

7.2 Install on Windows and Initial Configurations

This section describes how to install SoftEther VPN Server to an operating system with Windows 2000 or later. This assumes that in the Windows operating system, no extra application software is installed after performing a clean install of the system. This also assumes that the Windows function for blocking communication to TCP/IP ports from the outside (firewall function) is disabled.

7.2.1 Selecting the Installation Mode

As described in [3.2 Operating Modes](#), SoftEther VPN Server can be operated in either service mode or user mode. When configuring VPN Server for use as part of an everyday operation system, we recommend installing SoftEther VPN Server in service mode. The installer for the Windows version of VPN Server installs the VPN Server program to the system in service mode.

7.2.2 Installation Procedure Using the Installer

Preparing the Installer File

The installation of the Windows version of SoftEther VPN Server is very easy as it is almost completely performed automatically. To install VPN Server, you can download the latest VPN Server installer file from the SoftEther VPN Project website ([download](#)).

The VPN Server Windows version installer file is an executable file with the name **vpnserver-build-number-win32-x86.exe**.

[7-2-1.png](#)

VPN Server Installer

Starting the Installer

Start the installer by double-clicking the VPN Server installer file. On the screen for selecting the software to install, select "**VPN Server**". The Windows Installer-based installer starts automatically. Using the installation wizard, you can select the name of the installation directory. (By default, the program is installed to **Program Files\SoftEther VPN Server** on the system drive.) The VPN Server process writes large log files to the installation directory, so we recommend selecting an area on the hard drive that has high transfer rate and a large amount of unused space.

[setup_3_select_install_components.jpg](#)

Selecting the software to install

7-2-2.png

Specifying the VPN Server Installation Directory.

During the installation, the end-user license agreement may be displayed. Please thoroughly read the agreement. If you agree to the terms and conditions, the installation continues.

7-2-3.png

VPN Server End-User License Agreement.

The installer automatically registers the SoftEther VPN Server system service and sets the program to automatically start in background mode at Windows startup.

7.2.3 Precautions After Installation

When installation of the Windows version of VPN Server is completed, the SoftEther VPN Server service is already running in the background on the Windows system. Normally, the computer does not have to be restarted after installation of the program. However, if you expect to use the local bridge function while using a network adapter that supports hardware offloading, as described in [3.6 Local Bridges](#), we recommend that you restart the computer.

To check whether the VPN Server installer properly installed the SoftEther VPN Server service to the Windows system, click [Control Panel] > [Administrative Tools] > [Services], and check that [SoftEther VPN Server] is displayed on the list of services.

7-2-7.png

VPN Server Install Finished.

7.2.4 Managing VPN Server with VPN Server Manager

VPN Server Manager

After VPN Server is installed, the program can be properly configured and the VPN client computers can be provided with the function that allows the program to operate as a VPN server.

SoftEther VPN Server Manager can be used on Windows to manage VPN Server. For information about the detailed management method, please refer to [3. SoftEther VPN Server Manual](#).

Start VPN Server Manager, which is installed at the same time as the Windows version of VPN Server, connect to [localhost] (the host itself) on the server window, and configure the default settings.

To configure or manage the Linux or other Unix version of VPN Server, you can also use the Windows version of VPN Server Manager from a remote computer. For information about manually installing VPN Server Manager on a computer without VPN Server installed, please refer to [2.4 VPN Server Manager](#).

Default Settings of VPN Server Manager

When VPN Server Manager is started for first time, nothing is registered to the [SoftEther VPN Server Connection Settings] list on the startup window.

[7-2-8.png](#)

VPN Server Manager.

To create a connection setting, click [Create New Setting] and specify the host name, port number, and other information of VPN Server to which to establish a management connection. Once a connection setting is registered, it is displayed the next time VPN Server Manager is started.

Window for Creating a Connection Setting.

After creating a connection setting, double-click that connection setting to try to connect to VPN Server.

7.2.5 Managing with vpncmd

You can also use the command line-based vpncmd software to configure and manage VPN Server. This is helpful in cases where VPN Server is installed to a Linux or other Unix operating system and a separate Windows computer is not available locally, therefore VPN Server Manager cannot be used. In this case, you can use vpncmd to configure the default settings. You can also use vpncmd to configure the settings on the Windows version of VPN Server. For information about detailed vpncmd operations, please refer to [6. Command Line Management Utility Manual](#).

SoftEther VPN Project recommends using VPN Server Manager on a Windows computer to configure and manage VPN Server and using vpncmd as a supplemental management utility for automating simple repetitive tasks.

7.2.6 Starting and Stopping Service

The installer for the Windows version of VPN Server automatically installs the SoftEther VPN Server service. This service continually operates while Windows is running, and it automatically shuts down when Windows shuts down.

If the service must be restarted for management reasons or because VPN Server operations become unstable, you can click [Control Panel] > [Administrative Tools] > [Services], and start or stop the service. An easier and more reliable method is to call the **net** command at the command prompt and start or stop the service.

To stop the service, type the following command.

```
> net stop sevpnserver
```

To start the service, type the following command.

```
> net start sevpnserver
```

If, in the unlikely event, the VPN Server process hangs and cannot be controlled using the **net** command, you can use Task Manager in Windows to forcibly terminate the `vpnserver.exe` process.

7.2.7 Adding and Deleting the Service

You can add or delete the service for the `vpnserver.exe` process using the method described in the description of the service mode of the Windows SoftEther VPN Server in [3.2 Operating Modes](#). You can use this method, for example, to move all setting files in the VPN Server installation directory to a different directory or hard drive, and then re-register the process as a service. (However, we cannot recommend using this method as the uninstaller may not be able to properly uninstall the program.)

7.2.8 Limitations When Starting in User-mode

We recommend operating the Windows version of VPN Server as a service mode program, but you can also start VPN Server in the user mode by using the method described in [3.2 Operating Modes](#). When VPN Server is started in user mode, critical security holes, such as buffer overruns, exist temporarily on the VPN Server, but because only user accounts starting VPN Server in user mode would be affected if an attack were to occur, VPN Server can be used relatively securely and safely. However, SoftEther VPN Project does not recommend actually operating VPN Server in user mode for the following reasons.

- The local bridge function cannot be used. (For details, please refer to [3.6 Local Bridges](#).)
- Some features of the disaster recovery function, such as automatic recovery when an error occurs in a self process, cannot be used. (For details, please refer to [3.3 VPN Server Administration](#).)
- To start the VPN Server process in user mode, the user must remain logged on to the server. The user cannot operate VPN Server when the user logs off or when no users are logged on to the server after Windows starts. For these reasons, user mode is not suited for actual operation of VPN Server.

See Also

- [3.2 Operating Modes](#)
- [Download](#)
- [3.6 Local Bridges](#)
- [3. SoftEther VPN Server Manual](#)
- [2.4 VPN Server Manager](#)
- [6. Command Line Management Utility Manual](#)
- [3.2.1 Service Mode](#)
- [3.2.2 User Mode](#)
- [3.3.12 Failure Recovery](#)