

Is Your Smartphone Set to Auto-Lock?

Our smartphones contain contact information for friends and family, photos, access to social networking accounts, access to email accounts, and more. Beyond considerations for access to basic financial data and transactions, everyone should be protecting their mobile device from misuse. It should come as no surprise that every smartphone owner must protect their mobile device from misuse.

The following is a collection of best practices aimed at protecting you in the event that your mobile device is lost or stolen:

- Lock your smartphone with a PIN/passcode (if the option exists on your phone).
- Configure your phone to erase data after a specified number of failed PIN/passcode attempts (If the option exists on your phone).
- Take a note of your phone's ESN, IMEI or MEID number (often found behind the battery or on the back of the iPhone near the FCC ID). This number will come in handy when reporting a lost or stolen phone to your cellular provider or the police.
- Backup your device regularly to your computer to prevent the loss of purchased apps, photos, documents, contact information, and more.
- Consider purchasing a consumer app to assist the remote wiping of your phone should that become necessary. Please note: These Apps must be installed and configured BEFORE losing the device:
 - FindMyiPhone
 - Prey (Android)
 - BlackBerry Protect
- If your personal cell phone is stolen or lost, the most important action to take is to contact the cellular provider to have them suspend service on the device so that no one else can apply charges to it.
- Corporate BlackBerry users should contact their IT department immediately to perform a remote wipe of the device.

Of course the use of an unlock code is a minor annoyance that we would all like to avoid. Regardless, that small measure will provide the greatest peace of mind when it comes to securing the private information available via your smartphone. Criminals are counting on the lag time between the moment they acquire your device and the time you disable its connectivity. If everyone is diligent about locking their device, then stolen smartphones would become much less valuable.