



Buying Your Own Internet Router/Modem

FACT SHEET

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People used to rent telephones from the phone company, something we might find a bit odd in the age of cellphones. Yet, it seems that the Internet industry is following the same path.

Most consumers receive Internet from the phone company or the cable company, and most are still paying those companies to rent their modems and routers. Some companies allow customers to provide their own compatible modem in place of the rented modem, which helps reduce their monthly internet bills and can pay for itself in just a few months.

What is a Modem?

A modem enables your computer, or any device plugged directly into the modem, to access the Internet.

What is a Router?

A router enables your home to have Wi-Fi, meaning a computer or tablet in your home can access the Internet wirelessly. Since many consumers use wireless devices, such as a cellphone, laptop or tablet, most people will need to buy a modem and a router.

How Do I Buy a Modem or a Router?

You can purchase your modem and router separately, or purchase a device that contains both—it's up to you. Both options connect you to the Internet. Keep in mind that if you purchase a combined device, if one part breaks (i.e., the router or the modem) you will have to replace the entire system.

Before purchasing your modem or router, you need to check with your Internet provider to view its "approved" modem/router list.

• Comcast Xfinity Customers

Check if your device is approved for Xfinity Internet service. A list of compatible modems is found at mydeviceinfo.xfinity.com. Additional information can be found at www.customer.xfinity.com/help-and-support/internet/list-of-approved-cable-modems/



• Charter Spectrum Customers

Charter Spectrum customers are given a free modem when they sign up for Internet. Charter charges a monthly fee for this router. You can purchase your own router, however, and forego the fee. For information on compatible devices, visit this page: www.spectrum.net/support/internet/compliant-modems-charter-network/.

• Frontier Customers

Frontier provides customers with a free modem and charges \$10 per month to rent a router, though that cost is included in the advertised monthly rate so it's not an additional fee that can be removed by returning the router. Frontier adopted these policy changes in response to a [2020 FCC law](#) providing consumers the right to "accurate equipment charges."

• AT&T Internet Customers

AT&T no longer charges customers an additional equipment fee for their modem and router rental. To find compatible modems, see www.updater.com/guides/att-compatible-modems

• Mediacom Customers

Mediacom does allow customers to purchase their own modem and router, which allows customers to avoid rental fees. Most modems and routers are compatible with their service, according to Mediacom. For a list of compatible modems, visit this page: www.mediacomcable.com/assets/pdf/legal/Compatible-Retail-Modems-CRM03142022.pdf