

National Do Not Call Registry

How to stop those unwanted calls

What is the Registry?

Since 2003, Americans have had the option to reduce unwanted telemarketing calls by registering their phone numbers on the National Do Not Call (DNC) Registry. Today, the Registry includes more than 221 million phone numbers, helping those consumers enjoy the peace of not receiving unwanted calls.

Registering your number is free, and both your home and cell phone can be added. The Registry contains only phone numbers, and no other personally identifiable information.

The DNC Registry not only benefits consumers, but it also helps legitimate telemarketer operations run more efficiently by identifying individuals who prefer not to receive sales calls. The DNC Registry website is [DoNotCall.gov](https://www.donotcall.gov). There is also a Spanish-language version of the website available.



Exemptions to the Do Not Call Rules

Certain types of calls are not covered by the Do Not Call regulations. Because of limits to the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) authority, the Registry does not apply to:

- Political organizations
- Nonprofits and charitable organizations (although regulations do restrict telemarketers calling on behalf of charities)
- Legitimate survey or research organizations that are not selling a product or service
- Companies that you have done business with in the last 18 months

What the Registry Does & Doesn't Do

The National Do Not Call Registry is designed to stop unwanted sales calls from legitimate telemarketers. However, the Registry does not block calls automatically, instead it provides telemarketers with a list of numbers they are prohibited from calling.

Scammers often ignore these rules, so if you receive a suspicious or unwanted call, simply hang up and report it to the Federal Trade Commission.

Reporting Unwanted Calls

If you want to report an unwanted call, you can use the streamlined reporting form on [DoNotCall.gov](https://www.donotcall.gov).

If you have lost money due to a phone scam or have details about the company or scammer who contacted you, file a report at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov).

When you report a call, be sure to include:

- The phone number that received the call
- The number displayed on your caller ID (even if you think it may be faked or spoofed)
- Any number you were told to call back
- The time and date the call took place

Even if you believe a scammer has faked or spoofed the number that appears on your caller ID, you should still report it. Modern technology makes it easy for scammers to disguise their true numbers, but the FTC and law enforcement agencies can sometimes trace calls using the information you provide. Your report can also help the FTC to analyze trends and identify illegal callers based on calling patterns. Any additional details, such as a callback number, help investigators track down scammers more effectively.

The FTC receives millions of reports each year, so they cannot respond to every individual submission. However, your report still plays an important role. The FTC and other law enforcement agencies use the data from reports to identify, investigate, and take action against individuals and companies responsible for illegal calls and scams.

Additionally, the FTC releases the reported phone numbers each business day to phone carriers and industry partners to help develop and improve call-blocking and call-labeling solutions.



Frequently Asked Questions

Will my registration expire?

No, your registration will never expire. The Federal Trade Commission will only remove your number if it has been disconnected, reassigned, or if you personally request that it be removed.

How long will it take for sales calls to stop?

Once you register your phone number, it should appear on the Registry the next day, but it can take up to 31 days for sales calls to stop.

To confirm whether your number is on the Registry, go to DoNotCall.gov or call 1-888-382-1222 from the phone number you wish to verify.

Can a company still call me with a sales pitch?

In some cases, yes. Companies may contact you if you have recently done business with them or have provided written consent for them to call you. If you request that they stop calling, they are legally required to honor that request. If you have asked a company to stop calling, make note of the date you made the request.

What is the penalty if a company illegally calls numbers on the Registry?

Companies that illegally contact numbers on the National Do Not Call Registry, or that make illegal robocalls, can face penalties of up to \$50,120 per call.

What are robocalls?

Robocalls are automated calls that play a recorded message. They are generally illegal if they attempt to sell you something. If you have not authorized the company to contact you this way, and the call is not purely informational, such as an appointment reminder or service confirmation, it is considered illegal and is likely a scam. This applies whether you are or are not on the Registry.

If you receive an illegal robocall, hang up immediately. Do not press any buttons or engage with the call, as doing so may result in additional unwanted calls. Instead, report the call to the FTC.

What is the FTC doing to stop illegal calls?

The FTC has taken legal action against hundreds of companies and individuals behind unwanted calls. As a result, telemarketers who made illegal calls have paid more than 290 million dollars in judgments, and the FTC has shut down operations responsible for billions of robocalls.

The FTC collaborates with other law enforcement agencies and supports industry efforts to combat robocalls and caller ID spoofing. The FTC has also led several technology-based initiatives, including robocall contests that challenged tech experts to develop tools for blocking robocalls and to help investigators trace and stop scammers.