



Ask Charly Leetham

Relax, You're In Good Hands

VPNS 101 with Charly Leetham

Episode 4: Five VPNs Worth Considering

Hey, welcome to episode four of VPNs 101 with me, Charly Leetham. It's going to be a slightly different pace today. I hope I don't mess it up too much. We're going to talk about five different VPNs that I think are worth considering.

That doesn't mean to say that these are the only five that are out there. They're the five, however, that when I went out and had a look and did some research, these five have come up as the ones that hit all of the sweet spots and are budget-friendly. I'm going to call them budget-friendly.

So let's hop in and let's just have a look at what we've got. The five that we're going to consider are: NordVPN, ExpressVPN, Surfshark, ProtonVPN, and Mullvad VPN. These are all - I'm sure you've heard of most of them. I'm sure if you listen to any podcasts, a lot of these are actually spoken about in the ads.

I will have one referral link in this one: NordVPN. And that's because I use NordVPN, so I get a link that I can offer you guys. I think you get three months free when you take a paid plan (up to three months free when you take a paid plan). But I'm not saying that that's the one that you want. I'm going to give you your options.

I am really not the type that says, "This is the only thing that you want to do." I'm the type that says, "What are your questions? Here's some options for you. What sounds best for you?" I can't really make decisions for you. I'm not in your shoes, basically. But I want to give you some options to look at.

So let's start and have a look at what each of these gives us.

1. NordVPN

Pricing - just to call it out - is in US dollars, mostly because everything is priced in US dollars. And I didn't want to say AUD and have it vary next month as our dollar goes up and down against the international currencies.

Just so everyone knows, this is at the beginning of August 2025. So don't blame me if these prices change by the time you get to this slide. I can only do the best I can do.



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Price: Approximately \$3.50 per month **Devices:** Up to six devices on that plan

And there's a little bit of marketing jargon here that I'm going to cover off.

Double VPN - Double VPN, as I found out from my investigations, allows you to route your traffic through two VPN servers. So what that means is you connect to one VPN and then you say, "I want to double VPN this," and it creates a connection with a second VPN before your traffic hits the internet. Sounds a little bit movie-ish, doesn't it? Sounds a little bit Hollywood, doesn't it? You know, when they say, "Oh look, the traffic is bouncing off of all these servers." That's kind of what they're doing - connecting to one server, routing it to another server, and then out to the internet. NordVPN only does it twice.

It also allows you to **split tunnel** your apps, so you can choose which traffic goes through the VPN and which traffic doesn't.

And it also allows you to **connect your devices together securely**. It's called a mesh. It's kind of like creating your own private VPN across the VPN. It's really handy if you need to connect device to device.

Audited by: Deloitte and PWC

With NordVPN, you get I think a seven-day free trial and a 30-day money-back guarantee. So you do get to try this one before you go forward.

I haven't got information on all of these, so please bear with me if I don't mention trials. Some of these will probably have trials or 30-day guarantees. I just don't have the information in front of me. That's on me. Sorry.

2. ExpressVPN

If you've been listening to podcasts, we should all be aware of ExpressVPN.

Price: \$6.70 per month (US dollars) **Devices:** Allows you to use up to five devices

It provides **split tunneling** and it also **blocks trackers**. So if you're not using something like Brave or DuckDuckGo (Brave browser or DuckDuckGo), ExpressVPN will block your trackers.

It doesn't do double VPNs, however.

Audited: Yes, and when I'm talking about audited, I'm talking about the no-logs audit on it. This has actually been audited to say, "No, they do not log."

Audited by: PWC



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3. Surfshark

Checking my notes as I go.

Price: \$2.49 per month (US dollars) **Devices:** Unlimited devices

I am sure there is an asterisk on that somewhere about what you can and can't do and how many you can have connected at one time, but I haven't checked it, so just check that one out and make sure you are aware if there are any restrictions on that.

The standouts for this one:

- It does do **double VPN**, so you can route your traffic through two VPNs before it hits the internet
- It will do **split tunneling**
- Also offers **ad blockers and malicious site blockers**

Audited by: Deloitte

4. ProtonVPN

Proton is really interesting. Proton comes out of Switzerland. I think Proton is in Switzerland. I could be wrong, and if I am wrong, please correct me.

Price: \$4.99 per month

But they do have a **free plan**. I will cover the free plan when I finish talking about these.

Devices: You can have up to ten devices on the paid plan

It does offer **double VPN**. However, you do have to route your traffic through high-privacy countries. So I think your initial connection is to a high-privacy country. It's not like with the others where they say double VPN and you can connect in the US and then route it through France or route it through another VPN in the US. With Proton, it will only route it through the high-privacy countries.

Audited by: Securitum and SEC Consult

ProtonVPN Free Plan

Now it does have a free plan, and if I don't say it's got any of the others, apparently it doesn't support any of the other functionality or features or benefits that I've listed above.



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It does have a free plan which could be of interest to people. I did look into it because, yes, I said be very, very cautious around free plans. It's probably the only free plan VPN I would recommend you even consider looking at.

It does have - and of course it's got strings attached to it:

- You still get **unlimited data**
- There are **no ads**
- There's **no logs** on the free plan

That's the benefit of it.

The downsides:

- The servers for the free plan are only in the **Netherlands, US, and Japan**
- The **speed is slower**. If you're on the free plan, the speeds are slower, so it may feel a bit clunky if you're using it
- It **doesn't allow streaming or peer-to-peer connectivity**. So if you want to use it to view Amazon or Netflix or video streams, you're not going to be able to use it
- It's **limited to one device**. So with the free plan, you can use it on your phone or your computer or your tablet - you can't have it on all three operating simultaneously

5. Mullvad VPN

This was one that came up. I think it was recommended in a discussion, and then when I went and did my assessment, it also came up as a recommendation.

Price: \$5.50 per month **Devices:** Up to five devices

It **doesn't allow split tunneling**. It **doesn't do double VPNs**. So it's got limited functionality. It's good for browsing pretty much.

But you **don't need to provide any personal information**. It will provide **port forwarding**, which means that you can allow traffic into your devices. You can allow someone to connect into your devices using it, and it will port forward for you. It will forward that traffic for you. I'm trying to simplify that one down.

It uses **open-source apps**.

But it is limited. It has limited functionality. I guess one of the things with it, and I'm not quite sure how it works, is that you can **pay with cash** if you want. You don't need an account and you don't need email. I



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don't know how that works, but there you go. You can actually pay with cash.

Audited by: Assured and Cure53

So those were the benefits and the relative costs for the five that I see. If you go and have a look - I'm not saying that they're the only ones out there. I'm saying that these are five that came up as best options for people to use.

Use Cases: When to Use Each

NordVPN - If you're looking for just a good all-round VPN, NordVPN came up tops for that one, which is probably how I ended up with it. I was looking for something that would just work, and that was the one that I got.

Surfshark - Good if you've got lots of devices, you need something budget-friendly, and you don't need a lot of extra functionality.

ExpressVPN - Great if you're looking for streaming and stability.

ProtonVPN - If you want a free one with privacy focus and you don't mind the fact that it has got limited functionality.

Mullvad - If you want maximum anonymity and you don't mind the fact that it has limited functionality.

But if you're looking for a good all-rounder, honestly, NordVPN really does hit right up there. They're all audited. They're all audited by reputable external auditors to be no-logs.

Wrap Up

All right, guys, I hope this has been useful to you. I'm probably going to do a wrap-up episode next just to tie it all together. There's a few things that I do want to cover.

Connect With Me

But if you want to connect with me, if you want to know more about me, you can visit my website, AskCharlyLeetham.com.

You can join my community at AskCharlyLeetham.locals.com. It is designed for business owners who want to get a better handle on their tech, understand the tech better without becoming whiz kids and propeller heads and all of that.

There are all of my social - well, some of my social media accounts. I'm also on Rumble. I've got a



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podcast that goes out every day. If you use the QR code, you will get taken to a page and you'll get all of those links as well.

If you've got any questions, comments, feedback, anything at all, please leave them wherever you're watching or listening to this video. I'd appreciate it if you'd give this series a shout-out. If you give me likes, whatever it is, share it with your friends. Share it with your family.

As I said there, I do have a referral link for NordVPN. It is in the notes for this episode. If you do take a paid plan, you will get some amount free. You'll get extra time tacked on to your term, and I'll get a little bit back as well.

Apart from that, thank you so much for listening. And as I said, if you've got any feedback or questions, I'm here to help you demystify this stuff. See you guys.

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NordVPN: <https://askcharlyleetham.com/likes/nordvpn>