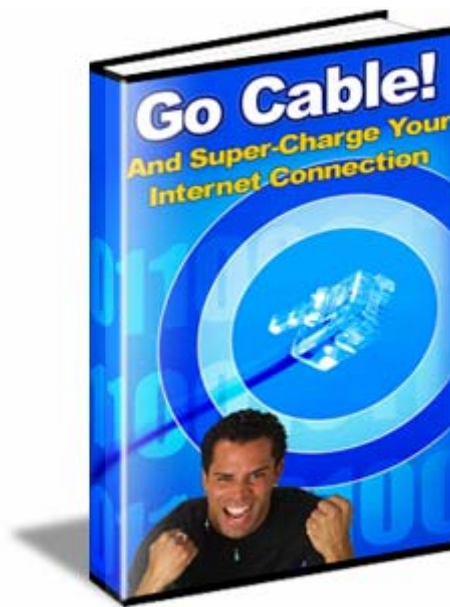


Go Cable! And Supercharge Your Internet Connection



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Brief Introduction

Within the pages of this guide, you will not see a lot of technical "mumbo-jumbo". The premise of this guide is to provide you with the information you need to make the decision on whether or not you want to switch over to a higher speed Internet connection. It is in no way meant to be a technical manual whatsoever, but rather a guide to help you reach a conclusion to your Internet access buying decision.

Three different types of "high speed" Internet access options will be covered here since there is more than just the cable type available. I wanted to be sure to lay out all these options before you so that you can make the best choice for you.

I do hope you enjoy this guide and learn more than you may already know about the benefits of having a high speed Internet connection.

What Is A Cable Internet Connection?

The term cable Internet access (or simply cable) refers to the delivery of Internet service over a cable television infrastructure. What this means is that instead of using the standard telephone line to transfer data, a standard cable line is used in its place.

Not only does using a cable Internet connection free up your telephone line for incoming calls, but, it also provides much higher transfer rates compared with what is capable through a standard telephone line.

The reason why a cable connection can accomplish this is due to the type of lines used to deliver the internet content to your home computer. While standard Dial Up connections use a small telephone line, which constricts the amount of usable bandwidth available at any one given time, a coaxial cable line has enough bandwidth available through just one line to deliver any of your cable television channels and your internet content.

It does this by allotting a standard 6Mhz "channel". Incredibly, this is the same amount of bandwidth supplied to deliver any one cable television channel. So, when the internet data is sent through the cable line, it is read as if it were just another cable television channel signal. In addition, more likely than not, you will be sharing this internet access with other users within your neighborhood. This is much like having your own web hosting account through one hosting server that you share with other web hosting customers. Even though you have "shared access" the speed is consistently high enough that you will definitely see a vast difference between cable and regular phone line internet connections.

But, just having the coaxial cable line alone will not allow you to receive the information, or get you "surfing the web" at break-neck speeds. You will need to have a cable modem in order to receive the internet signals.

There are several ways that you can get ready to receive all that high speed data transfer. You can either have an external(the most popular way) or internal cable modem unit associated with your computer, or have the cable internet capabilities incorporated within your set-top cable box.

Most cable internet access providers will offer a "lease" of sorts of their own modem equipment to their customers when they sign up for cable, or broadband, internet services. In comparison to this lease option, you can also visit your local computer store and purchase your own cable modem to reduce your monthly costs of accessing the internet.

If you decide to purchase your own cable modem, you must be sure that the unit you are purchasing is a DOCSIS 1.1 compliant Cable Modem. Otherwise, it may not work properly. Or at all. The best decision when considering either leasing/renting or purchasing outright a cable modem is in all honesty to lease/rent one from your cable company.

The reason is two-fold. One, you will have less complications when you need technical support if something goes wrong with your modem. And two, if the cable company decides to do an all around upgrade on their internet system, you will be provided with a new, compliant modem to make the transition as smooth as possible. Plus, leasing/renting a unit from your local cable company is fairly inexpensive at around \$10 a month. A small price to pay if anything ever goes wrong and you need a replacement unit.

It is important to remember that cable internet connection is not available in all areas throughout the world. In most developed countries, yes, in specific areas, cable access is available. But, in rural areas, and some still developing regions, cable internet access is more than likely not available, so users are stuck with the standard phone line access and lower data transfer speeds.

In countries such as the U.S., Canada, and Europe, cable internet access is offered by several companies and should not be too much of a problem to switch over to. If you aren't sure, contact your local ISP(Internet Service Provider) or cable company and see if they have this option available to you in your area. Remember too that just because you can get cable television doesn't always automatically mean that they have cable internet access available to you.

For more in depth information on how a cable internet connection works, visit [How Stuff Works online](#).

Is Cable Internet Access Considered "High Speed" Or "Broadband"?

You may be wondering whether cable internet access is considered either a high speed connection or a broadband connection. Well, the answer is simple. It is both actually. Many companies will use these terms to describe their internet connection services. And both terms are correct. Cable internet connectivity supplies the end user, you, with higher speeds than those of a DSL, or Dial Up connection, while also being classified as a "broadband" type of connection. In turn, a DSL(Direct Subscriber Line) provides faster speeds than a normal Dial Up connection.

The term broadband is used to describe a signal or circuit which includes or handles a relatively wide range of frequencies. A la, the coaxial cable that connects your computer to the internet, through the modem unit of course. ;-)

However, all claims of "high speed" are not created equal though. Some Internet Service Providers will boast that their internet connectivity speeds are very high. But, one must understand which type of connectivity the company is referring to. And what those companies are using to compare their speeds with.

Here is a quote taken directly from the Wikipedia site with relation to broadband definition:

"The International Telecommunication Union Standardization Sector (ITU-T) recommendation I.113 has defined broadband as a transmission capacity that is faster than primary rate ISDN, at 1.5 to 2 Mbit/s. However speeds of 256 kbit/s and greater are commonly marketed as "broadband" and this convention is held to by policy makers and ISPs alike."

So, be aware of this definition when you are making decisions on whether to switch from one form of internet connectivity to another. Many competing companies can offer both high speed and broadband internet services, so it's up to you to decide which fits into your budget and how fast you want to be able to experience the internet.

Just How Fast Can It Go?

While not an exact science, a cable internet connection can reach up to 8.0 Mbps. Doesn't seem very fast in terms of numbers, does it? But, compare the above speed to the standard 1.5 Mbps average speed of a standard DSL connection, or the very low maximum speed of just 56 Kbps of dial up connections. Still, most cable modems are able to deliver around 5.0 Mbps on average, to keep things fair.

Even when using the lower 5.0 Mbps rate, a cable internet connection can deliver internet content up to 3 times faster than that of a DSL connection, and up to 100 times faster than that of dial up. That's pretty good.

To illustrate this point more clearly, what use to take hours to download from the internet using a standard dial up connection, takes mere minutes, sometimes seconds, with a cable internet connection. Depending, of course, on the actual file size. Not to mention how quickly web sites will appear, how quickly you can view streaming audio or video files, and most importantly, how this increased speed will boost the viewing quality of these things.

Less computer freezes, less rebooting, more time to get things done!

And this is one of the biggest "sellers" of cable internet. Saving Time! Sure, you may have to pay a little more for this convenience, but you will be able to get more done at a faster pace online. Freeing up more time to spend with your family, or friends in the offline world.

Of course with cable internet connection, you can "set your own speed" by choosing how much you can afford to pay which will coincide with how fast your cable connection speeds will be. Even if you choose a lower "fastest speed" rate of transfer, you will still be getting a higher speed than that of a dial up connection. However, if you decide on a speed that is comparable, or equal to that of a lower cost DSL connection, maybe you should consider then going with the DSL and saving yourself a few more dollars.

Why Should I Consider Switching To A Cable Connection?

There are plenty of good reasons to consider switching to a faster cable Internet connection. The most popular reasons are these:

- Increase In Speed

As discussed earlier, doing multiple tasks online, such as listening to music, watching videos, playing online games, or even visiting web sites can be greatly improved by having a higher data transfer rate only available through a cable Internet connection. The faster speeds improves the quality of many different file formats.

- Ability to use your telephone while online

What a wonderful thing this is! The ability to talk on the phone while connected to the internet. If you are someone that dreads hopping online, or has to restrict your "surfing" time, then this is an excellent benefit for making the switch over to a cable Internet connection.

- Continuous connectivity(Always On Status)

This can be viewed as a "pro" or a "con" depending on your perspective. But, being able to simply start up your computer and have instant access to the Internet is a definite plus. No more dialing in is necessary. Just boot up and away you go! However, some people are concerned that because their computer is "always connected" to the Internet that hackers can slip through "back doors" and access their information, or computer, remotely. Most cable Internet service providers also offer beefed up security(firewalls) to try and curb some of this behavior. While it won't keep out all hackers, some of them are really good and can access almost any computer anywhere in the world, it will keep some of them out of your system. Beyond that, if you are using an external cable modem to connect, you can always unplug your modem from your computer when you're not using it.

- Stiff competition amongst providers equals extra savings for you(Lower Cost)

When the avenue of a cable connection to access the Internet first became available to consumers, the prices were quite high. Now that this technology is becoming more main stream, as with most computer technologies, it is much more affordable than before. One reason for this is all those companies competing to get your business. Use this to your advantage to get a "break" on your cable Internet services. Many times you can get a "price match", or extra services, with your account just by mentioning what another cable Internet service provider is offering. Shop around and check out all the service providers to be sure you are getting the best deal you can get. If there is something you do not understand, make the customer service representative explain it to you until you do understand it. Never make a commitment to purchase anything until you grasp every aspect of the services from any company.

What Type Of Connection Is Right For Me?

While there are many choices when it comes to connecting to the internet, we will be discussing only three here as these are the most affordable for personal consumer use in terms of higher speeds.

- Cable

This is the best choice for consumers who want to have the most freedom with their internet connection. Internet data information is run through existing coaxial cable lines and redirected into an external modem unit with the help of a cable filter or splitter. Having a cable Internet connection frees up your phone line so you can make or receive calls anytime you are online. In addition, with a cable Internet connection, you are "always connected" and accessing the Internet is as simple as turning on your computer.

Prices are affordable to most consumers and discounts are made available through some service providers to save you even more money. You will also be provided with a leased/rental external cable modem from the service provider and those fees will be automatically added into your monthly bill for more convenience.

Cable Internet access may not be available in all areas. Contact your local cable company to find out if your area is within their accessible areas. Most cable companies will offer you a "package" deal for both your Internet services and cable television to save you more money. Some cable companies will require you to have both cable television services along with your Internet services. The best course of action is to call them, be sure they offer services in your area, and if they require you to have both cable t.v. and Internet to become a customer.

- DSL(Digital Subscriber Line)

While not as fast as a cable Internet connection, DSL is much more available in most areas and can provide you with much faster speeds than those of regular Dial Up connections. It will also give you the opportunity to use your phone line to make and receive calls while accessing the Internet through a small splitter unit plugged directly into your phone wall outlet.

Most DSL service providers will lease/rent you an external modem unit and provide you with the necessary connection cords to split off the Internet access from your normal phone line.

This leased/rental fee will also be added into your monthly bill.

The increased availability in most areas around the country, and lower monthly rates make DSL a better choice for a majority of consumers. To switch to DSL, all it takes is a call to your local telephone company to see if service is available from them in your area.

- Satellite

Much like a cable Internet connection, a satellite Internet connection can provide it's subscribers with lightening fast speeds through signals sent from your external modem into your satellite dish off to theirs and back again. You will need to have several pieces of equipment that the satellite companies can provide you with similar to those offered by the other Internet service providers through a lease/rental option.

As with cable services, satellite Internet access may not be available in all areas. The best course of action would be to contact those satellite television providers locally and asking whether or not they can provide you with Internet access services as well.

This option out of all three is the most expensive as compared to base prices offered by all three types of Internet service providers.

Where To Find Your Cable Internet Service Provider

The best place to find a cable internet service provider is by contacting your local cable company! They will have all the information you need to determine whether or not you can receive their services. If not, they will more than likely have another option for you such as DSL. While this will not have the same top speed as a cable internet connection, a DSL connection can be a good solution if you want to speed up your internet and free up your phone line.

If satellite television is available in your area, another option is to contact them to see if they can provide you with internet service. Here are a few online companies web site links so you can start to get more information on their available services, compare them to one another, and get pricing information.

- Cable Internet Service Providers

ComCast -

<http://www.comcast.com/Localization/Localize.ashx?Referer=/BuyFlow/default.ashx>

RoadRunner - <http://content.rr.com/rdrun/how.htm>

Cox Communications - <http://www.cox.com/highspeedinternet/default.asp>

Charter - <http://www.charter.com/products/highspeed/highspeed.aspx>

Cable ONE - <http://www.cableone.net/>

TriWest - <http://www.triwest.net/highspeed.htm>

- DSL Internet Service Providers

EarthLink - <http://www.earthlink.net/highspeed/>

Qwest - <http://www.qwest.com/index.html>

Verizon Online - <http://www22.verizon.com/forhomedsl/channels/dsl/>?

Yahoo! - <http://promo.yahoo.com/broadband/>

BellSouth - <http://www.bellsouth.com/consumer/inetsrvcs/>

DSL.com - <http://www.dsl.com/>

- Satellite Internet Service Providers

Better Sky - http://www.bettersky.com/satellite_internet1

Wild Blue - <http://www.localwildblue.com/wb/>

StarBand - <http://www.starband.com/>

HughesNet - <http://www.direcway.bz/index.html>

SkyCasters - <http://www.skycasters.com/>

In conclusion, I do hope that you have enough information to make the best decision for you when considering switching to a high speed internet connection. As you have read, there are plenty of great reasons to make the leap from plain old Dial Up access to a higher speed connection. And, it doesn't have to cost you an arm and a leg to get these faster connections.

If you are still using a Dial Up Internet connection, you really should consider switching over to something more convenient for you. The least you will get out of doing this is freeing up more time for you to spend with your family in the "offline" world.

All The Best,

Admin

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