



TECH LINK

Mobile Hotspots vs. Fixed Broadband

Reliable internet access is critical in today's fast-paced, connected world. Living in rural or small-town Iowa, your internet options to this point may have been limited, prompting you to consider using a mobile hotspot. Mobile hotspots are devices that connect to a cellular network, like 4G or 5G. Other devices (such as tablets or laptops) that can't connect to a cellular network can connect to the mobile hotspot using Wi-Fi. The mobile hotspot acts as a bridge between your devices and your cellular network. In many cases, you don't even need a separate mobile hotspot device as your cell phone likely features hotspot capability. While this type of technology offers some advantages, there are limitations to consider as well.

The Pros of Mobile Hotspots

1. **Mobility** - A mobile Wi-Fi hotspot gives you internet access wherever you have a quality cellular signal. You no longer need to find a coffee shop or fast food restaurant that provides free internet. You can get online wherever - and whenever - you like.
2. **Versatility** - If you use a dedicated hotspot device like a cellular phone that broadcasts a Wi-Fi signal, you can connect to it with any non-mobile wireless capable device. Thus, you don't need to buy a 3G or LTE card for your laptop or tablet.
3. **Simultaneous Connectivity** - If you or others in your home (or small business) need mobile Internet access at the same time, you can do it (up to a point). Most hotspots typically allow at least five devices to connect simultaneously.



The Cons of Mobile Hotspots

1. **Speed** - Most mobile hotspots provide slower internet access than you would enjoy using a fixed broadband solution. If you're uploading or downloading large files, it might take considerably longer with a mobile connection - making working or streaming via a hotspot frustrating, if not impossible.
2. **Data Caps** - Although many home or office-based internet connections allow unlimited data, your mobile plan may not. It may allow only a certain amount of data usage or throttle (slow) speeds after you've reached the established limit.
3. **Cost** - It may cost you more to use mobile Wi-Fi than a home or business internet plan, especially if you require a lot of data. For instance, some providers charge extra per gigabyte of data used if you exceed your plan's limits.

A mobile hotspot may be a good choice for you if you are traveling, but when you are not on the road, a high-speed internet connection for home or business is a helpful tool. Contact MVEC for fast, reliable and affordable Internet access via our MVlink fiber internet product. Home telephone service (VoIP) is also available. Call us at 800-927-6068 for plans and pricing to meet your needs.