# **NEU CY 5770 Software Vulnerabilities and Security**

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# **Agenda**

- 1. Background knowledge
	- a. Compiler, linker, loader
	- b. x86 and x86-64 architectures and ISA
	- c. ARM ISA
	- d. Linux fundamentals
		- i. Linux file permissions
		- ii. Set-UID programs
		- iii. Memory map of a Linux process
		- iv. System calls
		- v. Piping
		- vi. Environment and Shell variables
		- vii. ELF files
		- viii. Reverse engineering tools

# **Background Knowledge: Compiler, linker, and loader**

## **From a C program to a process**



#### **A Shell in a Nutshell**

```
int pid = fork();
if (pid == 0) {
   // I am the child process
   exec("ls"); }
else if (pid == -1)\left\{ \right. // fork failed
}
else {
   // I am the parent; continue my business being a cool program
   // I could wait for the child to finish if I want
}
```
https://github.com/kamalmarhubi/shell-workshop

#### **Loading and Executing a Binary Program on Linux**

Validation (permissions, memory requirements etc.)

Operating system starts by setting up a new process for the program to run in, including a virtual address space.

The operating system maps an interpreter into the process's virtual memory.

## **Interpreter, e.g., /lib/ld-linux.so in Linux**

The interpreter loads the binary into its virtual address space (the same space in which the interpreter is loaded).

It then parses the binary to find out (among other things) which dynamic libraries the binary uses.

The interpreter maps these into the virtual address space (using *mmap* or an equivalent function) and then performs any necessary last-minute relocations in the binary's code sections to fill in the correct addresses for references to the dynamic libraries.

- 1. Copying the command-line arguments on the stack
- 2. Initializing registers (e.g., the stack pointer)
- 3. Jumping to the program entry point (\_start)

# **Compiling a C program behind the scene (add\_32 add\_64)**



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# **Background Knowledge: x86 architecture**

## **Data Types**

There are 5 integer data types:

Byte – 8 bits. Word – 16 bits. Dword, Doubleword – 32 bits. Quadword – 64 bits. Double quadword – 128 bits.

#### **Endianness**

● Little Endian (Intel, ARM) Least significant byte has lowest address Dword address: 0x0 Value: 0x78563412

● Big Endian Least significant byte has highest address Dword address: 0x0 Value: 0x12345678



## **Base Registers**

There are

- Eight 32-bit "general-purpose" registers,
- One 32-bit EFLAGS register,
- One 32-bit instruction pointer register (eip), and
- Other special-purpose registers.

### **The General-Purpose Registers**



- 8 general-purpose registers
- esp is the stack pointer
- ebp is the base pointer
- esi and edi are source and destination index registers for array and string operations

#### **The General-Purpose Registers**



- The registers eax, ebx, ecx, and edx may be accessed as 32-bit, 16-bit, or 8-bit registers.
- The other four registers can be accessed as 32-bit or 16-bit.

### **EFLAGS Register**

The various bits of the 32-bit EFLAGS register are set (1) or reset/clear (0) according to the results of certain operations.

We will be interested in, at most, the bits

```
CF – carry flag
PF – parity flag
ZF – zero flag
SF – sign flag
```
#### **Instruction Pointer (EIP)**

Finally, there is the EIP register, which is the instruction pointer (program counter). Register EIP holds the address of the **next** instruction to be executed.

## **Registers on x86 and amd64**



#### **Instructions**

Each instruction is of the form

label: mnemonic operand1, operand2, operand3 The label is optional.

The number of operands is 0, 1, 2, or 3, depending on the mnemonic .

Each operand is either

- An immediate value,
- A register, or
- A memory address.

#### **Source and Destination Operands**

Each operand is either a source operand or a destination operand.

A source operand, in general, may be

- An immediate value,
- A register, or
- A memory address.

A destination operand, in general, may be

- A register, or
- A memory address.

#### **Instructions**

**hlt** – 0 operands halts the central processing unit (CPU) until the next external interrupt is fired

**inc** – 1 operand; inc <reg>, inc <mem>

**add** – 2 operands; add  $\langle$ reg>, $\langle$ reg>

**imul** – 1, 2, or 3 operands; imul <reg32>,<reg32>,<con>

#### **In Intel syntax the first operand is the destination**

#### **Intel Syntax Assembly and Disassembly**

Machine instructions generally fall into three categories: data movement, arithmetic/logic, and control-flow.

<reg32> Any 32-bit register (eax, ebx, ecx, edx, esi, edi, esp, or ebp) <reg16> Any 16-bit register (ax, bx, cx, or dx) <reg8> Any 8-bit register (ah, bh, ch, dh, al, bl, cl, or dl) <reg> Any register <mem> A memory address (e.g., [eax] or [eax + ebx\*4]); [] square brackets <con32> Any 32-bit immediate <con16> Any 16-bit immediate <con8> Any 8-bit immediate <con> Any 8-, 16-, or 32-bit immediate

### **Addressing Memory**

Move from source (operand 2) to destination (operand 1)

Square bracket [] represents memory location.

**mov [eax], ebx** Copy 4 bytes from register EBX into memory address specified in EAX.

**mov eax, [esi - 4]** Move 4 bytes at memory address ESI - 4 into EAX.

**mov [esi + eax \* 1], cl** Move the contents of CL into the byte at address  $FST + FAX * 1$ .

**mov edx, [esi + ebx\*4]** Move the 4 bytes of data at address ESI+4\*EBX into EDX.

## **Addressing Memory**

The size directives BYTE PTR, WORD PTR, and DWORD PTR serve this purpose, indicating sizes of 1, 2, and 4 bytes respectively.

**mov [ebx], 2** isn't this ambiguous? We can have a default.

**mov BYTE PTR [ebx], 2** Move 2 into the single byte at the address stored in EBX.

**mov WORD PTR [ebx], 2** Move the 16-bit integer representation of 2 into the 2 bytes starting at the address in EBX.

**mov DWORD PTR [ebx], 2** Move the 32-bit integer representation of 2 into the 4 bytes starting at the address in EBX.

#### **Data Movement Instructions**

**mov** — Move

Syntax mov <reg>, <reg> mov <reg>, <mem> mov <mem>, <reg> mov <reg>, <con> mov <mem>, <con>

Examples mov eax, ebx — copy the value in EBX into EAX mov byte ptr [var], 5 — store the value 5 into the byte at location var

#### **Data Movement Instructions**

**push** — Push on stack; decrements ESP by 4, then places the operand at the location ESP points to.

Syntax push <reg32> push <mem> push <con32>

Examples push eax — push eax on the stack push [var] — push the 4 bytes at address var onto the stack

#### **Data Movement Instructions**

**pop** — Pop from stack

Syntax pop <reg32> pop <mem>

Examples pop edi — pop the top element of the stack into EDI. pop [ebx] — pop the top element of the stack into memory at the four bytes starting at location EBX.

#### **LEA Instructions**

**lea** — Load effective address; used for quick calculation

Syntax lea <reg32>, <mem>

Examples Lea edi, [ebx+4\*esi] — the quantity EBX+4\*ESI is placed in EDI.

#### **Arithmetic and Logic Instructions**

**add** eax, 10 — EAX is set to EAX + 10 **addb** byte ptr [eax], 10 — add 10 to the single byte stored at memory address stored in EAX

**sub** al, ah — AL is set to AL - AH **sub** eax, 216 — subtract 216 from the value stored in EAX

**dec** eax — subtract one from the contents of EAX

**imul** eax, [ebx] — multiply the contents of EAX by the 32-bit contents of the memory at location EBX. Store the result in EAX.

**shr** ebx, cl — Store in EBX the floor of result of dividing the value of EBX by 2n where n is the value in CL.

**jmp** — Jump

Transfers program control flow to the instruction at the memory location indicated by the operand.

Syntax jmp <label> # direct jump jmp <reg32> # indirect jump

Example jmp begin — Jump to the instruction labeled begin.

#### **jcondition** — Conditional jump

Syntax je <label> (jump when equal) jne <label> (jump when not equal) jz <label> (jump when last result was zero) jg <label> (jump when greater than) jge <label> (jump when greater than or equal to) jl <label> (jump when less than) jle <label> (jump when less than or equal to)

Example

cmp ebx, eax jle done

**cmp** — Compare

```
Syntax
cmp <reg>, <reg>
cmp <mem>, <reg>
cmp <reg>, <mem>
cmp <con>, <reg>
```
Example cmp byte ptr [ebx], 10 jeq loop

If the byte stored at the memory location in EBX is equal to the integer constant 10, jump to the location labeled loop.

#### **call** — Subroutine call

The call instruction first **pushes the current code location onto the hardware supported stack** in memory, and then performs **an unconditional jump to the code** location indicated by the label operand. Unlike the simple jump instructions, the call instruction saves the location to return to when the subroutine completes.

Syntax call <label> call  $<$ reg32 $>$ Call <mem>

#### **ret** — Subroutine return

The ret instruction implements a subroutine return mechanism. This instruction pops a code location off the hardware supported in-memory stack to the program counter.

Syntax ret

#### **The Run-time Stack**

The run-time stack supports procedure calls and the passing of parameters between procedures.

The stack is located in memory.

The stack grows towards **low memory**.

When we push a value, esp is decremented.

When we pop a value, esp is incremented.

#### **Stack Instructions**

**enter** — Create a function frame

Equivalent to:

push ebp mov ebp, esp sub esp, Imm

#### **Stack Instructions**

**leave** — Releases the function frame set up by an earlier ENTER instruction.

Equivalent to:

mov esp, ebp pop ebp
# **Background Knowledge: x86-64/amd64 architecture**

## **Registers on x86 and x86-64**



# **x86 vs. x86-64 (code/ladd)**



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## **x86 vs. x86-64 (code/ladd)**

x86



#### x86-64



 $\frac{1}{2}$  objdump -M intel -d ladd\_32  $\therefore$  objdump -M intel -d ladd\_64

# **Background Knowledge: ARM Cortex-A/M Architecture**

### **Cortex-A 64 bit**





#### **Cortex-M 32 bit**



# **Background Knowledge: Linux File Permissions**

### **Permission Groups**

Each file and directory has three user-based permission groups:

**Owner** – A user is the owner of the file. By default, the person who created a file becomes its owner. The Owner permissions apply only the owner of the file or directory

**Group** – A group can contain multiple users. All users belonging to a group will have the same access permissions to the file. The Group permissions apply only to the group that has been assigned to the file or directory

**Others** – The others permissions apply to all other users on the system.

## **Permission Types**

Each file or directory has three basic permission types defined for all the 3 user types:

**Read** – The Read permission refers to a user's capability to read the contents of the file.

**Write** – The Write permissions refer to a user's capability to write or modify a file or directory.

**Execute** – The Execute permission affects a user's capability to execute a file or view the contents of a directory.

**File type**: First field in the output is file type. If the there is a – it means it is a plain file. If there is d it means it is a directory, c represents a character device, b represents a block device.



**Permissions for owner, group, and others**

# ziming@ziming-ThinkPad:~\$ ls -l<br>tota@ 530336





т  $\blacksquare$  **Owner:** This field provide info about the creator of the file.

#### ziming@ziming-\hinkPad:~\$ ls -l

total 530336







 $\overline{\phantom{0}}$ 

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# **Background Knowledge: Set-UID Programs**

## **From a C program to a process**



#### **Real UID, Effective UID, and Saved UID**

Each Linux/Unix **process** has 3 UIDs associated with it.

**Real UID (RUID)**: This is the UID of the user/process that created THIS process. It can be changed only if the running process has EUID=0.

**Effective UID (EUID)**: This UID is used to evaluate privileges of the process to perform a particular action. EUID can be changed either to RUID, or SUID if EUID!=0. If EUID=0, it can be changed to anything.

**Saved UID (SUID)**: If the binary image file, that was launched has a Set-UID bit on, SUID will be the UID of the owner of the file. Otherwise, SUID will be the RUID.

### **Set-UID Program**

The kernel makes the decision whether a process has the privilege by looking on the **EUID** of the process.

For non Set-UID programs, the effective uid and the real uid are the same. For Set-UID programs, **the effective uid is the owner of the program**, while the real uid is the user of the program.

What will happen is when a setuid binary executes, the process changes its Effective User ID (EUID) from the default RUID to the owner of this special binary executable file which in this case is - root.





## **Example: rdsecret**

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <string.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <unistd.h>
#include <sys/types.h>
#include <pwd.h>
int main(int argc, char *argv[])
{
 FILE * fp = NULL;char buffer[100] = \{0\};
  // get ruid and euid
 uid_t uid = getuid();
  struct passwd *pw = getpwuid(uid);
  if (pw)
 {
       printf("UID: %d, USER: %s.\n", uid, pw->pw_name);
 }
 uid_t euid = geteuid;
  pw = getpwuid(euid);
İ
                                                                main.c
                                                                      if (pw)
                                                                      {
                                                                            printf("EUID: %d, EUSER: %s.\n", euid, pw->pw_name);
                                                                      }
                                                                        print_flag();
                                                                        return(0);
                                                                     } 
                                                                     void print_flag()
                                                                     {
                                                                            FILE *fp;
                                                                            char buff[MAX_FLAG_SIZE];
                                                                            fp = fopen("flag", "r");fread(buff, MAX_FLAG_SIZE, 1, fp);
                                                                            printf("flag is : %s\n", buff);
                                                                            fclose(fp);
                                                                     }
```
# **Background Knowledge: ELF Binary Files**

# **ELF Files**

The **Executable** and **Linkable Format** (**ELF**) is a common standard file format for executable files, object code, shared libraries, and core dumps. Filename extension none, .axf, .bin, .elf, .o, .prx, .puff, .ko, .mod and .so

Contains the program and its data. Describes how the program should be loaded (program/segment headers). Contains metadata describing program components (section headers).

#### **Command file**

ziming@ziming-XPS-13-9300:~\$ file /bin/ls /bin/ls: ELF 64-bit LSB shared object, x86-64, version 1 (SYSV), dynamically lin ked, interpreter /lib64/ld-linux-x86-64.so.2, BuildID[sha1]=2f15ad836be3339dec0e 2e6a3c637e08e48aacbd, for GNU/Linux 3.2.0, stripped<br>ziming@ziming-XPS-13-9300:~\$





00000000000006b0 00000000000000010 AX

**INTERP:** defines the library that should be used to load this ELF into memory. **LOAD:** defines a part of the file that should be loaded into memory.

#### Sections:

**.text:** the executable code of your program. **.plt** and **.got:** used to resolve and dispatch library calls.

**.data:** used for pre-initialized global writable data (such as global arrays with initial values) **.rodata:** used for global read-only data (such as string constants)

**.bss:** used for uninitialized global writable data (such as global arrays without initial values)

# **Tools for ELF**

**gcc** to make your ELF. **readelf** to parse the ELF header. **objdump** to parse the ELF header and disassemble the source code. **nm** to view your ELF's symbols. **patchelf** to change some ELF properties. **objcopy** to swap out ELF sections. **strip** to remove otherwise-helpful information (such as symbols). **kaitai struct** [\(https://ide.kaitai.io/](https://ide.kaitai.io/)) to look through your ELF interactively.

# **Background Knowledge: Memory Map of a Linux Process**

### **Memory Map of Linux Process (32 bit)**

Each process in a multi-tasking OS runs in its own memory sandbox.

This sandbox is the **virtual address space**, which in 32-bit mode is **always a 4GB block of memory addresses**.

These virtual addresses are mapped to physical memory by **page tables**, which are maintained by the operating system kernel and consulted by the processor.

### **Memory Map of Linux Process (32 bit system)**



https://manybutfinite.com/pos [anatomy-of-a-program-in-me](https://manybutfinite.com/post/anatomy-of-a-program-in-memory/) [mory/](https://manybutfinite.com/post/anatomy-of-a-program-in-memory/)

#### **NULL Pointer in C/C++**

```
int * pInt = NULL;
```
In possible definitions of NULL in C/C++:

```
#define NULL ((char *)0)
#define NULL 0
```
//since C++11 #define NULL nullptr

# **/proc/pid\_of\_process/maps**

Example processmap.c



cat /proc/pid/maps pmap -X pid pmap -X `pidof pm`




## **Memory Map of Linux Process (64 bit system)**



# **Background Knowledge: System Calls**

## **What is System Call?**

When a process needs to invoke a kernel service, it invokes a procedure call in the operating system interface using special instructions (not a **call** instruction in x86). Such a procedure is called a system call.

The system call enters the kernel; the kernel performs the service and returns. Thus a process alternates between executing in user space and kernel space.

System calls are generally not invoked directly by a program, but rather via wrapper functions in glibc (or perhaps some other library).

## **Popular System Call**

On [Unix,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unix) [Unix-like](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unix-like) and other [POSIX](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/POSIX)-compliant operating systems, popular system calls are [open](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_(system_call)), [read](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Read_(system_call)), [write,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Write_(system_call)) [close,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Close_(system_call)) [wait](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wait_(system_call)), [exec](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exec_(system_call)), [fork,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fork_(system_call)) [exit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exit_(system_call)), and [kill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kill_(system_call)).

Many modern operating systems have hundreds of system calls. For example, [Linux](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linux_kernel) and [OpenBSD](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenBSD) each have over 300 different calls, [FreeBSD](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FreeBSD) has over 500, Windows 7 has close to 700.

## **Glibc interfaces**

Often, but not always, the name of the wrapper function is the same as the name of the system call that it invokes.

For example, glibc contains a function chdir() which invokes the underlying "chdir" system call.



## **Tools: strace & ltrace**

ctf@misc firstflag 64:/\$ strace ./misc firstflag 64 execve("./misc firstflag 64", ["./misc firstflag 64"], 0x7fffffffe680 /\* 17 vars \*/) = 0 access("/etc/suid-debug", F OK) = -1 ENOENT (No such file or directory) brk(NULL)  $= 0x55555559000$ arch prctl(0x3001 /\* ARCH ??? \*/, 0x7fffffffe5a0) = -1 EINVAL (Invalid argument)  $fcntI(0, F GETFD)$ fcntl(1, F GETFD) fcntl(2, F GETFD) access("/etc/suid-debug", F OK) = -1 ENOENT (No such file or directory) access("/etc/ld.so.preload", R OK) = -1 ENOENT (No such file or directory) openat(AT FDCWD, "/etc/ld.so.cache", 0 RDONLY|0 CLOEXEC) = 3 fstat(3, {st mode=S IFREG|0644, st size=47355, ...}) = 0 mmap(NULL, 47355, PROT READ, MAP PRIVATE, 3, 0) = 0x7ffff7fbf000  $close(3)$ openat(AT FDCWD, "/lib/x86 64-linux-gnu/libc.so.6", 0 RDONLY|0 CLOEXEC) = 3 read(3, "\l77ELF\2\l\l\3\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\1\0\0\0\0\0\360q\2\0\0\0\0\0"..., 832) = 832 pread64(3, "\4\0\0\0\20\0\0\0\5\0\0\0GNU\0\2\0\0\300\4\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\", 32, 848) = 32 pread64(3, "\4\0\0\0\24\0\0\0\3\0\0\0GNU\0\t\233\222%\274\260\320\31\331\326\10\204\276X>\263"..., 68, 880) = 68 fstat(3, {st mode=S IFREG|0755, st size=2029224, ...}) = 0 mmap(NULL, 8192, PROT READ|PROT WRITE, MAP PRIVATE|MAP ANONYMOUS, -1, 0) = 0x7ffff7fbd000 pread64(3, "\4\0\0\0\20\0\0\0\5\0\0\0GNU\0\2\0\0\300\4\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0\0", 32, 848) = 32 pread64(3, "\4\0\0\0\24\0\0\0\3\0\0\0\0\0\t\233\222%\274\260\320\31\331\326\10\204\276X>\263"..., 68, 880) = 68 mmap(NULL, 2036952, PROT READ, MAP PRIVATE!MAP DENYWRITE, 3, 0) = 0x7ffff7dcb000 mprotect(0x7ffff7df0000, 1847296, PROT NONE) = 0 mmap(0x7ffff7df0000, 1540096, PROT READ|PROT EXEC, MAP PRIVATE|MAP FIXED|MAP DENYWRITE, 3, 0x25000) = 0x7fff7df0000 mmap(0x7ffff7f68000, 303104, PROT READ, MAP PRIVATE|MAP FIXED|MAP DENYWRITE, 3, 0x19d000) = 0x7fff7f68000 mmap(0x7ffff7fb3000, 24576, PROT READ|PROT WRITE, MAP PRIVATE|MAP FIXED|MAP DENYWRITE, 3, 0x1e7000) = 0x7ffff7fb3000 mmap(0x7ffff7fb9000, 13528, PROT READ|PROT WRITE, MAP PRIVATE|MAP FIXED|MAP ANONYMOUS, -1, 0) = 0x7ffff7fb9000  $close(3)$  $arch$  prctl(ARCH SET FS,  $0x7ffff7fbe540$ ) = 0 mprotect(0x7fff7fb3000, 12288, PROT READ) = 6 mprotect(0x555555557000, 4096, PROT READ) mprotect(0x7ffff7ffc000, 4096, PROT<sup>-</sup>READ) = 0 munmap(0x7ffff7fbf000, 47355)  $fstat(1, {st mode=}S IFCHR|0620, st reduce=makedev(0x88, 0), ...) = 0$  $= 0x55555559000$ brk(NULL) brk(0x55555557a000)  $= 0x55555557a000$ write(1, "Congratulations on getting your "..., 45Congratulations on getting your first flag!!  $= 45$ openat(AT FDCWD, "/flag", 0 RDONLY) = -1 EACCES (Permission denied) write(l, "Error: Cannot open the flag file"..., 36Error: Cannot open the flag file!!!  $) = 36$  $exit \space group(0)$  $= ?$ 

Execve - first system call Access - check file permission Brk - check data segment/heap Arch\_prctl - set architecture-specific thread state Fcntl - manipulate file descriptor Openat - similar to open Fstat - get file status Mmap - map files or devices into memory Close Read Pread64 - similar to read Mprotect - set protection on a region of memory Munmap - map files or devices into memory Write Exit\_group

### Use "man 2 syscall\_name" to check out its usage

On x86/x86-64, most system calls rely on the software interrupt.

A software interrupt is caused either by an exceptional condition in the processor itself, or a special instruction (the **int 0x80** instruction or **syscall** instruction).

For example: a divide-by-zero exception will be thrown if the processor's arithmetic logic unit is commanded to divide a number by zero as this instruction is in error and impossible.

## **Making a System Call in x86 Assembly (INT 0x80)**

#### x86 (32-bit)

Compiled from Linux 4.14.0 headers.



#### https://chromium.googlesource.com/chromiumos/docs/+/master/constants/syscalls.md#x86-32\_bit

xor eax,eax push eax push 0x68732f2f push 0x6e69622f mov ebx,esp push eax push ebx mov ecx,esp mov al,0xb int 0x80



Source: www.LookupTables.com











execve("/bin/sh", address of string "/bin/sh", 0)

## **Making a System Call in x86\_64 (64-bit) Assembly**

x86\_64 (64-bit)

#### Compiled from Linux 4.14.0 headers.



#### https://chromium.googlesource.com/chromiumos/docs/+/master/constants/syscalls.md#x86-32\_bit

## **Making a System Call in x86\_64 (64-bit) Assembly**





SYSTEM AND LIBRARY CALLS EVERY PROGRAMMER NEEDS TO KNOW



# **Background Knowledge: Piping**

## **Channels of Communication for Linux Process**

Every process in Linux has three initial, standard channels of communication:

- Standard Input (stdin, fd=0) is the channel through which the process takes input. For example, your shell uses Standard Input to read the commands that you input.
- Standard Output (stdout, fd=1) is the channel through which processes output normal data, such as the flag when it is printed to you in previous challenges or the output of utilities such as Is.
- Standard Error (stderr, fd=2) is the channel through which processes output error details. For example, if you mistype a command, the shell will output, over standard error, that this command does not exist.

## **Examples**

### **Redirecting output > or 1>**

echo hi > asdf echo hi 1> asdf

### **Appending output >>**

echo hi >> asdf

### **Redirecting errors 2>**

/challenge/run 2> errors.log

### **Redirecting input <** rev < messagefile

## **Channels of Communication for Linux Process**

● Process can also take input from command line arguments

## ls -al

# cat /flag

## cat 1.txt 2.txt 3.txt

## **Pipe**

The | (pipe) operator. Standard output from the command to the left of the pipe will be connected to (piped into) the standard input of the command to the right of the pipe.

## echo hello-world | wc -c

# **Background Knowledge: Environment and Shell Variables**

## **Environment and Shell Variables**

Environment and Shell variables are a set of dynamic **named values**, stored within the system that are used by applications launched in shells.

KEY=value KEY="Some other value" KEY=value1:value2

The names of the variables are case-sensitive (UPPER CASE). Multiple values must be separated by the colon : character. There is no space around the equals = symbol.

## **Environment and Shell Variables**

Environment variables are variables that are available system-wide and are inherited by all spawned child processes and shells.

Shell variables are variables that apply only to the current shell instance. Each shell such as zsh and bash, has its own set of internal shell variables.

## **Common Environment Variables**

- USER The current logged in user.
- HOME The home directory of the current user.
- EDITOR The default file editor to be used. This is the editor that will be used when you type edit in your terminal.
- SHELL The path of the current user's shell, such as bash or zsh.
- LOGNAME The name of the current user.
- PATH A list of directories to be searched when executing commands.
- LANG The current locales settings.
- TERM The current terminal emulation.
- MAIL Location of where the current user's mail is stored.

## **Commands**

env – The command allows you to run another program in a custom environment without modifying the current one. When used without an argument it will print a list of the current environment variables. printenv – The command prints all or the specified environment variables.

set – The command sets or unsets shell variables. When used without an argument it will print a list of all variables including environment and shell variables, and shell functions.

unset – The command deletes shell and environment variables.

export – The command sets environment variables

The environment variables live towards the top of the stack, together with command line arguments.



# **Background Knowledge: Executable and Linkable Format (ELF)**

## **ELF Files**

The **Executable** and **Linkable Format** (**ELF**) is a common standard file format for executable files, object code, shared libraries, and core dumps. Filename extension none, .axf, .bin, .elf, .o, .prx, .puff, .ko, .mod and .so

Contains the program and its data. Describes how the program should be loaded (program/segment headers). Contains metadata describing program components (section headers).



- Executable (a.out), object files (.o), shared libraries (.a), even core dumps.
- Four types of components: an **executable header**, a series of (optional) **program headers**, a number of **sections**, and a series of (optional) **section headers**, one per section.

## **Executable Header**



```
. . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
readelf -h a.out. . . . . .
```


## **Sections**

The code and data in an ELF binary are logically divided into contiguous non-overlapping chunks called sections. The structure of each section varies depending on the contents.

The division into sections is intended to provide a convenient organization for use by the **linker**.

## **Section Header Format**


# **sh\_flags**

#### SHF WRITE: the section is writable at runtime.

SHF\_ALLOC: the contents of the section are to be loaded into virtual memory when executing the binary.

SHF\_EXECINSTR: the section contains executable instructions.



 $\rightarrow$  add readelf -S add There are 31 section headers, starting at offset 0x385c:

Section Headers:



#### . . . . . . . . . . . readelf -S a.out

#### **Sections**

.init: executable code that performs initialization tasks and needs to run before any other code in the binary is executed.

.fini: code that runs after the main program completes.

.text: where the main code of the program resides.

#### **Sections**

.rodata section, which stands for "read-only data," is dedicated to storing constant values. Because it stores constant values, .rodata is not writable.

The default values of initialized variables are stored in the .data section, which is marked as writable since the values of variables may change at runtime.

the .bss section reserves space for uninitialized variables. The name historically stands for "block started by symbol," referring to the reserving of blocks of memory for (symbolic) variables.

#### **Lazy Binding (.plt, .got, .got.plt Sections)**

**Binding at Load Time:** When a binary is loaded into a process for execution, the dynamic linker resolves references to functions located in shared libraries. The addresses of shared functions were not known at compile time.

**In reality - Lazy Binding:** many of the relocations are typically not done right away when the binary is loaded but are deferred until the first reference to the unresolved location is actually made.

### **Lazy Binding (.plt, .got, .got.plt Sections)**

Lazy binding in Linux ELF binaries is implemented with the help of two special sections, called the Procedure Linkage Table ( .plt ) and the Global Offset Table ( .got ).

.plt is a code section that contains executable code. The PLT consists entirely of stubs of a well-defined format, dedicated to directing calls from the .text section to the appropriate library location.

.got.plt is a data section.

### **Dynamically Resolving a Library Function Using the PLT**



#### **Example: Debug misc/lazyb**



GDB Cheatsheet:

#### https://darkdust.net/files/GDB%20 Cheat%20Sheet.pdf

#### **Section View (Section Header) vs. Segment View (Program Header)**

The program header table provides a segment view of the binary, as opposed to the section view provided by the section header table.

The section view of an ELF binary is meant for static linking purposes.

The segment view is used by the operating system and dynamic linker when loading an ELF into a process for execution to locate the relevant code and data and decide what to load into virtual memory.

Segments are simply a bunch of sections bundled together.

#### **Program Header Format**



```
\rightarrow add readelf -l add
```

```
Elf file type is DYN (Shared object file)
Entry point 0x1160
There are 12 program headers, starting at offset 52
```
Program Headers:

 $\rightarrow$  add  $[0] 0:zsh*$ 



-97

# **Background Knowledge: Manual Binary Analysis Tools**

#### **Tools for this class**

file readelf strings nm objdump GDB [optional] IDA Pro [optional] ghidra [optional] Binary Ninja

Start gdb using: gdb <binary> Pass initial commands for gdb through a file gdb <binary> –x <initfile>

To start the program and breakpoint at main() start <argv>

To start the program and breakpoint at \_start starti <argy>

To run the program without breakpoint r <argv> Use another progrom's output as stdin in GDB: r <<< \$(python2 -c "print '\x12\x34'\*5")

Set breakpoint at address: b \*0x80000000

Set breakpoint at beginning of a function: b main

…. b <filename:line number> b <line number>

Disassemble 10 instructions from an address: x/10i 0x80000000

Exam 15 dword (w) from an address; show hex (x): x/15wx 0x80000000

Exam 3 qword (g) from an address; show hex (x): x/3gx 0x80000000

To show breakpoints info b

To remove breakpoints clear <function name> clear \*<instruction address> clear <filename:line number> clear <line number>

Use "examine" or "x" command x/32xw <memory location> to see memory contents at memory location, showing 32 hexadecimal words x/5s <memory location> to show 5 strings (null terminated) at a particular memory location x/10i <memory location> to show 10 instructions at particular memory location

See registers info reg

Step an instruction si

## **GDB Script**

Use "examine" or "x" command x/32xw <memory location> to see memory contents at memory location, showing 32 hexadecimal words x/5s <memory location> to show 5 strings (null terminated) at a particular memory location x/10i <memory location> to show 10 instructions at particular memory location

See registers info reg

Step an instruction si

#### **Shell Cheat Sheet**

Run a program and use another program's output as a parameter program \$(python2 -c "print '\x12\x34'\*5")

# **Reading**

1. <https://iq.thc.org/how-does-linux-start-a-process>