

Get all your devices online when you're travelling

Not all venues provide a wireless connection to the internet. Here's how to get your devices online when Ethernet or 3G access are all that's available.

When you're travelling away from home, getting all of your devices online can be a challenge. Although wifi is relatively easy to find when roaming around cities, some hotels still provide internet access over an Ethernet cable. Even if wifi is available, some venues charge a daily rate for access, making your mobile phone network's charge for tethering look more reasonable, especially if you want to take more than one device online – perhaps a wifi-only iPad, a Kindle and your kids' iPod touch or portable game console.

Retaining access to the internet on your iOS device means you can still download apps and media even if it's synced with a different Mac than the one that's with you. Happily, various bits of Apple kit can help keep you connected.

TIP When you turn on Personal Hotspot (see 'Sharing your iPhone's internet connection with other devices', right), it will ask if you want to turn on Bluetooth and wifi. It doesn't let you turn on one or the other. You can turn off Bluetooth in Settings > General > Bluetooth to avoid wasting battery life.

TURN YOUR MAC INTO A WIFI HOTSPOT

When the only internet connection that's available to you comes over an Ethernet cable, your Mac can propagate it to other devices over wifi. The same method that's used to share an Ethernet connection can be used with your 3G USB stick or ExpressCard,

provided it appears as an interface in the Network pane in System Preferences. To use this method with a MacBook Air, you'll need Apple's Ethernet-to-USB adaptor.

The downside of Mac OS X's Internet Sharing feature is that it creates a wifi

network that's protected with WEP security. That's worth enabling to prevent others joining the network at will, but it isn't really robust enough to prevent eavesdropping on your network to deduce your password, however unlikely that might seem.



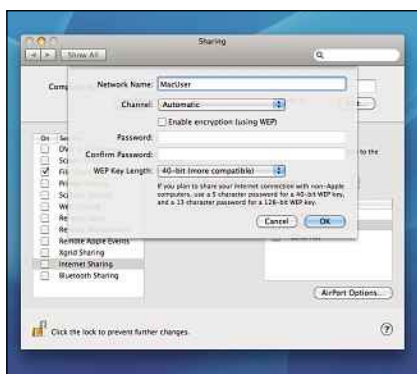
1. Open System Preferences and click the Sharing icon. In the pane that appears, you might need to click the padlock and enter your password to make changes.



2. Click the row for Internet Sharing in the list on the left to set it up. You must choose the network interface that's providing your Mac's internet connection. We've chosen Ethernet.



3. The list below shows network interfaces that can propagate the connection. We're creating an AirPort (wifi) network. Although you can turn on Internet Sharing now, don't do it yet.



4. Click the AirPort Options button and name your network. Although broadcast in the crowded 2.4GHz band, the channel is set automatically. It can be overridden if microwave ovens and other networks and devices interfere.



5. The only security available is WEP, which isn't robust. However, it prevents uninvited guests casually joining your network. Enable encryption and set a password, then click OK.



6. Tick the box next to Internet Sharing. The AirPort status icon shows that the connection is being shared. Connect devices to the wifi network as you would one created by a dedicated router.

