

# Symmetric Primitives: Design & Cryptanalysis

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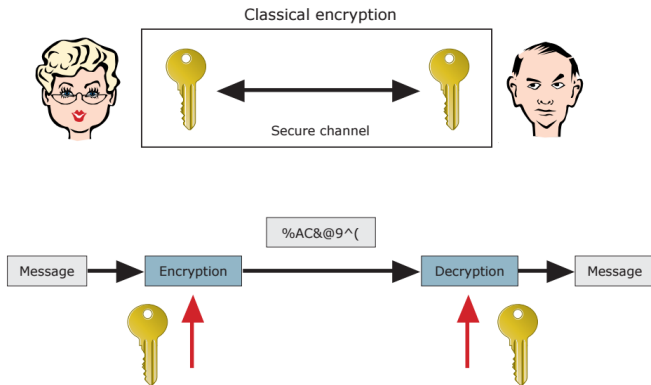
# Outline

- Symmetric Cryptography
  - SPN Design
- Differential Cryptanalysis
  - Toy Ciphers
- Secure designs against differential cryptanalysis
  - Wide Trail Design Strategy: AES
- Closing Remarks

# Symmetric Cryptography and SPN Design

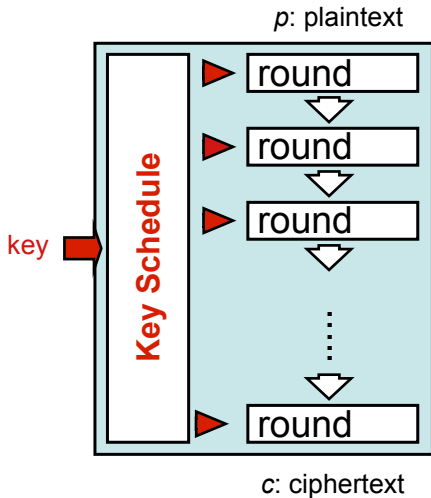
# Symmetric Cryptography

Cryptography is communication in the presence of an adversary (Ron Rivest)



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## Design Principles – SPN Construction



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- Iterative ciphers:

$$AddKey \circ (M_r \circ S_r) \circ AddKey \circ \dots \circ (M_2 \circ S_2) \circ AddKey \circ (M_1 \circ S_1) \circ AddKey(\cdot)$$

→ Round transformation

$$round(\cdot) \equiv AddKey \circ M_i \circ S_i(\cdot)$$

- Often:

- $M_i \circ S_i = M \circ S$
- $AddKey_K(\cdot) = \cdot + K$  (over  $(\mathbb{F}, +, \times)$ )

*Notation:*  $M \equiv$  Mixing Layer -  $S \equiv$  S-Box Layer

# Practical Constraints

Problem: Hardware/Software Constraints!

Typically

- *Small* substitution elements
- Key Agility:
  - the amount of preprocessing of a key (e.g. key-schedule) should be small
- the state size of a cipher uses is small (e.g. 16/32 bytes)

## Design Principles – S-Box

- An S-Box substitutes a small block of bits (the input of the S-Box) by another block of bits (the output of the S-Box)
- An S-Box is usually *not* simply a permutation of the bits: it must provide non-linearity!

If no operation provides non-linearity, each ciphertext  $c$  can be decomposed as

$$c = L_0(p) \oplus L_1(k) \quad L_0(\cdot), L_1(\cdot) \text{ linear}$$

and the key can be easily found (if plaintext  $p$  is known).

- The S-Box must be invertible in SPN constructions, while it is not required for Feistel Constructions!



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## Design Principles - Mixing

- Linear permutation of all the bits: it takes the outputs of several - if possible, all - S-Boxes of one round, permutes the bits, and feeds them into the S-Boxes of the next round
- A good linear permutation has the property that the output bits of any S-Box are distributed to as many S-Box inputs as possible
- “Branch Number” is a parameter that measures how good a linear permutation is  
(discuss in details in the following)

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## Should we worry?

- For almost all choices of a round transformation,

$$E_k(\cdot) = \lim_{r \rightarrow \infty} (M_i \circ S_i)^r(\cdot)$$

gives a secure (but not practical...) cipher

- **Goal:** *find the optimal number of rounds to guarantee security and good performances!*

# Differential Cryptanalysis

# Secure Ciphers - Symmetric Encryption

How can you tell if a cipher is secure?

## Definition (Kerckhoffs' Principle)

The security of a cryptosystem must lie in the choice of its keys only. *Everything else (including the algorithm itself) should be considered public knowledge.*

*A cipher is secure if there is no attack better than brute force:* a solid cipher must resist all known attacks!

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## Why Not Brute Force Attack? (1/2)

Given a plaintext and the corresponding ciphertext, *brute-force attack* involves systematically checking all possible key combinations until the correct key is found.

Key Size	Possible Combinations
1 bit	2
2 bit	4
4 bit	16
8 bit	256
16 bit	65536
32 bit	$4.2 \cdot 10^9$
56 bit (DES)	$7.2 \cdot 10^{16}$
64 bit	$1.8 \cdot 10^{19}$
128 bit (AES-128)	$3.4 \cdot 10^{38}$
192 bit (AES-192)	$6.2 \cdot 10^{57}$
256 bit (AES-256)	$1.1 \cdot 10^{77}$

## Why Not Brute Force Attack? (2/2)

(Currently) Fastest Supercomputer (“Summit” - USA, June 2018):  $\approx 122.3$  PetaFLOPS  
[FLOPS = Floating point operations per second]

Assume only 1 “floating point operation” is required per combination check (very optimistic!)

Number of combination checks per second:  $122.3 \cdot 10^{15}$

<i>Key Size</i>	<i>Time to Crack</i>
56 bit (DES)	$< 1$ sec
128 bit (AES-128)	$8.8 \cdot 10^{13}$ years
192 bit (AES-192)	$1.6 \cdot 10^{33}$ years
256 bit (AES-256)	$3.0 \cdot 10^{52}$ years

For comparison, our universe was born about  $1.37 \cdot 10^{10}$  years ago.

# Cryptanalysis

Question: *How can we be sure an attacker will require a large amount of work to break a non-perfect system with every method?*

Hard to achieve! But we can at least:

- *make it secure against all known attacks (Symmetric Crypto)*
- *reduce it to some “known difficult” problem (Asymmetric Crypto)*

# Symmetric Cryptanalysis

- Meet-In-The-Middle
- *Differential Cryptanalysis:*
  - Truncated Diff. Cryptanalysis, Impossible Diff. Cryptanalysis, Boomerang Attack, Yoyo Attack, ...
- Linear Cryptanalysis
- Algebraic Attack
  - Interpolation Attack, Higher-Order Differential Attack, Cube Attack, Gröbner Basis Attack, GCD Attack, ...
- Integral/Square Attack
- Related-Key Attack
- ...

# Differential Cryptanalysis: The Idea

*Idea: Deduce information about the secret key by tracing differences between pairs of plaintexts during the encryption (and decryption)*

Differential Cryptanalysis is based on the fact that pairs of plaintexts with certain differences yield other differences in the corresponding ciphertexts with a non-uniformity probability distribution.

- First published by Biham and Shamir to attack DES (1993)
- One of the best attack methods in cryptanalysis and applicable to many iterated block ciphers
- Chosen-Plaintext attack

# Differential Cryptanalysis: The Idea

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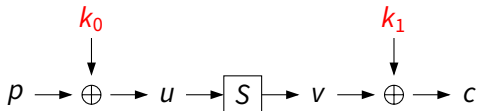
## A Simple Block Cipher

The block cipher  $E_{k_0||k_1}(p)$  encrypts 4 bits of plaintext using two 4-bit keys:

$$c = E_{k_0||k_1}(p) = S(p \oplus k_0) \oplus k_1$$

The 4-bit S-Box  $S$  is defined as follows:

$x$	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	a	b	c	d	e	f
$S(x)$	6	4	c	5	0	7	2	e	1	f	3	d	8	a	9	b

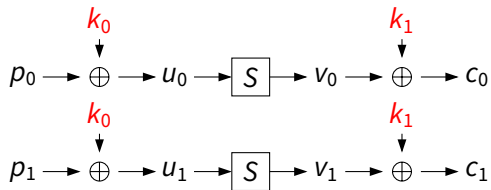


Given  $(p_0, c_0) = (a, 9)$  and  $(p_1, c_1) = (5, 6)$ , determine the key!?

Brute force (exhaustive search): try all  $2^4 \cdot 2^4 = 256$  keys.

## The Basic Idea

Assume we know two plaintext/cipher text pairs  $(p_0, c_0)$ ,  $(p_1, c_1)$ :



### Observation

We know that

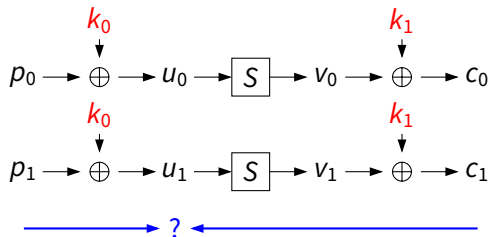
$$u_0 \oplus u_1 = (p_0 \oplus k_0) \oplus (p_1 \oplus k_0) = p_0 \oplus p_1$$

$$v_0 \oplus v_1 = (c_0 \oplus k_1) \oplus (c_1 \oplus k_1) = c_0 \oplus c_1,$$

even though we do not know  $k_0$  and  $k_1$ .



# Differential Attack

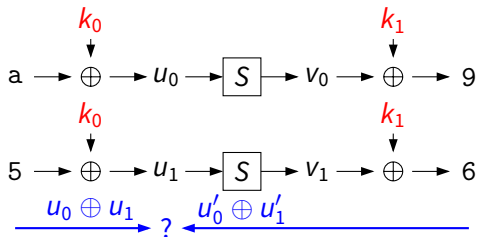


## Strategy:

1. compute  $u_0 \oplus u_1$
2. guess  $k_1$  (iterate over all values)
3. compute  $u'_0 = S^{-1}(c_0 \oplus k'_1)$  and  $u'_1 = S^{-1}(c_1 \oplus k'_1)$
4. check if  $u_0 \oplus u_1 = u'_0 \oplus u'_1$
5. if not: key guess was definitely wrong! (filtering)

## Example

Given  $(p_0, c_0) = (a, 9)$  and  $(p_1, c_1) = (5, 6)$



1. compute  $u_0 \oplus u_1 = p_0 \oplus p_1 = a \oplus 5 = f$
2. guess  $k_1$  and compute  $u'_0 \oplus u'_1$ :

$k'_1$	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	a	b	c	d	e	f
$u'_0 \oplus u'_1$	e	b	e	e	d	8	d	f	f	d	8	d	e	e	b	e

3. only two candidates for  $k_1$  are valid:  $k_1 \in \{7, 8\}$

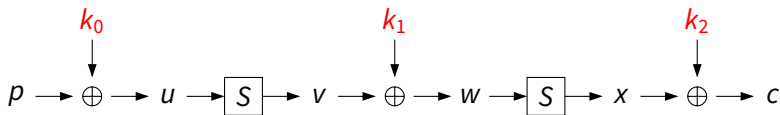
## Let's Extend it to a Two-Round Cipher

The block cipher  $E_{k_0||k_1||k_2}(p)$  encrypts 4 bits of plaintext using three 4-bit keys:

$$c = E_{k_0||k_1||k_2}(p) = S(S(p \oplus k_0) \oplus k_1) \oplus k_2$$

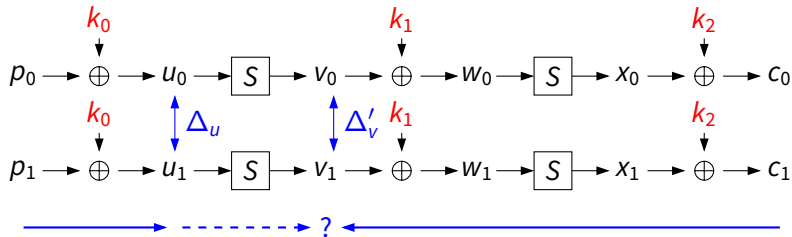
We use the same 4-bit S-Box  $S$ :

$x$	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	a	b	c	d	e	f
$S(x)$	6	4	c	5	0	7	2	e	1	f	3	d	8	a	9	b



Brute force:  $2^{4+4+4} = 4096$  keys.

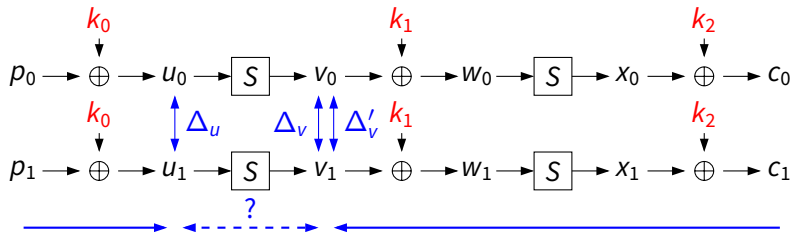
## Differential Attack on a Two-Round Cipher



What can we compute?

- compute  $\Delta u = \Delta p = p_0 \oplus p_1$
- we guess the last round key  $k_2$  and compute  $x'_0, x'_1, w'_0, w'_1$
- compute  $\Delta v' = \Delta w' = w'_0 \oplus w'_1$
- how can we check if our guess for  $k_2$  was correct?

## Differential Attack on a Two-Round Cipher



- we want to verify our computed  $\Delta'_v$  (based on guess  $k'_2$ )
  - can we get more information about the real  $\Delta_v$ ?
  - using  $\Delta_u = f$  but not knowing  $u_0$  or  $u_1$ ?
- ⇒ let's compute all possible differences for  $\Delta_v$

## The Influence of the S-Box (1/2)

$u_0$	$u_1 = u_0 \oplus f$	$v_0 = S(u_0)$	$v_1 = S(u_1)$	$\Delta v = v_0 \oplus v_1$
0	f	6	b	d
1	e	4	9	d
2	d	c	a	6
3	c	5	8	d
4	b	0	d	d
5	a	7	3	4
6	9	2	f	d
7	8	e	1	f
8	7	1	e	f
9	6	f	2	d
a	5	3	7	4
b	4	d	0	d
c	3	8	5	d
d	2	a	c	6
e	1	9	4	d
f	0	b	6	d

Only 4 differences for  $\Delta v$  are possible (for the given  $\Delta u = f$ ).

One difference ( $\Delta v = d$ ) occurs very often.

## The Influence of the S-Box (2/2)

### Observations

- the differences are unevenly distributed
- the difference  $d$  occurs 10 out of 16 times
- not all differences occur

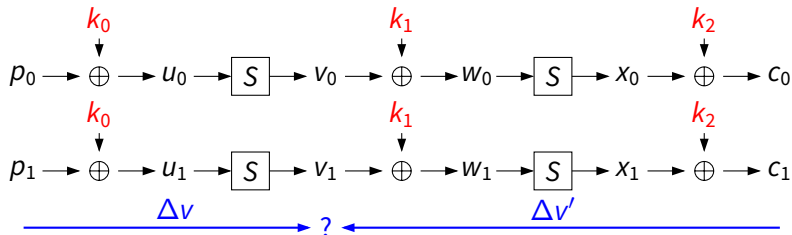
⇒ let's assume that  $\Delta v = d$

Then, we can verify our guess  $k'_2$  by checking whether  $\Delta v' (= \Delta v) = d$

With a probability of 10/16 our assumption is right

$\Delta v = v_0 \oplus v_1$
d
d
6
d
d
4
d
f
f
d
4
d
d
6
d
d

# Differential Attack on a Two-Round Cipher



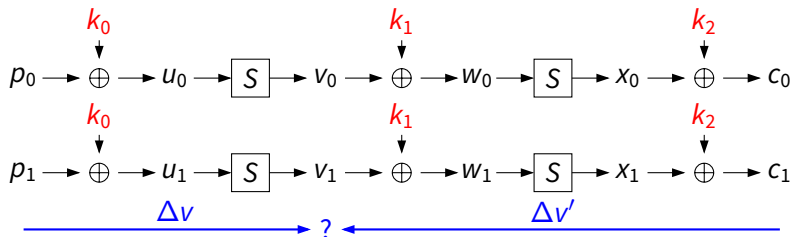
**We filter wrong key guesses:**

Strategy (1/2)

1. consider 16 plaintext/ciphertext pairs  $(p_0^i, c_0^i)$  and  $(p_1^i, c_1^i)$  such that  $p_0^i \oplus p_1^i = \mathbf{f}$  for  $i = 0, \dots, 15$
2. guess the last round key  $k_2$  (iterate over all values)



## Differential Attack on a Two-Round Cipher



### Strategy (2/2)

3. for each plaintexts-ciphertexts pair: compute  $x'_0, x'_1, w'_0, w'_1$  and count the number of pairs for which  $\Delta v' = \Delta w' = d$ ;
4. we expect that
  - for the *right key*, approx.  $16 \cdot \frac{10}{16} = 10$  pairs satisfy  $\Delta v' = d$ ;
  - for a *wrong key*, approx.  $16 \cdot \frac{1}{16} = 1$  pair satisfies  $\Delta v' = d$ .

# Difference Distribution Table

How can we find differences with a good probability?

- compute all possible output differences for all input differences of an S-Box
- or equivalently: compute the number of solutions  $x$  to the equation

$$S(x \oplus \Delta u) \oplus S(x) = \Delta v$$

## Definition

Let  $f$  be an  $n$  to  $m$  bit function. The **difference distribution table** of  $f$  is an  $2^n \times 2^m$  table whose entries are the number of valid solutions  $x$  for each differential  $\Delta u \rightarrow \Delta v$ .

# Difference Distribution Table

$\Delta_{in} \setminus \Delta_{out}$	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	a	b	c	d	e	f
0	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	2	-	4	-
2	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	6	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	4	-	2	-
4	-	-	-	2	-	2	4	-	-	2	2	2	-	-	2	-
5	-	2	2	-	4	-	-	4	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
6	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	2	2	-	2	2	2	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	4	-	-	4	-	2	-	2
9	-	2	-	-	-	2	2	2	-	4	2	-	-	-	-	2
a	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	4	4	-	2	2	-	-
b	-	-	-	2	2	-	2	2	2	-	-	4	-	-	2	-
c	-	4	-	2	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	6	-
d	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	6	2	-	4
e	-	2	-	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	6
f	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	2

# Maximum Differential Probability

Let  $f$  defined as before. *Differential Probability* is defined as

$$\begin{aligned} DP^f(\Delta u \rightarrow \Delta v) &:= \Pr[f(x \oplus \Delta u) \oplus f(x) = \Delta v] = \\ &= \frac{|\{x \text{ s.t. } f(x \oplus \Delta u) \oplus f(x) = \Delta v\}|}{2^n} \end{aligned}$$

## Definition

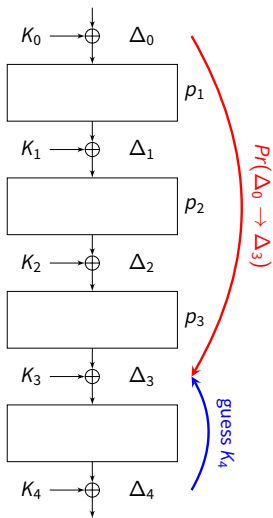
Maximum Differential Probability is defined as

$$DP_{max}^f := \max_{\Delta u \neq 0, \Delta v} DP^f(\Delta u \rightarrow \Delta v).$$

In the previous example

$$DP_{max}^S = \max_{\Delta u \neq 0, \Delta v} \frac{|\{x \text{ s.t. } S(x \oplus \Delta u) \oplus S(x) = \Delta v\}|}{16} = \frac{10}{16}$$

# Basic Approach of a Differential Attack

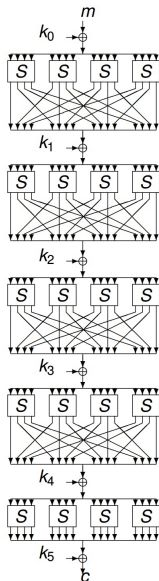


1. Find “good” differential characteristic

$$\Delta_0 \rightarrow \Delta_1 \rightarrow \Delta_2 \rightarrow \Delta_3$$

2. Guess final key  $K'_4$  and compute backward through the S-Boxes to determine  $\Delta'_3$
3. The right key satisfies  $\Delta'_3 = \Delta_3$  with probability  $Pr(\Delta_0 \rightarrow \Delta_3)$ , while a wrong key satisfies  $\Delta'_3 = \Delta_3$  with probability  $1/|\mathcal{P}| = 2^{-n}$  ( $\mathcal{P} = \mathbb{F}_2^n$  is the plaintext space).
4. *Necessary condition* for the attack:  
 $Pr(\Delta_0 \rightarrow \Delta_3) \gg 1/|\mathcal{P}| = 2^{-n}$ .

# A 4-round Toy-Cipher



The 4-bit **S-Box**  $S$  - remember:  $y = S(x)$  - is defined

as

$x$	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
$S(x)$	6	4	c	5	0	7	2	e

$x$	8	9	a	b	c	d	e	f
$S(x)$	1	f	3	d	8	a	9	b

Bit (linear) **permutation**  $P$  - remember:  $y_{P(i)} = x_i$  - is

defined as

$i$	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
$P(i)$	0	4	8	12	1	5	9	13

$i$	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
$P(i)$	2	6	10	14	3	7	11	15

# 1-round Characteristic

The 1-round characteristic for ToyCipher

$$(0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0)$$

holds with probability  $6/16$  due to the following facts

1. equation  $S(x \oplus 2) \oplus S(x) = 2$  admits 6 different solutions:  
→ probability that input difference 2 is mapped to output difference 2 is  $6/16$
2. details of the permutation layer

## Characteristic and Differential

The 1-round characteristic for ToyCipher

$$(0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0)$$

holds with probability  $6/16$ .

The 4-round **characteristic** for ToyCipher

$$(0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0)$$

holds with probability  $(6/16)^4 = \frac{81}{4096}$ .

The 4-round **differential** for ToyCipher

$$(0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow ? \rightarrow ? \rightarrow ? \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0)$$

holds with probability higher than  $\frac{324}{4096}$ .



# Characteristic and Differential

The 1-round characteristic for ToyCipher

$$(0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0)$$

holds with probability  $6/16$ .

The 4-round **characteristic** for ToyCipher

$$(0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0)$$

holds with probability  $(6/16)^4 = \frac{81}{4096}$ .

The 4-round **differential** for ToyCipher

$$(0, 0, 2, 0) \rightarrow ? \rightarrow ? \rightarrow ? \rightarrow (0, 0, 2, 0)$$

holds with probability higher than  $\frac{324}{4096}$ .

## Characteristic and Differential

- An  $s$ -round **characteristic** is a sequence of differences, denoted as an  $(s + 1)$ -tuple  $(\Delta_0, \Delta_1, \dots, \Delta_s)$ , where  $\Delta_i$  is the difference between the values of the partially encrypted messages after  $i$  rounds and  $\Delta_0$  is the difference between the plaintexts.
- An  $s$ -round **differential** is a pair of differences  $(\Delta_0, \Delta_s)$ , where  $\Delta_s$  is the expected difference after  $s$  rounds and  $\Delta_0$  represents the chosen value of  $\Delta m$ .

Note:

$$Pr(\Delta_0 \rightarrow \Delta_s) \geq Pr(\Delta_0 \rightarrow \Delta_1 \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow \Delta_s)$$

# Wide Trail Design Strategy: AES

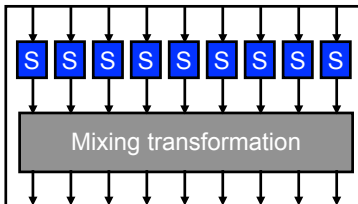
# Defending against Differential Cryptanalysis

- To prevent Differential Cryptanalysis: *keep the probability of each characteristic/differential as low as possible*
  - Since it is difficult to compute the exact probability, compute “bounds”
  - Strategy:
    - compute “Maximum Differential Probability” of the S-Box  $DP_{max}^{SBox}$
    - compute a (lower) bound of the number of active S-Boxes
- ⇒ design S-Boxes with low maximum values  $DP_{max}$
- ⇒ *design mixing layers which result in many active S-Boxes*

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- ⇒ *design mixing layers which result in many active S-Boxes*

## SPN: Single-Round Optimization



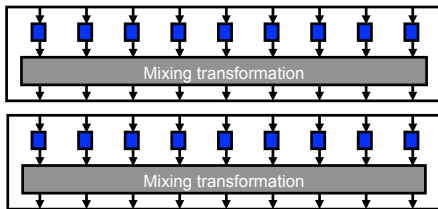
Relevant:

- Number of active components (S-Boxes) in input
- Worst-case (max) differential probability in S-Box

Result:

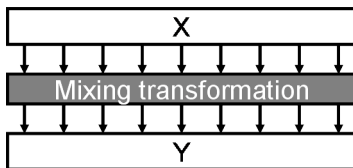
- bound of 1 active S-Box per round (= minimum number of active S-Boxes) - Mixing Transformation is *irrelevant* (in this case)
- we need to design large S-Boxes with small  $DP_{max}$

## SPN: Two-Round Optimization



- Relevant: number of active S-Boxes in input and after first round
  - The number of active S-Boxes after the first round depends on the (linear) *mixing transformation*
    - Branch number  $\mathcal{B}$ : *minimum number of active S-Boxes in two consecutive rounds*
- ⇒ Provides a bound of  $\mathcal{B}$  active S-Boxes per two rounds

## SPN: Designing the Mixing Transformation



Given  $Y = m(X)$  linear, then

$$\mathcal{B} \leq 1 + \text{total number of components (= number of S-Boxes) in } Y$$

$\Rightarrow$  Design a Mixing Transformation  $m$  that maximizes  $\mathcal{B}$

A linear transformation that maximizes  $\mathcal{B}$  is called **MDS** (= Maximum Distance Separable)



# AES: Iterated Block Cipher

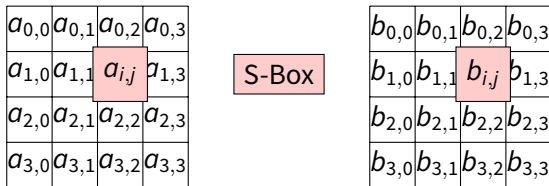
Advanced Encryption Standard (128-, 192-, 256-bit keys)

- 10, 12, 14 times applying the same round function
- State of  $4 \times 4$  bytes (128 bits)
- Round function: composed of 4 steps

$$R_K(\cdot) = K \oplus MC \circ SR \circ \text{S-Box}(\cdot)$$

- Each step has its own particular functionality!

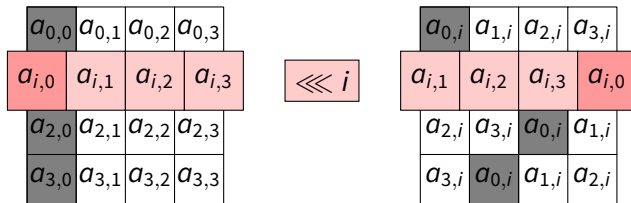
## SubBytes



- Bytes are transformed by invertible S-Box with  $b_{i,j} = S(a_{i,j})$
- Same S-Box (lookup table) for the whole cipher:
  - based on multiplicative inverse in  $GF(2^8)$
  - What about  $DP_{max}$ ?

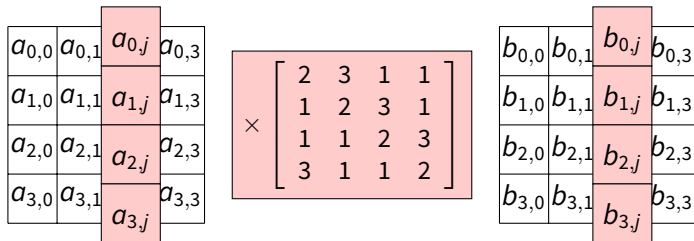
$$DP_{max}(\text{AES S-Box}) = \frac{4}{256}$$

# ShiftRows



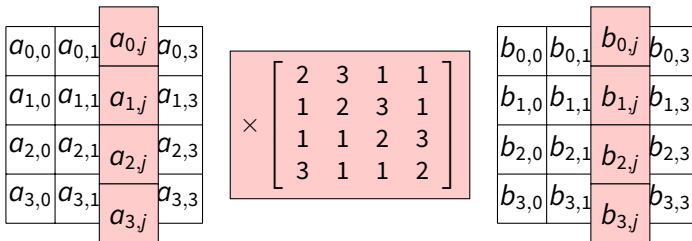
- Rows are rotated over 4 different offsets
- “*Optimal Diffusion*”: two bytes in the same column are mapped into different columns after ShiftRows operation

# MixColumns



- Columns transformed by  $4 \times 4$  matrix over  $GF(2^8)$
- Linear function with Branch number  $\mathcal{B} = 5$ 
  - **MDS matrix** (i.e. linear function that maximizes  $\mathcal{B}$ )
- Together with ShiftRows, *high diffusion* over multiple rounds:
  - minimum  $\mathcal{B}^2 = 25$  active S-Boxes for 4 rounds

## MixColumns



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## Bounds in AES (1/2)

Diffusion in AES:

- MixColumns: branch number 5
- ShiftRows: Diffusion-optimal

⇒ *lower bound* for number of active S-Boxes per 4 rounds: 25

As example



where: *white byte* = zero XOR-difference - *black byte* = non-zero XOR-difference

## Bounds in AES (2/2)



- Diffusion in AES: *lower bound* for number of active S-Boxes per 4 rounds = 25
- AES S-Box:
  - differential probability (DP)  $\leq 4/256 = 2^{-6}$ , that is  $DP_{max} = 2^{-6}$
- Provable bound:
  - probability of 4-round AES characteristic  $\leq (2^{-6})^{25} = 2^{-150}$
  - remember: given a fixed input difference, each output difference has prob.  $2^{-128}$

## Remark on resistance against DC

- **Remember:** characteristics are not differentials (differentials have much higher probability than characteristics)
  - What is the EDP (= Expected Differential Probability) of  $r$ -round AES?
    - easy for  $r = 1$ , i.e. for a single S-Box ( $DP_{max}$ )
    - for  $r = 2$  rounds, EDP has been computed (exhaustive search)
    - more rounds  $r \geq 3$ : unknown
  - Huge margin anyway (max.  $2^{-150}$  for 4-round characteristic and AES is composed of 10 rounds)
- ⇒ Standard differential attack on full AES is infeasible



## Closing Remarks

- Block ciphers are important in practice
- Design approaches are bottom-up
  - Start from simple components
  - Make something you can't break
  - Determined by state of the art in cryptanalysis
- Challenges
  - Provable security
  - Performance/cost in constrained platforms

Thanks for your attention!

Questions?

Comments?

## Why Prob. 1/16 for a Wrong Guessed Key?

Observe:

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta v' \equiv \Delta w' &= S^{-1}(c_0 \oplus k'_2) \oplus S^{-1}(c_1 \oplus k'_2) = \\ &= S^{-1}(S(w_0) \oplus k_2 \oplus k'_2) \oplus S^{-1}(S(w_1) \oplus k_2 \oplus k'_2)\end{aligned}$$

- If  $k_2 = k'_2$ , then  $\Delta v' = w_0 \oplus w_1 = \Delta v$ , that is  $\Delta v' = d$  with prob. 10/16;
- Otherwise, *since  $k_2$  is unknown and uniformly distributed*, it is possible to show that  $\Delta v' = d$  with *approximately* prob. 1/16

(“Wrong-key randomization hypothesis”)