

# Introduction to Networking

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The two most common types of networks are peer-to-peer and client/server. Both networks serve the same purpose &ndash; they allow users to share information or resources.

## Peer-to-Peer Networks

The most basic way to allow multiple users to share information or resources, such as printers and fax machines, is to connect multiple computers in a peer-to-peer network. A common method for setting up a peer-to-peer network is to connect computers running workgroup or client software, such as the Microsoft® Windows Vista® operating system, to a hub or to use a wireless access point. While this is a simple, low-cost solution, peer-to-peer networks are limited in what they can do. For example, peer-to-peer networks have no centralised security safeguards. Information and resources are shared from each computer, and if one computer shuts down, loses power, or loses data, it is impossible to access the information on that computer. Peer-to-peer networks also tend to slow down when more than five computers are connected.