

# Do I Still Need a Home Phone?

## THE 60-SECOND VERSION

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- 1 There's no single right answer — it's about what fits your home and habits.
- 2 Keep it for weak cell signal, a medical alert, or because everyone has the number.
- 3 Drop it for the cost, the robocalls, or because you're already all-cell.
- 4 A middle path — a cheap internet or cellular home phone — splits the difference.
- 5 Whatever you choose, you can almost always keep your old number.

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## Do I Even Need a Home Phone Anymore? An Honest Decision Guide

An honest look at keeping or dropping the house phone — no pressure.

————— **An Extended Guide · No. 1731** —————

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## SUMMARY

## The 60-Second Version

In a hurry? Here's the whole thing on one page. There is no right answer to whether you still need a home phone — it honestly depends on your home. Keep it if your cell signal is weak indoors, if a medical alert or alarm relies on it, if everyone has that number, or if it's simply a comfort. Drop it if the cost grates, the robocalls drive you mad, and you're already doing everything on a cell. And if you're torn, there's a middle path: a cheap buy-once internet phone or a cellular home base gives you a house phone for little money. No pressure either way.

- There's no single right answer — it's about what fits your home and habits.
- Keep it for weak cell signal, a medical alert, or because everyone has the number.
- Drop it for the cost, the robocalls, or because you're already all-cell.
- A middle path — a cheap internet or cellular home phone — splits the difference.
- Whatever you choose, you can almost always keep your old number.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

This guide won't push you either way — I don't sell phone service and I don't earn a thing from your choice. My only goal is that you decide with clear eyes and feel good about it.

## 1. No Wrong Answer Here

*This is a fit question, not a right-or-wrong one.*

Let me set the tone right at the start, because people sometimes expect me to tell them the “smart” thing to do. There isn't one. Whether to keep or drop a home phone is not a test with a correct answer — it's a fit question, like whether you prefer a sedan or a pickup. The right choice is simply the one that suits your life.

I've helped folks happily drop their landline, and I've helped just as many decide to keep one and feel relieved they did. Both were right — for them. So I'm not going to nudge you. I'm going to lay out both sides as honestly as I can and help you see which reasons actually apply to you.

Take your time with it. This is one of those decisions where there's no rush and no penalty for thinking it over. Read both sides, sit with it, and the answer that fits usually makes itself known.

**TIP**

Short on time? The 60-Second page up front and the cheat sheet at the back give you the gist. The chapters in between walk through each reason in turn.

## 2. Why This Question Comes Up Now

*Two things are pushing it.*

The question of whether to keep a home phone isn't new, but two things have brought it to a head lately. The first is that the old copper phone lines are being retired, so a lot of folks are being nudged to do something — and as long as you're deciding anyway, it's natural to ask whether to keep a house phone at all.

The second is that cell phones have simply gotten good enough that many households already do everything on them. When the home phone mostly rings with junk calls and the family all texts your cell, it's fair to wonder what the landline's still earning its keep for.

So if you're asking the question, you're not being difficult or behind the times — you're being sensible. The world around the home phone has changed, and it's worth a fresh look rather than paying for something out of pure habit.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Being nudged by a copper retirement notice doesn't mean you have to drop your home phone — just that you'll move it to a newer kind of line if you keep it. That's a separate topic I cover in my other guides.

## 3. Let's Be Honest About Both Sides

*How to read the chapters that follow.*

The next stretch of this guide walks through the real reasons to keep a home phone and the real reasons to drop one, one at a time. I want you to read them the way you'd weigh any decision: not looking for the “winner,” but noticing which reasons actually describe your life.

Some reasons will land hard for you and some won't matter at all. A reason to keep that's decisive for one person — say, a weak cell signal — is irrelevant to someone with great coverage. That's exactly why there's no universal answer. The reasons are general; your situation is specific.

As you read, maybe keep a little tally in your head, or on paper: which keep-reasons are true for me, which drop-reasons are true for me. By the end you'll have a clear picture, and often the choice will already feel obvious.

**TIP**

Weigh the reasons by how much they matter, not just how many there are. One strong reason — like a medical alert that depends on the line — can rightly outweigh several small ones.

## 4. Reason to Keep — Habit and Comfort

*There's real value in what feels easy.*

Let's start with the one people apologize for, as if it isn't a real reason. It is. If the home phone is what you're comfortable with — if you like a phone that sits in one spot, that you always know where to find, that your hands know how to use without thinking — that comfort has genuine value.

Not everything has to be justified on a spreadsheet. A phone you find easy and reassuring to use is worth something real, especially if a cell phone feels fiddly or stressful to you. There's no prize for forcing yourself onto a device you don't enjoy.

So if “I just like having it” is high on your list, don't dismiss it. Comfort and peace of mind are among the best reasons to keep anything. The only question is whether that comfort is worth the monthly cost to you — and only you can answer that.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

If it's the comfort of a simple, familiar phone you value — but the cost that nags — a middle-path home phone can give you the same easy handset for far less money. More on that later.

## 5. Reason to Keep — Everyone Has the Number

*A number decades in the making.*

Here's a reason that carries a lot of weight for people who've lived in one place a long time. Your home number might be on every form you've ever filled out, in every friend's address book, in your doctor's file, on the church directory, and in the memory of relatives who have dialed it for forty years. That's not nothing.

Giving up a number that deeply woven into your life means telling a lot of people a new one, and some of them — the occasional callers, the ones who only phone at the holidays — won't get the memo and will lose track of you. For some folks that's a real cost; for others it's no bother at all.

Now, here's the part that softens this reason: you can almost always keep your old number even if you change how the phone works, or even move it onto a cell plan. So “everyone has the number” is a reason to keep the number — which you can do — not necessarily a reason to keep the old kind of phone service.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Keeping your number when you switch is called “porting,” and it works in most cases. So don't let fear of losing the number alone decide this — the number can usually come with you whichever way you go.

## 6. Reason to Keep — Weak Cell Signal

*If calls drop at home, this one's decisive.*

This is one of the strongest reasons to keep a home phone, and it's purely practical. If your cell signal is weak or spotty inside your house — if calls drop, if you have to stand by a particular window to be heard — then a cell phone alone is not a reliable way to reach the world, and a home phone fills that gap.

Plenty of homes around the county, especially out in the rural stretches or in houses with thick walls, have genuinely poor cell coverage indoors. If that's you, dropping the home phone could leave you struggling to make an everyday call, let alone an emergency one. That's a real safety consideration, not just a convenience.

The honest flip side: if your cell signal is strong throughout the house, this reason simply doesn't apply to you, and you can set it aside. That's why I'll suggest a simple signal test later — because this one reason, more than most, can settle the whole question.

**TIP**

There are ways to boost a weak cell signal at home, too — signal boosters, or calling over your home internet with the right setup. So weak signal doesn't automatically force a landline; it just means do your homework before dropping one.

## 7. Reason to Keep — A Medical Alert Uses It

*Don't cut a line your safety depends on.*

This is a reason I treat with extra care, because getting it wrong has real consequences. Many older medical alert pendants — the kind with the button you press for help — and many home security and fire alarms were built to dial out over a copper phone line. If yours works that way, the phone line isn't optional; it's part of a safety system.

So if a medical alert or monitored alarm depends on your home phone, do not simply drop the line. Dropping it could leave that button unable to reach help in an emergency — and you might not find out until the worst possible moment. This one reason alone is enough to keep a line, unless you replace the device too.

The good news is there's a clean solution if cost or robocalls still bother you: newer medical alerts and alarms use a cellular connection instead of a phone line, so you could switch the device to a cellular one and then be free to drop the landline. Just never do it in the wrong order.

### WATCH OUT

Before you drop any home phone, call your medical alert company and your alarm company and ask plainly whether your equipment needs the phone line. Never assume. This is exactly the kind of check that's too important to guess at.

## 8. Reason to Keep — Reliable in an Emergency

*The old line's quiet superpower.*

One thing the traditional copper home phone did beautifully was work when everything else failed. It drew its own power from the phone line, so even when the electricity was out in a storm, the phone still had a dial tone. For a lot of people, that storm-proof reliability is the home phone's whole point.

Here's the honest wrinkle, though: that superpower belongs to the old copper line specifically. The newer home phones — cable, internet-based — run on house electricity and stop in an outage unless you add a battery. So “reliable in an emergency” is a strong reason to keep a phone, but it pushes you toward a copper line while you can have one, or toward a setup with good backup.

A cell phone, meanwhile, has its own battery and keeps working in a power outage as long as it's charged and has signal — which is part of why some folks feel comfortable relying on a cell. So weigh this one together with the signal question: they're two halves of the same emergency picture.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Whatever you decide, the ultimate emergency backup is a charged cell phone. Even with no plan, a cell phone can reach 911 as long as it has a charge and a signal. Keep one handy regardless of your home-phone choice.

## 9. Reason to Keep — A Fixed 911 Location

*The home phone knows where you are.*

Here's a subtle but real safety point. When you call 911 from a traditional home phone, the dispatcher automatically sees your exact street address, because the line is tied to your house. That matters most if you're ever unable to speak — if you can dial but can't talk, help still knows where to come.

A cell phone shares only an approximate location with 911, based on nearby towers and the phone's own locating — usually close, sometimes not exact, and not always reliable indoors. For most calls that's fine, because you can simply say your address. But for the rare case where you can't speak, the fixed address of a home phone is a genuine edge.

This is a modest reason for most people and a big one for some — particularly anyone with a health condition that might leave them unable to talk during an emergency. Weigh it according to your own health and peace of mind, not as a blanket rule.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

The newer internet-based home phones keep a “registered address” they send to 911, which works much like the old fixed location as long as it's set correctly. So this safety edge isn't unique to copper — a properly set-up internet phone has it too.

## 10. Reason to Keep — Comfort for an Older Adult

*When the phone is more than a phone.*

For an older person, especially someone living alone, the home phone can be more than a device — it's a steady, dependable link to the world, in a known spot, that doesn't need charging or a passcode or a touchscreen. That steadiness is a comfort, and comfort is worth protecting in later years.

A cell phone, for all its power, can be a source of low-grade anxiety for someone who finds it confusing — the fear of pressing the wrong thing, of the battery dying, of not hearing it in another room. A home phone that just sits there and works can ease that worry. There's dignity in using a tool you find easy.

So if we're talking about an older parent, this reason deserves real weight, and it's worth asking the person themselves how they feel — not just deciding for them on cost. The phone they're comfortable with may be doing quiet good you can't see on a bill.

### TIP

If you're an adult child weighing this for a parent, resist the urge to “modernize” them out of a phone they love. The cheapest option isn't the best one if it leaves them anxious or cut off.

## 11. Reason to Drop — The Cost

*The most common reason of all.*

Now to the other side, and the reason I hear most: the cost. A traditional copper home phone is often one of the pricier ways to have a phone once you add up the line charge, any long-distance, and the taxes and fees that pile on. For a phone that mostly rings with junk calls, that can feel like money down the drain.

If you're already paying for a cell phone — and most people are — then the home phone is a second phone bill on top of it. For a household watching every dollar, cutting that second bill is a real, recurring saving, month after month. That adds up over a year.

I won't print dollar figures, because prices change and everyone's bill is different. But I'll tell you this: dig out your actual home-phone bill, find the true all-in total with taxes, and ask yourself honestly what you're getting for it. If the answer is “not much,” cost is a fair reason to drop — or at least to switch to a cheaper middle path.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Before you drop entirely to save money, know that a middle-path home phone can cut the cost to a few dollars a month or less. You may be able to keep a house phone and still pocket most of the savings.

## 12. Reason to Drop — The Robocalls

*When the phone mostly brings aggravation.*

Here's a reason that's really about quality of life. Home phones get hammered by junk calls — more than cell phones, as a rule — and for some people the landline has become a little machine that mostly delivers aggravation and the occasional scam attempt. If every ring makes you sigh, that's a reason to question keeping it.

The honest counterpoint is that you can fight the robocalls without dropping the phone — the Do Not Call list, your carrier's spam filter, block buttons, and letting unknowns go to voicemail can quiet a line down a lot. So before you drop the phone just to escape the junk, know that there's a way to keep it and still get peace.

But if you've tried to tame the junk and it still outweighs the phone's usefulness to you — if the calls you want are few and the junk is relentless — then yes, that's a legitimate reason to let the landline go. You don't have to keep a phone that brings you more irritation than value.

**TIP**

I have a whole separate guide on blocking robocalls on a home phone. If junk calls are your main reason to drop the line, read that first — you may find you can keep the phone and lose the noise.

## 13. Reason to Drop — You're Already All-Cell

*When the landline just sits there.*

For a lot of households, the simplest reason to drop is that they already do everything on their cell phones and the landline just sits in the corner. If the family texts your cell, your friends call your cell, and the home phone hasn't rung with a wanted call in weeks, it may have quietly become a bill for nothing.

There's no sense paying to keep a phone you don't actually use. If you honestly can't remember the last time you made or took an important call on the landline, that's a strong sign its real job has already moved to your pocket, and keeping it is just inertia.

The checks before you act are the same ones we've covered: make sure your cell signal is solid at home, make sure nothing like a medical alert depends on the line, and keep your old number if it matters to you. Clear those, and if you're already living on your cell, dropping the landline simply ratifies what's already true.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

If you're all-cell but worry about losing the old home number, you can often move that number onto your cell plan as a second line, or onto a cheap internet phone. The number need not die just because the landline does.

## 14. The Myth That It's All or Nothing

*There's a comfortable middle.*

A lot of people frame this as a stark choice: keep the expensive old landline, or have no home phone at all. That's a false choice, and I want to knock it down, because the middle ground is where a lot of folks land happily once they know it exists.

The middle is this: you can have a real home phone — a handset on the counter, your old number, the works — for very little money, without the traditional landline bill. Two paths get you there, and the next two chapters walk through each. For many people torn between keeping and dropping, the middle path is the actual answer.

So as you weigh the two sides, hold a third option in mind: not “keep the old phone” or “go without,” but “keep a home phone, cheaply, a different way.” That reframing dissolves a lot of the agonizing.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

The middle path lets you answer “yes” to keeping a home phone and “yes” to cutting the cost at the same time. You don't have to sacrifice one for the other.

## 15. Middle Path — A Buy-Once Internet Phone

*A small box, and nearly free after that.*

The first middle path, if you have home internet, is a standalone internet phone — a small adapter you buy once, plug into your internet router, and plug your regular phone into. After the one-time purchase, basic calling is often free or nearly so; you just pay a few dollars a month in taxes and fees.

The best-known of these, Ooma, works exactly that way — buy the little box, and basic U.S. calling costs essentially nothing afterward. Others, like Vonage, sell a monthly plan. Both let you keep your old number, and both use the familiar handset you already own, so the phone on your counter doesn't change.

This path suits someone who wants to keep a real home phone and their old number but is mostly bothered by the cost. You trade a monthly landline bill for a one-time purchase and pocket change after. The catch is it needs your internet and power, so it goes quiet in an outage without a battery — worth knowing, not a dealbreaker for most.

### GOOD TO KNOW

I have a separate guide comparing the standalone internet phones in detail. If the cost is your main gripe and you have internet, this middle path is often the sweet spot.

## 16. Middle Path — A Cellular Home Base

*A house phone with no internet needed.*

The second middle path, especially if you don't have home internet or yours is poor, is a cellular home base. It's a small box that runs on a cell signal — the same network a cell phone uses — and your normal cordless phones plug right into it. No internet account, no technician, just a house phone that works over the airwaves.

This is the closest thing to the old landline feel for someone who wants simplicity. It usually has a built-in battery, so it keeps working through a short power cut, which is a nice safety touch. Verizon, T-Mobile, and independent companies all offer these, typically for a flat monthly amount.

The one requirement is a decent cell signal where the box will sit — which loops back to the signal test I keep mentioning. If your cell coverage at home is good, this gives you a dependable house phone without an internet bill. If your coverage is poor, this path isn't for

you, and that itself tells you something.

#### GOOD TO KNOW

A cellular home base is a tidy answer for someone who wants a house phone, has no interest in internet, but still wants to shed the old copper bill. I cover these in their own guide too.

## 17. What Dropping It Really Involves

*The practical steps, demystified.*

If you're leaning toward dropping the home phone entirely, it helps to know what that actually involves, because it's less dramatic than people imagine. You're mainly doing two things: deciding what happens to your old number, and making sure nothing important was quietly relying on the line.

- 1 Decide whether to keep your old number — if yes, arrange to move it BEFORE you cancel, or you can lose it for good.
- 2 Check that no medical alert, alarm, or fax quietly depends on the line.
- 3 Make sure your cell signal is solid throughout the house.
- 4 Tell the people who call your home number that it's going away, or that it's moving to your cell.
- 5 Only then call the phone company to cancel the old service.

The one that trips people is the number: you must move it to its new home — a cell plan or a cheap internet phone — while the old line is still active. Cancel first and the number can be lost forever. Get the order right and dropping the landline is painless.

#### WATCH OUT

Never cancel your old phone service as the first step if you want to keep the number. The number has to stay active until it's moved. Cancel too early and it's gone — this is the single most common and most painful mistake.

## 18. Keeping Your Number Either Way

*The number can usually come with you.*

Because the fear of losing a long-held number drives so much of this decision, let me give it a chapter of reassurance. In almost every case, you can keep your home number no matter what you choose — keep the phone, switch to a middle path, or even move the number onto your cell phone as a second line.

Moving a number is called “porting,” and the new provider does the work; you give them a recent bill so the details match. It usually takes a week or two for a landline number, and your phone keeps working the whole time — the switch happens on a scheduled day at the very end.

So separate the two questions in your mind. “Do I keep this number?” and “Do I keep this kind of phone service?” are different, and the answer to the first is almost always “yes, if you want to.” That frees you to decide the second purely on cost, convenience, and comfort.

### GOOD TO KNOW

I have a dedicated guide on keeping your number when you switch. If the number is the thing holding you back from a decision, read that — it may take the worry off the table entirely.

## 19. If You Live Alone

*Safety tips the scale toward keeping something.*

If you live by yourself, I'd gently tip the scale toward keeping some kind of dependable home phone — not necessarily the old expensive landline, but a reliable way to reach help that doesn't depend on finding a cell phone that might be charging in another room. When you live alone, the phone is a lifeline, and lifelines deserve belt and suspenders.

That could be a middle-path home phone with a battery backup, a cellular base that rides through outages, and a charged cell phone kept close by. The point isn't to keep paying a big landline bill — it's to make sure that in a bad moment, help is always within reach from where you are.

If a medical alert is part of your life, make sure it's a reliable one that doesn't quietly depend on a line you might drop. Living alone doesn't mean keeping everything — it means being

thoughtful about the safety pieces so you never have to wonder whether you can call for help.

**TIP**

A good setup for someone living alone: a simple home phone with battery backup OR a cellular base, plus a charged cell phone, plus a cellular medical alert if you want one. That's belt and suspenders without a big bill.

## 20. If You're Helping a Parent Decide

*Listen first, modernize second.*

A lot of the time this question comes up, it's an adult child weighing it on a parent's behalf — looking at the bill, seeing a phone that mostly rings with junk, and thinking “why are they still paying for this?” That instinct is kind, but I'd urge a little caution before you modernize a parent out of a phone they rely on.

Ask your parent how they actually feel about it. For them, that home phone may be a source of security, a thing they know how to use without stress, a steady point in a world that keeps changing on them. Saving a few dollars isn't worth leaving them anxious or feeling cut off, or worse, less safe.

If the cost truly is a burden, the middle paths let you ease it without taking the phone away — a cheap home phone with the same familiar handset. That's often the loving answer: keep what comforts them, trim what doesn't serve them, and make sure the safety pieces are solid.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

The best decisions here are made with the person, not for them. Bring them the honest options, including the cheap middle paths, and let their comfort carry real weight in the choice.

## 21. The Cell-Signal Test

*Five minutes that can settle it.*

Because so much of this decision hinges on how good your cell coverage really is at home, here's a simple test worth doing before you decide anything. It takes five minutes and gives you a real answer instead of a guess.

- 1 Walk through every room with your cell phone, including the basement and any back bedroom, noting the signal bars.
- 2 Make a short call from the spots where you'd most likely be — your chair, the kitchen, the bedroom — and see if it's clear.
- 3 Try it again with the doors and windows closed, the way the house actually sits in bad weather.
- 4 Note any dead zones where calls drop or you can't be heard.

If the signal is solid everywhere you'd use the phone, that removes one of the biggest reasons to keep a landline. If there are real dead zones — especially where you spend time or might need help — that weighs heavily toward keeping some home phone, or fixing the signal first.

### TIP

Do the test on a normal day and again in rough weather if you can. Signal can be fine on a clear day and poor in a storm — and a storm is exactly when you'd need the phone most.

## 22. The Power-Outage Question

*What works when the lights go out.*

Any honest version of this decision has to reckon with outages, because that's when a phone matters most. The old copper landline worked in a power cut all on its own — its quiet superpower. If you drop it, you need to know what you'll rely on when the power's out.

A cell phone works in an outage as long as it's charged and has signal — which is why good coverage matters so much. A cellular home base has its own battery and rides through short outages. A cheap internet phone needs a small battery added to keep going. Each path has an outage answer; you just need to pick one deliberately.

So don't let the fear of “what if the power goes out” freeze you — just make it part of the plan. Whatever you choose, keep a charged cell phone as the final backup for reaching 911. With that in place, no choice leaves you stranded in a storm.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

A small battery backup for your internet gear, or a cellular base with its own battery, closes the outage gap for the newer phones. The old copper advantage is real but replaceable — it's not a reason you're stuck with the expensive line.

## 23. The Cost Comparison, Honestly

*Compare the real numbers, not the headlines.*

If cost is driving your decision, do the comparison honestly rather than on a vague sense that the landline is “a lot.” Pull the real figures and lay them side by side. You might be surprised either way — sometimes the landline's cheaper than feared, sometimes far dearer.

- Find your home-phone bill's true all-in total, taxes and fees included.
- Compare it against a middle-path option: a buy-once internet phone (mostly just taxes after) or a flat-fee cellular base.
- Compare it against simply going cell-only, if your signal allows.
- Factor in one-time costs, like buying an adapter, versus ongoing monthly savings over a year.

When you see the actual numbers, the decision often clarifies. Frequently the answer isn't “keep the pricey landline” or “go without” — it's “switch to the cheap middle path and keep most of the savings while keeping a real home phone.” Let the real figures lead.

**TIP**

Prices change, so I won't print numbers that'll go stale. If you'd like, I can help you pull the real figures for your situation and compare them plainly on a visit — no sales pitch, since I'm not selling you phone service.

## 24. What the Grandkids Think vs. What Works

*Don't let anyone shame you into a choice.*

Sometimes the pressure to drop a home phone comes less from your own needs and more from a well-meaning relative who thinks landlines are hopelessly old-fashioned. I want to give you permission to ignore that if it doesn't fit your life. “Nobody has a landline anymore” is a fashion statement, not a reason.

The right choice for you is about your signal, your safety, your comfort, and your budget — not about what's trendy. A home phone that serves you well is a good choice no matter how many people roll their eyes at it. And dropping one you don't need is equally fine. Fashion has no vote.

By the same token, don't keep a phone you truly don't need out of stubbornness, either. The goal is clear-eyed fit in both directions — neither shamed into dropping it nor digging in out of pride. Decide on what actually works for your home, and let that be enough.

#### GOOD TO KNOW

A home phone is quietly handy even in a cell-first house — a backup if a cell dies, a steady number for deliveries and appointments, a phone a guest or grandchild can grab. “Old-fashioned” and “useful” aren't opposites.

## 25. A Trial Run Before You Decide

*Test the loss before you make it permanent.*

If you're genuinely torn, here's a low-risk way to decide: run a trial. Before you cancel anything, try living as though the home phone were gone for a couple of weeks. Make and take your calls on your cell. See how it actually feels, rather than guessing.

Pay attention during the trial: Did you miss the home phone? Were there moments the cell signal let you down? Did anyone struggle to reach you? Did you feel less secure, or did you barely notice? Real experience beats speculation every time, and it costs you nothing to try.

If the two weeks pass and you didn't miss it, that's your answer — dropping it is safe. If you found yourself reaching for the home phone or hitting dead zones, that's valuable too; it tells you to keep some home phone, maybe via a cheaper middle path. Either way, you'll decide from knowledge, not fear.

#### WATCH OUT

During the trial, don't cancel the line — just stop using it. That way, if you decide to keep a home phone after all, your number and service are right where you left them, no harm done.

## 26. Questions to Weigh

*The short checklist that points the way.*

Let's boil the whole decision down to a handful of plain questions. Answer these honestly and the right path usually reveals itself. There's no scoring — just notice where your answers lean.

- Is your cell signal solid everywhere in the house? Weak signal leans toward keeping a home phone.
- Does a medical alert or alarm depend on the line? If so, don't drop it without replacing the device.
- Does keeping your old number matter? You can keep it either way.
- Is the cost a real burden? A cheap middle path may solve it without dropping the phone.
- Do you actually use and value the home phone, or does it just sit there?

If your answers lean toward strong signal, nothing depending on the line, cost as the main gripe, and little real use — dropping or going middle-path fits. If they lean toward weak signal, a medical alert, and genuine comfort — keeping some home phone fits. Most people find themselves leaning clearly once they answer honestly.

### GOOD TO KNOW

If your answers are genuinely split, that's exactly the situation the middle paths were made for — a cheap home phone that keeps the benefits while shedding the cost. Split answers often mean the middle is your home.

## 27. Common Mistakes I See

*The slip-ups that cause regret.*

After helping a lot of folks through this decision, the same few regrets come up. None of them are your fault — the choice isn't always laid out clearly — but knowing them ahead saves grief.

- Cancelling the old line before moving the number — losing a number held for decades.
- Dropping a line that a medical alert or alarm quietly depended on.
- Going cell-only without checking that the signal is solid indoors.
- Assuming it's keep-the-pricey-landline or nothing, and missing the cheap middle path.
- Deciding for a parent on cost alone, without asking how they feel.

Every one of these is avoidable. The biggest is the number — move it before you cancel. The next is the medical alert — never drop a line it needs without a plan. Clear those two

and the rest is just picking the option that fits, with no real way to go wrong.

**WATCH OUT**

The costliest mistake is cancelling to “save money fast” and losing a number everyone's had for forty years. There's no undo on that. Always move the number first if you want to keep it.

## 28. If You Decide to Keep It

*Make the kept phone a good one.*

Say you weigh it all and decide to keep a home phone — good. Now make it a phone that serves you well rather than one you just tolerate. A few small moves turn a kept landline from a grudging expense into something genuinely worth having.

- Consider a cheaper middle path — a buy-once internet phone or a cellular base — to keep the phone but cut the cost.
- Quiet the junk calls with the free tools: Do Not Call, your carrier's spam filter, block buttons, voicemail screening.
- Add a battery backup so it works in an outage, or choose a base that has one built in.
- Make sure your 911 address is right, and your medical alert and alarm actually reach help.

Done this way, a kept home phone gives you the security and comfort you wanted it for, without the big bill or the endless ringing. That's the version worth keeping — not the expensive, junk-call-ridden one you were tired of.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Keeping the phone and improving it — cheaper service, quieter line, solid backup — is often the happiest outcome of this whole decision. You get everything you liked about the home phone and shed what you didn't.

## 29. If You Decide to Drop It

*Do it cleanly, in the right order.*

And if you weigh it all and decide to drop the home phone — that's equally fine, and plenty of people are happy they did. Just do it cleanly, in the right order, so you don't lose anything that mattered on the way out.

- 1 If you want the number, arrange to move it to your cell or a cheap internet phone first — before cancelling.
- 2 Confirm nothing — medical alert, alarm, fax — depends on the line.
- 3 Double-check your cell signal is solid throughout the house.
- 4 Tell the people who use your home number where to reach you now.
- 5 Only then cancel the old service, and confirm the final bill is correct.

Follow that order and dropping the landline is smooth and regret-free. The whole thing is really just those few checks plus a phone call to cancel. Done thoughtfully, you keep what mattered and shed a bill you no longer needed.

**WATCH OUT**

Keep a charged cell phone and good signal as your safety net once the landline's gone. That one habit means dropping the home phone never costs you the ability to call for help.

## 30. Questions I Get All the Time

*Quick, plain answers.*

Is it safe to go cell-only? Yes, if your signal is solid indoors and you keep a charged cell handy. Weak signal is the main reason to keep a home phone.

Will I lose my old number if I drop the landline? Not if you move it first. Never cancel before the number is moved.

Is there a cheap way to keep a home phone? Yes — a buy-once internet phone or a flat-fee cellular base, both far cheaper than a traditional landline.

What about my medical alert? Call that company before you drop anything. If the alert needs the line, keep the line or switch to a cellular alert first.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

If your question isn't here, it's probably one I've talked through a hundred times — just call and ask. There's no charge to talk it over on the phone.

## 31. A Few Plain Words to Know

*The jargon, translated.*

A few terms come up a lot in this decision. Here's the short translation so nothing throws you.

- Landline — a traditional home phone, classically over copper wire.
- Cell-only — having no home phone, just mobile phones.
- VoIP / internet phone — a home phone that travels over your internet.
- Cellular home base — a home phone box that runs on a cell signal.
- Porting — moving your phone number to a new service or your cell.
- Middle path — a cheap home phone that isn't the old copper landline.

### TIP

Keep this little list with your guide. When a provider or a relative uses one of these words, you'll know exactly what they mean.

## 32. When to Just Call Me

*You don't have to decide alone.*

I wrote this guide so you'd see both sides clearly and feel calm about whatever you choose. But sometimes it helps to talk it through with someone who has no stake in the answer — and that's me. I don't sell phone service, so I've got no reason to push you toward keeping or dropping. I just want you to land where you'll be happy.

I come to you, here in Portage County and the nearby towns. I can test your cell signal, pull your real costs, check whether anything depends on the line, and lay the honest options in front of you. The first in-home visit is a flat ninety-nine dollars, and if a question can be handled without a trip, I offer remote help too. If you're not completely happy, I'll make it right or refund it.

### TIP

When you call, my assistant Sophie may answer and take down the details so I can call you back — she's there so you always reach a friendly voice, not a dead end.

## 33. What I'd Tell My Own Neighbor

*The short, honest version.*

After 30+ years of professional experience helping folks with exactly this kind of decision, here's the plain advice I'd give over the fence. There's no right answer — only the one that fits your home. Keep a home phone if your cell signal is weak, if a medical alert depends on it, or if it's a real comfort. Drop it if the cost grates, the robocalls win, and you're already living on your cell.

And don't forget the middle: a cheap buy-once internet phone or a cellular base lets you keep a real house phone and your old number for little money. Whatever you pick, move the number before you cancel, never drop a line your safety depends on, and keep a charged cell phone for emergencies. Do that, and you truly can't go wrong.

### GOOD TO KNOW

If any of this feels like a lot, that's normal. You can talk the whole thing through with me — the signal, the costs, the options — and I'll help you land on the choice that fits, with no pressure and no sales pitch.

### CHEAT SHEET

## Everyday Cheat Sheet

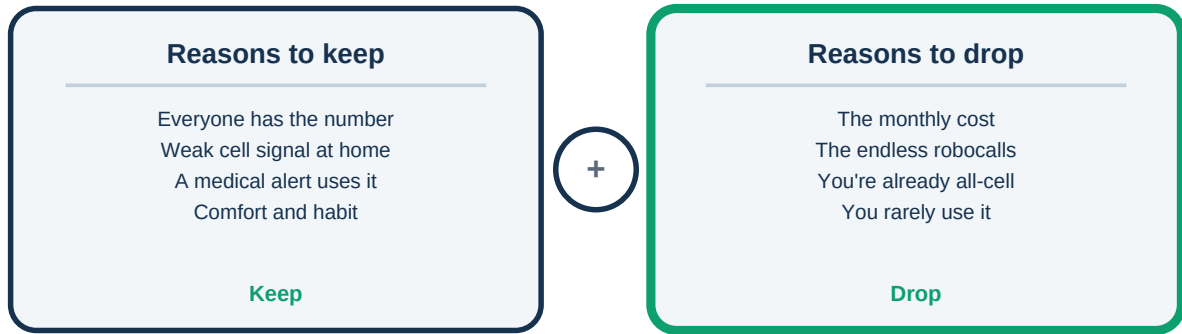
Keep this by the phone. I want to... Do this. Decide honestly — weigh the reasons that actually apply to YOU: weak cell signal, a medical alert on the line, everyone has the number, comfort (reasons to keep); cost, robocalls, already all-cell (reasons to drop). Test my signal — walk every room with your cell and note dead zones before deciding. Keep my number — move it to a cell or cheap internet phone BEFORE cancelling; never cancel first. Protect safety — call your medical alert and alarm companies before dropping any line. Save money but keep a phone — look at a buy-once internet phone or a flat-fee cellular base. Keep a backup — a charged cell phone reaches 911 no matter what. Get help deciding — call Bill: (330) 200-8042.

AT A GLANCE

## A Picture to Follow Along

### Keep It or Drop It?

The honest case on both sides

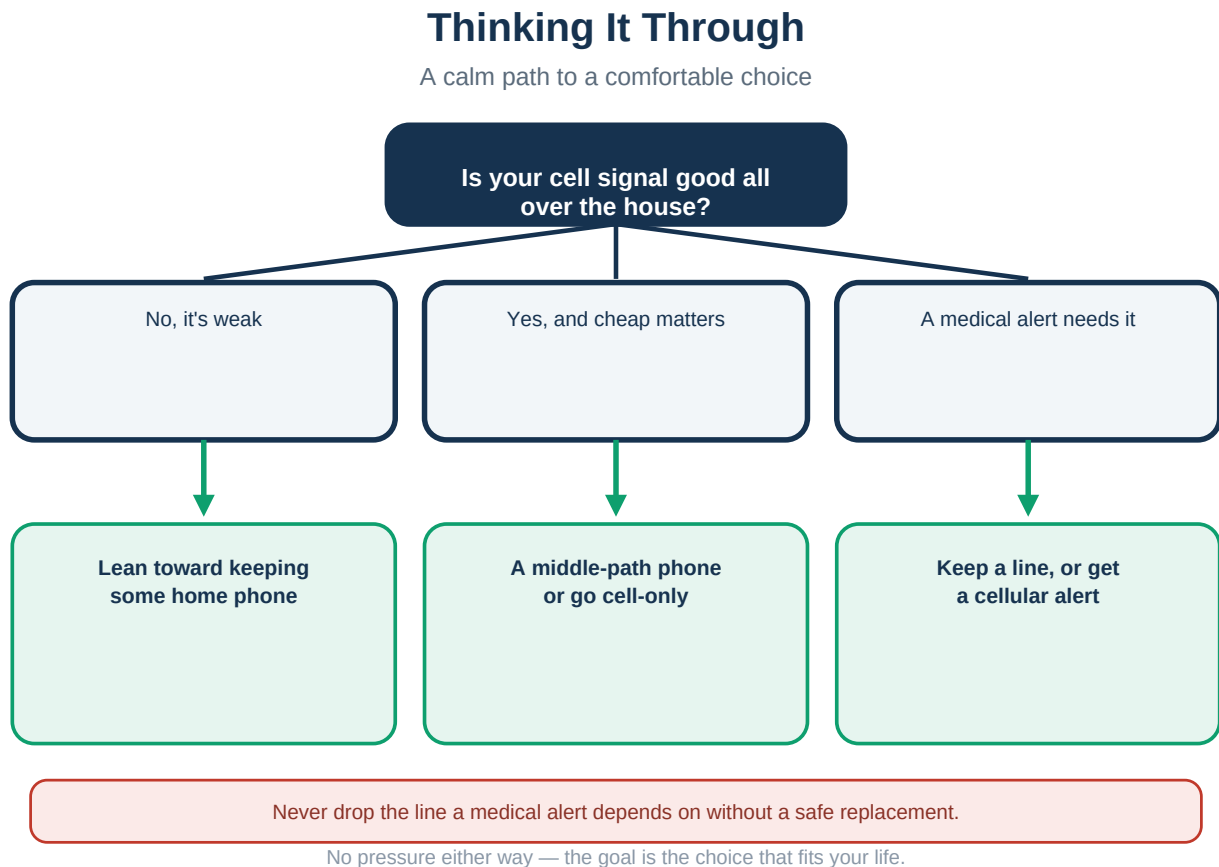


**Most homes have reasons on both sides — weigh which ones matter to YOU.**

There's no single right answer; a middle path may fit best of all.

## AT A GLANCE

## A Second Look



## BEFORE YOU GO

## A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



## HOW I CAN HELP

### Your Visit — and My Promise

**In-home visit — \$99 flat** for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

**Remote Support — \$49** for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

#### GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: [billshometech.com/book](https://billshometech.com/book) · [bill@billshometech.com](mailto:bill@billshometech.com)

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