

## Q&A

**Modems, Routers, and Wi-Fi**  
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**Saturday Safari**  
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**Saturday Safaris**  
*Exploring Technology*  
*In-Depth*

Q. David - How can I set up a Wi-Fi SAN using a cable modem with Ethernet and phone and Wi-Fi functions that can connect to Windows desktop, iPad, iPhone, 8Tb, and smaller external drives and have external cloud storage for shared drives. I want to isolate my SAN from the cloud.

A. From Craig Wright, Columbus Computer Society - A SAN (storage area network) is a network of storage devices that can be accessed by multiple servers or computers, providing a shared pool of storage space. As long as the SAN device(s) are attached to your network behind the cable modem/router, you should be totally isolated from the cloud. I would read a few articles on setting up a SAN and follow those instructions. Then connect from your computers to the SAN via SMB. Note that the iPhone and iPad will be as easy to set up compared to the cloud.

Q. Ellen - We travel with our RV, and many campgrounds say they have Wi-Fi, but it's usually weak and slow. Will any of this technology help us get a better connection inside our RV?

A. [How to Improve Campground WiFi Parkplace \(parkplacerv.com\)](http://parkplacerv.com)

FROM Chris Guld, Geeks on Tour: There are two ways to improve your connection in an RV park:

1. Park closer to the park's access point, in a small park that is probably by the office. They may have access points on the Bathhouses or other poles around the park in a large park. Ask the staff where the best place is to park for the best Wi-Fi.

2. Get a better Wi-Fi adapter for your computer. Something like this [Wireless USB WiFi Adapter for PC: 1300Mbps WiFi USB, 802.11AC WiFi Adapter for Desktop PC, Dual Band WiFi Dongle Wireless Adapter for WIN7 8 10 XP Vista MAC Linux, USB Computer Network Adapters: Electronics \(amazon.com\)](#)

For more info on the topic, see this article by our friends at Mobile Internet Info: <https://www.rvmobileinternet.com/guides/getting-better-wifi-rv-selecting-long-range-wifi-extending-cpes-antennas-radios/>

COMMENT: Dave - You can add an external antenna for your RV that will give you a cleaner signal

COMMENT: Kevin - I think the Verizon device is called a JetPack Mi-Fi 8800L  
[Amazon.com: JetPack Mi-Fi 8800L](#) (Ellen; we have one, and it burns up data.)

Q. Roy & Dale - I fondly remember being able to make phone calls using my contact list on my computer as you discussed being Hayes compatible - Is there any way to regain this functionality?

A. [Make and receive phone calls from your PC \(microsoft.com\)](#)

Q. Barry - My ASUS router (using the WPA2 standard) is five years old, and its latest firmware update is dated March 2021. Its functionality is still excellent. Do you suggest I replace it because of security considerations?

A. [How to Tell When It's Time to Replace Your Router - Consumer Reports](#)

COMMENT: Joel – A 5-year-old router probably has some components like power supply getting weaker with age that may reduce its range and speed from when it was new. An upgrade may be a wise choice for performance reasons.

Q. Richard - Has anyone developed software to enable a laptop or phone to act as a mesh node?

A. From Greg Skalka, President, UCHUG, who has had a Mesh network for several years: I've never heard of anything like that. I don't think the Wi-Fi hardware in a phone or laptop would be sophisticated enough, and I have never heard of a laptop or phone being able to be used as a simple Wi-Fi repeater.

Q. Please clarify 802.11ac (Wi-Fi 6) and 6E. Does 6 not have 6GHz frequencies?

A. [What Is Wi-Fi 6 vs. Wi-Fi 6E? - Cisco](#)

Q. Gary - I can't call my wife when in a Giant food store. Is it my phone, or is it Giant?

A. Sorry, I don't have an answer for you.

Q. Should I change my router's password?

A. To improve the security of your Wi-Fi network, **change the administrative password on your router, preferably after installing the unit.** You'll need to log in to the router console with its current password, locate the settings to change the router password, then choose a new strong password.

[Why You Should Change Wi-Fi Network Default Passwords \(lifewire.com\)](#)

Q. David - How important is it for all Wi-Fi components\* to be from same maker?  
\*router, mesh, etc.

A. You should use components from the same manufacturer.

COMMENT: Joel - Mesh routers with multiple nodes should all be from the same manufacturer. Different proprietary techniques are used for communicating between mesh nodes.

COMMENT: Richard – WI-FI originated in Australia, a spin-off from radio astronomy research done by CSIRO!

COMMENT: Alex - If the person with the mesh network problem wants to keep it, he needs to add a router plugged into one of the modem network ports and set up an independent network on the router for the mesh.

COMMENT: Joel - Mesh routers with multiple nodes should all be from the same manufacturer. Different proprietary techniques are used for communicating between mesh nodes.

COMMENT: Gregory - I have been using Modem/router from ISP with my home network router for years. You turn off the router in the ISP provider combo, so you do not have conflicts.

COMMENT: Richard - The ONE LAPTOP PER CHILD project included mesh networking between the laptops.

COMMENT: Alex - ASUS routers offer easy VPN setup.

COMMENT: Routers with VPNs <https://www.bestbuy.com/site/shop/routers-with-vpn>

COMMENT: Carol - If changing an email address, make sure to change the email address on any accounts that the address is being used for recovery email before the ISP cancels the address.

COMMENT: Bill - Your streaming device needs anywhere from 3–25 Mbps of dedicated internet speed, depending on which video quality you want.

SD (480p): 3+ Mbps

HD (720–1080p): 5–13+ Mbps

4K (UHD, 2160p): 16–25 Mbps