

SAFETY FIRST!

When your phone says "No service" and "Emergency calls only":

What does it mean?

by International Mountain Connection

Hi, I'm Michelle Onofrey with International Mountain Connection. Welcome to Safety First!

When we go into the mountains, most of us keep our cell phones with us and sometimes it's because we want to use an application or take photos, but most of us keep our cell phones with us just in case. In case we need to make a phone call because we need help.

Unfortunately, it's not always that easy.

Sometimes we have a connection, sometimes we don't, and sometimes our phone says "emergency calls only" or even "no service". It can be a little bit confusing.

So in this video, I'm going to talk about what services you actually have when you have a phone connection (signal) when you have an internet connection (signal), when your phone says "emergency calls only" and when it says "no service".

I can't say that I'm the most tech-savvy person, but I thought I understood. After talking to a mountain rescue professional, I understood that I didn't actually understand. So, in this video, I'm going to explain it all.

Remember, if you're having difficulty understanding me, you can turn on the captions or the subtitles, and those are the words that you see on the bottom of the screen, or you can download the transcript and that link is available in the description box below.

So let's start by talking about your phone connection.

And this provides 2 services: you're able to make phone calls and send text messages.

And these messages are SMS messages and this stands for Short Message Service.

I looked up on the internet exactly what it was, what it meant, and what kind of service we needed to be able to send and receive these messages and I will give you the simplified version.

To send an SMS you do not need the internet. You do not need an internet connection.

And I'm going to leave it at that. It was a little bit complicated.

So with your telephone provider, obviously you're able to make phone calls, but depending on where you live, you might have to pay extra to be able to send SMS or text messages. Remember when you're sending an SMS to keep it short. You only have a certain amount of characters and when you go past that, it becomes an MMS and for that you do need a data plan and you do need an internet connection.

But for what we're talking about right now, is your phone service with a phone connection, where you are able to make phone calls send simple text or SMS messages.

Now for your internet connection. This gives you access to applications like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, any kind of an application where you need an internet connection to be able to interact and to be able to view what's going on.

Just remember that if you are wanting to send an MMS a Multimedia Message[ing] Service, then you DO need an internet connection and an MMS can be an image, it can be a short video, an audio clip, or it could be a website link.

But for all of these things, you do need an internet connection.

Without an internet connection, you CAN find your GPS location. If you don't know how to do that, I have a video on that subject.

All you have to do is click up here, or you can look in the description box where there is also a link.

So, to sum it up! When you have an internet connection, you have access to applications like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and you can also send and receive MMS messages.

These are the most obvious black and white situations.

The next part is where things get a little bit interesting and there's a little bit of confusion and people don't really have a lot of good information.

So what does it mean if your phone says "Emergency Calls Only"? Well, remember, with your phone service, you have a phone provider, and with that phone provider, you are using their towers to be able to make your phone calls, right?

Well, if you are in a situation where your phone says, "Emergency Calls Only", that means that your specific provider does not have a tower in the area.

You do not have a signal to your provider, however, there is the signal of a competitor in the area.

Which means that maybe, um, another company named FREE, for example, has a tower in the area.

So you are able to make an emergency phone call. You're not using your provider's tower, but you're using another phone provider's tower.

And this doesn't mean that you can call grandma or your girlfriend, what it means if you're in the States, you can dial 911.

If you're in Europe, you can dial 112.

And if you're in France, you can dial 112, 15, 17, or 18.

So you are able to use another service provider's tower to be able to make these phone calls. It doesn't mean that you're using your specific provider, it just means that you have access to something else.

Your phone is in the same area or range of another provider. And just remember, you cannot call your aunt, your brother, your girlfriend, your child.

The only people that you can call are emergency numbers.

If this is what it means when you have "Emergency Calls Only" on your phone, what does it mean if it says "No Service"?

Well, if your phone says "No Service", I'm sorry, but it means that you cannot make phone calls, you cannot send text messages, and you do not have an internet connection.

And this is a point where a lot of people get confused because they think that even if their phone says "No Services", they can still contact emergency services and this simply isn't true.

If your phone says "No Service", you do not have a tower near you, using your provider or somebody else and you do not have an internet connection.

So you are not able to contact anyone.

If unfortunately you end up in this situation, my best advice would be to either try to go up higher in the mountain hoping that you can catch the signal of another tower or go in the direction of the nearest town or village if you know where that is.

But unfortunately if your phone says "No Service" you have no phone calls, no internet connection, and no way to send a text message. Not good.

Thank you for joining me. And if you would like to know when the next International Mountain Connection video comes out, all you have to do is click on the subscribe button and the bell.

And remember, why trust International Mountain Connection with your English training?

Because Brian isn't in the kitchen. He's in the mountains!

See you soon, bye!