

Understanding How Firewall Filters Control Packet Flows

EX-series switches support firewall filters that allow you to control flows of data packets and local packets. *Data packets* are chunks of data that transit the switch as they are forwarded from a source to a destination. *Local packets* are chunks of data that are destined for or sent by the switch. Local packets usually contain routing protocol data, data for IP services such as Telnet or SSH, and data for administrative protocols such as the Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP).

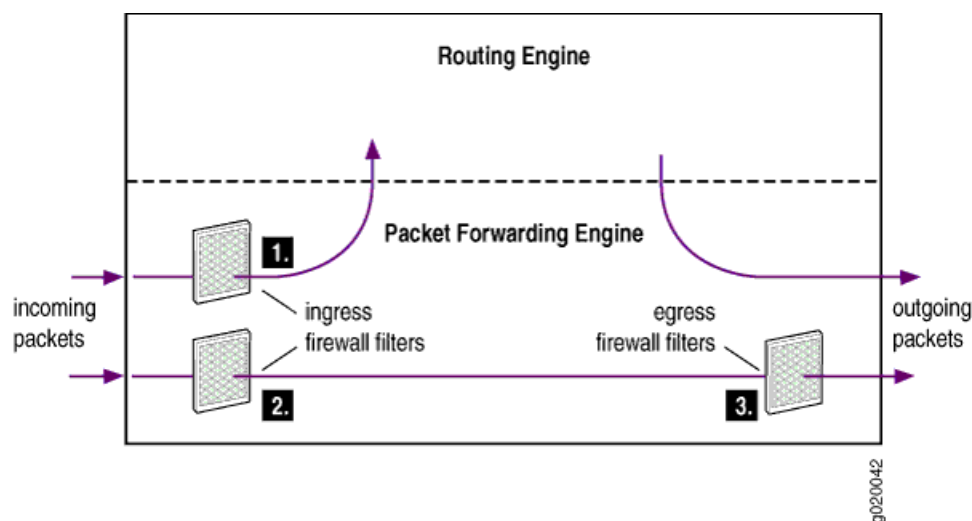
You create firewall filters to protect your switch from excessive traffic transiting the switch to a network destination or destined for the Routing Engine on the switch. Firewall filters that control local packets can also protect your switch from external incidents such as denial-of-service (DoS) attacks.

Firewall filters affect packet flows entering in to or exiting from the switch's interfaces:

- Ingress firewall filters affect the flow of data packets that are received by the switch's interfaces. The Packet Forwarding Engine (PFE) handles this flow. When a switch receives a data packet on an interface, the switch determines where to forward the packet by looking in the forwarding table for the best route (Layer 2 switching, Layer 3 routing) to a destination. Data packets are forwarded to their destination through an outgoing interface. Locally destined packets are forwarded to the Routing Engine.
- Egress firewall filters affect the flow of data packets that are transmitted from the switch's interfaces but do not affect the flow of locally generated control packets from the Routing Engine. The Packet Forwarding Engine handles the flow of data packets that are transmitted from the switch, and egress firewall filters are applied here. The Packet Forwarding Engine also handles the flow of control packets from the Routing Engine.

Figure 1 on page 1 illustrates the application of ingress and egress firewall filters to control the flow of packets through the switch.

Figure 1: Application of Firewall Filters to Control Packet Flow



1. Ingress firewall filter applied to control locally destined packets that are received on the switch's interfaces and are destined for the Routing Engine.
2. Ingress firewall filter applied to control incoming packets on the switch's interfaces.
3. Egress firewall filter applied to control packets that are transiting the switch's interfaces.

- Related Topics**
- Understanding Firewall Filter Processing Points for Bridged and Routed Packets on EX-series Switches
 - Understanding How Firewall Filters Are Evaluated