



## Activity: Analyzing a PCAP file for Signs of Network Attack

Analyzing a PCAP (Packet Capture) file can provide invaluable insight into network behavior and potential attacks. Here's an activity to guide you:

### 1. Open the PCAP file in Wireshark

- Launch Wireshark.
- Click on `File` in the menu, then `Open`, and navigate to your PCAP file. Click `Open` to load it.

### 2. Explore the Packet List Pane

- This pane displays all the packets in the PCAP file in chronological order.
- Review the Source, Destination, Protocol, and Info columns to get an overview of the network communication. Look for any patterns or anomalies.

### 3. Use Display Filters

- Display filters help you to narrow down the packet view.
- For instance, if you want to see only DNS traffic, enter `dns` in the display filter bar and press Enter.

### 4. Look for Malicious Traffic

- Look for multiple SYN packets without corresponding ACK packets, which could indicate a SYN flood attack.
- Look for a large number of packets sent to or received from a specific IP address or set of IP addresses, which might indicate a DDoS attack.
- Use `http.request` or `http.response` filters to view HTTP requests and responses. Look for suspicious GET requests or status codes (like multiple 401 Unauthorised responses, indicating brute-force attacks).

### 5. Inspect Packet Details

- Click on a packet to select it. The Packet Details pane will show the selected packet's layered structure.
- Expanding the layers will show more detail. For example, in a TCP packet, you can see the source and destination ports, sequence numbers, and flags.

### 6. Follow TCP/UDP/HTTP Streams

- Right-click on a packet and select `Follow > TCP Stream` (or UDP, HTTP as appropriate).

- This brings up a dialogue showing the complete conversation between the client and server. This can be useful to see the content of a session and identify anomalies.

## **7. Use Statistics Tools**

- Wireshark has many built-in tools to analyze traffic. For instance, `Statistics > Conversations` shows the communication between different pairs of endpoints.
- `Statistics > Endpoints` shows all unique network endpoints. A large amount of traffic to/from a single endpoint could suggest an attack.
- `Statistics > Protocol Hierarchy` shows what protocols are being used and how much of the traffic each one takes up.

## **8. Save Your Analysis**

- You can save filtered packet views for future reference or to share with others. Just set your filter, then click `File > Save As` and ensure the `Displayed` option is selected.