

What is the difference between Mobile Data and Wi-Fi?

Mobile data is **Internet content delivered to mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets over a wireless cellular connection.** Mobile data plans offer varying amounts of inclusive data per month depending on your chosen package.

When users send emails, access webpages or use mobile apps, their devices receive and transmit data over the Internet. In the absence of a Wi-Fi connection, a mobile device may connect to the Internet using a mobile network. Consumers and business users often think of the meaning of mobile data in terms of cost and usage because mobile data is measured separately from voice calls and can potentially increase monthly bills if you exceed your inclusive data allowance.



The increase in mobile users and the number of devices they own, as well as the popularity of high-bandwidth applications such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Skype video conferencing etc, is causing the amount of mobile data consumed every year to climb exponentially.

Mobile data vs. Wi-Fi

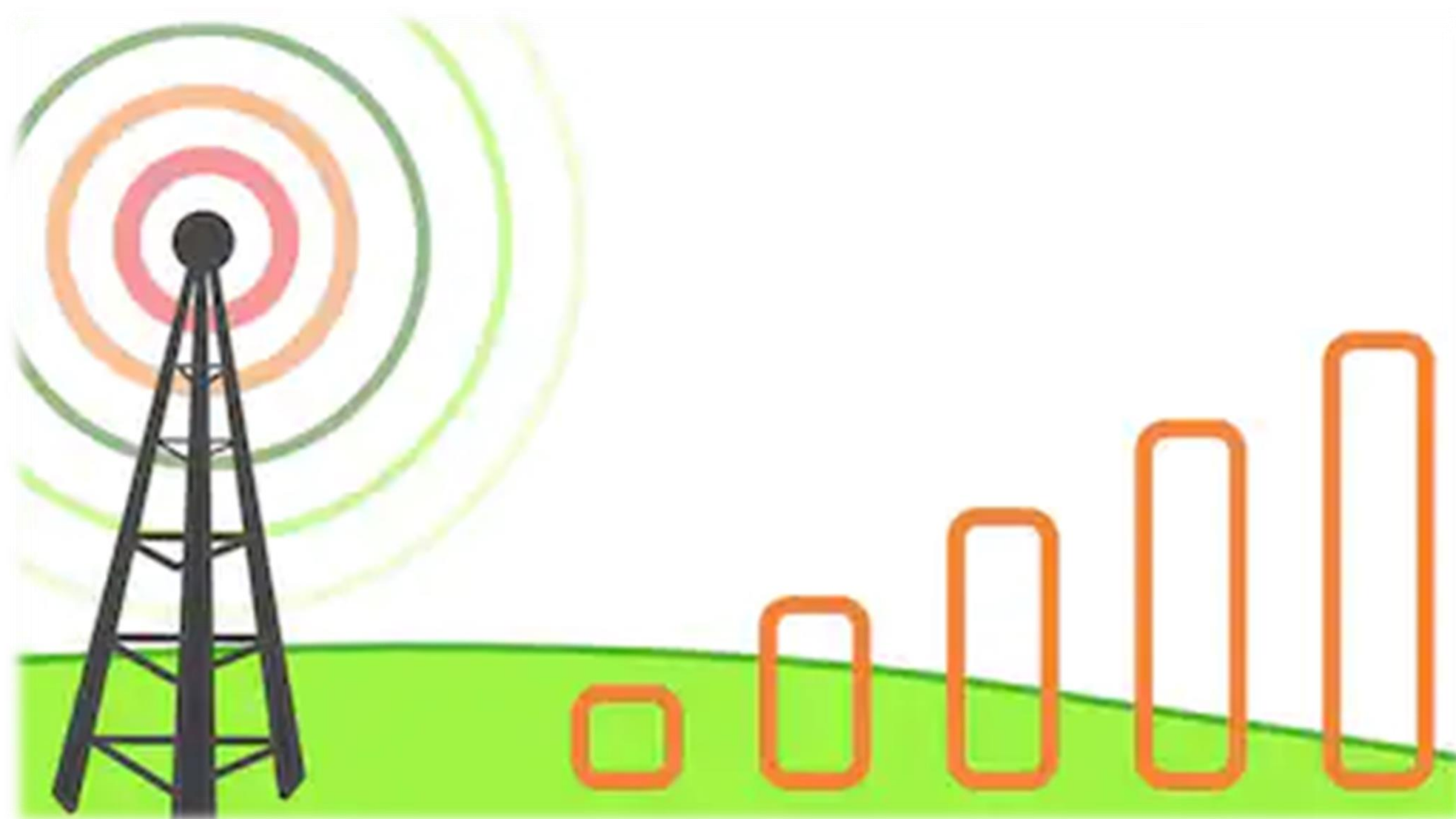
A mobile data plan and a Wi-Fi connection both enable you to access Internet resources without the use of a wired connection. Wi-Fi refers to a wireless local area network, which has limited range. When a user connects to Wi-Fi, their device accesses a wireless router or access point covering a defined short-range area within the reach of that specific router or access point. If you are connected to your home or public Wi-Fi, you wouldn't normally have to worry about your data usage as there is no limit on your residential or public Wi-Fi.

A mobile data connection on the other hand enables a user to access the same Internet resources over a mobile network. In this case, your mobile device connects to series of antennas, located across a number of sites in Gibraltar, forming a network designed to provide coverage throughout the peninsula. While this access offers convenience and flexibility, it comes with a cost per megabyte of data, as specified in your chosen plan. Remember most pre/post-paid mobile plans come with varying amounts of inclusive data and is not unlimited as is the case over Wi-Fi.



When you use your phone to access the Internet, without being connected to a Wi-Fi network, you are using up your monthly allowance of data included in your mobile plan. If you have a mobile package with a limit on monthly data, which is normally the case, you may want to minimise your use of data by connecting to Wi-Fi when you access the Internet. **Remember, many restaurants, retail shops and public areas now offer Wi-Fi for free! Most of the time, Wi-Fi is quite reliable, and generally fast enough for most of what you may need to do while out and about. That said, 4G and the newer 5G mobile technologies can offer some very high speeds for more exhaustive Internet use, just don't forget to keep an eye on your data consumption and the potential additional charges.**

The main benefit of Mobile Data is the portability for access in areas where Wi-Fi isn't available.



What is 4G and 5G?

4G is the fourth generation of mobile broadband network technology, in other words, a mobile communications standard, succeeding its predecessors and providing several advantages and improvements, most notably increased speeds, higher data-transfer rates and enhanced coverage that allow users to interact online and stream High-Definition content seamlessly.

5G is the fifth generation and latest version of wireless mobile technology. It is one of the fastest, most robust technologies the world has seen to date. That means faster connectivity speeds, when compared to 4G, ultra-low latency and greater bandwidth which will all have a significant impact on how we live, work and play.

In other areas 5G is advancing societies, transforming industries and dramatically enhancing day-to-day experiences. Services that we used to see as futuristic, such as e-health, connected vehicles and traffic systems are now on the horizon and these are collectively referred to as, the Internet of things (IoT). 5G technology, is already helping create a smarter, safer and more sustainable future.



Is using public Wi-Fi risky?

The short answer is: Yes. Using public or “open” Wi-Fi will always carry some degree of risk. If you must use public Wi-Fi (such as if your device has a limited data plan, or no data plan at all), use a Wi-Fi hotspot that requires a password. Many restaurants and retail spaces nowadays have their password visibly posted or will supply you with the password if you ask. Public Wi-Fi security depends on two factors, “who else is on it” and “who provides it”.

Difference between open Wi-Fi and public Wi-Fi?

1) Open Wi-Fi

Open Wi-Fi is any Wi-Fi network that can be accessed without a key or password. These are the least secure types of Wi-Fi hotspots to use. This type of Wi-Fi can be dangerous as it is one of the easiest ways for hackers to have access to lots of data from many different people in the shortest amount of time and hackers have the ability to see everything you do online, including the websites you visit, any data you send or links you may click on.

2) Public Wi-Fi

Public Wi-Fi refers to the hotspots at places like cafes, hotels and restaurants. Public Wi-Fi may have a password that customers need in order to sign in and use the hotspot.



A sign-in page does not necessarily mean good security!

Lots of public Wi-Fi spots will have sign-in pages. **Don't get the sign-in confused with password-level security.** The sign-in is usually the terms and conditions page, but it doesn't mean the network is secure. It's basically legal fine print to tell you how the Wi-Fi hotspot is using your data and in many cases, people may not even read this and simply click "accept".