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Internet Tips and Tricks - Can you live without it?

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Ah, the Internet – gateway to the world, endless knowledge, the master of all trivia, hot breaking news, entertainment, and boundless exploration. We all enjoy the Internet for many reasons. So, let’s explore and review some of the basics of the Internet so we can enjoy using it even more.

Here are some terms to understand –

**WI-FI** – A wireless network using a modem to access the Internet to any device capable of doing so. Your smartphone, iPad, and computer can access a Wi-Fi network IF one is available, and you have the password to use.

**MODEM** – A device (usually wireless) that allows communication from a computer, phone, etc., to the Internet. Your Internet service provider usually also provides this device to you.

**ROUTER** – Usually built into the modem, which allows multiple and various devices wireless access to the Internet network simultaneously.

There are two basic ways of accessing the Internet – through your Internet service provider, who allows you access through a modem or the cellular phone network. Many devices can access the Internet either way. Let’s start with your cell phone.

**Cell phones** (or “smartphones” such as the iPhone) were designed to make telephone calls using the cellular telephone network. You purchase (or make payments for) your cell phone and use the cellular network. Your provider probably has an assortment of plans from which you can choose with different monthly rates. If you use your cell phone (or any device that can use the cellular network) to access the Internet, you will pay usage charges depending upon your billing plan. But cell phones can also access the Internet through a Wi-Fi modem – the choice is yours.

**With a Wi-Fi modem/router** in your home, you can access the Internet (your Wi-Fi network) all you want by paying the monthly access fee to your Internet provider.

So the bottom line for keeping your costs down is always using the Internet modem/router rather than the cellular network unless you have a good cellular package that includes many hours of use for your cost. So now here are some tips to help you use the Internet more easily and at less cost.

Go to “settings” on your smartphone and look for “Wi-Fi.” In that option, you will see IF you have Wi-Fi turned on (and it should be) and what networks are in range of your device. You may be at a hotel or a restaurant, but let’s look at your home Wi-Fi. Most networks will require a password to access. Once you enter that password, your phone will remember it so you can get it right the next time you access it. But you should have your password written down! (Use a password manager/JT)You will need it someday, trust me! Most phones will also have a “default” setting to use the cellular network to access the Internet when there is no Wi-Fi network connected. This is handy, but you should be aware of using the cellular network or Wi-Fi to access the Internet.

Many options are available – different rates for different services and speeds, usage time, and devices. It is always wise to contact your provider at least every six months (both cell phone and Internet) and ask if a different plan would be better and cheaper for you. Take a moment to ask Google some good questions such as: “How do I access a Wi-Fi network with my cell phone?” or “How do I access the Internet while traveling?”

These days we all expect Internet access wherever we are; it is a vital necessity for most people. How about you? Could you live without the Internet?





