

TDS Telecom vs. ZiPLY Fiber Internet plan comparison



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Staff rating 3.5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Customer rating 3.2 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (8)

\$ Plans starting at \$38.95

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Staff rating 4.2 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Customer rating 3.0 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (2)

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Staff rating
3.5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Inconsistent speeds for the price, but it'll do

This budget internet provider offers DSL, cable, and fiber internet at a low price. However, TDS doesn't guarantee advertised speeds, and the quality of service will likely vary by location and connection type. If you want the highest speeds, guaranteed speeds, or unlimited data, this might not be the provider for you, but if you can get fiber, it's worth a look.

What we like

- Several plan options
- Fiber in some areas
- Easy installation

What we dislike

Staff rating
4.2 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Fast, reliable fiber for larger households and power users

ZiPLY offers great pricing for medium-to-large households and absurdly fast internet for power users. This provider has a few quirks, like hidden contracts and no self-setup, but if those don't bother you, ZiPLY is a solid internet service provider in the Northwestern US.

What we like

- Low prices
- Fast internet

What we dislike

- Hidden contracts with promotional pricing

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Rise Broadband

[Rise Broadband](#)

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Verizon Fios

[verizon](#)

[Add to compare](#)

- ✗ Complaints about speed
- ✗ Self-setup not available everywhere
- ✗ Contract required

[See full review →](#)

Savings tip: TDS Telecom often has sign-up promotions for first-time customers. Call **1-844-726-0721** to ask a rep about current deals and discounts.

[Check deals](#)



Value

3.5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Low prices, but varying value

TDS's [DSL](#), [cable](#), and [fiber](#) internet range from a superslow 1 Mbps to a superfast 2 Gbps, with over a dozen plans in between. Prices vary by location, but most seem to come in below US benchmarks for comparable broadband speeds (1) and are cheaper than similar plans from [Xfinity](#), [Spectrum](#), and [Cox](#).

Our favorite things about TDS prices is that in some locations, we've seen a "price for life" guarantee. That means the price you sign up at is the same price you'll pay as long as you're a customer. Since most providers have significant price hikes after a year or two of service, being able to lock in your price is a huge deal—and a big reason to stick with instead of switching to a different internet company.

We interviewed Marci-Ray, a TDS fiber customer since 2020. In a household with multiple gaming consoles and smart home devices, she's been very pleased with the reliability and price of the 300 Mbps fiber plan: "For the value of the speed and the price...it's great. I'm very happy with that."

Unfortunately, not all TDS customers have had the same experience. We've seen some customer complaints about slower-than-advertised speeds, meaning that customers aren't getting what they paid for, especially on DSL or cable plans. If you opt for a higher plan to account for that (which is what TDS recommends if you don't see the speeds it advertises), you may end up paying more than you would somewhere else for the same speed.

- ✗ No self-setup

[See full review →](#)

Savings tip: Zipy Fiber often has sign-up promotions for first-time customers. Call **1-833-970-0803** to ask a rep about current deals and discounts.

[Check deals](#)



Value

5.0 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Low-cost internet plans—unless you want the fastest speeds possible

Overall, Zipy offers fast fiber internet at great prices. Its slowest plans (50 Mbps and 200 Mbps) are the best value, priced at 25% and 33% of the national benchmark, respectively. (1) Its 1 gig plan is relatively more expensive, but it still comes in under 45% of the national benchmark for similar plans. After introductory pricing ends, your monthly bill will increase by about \$20 per month, but you'll still pay less than average. Plus, you'll get unlimited data.

If you want the absolute fastest internet possible, Zipy also offers 2- and 5-gig plans, but these come with much higher price tags. A 2-gig plan is nearly double the cost of a 1-gig plan (no bulk discount here), and a 5-gig plan is nearly 4 times the cost! (2) And there's no introductory pricing for these blazing-fast plans. You'll also need to spring for your own router (the Zipy one doesn't support these speeds). 1 gig should be more than enough speed to cover the vast majority of households, so we don't recommend springing for these plans unless you're sure you need them.

Pricing details vary by location. Visit [Zipy Fiber's website](#) or call **1-833-970-0803** to speak with a rep.

[See pricing](#)

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Pricing details vary by location. Visit [TDS Telecom's website](#) or call 1-844-726-0721 to speak with a rep.

[See pricing](#)



Performance

3.0 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Speeds not guaranteed

TDS says you could see speeds “up to” your plan’s max, which isn’t uncommon of internet service providers, but TDS seems to get a lot of complaints from customers seeing much lower speeds than advertised. And if you’re not happy with the speeds you’re seeing, TDS’ solution is to switch to a lower-level plan, and it’ll waive its usual \$15 fee for switching plans mid-contract. But if you ask us, this feels like an ineffective solution since lower-level plan speeds aren’t guaranteed either. You could end up with even lower speeds, albeit at a lower cost.

If TDS fiber is available in your area, you should see more consistent speeds since fiber-optic technology is more reliable all around. One customer who switched from Spectrum cable service to TDS fiber in the Madison, WI area told us that TDS has been far more reliable for them, with fewer slowdowns and outages.

Depending on your location, your TDS plan might come with unlimited data. Or it might come with a data cap of 500 GB and overage fees if you go over that. This cap is pretty low, considering most people use around 500 GB per month all on their own. Unless you live alone, it won’t be enough. And if you use less than 500 GB, the extra won’t roll over.

Available speeds vary by location. Call [1-844-726-0721](#) to speak with a TDS Telecom rep or [go to its website](#).



Performance

5.0 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Fast, reliable fiber in most areas

Ziply has a [fiber optic network](#), which is the most reliable kind of infrastructure out there. Fiber also allows for faster speeds than any other kind of internet, including upload speeds that are just as fast as download speeds (AKA symmetrical speed). Unfortunately, Ziply’s 1-gig plan isn’t symmetrical, serving up only 35 Mbps for upload, and that’s a shame. Still, most families will find a symmetrical 200 Mbps connection plenty fast, while high-powered users can opt for a 2- or 5-gig symmetrical plan (though it’ll cost you big).

Other than that, Ziply performs pretty well. It typically uses only 40% of its infrastructure capacity (3), which means you’re less likely to see slowdowns during peak hours. However, Ziply has legacy DSL infrastructure in some rural areas and tends to perform slower than other DSL providers.

Available speeds vary by location. Call [1-833-970-0803](#) to speak with a Ziply Fiber rep or [go to its website](#).



Equipment and installation

4.5 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Low-cost equipment and installation options

TDS offers two equipment options,



Equipment and installation

4.0 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Equipment and installation costs mostly balance each other out

which you purchase and pay down each month. A standard modem and Wi-Fi router combo is \$10/month, and Wi-Fi+ is around \$20/month. Wi-Fi+ comes with a modem plus an eero Wi-Fi home base and one mesh extender—all of which should give you 2,500 sq. ft. of signal, which isn't too bad. (2) TDS recommends adding an extender (\$5) for every additional 1,000 feet beyond that. This system comes with a smartphone app that makes managing your Wi-Fi easy.

Self-installation is free and takes about 15 minutes, but it's available in only some locations. In others, professional installation is required for no additional charge. However, if self-installation is available in your area and you still want professional help, it'll cost you around \$50.

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Equipment and installation options can vary widely depending on
[TDS Telecom plans](#) available in your area.

[View plans](#)

Ziply's equipment costs can add up. Its router/modem combo is a reasonable \$10 per month, but its Whole Home Wi-Fi costs \$20 per month. Sometimes, Ziply runs promotions that include Wi-Fi, so keep an eye out for those. Ziply's Wi-Fi is [Wi-Fi 6 technology](#), which is the best technology available. You can stream up to 12 devices at once (Wi-Fi 5 allows only up to 5). However, Ziply's router isn't compatible with its 2- and 5-gig plans. If you want one of these plans, you must BYO router, and not all routers are compatible, so be careful here.

Professional installation is free, which is great because Ziply doesn't have a self-install option. Technicians will run cables from the street to your home, wire up your house, and set up your Whole Home Wi-Fi. The downside is technicians likely won't get all this done in a single visit, so it might take a few weeks to get you up and running.

Equipment and installation options can vary widely depending on
[Ziply Fiber plans](#) available in your area.

[View plans](#)



Customer experience
3.0 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Extra help if you need it—at a price

Like most internet service providers, TDS gets mixed reviews from customers, but overall it seems about average. You'll get around-the-clock tech support, including phone calls, online chat, and remote internet sessions (during which a technician logs into your computer remotely to troubleshoot your connection).

If you want help with more than your connection, you can pay around \$13 per month for a [Remote PC Support](#) subscription. With it, you can get help with network security, optimizing your computer, and setting up your devices. Without the subscription, you'll pay around \$50 each time you need these services. If you're tech savvy, you'll save a lot by skipping the subscription. But if you think you'll need help at least once per quarter, the subscription will be cheaper.

When we interviewed a current customer about their experience with



Customer experience
3.0 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Could be more customer-friendly with more self-help options and better transparency

We love that Ziply provides professional installation for free, but we're bummed that it doesn't even offer a self-setup option. Ziply has some great self-help content on its website for troubleshooting or changing out your router later—you just can't use it to get started. Forcing you to use professional installation also means it takes longer to get started, and that's tough if you've just moved to the area. If you're not moving, it still means you'll have to juggle your old service with Ziply installation times to avoid a gap in internet service.

We're also not a fan of Ziply's hidden contracts. It advertises no-contract plans, but if you read the fine print, you'll pay early termination charges if you try to leave before your promotional plan ends. All that said, Ziply's customer service is decent, and

TDS customer support, they said that TDS was very responsive, clearly explained what was happening, and fixed connection issues for them without charging for the service.

They were also able to negotiate their internet price back down after their promotional price ended. TDS customer service recommended setting a calendar reminder to call in again each time the promo pricing was close to running out. It's less convenient than just getting the lower price consistently, but we appreciate the willingness to bring prices back down.

The one downside the customer mentioned was the lack of a dedicated app for managing their service and billing—something many other providers already provide.

Visit [TDS Telecom's website](#) or call 1-844-726-0721 for more information on contracts and money-back guarantees.

[Go to provider](#)

most negative reviews call out the same kinds of issues other providers get: billing disputes. (4)

Visit [Zipty Fiber's website](#) or call 1-833-970-0803 for more information on contracts and money-back guarantees.

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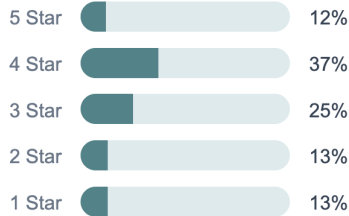
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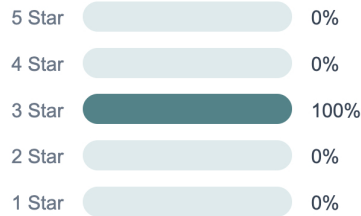
ZIP code*

[Check availability](#)

TDS Telecom 3.2 ★★★★★ (8)



Zipty Fiber 3.0 ★★★★★ (2)



Sheridan from Mounds, OK

TDS Telecom Customer for Less than a year



Reviewed on: 8-29-2022

I'm just fine using TDS the speed and reliability is spot on



Rowdy from Coos Bay , OR

Zipty Fiber Customer for Less than a year



Reviewed on: 11-21-2022

I love the service. The biggest problem is I signed up with the acp plan and every month they keep sending me a bill. The service is only 20 bucks a month and acp covers up to 30 dollars.



Beverly from Hobbs, NM

TDS Telecom Customer for Less than a year



Reviewed on: 6-22-2022

TDS provides my needs internet connection speed and capacity.



Michael from Hillsboro, OR

Zipty Fiber Customer for 1+ years



Endnotes and sources

Since we are all mature in the house, we don't do any gaming and live stream. We are also working most of the time, thus social media access from our side is mostly done only after work or during weekends.



Sherry from Milliken, CO

TDS Telecom Customer for Less than a year



Reviewed on: 6-22-2022

It took close to 6 months to get a permanent line and half of that to get a temporary line. They kept saying it would be done in a week. We have issues with speed and reliability on a weekly basis. The only reason we stay with them is they are cheaper than Century link and they have the same issues.



Jeff from Milliken, CO

TDS Telecom Customer for 1+ years



Reviewed on: 6-17-2022

They have horrible customer service

Endnotes and sources

Reviewed on: 6-17-2022

Price was fine, but they are adding charges all the time. They need to make sure the customer feels taken care of. The last time we were on the phone, they made it seem like it was our fault when their lines were faulty. And they didn't offer a break or a credit for the downtime.



PROVIDERS NEAR YOU

See all options in your area within seconds.

ZIP code*

Enter your ZIP code

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Endnotes and sources

1. "2022 Urban Rate Survey – Fixed Broadband Service," FCC. Accessed 9 December 2022.
2. "TDS Wi-Fi+," TDS. Accessed 9 December 2022.

Endnotes and sources

1. "2022 Urban Rate Survey – Fixed Broadband Service," FCC. Accessed 12 December 2022.
2. "Satisfy Your Need for Speed," Zipy Fiber. Accessed 12 December 2022.
3. "Why Choose Fiber?," Zipy Fiber. Accessed 12 December 2022.
4. "Zipy Fiber Customer Reviews," Better Business Bureau. Accessed 12 December 2022.



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