

Synology QuickConnect: Security, Alternatives, and Best Practices

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By Vipin PG | Published July 5, 2024 | Updated July 5, 2024 | Format: Article | 3 min read

In brief

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How QuickConnect Works

QuickConnect is a reverse proxy service that enables users to access their Synology NAS using a unique QuickConnect ID, eliminating the need for port forwarding or static IP addresses. When a user connects to their NAS via QuickConnect, the connection is routed through Synology's servers before reaching the NAS.

Security Concerns

While QuickConnect offers encryption and can be considered more secure than directly exposing your NAS to the internet, it still has some potential security risks:

1. **Exposure to the Internet:** QuickConnect opens up your NAS for access from anyone on the internet. If a remote exploitable vulnerability is discovered, attackers could target your NAS through QuickConnect.
2. **Trust Issues:** QuickConnect acts as a reverse proxy, and SSL certificates terminate at quickconnect.to. This means that, in theory, Synology could read the data sent across QuickConnect, including usernames and passwords. However, it's important to note that Synology does not actually intercept or read this data.
3. **Brute-Force Attacks:** QuickConnect allows strangers on the internet to attempt to log into your NAS. If you have weak credentials, your NAS could be vulnerable to brute-force attacks.

Mitigating Risks

To mitigate the risks associated with QuickConnect, follow these best practices:

1. **Use Strong Credentials:** Ensure that you use a strong, unique username and password for your NAS. Disable the default admin account and enable account protection to lock accounts after repeated failed login attempts.
2. **Enable Two-Factor Authentication:** Set up 2FA to add an extra layer of security to your NAS.
3. **Limit Access to DSM:** In QuickConnect settings, you can exclude DSM (DiskStation Manager) from the list of apps accessible through QuickConnect.
4. **Keep Your NAS Updated:** Regularly update your Synology NAS to the latest version of DSM to ensure you have the latest security patches and features.

Alternatives to QuickConnect

If you prefer not to use QuickConnect, there are alternative solutions for securely accessing your Synology NAS remotely:

1. VPN (Virtual Private Network): Set up a VPN server on your NAS or router. This allows you to connect to your NAS as if you were on the local network, providing a secure connection. Popular VPN solutions include:

- WireGuard: A fast, modern, and secure VPN protocol that can be set up on your NAS or router.
- Tailscale: A user-friendly VPN service that has an official Synology package. It uses WireGuard internally.
- ZeroTier: A VPN solution that can be run through Docker on your Synology NAS.

2. Reverse Proxy with SSL: Set up a reverse proxy server (e.g., Nginx) on your NAS and configure SSL certificates. This allows you to securely access your NAS using a domain name and SSL encryption.

Conclusion

While Synology QuickConnect offers convenience, you should understand its potential security risks. By following best practices such as using strong credentials, enabling 2FA, limiting access to DSM, and keeping your NAS updated, you can mitigate these risks. Alternatively, consider using a VPN or reverse proxy with SSL for secure remote access to your Synology NAS. Ultimately, the choice between using QuickConnect or an alternative solution depends on your specific needs and risk tolerance.