BILL'S HOME TECH

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My Printer Won't Connect to the New Wi-Fi

New router, new name, or new password? Here's how to get the printer back online

Plain-English printer help from:

Bill's Home Tech

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Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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What's Inside

Everything in this guide, with page numbers. Skip to whichever chapter answers your question right now.

The 60-Second Version 4
The Short Version 4
Why This Happens 5
What You'll Need Before You Start 5
Path 1: Reconnect From the Printer's Own Screen 6
Path 2: Reconnect With the Maker's App 6
Path 3: The WPS Button Shortcut 7
The 2.4GHz-Only Gotcha 8
Re-Add the Printer on Your Computer Afterward 9
Print From Your Phone in the Meantime 9
If It Still Won't Connect 10
After an Internet-Company Equipment Swap 10
Moving the Printer to a New House 11
Sharing One Printer Among Several Devices 12
Keep a Card With Your Wi-Fi Details 12
A Quick Word on Printer Security 13
Common Mistakes That Waste an Hour 13
When to Call Bill 14
Everyday Cheat Sheet 15
A Note From Bill 16

Your Visit — and My Promise 17

SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

Your printer memorized the OLD Wi-Fi, so after a new router, name, or password it needs to be told the new details. The easiest path is the maker's app (HP Smart, Canon PRINT, Epson Smart Panel), especially for a printer with no screen; otherwise use the printer's own Wireless Setup Wizard, or the one-touch WPS button.

The big gotcha: cheap printers only use the 2.4GHz Wi-Fi band, so point it there, not the 5G one. Afterward, remove and re-add the printer on your computer. Have your new Wi-Fi name and password ready before you start.

1 The Short Version

You changed something about your internet — a new router, a new provider, or just a new Wi-Fi name and password — and now the printer that worked for years refuses to connect. This is completely normal. Your printer memorized the old Wi-Fi, and it has no idea the network changed under it. The fix is simply to tell the printer about the new network, which takes just a few minutes once you know where to look.

This guide gives you three ways to do it, from easiest to most hands-on, plus the one gotcha — cheap printers that only speak to a certain kind of Wi-Fi — that trips up more people than anything else. Follow whichever path fits your printer.

- The printer still remembers your OLD Wi-Fi; you just need to point it at the new one.
- The maker's phone app is usually the easiest path, especially for a printer with no screen.
- Have your new Wi-Fi name and password written down before you start.
- If it simply will not join, it may be the 2.4GHz gotcha — covered here, and an easy call for Bill.

GOOD TO KNOW

Write your new Wi-Fi name and password on a card and keep it by the printer. You will need it here, and again for every smart device in the house — it is the single most useful thing to have handy during any internet change.

2 Why This Happens

A Wi-Fi printer does not reconnect to "the internet" in a general way; it connects to one specific network name with one specific password, and it holds onto those like a memorized phone number. When you get a new router or change your network name or password, that memorized number no longer works, so the printer keeps dialing the old one and never gets through.

Nothing is broken, and you did nothing wrong. The printer is simply waiting to be told the new details. Once you enter them, it reconnects and everything — printing from your computer, your phone, scanning to email — starts working again.

GOOD TO KNOW

This is also why a printer can suddenly go quiet after your internet company swaps your equipment or you accept a "free new modem." The new box almost always comes with a different Wi-Fi name and password, which quietly orphans every device that knew the old one.

3 What You'll Need Before You Start

A couple of minutes of preparation makes the whole thing smooth. Gather these first so you are not hunting mid-way through.

- Your new Wi-Fi network name (sometimes printed on a sticker on the router).
- Your new Wi-Fi password (also often on that sticker, labeled "password" or "key").
- Your phone, if your printer has the maker's app or has no screen of its own.

- A few minutes of quiet — typing the password carefully is the part that matters most.

> **WATCH OUT**
> Wi-Fi passwords are case-sensitive and often mix in similar-looking characters — a capital O versus a zero, a lowercase l versus the number 1. Most "it won't connect" moments are simply a mistyped password. Take it slowly, and use the printer's "show password" option if it has one.

4 Path 1: Reconnect From the Printer's Own Screen

If your printer has a touchscreen or a small display with buttons, this is the most direct route and needs nothing else.

1. On the printer, open Settings, then the Network or Wireless menu.
2. Choose "Wireless Setup Wizard" or "Wi-Fi Setup" (the wording varies by brand).
3. Let it scan, then pick your NEW Wi-Fi name from the list.
4. Carefully type the new password and confirm.
5. Wait for the connected confirmation, then print a test page from the printer's menu if it offers one.

> **TIP**
> If the printer still lists and tries to use the old network name, look for a "forget network" or "reset network settings" option first, then run the setup wizard fresh. That clears the stale memory that can block the new connection.

5 Path 2: Reconnect With the Maker's App

If your printer has no screen, or the on-screen typing is awkward, the printer maker's free phone app is the easiest and most reliable way. Each major brand has one, and it walks you through reconnecting step by step.

- HP printers: the "HP Smart" app.
- Canon printers: the "Canon PRINT" app (newer models use "Canon Print Inkjet/SELPHY").
- Epson printers: the "Epson Smart Panel" app.
- Brother printers: the "Brother iPrint&Scan" app.

1. Install the app for your brand from the App Store (iPhone) or Play Store (Android).
2. Make sure your phone is already on the NEW Wi-Fi you want the printer to use.
3. Open the app and look for "Add Printer," "Set up a new printer," or a Wi-Fi/printer-settings option.
4. Follow the prompts — the app passes your phone's Wi-Fi details to the printer for you.
5. When it confirms, send a test print from the app.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Because the app already knows the Wi-Fi your phone is on, it often fills in the network details for you, so you may not even have to retype the password. That is why the app route is usually the gentlest.

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6 Path 3: The WPS Button Shortcut

Many routers and printers support a one-touch pairing method called WPS, which connects them without typing a password at all. It is quick when both devices have the button, though not every router does, and some providers turn it off.

1. On the printer, find and start the WPS or "push-button" wireless option (often in the Network menu).
2. Within two minutes, press the WPS button on your router — a small button sometimes marked "WPS" or with two curved arrows.

3. Wait for both to confirm the connection; the printer's wireless light should go steady.

> **WATCH OUT**
> If your router has no WPS button, or pressing it does nothing, do not worry — simply use Path 1 or Path 2 instead. WPS is a convenience, not a requirement.

7 The 2.4GHz-Only Gotcha

Here is the single most common reason a printer will not join a new network, and it catches almost everyone. Most home Wi-Fi actually broadcasts on two "bands" — a 2.4GHz band and a 5GHz band. Many inexpensive printers can only use the 2.4GHz band. If your new router combines both bands under one name, or your phone is on the 5GHz band, the printer may never see a network it can join.

The fix is to make sure the printer is connecting to the 2.4GHz network. On some routers the two bands have different names (often one ends in something like "-5G"); choose the one WITHOUT the 5G label for the printer. If both bands share one name, the router may need a small setting change so the printer can find the 2.4GHz band — and that is a good moment to get help rather than guess.

> **WATCH OUT**
> This gotcha is not a defect in your printer; it is just how the cheaper models are built. If you have tried the password carefully and it still will not join a brand-new router, the band mismatch is the most likely reason — and it is a two-minute fix for someone who knows where the setting lives.

8 Re-Add the Printer on Your Computer Afterward

Once the printer is back on the new Wi-Fi, your computer may still be looking for it at its old address, so it is worth re-adding it so the two line up. This is the same gentle remove-and-add from printer housekeeping.

1. Windows: Settings Bluetooth & devices Printers & scanners remove the printer, then "Add device" and pick it again.
2. Mac: System Settings Printers & Scanners select the printer, click minus (–), then plus (+) and add it again.
3. Send a test page to confirm the computer and printer are reunited.

> **TIP**
> If the printer does not appear when you try to add it, double-check that your computer is on the SAME network name you just put the printer on. A computer on the 5GHz band and a printer on the 2.4GHz band can still print to each other on most home routers — but only if both bands share the same network and the router allows them to talk.

9 Print From Your Phone in the Meantime

As soon as the printer is on the new Wi-Fi, your phone can print to it directly, even before you sort out the computer. iPhones use AirPrint and Androids use Mopria or the maker's app — both just need the phone and printer on the same network.

1. Confirm your phone is on the same new Wi-Fi as the printer.
2. Open a photo, email, or web page and tap Share or the three-dots menu.
3. Choose Print, pick your printer, and tap Print.

10 If It Still Won't Connect

If you have tried the password slowly, used the maker's app, and ruled out the 2.4GHz gotcha, there are a couple of deeper reasons left — a router setting that hides devices from each other, a "guest" network the printer got put on by mistake, or a printer that needs its network settings fully reset. These are all fixable, but they live a layer deeper in the settings than most people want to go.

- Reset the printer's network settings to factory and run the setup fresh.
- Confirm the printer is on your main network, not a "guest" network.
- Check that the router is not set to keep devices from seeing each other ("client isolation").

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Any one of these takes a professional a few minutes and is easy to get wrong by trial and error. There is no shame in handing it off at this point — it is precisely the kind of thing I sort out on a quick visit.

11 After an Internet-Company Equipment Swap

One of the most common times a printer suddenly will not connect is right after your internet company sends a new modem or router, or you accept a "free upgrade." The new box almost always arrives with a different Wi-Fi name and password, which quietly orphans every device that knew the old network — the printer, yes, but also smart speakers, cameras, thermostats, and streaming sticks.

The good news is that reconnecting them all follows the same pattern you have just learned for the printer: tell each device the new network name and password. The printer is usually the fussiest of the bunch, so if you can get it back on, the rest tend to follow easily.

GOOD TO KNOW

When the installer sets up the new equipment, you can ask them to keep your OLD Wi-Fi name and password on the new box. Many will do it, and if they do, none of your devices — printer included — even notice the change. It is worth asking before they finish.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

12 Moving the Printer to a New House

Taking a printer to a new home, or to a snowbird's second place, raises the same issue as a new router: the printer remembers the old network and knows nothing about the new one. The steps are identical to reconnecting after a router change, with one extra thing to check first.

1. At the new place, find the Wi-Fi name and password (often on the router's sticker).
2. Power the printer on and give it a minute.
3. Use the printer's Wireless Setup Wizard, or the maker's app, to join the new network.
4. Re-add the printer on whatever computer you use at the new place.

TIP

If you split your year between two homes, the maker's app remembers both printers and makes switching painless. Many people simply keep an inexpensive second printer at the second home rather than carry one back and forth.

13 Sharing One Printer Among Several Devices

Once the printer is on your Wi-Fi, every device in the house on that same network can use it — your desktop, a laptop, two phones, a tablet — with no extra setup beyond adding it on each one. There is no limit that matters for a home, and no need for cables to each device.

- Each computer adds the printer once from its own printers settings; phones use Print directly.
- They can all print to it at the same time; jobs simply line up and print in turn.
- Everyone needs to be on the same home Wi-Fi network — not a separate guest network.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> This is exactly why the fixed-address and 2.4GHz tips matter in a busy household: when several people rely on one printer, you want it to stay put on the network so nobody's laptop suddenly "can't find" it.

14 Keep a Card With Your Wi-Fi Details

The single most useful habit around home internet is also the simplest: write your Wi-Fi network name and password on a card and keep it somewhere handy, like taped inside a kitchen cabinet or by the router. You will reach for it every time you add a device, reconnect a printer, or have a guest over.

If you do not know your current Wi-Fi password, it is usually printed on a sticker on the router, or saved on a phone or computer that is already connected. Getting it written down once saves a great deal of hunting later, and it is the first thing that makes any internet change go smoothly.

WATCH OUT

Keep that card where you can find it but not where a stranger walking through would see it. Your Wi-Fi password is the key to your home network; treat it with the same care as a spare house key.

15 A Quick Word on Printer Security

Printers are computers too, and a few simple habits keep yours from becoming a weak spot on your home network. None of this is urgent or alarming — it is just good housekeeping, the same as locking a door you rarely use.

- Let the printer install its firmware updates; they often close security holes.
- If the printer has its own admin password, change it from the factory default.
- Only install printer software from the maker's own app or website, never a random search result.
- On a strong home Wi-Fi password, your printer is well protected without any fuss.

GOOD TO KNOW

If your printer offers a setting to disable printing from the internet at large, and you only ever print from inside your home, turning that off is a sensible, no-downside choice. It is the kind of small tune-up I handle on a visit.

16 Common Mistakes That Waste an Hour

Most of the time people lose with a stubborn printer comes down to a handful of easy-to-miss things. Knowing them up front saves the frustration of circling the same steps.

- Typing the Wi-Fi password slightly wrong — the number-one cause by a wide margin.
- Connecting the printer to a "guest" network, or to the 5G band it cannot use.
- Forgetting to re-add the printer on the computer after it rejoins Wi-Fi.

- Downloading "drivers" from a look-alike website instead of the maker's own app.
- Switching the printer off at the wall each night, so it drops the connection and has to rejoin.

> *Nine times in ten, a printer that "won't connect" is one carefully retyped password or one correct network name away from working. Slow down on those two things and most of the battle is won.*

17 When to Call Bill

Reconnecting a printer to new Wi-Fi is usually a five-minute job once you are in the right menu, and this guide gets most people there. But if the password keeps bouncing, the printer will not show the new network, or you have hit the 2.4GHz wall, you do not need to keep wrestling with it.

I come to you, get the printer on the new network, re-add it on your computer and phone, and make sure everything — printing and scanning — works before I leave. If your internet just changed, I will happily reconnect the other devices that got orphaned at the same time, so the whole house is back to normal in one visit.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this by the printer. Have your new Wi-Fi name and password ready.

I want to...	Do this...
Reconnect (has a screen)	Printer Settings Network Wireless Setup Wizard pick new network type password
Reconnect (no screen)	Install the maker's app (HP Smart / Canon / Epson), open it, add the printer
Skip typing the password	Use WPS: start it on the printer, then press WPS on the router within 2 minutes
Fix "it won't find my network"	Connect the printer to the 2.4GHz band, not the 5G one
Reunite it with the computer	Remove the printer and add it again (Windows or Mac settings)
Print right now	From your phone: Share Print (same Wi-Fi as the printer)
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

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