

Sunsetting of 2G and 3G Phone Network – FAQ

1. What is the sunsetting of the 2G and 3G phone networks?

In December 2021, the UK Government [issued their plan](#) to decommission (“sunset”) the 2G and 3G phone networks by 2033. Vodafone and EE have already started the phasing out of their 3G, and both operators expect 3G to be completely switched off by December 2023.



Although it is older than 3G, the 2G network will remain operational for longer. This is due to the large number of devices that use 2G that will remain in use for a long period, examples include Smart Meters and eCall systems that are fitted to all new cars in Europe. Although no fixed dates have been announced by network providers, it is expected that 2G will remain operational for another decade.

Vodafone started piloting its 3G switch off in February 2023 and confirmed its plans to start switching off the remainder of the UK from June 2023. They have confirmed their 2G network will remain in place for calls and texts. You can find out more on [Vodafone's website](#). EE will also phase out 3G services throughout 2023, with the network then closing in early 2024, and 2G services will be switched off 'later in the decade'. You can find out more at [EE](#). Three expects to have closed its 3G offering by the end of 2024. Three never had a 2G network, as it launched in 2003 as the UK's first 100% 3G network. Visit the [Three website](#) for more information.


At the time of writing, O2 has not specifically announced when it will close down 3G and 2G services, or whether it'll be before the agreed date of 2033. As it stands, O2 will be the only operator of the “big four” that could still be offering 3G network services by 2025.

2. How does the sunsetting of 2G and 3G impact mobile phones?

The sunsetting will impact older mobile phones that rely solely on 2G and 3G connectivity for calls, texts, and internet access. These devices will no longer be able to connect to the network and may experience service disruptions or become entirely non-functional.

3. What other IoT devices are affected by the 3G sunsetting?

The sunsetting of 3G also affects various IoT (Internet of Things) devices that use 3G connectivity for communication.

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Examples of such devices include:

- Lift alarms and emergency call systems
- Parking barriers and ticketing systems
- Payment terminals and point-of-sale (POS) devices
- Courier and fleet management and tracking systems
- Smart meters and monitoring devices
- Security and surveillance systems

4. What is the impact on these 3G-connected services?

Once the 3G network is phased out, any services that rely solely on 3G connectivity will cease to function. This will result in service disruption, compromised security, or a complete loss of functionality. We advise customers to take action sooner rather than later to avoid any potential disruption or downtime.

5. What do customers need to do to switch to 4G and 5G?

To ensure uninterrupted service and compatibility with the evolving network infrastructure, customers need to take the following steps:


- **Mobile Phones:** Check if your mobile phone supports 4G or 5G technology. BDR can assist with this if you're unsure of what to do. If your phone doesn't support 4G or 5G, you'll need to upgrade to a compatible device and service plan in order to ensure continued connectivity.
- **IoT Devices:** Identify 2G and 3G-connected IoT devices your business or organisation relies on. BDR can help with this and provide guidance on the different service providers and their compatibility with 4G and 5G networks. We can assist with updating or replacing devices that are not compatible before the sunset date.
- **Service Providers:** If you rely on third-party service providers for lift alarms, parking barriers, payment terminals, or other IoT services, contact your service provider to discuss their plans for migrating to 4G or 5G.



6. Where can I find more information or assistance?

For further information or assistance regarding the sunsetting of the 2G and 3G networks and the migration to 4G and 5G, [please contact BDR for guidance and support.](#)

Remember, staying informed and taking proactive steps to migrate to newer technologies will help ensure a seamless transition and uninterrupted services for your mobile phones and IoT devices.

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