



# **Smartphone Safety: 5 Bad Habits to Break**

The average smartphone user taps, swipes and clicks on their device a whopping 2,617 times a day. As we spend more and more of our lives on our phones, safety and protection become increasingly important. If you're guilty of any of these five smartphone bad habits, you may be unintentionally putting your digital information at risk. The good news is that many of these habits can be broken, simply by taking some basic protective measures.

## 1. Leaving Your Phone Unlocked

Nearly a third of U.S. adults don't password-protect their smartphone. If you reach for your phone multiple times throughout the day, it's understandable if you don't want to punch in a password every time. But leaving your device unlocked may increase the chance that a stranger could access data stored on it. Already have a four-digit code? Consider bumping up to six digits, if your phone allows it.

## 2. Using an Outdated Operating System

If you frequently put off installing security patches and other essential system updates on your phone, you may be leaving it susceptible to potential hacking. Once an operating system update is released, hackers generally learn about vulnerabilities and attempt to breach devices that aren't up to date. Updating your software promptly can help resolve security flaws and help protect your data.

## 3. Neglecting to Back Up Your Data

Without periodically backing up your phone to a computer, flash or USB drive, or cloud service, you may run the risk of losing photos, contacts and other vital information if your phone is stolen or goes missing. Look in your settings menu to see if your device has an auto-backup option.

## 4. Getting Too Comfortable on Public Wi-Fi

Your smartphone data is more accessible to cyber criminals when you're on a public network. Consider using your mobile wireless connection when possible to help decrease your exposure. When you do use a public network, avoid accessing personal or sensitive information, and be wary if you're asked to enter login or other account information.

## 5. Forgoing Anti-theft Measures

One of the benefits of a smartphone is that it fits into the palm of your hand. That also means, however, that it can be easily misplaced. And if your phone is lost or stolen, your data may be at risk. But there is a step you can take to help protect yourself. Consider installing or enabling anti-theft services like Find My iPhone or Android Device Manager that can help you to locate your phone remotely and help protect your personal data until you do, by locking or erasing the device. Break these bad habits to help protect your smartphone today — and help keep your personal data safe in the future.