

## ENQUIRER exclusive tips on making the best deal



**C**ELL PHONES have become indispensable for most Americans – but the cost of going mobile puts a huge dent in many families' budgets.

The ENQUIRER has uncovered simple strategies you can use to dramatically cut your cell phone costs.

"Go online for the best deals – it's as simple as that," says expert Allan Keiter, who runs the independent Internet advice site *MyRatePlan.com*.

The rate plans among cell phone companies are usually similar, but the difference in the cost of phones is where customers can save big bucks, says Keiter.



Allan Keiter

You can get a much better phone, much cheaper on the Internet, experts say. Often, Web sites will ACTUALLY PAY YOU to use certain phones. Because online retailers don't have the overhead of physical stores, they will almost always have the best prices, says Keiter.

Web retailers, who work independently from brand name companies, make their money through commissions paid by phone carriers when new customers sign up for one of their rate plans – and they are often able to give away phones for free.

What's more, with incentives such as free minutes and rebates – you can often MAKE money on the deal!

Dave Frame, an executive with leading online retailer *LetsTalk.com*, told The ENQUIRER: "The only thing we can't offer is instant gratification – but if a customer is willing to wait a couple of days and buy online, they save a lot of money."

The ENQUIRER has compiled a few tips to help you get the best cell phone deal:

■ Before you buy, check out online comparison sites – like the two mentioned previously – that list the best deals for your specific needs.

■ When you buy online, print the terms and conditions of any rebates at the time the order is placed. Don't throw away your packaging – you may need the UPC to get your rebate!

■ Family plans (2-5 phones) are a good way to save money – additional lines can cost as little as \$10 each per month. And make sure you sign up for all additional lines at the time of purchase. Depending on the carrier, adding lines later is often surprisingly more expensive than starting out with multiple phones on a new account.

■ Stuck in a pricey contract and want to avoid the early termination fees? Try swapping your plan with other people on Web sites like [www.celltradeusa.com](http://www.celltradeusa.com) or [www.cellswapper.com](http://www.cellswapper.com).

■ Don't forget that coverage areas can vary, so all the major carriers offer a minimum two-week trial period to make sure the service will work where a subscriber needs it.

■ For a family with teenagers, it's a good idea to look at family rate plans that offer unlimited texting for the whole family. This feature usually costs about \$30 a month on top of the standard plan. It may seem like a lot, but per-message texting costs can add up quickly.

■ And what about the hottest phone on the market, Apple's new iPhone? Don't bother looking for a deal because it's generally not possible to get anything cheaper than the standard price of \$200 per phone and AT&T's relatively pricey monthly plan of at least \$60 a month.

Do you know of a great way to live better for less money? Tell us your dollar-stretching idea and if we publish your suggestion, we'll pay you \$50. E-mail your idea to: [savemoney@nationalenquirer.com](mailto:savemoney@nationalenquirer.com).

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# ON YOUR CELL PHONE!