

# what is spyware how can it affect mobile phone

Spyware is a real threat to the privacy and safety of millions of mobile phone owners worldwide, and has a history of causing disruption and distress.

## What is Spyware and How Can it Affect Your Mobile Phone?

To fight back, you need a little knowledge. So without further ado, here's a primer on spyware in a mobile context to help you avoid this serious dilemma.

Picture 1 of what is spyware how can it affect mobile phone

## The basics

As the name suggests, spyware is a malicious form of software that's designed to surreptitiously steal private data and send this to third parties without you even knowing about it.

This could be everything from the files you save to your portable device, to the things you say. That's right – some spyware is programmed to hijack your phone's mic and use this to eavesdrop on everything that's going on around you.

Spyware spreads in much the same way as malware, with dodgy code downloaded to your device from phishing sites or even hidden within otherwise legitimate-seeming applications. All this means that it's something you want to avoid as a priority.

## The signs of a spyware infection

There are a number of clues which point towards spyware being present on your device, and again these are consistent with the red flags associated with malicious software more generally.

A great example of this is if your phone is using much more data than usual, perhaps to the point that you receive an alert from your network provider about coming close to your tariff cap.

Spyware relies on a network connection to send personal info elsewhere, so if you aren't a heavy data user and this suddenly spikes, take note!

Odd mobile behavior is another thing to be on the lookout for, since when spyware is running in the background it will use up system resources without being conspicuous. So if you've closed all your apps and restarted your device but it is still running uncharacteristically slowly, spyware could be the culprit.

A fast-draining battery or even a hot battery could also hint at high levels of hardware use that might not be obvious if your phone is powerful enough to cope with the spyware's background antics.

## Checking your mobile phone for spyware

Using mobile security software from a reputable vendor like Certo is the quickest and easiest way to check up on the current state of your phone.

Modern solutions like this are able to scan your device regularly and highlight malicious code so that it can be dealt with, rather than left to work its mischief with impunity.

You should also pay attention to the aforementioned telltale signs of a spyware infection, as it's better to be overly cautious than to hope for the best if something doesn't seem right.

## Avoiding spyware in future

The best strategy for dealing with spyware is to not have it find a way onto your mobile phone in the first place, and there are a number of preventative steps you can take to improve your chances of success.

First, don't download any apps which aren't officially offered via the official app store for your device. In the case of Android users, that means sticking with the Play store that Google oversees. For iPhone fans, using the App Store that's regulated and tightly controlled by Apple is your best bet.

Of course there have been instances of malicious apps getting through on these official channels, so you still need to keep your wits about you. There are millions of apps out there, so look for ones which have got lots of downloads and plenty of positive user feedback.

Second, don't open any unsolicited emails you receive and certainly don't download attachments they contain. This is a sure fire way to get hit with a virus of some kind, whether you're using a mobile or on desktop machines.

Third, be wary of websites that are not well known, especially if they are trying to sell you something. Scammers con victims into visiting sites either by using phishing tactics, and posing as a real retailer, or by advertising offers that are too good to be true.

## The bottom line

Spyware is out there, but you don't need to be afraid of it if you use your mobile phone responsibly and stay vigilant for signs of infection, while also investing in security software.

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