

The 6 Most Popular Ways To Call Home When Traveling

Can you afford to make the wrong choice?

If you travel abroad, you will know that it can be frustrating trying keeping in touch with friends, family or colleagues back home.

And the frustration can start before you even leave home — if you do a little research on the Internet, you will quickly find tons of companies offering tons of different options...

...but the hardest part is deciding which option is the best for you. Get it right and your trip will be a breeze, get it wrong and it could turn into a trip to forget!

This free guide will tell you about the 6 most popular ways you can use to keep in contact when abroad:

1. Can you use your own cell phone when traveling?
2. Should you rent a cell phone?
3. Local SIM cards — the hidden costs!
4. Using hotel phones — doing it the old-fashioned way!
5. Using the Internet to get free calls!
6. Why all World Phones are not the same!
7. Conclusions — what the travel experts say!

I hope you find it useful and discover which option is best for you!

Regards,

Michael Furniss
International Communications Research Development Director

P.S. If you think this guide will be useful to any other travelers you know, it would be great if you passed it on to them too.

Option #1

Can you use your own cell phone when traveling?

If you don't currently own a cell phone

If you don't currently own a cell phone, skip to Option #2.

If you do own a cell phone — are you a statistic?

Currently, it is estimated that over 80% of cell phones in the US are not capable of working abroad, so the chances are, you will be one of the 80% who need a second solution if you want to keep in contact when traveling.

But how do you know which side you are on?

There can be a number of factors that determine whether your cell phone will work abroad, but the quickest and easiest way is to contact your carrier and ask them directly.

But as a quick overview...

Do the following carriers offer an international service using your own cell phone?

- Cingular – YES
- Verizon – NO
- Sprint – NO
- Nextel - NO
- T-Mobile - SOME

What to ask if your carrier does provide an international service:

What are the call charges?

Using your own cell phone abroad can be far more expensive than using it in the US — every call you make when abroad will have a charge from your own carrier, and a charge from the carrier your cell phone automatically registers with in the country you are visiting.

Your carrier will be able to tell you their charge, but they may not know how much the foreign carriers will charge you, so your bill could come as a nasty surprise!

Will I have to pay a fee?

If your carrier does provide an international service, you may need to notify them first before you leave so they can make the changes to your account, and you may have to pay an upgrade fee to activate your international service.

Does my cell phone handset use the right technology?

Your carrier may offer an international service, but only to its subscribers that use a certain type of cell phone handset. If you tell your carrier which type of handset you own, they should be able to tell you. You may find to use your carrier's international service you will need to upgrade your handset, and these upgrades can be expensive!

Final thoughts on using your own cell phone

First you must contact your carrier to see if they offer an international service. If the answer is no, then continue reading this guide to see what other options for keeping in contact when abroad are available to you.

If your carrier does provide an international service, then you need to check all the extra costs that are involved, as they could add up.

Note: If you use your own phone, you will keep your existing cell phone number. This may seem like a good thing, but remember that anyone who knows your number can call you — they may not know you are abroad, but you will still have to pay to receive their call!

It is best to continue reading this guide as you may find that another option is still better for your needs.

How the Mobal World Phone overcomes these problems...

At just \$49, it is easy to afford The Mobal World Phone to use just for traveling. Because there are no fees other than for your calls, it doesn't matter if you travel every month or just once a year. It can be much cheaper than upgrading your existing cell phone (if that is possible), plus you will have a dedicated international phone number that will work around the world, for life, so you can choose who calls you when you are traveling. You will know exactly how much every possible call costs, rather than only finding out when you get your statement.



"I have traveled for 30 years and just returned from vacationing in Italy. **The Mobal World Phone made a wonderful difference on the trip** thanks to the comfort and security of **knowing that the family and friends back home could reach me.**"
M. Boucher, DE

And with a 60-day money back guarantee, it might be worth giving it a try!

Learn more at <http://www.mobal.com/packingsecrets> (use this link to get a FREE international travel adapters set)

Option #2

Should you rent a cell phone?

Renting a cell phone for the period of your trip has traditionally been the popular option to keep in contact.

The way rental works:

1. You contact a rental company to order your phone
2. You pay a deposit and rental charges for the period of your trip
3. You arrange for a collection day before you travel and sign for the delivery
4. While you use the phone on your trip, the charges for your calls are deducted from your credit card
5. You arrange to return your phone when you arrive back home

Why rental looks like a good idea

- You only have to invest your money in a cell phone for the period of your trip

However, in reality it is not as good as it seems

It is true that a few years ago the cost to buy a second cell phone, just for international use, was a luxury that only those who traveled very frequently could afford.

But today this luxury has become affordable to all — you can buy your own international cell phone for the same price as between just one and two weeks' rental charges!

If you still decide that cell phone rental is the best option for you

Here are a few things you need to consider before choosing a cell phone rental company:

The cost of cell phone rental — The cost of rental differs between the main cell phone rental companies from \$3 to \$8. It would seem obvious to go with the cheapest option, but you must look into what other charges are involved:

Minimum rental period — Some companies will impose a minimum on their cell phone rental, e.g. you must rent for at least one week, or one month etc.

Minimum daily call usage — You may have to agree to a minimum call usage per day, that you will be charged for, whether you make the call or not.

Delivery charges — You could be charged as much as \$30 for shipping and collection, so make sure you check first.

Charges for itemised invoices — Another area where cell phone rental companies can gain a few extra dollars is by charging for itemised invoices, a necessity for business users and very useful for vacationers also.

Insurance — First, check whether this is optional or not -- you may find that you are covered under your general travel insurance policy. Also, check what the deductible is.

Deposits/credit card authorisations — Most companies will demand a deposit or authorise your credit card for a certain amount before they agree to rent a cell phone to you. This can be anywhere up to \$1000 off your credit card when you need it most -- on vacation.

Final thoughts on renting a cell phone

Renting a cell phone was once the most popular option, but now that the cost to own your own international cell phone has come down, rental is no longer cost effective. If you still decide you would like to rent, make sure you check out all the extra charges.

How the Mobal World Phone overcomes these problems

At just \$49 you can have your own international cell phone, which works in over 140 countries, which you can take traveling on every future trip abroad you may ever take.

- When you consider that \$49 will rent you a phone for about 2 weeks only, **you can easily see the savings you could make!**

"I researched my options to have a phone while I travelled and **I found that buying the Mobal World Phone was the most economical.** I was pleased by your service and the Mobal World Phone was very easy to use."
Jean John, NC



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Option #3

Using local SIM cards — what are the hidden costs?

What are local SIM cards?

Your international cell phone will use a little, removable electronic chip, called a SIM card, which contains your connection to the carrier. Many carriers in each country provide their own local SIM cards that you can purchase, giving you local call rates. You pay for credit in advance, and then you must keep topping-up your credit, or the service will be cut-off when you reach your limit.

To use local SIM cards, you will need to buy a SIM-free international cell phone separately (one that is not “locked” to the SIM card of one carrier). Buying a SIM free cell phone will generally be more expensive than one that comes with a SIM card, as it will not be subsidised by the carrier.

What are the benefits of local SIM cards?

Local SIM cards are increasing in popularity with travelers because:

Get local call rates — you will be using the same service that many of the locals are using

Get a local number — if you are giving your number out to locals, it could be an advantage that your phone number will be in the format of that country

Pre-pay for your calls — you buy call credit in advance, which you may find useful to for sticking to your budget

What are the problems with local SIM cards?

They are expensive to buy — you may get cheaper calls, but to purchase the actual SIM card you need to pay anywhere up to \$60, before you even make a call

It can be expensive to buy the cell phone — it will cost you more to buy your international cell phone as you will need one that is not “locked” to one carrier’s SIM card, and so will not be subsidised -- a 4-country trip around Europe could cost as much as \$306 for the phone and SIM cards, before you have made a call.

The SIMs will expire if unused — If you do not use your local SIM card, typically for 9-months, it will expire. If you planned to return to the same country a year later, you would need to buy a replacement local SIM card

You may pay for calls you never use — because you are pre-paying for your calls in advance, you may not use all your credit before you leave, and you will have paid for calls you will never make

You can get cut-off during conversations — as soon as your credit runs out you will be cut-off, and you may not be able to buy more credit immediately

You will have to change phone number in each country — if you are traveling to a few countries and have SIMs for each country, you will be changing phone numbers as you cross borders. It can be hard to keep friends back home informed with which phone number you are using and when

Foreign-speaking customer support — if you have problems using your local SIM cards, you may find the only customer support is in the language of the country you are visiting

Final thoughts on local SIM cards

You may think that local SIM cards offer a great deal due to the fact they offer local call charges, however, you must look into both the extra costs in setting yourself up with everything, and the extra inconvenience they bring, especially if you plan to visit a number of countries in the future.

How The Mobal World Phone overcomes these problems

From Mobal, \$49 buys you everything -- for that price you get the phone and the SIM card that works in over 140 countries. **Saving you \$225** over the example given earlier about visiting 4 European countries

Your Mobal SIM will never expire -- your Mobal service is **yours for life**. Every time you travel in the future your Mobal phone will go with you, whether you travel once a month, once a year, or even once every 10 years!

You only pay for calls you actually make -- because you pay after you have made your calls with Mobal, you know you are only paying for calls you actually made, you never have to estimate how much credit you need and run the risk of never using it

You will never get cut-off through lack of credit -- again, because you pay after your calls and do not need to buy credit in advance, **your Mobal World Phone is always connected** so you decide when to end the call.

You keep the same number around the world -- once you get a Mobal phone number, you will keep the same number around the world, for life. Friends never need to know which country you are in, they just dial your Mobal number and reach you

English-speaking customer support -- you can call us **free from you Mobal World Phone** anytime you have a problem, and get your answers back in plain English

"I will save over \$200 with the Mobal World Phone -- the cost of buying local SIM cards for the countries that I am visiting." **Gerald Hubler, FL**

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Option #4

Doing it the old-fashioned way — hotel and public phones

There was a time when using hotel and public phones abroad was the only option to keep in contact, and some people still swear by it -- they require no research or expense, before you leave home.

- **You do not need to invest in a cell phone** -- you just use the hotel phone or a public phone, when you need it

However, this is about the only reason

Now that it is affordable to take an international cell phone with you, each time you travel, it really does make relying on hotel phones and public phones a thing of the past. Most people who use them now are those that have not invested in an international cell phone because they did not think they would need one, and then regretted it when they need to be contactable in an emergency.

The main problems with using hotel and public phones

Need to organize times to be contacted — no-one will be able to call you at a moment's notice, they will have to wait for a pre-arranged time or leave you a message, no matter how urgent it is

You have no idea how much calls will be costing you — if you ask at reception how much a call will be, there is a good chance that they will not be able to tell you, so you will just have to take the risk each time you make a call, and wait for your bill to see if it was worth it

You may have to go through a foreign operator — when placing an international call you may need to speak to a foreign operator who does not speak English, are you confident that you would be able to place the call?

Final thoughts on using hotel phones

Although you may have been tempted to just take a chance with hotel and public phones, the reality is that it could prove to be more expensive, and a lot more hassle, than investing in your own international cell phone!

How The Mobal World Phone overcomes these problems:

Be contactable at a moment's notice -- because **you have The Mobal World Phone in your pocket**, you can be contactable anytime you need to be

Know exactly what each call is costing you -- with Mobal you can find out in advance exactly what every phone call you could possibly make will cost you, **so you never get a nasty surprise when the bill comes**

All support is in English -- you will never need to speak to an operator with your Mobal World Phone, but if you do need support, you can ring Mobal for free from your phone and **hear a friendly English voice, no matter where in the world you are**



"I never thought in my dreams that I could come across a deal like this, it is amazing! **Before I got my Mobal World Phone I would get crucified by the hotel phone rates.**" - Cedilio Ensley, UT

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Option #5

Using the Internet for free calls

The **benefit** of using the Internet to make calls:

- You can get free, unlimited calls to potentially any other computer with an internet connection

To make free calls using the Internet, you will need:

1. A computer with Internet connection
2. A headset, or microphone and speaker
3. The correct software to be installed on the computer (the most popular is called Skype and can be downloaded for free)
4. The person you want to contact must have the same set-up

This may seem complicated, but it is very popular and you may find that most Internet cafes are set up for you to make Internet calls. You will obviously have to pay for your time on the Internet, but if the person you want to contact also has the same set-up on their computer, you will be able to call each other for free.

What if the other person does not have the right set-up?

Using the Internet, you will be able to call normal cell phones and landline phones, but it will cost you. Using the most popular Internet calling company, Skype, you can register and buy credit in advance. However, your friends will not be able to call you on the Internet from an ordinary phone.

The problems with using the Internet to make calls

Using the Internet to get free calls may seem like the perfect idea, but it does have a lot of problems too:

You need to pre-arrange times to call — like using hotel phones, you will need to arrange a time when you and the person you want to speak with will be sat at a computer

You may not be able to find a computer with the correct set-up — although using the internet to make calls is growing in popularity, you may still find that computers you can access will not be set-up for making calls

The line quality can be poor — the quality of the line can differ completely, sometimes it may be better than using a normal phone, but other times it will be much worse. It also depends on the type of microphone and speakers installed, and the Internet connection of the computer

Final thoughts on using the Internet for free calls

Using the internet to get free calls sounds like a great idea, but you will need to make sure that the computer you plan to use has the correct software installed, and a headset (or make sure you take a headset with you), and you may not be able to make calls when you want to as you will need to prearrange times for your friends to be sat at their own computers ready for your call.

How The Mobal World Phone overcomes these problems:

Be contactable at a moment's notice — because you have The Mobal World Phone in your pocket, you can be contactable anytime you need to be

Your Mobal World Phone will automatically use the strongest cell phone signal — so you can be sure that your call quality will be the best available from where you are calling

With The Mobal World Phone, you always know that you can make a call exactly when you need to, which you will never be able to do if you rely on using the Internet.

"You definitely have the best plan going! I've traveled overseas quite a bit, but having **The Mobal World Phone will raise my wife's comfort level** when she accompanies me soon on her first trip outside the US." **Robert A. Kotche, MT**

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Option #6

Why all world phones are not the same

"World phone" is a general term that covers the following:

- An international cell phone that works in many countries using just one SIM card

Despite this general description, services offered by different companies can vary, so not all world phones are the same.

To show some of the differences between world phone options, you will see The Mobal World Phone's benefits, and how these compare to other world phones.

The Mobal World Phone costs just \$49 — other world phone options can start from about \$150

The Mobal World Phone has no fees other than for calls — other world phones can charge some sort of ongoing fees, either monthly or yearly, these can be as much as \$350 per year, before you even make a call

The Mobal World Phone works in over 140 countries — to date, you will not find a world phone that works in more countries than The Mobal World Phone

A Special Word Of Warning About Other World Phones!

Most other world phones use a complicated and often unreliable dialing method called a "Switch", but they don't often mention this in their sales literature.

Basically, it means you cannot directly dial the number you want to call.

They use a system of dialing where you must first call an access number, then follow instructions to dial the number you actually want. Then you have to hang up and wait for the system to call you back, when finally you should be connected.

This not only makes it complicated to place a call, it can also have a dramatic effect on the quality of the call, because it is relying on an extra technology in the middle.

With the Mobal World Phone you get none of these problems — you simply dial the number you want (obviously in the full international format), and you're automatically connected, like you would using your phone at home.

With the Mobal World Phone, you get the most affordable package available to travelers, both for purchase price, and because it has no other fees — you only pay for your calls!

"I don't think there is any service that compares to this one. The rate structure and the ability to use the phone in 140 nations are remarkable."
Dorothy Simms, OH




Learn more at <http://www.mobal.com/packingsecrets> (use this link to get a FREE international travel adapters set)

Conclusions — what the experts say!

As you can see, there are a number of different options, and in reality, only you can decide which option is best for you. However, below is a quick overview of the options discussed:

1. **Using your own US cell phone** — If you find that your own US cell phone can be used abroad then this could be the most convenient option for you, but make sure you find out what all the cost are, as you may have to pay extra fees, or for an upgraded handset.
2. **Renting a cell phone** — This used to be the best option if you did not travel enough to justify buying a second cell phone. However, today you can buy an international cell phone for as little as \$49 from Mobal, so rental is not cost-effective anymore.
3. **Using local SIM cards** — These are popular with travelers today because they advertise cheaper call rates, however, the cost to purchase everything you need can be expensive and cancel out any savings you make on getting cheaper calls.
4. **Using hotel and public phones** — These should really be used as a last chance option. Compared to using a cell phone they can be both expensive and inconvenient.
5. **Using the Internet** — You can get free calls using the internet, but you and the people you may want to call all need to be set-up in advance with the correct hardware and software. They also have the inconvenience of using hotel and public phones, you need to organize times to be contactable.
6. **Buying your own world phone** — As long as you choose a service that is cheap to purchase, and does not charge any extra fees other than calls, buying your own world phone -- like The \$49 Mobal World Phone with no extra fees -- can be the most convenient option.

Plus, the Mobal World Phone gets rave reviews from the travel experts:

Recommended by  msn

"After doing a bit of research we learned that Mobal's **prices ranked the lowest**. We think that Mobal is **the most cost-effective way to stay in touch** with friends, family and co-workers in the US while traveling abroad."

Recommended by  The Travel Insider

"The Mobal GSM World Phone has a lifetime phone number with no annual fee. **So what is the catch? There is no catch. And it gets better.** The phone service can work in over 140 countries. **This is a uniquely good deal.**"

Recommended by  Budget Travel

"Mobal's GSM World Phone works in over 140 countries with no minimums, fees or service charges. You pay only for calls you make. The Mobal GSM World Phone **comes highly recommended by seasoned travelers.**"

Recommended by **The Oregonian**

"The \$49 Mobal World Phone is worth its weight in roaming fees if you travel internationally. The only thing you pay for is the phone itself, delivery and the calling fees."

Recommended by  **THE WALL STREET JOURNAL**
ONLINE

"The Mobal World Phone is the convenient option for people who don't already have a usable phone. It costs just \$49 and works in 140 countries and comes equipped with a SIM card."

Recommended by **The Washington Post**

"I bought a Mobal World Phone about 18 months ago. It cost \$49. I have used it to call home from Italy, France and Thailand. I have been very pleased with the service."

Recommended by **Budget Travel**

"I've saved a lot of money buying The Mobal World Phone that works in 140 other countries. There's no monthly fee, and you pay only for the calls you make and receive."

Recommended by **visitBritain** 

"If you are planning to go overseas, it works out cheaper to buy The \$49 Mobal World Phone, rather than renting a cell phone."

Recommended by **Inc.**

"One alternative is buying The Mobal World Phone that requires no monthly fee or recurring charges."

Recommended by  **ITN**
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL NEWS

"This Mobal World Phone is a winner. In my view it is head and shoulders above phone cards. What a luxury to be on a ship going down the Nile and be able to make a call (clearly heard on both ends)."

Recommended by **Takin Travel**

"Our best tip is The \$49 Mobal World Phone. The best thing is that you can give your Mobal World Phone number out to loved ones back home, so when you are traveling and they need to get hold of you they don't have to worry about what hotel you are in, or what city you are in, or even what country you are in. They just call your Mobal World Phone."

Recommended by **TIME**

"Mobal's GSM World Phone costs just \$49, and can be used in 140 foreign countries. Calls are charged per minute, there are no monthly fees or usage minimums."

Recommended by **Frommer's**

"The lowest price I have found for a GSM world phone is through Mobal. There are no monthly or annual fees and unlike prepaid SIM cards, call charges are per minute in \$US and are debited from your credit card."

And rave reviews from travelers like you too...

"I have traveled extensively throughout the world for over 25 years and have flown over 3 million air miles.

I must say that the purchase of your Mobal World Phone has been the biggest improvement in my travels, ever!"

"Not only the security of having available communication in case of emergency, not only the convenience of using one phone number wherever I go, not only the elimination of having to tell my friends and family what hotel, what phone number, then try to be in the room at certain times to receive their call, usually missing most of them, etc.



All at a very reasonable cost and no contract.

Even when I am on a tour, I put into phone memory the tour director's cell number as well as the hotel number and so can wander off on my own without worry.

The only regrets I have is not buying it sooner. I saw the Mobal ad in an airline magazine ON THE WAY HOME from a month-long trip to China and Tibet. I surely could have used it on that trip !!

Also, Mobal is one of the few companies that I call where a live person answers the call and answers my questions every time ! I have told all of my travelling friends about it."

Best Regards,

Ray Schwartz, Memphis, Tennessee

“I love gadgets, but I never thought having a phone overseas was a necessity.

However, the Mobal GSM World Phone changed my mind!”

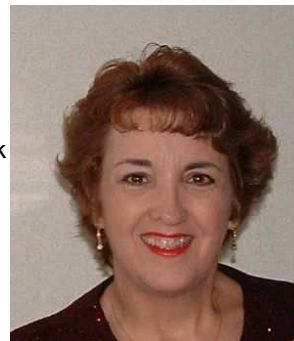
“I have used it on European cruise vacations and plan to carry it with me every time I go overseas.

It was very useful for checking in with friends and family back home, but I also used the phone to call for reservations, check with the airline when we missed a flight connection, and as a security blanket when touring. And family knew I was just a phone call away.

Unlike many other phones, the Mobal GSM World Phone works well in over 140 countries, and you never need to change the SIM card.

I recently used the phone easily (almost too easily) when calling the USA from Italy, France, Spain, and Croatia. Hotels often charge high prices to use their phones, so I liked not have to to buy a calling card or even look for a pay phone. Having family members able to call you is also good for those of us with aged parents or children back home.

The phone now sits in a desk drawer, costing me nothing, and waiting for its next opportunity to travel overseas. I'll just charge it up before my next trip, and we'll be off!”
Linda Garrison, About Cruises Editor



“With no monthly fees and virtually worldwide coverage

Mobal was the best option!”

“I travel extensively and was looking for an international cell phone that would work in most countries. I did extensive research on the various ways of obtaining cost effective, convenient international phone service.

With no monthly fees and virtually worldwide coverage Mobal was the best option. After using it in several countries as well as at home in Canada, I am very satisfied with the service. I also like the online account statement for tracking my charges.”

Angus Fraser, Canada



“Two American climbers had been ambushed and shot near the camp we were heading to...

... I turned on the phone for the first time and it was blessedly simple to use!”

I just returned from Mexico, and I wanted to say that the Mobal World Phone was a real, real benefit to our group of 10 climbers and guides.

As we were packing our gear into the trucks for the trip up to the 14,000' base camp of Pico Orizaba (Mexico's highest peak, at 18,600'), we learned that the day before, two American climbers had been ambushed and shot near the camp we were heading to.



Our guides called it quits before we even started, and all of a sudden our trip was cut short -- meaning we all had to change our flight departure dates. Before the 4-hour drive back to Mexico City, I turned on the phone for the first time and it was blessedly simple to use: no intermediaries, just dial the country code 001, followed by the phone number, and that was it.

A couple others bought phone cards, but they went through those quickly and sometimes a Mexican operator who wasn't bilingual got involved, and that was a hassle. So, I passed around the phone and we all made calls to change to our flights. That effort was 100% effective. It was an incredible convenience to be able to do with the Mobal while in a remote, god-forsaken village in rural Mexico.

Ted Alan Steadman from Outside Magazine

" Imagine how freaked out friends were when we casually phoned and said...

...Yeah, well we're in the middle of Maasai Mara surrounded by giraffes and wildebeest!"

At any rate, we wanted to let you know how incredibly well the whole setup worked. We thought we might get a weak signal in Nairobi.

Not only were we connected in Nairobi, we had a signal in the middle of every game park we visited.

Imagine how freaked out friends were when we casually phoned and said, "Yeah, well we're in the middle of Maasai Mara surrounded by giraffes and wildebeest."



More to the point, we wound up having to make critical phone calls to London in the middle of all this. We couldn't connect thru the internet but the phone worked just fine. Without it, we would not have been able to make crucial connections on an extremely important matter.

Yvette Cardozo, WA

Why not try the Mobal World Phone for your next trip...



60-day Money Back Guarantee

If you're not totally delighted with your Mobal GSM World Phone for any reason, return it within 60 days for a full, prompt, no-hassle refund.

Special gift if you act promptly!

Buy now and get a **FREE set of 5 PowerConnections travel adapters**, worth \$25. The set contains 5 high-quality electrical adapters, so you can charge your phone in any country in the world. The adapters come in a **sturdy carrying case**. You can also use the adapters with chargers for your other electricals -- such as your laptop, your digital camera or even your iPod! The set is essential for any world traveler. This **offer ends soon**, so buy now to avoid disappointment. **Choose your phone.**



Learn more at

<http://www.mobal.com/packingsecrets>