

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes in various shades of green, creating a modern, layered effect. The shapes are primarily triangular and polygonal, with some areas appearing more translucent than others. The overall composition is clean and minimalist, with the text centered on a white background.

Land Lines

What is happening to them and when?

What's this all about?

- ▶ Just like your TV signal and Mobile phone changed a few years ago from analogue to digital, the phone lines are doing the same.
- ▶ Which means the phone calls you make and receive on your 'land line' will be done across the internet instead of via the copper cable infrastructure that has been in place for years (and don't we know it!).
- ▶ It should mean you don't see any change (unless there is a power cut).
- ▶ If you don't have Broadband (internet) your provider should put it in free of charge for your phone line use only.
- ▶ Your provider should provide a means of making emergency calls in a power outage if you don't already have one, ie a mobile phone.

Why is it happening?

- ▶ Landline phone calls have traditionally been delivered over a network known as the public switched telephone network (PSTN). This network is old, and becoming harder and more expensive to maintain, so it needs to be replaced.
- ▶ Replacing the PSTN now will ensure that we continue to have reliable home phone services available.
- ▶ This is not happening only in the UK. These changes are taking place all over the world, with many countries having now completed them.
- ▶ BT has taken the decision to retire its PSTN by January 2027 and this means other providers that use BT's network must follow the same timescale. Other companies with their own networks such as Virgin Media plan follow a similar timescale.
- ▶ In addition, telecoms providers are also investing in new systems and networks - for example, by upgrading old copper-based broadband lines to full-fibre. They will need to switch customers away from the old PSTN at the same time as upgrading their technology.

You can still use your land line

- ▶ This means that in the future, landline calls will be delivered over digital technology, called Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). You might also see this referred to as 'digital phone' or 'digital voice'.
- ▶ These changes have already started, but you don't need to do anything until your provider contacts you to tell you your service is changing. Alternatively, if you want to move to a VoIP service now, you can do so by upgrading to a new phone and broadband package.
- ▶ Once you have moved to a VoIP service, your landline phone will work in much the same way as it always has. However there will be some differences.

What are the differences?

- ▶ Unlike some traditional corded analogue phones, a digital phone will only work in a power cut if it has a battery back-up.
- ▶ If you are dependent on your landline phone - for example, if you don't have a mobile phone or don't have mobile signal at your home - your provider must offer you a solution to make sure you can contact the emergency services when a power cut occurs. For example, a mobile phone (if you have signal), or a battery back-up unit for your landline phone.
- ▶ This solution should be provided free of charge to people who are dependent on their landline. If you are not eligible for a free resilience solution, you may be able to purchase one from your provider or another retailer - talk to your provider about options.
- ▶ If you need any new equipment to make your main telephone work - for example, a new router, new telephone handset or if you need a new broadband service installed, your provider will arrange this.

Before you change to a digital landline, let your provider know if:

- ▶ you have a care alarm, health pendant or security alarm that uses the telephone line;
- ▶ you don't own a mobile phone, or you don't have enough signal at home to call the emergency services in a power cut; or
- ▶ you have a disability or any other needs that mean you need extra help with the installation.

Questions to ask your provider

- ▶ Before you switch to a digital landline
 - ▶ What do I need to do for my new landline to work as soon as possible?
 - ▶ Will my new landline work in a power cut?
 - ▶ What can you provide if I only have my landline to call emergency services during a power cut?
 - ▶ How do I check whether other devices (like care alarms) that use my telephone line will be compatible?
 - ▶ Will my current handset work on the new system, or do you need to send me a new handset or some other equipment?

Even more questions to ask your provider

- ▶ Before you change your broadband to full-fibre broadband (also known as 'fibre-to-the-premises' or 'fibre-to-the-home')
 - ▶ Will I need an engineer visit? If so, what should I do to prepare for their visit?
 - ▶ Will my landline voice service be affected by the change to my broadband service?
 - ▶ Do I need any new equipment, such as a router? Will this be provided?