

Computer Networking Glossary
Portions taken from a Linksys Router Installation Guide
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802.11b - An IEEE wireless networking standard that specifies a maximum data transfer rate of 11Mbps and an operating frequency of 2.4GHz.

802.11g - An IEEE wireless networking standard that specifies a maximum data transfer rate of 54Mbps, an operating frequency of 2.4GHz, and backward compatibility with 802.11b devices.

Access Point - A device that allows wireless-equipped computers and other devices to communicate with a wired network. Also used to expand the range of a wireless network.

Adapter - A device that adds network functionality to your PC.

Ad-hoc - A group of wireless devices communicating directly with each other (peer-to-peer) without the use of an access point.

Backbone - The part of a network that connects most of the systems and networks together, and handles the most data.

Bandwidth - The transmission capacity of a given device or network.

Beacon Interval - Data transmitted on your wireless network that keeps the network synchronized.

Boot - To start a device and cause it to start executing instructions.

Broadband - An always-on, fast Internet connection.

Browser - An application program that provides a way to look at and interact with all the information on the World Wide Web.

Cable Modem - A device that connects a computer to the cable television network, which in turn connects to the Internet.

CTS (Clear To Send) - A signal sent by a wireless device, signifying that it is ready to receive data.

Database - A collection of data that is organized so that its contents can easily be accessed, managed, and updated.

DDNS (Dynamic Domain Name System) - Allows the hosting of a website, FTP server, or e-mail server with a fixed domain name (e.g., www.xyz.com) and a dynamic IP address.

Default Gateway - A device that forwards Internet traffic from your local area network.

DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol) - A networking protocol that allows administrators to assign temporary IP addresses to network computers by "leasing" an IP address to a user for a limited amount of time, instead of assigning permanent IP addresses.

DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) - Removes the Router's firewall protection from one PC, allowing it to be "seen" from the Internet.

DNS (Domain Name Server) - The IP address of your ISP's server, which translates the names of websites into IP addresses.

Domain - A specific name for a network of computers.

Download - To receive a file transmitted over a network.

DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) - An always-on broadband connection over traditional phone lines.

Dynamic IP Address - A temporary IP address assigned by a DHCP server.

Encryption - Encoding data transmitted in a network.

Ethernet - IEEE standard network protocol that specifies how data is placed on and retrieved from a common transmission medium.

Firewall - A set of related programs located at a network gateway server that protects the resources of a network from users from other networks.

Firmware - The programming code that runs a networking device.

FTP (File Transfer Protocol) - A protocol used to transfer files over a TCP/IP network.

Gateway - A device that interconnects networks with different, incompatible communications protocols.

Half Duplex - Data transmission that can occur in two directions over a single line, but only one direction at a time.

Hardware - The physical aspect of computers, telecommunications, and other information technology devices.

HTTP (HyperText Transport Protocol) - The communications protocol used to connect to servers on the World Wide Web.

IEEE (The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) - An independent institute that develops networking standards.

Infrastructure - A wireless network that is bridged to a wired network via an access point.

IP (Internet Protocol) - A protocol used to send data over a network.

IP Address - The address used to identify a computer or device on a network.

IPCONFIG - A Windows 2000 and XP utility that displays the IP address for a particular networking device.

ISM band - Radio bandwidth utilized in wireless transmissions.

ISP (Internet Service Provider) - A company that provides access to the Internet.

LAN - The computers and networking products that make up your local network.

MAC (Media Access Control) Address - The unique address that a manufacturer assigns to each networking device.

Mbps (MegaBits Per Second) - One million bits per second; a unit of measurement for data transmission.

NAT (Network Address Translation) - NAT technology translates IP addresses of a local area network to a different IP address for the Internet.

Network - A series of computers or devices connected for the purpose of data sharing, storage, and/or transmission between users.

Node - A network junction or connection point, typically a computer or work station.

Packet - A unit of data sent over a network.

Passphrase - Used much like a password, a passphrase simplifies the WEP encryption process by automatically generating the WEP encryption keys for Linksys products.

Ping (Packet INternet Groper) - An Internet utility used to determine whether a particular IP address is online.

Port - The connection point on a computer or networking device used for plugging in cables or adapters.

PPPoE (Point to Point Protocol over Ethernet) - A type of broadband connection that provides authentication (username and password) in addition to data transport.

RADIUS (Remote Authentication Dial-In User Service) - A protocol that uses an authentication server to control network access.

Roaming - The ability to take a wireless device from one access point's range to another without losing the connection.

Router - A networking device that connects multiple networks together.

RTS (Request To Send) - A networking method of coordinating large packets through the RTS Threshold setting.

Server - Any computer whose function in a network is to provide user access to files, printing, communications, and other services.

SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) - The standard e-mail protocol on the Internet.

Software - Instructions for the computer. A series of instructions that performs a particular task is called a "program".

SPI (Stateful Packet Inspection) Firewall - A technology that inspects every incoming packet of information before allowing it to enter the network.

Spread Spectrum - Wideband radio frequency technique used for more reliable and secure data transmission.

SSID (Service Set Identifier) - Your wireless network's name.

Static IP Address - A fixed address assigned to a computer or device that is connected to a network.

Static Routing - Forwarding data in a network via a fixed path.

Subnet Mask - An address code that determines the size of the network.

Switch - 1. A data switch that connects computing devices to host computers, allowing a large number of devices to share a limited number of ports. 2. A device for making, breaking, or changing the connections in an electrical circuit.

TCP (Transmission Control Protocol) - A network protocol for transmitting data that requires acknowledgement from the recipient of data sent.

TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol) - A set of instructions PCs use to communicate over a network.

Telnet - A user command and TCP/IP protocol used for accessing remote PCs.

TKIP (Temporal Key Integrity Protocol) - a wireless encryption protocol that provides dynamic encryption keys for each packet transmitted.

Topology - The physical layout of a network.

Upgrade - To replace existing software or firmware with a newer version.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator) - The address of a file located on the Internet.

VPN (Virtual Private Network) - A security measure to protect data as it leaves one network and goes to another over the Internet.

WAN (Wide Area Network)- The Internet.

WEP (Wired Equivalent Privacy) - A method of encrypting network data transmitted on a wireless network for greater security.

WINIPCFG - A Windows 98 and Me utility that displays the IP address for a particular networking device.

WLAN (Wireless Local Area Network) - A group of computers and associated devices that communicate with each other wirelessly.

WPA (Wi-Fi Protected Access) - a wireless security protocol using TKIP (Temporal Key Integrity Protocol) encryption, which can be used in conjunction with a RADIUS server.