

Keep Your Old Number

THE 60-SECOND VERSION

- 1 You can almost always keep your number — it rarely has to change.
- 2 The NEW provider starts and runs the port; you don't call the old one.
- 3 Golden rule: never cancel your old service first, or you can lose the number.
- 4 Give a recent bill so the name, address, and account number match exactly.
- 5 Your phone keeps working until the final scheduled switch-over day.

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Keeping Your Old Phone Number When You Switch — Porting Without Losing It

How to switch phone service and keep the number you've always had.

————— **An Extended Guide · No. 1725** —————

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SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

In a hurry? Here's the whole thing on one page. When you switch your home phone to a new company — whether that's cable voice, an internet phone like Ooma or Vonage, or a cellular home base — you can take your same phone number with you. Moving a number is called “porting,” and the new company handles it. You give them a recent bill so your account details line up, and they do the rest.

- You can almost always keep your number — it rarely has to change.
- The NEW provider starts and runs the port; you don't call the old one.
- Golden rule: never cancel your old service first, or you can lose the number.
- Give a recent bill so the name, address, and account number match exactly.
- Your phone keeps working until the final scheduled switch-over day.

WATCH OUT

The single biggest mistake is cancelling the old line to “save money” before the number moves. A number has to stay active to be ported. Cancel first and it can be gone for good. Let the new company finish, then close the old line.

1. First, the Good News

That number you've had forever? You keep it.

Let me lead with the part that puts most people at ease, because it's the first worry I hear. You are not going to lose your phone number just because you switch to a newer kind of home phone. The number that's printed on every form, written in every friend's address book, and sitting in your doctor's file can come right along with you.

That number feels permanent, and in a practical sense it is. The rules that let you move it from one company to another have been in place for years, and the companies do thousands of these moves every day. It's routine work for them, even when it feels like a big deal to you.

So the goal of this guide isn't to talk you out of worrying — it's to show you exactly how the move works, so you can do it with confidence and sidestep the one or two mistakes that cause trouble. Read it once and you'll know more than most people ever learn about this.

WATCH OUT

If you only remember one thing from this whole guide, make it this: don't cancel your old phone service first. Everything else is detail. That one rule keeps your number safe.

2. What “Porting” Actually Means

A plain word for a simple idea.

“Porting” is just the phone industry's word for carrying your number from your old company to your new one. Think of it like forwarding your mail when you move — the address (your number) stays the same, but it's now handled by a different office.

Behind the scenes, phone numbers live in a shared national database that all the companies use. When you port, your new company sends a request to take over your number, the old company confirms the details match, and the database is updated to point your number at the new service. You don't see any of that — you just end up with the same number on a new line.

The important thing to understand is who's driving. You do not call your old company and ask them to “send” your number. You sign up with the new company and tell them you want to keep your number, and they start the port for you. That flips the way most people expect it to work.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may also hear this called “number transfer” or “bring your own number.” It's all the same thing. If a company advertises that you can “keep your number,” that's porting.

3. The One Golden Rule

Never cancel your old service first.

This is the rule that matters more than every other sentence in this guide, so let me say it plainly: do not cancel your old phone service before your number has finished moving. Not to save a month's bill, not because a salesperson suggested it, not for any reason.

Here's why it's so important. A number can only be ported while it's still active on the old line. The moment you cancel, the old company releases that number back into the pool, and after a short while it can be assigned to a stranger or retired entirely. Once that happens, there is often no getting it back. People have lost numbers they'd had for forty

years this exact way.

The safe order is the opposite of what feels natural: sign up new, port the number, confirm it worked, test your phone — and only then let the old line close. In fact, when the port completes, the old line usually cancels itself automatically, so you often don't have to lift a finger.

WATCH OUT

If anyone — even someone at the new company — tells you to cancel your old service “to get started,” stop and double-check. The new provider should never need your old line dead to begin a port. They need it alive.

4. Who Actually Does the Work

The new provider, not you and not the old one.

A lot of the stress around porting comes from thinking you'll have to negotiate with the company you're leaving. You won't. The company you're joining does the heavy lifting. They submit the request, they chase down any snags, and they schedule the final switch.

Your job is small but real: choose the new service, tell them clearly that you want to keep your existing number, and give them accurate account information so their request matches what the old company has on file. After that, you mostly wait and watch for a confirmation.

If the old company calls to “win you back” or to ask why you're leaving, you can be polite and brief. You don't owe them a long conversation, and you should never agree to cancel anything with them while a port is in progress. Let the new company finish the job.

TIP

When you sign up, say it in plain words: “I want to port my current home number to this service, and I understand I should keep my old line active until it's done.” Saying it out loud gets everyone on the same page.

5. What You'll Need to Hand Over

A recent bill is the magic ingredient.

The single most useful thing you can have ready is a recent bill from your current phone company — the more recent the better. Nearly every detail the new company needs to start a clean port is printed right on it. Keep it next to you when you sign up.

- The phone number you want to keep, exactly as it appears.
- The account number from the old company (often near the top of the bill).
- The name the account is under, spelled exactly as they have it.
- The service address tied to the line, matching the old company's records.
- Any account PIN or passcode the old company uses to protect the account.

If you can't find a bill, call the old company's regular customer line and ask for your account number and the exact name and address on the account. You're not cancelling — you're just gathering the details so the move goes smoothly.

GOOD TO KNOW

The reason a recent bill matters so much is that it shows the account information exactly as the old company records it. The port is checked against those records, so matching them is what makes it sail through.

6. Why the Details Must Match Exactly

A tiny mismatch is the usual hold-up.

When the new company submits your port, a computer at the old company compares the request against your account on file. If the name, address, and account number all match, it usually sails through. If even one detail is off, the request gets kicked back, and you've lost days.

The mismatches are almost always small and innocent. The account is under “Robert” but you gave “Bob.” The address says “Street” but you wrote “St.” You moved a few years ago and the billing address never got updated. A middle initial is there on one and not the other. The computer doesn't know these are the same — it just sees a difference and stops.

That's exactly why a recent bill is gold. Copy the information from it word for word, character for character, and you remove the most common reason ports get delayed. If you're not sure which version is “right,” the right one is whatever the old company printed.

WATCH OUT

Don't "fix" or "clean up" your name or address when you give it to the new company. Match the old bill even if it looks slightly wrong to you. You can tidy it later, after the number has moved.

7. How Long a Port Really Takes

The targets, and the honest reality.

People expect porting to be instant, like flipping a switch. Sometimes it's quick, but often it isn't, and knowing that up front saves a lot of anxious phone calls. The official targets and the real-world experience are two different things.

The Federal Communications Commission sets targets: a simple port is meant to finish in about one business day, and a port between different kinds of service — say, a copper landline moving to an internet-based phone — is targeted at around four business days. Those are goals, not guarantees.

In the real world, moving a traditional landline number often takes closer to a week or two of business days, especially if any detail needs correcting. That's normal and not a sign anything's wrong. The reassuring part is that your phone keeps working the entire time, so a longer wait costs you nothing but patience.

GOOD TO KNOW

Ports don't count weekends and holidays, so "a few business days" can land a week or more out on the calendar. Start your switch when you're not in a rush, and the timing won't bother you.

8. Your Phone Keeps Working the Whole Time

There's no stretch where you're cut off.

This is the detail that calms almost everyone down. While the port is in progress — however many days it takes — your old line keeps ringing and you can keep making calls, exactly as always. You are not without a phone for a single minute of the wait.

The actual switch happens on one scheduled day at the very end, usually taking only a short window. On that day, your number quietly stops working on the old line and starts working on the new one. Most people barely notice the moment it flips.

So there's no need to time anything perfectly or stay home all day waiting. Set up the new equipment ahead of time, keep both plugged in, and when the number moves, your calls simply start coming through the new service. The old line goes quiet on its own.

TIP

On cut-over day, give your own number a quick test call from a cell phone or a neighbor's phone. If it rings on the new service, the move is done. If it still rings on the old line, give it a few more hours — sometimes it flips later in the day.

9. What Can Port and What Can't

Most numbers move; a few can't.

The vast majority of home phone numbers can be ported without any trouble. But it's honest to tell you there are a few situations where a number either can't move or needs extra steps, so you're not surprised.

- Numbers within the same local area almost always port fine between companies.
- Moving a number to a brand-new town or area code can sometimes be a problem — numbers are tied to geography, so ask before you assume.
- A number already disconnected or cancelled usually can't be recovered.
- Some rural or specialty lines have quirks — the new provider can check whether your specific number is eligible before you commit.
- Toll-free numbers follow their own separate process.

The simplest way to be certain is to ask the new provider to check your number's eligibility before you finalize anything. They can usually tell you in a moment whether your number will port. It almost always will.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you're moving house to a new area and keeping the number matters to you, mention it early. Sometimes you can keep an old-area number on an internet-based service even after you move, because those numbers aren't tied to the wire the way copper was.

10. They Must Release Your Number

Even if you owe a balance.

Here's a worry I hear a lot: "I think I still owe them money — can they refuse to let my number go?" The answer is no. The old company is required to release your number for porting even if you have an unpaid balance on the account.

That doesn't erase the balance — you still owe whatever you owe, and they can bill you for it like any other debt. But they can't hold your number hostage over it. Your number and your bill are two separate matters, and the rules keep them separate.

So don't let a lingering balance, or the fear of one, stop you from switching or make you feel trapped. Sort out the bill as its own thing. The port moves ahead regardless.

GOOD TO KNOW

If an old company ever tells you they won't release your number until you pay up, that's not how the rules work. Push back politely, and let the new provider know — they deal with this and can help.

11. Early-Termination Fees Don't Block You

A contract fee can't trap your number.

Same idea, slightly different worry. If you're still inside a contract and leaving early might trigger a cancellation fee, that fee does not stop you from porting your number. The old company must still release it.

You may well owe the early-termination fee — read your agreement so you know what to expect — but that's a billing matter between you and them. It's completely separate from your right to take your number to a new company.

It's worth doing the quick math before you switch so there are no surprises on a final bill. Sometimes it's cheaper to wait a month or two until a contract ends; sometimes the savings on the new service make an early exit worth it. Either way, the number is yours to take.

TIP

Call the old company and simply ask, "If I leave now, is there an early-termination fee, and how much?" Get the number before you decide. Knowing it beats being surprised by it.

12. The Account Number and PIN

The two details people stumble on.

If a port stalls, nine times out of ten it's one of two things: the account number or an account PIN. These are the details that don't appear on the phone itself, so people guess at them, and a guess that's off by a digit stops the whole process.

The account number is the one the old company uses to identify your account — it's usually printed near the top of your bill and it's not the same as your phone number. The PIN or passcode is a security code some companies attach to the account to stop strangers from moving your number without permission. Not every company uses one, but when they do, the port can't finish without it.

If you don't know your PIN, you can call the old company and ask them to tell you or reset it. Again — you're not cancelling, just retrieving a code so your own move can go through. Have it ready before you start and you'll skip the most common delay there is.

WATCH OUT

Never give your account number or PIN to someone who calls you out of the blue claiming to be from a phone company. Those details are exactly what a thief needs to steal your number. Only share them when you started the call to a company you chose.

13. Why Ports Get Rejected

The usual snags, and they're all fixable.

A rejected port sounds alarming, but it almost never means you've lost anything — it just means a detail didn't match and the request bounced back to be fixed. Here are the reasons it happens, so you can head them off.

- The name on the request doesn't match the old company's records.
- The service address is slightly different from what they have on file.
- A wrong or outdated account number.
- A missing or incorrect account PIN or passcode.
- The old line was already cancelled or suspended.
- The number isn't eligible to move to that area.

Notice that almost all of these come down to information not matching. That's why a recent bill and accurate details prevent most rejections before they happen. When one does

occur, the new provider tells you what was off, you correct it, and they resubmit.

GOOD TO KNOW

A rejection restarts the clock a little, but your old line stays active and working the whole time. You're never left without a phone just because a port got kicked back for a fix.

14. If Your Port Is Rejected

A calm, simple fix.

If you get word that a port was rejected, don't panic and don't cancel anything. It's a speed bump, not a dead end. Here's how to handle it in order.

- 1 Ask the new provider exactly which detail didn't match — they'll know.
- 2 Pull out your most recent old bill and compare it against what was submitted.
- 3 Correct the detail — usually a name, address, account number, or PIN.
- 4 If a detail on your old account is simply wrong, call the old company and have them fix their records, then resubmit.
- 5 Have the new provider submit the port again with the corrected information.

Most rejected ports go through cleanly on the second try once the mismatched detail is fixed. If it keeps bouncing, that's a good moment to get help rather than keep guessing — a wrong detail you can't spot is exactly the kind of thing a second set of eyes sorts out fast.

TIP

Keep a little note of which details you gave the new provider. If a port is rejected, you can compare your note to the bill line by line and usually find the mismatch yourself in a minute.

15. Landline, Cell, and Internet Ports

They're similar, with small differences.

You can port a number between almost any combination of services — an old copper landline to an internet phone, a landline to a cell plan, a cell number to a home base, and so on. The basic idea is identical. The small differences are mostly about timing and paperwork.

Moving a number between two similar services tends to be quickest. Moving between very different kinds — like a copper landline to an internet-based or wireless phone — is what the rules call an “intermodal” port, and it's the one targeted at around four business days

but often takes a little longer in practice.

The good news for you is that the steps you take are the same no matter what you're moving to and from: sign up new, give a recent bill, keep the old line active, wait for the scheduled cut-over. You don't have to learn a different process for each kind of service.

GOOD TO KNOW

One neat thing about moving a home number onto an internet-based or cellular service is that the number is no longer tied to a specific wire. That's what makes it possible to keep your number even if you later move across town — or across the country.

16. Porting to a Cellular Home Base

Keeping your number on a wireless box.

A cellular home base — a little box that runs on a cell signal and lets your regular cordless phones plug in — is a popular like-for-like replacement for a copper landline, especially where internet is spotty. And yes, you can bring your old home number to it.

When you set one up, tell the company you want to port your existing home number rather than take a new one. Carriers like Verizon and T-Mobile offer these bases, and so do independent companies; all of them can port. Give them the recent bill, as always, and keep your old line alive until the move finishes.

One thing to settle up front: make sure they understand you're bringing a home landline number, not a cell number. The process is the same, but being clear about what kind of number it is avoids confusion on their end.

TIP

Before you commit to any cellular base, test the cell signal in the exact spot the box will sit — not by the window. A great port onto a box with weak signal still gives you a frustrating phone.

17. Porting to an Internet Phone

Ooma, Vonage, and the adapter box.

Standalone internet phones — the small adapters from companies like Ooma and Vonage that plug into your router — all let you keep your number. In fact, keeping your existing number is one of the first things they ask about when you sign up.

The wrinkle worth knowing is timing. With some of these services you can start making calls right away on a temporary number while your real number ports over in the background. So for a week or two you might have the new box working on a placeholder number, and then one day your real number takes over. That's normal — don't let the temporary number worry you.

As always, keep your old line active through the whole port, give them a recent bill, and don't cancel the old service until your real number is live on the new box and you've tested it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Internet phones need power and a working internet connection, so they go quiet in an outage unless you add a battery backup or pick a model with cellular backup built in. The port has nothing to do with that — but it's worth planning while you're switching.

18. Porting to the Cable-Company Phone

If you're adding voice to your internet.

If you already have cable or fiber internet and decide to add the same company's home phone service, porting your number is part of the sign-up. Your call will ride over the internet you already have, and your existing phone plugs into their modem or a small phone box.

Tell them clearly at sign-up that you want to port your current number, and — this is the part people forget — ask them not to make you cancel your old separate phone line first. Because it's the same company doing both the internet and the new phone, the steps can feel blurred, but the golden rule still holds: the old number has to stay active until it moves.

Watch the bundle, too. Adding a phone line sometimes changes the price of the whole package after any promotion ends. Ask what the regular price will be, so the number you keep doesn't come with a surprise you didn't.

GOOD TO KNOW

Ask whether a battery backup for the phone box is included or extra. On a cable or fiber phone, no battery means no phone during a power cut — an easy thing to sort out while you're switching.

19. The Scheduled Cut-Over Day

The one day the number actually moves.

After all the waiting, the actual move happens on a single scheduled day. The new provider will usually tell you the date, and sometimes a rough window within that day. Knowing it's coming takes the mystery out of it.

On that day, have your new equipment set up and plugged in ahead of time, so the number has somewhere to land. When the switch happens, your number stops working on the old line and starts ringing on the new one. You don't have to do anything in the moment — it flips on its own.

If the new service was running on a temporary number, that's when your real number quietly takes its place. And in most cases, the old line cancels itself at that point, so you're not left to call and close it separately.

WATCH OUT

Don't schedule your switch for a day you'll be away or expecting an important call, just in case you want to test things right after. Pick an ordinary day when you'll be home and can confirm everything's working.

20. Testing After the Move

A few minutes that give you peace of mind.

Once your number has moved, spend a few minutes confirming it all works before you consider the job done. This is quick, and it catches the rare problem while it's still easy to fix.

- 1 Call your own number from a cell phone — it should ring on the new service.
- 2 Make an outgoing call and check that your caller ID shows the right number.
- 3 Leave yourself a voicemail and make sure you can retrieve it.
- 4 Confirm the old line has gone quiet — your number shouldn't ring there anymore.

5 Register and test your 911 address on the new service (more on that next).

If all of that checks out, you're done — the number you've had for years is safely living on your new service, and you never lost it or went without a phone. That's exactly how a port is supposed to go.

GOOD TO KNOW

Keep an eye on your mail for a final bill from the old company for the last partial month and any fees. That's normal and expected — it doesn't mean the port failed or that your number is still with them.

21. Don't Forget 911 After You Port

A new service means a new 911 setup.

Keeping your number is one thing; making sure 911 works is another, and it's too important to skip. On a newer internet or cellular phone, 911 doesn't have a fixed wire to trace, so your provider keeps a “registered location” — the street address they send to dispatchers when you call. You need to make sure that address is correct.

When you set up the new service, enter your real home address as the registered location, and double-check it. Many providers let you dial 933 to hear your registered address read back to you as a test, without placing a real 911 call. It's worth doing once so you know help would come to the right place.

WATCH OUT

A newer home phone can't reach 911 during a power or internet outage unless it has a battery or cellular backup. Always keep a charged cell phone as your final way to call for help. Porting your number doesn't change that — plan the backup separately.

22. Medical Alert and Alarm Systems

Check these before and after a switch.

This is the one that quietly catches people, so I always raise it. Many older medical alert pendants and home security or fire alarm panels were built to dial out over a copper landline. When your service changes underneath them — even if your number stays the same — they can stop reaching the monitoring center without any warning.

So before you switch, call your medical alert company and your alarm company and tell them what you're doing. They'll tell you whether your equipment works on the new kind of line or whether you need a cellular version that doesn't depend on a phone line at all. After the switch, test the system so you know for certain it reaches help.

WATCH OUT

Never assume a medical alert or alarm “just works” after a switch because the phone still has a dial tone. Those devices send signals differently than a voice call. Test them. This is exactly the kind of check I do on a visit.

23. Business and Fax Numbers

They port too, with a little more care.

If the number you're moving is also used for a small business, or a fax machine, the port works the same way, but there's a bit more to think about. A business number on every sign, card, and listing is worth protecting carefully, so plan the move for a slow stretch and test thoroughly afterward.

For a fax line, know that faxing over an internet-based phone can be fussy — fax machines were built for copper and don't always get along with internet calls. Many people who still need to fax switch to an online fax service instead, which sends and receives over the internet without a dedicated fax line at all.

GOOD TO KNOW

Business ports can be handled with the same golden rule: keep the old line active until the number moves. If the number is important to your livelihood, it's worth having help so there's no gap and no lost calls.

24. Snowbirds and Moving Away

Taking your number with you.

One of the quiet joys of a modern internet or cellular phone is that your number isn't chained to your house anymore. If you spend winters somewhere warm, or you're moving to a new town, you can often keep your longtime number even though the old copper line couldn't have followed you.

The move itself is just a port, same as any other. The thing that needs real attention when you relocate is your 911 registered address. If you carry a VoIP adapter or cellular base to a new location, update the registered address to where you actually are, so a 911 call sends help to the right place. Change it back when you return home.

WATCH OUT

Never leave a traveling phone box registered to the wrong address. In an emergency, help would be sent to your old home instead of where you're standing. Update it every single time you move the box.

25. What a Timeline Looks Like

So you know what to expect, day by day.

It helps to picture how a typical port unfolds. Yours may be faster or slower, but this is the shape of it, so nothing feels like it's stalling when it's really just following the normal rhythm.

- 1 Day one: you sign up with the new provider and request the port, bill in hand.
- 2 The next day or two: they submit the request and the old company checks the details against their records.
- 3 If something doesn't match, it bounces back, you correct it, and they resubmit.
- 4 Over the following several business days to about two weeks: the port is scheduled and worked.
- 5 Cut-over day: your number flips to the new service, and the old line goes quiet.

Through all of it, your old line keeps working. The only moment anything changes for you is the cut-over, and that's usually over in a short window. Patience really is the main ingredient.

TIP

Mark the day you started on a calendar. If two full weeks of business days go by with no cut-over date in sight, that's a fair point to call the new provider and ask where things stand.

26. Mistakes I See With Porting

The slip-ups that cause real headaches.

After helping a lot of folks keep their numbers, the same handful of mistakes come up over and over. None of them are your fault — the process isn't explained well — but knowing them ahead of time saves grief.

- Cancelling the old line first to save a month's bill — the number can be lost for good. Never cancel first.
- Guessing at the account number or PIN instead of reading them off a bill.
- “Correcting” a name or address that didn't match the old company's records exactly.
- Panicking at a rejection and cancelling, when a rejection is just a fixable mismatch.
- Forgetting to re-check 911 and test the medical alert after the switch.

Every one of these is avoidable with the two habits this guide keeps repeating: keep the old line active, and match the old bill exactly. Do those and your port will almost certainly be uneventful — which is exactly what you want it to be.

WATCH OUT

If anyone pressures you to decide or cancel right this minute, that pressure is itself the warning sign. A real switch can always wait a day while you gather your bill and think.

27. Scams That Target Your Number

Yes — a number can be stolen by porting.

There's a flip side to how easy porting is: a thief who gets enough of your account information can try to port your number to themselves. It's called port-out fraud, and it matters because your phone number is often the key to text codes that protect your bank and email.

The way they do it is by gathering your name, address, account number, and PIN — the same details a legitimate port needs — and then requesting your number on a new account they control. If they succeed, your phone goes dead and theirs starts receiving your calls and codes.

This is rarer for home landlines than for cell numbers, but it's the reason you should guard your account details closely and never share them with someone who contacts you out of the blue. The information that makes porting convenient is the same information a thief wants.

WATCH OUT

No real phone company calls you unprompted to ask for your account number, PIN, or a text code. If someone does, hang up. Only share those details when you started the call to a company you chose.

28. Protecting Your Number

A few simple guards against theft.

The good news is that protecting your number from being stolen takes just a few small habits. None of them cost anything, and they all come down to guarding the account details and adding a lock where you can.

- Ask your phone company to put a port-out PIN or “port freeze” on your account if they offer one.
- Keep your account number and PIN private — treat them like a bank password.
- Never read a security code from a text to anyone who calls you.
- If your phone suddenly loses service for no reason, call your provider right away from another phone — it can be a sign someone's porting it.
- Shred old bills before you throw them out; they hold your account details.

These guards don't make your own switching any harder — when you start a legitimate port, you'll have your PIN and can lift any freeze. They simply keep a stranger from doing it behind your back.

TIP

A sudden, unexplained loss of phone service is worth treating as urgent. Most of the time it's a simple outage, but once in a while it's the first sign of a port-out attempt. Checking costs nothing.

29. Questions I Get About Porting

Quick, plain answers.

Can I really keep my exact number? Almost always, yes — losing it is the rare exception, not the rule, and usually only happens if the old line was cancelled first.

Do I call my old company to move it? No — you sign up with the new company and they start the port. You don't ask the old one to send it.

Will I be without a phone while it moves? No — your old line works the whole time. The switch happens on one scheduled day at the end.

Can they refuse because I owe money or I'm in a contract? No — they must release the number. The balance or fee is a separate billing matter.

GOOD TO KNOW

If your question isn't here, it's probably one I've answered many times. There's no charge to ask a question over the phone — just call.

30. A Simple Porting Checklist

Run through this and you're ready.

If you're about to switch and keep your number, here's the short list to run through. Tick these off mentally and you've covered everything that matters.

- 1 Have a recent bill from your current phone company in hand.
- 2 Know your account number and any PIN, copied exactly from that bill.
- 3 Sign up with the new provider and clearly request to keep your number.
- 4 Give name and address exactly as the old company has them.
- 5 Leave the old line active — do not cancel it.
- 6 After cut-over, test calls, voicemail, 911, and your medical alert or alarm.

That's the whole job. It looks like a lot written out, but it's really just: gather the bill, sign up new, keep the old line on, and test at the end. Follow that order and your number comes along safely.

TIP

Keep this checklist and a recent bill together in an envelope by the phone. When you decide to switch, everything you need is in one place and you won't be hunting for a figure mid-call.

31. When to Let Me Handle It

You don't have to do this alone.

I wrote this guide so you'd understand porting and feel calm about it. But understanding a thing and wanting to sit on hold doing it are two different matters, and there's no shame in handing it off. Setting up a new phone box, starting the port, matching the account details, registering 911, and testing your alarm is exactly the kind of visit I do every week.

I come to you, here in Portage County and the nearby towns — Ravenna, Kent, Streetsboro, Aurora, Rootstown, and around Atwater. The first in-home visit is a flat ninety-nine dollars, and if a problem can be handled without a trip, I offer remote help too. If you're not completely happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's the whole deal.

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.

32. What I'd Tell My Own Neighbor

The short, honest version.

After 30+ years of professional experience helping folks through exactly this kind of change, here's the plain advice I'd give over the fence. Keeping your number is easy and routine — don't let the fear of losing it stop you from switching to something better and often cheaper.

Do three things and you'll be fine. Let the new company start the port. Hand them a recent bill so every detail matches. And never, ever cancel the old line until the number has moved and you've tested it. That's the whole art of it.

GOOD TO KNOW

If any of this feels like a lot, that's normal. You can hand the whole thing to me — the sign-up, the port, matching the details, the 911 setup, and the testing — and I'll handle it so your number comes across without a hitch.

33. The Bottom Line

Your number is yours — keep it with confidence.

So here's where all of this leaves you. The number you've carried for years — the one everyone knows you by — doesn't have to change just because the phone behind it does. Porting is routine, the new company does the work, and the rules are on your side, even if you owe a balance or you're in a contract.

The whole thing comes down to a little patience and one firm rule: keep the old line active until the move is done. Match your details to a recent bill, let the switch happen on its scheduled day, test it, and you'll barely notice anything changed at the kitchen phone —

except that it's now on a service built for the years ahead. That's a good outcome, and it's well within your reach.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

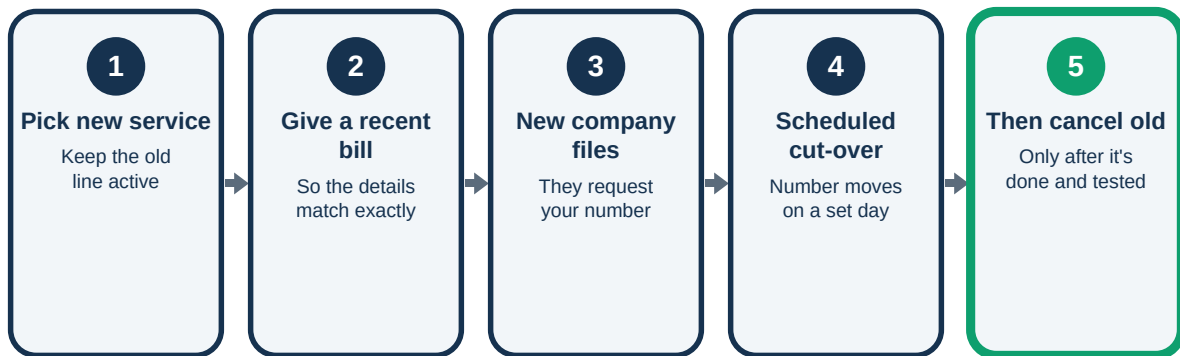
Keep this by the phone. I want to... Do this. Keep my number when I switch — have the NEW provider start the port; never cancel the old line first. Make it go smoothly — give them a recent bill so the name, address, and account number match exactly. Get through a delay — expect about one to two weeks for a landline; your phone works the whole time. Fix a rejection — ask which detail didn't match, correct it from your bill, resubmit. Protect 911 — after the move, register your address and dial 933 to test if your provider allows it. Protect my devices — call the medical alert and alarm companies before switching and test after. Avoid theft — never give your account number, PIN, or a text code to someone who calls you. Get help — call Bill: (330) 200-8042.

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

How a Number Port Works

The new company does the work — you keep the number



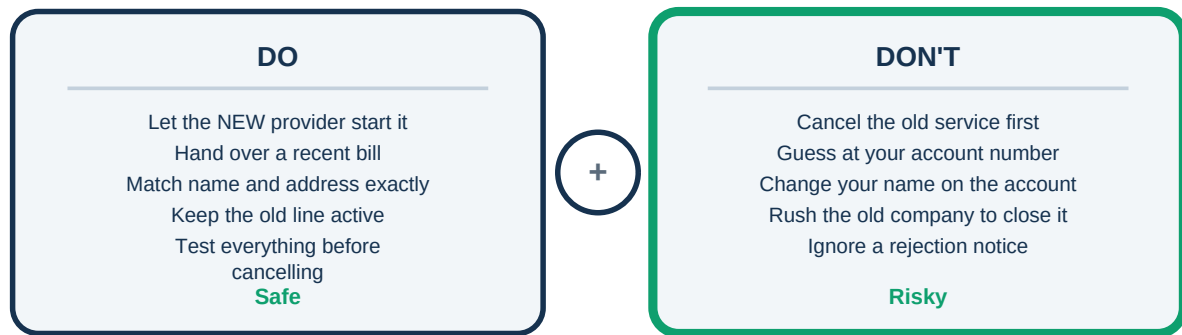
Your phone keeps working the whole time — nothing goes dark.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

Porting Do's and Don'ts

The habits that keep your number safe

**Cancel-first is the one mistake that can lose a number for good.**

When in doubt, leave the old line on until the move is confirmed.

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** · **bill@billshometech.com**

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.