

## How Will 'Net Neutrality' Affect My Netflix Streaming and What Can I Do About It?

Net neutrality, in a nutshell, is the principle of a free and open internet. What that means is that an internet service provider (ISP) cannot block, slow down, or charge extra for any content on the web. Keeping the internet free and open means that we all have the same access to the same content. It's meant to be a consumer protection. On December 14, 2017, in a wildly unpopular move, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to repeal net neutrality.

Netflix is one of the most popular video streaming sites in the world so naturally what many of us are asking right now is, what will that do to video streaming, specifically Netflix? Netflix tv and movie streaming could be affected by price hikes by our ISPs. If ISPs such as AT&T and Comcast begin charging content sites like Netflix more for them to be accessible, the cost will ultimately be passed on to us: the consumers.

Streaming movies on Netflix could also be affected by what people are calling "tiers:" offering paid "fast lanes" for content. Comcast has said in the past that they will not "prioritize Internet traffic or have paid fast lanes," and most of us surely want to believe them. But without net neutrality in place, there would be little to be done to stop them if they were to change their minds.

[Netflix CEO Reed Hastings](#) seems to not be worried about it because "(The) culture around net neutrality is very strong. The expectations of customers are very strong. So even if the formal framework gets weakened, we don't see a big risk actualizing, because consumers know they're entitled to getting all of the web services." Basically, customers will get so upset that we will protest and the FCC will have to walk back their decision.

Fortunately for us, the happy binge-watchers of the world, Netflix is not happy with the recent FCC ruling. They have submitted a filing before the FCC expressing their displeasure and advocating for consumers and future innovation and are fully prepared to go to court to defend net neutrality.

Congress can still vote to repeal the repeal. Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D – New York) has called for a Senate vote that would hopefully overturn the FCC decision, but with a Republican majority in the House of Representatives, it will likely be difficult. Not many Republicans are in opposition to the decision. Several states are also suing the FCC over the decision, so stay tuned.

So, for right now our Netflix is reasonably safe, but we have been put on notice. As customers, the proverbial ball is in our court. You and I have to get fired up and take action. What is there to be done, you ask? First things first: contact your members of Congress and tell them to overturn the FCC ruling. At their peril do they mess with our movie streaming! These are our elected officials, and they work for us. As constituents, we must let them know what we care about.