

Internet and Broadband

The Internet is a global telecommunications network which links millions of computers. To connect to the Internet you need a modem, a telephone line and an account with an internet service provider (ISP).

Wireless internet or 'WiFi' is the most common way to connect to the Internet in your home and when out and about. There is a wireless box which plugs into your telephone line. It transmits a signal to a receiver in your device/s (your computer, laptop, tablet, smart phone or Smart TV). When you want to connect, the wireless box and your device talk to each other and send information to and from your device.

You can read more about the Internet and the things you can use it for in our section on [Getting Online and Digital Equipment.](#)

Broadband

Broadband is simply a permanent Internet connection that is faster than the one that you get with a standard modem and telephone line. The faster an Internet connection is, the broader its bandwidth is (how much data it can cope with). This is where the term 'broadband' comes from.

Having broadband makes all the difference when it comes to getting the most out of the Internet. The time that it takes to move to a different page on a website becomes much quicker; it should be almost instantaneous. Also, you can make telephone calls while you're online and using the Internet. There's no waiting to do either one or the other. However, often the faster your Internet connection is, the more it will cost you.

Can I get broadband?

The majority of homes can get ADSL broadband, which uses British Telecom's (BT's) copper-wire telephone network. This is available directly through BT or via a third-party. Cable broadband is not yet fully available from Virgin Media. Use their postcode checker.

How much does broadband cost?

To get broadband, you usually need to pay a connection fee that will start from around £20. However, some providers will waive this fee if you sign up to get certain packages. The monthly fee then usually costs between £10 and £40 per month, depending on the provider and whether you sign up for any of their other services. Usually, you have to make a commitment to the provider for at least 12 or 18 months.

How do I get broadband?

If you opt for ADSL broadband, installation is fairly easy. The provider will give you a 'microfilter', so that you can use your telephone at the same time as the Internet, and a broadband modem, so that you can share the connection between more than one computer.

If you choose cable broadband, and you aren't an existing subscriber to the provider, an engineer will probably need to come out to wire things up for you.

Free WiFi available in Newcastle City Centre

[Newcastle City Council](#) provides free Wi-Fi across the city 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This includes both indoor and outdoor locations. It also covers the area from the Haymarket down to the Sage on the quayside. The service is family friendly – with inappropriate content automatically blocked by BT. A full list of the buildings where you can access indoor WiFi from is available on the [Get Online Newcastle website](#).

How to connect to the Free WiFi

1. Select 'Settings' on your device
 2. Select 'Network and WiFi'
 3. A list of available WiFi should appear, select 'Go Digital'
 4. A BT landing page will then appear. This may vary slightly depending upon the device you are using. Click the 'Get online' button.
 5. Accept Terms & Conditions page will appear. Click to 'Accept free WiFi' button
 6. **You're online!** You will then see an authentication screen which states 'you are now connected to free WiFi'. You can then browse the internet on your device for free whilst you are in the City Centre.
 7. Once you've gone through this process your device should connect automatically to the Go Digital free Wifi when you are in Newcastle City Centre if you have your WiFi on.
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Changing your Internet service provider

If you already have a broadband connection, it can be more complicated to change from one Internet service provider to another than if you are connecting to broadband for the first time. However, the Internet industry has agreed to work together to make the process as simple as possible for you.

To move your broadband connection from one company to another, without losing your Internet connection in the process, you need to do the following:

- Speak to the customer services staff at your Internet service provider and tell them that you want to switch to another company.
- You no longer need a Migration Authorisation Code (MAC). Your new provider will sort this out under Ofcom regulations.
- The new provider will cancel your previous package for you.

Remember, if you are under contract to your old Internet service provider when you change you may still need to pay for the remainder of your contract with them.

Complaining about your Internet service provider

If you have a complaint about your Internet service provider, whether it is about the quality of your Internet service or about the standard of their customer services, you should contact their complaints department in the first instance. If your concern can't be resolved informally, you should follow their formal complaints procedure.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your initial complaint, you can complain to your provider's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) scheme. The ADR scheme acts as an independent middleman between the company and you, the customer. You should find details of the company's ADR scheme either on the back of your bill, or from the company's customer services staff.

ADR schemes are meant to supplement, not replace, the formal complaints procedure. This means that you can only use the ADR scheme if:

- you have tried to make a formal complaint to the company and have had no success, **and** 12 weeks or more has passed since you first complained; or
- the company has written to you to say that they're not going to do anything else about your complaint.

For more information about complaining about your Internet service provider, see the [Ofcom website](#).

You may also find the Information Now article on [How to make a good complaint](#) useful

Guide to Common Terms Used

- **ADSL** – stands for Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line, which is a type of broadband connection that uses a standard telephone line.
- **Bandwidth** – is the amount of data that can be transferred over the Internet in a set amount of time. The higher the bandwidth, the faster the connection.
- **Broadband** – is a fast, broad bandwidth Internet connection.
- **Data** – are pieces of information that can be stored or transmitted, usually via computers. Data can be sound, text or images.
- **Dial-up** – is an Internet connection via a telephone line that hasn't been speeded up for broadband.
- **Downloading** – is a way of transferring data over the Internet to a computer.
- **Electronic mail (e-mail)** – is a way of sending messages and files from one computer to one or more others.
- **Firewall** – is the hardware or software that protects your computer when you are connected to the Internet.
- **Home page** – is the front page of a website, which appears every time you go into it.
- **html** – stands for hypertext mark-up language, which is the language used to make pages on

a website.

- **http** – stands for hypertext transfer protocol, which is the standard way of sending and receiving website pages.
 - **Hyperlink** – is the link that connects web pages. When you put your mouse pointer on a hyperlink and click the left mouse button, it displays the linked page.
 - **Internet** – is a global telecommunications network linking millions of computers.
 - **ISP** – stands for Internet Service Provider, which is a company that provides internet access.
 - **Link** – Clicking on a link takes you to a new page on a website, or allows you to download something.
 - **Online** – is being connected to the Internet.
 - **Search engine** – is a website that searches for website pages on a particular topic.
 - **Website address** – This tells your computer where to find a website online, for example www.informationnow.org.uk . This is also sometimes called a URL, which stands for Universal Resource Locator.
 - **Web browser** – is the software that you use on your computer to view pages on a website.
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Other Useful Organisations and Information

- **Digital Voice** works with participants who are excluded from digital media, helping individuals and communities to access the internet and web information.
- **Simplifydigital** are an independent company who provide an Ofcom accredited comparison service to help when choosing a broadband, TV and home phone service. They provide free impartial advice, answer questions and can help to find a deal that's right for you. They also offer support when switching providers.
- **Getonline@home** is a partnership with Microsoft and Simplifydigital, to help people to get online. They offer new customers a free refurbished PC or a refurbished laptop for £59 when you sign up to a new broadband and phone deal from your choice of provider. The Laptop or PC is despatched 90 days after your new Supplier has confirmed that your broadband service is active. Simplifydigital will help you find the best value broadband service that's right for you. Call Simplifydigital to arrange your broadband set up on freephone 0800 090 1297.
- **LifeBook** – Age UK free resource. It can be easy to mislay important documents and information. Record your details from, who insures your car, to where you put the TV licence. The LifeBook can help you to be more organised and could be invaluable to a family member or a friend if they need to locate important information about you in an emergency. Follow the step-by-step instructions and fill in the sections with your details, contacts and locations of important documents. Complete it online or order one.

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Useful Organisations

Ofcom

Website: www.ofcom.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 123 3333 or 020 7981 3040

Address: Riverside House, SE1 9HA

Simplifydigital

Website: <http://broadband.simplifydigital.co.uk/>

Telephone: 0800 542 4704

Address: Riverside, W6 9WA

Citizens Advice

Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk

Telephone: 03444 111 444

Address: Citizens Advice, EC1A 4HD

Gocompare.com

Email: help@gocompare.com

Website: <http://www.gocompare.com>

Telephone: 03444 111 444

Address: Gocompare.com Limited, NP10 8UH

Getonline@home

Email: info@computerrecyclersuk.com

Website: <https://www.getonlineathome.org/>

Telephone: 03444 111 444

Compare the Market

Website: <https://www.comparethemarket.com>

Telephone: 0800 093 6831

Address: Pegasus House, PE2 6YS

Moneysupermarket

Website: www.moneysupermarket.com

Telephone: 0845 345 5708

Address: Moneysupermarket House,, CH5 3UZ

Get online Newcastle

Email: Getonline@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/get-online-newcastle>

Telephone: 07584 205925

Address: Newcastle City Library , NE1 8AX

Digital Voice

Email: julie@digitalvoice.org.uk

Website: <https://www.digitalvoice.org.uk/>

Telephone: 01207 566 866

Address: Chopwell Community Centre, NE17 7HS

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