



Consumer Guide

Open internet

What is an “open internet?”

Sometimes referred to as “net neutrality,” “Internet freedom” or the “open Internet,” these rules protect your ability to go where you want when you want online. Broadband service providers cannot block or deliberately slow speeds for internet services or apps, favor some internet traffic in exchange for consideration, or engage in other practices that harm internet openness.

How do FCC rules protect the open internet?

The FCC's open internet rules protect and maintain open, uninhibited access to lawful online content. The rules specifically prohibit:

- **Blocking:** Broadband providers may not block access to lawful content, applications, services or non-harmful devices.
- **Throttling:** Broadband providers may not deliberately target some lawful internet traffic to be delivered to users more slowly than other traffic.
- **Paid prioritization:** Broadband providers may not favor some internet traffic in exchange for consideration of any kind. ISPs are also banned from prioritizing content and services of their affiliates.

The rules also put in place standards going forward to ensure that ISPs cannot engage in new or different practices — outside those three prohibitions — that would cause similar harms to the open internet.

The new rules apply to both fixed and mobile broadband service to protect your access to the internet.

In May 2017, the FCC initiated a new proceeding to assess whether the current rules are the best approach to Internet freedom. We are currently taking public comments on the issue, and more information can be found at www.fcc.gov/restoring-internet-freedom.

Testing your broadband speed and comparing services

FCC rules require broadband providers to be transparent about the services they offer and to provide sufficient information to empower you to make informed choices – including choices about speed, price, and network management practices. The rules also require that providers' information about their broadband service must be accurate and truthful. The FCC reports periodically on service providers' broadband service: www.fcc.gov/measuring-broadband-america. The FCC also encourages the public to test broadband speeds using publically-available, free, online tests and to test mobile broadband with our smartphone app: www.fcc.gov/measuring-broadband-america/mobile.

For more information

For more information about the open internet, see www.fcc.gov/openinternet.



FCC Ombudsperson

The Ombudsperson also is available to assist consumers, businesses, and organizations with open internet complaints and questions. The Ombudsperson can be reached at: ombudsperson@fcc.gov or 202-418-1155.

Filing a complaint

You have multiple options for filing a complaint with the FCC:

- File a complaint online at <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov>
- By phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322); TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322); ASL: 1-844-432-2275
- By mail (please include your name, address, contact information and as much detail about your complaint as possible):

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

Alternate formats

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