

# How to Switch ISPs (Without Ruining Everything)

So you want to change ISPs? Makes sense. Your current ISP probably loads you up with stuff like contracts and on-hold-forever call centres and you've decided you want a breath of fresh air from the Bigpipe.

But you are understandably nervous. You've heard horror stories from other people about how their switch left them [without internet for weeks](#) or continuing to [pay their old ISP](#) months after switching.

So we're here to show you the right way to switch ISPs, minimise downtime and costs, and get you up and running with your new provider (Bigpipe, right?)

## Doing It Right

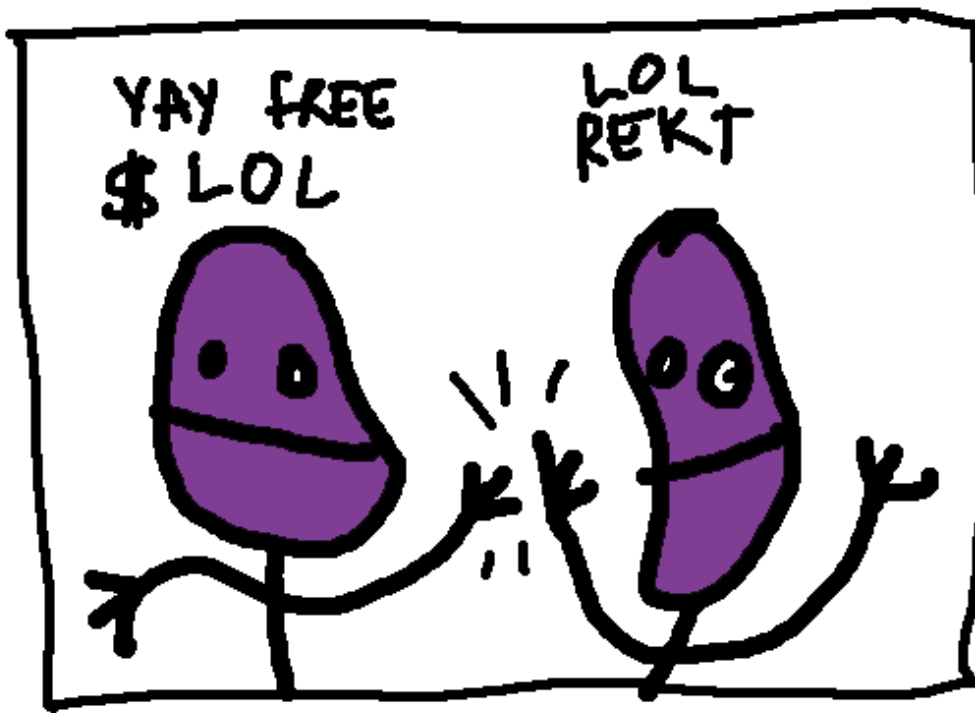
**In a few simple steps, this is the right way to go about switching ISPs.\***

Do NOT start by contacting your current ISP. If you do this, it'll screw everything up

1. Place your order with Bigpipe (or the ISP of your choice, which is obviously Bigpipe)

– If your current ISP is one of those annoying ones that requires 30 days notice, (which is most of them – so check!) then you can ask us to connect you, say, 35 days in the future so you don't end up being double billed – no worries, we'll wait.

– If you just want to get on Bigpipe goodness ASAP, then choose a convenient date for that (just bear in mind your current ISP might charge you an extra 30 days even though they aren't providing you a service, just because they like free money and putting 'gotchas' in their contract)



other isps be like

2. Bigpipe will come back to you in a day or two with a confirmed date. At this point, your connection date is set with Chorus and it is now not possible for your current ISP to accidentally block your move.

3. You can now contact your current ISP and say "Hello Mr ISP, I'm switching to Bigpipe in 30 days. please consider this my notice period. I do NOT want you to disconnect me before that time." (We'd recommend doing this via email – since that way you have it in writing if they screw it up.)

Look, a cartoon explanation, because cartoons!

YOU



SIGN UP  
AT BIGPIPE.  
CO.NZ

WHY HELLO  
THERE.



SET BIGPIPE  
CONNECTION  
DATE > 30  
DAYS IN FUTURE

☐ ASAP ☒ Set a preferred connection date



se-off charge of \$45 and you

you need to know

**THEN  
WAIT!**

BIGPIPE  
WILL CONFIRM  
YOUR CONNEC-  
TION DATE.

EMAIL  
YOUR ISP.



**THEN:**

IN ~30 DAYS  
ENJOY BIGPIPE

U COMPLETE ME

THX



**Important:** All the above is for like-for-like technology movements – moving from ADSL or VDSL (copper) to copper, or fibre to fibre.

Moving from copper to fibre is a little different. If you are moving from copper on ISP A to fibre on ISP B, then things get a bit trickier – it's very difficult to guarantee an installation date for UFB. The safest course of action is to wait until you get UFB up and running and then give notice to your old ISP – it will cost you a little bit more in double charges, but we think that's better than going without internet.

Now, read on for the more technical explanation.

### **The Easy Way**

As you probably know, the series of tubes that deliver the internet to your house is owned in NZ by a company called Chorus. (There are exceptions to this with fibre broadband, but for the purposes of this article it means pretty much the same thing.)

When you want to get broadband you place an order with your desired ISP (probably Bigpipe) and they then place the order with Chorus.

Then about 4-6 days later, a friendly Chorus technician pootles on out to the phone exchange in his trendy Chorus van, moves some cables and stuff, and then you have internet.

However, when you are dealing with a line that already has internet from another provider sitting on it, things have the potential to get hairy. We'll need to delve a wee bit into Telco lingo here – but don't worry, it should all become clear soon enough.

Basically, each line is only ever allowed to have one single unfinished piece of work at a time. (called an 'open service order' in telco land). This could be a fault that hasn't been fixed yet, or a disconnection request for a future date – it

doesn't matter.

Provided your line doesn't have an existing 'open service order' then your new ISP can place a 'transition' order with Chorus. This means the technician goes out to the exchange and does the whole job at once – disconnecting you from ISP A, and connecting you to ISP B. This means your downtime should be less than an hour. Nice! That's what we want.

### **The Road to Failville**

However, if there is an open service order on the line, this blocks any new orders from being placed until that order is completed and you will be on a path to having no internet. This means ISP B cannot even place their order (and start the 4-6 day process) until you are fully disconnected from ISP A. That means at least 4-6 days of having no internet. Boo!

So why would there be an open service order on the line? Unfortunately the most likely answer is that you did what you thought was the right thing and gave your current ISP their 30 day notice of disconnection. Then they decided to place a 'disconnection order' (dated 30 days in the future). You didn't know it at the time, but this action stops your new ISP from even placing their order.

(Also, a quick word about phone lines: they can complicate things a bit. Or a lot. Bigpipe is a naked internet provider, meaning we don't offer phone lines as part of our internet packages. If you switch to Bigpipe and don't specifically request otherwise with your current ISP, you will lose your phone line when you switch. If you want to keep your old phone line, you'll have to do so by organising it with your current provider after you switch to us. We wholeheartedly recommend not bothering with a phone line at all, if you can avoid it – just use your mobile, or if you want, VOIP.)

### **Movin on up**

All this shenanigans about open service orders is also why moving house can be such a pain in the ass. If you are moving

into your new place just a day or two after the current tenants are moving out, then it is virtually impossible for your ISP (any ISP!) to get you up and running on the day you move in. The existing tenant will have an open service order (a 'move address') and your ISP can't place your order until that is completed – which means you probably won't get internet until a week or so after that. It doesn't matter how much notice you give your ISP – there is nothing they can do but wait it out.

You may be saying to yourself, “well, that sucks!” – and we completely agree. We are working with Chorus to try and sort this out. It sucks for our customers, and sucks for us. It also means we are paying for two Chorus visits (one to disconnect and another to connect), when really it only needs one (to do the disconnect and reconnect at the same time). But in the meantime, if you follow the advice here, you'll find switching ISPs to be a breeze, rather than a hurricane of frustration and no-internet-fury it can otherwise become.

And now, of course, you can go ahead and [switch to Bigpipe](#) ☐