How to Get Your
WhatsApp Business Number

Your complete guide to going live on WhatsApp

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You've decided your business needs to be on WhatsApp. Smart move. But what number do you actually use? This guide walks you through every option so you can get set up quickly and start engaging customers on the channel they already prefer.

> WhatsApp has over **2 billion active users** worldwide and achieves a **98% message open rate** compared to just 20% for email. If your business isn't on WhatsApp, you're missing the channel your customers use most.

Understanding the Two WhatsApp Business Platforms

WhatsApp Business App is the free app designed for small businesses and sole traders. You can download it from the App Store or Google Play, and it supports up to five devices on a single number. It gives you access to a business profile, quick replies, greeting messages, and a product catalogue.

WhatsApp Business API (also known as the WhatsApp Business Platform) is built for larger businesses that need advanced automation, CRM integration, multi-agent access, and the ability to send messages at scale. The API doesn't have its own interface - you access it through a Business Solution Provider or a platform like Flowella that connects it to your existing tools.

Both platforms require a phone number, and both support mobile numbers, landline numbers, and Meta-generated numbers.

Option 1: Use a Mobile Number

This is the simplest and most common route, particularly for small businesses and sole traders. You can use any mobile number that can receive an SMS or phone call for verification. This includes a dedicated business SIM, a spare personal SIM, or even your existing personal number.

How to set it up:

   1. Download the WhatsApp Business App from the App Store or Google Play.

2. Open the app and agree to the terms of service.

3. Enter your mobile number when prompted.

4. WhatsApp will send a six-digit verification code via SMS. Enter the code to verify.

5. Complete your business profile with your business name, category, description, address, website, and opening hours.

6. You're live and ready to start receiving messages.

Things to keep in mind:

A phone number can only be registered on one WhatsApp application at a time. If your mobile is already linked to personal WhatsApp, you'll need to migrate it to WhatsApp Business.

For this reason, most businesses opt for a separate, dedicated mobile number. A pay-as-you-go SIM card is a low-cost way to get a dedicated business number.

Option 2: Use Your Office Landline

This is an underused option that works brilliantly for established businesses. If your customers already know your office phone number, using it for WhatsApp means they can reach you on a familiar number through a new channel. The key difference is that landlines can't receive SMS, so you'll need to use the voice call verification option.

How to set it up:

1. Download the WhatsApp Business App.

2. When asked for your number, enter your landline number (including the country code).

3. WhatsApp will attempt to send an SMS. Wait for the timer to expire.

4. Select "Call Me" to receive the verification code via voice call.

5. Answer the call on your landline and note down the six-digit code.

6. Enter the code in the app to verify your number.

7. Complete your business profile as normal.

> **Things to keep in mind:**
>
> WhatsApp Business doesn't support phone extensions, so the number needs to ring through to a direct line.
>
> If your office phone system uses an IVR or automated attendant, you may need to temporarily disable it so the verification call comes through cleanly.
>
> Incoming WhatsApp messages come through the app, not the phone line. Voice calls to the number still work as normal.

Option 3: Use a Meta-Generated Number

This is the newest option and one that many businesses don't know about yet. Meta now offers free phone numbers that you can use exclusively for WhatsApp Business. These are sometimes referred to as "555 numbers" because they use a US +1 country code with a 555 area code. This option is available through the WhatsApp Business API (not the standard Business App).

How to set it up:

1. Set up a Meta Business Portfolio (formerly Facebook Business Manager) with your business information completed.

2. Connect to the WhatsApp Business API through a Business Solution Provider.

3. During the sign-up process, select "Get a free WhatsApp number provided by Meta".

4. Follow the prompts to create your WhatsApp Business Account and Business Profile.

5. Submit your display name for approval.

6. Once approved, you're ready to go.

> **Things to keep in mind:**
>
> Meta-generated numbers always have a US country code (+1), regardless of where your business is based.
>
> These numbers are automatically verified, so there's no need to receive an SMS or phone call.
>
> They cannot be migrated between WhatsApp Business Accounts, so plan your setup carefully.
>
> A great option for getting started quickly with the API without needing phone hardware.

Option 4: Use a Virtual Number

Virtual phone numbers are cloud-based numbers that aren't tied to a physical SIM card or phone line. They're managed entirely online and can receive calls and SMS via the internet, making them a flexible option for businesses that want a professional number without additional hardware. Several UK providers offer virtual numbers compatible with WhatsApp Business, often from around ten pounds per month.

How to set it up:

1. Sign up with a virtual number provider that supports WhatsApp registration.
2. Choose your preferred area code and number.
3. Configure call routing so you can receive the verification call or SMS.
4. Register the virtual number in the WhatsApp Business App or through the API.
5. Follow the same verification steps as above.

Things to keep in mind:

Meta has restrictions on some VoIP numbers, particularly US-based ones. Always confirm WhatsApp compatibility before committing.

Keep the virtual number active, as you may need it for re-verification in the future.

Virtual numbers let you establish a local presence in different regions with local area codes.

Which Option Is Right for Your Business?

	Best For	Cost	Setup Time
Mobile	Sole traders, small businesses	Low (SIM card)	Minutes
Landline	Established businesses	Already have it	Minutes
Meta 555	Quick API setup	Free	15-30 minutes
Virtual	Maximum flexibility	From ~£10/month	30 minutes

Getting Your Number Is Just the Beginning

Having a WhatsApp Business number is the foundation, but the real value comes from what you do with it. Most businesses set up their number, create a profile, and then wait. They treat WhatsApp like a phone line, hoping customers will message them.

The businesses seeing real results are the ones proactively engaging customers on WhatsApp from the moment they show interest - and that's where **Flowella** comes in.

Flowella connects your existing forms to WhatsApp, transforming static form submissions into dynamic WhatsApp Flows.

• When a prospect fills out a form, they're immediately engaged in an interactive WhatsApp conversation
• Conversations qualify interest, answer questions, and move prospects towards a decision
• Every interaction syncs directly to HubSpot - contacts created, properties updated, data enriched
• Your team gets full context for follow-up without any manual data entry
• You capture WhatsApp numbers for future marketing with 98% open rates

Need help setting up your WhatsApp Business number?

If you'd like a hand getting your WhatsApp Business account up and running, we're here to help. Whether you need advice on which number option is right for your business, assistance with the technical setup, or guidance on connecting WhatsApp to your CRM, our team of consultants can walk you through the entire process.

Simply drop us an email at **hello@discoverdigital.com** and one of our consultants will be in touch to get you started.

Ready to go live on WhatsApp?
Visit flowella.io to connect your forms to WhatsApp Flows
with direct HubSpot integration.