

The Bitcoin Network :

The bitcoin network is a P2P network where nodes exchange transactions and blocks. There are different types of nodes on the network. There are two main types of nodes, full nodes and SPV nodes. Full nodes, as the name implies, are implementations of bitcoin core clients performing the wallet, miner, full blockchain storage, and network routing functions. However, it is not necessary to perform all these functions. SPV nodes or lightweight clients perform only wallet and network routing functionality. The latest version of Bitcoin protocol is 70014 and was introduced with bitcoin core client 0.13.0.

Bitcoin network is identified by its different magic values. A list is shown as follows:

Network	Magic value	Hex
main	0xD9B4BEF9	F9 BE B4 D9
testnet3	0x0709110B	0B 11 09 07

A full node performs four functions: wallet, miner, blockchain, and the network routing node.

When a bitcoin core node starts up, first, it initiates the discovery of all peers. This is achieved by querying DNS seeds that are hardcoded into the bitcoin core client and are maintained by bitcoin community members. This lookup returns a number of DNS A records. The bitcoin protocol works on TCP port 8333 by default for the main network and TCP 18333 for testnet.

First, the client sends a protocol message `Version` that contains various fields, such as version, services, timestamp, network address, nonce, and some other fields. The remote node responds with its own version message followed by `verack` message exchange between both nodes, indicating that the connection has been established.

After this, `Getaddr` and `addr` messages are exchanged to find the peers that the client do not know. Meanwhile, either of the nodes can send a ping message to see whether the connection is still live. Now the block download can begin.

If the node already has all blocks fully synchronized, then it listens for new blocks using the `Inv` protocol message; otherwise, it first checks whether it has a response to `inv` messages and have inventories already. If yes, then it requests the blocks using the `GetData` protocol message; if not, then it requests inventories using the `GetBlocks` message. This method was used until version 0.9.3



