

UE SCLAM

Sécurité Logicielle

Lecture 4: Protecting your code against software vulnerabilities ? (overview)

Master M2 Cybersécurité et Informatique Légale

Academic Year 2023 - 2024

Preamble

Bad news

several (**widely used !**) programming languages are **unsecure** ...

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Good news

There exists some **protections** to make attacker's life harder !

→ 3 categories of protections:

- ▶ from the programmer (and/or programming language) itself
- ▶ from the compiler / interpreter
- ▶ from the execution platform

Outline

Programmer's level protections

Compilers level protections

Platform level protections

Bonus

Step 0: all the languages are not equal . . .

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→ **Of course:** trade-off between security, expressiveness, execution time, code re-use, etc.

Demo: C, Ada, Java

Step 1: Know the threats . . .

Most language level vulnerabilities are well-known !

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CWE (Common Weakness Enumeration) <https://cwe.mitre.org/>

- ▶ a community-developed list of common **software security weaknesses**
- ▶ common language + a measuring stick for software security tools
- ▶ a baseline for weakness identification, mitigation, and prevention efforts

Ex: CWE-131 (Incorrect Calculation of Buffer Size)

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CVE (Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures) <https://cve.mitre.org/>

An (exhaustive ?) open list of all the publicly known soft. vulnerabilities

→ provides a common name & a standardized description

Ex: CVE-2017-12705 (A Heap-Based Buffer Overflow in Advantech WebOP).

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CAPEC (Common Attack Pattern Enumeration and Classification)

<https://capec.mitre.org/>

“A comprehensive dictionary and classification taxonomy of known attacks”

Attack scenario, the attacker perspective (means, gains), possible protections

→ a “design pattern” of an attack

Ex: CAPEC-100 (Overflow Buffers)

Step 2: and avoid the traps !

- ▶ The CERT coding standards

<https://www.securecoding.cert.org/>

- ▶ covers several languages: C, C++, Java, etc.
- ▶ rules + examples of non-compliant code + examples of solutions
- ▶ undefined behaviors
- ▶ etc.

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- ▶ ANSSI recommendations

- ▶ JavaSec, LaFoSec (Ocaml, F#, Scala)
- ▶ Rules for Secure C language software

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- ▶ Use of **secure libraries**

- ▶ `Strsafe.h` (Microsoft)
guarantee null-termination and bound to dest size
- ▶ `libsafe.h` (GNU/Linux)
no overflow beyond current stack frame
- ▶ etc.

Etc. (a lot of available references about “secure coding” ...)

CERT coding standards - Example 1

INT30-C. Ensure that unsigned integer operations do not wrap

Example of non compliant code

```
void func(unsigned int ui_a, unsigned int ui_b) {  
    unsigned int usum = ui_a + ui_b;  
    /* ... */  
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```
void func(unsigned int ui_a, unsigned int ui_b) {
    unsigned int usum = ui_a + ui_b;
    if (usum < ui_a) {
        /* Handle error */
    }
    /* ... */
}
```

CERT coding standards - Example 2

ARR30-C. Do not form or use out-of-bounds pointers or array subscripts

Example of non compliant code

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char *init_block(size_t block_size, size_t offset,  
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    memcpy(buffer + offset, data, data_size);  
    return buffer;
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Example of compliant code

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char *init_block(size_t block_size, size_t offset,
                 char *data, size_t data_size) {
    char *buffer = malloc(block_size);
    if (NULL == buffer) { /* Handle error */ }
    if (data_size > block_size || block_size - data_size < offset) {
        /* Data won't fit in buffer, handle error */
    }
    memcpy(buffer + offset, data, data_size);
    return buffer;
}
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Code validation

Several tools can also help to detect code vulnerabilities . . .

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Dynamic code analysis

Instruments the code to detect runtime errors (beyond language semantics!)

- ▶ invalid memory access (buffer overflow, use-after-free)
- ▶ uninitialized variables
- ▶ etc.

⇒ No false positive, but runtime overhead (~ testing)

Tool examples: Purify, Valgrind, AddressSanitizer, etc.

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Static code analysis

Infer some (over)-approximation of the program behaviour

- ▶ uninitialized variables
- ▶ value analysis (e.g., array access out of bounds)
- ▶ pointer aliasing
- ▶ etc.

⇒ No false negative, but sometimes “inconclusive” ...

Tool examples: Frama-C, Polyspace, CodeSonar, Fortify, etc.

Dynamic analysis tool example: AddressSanitizer

Google, open-source plugin for clang/gcc (flag `-fsanitize=address`)

Targets

- ▶ buffer overflows (within stack, heap, or globals)
- ▶ use-after-free (heap), use-after-return (stack)
- ▶ memory leaks, ...

Means

- ▶ code instrumentation (load/store operations)
- ▶ use of **redzones** around variables memory area
- ▶ custom version of `malloc()`
(redzone insertion, delay re-used of free memory, collect log information)

At work

- ▶ ~ 2x slowdown (Valgrind is ~ 20x) and 1.5x-3.x memory overhead
(→ ok for tests and/or fuzzing campaigns)
- ▶ # (security) bugs found in Chrome, Firefox, MySQL, gcc, etc.

(see <https://fr.slideshare.net/sermp/sanitizer-cppcon-russia>)

Demo: AdSan

Static analysis example: Frama-C RTE

runtime error annotation plugging for the Frama-C platform [CEA List]

Targets

potential runtime-errors and undefined behaviors

- ▶ invalid memory accesses
- ▶ arithmetic overflows on signed and unsigned integers
- ▶ invalid casts from float to int, etc.

Means

- ▶ **static** enhanced type checking \Rightarrow potential **false positives**
- ▶ lightweight optimizations (e.g., constant folding) to improve precision

At work

- ▶ exhibits potential RTE issues at the source level (assert annotations)
- ▶ to be discharged by hand and/or by other Frama-C plugins (Wp, VSA)

(see <https://frama-c.com/rte.html>)

Demo: Frama-C RTE

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Compilers may help for code protection

Most compilers offer **compilation options** enforce security

¹see also <https://blog.quarkslab.com/clang-hardening-cheat-sheet.html>
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Examples¹

- ▶ stack protection
 - ▶ stack layout
 - ▶ canaries (e.g, gcc stack protector)
 - ▶ shadow stack for return addresses
 - ▶ control-flow integrity (e.g., clang CFI, Java)
 - ▶ ...

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- ▶ pointer protection
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 - ▶ smart pointers (C++)
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 - ▶ ...
- ▶ no “undefined behavior”
e.g., enforce wrap around for unsigned int in C
(`-fno-strict-overflow`, `-fwrapv`)
- ▶ etc.

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Stack protection example: canaries



↔ gcc StackProtector, Redhat StackGuard, ProPolice, etc.

Principle: compiler generates **extra** code to:

1. insert a random value on the stack above the return address
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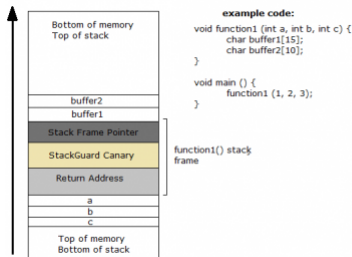
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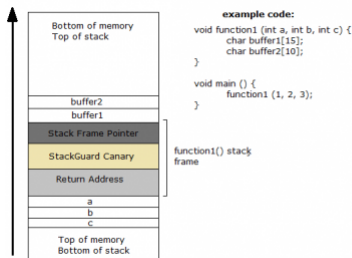
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Limited to stack (\neq heap) and **return** @ (\neq loc. variables) protection
Possibly **defeated** by information disclosure, non consecutive overflow, etc.

http://wiki.osdev.org/Stack_Smashing_Protector

Demo: `-fstack-protector`

Pointer protection

↔ Memory safety enforcement and attack prevention

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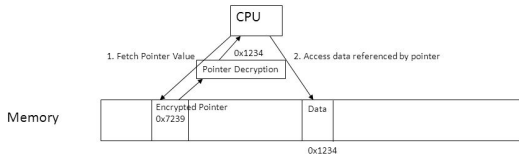
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extra meta-data to store memory cells base+bounds (**Ex:** C SoftBound)

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PointGuard Pointer Dereference



Control-Flow Integrity (CFI)

The main idea

→ Ensure that the **actual pgm control-flow** is the one **intended** by the pgmer
several means:

- ▶ pre-compute all possible flows (**CFG**) and insert runtime-checks in the binary code
pb: function pointers, dynamic calls (virtual functions), etc.
- ▶ simpler version: focus only on the **call graph**
protect function calls and returns, possible over-approximations
- ▶ execution overhead: 20% - 40% ?

More details in Abadi et al. paper:

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Clang CFI

Focus on virtual calls in C++ code

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Some more generic protections from the execution platform

General purposes operating systems (Linux, Windows, etc.)

- ▶ Memory layout randomization (ASLR)
attacker needs to know precise memory addresses
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basic attacks \Rightarrow execute code from the data zone
distinguish between:
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Example: make the execution stack non executable . . .

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Rks:

- ▶ exists other dedicated protections for specific platforms:
e.g., JavaCard, Android, embedded systems, ...
- ▶ exists also **hardware level** protections:
e.g., Intel SGC, ARM TrustZone, HW pointer protections, etc.

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e.g., on Linux only library code is randomized
- ▶ On a 32 bits machine, **brute force** may be effective, e.g.
 - ▶ heap spraying = filling the heap with # copies of the payload
 - ▶ overwriting the LSB of a pointer
- ▶ **Information leaks** may help to fully disclose address information

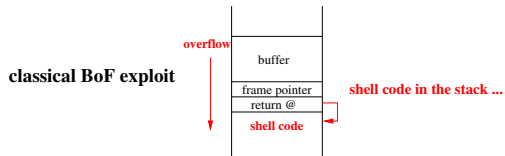
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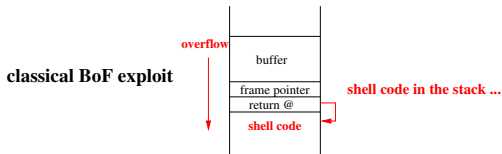
Stronger counter-measures ?

→ **encrypt** the data stored in memory with multiple keys !

Defeating the DEP ?



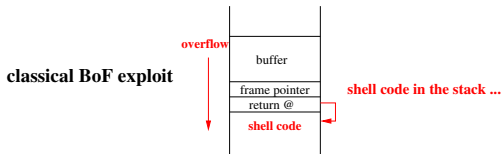
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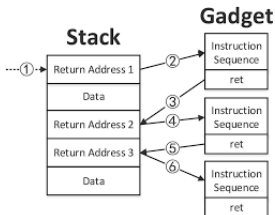
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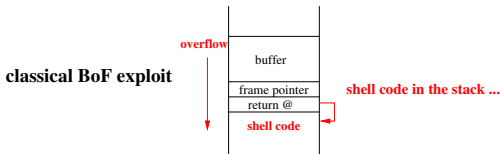


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payload = sequence of return-terminated instructions (gadgets)

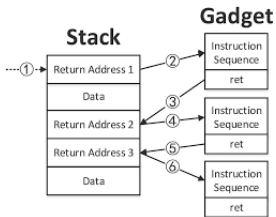


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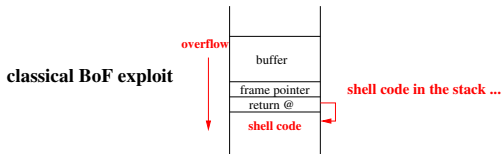
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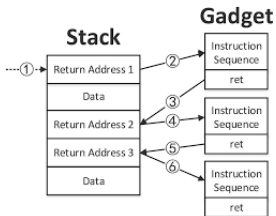
- ▶ gadget programming is “turing complete”
- ▶ ∃ tools for gadget extraction (ROPgadget, ROPium, etc.)
- ▶ ∃ ROP variants:
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Rks: may also ∃ library calls allowing to **make the stack executable** ...

Preventing ROP, COP, JOP ?

- ▶ preventing ROP:
 - ▶ count the number of `RET` instructions at runtime
 - ▶ use a **shadow stack** to duplicate return addresses
- ▶ preventing JOP and COP:
 - use a new machine instruction to “tag” valid jump/call destinations
 - e.g.: Intel CET (Control-Flow Enforcement Technology)

```
                                ...  
                                CALL 0xabcdef  
                                ...  
0xabcdef:                       ENDBRANCH // tag a valid jum/call des  
                                ...  
                                RET
```

→ no (easy) way to jump in the middle of a function ...

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Bonus: retrieving the stack layout

Stack layout of the following code ?

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    int x;  
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↪ set a breakpoint (`b main`), execute (`run`), print addresses (`p &i`)
3. **disassemble** the executable code (`objdump -S`, `idaPro`, etc.)
↪ get variable offset w.r.t frame pointer `rpb` on (x86_64)

Bonus: summary of memory-related exploits

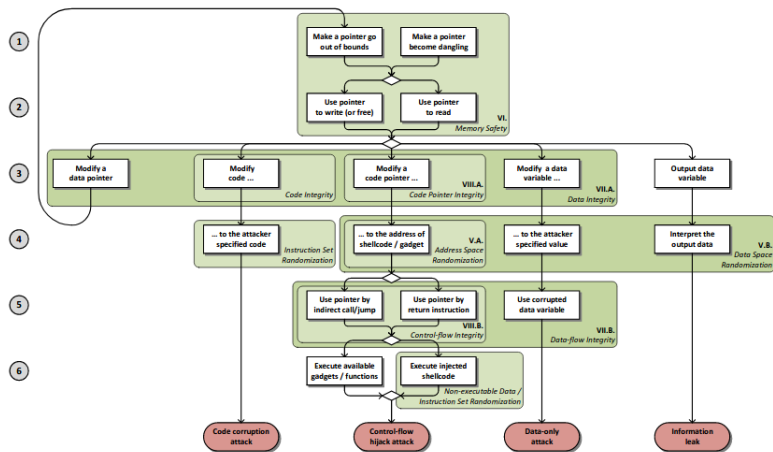


Figure 1. Attack model demonstrating four exploit types and policies mitigating the attacks in different stages

Some exploits defeating ASLR + DEP using ROP

CVE ID	Software	Vulnerability	Address leakage	User scripting
CVE-2011-0609	Adobe Flash	JIT type confusion	Read an IEEE-754 number	ActionScript
CVE-2012-0003	Windows Multimedia Library (affecting IE)	Heap buffer overflow	Read a string after overwriting its length	JavaScript
CVE-2011-4130	ProFTPD	Use-after-free	Overwrite the “226 Transfer Complete” message	none
CVE-2012-0469	Mozilla Firefox	Use-after-free	Read a string after overwriting its length	JavaScript
CVE-2012-1889	Microsoft Windows XML Core Services (affecting IE)	Uninitialized pointer	Read as a RGB color	JavaScript
CVE-2012-1876	Internet Explorer 9/10 (Pwn2Own 2012)	Heap buffer overflow	Read a string after overwriting its length	JavaScript

Table 1
EXPLOITS THAT DEFEAT BOTH DEP AND ASLR USING ROP AND INFORMATION LEAKS

(from “SoK: Eternal War in Memory” Laszlo Szekeres et al., Oakland 13)

A more recent detailed example:

Exploiting CVE-2018-5093 on Firefox 56 and 57 (part 1 and part 2)

Conclusion

- ▶ \exists numerous protections to avoid / mitigate vulnerability exploitations
- ▶ several protection levels
code, verification tools, compilers, platforms
- ▶ they allow to “(partially) mitigate” most known programming languages weaknesses (e.g., C/C++)
- ▶ they still require programmers skills and concerns
- ▶ even if they make attackers life harder ...
- ▶ ... they can still be bypassed !

→ an endless game between “attackers” and “defenders” !