

Cell Phone Safety



Cell phones everywhere – chances are, you are reading this on one right now. While they're indispensable in daily life, it's important to use them safely.

Physical and Personal Safety

- **Avoid distracted driving.** The most significant danger from cell phones is distracted driving. Always use hands-free options, such as CarPlay, to keep your focus on driving. If you need to text, pull over. A minor delay is better than a major accident.
- **Stay aware in public.** Being engrossed in your phone makes you an easy target. Maintain your situational awareness by putting the phone away, keeping your head high, and scanning the environment. When you need to use your phone, stop, put your back to a wall, and look up frequently to scan what and who is close to you.
- **Avoid overheating.** Don't leave your phone in direct sunlight (e.g., on a car dashboard) or under pillows while charging, as extreme heat can damage the battery or even cause fires.
- **Use certified chargers.** Cheap, uncertified chargers can overheat or deliver unstable power, potentially damaging your phone or battery.



Security and Privacy

- **Lock your device.** Ensure your phone is protected with a strong passcode and set it to lock when not in use. Enable two-factor authentication when available.
- **Enable tracking and remote wipe.** Use a device tracking service (e.g., Find My iPhone, Google Find My Device) to locate a lost phone or erase your data if it is stolen.
- **Keep software updated.** Regular updates patch security flaws to reduce your vulnerability to cyber threats.
- **Avoid public services.** Be cautious when using public Wi-Fi and avoid using public USB charging stations or accessories, as they can be used to steal data or install malware.

Data Protection

- **Review app permissions.** Check the permissions of the apps on your phone to make sure they are not accessing sensitive information. Restrict access to contacts, photos, and location, and delete unused apps.
- **Disable unnecessary location services.** Apps and thieves can use this to track your movements.
- **Follow best practices.** The National Security Agency's [Mobile Device Best Practices](#) document offers steps you can take to protect your devices.