Tips for improving your computer's broadband connection

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https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/boost-broadband-speed/

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1. Make sure your router is in the best place

When using Wi-Fi, obviously the nearer you are to the router, the better your signal will be, and therefore the faster your broadband. Because Wi-Fi signals can't travel through large objects such as thick walls, it's crucial you have a clear path for the signal to travel to your laptop, tablet or smartphone.

The position you place your router can therefore make a big difference to the speeds you get. Where possible, try to:

- Choose a central location.
- Position it high up with no obstacles around it.
- Don't hide your router away in a cupboard or drawer.
- Don't camouflage it with picture frames or ornaments.

It's also worth making sure it's plugged into the best socket. Try using multiple phone sockets to see if you can get better speeds, though plugging your router directly into your main phone socket will generally work best. Just remember the distance between your router and devices should be kept to a minimum where possible.

Use microfilters in each phone socket

Your provider should give you adapters that split your phone and broadband signals. It's advisable that these are plugged into every phone socket you use, not just the one you use for broadband.

If after plugging the filter in your regular phone line becomes noisier, try plugging in a second filter or investing in a better quality filter (you can find them online for around £2).

2. Opt for wires, not Wi-Fi

It may not be an immediately appealing option, but if you're desperate, reverting to cables should boost your speed. An Ethernet cable (pictured), connected from your router to your computer, is able to transfer data at a faster rate than Wi-Fi can because it doesn't encrypt data as wireless routers do.

Other benefits include much less interference, so you don't have to worry what frequency your neighbour is on, and a more reliable connection for devices such as games consoles and PCs, which don't need to be moved around the room.

3. Keep your router away from other devices

Like all wireless devices, routers are prone to interference, including from nearby electrical equipment. Try switching everything bar the router off, then do another speed test to see if it makes a difference.

Cordless phones, baby monitors, halogen lamps, dimmer switches, stereos, speakers, TVs and monitors can all affect your signal if they're too close to your router, so try to place these as far away as possible.

What's more, surprisingly microwave ovens can also reduce Wi-Fi signals according to regulator Ofcom.

4. Try a wireless booster

Wireless boosters are designed for people with big homes or with signal blackspots where the signal isn't strong enough. However, the gadget just extends the wireless signal – it won't improve your general broadband speed or bandwidth. Boosters generally work with any provider, so you don't have to be with one in particular to use them.

Check before buying though as your supplier may send you one out for free if you're having difficulties connecting in certain rooms. Also, if you've signed up to either Sky Boost or the BT Complete package, these guarantee Wi-Fi coverage throughout your home, which means you can request an unlimited amount of wireless boosters.

5. Turn off Wi-Fi on devices you're not using

The more devices attached to your Wi-Fi, the lower the speed you'll get. Even if you have a decent fibre or cable connection, you may think you're not prone to slow speeds, but devices such as tablets and smartphones often work in the background, so try switching Wi-Fi reception off on these when you're not using them.

6. Switch to audio-only conference calls

If you're having problems in a video meetings, turning the video off and only using audio will require much less of your internet connection. But if things are working fine, for your general wellbeing you may opt to keep your video on so you can better interact with colleagues – particularly important now as many of us are working from home for the first time.

You might also want to manage your family's online activity, so that different people aren't carrying out data-heavy tasks (such as HD streaming, gaming or video calls) all at the same time. Downloading video in advance, instead of streaming it, can also help.