




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 is also 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 bottom right corner of the task bar. It will look either like a ball or globe with lines on it  (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 identifies 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 "Network and Internet Settings" towards the bottom of this pop up to find the one you're looking for. You can also find Network and Internet in the settings app. You can find this by clicking on the start menu and clicking the small cog icon .

Click on your Wifi connection, click "connect" and enter your password into the dialogue box that opens. It will ask you for the network security key, which is the password for the wifi connection. If you click Show password then you can see exactly what you are typing to make sure the password is correct. Click on Next. 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 hotspotting – 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 connections icon on your computer and click to find your mobile hotspot at the bottom right of the pop up . Click connect. Your computer may ask you for a password, which you will find on your smartphone.

When you have finished using your mobile hotspot, be sure to 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 “online”, you can use a “browser” to access 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 towards the top of the screen. This is where you can search for what you want on the internet. This could be a website that you already know, 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 tabs. 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.