Configure a VPN with XP

VPN Overview

A VPN is a private network created over a public one. It’s done with encryption, this way, your data is encapsulated and secure in transit – this creates the ‘virtual’ tunnel. A VPN is a method of connecting to a private network by a public network like the Internet. An internet connection in a company is common. An Internet connection in a Home is common too. With both of these, you could create an encrypted tunnel between them and pass traffic, safely - securely.

If you want to create a VPN connection you will have to use encryption to make sure that others cannot intercept the data in transit while traversing the Internet. Windows XP provides a certain level of security by using Point-to-Point Tunneling Protocol (PPTP) or Layer Two Tunneling Protocol (L2TP). They are both considered tunneling protocols – simply because they create that virtual tunnel just discussed, by applying encryption.

If you want to configure a VPN connection from a Windows XP client computer you only need what comes with the Operating System itself, it's all built right in. To set up a connection to a VPN, do the following:

1. On the computer that is running Windows XP, confirm that the connection to the Internet is correctly configured.
   - You can try to browse the internet
   - Ping a known host on the Internet, like yahoo.com, something that isn’t blocking ICMP

2. Click Start, and then click Control Panel.

3. In Control Panel, double click Network Connections

4. Click Create a new connection in the Network Tasks task pad
5. In the Network Connection Wizard, click Next.

6. Click Connect to the network at my workplace, and then click Next.
7. Click Virtual Private Network connection, and then click Next.

8. If you are prompted, you need to select whether you will use a dialup connection or if you have a dedicated connection to the Internet either via Cable, DSL, T1, Satellite, etc. Click Next.

9. Type a host name, IP or any other description you would like to appear in the Network Connections area. You can change this later if you want. Click Next.
10. Type the host name or the Internet Protocol (IP) address of the computer that you want to connect to, and then click Next.

11. You may be asked if you want to use a Smart Card or not.

12. You are just about done, the rest of the screens just verify your connection, click Next.
13. Click to select the Add a shortcut to this connection to my desktop check box if you want one, if not, then leave it unchecked and click finish.

14. You are now done making your connection, but by default, it may try to connect. You can either try the connection now if you know its valid, if not, then just close it down for now.