

19 SMS - Mobile Premium Services

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- Get information
- Be entertained
- Have fun
- Be aware of what you are buying

Mobile Premium Services – What is it?

There are many informative, entertaining and fun services you can buy from sending an SMS message to a 19 number: news, weather, ringtones, games etc.

They are called 'Mobile Premium Services' or '19 SMS services' because you buy them using your mobile phone, you receive them on your mobile phone, and you will be charged a premium cost for them.

19 SMS services are more likely than not to be subscription services. Whatever you are buying – such as a ringtone - you will in all likelihood be signing up to receive more than one and to pay for more than one.

Providers of 19 SMS services are bound by a set of rules governing how to advertise the services, what information needs to be provided to consumers including how to unsubscribe and opt-out.

This fact sheet sets out what you can expect when you buy a bona fide 19 SMS service.



Advertising

19 SMS services can be advertised on TV, the internet, via mobile phone*, in a newspaper or magazine, by scratch cards, or any other advertising medium.

The advertising rules require that 19 SMS service advertisements prominently set out whether it is a subscription service and clearly set out pricing information.

* 19 SMS services can only be advertised via SMS by your current mobile service provider or content providers with whom you already have an existing relationship – otherwise this is SPAM.



AWARENESS TIP 1

Read the advertisement. If it is a subscription, and you don't want more than one or to incur the costs of a subscription, then take no action in response to the advertisement.



Subscribe

If you understand that you are buying a subscription service, and the costs you will be charged, then you can subscribe by sending an SMS to the 19 number (+key word).

You will receive a confirmation message, for which you will not be charged, confirming that you have entered into a subscription arrangement and confirming the costs.



AWARENESS TIP 2

Read the confirmation message carefully. Do not delete the confirmation message.



You will be billed through your mobile service provider, even though the actual services or content will have been provided by a content provider. If you have entered into a subscription service then the details for the content provider will be included in the confirmation message you receive and in some cases, on your bill.

If you have a postpaid account, your mobile phone bill should contain details and the 19 number of the service.

If you have a prepaid account, the charges will automatically come out of your account.



AWARENESS TIP 3

Check the details and amounts on your bill. If you wish to dispute them, follow the procedures for getting help in this fact sheet.



You can stop or cancel a subscription service at any time by texting STOP to the 19 number for the service. You will then receive a free confirmation message confirming that you have been unsubscribed.



AWARENESS TIP 4

You can stop the subscription at any time by texting stop. Note that there are no minimum contract periods.

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Help



1. If you have issues with your 19 SMS service, or are having trouble unsubscribing, then you should call the content provider using the Helpline number provided in the subscription confirmation message or on your bill. Quote your mobile phone number and the 19 number for that particular service.
2. If your query or request for help has not been addressed, then call your mobile service provider.
3. If you still need help contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) www.tio.com.au or 1800 062 058

Tips



Before you opt-in to any service:

- **CHECK** what you are actually purchasing
- **CHECK** the cost of the service
- **CHECK** if it is a subscription or one-off
- **CHECK** if your phone is compatible
- **CHECK** the terms and conditions
- **ASK** questions if you are unsure
- Keep **RECORDS** of what you opt-in / opt-out for.
- Text '**STOP**' at any time to cancel

19 Service Finder



If you cannot locate the Helpline number for the 19 SMS service that you are subscribed to, or would simply like to know more about the service itself, then this tool will assist you with obtaining details about the content provider, including name and Helpline number; and the service itself, including pricing, campaign dates and frequency of billing.

Simply go to www.19sms.com.au and enter the 19 number and appropriate dates to obtain the information you require. It's as easy as that!

✗ Scams

Unfortunately there are also scams which may trick you into sending an SMS to a 19 number in the expectation that you will be buying a legitimate 19 SMS service.

This is a scam because you were misled or tricked into buying a service. It is not a bona fide 19 SMS service because the first reply should have asked you to confirm that you were buying the service, and required you to send a second SMS opting-in.

You will help yourself if you can spot a scam in advance. You will also help yourself, other consumers and the telecommunications industry if you report scams and tricksters to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) www.accc.gov.au or 1300 302 502

✗ Spam

If you receive an unsolicited SMS that advertises a service, or invites you to subscribe to a service, you may have been spammed. Don't delete it – report it to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) www.acma.gov.au or 1300 850 115

EXAMPLE OF A SCAM

An advertisement says to send an SMS to see if you have won a prize. When you do, the reply message says that you have received 7 ring tones. You continue to receive the ring tones, and are billed for them, despite texting 'STOP'.