

## *Recommendations for in-home networks*

If you want to connect more than one computer to the Internet in your house or apartment, you'll need a couple of things:

1. an internet connection (see DSL and Cable providers on the **Links** page)
2. a network hub. This device allows you to connect multiple computers together.

Unless all of your computers are in one room, we highly recommend you purchase a wireless access point or a wireless router/hub. These devices allow you to connect all your computers without using wires (thus wireless!). We do not recommend you run wires all over the place and punching holes in walls is likely to cause you considerable problems for your damage deposit!

That said, for a typical house with, say, 3 roommates each with a computer, you will need:

1. an internet connection
2. a cable or DSL modem (in most cases this comes with the connection order)
3. a cable or DSL router
4. a network hub (only needed if you will use cables for some computers or printers)
5. a wireless access point (if you choose to go wireless)
6. a wireless card for each computer (if you choose to go wireless)

This sounds like a lot, but in reality you can purchase one device that combines the functionality of (3),(4), and (5). These are wireless routers that include hubs. Examples include products from **Netgear**, **Linksys**, and **3Com**, among many others (link to them). You can get such devices at **Office Depot**, **Staples**, **Circuit City**, or any other electronics store and they are generally under \$100.00. Most of these also include what's called a "firewall." A firewall helps protect your network from hackers and other intrusions from the Internet.

So what you really need, unless you know you don't have need for one or more pieces, is an Internet connection (which will generally provide the modem as well), a wireless router/hub, and a wireless card for all computers.

Please note that there are several types of wireless devices and **all of the devices you purchase must support the same protocol**, basically that they all speak the same language. The key is that your router/hub support any protocols that your cards have. So if the hub supports 501a & b and a card supports only the newer g protocol, then things won't work.

You'll hook the Internet connection (a cable cable (called RG6) or a telephone cable) into your modem. The modem will have a network cord to connect to the Router. The router then connects to machines via wireless connections (thus why you need the cards) or wired connections (cat5e cables).

You'll need to follow the instructions for the devices you purchase since they all vary a bit, but in general set-up is pretty easy.

Another thing to think about is how secure you want your wireless network to be. For example, most out-of-the-box configurations have a low level of security. This means that someone in an apartment next to yours or driving by in a car could detect your network and use it for free.

We will post frequently asked questions as they arise. Elkins Apartments does not provide Internet service so any technical support questions should be directed to your providers; however, if you email a question, we'd be happy to attempt to answer it as soon as possible. Note, the office staff are not prepared to answer any technical questions but will forward them to our internal computer support person for response at his leisure.

