

How to Change the Priority of Wired/Wireless Network Cards in Windows



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Do you ever plug in your wired network card while your wireless card is still enabled? Ever wonder how Windows chooses which one to use? Here's how to see the default priority—and how to change it if you want.

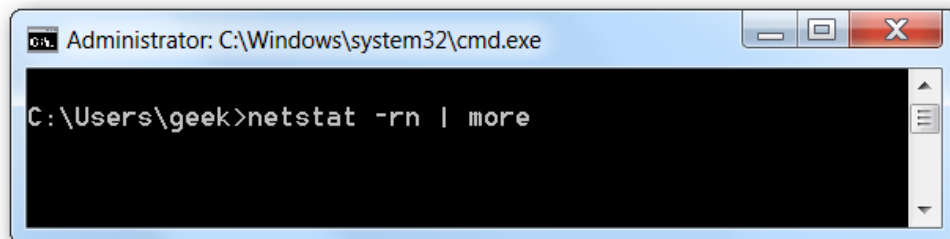
Note: there's almost never any reason to change this, as Windows does a good job of choosing the right connection. Still, if you want to tweak it to work differently, this is how you would do it.

How to See the Current Network Card Priority

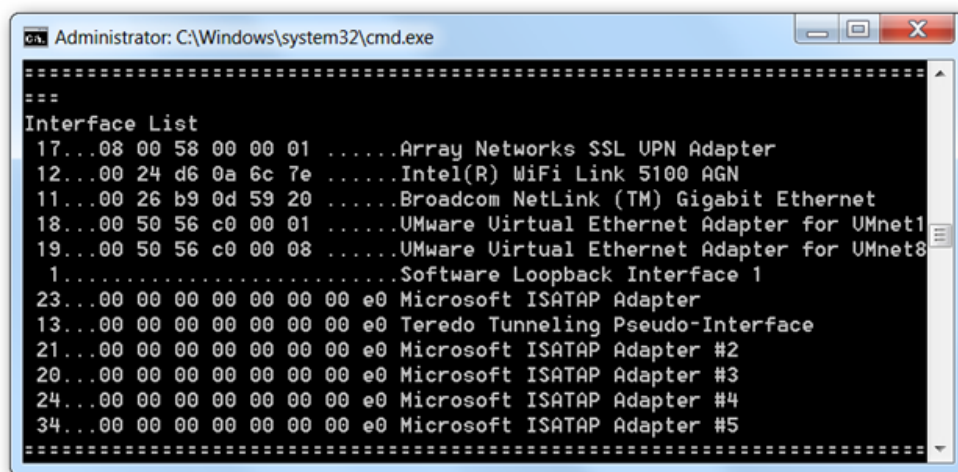
You'll need to open up a new command prompt window and type in the following command:

```
netstat -rn | more
```

The | more part of the command will make sure that it doesn't go flying off the screen, requiring you to scroll backwards—speaking of which, you should read our article about [how to scroll backwards in the command prompt with the keyboard](#).



At the top of the output you'll see the Interface List, and the column on the left-hand side shows the metric of the interface. You'll notice that the loopback interface has the highest priority, followed by my wired Gigabit card, and then my wireless card.

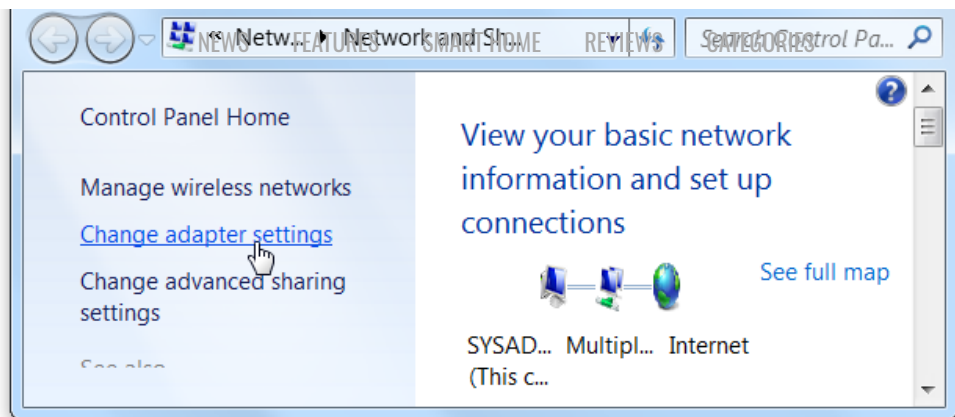


```
Administrator: C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe
=====
===
Interface List
17...08 00 58 00 00 01 .....Array Networks SSL UPN Adapter
12...00 24 d6 0a 6c 7e .....Intel(R) WiFi Link 5100 AGN
11...00 26 b9 0d 59 20 .....Broadcom NetLink (TM) Gigabit Ethernet
18...00 50 56 c0 00 01 .....VMware Virtual Ethernet Adapter for VMnet1
19...00 50 56 c0 00 08 .....VMware Virtual Ethernet Adapter for VMnet8
1.....Software Loopback Interface 1
23...00 00 00 00 00 00 00 e0 Microsoft ISATAP Adapter
13...00 00 00 00 00 00 00 e0 Teredo Tunneling Pseudo-Interface
21...00 00 00 00 00 00 00 e0 Microsoft ISATAP Adapter #2
20...00 00 00 00 00 00 00 e0 Microsoft ISATAP Adapter #3
24...00 00 00 00 00 00 00 e0 Microsoft ISATAP Adapter #4
34...00 00 00 00 00 00 00 e0 Microsoft ISATAP Adapter #5
=====
```

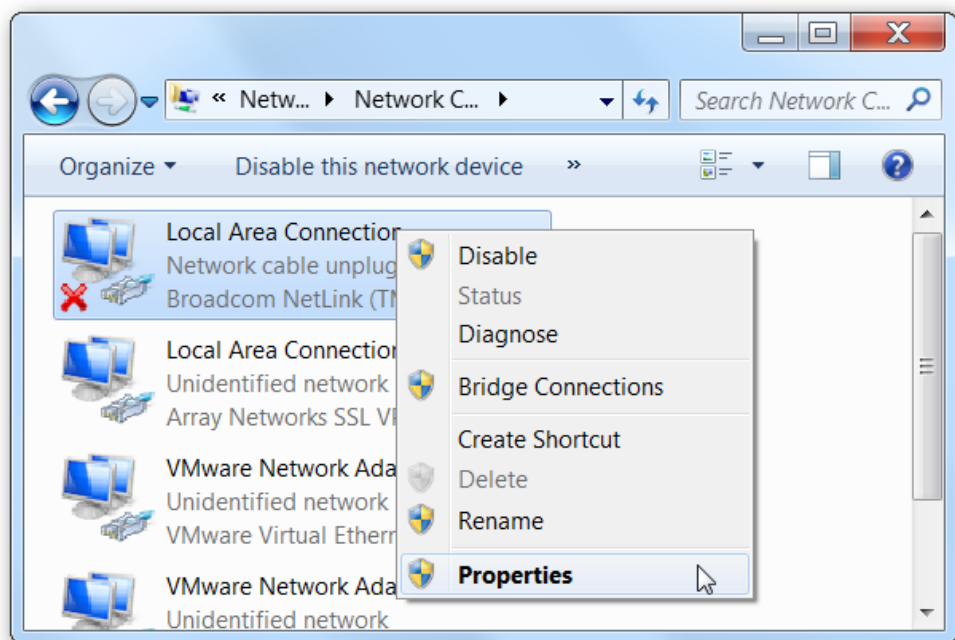
If you're wondering what all the other cards in the list are about, I've got some VPN software loaded, as well as VMware Workstation, all of which create virtual adapters that show up in the list.

How to Change the Network Card Priority

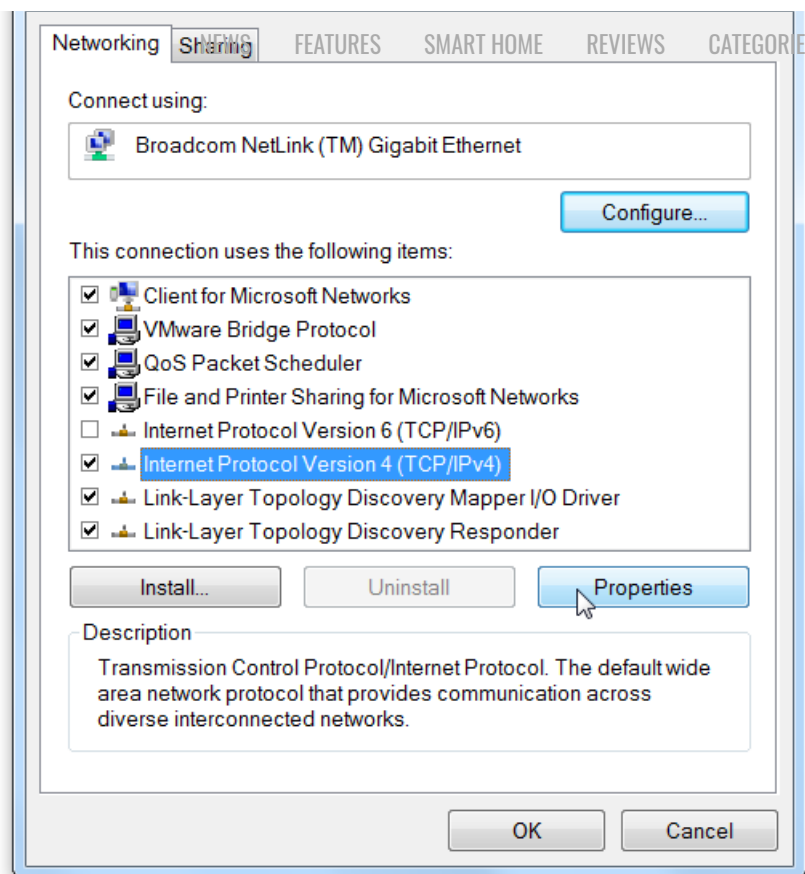
To change the priority, head into Network and Sharing Center and click on the Change adapter settings link on the left-hand side—or you can [quickly open the network connections list](#) by typing `ncpa.cpl` into the Start Menu search box.



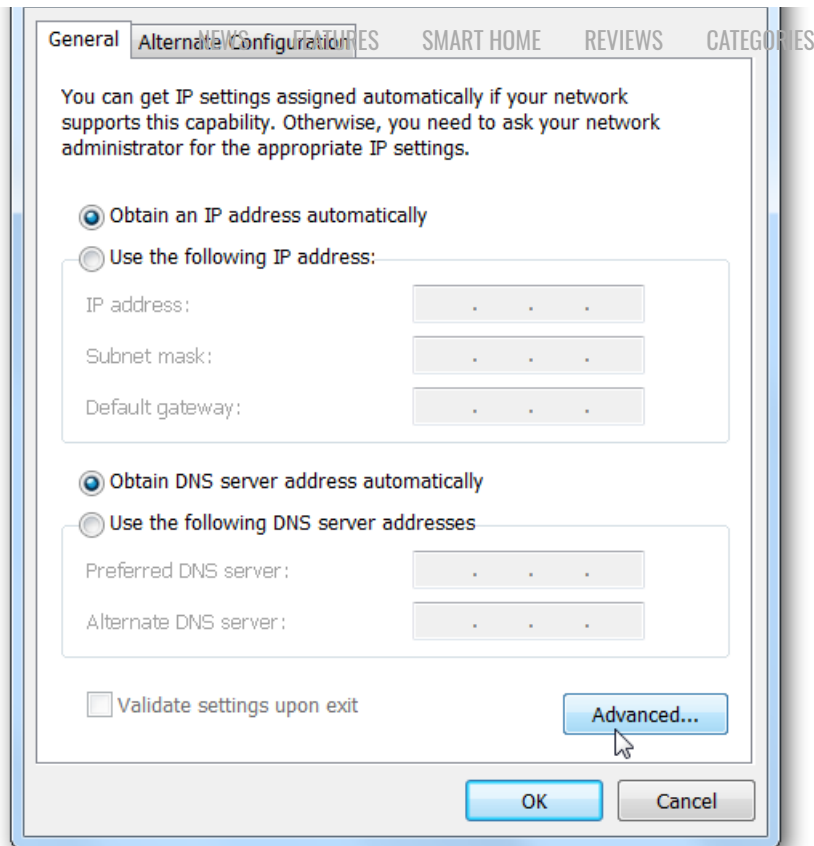
Now that we're in here, choose the network card that you want to change the priority for, right-click it, and choose Properties from the menu.



Now select the Internet Protocol Version 4 item in the list, and click the Properties button.



Now click the Advanced button at the bottom of this window.... getting tired of clicking yet?



And now, finally, we're at the place where you can make the change. Uncheck the box for Automatic Metric, and then type a number into the Interface Metric textbox. You can consult the list that we found in the command prompt earlier to know what metric to assign—you'll probably want to assign it something higher than 1, since that's used for the loopback adapter.