

ProtonVPN on iOS

**OLLI Digital Explorers SIG
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ProtonVPN is a VPN service provided by a cybersecurity company named Proton. The company website is proton.me. Proton is a highly regarded cybersecurity company and ProtonVPN is rated as one of the best VPN services for personal use. Proton allows you to use ProtonVPN for free with some limitations; those restrictions can be lifted through a subscription plan. This guide walks you through installing and using the free option.

With ProtonVPN's free option, you can install the app on as many of your devices as you want, but you can only use it on one of those devices at a time. For example, if I am currently using ProtonVPN on my laptop and want to switch to using ProtonVPN on my iPad, I first have to "turn it off" on my laptop before I can "turn it on" on my iPad. I don't think limitation will cause too much "heartburn" for us in our SIG session. (Certainly not enough pain to justify paying for a subscription plan, in my humble opinion.)

This document describes how to install and use ProtonVPN on a macOS. You will need to create a proton.me account to use ProtonVPN; this document describes creating an account with proton.me (as there is one step that I found confusing). The top level steps to set your macOS device up to use the free version of ProtonVPN are

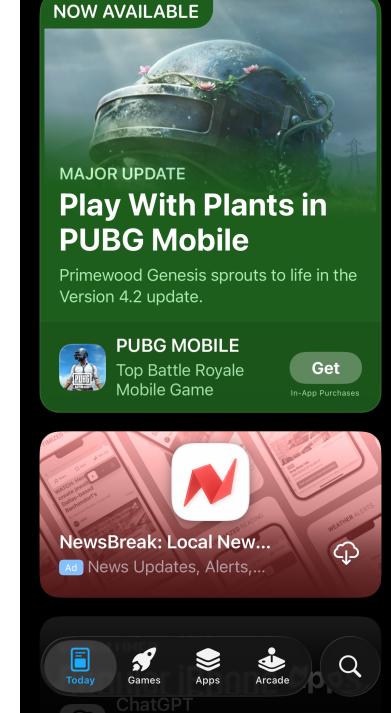
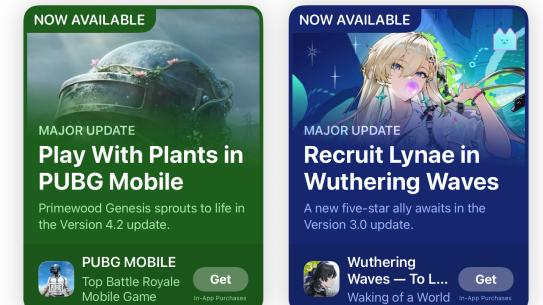
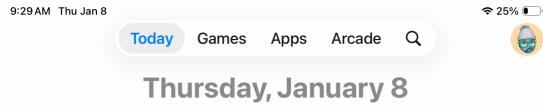
1. Install the ProtonVPN app
2. Run the ProtonVPN app
3. Create a VPN connection
4. Close a VPN connection



Step 1: Installing ProtonVPN on an iPhone or iPad

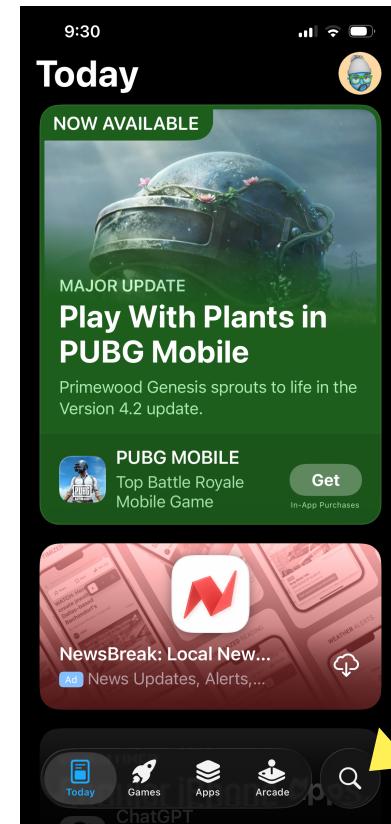
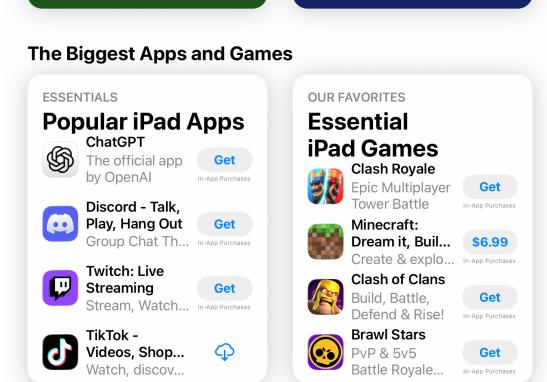
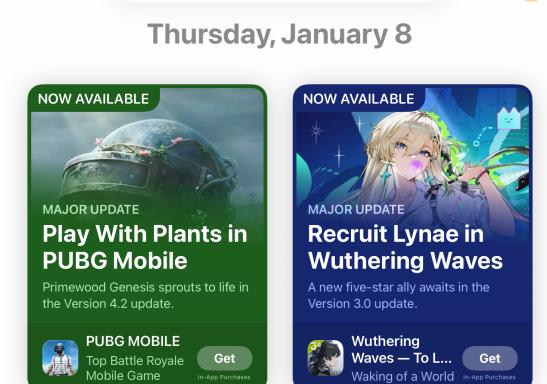
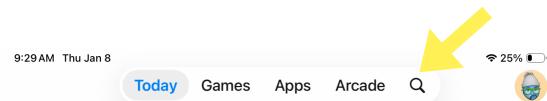
You need an app installed on the device(s) where you want to use Proton VPN. Installing this app on iPhones and iPads is *extremely* easy.

Using your iPhone/iPad first, open the App Store. If you need a reminder, the App Store icon looks like the image in the upper right hand corner of this page. Below are images of what I see on my devices screens when I open the App Store on each of them; my iPad screen is on the left and my iPhone screen is on the right.



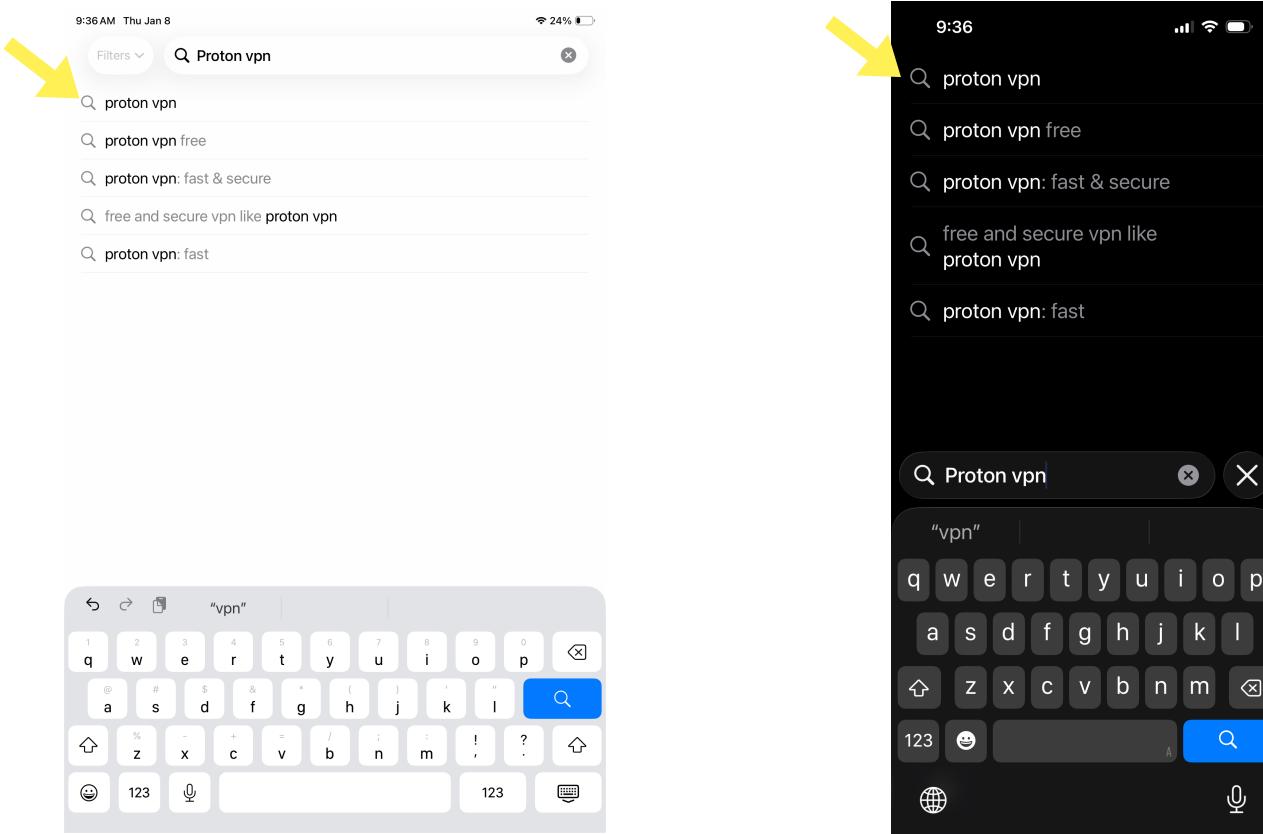
Step 1: Installing ProtonVPN on an iPhone or iPad

Tap the magnifying glass icon (highlighted with the yellow arrows in the images below) and then type "proton vpn" in the search box that appears.



Step 1: Installing ProtonVPN on an iPhone or iPad

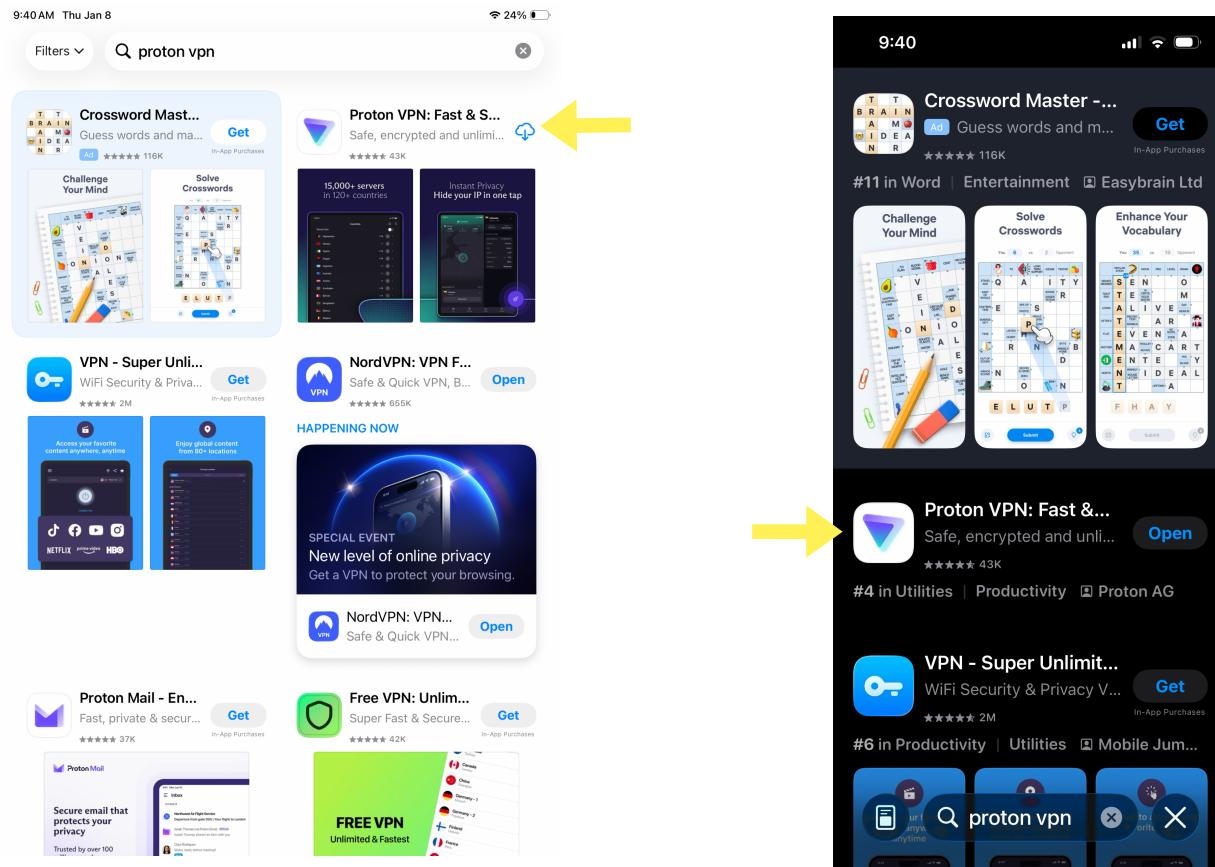
As you type in the search box, the app store will populate a set of refined search terms; from this list, tap "proton vpn" (highlighted with the yellow arrows in the images below).



Step 1: Installing ProtonVPN on an iPhone or iPad

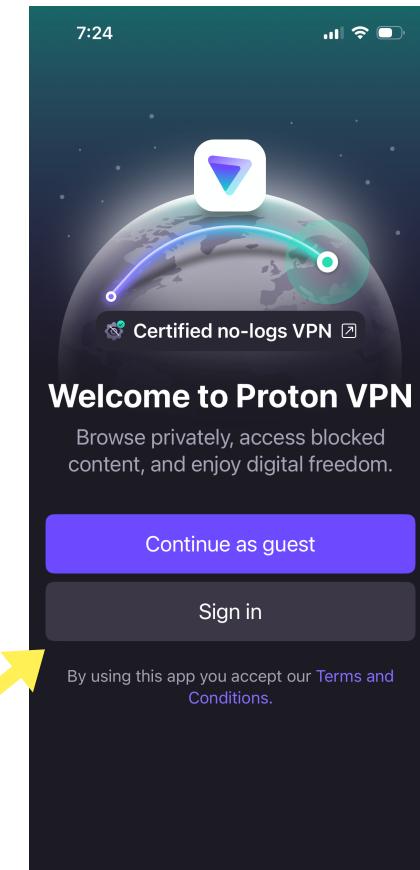
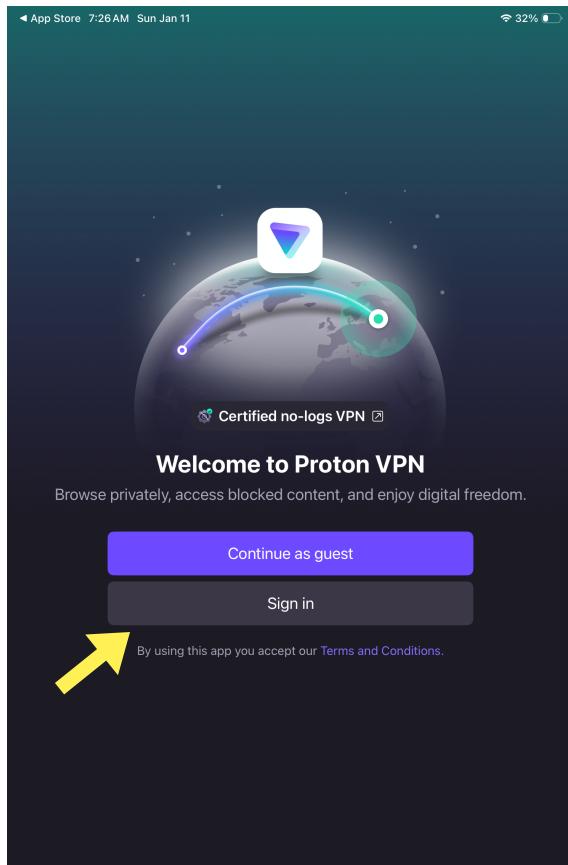
Scroll through the search results until you find an item that looks like the item highlighted by the yellow arrows in the images below. The images below show what this item looks like on each device; iPad is on the left and iPhone is on the right. Note on the right hand side of the Proton VPN item on my iPhone there is an "Open" button; this tells me I already have the ProtonVPN app installed on my iPhone at the time I took this screenshot. Now note on the right hand side of the Proton VPN item on my iPad there is a icon with a cloud and a downward arrow; this tells me that at some point in the past I installed the ProtonVPN app on my iPad and then uninstalled it. You are most likely to see a "Get" button on the right hand side of the ProtonVPN item on your device. Provided you do see a "Get" button or the icon with a cloud and downward arrow, tap it!

Your device will then download and install the app; when that's done, the cloud/down arrow icon or "Get" button will be replaced with an "Open" button. The next step in this document describes running the app. If you are going on to that step now, you can go ahead and click the "Open" button.



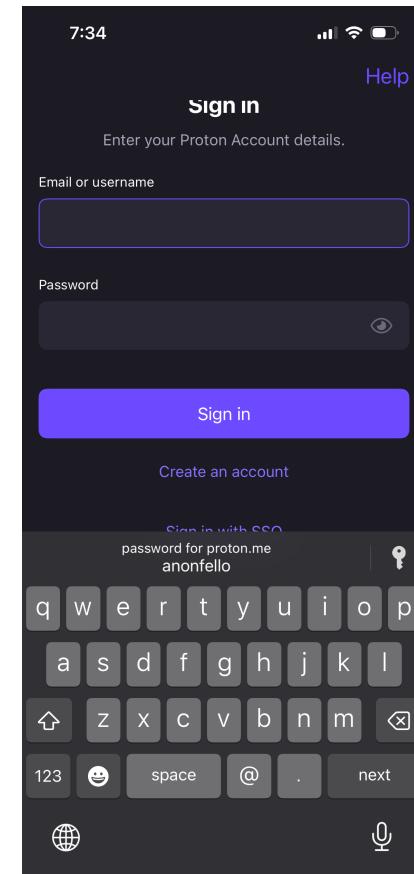
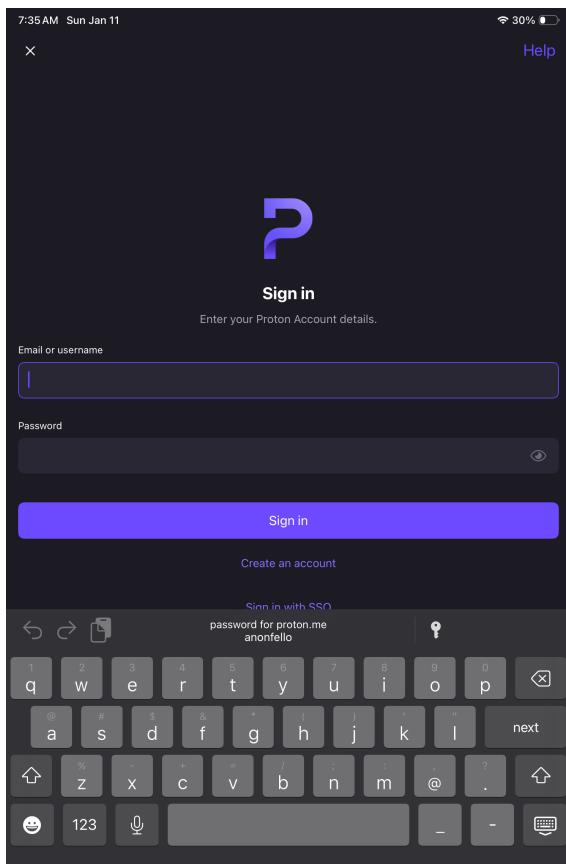
Step 2: Running ProtonVPN on an iPhone or iPad

When you run the ProtonVPN app for the first time, your screen should look similar to one of the images below (iPad on the left; iPhone on the right.) Tap the “Sign in” button (highlighted with the yellow arrows).



Step 2: Running ProtonVPN on an iPhone or iPad

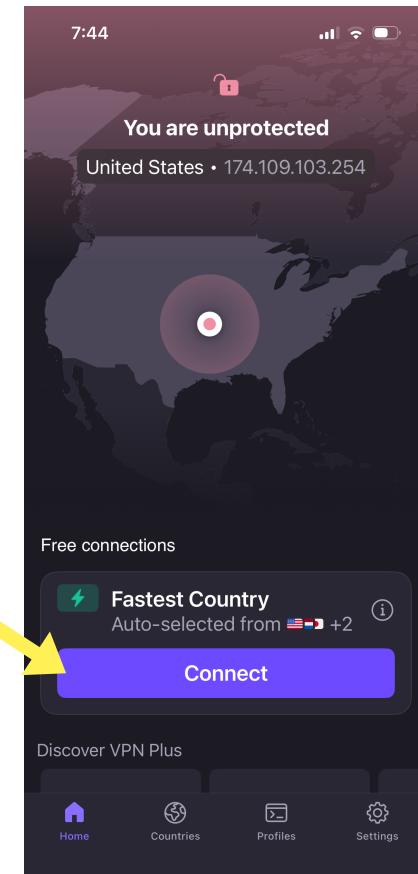
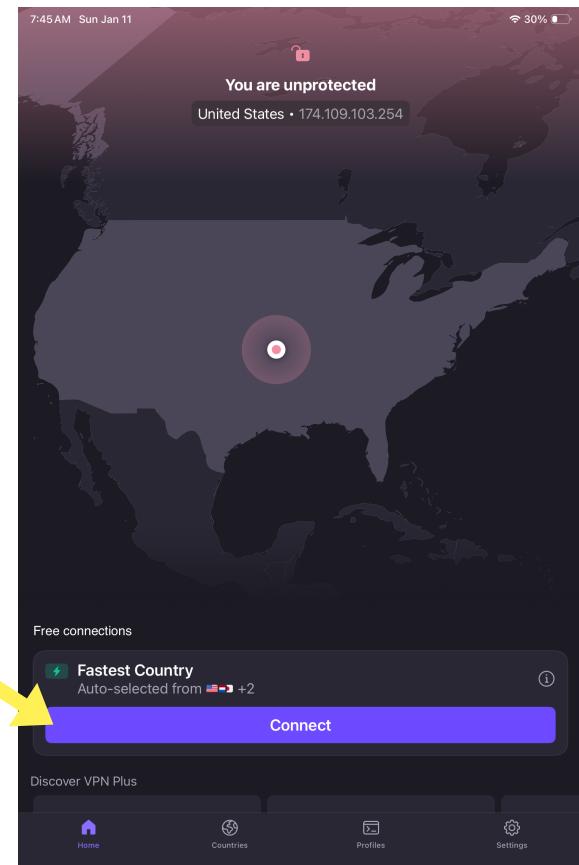
At this point, the ProtonVPN should be prompting you to enter your proton.me email address and password. Your device screen should look similar to one of the following images. (iPad on the left; iPhone on the right.) Enter your proton.me email address and password into the "Email or username" and "Password" textboxes, respectively. Then tap the "Sign in" button. Note, the app will "remember" that you signed in; you will not have to sign in again the next time you use the ProtonVPN app.



Step 3: Creating a VPN connection on an iPhone or iPad

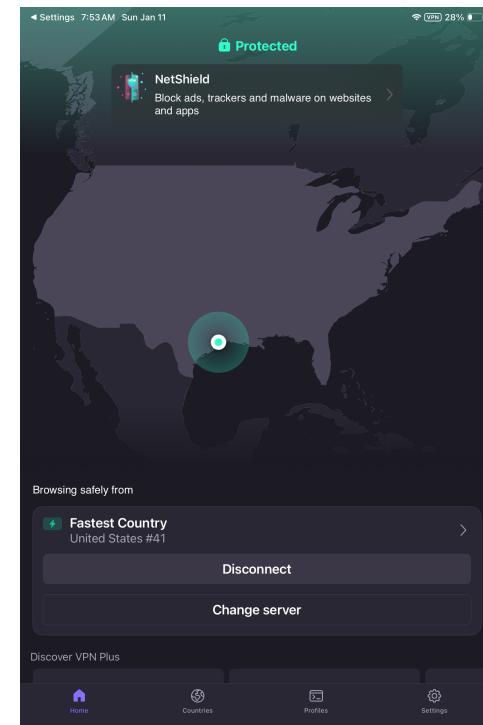
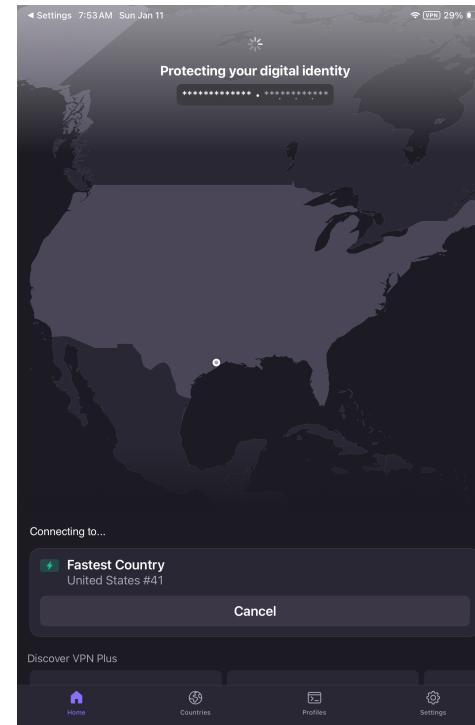
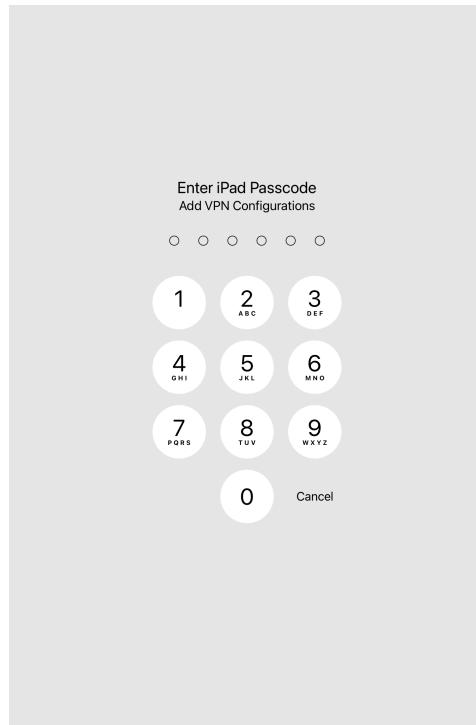
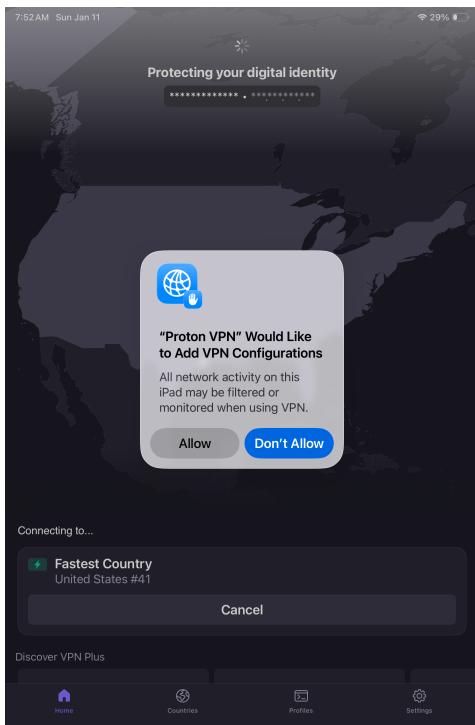
Your device screen should now look similar to one of the images below. (iPad on the left; iPhone on the right.) Tap on the "Connect" button to start a VPN connection (highlighted with the yellow arrows).

Note you may see a box appear in front of this screen promoting some other Proton service(s) you can try; I did once when I ran the app for the first time. The box had a "Got it" button; I tapped that button and the box went away.



Step 3: Creating a VPN connection on an iPad

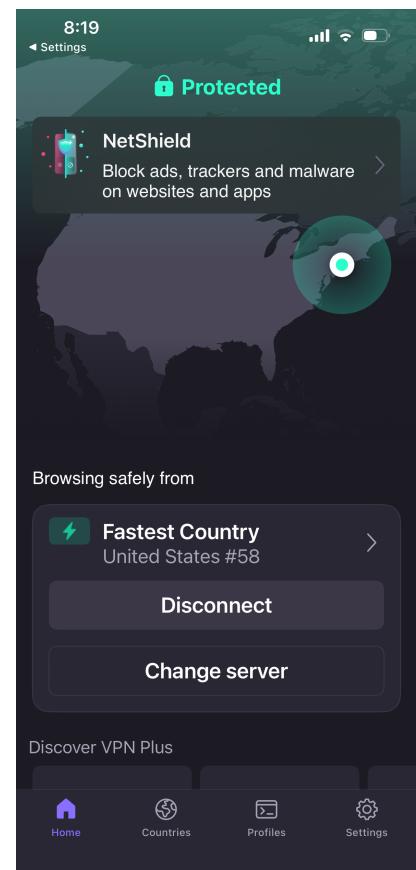
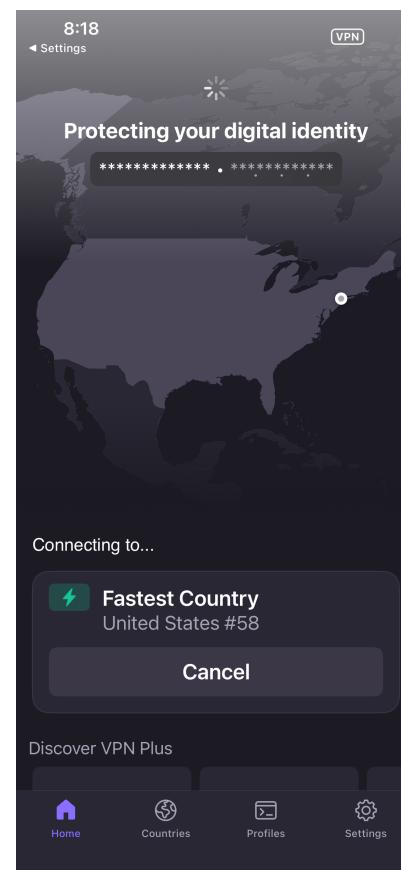
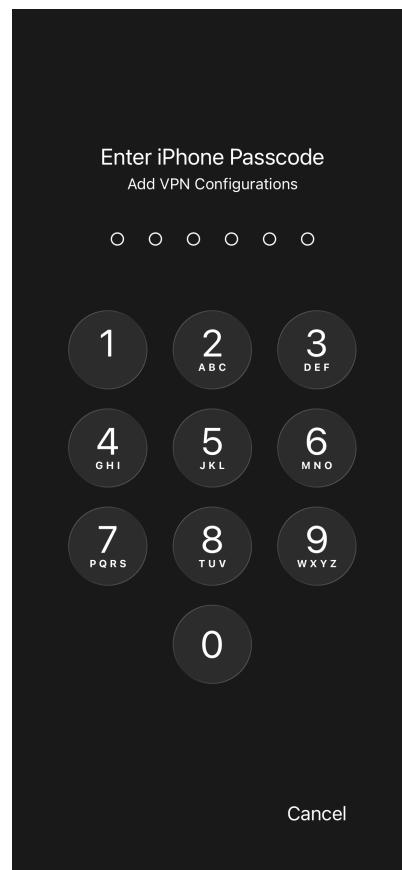
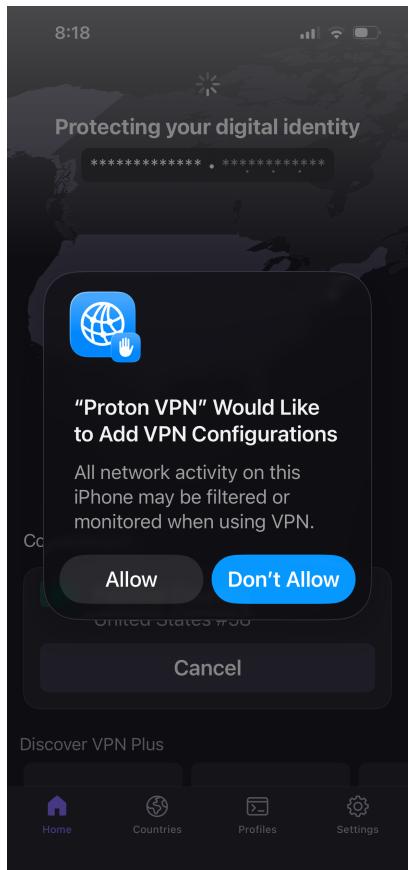
The very first time you make a VPN connection with the ProtonVPN app, the app needs to modify some system settings: you should see a box appear on your screen that says "Proton VPN Would like to Add VPN Configurations". (See the leftmost image below.) This box will have an "Allow" and a "Don't Allow" button; tap the "Allow" button. You will then be prompted to enter your device passcode (second image from the left.) Once you have entered your passcode, your screen will briefly look like the third image below; you should see this screen for no more than a few seconds. Once the ProtonVPN app has successfully made a VPN connection for you, your screen should look similar to the leftmost image below.



Step 3: Creating a VPN connection on an iPhone

Your device screen should now look similar to one of the images below. (iPad on the left; iPhone on the right.) Tap on the “Connect” button to start a VPN connection (highlighted with the yellow arrows).

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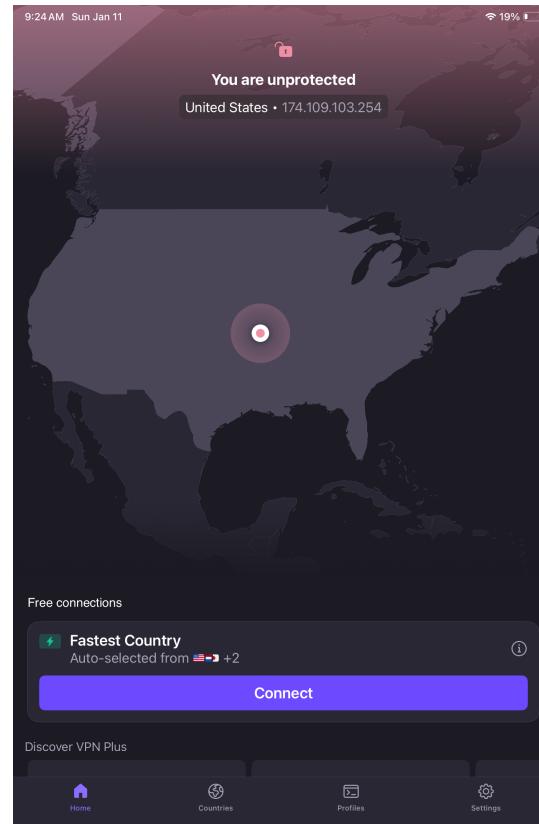
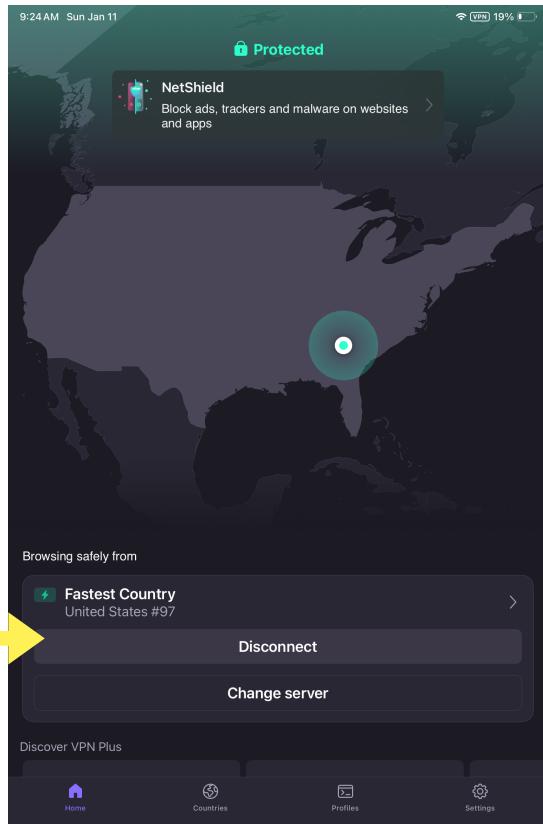


Step 4: Closing a VPN connection on an iPad

Your device screen should now look similar to the image below on the left. The word "Protected" (with the lock icon to its left) at the top of the screen indicates you have a VPN connection. At this point, you can swipe up from the bottom of the screen to send the ProtonVPN app to the background; your will still be protected with your VPN connection.

When you are done doing whatever you want to do online while protected by VPN, return to the ProtonVPN app. Your screen should look like the image below on the left. I.e., it should look the same as it did when you created the VPN connection and sent the ProtonVPN app to the background.

To close the VPN connection, click the "Disconnect" button (highlighted with the yellow arrow). After you have clicked that button, your screen should look similar to the image below on the right. At this point, you can again send the ProtonVPN to the background by swiping up on your screen and going on about your business.

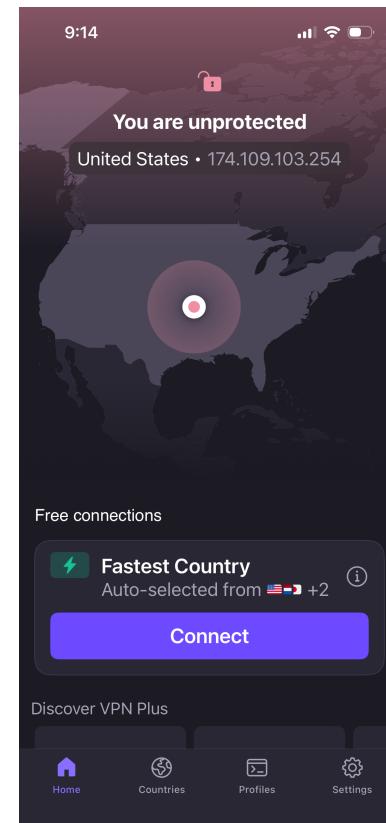
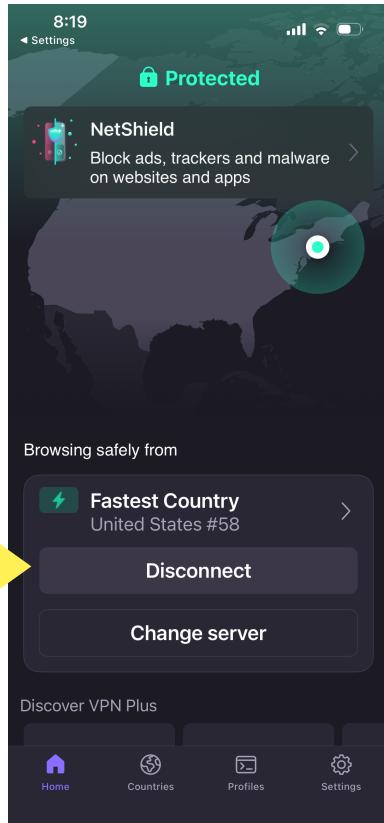


Step 4: Closing a VPN connection on an iPhone

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Congratulations! You did it!

Here's a gold star for a job well done.

