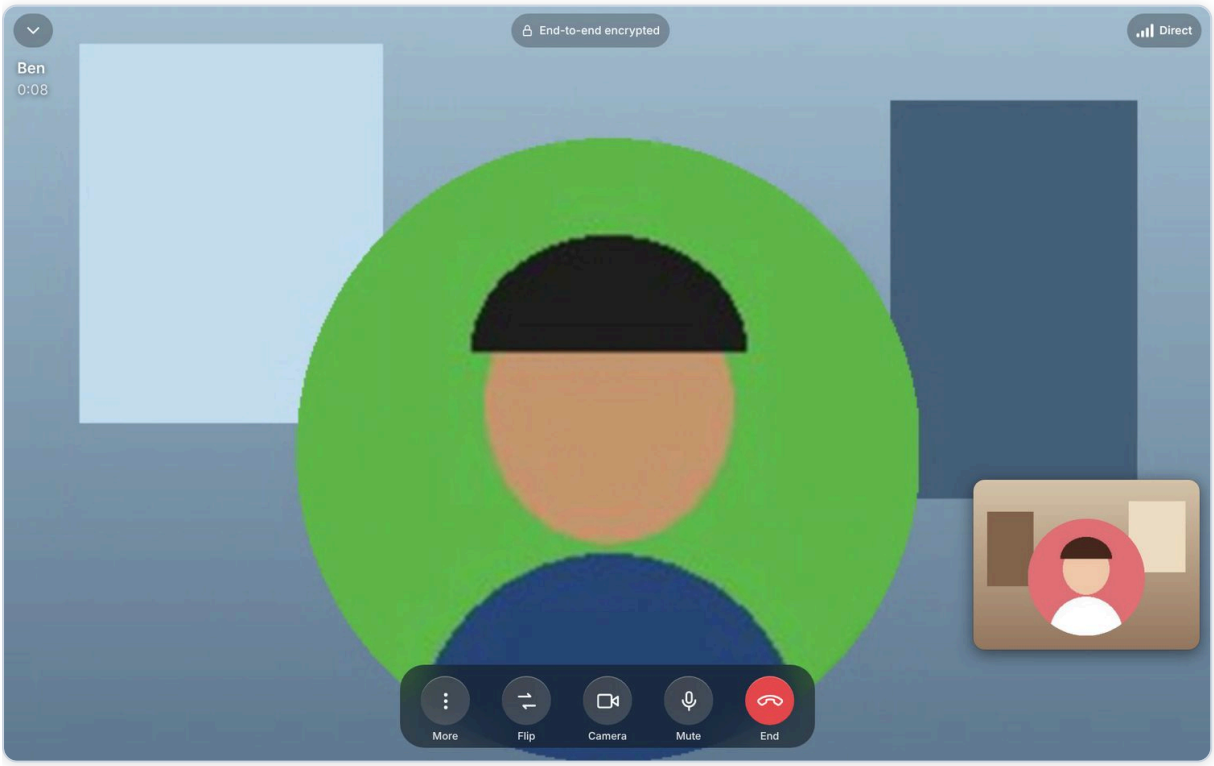
> 💡 **Tip**
> Voice calls have a calm moving background. The photo **glows when the other person talks**. Near your ear the screen turns off, like a normal phone call.



A **group** voice call: everyone has a card. The person talking has a green frame.

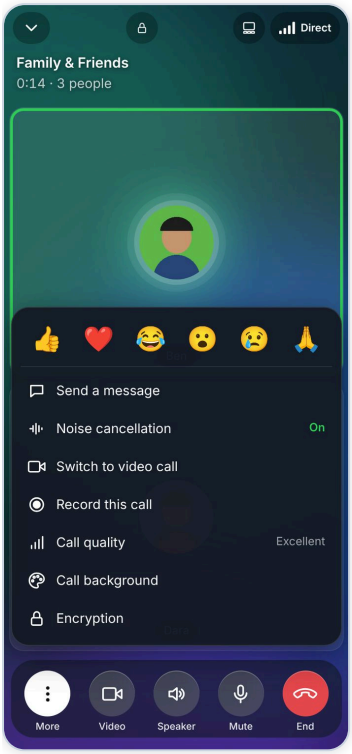


A video call: **Flip** switches the camera, **Camera** turns it on or off. Your own picture is the small window; drag it to any corner.



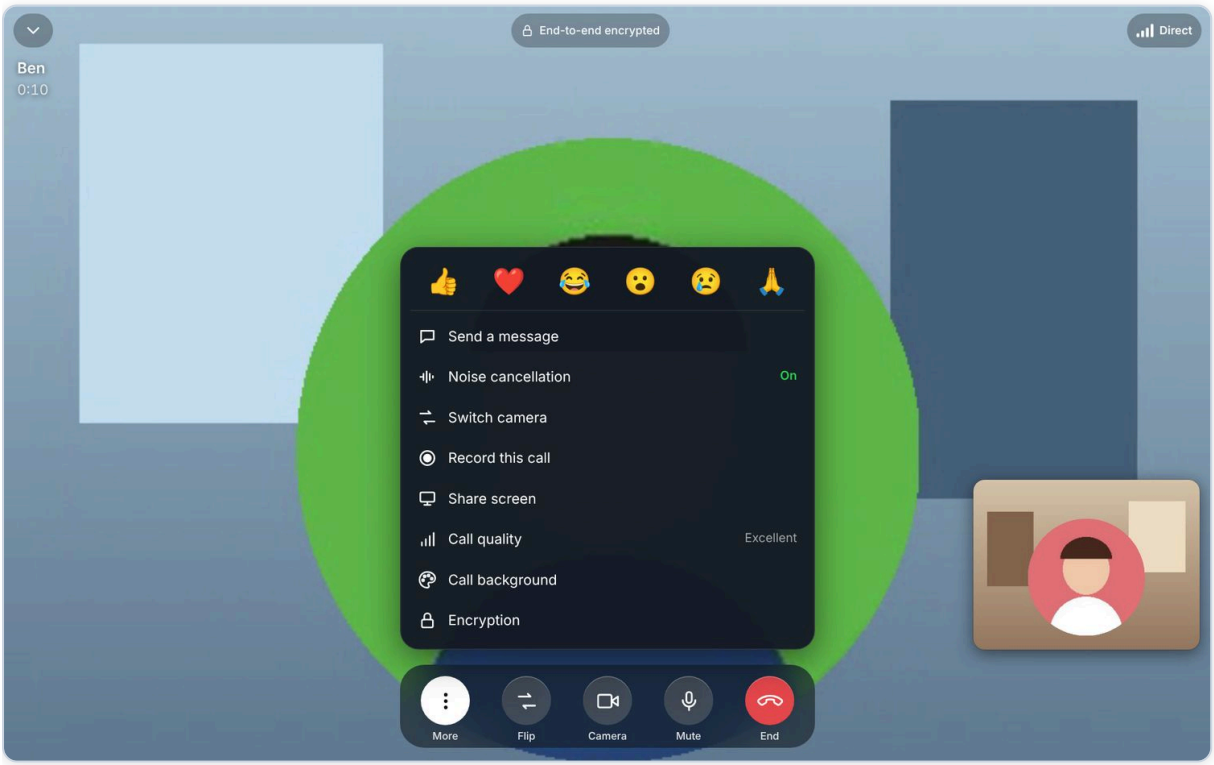
💻 A video call on the computer. The buttons hide after a few seconds; move the mouse to show them.

The More menu 📱 Android 💻 Computer



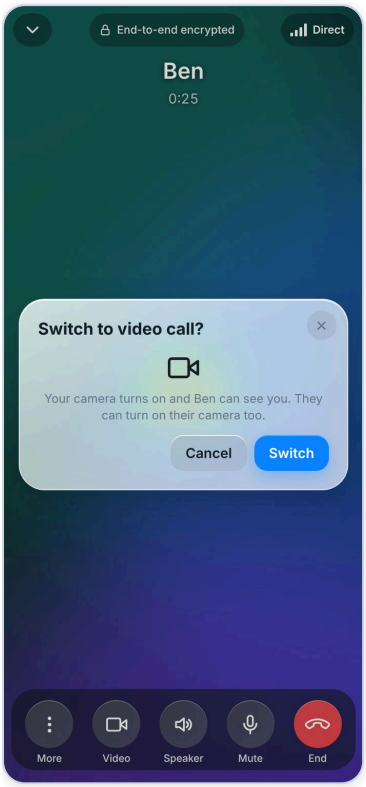
- **Reactions** 👍 ❤️ 😂 😮 😢 🙏: the emoji floats up on everyone's screen.
- **Send a message**: quick answers like "Can't talk now, I'll call you back" without leaving the call.
- **Noise cancellation**: on = less background noise; off = natural sound (for music).
- **Switch to video call** (or **Switch camera** in a video call).
- **Record this call** (see below).
- **Share screen**: on the computer only.
- **Call quality**, **Call background** and **Encryption**.

📱 Tap ⋮ More

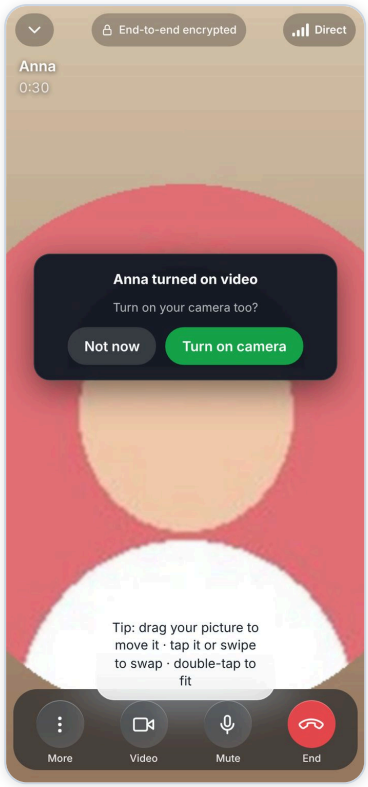


💻 The More menu on the computer, with **Share screen**.

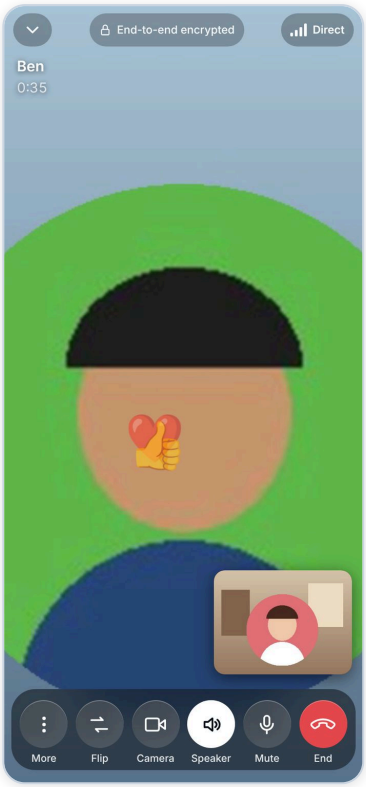
Switch a voice call to video 📱 Android 💻 Computer



1 Tap **Video**. It asks first: tap **Switch**.



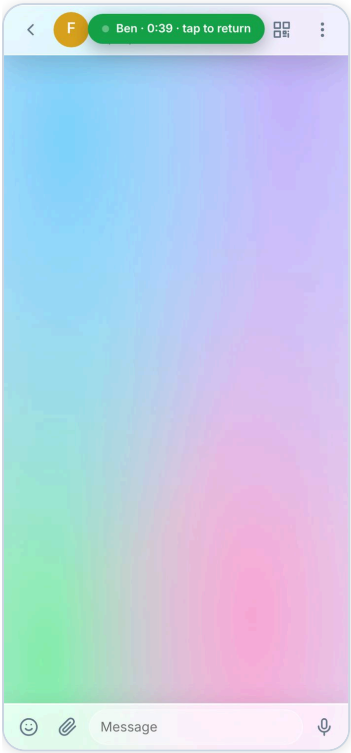
2 The other person sees you and is asked: **Turn on camera** or **Not now**.



3 Now it is a video call. Reactions float over the picture.

> ### ℹ️ Good to know
> Both people need version v1 to switch a call to video. If someone has an older version, Private Chat asks them to update.

Minimize a call 📱 Android 💻 Computer

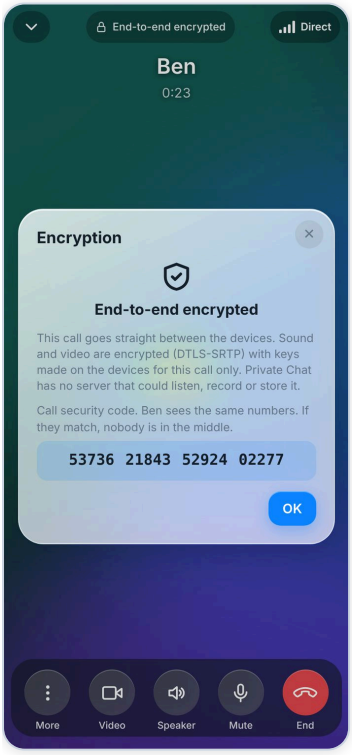


📱 Minimized call

Tap ⌄ (top-left). The call keeps going and a green bar shows the name and time at the top. Read and write messages as usual.

Tap the green bar to go back to the call.

Check that nobody is listening 📱 Android 💻 Computer

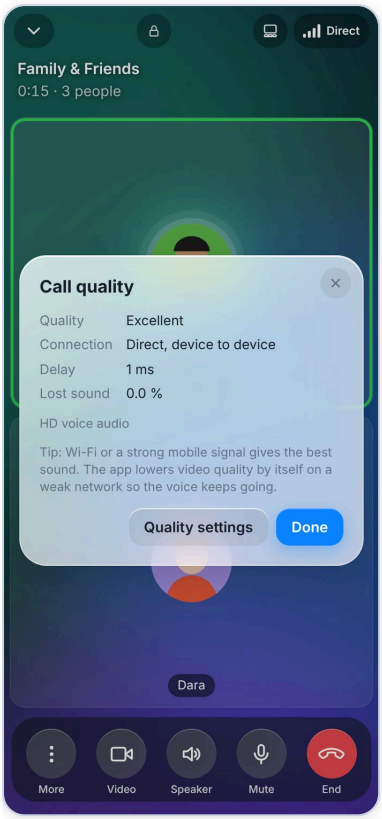


📱 Encryption

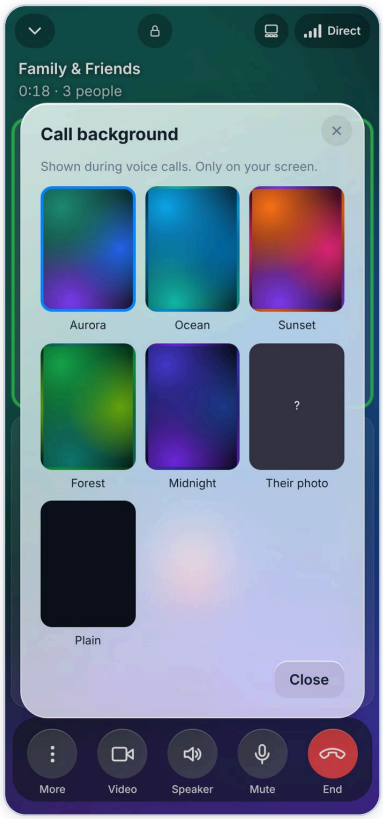
Tap 🔒 **End-to-end encrypted** (or More › Encryption). In a one-to-one call you see a **call security code** of 20 numbers.

Read the numbers to each other. **Same numbers on both phones = nobody is in the middle.** The code is new for every call.

Call quality and background 📱 Android 💻 Computer



Call quality: quality, direct or relay, delay and lost sound. **Quality settings** chooses HD or data saver.



Call background for voice calls: Aurora, Ocean, Sunset, Forest, Midnight, the other person's photo, or plain. Only you see it.

Group calls: layout 📱 Android 💻 Computer

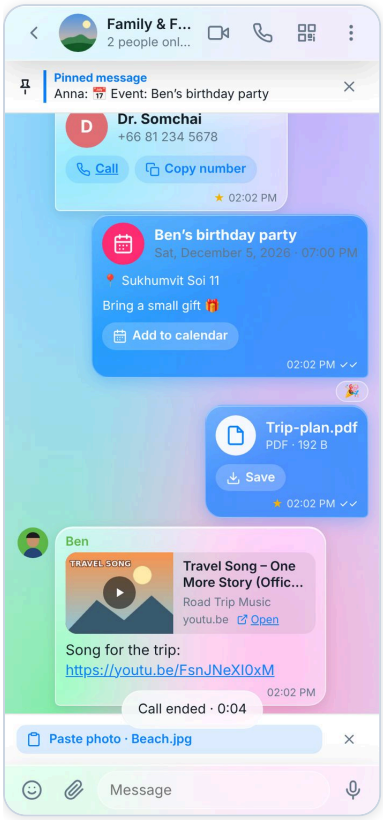
- With 3 or more people, the **Layout** button (top-right, beside the signal) switches between **grid** (everyone the same size) and **spotlight** (one person big, others small).
- In spotlight, swipe left or right on the big picture to change who is big.
- **Phone Back button during a call:** the call keeps going in the background. Open Private Chat again to see the call.

Record a call 📱 Android 💻 Computer

More › **Record this call**. **Video calls** are recorded as a screen video with sound. **Voice calls** record the voice only. Choose **Stop recording** to stop: the file is saved right away to Android **Download/Private Chat** or computer **Downloads\Private Chat**.

A red "REC" badge shows while it records, and the More button gets a red dot. Everyone in the call sees "… is recording this call".

> **⚠️ Important**
>
> Always tell people before you record. Everyone sees the recording notice.

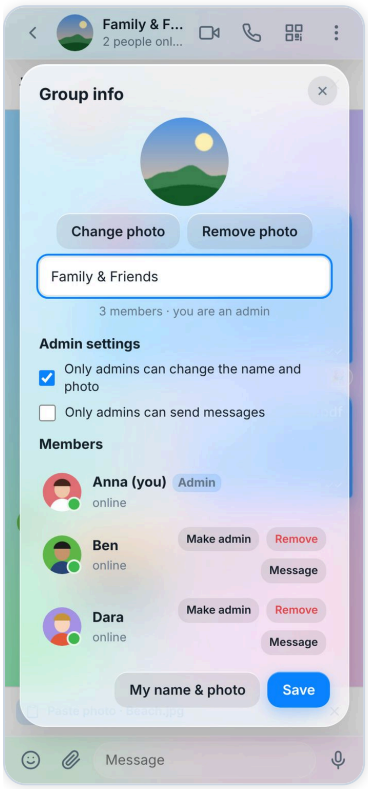


After the call the chat shows the call and how long it took. Tap it to call again.

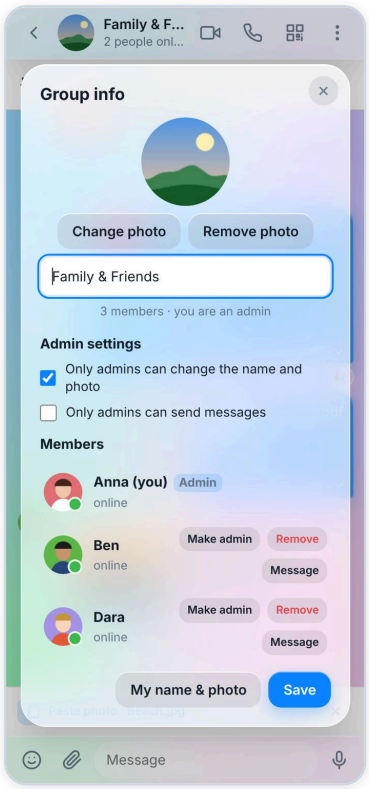
CHAPTER 16

Groups and admins

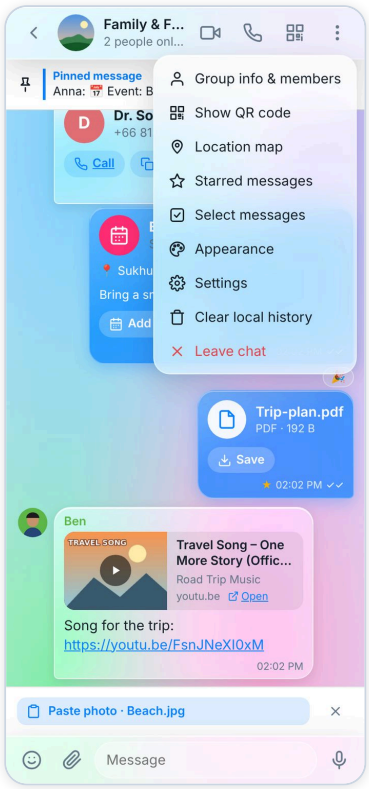
Every chat can have many people. The person who created it is the **admin**.



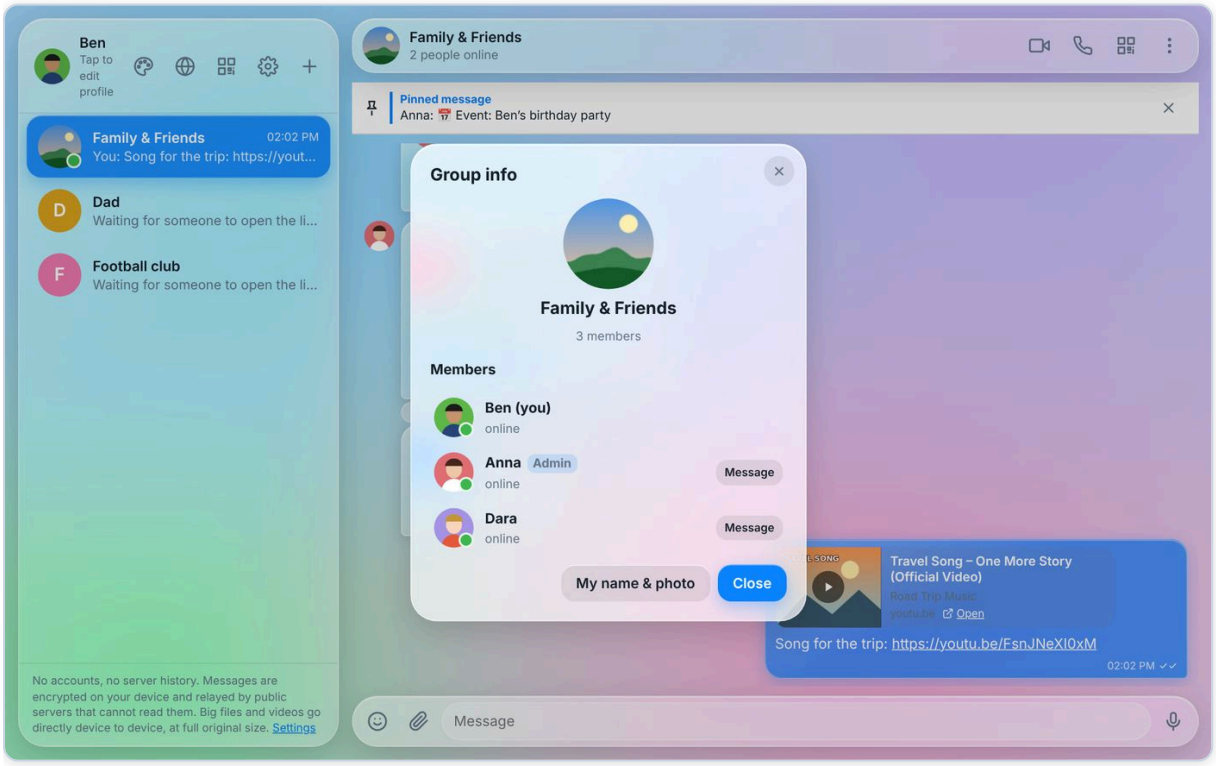
Tap the chat name › **Group info**: photo, name, members.



Admin options and the member list.



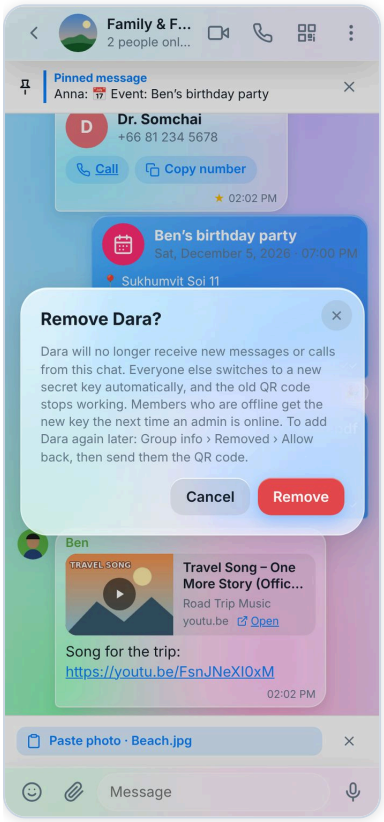
⋮ menu of a chat.



💻 Group info on the computer.

What an admin can do

- **Change the group name and photo.**
- **Only admins can change name and photo** (on/off).
- **Only admins can send messages** (on/off): an announcement group.
- **Make admin / Dismiss admin** for a member.
- **Remove** a member: the chat gets a new secret key, so the removed person cannot read new messages.
- **Allow back** a removed member (in the “Removed” list in Group info). They need the chat’s QR again to rejoin.
- **Delete for everyone** on any message.



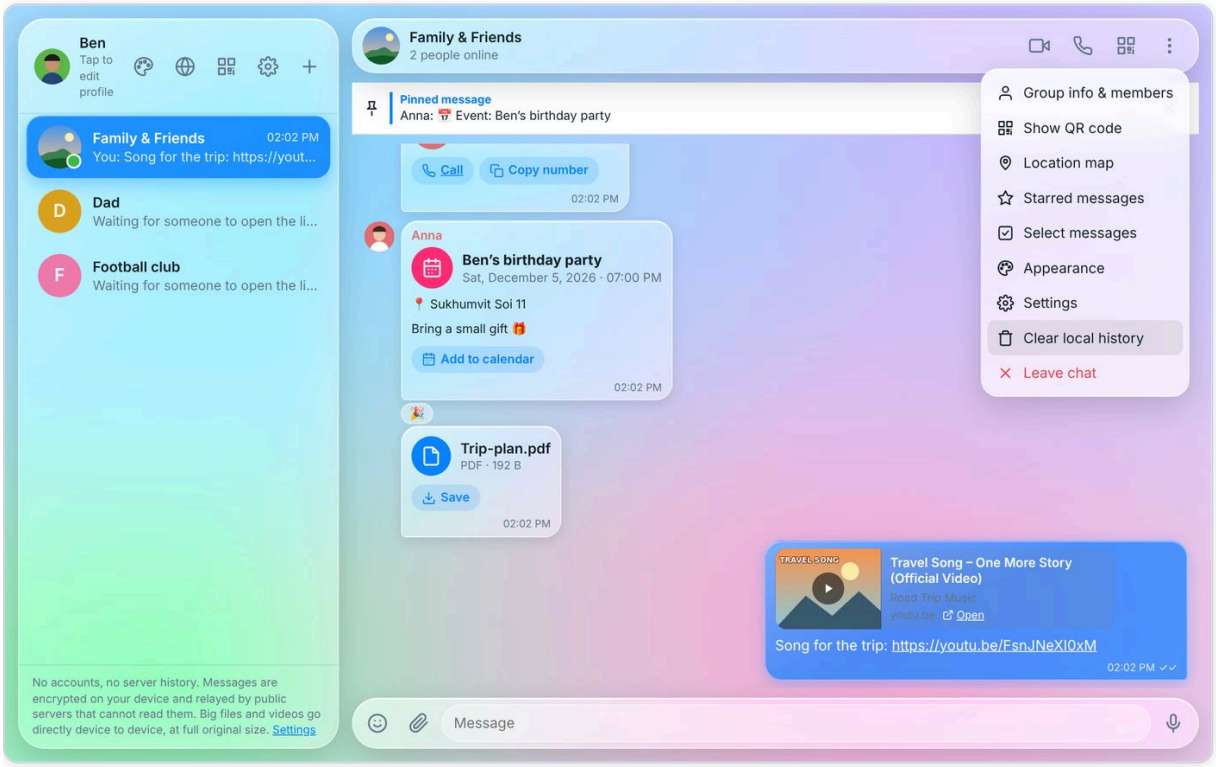
Removing a member asks you first.

> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> If the group has no admin (for example a very old chat), Group info shows **Become admin**.

The ⋮ menu of a chat

Item	What it does
Group info & members	Members, admins, name and photo.
Show QR code	Invite more people.
Location map	Live locations of the people in this chat (Chapter 17).

Starred messages	Your starred messages in this chat.
Media, links and docs	All photos, videos, links and files of this chat (Chapter 11).
Disappearing messages	New messages delete themselves after 1 hour, 24 hours, 7 days or 30 days (Chapter 25).
Scheduled messages	Messages waiting to be sent later (Chapter 25).
Team board	Who checked in and where (Chapter 25).
Select messages	Select several messages.
Appearance / Settings	Chapters 19, 20.
Clear local history	Deletes the messages of this chat **on your device only**. It asks **“Clear chat history?”** first.
Leave chat	You leave the chat and it is removed from your device.

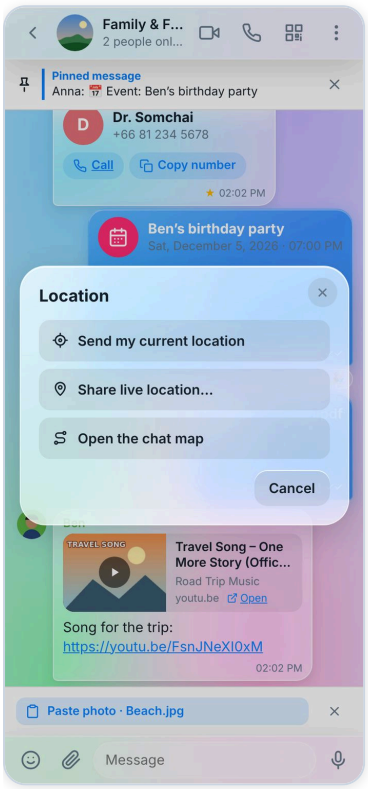


💻 The ⋮ menu on the computer.

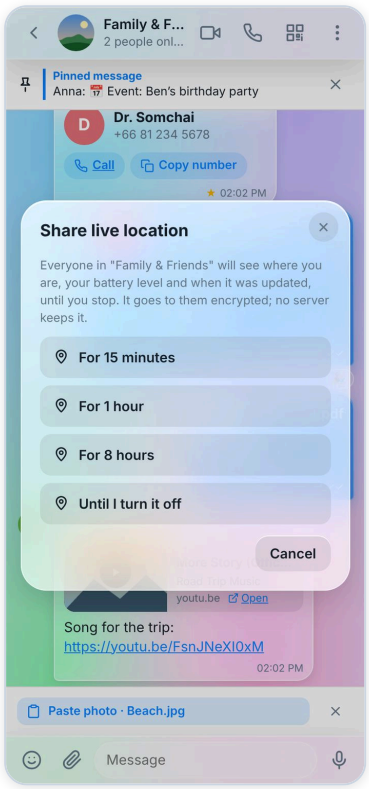
CHAPTER 17

Location sharing

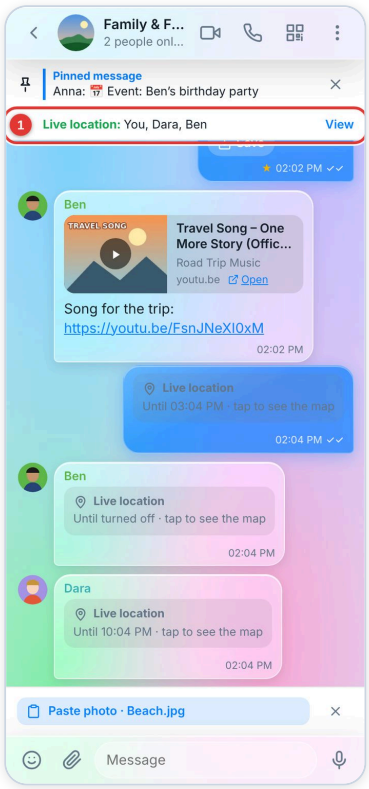
Like Life360: people in a chat can see each other on a map, check in, send SOS and get alerts when someone arrives home. **Each person decides to share**, and everyone sees who is sharing.



📎 › **Location**: send your current location once, share live location, or open the map.

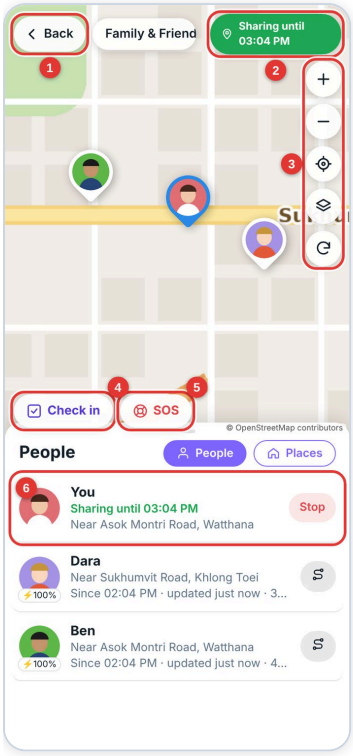


Share live location: for 15 minutes, 1 hour, 8 hours or until you turn it off.



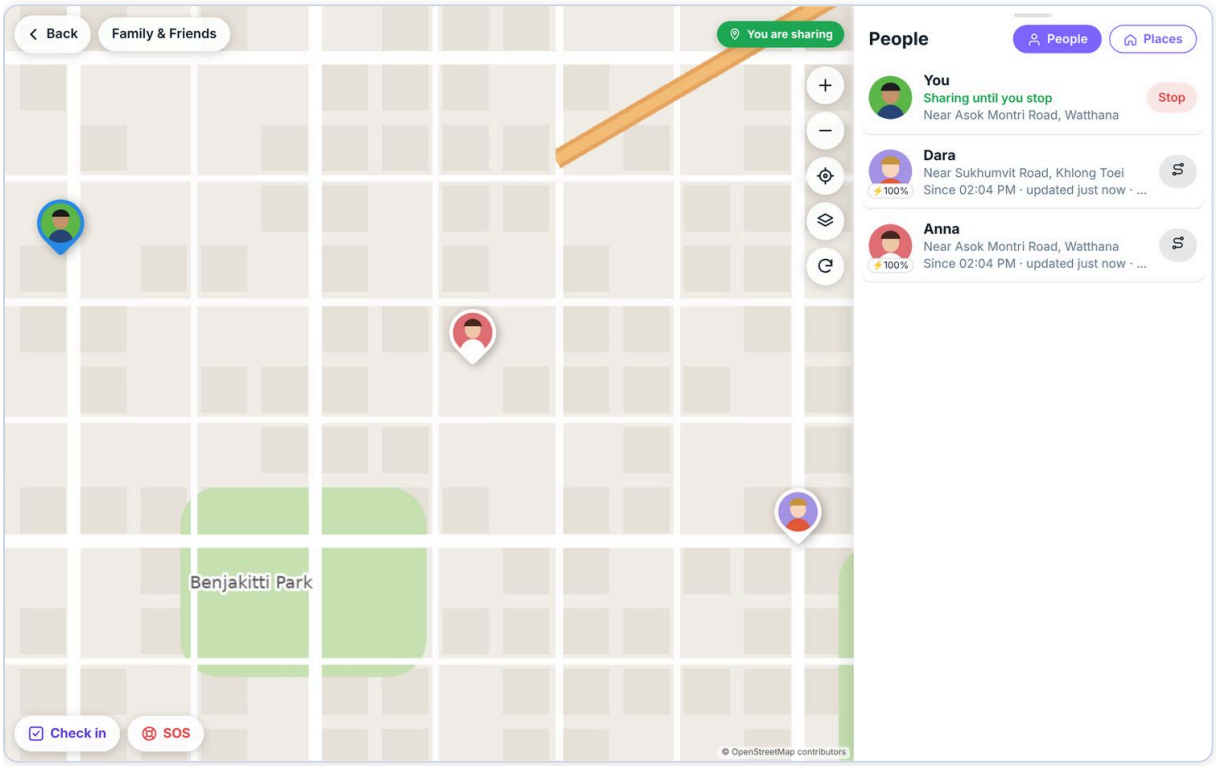
1 The green bar shows who is sharing in this chat. Tap **View** for the map.

The map 📱 Android 💻 Computer



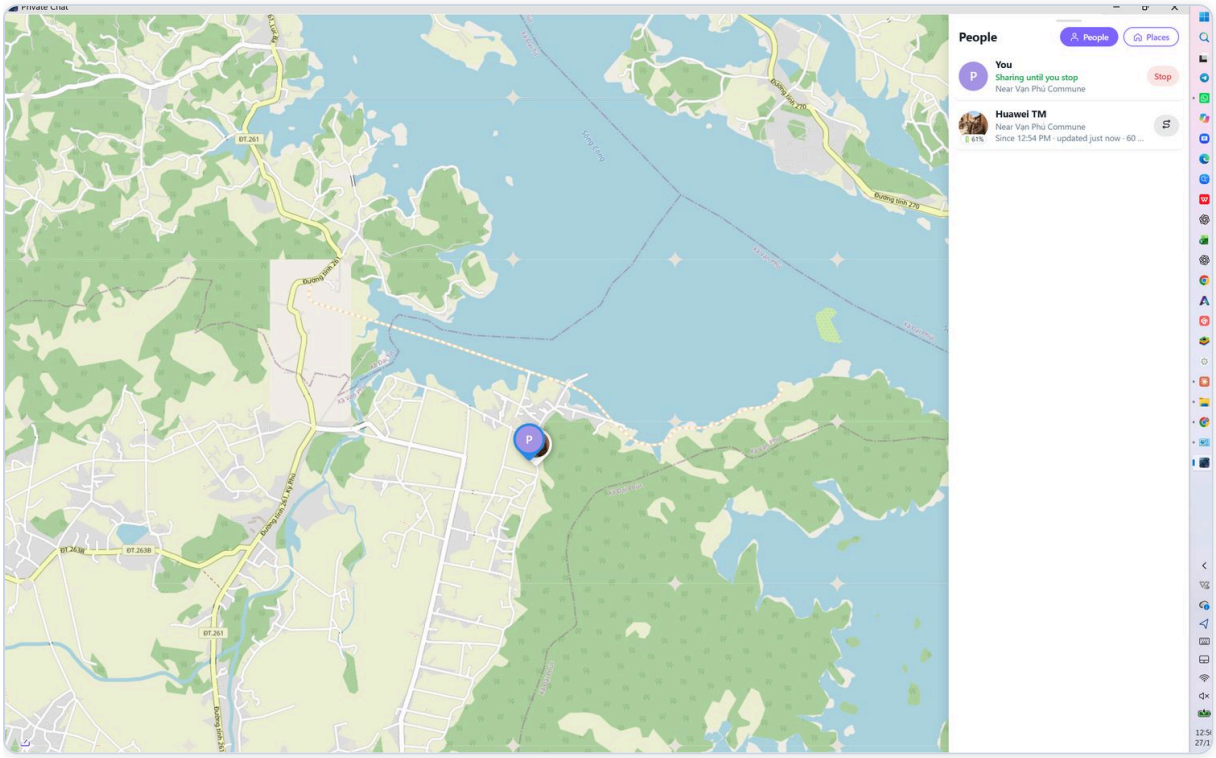
1. **Back** to the chat.
2. Shows that **you are sharing** and until when.
3. Zoom in / out, **show everyone**, **map type**, **ask for fresh locations**.
4. **Check in**: sends “I am here” with a small map to the chat.
5. **SOS**: an alert with your location to everyone in the chat.
6. **You**: Share / Stop. Below: every person with battery, street, since when, how far away, and a directions button.

📱 Location map (⋮ › Location map)

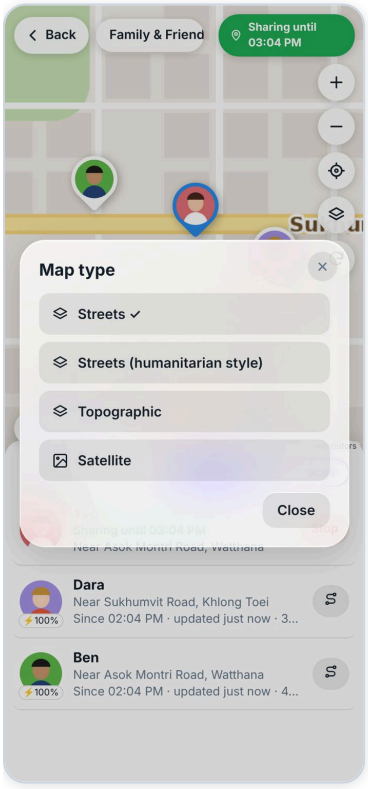


💻 The map on the computer: map on the left, people on the right. Drag to move the map, scroll the mouse wheel to zoom.

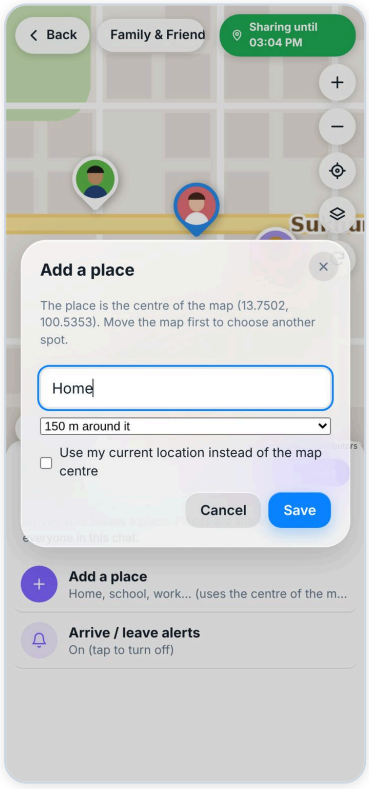
> **ℹ️ Good to know**
>
> The map pictures in this book are illustrations. In the app you see the real streets (from OpenStreetMap, free, no account).



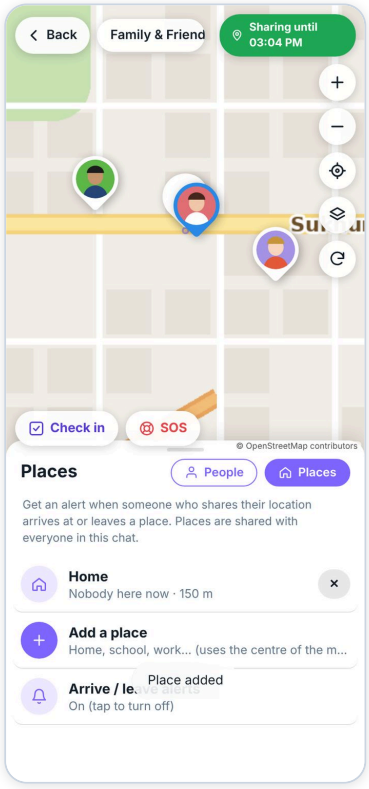
A real map in Private Chat on a computer (OpenStreetMap streets): your pin, your friend’s pin and the People list.



Map type: Streets, Humanitarian, Topographic or Satellite.

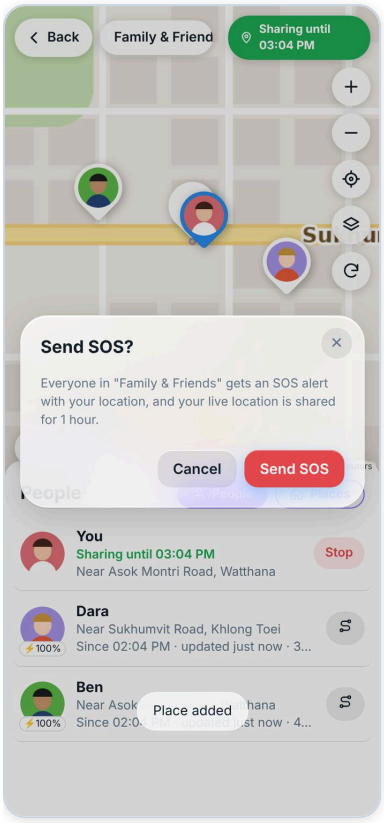


Places › Add a place: Home, School, Office… at the map centre or your location, with a size.

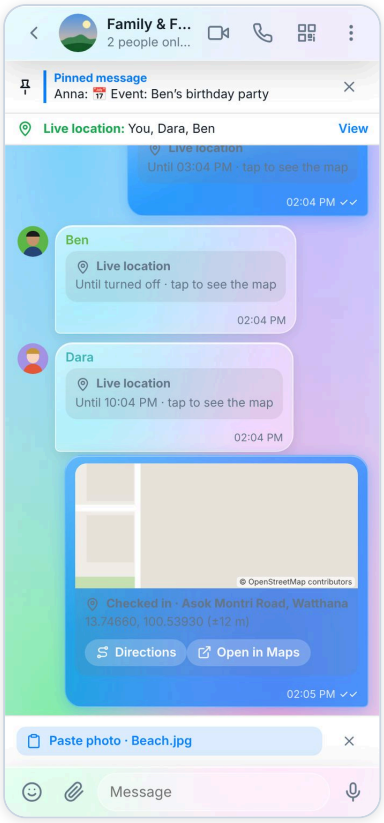


Places list: who is there now, and Arrive/leave alerts on/off.

With places set, everyone in the chat gets alerts like “📍 Ben arrived at Home” or “🚶 Dara left School”.

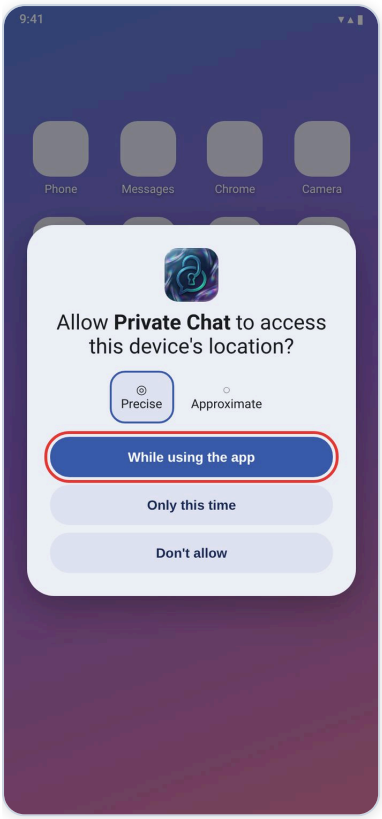


SOS asks first. It sends your location and shares it for 1 hour.

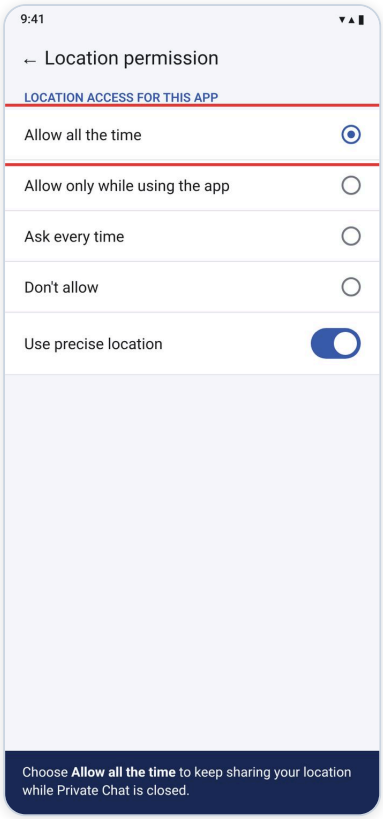


Check in and SOS messages show a small map with **Directions** and **Open in Maps**.

Location permission 📱 Android



The first time, allow location **While using the app**.



To keep sharing while the app is closed: tap the yellow tip **Allow** in the map and choose **Allow all the time**.

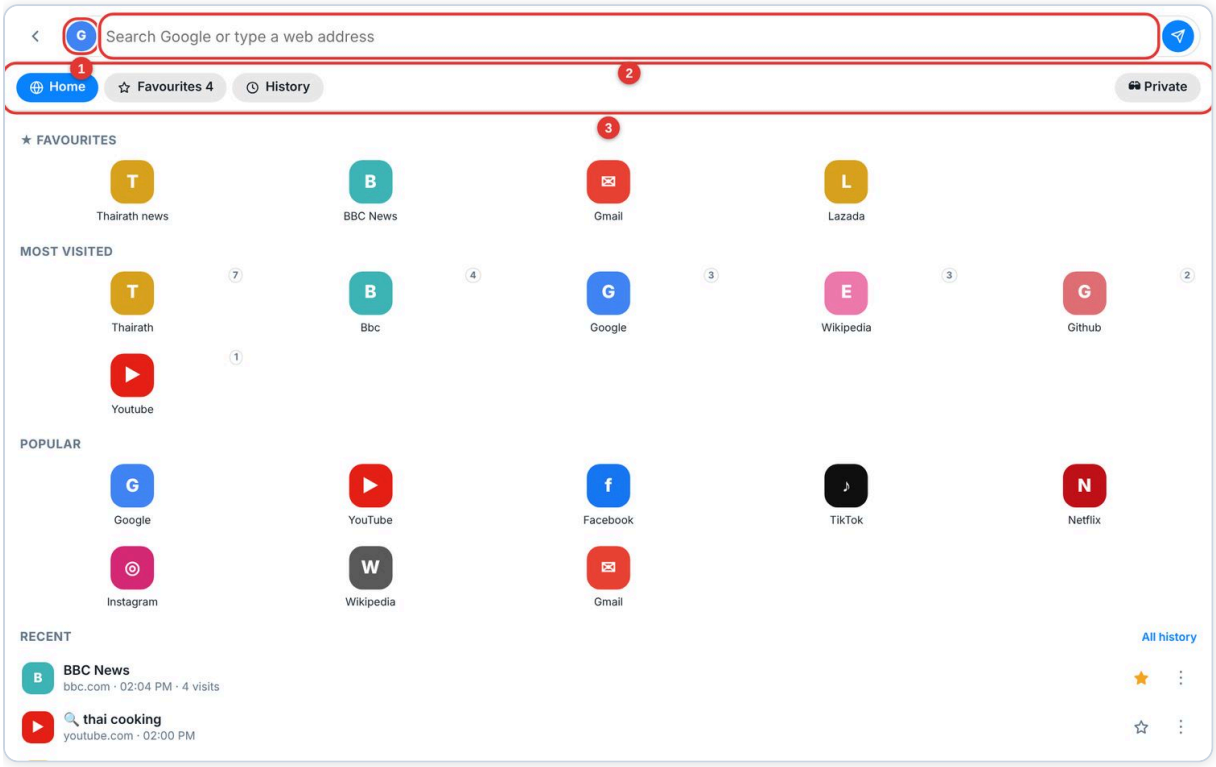
💻 On the computer

On the computer, location must be turned on in Windows Settings › Privacy › Location. A computer finds its place from Wi-Fi, so it is less exact than a phone.

CHAPTER 18

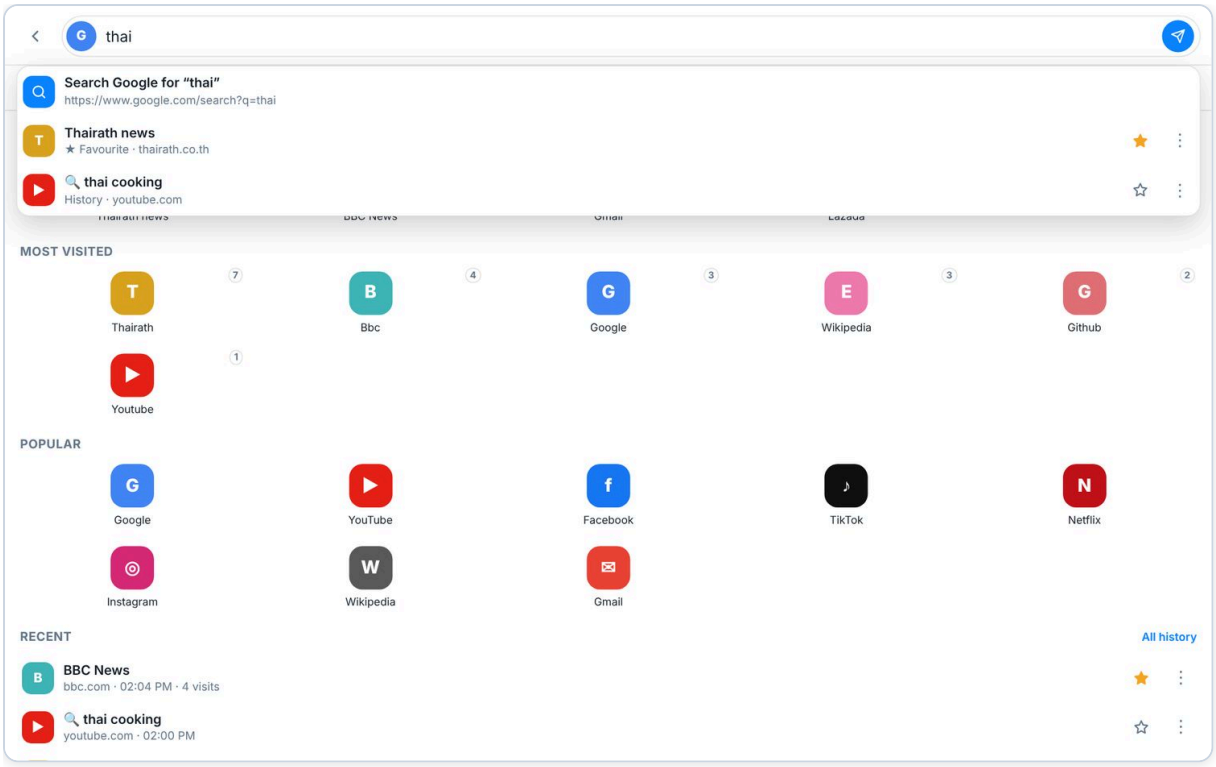
The browser

Tap the **globe** 🌐 on the main screen. Search the web and keep your favourite sites, without leaving Private Chat.



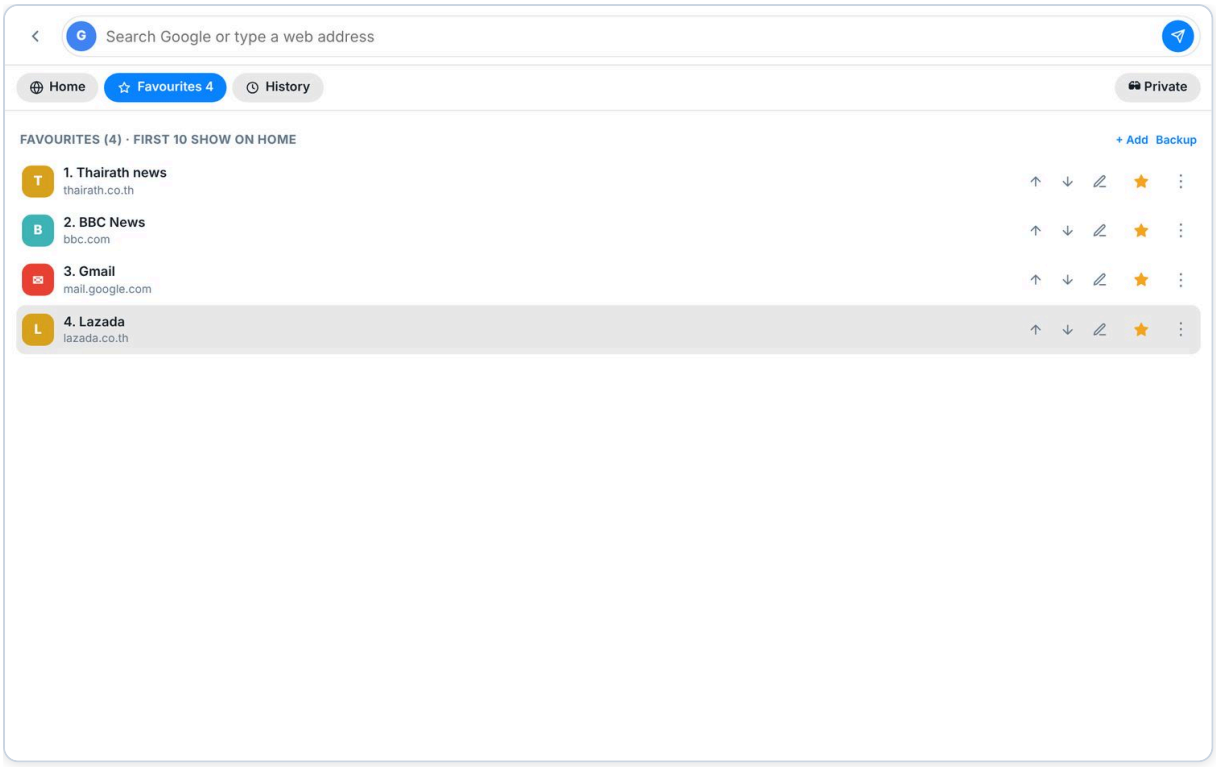
💻 Browser home. **1** search engine (tap to change), **2** address bar, **3** tabs: Home, Favourites, History, Private mode.

Home shows your first 10 **favourites**, your 10 **most visited** sites (with how many visits), popular sites, recent pages and tips.

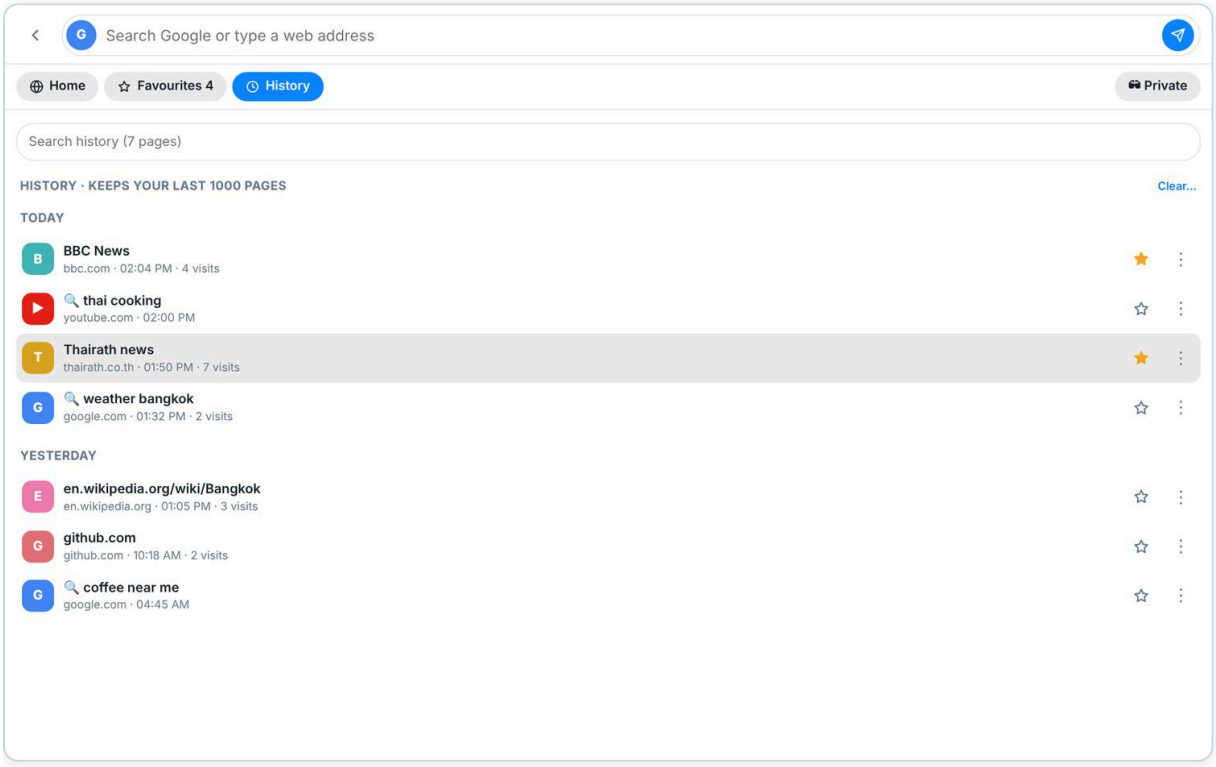


While you type, suggestions come from your favourites and history. The first line searches the web.

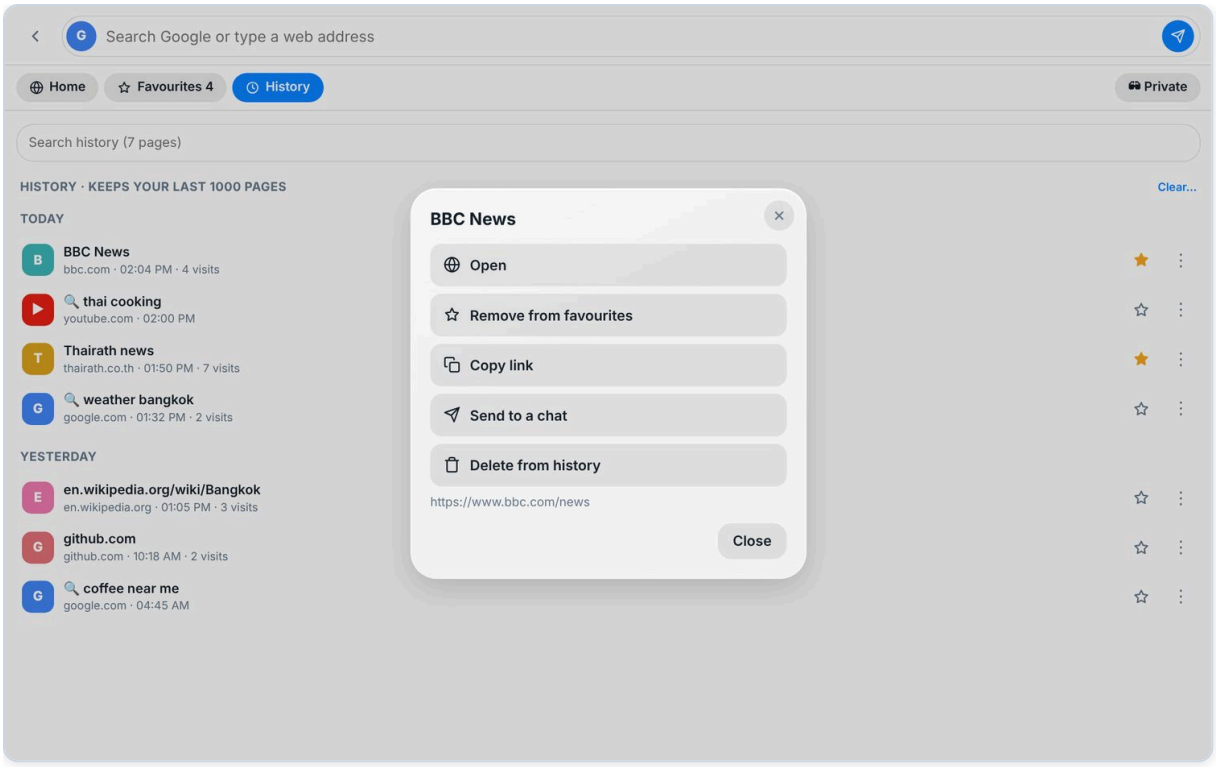
Type in the bar	Opens
`bbc.com`	The website.
`weather bangkok`	A search with your search engine.
`yt thai cooking`	YouTube search.
`w Bangkok`	Wikipedia.
`m coffee near me`	Google Maps.
`tr hello`	Google Translate.
`img cat`	Image search.
`fb …` / `tt …`	Facebook / TikTok search.



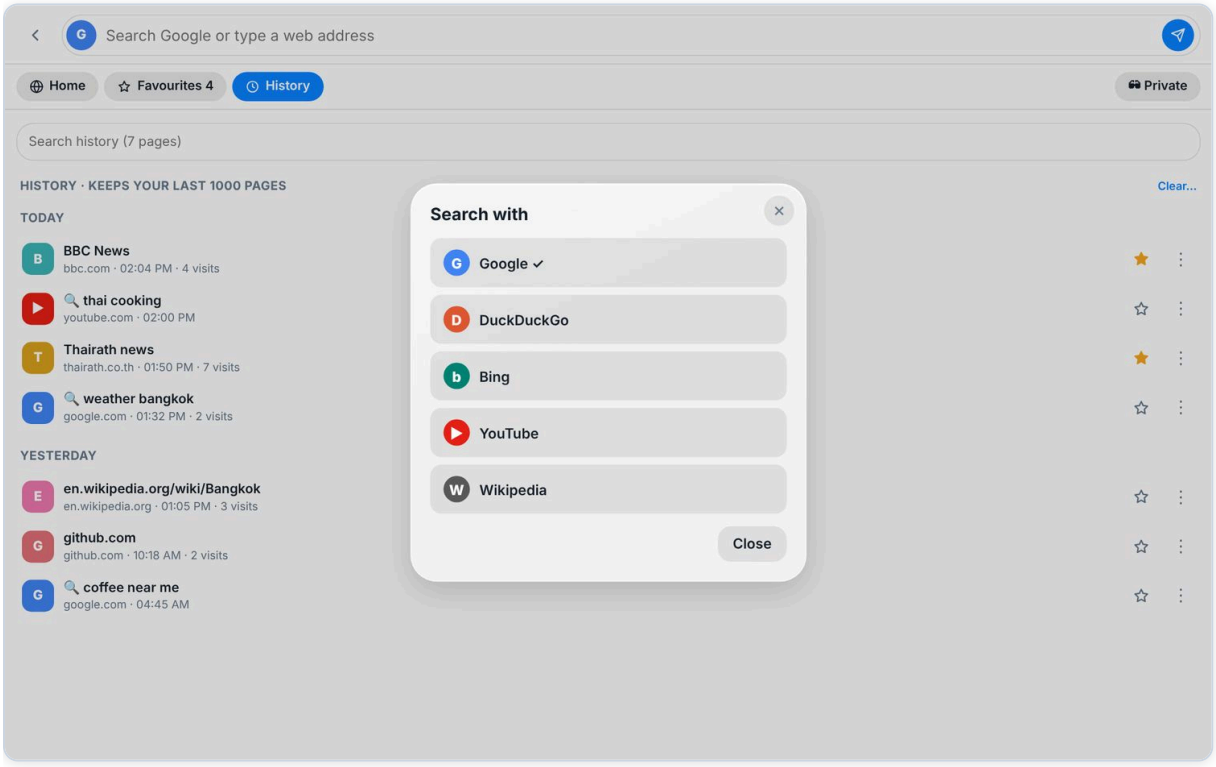
Favourites: ↑ ↓ to change the order (the first 10 are on Home), ✎ rename, + Add, **Backup** to copy them to another device.



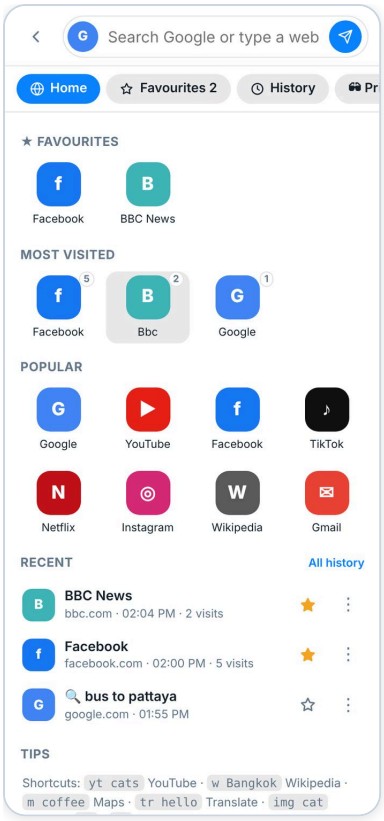
History: the last 1000 pages, by day, with search. **Clear…**: last hour, 24 hours, 7 days or everything.



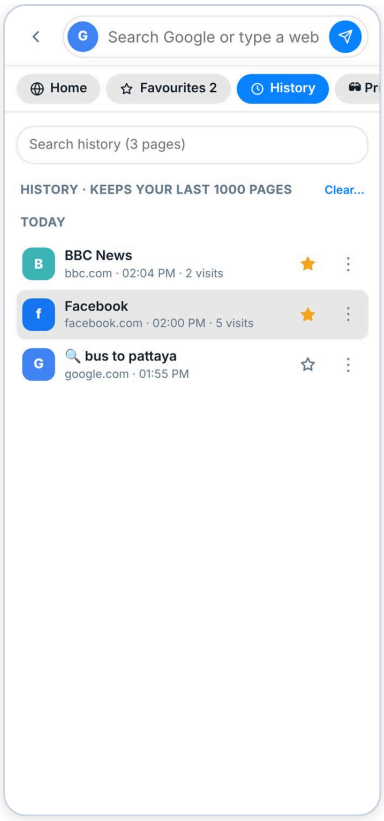
Tap ⋮ next to a page: Open, Play here (video links), Add to favourites, Copy link, **Send to a chat**, Delete from history.



Choose your search engine: Google, DuckDuckGo, Bing, YouTube or Wikipedia.



📱 Browser on Android.



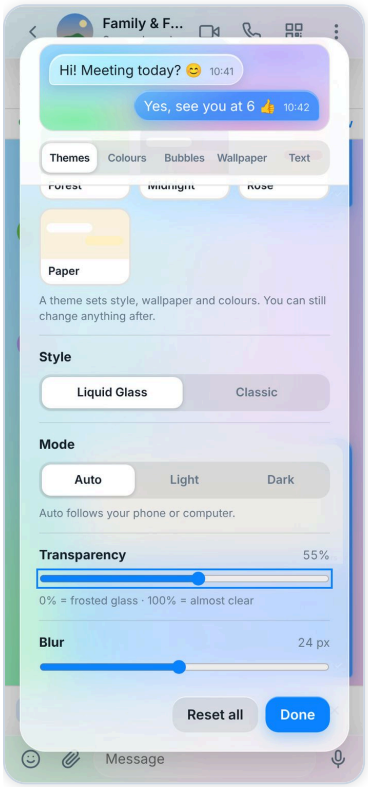
📱 History on Android.

- 🕶 **Private**: while on, pages are not saved in history.
- Pages open in your phone’s browser tab (Android: on top of Private Chat; tap ✕ to come back) or in your computer’s browser. Private Chat keeps running.
- Links you open from chats are saved in history too.

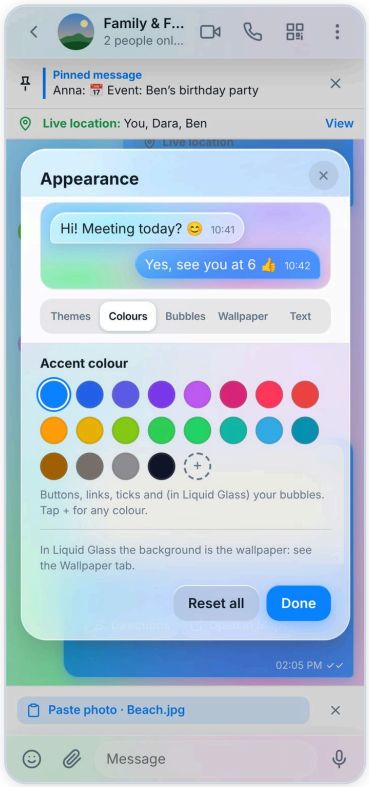
CHAPTER 19

Appearance

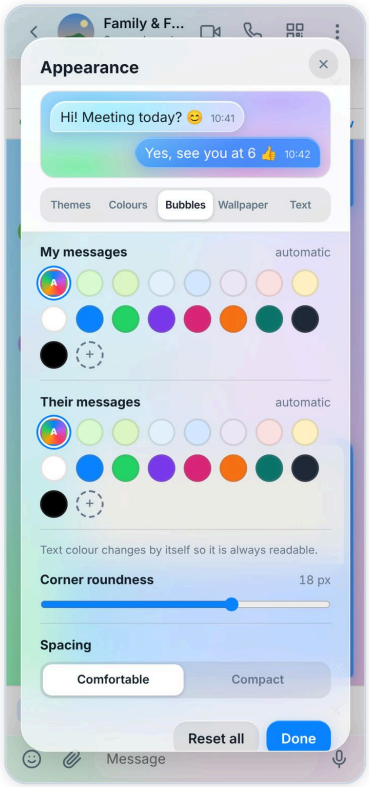
Tap the **palette** 🎨 on the main screen (or ⋮ › Appearance). A preview at the top shows the result right away.



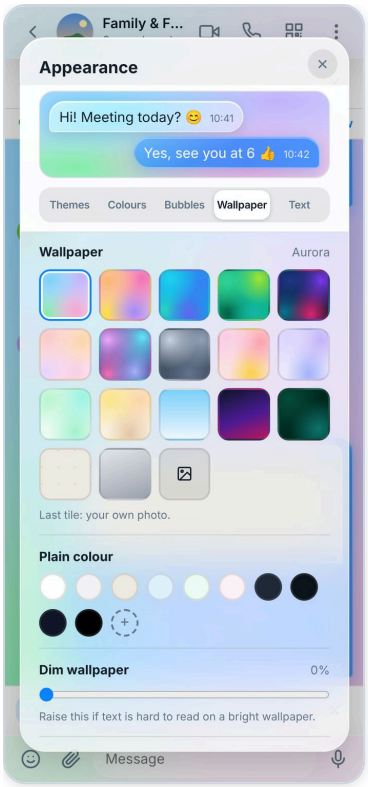
Themes: 10 one-tap themes, Liquid Glass or Classic, Light/Dark/Auto, transparency, blur.



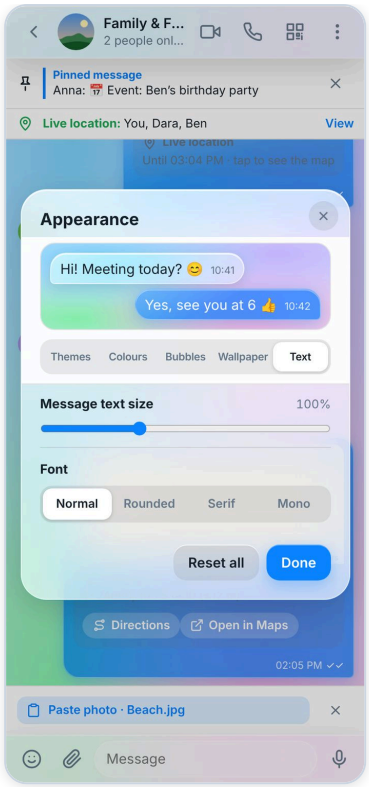
Colours: 20 accent colours or **+** any colour.



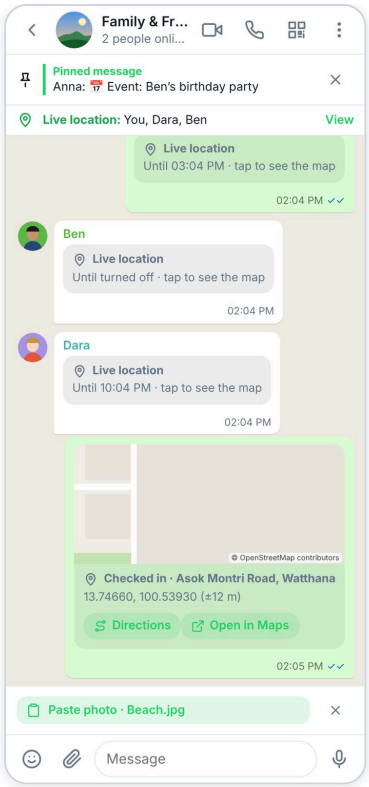
Bubbles: colour of your and their messages, roundness, compact spacing.



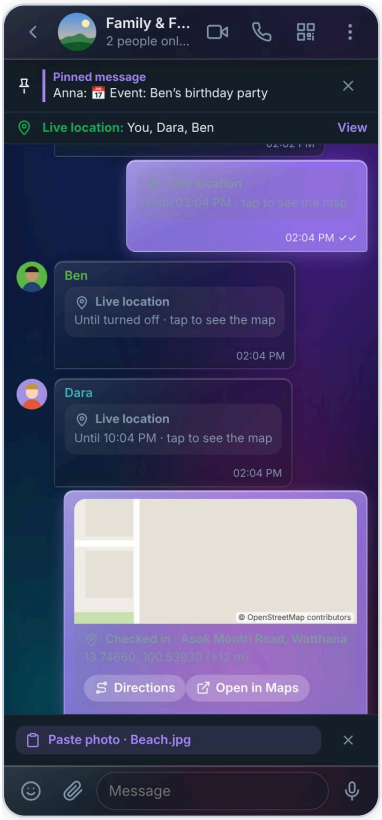
Wallpaper: 18 wallpapers, plain colours, or **your own photo** (last tile). Dim, transparency, blur.



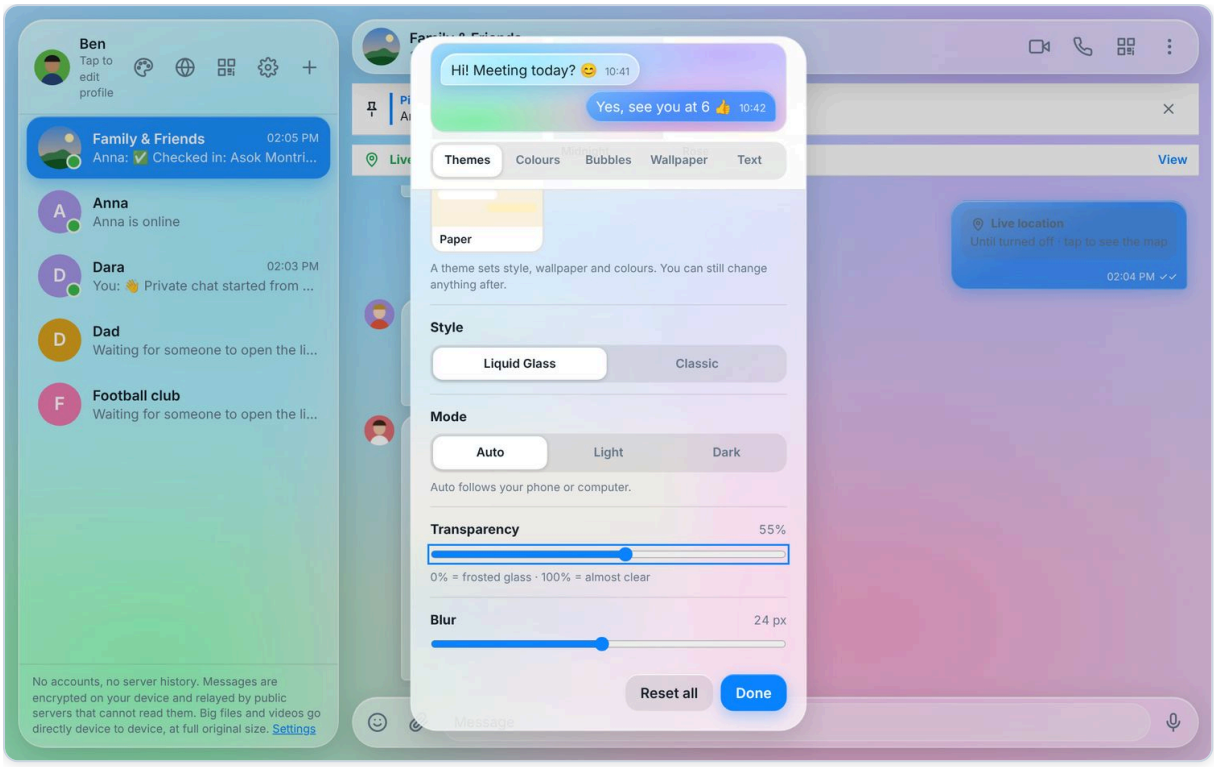
Text: message text size (80–140%) and font.



The WhatsApp theme.



The Midnight theme (dark).



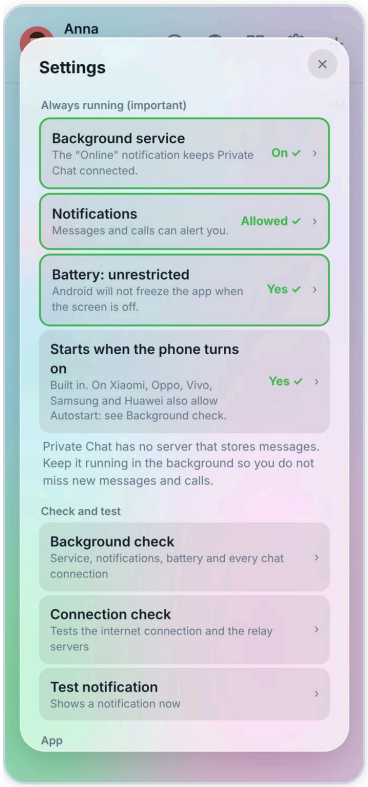
💻 Appearance on the computer.

> ℹ️ **Good to know**
> **Reset all** brings back the original look. Appearance is saved on each device separately.

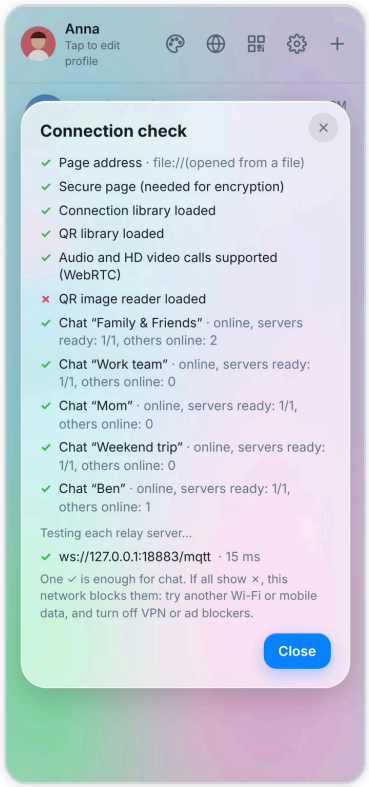
CHAPTER 20

Settings, connection check and About

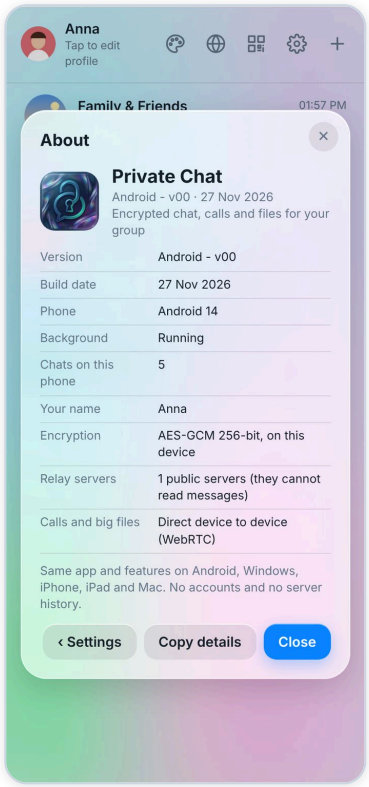
The gear ⚙ on the main screen. Chapter 5 explains the rows about keeping the app running.



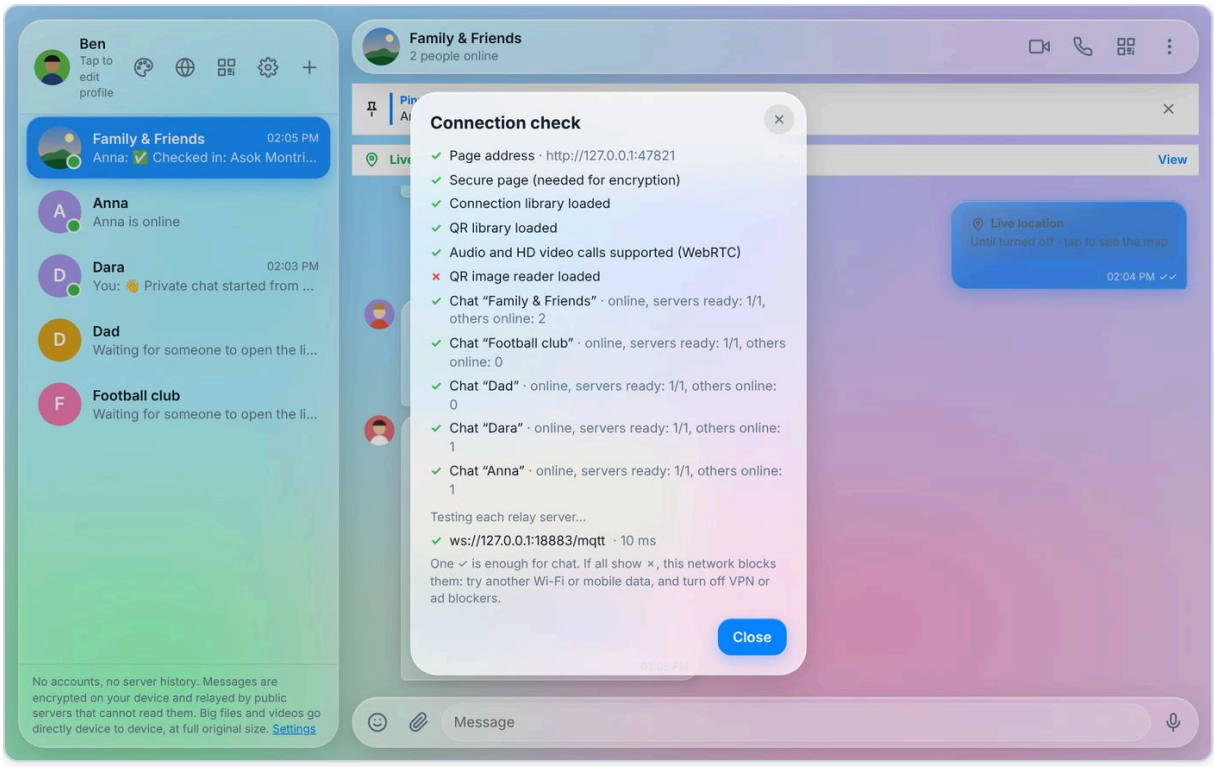
📱 Settings.



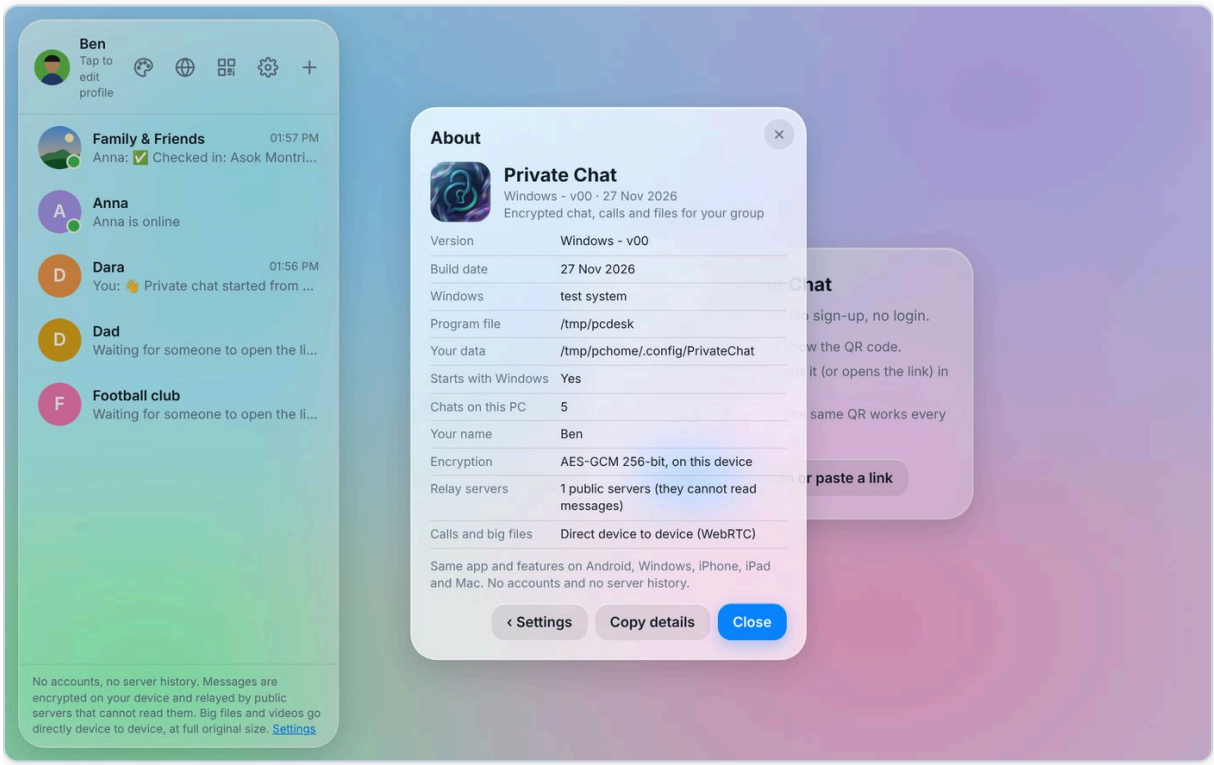
Connection check: tests the internet and each relay server.



About Private Chat: version (Android - v1), build date, device, and how your data is kept.



💻 Connection check on the computer.

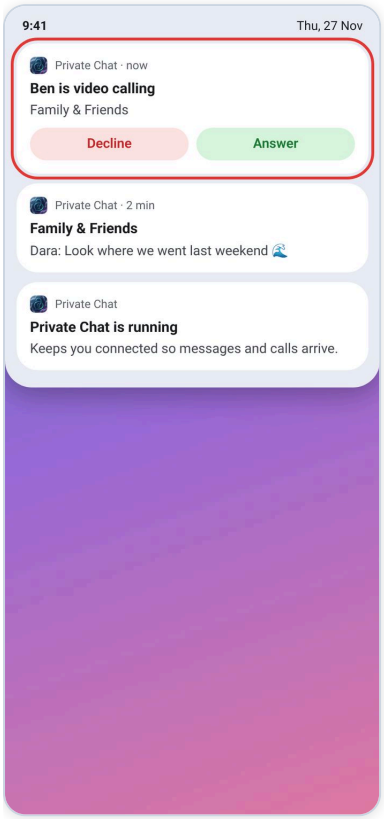


💻 About on the computer: Windows - v1.

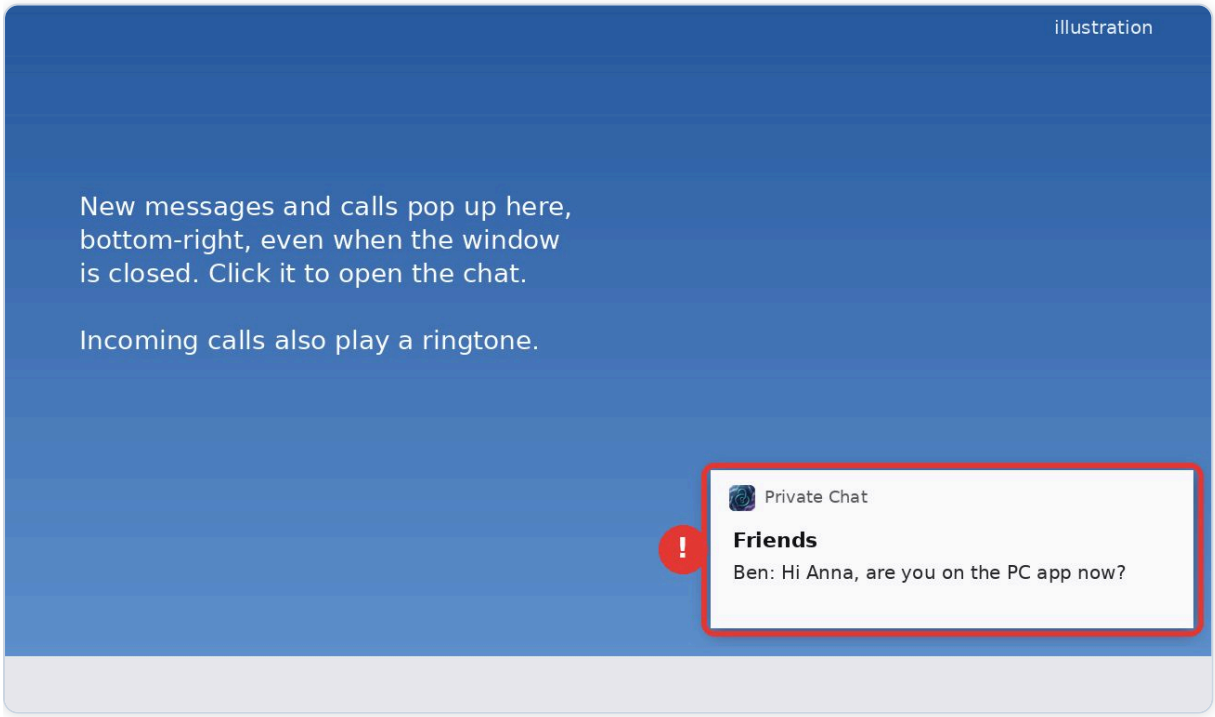
> 💡 **Tip**
> If someone asks “which version do you have?”, look in **Settings › About Private Chat**.

CHAPTER 21

Notifications



📱 Android: messages, calls (Answer / Decline) and the quiet “running” notification.



💻 Windows: messages and calls pop up at the bottom-right, even when the window is closed. Click to open the chat. Calls also ring.

- Use **Settings › Test notification** to check that notifications work.

- No notifications? Run **Settings › Background check** and fix every red ✗.
- Notifications only come while Private Chat runs (Chapter 5).

CHAPTER 22

Going back and keyboard keys

Every screen has a way back.

Where	How to go back
Any window	The × in its top-right corner, or **Cancel** / **Close**.
Map, browser, camera, photo viewer	The ← **Back** or × button at the top.
📱 Android	The phone’s **Back** button (or back gesture) closes the top screen, then goes back to the chat list.
💻 Computer	The **Esc** key closes the top screen (never the chat). The mouse’s side “back” button too.

Key (computer)	What it does
Enter	Send the message.
Shift + Enter	New line in the message.
Esc	Close the window, menu, map or browser on top.
↑ / ↓ on an incoming call	Answer / decline.
Ctrl + V	Paste text, or a copied picture into the message box.
Mouse wheel on the map	Zoom in / out.

CHAPTER 23

Privacy and safety

- **Who can read a chat?** Only people who have its QR code or link. Treat it like a key to your house.
- **Removed a member?** The chat changes its key, so they cannot read new messages.
- **Lost your phone?** The chats are only on that phone. Ask an admin of each group to remove the lost phone’s name.
- **New phone?** Install the app and join your chats again with their QR codes. Old messages stay on the old phone (no server copy).
- **Location** is shared only when you choose, only with that chat, and you can stop at any time.
- **Strangers with a code:** accept “Connect with…” only if you know the person.
- **Recording calls:** everyone sees the recording notice. Ask before you record.

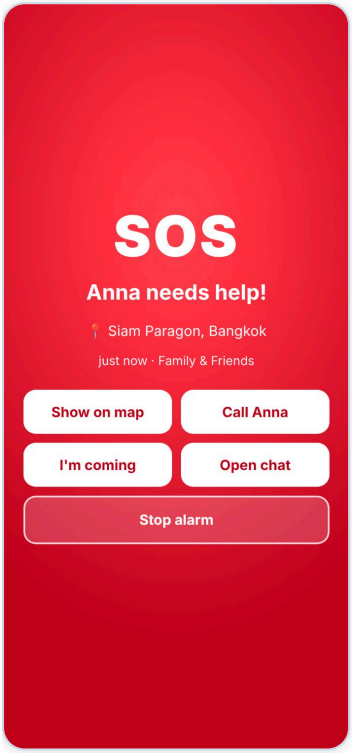
CHAPTER 24

Safety tools

For families, people living alone and anyone going home late. Everything runs on your own phone and goes only to the chats you choose.

SOS alarm

📱 Android 💻 Computer



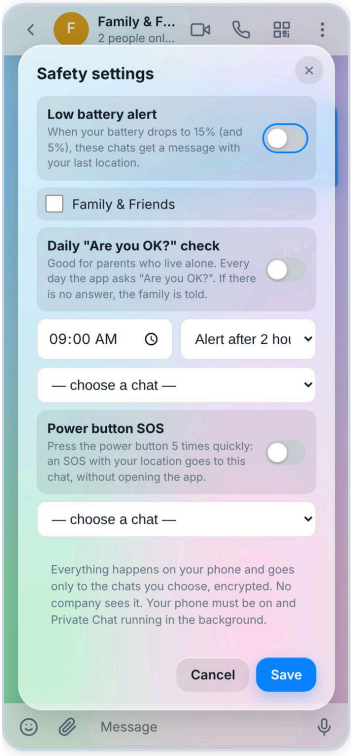
📱 What your family sees

Location map › **SOS** (it asks first). Everyone in the chat gets a **full red screen with a loud alarm**, even when their phone is on silent, until they react.

They tap **Show on map**, **Call**, **I’m coming** or **Stop alarm**. Your live location is shared for 1 hour.

> ⚠️ **Important**
> Private Chat does not call the police or an ambulance. In an emergency also call your local emergency number.

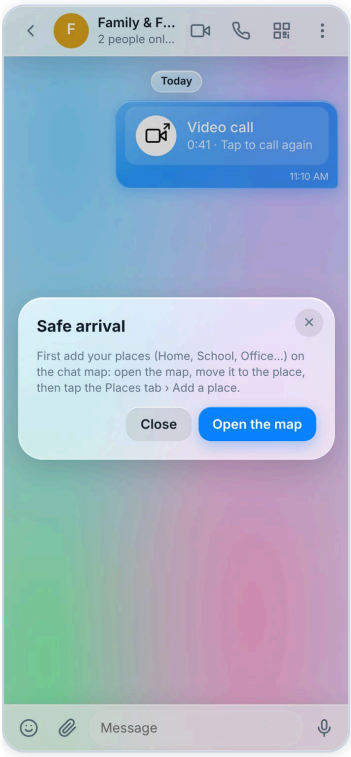
Safety settings 📱 Android



- **Low battery alert**: at 15% and 5% the chats you choose get a message with your last location.
- **Daily “Are you OK?” check**: good for parents who live alone. Every day at the time you choose the app asks “Are you OK?”. If there is no answer, the family is told.
- **Power button SOS**: press the power button 5 times quickly to send an SOS without opening the app.

📱 Settings › Safety settings

Safe arrival 📱 Android 💻 Computer

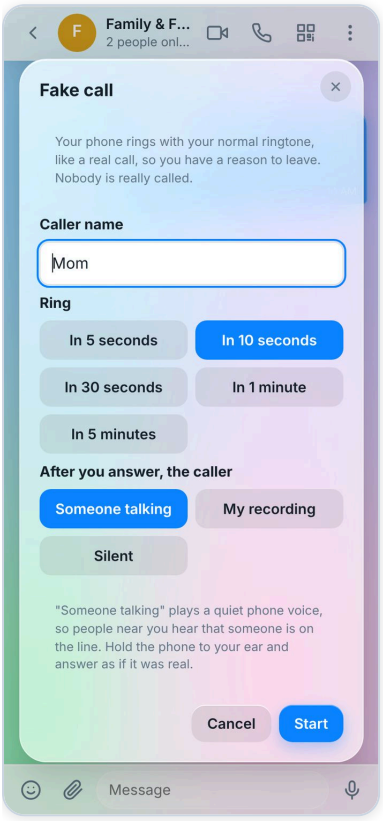


Add your places (Home, School, Office...) on the chat map. Choose where you are going and when you should arrive.

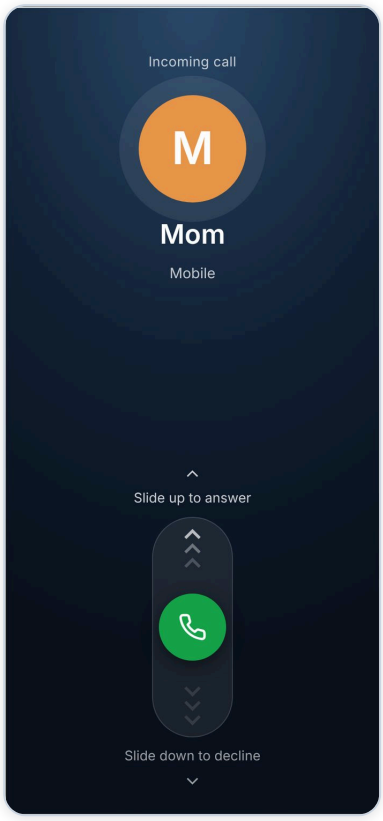
Your family gets **“Arrived safely”** automatically, or a warning with your last location if you are late.

📱 Location map › Places

Fake call 📱 Android



Settings › **Fake call** (or 📍 › Fake call): type a caller name and when it should ring.

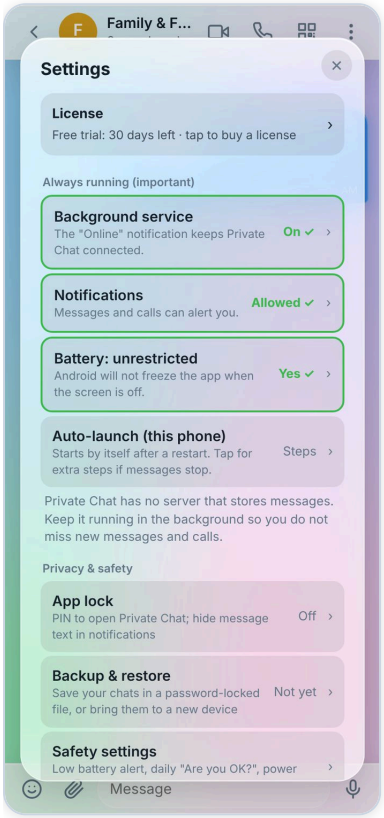


Your phone rings with its **real ringtone** and the normal call screen. Slide up to answer: a voice talks, so it sounds like a real call.

CHAPTER 25

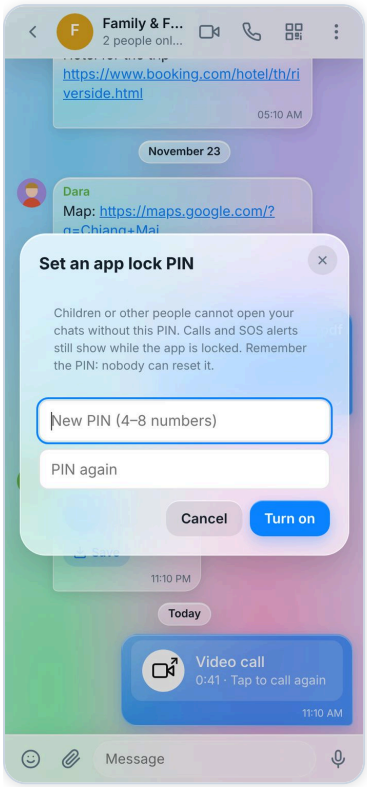
Privacy tools

Settings › **Privacy & safety**.

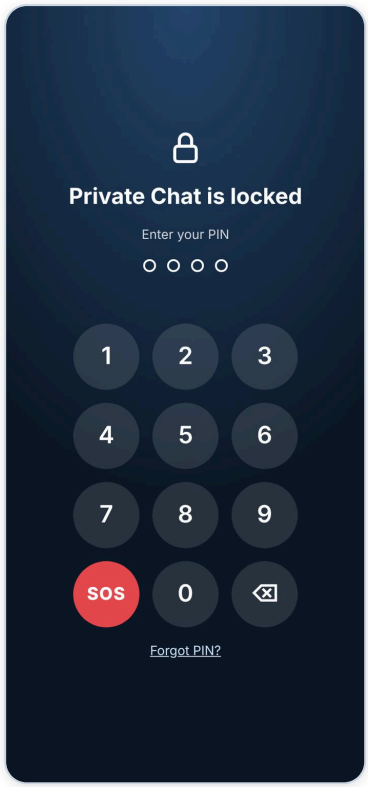


The Privacy & safety part of Settings.

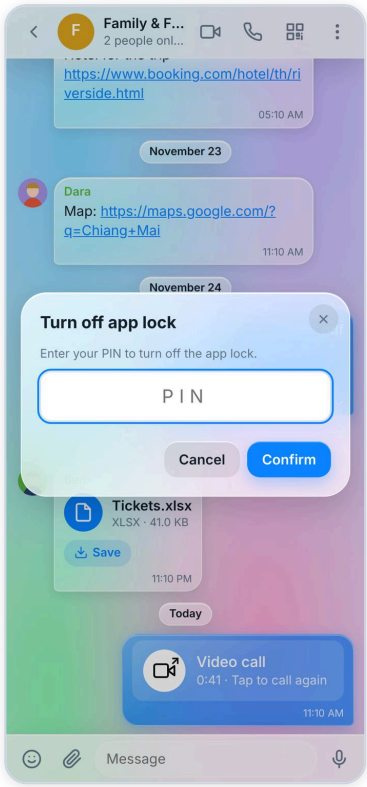
App lock (PIN) 📱 Android 💻 Computer



Set a PIN of 4 to 8 numbers. Choose when it locks again.



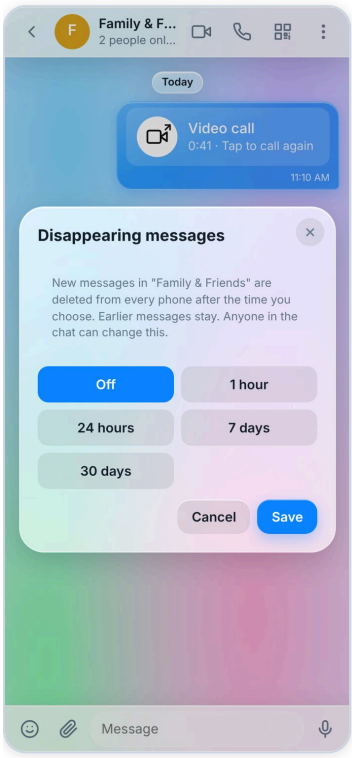
The lock screen. The key beside 0 is **SOS** (hold 2 seconds) when a safety chat is set, otherwise **OK**.



Turning the lock off asks for your PIN, so a child or another person cannot switch it off.

> ⚠️ **Important**
> Nobody can reset a forgotten PIN, not even the developer. Make a backup (below).

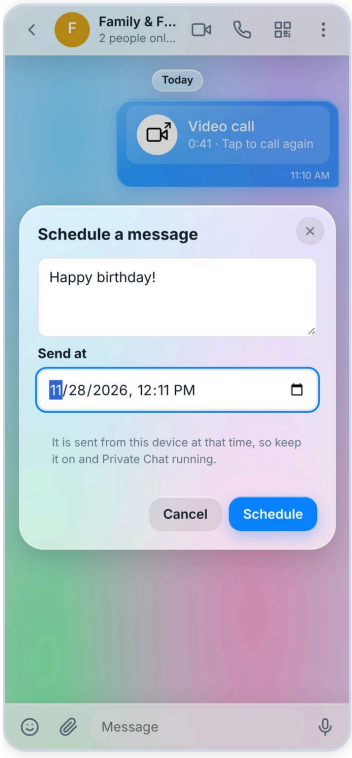
Disappearing messages 📱 Android 💻 Computer



New messages in this chat are deleted from every phone after 1 hour, 24 hours, 7 days or 30 days. Earlier messages stay.

📱 ⋮ › Disappearing messages

Scheduled messages 📱 Android 💻 Computer

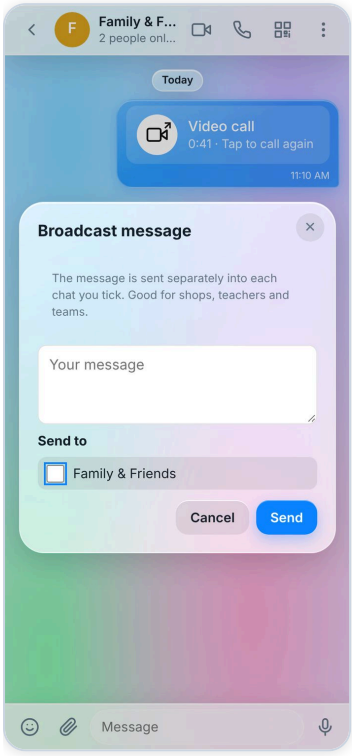


Type a message, then **press and hold Send ➤**. Choose the date and time and tap **Schedule**.

⋮ › Scheduled messages shows what is waiting. Your device must be on at that time.

📱 Hold the Send button

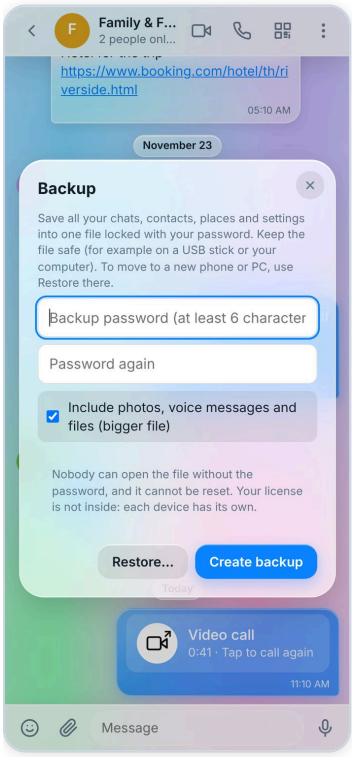
Broadcast 📱 Android 💻 Computer



Send the same message to many chats at once. Each chat gets it separately, so nobody sees the other chats. Good for shops, teachers and teams.

📱 Settings › Broadcast

Backup and restore 📱 Android 💻 Computer

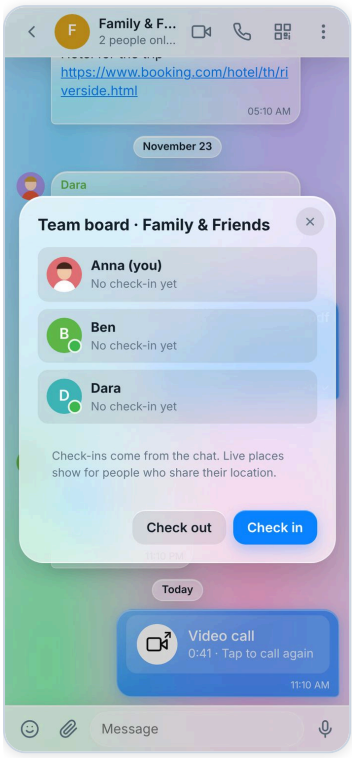


Saves all your chats, contacts, places and settings in **one file locked with your password**. Keep it safe (USB stick, computer).

New phone or PC: install Private Chat, then **Restore...** and choose the file. Without the password nobody can open it.

📱 Settings › Backup & restore

Team board 📱 Android 💻 Computer



For teams in the field: everyone taps **Check in** / **Check out**. The board shows who is where and since when.

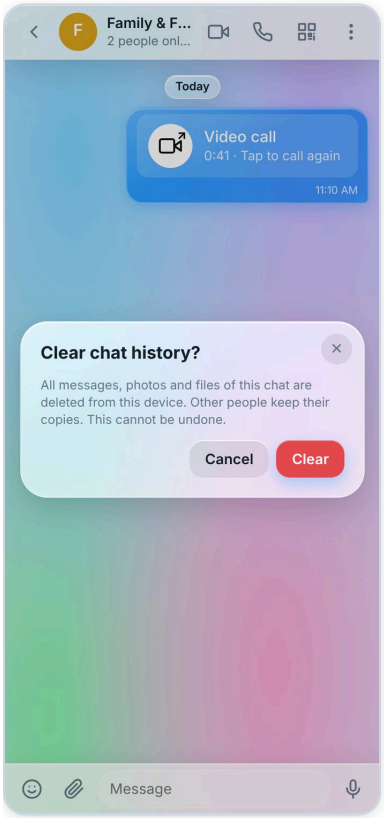
📱 ⋮ › Team board

CHAPTER 26

Ask-first protection

Important actions always ask a second time, so nothing happens by a wrong tap or a child’s hand.

Action	What it asks
Start a voice or video call	“Start voice call?” / “Start video call?” › Call
Switch a call to video	“Switch to video call?” › Switch
Answer or decline a call	Slide, not tap
Clear local history	“Clear chat history?” › Clear
Delete for everyone	“Delete for everyone?” › Delete
Turn off the app lock	Your PIN
Send SOS	“Send SOS?” or hold 2 seconds on the lock screen
Leave a chat	“Leave this chat?” › Leave



Example: Clear local history asks first.

CHAPTER 27

Problems and answers

❓ **I do not get messages when the app is closed.**

Android: Settings › Background check, fix every ✗ (notifications, battery Unrestricted, background service). Some phone brands also need “auto start” allowed. Computer: Start with Windows on; do not use Quit in the tray.

❓ **A friend says they sent a message but I never got it.**

Your device was off or the app was not running at that moment. There is no server to keep it, so ask them to send it again.

❓ **The chat says “Waiting for someone to open the link”.**

Nobody else has joined yet. Send the QR code or link (QR button in the chat).

❓ **It says “connecting” or “offline”.**

Check the internet. Then Settings › Connection check. Mobile data or another Wi-Fi often helps.

❓ **A call does not connect, or there is no video/sound.**

Allow camera and microphone (Android: Settings › Apps › Private Chat › Permissions). Try Wi-Fi. Both sides should have the newest version.

❓ **A big file or video does not arrive.**

Big files go directly between devices: both must stay online until it arrives. The receiver can tap Download later while you are online.

❓ **The QR scanner does not open the camera.**

Allow the camera. Or use “Choose picture” with a screenshot of the QR, or paste the link, or use Connect with a code.

❓ **Android says the app is not safe / blocked.**

It is not from the Play Store. Use More details › Install anyway (Chapter 2).

❓ **Windows says “Windows protected your PC”.**

More info › Run anyway (Chapter 3).

❓ **The map is empty or blank.**

Check the internet, then tap the map type button and choose another map type (Satellite works almost always).

❓ **My location does not update while the app is closed.**

Android: allow location “All the time” (Chapter 17).

❓ **A video link does not play in the small player.**

Some videos (private, age-restricted) only play on their website: tap Open under the card.

❓ **I cannot find a screen’s back button.**

Every window has ✕ top-right. Android Back button and computer Esc always work.

❓ **I want everything back to normal look.**

Appearance › Reset all.

❓ **Which version do I have?**

Settings › About Private Chat.

CHAPTER 28

Quick reference

Everything on one page.

I want to…	Do this
Change my name or photo	Main screen › tap your name (top-left)
Start a chat	+ › name › Create › share the QR
Join a chat	QR button › scan / Choose picture / paste link
Connect without QR	+ › Connect with a code / QR button › I have a code
Private chat with a group member	Tap their message › Message … privately
Invite more people	In the chat: QR button
Reply, react, forward, pin, star, copy, delete	Tap the message
Send photo, file, camera, contact, poll, event, sticker	📎
Voice message	Hold 🎤, talk, let go · slide left = cancel · slide up = lock
Video or voice call	📹 / 📞 in the chat
Answer a call	Slide up (computer: ↑)
Record a call	During the call: ⋮ More › Record this call
Switch a call to video	During the call: Video
React during a call	⋮ More › 👍 ❤️ 😂
Find a photo, link or file	⋮ › Media, links and docs
Lock the app with a PIN	⚙ › App lock
Back up my chats	⚙ › Backup & restore
Share my location	📎 › Location, or ⋮ › Location map › Share
Send SOS	Location map › SOS
Search the web	🌐
Change colours and wallpaper	🎨
Check the app runs in background	⚙ › Background check
See my version	⚙ › About

CHAPTER 29

Words used in this book

Word	Meaning
Chat	A conversation with one person or a group. Each chat has its own secret key.
QR code / link	The secret key of a chat as a picture / as text. Having it = being in the chat.
Admin	A person who manages a group (name, photo, members).
Relay servers	Public internet servers that pass the locked messages on. They cannot read them.
Encrypted	Locked with a key, so only people in the chat can read it.
Background	The app runs without being on the screen.
Tray	Small icons at the bottom-right of the Windows screen, near the clock.
APK	An Android app file.
Live location	Your position on the map, updated while you move.
Check in	A message that says where you are now.
Floating player	The small video window that stays while you chat.
Spotlight / Grid	Call layouts: one person big / everyone the same size.