



## O<sub>2</sub> Child Protection

Helping children deal  
with nuisance calls

### Further advice and support

If you or your children want any further advice, you should contact your Service Provider. You'll find their number on your most recent statement, or you can get it from the O<sub>2</sub> operator by dialing **100** from your mobile phone.

There are a number of further ways of stopping nuisance calls which your Service Provider can discuss with you. Often a telephone number change will be enough.

If the problem persists your Service Provider will contact the O<sub>2</sub> Nuisance Call Bureau. A specially trained team of people will offer you further advice or assistance on dealing with the problem. They may decide to apply a tracing facility to your mobile phone number. Almost all malicious calls can be traced and we'll work closely with the police to provide them with all the information they need to investigate your case further.

If you are a Pay & Go customer you should contact O<sub>2</sub> Customer Service. They will assist you or pass your details on to the O<sub>2</sub> Nuisance Call Bureau if further action is needed.

Alternatively, whatever type of mobile you or your children have, you can contact the police directly. Remember, nuisance calls are a serious threat and can be a criminal offence.



[o2.co.uk](http://o2.co.uk)

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If your children own mobile phones, they could receive calls or text messages which are annoying, offensive – or even threatening. It might be from someone they know or, from a complete stranger.

Whoever it is, it's important to remember that these types of calls can, and should, be stopped. Nobody should be making nuisance calls and nobody – least of all your children – should be subjected to them.

As a parent, however, you're probably sometimes kept in the dark about what's going on. Your child may be uncomfortable – even frightened – to let you know that he or she is receiving nuisance calls or messages. They might even think that it's not important.

But it is. Malicious calls aren't just a nuisance. They can be extremely distressing and harmful. It can also be a criminal offence to make them.<sup>1</sup>

O<sub>2</sub> is committed to helping protect all its customers against anti-social or criminal activity carried out on mobile phones.

Children can be particularly vulnerable, so here are some safety tips for you to share with your children on how to deal with nuisance calls and messages. Please don't wait for something to happen – make sure your family is aware of what the issues are and, therefore, properly prepared.

## Safety tips for children

### Share the problem

Tell someone you trust that you're receiving nuisance calls – your mum or dad, best friend or teacher at school. Don't keep it to yourself because you'll feel much better if you share your problem with somebody else. They should also be able to help you.

### Keep calm

Most people who make these kind of calls do so because they simply get pleasure from upsetting people. The natural thing for you to do is to get angry, frustrated or even frightened.

Try not to. It will only give the caller that much more pleasure if you do. It's best not to react in any way.

If you keep calm and don't show any emotion, the caller will probably get bored and not try to bother you again.

Remember you're the one in control because it's your mobile. You can end the call or switch-off the mobile at any time.

And don't forget, the caller is simply being a coward by hiding behind his or her phone rather than talking to someone like you face to face.

### Don't talk or text

Some malicious callers just want a chat. Although it's difficult, try not to start a conversation. It will only encourage them more.

But, if you do get a nuisance call, don't hang up immediately. Just calmly put down your mobile and walk away without saying a word. Do something else. After a few minutes go back to your mobile, end the call or switch the mobile off.

This should deter whoever it is from calling again. If you're not responding or reacting in any way they'll soon realise they're wasting their time and money.

And if you receive an unwanted text, the same rule applies. Don't respond in any way – however tempting it may be.

## Protect your identity

When you answer the mobile, just say 'hello' rather than giving your name. Never give out any information about yourself – such as where you live or where you go to school – unless you are certain you know and trust the caller.

Let callers identify themselves first. If the mobile keeps on ringing, don't say anything when you answer it. A genuine caller will normally speak first.

## Don't give out your number

Often malicious callers just call telephone numbers at random. If you give out or confirm your number they'll find it easier to remember and so may call again.

If a caller asks you to confirm your number, ask them what number they want and then tell them if they are right or wrong. Make sure anyone else who uses your mobile does the same thing.

## Use your voicemail

If you have voicemail, it can be useful for screening calls.

A lot of mobiles display the number of the caller. Genuine callers will be ready to identify themselves. Malicious callers will not. So look at the number on the handset and see if you recognise it. If you don't, and think it might be an unwanted call, let the mobile divert the caller to your message box. That way you don't have to answer it yourself.

But be careful not to leave your name or contact number on your mail box greeting. It might be good idea to ask someone else to record a greeting for you – your dad or another grown up, perhaps. Many malicious callers are put off by a male adult voice.