

How To Securely Erase Your Phone Before Selling It Or Giving It Away.

Android

To securely erase your Android device you can either:

1. Encrypt your data and then erase everything using Android's Factory reset option
2. Or you can download one of several Android apps from the Google Play Store that are made to securely erase Android devices.

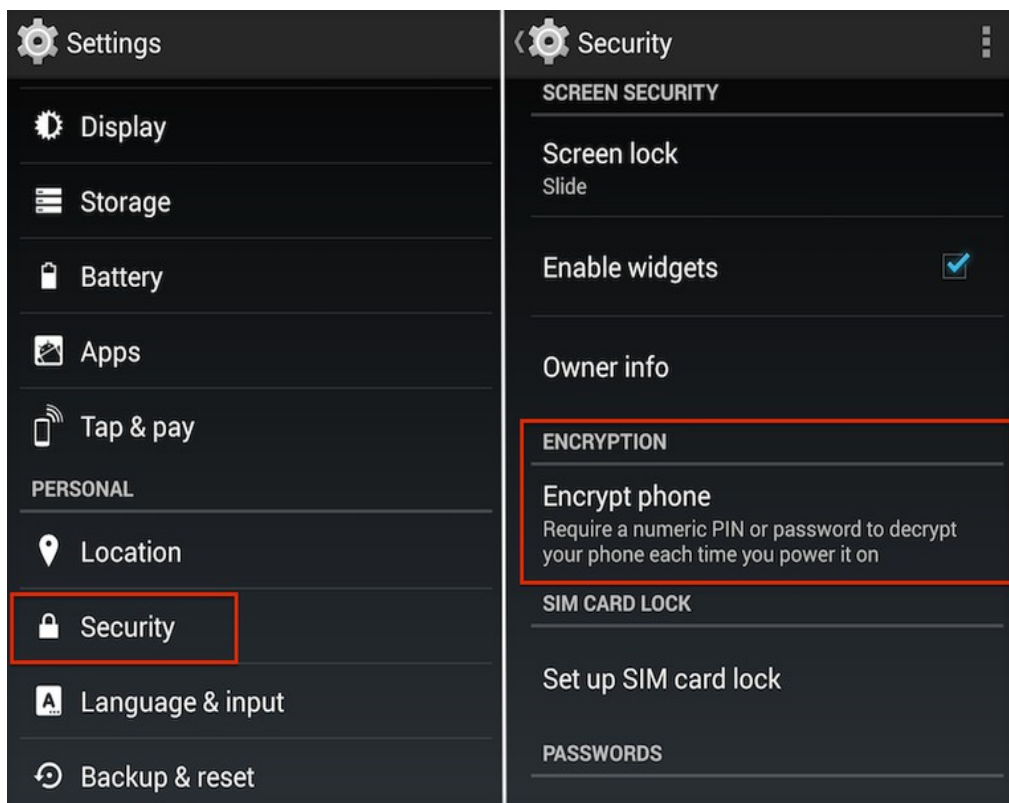
Encrypt Data, then Erase

Android 3.0 and later has a setting that will encrypt all the data on the Android device with an encryption key generated from a user-provided passcode. The encryption process will scramble the data on your device and make it unreadable without the key.

After this, then a factory reset will delete the key along with everything else, rendering the data unreadable if somebody still does manages to retrieve it.

Step one: Encryption

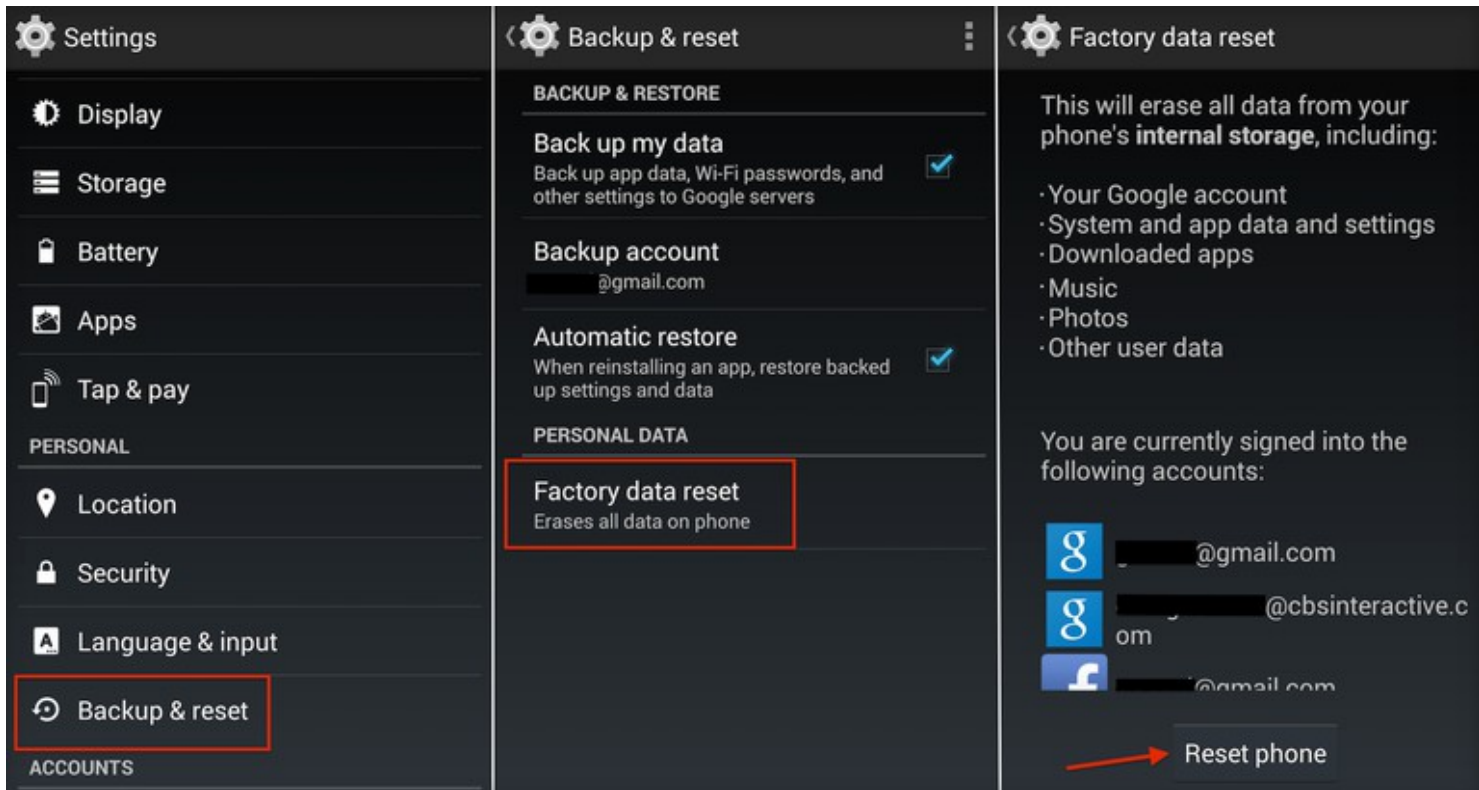
To encrypt your device enter **Settings**, click on **Security**, and select **Encrypt phone**. The feature may be located under different options on some devices.



(Warning: Encryption is irreversible on Android, so once you have enabled encryption the only way you can disable it is by deleting all your data by doing a factory reset.)

Step two: Perform a factory reset

The next thing you do is perform a factory reset. This is done by selecting **Factory data reset** in the **Backup & reset** option in the settings menu. You should be aware that this will erase all of the data on your phone and that you should backup anything you do not want to lose.



You are done. Your data has now been securely erased.

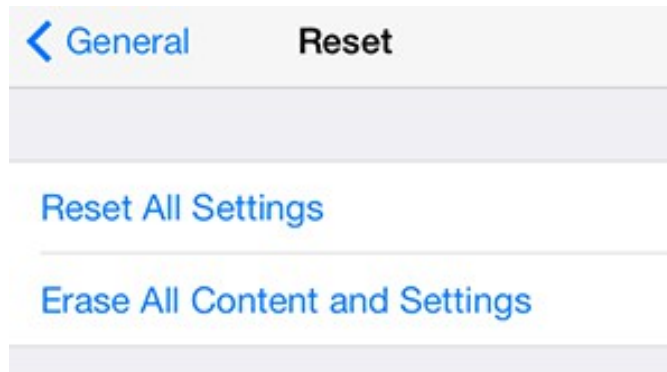
Use an App from Google Play Store

Alternatively you can install an app from Google Play Store that is designed to securely erase your data.

Two notable ones are: [avast! Anti-Theft](#) and [Nuke My Device](#).

Apple iOS (iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch)

To securely erase your iOS device go to **Settings > General > Reset > Erase all Content and Settings**.



Your data has now been securely erased.

Apple already has hardware encryption on its devices so all data on the phone is automatically encrypted. So when an iOS device is erased, the encryption key is securely deleted leaving all the data on the phone unreadable even if recovery software is used.