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Broadband Speed - DIY Speed Improvement - 3/12/07



DIY Broadband - Speed Tips

There's no guaranteed way to make your [broadband](#) run faster, but there are a few things you could do to try and squeeze a few more kilobits out of the connection you've got. Here are a few suggestions

1) First Port of Call - Reboot!

Before you try anything drastic you should first turn off your computer, modem and router (if you have one). If you're experiencing Internet problems or feel your speed is seriously lacking, a simple reset may do the trick. After shutting down, make sure you pull out the power leads and leave them to rest for 10 seconds. On reconnection of the wires, start the devices again in the normal way. Often this will help solve small problems - if it doesn't, or its sheer speed optimisation you want, read on

2) Check how you connect your Modem/Router

If you're given the choice, always choose an Ethernet connection on your modem rather than a USB. It is much more reliable, does not slow down the PC, doesn't compete with other USB devices and will work automatically on any computer. Most importantly, it allows you to plug in extra networking and security devices, such as a router.

If you're using a wireless router, you might consider switching to a wired connection (i.e. an Ethernet cable directly from your router to your PC), since this is typically more reliable than wireless connection. There are a number of home networking options on the market - for example, adaptors that allow you to network your home through the mains. Talk to a store like Maplin [Maplin](#) they should be able to fill you in on all the options open to you.

3) How busy is your router?

If you share your connection with other householders, then remember that your connection will slow every time a new user surfs at the same time as you do. It's the routers job to break up and allocate bandwidth to everyone online. It may not make for a harmonious household, but if you - alone - want to make the most out of your connection you have to kick everyone else off!

4) What time of day is it?

Just like our roads get clogged up at peak time, so does the Internet. Your best bet if you really need the speed is to pick a time where not as many people are on - research has shown that between 2 AM and 6 PM is the best. This may sound simple, but it is very effective.

5) Tweak your Internet connection

Now, this is a bit more technical, but if you're on Cable, you can actually go into the settings of your modem and tweak the way your broadband Internet cable connection sends the data/packets back and forth.

Firstly, you can try an Internet speed optimiser - programmes that claim to automatically optimise and accelerate your [Internet connection](#), be it dial-up, DSL, cable, or wireless. Of course these will not work for everyone, so be sure to read up on the terms and conditions of use, to ensure that these downloads will actually benefit your browsing experience.

If you are new to this whole thing, there are a number of programmes that will automatically set the best values for your connection. For a start, here are a couple of free programmes:

[Tweakmaster 2.5](#)

[PC Pitstop Optimize 1.5](#)

Alternatively you can simply just change your Internet Browser to one of the lesser known ones, such as Opera, [Maxthon](#) or Smartalec's [Voyager](#) (or even the popular [Firefox](#)) that's much faster than regular Internet Explorer.

Another tweak would involve updating the drivers on your NIC (Network Interface Card). This can give you the most noticeable speed boost above everything else (but we would not recommend trying this without some basic technical knowledge of how network cards operate). Some good places to check for drivers would be: www.drivershq.com, www.download.com, and even www.altavista.com.

Right, now this is where we get *really* technical...

6) Fit an ADSL Master Socket Faceplate

This little gadget fits onto your Master Socket, where your phone and ADSL come into the house. Your ADSL and phone exist on the same line, but they use different frequencies - ADSL higher than phone. So separate them with an ADSL Faceplate (which should cost less than a tenner) and you should hopefully cut out the unnecessary frequencies and pick up your speed. Here's how it's done:



a. This is your Master Socket. Undo the two short screws when undone and lift off the bottom half of the socket. Be careful as your telephone extensions are connected to this piece you are removing.



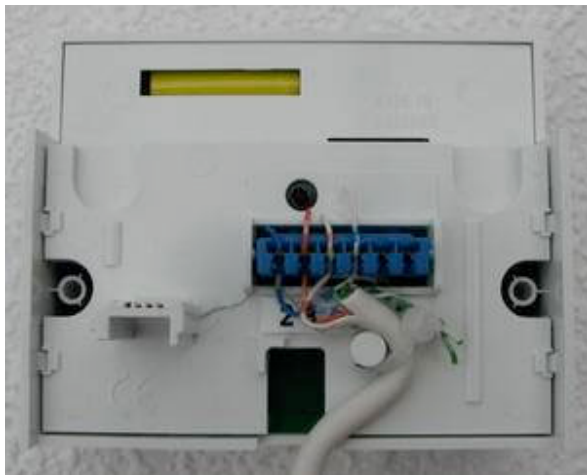
b. This is what you'll see on the other side of the faceplate.

DO NOT DISMANTLE THE WALL SOCKET ANY FURTHER.

Consumers can change the faceplate but the part screwed to the wall must be maintained by BT.

When wiring up telephone wiring also use the proper IPC insertion tool rather than a screwdriver or knife; they only cost about a quid:

<http://www.maplin.co.uk>



c. Reconnect the wiring to the back of the new ADSL Faceplate as shown in this image. The spare right hand connectors on the blue block are for connecting a dedicated ADSL extension.

The BT supplied ADSL faceplate which engineers sometimes fit when investigating a faulty line do not have this option for an ADSL extension.



d. Push the new ADSL Faceplate onto the Master Socket and screw on. It will be slightly larger than the original due to the filter electronics the faceplate holds.

7) Check that your modem has the latest firmware

Your PC might not be tuned to take full advantage of your speed. You can tweak settings to improve performance: check out this site www.broadbandreports.com for tests and tweaks.

While we hope to have given some useful tips and suggestions here, we always urge you to read the terms and conditions of use for all of the advertised programmes before reaching any decisions on what to trial or use. Understanding how these downloads work and what they will offer you is very important before pressing that big, shiny 'download' button.

For more information on boosting your Internet connection, check out this article: Computer Active - Fix your Broadband [Computer Active - Fix your Broadband](#)
Images courtesy of www.thinkbroadband.com