

Internet Access Intermediate

Sixteen year old Vicki is excited that at their last family meeting, it was decided the family would get internet access in their home. Vicki is the most computer savvy in the family and volunteered to find out what internet access options might be available in their area. She needs to bring a recommendation to their next family meeting.

Vicki's dad said it is not worth getting internet if they have to wait forever for things to download. Her mom wants to make sure they can still receive phone calls while on the internet. Her mom doesn't want to miss calls to pick up family members when they are done with different activities. In researching information about the internet, she has found that high speed Internet is any Internet which connects faster than dial-up. Generally, the lowest speed offered is 128Kbps - 3 to 5 times faster than dial-up. The speeds go up from there, up to 5Mbps and higher! Depending on the service and speed you choose, your connection may be hundreds of times faster than a 56Kbps dial-up connection. A fiber optic connection provides a designated line with the fastest connection speed available.

Vicki knows that their family budget is tight, so she will take cost into consideration. She also feels that on-going technical support will be important for her family, as she is the only one that has spent much time using their family computer and the internet in the past. She has two younger siblings that your going into the 1st and 5th grade.

Which internet access provider should Vicki recommend?

Criteria:

- Speed
- Ability to receive in-coming phone calls while on internet
- Cost
- On-going technical support

Internet Access

Senior

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University of Minnesota Extension
Minnesota 4-H Consumer Decision Making
2008 Regional Contest
Entertainment/Leisure – Internet Access

#1

NetZero Platinum

Cost: \$9.95

Service Information:

- Unlimited Internet access
- 56Kbps dialup connections - thousands of access numbers nationwide, with a local number available
- 1 GB of email storage
- Spam and Email Virus Protection
- NO banner ads
- Compatible with popular Instant Messenger (IM) programs
- Fast, easy sign-up and installation. Downloads in as little as 2 minutes
- NO credit card required
- **EXCLUSIVE: Connection Commitment** - Our Connection Commitment to our members on paid Internet service plans provides free live technical support to help you get connected during your first month of service. Call toll-free 1-866-841-1442

#2

Peoplepc Unlimited
Cost: \$10.95/mo.

Service Information:

- Unlimited Internet access
- Phisher Protection: Scanguard
- Smart Dialer technology
- Internet Call Waiting, provides pop-up notice when receiving phone calls
- Pop-up Blocker™
- Virus Protection powered by Symantec®
- 56Kbps local access dial-up connection number
- Free email technical support
- Email with spam controls
- 2 email addresses
- Email storage 100 MB
- Email attachments: up to 10 MB
- Outlook Express/Pop 3 Access
- WebMail - Access email from anywhere with a web connection
- Instant Message Center with AOL, MSN, and other IMs

#3

Local DSL Provider

**Cost: \$20.00 Monthly Service Charge (to Info Link) &
\$25.50 Monthly Line Charge (to Quest Phone Company on your
monthly phone bill)**

Service Information:

- Unlimited Internet access
- High Speed DSL connection
- Personal Webpage Storage
- 1 Free email address, additional available for \$3/month
- Free email virus scanning
- Internet Call Waiting, provides pop-up notice when receiving phone calls
- Webmail
- Free friendly and local tech support
- On site installation is not required but is available for \$75.00

#4
Local Telephone Company
Cost: \$42.95

Service Information:

- Unlimited High-Speed Internet access
- Includes local phone and long distance
- Fiber optic designated line connection, no need for additional phone lines
- Virus Protection and Parental Controls
- Spam and Email Virus Protection
- 1 email address
- Unlimited Email storage
- WebMail – Access email from anywhere with a web connection
- Free 24 hour technical support

Internet Access Official Reasons

Official Placing: 4-3-2-1
Cuts: 3,2,4

I place this class of internet access providers 4,3,2,1.

At the top of the class I place provider 4 which provides a fiber optic designated line connection and free technical support.

In the top pair, I place 4 over 3 because 4 is the faster connection available and Vicki's dad expressed concerns over connection speed. Both access plans allow for notification of incoming calls. I grant that both 4 and 3 are the most expensive internet access plans available but feel they are best able to meet the listed criteria.

In the middle pair, I place 3 over 2 because 3 provides a faster connection and free full technical support. I grant that 2 costs less.

In the bottom pair, I place 2 over 1 because it offers a call waiting notification and unlimited free email technical support. I grant that 1 is the least expensive, but fault it for the speed of connection, lack of incoming call notification and limited free tech support.

For these reasons I place this class 4-3-2-1.

**Internet Access
Official Placement:
4-3-2-1
Cuts:3,2,4**

1-2-3-4 - 21
1-2-4-3 - 24
1-3-2-4 - 23
1-3-4-2 - 28
1-4-2-3 - 29
1-4-3-2 - 31
2-1-3-4 - 25
2-1-4-3 - 28
2-3-1-4 - 31
2-3-4-1 - 40
2-4-1-3 - 37
2-4-3-1 - 43
3-1-2-4 - 29
3-1-4-2 - 34
3-2-1-4 - 33
3-2-4-1 - 42
3-4-1-2 - 43
3-4-2-1 - 47
4-1-2-3 - 38
4-1-3-2 - 40
4-2-1-3 - 42