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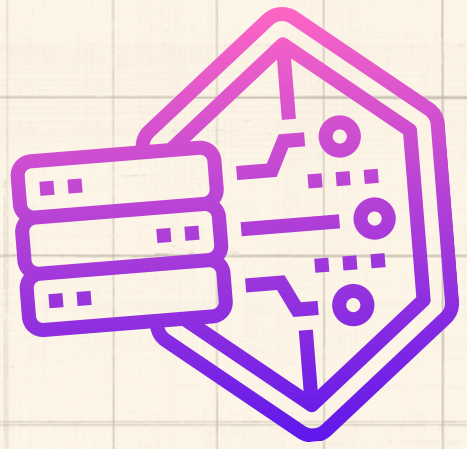
Pentest & its phases



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What is it?

A **Pentest** or Penetration testingis a controlled simulation of a cyber attack designed to identify and correct vulnerabilities in systems, applications or networks. In other words, it's like "*ethical hacking*" where security experts try to find weak spots before actual attackers do.

Es como probar las cerraduras de una casa para asegurarte de que un ladrón no pueda entrar.

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It consist of 5 phases

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1. Reconnaissance

The goal is to collect as much information as possible about the target system, without directly interacting with it (passive reconnaissance) or by interacting directly with it (active reconnaissance).

- Search public information: domain names, IP addresses, web servers, emails.
- Examine social networks and forums to find sensitive data
- Scan networks to identify connected devices.

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2. Scanning

In this stage, the pentester interacts more with the target system to identify possible weak points. Services, open ports and software versions are searched.

- Scan ports to identify exposed services (HTTP, SSH, etc.).
- Detect software versions to look for known vulnerabilities.
- Map the network structure of the organization.

3. Exploitation

Here the pentester tries to exploit the vulnerabilities found in the previous phase to access the system.

- Perform brute force attacks to crack weak passwords.
- Use known exploits to exploit bugs in the software.
- Upload malicious shells to gain remote access.

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4. Post-Exploitation

If the system was accessed, this phase focuses on analyzing how the attackers could stay inside without being detected and how far they can go with that access.

- Escalate privileges to gain administrator access.
- Set up backdoors to re-enter the system in the future. (persistence)
- Exfiltrate sensitive data without alerting the security system

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5. Report

At this phase, all findings are documented, explaining the identified vulnerabilities, their impact and recommendations to resolve them.

- Create a prioritized list of vulnerabilities with their level of criticality.
- Propose technical solutions such as updates, configuration changes or additional monitoring.
- Present an executive summary so that non-technical decision makers understand the risks.

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