

VPN Basics

What is a VPN?

- Stands for Virtual Private Network
- Your connection to the internet is securely routed through another network (the VPN service's servers)
- Uses an anonymous IP address in a different location

Advantages

- Security when connecting to wifi networks in cafes, airports, etc.
- Can get to blocked sites and around censorship in other countries (i.e. China).
- Keeps your identity and location (as identified by your IP address) private.
- Different from incognito browsing, which doesn't log history, searches, and cookies on your computer.
 - From Firefox: "Private Browsing doesn't make you anonymous on the Internet. Your employer or Internet service provider can still know what page you visit."
- Net Neutrality rules are under attack. Soon, ISPs (Internet Service Providers) can legally collect your browsing history and sell it to others, without asking for your consent.

Disadvantages

- Cost
- Slower connection
- Issues with FTP/SFTP, voice/video chat
- Blocked or difficult to use with some websites (i.e. NameCheap, Target)

My VPN Service Recommendation

Private Internet Access (<https://www.privateinternetaccess.com>):

- Inexpensive (\$39.95/yr)
- Fast
- Works with most FTP/SFTP connections
- 25 countries
- Mobile apps
- Doesn't keep logs (but it is a US corporation)

Other VPN Services

- Also used:
 - TunnelBear (used both free and paid)
 - HideMyAss (paid option only)
 - Hotspot Shield (only used free [not recommended], didn't use paid)
- Other popular ones I haven't used:
 - CyberGhost (free and paid options)
 - StrongVPN
 - NordVPN
- Free VPNs are typically slower, less secure, and sell your information to advertisers

THANKS!

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