

## SOME QUICK FACTS ABOUT CELL PHONES IN THE UNITED STATES

- In the USA, most cell phone companies charge for all calls, outgoing AND incoming. Most companies have free incoming and outgoing calls within their network during certain hours.
- One or two year plans usually give you a set number of minutes per month which you then “use up” when calling. Weekend and night minutes can be free, but not always. Check your plan for details. If you use more than your set minutes, you will be charged for additional minutes at a much higher rate, which can be very expensive. Make sure you have enough minutes on your plan.
- Most companies also have pre-paid phone deals available that are easier to obtain when you have no credit history in the USA or no Social Security Number (SSN). Although these plans tend to be more expensive than year-long contracts, they may be a good option while you are still figuring out your phone habits and which companies your friends use.
- Text messaging typically carries an additional charge to your account. Be aware that some phones, plans, and providers do not support this function, so make sure your recipient can receive text messages.
- Some cell phone companies use SIM cards which can be swapped between (unlocked) phones, while other’s use phones that only work for their network. Keep this in mind if you were planning to use your own phone.
- Be aware of the commitment that you are entering when signing a contract. Once it is signed, you will be obliged to pay for the entire period for which you signed up.

## POPULAR CELL PHONE PROVIDERS

### Verizon Wireless

Fashion Centre Mall  
1100 S Hayes St  
Suite 3032  
Arlington, VA 22202  
(703) 415-1101  
[www.verizonwireless.com](http://www.verizonwireless.com)

You will need your passport to sign up for Verizon Wireless Service. For contracts (1-2 years) international students can substitute a social security number by providing a deposit of up to \$400. This deposit accrues interest and is refunded after 12 months if payments are made on time during that period. Prepaid services are also available and credit can be recharged online, via telephone, and in the Verizon Wireless Stores. International calling rates differ depending on the country you are calling, but receiving calls from abroad does not incur any additional costs beyond plan minutes of normal phone calls. International roaming is available in a number of countries. Non-Verizon phones cannot be used with Verizon service. At the moment Verizon is the only provider in DC that gets service in the metro.

### T-Mobile

1330 Connecticut Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-429-0715  
[www.t-mobile.com](http://www.t-mobile.com)

To contract service you will need a government issued form of identification and a US-billing address. Individuals with no credit history in the United States must enroll in FlexPay. This offers the same rate as a regular contract, but individuals must pay their bill at the beginning of each month rather than at the end. There is no contractual commitment for Flex-Pay. Personal phones from overseas may be used as long as they are GSM phones that work on 1900mhz frequency and the phone is unlocked. Phones can be used overseas but usage incurs a roaming fee. Receiving international phone calls does not carry additional fees beyond plan minutes of normal phone calls. T-mobile offers an option through which voice-over IP calls can be made if a wireless network is available – in the United States as well as abroad.

### AT&T

1050 Connecticut Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 822-1350  
[www.att.com](http://www.att.com)

Individuals with no credit history in the United States can pay a \$500 deposit which will be refunded after one year. If students and scholars have an unlocked quad band phone, they can use their own phone. If they purchase a phone from AT&T, the longer the contract terms (from 0 to 2 years) the cheaper the phone. There are different prepaid options as well, including a \$100 a month unlimited plan. International calls and roaming available (see website for details) and receiving international phone calls does not carry additional fees beyond plan minutes of normal phone calls. Other location: 3307 M Street, NW, (202) 333-3373 (does not offer iPhone)

### Sprint

1208 18th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-496-9400  
[www.sprint.com](http://www.sprint.com)

Sprint does not require a US credit history or a SSN, but charges a deposit of \$500 for internationals with no credit history. Sprint only offers 2-year contracts.

## ONLINE ONLY PROVIDERS

Virgin Mobile: [www.virginmobileusa.com](http://www.virginmobileusa.com)  
Pre-paid or contract plans available.

CricKet: [www.mycricket.com](http://www.mycricket.com)  
Plans with unlimited minutes. Limited service coverage.

## BUYING CALLING CARDS IN STORES AND ONLINE

- Vital Vittles-Georgetown University Leavey Center: 202-687-9889
- Georgetown University Bookstore in the Leavey Center: 202-687-7482
- Rosslyn Market (next to Rosslyn Metro): 703-522-5387
- Wisemiller’s Deli (Wisey’s): 1236 ½ 36<sup>th</sup> St., NW: 202-333-8254
- Key Bridge Exxon: 3607 M Street, NW: 202-965-3760