



Practical tips for improving your broadband speed

There are a number of factors which can affect the speed of your broadband connection.

The distance your home is from the telephone exchange, the time of day you go online and the number of people in your home using the internet at the same time, can all play a part in slowing down your connection.

Your device may also not be set-up correctly or the line that provides the internet connection to your home may be damaged, while your internet provider's traffic management policies could also be a factor.

The following tips could help bring your connection back up to speed – the last three tips (8-10) apply specifically if you receive your broadband through your telephone line rather than via cable.

- 1. Carry out a speed test on your line.** This will show you what speed you're actually getting. Carry out a few tests over several days and vary the times you carry out the test. Ofcom accredited price comparison sites Broadband.co.uk, broadbandchoices.co.uk, Cable.co.uk and Simplifydigital all have speed checkers.
- 2. Talk to your internet provider.** If you have a problem with your connection, we suggest contacting your provider in the first instance. They should be able to help you work out what the cause is and how you might be able to fix it.
- 3. Update your browser.** Check whether you're using the latest version of your web browser – newer versions not only provide better security but should also work faster. You can check your browser via this page on the Get Safe Online website.
- 4. Some electrical devices can cause electrical interference to your router.** Halogen lamps, electrical dimmer switches, stereo or computer speakers, fairy lights, TVs and monitors and AC power cords have all been known to cause interference. Keep your router as far away as possible from other electrical devices as well as those which emit wireless signals such as cordless phones, baby monitors etc. Try to place your router on a table or shelf rather than on the floor and keep it switched on.



5. **Consider upgrading your router to the latest model.** If you have an older router, or you have regular disconnections on your line, you may benefit from upgrading. Speak to your provider.

6. **Password-protect your broadband.** If you don't keep your wireless router secure, anyone nearby could log on to your broadband. Not only could this slow down your internet speeds but your online security could also be at risk. To find out whether you are secure, scan your wireless network by visiting 'My Network Places'. There should be a picture of a padlock next to the name of your network. If there isn't then you'll need to password-protect your router. Use a password that contains a mixture of numbers and upper and lower case letters. If you're not sure how to set or change a password, speak to your provider.

7. **Try wired rather than wireless.** Use an Ethernet cable to connect your computer directly to your router rather than using WiFi. An Ethernet cable is a computer networking cable which should give you a faster, more reliable connection.

8. **Tackle phone line interference.** Any interference on your phone line could slow your broadband down. Make sure your home has the most up-to-date main phone socket and plug microfilters into every phone socket in your home. They look like little white boxes and split the phone and broadband signals so that they don't interfere with each other.

9. **Plug your broadband router directly into your home's main phone socket.** Try not to use a telephone extension lead – leads can cause interference which could lower your speed. If you have to use an extension lead, use a new, high quality cable with the shortest possible length. Tangled and coiled cables can cause interference.

10. **Fit a broadband accelerator or filter device.** There are a number of devices available that are designed to filter out interference from your home phone wiring. These may improve speed and, even if they don't, can help stabilise your broadband line and make it more reliable. Try searching online for devices that may suit your needs.

