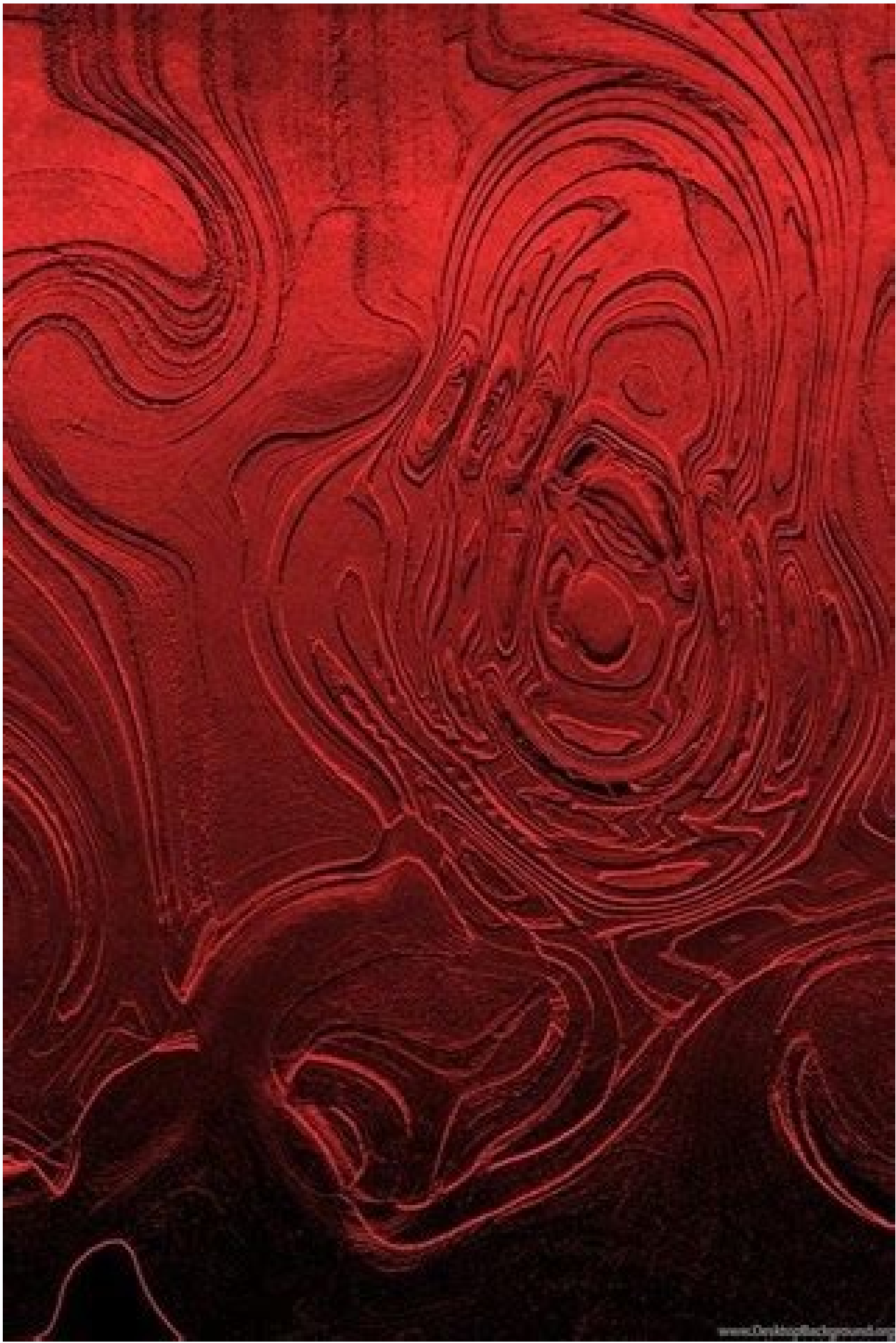


How can you unlock your iphone

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If you're thinking of moving from your current network provider to a new one, while keeping hold of your iPhone, or you've picked one up second-hand, you may find that the device is locked to your current carrier or network provider. While this could be a huge pain in the past, the good news is that it's usually much easier to unlock an iPhone these days. You should be able to get your network provider to unlock the iPhone for you, often for free. In fact, you might even be able to do it yourself. In this article we show how to unlock any iPhone model, either with an unlock code from the network itself (which is usually free and easy) or by using a third-party service like Doctor SIM. Unlocking an iPhone will soon be a thing of the past, as Ofcom has announced that all providers will be banned from locking devices to their network by the end of 2021. But obviously this won't necessarily affect all devices already in circulation. So, for now, you'll need to follow the steps outlined in this article to get your iPhone unlocked. We're focusing on unlocking an iPhone tied to a UK carrier, but for those in the US, visit our sister site's article on how to unlock an iPhone. Should you be looking for help on gaining access to data on a device in the sad event of its owner dying, you can read how to unlock an iPhone, iPad or Mac when its owner passes away. Is iPhone unlocking legal? It's completely legal to unlock your iPhone if you've finished paying for your contract or you purchased it outright, unsubsidised. However, if you're still in the process of paying for your contract you don't fully own the iPhone yet, so you're best to check with your carrier before unlocking it. Is my iPhone locked? Usually, if your iPhone is locked you'll see a message saying something like 'SIM Not Supported' when you try to set up the device. For more information here's how to tell if your iPhone is locked. The reason for the device being locked is most likely if you bought it second-hand or inherited it from a friend or family member. The previous owner may have bought the iPhone as part of a contract, and it's been standard practice for years that the network provider uses software restrictions to keep the device tied to its service for the duration of the contract. How to unlock your iPhone? There are four simple steps to take to unlock an iPhone: Contact your provider and request an unlock using the contact details and online tools listed below. If you haven't got the original SIM, you'll need to reset the phone before it can be unlocked. Power down the phone, then replace the old SIM card with a SIM from a different network. Check that the iPhone is able to connect a phone call over the new network. That's the shortened version, but let's go through those steps in a bit more detail. Below we will outline separately how to get your iPhone unlocked from each of the UK's most popular networks. Scroll down to your carrier to find out that company's specific process. How to unlock an iPhone on EE? EE states that it will automatically unlock an iPad or iPhone - 18 months after it was sold (or after it was dispatched, if it was a replacement). So if you know the purchase date, then you might find that the device will unlock itself very soon. Should this not be the case, then you can still request EE to unlock the device. If you've had your EE account for at least six months and have paid all of your bills to date, EE will unlock your iPhone for you. It'll cost £8.99 if you're still within the contract, though, and takes around 72 hours. If your contract has reached its end, then EE will unlock the iPhone for free. If you're a Pay As You Go customer and have enough credit to pay the £8.99 admin fee, EE will unlock your iPhone for you. If you've bought the iPhone second-hand, say from eBay, then EE will unlock it for you at a cost of £8.99. It does stipulate, 'As long as the second-hand device is more than six months old and has not been reported lost or stolen then we can unlock it.' The process is quite straightforward. All you need to do is call 0800 956 6000 then select options 2 followed by 4. You'll be required to undergo a security test (to prevent anyone stealing your iPhone and unlocking it) after which you'll be given the unlocking instructions. You'll find all the information you need on EE's How do I unlock an EE device to use with another network? page. How to unlock an iPhone on Vodafone? Vodafone states on its site that all Apple products issued by the company are already unlocked. Should you find this isn't the case, then you'll need to get a Network Unlock Code from Vodafone. Before attempting this, be aware that the company states, 'Unfortunately, if you bought your phone from a different provider or e.g. Carphone Warehouse, we can't unlock it. You will have to contact them directly.' So it could be that the device is locked by the other provider rather than Vodafone. If you're thinking of handing on your iPhone to someone else, and are worried that it might be locked to your Vodafone account, you can use Vodafone's online unlocking form to complete the process. The company claims it usually manages to unlock your device within 72 hours, but that in some cases it may be up to 10 days depending on the circumstances. The process is free. How to unlock an iPhone on Three? Three keeps things nice and simple. On its website, the carrier states that any iPhone purchased after 1 January 2014 from Three is automatically unlocked as soon as you connect it to Wi-Fi or iTunes/the Finder (depending on the version of macOS you are using). But even if you purchased your iPhone before that, you simply need to connect the iPhone to iTunes/the Finder and restore the device to unlock it. You'll want to back up first, though, as restoring will wipe all the data. Alternatively, you can fill out Three's online form. How to unlock an iPhone on O2? If you or the original owner purchased your iPhone from O2 after 1 August 2018, it's likely to be unlocked already. Should you find you still can't use another SIM with it, then (if you are an existing O2 customer) you can follow these steps: Log in to My O2 on your browser. Select 'More' in the menu bar at the top of the page, followed by 'Unlock your device'. Now follow the instructions to get your iPhone unlocked. Alternatively there's the Live Chat feature on the O2 site, although you'll need to have your IMEI ready (here's how to find it). The whole process is explained clearly on the Unlocking an O2 mobile for use on a different network page of the company website. The company says it will send a text to let you know when the iPhone is unlocked. You just need to pop the new SIM card in then and it should show as unlocked. If not, you'll need to connect the device to iTunes/the Finder with the non-O2 SIM, and iTunes will confirm the unlocking. How to unlock an iPhone on Virgin Mobile? Virgin says any iPhone purchased from the company will be unlocked already, but some older iPhones models might not. These are iPhone 4 and earlier though, so there's a very good chance your handset is unlocked. If you are on an iPhone 4, and why not it's still a great device, then you should still be able to perform a full restore of the device to unlock it. Just be sure to back up your data first so nothing gets lost. You can read more about how to do the former in our how to factory reset an iPhone and iPad guide. How to unlock an iPhone on Tesco Mobile? If you've been with Tesco Mobile for 12 months or more, or if you've completed your contract, you'll be able to get an unlock code from Tesco for free by using the online form. How to unlock an iPhone on Giffgaff? Giffgaff has a handy tool that helps you figure out how to free your Apple iPhone from other its own and other networks. It has the wonderful name of Unlockpedia and is well worth exploring. Using a third-party unlocking service? An alternative to contacting your carrier and asking them to unlock the iPhone is to use a mobile phone unlocking service. Retailers in most areas will arrange an unlock code for a small fee (usually around £25). You can also find online services that will unlock your iPhone, but they aren't always reputable and we would generally advise against it. If you do decide to use one, please make sure you read all the small print before you buy, because they can surprise you with extra bills at the end of the process. We've tried Doctor SIM, which promises to refund you if the unlock is unsuccessful, so that could be an option if you've tried all of the methods listed above. Doctor SIM successfully unlocked our phone with no problems and no hidden fees, so we feel confident in recommending them. How much should I pay? Ideally you shouldn't pay anything to unlock your iPhone, because your carrier should unlock it for you for free. But some carriers are still setting admin charges, so you might prefer looking at third-party options. These seem to charge between £10 and £25, and we wouldn't pay more than that. Shop around if anybody quotes you a higher price. How to tell if the unlock worked? Once your phone has been unlocked you'll receive a confirmation from the carrier. Now follow these steps: Power down the phone; hold down the power button (or the power button and volume down, if it's a Face ID equipped iPhone) and swipe your finger across as directed. Use the SIM card tool (or a straightened paper clip, but preferably the proper tool) to eject the SIM card holder from the side of the phone. Remove the old SIM card from the card holder. Place your new SIM - from a different network - into the card holder. Reinsert the SIM card holder into the iPhone. Make a phone call, and check that the iPhone is able to connect over the new network. If so, it's unlocked! If you've requested an unlock from your carrier, but have not got the original SIM card, or if you have acquired a locked iPhone from someone else, you may need to reset the phone before it will be unlocked. Follow these steps to reset the iPhone: Back up your iPhone to iCloud or via iTunes/the Finder. Erase your iPhone. Click on Settings > General > Transfer or Reset iPhone > Erase All Content and

Settings.Complete the setup assistant and restore from your backup.The phone should now be unlocked.When you turn the iPhone back on, complete the setup assistant and restore it from the backup you created. Then you can insert the new SIM card and it should now work.And there we have it! Your iPhone should be unlocked and free for use on any network. If you're interested in repeating the process for your tablet, we've got a separate guide for those who wish to unlock an iPad.If you're thinking of moving your old iPhone on to someone else, you should also read how and where to sell your old iPhone for the best price for some tips on resetting it and getting the best deal.

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