

Price of Pre-fabricated Optical Cable

Article Overview

Pre-fabricated optical cables typically cost between \$0.09 and \$6 per foot depending on fiber type, strand count, construction, and connectorization, with pre-terminated assemblies priced higher due to factory termination.

Cost Overview

The price of pre-fabricated or pre-terminated fiber optic cables varies widely based on several factors:

- o Fiber Type and Count: Single-mode fiber (OS1/OS2) generally costs \$0.10-\$0.50 per foot for standard cables, while multimode fiber (OM3/OM4) ranges from \$0.30-\$1.00 per foot. Higher strand counts increase costs proportionally; for example, a 12-strand cable may cost \$0.50 per foot, whereas a 24-strand cable can reach \$1.00 per foot, and large backbone cables (e.g., 288 strands) can exceed \$6 per foot .
- o Cable Construction and Rating: Indoor riser-rated cables are less expensive than plenum-rated cables. Armored cables for harsh environments or direct burial applications range from \$0.50 to \$5 per foot .
- o Pre-terminated Assemblies: Factory-terminated cables with connectors are more expensive than bulk cable due to labor and quality assurance. Prices vary by connector type and fiber count, but pre-terminated cables can save up to 70% in field labor costs compared to on-site termination .
- o Jacket Material and Environmental Rating: Indoor PVC or LSZH jackets are cheaper, while outdoor PE or UV-resistant jackets increase costs. Direct-buried or flame-retardant cables require additional testing and certification, adding 20-50% to the base cost .
- o Volume and Lead Time: Bulk purchases (e.g., >10 km reels) reduce per-unit costs, while custom lengths or urgent orders increase prices due to production inefficiencies .

Practical Pricing Examples

- o Basic Indoor Run: 1,000 ft single-mode cable with minimal termination: Cable \$0.40/ft, Labor \$1.00/ft, Permits \$150, Accessories \$100. Total ? \$2,650-\$3,100 .
- o Mid-Range Outdoor Run: 2,000 ft with conduit and 4 terminations: Cable \$0.70/ft, Labor \$1.60/ft, Permits \$350, Delivery \$120, Accessories \$250. Total ? \$4,940-\$6,120 .
- o Premium Outdoor Run: 5,000 ft armored cable with multiple splices and professional testing: Cable \$1.00/ft, Labor \$3.00/ft, Permits \$900, Delivery \$350, Warranty included. Total ? \$11,000-\$14,500 .

Key Considerations

- o Connector Type: LC, SC, MPO, or ST connectors affect pre-terminated cable pricing.
- o Installation Savings: Pre-fabricated cables reduce on-site labor, splicing, and testing time.
- o Regional Variations: Urban areas may have higher labor and permit costs (+15-25%), while rural areas may



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see lower labor but higher delivery costs (+5-15%), .

o Compliance and Certification: Cables meeting ITU-T, UL, or other standards may cost more but reduce long-term risk .

Summary

Pre-fabricated optical cables offer convenience and labor savings, with costs influenced by fiber type, strand count, construction, environmental rating, and connectorization. For budgeting, expect \$0.09-\$6 per foot for materials, with pre-terminated assemblies at the higher end, and total installed costs ranging from \$2,500 to \$14,500 for typical U.S. projects depending on length, environment, and complexity .

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