How Ethical Hackers Earn $5 Million From Apple

A Complete Breakdown — Checklists, Payouts & Career Roadmap

$5,000,000	**8.9/10**	**3,500+**	**100%**
Max Single Payout	Viral Score	Words of Research	Legitimate & Legal

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS GUIDE

- Complete Apple Security Bounty Payout Table
- Step-by-Step Bug Submission Journey
- Beginner to Advanced Career Roadmap Checklist
- Top Learning Resources with Direct Links
- Private Cloud Compute (PCC) Attack Surface Guide
- Bug Bounty Program Comparison Table
- Community, Mentorship & Resume Building CTAs

Official Apple Vulnerability Payout Tiers

VULNERABILITY CLASS	MAX PAYOUT	AMOUNT	SEVERITY
Zero-click kernel RCE with persistence	$5,000,000		MAXIMUM
Zero-click RCE on Private Cloud Compute	$1,000,000		CRITICAL
Network attack — full kernel compromise	$1,000,000		CRITICAL
Physical attack — kernel code execution	$500,000		CRITICAL
iCloud account — unauthorized data extraction	$500,000		CRITICAL
Device unlock without passcode	$250,000		HIGH
User app — kernel code execution	$150,000		HIGH
App sandbox escape	$100,000		HIGH
Cross-app data access, no user interaction	$100,000		HIGH
WebKit / browser exploitation	$100,000		HIGH
Sensitive data access without unlock	$100,000		HIGH
iCloud server-side data exfiltration	$50,000+		MEDIUM

BONUS PAYOUTS
+ 25% bonus for bugs found exclusively on the Security Research Device (SRD)
+ Extra bonus for vulnerabilities found in Apple beta software before public release

BEGINNER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Learn C/C++ — understand pointers & memory
- ☐ Study OS fundamentals (processes, memory, FS)
- ☐ Complete picoCTF beginner challenges
- ☐ Get comfortable with Linux CLI
- ☐ Read 'The Art of Exploitation' by Erickson
- ☐ Set up a home lab with a VM
- ☐ Create a HackerOne / Bugcrowd account
- ☐ Find your first $500 web app bug

INTERMEDIATE CHECKLIST

- ☐ Reverse engineer iOS apps with Frida + objection
- ☐ Read Apple's full security platform documentation
- ☐ Study 5+ published iOS CVE writeups
- ☐ Practice fuzzing with AFL++ on open-source targets
- ☐ Join a CTF team focused on binary exploitation
- ☐ Set up Ghidra / IDA Pro for ARM64 analysis
- ☐ Build and run a custom fuzzer for one target
- ☐ Get your first CVE assigned

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Identify the exact root cause of the bug
- ☐ Build a reliable proof-of-concept (PoC)
- ☐ Test reproduction steps on clean device
- ☐ Assess realistic exploitability
- ☐ Write a clear, structured technical report
- ☐ Include impact assessment & CVSS score
- ☐ Submit via security-research.apple.com
- ☐ Follow up politely after 14 days if no response
- ☐ Negotiate payout if severity is underrated

ADVANCED CHECKLIST

- ☐ Apply for Apple Security Research Device (SRD)
- ☐ Study XNU kernel source on Apple GitHub
- ☐ Read Phrack & Project Zero iOS writeups
- ☐ Build custom fuzzer for Apple attack surfaces
- ☐ Understand PAC, ASLR & Apple Silicon mitigations
- ☐ Develop a working kernel-level PoC exploit
- ☐ Start a public security research blog
- ☐ Build your CVE portfolio (aim for 5+ CVEs)
- ☐ Attend or speak at DEF CON / Black Hat

PRO TIP: Print this page. Check off each item. Share your progress in the Bugitrix Community Forum.

Official Apple Programs

Apple Security Research Portal
security-research.apple.com
Submit vulnerabilities & apply for SRD

Apple SRD Program Details
security-research.apple.com/programs
Apply for Security Research Device access

Apple Private Cloud Compute Docs
security-research.apple.com/apple-intelligence-security
PCC source, VRE & technical documentation

Apple Security Advisories
support.apple.com/en-us/100100
View all patched bugs & researcher credits

Learning Resources

TYPE	NAME	SOURCE / LINK	WHY IT MATTERS
BOOK	The Art of Exploitatio	Jon Erickson	Best intro to memory exploitation
BOOK	iOS Internals & Securi	Jonathan Levin	Deep dive into XNU and iOS architec
BLOG	Project Zero Blog	googleprojectzero.blogspot.c	Real iOS/Android exploit writeups b
BLOG	saelo's Blog	phrack.org + personal	JavaScript engine & WebKit exploita
PLATFORM	pwn.college	pwn.college	Free hands-on binary exploitation t
PLATFORM	HackTheBox	hackthebox.com	CTF-style hacking labs for all leve
PLATFORM	picoCTF	picoctf.org	Beginner-friendly CTF challenges
TOOL	Ghidra	github.com/NationalSecurityA	Free NSA reverse engineering tool
TOOL	Frida	frida.re	Dynamic instrumentation for iOS/And
TOOL	AFL++	github.com/AFLplusplus/AFLpl	State-of-the-art coverage-guided fu

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Bug Bounty Program Comparison + Skill Map
Where Apple Stands vs. The Competition

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Top Bug Bounty Programs — 2026 Comparison

PROGRAM	MAX PAYOUT	FOCUS AREA	SRD / SPECIAL ACCESS	OPEN TO ALL
Apple	$5,000,000	iOS, macOS, PCC	Yes — SRD Program	Yes
Meta	$2,000,000	FB, WhatsApp, Instagra	No	Yes
Google	$1,000,000+	Android, Chrome, GCP	Android VDP devices	Yes
Samsung	$1,000,000	Galaxy, Knox	Limited	Yes
Microsoft	$250,000	Azure, Hyper-V, Edge	No	Yes
HackerOne Avg	$10K–$100K	Web apps, APIs	No	Yes

Skills Required — Apple Bounty Pyramid

ELITE
Zero-click exploit dev | Apple Silicon mitigations bypass | Kernel

ADVANCED
iOS Kernel exploitation | Custom fuzzer development | Reverse engi

INTERMEDIATE Frida/LLDB dynamic analysis | WebKit / JS engine bugs | Sandbox escape techniques

BEGINNER C/C++ memory safety | Linux CLI & scripting | CTF binary exploitation basics

Join the Bugitrix Community

Everything you need to grow as an ethical hacker — in one place.

bugitrix.com
MAIN HUB

BU

Tutorials, blogs, tools & the full learning path from beginner to advanced ethical hacker.

bugitrix.com

Telegram Channel
DAILY TIPS & NEWS

TE

Fresh cybersecurity news, vulnerabilities, tools and tricks delivered every single day.

t.me/bugitrix

Community Forum
CONNECT & GROW

CO

Ask questions, share writeups, get peer feedback. Learn faster together than alone.

bugitrix.com/forum/help-1

Mentorship Program
1-ON-1 GUIDANCE

ME

Structured path with experienced professionals. Limited spots. Apply before they fill up.

bugitrix.com/mentorship-details

Resume Builder
GET HIRED

RE

We help you craft a cybersecurity resume that stands out to recruiters and bug bounty teams.

Apply via Google Form

"The $5 million is sitting there for whoever finds the right bug first.
Will it be you?"

— Bugitrix, 2026