

Internet Speeds: What do the numbers mean.

When internet companies are stating their speeds and features a lot of numbers get thrown around. Let's take a look at some of those and see if we can make sense of them.

The 4 main numbers when you run a speed test are:

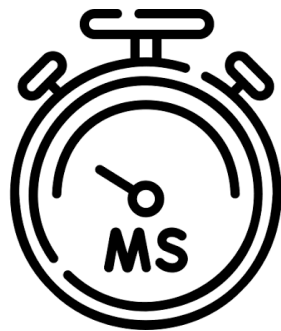
1. Download speed. Stated in Megabits per second (Mbps) or Gigabits per second (Gig). 1 Gigabit is 1000 Megabits. This is a measurement of how much data can flow down from the internet through your connection per second.



2. Upload speed is the opposite of download speed.



3. Latency or ping time stated in milliseconds. This is a measurement of the time it takes for a piece of information to flow upstream to the internet and back down again to your computer or device. The lower the better.



4. Jitter stated in milliseconds. This is a measurement of the variation of the latency or ping test. The lower the better.



One way to think of this would be carrying water from a lake (the internet) to a house fire (your computer). The download or upload speeds represent the size of the bucket. Latency is the time it takes to get from the lake to your house.



Notes:

1. When cell phone companies talk about 5G that is not a speed but a version of the equipment they are using.
2. Speed is important for streaming.
3. Speed and Latency is important for gaming.

