



BRPC
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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Computer and Internet Resource Guide

The resources on the pages that follow focus on the digital needs of Berkshire County residents of all ages. In addition to those included, all Berkshire County libraries offer free internet access -- and some lend laptops, tablets, or Wi-Fi hotspots and offer occasional computer classes -- to card holders. Senior centers may also run occasional computer classes or offer individual tech support. Check with your local library or senior center for details.

Los recursos en otros idiomas además del inglés están en rojo.

This guide was organized by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (<https://berkshireplanning.org/>).

If you have questions after reviewing this guide, please reach out to BRPC at digital@berkshireplanning.org.

Assistive Technologies

Assistive technologies include computers, equipment, products, and services that help people with mental or physical challenges more easily access and use online resources.

Resource	Description
<p>Choice Magazine Listening www.choicemagazinelisting.org/</p>	<p>A free audio magazine for adults with impaired vision or another disability. Four times a year listeners receive 12 hours of great magazine writing. A talking book player is also provided for free. Recipients enjoy the issue for several weeks, then return it in a postage-free mailer. CML is also available as a download. For more information, call toll-free 1-888-724-6423.</p>
<p>Mass. Rehabilitation Commission, Assistive Technologies www.mass.gov/info-details/massability-assistive-technology-services</p>	<p>Connects people with disabilities with the technology they need to live more independently. The regional provider can be found at https://www.easterseals.com/ma/.</p>
<p>United Cerebral Palsy of Western Mass https://ucpwma.org/</p>	<p>Offers free durable medical equipment, an assistive technology library, and a radio reading service through Berkshire Talking Chronicle over WRRS (104.3) to support children and adults with disabilities. They also offer Computer Fundamentals Webinars to teach beginning and advanced computer knowledge and skills. For more information, call 413-442-1562. Proporciona servicios en otros idiomas además del inglés.</p>

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity involves putting in place practices, software, and hardware to protect personal information from outside threats and attacks that could put identities, finances, and safety at risk and result in negative consequences.

Resource	Description
<p>Berkshire District Attorney's Office</p> <p>https://berkshiredistrictattorney.com/technology-resources/</p>	<p>Provides online safety resources including a Cyber-Tip Line and general safety information aimed at everyone from kids to older adults. For more information, email contact.BerkshireDA@mass.gov or call 413-443-5951.</p>
<p>Go Cybersafe Course for Seniors</p> <p>www.gocybersafe.org/the-course</p>	<p>Educates older adults about cybersecurity and inspires them to pursue a healthy digital lifestyle in an increasingly technology-dependent world. Curriculum was selected as one of the 25 national winners of the 2022 Prudential Emerging Visionaries Award.</p>
<p>Mass Attorney General: Computer and Online Privacy</p> <p>www.mass.gov/info-details/computer-and-online-privacy</p>	<p>Provides tips and insight into viruses, spyware, malware, and threats to computer systems, as well as phishing, hacking, and spam that can threaten personal identity and information. For more information, call 617-963-2223. Seleccione el idioma en la parte superior de la página para leer en el idioma de su elección.</p>
<p>Mass Attorney General: Cyber Crimes</p> <p>www.mass.gov/info-details/cyber-crimes</p>	<p>Offers tips to ensure people know what to look for and how to avoid cybercrimes. Seleccione el idioma en la parte superior de la página para leer en el idioma de su elección.</p>
<p>Virtual Private Network (VPN)</p>	<p>A Virtual Private Network (VPN) creates a private connection between a computer or phone and a remote server with the goal of masking a person's online activity so they cannot be monitored by others. Experts suggest using a VPN both at home and when using the internet in a public place. Below is a VPN recommended by the magazine <i>Consumer Reports</i>:</p> <p>TunnelBear has an easy-to-use free version and works on Mac, PC, and Apple and Android cellphones. The free version covers 500MB of data a month. An unlimited plan starts at \$6 a month: https://www.tunnelbear.com/</p>

Discount Internet + Cell Service

Information about how to access discounted (often slower) internet service for people enrolled in programs such as SNAP, WIC, SSI, or veteran's benefits. For questions about qualifying, email digital@berkshireplanning.org.

Resource	Description
<p>Discount Internet Service</p> <p><i>The new minimum speed for internet is 100 megabits (Mbps) upload and 20 Mbps download. The lower-cost plans to the left may offer slower service such as 50/10 or 25/3.</i></p>	<p>Find internet service providers by address: https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/home</p> <p>Spectrum Internet Assist: www.spectrum.com/internet/spectrum-internet-assist</p> <p>Verizon Forward: https://www.verizon.com/discounts/verizon-forward/</p> <p>Xfinity Essentials: www.xfinity.com/learn/internet-service/internet-essentials</p> <p>All Provider Search: www.digitalinclusion.org/low-cost-internet-plans</p>
<p>Lifeline Cellular Service</p> <p>www.lifelinesupport.org/</p>	<p>Lifeline phone service provides a small amount of data (usually 4-5 GB per month) through cellular service for free for people who are income-eligible. Cellphones can be used to connect to the internet if paired with a hotspot or if using the internet via a free, open Wi-Fi network like a café or airport. For detailed information about Lifeline, see the last pages of this guide.</p>

Digital Skills: Adults

Information about free and low-cost websites that help people build their digital skills and confidence. Some are aimed at specific audiences such as older adults.

Resource	Description
<p>Cyber-Seniors</p> <p>https://cyberseniors.org/</p>	<p>Provides free technology support and training for older adults. People can book a one-on-one tech call, watch instructional webinars, check out their cybersecurity center, visit their discovery hub, or connect with helpers in the community. For more information, call 888-217-3057. <i>Seleccione el idioma en la parte superior de la página para leer en el idioma de su elección.</i></p>
<p>Digital Skills Library Online</p> <p>https://digitalskillslibrary.org/</p>	<p>A website of free learning resources designed to help all adult learners develop the digital skills needed to achieve their personal, civic, educational, and career goals. <i>Available in multiple languages including Spanish, Arabic, Hungarian, and French. Desplázate hacia abajo hasta Explorar todos los recursos para encontrar las opciones de idioma.</i></p>
<p>Digital Learn</p> <p>https://training.digitallearn.org/</p>	<p>An online hub for digital literacy support and training from the Public Library Association using self-directed tutorials. <i>Los módulos están basados en video con narración y escritos en un lenguaje sencillo a nivel de escuela primaria a secundaria para hablantes de inglés y español.</i></p>
<p>Goodwill Foundation (GCF) Global</p> <p>https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/</p>	<p>A free program where people can learn essential skills such as Microsoft Office, email, and social media. The site offers more than 300 topics, including 6,000+ lessons, 2,000+ videos, and 50+ interactive exercises and games. <i>Seleccione el idioma en la parte superior de la página para leer el sitio web en español o</i></p>
<p>Google Applied Digital Skills</p> <p>https://applieddigitalskills.withgoogle.com/</p>	<p>Free online, self-paced digital skills classes focused on the Google Suite such as the Google workspace, gaining job-ready skills, and 100+ free digital skills classes, including computer science and coding.</p>
<p>MA Adult Literacy Hotline</p> <p>1-800-447-8844</p>	<p>Provides referrals to over 300 adult education programs including one-on-one tutoring, small-group, and classroom instruction for adult learners.</p>
<p>Mass Vets Advisor</p> <p>www.mass.gov/collections/vets-advisor</p>	<p>A website where veterans and their families can easily search for the benefits to which they are entitled. <i>Seleccione el idioma en la parte superior de la página para leer en el idioma de su elección.</i></p>

Resource	Description
<p data-bbox="277 428 506 457">Northstar via BRPC</p> <p data-bbox="123 491 662 520">https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/</p>	<p data-bbox="709 365 1516 680">A website offering free digital skills assessments and certifications. To get started, click on TRY AN ASSESSMENT. On the next screen, enter BRPC's 4-digit PIN: Z3E9. After completing your chosen assessments, email digital@berkshireplanning.org to let us know if you would like to take a proctored test to earn a certificate. Selecione el idioma en la parte inferior de la página para leer en el idioma de su elección. Northstar también está disponible en MCLA, William Stickney Adult Learning Center, 2nd Street Second Chances y Roots, Dreams y Mustard Seeds.</p>
<p data-bbox="201 758 581 821">Open Office: A Free Version of Microsoft Office</p> <p data-bbox="201 854 581 884">www.openoffice.org/download/</p>	<p data-bbox="709 758 1451 884">A free, open-source version of Microsoft Office that can be installed on computers, so people do not need to pay for a Microsoft license. Las descargas están disponibles en varios idiomas.</p>
<p data-bbox="233 989 480 1018">Senior Planet: AARP</p> <p data-bbox="220 1052 526 1081">https://seniorplanet.org/</p>	<p data-bbox="709 947 1516 1140">Free online classes for older adults through the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Older adults can also speak for free to a technology helper from 9:00 am – 8:00 pm EDT Monday to Friday by calling 888-713-3495. Haga clic en el menú principal para encontrar clases en español. 点击主菜单查找普通话课程。</p>
<p data-bbox="261 1186 511 1249">Tech Boomers/Tech Life Unity</p> <p data-bbox="245 1283 534 1312">www.techlifeunity.com/</p>	<p data-bbox="709 1220 1516 1312">Free tutorials about how to use popular and trusted websites and internet apps. The site has over 60 courses that include videos for those with little to no prior computer skills.</p>
<p data-bbox="237 1463 539 1493">Tech Foundry/Tech Hub</p> <p data-bbox="230 1526 548 1556">https://techhubmass.net/</p> <p data-bbox="172 1589 610 1619">https://techhubmass.ticketleap.com/</p>	<p data-bbox="709 1396 1516 1719">Free virtual and in-person (in Springfield, Mass.) tech classes covering a range of skills and subjects from beginning computer education to mastering advanced software. Students who complete six online or in-person classes are eligible to receive a free computer device. To learn more, call 413-340-1105 or email info@techhubmass.net. Selecione el idioma en la parte superior de la página para leer en inglés o español. Algunos materiales de capacitación han sido traducidos al español. Si al menos 5 personas están interesadas en una clase de español, es posible que puedan organizar una.</p>

Digital Skills: Youth

Information about resources teachers, parents, and youth advocates can use to help young people become safe and skilled digital citizens.

Resource	Description
<p>aiEDU www.aiedu.org/</p>	<p>A nonprofit that believes everyone—especially students likely to be disproportionately impacted by artificial intelligence (AI)—have access to knowledge and skills to thrive as workers, creators, consumers, and citizens. They offer online classes that are both self-guided and teacher-led for teachers and advocates.</p>
<p>Code.org https://code.org/</p>	<p>Expands computer science access and participation in schools focused on young women and students from underrepresented groups. <i>Seleccione el idioma en la parte inferior de la página para leer en el idioma de su elección.</i></p>
<p>DLCS Parent and Guardian Resources www.doe.mass.edu/stem/dlcs/pg-resources.html</p>	<p>Supports parents with digital literacy and computer science with access to MassCORE and school report cards. <i>Seleccione el menú desplegable en la parte superior de la página para leer en español. 也提供普通话. Anplis de sa, nan kreyòl ayisyen. Também em português. Cũng bằng tiếng Việt.</i></p>
<p>Girls Who Code https://girlswhocode.com/locations</p>	<p>Works to close the gender gap in technology and change the image of what a programmer looks like and does with a focus on programs for girls. Search for a location or start a club if none exists in your community.</p>
<p>Teens Teach Tech https://connectednation.org/programs/teens-teach-tech</p>	<p>Invites teachers, youth-focused organizations, and community nonprofits to offer workshops, mentorship, virtual sessions, and community events that cover skills from computer literacy to mobile devices and staying safe online. Part of AT&T Connected Learning.</p>

Healthcare + Social Services

Websites where people can find health, mental health, housing, and-related resources that improve the quality of their lives.

Resource	Description
<p>413 Cares www.413cares.org/</p>	<p>A searchable database of free and lower-cost services, including digital support, re-entry resources, mentoring, mental health, substance abuse treatment, housing, and food assistance.</p>
<p>DTA Connect https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/</p>	<p>A website where people who need transitional services such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC), and Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC) can log in or set-up an online account to access their benefits.</p>
<p>Mass 211 https://mass211.org/</p>	<p>A program of local United Way offices that offers links to resources such as food pantries, utility assistance, domestic survivor support, mental health treatment, runaway assistance, transportation, and youth homelessness.</p>
<p>VA Telehealth: Bridging the Digital Divide https://telehealth.va.gov/digital-divide</p>	<p>A free service of the Veteran’s Administration that helps veterans who don’t have internet service, or an internet-connected device, get the access they need for telehealth by connecting them with a social worker and lending them a tablet if they qualify.</p>

Hotspots + Large-Screen Devices

Nonprofit and for-profit companies that individuals and the organizations that serve them can use to apply for free or low-cost computers and devices.

Resource	Description
<p>Computers 4 People www.computers4people.org/</p>	<p>Provides free computers to income-qualifying adults; free refurbished laptops to college-bound students in financial need; and PC teen-building and digital skills classes for all ages. Computers come with the Google Chrome Suite. People can also download and install Apache Open Office for free at https://www.openoffice.org/download/. To request a device, email digital@berkshireplanning.org or call 413-442-1521 ext. 16. for more information. Computers4People currently has limited reach in Berkshire County.</p>
<p>PCs 4 People www.pcsforpeople.org/</p>	<p>Connects people with low-cost computers and internet services and recycles and refurbishes computers. <i>Seleccione el idioma en la parte superior de la página para leer en el idioma de su elección.</i></p>
<p>Total Access www.totalaccesscomputers.com/</p>	<p>Located in Adams, this for-profit business offers discounts on computer trade-ins and remote support for computer viruses and other software issues.</p>

Municipal Broadband

Information for town leaders interested in learning about moving their towns toward municipal broadband.

Resource	Description
<p>Connect Humanity https://connecthumanity.fund/</p>	<p>Provides tailored investments, strategic advice, and technical guidance to help under-served communities build the internet infrastructure needed to thrive.</p>
<p>Internet Society https://www.internetsociety.org/</p>	<p>Membership-based organization promoting the development of the internet as a global technical infrastructure, advancing the development of technologies, and advocating for policies that support the internet as a positive tool to benefit people.</p>
<p>Mass. Broadband Coalition https://www.ma-bc.org/</p>	<p>A membership based organization that includes towns and organizations working toward creating municipal broadband. Join their Google Group to be kept updated on monthly meetings and grant opportunities.</p>
<p>Mass Digital Service https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-digital-service</p>	<p>A statewide agency designed to help partners use the best technology, design, and data to make every interaction with the Mass. government simpler, faster, and more meaningful. Mass. Digital is part of the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security.</p>
<p>US Ignite https://www.us-ignite.org/</p>	<p>Creates next-generation internet applications to benefit the public using new technology. They work closely with HUD's ConnectHome's key ISP stakeholders.</p>
<p>Vernonberg Group https://www.vernonburggroup.com/</p>	<p>A consulting firm based in Georgia that works with businesses, organizations, and governments providing expertise on digital equity programming, large-scale broadband studies, fundraising, mapping, and policy.</p>

Resources for Organizations

Resources that can be accessed by nonprofits to help them expand the services and resources they offer clients as well as their own knowledge about digital equity activities happening in the Commonwealth.

Resource	Description
<p data-bbox="155 747 440 779">Alliance for Digital Equity</p> <p data-bbox="134 831 456 890">https://sites.google.com/view/alliancefordigitalequity/home</p>	<p data-bbox="501 583 1446 615">Offers digital equity services to nonprofit partners in Western Mass. including:</p> <ul data-bbox="501 648 1370 806" style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital skills training workshops and train-the-trainer options • Devices - laptops, Chromebooks, tablets • Hotspots - <i>coming soon</i> • Digital Navigator – Based at PCTV • Complete an online request for services for clients at the link at left. <p data-bbox="501 848 1542 907">Once-monthly digital alliance Zoom calls for digital equity champions and advocates in Western Mass. Email Diane.Fisher@baystatehealth.org to be added to the list.</p> <p data-bbox="501 945 1308 1003">There is also a Zoom for Berkshire County organizations. Email wgoodman@berkshireplanning.org to be added to the list.</p>
<p data-bbox="142 1392 451 1486">Public Health Institute of Western MA (PHIWM): Library and CoA Zooms</p> <p data-bbox="110 1522 477 1581">https://www.publichealthwm.org/</p>	<p data-bbox="509 1146 1511 1205">Provides free resources to libraries and Councils on Aging through a partnership with the Public Health Institute of Western MA (PHIWM). Get involved by:</p> <p data-bbox="509 1243 1511 1367">Attending PHIWM’s monthly digital equity Zooms. Stay up-to-date on emerging digital equity issues and resources. Librarians and CoA directors can listen in or be added to the email list. PHIWM is also happy to meet with librarians and CoA directors via Zoom or in-person to explain their work.</p> <p data-bbox="509 1409 1289 1476">Libraries Zoom: 3rd Monday of the month from 2-3 pm. Link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5234636756.</p> <p data-bbox="509 1514 1268 1581">CoA Zoom: 4th Tuesday of the month from 10-11 am. Link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5234636756.</p> <p data-bbox="509 1608 1507 1667">For more info. contact Liv Anna Homestead @ lhomstead@publichealthwm.org or by phone 413-795-0594 or Beyonca Twiggs at btwiggs@publichealthwm.org.</p>

<p>The a11y Project</p> <p>https://www.a11yproject.com/</p>	<p>A community-driven effort to improve digital accessibility. Features an extensive resource library and tools to assist communities and organizations audit their own web assets and create online content that is accessible to people of all abilities and assistive technologies.</p>
<p>Tech Soup</p> <p>https://www.techsoup.org/</p>	<p>A nonprofit working to build a dynamic bridge that enables design and implementation of technology solutions for a more equitable planet. They provide nonprofit leaders with software, hardware, and technology services as well as informative resources to help leaders gain mastery with the latest technology including artificial intelligence. TechSoup Connect mobilizes community organizers to host local tech-for-good meetups all over the world. Attend one or create your own.</p>

Workforce + Small Business

Resources that teach people advanced skills that make them more employable in a digital economy. Some resources focus on unique audiences such as women, veterans, and people of color.

Resource	Description
<p>1Berkshire: The Jobs Thing</p> <p>https://berkshires.org/living-here/the-jobs-thing/</p>	<p>A Berkshire County website overseen by 1Berkshire, the county's economic development agency, where people can find a wide range of jobs, including ones in the engineering/technology sector as well as remote work. All positions posted pay at least \$40K a year.</p>
<p>BreakThrough Tech</p> <p>www.breakthroughtech.org/</p>	<p>A program that seeks to increase women and non-binary students graduating with degrees in computer science and tech. They offer a one-year virtual and in-person AI program and a shorter internship with tech companies. Students can apply to join either program. The next registration date is in December 2024.</p>
<p>Fiber Broadband Association OptIC Path</p> <p>https://fiberbroadband.org/education-and-certification/fba-optic-path/</p>	<p>Provides future technicians with knowledge and skills needed for careers in fiber broadband such as telecom, internet service, and installation.</p>
<p>Free Online College and Advanced Study Courses</p>	<p>Coursera: www.coursera.org/collections/popular-free-courses</p> <p>EdX: https://www.edx.org/</p> <p>Khan Academy: www.khanacademy.org/</p> <p>MIT: http://ocw.mit.edu/</p> <p>Stanford: https://online.stanford.edu/free-courses</p>
<p>Mass CyberCenter Jobs Board</p> <p>https://jobs.masscybercenter.org/companies</p>	<p>Showcases jobs and internships in the Commonwealth and remote positions with Massachusetts companies focused on cybersecurity and technology.</p>

<p>MassHire</p> <p>www.masshireberkshirecc.com/jobseekers/</p> <p>https://masshirespringfield.org/computer-skills/</p>	<p>MassHire Berkshires serves adult and youth jobseekers. They can be reached by phone at 413-499-2220 or email info@MassHireBerkshireCC.com. They are located in Pittsfield at 160 North Street, 3rd Floor. They offer a computer lab and provide clients with help with resume writing. They can connect people with both entry-level and higher-level jobs that require digital skills. For those looking to develop digital skills first, online and on-demand classes are available at MassHire Springfield.</p>
<p>Opportunity: LinkedIn</p> <p>www.opportunity.linkedin.com/</p>	<p>Free learning paths mapped to in-demand jobs, discounted Microsoft certifications to validate skills, and best practices for job searching and interviewing so people can put their best foot forward.</p>
<p>Tech Foundry</p> <p>https://thetechfoundry.org/</p>	<p>An 18-week program to prepare people for IT careers. The combines technical skills, professional development, and readiness supported by experienced and committed staff through a of classes, projects, and labs. For more information, call 413-276- or visit https://thetechfoundry.org/contact-us/.</p>
<p>Telecomm. Industry Apprenticeship Program</p> <p>www.tirap.org/</p>	<p>Offers former military professionals a structured pathway to earn income while learning the skills to pursue a meaningful career in telecom. Contact them at https://www.tirap.org/contact_us/.</p>
<p>Verizon Innovative Learning</p> <p>www.verizon.com/learning/about</p>	<p>Expands digital access support to small businesses to protect the and prepare people for jobs of the future.</p>
<p>Molari Employment</p> <p>www.molariinc.com/</p>	<p>A Pittsfield-based employment agency that offers a wide range of job postings, including remote data entry positions for people with digital skills and devices.</p>

Other Resources





A range of miscellaneous resources related to phone and software how-to, tips, and more.

Resource	Links
Android	<p>Android basics from Goodwill: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/androidbasics/</p> <p>Android phones are manufactured by different companies. To identify the phone manufacturer, Google search for the name, model, and "how to" or "guide." Most phone manufacturers have device-specific guides on their websites.</p>
Google	<p>Chromebooks basics from Goodwill: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/chromebookbasics/</p> <p>Google apps from Goodwill: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/topics/googleapps/</p> <p>Google Chromebook guides: https://www.google.com/chromebook/howto/</p> <p>Google skills – multiple: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/topics/googleapps/</p> <p>Make voice calls for free with a Google phone #: https://voice.google.com/</p> <p><i>*Users may need a landline or personal mobile phone number first to use this service.</i></p>
iPhone / iPad	<p>iPhone basics from Goodwill: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/iphonebasics/</p> <p>iPhone guide: https://support.apple.com/guide/iphone/welcome/ios</p> <p>iPad basics from Goodwill: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/ipadbasics/</p> <p>iPad Guide by Apple: https://support.apple.com/guide/ipad/welcome/ipados</p> <p>Manage photo and video storage: https://support.apple.com/en-us/105061</p> <p>Optimize storage space on iPhone or iPad: https://support.apple.com/en-us/108429</p>





iPhone/iPad	<p>Reset an Apple PIN code: https://support.apple.com/en-us/119858</p> <p>YouTube guides to Apple devices and software: www.youtube.com/@applesupport</p>
Microsoft	<p>MS Office: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/training https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/subjects/office/</p> <p>MS Teams: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/microsoft-teams-video-training-4f108e54-240b-4351-8084-b1089f0d21d7</p>
Video Streaming	<p>Discount Amazon Prime (with commercials) for SNAP recipients: www.amazon.com/gp/video/splash/freevee_findus/</p> <p>www.amazon.com/58f8026f-0658-47d0-9752-f6fa2c69b2e2/qualify</p> <p>Tubi TV: https://tubitv.com/home</p> <p>Hoopla and Kanopy: Many libraries in Mass. offer free access to online video streaming with Hoopla and/or Kanopy. Check with your local library.</p> <p>Other: Many paid streaming services (e.g., Max, Netflix, Hulu) offer a free trial or have discounted sales on occasion. If users do not want to pay, they should set-up at least one cancel reminder before the first bill arrives. Some monthly or annual services let people cancel immediately while still enjoying the remainder of their subscription.</p>
Windows	<p>Windows 10 from Goodwill: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/windows10/</p> <p>Windows 11 Features & Tips: www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/tips/</p> <p>Windows 11 Microsoft guides: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/meetwindows11</p>
Zoom	<p>Zoom Learn: https://learning.zoom.us/learn</p> <p>Zoom for Chromebook: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=us.zoom.pwa.twa&hl=en_US&gl=US&pli=1</p>

Other Resources Continued

Top 4 Password Managers Recommended by *Consumer Reports*: 2023

Product	Overall Score	Usability	Data Security	Data Privacy	MAC
 1Password Families from \$60.00 Shop	69	5 /5	4 /5	3 /5	Yes
 Dashlane Premium from \$60.00 Shop	69	5 /5	3 /5	4 /5	Yes
 Keeper Unlimited from \$17.49 Shop	69	5 /5	4 /5	4 /5	Yes
 Keeper Free ---	67	5 /5	4 /5	4 /5	Yes

Top 4 Wi-Fi Routers Recommended by *Consumer Reports*: 2024

Product	Overall Score	Data Security	Data Privacy	Throughput Near	Throughput Midrange
 Netgear Orbi 750 Series AX5200 (3-pack) from \$249.99 Shop CR Smart Buy	90	4 /5	4 /5	5 /5	5 /5
 Linksys Velop Pro 6E Mesh System (3-pack) from \$299.99 Shop	90	4 /5	4 /5	5 /5	5 /5
 Linksys Velop AXE5400 Mesh System (2-pack) from \$299.05 Shop	89	4 /5	4 /5	5 /5	5 /5
 Netgear Nighthawk MK93S AXE5700 (1 router & 2 satellites) from \$357.99 Shop	88	4 /5	2 /5	5 /5	5 /5

A Guide to Lifeline Cell Service

Lifeline may be able to offer a discounted landline phone for close to \$10 a month OR provide cellular internet service that includes 1000 minutes of talk time, unlimited texting, and 4.5 gigabytes (GB) of data for free if a person is income-eligible. To learn more, visit <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>, call the Lifeline Support Center at 800-234-9473, or email LifelineSupport@usac.org.

Tips to Make the Lifeline Enrollment Process Easier:

Application: Start an application at <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>. You may need to upload a picture of your ID card or a document showing proof that you are income eligible such as SNAP, WIC, or veteran's benefits. When completing the application, use the name on your Social Security card or state ID. If you used a different name for a qualifying benefit (e.g., SNAP), update that first or call Lifeline for guidance.

How to choose a Lifeline cellular/internet service (ISP) provider: To choose a provider, go to <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/> and enter your zip code. The site will suggest ISPs that serve your area. Two of the most common ISPs are Safelink and Assurance Wireless. Once you choose a provider and your application is approved, you will be sent a SIM card (and possibly a free phone). They will arrive in the mail, often within a week.

If you don't have a phone: Lifeline phones are free but generally low-quality Android phones that can be frustrating. People have reported they stutter when scrolling, are slow to switch between apps, and freeze or crash sometimes.

If you have a phone: Call the Lifeline ISP directly if you want to use your own phone with a Lifeline plan. You may be able to use a Lifeline SIM card in your phone. Sometimes your card will work immediately, but it can stop working unexpectedly, even months later, requiring you to buy a 99-cent bring-your-own device SIM that Lifeline will need to activate. If you have a phone and want to keep it, have the Lifeline provider activate the SIM card. Most phones are compatible, but not all, and the phone first needs to be "unlocked," which may need to be done through the carrier from which you purchased the phone.

Transferring a phone number from an old cell plan to Lifeline: Call your original cell phone provider for guidance.

Lifeline renewal: You need to call Lifeline at least once a month to keep your service active and re-certify your eligibility at least once a year. You should read and respond to all emails and texts from Lifeline as soon as you receive them.

Alternatives to Lifeline

Internet-based cellphone service: You can use the internet to make phone calls and send text messages through mobile phone apps like TextNow (www.textnow.com/), NextPlus (<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/nextplus-private-phone-number/id920869470>) and others. Free apps, however, force people to see commercials first. They can be set up on Android or iOS (Apple) phones by downloading the apps and going through their setup instructions.

Low-cost cellphone plans: Many providers offer low-cost plans with limited minutes and a small amount of data -- or none. Some plans may not work everywhere. Phone company websites usually have a zip code

search that people can use to see if their area is served. Visit <https://www.tomsguide.com/us/best-cheap-cell-phone-plans,review-4504.html> to see if your cellphone service provider offers a low-cost option.

Refurbished cellphone devices: Refurbished cellphones are an option for lowering cell service but can be tricky. iPhone 8 will likely stop getting crucial security updates in 2024. Windows 10 will lose support in late 2024. For older Android phones, it's harder to find out for how long they'll be supported, so some may no longer be. The links below are websites people can visit to find refurbished, low-cost devices. People may need to document their income-eligibility:

<https://www.human-i-t.org/low-cost-devices/>

<https://www.pcsforpeople.org/get-tech/>

Devices work best when logging in with an existing account. If a person does not remember their account login, they will need to reset their password. If they don't have a device, it should be easy to set up a new one if they have internet access. It is recommended to write your password down or enter it into a password manager.

Many devices (Android & Windows in particular) come with software that is not useful or is junk. People may wish to uninstall or disable these apps. To disable an app, go to settings, all apps, open an app, and choose "Disable."

Hotspots: People can ask their local library if they offer loaner hotspots. Hotspots typically offer 25 GB a month of service for regular speed internet. After that, service gets throttled and for some people is too slow. Many people experience slow hotspot speeds unless they are near a cellphone tower. Hotspots may be slower than internet plans.

If people have unlimited internet service on their phone, it is possible that for free or for a small additional monthly cost, they can use their phone as a hotspot. This is not ideal because it will use up a phone's battery more quickly but can be better than a costly additional internet service.