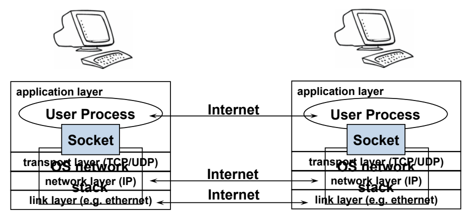
UNIX Sockets

COS 461 Precept 1

Socket and Process Communication



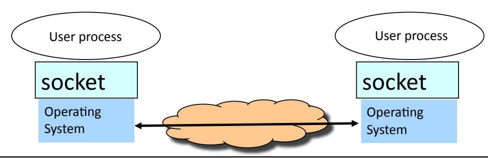
The interface that the OS provides to its networking subsystem

Delivering the Data: Division of Labor

- Network
  - Deliver data packet to the destination host
  - Based on the destination IP address
- Operating system
  - Deliver data to the destination socket
  - Based on the destination port number (e.g., 80)
- Application
  - Read data from and write data to the socket
  - Interpret the data (e.g., render a Web page)

Socket: End Point of Communication

- Sending message from one process to another
  - Message must traverse the underlying network
- Process sends and receives through a “socket”
  - In essence, the doorway leading in/out of the house
- Socket as an Application Programming Interface
  - Supports the creation of network applications



Two Types of Application Processes Communication

- Datagram Socket (UDP)
  - Collection of messages
  - Best effort
  - Connectionless
- Stream Socket (TCP)
  - Stream of bytes
  - Reliable
  - Connection-oriented

User Datagram Protocol (UDP): Datagram Socket

UDP	Postal Mail
Single socket to receive messages	Single mailbox to receive letters
No guarantee of delivery	Unreliable
Not necessarily in-order delivery	Not necessarily in-order delivery
Datagram – independent packets	Letters sent independently
Must address each packet	Must address each mail

Example UDP applications
Multimedia, voice over IP (Skype)

Transmission Control Protocol (TCP): Stream Socket

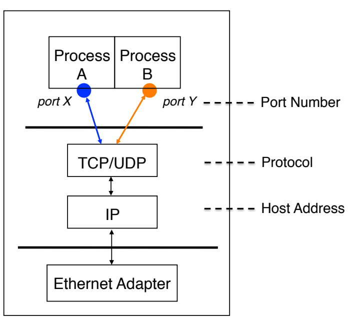
TCP	Telephone Call
• Reliable – guarantee delivery	• Guaranteed delivery
• Byte stream – in-order delivery	• In-order delivery
• Connection-oriented – single socket per connection	• Connection-oriented
• Setup connection followed by data transfer	• Setup connection followed by conversation

Example TCP applications
Web, Email, Telnet

Socket Identification

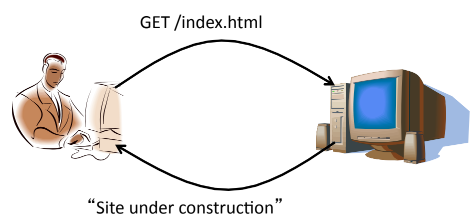
- Communication Protocol
  - TCP (Stream Socket): streaming, reliable
  - UDP (Datagram Socket): packets, best effort
- Receiving host
  - Destination **address** that uniquely identifies the host
  - An **IP address** is a 32-bit quantity
- Receiving socket
  - Host may be running many different processes
  - Destination **port** that uniquely identifies the socket
  - A **port number** is a 16-bit quantity

Socket Identification (Cont.)



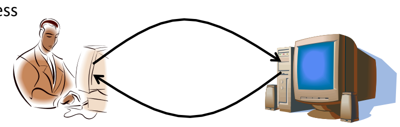
Clients and Servers

- Client program
  - Running on end host
  - Requests service
  - E.g., Web browser
- Server program
  - Running on end host
  - Provides service
  - E.g., Web server



Client-Server Communication

- Client "sometimes on"
  - Initiates a request to the server when interested
  - E.g., Web browser on your laptop or cell phone
  - Doesn't communicate directly with other clients
  - Needs to know server's address
- Server is "always on"
  - Handles services requests from many client hosts
  - E.g., Web server for the www.cnn.com Web site
  - Doesn't initiate contact with the clients
  - Needs fixed, known address



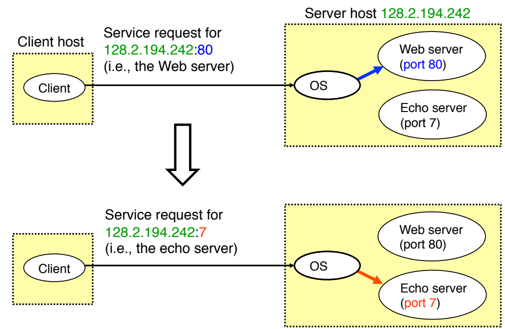
Client and Server Processes

- Client process
  - process that initiates communication
- Server Process
  - process that waits to be contacted

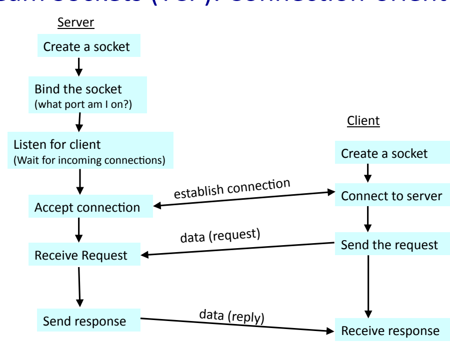
Knowing What Port Number To Use

- Popular applications have well-known ports
  - E.g., port 80 for Web and port 25 for e-mail
  - See http://www.iana.org/assignments/port-numbers
- Well-known vs. ephemeral ports
  - Server has a well-known port (e.g., port 80)
    - Between 0 and 1023 (requires root to use)
  - Client picks an unused ephemeral (i.e., temporary) port
    - Between 1024 and 65535
- Uniquely identifying traffic between the hosts
  - Two IP addresses and two port numbers
  - Underlying transport protocol (e.g., TCP or UDP)

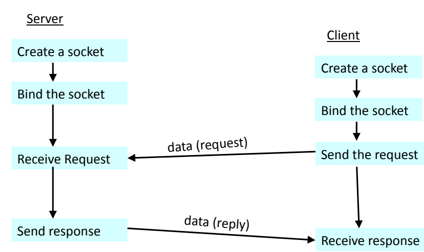
Using Ports to Identify Services



Client-Server Communication
Stream Sockets (TCP): Connection-oriented



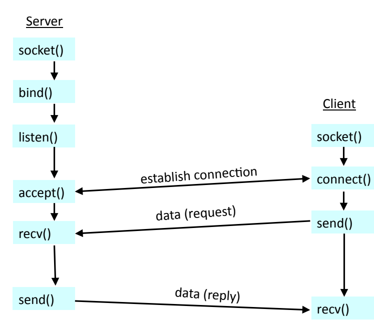
Client-Server Communication
Datagram Sockets (UDP): Connectionless



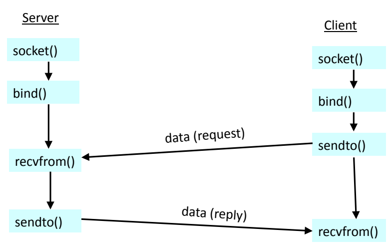
UNIX Socket API

- Socket interface
  - Originally provided in Berkeley UNIX
  - Later adopted by all popular operating systems
  - Simplifies porting applications to different OSes
- In UNIX, everything is like a file
  - All input is like reading a file
  - All output is like writing a file
  - File is represented by an integer file descriptor
- API implemented as system calls
  - E.g., connect, send, recv, close, …

Connection-oriented Example
(Stream Sockets -TCP)



Connectionless Example (Datagram Sockets - UDP)



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Client: Learning Server Address/Port

- Server typically known by name and service
  - E.g., "www.cnn.com" and "http"
- Need to translate into IP address and port #
  - E.g., "64.236.16.20" and "80"
- Get address info with given host name and service

```
– int getaddrinfo( char *node,
                   char *service
                      struct addrinfo *hints,
                      struct addrinfo **result)
```

  - *node: host name (e.g., "www.cnn.com") or IP address
  - *service: port number or service listed in */etc/services* (e.g. ftp)
  - hints: points to a *struct addrinfo* with known information

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Client: Learning Server Address/Port (cont.)

- Data structure to host address information

```
struct addrinfo {
    int              ai_flags;
    int              ai_family;    //e.g. AF_INET for IPv4
    int              ai_socketype; //e.g. SOCK_STREAM for TCP
    int              ai_protocol;  //e.g. IPPROTO_TCP
    size_t           ai_addrlen;
    char             *ai_canonname;
    struct sockaddr  *ai_addr; // point to sockaddr struct
    struct addrinfo  *ai_next;
}
```

- Example

```
hints.ai_family = AF_UNSPEC;      // don't care IPv4 or IPv6
hints.ai_socktype = SOCK_STREAM; // TCP stream sockets
int status = getaddrinfo("www.cnn.com", "80", &hints, &result);
// result now points to a linked list of 1 or more addrinfos
// etc.
```

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Client: Creating a Socket

- Creating a socket
  - `int socket(int domain, int type, int protocol)`
  - Returns a file descriptor (or handle) for the socket
- Domain: protocol family
  - PF_INET for IPv4
  - PF_INET6 for IPv6
- Type: semantics of the communication
  - SOCK_STREAM: reliable byte stream (TCP)
  - SOCK_DGRAM: message-oriented service (UDP)
- Protocol: specific protocol
  - UNSPEC: unspecified
  - (PF_INET and SOCK_STREAM already implies TCP)
- Example

```
sockfd = socket(result->ai_family,
                result->ai_socktype,
                result->ai_protocol);
```

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Client: Connecting Socket to the Server

- Client contacts the server to establish connection
  - Associate the socket with the server address/port
  - Acquire a local port number (assigned by the OS)
  - Request connection to server, who hopefully accepts
  - connect is **blocking**
- Establishing the connection

```
– int connect(int sockfd,
              struct sockaddr *server_address,
              socketlen_t addrlen)
```

  - Args: socket descriptor, server address, and address size
  - Returns 0 on success, and -1 if an error occurs
  - E.g. `connect( sockfd, result->ai_addr, result->ai_addrlen);`

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Client: Sending Data

- Sending data

```
– int send(int sockfd, void *msg,
           size_t len, int flags)
```

  - Arguments: socket descriptor, pointer to buffer of data to send, and length of the buffer
  - Returns the number of bytes written, and -1 on error
  - send is **blocking**: return only after data is sent
  - Write short messages into a buffer and send once

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Client: Receiving Data

- Receiving data
  - `int recv(int sockfd, void *buf, size_t len, int flags)`
  - Arguments: socket descriptor, pointer to buffer to place the data, size of the buffer
  - Returns the number of characters read (where 0 implies "end of file"), and -1 on error
  - Why do you need len? What happens if buf's size < len?
  - recv is **blocking**: return only after data is received

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Server: Server Preparing its Socket

- Server creates a socket and binds address/port
  - Server creates a socket, just like the client does
  - Server associates the socket with the port number
- Create a socket
  - `int socket(int domain, int type, int protocol )`
- Bind socket to the local address and port number
  - `int bind(int sockfd, struct sockaddr *my_addr, socklen_t addrlen )`

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Server: Allowing Clients to Wait

- Many client requests may arrive
  - Server cannot handle them all at the same time
  - Server could reject the requests, or let them wait
- Define how many connections can be pending
  - `int listen(int sockfd, int backlog)`
  - Arguments: socket descriptor and acceptable backlog
  - Returns a 0 on success, and -1 on error
  - Listen is **non-blocking**: returns immediately
- What if too many clients arrive?
  - Some requests don't get through
  - The Internet makes no promises…
  - And the client can always try again

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Server: Accepting Client Connection

- Now all the server can do is wait…
  - Waits for connection request to arrive
  - **Blocking** until the request arrives
  - And then accepting the new request

- Accept a new connection from a client
  - `int accept(int sockfd, struct sockaddr *addr, socketlen_t *addrlen)`
  - Arguments: sockfd, structure that will provide client address and port, and length of the structure
  - Returns descriptor of socket for this new connection

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Client and Server: Cleaning House

- Once the connection is open
  - Both sides and read and write
  - Two unidirectional streams of data
  - In practice, client writes first, and server reads
  - … then server writes, and client reads, and so on
- Closing down the connection
  - Either side can close the connection
  - … using the `int close(int sockfd)`
- What about the data still "in flight"
  - Data in flight still reaches the other end
  - So, server can `close()` before client finishes reading

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Server: One Request at a Time?

- Serializing requests is inefficient
  - Server can process just one request at a time
  - All other clients must wait until previous one is done
  - What makes this inefficient?
- May need to time share the server machine
  - Alternate between servicing different requests
    - Do a little work on one request, then switch when you are waiting for some other resource (e.g., reading file from disk)
    - "Nonblocking I/O"
  - Or, use a different process/thread for each request
    - Allow OS to share the CPU(s) across processes
  - Or, some hybrid of these two approaches

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Handle Multiple Clients using fork()

- Steps to handle multiple clients
  - Go to a loop and accept connections using accept()
  - After a connection is established, call fork() to create a new child process to handle it
  - Go back to listen for another socket in the parent process
  - close() when you are done.
- Want to know more?
  - Checkout out *Beej's guide to network programming*

Wanna See Real Clients and Servers?

- Apache Web server
  - Open source server first released in 1995
  - Name derives from "a patchy server" ;-)
  - Software available online at http://www.apache.org
- Mozilla Web browser
  - http://www.mozilla.org/developer/
- Sendmail
  - http://www.sendmail.org/
- BIND Domain Name System
  - Client resolver and DNS server
  - http://www.isc.org/index.pl?/sw/bind/
- ...