



DECEMBER 10-11, 2025

EXCEL LONDON / UNITED KINGDOM

Cut To The QUIC

Slashing QUIC's Performance With A Hash DoS



Paul Bottinelli

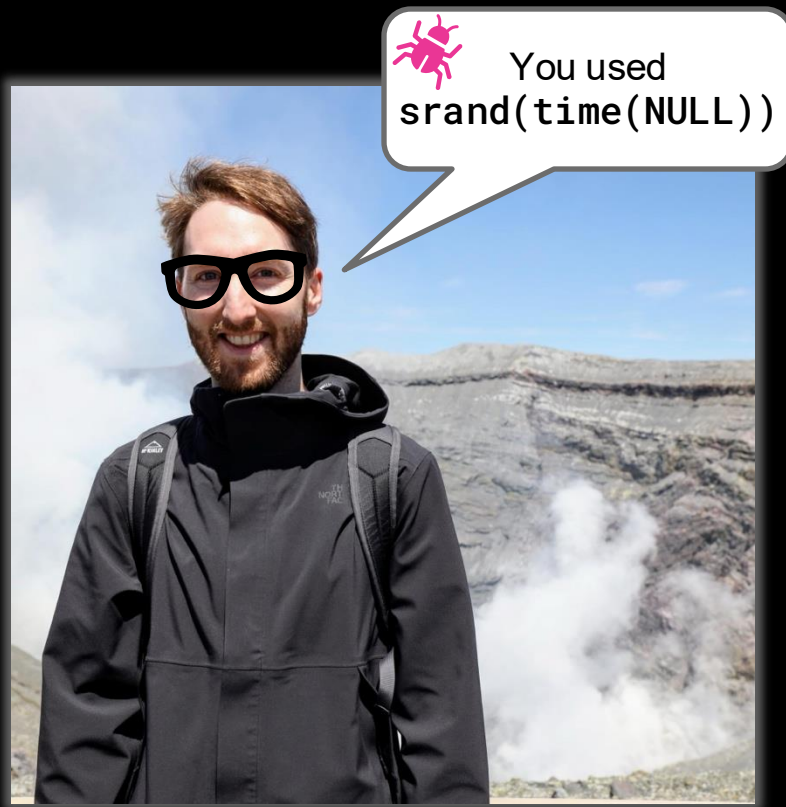
Principal Security Engineer, Cryptography @ Trail of Bits

Paul Bottinelli

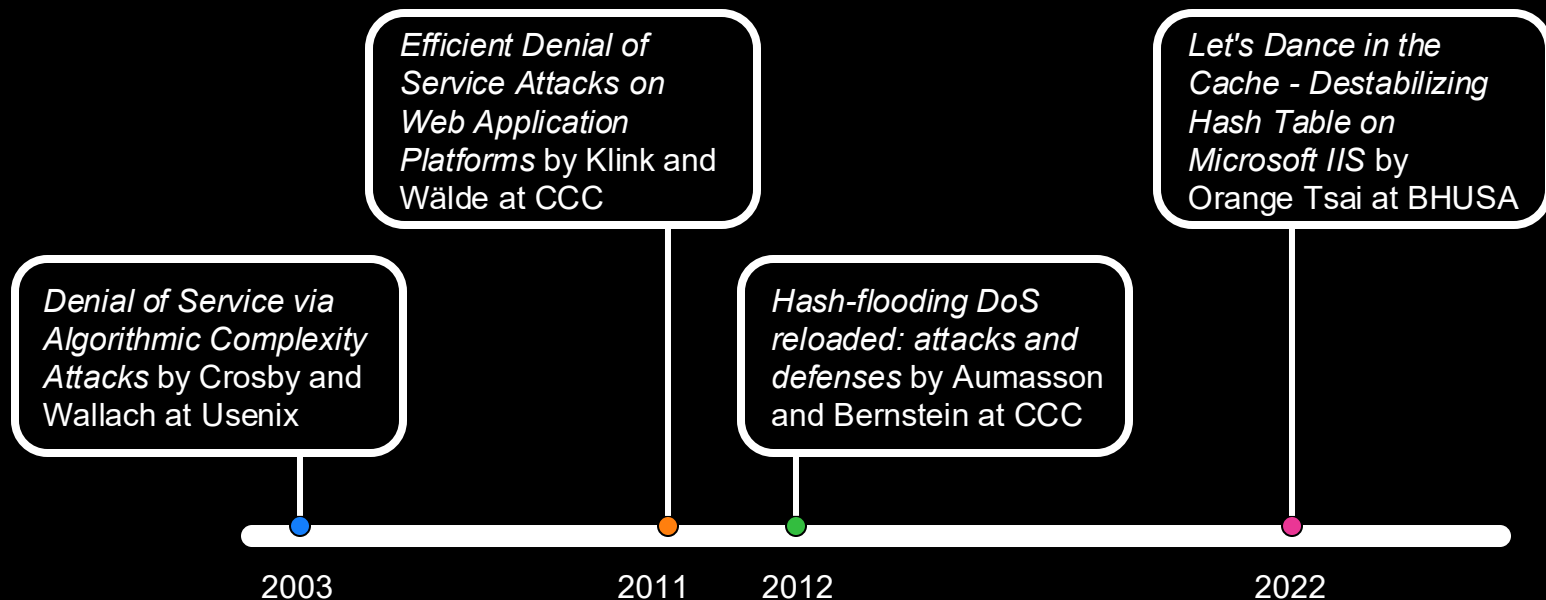
- Cryptography consultant

**TRAIL
OF BITS**

15 years ago...



Hash DoS – A Long History



Hash DoS Ingredients

Attacker-
controlled
input



Weak hash
function

Hash Tables

Hash Tables

```
{  
  "Alice": "10.0.0.1",  
  "Bob": "10.0.0.2",  
  "Claire": "10.0.0.3",  
  "Dan": "10.0.0.4"  
}
```

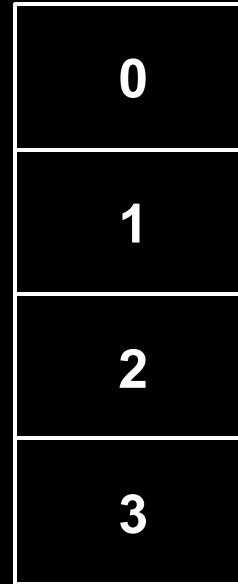
Insertion and lookup
complexity

$O(1)^*$

Insertion

```
function insert(key, value)  
  index = hash(key) % len(array)  
  array[index] = (key, value)
```

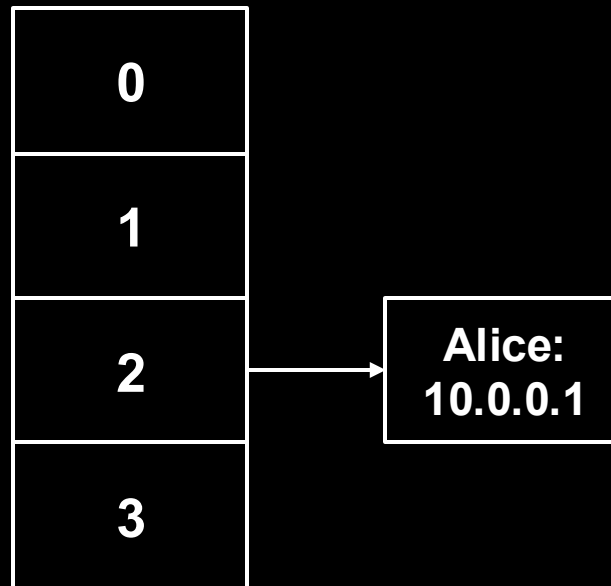
```
> insert("Alice", "10.0.0.1")  
  hash("Alice") = 6  
  index = 6 % 4 = 2
```



Insertion

```
function insert(key, value)
  index = hash(key) % len(array)
  array[index] = (key, value)

> insert("Alice", "10.0.0.1")
  hash("Alice") = 6
  index = 6 % 4 = 2
  array[2] = ("Alice", "10.0.0.1")
```

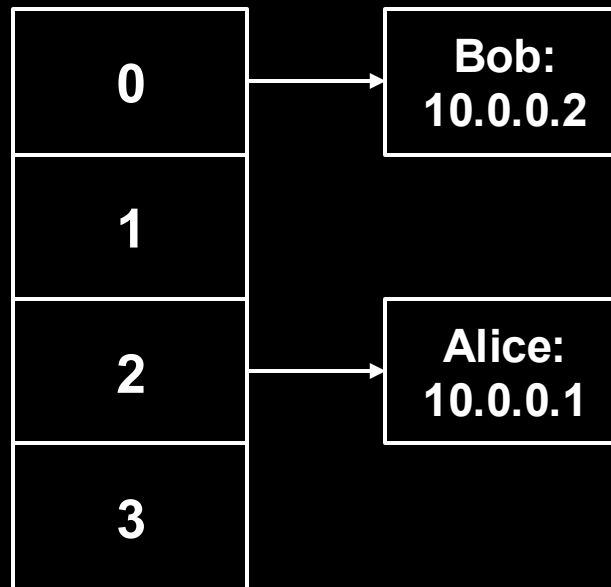


Insertion

```
function insert(key, value)  
  index = hash(key) % len(array)  
  array[index] = (key, value)
```

```
> insert("Alice", "10.0.0.1")  
[SUCCESS] inserted at index 2
```

```
> insert("Bob", "10.0.0.2")  
[SUCCESS] inserted at index 0
```



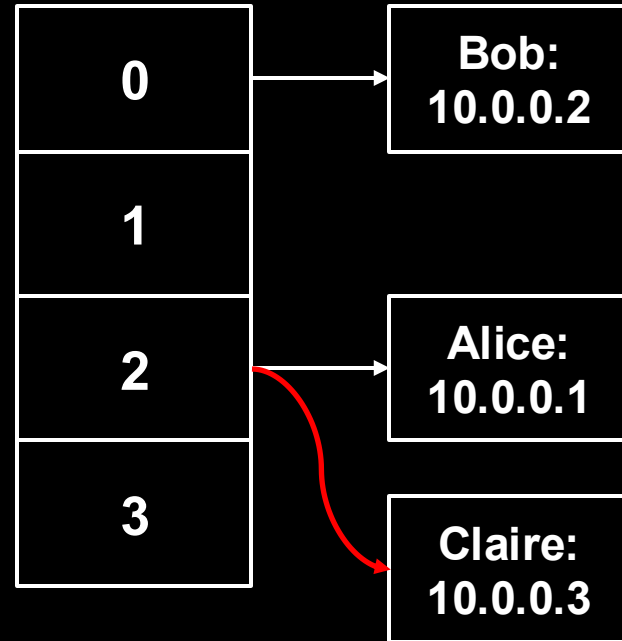
Insertion

```
function insert(key, value)
  index = hash(key) % len(array)
  array[index] = (key, value)
```

```
> insert("Alice", "10.0.0.1")
[SUCCESS] inserted at index 2
```

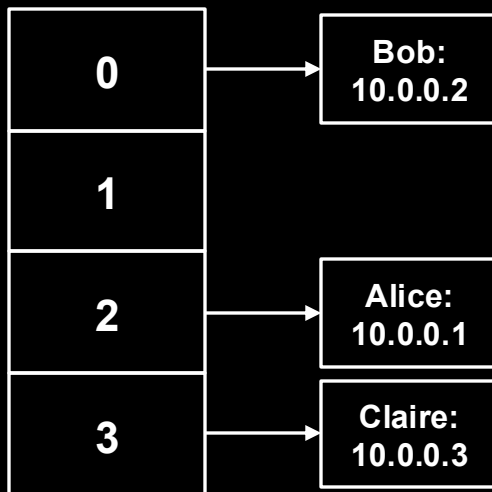
```
> insert("Bob", "10.0.0.2")
[SUCCESS] inserted at index 0
```

```
> insert("Claire", "10.0.0.3")
[ERROR] index 2 full!
```

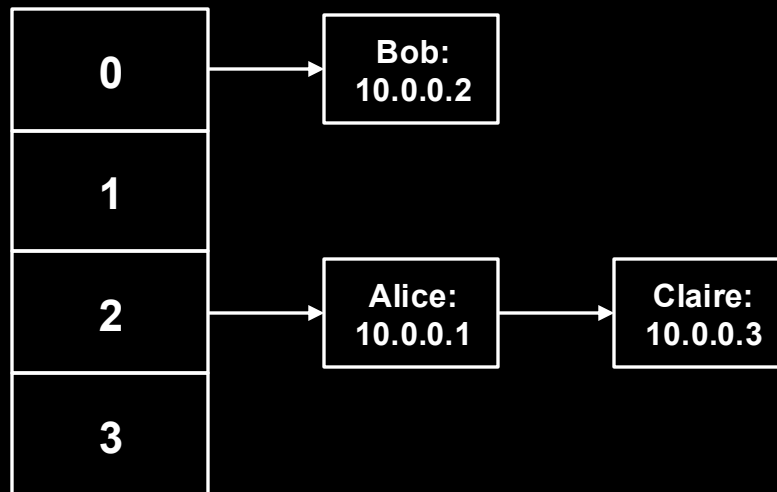


Collision Resolution Strategies

Open addressing



Separate chaining



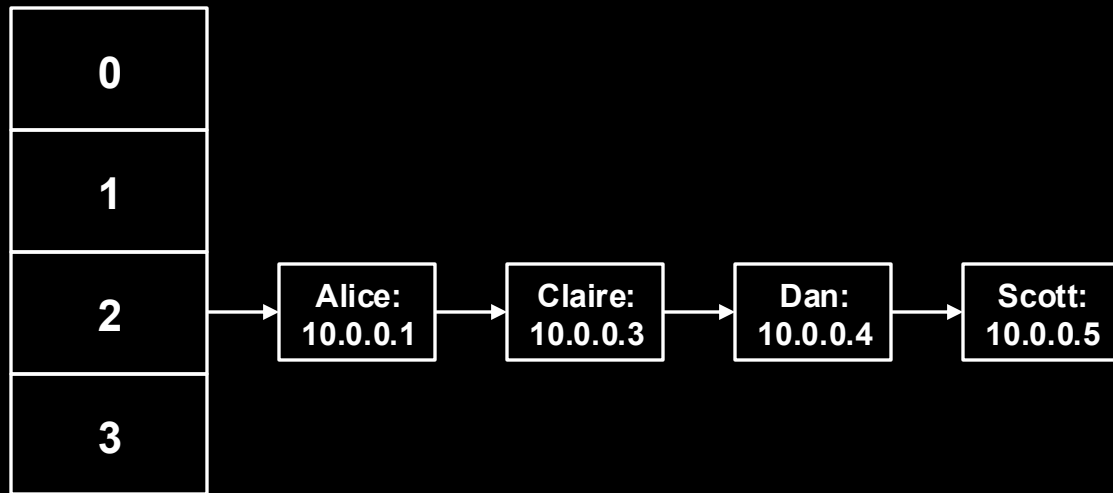
Hash Denial of Service

Lookup complexity of colliding elements

$O(n)$

Amortized complexity with n elements

$O(n^2)$



Hash DoS are **algorithmic complexity** attacks.

Hash DoS Ingredients

Attacker-
controlled
input



Weak hash
function

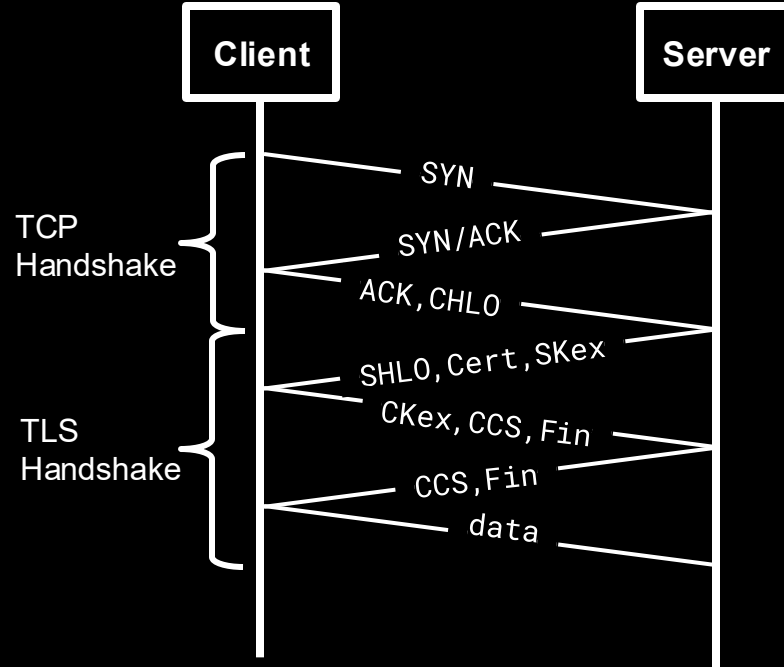
QUIC (quickly)

QUIC

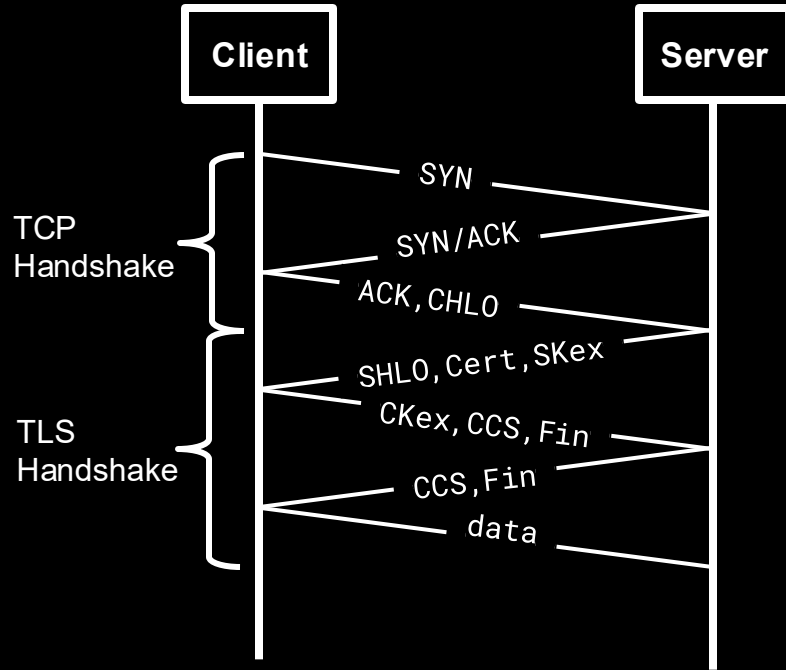
- Transport protocol originally designed by Google in 2012
- Formalized under RFC 9000 (and 8999, 9001, and 9002)
- Backbone of HTTP/3
- Improve performance of web applications and reduce network latency with UDP
- Leverages TLS 1.3 handshake



TCP+TLS

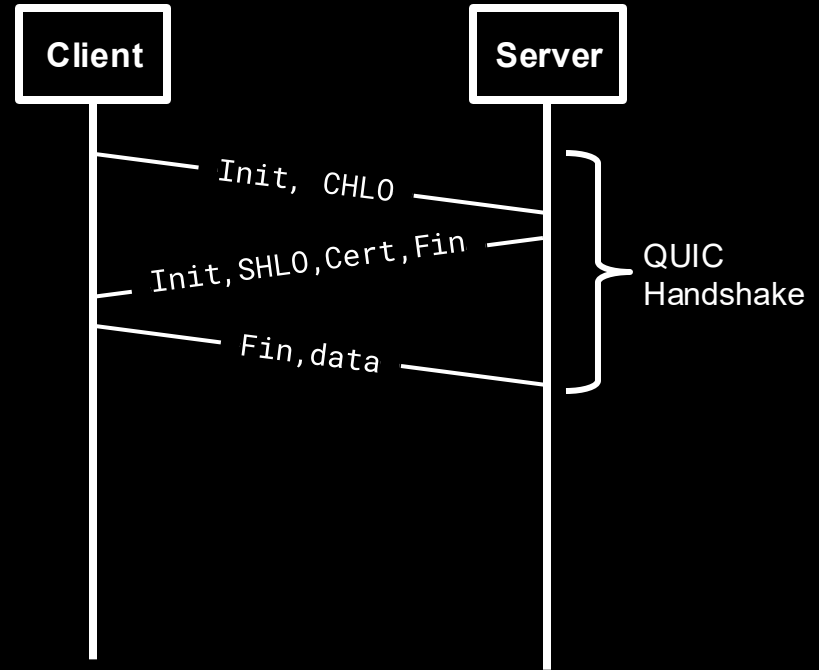


TCP+TLS



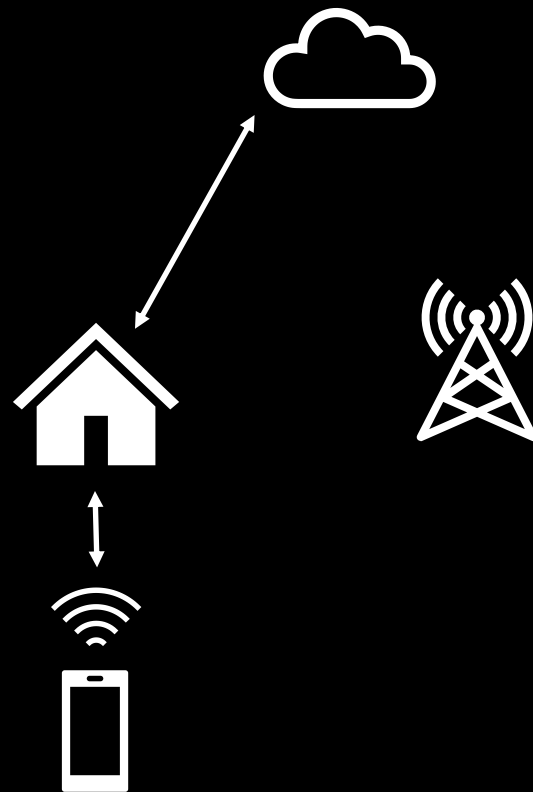
VS

QUIC



QUIC Connections

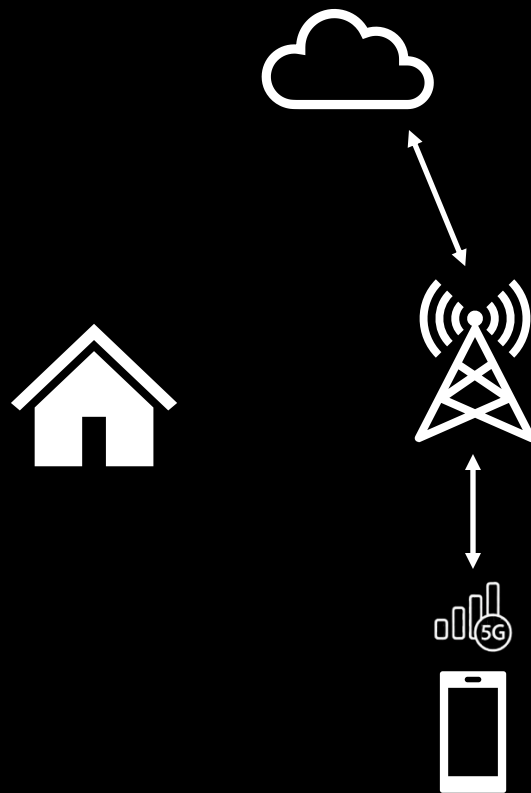
Improve performance during
network-switching events



QUIC Connections

Improve performance during
network-switching events

- Backend server keeps track of connections using Connection IDs
- Regardless of any changes in the source IP address
- Upon switching networks connection is re-established by sending a packet containing CID

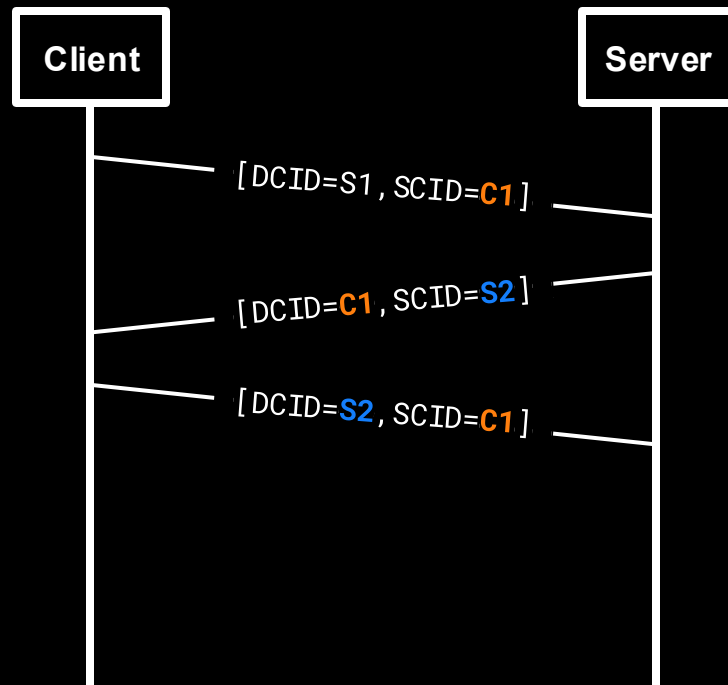


QUIC Connections

- A connection is *uniquely* identified by two connection IDs, the Source CID (SCID) and the Destination CID (DCID)

...	Dest. CID	Source CID	...
-----	-----------	------------	-----

- The **client** selects Source Connection ID using an **implementation-specific** (...) method (RFC 9000, Section 5.1)
- Natural for **the server** to store them in a hash table indexed by CID
- SCID is **attacker-controlled** → Hash DoS !



Hash DoS Ingredients

Attacker-
controlled
input



Weak hash
function

Hash DoS in QUIC

Modern programming languages protect against Hash DoS, see Rust's HashMap:

By default, `HashMap` uses a hashing algorithm selected to provide resistance against HashDoS attacks. The algorithm is randomly seeded,

How easy is it to find vulnerable implementations?

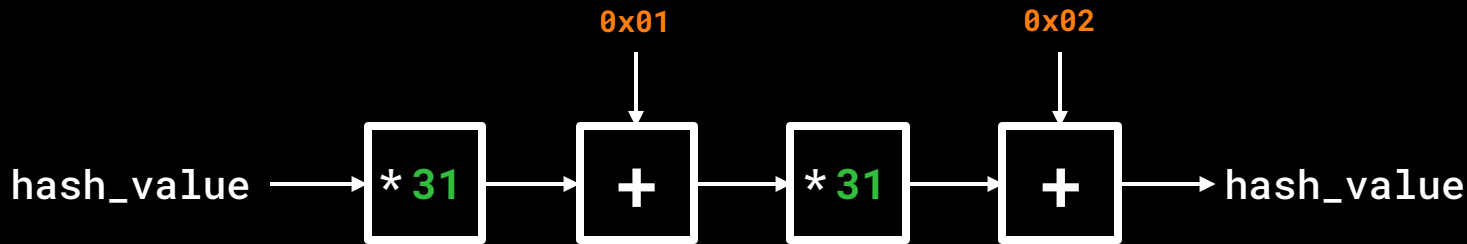
Multiplicative Hash in xquic

```
uint64_t xqc_hash_string(const u_char *data, size_t len){  
    uint64_t hash_value = 0;  
    for (size_t i = 0; i < len; ++i) {  
        hash_value = hash_value * 31 + data[i];  
    }  
    return hash_value;  
}
```

Multiplicative Hash in xquic

```
uint64_t xqc_hash_string(const u_char *data size_t len){  
    uint64_t hash_value = 0;  
    for (size_t i = 0; i < len; ++i) {  
        hash_value = hash_value * 31 + data[i];  
    }  
    return hash_value;  
}
```

> xqc_hash_string({0x01,0x02}, 2)



Multiplicative Hash in xquic

```
uint64_t xqc_hash_string(const u_char *data size_t len){  
    uint64_t hash_value = 0;  
    for (size_t i = 0; i < len; ++i) {  
        hash_value = hash_value * 31 + data[i];  
    }  
    return hash_value;  
}
```

> xqc_hash_string({0x01,0x02}, 2)

hash_value = 33

Computing Collisions in xquic

$$\text{hash}(0x\text{XXYY}) = 31 * \text{XX} + \text{YY}$$

$$\text{hash}(0x00ff) = 31 * 0 + 255 = 255$$

$$31 * 1 + 224 = 255 = \text{hash}(0x01e0)$$

$$31 * 2 + 193 = 255 = \text{hash}(0x02c1)$$

...

$$31 * 8 + 7 = 255 = \text{hash}(0x0807)$$

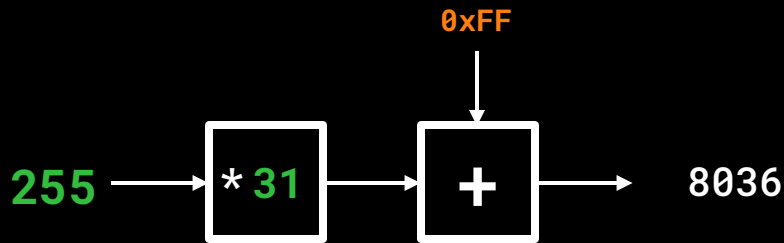
The nine 2-byte arrays all hash to the same value

→ Equivalent Substring Attack!

Equivalent Substring Attack in xquic

```
uint64_t xqc_hash_string(const u_char *data size_t len){  
    uint64_t hash_value = 0;  
    for (size_t i = 0; i < len; ++i) {  
        hash_value = hash_value * 31 + data[i];  
    }  
    return hash_value;  
}
```


```
> xqc_hash_string({0x00,0xFF}, 2)  
> xqc_hash_string({0x00,0xFF,0xFF}, 3)  
    = 8036  
> xqc_hash_string({0x01,0xE0,0xFF}, 3)  
    = 8036
```



*Appending the same
suffix to colliding
arrays maintains the
hash collision!*

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic


The nine 2-byte
arrays all hash
to the same
value



- hash(0x00ff)
- hash(0x01e0)
- hash(0x02c1)
- hash(0x03a2)
- hash(0x0483)
- hash(0x0564)
- hash(0x0645)
- hash(0x0726)
- hash(0x0807)

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic


The nine 2-byte
arrays all hash
to the same
value



```
hash(0x00ff )  
hash(0x01e0 )  
hash(0x02c1 )  
hash(0x03a2 )  
hash(0x0483 )  
hash(0x0564 )  
hash(0x0645 )  
hash(0x0726 )  
hash(0x0807 )
```

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic


The nine 4-byte
arrays all hash
to the same
value



```
hash(0x00ffabcd )  
hash(0x01e0abcd )  
hash(0x02c1abcd )  
hash(0x03a2abcd )  
hash(0x0483abcd )  
hash(0x0564abcd )  
hash(0x0645abcd )  
hash(0x0726abcd )  
hash(0x0807abcd )
```

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic


The nine 4-byte
arrays all hash
to the same
value



- hash(0x00ff00ff)
- hash(0x01e000ff)
- hash(0x02c100ff)
- hash(0x03a200ff)
- hash(0x048300ff)
- hash(0x056400ff)
- hash(0x064500ff)
- hash(0x072600ff)
- hash(0x080700ff)

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic


The nine 4-byte
arrays all hash
to the same
value



```
hash(0x00ff00ff )  
hash(0x01e001e0 )  
hash(0x02c102c1 )  
hash(0x03a203a2 )  
hash(0x04830483 )  
hash(0x05640564 )  
hash(0x06450645 )  
hash(0x07260726 )  
hash(0x08070807 )
```


Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic

The nine 4-byte
arrays all hash
to the same
value



```
hash(0x00ff02c1 )  
hash(0x01e001e0 )  
hash(0x02c100ff )  
hash(0x03a20807 )  
hash(0x04830564 )  
hash(0x05640483 )  
hash(0x064503a2 )  
hash(0x07260645 )  
hash(0x08070726 )
```

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic

00ff	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
01e0	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
02c1	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
03a2	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
0483	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
0564	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
0645	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
0726	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
0807	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000

{
9

Equivalent substring attack

9

colliding CIDs

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic

00ff	0807	0000	0000	0000	0000
01e0	00ff	0000	0000	0000	0000
02c1	01e0	0000	0000	0000	0000
03a2	02c1	0000	0000	0000	0000
0483	03a2	0000	0000	0000	0000
0564	0483	0000	0000	0000	0000
0645	0564	0000	0000	0000	0000
0726	0645	0000	0000	0000	0000
0807	0726	0000	0000	0000	0000


9 × 9

Equivalent substring attack

81

colliding CIDs

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic

00ff	0807	0726	0000	0000	0000
01e0	00ff	0807	0000	0000	0000
02c1	01e0	00ff	0000	0000	0000
03a2	02c1	01e0	0000	0000	0000
0483	03a2	02c1	0000	0000	0000
0564	0483	03a2	0000	0000	0000
0645	0564	0483	0000	0000	0000
0726	0645	0564	0000	0000	0000
0807	0726	0645	0000	0000	0000


9 × 9 × 9

Equivalent substring attack


729

colliding CIDs

QUIC CIDs MUST be 8-20 bytes long

Equivalent Substring Attack on xquic

00ff 0807 0726 0645 0564 0483
01e0 00ff 0807 0726 0645 0564
02c1 01e0 00ff 0807 0726 0645
03a2 02c1 01e0 00ff 0807 0726
0483 03a2 02c1 01e0 00ff 0807
0564 0483 03a2 02c1 01e0 00ff
0645 0564 0483 03a2 02c1 01e0
0726 0645 0564 0483 03a2 02c1
0807 0726 0645 0564 0483 03a2



9 X 9 X 9 X 9 X 9 X 9

Equivalent substring attack

531,441

colliding 12-byte CIDs

```
botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/cdemo> 
```

```
botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/cdemo> cat gen_collision.py
```

```
import itertools
```

```
# List of 2-byte hex strings
```

```
hex_values = ["00ff", "01e0", "02c1",  
              "03a2", "0483", "0564",  
              "0645", "0726", "0807"]
```

```
# Generate all 6-length permutations (with repetition)
```

```
for combo in itertools.product(hex_values, repeat=6):
```

```
    # Concatenate and print the result
```

```
    print("".join(combo))
```

```
botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/cdemo>
```

080708070807080707260807
0807080708070807080700ff
0807080708070807080701e0
0807080708070807080702c1
0807080708070807080703a2
080708070807080708070483
080708070807080708070564
080708070807080708070645
080708070807080708070726
080708070807080708070807

botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/cdemo> time python3 gen_collision.py > collisions.txt

Executed in	102.27 millis	fish	external
usr time	74.31 millis	0.01 millis	74.30 millis
sys time	25.23 millis	1.13 millis	24.10 millis

botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/cdemo> wc -l collisions.txt

531441 collisions.txt

botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/cdemo> █

Computing Collisions in xquic

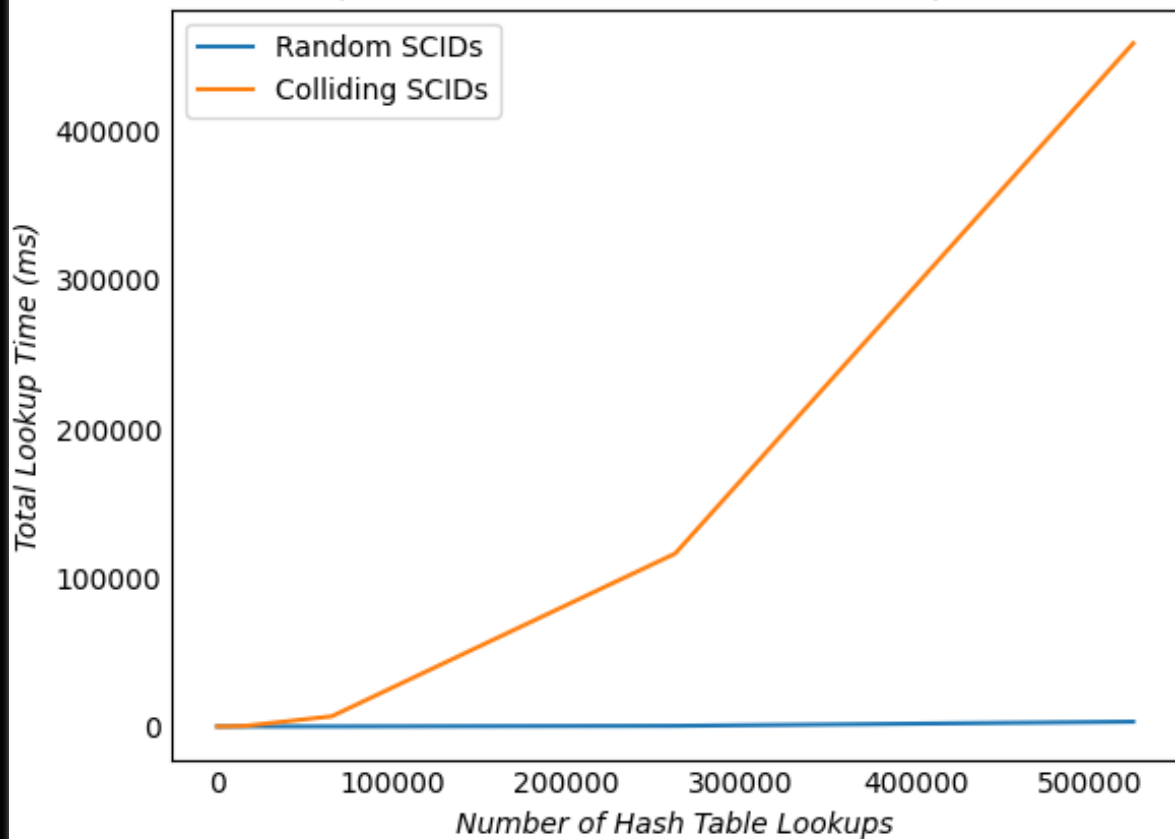
- Meet-in-the-middle attack
 - Build table of prefixes
 - Sample target hash
 - Draw random suffixes
 - Compute reverse intermediate hash
 - If match, input prefix+suffix is a hash collision
- SMT solver
- Linear property of the hash function



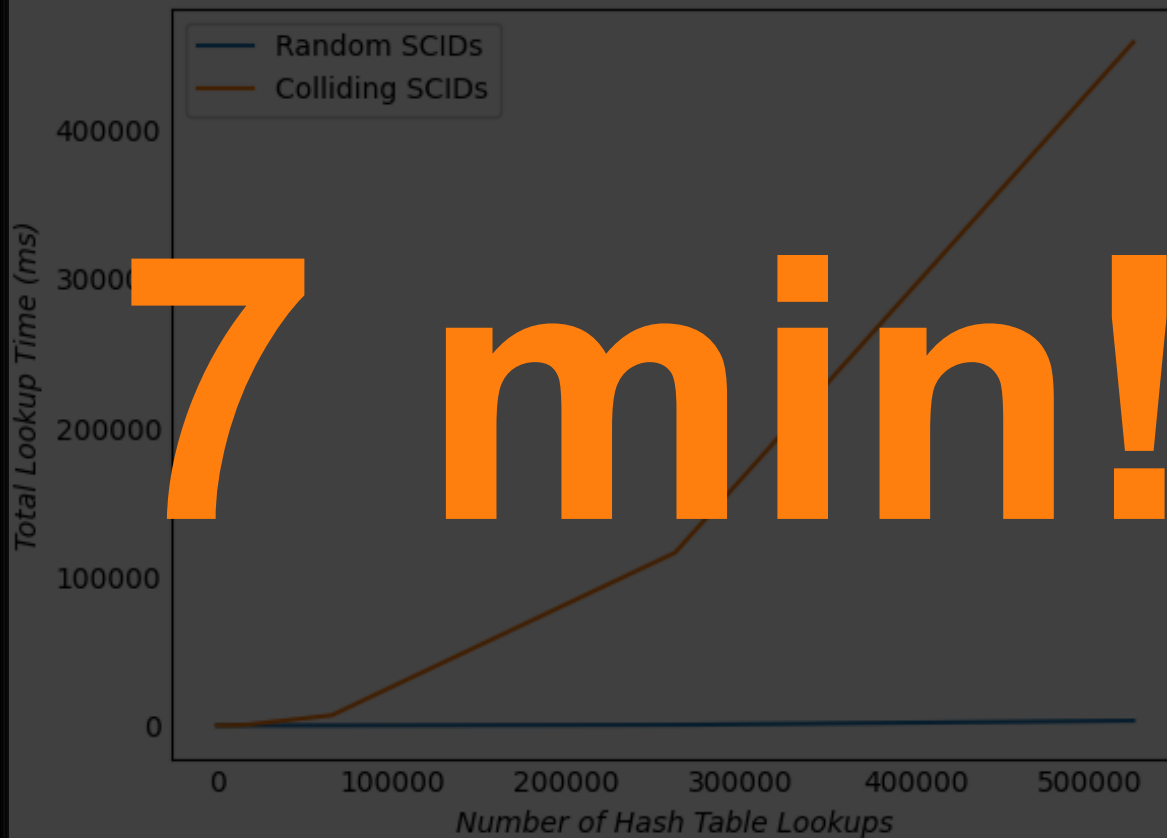
<https://github.com/pbottine/cut-to-the-quic>

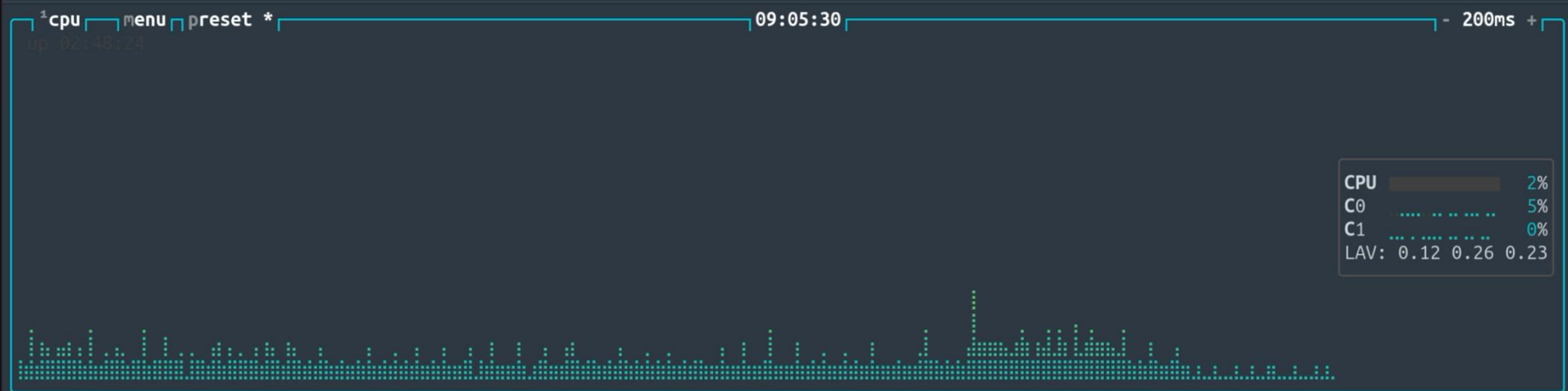
$$hash = c_n + c_{n-1} * 31 + c_{n-2} * 31^2 + \dots + c_1 * 31^{n-1}$$

xquic - Cumulative Hash Table Lookup Time



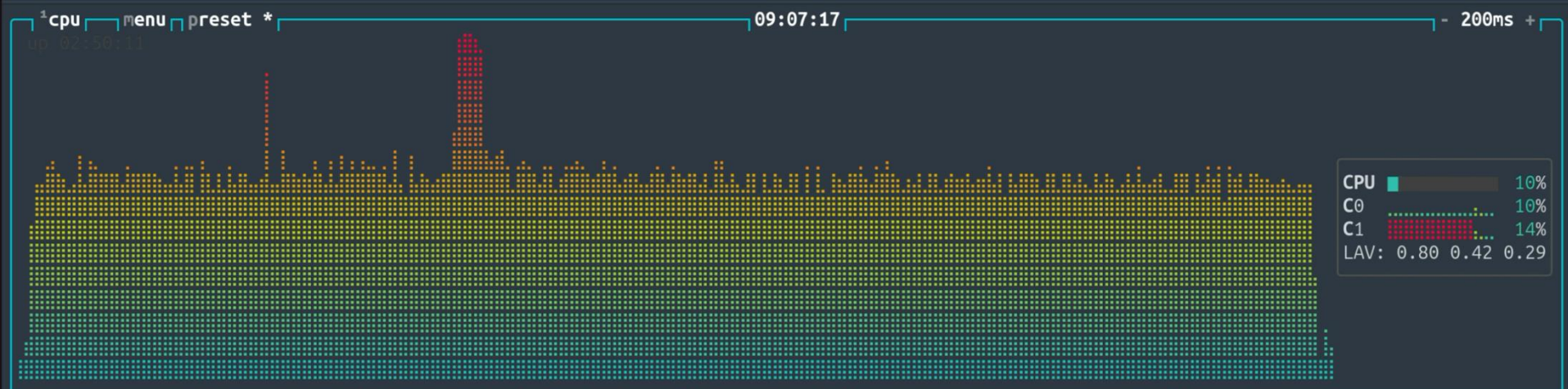
xquic - Cumulative Hash Table Lookup Time





botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/xdemo>

botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/xdemo>



3154360FA0CA6A67C82BEEB5
73D9DCC721643A604D404CC7
botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/xdemo> time ./demo scid_random.txt 100000

Executed in	345.94 millis	fish	external
usr time	339.44 millis	0.00 micros	339.44 millis
sys time	6.41 millis	404.00 micros	6.01 millis

botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/xdemo> time ./demo scid_random.txt 200000

Executed in	1.11 secs	fish	external
usr time	997.39 millis	0.00 micros	997.39 millis
sys time	6.44 millis	447.00 micros	5.99 millis

botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/xdemo>

00F800F900FA00FB00FC0805
00F800F900FA00FB01DD00FD
botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/xdemo> time ./demo scid_coll.txt 100000

Executed in	11.97 secs	fish	external
usr time	11.97 secs	0.00 micros	11.97 secs
sys time	0.00 secs	548.00 micros	0.00 secs

botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/xdemo> time ./demo scid_coll.txt 200000

Executed in	50.23 secs	fish	external
usr time	49.98 secs	0.00 micros	49.98 secs
sys time	0.01 secs	538.00 micros	0.01 secs

botpaul@ubuntu ~/D/h/x/xdemo>

Hash DoS Ingredients

Attacker-
controlled
input



Weak hash
function

Hash DoS Ingredients

Attacker-
controlled
input



CVE-2025-

More weak
hash
functions?

XXH32 used in lsquic

xxHash - Extremely fast hash algorithm

xxHash is an Extremely fast Hash algorithm, processing at RAM speed limits. Code is highly portable, and produces hashes identical across all platforms (little / big endian). The library includes the following algorithms :

- XXH32 : generates 32-bit hashes, using 32-bit arithmetic
- XXH64 : generates 64-bit hashes, using 64-bit arithmetic
- XXH3 (since v0.8.0) : generates 64 or 128-bit hashes, using vectorized arithmetic. The 128-bit variant is called XXH128.

All variants successfully complete the [SMHasher](#) test suite which evaluates the quality of hash functions (collision, dispersion and randomness). Additional tests, which evaluate more thoroughly speed and collision properties of 64-bit hashes, [are also provided](#).

Source: <https://github.com/Cyan4973/xxHash>

XXH32

```
class XXHash32 {
public:
    explicit XXHash32(uint32_t seed) {
        state[0] = seed + Prime1 + Prime2;
        state[1] = seed + Prime2;
        state[2] = seed;
        state[3] = seed - Prime1;
        bufferSize = 0;
        totalLength = 0;
    }
    bool add(const void* input, uint64_t length) {
        if (!input || length == 0)
            return false;
        totalLength += length;
        // SNIP
    }

private:
    static const uint32_t Prime1 = 2654435761U;
    static const uint32_t Prime2 = 2246822519U;
    static const uint32_t Prime3 = 3266489917U;
    static const uint32_t Prime4 = 668265263U;
    static const uint32_t Prime5 = 374761393U;

    static const uint32_t MaxBufferSize = 15+1;
    uint32_t state[4]; // state[2] == seed if totalLength <
    MaxBufferSize
    unsigned char buffer[MaxBufferSize];
    unsigned int bufferSize;
    uint64_t totalLength;

    static inline uint32_t rotateLeft(uint32_t x, unsigned char bits) {
        return (x << bits) | (x >> (32 - bits));
    }

    static inline void process(const void* data, uint32_t& state0,
        uint32_t& state1, uint32_t& state2, uint32_t& state3) {
        const uint32_t* block = (const uint32_t*) data;
        state0 = rotateLeft(state0 + block[0] * Prime2, 13) * Prime1;
        state1 = rotateLeft(state1 + block[1] * Prime2, 13) * Prime1;
        state2 = rotateLeft(state2 + block[2] * Prime2, 13) * Prime1;
        state3 = rotateLeft(state3 + block[3] * Prime2, 13) * Prime1;
    }
}
```

```
uint32_t hash() const {
    uint32_t result = (uint32_t)totalLength;

    // fold 128 bit state into one single 32 bit value
    if (totalLength >= MaxBufferSize)
        result += rotateLeft(state[0], 1) +
            rotateLeft(state[1], 7) +
            rotateLeft(state[2], 12) +
            rotateLeft(state[3], 18);
    else
        // internal state wasn't set in add(), therefore original seed is
        // still stored in state2
        result += state[2] + Prime5;

    // process remaining bytes in temporary buffer
    const unsigned char* data = buffer;

    // point beyond last byte
    const unsigned char* stop = data + bufferSize;

    // at least 4 bytes left ? => eat 4 bytes per step
    for (; data + 4 <= stop; data += 4)
        result = rotateLeft(result + *(uint32_t*)data * Prime3, 17) *
            Prime4;

    // take care of remaining 0..3 bytes, eat 1 byte per step
    while (data != stop)
        result = rotateLeft(result + (*data++) * Prime5, 11) * Prime1;

    // mix bits
    result ^= result >> 15;
    result *= Prime2;
    result ^= result >> 13;
    result *= Prime3;
    result ^= result >> 16;
    return result;
}
```

XXH32

```
class XXHash32 {
public:
    explicit XXHash32(uint32_t seed) {
        state[0] = seed + Prime1 + Prime2;
        state[1] = seed + Prime2;
        state[2] = seed;
        state[3] = seed - Prime1;
        bufferSize = 0;
        totalLength = 0;
    }
    bool add(const void* input, uint64_t length) {
        if (!input || length == 0)
            return false;
        totalLength += length;
        // SNIP
    }

private:
    static const uint32_t Prime1 = 2654435761U;
    static const uint32_t Prime2 = 2246822519U;
    static const uint32_t Prime3 = 3266489917U;
    static const uint32_t Prime4 = 668265263U;
    static const uint32_t Prime5 = 374761393U;

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    uint32_t state[4]; // state[2] == seed if totalLength <
    MaxBufferSize
    unsigned char buffer[MaxBufferSize];
    unsigned int bufferSize;
    uint64_t totalLength;

    static inline uint32_t rotateLeft(uint32_t x, unsigned char bits) {
        return (x << bits) | (x >> (32 - bits));
    }

    static inline void process(const void* data, uint32_t& state0,
        uint32_t& state1, uint32_t& state2, uint32_t& state3) {
        const uint32_t* block = (const uint32_t*) data;
        state0 = rotateLeft(state0 + block[0] * Prime2, 13) * Prime1;
        state1 = rotateLeft(state1 + block[1] * Prime2, 13) * Prime1;
        state2 = rotateLeft(state2 + block[2] * Prime2, 13) * Prime1;
        state3 = rotateLeft(state3 + block[3] * Prime2, 13) * Prime1;
    }
}
```

```
uint32_t hash() const {
    uint32_t result = (uint32_t)totalLength;

    // fold 128 bit state into one single 32 bit value
    if (totalLength >= MaxBufferSize)
        result += rotateLeft(state[0], 1) +
            rotateLeft(state[1], 7) +
            rotateLeft(state[2], 12) +
            rotateLeft(state[3], 18);
    else
        // internal state wasn't set in add(), therefore original seed is
        // still stored in state2
        result += state[2] + Prime5;

    // process remaining bytes in temporary buffer
    const unsigned char* data = buffer;

    // point beyond last byte
    const unsigned char* stop = data + bufferSize;

    // at least 4 bytes left ? => eat 4 bytes per step
    for (; data + 4 <= stop; data += 4)
        result = rotateLeft(result + *(uint32_t*)data * Prime3, 17) *
            Prime4;

    // take care of remaining 0..3 bytes, eat 1 byte per step
    while (data != stop)
        result = rotateLeft(result + (*data++) * Prime5, 11) * Prime1;

    // mix bits
    result ^= result >> 15;
    result *= Prime2;
    result ^= result >> 13;
    result *= Prime3;
    result ^= result >> 16;
    return result;
}
```

Simplified XXH32

```
uint32_t hash() const {
    uint32_t result = (uint32_t)totalLength;

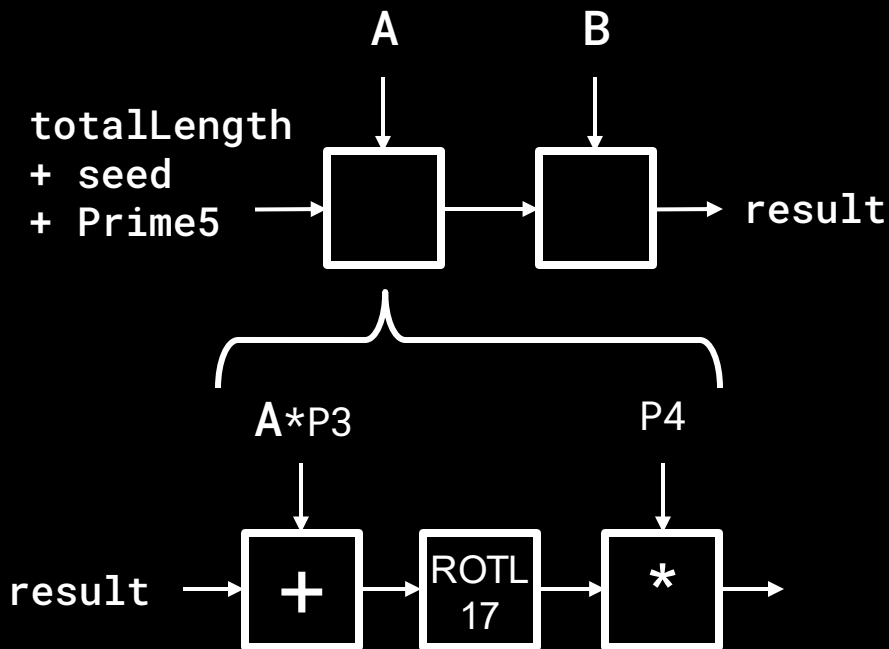
    result += seed + Prime5;

    // process remaining bytes in temporary buffer
    const unsigned char* data = buffer;

    // point beyond last byte
    const unsigned char* stop = data + bufferSize;

    // at least 4 bytes left ? => eat 4 bytes per step
    for (; data + 4 <= stop; data += 4) {
        result += *(uint32_t*)data * Prime3;
        result = rotateLeft(result, 17);
        result *= Prime4;
    }
    return result;
}
```

Simplified XXH32



```
uint32_t hash() const {  
    uint32_t result = (uint32_t)totalLength;  
  
    result += seed + Prime5;  
  
    // process remaining bytes in temporary buffer  
    const unsigned char* data = buffer;  
  
    // point beyond last byte  
    const unsigned char* stop = data + bufferSize;  
  
    // at least 4 bytes left ? => eat 4 bytes per step  
    for (; data + 4 <= stop; data += 4) {  
        result += *(uint32_t*)data * Prime3;  
        result = rotateLeft(result, 17);  
        result *= Prime4;  
    }  
    return result;  
}
```

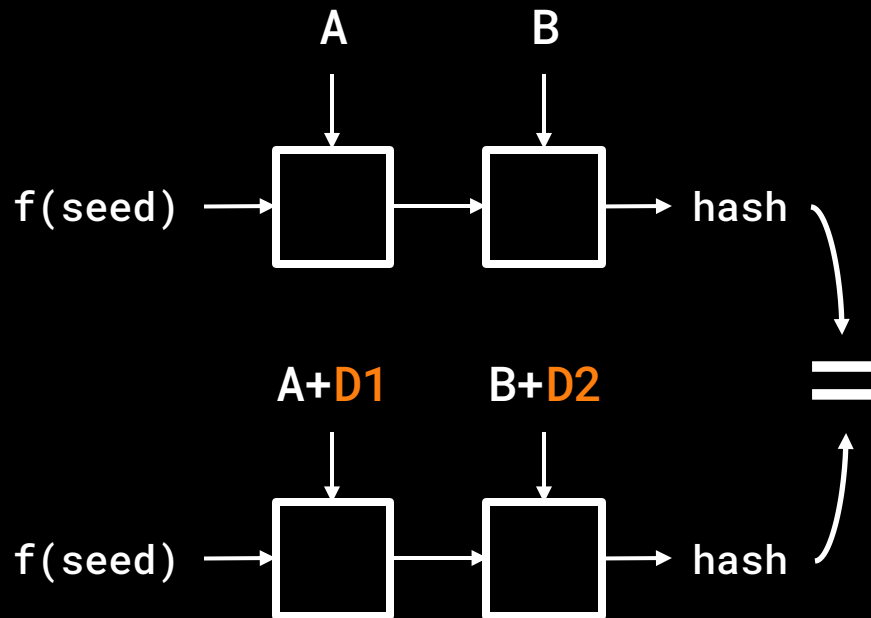
Simplified hash assuming `len(input) = 8`

Differential Cryptanalysis of XXH32

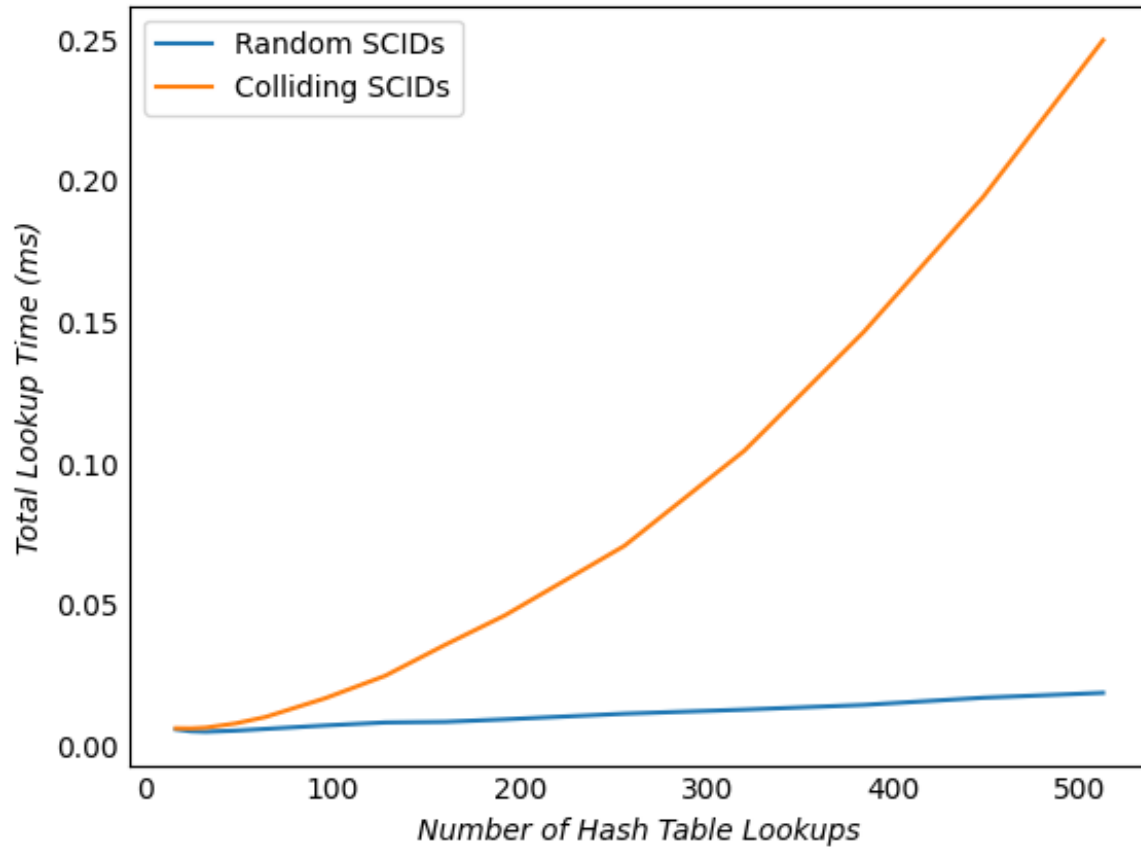
- Given input $A||B$, we can find pairs of deltas ($D1$, $D2$) such that

$$\text{XXH32}(A||B) = \text{XXH32}(A+D1||B+D2)$$

- Independent of the seed; collisions work for any seed!
- Exhaustive search yields over 100k of $(D1, D2)$ pairs per input $A||B$



Isquic - Cumulative Hash Table Lookup Time



Results

aioquic

AppleQUIC

f5

CVE-2025-24947

aproxy

Isquic

MsQuic

ngtcp2

nginx

Pluginized QUIC

quant

Quinn

quic-go

ats

Haskell quic

mvfst

CVE-2025-24946

nginx

quiche

s2n-quic

CVE-2025-47200

Chromium

CVE-2025-23020

kwik

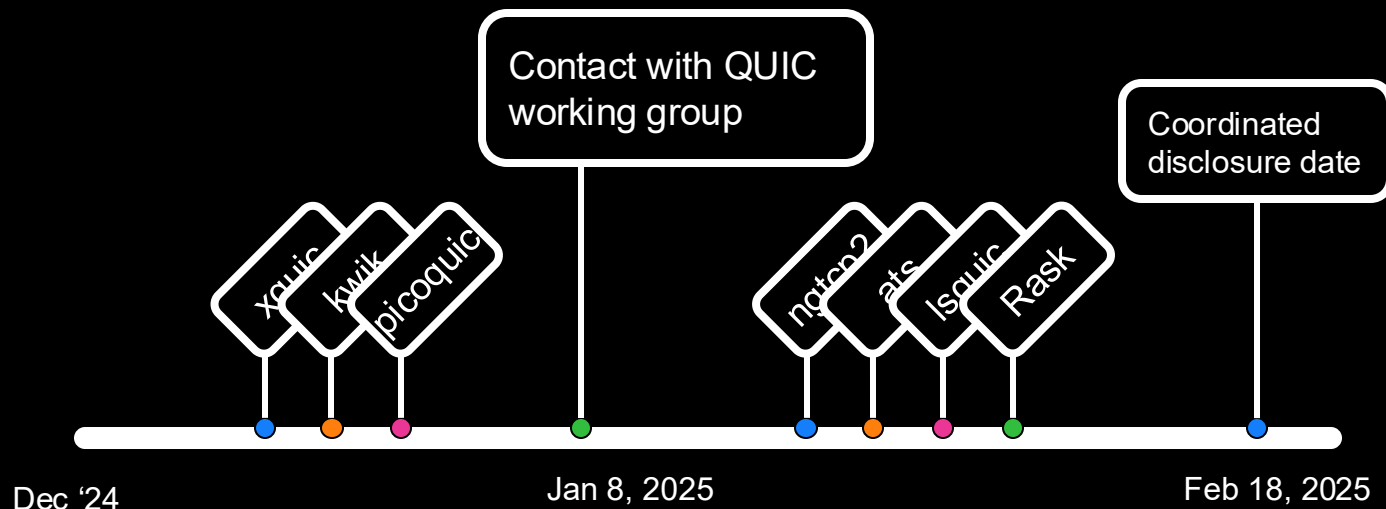
Nego

picoquic

quickly

xquic

Disclosure Timeline



Interesting Notes

- Ericsson Rask, an experimental, pre-GA MP-QUIC implementation used Rust
- Chromium had noticed and fixed the issue in 2019
- New CVE was assigned after disclosure to Netty QUIC

CVE-2025-29908 Detail

AWAITING ANALYSIS

This CVE record has been marked for NVD enrichment efforts.

Description

Netty QUIC codec is a QUIC codec for netty which makes use of quiche. An issue was discovered in the codec. A hash collision vulnerability (in the hash map used to manage connections) allows remote attackers to cause a considerable CPU load on the server (a Hash DoS attack) by initiating connections with colliding Source Connection IDs (SCIDs). This vulnerability is fixed in 0.0.71.Final.

Black Hat Sound Bytes

Attacker-
controlled
input

Protocol Designers:

- Design protocols with care
- Prevent attacker-controlled input
- Consider RFC 9414, 9415 and 9416



Vulnerability researchers:

- Keep findings Hash DoS attacks!

Weak hash
function

Protocol Implementers:

- Use languages with built-in Hash DoS protections
- Use hash functions that provide security
- Don't roll your own

Thank you

- Trail of Bits (my employer)
- Javed Samuel @ NCC Group
- Lucas Pardue for coordinating disclosure process
- BlackHat for having me
- Phil Young for coaching



<https://github.com/pbottine/cut-to-the-quick>

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