



# BETTER CONNECTIONS

A Practical Guide for  
Businesses & Community





# Welcome

**The Busselton Chamber of Commerce and Industry created this booklet because businesses, residents, and community groups have told us again and again that connectivity is a major challenge in our region.**

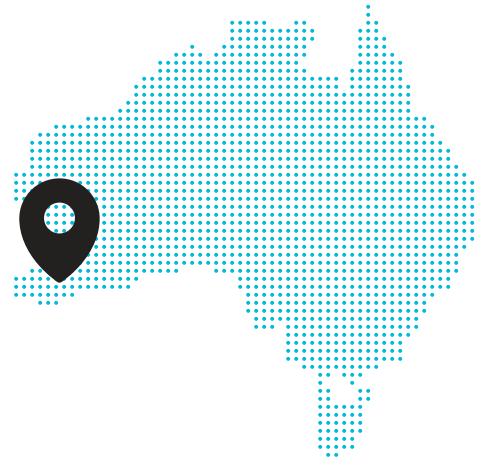
- Summer and holiday seasons bring internet slowdowns.
- Businesses rely on EFTPOS and cloud tools every day.
- Families, schools, and health services depend on stable internet.

This guide pulls together independent advice from the Regional Tech Hub with local tips for the South West. It gives you practical steps, troubleshooting help, and clear contacts so you know who to call.





# About the Regional Tech Hub



The Regional Tech Hub is funded by the Australian Government and operated by the National Farmers' Federation, providing free, independent and practical advice to help you get connected and stay connected.

They believe that every Australian, no matter where they live, should have access to affordable, reliable internet and phone services. Their regionally based team understands the unique challenges faced by people living and working in rural, regional and remote communities.

Connectivity jargon can be complex, but that's where they step in. The Regional Tech Hub offers straightforward, easy-to-understand advice that's tailored to your needs, helping you navigate your connectivity options with confidence.

They provide one-on-one support to troubleshoot issues, explore solutions, and guide you through every step - from first question to final resolution. Their free Connectivity Reports provide you with an individualised, custom report on the best connectivity options for your location to suit your needs and budget.

There are plenty of ways to reach them, and they're here to help however suits you best.

**Ph: 1300 081 029**

**[www.regionaltechhub.org.au](http://www.regionaltechhub.org.au)**



# What are your options?

In the South West, connectivity isn't one-size-fits-all. The landscape is varied, from town centres to rural properties, from busy holiday periods to quiet off-season months. This page gives you a quick guide to the **options available**, and how you can choose or combine them depending on your location and needs.

## The main connectivity types you'll come across:



### Fibre/Copper based fixed line connections

Wired solutions where they exist. Very dependable and usually your best bet in built-up areas.



### Satellite

Ideal where no wired or wireless service reaches. Note: latency, weather, and data caps can be challenges.



### Fixed Wireless

Signals sent from a local tower to a receiver on your property. Works where line of sight is clear and terrain isn't too obstructed.



### Mobile (4G / 5G as Internet / backup)

Often used as a fall-back or supplementary service. Good for remote spots, mobile work, or as emergency backup.



# Residential Options



Whether you're living full-time, part-time, or managing a holiday residence, this section helps you get the most from your internet and mobile services in our region.

## What to prioritise:

- **Reliability & consistency** — For streaming, calls, online study.
- **Peak time performance** — When many people are online (evenings, holiday seasons).
- **Backup / redundancy** — Extra options for when your main service falters.

## Recommended residents' options & tips

- Use **fixed line** through **NBN** where available — it gives the best baseline for consistent speeds.
- In fringe zones, combine with **fixed wireless** — check tower visibility and signal quality.
- Use mobile (4G/5G) as a backup or for lighter use, e.g. hotspot for phone/tablet.
- Satellite is available for remote areas where no fixed line or fixed wireless is available — just know latency and data caps may impact heavy use. There are two main types, low orbit or geostationary.

## Doing more with what you have: Practical steps

- Position your router in a central, open spot (not tucked away in a cabinet).
- Use **Wi-Fi extenders or mesh Wi-Fi systems** for larger houses or detached spaces.
- Switch between **2.4 GHz / 5 GHz bands** to avoid interference.
- Schedule downloads, updates, backups outside peak times.
- Keep a **mobile hotspot** or backup device ready for emergencies.
- Monitor your usage — if you consistently hit your data limit, it's time to upgrade.





# Business Options



For local businesses, reliable connectivity is not optional, it's integral. From EFTPOS systems to online ordering, cloud data, backups, and communications, you need resilient, capable infrastructure.

## What businesses should demand & look for:

- **Service Level Agreements (SLAs) & priority support** — faster issue resolution.
- **Stronger upload speeds** — especially for cloud backups, video calls, file transfers.
- **Redundancy & fallback** — mobile backup, dual links, alternate routes.
- **Static IPs, dedicated links & higher performance plans** — where available.

### Practical tips for businesses in Busselton & surrounds

- Keep a **mobile / 4G backup** for critical systems (EFTPOS, communications)
- Use **cloud tools smartly**: sync during peak off-hours, cache data where possible
- Ensure **data security & backups** every day and in non-peak times
- Consider **dual ISPs or failover setups** — if one fails, the other keeps you running.
- Similarly, consider adding a pre-paid e-SIM from a different provider for you mobile. For example, you may have your mobile with Telstra. You can purchase a cheap pre-paid e-SIM from Optus and install it as a redundancy so that if one network goes down, you have connectivity automatically switched over to your backup e-SIM.
- Monitor connectivity performance regularly: log downtime, speeds, anomalies



# Choosing a Plan

In the South West, not all internet plans are equal. What works for one household or business might not work for another. Seasonal congestion, distance from towers, and the type of connection (fixed line, wireless, mobile, satellite) all affect your experience.

Here are the key questions to ask before signing up:

## 1. What speed tier will I really get here?

- Advertised speeds are the maximum — not always the reality.
- Ask about average evening speeds (7–11pm) at your address.

### Guide speeds:

#### Households

- ◇ Email & browsing → 5–15 Mbps download / 1–5 Mbps upload
- ◇ Streaming HD → 25 Mbps per stream
- ◇ 4K or multi-user homes → 50–100 Mbps download

#### Businesses

- ◇ EFTPOS & cloud tools → 50 Mbps down / 20 Mbps up
- ◇ Creative or upload-heavy work → 100 Mbps down / 40 Mbps up+



### TIP:

Run your own speed tests. If you consistently get much less than promised, you may have grounds to change plans.

## 2. How does the network perform at busy times?

- In Busselton, Dunsborough and coastal towns, networks slow down in summer when visitor numbers spike.
- Ask: “What’s your average evening speed in my suburb?”
- For business, check if they offer a performance guarantee or SLA (service level agreement).

## 3. Is there a data limit or ‘fair use’ rule?

- Some mobile and satellite plans slow your service once you hit a data cap.
- Families, gamers, or households with multiple devices can use data quickly.



### TIP:

Check old bills or device reports to see how much data you actually use each month.







## 4. What happens if the service doesn't work — can I leave?

- Ask about **contract length and exit fees**.
- Some providers offer a trial period or **month-to-month plans**.
- Businesses: look for **business-grade support** with faster repair times and priority help.

## 5. What backup options are available?

- Mobile add-ons (hotspot, dongle, SIM) can keep you connected during outages. Having a backup e-SIM from another provider offers another level of redundancy
- Businesses: consider **dual connections** (e.g. NBN + mobile).
- Ask if your provider supplies or recommends a backup solution.

### Extras to Consider

#### Bundling:

Will adding mobile or home phone save money?

#### Support:

Is help local, or only via a call centre?

#### Equipment:

Is the modem/router included, and is it good quality?

#### Future-proofing:

Are upgrades (e.g. 5G, fibre) planned for your area?



# Troubleshooting Basics

## Quick Fixes Before You Call

Most internet problems can be solved with a few simple steps. Try these first:

1. **Restart** your modem/router and the device you're using.
2. **Run a speed test** (e.g. Ookla, Speedtest.net, or the Regional Tech Hub tool).
3. **Check outages** – look at your provider's website or social media for known issues.
4. **Move your router** to a central, open spot (not in cupboards or behind TVs).
5. **Switch Wi-Fi bands** – try 2.4 GHz for range, 5 GHz for speed.
6. **Plug in a cable (Ethernet)** to test if the issue is Wi-Fi or the service itself.
7. **Update firmware** on your router or modem.
8. **Disconnect unused devices** – too many can slow everything down.
9. **Log results** – note times, speeds, and error messages to help escalate.



### EXTRA TIPS:

**Businesses:** Always test EFTPOS on backup (mobile) if main internet is slow.

**Residents:** If streaming keeps buffering, lower video quality temporarily.

**Mobile users:** Step outside or closer to a window to check signal strength.

**Holiday homes:** Turn equipment off when empty – saves power and avoids issues.



**When to Escalate**  
If none of the above work:

**Contact your provider with your test results.**

**If you don't get answers, call the Regional Tech Hub (1300 081 029) for independent help.**

# Improving your setup

Small changes at home or in your business can make a big difference to internet performance.

Try these:



## Router Placement

- Put your router in a central, open location, off the floor, and away from walls, metal objects, or appliances like microwaves.
- Avoid cupboards and TV cabinets — Wi-Fi doesn't travel well through wood, glass, or concrete.



## Boosting Wi-Fi Coverage

- Use Wi-Fi extenders or mesh systems for large homes, multi-storey buildings, or offices with thick walls.
- Mesh systems are better than single extenders for businesses or busy households, as they give seamless coverage.



## Mobile Connections

- If you rely on mobile data, consider a telco-approved external antenna or signal booster to improve reception.
- Place modems/routers near a window facing the closest tower for stronger signals.



## Equipment & Cables

- Check your cables regularly — frayed or old cables can cause dropouts.
- Use shorter, good-quality Ethernet cables where possible.
- Restart your modem/router every few weeks to clear memory and keep it running smoothly.



## Managing Devices

- Turn off or disconnect unused devices (TVs, old phones, smart gadgets). Each connected device draws bandwidth.
- Prioritise key devices (computers, EFTPOS, video call machines) in your router settings if possible.



## Power Backup

- Consider a small UPS (uninterruptible power supply) for your modem/router if your area has frequent blackouts. This keeps you online during short power cuts — useful for businesses and remote workers.



### TIP:

Run your own speed tests. If you consistently get much less than promised, you may have grounds to change plans.



# Outages & Peak Loads

When systems are under stress — during busy seasons, storms, or emergencies — your normal connection might slow or fail. Here's what you can do to stay connected.

## What You Can Do

- **Keep a mobile-data backup (SIM / dongle / hotspot)**  
Use your mobile phone or a dedicated dongle as a fallback when your primary internet is down. Trial a different carrier to get on a different non-congested network
- **Schedule software updates overnight**  
Doing big downloads, updates or backups in off-peak hours reduces strain on your connection.
- **For businesses: plan for EFTPOS downtime**  
Always have a manual fallback (offline system, cash option) in case your internet drops during transactions.
- **Use Wi-Fi calling / VoIP when mobile voice is patchy**  
If your mobile network is weak, enable Wi-Fi calling or use an internet voice service (if available).
- **Back up critical files for offline access**  
If your connection fails, you can keep working with essential files stored locally until service returns.



## Holiday Peak Tips

### Staying Connected in Summer



As the South West swells with visitors, and so does internet and mobile demand. Here's how to cope when networks are busy:

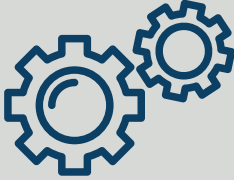
- **Plan ahead:** Download movies, podcasts, or software updates before peak holiday weeks.
- **Shift your schedule:** Run backups, big uploads, or video calls outside busy hours (before 8am or after 10pm).
- **Prioritise work:** Keep business-critical devices (EFTPOS, computers) on wired or priority connections.
- **Set expectations:** Let staff, family, or guests know service may slow, and have offline activities ready.
- **Mix connections:** Use both fixed and mobile where possible. If one slows, the other may still work.



### TIP:

Keep a cheap prepaid SIM on another network as a backup. If Telstra slows, Optus or Vodafone might still perform.

# Emergency Connectivity Checklist



If your connection drops out:

## 1. Check power first

- ◇ Is your modem/router plugged in and lights on?
- ◇ If power is out, switch to a charged mobile device or hotspot.

## 2. Look for known outages

- ◇ Check your provider's outage page or nbn® status page (if possible).
- ◇ Follow your provider's social media for real-time updates.

## 3. Switch to backup

- ◇ Use a mobile hotspot, dongle, or data SIM.
- ◇ Businesses: switch EFTPOS to mobile data or use offline/manual fallback.

## 4. Prioritise essentials

- ◇ Save bandwidth for email, EFTPOS, calls, and critical files.
- ◇ Pause large downloads, streaming, or non-essential use.

## 5. Stay safe in emergencies

- ◇ Enable Wi-Fi calling if mobile reception is weak.
- ◇ Keep phones, power banks, and laptops charged.
- ◇ Use a small UPS (uninterruptible power supply) to keep your modem/router running during short blackouts.



# Business Focus



## Connectivity is Business-Critical

Local businesses in Busselton, Vasse, Yalyalup, Dunsborough and Yallingup rely on internet and mobile services for everything from sales to staff rosters. A slow or unreliable service isn't just annoying — it directly affects revenue, productivity, and customer experience.

### Key pressures in the South West:

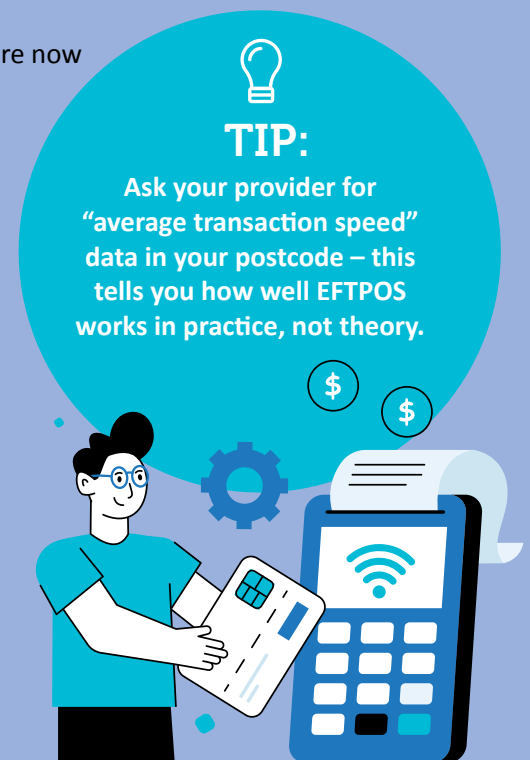
- **Tourist peaks** → networks slow during summer and holidays.
- **Cloud reliance** → POS, bookings, accounting and marketing are online.
- **Mobile coverage gaps** → patchy service in fringe suburbs and rural blocks.
- **Customer demand** → free Wi-Fi and contactless payments are now expected.

### EFTPOS & Payment Systems

- Most modern EFTPOS terminals have **multi-SIM or fallback options** – ask your provider if your machine can automatically switch to mobile if fixed internet drops.
- Talk to your bank about **offline mode** (stores transactions and processes later).
- Test your EFTPOS on a different network before peak season – don't wait until it fails in front of customers.
- Have a **backup SIM on another carrier**. In Busselton, Telstra is often strongest; in Dunsborough, Optus or Vodafone can sometimes outperform in certain spots.

### Choosing Business-Grade Plans

- Business plans may cost more, but they come with **higher upload speeds, faster fault response times, and priority restoration**.
- Ask for **Service Level Agreements (SLAs)** – what's the guaranteed response time if your service fails?
- If your work involves **large file transfers (design, photography, video)**, upload speed is as important as download. Minimum: **20 Mbps up**; ideal: **40 Mbps+**.
- Where available, ask about **enterprise grade fibre** for data intensive or medium to large business – it's more reliable but often under-promoted in regional towns.





## Backup & Redundancy

- Use **dual connections**: NBN + 4G/5G mobile. A simple modem with 4G failover can switch automatically.
- Keep a prepaid dongle/SIM from another carrier in the office drawer – it can save a day's takings.
- Consider a **UPS (uninterruptible power supply)** to keep your modem and EFTPOS alive for 1–2 hours in power cuts.
- In high-risk sectors (healthcare, food services, emergency trades), redundancy is not optional – it's risk management.

## Cybersecurity & Data Protection

- **Password hygiene**: change router defaults, update passwords every 6–12 months.
- **Separate networks**: keep staff/customer Wi-Fi separate from business systems.
- **Backups**: store critical data in two places – one cloud, one local.
- **Staff training**: most breaches happen via phishing. Teach staff what to look for.
- Regional Tech Hub resources include step-by-step guides to safe router setup and cyber basics for small business.



## BUSINESS CONNECTIVITY CHECKLIST

- ✓ EFTPOS tested on backup connection
- ✓ SLA or priority support in place
- ✓ Upload speed meets business needs (20 Mbps minimum)
- ✓ Dual connection or failover modem installed
- ✓ Data backed up (local + cloud)
- ✓ Separate customer/staff Wi-Fi
- ✓ Staff trained in cyber safety



For further Business connectivity information scan the QR code



# Community Focus



## Everyday Internet at Home

Households today often have **dozens of devices**: phones, TVs, tablets, smart speakers, gaming consoles, security cameras. All of them share your connection.

Tips to keep things running smoothly:

- **Share bandwidth wisely**, don't schedule Zoom calls at the same time as 4K streaming or big downloads.
- **Set priorities**, some routers let you give priority to certain devices (e.g. work laptop over the smart TV).
- **Use off-peak hours**, run updates, downloads or backups overnight.

## Holiday Homes & Rentals

The South West has many part-time residences and short-stay rentals. Connectivity can quickly become a headache if unmanaged — especially during peak tourist seasons.

- **Pause or adjust services when the property is empty.** Many internet providers offer seasonal or flexible plans. This helps avoid paying for unused data and prevents smart devices from running in the background.
- **Keep the network secure.** Change Wi-Fi passwords between guests, ensure locks and cameras are set to secure modes, and regularly update device software.
- **Choose fixed internet as your primary connection.** To minimise pressure on local mobile towers during busy periods, use a fixed-line internet service in the home, and reserve mobile data for when you're out and about. When households rely on mobile data as their main connection, it contributes to congestion — especially during peak holiday seasons.



### TIP:

Leave simple instructions for guests on how to reconnect Wi-Fi or use mobile data if the service slows. It reduces complaints.



## Helping Different Generations

- **Older family members** may not recognise scam calls, texts or emails. Show them how to spot red flags and where to check.
- **Children and teens** use heavy bandwidth (gaming, streaming, YouTube). Use parental controls or set usage rules to balance everyone's needs.
- **Visitors/guests** often add extra devices — consider a “guest Wi-Fi” to separate them from your main network.

## Staying Safe Online

- Use **strong, unique, easy-to-remember passwords** (e.g. a phrase, not “123456”). Use a trusted, secure vault like Lastpass to store passwords.
- Keep all devices updated – phones, TVs, tablets, even smart fridges.
- Don’t click on links in suspicious texts or emails – especially ones about deliveries, banking, or bills.
- Set up **two-factor authentication (2FA)** on important accounts.

## Improving Reception at Home

- Place routers in open, central spots – avoid cupboards.
- For mobile reception, use an external antenna (must be telco-approved).
- Mesh Wi-Fi systems are best for large houses or granny flats.



## COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY CHECKLIST

- ✓ Router in a good position
- ✓ Devices updated regularly
- ✓ Guest Wi-Fi for visitors
- ✓ Holiday home settings secured
- ✓ Family know scam red flags
- ✓ Backup mobile data option in case of outage

For further Community connectivity information scan the QR code





# Who to Call for Help

## Regional Tech Hub

Your first stop for **independent, free advice** on regional internet and phone connectivity.

**1300 081 029**

**[regionaltechhub.org.au](http://regionaltechhub.org.au)**

They can:

- Run a personalised **connectivity report** for your address (what tech is available).
- Guide you through **troubleshooting steps**.
- **Escalate issues** with telcos when problems aren't fixed.



### TIP:

Always note the time, date, and details of your calls to telcos. If you need to escalate, a clear record speeds things up.



The Busselton Chamber of Commerce and Industry created this booklet because **connectivity is one of the biggest issues raised by our members and community.**

Every year we hear the same stories:

- Businesses losing sales when EFTPOS goes down.
- Families frustrated when connections slow during tourist peaks.
- Community groups unable to access the tools they need.
- Residents struggling to get help or clear answers from providers.

We know that reliable digital access isn't a "nice to have", it's essential for business continuity, education, health, and community wellbeing.

That's why the Chamber has taken the lead in delivering the **Boosting Regional Digital Confidence** project:

- To give locals **practical tools and knowledge** they can use straight away.
- To make sure **residents and businesses feel supported** when connections fail.
- To strengthen the case for **better infrastructure and accountability** across our region.

### Looking Ahead

This booklet is your guide, but it's also part of a bigger conversation. By working together — businesses, residents, and local government — we can make the South West a region that is:

**Confident. Resilient. Better Connected.**

— Busselton Chamber of Commerce & Industry



[www.busseltonchamber.com.au](http://www.busseltonchamber.com.au)

email: [ceo@busseltonchamber.com.au](mailto:ceo@busseltonchamber.com.au)

