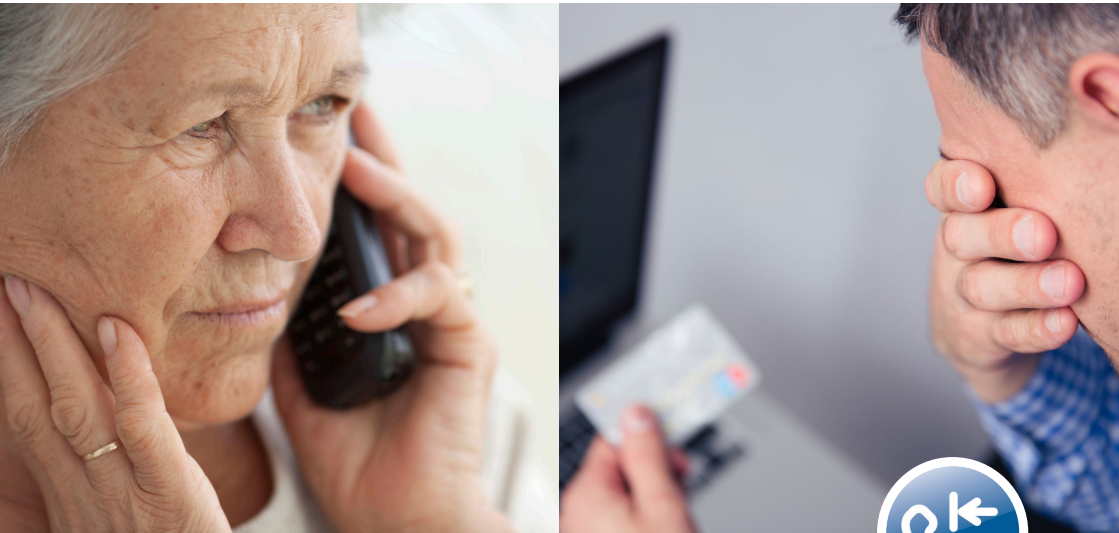





Communication Choices

Dealing with unwanted calls on your BT line



-  Call control
-  Peace of mind
-  Scams awareness

bt.com/scams

bt.com/unwantedcalls

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Not a BT customer?

We hope the information in this booklet is useful. But if you need to talk to someone about specific unwanted calls, sorry, we can't help because we don't have access to your customer details. Please contact your own phone service provider for help.

Dealing with unwanted phone calls

Your phone is a great way for people to stay in touch with you. But you might get unwanted calls.

This booklet tells you how to deal with them, and how BT can help. It also tells you about scams – when criminals try to con money from you over the phone – and how to protect yourself.

There are five main types of unwanted calls:

- marketing calls – someone trying to sell you something
- silent calls – when there's nobody on the line
- calls made by mistake – such as wrong numbers
- malicious calls – calls that aim to distress you
- scams – when someone is trying to get money from you illegitimately.

After an unwanted call, you might want to dial 1471 to find out who called you. But remember that a withheld number isn't necessarily from a suspect caller. For example a doctor's surgery might withhold its number to protect patient privacy.



Find more about unwanted calls at bt.com/unwantedcalls and bt.com/scams. You can also download a PDF version of this booklet from there.

Marketing and sales calls

You might get marketing calls from organisations you've dealt with in the past – unless you've told them you don't want to be contacted for marketing purposes. Or you could get 'cold calls' – unsolicited sales calls from companies you've not dealt with.

How to cut or stop marketing calls

Ask the company to stop calling you, by contacting them directly on the contact details they should give you for this purpose.

Some marketing calls start with a recorded message. If you listen to the whole message, it might give you the option to press a number key, the * or # button on your phone, which lets you ask to be taken off the organisation's calling list.



You can register with the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) by signing up for BT Privacy, which comes with the option of Caller Display, so you can see the number that's calling before you answer. For Caller Display charges, see [bt.com/callingfeatures](https://www.bt.com/callingfeatures)

Or you can register with the TPS by going to www.tpsonline.org.uk or calling their automated registration number: **0845 070 0707**.

Silent calls

Most silent calls aren't meant to be malicious or mischievous. They're usually made by automated dialling equipment in call centres. When you answer a call like this, the system tries to connect you to a sales agent. If no agent is available within a few seconds, the call ends automatically and it seems like you've got a silent call. When you get this kind of silent call, the calling company should leave a recorded message telling you its name and how to get in touch.

Calls made by mistake

Many unwanted phone calls are just mistakes, often wrong numbers – so they're usually one-offs and harmless. Some wrong number repeat calls are made by people with memory problems, where they think they're dialling a regular contact's number, such as a family member, but their memory's letting them down.

But if you're getting a lot of wrong numbers and think they might be deliberate, [see page 6](#) for our advice about malicious calls.

How to cut or stop calls made by mistake

Wrong numbers are usually innocent mistakes but, to be on the safe side:

- don't answer the phone with your number, just say 'hello' and, if the caller asks for your number, ask what number they dialled
- don't give out personal details such as your name or address
- consider asking the caller where they found your number.

If you're getting a lot of wrong number calls, your number could have been misprinted somewhere or be similar to another number. If you can find out where the caller got your number, you might be able to track down the reason for the calls.

Malicious calls

Using an answerphone

Keep your greeting message short. Consider whether to include your name and number and never leave a message telling callers that you're away from home. Just say that you can't get to the phone or you can't take their call at the moment.

You could also use your answerphone to screen calls, letting it answer calls even if you're available. You can then find out who's calling before deciding whether to pick up the call. And it's also worth knowing that malicious callers are more likely to be put off by a male voice message than a female one.

Reporting malicious calls

If you keep getting malicious calls, please contact our specialist advisors. Call the Nuisance Calls Advice Line on **0800 661 441**. We're open 8am–10pm Monday to Friday and 9am–6pm Saturday.

When you contact us, we'll talk about the calls you've been getting and suggest what to do next – perhaps changing your number or tracing your calls. Most malicious calls made in the UK can be traced, whether they come from private, public or mobile phones.

You can also report a nuisance call or text via Which?, the consumer organisation. With your approval, the Which? online tool will then automatically issue a complaint on your behalf to the appropriate regulator. To do this, go to the Which? link on the [bt.com/unwantedcalls](https://www.bt.com/unwantedcalls) website.

What else should you do?

- let other people in your household read this booklet
- after a malicious call, dial **1471** to see if you can get the caller's number
- use BT Answer 1571 as a tool for screening your calls. For charges, see [bt.com/callingfeatures](https://www.bt.com/callingfeatures)
- make a note of the date and time of the call and, if possible, what the caller said and any background noises you heard. It might help identify and prosecute the caller
- report any abusive, threatening, obscene or distressing calls to the police.

In some cases, you'll need to be ready to give evidence if the malicious caller is traced, charged and taken to court.



You'll find online advice at [bt.com/unwantedcalls](https://www.bt.com/unwantedcalls)

Reporting unwanted calls and texts to your mobile

You may get calls or texts to your mobile phone from organisations trying to market products or services. Texts encouraging you to claim compensation for a personal injury are typical of this 'spam'.

To report a 'spam' text like this, forward the text to **7726** (there's no charge for this). You may get an automated response thanking you for the report and possibly giving you further advice. An easy way to remember 7726 is that they're the buttons on most mobile phone keypads that spell out the word 'spam'.

Be alert to scams

Put simply, a 'scam' is a scheme to con people out of their money. Scams are on the increase in the UK, with thousands of people falling prey to scammers every year. Since pension rules changed in 2015, people of retirement age have been a particular target.

Fraudsters will use whatever means they can to con you. Some will build up trust and try to tempt you with offers that are 'too good to be true'. Others use sophisticated methods to get hold of your personal details, in order to carry out identity theft. But with a few precautions, you can protect yourself from these crimes.

Top tips to avoid being scammed

Your personal and financial information is invaluable, so make sure you protect it.

- Never give out banking or personal details or send money to anyone you don't know or trust.
- Always get independent / legal advice if an offer involves your money, time or any other commitment from you.
- Be aware that your bank or the police will never send anyone to your home to collect your cash, PIN card, payment cards or cheque book if you are a victim of a fraud.
- Your bank will never ask you to transfer money to a new account for fraud reasons, even if the caller says the account is in your name.
- Never be pressured into making a decision straight away.

How to protect yourself

- Buy a nuisance calls blocker phone to help reduce the volume of unsolicited phone calls you get. Find out more at bt.com/shop
- Always destroy or securely store personal documents. When getting rid of personal documents always destroy them – try to shred them.
- Always keep your computer security programs up to date, such as anti-virus software and firewalls. Find out more at bt.com/help/security
- Create strong passwords and use different ones for different accounts. To create a strong password, include a symbol and use numbers and upper and lower case letters. Remember the more complex and unique to you your password is, the harder it is to crack.



To learn how to protect yourself from common scams, and to download the useful guide ‘The Little Book of BIG Scams’, go to bt.com/scams

It’s important to report all crime, including fraud

If you are a victim of a scam or attempted scam, do report this. Your information could form part of a bigger picture and help to protect others in a similar position to you.

If you think a crime is in progress, or about to be committed, contact the police directly by dialing **999** in an emergency or **101** if it’s less urgent.

Otherwise, the quickest way to report scams or attempted scams is online to Action Fraud – actionfraud.police.uk – the UK’s national reporting centre for fraud and internet crime. The portal can also be accessed from bt.com/scams. You can also call Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040**.

Ways BT can help

BT's Calling Features can help you block or screen your calls



Please note that for some services, Calling Feature charges might apply. To find out more, go to bt.com/callingfeatures

BT Privacy

With BT Privacy you get more control over incoming calls. You're registered for the Telephone Preference Service and you can opt to have Caller Display.

BT Answer 1571

This voicemail service lets callers leave a message if you don't answer the phone. While it can't filter calls, it can answer them for you, so it acts as a kind of screening tool.

BT 1471

Dial 1471 to get the number of the last person who called you.

Caller Display

This feature lets you see the number that's calling you before you answer. So you can decide whether to pick up the phone or leave it to your answering service.

Choose to Refuse

Choose to Refuse helps you block some nuisance and unwanted calls, including withheld numbers. You can block up to ten numbers, including the last number you answered. You can check your list of blocked numbers at any time and change or unblock them if you want.

Anonymous Call Reject

This blocks calls from withheld or anonymous UK numbers. If a caller in the UK withholds their number, they won't be able to get through to you. Calls from 'unavailable' numbers (e.g. calls from abroad) can't be blocked.

Call Sign

With this feature you get an additional number with a different ring tone. You can then give this number only to close friends and family so you can distinguish between incoming calls.

Call Control

Call Control lets you filter the calls you want to take and block the ones you don't, to help you avoid nuisance calls.



Find out more about Call Control at bt.com/callcontrol

Please note: to block nuisance calls from phones like the BT8500, you'll need your network provider to enable the Caller Display service. You may be asked to pay Calling Feature charges. To find out more, go to bt.com/callingfeatures

Useful contacts at a glance

To report unwanted calls and texts

Visit bt.com/unwantedcalls or call 0800 661 441

BT calling features

Visit bt.com/callingfeatures or call 0800 789 456

Telephone Preference Service (TPS)

Visit www.tpsonline.org.uk or call 0845 070 0707

Scams awareness and reporting scams to Action Fraud

Visit bt.com/scams

Nuisance Calls Advice Line

Call 0800 661 441

8am–10pm Monday to Friday, 9am–6pm Saturday

General information

Visit bt.com



Offices worldwide

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Registered Office: 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ
Registered in England No. 1800000

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