13.11.3 Proxy Server Facts

A *proxy server* is a device that stands as an intermediary between a host and the internet. A proxy server is a specific implementation of a firewall that uses filter rules to allow or deny internet traffic. With a proxy, every packet is stopped and inspected, which causes a break between the client and the server on the internet.
Proxies can be configured to:

- Control internet access based on user account and time of day.
- Prevent users from accessing certain websites. For example, proxy servers used in schools or at home protect children from viewing inappropriate sites.
- Restrict users from using certain protocols. For example, a proxy server at work might prevent instant messaging, online games, or streaming media.
- Cache heavily accessed web content to improve performance.

Be aware of the following when using proxy servers:

- Configure a proxy server as a firewall device between the private network and the internet to control internet access based on user account.
- You can use a third-party service that uses proxy servers at your ISP or on the internet for content filtering.
- When using a proxy server, all traffic must be sent to the proxy server first before being forwarded to the destination device. This redirection is typically done by configuring the client to use the proxy server.
- Content filtering solutions reconfigure the client such that the redirection is done automatically and cannot be bypassed.
- Internet Explorer automatically detects and uses a proxy server if one is on the network. If the proxy server is not detected, use Internet Options to identify the proxy server IP address and port number.

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