

Concerned about a lost or stolen mobile?

Losing a mobile phone can be very disruptive – as well as its replacement cost, losing your phone also means losing access to your stored contact information including phone numbers and e-mail addresses, photos and history of recent communications with family, friends and colleagues.

How to minimize the impact of loss or theft

Prepare for the loss of your phone by:

- putting in place a SIM card PIN number or password to prevent the phone being used casually by anyone other than you. Where your SIM card is supplied set up with a default PIN, change this to a new number which only you know. Avoid “obvious” PINs such as 1111, 1234 etc..
- periodically back-up the phone or enable an automatic back-up where offered by the manufacturer, operating system provider or mobile operator;
- enable the “Find My Phone” capability where offered by the manufacturer, operating system provider or mobile operator;
- Note down details of your phone on a piece of paper or post-it: your phone make and model; mobile number; IMEI number (a 15-digit manufacturer’s code) together with your mobile operator’s customer contact centre details for lost or stolen mobiles. Put this somewhere where you can find it (or tell someone else to find it) if your phone is lost or stolen;
- register the phone with immobilise.com – a UK database designed to assist the police identify and return lost and stolen property.

If your phone is lost or stolen

- If your phone is **lost**, then ring it or use the “Find My Phone” capability if operating. If you can identify where it is, then decide if and how to recover it. Consider whether you need to be accompanied by a family member or friend before you try to collect it;
- If your phone is **stolen**, then get in touch with your mobile operator’s customer contact centre to report its loss. Operators typically offer a number of different ways to contact them including: online form, IM chat and phone number which operate 24 hours a day;
- Once you notify your operator, it will block your SIM card so that no one else can use it. It will also stop the phone being used in the UK. Depending on operator terms and conditions you may still be liable for usage if your phone is stolen - in particular for any usage between the time when your phone is stolen and when you notify your operator. For this reason, notify your operator about the stolen phone as soon as you can and, ideally, within 24 hours. Once you have notified your operator this limits your liability for any unauthorized use;
- Report the loss of your phone to the Police and obtain a crime or loss reference number. You will need to do this to if your phone is insured through your operator, household contents or holiday insurance and you decide to make a claim.

When you report your phone stolen to your operator and to the police you will normally need to provide details of the make and model, mobile number and IMEI number.

In addition to blocking your stolen SIM card and phone, your operator will normally arrange to send you a new SIM card. Once you activate this in a phone, it will work as normal with your existing mobile number. You should also be able to restore your personal information if this was backed-up to a compatible device.