

WIRELESS AND WIRED CONNECTIONS

It is important to remember that for a computer having access to both a wired internet connection and a wireless connection. The mere act of plugging and unplugging the network cable does *not* disable or enable the wireless; the user must explicitly disable or enable the wireless as follows.

Please note that these screenshots were taken from a Windows 7 machine, so for XP and Vista there may be differences in specifics, but the general principle of manually enabling and disabling wireless is the same.

For the following example, we assume that the computer is initially connected to a wireless network, which is the norm for many people these days.

Initial State (Wireless)

FIGURE 1



Note the wireless icon in the toolbar, circled above in red, which indicates that the computer is connected to a wireless network.

Changing from Wireless to Wired

Plug in a network cable to the computer. You might think you have switched to wired, but if you look at the toolbar, it will appear the same as in figure 1. You are still running wireless.

Click the wireless icon to bring up the window shown in figure 2. It shows you still connected to wireless

FIGURE 2



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Click the Disconnect button circled in Figure 2. This will explicitly disconnect you from the wireless network. Assuming you have plugged in your network cable and you have a good regular wired connection, you will now be connected only to wired. Your toolbar will appear as in Figure 3 below.

FIGURE 3



Note the icon has changed from the wireless icon to the wired icon (a little monitor and plug).

Changing from Wired to Wireless

Essentially, this is the reverse process. Click on the little wired icon from figure 3 and receive the popup as shown in Figure 4. Click the Connect Button shown circled below. As a final step, you can unplug the cable.

Note that you want to reconnect to wireless *before* you unplug the cable, or you will briefly interrupt your internet connection, which may do things like disconnect you from Wimba, log you out of MSN Messenger, and so on.

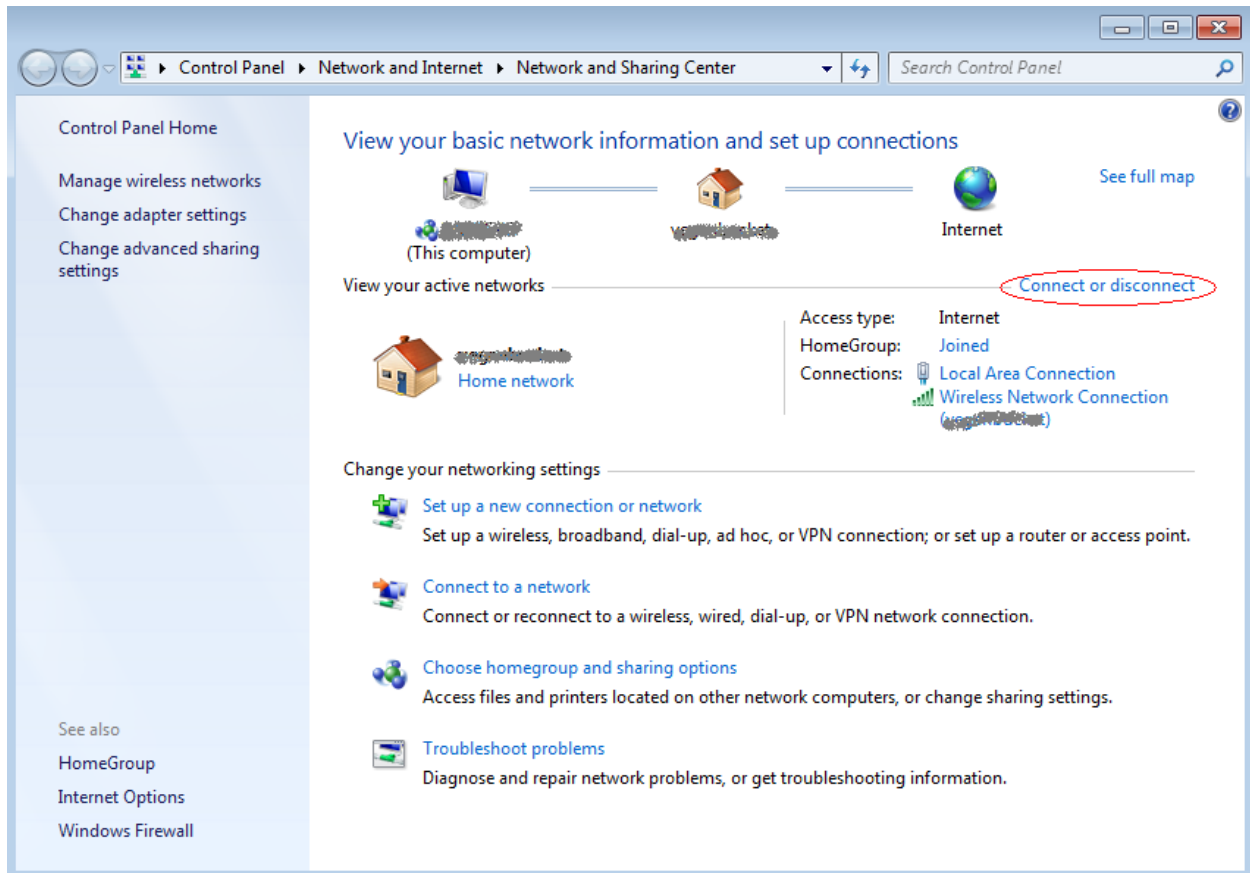
FIGURE 4



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If you go to Control Panel and find the Network And Sharing Center, you will see the something like Figure 5, with the option to Connect or Disconnect as shown circled in red.

FIGURE 5



Summary

To go from Wireless to Wired:

- Plug in the network cable
- Click “Disconnect” from your wireless network
- Verify that you have a wired connection with icon

To go from Wired to Wireless:

- Click “Connect” to your wireless network
- Unplug the network cable
- Verify that you have a wireless connection with icon