

Mobile phone communications in an emergency.

If you require emergency assistance, phone for help. **In the UK phone 999 or 112.**

For a medical emergency resulting from an accident or illness, ask the 999 operator for the police. The police are the emergency service of choice and not initially the ambulance service; this will ensure that the necessary actions and notifications are taken. This is because the ambulance service is equipped to reach urban locations, so if you are away from the road by much distance the ambulance service will need co-ordination with other rescue resources, which is initially organised by the police.

If you need to make an emergency call but have a poor or no signal, moving location by just a few feet can make a difference. Check the signal strength metre of the phone. Moving to a higher and a more open location will give a better chance of having a signal. Once you find a position with a signal, it's important that you stay in the same location. For most situations when you call 999/112, police or mountain rescue will need to call you back, so staying in the 'good signal' location means that anyone calling is more likely to get through.

If your phone is showing 'Emergency Calls Only', this means that it is camped-on to another mobile network. Being camped-on to another network is great in one respect, as you will be able to make a 999 call. However, if your phone remains camped-on to another network, you will not be able to receive incoming calls until back on your home network.

Be aware of this limitation when making the initial call, and advise the operator of such, as the police and/or Mountain Rescue Team will need to call you back. If someone else in the group has a phone that is not showing 'Emergency Calls Only', use their phone for the 999 call, as it will allow incoming calls. Police may also ask that you call back on another number after a set period of time (another use for pad & pencil).

If you have contacted police and not received a call back within 10 to 15 minutes, phone 999/112 again.

In the UK, 999 and 112 do the same thing, namely connect you to the emergency services. Neither number has priority over the other, and neither number provides location information better than the other. They are the same.

Phones showing Emergency Calls Only will not be able to send an Emergency Text/SMS.

Sending an Emergency Text

Even when a voice call is impossible, you may be able to squeeze through a text message to 999 referred to as Emergency SMS See below for Registration. **A voice call to 999 must always be used in preference to a text.** (This advice is from BT, who run the 999 and Emergency SMS functions.)

Using the Emergency SMS Service :-

To use the service, you just send a descriptive text – see example below - to 999 and await a reply. Do not assume that your message has been received until you receive a reply, which should be in 2 to 3 minutes.

999. If you do not have a signal on your home network, you will not be able to send a text to

Example of an emergency text:-



Registration for the Emergency SMS service

1. Send the word "register" to 999
2. You will receive a message about the service
3. When you have read the message, reply with 'yes' (in a text message to 999)
4. You will receive a further message confirming registration, or that there has been a problem with registering your phone

To check registration

At any time you can check whether your phone is registered by sending the word 'register' to 999.

Summary

1. In a medical emergency phone 999 or 112
2. Ask for the police so they can contact the appropriate emergency service
3. If your phone is showing 'Emergency Calls Only' you can send a voice message but not an emergency text. You can send but not receive unless you have a signal with your home network.
4. If you have a very weak home network signal, try sending a text to 999 on the Emergency SMS service
5. Include all the necessary information: Incident, exact location, group size, conditions, contact numbers, intentions.
6. Stay where you are to receive a reply, unless it is hazardous to do so.
7. Make a note of instructions or numbers to phone (carry a notepad and pencil).