

02 Connecting to the Internet

*Once you've set up your computer, you may want to purchase **home Internet access** so you can send and receive email, browse the Web, stream videos, and more. You may even want to set up a **home wireless network**, commonly known as **Wi-Fi**, so you can connect multiple devices to the Internet at the same time.*

▶ [Play the video by clicking the link below:](#)
[Connecting to the Internet](#)

Types of Internet Service

The type of Internet service you choose will largely depend on which **Internet service providers** (ISPs) serve your area, along with the types of service they offer. Here are some common types of Internet service.

Dial-up

This is generally the slowest type of Internet connection, and you should probably avoid it unless it is the only service available in your area. Dial-up Internet uses your **phone line**, so unless you have multiple phone lines you will not be able to use your landline and the Internet at the same time. In remote/rural areas, this may be the only service available.



DSL:

DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) service uses a **broadband connection**, which makes it much faster than dial-up. DSL connects to the Internet **via a phone line** but does not require you to have a landline at home. And unlike dial-up, you'll be able to use the Internet and your phone line at the same time. Currently, it is the most popular connection in the world – 60%.

Cable: Like DSL, Cable is a form of broadband internet connection. Cable internet uses neighbourhood **cable television conduits** rather than telephone lines. It can be faster than both dial-up and DSL service; however, it is only available where cable TV is available.



Fiber

Optical or fiber optic internet is the up and coming replacement for DSL and Cable. It is the **future of data transmission**. Data is transmitted through plastic or glass wires as light waves. It offers the most potential for high speed data transfer however it is expensive to install which is why it is not in wide use today.



Satellite

A satellite connection uses broadband but does not require cable or phone lines; it connects to the Internet **through satellites orbiting the Earth**. As a result, it can be used almost anywhere in the world, but the connection may be affected by weather patterns. Satellite connections are also usually slower than DSL or cable.

3G and 4G

3G and 4G service is most commonly used with mobile phones, and it connects **wirelessly** through your ISP's (Internet Service Provider) network. However, these types of connections aren't always as fast as DSL or cable. They will also **limit the amount of data** you can use each month, which isn't the case with most broadband plans.



Choosing an Internet Service

Which Service is Best for Me?

Most Internet Service Providers offer several tiers of service with different Internet speeds, usually measured in **Mbps** (short for **megabits per second**). If you mainly want to use the Internet for **email and social networking**, a slower connection (around 2 to 5 Mbps) might be all you need. However, if you want to **download music or stream videos**, you'll want a faster connection (at least 5 Mbps or higher).

You'll also want to **consider the cost** of the service, including installation charges and monthly fees. Generally speaking, the faster the connection, the more expensive it will be per month.



Hardware Needed

Modem

Once you have your computer, you really don't need much additional hardware to connect to the Internet. The primary piece of hardware you need is a **modem**.

The type of Internet access you choose will determine the type of modem you need. **Dial-up** access uses a **telephone modem**, **DSL** service uses a **DSL modem**, **cable** access uses a **cable modem**, and **satellite** service uses a **satellite adapter**. Your ISP may give you a modem—often for a fee—when you sign a contract, which helps ensure that you have the **right type** of modem. However, if you would prefer to shop for a **better** or **less expensive** modem, you can choose to buy one separately.



A DSL modem

Router

A **router** is a hardware device that allows you to connect **several computers** and **other devices** to a single Internet connection, which is known as a **home network**. Many routers are **wireless**, which allows you to create a **home wireless network**, commonly known as a **Wi-Fi network**.

You **don't necessarily need to buy a router** to connect to the Internet. It's possible to connect your computer directly to your modem using an Ethernet cable. Also, many modems include a **built-in router**, so you have the option of creating a Wi-Fi network without buying extra hardware.

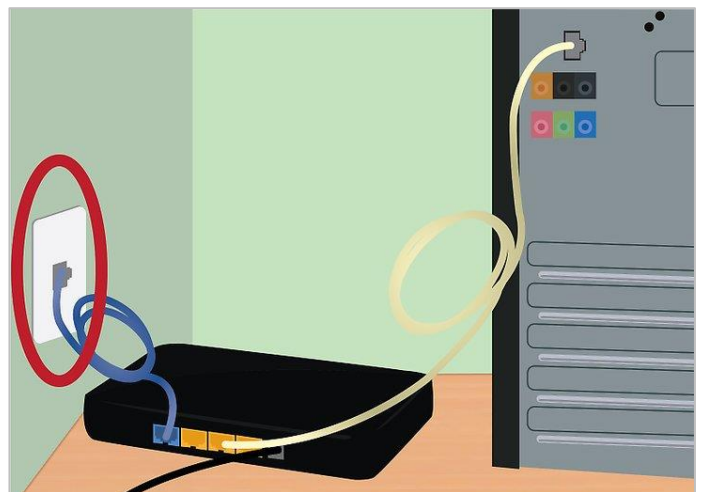


A wireless router

Setting Up Your Internet Connection

Once you've chosen an ISP (Internet Service Provider), most providers will **send a technician to your house** to turn on the connection. If not, you should be able to use the instructions provided by your ISP—or included with the modem—to set up your Internet connection.

After you have everything set up, you can open your **web browser** and begin using the Internet. If you have any problems with your Internet connection, you can call your ISP's **technical support** number.





Home Networking

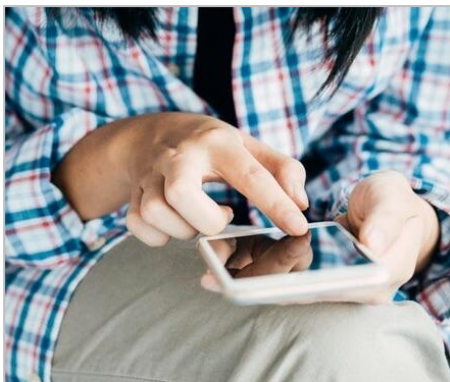
If you have multiple computers at home and want to use all of them to access the Internet, you may want to create a **home network**, also known as a **Wi-Fi network**. In a home network, all of your devices connect to your **router**, which is connected to the **modem**. This means everyone in your household can use the Internet **at the same time**.

Wireless Security

A home network can be **wired** (using Ethernet cables) or **wireless** (using Wi-Fi). It may also be a mixture of the two, with some devices connecting with Ethernet and others connecting wirelessly. Wireless is generally more convenient; however, you'll need to think about wireless security. You can **protect** your devices and your internet connection by requiring a password to connect to your router.



A router with Ethernet cables attached



Internet on Mobile Devices

With tablet computers and mobile phones, it's possible to have **full internet access**, allowing you to check your e-mail and browse the Web away from home. To do this, you'll need a **data plan**, which adds an additional monthly fee to your mobile phone bill. Data plans are also available for laptops and e-readers such as the Kindle.