

# Internet Calling

## Overview

Today we are learning about Internet based alternatives to traditional phone lines or cell phone data plans. This can be thought of as a variation on the theme of cutting the cord to your cable company. It offers a lot of the same benefits (reduced cost, freedom of choice) and carries a lot of the same concerns (increased complexity, extra setup required.) We'll look at apps that can be used as alternatives to traditional calling, then we'll discuss Internet based alternatives that would work with a physical phone in your home, and finally I'll talk about how you can create free phone numbers to work with your cell phone.

## Google Hangouts – Using existing accounts as a contact tool (alternative: Facebook Messenger)

Gmail users can also use their Google accounts to chat with contacts and make phone calls. The chat feature is common to almost all email services (though it is executed in Google's typical clean fashion) but the ability to make direct phone calls for free (domestic) is a nice feature.



Note that you need to enable Google Hangouts to make phone calls. When you do so you'll often find that your contacts disappear from view.

## FaceTime - Using apps to communicate with contacts over Wi-Fi (alternative: Google Duo)

Over Wi-Fi, you can use FaceTime on any of these devices:

- iPhone 4 or later
- iPad 2 or later
- iPad mini (all models)
- iPod touch 4th generation or later (only iPod touch 5th generation supports FaceTime audio calling)

With a cellular data plan, you can also use FaceTime without Wi-Fi on any of these devices:

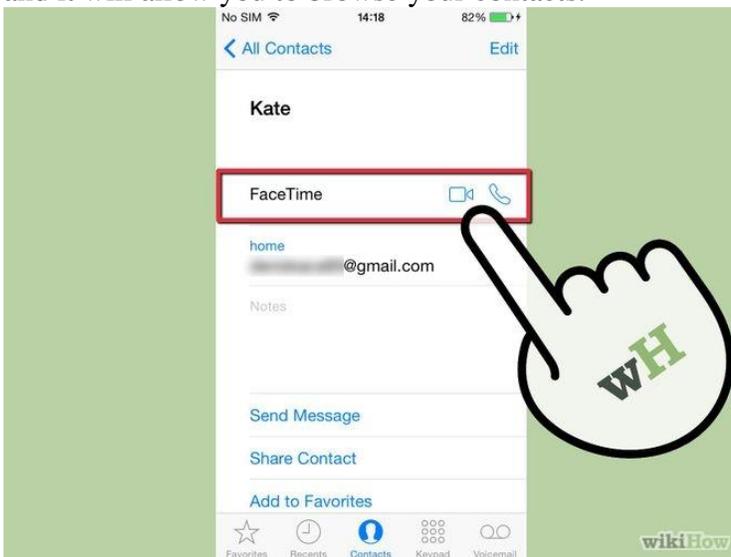
- iPhone 4s or later
- iPad (3rd generation or later)

FaceTime isn't available or might not appear on devices purchased or used in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Pakistan.

### Method 1 of 2: Using FaceTime on an iPhone

Step 1:

Click on the "Phone" icon on your homepage. This is the green button that looks like a phone on the bottom left of your homepage. Then, click on "Contacts." This will be the option in the middle of the bottom of the screen and it will allow you to browse your contacts.



Step 2:

Find the friend you'd like to call using FaceTime. Scroll through the contacts list until you find the friend you'd like to call. Click on the friend's name to open his or her contact entry. Then, click on the "FaceTime" button. Alternately, you can just call your friend regularly and then select the "FaceTime" button in the middle of the call to connect.

Step 3:

Wait for your friend to answer. Wait for your phones to connect over the Internet and for your friend to answer the call.

Step 4:

Talk to your friend using FaceTime. Once both parties are in the call, you will be able to see your friend in the main screen and yourself in a smaller picture on the top right of the screen. There are three options on the bottom of the screen:

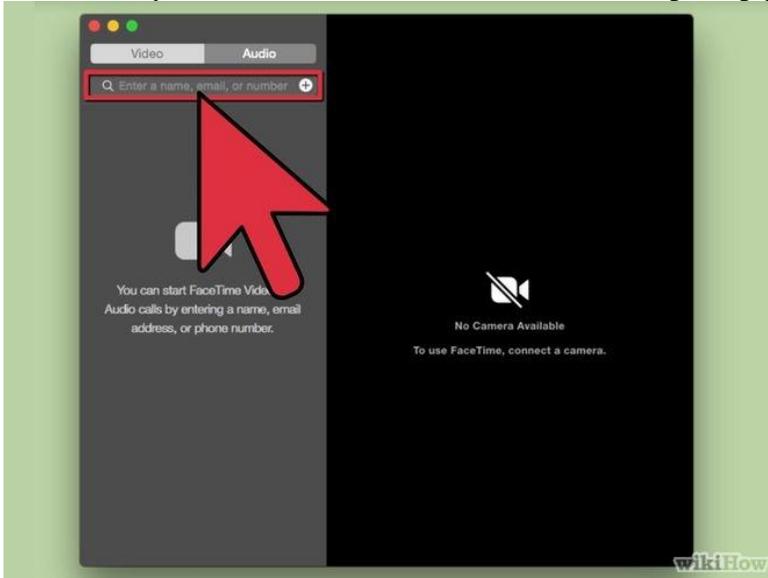
- Mute the call. Hit this button on the left so you that your friend can't hear you.
- End the call. Press the middle button to end the call.

- Switch the camera angle. Press the button on the right to switch the camera to be facing toward or away from you.

## Method 2 of 2: Using FaceTime on an iPad, iPod Touch, or Mac

### Step 1:

*Press the FaceTime icon on your homepage.* You'll be able to access this button once you press the home button and unlock your screen. The "FaceTime" icon will open up your contact book.

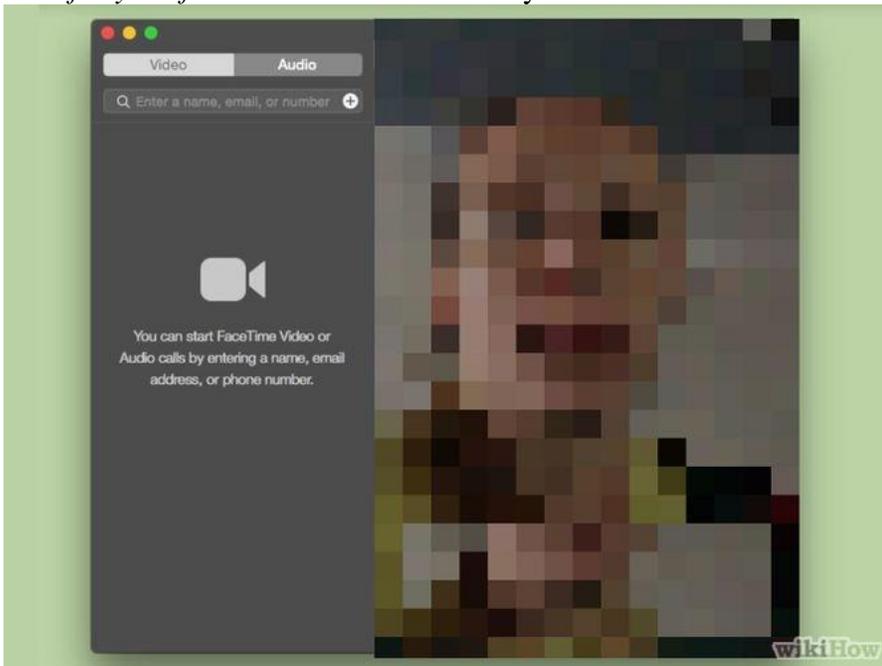


### Step 2:

*Find the friend you'd like to call using FaceTime.* Scroll through your Favorites or Contacts section to find the friend you'd like to call. Once you've found the friend, click on his or her name to access his or her contact entry. Then, click on the friend's phone number to begin the call.

### Step 3:

*Wait for your friend to answer.* Wait for your devices to connect over the Internet and for your friend to answer



### Step 4:

*Talk to your friend using FaceTime.* Once both parties are in the call, you will be able to see your friend in the main screen and yourself in a smaller picture. There are three buttons at the bottom: mute the call (so you can hear your friend.)

#### Notes

- FaceTime works better when both parties have a reliable wireless connection
- It's helpful to stand your iPhone up against something (e.g., a shelf) if you want to sit and video chat someone, so you don't have to keep holding your phone an arm's length away from your face
- Using FaceTime over Cellular data rather than Wi-Fi may incur large data usage charges. Make sure you have ample remaining data in your monthly plan before you use FaceTime without a wireless connection
- Call using Siri: Assuming Siri is activated, hold the Home button for two seconds and say “FaceTime video [insert contact name]” to invite the other party to a FaceTime video call

## Internet Phones

### Four kinds of software solutions

- PC to phone programs are ones that can make a free call from your computer to a real telephone number so you don't even need a telephone yourself.
- App to phone software are ones that make free Internet calls from a mobile device to a real number. These services support making phone calls to any number, even landlines and mobile phones that aren't using the app.
- PC to PC Internet calling is when a computer makes a free phone call to another computer. (GChat example)
- App to app services run entirely on mobile devices and results in phone calls that can only work if the recipient has the same application installed. This method cannot be used to call landlines or other mobile phones that don't have the proper software. (FaceTime example)

Look for a discussion of available services here:

<https://www.lifewire.com/free-internet-phone-calls-1356646>

### OOMA

Ooma provides free home phone service once you purchase our device for a one-time fee. Plug your high-speed Internet and existing home phone into Ooma and call anywhere in the U.S. for free. You pay only applicable taxes and fees. Features such as call waiting and voicemail are available.

When you register your physical Ooma device, you must provide a valid address within the country of purchase (either the U.S. or Canada). This address is filed as your service address. If you dial 911, your service address is forwarded to emergency response personnel so that they can locate you. It is very important to keep your service address up to date so that emergency personnel can be dispatched to the right location in the event of an emergency.

### magicJack

The magicJack device uses Voice Over Internet Protocol (“VoIP”) to allow you to make local and long-distance calls to the U.S. and Canada using an existing internet connection. 911 and 411 services require similar procedures to OOMA.





## Internet Phone Numbers

There are a lot of services available online for acquiring free phone numbers. Google Voice is the most famous option but there are other options available. These numbers can be used on cell phones, either independent of having a phone plan or in addition to it. The process is similar to creating an email address and then downloading the appropriate app.

### Reasons why you might create a Google Voice number:

1. Save money – if you have a pay as you go phone plan this can greatly reduce minutes
2. Privacy – if you have a small business that requires contact information but you don't want to publish your personal phone number this can be a way to have the calls come to the same phone but maintain your privacy
3. In home phone – if you don't want to get a data plan for a phone you can use it in Wi-Fi environments with just a Google Voice number

### Creating a number:

1. Go to [voice.google.com](http://voice.google.com).
2. Browse available area codes. On this screen, Google will prompt you to enter an area code.
3. Choose a Google Voice number and click "Select" Once you find a phone number that suits you, simply click "Select."
4. Verify your existing phone number