

# Internet Essentials

Internet Applications, ID1354

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- The HTTP Protocol
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# Section

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# The IP Protocol

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

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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.

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# 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**.

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# 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.

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- ▶ 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.

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# The TCP Protocol

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  - ▶ 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.

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# The TCP Protocol (Cont'd)

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- ▶ 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**.

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# 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, **.**

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# 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**.

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# URL

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

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

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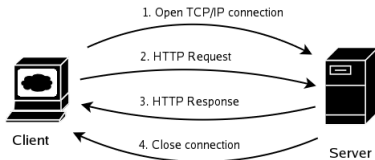
# HTTP

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- ▶ **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

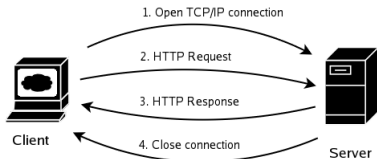


A HTTP communication typically proceeds as follows.

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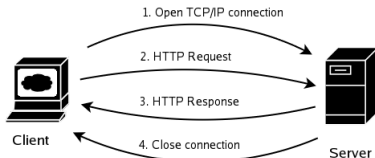
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A HTTP communication typically proceeds as follows.

1. The client **opens** a TCP connection to the server.
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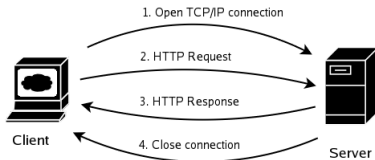
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4. The server **closes** the TCP connection.

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- ▶ 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.

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

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# HTTP Sessions

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

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# HTTP Sessions

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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.

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# 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**.

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# 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
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<?xml version...>
<!DOCTYPE ....>
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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

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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.

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# 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.

# 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.

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- ▶ Use **GET** when
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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).

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  - ▶ You want to be able to **write** the entire request, including data, in the **browser**. This is useful when debugging.

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



# When to Use POST

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# When to Use POST

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

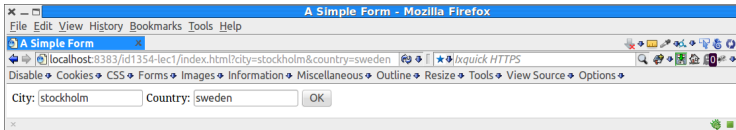
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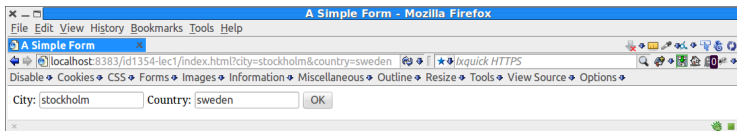
# HTTP Parameters

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- ▶ A typical example is when the user has entered data in a HTML form.



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- ▶ A typical example is when the user has entered data in a HTML form.



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- ▶ When using the **POST** method, parameters are included in the message body.

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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.

# Section

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- **Web Browsers and Web Servers**

# Web Browsers

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# Web Browsers

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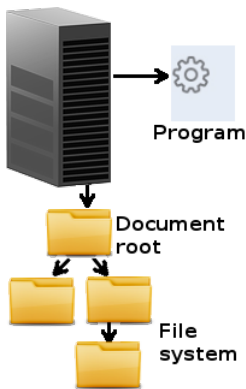
- ▶ It is important to test the web application with **all different browsers** that shall be able to display it.
- ▶ Browsers **behave differently**, and you should expect that some **break specifications**.

# Web Servers

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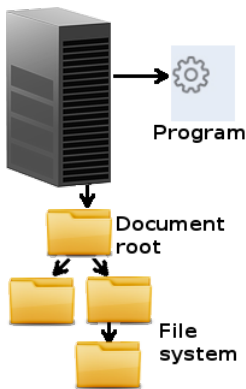
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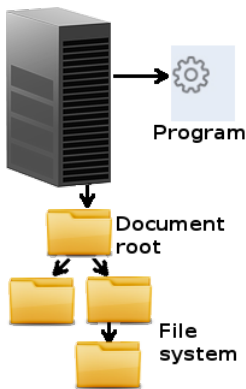
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- ▶ The most commonly used web server is **apache**, <https://httpd.apache.org/>
- ▶ Other common web servers are **nginx**, <http://wiki.nginx.org/Main> and Microsoft **IIS**.



# Web Servers (Cont'd)

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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.

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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**.