

6-3: Useful crates and tools

Artem Pavlov, TII, Abu Dhabi, 21.04.2025

getrandom

- Retrieves random data from (operating) system sources
- Supports a wide range of targets (approximately the same as Rust's std)
- Can be used in no-std environments (backend must be specified by an application programmer)
- Repository: <https://github.com/rust-random/getrandom>
- Docs: <https://docs.rs/getrandom>

subtle

- Traits and utilities for constant-time cryptographic implementations
- Provides traits for constant-time comparison and selection
- Provides constant-time alternatives to **bool** (**Choice**) and **Option** (**CtOption**)
- Repository: <https://github.com/dalek-cryptography/subtle>
- Docs: <https://docs.rs/subtle>

hex-literal

- Provides the **hex!** macro for converting hexadecimal string literals to a byte array at compile time
- Accepts multiple string literals
- Implemented using **const fns**
- Docs: <https://docs.rs/hex-literal>

cpufeatures

- Lightweight and efficient runtime CPU feature detection for `aarch64`, `loongarch64`, and `x86/x86_64` targets
- An alternative to the `is_x86_feature_detected!` macro
- Provides “tokens” which serve as a proof that target feature storage was already initialized
- Docs: <https://docs.rs/cpufeatures>

base16ct, base32ct, base64ct

- Crates for constant time encoding and decoding of base16 (hex), base32, and base64 formats
- Supports different format flavors encountered in the wild
- Constant time only in respect to input content, not length
- Because of the constant time property, the crates do not implement “early failure”
- Repository: <https://github.com/RustCrypto/formats>

serdect

- Constant-time serde serializer/deserializer helpers for binary secret data
- For human-readable formats (e.g. JSON) serializes data as hex using **base16ct**
- For binary formats uses binary data as-is
- Docs: <https://docs.rs/serdect>
- Repository: <https://github.com/RustCrypto/formats>

zeroize

- Provides functions and traits for zeroization of secrets which will not be optimized away by compiler
- Zeroization support in cryptographic crates is often optional and enabled using **zeroize** crate feature
- Warning: does not prevent potential leaks caused by moves and stack spilling!
- Repository: <https://github.com/RustCrypto/utls>
- Docs: <https://docs.rs/zeroize>

Memory sanitizers

- Rust is compatible with external memory sanitizers such (e.g. Valgrind or LLVM sanitizers)
- <https://doc.rust-lang.org/beta/unstable-book/compiler-flags/sanitizer.html>

MIRI

- An interpreter for Rust's mid-level intermediate representation
- Repository: <https://github.com/rust-lang/miri>
- Installation: `rustup +nightly component add miri`
- Execution: `cargo miri test`, `cargo miri run`

proptest

- A framework for property testing
- Allows to easily write tests which check range of inputs
- Book: <https://proptest-rs.github.io/proptest/intro.html>
- Docs: <https://docs.rs/proptest>

proptest example

```
proptest! {  
  #[test]  
  fn doesnt_crash(s in "\\PC*") {  
    parse_date(&s);  
  }  
  
  #[test]  
  fn parses_date_back_to_original(y in 0u32..10000,  
                                   m in 1u32..13, d in 1u32..32) {  
    let (y2, m2, d2) = parse_date(  
      &format!("{:04}-{:02}-{:02}", y, m, d)).unwrap();  
    // prop_assert_eq! is basically the same as assert_eq!, but doesn't  
    // cause a bunch of panic messages to be printed on intermediate  
    // test failures. Which one to use is largely a matter of taste.  
    prop_assert_eq!((y, m, d), (y2, m2, d2));  
  }  
}
```

cargo fuzz

- Fuzzing with **libFuzzer**
- **libFuzzer** requires LLVM sanitizer support, only works on x86-64 Linux, x86-64 macOS and Apple-Silicon (aarch64) macOS
- Also needs a C++ compiler with C++11 support
- Repository: <https://github.com/rust-fuzz/cargo-fuzz>
- Rust Fuzz Book: <https://rust-fuzz.github.io/book/afl.html>

cargo afl

- Fuzzing cargo plugin based on American Fuzzy Lop (AFL)
- Requires C compiler (e.g. `gcc` or `clang`) and `cmake`
- Repository: <https://github.com/rust-fuzz/afl.rs>

Questions?