

So what is Fibre Optic Broadband?

Fibre broadband is one of the fastest and most reliable broadband connections available in the world today.

Ok, let's talk tech. Fibre optic uses tiny thin strands of glass (or plastic) to transmit massive amounts of information as pulses of light over long distances.

Fibre optic has a whole load of benefits over copper wire, which is what has been used in telephone lines to deliver broadband services up until now. Because fibre optic has so many advantages over copper, all future telecommunications services will be based on fibre.

Compared to copper, fibre optic is:

Faster:

With download speeds* of up to 80 Mbps (and even up to 330 Mbps in some places), fibre broadband can transform your internet experience, expand your horizons and change the way you live, work and play.

More reliable:

Unlike copper, fibre does not suffer from electro-magnetic interference and is immune to corrosion, so you can rely on clearer communications.

Safer:

It uses light, which means there is no electrical current being passed through fibre optic cabling, only light. Because of this, there is no heat and no fire hazard.

Longer lasting:

Fibre is future proof and the network that is being installed now will last for decades to come. This is a 'once in a generation' investment.

Thin and light:

So it is easier to handle and install.

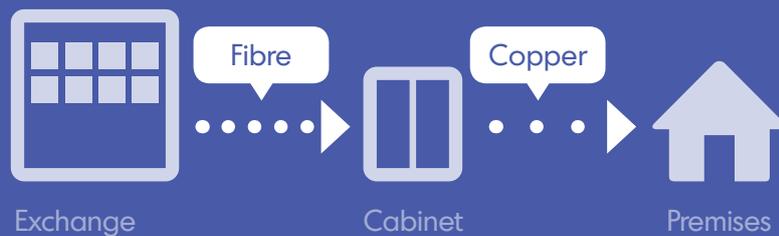


What is 'Fibre to the Cabinet' and 'Fibre to the Premises'?

There are two ways to deliver fibre optic broadband services, both of which are available in Scotland: fibre-to-the-cabinet and fibre-to-the-premises. This may sound like jargon, but actually it's very simple. These names just describe the way they deliver high speed broadband services to you. The former provides fibre to the cabinet which later finds its way to your home, whereas the latter supplies the connection directly to your doorstep.

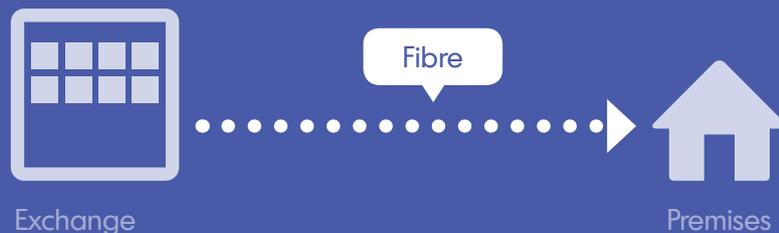
Fibre to the Cabinet

This is sometimes shortened to FTTC. The fibre optic cabling runs from the telephone exchange to a local cabinet. These are the green boxes which you may have noticed by the side of the road. Your copper telephone line is then used to deliver the last leg of the service between the cabinet and your own premises. This combination of fibre optic and copper can deliver speeds* of up to 80 Mbps for downloads. The maximum speed you will actually get depends very much on how far away from the cabinet you are.



Fibre to the Premises

This is sometimes shortened to FTTP. At the cutting edge of superfast broadband technology, this is when fibre optic cable runs directly from the exchange right into your premises. Fibre to premises can deliver download speeds of up to a blistering 330 Mbps.



The widely accepted definition of 'superfast' broadband is a service that provides download speeds of at least 24Mbps. This was the benchmark we set for the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) programme when we first launched the programme in 2014. The EU has since defined 'superfast' as download speeds of 30Mbps or above, and the technology we're using to roll out the majority of superfast connections will achieve this. It will provide download speeds of up to 80Mbps and upload speeds of up to 20Mbps – but speeds will differ according to a range of factors.

The choice of delivery method is a delicate balance between speed, cost and coverage. Our goal is to make the best use of the available funding to bring high speed fibre broadband to as many people as possible.

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