How to test your internet

When I'm working on a client's computer with internet trouble, there are some simple tests I can do to give a good picture of what's going on.

#1 - Ping test

Frist you need to open a command prompt. This takes us back to the good old DOS days. You remember those when computers were simple and Windows did not exist ;) You can get to a DOS prompt in Windows 10 by searching for "cmd" in the white search box in the lower left corner of your desktop screen. Click on CMD and a small black box should come up with a blinking cursor. You can maximize that box to make it bigger.

Now type in this command and press Enter on the keyboard: ping -t google.com
You should see a list go down the screen something like this, the numbers will vary:
Reply from 74.125.225.39: bytes=32 time=113ms TTL=53
Reply from 74.125.225.39: bytes=32 time=131ms TTL=53
Reply from 74.125.225.39: bytes=32 time=72ms TTL=53
Request timed out
Reply from 74.125.225.39: bytes=32 time=113ms TTL=53

Let it run it run for 30 seconds or so. If you see no interruptions that's good. That means you have a reliable internet connection. However if you see 2 or more lines saying "Request timed out" that's bad. It means your internet is disconnecting and that causes webpages not to load or at least be very slow. The more disconnects you see the worse the problem is. A common fix for this is to unplug the power to your modem, wait a minute, plug the modem back in, wait 5 minutes, then run the ping test again. If the problem is consistent day after day, you may want to have me or someone look at it. You can also call your internet company. In the end you may need a new modem.

#2 - Speed test

Open your browser and type in any of the following webpages. You can try them all:
speedtest.midco.net
speakeasy.net/speedtest
chicago.speedtest.centurylink.net/speedtest5.html

On each webpage click the GO button to start the test. This will measure your internet's download and upload speed. That is to say how fast stuff comes into your computer from the internet and how fast stuff goes out. The download speed should be in the range from 3 to 150. Anything over 7 is good. The upload speed is usually much lower and can even be less than 1, but that's usually not a concern, it's the download speed that's important. If your download speed is less than 3 that's a problem. You should check with your internet company and see if the numbers are close to what you are paying for. Typically your results are about 90% of what the company will advertise. See if you can pay more and increase your speed.

<u>#3 - Try another computer</u>
Bring in a 2nd computer and connect to your internet, then try both the tests again. If you get the same results, then you know any problems you are having are not the fault of your computer, but rather something outside it like a bad modem, bad wiring, or even a temporary problem with your internet service. A while back I had internet trouble for a couple of weeks and it turned out to be a problem at a Midco junction box a block from my house. If your internet problems do not show on the 2nd computer, then your computer is the cause. That could be background programs, browser settings, or viruses. In that case have me or someone knowledgeable clean up your computer.

If you need help you can call me anytime to set an appointment and we'll figure out what's going on 763-689-5912 ;)