

## **OPENING A GOOGLE VOICE ACCOUNT ~**

It costs nothing to sign up for a Google Voice account, and to use it. The phone number, the text service and other features, as we see below, are free. You pay only for the international calls you make, but calls to any phone in the US and Canada are free. There is one serious limitation though – you don't get Google Voice if you don't live in the US. Easiest way is to create a new Gmail email account and use the log in information to open your Google Voice. Watch the video at the end of this document ~ it shows how to set up Google Voice Account

### **One Number Rings All Your Phones**

When you sign up, you get one free phone number. You can decide which one of your phones rings, or does not ring, whenever anyone calls that number. For example, when your daughter calls, you want all your phones to ring, but when your business partner or boss calls, you want only the office phone to ring. Too bad if you are not there. And what if that annoying marketing agent rings? Maybe you'll want to have none of your phones ring.

But before getting to ring the phones you like, you just have a number, which can be something quite interesting and useful in itself. You can choose the area code and some other specific characteristics of the number you will be allotted. That number isn't attached to a SIM card on a mobile phone or a line, it remains yours whether you change your mobile carrier, you move to another state, or you change your phone.

Some people use their free Google Voice number as a mask to protect the privacy of their real number when it comes to giving a number to a group of people or the public. Calls to the Google Voice number will then be forwarded to your real number on the phone you like.

### **You Can Port Your Number**

This means that you can use your existing number and transfer it to your new Google Voice account. This service is not free, but it will be worth paying for those who don't want to notify all their contacts about a new number, or if their numbers are already displayed in public. It costs a one-time fee of \$20. Your existing number, which is handled currently by your carrier, will be handed over to Google, and you will have to get a new number from your carrier. There are number of issues relating to [number porting](#), like you might want to know first whether your [number is portable](#). You can also change your Google-given number to a new one, for \$10.

### **Make Free Local Calls**

Calls are free within the US and Canada, and you can call for free unlimited to any phone, be it landline or mobile, not just VoIP numbers.

### **Make Cheap International Calls**

Calls are free within the US and Canada, and you can call for free unlimited to any phone, be it landline or mobile, not just VoIP numbers. You can do that through your web interface or [smartphone](#). The rates are interesting to some common destinations, being as low as two cents per minute to some. You pay by depositing prepaid credit to your account.

## **Voicemail**

Whenever you don't take a call, the caller can leave a voicemail, which goes directly to your mailbox. You can retrieve it anytime you wish. This allows you to choose whether to take a call or not, and gives you the freedom to not take calls, knowing there is a way for the caller to leave a message. There is another feature that comes handy here – the call screening feature. When someone calls, you are given options to either answer the call or send the caller to voicemail. While they are through with the voicemail, you can change your mind and answer.

## **Voicemail Transcription**

This feature is taken as a flagship for Google Voice, maybe because it is so rare. It converts your voicemail (which is in voice) into text, which you can read in your mail box. This helps when you need to get the messages in silence, and also when you have to search for a message. Since you can't search voice (yet), you can with text. Yes, you will ask, as everyone does, about the accuracy of the transcribed text. Voice to text has never been perfect, even after decades, but it has improved. So Google voicemail transcription is not perfect, and can be quite funny at times, and annoying at others, but at least it is fun to have if it doesn't help.

## **Share Your Voicemail**

It's like forwarding a text messages or an email, but in voice. This is not multimedia messaging, but simple sharing of a voicemail message to another Google Voice user.

## **Personalize Your Greetings**

You can choose which voice message to leave to which caller. Google offers a lot of settings and options for this, so the tool is quite powerful.

## **Block Unwanted Callers**

Call blocking is a feature in most VoIP services. In your Google web interface, you can set a caller to the blocked state. Whenever they call, Google Voice will lie to them after the dramatic call-not-established beep saying your account is no longer in service or has been disconnected.

## **Send SMS on Your Computer**

You can configure your Google Voice account such that SMS messages to you are sent to your Gmail inbox as an email message, besides being sent to your phone. You can then reply to that email messages which will be converted back to an SMS and sent to your correspondent. This is free service.

### **Make Conference Calls**

You can hold meetings with more than two participants on Google Voice. You can do so using your smart phones as well.

### **Record Your Calls**

You can record any of your Google Voice calls by just pressing the 4 button during the call. This recorded file will be stored online and you can download it from your Google web interface. Call recording is not always simple and sometimes requires additional hardware, software or settings. The way Google Voice makes it easy, either for activating it or for storage, is really interesting. Read more on how to [record a call with Google Voice](#), and on other [call recording tools](#) for VoIP.

### **Use Google Voice Apps on Your Smartphone**

Google Voice has free apps for Android, iOS and BlackBerry phones. They allow you to manage your voicemails and transcripts and do some other stuff. Besides, if you use the phone's browser for accessing your account, you will no longer need a computer. Watch [this video](#) to be able to set up and get started with Google Voice.

### **Watch this VIDEO on how to set up a Google Voice Account**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BI0K\\_M7MKw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BI0K_M7MKw)