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You've enjoyed a great day out – shopping, grabbing a coffee with friends, maybe a quick stop at the park to walk the dog. But then as you walk into the house, you have a sudden panicked feeling ... where is your cellphone?

According to a recent [study](#) by Lookout Labs, \$30 billion worth of cellphones and mobile devices were lost in 2011. That's a lot of hardware that ends up somewhere, possibly in the wrong hands.

Life gets complicated when you lose your phone or if it's stolen: All of your contacts, your calendar appointments and many of your photos. It's a central hub of communication and entertainment in your life.

It's also a central hub of [finance](#) in your life and if your phone was stolen, the thief could do a lot of [harm](#) to your credit score. Here are just a few ways your phone can put your credit at risk:

- Your phone contains a lot of identification information that can be used to impersonate you. That information can be used to then open new accounts in your name.
- If you've ever [shared](#) your financial information (such as a credit card number) with a friend via email or text, it may be available in the communication history or sent folder.
- Your phone may contain shopping apps that hold your credit card information on file so you can shop quickly and conveniently again.

- Your phone may contain banking apps that allow you to quickly access your bank account to get account balances or to pay bills.

While all of this is convenient, it's also a lot of information about you that could potentially destroy your credit if someone got hold of it.

What You Can Do

- Avoid including this information on your cellphone in the first place.
- Don't do your [banking](#) on your cellphone; don't do your shopping on your cellphone. This can be difficult and sometimes even nearly impossible due to the mobile age we live in, but it is the easiest solution to keeping your identity safe.
- Don't store financial information on your phone.
- Adjust the security settings so that you have to re-enter your credit card every time you want to make a purchase. (Not all apps allow you to do this but take advantage of them if they have that option!)
- Download an app that allows you to locate your lost phone. And, if necessary, try to get an app that can "wipe" your phone remotely so that others can't access your information.
- Put a password on your phone. A good one.
- Keep the contact information of your credit cards and banks handy. This way you can contact them and tell them to temporarily disable access to your account if your phone is missing.

These aren't all fool-proof methods of security but together they provide a pretty good layer of protection in case your phone goes missing.