Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____

Best Free VPN for Laptop

Comparing free VPN apps, kill switches and data caps on a laptop

FREE VPNS ON A LAPTOP LEARNING OVERVIEW

LEARNER
STUDENT STATUS
Laptop Privacy Track

4 PICKS
PLANS COMPARED
Proton, Windscribe, Hide.me, TunnelBear

NO CAP
TOP FREE PICK
Proton VPN data limit

Welcome! This activity packet guides you through choosing a free VPN for a laptop. You will explore the difference between a full app and a browser extension, monthly data caps, kill switches, split tunneling, device limits and safe setup.

WORKSHEET CHECKPOINTS

- [ ] **Part 1-4: Master VPN and network security configurations.**
- [ ] **Part 5-7: Solve crossword & word search puzzles.**
- [ ] **Part 8-9: Solve case studies & cipher challenge.**
- [ ] **Part 10: Review basic & advanced FAQ pages.**
- [ ] **Part 11: Explore 10 interesting real-world facts.**
- [ ] **Bonus: Think Fast challenge.**

Open the VPN.com Laptop VPN Guide

URL: https://www.vpn.com/vpn/best-free-vpn/laptop/

Your Free Laptop VPN Learning Roadmap

- Explain the difference between a full VPN app and a browser extension on a laptop.
- Compare the free data caps of Proton VPN, Windscribe, Hide.me and TunnelBear.
- Read which providers state a kill switch or split tunneling on Windows and Mac.
- Compare free device limits and free server locations across the four plans.
- Follow safe steps to download, install and set up a free VPN app.
- Decide when a free plan stops being enough and a paid plan is the better fit.

FREE VPNS ON A LAPTOP INSTRUCTIONS

Answer the multiple choice and true/false questions, complete the fill-in-the-blank sentences using the word bank, match definitions, and solve the crossword and word search puzzles. Use the facts from the VPN.com guide to decide which free plan fits a laptop. Finish with the Bonus Activity: Think Fast.

APP OR EXTENSION, CAPS AND LIMITS (INTRODUCTION)

A laptop gives you a choice a phone does not: a full app that covers the whole computer, or a browser extension that covers one browser. Free plans also limit data, devices or server choice, so compare them before you install.

READ EACH CHECKPOINT CAREFULLY AND SELECT OR WRITE THE CORRECT RESPONSE.

Checkpoint 1: Multiple Choice Challenge

1. On a laptop, what does a full VPN app cover that a browser extension does not?

- A) Only one browser tab
- B) Every program on the laptop
- C) Only the email program
- D) Only video calls

2. Which of the four free plans has no data cap?

- A) Hide.me
- B) TunnelBear
- C) Proton VPN
- D) Windscribe

3. How much free data does Windscribe give each month once you confirm your email?

- A) 2 GB
- B) 5 GB
- C) 20 GB
- D) 10 GB

4. How many free server locations does Hide.me offer?

- A) Five locations
- B) Ten countries
- C) All locations
- D) One location

5. Which provider has published Cure53 security audits since 2016?

- A) Proton VPN
- B) TunnelBear
- C) Hide.me
- D) Windscribe

Checkpoint 2: True or False Challenge

6 Question 6

6. Proton VPN's free plan has no data cap.

○ True ○ False

7 Question 7

7. A browser extension routes the traffic of every program on the laptop.

○ True ○ False

8 Question 8

8. Hide.me states a kill switch by system on its website.

○ True ○ False

9 Question 9

9. Windscribe's free plan allows an unlimited number of devices.

○ True ○ False

10 Question 10

10. TunnelBear's free plan allows only 2 GB a month.

○ True ○ False

Checkpoint 3: Key Term Insertion

Read each sentence below and fill in the blank with the correct term from the Word Bank.

1. A _____ blocks your traffic if the VPN drops, so your real connection is not exposed.
2. The only free plan on this page with no data cap is from _____ VPN.
3. The free plan that allows an unlimited number of devices is from _____ .
4. A _____ lets chosen apps stay outside the VPN on Windows and Mac.
5. A browser _____ covers only the browser it is installed in.
6. TunnelBear has the lowest _____ of the four, only 2 GB a month.

VOCABULARY WORD BANK

BROWSER DATA CAP EXTENSION FIREWALL KILL SWITCH PROTON SPLIT TUNNEL WINDSCRIBE

Write your answers here:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Checkpoint 4: Laptop VPN Concept Match

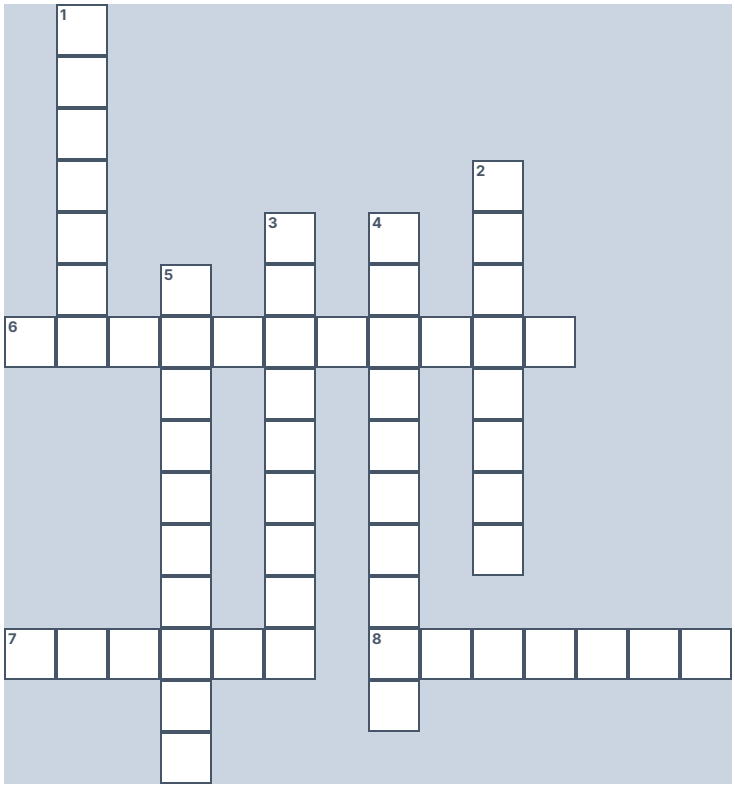
DEFINITION MATCHING

Match each vocabulary term on the left with its correct definition on the right by writing the corresponding letter (A-H) in the fillable input box.

☐	1. KILL SWITCH	A	Keeps chosen apps outside the VPN.
☐	2. PROTON	B	Free plan that allows unlimited devices.
☐	3. WINDSCRIBE	C	The one program a VPN extension covers.
☐	4. SPLIT TUNNEL	D	Windscribe setting that blocks traffic outside the VPN.
☐	5. EXTENSION	E	Free plan here with no data cap.
☐	6. DATACAP	F	Blocks your traffic if the VPN drops.
☐	7. FIREWALL	G	Add on that covers only one browser.
☐	8. BROWSER	H	Monthly limit on free data.

Checkpoint 5: Crossword Puzzle

Solve the crossword puzzle by typing letters into the active white boxes. The numbers correspond to the clues below.



ACROSS

6. Keeps chosen apps outside the VPN (11)

7. Free plan here with no data cap (6)

8. The one program a VPN extension covers (7)

DOWN

1. Monthly limit on free data (7)

2. Windscribe setting that blocks traffic outside the VPN (8)

3. Add on that covers only one browser (9)

4. Free plan that allows unlimited devices (10)

5. Blocks your traffic if the VPN drops (10)

Checkpoint 5 Alternative: Accessible Crossword Clues

Screen-reader and keyboard users can type the crossword answers directly in the text fields below.

ACROSS

6 across: Keeps chosen apps outside the VPN (11 letters):

7 across: Free plan here with no data cap (6 letters):

8 across: The one program a VPN extension covers (7 letters):

DOWN

1 down: Monthly limit on free data (7 letters):

2 down: Windscribe setting that blocks traffic outside the VPN (8 letters):

3 down: Add on that covers only one browser (9 letters):

4 down: Free plan that allows unlimited devices (10 letters):

5 down: Blocks your traffic if the VPN drops (10 letters):

Checkpoint 6: Hidden Word Search

Find the 8 key vocabulary terms hidden in the grid below. Words can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal.

U S T E L J B F A B C P X L K
Y K X T K D Q I M J D D I N N
H K Q P G M M R Q R A S T T G
C N C S Q O H E S B T W D S Z
T O V C Z S W W F K A H Z W D
I T N D Q P X A P C C U B I A
W O Z N D L K L E A A D O N D
S R F H I I D L X B P R Q D M
L P E I R T Z S T R F Q V S F
L A A Q O T N P E O T X Q C K
I R U S D U N Y N W B F S R X
K W J A R N Z Y S S Y L G I I
M R J M L N T O I E H Q Q B H
Z A O V G E U B O R Y R Y E B
H L Z G J L O P N N W C M Z Y

VOCABULARY WORD LIST

KILLSWITCH PROTON WINDSCRIBE FIREWALL SPLITTUNNEL BROWSER EXTENSION DATACAP

Checkpoint 6 Alternative: Accessible Vocabulary Matching

Match each of the 8 vocabulary terms from the Word Search to its correct definition by writing the letter (A-H) in the blank space.

VOCABULARY TERMS

- **A. KILLSWITCH**
- **B. PROTON**
- **C. WINDSCRIBE**
- **D. SPLITTUNNEL**
- **E. EXTENSION**
- **F. DATACAP**
- **G. FIREWALL**
- **H. BROWSER**

DEFINITIONS & MATCH FIELDS

1. Add on that covers only one browser.
2. Keeps chosen apps outside the VPN.
3. Blocks your traffic if the VPN drops.
4. Monthly limit on free data.
5. Free plan that allows unlimited devices.
6. Free plan here with no data cap.
7. The one program a VPN extension covers.
8. Windscribe setting that blocks traffic outside the VPN.

Checkpoint 7: Scrambled Word Challenge

Unscramble the letters below to reveal the key laptop VPN terms. Write your answers in the input boxes provided.

1. CIWSIKTHLL
2. BDWISERICN
3. ESNXINEOT
4. ELLAWFIR
5. TONPOR
6. TLTNENSPULI
7. DACPAAT
8. RWRBESO

Bonus Activity: Think Fast

3 ITEMS FROM EACH CATEGORY. FIRST PERSON TO COMPLETE THE LIST WINS.

1	Promises a good VPN provider makes			
2	Warning signs in a free app			
3	Things that are free but cost you data			
4	Reasons to use a VPN while traveling			
5	Free VPN services you know			
6	Things your internet provider can see			
7	Things a VPN can't protect you from			
8	Reasons to pay for a VPN			
9	Ways to spot a fake Wi-Fi network			
10	Things a VPN can hide			
11	VPN services you know			
12	Words related to privacy			
13	Ways a free VPN can make money			
14	Limits of a free VPN			
15	Myths about VPNs			

Checkpoint 8: Laptop VPN Case Studies

Apply the concepts you have learned to solve the real-world scenarios below.

CASE STUDY 1: APP OR EXTENSION



Scenario: A student works from a cafe and adds a VPN browser extension. Her email program and system updates still run, and she assumes they are protected too.

Discussion Question: Why are those programs not covered, and what should she install instead?

CASE STUDY 2: DATA CAPS



Scenario: A student uses the free Windscribe plan on a laptop. After a week of video calls and large downloads, his free data is almost gone.

Discussion Question: What limit is he reaching, and what could he do about it?

Checkpoint 9: Decrypting the Cipher

A laptop user compares free VPN plans before installing an app. Use the Letter-to-Number key below to decrypt the message by writing the matching letters in the blank spaces.

LETTER-TO-NUMBER ENCRYPTION KEY

A=1 B=2 C=3 D=4 E=5 F=6 G=7 H=8 I=9 J=10 K=11 L=12 M=13

N=14 O=15 P=16 Q=17 R=18 S=19 T=20 U=21 V=22 W=23 X=24 Y=25 Z=26

16	18	15	20	15	14		8	1	19		14	15		3	1	16

Decoded message:

TIP: EACH NUMBER REPRESENTS THE POSITION OF THAT LETTER IN THE ALPHABET (E.G. 1 = A, 2 = B, 26 = Z).

Checkpoint 10: Basic VPN FAQs (Part A)

Review the most common questions and answers about free VPN plans on a laptop.

Q1: Why install the app instead of only a browser extension?

An app routes the whole laptop's traffic through the VPN, including your browser, email program, chat apps and updates. An extension covers only the browser it is installed in.

Q2: Which free VPN has no data cap?

Of the four on this page, only Proton VPN has no data cap on its free plan. It allows one device at a time and assigns your server for you.

Q3: What is a kill switch?

A kill switch blocks your traffic if the VPN drops, so your real connection is not exposed for a moment.

Q4: Which free VPNs state a kill switch on Windows and Mac?

Proton VPN states a kill switch on both, and Windscribe states a Firewall setting that does the same job. Hide.me does not state one by system.

Q5: Does Not stated mean a feature is missing?

No. It means the provider does not say, so the page does not claim it either way. Check the app settings after you install.

Checkpoint 10: Basic VPN FAQs (Part B)

Review the most common questions and answers about free VPN plans on a laptop.

Q6: How much free data does each plan give?

Proton VPN has no data cap, Windscribe gives 10 GB a month with a confirmed email, Hide.me gives 10 GB a month, and TunnelBear gives 2 GB a month.

Q7: Which free plan covers the most devices?

Windscribe's free plan allows an unlimited number of devices. Proton VPN allows one device at a time, and Hide.me and TunnelBear do not state a free device limit.

Q8: Can I choose my server on Proton VPN's free plan?

No. The free plan assigns you a server in one of its ten free countries, so you cannot choose where you connect.

Q9: How many free locations does Hide.me offer?

Hide.me offers a choice of five server locations on its free plan, and it supports its full set of protocols there, WireGuard included.

Q10: What is TunnelBear best for on a laptop?

It is the easiest of the four to start with. Its free plan allows only 2 GB a month with all server locations, so it suits a first look at a VPN app.

Checkpoint 10: Advanced VPN FAQs (Part C)

Explore the deeper points from the guide: free plan funding, setup checks, data use on a laptop and when to upgrade.

Q1: How can a free VPN funded by ads put my data at risk?

The US Federal Trade Commission has warned that many free VPN apps are free because they sell advertising or share your information with third parties.

Q2: Why can a free plan from a paid provider be safer?

A provider that earns from paid subscriptions has no need to sell your data. Proton VPN, Windscribe, Hide.me and TunnelBear fit that description.

Q3: What should I check in the app after installing?

Turn on the kill switch or Firewall setting if the app has one, find where the app shows your remaining data, and check the app settings for split tunneling.

Q4: When should I move to a paid plan?

Move when you hit the data cap in the first half of the month, when you need to choose a server, or when you need more than the free device limit.

Q5: Why does a laptop use more free data than a phone?

A laptop uses more data in the background. System updates, cloud backups and video calls all count toward the cap.

Checkpoint 10: Advanced VPN FAQs (Part D)

Explore the deeper points from the guide: speed, regional content, safe downloads, extensions and the Firewall setting.

Q6: Will a free VPN slow down my laptop's connection?

Usually a little. Free plans share a smaller set of servers, and a VPN adds some delay to every connection. Choose the closest server you can.

Q7: Are free plans good for content in other regions?

They are the weakest choice. The free server pools are small, and the terms of the service you want to reach still apply.

Q8: How should I download a free VPN safely?

Open the provider's own website, not a search result for free VPN, and download the app from there. A trustworthy free plan should not ask for a card.

Q9: When is a browser extension the right choice?

Use it for a quick check of how a VPN behaves, or for one browser profile. It is a lighter second choice, not a replacement for the app on public networks.

Q10: How does Windscribe's Firewall setting relate to a kill switch?

On Windows and Mac, Windscribe states a Firewall setting that blocks traffic outside the VPN, which does the same job as a kill switch.

Part 11: 10 Real-World VPN Facts & Insights

Review real-world facts from the guide about free laptop VPNs, data caps, kill switches and safe setup.

1. VPN INSIGHT

The guide ranks four free plans by Trust Score: Proton VPN 85, Hide.me 78, Windscribe VPN 76 and TunnelBear 70.

2. VPN INSIGHT

Proton VPN's score of 85 out of 100 is built from Trust & Value at 26 out of 30 and VPN Performance at 59 out of 70.

3. VPN INSIGHT

A full app routes your browser, email program, chat apps and updates through the VPN. A browser extension routes only that browser.

4. VPN INSIGHT

A browser extension is lighter, so it suits a ten minute test of a provider or one browser profile.

5. VPN INSIGHT

Windscribe's free plan covers an unlimited number of devices and includes a built in ad and tracker blocker.

6. VPN INSIGHT

Hide.me supports its full set of protocols on the free plan, WireGuard included, and gives 10 GB a month.

7. VPN INSIGHT

TunnelBear's Cure53 security audits have been published since 2016, and its free plan allows 2 GB a month.

8. VPN INSIGHT

A laptop uses more data in the background than a phone: system updates, cloud backups and video calls all count.

9. VPN INSIGHT

The free plan data in the comparison was checked on 2026-10-12, and a cap or limit can change.

10. VPN INSIGHT

The US Federal Trade Commission has warned that many free VPN apps sell advertising or share your information with third parties.

Technical References & Sources

The study guide and interactive puzzles are compiled from the sources cited on the VPN.com guide and from the guide itself.

SCHOLARLY & INDUSTRY REFERENCES

[1] Windscribe. Features.

https://windscribe.com/features/

[2] TunnelBear: Secure VPN Service. Buy TunnelBear VPN with Credit Card.

https://www.tunnelbear.com/pricing

[3] Federal Trade Commission. 2018. In the market for a VPN app?

https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/blog/2018/02/market-vpn-app

[4] VPN.com. Best Free VPN for Laptop. Decision guide, updated October 2026.

https://www.vpn.com/vpn/best-free-vpn/laptop/

Answer Key: Checkpoint 1 - Multiple Choice

1 **App Coverage** FULL APP — **Correct Answer: B**

TEACHING NOTE

An app routes the whole laptop's traffic through the VPN: browser, email program, chat apps and updates.

2 **No Data Cap** PROTON VPN — **Correct Answer: C**

TEACHING NOTE

Of the four on this page, only Proton VPN has no data cap on its free plan.

3 **Windscribe Cap** 10 GB A MONTH — **Correct Answer: D**

TEACHING NOTE

Windscribe's free plan gives 10 GB a month once you confirm your email.

4 **Hide.me Locations** FIVE LOCATIONS — **Correct Answer: A**

TEACHING NOTE

Hide.me's free plan gives a choice of five server locations.

5 **Published Audits** TUNNELBEAR — **Correct Answer: B**

TEACHING NOTE

TunnelBear's Cure53 security audits have been published since 2016.

Answer Key: Checkpoint 2 - True or False

6 **Proton Data** NO CAP — **Correct Answer: True**

TEACHING NOTE

Of the four on this page, only Proton VPN has no data cap on its free plan.

7 **App Coverage** EXTENSION SCOPE — **Correct Answer: False**

TEACHING NOTE

A browser extension routes only the browser it is installed in, not every program.

8 **Kill Switch** NOT STATED — **Correct Answer: False**

TEACHING NOTE

Hide.me does not state a kill switch by system, so check the app settings.

9 **Question 9** — **Correct Answer: True**

TEACHING NOTE

Windscribe's free plan allows an unlimited number of devices.

10 **Question 10** — **Correct Answer: True**

TEACHING NOTE

TunnelBear's free plan allows only 2 GB a month.

Vocabulary Keys & Grading Rubric

Instructor Grading Rubric: Award 1 point for each correct matching (8 points total) and context term (6 points total).

CHECKPOINT 4: CONCEPT MATCH KEY

F 1. KILL SWITCH	E 2. PROTON	B 3. WINDSCRIBE	A 4. SPLIT TUNNEL
G 5. EXTENSION	H 6. DATACAP	D 7. FIREWALL	C 8. BROWSER

CHECKPOINT 3: KEY TERM KEY

1 KILL SWITCH	2 PROTON	3 WINDSCRIBE	4 SPLIT TUNNEL
5 EXTENSION	6 DATA CAP		

CHECKPOINT 6 ALTERNATIVE: VOCABULARY MATCH KEY

1 E – EXTENSION	2 D – SPLITTUNNEL	3 A – KILLSWITCH	4 F – DATACAP
5 C – WINDSCRIBE	6 B – PROTON	7 H – BROWSER	8 G – FIREWALL

DISCUSSION NOTES FOR INSTRUCTORS

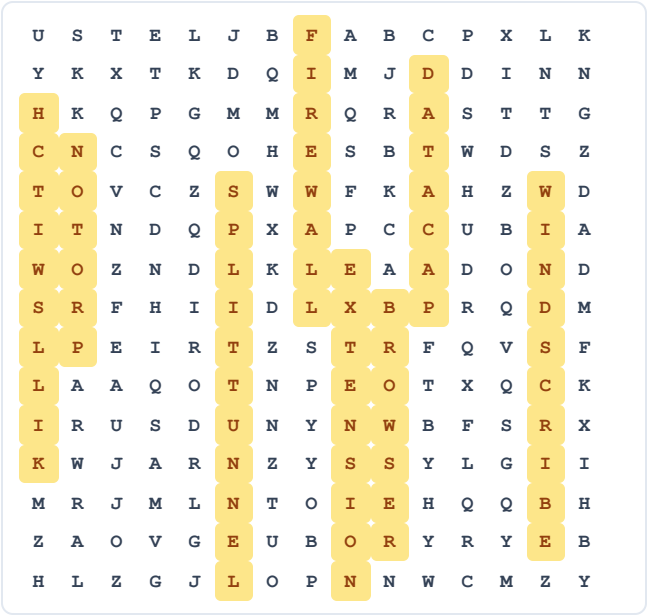
Key Terms:
Check that students can explain KILL SWITCH, PROTON and WINDSCRIBE in their own words and give an example of each.

Case Studies:
Ask students to support their recommendations with facts from the worksheet rather than assumptions.

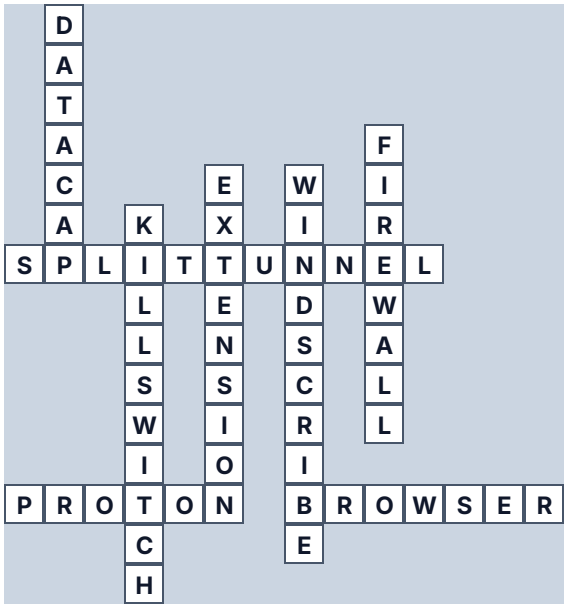
Source Evaluation:
Have students verify at least one claim against the worksheet references, and discuss why figures, prices and rules can change over time.

Puzzles Keys & Instructor Notes

WORD SEARCH SOLUTION



CROSSWORD SOLUTION



INSTRUCTOR GUIDE FOR CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

ACROSS

6 across: SPLITTUNNEL Keeps chosen apps outside the VPN (11 letters)

7 across: PROTON Free plan here with no data cap (6 letters)

8 across: BROWSER The one program a VPN extension covers (7 letters)

DOWN

1 down: DATACAP Monthly limit on free data (7 letters)

2 down: FIREWALL Windscribe setting that blocks traffic outside the VPN (8 letters)

3 down: EXTENSION Add on that covers only one browser (9 letters)

4 down: WINDSCRIBE Free plan that allows unlimited devices (10 letters)

5 down: KILLSWITCH Blocks your traffic if the VPN drops (10 letters)

Scrambled Words & Cipher Solution Key

Grading key for the vocabulary word unscramble activity and Secret Cipher Challenge.

WORD UNSCRAMBLE KEY

1. CIWSIKTHLL	KILLSWITCH	5. TONPOR	PROTON
2. BDWISERICN	WINDSCRIBE	6. TLTNENSPULI	SPLITTUNNEL
3. ESNXINEOT	EXTENSION	7. DACPAAT	DATACAP
4. ELLAWFIR	FIREWALL	8. RWRBESO	BROWSER

SECRET CIPHER CHALLENGE KEY

"PROTON HAS NO CAP"

Case Studies Solution Key

A Case Study 1: App or Extension

Instructor Solution

GRADING GUIDELINE

Student answers should cover the following points:

- Scenario Analysis: A student works from a cafe and adds a VPN browser extension. Her email program and system updates still run, and she assumes they are protected too.
- Recommended Strategy & Solution: The browser extension covers only the browser it is installed in, so her email program and updates stay outside the VPN. She should install the full app, which covers every program on the laptop.

B Case Study 2: Data Caps

Instructor Solution

GRADING GUIDELINE

Student answers should cover the following points:

- Scenario Analysis: A student uses the free Windscribe plan on a laptop. After a week of video calls and large downloads, his free data is almost gone.
- Recommended Strategy & Solution: He is reaching the free monthly cap of 10 GB, which applies once the email is confirmed. Video calls and large downloads use a lot of data, so he can watch the data meter in the app or move to a paid plan if the VPN has to stay on all day.