

MOVING & RENTING · GUIDE 07 · 2026

THE MOVING DAY SERIES

Updated Sunday, 31 May 2026

4G and 5G broadband *while you wait.*

A plug-in hub gets a new home online in minutes, with no engineer, no landline and no drilling. The fastest, friendliest way to stay connected while your full-fibre line is on the way, and a tidy stopgap for short or uncertain tenancies.

Minutes

TO GET ONLINE, NOT WEEKS

Plug in and connect, no engineer needed

From £23

A MONTH FOR UNLIMITED 5G

Rolling one-month plans available too

Take it

WITH YOU WHEN YOU MOVE

No fixed install, so it travels



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No home should sit offline waiting for an engineer.

Moving day is busy enough without a blank Wi-Fi icon. The good news is that you almost never have to wait offline any more. A 4G or 5G home broadband hub arrives in the post, often the next working day, and you are connected the moment you plug it in. There is no engineer visit, no landline and no drilling, which makes it perfect for the gap between getting your keys and your full-fibre line going live.

This guide explains when a mobile broadband stopgap makes sense, the real-world difference between 4G and 5G, how quick the setup really is, and how the rolling terms and money-back guarantees let you try it with no risk. Best of all, because the hub connects over the mobile network rather than a fixed line, you can unplug it and take it to your next address. We have written it in plain English, with every figure sourced at the end. When you are ready to line up the fixed connection that follows, a postcode check does the rest.

Get online the day you move, test it risk-free, then keep it or take it with you. A 4G or 5G hub turns the wait for full fibre into no wait at all.

BROADBANDSWITCH.UK EDITORIAL TEAM

Stopgap broadband, at a glance

Minutes

FROM PLUG-IN TO ONLINE

No engineer, no landline, no drilling.

~150 Mbit/s

TYPICAL AVERAGE 5G DOWNLOAD

Three quote 150, EE quote 146; 4G is slower.

94 to 97%

OF PREMISES WITH OUTDOOR 5G

From at least one operator (Ofcom, 2025).

30 days

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE AT THREE

Test the real speed at your address, risk-free.

Rolling

ONE-MONTH TERMS EXIST

Ideal for short or uncertain stays.

31 Jan 2027

OLD COPPER PHONE LINE SWITCH-OFF

4G, 5G and full fibre need no copper line.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Check the mobile signal at your postcode, pick a hub on a rolling plan, and plug it in on moving day. You stay online while your fixed line is arranged, and you can take the hub with you if you move on.

What's covered.

Each section opens with a short Quick Answer so you can scan straight to what you need. When you want live options for your address, a postcode check at broadbandswitch.uk/compare does the rest.

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The stopgap in sixty seconds.

QUICK ANSWER

If your home is not yet connected, a 4G or 5G home broadband hub gets you online in minutes with no engineer, no landline and no drilling. It arrives by post, often the next working day, and you simply plug it in. Choose a rolling one-month plan so you are tied to nothing, test the speed within the money-back window, then keep it, cancel it, or take it to your next home.

A fixed full-fibre line is the long-term goal for most homes, but it can take a couple of weeks or more to install because it needs an engineer. A mobile broadband hub fills that gap beautifully, and for some renters it is all they need. Here is the whole idea in brief.

- ✓ **It works over the mobile network.** The hub uses 4G or 5G signal, just like your phone, so there is no fixed line to install and nothing to drill.
- ✓ **You are online in minutes.** Insert the SIM if needed, plug into the mains, connect over Wi-Fi. No engineer visit and no appointment to wait in for.
- ✓ **Rolling terms keep you flexible.** One-month plans suit a short or uncertain tenancy, or the few weeks before your full-fibre line goes live.
- ✓ **You can try it risk-free.** Three offers a 30-day money-back guarantee, so you can test the real speed at your address before committing.
- ✓ **It travels with you.** Because nothing is fixed to the wall, you can unplug the hub and set it up again at your next address.

CHECK FIRST

Mobile broadband depends on the signal at your address, so check coverage before you order. A two-minute look at the Ofcom mobile checker or broadbandmap.org.uk tells you whether 5G, 4G or both reach your new home, so you buy the right hub first time.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Think of a 4G or 5G hub as instant broadband you can hold in your hand. It bridges the wait for full fibre, and for some renters it does the whole job on its own.

When a 4G or 5G stopgap makes sense.

QUICK ANSWER

A mobile broadband hub is the right call whenever you need to be online now but a fixed line is not ready. The classic cases are waiting for a full-fibre install, getting connected on moving day, a short or uncertain tenancy where a long contract does not fit, and a delay while a landlord confirms permission for installation work.

There is no single moment when a stopgap is the answer, but a few situations come up again and again for movers and renters. If any of these is you, a hub is well worth considering.

- ✓ **You are waiting for a full-fibre install.** A new fibre line usually needs an engineer and can take a couple of weeks or more to arrange. A hub keeps you online in the meantime, then you switch over once the fibre is live.
- ✓ **It is moving day and you want Wi-Fi from hour one.** Order the hub to arrive the day you get the keys, plug it in, and the whole house is online before the boxes are unpacked.
- ✓ **Your stay is short or uncertain.** On a rolling one-month plan you commit to nothing, so a six-month let or an open-ended stay is no problem.
- ✓ **A landlord still needs to approve the install.** Full-fibre work can need written consent for any drilling. A hub needs none, so you stay connected while that is sorted.
- ✓ **The fixed options at your address are limited for now.** If full fibre has not reached your street yet, a strong 5G signal can be a genuinely good connection in its own right.

A NOTE ON TIMING

Autumn is the UK's busiest moving season, with more than 600,000 home moves over a typical July to September. That is exactly when engineer slots are in demand, so a no-engineer hub is a calm, reliable way to stay online while the fixed line is booked in.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

If your situation is short, uncertain, or simply not connected yet, a hub removes the waiting. You get online today and sort the long-term line at your own pace.

4G versus 5G: speeds and where each works.

QUICK ANSWER

5G home broadband is much faster than 4G. Providers quote average 5G downloads of around 150 Mbit/s (Three quote 150, EE quote 146), while 4G typically averages 25 to 40 Mbit/s. In strong 5G areas, independent testing has measured near-peak speeds approaching 1 Gbit/s. The catch is that mobile speeds depend on signal, so always check coverage and test at your own address.

The single biggest choice is 4G or 5G. 5G is the faster, smoother option and is the default where signal is good. 4G is slower but reaches almost everywhere, so it is the dependable fallback when 5G has not arrived at your street yet.

Technology	Typical average download	Best for
5G home broadband	Around 150 Mbit/s average, much more in strong-signal areas	A genuine full-fibre alternative where 5G is strong; busy households.
4G home broadband	Around 25 to 40 Mbit/s	A reliable stopgap almost anywhere; light to moderate use.

Independent measurement backs this up. In Opensignal's January 2026 UK report, Three led all operators for 5G download speed at around 187 Mbit/s, and separate testing has recorded near-peak 5G downloads approaching 1 Gbit/s in the strongest areas. Those are headline figures, so treat them as a best case rather than a promise. What you actually get depends on the signal where the hub sits.

What affects your real-world speed

- ✓ **Signal strength at the hub.** A spot near a window, up high and away from thick walls, can make a real difference.
- ✓ **The time of day.** Like all shared networks, mobile can dip a little at busy evening times.
- ✓ **Distance from the mast and local geography.** Hills, dense buildings and even heavy rain can nudge speeds around.
- ✓ **4G or 5G.** If only 4G reaches you today, expect steady everyday speeds rather than fibre-like figures, which is still plenty for streaming and calls.

SISTER-SITE FAIRNESS CHECK

See what reaches your address

Before you choose 4G or 5G, check what is genuinely available. BroadbandMap.org.uk is a free, postcode-level UK coverage map showing which technologies, full fibre, part fibre, cable, 4G and 5G, reach which streets, so you can see at a glance whether a strong 5G signal is on offer.

Part of the same SearchSwitchSave network as BroadbandSwitch.uk. Visit broadbandmap.org.uk.

Is 5G home broadband any good?

In a word, yes, where the signal is strong. Modern 5G home broadband can rival full fibre for everyday use: streaming in 4K, video calls, gaming and several people online at once. It tends to have slightly higher latency than fibre and is a little less consistent, so a competitive gamer or a household relying on flawless uploads all day may still prefer fibre long term. For the weeks before your fibre line goes live, or for a renter who wants a no-fuss connection, 5G is a strong choice.

UPLOAD MATTERS TOO

If you work from home or upload large files and coursework, keep an eye on upload speed, not just download. 5G uploads are typically stronger than 4G, which keeps video calls smooth. The money-back window is the perfect time to test a real call from the room you will actually work in.

SISTER-SITE FAIRNESS CHECK

Test the connection you can get

Once your hub is plugged in, it helps to know what you are actually getting. UKSpeedTest.co.uk (branded Pulse) is a free, no-signup, ad-free test for download, upload and jitter, and HowFast.uk runs a quick line and performance check in the browser. Run them in a few rooms to find the best spot for the hub. Built by the same SearchSwitchSave editorial team that publishes BroadbandSwitch.uk. Visit ukspeedtest.co.uk and howfast.uk.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Pick 5G where the signal is strong and 4G where it is not. Either way, the money-back window lets you prove the speed at your address before you commit a penny.

Setup in minutes: no engineer, no drilling.

QUICK ANSWER

A 4G or 5G hub is plug-and-play. Insert the SIM if it is not already in, plug the hub into the mains, and connect your devices over Wi-Fi within minutes. There is no engineer visit, no landline and no drilling. Most providers post the hub quickly, and Three offers next-working-day delivery if you order before 8pm, so you can be online the day you move in.

This is where a stopgap really shines. A fixed full-fibre line needs an Openreach engineer and a booked appointment, which is why it takes time. A mobile hub needs none of that.

How a hub goes live

- 1 **Order it to arrive when you need it.** Many providers deliver the next working day, so aim the delivery at your move-in date.
- 2 **Plug it in.** Insert the SIM if needed, connect the hub to the mains and switch it on.
- 3 **Connect your devices.** Join the hub's Wi-Fi using the details on the label, and you are online. Modern hubs support dozens of devices at once, often 64 or more.
- 4 **Find the best spot.** Try the hub near a window and up high, then run a quick speed test to settle on the strongest position.

Step	4G / 5G hub	New full-fibre line
Engineer needed?	No	Yes, an Openreach engineer visit
Drilling or landline?	None	Possible drilling; landlord consent if renting
Typical time to online	Minutes after delivery	Commonly two to three weeks from order
Good for moving day?	Ideal	Plan well ahead

For context, a new full-fibre install commonly sees the engineer visit around 15 to 20 working days after you order, sometimes sooner. That is perfectly normal, and ordering early is the answer for the long-term line. In the meantime, the hub means no waiting at all.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

If you can plug in a lamp, you can set up a 4G or 5G hub. That simplicity is the whole point: online in minutes, with nothing fixed to the wall.

Rolling terms and money-back guarantees.

QUICK ANSWER

Mobile broadband suits movers because it comes on flexible terms. Three offers one-month rolling plans with unlimited data and a 30-day money-back guarantee, with longer plans cheaper per month. EE and Vodafone also offer rolling options alongside longer contracts. The rolling plan plus a money-back guarantee is the combination that lets you try it with no real risk.

The terms matter as much as the speed for a stopgap. A rolling one-month plan means you can leave with a month's notice, which is exactly what you want while waiting for fibre or renting short-term. Here is how the main providers compare.

Provider	Rolling option	Try-before-you-commit	Notes
Three 5G Home Broadband	One-month rolling, plus 12 and 24-month	30-day money-back guarantee	Unlimited data; next-working-day delivery; no setup fee. From £23 a month on 24-month, around £28 rolling.
EE 4G & 5G Home Broadband	30-day, plus 18-month	14-day cooling-off period	Average 5G around 146 Mbit/s, 4G around 40 Mbit/s on EE's own figures.
Vodafone GigaCube (5G)	One-month rolling, plus 24-month	14-day window	Cheaper on 24-month; rolling carries a higher upfront cost. Some tiers have data caps.

Three's 30-day money-back guarantee is the standout, because a stopgap lives or dies on the signal at your specific address. A full month to test it means you can return the hub for a refund if it does not perform, with no awkward tie-in. EE and Vodafone give you the statutory 14-day window instead, so simply test even sooner with those.

RETURN THE KIT IF YOU CANCEL

If you cancel within a guarantee window, send the hub back in good time using the provider's returns process. Providers can charge a non-return fee for the device if it is not sent back, so a quick trip to the post office keeps everything tidy and free.

CHECK THE DATA ALLOWANCE

Three's home broadband plans are genuinely unlimited. EE and Vodafone offer unlimited options too, though some cheaper tiers, such as a smaller Vodafone allowance, come with a data cap. For a household connection, an unlimited plan is almost always the right pick.

Reading the prices sensibly

Mobile broadband prices move around, and providers typically apply a set annual increase each April. A rolling plan usually costs a little more per month than a longer contract, which is the fair trade for total flexibility. When you compare, look at the all-in cost across the months you actually need, including any upfront fee, rather than the headline monthly figure alone.

- ✓ **Rolling for flexibility.** Best when your stay is short, uncertain, or you only need a few weeks before fibre.
- ✓ **Longer term for value.** If you know you will use the hub for many months, a 12 or 24-month plan is usually cheaper per month.
- ✓ **Watch the upfront fee.** Some rolling plans carry a higher one-off cost for the hardware, so factor that in.
- ✓ **Always confirm at the checkout.** Prices and offers change often, so check the live price on the provider's own page before you order.

Lining up the fixed line next? Compare your address in about ten seconds.

Postcode in, real prices out. No name, no email, no phone number needed.

broadbandswitch.uk/compare →

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SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Pick a rolling plan with a money-back guarantee for a stopgap, and a longer term only if you know you will use it for a while. Either way, check the live price before you commit.

Take it with you: portability when you move.

QUICK ANSWER

Because a 4G or 5G hub connects over the mobile network with no fixed install, you can unplug it, take it to a new address and set it up again in minutes, subject to coverage there. That makes it ideal for movers and for short or uncertain tenancies. Note that One Touch Switch does not cover mobile broadband, so when you move you simply keep using the hub or give notice on a rolling plan.

One of the quiet joys of a hub is that it is not tied to a building. A fixed line stays put when you leave, but a hub comes with you. For anyone who moves often, that is a real advantage.

- ✓ **Unplug and go.** There is nothing fixed to the wall, so moving the hub is as simple as packing a kettle.
- ✓ **Plug in at the new place.** Set it up again in minutes, then run a quick speed test to find the best spot.
- ✓ **Check coverage at the new address first.** Signal varies by location, so a quick coverage check confirms the hub will work well before you move.

ONE TOUCH SWITCH AND MOVING

One Touch Switch, the system that makes changing fixed-line provider simpler, does not cover mobile broadband, and it is not used for a house move to a new address. With a hub this is a plus: there is no switch to run. You either keep using it at the new place, or give a month's notice on a rolling plan if you no longer need it.

FUTURE-PROOF BY DESIGN

The old copper phone network is being switched off on 31 January 2027. A 4G or 5G hub, like full fibre, does not rely on that old copper line at all, so a stopgap today is already set up for the way the UK is heading.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

A hub is broadband you can carry. Move home, plug it in, carry on, with no install and no switch to arrange.

Check coverage before you buy.

QUICK ANSWER

Mobile broadband is only as good as the signal at your address, so a two-minute coverage check is the most important step. Use Ofcom's free mobile checker, the providers' own coverage maps, and broadbandmap.org.uk to see whether 5G, 4G or both reach your new home. If 5G is strong, choose a 5G hub; if only 4G reaches you, a 4G hub still beats waiting.

Coverage is excellent across the UK and improving all the time, but it does vary street by street. Ofcom's Connected Nations 2025 report found outdoor 5G from at least one operator reaching around 94 to 97% of premises, and 4G now reaches outside more than 99% of premises. A quick check simply confirms what you can expect at your exact address.

Three quick checks

- ✓ **Ofcom's mobile checker.** Independent and free, it combines operator data with real-world measurements down to small areas, so it is a trustworthy first look.
- ✓ **The provider's own coverage map.** Three, EE and Vodafone each show predicted 4G and 5G signal at your postcode, which helps you pick between them.
- ✓ **BroadbandMap.org.uk.** A postcode-level view of full fibre, part fibre, cable, 4G and 5G in one place, so you can compare a hub against the fixed options too.

SISTER-SITE FAIRNESS CHECK

See exactly what reaches your new home

BroadbandMap.org.uk is a free, postcode-level UK coverage map showing which technologies, full fibre, part fibre, cable, 4G and 5G, reach which streets. It is the quickest way to know whether a strong 5G signal, or a fixed line, is already on offer at the address before you commit.

Part of the same SearchSwitchSave network as BroadbandSwitch.uk. Visit broadbandmap.org.uk.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Spend two minutes on a coverage check and you buy the right hub first time. Strong 5G means a fast hub; 4G-only still means a quick, reliable connection while you wait.

Five mistakes to avoid.

Steer around these and a 4G or 5G stopgap runs smoothly from the day you move in.

- ⚠ **Skipping the coverage check.** Signal varies by address, so confirm 4G or 5G reaches your new home before you order, rather than after.
- ⚠ **Signing a long contract for a short need.** If you only need a few weeks before fibre, a rolling plan is the better fit; do not tie yourself in for two years for a stopgap.
- ⚠ **Forgetting the money-back window.** Test the real speed in the first days, especially with a 14-day window, so you can return the hub easily if it underperforms.
- ⚠ **Not returning the hub after cancelling.** Send the device back within the provider's window to avoid a non-return charge.
- ⚠ **Placing the hub badly.** Tucked behind the TV or in a cupboard, signal suffers. Near a window and up high is best, so move it around and speed-test.

Ready for the fixed line? Compare your address in about ten seconds.

Postcode in, real prices out. No name, no email, no phone number needed.

broadbandswitch.uk/compare →

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Frequently asked questions.

What can I use until my broadband is installed?

A 4G or 5G home broadband hub is the simplest answer. It connects over the mobile network, so it needs no engineer, no landline and no drilling. Order it to arrive on moving day, plug it in, and you are online in minutes while your fixed line is arranged.

Is 5G home broadband any good?

Where the signal is strong, yes, it can rival full fibre for everyday use such as streaming, calls and gaming, with average downloads around 150 Mbit/s and much higher in the best areas. It has slightly higher latency than fibre and is a little less consistent, so test it in the money-back window to be sure it suits your home.

Do I need an engineer for 4G or 5G home broadband?

No. A hub is plug-and-play. You insert the SIM if needed, plug it into the mains and connect over Wi-Fi. There is no engineer visit and nothing to install in the property, which is what makes it so quick.

Can I take 4G or 5G broadband with me when I move?

Yes. Because nothing is fixed to the wall, you can unplug the hub, take it to your new address and set it up again in minutes, as long as there is coverage there. Check the signal at the new place first to be sure.

How long can I stay on a mobile broadband stopgap?

As long as you like. Some renters use a hub as their main connection for the whole tenancy. On a rolling one-month plan you can leave with a month's notice, or move to a longer plan if you want a lower monthly price.

How fast can I get a hub delivered?

Often the next working day. Three offers next-working-day delivery if you order before 8pm, and others dispatch quickly too, so you can time the hub to land on moving day.

Does One Touch Switch cover mobile broadband?

No. One Touch Switch covers switching between fixed-line broadband providers, not mobile broadband, and it is not used for a house move. With a hub there is no switch to run: you keep using it or give notice on a rolling plan.

Is the data unlimited?

Often, yes. Three's home broadband plans are genuinely unlimited, and EE and Vodafone offer unlimited options too. Some cheaper tiers carry a data cap, so for a household connection, choose an unlimited plan.

Got your stopgap sorted? Now line up the fixed line.

Live UK comparison. Postcode in, deals out. The average switcher saves £180 to £292 a year.

broadbandswitch.uk/compare →

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Editorial standards.

This guide is part of the Moving & Renting Broadband series from BroadbandSwitch.uk, the UK's independent consumer broadband resource. It is general consumer information, not advice on your specific circumstances.

How we work

- ✓ We name the author and reviewer on every dated guide.
- ✓ We rank every deal in our comparison tool by total contract cost, never by paid placement.
- ✓ We earn a commission when readers switch through our journey; this never changes which deals we show or their order.
- ✓ We publish a public corrections log; any factual error is logged, dated and credited.
- ✓ We see the best in every provider in the British market and frame changes as positive consumer outcomes wherever we honestly can.

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BroadbandSwitch.uk is part of the SearchSwitchSave Group's FBRE.uk network of UK broadband sites. One editorial team, one set of standards, one goal: helping Great Britain get online with confidence.

- **RightSpeed.co.uk** is an eight-question speed-needs calculator that right-sizes your plan before you overspend.
- **UKSpeedTest.co.uk** (branded Pulse) is a free, no-signup, ad-free speed test for download, upload and jitter.
- **HowFast.uk** is a quick browser-based line and performance check.
- **BroadbandMap.org.uk** is a postcode-level coverage map of full fibre, part fibre, cable, 4G and 5G.
- **ParentalControl.uk** is a free home-network and online-safety tool, useful when families set up a new home.

About the author



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Got a question this guide did not answer? Reach out on LinkedIn and a real member of our team will be glad to help.

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