AWS HONEYPOT CONFIGURATION LAB

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Purpose:

The purpose of this lab is to create a honeypot and observe and document the attacks and vulnerabilities that are exploited to try to gain access to the system. I will likely be running two AWS honeypots, one on the west coast and one on the east coast, both for a week and comparing the results.

Background:

Honeypots are a type of cybersecurity tool that is designed to detect and monitor unauthorized access to computer systems. They are essentially decoy systems that are intentionally left vulnerable to attract and distract attackers. By luring attackers to these systems, security professionals can gain valuable insight into their methods and motives, as well as behaviors.

Amazon Web Services (AWS) is a popular platform for hosting honeypots because it offers a high level of scalability, flexibility, and security. With AWS, security professionals can easily spin up and configure multiple honeypot instances across the country, and they can also take advantage of AWS's advanced security features, such as encryption and network isolation, ensuring that even if a honeypot is breached, that intrusion is contained and can be remediated.

One popular honeypot software that can be hosted on AWS is the T-Pot GitHub honeypot. T-Pot is an open-source tool that provides a fully functional honeypot environment, complete with a range of pre-installed services and tools, like honeypots resembling mail severs, shell environments, web servers, and much more. It is designed to be easy to deploy and configure, and it can be customized to suit the specific needs of individual users.

Overall, honeypots are an important tool in the fight against cyber threats, and AWS is a powerful platform for hosting and managing these tools. By using tools like T-Pot, security professionals can gain valuable insight into the tactics and techniques used by attackers, and they can use this information to better protect their systems and networks.

Resources/Prerequisites:

AWS Account

https://github.com/telekom-security/tpotce

PuTTY

Debian EC2 Instance

18 cents an hour

Lab Commands:

sudo apt install git: This command installs the Git version control system, ensuring Git is installed on the system and ready to use.

sudo apt update: "sudo apt update" updates the package lists on the Linux system from the repositories. It doesn't install or upgrade packages but retrieves information about available updates and their dependencies.

sudo apt upgrade: "sudo apt upgrade" upgrades all installed packages to their latest versions.

git clone https://github.com/telekom-security/tpotce: This command copies the GitHub Telekom tpotce repository.

cd tpotce/iso/installer/: This command navigates to the directory the repository is stored in.

sudo ./install.sh -type=user: This command runs the script of install.sh with elevated privileges using "sudo" while the -type=user ensures the software is only installed for the specified user, rather than all users on the system.

Diagram of Network Topology:

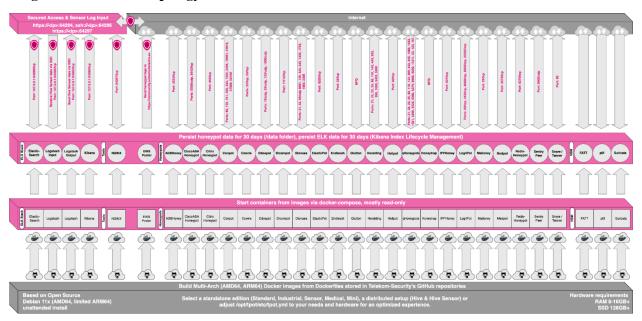


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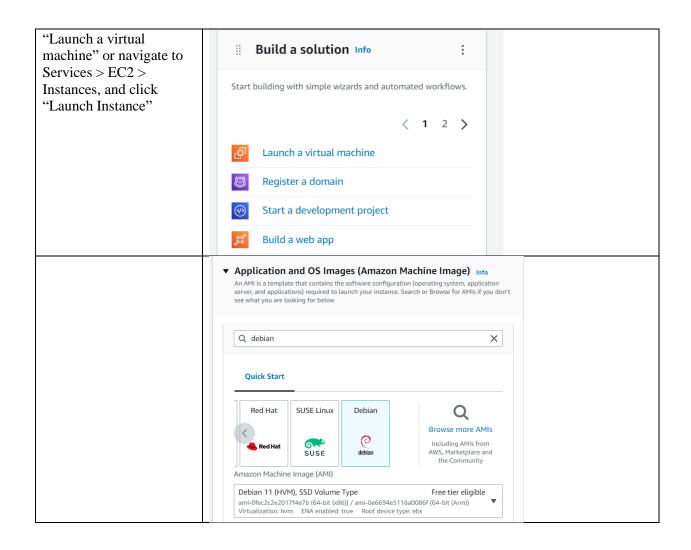
AWS Instance Logon

Security Rules Configuration

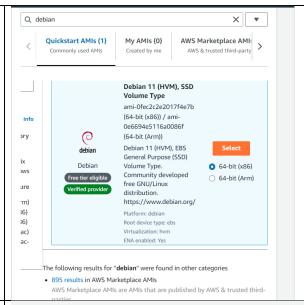
Kibana Dashboard Access

AWS Instance Creation

Sign into https://aws.amazon.com/ and log into AWS Management Console



You can choose different versions but I used the most recent, Debian 11. Select x86

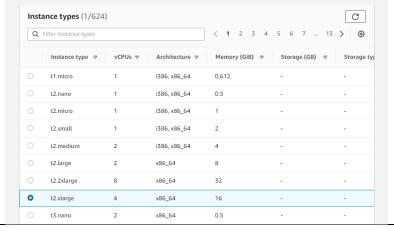


Once you select Debian, you will be prompted to select the instance type. Click edit and navigate to t2.xlarge, giving us 4 CPUs and 16 GB of memory.

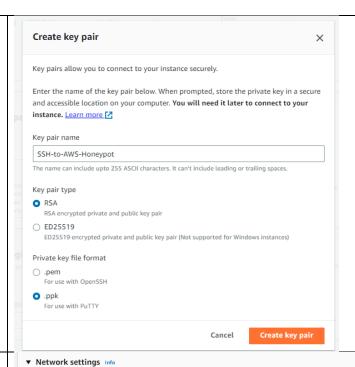
Compare instance types

Amazon EC2 provides a wide selection of instance types optimized to fit different use cases. Instances are virtual servers that can run applications. They have varying combinations of CPU, memory, storage, and networking capacity, and give you the flexibility to choose the appropriate mix of resources for your applications. Learn more about instance types and how they can meet your computing needs.

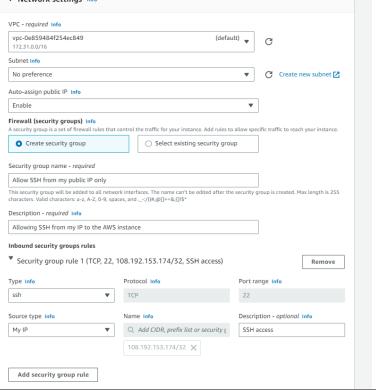
Currently selected: t2.xlarge (4 vCPUs, 16384 memory, EBS only)

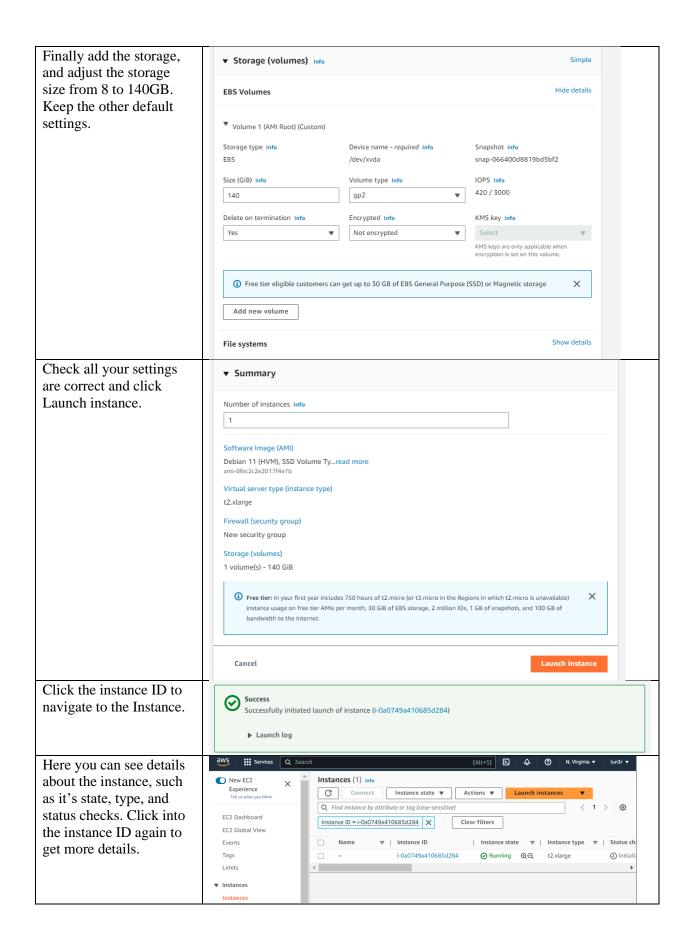


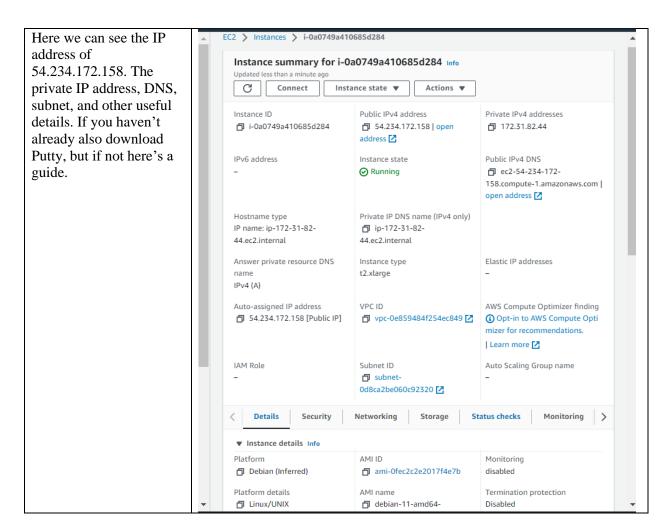
In order to access the AWS machine from Putty through an SSH session, we have to create a key pair. Choose the option to Create key pair. Make sure to create it as RSA and .ppk. It will automatically download once you click create. Save this in a safe place for later.



On the Configure Security Group page, click edit and create a new security group. Ensure the security group is type ssh, TCP 22, source is my IP. Add a description if you want to.

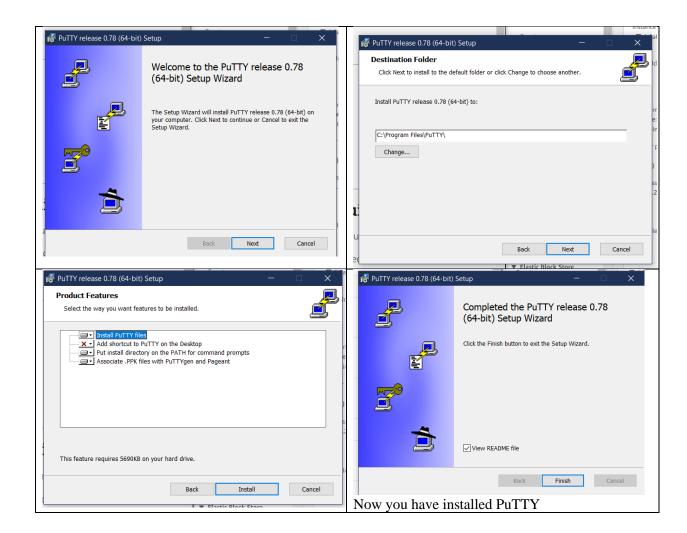




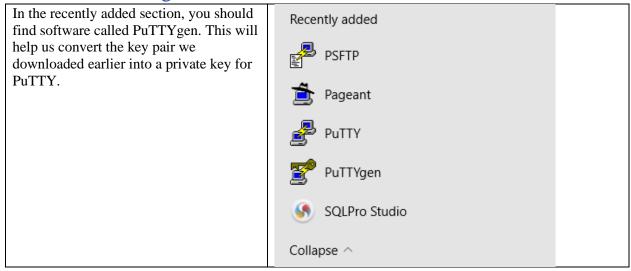


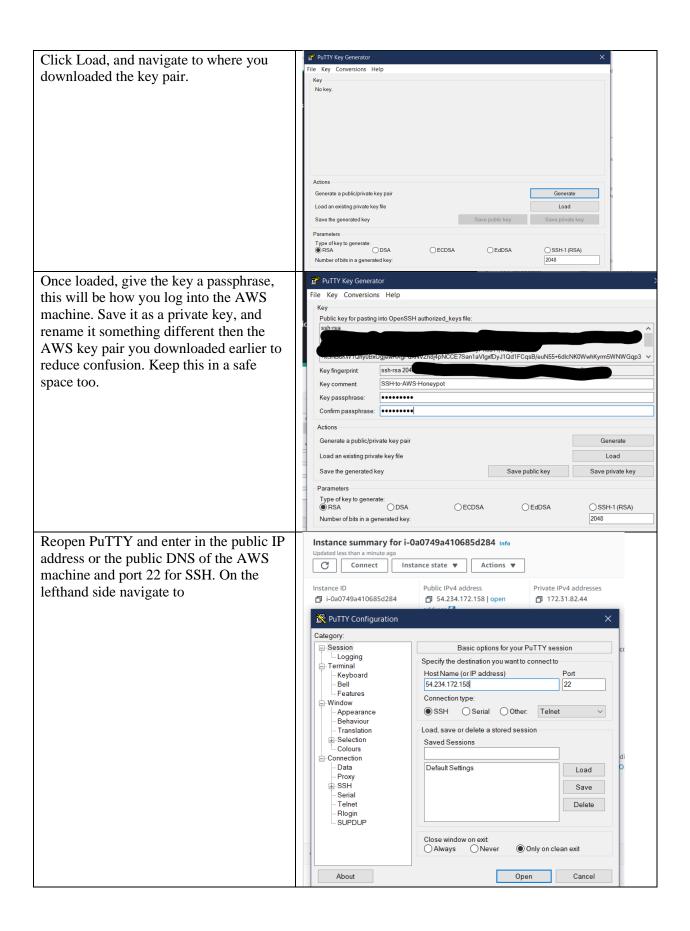
Downloading Putty:

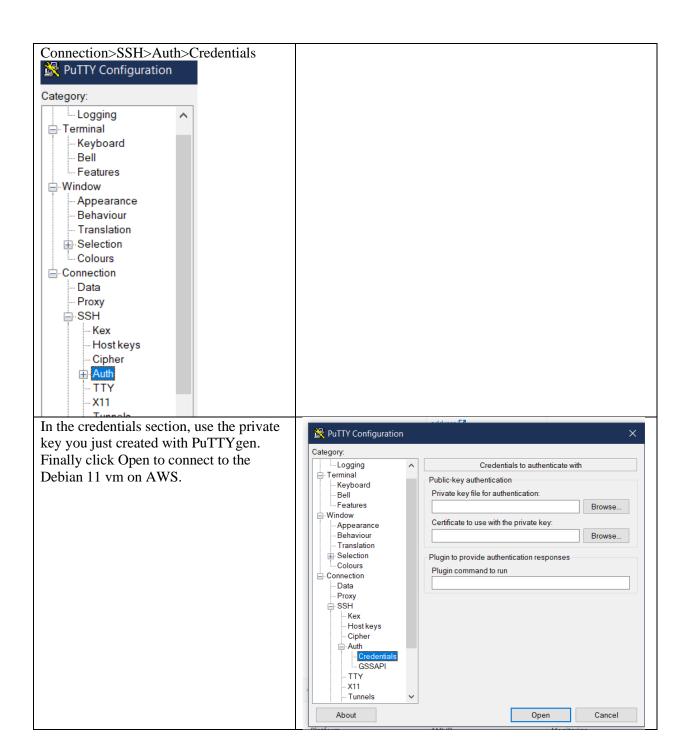
Download from this link -> https://www.puttygen.com/download-putty



AWS Machine Logon







When you connect, click accept on the ₫ 54.234.172.158 - PuTTY prompt for unknown key and proceed. login as: admin
Authenticating with public key "SSH-to-AWS-Honeypot"
Passphrase for key "SSH-to-AWS-Honeypot": The username should be admin, and the password is the key you assigned when converting the private key. admin@ip-172-31-82-44:~\$ sudo apt update
Get:1 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye InRelease [116 kB]
Get:2 http://security.debian.org/debian-security bullseye-security InRelease [48.4 kGet:2 http://security.debian.org/debian.bullseye-updates InRelease [44.1 kB]
Get:4 http://sdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye-backports InRelease [44.1 kB]
Get:5 http://security.debian.org/debian-security bullseye-security/main Sources [19]
Get:6 http://security.debian.org/debian-security bullseye-security/main amd64 Packag login as: admin Authenticating with public key "SSH-to-AWS-Honeypot" Passphrase for key "SSH-to-AWS-Honeypot": passphrase hrase for key "SSH-to-AWS-Honeypot": -172-31-82-44 5.10.0-21-cloud-amd64 #1 SMP Debian 5.10.162-1 (2) et:7 http://security.debian.org/debian-security bullseye-security/main Translation sl set:8 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye/main Sources [8634 kB] set:9 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye/main amd64 Packages [8183 kB] set:10 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye/main Translation-en [6240 kB] set:11 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye-updates/main Source [4812 B] set:12 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye-updates/main amd64 Packages [1et:13 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye-updates/main Translation-en [7] et:14 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye-backports/main Sources [410 kB] et:15 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye-backports/main amd64 Packages et:16 http://cdn-aws.deb.debian.org/debian bullseye-backports/main Translation-en etched 25.1 MB in 4s (6023 kB/s) etcned 25.1 Mb in 4s (6023 KB/S) sading package lists... Done uilding dependency tree... Done sading state information... Done packages can be upgraded. Run 'apt list --upgradable' to see them. dmin@ip-172-31-82-44:~\$ dmin@ip-172-31-82-44:-\$

min@ip-172-31-82-44:-\$

mainigp-172-31-82-44:-\$

sading package lists... Done

silding dependency tree... Done

silding additional packages will be installed:

git-man liberror-perl libgdm-compatd libper15.32 patch perl perl-modules-5.32

sigt-daemon-run | git-daemon-sysvinit git-doc git-el git-email git-gui gitk gitweb git-cvs

git-maediawiki git-svn ed diffutils-doc perl-doc libterm-readline-gnu-perl

| libtern-readline-perl-perl make libtap-harnes-archive-perl

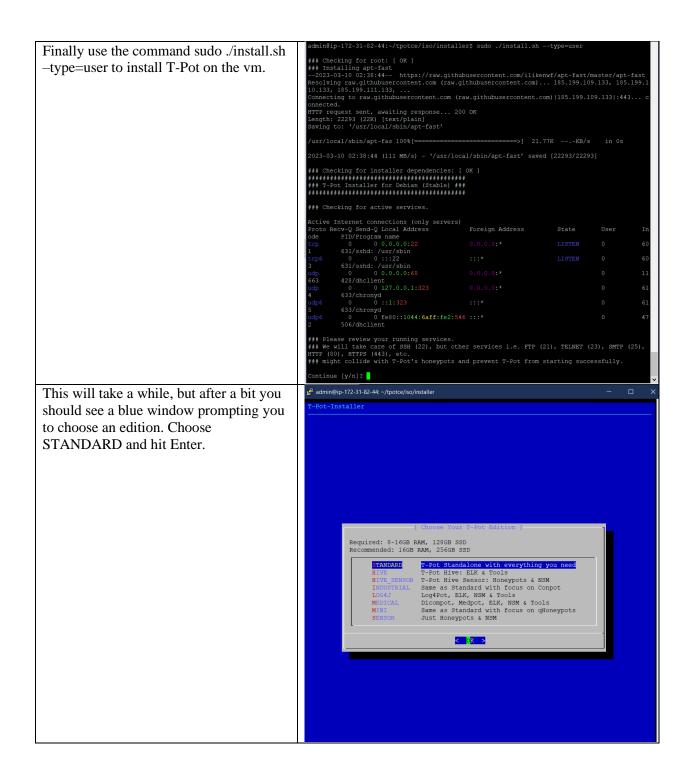
sigt git-man liberror-perl libgdm-compatd libper15.32 patch perl perl-modules-5.32

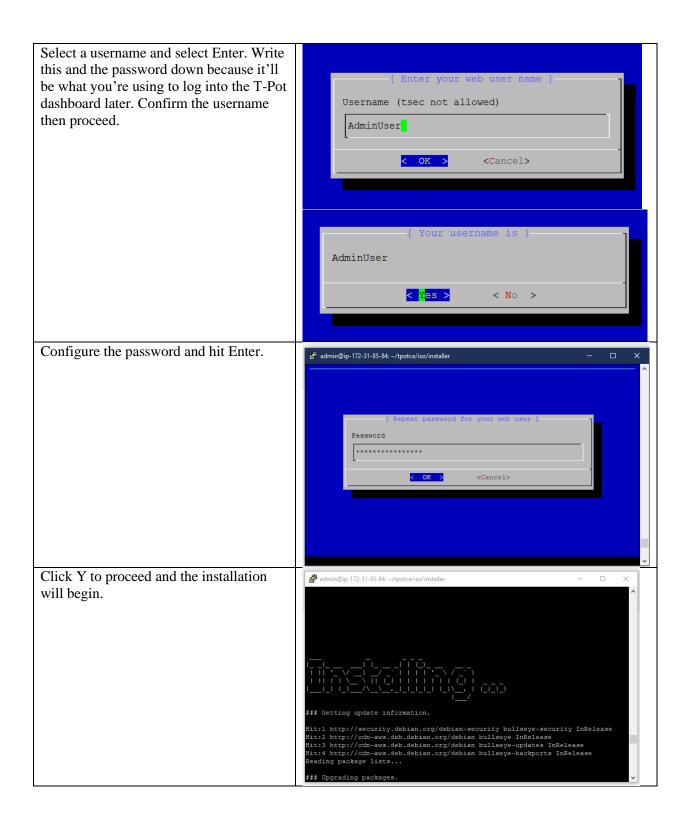
upgraded, 8 newly installed, 0 to remove and 0 not upgraded.

sed to get 14.8 MI of archives.

fter this operation, 85.4 ME of additional disk space will be used.

o you want to continue? [Y/n] Y adminfeip-172-31-02-44:-\$ sudo apt upgrade
Reading package lists... Done
Ruilding dependency tree... Done
Reading state information... Done
Reading state information... Done
Reading state information... Done
Ref following packages will be upgraded:
Right information in the suppraded:
Reading information in the suppraded in the Run sudo apt update, sudo apt upgrade, and sudo apt install git to install all relevant packages and updates. Clone the GitHub repository of T-Pot into 'tpotce'...
redirecting to https://github.com/telekom-security/tpotce/ using git clone http://github.com/telekomarning: redirecting to https://github.com/delekom-scoling/cposes/ emote: Enumerating objects: 14347, done. emote: Total 14347 (delta 0), reused 0 (delta 0), pack-reused 14347 leceiving objects: 100% (14347/14347), 240.14 MiB | 59.68 MiB/s, done. lesolving deltas: 100% (7987/7987), done. security/tpotce admin@ip-172-31-82-44:~\$ cd tpotce/iso/installer/ Navigate to the relevant working admin@ip-172-31-82-44:~/tpotce/iso/installer\$ ls directory using cd tpotce/iso/installer/ install.sh iso.conf.dist rc.local.install tpot.con admin@ip-172-31-82-44:~/tpotce/iso/installer\$

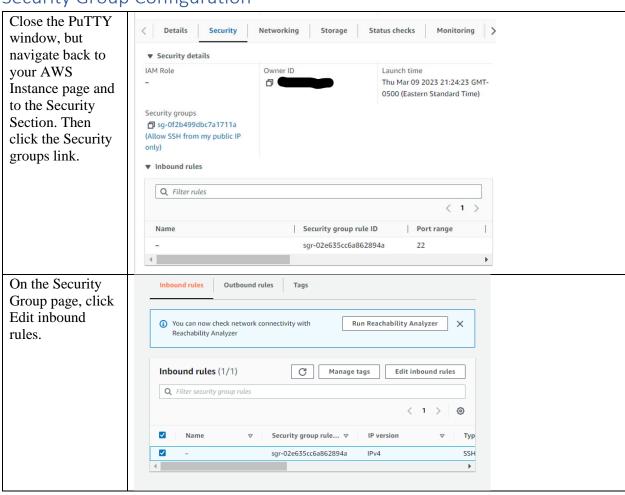


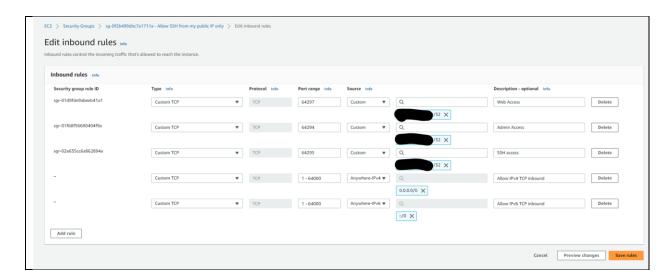


After installation, the AWS machine will reboot and you'll not be able to access the command line anymore except through the web interface.



Security Group Configuration





Kibana Dashboard Logon

Adjust the security rules to the following requirements:

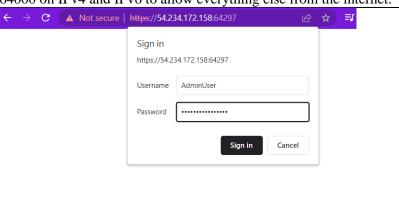
Ensure you restrict TCP port 64294 to allow Admin access only from your source IP address.

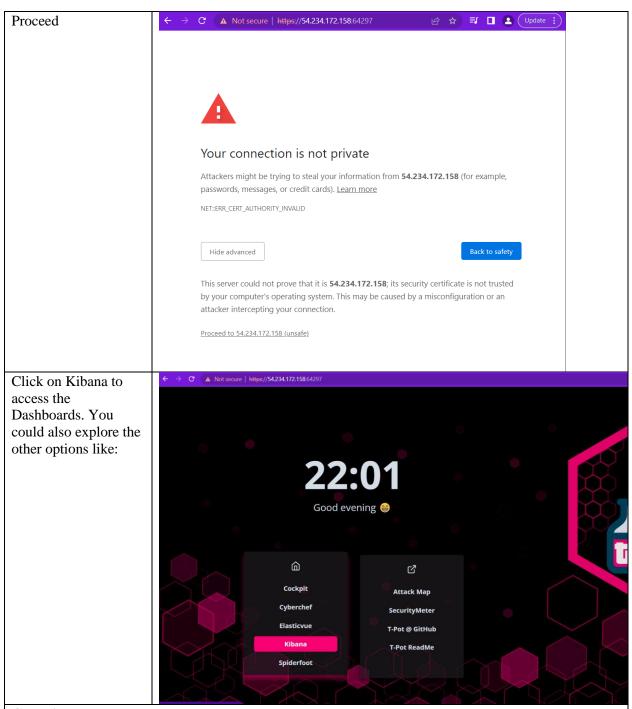
Ensure you restrict TCP port 64295 to allow SSH access only from your source IP address.

Ensure you restrict TCP port 64297 to allow the web interface access only from your source IP address.

Configure TCP ports 1-64000 on IPv4 and IPv6 to allow everything else from the internet.

Next, open your web browser and go https://###.###.###.## #:64297 and log-in with the user account, you will be redirected to the following dashboard, simply click on Kibana:





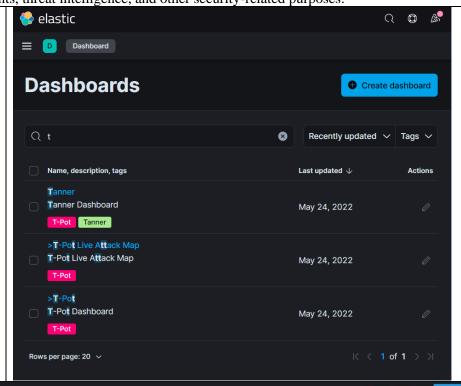
Cockpit: Cockpit is a web-based GUI that allows system administrators to manage various aspects of their Linux servers. It provides a dashboard for monitoring system performance, managing services and applications, and configuring settings. Cockpit is often used to manage server clusters, allowing administrators to monitor multiple servers from a single dashboard.

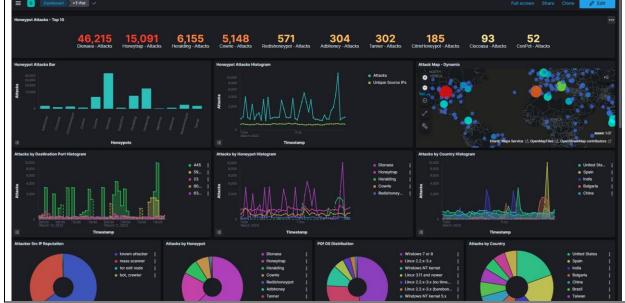
CyberChef: CyberChef is a powerful, web-based tool for decoding, encoding, analyzing, and manipulating data. It supports a wide range of data formats and provides a user-friendly interface for performing complex operations on data. CyberChef is often used by security professionals and researchers to analyze malware and extract information from various types of data.

ElasticVue: ElasticVue is a web-based GUI tool that allows users to interact with Elasticsearch data. Elasticsearch is a popular search engine and analytics platform used for indexing and searching large volumes of data. ElasticVue provides a user-friendly interface for querying and visualizing Elasticsearch data, making it easier for non-technical users to interact with the platform.

SpiderFoot: SpiderFoot is an open-source reconnaissance tool that automates the process of gathering information about a target. It can be used to perform footprinting, reconnaissance, and OSINT (Open-Source Intelligence) gathering on various targets, including websites, networks, and social media accounts. SpiderFoot is often used by security professionals and researchers to gather intelligence for vulnerability assessments, threat intelligence, and other security-related purposes.

Navigate to the T-Pot dashboard. You can also check out some of the other dashboards for individual honeypots like *Cowrie, Dionaea* or *Heralding*.





The following shows all attacks and threats occurring on our honeypot. If you leave the honeypot running for an extended period on the internet, it will accumulate more data and possibly be more useful/insightful. However, it's important to keep in mind that the virtual machine on AWS incurs charges based on usage. Therefore, it's advisable to stop or terminate any unused services on AWS to avoid unnecessary charges to your credit card. 1 week vs 1 day. It's approximately 4\$ a day to run this process.

Problems and Troubleshooting:

For the most part the installation ran smoothly, however I did encounter a few issues, but they were minor typecast errors. For example, you must use two dashes when installing sh –type=user instead of -type=user(figure 1). Also when connecting to the dashboard, you must use https, not http, or you will get a 400 bad request message(figure 2). Also if you want to make the T-Pot more accurate, you may want to remove your home IP address from the data through using NOT scr_ip.keyword: IP ADDRESS. For example I ran a few nmap scans on my AWS machine and that greatly skewed the data by thousands of attacks, so removing your IP address from the dataset generally a good idea.

Figure 1:

Figure 2:





400 Bad Request

The plain HTTP request was sent to HTTPS port

nginx

Conclusion

Overall, in this lab we set up an AWS instance, installed T-Pot onto it, and successfully started running the honeypot. Now all we have to do is wait and see what happens. T-Pot is a valuable open-source honeypot software that can be easily deployed and customized to suit the specific needs of individual users. As a fully functional honeypot environment, it offers a range of pre-installed services and tools that can help security professionals gain valuable insights into attacker behavior and tactics. Over the next week I will be documenting everything that happens every 24 hours, including number of attacks, their origins, commands ran, and a lot more.