Guide on How to Read Your Phone Bill

Your phone bills can have charges that may be complicated and confusing.

This guide helps you understand your phone bill and the charges listed on it.

How to Read Your Phone Bill



Page 1 of 19

412-123-4567-89Y

Please make payment to ABC Phone Co.

June 4, 2002

And return this page with your payment

Due Immediately

Due Date July 3, 2002

3

Total Due

JOHN DOE

123 ANYWHERE ST.

APT H-3

ANYTOWN, PA 12345-1111

\$75.00

+25.00

\$100.00 4

Fill in Amount Paid

\$ _ _ _ _

PO Box 123

Baltimore, MD 12345

R74 030

How to Read Your Phone



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412-123-4567-89Y1- Account

June 4, 2002

2 - Billing Date

Number

Please make payment to ABC Phone Co.

And return this page with your payment

Due Immediately

3- Date Payment is Due _

Total Due

JOHN DOE

123 ANYWHERE ST.

APT H-3

ANYTOWN, PA 12345-1111

R74 030

7- For Company Use Only

\$75.00

+25.00

\$100.00 4-Total Amount Due

Fill in Amount Paid 5- Payment Boxes If there is a credit balance or a zero amount due. the boxes will not appear.

PO Box 123

6- Mailing Address

Baltimore, MD 12345

How to Read Your Phone Bill



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412-123-4567-89Y

June 4, 2002

This information is required by the Public Utility Commission. "Basic" service includes the line charge, local calling and TOUCH TONE service (if applicable). "Non-Basic" service includes optional services, other than TOUCH TONE, such as a maintenance agreement for inside wire, call waiting, caller ID or voice mail. This does not include toll services.

	Past Due Balances	Current Charges	Totals
BASIC	\$25.00	\$18.00	\$43.00
TOLL	\$15.00	\$5.00	\$20.00
NON-BASIC	\$35.00	\$2.00	\$37.00
TOTALS	\$75.00	\$25.00	\$100.00

The following pages provide additional billing details.

^{* (}Includes ABC Phone Co. and other service provider(s) charges.)

Basic Local Service

- ❖ Basic Local Service is a basic monthly charge for the dial tone that enables you to make and receive calls, and allows you to be listed in the telephone book, and get a copy of the directory. The fees associated with Basic Local Service include:
 - Federal line cost charge
 - PA relay surcharge
 - Federal universal service fund surcharge
 - Local number portability surcharge
 - 9-1-1 emergency service fee

Optional Services

- Optional Services may appear as miscellaneous charges on your phone bill. Make sure you are being charged only for those services you have authorized. Optional Services include:
 - Call Waiting
 - Caller ID
 - Voice Mail
 - Three-Way Calling
 - Maintenance Agreement of Inside Wiring

Local Toll Service

Or Regional Toll Service

- Local toll calls are made to places that are not close enough to be in your local calling area.
- The telephone calls may be within your region, but outside of your local calling area.
- Check your telephone directory's "Regional Calling Pages" for this information.

Extended Area Service

- Extended Area Service (EAS) expands customers' local calling area by allowing them to call additional adjacent exchanges for a flat fee, rather than incur long-distance charges assessed on a per-minute basis.
 - The size of the local calling area varies from company to company.
 - Availability is determined by affected local telephone companies and communities, and must be approved by the PUC.

Long-Distance Service

- Most consumers have a regular longdistance carrier, which bills you at the rates the company charges. Long-distance service includes:
 - In-state calls outside your calling region.
 - State-to-state calls.
 - International calls.

Long-Distance Dial Around Service

- Dial Around Service is when you manually enter another company's access code.
 - Dialing a number such as 10-10-XXX, then "1", the area code and the phone number.
 - That company will then bill you for the call based on its own rates and fees.
 - This charge may appear on your regular phone bill.

Pay-Per-Call Service

- Pay-Per-Call Service relates to calls such as 900 numbers.
 - Charges are set by the service providers, not the telephone companies.
 - The charges will appear on a separate page in your phone bill.

Directory Assistance

- There may be a charge for directory assistance calls.
 - Know what each company charges for directory assistance before placing a call.
 - If the directory assistance operator offers to complete the call for you, be aware that there may be an additional charge for the service.

Local Telephone Plans

- *There are various local telephone plans available to consumers. Contact your phone company to select the best plan for you.
 - Charge per Call
 - Local Calling with Allowance
 - Unlimited Calling

Protect Yourself from Billing Errors

- Review each page to identify each company billing you.
 - Look for companies you don't recognize.
- Analyze the rates charged to identify possible inaccuracies.
 - If you find inaccuracies, call the company listed at the top of the page that contains the inaccurate charge.

Protect Yourself from Billing Errors

- If billing problems are not corrected by company, call your Local Service Provider (LSP).
 - Follow the LSP's instructions and wait for the LSP to investigate.
- If you aren't satisfied, tell the LSP to remove the disputed charges from your LSP bill.
 - If the LSP refuses, call the PUC's Bureau of Consumer Services at 1-800-692-7380.

Consumer Protections

Scams

- Slamming
 - FCC Definition: "The illegal practice of changing a consumer's telephone service without permission."
- Cramming
 - FCC Definition: "The practice of placing unauthorized, misleading, or deceptive charges on your telephone bill."



If you are a victim of Cramming or Slamming...

- Contact your Local Service Provider (LSP).
 - Register your complaint and ask to be reconnected to your chosen provider or have charges removed from bill.
- Contact the company that you were switched to or that placed additional unordered services on your bill.
 - Explain that you will not pay the charges for these services.

If you are a victim of Cramming or Slamming...

If the company or LSP is unable to help you with your problem:

- File a complaint with the PUC's Bureau of Consumer Services at 1-800-692-7380 or go to www.puc.state.pa.us
- If slammed by a long-distance company, you should contact the FCC.



Who to Call...

If you suspect fraud or misleading information:

- Contact the Office of Attorney General, Bureau of Consumer Protections
 - 1-800-441-2555 (within Pennsylvania)
 - **-** 717-787-9707
 - www.attorneygeneral.gov