



INFO SHEET N°12

WhatsApp

The complete guide for seniors

Messages, calls, photos, groups, lists — everything you can do with WhatsApp, explained simply.

WhatsApp is the most widely used messaging app in the world. In Switzerland, it is the number 1 way to stay in touch with family and friends. This sheet explains everything — from the basics to advanced features — so you can use it fully and safely.



What you can do with WhatsApp



Text messages

Send and receive written messages — free of charge, in Switzerland and abroad



Free calls

Call anyone in the world with no extra charges



Video calls

See your loved ones' faces live — perfect for grandchildren



Photos & videos

Share your photos instantly with the whole family



Voice messages

Record and send your voice — ideal if typing is difficult



Groups

Chat with several people at once — family, friends, club



Broadcast lists

Send a message to several contacts without creating a group



GPS location

Share your location in real time with a loved one



Installing WhatsApp — step by step

Installation on Samsung (Android)

1

Open the Play Store

Search for "WhatsApp" — the green icon with a white phone. Tap "Install".

2

Open WhatsApp and enter your number

Select  +41 and enter your number without the leading 0. e.g. 79 123 45 67

3

Confirm by SMS

You receive a 6-digit code by SMS — enter it. WhatsApp often confirms automatically.

4

Add your name and photo

Enter your first name (and last name if you wish). Add a photo — your contacts will recognise you more easily.

5

Allow access to contacts

WhatsApp asks to access your phone contacts — accept. This lets you see who in your address book already uses WhatsApp.

Essential actions

Send a message

Tap the pencil  → choose a contact → type your message → tap the green arrow  to send.

Make a call

Open a chat → tap the phone  at the top right → the call starts automatically.

Video call

Open a chat → tap the camera  at the top right → your camera activates.

Voice message

In a chat, press and hold the microphone  → speak → release to send.

Send a photo

Tap the paperclip  → choose "Gallery" → select your photos → send.

Create a group

Tap the 3 dots  → "New group" → add your contacts → give the group a name.

WhatsApp vs SMS vs classic call

Feature	 WhatsApp	 SMS	 Classic call
Text messages	✓ Free	~ Included in plan	✗ Non
Voice calls	✓ Free	✗ Non	~ Included in plan
Video calls	✓ Free	✗ Non	✗ Non
Photos & videos	✓ Free	~ Limited (MMS)	✗ Non
Voice messages	✓ Free	✗ Non	✗ Non
Groups	✓ Oui	~ Limited	✗ Non
Abroad	✓ Free	✗ Very expensive	✗ Very expensive
Requires internet	✗ Oui	✓ Non	✓ Non



What you need to know



End-to-end encryption

Your messages are encrypted — only your recipient can read them. Even WhatsApp cannot read them.



Read receipts

The two blue ticks ✓ ✓ mean your message has been read. You can disable this in Settings.



Lock WhatsApp

Enable fingerprint or PIN lock in Settings → Privacy → Fingerprint lock.



Backup

Enable automatic backup in Settings → Chats → Chat backup to never lose your messages.



SeniorPhone tips

→ Use **voice messages** if typing on the phone is difficult — hold the microphone and speak

→ Enable **notifications** so you never miss messages from your family

→ In a group, you can **mute notifications** if it is too active — tap the group name → Mute

→ Increase text size in Settings → Chats → Font size

→ Use **broadcast lists** to send the same message to several people without creating a group

→ WhatsApp Web lets you use WhatsApp from your computer — very handy for typing long messages

WhatsApp scams

-  If someone sends a message saying "Mum/Dad, I have a new number" — verify by calling the old number before replying
-  Never click on a link received on WhatsApp from an unknown person — even if it looks official
-  WhatsApp will never ask you to pay anything or give your verification code
-  If someone asks for a 6-digit code received by SMS — it is an account theft attempt, refuse

Key takeaways

- WhatsApp = messages, calls, video, photos — all free via internet.
- WhatsApp calls abroad are free — perfect for family overseas.
- Voice messages are ideal if typing is difficult.
- Never share your verification code with anyone.
- Enable fingerprint lock to protect your account.

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Safety — Essential reminders



Never share your passwords or codes with anyone

Not by phone, not by email, not by SMS. Your bank, the police and operators will never ask for them.



Hidden number — do not answer

A hidden number deliberately conceals its identity. Hang up without hesitation.



Unknown number — avoid answering

Let it ring, wait for a voicemail, call back only if necessary. Never call back a 0900 number.



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