

Differentiating Landline and Cell Phone Numbers

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Which Number Should You Call?

Whenever someone calls you, it's helpful to be able to figure out whether that call was made from a landline phone or a cell phone. Why?

If you can determine that it was a cell phone, then you can feel free to call back at any time of the day in order to leave a message. If it's a landline, however, you might not want to call at certain times, like early in the morning or late at night, because the ringing of the landline phone might wake people up if the homeowners never turn off the ringer.

Another consideration is the other party's cell phone minutes. That is, if you ascertain that a phone call was made from a mobile phone, you might choose to respond by sending a text message or by writing an email. That way, you don't have to worry about eating up the other person's valuable phone minutes if you're not sure and want to be respectful of that.

Businesses can also benefit from being able to tell cell phone numbers apart from landline numbers.

If you run, say, a hair salon, you might be in the habit of texting your customers about upcoming appointments. However, you don't want to be sending text messages to a landline number by mistake. Not only will text messages to landlines never get delivered (although some landline based VoIP numbers do accept text messages) you may still be charged a fee by your text message service provider for these requests.

In addition, many businesses and [medical offices](#) want to have a cell phone number for every one of their clients or patients so that they can reach them at any time of the day. And medical offices may qualify for [EHR incentives](#) if their phone number data is more meaningful.

Most schools want to be able to reach parents in case of any type of emergency involving their children

and when filling out the school forms, occasionally parents don't enter the right numbers in the correct fields. If school administrators call a landline number during the day when no one is home it can be useless, this wastes school administrator time and can cause your child undo anxiety.

If you manage a doctor's office, and you are in the processing of switching from a paper filing system to an [Electronic Health Records \(EHR\) system](#), you need to input up-to-date information on the phone numbers of all of your patients.

How Do You Know if You are Calling a Landline or Mobile Number?

So how do you actually go about figuring out whether a certain phone number is a landline number or a mobile number? A company like SearchBug can actually do all of the work for you. In fact, the company's phone number verification tools is among one of its most popular services.

So how does this system work? All you have to do is visit the [landline or cell phone number tool](#) and enter the phone number. Any valid phone number from the United States or Canada will work. SearchBug will then tell you whether that phone number is a landline number, a wireless number, a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) number, or an unknown number (unknowns can be for a variety reasons such as the area code is invalid, or the area code and prefix do not match, or the number provide is not a valid number like the area code 555 is used for movies).

VoIP numbers by the way, are a system of vocal communications in which the sounds of people's voices are carried over the Internet. VoIP numbers are typically sold in blocks of 1000s to VoIp providers from the major CLEC (Central Local Exchange Carriers).

That's not all. SearchBug will also respond with the following pieces of information about that number:

- the name of the phone company or, in the case of VoIP, the name of the local exchange carrier
- the city or town where a landline phone is located, or where a mobile phone owner lives
- the area code local
- the local time zone for that number

You can find out all this information for free, too. SearchBug will even let you search for up to five different phone numbers a day. And for a nominal charge, you can find out if the phone number you searched for was ported – meaning whether that number was transferred, say, from a landline phone to a mobile phone or from AT&T to Verizon for example.

For an extra charge, you can learn the name of the person to whom that phone number is assigned if you need that sort of information. That can be a valuable tool in case, for instance, someone keeps calling you and hanging up whenever you answer.

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