

OFFLINE FIELD PACK

Briar: talk without internet

Phones pass messages to each other over Bluetooth and Wi-Fi. When any phone gets internet, messages go out to people far away by themselves. Do steps 1–6 **tonight**, while the internet still works.

iPhone users, read this first

Briar works only on Android. There is no iPhone version. If you have an iPhone:

- Carry any old Android phone if you have one. Set Briar up on it tonight. It needs no SIM.
- Otherwise, stay close to a friend with Briar and read updates on their phone.
- Install Signal for when internet comes back. It does not work without internet.

01 Get the app

- Search **Briar** in the Play Store, or use F-Droid, or **briarproject.org**.
- If it's blocked or you have no internet, get it from someone nearby who already has it. See step 04.

02 Make your account

- Pick a nickname. **Not your real name.**
- Pick a password you will remember. There is no "forgot password". If you lose it, the account is gone.
- When Briar asks to stay connected in the background, tap **Allow Connections**, then **Allow**. Otherwise the phone stops passing messages when the screen is off.

03 Turn on all connections

Open the menu  → **Settings** → **Connections**. Turn on all three: **Connect to contacts via the Internet**, **Connect to contacts on the same Wi-Fi network** and **Connect to contacts via Bluetooth**. Bluetooth is off in Briar until you turn it on. Keep Bluetooth on in your phone too.

04 Give the app to others, no internet needed

If you have Briar:

1. Open the menu  → **Settings** → **Share this app offline**, then tap **Start hotspot**. If asked, allow location. Briar needs it to start the hotspot.
2. Your phone makes a Wi-Fi hotspot and shows its network name and password. They stay the same every time. A QR code is on the next tab.
3. Once the other phone has joined the Wi-Fi, tap **Next**. Briar shows a web address and a second QR code.

The person receiving it:

1. Open Wi-Fi settings, pick the network name shown on the other phone and type the password. If the phone says the Wi-Fi has no internet, stay connected anyway. Scanning the QR code also works on some phones, but not all.
2. Type the web address into Chrome or any browser exactly as shown, including **http://** and the number after the colon. Or scan the second QR code.
3. Download the file and tap it. If asked, allow **Install unknown apps** for the browser.

If the address won't load: on the receiving phone, disconnect any VPN app. Then open **Settings** → **Network & internet** → **VPN**, tap the gear next to each VPN, and turn off **Always-on VPN** and **Block connections without VPN**. Otherwise the VPN blocks the address even when it looks switched off. Then try again, or try another browser. If it still fails, the person sharing taps the  help button on the sharing screen → **Save app**, and sends the file by Quick Share or Bluetooth. For Bluetooth, rename the file to end in .zip first.

Each new person can then share it onward. One copy can reach a whole crowd.

05 Add contacts

Briar only talks to people you have added. Tap **+** on the Contacts screen.

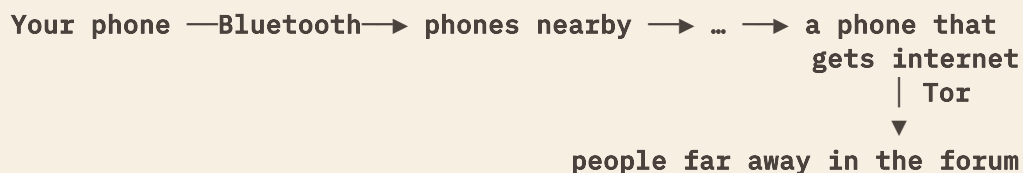
- **Standing together:** **Add contact nearby**. Both phones scan each other's QR code.
- **Far away (family, friends outside the city):** **Add contact at a distance**. Send your link to them on WhatsApp or SMS, paste their link, give them a nickname. **Do this tonight**. It needs internet once.

06 Join the group

- One organiser opens **☰** → **Forums** → **+** and creates a forum.
- Inside the forum, open **⋮** → **Share Forum**, pick contacts and tap **Share Forum**. They accept the invite.
- Every member can share it onward to their own contacts, so the group grows by itself.
- Add your far-away contacts to the forum too. That is what makes step 07 work.

07 How messages get out automatically

You don't press anything. Briar keeps trying every connection in the background.



- The far-away person must already be a Briar contact of someone in the crowd (step 05) and be in the forum (step 06).
- Their phone must be online at that moment. If they have a spare Android phone, they can set it up as a **Briar Mailbox** at home. It holds messages for them even when their own phone is off.
- Briar cannot post publicly to X or Instagram. Pick one or two people outside to copy important updates from the forum to social media.

08 Test it tonight

Two or three phones: turn on Airplane mode, then turn Bluetooth back on. Send a forum message. It should show up on the other phones within a few minutes. Briar checks for nearby phones every 1 to 10 minutes. If nothing arrives after 10 minutes, check step 03 and battery settings.

09 Stay safe

- Set a phone screen lock. Turn off fingerprint and face unlock before tomorrow.
- Open  → **Sign Out** when you're not using Briar. Nobody can read it without your password.
- **To wipe your account and start fresh:**  → **Sign Out**. On the sign-in screen, tap **Forgot your password?**. Briar warns that this deletes your account, contacts and messages. Tap **Delete**, then create a new account.
- In one-to-one chats, open  → **Disappearing messages** and turn it on.
- Don't write names, phone numbers or plans you wouldn't want read aloud. Anyone in a forum can share it onward.
- Briar's distribution has been ordered blocked in India.