TOOLBOX

Network Commands in Your Pocket

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The network-troubleshooting commands you actually reach for are no longer chained to a Windows box. They are in your pocket, cross-platform, and free.

Every few months a "17 Essential Windows Network Commands" list goes around. Good commands. I have typed most of them countless times. The catch was always the same: you had to be sitting at a Windows machine to run them. The diagnostics most of us drop to a laptop for are now a tap away on the device already in your hand.

This is where the WLAN Pros Toolbox earns its keep. When Apple's sandbox will not let any app read deeper, the Toolbox tells you so instead of faking it.

Your own hardware MAC, your hostname, the neighbor table, your live SSID without a one-tap Shortcut. On iPhone, those are blocked by Apple, not missing from the app. Interface Info does not paint a fake blank where the real value should be. It says the value is unavailable on this device and why. ARP on iOS reports that Apple closes the neighbor table, rather than inventing a tidy list of MAC addresses that no iPhone app can actually read.

That refusal to fake it is the whole point. A diagnostic that lies to look complete is worse than one that admits a limit. I would rather hand you a tool that says "the OS blocks this here" than one that fills the gap with a confident guess. A few of these read deeper on macOS and Android, where the OS allows it.

Two notes on ping, because the words matter

The default Ping is a TCP-handshake reachability and latency probe, not an ICMP echo. That is a deliberate design choice. A TCP probe works in plenty of places where ICMP is filtered or dropped, so you still get a real reachability and latency answer when classic ping would just time out.

If you want genuine ICMP, there is a separate ICMP Ping tool, and it runs on iPhone and Android. It is real ICMP echo, not a TCP probe wearing the name. On sandboxed desktop it is the other way round: the ICMP path is closed there, so TCP Ping is the one that answers.

That is not a roadmap promise. That is what the platform does today, and the app says so on the screen.

So the commands you reach for to see what the network is doing now travel with you. The ones that change the machine stay where they belong, on the box that owns that machine.

Which one do you still drop to a laptop for?

When something is broken, what is the first command you type?

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