

# Internet Access in Nevada County

is provided by a small number of national, regional and local providers. There are a variety of technologies available for Internet services in our rural area each with its plusses and minuses. Internet access speeds include both download and upload components.

All current providers offer asymmetrical speeds, with the upload speed (from you to the Internet) being much slower than the download advertised speed (from the Internet to you). Only a 100% fiber optic network – Fiber to the Home (FTTH) – is capable of offering symmetrical speeds, so 1 Gigabit download and upload.

Nevada County Connected provides updated news about Internet access locally.  
nevadacountyconnected.com

## Types of Service Available and Internet Service Providers:

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### 100% Fiber Optic

Race Communications will be building the Bright Fiber Network Project in Nevada County as initiated by Spiral Internet. Internet over 100% fiber optic cables is the fastest service available. Race will be offering speeds of up to 1 Gigabit per second symmetrical access over the newly built network. Telcos and cable companies often refer to their “fiber optic networks” but fiber is only used for infrastructure and is not connected directly to the home or business.

**Race Communications**  
877-722-3833  
race.com

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### DSL (Digital Subscriber Service)

DSL is Internet access provided over the copper telephone network. AT&T, the incumbent local exchange carrier (telephone company), is the primary provider of DSL service. Other local and regional Internet Service Providers (ISPs) can also offer DSL service, although AT&T requires that customers maintain landline telephone service with AT&T.

AT&T is upgrading much of its local networks to U-Verse (a different version of DSL), but does not allow independent (third-party) Internet Service Providers to ever provide you with DSL service.

Available DSL speeds are dependent on distance from the Central Office or Remote Terminal (those big green boxes alongside the road). The further away one's location, the slower the speed available, hence many of the more outlying areas do not have access to DSL although they do have telephone service.

DSL Providers typically also provide dial-up service.

SERVICE AREA: Grass Valley, Nevada City, Penn Valley, and Truckee areas (as well as most of California)

This DSL provider **has data limits**. Note that AT&T Internet can be either DSL or cellular wireless now. And they don't tell you which. Cellular wireless can incur high extra charges for data usage. Be aware.

**AT&T Internet**  
877-632-8929  
attplans.com

This DSL provider **does not have data limits**:

**Spiral Internet DSL**  
416 Broad St, Nevada City CA 95959  
530-478-9822  
spiralinternet.com

### Cable

Locally, Comcast offers the fastest Internet access speeds hands down over a coaxial cable network, that may use fiber optic cable for its backbone. Suddenlink does now offer faster Internet speeds. Cable bandwidth in each neighborhood is shared by all the users, which accounts for slower speeds during high-traffic times (early evenings, for instance).

Cable providers have announced data limits.

**Comcast / Xfinity**  
SERVICE AREA: Grass Valley, Nevada City, Penn Valley areas  
840 E Main St, Suite G, Grass Valley, CA 95945  
800-824-2000  
comcast.com

**Suddenlink**  
SERVICE AREA: Alta Sierra, parts of south county, Truckee areas  
10101 Street Rd, Auburn CA 95602  
530-268-3731  
suddenlink.com

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## Fixed Wireless

Like mobile phone service, fixed wireless service provides a wireless connection to the Internet from towers and poles on local hilltops. A dish or antenna is placed on the residence to connect to the tower, then a cable brings the service to a router inside.

Next to wireline service (such as cable or DSL) it can be the most robust and reliable broadband service in remote areas where DSL or cable is not available. Because of the geographic diversity of Nevada County and because fixed wireless service requires line-of-sight between your dish and the tower, coverage areas are spotty.

These providers have **data limits**:

### DigitalPath

SERVICE AREA: western Nevada County up to 5-Mile House (also Sierra County and north)  
275 Airpark Blvd., Suite 500, Chico CA 95973  
Contact: Spiral Internet 530-478-9822  
spiralinternet.com/wireless  
digitalpath.net

### Colfax.Net

SERVICE AREA: Colfax and Hwy 174 corridor to Grass Valley  
PO Box 1597, Colfax CA 95713  
530-346-8411  
colfaxnet.com

### SmarterBroadband

SERVICE AREA: western Nevada County up to 5-Mile House  
15533 Johnson Pl, Grass Valley CA 95949  
530-272-4000  
smarterbroadband.com

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## Cellular

Mobile phone providers sell USB modems that connect directly to computers for Internet access. Like mobile phone data plans, Internet data use is not unlimited. The service is dependent on cellular coverage in the area, which both AT&T and Verizon claim they will be improving over time. When this service is the only one available, it's much better than dial-up.

Cellular providers **have data limits**.

### Verizon Mobile Broadband

682 Freeman Lane Suite B, Grass Valley CA 95949  
530-477-8042  
2068 Nevada City Hwy, Grass Valley CA 95945  
530-272-9999

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## Satellite

Accessing the Internet via satellite was a promise made to rural America to replace dial-up access. The speeds are faster, but the latency (slowness due to distance from residence to satellite and back down again) and data limit policies make it less than ideal.

Satellite providers **have data limits**.

### ViaSat (previously Exede or WildBlue)

855-393-3302  
viasat.com/internet

### HughesNet

866-293-8945  
hughesnet.com