



## Choosing an ISP

Connection to the Internet requires either a modem or an ethernetcard. Typically, modems and/or ethernet cards come pre-installed with your computer (these are labeled "Internet ready.")

### Dial Up, Cable, Satellite or DSL?

**Dial Up:** Dialup connections appropriate your phone line. With dial-up connections, you risk getting disconnected (either for idle time or no response from the server) and losing what information you have started working on, or your downloads stop, and it takes longer to get reconnected once you have been disconnected a few times. The advantage to dial-up is that it is generally cheaper than Cable or DSL connections.

**Cable:** A cable connection is quicker and makes it easier to download files, surf the net, etc. because you are constantly connected, and do not have to deal with getting disconnected in the middle of downloads, and you don't have to wait to get reconnected. One disadvantage is that the more people are on the same cable, the less power each user will get - so connections can slow down when usage is heavy. Another disadvantage can be that as long as you stay connected your IP address does not change, which makes your computer more of a target than dial up modem users.

**DSL:** DSL is much faster than Dial Up, and because it uses your phonelines (but doesn't tie up your line), it does not require you to package the deal with a specific cable television provider. It isn't available in all areas though.

**Satellite:** Satellite is not as fast (or as cheap) as Cable or DSL, but it is more widely available across the country.

### Factors to Consider

- Local access numbers (for dial up)
- Amount of expected usage
- Availability (and quality) of customer tech support
- Cost  
(don't forget to ask about overage fees)
- Number of Profiles  
(e-mail accounts, chat profiles etc)
- Bundled Services  
(spam blockers, virus check, parental controls)

### Additional Resources

CERT: [Understanding ISPs](#)

CSCIC: [Keeping Broadband Connection Secure](#)