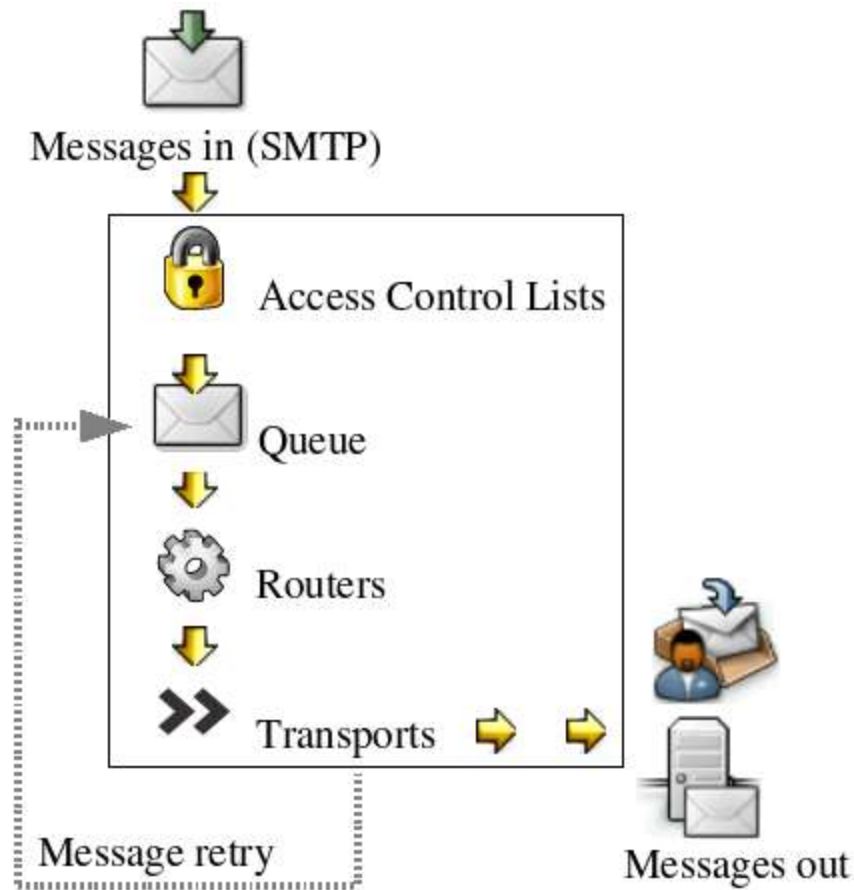


How Exim processes messages



In the diagram above messages that can not be delivered immediately by a *transport* are put back in the *queue* for retry later.

Messages In

Messages arrive via SMTP from a user's e-mail client or from another mail server.

Access Control Lists

Exim uses *access control lists* or *ACLs* to decide if it will accept a message for delivery. A basic access control list might only accept messages *from* a specific list of computers or *for* a different list of users. Access control lists are often used to stop other people from using your mail server to send spam.

Queues

Messages that have been accepted, but have not yet been delivered are held in a queue. *Queue runners* are used to pick up messages waiting in the queue.

Routers

Routers process messages passed to them by queue runners. A router specifies which *transport* (see below) should be used to deliver the message to its final destination.

Transports

Transports actually deliver the message. Each type of delivery may have its own transport. For example a message that is delivered into a user's mailbox would need to be saved to a mailbox file or directory on the server, but a message that needs to be sent on to another mail server would be delivered over a network, involving the use of DNS and SMTP again.

Retry settings

Exim has a facility for *re-trying* delivery for messages that could not be delivered on the first attempt. Exim uses these settings for determining how often, and at what times a messages should be re-tried before finally giving up on the message.

Messages out

Most messages out will be delivered to another mail server or put into a user's mailbox that is located on the same server as Exim.