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Rural businesses can struggle to get fast, stable internet. This guide explains your options and helps you find the right connection for your location.

[H1] Top Rural Business Internet Options

[subhead] Learn about available connectivity options and find the right-fit internet for your remote business

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Rural and remote businesses often struggle to find reliable business internet. While cable reaches many parts of the U.S., it still doesn't serve every area. Fiber is even more limited, and although DSL is still available in some rural locations, it's being phased out by many internet service providers (ISPs).

This is where modern satellite and wireless business internet can help bridge the gap.

Both connection types help locations without wired service get remote internet access. While performance can still be less dependable than wired connections, modern options are improving and can often support most everyday business activities.

Learn more about your rural business internet options, the pros and cons of each connection, the speeds to look for, and how to use hybrid setups for better internet coverage in this guide.

In this guide:

[Best rural internet options](#) | [Speed recommendations](#) | [Factors that affect performance](#) | [Hybrid rural internet](#) | [Costs of rural internet](#) | [Key takeaways](#)

[H2] Best internet options for rural businesses

While rural business locations are often not serviced by fiber or cable broadband connections, that doesn't mean your business is out of internet options.

Rural businesses can often choose between the following connection types:

- LTE/5G
- Fixed wireless
- Satellite
- DSL

[H3] LTE/5G

Pros	Cons
• Widely available with quick setup • Portable and secure connectivity • Reliable backup during primary internet outages • Lower cost than fixed wireless	• Performance impacted by cell signal strength • Slower speeds during peak network usage • Data caps on most standard plans • Limited capacity for multiple devices

Mobile internet, also called LTE/5G internet, uses a portable internet hotspot or SIM-enabled router to connect to a cellular network. Because it relies on a pre-existing cell network, this connection is easy to set up and widely available in rural areas.

LTE and 5G plans typically offer speeds fast enough for everyday business activities like email, web browsing, cloud tools, and occasional video calls. However, performance can vary depending on signal strength and network congestion.

For businesses considering LTE/5G, [T-Mobile](#) is the strongest option for rural coverage, with [Verizon](#) and [AT&T](#) also worth comparing.

Best for: Small teams, temporary setups, or backup internet.

[H3] Fixed wireless

Pros	Cons
• Ideal for rural areas lacking wired infrastructure • Superior in speed and latency compared to DSL or satellite • Efficient to install with plug-and-play options • Reliable performance backed by service-level agreements (SLAs)	• Requires a clear line-of-sight to local towers • Suffers from interference caused by weather or physical obstructions • Restricts usage to a single fixed location • Experiences reduced speeds during peak usage times

Fixed wireless also uses a cellular signal, but it connects through a fixed receiver or antenna instead of a portable hotspot like LTE/5G internet or mobile phones.

Because the equipment is stationary and set up for that location, fixed wireless connections can offer more consistent performance than mobile hotspots.

ISPs also tend to offer service-level agreements (SLAs) that guarantee internet performance and uptime for fixed wireless plans, which can be important for businesses that do a lot of real-time collaboration, video calls, or remote desktop work.

[Verizon](#), [AT&T](#), [EarthLink](#), and [Viasat](#) all offer fixed wireless solutions.

[T-Mobile's 5G Business Internet](#) also connects to a fixed location, but as a self-install with no-SLA on standard plans. It's a strong fit for rural businesses that want fixed wireless-style stability without professional installation or a long-term commitment.

Best for: Rural locations needing quick deployment and moderate speeds

[H3] Satellite

Pros • Widespread availability across nearly all of the U.S • Improved performance with modern, high-speed, and dependable options • Rapid deployment compared to traditional wired infrastructure • Mobile connectivity via vehicle-mounted antenna options	Cons • Higher costs compared to other rural options • Reliability challenges in severe weather • Slow speeds during network congestion • Higher latency than fixed wireless or mobile networks
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[Satellite internet](#) connects your business to the internet through satellites orbiting the Earth. A dish that's installed at your location then communicates with that satellite to send and receive data.

Because it doesn't rely on in-ground cables or any pre-built infrastructure, satellite internet can reach almost anywhere that has a clear view of the sky.

Newer satellite services offer faster speeds than older systems, but latency can still be higher than other connection types. Satellite is also typically one of the more expensive options for rural internet.

If satellite internet sounds like your best option, [Starlink](#) and [Viasat](#) are both solid providers of satellite business internet.

For rural businesses that want satellite-level reach without depending on satellite alone, consider [T-Mobile's SuperBroadband](#). This plan pairs Starlink's satellite network with T-Mobile's nationwide 5G into one [hybrid plan](#).

Best for: Remote locations with no wired or wireless alternatives

[H3] DSL (where available)

Pros	Cons
• Stable connections that use pre-existing phone lines • Affordable pricing	• Weaker speeds and performance as signal gets farther from a central hub • Reduced availability as it's phased out for newer connections

Using an existing phone line, DSL delivers slow but stable internet. Although the technology is being phased out, it's still available in some rural areas.

DSL speeds are generally slower than other connectivity options, but they can often support basic business tasks like email, browsing, and light cloud use. But because many providers are replacing DSL with more modern technology, this option has limited scalability options and shouldn't be used as a long-term solution.

[AT&T](#), [Verizon](#), [CenturyLink](#), and [Frontier](#) all offer DSL services.

Best for: Light internet use in rural areas with limited infrastructure

[zipform hide-label=true tab="business"]

Find the best rural business internet options near you.

Enter your zip code to see all providers and deals in your area.

[H2] Recommended internet speeds for rural businesses

Most small to medium businesses don't need ultra-fast internet; they just need a reliable and stable connection. That said, there are some minimum speeds to look for in a plan to support your business operations.

	Small rural office	Rural customer-facing business
Minimum download speeds	50Mbps	100Mbps

Internet activities	• Video calls • Email • Browsing • Cloud storage • Cloud applications	• 1–2 point-of-sale (POS) terminals • Security system • Guest Wi-Fi
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While 5G internet can deliver speeds up to 1,000Mbps, many ISPs only offer plans with max speeds of 300Mbps. Some fixed wireless plans go a bit higher, such as [Verizon's](#) 400Mbps business plan and [T-Mobile's](#) Business Select plan, which reaches up to 455Mbps.

Satellite internet roughly tops out at 400Mbps, which is the maximum speed [Starlink](#) advertises. However, most customers experience download speeds between 45 and 280Mbps, according to Starlink. [Viasat's](#) highest available speed is 150Mbps.

Below are some average speeds for many common business operations to help you gauge your internet needs and pick the right rural business internet plan.

General business activities

Activity	Internet speed (per user)
Internet browsing and email	1–5Mbps
Cloud tools	5–20Mbps
HD video calls	1–4Mbps
Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)	Under 1Mbps
Security system	10–50Mbps, depending on scale

Retail and hospitality

Activity	Internet speed
POS system	0.5-5Mbps per terminal
4K Ultra HD video streaming	25Mbps per 4K stream
Guest Wi-Fi	50–150Mbps shared bandwidth, but can be set to any limit

The speeds listed represent the bandwidth used by a single user or device while performing that activity. If multiple employees or systems are active at the same time, add those speeds together to estimate your total bandwidth needs.

Once you've added up the bandwidth used by each activity and multiplied it by the number of users or devices, you'll have a good idea of the [minimum speed your business needs](#) for daily operations.

[H2] Reliability challenges in rural areas

Severe weather, power outages, and physical obstructions can all cause issues with rural internet. Here are a few common rural internet challenges and the ways to handle them.

[H3] Severe weather (dense fog, heavy snow or rain)

- **How it affects rural internet:** Can interrupt connections from satellite dishes or antennas, causing signals to cut out.
- **Solution:** Use backup LTE/5G internet to cover gaps in service.

[H3] Power outages

- **How it affects rural internet:** Cuts power to equipment and antennas.
- **Solution:** Use battery-powered mobile equipment on an LTE/5G plan until power is restored.

[H3] Network congestion

- **How it affects rural internet:** Slows internet speeds on LTE/5G and satellite connections.
- **Solution:** Use fixed wireless for a more consistent connection. If budget and availability allow, consider Dedicated Internet Access (DIA) for the most predictable speeds and reliability.

[H2] Using hybrid setups to improve rural internet reliability

One of the best ways to improve overall network connectivity for a rural business location is to add a backup internet connection. Having a primary plan with backup ensures your business stays online if one service experiences issues.

Businesses can even use load-balancing routers that can automatically switch from a primary to a secondary connection once it senses a loss of signal.

[H3] Best primary rural internet

Satellite and fixed wireless are strong options for primary connections. Both can support most everyday business activities, with some plans offering speeds fast enough for video calls, cloud apps, and more complex operations.

[H3] Best backup rural internet

LTE/5G with a hotspot or router is a great backup solution, provided your location gets a sufficient cell signal. If not, satellite internet might be a better option.

[T-Mobile's SuperBroadband](#) is currently the only internet service provider that packages 5G and satellite into one solution. This plan combines 5G and Starlink satellite into a single service, giving rural businesses built-in backup internet without having to piece together two separate providers.

[H2] Cost considerations for rural business internet

Rural internet costs can be higher than those in metropolitan areas, for both equipment and monthly service fees.

Pricing varies widely depending on the connection type. Generally, DSL tends to be one of the more affordable options. Fixed wireless and 5G/LTE can range from moderate to higher monthly costs depending on speed and data allowances.

Satellite internet is typically the most expensive option, especially if you're using a large amount of data.

Upfront costs can also be higher for rural internet. Fixed wireless and satellite internet typically require an antenna and a separate router, both of which could include a monthly rental fee. Some setups also might require professional installation at an additional cost.

LTE/5G connections tend to be easier to set up than wired options, but also might require a monthly equipment fee for a hotspot or router.

[H2] Key takeaways and next steps

- Rural internet speeds top out around 400Mbps, enough for many business operations.
- Fixed wireless and satellite business internet provide stable, fast primary connections for rural businesses.
- LTE/5G internet works well as backup internet.
- Severe weather and network congestion can affect satellite connections.

- Rural internet can cost more than metropolitan plans.

Looking for even more guidance on which rural business internet connection is right for you?

HighSpeedInternet.com has partnered with [Clearlink Consulting](#) to provide personalized advice from a live internet consultant for free.

Clearlink Consulting is an independent technology consulting firm, not a service provider. Their local advisors will listen to your needs and help you find the right rural internet solution for your business.

Get free, expert advice about rural business connectivity options at +[1-833-923-6262](tel:1-833-923-6262).