

6 problems with routers and solutions to overcome

In this article, I will show you 6 common problems with routers, which are really frustrations that many users have encountered.

Network administration - Today, wireless broadband access is an extremely necessary issue for families and small businesses . After more than a decade of innovation, you may think that standard wireless gateways / routers will be a perfect product, but the truth is not yet.

While many routers offer good features, there are still many routers that make mistakes that can make your life with these digital devices difficult, such as interfering with installation. or security issues are limited.

In this article we will discuss 6 common problems with routers, which are really frustrations that many users have encountered, besides solutions to overcome problems. This annoyance.

1. Difficult configuration

Problem : How long does it take you to set up the router? When was the last time you could set it up on the first try? What to do when you want to add a new computer to your wireless network? And how to connect the wireless printer to your network?

Let's face it: Each network has different problems, getting the right combination of settings can be a difficult problem. For example, some users with long experience with computers may not understand the difference between security settings or know WPA-2 provides better protection than normal WEP and WPA.

In addition, there are many problems, why setting up routers is still a difficult task, even for experienced computer users. Some routers, such as Buffalo AirStation Wireless-N 300Mbps Cable Router WHR-HP-G300N (\$ 53), have many multi-layer menus that make navigation very difficult. Another example such as Netgear RangeMax Dual Band Wireless-N Gigabit Router WNDR3700 (\$ 170), based on security settings has a series of long instructions that need to be taken to allow a new computer to access the network.

Possible solutions : Firms often try to make things simpler with easy-to-install CDs or one-click connection buttons, but they can't cover every possible situation. Buffalo and Netgear installation instructions add by securing the order in which you need to plug everything in before you run the CD. (Cable modems in particular need to be turned on before you connect the router to them). That's a very interesting detail - but it does acknowledge that you have read the user guides printed with the router. When was the last time you read the manual before plugging in the new device?

Most routers have a web configuration screen, as long as you remember the device's IP address, the default username and password (which you should change when setting it up), you will be able to access the screen. install image and make any adjustments you need. The problem here is to indicate which adjustments are needed.

The best routers : Cisco Valet M10 (\$ 100), part of Cisco's recently introduced Valet line, comes with a USB key with configuration software on it. When setting up a PC on your network, you use the key to run the configuration on other PCs or Macs (which also includes Mac software) without having to write down a wireless encryption key or information. other.



Cisco Valet provides simple installation for connecting wireless printers

Cisco also allows users to easily install devices such as wireless printers, by providing an overall screen with all wireless related information so you can print out. for easy reference when running the installation program on the USB key.

Buffalo has an interesting diagnostic routine for checking whether you are connected to the Internet and whether your router is configured correctly. You run it from the web configuration interface.

Apple's AirPort Express (\$ 99) is simple to set up and has many interesting features, including the ability to share USB printers and share audio over the network with connected stereo receivers. You can also expand your existing AirPort base station range, which is something most Wi-Fi routers can't do easily. However, if you are using a Windows PC, you will have to install Bonjour, and adding a new PC to the existing network is not so easy.

2. Allow file sharing from the router

Problem : Why spend a lot of money on a separate network-attached storage (NAS) when you can use your router to share files? Many routers have USB ports that can connect external USB drives for simple backup and file sharing purposes.

However, although plugging in an external drive is a simple action, setting it up to perform the tasks you expect is not simple at all. The Linksys WRT610N Wireless-N Router (\$ 200), for example, has a complicated setup screen, you need to find out where to set it when you attach your USB to it.

It would be better if there is a software that can allow sharing without complicated installation. It needs to be easy to connect the computers in the network to this shared repository, using the router's SSID or its IP address. You can also password-protect your shared drive so that it is not available to anyone connected to your network.

Possible solutions : Many routers have USB ports, such as routers from Linksys, Belkin and Netgear.

All the problems here are what software will be used to configure the USB drive and whether you need to do anything on a Windows or Mac client to connect to the shared drive.

The best routers : Belkin N + Wireless Router (\$ 120) has a separate software configuration utility that can work on both Windows and Mac and just run when setting up an external shared drive. You can then connect to the shared drive by entering its IP address, such as *192.168.1.1sharename* . However, this product is still not perfect: there is no way to protect the password for files on the shared drive.

USB Storage (Advanced Settings)

Network/Device Name:

Workgroup:

Enable	Access Method	Link
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Network Connection	\readysare
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HTTP	http://readysare.routerlogin.net/shares
<input type="checkbox"/>	HTTP(via internet)	http://10.0.0.14/shares
<input type="checkbox"/>	FTP	ftp://readysare.routerlogin.net/shares
<input type="checkbox"/>	FTP(via internet)	ftp://10.0.0.14/shares

Available Network Folders

	Share Name	Read Access	Write Access	Folder Name	Volume
<input type="radio"/>	readysareUSB_Storage	All - no password	All - no password	U:\	STROM

Netgear's USB installation allows you to connect to a shared drive via FTP and Web sharing

Netgear RangeMax does not require any additional software and can protect passwords for files. It also offers a variety of access methods, including FTP and Web sharing, from its installation screen.

3. Perform software upgrades

Problem : The router's software is an important first thing to mention in preventing network security and should be updated on a regular and timely basis. However, finding software upgrades on firms' websites is something that not everyone can do, and many firms also make this search not easy at all.

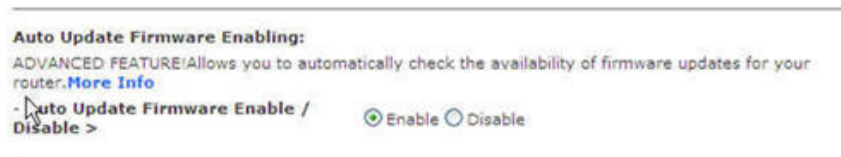
You will need to launch the browser, go to its support website and find the latest version for your router model. Then you need to download the files to your computer and upload it to the router properly in the control panel screen.

The more complex issues are, vendors often have several different versions for each router model, they often have improved actions for their routers, often changing chipsets but still keeping the version number.

Possible solutions : Perform an automatic upgrade or at least select it easily, so you don't need to go through a complicated process to download and upload the upgrade file.

Check the upgrade version of the software in each router's web settings screen to see if the router can automatically upgrade it.

The best routers : Belkin's N + Wireless and Netgear's RangeMax, both have option buttons to enable updates. When activated, you can forget about upgrading and still be confident that you always get the latest software.



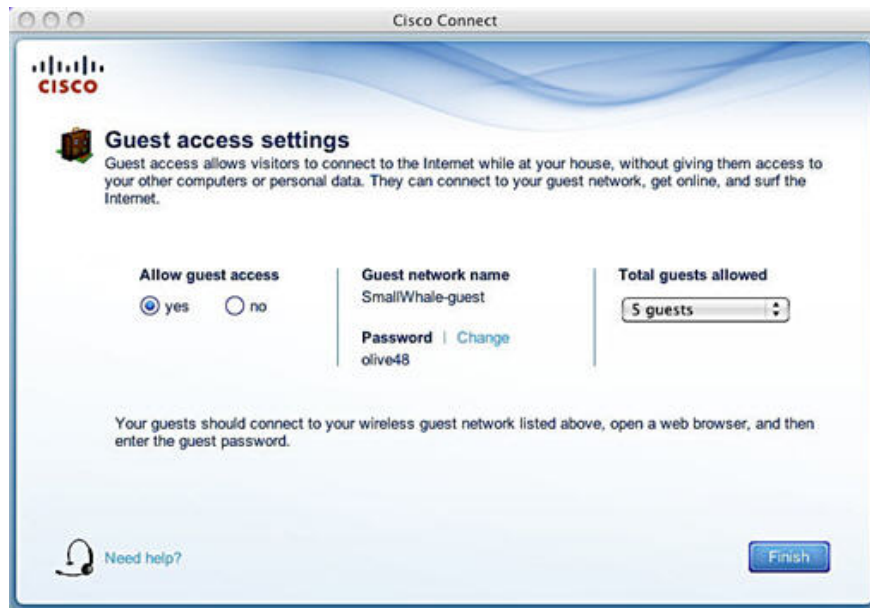
Belkin's N + Wireless has a select button to enable updates

4. Allow temporary wireless access

Problem : If you have a lot of visitors, do you really want them to have permanent access to your network? Even if you trust them online, do you know how good they are to protect themselves? (For example, can a notebook of a neighbor next to your house fall into their own hands?). If you give your visitors a router password, you definitely need to change this information when he leaves home or office, this is really an inconvenience.

Possible solutions : A good idea here would be to allow them to have temporary guest access, the goal is to only provide them with Internet access without providing anything else in your network, but Other things here such as sharing printers or shared drives.

Firms have begun to allow users to do this on their routers in a variety of ways. For example, Belkin has an option called "Hotel-style", with this option users will have direct access to the landing page, where they need to enter their guest password. Others make it easy to set up private wireless networks for visitors.



Cisco's Valet provides private wireless network for guests

Best routers : USB keys you can create with Cisco's Valet can help you here. You need to run an automatic installation of the USB key (rather than the web interface) on each of your client computers. When you do that, it will set up a separate wireless network with a different name, password and only allow Internet access.

5. Determine who is accessing your wireless network

Problem : Thinking your network is safe doesn't mean it's really safe. A good idea is to regularly check who is using your router - especially if you do not change the default password of the router. However, in the real world, it is difficult for us to have regular time to check who is accessing our network.

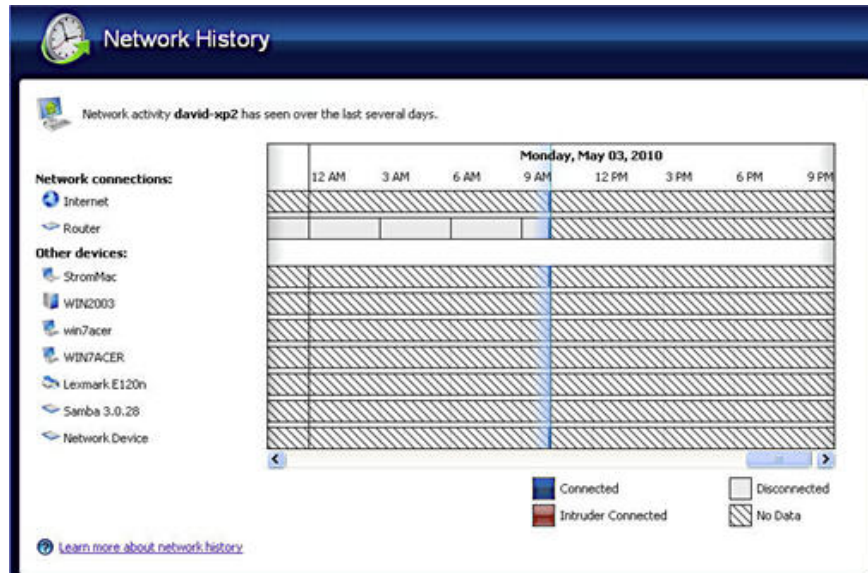
And even if you want, it's not easy. Most of the router's web interfaces can indicate who is currently connected, but figuring out who should ask you to do a lot of work, digging through multiple menus. Sometimes companies also hide this information under the title like "DHCP client list" or just give you the IP addresses and hostnames of the current connections.

So it would be useful if your router notifies you every time someone connects to it? Somehow, somehow get a deposit box to represent you the moment and someone connected to your network last week?

Possible solutions : There are many enterprise-level wireless testing tools, such as AirMagnet, but its cost is quite high, beyond the affordability of home users and small businesses.

Check the windows labeled " *Attached devices* " or " *DHCP client list* " to see who is connecting and what IP addresses are using. Some companies, such as Buffalo, also clearly show how the clients are connected and what wireless devices they are using.

Best routers : When Cisco bought Pure Networks, they acquired software called Network Magic. The Windows version of Network Magic will show you a pretty nice map with a network chart that shows who is connected to your network.



Network Magic provides timeline of network connections

For some reason, Cisco has integrated this software into some of their Linksys routers but not in the Valet M10 series. You can buy a subscription for three computers, about \$ 24, to be able to work with any router.

6. Change DNS provider

Problem : After you've just set up your network, you're probably not able to set your Domain Name System settings thoroughly. If you have a DSL or cable modem, your system will automatically receive its DNS settings from the service provider's DNS server. (However, if you are managing a large enterprise network, then you will have your own DNS server to provide this service.)

Home users and small businesses may want to search for another DNS provider. Why is it so troublesome? There are two good reasons: browsing performance and security for domains that have been infected with malware and phishing better. (Your real performance will vary depending on the Internet provider).

Possible solutions : Individual or small businesses currently have a few vendors worth considering, including OpenDNS, Google Public DNS, and .

Getting router vendors to support such servers is sometimes difficult. Some routers, such as 2Wire's Home Portal 3000 series, when hosted from AT&T U-verse, do not support alternative DNS settings. Even more difficult, most automated installers that the router does not allow you to enter your own DNS provider.

So if you have decided on an alternative, first you need to make sure your router supports other DNS settings. If you're not sure, check to see if you can enter your own DNS address on the router settings screen instead of just using what your Internet provider provides.

Then try it. After making DNS changes, there is a Java tool here so you can test the speed and see the differences you get. Depending on how you connect to your Internet provider, the difference may be more or less. If no help is available, consider returning to the original settings.

WAN > DNS

If your ISP provided you with a specific DNS address to use, enter the address in this window and click "Apply Changes".

Automatic from ISP

Primary DNS Address >

208 . 67 . 222 . 222

Secondary DNS Address >

208 . 67 . 220 . 220

Setting up a different DNS provider with a Belkin router is a fairly simple job

Best routers : Most routers allow you to enter this information. If your router cannot, change to another carrier or accept to live with the DNS provider you already have.

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