

Mobile Phone Features offered by Phone Companies to Individuals with Hearing Loss

Lucy Hinderliter B.S., Emma Freeman B.S., Linda Thibodeau Ph.D.

March 15, 2021



AT&T

Service plans:

<https://www.att.com/support/article/wireless/KM1207491/>

Real-time text (RTT): free app on your Android or Apple wireless phone “transmits text in near real-time enabling a conversational flow of communication, simultaneously, with voice and text.”

<https://www.att.com/support/article/wireless/KM1233824/>

Text Telephone (TTY): compatible wireless and wired phones “allow you to communicate back-and-forth with another person, also on a TTY device, by taking turns.”

TTY Compatible phones- <https://www.att.com/support/article/wireless/KM1207550/>

WebCapTel

<https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/7022116345.pdf>

Contact AT&T's National Center for Customers with Disabilities: For voice calls, 866-241-6568, or for TTY calls, 866-241-6567, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. PT.



Consumer Cellular

Service plans:

<https://www.consumercellular.com/shopping/choose/plan>

“AARP members receive a 5% discount on monthly service.”

FAQs:

<https://www.consumercellular.com/Help/plans-and-usage>

Contact:

Call: [\(888\) 345-5509](tel:8883455509)

Online Chat Feature: <https://www.consumercellular.com/contact>



T-Mobile

Service plans:

<https://www.t-mobile.com/support/plans-features/magentaand174-deaf-or-hard-of-hearing--data-only-plans>

FAQ for RTT: “allows consumers to send and receive instant transmission of text messages as they are being composed.”

<https://www.t-mobile.com/responsibility/consumer-info/accessibility-policy?filter=get-support>

Contact: Call: [1-800-937-8997](tel:18009378997), Accessibility Customer Care at [1-844-375-8107](tel:18443758107), or via TTY toll free at [1-877-296-1018](tel:18772961018)

TTY hours are from 4:00 a.m. - Midnight PST, daily.



Verizon

Service plans:

<https://myverizonid.verizon.com/aboutus/accessibility/nationwidemessaging.html>

Real-time text (RTT):

<https://www.verizon.com/about/privacy/accessibility/auditory-support#acc-item-439>

Verizon FAQs: covers compatible phones, RTT, video calling, closed captioning, and service plans

<https://www.verizon.com/about/privacy/accessibility/auditory-support#acc-item-457>

Assistive Devices:

[https://www.verizon.com/info/technology/assistive-listening-devices/#What Types of Assistive Devices Are Available](https://www.verizon.com/info/technology/assistive-listening-devices/#What_Types_of_Assistive_Devices_Are_Available)

Smart Home device: <https://www.verizon.com/smart-home/>

Contact: Verizon Wireless National Accessibility Customer Service Center
[1-888-262-1999](tel:1-888-262-1999) 8:00 am to 5:00 pm EST Monday – Friday

Compatible Mobile Phones for Hearing Aids and Cochlear Implants and their M-rating & T Rating

- Helpful website when buying a new device (phone, tablet, TV). <https://www.gari.info/>
 - Conduct a device lookup and it will tell you the accessibility features for that device.
 - Can view filter and view features for “hardware, hearing/speech, vision, dexterity, and cognition”.
 - Can filter devices that are compatible with specific apps.
- Devices with M&T ratings: <https://www.att.com/support/article/wireless/KM1207494/>

iPhone vs. Samsung Accessibility Features:

<https://www.apple.com/accessibility/hearing/>

<https://www.samsung.com/us/support/answer/ANS00085522/>

What’s accessibility features are available on most smart phones?

(These features will most likely be found under “Accessibility” in your phone’s settings.)

- Vibrate on Ring
 - Samsung will allow you to adjust the strength of the vibration.
 - Many phones will allow you to customize the vibration pattern.
- LED Flash for alerts (phone call, text message, alerts)
- Closed Captioning on videos.
- Bluetooth compatibility to connect your hearing devices to your phone for calls
 - In addition, iPhone has a remote microphone feature called Live Listen that is compatible via Bluetooth with hearing aids, cochlear implants, and Apple AirPods.
- Sound Recognition Feature allows the phone to continuously listen to sounds in your environment and alert you when a specific sound is detected (ex. Siren, smoke alarm, dog barking, knock on the door, water running, etc.)

Other Services:

- CapTel Phones: <https://www.captel.com/>

Suggested Phones with Accessibility Features and Strong M&T Ratings

- The “GARI” website displays accessibility features for hardware, hearing/speech, vision, dexterity, and cognition. The websites below list the accessibility features in detail and how to access those features for the individual phone.

Samsung Galaxy A11

<https://www.gari.info/findphones-detail.cfm?productid=5425&iframeid=>

<https://www.att.com/device-support/article/wireless/KM1388875/Samsung/SamsungSMA115A>

How to boost high frequencies:

<https://www.samsung.com/us/support/answer/ANS00080348/>

Apple iPhone SE (2020)

<https://www.gari.info/findphones-detail.cfm?productid=5524&iframeid=>

<https://www.apple.com/accessibility/hearing/>

How to boost high frequencies: <https://support.apple.com/guide/iphone/audio-visual-iph3e2e2cdc/ios>

Samsung Galaxy S21

<https://www.gari.info/findphones-detail.cfm?productid=6012&iframeid=>

<https://www.samsung.com/us/support/answer/ANS00085522/>

How to boost high frequencies:

<https://www.samsung.com/us/support/answer/ANS00080348/>

Google Pixel 5

<https://www.gari.info/findphones-detail.cfm?productid=5842&iframeid=>

<https://support.google.com/pixelphone/answer/6006564?hl=en>