

A: ... so that's £549 including VAT. Is there anything else I can help you with?

C: Well, would you mind explaining how I access the Internet with this computer? I don't think I really even understand what the Internet is! Wait a minute, I'm going to write this down.

A: Of course. Well, basically, the Internet is a global network of computer networks, which allows users to share all kinds of information and computer resources. The system is made up of networks interconnected all over the world, from universities and large corporations to commercial online systems and non-profit organizations...

C: OK, that sounds complicated enough. And can I access the Internet automatically with this PC?

A: Well, you need a computer and a modem – a device that connects your PC to the telephone line. You'll also need an account with an Internet Service Provider, or ISP – that's a company that offers connection to the Internet for a monthly fee.

C: OK, that sounds easy, but what if we have several computers in different rooms. How can I connect them all to the Internet?

A: In that case, the best choice is a wireless router with a built-in modem. It's a device that links various computers over a network and will connect everyone in your family to the Internet without using cables. New computers include wireless support but if any of the computers are old, you'll need a Wi-Fi wireless adapter.

C: I'm sorry but what does Wi-Fi exactly mean?

A: Wi-Fi is short for Wireless Fidelity and refers to a technology that uses radio waves to communicate data over medium range distances.

C: Right. And so that's everything?

A: Not quite. You'll need some special software too, specifically internet connection software and a Web browser application, such as Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox.

C: OK, I think I've got it. And I'll be able to start emailing straight away?

A: You can do more than just email. There's file transfer, newsgroups, real-time chats, instant messaging and looking for information on the Web.

C: Wow, this all sounds complicated. I'm not sure I even understand the difference between the Web and the Internet.

A: Well, the Web is a huge collection of pages stored on computers all around the world. Web pages contain all sorts of information in the form of text, pictures, sounds and video. The Internet is the network which connects all the computers.

C: OK, I think I've got it.