

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/1712/linksys-wrt54g4g-router-3g-broadband>

## Linksys WRT54G3G-UK Wireless-G Router for 3G/UMTS Broadband

A network anywhere? Surely not

by Stuart Miles published on 23 August 2006

For business travellers wanting to access the office anywhere in the UK most have switched to a 3G datacard. However if there is more than one of you on the road, you'll need a datacard for every man, woman and child won't it? Not according to Linksys. It's idea has been to create a networking device that allows you to not only connect to the internet using a Vodafone 3G datacard, but also to share that connection once connected. There are two parts to the WRT54G3G. The first is that it works just as like any other standard router, and can be plugged into your existing fixed line WAN (cable modem or DSL), sharing this connection with other four computers via ethernet (RJ45), or multiple computers via wireless (Wi-Fi). The second is that plug in the Vodafone datacard and providing you are in a 3G or GPRS area you can not only connect to the internet, but now share that network wirelessly so other computers (ie your colleagues) can use that internet connection as well. In practice and the router does what its says it does on the tin. Although only working with Vodafone's data card collection - either the current standard 3G offering or the new improved superfast HSDPA variant currently within the M25 - speeds are never too far behind regular broadband connections. The newer of the cards offers a potential 1.4Mbps for downloads and 384kbps for uploads and Vodafone reckons it'll cover ninety per cent of the areas where 3G is currently in use by the end of 2006 so we would recommend checking Vodafone's web site before purchasing this product. In terms of security, the unit ticks all the boxes and is compatible with WEP, WPA and WPA2. It comes with a fully configurable built-in DHCP server, VPN passthrough and a SPI firewall. It also allows the user to configure port forward for specific applications and to define an IP address to be placed on the DMZ. Setup is simple, although you



...cont.

will need a PC to do it. After that however if you've got Mac colleagues then they can join in with the fun too. So what's the catch? Well the device although perfect as a travelling solution isn't very "travelable". The router, while flat is still fairly large and the Powerpack even larger. Then there is the set up. While incredibly simple, we still have teething problems getting the router to recognise our datacard a problem which judging by some comments on web forums isn't isolated. The final worry is data. Not its protection, but its price. Unless you are on a decent package with Vodafone, more users means you are likely to speed though your allowance as fast as a group of kids with a box of doughnuts.

## VERDICT

Grumbles aside, the WRT54G3G is a fantastic mobile networking solution that allows you to create a wireless network wherever you go as long as there is a 3G or GPRS signal. It would have been nice to see a battery pack option and a smaller casing for ultimate portability however we love the fact that you can use this box to share your internet connection (and datacard) with your colleagues. As an ad hoc network at a conference or trade show you'll be hard pushed to beat it as long as you can afford the connection fees.

---

## At a glance

### What is it?

3G network router

### Good

Allows you to share your 3G network with colleagues

### Bad

Large, even larger power pack, difficulties setting up, connection costs

### Verdict

As an ad hoc network at a conference or trade show you'll be hard pushed to beat it as long as you can afford the connection fees

**Price** 130 plus Vodafone connect card

**Our score**

**8/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**