





## Connecting to the Internet

### Turning wifi on and off, connecting to different networks and using hotspot, using different browsers


Being online means being connected to the internet. If you are working on your computer without being connected to the internet, it is called being offline.

You can access the internet by wifi from your broadband router at home, with your smartphone (by using a dongle or mobile hotspot), or by using free internet access in public spaces such as libraries. Your broadband router might also be known as an internet box or hub, and will have been sent or given to you when you set up your internet.



To connect, click on the network and internet icon in the top right corner of your screen. It will look either like a curved empty triangle  (when you are not connected to the internet), or a small dot with waves coming from it  (when you are connected to the internet) .

Click on this icon to see a list of wifi network connections and look for the one that is yours (you will see others in the list that are nearby). A wifi network is a name that helps identify the correct network when you try to connect. The one for your home internet will be printed on your home's broadband router.

If you cannot find your network then you might have to click on 'Other Networks' or Network Preferences to find the one you're looking for. You can also find Network Preferences in the System Preferences app. You can find this by clicking on the grey cog icon  .



Click on your Wifi connection, and a dialogue box will appear. Enter your password here. If you click Show password then you can see exactly what you are typing to make sure the password is correct. Make sure you tick “remember this network”, so that you only have to enter the password once.

Click on “join”. You are now connected to the internet!

The ‘waves’ or bars on the icon show the signal strength of your wifi connection. The more bars you have, the stronger the signal.

## Hot spotting

If you have a smartphone that connects to the internet, you can use this to connect your computer as well. This is called tethering or hot spotting: it’s like a mini wifi hub you can carry around with you!

In settings in your Apple smartphone, you should have a “mobile hotspot”. In settings in your Android smartphone, you should have a “Network & Internet” section where you will find “Hotspot & tethering”. Click this to turn it on. There may also be shortcuts to the hotspot on your smartphone.

Go back to your wifi network preferences icon and click to find your mobile hotspot. Your computer may ask you for a password, which you will find on your smartphone.

When you have finished using your mobile hotspot, make sure you turn this off again on your smartphone as it can use up a lot of your phone’s internet data.

## Internet browsers



Once you are connected to the internet or once you are “online”, you can use a “browser” to look at the internet. There are a number of internet browsers you might find on your computer, such as Google Chrome, FireFox, Safari, and Microsoft Edge.




When you open an internet browser you will see a search bar at the top of the screen. This is where you can search for what you want on the internet. This could either be a website that you already know or the name of something you want to look up or a question you might have. Whatever you want.

For example if you want to find the “Community TechAid” website, you can type in either our full website or just “Community Techaid” and then press the Enter button on your keyboard. The search bar will sometimes make suggestions based on websites you have already visited or things that you might like. If you are using Google search you might be asked to agree to Google’s search terms at the bottom of the pop up box.

If you want to search for multiple things on the internet then you can use the tab system. This will keep websites open whilst visiting other websites.



At the very top of your internet page, you will see a plus button. If you click on this a new tab will open up where you can search for another website. If you want to close the tab, click the X button.

In the top left corner, next to the search bar, you will see an arrow pointing to the left, an arrow pointing to the right and a circular arrow . The arrow pointing left will take you back to the last web page that you visited in this session. The arrow pointing right will take you forward to a page that you have visited. The circular arrow will refresh the page to show you the latest version of the webpage that you are on.