



## IT basics to make it easier to work from home

- 1 SPEED MATTERS:** Identify your plan's maximum internet speeds through your internet provider, then share those speeds with your IT department. Are they fast enough to support the workflow your job demands? If not, contact your internet provider about upgrading to a faster connection.
- 2 SPEED TEST:** Internet providers don't always provide consistently high speeds so you'll want to confirm the speed to your home office – what we call Trust But Verify. There are dozens of apps you can use from your favorite app store and MERIT can help if you get stuck.
- 3 UP and DOWN:** The three main measurements for internet quality are download, upload and latency. When you run a speed test, pay attention to all three metrics because they each carry significant responsibility for the quality of your internet connection. If you work from home and connect to your work computer – that is an “upload” connection, so even though a speed test with a 200Mbps downstream reading seems terrific, if the upload speed is less than 2 Mbps, your connection may be too slow to support your workload.
- 4 CLOSER IS BEST:** Stay close to your router. The router is responsible for spreading your Wi-Fi connection around your home. If you're too far away from the device, the signal could be too weak to support the fastest and most stable connection possible.
- 5 CLEAR CONNECTIONS:** Limit the interference for your Wi-Fi. Just as staying close to the router is important here, so is making sure that the connection isn't blocked by physical and non-physical items in your home. Physical items like walls and doors, and non-physical things such as microwave interference can all block the Wi-Fi signal as it connects to your device.

### About MERIT 2.0

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- 6 WIRES WORK BEST:** If possible, go with a wired connection. Wi-Fi can be fast, but it can't beat the speed of an ethernet cable. For the fastest and most reliable connection possible on your network, you'll want to plug your device directly into the router using one of these ethernet cables. Since many modern computers don't come with an ethernet port, you might need an adapter before you can plug in.
- 7 RE-BOOT FREQUENTLY:** Don't be afraid to reset the router. How often? If you work from home a lot, you'll want to re-boot your modem at least once per month and up to once per week. If you notice your internet connection is unusually slow, or you cannot connect at all, a router reset might just be the way to go. Just like other electronic devices, a router can benefit from being shut down and powered back on. Sometimes, these devices have an On/Off switch, but other times, you simply need to unplug the router from power.
- 8 BE EXCLUSIVE:** Limit the number of people and devices on the network. Too much activity can weigh on your Wi-Fi's throughput. To maximize the connection for your work, turn off other devices or at least shutdown connections that aren't relevant to the task at hand. You don't want a Zoom call to have poor connection because your personal laptop was downloading movies. And if you have kids at home, try and limit their WiFi usage until your key work tasks are completed.
- 9 FIVES BEATS TWO:** If your router supports separate 2.4 and 5 GHz connections, try connecting to the latter. The 5 GHz connection will typically give you a faster, more reliable connection. You'll know if your router supports this split network if you see "2.4 GHz" or "5 GHz" next to the Wi-Fi names.
- 10 EXTRA CONNECTION:** Have you thought about an extra Internet connection? This is no longer a luxury in a lot of households with competing bandwidth needs. A separate internet connection reserved for your work will remove the kids and the TV from competing with your work computer.

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