

Is There a Free Reverse Phone Lookup Service?

by James Miller - Monday, February 17, 2020

<https://www.searchbug.com/info/is-there-a-free-reverse-phone-lookup-service/>

You've probably had this experience:

You need to find out who owns a phone number. So, you Google “free reverse phone lookup” or “reverse phone lookup free.” Naturally, you'd like to find out who owns the phone number for free.

Then, you click on one of the search results that claims to offer a free reverse phone lookup service. You type the phone number into the search bar, click “search,” and wait...

The results come up...

But, you must pay \$4.95 to view the results.

Or it simply says it couldn't find anything.

Worst case scenario: it gives you information that turns out to be wrong. Then you end up calling the wrong person. That's embarrassing.

Maybe you've tried this a few times. And, you still don't have any verified phone information.

A few trips through this cycle will leave you wondering if there's really any free reverse phone lookup service.

Let's talk about that. Here's why the term “free reverse phone lookup” has gotten a bad reputation.

Are there totally free reverse phone lookup services?

Currently, there are no free reverse phone lookup services *that are consistently accurate*.

That's because there's no central database for phone number information. It used to be easier to look up landline phone numbers. But, many landline phone numbers have been transferred to cell phone carriers as cell phone numbers. And, cell phone information is owned by the various cell phone carriers.

There are databases you can search (if you have the right software, API connections, and permissions), like the Line Information Database (LIDB) and the Number Portability Administration Center (NPAC) database.

But, names and billing addresses are not used to connect calls. So, it's difficult—if not impossible—to search the LIDB and NPAC database for names and addresses.

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It's possible to search for phone numbers based on the caller ID name (CNAM). But, the CNAM can be set to anything. It's not dependent on the billing name and address.

And, even if the CNAM always matched the name of the person who paid for the phone number, common names like "John Smith" would make it difficult to accurately identify who owns a phone number.

As you may have gathered from all this, it is possible to do an accurate reverse phone lookup, it's just impossible to do it for free.

If you just need the name associated with a phone number, you can do a CNAM lookup. The caller ID name is often automatically generated based on the billing information for a phone number. But, you need certain software to do a [CNAM search](#).

Finding an address is even more involved. You'd have to search public records, run a soft credit check, work with a data broker, or some combination of the three.

This is the most affordable way to do a reverse phone lookup:

1. Find the caller ID name for the phone number.
2. Search the public records within the area code of the phone number.
3. If an address matches the first and last name on the CNAM and is within the matching area code, assume that's the name and address for the phone number.

It's a complex task. There's no way around it.

The bottom line is that all of that costs money. There's no way to get accurate phone number information for free. So, there's no way to offer that service to customers for free. That's why you've had such a hard time with those free reverse phone lookup services.

The most common business model is to offer a "free reverse phone lookup," which is actually just a search that tells you whether or not the data is available. But, then you have to pay to see the information.

Or, the company will purchase a database and build an online search tool that queries that database. Unfortunately, this database isn't updated very often. So, the search results are very hit or miss. These companies use the traffic from their free search tool to sell ad space and make money that way (similar to Facebook or Instagram).

TLDR; yes, there are free reverse phone lookup services. But, they can't deliver accurate results for free.

What is the best way to lookup a phone number for free?

Facebook is your best bet, if you're dead set on doing a free reverse phone lookup. A huge chunk of the world population has a Facebook profile. And, as we've learned through certain [Facebook data breaches](#), there's a lot of information in their databases.

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Just hop onto Facebook, type the phone number into the search bar, and hit search. If the owner of the phone number has it in their Facebook profile, they'll come up as one of the top search results.

Of course, the results will be just as spotty as any free reverse phone lookup service. People without Facebook profiles, and those who haven't added or shared their phone number won't show up in the search results. As they say, you get what you pay for.

But, if you want to do an accurate phone number lookup, there's an option...

What is the best reverse phone lookup service?

The best reverse phone lookup service will collect data from as many sources as possible. And, the service will retrieve that information in real time, if it's possible.

That's how Searchbug works.

When you order a reverse phone lookup through Searchbug.com, our system gets information from:

- Public records.
- Phone books.
- Vital records.
- Real estate records.
- Magazine subscriptions.
- Voter registration.
- Other proprietary sources.

If information can be retrieved on demand, we get that data in real time.

Then, the results are curated and searched to find the most recent name and address match for the phone number. That way, the results are as accurate as possible. The Searchbug reverse phone lookup service works for both cell phones and landlines.

Does it cost a little bit? Yes. It's about a dollar per reverse phone lookup.

If you do a bulk reverse address lookup, it can be less than 16 cents per phone number.

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Either way, if we don't find any information, you don't pay. So, there's no risk that you'll pay for bad information or an unsuccessful search.

And, the price is as low as it gets for an accurate reverse phone lookup.

So, it's Searchbug; Searchbug is the best reverse phone lookup service.

What to do now

If you've tried the free reverse phone lookup services without success, try this:

First, [create a Searchbug account](#). Then...

Use the [Searchbug reverse phone lookup tool](#) if you need information about a phone number or a few phone numbers.

If you have a whole list or database of phone numbers that you need to get information for, export your list to an Excel, .csv, or .txt file and upload it to our [bulk reverse phone lookup service](#).

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