Networks are classified according to different criteria:

* Geographical area PANs (Personal Area Networks) typically include a laptop, a mobile phone and a PDA; LANs cover a building; MANs (Metropolitan Area Networks) cover a campus or a city; WANs (Wide Area Networks) cover a country or a continent.
* Architecture: in a client-server network, a computer acts to the other nodes, or clients. In a peer-to-peer network, all the computers have the same capabilities – that is, share files and peripherals without requiring a separate server computer.
* Topology, or a layout: In a bus network, all the computers are connected to a main cable, or bus. In a star network, all data flows through a central hub, a common connection point fir the devices are connected to one another in a continuous loop, or ring.
* Network protocol: This is the language, or set of rules that computers use to communicate with each other. Networks use different protocols. For instance, the Internet uses TCP/IP.

A modem router is a device that connect your computer or home LAN to the Internet.

* Plug one end the phone cord directly into a phone jack the other end into the ADSL port on the router.
* Plug one end of the Ethernet cable into the your computer’s network port and the other end into an Ethernet port on the router.
* Turn on your computer. To set up, or configure, the router, you’ll need to input some parameters, for example, you ISP’s name and phone number.

NOTE: A router has various Ethernet ports, so you can connect various PCs to the router via Ethernet cables. If you already have a hub or switch connecting a LAN, you only need one cable to connect the hub to the router.

Log on to the Internet Service Provider.

You need type in your username and password. Once you are online, you can get email, look for information on the Web, look up IT words in dictionaries, try out new software , and sing up for RSS feeds, newsletters, etc. It is important than you remember to log after using the Internet. An open line increases the risk if viruses, and hackers might break into your computer to several confidential data.

Wireless networking

Wired networks are linked by cables, phone lines and high-speed fibre optic cables. Wireless networks, however, use electromagnetic waves, such as radio waves, to transmit data. These are the main types of wireless networks:

* Satellites – for long distances;
* WiMAX – for connecting Wi-Fi hotspots
* Wi-Fi – for medium-range distance;
* Bluetooth – for short distances
* GSM – for mobile phone

To set up a home wireless LAN you need computer equipped with a wireless adapter or wireless card, a wireless access point(a wireless router) and a broadband connection.

Wired LANs are more difficult to install, but they are cheaper, faster and more reliable. Wireless networks let you move, or roam from one access point to another, but they are less secure and subject to interference.