

Is Your Home a Technology Basket Case?

Our simple guide helps you solve bring order to the chaos

Have you been struggling with all of the technology in your home? Perhaps you have a PC's and Mac's, and you don't know how to support both types. Do you want less cords and wires? Maybe your Wi-Fi signal is weak or doesn't reach all areas of your home. There is so much technology now, it can feel like you don't know where to start.

Here is our Guide to Home Technology:

- ✓ **What should I be doing to maintain my PC or Mac?** Over time, most computers accumulate many different programs, and sometimes those programs don't uninstall correctly, or leave unwanted processes running in the background which slow down other programs. Along with making sure your computer is running its best by taking care of those issues, you'll want to test your hardware to determine if there are any critical problems with your system. A regular schedule of maintenance will guarantee smooth, efficient operations, plus reduce the odds of costly repairs in the future.
- ✓ **How do I add surround sound to my new TV and not have to drill holes in my walls?** In today's "wireless" world, you don't have to drill holes to enjoy the rich sound of your TV and speakers. There are literally hundreds of models now that use wireless technology to distribute that sound to your speakers. Not to mention all of the Bluetooth portable speakers out there! You will definitely pay a premium for going wireless, but it affords you the flexibility you want without the mess! Some of the brands we recommend are Sonos, Bose and Vizio.
- ✓ **Is it possible to get better Wi-Fi?** Yes! No matter how fast your internet connection is - just like a chain - the weakest link is generally your Wi-Fi connection. Today we have new standards such as 802.11 ac, the newest standard which has a top speed of 3 Gigabits per second! The previous standard, which is still used by many lower priced and older Wi-Fi routers, tops out at 600 Megabits per second. In English, that means that 802.11 ac is FIVE times faster! Check the specs on your Wi-Fi router to see if you have this capability, and then along with it, your wireless devices have to be rated at these speeds as well. All Apple MacBook's in the last year take advantage of this speed, as well as many newer laptop from Dell and HP.
- ✓ **What should it all cost?** Many people pride themselves on being a Do It Yourselfer (DIY). If you have the time and experience, your only cost is any parts or

materials you may need, plus your time. Today, we have so many resources literally at our fingertips on websites like How to Geek (www.howtogeek.com) or YouTube that can help. If you prefer a more hands-off approach, look for a local computer or home technology company that offers a la carte support as well as service plans that fit your needs and your budget. Sometimes getting things done by a professional can be more cost-effective and you get a better end result (no “extra” pieces after the re-assembly!). Each area of the country is slightly different, but in the metro Boston area, expect to pay between \$100 and \$175 an hour for professional help, with most service plans falling into the \$50 to \$100 a month range.

- ✓ **Where is the best place to buy it?** For products such as new PC’s, home electronics stores like Best Buy is the way to go. Amazon.com has a dizzying amount of choices. Other websites offer certain specialties such as Dell.com for Dell PC’s. If you are shopping for a new PC, you may want to check out our guide on how and when to purchase a new PC or Mac by clicking [here](#). Depending on whether or not you are that DIY’er or a “Here’s my AMEX”, you may want to consider purchasing a bundle from a local service provider that can not only help guide you on the selection of the equipment, but also answer any questions you have plus set it all up for you. Service after the sale is important to some people so if it is, you may want to go this route.

Today with all the choices available to us, it can be overwhelming to make these decisions. You don’t want to spend a lot of money and regret it later.

Hopefully this guide has helped you navigate through this process so you are happy with your decision and feel confident that you have made the right choice.

This guide was created by Tech Help Boston, a local home technology company that has been helping clients since 2000 with their technology. We are staffed with technology experts that have advanced degrees along with years of hand-on experience.