Stay connected during coronavirus

EasyRead version

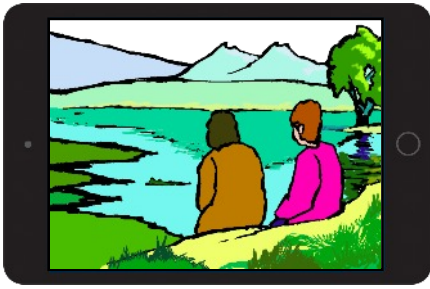# Stay connected during coronavirus

Ofcom wrote this guide.

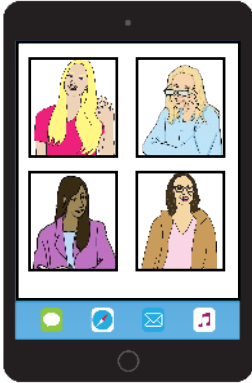Because of coronavirus or Covid-19, more people are online at home at the same time.

This can cause problems with **broadband** and mobile phone **networks** that carry information between devices like phones, tablets and computers.

This leaflet has ideas to help everyone get the **internet** speeds they need to:

- stream videos

- meet or chat online

- make voice calls
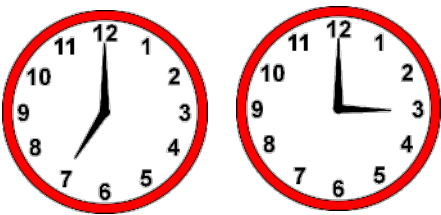
1. Test your broadband speed

Broadband allows you to connect to the **internet**.

But different things can slow it down. It is worth checking:

- our mobile and **broadband** checker to see if the speed is as fast as it should be.

- at different times of the day

- on the website of the company that provides your **broadband**

3

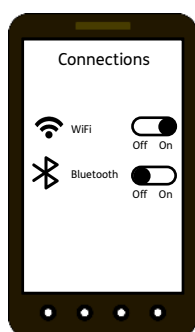## 2. Make calls using your landline or wifi if you can

Mobile phone **networks** get busy when lots of people make calls at the same time.
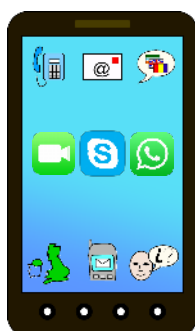
You could:

- use your home phone if you have one

- go to your mobile phone settings and turn on **wifi** calling

- use apps like Facetime, Skype or Whats App to make calls using **broadband**.

3. Move the router away from other devices

A **router** sends information from the **internet** to your computer, phone or tablet.

Keep the **router** as far away as possible from electrical and wireless equipment like:
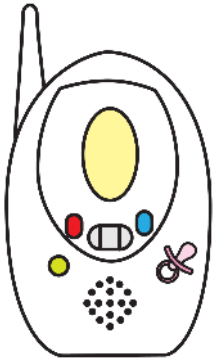
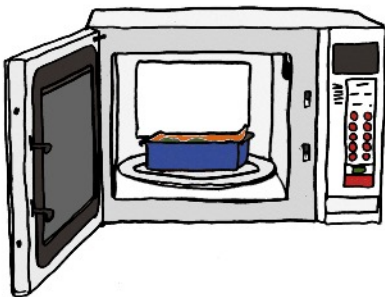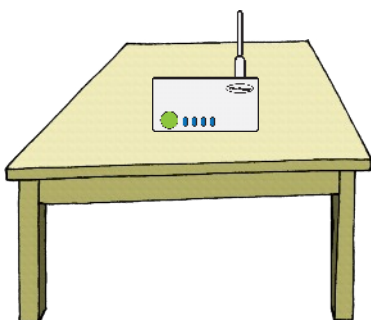- halogen lamps

- dimmer switches

- TVs

- computer monitors

- some types of baby monitors

Microwave ovens can also affect your signal.

Keep the **router** switched on and stand it on a table or shelf and not the floor.
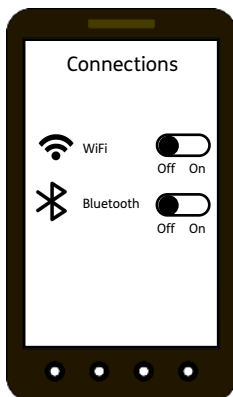
4. Cut down on the wifi you use

Devices use **wifi** if they are not connected to your **broadband** with a cable.
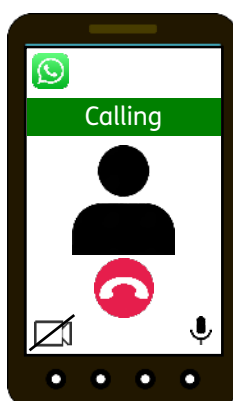
The more devices that use **wifi**, the slower it will be.

You can make it faster if:

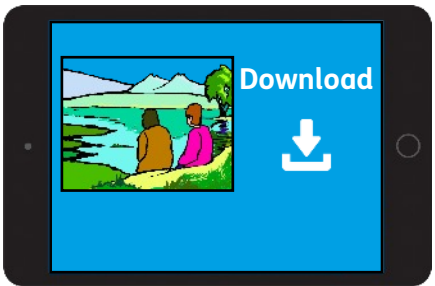- you switch off **wifi** when you are not using it on your phone or tablet

- turn off video and just use audio for Facetime, Skype or Whats App calls

- try not to start your calls on the hour or half hour when lots of other people arrange to chat to each other
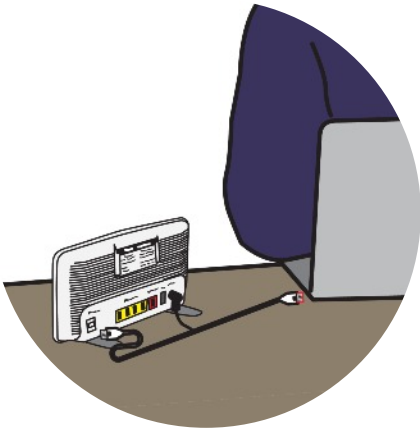
- agree with your family to do video streaming, gaming or video calls at different times

- instead of streaming, download videos at a quieter time to watch later.

5. Connect your computer to the internet with a cable

Your **internet** will be much faster if you use an **ethernet** cable to link your computer to the **router** instead of **wifi**.
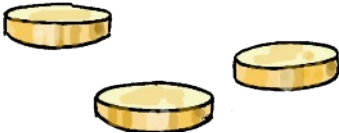
These cables cost about £3.

6. Plug your router into your main phone socket

It can slow your **internet** down if you have:

- a telephone extension lead

- tangled cables

- problems on your phone line

You could try:

- using a new, fast telephone extension cable that is as short as possible

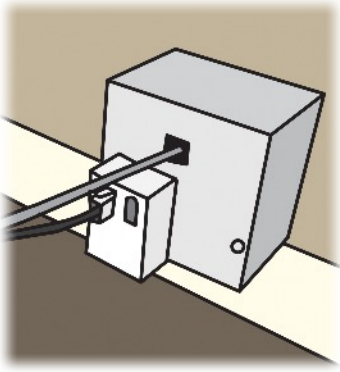- plugging **microfilters** into every phone socket in your house. These small white boxes stop the phone signal affecting your **broadband**.

Talk to the company that provides your **broadband** or check their website before you unplug any cables.

7. Talk to the company that provides your broadband

Contact the company if you try these things and your **internet** is still slow.

Because of coronavirus you might have to wait longer because:

- they do not have as many people working for them

- they first have to help customers who are at risk and services everyone needs.

What the words mean

Broadband - a fast connection to the internet.

Ethernet cable – a cable that links your computer to the router instead of using wifi.

Internet - a worldwide system of computer networks that allows anyone using a computer to connect with any other computer.

Microfilters - small boxes that you plug into the phone sockets in your house to stop the phone signal affecting your broadband.

Network – a way of connecting people or things.

Router – a device that you plug into your phoneline that sends information from the internet to your computer, phone or tablet.

Wifi – a way for computers, smartphones, or other devices to connect to the internet or each other without using cables.

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