

● UK FIBRE GUIDE · JUNE 2026

PLAIN-ENGLISH EXPLAINER

Monday, 8 June 2026

What Is FTTP? Full Fibre *explained.*

Full fibre, in plain English. What FTTP actually is, how it differs from older broadband, why it is faster and steadier, and what to expect when you switch to it.

82%

UK HOMES CAN GET IT

Ofcom, January 2026

24.9M

PREMISES REACHED

And still climbing

2027

OLD COPPER RETIRES

Phone network off, January

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Reviewed by **Adrian James**

Next review within 90 days

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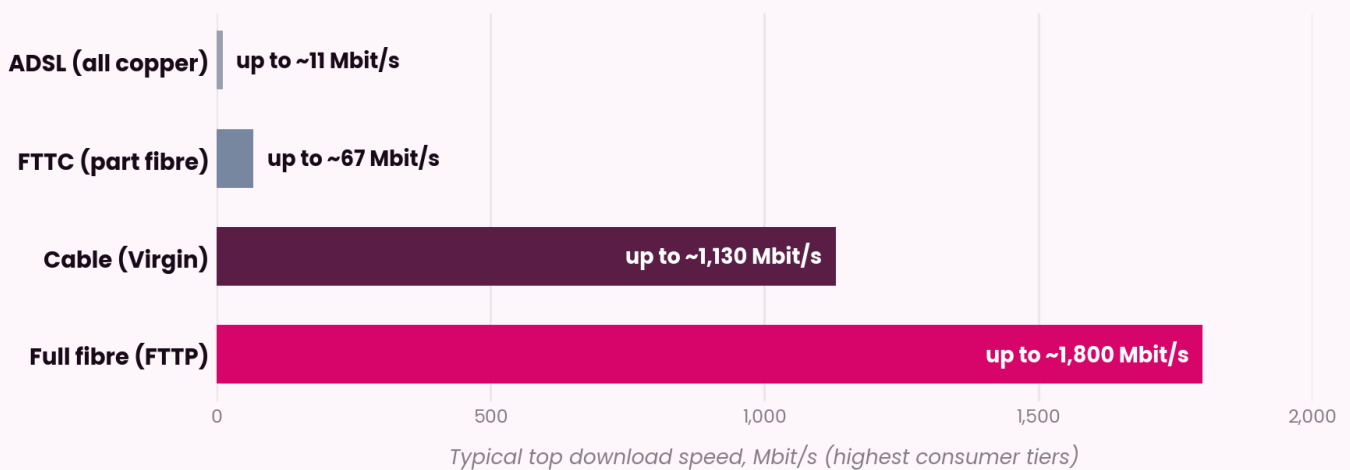
SECTION 01 · THE BASICS

What full fibre actually is

IN SHORT

FTTP, fibre to the premises, is a full fibre-optic line running all the way from the exchange to your home, with no old copper in the final stretch. That single change, fibre instead of copper to your door, is what makes it faster, steadier and quieter than the broadband most of us grew up with.

Older broadband mixes fibre with copper, or uses copper alone. The difference is simply how far the fibre runs before the signal hops onto something slower.



Typical top download speeds by connection type, highest consumer tiers. Full fibre reaches furthest because the fibre runs all the way to the home.

How the types differ

TYPE	WHAT REACHES YOUR HOME
Full fibre (FTTP)	Fibre, all the way
Part fibre (FTTC)	Fibre to the street cabinet, then copper
Cable (Virgin)	Fibre to a local box, then coaxial copper
ADSL	Copper all the way from the exchange

With FTTP, the fibre ends at a small box on your wall called an optical network terminal, which feeds your router. Because it is light down glass rather than electricity down copper, distance barely weakens it.

SECTION 02 · WHY IT IS BETTER

Why full fibre wins

Full fibre is not just about a bigger headline speed. Its real strengths are the ones you feel every day: a strong upload, steadiness, and a connection that does not fade with distance.

- ✓ **Much stronger upload.** Older copper and cable give you far less upload than download. Full fibre offers high, often near-symmetric upload, which is what video calls, cloud backups and working from home depend on.
- ✓ **More reliable.** Fibre shrugs off the distance, weather and electrical interference that trouble copper, and it cannot corrode, so faults are rarer.
- ✓ **Lower latency.** Signals travel with less delay, which makes calls and gaming feel sharper.
- ✓ **Steady at peak times.** Full fibre has vast headroom, so it holds up in the busy evening hours when older lines can sag.
- ✓ **It does not fade with distance.** Copper weakens the further you are from the cabinet; fibre barely changes whether you are near or far.

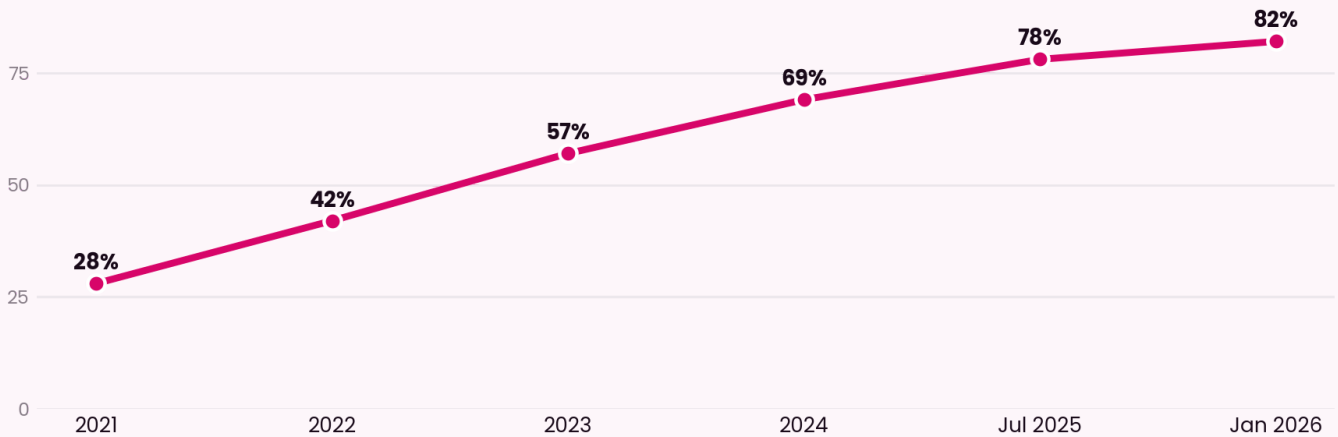
SPEEDS YOU CAN CHOOSE

Full fibre comes in a wide range of tiers, from modest everyday plans of around 40Mbps up to 1.8Gbps today, and multi-gigabit plans of 2Gbps and beyond are already arriving. Most homes are very well served well below the top tier, so there is no need to overbuy.

SECTION 03 · ROLLOUT

Where it is, and the copper switch-off

Full fibre has gone from just over a quarter of UK homes in 2021 to more than four in five today, one of the fastest infrastructure rollouts the country has seen.



UK full-fibre availability, 2021 to January 2026. Sources: Ofcom Connected Nations reports, with the January 2026 figure from the Spring 2026 update.

The state of play

- ✓ **82% of homes, 24.9 million premises, can now get full fibre**, and gigabit-capable broadband reaches 89% once cable is counted (Ofcom, January 2026).
- ✓ **Take-up is 47%.** Far more homes can get full fibre than have switched to it, so most people reading this can probably already order it.
- ✓ **Openreach has reached 23 million premises** and is targeting 25 million by the end of 2026, with other networks adding millions more.

THE OLD COPPER NETWORK IS CLOSING

The UK's traditional copper phone network is being switched off, with the national deadline set for **31 January 2027**. Where full fibre is widely available, providers already stop selling new copper services. This is the main reason full fibre is moving from a nice-to-have to the normal way the UK connects.

SECTION 04 · GETTING CONNECTED

Switching to full fibre

Moving to full fibre is straightforward, and switching is simpler than it used to be. Since 2024, you only need to contact your new provider, who arranges everything with the old one and can keep your phone number.

1 Check your address.

Run a postcode check to see which full fibre networks and deals reach you. Entry full fibre often starts in the low £20s a month, with gigabit around £25 to £40.

2 Book the install.

A new full fibre line usually needs a short engineer visit, so allow a week or two from ordering.

3 Meet your new kit.

The engineer fits a small optical network terminal on an inside wall and sets up a new router. That is the whole change inside your home.

4 Say goodbye to the old phone line.

Full fibre does not need a traditional landline; if you want a home phone, it simply plugs into the router as digital voice.

ONE THING WORTH KNOWING ABOUT POWER CUTS

Unlike the old copper phone, full fibre needs mains power at home, so a power cut will take out your phone unless you have a backup. Providers must offer a free battery backup to customers who rely on their landline, such as vulnerable users, so do tell your provider if that is you.

• SEE WHAT REACHES YOU

Find out if full fibre has reached your home.

Check which full fibre networks cover your address and compare live deals on every one.

[Compare live deals at your postcode →](#)

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SECTION · REFERENCES

References and sources



Written by **Dr Alex J. Martin-Smith** (CMgr, MBA, LL.M, DBA), Lead Editor. Reviewed by **Adrian James**.
Published 8 June 2026, next review within 90 days. Every figure is sourced below and logged in our public corrections process.

Every figure in this guide is backed by a publicly verifiable source, listed in APA 7th edition format. Coverage figures are Ofcom's January 2026 snapshot; rollout targets are providers' own stated goals.

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REMEMBER

Full fibre is faster, steadier and increasingly the standard way the UK connects, and most homes can already get it. Start with a postcode check at broadbandswitch.uk/compare to see what reaches you and what it costs.

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