

# Reasons why you might not need a Wi-Fi 7 router yet.

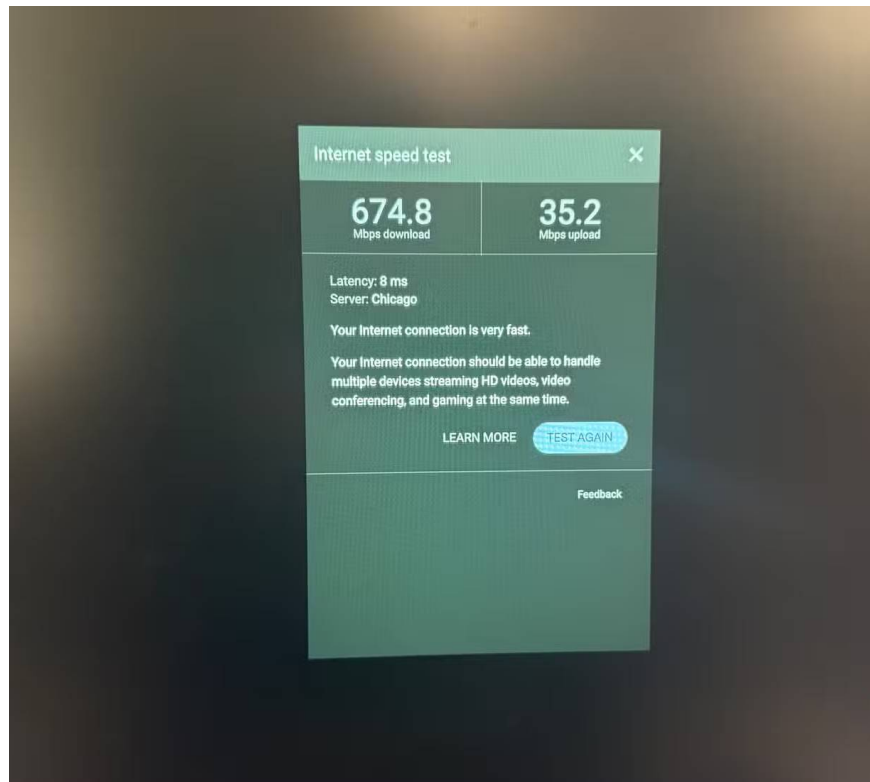
Most people upgrading to Wi-Fi 7 now won't notice any difference – because their homes aren't equipped to take advantage of it.

Every few months, a new router pops up on the market with specifications designed to render your current system obsolete. Wi-Fi 7 has been doing that for a while now and does it very well. Prices have dropped enough to make upgrading worthwhile, and if you follow the tech news, the question is no longer "Should I upgrade?" but "When?".

But most people upgrading to Wi-Fi 7 now won't notice any difference – because their homes aren't equipped to take advantage of it. A well-planned network infrastructure will perform better than a flashy new wireless standard in most practical situations, and that's worth researching before spending a few million dollars.

## **Your internet plan is the real limit.**

**Your Internet Service Provider (ISP) sets the actual speed limit – not your router.**



Theoretically, Wi-Fi 7 can reach speeds of 46 Gbps. Your internet plan almost certainly won't meet that requirement. Most internet connections are between 200 Mbps and 1 Gbps, and even the fastest 1.2 Gbps plan only achieves about 3% of Wi-Fi 7's maximum speed. Higher-speed (multi-gigabit) home internet does exist, but it remains a niche product in most areas, not something the average household can afford.

The bottleneck between your home and the internet is always the connection provided by your internet service provider (ISP), not the wireless standard your router supports. A Wi-Fi 7 router connected to a 500 Mbps internet package is a huge amount of hardware but doesn't solve the problem.

## **Most devices on the network have not been updated.**

**The key features of Wi-Fi 7 require connected devices to support Wi-Fi 7 in order to function.**



This is something marketing campaigns don't mention: Multi-link operating mode and 320 MHz channel – two capabilities that make Wi-Fi 7 truly exciting – require the connected devices to support Wi-Fi 7, not just the router. Both sides of the connection process must use the same standard. Some high-end phones in the past year have integrated Wi-Fi 7. Some high-end laptops have too. All other devices – TVs, streaming devices, game consoles, security cameras, smart thermostats – are manufactured according to a different timeline and connect according to the standard they were equipped with when they shipped. A new router can't automatically upgrade your devices over the network. Spending a few million dong on hardware whose best features aren't accessible across your entire device network isn't really an upgrade.

**Your practical usage doesn't push modern Wi-Fi to its limits.**

**Streaming, web browsing, and smart home tasks are no problem for Wi-Fi 7.**



4K streaming uses around 15 to 25 Mbps – less than most people think. A Zoom call runs at 3-4 Mbps. Smart home devices consume so little bandwidth that they have virtually no impact on network speed, either individually or overall. Try combining it all at once: several streams in different rooms, a call, devices running in the background.

A good Wi-Fi 6 router will have no problem with that load. Wi-Fi 7 is designed for environments with a really high density of devices – apartment buildings with hundreds of overlapping networks, corporate offices, special cases like households with multiple VR setups running simultaneously. Those conditions exist, but they don't describe most homes. A network that isn't causing you problems doesn't need this kind of fix.

## **Are you still using Wi-Fi 6 or Wi-Fi 6E?**

**Upgrading to 6E means you've taken the most important upgrade step.**



People often assume that successive generations of wireless networks improve with consistent speeds – that the upgrade from 6 to 7 mirrored the upgrade from 5 to 6. Wi-Fi 6E overturned that assumption. The opening of the 6 GHz band gave devices a new frequency range to operate on – a frequency that hadn't been congested for years by overlapping neighboring networks and legacy hardware. It was a real change that households felt. Wi-Fi 7 didn't make the same breakthrough. It expanded and refined what 6E had introduced rather than fundamentally changing the underlying architecture. Upgrading from Wi-Fi 5 hardware that's several years old makes sense. Replacing a perfectly functioning 6E router is hardly more justifiable.

## **Cheap Wi-Fi 7 routers aren't what they seem.**

**Cheaper products often cut back on features, making Wi-Fi 7 not worth buying.**



Wi-Fi 7 routers priced between \$150 and \$180 are appearing more frequently, making the standard seem more accessible, but the small details tell a different story. Many products quietly drop the 6 GHz band or are equipped with only a 2x2 MIMO configuration instead of 4x4 – and losing either of those features essentially turns it into a Wi-Fi 6 router branded as Wi-Fi 7. A true tri-band Wi-Fi 7 router still costs between \$250 and \$500.

A good Wi-Fi 6E router with full tri-band support costs between \$100 and \$150 and handles the 6 GHz band without issues. For most buyers today, that's a better option. And if you're unsure about the health of your home network, starting by checking your Ethernet cables will give you a better understanding than simply changing your router.

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