

## [fw-wiz] Stateful Proxying?

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While talking about Firewalls and Proxies, I was asked, can you have a "Stateful Proxy"?

It seems like a simple enough question, but I was not sure how to answer it. Typically a Proxy Server doesn't forward IP packets, so it must listen for any service it proxies and then "proxy" the service. This almost implies state, doesn't it? But do Proxy servers watch ack and sequence numbers or "keep state" like a stateful packet filter does? Am I thinking about this correctly?

If a Proxy Server is "stateful" then the difference between a stateful packet filter and a stateful proxy becomes small indeed. Would you then classify the difference as whether or not the proxy server breaks the connection/circuit and how far up the OSI model it checks and how thoroughly it checks the protocols for RFC/rules conformance?

I would greatly appreciate any feedback or pointers.

Thanks,  
◇ Jim

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