

## Budget Internet Access Using Mobile and WiFi Technology 1.5.14

Modern mobile phones now incorporate Internet access, via direct tethering to a PC or laptop, or, by acting as a hotspot, connecting to the Internet by conventional onboard or external wifi hardware. Mobile phone usage pricing has also now become more reasonable, and, data rates as well, all usually offered in 'packages' of a renewable fixed duration.

Putting these two main factors together, the aspiring light-to-medium Internet user can now avoid both needing a land phone line, and accompanying Internet access, via a Telecom provider. They can also have Internet access on demand anywhere that their SIM card is valid, usually within a national boundary. This is also good news for travellers who may plan to remain in a country for some duration which makes purchasing a local SIM card worthwhile, eg, a SIM that covers all of the UK and Northern Ireland is a good example. **Note that Smartphone SIMs are not needed just to access hotspots alone.**

Also now available for Internet access are street cafés, (in return for food and beverage \$ patronage), plus localised 'hot spots', (including sometimes local phone booths), city library access, as well as community or urban blanket access, plus transport modes such as buses and rail, and all are usually free, although some sort of access registration may be needed when using your personal laptop or smartfone. The Great Library, and on-demand universal individual access, now both beckon, especially for those with a knowledge-based motive for use, beyond just seeking the commercially-dominated areas of the Internet.

**Note that iCafes (\$)** are useful, and should be supported occasionally, they should also have secure Internet access, as well as ancillary business services, such as phone, fax, p/c, plus, hardware systems, laptops, software, OSs, parts and repairs, for sale, Your personal laptops, phones, and PCs can be used therein, of course, and you usually just pay for what Internet time you use.

**Budget measures are important in a current Market climate preferring that consumers 'think not but consume', so, to stretch your Internet access \$\$, shop around for optimal Internet and phone 'packages', especially ones with carry-over of data and \$\$, plus, here are some extra tips for Internet access using mobile and wifi technology:**

**Firstly, any mobile phone or similar device**, regardless of price or 'newness', and, having current tethering and/or hotspot facilities, will do the access job effectively, and even if there is a weak battery, just being connected to the charger and mains will enable function. Your laptop or PC can then access the Internet via USB tethering, or hotspot settings, and, more than one system can/should have access concurrently, depending mode and connection capabilities. **Otherwise, note that any external local hotspot, anywhere, can be accessed with a PC, laptop, or, SIM-less smartfone, given extant wifi capabilities.**

2) **Use a Linux O/S (f)** on your laptop or PC, either via double/multi-boot, or, a dedicated Linux O/S installation. As long as you can match any PC or laptop system to a Linux O/S, an expensive system and/or OS outlay is not necessary, eg, Pentium 4s will still be quite adequate, (as of 2013), offering both smooth function, plus, the means to just boot up, then clicking on the Internet icon. Magically, no extra drivers are needed, especially for tethering to your mobile, or, for using the wireless to connect to any available hotspot. Refer to **DistroWatch** for available Linux O/Ss and their descriptions, plus current popularity ratings.

**If you just need to browse**, and access email online, (or via a basic desktop email app), Linux is for you, plus, other apps, such as for word- and picture-processing, are also duplicated in Linux O/Ss. **Just Linus OS discs alone can be booted and used.** **Note that these Linux O/Ss, when installed, look after their own Housekeeping, and do not even require defragging, amazing to experience after the Microsoft 'Experience'....!**

**Apart from the initial installation update**, and occasional subsequent update event, there will never be the drain on data allowance of Microsoft O/Ss for updates, including for security. (Your local iCafe would be pleased to provide one-off access just for this update purpose..?)

3) **Check settings** on your mobile, PC, and/or laptop, for unnecessary or unwanted data access, so that emails are text-only, or, you have shortcuts/bookmarks direct to preferred sites, and/or that search engines are restricted as to History, Tracking, Cookies, animations, images, etc. Do not resend large emails as replies unnecessarily, plus, use Google Search and online email. More advanced users could try Opera and UC Browsers, which have data compression utilities incorporated. **Even restore smartphones, etc, to their original factory settings, after all, any ISP has a vested interest in wasted data allocation...OK!** Then reset anti-theft, GPS, etc., though only if required. **RTFM applies..OK!**

**These few steps will definitely reduce data \$\$ 'waste'.** You should periodically check your Internet use via dialling the provider to access your credit level, and, you could make a rough estimate for data use totals, eg, 1 Gb pm data allowance -:- by 30, useful whether you access daily, or just on occasion, and, such an exercise is easily habituated. These factors are also applicable to Apple/Mac product users, note. **If you are unaccustomed to online use of mobile wifi, Nofrillstech recommends trialing prepaid usage only, until you have a coherent pattern of data use, before committing to a 'package', whose terms are calculated to be so confusing that you easily lose track of where the \$\$\$ actually do go....?**

4) **So, entirely up to you** what laptop/PC system and OS you use, and if in actual conjunction with your mobile wifi, also as to age, size, portability, etc, though the preceding recommendations do work satisfactorily. Plus, it is very pleasant and relaxing to be able, at home, to sit upright in a comfortable chair, looking at a sizable screen set at your ideal sight level, typing on a conventional keyboard, with lots of room around for papers, and, coffee cup set to one side. **Viz, the ideal INDEPENDENT Home Internet access**, without the shock of the usual landline Telecom bill, including line rental, especially that now a new connection and/or

installation is never required, yet whilst still having some smartfone email and Internet access, etc, at a reasonable price..? **Oh, Happy Days...?**

5) **As to travel**, well, taking the trusty mobile, with or without needing a local SIM, plus, the smallest Internet-capable laptop/notebook you can buy, especially secondhand, with a conventional screen and keyboard that fits easily and lightly into your shoulder bag or rucksack, would surely be sensible choices for a budget traveller..? **Finally, record your webmail u/n and p/w to hard copy, and keep safe with your passport; note that current webmail security measures can be most unforgiving, if you fudge your logins....OK!!**

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