How to use the TOR network

In this post, I will focus on showing and demonstrating how to use the Internet the way Free Software Foundation founder Richard M. Stallman uses it.

It is a case study of how little free software there is in our daily lives

A few rules to start with

1. Do not run on your machine any non-free or non-trivial javascript that loads together with web pages.
2. You should log in to websites using a proxy in the form of the TOR network

The whole situation will be made a bit more difficult by the fact that we will be using a terminal at the beginning and then only a graphical firefox

How to use the TOR network as a proxy

Many of you are familiar with the TOR browser, shown in many hacking series (i.e. MR.ROBOT) or other media as a hacking tool. It allows us to connect to the TOR network and browse sites on that network using the onion protocol. In contrast, what RMS (Richard Stallman) is doing is using the TOR network itself as a proxy rather than using IceCat itself, which is a reworked Firefox.

First we need to install the tor package and lynx (Recommended by RMS).

Then we can use the torsocks tool.

The term SOCKS itself stands for a proxy protocol, which allows applications to route network traffic through an intermediary (proxy server), in our case the intermediary will be the TOR network.

Below you can see how torsocks works in conjunction with the lynx browser by opening the fsf.org website.

screencast1-2025-07-21_18.58.59.mp4

We can also check if the IP is hidden behind a tor network.

screencast1-2025-07-21_19.02.12.mp4

You can also use other network services with this proxy

screencast1-2025-07-21_19.06.49.mp4

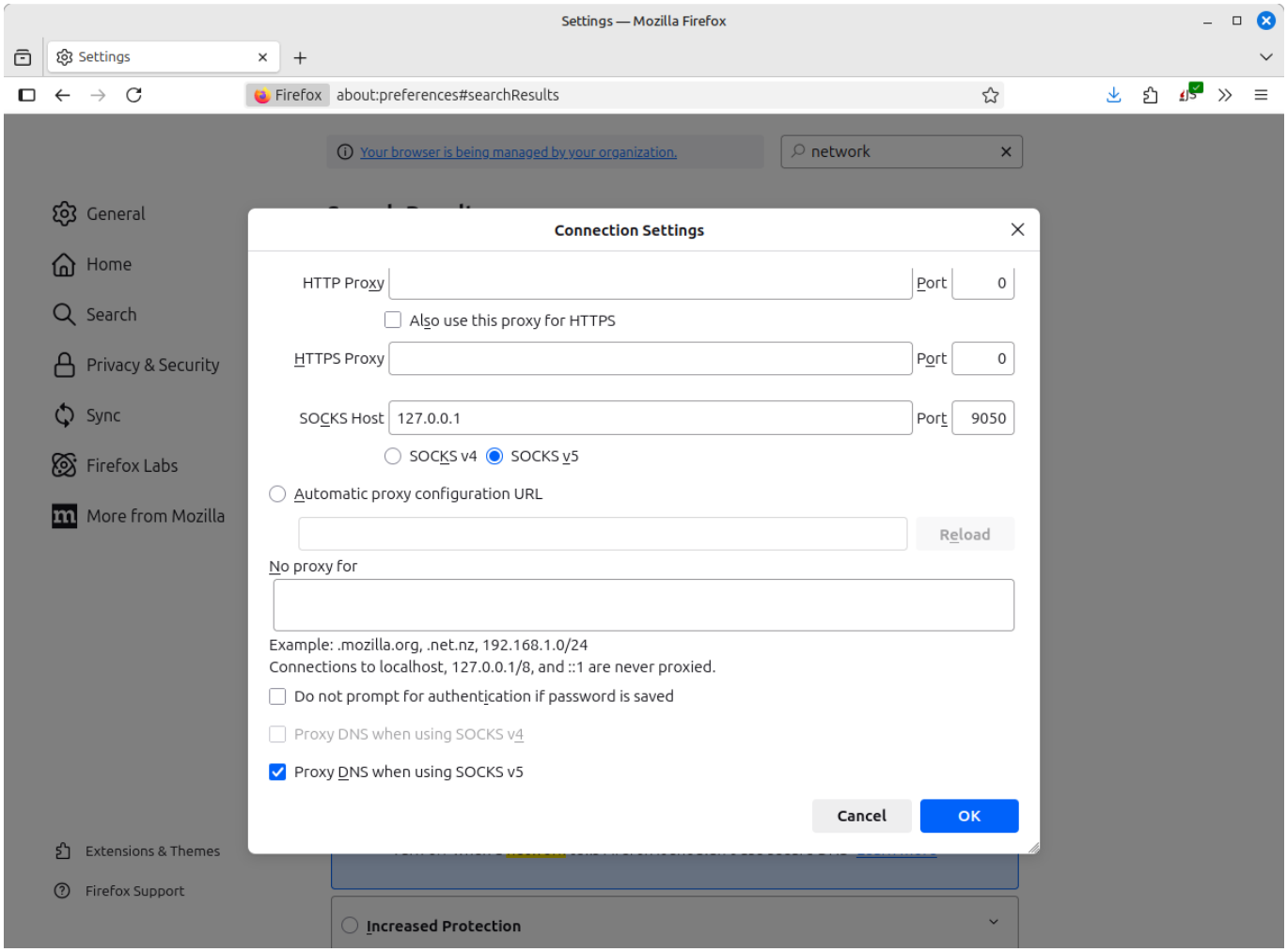
OK, but how do I open a regular website using this proxy

First, we start the TOR service in the background.

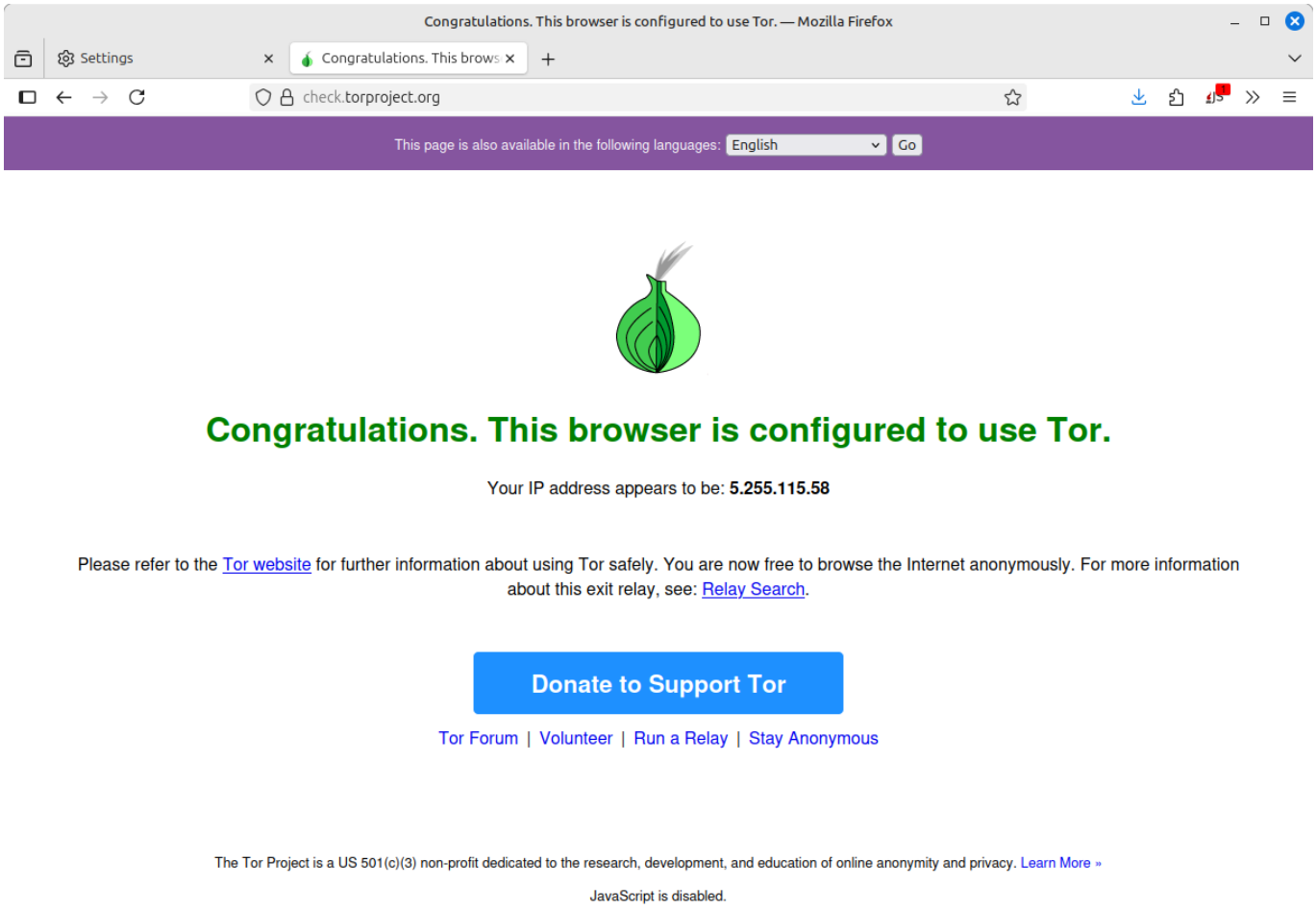
```
kacper@ARDU-LAPTOP:~$ sudo systemctl start tor
[sudo] password for kacper:
kacper@ARDU-LAPTOP:~$ sudo systemctl status tor
● tor.service - Anonymizing overlay network for TCP (multi-instance-master)
     Loaded: loaded (/usr/lib/systemd/system/tor.service; enabled; preset:
enab>
     Active: active (exited) since Mon 2025-07-21 18:49:53 CEST; 23min ago
    Process: 20129 ExecStart=/bin/true (code=exited, status=0/SUCCESS)
   Main PID: 20129 (code=exited, status=0/SUCCESS)
        CPU: 1ms

lip 21 18:49:53 ARDU-LAPTOP systemd[1]: Starting tor.service - Anonymizing
over>
lip 21 18:49:53 ARDU-LAPTOP systemd[1]: Finished tor.service - Anonymizing
over>
lines 1-9/9 (END)
kacper@ARDU-LAPTOP:~$
```

Then we change the firefox settings



And as you can see it works as it should all the sites we will be accessing will be sent through TOR.


Congratulations. This browser is configured to use Tor. — Mozilla Firefox
Settings
Congratulations. This brows
check.torproject.org
This page is also available in the following languages: English Go
Congratulations. This browser is configured to use Tor.
Your IP address appears to be: 5.255.115.58
Please refer to the Tor website for further information about using Tor safely. You are now free to browse the Internet anonymously. For more information about this exit relay, see: Relay Search.
Donate to Support Tor
Tor Forum | Volunteer | Run a Relay | Stay Anonymous
The Tor Project is a US 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to the research, development, and education of online anonymity and privacy. Learn More »
JavaScript is disabled.

C.D.N.