

# **End Telemarketing: National Do Not Call Registry**

The National Do Not Call Registry was created to stop unwanted **sales calls**. It's free to register your home or mobile phone number.

If you've already added your phone number to the Do Not Call Registry and are still getting a lot of unwanted calls, odds are the calls are from scammers. Read about [blocking unwanted calls](#) to find out what to do about them. If you answer one of these calls, hang up and [report the call to the FTC](#).

## **Adding Your Number to the Registry**

### **How do I add my number to the Registry?**

Go to [donotcall.gov](https://donotcall.gov) or call 1-888-382-1222 (TTY: 1-866-290-4236) from the phone you want to register. It's free.

If you register your number at donotcall.gov, you'll get an email with a link you need to click on within 72 hours to complete your registration.

### **How long will it take for sales calls to stop?**

Your phone number should show up on the Registry the next day, but it can take **up to 31 days** for sales calls to stop. You can check whether your number is on the Registry at [donotcall.gov](https://donotcall.gov) or by calling 1-888-382-1222 from the number you want to verify.

### **Will my registration expire?**

No, your registration will never expire. The FTC will only remove your number from the Registry if it's disconnected and reassigned, or if you ask to remove it.

### **Can I add my mobile phone to the Do Not Call Registry?**

Yes.

## What the Registry Doesn't Do

### Will the Registry stop all unwanted calls?

No. The Do Not Call Registry stops **sales** calls from real companies. The Registry is a list that tells telemarketers what numbers not to call. The FTC does not and cannot block calls. The Registry can't stop calls from scammers who ignore the Registry.

One reason people get a lot of unwanted calls is because it's easy and cheap for scammers to call people anywhere in the world. To get fewer unwanted calls, look into [blocking unwanted calls](#). There are different call-blocking options for mobile phones, traditional landlines, and landlines that use the internet (VoIP).

You can find a list of some call-blocking apps for mobile phones at [ctia.org](http://ctia.org), a website for the U.S. wireless communications industry. For company-specific information about blocking calls on landlines and phones that use the internet, go to [the FCC's Call Blocking Resources](#).

### Can a company still call me with a sales pitch?

Companies can call you if you've recently done business with them, or if you've given them written permission to call. But if you ask them not to call you, they have to stop. Be sure to write down the date you asked them to stop.

### Are any other types of calls still allowed under FTC rules if I'm on the Registry?

The rules allow:

- political calls
- charitable calls
- [debt collection calls](#)
- purely informational calls
- surveys

But these calls can't also include a sales pitch.

### What about robocalls?

If a robocall — a call that plays a recorded message — is selling something, it's illegal unless you've given a company **written permission** to call you that way.

So if you haven't given the company permission, and the robocall isn't purely informational — like your cable company confirming a service appointment — there's a good chance it's a scam. At the very least, it's from a company you don't want to do business with.

If you get an illegal robocall, hang up. Don't press buttons to be taken off a call list or to talk to a live person. It might lead to more unwanted calls. Instead, [report it to the FTC](#).

Learn more about robocalls at [ftc.gov/robocalls](https://ftc.gov/robocalls).

## **Report Unwanted Calls**

### **Where can I report an unwanted call?**

Report unwanted calls at [donotcall.gov](https://donotcall.gov). Report the number that appears on your caller ID — even if you think it might be spoofed or faked — and any number you're told to call back.

### **Should I expect to hear back from the FTC?**

The FTC gets millions of reports each year, so we can't respond to each one. But your report matters. The FTC and other law enforcement agencies analyze reports to identify and take action against the people responsible for illegal calls and scams.

The FTC also takes the phone numbers you report and releases them each business day to help telecommunications carriers and other industry partners that are working on [call-blocking solutions](#).

### **What's the penalty for companies that illegally call numbers on the Registry?**

Companies that illegally call numbers on the National Do Not Call Registry or place an illegal robocall can currently be fined up to \$42,530 per call.

### **The number from my caller ID was faked. Why should I report it?**

Technology has made it easy for scammers to fake or “spoof” caller ID information, so the number you’re reporting might not be the caller’s real number. But in some instances, the FTC and other law enforcement agencies can still trace the call based on the information you provide. The complaint also helps because the FTC analyzes complaint data and trends to identify illegal callers based on calling patterns. We also use additional information you report, like any number you’re told to call back, to track down scammers. Learn more about [common phone scams](#).

To get fewer unwanted calls, look into [call-blocking solutions](#).

### **What is the FTC doing to stop illegal calls?**

The FTC has sued hundreds of companies and people responsible for unwanted calls, and has forced telemarketers making illegal calls to pay more than \$100 million dollars in judgments. The FTC also brings enforcement actions against robocallers and has already stopped people responsible for billions of robocalls. You can read about recent FTC cases and other robocall-related actions in our press releases.

The FTC continues to work with other law enforcement agencies and encourages industry efforts to combat robocalls and caller ID spoofing. The FTC has led initiatives to develop technology-based solutions, including a series of robocall contests that challenged tech experts to design tools that block robocalls and help investigators track down and stop robocallers.

### **What do businesses and sellers need to know?**

Generally speaking, telemarketers who sell goods and services must download the Registry and remove from their calling lists numbers listed on the Registry. Businesses and organizations must register with the FTC before they are allowed to access the Registry. It’s illegal for anyone to use the Registry for any purpose other than preventing telemarketing calls to the telephone numbers on the Registry. Read the FTC’s [Q&A for telemarketers and sellers](#).

## **Registration Questions**

**Are mobile phones, or cell phones, treated differently than home phones on the Do Not Call Registry?**

No. You register a mobile phone number the same way you do any other personal number. There's no separate list or database for mobile phones. There's no deadline for registering mobile phone numbers, mobile phone registrations don't expire, and the government is not releasing mobile phone numbers to telemarketers.

In fact, mobile phones have extra protection. [Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\)](#) regulations prohibit telemarketers from using automated dialers to call mobile phones without your permission. Automated dialers are standard in the industry, so most telemarketers can't call your mobile phone without permission.

**Someone called and offered to put my name on the Registry. Should I let them?**

No. It's free and easy to register yourself at [donotcall.gov](http://donotcall.gov) or by calling 1-888-382-1222 from the phone you want to register (TTY: 1-866-290-4236).

**What happens if I register more than one number online?**

You will get an email for each number you register online. You must open each email and click on the link in it within 72 hours to register each number.

You can register up to three numbers at a time online. To register more personal phone numbers, just go through the registration process again. If you want to register your number by phone, you will have to call from each phone number you want to register.

**Can I register my business phone number or a fax number?**

The Registry is for personal phone numbers. Business-to-business calls and faxes are not covered.

**Can I take my number off the Registry?**

Yes. You can remove your number by calling 1-888-382-1222 from the phone you want to remove. Your number will be off the Registry the next day. Companies have to update their telemarketing lists within 31 days.

**If I register, how will the FTC use my information?**

The FTC stores your phone number so telemarketers can remove it from their call lists. If you register at [donotcall.gov](https://donotcall.gov), we also collect your email address to confirm your registration. We store your email address securely, separate from your phone number, and never share it with telemarketers.

For more information about the privacy of your information, please see the [FTC privacy policy](#).

**When I called to register, a message said my number could not be verified. What should I do?**

If the automated phone system can't verify your number, you'll need to register at [donotcall.gov](https://donotcall.gov).

**When I called to register, a message said the number I was calling from did not match the number I entered. What should I do?**

To register, you must call from the phone you want to register. People in certain communities — such as senior living centers or university residences — have phone numbers that are hidden and can't be verified by the FTC's automated system. If that's the case, you'll need to register at [donotcall.gov](https://donotcall.gov).

**I moved and got a new phone number. Do I need to register the new number?**

Yes.

**Do I need to take my old phone number off the list when I get a new number?**

No. The system removes numbers automatically when they're disconnected and reassigned.

**What happens if my phone number is disconnected but then reconnected?**

If your number is disconnected and then reconnected, you might need to register your number again. You can verify that your number is on the Registry at [donotcall.gov](https://donotcall.gov) or by calling 1-888-382-1222.

**If my area code changes or splits, do I need to register my number again?**

If phone companies change your three-digit area code, you don't have to register your number again. Your new number will be registered for you during the 90-day period when both the old and new area codes work.

### **Where can I get more information?**

If you have questions or complaints about the Do Not Call Registry, please contact the FTC by email at [crcforward@donotcall.gov](mailto:crcforward@donotcall.gov).

## **Other Telemarketing Rules**

### **Are there other rules telemarketers have to follow?**

Yes, telemarketers have other rules they must follow under the Telemarketing Sales Rule.

Telemarketers can't:

- call before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m.
- be deceptive or abusive or lie about any terms of their offer
- ask you to pay:
  - with a cash-to-cash [money transfer](#)
  - by giving the PIN from a cash reload card like MoneyPak and Vanilla Reload
  - by asking for your bank account information to create a type of check that you never see or sign, called a "remotely created payment order"

Telemarketers must:

- connect their call to a sales representative within two seconds after you answer
- transmit their telephone number and, if possible, their name, to your caller ID service
- tell you right away what seller or charitable organization they represent and that the call is a sales call or a charitable solicitation
- disclose all material information about the goods or services they're offering and the terms of the sale
- get your permission to charge you and to use a particular account number

To learn more about the Telemarketing Sales Rule, visit the [FTC's Business Center](#).

Article Source

Federal Trade Commission

Source URL

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov>

Last Reviewed

Wednesday, December 30, 2020