

PEAK Class 101:

How to set up your first PEAK IP Camera. (Part I)

If you are reading this article, chances are you've already set up a simple, small office / home office network. Not long ago, it was complicated and time-consuming to set up a home network, let alone an IP camera. However, with the popularity of wired / wireless routers, setting up your home / office network is now as easy as 1-2-3. This article will help you plan, select and install your first IP Camera.



What is an IP camera?

An IP camera is a self-contained digital camera similar to a webcam but one that is able to connect directly to a computer network without the need to be plugged into a PC. It has numerous applications, especially for security purposes. They are available for wired or wireless use.

Plan your installation

You can set up the IP camera with either a wired or wireless connection, depending on the camera, where it will be located and your preferences. If you already have a wireless network, a wireless connection is usually a better choice since you will not need to run network cables around your house or office. Keep in mind that you will need a mains power supply for the IP camera. Take note of the location of your wireless router in order to maximize signal strength.

Select the IP camera

IP cameras come in various shapes and sizes. Make sure the IP camera is suitable for your purposes. If you need any special features, such as remote pan/tilt, night vision, motion detection, auto notification or video recording, make sure the models on your short list support them. If possible, read the installation manual of the model you wish to buy before the actual purchase. Compatibility between the IP camera and your wireless router should not be an issue since they all use special firmware that makes cross-platform use possible.

Installation

Remove the unit from its packaging and check that all accessories are included. Follow the instructions to mount the IP camera using its mounting kit (if applicable). Connect the power cable to the camera and use a network cable to connect it to a spare port on your wireless router (a wired connection is usually required for initial setup, but once the IP camera has been configured for wireless connection, you can remove the network cable).

Power on the unit and go to any computer system on your network. Generally speaking, you can access the IP camera by either:

- Launching a web browser and entering the IP address of your IP camera. You will not need to install any additional software / driver.
- Insert the software CD that came with the package and install the 3rd party IP camera monitoring tools. Such software will detect and monitor multiple IP cameras on your network. Repeat the software installation on all other systems on the network if you wish to access the IP camera from different computer systems.

Once you are able to access the camera, go to the configuration page and click on the "wireless section" and perform a "site survey". The IP camera will search all available wireless networks within the area. You will be prompted to enter the password key for your wireless network (if applicable). Once the IP camera has been set up to communicate wirelessly, remove the network cable.

You should now be able to access the IP camera from any computer system within your local network. If you encounter any problems, check all cables and repeat the installation if necessary.

PEAK offers a wide range of wired and wireless IP camera at an affordable price. For more information, please visit our website at www.peakhardware.com.



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