

Cryptographic Algorithms for Data Security: AES & Blowfish Overview

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Introduction to Symmetric Key Cryptography

A cryptographic technique where the **same key** is used for both **encryption and decryption**.

Also known as **Secret Key Cryptography**.

Commonly used in applications requiring **fast and efficient encryption** (e.g., AES, Blowfish).

How It Works

- A **single key** is shared between sender and receiver.
- Both parties use this key to **encrypt and decrypt** data.

- Example flow:

Plaintext + Key →  Encryption → Ciphertext

Ciphertext + Same Key →  Decryption → Plaintext

Blowfish Algorithm

Inventor: Bruce Schneier (1993)

Purpose: Alternative to DES — faster, stronger, and not patented

Type: Symmetric Block Cipher

blockSize: 64-bits

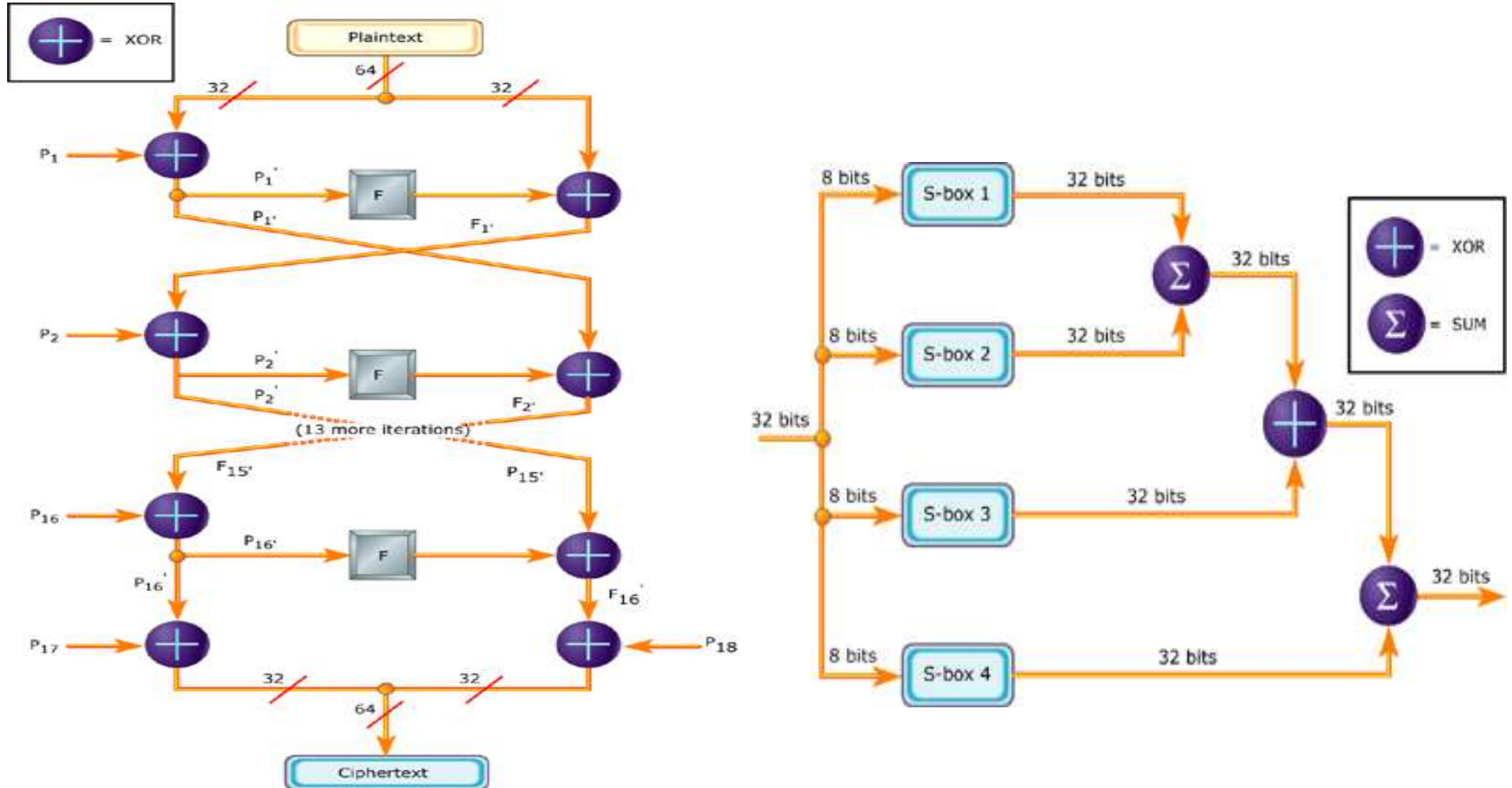
keySize: 32-bits to 448-bits variable size

Number of subkeys: 18 [P-array]

Number of rounds: 16

number of substitution boxes: 4 [each having 512 entries of 32 bits each]

Schematic of Blowfish Algorithm



Step 1: Generation of subkeys

- **18 subkeys** (P[0] to P[17]) are required.
- Stored in a **P-array**, each of **32 bits**.
- These subkeys are used in **both encryption and decryption** (same for both directions).

Now each of the subkey is changed with respect to the input key as:

P[0] = P[0] XOR 1st 32-bits of input key
P[1] = P[1] XOR 2nd 32-bits of input key.
.
.
.
P[i] = P[i] XOR (i+1)th 32-bits of input key
(roll over to 1st 32-bits depending on the key length).
.
.
.
P[17] = P[17] XOR 18th 32-bits of input key
(roll over to 1st 32-bits depending on key length)

32-bit hexadecimal representation of initial values of sub-keys

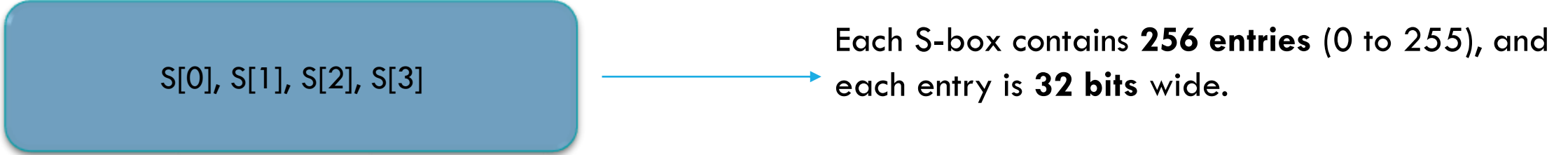
P[0]	:	243f6a88	P[9]	:	38d01377
P[1]	:	85a308d3	P[10]	:	be5466cf
P[2]	:	13198a2e	P[11]	:	34e90c6c
P[3]	:	03707344	P[12]	:	c0ac29b7
P[4]	:	a4093822	P[13]	:	c97c50dd
P[5]	:	299f31d0	P[14]	:	3f84d5b5
P[6]	:	082efa98	P[15]	:	b5470917
P[7]	:	ec4e6c89	P[16]	:	9216d5d9
P[8]	:	452821e6	P[17]	:	8979fb1b

The resultant P-array holds 18 subkeys that is used during the entire encryption process

⚙️ Step 2: Initialize Substitution Boxes (S-boxes)

- **S-boxes (Substitution boxes)** are used in each encryption round to perform **complex substitutions** on the data.
- Blowfish uses **4 S-boxes**:

Blowfish uses **4 S-boxes**:



S[0], S[1], S[2], S[3]

Each S-box contains **256 entries** (0 to 255), and each entry is **32 bits** wide.

Usage in Encryption & Decryption

- These S-boxes are used in the **F-function** of Blowfish during **each of the 16 rounds**.
- The same S-boxes are used for both **encryption and decryption**, ensuring reversibility.

Step 3: Encryption

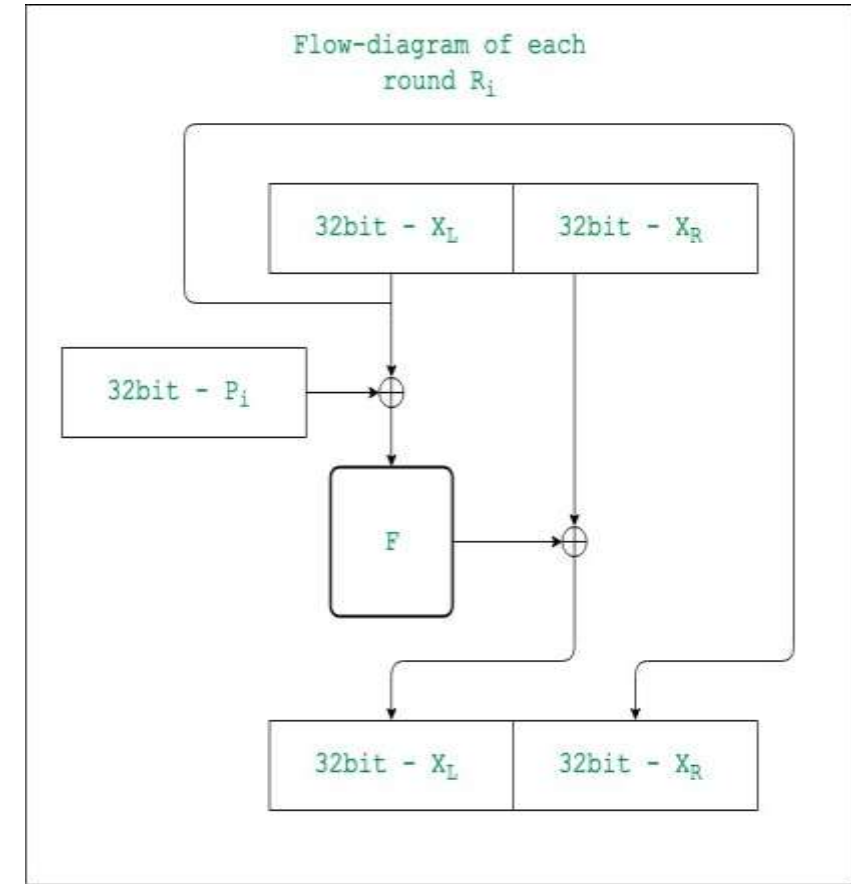
The encryption function consists of two parts:

a. Rounds: The encryption consists of 16 rounds with each round(R_i) taking inputs the plaintext(P.T.) from previous round and corresponding subkey(P_i). The description of each round is as follows

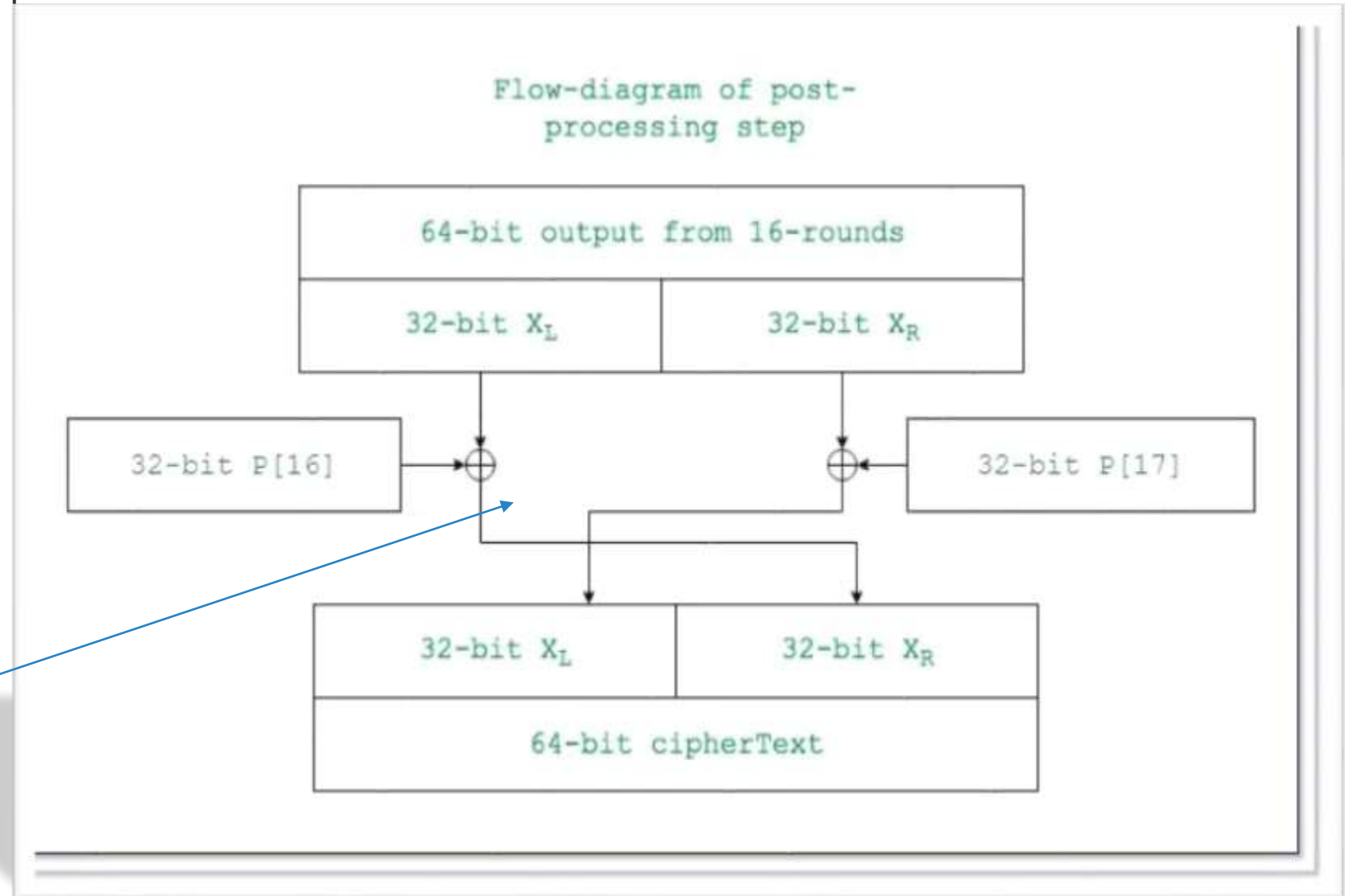
Here, the function "add" is addition modulo 2^{32} .

Decryption of Blowfish

In Blowfish, decryption is carried out by reversing the encryption process. Therefore, everything reverses until the ciphertext is converted back into plaintext.



b. Post-processing: The output after the 16 rounds is processed as follows:



Swap L and R

Advantages of Blowfish

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graph LR; A(Advantages of Blowfish) --- B(◆ More Efficient than DES and IDEA:); A --- C(◆ Efficient on Large Microprocessors:); A --- D(compact); A --- E(◆ Secure Remote Access:); B --- F(only XOR and ADD operation); B --- G(Variable key length); D --- H(Executes in less memory);
```

◆ More Efficient than DES and IDEA:

only XOR and ADD operation

Variable key length

◆ Efficient on Large Microprocessors:

compact

Executes in less memory

◆ Secure Remote Access:

Overview

- Developed by **NIST** in **2001**.

- **Block cipher** used to **secure data** by transforming it into an unreadable format.

- **Widely adopted** due to its strength and reliability



Advanced Encryption Standard (AES)

Key Features

- **Key Sizes:** 128, 192, or 256 bits.

- **Block Size:** 128 bits (input and output).

- **Type:** Substitution-Permutation Network (SPN).

- **Rounds:**

- 10 rounds for 128-bit key
- 12 rounds for 192-bit key
- 14 rounds for 256-bit key

💡 Why AES?

- **Much stronger** than DES & 3DES.

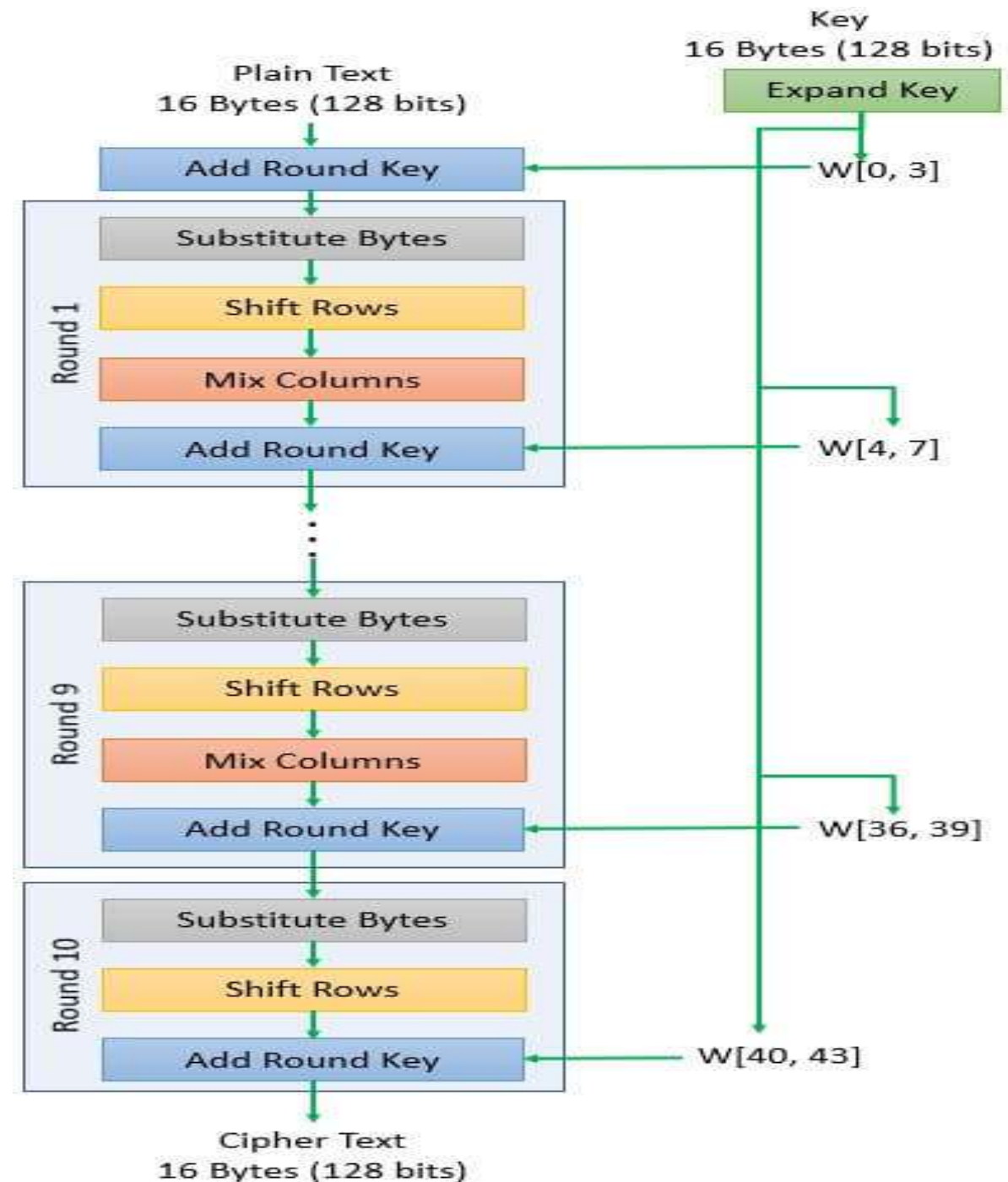
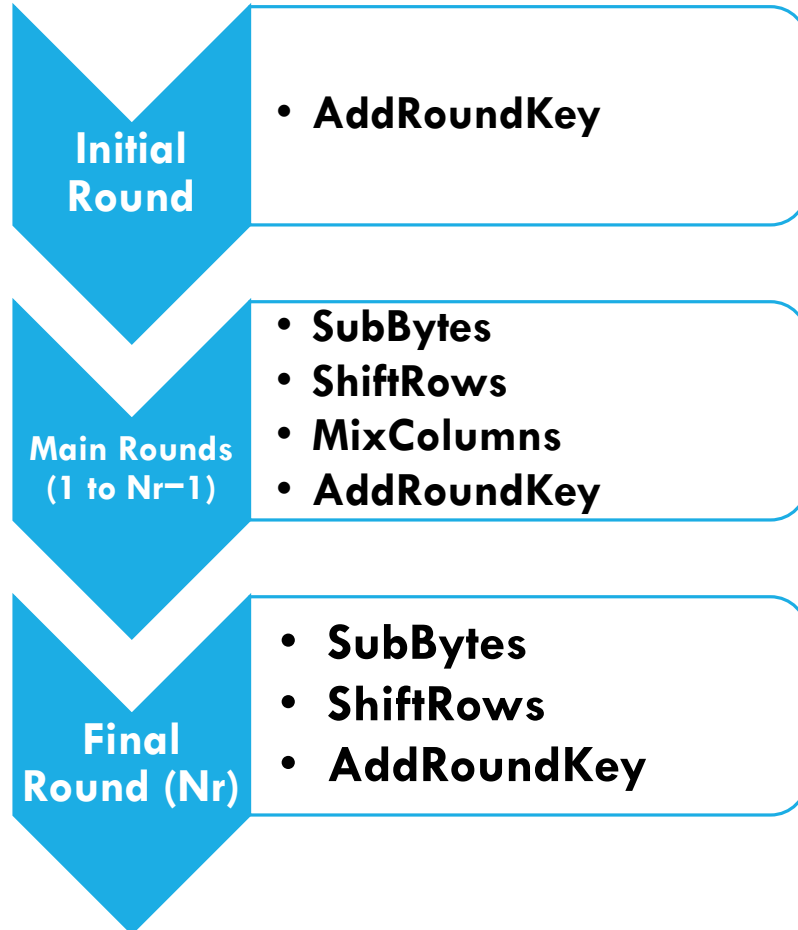
- **Efficient** for both hardware and software.

- **Global standard** for:

- Internet security
- File encryption
- Securing sensitive data

Schematic of AES structure

The AES algorithm can be broken into three phases: the initial round, the main rounds, and the final round.



AES Key Schedule

- **Key Schedule** generates a set of **round keys** from the initial secret key.
- The number of **round keys** = $Nr + 1$:
- 11 keys for 128-bit
- 13 keys for 192-bit
- 15 keys for 256-bit

11 subkeys? But there are only 10 rounds !
That's because first key K_0 is XOR'd with the plaintext *before* the first round.

- Round keys are used in the **AddRoundKey** step of each round.

AES Key Schedule for 128 bits

$$K0 = [w0, w1, w2, w3]$$

Then each new subkey depends on the previous subkey. To compute

$$K1 = [w4, w5, w6, w7]$$

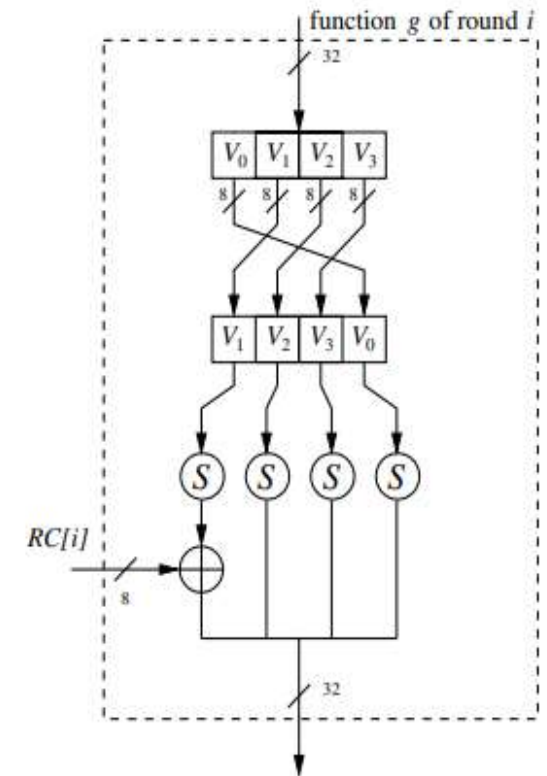
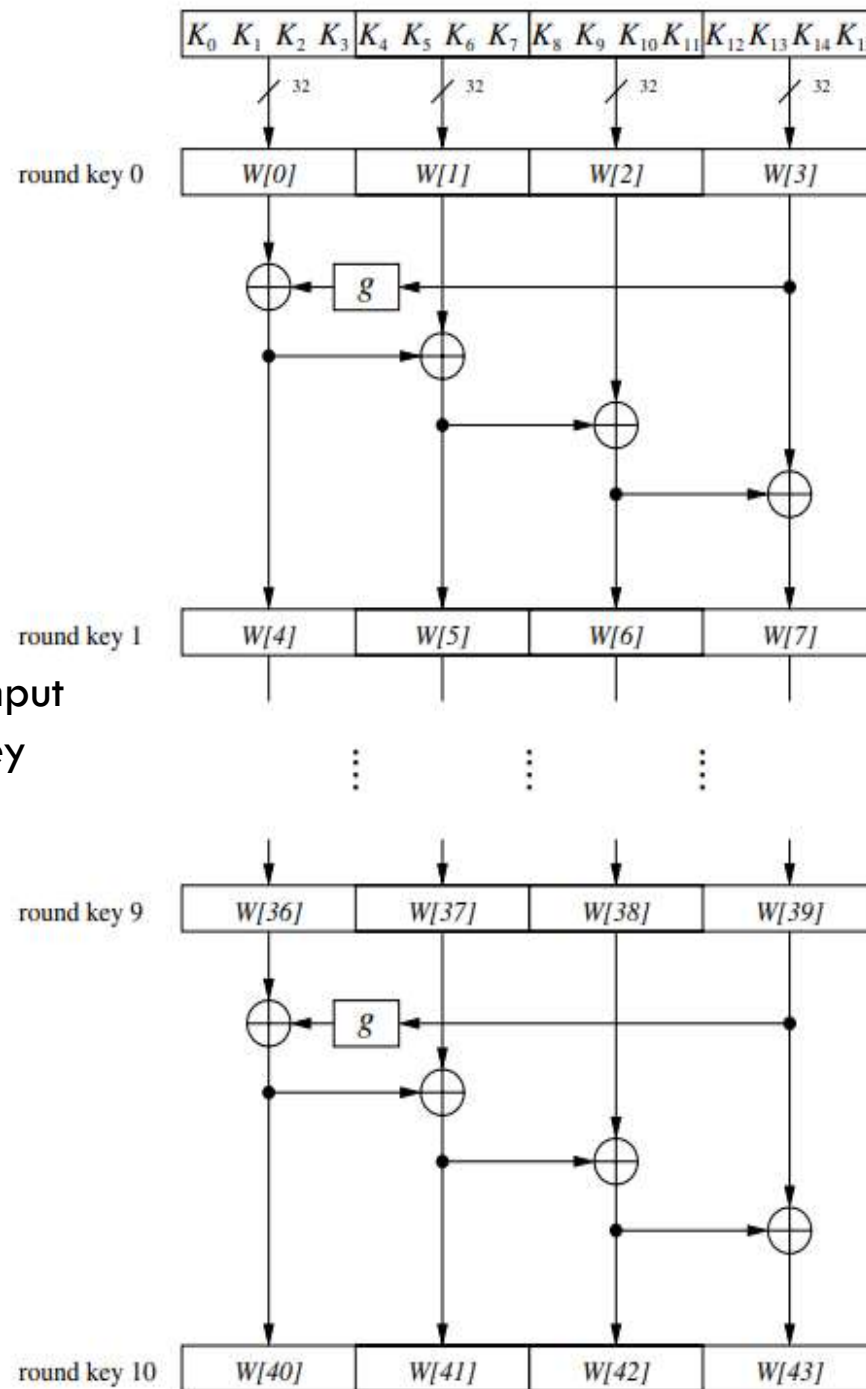
the algorithm the following:

$$W[4i] = W[4(i-1)] + g(W[4i-1]).$$

Here $g()$ is a nonlinear function with a four-byte input and output. The remaining three words of a subkey are computed recursively as:

$$W[4i+j] = W[4i+j-1] + W[4(i-1)+j],$$

where $i = 1, \dots, 10$ and $j = 1, 2, 3$. The function $g()$ rotates its four input bytes



How g() function work

It consists of 3 steps:

RotWord:

Takes a 4-byte word and rotates it left by 1 byte.

Example: Input = [a0, a1, a2, a3]

Output = [a1, a2, a3, a0]

SubWord

Applies the AES S-box to each byte of the word.

Introduces non-linearity and confusion.

Rcon

XORs the result with a round constant (Rcon).

Ensures each round key is uniquely dependent on the round number.

Values of Rcon (for AES-128):

$$\text{RC}[1] = x^0 = (00000001)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[2] = x^1 = (00000010)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[3] = x^2 = (00000100)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[4] = x^3 = (00001000)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[5] = x^4 = (00010000)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[6] = x^5 = (00100000)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[7] = x^6 = (01000000)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[8] = x^7 = (10000000)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[9] = x^8 = (00011011)_2$$

$$\text{RC}[10] = x^9 = (00110110)_2$$

AES Example - The first Roundkey

- Key in Hex (128 bits): 54 68 61 74 73 20 6D 79 20 4B 75 6E 67 20 46 75
- $w[0] = (54, 68, 61, 74)$, $w[1] = (73, 20, 6D, 79)$, $w[2] = (20, 4B, 75, 6E)$, $w[3] = (67, 20, 46, 75)$
- $g(w[3])$:
 - circular byte left shift of $w[3]$: (20, 46, 75, 67)
 - Byte Substitution (S-Box): (B7, 5A, 9D, 85)
 - Adding round constant (01, 00, 00, 00) gives: $g(w[3]) = (B6, 5A, 9D, 85)$
- $w[4] = w[0] \oplus g(w[3]) = (E2, 32, FC, F1)$:

0101 0100	0110 1000	0110 0001	0111 0100
1011 0110	0101 1010	1001 1101	1000 0101
1110 0010	0011 0010	1111 1100	1111 0001
E2	32	FC	F1

- $w[5] = w[4] \oplus w[1] = (91, 12, 91, 88)$, $w[6] = w[5] \oplus w[2] = (B1, 59, E4, E6)$,
 $w[7] = w[6] \oplus w[3] = (D6, 79, A2, 93)$
- first roundkey: E2 32 FC F1 91 12 91 88 B1 59 E4 E6 D6 79 A2 93

AES Example - Input (128 bit key and message)

Key in English: **Thats my Kung Fu** (16 ASCII characters, 1 byte each)

Translation into Hex:

T	h	a	t	s		m	y		K	u	n	g		F	u
54	68	61	74	73	20	6D	79	20	4B	75	6E	67	20	46	75

Key in Hex (128 bits): **54 68 61 74 73 20 6D 79 20 4B 75 6E 67 20 46 75**

Plaintext in English: **Two One Nine Two** (16 ASCII characters, 1 byte each)

Translation into Hex:

T	w	o		O	n	e		N	i	n	e		T	w	o
54	77	6F	20	4F	6E	65	20	4E	69	6E	65	20	54	77	6F

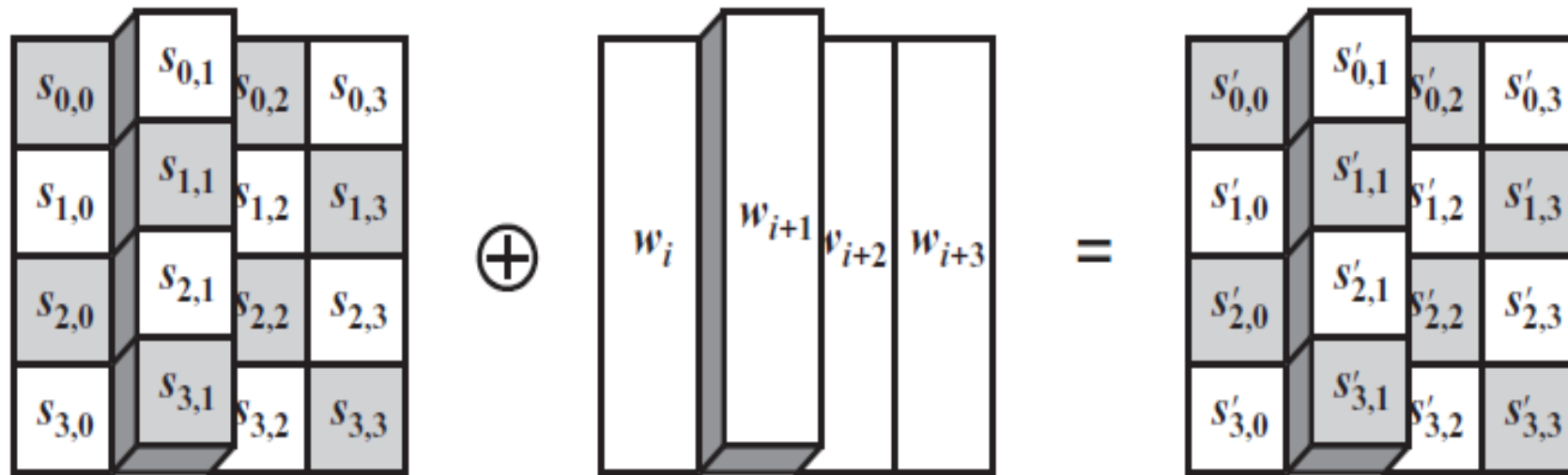
Plaintext in Hex (128 bits): **54 77 6F 20 4F 6E 65 20 4E 69 6E 65 20 54 77 6F**

AES Example - All RoundKeys

- Round 0: 54 68 61 74 73 20 6D 79 20 4B 75 6E 67 20 46 75
- Round 1: E2 32 FC F1 91 12 91 88 B1 59 E4 E6 D6 79 A2 93
- Round 2: 56 08 20 07 C7 1A B1 8F 76 43 55 69 A0 3A F7 FA
- Round 3: D2 60 0D E7 15 7A BC 68 63 39 E9 01 C3 03 1E FB
- Round 4: A1 12 02 C9 B4 68 BE A1 D7 51 57 A0 14 52 49 5B
- Round 5: B1 29 3B 33 05 41 85 92 D2 10 D2 32 C6 42 9B 69
- Round 6: BD 3D C2 B7 B8 7C 47 15 6A 6C 95 27 AC 2E 0E 4E
- Round 7: CC 96 ED 16 74 EA AA 03 1E 86 3F 24 B2 A8 31 6A
- Round 8: 8E 51 EF 21 FA BB 45 22 E4 3D 7A 06 56 95 4B 6C
- Round 9: BF E2 BF 90 45 59 FA B2 A1 64 80 B4 F7 F1 CB D8
- Round 10: 28 FD DE F8 6D A4 24 4A CC C0 A4 FE 3B 31 6F 26

AddRoundKey

In this operation, the 128 bits of **State** are bitwise XORed with the 128 bits of the round key. Here is an example where the first matrix is State, and the second matrix is the round key.



$$\begin{pmatrix} 54 & 4F & 4E & 20 \\ 77 & 6E & 69 & 54 \\ 6F & 65 & 6E & 77 \\ 20 & 20 & 65 & 6F \end{pmatrix} \oplus \begin{pmatrix} 54 & 73 & 20 & 67 \\ 68 & 20 & 4B & 20 \\ 61 & 6D & 75 & 46 \\ 74 & 79 & 6E & 75 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 00 & 3C & 6E & 47 \\ 1F & 4E & 22 & 74 \\ 0E & 08 & 1B & 31 \\ 54 & 59 & 0B & 1A \end{pmatrix}$$

e.g., $69 \oplus 4B = 22$

$$\begin{array}{r} 0110 \ 1001 \\ 0100 \ 1011 \\ \hline 0010 \ 0010 \end{array}$$

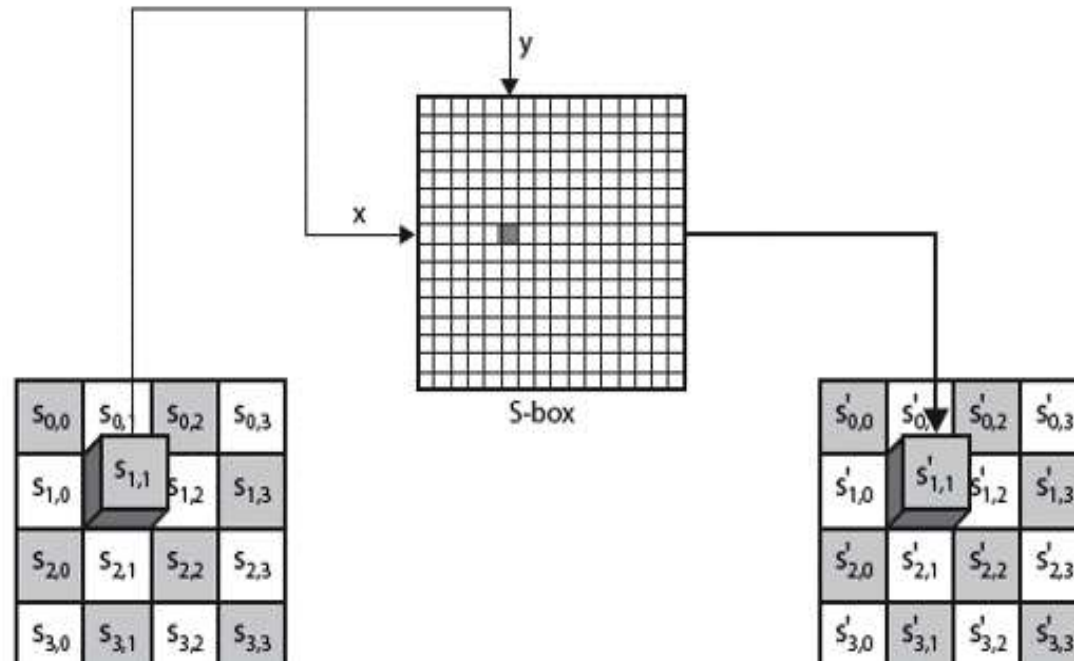
SubBytes

- **SubBytes** is a **nonlinear substitution** step.
- Each byte in the **state matrix** is replaced using the **AES S-Box**.

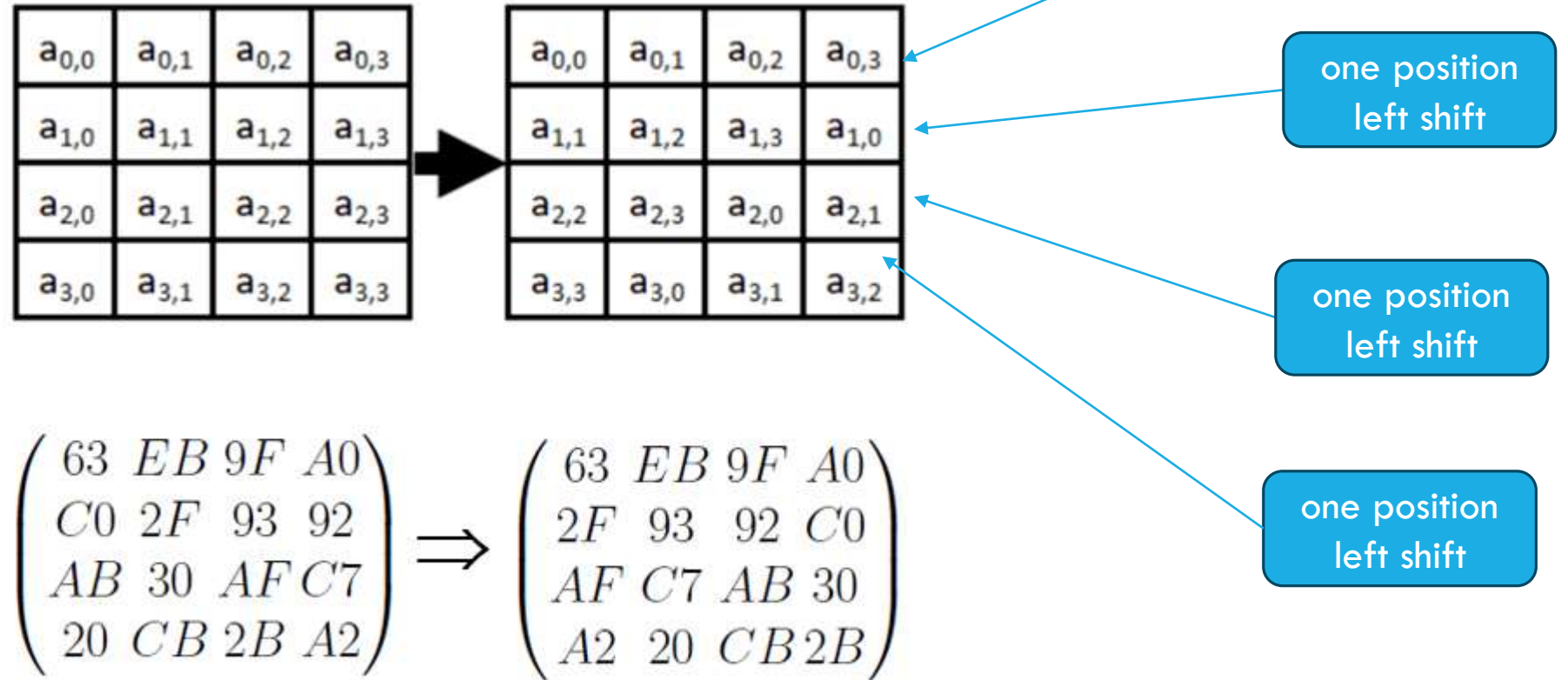
e.g.:

$$\text{state} = \begin{pmatrix} 00 & 3C & 6E & 47 \\ 1F & 4E & 22 & 74 \\ 0E & 08 & 1B & 31 \\ 54 & 59 & 0B & 1A \end{pmatrix} \Rightarrow \text{S_box}(\text{State}) = \begin{pmatrix} 63 & EB & 9F & A0 \\ C0 & 2F & 93 & 92 \\ AB & 30 & AF & C7 \\ 20 & CB & 2B & A2 \end{pmatrix}$$

- The byte (e.g., 6E) is split into:
 - **Row** = 6 (first 4 bits)
 - **Column** = E (last 4 bits)
- The substitution value is taken from **S-Box[6][E] = 9F**.



ShiftRows



MixColumns

a linear mixing operation which multiplies fixed matrix against current State
Matrix:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 02 & 03 & 01 & 01 \\ 01 & 02 & 03 & 01 \\ 01 & 01 & 02 & 03 \\ 03 & 01 & 01 & 02 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} s_{0,0} & s_{0,1} & s_{0,2} & s_{0,3} \\ s_{1,0} & s_{1,1} & s_{1,2} & s_{1,3} \\ s_{2,0} & s_{2,1} & s_{2,2} & s_{2,3} \\ s_{3,0} & s_{3,1} & s_{3,2} & s_{3,3} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} s'_{0,0} & s'_{0,1} & s'_{0,2} & s'_{0,3} \\ s'_{1,0} & s'_{1,1} & s'_{1,2} & s'_{1,3} \\ s'_{2,0} & s'_{2,1} & s'_{2,2} & s'_{2,3} \\ s'_{3,0} & s'_{3,1} & s'_{3,2} & s'_{3,3} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$s'_{0,j} = (2 \cdot s_{0,j}) \oplus (3 \cdot s_{1,j}) \oplus s_{2,j} \oplus s_{3,j}$$

$$s'_{1,j} = s_{0,j} \oplus (2 \cdot s_{1,j}) \oplus (3 \cdot s_{2,j}) \oplus s_{3,j}$$

$$s'_{2,j} = s_{0,j} \oplus s_{1,j} \oplus (2 \cdot s_{2,j}) \oplus (3 \cdot s_{3,j})$$

$$s'_{3,j} = (3 \cdot s_{0,j}) \oplus s_{1,j} \oplus s_{2,j} \oplus (2 \cdot s_{3,j})$$

Unlike standard matrix multiplication, MixColumns performs matrix multiplication as per Galois Field (2^8).

e.g.:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 02 & 03 & 01 & 01 \\ 01 & 02 & 03 & 01 \\ 01 & 01 & 02 & 03 \\ 03 & 01 & 01 & 02 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 63 & EB & 9F & A0 \\ 2F & 93 & 92 & C0 \\ AF & C7 & AB & 30 \\ A2 & 20 & CB & 2B \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} BA & 84 & E8 & 1B \\ 75 & A4 & 8D & 40 \\ F4 & 8D & 06 & 7D \\ 7A & 32 & 0E & 5D \end{pmatrix}$$

AES Example - Add Roundkey, Round 1

- State Matrix and Roundkey No.1 Matrix:

$$\begin{pmatrix} BA & 84 & E8 & 1B \\ 75 & A4 & 8D & 40 \\ F4 & 8D & 06 & 7D \\ 7A & 32 & 0E & 5D \end{pmatrix} \quad \begin{pmatrix} E2 & 91 & B1 & D6 \\ 32 & 12 & 59 & 79 \\ FC & 91 & E4 & A2 \\ F1 & 88 & E6 & 93 \end{pmatrix}$$

- XOR yields new State Matrix

$$\begin{pmatrix} 58 & 15 & 59 & CD \\ 47 & B6 & D4 & 39 \\ 08 & 1C & E2 & DF \\ 8B & BA & E8 & CE \end{pmatrix}$$

- AES output after Round 1: 58 47 08 8B 15 B6 1C BA 59 D4 E2 E8 CD 39 DF CE

AES Example - Round 10

- after Substitute Byte and after Shift Rows:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 01 & 3A & 8C & 21 \\ 33 & 3E & B0 & E2 \\ 3D & B8 & 8E & 04 \\ BC & 4D & 1C & A7 \end{pmatrix} \qquad \begin{pmatrix} 01 & 3A & 8C & 21 \\ 3E & B0 & E2 & 33 \\ 8E & 04 & 3D & B8 \\ A7 & BC & 4D & 1C \end{pmatrix}$$

- after Roundkey (Attention: no Mix columns in last round):

$$\begin{pmatrix} 29 & 57 & 40 & 1A \\ C3 & 14 & 22 & 02 \\ 50 & 20 & 99 & D7 \\ 5F & F6 & B3 & 3A \end{pmatrix}$$

- ciphertext: 29 C3 50 5F 57 14 20 F6 40 22 99 B3 1A 02 D7 3A

AES Block Cipher

The AES Decryption Algorithm:

❑ AddRoundKey:

Add Roundkey transformation is identical to the forward add round key transformation, because the XOR operation is its own inverse.

❑ Inverse SubBytes:

This operation can be performed using the inverse S-Box. It is read identically to the S-Box matrix.

❑ InvShiftRows:

Inverse Shift Rows performs the circular shifts in the opposite direction for each of the last three rows, with a one-byte circular right shift for the second row, and so on.

❑ InvMixColumns:

The inverse mix column transformation is defined by the following matrix multiplication in Galois Field (2^8):

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0E & 0B & 0D & 09 \\ 09 & 0E & 0B & 0D \\ 0D & 09 & 0E & 0B \\ 0B & 0D & 09 & 0E \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} s_{0,0} & s_{0,1} & s_{0,2} & s_{0,3} \\ s_{1,0} & s_{1,1} & s_{1,2} & s_{1,3} \\ s_{2,0} & s_{2,1} & s_{2,2} & s_{2,3} \\ s_{3,0} & s_{3,1} & s_{3,2} & s_{3,3} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} s'_{0,0} & s'_{0,1} & s'_{0,2} & s'_{0,3} \\ s'_{1,0} & s'_{1,1} & s'_{1,2} & s'_{1,3} \\ s'_{2,0} & s'_{2,1} & s'_{2,2} & s'_{2,3} \\ s'_{3,0} & s'_{3,1} & s'_{3,2} & s'_{3,3} \end{bmatrix}$$

Electronic Code Book (ECB)

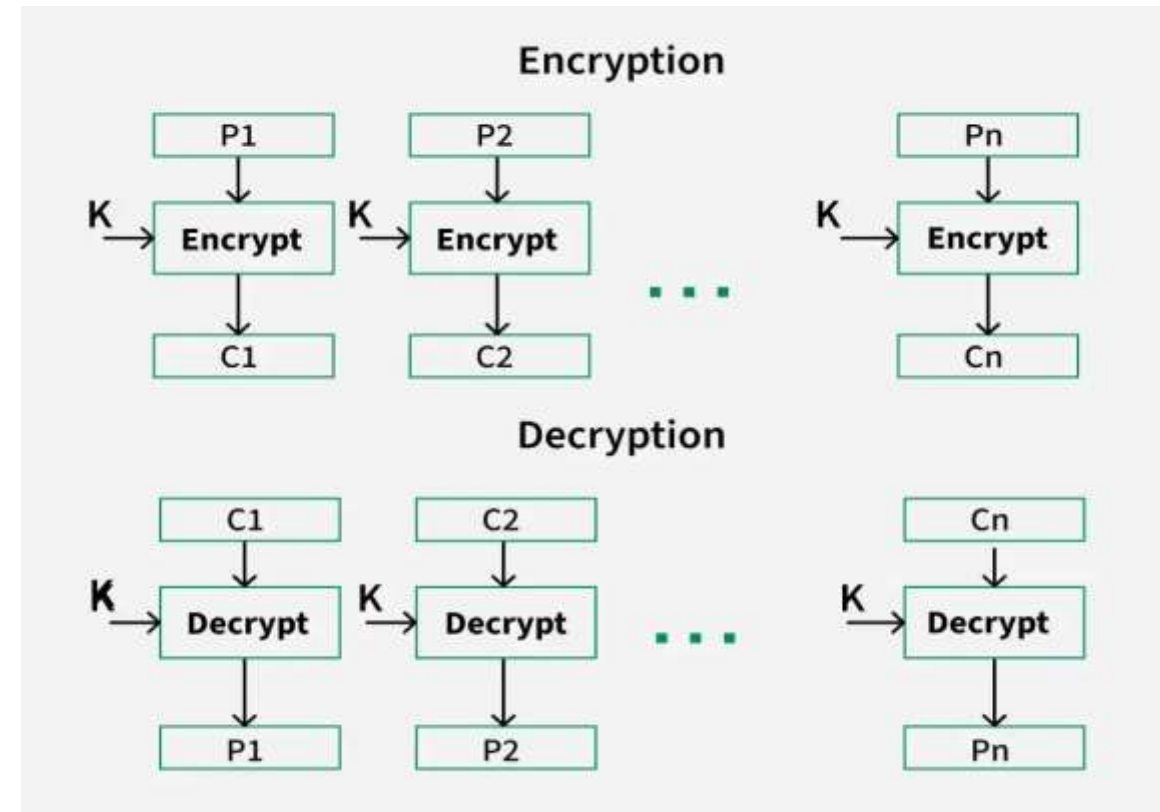
- Simplest block cipher mode.
- Each block encrypted **independently**

Encryption:

$$y_i = e_k(x_i) \quad i \geq 1$$

Decryption:

$$x_i = e_k^{-1}(y_i) \quad i \geq 1$$



Cipher block chaining mode (CBC):

Converts block cipher into self-synchronizing stream cipher.

Encrypts IV, then XORs with plaintext

Let $e()$ be a block cipher of block size b ; let x_i and y_i be bit strings of length b ; and IV be a nonce of length b .

Encryption(first block):

$$y_1 = e_k(x_1 \oplus IV) \quad i \geq 1$$

Encryption (general block):

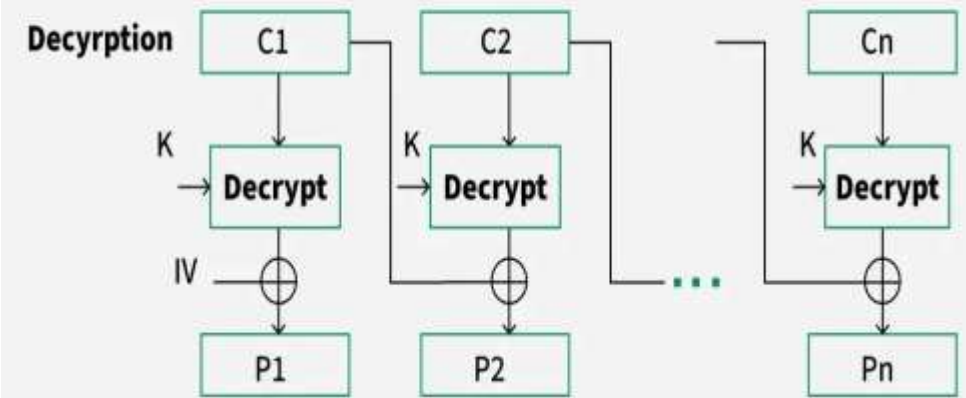
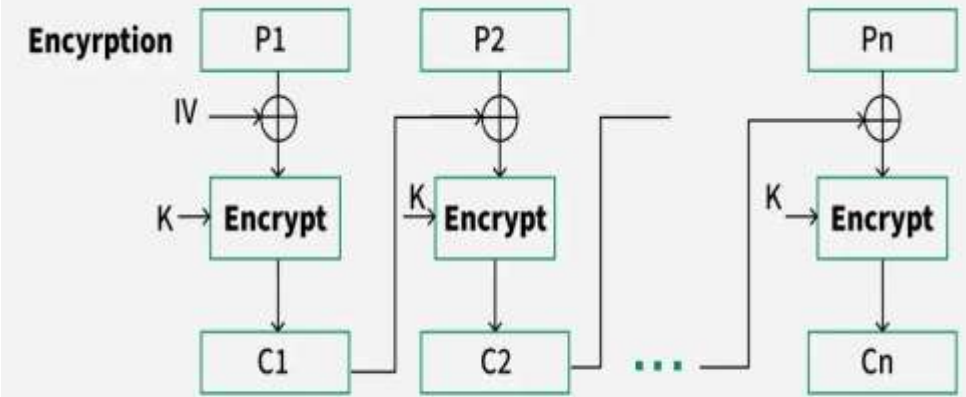
$$y_i = e_k(x_i \oplus y_{i-1}) \quad i \geq 2$$

Decryption (first block):

$$x_1 = e_k^{-1}(y_1) \oplus IV$$

Decryption (general block):

$$x_i = e_k^{-1}(y_i) \oplus y_{i-1} \quad i \geq 2$$



Cipher feedback mode (CFB):

- Each plaintext block is XORed with the previous **ciphertext block**.
- **IV (Initialization Vector)** is used for the first block.

Let $e()$ be a block cipher of block size b ; let x_i and y_i be bit strings of length b ; and IV be a nonce of length b .

Encryption(first block):

$$y_1 = e_k(IV) \text{ xor } x_1$$

Encryption (general block):

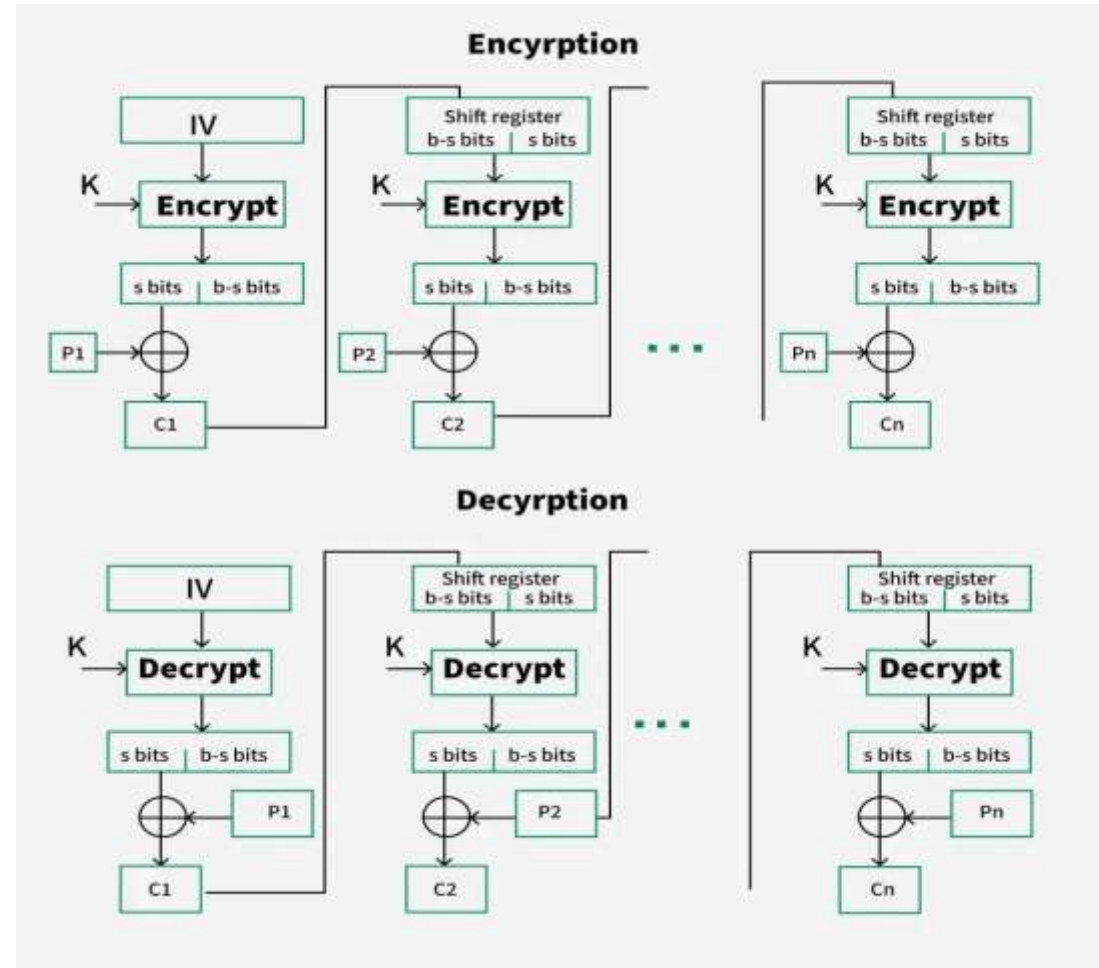
$$y_i = e_k(y_{i-1}) \text{ xor } x_i \quad i \geq 2$$

Decryption (first block):

$$x_1 = e_k(IV) \text{ xor } y_1$$

Decryption (general block):

$$x_i = e_k(y_{i-1}) \text{ xor } y_i \quad i \geq 2$$



Output feedback mode (OFB):

Uses encrypted output as feedback instead of ciphertext.

Entire block output is used, making it a stream-like cipher.

Let $e()$ be a block cipher of block size b ; let x_i and y_i and s_i be bit strings of length b ; and IV be a nonce of length b .

Encryption(first block):

$$s_1 = e_k(IV) \text{ and } y_1 = s_1 \text{ xor } x_1$$

Encryption (general block):

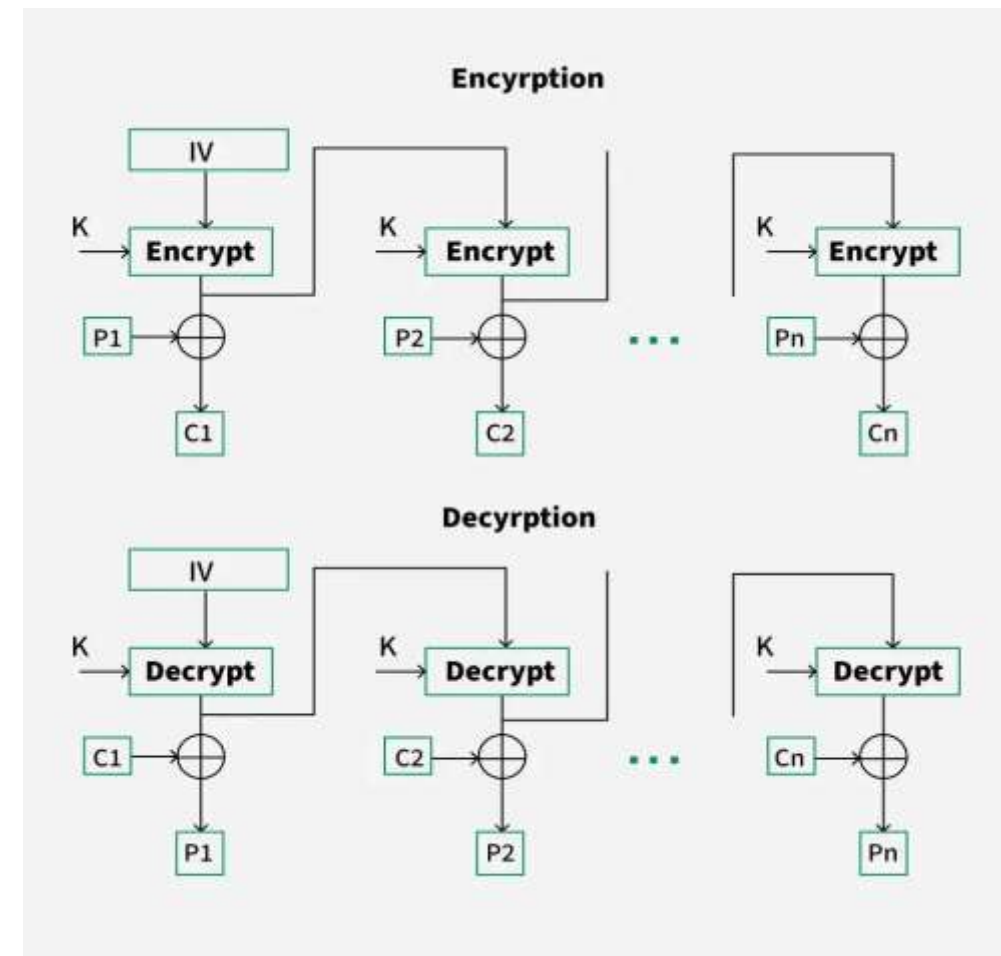
$$s_i = e_k(y_{i-1}) \text{ and } y_i = s_i \text{ xor } x_i \quad i \geq 2$$

Decryption (first block):

$$s_1 = e_k(IV) \text{ and } x_1 = s_1 \text{ xor } y_1$$

Decryption (general block):

$$s_i = e_k(y_{i-1}) \text{ and } x_i = s_i \text{ xor } y_i \quad i \geq 2$$



Counter mode (CTR):

Encrypts a **counter** for each block.

Counter is incremented for each block.

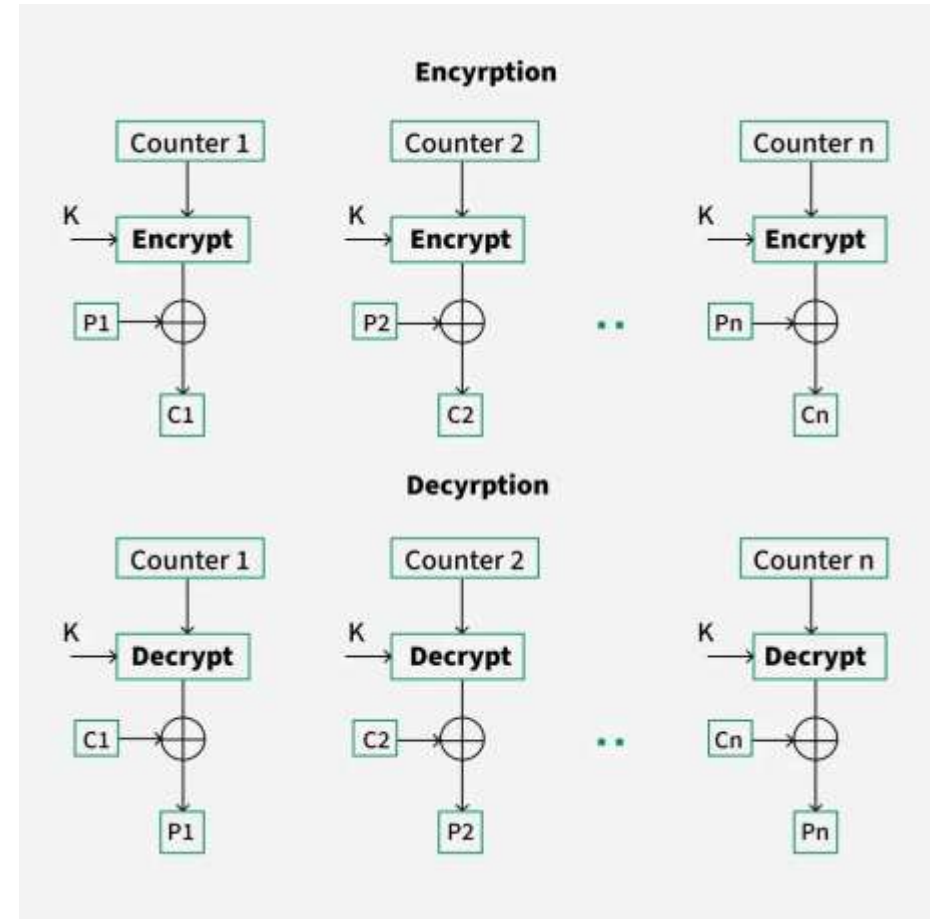
Let $e()$ be a block cipher of block size b , and let x_i and y_i be bit strings of length b . The concatenation of the initialization value IV and the counter $CT R_i$ is denoted by $(IV || CTR_i)$ and is a bit string of length b

Encryption:

$$y_i = e_k(IV || ctr_i) \text{ xor } x_i \quad i \geq 1$$

Decryption

$$x_i = e_k(IV || ctr_i) \text{ xor } y_i \quad i \geq 1$$



Galois Counter Mode (GCM)

Combines **CTR mode + Authentication (via GHASH)**.

Provides **confidentiality + integrity**.

Used In: TLS, VPNs, IPsec.

Let $e()$ be a block cipher of block size 128 bit; let x be the plaintext consisting of the blocks x_1, \dots, x_n ; and let AAD be the additional authenticated data.

Encryption(first block):

Derive a counter value CTR_0 from the IV and compute

$CTR_1 = CTR_0 + 1$.

Compute ciphertext:

$$y_i = e_k(CTR_i) \text{ xor } x_i \quad i \geq 1$$

. Authentication a. Generate authentication subkey $H = e_k(0)$ b. Compute $g_0 = \text{AAD} \times H$ (Galois field multiplication)

c. Compute $g_i = (g_{i-1} \text{ xor } y_i) \times H \quad 1 \leq i \leq n$

d. Final authentication tag: $T = (g_n \times H) \text{ xor } e_k(CTR_0)$

References:

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