

Top 8 Places You Can't Get Cell Reception



POSTED BY: JAKE BUCKLER MAY 3, 2019

Where are some places where you can't get cell phone reception? Stuart Sweet and I were discussing this just the other day. One of the first places he and I thought of was Chernobyl, the abandoned nuclear power plant in Pripyat, Ukraine. The place was the site of a catastrophic nuclear accident in 1986 that caused the deaths of many and poisoned the area with radiation. Despite this cataclysmic disaster, internet sources say that the town has had effective cellular coverage with 3G data speeds since 2017!

As I was flabbergasted by this news but was even more shocked to learn that there's even some cell phone reception in Antarctica. This made me wonder if there's anywhere where you can't get cell reception? As it turns out, I had to do a lot of research to come up with places that I'm pretty sure have no cellular reception. I say "pretty sure" because

if you can get reception in Chernobyl and Antarctica, you might be able to send and receive calls anywhere on earth.

Without any further ado, here are the top eight places you (probably) won't get cell phone reception:

1. Nearly Every National Park

America's many natural parks offer views of nature in all its pristine beauty. What these areas don't offer is cell phone reception. When you enter many of the country's designated national parks, you can kiss your cell phone service goodbye. I believe federal law prohibits cell phone towers from being constructed inside these parks' vast boundaries. It makes sense if you think about it. A gigantic cell phone tower jutting up above the tree line doesn't exactly scream "Mother Nature."

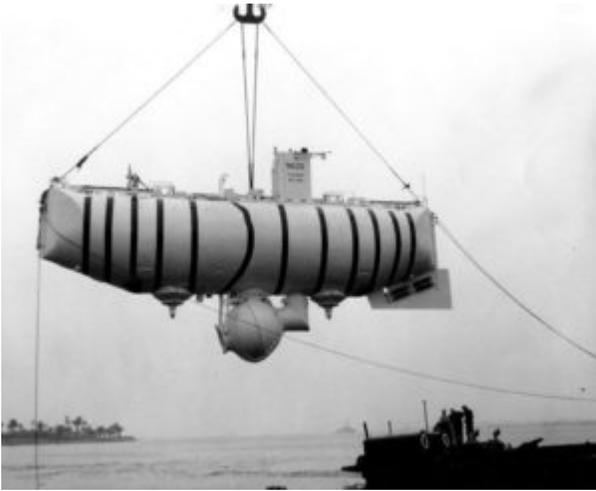
Here's a short list of national parks that are long on amazing views but dead short on cellular service:

- Big Bend National Park (TX)
- Joshua Tree National Park (CA)
- Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge (AK)
- Napali Coast State Wilderness Park (HI)
- Sequoia National Park (CA)

2. Mount Kilimanjaro

This dormant volcano rises roughly 16,100 feet above Tanzania. While people climb this mountain as a personal challenge, they don't have cellular reception on their journeys. Because the mountain is so high, many climbers risk getting altitude sickness on the way up the mountain. (This has claimed the lives of many climbers over the years.) Because of these dangers and the remoteness of the location, it seems unlikely that any wireless carrier would risk putting cell towers there. Climbers can probably expect similar experiences on Mount Everest, K2, and other popular mountains.

3. The Mariana Trench



Located in the Pacific Ocean near Japan and The Philippines, this is the deepest natural ocean trench in the world. If you tried to go to the bottom to make a cell phone, you wouldn't get any signal. Cell signals don't transmit through the water. In fact, you couldn't get to the bottom of the trench without being crushed by the extreme water pressure encountered down there.

I suppose you could explore the Mariana Trench inside a specialized submarine. If you did, you couldn't make the call either because a submarine is a Faraday cage. That's an enclosure such as a cage or mesh, that blocks electromagnetic fields and radio frequencies. Since cell phones operate using radio frequencies, the person inside the submarine would be cut off from communicating with the outside world.

4. MillerCoors beer vats (Irwindale, CA)

Have you ever seen one of those gigantic vats that belong to the MillerCoors Brewing in Irwindale, CA. Those gigantic metal canisters are so big that someone could actually live in one as a hip and trendy micro apartment kind of thing. (Granted, it would pose an extreme interior decorating challenge, but it could be done.) While that vat might make a good home, the person who lived there wouldn't have any cell phone reception. Because the vats are made of metal, it would basically be a Faraday Cage, as noted above.

5. Centralia, Pennsylvania



Have you heard the story of Centralia, PA? It was a thriving coal mining town until the vast vein of coal beneath it caught fire in 1962. That fire chased out more than one thousand residents, and it continues to burn beneath Centralia to this very day. Now, only about seven people still live in the town, making it the least-populated municipality in the entire state. Since the town has basically been a burning death trap for decades, I'm pretty sure there are no cellular towers exist inside Centralia's non-existent zip code.

I honestly can't guarantee that Centralia is one big cellular dead zone. There are cell phone towers in the nearby towns of Mr. Carmel, Ashland, and Girardville. Since I don't know any of the seven or so people who still live there, I can't be sure that these towers transmission beams reach into the area. Does anyone want to volunteer to travel there so I can give you call? Before you say "yes," keep in mind that people and animals have severely burned by steam after falling inside hidden holes in Centralia's burning ground.

6. Green Bank, West Virginia

Most people have never heard of this small town in West Virginia's Pocahontas County. Maybe because it's located in the national Radio Quiet Zone. This 13,000 square-mile region is home to the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, which is home to the world's largest radio telescope. Scientists use it to study radio emissions from space. (Is there anybody out there?)

Since a cell tower would interfere with that huge telescope, Green Bank does not allow any wireless connectivity at all. The town's policy is enforced with specialized equipment that detects the signals of unauthorized electronics. On the off chance that you might be

visiting Green Bank in the near future, you won't have any wireless communication at all. Sorry not, not sorry, I guess?

7. Tikaboo Valley (Lincoln County, Nevada)

Are you a U.F.O. buff with a burning desire to spy on Area 51? (I know I am.) Tikaboo Peak is the closest place to legally do this. (The mountain is roughly 26 miles east of the highly-guarded military base.) To get there, you have to hike through the Tikaboo Valley, which is a vast desert area with no cellular reception. I'm guessing there are no cellular towers in this area for two important reasons:

1. It's extremely remote.
2. There's a top-secret military installation nearby.

I'm curious about Area 51 but not enough to make this trek. It just too dangerous. I'd have to climb a mountain in a remote desert. If I fell, twisted my ankle, or ran into another emergency, I'd miles away from help with no way to call for it. As Randy Jackson once said on American Idol, "That's a no from me, dawg."

8. Amish Country (Southwest, Ohio)

Nearly everyone has an idea of who the Amish are, right? They're a unique group of Christian fundamentalists who shun the conveniences of modern technology. Because of this, one might expect to find "Amish country" devoid of any cell phone reception. For the most part that's true. If you're driving through some of the traditionally Amish areas of southwest Ohio, your reception will go in and go out.

According to one cell phone user's online account, here are some possible dead zones in Amish country:

- The outskirts of Findlay, Ohio
- Areas between Hayesville and Nashville via OH-60
- Nashville to Millersburg via OH-60
- Millersburg to Charm via OH-60, OH-557
- No service from Charm to Farmerstown

As far as "studies" go, this one has its limitations. It was made by one person with one cellphone and one wireless carrier. All we know is where his carrier did and didn't

perform in areas of southwest Ohio. He reported getting good cell service overall. That's hardly surprising considering the number of cell phone towers in the surrounding areas.

Add to Our List of Dead Zones

I have to admit that Stuart and I came up with this list in the spirit of "Fun Friday." That's not to say that there aren't other dead zones around the world, though. Can you think of any? If so, feel free to list them in the comments section below. You'll probably surprise me with your answers. I mean, if you can get cell phone reception in Chernobyl and Antarctica, you can get it practically anywhere. At least that's how I see it.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jake Buckler

Jake Buckler is a cord-cutter, consumer electronics geek, and Celtic folk music fan. Those qualities, and his writing experience, helped him land a copywriting gig at Signal Group, LLC. He also contributes to The Solid Signal Blog.