



# Getting online safely for parents & families

Knowing how to get online safely is important for all families in Australia. Read our tips to help you get started.

# Everything WiFi

WiFi is a convenient way to connect your devices to the internet without cables.

## What is WiFi?

WiFi is a type of wireless internet connection.

- WiFi works with phones, tablets, desktop and laptop computers.
- With WiFi at your home, you can connect to devices from any room, even from the couch
- WiFi lets more than one person use a single internet connection at the same time.

## WiFi devices

All kinds of devices use WiFi to connect to the internet.

- All modern computers, mobile phones and tablets can connect to WiFi.
- Smart TVs, digital radios and wireless speakers use WiFi.

## Wi-Fi at home

Your internet service provider can give you instructions to help you set up WiFi at your home. Here are some tips to help you:

- Your internet connection will be provided by an internet service provider like Telstra or Optus
- When the internet is connected, they will provide a small box called a router or modem
- The router turns the internet signal from the cable outside the house into a WiFi signal inside the house.
- When you connect devices to WiFi in your home, you're connecting them wirelessly to the router and through it to the internet.

You will need a password to access the wifi at home.

## Connecting to your home Wi-Fi

Once you have set up home WiFi, you will need to connect your devices to it to use the internet.

1. Your WiFi network has a name and a password, usually printed on the underside of the router.
2. Go to the WiFi settings on your device. A list of WiFi networks in range will be shown. Most, or all, of the available WiFi networks you can see will have a padlock icon next to them meaning they need a password.
3. The WiFi strength signal will show the strength of the signal. The more bars, the stronger the signal.
4. Select the name of your WiFi network from the list by tapping or clicking on the name.
5. You will be prompted to enter a password. Enter the password to join your WiFi network and access the internet. Be careful to enter the password exactly or you won't be able to join.
6. Your device will remember how to connect to the WiFi network automatically from now on, so you don't need to do this step again.
7. If you want to stop it from automatically connecting, return to WiFi Settings, select that network and choose Forget this Network.

You will need to follow these steps and use the password for each device you want to connect to your WiFi for the first time.

## Be safer when using home WiFi

Some tips for staying safe when using your home WiFi:

- Don't share your WiFi network password with anyone you don't want to use it in the future.
- Remember, once someone's device has connected, it will automatically connect whenever it's in range.
- If somebody is using your WiFi and you no longer want them to be able to access it, you can change your password at any time. You will then need to reconnect all of your devices with the new password.

## Home WiFi vs Public WiFi

Your home WiFi is only for use in and around your home. If you go out, you won't be able to stay connected to it.

The good news is that there is often free public WiFi in shopping centers, libraries, cafes and government buildings you can use.

Most public WiFi is not very fast, but it should be okay for viewing web pages and maps, but not ideal for watching videos. Be careful about what you do online using public WiFi - it may not be as secure as your home internet. If you do not want to connect to public WiFi, you can use mobile data on your smartphone or tablet instead.

## When is public WiFi helpful

If you use the internet on your mobile phone or tablet when you are out and about, you are using mobile data. Connecting to free public WiFi can save your mobile data allowance and save you money.

Public WiFi can also be helpful in an emergency if your mobile data connection is not available.

Look for signs when you are next out and about that say Free WiFi or Public WiFi Hotspot so you know where it is available.

## How to connect to public Wi-Fi

Connecting to a public WiFi network is similar to connecting to your home WiFi network.

1. Open up the WiFi Settings of your device.
2. Find the name of the venue's WiFi network and click or tap on it.
3. Follow the venue's instructions on how to join the network. This may include entering the WiFi password and accepting their Terms and Conditions..
4. Connect to the network.

Many locations will open up a web page giving information on the venue or rules about the use of the connection. This page only appears when you connect to that network. Check the terms and conditions. They may say that you're giving permission to receive advertisements.

## How to be safer on public Wi-Fi

It's important to be careful using public WiFi. Public WiFi networks are usually less secure than your private home WiFi network. But, some are more secure than others.

There are two main types of public WiFi networks.

1. **Open WiFi** networks don't use a password. They are commonly offered in shopping and transport centres.
2. **Semi-open WiFi** networks ask for a password when you select them the first time. They ask straight away, not later on a web page. They are commonly offered in smaller venues, such as cafes and libraries.

Semi-open Wi-Fi networks are safer than open WiFi networks. However, neither is as safe as your home WiFi network.

Semi-open and open networks are both safe for checking normal websites, listening to internet radio and reading the news. Semi-open or open WiFi are not safe to use when logging into your personal accounts – especially not your bank account.

## Keep learning

Check out our website [learning.goodthingsfoundation.org.au](https://learning.goodthingsfoundation.org.au) to learn more about what you can do online.

Parents can also contact The Smith Family for support to get online, including access to affordable computers and internet.

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