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Starlink in UAE: Setup, subscription costs, and how it works explained

Elon Musk's satellite internet arrives with portable kits, flexible plans and fast setup

DUBAI

BY NIVETHA DAYANAND
Assistant Business Editor

Starlink, the satellite internet service developed by SpaceX, is now available in the UAE, giving residents a new way to access high-speed internet without relying on fibre lines or mobile towers.

The service, backed by Elon Musk, uses a constellation of low-Earth orbit satellites to deliver faster speeds and lower latency than traditional satellite internet. The UAE now joins more than 150 countries and territories where Starlink is already live, marking a major expansion of satellite-based connectivity in the region.

What sets its apart

Traditional satellite internet relies on satellites located far from Earth, which often results in delays and slower speeds. Starlink operates much closer to the planet, allowing data to travel faster and reducing lag, which is critical for video calls, gaming and real-time applications.

Users connect through a small satellite dish that communicates directly with the network in space, removing the need for underground cables or fixed infrastructure. Installation is designed to be simple, with a plug-in system that requires an unobstructed view of the sky and can be completed in minutes.

Speed, performance

Starlink is designed to deliver download speeds of up to 400 Mbps in many locations worldwide, with typical residential speeds ranging from 135 Mbps to 305 Mbps. Upload speeds generally fall between 20 Mbps and 40 Mbps, supporting cloud work, file sharing and video streaming across multiple devices.

The system is built for reliability, with an average uptime of more than 99.9 per cent. Equipment includes features such as snow-melt capability and weather resistance, allowing it to operate in heavy rain, strong winds and extreme temperatures.

Future upgrades are already planned, with Starlink targeting gigabit speeds through network enhancements expected from 2026, without requiring users to change hardware.

Plans and pricing

Starlink's UAE rollout includes multiple pricing tiers for different user types. The main residential plan costs

BUILT FOR EXTREME ENVIRONMENTS

Starlink's Performance kit is designed for demanding use cases, including industrial operations, remote worksites and maritime environments. It is engineered to withstand temperatures from -40°C to 60°C and wind speeds above 270km/h.

The system carries high waterproof ratings and is built for long-term durability, with a design life of up to 10 years. It also supports both AC and DC power inputs, allowing operation in off-grid environments with backup power systems.

The launch of Starlink adds a new layer of competition to the UAE's internet market, particularly for users in remote areas, construction sites, desert locations and offshore environments where fibre coverage may be limited.

It introduces a flexible alternative for consumers that combines fast setup, global reach and consistent speeds, offering a different model of connectivity that is not tied to fixed infrastructure.

Dh300 per month and offers unlimited data with consistent performance for everyday use.

A lower-cost Residential Lite plan is available at Dh230 per month, offering unlimited data but prioritised only during off-peak hours, which may result in slower speeds during peak usage periods.

Hardware is sold separately. The standard kit is priced at Dh1,465 and includes the satellite dish and a WiFi 6 router. A more compact Mini kit, priced at Dh1,099, is designed for portability and lower power consumption.

Internet beyond fixed locations

One of Starlink's key advantages is flexibility. The Mini kit is built for mobility and fits in a backpack, offering download speeds above 200 Mbps for users who need internet on the move.

The service supports cross-country travel, allowing users to stay connected in more than 150 global markets. Plans can be paused and resumed based on usage, making it suitable for temporary travel, remote work or emergency connectivity.

In-motion usage is also supported, enabling internet access while travelling by road or at sea, extending coverage to areas where traditional networks are unavailable.



■ A visitor stands near a Starlink antenna for aircraft on display at Al Maktoum International Airport.