

The Pro's Answer: There are many different types of Internet connections. The fastest connections are usually targeted toward large businesses and web hosting services, and can cost thousands of dollars per month. It is possible, however, to get a fast Internet connection at home, or even at the office, for a very reasonable price. Let's take a quick look at a few different home connections:

Dial-Up Connections

Dial-Up connections use a computer's modem and telephone line to connect to the Internet. Dial-Up connections were the first Internet connections available to home users. These connections usually range from \$9.95 to \$30 per month, plus the cost of the telephone line.

ISDN Connections

ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network) requires a special type of dedicated digital telephone line. ISDN is faster than Dial-Up, but not as fast as some of the other connections. ISDN prices may average anywhere from \$50 to \$100 per month. ISDN is suitable for small businesses or residential users looking for faster downloads.

Cable Modems

Cable modems are always connected to the Internet and are much faster than dial-ups and most ISDN lines. Road Runner is an example of a Cable Modem. Pricing averages around \$45 per month, though cable television subscribers may receive a discount. Cable modems are most popular with residential users, though some business options are offered.

DSL

DSL stands for Digital Subscriber Line. These connections are usually available from telephone companies. The speed of DSL is similar to the speed of a Cable Modem. DSL can be used for both Internet and telephone communications, saving on the cost of a second line. DSL prices start around \$35 per month. DSL is suitable for both residential and business needs. Find out more about high-speed access availability at <http://www.dslreports.com>. Just enter your zip code and potential local providers in your area are shown.

So, which Internet connection is the best?

As with many things in life, there is no "best type" of home connection. DSL and Cable are both very fast, and are reasonably priced. Although the cost may seem higher than that of a Dial-Up line, once the cost of a telephone line is considered, the costs are about equal. ISDN isn't practical for a home user, unless Cable and DSL connections aren't available. Dial-Up is usually best suited for home users that don't use the Internet often, and don't plan on getting a second phone line.

What would you like to ask the pro? Email your questions to askthepro@onyourmark.com!