

FACT SHEET

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TIPS FROM TELECOM to IMPROVE YOUR RURAL INTERNET CONNECTION

OTHER NOISE INTERFERENCE PROBLEMS

Here are some quick checks if you have other noise interference on your phone line.

Q: Is it a hum, whine or buzz?

A main powered appliance - such as a light dimmer, florescent lamp or electric motor - may be to blame.

Q: Is it a harsh static, distorted speech or radio programme?

It may be caused by radio interference from a broadcast transmitter, amateur radio, CB radio, mobile or portable phone, unsuppressed electric motor or welding plant.

Q: Can you find the noise source?

Check it's the source by switching it off. Then have it checked to ensure it's not faulty, get it fixed or locate it further away from the telephone wiring.

TIPS AROUND THE HOME

UNPLUG OTHER EQUIPMENT

Try unplugging things from the phone line when you're on the Internet such as phones, faxes, cordless base stations, bells, answer machines, double adaptors, extension cords, Sky digital encoders, and monitored alarm systems. These can reduce connect speeds and cause disconnections.

Alarm systems are usually programmed to call into the monitoring station at regular times, so check with your supplier that it isn't programmed to call when you want to use the Internet.

AVOID USING TELEPHONE EXTENSION CORDS

Avoid using telephone extension cords if you can, especially when the cord is wound onto a drum.

CHECK THE PHONE WIRING

The new two-wire telephone system offers improved performance over the old three-wire system. Consider upgrading if you have two or more phone outlets in the house, and they are not the modern two-wire type (with a small 'two' on the face plate instead of a 'M' or 'S').

Consider installing a new outlet near your computer if you are using an extension lead.

CHECK YOUR MODEM

Some modems try to go too fast on more challenging rural lines causing problems connecting and staying connected to the Internet. These modems often perform more

reliably if you force them to connect at lower speeds with more time to negotiate a connection. Check your modem documentation to find the command to do this.

Here's an example. For a Dyalink rural modem the 'Extra Settings' field command to extend the connection time to 120 seconds is 's7=120'. The command to limit the speed to no faster than 33 kbps is '+ms=11,,300,33600,,' (in some other Dyalink modems the command is '+ms=V.34,,300,33600', and in USR/3COM modems '&U1&n16').

Therefore, in the case of a Dyalink rural modem, you would enter 's7=90+ms=11,,300,33600,,' in the 'Extra Settings' field. To do this under Windows XP:

Click on 'Start'

Then go to 'Settings', 'Control Panel' and click on it

Double click on 'Phone and Modem Options'

Click on the 'Modems' tab

Highlight the modem you are using for your Internet connection and click on it

Click the 'Properties' button

Click on the 'Advanced' tab

Insert the appropriate modem command string in the 'Extra initialisation commands' field

Click on the 'Change Default Preferences...' button

Change the 'Cancel the call if not connected within' value to 120 secs

Click 'OK' button

Click 'OK' button

Click 'Close' button

Close the 'Control Panel' window

CHECK YOUR DIGITAL MOBILE PHONE

Digital mobile phones and other radio transmitters have been known to cause disconnections when near a PC or phone line. Either switch them off while you're on the Internet or put them well away from your computer, modem and phone wiring.

CHECK THE MODEM DRIVER AND FIRMWARE

Make sure you use the most appropriate driver and firmware for your modem. Modem manufacturers release new software and firmware periodically to fix problems and improve performance. Loading the latest driver or firmware may resolve problems you are experiencing.

CHECK POWER CABLE LOCATION

Avoid running your telephone cables close to power cables and speaker wires. This can increase the noise on your line and degrade performance.

Avoid placing your external modem and/or the computer near other high power or electrically noisy appliances (heaters, microwaves, conventional ovens, vacuum cleaners, or other appliances with electric motors, florescent or neon lights, welding plant etc). Aim to keep at least 150 cm away from these if you can - the further the better.

PROTECT AGAINST POWER SURGES AND SAGS

Problems with the quality of your power supply can also cause Internet connection problems. If you have frequent power outages or your lights often go dim or flicker, consider getting a true on-line no-break Un-interruptible Power Supply (UPS) to supply both your computer and modem (if it's an external one).

If you're in an area prone to electrical storms, install either a UPS with in-built surge protection or an external surge protector to protect the UPS and computer.

CONTACT

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