

CSE 127: Computer Security

Buffer overflow defenses

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Some slides adopted from Nadia Heninger, Kirill Levchenko, Stefan Savage, and Stephen Checkoway

Today: mitigating buffer overflows

Lecture objectives:

- Understand how to mitigate buffer overflow attacks
- Understand the trade-offs of different mitigations
- Understand how mitigations can be bypassed

Can we just avoid writing C code that has buffer overflow bugs?

Yes! Avoid unsafe functions!

- strcpy, strcat, gets, etc.
- This is a good idea in general...

Yes! Avoid unsafe functions!

- strcpy, strcat, gets, etc.
- This is a good idea in general...
- But...
 - Requires manual code rewrite
 - Non-library functions may be vulnerable
 - E.g. user creates their own strcpy
 - No guarantee you found everything
 - Alternatives are also error-prone!

Even printf is tricky

If buf is under control of attacker is: printf("%s\n", buf) safe?

A:yes, B: no

Even printf is tricky

If buf is under control of attacker is: printf(buf) safe?

A:yes, B: no

Even printf is tricky

Is printf("%s\n") safe?

A:yes, B: no

printf can be used to read and write memory control flow hijacking!

Exploiting Format String Vulnerabilities

scut / team teso
September 1, 2001

If we can't avoid writing buggy C code... Can we prevent/mitigate their exploitation?

Buffer overflow mitigations

- Avoid unsafe functions
- Stack canaries
 - Separate control stack
 - Memory writable or executable, not both (W^X)
 - Address space layout randomization (ASLR)

Miner's canary [edit]

Canaries were used as sentinel species for use in detecting carbon monoxide in coal mining from around 1913 when the idea was suggested by John Scott Haldane.^[14] Toxic gases such as carbon monoxide or asphyxiant gases such as methane^[15] in the mine would affect the bird before affecting the miners. Signs of distress from the bird indicated to the miners that conditions were unsafe. The birds were generally kept in carriers which had small oxygen bottles attached to revive the birds, so that they could be used multiple times within the mine.^[16] The use of miners' canaries in British mines was phased out in 1986.^[17][18]

The phrase "canary in a coal mine" is frequently used to refer to a person or thing which serves as an early warning of a coming crisis. By analogy, the term "climate canary" is used to refer to a species (called an indicator species) that is affected by an environmental danger prior to other species, thus serving as an early warning system for the other species with regard to the danger.^[19]

Stack canaries

Prevent control flow hijacking by detecting overflows

• Idea:

- Place canary between local variables and saved frame pointer (and return address)
- Check canary before jumping to return address

Approach:

Modify function prologues and epilogues

Example (at a high level)

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
                                                    argv[1]
#include <string.h>
                                                   0xbbbbbbbb
void foo() {
 printf("hello all!!\n");
                                                   0xaaaaaaaa
 exit(0);
                                                   saved ret
                                                   saved ebp
void func(int a, int b, char *str) {
                                       %ebp
 int c = 0xdeadbeef;
                                                     canary
 char buf[4];
 strcpy(buf,str);
                                                   0xdeadbeef
                                                    buf[0-3]
int main(int argc, char**argv) {
 return 0;
                                       %esp
```

Compiled, without canaries

```
#include <stdio.h>
    #include <stdlib.h>
    #include <string.h>
    void foo() {
                                                                       func(int, int, char*):
 6
      printf("hello all!!\n");
                                                                               pushl
                                                                                       %ebp
 7
      exit(0);
                                                                               movl
                                                                                       %esp, %ebp
 8
                                                                               subl
                                                                                       $24, %esp
 9
                                                                               movl
                                                                                       $-559038737, -12(%ebp)
    void func(int a, int b, char *str) {
10
                                                                               subl
                                                                                       $8, %esp
      int c = 0xdeadbeef;
11
                                                                                      16(%ebp)
                                                                               pushl
12
      char buf[4];
                                                                               leal
                                                                                       -16(%ebp), %eax
13
      strcpy(buf,str);
                                                                                       %eax
                                                                               pushl
14
                                                                               call
                                                                                       strcpy
15
                                                                               addl
                                                                                       $16, %esp
16
     int main(int argc, char**argv) {
                                                                               nop
17
      leave
18
      return 0;
                                                                               ret
19
```

With -fstack-protector-strong

```
#include <stdio.h>
     #include <stdlib.h>
     #include <string.h>
     void foo() {
                                                                          func(int, int, char*):
 6
       printf("hello all!!\n");
                                                                                  pushl
                                                                                          %ebp
 7
       exit(0);
                                                                                          %esp, %ebp
                                                                                  movl
 8
                                                                                          $40, %esp
                                                                                  subl
                                                                                          16(%ebp), %eax
 9
                                                                                  movl
     void func(int a, int b, char *str) {
                                                                                  movl
                                                                                          %eax, -28(%ebp)
10
                                                                                          %gs:20, %eax
       int c = 0xdeadbeef;
11
                                                                                          %eax, -12(%ebp)
                                                                                  movl
12
       char buf[4];
                                                                                  xorl
                                                                                          %eax, %eax
13
       strcpy(buf,str);
                                                                                          $-559038737, -20(%ebp)
                                                                                  movl
14
                                                                                          $8, %esp
                                                                                  subl
15
                                                                                          -28(%ebp)
                                                                                  pushl
16
     int main(int argc, char**argv) {
                                                                                  leal
                                                                                          -16(%ebp), %eax
17
       pushl
                                                                                          %eax
18
       return 0;
                                                                                  call
                                                                                          strcpy
19
                                                                                          $16, %esp
                                                                                  addl
                                                                                  nop
                                                                                  movl
                                                                                          -12(%ebp), %eax
                                                                                  xorl
                                                                                          %gs:20, %eax
                                                                                          .L3
                                                                                  jе
                                                                                  call
                                                                                           stack chk fail
                                                                          .L3:
                                                                                  leave
                                                                                  ret
```

With -fstack-protector-strong

.L3:

leave ret

write canary from %gs:20 to stack -12(%ebp)

compare canary in %gs:20 to that on stack -12(%ebp)

```
func(int, int, char*):
        pushl
                 %ebp
                 %esp, %ebp
        movl
                 $40, %esp
        subl
                 16(%ebp), %eax
                 %eax, -28(%ebp)
                 %gs:20, %eax
        movl
                 %eax, -12(%ebp)
        movl
                 %eax, %eax
        xorl
                 $-559038737, -20(%ebp)
        movl
        subl
                 $8, %esp
                 -28(%ebp)
        pushl
        leal
                 -16(%ebp), %eax
        pushl
                 %eax
        call
                 strcpy
                 $16, %esp
        addl
        nop
                 -12(%ebp), %eax
        movl
        xorl
                 %gs:20, %eax
                 .L3
        jе
        call
                   stack chk fail
```

Trade-offs

- Easy to deploy: Can implement mitigation as compiler pass (i.e., don't need to change your code)
- Performance: Every protected function is more expensive

-fstack-protector-strong

```
pushl %ebp
                 No stack protection
                                                                             $-559038737, -20(%ebp)
func(int, int, char*):
      pushl %ebp
                                                                           -28(%ebp)
      movl %esp, %ebp
                                                                            -16(%ebp), %eax
      subl $24, %esp
            $-559038737, -12(%ebp)
             $8, %esp
                                                                            $16, %esp
      pushl 16(%ebp)
             -16(%ebp), %eax
                                                                            -12(%ebp), %eax
                                                                            %gs:20, %eax
             $16, %esp
                                                                      call stack chk fail
                                                               .L3:
      leave
                                                                      leave
```

func(int, int, char*):

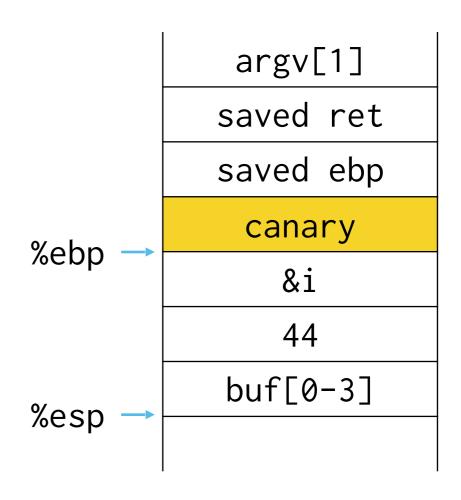
Can we defeat canaries?

- Assumption: impossible to subvert control flow without corrupting the canary
- Think outside the box

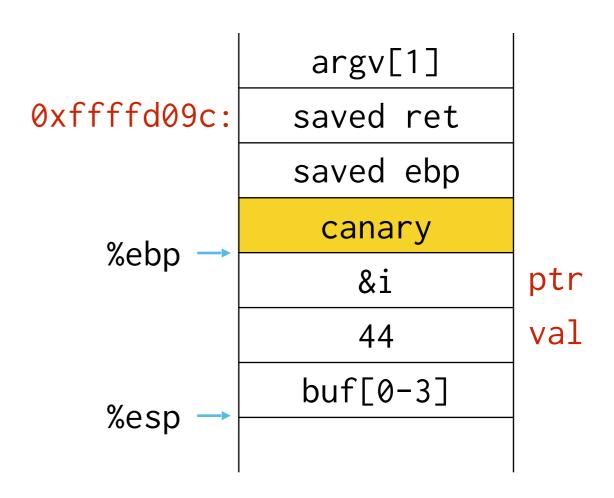
Can we defeat canaries?

- Assumption: impossible to subvert control flow without corrupting the canary
- Think outside the box
 - Overwrite function pointer elsewhere on the stack/heap
 - Pointer subterfuge
 - memcpy buffer overflow with fixed canary
 - Learn the canary

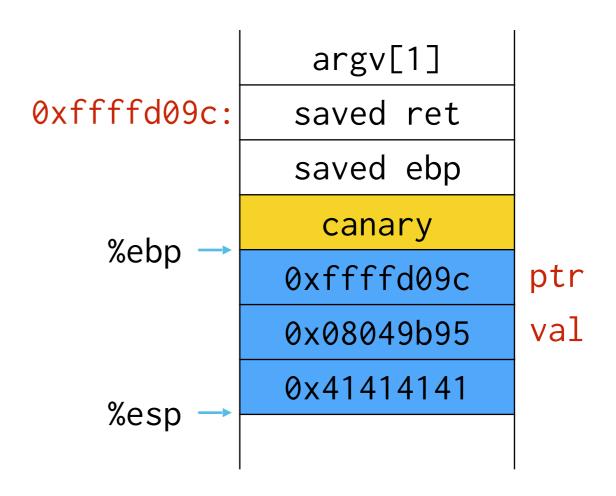
```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <string.h>
void foo() {
  printf("hello all!!\n");
  exit(0);
int i = 42;
void func(char *str) {
  int *ptr = &i;
  int val = 44;
 char buf[4];
  strcpy(buf,str);
  *ptr = val;
int main(int argc, char**argv) {
  func(argv[1]);
  return 0;
```



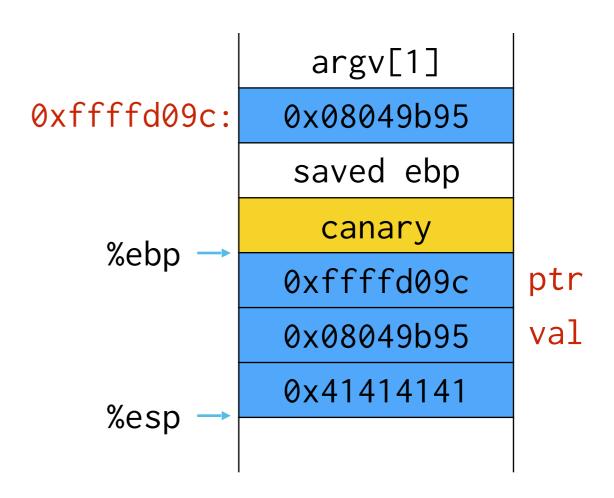
```
#include <stdio.h>
            #include <string.h>
            void foo() {
0x08049b95:
              printf("hello all!!\n");
              exit(0);
            int i = 42;
            void func(char *str) {
              int *ptr = &i;
              int val = 44;
             char buf[4];
              strcpy(buf,str);
              *ptr = val;
            int main(int argc, char**argv) {
              func(argv[1]);
              return 0;
```



```
#include <stdio.h>
            #include <string.h>
            void foo() {
0x08049b95:
              printf("hello all!!\n");
              exit(0);
            int i = 42;
            void func(char *str) {
              int *ptr = &i;
              int val = 44;
              char buf[4];
           strcpy(buf,str);
              *ptr = val;
            int main(int argc, char**argv) {
              func(argv[1]);
              return 0;
```



```
#include <stdio.h>
            #include <string.h>
            void foo() {
0x08049b95:
              printf("hello all!!\n");
              exit(0);
            int i = 42;
            void func(char *str) {
              int *ptr = &i;
              int val = 44;
              char buf[4];
              strcpy(buf,str);
            → *ptr = val;
            int main(int argc, char**argv) {
              func(argv[1]);
              return 0;
```



Overwrite function pointer on stack

```
void func(char *str) {
  void (*fptr)() = &bar;
  char buf[4];
  strcpy(buf,str);
  fptr()
}
```

Overwrite function pointer on stack

```
void func(char *str) {
  void (*fptr)() = &bar;
  char buf[4];
  strcpy(buf,str);
  fptr()
}
```

str
saved ret
saved ebp
canary
fptr
buf[0-3]

Or a function pointer argument

Or a function pointer argument

```
void func(char *str, void (*fptr)()) {
  char buf[4];
  strcpy(buf,str);
  fptr()
}
```

fptr	
str	
saved ret	
saved ebp	
canary	
buf[0-3]	

What can we do about this?

 Problem: Overflowing locals and arguments can allow attacker to hijack control flow

arg	
saved ret	
saved ebp	
canary	
local var	
local var	
buf[0-3]	

What can we do about this?

 Problem: Overflowing locals and arguments can allow attacker to hijack control flow

• Solution:

- Move buffers closer to canaries vs. lexical order
- Copy args to top of stack

arg	arg
saved ret	saved ret
saved ebp	saved ebp
canary	canary
local var	buf[0-3]
local var	local var
buf[0-3]	local var
	arg

-fstack-protector

- ➤ Functions with char bufs \geq ssp-buffer-size (default=8)
- Functions with variable sized alloca()s

- -fstack-protector
 - ➤ Functions with char bufs \geq ssp-buffer-size (default=8)
 - Functions with variable sized alloca()s
- -fstack-protector-strong
 - Functions with local arrays of any size/type
 - + Functions that have references to local stack variables

- -fstack-protector
 - ➤ Functions with char bufs \geq ssp-buffer-size (default=8)
 - Functions with variable sized alloca()s
- -fstack-protector-strong
 - Functions with local arrays of any size/type
 - + Functions that have references to local stack variables
- -fstack-protector-all:
 - All functions!

If we zoom in...

```
func(int, int, char*):
       pushl
                %ebp
               %esp, %ebp
        movl
        subl
              $40, %esp
       movl
               8(%ebp), %eax
               %eax, -28(%ebp)
        movl
               12(%ebp), %eax
       movl
       movl
               %eax, -32(%ebp)
               16(%ebp), %eax
       movl
               %eax, -36(%ebp)
        movl
               %gs:20, %eax
       movl
               %eax, -12(%ebp)
       movl
        xorl
               %eax, %eax
               $-559038737, -20(%ebp)
        movl
               $8, %esp
        subl
       pushl
               -36(%ebp)
        leal
               -16(%ebp), %eax
       pushl
               %eax
        call
                strcpy
        addl
               $16, %esp
       nop
               -12(%ebp), %eax
        movl
               %gs:20, %eax
        xorl
        jе
                .L4
        call
                stack chk fail
.L4:
        leave
        ret
```

If we zoom in...

```
func(int, int, char*):
                     pushl
                             %ebp
                             %esp, %ebp
                     movl
                             $40, %esp
                     subl
                             8(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
copy arg1
                             %eax, -28(%ebp)
                     movl
                             12(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
                             %eax, -32(%ebp)
                     movl
                             16(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
                             %eax, -36(%ebp)
                     movl
                             %gs:20, %eax
                     movl
                             %eax, -12(%ebp)
                     movl
                             %eax, %eax
                     xorl
                             $-559038737, -20(%ebp)
                     movl
                             $8, %esp
                     subl
                     pushl
                             -36(%ebp)
                     leal
                             -16(%ebp), %eax
                     pushl
                             %eax
                     call
                             strcpy
                     addl
                             $16, %esp
                     nop
                             -12(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
                             %gs:20, %eax
                     xorl
                     jе
                              .L4
                     call
                              stack chk fail
             .L4:
                     leave
                     ret
```

If we zoom in...

```
func(int, int, char*):
                     pushl
                             %ebp
                             %esp, %ebp
                     movl
                             $40, %esp
                     subl
                             8(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
copy arg1
                             %eax, -28(%ebp)
                     movl
                             12(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
copy arg2
                     movl
                             %eax, -32(%ebp)
                     movl
                             16(%ebp), %eax
                             %eax, -36(%ebp)
                     movl
                             %gs:20, %eax
                     movl
                             %eax, -12(%ebp)
                     movl
                             %eax, %eax
                     xorl
                             $-559038737, -20(%ebp)
                     movl
                             $8, %esp
                     subl
                     pushl
                             -36(%ebp)
                     leal
                             -16(%ebp), %eax
                     pushl
                             %eax
                     call
                             strcpy
                     addl
                             $16, %esp
                     nop
                             -12(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
                             %gs:20, %eax
                     xorl
                     jе
                              .L4
                     call
                              stack chk fail
             .L4:
                     leave
                     ret
```

If we zoom in...

```
func(int, int, char*):
                     pushl
                             %ebp
                             %esp, %ebp
                     movl
                     subl
                             $40, %esp
                             8(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
copy arg1
                             %eax, -28(%ebp)
                     movl
                             12(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
copy arg2
                     movl
                             %eax, -32(%ebp)
                             16(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
copy arg3
                             %eax, -36(%ebp)
                     movl
                             %gs:20, %eax
                     movl
                             %eax, -12(%ebp)
                     movl
                             %eax, %eax
                     xorl
                             $-559038737, -20(%ebp)
                     movl
                     subl
                             $8, %esp
                     pushl
                             -36(%ebp)
                     leal
                             -16(%ebp), %eax
                     pushl
                             %eax
                     call
                             strcpy
                     addl
                             $16, %esp
                     nop
                             -12(%ebp), %eax
                     movl
                             %gs:20, %eax
                     xorl
                     jе
                             .L4
                     call
                             stack chk fail
             .L4:
                     leave
                     ret
```

If we zoom in...

```
func(int, int, char*):
                        pushl
                                %ebp
                                %esp, %ebp
                        movl
                                $40, %esp
                        subl
                                8(%ebp), %eax
                        movl
   copy arg1
                                %eax, -28(%ebp)
                        movl
                                12(%ebp), %eax
                        movl
   copy arg2
                        movl
                                %eax, -32(%ebp)
                                16(%ebp), %eax
                        movl
   copy arg3
                                %eax, -36(%ebp)
                        movl
                                %gs:20, %eax
                        movl
write canary
                                %eax, -12(%ebp)
                        movl
                                %eax, %eax
                        xorl
                                $-559038737, -20(%ebp)
                        movl
                                $8, %esp
                        subl
                        pushl
                                -36(%ebp)
                        leal
                                -16(%ebp), %eax
                        pushl
                                %eax
                        call
                                strcpy
                        addl
                                $16, %esp
                        nop
                                -12(%ebp), %eax
                        movl
                                %gs:20, %eax
                        xorl
                        jе
                                .L4
                        call
                                stack chk fail
                .L4:
                        leave
                        ret
```

Can we defeat canaries?

- Assumption: impossible to subvert control flow without corrupting the canary
- Think outside the box
 - Overwrite function pointer elsewhere on the stack/heap
 - Pointer subterfuge
- memcpy buffer overflow with fixed canary
 - Learn the canary

How do we pick canaries?

- Pick a clever value!
 - E.g., 0x000d0aff (0, CR, NL, -1) to terminate string ops like strcpy and gets
 - Even if attacker knows value, can't overwrite past canary!

Not all overflows are due to strings

Many other functions handle buffers

- E.g., memcpy, memmove, read
- These are also error-prone!

```
void func(char *str) {
  char buf[1024];
  memcpy(buf,str, strlen(str));
}
```

How do we pick canaries?

- Pick a random value!
 - When?

How can we defeat canaries?

- Assumption: impossible to subvert control flow without corrupting the canary
- Ideas?
 - Use targeted write (e.g., with format strings)
 - Pointer subterfuge
 - Overwrite function pointer elsewhere on the stack/heap
 - memcpy buffer overflow with fixed canary
- Learn the canary

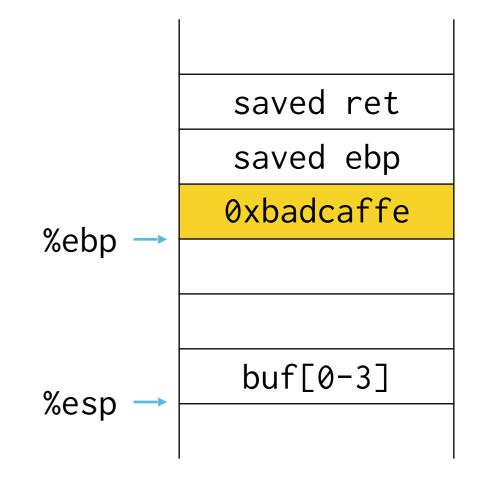
Learn the canary

- Approach 1: chained vulnerabilities
 - Exploit one vulnerability to read the value of the canary
 - Exploit a second to perform stack buffer overflow
- Modern exploits chain multiple vulnerabilities
 - Recent Chinese gov iPhone exploit: 14 vulns!

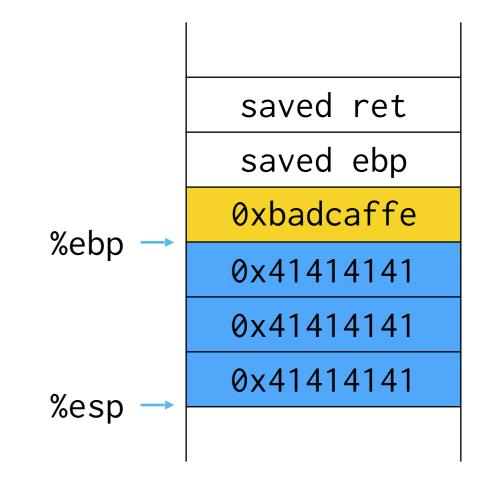
Learn the canary

- Approach 2: brute force servers (e.g., Apache2)
 - Main server process:
 - Establish listening socket
 - Fork several workers: if any die, fork new one!
 - Worker process:
 - Accept connection on listening socket & process request

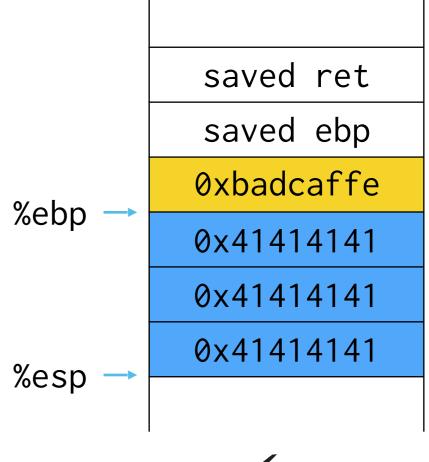
- Forked process has same memory layout and contents as parent, including canary values!
- The fork on crash lets us try different canary values



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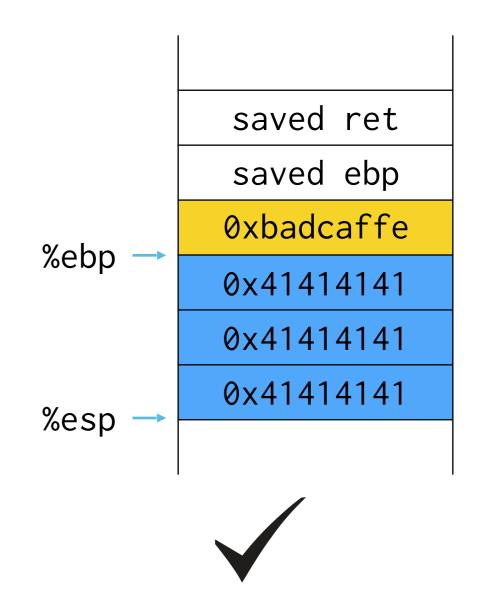


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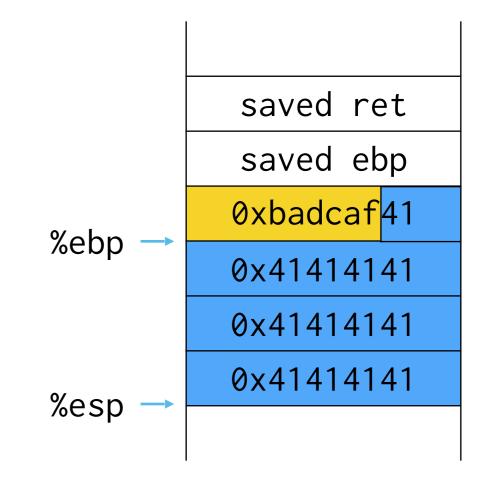


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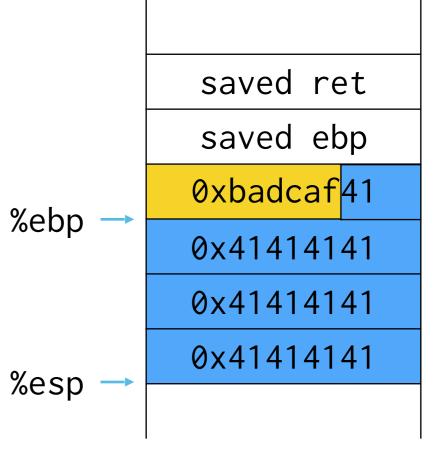


Figured out size of buffer!

- Forked process has same memory layout and contents as parent, including canary values!
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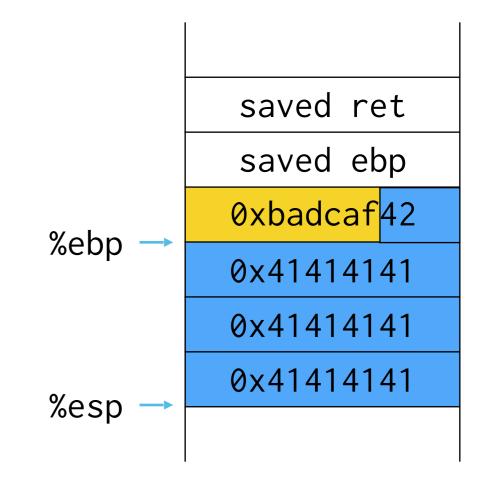


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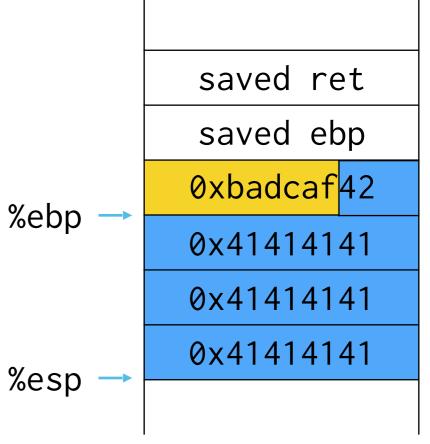




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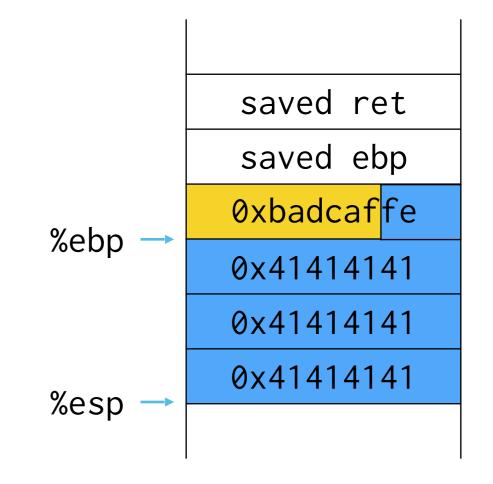


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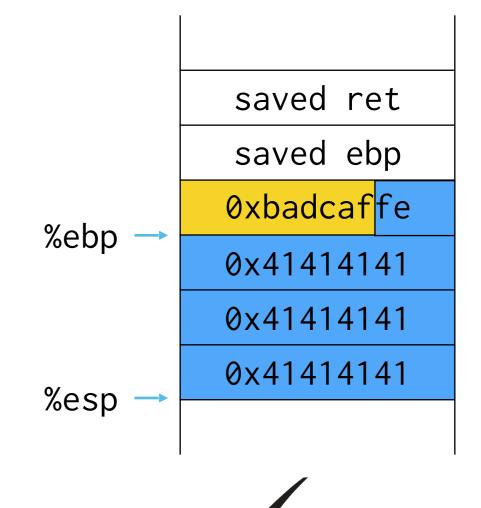




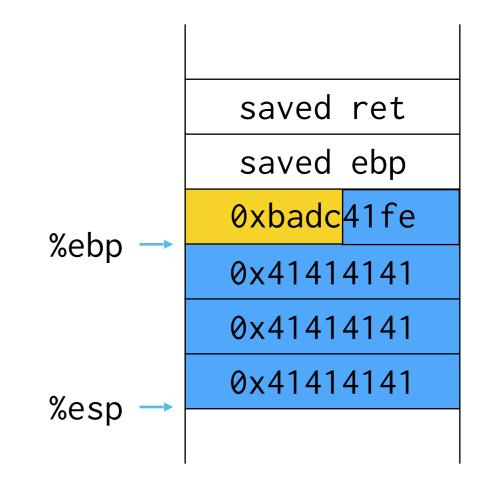
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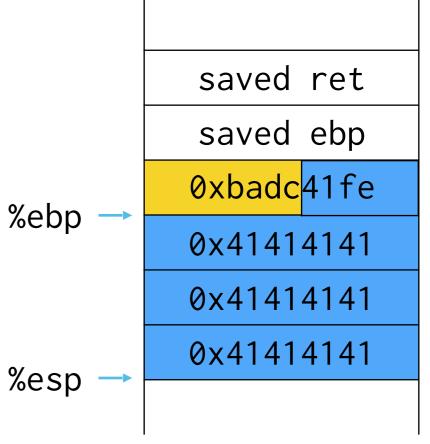
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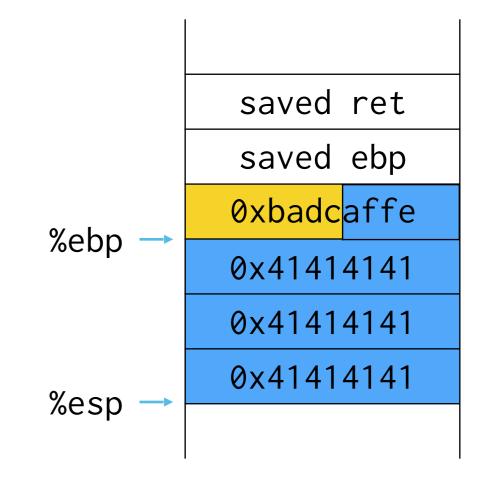


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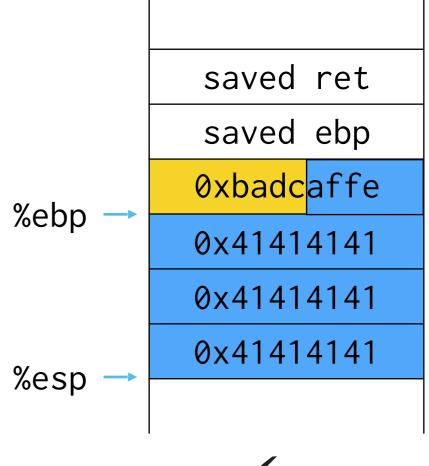




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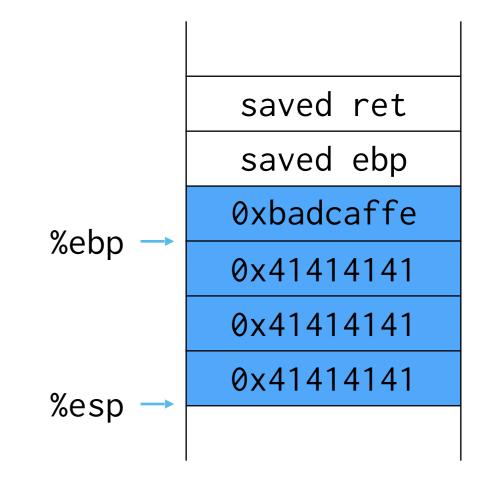


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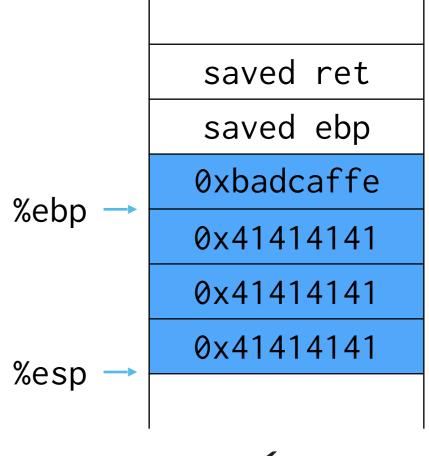




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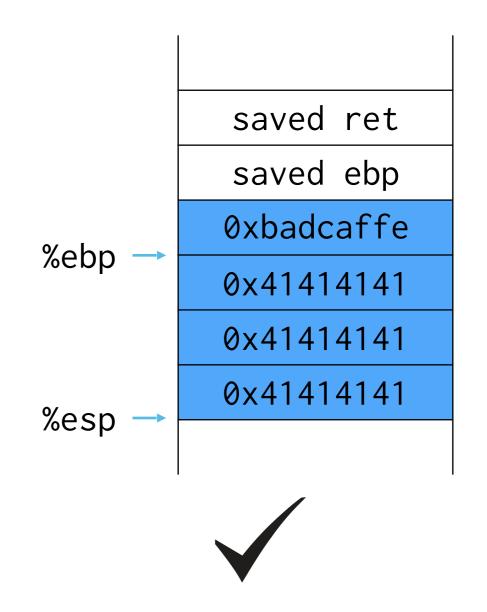


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Figured out size of canary!

Buffer overflow mitigations

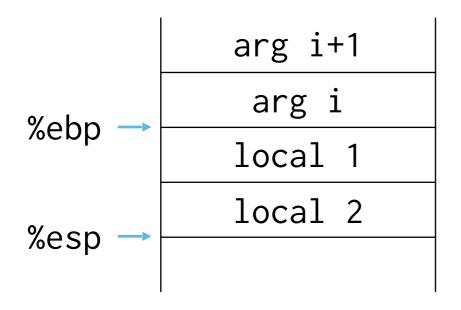
- Avoid unsafe functions (last lecture)
- Stack canaries
- Separate control stack
 - Memory writable or executable, not both (W^X)
 - Address space layout randomization (ASLR)

Separate control stack

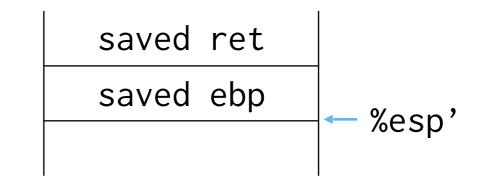
Problem: Control data is stored next to data

Solution: Bridge the implementation and abstraction gap: separate the control stack

User stack



Control stack

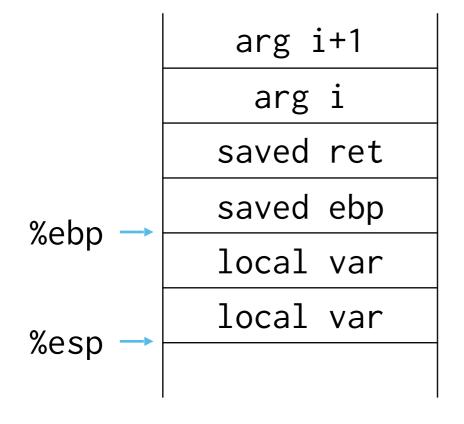


Safe stack

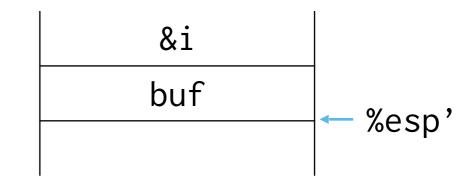
Problem: Unsafe data structures stored next to control

Solution: Move unsafe data structures to separate stack

Safe stack



Unsafe stack



How do we implement these?

- There is no actual separate stack, we only have linear memory and loads/store instructions
- Put the safe/separate stack in a random place in the address space
 - Location of control/stack stack is secret

How do we defeat this?

Find a function pointer and overwrite it to point to shellcode!

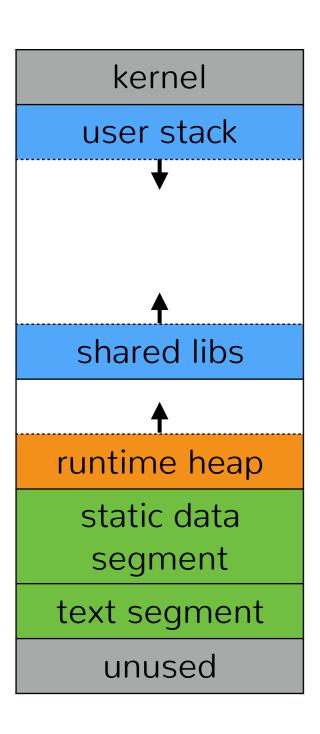
Buffer overflow mitigations

- Avoid unsafe functions (last lecture)
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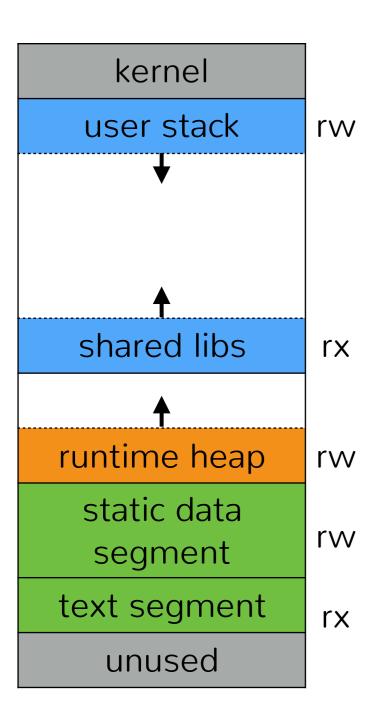
W^X: write XOR execute

- Goal: prevent execution of shell code from the stack
- Insight: use memory page permission bits
 - Use MMU to ensure memory cannot be both writeable and executable at same time
- Many names for same idea:
 - XN: eXecute Never
 - W^X: Write XOR eXecute
 - DEP: Data Execution Prevention

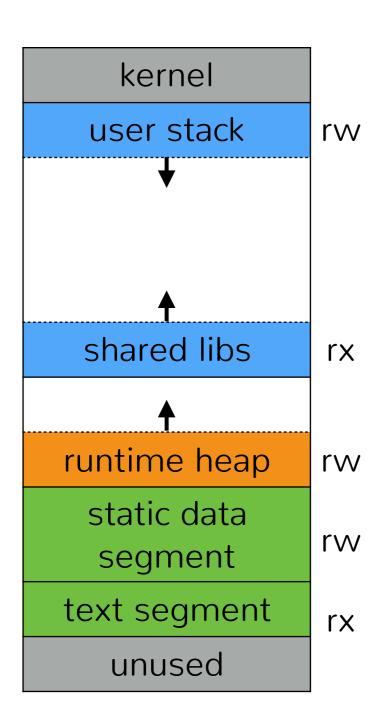
Recall our memory layout

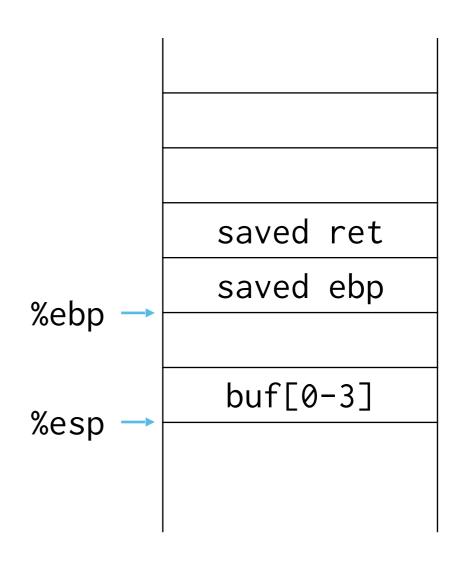


Recall our memory layout

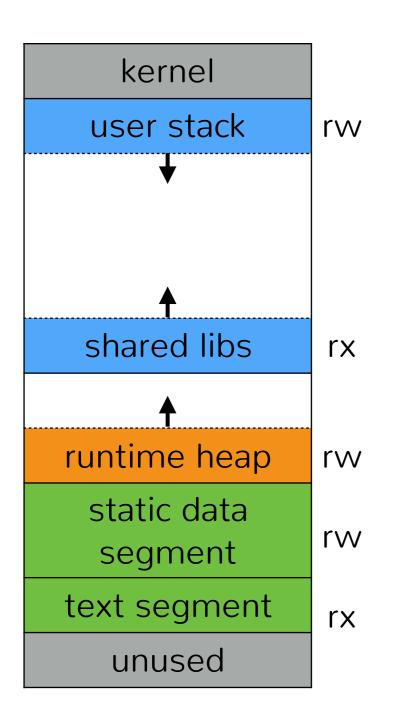


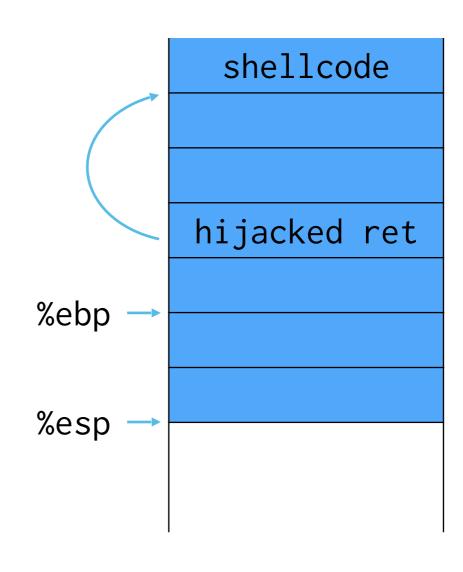
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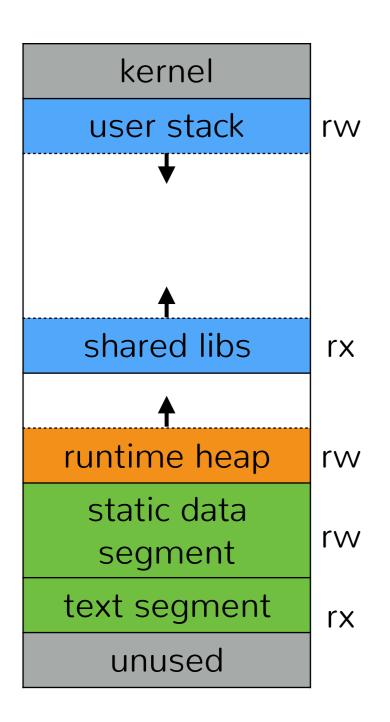


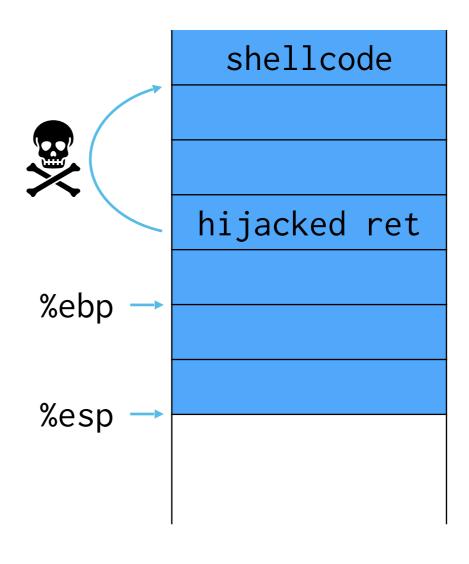
Recall our memory layout





Recall our memory layout





W^X tradeoffs

- Easy to deploy: No code changes or recompilation
- Fast: Enforced in hardware
 - Downside: what do you do on embedded devices?
- Some pages need to be both writeable and executable
 - Why?

How can we defeat W^X?

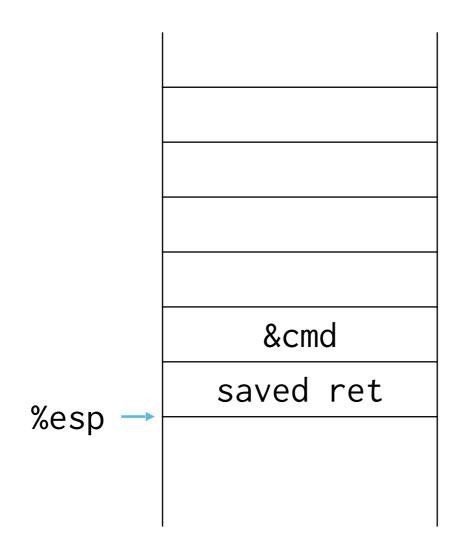
- Can still write to return address stored on the stack
 - Jump to existing code
- Search executable for code that does what you want
 - E.g. if program calls system("/bin/sh") you're done
 - libc is a good source of code (return-into-libc attacks)

Employees must wash hands before returning to libc



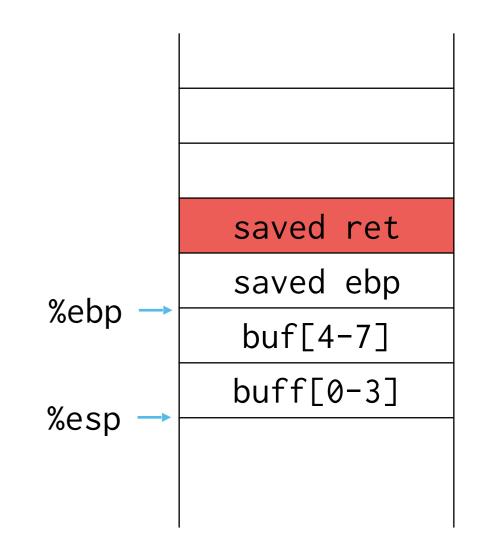


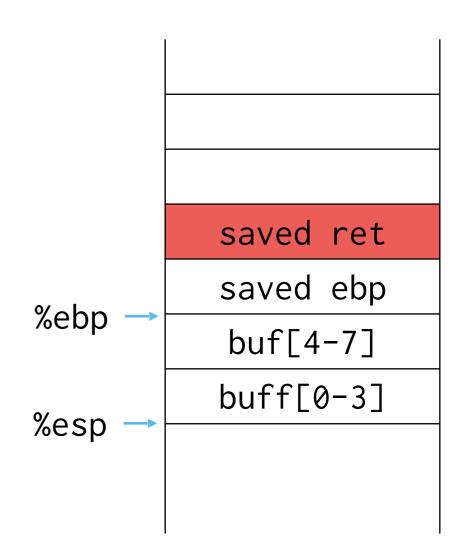
Normal system() call

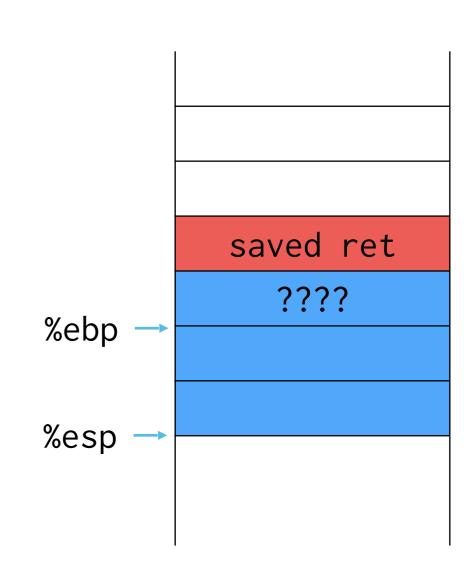


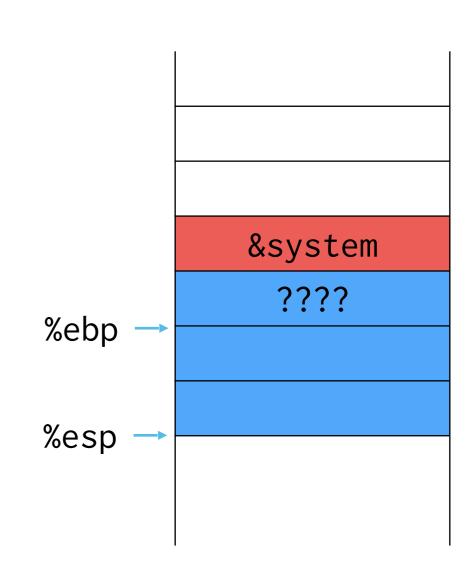
Redirecting control flow to system()

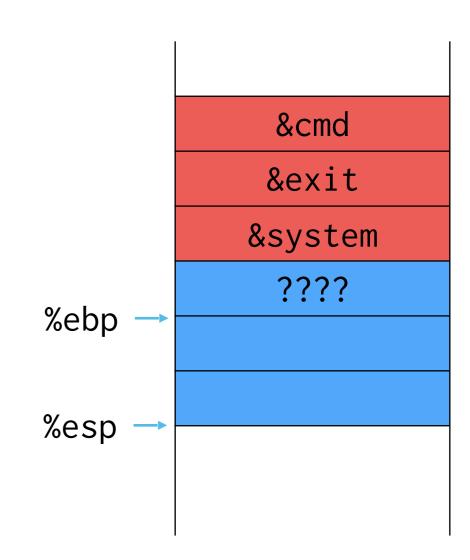
- We redirected control flow in previous lecture to baz()
- Calling system() is the same, but need to have argument to string "/bin/sh" on stack

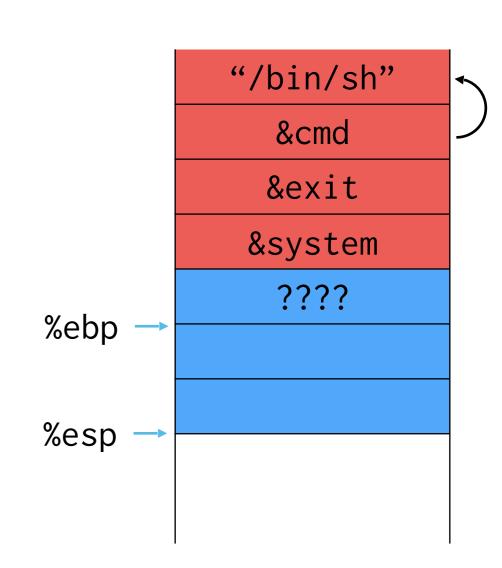


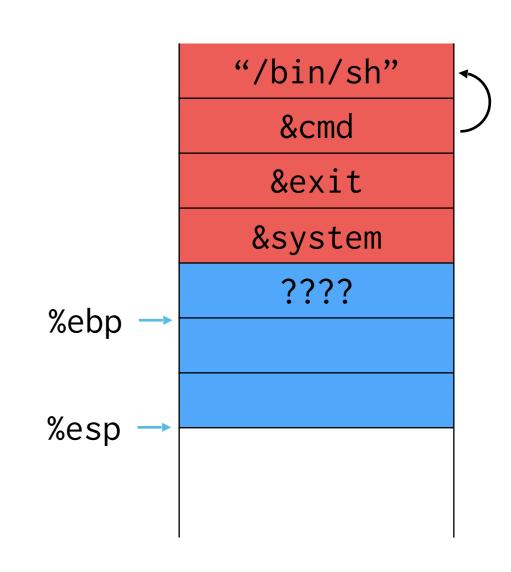


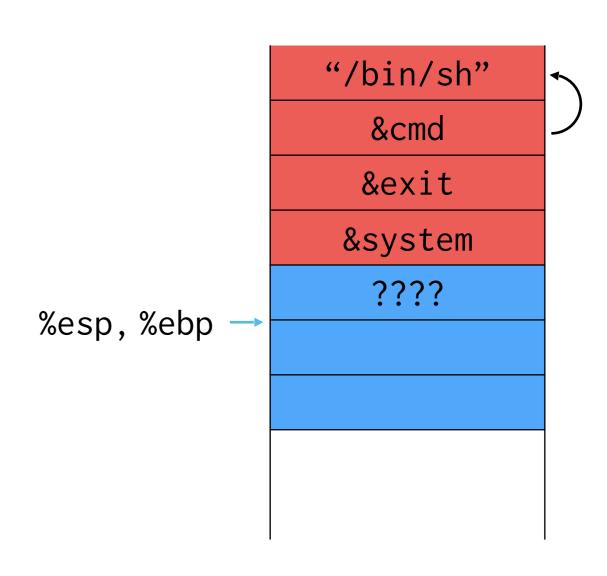


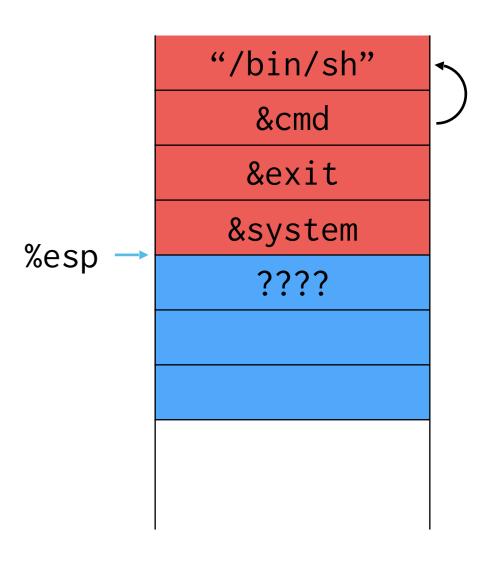












%ebp → ????

"/bin/sh"

&cmd

&exit

&system

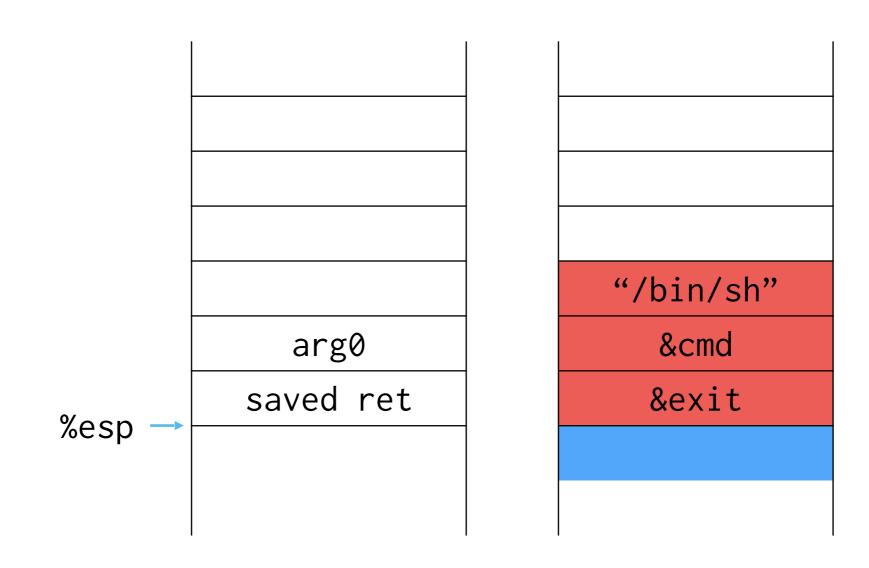
????

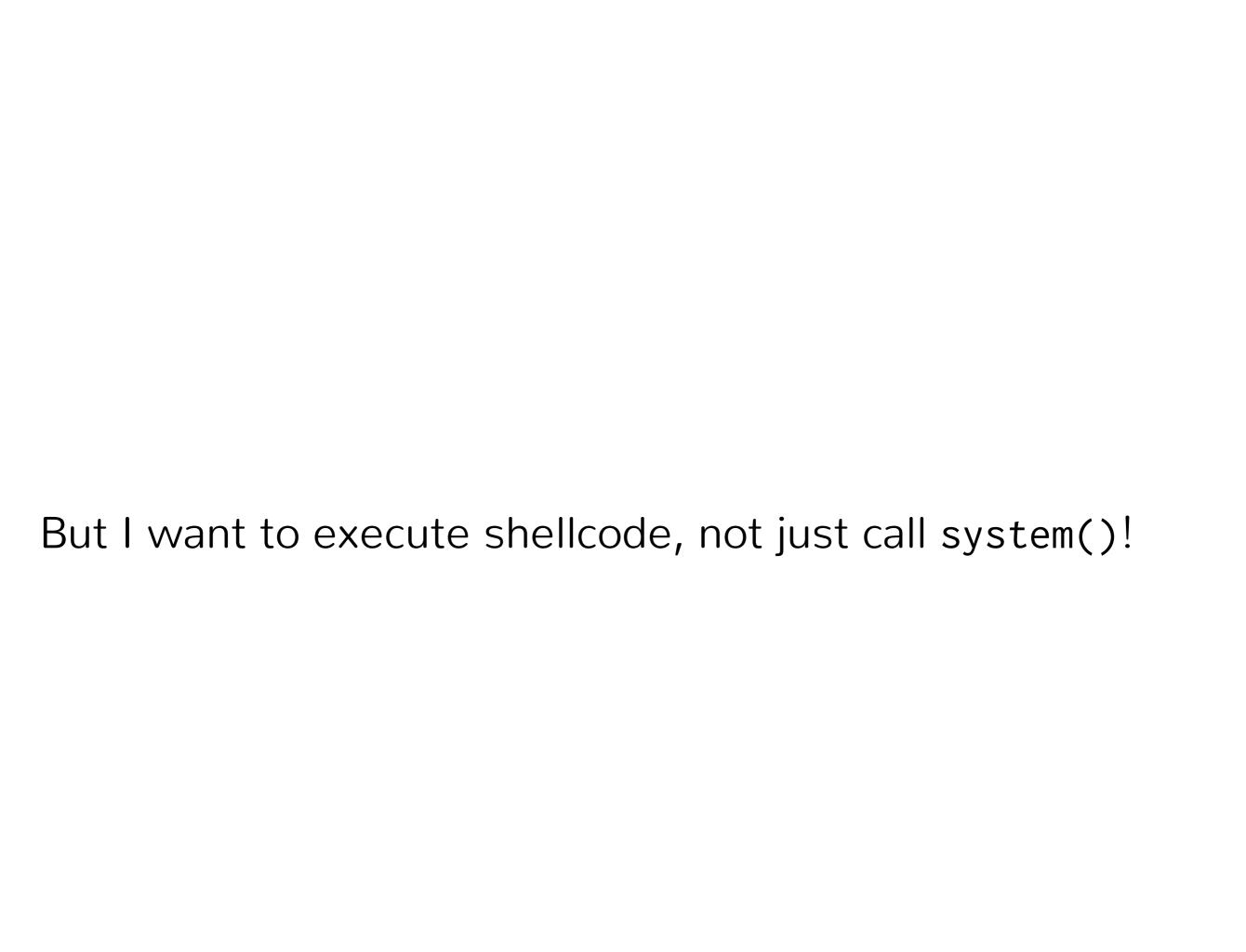
ret = pop %eip

%ebp → ???? "/bin/sh" &cmd &exit %esp &system ???? %eip → &system

ret = pop %eip

To system this looks like a normal call





Can we inject code?

Can we inject code?

```
MPROTECT(2)
                         Linux Programmer's Manual
                                                                MPROTECT(2)
NAME
         top
       mprotect, pkey mprotect - set protection on a region of memory
SYNOPSIS
       #include <sys/mman.h>
       int mprotect(void *addr, size_t len, int prot);
       #define GNU SOURCE
                                    /* See feature test macros(7) */
       #include <sys/mman.h>
       int pkey mprotect(void *addr, size t len, int prot, int pkey);
DESCRIPTION
       mprotect() changes the access protections for the calling process's
       memory pages containing any part of the address range in the interval
       [addr, addr+len-1]. addr must be aligned to a page boundary.
       If the calling process tries to access memory in a manner that
       violates the protections, then the kernel generates a SIGSEGV signal
       for the process.
       prot is a combination of the following access flags: PROT_NONE or a
       bitwise-or of the other values in the following list:
       PROT_NONE The memory cannot be accessed at all.
       PROT READ The memory can be read.
       PROT WRITE The memory can be modified.
       PROT EXEC The memory can be executed.
```

Can we inject code?

- Just-in-time compilers produce data that becomes executable code
- JIT spraying:
 - 1. Spray heap with shellcode (and NOP slides)
 - > 2. Overflow code pointer to point to spray area

What does JIT shellcode look like?

What does JIT shellcode look like?

What does JIT shellcode look like?

The Devil is in the Constants: Bypassing Defenses in Browser JIT Engines

Buffer overflow mitigations

- Avoid unsafe functions (last lecture)
- Stack canaries
- Separate control stack
- Memory writable or executable, not both (W^X)
- Address space layout randomization (ASLR)

ASLR

- Traditional exploits need precise addresses
 - stack-based overflows: shellcode
 - return-into-libc: library addresses
- Insight: Make it harder for attacker to guess location of shellcode/libc by randomizing the address of different memory regions

kernel

user stack

shared libs

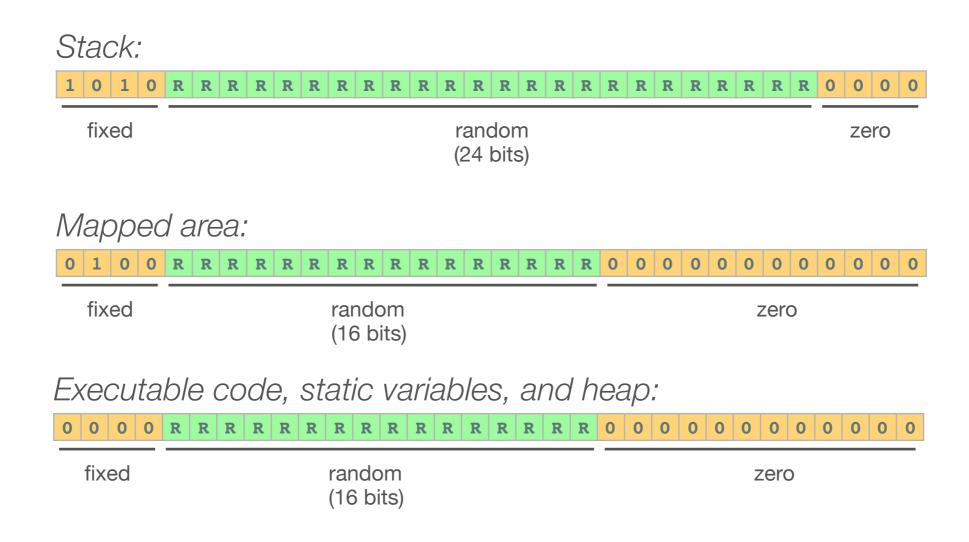
runtime heap

static data segment

text segment

unused

How much do we randomize? 32-bit PaX ASLR (x86)



Tradeoff

- Intrusive: Need compiler, linker, loader support
 - Process layout must be randomized
 - Programs must be compiled to not have absolute jumps
- Incurs overhead: increases code size & perf overhead
- Also mitigates heap-based overflow attacks

When do we randomize?

- Many options
 - At boot?
 - At compile/link time?
 - At run/load time?
 - + On fork?
- What's the tradeoff?

How can we defeat ASLR?

- -fno-pie binaries have fixed code and data addresses
 - Enough to carry out control-flow-hijacking attacks
- Each region has random offset, but layout is fixed
 - Single address in a region leaks every address in region
- Brute force for 32-bit binaries and/or pre-fork binaries
- Heap spray for 64-bit binaries

Derandomizing ALSR

- Attack goal: call system() with attacker arg
- Target: Apache daemon
 - Vulnerability: buffer overflow in ap_getline()

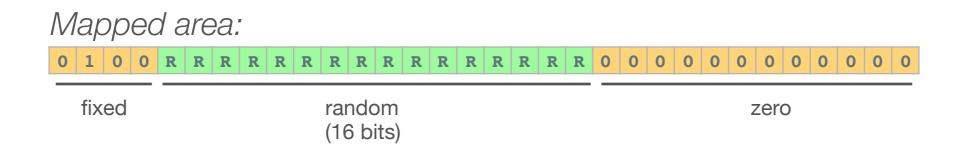
```
char buf[64];
...
strcpy(buf, s); // overflow
```

Assumptions

- W^X enabled
- PaX ASLR enabled
 - Apache forks child processes to handle client interaction
 - Recall how re-randomization works?

Attack steps

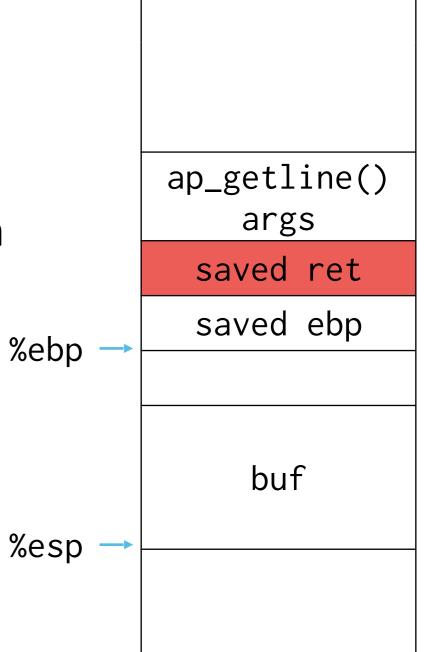
Stage 1: Find base of mapped region



Stage 2: Call system() with command string

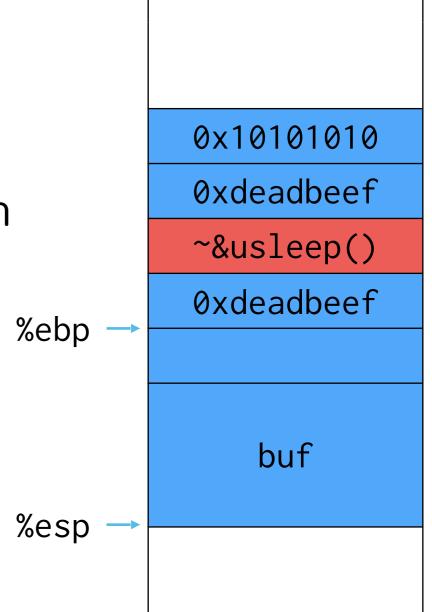
How do we find the mapped region?

- Observation: layout of mapped region (libc) is fixed
- Overwrite saved return pointer with a guess to usleep()
 - base + offset of usleep
 - non-negative argument



How do we find the mapped region?

- Observation: layout of mapped region (libc) is fixed
- Overwrite saved return pointer with a guess to usleep()
 - base + offset of usleep
 - non-negative argument



Finding base of mapped region

• If we guessed usleep() address right

• If we guessed usleep() address wrong

 Use this to tell if we guessed base of mapped region correctly

Finding base of mapped region

- If we guessed usleep() address right
 - Server will freeze for 16 seconds, then crash
- If we guessed usleep() address wrong

Use this to tell if we guessed base of mapped region correctly

Finding base of mapped region

- If we guessed usleep() address right
 - Server will freeze for 16 seconds, then crash
- If we guessed usleep() address wrong
 - Server will (likely) crash immediately
- Use this to tell if we guessed base of mapped region correctly

What is the success probability?

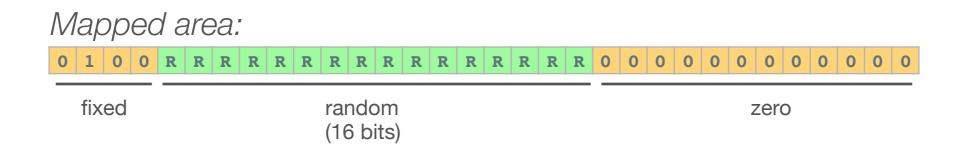
- What is the success probability?
 - ➤ 1/2¹⁶ 65,536 tries maximum

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 - ➤ 1/2¹⁶ 65,536 tries maximum
- Do we need to derandomize the stack base?

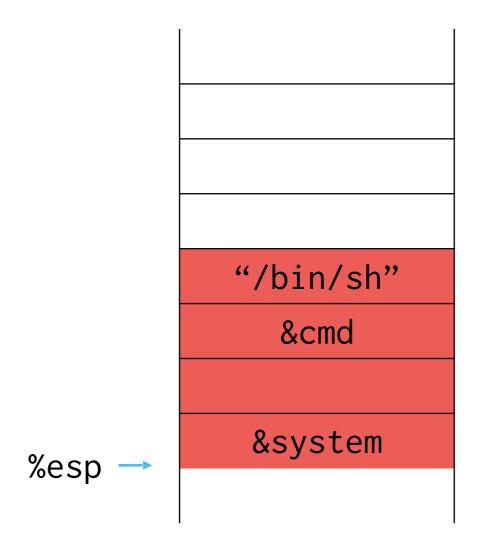
- What is the success probability?
 - ➤ 1/2¹⁶ 65,536 tries maximum
- Do we need to derandomize the stack base?
 - No!

Attack steps

Stage 1: Find base of mapped region (libc)



Stage 2: Call system() with command string



- In the paper...
 - Overwrite saved return pointer with address of ret instruction in libc
 - Repeat until address of buf looks like argument to system()
 - Append address of system()

	&buf
	ap_getline()
	args
	saved ret
n	saved ebp
p -	
	buf
p →	
Ρ	

%eb

%es

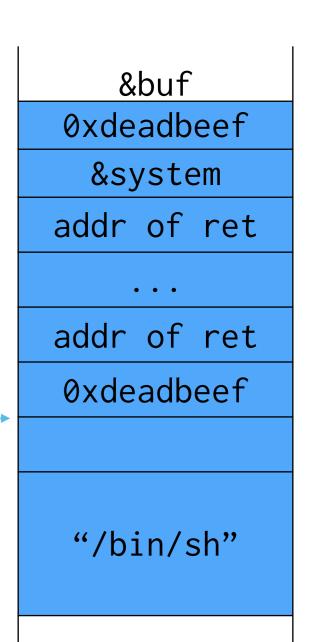
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&buf	
0xdeadbeef	
&system	
addr of ret	
• • •	
addr of ret	
0xdeadbeef	
"/bin/sh"	

%ebp →

%esp →

- In the paper...
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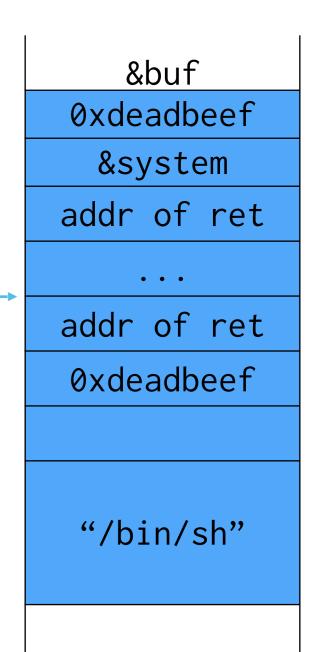
%esp

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&buf 0xdeadbeef &system addr of ret addr of ret 0xdeadbeef "/bin/sh"

%esp

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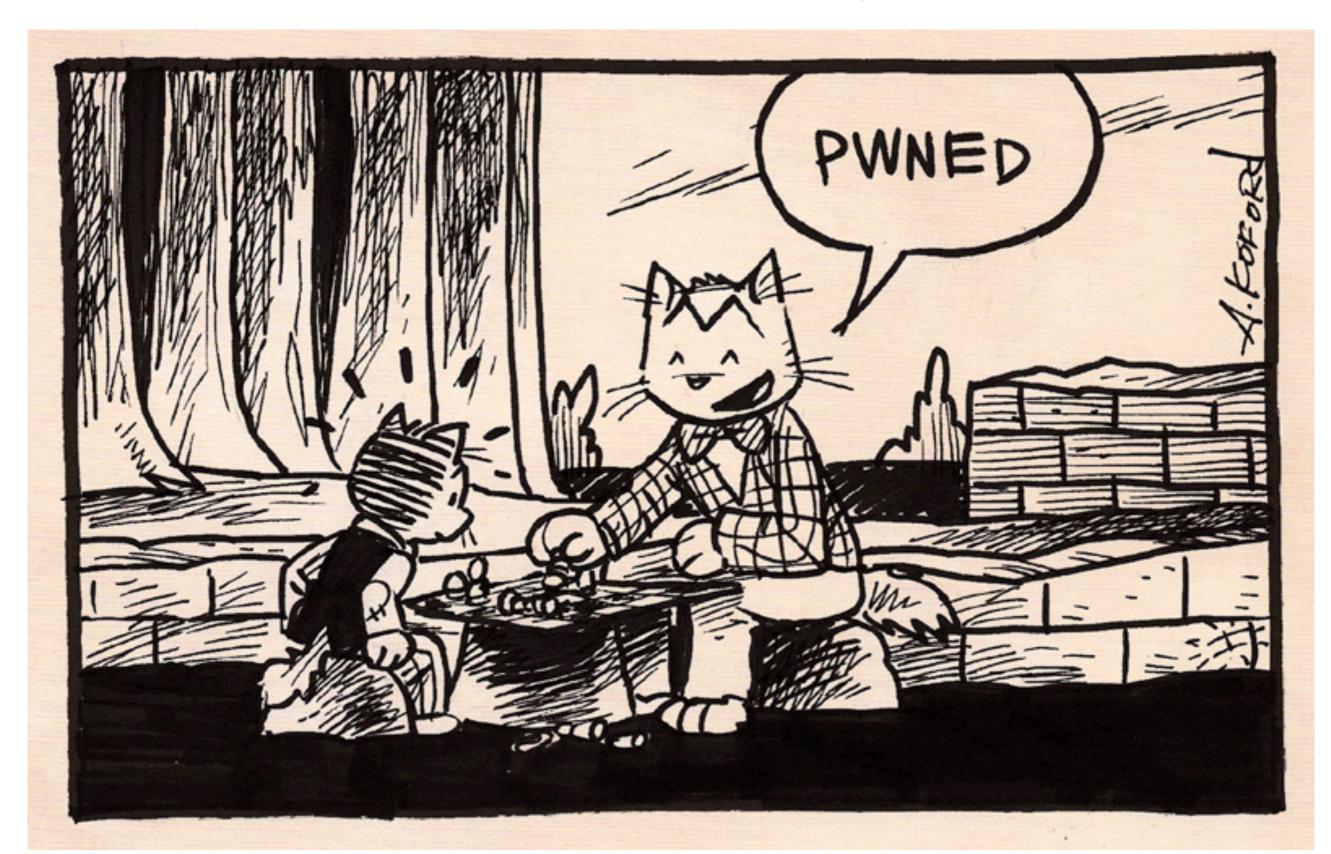
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"/bin/sh"

%esp



Buffer Overflow Defenses

- Avoid unsafe functions
- Stack canary
- Separate control stack
- Memory writable or executable, not both (W^X)
- Address Space Layout Randomization (ASLR)

None are perfect, but in practice they raise the bar dramatically