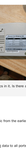


I am going through a closet with old electronics in it. Is there any use for this linear dial?

You're looking a Linksys EWS0404, a Sears Ultimate 5-Port Workgroup Hub - a relic from the earlier days of home and office networking.

What it is:

This device is a network hub, not a switch or router. It simply repeats all incoming data to all ports, meaning it:

- Lacks traffic management
- Can cause collisions in busy networks
- Has 10 Mbps speed, which is very slow by today's standards (modern gear runs at 1000 Mbps or faster)

Is it useful today?

Mostly no, unless:

✅ You're a retro computing enthusiast:
- Great for connecting vintage machines (DOS/Windows 3.1/95) in a network without needing smart switches.
- Some retro DSLs don't play well with modern networking hardware but do fine with dumb hubs.

✅ Classroom/Demo purposes:
- Can be used to teach networking concepts like collision domains, or show how data collisions occur in a shared network.

✅ You want to sniff traffic:
- Since it repeats traffic to all ports, it can be used to capture data packets for learning/testing (like with Wireshark). Modern switches usually isolate traffic.

Why you probably don't want to use it:

❌ Slow (10 Mbps max) - not even enough for basic streaming or modern internet use
❌ No traffic isolation - a noisy network with poor performance
❌ No security - anyone on the network can see all traffic
❌ Inefficient - generates unnecessary load in any real-world use case

Bottom line:

Unless you're playing with old hardware or educational setups, this is a neat collector's item or donation to a tech museum. Otherwise, it's safe to recycle. If you're unsure, I can suggest some fun uses or tracks to.

Thanks!

Where can I recycle electronics in Huntsville?

Absolutely, Darren! You've got several convenient and responsible options for recycling electronics in Huntsville. Here's a roundup of the best local choices:

🏛️ City of Huntsville Household Hazardous Waste Facility

- Location: 3010 A Cleaver Way, Huntsville, AL 35805
- Hours: Monday–Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Details: This drive-through facility accepts a wide range of electronics, including TVs, laptops, cell phones, and more. It's open rain or shine and is free for residents of Huntsville, Madison, and Madison County. (huntsvilleal.gov, facebook.com)

🏬 uBreakiFix by Asurion

- Service Area: Huntsville, AL
- Contact: Call 903-589-3705 or email recycle@freecycle.com
- Details: uBreakiFix offers electronics recycling services, including data destruction that meets HIPAA, PCIPA, and FACTA standards. They accept a variety of items such as computers, monitors, networking hardware, and more. (asurion.com, uBreakiFix.com)

🔧 Advanced Technology Recycling (ATR)

- Service Area: Huntsville, AL
- Contact: Call 877 782-1779
- Details: ATR provides R2v3 and R05 certified electronics recycling services. They handle a wide range of items, including computers, monitors, medical electronics, and more. (atrcorp.com, atrcorp.com)

♻️ Retailers Offering Electronics Recycling

- Best Buy: Accepts a variety of electronics for recycling. Check their website for specific items and any potential fees.
- Staples: Offers recycling for certain electronics and office equipment.
- Apple Store: Accepts Apple products for recycling. (cnet.com)

If you have specific items you're looking to recycle, feel free to let me know, and I can provide more detailed information on the best disposal method for each.

Thanks!

How about that hub?

For that Linksys EWS0404 (5-Port Ethernet Hub) specifically, here's how it stacks up with the options in Huntsville:

♻️ Best Option: City of Huntsville Household Hazardous Waste Facility

- Accepted? ✅ Yes
- Why: They take general electronics devices like routers, hubs, switches, and small network hardware.
- Where: 3010 A Cleaver Way, Huntsville, AL 35805
  Monday–Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Just drive up, and they'll unload it for you. No need to disassemble or remove labels.

♻️ Also Acceptable: uBreakiFix

- Accepted? ✅ Probably. While it's a great idea to call ahead and confirm for old network hardware like hubs.
- Bonus: They responsibly recycle e-waste in partnership with Samsung, which ensures downstream recycling compliance.

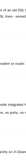
❌ Not Ideal:

- Retailers like Best Buy or Staples are better suited for consumer electronics like phones, laptops, and printers - they often don't take networking gear like this hub.

✅ Final Tip:

If the hub still works and you want to avoid tossing it, Freecycle, Buy Nothing Huntsville, or eBay for parts might find a new home with a tech enthusiast.

Want a label to stap on it for drop-off or just want to batch this with other gear? I can help organize that too.



I assume there is no test reason to keep this around either.

You're right to be analytical about testing units this one too, Darren.

The Linksys EWS0404 (5-Port Ethernet Hub) specifically, here's how it stacks up with the options in Huntsville:

♻️ Best Option: City of Huntsville Household Hazardous Waste Facility

- Accepted? ✅ Yes
- Why: They take general electronics devices like routers, hubs, switches, and small network hardware.
- Where:
  3010 A Cleaver Way, Huntsville, AL 35805
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How about these guys?

These two are definitely a throwback, Darren! Let's break them down:

🔹 Top device: Netgear MA101

- Type: USB 802.11b wireless adapter
- Speed: Up to 11 Mbps
- Era: Early 2000s Wi-Fi (pre-802.11g)

✅ Useful today:

- Pretty much obsolete. Only supports 802.11b, which is too slow for modern networks and may not even connect to most modern routers (have dropped support for 802.11b altogether).
- Requires drivers that likely aren't available or compatible with current operating systems.

♻️ Recycle it:

The only exception might be a niche retro project running Windows 98 or Linux with an ancient kernel - but even then, there are better choices.

🔹 Bottom device: D-Link DI-624 Wireless Router

- Type: Wireless G router (802.11g, 54 Mbps)
- A part 02/20 week
- WEP/WPA support (WPA2 with newer firmware, but unlikely)
- Single 2.4GHz band

✅ Useful today:

- Very limited:
  - Slow speeds
  - Insecure (WEP/WPA only)
  - Weak CPU and RAM (unsuitable for modern traffic)
  - No IPv6 support
  - No firmware updates in over a decade

That said, this could technically still be repurposed for:

- A guest Wi-Fi network with a very limited speed and no access to your main LAN (if isolated).
- A retro gaming LAN (e.g., DS or PSP games that only support WEP).

But again, that's fringe hobbyist stuff.

♻️ Recommend recycling it too.

🧾 Summary:

These are great tech fossils and neat to see, but practically speaking:

- The 802.11b: Fully obsolete. Do not use.
- The D-Link: Marginal edge case use, otherwise obsolete.

They'll both be happily accepted at the Household Hazardous Waste Facility in Huntsville. Or if you want to get cheeky, you could use them as props in a "history of the internet" display. 😄

And this?

That's a Motorola SURFboard SB6121, a standalone DOCSIS 3.0 cable modem - and unlike most of the older gear you've shown, this one still might have some life left, depending on the situation.

🧾 Key Specs:

- Model: SB6121
- Type: Cable modem (no router, no Wi-Fi)
- Standard: DOCSIS 3.0
- Channels: 4 downstream × 4 upstream
- Max speed: ~1000 Mbps down (realistically ~100-130 Mbps)

✅ Is it still useful?

✅ Maybe, for now (also temporary):

- If someone is using it as a spare cable modem for Xfinity and their ISP still supports DOCSIS 3.0, this modem can work fine.
- It's on the approved modem list for some providers (like Mediacom, Spectrum, etc.) - but not all anymore.

❌ But...

- Most ISPs now push DOCSIS 3.1 for future compatibility and gigabit speeds.
- This model lacks IPv6 support and may cause issues with some modern services.
- It's no longer officially supported by Xfinity/Comcast or Cox.
- Some ISPs are starting to deprecate DOCSIS 3.0 entirely in some regions.

🧠 Verdict:

- Still potentially usable, especially for someone with a basic internet plan and a compatible ISP.
- If you're planning to donate gear, this one has a better shot at helping someone on a budget.
- Otherwise, if it's been sitting around and you're not planning to keep/reuse it, ♻️ Recycle it.

Want me to check if your local ISP (e.g., Spectrum or WOW) still supports it, or help find a good place to donate working modems in Huntsville?

Where might it be a useful donation?

Absolutely, Darren! If you're looking to donate your Motorola SURFboard SB6121 cable modem to someone who could benefit from it, here are some local and national organizations that accept technology donations:

🏬 Local Huntsville Organizations

New Life Computer Recycling

- Location: 3010 A Cleaver Ln NW, Huntsville, AL 35805
- Details: A 501(c)(3) nonprofit that accepts computer equipment donations. While specific information about their programs is limited, they are a local option for donating electronics. (newlifecomputer.com)

America Thrift Store - Huntsville Donation Center

- Location: Huntsville, AL
- Details: They accept a variety of items, including electronics, and proceeds support local charities like Wade-A-Brish Alabama. (americathrift.com)

🌐 National Organizations Accepting Shipped Donations

Computers with Causes

- Details: A nationwide 501(c)(3) nonprofit that accepts a wide range of electronics, including modems and networking equipment. Donations are refurbished and provided to families in need, and donors receive a tax deduction. (computerswithcauses.com)

Computers for Students

- Details: A nationwide organization that refurbishes donated electronics and distributes them at no cost to families and individuals lacking technology access. They accept various electronics and provide donation receipts upon request. (c4students.org)

🧰 Donation Tips

- Check Compatibility: Ensure the modem is compatible with current ISP standards (some providers have phased out DOCSIS 3.0).
- Include Accessories: If possible, donate the modem with its power adapter and any relevant cables.
- Reset the Device: Perform a factory reset to clear any personal settings.
- Contact First: Reach out to the organization to confirm they can accept the modem and to inquire about any specific requirements. (computerswithcauses.com)

If you'd like assistance in contacting any of these organizations or need more information, feel free to ask!

Thanks!

You're welcome!