

Detecting Application Layer Attacks on IEEE 802.11 Networks Using Machine Learning

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May 2023

Abstract

This project aligns with the following CyBoK Skills: Network Security, Security Operations & Incident Management

Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Aegan Wi-Fi Intrusion Dataset v3 | AWID3 |
| Artificial Intelligence | AI |
| Area Under Curve | AUC |
| Autoencoders | AE |
| Machine Learning | ML |
| Intrusion Detection System | IDS |
| Intrusion Prevention System | IPS |
| Neural Network | NN |
| Deep Neural Network | DNN |
| Multi-Layer Perceptron | MLP |
| K Nearest Neighbour | KNN |
| Random Forest | RF |
| eXtreme Gradient Boosting | XGBoost |
| Address Resolution Protocol | ARP |
| Domain Name Service | DNS |
| Transmission Control Protocol | TCP |
| User Datagram Protocol | UDP |
| Server Message Block | SMB |
| Secure Shell | SSH |
| Simple Service Discovery Protocol | SDDP |
| Stratified Cross Validation | S-CV |
| F-Score/F-Measure | F1 |
| Man-in-the-middle | MITM |
| Denial Of Service | DoS |

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1 Introduction

The ongoing increase in IoT devices in homes and enterprise environments has seen a rise in the utilisation of wireless networks such as IEEE 802.11 networks, more commonly known as WiFi. As businesses and consumers seek to try out new devices and technologies, these manufacturers tend to focus more on improving performance and features and neglect security (Roundy 2021). As a result, this may weaken the security posture of an organisation or home to be more susceptible to attacks from malicious threat actors taking advantage of vulnerable devices in the network.

1.0.1 Wireless Networks And Attacks

The 802.11 standards have advanced and improved since their inception in 1997 in terms of security, however, despite this, Wi-Fi networks are still vulnerable to well-known attacks such as de-authentication attacks to disconnect all devices from a network, leading to more advanced attacks such as Man-in-the-middle attacks (MITM) or Denial Of Service (DoS) attacks. The introduction of Protected Management Frames (PMF) in 2009 (IEEE 2009) helped to increase the security of management frames by using cryptography and integrity protection on de-authentication, disassociation and action management frames (Sattam and Hariri 2021).

The introduction of WPA3 in 2018 (*WPA3 Specification Version 3.1* 2022), aimed to succeed WPA2, bringing new features and fixes to strengthen the security of wireless networks. More notably, Simultaneous Authentication of Equals (SAE) was introduced to provide a secure key negotiation and key exchange method based on the Dragonfly key exchange protocol in RFC 7664 (Harkins 2015), preventing dictionary or brute-forcing attacks as well as the (KRACK) Key-Reinstallation attack (Vanhoeef and Piessens 2017) by providing perfect forward secrecy, ensuring that even if the private key is obtained, the data packets cannot be decrypted.

Research into WPA3 networks indicates that even features such as Protected Management Frames (PMF) and Simultaneous Authentication of Equals (SAE) methods of authentication have their shortcomings including being vulnerable to denial-of-service, side-channel, and downgrade attacks (Vanhoeef and Ronen 2020).

1.0.2 Intrusion Detection Systems

Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS) are a common mechanism to defend against these attacks by analysing network traffic and determining if they are malicious or benign. There are typically two types of intrusion detection: signature-based and anomaly-based. Signature-based IDS monitors the network traffic for any suspicious patterns within data packets that match a known signature for an intrusion. This is usually via a database holding known intrusion attack patterns. Anomaly-based IDS creates an organisational benchmark of 'normal' as a baseline to help determine whether an activity is considered unusual or suspicious. This involves feeding the system with a large amount of data to learn an environment's regular usage patterns initially.

External tools such as Stratosphere IPS (SLIPS) developed by Garcia, Goma, and Babayeva (2015) at the Stratosphere Lab at CTU University of Prague seek to utilise a combination of behaviour patterns and machine learning such as Markov Chain models to detect malicious network traffic. Open-source implementations of wireless IDS such as Kismet (Kismet 2002) and OpenWIPS-ng (d'Otreppe 2011) also exist and serve a usage for both consumers and businesses.

Significant work and research have been seen recently into investigating and developing wireless intrusion detection systems using Machine Learning based algorithms utilising supervised, unsupervised and deep learning approaches in both wired and wireless networks. However, research on Intrusion Detection Systems utilising 802.11 and other network protocol features e.g. ARP, TCP & UDP, including application layer features such as HTTP, DNS, SMB etc lacks sufficient research.

This research seeks to investigate and evaluate different machine learning algorithms in detecting and classifying application-level attacks on 802.11 wireless networks for a proposed intrusion detection system.

1.1 Research Questions and Objectives

The objectives for the project are as follows:

- To explore and analyse current literature and academic research utilising ML for intrusion detection systems for IEEE 802.11 networks.
- To examine and identify common machine learning algorithms used for the classification in the context of network attacks.

-
- To compare the performance of various machine learning models in detecting application layer-based network attacks on an 802.11 dataset, proving a recommendation for a proposed Wireless Intrusion Detection System (WIDS)

2 Literature Review

This section covers the existing research and reviews literature, papers and reports focusing on publicly available datasets, existing work and different machine learning algorithms. The literature reviewed details some of the methodologies and techniques used to develop existing models created for detecting network attacks on 802.11 wireless networks. The practical element of this dissertation is inspired by the following papers and literature.

2.1 Intrusion Detection Systems

Saskara et al. (2022) studies the performance of detecting 10 Denial Of Service attacks using Kismet on a Raspberry Pi using Aireplay-ng to generate a DoS attack on the target access point secured with WPA2/PSK, the experiment was repeated ten times. Using Kismet, the authors were able to successfully identify the attack with an average detection time of 3.42 seconds.

2.2 Datasets

Hnamte and Hussain 2021 discusses 37 public datasets and their suitability for building and training an IDS, limitations and restrictions. It was concluded that these datasets do not represent newer threats such as zero-day attacks. An optimal dataset should consist of well-labelled, up-to-date and public network traffic ranging from regular user activity to different attacks and payloads. It was proposed that using multiple data sets in different network environments and scenarios across a standard set of features could help to improve the accuracy of ML-based Network Intrusion Detection Systems.

The AWID3 data set (E. Chatzoglou, G. Kambourakis, and C. Kolias 2021) released in February 2021 seeks to build upon the existing AWID2 data set by evaluating various network attacks in an IEEE 802.11 enterprise network environment. These include higher-level layer attacks initiated from the link layer across multiple protocols and layers and newly discovered 802.11w attacks such as Krack, Kook, SSDP amplification, malware and event botnet attacks (Constantinos Kolias et al. 2016). Included with the dataset, are the Pairwise Master Key (PMK) and TLS Keys. Additionally, AWID3's concentration on enterprise networks includes the use of Protected Management Frames (PMF) that help to provide additional information during usage for an IDS.

Previous work and research into evaluating numerous machine learning algorithms have been conducted on the well-known older AWID2 data set (Constantinos Kolias et al. 2016), however with an overall lack of publicly available wireless network data sets, the introduction of AWID3 can help to bring new research and training data to help develop new machine learning models.

In the context of wireless networks, the AWID suite of datasets is widely recognised and used within academic research and literature, being one of the only extensive publicly available datasets on 802.11 enterprise networks with respect to application layer attacks, AWID3 is a strong candidate for investigating the development of an IDS using machine learning.

2.3 Detecting Network Attacks

Application Layer Attacks

Efstratios Chatzoglou, Georgios Kambourakis, Smiliotopoulos, et al. (2022) discusses the detection of application layer attacks using machine learning utilising the AWID3 dataset. The authors did not rely on optimisation or dimensionality-reducing techniques, only the six PCAPS containing application layer attacks were used and more specifically, no application layer features were used e.g. HTTP and DNS. These were classified and grouped under three main classes: Normal, Flooding and Other. This was justified due to these being usually encrypted and therefore not easily accessible, moreover, it raises concerns about privacy, requiring attention to ensure the data does not contain personally identifiable information or data unique to the environment. A research gap was identified as no previous work focused on primarily on detecting the attacks originating from the application layer on the newer AWID3 dataset.

A set of 802.11 and non-802.11 and features were evaluated using three classifiers (Decision Tree, Bagging and LightGBM) and two DNNs (Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) and Denoising stacked Autoencoders (AE)). Of the classifiers, Bagging produced the highest scoring AUC with the MLP DNN performing slightly better than the AE across the non-802.11 and 802.11 features. The feature importance was evaluated and irrelevant features were removed and tested in combination, resulting in better results across models.

5G Attacks

Mughaid et al. (2022) discusses the rise and need for protection of 5G based attacks, including rule-based methods and machine learning-based methods. However, these methods have limitations in terms of accuracy and efficiency. To address these issues, the paper "Improved dropping attacks detecting system in 5g networks using machine learning and deep learning approaches" proposes a new system that leverages machine learning and deep learning techniques to achieve a high detection accuracy. A 99% accuracy was achieved using KNN and 93% for DF and Neural Network.

Attack Classifications

Islam and Allayear (2022) utilised the AWID dataset to predict one of four attacks using the KNN classifier, the paper presented strong results for the "ARP" attack type, achieving the best accuracy with recall. The paper highlighted the importance of the pre-processing of data, feature selection, and choosing an appropriate classifier and oversampling method. The authors suggested that including additional features in the classification process and testing a more generalised model could improve a model's performance in future research and prevent the curse of dimensionality.

The work by Dalal et al. (2021) investigates WPA3 Enterprise Networks against a combination of known WPA3 attacks alongside a series of older WPA2 attacks such as Beacon Flood and De-authentication attacks. It was concluded that eight of the nine attacks to the testbed's Access Point were vulnerable and a chosen Intrusion Detection System was unable to identify and detect the attacks. Dalal et al. (ibid.) then proceeded to design a new signature-based IDS using Python. A packet capture of each attack was captured and processed into the proposed IDS, if there were indicators of attacks, the IDS outputted the time and classified the type of attack. The paper focuses on logical reasoning to deduce an attack rather than utilising anomaly detection such as machine learning.

2.4 Machine Learning Algorithms

A key area of the work was deciding the machine learning algorithms to use, a combination of classifiers and neural networks were considered in their context of suitability, efficiency and performance. AWID3 is a labelled dataset, as such only supervised algorithms were used for this work.

2.4.1 Random Forest

Random Forest is an ensemble learning algorithm that combines multiple decision trees during its training process, at each node the best features are selected to split the tree with additional pruning used to help prevent overfitting. The predictions of all the individual decision trees are combined to make a final prediction.

2.4.2 K-Nearest Neighbor

K-Nearest Neighbor is a non-parametric algorithm that works by finding the k closest neighbours to a given input and classifying it based on the majority class within the k neighbours.

2.4.3 XGBoost

XGBoost, short for eXtreme Gradient Boosting is a type of gradient-boosted decision tree. It was developed by Chen and Guestrin (2016) and is considered to be an efficient and scalable algorithm capable of handling large datasets and models. It utilises a collection, referred to as an ensemble, of decision trees combined to create a model capable of learning from the errors of the previous tree in a sequence.

2.4.4 Neural Networks

Multi-Layer Perceptron

A Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) works using a feed-forward artificial neural network that consists of an input layer, one or more hidden layers, and an output layer. Each layer within contains a given number of neurons that are connected together to additional layers through weighted connections.

2.5 Summary

Based on the literature review and research on the AWID3 dataset and wireless network attack classification, it appears that detecting application layer wireless network attacks using machine learning remains an under-researched area. In their previous work, Efstratios Chatzoglou, Georgios Kambourakis, Smiliotopoulos, et al. (2022) showed that combining 802.11 and non-802.11 features achieved high accuracy and AUC, without using application layer features such as DNS, SMB and HTTP etc. However, it remains to be investigated whether combining these application layer features can improve the accuracy of

machine learning classifiers in identifying application layer attacks on 802.11 networks. Furthermore, the works fail to classify individually the method of attack, combining the six attacks under three classes: Normal, Flooding and Other. This project aims to address this research gap by exploring the feasibility of using application layer features to enhance the performance of machine learning classifiers for detecting application layer attacks on specifically the AWID3 dataset.

3 Methodology

3.1 Code Environment

The code for developing the machine learning models was programmed using Python 3.8/9, Visual Studio Code, and Jupyter Notebooks for the IDE. All experiments were conducted on a hardware combination of an M2 Mac Mini with 8 Cores and 16GB RAM or an Intel(R) Xeon(R) CPU E5-2699 VM running Ubuntu 22.04.02 LTS with 64 GB RAM and an Nvidia Tesla M40. Accordingly, the two machines will be referred to as 'M2' and 'VM'. Due to the limitations and errors encountered, TensorFlow GPU Acceleration was not utilised for Deep Learning on the M2 Mac Mini.

In order to create a reproducible environment and manage dependencies, Conda virtual environments (Distribution 2016) were used to isolate the experiments on the M2 Mac Mini. A TensorFlow GPU docker container running Nvidia CUDA was utilised on the VM. See Appx C for the full code for creating the environments.

3.2 Libraries

Several libraries were used to develop and implement the machine learning models, including: A selection of common machine learning libraries was utilised for this project, namely Numpy, Pandas, Scikit-Learn (Pedregosa et al. 2011), Matplotlib, Seaborn, Joblib, Jupyter, Tensorflow (Martín Abadi et al. 2015) and XGBoost (Chen and Guestrin 2016).

3.3 Feature Selection

Similar to the work carried out by Efstratios Chatzoglou, Georgios Kambourakis, Smiliotopoulos, et al. (2022), six attacks out of the 21 from AWID3 were concentrated, namely Botnet, Malware, SSH, SQL Injection, SSDP Amplification and Website Spoofing, these are attacks that originate from the application layer and forms a good scope of research for this project.

This work aims to combine the (16) 802.11 and (17) non-802.11 features from *ibid.* with a set of chosen application layer features with the aim to detect and classify the different application layer attacks. As previously established, existing research determined a high degree of accuracy and performance when combining both the 802.11 and non-802.11 features together, but a lack of research into determining if including additional application layer features would provide grounds for a further context into developing a machine learning model and affect its overall performance.

3.3.1 Application Layer Features

The AWID3 dataset contains 254 features within each of its attack CSV files, including application layer features in a decrypted format; provided by the decryption keys. While this may not be readily available in most cases, within an organization’s internal network in the context of an IDS, some application layer features will be accessible, such as any unencrypted DNS, HTTP, SMB, and NBNS traffic since the keys to protected 802.11 wireless networks would be available. However, to ensure data privacy and avoid bias from information specific to the AWID3 environment or containing identifiable information such as URLs and IP addresses, these features were not selected for this study. Therefore, the selected application layer features can be seen in Table 3.1. By combining these selected application layer features, this study aims to develop a machine learning classifier capable of accurately distinguishing between the different types of wireless network attacks.

| Application Layer Features (19) | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Feature Name | Preprocessing Method | Data Type |
| nbns | OHE | object |
| ldap | OHE | object |
| dns | OHE | object |
| http.content_type | OHE | object |
| http.request.method | OHE | object |
| nbss.type | OHE | int64 |
| smb2.cmd | OHE | int64 |
| http.response.code | OHE | int64 |
| ssh.message_code | OHE | int64 |
| nbss.length | Min-Max | int64 |
| dns.count.answers | Min-Max | int64 |
| dns.count.queries | Min-Max | int64 |
| dns.resp.len | Min-Max | int64 |
| dns.resp.ttl | Min-Max | int64 |
| ssh.packet.length | Min-Max | int64 |

Table 3.1: The selected set of application layer features.

The section below covers in more detail each of the selected features and their justification.

NetBIOS name service can be used to identify the names of machines on a network. The *nbns* feature combined with the *nbss.type* and *nbss.length* can provide context into the connections made between machines on a network without including AWID3 specific information. Different types of session packets can be indicative of certain activities such as file transfers, remote execution etc. The length of the packets can also help to identify any anomalous activity that may be useful for a machine learning classifier.

http.content.type, request.method and response.code: These features relate to the HTTP used for web browsing. They can provide insights into the type of content accessed by an attacker, the type of request method used, and the HTTP response code that was received. These HTTP features can be used to help identify potential attacks exploiting web-based vulnerabilities such as SQL Injections or Website Spoofing.

Domain Name System (DNS) is responsible for translating human-readable domain names to IP addresses. *dns.count.answers, count.queries, resp.len, and resp.ttl* chosen can provide additional information about DNS traffic, such as the number of queries and answers, the response length, and the time to live of each response. These can be used to help identify potential reconnaissance attacks and provide insights into the

network traffic patterns to identify potential DNS-based attacks such as DNS spoofing, cache poisoning, or tunnelling.

SMB (Server Message Block) is a client-server communication protocol used for sharing resources such as files and printers, in 2017 several Remote Code Execution vulnerabilities were discovered relating to the SMB protocol, including the wider known MS17-010 Eternal Blue exploit. By examining SMB activity, the *smb.cmd* we can determine different access types such as SMB access attempts, SMB file transfers, or SMB authentication requests, using this it may be possible to identify anomalous behaviour that could be indicative of an attack.

3.3.2 802.11 Features

The works by Efstratios Chatzoglou, Georgios Kambourakis, Constantinos Kolias, et al. 2022

| 802.11 Features (16) | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Feature Name | Preprocessing Method | Data Type |
| radiotap.present.tsft | OHE | int64 |
| wlan.fc.ds | OHE | int64 |
| wlan.fc.frag | OHE | int64 |
| wlan.fc.moredata | OHE | int64 |
| wlan.fc.protected | OHE | int64 |
| wlan.fc.pwrmtg | OHE | int64 |
| wlan.fc.type | OHE | int64 |
| wlan.fc.retry | OHE | int64 |
| wlan.fc.subtype | OHE | int64 |
| wlan_radio.phy | OHE | int64 |
| frame.len | Min-Max | int64 |
| radiotap.dbm_antsignal | Min-Max | int64 |
| radiotap.length | Min-Max | int64 |
| wlan.duration | Min-Max | int64 |
| wlan_radio.duration | Min-Max | int64 |
| wlan_radio.signal_dbm | Min-Max | int64 |

Table 3.2: The selected set of 802.11 features.

3.3.3 Non-802.11 Features

Table 3.3 shows the non-802.11 features used in the analysis. It consists of Transport layer (TCP & UDP) protocols features responsible for data transfer and ARP features that operate on the Data-link layer to resolve Mac addresses. By analysing

| Non-802.11 Features (17) | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Feature Name | Preprocessing | Data Type |
| arp | OHE | object |
| arp.hw.type | OHE | int64 |
| arp.proto.type | OHE | int64 |
| arp.hw.size | OHE | int64 |
| arp.proto.size | OHE | int64 |
| arp.opcode | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.analysis | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.analysis.retransmission | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.checksum.status | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.flags.syn | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.flags.ack | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.flags.fin | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.flags.push | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.flags.reset | OHE | int64 |
| tcp.option_len | OHE | int64 |
| ip.ttl | Min-Max | int64 |
| udp.length | Min-Max | int64 |

Table 3.3: The selected set of Non-802.11 Features

3.4 Dataset Manipulation

The AWID3 Dataset (E. Chatzoglou, G. Kambourakis, and C. Kolias 2021) is supplied in two formats, a set of CSV files representing each method of attack and its subsequent data and the raw PCAP network captures. This project, as mentioned previously focuses on the six attack methods. For this instance, the CSV files were utilised and the dataset was manipulated to suit the purpose of experimentation. Each attack contained a folder with the data split into numerous CSV files, these needed to be rejoined to form one file/dataset so that it could be utilised and processed accordingly.

The methodology proposed was as followed:

1. Combine all individual CSV files for each attack method into one file using a bash script.
2. Import the file as a data frame and extract the desired features into a separate data frame.
3. Remove Nan and fix invalid values
4. Replace missing values to 0
5. Remove Nan target values.
6. Export the data frame as a new CSV file.
7. Combine all reduced datasets into one large data set.

Combing Files

A bash script, Appendix B.1 was created to list all contents of a given folder, containing the .csv file extension and sorted into numerical order i.e. 01, 02, 03. However, each individual file contained the CSV header, so only the first CSV file's header was read and written into the new 'combined.csv' file. All other files were read and appended into the new file, ignoring the first line; the CSV header.

After this step, we had 6 large CSV files with the following rows and file sizes. See Table 3.4

| Class | Rows | File Size |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| SSH | 2,440,571 | 3 GB |
| Botnet | 3,226,061 | 4.27GB |
| Malware | 2,312,761 | 3.41GB |
| SQL Injection | 2,598,357 | 3.8 GB |
| SSDP | 8,141,645 | 8.02 GB |
| Website Spoofing | 2,668,568 | 2.85 GB |

Table 3.4: Data Before Cleaning and Processing

Feature Extraction

With the combined data sets, the selected features were extracted from the 254 features as referenced in Table 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. Due to the large file sizes, we faced numerous errors and kernel crashes during the importing of the file into Pandas.

Instead of importing all columns, we specified the required features using the 'use_cols' parameter along with the 'chunk size' parameter to read the file in smaller chunks to save memory and eventually combined them together, forming one data frame. This saw a reduction in import time and lower memory consumption.

Data Cleaning

Following this, we proceeded to clean the data and ensure it was fit for the next stage of data pre-processing. Rows that contained only NAN values were dropped, as well as missing Label values. All missing/nan values from each column were replaced and represented with 0, following a similar approach to Efstratios Chatzoglou, Georgios Kambourakis, Smiliotopoulos, et al. (2022).

Upon analysis, we noticed frequent occurrences of hyphenated values e.g. *-100-100-10*, *123-456-1*, *-10-2*, *81-63-63* etc. These were more notable in the 802.11w features such as *'radiotap.dbm_antsignal'* and *'wlan_radio.signal_dbm'*, this was expected, being wireless radio features, *'radiotap.dbm_antsignal'* represents the signal strength in decibel milliwatts (dBm) and is captured via multiple antennas each representing the captured signal strength. We followed a similar approach to (ibid.), extracting and keeping the first value in the sequence, e.g. *-100-100-10* became -100, *123-456-1* became 123, *-10-2* became -10 and *81-63-63* became 81. A regex expression was written to iterate through each column to replace these values accordingly.

Following on, invalid values were observed, we noticed the presence of values containing months such as: *Oct-26*, *Oct-18*, *Feb-10* etc. We determined this to be a processing error during the creation of the

CSV files from the PCAP files and represented a low majority of the dataset. It was concluded that rows containing invalid values would be dropped from the data. A similar RegEX expression was written to filter out these values from the following columns: *'tcp.option.len'*, *'dns.resp.ttl'*, *'ip.ttl'*, *'smb2.cmd'*. The full code for this section can be found in Appendix B.2.

Individual Datasets

After our data cleaning and processing, the final 6 individual data files consisted of the following. See Table 3.5

| Class | Rows | File Size |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| SSH | 2,433,851 | 298 MB |
| Botnet | 3,216,505 | 393 MB |
| Malware | 2,304,632 | 283 MB |
| SQL Injection | 2,590,119 | 317 MB |
| SSDP | 8,137,106 | 1.04 GB |
| Website Spoofing | 2,666,406 | 340 MB |

Table 3.5: Data After Cleaning and Processing

Combining Datasets

Finally, utilising the same bash script (B.1) we combined the six reduced CSV files into one large single data frame which we exported to a CSV file. The resulting file was 2.67GB in size and contained approximately 21,348,614 rows.

3.5 Pre-Processing Methods

3.5.1 Encoding

One of the main decisions when building a model for a classification problem is the choice of encoding such as label, ordinal and one-hot encoding.

We decided to use one-hot encoding to encode the categorical data for our models, a binary vector is created for each category, and at once only one element is set to 1 (referred to as 'Hot' i.e True) and the rest set to 0 (referred to as 'Cold' i.e. False). This approach will avoid assigning arbitrary numerical values to each variable that the model may interpret as having a weighting depending on its value.

Ensemble Classifiers such as Random Forest do not require the target variable i.e. Labels to be encoded and can be interpreted as a string e.g. Normal, SSH, Malware etc. However, for deep learning, K-Nearest Neighbor and XGBoost we also utilised One-Hot Encoding to encode the target variable. Refer to D.2 for the code used to One-Hot Encode the categorical features.

3.5.2 Normalisation

Scaling was performed on the dataset for normalisation to help normalise all numerical values and bring features to a similar scale. Min-Max scaler was chosen to scale the data between 0 and 1. As a linear scaling method, it helps preserve the original distribution's shape, ensuring it does not affect the underlying relationship between the different features in the data. Refer to D.1 for the code used to perform the MinMax scaler on the numerical features in the dataset.

3.6 Data Balancing

At its core, the dataset is imbalanced, with a majority of 'Normal' data with varying ranges of available malicious data from each attack class. Consideration was taken to utilise data balancing methods such as SMOTE and Random under/oversampling to help distribute the data. However, in a normal environment one would expect an overwhelming majority of Normal network traffic, therefore to best represent a real-life scenario, the data was kept imbalanced, ensuring changes were not made to the underlying distribution of the dataset. Refer to Table 3.6 for the distribution of each class respectively before and after splitting into the train and test sets.

| Class | Train Data (70%) | Test Data (30%) | Whole Data (100%) |
|------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Normal | 10,668,482 | 4,572,206 | 12,192,550 |
| SDDP | 3,849,896 | 1,649,955 | 4,399,881 |
| Website Spoofing | 283,576 | 121,533 | 324,087 |
| Malware | 92,112 | 39,476 | 105,270 |
| Botnet | 39,806 | 17,060 | 45,493 |
| SSH | 8,317 | 3,565 | 9,506 |
| SQL Injection | 1,840 | 789 | 2,103 |

Table 3.6: Data Model Split into Train and Test Sets

Analysing the split, we observe a large imbalance of data between each class of attack, in particular, SQL Injection makes up less than 0.01% of the entire dataset, with SSDP taking the majority 21% of the data.

3.7 Cross Validation

Due to the imbalanced nature of the datasets, stratified k-fold cross-validation with a k value of 10 was used, similar to the works carried out by Efstratios Chatzoglou, Georgios Kambourakis, Smiliotopoulos, et al. (2022). The training set will be split into 10 folds, the model is then trained on all folds, except one called the validation set. The model is then tested on the validation set for its performance metrics and recorded. This is then repeated for all 10 folds, so each fold is used as a test set. The results are then averaged to better represent the model's performance across the data. Stratified split ensures each fold contains the same proportion of samples within each class to preserve the underlying structure of the data.

Finally, after Cross Validation, we train the model using the full training set and evaluate it based on the test set to obtain a final measure of performance, before finally saving the model.

3.8 Machine Learning Algorithms

3.9 Evaluation Metrics

A key area of the work was deciding the specific metrics use to evaluate the performance of the models. Metrics are vital to determine if models were under or over-fitting on our data and helps to provide context into steps and modifications needed to improve the performances of the models. As a multi-class classification problem, we concerned on primarily two main metrics of evaluation:

AUC-ROC

The Area Under the Receiver Operating Characteristic Curve (AUC-ROC) measures the ability for a model to correctly distinguish between positive and negative classes. AUC-ROC is also insensitive to class imbalances. Similarly in the works carried in (Efstratios Chatzoglou, Georgios Kambourakis, Smiliotopoulos, et al. 2022; Efstratios Chatzoglou, Georgios Kambourakis, Constantinos Kolias, et al. 2022) AUC was used as one of the primary evaluation metrics.

This value is first calculated by plotting the Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curve using the True Positive Rate (TPR) against the False Positive Rate (FPR) for each classification thresholds. The TPR is measure of the proportions of positive values that were correctly classified. Similarly, the FPR is the proportion of negative values that are incorrectly classified as positive. Using the ROC curve, the area under the curve (AUC) is calculated. This value ranges between 0 and 1, where 0.5 represents at best random guessing, and 1 corresponds a perfect classifier.

As our problem is multi-class, the AUC will be calculated by computing the one-vs-all metric for each class separately i.e, calculated for each class individually, treating all samples for that class as positive and all other as negative. Then these scores are averaged to calculate a final AUC score.

F1

The F1 score is a weighted average of both precision and recall. Precision is the fraction of correctly predicted positive instances out of all total predicted positive instances. Recall is the fraction of correctly predicted positive instances out of the total actual positive instances.

The F1-score was chosen due to its representation in an imbalanced dataset; as it considers both precision and recall. Accuracy can be a misleading metric (Fawcett 2006; Grandini, Bagli, and Visani 2020). A model can predict the majority class i.e 'Normal' in most cases and

still receive high accuracy, but in reality it poorly represents the minority classes. In the context for detecting network attacks, A high precision would result in a lower number of false positives, but would also decrease overall recall and may result in missing attacks being detected. Therefore, we cannot focus primarily on either Precision or Recall, F1 can allow us to tune the model to achieve a balance between false positives and false negatives.

Equations for Precision, Recall & F1

$$Precision = \frac{True\ Positive}{True\ Positive + False\ Positive}$$

$$Recall = \frac{True\ Positive}{True\ Positive + False\ Negative}$$

$$F_1 = 2 \cdot \frac{Precision \cdot Recall}{Precision + Recall}$$

Micro, Macro and Weighted

In regular binary classification, metrics such as F1, Precision, Recall and AUC can be calculated easily, however for our multi-class classification problem a slightly different approach must be taken. In particular, there are three main methods:

- Micro averaging uses the metric across all classes by counting the total true positives, false positives, and false negatives. This is the equivalent of using the accuracy i.e, fails to take into account class imbalances.
- Macro averaging calculates the metric in each class independently and then averages this for all classes, giving equal weight for all classes. It is used typically when all classes are equally as important, irrespective of the class size or any imbalances.
- Weighted averaging also calculates the metric for each class independently, but the average of the individual class scores are weighted with the number of samples in each class. It is used when performance across all classes are considered important, and the class imbalance needs to be considered.

Therefore, the weighted averaging method was chosen, leading to robust scores that takes into account both the number of samples within the class and its performance. It was observed that most previous works fails to mention the averaging method used for its evaluation metrics.

Classification Report

In addition to viewing the averaged metrics across all classes, the classification report provides a comprehensive summary of detailing the metrics for Precision, Recall, Accuracy and F1 across each class. This is important for understanding the underlying performance of the model, we can easily identify specific classes the model may be underperforming on, allowing for better tweaking and modifications to improve performance.

Confusion Matrix

The Confusion Matrix is a table that displays the performance of a model by showing the number of true positives, false positives, true negatives and false negatives for each class. In other words, how accurate the classifier is on each class and how it tends to wrong predict each class for another (confusion). By examining the confusion matrix, we can identify any specific classes that may require additional tuning or changes to the model to improve its performance. Works by Koço and Capponi (2013) introduced a new method using confusion matrices to measure and analyse the performance of cost-sensitive methods showing the importance of the confusion matrix in imbalanced data sets.

4 Experiments

4.1 Initial Modelling

In order to speed up initial training and testing for each machine learning algorithm, a multitude of subsets of the original combined data were created using sklearn's `train_test_split` to create a stratified split resulting in reduced data sets. Varying levels of data splits were created, including a 50%, 60% and 80% data split from the original 12 million rows of data as seen in Table 3.6.

4.2 Parameter Tuning

Due to the limitations in hardware and training time, the majority of models were optimised on a trial and error methodology to find the optimal parameters, with some instances where `GridSearchCV` and `RandomisedSearchCV` was used. We did not use 10-fold Stratified Cross Validation during initial experiments, this was justified under the pretence that the best found parameters would undergo cross validation training afterwards.

4.3 Classifiers

4.3.1 Random Forest (RF)

Initial modelling began using stock parameters without changing or adding any values. Due to the nature of training time, we did not utilise GridSearchCV for hyperparameter tuning. Instead, we used a series of settings and parameters to get an optimal model. Each model was trained on the entire training dataset to gauge initial performance, before using 10-fold Stratified Cross Validation and evaluating finally on the test set. Table 4.1 shows the parameters considered during the creation and optimisation of the models. For the context of the device, the majority of Random Forest models were trained using the VM.

Table 4.1: Parameters for Random Forest Classifier

| Parameter | Description |
|-------------------|---|
| n_estimators | The number of trees in the forest |
| criterion | Function to measure the quality of a split. |
| max_depth | Maximum depth of the tree. |
| min_samples_split | Minimum samples required to split an internal node. |
| min_samples_leaf | Minimum samples required to be at a leaf node. |
| max_features | Maximum features to consider when splitting. |
| bootstrap | To bootstrap samples when constructing trees |
| class_weight | Weights associated with classes |
| random_state | The random seed. |

Table 4.2: RF S-CV Mean Metrics

| Model | Size | AUC | F1 | Precision | Recall | Accuracy |
|---------|------|-------|-------|-----------|--------|----------|
| Stock | 100% | 99.99 | 99.66 | 99.66 | 99.67 | 99.67 |
| Model 1 | 100% | 99.99 | 99.66 | 99.66 | 99.67 | 99.67 |
| Model 2 | 100% | 99.95 | 95.23 | 98.50 | 92.96 | 92.96 |
| Model 3 | 100% | 99.87 | 91.53 | 98.42 | 86.65 | 86.65 |

Table 4.3: RF Evaluation Set Metrics

| Model | Size | AUC | F1 | Precision | Recall | Accuracy |
|---------|------|-------|-------|-----------|--------|----------|
| Stock | 100% | 99.99 | 99.66 | 99.66 | 99.67 | 99.67 |
| Model 1 | 100% | 99.99 | 99.66 | 99.66 | 99.67 | 99.67 |
| Model 2 | 100% | 99.95 | 95.23 | 98.50 | 92.96 | 92.96 |

Table 4.4: RF Model Parameters

| Parameter | Model 1 | Model 2 |
|--------------------|---------|----------|
| n_estimators: | 100 | 200 |
| max_depth: | 10 | 15 |
| min_samples_leaf: | 2 | 1 |
| min_samples_split: | 3 | 2 |
| random_state: | 1234 | 1234 |
| class_weight: | None | balanced |

4.3.2 XGBoost

As discussed earlier, with XGBoost we focused on training initial models with default settings across a range of subsets of data before attempting to optimise parameters using 10 Fold Stratified Cross Validation to verify results across the training set. Finally, the test set (30% of the overall data) was used to evaluate each model on a series of unseen data.

In the initial experiments, even without tuning parameters, the models achieved a high performance across all metrics.

Randomised GridSearch

An attempt was made to utilise GridSearchCV for parameter optimization; significant setbacks were encountered in achieving a successful execution due to numerous errors and system crashes, along with exceptionally high grid search time. In light of the difficulties faced with GridSearchCV, RandomizedSearchCV was utilised instead. This decision was justified by several factors:

RandomizedSearchCV uses a subset of parameter combinations sampled from a defined grid. This approach heavily reduces the computational power required compared to the exhaustive search needed for GridSearchCV. Moreover, RandomizedSearchCV enables striking a balance between computational resources and search comprehensiveness by defining the number of iterations to evaluate. See Listing 1 for the parameter grid used.

```

1 param_grid = {
2     'learning_rate': [0.01, 0.1, 0.3],
3     'max_depth': [3, 6, 9],
4     'min_child_weight': [1, 3, 5],
5     'gamma': [0, 0.1, 0.2],
6     'subsample': [0.5, 0.7, 0.9],
7     'colsample_bytree': [0.5, 0.7, 0.9],
8     'n_estimators': [100, 200]
9 }

```

Listing 1: Grid Search Parameters For XGBoost

Best Found Parameters

Table 4.5: XGBoost RGS Parameters

| Parameter | Value |
|-------------------|--------|
| Early Stopping | 10 |
| Evaluation Metric | merror |
| Learning Rate | 0.3 |
| Max Depth | 9 |
| Min Child Weight | 3 |
| Gamma | 0 |
| Subsamples | 0.9 |
| Colsample By Tree | 0.7 |
| N Estimators | 200 |

Table 4.6: XGBoost RGS Classification Report

| Class | Precision | Recall | F1-Score | Support |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------|
| Botnet | 0.95 | 0.76 | 0.84 | 17060 |
| Malware | 0.89 | 0.82 | 0.85 | 39476 |
| Normal | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4572206 |
| SQL Injection | 0.94 | 0.90 | 0.92 | 789 |
| SSDP | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1649955 |
| SSH | 0.91 | 0.79 | 0.85 | 3565 |
| Website Spoofing | 0.99 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 121533 |
| Accuracy | | | 1.00 | 6404584 |
| Macro Avg | 0.95 | 0.89 | 0.92 | 6404584 |
| Weighted Avg | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 6404584 |

Table 4.7: XGBoost Evaluation Metrics

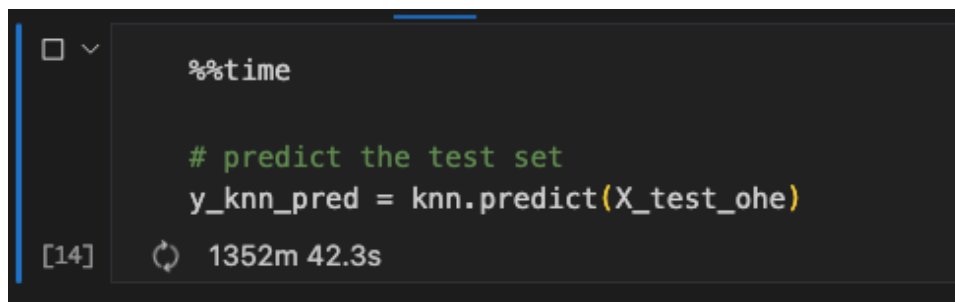
| Model | Device | Size | AUC | F1 | Precision | Recall | Accuracy |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Stock | M2 | 80% | ? | 91.5 | 95.5 | 88.2 | 99.7 |
| Stock | M2 | 100% | 99.99 | 99.65 | 99.65 | 99.65 | 99.65 |
| Stock | VM | 60% | ? | 91.4 | 95.0 | 88.4 | 99.6 |
| Stock | VM | 80% | 1.00 | 91.0 | 94.9 | 87.8 | 99.6 |
| Stock | VM | 100% | ? | 99.6 | 99.7 | 99.7 | 99.7 |
| Optimised | VM | 80% | 1.00 | 99.6 | 99.6 | 99.6 | 99.6 |
| Optimised | VM | 100% | 1.00 | 99.6 | 99.6 | 99.7 | 99.7 |
| RGS | VM | 100% | 99.99 | 99.65 | 99.65 | 99.66 | 99.66 |

4.3.3 KNN Classifier

During initial experimentation, KNN took over 22 hours to predict on our test data set after training - Figure 4.1. Additionally, utilising the second VM machine, KNN took over 28 hours to predict the test set of data, and subsequently crashed the system multiple times before we could gather results or evidence. KNN's algorithm means it does not build and store a model during training but rather stores them in memory. As a result, when we predict on the test set we encounter a high computational complexity task as KNN searches for the K-nearest neighbour from our training set. As we have a relatively large amount of features, this further increases the computational power required for these tasks. This was deemed too long for real-world applications where detecting network attacks would be time-sensitive. As network attacks can occur quickly, an IDS using ML algorithms need to have a quick response to detecting these attacks.

Despite the advantages of KNN, such as being easy to implement and interpret, the prioritisation of speed and accuracy in this work led to the ultimate decision not to continue with this classifier. Consequently, the results for this classifier remain inconclusive.

Figure 4.1: Training Time for KNN Classifier



```
□ v
%%time

# predict the test set
y_knn_pred = knn.predict(X_test_ohe)

[14] 1352m 42.3s
```

4.4 Neural Networks

4.4.1 Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP)

Table 4.8 specifies the parameter values for a multi-layered feed forward neural network model, consisting of one input layer (128 neurons) and one hidden layer (64 neurons) using the ReLu activator function. The output layer has a subsequent 7 neurons corresponding to the 7 different output classes, using a soft-max activation function to produce the class probabilities. See Appendix F.1 for the full code.

Table 4.8: MLP v1 Specifications

| Parameter | Value |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Activator | Relu |
| Output Activator | Softmax |
| Initialiser | Default |
| Optimiser | Adam |
| Momentum | N/A |
| Early Stopping | N/A |
| Dropout | N/A |
| Learning Rate | Default |
| Loss | Categorical Crossentropy |
| Batch Norm | N/A |
| Hidden Layers | 2 |
| Nodes per Layer | 128, 64 |
| Batch Size | 32 |
| Epochs | 10 |

Table 4.9: MLP v1 Classification Report

| Class | Precision | Recall | F1-Score | Support |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------|
| Botnet | 0.65 | 0.53 | 0.58 | 8530 |
| Malware | 0.83 | 0.68 | 0.75 | 19738 |
| Normal | 0.99 | 1.00 | 0.99 | 2286103 |
| SQL Injection | 0.98 | 0.23 | 0.37 | 395 |
| SSDP | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 824978 |
| SSH | 0.58 | 0.38 | 0.46 | 1782 |
| Website Spoofing | 0.92 | 0.92 | 0.92 | 60766 |
| Accuracy | | | 0.99 | 3202292 |
| Macro Avg | 0.85 | 0.68 | 0.72 | 3202292 |
| Weighted Avg | 0.99 | 0.99 | 0.99 | 3202292 |

After tuning, we proceeded to create an additional model with additional layers

Table 4.10: MLP v2 Specifications

| Parameter | Value |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Activator | Relu |
| Output Activator | Softmax |
| Initialiser | he_uniform |
| Optimiser | Adam |
| Momentum | N/A |
| Early Stopping | N/A |
| Dropout | 0.2 |
| Learning Rate | 0.001 |
| Loss | Categorical Crossentropy |
| Batch Norm | Yes |
| Hidden Layers | 3 |
| Nodes per Layer | 128, 64, 32 |
| Batch Size | 180 |
| Epochs | 15 |

Table 4.11: MLP v3 Specifications

| Parameter | Value |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Activator | Relu |
| Output Activator | Softmax |
| Initialiser | he_uniform |
| Optimiser | Adam |
| Momentum | N/A |
| Early Stopping | True (2 rounds) |
| Dropout | 0.2 |
| Learning Rate | 0.001 |
| Loss | Categorical Crossentropy |
| Batch Norm | Yes |
| Hidden Layers | 3 |
| Nodes per Layer | 128, 64, 32 |
| Batch Size | 200 |
| Epochs | 20 |

| Parameter | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|-------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Activator: | ReLU | ReLU | ReLU | ReLU | ReLU |
| Output Activator: | Softmax | Softmax | Softmax | Softmax | Softmax |
| Initialiser: | Default | he uniform | he_uniform | he_uniform | he uniform |
| Optimiser: | Adam | Adam | Adam | Adam | SGD |
| Momentum: | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.9 |
| Early Stopping: | N/A | N/A | 2 Rounds | 2 Rounds | N/A |
| Dropout: | N/A | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.25, 0.2 |
| Learning Rate: | Default | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.01 |
| Loss: | CC | CC | CC | SCC | CC |
| Batch Norm: | N/A | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Hidden Layers: | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Nodes per Layer: | 128, 64 | 128, 64, 32 | 128, 64, 32 | 128, 64, 32 | 100, 80, 60, 40, 20 |
| Batch Size: | 32 | 180 | 200 | 200 | 180 |
| Epochs: | 10 | 15 | 20 | 20 | 15 |

5 Analysis Of Results

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A Ethical Approval

1 Dear 2054584,

2

3 Warwick ID Number: 2054584

4

5 This is to confirm that your Supervisor's Delegated Approval
form has been received by the WMG Full-time Student Office,
Detecting IEEE 802.11 Attacks using Machine Learning does NOT
require ethical approval.

6

7 You are reminded that you must now adhere to the answers and
detail given in the completed WMG SDA ethical approval form (
and associated documentation) within your research project.
If anything changes in your research such that any of your
answers change, then you must contact us to check if you need
to reapply for or update your ethical approval before you
proceed.

8

9 If your data collection strategy, including the detail of any
interview/ survey questions that you drafted changes
substantially prior to or during data collection, then you
must reapply for ethical approval before your changes are
implemented.

10

11 When you submit your project please write N/A against the
ethical approval field in the submission pro-forma and
include a copy of this email in the appendices of your
project.

12

13 Kind regards

14

15 Jade Barrett

B Dataset Manipulation

B.1 CSV Combiner Script

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 # Input Directory
4 input_dir=" ../ Malware"
5
6 cd "$input_dir"
7
8 # Set the output file name
9 output_file="combined.csv"
10
11 # Check if the output file already exists and delete it
12 if [ -f "$output_file" ]; then
13     rm "$output_file"
14 fi
15
16 # Print a status message
17 echo "Combining files ..."
18
19 # Loop through all the files that match the pattern reduced_*.
20     csv
21 for file in $(ls *.csv | sort -V)
22 do
23     # Check if the file exists
24     if [ -f "$file" ]; then
25         # Print a status message
26         echo "Combining $file ..."
27
28     # If this is the first file , copy the header to the output file
29     if [ ! -f "$output_file" ]; then
30         head -n 1 "$file" > "$output_file"
31     fi
32
33     # Append all the rows except the header to the output file
34     tail -n +2 "$file" >> "$output_file"
35 fi
36 done
37
38 # Print a status message
39 echo "Done."
```

B.2 Feature Extraction & Reduction

```
1 # Define the columns to extract
2 cols_to_use = [
3     'frame.len', 'radiotap.dbm_antsignal', 'radiotap.length',
4     'wlan.duration', 'wlan_radio.duration', 'wlan_radio.signal_dbm',
5     'radiotap.present_tsft', 'wlan.fc.type', 'wlan.fc.subtype',
6     'wlan.fc.ds', 'wlan.fc.frag', 'wlan.fc.moredata',
7     'wlan.fc.protected', 'wlan.fc.pwrmtgt', 'wlan.fc.retry',
8     'wlan_radio.phy', 'udp.length', 'ip.ttl',
9     'arp', 'arp.proto.type', 'arp.hw.size',
10    'arp.proto.size', 'arp.hw.type', 'arp.opcode',
11    'tcp.analysis', 'tcp.analysis.retransmission', 'tcp.option.len',
12    'tcp.checksum.status', 'tcp.flags.ack', 'tcp.flags.fin',
13    'tcp.flags.push', 'tcp.flags.reset', 'tcp.flags.syn',
14    'dns', 'dns.count.queries', 'dns.count.answers',
15    'dns.resp.len', 'dns.resp.ttl', 'http.request.method',
16    'http.response.code', 'http.content_type', 'ssh.message_code',
17    'ssh.packet_length', 'nbns', 'nbss.length',
18    'nbss.type', 'ldap', 'smb2.cmd',
19    'smb.flags.response', 'smb.access.generic_read',
20    'smb.access.generic_write', 'smb.access.generic_execute',
21    'Label']
22
23 # Define the chunk size you want to read in each iteration
24 batch_size = 1000000
25
26 # Initialize an empty dataframe to hold the combined results
27 combined_df = pd.DataFrame()
28
29 # Iterate through the file in batches
30 for chunk in pd.read_csv('botnet_combined.csv', chunksize=
    batch_size, usecols=cols_to_use, low_memory=False):
31
32     # Combine the processed chunk with previous chunks
33     combined_df = pd.concat([combined_df, chunk])
```

```
1 # Drop all missing rows that contain only nan values
2 combined_df = combined_df.dropna(how='all')
3
4 # Drop all rows with missing values in Label Column
5 combined_df = combined_df.dropna(subset=['Label'])
6
7 # Fill NAs with zeros
8 # Change nan values to 0
9 combined_df = combined_df.fillna(0)
```

```

1 # Duplicate the dataframe
2 df = combined_df.copy()
3
4 # Regex to keep only the first value e.g
5 # -100-100-10 becomes -100, 123-456-1 becomes 123, -10-2
   becomes -10, 81-63-63 becomes 81
6 def seperated_values(x):
7     x = str(x)
8     match = re.match(r'^(-?\d+).*$', x)
9     if match:
10         return match.group(1)
11     else:
12         return x
13
14 # Go through all columns and change separate values into just
   one value
15 for column in df.columns:
16     df[column] = df[column].apply(seperated_values)
17     print('Processing', column)
18 print('Done')
19
20 # Find Rows that contain values such as Oct-26, Oct-18, Feb-10
   etc.. as these appear to be invalid and we will drop these
   rows.
21 regex = r"\b(?:\d{2}|(?:Jan|Feb|Mar|Apr|May|Jun|Jul|Aug|Sep|Oct|
   Nov|Dec))-(?:\d{2}|(?:Jan|Feb|Mar|Apr|May|Jun|Jul|Aug|Sep|Oct
   |Nov|Dec))\b"
22
23 # Use str.match method to apply the regex pattern to the column
24 mask = df['tcp.option_len'].astype(str).str.match(regex).fillna(
   False)
25 df = df[~mask]
26
27 mask = df['dns.resp.ttl'].astype(str).str.match(regex).fillna(
   False)
28 df = df[~mask]
29
30 mask = df['ip.ttl'].astype(str).str.match(regex).fillna(False)
31 df = df[~mask]
32
33 mask = df['smb2.cmd'].astype(str).str.match(regex).fillna(False)
34 df = df[~mask]
35
36 df.to_csv('Botnet_Reduced.csv', index=False)

```

C Conda Environments

C.1 Neural Networks - Apple Silicon

```
1 conda create -n nn-env python=3.9
2 conda activate nn-env
3 conda install -c apple tensorflow-deps
4 conda install -c conda-forge -y pandas jupyter
5 pip install tensorflow-macos==2.10
6 pip install numpy, matplotlib, scikit-learn, scipy, seaborn
```

C.2 Classifiers

```
1 # Conda environment used for Random Forest, XGBoost and K-NN.
2
3 conda create -n ml-env python=3.9
4 conda activate ml-env
5 conda install -c conda-forge -y pandas jupyter
6 pip install numpy, matplotlib, scikit-learn, scipy, seaborn,
   xgboost
```

D Data Preprocessing

D.1 MinMax Scaling

```
1 # Define the scaler
2 scaler = MinMaxScaler()
3
4 # Fit the scaler to the following columns we define
5 scale_cols = [
6     'frame.len',
7     'radiotap.dbm_antsignal',
8     'radiotap.length',
9     'wlan.duration',
10    'wlan-radio.duration',
11    'wlan-radio.signal-dbm',
12    'ip.ttl',
13    'udp.length',
14    'nbss.length',
15    'dns.count.answers',
16    'dns.count.queries',
17    'dns.resp.ttl',
18    'ssh.packet.length']
19
20 # Fit the X_train and X_test
21 X_train[scale_cols] = scaler.fit_transform(X_train[scale_cols])
22 X_test[scale_cols] = scaler.transform(X_test[scale_cols])
```

D.2 OHE Encoding

```
1 cols_to_encode = [col for col in X_train.columns if col not in
2     scale_cols]
3
4 X_all = pd.concat([X_train, X_test], axis=0)
5
6 X_all_ohe = pd.get_dummies(X_all, columns=cols_to_encode,
7     drop_first=True, dtype=np.uint8)
8
9 # split back into train and test sets
10 X_train_ohe = X_all_ohe[:len(X_train)]
11 X_test_ohe = X_all_ohe[len(X_train):]
```

D.3 Label Encoding

```
1 # Use Label Encoder to encode the target variable
2 le = LabelEncoder()
3
4 label_encoder = le.fit(y_train)
5 y_train_encoded = label_encoder.transform(y_train)
```

D.4 Loading Dataset

```
1 chunk_size = 1000000
2 dtype_opt = {
3     'frame.len': 'int64',
4     'radiotap.dbm_antsignal': 'int64',
5     'radiotap.length': 'int64',
6     'radiotap.present.tsft': 'int64',
7     'wlan.duration': 'int64',
8     'wlan.fc.ds': 'int64',
9     'wlan.fc.frag': 'int64',
10    'wlan.fc.moredata': 'int64',
11    'wlan.fc.protected': 'int64',
12    'wlan.fc.pwrmtg': 'int64',
13    'wlan.fc.type': 'int64',
14    'wlan.fc.retry': 'int64',
15    'wlan.fc.subtype': 'int64',
16    'wlan_radio.duration': 'int64',
17    'wlan_radio.signal_dbm': 'int64',
18    'wlan_radio.phy': 'int64',
19    'arp': 'object',
20    'arp.hw.type': 'object',
21    'arp.proto.type': 'int64',
22    'arp.hw.size': 'int64',
23    'arp.proto.size': 'int64',
24    'arp.opcode': 'int64',
25    'ip.ttl': 'int64',
26    'tcp.analysis': 'int64',
27    'tcp.analysis.retransmission': 'int64',
28    'tcp.checksum.status': 'int64',
29    'tcp.flags.syn': 'int64',
30    'tcp.flags.ack': 'int64',
31    'tcp.flags.fin': 'int64',
32    'tcp.flags.push': 'int64',
33    'tcp.flags.reset': 'int64',
34    'tcp.option_len': 'int64',
35    'udp.length': 'int64',
36    'nbns': 'object',
37    'nbss.length': 'int64',
38    'ldap': 'object',
39    'smb2.cmd': 'int64',
```

```

40     'dns': 'object',
41     'dns.count.answers': 'int64',
42     'dns.count.queries': 'int64',
43     'dns.resp.ttl': 'int64',
44     'http.content_type': 'object',
45     'http.request.method': 'object',
46     'http.response.code': 'int64',
47     'ssh.message_code': 'int64',
48     'ssh.packet_length': 'int64'
49 }
50
51 # Read the data
52 print('Reading X...')
53 X = pd.DataFrame()
54 for chunk in pd.read_csv('X.csv', chunksize=chunk_size, usecols=
    dtype_opt.keys(), dtype=dtype_opt, low_memory=False):
55     X = pd.concat([X, chunk])
56
57 print('Reading y...')
58 y = pd.DataFrame()
59 for chunk in pd.read_csv('y.csv', chunksize=chunk_size, usecols
    =['Label'], dtype='object', low_memory=False):
60     y = pd.concat([y, chunk])
61
62 # Split the data into training and testing sets
63 print('Splitting the data...')
64 X_train, X_test, y_train, y_test = train_test_split(X, y,
    test_size=0.30, random_state=1234, stratify=y)

```

E Classifiers

E.1 Base K-Nearest Neighbor (KNN)

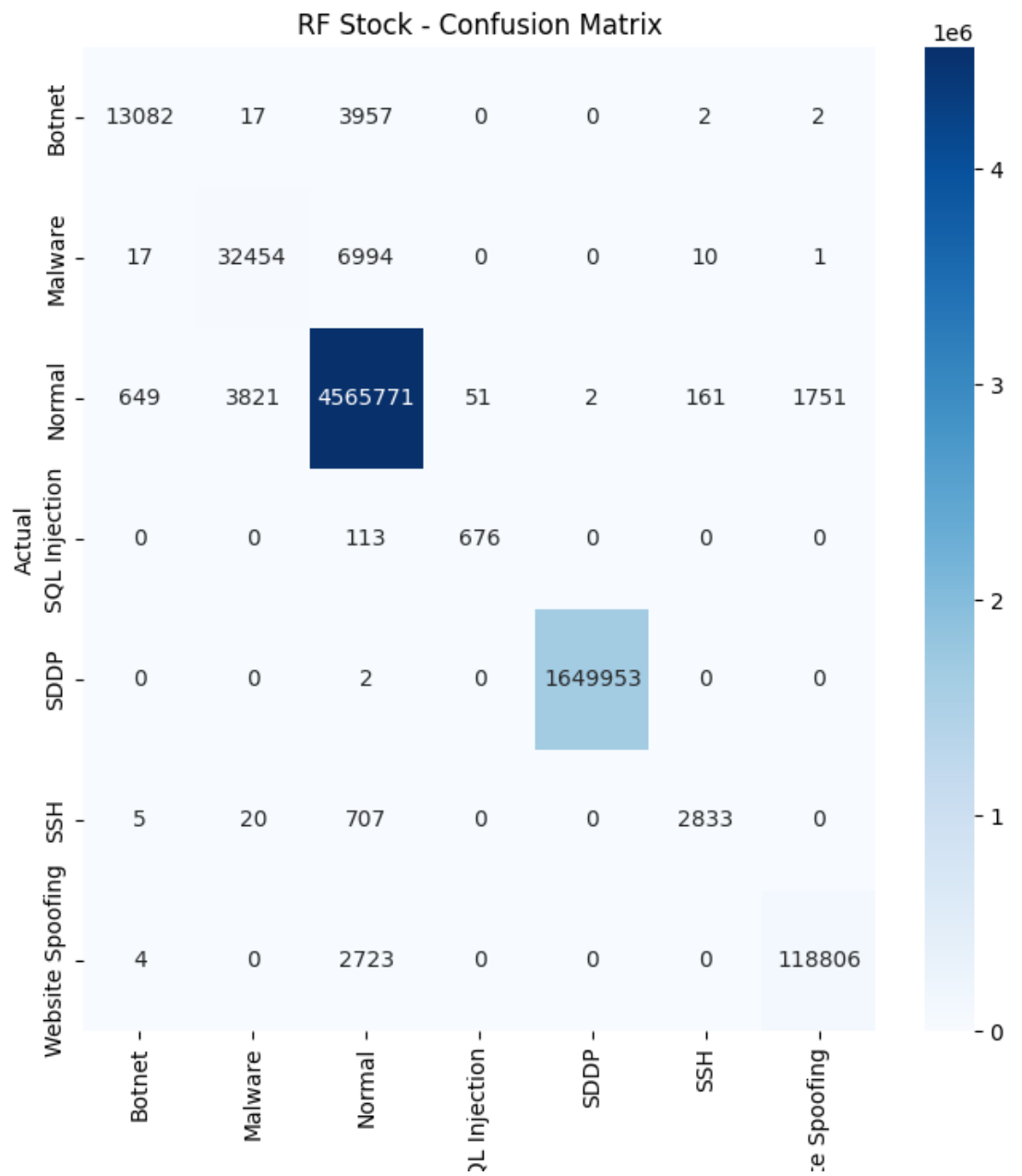
```
1 # Use KNN
2 from sklearn.neighbors import KNeighborsClassifier
3
4 k=5
5
6 # Create KNN classifier
7 knn = KNeighborsClassifier(n_neighbors=k, n_jobs=-1)
8
9 # Fit the model
10 knn.fit(X_train_ohe, y_train_encoded)
11
12 # predict the test set
13 y_knn_pred = knn.predict(X_test_ohe)
14
15 from sklearn.metrics import classification_report, roc_auc_score
16
17 # Get the classification report
18 report = classification_report(y_test_encoded, y_knn_pred)
19
20 print('Classification Report:\n', report)
21
22 # Get the all the metrics for the multi class classification
23
24 print('Accuracy: ', accuracy_score(y_test_encoded, y_knn_pred))
25 print('Precision: ', precision_score(y_test_encoded, y_knn_pred,
26                                     average='macro'))
26 print('Recall: ', recall_score(y_test_encoded, y_knn_pred,
27                                average='macro'))
27 print('F1 Score: ', f1_score(y_test_encoded, y_knn_pred, average
28                               = 'macro'))
28
29 # Get the confusion matrix for multi-class and plot it
30 confusion = confusion_matrix(y_test, y_rf_pred)
31 print('Confusion Matrix\n')
32 print(confusion)
33
34 # Plot the confusion matrix for multi-class classification using
35     seaborn
36
37 labels = ['Normal', 'SSDP', 'Website Spoofing', 'Malware', '
38     Botnet', 'SSH', 'SQL Injection']
39
40 plt.figure(figsize=(8, 8))
41 sns.heatmap(confusion, annot=True, fmt='d', cmap='Blues',
42             xticklabels=labels, yticklabels=labels)
43 plt.title('Confusion Matrix')
44 plt.xlabel('Predicted')
45 plt.ylabel('Actual')
46 plt.show()
47
```

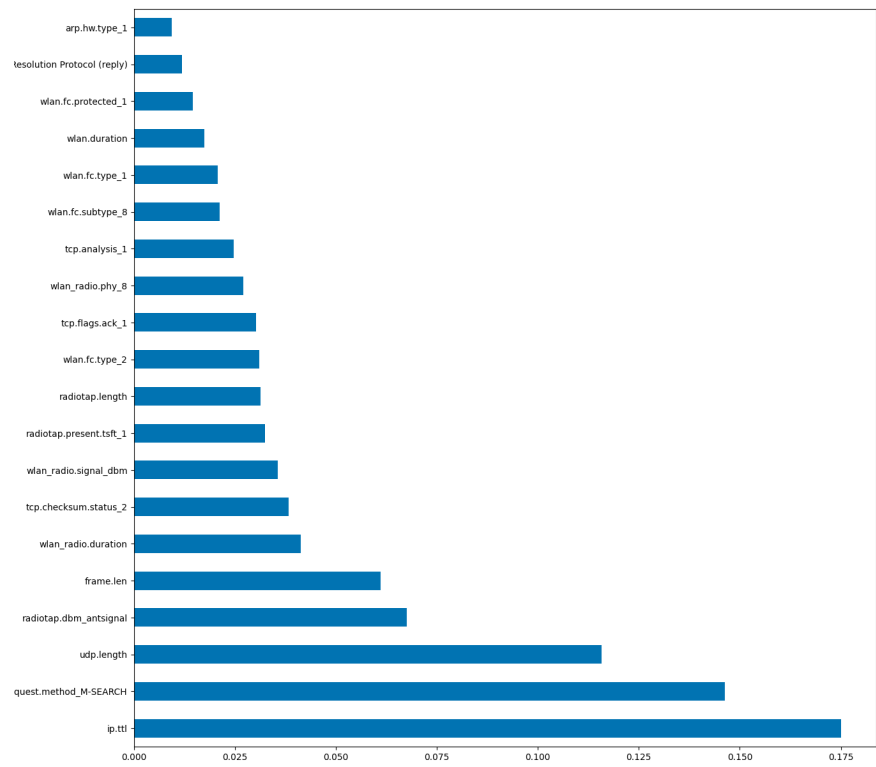
```
44 plt.figure(figsize=(10, 10))
45 feat_importances = pd.Series(rf.feature_importances_, index=
    X_train_ohe.columns)
46 feat_importances.nlargest(20).plot(kind='barh')
47 plt.show()
```

E.2 Random Forest

E.2.1 Stock RF - Raw Metrics

```
1 S-CV Results
2 Mean AUC = 99.99
3 Mean F1 = 99.66
4 Mean Precision = 99.66
5 Mean Recall = 99.67
6 Mean Accuracy = 99.67
7 Training Time: 7795 seconds
8
9 Final Test Results
10 Weighted AUC: 0.9999070506312879
11 Weighted F1: 0.996638797834701
12 Weighted Precision: 0.9966379719195173
13 Weighted Recall: 0.9967196932696956
14 Accuracy: 0.9967196932696956
15
16 Classification Report
17               precision    recall  f1-score   support
18
19      Botnet           0.95       0.77       0.85       17060
20      Malware          0.89       0.82       0.86       39476
21      Normal           1.00       1.00       1.00      457220
22      SQL              0.93       0.86       0.89        789
23      SDDP             1.00       1.00       1.00     1649955
24      SSH              0.94       0.79       0.86        3565
25      Spoofing         0.99       0.98       0.98     121533
26
27      accuracy                   1.00     6404584
28      macro avg           0.96       0.89       0.92     6404584
29      weighted avg        1.00       1.00       1.00     6404584
30
31 Confusion Matrix
32 [[ 13082    17    3957         0         0         2         2]
33 [         17   32454    6994         0         0        10         1]
34 [         649    3821 4565771        51         2       161      1751]
35 [          0         0    113       676         0         0         0]
36 [          0         0         2         0 1649953         0         0]
37 [          5        20       707         0         0      2833         0]
38 [          4         0      2723         0         0         0    118806]]
```





E.2.2 RF Model 1 - Raw Metrics

```

1 S-CV Results
2 Mean AUC = 0.9999
3 Mean F1 = 0.9966
4 Mean Precision = 0.9966
5 Mean Recall = 0.9967
6 Mean Accuracy = 0.9967
7 Training Time: 56043 seconds
8
9 Final Test Results
10 Weighted AUC: 0.9999070506308619
11 Weighted Precision: 0.9966379719195173
12 Weighted Recall: 0.9967196932696956
13 Weighted F1: 0.996638797834701
14 Accuracy: 0.9967196932696956
15
16 Classification Report
17
18      precision    recall  f1-score   support
19
20     Botnet         0.95        0.77         0.85       17060
21     Malware         0.89        0.82         0.86       39476
22     Normal         1.00        1.00         1.00      4572206
23  SQL_Injection     0.93        0.86         0.89         789
24         SSDP         1.00        1.00         1.00     1649955
25         SSH          0.94        0.79         0.86         3565
26  Website_spoofing  0.99        0.98         0.98       121533
27
28      accuracy                 1.00     6404584
29      macro avg           0.96        0.89         0.92     6404584
30      weighted avg          1.00        1.00         1.00     6404584
31
32 Confusion Matrix
33 [[ 13082    17    3957     0     0     2     2]
34 [    17   32454   6994     0     0    10     1]
35 [    649    3821 4565771    51     2    161   1751]
36 [     0         0    113   676     0     0     0]
37 [     0         0     2     0 1649953     0     0]
38 [     5     20    707     0     0   2833     0]
39 [     4         0   2723     0     0     0 118806]]

```

E.2.3 RF Model 2 - Raw Metrics

```
1 S-CV Results
2 Mean AUC = 99.95
3 Mean F1 = 95.23
4 Mean Precision = 98.50
5 Mean Recall = 92.96
6 Mean Accuracy = 92.96
7 Training Time = 10147 seconds
8
9 Final Test Results
10 Weighted AUC: 0.9994792868436975
11 Weighted Precision: 0.984757273176817
12 Weighted Recall: 0.925409987596384
13 Weighted F1: 0.9496738038716113
14 Accuracy: 0.925409987596384
15
16 Classification Report
17
18               precision    recall  f1-score   support
19
20      Botnet           0.14       0.96       0.24       17060
21      Malware           0.22       0.97       0.36       39476
22      Normal           1.00       0.90       0.95      4572206
23  SQL_Injection        0.01       0.99       0.02         789
24      SSDP             1.00       1.00       1.00     1649955
25      SSH              0.04       0.99       0.08         3565
26  Website_spoofing     0.61       0.98       0.75      121533
27
28      accuracy                   0.93     6404584
29      macro avg           0.43       0.97       0.48     6404584
30      weighted avg        0.98       0.93       0.95     6404584
31
32
33 Confusion Matrix
34
35 [[ 16326      90      30      91      0      504      19]
36 [      76    38392     13     170      0      824      1]
37 [ 102163   135709 4098890   76381      2   83351   75710]
38 [      0         0         1     785      0         3         0]
39 [      0         0        10         0 1649945         0         0]
40 [      6        15         4        16         0     3523         1]
41 [     282     1145     484     262         0      355   119005]]
```

E.3 XGBoost

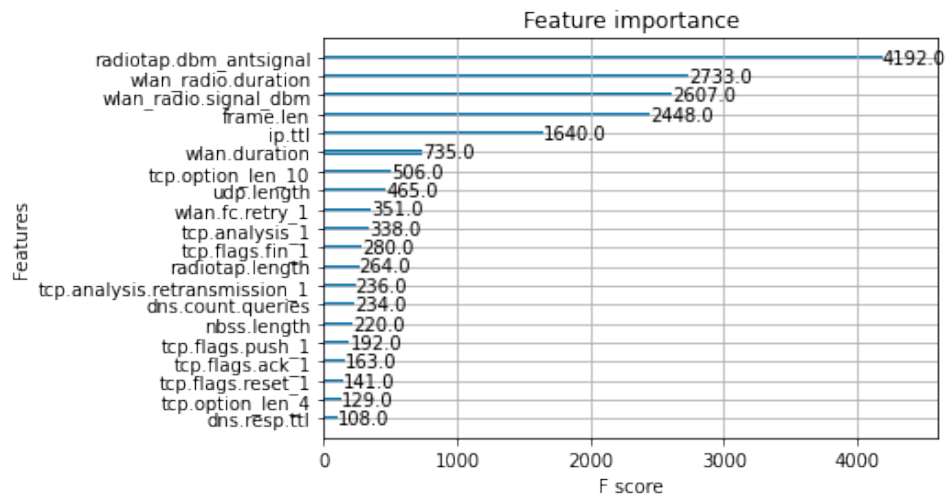
E.3.1 Stock 100% - XGBoost Raw Metrics

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------|----------|---------|
| 1 | Final Test Results | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | Weighted AUC: 99.99 | | | | |
| 4 | Weighted F1: 99.65 | | | | |
| 5 | Weighted Precision: 99.65 | | | | |
| 6 | Weighted Recall: 99.65 | | | | |
| 7 | Accuracy: 99.65 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | |
| 9 | Classification Report | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | |
| 11 | | precision | recall | f1-score | support |
| 12 | | | | | |
| 13 | 0 | 0.96 | 0.74 | 0.84 | 17060 |
| 14 | 1 | 0.86 | 0.85 | 0.86 | 39476 |
| 15 | 2 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4572206 |
| 16 | 3 | 0.93 | 0.88 | 0.90 | 789 |
| 17 | 4 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1649955 |
| 18 | 5 | 0.95 | 0.79 | 0.86 | 3565 |
| 19 | 6 | 0.99 | 0.97 | 0.98 | 121533 |
| 20 | | | | | |
| 21 | accuracy | | | 1.00 | 6404584 |
| 22 | macro avg | 0.95 | 0.89 | 0.92 | 6404584 |
| 23 | weighted avg | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 6404584 |
| 24 | | | | | |
| 25 | | | | | |
| 26 | Confusion Matrix | | | | |
| 27 | | | | | |
| 28 | [[12703 31 4320 0 0 2 4] | | | | |
| 29 | [17 33596 5857 0 0 6 0] | | | | |
| 30 | [539 5289 4564546 56 0 144 1632] | | | | |
| 31 | [0 0 91 698 0 0 0] | | | | |
| 32 | [0 0 0 0 1649955 0 0] | | | | |
| 33 | [5 15 745 0 0 2800 0] | | | | |
| 34 | [1 4 3344 0 0 0 118184]] | | | | |

E.3.2 Stock 100% - XGBoost CM



E.3.3 Stock 100% - XGBoost Feature Importance



F Neural Networks

F.1 MLP NN v1

```
1 # Create a sequential model
2 model = Sequential()
3 input_shape = (X_train_ohe.shape[1],)
4
5 # Add layers to the model
6 model.add(Dense(128, activation='relu', input_shape=input_shape))
7
8 model.add(Dense(64, activation='relu'))
9 model.add(Dense(7, activation='softmax'))
10
11 # Compile the model
12 model.compile(loss='categorical_crossentropy', optimizer='adam',
13               metrics=['accuracy'])
14
15 # Train the model
16 model.fit(X_train_ohe, y_train_ohe, epochs=10, batch_size=32,
17           validation_data=(X_test_ohe, y_test_ohe))
18
19 # Evaluate the model using test data
20 test_loss, test_acc = model.evaluate(X_test_ohe, y_test_ohe)
21
22 print('Test accuracy:', test_acc)
```

F.1.1 MLP Neural Network

```
1 from keras.models import Sequential
2 from keras.layers import Dense, Dropout, BatchNormalization
3 from keras.optimizers import SGD
4 from keras.initializers import he_uniform
5 from keras.metrics import AUC
6
7 # Define the number of classes
8 num_classes = 7
9
10 # Define the model architecture
11 model = Sequential()
12
13 # Add the input layer
14 model.add(Dense(100, input_shape=(X_train_ohe.shape[1],),
15                                activation='relu', kernel_initializer=he_uniform()))
16
17 # Add batch normalization
18 model.add(BatchNormalization())
19
20 # Add the first hidden layer
```

```

20 model.add(Dense(80, activation='relu', kernel_initializer=
    he_uniform()))
21 model.add(Dropout(0.25))
22 model.add(BatchNormalization())
23
24 # Add the second hidden layer
25 model.add(Dense(60, activation='relu', kernel_initializer=
    he_uniform()))
26 model.add(Dropout(0.2))
27 model.add(BatchNormalization())
28
29 # Add the third hidden layer
30 model.add(Dense(40, activation='relu', kernel_initializer=
    he_uniform()))
31 model.add(BatchNormalization())
32
33 # Add the fourth hidden layer
34 model.add(Dense(20, activation='relu', kernel_initializer=
    he_uniform()))
35 model.add(BatchNormalization())
36
37 # Add the output layer
38 model.add(Dense(num_classes, activation='softmax'))
39
40 # Define the optimizer
41 sgd = SGD(lr=0.01, momentum=0.9)
42
43 # Compile the model
44 model.compile(loss='categorical_crossentropy', optimizer=sgd,
    metrics=[AUC()])
45
46 # Train the model
47 batch_size = 170
48 epochs = 10
49 history = model.fit(X_train_ohe, y_train_ohe, batch_size=
    batch_size, epochs=epochs, validation_data=(X_test_ohe,
    y_test_ohe))
50
51 # Evaluate the model on your test data
52 test_loss, test_auc = model.evaluate(X_test_ohe, y_test_ohe)

```