CSE 127: Computer Security

Symmetric Cryptography

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Some slides from Deian Stefan, Dan Boneh, and Kirill Levchenko
Cryptography

• **Is:**
  ➤ A tremendous tool
  ➤ The basis for many security mechanisms

• **Is not:**
  ➤ The solution to all security problems
  ➤ Reliable unless implemented and used properly
  ➤ Something you should try to invent yourself
  ➤ Another word for blockchain
How Does It Work?

- Goal: learn how to use crypto primitives correctly
  - We will treat them as a black box that mostly does what it says
- To learn what’s inside black box take CSE 107
How Does It Work?

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• Do not roll your own crypto*

* Exceptions: You are Daniel J. Bernstein, Joan Daemen, Neal Koblitz, Dan Boneh, or similar, or you have finished your PhD in cryptography under an advisor of that caliber, and your work has been accepted at Crypto, Eurocrypt, Asiacrypt, FSE, or PKC and/or NIST is running another competition, and then wait several years for full standardization and community vetting.
Real-world crypto: SSL/TLS

1. Browser and web server run “handshake protocol”:
   - Establishes shared secret key using public-key cryptography (next lecture)

2. Browser and web server use negotiated key to symmetrically encrypt data (“Record layer”)

Real-world crypto: File encryption

- Files are symmetrically encrypted with a secret key.
- The symmetric key is stored encrypted or in tamperproof hardware.
- The password is used to unlock the key so the data can be decrypted.
This class: secure communication

➤ Authenticity: Parties cannot be impersonated
➤ Secrecy: No one else can read messages
➤ Integrity: Messages cannot be modified
Attacker models

- Passive attacker: Eve only snoops on channel
- Active attacker: Eve can snoop, inject, block, tamper, etc.
Outline

• Symmetric-key crypto
  ➤ Encryption
  ➤ Hash functions
  ➤ Message authentication codes

• Next time: asymmetric (public-key) crypto
  ➤ Key exchange
  ➤ Digital signatures
Symmetric-key encryption

- **Encryption**: (key, plaintext) → ciphertext
  - $E_k(m) = c$

- **Decryption**: (key, ciphertext) → plaintext
  - $D_k(c) = m$

- **Correctness**: $D_k(E_k(m)) = m$
Security definition against a passive eavesdropper

Simplest security definition.

How do you know an encryption scheme is secure against a passive eavesdropper?
Security definition against a passive eavesdropper

Simplest security definition.

• Desired definition: Something like “ciphertext reveals no information about plaintext”

• Informal formal definition: Given $E_k(m_0)$ and $E_k(m_1)$, adversary can’t distinguish which ciphertext encrypts which plaintext without key
Example: One Time Pad

Vernam (1917)

Encryption: $c = E_k(m) = m \oplus k$

Decryption: $D_k(c) = c \oplus k = (m \oplus k) \oplus k = m$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>0 1 0 1 1 1 0 0 1 0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plaintext:</td>
<td>1 1 0 0 0 1 1 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciphertext:</td>
<td>1 0 0 1 1 0 1 0 1 0</td>
</tr>
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One-time pad security

- Shannon (1949)
  - One-time pad is “information-theoretically” secure: Without key, ciphertext reveals no information about plaintext

- Problems with one-time pad
  - Key must be as long as the message
  - Key can only be used once
Computational cryptography

• We would like to encrypt with shorter keys
  • Problem: Information-theoretic security is impossible if key space is smaller than message space

• Solution: Use a weaker/more practical security notion
  • It should be infeasible for a computationally bounded attacker to violate security
  • In practice, we ask for attacks to take at least e.g. $2^{128}$ time
Stream ciphers

• Problem: OTP key is as long as message
• Solution: Pseudo random generator

➤ Examples: ChaCha, Salsa, etc.
Stream ciphers

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key
PRG
Computationally hard to distinguish from random
Stream ciphers

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  \[ E_k(m) = \text{PRG}(k) \oplus m \]

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Dangers in using stream ciphers

- Can we use a key more than once?
  - E.g., $c_1 \leftarrow m_1 \oplus \text{PRG}(k)$
    
    $c_2 \leftarrow m_2 \oplus \text{PRG}(k)$
  
  - Yes? No?
Dangers in using stream ciphers

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  \[ c_2 \leftarrow m_2 \oplus \text{PRG}(k) \]

  ➤ Yes? No?

  ➤ Eavesdropper does: \( c_1 \oplus c_2 \rightarrow m_1 \oplus m_2 \)

  ➤ Enough redundant information in English that:

\[ m_1 \oplus m_2 \rightarrow m_1, m_2 \]
Chosen plaintext attacks

• Attacker can learn encryptions for arbitrary plaintexts

• Historical example:
  ➤ During WWII the US Navy sent messages about Midway Island and watched Japanese ciphertexts to learn codename (“AF”)

• More recent (but still a bit old) example:
  ➤ WEP WiFi encryption has poor randomization and can result in the same stream cipher used multiple times
Block ciphers: crypto workhorses

- A block cipher is a permutation of fixed-size input blocks
  - Each input is mapped to exactly one output, depends on the key

- Most common examples:
  - DES: $|m| = |c| = 64$ bits, $|k| = 64$ bits with 56-bit strength
  - 3DES: $|m| = |c| = 64$ bits, $|k|$ usually 112 bits
  - AES: $|m| = |c| = 128$ bits, $|k| = 128, 192, 256$
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Correct block cipher choice: AES
What’s inside the box?

R(k, m): round function for AES-128 (n=10)
What’s inside that?
Challenges with block ciphers
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- Block ciphers operate on single fixed-size block
- How do we encrypt longer messages?
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- How do we deal with messages that are not block-aligned?
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• How do we encrypt longer messages?
  ➤ Several modes of operation for longer messages

• How do we deal with messages that are not block-aligned?
  ➤ Must pad messages in a distinguishable way
Insecure block cipher usage:

ECB mode
Insecure block cipher usage:

**ECB mode**

Electronic Codebook (ECB) mode encryption

Source: wikipedia
Why is ECB so bad?

\[ E_k(\text{Penguin}) = \text{Image} \]

Source: wikipedia
Moderately secure usage:
CBC mode with random IV
Moderately secure usage: CBC mode with random IV

Cipher Block Chaining (CBC) mode decryption
Moderately secure usage: CBC mode with random IV

Cipher Block Chaining (CBC) mode decryption

Subtle attacks that abuse padding possible!

Source: wikipedia
Better block cipher usage:
CTR mode with random IV
Better block cipher usage:
CTR mode with random IV

Counter (CTR) mode encryption

Source: wikipedia
Better block cipher usage:
CTR mode with random IV

Essentially use block cipher as stream cipher!

Counter (CTR) mode encryption

Source: wikipedia
If your crypto library is making you choose a block cipher mode of operation, use a different library.

(Right answer is that the block cipher mode of operation will be built into an AEAD mode, which comes at the end of the lecture.)
What security do we actually get?

- All encryption breakable by brute force given enough knowledge about plaintext
  - Try to decrypt ciphertext with every possible key until a valid plaintext is found
- Attack complexity proportional to size of key space
  - 128-bit key requires $2^{128}$ decryption attempts
Chosen ciphertext attacks

• What if Eve can alter the ciphertexts sent between Alice and Bob?

• Symmetric encryption alone is not enough to ensure security.
  ➤ Need to protect integrity of ciphertexts (and thus underlying encrypted messages)
Outline

• Symmetric-key crypto
  ➤ Encryption
  ➤ Hash functions
  ➤ Message authentication codes

• Asymmetric (public-key) crypto
  ➤ Key exchange
  ➤ Digital signatures
Hash Functions

- A (cryptographic) hash function maps arbitrary length input into a fixed-size string

\[ h = H(m) \]

- \(|m|\) is arbitrarily large
- \(|h|\) is fixed, usually 128-512 bits
Hash Function Properties
Hash Function Properties

• Finding a preimage is hard
  ➤ Given h, find m such that H(m)=h

• Finding a second preimage is hard
  ➤ Given m₁, find m₂ such that H(m₁)=H(m₂)

• Finding a collision is hard
  ➤ Find m₁ and m₂ such that H(m₁)=H(m₂)
Hash function security

• A 128-bit hash function has 64 bits of security
  ➢ Why?
Hash function security

• A 128-bit hash function has 64 bits of security
  ➤ Why? Birthday bound: find collision in time $2^{64}$
Real-world crypto: Hash functions

• Versioning systems (e.g., git)
  ➤ Better than _1, _final, _really_final

• Sub-resource integrity
  ➤ Integrity of files you include from CDN

• File download integrity
  ➤ Make sure the thing you download is the thing you thought you were downloading
# Maintainer: Deian Stefan

pkgname=xwrits
pkgver=2.26
pkgrel=1
pkgdesc="reminds you to take wrist breaks"
arch=('any')
url="http://www.lcdf.org/xwrits/
license=('GPLv2')
depends=()
makedepends=()
conflicts=()
source=('http://www.lcdf.org/xwrits/$pkgname-$pkgver.tar.gz')
sha256sums=('acaca4809b4cd62a627335ca14a231d4ab556fc872450b8bd6f76b103fed8')
sha512sums=('c8beec957e41468d85819a7d6d4475c83a99735ff17d13d724568a421d3b9a1519ee8ab903104ab19b869a4832103db2e7d3ec2a9bf89a95a7899e92f927')

build() {
  cd "$pkgname-$pkgver"
  ./configure --prefix=/usr
  make
}

check() {
  cd "$pkgname-$pkgver"
  make -k check
}

package() {
  cd "$pkgname-$pkgver"
  make DBSDIR="$pkgdir/" install
}
Popular broken hash functions

- **MD5**: Message Digest
  - Designed by Ron Rivest
  - Output: 128 bits

- **SHA-1**: Secure Hash Algorithm 1
  - Designed by NSA
  - Output: 160 bits
Hash functions

- **SHA-2: Secure Hash Algorithm 2**
  - Designed by NSA
  - Output: 224, 256, 384, or 512 bits

- **SHA-3: Secure Hash Algorithm 3**
  - Result of NIST SHA-3 contest
  - Output: arbitrary size
  - Replacement once SHA-2 broken
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MACs

- Validate message integrity based on shared secret
- **MAC**: Message Authentication Code
  - Keyed function using shared secret
  - Hard to compute function without knowing key

\[ a = \text{MAC}_k(m) \]
HMAC construction

• HMAC: MAC based on hash function

$$\text{MAC}_k(m) = H( k \oplus \text{opad} \ || \ H( k \oplus \text{ipad} \ || \ m ) )$$

➤ HMAC-SHA256: HMAC construction using SHA-256
Other MAC constructions

• In 2009, Flickr required API calls to use authentication token that looked like:

\[ \text{MD5( secret } \| \text{ arg1=val1&arg2=val2&…)} \]

• Is \( \text{MAC}_k(m) = H(k \| m) \) a secure MAC?

➤ No! If \( H \) is MD5, SHA1 or SHA2
➤ Use HMAC!
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Length extension attack

- Merkle-Damgård construction: hash function from collision-resistant compression function $f$
  
- Attacker that can observe $\text{MAC}_k(m)$ can forge $\text{MAC}_k(m||\text{padding}||r)$ for an $r$ of their choice
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Combining MAC with encryption

MAC then Encrypt (SSL)

➤ Integrity for plaintext not ciphertext

➤ Issue: need to decrypt before you can verify integrity

➤ Hard to get right!
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Combining MAC with encryption

Encrypt and MAC (SSH)

➤ Integrity for plaintext not ciphertext

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Combining MAC with encryption

Encrypt then MAC (IPSec)

➤ Integrity for plaintext and ciphertext
➤ Almost always right!
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AEAD construction

- Authenticated Encryption with Associated Data
  - AES-GCM, AES-GCM-SIV
- Always use an authenticated encryption mode
  - Combines mode of operation with integrity protection/MAC in the right way
Good libraries have good defaults

Authenticated encryption

Example

```c
#define MESSAGE ((const unsigned char *) "test")
#define MESSAGE_LEN 4
#define CIPHERTEXT_LEN (crypto_secretbox_MACBYTES + MESSAGE_LEN)

unsigned char key[crypto_secretbox_KEYBYTES];
unsigned char nonce[crypto_secretbox_NONCEBYTES];
unsigned char ciphertext[CIPHERTEXT_LEN];
crypto_secretbox_keygen(key);
randombytes_buf(nonce, sizeof nonce);
crypto_secretbox_easy(ciphertext, MESSAGE, MESSAGE_LEN, nonce, key);

unsigned char decrypted[MESSAGE_LEN];
if (crypto_secretbox_open_easy(decrypted, ciphertext, CIPHERTEXT_LEN, nonce, key) != 0) {
    /* message forged! */
}
```