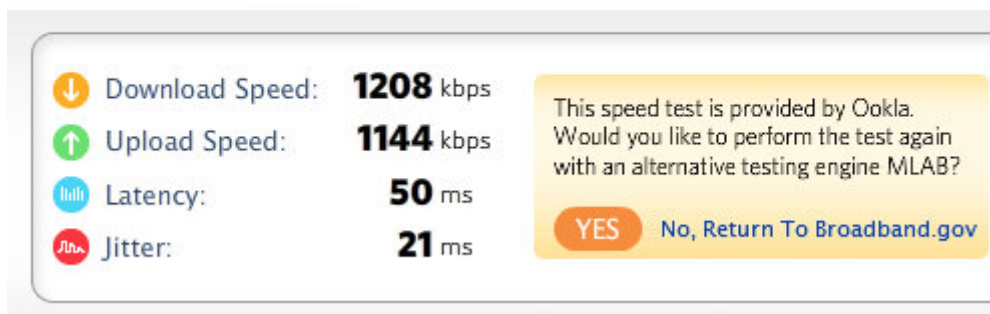


National Broadband Plan

Test Your Broadband Speed:

Consumer Broadband Test Results



Would you like to know the actual download speed you are getting from your Internet Service Provider (ISP)? The Federal Government would also like to test your residential broadband speed. They are gathering information around the country to see what our current national broadband speeds are. They have a national goal of "at least 100 million U.S. homes should have affordable access to actual download speeds of at least 100 megabits per second (12.5 megabytes) and actual upload speeds of at least 50 megabits per second (6.25 megabytes)." If you feel you are not getting the speed you are paying for testing your own broadband speed can give you the information you need to contact your ISP to complain (For example, Qwest DSL is currently advertising 7 Mbps for DSL service and Comcast is advertising 12 Mbps for cable service).

Visit www.broadband.gov and click on [Consumer Broadband Test](#) to learn more and test your own service. Once you have your actual kilobits per second (kbps) number [click here](#) to convert it into megabytes (ISP commonly refer to download speeds in megabytes per second). Type your kbps number in the left-hand "From:" box and select kilobit [kb] from the list. Then on the right-hand side click on megabytes [MB] and you will instantly see your megabytes number in the "To:" box. The difference between bits (lower case b) and bytes (upper case B) can be confusing and most of us don't need to understand the difference, but for those who are more curious [click here](#) for one explanation.

From: 1208	To: 0.147460937
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bit [b] nibble byte [B] character word MAPM-word quadruple-word block kilobit [kb] kilobyte [kB] kilobyte (10³ bytes) megabit [Mb] megabyte [MB] megabyte (10⁶ bytes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bit [b] nibble byte [B] character word MAPM-word quadruple-word block kilobit [kb] kilobyte [kB] kilobyte (10³ bytes) megabit [Mb] megabyte [MB] megabyte (10⁶ bytes)
Result: 1208 kilobit = 0.147460937 megabyte	

Convert kilobits to megabytes

[National Broadband Plan](#)

[Convert your results](#)

[PC World on National Broadband Plan: FCC Offers Free Broadband Speed Tests](#)

Updates

Java Update 20: Recently you may have see an update message from Java. Java is a programing language that is used by programs on your computer and by websites that you visit. Everyone needs to keep their Java up-to-date so these programs and websites continue to work properly. So every few months or so Java might come out with an update and you may see a message in the lower right stating that an update is available. It is safe to click on the message to start the installation. Just follow the onscreen instructions to install the update. Take all the default choices if you are not sure how to answer a question. Just agree and allow your way through the update.



To learn more about Java [click here](#).

Comcast Norton Security Suite: Starting last month Comcast customers can now download for free Norton Security Suite for Windows and Mac. (I usually say that Mac users don't need to worry about security software because most viruses only affect Windows computers, but since you don't have to pay extra for it, go ahead and get the extra protection.) This replaces McAfee Security which Comcast customers were using in the past. (Installing this version of Norton from Comcast will automatically uninstall your Comcast version of McAfee so you don't have to worry about that extra step of removing McAfee first.) Norton is generally considered the best security suite so I recommend that Comcast customers take advantage of this program, especially since it is free with your account. (If I have already switched you to [Microsoft Security](#)

[Essentials](#) and you don't want to bother with this upgrade, that is fine. Microsoft Security Essential has also received good reviews.)

If you are a Comcast customer and are still using McAfee or AVG, then simply go to <http://security.comcast.net> to download and install Norton Security Suite. You will need your comcast.net email address and password. Some of you may not be using your Comcast email address so you might not know what it is. If I have created a "user names" file for you it may be in there (look for a "user names" icon on your Desktop or in your Documents\Computer folder). If you can't find it then you will need to contact Comcast to find out what your Comcast email address and password are.



Parental Controls: If you are a parent with kids at home another advantage to installing Norton Security Suite is the option of installing Parental Controls. [Click here](#) to learn more about OnlineFamily.Norton.com. [Click here](#) to get started.

Microsoft Security Essentials: For those Windows users who are not with Comcast, Microsoft offers an excellent free security software program call [Microsoft Security Essentials](#). Windows XP, Vista and 7 users can download it for free. Make sure to remove your old security software (from Control Panel go to Add/Remove Programs or simply Programs to remove your old security program) and reboot before downloading and installing it.

And of course if you would rather not do any of this yourself put it on the list for me to do the next time I see you.

Newsletter Archives

[Click here](#) to read my past newsletters on the following subjects:

- Top Ten Things Every Computer User Should Know (February 2010)
- Vacation Message Setup and Webmail (December 2009)
- Upgrades and Updates (November 2009)
- Encyclopedia of Life (October 2009)
- Windows 7 coming soon (September 2009)
- Picasa Video Lessons (August 2009)
- YouTube, FaceBook, Twitter (May 2009)
- Disaster Protection (March 2009)
- Share Your Holiday Photos (January 2009)
- Electronic Voting Machines (November 2008)
- Why do printer cartridges cost so much? (September 2008)
- February 2009 Over-the-air TV change (July 2008)
- Wireless explained (June 2008)
- Updates Galore (March 2008)
- What is RSS all about? (January 2008)
- One Laptop Per Child (November 2007)
- Backups 2007 Style (October 2007)
- Going Green with Technology (August 2007)
- Credit Card Safety, Personalized Email (April 2007)
- Should you upgrade to Windows Vista? (January 2007)

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