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A free VPN, or virtual private network, is a wonderful thing — as many things that are free tend to be. But, as is also often the case, you get what you pay for and a paid VPN is often better. That said, it all depends on what you need. So which is the best VPN for you, free or paid?The price difference between these two options is clearly big, going from totally free to the average monthly price of a VPN which is about \$10. But subscribe for longer and you save money that way.The downside of going for a free option — and one of the main differences between the two — is the amount of data you can use. A free service will have a limit on your data usage in most cases, be it daily or monthly. Once you've gone over that data limit you will no longer be able to use the VPN. There is one unlimited service, but there are other limits, more on that below.So a free VPN is a great option for those that want it for limited use — perhaps to check a map or certain website while abroad, for example. But for those that want to check emails in bulk, stream music, and watch online video — a paid VPN is going to be needed.How much data does a free VPN offer?One of the best free VPN options is Hotspot Shield VPN, which also has a premium version should you want to upgrade. At its most basic, the free service is good for up to 500MB of data per day. Not a small amount for browsing websites, but very little if you want to watch your latest Netflix show, for example.A monthly data allowance of 15GB, which that equates to, does sound like a lot but since you can't roll over that daily limit, it's not that much. But, of course, it depends on what you need it for. For bulk use, you might want to go for a service like Windscribe which offers a lower 10GB data allowance but it's spread over the month so you can use that as you need. Tweet about the service and you'll get an extra 1GB, and each time you refer a friend you get an extra 1GB also.ProtonVPN has no limits on data but, before you get excited, this has other limits to incentivize you to upgrade. That means only one device can be used and there are only three server locations plus speeds can be limited. You will be throttled on speed if a lot of paid users are online as they get priority. There is also no P2P torrent support from this service.What are the problems with a free VPN?Aside from the data limit, there is also the issue of connection speed. A service like Hotspot Shield premium has over 1,800 servers across over 80 international locations. But if you go for the free version you won't be able to pick and choose servers. The result is spotty speeds.You could get lucky and have a really great connection at a local server. But you could end up connecting to a slower server that's really far away and struggles with speed. In the case of Windscribe, which offers more liberal free data use, it is limited to servers in the U.S., UK, Hong Kong, and Canada only.Another issue is that with the free service you'll have to put up with ads. Yup, nothing is ever really free, as they say. But if you don't mind pop-ups then this could be a good option to save you a bit of money and still get you the security of a VPN.What's good about a free VPN?Despite being free, you'll still be accessing secure servers. This means that your location and identity, via your IP address, will be hidden. That helps you stay anonymous online as well as more secure than using an open connection.In the case of Hotspot Shield you get military-grade encryption, meaning your data is kept super secure in transit so even if someone were to, somehow, get hold of it, they wouldn't be able to decipher it anyway.What does a paid VPN get me?This is the key question as you're committing to a monthly or annual payment for a service. Of course, you'll get all the security of an encrypted connection but you'll also get unlimited data. That means you could be abroad and still watch all your favorite Netflix shows without the worry of running low on your data allowance.The other important thing to keep in mind is that you'll be able to select the server that you want. This is a huge advantage as you could connect to U.S. Netflix while you're in Europe, say. This is also really helpful if you're somewhere like China where VPN use is restricted and you may need to try a few server locations to actually get online.Best VPN Services 2020Speeds are usually faster on paid-for VPN services. Although there is the free option, Speedify, which is all about rapid connections but that will be limited with just 1GB of data allowance per month. We recommend ExpressVPN for anyone looking to pay for a VPN.What is the best free VPN?Depending on what you need, as an all-around service, Hotspot Shield is great for free access to 15GB of data per month at 500MB per day with decent speeds and top security. Want to get bulk data that you use when you like? Then the Windscribe service with 10GB per month is for you. If it's all about speed and you don't need much data then Speedify is ideal. Don't care about speed but want unlimited data? Go ProtonVPN.What is the best paid VPN?If you've decided what you need can't be provided by a free VPN then you'll want to take a look at ExpressVPN. In all our testing it's come out on top time after time. It's fast, secure, has great customer service with 24/7 live chat, gets you Netflix abroad, supports torrents, and works on five devices at once with lots of clients to suit all sorts of tech. The pricing is average but what you get is anything but that.How do I find the best VPN deals?Free versions not cutting it for you? You don't have to go broke while signing up for a new VPN service. We've rounded up all the best VPN deals for you. We keep it up to date with coupons, price drops, and other promotions that are available. Be sure to check back often!We test and review VPN services in the context of legal recreational uses. For example:1. Accessing a service from another country (subject to the terms and conditions of that service).2. Protecting your online security and strengthening your online privacy when abroad.We do not support or condone the illegal or malicious use of VPN services. Consuming pirated content that is paid-for is neither endorsed nor approved by Future Publishing. Join our newsletter!All the best features, news, tips and great deals to help you live a better life through technology Thank you for signing up to T3. You will receive a verification email shortly. There was a problem. Please refresh the page and try again. By submitting your information you agree to the Terms & Conditions (opens in new tab) and Privacy Policy (opens in new tab) and are aged 16 or over. VPN APK might sound like a complex term, but in reality, it just describes VPN technology that's compatible with Android devices. The best VPN services provide options for all operating systems, but it's important to check that the option you choose offers this level of compatibility.In this article, we explain what APK is, how it can enable you to install a VPN on your Android device, and the protection it offers. Read on to learn how to benefit from an extra layer of security and privacy when using your Android phone or tablet. What is an APK? APK (Android Package Kit) is a file format that's compatible with Android devices. APK files are used for sideloading apps - those not typically listed on the Google Play store. They are available via third-party vendors and, as a result, may contain malicious content. For this reason, you need to be extra vigilant before downloading an APK file. Do your due diligence and check the legitimacy of the VPN vendor site before downloading the APK file.(Image credit: Shutterstock)Why do I need an APK file for an Android VPN? When you visit a VPN provider's website, you'll see that there are multiple download options. These options have specific software that's compatible with particular operating systems, and each will have a different file extension. For example, Apple iOS files typically end in .ipa. Unless you use a compatible file type on your Android device, you can't access all the security and anonymity features provided by VPN technology. APK is the file extension that's compatible with Android VPNs. Most legitimate VPN providers will make it easy for you to locate and download the APK file for your Android device. You'll usually see a range of options for compatible operating systems. Just follow the instructions to download and install the technology as you would any other app.Try out our pick for the best vpnWhat are the benefits of VPN APK? Typically, a VPN that's compatible with Android devices will provide you with the same level of privacy and protection that you might receive when downloading a VPN for another device or operating system. A VPN offers an extra layer of security when browsing online. It also enables you to access geo-restricted content such as region-specific content streaming services, and makes it possible to access the internet anonymously. Online anonymity provides many legitimate benefits, such as data protection and the avoidance of targeted marketing and ad tracking. APK enables VPN providers to offer Android users the same benefits that other users on different operating systems enjoy. Of course, these benefits come with drawbacks if the technology you download is unsafe, so always do your research before committing to a provider.There are lots of free providers for VPNs out there, but you must be extra vigilant before signing up to a free service as there is often less regulatory oversight. You should also weigh up whether a free VPN is right for your requirements as, more often than not, a free VPN provider offers a very limited service. In search of more info about VPNs Setting out to 'reinvent HTTP' and allow everyone to override censorship, Hola VPN is both a free and premium VPN service, claiming over 239 million users globally. Offering compatibility across a variety of devices, including a router VPN and TV apps for LG, Fire TV, Apple TV and other Smart TVs, how does its middling, paid-for plan shape up against the big players in the game? We put it through its paces in our Hola VPN Premium review below.Click to head straight through to the Hola website (opens in new tab)Hola VPN Premium 1-minute reviewPerhaps best known for its browser extensions, Hola VPN is certainly of interest if you're looking for a VPN that can bypass geo-restrictions and access the most popular streaming platforms like Netflix and Disney+. It also offers a number of clients - some that other VPN simply don't provide, like a Fire Stick VPN - allowing you to equip multiple devices with its 10 simultaneous connections.Standing out above the rest, Hola calls itself 'the first community-powered VPN'. This essentially means it will route your traffic through other users of Hola (nodes) as opposed to the more standard private server network system other VPNs adopt. The perks of this means Hola VPN is less likely to be detected - great news for those looking to stream who don't want to be caught out by the likes of Netflix's anti-VPN infrastructure. Better still, for paying customers, your bandwidth won't be used - only customers of the free tool can become peers.Really, though, that's where Hola's positives end. While being an excellent streaming VPN is desirable, Hola's Premium plan is pretty expensive (\$14.99 a month or \$7.69 a month for its annual plan), unless you're prepared to commit to its three year plan from the get-go, working out at \$2.99 a month. What's more, its streaming capabilities are pretty much all you're getting for your money. In short, good value for money it does not make.It's very slim-pickings on its feature front. There's no P2P support, port forwarding, or the like. You won't even find interesting and useful interface quirks like a Favorites system to curate a list of the servers you want to connect to time and time again. In fact, its interface, while welcoming in its simple, straight-forward design, is severely lacking, and the few configurable settings you'll find on its Windows app are absent elsewhere on its iOS app.Of course, there's also the current glaring issue that for Android users and those after its well-known Chrome browser extension, you're fresh out of luck. Both have been pulled from their respective stores with vague explanations of them being filled with malware - something which Hola VPN denies. Not exactly something you want to hear about a VPN you're looking to try..In terms of performance, it's also slower than average and there are some glaring logging concerns, too. As we stated earlier, while it's great for streaming, there's an argument that you could get a VPN just as capable in that regard with far more going for it in other areas, all at a far more attractive price point.(Image credit: Hola) (opens in new tab)As of September 2021, users have been unable to get the Hola extension in the Chrome Store following its removal by Google. This was due to Google warning the extension contained 'malware'.In response, Hola stated, "the Hola extension does NOT contain malware, does not display ads, and above all, respects user privacy." This follows the Hola Android VPN app no longer being available to download in the Google Play Store, either. With little information provided on either side, it's difficult to determine whether or not there is a significant privacy concern or not.Rest assured, we will update this review if and when the situation changes.Hola VPN Premium on paperNumber of servers: up to 1,500+ depending on plan Number of countries: 41 Platforms supported: Windows, MacOS, iOS, Android, selected Smart TVs, PS4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, Internet Explorer, Opera, router Simultaneous connections: 10 Split tunneling: No Kill switch: Yes Supported protocols: IKEv2/IPsec, PPTP/L2TP Country of registration: Israel Support: Support site,

formHola VPN Premium price: how much is it, and is there a Hola VPN Premium free trial?The Hola VPN Premium plan (opens in new tab), advertised as an ‘unlimited VPN’, comes in at three different price points. Its monthly rate is a heady \$14.99, with its annual rate of \$7.69 still steeply priced when you consider some of the top VPN work out less on their yearly plans. It becomes affordable only when committing to three years, trialing out at \$2.99 a month (opens in new tab).It’s also worth noting there is a step up from the Hola Premium. Stepping up from 10 simultaneous connections to 20, with a boost to its apparently ‘Ultra fast’ speeds, Hola Ultra costs an extortionate \$29.99 a month (opens in new tab) – but if you can get the Hola Ultra plan, or a browser extension, mobile app, desktop app, or on selected smart TVs, through a referral link, you can get it for half price.

If you’re limited to 30 minutes of unlimited usage every hour. If you’re looking to stream anything more than a 20-minute sitcom episode, then, you’ll probably find it pretty tedious to use.Sign up for Hola VPN Premium from \$2.99 a month (opens in new tab)(Image credit: Hola VPN) (opens in new tab)How private is Hola VPN Premium?Hola sets itself apart from most VPN providers in that it doesn’t route your traffic through its own servers, but instead through its users. This may sound like a privacy dream as you think this would mean it wouldn’t have the opportunity to log and retain any of your details. However, Hola VPN does outright state it monitors the consumer network.Highlighted in Hola’s FAQ (opens in new tab), the provider is very transparent in that it [does] keep logs and will report any malicious use to the authorities. These measures are probably what make Hola the least attractive VPN for people with malicious or illegal intent to use.Its privacy policy then goes on to detail the kind of information logged for both paying customers and free users. This includes ‘browser type, web pages you visited, time spent on those pages, access times and dates’, as well as your IP address, your name and email address, username, and payment information. If you sign up through a social network, this also gives Hola access to profile pictures, friends lists, birth dates, and so on.In short, it sounds like a bit of a privacy nightmare, with little explanation reserved for how it encrypts and protects your traffic while using its tool. So if online anonymity is of the utmost importance for you, Hola is a no-go.Protocol uncertainties aside, it did pass our final privacy tests with no sign of WebRTC, DNS, or other data leaks.How fast is Hola VPN Premium?Running our Hola speed tests under the same variables as the other services we test, we measured Hola VPN Premium through a number of benchmarking tools from two locations. Firstly, from a US residential location, and secondly at a UK data center, both with a 1Gbps connection. We run these tests multiple times and across different times of day to get a real idea of how each provider performs.Hola had good to keep up with the strides many providers have taken, particularly in their WireGuard results. While Hola’s average speeds sit between 260-280Mbps at their peak, this is the near-equivalent of CyberGhost and its OpenVPN connections at 17-210Mbps – but it’s nowhere near as consistent as NordVPN, which averages around 700Mbps in our tests.

Particularly responsive (Image credit: Hola VPN) (opens in new tab)Hola has to be one of the best VPN Premiums for streaming and torrenting.For many, Hola’s browser extension has been their first foray into bypassing geo-restrictions and using Netflix VPN. However, while it promotes its cybercensor prowess, one of its key attributes is that it doesn’t disappoint in its interface didn’t reflect that selling point in any unique features.There were no specialist server lists or city-level locations to choose from, but Hola did exceed expectations when it came round to actually accessing popular streaming platforms. We were able to stream US Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, and BBC iPlayer.We did, however, fall victim to CAPTCHAs when using Google and other websites. When checking its IPQualityScore, this threw up a 100 ‘fraud’ rating, an indication the service has been abused by hackers. While not strictly the service’s fault, it certainly doesn’t bode well if Hola’s IP addresses have garnered a bad reputation.(Image credit: Hola VPN)How good are the Hola VPN Premium desktop apps?The Hola VPN Premium Windows app is pretty simplistic, which could very well be a blessing or a curse depending on what you want from your VPN. Open it up and you’ll be presented with a location picker in the form of a list, with the US and UK at the top and the other 40 countries listed alphabetically. You’re unable to pick on a city-level, making switching between servers difficult when one doesn’t work. There’s also no Favorites List system to speak of, and the app doesn’t send notifications when you connect or disconnect from a server. Alternatively, though, the system tray icon changes to display the flag of the server you’re connected to, which does feel like quite a nice touch.Connecting to a server did prove pretty slow, taking 10-15 seconds for the closest servers. Considering some of the best fast VPN services take a matter of seconds, this did feel like a bit of a slog.Dividing into Hola VPN Premium’s settings, you’ve got the option to Auto Connect, an App Kill Switch, and a Security panel, which allows you to choose encryption methods. In fact, this is quite extensive, able to choose from AES-128/192/256 encryption, SHA-1/256-384 integrity checking, and more.How good are the Hola VPN Premium mobile apps?Of course, we weren’t able to check out the Android Hola VPN app due to it being pulled from the Google Play Store after our review. However, having downloaded the iOS version, it was disappointing to see such a lack of differentiation from the desktop counterpart, though, as expected, the iOS version did allow us to download the app and install it without any fuss or bother. And that about it. Comparing this to some of the competitors where you’ll find extra details and features like a Favorites system and servers located close to your location, we don’t really feel like we’re missing out either, you certainly isn’t the ability to adjust protocols as well as the benefit of the Kill Switch and Auto Connect features.It’s fair to say Hola’s target market may be quite happy with the fairly simple interface that allows them to connect and go without much thought for the configuration. However, if you’re used to more feature-packed mobile VPN - or, indeed, Windows VPN - Hola likely won’t cut it.(Image credit: Hola VPN)How private is the Hola VPN Premium?Final verdict?Those looking for a decent VPN to stream with that’s really, really straightforward to use, Hola VPN Premium might just fit the bill. If you do want a VPN that also ticks those privacy and speed boxes, though, you’re going to need to look elsewhere. Considering Hola Premium isn’t all that affordable unless you’re prepared to commit for a whole three years, there are certainly way more powerful VPN services like Surfshark (opens in new tab) or Private Internet Access (opens in new tab) out there that also gave you way more bang for your buck.TODAY’S BEST DEALS