BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

# T-Mobile & Verizon 5G Home Internet

Choosing a plan, placing the gateway and getting a strong signal from a cell tower instead of a cable, in plain English

## A plain-English guide to 5G home internet

Good signal starts with the right window

*Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech*

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

*For T-Mobile Home Internet and Verizon 5G Home Internet · facts current November 2026*

# What's Inside

This is your 5G home internet manual. **T-Mobile Home Internet** and **Verizon 5G Home Internet** bring the internet into your house over the air, from the same cell towers your mobile phone uses, instead of through a cable in the ground. A small box called a **gateway** catches that signal and turns it into Wi-Fi. For many homes it's simpler and cheaper than cable. For others the signal just isn't strong enough. This guide helps you tell which kind of home you have, pick a plan with your eyes open, find the gateway's best spot, and fix the common hiccups yourself. Read it in any order; there's no test.

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PART 1

# Getting Started

What 5G home internet is, how T-Mobile and Verizon compare, and whether it's a good fit for your home.

CHAPTER 1

# A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Maybe you've seen the T-Mobile or Verizon ads promising home internet with no cable and no annual contract. Maybe a family member just plugged a white box into your outlet and said, "There, you're on 5G now." Or maybe your cable bill went up again and you're wondering whether there's another way. Whichever it is, this guide is for **you**.

I'm Bill. Helping folks feel at home with their technology is what I do every day, and I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it sitting beside you at your kitchen table: slowly, in plain English, with nothing taken for granted. If I use a word you don't know, I'll stop and explain it.

## The one thing to remember

If you take only one idea from this whole guide, make it this: **with 5G home internet, where you put the box matters more than anything else.** The same gateway can be slow by the couch and quick by an upstairs window. Once it's in its best spot, most homes can simply forget about it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

### What this guide does for you

You'll know whether 5G home internet is likely to work well at your address before you cancel anything, what the price guarantees really cover, how to find the strongest spot in your house, and what to try when the internet stops working. That means fewer surprises on the bill and fewer calls to a support line.

## The big promise

You can't break anything by moving the gateway from window to window or restarting it. Those are the two most useful things you'll ever do with it. The one thing to be careful with is **canceling**: the gateway belongs to the carrier and has to be returned on time. I'll show you how in its own chapter.

## And I'm a phone call away

If you're ever unsure, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. Now, let's get you comfortable.

***— Bill***

CHAPTER 2

# What 5G Home Internet Is

Most home internet arrives through a wire: a cable line, a phone line, or a fiber-optic line. **5G home internet** skips the wire. It uses the same cell towers that carry your mobile phone calls and data. The industry calls this **fixed wireless**, because the box stays in one place at your home.

## How it works, in plain terms

1. A cell tower in your area sends out a 5G (or 4G LTE) signal.
2. A box in your home, called a **gateway**, catches that signal, much like your phone does.
3. The gateway turns the signal into ordinary **Wi-Fi** for your tablet, computer, TV and smart speakers.
4. Your devices connect to the gateway's Wi-Fi exactly as they would to any other router.

## What makes it different from cable

| Feature | What it means for you |
|---|---|
| **No technician needed** | Most people set it up themselves by plugging in the gateway and following an app. |
| **No digging or drilling** | Nothing is run into the house. The gateway needs only an electrical outlet. |
| **Signal varies by spot** | Walls, floors, trees and distance from the tower all change how strong the signal is. |
| **Shared with phones** | You share the tower with mobile phone users, so speeds can dip at busy times. |
| **Tied to your address** | The service is approved for a specific address and is meant to be used there. |

GOOD TO KNOW

### "5G" on your phone is the same family

If your mobile phone shows strong 5G bars inside your house on the same carrier, that's a hopeful sign. It's not a guarantee, because the home service uses its own capacity checks, but a phone with one bar indoors is a warning sign worth noting.

CHAPTER 3

# T-Mobile and Verizon at a Glance

Both companies sell 5G home internet with no annual contract and a self-setup gateway. They differ in plan names, prices, apps and price guarantees. Here's the quick comparison; later chapters go into each one.

| | T-Mobile Home Internet | Verizon 5G Home Internet |
|---|---|---|
| Plan names (Nov. 2026) | Rely, Amplified, All-In | 5G Home, 5G Home Plus, 5G Home Ultimate |
| App you'll use | **T-Life** (T-Mobile's main app) | **My Verizon**, plus the optional **Verizon Home** app |
| Price guarantee | Multi-year guarantee on the internet rate | 3, 4 or 5 years depending on plan |
| Trial period | 15-day Test Drive | 30-day money-back guarantee |
| Return window after canceling | 45 days | 30 days |

*Checked against T-Mobile's Home Internet FAQ and Verizon's 5G Home Internet page on November 13, 2026.*

TIP

### Already a customer for your phone?

Both companies take a sizable amount off the home internet price if you also have a qualifying mobile phone plan with them. Check that first. It often decides which one is cheaper for you.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Other names you may see

T-Mobile also sells fiber internet in some places, and Verizon sells Fios fiber in parts of the East Coast. This guide covers only the 5G wireless versions, the kind that use a gateway by the window.

CHAPTER 4

# Is 5G Home Internet Right for Your Home?

5G home internet is a great fit for some homes and a disappointment in others. The difference is almost always the signal at your address and how your household uses the internet. Here's an honest way to decide.

## When it often beats cable

- Your cable bill has crept up after a promotion ended, and you want a **steady, guaranteed price**.
- You use the internet for **email, video calls, web browsing and streaming** a few shows at a time.
- You'd like **no annual contract** and no equipment rental fee.
- Your phone already gets strong 5G from the same carrier inside your home.
- Cable isn't available on your road, and the alternative is slow DSL or satellite.

## When cable or fiber is usually the better choice

- Someone in the house works from home and **can't afford a slow afternoon**.
- You upload a lot: big photo backups, video for church or club livestreams, or work files.
- Several people stream 4K video or play online games at the same time every evening.
- The signal test at your address is weak, or the carrier won't offer service there.
- You have fiber available. Fiber is usually faster and steadier, especially for uploads.

TIP

### Try before you cancel

Keep your cable or DSL service running until the 5G gateway has proven itself for a week or two at your house, including busy weekday evenings. Both carriers offer a trial period, covered in Chapter 11, *Trial Periods: Try It Before You Commit*.

GOOD TO KNOW

### A note for Portage County

Coverage here can change from one road to the next, and from one side of a hill to the other. The only reliable test is the carrier's address check, followed by a real trial in your own house. For a broader look at all your options, see Bill's *Choosing an Internet Plan & Reading the Bill* manual.

CHAPTER 5

# The Words You'll See

A short glossary. Come back to it whenever a word on the screen or bill puzzles you.

| Word | What it means |
|---|---|
| **Gateway** | The box from the carrier. It's a 5G modem and a Wi-Fi router in one. |
| **Receiver** | A small window or outdoor unit some Verizon homes use with a separate router. |
| **Fixed wireless** | Internet delivered over the air to a box that stays at one address. |
| **5G / 4G LTE** | Generations of cell signals. The gateway uses whichever is best at your spot. |
| **Signal bars** | The gateway's or app's rough measure of signal strength. More is better. |
| **Mbps** | Megabits per second, the speed unit you'll see in speed tests and plan details. |
| **Upload / download** | Download is what comes in (video, web pages). Upload is what you send (photos, video calls). |
| **Latency (ping)** | How long a signal takes to make a round trip. Lower is better for video calls. |
| **Price guarantee / price lock** | A promise not to raise the base monthly rate for a set number of years. |
| **AutoPay** | Automatic monthly payment. Both carriers' advertised prices assume it. |
| **Deprioritization** | When the network is busy, some traffic is served after other traffic, so it may slow down. |
| **Mesh extender** | A second Wi-Fi unit that carries the signal to far corners of the house. |
| **Broadband label** | A standard "nutrition label" showing a plan's price, fees and typical speeds. |

PART 2

# Plans, Prices & Signing Up

Checking your address, the current plans from each carrier, what a price guarantee really covers, and how the trial periods work.

CHAPTER 6

# Checking Your Address

5G home internet is sold address by address. A neighbor down the road may be able to get it while you can't, because each tower has only so much room for home customers. So the very first step is the carrier's address check.

## How to check

1. On a computer or tablet, go to **t-mobile.com/home-internet** or **verizon.com/home/internet/5g**. Type the address yourself rather than clicking an ad.
2. Enter your full street address, including any apartment or unit number.
3. Read the result carefully. You may see that service is available, that it isn't, or that you can join a waiting list.
4. If it's available, note which plans are offered. Not every plan is offered at every address.

*Checked against T-Mobile's Check Eligibility page and Verizon's 5G Home Internet page on November 13, 2026.*

HEADS UP

### "Available" isn't the same as "strong"

The address check tells you the carrier is willing to sell you service. It doesn't promise a strong signal in every room. That's why placement (Part 3) and the trial period matter so much.

TIP

### Ask a neighbor

If a neighbor on your road already uses T-Mobile or Verizon home internet, ask how it does on weekday evenings. That's the most useful real-world test you can get before you sign up.

CHAPTER 7

# T-Mobile's Plans

In November 2026, T-Mobile sells three 5G home internet plans. All have no annual contract and no data cap. Prices below are T-Mobile's advertised monthly prices with AutoPay, before taxes and fees. They change often, so treat them as a starting point and confirm on T-Mobile's site.

| Plan | About per month with AutoPay | With a qualifying T-Mobile phone line | In short |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rely | $50 | about $35 | The basic plan. Fine for email, browsing and some streaming. |
| Amplified | $60 | about $45 | Higher top speeds where the tower allows, and a newer gateway. |
| All-In | $70 | about $55 | Adds extras such as a mesh Wi-Fi unit and streaming perks. |

*Checked against T-Mobile's Home Internet plans page and plan terms on November 13, 2026.*

GOOD TO KNOW

**Taxes and fees are extra**

T-Mobile's plan terms list a monthly regulatory and telco recovery fee on some plans, plus taxes. Ask for the "out the door" monthly total before you agree.

## How to choose

- Start with **Rely** if one or two people use the internet for everyday things.
- Consider **Amplified** if your address shows strong signal and you stream a lot.
- Look at **All-In** only if you'd use its extras. Don't pay for streaming services you won't watch.

TIP

**Ages 55 and up**

T-Mobile has offered special bundle pricing for customers 55 and older who also have a T-Mobile phone line. Ask about it when you call or visit a store, and get the price in writing.

CHAPTER 8

# Verizon's Plans

In November 2026, Verizon sells three main 5G home internet plans, all with no annual contract. Verizon's own page lists a base monthly price and a lower price when you also have a qualifying Verizon mobile plan and use AutoPay.

| Plan | Base price per month | With qualifying mobile plan and AutoPay | Price guarantee |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5G Home | about $60 | as low as $35 | 3 years |
| 5G Home Plus | about $70 | as low as $45 | 4 years |
| 5G Home Ultimate | about $85 | as low as $60 | 5 years |

*Checked against Verizon's 5G Home Internet page and plan FAQs on November 13, 2026.*

GOOD TO KNOW

### Prices can differ by address

Some Verizon local pages show lower starting prices than the main page. The price you're quoted at checkout for your address is the one that counts. Screenshot or print it for your records.

## The "Lite" plans

In some areas, Verizon also offers lower-speed **Home Internet Lite** plans for Verizon mobile customers. These come with a monthly data allowance rather than unlimited data. If you're offered one, ask exactly how much data is included and what happens if you use more.

TIP

### Which one is enough?

For a household that reads email, browses, video-calls family and streams one show at a time, the basic plan is usually plenty. Paying for the top plan won't help if the signal at your window is the limit.

CHAPTER 9

# Price Locks and Guarantees: What They Cover

Both carriers advertise a **price guarantee**, sometimes called a price lock. It's a real benefit, and it's also narrower than it sounds. Here's what it does and doesn't cover.

## What's guaranteed

- **T-Mobile:** a multi-year guarantee that the monthly price of the home internet plan itself won't change while you stay on an eligible plan. The guarantee starts when you activate or switch to the plan.
- **Verizon:** the base monthly price is fixed for 3 years on 5G Home, 4 years on 5G Home Plus and 5 years on 5G Home Ultimate, and Verizon gives advance notice of any change after that.

*Checked against T-Mobile's plan terms and Verizon's 5G Home Internet plan FAQs on November 13, 2026.*

## What's not guaranteed

- **Taxes and fees.** These can still change.
- **Discounts.** If you lose the AutoPay discount or the mobile-plan bundle discount, your bill goes up.
- **Promotions and perks.** Free months, gift cards and streaming extras aren't part of the guarantee.
- **Equipment and setup charges.**
- **Changing plans.** Switching to a different plan usually starts a new set of terms.

HEADS UP

### The bundle discount is the big one

If you get a lower price because of your mobile phone plan, and you later move your phones to another company, the home internet discount goes away. Factor that in before switching phone carriers.

TIP

### Write down your start date

Note the date you activated and the plan name in the cheat-sheet at the end of this guide. When the guarantee ends, you'll know to review your bill.

CHAPTER 10

# Reading the Broadband Label

Internet companies must show a standard **broadband label** for each plan, a bit like the nutrition label on a cereal box. It's the most honest place to compare plans, because every company has to fill in the same boxes.

## What to look at

| Label line | Why it matters |
|---|---|
| **Monthly price** | The base price, and whether it's an introductory price. |
| **Fees** | One-time and monthly fees, and any fee for ending service early. |
| **Typical download speed** | What most customers actually get, not the "up to" headline. |
| **Typical upload speed** | Matters for video calls and sending photos. |
| **Typical latency** | Lower numbers mean snappier video calls. |
| **Data included** | Unlimited, or a monthly allowance. |

*Checked against the FCC's broadband label requirements on November 13, 2026.*

1. On the carrier's plan page, look for a link called **Broadband Facts** or **broadband label** near each plan.
2. Open the label for the plan you're considering.
3. Compare the **typical** speeds and the fees side by side with your current provider's label.

TIP

### Typical speed, not top speed

5G speeds vary a lot by address. The "typical" numbers on the label are a fairer comparison than the biggest number in an ad.

CHAPTER 11

# Trial Periods: Try It Before You Commit

Both carriers let you try the service and get your money back if it doesn't work out, as long as you follow their rules and return the equipment on time.

## T-Mobile's 15-day Test Drive

- The 15 days start when you activate and bring the gateway home from a store, or when T-Mobile tells you it has shipped.
- If you schedule cancellation within those 15 days, you get a one-time bill credit for the internet service charges. Taxes and fees may not be refunded.
- You still have to return the gateway within **45 days** of canceling, or you may be charged a non-return fee of up to **$370**.

*Checked against T-Mobile's 15-Day Test Drive page and Home Internet FAQ on November 13, 2026.*

## Verizon's 30-day money-back guarantee

- Cancel within 30 days of activation for a refund of service charges.
- Return all Verizon equipment within **30 days** of canceling. The refund arrives some weeks after the equipment is received.

*Checked against Verizon's 5G Home Internet page and plan FAQs on November 13, 2026.*

## Make the most of the trial

1. Set the gateway up in its best spot on day one (see Chapter 15, *Finding the Best Spot for the Gateway*).
2. Use it exactly as you normally would: video calls, streaming, the grandkids' visit.
3. Run a speed test in the morning and again on a weekday evening (see Chapter 20, *Speed Tests the Right Way*).
4. Decide a few days before the deadline, not on the last day.

HEADS UP

**Mark the deadline on your calendar**

Write the last day of the trial on your calendar the day you activate. Missing it by a day can mean paying for a month you didn't want.

PART 3

# Setting Up the Gateway

Unboxing, setting up with the carrier's app, finding the best window, reading the signal bars, and connecting your devices.

CHAPTER 12

# What's in the Box

The box is simple. You'll find the **gateway** itself, a **power cord**, and a quick-start card. Some plans also include a **mesh extender**, a smaller second Wi-Fi unit. Some Verizon homes receive a separate **receiver** that goes on a window or outside wall, plus a router.

## Before you plug anything in

- Find the sticker on the gateway, usually on the back or bottom. It shows the Wi-Fi **network name** and **password**. Take a photo of it with your phone.
- Keep the box and any packing for the length of the trial. You'll need it if you return the gateway.
- Install the carrier's app on your phone (next two chapters). Setup is easiest with the app.
- Charge your phone. Setup includes walking around the house testing spots.

GOOD TO KNOW

### The gateway belongs to the carrier

With both carriers, the gateway is lent to you as part of the service. Treat it like a library book: keep it safe, and return it when you leave.

TIP

### Leave your old router plugged in for now

If you're switching from cable, leave the old equipment connected until the new service is working well. You'll return or retire it once the trial is over.

CHAPTER 13

# Setting Up T-Mobile with the T-Life App

T-Mobile now handles home internet inside **T-Life**, the same app T-Mobile phone customers use. It walks you through setup, helps you find the best spot, and lets you check the signal and change the Wi-Fi name and password later.

## Setting up, step by step

1. On your phone, open the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play Store (Android) and install **T-Life**, published by T-Mobile.
2. Open T-Life and sign in with your T-Mobile ID, or create one using the details from your order.
3. Follow the on-screen setup for your home internet. The app shows you where to plug in the gateway.
4. When asked, use the **Gateway placement assistant** to compare spots. Later, you can find it again from the **More** screen.
5. Once the gateway is online, the app shows its Wi-Fi name and password, and lets you change them.

*Checked against T-Mobile's support page "T-Mobile Internet in T-Life app" on November 13, 2026.*

GOOD TO KNOW

### What T-Life can do for your home internet

Check signal strength, see connected devices, change the network name and password, and run the placement assistant again whenever you rearrange furniture. If you ever get a replacement gateway, T-Life shows the old one as offline and lets you swap in the new one.

SCAM ALERT

### Only the real app

Download T-Life from your phone's official app store, published by T-Mobile. Never install an app because a caller or text told you to. Real T-Mobile setup doesn't require a remote-control app on your phone or computer.

CHAPTER 14

# Setting Up Verizon with the My Verizon App

Verizon uses the **My Verizon** app for setup and account tasks. It also offers the separate **Verizon Home** app for managing your Wi-Fi, but Verizon says that app isn't required. For 5G Home, you sign in to Verizon Home with the same My Verizon login.

## Setting up, step by step

1. Install **My Verizon** from your phone's official app store and sign in.
2. Look for **Start your 5G Home setup** and tap it.
3. Allow Bluetooth and location access when asked. The app uses them to talk to the equipment and guide placement.
4. Follow the signal test. The app guides you toward a window facing the nearest antenna.
5. When the test finds a good spot, place the gateway (or receiver) there and finish setup.

*Checked against Verizon's 5G Home setup and signal-strength support articles on November 13, 2026.*

## If your kit has a separate receiver

Some Verizon homes get a receiver that attaches to a window, an inside wall or an outside wall, with a router indoors. The My Verizon app walks you through testing and mounting it. Verizon describes mounting it outside the house as an advanced job meant only for people experienced with exterior mounting, and renters or homeowners' association members may need permission first.

TIP

### There's help built in

If the signal test keeps coming up weak, the setup screens offer to connect you with a Verizon setup expert by phone, chat or video chat. Professional installation is offered in some areas too.

FROM BILL

### Ladders are my department

If a receiver needs to go outside, please don't climb a ladder alone. That's a good time to call a family member or me.

CHAPTER 15

# Finding the Best Spot for the Gateway

This is the most important chapter in the guide. The gateway's job is to hear the cell tower clearly. Walls, floors, metal and distance all muffle that signal. A few feet can make a real difference.

## What both carriers recommend

- **Near a window**, ideally one facing toward the tower, or against an outside wall.
- **High up**: an upper floor, or a tall bookshelf rather than the floor.
- **Not in a basement**, and not inside a cabinet or behind a metal object.
- **Near an outlet**, so you don't need an extension cord across a walkway.
- **Away from water**: Verizon specifically suggests avoiding bathrooms and kitchens.

*Checked against T-Mobile's Home Internet network support guidance and Verizon's gateway setup articles on November 13, 2026.*

## A simple way to test spots

1. Pick two or three candidate spots, such as an upstairs bedroom window, a living-room window and a tall shelf.
2. Place the gateway at the first spot and let it settle for a few minutes.
3. Check the signal in the app and run a speed test from a phone or tablet near the gateway.
4. Write down the result, then move to the next spot and repeat.
5. Leave the gateway at the winner.

TIP

### Test, don't just count bars

T-Mobile's own guidance is to test the service in each spot rather than relying only on the signal bars. A spot with fewer bars can occasionally be faster.

HEADS UP

### Windows with special coatings

Some energy-efficient windows have a thin metallic coating that can weaken signals. If a window spot tests poorly, try a different window or a spot near an outside wall.

CHAPTER 16

# Reading the Signal Bars

Both the gateway and the carrier's app show a signal reading. Bars give you a quick feel for signal strength, the same way they do on your mobile phone.

## Where to see them

| Carrier | Where to check signal |
|---|---|
| **T-Mobile** | Some gateways show bars on a small display on the box. The T-Life app shows signal strength too. |
| **Verizon** | The My Verizon setup flow shows signal while you test. Afterward, the Verizon Home app has a **Gateway 5G Optimizer** that tests the current spot and compares a new spot against it. |

*Checked against Verizon's 5G Home setup and signal-strength support articles on November 13, 2026.*

## What the reading tells you

- **Strong signal:** leave the gateway where it is.
- **Middling signal:** try a higher spot or a different window and compare.
- **Weak or no signal:** try every window on the tower side of the house. If nothing helps, call the carrier during the trial period. A weak signal everywhere is a good reason to cancel and return the gateway.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Signal can change through the year

Leaves on trees, new construction and changes on the carrier's side can all shift the signal a little. If speeds drop and stay low for days, re-run the placement test.

CHAPTER 17

# Connecting Your Devices

Once the gateway is online, connecting your tablet, computer, TV and smart speakers works just like any other Wi-Fi network. You'll need the network name and password from the gateway's sticker or the app.

## Connecting a phone or tablet

1. Open **Settings** and tap **Wi-Fi**.
2. Tap the gateway's network name.
3. Type the password carefully. Capital letters matter.
4. Tap **Join** or **Connect**.

## The easy trick for a switch from cable

If you're replacing an old router, you can give the new gateway **the same Wi-Fi name and password** as the old one. Then most devices, including smart TVs, printers and smart plugs, reconnect on their own without you re-entering anything. Turn the old router off first so the two don't compete.

TIP

### Write it down once

Put the Wi-Fi name and password in the cheat-sheet at the end of this guide. Bill's *Wi-Fi Passwords* manual covers sharing it with guests by QR code.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Plugging in with a cable

Gateways also have Ethernet ports. A desktop computer or TV near the gateway can plug straight in for the steadiest connection.

CHAPTER 18

# Moving Over from Cable

Switching providers is mostly painless, but a few things are easy to forget. Use this checklist.

1. Run both services side by side for a week or two, as long as the trial allows.
2. Check whether you use an **email address from your old provider**. If you do, find out what happens to it when you cancel before you cancel.
3. Check whether your **home phone** runs through the cable company. If it does, make a plan for it first.
4. Check whether a medical alert, alarm system or doorbell camera depends on the old connection. Reconnect each one to the new Wi-Fi and test it.
5. Cancel the old service yourself by calling the number on your bill, and ask for a confirmation number.
6. Return the old provider's equipment and keep the receipt.

HEADS UP

### Medical and security devices

If anyone in the home relies on a medical alert or monitored alarm, test it on the new internet with the monitoring company before canceling the old service.

FROM BILL

### This is a good day to have help

Moving every device over in one visit is exactly the kind of job I do. I'll make sure the TV, printer, cameras and smart speakers are all happy before I leave.

PART 4

# Everyday Use

Managing Wi-Fi, testing speed the right way, understanding busy-hour slowdowns, covering a big house, and what to know if you move.

CHAPTER 19

# Changing Your Wi-Fi Name and Password

You can change the network name and password from the carrier's app at any time. It's worth doing if the password is hard to type, or if someone who shouldn't have it does.

## T-Mobile

1. Open **T-Life** and go to your home internet.
2. Find the Wi-Fi network settings.
3. Change the network name or password and save.

*Checked against T-Mobile's support page "T-Mobile Internet in T-Life app" on November 13, 2026.*

## Verizon

1. Open **My Verizon** (or the **Verizon Home** app) and choose your home internet.
2. Find the Wi-Fi network settings for your 5G Home device.
3. Change the network name or password and save.

*Checked against Verizon's 5G Home Internet support overview and Verizon Home app FAQs on November 13, 2026.*

HEADS UP

### Every device will need the new password

After a password change, each device has to be reconnected. Do it on a day when you have time, and keep the new password in front of you.

TIP

### Make it strong but typeable

Three or four ordinary words strung together, such as "maple-porch-sunny-kettle", are easier to type on a TV remote than a random jumble, and still hard to guess.

CHAPTER 20

# Speed Tests the Right Way

A speed test measures how quickly data reaches your device right now. With 5G home internet, a fair test needs a little care, because Wi-Fi in the house and the signal at the window both play a part.

1. Stand or sit in the same room as the gateway.
2. Pause anything big, such as a TV streaming or a computer backing up.
3. Run a test in the carrier's app if it has one, or at a well-known test site you type in yourself.
4. Write down the download, upload and ping numbers, with the date and time.
5. Repeat on a weekday evening, when networks are busiest.

## What the numbers mean for everyday life

| Activity | What it needs |
|---|---|
| Email and web browsing | Very little; almost any working connection is fine. |
| A video call with family | A steady connection with decent upload and low ping. |
| Streaming one HD show | A moderate, steady download speed. |
| Several people streaming at once | Multiply by the number of screens. |

TIP

### Near the gateway first

If the test is fast near the gateway but slow in the bedroom, the problem is Wi-Fi reach inside the house, not the 5G signal. See Chapter 22, *Mesh Extenders for Bigger Homes*. Bill's *Slow Internet? Speed Tests & Fixes* manual goes deeper.

CHAPTER 21

# Slower in the Evening? Busy Hours Explained

Because 5G home internet shares the tower with mobile phones, speeds can dip when lots of people nearby are online, often weekday evenings. This isn't your gateway failing; it's the network managing a crowd.

## What T-Mobile says

- During congestion, home internet customers may notice lower speeds than some other customers, because of how data is prioritized.
- Customers who use more than **1.2 terabytes** (1,200 gigabytes) in a billing cycle are treated as heavy data users and are prioritized last when the network is busy.
- When the network isn't busy, T-Mobile says prioritization has little, if any, effect.

*Checked against T-Mobile's Network Traffic Prioritization & Management page on November 13, 2026.*

GOOD TO KNOW

### Verizon publishes its rules too

Verizon describes its own network management practices in the plan information on its website. Read them if busy-hour speed matters a lot to your household.

## What you can do

- Schedule big jobs, like computer updates and photo backups, for overnight.
- Make sure the gateway is in its best spot. A strong signal holds up better when the tower is busy.
- If evenings are unusable for weeks, talk to the carrier, and keep the option of cable or fiber in mind.

TIP

### 1.2 terabytes is a lot

Most households reading email, browsing and streaming a few hours a day use far less. You can see your usage in the carrier's app if you're curious.

CHAPTER 22

# Mesh Extenders for Bigger Homes

The gateway sits by a window, which may be at one end of the house. If the far bedroom or the back porch gets weak Wi-Fi, a **mesh extender** can help. It's a second Wi-Fi unit that repeats the gateway's signal.

## Getting one

- **T-Mobile** sells a mesh Wi-Fi extender, and some plans include one. T-Life helps you set it up.
- **Verizon** offers Wi-Fi extenders for its home internet. Ask what's included with your plan.
- You can also use your own mesh system, such as eero, connected to the gateway. See Bill's *eero* manual.

*Checked against T-Mobile's mesh Wi-Fi extender support pages on November 13, 2026.*

## Where to put an extender

1. Find a spot about halfway between the gateway and the weak area, not in the weak area itself.
2. Plug it in and follow the app's setup.
3. Check the extender's light or the app to confirm it has a good connection to the gateway.
4. Test the weak room again.

HEADS UP

### Extenders are equipment, too

A carrier's extender is usually returned when you cancel, just like the gateway. Verizon lists a non-return fee for its extender. Keep track of everything the carrier sent.

CHAPTER 23

# Streaming TV, Video Calls and Smart Devices

Most homes on 5G internet stream TV, video-call family and run smart devices without trouble. A few habits help everything run smoothly.

- **Streaming TV:** if the TV is near the gateway, plug it in with an Ethernet cable for the steadiest picture.
- **Video calls:** sit closer to the gateway, and ask others in the house to pause big downloads during the call.
- **Smart speakers, plugs and cameras:** they connect to Wi-Fi like any device. If you changed networks, each one needs to be reconnected in its own app.
- **Doorbell and security cameras** upload video all day. If uploads are weak, lower the video quality in the camera's app.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Gaming and very large uploads

Fast-paced online games and constant big uploads are the hardest jobs for any wireless connection. If those matter to your household, test them during the trial.

TIP

### Live sports

Live TV through a streaming service works over 5G home internet. If the picture stutters at kickoff on a busy evening, that's the busy-hour effect from Chapter 21, *Slower in the Evening? Busy Hours Explained*.

CHAPTER 24

# Moving, Vacations and Taking It with You

It's tempting to unplug the gateway and take it to the lake cottage. But 5G home internet is approved for **your registered service address**, because the carrier reserves room on the towers that serve it.

## If you're moving house

1. Check the new address on the carrier's website before you move.
2. If it's available, use the carrier's transfer process. T-Mobile has a **Transfer Internet Service When Moving** page; with Verizon, call or use My Verizon.
3. Set up the gateway at the new home and repeat the placement test.
4. If service isn't available at the new address, cancel and return the gateway on time.

*Checked against T-Mobile's Transfer Internet Service When Moving page on November 13, 2026.*

GOOD TO KNOW

### For travel, think phone hotspot

For a weekend away, your mobile phone's hotspot or the Wi-Fi where you stay is the right tool. Bill's *Staying Connected While Traveling* manual covers it.

TIP

### Snowbirds

If you spend months somewhere else, ask the carrier about your options for the time you're away instead of simply unplugging. Write down what they tell you and who told you.

PART 5

# Fixing Problems & Staying Safe

What to do when the internet stops or slows, how to spot fake "provider" calls, and how to cancel and return the gateway without a fee.

CHAPTER 25

# Internet Stopped Working: First Steps

Take a breath. Most outages are fixed by the same few steps, in this order. Work down the list and stop as soon as things are working again.

1. **Check one other device.** If your phone on Wi-Fi works but the TV doesn't, the problem is the TV, not the internet.
2. **Look at the gateway.** Is it powered on? Has anyone moved it or unplugged it?
3. **Restart the gateway.** Unplug its power cord, wait a full minute, and plug it back in. Give it five to ten minutes to come back fully.
4. **Check the app.** T-Life or My Verizon may show an outage notice or a problem with your gateway.
5. **Check the signal.** If the bars dropped, try the gateway at its old best spot or another window.
6. **Restart the device** that still can't connect.
7. **Call the carrier** using the number in the app or on your bill if nothing works.

*Checked against T-Mobile's Home Internet troubleshooting page and Verizon's 5G Home Internet support overview on November 13, 2026.*

TIP

### Use your phone's data in a pinch

If the home internet is down and you need to look something up, turn off Wi-Fi on your phone and use mobile data. That's also how you'll reach the carrier's app during an outage.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Power outages

The gateway needs power. When the electricity goes out, the internet goes too, even if the tower is fine. A small battery backup can keep it running for a while; Bill's *Surge Protectors & Battery Backups* manual explains how.

CHAPTER 26

# Slow or Dropping Connection

If the internet works but feels slow, or keeps cutting out, sort out whether the problem is the 5G signal or the Wi-Fi inside your house. The fix is different for each.

| What you notice | Likely cause | What to try |
|---|---|---|
| Slow everywhere, even next to the gateway | Weak 5G signal or a busy tower | Re-test placement; check at a different time of day. |
| Fast near the gateway, slow far away | Wi-Fi reach | Move closer, or add a mesh extender. |
| Slow only on weekday evenings | Network congestion | Schedule big jobs overnight; see Chapter 21, *Slower in the Evening? Busy Hours Explained*. |
| Drops every so often | Signal on the edge | Try a higher spot or a window facing the tower. |
| One device slow, others fine | That device | Restart it; forget and rejoin the Wi-Fi network. |

## Things that quietly slow Wi-Fi

- The gateway tucked behind a TV, in a cabinet or on the floor.
- Thick walls, brick, mirrors or appliances between the gateway and the device.
- Lots of devices streaming or updating at once.

TIP

### Keep notes for the carrier

If you call for help, a short list of speed test results with dates and times gets you much further than "it's slow."

HEADS UP

### Replacement gateways

If the carrier decides your gateway is faulty, they'll send a new one. Return the old one the way they ask, so you're not charged for it.

CHAPTER 27

# Fake "Provider" Calls and Discount Scams

Scammers love to pretend to be your internet company. The Federal Trade Commission has warned about callers posing as internet, TV and phone providers who offer a big discount, often 40 to 50 percent off, if you act right now.

## How the scam goes

- An unexpected call or robocall says it's from your provider.
- You're offered a big discount on future bills, or a free gadget.
- To "lock in" the deal, you're told to buy **gift cards** and read the numbers over the phone.
- Or you're asked to "confirm" your account details or a code sent to your phone, which lets them take over your account.

*Checked against FTC consumer alerts on provider-impostor and gift-card discount scams on November 13, 2026.*

SCAM ALERT

### Gift cards are for gifts

No real internet or phone company asks you to pay with gift cards. Only scammers do. And caller ID can be faked to show the company's real name.

## What to do instead

1. Hang up. You don't owe a stranger on the phone a polite goodbye.
2. Open the carrier's app yourself, or call the number printed on your bill.
3. Ask whether the offer is real. If it is, they'll have it on file.
4. Never read a code from a text message to someone who called you.

HEADS UP

### If you already paid

Contact the company that issued the gift card right away and tell them it was used in a scam. Then report it at **ReportFraud.ftc.gov**. Bill's *I Think I've Been Scammed* manual walks through the next steps.

CHAPTER 28

# Canceling and Returning the Gateway

If you decide 5G home internet isn't for you, or you're moving somewhere it isn't offered, cancel properly and return the equipment on time. This is where avoidable fees happen.

## T-Mobile

- Contact T-Mobile to cancel. If you're within the 15-day Test Drive, say so.
- Return the gateway, and any mesh extender, within **45 days** of canceling.
- If you don't, T-Mobile may charge a non-return fee of up to **$370**. A heavily damaged gateway can bring a separate damage charge.

*Checked against T-Mobile's Home Internet FAQ and 15-Day Test Drive page on November 13, 2026.*

## Verizon

- **Returning equipment doesn't cancel your service.** You have to cancel the service itself, too.
- Verizon sends a box and a postage-paid return label to your service address.
- Mail the equipment back through the U.S. Postal Service within **30 days** of canceling.
- Unreturned or damaged equipment carries a fee that depends on the model; Verizon's table lists amounts from about $175 to $300.

*Checked against Verizon's Home Internet (Wireless) equipment return FAQs on November 13, 2026.*

## Protect yourself

1. Write down the date you canceled and the confirmation number.
2. Pack everything the carrier sent, including the power cord.
3. Take a photo of the packed box and the label.
4. Get a receipt when you drop it off, and keep it until the final bill shows no fee.

TIP

### Watch the final bill

Check your last one or two bills. If you see a non-return fee after you mailed the gateway, call with your receipt and tracking number in hand.

PART 6

# When to Call Bill & Your Cheat-Sheet

When a hand saves worry, and everything important about your 5G home internet on one page.

CHAPTER 29

# When to Call Bill

This guide covers what you need to choose, set up and live with 5G home internet on your own. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand saves you time and worry. Here's when I'd pick up the phone.

## Good reasons to call

- You're trying to decide between cable, fiber and 5G, and want a second opinion before you sign up. That's what my **Wi-Fi Help** visit is for.
- You'd like help **finding the best spot** for the gateway and testing every window properly.
- You're switching from cable and want every device, from the TV to the printer to the doorbell, moved over in one visit.
- A far room needs better Wi-Fi, and you're weighing an extender or a mesh system.
- Someone called about a "discount" on your internet and it doesn't feel right.
- You're canceling and want help making sure everything goes back on time.

## Things you can handle yourself

Restarting the gateway, checking signal bars, running a speed test, changing the Wi-Fi password, and hanging up on a caller who wants gift cards. These are yours now.

SCAM ALERT

### I'll never ask for gift cards either

If someone claiming to be me, your carrier or anyone else asks for gift cards, payment apps or a texted code, it's a scam. Hang up and call the number you know is right.

FROM BILL

### How I like to help

I'm Bill, and I bring 30+ years of professional experience to helping folks feel at home with their technology, right here in Portage County, Ohio. I don't rush, I don't talk down to anyone, and there's no such thing as a silly question. $49 remote · $99 in your home. Call or text **(330) 200-8042** or book at **billshometech.com/book**. If you reach my assistant Sophie on the main line, she can answer simple questions and get you on my schedule.

Thank you for taking the time to learn this. A well-placed gateway is one of those quiet things that just works once it's set up right, and now you know how.

***— Bill***

CHAPTER 30

# Your 5G Home Internet Cheat-Sheet

Keep this handy. The everyday moves, all in one place.

## The everyday moves

| To do this | Do this |
|---|---|
| Check your address | t-mobile.com/home-internet or verizon.com/home/internet/5g; type it yourself. |
| Set up (T-Mobile) | Install **T-Life** > sign in > follow home internet setup > placement assistant. |
| Set up (Verizon) | Install **My Verizon** > **Start your 5G Home setup** > follow the signal test. |
| Find the best spot | Near a window or outside wall, high up, not in a basement or cabinet. Test each spot. |
| Restart | Unplug the gateway, wait one minute, plug it back in, wait five to ten minutes. |
| Change Wi-Fi password | T-Life, or My Verizon / Verizon Home > Wi-Fi settings. |
| Cancel | Call the carrier; return equipment (T-Mobile 45 days, Verizon 30 days). |

## The safety rules

- Set up only with the carrier's real app from the official app store.
- No real provider asks for gift cards. Hang up and call the number on your bill.
- Never read a texted code to someone who called you.
- Caller ID can be faked.
- Returning equipment doesn't cancel service, and canceling doesn't return equipment. Do both.

## Keep these handy

| My 5G home internet details | |
|---|---|
| **My carrier and plan** | _____ |
| **Date activated / trial ends** | _____ |
| **Price guarantee ends** | _____ |
| **Wi-Fi name** | _____ |
| **Wi-Fi password** | _____ |
| **Best spot for the gateway** | _____ |
| **Carrier support number (from bill)** | _____ |
| **Bill's Home Tech** | (330) 200-8042 · billshometech.com/book |

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

### Connected, and in control

You can now judge whether 5G home internet suits your house, read the fine print on a price guarantee, put the gateway where it works best, and fix the everyday hiccups yourself. That's real independence.

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