

PORT NETWORKS

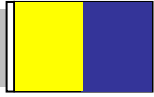
Port Networks Wi-Fi

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(ALL OPERATING SYTEMS)

PORT NETWORKS, LLC

World Trade Center of Baltimore · 401 East Pratt Street, 24th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GETTING READY

What do I need to use Port Networks Wi-Fi?

If you are near one of our public access points, or you are in a marina or multi-tenant building serviced by Port Networks, all you need is a laptop or handheld computer with Wi-Fi (802.11b) capability. Many laptop computers now being sold by Dell, Compaq, IBM, and Apple have Wi-Fi built-in, or available as a factory option. Look in your computer's specifications for 'Wireless LAN card,' 'Wireless NIC,' '802.11b,' 'Wi-Fi,' 'WaveLAN,' or 'AirPort.' If your computer doesn't already have Wi-Fi capability, you'll probably need to add a Wi-Fi PC Card to your system. These cards are available from our Online Store, and from most computer and electronics retailers.

If you are further than 300' from one of our access points, you will probably need an external antenna. We offer several, including models that mount on laptop PCs, automobiles, and building walls. For more details, visit our Online Store or call us for a solution that meets your needs.

Do I need a special kind of Wi-Fi Card?

Generally, any card that has been tested and certified as "Wi-Fi Compliant" will work with our network. For a list of manufacturers and products that have been certified, please visit the Wi-Fi Alliance web site.

What should I look for when buying a Wi-Fi card?

Most cards are very similar, in part because many different brands are manufactured by just a handful of suppliers. The key features to consider are antenna options, transmission power, and sensitivity.

Antenna Options. Most cards come with a built-in antenna that sticks out a bit from your laptop or handheld to transmit and receive signals. These antennas are fine for most purposes, but some cards also have a place to plug in a larger antenna, which will improve the range and quality of your network connections.

Transmission Power. Many cards transmit at 35mW, but some broadcast at 150mW or even 250mW – the radio equivalent of talking more loudly. Like an external antenna, more transmission power can improve the speed and quality of your communications, especially if you are in an out-of-the-way location.

Sensitivity. The ability of a Wi-Fi card to "hear" transmissions is measured in decibels, so you'll see a number like "-86dB" in the card's specifications. The lower the sensitivity, the better – and because the measurement is logarithmic, a card that has -86dB sensitivity is actually twice as sensitive as one that has -83dB, so every bit counts.

How much does Port Networks Wi-Fi cost?

Port Networks offers several different service plans, which vary in connection speed and duration. For a full description of each available plan, please visit the Services section of our web site.

Do Wi-Fi signals carry any health risks?

Wi-Fi uses the same portion of the spectrum already used by cordless phones, microwave ovens, and many medical and scientific devices. Unlike those other products, however, Wi-Fi is limited to extremely low power levels. A Wi-Fi card typically broadcasts at 0.035 watts, while many cell



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

phones are in the 3 to 6 watt range. For more information on Wi-Fi safety issues, please visit the Wi-Fi Alliance website.

CONNECTING TO OUR NETWORK

How do I connect to Port Networks Wi-Fi?

When you get within range of Port Networks Wi-Fi, just turn on your computer and launch your web browser. The Port Networks Sign-In page will appear. If you haven't already subscribed, you'll need to choose the Sign-Up button. Otherwise, just enter your email address and password.

If you aren't greeted by the Port Networks welcome page when you start your browser, you may want to try entering "Port Networks Public Wi-Fi" as the Service Set Identifier (SSID) in your Wi-Fi card's settings. An SSID is a unique code that tells your computer which wireless network to connect to. If you have someone else's SSID entered in your network settings, that may prevent you from connecting to Port Networks Wi-Fi. On your system, the SSID may also be referred to as the Network Name, or ESSID.

I forgot my password, can I still get connected?

Please contact Port Networks at 410-637-3707 between 9am and 6pm, Monday through Friday.

USING THE NETWORK

Can I send and receive e-mail from my own account?

Yes. You can use Port Networks Wi-Fi to send and receive e-mail from your own POP e-mail account using Outlook, Netscape Mail, or another e-mail program. However, before sending mail it may be necessary to change your SMTP client to "pop.portnetworks.net" (not .com). If you do make that change, set up your mail program to login with your Port Networks account ID and password. Do not check "Secure Password Authentication" or "SSL".

Can I use Port Networks Wi-Fi to access my company email and network?

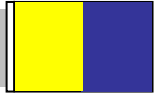
Yes. Port Networks Wi-Fi offers the same unrestricted access to online resources available through other Internet Service Providers. As long as your company's email and network are configured to allow access by remote users, you can connect through our service.

Can I log in to my company's Virtual Private Network (VPN)?

Yes. As long as your VPN software is set up to obtain an IP address from a DHCP server, you should be able to use it with Port Networks Wi-Fi. Port Networks provides fully routable IP addresses, and blocks only ports used for Microsoft services that are vulnerable to exploitation (ports 135, 137, 138, 139, and 445). If you are having difficulty logging in through a VPN, or are using a VPN router instead of software, please contact Port Networks for further assistance.

Do I need to follow any special steps when using VPN software?

No. Your VPN software should work exactly the same way it does on other broadband connections. Before you can connect, however, you will have to log in as a subscriber on the Port Networks Welcome Page.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why do I keep losing my network connection while running my VPN software?

Some VPN software hides your network traffic so well, it fools our system into thinking you've stopped sending data even though your connection is still active. You can fix this by adding a static route, so that data from IP address 10.0.0.4 is directed through the gateway IP address we provide for you via DHCP.

Does Port Networks Wi-Fi use WEP encryption?

No. Port Networks does not use WEP (Wired Equivalency Protection) on its system, because that method of encryption requires the distribution of special keys to each user, which is impractical on a large public network. In cases where privacy protection is important, we recommend using Virtual Private Network (VPN) software. We also encourage all of our subscribers to follow the standard security practices that apply to any network connection, such as not "sharing" hard drives, using firewall software, and protecting passwords.

Why does the system make me login every few minutes?

If you're repeatedly losing your connection, it's probably because you are running firewall software that is preventing our server from pinging your computer through ICMP. To fix this problem, please reconfigure your firewall software to allow ICMP in and out. If that doesn't fix the problem, please contact Port Networks technical support.

Do I need to log off when I'm done?

Our system continually monitors the connection with your computer and terminates the connection when it stops seeing activity.

Need Help? Port Networks Support (410) 637-3707