



# Google Account Recovery & Subscription Cheatsheet (Android)

*A companion guide to our Apple ID cheatsheet — for anyone locked out of a Google Account, especially helpful if you're assisting a family member or client through the process.*

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## Part 1: Google Account Recovery

### Before You Start

- Try to recall **any** old passwords, approximate account creation date, and devices/locations previously used to sign in — Google's recovery flow asks for these and rewards accuracy.
- If a **recovery phone number or recovery email** was ever set up on the account, recovery will go much faster and more reliably.
- If the account is a **work, school, or Google Workspace/family-managed account**, standard self-service recovery may not apply — you'll need the organization's administrator instead. Check this first, since it changes the whole approach.

### How to Start Recovery

1. Go to [g.co/recover](https://g.co/recover) (best for accounts that were changed/compromised) or the standard account recovery page.
2. Enter the email address or phone number tied to the account.
3. Follow the verification prompts — Google will offer methods based on what's set up on the account: a trusted device confirmation, a code sent to a recovery phone/email, or questions about account history.
4. If a verification method fails, look for "**Try another way**" — this reveals additional options one at a time rather than all at once.

## ⚠ Key Differences From Apple's Process

- **There's no guaranteed wait-time email with a specific restoration date.** Google doesn't commit to a fixed window the way Apple does — recovery can be nearly instant if your answers check out, or it can stall if they don't.
- **Familiar devices and locations matter a lot.** Attempting recovery from a device/browser/network previously used to sign in significantly improves the odds of success. If possible, do the recovery attempt on the person's own phone or home Wi-Fi rather than a new device.
- **Accuracy over speed.** Google is evaluating whether you look like the real account owner — one careful, accurate attempt works better than several rushed or guessed ones. Repeated wrong answers can hurt your chances rather than help.

## What Happens During Recovery

- Follow each verification prompt carefully — old passwords, recovery codes, and account history questions (e.g., approximate account creation date, frequently emailed contacts) are all used to confirm identity.
- Once verified, you'll be prompted to set a new password immediately.
- After regaining access, check **Security > Recent security activity** for anything unfamiliar, and sign out of any unrecognized devices under **Security > Your devices**.

## Tips If You're Helping Someone Else

- Have the person's phone or computer on hand if it's ever been used to sign into the account before — a "known" device genuinely helps.
- Don't let the person attempt guesses repeatedly on their own if they're prone to frustration or forgetfulness — it's better to sit down together and go through the flow once, carefully.
- Unlike Apple, there's no specific date to plan around, so it's worth checking back periodically rather than waiting for a notification.

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## Part 2: Subscriptions on a Second Google Account

**Common scenario:** someone gets locked out, a family member sets up a *new* Google Account to get the device usable again, and pays for a subscription (Google One, YouTube Premium, an app subscription, etc.) under that new account.

## ⚠ Important: This Does Not Work Like Apple

Unlike Apple's Migrate Purchases feature, **Google Play subscriptions cannot be transferred between Google Accounts**— even when both accounts belong to the same person. There is currently no official migration tool. Don't spend time looking for one in Settings; it doesn't exist.

## What To Do Instead

1. **Check whether the billing is really through Google Play**, or through the app/service itself. Some apps (Spotify, streaming services, etc.) manage their own accounts and billing separately from Google Play — in those cases, you may just need to log into the *same app account* on the original device rather than dealing with Google at all. Look at the receipt or the app's own subscription settings first.
2. **If it is a genuine Google Play subscription:**
  - Let the current billing cycle run out, or cancel it (Play Store > Payments & subscriptions > Subscriptions).
  - Once the original Google Account is recovered, resubscribe under that account.
  - There's no way to "carry over" the time already paid for — this is a real loss if the subscription is cancelled mid-cycle, so if possible, let it ride out the paid period rather than cancelling early.
3. **Avoid setting up subscriptions on a "temporary" account in the future** where possible — if a new Google Account is truly meant to be short-term, it's better to hold off on subscriptions until the original account is confirmed working again.

## Bottom Line

|                                      | Apple                                         | Google                                                     |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Purchase/subscription migration tool | Yes (one-time, with eligibility requirements) | <b>No official tool</b>                                    |
| Workaround if not eligible           | Cancel & resubscribe on original ID           | Cancel & resubscribe on original account (the only option) |
| Paid time already spent              | Preserved via migration if eligible           | Lost if cancelled early — let it run out if you can        |

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## Quick Reference Timeline

| Step                                             | What Happens                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Start recovery                                   | Go to <a href="https://g.co/recover">g.co/recover</a> or the account recovery page, enter the email/phone |
| Verification                                     | Follow prompts: trusted device, recovery phone/email code, or account history questions                   |
| If a method fails                                | Click "Try another way" for additional options                                                            |
| No fixed wait time                               | Recovery can be fast or slow depending on how well recovery info matches                                  |
| After recovery                                   | Check recent security activity, sign out unfamiliar devices, set a new password                           |
| If subscriptions were made on a separate account | No migration path — let the paid period run out, then resubscribe on the recovered account                |

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*This guide reflects Google's account recovery and Play Store subscription policies as of mid-2026. Google's process can change — when in doubt, verify current steps at [support.google.com](https://support.google.com).*