

The 10-minute test sheet

Find out what mobile signal you actually have, before you spend a penny on equipment.

1 Before you start

- ☐ Install the free Speedtest app by Ookla. On some phones the website version does not give you an upload figure.
- ☐ Turn off any VPN.
- ☐ Turn WiFi OFF on your phone, or you will measure the campsite broadband instead.
- ☐ Carry out this test where you actually park up, such as at a campsite, not on the driveway at home.

2 The privacy and permission pop-ups, and what to tap

The first time you open the app it asks you a few things. None of them stops the test working.

On an Android phone or tablet

Your location

Tap "Only this time". Leave Precise switched on: it picks a nearby test server.

Make and manage phone calls

Tap "Don't allow". It looks alarming, but it is only how Android lets an app read your network name.

Help us build global coverage maps

Tap "Don't allow".

Cookies and privacy

Tap "Reject all".

On an iPhone or iPad

Use your location

Tap "Allow while using app".

Ads, and an ad-free version

Tap "Continue". You do not need to buy anything.

Track your activity across other apps

Tap "Ask app not to track".

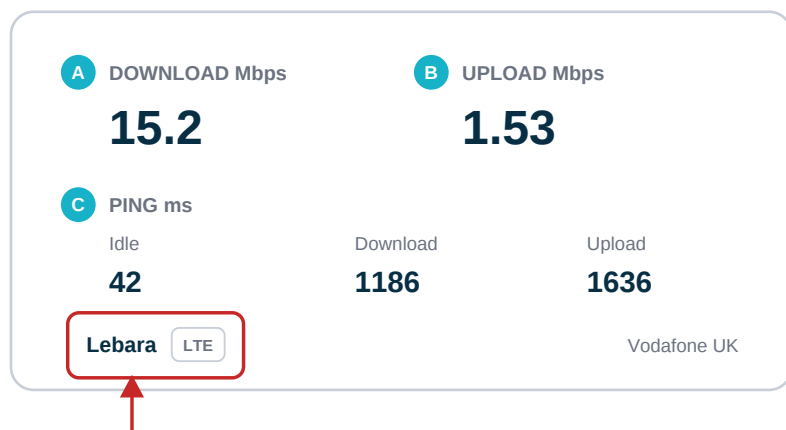
Cookies and privacy

Tap "Reject all".

3 Which numbers to write down

When the test finishes your screen looks like this. Write down three numbers, and check the one in red.

- 1 Check the bottom of the screen shows your mobile network, not a WiFi network.
- 2 Press the Go button and wait for the test to finish.
- 3 Tap "Detailed result" at the bottom of the screen, then write the three numbers into the table overleaf.



- A Download speed. The headline number.
- B Upload speed. Smaller is normal.
- C Ping: write down the Idle one.

Check this before you write anything down

This must show your mobile network's name with a small 4G, LTE or 5G badge.

If it shows a WiFi symbol, or the name of a WiFi network, turn WiFi off and run the test again.

Not sure what to buy? Sort my WiFi at touringsorted.co.uk/sortmywifi

Your results

4 Run the test three times and write the numbers here

	A Download	B Upload	C Ping (idle)
Where you sit (table, sofa or bed)			
Outside, by the door			
Again about 8pm, when it's busy			

5 What your numbers mean

A Download – How much can arrive at once. Higher is better.

Under 2 Mbps	Messaging, email and maps. Streaming video will stop and start.
2 to 5 Mbps	One person can stream, though HD may struggle at the lower end.
5 to 10 Mbps	HD plays on the TV without buffering. Fine for a couple.
10 to 25 Mbps	Everyone online at once, with HD on the TV and calls holding up.
25 Mbps plus	4K on the TV, and downloads running without spoiling it.

B Upload – What you send out. Always smaller than download, and that is normal.

Under 1 Mbps	Fine for browsing and email. Video calls will be a struggle.
1 to 5 Mbps	Video calls work. Enough for a security camera or two on the van.
5 Mbps plus	A good mobile connection. Nothing in a van needs more.

C Ping (idle) – How quickly it reacts. Lower is better. Matters for calls and gaming.

Under 60 ms	Video calls and gaming will be fine.
60 to 300 ms	Usable. The odd stutter on calls.
Over 300 ms	Calls will struggle, and above 500 ms they'll drop.

6 What to do next – What the result tells you about hotspotting from your phone.

Good numbers inside the van

You may not need to buy anything. Turn on your phone's hotspot and connect the TV and the laptop to it. Heat, battery and your data allowance are what usually push people into investing in a separate router.

Better outside than inside

The van walls are reducing your mobile signal. First, for free: move the phone to a window and test again. That is often the whole fix. If it is not, a portable router will not help either, because its aerials sit inside the same van. What helps is a router with aerial sockets, plus an aerial mounted outside the bodywork. An aerial on its own does nothing: it needs a router to plug into.

Bad outside as well

Your network does not reach this pitch, but another one might. Check Ofcom's coverage map, or borrow a phone on a different network. If another network works here, that is the SIM to buy, for your phone or for a router. If there is still no signal on another network, you are parked in a dead spot, and satellite such as Starlink is the only option.

Fine by day, dead at 8pm

The mast is busy rather than weak, so an aerial barely helps. The answer is a second SIM on a genuinely different network, which can go in your phone or in a portable router. There are now only three real networks in the UK: VodafoneThree, EE and O2, and every other SIM brand runs on one of them. Check which network a SIM really uses at touringsorted.co.uk/motorhome-sim-cards before you buy.

Not sure what to buy? Sort my WiFi at touringsorted.co.uk/sortmywifi