

# Broadband Price Hacks

How to achieve more affordable internet on your mobile and home broadband to keep you connected.



## How to reduce bills

- Switch to a cheaper provider
- Haggle with provider for a cheaper deal
- Switch to cheaper contract such as an essential, basic or social tariff
- Avoid annual price hikes
- Check you're not paying for products and services you don't use
- Request compensation for breaks in service
- Get cashback

## Get a cheaper contract

There is a lot of competition between providers, and a wide variety of different data deals at different prices. Make sure you shop around and use these tips to get the most cost-effective deal you can.

## Switch provider

Check when your contract ends. This will be on your online account or paperwork when you took out the contract. If you don't have access to either of these, phone your provider.

- **Out of fixed-term contract.** If your contract date has expired you are free to leave without any exit fees to pay. Or negotiate a cost-saving deal for a

new fixed-term contract with your existing provider.

- **Still in fixed-term contract.** You can exit but may have cancellation fees to pay. This might work out cheaper in the long run if you are switching to a much cheaper contract with another provider. Some providers offer free broadband for the period in which you still have your old contract so you will have two contracts overlapping but only pay bills for the old contract.

- **Bundled package.** Include combination of two or more services such as home broadband, TV, and mobile internet. Can work out cheaper than having separate contracts depending on your household needs. Have in mind that having a bundled contract makes it more complicated to switch provider as you have multiple services bundled together.

- **Compare providers.** Check out the competition if you are unhappy with best price from current provider. Comparison websites are a quick way of finding best offer for your needs.

## Haggle for cheaper deal

Here are tips on how to get a discount. Customers who ring up and haggle save about seven percent of current price - the same amount as the annual increase at end of March each year. So haggling could reduce your bills back to last year's price.

- **Quote competitor's price.** Do your homework first to secure best discount. Be specific with customer service by quoting details of a cheap deal that you've found elsewhere that meets your needs. Ask them to price match.

- **Impress with loyalty.** Remind customer service if you have been a longtime customer and ask for a loyalty discount. New customers often get special cheap deals, so why shouldn't you!

- **Ask for lower price.** Sales teams often have a budget for discretionary discounts to retain existing customers or sign up new ones.

- **Pretend to leave.** If considering taking out a new contract with existing provider you can threaten to switch to competitor. You will get transferred to the customer retention team who are responsible for trying to keep customers. They will very often offer a discounted price to encourage customers to stay.

### Latest low budget plans and tariffs

Check Ofcom website for up-to-date list of social tariff and essentials plans, with links to each provider.

Visit here: [www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-and-broadband/saving-money/social-tariffs](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-and-broadband/saving-money/social-tariffs)



### Budget plans and social tariffs

Discounted deals from £7.00 per month, to help people on low income stay connected.

- **Essentials and basics plans.** Aimed at low income households, but not required to be receiving benefits.

- **Social tariffs.** Available for households with low income or receiving benefits. Proof of eligibility usually required, varies between providers depending on which benefits you receive.

### Avoid annual price hikes

Every year at the end of March, broadband prices increase. Some customers are protected from this cost inflation depending on the type of broadband plan they have and which provider it is with. Check with providers about offers and eligibility, or use comparison or advice websites.

- **Essentials and Basics plans.** Customers are protected from increase.

- **SIM-only and pay-as-you-go.** Many of these plans usually protected from increase.

- **New contract.** Some providers offer a price freeze for 12 months if you take out a new contract

with them in the weeks before 31 March. Worth asking about this if you are thinking of starting a new contract in February or March.

- **Mid-contract.** Some providers make a price promise and don't increase price mid-contract.

### How to get a free mobile SIM

Low income households who cannot afford internet access can get free mobile SIM card with six months data allowance included, based on eligibility. Ask local services you are connected to such as DWP work coach, GP social prescriber, local community hub or council support team.

### Spend less on extras

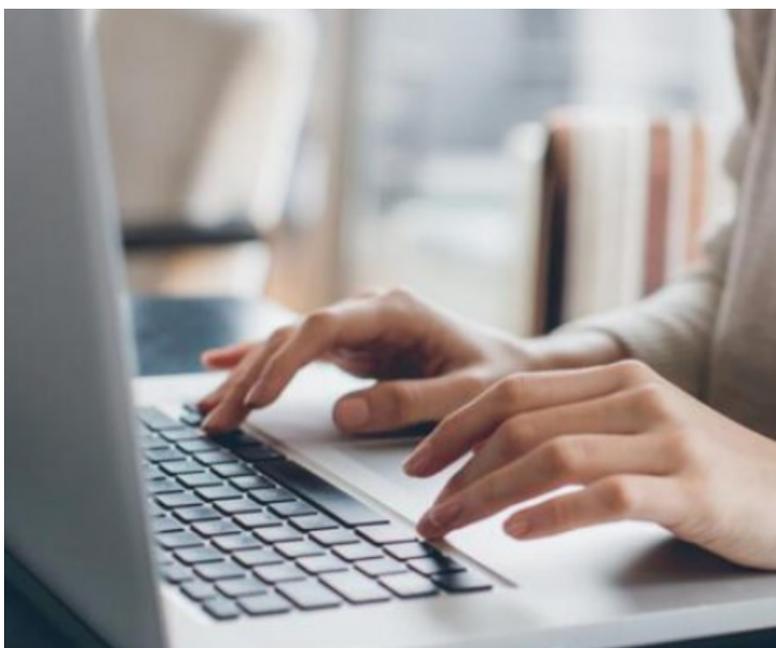
Check what services, extras, broadband speed and data allowance are included in your contract or on your bills. It's best to work out what you really need before taking out a new contract, although you have 14 days to make changes after taking out the contract. Drop non-essential extras and cancel services you can do without such as pay-to-view TV channels (eg. Disney, Sky). If you are out-of-contract you can cancel these straightaway.

### Save on home broadband speed

Faster speed costs more. Aim to avoid paying for a higher speed than your household needs.

- **Low speed.** For light usage, emails, social media, and online shopping choose 10Mb. If you have online meetings and social videos choose 30Mb.

- **High speed.** If your home broadband is used for gaming or TV streaming, or you have a large household of internet users you will need faster speed of at least 60Mb.



## Save on data allowance

Check some recent bills for your home broadband and mobile contracts, to see how much data you download each month. Make sure you are not paying for a higher amount of data download than you regularly use, and switch to a cheaper data plan if possible.



### Avoid paying more on mobile bundle

If you take out a contract for mobile handset with data plan, keep a note of your contract end date and switch to a SIM-only contract as soon as your handset with data contract ends. Otherwise you will continue to be charged handset instalments even after you have paid off the value of the mobile phone.

## Savvy shopping for mobile data

- **Buy mobile handset separately.** This allows you to shop around for a discount price for the phone, including the option of buying a refurbished phone from an approved seller such as Apple, and shop around for cheapest mobile data deal too.
- **SIM card only.** Getting a phone without data in the contract leaves you free to find a cheap data-only deal, or consider pay-as-you-go option.
- **Pay-as-you-go.** Only pay for what you use. Price per minute for calls is expensive, but if you are a low user of calls and internet it can be cheaper than a contract. Just top up as you need to.
- **Mobile data rollover.** Some providers offer mobile data rollover, so that unused data from one month rolls over to the next. Means that unused data that you have paid for isn't wasted. Could be cost-saving if your usage varies a lot from month to month.

## Cashback and discounts

If you look around online, you can sometimes find discounts and cashback offers that will help you cover the cost of your broadband bills for a while.

### Get cashback

- Some broadband providers offer cashback deals, where you get free bills for a while if you take out a contract during an offer period.

- Check out cashback websites such as Topcashback and Quidco where you can sometimes find cashback offers listed for broadband providers.

## Request compensation

You can save money off future bills by requesting compensation when there is a connectivity fault or you get poor service. Companies offer standard payments for specific failures, or may offer a goodwill payment if you are persuasive. Compensation payments are added to your broadband account as a credit and offset against future bills. Alternatively you can ask to have it paid into your bank account. Make sure you make a note of the compensation offer and track this on your bills or bank statement to ensure you get the total compensation promised.

## Comparison checklist

Consider your needs and budget when comparing home broadband and mobile contracts, to help find a deal that meets both your usage needs and your budget.

- Speed options for home broadband
- SIM only options
- Data allowance
- Bundles
- Total monthly bill
- Contract length and early exit fees
- One-off set up cost for home broadband
- Offers of cashback or period of free bills

### Trusted advice online

[www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities)

### Comparison websites

For current prices and offers, this is a popular website. There are other comparison websites.

[www.uswitch.com](http://www.uswitch.com)

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Scan QR code or go to [www.elft.nhs.uk/cost-living-tips](http://www.elft.nhs.uk/cost-living-tips)



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