

What is Traceroute?

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Traceroute, also known as Trace or TRACERT, is a utility that tracks the route IP packets take from your computer to an Internet host, showing you how many hops the packet needs to reach the host and how long it takes to reach each router. If pages are appearing slowly for a website, you can use Traceroute to figure out where the longest delays are occurring. Traceroute works by sending sequential IP packets with incremental time-to-live (TTL) fields. The TTL values set a maximum number of hops a packet can go through before it is rejected as an "expired" packet. When this happens, the last router that received the packet returns a "TTL expired" ICMP packet, that reveals the router's IP address. By comparing the time when the packet is sent out with the time that the "TTL expired" packet comes back, an estimated time to reach that router can be calculated. By sending a series of packets, and incrementing the TTL value with each successive packet, Traceroute can find out who virtually all the intermediary hosts are. You can run Traceroute on your desktop, or use the Trace feature in your eXtend Control Panel. To run Traceroute: Log into your eXtend Control Panel Click 'Ping, Trace & NSlookup' Enter in the domain, IP address, or hostname you want to look up Click 'Trace' Wait for Traceroute to run The time given, known as the Round Trip Time (RTT), is the time it takes the packet to reach the router in question, plus the time it takes the router to send an error message back. Since the route back might not be the same route the packet took to get there, the RTT value is not necessarily equal to double the time it takes the packet to reach the router. The main number to focus on is the RTT for the last hop. Anything under 60ms is considered fast, and anything under 300ms is perfectly usable. RTT is not an indication of transfer speed or available bandwidth, although a router under bandwidth pressure is more likely to drop packets or provide very slow replies to them.

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