## DAY1\_advent\_of\_the\_cyber

## Cookies:

HTTP is an inherently *stateless* protocol. This means that no data persists between connections; your computer could make two requests immediately after each other, and, without relying on separate software, the web server would have no way to know that it was you making both the requests. This begs the important question: if HTTP is stateless, then how do login systems work? The web server must have a way to identify that you have the right level of access, and it can hardly ask you to enter your password every time you request a new page!

The answer is cookies — tiny little pieces of information that get stored on your computer and get sent to the server along with every request that you make. Authentication (or session) cookies are used to identify you (these will be *very* important in your mission today!). The server receives your request with the attached cookie, and checks the cookie to see what level of access you are allowed to have. It then returns a response appropriate to that level of access.



For example, a standard user should be able to see (but not interact with) our control panel; but Santa should be able to access everything! Cookies are also often used for other purposes such as advertising and storing user preferences (light/dark theme, for example); however, this will not be important in your task today. Any site can set cookies with a variety of properties — the most important of these for today's task are the name and value of the cookies, both of which will always be set. It's worth noting that a site can only access cookies that are associated with its own domain (i.e. google.com can't access any cookies

stored by tryhackme.com, and vice versa).

It's important to note that cookies are stored locally on *your* computer. This means that they are under your control – i.e. you can add, edit, or delete them as you wish. There are a few ways to do this, however, it's most commonly done by using your Browser Developer Tools, which can be accessed in most browsers by pressing F12, or Ctrl + Shift + I. With the developer tools open, navigate to the Storage tab in FireFox, or the Application tab in Chrome/Edge and select the Cookies menu on the left hand side of the console.



In the above image you can see a test cookie for a website. The important attributes "Name" and "Value" are shown. The name of a cookie is used to identify it to the server. The value of the cookie is the data stored by the server. In this example the server would be looking for a cookie called "Cookie Name". It would then retrieve the value "CookieValue" from this cookie.

These values can be edited by double-clicking on them, which is great if you can edit a session or authorisation cookie, as this can lead to an escalation of privileges, assuming you have access to an Administrator's authorisation cookie.







