

# Security and security controls in operating systems

*A quantitative approach*  
2023-02-27

Robert Malmgren  
[rom@romab.com](mailto:rom@romab.com)

# 1 minute presentation

- Consultant in IT and infosec since 20+ years
- Working alot on with critical infrastrucutre protection, process control, SCADA security etc, but also in financial sector, government, etc
- Work covers everything from writing policies, requirement specs and steering documents to development, penetration testing, incident handling and forensics

# Outline of talk

- Intro
- Background and basics
- Security problems & vulnerabilities
- Example of operating systems and security
- Trends

# Some short notes

- The focus is on general operating system used in general computers - COTS products
- *Embedded systems, code for micro controllers, etc often lack most fundamental security features*
- Some experimental OS's and domain specific solutions have better-than-average security concepts and security controls, e.g. military grade usage

# Background and basics

Part I: protection, security controls

# Intro - foundation

- Modern software is normally formed into components, parts and layers in *systems*
- Layers and isolation is a way to provide separation, which can be:
  - Logical/Virtual: A way to make it appear that execution environment have exclusive access
  - Physical: Different computers, different CPUs/cores, different disks
  - Time based: Separation of execution time/Timeshare
  - Based on security technologies, i.e. cryptographic

# Intro - foundation

- Complex systems
  - ...run multiple programs at once,
  - ...have multiple users,
  - ...store huge amounts of data,
  - ...is interconnected via networks

# Intro - foundation

- This there is to built-in security into the foundation of the systems - the operating system
  - To **identify** and **authorize** users of the system
  - To allow for an environment where necessary basic controls are in place
  - To prevent unauthorised access to OS resources

# Some concepts and principles

**TCB** - *Trusted Computing Base*

**RBAC** - *Role Based Access Control*

**MAC** - *Mandatory Access Control*

Principle of least privilege

**DAC** - *Discretionary Access Control*

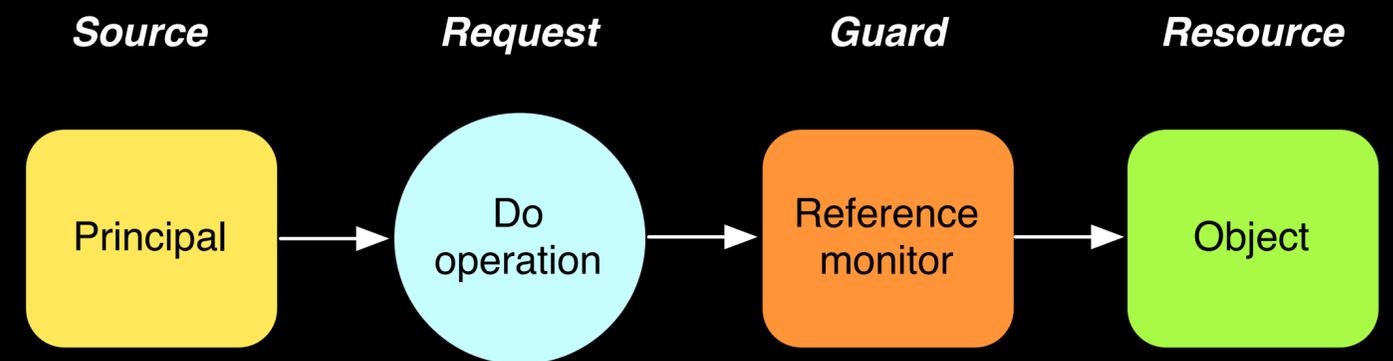
*Principle of least surprise*

# Capabilities and requirements

<b>Need</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
Protect a system resource	<i>Prohibit <b>malicious</b> or <b>unintentional</b> access to</i>	System tables, direct access to I/O-units, memory protection
Authorization checks for usage of system calls and system resources	<i>Provide controlled access to system, so that system maintain system integrity and provide continuous security to application and information</i>	reference monitor
Separation of resources	<i>Physical, Logical, temporal or cryptographical separation</i>	separation in running time

# Some important concept

- Reference monitor



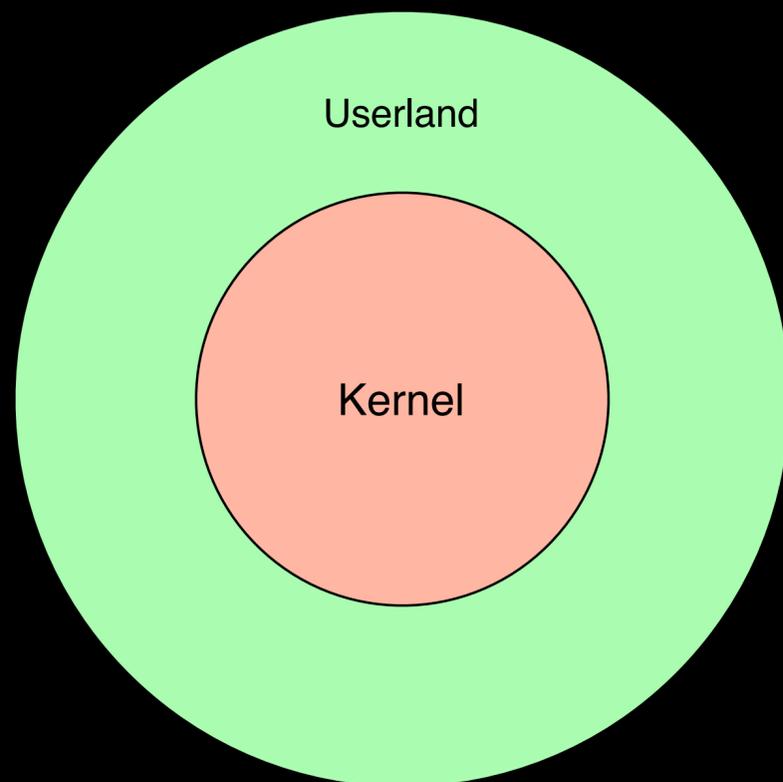
- Trusted Computing Base, TCB
  - All things in the trusted part of the OS necessary to enforce the security policy

# Principles for secure design\*

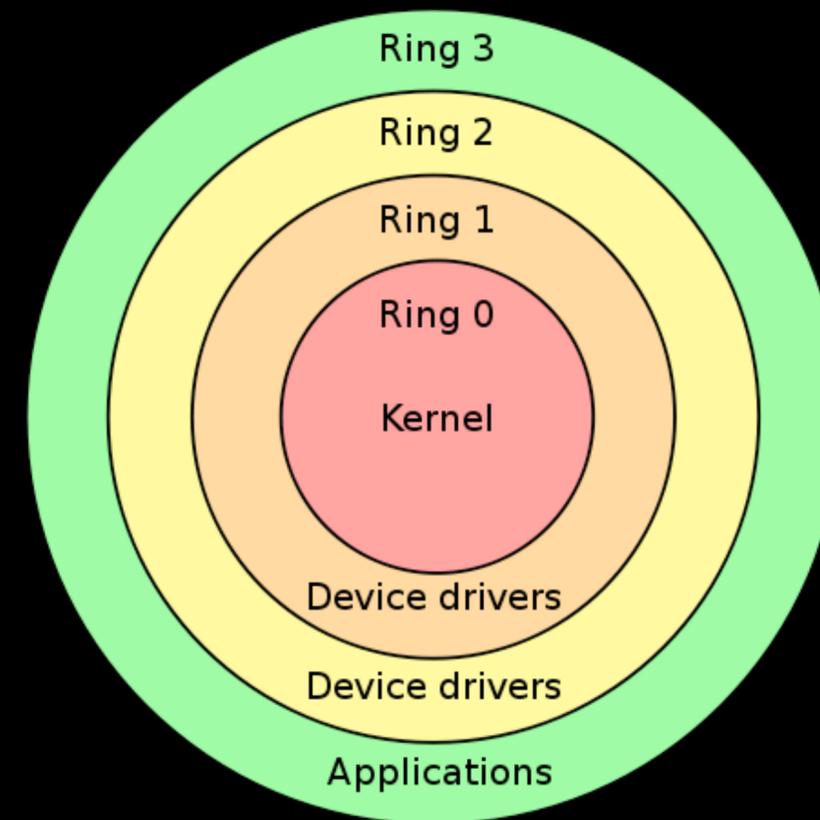
<b><i>Economy of mechanism</i></b>	Keep the design as simple and small as possible
<b><i>Fail-safe defaults</i></b>	Base access decisions on permission rather than exclusion
<b><i>Complete mediation</i></b>	<i>Every access to every object</i> must be checked for authority
<b><i>Open design</i></b>	The design should <b>not</b> be secret
<b><i>Separation of privilege</i></b>	technique in which a program is divided into parts which are limited to the specific privileges they require in order to perform a specific task
<b><i>Least privilege</i></b>	Every program and every user of the system should operate using the least set of privileges necessary to complete the job
<b><i>Least common mechanism</i></b>	Minimize the amount of mechanism common to more than one user and depended on by all users
<b><i>Psychological acceptability</i></b>	It is essential that the human interface be designed for ease of use, so that users routinely and automatically apply the protection mechanisms correctly

# The classical *ring model*

*UNIX*



*x86*

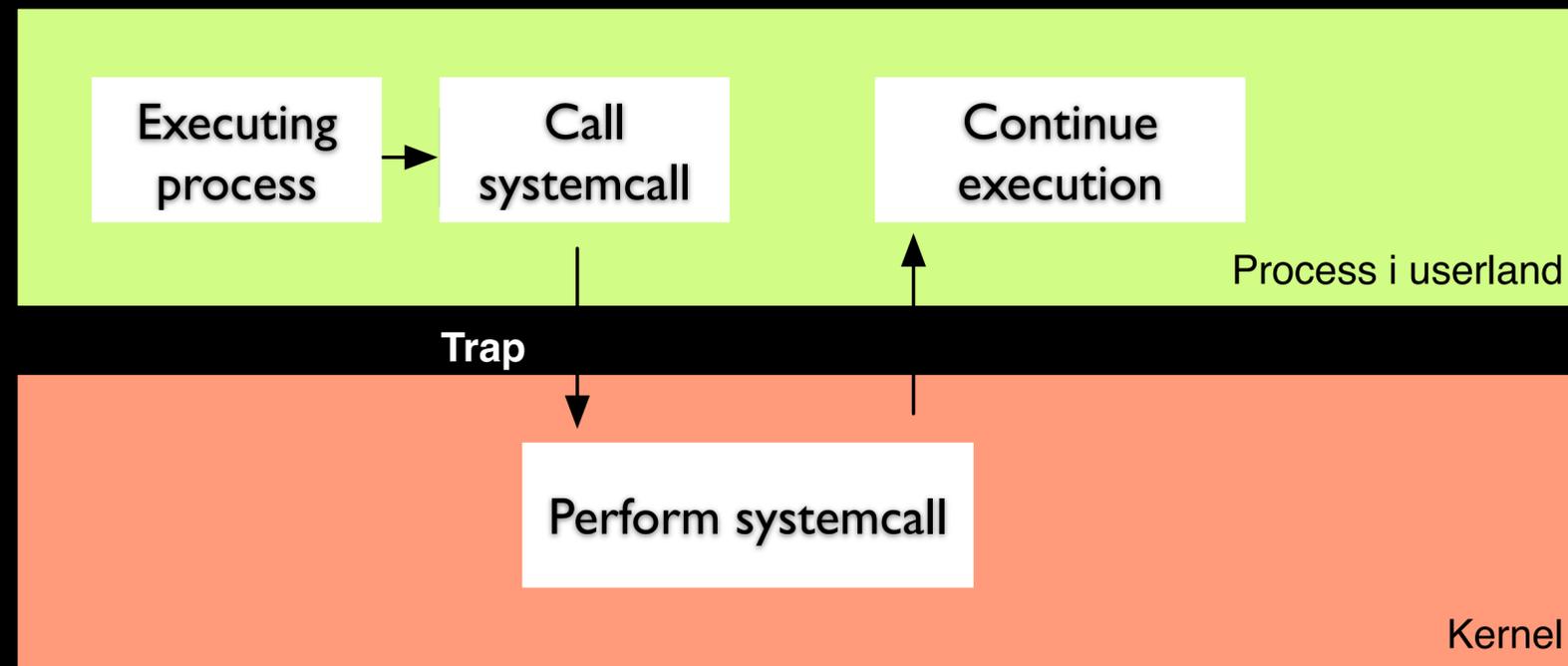


*Least  
privileges*

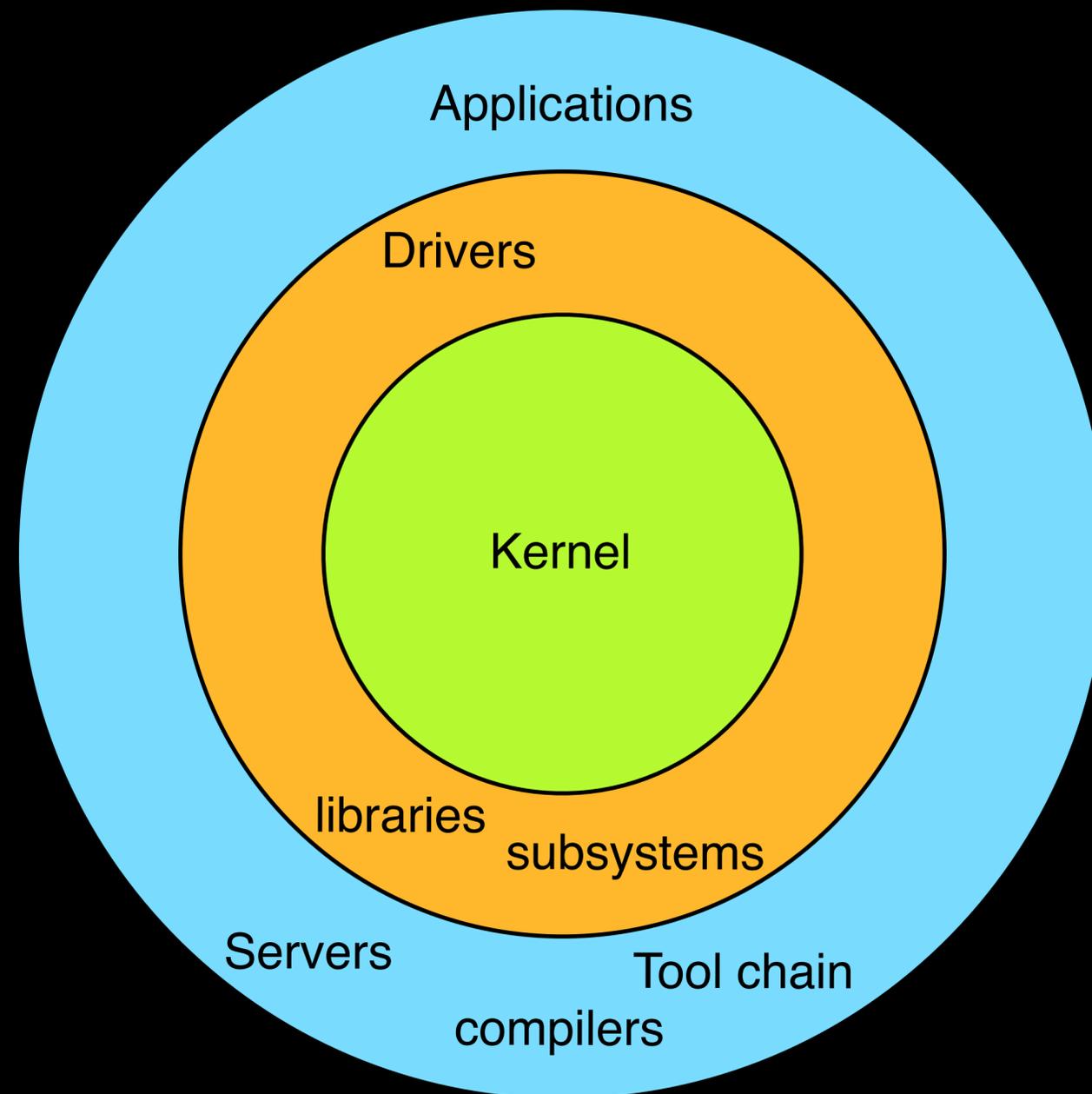


*Highes  
privileges*

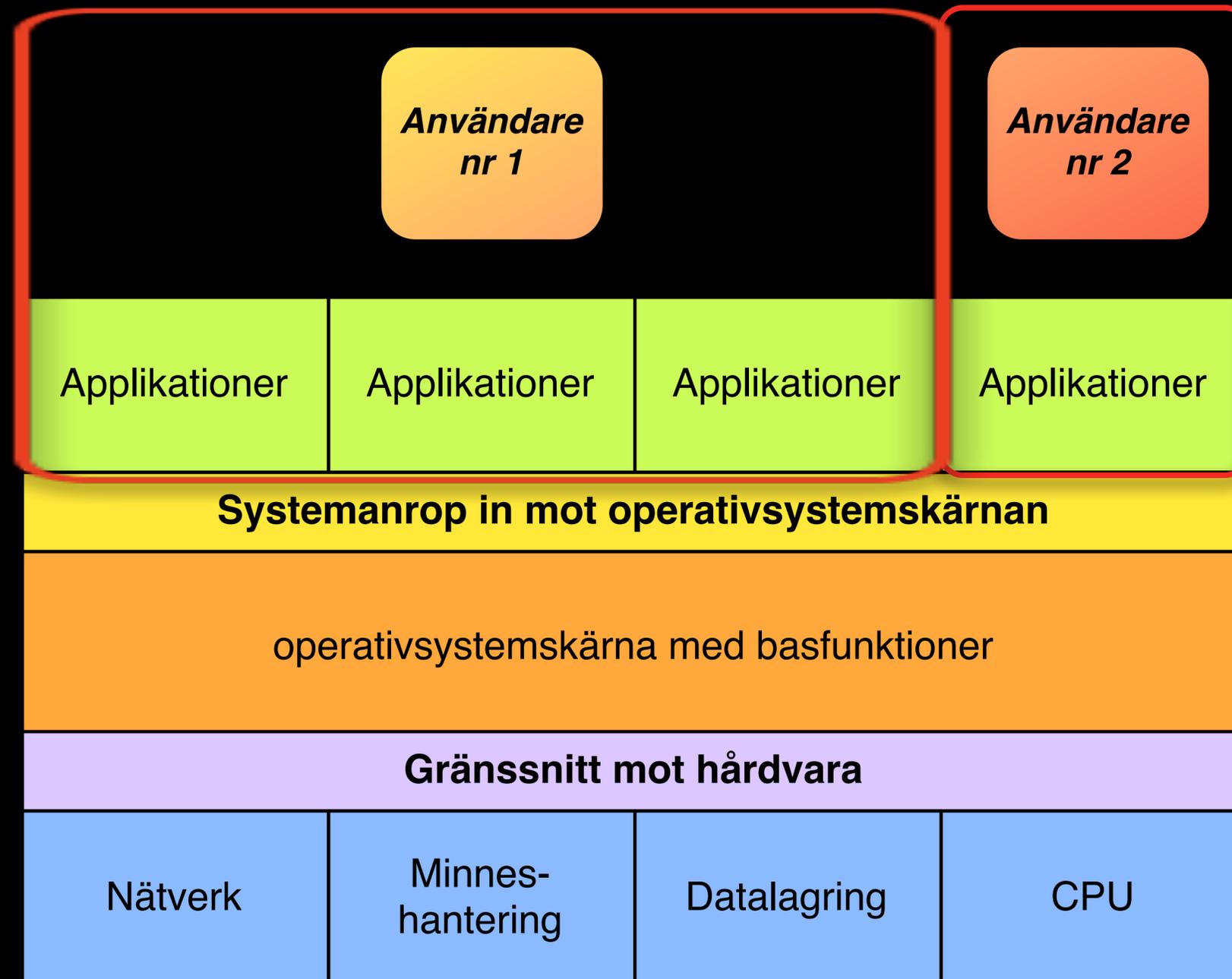
# Interaction between application and OS



# Overview of operating system (1/2)



# Overview of operating system (2/2)



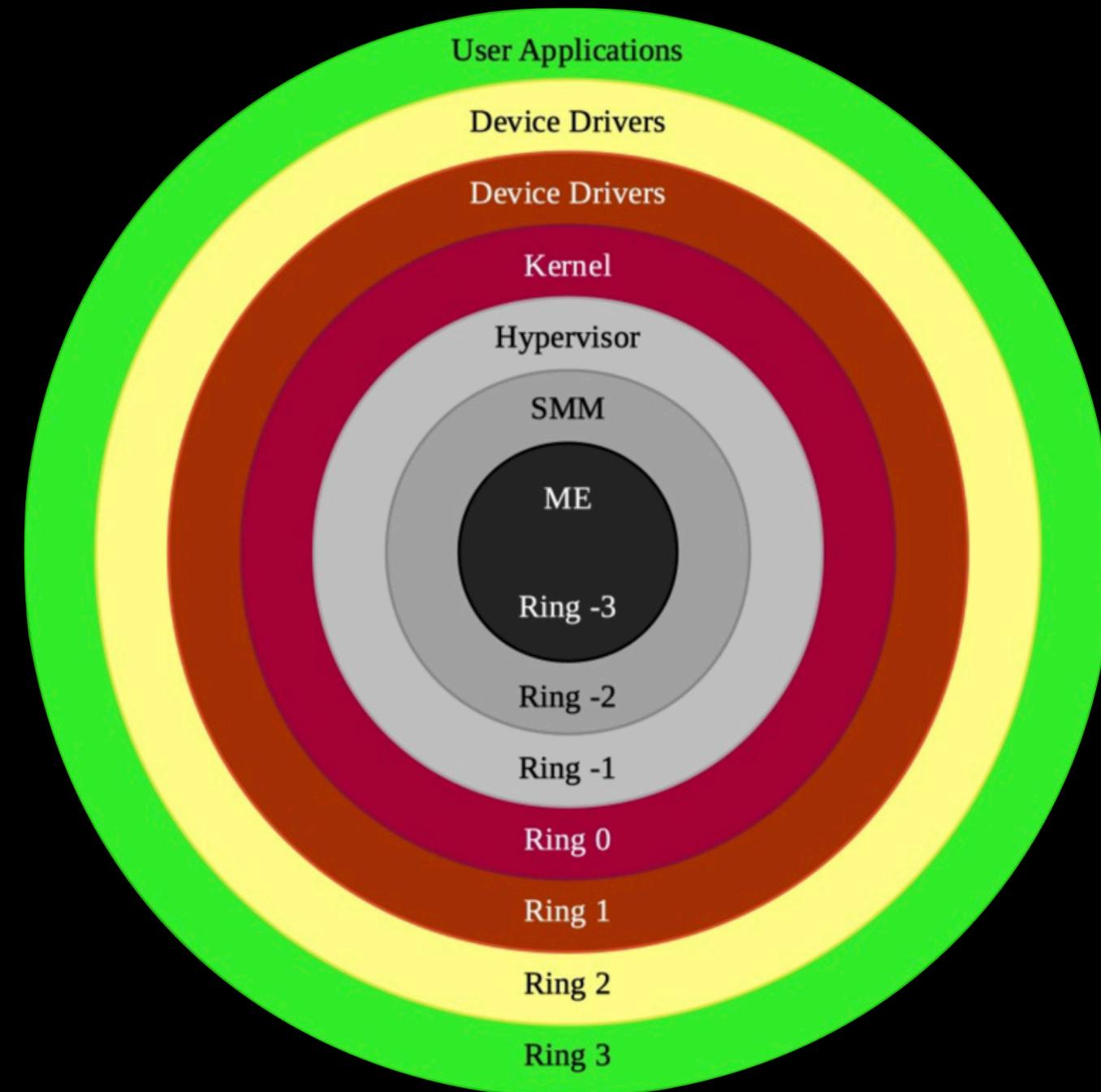
# Problem with these pictures and concepts

- Layering violation
  - some software might skip a layer and call an underlying layer directly and hence bypass controls
- In some scenarios attackers might come an unexpected way
  - Attacking from host operating system against guest operating systems in a virtual machine environment

# The classical *ring model*, updated

## Other rings

-1	Hypervisor	Allow guest OS "ring 0"
-2	System Management Mode	APM/ACPI/TPM-support
-3	<i>Intel</i> Management Engine / <i>AMD</i> Platform Security Processor	Special software running in the Platform Controller Hub (PCH) processor



# Problem with these concepts

- You have a “hidden” processor on your computer
- Its functionality has never been publicly documented
- It appears to have been customized for certain TLA government agencies
- It has unlimited access to the main processor
- It has unlimited access to all memory
- It has unlimited access to all peripherals
- It has its own MAC and IP addresses
- It runs a web server
- It is always running
- You can't turn it off
- You can't disable it
- It has had multiple known exploitable vulnerabilities
- It is the single most privileged known element of an Intel Architecture processor chipset

# Memory handling

- RAM memory is a central resource that in a controlled way must be shared and handled *between operating system, applications and other components*
- Modern computer systems have hardware support for memory protection, e.g. **MMU**
- OS support is required to use the hardware supported memory protection
- Modern hardware support can enforce several security features related to isolation, non-executable memory areas, etc

# File system

- A file system is often a central component in a computer system w.r.t. security and protection
- Besides the actual file content, there is meta data that is of importance
  - File owner, dates of creation/change/access, access information, security labels, etc
- Manipulation of meta data can in some cases be more serious security breach than the manipulation of the file content itself. Or a combo of both can be misleading and hide the fact that a file has been altered

# Local filesystem

<b>File system</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Comment</b>
FAT	<i>No access control</i>	Classic MS-DOS
NTFS	<i>Discretionary Access Control via <b>ACL</b></i>	Advanced possibilities to make controls
UFS	<i>Discretionary Access Control, writing &amp; program execution for owner, group, "others"</i>	Simple access controls

# Network file systems

<b>File system</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Comment</b>
NFSv3	<i>Hostbaserad accesskontroll, uid</i>	Trivial to circumvent
NFSv4	<i>Secure RPC, KRB5<sub>a</sub>, KRB5<sub>p</sub>, KRB5<sub>i</sub></i>	Require a Kerberos server, KDC a= authentication i=integrity = calculate MAC p= privacy = encrypt packet
SMB/CIFS	<i>KRB5<sub>a</sub></i>	

# Comparing security in Operating systems (1/5)

- When in time was the system developed?
  - What was the state-of-the-art at that time?
  - What trends were currently in fashion?

# Comparing security in Operating systems (2/5)

*"Given enough eyeballs, all  
bugs are shallow"*  
- Linus' Law

- Development methodologies
  - Open Source or Closed Source?
  - What support do one use to ensure that security is *built into the product*?
  - How does one ensure that implementation is a correct representation of the design, that is a correct interpretation of the analysis?

# Comparing security in

But really, what good is this comparison?

Write more code = get higher salary?

Manage a 200K-SLOC project is *cooler* than a 5K-SLOC?

More code = more bugs?

More code = more *security checks* and *advanced concepts* like **crypto**, **resilient failure checking** built into everything?

But certainly, complexity is considered **bad** and **evil** in the context of security.

And there is often a relation between complexity and size of program

2015	Windows 10	40-60
------	------------	-------

2020	Linux kernel 5.12	28.8
------	-------------------	------

# Comparing security in Operating systems (5/5)

- What can one gain by having formal certification of operating systems, subsystems or application
  - Trusted Computer System Evaluation Criteria (TCSEC), Common Criteria (CC, ISO/IEC 15408), etc
- More a theoretical exercise than of any real value?

# Background and basics

Part 2: bugs and vulnerabilities

# Intro - *just the basic facts*

- All software is prone to bugs
- Some bugs will have an impact that can have security implications - data leaks, destruction of data, privilege escalations

# Intro - *just the basic facts*

- Some bugs help to circumvent security mechanisms
- Some security designs are flawed, or build on *flawed assumptions*



# Operating system security

- Security problems in the operating system can affect the integrity of the system itself
  - Someone else can control the system to their own liking - ***pwnd!***
  - Bugs in OS kernel can affect system integrity
- Security problems with the operating system can in turn affect the security in ***applications*** and ***subsystems*** (databases, middle ware, etc)

# Some concepts and terms

Vulnerability

Exploit

0day exploit

Foreverday exploit

CVE-2021-1234

*Stack smashing*

*Stack overflow*

*Race conditions*

*Heap overflow*

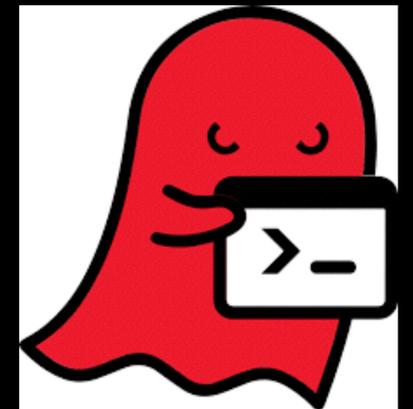
# Intro - *the basics*

- Some bugs are undiscovered for some time, they lay latent
- Once discovered, they can be abused, if it is an **security vulnerability**, that can be **exploited**
- A discovered security bug, is sometime called a **0day**, until it is mitigated

# Intro - *the basics*



- Nowadays bugs and vulnerabilities tend to get **names** (*heartbleed, ghost, shellshock, etc*) and **logos**
- also some bugs/vulnerabilities gets "formal name", i.e. CVE\*, and a scoring CVSS\*\*
- e.g. CVE-2011-3172



\* "Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures;" <https://cve.mitre.org/>

\*\* <https://www.first.org/cvss/specification-document>\*\*

# Some concepts and principles

- **Attack vector** - Different paths to reach an vulnerability. One path might be closed by a vendor patch, but another might still be there, if the root cause is not identified and fixed.
- **Reverse engineering** - To re-create the original design by observing the final result, in computer science - to re-create some source code by examining a binary.

# CVE Details

The ultimate security vulnerability datasource

(e.g.: CVE-2009-1234)

[Log In](#) [Register](#)

[Switch to https://](#)

[Home](#)

**Browse :**

[Vendors](#)

[Products](#)

[Vulnerabilities By Date](#)

[Vulnerabilities By Type](#)

**Reports :**

[CVSS Score Report](#)

[CVSS Score Distribution](#)

**Search :**

[Vendor Search](#)

[Product Search](#)

[Version Search](#)

[Vulnerability Search](#)

[By Microsoft References](#)

**Top 50 :**

[Vendors](#)

[Vendor Cvss Scores](#)

[Products](#)

[Product Cvss Scores](#)

[Versions](#)

**Other :**

[Microsoft Bulletins](#)

[Bugtraq Entries](#)

[CWE Definitions](#)

[About & Contact](#)

[Feedback](#)

[CVE Help](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Articles](#)

**External Links :**

[NVD Website](#)

[CWE Web Site](#)

**View CVE :**

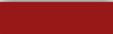
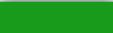
 

(e.g.: CVE-2009-1234 or 2010-1234 or 20101234)

## Top 50 Products By Total Number Of "Distinct" Vulnerabilities

Go to year: [1999](#) [2000](#) [2001](#) [2002](#) [2003](#) [2004](#) [2005](#) [2006](#) [2007](#) [2008](#) [2009](#) [2010](#) [2011](#) [2012](#) [2013](#) [2014](#) [2015](#) [2016](#) [2017](#) [2018](#) [2019](#) [2020](#) [2021](#) [2022](#)

	Product Name	Vendor Name	Product Type	Number of Vulnerabilities
1	<a href="#">Debian Linux</a>	<a href="#">Debian</a>	OS	<a href="#">5816</a>
2	<a href="#">Android</a>	<a href="#">Google</a>	OS	<a href="#">4069</a>
3	<a href="#">Ubuntu Linux</a>	<a href="#">Canonical</a>	OS	<a href="#">3115</a>
4	<a href="#">Mac Os X</a>	<a href="#">Apple</a>	OS	<a href="#">2964</a>
5	<a href="#">Linux Kernel</a>	<a href="#">Linux</a>	OS	<a href="#">2748</a>
6	<a href="#">Fedora</a>	<a href="#">Fedoraproject</a>	OS	<a href="#">2728</a>
7	<a href="#">Windows 10</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	OS	<a href="#">2590</a>
8	<a href="#">Iphone Os</a>	<a href="#">Apple</a>	OS	<a href="#">2573</a>
9	<a href="#">Windows Server 2016</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	OS	<a href="#">2334</a>
10	<a href="#">Chrome</a>	<a href="#">Google</a>	Application	<a href="#">2329</a>
11	<a href="#">Windows Server 2008</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	OS	<a href="#">2154</a>
12	<a href="#">Windows 7</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	OS	<a href="#">2019</a>
13	<a href="#">Firefox</a>	<a href="#">Mozilla</a>	Application	<a href="#">1993</a>
14	<a href="#">Windows Server 2012</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	OS	<a href="#">1954</a>
15	<a href="#">Windows 8.1</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	OS	<a href="#">1841</a>
16	<a href="#">Windows Server 2019</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	OS	<a href="#">1792</a>
17	<a href="#">Windows Rt 8.1</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	OS	<a href="#">1682</a>
18	<a href="#">Enterprise Linux Desktop</a>	<a href="#">Redhat</a>	OS	<a href="#">1469</a>
19	<a href="#">Enterprise Linux Server</a>	<a href="#">Redhat</a>	OS	<a href="#">1419</a>
20	<a href="#">Enterprise Linux Workstation</a>	<a href="#">Redhat</a>	OS	<a href="#">1380</a>
21	<a href="#">Opensuse</a>	<a href="#">Opensuse</a>	OS	<a href="#">1314</a>
22	<a href="#">Leap</a>	<a href="#">Opensuse</a>	OS	<a href="#">1305</a>
23	<a href="#">Tvos</a>	<a href="#">Apple</a>	OS	<a href="#">1295</a>
24	<a href="#">Internet Explorer</a>	<a href="#">Microsoft</a>	Application	<a href="#">1171</a>
25	<a href="#">Safari</a>	<a href="#">Apple</a>	Application	<a href="#">1136</a>
26	<a href="#">Mysql</a>	<a href="#">Oracle</a>	Application	<a href="#">1131</a>
27	<a href="#">Enterprise Linux</a>	<a href="#">Redhat</a>	OS	<a href="#">1052</a>

-  Linux dialects
-  Windows versions
-  Apple OS's

Examples of different protection solutions

# General example of control principles

<b>Security controls</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Where?</b>
Encryption	<i>Protection against <b>eavesdropping</b> or unauthorized access</i>	network traffic, file content, disk partitions, memory pages, swap files/ page area	OpenSSL, IPsec, SSH, OS kernel
Electronic signatures	<i>Protection against <b>changes</b> or unauthorized modifications by third parties,</i>	network traffic, file content, disk partitions	OpenSSL, IPsec, SSH, OS kernel
Cryptographically strong hash values	<i>Protection against unauthorized changes, detect errors or changes</i>	Saved passwords, file content,	Password file, user database, checksums on files

# General example of control principles

<b>Security controls</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Where?</b>
<b>Random numbers</b>	<i>Make a resource non-deterministic</i>	File names, process ID's, port numbers, session keys, session id's, transaction numbers, DNS query ID's, execution time & timing	getrandom() /dev/urandom
<b>Constant numbers</b>	<i>Make a resource non-deterministic</i>	execution time, timing of events	Crypto code to prevent side channel attacks

# General example of control principles

<b>Security controls</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
Compiler generated airbag - <b>canary</b>	<i>Make sure buffer overflows dont get undetected</i>	ProPolice, VisualStudio /GS
ASLR	<i>Randomize addresses used by applications. Make sure its hard to write code that knows of addresses. Where did that lib go?</i>	Android >4.0, iOS > 4.3, Windows >Vista, OpenBSD/NetNSD, Linux >2.6.12, MacOSX >10.5, Solaris >11.1, etc
KASLR	<i>Randomize addresses used by kernel</i>	Windows Vista, NetBSD, Linux >3.14, MacOSX 10.8, Android 11, etc

# General example of control principles

<b>Security controls</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
DEP, NX, W <sup>X</sup>	<i>Make sure memory is <b>not executable</b></i>	IE on Windows Vista, Android >2.3, FreeBSD > 5.3, OpenBSD, Linux >2.6.8, MacOSX >10.5, etc
MTE	<i>Memory Tagging Extension</i>	Using ARM architecture feature to better protect against memory safety violations

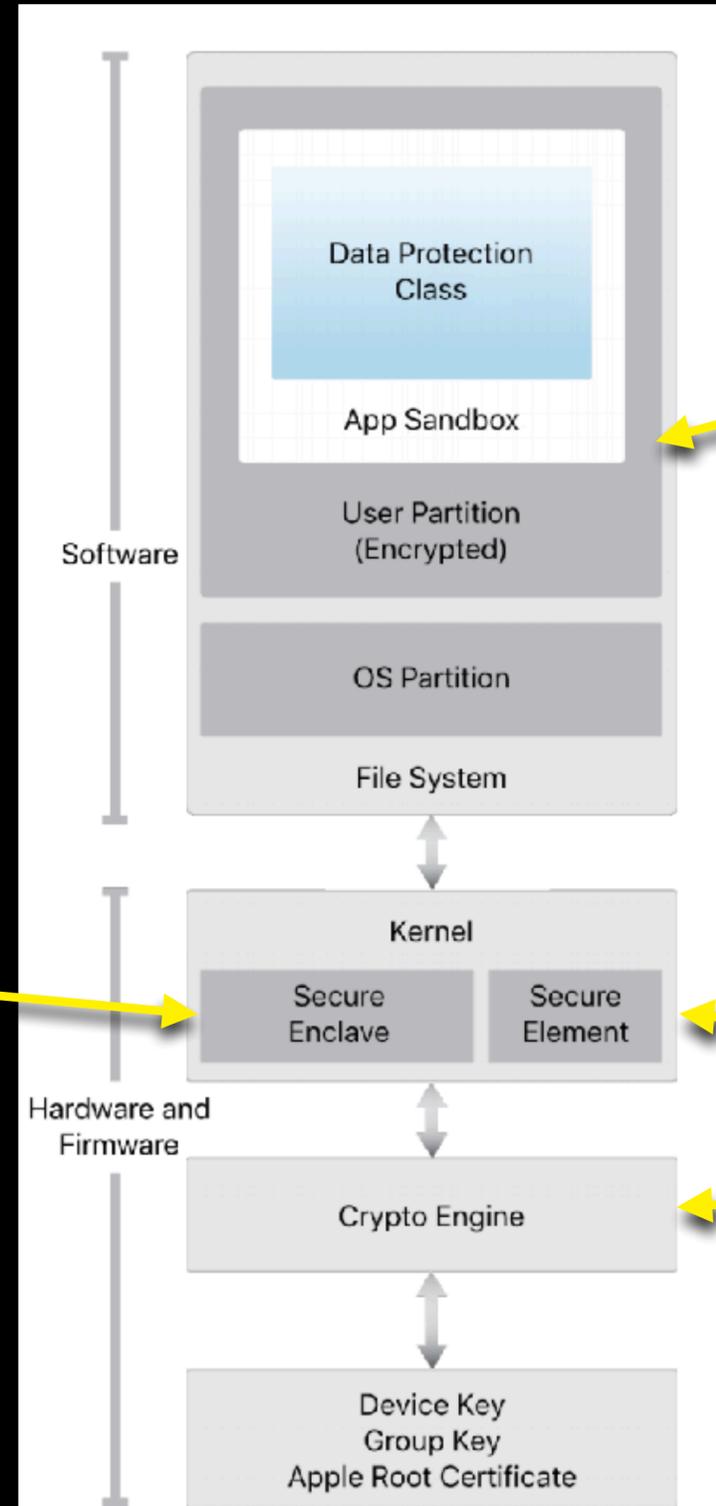
# General example of control principles

<b>Security controls</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
Secure boot chain / Verified boot	<i>Make system startup sequence is secure</i>	Make sure that each step of boot is cryptographically signed to ensure code integrity, e.g. <b>BIOS vs UEFI</b>
Secure pairing	<i>Make sure to connect to peripherals and resources in a secure way</i>	Using bluetooth to connect to headset,

# General example of control principles

<b>Security controls</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
Scrubbing, zeroing	<i>Make sure that old data areas are cleaned before usage or returned to system</i>	memory, file systems, VM system
Logs, audit trails	<i>Traces, error messages and dumps from systems and applications</i>	Windows Eventlog, Syslog, audit, BSM

# Apple iOS device security



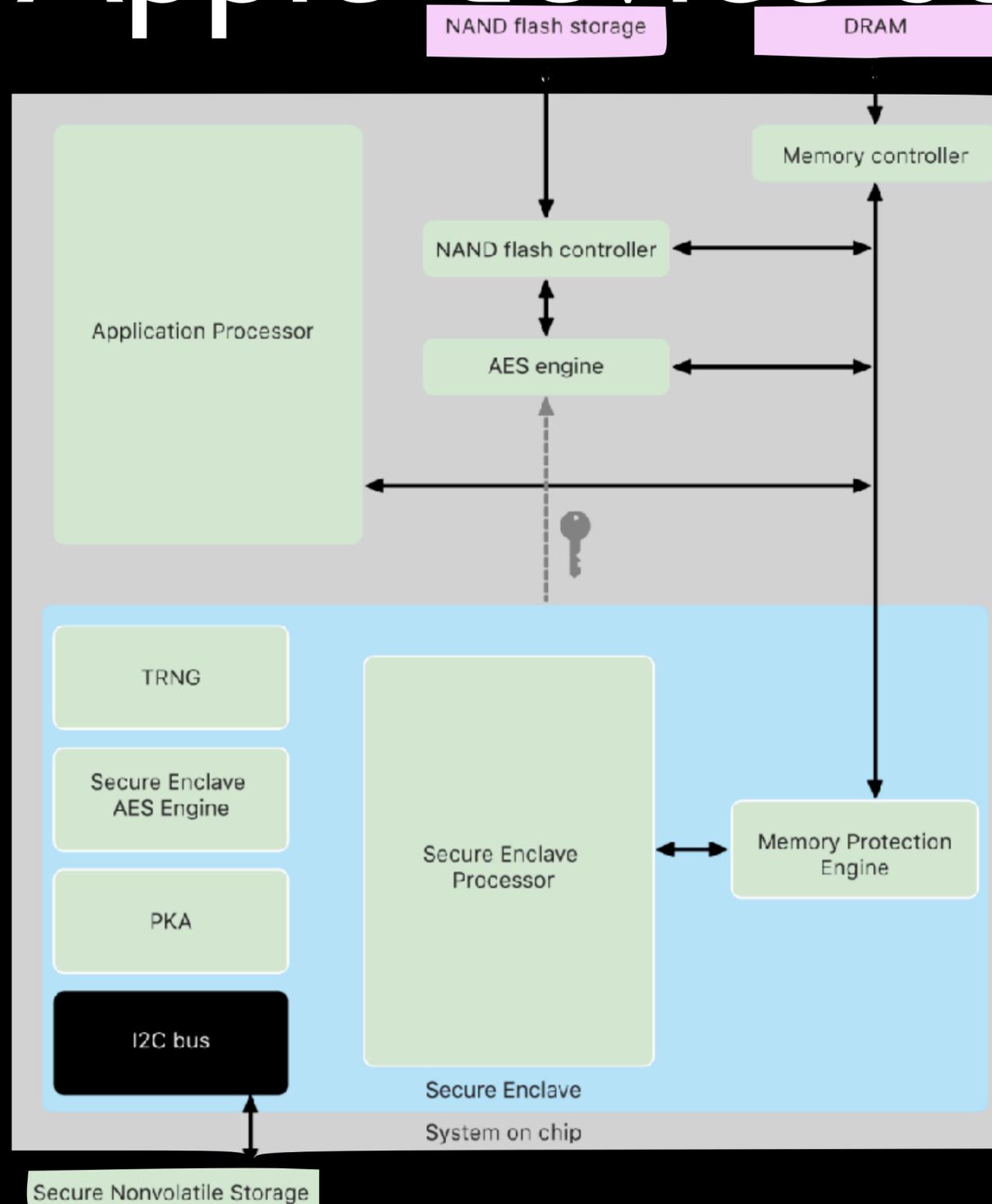
App Sandbox

Secure Enclave

Secure Element

Crypto Engine

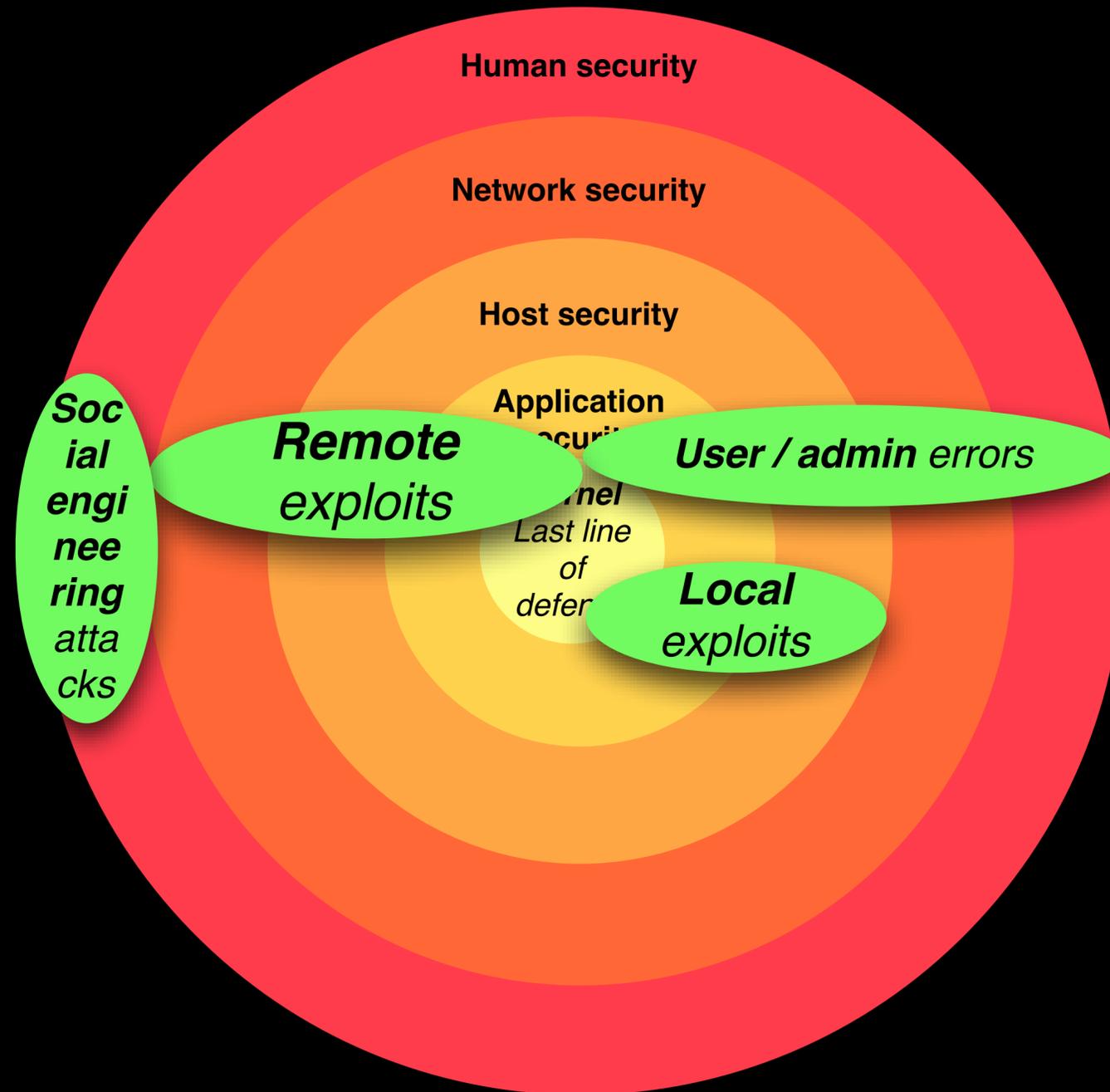
# Apple device security



Secure Enclave

Examples of vulnerabilities and attacks

# Where do attacks occur?



# Most common attacks?

2021

A01:2021-Broken Access Control

A02:2021-Cryptographic Failures

A03:2021-Injection

A04:2021-Insecure Design

A05:2021-Security Misconfiguration

A06:2021-Vulnerable and Outdated Components

A07:2021-Identification and Authentication Failures

A08:2021-Software and Data Integrity Failures

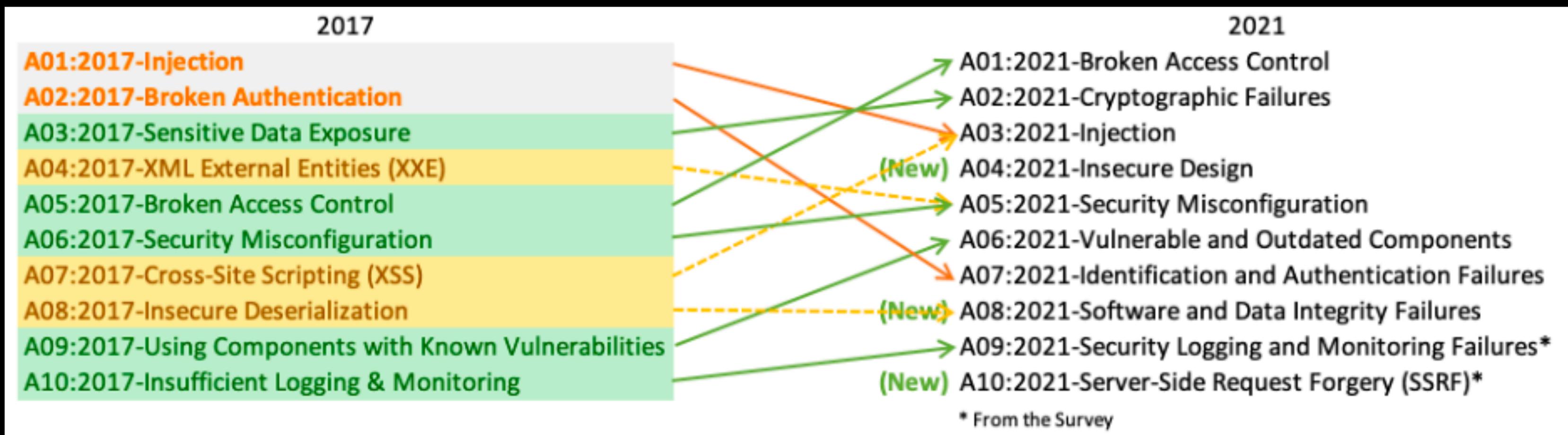
A09:2021-Security Logging and Monitoring Failures\*

A10:2021-Server-Side Request Forgery (SSRF)\*

\* From the Survey

**OWASP top-10 list**

# Most common attacks?



OWASP top-10 list

# General examples of threats and attacks

Wrong file permissions

Sensitive plaintext in RAM

fork bombs

SYN flood

## **Confidentiality**

malformed network packets

Crashdumps with credentials or crypto keys

## **Availability**

Bypassed security checks

*unintentional* filling of disk space

intentional filling of disk space

Manipulated system configuration

## **System integrity**

Manipulated user files

Manipulated application

## **Data integrity**

program binaries

Manipulated system binaries

Zapped system logs

Manipulated database content

Reconnaissance 10 techniques	Resource Development 7 techniques	Initial Access 9 techniques	Execution 12 techniques	Persistence 19 techniques	Privilege Escalation 13 techniques	Defense Evasion 40 techniques
Active Scanning (2)	Acquire Infrastructure (6)	Drive-by Compromise	Command and Scripting Interpreter (8)	Account Manipulation (4)	Abuse Elevation Control Mechanism (4)	Abuse Elevation Control Mechanism (4)
Gather Victim Host Information (4)	Compromise Accounts (2)	Exploit Public-Facing Application	Container Administration Command	BITS Jobs	Access Token Manipulation (5)	Access Token Manipulation (5)
Gather Victim Identity Information (3)	Compromise Infrastructure (6)	External Remote Services	Deploy Container	Boot or Logon Autostart Execution (15)	Boot or Logon Autostart Execution (15)	BITS Jobs
Gather Victim Network Information (6)	Develop Capabilities (1)	Hardware Additions	Exploitation for Client Execution	Boot or Logon Initialization Scripts (5)	Boot or Logon Initialization Scripts (5)	Build Image on Host
Gather Victim Org Information (4)	Establish Accounts (2)	Phishing (3)	Inter-Process Communication (2)	Browser Extensions	Create or Modify System Process (4)	Deobfuscate/Decode Files or Information
Phishing for Information (3)	Obtain Capabilities (6)	Replication Through Removable Media	Native API	Compromise Client Software Binary	Domain Policy Modification (2)	Deploy Container
Search Closed Sources (2)	Stage Capabilities (5)	Supply Chain Compromise (3)	Scheduled Task/Job (5)	Create Account (3)	Escape to Host	Direct Volume Access
Search Open Technical Databases (5)		Trusted Relationship	Shared Modules	Create or Modify System Process (4)	Event Triggered Execution (15)	Domain Policy Modification (2)
Search Open Websites/Domains (2)		Valid Accounts (4)	Software Deployment Tools	Event Triggered Execution (15)	Exploitation for Privilege Escalation	Execution Guardrails (1)
Search Victim-Owned Websites			System Services (2)	External Remote Services	Hijack Execution Flow (11)	Exploitation for Defense Evasion
			User Execution (3)	Hijack Execution Flow (11)	Process Injection (11)	File and Directory Permissions Modification (2)
			Windows Management Instrumentation	Implant Internal Image	Scheduled Task/Job (6)	Hide Artifacts (9)
				Modify Authentication Process (4)	Valid Accounts (4)	Hijack Execution Flow (11)
				Office Application Startup (6)		Impair Defenses (9)
				Pre-OS Boot (5)		Indicator Removal on Host (5)
				Scheduled Task/Job (6)		Indirect Command Execution
				Server Software Component (4)		Masquerading (7)
				Traffic Signaling (1)		Modify Authentication Process (4)
				Valid Accounts (4)		Modify Cloud Compute Infrastructure (1)
						Modify Registry
						Modify System Image (2)
						Network Boundary Bridging (1)
						Obfuscated Files or Information (6)
						Pre-OS Boot (5)
						Process Injection (11)
						Reflective Code Loading
						Rogue Domain Controller
						Rootkit
						Signed Binary Proxy Execution (13)
						Signed Script Proxy Execution (1)
						Subvert Trust Controls (6)
						Template Injection
						Traffic Signaling (1)
						Trusted Developer Utilities Proxy Execution (1)
						Unused/Unsupported Cloud Regions
						Use Alternate Authentication Material (4)
						Valid Accounts (4)
						Virtualization/Sandbox Evasion (3)
						Weaken Encryption (2)
						XSL Script Processing

# MITRE ATT&CK framework

Credential Access 15 techniques	Discovery 29 techniques	Lateral Movement 9 techniques	Collection 17 techniques	Command and Control 16 techniques	Exfiltration 9 techniques	Impact 13 techniques
Adversary-in-the-Middle (2)	Account Discovery (4)	Exploitation of Remote Services	Adversary-in-the-Middle (2)	Application Layer Protocol (1)	Automated Exfiltration (1)	Account Access Removal
Brute Force (4)	Application Window Discovery	Internal Spearphishing	Archive Collected Data (3)	Communication Through Removable Media	Data Transfer Size Limits	Data Destruction
Credentials from Password Stores (5)	Browser Bookmark Discovery	Lateral Tool Transfer	Audio Capture	Data Encoding (2)	Exfiltration Over Alternative Protocol (3)	Data Encrypted for Impact
Exploitation for Credential Access	Cloud Infrastructure Discovery	Remote Service Session Hijacking (2)	Automated Collection	Data Obfuscation (3)	Exfiltration Over C2 Channel	Data Manipulation (3)
Forced Authentication	Cloud Service Dashboard	Remote Services (6)	Browser Session Hijacking	Dynamic Resolution (3)	Exfiltration Over Other Network Medium (1)	Defacement (2)
Forge Web Credentials (2)	Cloud Service Discovery	Replication Through Removable Media	Clipboard Data	Encrypted Channel (2)	Exfiltration Over Physical Medium (1)	Disk Wipe (2)
Input Capture (4)	Cloud Storage Object Discovery	Software Deployment Tools	Data from Cloud Storage Object	Fallback Channels	Exfiltration Over Web Service (2)	Endpoint Denial of Service (4)
Modify Authentication Process (4)	Container and Resource Discovery	Taint Shared Content	Data from Configuration Repository (2)	Ingress Tool Transfer	Scheduled Transfer	Firmware Corruption
Network Sniffing	Domain Trust Discovery	Use Alternate Authentication Material (4)	Data from Information Repositories (3)	Multi-Stage Channels	Transfer Data to Cloud Account	Inhibit System Recovery
OS Credential Dumping (8)	File and Directory Discovery		Data from Local System	Non-Application Layer Protocol		Network Denial of Service (2)
Steal Application Access Token	Group Policy Discovery		Data from Network Shared Drive	Non-Standard Port		Resource Hijacking
Steal or Forge Kerberos Tickets (1)	Network Service Scanning		Data from Removable Media	Protocol Tunneling		Service Stop
Steal Web Session Cookie	Network Share Discovery		Data Staged (2)	Proxy (4)		System Shutdown/Reboot
Two-Factor Authentication Interception	Network Sniffing		Email Collection (3)	Remote Access Software		
Unsecured Credentials (7)	Password Policy Discovery		Input Capture (4)	Traffic Signaling (1)		
	Peripheral Device Discovery		Screen Capture	Web Service (3)		
	Permission Groups Discovery (3)		Video Capture			
	Process Discovery					
	Query Registry					
	Remote System Discovery					
	Software Discovery (1)					
	System Information Discovery					
	System Location Discovery (1)					
	System Network Configuration Discovery (1)					
	System Network Connections Discovery					
	System Owner/User Discovery					
	System Service Discovery					
	System Time Discovery					
	Virtualization/Sandbox Evasion (3)					

# MITRE ATT&CK framework

# Example of attacks

<b>Attack method</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Synonyms and variants</b>
Buffer overflow	<p>Attacks that allow an attacker to <u>deterministically alter the execution flow of a program by submitting crafted input to an application</u>. Executable code is written outside the boundaries of a memory buffer originally used for storing data. The executable parts is somehow made to execute, e.g. by manipulate return adress to be used when a function call is finished.</p> <p>Real world examples: OpenBSD IPv6 mbuf's* remote kernel buffer overflow[1], windows kernel pool</p>	<p>Synonyms: memory corruption attack, Buffer overrun, Stack smashing,</p> <p>Variants: Heap smashing, format string bugs,</p>

[1] <http://www.coresecurity.com/content/open-bsd-advisorie>

\* An *mbuf* is a basic unit of memory management in the kernel IPC subsystem

# Example of attacks

<b>Attack method</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Backward compability	<p>Attacks that allow an attacker to <i>use</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>an older version of a service, or</i></li><li>• <i>an old protocol, or</i></li><li>• <i>an older mode, or</i></li><li>• <i>call legacy code</i></li></ul> <p>Sometime triggered by downgrade attack, a negotiation to use older variant</p>	Remote Desktop NTLMv1 XML encryption SSLv2, SSLv3, incl POODLE, FREAK Encryption modes Kerberos v4 in v5

# Attacks and counter measures



Hijacking JIT compilers

ROP attacks

Address Space Layout  
Randomization (ASLR)

No-executable  
(NX, W<sup>X</sup>) stacks

Data Execution  
Prevention (DEP)

More advanced buffer  
overflows, defeating canary

Stack canaries

Buffer overflow/memory  
corruption attacks

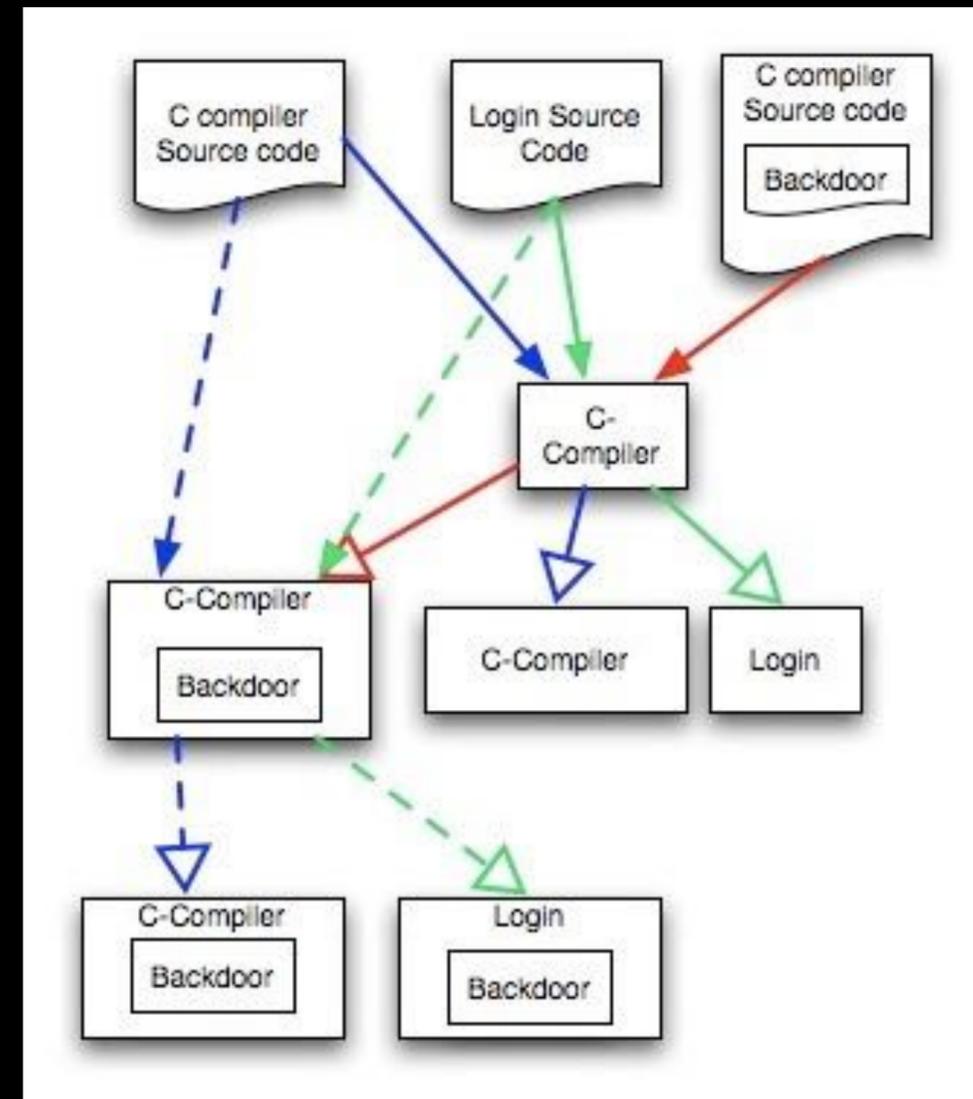
Note - several of these counter  
measures does not work for  
protection **within** the kernel

# Attacks and counter measures

- *Chaining of attacks* - combining a number of exploits to achieve goal
  - finding and abusing a number of different vulnerabilities might allow an attacker to achieve goals not possible with just one potent exploit
  - *Code execution in gadgets (ROP) + sandbox escape + elevation of privileges + execution of privileged code*

# A classic attack

- Ken Thompson's trojanized c compiler
  - Modify the source code to the compiler to recognize if it recompile itself or the login program - insert backdoor in login
  - recompile compiler
  - remove source code changes and recompile the compiler
  - recompile the login program with the modified compiler
- No visible signs for humans or tools to see the backdoor in source code. Calls for binary inspection or decompilation.



# Example of attacks

Remember that there is a number of ways that all OS security controls can be bypassed,  
***especially if the operating system is not running***  
- a very good side-channel attack ;-)

# Virtualization and isolation

sandboxes, containers, hypervisors, etc

# Sandboxing

- Various types of OS supported or application supported **sandboxing** is good as a way to get defense-in-depth
- Create **temporary execution environments** for certain tasks
  - test of exe files to lure out malicious code execution
  - perform certain tasks that is more prone to attacks
  - perform certain tasks that is more sensitive
- Provide **isolation**, from other parts of system

# Pro's and con's with virtualization

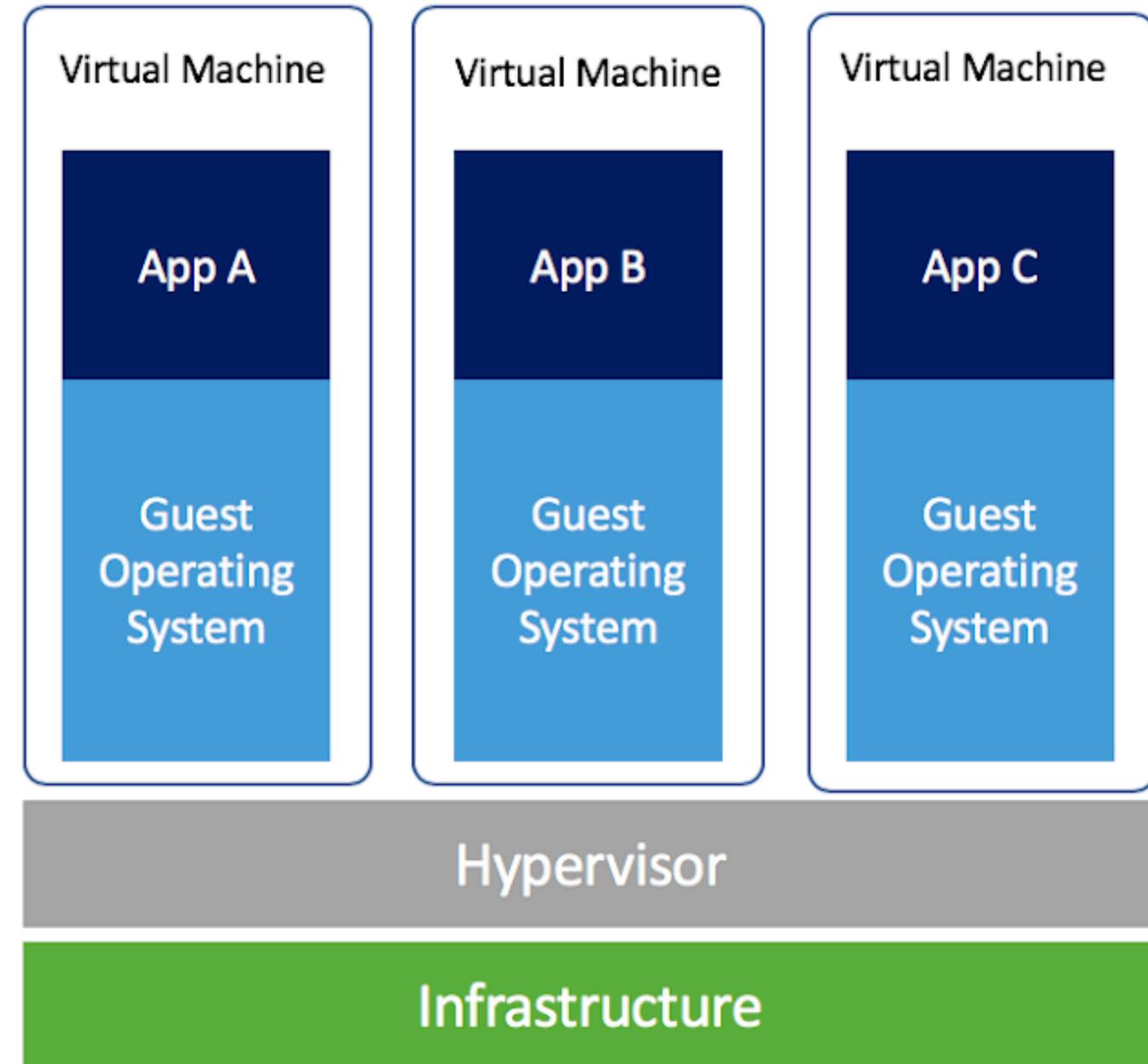
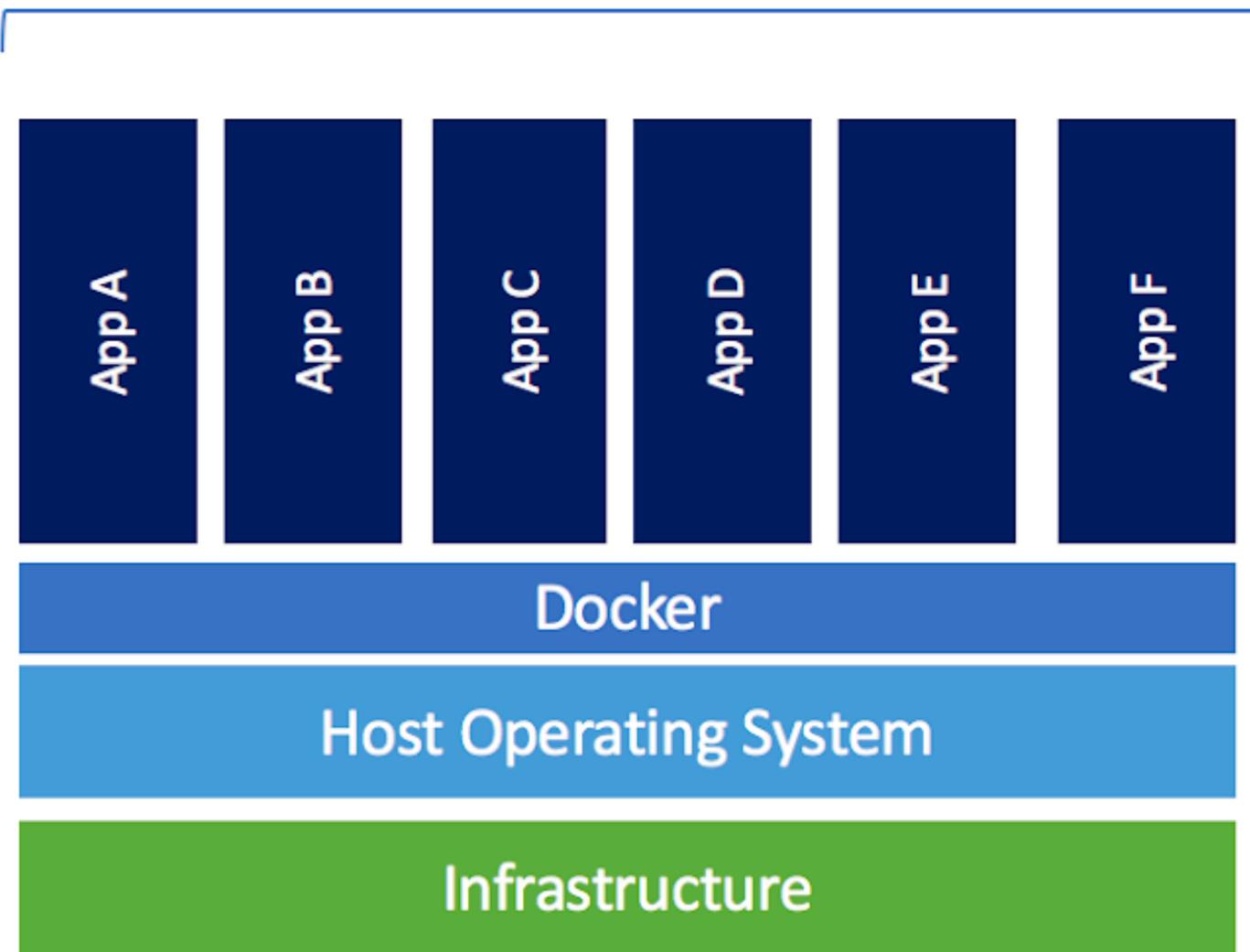
- Some sandbox and isolation technologies are not complete virtualization or separation
  - E.g. share *name space* (processes, file system, etc)
  - Share operating system kernel
  - Share drivers

# Isolation, separation and virtualization

Type	Example	Description
<b>chroot</b>	Change root for network service	<b>Classic Unix concept. No virtualization, just isolation</b>
<b>jails</b>	FreeBSD Jails	Userland. Can run FreeBSD and Linux binaries. Integrated into OS.
<b>user mode linux, uml</b>		Userland. More lightweight and thus faster than virtual machines
<b>Containers</b>	<b>Docker</b>	Userland. 3rd party tool on top of OS. Need container engine, not hypervisor. More lightweight and thus faster than virtual machines
<b>Virtual machines</b>	Xen, VMware vSphere, HyperV,	Type 1 hypervisor based. Stronger isolation than container
<b>Virtual machines</b>	VMware Workstation, KVM	Type 2 hypervisor based. Stronger isolation than container
<b>Hardware partitioning</b>	<b>Sun LDOMs, IBM LPAR</b>	Best isolation and separation. Hardware support gives superior performance and security

# Overview of virtualization

Containerized Applications



# Pro's and con's with virtualization

- Isolation, and to have hardened and dedicated servers running specific services, are standard ways to minimize attack surface. Virtualization tools can help this
- Its easy to believe that virtualization will automatically make things secure, and that there is no way to jump between guest os', but exploits have shown this not hold true, e.g. cloudburst

# Advanced attacks

Hardware attacks, etc

# Attack tools



- Reverse Engineering Frameworks, such as Ghidra help debugging, disassemble, reverse engineer binaries
- Give attackers powerful tools to introspect into applications, drivers, kernels

# Example of attacks

- Attacks by attaching malicious hardware to buses and ports
  - Using debug interfaces to snoop & manipulate bus
  - **JTAG** (IEEE standard 1149.1-1990)
  - **SWD** (Serial Wire Debug)
- Firewire and other DMA based methods to access memory of a computer (*evil maid attacks, evil devices*)
- UEFI attacks via Thunderbolt (*thunderstruck attack*)

# Example of attacks

- Removal of, or direct attachment to, physical memory chips (*cold boot attacks*)



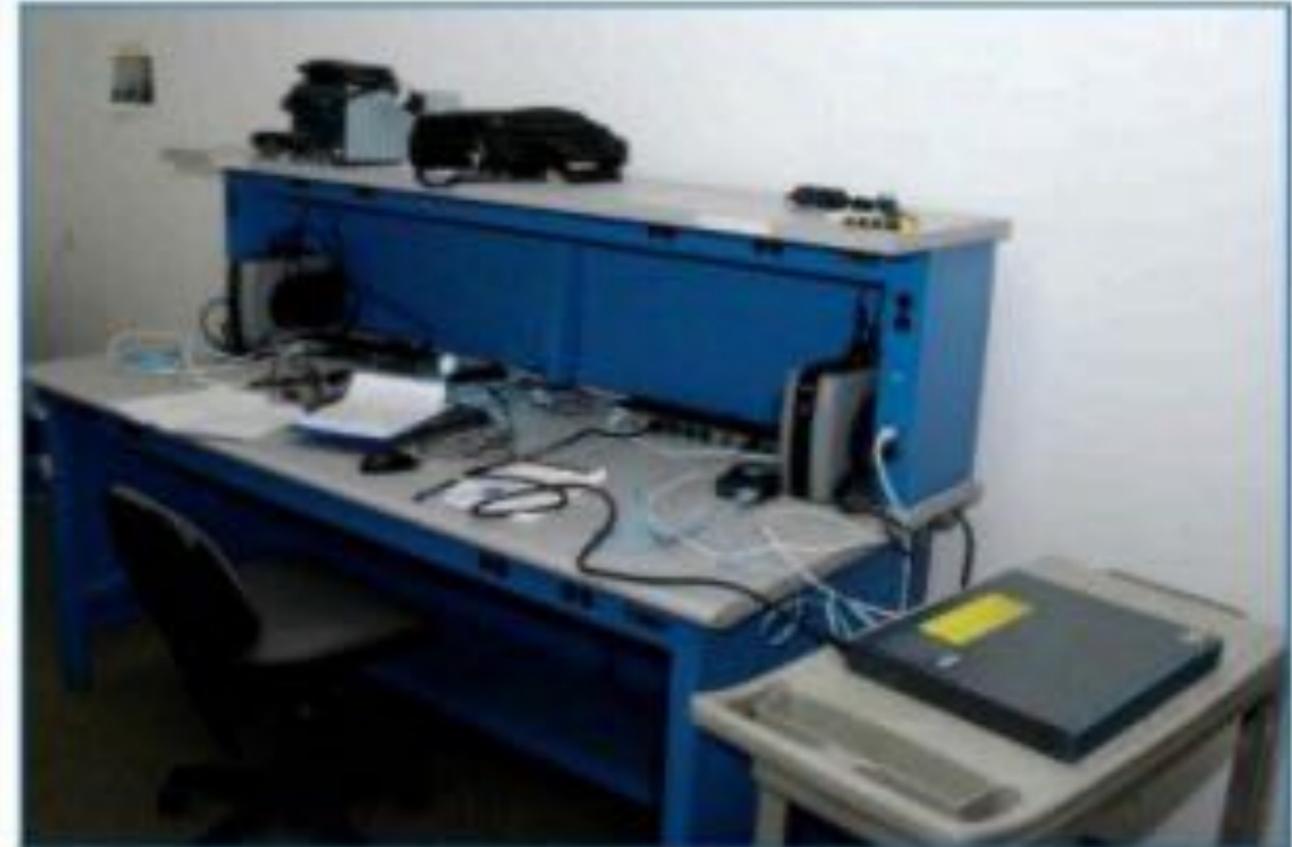
# Example of attacks: *cold boot attacks*



# Example of attacks: *PCILeech*

Attacking  
UEFI Runtime Services  
and Linux

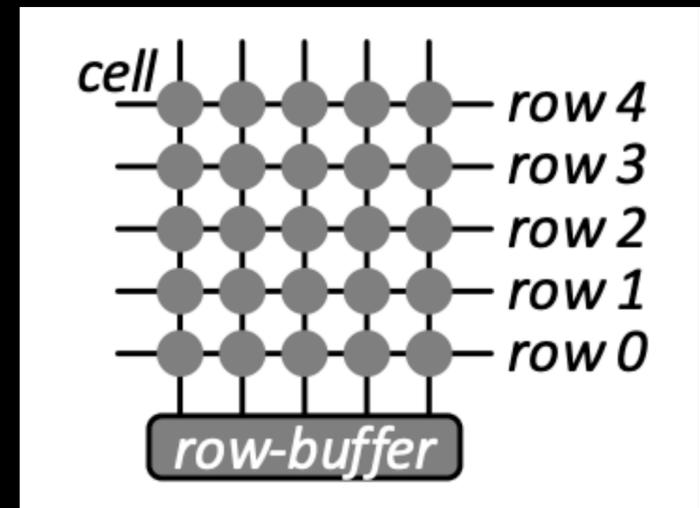
# Example of attacks: *HW implants*



(TS//SI//NF) Left: Intercepted packages are opened carefully; Right: A “load station” implants a beacon

# Advanced attacks

- **Rowhammer\***
  - Flipping bits without accessing them
  - Method of reading writing memory cells so that memory cells in adjacent rows become changed
  - Based on an unintended side effect in dynamic random-access memory (DRAM) that causes memory cells to leak their charges and interact electrically between themselves, possibly altering the contents of nearby memory rows that were not addressed in the original memory access



# Advanced attacks

- *Rowhammer\**

- *This circumvention of the isolation between DRAM memory cells*
  - *Memory leak == information leak*
- *Have been used to **Gain Kernel Privileges, e.g. DRAMMER attack on Android***
- *Can be used to attack **Virtual Machines***

# Advanced attacks

- *Rowhammer*
  - *Have been implemented in JavaScript and runned in a browser*
  - *Modern variants\* have been used to **defeat ECC memory***

# Advanced attacks

- *Rowhammer\**
  - Initial research published 2014, but variants have been developed later
  - Hardware solutions to protect against it have been circumvented
    - Blacksmith
    - Half-double



# Advanced attacks



- *Meltdown\** & *Spectre\*\**
  - *Low-level **cache** attacks, allow malicious READ's*
  - *Meltdown breaks isolation between **user land and kernel***
  - *Spectre breaks isolation between **applications in user land***

<https://meltdownattack.com/>

\* Lipp et al "Meltdown: Reading Kernel Memory from User Space" <https://meltdownattack.com/meltdown.pdf>

\*\* Kocker et al "Spectre Attacks: Exploiting Speculative Execution" <https://spectreattack.com/spectre.pdf>



# Advanced attacks



- *Meltdown & Spectre*

- *work on personal computers, mobile devices, and in the cloud*
- *Works on Windows, Linux, Android, etc*
- *Works on containers: docker, LXC, OpenVZ etc*



# Advanced attacks



- *Spectre class vulnerabilities will remain unfixed because otherwise CPU designers will have to disable speculative execution which will entail a **massive performance loss***



# Advanced attacks



## ● Meltdown & Spectre

- All modern CPUs are vulnerable (x86, AMD, ARM) in various degrees

		Attack	Spectre-PHT	Spectre-BTB	Spectre-RSB	Spectre-STL
		Method				
Intel	same-address-space	in-place	● [52, 50] ★	● [62]	● [32]	
		out-of-place	★	● [18]	● [62, 54]	○
	cross-address-space	in-place	★	● [52, 18]	● [62, 54]	○
		out-of-place	★	● [52]	● [54]	○
ARM	same-address-space	in-place	● [52, 50] ★	● [6]	● [6]	
		out-of-place	★	☆	● [6]	○
	cross-address-space	in-place	★	● [6, 52]	☆	○
		out-of-place	★	☆	☆	○
AMD	same-address-space	in-place	● [52]	★	★	● [32]
		out-of-place	★	☆	★	○
	cross-address-space	in-place	★	● [52]	★	○
		out-of-place	★	☆	★	○

Symbols indicate whether an attack is possible and known (●), not possible and known (○), possible and previously unknown or not shown (★), or tested and did not work and previously unknown or not shown (☆). All tests performed with no defenses enabled.

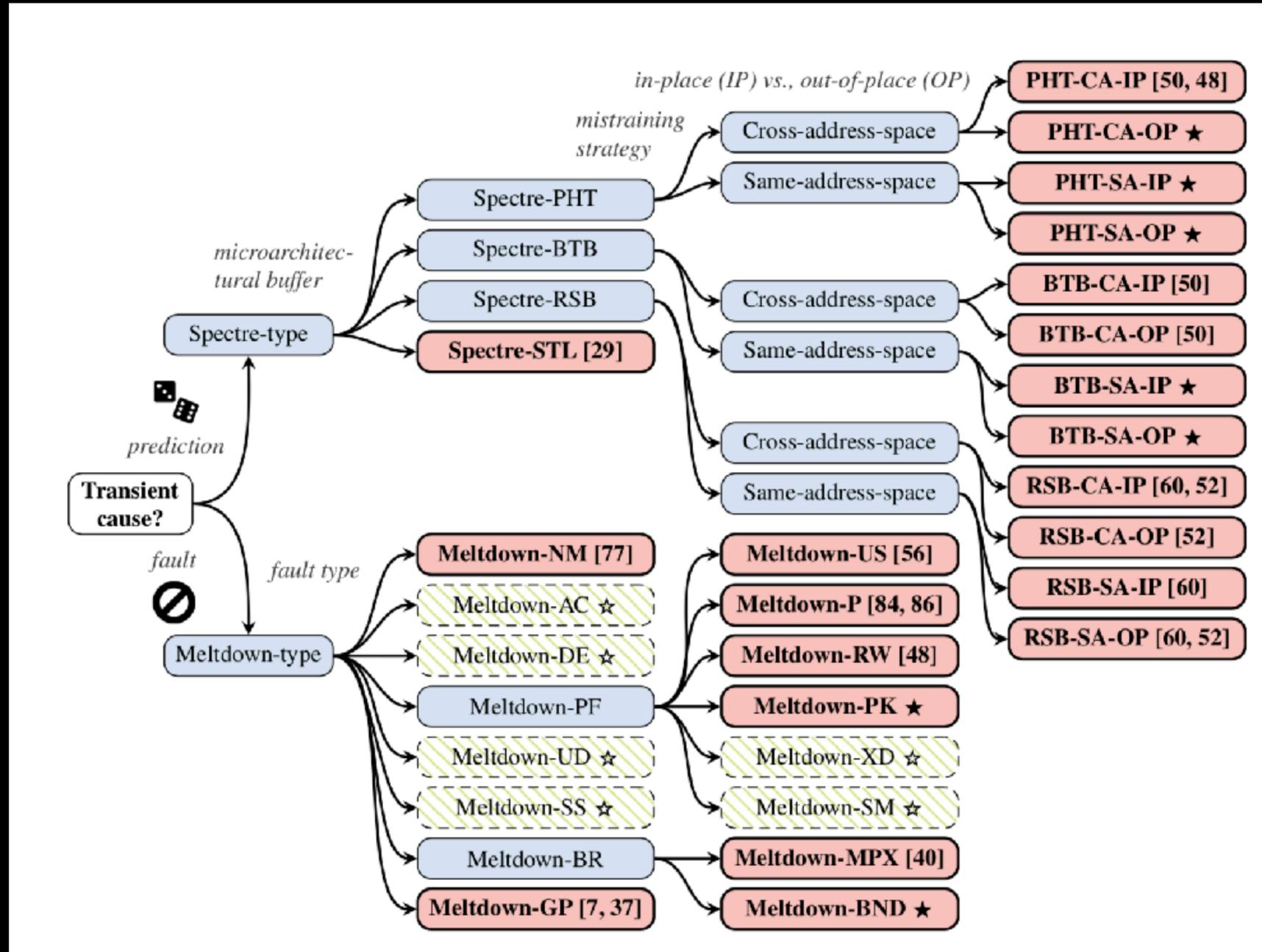
		Attack	Meltdown-US [59]	Meltdown-P [90, 93]	Meltdown-GP [10, 40]	Meltdown-NM [83]	Meltdown-RW [50]	Meltdown-PK	Meltdown-BR	Meltdown-DE	Meltdown-AC	Meltdown-UD	Meltdown-SS	Meltdown-XD	Meltdown-SM
Vendor															
Intel		●	●	●	●	●	★	★	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
ARM		●	○	●	—	●	—	—	☆	☆	☆	—	☆	☆	
AMD		○	○	○	○	○	—	★	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

Symbols indicate whether at least one CPU model is vulnerable (filled) vs. no CPU is known to be vulnerable (empty). Glossary: reproduced (● vs. ○), first showed in this paper (★ vs. ☆), not applicable (—). All tests performed without defenses enabled.

\* Canello et al "A Systematic Evaluation of Transient Execution Attacks and Defenses" <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1811.05441.pdf>

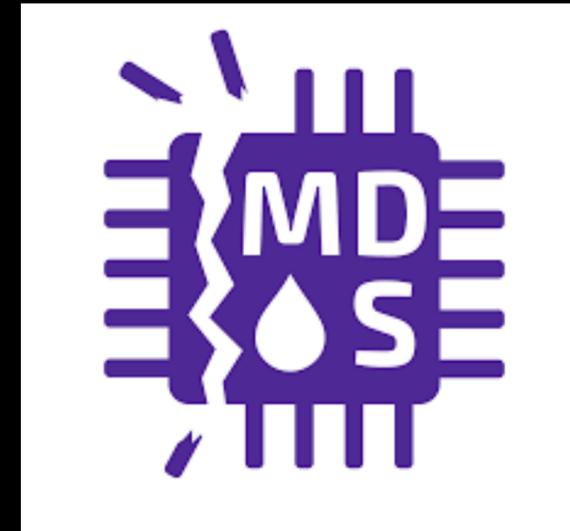


# Advanced attacks





# Advanced attacks



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transient\\_execution\\_CPU\\_vulnerability](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transient_execution_CPU_vulnerability)

# Advanced attacks

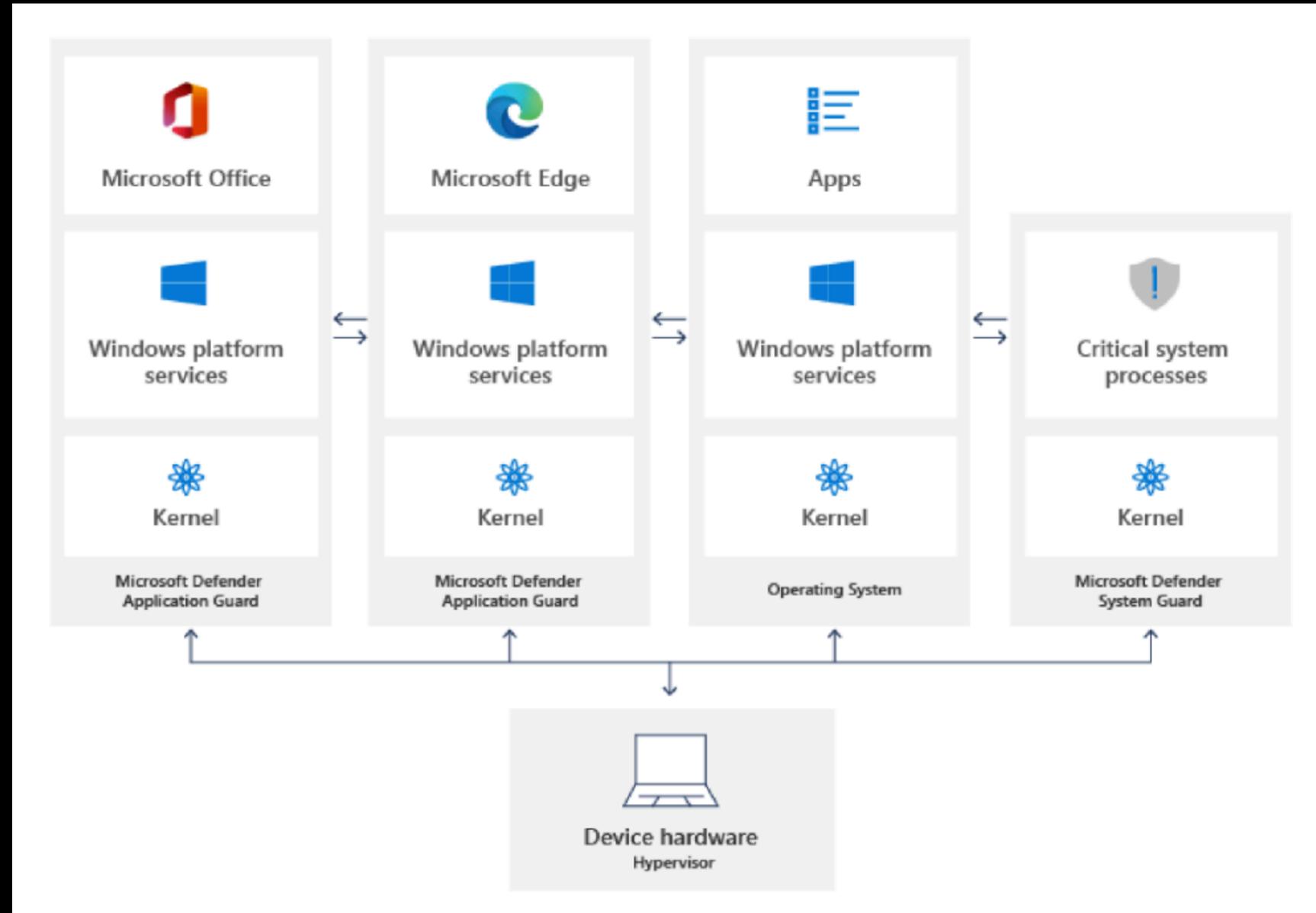
- *Attacks against Intel Management Engine*
  - *Proprietary and non-documented*
  - *Own OS (Minix!)*
  - *Reverse engineered and analysed by attackers*
  - *Found multiple vulnerabilities in Skylake & Kabylake architecture*

# Examples of modern security controls

Windows Defender security features in Win 10, Win 11

# Windows

- Application Guard, **WDAG**
- App & browser control
- Isolation browsing
- Windows Device Guard, now called Windows Defender Application Control



# Windows

- Windows Device Guard, And Applocker, now called Windows Defender Application Control
  - Attributes of the **codesigning certificate**(s) used to sign an app and its binaries
  - Attributes of the app's binaries that come from the **signed metadata for the files**, such as Original Filename and version, or the hash of the file
  - The **path from which the app or file is launched**

# Windows

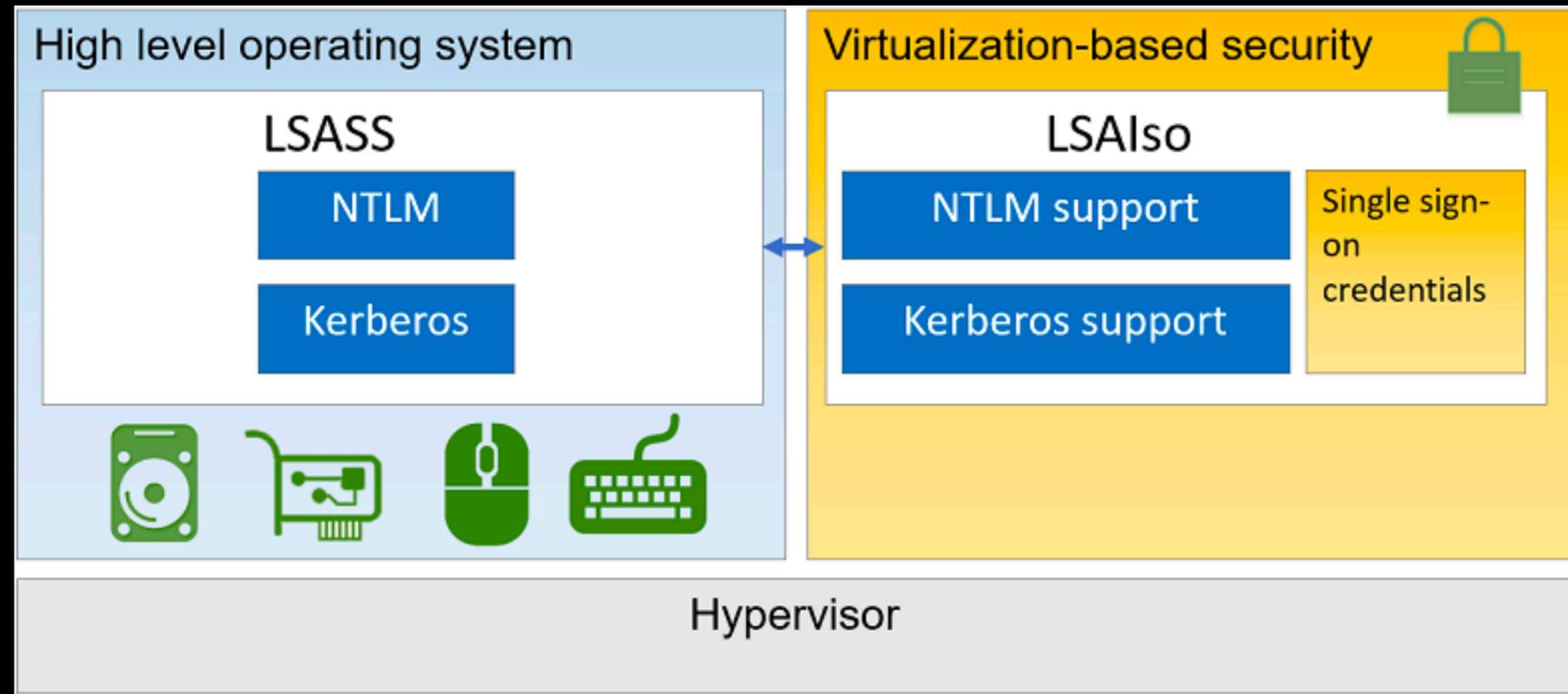
- *Core isolation with Memory integrity*, aka Hypervisor-protected Code Integrity (**HVCI**)
  - make it difficult for malicious programs to use low-level drivers to hijack your computer

# Windows

- Windows Defender Exploit Guard, **WDEG**
- **Attack Surface Reduction (ASR)**: A set of controls that enterprises can enable to prevent malware from getting on the machine by blocking Office-, script-, and email-based threats
- **Network protection**: Protects the endpoint against web-based threats by blocking any outbound process on the device to untrusted hosts/IP through Windows Defender SmartScreen
- **Controlled folder access**: Protects sensitive data from ransomware by blocking untrusted processes from accessing your protected folders
- **Exploit protection**: A set of exploit mitigations (replacing EMET) that can be easily configured to protect your system and applications

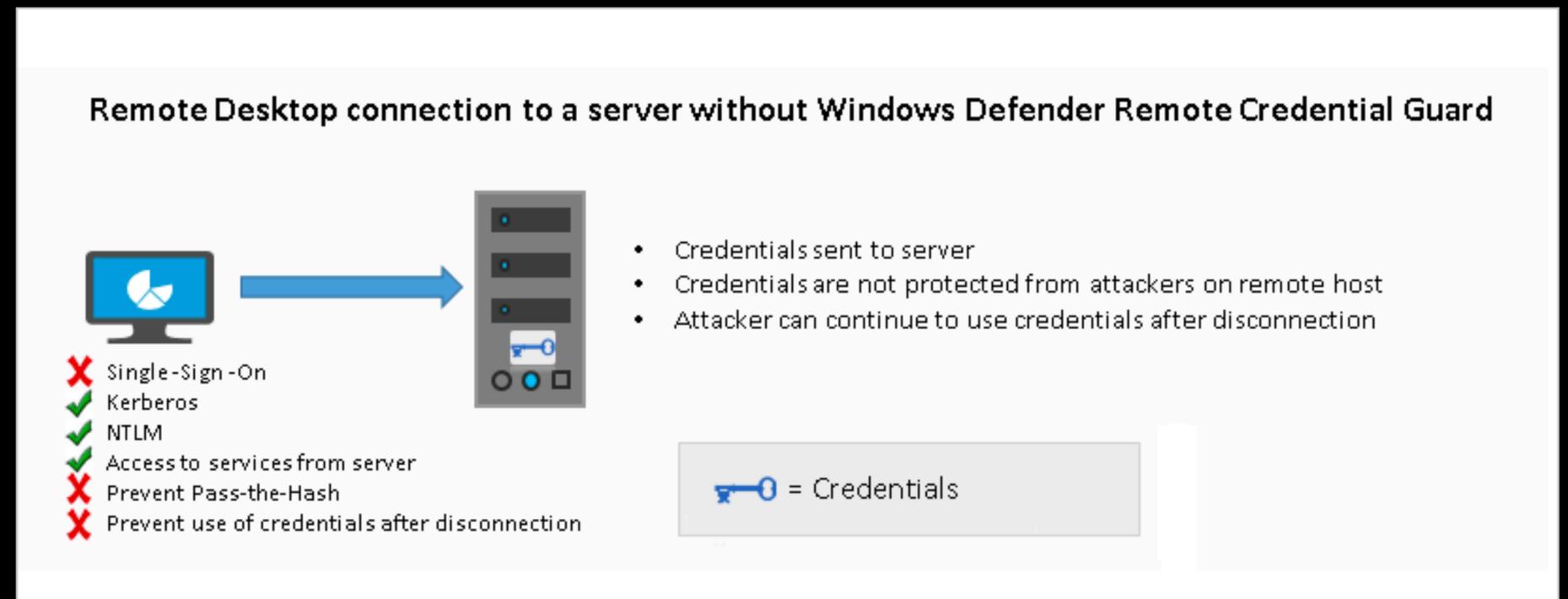
# Windows

- Windows Credential Guard
  - To protect *Local Security Authority Server Service* (LSASS) by moving it into *LSAIso*
- Build on top of
  - Virtualization Based Security (VBS)
  - Secure boot
  - Trusted Platform Module (TPM)
  - UEFI lock



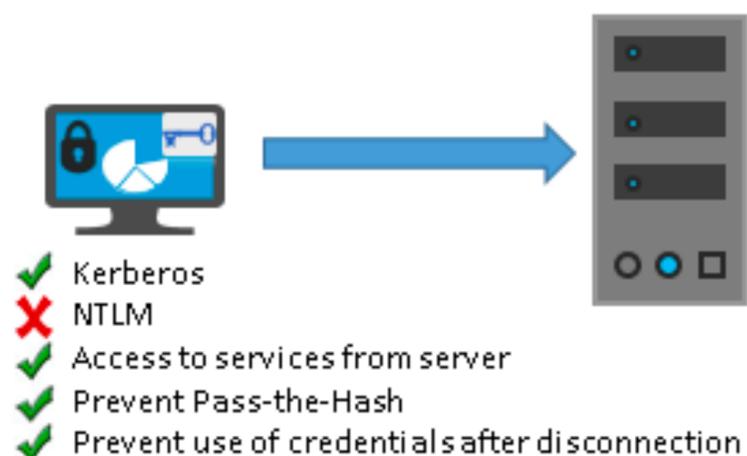
# Windows

- Windows Remote Credential Guard
- To protect *against theft of credentials sent to server side*
  - *Others that have admin access to the server*
- *Especially important on jump hosts*



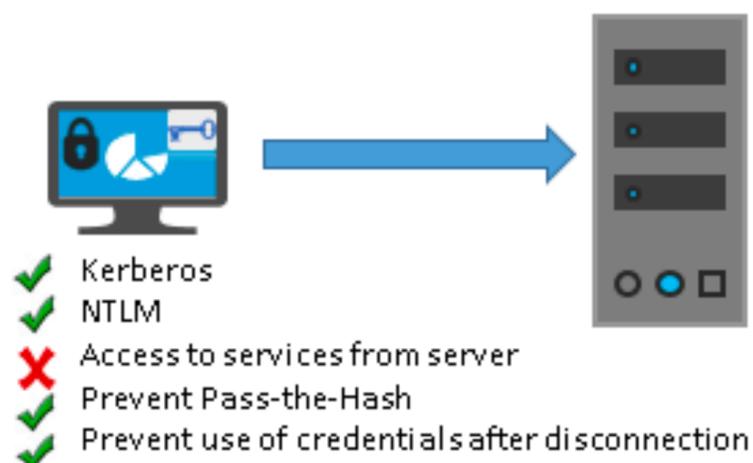
# Windows

## Windows Defender Remote Credential Guard

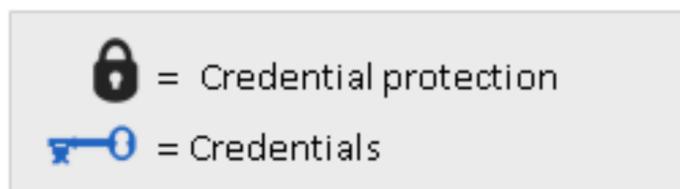


- Credentials protected by Windows Defender Remote Credential Guard
- Connect to other systems using SSO
- Host must support Windows Defender Remote Credential Guard

## Restricted Admin Mode



- Credentials used are remote server local admin credentials
- Connect to other systems using the host's identity
- Host must support Restricted Admin mode
- Highest protection level
- Requires user account administrator rights



# MacOSX

- GateKeeper
  - Checks code signing
- XProtect
  - Malware protection

# Tools mentioned during the class

- Ghidra - Reverse Engineering Framework
- IDA pro - Disassembler
- Hexray - Decompiler
- Ollydbg, windbg - Other disassemblers
- Bindiff - Advanced tool from zynamics to compare binaries, with call graphs etc. Not same as built-in windows tool with same name.

# References used during the class

- <https://www.commoncriteriaportal.org/>
- <https://www.cs.virginia.edu/~av6ds/papers/isca2021a.pdf>
- <https://www.cvedetails.com/top-50-products.php>
- <https://owasp.org/www-project-top-ten/>

# References used during the class

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Source\\_lines\\_of\\_code](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Source_lines_of_code)
- <https://sources.debian.org/stats/>
- <https://informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/million-lines-of-code/>
-

# Referenses used during the class

- <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/security/identity-protection/credential-guard/credential-guard-how-it-works>
- <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/deployedge/microsoft-edge-security-windows-defender-application-guard>
- <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/security/threat-protection/microsoft-defender-application-guard/md-app-guard-overview>
- <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/security/identity-protection/remote-credential-guard>

# References used during the class

- <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/core-isolation-e30ed737-17d8-42f3-a2a9-87521df09b78>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local\\_Security\\_Authority\\_Subsystem\\_Service](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_Security_Authority_Subsystem_Service)
- <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.91.5728&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
-