

Landline vs Cell Phone - Everything You Need to Know

by James Miller - Tuesday, January 07, 2020

<https://www.searchbug.com/info/landline-vs-cell-phone-everything-you-need-to-know/>

Are you trying to do a cell phone vs landline lookup? Use our [phone validator](#) to find out is it a cell or is it a landline.

If you have a phone number, but you don't know if it's a cell phone or a landline, you need to find out... Especially if you run a business that contacts customers by phone call or text.

This is why:

Every year, people ditch their landlines in favor of cell phones. And, that trend will likely continue. Every day, people search the web for answers to questions like:

- Are cell phones better than landlines?
- What is the advantage of mobile phone over landline phone?
- Do you still need a landline?

The [landline vs cell phone statistics](#) also show the trend toward cell phone numbers:

- There were [455 million telephone numbers](#) in the United States in 2017.
- About three quarters of the 455 million phone numbers were mobile phone numbers.
- Only about 10 percent were classic landlines.
- The remaining phone numbers were [VoIP phone numbers](#).

But, landlines aren't dead. People still use them.

And, if a customer, a friend, or someone else gives you their telephone number, you won't know if it's a cell or if it's a landline by just looking at the phone number. Cell phone and landline phone numbers both have the same format.

Not knowing if a phone number is a cell phone or landline can be inconvenient for personal use. But, it's most challenging for businesses.

Landline and VoIP numbers can't be used the same way that cell phone numbers can. For example, you can't text a landline. And, customers will often enter their landline phone number on lead generation forms. That way they won't be bothered by marketing calls on their mobile phone.

So, if you're in business, it's likely that far more than 10 percent of the phone numbers in your customer contact lists are landlines. You can't just assume that all the numbers are cell phone numbers, or even that three quarters of them are cell phone numbers.

Can you tell if a phone number is a cell or land line? Yes. But, you probably can't do it without some help.

Here's everything you need to know.

Landline vs cell: What's the difference?

First—as we already pointed out—you can't send text messages to landlines. Also, landlines usually aren't useful for apps. Since you can't text landlines, you can't use them for two-factor authentication, unless your second authentication factor is a phone call.

But, the big difference that most people don't realize is that cell phone numbers and landline numbers are owned, managed, and regulated differently.

Telephone vs cell phone regulations

Commercial telephone number use is regulated by the [FCC](#). Consumer telephone numbers are protected under the [TCPA](#).

However, since you can do more things with a cell phone number, the TCPA has more rules about using cell phone numbers. But, it's difficult to know if a phone number is a cell phone number.

So, it's best to follow these guidelines:

- Do not text customers without getting permission first.
- Never call or text phone numbers that are on the [Do Not Call List](#).
- Never call or text customers who have asked you to stop contacting them.

The FCC applies fines for TCPA violations on a per-violation basis. So, if you text five cell phone numbers without getting permission first, that will get you five separate fines.

Yes, TCPA violations can get expensive fast. It's best for businesses to [check phone numbers](#) before calling or texting. That way you can drop numbers that are on the Do Not Call List and avoid getting slapped with TCPA fines for contacting cell phone numbers you thought were landlines.

How to tell if a number is a cell phone

As we mentioned earlier, cell phone numbers are owned by cell phone carriers. If you're doing a [phone number lookup](#), finding cell phone numbers is usually more difficult because there's no central database of cell phone numbers. Doing a cell phone lookup means asking each carrier if a number belongs to them. Then, you'd request information from the cell phone carrier.

Landline phone numbers *used* to be easy to lookup. That's how phone books were printed. There were fewer telecom carriers, and they more readily shared the information.

But, many—maybe even most—landline telephone numbers have been ported over to cell carriers or converted to VoIP numbers.

So, really, if you need to do a [phone number search](#) or find out if a phone number is a cell phone or landline, you must use modern tools. The phone book just isn't enough anymore. And, it's hard to find reliable information with a standard internet search.

Cell phone vs landline cost

[Cell phone service costs more than a landline phone number](#). But, that's not what we're getting at here.

What we're talking about is how much it costs to check phone numbers and find out if they are cell phone numbers or landlines.

Companies like [phonevalidator.com](#), [textmagic.com](#), and [realphonevalidator.com](#) offer free phone validator services.

However, it's impossible to get accurate telephone data for free. The phone numbers are owned by telephone carriers. And, they don't just give out information to anyone who asks.

So, free phone number lookup services are forced to rely on publicly available information. Free phone validator services use information that you could find with a bit of searching. Needless to say, free phone number lookup results are often inaccurate.

How much does it cost to verify phone numbers with accurate data?

Easy: it can be done for [two cents per phone number](#). And, if you [verify phone numbers in bulk](#), it can cost less than a penny per phone number.

The takeaway here is that paying to verify phone numbers costs you less than trying to find phone numbers on Google (we're confident that a few minutes of your time is worth more than two cents).

Paying for verified phone information costs you less than a free cell phone lookup, in the end. If you do a free phone lookup, and you end up calling the wrong number or a disconnected number, that just cost you more than two cents. In fact, it probably cost you enough to pay for several verified phone lookups.

And, using a phone validator does more than just tell you if it's a cell or if it's a landline.

A phone validator gets additional phone information:

- Phone carrier lookup.
- Do Not Call List check.
- Location and time zone lookup.

So, a phone validator gives you all the information you need to call or text a phone number without risking TCPA fines or wasting time on disconnected phone numbers and texting landlines.

In the end, finding out if it's a landline or a cell phone is important. But, it can be done. And, using a phone validator will more than pay for itself.

What to do now

Need to verify phone numbers? Check phone numbers with our [phone validator](#).

Need to validate phone numbers in bulk? Use our [batch phone validator](#).

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