TKDL TECH

Los Angeles · tkdl.tech

LA TECH EMERGENCY PLAYBOOK

Fix it fast. Lock it down. Keep working.

FOUNDERS 100 EDITION

Limited release · 25+ pages · v2026

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Table of Contents

This playbook is the condensed field manual I wish every LA household and solo operator had on their fridge. Skim the table of contents, bookmark the three sections closest to your current pain, then read the

rest over coffee this weekend.

00 · How to use this playbook

Every section follows the same pattern: **triage first, fix second, prevent last**. If you are mid-emergency, jump to the yellow TRIAGE box on each page, run those three to five steps, and get working again. Come back for the prevention checklist when the house is not on fire anymore.

What you need nearby

- A laptop or phone that can get online (even tethered through cell data).
- Your router's admin password (usually on a sticker under the router).
- Your primary email's recovery phone number.
- A pen. Yes, a real one. Writing down the weird error message helps a tech 10x more than a vague description.

The golden triangle

Speed, clarity, and not making it worse. In that order. About 70 percent of emergencies get resolved by a power cycle, a cable check, or a fresh browser session. Do those first. Always.

PRO TIP	If a step says 'wait 60 seconds' — actually wait. Modems take that long to stop remembering their bad state.

01 · Internet down — the 90-second triage

Before you call the ISP, before you tweet at Spectrum, before you drive to a coffee shop — do these five things. I have resolved thousands of outages and this sequence alone fixes about three out of four of them.

TRIAGE

1. **Look at the modem lights.** Internet/Online should be solid, not blinking. Photograph the lights with your phone so you can show the tech.
2. **Power cycle in the right order.** Unplug modem and router. Wait 60 seconds. Plug modem first, wait two minutes. Then router. Wait two more.
3. **Try a different device.** If the phone on cellular works but the laptop on Wi-Fi doesn't, it's your Wi-Fi, not the internet.
4. **Check for a known outage.** On cell data open downdetector.com and search your ISP. Save yourself an hour on hold.
5. **Plug in via Ethernet.** If wired works and Wi-Fi doesn't, it's a router or wireless problem, not a service problem.

FIX

- Still down after the power cycle? Log into your router (typically 192.168.1.1 or 192.168.0.1) and look at the WAN status. 'No signal' or 'Not connected' means the problem is upstream.
- Single device offline? On Windows: Settings → Network → Reset. On Mac: System Settings → Network → remove Wi-Fi and re-add.
- Google Fiber / AT&T; Fiber users: check the ONT (the little box in a closet) for a red light. Red light = field tech needed.

PREVENT

- Buy a cheap UPS (uninterruptible power supply) for the router and modem. Brown-outs in LA are the #1 cause of 'dead' routers.
- Set a calendar reminder to reboot the router on the first Sunday of each month. Seriously.
- Have a backup plan: a $10/month hotspot plan on a cheap Android keeps you online for the four hours a year your ISP fails you.

PRO TIP ISP agents have a 'trouble ticket ID' they must give you on first contact. Write it down. It is your receipt and it is the only way you get a credit.

02 · Wi-Fi that keeps dropping

Flaky Wi-Fi is usually one of three things: interference, a router that is too far from you, or a router that is seven years old. Run through this and you will usually know which within five minutes.

TRIAGE

1. Stand right next to the router. Speed test there. If it is rock solid in that spot but crashes in your bedroom, it is coverage, not service.
2. Look at the router model. If it is older than 2019 and rented from your ISP, it is likely the bottleneck.
3. Check the 2.4 GHz vs 5 GHz bands. 2.4 GHz goes far but is slow; 5 GHz is fast but shorter range. Most routers should broadcast both — connect to the faster 5 GHz when near the router.

FIX

- **Move the router.** Central to the house, up high, not in a cabinet, not behind a TV. You just gained 20 percent coverage for free.
- **Change the channel.** LA apartments have 30+ overlapping networks. Log into the router and manually pick channel 1, 6, or 11 on 2.4 GHz, and channel 36, 40, 44, or 48 on 5 GHz.
- **Mesh system.** TP-Link Deco or Eero under $200 covers most two-bedroom homes. This is the single best Wi-Fi upgrade people ever make.
- **Guest network for IoT.** Put Ring, Nest, smart plugs on a guest Wi-Fi so they don't bog down your laptop network.

PREVENT

- Replace consumer routers every 4–5 years. The chips age and the firmware stops getting security updates.
- Password protect your Wi-Fi with WPA2 or WPA3, minimum 12 characters. 'dolphin-purple-truck-42' is stronger than 'P@ssword1!'
- Rename the default SSID. 'LINKSYS-8832' invites attention. 'Tyrrell-5G' or 'Not The FBI' tells you which is yours without advertising the make.

> **WARNING** Never hand out your Wi-Fi password in a group chat. Write it on a printable card. Tape it inside a cabinet. Airtight.

03 · Slow computer rescue (Mac + Windows)

A slow computer is rarely dying. Usually it is choking on startup items, browser tabs, and background updaters. Here is the triage that takes 15 minutes and buys most people another two years of life out of their machine.

TRIAGE — Mac

- Activity Monitor → CPU tab. Look at the top 3 rows. If Chrome is at 90%+, that's your culprit — close tabs.
- System Settings → General → Login Items. Kill anything you don't use daily. Spotify, Zoom helpers, and old printer agents are common offenders.
- Storage: under 15% free causes severe slowdowns. Apple → About This Mac → More Info → Storage Settings.

TRIAGE — Windows

- Ctrl+Shift+Esc opens Task Manager. Processes tab, sort by Memory. Anything above 1 GB and not obvious: research it.
- Task Manager → Startup apps tab. Disable everything you don't recognize. You can always turn them back on.
- Windows Update is NOT optional. If it has been more than 90 days, run it. Old Windows gets slower by design.

FIX

- Uninstall junk: control panel / App store / Finder Applications — remove anything you don't remember installing.
- Chrome eating RAM? Install an extension called 'The Great Suspender' alternative (Auto Tab Discard) — auto-sleeps unused tabs.
- Upgrade the SSD if the machine is older than 2017. $80 SSD + 30 min of labor = a computer that feels new. Do NOT upgrade RAM on modern Macs — it's soldered.
- Nuclear option: back up, reinstall the OS from scratch. One afternoon, usually cures everything.

PREVENT

- Restart your computer weekly. Sleep/wake cycles accumulate state that bogs the system down over months.
- Pick a browser. Running Chrome, Firefox, and Edge simultaneously triples the RAM usage for no gain.
- Run a disk health check twice a year. Mac: Disk Utility → First Aid. Windows: CrystalDiskInfo (free).

04 · Virus, malware, scareware removal

The scary 'Microsoft security alert! Call now!' pop-up is a scam 100 percent of the time. No Apple or Microsoft support team will ever call you. Hang up. Close the tab. You almost certainly do not have a virus yet — but clicking that number will give you one.

TRIAGE

1. Force-quit the browser. Mac: Cmd+Option+Esc. Windows: Alt+F4 on the browser window. Don't click anywhere in the pop-up.
2. When reopening the browser, decline 'Restore tabs' — that's how the scam page comes back.
3. Run a full scan. Mac: Malwarebytes free. Windows: Windows Defender full scan + Malwarebytes free.
4. Check extensions. Most browser infections hide as extensions you don't remember installing. Remove anything suspicious.

FIX

- Reset the browser. Chrome: chrome://settings/reset. Firefox: Help → Troubleshooting → Refresh Firefox.
- If the scan finds anything: quarantine, restart, scan again. Something that survives two scans is serious — get professional help.
- Change passwords for your email and bank from a DIFFERENT device. Assume anything you typed during the infection was seen.

PREVENT

- Use uBlock Origin in the browser. 90% of infections come through ads on sketchy sites.
- Install software from official sources only. Mac App Store, Microsoft Store, or the real vendor site. No 'free-download-pro.com'.
- Keep macOS and Windows auto-update ON. Those updates patch the holes that malware crawls through.

WARNING If a tech on the phone asks you to install TeamViewer, AnyDesk, or 'Quick Assist' — STOP. That is how scammers drain bank accounts. A legitimate tech from your bank, your ISP, or Apple will NEVER ask for remote access out of the blue.

05 · Recover a hacked account

Time matters. Every minute an attacker has your account is a minute they can mail themselves reset links from other services. Move in this order.

TRIAGE (first 15 minutes)

1. From a different device you trust, try to log in. If you can, change the password immediately to something 16+ characters you have never used.
2. Turn on two-factor authentication. Prefer an authenticator app (Authy, Google Authenticator, 1Password) over SMS. SMS is vulnerable to SIM-swap.
3. Review recent activity. Gmail: myaccount.google.com/security. Apple: appleid.apple.com. Sign out all other sessions.
4. Check your recovery email and phone. Attackers sometimes add their own. Remove anything you don't recognize.
5. Look in Sent + Trash for emails YOU didn't send, especially password reset emails for other services. Change those passwords too.

FIX (next hour)

- Update passwords for every account that used the same password as the breached one.
- Run 'haveibeenpwned.com' with your email address. It will list every known breach your email shows up in.
- If it's a financial account: call the bank's fraud number printed on the back of the card. Do not use a number found via Google search.
- File an identity theft report at identitytheft.gov if any money moved. Keep the PDF — banks ask for it.

PREVENT

- Password manager. Non-negotiable. 1Password, Bitwarden, or iCloud Keychain.
- Hardware key for email: YubiKey or a Google Titan. $25 keeps you safer than any software alone.
- Email is the skeleton key to your life. If someone owns your email, they own every account that can send a reset link there. Treat it accordingly.

06 · Phishing anatomy — how to spot it cold

Phishing has gotten remarkably good. AI-written emails pass every old rule-of-thumb (typos, bad grammar). Here is what still works in 2026.

The five tells

1. **Urgency + threat.** 'Your account will be closed in 24 hours.' Real companies don't move that fast over email.
2. **Mismatched sender domain.** 'Apple' but the email is from apple-support.confirm-id.com. Hover the sender name on desktop, tap-and-hold on mobile.
3. **A link that doesn't go where it says.** Hover without clicking. If the tooltip domain doesn't match, it's a trap.
4. **Requests to bypass normal channels.** Gift cards. Wire transfers. 'Don't tell accounting.' Stop. Call the person on their known number.
5. **Attachments you didn't expect.** PDFs, .docm, .zip — especially invoices or shipping notices from companies you never ordered from.

The one-question test

Before clicking anything in ANY financial, password, or account email, ask: **did I expect this?** If no, open a new browser tab, go to the company's website directly, and log in there. Never from the email link. This one habit prevents 95% of phishing losses.

Voice phishing (vishing)

- Caller ID is trivially spoofed. A call 'from your bank' from the exact number on your card is not proof of anything.
- If they ask for codes sent to your phone — they are NEVER legitimate. No bank, no Apple, no Google needs your 2FA code.
- Hang up. Call back on the number on the back of your card or on the company's official website.

PRO TIP Show a suspicious email to a family member or tech friend before acting. Scammers rely on solo panic. Pause = win.

07 · Password strategy that actually works

The old rules (change your password every 90 days, add a capital letter and a number) made everyone's security worse. They trained us to pick short, reusable, guessable passwords. Here is the 2026 playbook.

The three tiers

- **Tier 1 — email + password manager.** Long, unique, memorized. 4+ random words. Example style: 'glacier-market-foxtail-91'. No one else's problem but yours.
- **Tier 2 — banks, work, primary social.** Generated 20-character random, stored in your password manager, 2FA on.
- **Tier 3 — everything else.** Generated 16-character random in the password manager. You will never remember these and that is fine.

Must-dos

- One password, one site. No exceptions. Reuse is the single biggest cause of account takeover.
- Password manager (1Password, Bitwarden, iCloud Keychain). Free or cheap, non-optional.
- Two-factor on every critical account. Authenticator app > SMS. Hardware key > authenticator app.
- Write your tier-1 master password on paper and store it in a fire safe. This is not a joke — if you lose the master, you lose everything.

Nevers

- Never share a password by email, text, or DM. Use a password manager's 'secure share' if you must.
- Never reuse passwords across work and personal accounts.
- Never answer security questions truthfully. 'Mother's maiden name' on a public genealogy site is the attacker's favorite gift. Answer with random words from your password manager.

08 · Back up everything in under an hour

The 3-2-1 rule still works in 2026: three copies of your data, on two different media, one of them off-site. Here is the cheap consumer version that does all three.

The kit

- A 2TB external SSD (Samsung T7 Shield, WD My Passport). $130–$180.
- A cloud backup service: Backblaze ($9/month, unlimited) or iCloud/OneDrive/Google One (1–2 TB tiers).
- A reminder in your calendar: 'Backup check — 1st of each month'. One of these will silently stop working someday and you want to find out in a drill, not an emergency.

Mac setup (20 minutes)

1. Plug in the external SSD. System Settings → General → Time Machine → Add Backup Disk. Pick the SSD.
2. Enable iCloud Drive for Desktop and Documents folders: System Settings → iCloud.
3. Install Backblaze. Let it run continuously; the first backup takes a few days but that is fine.

Windows setup (20 minutes)

1. Plug in the external SSD. Settings → Update & Security → Backup → Add drive.
2. Turn on OneDrive for Desktop, Documents, Pictures.
3. Install Backblaze.

PREVENT

- Do a restore drill twice a year. Pick one file from last month's backup and restore it. If you can't, your backup is theater.
- Keep one 'cold' drive in a different location: a parent's house, a work drawer, a bank safe deposit. Rotate every 90 days.
- If you work on important files, use a versioned service (Dropbox, Google Drive). 'Oh no I overwrote it' is a time-machine problem, not a disaster.

WARNING	Ransomware will encrypt attached drives. Your external must not stay plugged in 24/7, OR your cloud backup must retain old versions (Backblaze keeps 1 year).

09 · Smart home + TV chaos

Smart homes fail the same three ways: Wi-Fi, an expired subscription, or a hub that needs to be rebooted. Here is the systematic fix.

TV / streaming

- Buffering on one app but not another? App problem. Sign out, sign back in. If it persists, remove and reinstall the app.
- Buffering on everything? Run a speed test on the TV itself if it supports it (smarthub → settings → network). Below 25 Mbps: Wi-Fi issue. Above 25 Mbps on wired: the service has a region-level problem, not you.
- Remote not working? 90% of the time: batteries. Before you factory reset anything, try two fresh AAAs.

Ring / Nest / cameras

- Offline camera: unplug, count to 60, plug back in. Give it five minutes. Most self-heal.
- Wi-Fi coverage is the #1 cause. A camera on the far side of a stucco wall will drop. Add a mesh point.
- Subscription lapsed? No cloud clips, no alerts. Open the app and check billing; this is a common 'my camera isn't working' cause that nobody thinks of.

Smart speakers (Alexa / HomePod / Google)

- Can't hear you? Unplug, wait 30 seconds, plug back in. Check the far-field microphone isn't physically covered.
- Constant wake-word false triggers? Turn down sensitivity in the app; some rooms with TVs just need this.
- Mix of brands? Use Matter (new standard) where possible — HomeKit and Alexa both support it, which cuts your juggling in half.

10 · Printer problems, solved

Printers are the most-hated hardware in the house, for good reason. Here is what actually fixes them without calling Canon at 2am.

TRIAGE

1. Power cycle the printer. Unplug from the wall, not the power button. Wait 30 seconds. Plug back in.
2. Delete the printer from the computer. Re-add using the printer's IP address rather than Bluetooth or 'nearby'.
3. Print from phone. If the phone prints and the laptop doesn't, it is a driver problem. If nothing prints, it's the printer.
4. Check ink/toner. Some printers refuse to print BLACK if a COLOR cartridge is empty — stupid, common.

FIX

- Give the printer a static IP in your router so it never 'disappears' on you. Router → DHCP → reserve IP for this MAC.
- Disable HP Smart pop-ups that won't leave you alone: HP customer service's line includes literal instructions.
- Print queue stuck? Windows: Services.msc → Print Spooler → Restart. Mac: open Printers & Scanners, right-click, Reset printing system.

PREVENT

- Buy a laser printer for home use (Brother HL-L2460DW or similar). No clogged nozzles, no $90 ink. Toner lasts a year.
- Print one page a week. Inkjets that sit idle clog. If you print rarely, a laser is twice the printer at half the cost.
- Keep the original box or a spare set of cartridges. An emergency printer trip on a Sunday is 2x the price.

11 · Phone acting up (iPhone + Android)

Phones fail four ways: battery, storage, OS update, or account sync. Walk through these before you buy a new one.

iPhone

- Settings → Battery → Battery Health. Under 80%? Replace the battery ($89 at Apple Store). Old battery explains 90% of 'my phone is slow' complaints.
- Storage nearly full? Settings → General → iPhone Storage. Delete unused apps, offload big photos to iCloud or a computer.
- iOS update available? Settings → General → Software Update. Major updates patch security AND fix most performance issues.
- Forced restart when frozen: Volume Up → Volume Down → hold Side button until Apple logo. Doesn't wipe anything.

Android

- Settings → Battery → Battery usage. If a single app is 40%+, that's your culprit. Uninstall or force-stop.
- Settings → Storage → Free up space. Android builds up cache aggressively; clearing can recover several GB.
- Safe mode to diagnose bad apps: hold power, long-press 'Power off', tap 'Safe mode'. If the phone runs smoothly here, a third-party app is to blame.
- Samsung or Pixel: security update monthly. Settings → System → Software update.

Both

- Clear the browser cache weekly if you use it a lot.
- Don't 'optimize' with third-party cleaner apps. They make things worse. Both OSes already manage this.
- Keep 20% free storage at all times. 'Out of space' is the #1 cause of phones refusing to update.

12 · Email deliverability + Gmail fixes

Two scenarios: (a) you send important emails and they land in spam; (b) you're missing emails you expected to receive. Different causes.

If you send and it lands in spam

- Check your 'from' domain reputation at mail-tester.com — free, tells you exactly what Gmail thinks of you.
- For business email on your own domain: set up SPF, DKIM, DMARC. One Saturday afternoon, never have this problem again.
- Avoid ALL-CAPS subject lines, <img> tags with huge files, and shady URL shorteners. All spam triggers.
- Warm up new email addresses. Don't send 500 cold emails from a three-day-old account.

If you're missing incoming emails

- Search spam AND trash. Gmail has both a 'Spam' folder and automatic deletion at 30 days.
- Filters: Gmail Settings → Filters. You or someone on your account may have set an auto-delete rule. Review and disable.
- Storage full? Gmail at 100% will silently reject incoming mail. One.google.com to check.
- Blocked senders: Gmail Settings → Blocked addresses. People get added here by accident all the time.

Clean house

- Use aliases. 'tyrrell+newsletter@gmail.com' still delivers to you but lets you filter and spot who sold your address.
- Unsubscribe, don't delete. Takes 10 extra seconds per newsletter; one year later your inbox is 10x calmer.
- Two-factor on the email. This is tier-1 security — see chapter 07.

13 · Small business disaster kit

Solo operators and small shops get hit by the same stuff as homes, but the downtime costs money. Here is the minimum kit to be back up in under 2 hours on a bad day.

Have these ready

- **Cloud-first files.** Google Workspace or Microsoft 365. If your laptop dies, any other laptop is five minutes from being your working laptop.
- **Password vault with teammates.** 1Password Business or Bitwarden Business. $3–$8 per seat and worth every cent.
- **Hot spare laptop.** Refurbished M1 MacBook Air for $500. In a drawer. Ready. Your business insurance, in laptop form.
- **Cell hotspot.** A $40/month Verizon hotspot plan. When ISP dies, you keep taking payments.
- **Backup POS / payment method.** Square and Stripe both offer mobile readers. Redundancy = revenue.

Paper runbook

Write down — on paper, in a folder at your physical workplace — the following: ISP account number and phone; domain registrar login; primary email recovery phone; hot-spare laptop location; where the backup hard drive lives. When the bad day comes, nobody remembers passwords. Paper works.

Insurance + compliance

- Cyber liability insurance. A small policy is about $500/year and covers ransomware cleanups that run $10k+.
- If you take card payments, check with your processor that you're PCI-compliant. It is mostly questionnaires, but not doing them can cost you fines after an incident.
- CA AB-1799 and CCPA: know what customer data you hold and where. Short written policy is enough for most solo shops; attorneys are cheap compared to audits.

14 · Digital inheritance — prep now

The hardest calls I take are from families who just lost a loved one and cannot get into the photo account, the bank login, or the Apple ID. An hour of prep now saves your family a month of grief later.

Set up now

- **Apple Legacy Contact.** Settings → Apple ID → Sign-In & Security → Legacy Contact. Takes 90 seconds.
- **Google Inactive Account Manager.** myaccount.google.com/inactive. Choose who gets what and when.
- **Facebook Legacy Contact.** In Settings → Memorialization.
- **Password manager emergency access.** 1Password and Bitwarden both let a trusted person request access after a waiting period.

The paper letter

One sealed envelope. In a fire safe. Contains: the master password to your password manager, the recovery words for any crypto wallets, PIN codes for paying accounts, a short note naming who to give this envelope to. Update this letter every year on your birthday. Most households never do this and it costs them dearly.

Crypto specifically

- Hardware wallet seed phrases on stainless steel plates (Cryptosteel, BlockMint). Fire-proof, water-proof.
- Never store seed phrases in a photo, in iCloud, or in a password manager. That is a single point of failure for everything you own on-chain.
- Multi-sig for larger holdings. Gnosis Safe or Casa for households with meaningful crypto wealth.

15 · Ergonomic + healthy setup

Hardware that ignores your body is the most expensive hardware you own. Fix this before you need a physical therapist.

The 5-minute setup check

1. Monitor top should be roughly at eye level. Laptop straight on the desk is not ergonomic — add a stand or external monitor.
2. Elbows at 90 degrees. If you are reaching up or down, raise or lower the chair.
3. Feet flat on floor (or on a footrest). Dangling legs kill your low back within a year.
4. Keyboard centered with the B key in line with your belly button. Sounds dumb, matters a lot.
5. Monitor about an arm's length away.

The 20-20-20 rule

Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. Cuts dry eye and headache frequency dramatically. A free Chrome extension ('20-20-20') will buzz you.

Gear that pays for itself

- **Chair.** A used Herman Miller Aeron on Facebook Marketplace for $400 beats any new $200 office chair by a mile.
- **External keyboard + mouse.** Logitech MX Keys + MX Master 3 is the standard for a reason. Your wrists will send you a thank-you card.
- **Monitor.** 27-inch 4K under $350 on sale. Reading code or documents on a 13-inch laptop screen is a tax on your eyes.
- **Blue-light glasses at night** if you work after dark. Cheap insurance for your sleep.

16 · Identity theft — first 48 hours

If a credit card, SSN, or Social Security login is compromised, time is not your friend. Do these things in this order.

Hour 1

1. Call the card issuer (number on the back of the card) and freeze the compromised card.
2. Change passwords on your email and any account that shares that password.
3. Turn on 2FA on email if you have not already.

Hour 2–6

1. Freeze credit at all three bureaus: Equifax, Experian, TransUnion. Each website has a 'Security Freeze' link. Free. Do it for your spouse and adult kids too.
2. File at identitytheft.gov. You'll get a PDF 'FTC Identity Theft Report' — keep it; banks and creditors will ask.
3. File a police report with LAPD non-emergency (877-275-5273). Some insurers require this to reimburse.

Day 2

1. Check annualcreditreport.com. Review every account you don't recognize.
2. Contact the IRS if the SSN is exposed: file IRS Form 14039 (Identity Theft Affidavit).
3. If mail was stolen: file with USPS at uspis.gov.

The quiet aftermath

- Set fraud alerts on all accounts. They renew every year — calendar it.
- Consider a monitoring service (Aura, IdentityGuard) for 12 months. $10–20/month is cheap insurance.
- Keep the FTC report PDF and the police report forever. Disputes can resurface years later.

17 · Common error messages, decoded

The biggest barrier to self-fix is that error messages are written for engineers. Here are the ones you will actually see.

Message	What it really means	First thing to try
'Could not verify server identity'	Your device's clock is wrong or a cert expired	Restart the device; check date/time in settings
'Your connection is not private'	Website's security certificate is broken — or you're on bad Wi-Fi	Try different Wi-Fi; don't bypass on banking sites
'No bootable device'	The hard drive is failing OR boot order is wrong	Stop using the computer; call for data recovery
'This app is not optimized for your Mac'	32-bit app won't run on newer macOS	Update the app or find a modern equivalent
'Storage almost full'	Yes, it is	See chapter 03; clear big files + old backups
'Printer offline'	The computer can't reach the printer on the network	Power-cycle printer; re-add by IP
BSOD 'Critical process died'	Driver, bad RAM, or disk failing	Boot safe mode; run chkdsk; if recurring, hardware
'Kernel panic'	Mac equivalent of BSOD; same causes	Restart; if recurring, disconnect peripherals
'Your account has been locked'	Usually rate-limited login or real compromise	Password reset through the official site only
'Verification code sent'	Always — ALWAYS — did YOU just request this?	If not, change your password now

PRO TIP Always screenshot the full error, including numeric code. A tech can diagnose a 0x80070422 in 30 seconds if you give them the number.

Appendix A · Vendor cheat sheet (LA numbers)

Save these in your phone. When your internet is down, you can't Google the number.

Service	Number	Notes
Spectrum (Charter)	855-243-8892	Say 'disconnect' to reach retention → faster support
AT&T Fiber	800-288-2020	Ask for Tier 2 if Tier 1 can't help after 15 min
Frontier Fiber	800-921-8101	Los Angeles service area growing
Verizon Wireless	800-922-0204	For hotspot and cell issues
T-Mobile	800-937-8997	Best coverage in central LA
Apple Support	800-275-2273	Schedule Apple Store visits via support.apple.com first
Microsoft Support	800-642-7676	Go through support.microsoft.com — no cold calls
Google (Paid Workspace)	via Admin Console	No public support number — use admin panel 'Get Help'
LAPD non-emergency	877-275-5273	Scam reports, stolen device reports
FBI IC3 (cybercrime)	ic3.gov	Online form only — recommended for fraud losses
FTC Identity Theft	877-438-4338	identitytheft.gov for printable report
Your local electrician	—	Fill this in NOW on paper
TKDL TECH	(424) 421-1818	That's me. I answer. tkdl.tech

Appendix B · Phone scripts for ISP / support

Good phone support is a dialogue you prepare for. Use these word-for-word. You'll skip 30 minutes of scripted troubleshooting you've already done.

When you call your ISP about an outage

'Hi. I'm calling about an outage at [address]. Account ending [last 4 of phone].'

'I've already power-cycled the modem and router in order. Internet light is [red/blinking/off].'

'I can see [IP address or no IP] on my WAN status page. I'd like to open a ticket please.'

'Can you provide the ticket ID before we hang up, and the estimated resolution time?'

When you want a credit for downtime

'I had a confirmed outage from [date] to [date], ticket [ID]. That's [X] days.'

'My monthly bill is [amount]. I'd like a pro-rated credit for those days.'

'I'll hold while you process it. Thanks for your help.'

When you want the retention team

'I'd like to cancel my service please.'

(They will transfer you. Retention has the power to give discounts Tier 1 cannot.)

'I've been a customer for [X] years. I've had [Y] outages this year. I'd like to see what you can do on the bill.'

When you call your bank's fraud line

'Hi. I'm calling from the number on the back of my card. I need to report a suspicious transaction.'

'The charge was [amount] to [merchant] on [date]. I did not authorize it.'

'I'd like to dispute the charge and please flag the card for fraud monitoring.'

'Do I need to file anything with identitytheft.gov for this case?'

WARNING If the 'bank' calls YOU first, hang up. Call back on the number on the back of your card. Always.

Appendix C · 30-minute monthly maintenance worksheet

Print this page. Do the checklist the first Sunday of every month. You will save yourself at least one emergency per year.

	Task	Time
■	Restart router + modem (in order, 60-second waits)	5 min
■	Restart all computers and phones (a real shutdown, not sleep)	3 min
■	Run OS updates on all devices (macOS, Windows, iOS, Android)	10 min
■	Check password manager for reused or weak passwords	3 min
■	Empty browser cache + review installed extensions	2 min
■	Verify backups ran (Time Machine / Windows Backup / Backblaze)	2 min
■	Test restore ONE file from the backup	2 min
■	Scan for malware (Malwarebytes free, quick scan)	2 min
■	Check disk space — keep 15%+ free	1 min
■	Walk through the house and dust out vents / behind computer fans	5 min
■	Check smoke + CO detector batteries (you are already on 'maintenance mode' anyway)	3 min
■	Glance at credit card + bank statements for weirdness	5 min
■	Review recent login activity: google, apple, email provider	3 min
■	Update the paper letter (chapter 14) if anything major changed	2 min

Date completed: _____ Initials: _____

PRO TIP Set a recurring calendar event. Name it 'TKDL monthly check'. Your future self will thank your past self.

Appendix D · When to call TKDL TECH

The playbook covers the majority of everyday emergencies. Sometimes you want a human. Here is when to pick up the phone.

Call us when

- You've tried the triage steps and you're still down — and downtime is costing you money or sanity.
- Suspected ransomware or data breach. Do not pay. Do not power off. Unplug from the internet. Call.
- You are moving offices, setting up a new home, or opening a studio. Preventive setup is 10x cheaper than emergency fixes.
- You inherited a loved one's devices and cannot get in. We work carefully and legally, with documentation.
- You want an advisor on retainer. We run monthly retainers for LA small businesses starting at $199/month.

How we work

- Messages: reply within 1 business day. Usually same-day.
- Emergency line: same-day call-back, after-hours triage available on retainer.
- On-site in LA metro within 48 hours, usually next day for downtown / West LA.
- Remote work first when we can. Faster, cheaper, same result for most jobs.
- Clear pricing. You approve before anything starts. No surprise bills, ever.

Service menu

- **Emergency triage** — $125 flat, remote or in-person. Get you working today.
- **Computer tune-up** — $150 per machine. The '08+' slow-fix chapter, done for you.
- **Smart home & Wi-Fi overhaul** — starting at $399. Mesh, hardware, wiring, configuration.
- **Security & backup setup** — $275. Password manager, 2FA, backups, monitoring. The full chapter 07/08.
- **Monthly retainer (small biz)** — $199–$799/month. First-on-call, proactive maintenance.
- **Custom AI / web build** — scoped per project. Free site builder on tkdl.tech/builder, or hire us to polish.

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Thank you for being one of the Founders 100. This playbook is living — new editions ship every quarter, and Founders get each update for free, for life. Stay safe out there.