

New action to stop nuisance phone calls

15th January, 2016



Many people hate nuisance telephone calls. These are the calls we get from companies trying to sell us something that we usually do not want. They are also called 'cold calls'. Britain's government is thinking about taking action to stop these calls. One thing it wants to do is to make sure the company that calls does not hide its telephone number. With most nuisance calls, we cannot see the telephone number of who called us, but that could change. This means people could report companies who make nuisance calls. Another measure the British government is looking at is to fine companies that make nuisance calls. Cold callers could get a fine of up to \$720,000 for making nuisance calls.

Three-quarters of people who own a landline in Britain get cold calls every month. The number of people who get monthly nuisance calls on their mobile phones increased from just over 50 per cent in 2014 to 72 per cent today. One company in Britain made 40 million cold calls in just three months. Britain's minister for data protection said nuisance calls were a problem. She said: "There is no simple solution to the problem of nuisance calls, but making direct marketing companies display their telephone number will help consumers...take action." She added: "Being pestered by marketing calls is annoying at the best of times, and at its worst it can bring real misery for the people on the receiving end."

Sources: *ComputerWeekly* / *TheMoneyPages* / *BBC*

Writing

Nuisance calls should be a criminal offence. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

nuisance / telephone calls / companies / action / hide / telephone number / measure / landline / mobile phones / data protection / problem / direct marketing / consumers

True / False

- Nuisance calls are also known as cold calls. T / F
- Britain has taken several actions to stop nuisance calls. T / F
- No one in the UK can hide their telephone number any more. T / F
- Nuisance callers in the UK are fined over \$500,000. T / F
- Around 75% of people in the UK with a landline get monthly cold calls. T / F
- A company in Britain made 40 million cold calls in 3 months. T / F
- Britain's minister for data protection said there is an easy answer. T / F
- The minister said cold calls can bring misery to people. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. nuisance | a. certain |
| 2. action | b. penalty |
| 3. sure | c. only |
| 4. fine | d. measures |
| 5. hide | e. bothered |
| 6. increased | f. annoying |
| 7. just | g. unhappiness |
| 8. simple | h. went up |
| 9. pestered | i. conceal |
| 10. misery | j. easy |

Discussion – Student A

- Should nuisance callers be able to hide their phone numbers?
- Should nuisance calls be illegal?
- How can you protect yourself against nuisance calls?
- What do you think of marketing companies?
- What annoys you most about telephones?
- Would you change your telephone number to stop getting cold calls?
- Why might you report a company for a nuisance call?
- What would you like to ask the CEO of a cold calling company?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. sell us something that we usually | a. who called us |
| 2. thinking about taking action | b. misery |
| 3. we cannot see the telephone number of | c. making nuisance calls |
| 4. report companies who | d. a landline |
| 5. get a fine of up to \$720,000 for | e. nuisance calls |
| 6. Three-quarters of people who own | f. to stop these calls |
| 7. people who get monthly | g. to the problem |
| 8. Britain's minister for data | h. do not want |
| 9. There is no simple solution | i. protection |
| 10. it can bring real | j. make nuisance calls |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of nuisance telephone calls?
- What should happen to companies that make nuisance calls?
- What would you like to see happen to nuisance callers?
- What do you think of the fine that Britain wants to introduce?
- Which is worse – nuisance phone calls or spam mail? Why?
- How important is a telephone to you?
- How can you keep your telephone number a secret?
- Do you worry about getting strange phone calls?

Spelling

- Many people hate nuisance ptoenheel calls
- calls we get from niscomaep
- Britain's tnoegemnvr
- taking niocat to stop these calls
- Another saemuer
- Cold relclas could get a fine
- Three-rtuaqers of people who own a landline
- people who get ylnhomt nuisance calls
- data tcntiopero
- no simple suiotlno
- direct egnkamirt
- it can bring real ysmeri for the people

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. a	4. b	5. i
6. h	7. c	8. j	9. e	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Camera

You think a camera is the most important feature on a mobile phone. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things that aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): SMS, long battery life or electronic money.

Role B – SMS

You think SMS is the most important feature on a mobile phone. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things that aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): a camera, long battery life or electronic money.

Role C – Long battery life

You think a long battery life is the most important feature on a mobile phone. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things that aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): SMS, a camera or electronic money.

Role D – Electronic money

You think electronic money is the most important feature on a mobile phone. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things that aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): SMS, long battery life or a camera.

Speaking – Mobile phones

Rank these with your partner. Put the best features at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| • SMS | • GPS |
| • camera | • electronic money |
| • music player | • clock |
| • long battery life | • answering machine |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.