



# Block Ciphers, TLS/SSL and HTTPS

COSC412

# Learning objectives

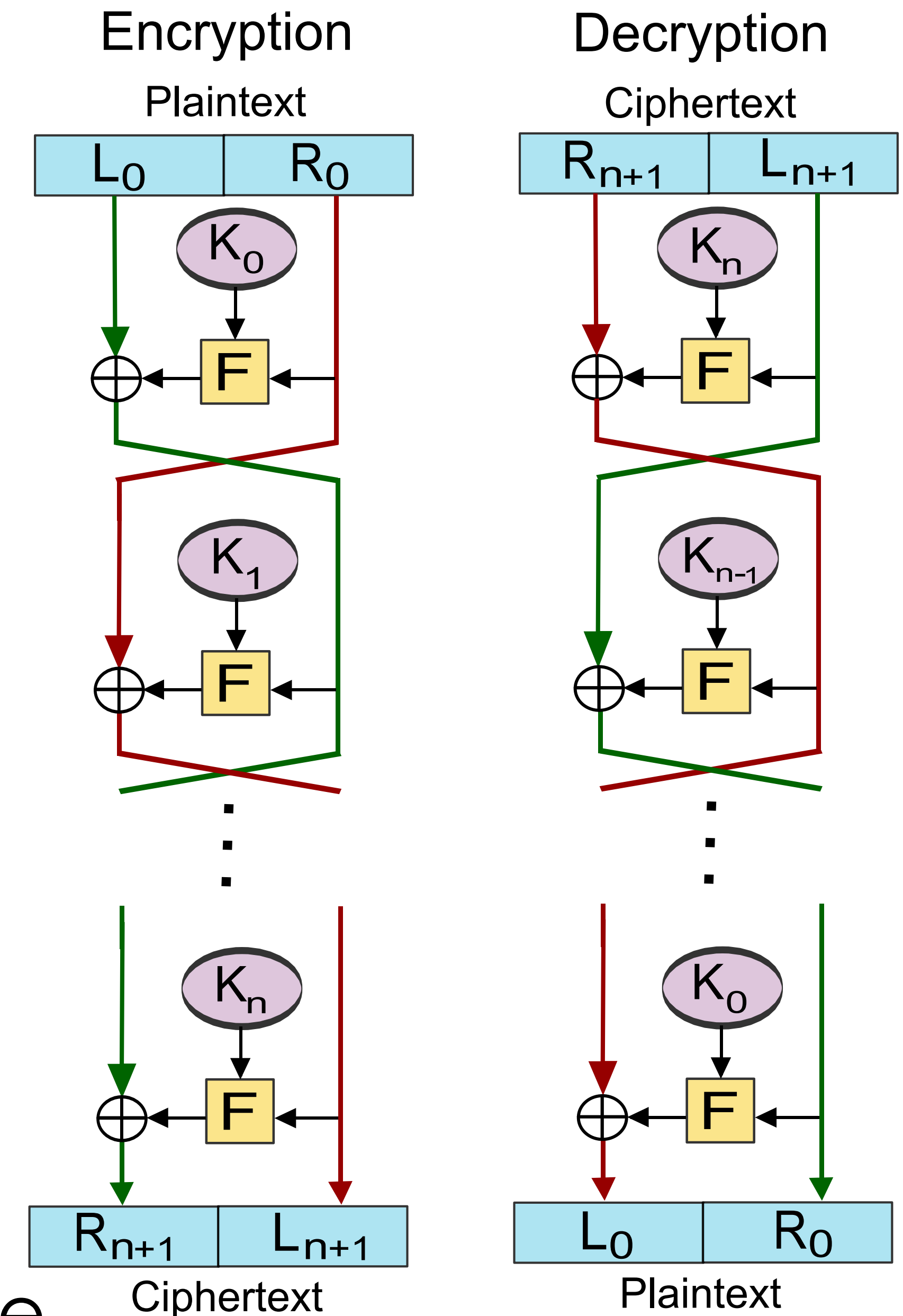
- Explain how block ciphers work
  - Contrast block ciphers and stream ciphers
- Understand the role of asymmetric cryptography in practical protocols
  - Particularly HTTPS + TLS (*i.e.*, SSL)
- Appreciate structure and function of digital certificates

# Block ciphers

- You have already met stream ciphers
  - Can think of a key-stream that gets combined with the plaintext to produce cipher text
- Block ciphers transform a block at a time
  - Effect of plain-text bits should be distributed throughout the cipher-text bits within block
- Note block sizes are often not large
  - e.g., DES has 64-bit blocks, AES has 128-bit blocks

# Example: Feistel ciphers

- Input plaintext is split in two:  $L_0$  /  $R_0$
- ‘Round’ function  $F$  is applied thusly:
  - $F$  takes key  $K_n$
  - Compute  $T$  as  $F$  transforming  $R_n$
  - Result  $T$  is XORed with  $L_n$
  - Input parts are swapped
- Feistel cipher property:
  - Function  $F$  does not need to be invertible



# Utilising block ciphers

- Block ciphers are used as a device in the construction of secure protocols
  - They are not a complete means to effect secure communication on their own
- *E.g.*, when there is more data than the block size, we need a means for repeated block cipher utilisation
  - how to generate sub-keys  $K_n$  conveniently?
  - what if plain-text does not match block size?
  - these questions are unrelated to specific block ciphers in use



# Let's meet aes-128-ecb

```
# (Visit COSC412 resources page for more information.)  
# On your computer run:  
git clone https://altitude.otago.ac.nz/cosc412/demo-vm  
cd cosc412-demo; vagrant up; vagrant ssh  
# Then, after SSHing to the VM, run:  
. /vagrant/bash-vars.sh
```

- Some simple plaintext:

```
: $; P=$(ruby -e'(0..127).each{|x|print x%8}'); echo -n $P | xxd -g1  
0000000: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567  
0000010: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567  
0000020: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567 ...
```

- Using really terrible parameters, apply AES scheme:

```
: $; B_ENC='echo -n $P | openssl aes-128-ecb -K 61 -e -nopad -nosalt'  
: $; eval $B_ENC | xxd -g1  
0000000: 02 f9 c0 7b 93 46 fc 02 e0 67 48 40 d1 7e 33 19  ...{.F...gH@.~3.  
0000010: 02 f9 c0 7b 93 46 fc 02 e0 67 48 40 d1 7e 33 19  ...{.F...gH@.~3.  
0000020: 02 f9 c0 7b 93 46 fc 02 e0 67 48 40 d1 7e 33 19  ...{.F...gH@.~3. ...
```

- What can you say about this?

# What would RC4 have done?

- Encrypting our plaintext with RC4 stream cipher gives:

```
: $; S_ENC='echo -n $P | openssl rc4 -K 61 -e -nopad -nosalt'
: $; eval $S_ENC | xxd -g1
00000000: b0 03 63 e6 1b 74 5d 28 a4 d2 bb 87 52 ad 20 42  ..c..t](....R. B
00000010: d7 89 eb 33 a7 ec 30 19 e4 c3 49 78 14 7d 8d 64  ...3..0...Ix.}.d
00000020: ee f7 d1 ce 9d 9e 96 ae 2c e4 87 a8 3c d3 16 99  .......,...<...
00000030: 3d fa 72 4e 10 82 11 82 5c 08 a0 72 80 17 5c 35  =.rN....\..r..\5
00000040: d6 0b a4 c9 81 3e bf 14 d5 7e 93 b5 fe 4d 78 80  ....>...~...Mx.
00000050: f9 e3 7a 10 d2 18 8c 4a fc cd 67 ee 62 b5 f5 94  ..z....J..g.b...
...
```

- Note that we have taken care to handle null
  - Shell variables drop `\0` characters (they end the string), but...
  - Pipes can pass `\0` through streams, which is why we `eval` here

# Block cipher 'modes'

- How to use block ciphers on more than a single block of plain-text? Select a block cipher '**mode**'.
- Common block cipher modes:
  - ECB: Electronic codebook
  - CBC: Cipher-block chaining
  - CFB: Cipher feedback
  - OFB: Output feedback
  - CTR: Counter



# Explaining our cipher-patterns

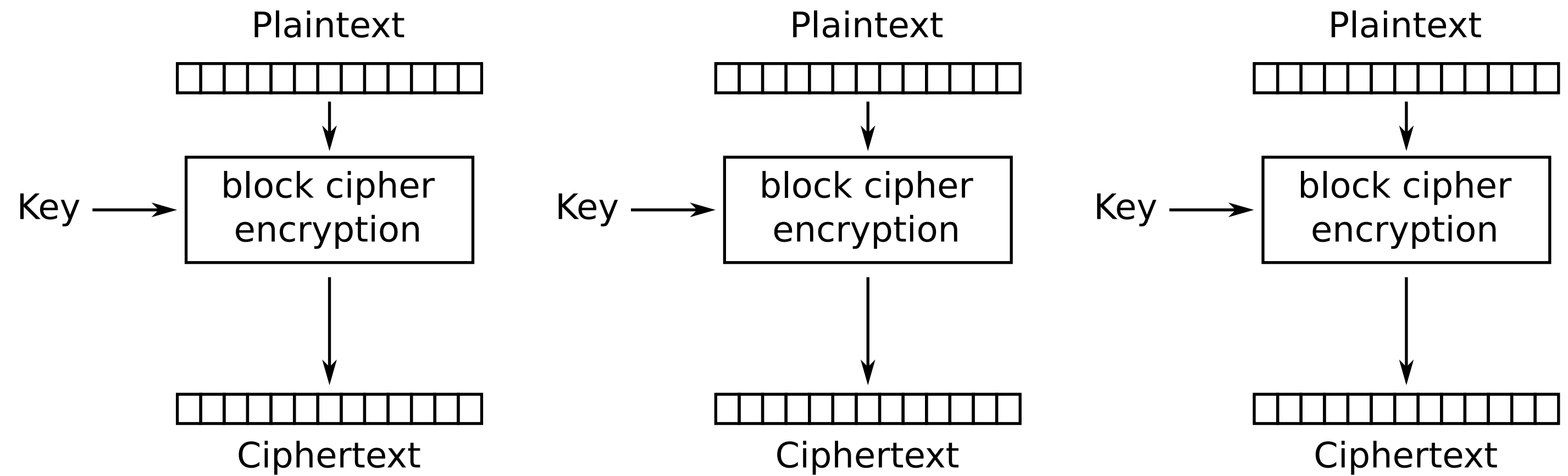
- Recall that we used aes-128-ecb a few slides ago
  - *i.e.*, Electronic Code Book block chaining
- What about aes-128-cbc? Output blocks don't repeat

```
: $; B_ENC='echo -n $P | openssl aes-128-cbc -K 61 -e -iv 61 -nopad -nosalt'
: $; eval $B_ENC | xxd -g1
00000000: e8 a0 fd b4 db 5a 0b ce 96 38 15 91 ce 86 82 81  ....Z...8.....
00000010: 18 d3 cb a2 0b b9 20 45 66 b3 d5 bf 7d 22 32 ba  .... Ef...}"2.
00000020: c6 36 63 4b 83 c8 aa d9 01 dd 04 81 d3 ad e9 8d  .6cK.....
00000030: 96 f4 73 fb b2 b2 9a b3 79 3e 0f 1a c3 98 5d 59  ..s.....y>....]Y
00000040: 2c 45 e2 56 2d 6b 4b b6 80 bc ac fd 68 32 32 fb  ,E.V-kK.....h22.
00000050: 92 9f 86 6d 9d 95 7b c6 6f b5 b3 5c fe 7d 5c 29  ...m..{.o..\}. \)
00000060: 7d 9e 20 7e d7 f0 30 7c 49 9c 6f db 17 a8 3f 7e  }. ~..0|I.o...?~
00000070: f7 b6 35 aa e0 fc f6 ce 68 39 85 4e e8 e1 68 67  ..5.....h9.N..hg
```

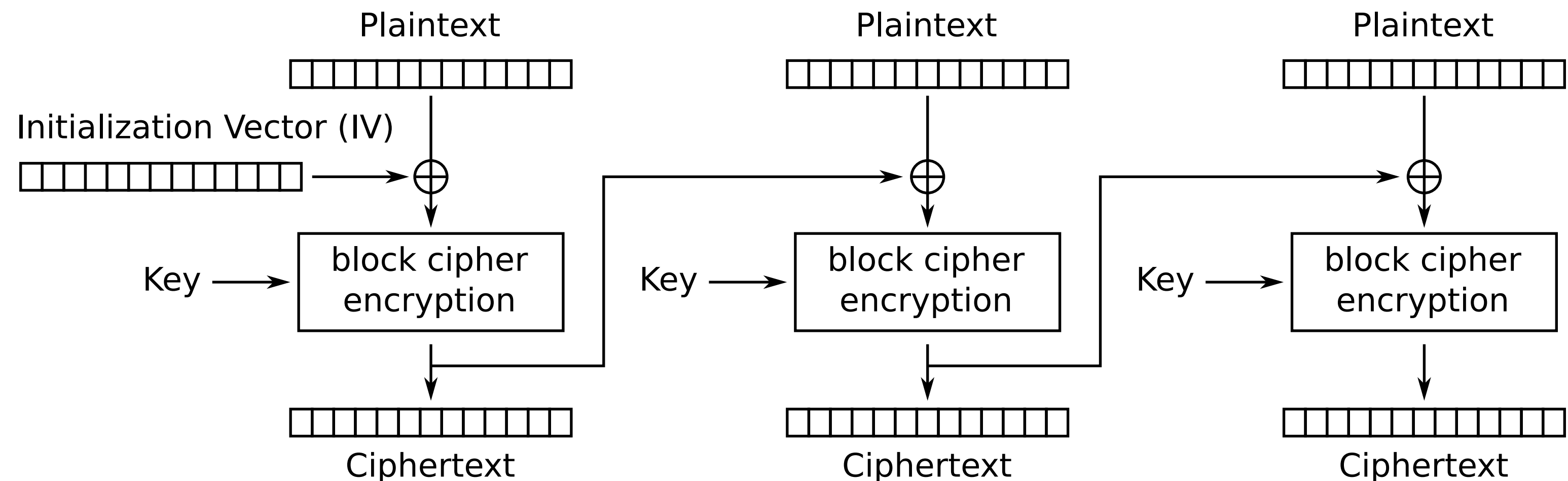
# Explaining our cipher-patterns (2)

- The encryption operation of two different block cipher modes' are shown here:

- ECB
- CBC



Electronic Codebook (ECB) mode encryption



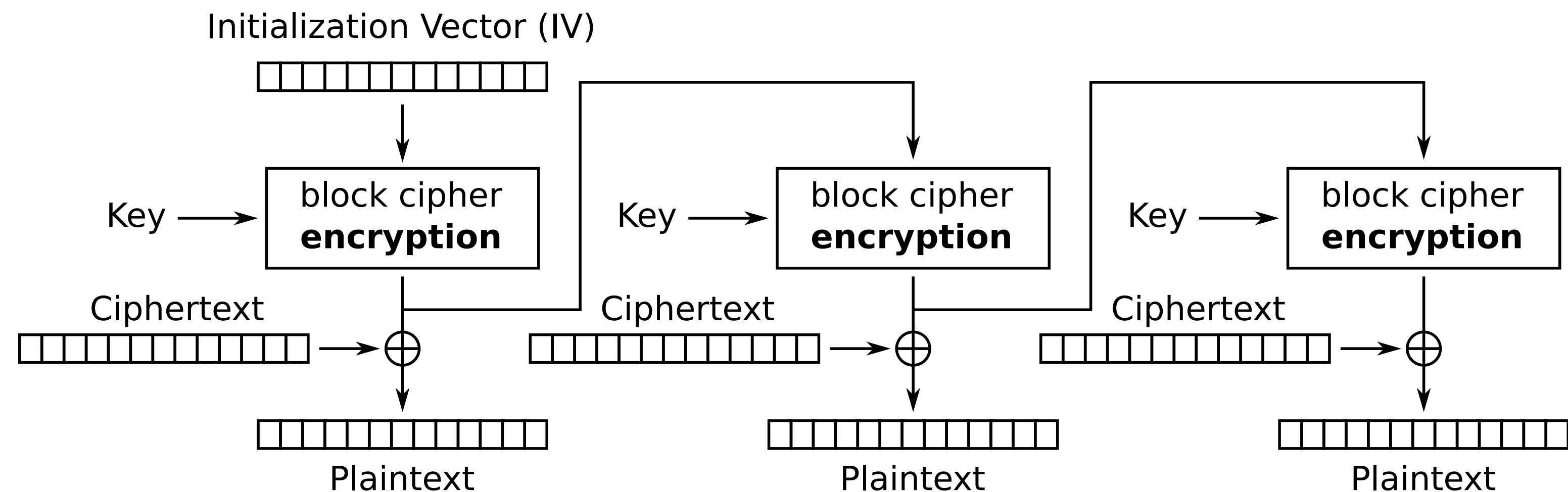
Cipher Block Chaining (CBC) mode encryption

# Stream ciphers from block ciphers

- CBC can use the same key for all blocks
  - Convenient and straightforward interface
  - As for a stream cipher, repeated data blocks are not encrypted to matching cipher-text

- Even closer match:

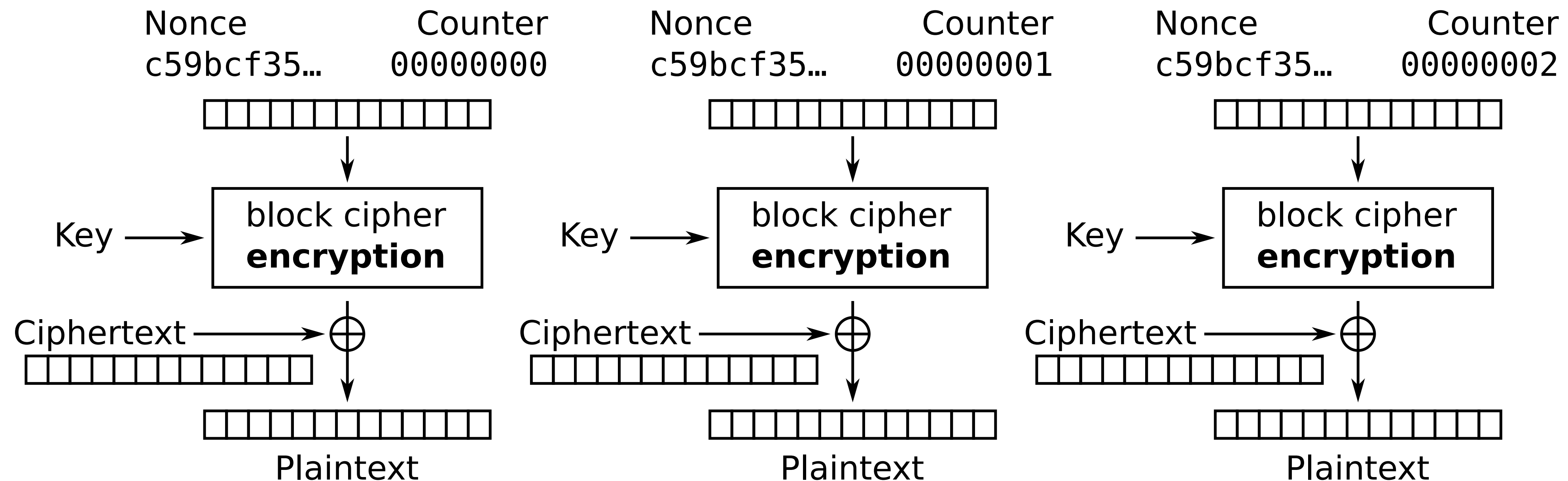
- OFB
- only needs block encryption, even for decryption



Output Feedback (OFB) mode decryption

# Nice compromise: counter mode

- Similar to OFB, but allows random access



Counter (CTR) mode decryption

- Have we **actually** created a stream cipher?

# Block ciphers may need padding

- Plain-text may be of any length
  - ECB and CBC (but not OFB) require input to be  $n \times \text{block length}$
- How about filling last block with zeros (... ?)
- Cipher-text stealing: shuffles last two blocks
  - Allows variable length final block
  - Cost: some bits are double-encrypted & extra complexity
  - Also, it changes error propagation effects for last two blocks



# Comparing stream and block ciphers

- Some bases for comparison:
  - Effects of different types of data errors
  - Different types of attack susceptibility
  - Types of implementation
  - Speed of encoding and decoding
- We've seen: distinction between stream and block cipher use in practice can be blurry

# Errors: stream versus block ciphers

- If a byte is **changed** in the cipher-text...

```
: $; P=$(ruby -e'(0..127).each{|x|print x%8}')
: $; S_ENC='echo -n $P | openssl rc4 -K 61 -e -nosalt -nopad'
: $; echo -n $P | LANG=C sed -r '1s/^(.{4})./\1B/' | xxd -g1
0000000: 30 31 32 33 42 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123B56701234567 ...
```

- Output from stream cipher:

```
: $; eval $S_ENC|LC_ALL=C sed -r '1s/^(.{4})./\1B/'|openssl rc4 -K 61 -d -nosalt -nopad|xxd -g1
0000000: 30 31 32 33 6d 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123m56701234567
0000010: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567
0000020: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567
0000030: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567
0000040: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567
0000050: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567
0000060: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567
0000070: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567
```

# Errors: stream versus block ciphers

- Now see what happens with block ciphers...

```
: $; P=$(ruby -e'(0..127).each{|x|print x%8}')
: $; B_ENC_ECB='echo -n $P | openssl aes-128-ecb -K 61 -e -iv 61 -nopad -nosalt'
: $; B_ENC_CBC='echo -n $P | openssl aes-128-cbc -K 61 -e -iv 61 -nopad -nosalt'
```

- Output from ECB:

```
: $; eval $B_ENC_ECB | LC_ALL=C sed -r '1s/^(.{4})./\1B/' | \
openssl aes-128-ecb -K 61 -d -iv 61 -nopad -nosalt | xxd -g1
0000000: af 89 3d af 9a 7c cc cd 66 d9 6a a4 84 b1 8e e6  ..=..l..f.j.....
0000010: 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123456701234567 ...
```

- Output from CBC:

```
: $; eval $B_ENC_CBC | LC_ALL=C sed -r '1s/^(.{4})./\1B/' | \
openssl aes-128-cbc -K 61 -d -iv 61 -nopad -nosalt | xxd -g1
0000000: 71 d8 89 7d 35 61 b2 39 e4 71 43 f5 96 1c 66 a8  q..}5a.9.qC...f.
0000010: 30 31 32 33 ad 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37  0123.56701234567 ...
```

# Errors: stream versus block ciphers

- Let's change to **removing** a byte...

```
: $; echo -n $P | LC_ALL=C sed -r '1s/^(.{4})./\1/' | xxd -g1
0000000: 30 31 32 33 35 36 37 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 30 0123567012345670 ...
```

- Stream:

```
: $; eval $S_ENC|LC_ALL=C sed -r '1s/^(.{4})./\1/' | openssl rc4 -K 61 -d -nosalt -nopad | xxd -g1
0000000: 30 31 32 33 5b 1c 43 bb 46 58 0e e6 cb 92 7e a2 0123[.C.FX....~.
0000010: 6e 53 ea a7 7f e9 1f ca 17 bb 03 5f 5d c5 df bd nS....._]... ..
```

- Block:

```
: $; eval $B_ENC_ECB|LC_ALL=C sed -r '1s/^(.{4})./\1/' | openssl aes-128-ecb -K 61 -d -iv 61 -nopad -nosalt | xxd -g1
bad decrypt ...
0000000: 6f 5a e3 07 35 fe 24 3d af 71 7e d5 22 ae 1b ea oZ..5.$=.q~."...
0000010: 1d e3 5b 0a 29 9d 46 fe 8e 35 3e 33 ae 9d 2f a2 ..[.].F..5>3../.
0000020: 1d e3 5b 0a 29 9d 46 fe 8e 35 3e 33 ae 9d 2f a2 ..[.].F..5>3../. ...
: $; eval $B_ENC_CBC|LC_ALL=C sed -r '1s/^(.{4})./\1/' | openssl aes-128-cbc -K 61 -d -iv 61 -nopad -nosalt | xxd -g1
bad decrypt ...
0000000: eb 8a 8e ef ed b0 85 8f aa ea fd 95 63 d5 9e 99 .....c...
0000010: 78 73 63 ea 33 e8 b2 5c f1 d3 40 5a 6d 78 94 ed xsc.3..\..@Zmx..
0000020: 0e 6c 88 02 60 8a 70 80 44 47 4e 1f 7c c8 28 08 .l..`.p.DGN.l.(. ...
```



# Attacks: stream versus block ciphers

- For example, stream ciphers' error-handling poses risk:
  - Attacker can know where bit flips will affect damaged plain text decoding
    - How can we address this risk?
  - Key stream needs a large period to be (potentially) secure
- Or, block ciphers' final block padding:
  - 1-bit followed by 0s to pad last block is secure
  - Other schemes can allow padding oracle attack



# Implementation: stream versus block

- Bulk encryption? Hardware support, for example:
  - Stream cipher: linear feedback shift-registers
  - Block cipher: substitution-permutation networks
- All sorts of subtle risks and concerns:
  - e.g., timing side-channels; susceptibility to cryptanalysis
- General message remains: don't make assumptions about crypto implementations!

# Web security

- Potential usefulness of authentication became clear early in WWW development
  - Recall that web systems involve HTML over HTTP
- HTTP authentication is not an HTML function:
  - Hence different user interface from HTML forms
  - Can protect non-HTML content
- We will look at TLS/SSL and how it supports web security

# HTTP basic authentication

- Require users to authenticate before they are allowed to access content
- Client sends HTTP GET / POST / etc.
- Server responds with 401 including header:
  - WWW-Authenticate: Basic realm="..."
- Client prompts user for authentication
- Client sends original request, with header:
  - Authorization: Basic ...

# HTTP basic authentication... TCP/IP

- In your COSC412 VM, set up Apache `: ~$; /vagrant/setup-apache.sh`
  - Use `tcpdump` wrapper on the VM; point your browser to:  
<http://localhost:8180/1-basic-auth/> (user/password test/test)

```
: ~$; /vagrant/tcpdump-web.sh
...
07:26:31.614049 IP 10.0.2.15.http > 10.0.2.2.59643: Flags [P.], seq 1:766, ack 337, win 15544, length 765...
HTTP/1.1 401 Authorization Required
Date: Sat, 05 Aug 2017 22:51:04 GMT
Server: Apache/2.2.22 (Ubuntu)
WWW-Authenticate: Basic realm="Authentication Required"
...
07:26:38.160320 IP 10.0.2.2.59649 > 10.0.2.15.http: Flags [P.], seq 1:372, ack 1, win 65535, length 371...
GET /1-basic-auth/ HTTP/1.1
...
Authorization: Basic dGVzdDp0ZXN0
...
```

# HTTP digest auth. [RFC2617]

- Improves on HTTP basic (passwords hidden!)
  - Still not an acceptably modern type of security
  - Server sends to client:

```
WWW-Authenticate: Digest realm="Badly protected area",  
nonce="ad30AgQABQA=3a714b04208e85496e47d482a8bac297c78b6887", algorithm=MD5, qop="auth"
```

- Client sends to server:

```
Authorization: Digest username="test", realm="Badly protected area",  
nonce="ad30AgQABQA=3a714b04208e85496e47d482a8bac297c78b6887", uri="/2-digest-auth/",  
response="6b21c1d403b8559fccc860afb2653df0", algorithm="MD5", cnonce="0389790832a7e8db5290d6e9b63276ed",  
nc=00000001, qop="auth"
```

```
: ~$; read HA1 D < <(echo -n 'test:Badly protected area:test' | md5sum)  
: ~$; read HA2 D < <(echo -n 'GET:/2-digest-auth/' | md5sum)  
: ~$; echo -n \  
"$HA1:ad30AgQABQA=3a714b04208e85496e47d482a8bac297c78b6887:00000001:0389790832a7e8db5290d6e9b63276ed:auth:$HA2" |  
md5sum  
6b21c1d403b8559fccc860afb2653df0 -
```



# HTML forms-based authentication

- Authentication using HTML forms (above HTTP-level)
  - HTML form submits values to server (e.g., using POST method)
  - Login done in web domain: allows styling, JavaScript, *etc.*
  - But... still no transport-level security:

```
: ~$; /vagrant/tcpdump-web.sh
```

```
tcpdump: verbose output suppressed, use -v or -vv for full protocol decode  
listening on eth0, link-type EN10MB (Ethernet), capture size 65535 bytes
```

```
...
```

```
04:34:38.593226 IP 10.0.2.2.52205 > 10.0.2.15.http: Flags [P.], seq 1:531, ack 1 ...
```

```
Content-Type: application/x-www-form-urlencoded ...
```

```
Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate
```

```
username=test&password=somepassword
```

# A crucial tool: TLS (*i.e.*, SSL)

- Transport Level Security / Secure Sockets Layer
  - Put security at a lower layer of the network stack than HTTP
- Establish secure end-to-end connection
  - Need a handshaking protocol to establish identities, choose crypto algorithms, *etc.*, below the application layer
- Implementation is complex!
  - *c.f.*, OpenSSL ‘heartbleed’ problems

# TLS/SSL handshake, *e.g.*, HTTPS (1/3)

- Client opens TCP connection to port 443
- Starts negotiating session details by sending:
  - {Session ID, cipher schemes and their key sizes, compression algorithms}
- Server may resume based on session ID
- Or server creates new session, sending back:
  - {Selected cipher + key size, selected compression algorithm, server certificate, optional client authentication request}

# TLS/SSL handshake, *e.g.*, HTTPS (2/3)

- Client: authenticates the server's (S) certificate
- Generates symmetric key PM (pre-master), encrypts with server's public key ( $S_{pub}$ )
  - $\{E(S_{pub}, PM), \text{client certificate (if requested)}\}$
- Server: authenticates client's certificate, if required
  - If needed uses  $S_{pri}$  to decrypt and get PM
- Client and server use PM to generate session key (master key)  $M$

# TLS/SSL handshake, *e.g.*, HTTPS (3/3)

- Client says to server it will start using  $M$
- Sends a separate message, encrypted using  $M$ , that it has finished handshaking
- Server does the same in response
- Now data can be transferred using  $E(M, \text{data})$
- The session key can be re-keyed periodically



# HTTP versus HTTPS in action

- Request / response using HTTP

```
: ~$; /vagrant/tcpflow-web.sh
tcpdump: listening on eth0, link-type EN10MB (Ethernet), capture size 65535 bytes
GET /0-no-auth/ HTTP/1.1
Host: localhost:8080
Upgrade-Insecure-Requests: 1
Accept: text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,*/*;q=0.8
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10_12_6) AppleWebKit/603.3.8 (KHTML, like Gecko)
Version/10.1.2 Safari/603.3.8
...
HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Date: Sun, 06 Aug 2017 01:06:33 GMT
Server: Apache/2.2.22 (Ubuntu)
...
Content-Length: 270
...
Content-Type: text/html

<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN" ...
```

# HTTP versus HTTPS in action

- Request / response using HTTPS

```
: ~$; /vagrant/tcpflow-web.sh
tcpdump: listening on eth0, link-type EN10MB (Ethernet), capture size 65535 bytes
.....S.<L0..QIp...J...88.N..z
bw..4:...J...$.#.
.=.<./.....5.....&.%.*.).....
.g.k.3.9.....4.....localhost.
.....
.....
...._....N.X. .&o...qW..0b(..".x.^k.m...../...=.....
0...0.....0..0.1.0...U....precise640.."0
.....-p.Y....4.....X../.l.....a.(....J7u.5t@.'..
scgn.....2..{.....8.....8]....R"s.].....1$.3\...*..0Tt.....a.l..}..rZl
G.."..'..X....._..a..DX.....~../...e.F.(::.....~..?...+...
3.....y.&W...bk.....o.).....v.;..."!.../...,.
3...L ..j.....T.NQ..).....k..U.y?..-...Ms:...,)SI.r.....w.....P.>.g.{l..^..gf.Y..3.$..3{.....?.....
...
```

# Very brief history of SSL / TLS

- Netscape released SSL v2.0 in mid 1990s
  - Cryptographic weaknesses in the protocol (handshaking)
- SSL v3.0 incorporates additional ciphers
  - Key derivation is weaker than in SSL v3.1
- SSL v3.1 = TLS v1.0 uses both SHA1 and MD5
  - TLS v1.1 cleans up CBC IV (BEAST attack)
  - TLS v1.2 adds access to more crypto methods
  - TLS v1.3 released in 2018: improved protocols; cipher refresh

# Protocol use of SSL / TLS

- Probably HTTPS is most common TLS use
  - Also email protocols: POP3S, IMAPS
  - File transfer: FTPS (not SFTP!)
- Often TLS use will be based on port, e.g., 443
  - Problem: application only gets in after TLS handshake
- TCP/IP connection need not start encrypted
  - STARTTLS instruction can facilitate plain-text setup
  - Useful for multiplexing connections

# HTTP(S) virtual names

- HTTP/1.1 added `Host:` header
  - Allows one IP address to host multiple sites
- ...but HTTPS applied port-based connections
  - TLS handshake finishes before server sees HTTP, thus
  - ... server does not know which certificate to show
  - Wildcard certificates and `subjectAltName` extension can help
- Now Server Name Indication (SNI) common [RFC 6066]
  - Client can add extension with target host name



# What SSL/TLS does not achieve

- Transport Layer Security encrypts end-to-end
  - ... but only as a stream between two hosts
- Increasingly server-side could benefit from not decrypting **all** content on its arrival
  - Complex caching, load-balancing in the cloud
- Needs lots of management:
  - Filter allowed algorithms, check randomness
  - Certificate management: validation; expiry; ...

# Digital certificates

**Kiwi bank.** Personal banking

**Nominate New Zealand Year Awards**

Help us find the opportunity to make a difference for Kiwis whose vision make a difference at home.

[Nominate now at nzawards.org.nz >](#)

**Let's Chat!**

**Welcome to Kiwibank**

Our name says it all. We're a bank made for New Zealanders, by New Zealanders. Helping Kiwis

HOT RATE	HOME LOAN	SPECIAL	TERM
<b>3.55%</b> p.a.		<b>2.90%</b> p.a.	

**Safari is using an encrypted connection to www.kiwibank.co.nz.**  
Encryption with a digital certificate keeps information private as it's sent to or from the https website www.kiwibank.co.nz.  
DigiCert Inc has identified www.kiwibank.co.nz as being owned by Kiwibank Limited in Wellington, NZ.

DigiCert High Assurance EV Root CA  
↳ DigiCert SHA2 Extended Validation Server CA  
↳ www.kiwibank.co.nz

**www.kiwibank.co.nz**  
Issued by: DigiCert SHA2 Extended Validation Server CA  
Expires: Thursday, 9 September 2021 at 12:00:00 AM New Zealand Standard Time  
✓ This certificate is valid

Trust  
Details

Hide Certificate OK

Go

# Digital certificates have many parts

- Recap: certificate ‘proves’ you own a public key
- Flexible encoding (e.g., ASN.1) of certificates stores:
  - A public key (so can send data to the certificate’s owner)
  - Issue details: name (X.500), serial number, lifetime
  - Indicate allowed uses, and other metadata
  - Digital signature (...checked using public key)
    - How do we check this digital signature’s key?
- X.509 standards cover web certificates



# Our test server has a certificate

```
: ~$; sudo cat /etc/ssl/certs/ssl-cert-snakeoil.pem | openssl x509 -text
Certificate:
  Data:
    Version: 1 (0x0)
    Serial Number: 16545568902022667726 (0xe59dab4113cf9dce)
    Signature Algorithm: sha1WithRSAEncryption
    Issuer: CN=precise64
    Validity
      Not Before: Aug  5 22:47:16 2017 GMT
      Not After : Aug  3 22:47:16 2027 GMT
    Subject: CN=precise64
    Subject Public Key Info:
      Public Key Algorithm: rsaEncryption
      Public-Key: (2048 bit)
      Modulus:
        00:b9:23:b3:e1:ee:25:65:83:58:33:48:14:62:ae:
...
      Exponent: 65537 (0x10001)
    Signature Algorithm: sha1WithRSAEncryption
      8a:2c:da:54:c3:08:2c:c2:58:98:b9:70:0a:d2:31:3b:2b:af:
      cf:f1:5a:fc:c4:6d:38:0d:a9:be:23:4f:a1:62:a4:4d:2f:8c:
...
```

# We previously discussed trust setup

- Browser has pre-loaded root certificates
  - Actually also has intermediate certificates: **Why?**
- You can declare that you trust a certificate
  - Like SSH: you can approve exception
  - Also like SSH, be sure that you actually want to!
- Can import your own certificates into your browser
  - Necessary for client-side authentication
  - ... which hardly seems to get used these days



# Verification of a certificate's quality

- First: certificate should validate on own terms
  - *i.e.*, should not be outside valid date range
  - Cryptographic verification of keys is successful
- However that's not all: beware weak crypto
  - Keys will specify algorithms they use: may be old
  - Are the CAs that are used trustworthy?
- A “perfect” certificate may need revocation—**why?**

# Revocation of digital certificates

- Public key revealed/stolen? Certificate is now invalid
  - Worse than that: the old certificate is dangerous!
  - Taken on its own, it's digitally "correct"
- Owner requests CA add certificate's serial number to Certificate Revocation List (CRL)
  - CRL is signed by CA, but clients have to get it to act on it!
- CRLs are likely to be growing over time
  - (Why won't they grow without bound?)

# Online Certificate Status Protocol

- OCSP aims to be more lightweight than CRLs
  - OCSP responder sends pub-key signed “certificate is OK” messages when asked
  - ... however OCSP can suffer replay attacks (!)
  - Not all servers support use of a nonce (!!)
- Only in the last few years have web browsers started supporting it by default
  - If in doubt, use Firefox... (in fairly recent history it has picked secure choices even at the potential expense of speed)

# HTTPS certificates can be acquired for free

- Let's Encrypt provides free certificates automatically
  - Uses a challenge/response method to have the requestor prove that they have access to resources
  - Common approach is to request demonstration of the ownership of a particular DNS domain
- No CA attestation of your affiliation... no EV certificates
  - ... but do get end-to-end encryption



# Summary

- Explored block ciphers, and contrasted their behaviour to stream ciphers
- Discussed web security, and how cryptography has become involved in web technology
- Examined digital certificates, and how they use cryptography to help security engineering