Android phone: Cloud location services

Use the cloud to help find your device if it gets lost, and to let family or friends know where you are.

With your free Google Account, you can track the location of your devices, use **Google Maps** to share your location with friends and family, or ask them to share their location with you.

What you will need

Before you begin the course, check that your phone is fully charged, and has the latest version of its operating software.

You'll need an internet connection over home Wi-Fi or via a mobile data plan, and you'll need to be signed in to your Google Account using its email address and password.

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 those on this tip sheet, but you should still be able to follow along.

Your Google Account cloud service can help you locate your phone if it goes missing

Setting up to find your device

Here's how to set up your phone so that the cloud can help you find it if it becomes lost or stolen.

1. Swipe up from the bottom of the screen to show all your apps.

2. Find the **Google app** icon and tap on it.

3. Tap on your Google Account profile icon in the top right corner of the screen. A pop-up box will appear.

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4. Tap on **Manage your Google Account** to see information about your Google Account.

5. Below your account name and email address is a line of headings. Swipe left through the headings until you can see **Security** and tap on it.

6. A new page opens, and you should scroll down until you see **Your devices**.

7. Because you are looking at this list on your Android phone, the top device in this list will show your phone with a blue tick underneath it labelled **This device**.

8. The blue tick means your phone is ready to report its location if you use another device, such as your computer, to look for it.

   To test this, you can use a computer web browser to sign in to your Google Account with your username and password. Once signed in, your phone's location will appear on a map. You can learn how to use your Windows desktop or laptop computer to find your Android mobile device in the **Sharing photos and location with the cloud** courses.

Use your computer's web browser to see the location of your missing device on a map

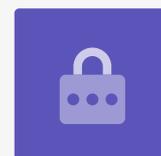9. Tap the **Home** button to return to the Home screen.

Getting ready to share your location with friends.

You can share your location, or ask friends and family to share their location with you, by using the **Google Maps app**.

To exchange location information, you need to be signed into your phone with your **Google Account**, and your friend or family member must be signed into their device with their own Google Account.

To get ready to share you location, follow the steps on the next page.

People you share your location with on Google Maps can see your name and photo, information about where you've been, and your saved destinations such as a work or home address. Google may also send you advertising based on your location.

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1. From the **Home** screen, swipe up from the bottom of the screen to show all your apps. Find the **Maps app** icon and tap on it to open the app.

2. **Google Maps** opens showing a map. If your Android phone has its **Location Services** turned on, this map will display your local area

3. If the map is not showing your current location, you can tap the **compass icon** in the bottom right of the screen to centre the map on where you are right now.

You phone's Location Services works with Google Maps to share your whereabouts with others

4. If you can't see the **compass icon**, and there's no **Search bar** at the top of the screen, tap the map once in the centre.

5. If the compass is red and showing a question mark in the middle, that means your phone's **Location Services** are not turned on.

6. To fix this, tap the **red compass**, and a pop up will appear asking if you want to turn on the **device location** service. If you tap the grey arrow after the word **service**, you can see some information about what Google Maps will use your phone's **Location Services** to do.

7. Tap **OK** to turn on your phone's Location Services.

8. Tap the compass to turn it blue, and the map will centre on your current location. It might take a few seconds to do this.

You're now ready to share your location with a friend or family member.
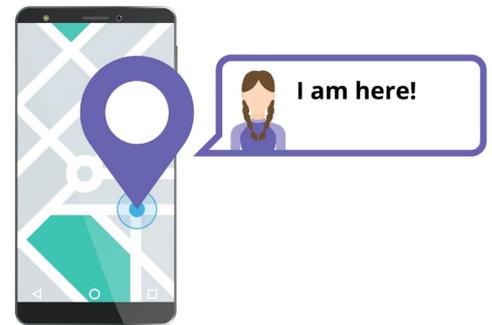
How to share your location with friends or family

Tap the circle in the top right, and a pop-up showing your **Google Account** appears.

1. Tap on **Location sharing**.

2. On the next screen, tap the blue **Share location** button. The map will re-open, along with the **Share your real-time location** panel.

3. Next to **Share your real-time location** is a small question mark in a circle. Tap this now to see another pop up that explains exactly what information is visible to a person with whom you share your location.

4. Tap the blue **OK** button.

5. The pop up will disappear and you can see the **Share panel** again. Under the title is a pale blue button that says **For 1 hour**. This means that the person you are about to share your location with will only see it for one hour.

6. Tap the pale blue button and the panel will expand.

7. Tap the blue minus or plus buttons to share your location for less time or for more.

8. If you want to share your location permanently, tap **Until you turn this off**.

9. Under this you can see a list of your contacts. You can swipe to the left to see more contacts, and tap **More** to see all of your contacts.

10. Scroll your list of contacts to find the person you want to share your location with and tap their name. The circle next to their name will turn blue and show a white tick.

    When you are sure you want to share your location with this person, tap the blue **Send** button at the bottom right of the screen.

Allowing others to know where you are can help you feel safe

Managing who you share your location with

When you choose someone to share your location with, their name will appear at the bottom of the map. Underneath their name is **Not sharing with you** and **Can see your location**.

1. Tap their name and the panel will change to show information about this person.

2. To stop sharing your location with them right away, tap the blue **Stop**.

3. To ask the person to share their location with you, tap **Request**. A pop up will check that you don't mind sharing your email address with Google.

4. Tap **Request** again.

5. Your contact will receive a notification on their own phone letting them know you want them to share their location with you.

6. Once they agree, you will receive a notification saying the person has shared their location with you.

Your location remains visible until your timer expires or you turn off location sharing

Your phone will now show the **Location sharing** screen on Google maps, and the person's name will appear at the bottom. A circle with their name next to it will appear in the map, and the map will become centred on the screen and show your location as a blue dot.

How to check someone's location

At the bottom of screen, below their name, a panel will show how far away they are from your location, and it may show the battery charge of their phone too.

Next to the battery it may say **Just now**, in which case the location you are seeing on the map is current.

If it says **Five minutes ago**, or longer, you might need to refresh the location. To do this:

1. Tap the **three dots** to the right of the person's name.

2. On the pop-up menu that appears, tap **Refresh** and wait a moment for their location to update.

3. To finish up, tap the **Home** button to return to the Home screen. Don't forget, your location will always be visible to anyone you have shared it with, until the time you set expires or you turn Location sharing off.