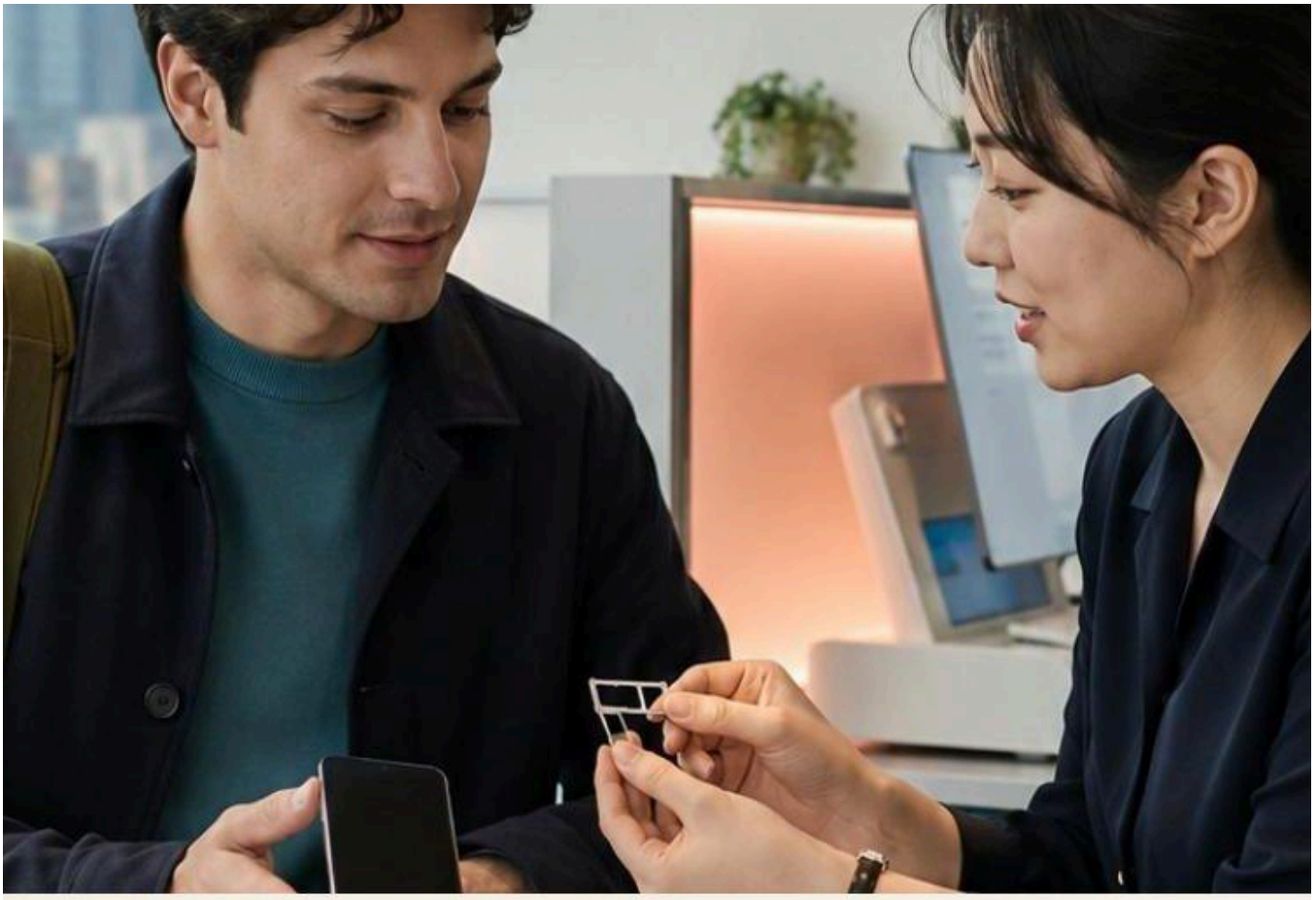

Settle. Seoul

PHONE & IDENTITY · INDIVIDUAL ARTICLE PDF

Your phone becomes part of your identity.

In Korea, a phone number is more than connectivity. Once properly linked to your identity, it can unlock banking, delivery, reservations, and online services.

Settle Seoul 2027 · Reviewed October 2026 · Read online: www.settleseoul.com/articles/your-phone-is-your-identity

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Contents

1. From landing to a number in your own name
2. Three kinds of plan, three different jobs
3. Set up verification with patience
4. Why the verified number matters
5. When it still will not verify

> Links in this PDF open the official source or the online guide. Opening hours, prices, programmes and access rules change — confirm with the responsible operator before you travel.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Choose a plan that can remain active beyond the first month.
- Ask how the subscriber name will match your residence record.
- Do not assume every prepaid or tourist SIM supports local verification.

Adapted from the Settle Seoul 2027 digital edition, pages 13, 14.

Official routes: Easy to Find Practical Law · Seoul banking guide · Seoul Foreign Portal.

THE THREE STAGES

From landing to a number in your own name

Most newcomers move through three phone set-ups. Knowing which stage you are in explains why some apps work and others refuse you.

1. **Before you fly** — Check your handset is unlocked and supports Korean bands and eSIM. Arrange a data eSIM or airport SIM so maps and messages work on landing.
2. **Arrival to ARC (first weeks)** — Use a passport-registered prepaid line. Expect data, calls and texts to work, but many identity checks (본인인증, bonin injeung) may fail.
3. **After your residence card** — Move to a plan registered to your ARC, or update the existing line with your ARC number. Ask whether you can keep the same 010 number.
4. **Activate verification** — Once the line is in your name, set up PASS or the carrier's identity service, then banking, delivery and government apps.

> **Keep one number**
> Banks, employers and apps store your phone number. Changing it later means updating every account, so choose a line you can keep.

CHOOSING A PLAN

Three kinds of plan, three different jobs

Compare the type of plan before comparing prices. The cheapest arrival option is not always the one that can grow with you.

Tourist data eSIM / SIM

- Quick to buy before departure or at the airport.
- Often data-only or a temporary number.
- Usually cannot be converted to your ARC or used for 본인인증.

Foreigner-friendly prepaid (알뜰폰 MVNO)

- Budget operators reselling major networks, often with English sign-up.
- Can usually start on a passport and update to an ARC later — ask first.
- Check which network, data speed after the allowance, and top-up method.

Major carrier postpaid (SKT, KT, LG U+)

- Widest shop network and handset deals.
- Generally needs an ARC and a Korean bank account or card.
- Read contract length, device instalments and early-termination fees.

Ask before you pay
“Can this line be re-registered to my residence card, keep the same number and pass mobile identity verification?” A clear yes matters more than a small monthly saving.

PHONE & DIGITAL IDENTITY

Set up verification with patience

The exact workflow depends on your phone company, visa record, bank, app, and the spelling of your name.

Before choosing a plan

- Check handset compatibility and whether the device is unlocked.
- Ask whether the plan supports identity verification for registered foreign residents.
- Confirm contract length, early termination rules, and required payment method.

Name matching matters

- Use the same identity details held by immigration.
- Small differences in spacing or ordering can interrupt automated checks.
- Ask the provider to show how your name is stored if verification repeatedly fails.

PASS and similar services

- These services can provide mobile identity checks where supported.
- Eligibility and onboarding can vary by carrier and residence record.
- Use the carrier's current guidance rather than an old online tutorial.

If verification fails

- Re-check the phone subscriber name and residence-card details.
- Try the service's foreign-resident support route.
- Keep a second way to pay or book while the issue is corrected.

Common snag
Do not repeatedly alter spellings across services. First identify which record is authoritative, then align the others to it.

WHAT IT UNLOCKS

Why the verified number matters

A line in your own name is the key many everyday services ask for. Set them up in this order once verification works.

Money

- Mobile banking and transfer limits.
- Simple payment apps such as Kakao Pay or Naver Pay.
- Card registration for online shopping.

Everyday life

- Delivery and shopping apps (Coupang, Baemin).
- Restaurant, clinic and taxi bookings.
- Membership sign-ups at gyms and study cafés.

Official services

- Government and insurance portals that accept mobile verification.
- Customs PCCC registration for overseas orders.
- Employer and university systems.

Useful Korean
본인인증 (bonin injeung) — identity verification · 명의 (myeong-ui) — the name an account is registered in · 번호이동 (beonho idong) — keeping your number when you switch provider.

TROUBLESHOOTING

When it still will not verify

Work from the record that is hardest to change — usually your residence card — outward.

1. **Compare three records** — Write down your name exactly as it appears on the ARC, the carrier account and the failing app. Look for order, spaces and middle names.
2. **Fix the carrier record first** — Ask the shop or support line to update the subscriber name and ARC number so they match immigration's record.
3. **Retry with the correct option** — Select the foreigner (외국인, oegugin) option where offered, and enter your ARC number rather than a passport number.
4. **Use a fallback** — Many services offer card, email or in-branch verification. Keep cash or a foreign card for the gap.

Lost phone?
Report it to your carrier straight away and lock the SIM; the number protects your banking and identity apps.

Settle Seoul article PDF. Editorial guidance, not legal, immigration or medical advice — confirm requirements with the responsible office (1345 Immigration Contact Center, HiKorea). Photographs credited by name are by the photographer named. Corrections: support@settleseoul.com · Read online · www.settleseoul.com/downloads