

How to Get connected to the internet

Wellbeing area: Social / Money / Home / Health / Positivity / Independence / Work
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INTRODUCTION

The internet is almost a household requirement, similar to electricity and hot-and-cold running water. It is extremely useful for finding out anything you might need to research, from transport links to GP opening hours, to managing your banking or bills, online shopping and it can also give access to games and entertainment.

A really important part of being online is that it's a great way of keeping in touch with friends and family - via email, social media, such as Facebook. There are also online activities, where you can meet up with others socially, for example by joining a Zoom meeting. This might be to take part in an activity or a discussion about a particular subject. They are a really good way of keeping connected if you can't get out and about! See Age UK Islington's new programme of [online Get Togethers](#).

LET'S GET STARTED TOGETHER!

How can I get access to the internet?

Using a smartphone

Most people with a smartphone, will be able to get online. Smartphone contracts usually come with a data allowance that enables you to browse the internet, send and receive email.

The size of the screen might be a bit small for browsing some websites and your data allowance can get quickly used up, unless you have a mobile phone contract with sufficient data.

Using tablets, laptops, desktop PCs

You can also use tablets, laptops or desktop PCs to get onto the internet, but need to set up a connection to the internet using an internet provider.

How do I choose an internet provider?

Choosing an internet provider can be daunting if you are seeking one for the first time. For each deal, you will want to consider, besides the price, things such as speed, data limits, connection type, contract length and reputation (e.g. reliability of internet service, and the quality of the customer service support).

You should also consider any setup fee and bundled deals such as with TV or home phone.

Things to keep in mind are that:

- if you already have a TV, and just want to use the internet to look up information, book an appointment or shop online, you're unlikely to need more than the following:
 - an internet speed of 10 Mbps
 - a data allowance of up to 10 GB/month
- if you have a standard TV licence, this will give you access to 60+ TV channels and 15+ in high definition. TV packages through broadband providers can be expensive, but might be worth considering if you want access to a greater selection of specialist film or music channels, or if you regularly want to watch live sport.

Using a comparison website

Comparison sites are a good place to find deals. Here are some examples –

Money Saving Expert Broadband Unbundled Deals -
<https://broadband.moneysavingexpert.com/>

Broadband Genie Compare Broadband Deals -
<https://www.broadbandgenie.co.uk/broadband>

Uswitch Compare Broadband Deals -
<https://www.uswitch.com/broadband/>

For mobile phones

Uswitch - Mobile Broadband Deals -
<https://www.uswitch.com/broadband/mobile-broadband/>

Money Super Market Best Mobile Broadband Deals -
<https://www.moneysupermarket.com/broadband/mobile-broadband/>

For anyone on a low income / benefits

BT have a low-cost phone and broadband deal for anyone who is on low income and government benefits; it would be worth considering and comparing with other options -

<https://btplc.com/inclusion/ProductsAndServices/BTBasic/BTBasicBroadband/index.htm>

Or you could talk to Sales Advisers face to face by going to individual broadband high street shops.

Don't forget that the Sales Advisers will make money from the sales that they make, but it could still be a useful source of information.

For more information:

- Age UK Islington “[How to - Choose an Internet Provider](#)” [guide](#).
- Age UK Islington **website** for details of [community and digital Get Togethers](#) (community Get Togethers are currently on hold due to government guidance around Covid-19).

READY TO GO? That's great! Taking all the elements above into consideration should help you decide how to take the first steps to get an internet connection.

Once you've got internet access at home, visit our website at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/islington/> to get familiar with all our services and see how we can help you next.

GOT SOME QUESTIONS? If you'd like to know any more about the above or need some support getting started, just give our Helpline a call 0207 281 6018 / email gethelp@ageukislington.org.uk (Mon to Fri 9 - 5pm)

Please note we cannot recommend or endorse. Information provided is accurate to the best of our knowledge at the time of publishing. If you find any inaccuracies, please notify us gethelp@ageukislington.org.uk

What can Age UK Islington help with? *Age UK Islington provides adults (16 yrs+) in Islington with information and guidance about anything to do with your wellbeing, e.g. debt, housing issues, bereavement, support for unpaid carers (Islington Carers Hub) and much more. We can also help you get the most of the local area, e.g. finding affordable social groups or training. Our staff are experts in finding the best way forward, and have lots of knowledge about local specialist partners.*

Contact Age UK Islington Helpline: 020 7281 6018 (Mon to Fri
9 - 5pm) / gethelp@ageukislington.org.uk /
info@islingtoncarershub.org