

Should the government be allowed to wiretap your phone?

YES!

Safety First

One role of the US government is to keep its citizens safe. One way the government can do so is by investigating threats and tracking communications that might reveal terrorist activity. The National Security Agency claims it only listens to calls between the United States and other countries. It also only listens to conversations where one person is associated with a terrorist group.

Wiretapping can also help law enforcement catch criminals. Getting warrants to listen in on conversations is difficult. With fewer restrictions, law enforcement could perform their jobs even better and help fight illegal activities like drug trafficking.

Giving up some personal freedom is a small price to pay for making sure everyone is safe. When the government hears dangerous phone calls, it can prevent terrible events from happening.

VS

NO!

Protect Your Rights

If the government is allowed to listen to conversations, then every email and text message is also fair game. Maybe you feel like you have nothing to hide. But what if the people listening misinterpret something you say or write? This could have serious consequences. You have a right to privacy.

People who support wiretapping claim it can reveal terrorist activity. However, President Barack Obama found that wiretapping was not essential in preventing terrorist attacks. The National Security Agency receives a huge amount of tips, and almost all of them are false leads.

Opponents of wiretapping worry about how the government might use the information it gathers. The US government is responsible for more than just stopping terrorism. How can we be sure that's the only way the government will use our information?

Language to Debate

One (fact/example) that supports my claim is ____.

According to ____, ____.

TREE

Thesis statement

Reasons

Evidence

Ending

Identify Evidence

A strong argument supports a claim with **evidence** such as facts, statistics, quotations, and examples. Evidence that supports a claim is:

- **Factual.** The information in the evidence should be provably true.
- **Relevant.** The evidence should relate directly to the claim.
- **Meaningful.** The evidence should make the claim stronger.

Analyze Arguments

Identify a claim that supports each side. Then identify evidence and explain how it supports the claim.

Claim for Yes	Claim for No
<hr/>	<hr/>
Supporting Evidence	Supporting Evidence
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
How Evidence Supports the Claim	How Evidence Supports the Claim
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Plan and Present a Debate

Take notes and prepare for the debate.

Opening Statement: The US government (should/should not) wiretap our phones because . . .	
Claim: <hr/>	Possible counterclaims: <hr/>
Reason: <hr/>	<hr/>
Evidence: <hr/>	<hr/>
Closing Statement	
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