

AirPort Wireless Communications FAQ

Q. What is AirPort?

A. AirPort is a wireless local area network (LAN) technology that offers a simple, affordable way to bring the Internet to every room in your home or every desk in a classroom—without cables, additional phone lines, or complicated networking hardware. AirPort enables multiple computer users to simultaneously surf different web sites and access e-mail through a single Internet service account. Users of AirPort-enabled computers can also exchange files without needing floppy disks or other media.

Q. Is AirPort difficult to set up?

A. No. Apple has made it remarkably easy for anyone to set up AirPort. A software setup assistant walks you through the process in simple terms, and automatically configures your computer for you.

Q. Can I add wireless communications capability to iBook?

A. Yes. You can purchase an AirPort Card and install it yourself.

Q. What is the AirPort Base Station?

A. This unit is similar to the base station of a cordless telephone. It connects to the phone line in your home. The AirPort Base Station enables different family members to share a single modem connection so that they can simultaneously access different Internet sites—all without wires. The access point also has an Ethernet connection in case you have a cable modem or DSL line in your home. Whenever you open your browser, the hardware access point dials your ISP and goes to the web site you've requested. It automatically hangs up soon after you're finished.

Q. What is the AirPort Software Access Point?

A. This special software allows you to use a second iBook computer as a wireless base station to connect to the Internet instead of using an AirPort Base Station. The software works similarly to the hardware access point, except that it uses the modem of the iBook as its Internet connection.

Q. Can I transfer files between iBook computers equipped with AirPort if there is not an access point?

A. Yes. You can transfer files or play multiplayer games directly between AirPort-enabled computers. Simply use the AirPort Control Strip module on both computers to switch from using the AirPort Base Station to using direct computer-to-computer communications. Depending on their surroundings, the computers will be able to communicate within about 150 feet of each other.

Q. How far from the hardware access point does AirPort work?

A. AirPort typically has a transmission radius of about 150 feet—even through walls. So you can use AirPort-enabled iBook systems in every corner of

Q. What Apple systems are wireless capable?

A. iBook comes with an antenna already built in; all you need to add is an AirPort Card. PowerBook computers can use a PC Card to communicate with an AirPort network.

Q. How do I add an iMac or Power Macintosh G3 system to an AirPort network?

A. An iMac or Power Macintosh G3 can easily be added to the network by using a crossover Ethernet cable with the AirPort Base Station. You merely locate the hardware access point near the desktop computer, connect the Ethernet port of that computer to the Ethernet port on the access point using the crossover cable, and you're ready to share the AirPort Base Station modem. You can also share files and play multiplayer games.

Q. How do I add a PowerBook G3 computer to an AirPort network?

A. Several third-party companies offer Macintosh-compatible wireless PC Cards that can be used in an AirPort network.

Q. Can I share a printer among computers on an AirPort network?

A. Currently, Apple offers the same printer-sharing capabilities for wired and wireless connections. In the classroom, IP printers can be shared on the AirPort network just as they are on your Ethernet network. In the home, many USB printers cannot be shared among Macintosh systems. However, because AirPort allows files to be easily exchanged between computers, you can simply transfer your file to the computer that's connected to the printer.

Q. If I use iBook with AirPort at school, can I also use AirPort at home?

A. Yes. If you purchase an AirPort Base Station for your home (or you set up an AirPort Software Access Point), you can use AirPort there, too. The AirPort Control Strip module allows you to quickly change between your home and school networks.

Q. What is IEEE 802.11 and why does it matter to me?

A. IEEE 802.11 is a standard developed by the same organization that set standards for Ethernet networking, which is commonly used in offices. 802.11 is a worldwide standard, so companies that build products conforming to this standard can have their products work together. Schools often find it beneficial to use standardized equipment so that they can combine hardware from different vendors. Home users who buy a standardized product are assured that it will work with products from other companies.

Q. Will my iBook work with third-party 802.11 wireless products?

A. iBook works with third-party access point products that conform to the IEEE 802.11 standard

your house or across several classrooms.

Q. How can AirPort work through walls?

A. AirPort uses radio frequencies for communication. Unlike infrared signals, which require an unobstructed line of sight between the remote unit and the base station, radio frequencies can pass through solid objects such as walls.

and use Direct Sequence Spread Spectrum (DSSS) modulation.

Q. Can I use a PC notebook in an AirPort network?

A. Yes. Because AirPort is based on the IEEE 802.11 DSSS standard, there are a number of companies with products that allow a PC to be used in an AirPort network.

*Data speeds up to 56 Kbps. Download speeds vary with line conditions and your ISP's modem capabilities. FCC regulations limit ISP transmission speeds to 53 Kbps in the U.S.

Product specifications are subject to change without notice.

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