Speed up a slow smartphone

IF your smartphone is no longer running smoothly there can be a couple of reasons.

One could be the age of the hardware itself. "Updates to the operating system are adapted to the newest model and not old hardware," says tech journalist Alexander Spier from *c't* magazine.

However, not installing updates is not a good idea either – then you're going to run the risk of your phone's security vulnerabilities not being plugged.

A full memory can also be the cause of a slowdown. To run reasonably smoothly, a smartphone needs at least 10% of its memory to be free. One thing that will help to free up memory is to delete apps that you never use.

Spier advises Android users to clear the cache for all apps. You can do this within the phone's settings, app by app. However, when it comes to iOS devices you can't get manual access to the cache. In that case all you can do is uninstall an app and then reinstall it.

However, clearing the cache may only speed things up for a short time. Then you might want to consider the more radical step of a factory reset. "This is a tough move, but it often makes the device faster again," Spier says.

It can take three or four hours to set the device up again after a factory reset. "How long this positive effect lasts is anyone's guess," Spier says.

All your data, such as photos and WhatsApp conversations, will need to be backed up somewhere before you wipe the phone clean. — dpa
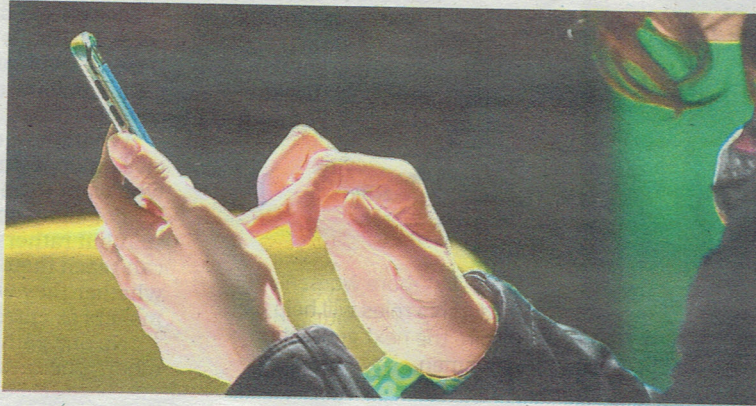
Clearing the cache will speed up the phone but only for a short time. — dpa