

DVWA Lab Setup Guide – Hacking Practice

DVWA (Damn Vulnerable Web Application) is a deliberately vulnerable PHP/MySQL web app for learning and practicing web vulnerabilities such as XSS, SQLi, CSRF, etc.

1. Requirements

- OS: Kali Linux, Ubuntu, or any Debian-based distro
 - Apache2 (Web Server)
 - MySQL/MariaDB (Database Server)
 - PHP
 - Git (for cloning DVWA repo)
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2. Install Dependencies

```
sudo apt update && sudo apt install apache2 mariadb-server php php-mysqli git -y
```

Enable and start Apache & MySQL:

```
sudo systemctl enable apache2
sudo systemctl start apache2
sudo systemctl enable mariadb
sudo systemctl start mariadb
```

3. Setup MySQL

Login to MySQL:

```
sudo mysql
```

Then run:

```
CREATE DATABASE dvwa;
CREATE USER 'dvwauser'@'localhost' IDENTIFIED BY 'dvwapass';
GRANT ALL PRIVILEGES ON dvwa.* TO 'dvwauser'@'localhost';
FLUSH PRIVILEGES;
EXIT;
```

4. Clone and Move DVWA Files

```
git clone https://github.com/digininja/DVWA.git
sudo mv DVWA /var/www/html/dvwa
```

Set permissions:

```
cd /var/www/html/
sudo chmod -R 777 dvwa
```

5. Configure DVWA

Edit the config file:

```
sudo cp /var/www/html/dvwa/config/config.inc.php.dist
/var/www/html/dvwa/config/config.inc.php
sudo nano /var/www/html/dvwa/config/config.inc.php
```

Update MySQL settings:

```
$_DVWA[ 'db_user' ] = 'dvwauser';
$_DVWA[ 'db_password' ] = 'dvwapass';
```

☒ 6. Enable PHP and Apache Modules

```
sudo phpenmod mysqli
sudo systemctl restart apache2
```

7. Access DVWA in Browser

Open:

```
http://127.0.0.1/dvwa
```

Click **Create / Reset Database** to initialize.

8. Set DVWA Security Level

DVWA Security Level: Go to **DVWA** > **Security** in the menu Set to:

- **Low** – For practicing basic vulnerabilities
 - **Medium/High** – For realistic challenges
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Tips

- Always reset the database if configs break.
 - Use Burp Suite with DVWA for intercepting HTTP requests.
 - Practice:
 - XSS (Reflected/Stored)
 - SQL Injection
 - File Upload
 - CSRF
 - Command Injection
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☒ DVWA is now ready for hacking practice!

Made by **Lucy – Your Hacking Trainer** 