

## ***VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK (VPN)***

This technology, widely used in the business world, allows the creation of an Internet tunnel (a virtual link) between two physical networks in different locations in a way that is transparent for users. Only they will be allowed access (hence the term “private”) and data sent via the tunnel is encrypted. This guarantees that data sent by VPN users will be illegible to any third party in the event of malicious interception such as espionage or intrusion.

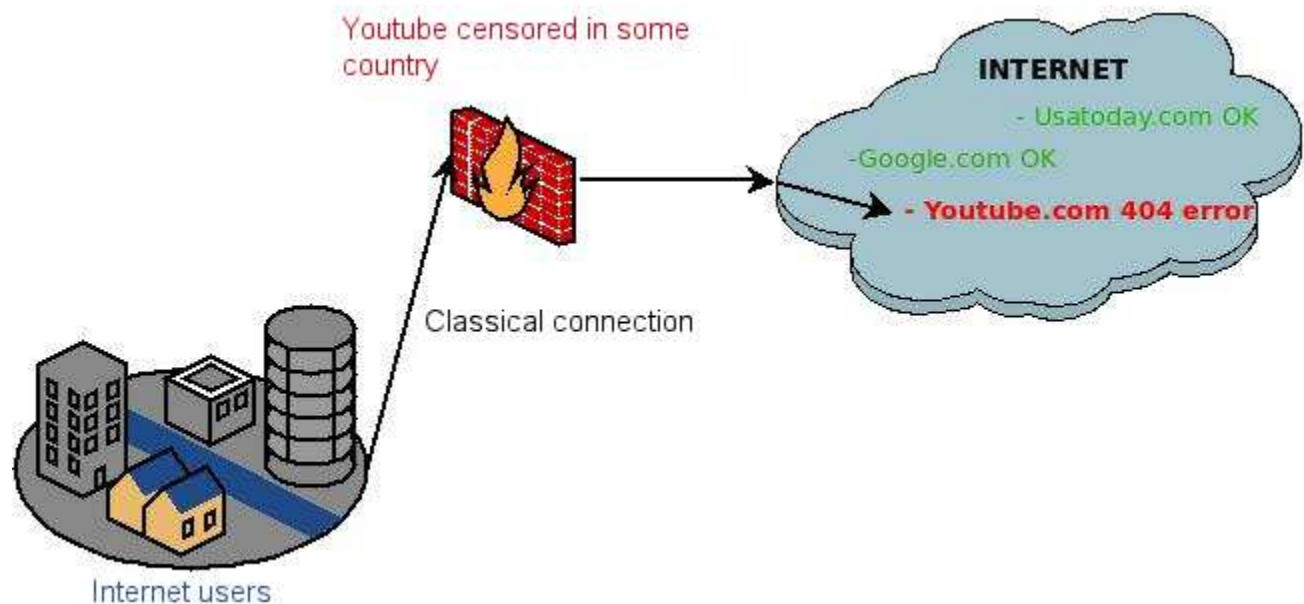
### ***HOW A VPN CAN BE USED***

A VPN allows data to be moved from one private network to another using a secure Internet tunnel. Your Web browser cannot access [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) via a classic VPN connection. Your email client can only connect to your company’s internal email and not to your own email address. You are sheltered but isolated. The VPN has the functionality it needs for us to protect our communications between A and B using legal means. But there is more to it than this.

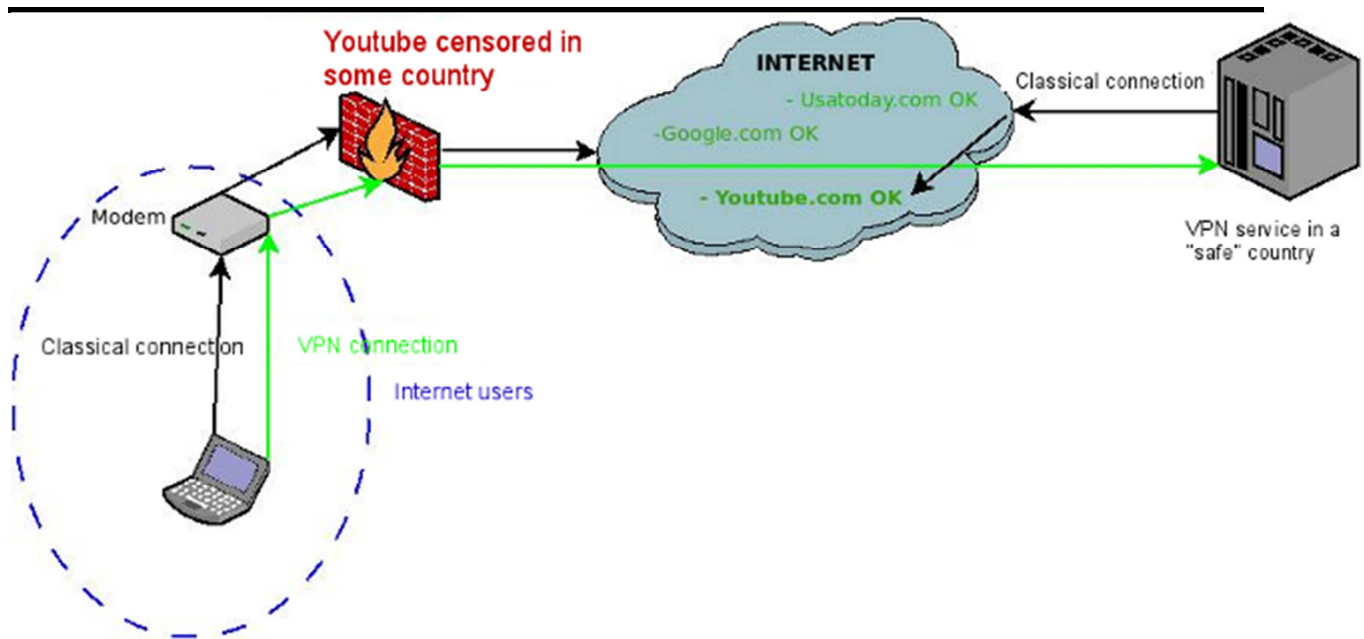
### ***USING A VPN AS A “VIRTUAL ESCAPE ROUTE” TO CIRCUMVENT CENSORSHIP***

The Internet is a place for communicating and exchanging information, which does not please everyone. Some states monitor and spy on the content of their citizens’ online activities and, where they feel it is necessary, restrict access to some websites or services that they believe to be contrary to their interests.

The diagram below shows an example of a filtering system put in place by a government to prevent the country’s Internet users from posting videos of demonstrations. This is an ideal scenario for using a VPN to circumvent the filter system.



The following diagram shows the use of a VPN as a means of bypassing an existing filtering system.



Your workstation is company A and the VPN provider is company B. The main difference is that your real Internet connection is through the VPN provider, so the Internet sees that you are connected from Sweden and not from your own country. This means the filtering system in place in your own country no longer applies. By using a VPN, a legal tool, you can publish your video on YouTube, read your email, surf any part of the Web securely, etc. Your country will no longer be able to see what you are using the Internet for since you are now accessing it via a tunnel with one end in Sweden, a country where the Internet is outside your government's control.

Setting up this type of service is no simple matter and requires a level of technical knowledge not available to everyone. Fortunately there are companies that provide such services commercially, making the configuration and use of a VPN on your workstation a fairly simple matter.

## ***CHOOSE A VPN PROVIDER CAREFULLY***

A VPN connection costs about five euros per month. Avoid free offers. One way or another these so-called free services find a way to make you pay. A free VPN may, for example, be set up with the intention of discreetly spying on your communications, known as a "honeypot".

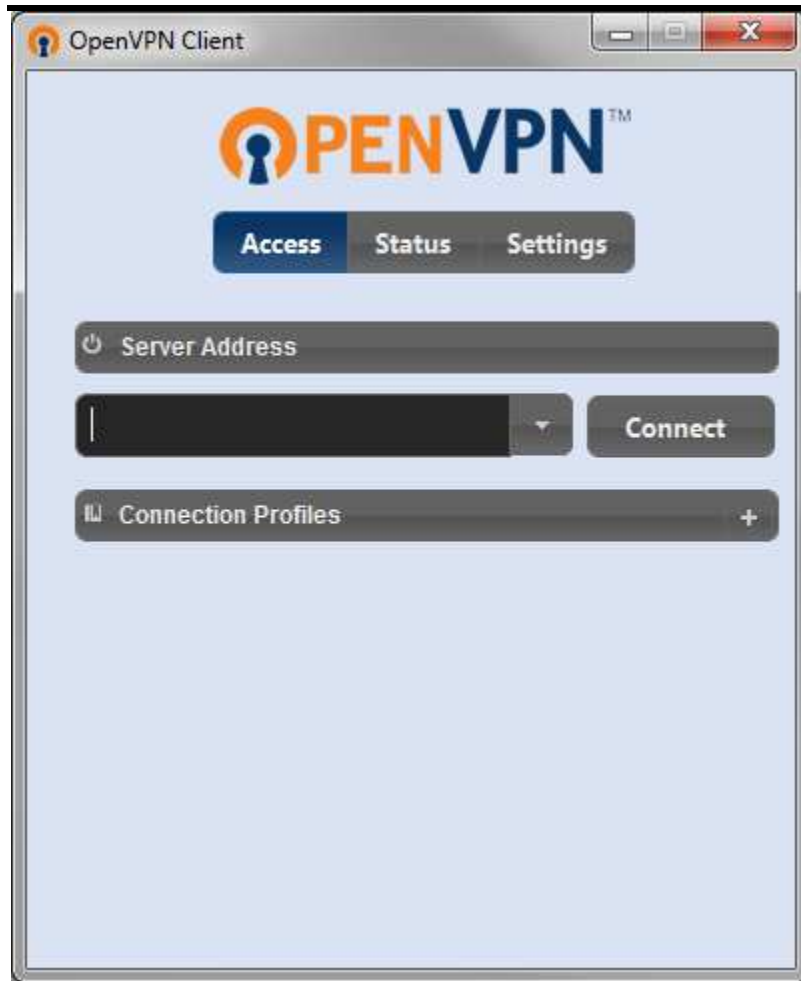
### **VPN providers :**

VyprVPN  
Astrill VPN  
VPN Tunnel

Most VPN services provide documentation and software to install on your computer. Once you sign up, you will receive your login information by email, including your username and password (similar to your mailbox details).

Launch the software, enter your username and password and the application will do the rest. It will create a tunnel connecting you to the country you have previously specified. Once the connection is established, you are virtually in another country.

Here is an example of a connection interface:



## ***VPN ON YOUR MOBILE PHONE***

Like any other device that connects to the Internet, your smartphone is subject to restrictions imposed by your telephone provider, if you connect via 3G, or your Internet service provider if you use wifi.

You can install an application on your smartphone, as you can on your computer, to create a VPN tunnel allowing you to connect from your phone. The Android operating system has already launched a VPN client in the menu "Wireless and Networks -> VPN settings". You can obtain information from your VPN provider that will allow you to set up your Android phone just as easily as your computer.

Text and images kindly provided by *Jean Marc Bourguignon / fo0*

<https://www.wefightcensorship.org/article/virtual-private-network-vpn-ou-reseau-prive-virtuelhtml.html>