

- PE (Portable Executable) is a native executable format on Windows
- PE files:
  - user mode: EXE, DLL
  - kernel mode: driver (.sys), kernel image (ntoskrnl.exe)
  - UEFI (run in SMM System Managemant Mode)
  - Also OBJ files have structures similar to PE

- PE (Portable Executable) contains information:
  - What to execute: the compiled code

FF remcos.exe

DOS Header

• How to execute: headers with data necessary for loading it

Signature
File Header
Optional Header
Section Headers

Sections

EP = 13A84

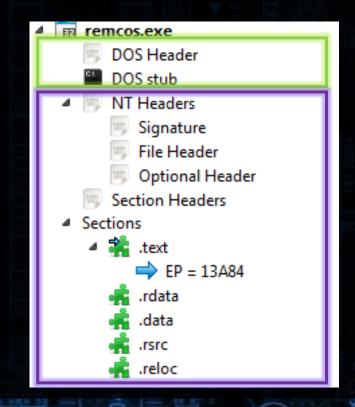
A data

remcos.exe

REFER		
	Hex	Disasm
413A84	55	PUSH EBP
413A85	SBEC	MOV EBP, ESP
413A87	6AFF	PUSH -1
413A89	68805F4100	PUSH 0X415F08
413A8E	68103C4100	PUSH 0X413C10
413A93	64A100000000	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR FS:[0]
413A99	50	PUSH EAX
413A9A	64892500000000	MOV DWORD PTR FS:[0], ESP
413AA1	83EC68	SUB ESP, 0X68
413AA4	53	PUSH EBX

- PE format is based on a Unix format COFF that was used in VAX/VMS
- It was introduced as a part of specification Win32
- Throughout many years, the core of the format didn't change, only some new fields of some structures have been added
- Since introduction of 64 bit environment, PE needed to be adjusted to it: 64 bit PE was introduced
- Also, new variants have been introduced, like .NET PE containing additional structures with intermediate code and metadata

• PE file structure: the DOS part (legacy) and the Windows Part





• DOS Header: only e\_magic, and e\_lfnew must be filled:

```
typedef struct _IMAGE_DOS_HEADER {
                                      // DOS .EXE header
                                      // Magic number -----
          e_magic;
   WORD
   WORD
          e_cblp;
                                      // Bytes on last page of file
                                      // Pages in file
   WORD
          e_cpi
          e_crlci
   WORD
                                      // Relocations
          e_cparhdr;
   WORD
                                      // Size of header in paragraphs
          e_minalloci
                                      // Minimum extra paragraphs needed
   WORD
   WORD
          e_maxalloc;
                                      // Maximum extra paragraphs needed
                                      // Initial (relative) SS value
   WORD
          e_ssi
   WORD
          e_spi
                                      // Initial SP value
          e_csum:
   WORD
                                      // Checksum
   WORD
          e_ip;
                                      // Initial IP value
   WORD
          e_csi
                                      // Initial (relative) (S value
          e_lfarlc;
   WORD
                                      // File address of relocation table
   WORD
          e ovnoi
                                      // Overlay number
          e_res[4];
   WORD
                                      // Reserved words
          e_oemid;
                                      // OEM identifier (for e_oeminfo)
   WORD
   WORD
          e oeminfo;
                                      // OEM information; e_oemid specific
          e_res2[10];
   WORD
                                      // Reserved words
          e_lfanew;
                                      // File address of new exe header -----> Points to the NT header
   LONG
  } IMAGE_DOS_HEADER, *PIMAGE_DOS_HEADER;
```

### • PE sections

- PE is divided into sections with different permissions
- Sections introduce a logical layout of the binary, that compilers/linkers can follow
- Dividing PE on section improves security: the code is isolated from the data
- HOWEVER:
  - if DEP is disabled, page without execution permission can still be executed
  - The section containing the Entry Point will always be treated as executable

• PE sections are defined by sections header

Name	Raw Addr.	Raw size	Virtual Addr.	Virtual Size	Characteristics	Ptr to Reloc.	Num. of Reloc.	Num. of Linenum.
	1000	13000	1000	12D26	60000020	0	0	0
>	14000	٨	13D26	٨	r-x			
	14000	6000	14000	5490	40000040	0	0	0
>	1A000	٨	19490	٨	r			
■ .data	1A000	1000	1A000	114C	C0000040	0	0	0
>	1B000	٨	1B14C	٨	rw-			
	1B000	1000	1C000	B80	40000040	0	0	0
>	1C000	٨	1CB80	^	r			
	1C000	3000	1D000	268A	42000040	0	0	0
>	1F000	٨	1F68A	٨	r			

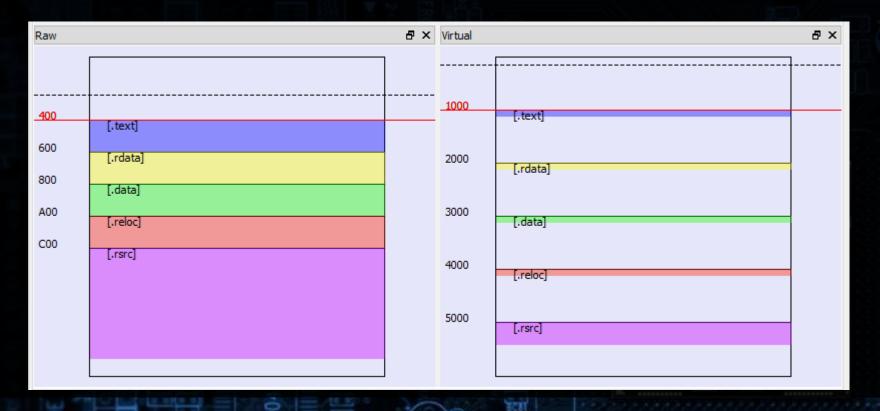
#### PE sections

- on the disk PE is stored in a raw format (the unit is defined by File Alignment)
- In memory PE is mapped to its virtual format (the unit is defined by Section Alignment) usually of the granularity of one page (0x1000)

Disasm: .rdata	General	DOS Hdr	Rich Hdr	File Hd	r Optional Hdr		
Offset	Name			Value	Value		
110	Entry Point			47A3			
114	Base of Code			1000			
118	Base of Data			1D000			
11C	Image Base			400000			
120	Section Align	ment		1000			
124	File Alignmer	nt		200			



Raw (file on the disk), Virtual (mapped in the memory)



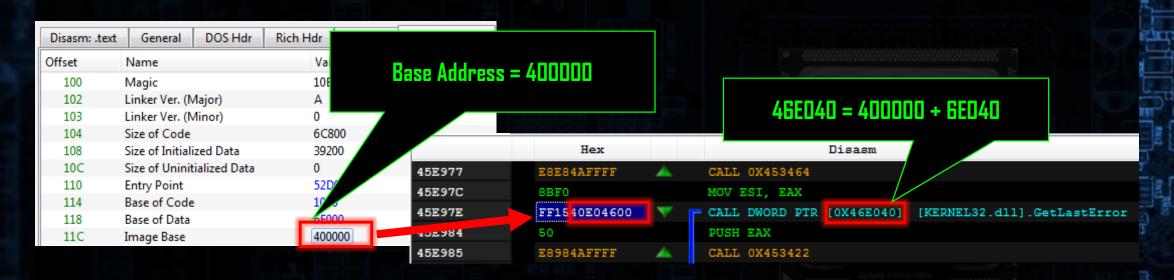
• The most information lies in data directories

4	Data Directory	Address	Size
F8	Export Directory	294000	1E62
100	Import Directory	296000	3600
108	Resource Directory	29C000	4B134
110	Exception Directory	0	0
118	Security Directory	0	0
120	Base Relocation Table	2E8000	16ED0
128	Debug Directory	0	0
130	Architecture Specific Data	0	0
138	RVA of GlobalPtr	0	0
140	TLS Directory	29B000	18
148	Load Configuration Directory	0	0
150	Bound Import Directory in headers	0	0
158	Import Address Table	2968D4	7A8
160	Delay Load Import Descriptors	0	0
168	.NET header	0	0

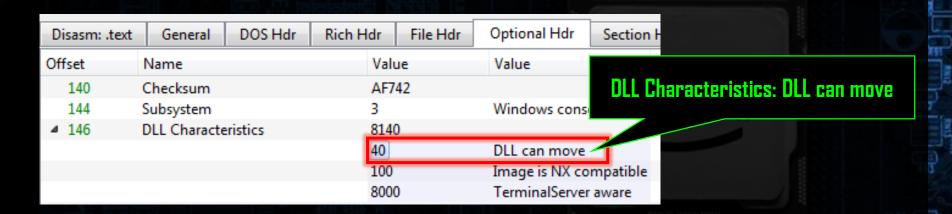
### Relocation Table

Disasm: .rdata	General DC	S Hdr Rich Hdr	File Hdr Opt	ional Hdr	Section Hdrs	Imports	Resources	BaseReloc.	
<ul><li>*</li></ul>									
Offset I	Page RVA	Block Size	Entries Count						
24A00 1	1000	94	46						
24A94 2	2000	74	36						
24B08	3000	70	34						
24B78 4	1000	11C	8A						
24C94 5	5000	A0	4C						
24D24 6	5000	7/	26						
Relocation Block	[ 70 entries ]								
Offset	Value	Туре	Offset from Page	Reloc RV	A				
24A08	300A	32 bit field	Α	100A					
24A0A 3	3043	32 bit field	43	1043					
24A0C 3	3055	32 bit field	55	1055					
24A0E 3	305B	32 bit field	5B	105B					
24A10 3	30C7	32 bit field	C7	10C7					
24A12 3	30F6	32 bit field	F6	10F6					
24A14 3	3119	32 bit field	119	1119					
24A16 3	3153	32 bit field	153	1153					
	318A	32 bit field	18A	118A					
24A1A 3	31D6	32 bit field	1D6	11D6					

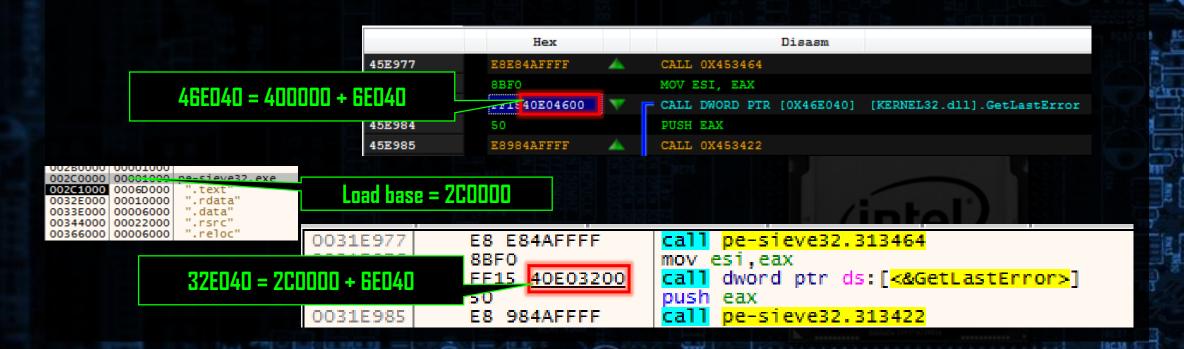
- 1. PE comes with some default base address in the header
- 2. All the absolute addresses inside the PE assume that it was loaded at this base



- In the past EXEs were usually loaded at their default base (only DLLs didn't have to)
- Nowadays most PEs load at a dynamic base (due to ASLR)
- A flag in the header determines if a dynamic base will be used



 If the PE was loaded at a different base than the one defined in the header, all its fields using absolute addresses must be recalculated (rebased)



•How does PE know where are the fields that needs to be rebased?

- •How does PE know **where** are the fields that needs to be **rebased**?
- •They are listed in the Relocation Table!

- Let's open one of our sample PEs in PE-bear and see the relocation table
- Check the code snippet to see how the relocation table is processed

Exercise time...

# Basics of a PE file: Imports & Exports

Most executables use some functions exported by other PEs (external libraries)

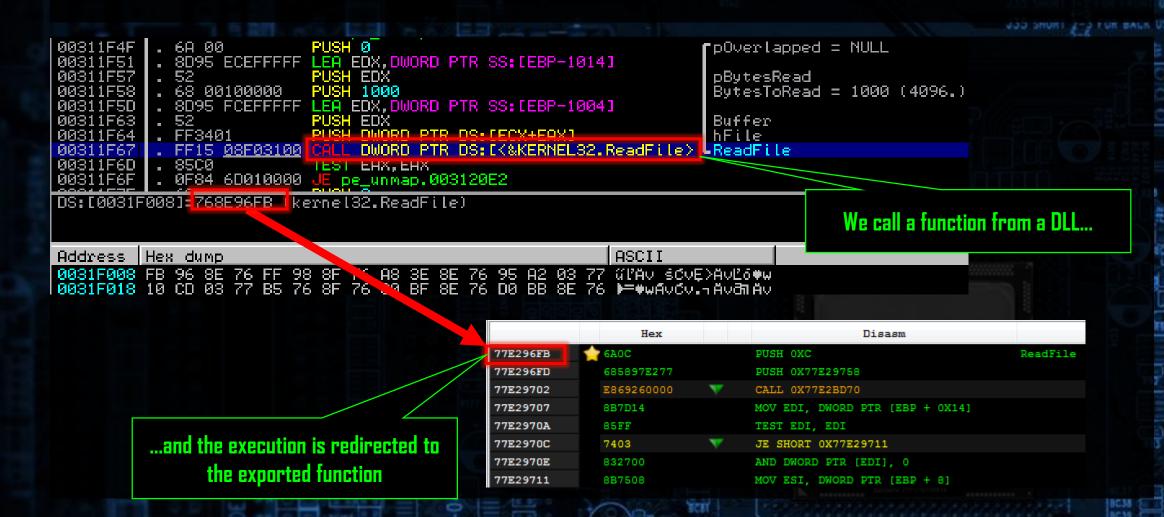
- 1. If we use a static library, the linker will automatically add the code of used functions into our PE
- 2. If we use a dynamic library (DLL), the used functions will be added to the Import Table of our PE, and dynamic linking will be done when the PE is loaded
- 3. Alternatively, we can load a DLL by ourselves using LoadLibrary and fetch the exported function via GetProcessAddress

• Export Table

				-1			me :	-	the s	
Disasm: .tex	t General	DOS Hdr	Rich Hdr	File Hdr	Optional Hdr	Section Hdrs	Exports	Imports	Reso	
+**										
Offset	Name	Name			Meaning					
B47C4	Characteri	stics	(	0						
B47C8	TimeDate9	Stamp		4CE78B54	sobota, 20	0.11.2010 08:48:	20 UTC			
B47CC	MajorVersion			0						
B47CE	•			0						
B47D0	Name			B8502	KERNEL32	2.dll				
B47D4	Base			1						
B47D8	NumberOfFunctions			54F						
B47DC	NumberOfNames			54F	F					
B47E0	AddressOfFunctions			B4FEC	FEC					
B47E4	AddressOf	Names		B6528	528					
B47E8	AddressOf	NameOrdinals	I	B7A64						
Exported Fund	ctions [ 1359	entries]								
Offset C	Ordinal	Function RVA	Name RV	/A Name			Forwarder			
B481C D	)	BBFFB	B85E3	AddRe	fActCtx					
B4820 E	1	36399	B85F0	AddSI	)ToBoundaryDes	scriptor				
B4824 F		BD00	B860B	AddSe	cureMemoryCa	cheCallback				
B4828 1	0 1	BEE06	B8628	AddVe	ctoredContinue	Handler	NTDLL.RtIAddV	ectoredContinu	eHandler	
B482C 1	1	BEE2A	B8643	AddVe	ctoredException	Handler	NTDLL.RtIAddV	ectoredExceptio	nHandler	
B4830 1	2 !	5DF86	B865F		Calendar Date			·		
B4834 1	3	AC328	B8672	AllocC						
B4838 1	4 9	97CA8	B867F	Allocat	eUserPhysicalPa	ages				

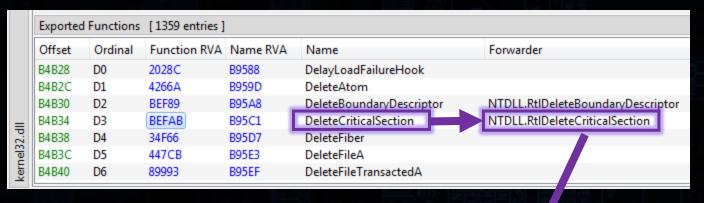
- 1. DLLs are libraries of functions for other PEs to use
- 2. An Export Table is a catalogue allowing to find and use a particular function

Offset	Ordinal	Function RVA	Name RVA	Name				
B56E0	3BE	60E73	BCF4F	ReadCor	ReadConsoleW			
B56E4	3BF	42C62	BCF5C	ReadDire	ectoryChangesW			
B56E8	3C0	496FB	BCF72	ReadFile				
B56EC	3C1	63D99	PCF7B		Hex		Disasm	
B56F0	3C2	31B14	BCF86	77E296FB	◆ 6A0C		PUSH OXC	ReadFil
B56F4	3C3	3C1CE	BCF96	77E296FD	685897E277		PUSH 0X77E29758	
B56F8	3C4	9851F	BCFA8			W		
B56FC	3C5	4CB4F	BCFC0	77E29702	E869260000	W	CALL 0X77E2BD70	
B5700	3C6	42D7C	BCFCC	77E29707	8B7D14		MOV EDI, DWORD PTR [EBP + 0X	.14]
B5704	3C7	40D25	BCFDC	77E2970A	85FF		TEST EDI, EDI	
B5708	3C8	A8CD5	BCFEC	77E2970C	7403	A.	JE SHORT 0X77E29711	
B570C	3C9	36644	BCFFC	77E2970E	832700		AND DWORD PTR [EDI], 0	
05.00		300.7	20.10	77E29711	887508		MOV ESI, DWORD PTR [EBP + 8]	



- 1. Functions can be exported by a name or by ordinal (a number)
- 2. Some exports can be forwarded (pointing to other functions, in other DLLs)

#### • Forwarded functions



Exported Fu	Exported Functions [1990 entries]								
Offset	Ordinal	Function RVA	Name RVA	Name					
3614C	2E6	556D1	3ECD1	RtlDeleteBoundaryDescriptor					
36150	2E7	59AC5	3ECED	RtlDeleteCriticalSection					
36154	2E8	5DD50	3ED06	RtlDeleteElementGenericTable					
36158	2E9	DC18	3ED23	RtIDeleteElementGenericTableAvI					
3615C	2EA	76E87	3ED43	RtlDeleteHashTable					
36160	2EB	B6994	3ED56	RtlDeleteNoSplay					
4			!!!						

	Disasm	Hint
i	🏫 MOV EDI, EDI	${\tt RtlDeleteCriticalSection}$
	PUSH EBP	
	MOV EBP, ESP	
L.	PUSH -2	
:	PUSH 0X77F10DE8	
	PUSH 0X77EDE0ED	

59AC5 59AC7 59AC8 59ACA 59ACC 59AD1

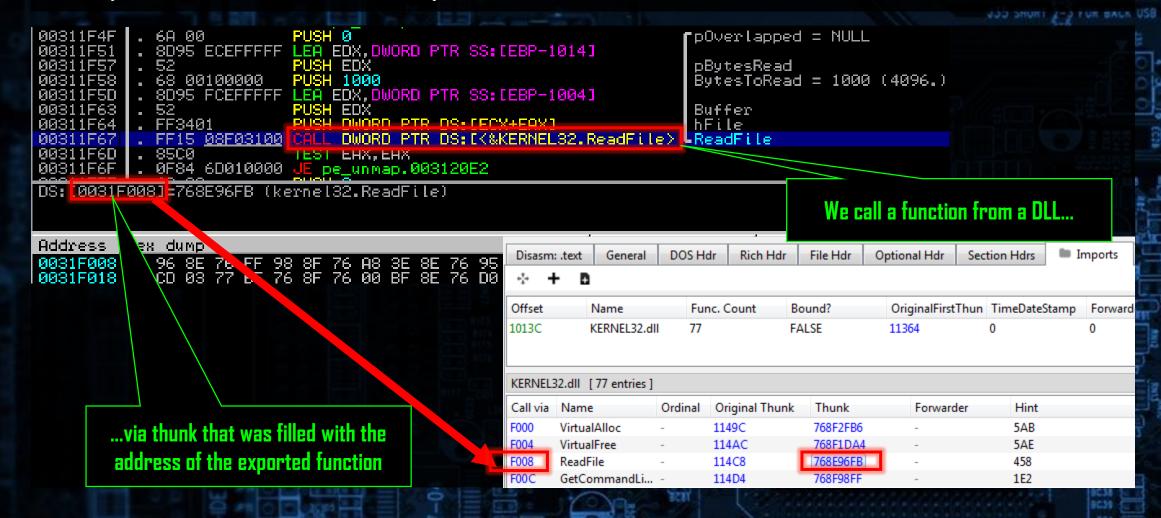
• Import Table

Disasm: .rd	lata General	DOS Hdr	Rich Hdr	File Hdr	Optional Ho	lr Se	ction Hdrs	Imports	Resources	BaseRel
Offset	Name	Func. Cour	nt Bound?	Orig	inalFirstThun	TimeD	ateStamp	Forwarder	NameRVA	FirstThunk
22474	KERNEL32.dll	93	FALSE	2309	С	0		0	23328	1D000
KERNEL32.dl	[ 93 entries ]									
Call via	Name	Ordinal	Original Thu	ınk Th	unk For	warder	Hint			
1D000	${\sf CreateDirectoryA}$	-	23214	232	214 -		C1			
1D004	CloseHandle	-	23228	232	228 -		8E			
1D008	GetLastError	-	23236	232	236 -		26A			
1D00C	OpenProcess	-	23246	232	246 -		408			
1D010	VirtualFree	-	23254	232	254 -		5AE			
1D014	CreateToolhelp	-	23262	232	.62 -		10A			
1D018	Module32First	-	2327E	232	?7E -		3DF			
1D01C	Module32Next	-	2328E	232	.8E -		3E1			
1D020	CreateFileA	-	2329E	232	.9E -		CE			
1D024	GetFileSize	-	232AC	232	AC -		254			
1D028	MapViewOfFile	-	232BA	232	2BA -		3DB			
1D02C	${\sf UnmapViewOfF}$	-	232CA	232	2CA -		593			
1D030	CreateFileMapp	-	232DC	232	DC -		CF			

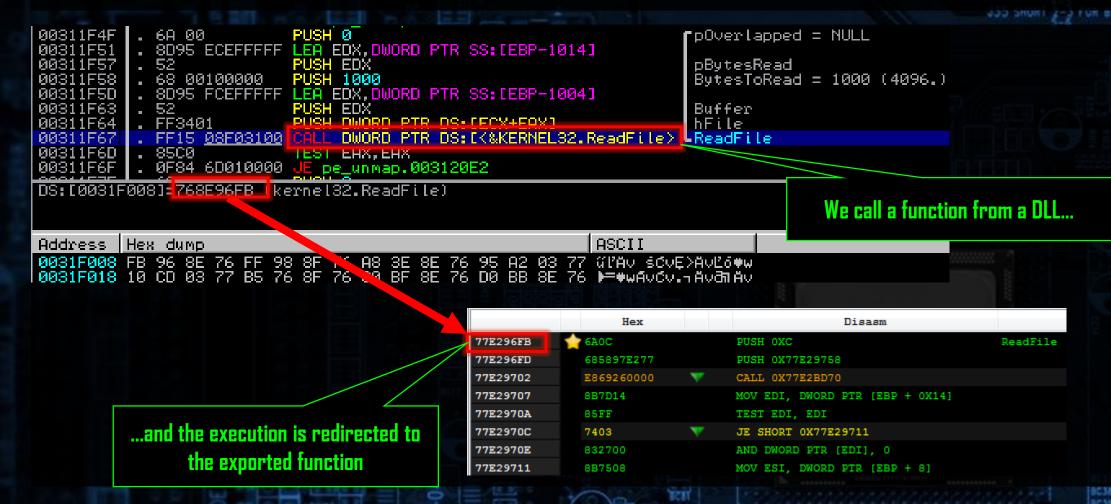
https://github.com/hasherezade/malware training vol1/blob/main/exercises/module1/lesson2 pe/pe snippets /imports load.h

- Dynamic linking is done when a PE is loaded
- The loader walks through the Import Table of the PE
  - loads needed DLLs
  - searches the imported functions in the export table of the DLL
  - fills the thunks via which the PE is going to make calls to the exported functions with appropriate addresses

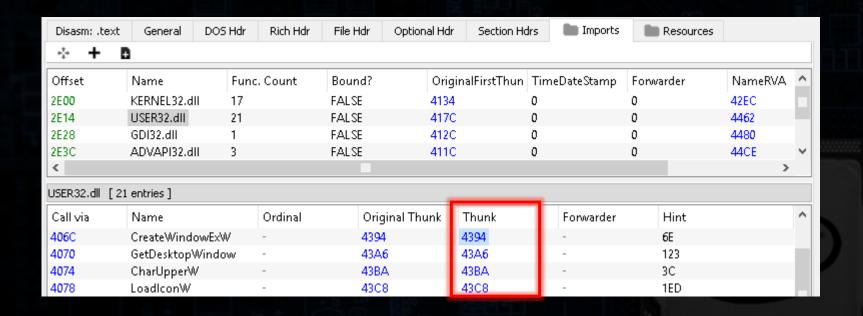
# Basics of a PE file: Imports & Exports



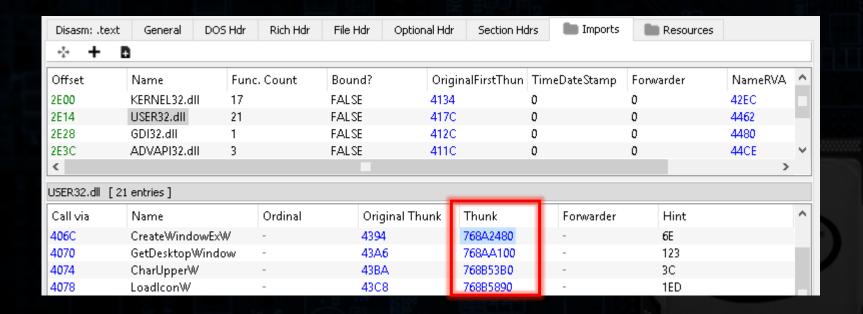
# Basics of a PE file: Imports & Exports

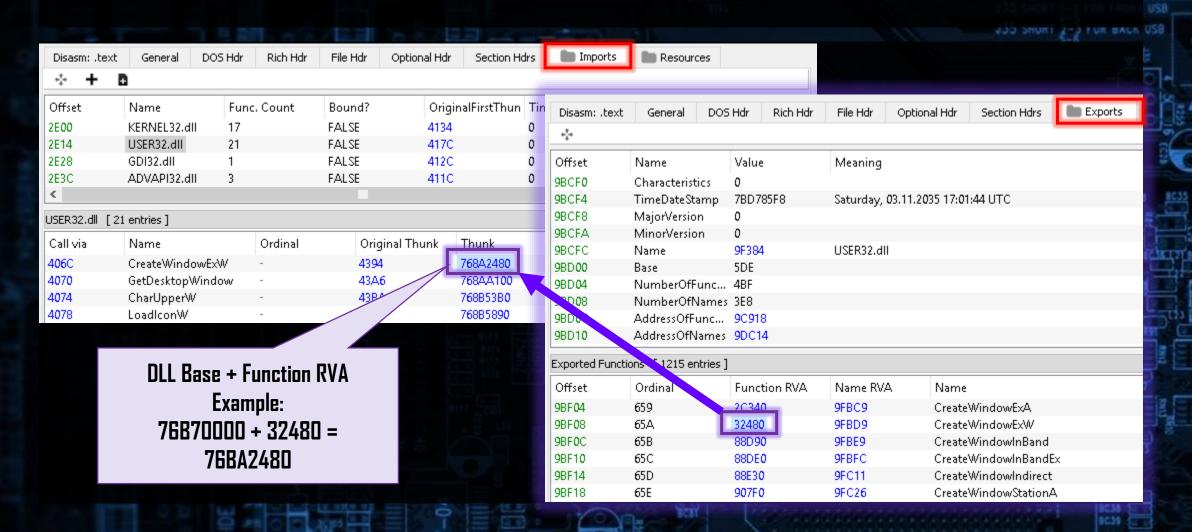


• Raw: before filling imports

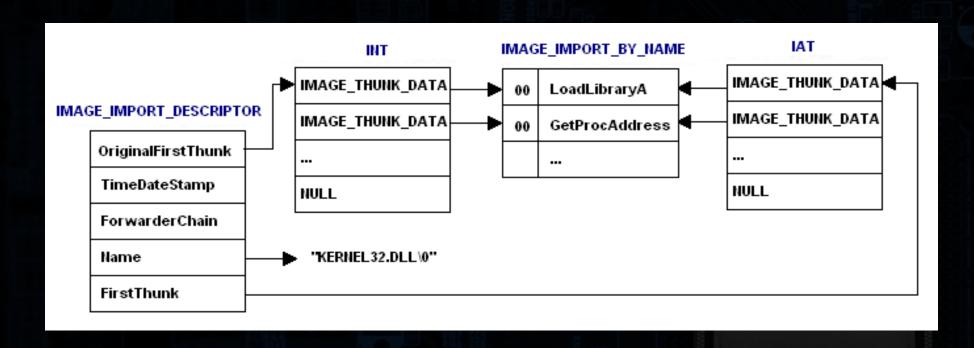


Loaded: after filling imports – thunks are filled with addresses of exported functions





• Import Table: structure



- Let's open one of our sample PEs in PE-bear and see the import table. Find the corresponding DLLs and their exports.
- Check the code snippets to see how the import and export tables are processed

Exercise time...



- Compile the given code of a custom PE loader and get familiar with it
  - <a href="https://github.com/hasherezade/malware\_training\_vol1/tree/main/exercises/module1/lesson2">https://github.com/hasherezade/malware\_training\_vol1/tree/main/exercises/module1/lesson2</a> pe