Getting Connected to the Internet

This guide describes how families can get access to the Internet at home. These options are provided by external companies and are not affiliated with Chicago Public Schools.

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before continuing, see if your student is eligible for Chicago Connected, a no-cost program that provides internet access to thousands of children and families. To check your student's eligibility, visit www.cps.edu/strategic-initiatives/chicago-connected/eligibility

OPTION A: CHOOSE AN INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER

An Internet service provider (ISP) is a company that provides customers with Internet access. Data may be transmitted using several technologies, including dial-up, DSL, cable modem, wireless or dedicated high-speed internet.[1]

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[1] [Source: Techopedia - https://www.techopedia.com/definition/2510/internet-service-provider-isp]

Comcast

![Comcast logo]

Internet Options

Comcast offers several low-cost options with Xfinity Internet. Learn more at xfinity.com/learn/internet-service or call 1-800-XFINITY

Internet Essentials

Internet Essentials provides affordable high-speed internet for low-income households.

New customers will receive two months of free service in response to the Coronavirus emergency through the end of 2020. You may qualify if you are eligible for public assistance programs such as the National School Lunch Program, Housing Assistance, Medicaid, SNAP, SSI, and others. Xfinity Internet customers are not eligible for Internet Essentials.

Learn more and see if you qualify for the program at internetessentials.com.

Xfinity WiFi Hotspots Available to All

To help people connect to the internet during the Covid-19 crisis, Comcast is extending free access to its 1.5 million public Xfinity WiFi hotspots to anyone who needs them, including non-customers, through the end of 2020.

Locate hotspots by following these steps:
1. Go online to wifi.xfinity.com
2. Use "find a hotspot" and enter your city or zip code
3. Go to location of hotspot

Look for "xfinitywifi" in the list of available networks on your device. Most are located in businesses and outdoor locations. Note: If you are asked to pay for additional time, you are most likely logged onto a residential hotspot, which is not a part of Comcast's COVID-19 open access.

AT&T

Internet Options

Access from AT&T provides low-cost internet service for eligible households starting at $10 per month. AT&T is also waving home internet data overage charges through September 30, meaning customers can use unlimited data without seeing additional charges on their bill.

To apply for Access from AT&T, visit att.com/access.

Verizon

Internet Options

Verizon offers a number of Mobile Hotspot devices and data plans that can connect capable devices to the internet.

Learn more at verizon.com.

T-Mobile

T-MOBILE CONNECT AVAILABLE NOW

Helping keep all Americans connected when it matters most.

Introducing our lowest-priced plans ever, starting at only $15/month.

Go to www.t-mobile.com

RCN

RCN offers many different internet packages at different price points. To see all the plan options, go to rcn.com

Internet Options

RCN is offering new Internet First customers two free months of internet service and free installation for qualifying households. There is no credit check and no contract.

Apply now at https://www.internetfirst.com

If you have any questions about applying for Internet First, please call 1-833-730-0644 between 8am and 7pm on weekdays.

OPTION B: USE A MOBILE PHONE TO CONNECT

Set up your cellular phone as an Internet 'Personal Hotspot'
You can use your phone's mobile data to connect another phone, tablet, or computer to the internet. Sharing a connection this way is called tethering or using a hotspot. Some mobile phones can share Wi-Fi connections by tethering.[2]

- When you use Personal Hotspot, your phone can share data with other devices, transmitting and receiving data for these devices. If you have the available data on your cellular plan, it's another option to connect devices to the Internet. [3]

- Many Apple and Android mobile phones can be set up to share the Internet.

- **Important:** Some mobile carriers limit or charge extra for tethering. We recommend checking with your mobile phone carrier.

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[2] [Source: Google - https://support.google.com/android/answer/9059108?hl=en]
[3] [Source: Lifewire - https://www.lifewire.com/set-up-personal-hotspot-on-iphone-2000120]

Apple iPhone 	**How to set up a Personal Hotspot on your iPhone or iPad** A Personal Hotspot lets you share the cellular data connection of your iPhone or iPad (Wi-Fi + Cellular) when you don't have access to a Wi-Fi network. For step by step instructions from Apple, go to https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204023 --- **Use Instant Hotspot to connect to your Personal Hotspot without entering a password** With Instant Hotspot, the Personal Hotspot on your iPhone or iPad (Wi-Fi + Cellular) can provide Internet access to a Mac, iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch without requiring you to enter the password. For instructions from Apple, go to https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT209459
Android Phone 	**Share a mobile connection by tethering or hotspot on Android** You can use your phone's mobile data to connect another phone, tablet, or computer to the internet. Sharing a connection this way is called tethering or using a hotspot. Some phones can share Wi-Fi connections by tethering. Most Android phones can share mobile data by Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or USB. For instructions from Google, go to support.google.com/android/answer/9059108