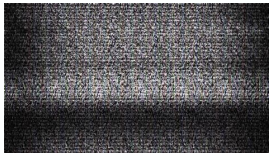


## How to turn location off on android

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Your smartphone comes with built-in location services, which are useful if you lose it or if you use an app that needs to know your location. But what if you don’t want your phone to be tracked? Can the phone be located if you turn off location services? The answer is yes, it’s possible to track mobile phones even if location services are turned off. Turning off the location service on your phone can help conceal your location. This is important if you don’t want third parties knowing where you are or being able to track your movement. However, a smartphone can still be tracked through other techniques that reveal its general location. This article explains how your phone can be tracked and what you can do to enhance your mobile security. How can a phone be tracked? Whether you have an iOS or Android phone, there are ways it can be tracked even if location services are turned off. You may have used some of these yourself to find a lost or stolen phone. For example, the Find My iPhone app uses Bluetooth to help you find an iPhone even if it’s offline. If you have an Android phone and the Find My Device app, you can log in to your Google account and use Google Maps to check your phone’s location history. Here are four ways that your phone could be tracked:
Cell towers The United States has more than 307,000 cell towers. When you use your phone, signals travel back and forth to the nearest cell tower. Cell carriers can calculate the general area of your phone by measuring the time it takes for a signal to travel back and forth. Carriers use cell tower triangulation for a more accurate reading, which combines location data from three cell towers. This technology was developed to help 911 operators locate callers. It pinpoints the phone’s location within a 300-meter area.
Public Wi-Fi A smartphone that has Wi-Fi enabled communicates with nearby Wi-Fi networks even if it’s not connected to one. Your device automatically scans Wi-Fi access points nearby and notes the signal strength. When using public Wi-Fi, the provider commonly asks you to agree to location tracking. That Wi-Fi provider will then record your location whenever you’re in range of one of its hot spots. To use public Wi-Fi while protecting your privacy, it’s a good idea to connect with a VPN like McAfee’s Safe Connect VPN. This software protects your data using bank-grade encryption to keep your online activity private. The VPN also keeps your IP address and physical location private.
Cell site simulators Cell site simulators — otherwise known as stingrays— mimic cellphone towers. They trick your phone into pinging it, transmitting its location, and identifying information. Stingrays cause cellphones to connect to them rather than to legitimate cell towers by transmitting a stronger signal than that from the cell towers. Law enforcement officers often use stingrays to locate and track the movement of potential suspects. While attempting to connect to a specific individual, stingrays connect data from all phones in the vicinity of the device. Malware or spyware A device that is infected with malware or spyware can track your location even if your location settings are turned off. Malware can also record your online activities, allow cybercriminals to steal personal information, or slow down your operating system. To help protect your mobile device, consider getting a comprehensive security tool like McAfee Security for Mobile. It works for both Android and iOS devices and comes with an antivirus app that scans for threats and malware and blocks them in real-time. Can you tell if your phone is being tracked? While many reasons for tracking a phone’s location information are benign — such as seeing where a loved one might be — scammers and hackers may track phones in an attempt to steal personal data. Luckily, some telltale signs can help you spot whether your phone is being tracked.
Battery drain When your phone has spyware, the program continuously runs in the background and drains your battery. A battery that is losing power faster than normal is either due to an old battery or spyware. Check your battery health to see if it is still strong. If you use an iPhone, follow these steps to check battery health. You’ll see a maximum capacity score that shows your battery power compared to when it was new. An older phone with a battery capacity of 75% could explain why your battery loses power throughout the day. If your battery capacity is 95% or 100% and it drains quickly, however, a virus could be to blame. It’s a slightly different process to check the battery health on an Android device. Depending on the phone brand, you may need to download an app. Overheating Using apps with high processing demands can cause your mobile device to heat up. A spyware app that tracks your device’s location will use GPS, which causes the phone to work harder and overheat. If you’re using your smartphone normally and it overheats, it could be a sign of malware. Extra apps If there are unfamiliar apps on your phone, someone may have tampered with it. The mystery app could be spyware. Unprompted activity If your phone launches activities that you didn’t initiate, an app might be running in the background. In some cases, malware needs to reboot your phone to install updates or change the phone’s settings. A phone that automatically restarts lights up for no reason or makes noises during calls or texts could be infected with malware. Phone tracking FAQs Here are answers to some common questions about phone tracking.
Can a phone be tracked if it’s turned off? A phone that is turned off is difficult to track because it stops sending signals to cell towers. However, the service provider or internet provider can show the last location once it’s switched back on. Can a phone be tracked with no cell service/connection? Even without cell service, Android devices and iPhones can be tracked. Your phone’s mapping apps can track your phone’s location without an internet connection. The GPS works in two ways: It uses Assisted GPS or A-GPS when you have a data connection. This uses the locations of cellphone towers and known Wi-Fi networks to figure out where you are. It also uses data from GPS satellites for more precise information. The A-GPS needs data service to work, but the GPS radio can receive satellite information without data service. Can a phone be tracked when it’s in airplane mode? Yes, your phone can be tracked when it’s in airplane mode. While it does turn off Wi-Fi and cellular services, airplane mode doesn’t turn off GPS (a different technology that sends and receives signals from GPS satellites). You’ll have to disable GPS on your device and turn on airplane mode to prevent your phone from being tracked. Protect your mobile security with McAfee Understanding how your phone can be tracked can help you protect your privacy. For greater peace of mind, though, it can help to have a mobile security tool like McAfee Security for Mobile to keep your Android or Apple device free from spyware. Our all-inclusive mobile security tool safeguards your digital life by offering safe browsing, a secure VPN, and antivirus software. It actively protects you from malicious apps, like spyware, and unwanted visitors. With a dedicated mobile security app, you can use your phone the way you want without worrying about cybercriminals tracking your information. 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It might seem like a walk down memory lane, but it can also leave the door to your privacy wide open(Opens in a new window)With Timeline, Google Maps can show you where you’re going and where you’ve been. There might even be photographic evidence, since Timeline syncs with any shots uploaded to Google Photos. You can also share your location with anyone in real time on iOS and Android.If you’d prefer to keep your whereabouts private without completely ditching Google, you can remove your location history and tell it to stop following you. Here’s how.Stop Location Tracking Your first order of business is to visit your My Activity(Opens in a new window) dashboard, Google’s one stop shop for viewing and controlling web and app activity, location history, and YouTube history for your Google Account. From this page, you can turn off Google’s location tracking features.On mobile, tap the Data & privacy tab and select Location History. On desktop, click Location History. From here, tap Turn off and select Pause from the pop-up message. Your Location History will then be set to Off. To remove a specific device linked to your Google account, click Devices on this account to see which devices are linked to the account and disconnect those you don’t want tracked. If that sounds too severe, Google lets you choose how long the company will hold on to your data before deleting it automatically. Under Auto-delete, choose Choose an auto-delete option. From the pop-up window, select Auto-delete activity older than and choose 3, 18, or 36 months You can also manually remove specific data from your Google Timeline. If you’re still in the Activity dashboard, click Manage history from the Location History page. Otherwise, you can open the hamburger menu in Google Maps and select Your timeline from the menu. The best place to start is the date filter, which allows you to narrow results down by year, month, and day. Google will surface trips that fall into the range you select. If you’re still in the Activity dashboard, tap the gear icon to delete all your visits to a specific location, you will have to switch to mobile. From mobile, tap your profile icon and choose Your timeline. You’ll see tabs for Day, Trips (Android only), Places, Cities, and World. Tap Places > View all visited places. Find the place you want to delete, tap the three-dot menu on the right and select Remove all visits.Manage Location Settings on iOS Devices You can do more on your iPhone to stop Google from tracking your location. Go to Settings > Google Maps > Location to view the location settings for the Google Maps app. You can set it to While Using the App to cut down on the amount of data Google collects when the app isn’t in use. Instead of using your precise location, you can make Google Maps (or any app) use more generalized data instead. Turn off the switch next to Precise Location to start using your approximate location. If you want to shut off location services completely, go to Settings > Privacy > Location Services and toggle the switch off. This will, of course, cause many of the services on your phone to stop working. However, you can take control of individual apps by setting when they can access location services.Manage Location Settings on Android Devices Android users can take control of their device’s location services, but the exact instructions may differ by manufacturer. On a Samsung device, for example, you can open Settings > Location to view various options. You can turn location services off completely by tapping the switch at the top of the screen, though this will cause many of the services on your phone to stop working. Location services can also be easily disabled by pulling down the notification shade and tapping the Location icon.Other, less invasive options, are to click Location services, then turn off the settings for Wi-Fi scanning and Bluetooth scanning. You can also click Google Location Accuracy and disable Improve Location Accuracy. Turning this off will remove all other manner of tracking location, other than GPS, but make location tracking less accurate overall. Starting with Android 11, you can change the permissions you grant individual apps. Tap App permissions and select Google Maps, Google Photos, Google, or another Google service. You can change the app permissions to Allow only while using the app and cut down on the amount of data Google collects when the app isn’t in use.For those running at least Android 12, you have the added option to disable Use precise location, which only let apps see your approximate location.Browse Privately Everywhere If you don’t want to fiddle with your location settings, but would like to tell Google to stop looking at what you’re doing for a moment, Incognito mode is a good choice. In the Google Maps app, tap your profile icon and select Turn on Incognito mode. By turning on Incognito Mode, you will stop Maps from saving your search history, location history, and shared location, and will prevent the app from personalizing maps based on your activity. It doesn’t prevent other Google services from tracking where you go online when you’re finished, you can tap the Incognito mode icon and select Turn off Incognito mode to return to the normal version of Google Maps.Try a VPN If you’re wondering why all this sounds so complicated, it’s because Google doesn’t actually want you to disable your location data. As a company, Google makes money off your data, and location is another way to personalize the ads you see. Even if you follow through with all these steps, Google won’t let you completely shut it out. If you want to stop Google—or anyone else—from tracking your location, you may want to try a VPN instead. By setting one up, you can keep your activity and data private, even from Google.You can find good VPNs that are both paid or free. If you’re specifically looking for one that works on your phone, there are many options for both iOS and Android. Sign up for SecurityWatch newsletter for our top privacy and security stories delivered right to your inbox. This newsletter may contain advertising, deals, or affiliate links. Subscribing to a newsletter indicates your consent to our Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. You may unsubscribe from the newsletters at any time.

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