



# Spotify in the US? Yes please.

2010

2 min read • 545 words

---

I spent about 8 hours last night obtaining a Premium Spotify account in the US, and I've never been happier. As you know, [Spotify](#) is only available in the UK, Spain, and France. So, the only way to signup for an account is to take a trip overseas... virtually.

## Step 1: Signup for a Virtual Private Server

Signup for a [Linode](#) account, and buy a 360 VPS. Linode allows you to choose a datacenter when you buy a VPS, and luckily, they have a datacenter in the UK. This will run you \$20 a month.

## Step 2: Install Ubuntu and Boot Your VPS

Install Ubuntu Server on your new british hackbox. You can SSH in to test it out. Have fun. Make sure openssh-server is installed.

## Step 3: Edit Hosts File

Append the following lines to your `/etc/hosts` file:

```
127.0.0.1 spotify.com
127.0.0.1 www.spotify.com
[your vps ip] hackbox
```

## Step 4: Open a Reverse SSH Forwarding Tunnel

```
sudo ssh -C root@hackbox -L 443:spotify.com:443
sudo ssh -C root@hackbox -L 80:spotify.com:80
```

Congratulations. You're now a Brit.

## Step 5: Create an Account

While creating an account, you are prompted for your postal code. I did some [google-fu](#) and used `S023 8TH` as my postal code for Winchester, Hampshire UK.

[Download the client.](#)

## Step 6: Enjoy :)

You now have unlimited access to a library of ~8,000,000 tracks, as if they were on your own computer.

Once every two weeks, you'll have to reopen your SSH tunnels and login at [spotify.com](#) to prove you're still in the UK – then you'll be good to go.

This restriction is lifted if you signup for a Premium account. I highly recommend this, as it allows you to listen to your music at 320 kbps. I'd tell you how, but I'd rather enjoy the fruits of my hard labor.

# The Broader Context

This whole process really highlights the absurdity of digital borders in 2010. Music is universal, but licensing deals create these artificial geographic restrictions that force users to jump through hoops like this. It's a symptom of an industry that hasn't quite figured out how to adapt to the internet age.

The irony isn't lost on me that I had to essentially rent a computer in another country just to access a music service. But the result is worth it – having access to millions of tracks with the click of a button feels like living in the future. The recommendation engine is surprisingly good, and the social features let me discover what my friends are listening to.

## A Glimpse of Things to Come

I suspect we'll look back on this era as the awkward transitional period between physical media and true global digital distribution. Eventually, services like Spotify will be available worldwide from day one. But for now, those of us willing to set up SSH tunnels and virtual servers get a preview of what music consumption will look like for everyone else.

The technical knowledge required acts as a kind of early adopter tax. But experiencing this level of music access – especially at 320kbps quality – makes it clear that this is the direction the entire industry is heading. Physical media feels antiquated in comparison.

Until then, my British hackbox continues to serve as my musical passport to the future.