

Switch phones, the smart way

HOW TO MOVE ON Migrate your contacts and files from your old phone to your new – with ease

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Microsoft is here with Windows Phone 8. Blackberry OS 10 is around the corner. A new Android version pops every now and then. Apple iOS6 is still spanking new. Now, what happens when you dump one old phone for one of the new ones? It is not easy when you have files, contacts, applications and photos to manage in the age of smartphones. It is not like in the 90s, when limited choice and memory made migration not much of an issue.

This week we guide you on how to move from one operating system to another. We assume you are switching from one smartphone to another and between one of the more popular platforms such as Blackberry, Anroid, iOS or Windows. We are talking of Symbian, Bada or other platforms, which we hope to discuss some other time.

Apart from a sound Internet connection (preferably wi-fi), we need a couple of free software apps in your toolkit: Google Sync (which is now available for all platforms) and Dropbox, which offers free storage. You need a Gmail account to use Google Sync. You can download Dropbox for your mobile phones or PC and can sign up for a 2GB account free. You need to pay for more storage.

STEPS TO SALVATION

1. Connect your current phone to the Internet using wi-fi (preferable) or 3G
2. Download and install Google Sync (from the Google site) and Dropbox (from Dropbox.com) as applications
3. Once the apps are downloaded, set up your accounts and create logins for both apps.
4. Depending on the number of your contacts, the sync (synchronization)



time can be anywhere between 10 minutes to a long wait. So find a slot when you will really not need your phone and can leave it plugged into the charger. For me, when I am about to sleep is the time I start my "set sync."

5. Set up Google Sync to sync all the contacts from your phone to the Gmail Server (network computer). This can also synchronise the calendar of your phone to the servers. When you wake up in the morning, both your calendar as well as your contacts will be up there in "the cloud" on the Internet. Think of it like a cloak room at a railway station you use to pick up your luggage when switching trains.

6. Give yourself a few hours before synchronizing your photos—which are heavier files. In your Dropbox app, go to the "Uploads" tab, where you need to press the Plus icon and select photos from your photo album by putting a check mark on each. Press upload. Now, depending on the size of the data that you have and the Internet speed available, this may take a full night, or maybe even a full day and night. But rest assured, all photos will be uploaded to your Dropbox account if you have space.

Get the new handset, and repeat the steps outlined above. Since your new phone is empty, it will sync contacts

faster and in case the new phone is an Anroid, which is from the Google stable, it will automatically do this without your having to download a Google Sync app. In Google Sync, there is a Button Called Sync, it will not only upload contacts to Google but also download contacts that are on your google contacts. Also, when you are getting your images from Dropbox, you can (in my opinion) just leave them there in Dropbox and just access it from the Net when you need them. You can also open the Dropbox app, browse to the folder that has your pictures, and then press to download them. In Dropbox, there is a Button called Upload, but when you come to downloading you will need to select each image and press Save to Photos

The sync process helps you manage your content across devices without using a computer or having to go across to your local gizmo store. You can also upload content from memory cards to the Dropbox site. If your phone does not accept the memory card, you can upload the content after loading the card on your PC. Remember, using the cloud helps you because you can easily share it on social media sites.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR SMARTPHONE RUNNING SMARTLY

Our smartphones are increasingly becoming indispensable, so here are a few tips to keep your constant companion running smoothly

- 1 Make sure that at-least once a week you finish the battery on your smartphone till it actually dies. Only after it dies, put it for charging. This will ensure your smartphone battery has a longer life.
- 2 Always use genuine chargers. Now, I know you can buy compatible chargers from different accessory companies - and even from small time vendors while your vehicle gets a breather at a traffic signal - but the charger is an electronic device conditioned for your phone. Though all chargers may look like USB ones, the voltage rating on each is different.
- 3 Always ensure your phone is dry. If you drop water on your phone or are worried it may have got wet, immediately disconnect it, power it off, and keep it in a bag filled with silica gel packets or rice (uncooked) to take away the moisture.
- 4 Do not install applications from unknown sources. Sure, there are various friends who will tell you they can give you a game for free, or that local store chap who can put in some songs for you, but, not only does this expose your phone to virus attacks, but they can also copy data off your phone.
- 5 Always make sure that your phone has a backup. Depending on how frequently you use the phone, you could backup daily, weekly or every 30 minutes, using the sync tools I talked about in this article.