



IT Cheat Sheet.

Improving Internet performance when learning remotely



I am not sure what my current home plan is?

- Your Internet Service Provider's (ISP's) website will have a subscriber/user login page which on entry, usually describes your plan and its features. You will also be able to view and request upgrade options from there.

My Internet performance is poor and drops out all the time?

- Check your plan, if you've exceeded your data limit the performance may have been capped. You may need to pay to upgrade it.
- If you can, select a plan that gives unlimited data and the highest speed possible, especially if you are also streaming entertainment into the house.
- Phone your ISP and ask them to check if there is a problem with your line specifically and/or in the area? Are the regular drop outs something unique to you or to the area?
- Check that all the cables including power are fixed securely and cannot be kicked or pulled out easily.
- If technically minded, consider changing your router's WiFi channel setting from 2.4 GHz to 5 GHz. This will limit the range but improve the speed the closer you are to the router.

- Turn-off streaming or entertainment services during key learning periods.
- If other family members are working or learning from home, see if you can come up with a shared schedule that works for everyone. The same applies if you are in shared accommodation. Download any education materials the night before classes rather than at the time of the class if possible.
- Ensure the people in your home are the only ones using your WiFi. Make sure your router is secure by using a strong password and WPA2 security. This might be particularly important for those students living in apartment blocks.
- If you have it as an option (and if the location of your router and study space allow), try using a network cable from your computer to your router, rather than WiFi. Wired connections can avoid many issues WiFi might experience.

My router is more than 3yrs old. Will that account for poor Internet performance?

- Ask your ISP about getting a new, faster one from them or whether they'd recommend a make/model to buy. You might consider making the investment and upgrading your router to a newer or faster model.

My router is relatively fixed at one end of the house but my learning space is at the other. What can I do?

- Try and position your router in the centre of the house, in the open and away from any other devices (like a microwave) that might interfere with it.
- You could also consider buying a WiFi extender if moving the router is not possible.
- Again, wired cable rather than WiFi could help here. Although of course this might not be possible due to length of cable needed and the layout of rooms and furniture. But if you can do it, it could help. You could perhaps test it with a short cable and temporarily moving your device close to the router - to see if wired is better for you.

My ISP plan does not provide me with enough data or fast enough speeds?

- Check with your ISP about changing your plan to better suit your needs. Unlimited data and the fastest speeds available will work best in most situations but carefully consider the costs.

My home computer is too old and slow, should I upgrade to a newer device?

- You should first check that your device performance is optimised. You can remove any unwanted programs, free up disk space, check that your operating system is optimally set-up etc. You can find plenty of help on how to do this by referring to the device manufacturer's support website site or online forums related to your chosen operating system. If this does not help, you might consider a newer device.
- Using a laptop also frees you up to study a little more flexibly in terms of location.
- UNSW operates a BYOD policy for students in Sydney so your investment will travel with you when you come to Sydney.
- If you need to get your own device repaired when you are studying in Sydney, UNSW operates a pool of share devices that you can borrow for a short period until your own is available again.

To help ensure that your learning space is safe and secure, have a good quality anti-virus program installed on your home or your personal electronic device and update it regularly to remain fully protected.

