

ACCESS MEDIA 3 WIRELESS FAQ

I can't get a WiFi signal, but my roommate can.

Not all Wireless cards are the same. The quality of your card versus your neighbor's can be quite different.

Do all PDA's support wireless?

While not all PDA's support wireless, several manufacturers have adopted the 802.11b standard.

Will my Macintosh work with wireless in the building?

Yes, as long as it supports 802.11b or 802.11g wireless.

Do I need special software or drivers to connect?

While you won't need special software, up-to-date drivers have remedied many connection problems. The drivers included with the card may be several generations old. Updates are usually available on the vendor's website.

What is the difference between 802.11a, 802.11b, 802.11g, etc?

802.11a (aka Wi-Fi5) – Theoretical speeds up to 54 Mbps (with a fallback to 48Mbps, 36Mbps, 24Mbps 18Mbps, 12Mbps, 9Mbps, 6Mbps) in the 5 GHz band, however not compatible with 802.11b.

802.11b (aka Wi-Fi) – Theoretical speeds up to 11 Mbps (with a fallback to 5.5 Mbps, 2 Mbps and 1 Mbps) in the 2.4 GHz band, most popular standard with the majority of HotSpot locations and equipment utilizing this.

802.11g – Theoretical speeds up to 54 Mbps (with a fallback to 48 Mbps, 36 Mbps, 24 Mbps, 18 Mbps, 12 Mbps, 11 Mbps, 9 Mbps, 6 Mbps, 5.5 Mbps, 2 Mbps, 1 Mbps) in the 2.4 GHz band, extremely fast AND compatible with 802.11b.

What do all the acronyms mean?

AP – Access Point ISP – Internet Service Provider SSID – Service Set Identifier VPN – Virtual Private Networking WEP – Wired Equivalent Privacy WI-FI – Wireless Fidelity WISP – Wireless Internet Service Provider WLAN – Wireless Local Area Network

Does the wireless network pose a health hazard?

No, the wireless network does not pose any health risk. It uses radio signals within the spectrum of safety. While there will always be controversy over the safety of exposure to radio signals, it is something we are exposed to whether we have a wireless network or not.

What kind of wireless card do I need?

You need an 11Mbps 802.11b or 802.11g Wireless Network Card. Many new laptop computers have wireless built-in so you will want to check with your laptop manufacturer for your options.

Do I need to Update *Windows* for wireless?

You don't need to update Windows specifically for wireless but it is always a good idea to keep your software fully patched and up to date. You need to make sure that Windows remains safe when you are on the wireless network (or any internet connected networks). Microsoft recommends that you install all the "service packs" for your version of Windows. Visit www.windowsupdate.microsoft.com for more information. Make sure that you have anti-virus software and that personal firewall software is running on your machine

I can't get XP to connect with your wireless.

Two very common problems are:

On some XP laptops with both wireless and wired (Ethernet) connectivity, vendor's ship with the "Network Bridge" turned on. You may need to delete this (under Control Panel, Network Connections).

Numerous problems have been reported with Windows XP Service Pack 1 that is resolved by Service Pack 2.

I can't use your wireless with Windows 2000

A machine with an integrated wireless card and running Windows 2000 might stop to work after installing SP3. Microsoft Knowledge Base article 327947 <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=327947>, states that Windows 2000 SP3 turns off PCMCIA-to-PCI IRQ routing, which causes problems for integrated Lucent/Orinoco wireless adapters. You need to follow the instructions in the Microsoft Support document to re-enable the card.

Will Bluetooth transmissions interfere with my Wireless connection?

It is unknown whether Bluetooth transmissions will interfere with Wireless connections at this time. Bluetooth does transmit in the same frequency range as Wireless so it is possible that the transmissions may interfere with each other.

Does a wireless card reduce battery life? The wireless card does use the battery more since it is constantly radiating a signal to the access point.

I own a Cisco, D-Link, Linksys, Netgear, Nortel, or SMC a/b/g wireless card and am having throughput (slow connection) problems. Check with the manufacturers for resolution. Some cards are more problematic than others but upgrades are regularly available for the popular cards.

Can a cell phone interrupt my connection? A cell phone probably won't interrupt your connection, however there are cordless phones and microwave ovens that operate within the frequency range of the CPL Wireless (2.4 GHz and up) that can cause interference with the connection.

What else can interrupt my connection? Wireless connects using radio waves. Those things that can cause interference of radio can also interfere with your Wireless connection. The largest offenders however are those things containing water. Wood, people, fish tanks, walls all can cause the signal to be interrupted or lessened. If you experience a connection problem try moving to a different part of your apartment or closer to the windows.

Why does the wireless network data transfer rate vary? There are several possibilities including:

1. Your distance from the Access Point (AP). You can see variable rates ranging from 54Mbps to 1 Mbps depending on how close you are to the AP.
2. Since a wireless network is a shared network, its data transfer capability depends on how many users are using the same AP. If more people use the same AP then users might see slower connections.

I think I got a virus from your Hotspot. Hotspots do not produce viruses. They come from the Internet, often as attachments to e-mail. It is strongly recommend that all users have virus protection and personal firewall installed on their Laptops.