



Computer Help Desk

(250) 721-7687 :: helpdesk@uvic.ca
Clearihue A004

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VPN Service Overview

UVic offers free high performance VPN (Virtual Private Network) access to protect your communications. VPN servers employ encryption and other security measures to ensure that any data sent over the internet or other insecure networks will not be intercepted.

You can connect to the VPN servers via the Internet by using a VPN client. The VPN client encrypts any traffic between your computer and UVic's VPN servers to safeguard your communication to UVic.





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What is VPN?

Short for virtual private network, these systems use encryption and other security mechanisms to ensure that only authorized users can access the network and that the data cannot be intercepted.

VPN increases security and all faculty, staff and students are strongly encouraged to use VPN when connecting to UVic services over the Internet or other insecure networks.

The UVic VPN service provides a secure communication back to the campus network. VPN servers employ encryption and other security measures to ensure that any data sent on the Internet will not be intercepted. Without these additional precautions, any information you send across the Internet is not guaranteed to be safe. Be aware that the VPN service can only protect communication between your computer and the UVic campus network. While connected to the VPN, if you use services outside of UVic's network (Hotmail, for example), that communication is not considered safe. This is because the encrypted traffic between your computer and the VPN server is decrypted (made unprotected) at the VPN server before heading to its final destination (like a Hotmail web server).

Always use VPN when connecting from wireless networks at coffee shops, airports, or conference areas. Without encryption, anyone in your proximity (up to several hundred feet) can "hear" your conversation. From your home internet connection, you can use VPN to secure your connection to the campus network. Always assume networks to be unsafe.

Unless you take steps to secure your communications, your private information -- such as usernames, passwords, and email messages -- can be readily intercepted by malicious users.

You can connect to the VPN servers via the Internet by using a VPN client. The VPN client encrypts any traffic between your computer and UVic's VPN servers to safeguard your communication to UVic.





Installing the VPN Client

Choose your operating system:

- [Windows 2000/XP](#)

Please note (from the Cisco VPN page): "Q. Can the Cisco VPN Client work with Microsoft Internet Connection Sharing (ICS) installed on the same machine? A. No, the Cisco VPN 3000 Client is not compatible with Microsoft ICS on the same machine. You must uninstall ICS before you can install the VPN Client. Refer to Disabling ICS when Preparing to Install or Upgrade to Cisco VPN Client 3.5.x on Microsoft Windows XP for more information."

In other words, if you install VPN on a computer with ICS you will encounter serious problems and you will most likely have to reset your firewall to factory defaults and start over.

- [Windows 98/ME/NT](#)
- [Mac OS X 10.2/10.3/10.4](#)

The Cisco VPN client for Mac OS X does not work properly when the Mac is put to sleep. Please see the [FAQ](#).

The current Cisco VPN client for Mac OS X does not work with the new Intel-based Macintoshes. Cisco estimates that they will have a new client available at the end of February 2006.

- [Mac OS X 10.0/10.1](#)

(Sorry, there is no Cisco VPN client available for Mac OS X 10.0 or 10.1.)

- [Mac OS 7/8/9](#)

(Sorry, there is no Cisco VPN client available for Mac OS 7 or 8 or 9.)

- [Linux](#)





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Downloads

A UVic [NetlinkID](#) and password is required to download the VPN client software.

Cisco VPN Client for:

- [Windows 2000/XP](#)
- [Windows 98/ME/NT](#)
- [Mac OS X](#)
- [Linux](#)
- [VPN Connection Profile Configuration file](#) for all operating systems.
- [On-Campus VPN Connection Profile Configuration file](#) for all operating systems (for connecting to VPN from the campus network).

(Hint: With Internet Explorer, right-click on the link above and choose **Save Target As...** Remember to select **All files** in **Save as type.**)





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Frequently asked questions



Q: I'm trying to connect to the VPN service from an on-campus location, but the connection fails.

A: You need to import the **On-Campus VPN Connection Profile**. In order provide the best VPN service possible, Network Services has reworked the VPN service in such a way that users connecting to the VPN service are now required to connect using a separate profile.

Q: When I connect to the VPN, I can't access a file server, network printer, or other resource on my local network.

A: As a security measure, the VPN client disables access to other computers and network devices on your local network (LAN). This is to prevent the possibility of a virus/trojan infected computer on your local network from using your computer as a "jump point" into the secured UVic network through the VPN connection.

Q: I'm behind a router/firewall at home, and my VPN connection keeps dropping.

A: Many consumer firewall devices have difficulty dealing with VPN traffic. Some devices have an option to allow IPsec or VPN passthrough. Check your firewall's documentation for details.

Q: When I wake my Mac after it has been asleep, I get the error "Secure VPN Connection terminated locally by the Client."

A: This is a known problem with the Cisco VPN Client for Mac OS X. Click OK to dismiss the error message. Then make a new connection as you normally would.

Warning: Even if the error message is not immediately visible after waking your Mac from sleep, you no longer have a secure connection to UVic and any information you transmit after waking the Mac **will not be protected by encryption** until you make a new VPN connection.

