

## Week 9 Workshop - Database Security



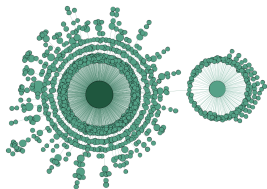


## Qing Wang

**Website:** <http://users.cecs.anu.edu.au/~u5170295/>  
<https://graphlabanu.github.io/website/>

**Zoom drop-in session:** Tuesday 2pm-3pm (Week 10 to Week 12)

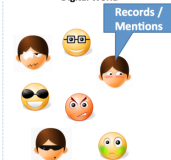
**Research areas:** Data management and analytics  
Data mining  
Deep learning on graphs  
Graph algorithms.



Real World



Digital World



## House Keeping

- Lab 8 (Database programming) in Week 10 is optional - three options. A sign-up page is available on Wattle.
- Assignment 2 (Database Theory) is due at 23:59, Oct 12.

## Week 9 Workshop - Database Security



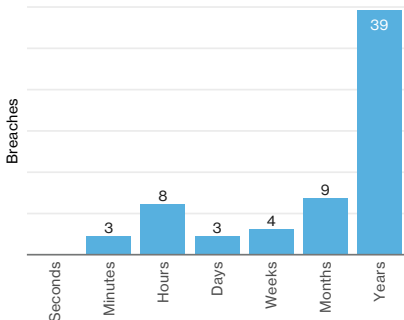


“Hardware is easy to protect: lock it in a room, chain it to a desk, or buy a spare. Information poses more of a problem. It can exist in more than one place; be transported halfway across the planet in seconds; and be stolen without your knowledge.”

– Bruce Schneier

## Data Breaches

- In 80% of cases, attackers are able to compromise an organization within minutes. However, in almost 60% of cases, it takes years to learn that they have been breached.<sup>1</sup>



Time-to-discovery within Public breaches (n=66)

<sup>1</sup> Verizon 2016&2017 Data Breach Investigation Reports

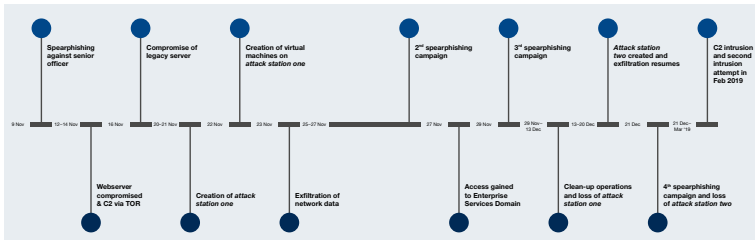
## Data Breaches

- June 2019, ANU community was notified of a data breach.

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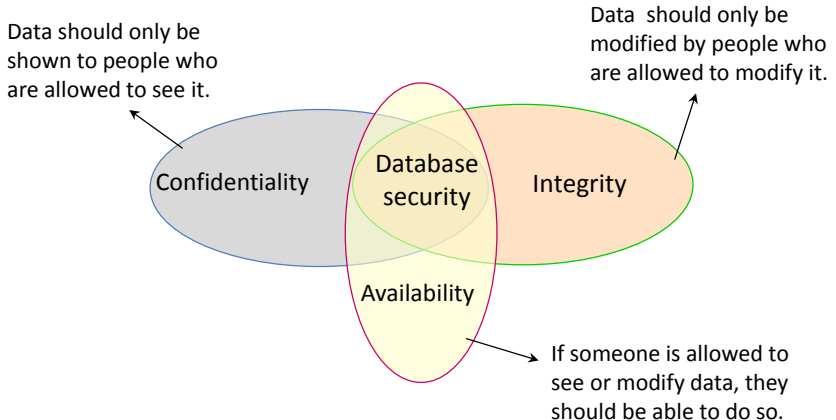
“It’s shocking in its sophistication”



“While we cannot confirm exactly what data was taken, we know it was much less than the 19 years’ worth we originally reported”



## Objectives of Database Security



## Database Security - Examples

- 1 *A health-care information system*



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  - A patient's medical information should not be improperly disclosed.



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- A patient's medical information should be correct.



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- The target of a missile cannot be given to an unauthorized user.

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- The target of a missile cannot be given to an unauthorized user.
- The target of a missile cannot be arbitrarily modified.
- The target of a missile can be accessed when needed.



## Database Security - Core Services

- Confidentiality
- Integrity
- Availability



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- **Confidentiality**
  - E.g. enforced by access control mechanisms
- **Integrity**
- **Availability**



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  - E.g. enforced by recovery and concurrency control mechanisms

Some further services

- **Encryption**: to protect data when being transmitted across systems and when being stored on secondary storage
- **Query authentication**: to ensure a query result is correct by using signature mechanisms and data structures
- ...



# Access Control Mechanisms

## Access Control Mechanisms

- Three types:
  - 1 Discretionary access control (DAC)
  - 2 Mandatory access control (MAC)
  - 3 Role-based access control (RBAC)



## Database Security - DAC

*Your objects at your own discretion!*

**Grant** privileges  
**Revoke** privileges  
**Delegate** privileges

Bob



Alice





## Granting/Revoking/Delegating Privileges

```
GRANT privileges ON object TO users [WITH GRANT OPTION]
```



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GRANT privileges ON object TO users [WITH GRANT OPTION]
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REVOKE [GRANT OPTION FOR] privileges ON object FROM users
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```
[RESTRICT|CASCADE]
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GRANT privileges ON object TO users [WITH GRANT OPTION]
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REVOKE [GRANT OPTION FOR] privileges ON object FROM users
```

```
[RESTRICT|CASCADE]
```

- Possible privileges:
  - SELECT
  - INSERT and INSERT(column)
  - UPDATE and UPDATE(column)
  - DELETE
  - REFERENCES(column)
  - ...

## Granting/Revoking/Delegating Privileges

- The privileges of an object can be given to a user **with** or **without** the GRANT OPTION

```
GRANT SELECT ON SUPPLIER TO Bob;
```

```
GRANT SELECT ON SUPPLIER TO Bob WITH GRANT OPTION;
```

## Granting/Revoking/Delegating Privileges

- The privileges of an object can be given to a user **with** or **without** the GRANT OPTION

```
GRANT SELECT ON SUPPLIER TO Bob;
```

```
GRANT SELECT ON SUPPLIER TO Bob WITH GRANT OPTION;
```

- The privileges of an object can be taken away from a user. It is also possible to **only** revoke the GRANT OPTION on a privilege.

```
REVOKE SELECT ON SUPPLIER FROM Bob;
```

```
REVOKE GRANT OPTION FOR SELECT ON SUPPLIER FROM Bob;
```

## Question

- In which situations a user can grant a privilege on an object to other users?
  - (1) The user is the owner of the object.
  - (2) The user has the privilege on the object.
  - (3) The user is a superuser of the database.
  - (4) The user has received the privilege with the `GRANT OPTION` from the owner of the object.

## Example - Granting Privileges

- Alice owns table EMPLOYEE:

```
(Alice): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Bob WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(Alice): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Jane WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(Alice): GRANT INSERT ON Employee TO Jane;  
      (Bob): GRANT UPDATE ON Employee TO Tom WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(Jane): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Tom;
```



## Example - Granting Privileges

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(Alice): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Bob WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(Alice): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Jane WITH GRANT OPTION;  
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(Jane): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Tom;
```

- Questions:
  - 1 What privilege(s) does Jane receive?

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      (Bob): GRANT UPDATE ON Employee TO Tom WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(Jane): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Tom;
```

- Questions:
  - 1 What privilege(s) does Jane receive?
  - 2 What privilege(s) does Tom receive?

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(Alice): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Bob WITH GRANT OPTION;  
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- Can these commands be executed?

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```

- Can these commands be executed?
  - The first three are fully executed.

## Example - Granting Privileges

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(Alice): GRANT INSERT ON Employee TO Jane;  
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(Jane): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Tom;
```

- Can these commands be executed?
  - The first three are fully executed.
  - The fourth one is not executed, because Bob does not have the UPDATE privilege on the table.

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(Alice): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Bob WITH GRANT OPTION;  
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(Alice): GRANT INSERT ON Employee TO Jane;  
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(Jane): GRANT SELECT, INSERT ON Employee TO Tom;
```

- Can these commands be executed?
  - The first three are fully executed.
  - The fourth one is not executed, because Bob does not have the UPDATE privilege on the table.
  - The fifth one is partially executed because Jane has the SELECT and INSERT privileges but no GRANT OPTION for INSERT. Therefore, Tom only receives the SELECT privilege.

## Granting/Revoking/Delegating Privileges

- A user can only revoke privileges that the user has granted earlier, with two optional keywords in the **REVOKE** command:
  - **CASCADE**: revoking the privilege from a specified user also revokes the privileges from all users who received the privilege from that user.
  - **RESTRICT**: revoking the privilege only from a specified user.

Possible implementations:

- (1) Causing an error message in some DBMS if the revoked privilege is still delegated;
  - (2) Revoking the privilege from the specified user in any case.
- If a user receives a certain privilege from multiple sources, and the user would lose the privilege only after all sources revoke this privilege.



## Example - Revoking Privileges

- Again, Alice owns table EMPLOYEE:

```
(Alice): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Bob WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(Alice): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Jane WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(Bob): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Tom;  
(Jane): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Tom;  
(Bob): REVOKE SELECT ON Employee FROM Tom;
```

- Will Tom lose the SELECT privilege on EMPLOYEE?

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(Alice): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Bob WITH GRANT OPTION;  
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(Bob): REVOKE SELECT ON Employee FROM Tom;
```

- Will Tom lose the SELECT privilege on EMPLOYEE?
  - Tom will still hold the SELECT privilege on EMPLOYEE, since he has independently obtained such privilege from Jane.

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(Jane): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Tom;  
(Alice): REVOKE SELECT ON Employee FROM Bob CASCADE;
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(Jane): GRANT SELECT ON Employee TO Tom;  
(Alice): REVOKE SELECT ON Employee FROM Bob CASCADE;
```

- Will Tom lose the SELECT privilege on EMPLOYEE?
  - Tom will lose the SELECT privilege on EMPLOYEE.

## Delegating Privileges - Propagation

- There are techniques to limit the propagation of privileges.
  - Limiting **horizontal propagation**: limits that an account given the GRANT OPTION can grant the privilege to at most  $n$  other accounts;
  - Limiting **vertical propagation**: limits the depth of the granting privileges.
- How can we keep track of privilege propagation?

## Privilege Propagation

- tuna owns:

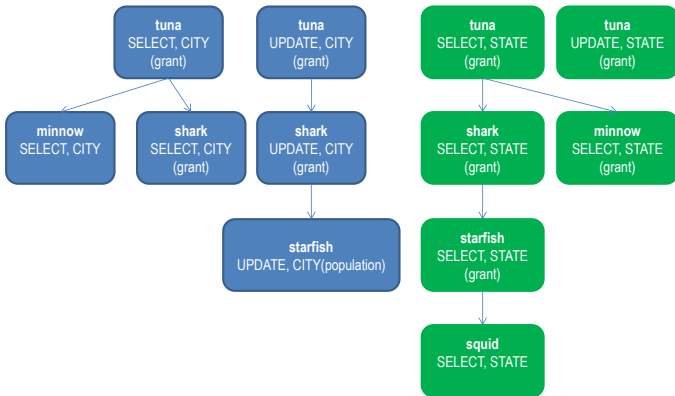
CITY(name, state, population)  
STATE(name, abbreviation, capital, area, population)

- The following commands are executed in order:

```
(tuna): GRANT SELECT, UPDATE ON CITY TO shark WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(tuna): GRANT SELECT ON CITY TO minnow;  
(tuna): GRANT SELECT ON STATE TO shark, minnow WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(shark): GRANT SELECT ON STATE TO starfish WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(shark): GRANT UPDATE (population) ON CITY TO starfish;  
(starfish): GRANT SELECT ON STATE TO squid;  
(shark): ...
```

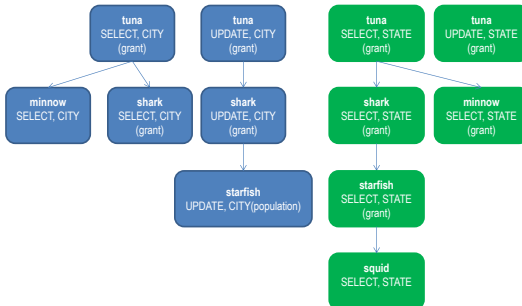
## Privilege Propagation

- A **grant graph** can be used to keep track of privilege propagation.





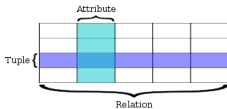
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(tuna): GRANT SELECT, UPDATE ON CITY TO shark WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(tuna): GRANT SELECT ON CITY TO minnow;  
(tuna): GRANT SELECT ON STATE TO shark, minnow WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(shark): GRANT SELECT ON STATE TO starfish WITH GRANT OPTION;  
(shark): GRANT UPDATE (population) ON CITY TO starfish;  
(starfish): GRANT SELECT ON STATE TO squid;
```



## Using Views

```
CREATE VIEW view_name AS
SELECT attribute_list
FROM table_list
...
```

- Views can be used to create a “window” on a collection of data that is appropriate for some users to access.



### Some examples:

- 1 The owner  $A$  of a relation  $R$  wants to give a user  $B$  read access to some columns of  $R$ .  $A$  can create a view  $V_1$  that includes only those columns.
- 2 The owner  $A$  of a relation  $R$  wants to give a user  $B$  read access to some rows of  $R$ .  $A$  can create view  $V_2$  that selects only those rows from  $R$ .

## Using Views

- EXAMS(CourseID, StudtID, Grade, Date)

```
(Tom): CREATE VIEW HardCourses AS
        SELECT CourseID, AVG(Grade) AS Difficulty FROM EXAMS
        GROUP BY CourseID
        Having AVG(Grade) ≤ 50;
```

```
(Tom): CREATE VIEW AllCourses AS
        SELECT CourseID, Grade FROM EXAMS;
```

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*Your objects at your own discretion!*

**Grant** privileges  
**Revoke** privileges  
**Delegate** privileges

Bob



Alice



## Database Security - DAC

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Alice



– GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Alice;

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Alice



- GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Alice;
- REVOKE SELECT ON tableB FROM Alice;

## Database Security - DAC

Bob



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Alice



- GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Alice;
- REVOKE SELECT ON tableB FROM Alice;
- GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Alice

**WITH GRANT OPTION;**

## Database Security - DAC

Bob



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Alice



- GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Alice;
- REVOKE SELECT ON tableB FROM Alice;
- GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Alice  
WITH GRANT OPTION;
- REVOKE GRANT OPTION FOR SELECT  
ON tableB FROM Alice;



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- GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Alice;
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  - GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Alice  
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ON tableB FROM Alice;
- GRANT SELECT ON tableA TO Bob;

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ON tableB FROM Alice;
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ON tableB FROM Alice;
- GRANT SELECT ON tableA TO Bob;
- REVOKE SELECT ON tableA FROM Bob;
- GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Tom;

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Bob



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- GRANT SELECT ON tableB TO Tom;
- REVOKE SELECT ON tableB FROM Tom;

## Database Security - MAC

### Security Clearance



Bob  
(Top secret)



Alice  
(Secret)



Jane  
(Confidential)



Tom  
(Unclassified)

### Security Class



(Top secret)



(Secret)



(Confidential)



(Unclassified)

System-wide policies govern controlled access to classified information.

## Mandatory Access Control

- It is based the **Bell-LaPadula** model (originally developed for U.S. Department of Defense multilevel security policy).
  - Subjects (e.g. users) are assigned *security clearances*;
  - Objects (e.g. rows, tables, views) are assigned *security classes*.

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(TS: Top secret, S: Secret, C: Confidential, U: Unclassified)

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- Two rules are enforced by the model:
  - 1 Subject  $X$  can read object  $Y$  only if  $clearance(X) \geq class(Y)$ .  
↪ **Read down**
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↪ **Read down**
  - Subject  $X$  can write object  $Y$  only if  $clearance(X) \leq class(Y)$ .  
↪ **Write up**
- The key idea is “**preventing information in high level objects from flowing to low level subjects**”.



## Mandatory Access Control

- **Multilevel relations:** Assume that each row is assigned a security class. Then users with different security clearances see a different collection of rows when they access the same table.

city	rating	security class
Paris	4	secret (S)
Canberra	5	confidential (C)

- Bob with C clearance can only access the second tuple.
- Peter with S clearance can access both tuples.

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  - 1 What would happen?

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- Suppose that city is the primary key, and Bob with C clearance wishes to add a row (*Paris*, 4, *confidential*(C)).
  - 1 What would happen? The first record may be (partial) inferred.
  - 2 How to solve the potential security issues? whiteTreating security class as part of the primary key.

## Database Security - MAC

### Security Clearance



Bob  
(Top secret)



Alice  
(Secret)



Jane  
(Confidential)



Tom  
(Unclassified)

### Security Class



(Top secret)



(Secret)



(Confidential)



(Unclassified)

- **Read down:** Subject X can read object Y only if  $\text{clearance}(X) \geq \text{class}(Y)$ .
- **Write up:** Subject X can write object Y only if  $\text{clearance}(X) \leq \text{class}(Y)$ .

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- How do DAC and MAC differ from each other?



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- How do DAC and MAC differ from each other?
  - **DAC is very flexible but complex.**
    - Owners decide how their data is shared.
    - A user may have different privileges on different objects.
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    - ...



## DAC vs MAC

- How do DAC and MAC differ from each other?
  - **DAC is very flexible but complex.**
    - Owners decide how their data is shared.
    - A user may have different privileges on different objects.
    - Different users may have different privileges on the same object.
    - ...
  - **MAC is comparatively rigid.**
    - The system decides how data is shared.
    - Each object is given a security class, and each user is given a security clearance.
    - An object can then be accessed by users with the appropriate clearance.
    - ...

## DAC - Limitations

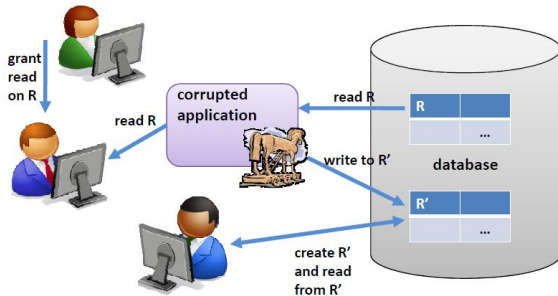
- Suppose that Alice owns a table  $R$ .
  - Alice gives Bob the `SELECT` privilege to read it, but not Steve. However, Steve may steal the information in  $R$  from Bob.
  - How?

## DAC - Limitations

- Suppose that Alice owns a table  $R$ .
  - Alice gives Bob the `SELECT` privilege to read it, but not Steve. However, Steve may steal the information in  $R$  from Bob.
  - How? **Trojan Horse attacks.**

## DAC - Limitations

- **Trojan Horse attacks:** If Steve tricks Bob into copying data from table  $R$  into table  $R'$ , then the access control on table  $R$  doesn't apply to the copy of the data in table  $R'$ .



- Can this problem occur in MAC?

## DAC - Limitations

- DAC does not impose any restriction on the usage once data has been obtained by a user, i.e., the dissemination of data is not controlled.
- MAC prevents illegitimate flow of information by attaching security classes to objects and security clearances to subjects.

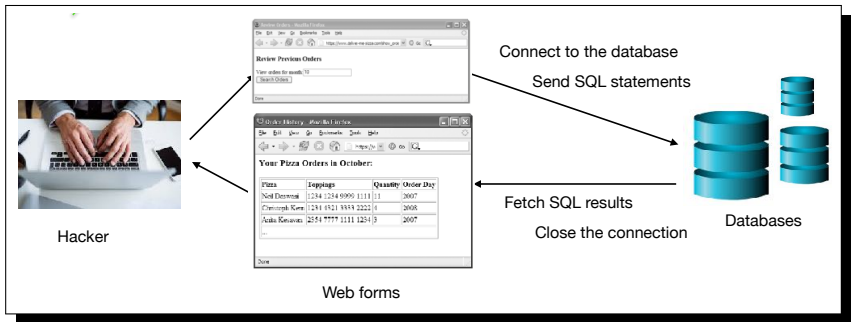
# SQL Injection Attacks

## SQL Injection Attacks

- SQL injection is one of the most basic and oldest tricks hackers use to get into websites and their backend databases.
- Web applications often access a database by
  - 1 Connect to the database;
  - 2 Send SQL statements to the database;↔ **SQL Injection!**
  - 3 Fetch the result and display data from the database;
  - 4 Close the connection.

## SQL Injection Attacks

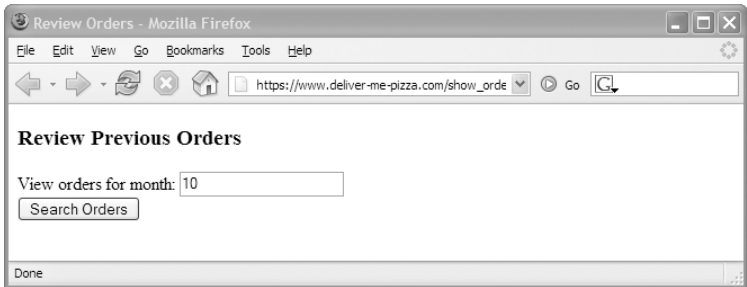
- Many web applications take user input from a form.
- A user input is used in constructing a SQL query submitted to a database.
- A SQL injection attack involves manipulating queries through the user input.





## SQL Injection - Example

- Consider a pizza-ordering application that allows users to review the orders they have made in a given month.



The pizza order review form

## SQL Injection - Example

- When the form is submitted, it results in an HTTP request to the application:

*[https://www.deliver-me-pizza.com/show\\_orders?month=10](https://www.deliver-me-pizza.com/show_orders?month=10)*

- When receiving such a request, the application constructs an SQL query:

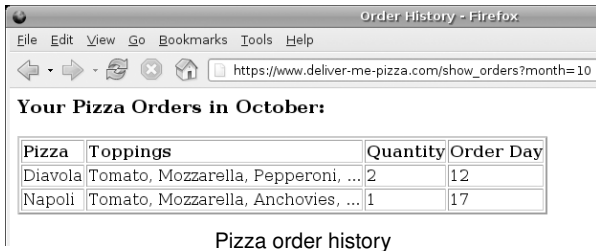
```
sql_query = "SELECT pizza, toppings, quantity, order_day "  
            + "FROM orders "  
            + "WHERE userid=" + session.getCurrentUserId() + " "  
            + "AND order_month=" + request.getParameter("month");
```

- Assuming that the current user's userid is 1234, we have:

```
SELECT pizza, toppings, quantity, order_day  
FROM orders  
WHERE userid=1234 AND order_month=10
```

## SQL Injection - Example

- The application then executes the query and retrieves the result set.



The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window titled "Order History - Firefox". The address bar displays the URL `https://www.deliver-me-pizza.com/show_orders?month=10`. Below the browser window, the text "Your Pizza Orders in October:" is displayed. Underneath this text is a table with four columns: "Pizza", "Toppings", "Quantity", and "Order Day". The table contains two rows of data: one for "Diavola" with toppings "Tomato, Mozzarella, Pepperoni, ..." and quantity 2, ordered on the 12th; and another for "Napoli" with toppings "Tomato, Mozzarella, Anchovies, ..." and quantity 1, ordered on the 17th.

Pizza	Toppings	Quantity	Order Day
Diavola	Tomato, Mozzarella, Pepperoni, ...	2	12
Napoli	Tomato, Mozzarella, Anchovies, ...	1	17

Pizza order history

- How can this application be attacked?

## SQL Injection - Example

- What would happen if an attacker replaces '10' with '0 OR 1=1'?



- Alternatively, the attacker may modify the HTTP request, e.g.,

*[https://www.deliver-me-pizza.com/show\\_orders?month=0%20OR%201%3D1](https://www.deliver-me-pizza.com/show_orders?month=0%20OR%201%3D1)*

Then `request.getParameter("month")` extracts '0%20OR%201%3D1' and returns the string '0 OR 1=1'.

## SQL Injection - Example

- The SQL query that the application constructs and sends to the database now becomes:

```
SELECT pizza, toppings, quantity, order_day  
FROM orders  
WHERE userid=4123 AND order_month=0 OR 1=1
```

- Since the operator precedence of the AND operator is higher than that of OR, the WHERE condition is equivalent to

```
WHERE (userid=4123 AND order_month=0) OR 1=1
```

- What happened?

The (malicious) user supplied a parameter that, once inserted into the SQL query string, actually altered the meaning of the query!

## SQL Injection - Example

- However, the attacker might be able to do even more damage, e.g., making a request such that the request parameter month evaluates to:

```
0 AND 1=0
```

```
UNION
```

```
SELECT cardholder, number, exp_month, exp_year
```

```
FROM creditcards
```

- Then, the SQL query that the application constructs and sends to the database becomes:

```
SELECT pizza, toppings, quantity, order_day
```

```
FROM orders
```

```
WHERE userid=4123 AND order_month=0 AND 1=0
```

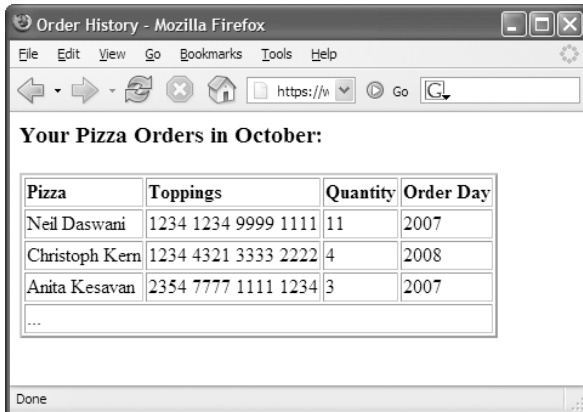
```
UNION
```

```
SELECT cardholder, number, exp_month, exp_year
```

```
FROM creditcards
```

## SQL Injection - Example

- As a result, the attacker receives an HTML page that contains the entire content of the creditcards table.



## SQL Injection Attacks

- How can we prevent SQL injection attacks?
- Can SQL injection attacks be prevented by any of the following security solutions?
  - 1 **Firewall**  
i.e., monitors and controls the incoming and outgoing network traffic based on predetermined security rules
  - 2 **Intrusion detection system (IDS)**  
i.e., monitors a network or systems for malicious activity or policy violations
  - 3 **Authentication**  
i.e., the process by which a system can identify users



## SQL Injection Attacks - Protection Techniques

- Several techniques of input validation:
  - **Blacklisting?**

i.e., blacklist quotes, semicolons, etc. from the input string. However, if you forget to blacklist just one type of dangerous character, it could give rise to a successful attack.
  - **Whitelisting?**

i.e., explicitly test whether a given input is within a well-defined set of values that are known to be safe, e.g., the parameter month is a string that represents a non-negative integer.
  - **Escaping?**

i.e., transform dangerous input characters to turn a potentially dangerous input string into a sanitized one, e.g., `escape(o'connor)= o"connor` (the double quote is the escaped version of the single quote).

## SQL Injection Attacks - Protection Techniques

- The recommended solution: **Parameterized Queries**

Two steps:

- 1 The statement is prepared (parsed and compiled), in which ? is used as place-holders for the actual parameters.
- 2 The actual parameters are passed to the prepared statement for execution.

```
PreparedStatement stmt=conn.prepareStatement(  
    "SELECT pizza, toppings, quantity, order_day "  
    + "FROM orders WHERE userid=? AND order_month=?");  
stmt.setInt(1, session.getCurrentUserId());  
stmt.setInt(2, Integer.parseInt(request.getParameter("month")));  
  
ResultSet res = ps.executeQuery();
```

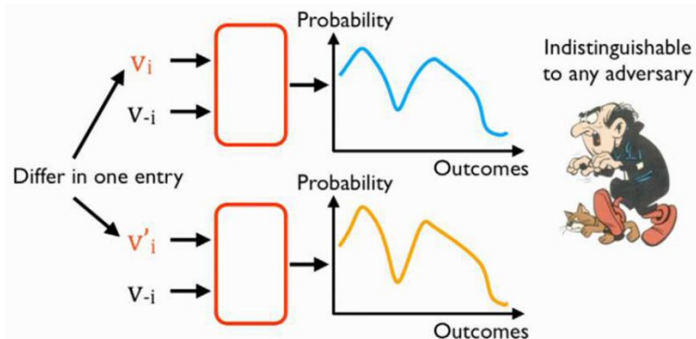
- The key idea is “**separation between control and data**”!



# Research Topics

## Research Topics

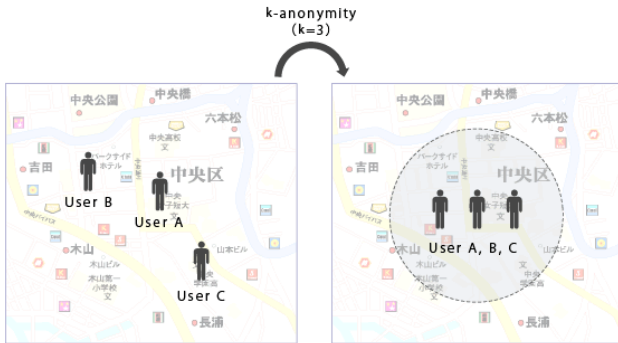
- Differential privacy



- What Apple's differential privacy means for your data and the future machine learning: <https://techcrunch.com/2016/06/14/differential-privacy/>
- Learning with privacy at scale: <https://machinelearning.apple.com/research/learning-with-privacy-at-scale>

## Research Topics

- Data anonymization



Can identify the user's detailed location from latitude and longitude.

When the location information is blurred, it becomes impossible to tell who is where in the circle.

- k-anonymity: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K-anonymity>