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Choosing the number for a WhatsApp API

Choosing a WhatsApp Option

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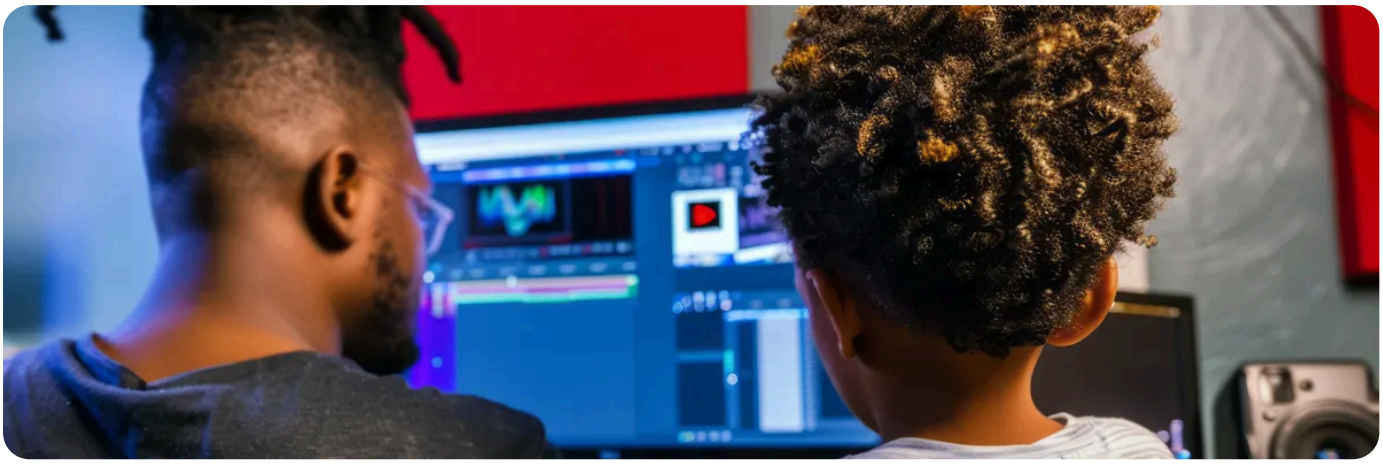
Choosing the number for a WhatsApp API

Choosing a WhatsApp Option Created on **October 10, 2026** 3 min read



The number you choose decides how much a mistake costs. If you link it to the **official Cloud API**, it is a company number that should last for years. If you link it through **Baileys** (QR code), you may lose it. The golden rule is this: **do not put through an API the number your customers already know**, unless you accept the consequences. The exact conditions of each route are Meta's and they change; check them in its documentation before buying or moving a number.

The criteria

Criterion	Why it matters
It belongs to the company, not to a person	If the number is on an employee's phone, it leaves with them. Register it in the company's name.
It can receive the verification code	Meta confirms the number by SMS or call. A number that only sends, or that is switched off, will not pass.
It is dedicated	According to Meta's documentation, a number linked to the Cloud API has its own conditions compared with the ordinary app. Read them before deciding.
It is stable	Changing number halfway loses the history and the name customers recognise.
Its country code fits your audience	A number from your customers' country inspires more trust than a foreign one.

Choosing by route

Route	Which number	Watch out
Official Cloud API	A new, dedicated number that can receive Meta's code.	Understand, from Meta's documentation, what happens to a number already on ordinary WhatsApp or WhatsApp Business.

Route	Which number	Watch out
Evolution API with Baileys	A trial or secondary number you can afford to lose.	Baileys is unofficial: a ban is a real risk with no appeal.
Experimenting	The test number Meta offers in the dashboard, or a trial SIM.	Never test with your main number.

Do not move your main number to an API without knowing what happens to the account.
Linking a number already used on WhatsApp to an API can, under Meta's rules, change how that number works. Read the current terms and rehearse with another number first. And if it is through Baileys, accept that you may lose it.

Before buying or moving

1. **Decide the route.** Cloud API or Baileys, after reading **the risk and the rules**.
2. **Pick the number** by the criteria above, in the company's name.
3. **Confirm it receives the verification code**, by SMS or by call.
4. **Check Meta's conditions** for that number and for the display name. They change.
5. **Rehearse with a secondary number** before touching what customers use.
6. **Keep access to the number** somewhere safe. Whoever controls the number controls the account.

After choosing

With the number chosen, the next steps are the Cloud API ones in **getting started with Meta**, or the Evolution API ones in **connecting an instance with the QR**. If you still hesitate between ordinary WhatsApp, Business and the API, see **which one suits your business**.

Choosing the number is also choosing whom you write to. Even with the best technology, write only to people who consented. That is the rule that protects a number most, whichever route you take.

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SEE ALSO

- **Baileys or the Cloud API: the risk and the rules** →
- **Getting started with the Cloud API** →
- **Ordinary WhatsApp, Business or the Cloud API** →

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