

# mobile phones and tablets



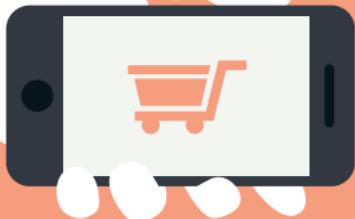
Government  
of South Australia

Attorney-General's  
Department



## coverage

Look at the network coverage maps on the service provider's website or in-store to find out the quality of reception in the areas you are likely to use the device.



## shop around

Look at the different types of plans or service agreements available (fixed term contract, pre-paid, pay monthly or renting/leasing). Call costs and deals may vary dramatically. Do your sums and look at what calls, texts and downloads you would normally make in a month so you can work out the best deal for you. If you're a heavy data user, you might consider a phone or internet plan

that includes unlimited data. There are usually extra charges if you exceed your monthly limit for data usage, SMS and calls.

Premium SMS, new apps, 'in-app' purchases and international roaming are often extra charges that are added to your plan or value.

Penalties can apply if you change plans before the contract expires and some contracts last up to 3 years.



## understand the contract

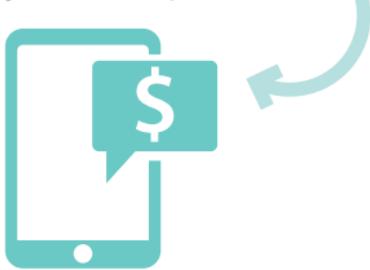
Don't just go by what the salesperson says. Always read contracts thoroughly and don't sign anything unless you fully understand what you are getting and your obligations under the contract. If you think a term in the contract is unfair, speak to the salesperson or seek advice from Consumer and Business Services.

Be careful about 'going guarantor' on a phone or tablet for someone under 18 years of age as you will be responsible for paying the bills if they can't pay.

## check and pay your bills

Before signing a contract, find out what your monthly (and any additional device purchase) payments will be and when they are due so that you don't get an unexpectedly high bill.

If you don't pay your bill on time you could be listed with a credit reporting agency. This would then appear on your credit history record. If you need to dispute any call or data charges, raise this with your service provider.



# 'pro-rata' charging



When signing up to a new service, discuss with your provider how their billing cycle and 'pro-rata' charging practices may affect you. Also, check your original contract before switching between providers. 'Included value' in some service plans may not correspond with the provider's billing cycle

and you can't always control exactly how long a connection to a provider, or transfer between providers, may take. Be alert when signing up or transferring to a new provider part way through a billing cycle. You may incur extra costs if you exceed your pro-rata usage entitlements.

## global roaming charges

Before travelling overseas with a mobile phone or tablet, check with your service provider about international roaming and overseas telephone services. You can

arrange for automatic call diversion to voicemail or turn off

global roaming and data settings before leaving Australia. You can also arrange with your provider to restrict access to global roaming. Understanding roaming costs and overseas call charges as well as taking precautions with your phone or tablet may prevent you from returning home to a bill that costs more than your trip.



# security tips



- It is a good idea to update your phone software when prompted on your device.
- Use a strong password for your main email address to prevent others from accessing your backups, photos and personal information.
- Be careful when using public Wi-Fi. A Virtual Private Network (VPN) can protect your login details (e.g. when logging into your bank or social media account).
- Use a strong lock-screen (e.g. fingerprint reader or passcode).

## mobile phone scams

It is best not to respond to text messages or missed calls that come from numbers you don't recognise. Sometimes the SMS may urge you to enter a competition or to answer a quick question to win a prize. By responding you may unintentionally sign up to a premium service, with a call rate of around \$6 per minute or more. It may be hard to unsubscribe without further costs and you may need to change your phone number to stop the scam.

# apps and in-app purchases

You can download many apps for free or for a small fee. Check the app size (in megabytes), terms and conditions when downloading or updating apps. You may also use up data when using apps.

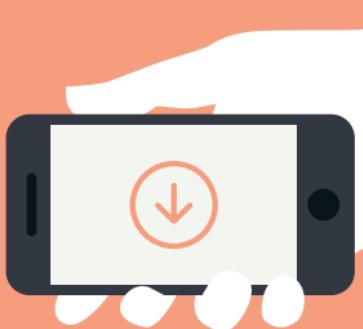
Control data use by:

- closing apps
- switching off 'push notifications'
- turning off the auto-play function in social media apps
- turning off network access altogether when not needed
- downloading new apps or updates through Wi-Fi connections.

Only download apps from official sources (Google Play store for Android, or

the App Store for iOS) to avoid downloading any malicious software.

In-app purchases are items you purchase using the app (e.g. music, e-books or credits towards bonus game levels). Use password protection and settings that give you control over how apps and in-app purchases can be accessed.



# numbers that begin with 13, 18 or 19

## '13' and '1300' numbers

- These have a similar call rate to landline calls.
- Check if your plan includes this. You may be charged extra if you exceed your limits.

## '18' and '1800' numbers

- These are usually free.
- Check if your plan offers this for free.

## '19' numbers

- These are usually charged at a premium rate.

Before downloading a ring tone or other entertainment/information service check:

- what you are actually purchasing
- if it is a one-off download or a subscription service
- the cost for each download and overall cost
- if your device is compatible
- how to cancel it
- the terms and conditions.

For information on mobile premium services visit [19SMS.com.au](http://19SMS.com.au)



# consumer guarantees



Mobile devices and services must meet consumer guarantees. They must be of acceptable quality, in proper working order and match the description provided by the retailer or service provider. Regardless of any warranty that comes with the device, you are automatically protected by consumer guarantees.

If the phone or tablet is not of acceptable quality and fails soon after you buy it

then you are entitled to ask for a remedy such as a refund or replacement. If you buy a phone or tablet as part of a service contract with a specified length of time, and the device fails through no fault of your own during that time, then the provider should offer a reasonable remedy.

Make sure you keep your receipts and network connection agreement as proof of purchase.

## downloading data



Monitoring your data allowance can avoid big bills when accessing the internet and email via your phone or tablet. Some devices monitor your data usage automatically in 'Settings', but you may need to

reset these at the start of each billing period. Or log into your online account or contact your service provider to check your data usage. This service may cost extra, so check with your service provider first.

# if your device is lost/stolen ?

Contact your service provider immediately to suspend the service. This will stop unauthorised calls being made. If you are on a plan you will still need to pay the monthly contract fee. Some network providers offer insurance for your device but make sure you read the conditions and any exclusions before signing up for it.



## recycling your old device

Mobile phones and tablets are not biodegradable so you should try to recycle any unwanted devices. Many mobile retailers offer a recycling program.

The Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA) manages a mobile recycling program on a not-for-profit basis. Check on the mobile muster website for a drop off centre near you: [mobilemuster.com.au](http://mobilemuster.com.au)

# what if things go wrong?

Contact the retailer or network provider to try and sort out the problem. If you are unsuccessful, contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) for problems with a network service provider or Consumer and Business Services (CBS) for problems with a retailer concerning the device. The TIO will also examine complaints about faulty handsets where the handset was bought as part of a plan.

## **Consumer and Business Services**

91 Grenfell St, Adelaide,  
GPO Box 1719,  
Adelaide SA 5001  
Phone: 131 882  
[cbs.sa.gov.au](http://cbs.sa.gov.au)

## **SCAMwatch**

Phone: 1300 795 995  
[scamwatch.gov.au](http://scamwatch.gov.au)

## **Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO)**

Phone: 1800 062 058  
[tio.com.au](http://tio.com.au)

## **Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network**

[acorn.gov.au](http://acorn.gov.au)

## **Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA)**

For call blocking and preventing phone theft  
Phone: 6239 6555  
[amta.org.au](http://amta.org.au)

