OpenVPN Community VPN daemon

CONCEPTS

An option on the command line is the same as in a config file, just with the leading -- dropped: --verb 4 becomes verb 4.

Client tun0 device
↓ TLS handshake
Control channel certs, tls-crypt
↓ keys
Data channel data-ciphers
↓ UDP 1194
Server tun0, routes

dev tun carries IP packets (routed VPN); dev tap carries Ethernet frames (bridging). Both ends must match.

RUN

openvpn --config *<file>*
Start with a config file

openvpn --config *<file>* **--daemon**
Detach and run in background

openvpn --config *<file>* **--verb 4**
Set log verbosity (0-11, default 1)

openvpn --config *<file>* **--log-append** *<file>*
Log to a file (appends)

openvpn --config *<file>* **--status** *<file>* *<sec>*
Write a status file every N seconds

openvpn --version
Show version and build options

CLIENT OPTIONS

client
Pull options from the server, act as TLS client

remote *<host>* *<port>* *<proto>*
Server to connect to

dev tun
Routed IP tunnel device

proto udp
Transport: udp, tcp-client, tcp-server

CLIENT OPTIONS (cont.)

remote *<host>* **443 tcp-client**
Server reachable over TCP 443

nobind
Do not bind a fixed local port

persist-key
Keep keys across restarts

persist-tun
Keep the tun device across restarts

auth-user-pass *<file>*
Username and password from a file

KEYS AND TLS

ca *<file>*
CA certificate to trust

cert *<file>*
Your certificate

key *<file>*
Your private key

tls-crypt *<file>*
Encrypt and authenticate control channel

remote-cert-tls server
Require a server-purpose certificate

data-ciphers *<list>*
Colon-separated data channel ciphers

openvpn --genkey secret *<file>*
Create a static key file

openvpn --genkey tls-crypt *<file>*
Create a tls-crypt key

SERVER OPTIONS

server *<network>* *<netmask>*
Server mode with a client address pool

push "*<option>***"**
Send an option to every client

client-config-dir *<dir>*
Per-client files named by common name

keepalive *<interval>* *<timeout>*
Ping and restart on silence

ROUTING AND DNS

push "redirect-gateway def1"
Send all client traffic via the VPN

redirect-gateway def1
Same, set on the client

push "route *<network>* *<netmask>***"**
Give clients a route to a subnet

push "dns server 1 address *<ip>***"**
Set DNS on clients (2.6+)

sysctl -w net.ipv4.ip_forward=1
Let the server forward packets

OPERATE

systemctl start openvpn-client@*<name>*
Start /etc/openvpn/client/<name>.conf

systemctl start openvpn-server@*<name>*
Start /etc/openvpn/server/<name>.conf

journalctl -u openvpn-client@*<name>* **-f**
Follow the service log

kill -USR1 *<pid>*
Soft restart, keeps keys and tun

TROUBLESHOOT

ip addr show tun0
Check the tunnel got an address

ip route
Check the VPN routes exist

openvpn --config *<file>* **--verb 6**
Debug handshake problems

Common log messages

Message	Usually means
`TLS key negotiation failed`	Port, firewall or key
`certificate verify failed`	Bad CA, expiry, clock
`AUTH_FAILED`	Wrong login
`Initialization Sequence Completed`	Connected