

by Alan J. Pierce, EdD

D-Link's DAP-1320 Wireless Range Extender

Are you looking for a way to boost the Wi-Fi signal at your residence, office, or classroom? If you answered yes you will probably be interested in learning more about the new D-Link DAP-1320 Wireless Range Extender. To boost your signal in a weak area you place this extender near the area where your Wi-Fi signal is weak. It simply receives your protected signal from your Wi-Fi wireless router, boosts it, and then retransmits it further into the area where your signal was previously too weak to be effective. The end result is you end up with a more robust wireless network.

Physically the D-Link DAP-1320 range extender is a little larger than one of the chargers that you use to charge your cellphone or tablet. See photo 1. Since it is wireless it only needs you to plug it directly into any standard electrical outlet. The last step is to give it access to your protected network so it can start to boost and retransmit your Wi-Fi signal.

If your Wireless router has a WPS (Wi-Fi Protected Access) button, setup is unbelievably easy. Wireless Access Point Routers let you add new hardware to your network by just pressing a button. If your wireless router doesn't have a WPS button the procedure isn't difficult, but it will take a little more time to get the D-Link DAP-1320 up and boosting your Wi-Fi signal.



Setup Procedure

Wi-Fi Wireless Router with a WPS Button

1. Plug in the DAP-1320 into an electrical outlet and wait until the LED on the unit changes from red to blinking amber.
2. Now press the WPS button on your Access Point Wireless Router. On most Access Point Routers an LED light near this button should blink. If the light on your router doesn't blink, check your wireless router manual or use the procedure outlined below for routers without a WPS button.
3. On the D-Link DAP-1320 press and hold its WPS button until the blinking light on the unit changes from amber to blinking green.
4. When the light on the D-Link DAP-1320 turns solid green your installation is done.



Setup Procedure

Wi-Fi Wireless Router without a WPS Button

1. Plug in the DAP-1320 into an electrical outlet and wait until the LED on the unit changes from red to blinking amber.
2. On your computer disconnect from your current wireless network selection.
3. The D-Link extender, even though it doesn't have access to the internet, is broadcasting a signal and you want to select it from the list of available networks. You will find the extender Wi-Fi name (ex. Dlink-6933) and its password (ex. Ocdh1234) on a peel and stick label that comes with your extender.
4. Now open your web browser (ex. Internet Explorer) and type <http://dlinkap.local> to access the D-Link wizard that will help you complete the installation.
5. Click launch to start the setup wizard and then select manual configuration. Click next to continue.
6. Your computer will now scan for available wireless networks.
7. From the available wireless networks listed, select your own wireless router and click connect to continue.
8. Enter your password for your home, office, or school router and then click next.
9. Click the check box to use the same Wi-Fi Network name and password as your home or office Wi-Fi wireless router.
10. Click save to complete the setup. In two minutes the LED on your D-Link DAP-1320 should be a solid Green which means your network signal is stronger in the location where you placed the D-Link DAP-1320.

Reasons to Drool

The D-Link DAP-1320 lets you easily expand the coverage of your Wi-Fi network. Once it is operational you will be able to use your Wi-Fi networked devices in areas where your signal was previously too weak or just nonexistent.

Not So Cool – But Necessary

If you want to boost your Wi-Fi signal at work and you don't have access to the WPS button or know the wireless modem's password you cannot set up the D-Link DAP-1320. This is obviously proper security for your network. It is in place to keep data from outside prying eyes. If you plan on using the D-Link DAP-1320 to improve your Wi-Fi signal where you work, you should first talk to the person in charge of computer services before you purchase this device.

*Alan is co-author of **Introduction to Technology Glencoe McGraw-Hill 2010** and a **TechDirections Magazine** Columnist . Visit www.technologytoday.us for past columns, reviews, and resources.*