



Researched and produced for all English speaking Expats living in France from the team of professionals at UKTelecom.



Lifting the lid on the French Telephone & Broadband industry

Your ultimate telephone and broadband guide to the pitfalls when moving home





INDEX

Introduction	1
Understanding the way the French market works	
Setting up your telephone service	1
How to avoid high cost products	
Looking at the alternatives to France Telecom	3
Understanding how the others charge for their services - to get you the best deal	
Making it cheaper for your friends and family in the UK to call you	5
How to call your home in France from the UK for the price of a local call	
Exposed - the myth of 'cheap calls to the rest of the world'	5
Dial through numbers and their total cost	
Don't get hijacked!	6
Understanding the consequences of poor regulation and the role of the regulator	
Broadband in France	7
How it works and how to avoid mis-selling	
What do I do when my telephone stops working?	11
A straight forward guide to restoring your service quickly	
What do I do when my Broadband stops working?	13
A simple checklist to find out what the problem is and how to get it fixed	
Useful information	16
Contact details you will need	
User's Check List - Telephone Services	17
Compare your short-listed providers to get the best prices	
User's Check List - Broadband Services	18
Compare the headline price, type of technical support and cost etc.	



INTRODUCTION

France Telecom is the dominant supplier and the most expensive. Depending on which competitor you choose you can save between **30%** and **60%** on a typical bill for phone calls.

Don't become a victim of the French Telecommunication minefield!

Telephone and Broadband services are a must when you set up in France. But the choice is bewildering and the risk of over-paying with France Telecom is high.

This ultimate guide will:

- Show you how to navigate this minefield in two sections:
 1. Telephone and
 2. Broadband services
- Supply two advice sheets which will help you if your Telephone or Broadband services stop working
- Assist you in evaluating your short-listed service providers
- Give you a list of useful contacts

Setting up your telephone service

The choices

When you set up in France, you are faced with a number of decisions before you have had a chance to understand the marketplace. Getting a telephone service up and running quickly to avoid the huge cost of using mobile phones is just one of them.



How do you know and then avoid the expensive pitfalls? As a new arrival from the tightly regulated UK market you will be shocked by:

- The inadequate regulation of the French market
- The poor customer support from France Telecom
- The inadequacy of some internet services which often do not work at all.

Why is it like this? How can you avoid being mis-sold the wrong products? How can you avoid over-paying for your services?

Like BT in the UK, **France Telecom is a high cost provider**. As in the UK, you can choose another provider to carry the calls made on your France Telecom telephone line. This service - 'Carrier Pre Selection' - works via an electronic code put on your telephone line at your local exchange. This tells France Telecom that your calls are to go over another provider's network.

Line rental

As in the UK, you have to rent a telephone line; in nearly all cases this is rented from France Telecom. France Telecom has an English Help Line (in France: 0800 364775, from overseas: 0033 55786056) for sales only. Do not be surprised if you have to wait a long time for your call to be answered as the service is under resourced.



You are likely to find that an enquiry to the French language sales line will result in a high pressure sales pitch aimed at getting you to buy a call package and internet services - at extortionately high rates. When you say No! you will find the level of helpfulness plummets: in many cases the sales person simply hangs up.

This is because France Telecom staff are paid on a commission basis - they are more interested in their pockets than in what is right for you.

UKTelecom can arrange the rental of your line from France Telecom for a small fee. This is particularly useful if you have little French or have pressure on your time.

???

Who can you trust?

In France's poorly regulated telecoms environment it is very much a case of buyer be-

ware! Providers impose all sorts of hidden charges in order to say that services are being provided more cheaply than is actually the case.

In addition there is a great deal of misleading advertising that simply would not be allowed in the UK. Neither the French regulator, ARCEP, nor the consumer watchdog, Direction Générale de la Concurrence de la Consommation et de la Répression des Fraudes (DGCCRF), have addressed these problems.

So understanding the market and how it works can save you a lot of money??

SIMPLE TIPS...

Some simple tips

Here are some simple tips to help you avoid paying through the nose:

- Beware of France Telecom (and others) mis-selling
- Ask about the free services
- Only rent your line when you need it
- Check the actual services provided
- Check your terms and conditions
- Understand your 'connection charge'
- Know the minimum call charges
- Be sceptical about 'Free Call Packages'
- Avoid long-term contracts

These are covered in more detail below.

FRANCE TELECOM Beware of mis-selling

You will probably rent a telephone line from France Telecom. But beware, many customers are persuaded to take expensive call packages and Broadband services with the line rental. France Telecom staff earn sales commission and what is right for you is not their priority.

The choice is yours to say no!

Setting up your Telephone Service

Available free services

When you order your line do not forget to ask about the four free line services which France Telecom provides:

- voicemail
- conversation à 3 (speak with 2 people at the same time)
- ex-directory (liste rouge)
- online account management.

There are many other services you can pay for and the most popular are listed at the back of this guide.

Only rent your line when you need it

There is a special service that many second home owners use to save paying line rental for the months when they are not in France. Instead of applying for a standard line they rent a 'ligne résidence secondaire'. With this arrangement you simply advise France Telecom when you do not

want the line and your line rental charges will be suspended.

- Suspend your line from 1 month to 1 year
- Suspend the service for up to 6 times a year

YES YOU CAN...

This service does not remove your 'Carrier Pre Selection' service. So if you have chosen to save money by using an alternative provider for your phone calls the arrangement will remain in place. You have to ask for this service -

France Telecom will not tell you about it.

Looking at alternatives to France Telecom- Check the actual services provided

Services provided by alternatives to France Telecom may appear the same but can be very different.

For example, France Telecom will charge for all calls to UK 08 numbers. Not all other French providers are able to give you access to 08 numbers in the UK. 08 numbers are most often needed to contact British banks, insurance companies etc. If this is important to you check before you sign up. But don't just check that the service is available; check the cost as there are huge variations. The latest 0844 and 071 UK numbers (which have

been added due to capacity having been reached on the 0800, 0870 and 0845 numbers) are not available through France Telecom and most other providers – so again check if this is important to you.

Terms and Conditions

Look out for web sites aimed at English speaking customers that contain lots of product information but where the terms and conditions are not in English. There is usually a reason for this! Businesses with nothing to hide will have no interest in avoiding the small cost of the translation.

Connection charges

A connection charge is often made in France every time you dial a number and the call is answered. It is typically 12 cents. Surprisingly this is often a more important consideration than the 'headline' cost of calls

which advertisers promote. This is a charge that has long since disappeared in the UK following BT's loss of its monopoly.

You may find yourself paying between **30% and 60%** more than you need to every month...

This connection charge may not sound like very much but because the average call to a mobile phone is 1.5 minutes and that to a land line is between 3 and 5 minutes you may find yourself paying between 30% and 60% more than you need to every month. So unless you always make long duration calls, avoid providers who charge connection fees.

Minimum call charges

Look out for hidden costs buried away in the small print such as a minimum call charge, or the units in which calls are billed. This rounding up of costs will again add to an otherwise apparently competitive service. Although this is a less common problem it is still a mechanism some providers use to maximise their profits at your expense.

Monthly fee charges

Look out for this major hidden cost. You may find that when you are away from home for an extended period

you get charged a minimum fee simply for having an account although you have not made a single call! An example of this is Onetel, which charges 2.90 Euros per month. Avoid these providers; there are many better options out there.

'There is no such thing as a free lunch' applies to the telephony market in France.

'Free' call charges

The old saying 'there is no such thing as a free lunch' applies to the telephony market in France. You will frequently

come across adverts offering 'Free Calls'.

This is simply, and deliberately, misleading.

What is being advertised is an 'unlimited call package', for which you are charged a monthly fee. Such mis-selling, which is banned in the UK, conceals a raft of other dangers. Typical of the many providers selling on this basis are Phonexpat and Teleconnect.

There are several types of 'unlimited calls' packages

- within France to land lines (calls to mobiles are also available with some carriers)
- to land lines for a number of European countries
- for calls to landlines to an 'Anglo' group of countries usually the UK, Ireland, Australia, Canada and the USA. The package may also include calls to mobiles in the USA and Canada.



BE CAREFUL!

The headline rates may look good, so check on the cost of calls and types of lines to destinations not included in the package, as some providers take advantage of the headline resulting in less thorough checks on the cost of calls outside of the service. Particularly, check the cost to mobiles and to other international destinations which you may routinely wish to call. With their emphasis on headline rates some providers may prove very costly to you.

There have recently been complaints about a promotion being run by Phonexpat. Their call package provides 'free calls' to one country for 7 Euros a month. But their press advert does not make clear that, whilst the call is 'free', a 22 cents connection charge applies to each call made and that each call is limited to 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, normal charges apply!



Avoid long term contracts

If a service is good there is no need for the provider to insist on you signing a long-term contract. A quality, reasonable cost provider has no need to force you into a 3 month, year, one or two year contract which is sometimes the case.

If you are asked to do this it may be because the customer care available afterwards is poor and difficult or expensive to access. In addition you may find yourself locked into paying much more than necessary.

After you've signed up

Many providers offer a freefone service for sales enquiries. For all other service calls they give you different numbers, some of which may be premium rate numbers. These lines are sometimes

poorly staffed, making it difficult and/or expensive to get help to resolve a problem or raise a question over a bill.



You may also find that, whilst the sales service is in English, the customer care or technical support is only available in French. This may be a problem if you cannot communicate easily in French.

A quality customer focused business will provide free phone access for customers and prospective customers alike.

Paying your bills

You may want to be able to pay your bills by a UK Direct Debit rather than a French Prélèvement. Very few providers offer this choice, so check this out if it is important to you.

Making it cheaper for friends and family back in the UK

The cost of making a call to France from a BT domestic line in the UK is high at 18.5 pence per minute at peak times and 10 pence per minute off peak. There is however a long established alternative that provides big cost savings - at just 3 pence per minute, with per second billing.

The principle is simple: the provider 'translates' your French telephone number into a British number starting 0844 and this can then be given to your friends and relations in the UK who may want to contact you. This service has no effect at all on the way your French number works and all calls made to it will connect in the usual way. The calls are made over landlines so the call quality is good.

You do not have to sign a contract and your

friends and relations phoning you from the UK simply get billed on their own telephone account for a local number. Charges for calling from a mobile phone will of course vary and with so many call plans the callers will have to make their own checks. Some call plans may include calls to this service within the package.

Make sure you shop around for this service

You can pay as much as 4 Euros a month (with Teleconnect) to rent an 0844 number, or nothing with UKTelecom!

Exposed, the myth of cheap calls to the rest of the world



But avoid 0811 dial through numbers

You may have come across promotions for 'cheap' calls to anywhere in the world by simply dialling an 0811 number followed by the number you want to call. These are typically advertised as costing just 1.4 cents per minute. The real cost is much more, unless you only want to speak for 3 minutes at a time.

This is how the true costs mount up

- You have to dial an 0811 number
- If you use France Telecom or other providers you will be charged 2.8 cents per minute peak and 1.4 cents off peak
- In addition, you will be charged a connection fee of 7.8 cents
- In effect, you are paying 10.6 cents for the first minute and the service provider's minute charge thereafter
- After 3 minutes of conversation your call is then terminated and you have to start again.

This is certainly not a great saving!



Don't get hijacked!

Having decided which telephone service provider is right for you it should be a simple case of paying the bills when they arrive?

Wrong!

The problem with a weak regulatory system is that providers can get away with extraordinarily bad behaviour which, in effect, is condoned. Read on if you want to protect yourself against risks that can cost you money. You will be surprised at just what you have to look out for.

Unauthorised change of provider

Like any other business, France Telecom does not like to lose customers. If you take the decision to buy your call time from an alternative provider you will receive a letter from France Telecom acknowledging your decision, together with a form for you to use should you wish to return to France Telecom. If your understanding of French is limited you may simply complete this form and return it. This would be a mistake as the form is intended for use if you choose at any time in the future to return to France Telecom. So whilst this would not be an unauthorised change of provider, it would have the same effect through a lack of awareness.

You will have gone through a lot of bureaucratic hoops to set up your services. So you would think that any subsequent changes would be equally difficult to effect. **Not so!**



If you merely take a phone call from a competitor of your supplier and out of politeness express an interest in their rates, this may be interpreted as an agreement on your part to change to them!

Unwittingly, you can be switched to another provider. And don't expect any support from the consumer protection body. They will agree with the company taking your traffic that you have done enough to justify the transfer of your account to them. If you have limited French you are particularly vulnerable to this type of pressurised selling. All you can do is cancel the contract as quickly as possible and let all your friends know of the bad practice.

You can expect **NO HELP** from the regulatory and consumer bodies if you want to challenge an invoice received from a company that has 'hijacked' your business in this way.

France Telecom's special arrangement with the regulator

We can all make mistakes, and we expect to carry the responsibility for them. Not so with France Telecom. They are the largest provider and inevitably mistakes will occur within the huge number of transactions undertaken every day. If you have taken a decision to leave France Telecom but find that your service has been taken back you have no right to claim compensation for the higher charges you have incurred from them as a result. The arrangement they have with ARCEP, the regulator, is that they are able to have a 4% error in their processing activities.

We at UKTelecom will be there to advise and help you make the correct decision

There is a view that France Telecom uses this 'licence' to take back customers knowing that there is no instruction or authorisation for them to do so, using the 4% margin of error allowed to them. There are examples of this happening to customers not once but up to three times in rapid succession! Again, the system is weighted against the customer, so the need to be vigilant is always there.



The Broadband telephony service in France results in more dissatisfaction than any other.

Broadband in France

Don't get mis-sold a service that will not work

Setting up your Broadband in France

The Broadband telephony service in France results in more dissatisfaction than any other. To put it simply there are some basic facts you need to be aware of to avoid a costly mistake. You are particularly vulnerable if you live in a rural area and are a long way from the local telephone exchange. If you are over 5 kilometres from your exchange you will see a significant drop in the speed of the service, or even its intermittent loss. This poor quality of service is a function of the distance – not a reflection of various providers' products. Whilst it is tempting to shop around until someone says they can provide a good service, this service will not be stable if they say the speed is less than 512K. If you are more than the 5 kilometres from the exchange do not be surprised if the service is not available for several hours at a time on a regular basis.

To find out for yourself what speed is available where you live log on to www.degrouptest.com and enter your telephone number. A near instant response will tell you the speed of service available from different providers. The distance becomes even more critical if you want to make calls over your Broadband line. The quality will be very poor, with the ends of words being 'clipped',

whole words being lost or, worst of all, calls 'dropping out' and having to be started all over again.

Mis-selling is rife as those selling the products are often paid on a commission basis, resulting in your needs coming second.

It is important to remember that there are some significant costs involved in setting up your Broadband service. For example there is an activation charge (typically 50 Euros) and there are cancellation fees (typically 50 Euros). So a mistake at the outset is to be avoided. If you cannot receive a Broadband service you can elect to have the much slower dial-up service. This will at least allow limited web access and you will be able to send and receive emails. (See below)



The next thing to ensure is that your PC operating system is capable of working with your Broadband. This usually means that any operating system older than Windows 98 Second Edition will have to be upgraded.

Enabling more than one computer with the same broadband

Most providers' equipment allows two computers to be connected to the same router by wires. If this is not convenient, for example if you wish to use a lap top in another room, or more than two need to be connected this can best be done with a wireless router. Several providers supply these as standard.



The range of a wireless router can be extended to reach other rooms or nearby outbuildings by using propriety devices that are often available from your service provider, France Telecom and computer shops.

Ensuring your computer security

Remember to ask your provider to help you install and set up computer security features (usually WEP or WPA) if you are using the wireless facility, especially if you live in close proximity to others.

Getting your broadband to work

There are four common obstacles to getting your service live:

- Language
- Lack of IT skills
- Problems with your PC (such as viruses)
- Incorrect telephone wiring in your house

Language

If your command of French, especially technical French, is limited you will be well advised to

choose a provider with an English language support service. There are a number to choose from.

Lack of IT skills

Many providers offer limited support, perhaps 30 free minutes and then you may be charged for any additional time you require. For example, Orange charges at a premium rate of 0.38 cents a minute, limited to a maximum of 10 minutes, and it is in French. If the problem is not resolved within this time you have to redial, usually speak to a different person and go through the basic questions all over again before they can get on to the problem.

Problems with your PC

You may be using a PC you brought with you from the UK that is somewhat aged to start with. This may have accumulated viruses along the way, and help may be required to get it ready to work with your Broadband service. This is not something that all providers will help you with, so be prepared to have to pay for things to be put right.

Support is not something that all providers will help you with, so be prepared to have to pay for things to be put right.



Incorrect wiring

As you may know, filters have to be used on telephone sockets to ensure the operation of Broadband. However, if you are using extension cables as well this will cause difficulties. Make sure you check with your provider what is needed before you try to get the service working.

Assistance to set up problem computers may take a long time so cost and ease of communication are considerations. Choose a provider with a freephone number for technical support that operates an unlimited service - and check that the support is also available in English.

At UKTelecom, we provide free English language support which will save you time and money - so long as this is on a fair usage basis.

Telephony on Broadband

Providing a second telephone line

Your Broadband service will usually include a virtual second telephone line with a different number. This comes at no extra cost and means that two separate conversations can be held at the same time. This requires a separate phone to be connected to the back of the router.



There are a couple of quirks with this second line.

- Calls can be received on your France Telecom number in the usual way, but incoming calls on this number can also be answered on your phone connected to the router. However, calls made to the Broadband telephone line can only be answered on the phone plugged into the router.
- Call packages are available for both France Telecom lines and Broadband telephone. If you opt for a package on your Broadband line you need to be aware that to benefit from the package you can only make calls with the phone connected to your router!

Another problem not widely understood is the variable call quality of Broadband telephone calls. Unlike calls made over an ordinary telephone where there is exclusive use of the line whilst it is being used, Broadband calls are carried over the Internet. When this is done voice is converted into small data packages. This can be likened to a call being made up of a lot of small railway carriages. The quality breaks down when the couplings between these carriages disengage. The result is that syllables and whole words may be lost, resulting in the listener hearing clipped words, or missing complete words. If the problem is sufficiently serious, the call drops out and the number will have to be redialled.

There are a number of possible reasons for this loss of call quality. It may be that the distance between your PC and the local telephone exchange is such that the signal is poor. Alternatively it might be congestion on the Broadband service itself. There is nothing that can be done to improve this situation at present, so subscribers have to make the choice to continue to use the service or revert to traditional type phone calls.

'Free' phone calls

As with phone calls there is a huge amount of mis-leading advertising that you do not see in the UK, leading you to believe that you can really get something for nothing. Once contact has been made with these advertisers it quickly becomes apparent that the calls are not free.

Once contact has been made with these advertisers it quickly becomes apparent that the calls are **NOT FREE**.

There are several types of package to choose from. These are usually in the form of unlimited calls to a group of destinations and to certain line types. For example you can choose to pay a monthly fee that will allow you to call French local and national land line numbers; or for a higher fee calls to the main English speaking countries may be included. This latter group will also include calls to mobiles in the USA and Canada.

Beware though to check if there are connection charges (see below).

Taking over the France Telecom line

Some providers will offer to take over your France Telecom line. In effect this will mean that all your calls will go over the Internet (Broadband line). This service is not always available and will depend on where you live. Whilst this represents a good saving remember that if your service fails for any reason you will not be able to make any calls at all! In many rural areas, you may experience regular, and long, periods of loss of access with this type of service. So, if you have any doubts ask if anyone else nearby uses the service and check with them. Remember that you will usually have to sign a 2 year contract for this type of service and early cancellation because of poor quality will not release you from the high early termination charges. Many people have mobile phones, so emergencies can still be addressed. However, if you live in a remote area with poor mobile coverage the risk of this type of contract may be too high.

Dial-Up service

This inexpensive service can be purchased on a monthly contract, with a typical cost of €14.10 cents for unlimited use between 6.00am and 8.00pm.

If you use the service outside this time you will be charged about 1.3 cents per minute by France Telecom.

You may wish to use this service whilst you are waiting for your Broadband to be connected (this usually takes 2 to 3 weeks.)

Most modern computers already have a built in modem. If yours does not your local computer shop will be able to provide you with one.

Every care has been taken to ensure accuracy of the information contained in this guide. However, UK Telecom cannot accept any responsibility for any inaccuracy as providers may change their prices at any time. Therefore it is recommended that the latest rates are obtained directly from the offices or web sites of providers being considered.



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What do I do if my telephone stops working?



Complete loss of service

If you cannot receive or make any calls the problem will most likely be due to the telephone line being faulty. One of the big differences between the UK and France is that in France many more telephone lines are carried above ground on poles. This, coupled with a more widely dispersed population with a higher proportion in rural areas, means that the service is much more susceptible to storm damage. It follows that most causes of a loss of service are due to line damage and therefore have to be investigated by France Telecom.

Finally, check that there has been no damage to the telephone wiring in your property, and that all equipment is connected in the usual way. If the fault is with your wiring or equipment and a France Telecom engineer has been called out to investigate you are likely to be charged.

One other possibility is that an electrical storm, or simply age, could cause your telephone handset not to work. Always try another handset before you look any further.

Check list

- Check that your handset is working
- Check that there is no obvious fault with your wiring and that your phone is plugged in properly
- Check that you cannot receive incoming calls by using your mobile phone or getting a neighbour to call your number

If these do not reveal a problem call France Telecom on 1013. Choose 'Option 1' for poor quality or total failure on your line. This is a French language automated service that will ask you to give your number and a description of the fault. Your call needs to be made from a noise free environment or your message may fail. Make sure you can give a clear description of the problem across clearly.

Calls can be made, but are poor quality

If both incoming and outgoing calls are poor

quality the problem will again be on the France Telecom line. You should give three detailed examples of calls with a poor quality.

Dial 1013 to report the fault and ask for a 'Mirabelle' test to be made. The test is normally carried out whilst you are still on the line.

If the fault is intermittent, make sure you tell this to the engineer. Give any other relevant information e.g. is the intermittent fault always at a particular time of day, is it to certain destinations only or is it just when it rains.

This is not a joke.

There are instances when problems occur because the line has come down from poles and is laying in a ditch. The service only fails when it has been raining and the ditch is full of water.

All these pieces of information are used to replicate or assist in the identification of the problem.

Check List

- Have you made a list of the times when the service fails or quality drops?
- Have you considered variations in weather and if they are linked to a drop in service?
- Remember the fault line is a French language service so make sure you can explain the problem clearly

Incoming calls are good but outgoing calls are poor

This is most likely to happen where you are using an alternative provider to France Telecom to carry your calls. This is because their service only affects outgoing calls. In practice this does not happen very often, and when it does it will effect a small area, not the whole country. To ensure the quickest resolution call your provider and describe the problem. Also include

the time of day and the numbers being called. This will enable their engineers to replicate the calls using their test equipment and procedures. Make sure you let them know if calls are OK to land lines but not to mobiles, as this could point to a mobile operator having a problem.

Occasionally just a single destination - usually an overseas number - can have poor quality. In these cases do not wait for 3 examples, as the cause may be with another supplier involved in the international route your call goes over.

Good providers will be able to route your calls over a different network whilst the problem is being solved. Telecom ask if they have the ability to put

you onto an alternative network at the same low costs in the event of a service problem. In any event such problems can usually be put right within a day.

Check list

- Is call quality poor to both land lines and mobiles, or just to mobiles?
- Have you made a list of 3 examples having noted the date, time of day, telephone number and type of number being called?
- Be prepared to explain the problem accurately in French if your provider does not offer Customer Support in English



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What do I do when my Broadband stops working?



Keeping the Broadband service going

Your internet service uses the same telephone line as your phone. It does however use a different bandwidth. Filters are used on sockets other than the router or modem, to keep these two types of 'traffic' separate. You can experience problems with your internet service whilst your phone service remains satisfactory.

There are a number of reasons for the service to stop working. The most common are:

Non specific problems

There are times when the service fails for no apparent reason. The first step is to reboot the router/modem. (This means simply switching it off for about 30 seconds and then switching it back on.) This will resolve a great many problems and should avoid the trouble of reporting the fault. If none or only some lights come back on the modem/router your equipment may have been damaged by a power surge - see below. If however the modem/router appears to be working, check that the phone line is working. If it is not it will be a line problem, not a Broadband problem. If the phone is working then report the problem to your provider - see below.

Check List

- Check that the power supply to the modem is live
- Check that the modem is plugged in correctly
- Check that the lights on the modem are showing: PWR (power); LAN or ETH (Lan or Ethernet); DSL (the internet connection)
- Check that the phone line is working

Faults on the France Telecom line

Your service 'on-line' provider will be able to test your service on line whilst you are reporting a fault. This simple test will confirm if the Broadband service is live to your line. If it is the problem is likely to be with the line between your local telephone exchange and your property and will need to be reported by you to France Telecom. France Telecom usually repair these faults very quickly, and often before the ordinary fault reporting service has completed its cycle. Call France Telecom on 1013.

This is an automated service that will ask you to give your number and a description of the fault. Your call needs to be made from a noise free environment or your message may fail.

- To report a fault call 1013 and choose 'Option 1' for poor quality or total failure on your line. This is a French language service. Make sure you can get a description of the problem across clearly.

Power surges

These usually result from an electrical storm and can damage the modem. Replacement is often required, usually at the customers' expense. You can protect yourself from these surges by installing a surge protector between your electrical socket and router/modem. This will not however protect you from a major surge.

Surge Protectors are inexpensive and are available from most electrical and computer shops.

Installing new software

Occasionally this can result in conflicts and you may need to contact your provider for assistance. This may incur a charge.

Other changes made to your PC

If you delete software, make changes to settings etc, you may disable your Broadband service. Reinstall the software first before reporting a fault as you may otherwise incur a charge.

Viruses and Spyware:

It is important that you have an adequate level of protection for your computer as viruses and spyware can and often do interfere with the sound operation of your Broadband service. In addition you also are open to risks of fraud over the internet.

Viruses: McAfee, Kaspersky, Avast etc. are just a few examples of good softwares available at modest cost. In addition there are several free packages, these include Avast and AVG.

Spyware: Adaware and Spybot Search & Destroy are two examples of free software.

Call Cost Comparisons January 2008

You have probably found out that the telecommunications market in France is more lightly regulated than in the UK, and will already be aware of the many hidden costs or costs not usually charged in the UK because of its more competitive market place. If not help is here with this simple comparison, so in just a few moments you can see how to avoid paying more than you need to for the same products.

If you really want to know how much you are paying for your telephone calls you need to look behind the headline price quoted in many adverts. Most providers, including France Telecom, increase the amount they can charge you by applying a connection charge to every call you make. You may also find that some providers will aggressively round up the time you have been on the phone to further add to their profits.

UK Telecom does not apply a connection charge to any of its call services. Nearly all providers charge 12 cents each time a call you dial is answered. Although this does not sound like a lot it will add substantially to your monthly telephone bill. This is because the average length of a call to a mobile phone is 3 minutes and to land lines typically 3 to 5 minutes. The result is that should you have a typical call pattern you can expect to save 60% on your call costs compared with the same calls purchased from France Telecom, and 30% compared with other providers such as Phonexpat and Teleconnect.

UK Telecom prices are simple to understand - it will cost you just 2.99 cents (including tax) a minute to call a French local or national land line number, or a UK land line number. There are no hidden charges. This low price is for any time of day - there are no peak rates, so it is as cheap to call your friends and family back home as if you were still in the UK.

In addition to exceptional value for money for calls to land lines UK Telecom also provides competition beating prices for calls to mobiles. Our simple to read comparison tables below and over the page are there to help you pick your way through the price jungle. You will see that this is simply an unbeatable deal!

All Customer Support is FREE via our Freephone number and in English



Calls to the UK

All prices include VAT / TVA & are based on peak standard rates

Includes connection fee!

	1st Minute	5 Minutes	Includes Connection fee
UKtelecom ➤	2.99 cents	14.95 cents	No Fee!
Primus	12.9 cents	24.5 cents	10.0 cents
Phonexpat	15.0 cents	27.0 cents	12.0 cents
Teleconnect	7.0 cents	35.0 cents	No Fee
Onetel	16.9 cents	40.5 cents	11.0 cents
Tele2	17.0 cents	41.9 cents	11.9 cents
France Telecom	34.0 cents	122.0 cents	12.0 cents

Local & National Calls in France

All prices include VAT/TVA & are based on peak standard rates

Includes connection fee!

	1st Minute	5 Minutes	Includes Connection fee
UKtelecom	2.99 cents	14.95 cents	No Fee!
Primus	11.0 cents	15.0 cents	10.0 cents
Phonexpat	12.9 cents	16.5 cents	12.0 cents
Teleconnect Local	14.0 cents	18.0 cents	13.0 cents
Teleconnect National	14.0 cents	26.0 cents	11.0 cents
Onetel Local	11.0 cents	15.0 cents	10.0 cents
Onetel National	12.0 cents	16.0 cents	11.0 cents
Tele2 Local	12.7 cents	15.9 cents	11.9 cents
Tele2 National	10.6 cents	21.8 cents	11.9 cents
France Telecom Local	10.6 cents	21.8 cents	7.8 cents
France Telecom National	17.2 cents	44.0 cents	10.5 cents

Calls to French Mobiles

All prices include VAT/TVA & are based on peak standard rates


	1st Minute	5 Minutes	Includes Connection fee
UKtelecom	22 cents	110 cents	No Fee!
Primus	33.0 cents	93 cents	18.0 cents
Phonexpat	44.0 cents	132 cents	22.0 cents
Teleconnect	40.0 cents	156 cents	11.0 cents
Onetel to SFR & Orange	52.0 cents	140 cents	30.0 cents
Onetel to Bouygues	61.0 cents	189 cents	29.0 cents
Tele2 to SFR & Orange	35.8 cents	95 cents	21.0 cents
Tele2 to Bouygues	40.9 cents	121 cents	21.0 cents
France Telecom to SFR & Orange	26.8 cents	62.4 cents	17.9 cents
France Telecom to Bouygues	30.0 cents	78.4 cents	17.9 cents

Calls to UK Mobiles

All prices include VAT / TVA & are based on peak standard rates

	1st Minute	5 Minutes	Includes Connection fee
UKtelecom	31.2 cents	156 cents	No Fee!
Primus	37.0 cents	145 cents	10.0 cents
Phonexpat	60.0 cents	212 cents	22.0 cents
Teleconnect	34.0 cents	170 cents	No Fee
Onetel	37.8 cents	145 cents	11.0 cents
Tele2	44.9 cents	177 cents	11.9 cents
France Telecom	56.2 cents	193 cents	22.0 cents

All the information used in compiling these tables was taken from the individual providers web sites and correct at time of publication. This information is of a general nature and readers should make their own checks if more detail is required.



Useful Telephone
Numbers and
Contacts

France Telecom

Enquiries and Assistance

1013 After sales, line problems
(bad quality, interruption of service ..)

1014 Sales, account and billing enquiries

3900 Technical support

3000 24h/7 automated support

Line Features

3103 France Telecom voicemail

3651 Hide caller ID when making a call

3131 Last caller ID

Regulation Authorities/Consumer Protection

ARCEP (Autorité de Régulation des Communications Electroniques et des Postes)

7, Square Max Hymans,
75730 Paris Cedex 15

Tel: +33 1 40 47 70 00

Fax: +33 1 40 47 71 98

<http://www.art-telecom.fr/>

(Equivalent to OFCOM)

DGCCRF (Direction Générale de la Concur- rence, de la Consommation et de la Répression des Fraudes)

See web site for list of addresses of local agencies:

<http://www.finances.gouv.fr/DGCCRF/>

UFC (Union Fédérale des Consommateurs) - Que Choisir

See website for list of addresses of local branches:

<http://www.quechoisir.org>

See website for list of addresses of local branches:

<http://www.quechoisir.org>

Chargeable France Telecom Features

Individual features

Signal d'Appel

> Call waiting, €1.50/month

Stop Secret

> Call filtering, €1/month

Transfert d'Appel

> Call diversion, €1.50/month

Présentation du Numéro

> Caller Phone Number Display, €1.50/month

Présentation du Nom

> Caller Name Display, €2.30/month

Messagerie Vocale Enrichie

> Customized voicemail, €1.50/month

Bundled features

Pack 3 Services

> Caller Name Display

+ Call waiting

+ Call diversion

• €3/month

Pack Filtrage d'Appels

> Call filtering

+ Call waiting

+ Caller Name Display

• €3/month

Simply email or phone (free from France) UKTelecom for your free guide:

email: enquiries@uktelecom.uk.net






















Tel: from France: 0800 940 614 (no need to use international code 00 44)

Tel: from the UK: 01483 833 795 www.uktelecom.uk.net

Telephone Services

User's Check List

A simple method to allow like for like comparisons between providers being considered














Service			Other
Can Lines be supplied / arranged?		 (€25 fee to arrange with FT)	
Is the customer sales service bilingual?	 General sales enquires - special services		
Is the customer after sales / email service bilingual?			
Are all calls to the provider free?	 Nos.1013 & 1014 free. No 3900: 34 cents/min	 from France	
Is there a fee for having an account?			
Is there a connection fee?	 Typically 12 cents		
Cost for first minute to land lines for local calls, including tax:	€0.106	€0.0299	
Cost for first minute to land lines for national calls, including tax:	€0.179	€0.0299	
Cost for first minute to mobiles:	€0.274 to €0.307	€0.22	
Cost for calls to UK including tax:	€0.34	€0.0299	
Can calls to UK 0800, 0845 and 0870 numbers be made on the service?			
Cost/min for calls to UK numbers: 0800 0845 0870	 €0.22/min + €0.12 connection €0.56/min + €0.12 connection	€0.047 €0.1645 €0.235	
Cost of unlimited call packages land lines in France:	 Optimale illimite (also gives unlimited calls to Europe, but not Australia) €39/month with line rental	€19.90/month (FT line €16.00/month) = €35.90/month	
Cost of unlimited call packages, land lines to 'Anglo' group of countries:*			
Is there a low cost number (0844) for UK friends and family to use to call you, cost?		 3 pence per minute	
Is there a monthly rental for the number?	N/A		
What is the notice period for cancellation of the contract?	Variable, generally 1 month	1 Month	

*The 'Anglo' group of countries is typically UK, Ireland, Australia, Canada and the USA. Calls to Canada and the USA will usually include calls to mobiles.

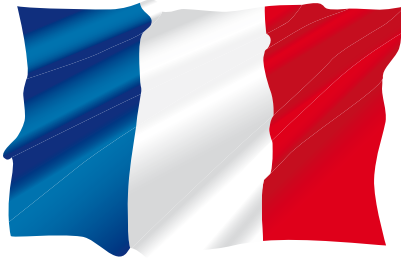
Broadband Services

User's Check List

A simple method to allow like for like comparisons between providers being considered

Service			Other
Are the Terms & Conditions easily available and in English?			
Cost of installation (activation):	Free	€25.00	
Cost of modem:	Rented	Free Loan	
Monthly charge:	€29.90 to €34.90	€29.00 to €29.50	
Monthly modem rental:	€3.00/month	Free	
Can I use my own modem with the service?			
Is an installation guide supplied and in English?	Only in French		
Is the router/modem wireless enabled?			
Is there a limit to how much the service can be used, eg bandwidth?	 (Fair Usage Policy)	 (Fair Usage Policy)	
Is there a call package for land lines in France, cost?	Included	€4.99 / month	
Is there a call package for landlines in 'Anglo' group?*	€7.00/month	€9.99 / month	
Is there a connection charge for calls made on this service?			
Cost to call help line:	€0.34/min, max 10 mins & then redial	Free	
Is technical support available in English?			
If free, is there a limit to the support given?	(Paid for service)	Unlimited	
Is there a cancellation or termination fee?	Yes if within 1st year	€45	
Minimum contract period	12 months	30 days	
Is there an alternative service available if Broadband is not?	Dial-up, monthly, several contracts	Dial-up, monthly contract	

*The 'Anglo' group of countries is typically UK, Ireland, Australia, Canada and the USA. Calls to Canada and the USA will usually include calls to mobiles.



INSURANCE IN FRANCE

Insurances, Investments and Pension Placements

Asttral is a premier partner of UKTelecom and also a long established French Insurance Broker with a specialist section focusing on English speaking clients. All our staff are English speaking and, as some of our principals are French nationals, we have a full knowledge of all French insurance issues. Asttral offers our clients a combined 70 years of experience in insurance cover in France and overseas.

France, like any other nation, has particular features in its insurance industry, which differentiate it from that which residents or visitors may have experienced in their country of origin. It is important that newcomers are aware of these features.

Our extensive experience means we can offer advice and guidance to ALL categories of people with interests in France and provide a comprehensive solution for all insurance requirements:

> **Homes**

Principal or secondary homes, rented property, both short and long term lets, gites etc.

> **Health**

Top-up insurance on the French state health system, or, where required, full health cover in France. Advice offered on entry into state health system.

> **Investments, pensions and placements**

> **Cars, caravans, motor homes**

> **Commercial insurance**

Includes chambres d'hôtes, gites complexes, hotels and businesses, professional and public liability etc.

> **Pets**

> **Marine**

> **Special risk**

Event insurance etc.

Our rates are competitive and our covers are placed with some of the major insurance companies in France and Europe.

When contacting us, please mention you have been referred by UKTelecom.

ASTTRAL
ASSURANCES TERRESTRE & TRANSPORT INTERNATIONAL



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