

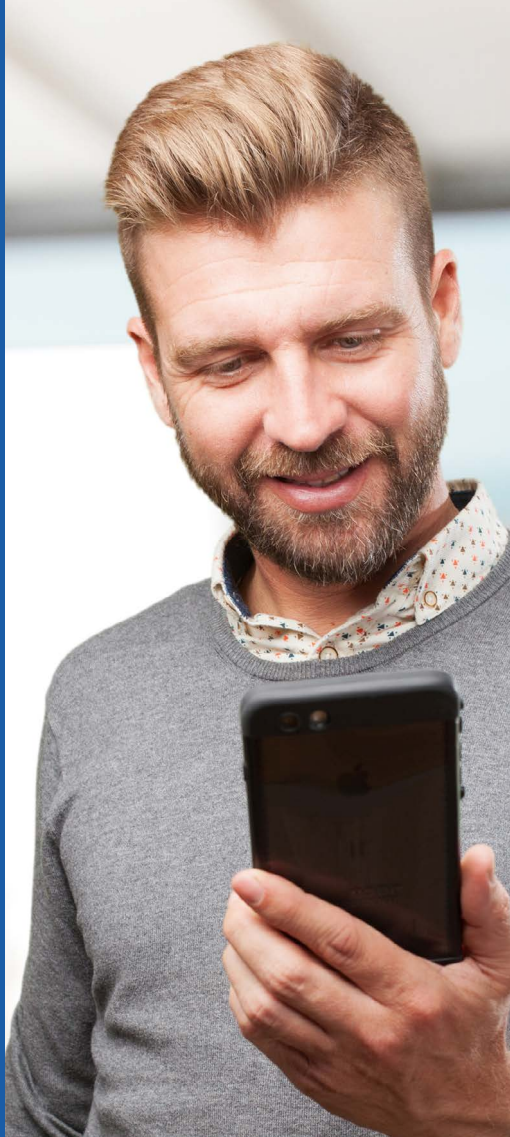


An Coimisiún um  
**Rialáil Cumarsáide**  
Commission for  
**Communications Regulation**

# The Mobile Switch Guide

Information on moving your  
service to a new provider

ComReg.ie





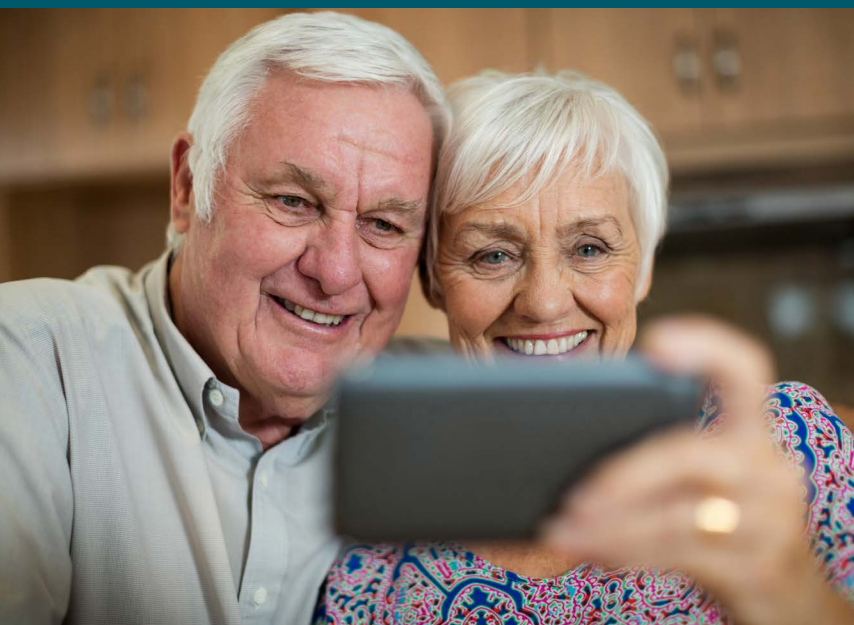
# Who is ComReg?

ComReg is the Commission for Communications Regulation.

- We are an independent public body with powers under the law
- We protect consumers and provide independent advice and information

At ComReg, we regulate:

- The electronic communications sector which includes phone and broadband
- Postal services like An Post



For further  
information  
visit  
**[comreg.ie](http://comreg.ie)**

## What is switching?

If you're thinking about moving your service to another provider, this is known as switching.

Switching can help you save money and find a better service, if you take some time to shop around.

There are a few things to consider before switching to make sure you don't run into any problems.

## How will I know if I'm still in contract?

If you're a **bill pay customer**, you may agree to stay with a service provider for an agreed amount of time. This is known as a fixed term contract and these contracts can be up to 24 months in duration. Bill pay plans typically include a new or refurbished mobile phone handset in the contract.

If you're on a **SIM-only plan**, the service provider does not provide a handset and you receive a monthly bill. The duration of these plans can be either month-to-month 'rolling' contracts or fixed term contracts, typically up to 12 months.

If you think you're still in a fixed term contract with your service provider, you should speak with them to find out or check your contract terms and conditions.





It's important to remember that your service will continue even if the minimum term has ended. This means that there is no disruption to your service.

If you're on a **pre-pay plan**, also known as pay-as-you-go, you buy credit from various outlets such as shops, bank machines and online, and top up your phone when you need to. This plan can also include a new or refurbished mobile phone handset which is usually paid upfront.

You aren't tied into a fixed term contract and can stop using the service at any time.

## Will I get notice before my contract ends?

Yes, if you are in a fixed term contract your service provider must make you aware that your contract is coming to an end and that you can cancel your existing plan. Your provider should also send you **Best Tariff Advice** before the end of your fixed term contract, highlighting the best tariff, price plan or bundle, from your current service provider that suits your needs.

## Is it better to switch or stay with my provider?

At the end of a fixed term contract, you can negotiate a new contract with your provider. You might be happy to stay with them, especially if they offer you a better deal or an improved service. If you decide to do this, you may be entering a new fixed term contract.

Or you can choose to switch to a new provider to take advantage of any new customer deals on offer. This could save you money in the long term.

Visit [comreg.ie/compare](https://comreg.ie/compare) to help find a plan that best suits your needs.



# How do I switch to a new provider?

You can contact a new provider who should lead the switching process. They contact your old provider and manage the switch for you so you don't have to coordinate between them.

Important information to have when you call the new provider:

- your current contract details
- your current plan or bundle information
- the 'best tariff advice' given to you by your old provider if you were in a fixed term contract, or a good understanding of what plan suits your needs
- bank or payment details
- mobile number
- address or Eircode





## Will it cost me to switch?

You are entitled to retain your number free of charge and generally there aren't charges to switch provider. However, you should consider the terms of your contract as it is possible that some charges may apply.

Remember that your old contract ends when your new service begins, so there should be no overlap or double billing.

## How long will the switching process take?

The switching process should take the shortest amount of time. You can agree on a date for the switch to take place.

The process should not be delayed without reason and should not result in any disruption to your service. When problems arise, you shouldn't be without service for more than one working day. If there is a delay, then you must be kept updated.

## What happens if something goes wrong with the switch?

Service providers must compensate customers for problems that might happen when switching. This includes compensation for:

- a loss of service
- a delay in switching
- a delay by the provider in terminating the service, and
- a failure by the provider to keep you informed during the switch

Service providers must publish information about their compensation schemes and how to make a claim on their websites.



## Can I keep my old mobile phone number?

Yes, you can transfer your mobile number. This is known as number portability. It's free to keep your number.

It's important you let the new provider know if you want to keep it as it will not automatically be done.

## Can I switch provider and use the same mobile phone?

Yes, you can. You'll need to request an unlock code if your phone is locked to your provider's network. A locked phone can only be used with the network it was originally sold with.

At the end of your fixed term contract, you can have your phone unlocked free of charge when you request a mobile unlock code. This can take a few days to organise so it's best to ask in advance of your switching date.

If your contract is not up and you want to switch or cancel your service, you might need to pay back the outstanding balance for your phone. The way this is calculated must be set out in your contract. You can contact your service provider to find out more.

## Will I get my mobile credit back if I switch provider?

Yes, you can get a refund of any unused credit for prepaid services when you request it back.

Likewise, if you have a bill pay service and there is credit on your account, you can also request it back.

These refunds might come with an administration fee. The fee you're charged should be fair and match the provider's refund cost.



## What happens if I switch and I'm still in contract?

Your contract sets out any charge that you might have to pay for ending the contract early. It is known as an early termination fee.

The amount will vary depending on the provider and your contract, but it's usually based on the remaining months and the monthly cost of your plan.

## Can I cancel the new contract?

When you sign up to a contract and you change your mind, you may have a right to cancel it during the cooling-off period.

The rules around the cooling-off period are different depending on how you signed up to the contract. To learn more about the cooling-off period and cancellation rights, see the contracts section on [comreg.ie](https://www.comreg.ie) or check your contract terms.

## Is there a way to check coverage before switching?

It's a good idea to make sure you'll have coverage at home, work and in places you visit frequently. Visit our [comreg.ie/coveragemap](https://www.comreg.ie/coveragemap) to see the predicted mobile outdoor coverage across Ireland for all mobile service providers.

## What else should I consider when switching?

Many providers offer package deals on home phone, mobile phone, broadband and television. These are known as bundles.

It's possible to switch a bundle from one provider to another, or to change just one service from a bundle. For example, you may get home phone, broadband and tv from one provider but choose to switch your mobile phone plan to a different provider.





Some providers offer lower prices for bundling services together compared to buying them separately.

One bill and a single provider can make payments and any customer service interactions more convenient.



# Contact us for advice and support

## Consumer Care Team

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**Phone:** (01) 804 9668  
Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm  
Saturday: 9am to 1pm

**Email:** [consumerline@comreg.ie](mailto:consumerline@comreg.ie)

**Text:** COMREG or ASKCOMREG to 51500 to receive a call or text back (standard SMS rates apply)

**By Post:** Consumer Care Team, ComReg, One Dockland Central, Guild St., D01 E4X0

**Web chat and online form:** [comreg.ie](https://comreg.ie)

## Access officer

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**Phone:** (01) 804 9639

**Email:** [access@comreg.ie](mailto:access@comreg.ie)

**By Post:** As above addressed to the Access Officer

## ITRS (Irish Text Relay Service)

The ITRS ensures that those of us who are deaf, hard-of-hearing and, or speech-impaired, may make and receive calls independently. The service provides the translation of text into voice and voice into text. These calls are relayed through an ITRS agent who performs the relay of the text.

The service is accessible from mobile phones, tablets, and PCs. The ITRS service is operated by Eir serving the customers of Three, Eir, Sky, Tesco Mobile, Virgin Media and Vodafone.

Visit [itrs.ie](https://itrs.ie) for more information.

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**The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) is an independent statutory body that regulates the electronic communications sector (telecommunications, radio communications, broadcasting transmission and premium rate services) and the postal services sector in Ireland.**