

Steps to Protect Your Smartphones Against Theft

iPhones

Do this right now: Make sure you have [iOS7 software](#) (if you haven't already, you can download the upgrade on iTunes). Go to Settings, then iCloud, and then flip on "Find My iPhone." If your phone gets lost, you'll be able to track it on [icloud.com](#).

Do this if your phone gets stolen: Go to [icloud.com/find](#) and sign in using your Apple ID and password. There, a button lets you play a sound on your iPhone to help you locate the device. You can also put the phone in "lost mode," which gives you the option to display an alternate phone number and a message explaining that the phone has been lost, so Good Samaritans will be able to find you.

If you're sure your phone has been stolen, erase the data. Remember that this is a last resort: Once you've erased your phone, you won't be able to track it. But that way, the only way someone will be able to activate it is by [entering your Apple ID and password](#). (And in the event that you find your phone again, you can [restore the data using iCloud backup](#).)

Android

Do this right now: Android doesn't have a kill switch (an app "that makes it impossible for thieves to stolen phones") yet, but it has still some helpful anti-theft features. Start by downloading the free "[Android Device Manager](#)."

Do this if your phone gets stolen: Sign in to the [Android Device Manager](#) using your Google account and password. Again, you'll be able to play a sound, track your phone, reset the screen lock PIN, and erase the data. (Remember, once you erase the data, you won't be able to track the phone anymore.)

However, hackers may still be able to reset and reactivate the device. Expect a tougher kill switch feature in Google's next software upgrade.

Samsung

Do this right now: If you've have a Samsung Android phone, you're in luck. Go to Apps, then Settings, and then Security. Check the box next to "[reactivation lock](#)." You'll be prompted to either sign in to your Samsung account or create one.

Do this if your phone gets stolen: Go to [findmymobile.samsung.com](#) and log in with your Samsung account. Like "Find My iPhone," Samsung lets you track your phone, play a sound to help you find it, and lock your device remotely.

If your phone has been stolen, the reactivation lock renders it useless. Once you've turned the feature on, no one can reset the device without your Samsung account and password.

Windows Phone

Do this right now: Windows phones don't have kill switches yet either, but they do have a device tracking feature. Go to Start, then App, then Settings, and then "[Find My Phone](#)." You can opt to save your phone's location every few hours, which could give you a more accurate reading of its last known location if the battery dies.

Do this if your phone gets stolen: Go to [windowsphone.com](#) and sign in with your Windows Live ID. You'll be able to track your phone, play a sound, lock your phone with a message, and erase your data.