



USING SKYPE FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Summary

Skype is a piece of software for computers that lets you communicate free with other Skype users via voice, video and “chat”.

Skype users can also call landlines and mobile phones at reasonable rates, and customers can call you on Skype using their own standard telephones.

Setting Up a Skype Account

Firstly you will need to download the Skype software from www.skype.com and install it on your computer. Once installed, you can open the software and choose a Skype user name - the name people will use to call you on Skype. For security you will also need to set up a password.

You will also need to check that your microphone and speakers are working, or that you have a headset plugged in.

Hardware and accessories

You may need to consider purchasing a headset, webcam, speakerphones or perhaps a special telephone handset to receive Skype calls away from your computer.

Skype calls

Voice calls between Skype users are simple and free. Skype also encrypts these calls, so they are considered to be secure.

Skype In - Telephone numbers

Skype In is an individual telephone number that lets you receive calls on Skype from anyone, anywhere in the world who is calling from an ordinary phone.

There are no extra fees or per-minute charges to receive the calls on Skype. But you do have to pay to use a SkypeIn telephone number yearly (around £35 per year).

A business can buy a telephone number local to where you live or local to where others live, making it easier (and cheaper) for your customers to contact you.

Skype Out

Skype Out allows you to purchase “credits” so that you can use Skype to call standard telephone numbers, anywhere in the world. Skype Out calls are cheap, and are often charged at the local rate of the telephone you are calling.

Skype Voicemail

For a small fee (around £10 per year) you can include **Skype Voicemail**, which will allow your customers to leave you message when you are unavailable to take the call. Skype Voicemail also lets you send voicemail messages to anyone on Skype

Call Forwarding

With call forwarding you can answer your Skype calls even when you're not online. You can receive your calls no matter where you are, be that away from home or traveling on the other side of the planet with no internet access. Forwarding calls to a landline or mobile is charged at SkypeOut rates.

Video Calls and Video

Skype software comes with video calling included, so as long as you (and the person you are talking to) have a webcam, you can use Skype's free video calls.

Conferencing

It is also possible to use Skype for conference calls, and hold conversations (even including video) with several people at one time.

Skype Prime

Skype Prime is a way to share advice, knowledge or services over Skype. You can set yourself up as a **call provider** and pass on your skills to other users, and earn money in the process (via PayPal).

Skypecasts

Skypecasts are large, hosted calls on Skype with up to 100 people participating from anywhere in the world. They let you join live conversations, connect with people and voice your opinion on subjects close to your heart. It's a bit like a “mini broadcast”.

SkypeFind

SkypeFind allows you to recommend your favourite local businesses to the Skype community. You can also find information about various businesses, a little bit like Yellow Pages. It's free for your business to be included.

Skype Business Extras

Skype Business Extras are tools and software often created by a 3rd party companies that integrate Skype into your existing enterprise solution.

Examples include Customer Relationship Management software, call centre applications, and meeting centre software, where you can connect to a contact's PC and share their desktop and file applications.