BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Rural Internet Options

Satellite, 5G home internet, local wireless and DSL — compared in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for homes past the end of the cable line

Take your time — looking costs nothing

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

For satellite, 5G home, local wireless and DSL in rural Ohio · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to getting good internet where cable and fiber don't reach. Part 1 explains the choices and the few words that matter. Part 2 shows you how to find out what reaches your own address. Parts 3 to 5 cover each kind of service, Part 6 the money and fine print, and Part 7 living with the connection you choose. Read it in any order and at your own pace.

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PART 1

Getting Started

What your choices really are when cable doesn't reach the end of your road, and the few words that make every internet ad easier to understand.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. I'm Bill, and I've spent more than 30 years in professional technology work. Here in Portage County, there are plenty of homes where the cable company's line stops a mile short of the driveway. If that's your house, you've probably heard a dozen different answers about what to do: "get a dish," "use your phone," "wait for fiber." This guide sorts all of that out in plain English.

Rural internet has changed a great deal in the last few years. Satellite isn't just the slow, expensive option it once was. Cell phone companies now sell home internet that runs off their towers. Federal and state money is paying to build new lines and connections in rural Ohio. That's good news, but it also means more choices, more fine print and more sales pitches.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this guide does for you

It shows you how to find out exactly which services reach **your** address, how to compare them fairly, what each kind of service is good and bad at, what the contracts and equipment fees really look like, and where to get help paying. It also covers living with the connection you pick: data limits, bad weather, phone calls and the scams aimed at people shopping for internet. Start with Chapter 2, *Your Rural Internet Choices at a Glance* for the big picture.

Who this guide is for

- Anyone in the country, or at the edge of town, where cable or fiber doesn't reach.
- People stuck on slow DSL over the phone line and wondering what's better.
- Anyone paying for satellite internet and curious whether newer options would cost less or work better.
- Family members helping a parent choose internet for a farmhouse, cabin or new place.

The big promise: you can't break it

Looking up your address, reading a broadband label and asking providers questions costs nothing and commits you to nothing. The one place to slow down is **signing up**. Some services have two-year agreements, equipment fees and short return windows. This guide flags those clearly, so you know what you're agreeing to before you say yes. See Chapter 24, *Contracts, Equipment and Return Windows*.

You're never stuck alone

Read this in any order and at your own pace. And if you'd like someone to look at your address, your options and your bills with you, call or text me at **(330) 200-8042**.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

Your Rural Internet Choices at a Glance

When people say "rural internet," they usually mean any home internet that isn't cable or fiber. There are four main families of service, and most rural homes can get at least two of them. The trick is knowing which ones actually reach your address and how well.

Kind of service	How it reaches you	Usually good at	Watch out for
Satellite (Starlink, HughesNet, Viasat)	A dish on your roof or pole talks to satellites	Works almost anywhere with a clear view of the sky	Trees, equipment cost, delay on some systems
5G or LTE home internet (T-Mobile, Verizon, AT&T Internet Air)	A box in your window picks up cell towers	Simple setup, no long contracts	Only at addresses near a strong tower
Local wireless (WISP)	A small antenna aimed at a local tower	Local service, often steady	Line of sight to their tower
DSL (phone-line internet)	The copper phone line	Already wired to many homes	Slow, and being phased out in places

And two more you might hear about

- **A phone hotspot.** Your cell phone can share its data with a tablet or laptop. Handy in a pinch, but phone plans limit how much you can share. See Chapter 19, *Using a Phone or Hotspot as Your Home Internet*.
- **Fiber or cable "coming soon."** New lines are being built in parts of rural Ohio with federal and state money. See Chapter 22, *Cable or Fiber That Might Reach You* and Chapter 23, *Ohio's Broadband Program: BroadbandOhio and BEAD*.

TIP

Two is better than one

If two kinds of service reach your house, you have real choices and some bargaining power. Many rural households try the cheaper option first, during its return window, before signing up for something with a long agreement.

GOOD TO KNOW

Nobody's best everywhere

The same service can be wonderful at one farm and poor at the next one down the road. A hill, a row of tall pines or the distance to a cell tower changes everything. That's why this guide keeps sending you back to your own address.

CHAPTER 3

Speed, Delay and Data: The Three Words That Matter

Internet ads throw around a lot of numbers. Only three ideas really matter when you compare rural options: **speed**, **delay** and **data**. Once you know these, every ad and every broadband label gets much easier to read.

Speed (Mbps)

Speed is measured in **megabits per second**, written **Mbps**. Think of it as the width of a hose. A wider hose fills a bucket faster. **Download** speed is how fast things come to you (movies, web pages, email). **Upload** speed is how fast things go out from you (sending photos, your face on a video call). Upload is almost always much smaller.

Delay (latency)

Delay, called **latency**, is how long it takes a signal to make a round trip, measured in milliseconds (ms). Low delay feels snappy. High delay makes video calls feel awkward, with people talking over each other. Satellites high above the equator have much more delay than newer, lower satellites or cell towers. See Chapter 10, *Satellite Internet: The Basics*.

Data (GB)

Data is how much you use in a month, measured in **gigabytes (GB)**. Some plans are unlimited. Others give you a set amount of fast data and then slow you down. Streaming TV uses far more data than email does. See Chapter 28, *Data Limits and Slowdowns*.

Word	What it means for you
Speed (Mbps)	How fast. Bigger is better. Check both download and upload.
Delay / latency (ms)	How snappy. Smaller is better. Matters most for video calls.
Data (GB per month)	How much. "Unlimited" or a monthly allowance.

TIP

Ask about all three

When a salesperson talks only about speed, ask two more questions: "What's the typical delay?" and "Is there a data limit, and what happens when I reach it?"

CHAPTER 4

How Much Internet Do You Really Need?

It's easy to pay for more than you need, and just as easy to buy too little and be frustrated. The answer depends on what you do and how many people do it at the same time.

The FCC's rough guide

The Federal Communications Commission publishes simple guidelines for everyday activities. They are minimums for one activity at a time, so add them up for a busy household.

Activity	FCC minimum (download)
Email, web, basic browsing	A few Mbps is enough
HD video call with family	About 1.5 Mbps per call
HD video meeting (doctor visit, work)	About 6 Mbps
4K streaming TV	About 25 Mbps per TV

Quick questions to ask yourself

1. How many people use the internet at the same time in your home on a busy evening?
2. Do you stream TV over the internet instead of cable or satellite TV?
3. Do you make video calls or have telehealth visits with your doctor?
4. Does anyone work from home, or upload lots of photos and videos?
5. Do you have security cameras that send video to the internet all day?

What the answers point to

Your household	What usually works
One or two people, email, web, some video calls	Almost any option here, even a modest plan
Streaming TV every evening	A plan with steady speed and plenty of data
Work from home, frequent video meetings	Low delay matters: newer satellite, 5G or a local wireless service
Several cameras, lots of uploading	Check the upload speed and data limits carefully

GOOD TO KNOW

The federal benchmark

For planning purposes, the FCC treats 100 Mbps down and 20 Mbps up as the standard for fixed home broadband. Plenty of households live happily on less. It's a yardstick, not a requirement.

PART 2

Finding What's Available at Your Address

The free lookup tools that tell you which services reach your home, how to fix a wrong listing, and how to compare offers fairly.

CHAPTER 5

Check Your Address on the FCC National Broadband Map

The single best starting point is the **FCC National Broadband Map**. It's a free government website where you type your address and see every company that says it can serve that exact spot, what kind of service it is, and the top speeds it claims.

To look up your home

1. On a computer, tablet or phone, open your web browser and go to **broadbandmap.fcc.gov**.
2. Click or tap in the box that says **Search by Address**.
3. Start typing your street address. Pick your address when it appears in the list.
4. The map zooms to your home. Below it, you'll see a list of providers that report service there.
5. Look at each row: the company name, the **technology** (such as satellite, licensed fixed wireless, copper, cable or fiber) and the speeds.
6. Use the tabs or filters to switch between **Fixed Broadband** (home internet) and **Mobile Broadband** (cell coverage).

Reading the list

Technology	What it usually means
Satellite	Starlink, HughesNet and Viasat usually show for nearly every address.
Licensed / unlicensed fixed wireless	5G home internet or a local wireless company.
Copper	DSL over the phone line.
Cable / fiber	Wired service. If it shows, call to confirm it truly reaches your house.

HEADS UP

The map is a starting point, not a promise

Providers report their own coverage. A company can list your address and still say "not available" when you call, or list speeds you'll never see. Always confirm with the company using your exact address. If the listing is wrong, you can challenge it, see Chapter 6, *When the Map Is Wrong: Filing a Challenge*.

TIP

Write down what you find

Jot each provider and technology in the "Keep this handy" table in Chapter 35, *Your Rural Internet Cheat-Sheet*. It makes the phone calls that follow much easier.

CHAPTER 6

When the Map Is Wrong: Filing a Challenge

If the map says a company serves your home and it doesn't, or says the speeds are much higher than they really are, you can tell the FCC. This matters for more than your own house. Maps like this help decide where new government-funded lines get built, so an address wrongly shown as covered can be skipped.

To challenge a home internet listing

1. Look up your address on **broadbandmap.fcc.gov** as in Chapter 5, *Check Your Address on the FCC National Broadband Map*.
2. Above the list of providers, choose **Availability Challenge**.
3. Pick the provider and the specific service you're disputing.
4. Choose the reason, for example the company said service isn't available, or wanted a big construction charge.
5. Add details and any proof you have, such as an email or a note of the date and the name of the person you spoke with.
6. Enter your contact information and submit.

What happens next

The FCC sends your challenge to the provider, which then has 60 days to respond. It can agree and fix the map, or dispute it. You'll get updates by email.

For cell coverage

Mobile coverage is challenged differently, with the free **FCC Speed Test** app on your phone. The tests have to be taken outdoors or in a vehicle on cellular data, not Wi-Fi. The FCC gathers many tests before acting.

> **TIP**
>
> **Keep notes when you call providers**
>
> Every time a company tells you "we don't serve that address," write down the date, the person's name and what they said. It's exactly the proof a challenge asks for.

CHAPTER 7

Provider Address Tools and Asking Around

After the FCC map, check each company's own website. Every provider has an address checker, and these are usually more current than the map. They also show the actual price for your address.

Where to check

Provider	Where to look up your address
Starlink	starlink.com, then enter your service address
HughesNet	hughesnet.com, then check availability
Viasat	viasat.com, home internet
T-Mobile 5G Home Internet	t-mobile.com/home-internet, then Check Eligibility
Verizon 5G Home / LTE Home	verizon.com/home/internet
AT&T (Fiber, Internet Air, DSL)	att.com/internet/availability

Tips for using address checkers

- Type your address exactly as it appears on your mail. Rural routes and new addresses sometimes need a nearby house number or your county's 911 address.
- If a checker says "not available" but a neighbor has the service, call. The online tool may simply not know your address yet.
- Write down the price shown and whether it's a first-year promotional price.
- Some 5G services say "join the waitlist." That means not now, not no forever.

Ask the neighbors

Nothing beats asking the people around you. A neighbor a quarter mile away, with the same hills and trees, can tell you what works on your road. Ask what they use, how it holds up on stormy evenings and in heavy snow, and what they pay after the first year.

TIP

Look at the roofs

Drive your road and notice the equipment on houses: a flat rectangular dish, a round dish, or a small antenna pointing at a distant tower. It tells you what's working nearby.

SCAM ALERT

Use the real websites

Type the provider's address yourself rather than clicking ads. Some ads for "rural internet deals" lead to resellers or copycat sites. See Chapter 33, *Scams Aimed at Rural Internet Shoppers*.

CHAPTER 8

Reading the Broadband Label

Home internet providers have to show a **Broadband Facts** label, a lot like the nutrition label on a cereal box. It lays out the price, fees and typical performance of each plan in the same format, which makes comparing providers far easier.

What's on the label

Section	What it tells you
Monthly price	The regular price, and how long any promotional price lasts.
One-time and monthly fees	Installation, equipment lease, activation, early termination.
Data included	Unlimited, or how many GB per month.
Typical download and upload speed	What customers actually get, not just "up to."
Typical latency	The delay, in milliseconds.
Links to policies	Network management, privacy and more.

Where to find it

- On the provider's website next to the plan, sometimes behind a link or icon that says "Broadband Facts."
- In your online account after you sign up.
- By asking a sales or support person to send it to you.

TIP

Compare the "typical" lines

Ads say "up to." The label says "typical." When you put two labels side by side, compare the typical download speed and typical latency. Those are the numbers you'll actually live with.

GOOD TO KNOW

The labels were simplified in 2026

The FCC streamlined some label rules in 2026, for example allowing a link or icon where you shop. The core information stays the same: price, fees, data and typical speeds.

CHAPTER 9

Comparing Your Options Side by Side

Once you know what reaches your address, it helps to put the choices next to each other. The table below is a general picture as of November 2026. Your own address and the label for each plan always win over a general table.

	Starlink	HughesNet / Viasat	5G / LTE home	Local wireless	DSL
Delay	Low	High	Low to medium	Low	Low
Data	Unlimited plans	Varies by plan	Usually unlimited	Varies	Usually unlimited
Contract	No	HughesNet: often 2 years. Viasat Unleashed: none	No	Varies	Varies
Up-front cost	Dish kit or rental	Lease or purchase fee	Usually none	Install fee common	Modem
Needs	Clear sky view	Clear view of southern sky	Strong tower signal	View of their tower	Phone line

Questions to ask every provider

1. What will I pay each month after the first year, including equipment and fees?
2. Is there a contract? What does it cost to cancel early?
3. Is there a data limit? What happens if I go over?
4. What are the typical speed and typical delay at my address?
5. How long do I have to return the equipment if it doesn't work for me?
6. Is there an installation fee, or do I set it up myself?

TIP

Count the whole cost

Add the monthly price for 24 months, plus equipment and installation. A plan that looks cheaper per month can cost more over two years once equipment is included.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

Ten minutes with a pad of paper and these questions can save a household hundreds of dollars and a long contract for a service that didn't fit.

For a deeper walk through internet bills and plans, the **Choosing an Internet Plan** guide in this series goes line by line.

PART 3

Satellite Internet

Starlink, HughesNet, Viasat and what's coming next: how each works, what it costs, and how to give a dish the clear view of the sky it needs.

CHAPTER 10

Satellite Internet: The Basics

Satellite internet works almost anywhere, which is why it's the fallback for so many rural homes. A dish outside your house talks to satellites overhead, which talk to stations on the ground that connect to the rest of the internet. There are two very different kinds of satellite service, and the difference matters.

High satellites (HughesNet and Viasat)

HughesNet and Viasat mostly use large satellites parked about 22,000 miles above the equator. Because they're so far away, every signal takes a noticeable fraction of a second to make the trip. Web pages and streaming work fine once they get going, but video calls can feel awkward and fast-moving online games don't work well. In Ohio, the dish has to point toward the southern sky.

Low satellites (Starlink, and Amazon Leo coming)

Starlink uses thousands of small satellites flying only a few hundred miles up. They're much closer, so the delay is far lower and video calls feel normal. Because the satellites move across the sky, the dish needs a wide, clear view of a big part of the sky, not just one direction.

Kind	What it means for you
High satellites (HughesNet, Viasat)	Higher delay. Dish aims at one spot in the southern sky. Often a lease and, on some plans, a 2-year agreement.
Low satellites (Starlink)	Low delay. Dish needs a wide, open view of the sky. You buy or rent the kit; no annual contract.

GOOD TO KNOW

What the numbers look like

Delay on high satellites is measured in hundreds of milliseconds. HughesNet says its Fusion plans, sold only in select areas, blend in a land-based wireless link to bring the delay down. Starlink's delay is generally far lower than traditional satellite. Rather than trust any ad, read the **typical latency** line on the Broadband Facts label for the plan at your address. See Chapter 8, *Reading the Broadband Label*.

TIP

Weather and trees

Heavy rain or wet snow can briefly interrupt any satellite service. Trees are the bigger, everyday problem. See Chapter 15, *Placing a Dish: Trees, Roofs and Clear Sky* before you order anything.

CHAPTER 11

Starlink in Brief

Starlink, from SpaceX, is the satellite service most rural households ask about now. Its low satellites give much lower delay than traditional satellite, and its home plans come with unlimited data and no annual contract. This chapter is a short overview; the separate **Starlink** guide in this series covers ordering, setup, the app and troubleshooting in detail.

What you get

- A dish kit you set up yourself: the dish (Starlink calls it the Starlink), a router and a long cable.
- Residential plans for the address you register. Using it somewhere else takes a different plan called Roam.
- Unlimited data on the home plans.
- A 30-day window to return the hardware, which is a hardware return window, not a free trial of service.

What it costs

As of November 2026, Starlink's Residential plans run from about $55 a month for its 100 Mbps plan up to about $130 a month for Residential Max, which gets the highest priority. Starlink shows the exact price, and the hardware price or rental option, after you enter your address. Prices changed more than once in 2026, so check the order screen.

Before you order

1. Download the **Starlink** app on your phone.
2. Use **Check for obstructions** (Find an Install Location) and hold your phone where the dish would go.
3. Try several spots: roof peak, a pole in the yard, the edge of a field.
4. Order only if you find a spot with no obstructions, or very few.

SCAM ALERT

"Lifetime Starlink" ads are fake

Social media ads offering a "lifetime" Starlink subscription for a single small payment are scams. Order only at starlink.com or a known store. Starlink support is **888-GO-STARLINK (888-467-8275)**.

CHAPTER 12

HughesNet

HughesNet has served rural America by satellite for many years. Its newer **Fusion** plans blend satellite with a land-based wireless link to cut the delay, where that's offered. HughesNet is available at nearly every address with a clear view of the southern sky.

How the data works

HughesNet plans include a set amount of **Priority Data** each month and unlimited **Standard Data**. Priority Data is the fast lane. Once it's used up, you keep going on Standard Data, which can be much slower, especially at busy times of day. Priority Data resets automatically with each billing cycle.

Plans

HughesNet sells plans under names like **Select**, **Elite** and **Fusion**. On HughesNet's own availability pages, Select comes with 100 GB of Priority Data a month and Elite with 200 GB. Fusion, the lower-delay plan, is offered only in select areas.

Prices

HughesNet prices vary by address and change with promotions, and the first months are often discounted before the regular price starts. Equipment lease or purchase can be extra. Enter your address on **hughesnet.com**, then ask for the Broadband Facts label so you can see the regular price, not just the promotion.

The agreement and fees

- HughesNet plans generally come with a **24-month service agreement**.
- For Select, Elite and Fusion plans, HughesNet's terms list an early cancellation fee of $400 during the first 90 days, which then goes down by $15 for each month you stay.
- Leased equipment has to be returned when you cancel, or an unreturned equipment fee applies.
- Older plans signed in earlier years may have different fee schedules. Your own agreement is the one that counts.

HEADS UP

Get the fees in writing

Before you sign, ask for the Broadband Facts label for your plan and read the early termination and unreturned equipment lines. Those are the costs people are most surprised by later.

CHAPTER 13

Viasat

Viasat is the other long-running satellite company. Like HughesNet, it uses large satellites high above the equator, so the delay is higher than Starlink, but it is available at most addresses with a clear view of the southern sky.

Plans as of November 2026

Plan	What it is
Unleashed	Viasat's main home plan. Month-to-month, with no minimum term and no early termination fee.
Unleashed Max	A newer, faster tier, in select areas.
Other offers	Some promotions and older plans carry a minimum term. Ask before you sign.

What it costs

Viasat's pages list Unleashed at about $69.99 a month for the first 12 months, rising to about $100 a month. Equipment is leased for about $15 a month on top of that, and the promotion doesn't discount the lease. Viasat also offers a one-time lifetime lease so there's no monthly equipment charge. Prices and promotions vary by address, so check viasat.com or call.

TIP

"Unlimited" has fine print

Viasat publishes an unlimited data policy that explains how it manages the network. Ask whether your speeds can be slowed at busy times and read the network management link on the label.

GOOD TO KNOW

Name check

You may still see the old brand name **Exede** on older equipment and bills. It's the same company. Viasat also bought Inmarsat, so you may see that name on some Viasat documents.

CHAPTER 14

Amazon Leo: Coming, Not Here Yet

You may have seen news about Amazon's satellite internet. It began as **Project Kuiper** and was renamed **Amazon Leo** in November 2025. Like Starlink, it uses low satellites, so it is expected to have low delay.

Where it stands

- As of November 2026, Amazon was still launching satellites. Its business customers began testing the network in a preview in November 2025.
- Amazon says service will begin rolling out once more satellites are up, starting at northern and southern latitudes and moving toward the equator.
- In its fall 2026 earnings report, Amazon said it was on track to begin initial service later in 2026. No U.S. home price had been announced.
- Reports about the home launch date have shifted more than once.

What to do about it

1. Don't wait on it if you need internet now. You can always switch later.
2. If you sign up for something else today, prefer a plan with no long contract so you're free to change.
3. If you're curious, follow the news on Amazon's own website and sign up for anything only there.

SCAM ALERT

Nobody can sell you Amazon Leo early

If someone calls or messages offering early access to Amazon's satellite internet for a deposit, gift card or crypto payment, it's a scam. Amazon would never sell it that way.

TIP

New choices are coming

More low-satellite competition is good news for rural prices. It's one more reason to avoid locking into a long agreement unless the price is worth it.

CHAPTER 15

Placing a Dish: Trees, Roofs and Clear Sky

With satellite, where the dish goes matters more than anything else. A dish that can't see the sky drops out, buffers and frustrates. In wooded parts of Ohio, trees are the number one reason satellite service disappoints.

What each kind of dish needs

Service	Needs
Starlink	A wide, open view of much of the sky. Trees and buildings in any direction can cause short dropouts.
HughesNet / Viasat	A clear line toward one spot in the southern sky. A single tree in that line can block it.

Finding a good spot

1. Stand where you'd like the dish to go and look up. Notice tall trees, especially to the south.
2. For Starlink, use the app's obstruction check at that spot before you order.
3. For HughesNet or Viasat, the installer checks the view toward the satellite. Ask them to show you.
4. Consider a pole in the yard or a mount on the roof peak if the house is surrounded by trees.
5. Think about the future: trees grow, and summer leaves block more than bare winter branches.

STAY SAFE

Stay off the roof

Climbing a ladder onto a roof is one of the riskiest things a homeowner can do. If the best spot is up high, hire a licensed installer or ask a capable family member, and never work on a roof that's wet, icy or windy.

HEADS UP

Renters and HOAs

If you rent or have a homeowners' association, ask before mounting anything on the house.

TIP

Snow

Starlink's dish can melt light snow on its own. Traditional dishes can lose signal under wet, heavy snow. Never climb up to clear one in winter; wait or call the installer.

PART 4

Wireless from Towers

Home internet from cell towers and local wireless companies: often the best value in the country, if a strong signal reaches your home.

CHAPTER 16

5G Home Internet: T-Mobile and Verizon

T-Mobile and Verizon sell home internet that runs on their cell networks. A box called a **gateway** sits near a window, picks up the nearest tower, and makes Wi-Fi for your house. There's no dish and no installer in most cases. If a strong tower is near you, this can be the best value in rural areas.

What it costs as of November 2026

Service	Plans and prices
T-Mobile 5G Home Internet	Plans called Rely, Amplified and All-In, about $50 to $70 a month with AutoPay; about $15 less with a T-Mobile phone line.
Verizon 5G Home Internet	5G Home, Plus and Ultimate, about $60 to $85 a month; as low as about $35 with a qualifying Verizon phone plan and AutoPay.

Why rural folks like it

- No annual contract and no data caps on the main plans.
- You set it up yourself, usually in under an hour.
- Trial and return periods let you test it at your house.
- Delay is low enough for video calls.

The catch: your address has to qualify

These services are sold address by address, only where the tower has room. In rural areas, the website may say not available, or offer a waitlist. Speeds depend on how far you are from the tower and how busy it is.

GOOD TO KNOW

Verizon in areas without 5G Home

Verizon's older **LTE Home** plans are closed to new sign-ups. Where 5G Home isn't offered, Verizon may offer **Home Internet Lite**, a simpler plan for lighter use with a monthly data allowance and slower speeds. Check your address at verizon.com/home to see which one you can get.

TIP

Test before you trust

T-Mobile has a 15-day Test Drive and Verizon a 30-day money-back guarantee as of November 2026. Use the full time to test on a busy weekday evening. The separate **T-Mobile & Verizon Home Internet** guide in this series walks through setup and placement.

CHAPTER 17

AT&T Internet Air

AT&T Internet Air is AT&T's home internet over its cell network, much like T-Mobile's and Verizon's. AT&T often offers it in places where it's retiring old copper phone lines and DSL, and where fiber isn't available.

How it works

- A gateway AT&T calls the **All-Fi Hub** sits near a window and picks up the AT&T network.
- One plan with unlimited data and no annual contract.
- Availability depends on the AT&T wireless network at your exact address.

Price

As of November 2026, AT&T's Internet Air page lists a regular price of about $60 a month, with a lower price when you also have AT&T wireless phone service. The All-Fi Hub is included; extra Wi-Fi extenders cost more each month. Check **att.com/internet/availability** with your address for the real price.

To check if you can get it

1. Go to **att.com/internet/availability**.
2. Type your street address and choose it from the list.
3. The page shows which AT&T services reach your address: Fiber, Internet Air or older service.
4. If Internet Air is offered, read the Broadband Facts label before you order.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **If you have AT&T DSL today**
>
> If you receive a letter about AT&T retiring the copper network in your area, it usually offers a replacement such as Internet Air or Fiber. Read it carefully and call AT&T at the number on your bill, not one in an unexpected text. See Chapter 21, *DSL and the Old Copper Phone Line*.

The separate **AT&T Internet & Fiber** guide in this series covers AT&T's equipment and app.

CHAPTER 18

Local Wireless Providers (WISPs)

In many rural areas, a small local company beams internet from its own towers, grain elevators or water towers to an antenna on your house. These are called **wireless internet service providers**, or **WISPs**. They're easy to miss because they don't advertise on national TV.

How to find one

- On the FCC National Broadband Map, look for providers listed as **licensed** or **unlicensed fixed wireless** that aren't national names.
- Ask neighbors, your township office, or the local hardware store.
- Look for small antennas on nearby houses pointing toward a tall structure.

Good things about local wireless

- Delay is usually low, so video calls work well.
- You often deal with local people who know the area.
- Some offer unlimited data.

Questions to ask a WISP

1. Can your installer test the signal at my house before I commit?
2. What does installation cost, and who owns the antenna?
3. What are the typical speeds at my address, and is there a data limit?
4. Is there a contract? What happens if I move or cancel?
5. How do I reach you when it goes down, and what are your support hours?

HEADS UP

Line of sight

Most local wireless needs a clear path from your antenna to their tower. Trees that leaf out in spring can weaken a signal that tested fine in winter. Ask how they handle that.

CHAPTER 19

Using a Phone or Hotspot as Your Home Internet

A **hotspot** lets a phone, or a small stand-alone hotspot device, share its cell data over Wi-Fi with a tablet, laptop or TV. It can be a useful backup or a stopgap, but it's rarely a good full-time home connection.

To turn on your phone's hotspot

Phone	Where to find it
iPhone	Settings > Personal Hotspot, then turn on Allow Others to Join
Samsung Galaxy	Settings > Connections > Mobile Hotspot and Tethering > Mobile Hotspot
Google Pixel	Settings > Network & internet > Hotspot & tethering > Wi-Fi hotspot

Why it's a stopgap

- Most phone plans include a limited amount of hotspot data each month, then slow it way down.
- Phone data plans often treat hotspot data as lower priority on busy towers.
- It drains your phone's battery quickly, so keep it plugged in.
- Streaming TV over a hotspot can use up a month's allowance in an evening or two.

TIP

Check your own plan

Hotspot allowances vary widely and change often. Ask your carrier, or look in your account, for how much hotspot data your plan includes and what speed you get after that.

GOOD TO KNOW

Home internet plans are different

5G home internet from T-Mobile, Verizon or AT&T is designed for home use, usually without the small data limits of a phone hotspot. It must stay at your registered address. See Chapter 16, *5G Home Internet: T-Mobile and Verizon*.

CHAPTER 20

Getting a Better Cell Signal at Home

Every tower-based option, from a phone hotspot to 5G home internet, depends on a good cell signal. A few small changes can make a big difference.

Simple things to try

1. Move the gateway or phone to a window that faces the nearest tower, ideally on an upper floor.
2. Keep it off the floor, out of cabinets and away from metal appliances.
3. Try each side of the house and compare speed tests, not just signal bars.
4. Check the carrier's coverage map with your address to see which direction the tower is likely in.

Signal boosters

A **cell signal booster** uses an outside antenna to grab a weak signal and rebroadcast it indoors. Boosters for consumers have to carry an FCC label and be registered with your carrier, which is free. They need at least some signal outside to work with.

TIP

There's a guide for this

The **Cell Signal Boosters & Wi-Fi Calling** guide in this series covers boosters, registration and Wi-Fi Calling step by step.

HEADS UP

Metal roofs and new windows

Metal roofs, metal siding and energy-efficient coated windows can weaken cell signals indoors. If your signal is great in the yard and poor inside, that may be why.

PART 5

Wired Options and What's Coming

DSL over the phone line, the copper phase-out, cable or fiber that might reach you, and Ohio's big federally funded build-out.

CHAPTER 21

DSL and the Old Copper Phone Line

DSL is internet carried over the same copper wires as an old-fashioned landline phone. For years it was the only wired choice in much of the country. It's steady and doesn't care about trees or weather, but it's usually slow, and the farther you live from the phone company's equipment, the slower it gets.

Is DSL still worth keeping?

- If it's steady and fast enough for email, the news and a little video, it can be fine for one or two people.
- If streaming TV stutters every evening, or video calls with the doctor keep freezing, it's time to compare. See Chapter 9, *Comparing Your Options Side by Side*.
- If a newer choice reaches you, such as 5G home internet or a local wireless company, it's often faster for a similar price.

The copper phase-out

Phone companies are retiring their old copper networks, area by area, with federal approval. AT&T has said it aims to retire most of its copper outside California by the end of 2029, and its approved filings include wire centers in Ohio. Where copper goes away, AT&T offers replacements such as fiber or **AT&T Internet Air**, and a home phone service that keeps your existing phones working over the new connection. See Chapter 17, *AT&T Internet Air*.

If a letter arrives

1. Read the whole letter. Note the date your current service is scheduled to end.
2. Find your phone company's number on a paper bill or its official website, not in the letter's fine print or a text.
3. Call and ask exactly what will replace your service, what it costs per month, and whether equipment is included.
4. Ask whether your home phone number, alarm system, medical alert or fax will keep working on the new service.
5. Before you say yes, check the FCC map in Chapter 5, *Check Your Address on the FCC National Broadband Map*. The replacement isn't your only choice.

HEADS UP

Medical alerts and alarms

Some medical alert pendants, home alarm panels and older fax machines were built for copper lines. If you rely on one, ask the alarm or alert company whether it works on the new service before the copper is switched off.

SCAM ALERT

Watch for fake "your line is shutting off" calls

The real copper changes come by letter, with plenty of notice. If someone calls demanding immediate payment to "keep your line on," hang up and call the number on your bill.

CHAPTER 22

Cable or Fiber That Might Reach You

Sometimes the cable or fiber line runs right past the end of the road, or the next farm over has it and you don't. Wired service is usually the fastest and steadiest option, so it's worth a few phone calls to find out whether it could reach you.

Ask about a line extension

Cable and fiber companies will sometimes extend their lines to a home that's close but not yet connected. Some do it at no charge if you're near enough, others ask the homeowner to pay part of the construction cost. The only way to know is to ask with your exact address.

1. Call the cable or fiber company's sales line from its official website.
2. Say: "I'd like a quote for extending service to my address." Give your address and how far you are from the nearest connected home, if you know.
3. Ask how much it costs, who pays, how long it takes and whether there's a contract.
4. Ask whether any neighbors along the road have asked too. Some companies share the cost when several homes sign up.
5. Get the quote in writing or by email.

> TIP
> **Neighbors help**
> A line extension makes more sense to a company when several homes on the road want it. Talk to your neighbors and call together.

Watch for "coming soon" signs

- New poles or orange marker flags along the road often mean a line is being built.
- Township and county newsletters sometimes announce projects.
- Provider address checkers may show "coming soon" or let you sign up for updates.
- Ohio's state program, described in Chapter 23, *Ohio's Broadband Program: BroadbandOhio and BEAD*, lists funded projects.

GOOD TO KNOW

If they say yes, then change their minds

If a company told you it would serve you and then won't, or quotes a large construction charge for an address the FCC map shows as served, that's exactly what an availability challenge is for. See Chapter 6, *When the Map Is Wrong: Filing a Challenge*.

CHAPTER 23

Ohio's Broadband Program: BroadbandOhio and BEAD

You may have heard that the government is paying to bring internet to rural Ohio. That's true. The federal **BEAD** program (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) gives each state money to connect homes that don't have good internet. In Ohio, the state office called **BroadbandOhio** runs it.

Where it stands as of November 2026

- Ohio's share of federal BEAD money was about $793 million. BroadbandOhio runs it through its Ohio Residential Broadband Expansion Grant program.
- The federal agency in charge, NTIA, approved Ohio's final plan. By late August 2026, NTIA said it had approved the plans of all 56 states and territories.
- Under the federal rules as changed in 2025, states could give money to satellite companies as well as to fiber and wireless builders. Reports say satellite providers received a share of Ohio's locations.
- Building takes time. Wired projects are expected to take a few years, and some areas will see service sooner than others.

To see what's planned near you

1. Go to **broadband.ohio.gov**, BroadbandOhio's official website.
2. Look for the BEAD or grant program pages and the lists or maps of funded projects.
3. Check the FCC map for your address too. If your home is wrongly shown as already served, file a challenge. See Chapter 6, *When the Map Is Wrong: Filing a Challenge*.
4. If a project is planned for your area, ask the company named for it when service is expected at your road.

HEADS UP

Don't wait forever

A project on a map is not a connection at your door. If you need internet now, pick the best option available today, ideally one with no long contract, so you can switch when the new line arrives. See Chapter 24, *Contracts, Equipment and Return Windows*.

SCAM ALERT

Nobody charges to sign you up

Be very wary of anyone who calls asking for payment, bank details or a "deposit" to get you on a list for new government-funded internet. Hang up and look at broadband.ohio.gov yourself. See Chapter 33, *Scams Aimed at Rural Internet Shoppers*.

PART 6

Money, Contracts and Help Paying

What you're really agreeing to, how to test a service before you're stuck with it, and the programs that can lower the bill.

CHAPTER 24

Contracts, Equipment and Return Windows

Rural internet companies differ most in the fine print: whether you sign a contract, whether you buy or rent the equipment, and how long you have to change your mind. Knowing this before you order is the single best way to avoid an unpleasant bill.

Service	Contract	Equipment	Change-your-mind window
Starlink	No annual contract	Buy or rent the kit	30 days to return the hardware
HughesNet	Usually 24 months	Lease or buy	Ask; early cancellation fee applies after that
Viasat Unleashed	Month-to-month	About $15 a month lease, or one-time lifetime lease	Ask at sign-up
T-Mobile 5G Home	No annual contract	Gateway included	15-day Test Drive
Verizon 5G Home	No annual contract	Gateway included	30-day money-back guarantee

Returning equipment

- **Starlink:** cancel and tick the hardware-return box within 30 days; Starlink emails a prepaid label. Rented kits must be returned in good condition.
- **T-Mobile:** return the gateway within 45 days of canceling, or a fee of up to $370 can apply.
- **Verizon:** returning the equipment doesn't cancel service. Verizon sends a box and label; mail it back within 30 days of canceling.
- **HughesNet and Viasat:** leased equipment must go back when you cancel, or an unreturned equipment fee applies.

TIP

Keep the box

Keep every box, cable and power cord until the return window has passed and you're sure you'll stay. Write the last day to return it on your calendar.

HEADS UP

Get a receipt for returns

When you mail equipment back, keep the shipping receipt with the tracking number. It's your proof if a non-return fee shows up later.

CHAPTER 25

Try It Before You're Stuck With It

The best way to choose rural internet is to try it at your own house. A return window is your test drive. Use it on purpose, with a plan, so you know by the end whether to keep it.

A simple two-week test

1. On day one, write down the last day you can return the equipment.
2. Run a speed test at the same few times each day: morning, mid-afternoon and around 8 p.m. See Chapter 29, *Testing Your Speed at Home*.
3. Make at least one video call, ideally on a busy weekday evening.
4. Stream a show or a ball game for an hour and notice whether it freezes.
5. If it rains or snows during the test, notice how the service holds up.
6. Two or three days before the deadline, decide: keep it or send it back.

Keep a simple log

Day and time	Download	Upload	Video call OK?	Notes
Mon 8 a.m.				
Mon 8 p.m.				
Wed 2 p.m.				
Sat 8 p.m.				

TIP

Keep the old service until you're sure

If you can, don't cancel your old internet until the new one has passed your test. Paying for both for a couple of weeks is cheaper than being stuck with something that doesn't work.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this works

A written log turns "it seems slow sometimes" into facts. It helps you decide, and it's useful proof if you need to return equipment or talk with support.

CHAPTER 26

Help Paying: Lifeline and the End of ACP

Internet can be one of the bigger monthly bills in a rural home. There used to be a large federal discount for it. That one is gone, but a smaller, long-running program called **Lifeline** still helps qualifying households.

The Affordable Connectivity Program ended

The **Affordable Connectivity Program** (ACP), which took up to $30 a month off internet bills, ran out of money and ended on June 1, 2024. If you see an ad or get a call offering to sign you up for ACP today, it's out of date or a scam.

Lifeline

Lifeline	The basics
What it gives	Up to $9.25 a month off phone or internet service (more on Tribal lands).
Who qualifies	Income at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines, or getting SNAP, Medicaid, SSI, Federal Public Housing Assistance or a Veterans Pension.
How many	One Lifeline benefit per household, for phone or internet, not both.
How you apply	Through the National Verifier, online or by mail, then with a company that takes Lifeline.
Each year	You must recertify that you still qualify.

To apply

1. Gather proof: a SNAP or Medicaid letter, or proof of income.
2. Go to the official Lifeline site, **lifelinesupport.org**, and choose to apply through the National Verifier. You can also ask for a paper form.
3. Once you're approved, ask your phone or internet company whether it takes Lifeline. Not every rural internet company does.
4. Mark your calendar to recertify each year.

GOOD TO KNOW

Rules may change

In early 2026 the FCC proposed changes to how Lifeline checks eligibility. Proposals aren't final rules. For questions, the Lifeline Support Center is at **(800) 234-9473**.

CHAPTER 27

Other Ways to Lower the Bill

Beyond Lifeline, a few honest, everyday moves can trim what you pay for rural internet. None of them require switching to something that doesn't work for you.

Things worth asking about

- **Bundles with your phone.** T-Mobile, Verizon and AT&T all take money off home internet when you also have their cell phone service. See Chapter 16, *5G Home Internet: T-Mobile and Verizon* and Chapter 17, *AT&T Internet Air*.
- **Senior plans.** T-Mobile offers home internet bundle pricing for customers 55 and older.
- **AutoPay.** Some providers give a discount for paying automatically from a bank account. Make sure you still read each bill.
- **Low-income plans.** Some companies have their own discounted plans for households that qualify for programs like SNAP. Ask by name: "Do you have a low-income plan?"
- **A smaller plan.** If you mostly read email and the news, a lower tier may be all you need. See Chapter 4, *How Much Internet Do You Really Need?*.

When the promotion ends

1. Look at your sign-up paperwork or label for the date the promotional price ends.
2. Put a reminder on your calendar a month before.
3. When it comes, call and ask: "My promotion is ending. What can you do to keep my bill the same?"
4. If they can't help, compare what else reaches your address. See Chapter 9, *Comparing Your Options Side by Side*.

TIP

Check the bill once in a while

Look for new fees, equipment charges for things you returned, or add-ons you didn't ask for. If something's wrong, call the number on the bill. If you can't get it fixed, see Chapter 33, *Scams Aimed at Rural Internet Shoppers* for where to file a complaint.

HEADS UP

Price guarantees have fine print

Some plans promise a locked price for a few years. The guarantee usually covers the internet rate only, not taxes, fees or discounts. Read what's included.

PART 7

Living with Rural Internet

Data limits, testing your speed, storms and outages, phone calls over the internet, and Wi-Fi that reaches the whole house.

CHAPTER 28

Data Limits and Slowdowns

Some rural plans include a set amount of fast data each month. Others are "unlimited" but can slow you down when the network is busy or after heavy use. Knowing which kind you have keeps surprises off the bill and the TV from buffering at the end of the month.

The three kinds of limits

Kind	What it means
A monthly allowance	You get a set amount of fast data, such as HughesNet's Priority Data. After that, you keep going at slower speeds until the next bill.
Unlimited, with priority rules	No cap, but heavy users or certain plans can be slowed when the tower or satellite is busy.
Truly unlimited	No cap and no stated slowdown. Read the network management link on the label to be sure.

An example: 5G home internet

T-Mobile's policy says home internet customers may see lower speeds when the network is congested, and customers who use more than 1.2 TB in a billing cycle are prioritized last. When the tower isn't busy, that makes little difference.

What uses the most data

- Streaming TV and movies, especially in HD or 4K.
- Automatic phone and computer backups and updates.
- Security cameras that upload video all day.
- Video calls, at a more modest rate.
- Email, web pages and the news use very little.

TIP

Watch the meter

Most providers show your data use in their app or online account. Check it halfway through the month. If you're close to a limit, lower the streaming quality on your TV apps and turn on the data-saving settings on your phone and tablet.

GOOD TO KNOW

Satellite plans often have free hours

Some satellite plans have hours, usually late at night, when data doesn't count against your allowance. Ask your provider. Scheduling big updates for those hours can stretch your data.

CHAPTER 29

Testing Your Speed at Home

A speed test tells you what you're really getting. It's free, takes under a minute and gives you facts for comparing services, checking a return-window trial or talking with support.

To run a fair test

1. Use a computer or phone close to the router, or plugged into it with a cable if you can.
2. Pause streaming and downloads on other devices for a minute.
3. Open your provider's app if it has a speed test, or a well-known speed test website.
4. Tap or click **Go** or **Start**, then wait about 30 seconds.
5. Write down the download, upload and the delay (often called **ping** or **latency**).
6. Repeat at a busy time, around 8 p.m., and compare.

What the results mean

If you see...	It usually means
Close to the label's typical speed	You're getting what you pay for.
Much lower near the router	Restart the router and test again; then call the provider.
Fine near the router, poor far away	It's your Wi-Fi, not the service. See Chapter 32, *Wi-Fi Through the Whole House and Out to the Barn*.
Fine mornings, poor evenings	A busy tower or network. Ask the provider about it.

TIP

Compare with the label

Hold your results up against the **typical** speed and latency on the Broadband Facts label. See Chapter 8, *Reading the Broadband Label*.

SCAM ALERT

Speed test pages don't need your information

A real speed test never asks for your name, credit card, or to install a "booster" program. If a page says your connection is "infected" and to call a number, close it.

The **Slow Internet & Speed Tests** guide in this series goes further on testing and fixes.

CHAPTER 30

Storms, Outages and a Backup Plan

In the country, a storm can knock out power, bend a dish or take down a tower. A little planning means you can still check on family, call for help and get the weather when it matters.

When the internet goes out

1. Check whether the power is on and the router and modem lights are lit.
2. Unplug the router and dish or gateway power for 30 seconds, plug them back in and wait several minutes.
3. Check the provider's app or website on your phone's cellular data for an outage notice.
4. If there's no outage, call the provider's support number from your bill.

GOOD TO KNOW

Starlink tells you about outages

The Starlink app shows alerts, including outages in your area. Not every alert affects your service.

A simple backup plan

- **Your phone's hotspot.** If your home internet is out but your cell phone works, its hotspot can carry email and a video call for a while. See Chapter 19, *Using a Phone or Hotspot as Your Home Internet*.
- **A battery backup.** A small battery backup (UPS) for the router and modem can keep them running through short power blips.
- **A charged power bank** for your phone.
- **A battery or crank radio** for weather when everything else is out.

STAY SAFE

Never climb in a storm

Don't go up on a roof or ladder to fix a dish in rain, wind, snow or ice. Wait for calm, dry weather, or call the installer.

The **Mobile Hotspots & Backup Internet** guide in this series covers backup options in detail.

CHAPTER 31

Phone Calls Over Rural Internet

When the cell signal inside your house is weak but you have home internet, your phone can make calls over Wi-Fi instead. And if your landline is moving off copper, your home phone may soon run over the internet too.

Wi-Fi Calling on your cell phone

Phone	Where to turn it on
iPhone	Settings > Cellular > Wi-Fi Calling, then turn on Wi-Fi Calling on This iPhone
Samsung Galaxy	Phone app > More options > Settings > Wi-Fi Calling
Google Pixel	Settings > Network & internet > SIMs > your carrier > Wi-Fi calling

STAY SAFE

Set your 911 address

When you turn on Wi-Fi Calling, your carrier asks for an emergency address. Use your home's street address, not a P.O. box. If the power or internet goes out, a Wi-Fi call can drop, so keep another way to call 911.

Satellite internet and calls

Wi-Fi Calling and video calls work best on low-delay connections: Starlink, 5G home internet, local wireless or wired service. On high-satellite service, the delay can make conversations feel awkward, with people talking over each other. See Chapter 3, *Speed, Delay and Data: The Three Words That Matter*.

TIP

Home phone guides

The **Home Phone Service** and **Cell Signal Boosters & Wi-Fi Calling** guides in this series cover landline replacements and Wi-Fi Calling step by step.

CHAPTER 32

Wi-Fi Through the Whole House and Out to the Barn

Farmhouses and older homes are often long, with thick walls, and the barn or shop is a separate building. Your internet can be strong at the router and weak two rooms away. That's a Wi-Fi problem, and it's usually fixable.

Start with the router's spot

1. Put the router in the middle of the house if you can, up off the floor and out in the open.
2. Keep it out of cabinets and away from the microwave, metal shelves and fish tanks.
3. With satellite, the dish cable often enters at one end of the house. A longer network cable from the dish's power unit to a central router can help.
4. Run a speed test near the router and in the far rooms to see where it drops. See Chapter 29, *Testing Your Speed at Home*.

Options for bigger places

Option	Good for
Mesh Wi-Fi	Two or three units spread through the house that work as one network. Many providers sell or rent them.
A wired access point	A network cable to a second Wi-Fi unit in the far end of the house. The most reliable.
Outdoor point-to-point link	A pair of small antennas that beam the connection from the house to a barn or shop.

TIP

Use your provider's units first

Starlink, T-Mobile and Verizon all offer mesh or extender units designed for their routers. They're often the easiest to set up. Ask what they cost each month or to buy.

GOOD TO KNOW

More help in other guides

The **Wi-Fi Extenders & Dead Zones** and **Wi-Fi to the Garage & Barn** guides in this series cover these options step by step.

HEADS UP

Change the default Wi-Fi password

If your router still uses the password printed on its sticker, set a new one in the provider's app. In the country it's less likely a stranger is nearby, but it's still a good habit.

PART 8

Staying Safe & Getting Help

The scams aimed at people shopping for internet, where to complain, when to call Bill, and your cheat-sheet.

CHAPTER 33

Scams Aimed at Rural Internet Shoppers

When people are eager for better internet, scammers follow. The tricks are old ones dressed up with new names: fake deals, fake support and fake government programs.

The common ones

If you see...	What it really is
"Lifetime Starlink" for one small payment	Fake. Order only at starlink.com or a known store.
A big discount if you pay with gift cards	Fake. No real internet company takes gift cards for a bill.
A call from "your provider" about a problem	Hang up and call the number on your bill.
"Free government internet" for a fee	Real programs never charge to sign you up. See Chapter 26, *Help Paying: Lifeline and the End of ACP*.
Early access to new satellite service	Fake. Nobody can sell you Amazon Leo early. See Chapter 14, *Amazon Leo: Coming, Not Here Yet*.
A pop-up saying your connection is infected	Close it. Never call the number.

Rules that protect you

1. Type the provider's website yourself. Don't click ads or links in texts.
2. Never pay with gift cards, cryptocurrency or a wire transfer.
3. Never let a caller connect to your computer.
4. Never give a verification code to anyone who calls you.
5. When in doubt, hang up and call the number on your bill.

SCAM ALERT

Caller ID can be faked

Scammers can make a call look like it's from your internet company. The name on the screen proves nothing. Call back on a number you look up yourself.

Where to report and complain

- Report a scam to the FTC at **ReportFraud.ftc.gov**.

- If you paid with a gift card, call the card company right away.
- For a billing or service problem a provider won't fix, file a complaint with the FCC at **consumercomplaints.fcc.gov**, Internet category. The FCC sends it to the provider for a response.

CHAPTER 34

When to Call Bill

Rural internet is a lot of choices, fine print and trial and error. You don't have to sort it out alone. With more than 30 years of professional experience, I'm glad to look at your address, your options and your bills with you.

Good reasons to call

- You'd like someone to check the FCC map and provider sites for your address and explain the choices.
- You got a copper retirement letter and aren't sure what to pick.
- You're testing a new service during its return window and want help judging it.
- Your Wi-Fi is strong at the router and weak everywhere else.
- You want a backup plan for storms and outages.
- You got a call or ad about internet and aren't sure it's real.

FROM BILL

My Wi-Fi Help service

My **Wi-Fi Help** visit covers exactly this: comparing what reaches your home, setting up the router or gateway in the best spot, getting Wi-Fi into the far rooms, and making sure every device in the house connects.

SCAM ALERT

If you've already paid a scammer

Call your bank or card company first, then call me. We'll change passwords and check your devices together.

How to reach me

Call or text **(330) 200-8042**, or book online at **billshometech.com/book**. Bill's Home Tech serves **Portage County, Ohio**. If you reach my assistant **Sophie** on the main line, she can answer simple questions and get you on my schedule.

FROM BILL

What it costs

My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. The guides themselves, like this one, are free to read and share.

— Bill

CHAPTER 35

Your Rural Internet Cheat-Sheet

The most-used steps on one page. Keep it handy, save it or print it for the fridge.

Find what reaches your address

1. Look up your address at **broadbandmap.fcc.gov**.
2. Check each provider's own website with your exact address.
3. Ask the neighbors what works on your road.
4. Read the Broadband Facts label for each plan.
5. Try the best one during its return window.

Where to check

What	Where
FCC National Broadband Map	broadbandmap.fcc.gov
Starlink	starlink.com
HughesNet	hughesnet.com
Viasat	viasat.com
T-Mobile 5G Home Internet	t-mobile.com/home-internet
Verizon Home Internet	verizon.com/home
AT&T Fiber and Internet Air	att.com/internet/availability
BroadbandOhio	broadband.ohio.gov
Lifeline	lifelinesupport.org · (800) 234-9473

Questions for every provider

Topic	Ask
Price	What will I pay after the first year, with equipment and fees?
Contract	Is there one? What does it cost to cancel early?
Data	Is there a limit? What happens when I reach it?
Speed and delay	What are the typical numbers at my address?
Return window	How many days do I have to send it back?

Safety in five

1. Type provider websites yourself.
2. Never pay with gift cards, crypto or wire transfers.
3. Hang up on surprise calls and call the number on your bill.
4. Never give a code or remote access to a caller.
5. Stay off the roof. Hire an installer.

Keep this handy

What	Notes
Providers that reach my address	_____
My provider and account number	_____
Provider support number (from my bill)	_____
Last day to return equipment	_____
Promotional price ends	_____
My Wi-Fi name	_____
Bill's Home Tech	(330) 200-8042 · billshometech.com/book

FROM BILL

The right choice is out there

Rural internet is better and has more choices than it did a few years ago. Take it one step at a time, starting with your own address. And if it ever gets tricky, call or text me at (330) 200-8042.