Plex - Getting Started

How to access

This assumes you've created a Plex.tv account, been invited to my personal Plex server and accepted the invite to it.

Make sure to log in to app.plex.tv with the same email/account as the one you received the invite on.
Once logged in, you should automatically have access to my Plex servers. The primary server should be called `Cactflix [Main]`.

Costs

My Plex server isn't free for me to host. I also spend some time here and there maintaining the library (mostly cleanup to get space for newer media, but sourcing more niche media can also be a bit of a pain).

- PayPal
- Revolut: `@decicus`
- Ko-fi
- Liberapay - For recurring payments
- Twitch - In case you wanna use your Twitch Prime subscription :)

Cryptocurrencies:

- Bitcoin: `1PPYK5bJ9TZVfxYBmAPF4Xcb6rHF2sEzzK`
- Dogecoin: `DECicUS4MANNEnWNdjLvxfa3who5DmohG5`
- Ethereum / Polygon (MATIC) / USDT etc.: `0xE66Ff6B10FC7a77a8e7c4dfEd5Ad122c47D6a777`
  - I accept most common tokens on both Ethereum and the Polygon networks <3

Transparency

When using my Plex server I will have access to see the following information about your streaming:

- What media you're streaming from my server, including full playback history of the media you have previously streamed from my server.
- The web browser or device (TV, phone, game console etc.) you are using or have been using.
- Your IP address, including IP address history.
- Timestamp of where you are in media (movies / TV shows) you're currently watching.

You can have access to your own information too via a tool called Tautulli, just let me know if you want access (I have to tick a checkbox that is unchecked by default).

Normally I don't access any of this information and it's just running in the background, it would only really be relevant whenever:

- You report an issue, I use it to see the technical details for troubleshooting.
- I am doing media maintenance (mostly deleting) and trying to figure out if someone is currently watching a show.
  - I don't wanna delete a show if someone is in the middle of watching it :P

Location & Performance

The Plex server is located in Germany. Depending on your own location, the server may not perform optimal due to how the internet works.
I also expect you have a decent enough internet connection to handle the streaming. You can turn down the quality if you have issues with buffering.

The server runs on an i5-12500 using the integrated graphics for transcoding (Intel QuickSync). There's mostly 1080p content on there (assuming it is available), with only a small set of 4K content. This is mainly for storage and bandwidth reasons.

Whenever possible, I highly recommend using one of the official Plex client apps as it supports "direct streaming" (which helps with performance, speed and quality).

Mobile

If you're not a Plex Pass user, then mobile streaming & sync with Plex (at least on Android / iOS) has an additional cost to the *company behind the Plex software*.

Update - March 19th, 2025:

If you are a bit patient and you haven't already paid the unlock fee, you might wanna wait until the "new mobile Plex experience" is available.

Plex has plans to eliminate this fee: https://www.plex.tv/blog/important-2025-plex-updates/#so-long

> Our Android and iOS mobile apps previously required a one-time activation fee or Plex Pass to remove the one-minute playback limitation when streaming content from a Plex Media Server. As part of these changes, there will no longer be any such one-minute playback limitation. Playing content on a local network will be free in the new mobile apps. These changes will go into effect when the new mobile Plex experience exits the preview period and launches publicly.

Old Plex mobile / tablet apps information

> **Quote from Plex:**
> Until the mobile app is unlocked (through an in-app purchase or a Plex Pass subscription), video and music streamed from a Plex Media Server has a 1 minute limit, and photos will be watermarked.

The in-app purchase is *one-time* cost of 5 USD, which you have to pay through the Android / iOS app.
Plex has guides on how to do this for both Android and iOS:

- Unlocking or Activating Plex for Android
- Unlocking or Activating Plex for iOS

Alternatively, you pay 5 USD per month for Plex Pass, but that's unnecessary if you only need access on mobile.
Plex Pass is mostly useful if you host your own Plex server.

If you want to read more about this particular topic, I suggest you read this support article: Plex Support | Plex: Free vs. Paid

If you only plan to watch Plex via the browser, desktop app or TV (either via smart TV app or devices such as Chromecast), then there should be no additional cost.

Suggestions / Requests

If you want to request something (TV show / movie):

1. Go to Seerr (formerly known as Overseerr)
2. Log in with your Plex account
3. Request gets added to the queue and will be manually processed when I have time, if it's daytime EU, usually within a few hours.

For any other questions / inquiries:

- Email: alex@thomassen.dev
- Discord: @Decicus
- Matrix: @alex:discuss.no

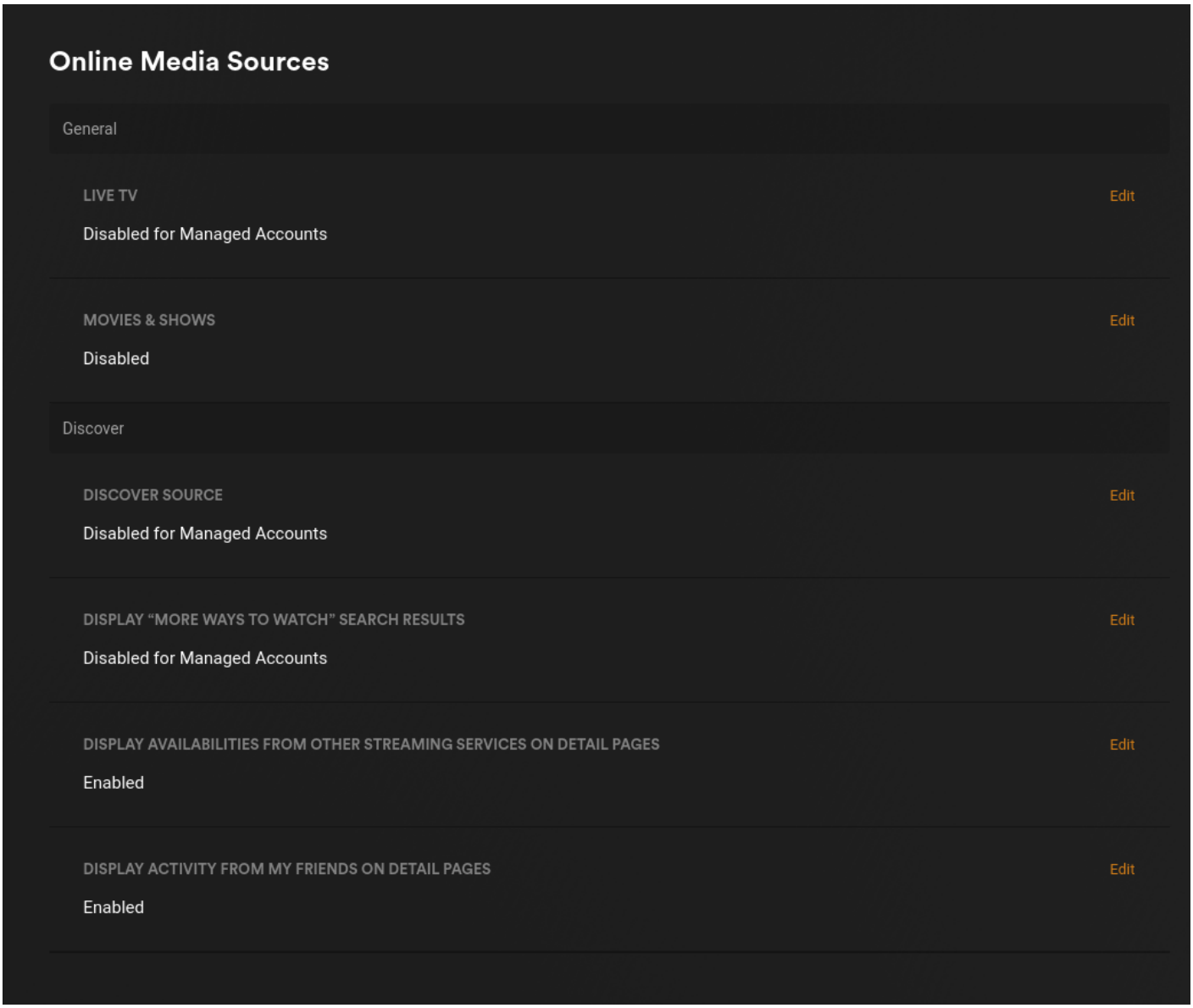
No guarantees that I can get what you want, but I'll try (as long as it's a reasonable request). :)

Tips when getting started with Plex

For all of these tips, make sure you have already logged in on app.plex.tv.

Disabling junk

I recommend disabling all the extra "Online media sources", since I just find them cluttering the Plex interface: https://app.plex.tv/desktop#!/settings/online-media-sources



Default quality

For *every device* you log into (your phone, different web browsers, the official Plex client etc.) you should set the default quality to "Maximum" as long as your connection to the Plex server is good enough.

For some reason Plex has decided that the default quality is 720p @ 2 mbps (in other words, not as good as it can be) and that this setting doesn't sync between devices.

See embedded guides below for the relevant devices. Note that they were made in 2021, so the user interface might be slightly different than the most up-to-date versions of the apps.

The graphics below were created by Endawmyke on the Plex subreddit!

You can also take a look at MediaClients.wiki for slightly more up-to-date guides.

mpv

If you're an mpv user and prefer that, you can use the MPV Shim for Plex (Unofficial), which would allow you to cast your stream to your mpv player.

For content that requires subtitles, it's not a perfect solution. If subtitles are tagged as "External", they may not work when using the MPV Shim.

Web browser / Desktop app

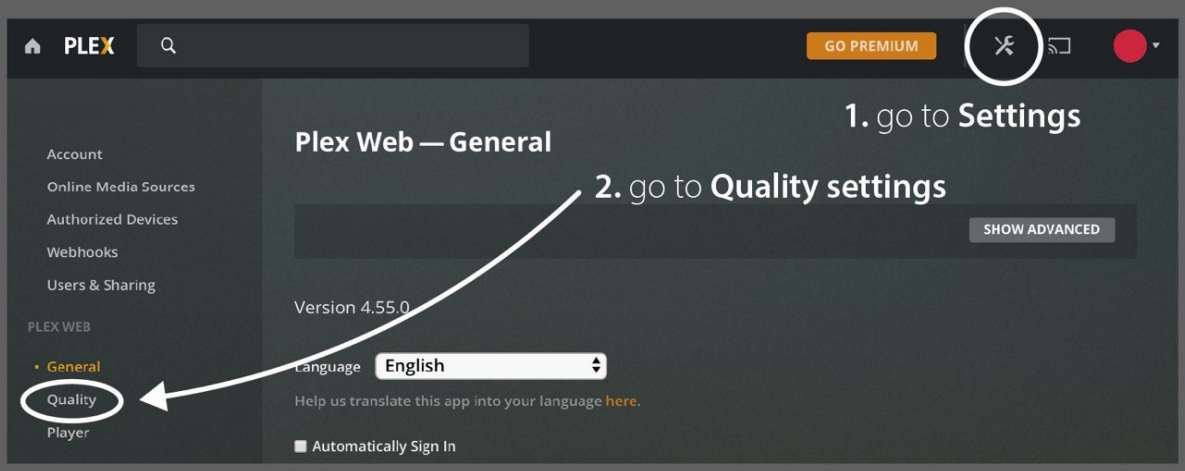
This setting is available on this page: https://app.plex.tv/desktop/#!/settings/web/quality

how-to setup plex

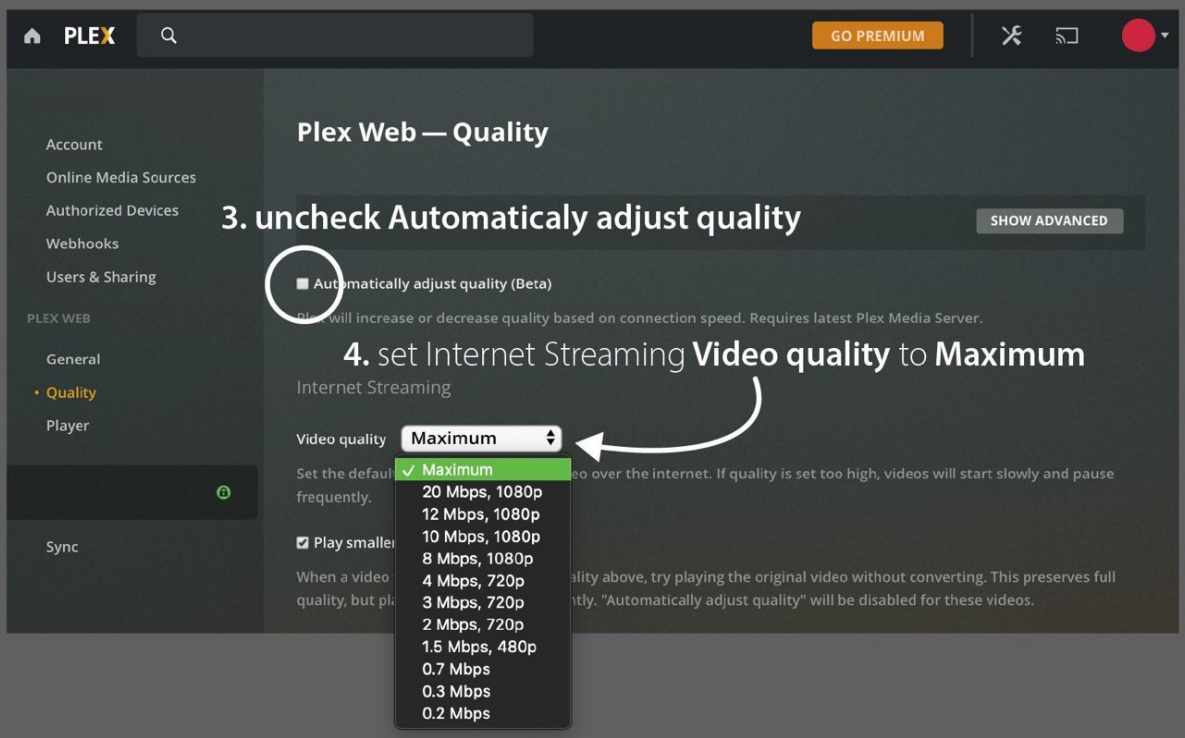
you **must do this** every time you login to a **new app** or **browser** for the **first time**

visit **app.plex.tv** or open the **plex desktop app**

A



B



congratulations you're **ready** to **watch!**

Amazon Fire / Android TV, Consoles, Roku

how-to setup plex

you **must do this** every time you login to a **new app** for the **first time**



remote legend

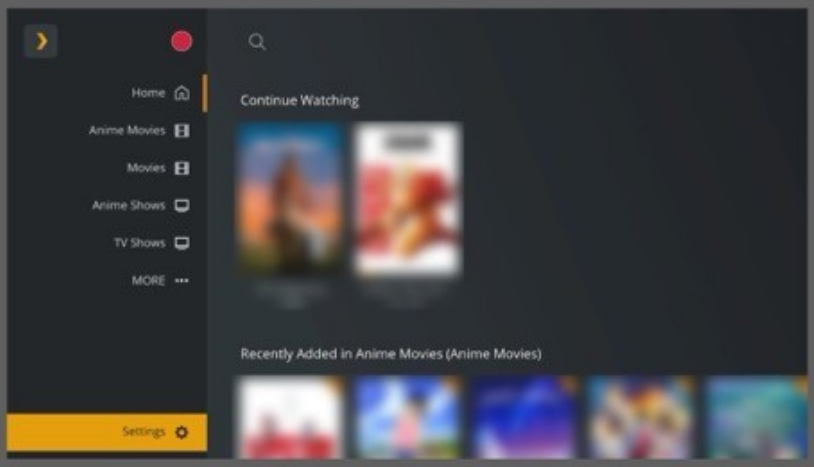
directional controls
(up, down, left, right)

confirm button
(aka: select button, OK button, Cross, ✕ button, A button)

back button
(aka: ⮌, Circle, ○ button, B button)

open the **Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, PlayStation 4/5, Roku, Smart TV (LG, Samsung, VIZIO), Xbox** **plex app**

A. Home



1. press **left** to reveal **Side Bar**
2. press **down repeatedly** to hover over **Settings**
3. press **confirm button** to enter Settings Page



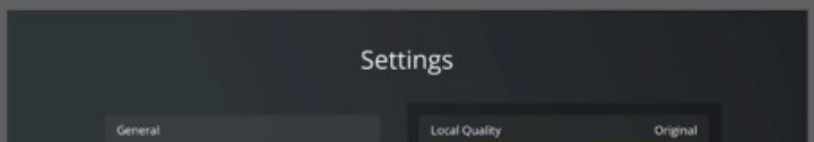
B. Settings



4. press **down 3 times** to hover over **Video**
5. press **confirm button** to enter Video Settings



C. Video



6. press **down once** to hover over **Remote Quality**

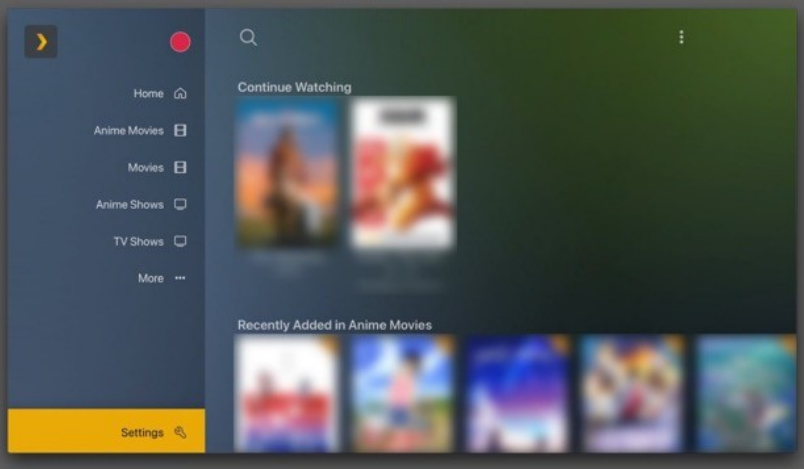
Apple TV / tvOS

how-to setup plex

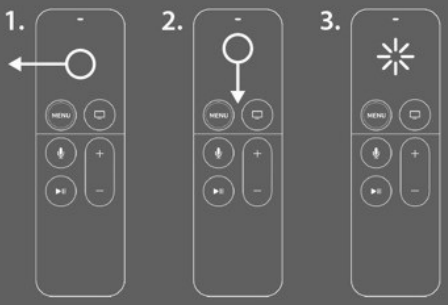
you **must do this** every time you login to a **new app** for the **first time**

open the tvOS **plex app**

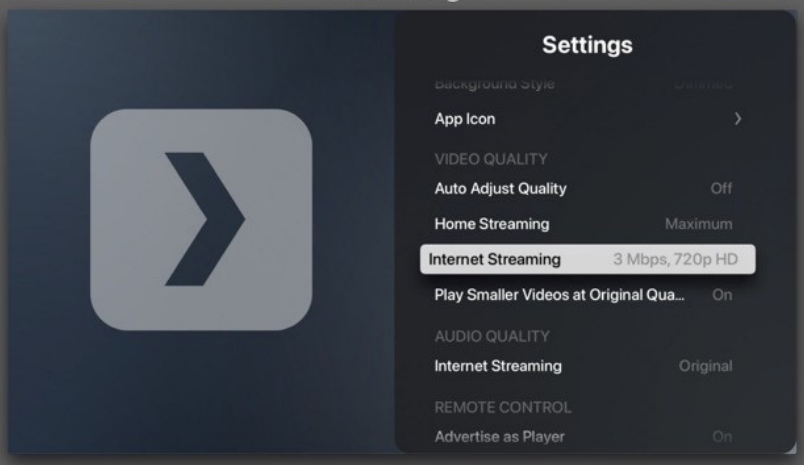
A. Home



1. swipe **left** to access **Side Bar**
2. scroll **down** to **Settings**
3. press to open **Settings**

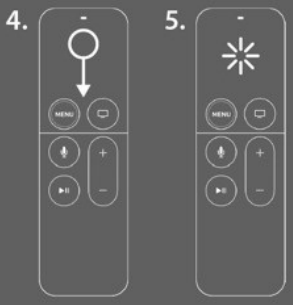


B. Settings



4. scroll **down** to Video Quality > **Internet Streaming**

5. press to open **Internet Steaming**

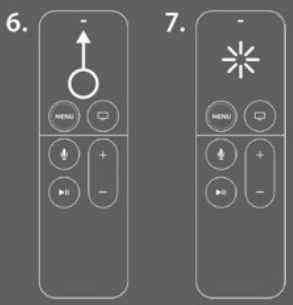


C. Internet Streaming



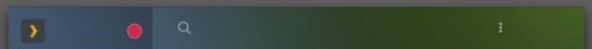
6. scroll **up** to **Maximum**

7. press to select **Maximum**



D. go back Home

8. press MENU button 2 times



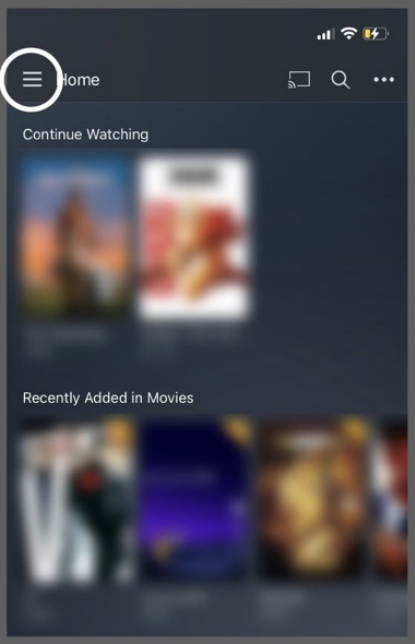
Android & iOS (iPhone / iPad)

how-to setup plex

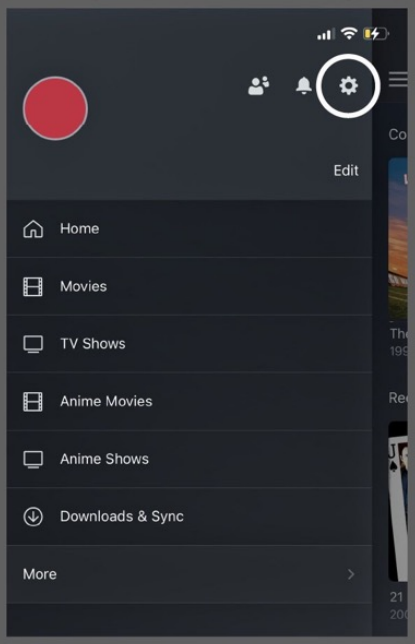
you **must do this** every time you login to a **new app** for the **first time**

open the iOS/Android **plex app**

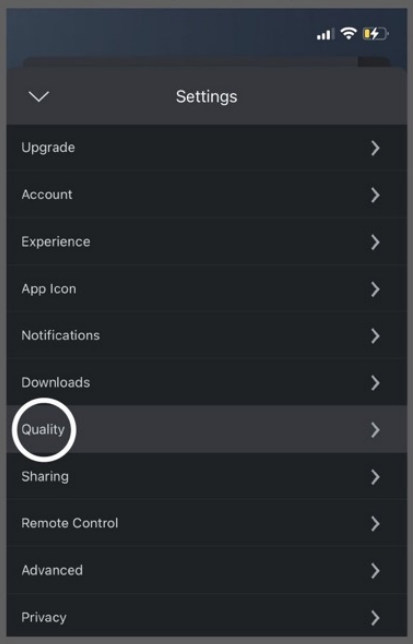
1. tap **3 lines menu**



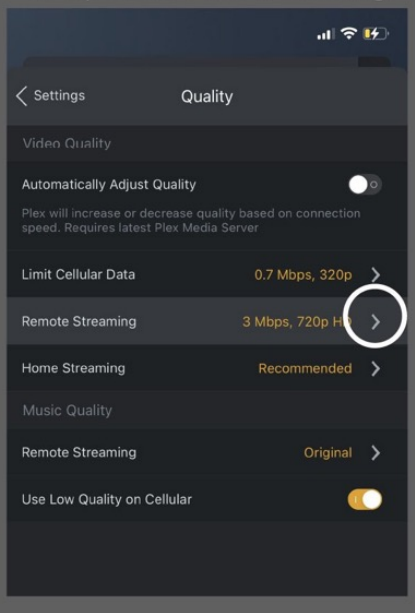
2. tap the **Gear** (Settings)



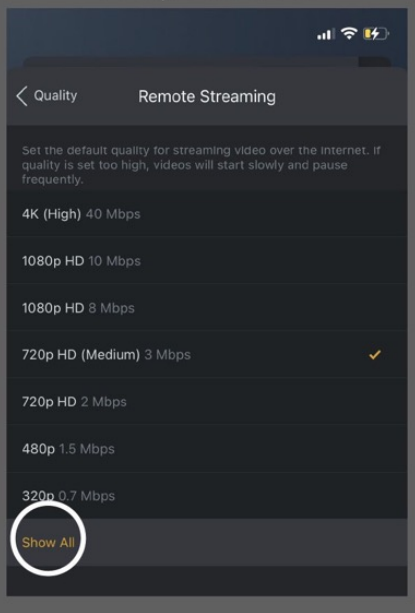
3. tap **Quality**



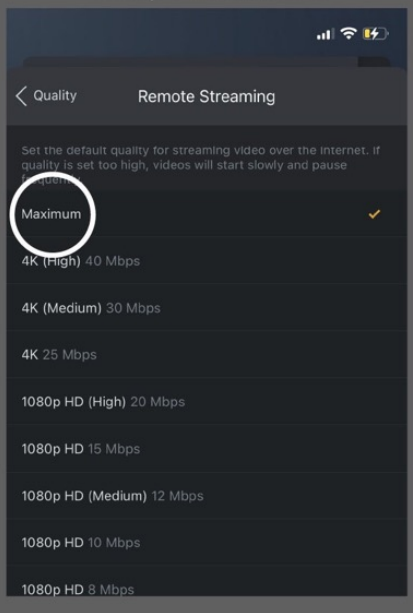
4. tap **Remote Streaming**



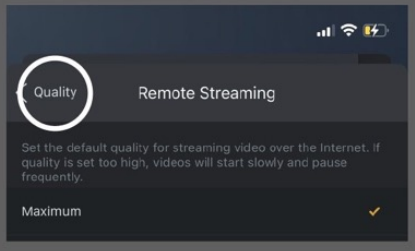
5. tap **Show All**



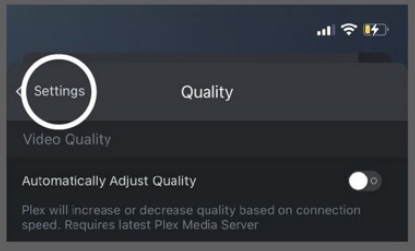
6. tap **Maximum**



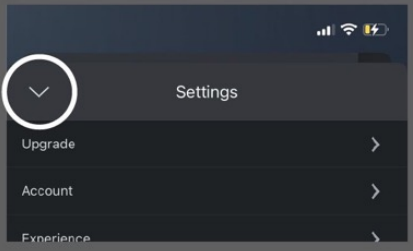
7. exit by tapping **Quality**



8. exit by tapping **Settings**



9. exit by tapping this button



congratulations you're **ready** to **watch!**

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