Armored Optical Cable Installation Price Standard



Overview

Main cost drivers include cable grade (indoor vs outdoor, armoured), distance, and labor for trenching, splicing, and termination.

Key Takeaways

Armored fiber optic cable installation typically costs 30–50% more than unarmored cable, with material prices ranging from $1. 15 to $6. 50 per meter and labor costs 2–3 times higher due to handling and routing complexity.

Material Costs

Armored fiber optic cables include a protective metal layer, such as corrugated steel tape or steel wires, which increases the material cost compared to unarmored cables. Typical prices for armored cables range from $1. 15 to $6.

50 per meter, depending on fiber count, jacket type (PE, LSZH, PVC), and armor structure. For comparison, unarmored cables generally cost 20–30% less per meter.

Labor and Installation Costs

Installation of armored cables is more labor-intensive due to their heavier weight and reduced flexibility, requiring careful routing through conduits or direct burial trenches. Labor costs can be 2–3 times higher than for unarmored cables. For underground or direct burial installations, additional costs may include trenching, water-blocking measures, and conduit reinforcement, which further increase the total project cost.

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Total Project Considerations

For a representative outdoor deployment, using armored cable may cost $25,000 upfront for a 10-kilometer run, while unarmored cable with protective conduit might cost $15,000 in materials but incur $8,000–$12,000 per major repair event over its lifetime due to damage risks. Armored cables provide long-term reliability (20–30 years), rodent protection, crush resistance, and reduced maintenance costs, making them cost-effective in high-risk environments.

Key Factors Affecting Cost

Fiber type and count: Single-mode vs. multimode, number of strandsArmor type: Steel tape, steel wire, or double-armoredJacket material: LSZH, PE, or PVCInstallation environment: Indoor, aerial, underground, or direct burialProject scale: Longer runs and higher fiber counts increase both material and labor costs In summary, expect armored fiber optic cable installation to cost significantly more than unarmored cable, primarily due to material and labor requirements, but it offers superior protection and lower long-term maintenance in harsh or high-risk environments.

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Not sure whether to choose armored or unarmored fiber optic cable? Our 2026 guide breaks down protection, cost, installation, and performance—plus a quick decision checklist for data

What Is Armored Fiber Cable?

Armored fiber optic cables provide enhanced protection and durability for environments where standard fiber cables may be vulnerable to physical damage. By understanding their structure,

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