

Plug Types

Question: *How can I tell what to get?*

Answers:

Descriptions:

- Handset plugs are often designated as (4X4)
- Telephone plugs are typically (6X4)
- Ethernet uses the (8X8) style

Common Terms:

- RJ11 (6X4) 6 contact positions but only 4 populated with contacts
- RJ12 (6X6) 6 contact positions, all 6 populated with contacts
- RJ45 (8X8) 8 contact positions, all 8 populated with contacts

Shielded vs Non-Shielded:

- Shielded plugs have a metal outer shell and are often specified in areas where a shield or ground connection is required. Areas with high electrical noise use shielded cable and plugs

Contact Types - Plating

Question: *Why would you use Gold rather than Nickel?*

Answer: As everyone knows, gold is soft and malleable. This can be problematic for a surface that is intended for physical impact in a connection. The nickel serves a couple purposes:

- Provide a hard surface beneath the gold to make the contact surface more reliable.
- Prevent base material (usually Phosphor Bronze) from being exposed and corroding

Question: *How much Gold is enough?*

Answer:

This varies greatly in the market especially with Gold over \$800 per ounce.

- Low end plus start at flash plated or 3 micro inches (3u)
- High end performance grade are 50 micro inches (50u)

If it connects to the public telephone network, the plug must have 50u gold.