

Android phone security and privacy

Secure your phone with a PIN and your own fingerprint.

A PIN or fingerprint can secure your Android phone to keep all your personal data safe. A PIN or fingerprint is like a key that unlocks your phone. When your phone is locked, no-one else can use it.

If you already have a PIN set up on your phone, you can follow along with this guide and learn how to change your PIN.

What you will need

Before you begin the course, check that your phone is fully charged and showing the **Home** screen. Your operating system software should also be fully up to date.

To check your system software is up to date tap **Settings**, then **Software update**. Depending on your device, you can then tap **Download updates manually** or **Download and install** to start the update. Your phone will restart when the update is complete.

We recommend you only use your home Wi-Fi to do these updates to save your data and to protect your privacy.

Remember, there are lots of different brands of Android phone, and they all do things slightly differently. Some of the screens on your phone might look a little different to the ones on this guide, but you should still be able to follow along.

First steps

Your phone's security options are controlled from the **Settings** app. To open it:

1. Swipe up from the bottom of the **Home** screen to show the **Apps** screen. You will see a grid of icons.
2. Find the icon that looks like a cog wheel. This is the **Settings** icon. Tap it.
3. Once the **Settings** app is open, look for **Lock screen and security**. Tap on it.

If you already have a PIN on your phone, the next few steps are similar to those for changing it, so it's a good idea to follow along.



Security is controlled by the **Settings** app, which looks like a cog wheel

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Choosing a screen lock type

There are a few different ways to protect your phone, or even turn off security altogether. Let's choose a secure option.

1. You'll see **Screen lock type** at the top of the screen, and **Swipe** written below it.
2. This setting doesn't protect your phone. Tap on it to choose a better option.
3. Tap **PIN** from the list.
4. Your phone will connect, then continue with some automatic setup tasks in the background.
5. Use the number pad to enter your new six-number PIN.
6. It can be inconvenient to tap **OK** each time you enter your PIN, so tap **Confirm PIN without tapping OK** to avoid this.
7. Your phone wants to be sure you remember your PIN, so enter the PIN again and tap **Done**. Your phone and personal information are now protected by your new PIN.



A PIN is one of the methods you can use to secure your phone

Testing your new PIN

Now let's test your new PIN to make sure it works.

1. Press the power button on your phone so the screen goes dark. Don't hold the button for too long, or your phone may switch off completely.
2. Press the power button once to wake up your phone. The **Lock** screen will appear and ask you to enter your PIN.
3. Carefully enter each number of your PIN. If you enter the PIN incorrectly, the phone will ask you to try again.
4. If you enter the wrong PIN too many times in a row, everything on your phone might be erased! Keeping a backup of your phone can restore all your content and settings if this happens, and you can learn about this in another guide.



Entering a correct PIN unlocks your phone

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5. After you enter your PIN correctly, the phone will unlock and show the last screen you had open and you can use your phone.

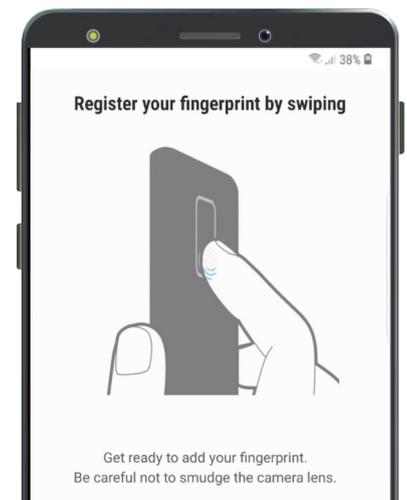
If you enter the wrong PIN too many times in a row your phone might be erased, so it's a good idea to keep a record of your PIN in a safe place.



Setting up fingerprint security

Your fingerprint can be a faster and more convenient way to unlock your phone than a PIN. However, you still need a PIN to keep your information secure. Your PIN can always unlock your phone, even if fingerprint security is set up.

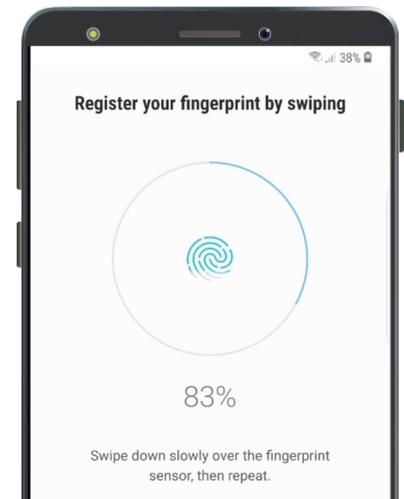
1. To set up fingerprint security, find and open the **Settings** app like you did earlier in this guide.
2. From the **Settings** menu, find the **Lock screen and security** option and tap it. Then look for **Fingerprint scanner** and tap it.
3. For your security, your phone will ask you to put in your PIN. Enter your PIN now, to confirm that it's you scanning your fingerprint, and not someone else.
4. Setting up your fingerprint will take a couple of minutes, because you will need to scan your finger in a range of different positions. Get ready to do this now.
5. Locate your phone's fingerprint scanner. Depending on your model, the scanner will be near the camera on the back of the phone, or it might even be built-in to the **Home** button. Your phone should display a picture or an animation showing you where the scanner is.



A fingerprint is one of the methods you can use to secure your phone

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6. Your phone will also show an animation that tells you how to position and move your finger on the scanner to scan it properly. Follow the instructions until the phone says your fingerprint is registered.
7. Once registration is complete, your phone will ask if you want to register another finger. For now, tap **Done** to continue.
8. Because this is the first fingerprint you've registered, your phone will ask if you want to turn on **Fingerprint unlock**. This is required so you can unlock the phone with your fingerprint. Tap **Turn on**.
9. The phone is now set up with fingerprint security.



Your phone uses an inbuilt scanner to register your fingerprint

Testing your fingerprint

Now let's test unlocking your phone using your fingerprint.

1. Press the power button on the side of your phone until the screen goes dark. Don't press and hold for too long, or your phone might switch off completely.
2. Press the power button again. The display will show the **Lock** screen.
3. You can swipe to go to a screen that asks for your PIN or hold your finger against the sensor to unlock your phone. The finger needs to be the same one you registered with the fingerprint scanner.
4. When your phone unlocks and shows the last screen you were using, you can take your finger off the scanner.



Fingerprint security can be faster and more convenient than a PIN

Congratulations! You should now know how to protect the personal data and information on your phone using a PIN, and your fingerprint!