

**Information Sheet**  
**VPNALYZER DESKTOP APPLICATION**  
**HUM00193036**

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You are invited to participate in a research study about commercial VPN products.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to **download and run our desktop application** to evaluate your VPN provider. **The application uploads data collected during the experiment to our servers.**

The potential risks described below are hypothetical and we provide them to inform the user of the nature of our tests and the data we may collect.

The VPNalyzer application is designed to run an “experiment” which tests the user’s VPN connection for misconfigurations, leakages, and support for good security practices. The results from the application will help users understand the security and privacy risks and/or benefits that their VPN provider affords them. Using crowdsourced data from users, we aim to advance the public interest in the VPN ecosystem, inform practical regulations and standards, and enforce accountability and transparency.

Users run the VPNalyzer application at their own risk and receive no compensation or benefits beyond the results compiled from their experiments. By installing the application, users agree to comply with VPNalyzer’s Data Policy.

Summary of the application which includes potential (privacy) risks:

- Anyone monitoring your internet activity (e.g. ISP, government, employer, VPN provider) will be able to see that you are running the VPNalyzer application. To our knowledge, we **do not** run any “sensitive” measurements to which they may have objections.
- Note that in some countries, using VPNs (or non-government-certified VPNs) may be illegal. We advise you to be informed of the local laws regarding the use of VPNs and download and use VPNalyzer at your own discretion.
- The application requests administrator privileges to your machine for advanced tests that require access to your machine’s firewall and to record packet captures for in-depth analyses. Note that you can opt-out of these measurements by not providing administrative privileges.
- Each run of the application is called an “experiment” which takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. We advise you not to use your computer to do “personal browsing” during the testing since the packet captures may record them and the advanced test modifying your firewall may disrupt your browsing.

Note that packet captures collect data on open interfaces on your computer which could include data about bluetooth-connected or Internet-connected devices on your network. It may also include data about existing connections on your machine.

- After one full experiment is completed, we will provide you with the link to a consent form that gives you relevant information about packet captures and you must explicitly opt-in to allow the packet captures to be uploaded. If you refuse to give this consent, only the experiment log is uploaded.

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose **not to run the application, not to answer the optional survey on the application, or not allow upload of the experiment results** for any reason.

Disclaimer: Users run VPNalyzer at their own risk. By installing and using VPNalyzer, users agree to our privacy policy and our data policy. Users must be informed of the local laws regarding the use of VPNs and download and use VPNalyzer at their own discretion.

I/We will protect the confidentiality of the data by using **strict access management** and only team members mentioned on [our website](#) will have access to it. We will only publish results about VPN providers in an aggregated manner.

If you have questions about this research study, please contact [vpnalyzer@umich.edu](mailto:vpnalyzer@umich.edu)

As part of their review, the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences has determined that this study is no more than minimal risk and is considered not regulated from on-going IRB oversight.