# **Exploring OpenSSH: Hands-On Workshop for Beginners**

William Robinet (Conostix S.A.)

**Hacktivity 2024 - Budapest** 

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William Robinet (Conostix S.A.) - 2024-10-14

## Before we begin 1/2

### **Workshop resources**

Matrix Room (cfr paper QR Code):

https://matrix.to/#/#Hacktivity\_2024-OpenSSH\_Workshop:matrix.org

Used to exchange links and commands.

Workshop repository (cfr paper QR Code):

https://github.com/wllm-rbnt/hacktivity-2024-openssh-workshop/

git clone https://github.com/wllm-rbnt/hacktivity-2024-openssh-workshop.git
cd hacktivity-2024-openssh-workshop

#### Shorter URLs:

- Matrix Room -> https://tinyurl.com/52bftbc7
- Repository -> https://tinyurl.com/3z5n9ppb
- Slides:
  - Markdown (source version) -> https://tinyurl.com/4muxcxrz
  - HTML (rendered version) -> https://tinyurl.com/4jpsm4nr
  - PDF (rendered version) -> https://tinyurl.com/2jmkfsfy

### Before we begin 2/2

Slides are written in Markdown

Get the *PDF/HTML* versions or use *patat* to render the presentation in your terminal

Go to release page https://github.com/jaspervdj/patat/releases and download version 0.12.0.1

or

```
wget https://github.com/jaspervdj/patat/releases/download/v0.12.0.1/patat-v0.12.0.1-linux-x86_64.tar.gz
tar xzf patat-v0.12.0.1-linux-x86_64.tar.gz patat-v0.12.0.1-linux-x86_64/patat
patat-v0.12.0.1-linux-x86_64/patat hacktivity-2024-openssh-workshop.patat.md
```

The Markdown version can be converted to PDF & HTML by using the provided *md2pdf.sh* script (*pandoc* & *chromium* must be installed first)

## **About me**

- Introduced to Open Source & Free Software around the end of the 90's
- CompSci studies, work in IT at Conostix S.A. AS197692
- ssldump improvements (build system, bug fixes, JSON output, IPv6 & ja3(s), ...)
- asn1template: painless ASN.1 editing
- **%** % % \\ \pm \\ \pm \\ \pm \\ \mathread \\ \mathread
- GitHub: https://github.com/wllm-rbnt/
- Mastodon: https://infosec.exchange/@wr

### **Local Machine Setup**

### **Docker Installation**

Reference documentation: https://docs.docker.com/engine/install/

This will provide docker compose v2 command (with a space).

On Debian 12 (bookworm), the following command will provide docker-compose v1 command (with a dash).

```
sudo apt install docker.io docker-compose
```

On Ubuntu 24.10, the docker compose v2 command can be installed directly:

```
sudo apt install docker.io docker-compose-v2
```

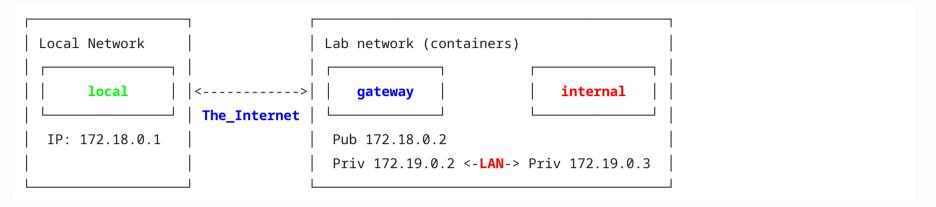
On Rocky Linux 9, install docker-ce with docker compose v2 commmand:

```
sudo dnf config-manager --add-repo https://download.docker.com/linux/rhel/docker-ce.repo
sudo dnf -y install docker-ce docker-ce-cli containerd.io docker-compose-plugin
sudo systemctl --now enable docker
```

#### Various other tools

We will use netcat (netcat-traditional on Debian/Ubuntu), curl, wireshark (or tcpdump).

## **Labs Network Layout**



(IP addresses may differ from your Docker setup)

Your local machine can reach gateway server over 'The Internet'

- *local* machine is your personal laptop or VM. It is located "somewhere on the Internet" It is able to reach gateway on TCP port 22 (on 172.18.0.2)
- **Lab network** is a remote private LAN (172.19.0.0/16 in this case)
- On this remote LAN, gateway is privately known as 172.19.0.2.
- gateway is connected to another machine named **internal** (172.19.0.3)

### **Usernames and Passwords**

2 users exist on each container: root and user.

Passwords are the same as usernames. *user* has **sudo** access on each machine (no password required).

### **Shell commands**

Shell commands are prefixed by a prompt designating the machine on which the command shall be run:

```
(local)$ <local command>
(gateway)$ <remote command on gateway machine>
(internal)$ <remote command on internal machine>
```

### **IP** addresses

- IP addresses are configured statically when you execute start\_containers.sh
- 3 IP addresses will appear during this workshop
  - < qateway\_pub>
  - < <gateway\_priv>
  - o <internal\_priv>

### **Labs Containers**

- 2 containers will be used during this workshop, one for *gateway* and a second for *internal*
- Build and start containers with:

```
(local)$ cd docker
(local)$ ./build_containers.sh
(local)$ ./start_containers.sh
```

• Print setup information:

```
(local)$ ./get_info.sh
```

• Stop containers with:

```
(local)$ ./stop_containers.sh
```

• Cleanup the whole Docker setup: WARNING this will remove all containers, images and networks from your local Docker setup

```
(local)$ ./docker_wipe.sh
(local)$ sudo systemctl restart docker
```

### Illustration: Telnet is not secure

- A *telnet* server is listening on *gateway*, TCP port 23
- Start a traffic capture on TCP port 23 in another terminal:

```
(local)$ sudo apt install wireshark
(local)$ sudo wireshark
```

- Start a capture on your main network interface (eth0) or any
- Then, in another shell, run the *telnet* client on your local machine:

```
(local)$ sudo apt install telnet
(local)$ telnet 172.18.0.2
```

- Login, user Password, user
- Finally, right-click on the first TCP packet that belongs to this connection (port 23), then *Follow -> TCP Stream*

## **Two main issues:**

- Cleartext message exchange: vulnerable to traffic sniffing tcpdump/wireshark on traffic path (firewall, router)
- Insecure authentication: vulnerable to Man-In-The-Middle attack Ettercap (another machine on same LAN), proxy software on an intermediate router/firewall

Same goes for FTP, HTTP, SMTP, ...

# **SSH History & Implementations**

SSH stands for **S**ecure **SH**ell

### **Protocol Versions**

- SSH-1.0 1995, by Tatu Ylönen, researcher at Helsinki University of Technology
- <u>SSH-2.0</u> 2006, IETF Standardization RFC 4251-4256
- SSH-1.99 Retro-compatibility pseudo-version, Old client/New Server
- SSH3 (?) Experimental implementation using HTTP/3 (QUIC)

### **Implementations**

- OpenSSH on Unices, Client & Server for GNU/Linux, \*BSD, MacOS, ...
- OpenSSH on MS Windows
- Terminal & File transfer clients for MS Windows: PuTTY, MobaXterm, WinSCP, FileZilla, ...
- Dropbear, Lightweight implementation, for embedded-type Linux (or other Unices) systems
- On mobile: ConnectBot for Android, Termius for Apple iOS
- Network Appliances, OpenSSH or custom implementation

### Focus on OpenSSH Tool suite (on GNU/Linux)

- Focus on the OpenSSH tool suite, a project started in 1999
- Clients & Server software
- This is the reference opensource version for many OSes
- It is based on modern cryptography algorithms and protocols
- It is widely available out-of-the-box
- It contains a wide range of tools (remote shell, file transfer, key management, ...)
- Automation friendly (Ansible, or custom scripts)
- Main tools
  - ssh Remote terminal access
  - *scp* File transfer
  - *sftp* FTP-like file transfer
- Helpers
  - ssh-keygen Public/Private keypair generation
  - ssh-copy-id Key deployment script
  - ssh-agent Key management daemon (equivalent to PuTTY's pageant.exe)
  - ssh-add Key/Agent management tool

### **Documentation**

#### Online manual pages

• Listing of Command LIne man pages:

```
$ man -k ssh
```

• Listing client's configuration options:

```
$ man ssh_config
```

• Listing server's configuration options (the *openssh-server* package must be installed):

```
$ man sshd_config
```

• CLI help, in your terminal, just type

```
    ssh for the client
```

- o /usr/sbin/sshd --help for the server
- ssh-keygen --help for the key management tool

o ...

# First Login (1/2) - Commands, tcpdump & fingerprints

Syntax is: ssh <username>@<host>, where can be a hostname or an IP address

Username and password are the same as the one from the telnet example: - Username: *user* / Password: *user* 

• Start a traffic capture on TCP port 22 in another terminal, traffic is **encrypted**:

(local)\$ sudo tcpdump -n -i any -XXX tcp and port 22

• Retrieve the server keys fingerprints through a secure channel:

https://github.com/wllm-rbnt/hacktivity-2024-openssh-workshop/blob/main/fingerprints.txt

## First Login (2/2) - Connection & host authentication

Type the following in a local terminal on your machine:

```
(local)$ ssh user@<qateway_pub>
or
(local)$ ssh -o VisualHostKey=true user@<qateway_pub>
The authenticity of host '172.18.0.2 (172.18.0.2)' can't be established.
ED25519 key fingerprint is SHA256:HFofTLfh2W/1IR3+q0sXGAcRs4ZnVsWwGKmb0zeMefk.
+--[ED25519 256]--+
          . +B=*o|
         o ooBX.o
        o oo=0o=.|
       + 0..= 0.*
      . S .o o o=
          0 . 0..
           = O
          = *
           + oE
+----[SHA256]----+
This key is not known by any other names.
Are you sure you want to continue connecting (yes/no/[fingerprint])?
```

- Type yes to accept and go on with user authentication, or no to refuse and disconnect immediately
- or type the *fingerprint* you received from the secure channel If the fingerprint you entered matches the one that is printed, the system will proceed with user authentication

### **Known hosts fingerprint databases**

Remote Host Authentication is performed only on first connection

~/.ssh/known\_hosts is then populated with host reference and corresponding key fingerprint

/etc/ssh/ssh\_known\_hosts can be used as a system-wide database of know hosts

Hosts references can be stored as clear text (IP or hostname) or the corresponding hash (see HashKnownHosts option)

### Host keys location on OpenSSH server

```
(gateway)$ ls -l /etc/ssh/ssh_host*pub
-rw------ 1 root root 513 May 23 12:39 /etc/ssh/ssh_host_ecdsa_key
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 179 May 23 12:39 /etc/ssh/ssh_host_ecdsa_key.pub
-rw------ 1 root root 411 May 23 12:39 /etc/ssh/ssh_host_ed25519_key
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 99 May 23 12:39 /etc/ssh/ssh_host_ed25519_key.pub
-rw------ 1 root root 2602 May 23 12:39 /etc/ssh/ssh_host_rsa_key
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 571 May 23 12:39 /etc/ssh/ssh_host_rsa_key.pub
```

# **Computing fingerprints of host keys**

```
(gateway)$ for i in $(ls -1 /etc/ssh/ssh_host*pub); do ssh-keygen -lf $i; done
256 SHA256:gbF30TEqv4ucpI3VFIEjq0dnrji5woxacnPe+N9mFX8 root@460a6cac3a3c (ECDSA)
256 SHA256:/hUAOroJsQzhM4f9qSZxcBLqEYqmoPi03pVX2fQUxrg root@460a6cac3a3c (ED25519)
3072 SHA256:D0gvg+2kFzvrLjqi00EZ23tnQN3H/+oB3cqm0VZHWiQ root@460a6cac3a3c (RSA)
```

Note: use ssh-keygen -lvf <public\_key\_file> to generate the visual ASCII art representation of a key

# **Configuration (1/2)**

### **Configuration files**

#### Client:

- Per-user client configuration: ~/.ssh/config
- System-wide client configuration: /etc/ssh/ssh\_config
- System-wide local configuration: /etc/ssh/ssh\_config.d/\*

#### Server:

- Server configuration: /etc/ssh/sshd\_config
- Server local configuration: /etc/ssh/sshd\_config.d/\*

### **Configuration options**

- Client configuration options: \$ man ssh\_config
- Server configuration options: \$ man sshd\_config

# **Configuration (2/2) - Per host client configuration**

Client configuration options can be specified per host

Example:

Type following in your local ~/.ssh/config:

```
Host gateway
Hostname <gateway_pub>
User user
```

Tips: Printing the "would be applied" configuration

The -G parameter cause ssh to print the configuration that would be applied for a given connection (without actually connecting)

```
(local)$ ssh -G gateway
```

The following command should output your username:

```
(local)$ ssh -G gateway | grep user
user user
```

### **Tips**

### **Increase verbosity**

Launch ssh commands with -v parameter in order to increase verbosity, and help with debugging

Example:

```
(local)$ ssh -v user@<gateway_pub>
OpenSSH_8.4p1 Debian-5+deb11u2, OpenSSL 1.1.1w 11 Sep 2023
debug1: Reading configuration data /home/user/.ssh/config
debug1: Reading configuration data /etc/ssh/ssh_config
[...]
```

### **Escape character**

The escape character can be used to pass out-of-band commands to ssh client

- By default ~, must be at beginning of a new line
- Commands:
  - Quit current session ~.
  - List Forwarded connections ~#
  - Decrease the verbosity (LogLevel) ~V
  - Increase the verbosity (LogLevel) ~v
- Repeat ~ char in order to type it ( ~~ )

# **Public Key Authentication (1/2)**

### **Main Authentication Methods**

- Password authentication
- Public/Private key authentication
  - Used for password-less authentication (passphrase may be required to unlock private key)

### Lab

• Generate a new key pair on your local system (with or without a passphrase):

```
(local)$ ssh-keygen -f ~/.ssh/my-ssh-key
```

• Install your public key on the remote server:

```
(local)$ ssh-copy-id -i ~/.ssh/my-ssh-key.pub user@<gateway_pub>
```

Note: ssh-copy-id copies the public key from ~/.ssh/my-ssh-key.pub to the remote machine in ~/.ssh/authorized\_keys

# **Public Key Authentication (2/2)**

• Login again with your new key pair:

```
(local)$ ssh -i ~/.ssh/my-ssh-key user@<gateway_pub>
```

• Reference your key pair in your personal local configuration file (~/.ssh/config):

```
Host gateway
  Hostname <gateway_pub>
  User user
  IdentityFile ~/.ssh/my-ssh-key
```

# **Authentication Agent (1/2)**

The Authentication Agent can hold access to private keys, thus eliminating the need to enter passphrase at each use

Start the agent:

```
(local)$ ssh-agent | tee ssh-agent-env.sh
SSH_AUTH_SOCK=/tmp/ssh-KwTcl7ZieUKD/agent.1193973; export SSH_AUTH_SOCK;
SSH_AGENT_PID=1193974; export SSH_AGENT_PID;
echo Agent pid 1193974;
(local)$ source ssh-agent-env.sh
Agent pid 1193974
```

# **Authentication Agent (2/2)**

Load private key into the agent:

```
(local)$ ssh-add ~/.ssh/my-ssh-key
Enter passphrase for /home/user/.ssh/my-ssh-key: ******
Identity added: my-ssh-key (user@local)
```

Connect to remote machine:

```
(local)$ ssh user@<gateway_pub>
```

Going further, <u>keychain</u> can be used to manage ssh-agent & keys across logins sessions

# Remote Command Execution (1/2)

Simple command execution:

```
(local)$ ssh user@<gateway_pub> hostname
```

With redirection to local file:

(local)\$ ssh user@<gateway\_pub> hostname > hostname.txt

# **Remote Command Execution (2/2)**

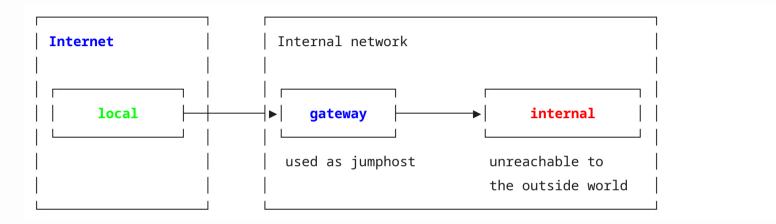
With redirection to remote file:

```
(local)$ ssh user@<gateway_pub> "hostname > hostname.txt"

With pipes:
(local)$ echo blabla | ssh user@<gateway_pub> "cat - | tr 'a-z' 'A-Z'"
```

# Jumphost (1/2)

A Jump Host is a machine used as a relay to reach another, otherwise possibly unreachable, machine. This unreachable machine is named internal-machine



Lab objective: Connect to internal from your local machine via SSH with a single command

## Jumphost (2/2)

Lab setup:

• First, copy your public key to the remote server (gateway):

```
(local)$ scp .ssh/my-ssh-key.pub user@<gateway_pub>:
```

• Login to the remote server then copy your public key to the destination machine:

```
(local)$ ssh user@<gateway_pub>
(gateway)$ ssh-copy-id -f -i my-ssh-key.pub <internal_priv>
```

• Connect to the remote machine with a single command:

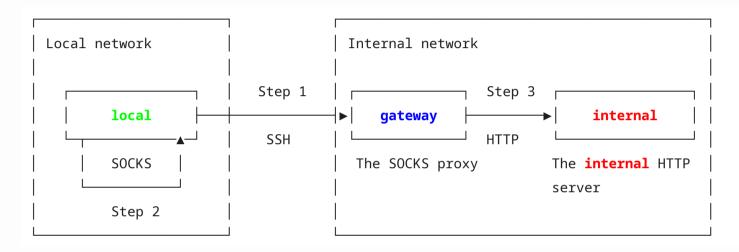
```
(local)$ ssh -J user@<gateway_pub> user@<internal_priv>
```

Note: *internal* host key fingerprints available at https://github.com/wllm-rbnt/hacktivity-2024-opensshworkshop/blob/main/fingerprints.txt

## SOCKS proxy (1/2)

A SOCKS server proxies TCP connections to arbitrary IP addresses and ports

With SOCKS 5, DNS queries can be performed by the proxy on behalf of the client



Lab objective: Reach the internal HTTP server at http://secret-intranet (running on internal) through a SOCKS proxy running on gateway

### SOCKS proxy (2/2)

• Start a local SOCKS Proxy by establishing an SSH connection to *gateway* with parameter -D:

```
(local)$ ssh -D 1234 user@<gateway_pub>
```

• Check, locally, for listening TCP port with

```
(local)$ ss -tpln | grep :1234
```

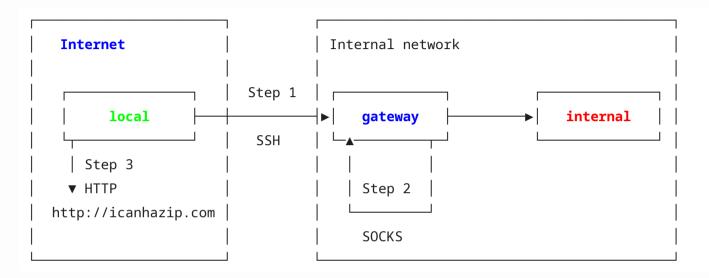
- Configure your local browser to use local TCP port 1234 as a SOCKS proxy
- Configure your local browser to send DNS queries though the SOCKS proxy (tick the option in configuration)
- Point your browser to http://secret-intranet or Try it with curl:

```
(local) http_proxy=socks5h://127.0.0.1:1234 curl http://secret-intranet
This is the secret Intranet on internal machine listening on 127.0.0.1 port 80.
```

• Bonus: look at your local traffic with *tcpdump*, you shouldn't see any DNS exchanges

## Reverse SOCKS proxy (1/2)

A reverse SOCKS proxy setup allows a remote machine to use your local machine as a SOCKS proxy



*Lab objective*: Reach the external HTTP server at **http://icanhazip.com** from *gateway* through a SOCKS proxy running on your local machine

## Reverse SOCKS proxy (2/2)

Setup:

• Start a remote SOCKS Proxy by establishing an SSH connection to *gateway* with parameter -R:

```
(local)$ ssh -R 1234 user@<gateway_pub>
```

• Check, on *gateway*, for listening TCP port with

```
(gateway)$ ss -tpln | grep :1234
```

• Point your curl on *gateway* to **http://icanhazip.com** though the SOCKS proxy listening on 127.0.0.1

```
(gateway)$ http_proxy=socks5h://127.0.0.1:1234 curl http://icanhazip.com
<Conference public IP address>
```

# LocalForward (1/2)

A *LocalForward* creates a locally listening TCP socket that is connected over SSH to a TCP port reachable in the network scope of a remote machine

Lab objective: Create and connect local listening TCP socket on port 8888 to TCP port 80 on 127.0.0.1 in the context of gateway

Setup:

• Configure the forwarding while connecting to *gateway* through SSH with -L parameter:

(local)\$ ssh -L 8888:127.0.0.1:80 user@<gateway\_pub>

# LocalForward (2/2)

```
-L parameter syntax:
<local_port>:<remote_IP>:<remote_port>
can be extended to
<local_IP>:<local_port>:<remote_IP>:<remote_port>
```

• SSH is now listening on TCP port 8888 on your local machine, check with:

```
(local)$ ss -tpln
```

• Point your browser to **http://127.0.0.1:8888** You should see something like:

Hello world! This is gateway listening on 127.0.0.1 port 80.

### RemoteForward (1/2)

A *RemoteForward* creates a listening TCP socket on a remote machine that is connected over SSH to a TCP port reachable in the network scope of the local machine

Lab objective: Create a TCP socket on gateway on port 8123 and connect it to a locally listening netcat on TCP port 1234

#### Setup:

• Start a listening service on localhost on your local machine on TCP port 1234:

```
(local)$ nc -l -p 1234 -s 127.0.0.1 # if you use netcat-traditional or (local)$ nc -l 127.0.0.1 1234 # if you use netcat-openbsd
```

• Check that it's listening with ss (netstat replacement on GNU/Linux):

```
(local)$ ss -tpln | grep 1234
```

• Configure the forwarding on TCP port 8123 while connecting to *gateway* with -R parameter:

```
(local)$ ssh -R 8123:127.0.0.1:1234 user@<gateway_pub>
```

• ssh is now listening on TCP port 8123 on *gateway* 

## RemoteForward (2/2)

```
-R parameter syntax:
<remote_port>:<local_IP>:<local_port>
can be extended to
<remote_IP>:<remote_port>:<local_IP>:<local_port>
• Check its listening status on gateway:
```

(gateway)\$ ss -tpln | grep 8123

• Connect to the forwarded service on remote machine on port 8123 with netcat:

```
(gateway)$ nc 127.0.0.1 8123
```

• Both netcat instances, local & remote, should be able to communicate with each other

Note: reverse proxy SOCKS is a special use case of -R

## **X11 Forwarding**

Lab objective: Start a graphical application on gateway, and get the visual feedback locally

Setup:

• Connect to *gateway* with -X parameter:

```
(local)$ ssh -X user@<gateway_pub>
```

• Then, start a graphical application on the remote machine:

```
(gateway)$ xmessage "This is a test !" &!
```

• Check processes on *gateway* and *local* machine:

```
(gateway|local)$ ps auxf
```

#### **Notes:**

- On a Linux local client, the XOrg graphical server is used
- On a Windows machine use:
  - VcXsrv: https://sourceforge.net/~/vcxsrv/
  - or XMing: https://sourceforge.net/~/xming/

# Connection to Legacy Systems (1/4)

### **Host key algorithm mismatch**

"Unable to negotiate with 10.11.12.13 port 22: no matching host key type found. Their offer: ssh-rsa"

(local)\$ ssh -o HostKeyAlgorithms=ssh-rsa <user>@<machine>

• Listing known host key algorithms:

(local)\$ ssh -Q key

# Connection to Legacy Systems (2/4)

### Wrong key exchange algorithm

"Unable to negotiate with 10.11.12.13 port 22: no matching key exchange method found. Their offer: diffie-hellman-group-exchange-sha1"

(local)\$ ssh -o KexAlgorithms=diffie-hellman-group1-sha1 <user>@<machine>

• Listing known key exchange algorithms:

(local)\$ ssh -Q kex

# Connection to Legacy Systems (3/4)

### Wrong cipher

"Unable to negotiate with 10.11.12.13 port 22: no matching cipher found. Their offer: aes128-cbc,3des-cbc,aes192-cbc,aes256-cbc"

```
(local)$ ssh -o Ciphers=aes256-cbc <user>@<machine>
```

• Listing known ciphers:

```
(local)$ ssh -Q cipher
```

# Connection to Legacy Systems (4/4)

### Wrong public key signature algorithm

```
"debug1: send_pubkey_test: no mutual signature algorithm" (with ssh -v)

(local)$ ssh -o PubkeyAcceptedAlgorithms=ssh-rsa <user>@<machine>

• Listing known public key sig algorithms:

(local)$ ssh -Q key-sig

or

(local)$ ssh -Q PubkeyAcceptedAlgorithms
```

### **SSH Tarpit**

- The legitimate SSH server is running on port 22 on *gateway*
- endlessh, a simple honeypot, is running on port 2222 on *gateway* for demonstration purpose
- Try to connect to port 2222 with

```
(local)$ ssh user@<qateway_pub> -p 2222
```

• Check both ports with netcat:

```
(local)$ nc -nv <gateway_pub> 22
(UNKNOWN) [<gateway_pub>] 22 (ssh) open
SSH-2.0-OpenSSH_9.2p1 Debian-2

(local)$ nc -nv <gateway_pub> 2222
(UNKNOWN) [<gateway_pub>] 2222 (?) open
XkZ?NK>-h5xs#/OSF
SUGJv
6%n[;
M5I'R8.W}wgE?"DhAD1"jp"$x#4;Z
wT%mJK_15(Nf]Iw_
$2'ZUmQ2YgdyXnI,
\7_c.f4@bQHcY>N'y
[...]
```

## tmux - terminal multiplexer

tmux can be used to keep interactive shell tasks running while you're disconnected

- Installation: \$ sudo apt install tmux
- Create a tmux session: \$ tmux
- List tmux sessions: \$ tmux ls
- Attach to first session: \$ tmux a
- Attach to session by index #: \$ tmux a -t 1
- Commands inside a session:
  - Ctrl-b d: detach from session
  - o Ctrl-b c: create new window
  - Ctrl-b n/Ctrl-b p: switch to next/previous window
  - Ctrl-b %/Ctrl-b ": split window vertically/horizontally
  - Ctrl-b <arrow keys>: move cursor across window panes
  - Ctrl-[ + <arrow keys>: browse current pane backlog, press return to quit
- Documentation: \$ man tmux

## **References**

- OpenSSH
- SSH History (Wikipedia)
- SSH Mastery by Michael W. Lucas
- SSH Mastery @BSDCAN 2012
- A Visual Guide to SSH Tunnels
- SSH Kung Fu
- The Hacker's Choice SSH Tips & Tricks
- Why port 22?

Thanks for your attention!