

What are the differences between push, text, and email notifications?

GoSafer Security Knowledge Base

This operational reference is organized for GoSafer Security customers and staff. Alarm.com product names are retained where required for technical accuracy.

Overview

Notice: Text-based notifications to AT&T subscribers were degraded on August 15, 2025, due to changes in how AT&T handles messaging. For phones with AT&T, it is recommended to set up Push Notifications. For more information about configuring push devices and notifications, see [Configure mobile push notification devices](#). For Canadian customers, text based notifications to Bell subscribers will be degraded on December 31, 2025, due to changes in how Bell handles messaging. For phones with Bell, it is recommended to set up Push Notifications. For more information about configuring push devices and notifications, see [Configure mobile push notification devices](#). Notification method performance can vary based on factors such as the device in use (e.g., iOS, Android, etc.) or your network provider. For more information about configuring notifications, see [Configure notification recipients](#).

Platform	Mobile App
Content type	Troubleshooting
Source last updated	2025-11-24

Procedure

Step-by-step guide: Screenshots and videos are placed with the instruction they illustrate.

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For Canadian customers, text based notifications to Bell subscribers will be degraded on December 31, 2025, due to changes in how Bell handles messaging. For phones with Bell, it is recommended to set up Push Notifications. For more information about configuring push devices and notifications, see [Configure mobile push notification devices](#).

Notification method performance can vary based on factors such as the device in use (e.g., iOS, Android, etc.) or your network provider.

For more information about configuring notifications, see [Configure notification recipients](#).

Push notifications

Note: It is recommended to use push notifications over other notification types (i.e., text and email) as push notifications offer several benefits. For more information about configuring push notifications, see [Configure mobile push notification devices](#).

Push notifications are sent from the Alarm.com server directly to the Alarm.com app. As long as your device has a strong and consistent internet connection, push notifications should arrive within a few seconds after being sent.

Push Notification
Push Notification

Note: A thumbnail image will only display in a push notification if the user is logged into the Alarm.com app.

Benefits

Benefit	Description
Push notifications are actionable	Since push notifications are received using the Internet, they can be actionable. This means you can tap on the notification to be instantly brought within the Alarm.com app, or send commands directly from certain notifications (e.g., closing a garage door that was left open, answering the doorbell, etc.). Note: On iOS, actions may require a long press to be visible. The following is an image of a garage door push notification: Push Notification iOS Push Notification iOS The following is an image of a video doorbell push notification: Push Notification Doorbell iOS Push Notification Doorbell iOS
It is clear where the notification came from	Push notifications come directly from the app, so the app logo and name are prominently displayed. This provides an extra layer of trust, knowing the information is coming directly from the app, and is not a spam notification.
Push notifications allow for Critical Alerts (iOS)	Critical Alerts are special notifications that are sent even if the customer's phone is on Do Not Disturb. For more information, see Configure Critical Alert notifications. For Android, customers are able to choose to override Do Not Distrurb within the App's Notification settings.

Benefit	Description
Video notifications are better with Push	Push notifications can be set up to send either plain text or thumbnail images for certain notifications (e.g., video clips). Links within push notifications will bring you to a specific place within the app. If the notification indicates that motion has been detected, the link will redirect to the camera's live view. If the notification indicates that a clip has been uploaded, the link will redirect you directly to the saved clip.
Push notifications have customizable sounds (Android)	Android allows customers to change which sound plays for their notifications. For more information, see Can I choose which sounds play when push notifications are received? .
Push notifications do not depend on your carrier	While text notifications may be susceptible to low signal or carrier messaging delays, push notifications only rely on a data connection. Whether the connection is on cellular data or a local wifi network, push notifications arrive quickly.
Push notifications can be sent to all of your devices	Push notifications allow you to stay connected across all your devices, including tablets and smart watches.
Pause notifications	Allows you to pause push notifications directly from the notification.
Continuous enhancements	Allows continuous enhancements as iOS and Android functionality evolves.

For more information about configuring push notifications, see [Configure mobile push notification devices](#).

Text notifications

Note: It is recommended to use push notifications.

Text messages can be sent two ways depending on the type of event that triggers it. Text messages are sent from the Alarm.com server to a phone number using a non-data portion of the cellular network (i.e., SMS) and a low-level data network (i.e., MMS). These messages should arrive within seconds of being sent out.

Note: Limitations with your cellular carrier's infrastructure can cause inconsistencies, delays, or possibly prevent delivery entirely.

Text messages are not actionable and therefore are not compatible with *Unexpected Activity* notifications. For more information about Unexpected Activity Alerts, see [Configure Unexpected Activity Alert notifications](#).

Cellular provider service plan conflicts can occur with T-Mobile customers, Canadian cellular plans, and less common cellular carriers. It is also possible to block the *From* address in your phone, which prevents delivery of these notifications. This process changes based on the device in use and it is recommended to contact the cellular provider for assistance.

Note: The alert sound for text notifications may be customizable if this is a feature the phone's operating software supports.

SMS (Short Message Service)

SMS is limited by the length of the message and can only contain plain text. Since the file size is very small for these messages, these can be received with only a connection to the cellular carrier voice network (no data access required). This type of notification is recommended if you have inconsistent access to Cellular data connections.

SMS
SMS

MMS (Multi-Media Service)

Note: T-Mobile and Verizon users cannot receive multimedia attachments (i.e., video clips and thumbnail images) and instead receive SMS messages with links to the same content. These links are only available to Verizon and T-Mobile users for 72 hours. If the link expires, use the

Alarm.com app to view the video clip. It is recommended to use push notifications. For more information, see [Push Notification Benefits](#).

MMS can contain media in the form of video and pictures (e.g., thumbnails, video clips, etc.) and therefore requires a connection to a data section of their cellular carrier. MMS notifications are sent to your *Email to SMS* address which is based on your cellular provider.

Important: A data connection is required to receive all contents of an MMS notification and send times can be inconsistent due to file size, processing time, the Cellular Provider, or potential SPF conflicts.

MMS
MMS

Note: Some carriers may have restrictions that prevent Alarm.com from delivering SMS notifications or limit the ability to attach video clips to messages. The use of video features may also incur data charges by your cellular provider. For more information about SMS limitation see [Customer is not receiving notifications](#).

Email notifications

Note: It is recommended to use push notifications.

Email notifications are delivered from the Alarm.com server directly to your email inbox using an internet connection. Since they are sent to an email inbox, they can be viewed from any device with an internet connection and access to the inbox.

Email apps/clients may provide the ability to receive a push notification when a new email arrives. However, these push notifications will redirect you to the email in your inbox instead of Alarm.com.

Depending on your email provider, you may have different experiences with potential spam and junk filters. Email notifications can accidentally go to a spam or junk folder based on personal filters and email-provided filters that have been created. For more information, see [What can I do if someone is not receiving notifications?](#).

The alert sound for email notifications may be customizable if the device being used to view the notifications supports this ability. Alert sounds for email notifications may vary based on the device in use.

Example: The Gmail application will have different alert sound options for computers and mobile devices.

Email Notification
Email Notification

Source and support

For GoSafer Security assistance, visit gosafersecurity.com.

Original Alarm.com reference:
https://answers.alarm.com/Customer/Website_and_App/System_Management/Notifications/What_are_the_differences_between_push_text_and_email_notifications

Always verify safety, installation, compatibility, and current UI details against the original manufacturer documentation before operational use.

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