



Quick Tips

Unwanted Telemarketing Calls

What is a "robocall"?

Robocalls are automated calls using a device that dials numbers indiscriminately and plays a recorded message when the call is answered. These calls are often unwanted solicitations and can sometimes be the source of fraudulent offers. But these automated calls can also be used for legitimate purposes. Some city, town and state governments use these systems to disseminate information during or after some sort of emergency. Likewise, doctors and pharmacies will often use them to remind patients about upcoming appointments and prescriptions.

How do I stop unwanted robocalls?

- **Sign up for the “Do Not Call” List:** If you do not wish to receive any telemarketing calls, you can add your phone number to the national “Do Not Call” Registry by calling 888-382-1222 from the phone you wish to register, or visit www.donotcall.gov and register your phone number online.
- **I’m already on the list, but I still get telemarketing calls:** It may take as long as 31 days after you register your number for telemarketers to remove your number from their database. If you receive unwanted calls after this 31 day period, you can report violations of the “Do Not Call” list by filing a complaint online at www.donotcall.gov.
- **I’ve heard registering my number won’t stop all calls:** It is true that certain exempt groups will still be able to call you even if your number is on the Do Not Call list. The list of exempt groups includes charities, political organizations and telephone surveyors. You may also still receive automated calls from your local government and from businesses and services providers you use, such as your doctor and your pharmacy.

Other tips for preventing unwanted phone calls

- **Do not share your phone number:** Each time you give your phone number to a business, you are giving them an invitation to call you or sell your phone number. This includes giving your phone number to the cashier or clerk at a local retail store or at financial institutions. If a business asks for your phone number, ask them why they need it.
- **Talk to your service provider:** Your telephone company may have its own blocking service or other resources that can help prevent unwanted phone calls. Your telephone company may also be able to provide you with the true phone numbers of telemarketers who have been calling you even though your number is on the Do Not Call list. This can be helpful information to have since many telemarketers have devices that send false information to your caller ID.
- **Do not press any buttons:** When you answer a telemarketer’s phone call, you should never push any buttons, even if the call says, “dial 1 to remove yourself from our call list.” You should just hang up and report the caller at www.donotcall.gov. By pressing any buttons on your phone, you are alerting the telemarketer that someone is answering the number they dialed and responding to the call. This could lead to more unwanted phone calls.

Additional Resources

- You can learn more about robocalls and the Do Not Call list by [visiting the Federal Trade Commission’s Web site](#).
- For additional information, call the Office of the Attorney General Consumer Assistance Unit at 860-808-5420.