



...Created by Mike Bloomfield

'Wireless LAN'

December 2004

By Nic Danger

The Wireless Local Area Network...

Wireless networking is becoming more and more popular every day. Imagine sitting on your couch with your laptop and surfing the Internet with no cables! Or at your favourite café having a coffee and sending emails to your friends and family.

While laptops have been commonplace for years, wireless is only now hitting the mainstream market. This is due to the relative low cost of the hardware and the availability. There have also been a number of connectivity options launched for every PC.

Tonight we will cover some of the basics and try to make it easy to decide if wireless is for you.

A basic wireless network will consist of

- ✓ **Access Point or a Wireless Router**
- ✓ **Wireless Network card**
- ✓ **Broadband Internet Connection**

Lets look at these components in detail.



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WIRELESS ROUTER

This is a device you use to firstly share a broadband or fast Internet connection and secondly to broadcast the signal from. The protocol of transfer is called 802.11 and there are various speed options ranging from 11Mbps to 108Mbps.

The Router can perform several functions. It can provide an Internet connection to one or many computers, wired or wirelessly. It can allow many computers to operate in a network and it can offer security in the form of encryption and blocking particular websites or even particular words from being viewed.

If you have a broadband Internet connection and want to share it with other computers in your house it can be done best with a router and often without running cables all over your house or office!

WIRELESS NETWORK CARD

This is the device you connect to your computer to talk to the router and comes in the following connection options. PCI Network Cards for desktop pc's. PCMCIA for laptops, USB for any computer with USB ports, and also PDA cards are available for Personal Data Assistants.

These cards have come down dramatically in price and can be bought for \$50 to \$200 depending on the speeds needed.

Lets say you want to share your Internet connection with 3 computers and you already have broadband. Lets look at how you would go about hooking it all up.

Here follows a diagram to show a possible Local Area Network that works wirelessly!



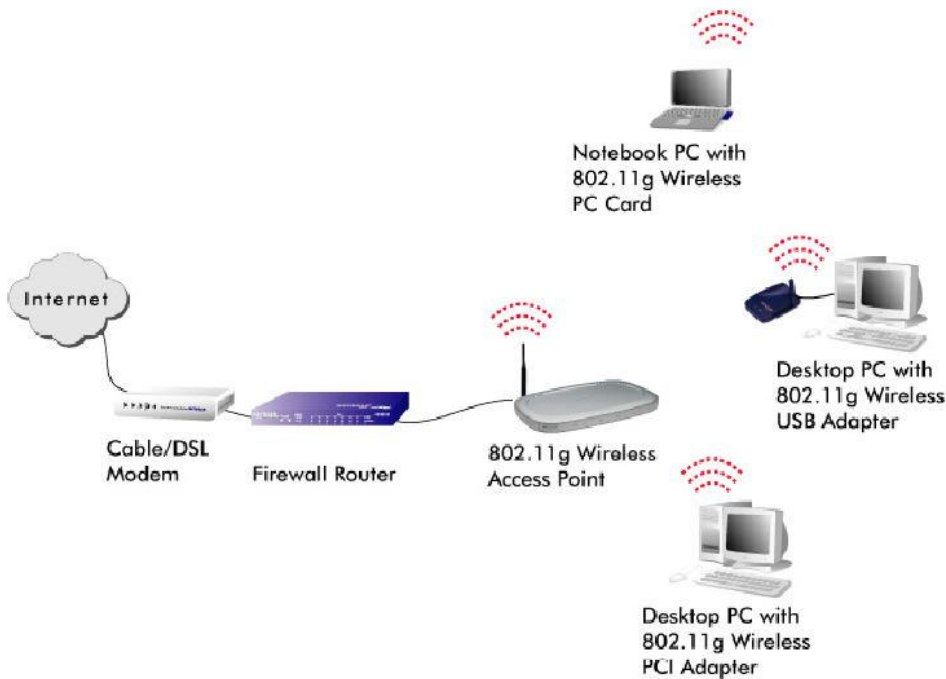
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In the above picture you can see how the network works using a laptop, 2 desktop pc's and a wireless router.

You can also see the Internet connection with an ADSL modem, although you can also use Cable and Wireless Broadband, such as Unwired or iBurst (See our separate article on these!). In this particular diagram we are using a firewall/router combination.

Please support Mike Williams and 2UE for letting us give you this advice for *free*. Every time you ask for me back, I promise I will give you a free article. The last three weeks articles will be published this week, as we have been too busy giving out prizes and answering your excellent questions.

Kind Regards,

Mike Bloomfield



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