

Internet Essentials

Internet Applications, ID1354

Contents

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

The IP Protocol

- ▶ All Internet communication is based on the **Internet Protocol (IP)**.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ IP provides basic functionality for sending and receiving data.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ Data is sent in chunks, called **packages**. A package is like an envelope for a letter. It has sender and a receiver addresses and a content, which is the data being transmitted.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ A node (computer) receiving a packet can **accept** it, **ignore** it or **retransmit** it.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

The IP Protocol

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- ▶ A node (computer) receiving a packet can **accept** it, **ignore** it or **retransmit** it.
- ▶ A node dedicated to retransmitting packets across subnet borders is called a **router**.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

IP Address

- ▶ An internet (version 4) address has 32 bits divided into **four bytes**, [0-255].[0-255].[0-255].[0-255]. Each node connected to the internet has one or more addresses.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ Normally, an IP address must be **unique**, assigned only to one node.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

IP Address

- ▶ An internet (version 4) address has 32 bits divided into **four bytes**, [0-255].[0-255].[0-255].[0-255]. Each node connected to the internet has one or more addresses.
- ▶ Normally, an IP address must be **unique**, assigned only to one node.
- ▶ Some addresses, like 192.168.X.X are dedicated to **private networks** and can be used freely. Such an address is not transmitted on the public internet. Instead, it is **translated** to a public address by a router.

The TCP Protocol

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

- ▶ **TCP, Transmission Control Protocol**, is used on top of the IP protocol.

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

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Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

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Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ TCP adds transport guarantees, for example the following.
 - ▶ Packets are delivered to the receiver in the **same order** they are sent by the sender.
 - ▶ Delivered packets have the **same content** as sent packets.
 - ▶ There are **no lost packets**.

The TCP Protocol (Cont'd)

- ▶ TCP is **connection-oriented**, think of a telephone line as opposed to sending a letter. To establish a TCP connection is a slow operation.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

The TCP Protocol (Cont'd)

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

- ▶ TCP is **connection-oriented**, think of a telephone line as opposed to sending a letter. To establish a TCP connection is a slow operation.
- ▶ TCP handles **ports**, which makes it possible to have multiple connections with the same IP address open simultaneously. A port is identified by a number. An endpoint of a TCP connection has an IP address and a port number.

DNS

- ▶ IP addresses are normally translated to **names** (instead of numbers). Such a name is called **domain name**.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

DNS

- ▶ IP addresses are normally translated to **names** (instead of numbers). Such a name is called **domain name**.
- ▶ Domain names are divided into **subdomains**, divided by dots (.)
 - ▶ The address **www.ict.kth.se** consists of the subdomain **www**, which is part of the subdomain **ict**, which is part of **kth**, which is part of **se**, which is part of the root, **.**

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

DNS

- ▶ IP addresses are normally translated to **names** (instead of numbers). Such a name is called **domain name**.
- ▶ Domain names are divided into **subdomains**, divided by dots (.)
 - ▶ The address **www.ict.kth.se** consists of the subdomain **www**, which is part of the subdomain **ict**, which is part of **kth**, which is part of **se**, which is part of the root, **.**
- ▶ The translation between numbers and names is managed by **DNS, Domain Name System**.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

URL

- ▶ A **Uniform Resource Locator, URL** defines a resource's location on the internet.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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 1. A **protocol**, e.g., **http**

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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 1. A **protocol**, e.g., **http**
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 3. A **port** number (optional). The default HTTP port number is 80.
http://www.kth.se:8080

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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http://www.kth.se:8080
 4. A **path**, which identifies the resource's location on the server.
http://www.kth.se:8080/abc/index.html

URN and URI

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URN and URI

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- ▶ A **Uniform Resource Identifier, URI** is either a URL or URN.

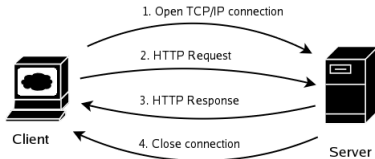
HTTP

- ▶ **HyperText Transfer Protocol, HTTP** is used for communication between web browsers and web servers.

HTTP

- ▶ **HyperText Transfer Protocol, HTTP** is used for communication between web browsers and web servers.
- ▶ HTTP is **based on TCP**, which means a TCP connection is established for each browser-server communication.

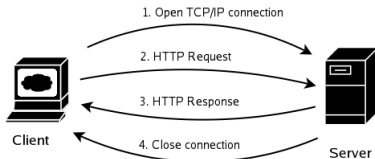
The Request-Response Cycle



A HTTP communication typically proceeds as follows.

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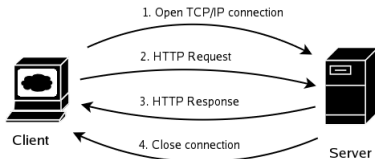
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A HTTP communication typically proceeds as follows.

1. The client **opens** a TCP connection to the server.
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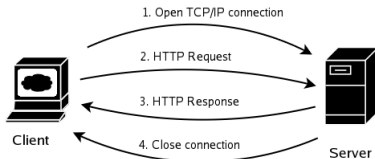
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The Request-Response Cycle



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1. The client **opens** a TCP connection to the server.
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3. The server sends a **response** to the client. Also the response consists of HTTP headers, and data if the response required data.
4. The server **closes** the TCP connection.

The Request-Response Cycle (Cont'd)

- ▶ HTTP is **stateless**. Neither server nor browser remembers anything about previous request-response cycles. Session handling must be added in server-side code.

The Request-Response Cycle (Cont'd)

- ▶ HTTP is **stateless**. Neither server nor browser remembers anything about previous request-response cycles. Session handling must be added in server-side code.
- ▶ To establish a TCP connection is expensive. Therefore, TCP connections might be **kept alive** and reused for multiple request-response cycles. This is specified with the **keep-alive** HTTP header, see below.

Cookies

- ▶ A cookie is a **piece of data** that is stored on the client.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ The cookie is **tagged** with the server's domain name and **included** in every request to that server.
- ▶ This enables the server to **associate** data with a specific client.
- ▶ Cookies can be used to **store the user's settings**, for example display language.

HTTP Sessions

- ▶ As mentioned above, HTTP is stateless.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

HTTP Sessions

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- ▶ Still, the server must be able to recognize which calls **originate from the same** client. Otherwise for example log in is impossible.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ If a request has a cookie with a session identifier, it **identifies** the user. If there is no such cookie, the user does not have a running session.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

HTTP Sessions

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- ▶ Still, the server must be able to recognize which calls **originate from the same** client. Otherwise for example log in is impossible.
- ▶ One commonly used method to solve this problem is to **use cookies**.
- ▶ If a request has a cookie with a session identifier, it **identifies** the user. If there is no such cookie, the user does not have a running session.
- ▶ On the server, the session id can be associated with any amount of data related to the user with that session. This is called **conversational state**.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

HTTP Message Format

- ▶ A HTTP message has **start-line**, **headers** and **body**.

```
GET /sidal.html HTTP/1.1
```

```
Host: www.dn.se
Accept-Charset: utf-8
User-Agent: Firefox
```

```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK
```

```
Date: Sun, 06 Nov...
Content-Length: 962
Content-Type: text/html
```

```
<?xml version...>
<!DOCTYPE ....>
<html>
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Protocols Enabling
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The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ A HTTP message has **start-line**, **headers** and **body**.
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- ▶ Sample request (top) and response (bottom) messages are depicted to the left.

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 - 4xx **Client error**, for example **404**, Not Found.
 - 5xx **Server error**, for example **500**, Internal Server Error

HTTP Methods

- ▶ HTTP 1.1 has eight different methods that requires the following server actions.
 - GET** Deliver resource identified by the specified URL.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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 - DELETE** Delete the resource at the given URL.

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 - TRACE** Return the request message.
 - OPTIONS** Tell which HTTP methods can be used with the specified URL.
 - CONNECT** Connect to another host.
- ▶ **GET** and **POST** are the most common methods and the only ones we will use in this course.

Safe and Idempotent Methods

- ▶ **GET** and **HEAD** are **safe** methods, which means they should not take any action other than to retrieve the specified resource.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

Safe and Idempotent Methods

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- ▶ **GET, HEAD, PUT, DELETE, OPTIONS** and **TRACE** are **idempotent** methods, which means the same request can be sent multiple times without any side-effects on the server.

Safe and Idempotent Methods

- ▶ **GET** and **HEAD** are **safe** methods, which means they should not take any action other than to retrieve the specified resource.
- ▶ **GET**, **HEAD**, **PUT**, **DELETE**, **OPTIONS** and **TRACE** are **idempotent** methods, which means the same request can be sent multiple times without any side-effects on the server.
- ▶ **POST** is not idempotent. If you submit the same purchase order multiple times in a web shop you will probably buy multiple items. The purchase is typically a **POST** request.

When to Use GET

- ▶ Use **GET** when
 - ▶ The only desired action is to **retrieve** the specified resource.

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

When to Use GET

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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 - ▶ If it shall be possible to **bookmark** the link.

When to Use GET

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

- ▶ Use **GET** when
 - ▶ The only desired action is to **retrieve** the specified resource.
 - ▶ If it shall be possible to **bookmark** the link.
 - ▶ The URL is **shorter than 255 bytes**. Note that a **GET** URL is longer than a **POST** URL since data is included in the URL which **GET**, but is in the message body with **POST** (see below).

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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 - ▶ The only desired action is to **retrieve** the specified resource.
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 - ▶ The URL is **shorter than 255 bytes**. Note that a **GET** URL is longer than a **POST** URL since data is included in the URL which **GET**, but is in the message body with **POST** (see below).
 - ▶ You want to be able to **write** the entire request, including data, in the **browser**. This is useful when debugging.

When to Use POST

- ▶ Use **POST** when
 - ▶ The required action **updates** server state, for example saves something in a database.

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 - ▶ The data **does not fit** within the 255 byte limit for URLs.
 - ▶ The data shall **not appear** in the URL. Note that this is not a matter of security, data is sent in clear text also when using **POST**.

HTTP Parameters

- ▶ HTTP parameters are **data** included in a request to a web server.

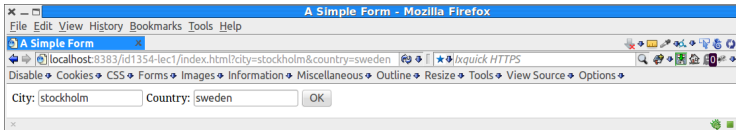
Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

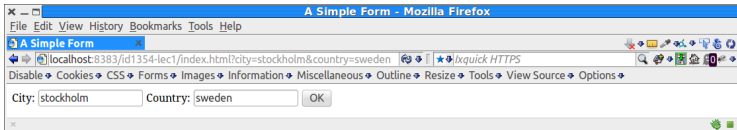
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`http://some.domain/
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HTTP Parameters

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- ▶ A typical example is when the user has entered data in a HTML form.
- ▶ When using the **GET** method, parameters are appended to the URL as a **query string**,
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- ▶ When using the **POST** method, parameters are included in the message body.

HTTP Headers

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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- ▶ There are several predefined headers, and it is also allowed to add new headers.
- ▶ Sample request headers are:
 - Host** The **receiver** address or domain name.

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Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
Web Servers

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Content-Type **Media Type** (see below) of response.

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- ▶ Some media types are:
 - text/html** HTML markup
 - text/plain** Plain text
 - image/png** A png image
 - video/ogg** A ogg video.

Web Browsers

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Web Browsers and
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Web Browsers

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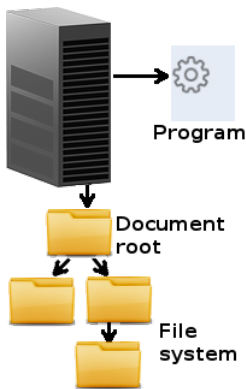
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Web Servers

Protocols Enabling
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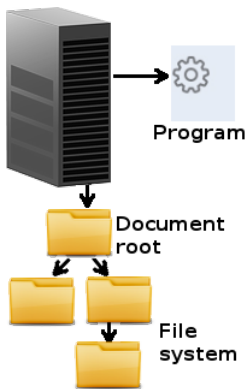
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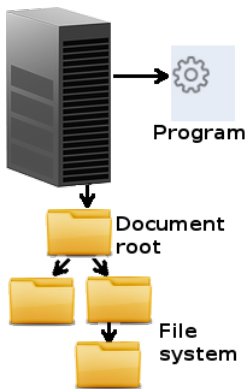
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- ▶ The most commonly used web server is **apache**, <https://httpd.apache.org/>
- ▶ Other common web servers are **nginx**, <http://wiki.nginx.org/Main> and Microsoft **IIS**.

Web Servers (Cont'd)

Protocols Enabling
HTTP

The HTTP Protocol

Web Browsers and
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- ▶ You need to **install a web server** on your laptop. All labs will be reported on your own laptop, there is no web server in ICT school where you can run all the labs.

Web Servers (Cont'd)

Protocols Enabling
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- ▶ You need to **install a web server** on your laptop. All labs will be reported on your own laptop, there is no web server in ICT school where you can run all the labs.
- ▶ It might take time to get the web server running. You are advised to start installing the web server **now**.