Stay connected during coronavirus

EasyRead version
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Ofcom wrote this guide.

Because of coronavirus or Covid-19, more people are online at home at the same time.

This can cause problems with broadband and mobile phone networks that carry information between devices like phones, tablets and computers.
This leaflet has ideas to help everyone get the internet speeds they need to:

- stream videos
- meet or chat online
- make voice calls
1. Test your broadband speed

**Broadband** allows you to connect to the **internet**.

But different things can slow it down. It is worth checking:

- our mobile and **broadband** checker to see if the speed is as fast as it should be.

- at different times of the day

- on the website of the company that provides your **broadband**
2. Make calls using your landline or wifi if you can

Mobile phone **networks** get busy when lots of people make calls at the same time.

You could:

- use your home phone if you have one
- go to your mobile phone settings and turn on **wifi** calling
- use apps like Facetime, Skype or Whats App to make calls using **broadband**.
3. Move the router away from other devices

A router sends information from the internet to your computer, phone or tablet.

Keep the router as far away as possible from electrical and wireless equipment like:

- halogen lamps
- dimmer switches
- TVs
• computer monitors

• some types of baby monitors

Microwave ovens can also affect your signal.

Keep the router switched on and stand it on a table or shelf and not the floor.
4. Cut down on the wifi you use

Devices use wifi if they are not connected to your broadband with a cable.

The more devices that use wifi, the slower it will be.

You can make it faster if:

- you switch off wifi when you are not using it on your phone or tablet
- turn off video and just use audio for Facetime, Skype or Whats App calls
● try not to start your calls on the hour or half hour when lots of other people arrange to chat to each other

● agree with your family to do video streaming, gaming or video calls at different times

● instead of streaming, download videos at a quieter time to watch later.
5. Connect your computer to the internet with a cable

Your internet will be much faster if you use an ethernet cable to link your computer to the router instead of wifi.

These cables cost about £3.
6. Plug your router into your main phone socket

It can slow your **internet** down if you have:

- a telephone extension lead
- tangled cables
- problems on your phone line

You could try:

- using a new, fast telephone extension cable that is as short as possible
• plugging **microfilters** into every phone socket in your house. These small white boxes stop the phone signal affecting your **broadband**.

Talk to the company that provides your **broadband** or check their website before you unplug any cables.
7. Talk to the company that provides your broadband

Contact the company if you try these things and your **internet** is still slow.

Because of coronavirus you might have to wait longer because:

- they do not have as many people working for them
- they first have to help customers who are at risk and services everyone needs.
What the words mean

**Broadband** - a fast connection to the internet.

**Ethernet cable** – a cable that links your computer to the router instead of using wifi.

**Internet** - a worldwide system of computer networks that allows anyone using a computer to connect with any other computer.

**Microfilters** - small boxes that you plug into the phone sockets in your house to stop the phone signal affecting your broadband.

**Network** – a way of connecting people or things.

**Router** – a device that you plug into your phoneline that sends information from the internet to your computer, phone or tablet.

**Wifi** – a way for computers, smartphones, or other devices to connect to the internet or each other without using cables.
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