



Tips for Tech Savvy Seniors

An Introduction to smartphones

Beginners Guide

Becoming familiar with a smartphone can take a little bit of practise, but you'll soon find yourself doing more than you ever thought possible on a mobile phone.

What you can do with a smartphone

- Make voice calls (of course!)
- Make video calls
- Access the internet and browse the web
- Take photos, and upload them to the web
- Navigate with GPS if the phone has GPS built-in
- Play back music and video stored on the phone
- Manage your contacts and appointments
- Send emails
- Run new apps and games downloaded from the internet

Understanding data plans

Without a mobile data plan, you can't access the internet, download new apps, send emails, and in some cases GPS navigation won't work either. There are two main kinds of plan:

- **Post-paid** plans include a monthly fee for your calls and data. They may require you to sign a 2-3 year contract, and a smartphone might be included in the cost.
- **Pre-paid** plans include an amount of data and calls that you purchase up-front. The data may expire after a month.
- Both kinds of plan include a **data limit** (though the more expensive post-paid plans have unlimited data).
- If you go over the data limit on a **post-paid** plan, you might have to **pay extra** for that month.
- If you use up the data limit on a **pre-paid** plan, the data connection will stop working until you purchase more.

Two main kinds of smartphone

Smartphones can be differentiated by their operating system:

- **iOS** is exclusive to Apple's iPhone range of phones, and works like the iPad's **iPadOS**, where you touch icons to launch apps.
- **Android** is created by Google and, like iOS, you launch phone apps and features by tapping icons. Each manufacturer's implementation of Android can look very different, but underneath they are all fundamentally the same.

The cost of a smartphone is determined by the size of its screen, its performance, and by how much internal storage it has. For example, a 512GB iPhone will cost more than a 128GB iPhone.

Touchscreen gestures

Smartphones are controlled via the touchscreen. Simply **tap** an icon to open an app, tap a **button** to activate it, or tap a **text field** to bring up a virtual keyboard to enter text. As well as tapping, there are some other useful gestures too

- **Tap and hold:** Touch your finger to the screen and leave it there until something happens. A menu might open, or it might let you move icons around on the home screen.
- **Scroll:** Slide your finger up and down to scroll the screen vertically, or left and right to scroll it horizontally.
- **Swipe:** Similar to scrolling, but starting from the edge of the screen and with a faster movement. This can flip pages in a book or album, and much more.
- **Pinch-to-zoom:** Place two fingers on the display and move them apart or pinch them together. This will zoom the screen in and out.
- **Double tap:** Some functions require you to tap the screen twice, in quick succession.

Basic smartphone operations

- **Turning on and off:** Hold the button on the side of the smartphone. Once turned on, a smartphone is designed to stay on. The screen will go black after a few minutes of inactivity. Tap a button to wake it up.
- **Unlocking:** For security, your phone automatically locks and must be unlocked with a **PIN**, **Passcode**, **fingerprint** or **face recognition**.
- **Making a call:** Tap the **Phone icon** on the home screen. The phone interface will appear, and you can dial numbers or choose from your contacts.
- **Receiving a call:** When the phone rings, the display will show the number. If this matches one of your **contacts**, your phone will show the contact's name instead.
- **Adding a contact:** Tap the **Contacts icon** to open a list of your contacts. Use the interface to add contact details including number, name, and even a photo.
- **Sending an SMS (text message):** The **Messages icon** will let you send a text message. There are several different ways to send messages on a smartphone, depending on which apps are installed. All smartphones can send SMS by default.
- **Taking a photo:** Tap the **Camera icon** to open the camera interface. Many smartphones have a camera shortcut, such as by pressing the power button three times, for when you want to take a picture quickly.
- **Viewing photos:** You can access your **Camera roll** through the **Camera app**, or through a photos app. You'll see thumbnails of all your photos and can tap one to make it fill the screen.
- **Recording video:** The **Camera app** also has a video mode which you can access via the controls in the app.

Where to get apps

Your smartphone comes with some apps pre-installed, but there are literally hundreds of thousands more you can download. The **Google Play store** on Android and the **App store** on iPhone, let you download apps, music, movies, and more. You might have to pay for some items with a credit card, but there's plenty of free content.