How to Find Your Local and External IP Address

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When you're troubleshooting internet and networking problems over the phone, one key piece of information is your IP address. This is easy to find on both a Mac and Windows computer. Here's how to do it.

First things first, you should know there are two kinds of IP addresses: local and external/public. Your local IP address is what identifies your computer or device to the local network. Your external/public IP address is what the rest of the internet sees. First, let's take a look at how to find your external/public IP address since that's a lot easier and the more commonly needed number.

1. Visit a search engine like Google and search for *what's my IP*
2. The first result you get should be a site called What's My IP Address. Click on that.
3. Your external/public IP address should be prominently displayed on the resulting page.

Next, let's find your local IP address. Here are the instructions for Windows

1. Click on the Start menu and type cmd. When you see the cmd applications in Start menu panel, click it or just press enter.
2. A command line window will open. Type ipconfig and press enter.
3. You'll see a bunch of information, but the line you want to look for is

"IPv4 Address." The number across from that text is your local IP address.

Here's how to do the same thing on a Mac:

1. Open System Preferences (via the Apple menu at the top lefthand corner of your screen).

2. When System Preferences opens, click on the icon labeled Network.

3. You should see a few options on the left with labels like Wi-Fi, Ethernet, Bluetooth, etc. The ones with green dots have IP addresses assigned to them. Click the one on top (if it isn't already selected) and look to the right. There should be a sentence that reads something like "Wi-Fi is connected to Chocolate and has the IP address 192.168.1.102." The number at the end of that sentence is your local IP address.

For a demonstration of everything you just read, watch the video up at the top of your screen.

What other beginner tech support questions do you field or have? Let us know at tips@lifehacker.com.

Remember, when you're just starting out computing, there's really little that's too basic to learn.

You can follow Adam Dachis, the author of this post, on Twitter , Google+ , and Facebook . Twitter's the best way to contact him, too.