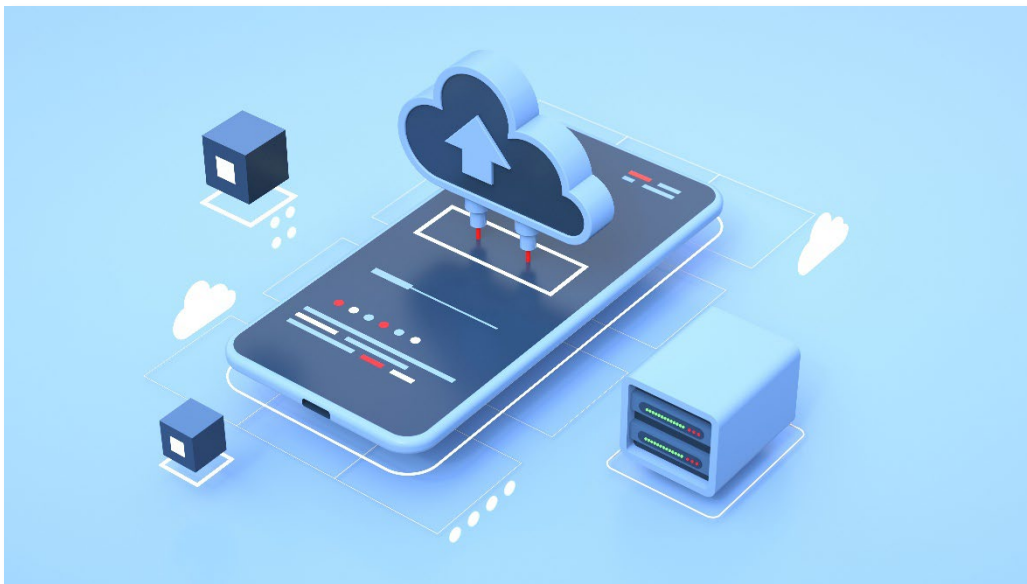# How-to guide for smartphones

Part 1: Getting Started

Digital InSpiration Collective [DISC]

A guide written by users for users...

Index

1   Buying a new smartphone and/or mobile contract

If you've decided you want to buy a smartphone, there are a few things to consider. You may want to do your own research into this or you may want to get advice from a family member or friend.

1.1   Which provider?

A provider is a company that sells services to enable people to connect to their wireless network to make phone calls and connect to the internet. You may have heard of names such as O2, Vodafone, Tesco, as well as upcoming providers such as Lebara.

The way a provider enables you to connect to their network is via a small SIM card, which fits inside your phone.

Different providers provide different coverage, which means that the mobile signal you get may be stronger or weaker depending on which provider you go with and where you live. Most providers will provide a 'coverage map' on the internet, so it may be worth checking your area on those (type in the name of provider you're interested in and 'coverage map') before making this decision. You could also ask your neighbours which provider they use and what the coverage is like.
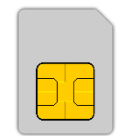
SIM card

Tip: If you haven't got access to the internet and/or don't feel confident in doing this, consider asking someone to do a search for you or access the internet via a library.

1.2   Which contract?

Providers often sell or rent smartphones as part of a monthly contract which includes a phone, phone minutes (i.e. calls), texts and mobile data sold as part of a package. Some also offer pay as you go (PAYG), or SIM-only plans if you want to buy your own phone. Working out which plan or contract will suit you best can be confusing, as there are so many options to choose from.

Before buying a plan, it is worth thinking carefully about what you want to use your phone for: *Do you want it primarily for making calls, texting, sending emails or looking at the news, or do you want to use it for video calls, watching films or as a satnav too?*

If you want to access the internet while you're out and about, this will be using 'mobile data'. If you have already got wireless broadband at home, you should be connecting to that rather than using mobile data when you're at home.

When you're away from home, certain things like video calls or using your phone as a satnav will eat up your data more quickly than basic functions like texting or emailing, so this is something to be aware of when you're deciding which contract to go for.

You are often able to find better deals online, so it may be worth enlisting the help of family or friends if you are unable to do this research yourself, for example, if you don't have access to the internet or don't feel familiar or confident enough. Some deals may be advertised as only being available if you sign up within a certain time limit. *Do not feel pressured* into buying a contract – it is always best to take away some details of the plans offered and think it over, or discuss with family or friends. Age UK also offer advice on buying phones and/or contracts, so you could consider getting in touch with your nearest branch.

Tip: If you signed up for a mobile contract over the phone or online, you should be able to cancel a contract for free if you signed up to it less than 14 days before.

1.3   Which phone?

Which phone you get is a matter of personal choice. Some people may want to buy an iPhone (made by Apple which uses IOS as its operating system) because it provides easier methods to communicate with other members of their family who have iPhones or iPads (for example, iMessage or Facetime). Others may prefer the flexibility or better camera provided on a device that uses Android (the mobile operating system primarily developed by Google), while others may have their own particular preferences and criteria.

The phone you end up buying will be determined by the amount of *money* you want to spend, the *functionality* you want to have and how much *storage* you want. Storage of a phone is usually described in gigabytes (GB for short), with phones today ranging from having 16-128 GB of storage (where more storage means more space for storing photos, videos, apps and other files).

Tip: There is another option for storing photos and videos other than on your device which is discussed under 'Storing photographs and videos on the Cloud '.

As before, it's always worth getting advice about the purchase of a phone rather than rushing what is an important decision, and it may well be worth going into a shop that sells phones to see for yourself how a phone looks and feels in your hand before committing to buying one.

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1.4   Inserting a SIM card

If you buy a data plan in a shop that sells phones, the staff will often insert the SIM for you and connect you to the mobile network.
If you need to do this yourself, look at the side of your phone (the case will need to be off your phone) and you should see a slot with a small hole not much bigger than a pin head.

Gently pressing a special 'SIM card ejector' tool (or the end of a paperclip) into the hole should unlock the slot and enable you to pull out a tray to insert your SIM.
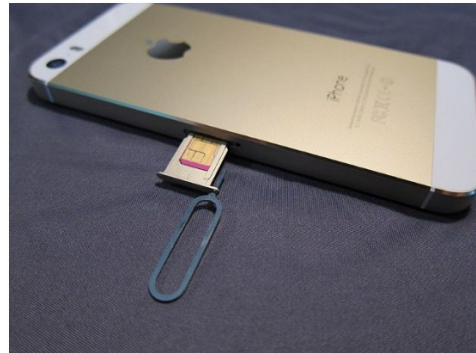
*Photo showing SIM tray
(Wikimedia Commons: CC BY-SA 3.0)*

1.5   Phone Maintenance

Smartphones are valuable items and there are a few things to be aware of right from the start, to help maintain the life of your phone.

1.5.1 Charging your battery

In terms of day-to-day maintenance, most manufacturers suggest you can preserve the battery of your phone by charging it between 20-80%, and also recommend trying to avoid the battery reaching 0% and avoid charging it up to 100% on too many occasions. Some phones enable 'optimised' charging, which means they charge the phone faster up to 80% and then slow down charging to 100% until your typical wake-up time (see 'Accessing your phone's settings' (section 2.7) to find out where you can check whether similar functionality is available on your phone).

1.5.2 Buying a phone case and screen cover

If a phone case hasn't been provided with your new phone, it is worth buying one to protect the phone from damage. You will need to make a note of the make and model of the phone first (to avoid covering up the camera and/or microphone, amongst other things). It's also recommended that you put a transparent screen cover on to protect the screen from scratches (again, make sure you get the correct one to fit your phone). This can be a fiddly process in terms of small air bubbles getting trapped under the screen cover, but practice helps!

1.5.3 Storage

If your phone is running out of space it will start to slow down and may not function properly. You may get a message telling you you're running out of space if you try to save a photo or video, or try to download a new app. Lots of things can fill up your storage, but the main reasons are operating system updates, photos, large videos and data associated with apps, so it's worth deleting any photos, videos or apps you don't want as you go (see section 4.4 'Managing your storage' for more details).

1.5.4 Operating System updates

Operating system updates (also known as software updates) are important to keep your phone running properly, particularly when they include security fixes. Your phone may have updates set to 'auto install' but you should always be able to check the status of system updates by searching on 'Updates' in your 'Settings' app (see Section 2.7 for details of how to locate the 'Settings' app). Some systems updates are very large and will require your phone to be plugged in - you should get a warning message if an update is about to be downloaded/installed and be able to delay this if you're out and about.

1.5.5 Moving content from an old phone onto a new phone

If you get a new phone, you may want to copy over all your contacts rather than adding each one manually, as well as moving your photos, videos and other data. How you achieve this depends on the make and model of your phone, for example iPhone users can often transfer the contents from one device to another by having both devices switched on, connected to the same WI-FI network and placed next to another. Users of Android devices should be able to back up/sync content from their old phone using their Google account, and then download this onto their new device.

Providing detailed instructions for all phones is outside the scope of this guide and we therefore recommend going to the website of your phone's software (e.g. Apple or Android) and doing a search for 'Moving content to new phone' or 'transferring content to new phone' for support.

Tip: If you are concerned about losing your contacts or other data, you can pay to have someone in a shop to do this on your behalf.

1.5.6 Losing your phone or having it stolen

Hundreds of smartphones are lost or stolen every day, so it is worth writing down key phone numbers of people or institutions you may need to call in this event, and to make a note of any bank account and card details you may have connected to your phone. You should also set up automatic backups as soon you get a new phone, to avoid losing

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treasured photos or other data. If you're using an Android device, Google will prompt you to back up your phone as soon as you sign up, and you should be able to select to continue doing this automatically. iPhones offer similar functionality through iCloud.

Tip: Most smartphones will have some sort of 'Find my phone' functionality to enable you to see where your phone is (see section 5.2.3 'Sharing your location' for details). Your phone will need to be switched on to enable its location to be tracked.

2   Setting up your new phone

2.1   Switching your mobile phone on and off

Most smartphones will have a single button on the top or side of the phone (known as the 'Power button') that you keep pressed down until the screen turns on.
Tip: If nothing happens when you try this, make sure your new device is charged before trying to turn it on.

2.2   Interacting with your phone

If this is the first time you have used a touch screen, there are four main modes of interacting with it:
- *Tap*: this is where you gently tap on a word or button to select it (for example, a 'Next' button);
- *Double-tap*: primarily used to zoom in and out of photos or videos;
- *Swipe*: you swipe by putting your finger gently on the screen and in a particular direction (for example, you would swipe down to scroll down a list);
- *Long press/touch & hold*: this can be used to select a word or icon and then dragging (for example, to select a line of text or move an icon);
- *Pinch out/pinch in*: this is generally used to zoom in on photos by placing the tips of two fingers on the screen and then moving them apart;
- *Voice commands*: you can interact with your phone using your voice, including 'voice typing'. This is covered in further detail in the 'Accessibility' section.

2.3   Going through the setup process

The 'setup' process on most smartphones involves personalising your phone by making a series of selections (for example, choosing your language, choosing the region where you live, choosing a name for your phone, etc.) You are also likely to be asked to type in your Wi-Fi password (if you have Wi-Fi) to enable your phone to connect to it, so it's worth making a note of that before you start. It may also ask you to set a passcode for your phone, so other people can't open it.

Tip: The Wi-Fi password is the password for your router, if you have one.

2.4   Setting the language and region

Most smartphones will ask you to specify a language and region as part of the initial setting up process, and this will have an impact on how the date is displayed. You

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should be able to adjust these settings later if you want to (see 'Accessing Settings' section).

2.5   Setting the time and date 🕐

Some smartphones will automatically set the time based on the location you chose, but you can re-set this later if needed (see 'Accessing Settings' section).

2.6   Adding a credit card 💳

While most setup processes appear designed to push you to add credit card details, this should not be necessary. One thing to be aware of if you do want to add a card is that certain apps rely on 'in-app' purchases for functionality. This is discussed in Section 5.2.1.

Tip: If you do choose to save a credit card to your device, you should avoid adding the CVV code (Card Verification Value), which is the 3-digit number either on the back or front of your card. If you do include this, transactions can be carried out without your approval.

2.7   Accessing your phone's settings ⚙️

Most smartphones will have some sort of 'Settings' app which enables you to set up your phone in the way you want (for example, adjusting the screen brightness, volume level or size of text), and for managing privacy and other settings.

If you can't see an icon on your screen or unsure of where your 'Settings' app is located, you should be able to search for it by typing 'Settings' in a search box provided by your device (icons for search often look like a magnifying glass).

Tip: If you cannot locate a 'Settings' app (it may be called something else on your phone), you could use a search engine like Chrome to get advice (type in the name and model of your phone and "Settings' app'). Alternatively, ask friends, family or the shop where you bought your phone for support.

3   Personalising your device

Once you've located your 'Settings' app, we recommend spending some time going through the various options to learn more about what functionality your phone offers. Some examples of what you should be able to adjust are given below.

Tip: If you cannot find a particular function that you think should be on your phone, most smartphones should offer a way to search through your settings (for example, a search box included either at the top or bottom of your 'Settings' app screen).

3.1   Adjusting font size and boldness   A+

Most smartphones should enable you to make text larger or bolder to aid legibility. If that functionality is available, locate '*Accessibility*' in the 'Settings' app and search for '*font size*', '*text size*' or '*display size*'.

You should then be able to adjust the size of your text by dragging a slider until you're happy with the size, and/or use a toggle switch to turn boldness on or off. Any apps that support 'dynamic type' should adjust to your preferred reading size and boldness setting.
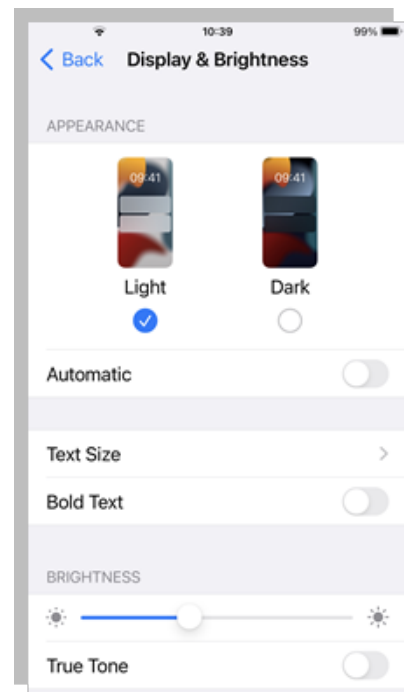
Screenshot from iPhone

3.2   Adjusting brightness/colour contrast   ☀

To change the brightness or colour contrast, find the settings app and locate '*Display*' or '*Brightness*' in the list. You should be able to adjust the brightness/contrast by dragging a slider until you're happy with the brightness and contrast.

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3.3   Adjusting wallpaper/background colour

Different devices will have different options to adjust colour settings for your device, for example selecting a 'color palette' for your background. You can usually locate these settings by searching for '*Wallpaper'* in your 'Settings' app.

3.4   Adjusting the volume

Smartphones often include two ways to adjust the volume. Most will have 2 small buttons next to each other on the outside edge of the phone that you can use to increase or decrease the volume (keep the respective 'up' or 'down' button pressed to turn the volume either completely off or on). You should also be able to access the volume controls through the 'Settings' app (search for '*Volume'*).

Tip: Some models may also include a 'toggle' switch on the outside edge of the phone to enable you to quickly turn all sounds off or on.

3.5   Adjusting the time and date

Most smartphones will enable you to set the date and time, and you should be able to adjust this in your 'Settings' app, with the option to set this automatically (search for '*Time'*).

Tip: Choosing your time zone should automatically set your phone to the correct time for that zone.

3.6   Adjusting the language and region

Most smartphones will ask you to specify a language and region as part of the initial setting up and this will have an impact on how the date is displayed. You should be able to adjust these in your 'Settings' app (search for '*Language'*).

3.7   Turning 'auto-correct' or 'predictive text' on/off

While some people find 'auto-correct' useful (which is where the text you write is automatically corrected according to a set of rules), others do not. You should be able to turn this functionality on or off in the 'Settings' app (search for '*keyboard'*, '*auto-correct*', '*autocorrect'* or '*spelling'* in the Settings search box).

Some people find 'predictive text helpful (which suggests words and phrases as you type), while others do not. You should also be able to turn this functionality on or off in the 'Settings' app (search for '*keyboard'* or '*predictive'* in the 'Settings' app search box if you can't locate it).

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3.8   Locking horizontal/vertical display mode

Some people find it annoying when their phone suddenly rotates from portrait to landscape display. Most smartphones enable you to 'lock' the orientation so that it doesn't switch.

As an example, on some Android *phones*, you should be able to swipe down from the top of the screen to open the 'Quick Settings' panel and tap the '*Landscape'* or '*Portrait'* icon to activate or deactivate lock screen. On iPhones, you can turn this functionality on and off through the 'Control Centre' (swipe up from the bottom of your screen to open Control Centre) and then tap the icon to lock or unlock *Portrait mode* (if the icon is white, this indicates the screen is locked).

3.9   Setting up voice commands

Voice commands enable you to use your voice to control your device. If voice commands are part of your phone's functionality, you can usually set this up in the Accessibility area of your 'Settings' app (search for '*voice command' or 'voice control'* in your 'Settings' search box if you can't locate it). Specific instructions for how to do this will be device-dependent and outside the scope of this guide, but should be available on the support web pages of the company that run your operating system (e.g. Apple or Google).

If you are finding your voice commands are not being recognised, it may be that your device is having difficulty understanding regional accents. In certain circumstances, for example when you are entering text, you may be able to use the phonetic alphabet code word (for example, saying "Alfa Bravo Charlie" to enter "abc").

3.9.1 Enabling dictation

Some people find it easier to dictate emails or notes than typing them out on a small screen. To enable dictation, go to your 'Settings' app and search for '*keyboard'*, '*voice typing*' or '*dictate'*, and turn this functionality on. When you open an app you normally type in, there should be a microphone icon that you tap when you want to start dictating.

3.10 Setting up Bluetooth

Bluetooth is a specific set of radio frequencies that your phone can send and receive to other devices, for example, keyboards, speakers, headphones. It does not use your phone's mobile data but will use up your battery, so worth keeping your phone well-charged. Typically, Bluetooth connects up to a maximum distance of 10m.

Bluetooth is used to connect your phone to 'Bluetooth-enabled' devices, such as the sound-system on newer cars, some loudspeakers, earbuds, and some hearing aids.

Tip: You may have heard of Air Tags, or Tiles - these are small Bluetooth devices that you can attach to things like your bag, so that if the connexion is lost, you get an alert - very useful when you are out and about.

3.10.1 Enabling/disabling Bluetooth

You should find the controls for Bluetooth in the 'Settings' app on your phone (search for '*Bluetooth'* if you can't locate them). These are likely to include turning Bluetooth off/on, adding a new device/pairing and removing/forgetting a device.

3.10.2 Connecting to Bluetooth-enabled devices

The first time you connect to a new device, it needs to go through 'Pairing'. Each device will have its own method to initiate pairing such as holding down a button for a few seconds - check the instructions for your device. You will need to navigate to 'Settings'/'Bluetooth' on your phone, and then select 'Add new device' to make the phone search for your hearing aids, for instance. The name of the device should pop up on the screen, and you should then be able to tap an 'Accept' button on screen. You should only need to do this once for each device that you connect.

3.10.3 Using Bluetooth with hearing aids

Bluetooth can be convenient when answering phone calls, as you don't need to take the phone out of your bag or pocket; just tap one of the buttons on your hearing aid to accept the call, and again to hang up.

Many hearing aid makers have software you can download to your phone so that you can 'fine tune' your hearing aids. This can be useful in the street, at the cinema, or in a restaurant, when conversation will be clearer and background noise is suppressed.

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4   Using your device

Now you've set up and personalised your device, it's time to start using some of its functionality. A smartphone has a whole lot more functionality than simply making phone calls, and this section will hopefully give you a flavour of what your device is likely to offer.

4.1   Adding contacts and making phone calls 📲

While many people now use apps like WhatsApp or Facetime to speak to each other, most of us will still need to make and receive 'normal' phone calls on occasion. Most smartphones will offer similar functionality to organise how you receive and make calls.

4.1.1 Adding contacts 🖼

Adding a contact is useful for quick access to call someone, whether using your 'Phone' app or other apps. How you do this will be dependent on your device but is likely to involve opening a 'Contacts' app or your 'Phone' app, adding a 'New contact' and then adding details such as their name and telephone number.

4.1.2 Making phone calls 📞

To make a call, you will need to open your 'Phone' app (the icon for this will generally look like a phone). There are usually various ways you can input the number you want to call. You should be able to either:

- Use the dialpad to enter a number;
- Select a contact you've previously added;
- Select from your recent phone calls; or,
- Select from your favourites.

… and then tap the '*Call'* button (often coloured green). To stop the call, tap the '*Stop call*' button (often coloured red).

4.1.3 Answering one call while on another 🔀

Whether you're able to switch between incoming calls is dependent on your device and/or your network provider. On iPhones you should be able to '*End and Accept'* or '*Hold and Accept'*, and may be able to '*Swap'* to switch between them or '*Merge'* to talk to both people (these last two are dependent on whether the calls were incoming or

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outgoing). With other phones, you should have similar options to 'Hold' one call while you take the other but this is device-dependent so check the options in your 'Phone' app to see what functionality is offered.

Tip: You are likely to need to have 'call waiting' functionality turned on (this should be available in the 'Phone' settings in your 'Settings' app (search on 'call waiting').

4.1.4 Turning on 'speakerphone'

Speakerphone can be very useful to enable you to do other things while answering a call (for example, while driving). You should be able to turn on speaker phone while making a call by tapping the 'Speaker' icon.

4.1.5 Blocking voice calls

If you are receiving nuisance or scam calls, you may wish to block a number (or numbers).

 Most smartphones will enable this through settings in your 'Phone' app, either by either adding a number to your 'blocked' list, or by selecting the settings relating to the specific caller you want to block.

‹ Contacts   Edit

JS

John Smith

message   call   video   mail

Notes

Share Contact

Block this Caller
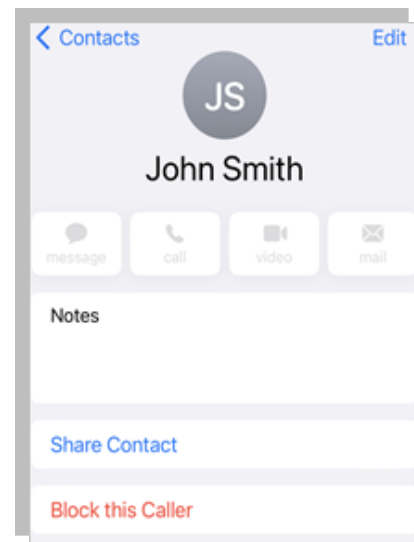
Example screenshot of iPhone

4.2   Photographs and screenshots

The majority of smartphones will have some sort of camera app allowing you to take photos and videos – the functionality offered will depend on your particular make and model. Most will also enable you to take screenshots (i.e. photos of your screen) to store or send to others.

4.2.1 Sharing your photos and videos

If you open your camera app, you should be able to select one or more photos or short video clips to share using your messages, email or another communication app. Look

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for a word like '*Share*', '*Export*' or a share icon similar to the one above, then select which app you want to use and the person you want to share it with.

Tip: Many smartphones will also let you take photos and attach to messages from within messaging apps.

4.2.2 Taking screenshots

Screenshots have many uses, for example some people take a screenshot of a ticket they've bought online so they have a stored copy offline if they need it.
How you take a screenshot depends on the make and model of your phone and will usually involve pressing a combination of 2 buttons on the outside of your case (for example, holding the 'Power' and 'Volume down' buttons at the same time). If you have taken a screenshot successfully, a thumbnail of the image should appear in the corner of your screen. Search the name and model of your device and the word '*screenshot*' (e.g. '*Samsung Galaxy s24 screenshot*') in a web browser for instructions on how to do this.

Tip: Screenshots should be stored in your photos app and can be shared in the same way as other photos.

4.2.3 Storing photographs and videos 'on the cloud'

'The cloud' refers to a global network of remote servers that enable you to store and access files, such as photos and videos, via the internet, i.e. they are not stored on your phone. Google, iCloud (the name for Apple's cloud provision) and other cloud providers (e.g. Dropbox) offer some cloud services for free limited storage to account holders, and offer more space to those that are happy to pay a monthly fee. You will usually need to enable (i.e. switch on) cloud storage and set up other options for this in your 'Settings' app.

Tip: You will often be asked if you want to 'sync' your device with your cloud storage, which means that any photos or videos you take using your device are automatically stored on your cloud storage. Google also enables you to back up your phone using its cloud provision.

4.3 Downloading apps

Most smartphones come with a set of apps pre-installed (e.g. including a 'Settings' app, a 'Photos' app, a 'Phone' app and a 'Clock' app). Being able to download other apps you want is a key skill, for example you may want to download a banking app so that you can securely access your online banking, or a shopping app so you can do some of your

shopping online. The apps available to you are likely to vary depending on your region and/or country.

While iPhone apps can only be accessed from the 'App Store' hosted by Apple, other phones are likely to get their apps from the 'Google Play App' store. To download an app, select the app store on your device, and locate a 'Search' box or scroll through the various headings to find apps you would like to download. For example, if you wanted a banking app, you would search for the name of the bank and look for its logo (see the tip below if your phone is not an iPhone). Once you're happy that the app is the one you want, tap to download/install it.

Tip: Apple state that all apps in their app store are tested to meet their 'high standards for privacy, security and content'; Google Play apps are not tested in the same way, so always check the reviews and number of downloads for any apps before downloading them (with a higher number of downloads providing a higher level of confidence that an app is fit-for-purpose and/or legitimate).

4.3.1 Removing apps ☒

You should be able to remove any app you've downloaded. How you do this will depend on your device. On iPhones you can do a 'long press' on an app you don't want which will bring up a memory enabling you to delete. Other phones may offer this functionality through the Settings or Google Play Store app (search or scroll for words like '*Manage apps*', '*Storage'* or '*Uninstall'*).

4.4   Managing your storage ☰

Your 'Settings' app should enable you to check how much space you have left on your phone (the amount of storage you have on your device is often measured in gigabytes, GB for short), with some devices displaying this information visually. Search on '*Storage'* or '*Memory'* in your 'Settings' app to see how much of your phone's storage is being used and what is taking up the space.

4.4.1 Freeing up storage

The best way to free up memory is to delete any unwanted photos, apps and videos that you have stored on your device (the longer the video, the more space it takes up). If you have a lot of photos or videos you want to keep, one of the easiest solutions is to move them to cloud storage (see Section 4.2.3).

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4.5   Setting alarms   ⏰

You should be able to set as many alarms as you want on most smartphones, with various settings available in your 'Clock' app (for example, giving the alarm a name, specifying whether you want it to repeat, which days you want it activated, and the sound you want to play).

4.6   Scanning QR-codes   ▦

You may have seen QR-codes (also known as 'quick response codes' in museums, restaurants, in emails, on websites or even in your local supermarket.

You scan a QR-code by opening your 'Camera' app and holding it over the code until 'handles' appear around the code, meaning your camera has detected it's a QR-code and either a link or text will appear on your screen.

Screenshot of an iPhone

Scanning a QR-code can launch a website, link directly to download an app from an app store (eg Apple App Store or Google Play), send and receive payment information, authenticate online accounts and much more (you may need to tap the code on your screen to activate it if no link or text appears).

4.6.1 QR-codes used for scamming purposes

Sometimes scammers use QR-codes for malicious purposes. Some QR-codes may send you to fake websites in a similar way to scam emails or texts, others can embed links to websites which contain malware to extract data from a mobile device, and some scammers will even go around sticking their own QR-codes over legitimate ones (for example, those found on parking machines) to trick people into visiting a fake website.

The message is therefore to only scan codes that you know come from a trusted source.

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How-to guide for smartphones

Part 2: Managing your data and security

Digital InSpiration Collective [DISC]

A guide written by users for users...

5 Managing your information

Many of us will have heard stories about websites collecting information about you, including the use of 'cookies'. Cookies are small files sent by websites that are saved on your device. They are used for various purposes, for example storing your username and password to make it quicker for you to access your favourite websites, or storing information about the websites you're visiting and what you've searched for. These latter are known as 'tracking cookies' and can be used to assist companies in user profiling, tailoring the ads and other content you see. This information about you is sometimes shared with other companies or sold on. The use of cookies is governed by UK data protection rules which state that consent to allow them has to be clearly given. In addition to cookies and the data they collect, it's worth being aware of the other information you share through apps (such as your location, your name, date of birth, address, your contacts) and the day-to-day sharing that takes place through social media accounts.

Some people may consider sharing their information a worthwhile trade-off to enable them to access the content they want, and this is obviously a personal choice, but it's worth this being an informed choice.

5.1 Managing cookies 🍪

On most websites, you should be given the option to allow or reject certain cookies. Some websites, however, (e.g. those of national newspapers), will not work unless you either allow cookies, accept adverts or pay a subscription to remove adverts.

Sites may offer a 'More Information' or 'Cooking settings' type link which should let you reject some or all cookies on the page or choose which ones you want (if you see a link to 'Legitimate partners' or 'Legitimate interest', it's also worth checking the cookies set for those too, before saving your preferences).
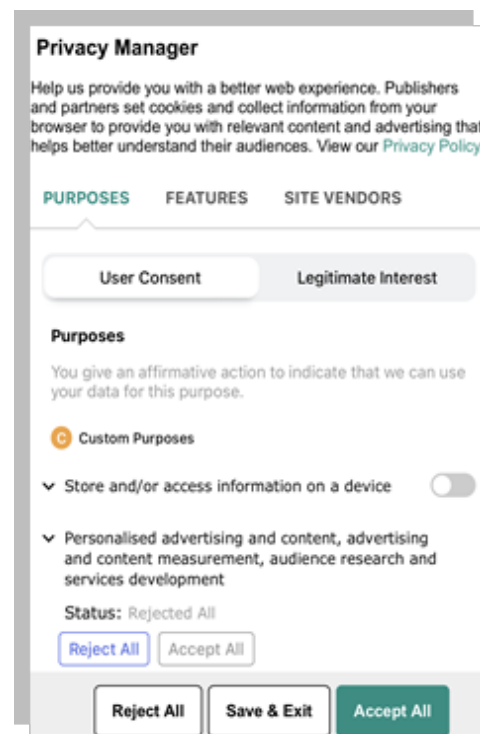
Screenshot of an iPhone

Some devices enable you to manage your cookie settings centrally via their 'Settings' app (search for 'tracking', 'website data', 'internet settings' or the name of your browser to learn what settings are available).

5.1.1 Turning tracking on and off

You should be able to block or unblock websites from tracking which sites you visit via your 'Settings' app (search for '*tracking*'), or you can manage tracking cookies on a per-website basis, as outlined above.

Tip: If you've visited a website previously and have accepted cookies, you will not be asked again unless you clear your browsing history and data (accessed through the settings for your web browser app, e.g. Chrome or Safari).

5.2   Managing apps

While it makes sense that you will need to share some personal information when setting up a banking app (for example, your name, date of birth, address, telephone number and so on), you should be wary of apps that ask for this information without a valid reason (for example, gaming apps). As outlined in the introduction to this section, however, you may consider that sharing your data is a worthwhile trade-off for the services you receive.

5.2.1 Automatic sign-up (with credit card)

When you set up your device, you may have entered your credit card details as part of the setup process. Some apps, including pre-installed apps that came with your phone, may offer some services on an app for free, while others are 'paid-for'. For example, a fitness app may provide step-counting functionality for free but may charge for heart monitoring. Apps should let you know when a particular service requires payment before they take payment, but it's worth being mindful of this if your phone has your credit card details stored so they can be used by the app store. You should be able to remove any payment card you have associated with your device (search on '*payment*' in your Settings app).

5.2.2 Sharing your information in social media apps

It's worth being mindful about who you share information with on social media channels, particularly if it relates to your being away from home, for example, on

holiday or out for the night, or giving away personal details that make it easier for scammers to target you.

5.2.3 Sharing your location

If you want to use functionality such as 'Find my iPhone' or 'Find My Device', you will need to make sure you are sharing your location. This functionality can be switched on or off, as needed, in your 'Settings' app (search for '*location'* to see what settings are offered – location sharing is usually switched off by default). Turning 'location sharing' on means people you choose to share with can track your location in a mapping app (e.g. Google maps), providing you have also enabled sharing in your 'find my device' type app. Other people can also enable this functionality on their phones, so you can track their location if they give you permission.

If you want a mapping app to have direct access to your location as it changes (for example, if you are wanting to use it as a satnav), search for *'maps'* in your 'Settings' app to access the settings.

You should be able to set whether and how you want your location to be shared, to enable you to get precise directions and estimate travel times while you are travelling.
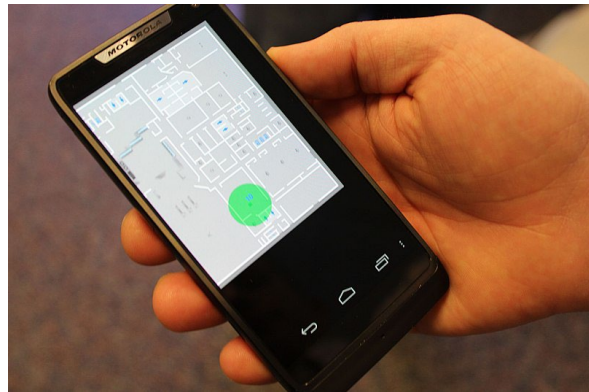
Intel Free Press
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6 Managing your security

While smartphones bring many advantages to our day-to-day lives, they require a degree of caution in how we use them. We have already mentioned needing to be aware of what information you share, for example on social media, and there are other things to keep an eye out for.

6.1 Using your phone abroad ✈

There are a few things to consider before you go abroad in terms of accessing the internet and mobile data. You may be able to use your mobile data free of charge in Europe and elsewhere, but this will depend on your provider, the kind of contract you have with them, and the country (or countries) you're visiting.

The EU rules on 'roaming charges' (i.e. the amount companies can charge for data you access in Europe) is no longer capped, so it's worth checking with your provider before you leave. They may allow you to access mobile data free as part of your contract (depending what country you're visiting), they may offer a daily rate for using your phone abroad, they may charge you per megabyte (MB) used or have some other 'add-on' you can buy. Some companies also offer you an international SIM card or you could buy a local SIM car abroad, so it's worth checking to see what best fits your needs.
Tip: If you are paying for the amount you use and you want to keep costs low, it's probably worth switching off certain resource-heavy apps (e.g. mapping apps that continually update your location) until you need them.

While accessing free WiFi in your hotel, apartment or in a café might seem like a good way to save money if you're on a PAYG contract, be aware that these connections are not always secure so you should be wary when accessing online banking or other sensitive information. One way to respond to security concerns is to access the internet through a 'virtual private network' (see next section).

6.1.1 Using a virtual private network (VPN) 🛡

A VPN allows you to connect securely to the internet by encrypting your data – this means you can securely access banking and other apps by enabling your VPN while using free WIFI, e.g. that provided by a rail company, hotel, apartment, restaurant or airport. You can pay for a VPN or you can download a free one - the ones you pay for are more likely to give a faster and more stable connection. Once the VPN app is installed on your phone, go to your 'Settings' app and search for 'VPN' to check it's enabled (you should see the name of the VPN app you downloaded). Tap the icon for your VPN to open it, choose your location (if required), and then connect.

Tip: Always check you've turned on the VPN before accessing banking apps and other sensitive data.

6.2   Spotting scams and 'phishing' attacks

Many of us will have received phone calls from someone trying to sell us something. These calls may be annoying but aren't necessarily scams. Age UK has useful information about the different types of scams you may encounter, including phone scams and postal scams, but our focus in this guide is on those you may receive via email or text.

You can usually tell whether an email comes from a legitimate source by looking at the 'from' address (tap the sender and look carefully at the bit of the email address after the '@' symbol). If you've received something from the government, for example, this should show as coming from '**gov.uk**' at the end (e.g. info@access.service.**gov.uk**). Some scammers will imitate email addresses to try and trick people (for example, using info@access.service **govuk.uk**), so it's worth familiarising yourself with what the correct email addresses are for important contacts such as banks and building societies.

6.2.1 Email scams

Scam emails often try to encourage you to click a link which will take you to a fake website which will ask you to input personal details in order to give scammers access to your accounts. These are known as phishing attacks. Some will have created a very genuine-looking website (for example, impersonating the government tax portal) to achieve this, and may use ploys such as including official logos and a deadline by which you need to pay to avoid a fine. Others will appear to come from companies many of us use (for example, Amazon or parcel delivery services) with a large heading such as 'Response required' or 'Your account has been hacked'. Some may even purport to be from people you know.

The key thing if you think you have got a scam email is not to click any links in the email. It may be that your suspicions were raised because the text of the email had incorrect spelling or grammar, or it just didn't feel right, but it's important to recognise that scammers are becoming more skilful and it's not always easy to spot what is a scam and what isn't.

Emails may also contain a QR-code (see Section 5.6) that will take you to a fake website or one infected with malware if you scan it.

Tip: If you are concerned you may have been scammed, you can freeze your credit or debit card immediately in your banking app (if you use online banking), as well as phoning your bank or building society to secure your account.

6.2.2 Text scams 💬

Many text scams relate to the collection of a parcel and there is unsurprisingly an increase in these in the run-up to Christmas, so it's worth checking with family or friends if you are not sure. Like scam emails, scam texts are likely to contain a link that will take you to a fake website or ask you to reply by text or phone. The key advice is don't tap on any links in the text, don't reply to the message and don't try calling a number connected with an unsolicited text message.

6.2.3 Spotting fake websites ⚠️

There are a few things to look out for on any website to make sure it's secure. This is particularly important on a site where you're likely to be putting in personal details such as name, address or credit card number. Taking the Lancaster City Council site as an example, in the 'address bar' (likely to be at the top or the bottom of the screen), you should either see a padlock icon (where closed indicates the site is secure), or an icon indicating the security level of your site (where an exclamation mark suggests a site is insecure or dangerous, while an icon similar to the one indicates the site is secure).

Depending on your operating system and/or browser, tapping the icon may give additional information about the site, such as its security certificate and what cookies it's using. Another indication a site is secure is if its full web address starts with 'HTTPS' (rather than HTTP). You can also check a website by copying and pasting its address into Google's 'Safe Browsing' checker: https://transparencyreport.google.com/safe-browsing/search

Tip: Most smartphones should enable you to easily copy a web address (also known as a URL).

On iPhones, you do this by visiting a page, then tapping the 'Share' icon ⬆️, selecting 'Copy' from the list and then 'Paste'. On Android phones, you should be able to tap the address bar and then tap 'Copy'.
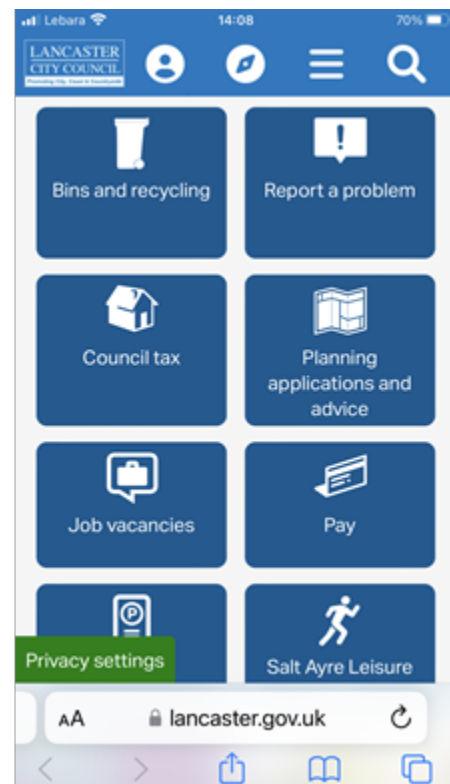
Screenshot of an iPhone

6.2.4 Reporting scams and fake websites ⛔

Many organisations have a helpline you can call to check if an email, text or call you've received from them is legitimate, and it's always useful to discuss any concerns you may have with a family member or friend (this is where a screenshot of a suspicious email may come in handy).

The UK National Cyber Security Centre (https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/phishing-scams/spot-scams) has some excellent resources to help you spot scams and also provides online forms to report suspicious emails, texts, calls, websites or adverts.

6.3 Creating and remembering passwords 🔑

Creating and remembering all the different passwords we may have for our various online accounts can be tricky. You can use a password manager and/or a web browser to help with this, which means your passwords will be securely stored so you don't have to remember them, and in addition, the passwords created will be unique and strong.

6.3.1 Using a Password Manager

Most password managers require you to use a 'master' password to gain access, and should then enable you to set passwords for various websites and apps you visit, which it will store securely. This means you should be automatically logged into those sites and apps rather than needing to type a password every time. Some password managers also allow you to synchronise your passwords across different devices, and may also help spot fake websites and alert you if a data breach means your password needs changing. Search for '*Passwords'* in your 'Settings' app to see what functionality is available on your device (Android users should be able to access a password manager within their Google account).

Tip: It is worth setting a strong 'master' password to give access to your password manager, and turning on two-factor authentication for it (if available).

6.3.2 Using a web browser

You may already be using a web browser (e.g. Google Chrome or Safari) to save your passwords, or you may have been asked if you want to save a password when logging into a site. You should only save passwords in a web browser if you are using your own device.

Tip: Make sure you are using the latest version of your browser and operation system, to keep passwords secure.

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7   Managing your money

Aside from enabling you to save credit card details and download banking apps to give you access to online banking, many smartphones now also offer a 'Wallet' app. A 'Wallet' app enables you to store debit, credit cards, loyalty cards and passes on your device so you don't need to take the physical cards and passes out with you. Some 'Wallet' apps come pre-installed on your device, while others need installing (search for '*Wallet*' in your 'Settings' app to see what if your device has one).

7.1   Using a 'Wallet' app

On iPhones, you can use 'Apple Pay' within the 'Wallet' app to pay for items anywhere that takes contactless payments by tapping and authenticating (for example with Face ID). The equivalent on Android devices is the 'Google Pay' app. You can either pay using your default card or select a different one from your 'Wallet'.

Tip: Wallet apps can provide enhanced security, however there is an obvious danger of their being accessed if someone takes your device and your phone is unlocked. It is always worth setting a strong passcode to access your phone, and consider adding two-factor authentication if given the option.

Glossary

Accessibility	Design and functionality aimed at ensuring apps, websites and other technologies can be used by people with disabilities and/or medical conditions
Android	An example of an operating system for mobile phones and tablets that is not for use on Apple iPhones.
App/application	Programs you can download to help you do things (e.g. you can download a banking app so you can use online banking)
Auto-correct	Corrects your text as you type according to a set of rules
Back up (or backup)	Making a copy of your phone data which is created and stored elsewhere, to enable you to restore the original
Cloud	Enables you to save and access files (e.g. photos) on servers on the internet, wherever you are
Delete	Removing a file from your device. You may be able to retrieve deleted files from a 'recycle bin' or 'recently deleted' area.
Download	To transfer a file (e.g. an app) from the internet to your device
Export	To share a file (e.g. a photo) from your device via email, text or some other app
Gigabytes (GB)	A unit of data capacity equivalent to 1024 megabytes (or one billion bytes).
Icon	A small graphical symbol that often acts as a button (e.g. apps are often represented by icons as well as text).
Import	Transferring content to your device, for example importing contacts from an old phone to a new phone
Install	Downloading an app from an app store (or operating system update) to automatically add to your device
iOS	The Apple operating system that runs iPhones.
Landscape	Horizontal orientation of your screen where the width is greater than the height. See 'Portrait'.

Megabytes (MB)	A unit of data capacity equivalent to 1000 kilobytes (or 1,000,000 bytes)
Navigate	Getting around your phone by tapping buttons and icons, and using menus
Operating System	The software that runs your phone.
Passcode	A code made up of digits that you choose when you set up your phone.
Password	A password (often made up of digits, letters and sometimes symbols) used to gain access various apps and websites. See 'Password Manager'.
Password Manager	Used to create and store passwords.
Popup menu	A menu that appears when you tap on an area, such as an icon or word.
Portrait	Vertical orientation of your screen where the height is greater than the width. See 'Landscape'.
QR-code	A code consisting of a mixture of black and white squares that you scan using your smartphone camera. Depending on how the code is configured, it can launch a website, show text or perform other functions.
Scam	A dishonest scheme or fraud that tries to extract information from you, either through scam emails, texts, phone calls or website.
Screenshot	A photo taken of your screen.
Scroll	On a smartphone, you scroll by moving your finger up, down or across to show more text or graphics (for example, you may scroll a menu, to show more items that are offscreen)
Search box	A box that you can type into to search (e.g. typing the word '*Location'* in the search box in your 'Settings' app)
Search engine	A website used to search for information (e.g. Google, Yahoo or DuckDuckGo).
Server	A computer or system that provides resources, data or services to other devices over a network (e.g. the internet).

Slider	A visual representation of a slider on your screen that you can long-press and then drag to alter a setting (e.g. size of text)
Site	See 'website'
Smartphone	A mobile phone you can use to access the internet.
Social media	Interactive technologies that enable the creation and sharing of text and audio-visual content in virtual communities. Examples include Facebook, WhatsApp, X, Instagram.
Spam	Unwanted emails or messages.
Streaming	Listening to music or watching video via a continuous stream of data rather than downloading it onto your device.
Swipe	Moving your finger right or left on your device's screen, for example to look through photos in an album.
Toggle switch	A visual representation of a switch on your screen that you can tap to turn something on or off (e.g. bold text).
Two-factor authentication	Enhances security by using two forms of identification (e.g. receiving a verification code in a text message as well as verifying a transaction within a banking app).
Uninstall	Removing an app from your device.
Update	Keeping your operating system and apps up-to-date. This can use up space on your device but can be important for security reasons.
URL	The web address of a website (e.g. www.google.co.uk).
Wi-fi	Enables you to connect to the internet without wires but needs you to be near a 'broadband router'. If you have broadband at home, you will probably have saved your Wi-fi password in your device's settings so should be able to connect automatically. If you're away from home, you will usually need to enter a password to access free Wi-fi (see virtual private network).

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Contributions

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