

## International Roaming: Using Your Mobile Phone in Other Countries

Before you travel abroad, find out if your mobile phone will work abroad. Mobile telephone networks differ from country to country, and your phone may be incompatible with the networks where you are visiting. Also, if your phone works for voice calls, some other functions – such as sending and receiving mobile data or text messaging – might not work. Check with your mobile service provider before you depart.

Check your roaming rates before traveling. For most U.S. customers, domestic service plans do not cover usage abroad. Rates may be much higher because of additional roaming fees on foreign mobile networks and may vary from country to country or network to network. Higher rates may apply to all of your phone's functions, including voice calls, voice mail, text messages, and Internet access. Ask your service provider about available options.

Roaming is complicated. Take time to understand all the rules and rates before you travel. Advance preparation can prevent disappointments such as lack of service or unexpectedly high charges on your next bill.

### Research other options

- If you're a frequent international traveler, consider buying a "world phone" that will work anywhere. Check with your provider for more information.
- If your phone is capable, consider buying a "SIM" card (the removable card used by some mobile handsets containing subscriber data and the phone's number) with a local number in the country you're visiting, effectively turning the handset into a local phone.
- You could also rent an inexpensive handset for the country you'll be visiting. You can rent it before you leave home or when you get to your destination.
- You may save money by purchasing a calling card overseas.
- You may be able to rely entirely on wireline phones and wireline Internet access, perhaps including Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) calling. And by making mobile VoIP calls with your smartphone, you also may avoid voice roaming charges.
- If you have a smartphone, uploading/downloading data using a Wi-Fi hotspot rather than a foreign mobile network may avoid data roaming charges. Use free Wi-Fi hotspots whenever possible. Check with your provider about Internet applications using Wi-Fi that may save you money.

### More quick tips for international mobile phone use

- Your provider may have a plan to cover mobile service outside of the U.S. Check before you travel.
- Turn off automatic downloads. Some phones and data services will automatically download data while the phone is on. Check with your provider or your phone's manufacturer to learn how to disable these automatic downloads.
- Do not call mobile to mobile within foreign hotels. Use the hotel phones.
- Most hotels don't charge for incoming wireline calls, so pre-arrange a time to be in your hotel room for an incoming call from home.
- If you have an option of contacting someone in the country you're visiting at either a wireline or mobile number, call the wireline. It's likely to be cheaper.
- Be aware of the emergency calling number in the country you're visiting. If you rely on VoIP services, note they often lack some of the emergency calling features of a regular telephone, so be informed about these differences as well.

### Resources: contact information for mobile and VoIP service providers

*This section includes a few selected service providers of several types. It is not meant to be a complete list of all providers. Neither the FCC nor the U.S. Government is endorsing the products or services of any provider by including it on this list.*

## AT&T

General toll free number: **1-800-331-0500** or **611** from a wireless phone; international services: **1-800-335-468**; when calling from overseas: **1-916-843-4685**

Web: [www.wireless.att.com/learn/international/roaming/faq.jsp](http://www.wireless.att.com/learn/international/roaming/faq.jsp); [www.wireless.att.com/global](http://www.wireless.att.com/global)

## Skype

Web: [www.skype.com/intl/en/home](http://www.skype.com/intl/en/home)

## Sprint Nextel

Sprint Worldwide Customer Support: **1-888-226-7212**

Web: [http://shop.sprint.com/mysprint/services\\_solutions/category.jsp?catId=service\\_international&catName=International Services#](http://shop.sprint.com/mysprint/services_solutions/category.jsp?catId=service_international&catName=International%20Services#)

## Truphone

Customer Support: UK **+44 (0) 203-318-0742**; United States and rest of world **1-646-360-1689**

Web: [www.truphone.com/ROW/](http://www.truphone.com/ROW/)

## T-Mobile

Customer Support: **1-877-453-1304**

Web: [www.t-mobile.com/optional-services/international.html](http://www.t-mobile.com/optional-services/international.html)

## US Cellular

Customer Support at **1-888-944-9400**

Web: [www.uscellular.com/services/international/index.html](http://www.uscellular.com/services/international/index.html)

## Verizon Wireless

Customer Service: Dial **\*611** or call **1-800-922-0204** to enable international roaming

Web: [www.verizonwireless.com/global](http://www.verizonwireless.com/global)

**CTIA International Calling Provider Information** [www.fcc.gov/guides/international-calling-wireless-providers-voip-services-and-smartphone-manufacturers](http://www.fcc.gov/guides/international-calling-wireless-providers-voip-services-and-smartphone-manufacturers)

## Filing a complaint

You have multiple options for filing a complaint with the FCC:

- File a complaint online at <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov>
- By phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322); TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322); ASL: 1-844-432-2275
- By mail (please include your name, address, contact information and as much detail about your complaint as possible):

Federal Communications Commission  
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

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Last Reviewed: 11/06/15

