

Part 2 – Calls & Text Messages

Making the Miles Fade

Using your smartphone, tablet, PC or laptop to bring you closer to friends and family who live far away (*and those who don't*)



Tech Inner Circle Edition

THE
HELPFUL BOOK
COMPANY

An Employee-Owned Company

Making the Miles Fade

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A note about this chapter

Hello

In this chapter, we'll explain how to use a smartphone as... well... a phone!

You'd think it'd be blindingly obvious, wouldn't you – but it's amazing just how hard some manufacturers make it to use their phones as phones. Even when there's a big green phone-shaped button flashing on the screen, answering a call isn't as easy as just tapping that button! Oh no, that'd be far too easy...

But once you've got the hang of it, talking to someone on a mobile phone is a great way to keep in touch. You can pick up a mobile signal virtually anywhere in the country now, although some areas are better than others.

If you're struggling to get a decent signal, there are a few things that are worth trying:

- If you're in a building with more than one floor, try getting as high up in it as you can – there'll usually be less “stuff” between your phone and the signal tower that way.
- Moving closer to the outside of the building can help too – in a window is often your best bet.
- If you're really struggling, it's worth getting in touch with your phone provider (e.g. EE or O2) to ask about a feature called “wi-fi calling”. Or if that's not an option, they might be able to recommend a signal booster that could help.

Anyway – lots to discover in this chapter. Not just making and receiving calls, but how to use your in-built voicemail service and send quick text messages to friends through the mobile network.

Let's get stuck in...

Chapter 2

Calls and Text Messages

Calling on a Smartphone

Phone calls are one of the more direct methods of contacting people. These days it seems everyone's always on their phone – which should at least make them easy to get hold of!

O2, Vodafone, EE and Three are the main mobile phone networks.

“Data” is the information you view or download from the internet over the mobile phone network. You don't use data if you're connected to wi-fi, though.

Using a mobile phone network

Of all the various methods of keeping in touch, mobile phone networks are probably the most reliable. They're available 24/7 and they cover the entire country, although there are still a few signal blackspots in more rural areas.

The main drawback of mobile phone networks is that they aren't free to use – you have to pay to access them. There are two main ways to do this:

- 1) **Contract** – you pay a fixed monthly tariff to get up to a certain number of minutes, texts and data for that month. Contracts usually last for 1-2 years.
- 2) **Pay As You Go (PAYG)** – you pay for every text and phone call as you go.

Some people prefer PAYG because it's more flexible than a contract, and you can't run up a huge bill by accident. However, if you use your phone a lot, a contract can work out cheaper for you in the long run. You can choose whichever one works best for you.

Contacting people by phone

One of the nice things about phone calls is that you can hear the other person's voice, which makes it feel more natural than most electronic forms of communication. Phone calls can also feel more appropriate for sharing any big news you might have, because they're so much more personal than a text or an email.

A call can take a while, though – so they're not always ideal if you're both busy people. And when it comes to contacting someone who you haven't been in touch with for a while, calling them can sometimes feel a little intrusive – which is where text messages can come in handy...

Text messages

Text messages are short, typed messages that you can send from your mobile phone to someone else's mobile phone. They arrive almost instantly, depending on how good the mobile phone signal is at both ends. So I use them for quick messages while I'm on the go.

Texts messages are useful for sharing specific details – for example the time, date and location of a birthday party – because it gives you a written (well, typed) record that you can go back to if you forget.

A text message can also be a good way to contact someone if you don't want to bother them with a phone call. The person getting it can read it whenever's convenient and get back to you in their own time.

How to Find a Phone Number

It might sound quite old-school, but the phone book can be an easy way to find old friends. On this page I'll show you how to use an online phone book to find someone's phone number.

Using an online phone book

Online phone books are also updated regularly, to make sure that the information they're giving you is still correct.

Online phone books work in much the same way as the physical phone books that get posted through your letterbox once a year. The biggest advantage of using an online phone book instead of a physical one is that it covers the whole country, not just your local area. It also does most of the actual searching for you – no more hauling out the Yellow Pages and having to flick all the way through it to find the Ws...

However, online phone books do have their drawbacks:

- As always, if the person you're looking for is ex-directory, you won't be able to find their details.
- You also won't be able to find anyone's mobile phone number – there's no directory for that. If you come across a website that offers to find someone's mobile number for you for a price, I'd give it a miss. Chances are they won't find anything and it's verging on stalking – probably not the best way to try and rekindle an old friendship!

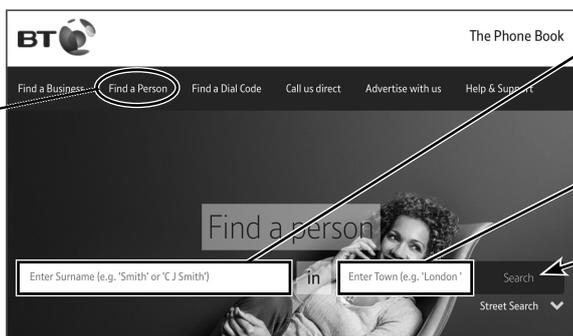
If you don't immediately find the person you're looking for in the online phone book, don't lose heart. There are a few other things you can try: for example, most entries include first initials rather than first names, so J Andrews will bring up more results than Julie Andrews would. Geography can also be a factor – if you're looking for a Smith in a huge city like London, you're probably going to need to narrow it down to a particular borough. Likewise, if you know that your Uncle Bob lives in a village somewhere near Windermere, you might need to widen your search to look at Cumbria to find the right person.

Looking for someone in an online phone book

If you end up on a screen that says "Find a business" rather than "Find a person", don't worry. Just click or tap on the "Find a Person" button at the top of the screen.

There are quite a few phone book websites on the internet. I'm going to use the BT one because it's free to use, and it doesn't limit you to a certain number of searches per day.

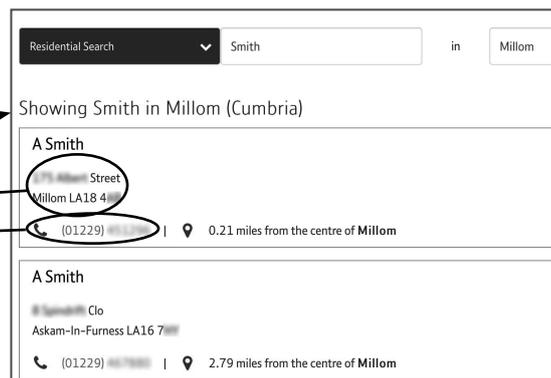
- 1) Open your web browser and type in thephonebook.bt.com/person
You'll see a screen like this:



- 2) Type the surname (and first initial) of the person you're looking for into the first box.
- 3) Then type the area you want to search into the second box. This can be a county, a town or even the start of a postcode.
- 4) Click or tap on the Search button.

If you get a message saying "We're sorry, we found too many results to display", you'll need to narrow down your search.

- 5) The results will appear on the screen in alphabetical order, like this:
- 6) Each entry will have an address and a landline phone number listed for that person.



- 7) If you're using the web browser on your phone, you can tap directly on the phone number to call that person. If not, you can jot it down to use later on.

Making a Phone Call

If you've got a traditional phone with buttons, you don't need to worry about all this lot!

Right, now that you've found the number you want to ring, let's get stuck into actually making a phone call. (For the rest of this chapter, I'm going to assume that you're using a smartphone – something like an Apple iPhone or a Samsung Galaxy.)

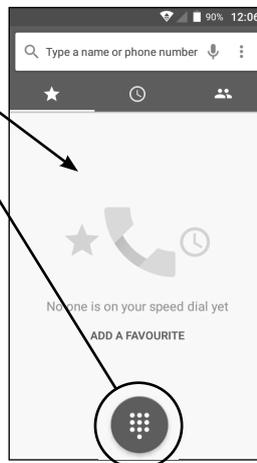
Making a phone call with the Phone app

- 1) To phone someone you need to use the Phone app, which has an icon of a phone receiver that's been lifted up. Here are a few examples:

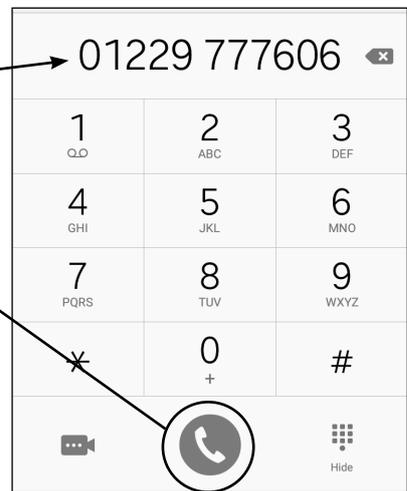


- 2) Tap on the icon on your Home screen to open it up and you'll get a screen that looks something like this one, with a number keypad on it. If you see a screen without a number keypad, then don't worry. Look for this button and tap on it to bring up the number keypad.

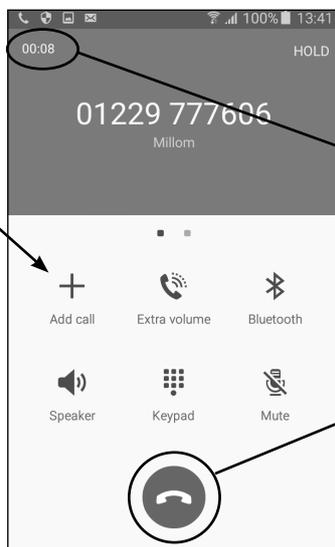
If you ever need to "press 1" during a phone call, you can take the phone away from your ear and press this button to bring up the keypad again.



- 3) Type the phone number in using the buttons.
- 4) As you type, the numbers will appear up at the top. If you get a number wrong, you can delete it by tapping on the delete button, which will look something like this: 
- 5) Tap on the green button at the bottom to call the number.
- 6) The screen will change to look something like this:



I'll show you some of the other buttons on the next page.



On some Pay As You Go contracts, after you finish a call a little box will pop up to tell you how much credit you have left.

- 7) While it's dialling it'll say "dialling" or "calling" up at the top, then when they answer it'll start a timer for the call.

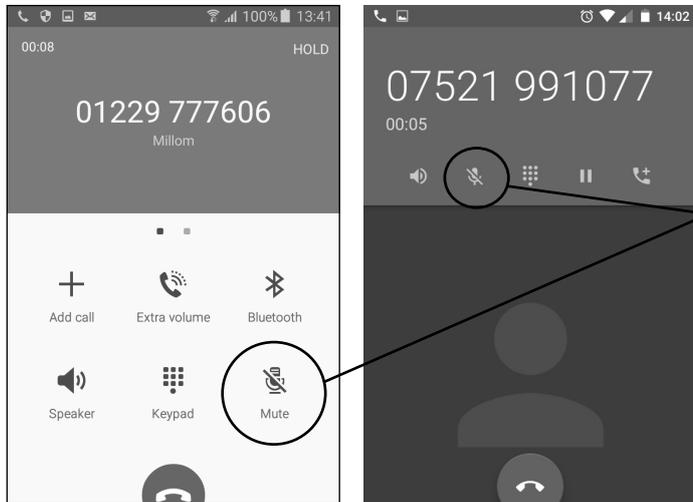
Hanging up

Tap on the red button at the bottom to hang up the call. This is the same whether you've rung someone or they've rung you. If the person you're talking to hangs up first, your call will automatically end – you don't need to do anything.

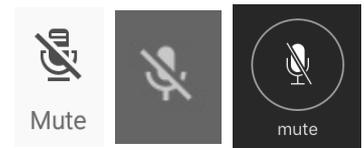
Making a Phone Call

On this page I'm going to go through some things you might want to do during a call, like mute the microphone or put it on speakerphone, and how to call someone in your contacts.

How to mute your phone during a call



If you want to mute the microphone while you're on the phone to someone, so you can have a private conversation with someone else who's with you, it's easy – just tap the mute button.



To turn off mute, just tap the button again.

How to put the call on speakerphone

If you want to put the call on speakerphone, for example so you can put the phone down and have your hands free or so someone else in the room can hear the conversation, all you do is tap on the speakerphone button.

It usually has a little megaphone icon, like these ones:

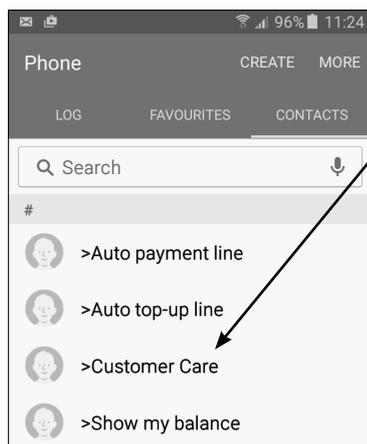


To take it off speakerphone, just tap the button again.

Calling someone in your contacts list

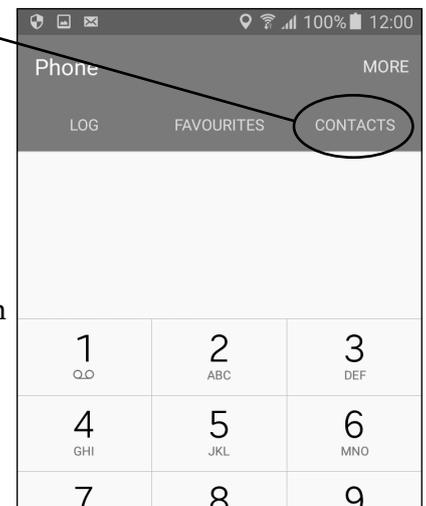
Your phone has a built-in digital address book called the Contacts app, which I showed you how to use in Chapter 1. If you want to ring someone in this list of contacts you can do it straight from the Phone app.

- 1) Open the Phone app and look for "People", "Contacts" or this little icon somewhere on the screen.
- 2) Tap on that and it'll take you to a list of all the people in your phone's contacts app:



- 3) Tap on the one you want to call, then on the next screen tap on the phone icon:

- 4) There's also a "Favourites" option on some phones that shows a list of the people you phone most often. To get to it, just tap "Favourites" or the star icon. Tap on the name of the person you want, then on the phone icon to ring them.



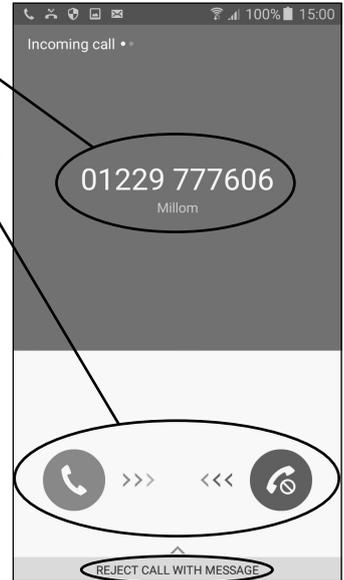
Answering a Phone Call

Confusingly, when someone rings you, how you answer it depends on whether your phone was asleep or awake when the call came in – reminds me of my dad...

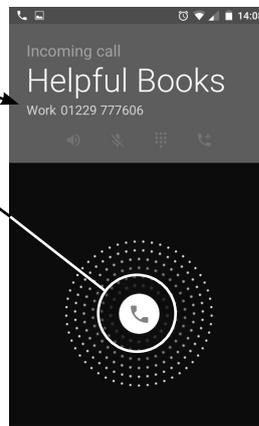
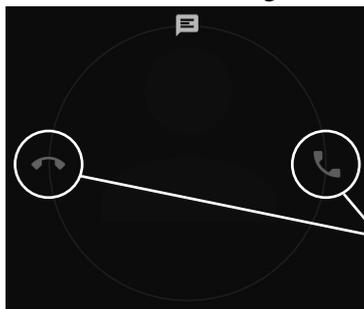
Answering a call if your phone is asleep

- 1) You'll see a screen a bit like this one, showing who's calling at the top and giving you options at the bottom.
- 2) To answer the call, touch the green button and swipe it (usually to the right). On some phones there are little arrows showing you where to swipe, or there's a path to follow like this:
- 3) If you don't want to answer it, touch the red button and swipe it (usually to the left). If you don't have a red button, press the power button twice to stop the call.
- 4) On some phones you'll see a screen like this instead:
- 5) Touch the icon in the middle and hold your finger down. The screen changes to this:

You need to touch and swipe the one you want, not just tap it.



Tap here to reject the call and send the caller a message explaining why.

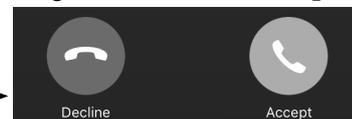
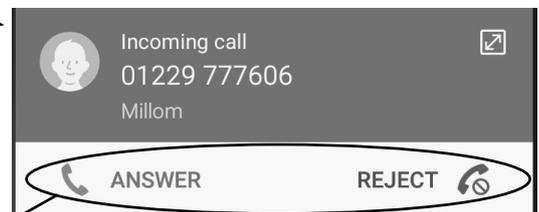


- 6) Swipe your finger right to answer the call, left to hang up or upwards to reject the call with a message.

Answering a call if your phone is awake

- 1) On some phones, your whole screen will change to an "Incoming Call" screen. On others, a box will appear up at the top of your screen to tell you that someone's calling. The box will look something like this:
- 2) If the person ringing is in your phone's contacts it'll show you their name, otherwise it'll just show you the phone number. If the person has an ex-directory number or has blocked their number it'll say something like "Unknown" or "Private call".
- 3) Tap on "Answer" to answer it, or "Reject" if you don't want to talk to them. You will always be given these two options, although they might look different depending on what kind of phone you have. For example, on iPhones the options are called "Accept" and "Decline", and they look like this:

See pages 5-7 for more on contacts.



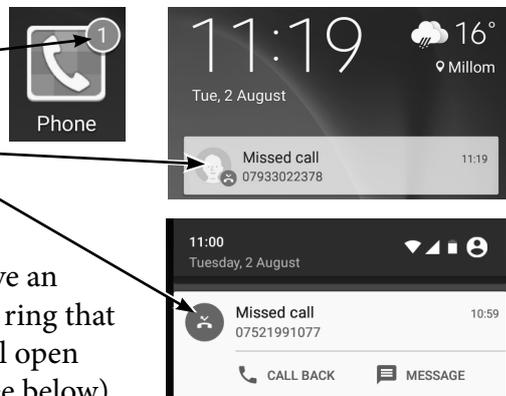
Often the icons will be red and green (like traffic lights), but if you're not sure, the "Answer" option should always look like a telephone receiver that's been lifted up, just like the icon for the Phone app that I showed you on page 10.

Missed Calls and History

If you miss a call, don't worry – you'll get a notification to tell you about it. Your phone also has a call history, so you can see a list of all the calls you've made, received and missed.

How to tell you have a missed call

- 1) On some phones there will be a little number on the Phone app icon on the home screen.
- 2) On some phones you'll get a message on the lock screen or in the notifications centre, showing you who you missed a call from.



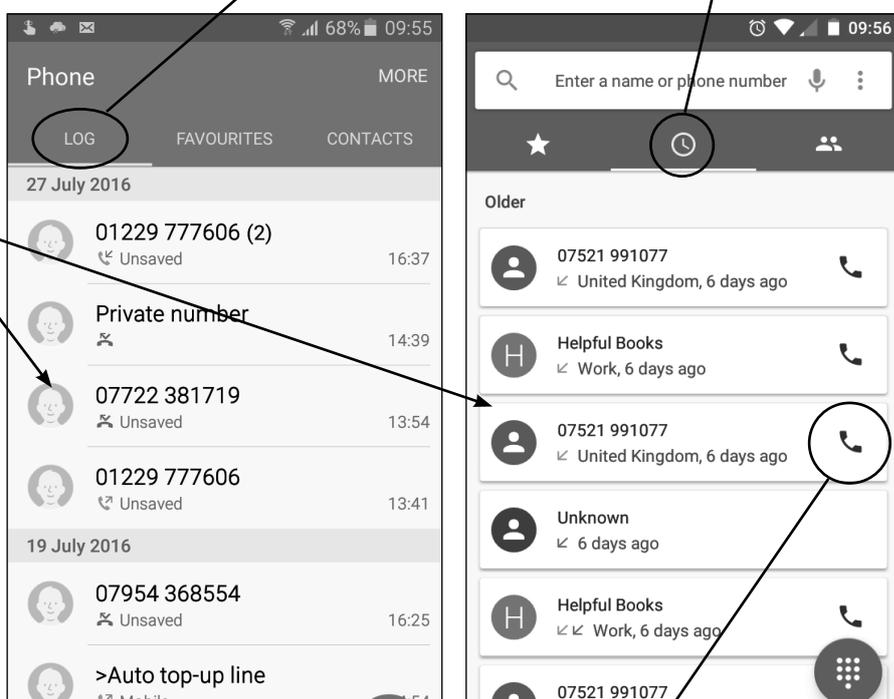
Swipe down from the top of the screen to see your notifications.

What happens when you tap on that notification depends on the kind of phone you have. If you have an iPhone, tapping or swiping on the notification will ring that person back straight away. On other phones, it will open the Phone app and take you to your call history (see below).

Viewing your call history

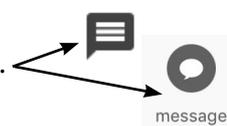
It's useful to know how to look at your call history – calls you've made, calls received and any you've missed. For example, if someone rang you and you didn't write down their number, you can look it up in your call history to ring them back. Here's how to look at it:

- 1) Open the Phone app and look for "Log", "History", "Recents" or a little clock symbol.
- 2) Tap on it and you'll see a list of all the calls you've made, received or missed.
- 3) It'll normally tell you the time or date of the call. If you can't see this information, look for an "i" button or a "call details" option. You might have to tap on the number first.



On iPhones, tapping on a number in your "Recents" list will instantly call that person, so be careful! If you ring someone by accident, don't panic – just tap on the red button at the bottom to end the call.

- 4) To ring someone back, on some phones you need to look for a phone icon next to the number and tap on that. On others, you can just tap on the number in the list.
- 5) You can also send a text message to someone on the list. To do this you need to look for a message icon and tap on it. You usually need to tap on the "i" symbol or "call details" option to get to the text message option.



See pages 16-18 for more on text messages.

Find out Who's Calling...

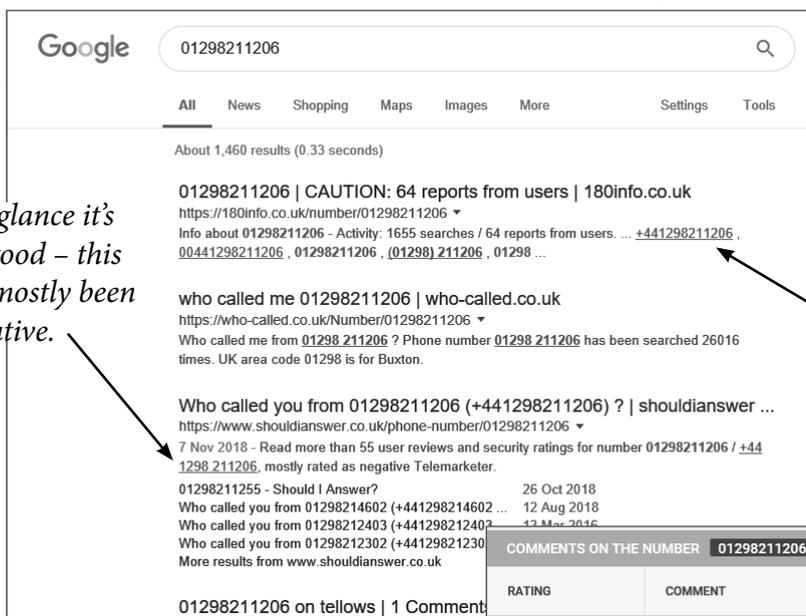
If you get a phone call and you don't know who it's from, how can you find out whether it was the bank calling you or some scammer? Well, here's one thing you can try...

Reverse phone number look-up

Junk phone calls are an unfortunate fact of life these days, and it can be easy to assume that if someone rings you and you don't recognise the number, it was probably a junk call. Unfortunately I've missed an important phone call from the bank before now, by making that assumption... whoops!

But because junk calls are so common, there are now actually several websites set up for reporting phone numbers that turned out to be someone trying to sell you something/ just hanging up on you/trying to scam you out of money. So all you need to do is type the phone number into a search engine and there'll probably be some search results that tell you if it's a genuine company.

Here's an example – I had a missed call on my phone the other day from this number, which I've searched for on Google:



Even at first glance it's not looking good – this one says it's mostly been rated as negative.

And here in the results you can see that there are several websites that other people have used to look up this number.

I'll have a look at this one to see a bit more detail about what people are saying.

A word of warning:
The comments on these websites aren't always moderated, so you can occasionally stumble across some unpleasant ranting (and not everything on them will necessarily be true). Try to ignore the rubbish and just move on!

There were some statistics at the top of the page, and further down were people's comments about it. It's looking pretty likely that this isn't a phone call I should worry about missing!

BUT – don't rely too much on other people's comments. It's worth looking at a few different websites from your search results and don't just read the first few comments – because some people will complain about anything.

| COMMENTS ON THE NUMBER 01298211206 | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| RATING | COMMENT |
| Market Research | Spam 05.11.2018: Comment from user (United Kingdom, app) |
| Scam / Robocall | Everyday and nobody answers 01.11.2018: Comment from user (United Kingdom, web) |
| Scam / Robocall | None stop calls from this number 01.11.2018: Comment from user (United Kingdom, web) |
| Market Research | Someone called so I google it and needed up on this website. So from what I have read it's a nuisance call. So it doesn't matter to me. Mind at peace. 01.11.2018: Comment from user (United Kingdom, web) |
| Scam / Robocall | Spam 01.11.2018: Comment from user (United Kingdom, app) |
| Other | Spam 01.11.2018: Comment from user (United Kingdom, app) |
| Scam / Robocall | Keeps calling, spam 31.10.2018: Comment from user (United Kingdom, web) |

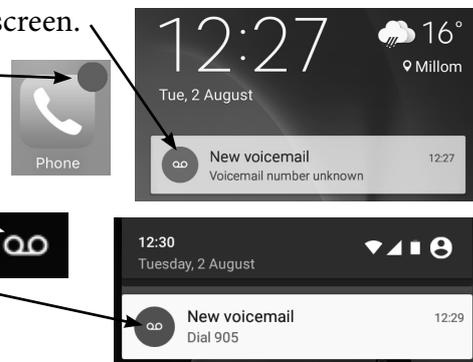
For example, the first time I tried this I'd actually been called by Laithwaites Wine, and the number had been reported as spam by lots of people – when in fact they're a genuine company who only ring up their own customers. Personally I don't mind at all if a very good wine company that I use a lot rings me up to check if I want to buy wine...

Voicemail and Contacts

Voicemail is your phone's answer machine, so you need to know how it works. I'll also show you how to add someone who's rung you to your contacts so you can easily call them again.

How to tell you have a voicemail message

- 1) On some phones you'll get a message on the lock screen.
- 2) Some phones will give you a notification on the Phone app icon. You might also get a text message saying that you have a new voicemail.
- 3) On some phones a tiny voicemail icon will appear in the notifications bar at the top left of the screen. If you open the notifications centre you'll also see a message about the voicemail.



Swipe down from the top of the screen to see your notifications.

Listening to your voicemail

There are a few different ways to access your voicemail, depending on what phone you have, but this method should work on any type of phone:

- 1) Open the Phone app and tap on the voicemail icon. It might be somewhere on the keypad, or it might be an option at the bottom of the screen, but it will look something like this:
- 2) Tap on the icon and it will ring the number for your voicemail. (The number it rings depends on which mobile network provider you use.) Most voicemail services are automated, so you'll have to do things like "press 1 to listen to your message" or "press 3 to delete the message". You don't have to delete the messages once you've listened to them if you don't want to, but they're usually automatically deleted after a certain length of time, e.g. 30 days. (You might keep getting notifications if you don't delete it, though.)



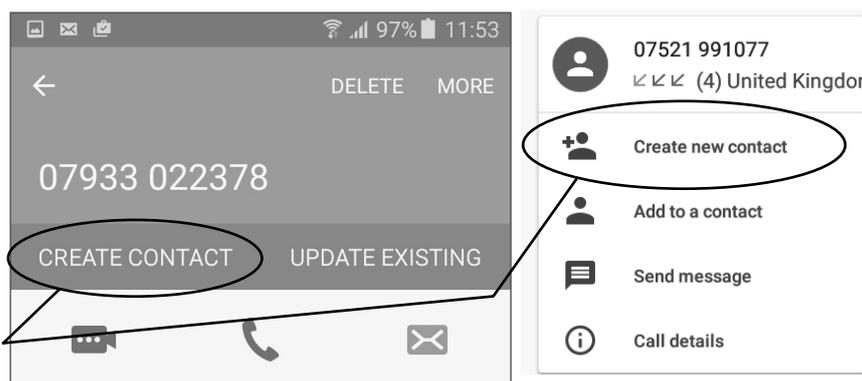
If your phone doesn't know the voicemail number for some reason, do an internet search for your provider, e.g. EE, and "voicemail phone number".

Listening to your voicemail is free with some types of phone contract, but not with others (you're usually charged per minute or per message). Don't worry if you're asked to set up a PIN code the first time you use voicemail – this is so that you can listen to your voicemail from a phone that isn't your mobile, e.g. your landline.

Adding a new contact from call history

It's easy to save the phone number of someone who's called you into your contacts:

- 1) Open up your call history (see page 13 for how).
- 2) Tap on either the "i" symbol or on the phone number in the list. You'll get an option to create a new contact with that number.
- 3) Type in the name (and any other relevant details) then tap on "Save" or "Done".



There's also usually an option to add the number to a person already in your phone – look for "Update existing" or "Add to a contact".

Text Message Basics

Instead of making a phone call, if you just want to leave a quick note for someone on their mobile phone, you can do it by sending a text message. Before we get stuck into actually sending one, though, here's a bit of theory that it's worth you knowing about.

Text messages use your mobile phone network

Text messages are sent over the mobile phone network, so the person you send it to will only get it when they have signal. And you can only send messages when you have signal, although you can write one at any time and tell your phone to send it, and it'll automatically be sent when it picks up a signal.

Normal text messages are called "SMS" messages (Standard Messaging Service). Messages with a photo or video attached are "MMS" messages (Multi-Media Messaging Service). They're usually not included in your text message allowance, so if you want to send them regularly it's a good idea to check what they cost, so you don't run up a big bill.

Text messages vs iMessages

With iPhones there's yet another type of message to contend with – iMessages. These are what's known as "instant messages" and they're practically identical to text messages, but they're sent via the internet (using wi-fi, 3G or 4G) instead of over the normal mobile phone network.

The big advantage of iMessages are that when you're using wi-fi they're completely free to send, whether you're sat at home or on holiday on the other side of the world. The main disadvantage of iMessages is that you can only send them to people with Apple devices, such as iPhones.

When your iPhone recognises that you're trying to text another iPhone user, it'll automatically send the message as an iMessage instead of a text message. So you don't need to worry, but it's worth understanding how they're different from text messages.

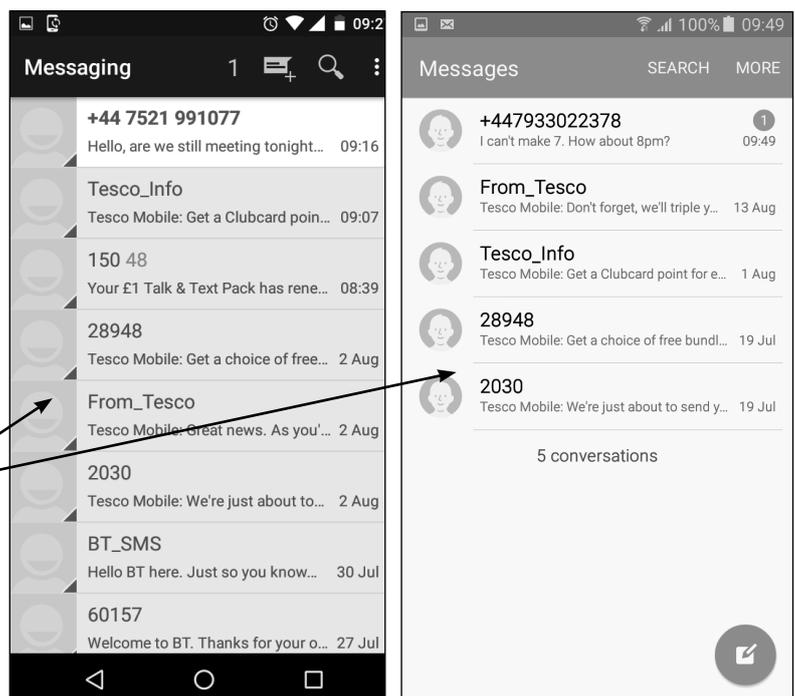
I'll explain more about iMessages and other types of instant messages that you can send in Chapter 5.

You send text messages with the Messages app

- 1) To send a text message to someone you use the Messages app, which looks something like this:



- 2) When it opens you'll see a list of all the text messages you've sent or received. Here are two examples:



- 3) Your phone groups together texts sent and received from the same phone number, so each line in this list could be a single text message or a conversation of many messages.

Sending Texts and Replying

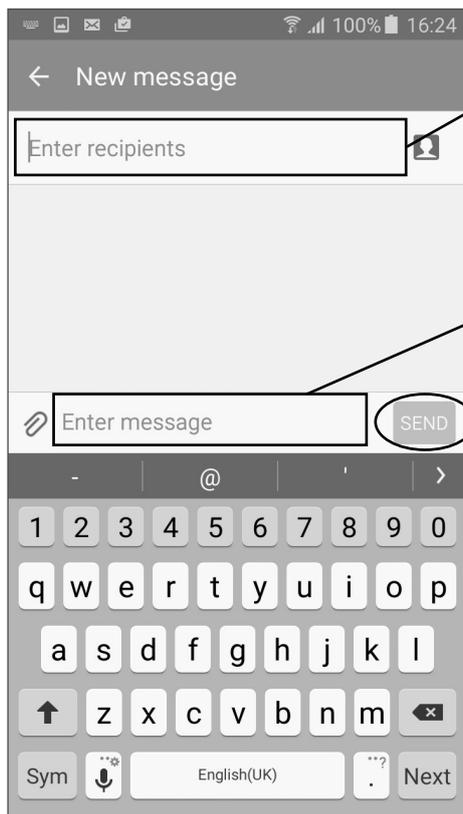
Right, let's get down to business and send a text message...

Sending a text message

- 1) Open the Messages app and tap on the “new message” button. On some phones it's at the bottom and looks like this:  or just a “+” symbol. On others it's at the top and looks like one of these:  
- 2) You'll get a screen that looks a bit like this:

You can send a text to more than one person – just tap in the box at the top and repeat step 3.

See page 7 for how to add someone to your contacts.



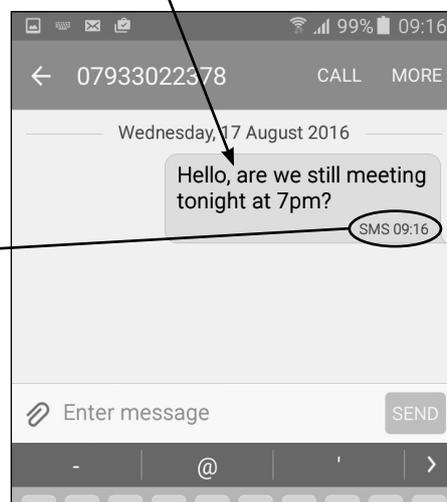
- 3) Type the phone number in up at the top. Or if the person you want to text is in your contacts, just start typing their name. As you type, it'll bring up a list of possible matches and you tap on the one you want to choose it.
- 4) Type your message in here.
- 5) Tap the “send” button. On some phones it unhelpfully isn't labelled, and might look like an arrow  or a paper aeroplane: 
- 6) It'll then send the message (if you have mobile phone signal) and what you've sent will appear here.

You can tell it's sent if there's a time on it or if it says “Delivered” underneath. If your phone can't send it because you've got no signal a message will pop up to tell you.

- 7) If you want to attach a photo to the message, tap the paperclip icon next to where you type your message: 

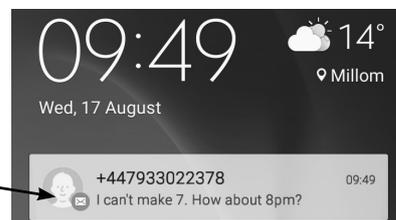
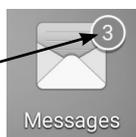
On some phones it might be a “+” symbol instead, or a camera: 

You'll then be able to choose what to attach. This will convert the message from an SMS into an MMS, which usually cost more to send (see the previous page).



How to tell you have a new text message

- 1) On some phones there will be a little number on the Messages app icon on the home screen.
- 2) On some phones you'll get a message on the lock screen.



Swipe down from the top of the screen to see your notifications.

Most phones will also usually beep to alert you to a new message.

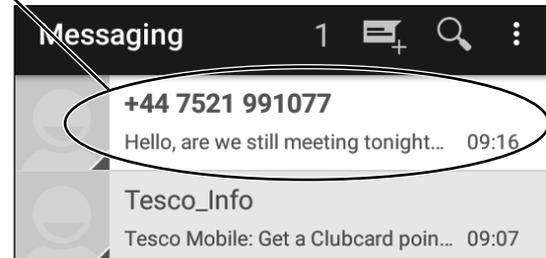
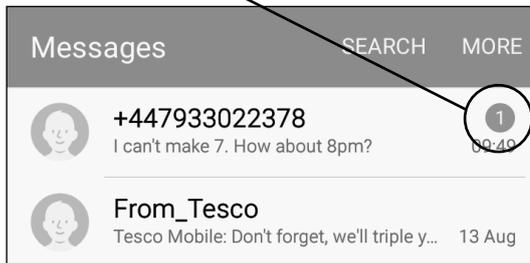
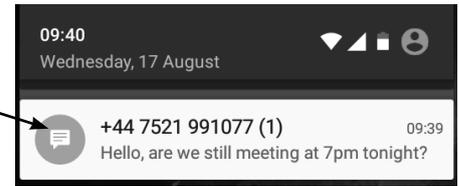
How to tell you have a new text message (continued)

- 3) On some phones a tiny messages icon will appear in the notifications bar at the top left of the screen. If you open the notifications centre it'll show you who the message was from.



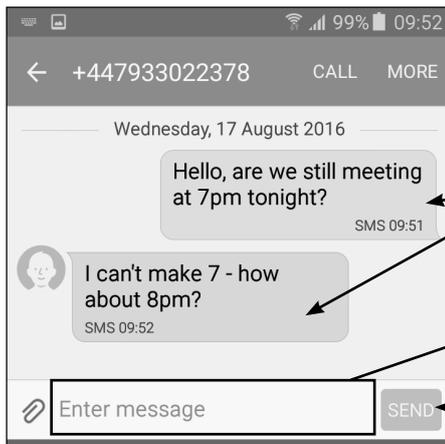
If you tap on the notification it'll open the Messages app and take you to the new message.

If you tap on the Messages app icon on the Home screen to open it, the new message will be marked in your list of messages, e.g. by a little dot or number next to it, or by a different shade.



Replying to a text message

If it's a long conversation you can swipe up and down on the screen to view the other messages.



- 1) Open the Messages app and tap on the one you want to reply to in the list of messages.
- 2) You'll see your conversation with that person in the middle of the screen (your phone groups all the messages from the same person into one conversation).
- 3) Type your message in the box at the bottom, just like if you were sending a new message, and tap on the send button.

Deleting a text message

You can delete individual texts and also whole conversations at once:

To delete a whole conversation

Android phones:

- 1) Tap on the conversation in the big list of messages and hold your finger down on the screen for a second or two.
- 2) A "delete" button or rubbish bin icon will appear somewhere on the screen and you just tap on that.

iPhones:

- 1) Tap on the "Edit" button at the top of the screen.
- 2) Tap on the conversation you want to delete. Then tap on "Delete" at the bottom of the screen.

To delete a single text

- 1) Open the conversation, tap on the text and hold your finger down on the screen for a few seconds.
- 2) Tap on "delete" in the little menu that pops up or on the rubbish bin icon – on iPhones, you have to tap on "More" to get to the Delete option.

When you delete a text message, you're only deleting it from your phone – the person you sent it to can still see the text. Once it's sent, you can't really take it back...

To be continued...

Hello again

That was a bit of a jam-packed chapter – I hope you picked up some helpful tips.

The next installment is all about email – whether you're using an app on your phone or tablet, an email programme on a PC or laptop, or webmail through a browser like Edge or Chrome.

Until next time

Julie Wakeling and The Helpful Book Company

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