

How to give a cell phone as a gift

If you are considering giving a cell phone as a gift this year, learn more about how to choose the best mobile phone for your recipient, how to delay activation, and how to choose the best payment options.



If you have a friend or family member who'd appreciate the gift of connectivity this holiday season, you might be interested in learning how to give a cell phone as a gift. Whether you're shopping for the new [iPhone 16](#) for a teenager or a [prepaid phone](#) for a grandparent, there are some considerations and tips you should know before you add to your cart.

Buying a child's first cell phone as a gift

If you're planning to buy your kid's first cell phone as a gift, one option is to add a new line to your existing plan and finance the device through an installment program. Of course, you always have the option to pay for a new cell phone outright, but oftentimes, there are deals and discounts when you purchase a new phone on an installment plan. [Find the best cellphone deals at AT&T](#)

At AT&T, you can have up to ten lines total on your plan, and you save up to \$10 per month on every line when you sign up for both eligible AutoPay and paperless billing with your debit card or bank account. With AT&T Unlimited Your Way®, you can choose a plan to fit the needs of each family member on your account. You can mix and match from three [unlimited data plans](#): AT&T Unlimited Starter™ SL, Unlimited Extra™ EL, and Unlimited Premium™ PL.¹ You can even add a wearable, like a smartwatch, as an additional line on your account for \$10.99 a month. [Learn more about adding a line](#)

Since kids and teenagers are known to want the latest cell phones, like [iPhone 16](#), you might consider enrolling in the AT&T Next Up Anytime™ program when you buy a new phone for your child. AT&T Next Up Anytime is new. It costs an extra \$10 per month and allows you to upgrade early without worrying about the remaining balance of your installment plan. And every year, or once you've paid off one-third of your phone's cost, you will be eligible for our [smartphone deals](#) (maximum three upgrades in a 12-month period). [Learn more about AT&T Next Up Anytime](#)

When shopping for your child, don't forget the [screen protector](#), [phone case](#), and maybe even an [insurance plan](#).

If you plan to do your holiday shopping early and wrap up the new phone for a surprise, you may be able to delay activation on your new device. AT&T can future date activations up to thirty days, and your installment payments will begin on the activation date for any new line of service.

¹AT&T may temporarily slow data speeds if the networks is busy.

Buying a senior a cell phone as a gift

A phone can be a thoughtful gift for a senior citizen, especially if your friend or relative is somewhat hesitant to shop for a cell phone or set up a cell phone plan on his/her own. Before purchasing, you'll want to consider how the recipient will likely use the phone.

If you're buying a phone for a senior citizen family member who'll use it often for calls and internet access, you might want to add the new line to your existing plan and finance the device through an installment program. [AT&T offers cell phones at varying price points](#)

If you're buying a phone for a senior citizen who'll likely use their cell phone sparingly, you might consider prepaid or pay-as-you-go service. [AT&T Prepaid® offers a variety of prepaid plans](#) and [prepaid phones](#) that appeal to every age group.



Buying a cell phone for an international guest as a gift

The holiday season is a popular time to host international guests, and a prepaid cell phone and plan might make a great and convenient gift to give your visitors. For example, if your parents live in Europe and plan to visit for a month over the holidays, AT&T offers a variety of [prepaid cell phones under \\$50](#). Depending on your budget, you might pair that with an [AT&T Prepaid plan for \\$30/month](#).^{*} Of course, you'll want to check with your guests to ensure they haven't already made arrangements for international cell phone service. [Learn more about the best options for using a cell phone internationally](#).

^{*}Plus taxes and fees.

Buying a cell phone as a gift for someone who already has a cell phone

If you want to buy a cell phone as a gift for a recipient who already has a cell phone, you might take a few things into consideration.

It's possible to bring your own phone to most carriers. You can learn more about [bringing your own device to AT&T](#). That said, many consumers with traditional wireless carriers finance their devices on installment plans. Typically, they'll have an upgrade cycle and may have to pay off the device they are currently financing if they are gifted a new cell phone outside of that cycle.

Other gift ideas for tech lovers

If you want to get a gift for the tech lover in your life but are unsure if a cell phone fits the bill, there are countless fun options. A teen might enjoy a new set of [headphones](#), including [Apple AirPods 4 with Active Noise Cancellation](#). [Smart home accessories](#), like [Apple AirTags](#), can make great stocking stuffers or gifts. Or, you might browse [gadgets for the gamer in your life](#).

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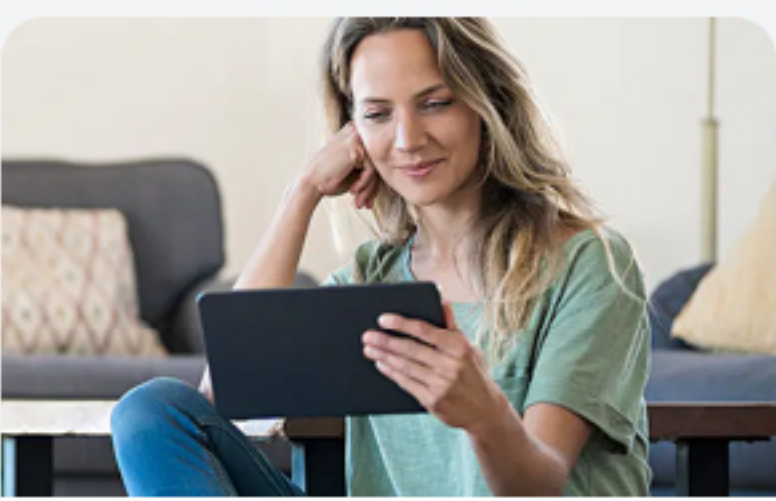
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Author
Katherine Wroblecki

Katherine Wroblecki is a Principal Technical Product Manager at AT&T who specializes in wireless and wireline technology. Katherine holds a bachelor's degree from Georgia Tech and currently leads SEO content strategy for att.com. She is based in Atlanta, Ga.

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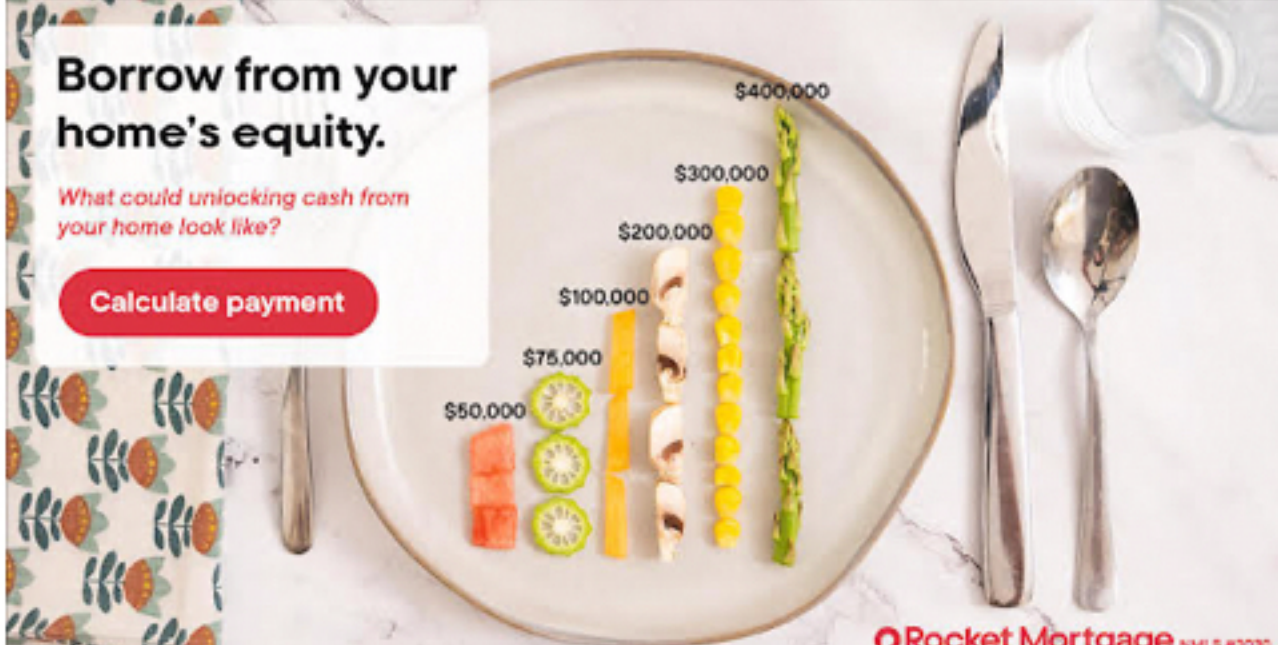
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