

Tips

In Progress

There are plenty of reasons your internet may be slow, ranging from the genuine to the scummier tactics some ISPs may use. We are here to help you with that.

Restart your router

Restarting your router is a big help. It's not just a 'try turning it off and on again' trick. Every time your router restarts, it looks for the best channels to run on, clears out memory and sometimes refreshes your IP address. Most routers have some sort of restart schedule, maybe every couple weeks.

If restarting your router seems to help, you can try getting your router to restart automatically on a schedule. All routers have a schedule, maybe once a month or fortnightly. Some routers give you the option to change the schedule. You can try this by Googling your type of router and settings. If you find that your router does not allow you to do this, you can buy a plug-in mechanical timer; like you would use for saving electricity, to turn your router off some time you're not using it so that it has restarted when it comes back on.

Speak to your provider

Let them know of any faults as soon as you are aware of them. They must assist you if you are not getting what you are paying for. BUT!!! When speaking to them make sure you do these things:

1. **KEEP YOUR OWN NOTES!** Tech support is there to assist you and yes, they do keep notes on your account of the discussions you have with them, but when dealing with a fault you will quite often speak to many different people, all who will say different things. If someone says you will get your money back for the time your service was down, RECORD IT. Which brings me onto the next point.
2. **RECORD YOUR PHONE CALLS WITH TECH SUPPORT.** If you live somewhere, it is legal to record your phone calls without the other party's permission, do it. There are apps to do it for you. You don't want to be speaking to someone who offers a fix or compensation, then be passed to someone else who has no knowledge of what you're talking about.
3. Speaking of notes, **GDPR ALLOWS YOU TO ASK FOR ALL OF THESE NOTES TO BE SENT TO YOU!** If you happen to live in the EU; or the UK for as long as GDPR stands, you can ask for all these notes and they have to send them to you. Your first line support person may not know this or if they do, they may not be able to give it to you then and there, but they can make a request and it should be sent to you within a couple weeks. These notes will help you if you haven't kept your own when asking for compensation. It is very hard to remember when things happened as some faults can go on for a long time. Luckily, they have made notes and you are legally allowed access to them. You will receive the full notes that the support team have, **NOT** a summarised/edited collection. If they have 30 pages of notes, you will receive 30 pages of notes.
4. **EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM TO ANY ENGINEERS YOU HAVE CONTACT WITH.** It is all too easy for an engineer to come out, do a first line check on your line and say there is no problem. Do another speedtest, show them that there clearly is still a problem and convince them to do the next measure while they are still there. You don't want to let them leave, wait a week for the ISP to check up on you, tell them that it didn't help only to have to wait yet another week for another engineer. Also, the engineers do different jobs. The first time one comes out you might be told they are a low level or first line engineer only, and that they only do the standard check and nothing more complicated. Later they may send a higher-level engineer only for the same person to turn up. So, ask when they're there if they can help in any other way
5. **BE NICE!** Yes, it is annoying spending so much time on the phone, and yes, the hold music is infuriating, but the person on the other end is at least trying to help. If you annoy them, they can quite easily tell you they are putting you through to a manager, then just stick you back on hold and put you to the back of the queue for

another operator. All because they didn't want to deal with you. A lot of people are working from home now too, and if you scream at someone who is in their living room heating up their lunch, they might just want to get rid of you. This also leads onto the next point.

6. **SPEAK TO SOMEONE IN THE OFFICE.** Tech support often doesn't have all the questions. If you get through to someone who is working from home, that means they don't have immediate access to their colleagues who may be able to answer questions they can't. You can politely ask if you can speak to someone in an office and often you will be passed on.
7. **KEEP A LOG OF HOW LONG YOU SPEND ON THE PHONE.** If you have a fault that goes on for a long time, it might be worth some compensation. It will help your case if you can say exactly how long you have spent on the phone trying to get this fixed. You can also point out how much time of that is spent on hold too.

Some things to look out for

When you've got a few speedtests in your app and notice an issue, there are a few ways of noticing and possibly diagnosing a problem.

Firstly, a sudden drop off in speed is what would typically indicate a technical fault. If your speeds slowly go down over a time period, that could also be a technical issue, but a sudden drop would be a definite indicator that something has gone wrong. Maybe the channel is overcrowded, in which case restarting your router may help. If it persists, it's time to contact your ISP.

A gradual drop off in speed over time could be your ISP. Some less reputable ISPs have been known to throttle speeds to their users to save bandwidth on the line. A line can only hold so much data throughput, and if there is an overabundance of data being sent along it, it is not unheard of that the ISP will cut data speeds to some of their users so that they can fit more customers onto one line. If you call your ISP and mention the fault, they will not admit to this so don't ask, but if the speeds come back immediately and they say they didn't do anything, they might have been throttling you. Some of these companies will hold data on their users on how long it takes before they call in a fault. So if you are someone who would go months without even noticing that your speeds were low, they're likely to keep doing it. Because of this, if you have low speeds, even if by a little, call them immediately. This usually means that they end up screwing over less technically minded people and the older generations, but hey.

If your speeds are up and down all the time, this could be many things. It could be a technical issue. It could be that another user on the line is using large amounts of data sporadically. Either way, call your ISP about this immediately.