

Emergency contacts on mobile telephones

If you are taking part in a u3a event, especially active events such as walks and sports, it is helpful to have your emergency contact details available in case of an accident or sudden illness. Happily, modern smartphones have provision for storing this information so that it can be seen – and any listed numbers can be called – without unlocking the device. You can also include useful information such as your blood group, allergies, and details of any medications being taken. Here are basic instructions for setting this up on an iPhone or Android device.

iPhone

See <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT208076> for instructions. The basics are as follows:

Open the Health app and tap your profile picture.

Tap **Medical ID**. From here you can edit the information shown. To add emergency contacts, tap **Edit**, then scroll to **Emergency Contacts**. Tap the **Add** button to add an emergency contact. Tap a contact, then add their relationship. Tap **Done** to save your changes.

If an emergency call (999) is made on your iPhone, then after it ends your iPhone alerts your emergency contacts with a text message, unless you choose to cancel. Your iPhone sends your current location, and for a period of time after you enter SOS mode, your emergency contacts receive updates when your location changes.

To test that your **Medical ID** contains all the information you added, lock your iPhone and then wake it back up to reveal the Touch ID/passcode lock screen. Tap **Emergency** in the corner to bring up the SOS keypad — which should display the Medical ID link in the bottom left. Press this to bring up your emergency information as well as emergency numbers that can be tapped and dialled directly from that screen.

Android devices

The latest Android devices have a **Personal Safety** app. For details of how to enter your information, see <https://support.google.com/android/answer/9319337>.

If you have an older device without the Personal Safety app, you can enter emergency information via the **Settings** app. Details vary between models, but in general terms select **Safety & Emergency** and use the editing information offered. Guidance for Samsung Galaxy devices may be found at <https://www.samsung.com/levant/support/mobile-devices/how-to-use-galaxy-device-in-an-emergency-to-contact-emergency-contacts-and-view-important-medical-information/> and for various brands at <https://www.androidpolice.com/how-to-set-up-emergency-sos-features-on-android/>.

You can also include a helpful text message on your lock screen, such as “This phone belongs to [Name]. If found please call [Contact name] on [number]”. In **Settings**, select **Display**, then **Lock screen** to enter or amend the wording. (On an iPhone with iOS 16 you can do something similar by installing an app to create a suitable widget – see e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehxTO-2NkE4>.)

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