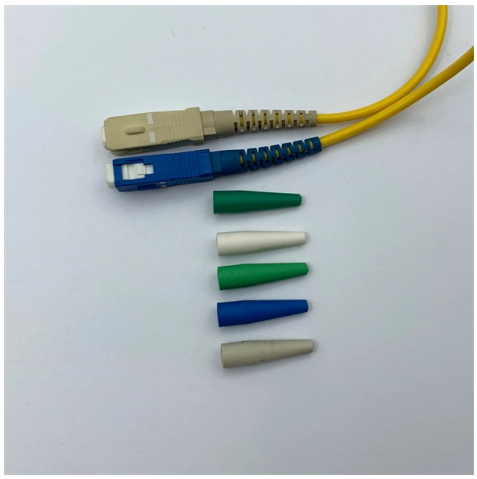
Prices of optical cables of various specifications



Overview

The core of an optical fiber cable is made of glass or plastic, which facilitates light movement with minimal signal loss.

Key Takeaways

Fiber optic cables come in single-mode and multimode types, with prices ranging from $0.05 to $6 per foot depending on type, construction, and application.Types of Fiber Optic Cables

1. Single-Mode Fiber (SMF)

• Core Diameter: 8–10 microns

• Transmission Distance: Up to 40–100 km without amplification

• Applications: Long-haul networks, campus backbones, metropolitan networks

• Construction: OS1 (indoor, tight-buffered) and OS2 (outdoor, loose-tube)

• Price Range: $0.09–$1.52 per foot depending on strand count and jacket type 2. Multimode Fiber (MMF)

• Core Diameter: 50 or 62.5 microns

• Transmission Distance: Shorter distances due to higher signal attenuation

• Applications: Data centers, enterprise LANs, short-reach connections

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• Standards: OM1, OM2, OM3, OM4
• OM1: Up to 100 ft at 10 Gbps, most affordable

• OM2: Up to 260 ft at 10 Gbps

• OM3: Up to 1000 ft at 10 Gbps

• OM4: Up to 1300 ft at 10 Gbps

• Price Range: $1.50–$6 per foot for OM3/OM4, lower for OM1/OM2 3. Armored Fiber Cables

• Purpose: Protection in harsh environments or direct burial

• Price Range: $0.50–$5 per foot depending on armor type and environmental rating 4. Indoor vs Outdoor Cables

• Indoor (PVC or LSZH jacket): Cheaper, suitable for climate-controlled environments

• Outdoor (PE, UV-resistant jacket): Higher cost, designed for aerial or long-distance installations

• Direct-buried or plenum-rated cables: Additional testing and certification increase cost 5. Aerial / Self-Supporting Cables

• Designed for overhead installations

• Price Range: $0.40–$1.50 per meter depending on fiber count and construction Factors Affecting Prices
• Fiber Count: More strands increase cost (e.g., 12-strand ~$0.50/ft, 24-strand ~$1/ft)

• Cable Construction: Loose tube, tight-buffered, armored, or non-armored

• Material: Glass fiber cores are more expensive than plastic optical fiber

• Volume: Bulk purchases (>10 km) can reduce per-foot cost by 20–40%

• Compliance & Certification: Cables meeting ITU-T, UL, or other standards may cost more

• Region & Shipping: Logistics can add 5–15% to total cost for overseas shipments Summary
• Single-mode fiber: Best for long distances, $0.09–$1.52/ft

• Multimode fiber: Best for short distances, $1.50–$6/ft for OM3/OM4

• Armored or outdoor-rated cables: Higher cost due to protection and environmental resistance

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• Bulk purchasing and proper specification can significantly reduce costs while ensuring performance Choosing the right fiber optic cable depends on distance, bandwidth requirements, environment, and budget, with single-mode preferred for long-haul and multimode for short-reach, high-speed applications.

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The price ranges reflect common project scopes and regional differences. Cost and price drivers include cable grade,

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The main cost drivers are cable grade (indoor vs outdoor, riser vs plenum), fiber type (single-mode vs multimode),

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