IP Address

Introduction ;

The term IP Address refers to **Internet Protocoll Addresss**, All the computers of the world on the Internet network communicate with each other with underground or underwater cables or wirelessly. If I want to download a file from the internet or load a web page or literally do anything related to the internet, my computer must have an address so that other computers can find and locate mine in order to deliver that particular file or webpage that I am requesting. In technical terms, that address is called **IP Address or Internet Protocol Address**.

Let us understand it with another example, like if someone wants to send you a mail then he/she must have your home address. Similarly, your computer too needs an address so that other computers on the internet can communicate with each other without the confusion of delivering information to someone else’s computer. And that is why each computer in this world has a unique IP Address. Or in other words, an IP address is a unique address that is used to identify computers or nodes on the internet. This address is just a string of numbers written in a certain format. It is generally expressed in a set of numbers for example 192.155.12.1. Here each number in the set is from 0 to 255 range. Or we can say that a full IP address ranges from 0.0.0.0 to 255.255.255.255. And these IP addresses are assigned by IANA(known as Internet Corporation For Internet Assigned Numbers Authority).

Working of IP Address ;

* Your device directly requests your Internet Service Provider which then grants your device access to the web.
* And an IP Address is assigned to your device from the given range available.
* Your internet activity goes through your service provider, and they route it back to you, using your IP address.
* Your IP address can change. For example, turning your router on or off can change your IP Address.
* When you are out from your home location your home IP address doesn’t accompany you. It changes as you change the network of your device.

**Types of IP Address ; IP Address is of two types:**

1. **IPv4:** Internet Protocol version 4. It consists of 4 numbers separated by the dots. Each number can be from 0-255 in decimal numbers. But computers do not understand decimal numbers, they instead change them to binary numbers which are only 0 and 1. Therefore, in binary, this (0-255) range can be written as (00000000 – 11111111). Since each number N can be represented by a group of 8-digit binary digits. So, a whole IPv4 binary address can be represented by 32-bits of binary digits. In IPv4, a unique sequence of bits is assigned to a computer, so a total of (2^32) devices approximately = 4,294,967,296 can be assigned with IPv4.

IPv4 can be written as:

*189.123.123.90*

**Classes of IPv4 Address:** There are around 4.3 billion IPv4 addresses and managing all those addresses without any scheme is next to impossible. Let’s understand it with a simple example. If you have to find a word from a language dictionary, how long will it take? Usually, you will take less than 5 minutes to find that word. You are able to do this because words in the dictionary are organized in alphabetical order. If you have to find out the same word from a dictionary that doesn’t use any sequence or order to organize the words, it will take an eternity to find the word. If a dictionary with one billion words without order can be so disastrous, then you can imagine the pain behind finding an address from 4.3 billion addresses. For easier management and assignment IP addresses are organized in numeric order and divided into the following 5 classes :

| **IP Class** | **Address Range** | **Maximum number of networks** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Class A | 1-126 | 126 (27-2) |
| Class B | 128-191 | 16384 |
| Class C | 192-223 | 2097152 |
| Class D | 224-239 | Reserve for multitasking |
| Class E | 240-254 | Reserved for Research and development |

The 0.0.0.0 is a Non-routable address is  that indicates an invalid, or inapplicable end-user address.

A [loopback address](https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/what-is-a-loopback-address/) is a distinct reserved IP address range that starts from 127.0.0.0 ends at 127.255.255.255 though 127.255.255.255 is the broadcast address for 127.0.0.0/8. The loopback addresses are built into the IP domain system, enabling devices to transmit and receive the data packets. The loopback address 127.0.0.1 is generally known as localhost.

1. **IPv6:**

But, there is a problem with the IPv4 address. With IPv4, we can connect only the above number of 4 billion devices uniquely, and apparently, there are much more devices in the world to be connected to the internet. So, gradually we are making our way to **IPv6 Address**which is a 128-bit IP address. In human-friendly form, IPv6 is written as a group of 8 hexadecimal numbers separated with colons(:). But in the computer-friendly form, it can be written as 128 bits of 0s and 1s. Since, a unique sequence of binary digits is given to computers, smartphones, and other devices to be connected to the internet. So, via IPv6 a total of (2^128) devices can be assigned with unique addresses which are actually more than enough for upcoming future generations.

IPv6 can be written as:

*2011:0bd9:75c5:0000:0000:6b3e:0170:8394*

Thank You