

# Why can't I make or receive telephone calls (cordless phones)?

There can be several reasons for this. You can test your line and do some quick checks with our [landline troubleshooter >](#)

# Why do the batteries keep running low on my cordless phone?

If your cordless phone batteries keep running low they may need replacing. A cordless phone has an approximate talk and standby time when new and fully charged:

- The talk time is the time you can be on calls without charging the handset
- The standby time is the time the handset can be off the base not in use, without you needing to charge it

To get the approximate talk and standby times, a new handset must be charged for 24 hours before use. The talk and standby times vary between models. You can find the times for your phone on the gift box or in the [user guide >](#)

Over time your battery performance will reduce (usually after 12 months). When this happens, we suggest you replace the rechargeable batteries.

[What you need to know about replacing batteries](#)

You must replace the batteries with rechargeable batteries of the same type and rating. Using incorrect batteries or non-rechargeable batteries could damage your phone. It can cause overheating, a possible fire or an explosion. To check what battery you need go to the [user guide for your phone >](#)

You can get batteries from the BT Helpline. The number is in the user guide and it may be on the underneath of the base station of your product.

# Why don't I get a good range with my cordless phone?

There can be various reasons why you can't get a good range with your cordless phone.

The range is the distance you can use the handset from its base. We test our phones to make sure they meet the maximum range of up to 50 metres indoors and up to 300 metres outdoors.



You will only get this range when there is a clear line of sight between the base and the handset. Anything blocking the base and handset will significantly reduce the range.

In a normal home several things can affect the range, so please check:

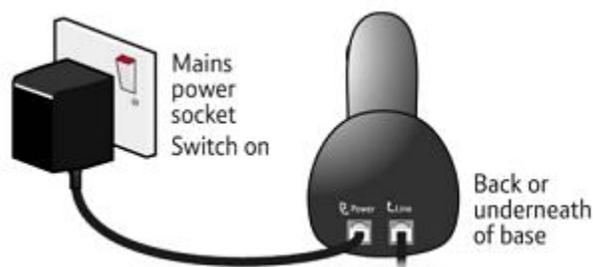
- The construction of the building where you've placed the base and handset. For example the type of wall material, the thickness and dampness. Thick walls can severely affect the range
- That as few walls as possible block the distance between the base and handset
- The base is away from other electrical or electronic equipment. For example away from TVs, computers, microwaves, mobile phones, modems or routers. Ideally the base should be at least a metre away to avoid possible interference
- The base is away from large metal items such as fridges, freezers and microwave ovens

## Why does my cordless phone keep showing "Searching", "Base" or "Range out"?

If your cordless phone shows "Searching", "Base" or "Range Out" it means your phone has lost its link with the base.

Try the following:

1. Check the power adapter is correctly connected to the base



2. Check the cordless phone batteries are correctly installed and fully charged



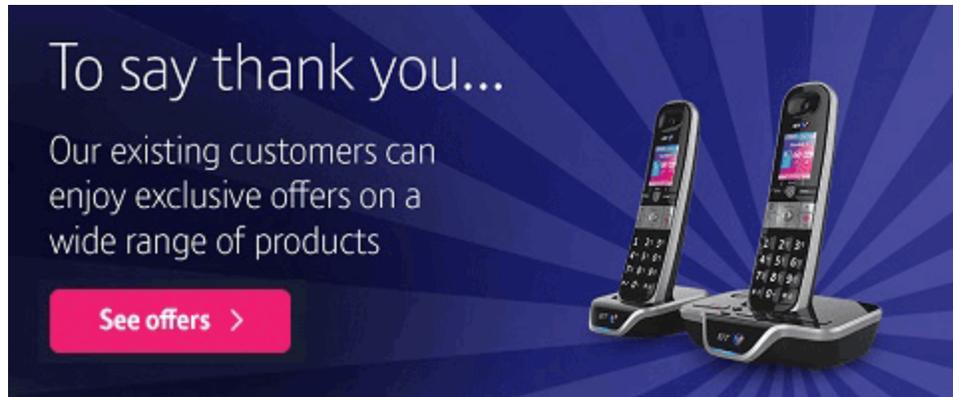
3. Check the cordless phone and base are in range of each other and not blocked by thick walls. You may need to move the handset closer to the base



4. Make sure the base is at least one metre away from any large metal objects or other electrical equipment
5. Switch the mains power off, wait five seconds and then turn it on again to reset your product



6. Reset the cordless phone and the base. This will change the settings back to the factory default. You will find the correct steps to follow in the [user guide for your phone >](#)
7. Register the cordless phone to the base again. If you need help, check the [user guide >](#)



## Why does my cordless phone keep showing Register?

If your cordless phone keeps showing "Register", please follow these steps:

1. Check the cordless phone and base are within range of each other and are not blocked by thick walls. You may need to move the handset closer to the base

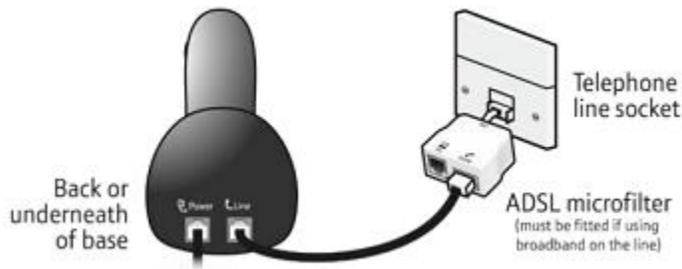


2. Make sure the base is at least one metre away from any large metal objects or other electrical equipment
3. Register the cordless phone to the base. You will find the correct steps to follow in the [user guide for your phone >](#)
4. Check how many cordless phones you have already registered to the base. If you've registered the maximum amount of handsets and want to register another, you must unregister one first. To find out how many cordless phones you can register, go to the registration section of the [user guide >](#)
5. Reset the cordless phone and the base. This will change the settings back to the factory default. If you need help, check the [user guide >](#)
6. If you still haven't fixed the problem, please contact the helpdesk. You'll find the contact details in the [user guide >](#)

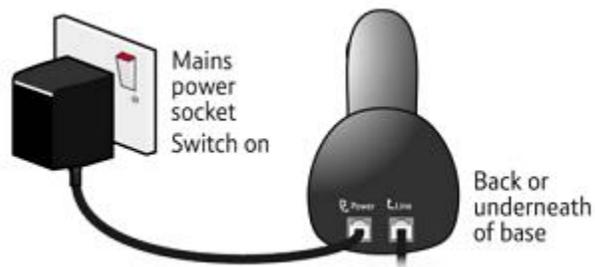
## Why doesn't my handset ring?

If your cordless phone doesn't ring, please try these checks:

1. Make sure the ringer volume on your phone is not turned down or switched off. If you need help, check the [user guide for your phone >](#)
2. Make sure you are using the phone line cord that you received in the box with the phone. Don't use one from another phone
3. Check both ends of the supplied line cord are plugged in correctly



4. Make sure both ends of the power adapter are plugged in and secure



5. Check the power adapter is plugged into a working mains socket and the power is switched on
6. If you've got broadband, you may need to use a microfilter to stop the broadband interfering with your phone service. Find out more at [Why do I need ADSL filters \(microfilters\) and where do they go? >](#)
7. If your cordless phone display flashes "Searching", "Base" or "Range out" it has lost its link to the base.



You need to move it closer to the base so that it is back in range.



If the link isn't restored, register the phone again to the base. For how to do this, see the [user guide >](#)

8. Switch the mains power off, wait five seconds or so, then turn it on again. This will reset your phone



9. Reset both the phone and the base to change the settings back to the factory default. Check the [user guide >](#)
10. If you have your phone plugged into an extension, try it in the master socket instead. This is usually the one nearest your front door. If you can now make or receive calls, it shows the phone works but there may be a problem with your extension wiring. To find out more about master sockets see [What type of master socket have I got? >](#)
11. Some phones have a "Do Not Disturb" function. Check it isn't switched on. It must be turned off, so you can hear when the phone rings. For instructions, see the [user guide >](#)



12. Some phones let you block certain numbers. Check that you've not blocked a specific number from calling that you now want to call. To find out how to see the blocked number list and call types blocked. For help, see the [user guide >](#)

If the phone didn't ring for calls in your calls list, check the blocked numbers list and calls type blocked. For the steps to follow see your [user guide >](#)

# Why isn't my answering machine recording messages?

There can be several reasons why your answering machine isn't recording messages. Please try the following:

1. If your phone needs a power supply check the power is on
2. Make sure the power adapter is plugged into a working mains electrical socket and to the phone



3. Check the answering machine is on and is set to "Answer and Record" mode. If it is set as "Answer Only", the answering machine won't record any messages.

When the answering machine is turned on, you'll see an "On" indicator. It is either an icon on the display or a light. For more information check the [user guide >](#)



4. If you have BT Answer 1571, BT Call Minder or a similar service, make sure the answering machine takes the call before the network answering service.

If the network answering service takes the call first, you will need to change the "Answer delay" setting on your phone. This is the number of times it rings before the answering machine takes the call.

For example if you have BT 1571, make sure you don't set the answer delay to more than five rings. To find out how to change the setting, go to the [user guide >](#)

**BT Answer 1571** will answer the call after seven rings.

**BT Call Minder** answers after no rings, four, seven or ten rings (you can choose).

Details on these services are available from [www.bt.com/help](http://www.bt.com/help) or by calling 0800 800 150

5. If you have a fax machine connected to the same line as your answering machine, make sure the answering machine takes the call before the fax machine.

If the fax machine takes the call first, you will need to change the "Answer delay" settings. For instructions on how to do this, see the [fax machine and phone user guide >](#)

6. Check the "Loudspeaker/Playback volume" setting. If it is set too low you may not hear a recorded message playback. There is usually a **Vol+/Vol-** button to adjust the "Loudspeaker/Playback" volume. If you need help, go to the [user guide >](#)

## Why can't I play messages left on my answering machine?

1. If your phone needs a power supply check the power is on
2. Make sure the power adapter is plugged into a working mains power socket and to the phone



3. Check the "Loudspeaker/Playback volume" setting. If it is set too low you may not hear a recorded message playback. There is usually a **Vol+/Vol-** button to adjust the "Loudspeaker/Playback" volume. If you need help, go to the [user guide for your phone >](#)
4. Check the answering machine is set to "Answer and Record" mode. If it is set as "Answer Only" the answering machine won't record any messages. For more information, please see the [user guide >](#)
5. If you have BT Answer 1571, BT Call Minder or a similar service, make sure the answering machine takes the call before the network answering service.

If the network answering service takes the call first you will need to change the "Answer delay" setting on your phone. This is the number of times it rings before the answering machine takes the call.

For example if you have BT 1571, make sure you don't set the answer delay to more than five rings. To find out how to change the setting, go to the [user guide >](#)

**BT Answer 1571** will answer the call after seven rings.

**BT Call Minder** answers after nil, four, seven or ten 10 rings (you can choose).

Details on these services are available from [www.bt.com/help](http://www.bt.com/help) or by calling 0800 800 150

6. If you have a fax machine connected to the same line as your answering machine, make sure the answering machine takes the call before the fax machine.

If the fax machine takes the call first, you will need to change the "Answer delay" settings. For instructions on how to do this, see the [fax machine and phone user guide >](#)

## Can I use a different type of BT cordless phone with my existing base?

To find out if you can use a different type of BT cordless phone with your base, you need to know if it is GAP compatible. To check, go to the [user guide for your phone >](#)

If your phone is not GAP compatible:

- You can only use extra phones that are the same model with your base

If your phone is GAP compatible:

- You should be able to register your phone to the base but it is not guaranteed that all features will work
- Phones that are GAP compatible are only required to:
  - make and receive calls
  - ring for incoming internal, external and paging calls
- In most cases, the phone will show Caller Display information but it is not mandatory

There is also a limit to the number of phones that you can register to a base. For more information, see the [user guide for your phone >](#)