Key Management

- Where do keys come from?
- More precisely, we have to distinguish between long-lived keys and session keys
- Need keys for secrecy and for MACs
- General solution: use long-lived key for authentication and to negotiate session key
- (We saw a simpler form of this when discussing RSA)
- Many different ways to do this
Desired Properties

- Alice and Bob want to end up with a shared session key $K$, with the help of a key server S.
- They each want proof of the other’s identity.
- They want to be sure the key is *fresh*.
- A fresh key is one that hasn’t been used before, i.e., is not a replay.
Why is Freshness Important?

- For stream ciphers, it’s crucial
- If too much traffic is encrypted with any key, it might help a cryptanalyst (remember the CBC block count limit)
- If too much traffic is encrypted with any one key, it’s a very tempting target for a cryptanalyst
- An old key may have somehow been compromised
Key Management for Symmetric Ciphers

- Simplest case: each pair of communicators has a shared key
- Doesn’t scale — would require $n^2$ keys for $n$ nodes
- Besides, cryptographically unwise — each key is used too much
- Need a Key Distribution Center (KDC)
Needham-Schroeder Protocol (1978)

\[
\begin{align*}
A &\rightarrow S : \quad A \parallel B \parallel N_A \\
S &\rightarrow A : \quad \{N_A \parallel B \parallel K_{AB} \parallel \{K_{AB} \parallel A\}K_{BS}\}K_{AS} \\
A &\rightarrow B : \quad \{K_{AB} \parallel A\}K_{BS} \\
B &\rightarrow A : \quad \{N_B\}K_{AB} \\
A &\rightarrow B : \quad \{N_B - 1\}K_{AB}
\end{align*}
\]

\(A\) and \(B\) are names of parties that wish to talk; \(S\) is the KDC. \(N_x\) are \textit{nonces} — one-time values. \(K_{xy}\) is the session key for use between \(x\) and \(y\).
Needham-Schroeder Protocol

Keys:
- $A - S$
- $B - S$
- $A - B$

Diagram:
- $A \parallel B \parallel N_A$
- $N_A \parallel B \parallel K_{AB} \parallel K_{AB} \parallel A$
- $K_{AB} \parallel A$
- $N_B$
- $N_B - 1$
- $A - S$
- $B - S$
- $A - B$
Explaining Needham-Schroeder

1. Alice sends S her identity, plus a random nonce

2. S’s response is encrypted in $K_{AS}$, which guarantees its authenticity. $N_A$ guarantees its freshness. It includes a new random session key $K_{AB}$, plus a sealed package for Bob. (Note: $K_{AB}$ includes both confidentiality and authentication keys.)

3. Alice sends the sealed package to Bob. Bob knows it’s authentic, because it’s encrypted with $K_{BS}$ which is known only to Bob and $S$

4. Bob sends his own random nonce to Alice, encrypted with the session key

5. Alice proves that she could read the nonce
Cryptographic Protocol Design is Hard

- Bob never proved his identity to Alice
- If $K_{AB}$ — the session key, which should be less sensitive — is ever compromised, the attacker can impersonate Alice forever
- Denning and Sacco proposed a fix for this problem in 1981.
- In 1994, Needham found a flaw in their fix.
- In 1995, a new flaw was found in the public key version of the original Needham-Schroeder protocol — in modern notation, that protocol is only 3 messages.
- Cryptographic protocol design is hard...
Other Cryptographic Protocols

- Cryptographic protocols allow us to do many strange things, such as signing a message you can’t see
- Too many to discuss in this class; here are a few small examples
Coin Flips

- How do you flip a coin on the Internet, without a trusted third party?
- Alice picks a random number $x$, and sends $H(x)$ to Bob, where $H$ is a cryptographic hash function.
- Bob guesses if $x$ is even or odd, and sends his guess to Alice.
- If Bob’s guess is right, the result is heads; if he’s wrong, the result is tails.
- Alice discloses $x$. Both sides can verify the result. Alice can’t cheat, because she can’t find an $x'$ such that $H(x) = H(x')$.
- Note: this protocol is crucially dependent on the lack of correlation between the parity of $x$ and the values of $H(x)$, or Bob can cheat.
Kerberos

- Originally developed at MIT; now an essential part of Windows authentication infrastructure.
- Designed to authenticate users to servers
- Users must use their password as their initial key — and must not be forced to retype it constantly
- Based on Needham-Schroeder, with timestamps to limit key lifetime
“Kerberos” in Greek Mythology

*Kerberos*; also spelled Cerberus. *n.* The watch dog of Hades, whose duty it was to guard the entrance—against whom or what does not clearly appear; ... it is known to have had three heads. . .

—Ambrose Bierce, The Enlarged Devil’s Dictionary
Design Goals

- Users only have passwords to authenticate themselves
- Users don’t want to type passwords for every interaction
- The network is completely insecure
- It’s possible to protect the Kerberos server
- The workstations have not been tampered with (dubious!)
Resources Protected

- Workstation login
- Network access to home directory
- Printer
- IM system
- Remote login
- Anything else that requires authentication
Principals

- A Kerberos entity is known as a *principal*
- Could be a user or a system service
- Principal names are triples: ⟨*primary name*, *instance*, *realm*⟩
- Examples: username@some.domain.name, somehost/lpr@other.domain
- The *realm* identifies the Kerberos server
How Kerberos Works

- Users present *tickets* — cryptographically sealed messages with session keys and identities — to obtain a service.

- Use Needham-Schroeder (with password as Alice’s key) to get a *Ticket-Granting Ticket* (TGT); this ticket (and the associated key) are retained for future use during its lifetime.

- Use the TGT (and TGT’s key) in a Needham-Schroeder dialog to obtain keys for each actual service
Shared Secrets

• Everyone shares a secret with the Kerberos KDC

• For users, this is their password (actually, a key derived from the password)

• The KDC is assumed to be secure and trustworthy; anything it says can be believed
Kerberos Data Flow

User

KDC

TGS

Service

1. TGT Request
2. Encrypted TGT
3. Ticket Request, TGT, Auth
4. Encrypted Ticket
5. Ticket, Auth
6. Optional Server Response
Getting a Ticket-Granting Ticket (TGT)

- The user sends its principal name to the Kerberos KDC
- The KDC responds with

\[ \{K_{c,tgs} \parallel \{T_{c,tgs}\}K_{tgs}\}K_c \]

- That is, it contains a session key \(K_{c,tgs}\) and a TGT encrypted with a key known only to the KDC
- The ticket contains

\[ \{tgs \parallel c \parallel addr \parallel timestamp \parallel lifetime \parallel K_{c,s}\}K_{tgs} \]

- It has the service name (tgs), the principal's name, its IP address, the validity period, and the session key \(K_{c,tgs}\) sent to the client
- \(K_c\) is the user's password, known to the user and the KDC
Who Knows What Now?

- The user and the KDC know $K_c$; the user use it to decrypt $\{K_{c,tgs}\}_{K_c}$ and recover $K_{c,tgs}$
- Only the KDC knows $K_{tgs}$; therefore, anything encrypted with that key could only have been created by the KDC
- The user will use $K_{c,tgs}$ plus the ticket-granting ticket to obtain more credentials
Using the TGT

- The client uses the TGT to obtain tickets for other services
- To get a ticket for service $s$ — say, email access — it sends $s$ (email), the ticket, and an authenticator to the KDC
- The KDC uses this information to construct a service ticket
Authenticators

- Authenticators prove two things: that the client knows $K_{c,s}$, and that the ticket is fresh
- An authenticator for a service $s$ contains
  $$\{c \parallel addr \parallel timestamp\}^{K_{c,s}}$$
  That is, it contains the client name and IP address, plus the current time, encrypted in the key associated with that ticket
- For a ticket-granting ticket, $s$ is the $tgs$
Processing the Ticket Request

- The KDC decrypts the ticket to recover $K_{c,tgs}$
- It uses that to decrypt the authenticator
- It verifies the IP address and the timestamp (permissible clock skew is typically a few minutes)
- If everything matches, it knows that the request came from the real client, since only it would have access to the $K_{c,tgs}$ that was in the ticket
- It then sends a service ticket back to the client
Service Tickets

• Service tickets are almost identical to ticket-granting tickets

• The differences is that they have the name of a different service — say, “email” — rather than the ticket-granting service

• They’re encrypted in a key shared by the KDC and the service
Using Service Tickets

- The client sends the service ticket and an authenticator to the service.
- The service decrypts the ticket, using its own key.
- The service knows it’s genuine, because only the KDC knows the key used to produce it.
- The service verifies that the ticket is for it and not some other service.
- It uses the enclosed key to decrypt and verify the authenticator.
- The net result is that the service knows the client’s principal name, extracted from the ticket.
Authentication, Not Authorization

- Kerberos is an authentication service
- It does not (usually) provide authorization
- The services know a genuine name for the client, vouched for by the KDC
- They then make their own authorization decision based on this name
Bidirectional Authentication

- Sometimes, the client wants to be sure of the server’s identity
- It asks the server to prove that it, too, knows the session key
- The server replies with $\{timestamp + 1\}_K_{c,s}$ using the same timestamp as was in the authenticator
Ticket Lifetime

- TGTs typically last about 8–12 hours — the length of a login session
- Service tickets can be long- or short-lived, but don’t outlive the TGT
- Live tickets are cached by the client
- When service tickets expire, they’re automatically and transparently renewed
Inter-Realm Tickets

- A ticket from one realm can’t be used in another, since a KDC in one realm doesn’t share secrets with services in another realm.
- Realms can issue tickets to each other.
- A client can ask its KDC for a TGT to another realm’s KDC.
- The remote realm trusts the user’s KDC to vouch for the user’s identity.
- It then issues service tickets with the original realm’s name for the principal, not its own realm name.
- As always, services use the principal name for authorization decisions.
Putting Authorization into Tickets

- Under certain circumstances, tickets can contain authorization information known or supplied to the KDC
- Windows KDCs use this, to centralize authorization data
- (As a result, Windows and open source Kerberos KDCs don’t interoperate well...)
- Users can supply some authorization data, too, to restrict what other services do with proxy tickets
Proxy Tickets

- Suppose a client wants to print a file
- The print spooler doesn’t want to copy the user’s file; that’s expensive
- The user obtains a proxy ticket granting the print spooler access to its files
- The print spooler uses that ticket to read the user’s file
Restricting the Print Spooler

- The client doesn’t want the spooler to have access to all of its files
- It lists the appropriate file names in the proxy ticket request; the KDC puts that list of names into the proxy ticket
- When the print spooler presents the proxy ticket to a file server, it will only be given those files
- Note: the file server must verify that the client has access to those files!
Kerberizing Applications

- Replace (or supplement) existing authentication mechanisms with something that uses Kerberos
- Add authorization check
- If necessary (and it probably is, these days), change all network I/O to use the Kerberos session key to encrypt and authenticate all messages
Limitations of Kerberos

- Ticket cache security
- Password-guessing
- Subverted login command
Ticket Cache Security

- Where are cached tickets stored?
- Often in /tmp — is the OS protection good enough?
- Less of an issue on single-user workstations; often a threat on multi-user machines
- Note: /tmp needs to be a local disk, and not something mounted via NFS...
Password-Guessing

- Kerberos tickets have verifiable plaintext
- An attacker can run password-guessing programs on intercepted ticket-granting tickets
- Kerberos uses *passphrases* instead of *passwords*
- Does this make guessing harder? No one knows
It’s Worse Than That

- On many Kerberos systems, anyone can ask the KDC for a TGT
- There’s no need to eavesdrop to get them — you can get all the TGTs you want over the Internet!
- Solution: preauthentication
- The initial request includes a timestamp encrypted with $K_c$
- It’s still verifiable plaintext, but collecting TGTs becomes harder again
Subverting Login

- No great solutions!
- Keystroke loggers are a real threat today
- Some theoretical work on secure network booting
- Perhaps use the Trusted Computing mechanisms to protect passphrase entry? Unclear if it will really help