13. Authentication Part 1



Blase Ur and Grant Ho February 19th, 2024 CMSC 23200



Who Am I?

- Grant Ho
 - Distinguished security researcher
 - Recently moved here from California; hates the cold
 - Fan of hot dogs
 - Ed course forum expert

Or Am I?

How (and why) do we authenticate users?

Authentication in the Abstract

- Principal: legitimate owner of an identity
- Claimant: entity trying to be authenticated
- Verify that people or things (e.g., server) are who they claim, or maybe that the claimant has some attribute
- Authentication ≠ Authorization ≠ Access Control
 - Authorization is deciding whether an entity should have access to a given resource
 - Access control lists / policies

Authentication Use Cases

- Explicit authentication
 - Single-factor authentication
 - Multi-factor authentication (e.g., with Duo)
- Implicit authentication
 - Continuous authentication (e.g., with behavioral biometrics)
- Risk-based authentication: vary auth requirements based on estimated risk

How We Authenticate (1/2)

- Something you know
 - Password
 - PIN (Personal Identification Number)
- Something you have
 - Private key (of a public-private key pair)
 - Hardware device (often with a key/seed)
 - Phone (running particular software)
 - Token (e.g., string stored in a cookie)

How We Authenticate (2/2)

- Something you are
 - Biometrics (e.g., iris or fingerprint)
 - Behavioral tendencies (behavioral biometrics)
- Somewhere you are
 - Location-limited channels
 - IP address
- Someone you know (social authentication)
- Some system vouches for you
 - Single sign-on (e.g., UChicago shib/Okta)
 - PKI Certificate Authorities



Why Are Passwords So Prevalent?

- Easy to use
- Easy to deploy
- Nothing to carry
- No "silver-bullet" alternative

Why Are Passwords So Prevalent?

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Bonneau et al. "The Quest to Replace Passwords: A Framework for Comparative Evaluation of Web Authentication Schemes," In *Proc. IEEE S&P*, 2012

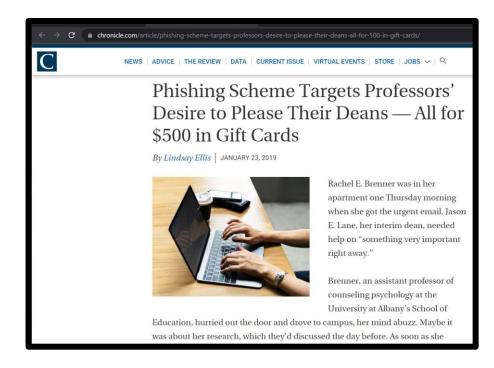
Why Are Passwords So Prevalent?

				Usability					I	Deployability					Security									
Category	Scheme	Described in section	Reference	Memorywise-Effortless	Scalable-for-Users	woining-to-Carry Physically-Effortless	Easy-to-Learn	Efficient-to-Use	infrequent-Errors Easy-Recovery-from-Loss	Accessible	Negligible-Cost-per-User	Server-Compatible	Browser-Compatible	Mature Non-Proprietary	Resilient-to-Physical-Observation	Resilient-to-Targeted-Impersonation	Resilient-to-Throttled-Guessing	Resilient-to-Unthrottled-Guessing	Resilient-to-Internal-Observation	Resilient-to-Leaks-from-Other-Verifiers	Resilient-to-Phishing	Resilient-to-Theft	No-Trusted-Third-Party	Kequiring-Explicit-Consent Unlinkable
(Incumbent)	Web passwords	III	[13]		-	•	•	•	0 •	•	•	•	•	• •)	0						•	• (
Password managers	Firefox	IV-A	[22]	0		0 0	•	•		•	•	•		• •	0	0						•	• (
	LastPass		[42]	0		0	•	•	0	•	0	•		•	0	0	0	0		0		•		•
Proxy	URRSA	IV-B	[5]		-		•		0 🗏		•	0	•			0			0					•
	Impostor		[23]	0		•	•		•	•	•	•	0	•		0			0			•		•
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	Microsoft Passport		[43]	0		0	•	•		•			•	•	0	0	0	0				•		
	Facebook Connect		[44]	0		0	•	•		•	•		•	•	0	0	0	0				•		
	BrowserID		[45]	0		0	•	•	•	•	•		0	0	0	0	0	0				•	= (•
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Bonneau et al. "The Quest to Replace Passwords: A Framework for Comparative Evaluation of Web Authentication Schemes," In *Proc. IEEE S&P*, 2012

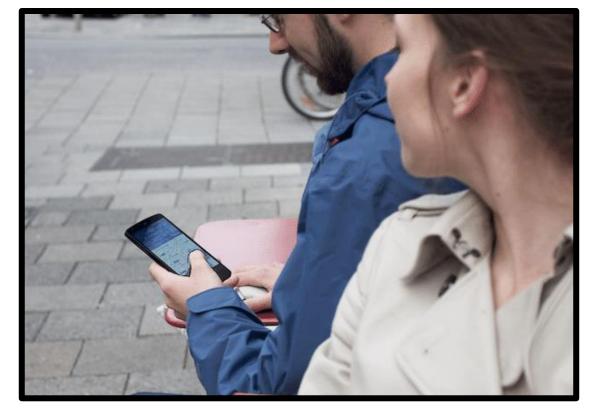
Attacks Against Passwords

- Phishing attack: try to trick the user into giving their credentials to you, believing you are the legitimate system
 - Spear phishing: targeted to the recipient



Attacks Against Passwords

Shoulder surfing: looking at someone else entering their credentials



Detour: Storing Passwords

- Goal: Prevent attacker from being able to use a stolen password database immediately (without more work)
- Hash function: one-way function
 - Traditionally designed for efficiency (e.g., MD5, SHA-2), but don't ever use those!
 - Use password-specific hash functions (e.g., bcrypt, scrypt, Argon2)

Hashing on one NVIDIA RTX 4090

- Hashcat benchmarks
- MD5: ~ 150 billion / second
- SHA-1: ~ 50 billion / second
- UNIX md5crypt: ~ 60 million / second
- NTLM: ~ 250 billion / second
- SHA-2 (256): ~ 20 billion / second
- bcrypt (32 iterations): ~ 240,000 / second
- scrypt (16,384 iterations): ~ 7,000 / second

Storing Passwords

- Salt: random string assigned per-user
 - Combine the password with the salt, then hash it
 - Stored alongside the hashed password
 - Prevents the use of rainbow tables (hash outputs are precomputed for many passwords, mapping sorted by *output*)
 - Increases the attacker's work proportional to the number of accounts
- Pepper: secret salt (very uncommon)
- Both salt and hash passwords

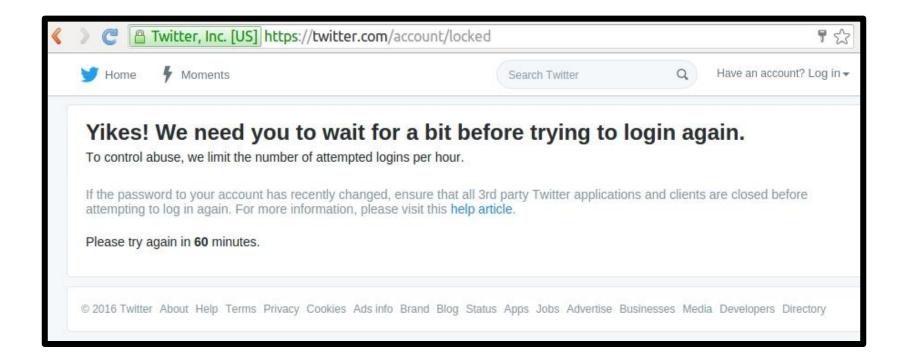
Typical (Web) Account Creation

- User sends username and desired password over an encrypted tunnel
- Server validates username (e.g., does it exist in the system?) and password (e.g., does it meet composition requirements?)
- Server generates a random salt
 - Think about how long the salt should be!
- Server stores username, salt, and hash(password|salt) in database

Typical (Web) Authentication

- User sends username and password₀ over an encrypted tunnel
- Server looks up the salt and hash output associated with that username
- Server computes hash(password₀|salt)
- If it matches the hash output in the database, typically send back auth token (long string attacker can't guess associated with that user's session)

- Online attack (web)
 - Try passwords on a live system
 - Usually rate-limited



- Online attack (web)
 - Try passwords on a live system
 - Usually rate-limited
- Authenticating to a device is often similarly rate-limited (e.g., iPhone PIN) using secure hardware

- Offline attack (web)
 - Try to guess passwords from a stolen copy of the password store or password database

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 - Try to guess passwords from a stolen copy of the password store or password database
- Attacking a file encrypted using a key derived from a password (e.g., with PBKDF2) is similar

Offline Attack (In Practice)

- Attacker compromises database (e.g., via SQL injection)
 - hash("Blase") =

```
$2a$04$iHdEgkI681VdDMc3f7edau9phRwORvhYjqWAIb7hb4B5uFJO1g4zi
$ = delimiter
2a = bcrypt
04 = 24 iterations (cost)
iHdEgkl681VdDMc3f7edau = 16 bytes of salt (radix-64 encoded)
9phRwORvhYjqWAIb7hb4B5uFJO1g4zi = 24 bytes of hash output (radix-64 encoded)
```

- Attacker makes guesses (from most likely/probable to the least) and hashes those guesses
- Finds match

 try on other sites
 - Password **reuse** is a core problem







80d561388725fa74f2d03cd16e1d687c



1. h("123456") = e10adc3949ba59abbe56e057f20f883e





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- 2. h("password") = 5f4dcc3b5aa765d61d8327deb882cf99





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- 4. h("letmein") = 0d107d09f5bbe40cade3de5c71e9e9b7





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- 5. h("p@ssw0rd") = 0f359740bd1cda994f8b55330c86d845





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Credential Breaches

Some Breached Companies



















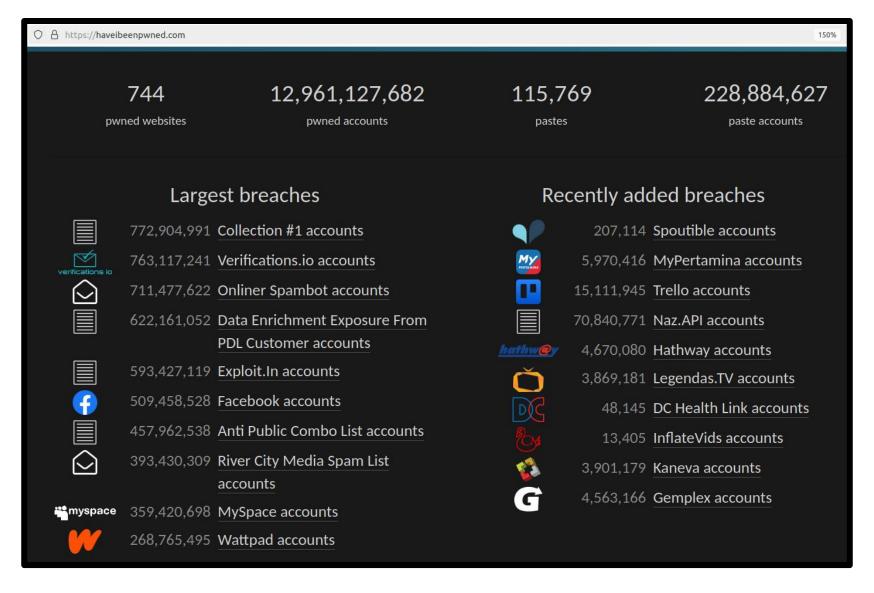
Data-Driven Statistical Attacks

• (2009) 32 million passwords: rockyou

• (2016) 117 million passwords: Linked in

- (2017) 3 billion passwords: YAHOO!
 - Still not released publicly as of 2024

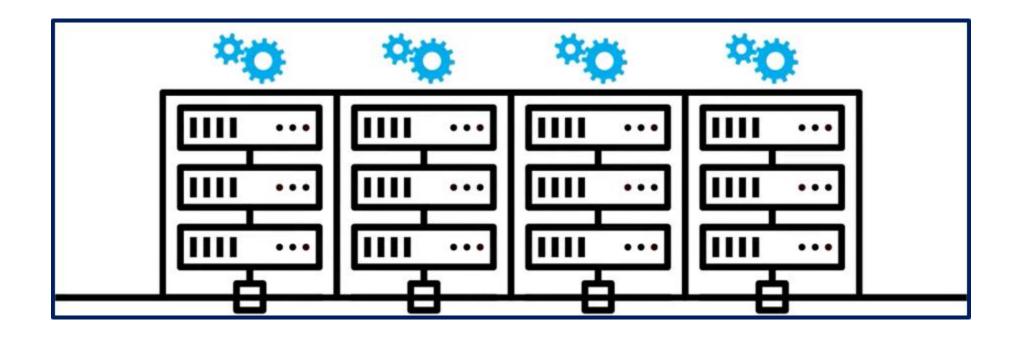
Have I Been Pwned (as of 2/19/24)



Password Policies (Partial Attempt to Combat Attacks)

What Do Human-Chosen Passwords Look Like? (Live Demo)

Password Cracking



Blase Ur, Sean M. Segreti, Lujo Bauer, Nicolas Christin, Lorrie Faith Cranor, Saranga Komanduri, Darya Kurilova, Michelle L. Mazurek, William Melicher, Richard Shay. Measuring Real-World Accuracies and Biases in Modeling Password Guessability. In *Proc. USENIX Security Symposium*, 2015.

Statistical Metrics For Passwords

- Traditionally: Shannon entropy
- Recently: α-guesswork
- Disadvantages of statistical approaches
 - Entropy does not consider human tendencies
 - Usually no per-password estimates
 - Huge sample required for accuracy (since many passwords are related to each other)
 - Does not model real-world attacks

 How many guesses a particular cracking algorithm with particular training data would take to guess a password

Chic4go

Guess # 6

j@mesb0nd007!

Guess # 366,163,847,194

Guess # past cutoff

Some Key Password-Cracking Approaches

- Brute force (or selective brute force)
- Wordlist
- Mangled wordlist
 - Hashcat and John the Ripper
- Markov models
- Probabilistic Context-Free Grammar
- Deep learning
- In practice: manual, iterative updates

Wordlist

Super Password Chicago

Wordlist

Super Password Chicago

Rulelist

- 1. Append "1"
- 2. Replace "a" \rightarrow "4"
- 3. Lowercase all

Wordlist

Super

Password Chicago

Rulelist

- 1. Append "1"
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Guesses

Super1

Wordlist

Super

Password

Chicago

Rulelist

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Guesses

Super1

Password1

Wordlist

Super Password Chicago

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Guesses

Super1
Password1

Chicago1

Wordlist

Super Password Chicago

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Guesses

Super1

Password1

Chicago1

Super

P4ssword

Chic4go

Wordlist

Super Password Chicago

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- 3. Lowercase all

Guesses

Super1

Password1

Chicago1

Super

P4ssword

Chic4go

super

password

chicago

Wordlist

PGS (≈ 20,000,000)

Linkedin (≈ 60,000,000)

HIBP (≈ 500,000,000)

Wordlist

Rulelist

PGS (≈ 20,000,000)

Linkedin (≈ 60,000,000)

HIBP (≈ 500,000,000)

Korelogic (≈ 5,000)

Megatron (≈ 15,000)

Generated2 (≈ 65,000)

Wordlist

PGS (≈ 20,000,000)

Linkedin (≈ 60,000,000)

HIBP (≈ 500,000,000)

Rulelist

Korelogic (≈ 5,000)

Megatron (≈ 15,000)

Generated2 (≈ 65,000)

10⁹ - 10¹⁵ guesses

Wordlist

Rulelist

PGS (≈ 20,000,000)

Linkedin (≈ 60,000,000)

HIBP (≈ 500,000,000)

Korelogic (≈ 5,000)

Megatron (≈ 15,000)

Generated2 (≈ 65,000)

 $10^9 - 10^{15}$

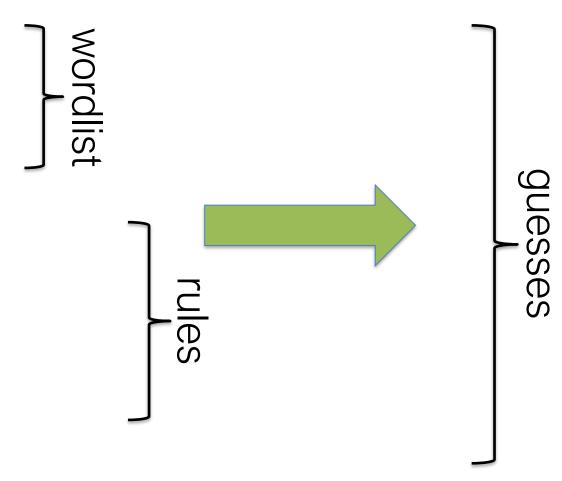
guesses

+ Hackers' private word/rule lists

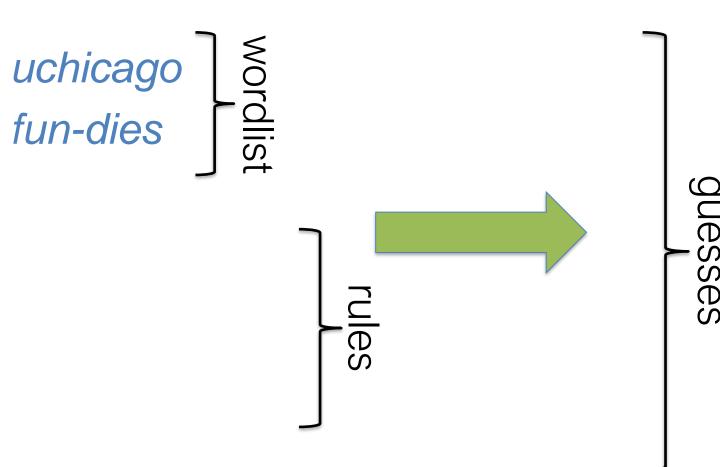
- Wordlist mode requires:
 - Wordlist (passwords and dictionary entries)
 - Mangling rules
- Guesses variants of input wordlist
- Speed: Fast
- "JTR"









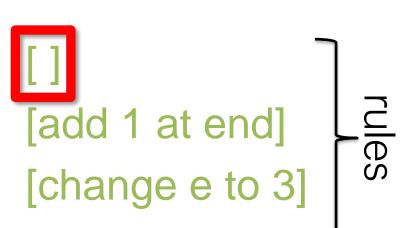


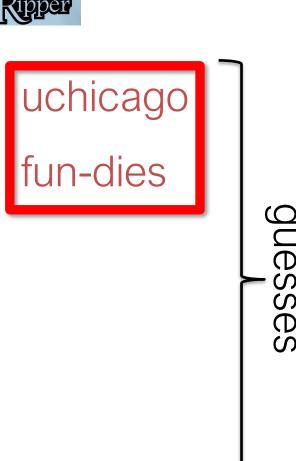


```
uchicago | Wording | Wordi
[add 1 at end]
[change e to 3]
```



```
uchicago fun-dies
```







```
uchicago
fun-dies
                             uchicago
                             fun-dies
                             uchicago1
fun-dies1
[add 1 at end]
[change e to 3]
```

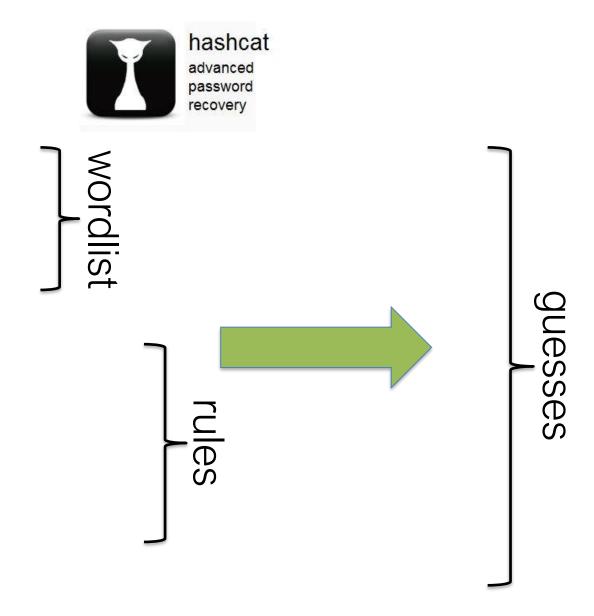


guesses

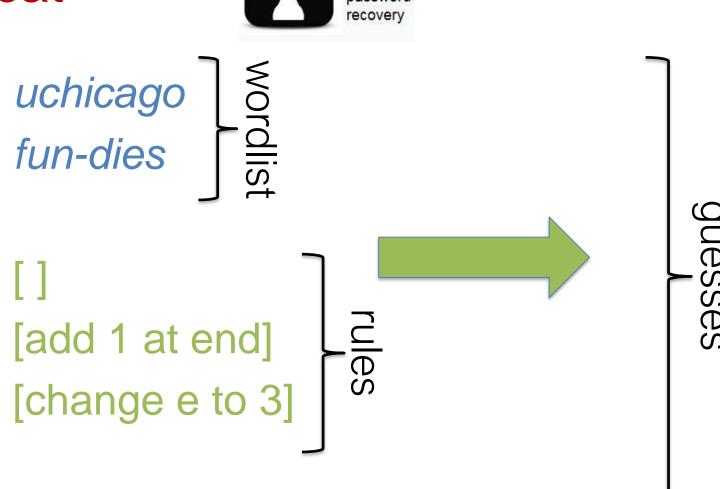
```
uchicago
fun-dies
                          uchicago
                          fun-dies
                          uchicago1
                          fun-dies1
[add 1 at end]
[change e to 3]
                          uchicago
```

- Wordlist mode requires:
 - Wordlist (passwords and dictionary entries)
 - Mangling rules
- Guesses variants of input wordlist
- (Many other modes)
- Speed: Fast

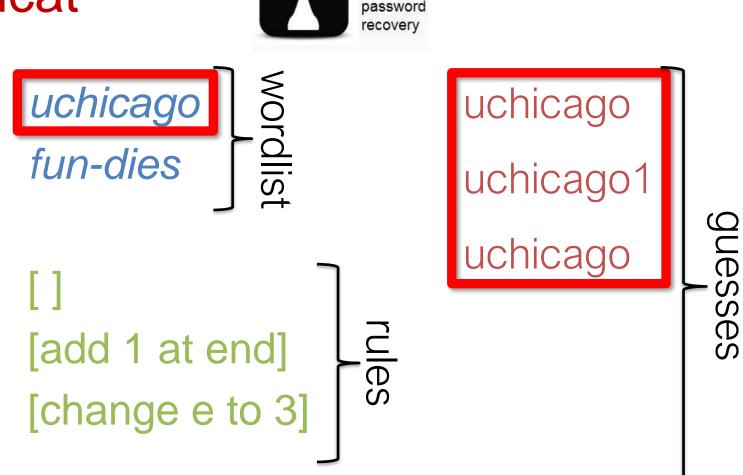




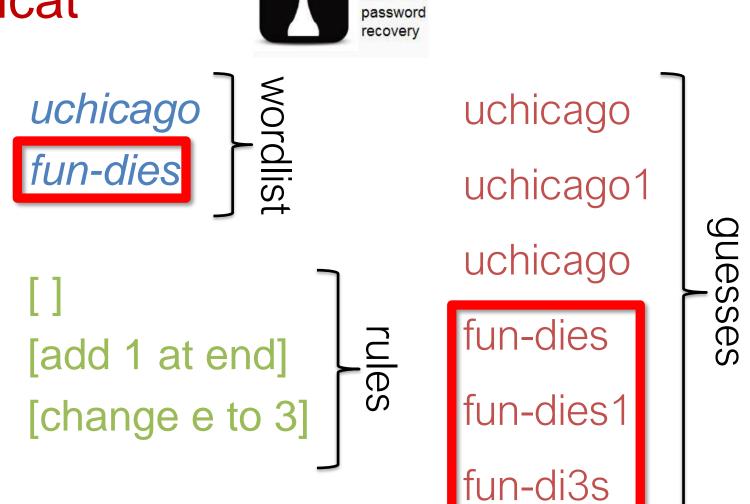












Hashcat Mangling-Rule Language

Name	Func tion	Description	Exam- ple Rule	Input Word	Output Word	Note
Nothing	:	do nothing	:	p@ss- W0rd	p@ssW0rd	
Lower- case	ı	Lowercase all letters	ı	p@ss- W0rd	p@ssw0rd	
Upper- case	u	Uppercase all letters	u	p@ss- W0rd	P@SSW0RD	
Capital- ize	c	Capitalize the first letter and lower the rest	с	p@ss- W0rd	P@ssw0rd	
Invert Capital- ize	с	Lowercase first found character, uppercase the rest	С	p@ss- W0rd	p@SSW0RD	
Toggle Case	t	Toggle the case of all characters in word.	t	p@ss- W0rd	P@SSw0RD	
Toggle @	TN	Toggle the case of characters at position N	Т3	p@ss- W0rd	p@sSW0rd	*
Reverse	r	Reverse the entire word	r	p@ss- W0rd	dr0Wss@p	
Dupli- cate	d	Duplicate entire word	d	p@ss- W0rd	p@ssW0rdp@ss W0rd	
Dupli- cate N	pΝ	Append duplicated word N times	p2	p@ss- W0rd	p@ssW0rdp@ss W0rdp@ssW0rd	
Reflect	f	Duplicate word reversed	f	p@ss- W0rd	p@ssW0rd- dr0Wss@p	
Rotate Left	{	Rotates the word left.	{	p@ss- W0rd	@ssW0rdp	
Rotate Right	}	Rotates the word right	}	p@ss- W0rd	dp@ssW0r	
Append Charac- ter	\$X	Append character X to end	\$1	p@ss- W0rd	p@ssW0rd1	
Prepend Charac- ter	^X	Prepend character X to front	^1	p@ss- W0rd	1p@ssW0rd	
Truncate left	[Deletes first character	[p@ss- W0rd	@ssW0rd	
Trucate right]	Deletes last character]	p@ss- W0rd	p@assW0r	
Delete @ N	DN	Deletes character at position N	D3	p@ss- W0rd	p@sW0rd	*
Extract range	xNM	Extracts M characters, starting at position N	×04	p@ss- W0rd	p@ss	* #
Omit range	ONM	Deletes M characters, starting at position N	012	p@ss- W0rd	psW0rd	*
Insert @ N	iNX	Inserts character X at position N	i4!	p@ss- W0rd	p@ss!W0rd	*
Over- write @ N	oNX	Overwrites character at position N with X	o3\$	p@ss- W0rd	p@s\$W0rd	*
Truncate @ N	'N	Truncate word at position N	'6	p@ss- W0rd	p@ssW0	*
Replace	sXY	Replace all instances of X with Y	ss\$	p@ss- W0rd	p@\$\$W0rd	
Purge	@X	Purge all instances of X	@s	p@ss- W0rd	p@W0rd	+

Name	Function	Description	Example Rule	Note
Reject less	<n< td=""><td>Reject plains if their length is greater than N</td><td><g< td=""><td>*</td></g<></td></n<>	Reject plains if their length is greater than N	<g< td=""><td>*</td></g<>	*
Reject greater	>N	Reject plains if their length is less or equal to N	>8	*
Reject equal	_N	Reject plains of length not equal to N	_7	*
Reject contain	!X	Reject plains which contain char X	!z	
Reject not contain	/X	Reject plains which do not contain char X	/e	
Reject equal first	(X	Reject plains which do not start with X	(h	
Reject equal last)X	Reject plains which do not end with X)t	
Reject equal at	=NX	Reject plains which do not have char X at position N	=1a	*
Reject contains	%NX	Reject plains which contain char X less than N times	%2a	*
Reject contains	Q	Reject plains where the memory saved matches current word	rMrQ	e.g. for palindrome

Name	Funct ion	Description	Example Rule	Input Word	Output Word	Note
Swap front	k	Swaps first two characters	k	p@ssW0rd	@pssW0rd	
Swap back	K	Swaps last two characters	K	p@ssW0rd	p@ssW0dr	
Swap @ N	*NM	Swaps character at position N with character at position M	*34	p@ssW0rd	p@sWs0rd	*
Bitwise shift left	LN	Bitwise shift left character @ N	L2	p@ssW0rd	p@æsW0rd	*
Bitwise shift right	RN	Bitwise shift right character @ N	R2	p@ssW0rd	p@9sW0rd	*
Ascii increment	+N	Increment character @ N by 1 ascii value	+2	p@ssW0rd	p@tsW0rd	*
Ascii decrement	-N	Decrement character @ N by 1 ascii value	-1	p@ssW0rd	p?ssW0rd	*
Replace N +	.N	Replaces character @ N with value at @ N plus 1	.1	p@ssW0rd	psssW0rd	*
Replace N - 1	,N	Replaces character @ N with value at @ N minus 1	,1	p@ssW0rd	ppssW0rd	*
Duplicate block front	yN	Duplicates first N characters	y2	p@ssW0rd	p@p@ss- W0rd	*
Duplicate block back	YN	Duplicates last N characters	Y2	p@ssW0rd	p@ssW0r- drd	*
Title	E	Lower case the whole line, then upper case the first letter and every letter after a space $% \left\{ 1,2,\ldots ,n\right\}$	E	p@ssW0rd w0rld	P@ssw0rd W0rld	+
Title w/separator	eX	Lower case the whole line, then upper case the first letter and every letter after a custom separator character	e-	p@ssW0rd- w0rld	P@ssw0rd- W0rld	+

Hashcat Mangling-Rule Language

*05 003 d '7

Switch the first and the sixth char;

Delete the first three chars;

Duplicate the whole word;

Truncate the word to length 7;

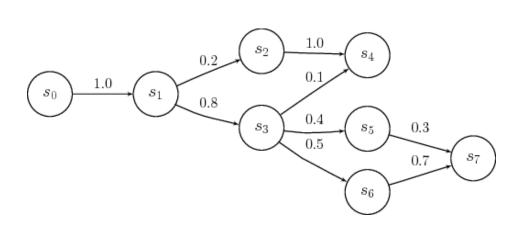
Hashcat (Other Modes)

- Mask attack (brute force within a specified character-class structure)
- Combinator attacks
- Hybrid attacks
- Many more!

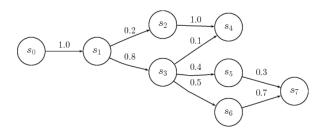


Markov Models

- Predicts future characters from previous
- Approach requires weighted data:
 - Passwords
 - Dictionaries
- Speed: Slow
- Smoothing is critical



Markov Models



chic4gooo

```
2-gram model (1 character of context):

[start] \rightarrow c (1.0)

4 \rightarrow g (1.0)

c \rightarrow h (0.5), 4 (0.5)

g \rightarrow o (1.0)

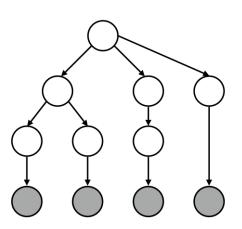
h \rightarrow i (1.0)

i \rightarrow c (1.0)

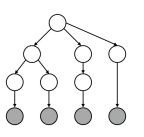
o \rightarrow o (0.67) [end] (0.33)
```

Probabilistic Context-Free Grammar

- Generate password grammar
 - Structures
 - Terminals
- OG: Weir et al. IEEE S&P 2009
- Speed: Slow
- "PCFG"

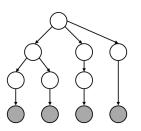


PCFG



passwordpassword
password123
usenix3
5ecurity
iloveyou
nirvanaa123

PCFG



```
passwordpassword
password 123
usenix
iloveyou
nirvanaa 123
```

Structure Model:

 L_{16} (1/6)

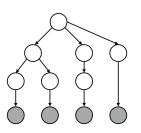
 L_8D_3 (2/6)

 L_6D_1 (1/6)

 D_1L_7 (1/6)

 $L_8 \qquad (1/6)$

PCFG



passwordpassword

password 123

usenix3

5ecurity

iloveyou

nirvanaa 123

Digit Model:

 $D_1 \rightarrow 3 (0.5) 5 (0.5)$

 $D_3 \rightarrow 123 (1.0)$

Repeat for letters, etc.

Professionals ("Pros")

- Proprietary wordlists and configurations
 - -10^{14} guesses
 - Manually tuned, updated
- For example: KoreLogic
 - Password audits for Fortune 500 companies
 - Run DEF CON "Crack Me If You Can"



Research Approach (2015)

4 password sets



5 approaches

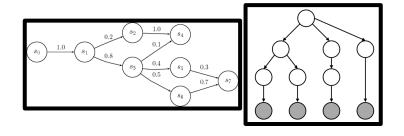
password iloveyou teamo123

> passwordpassword 1234567812345678 !1@2#3\$4%5^6&7*8

Pa\$\$w0rd iLov3you! 1QaZ2W@x

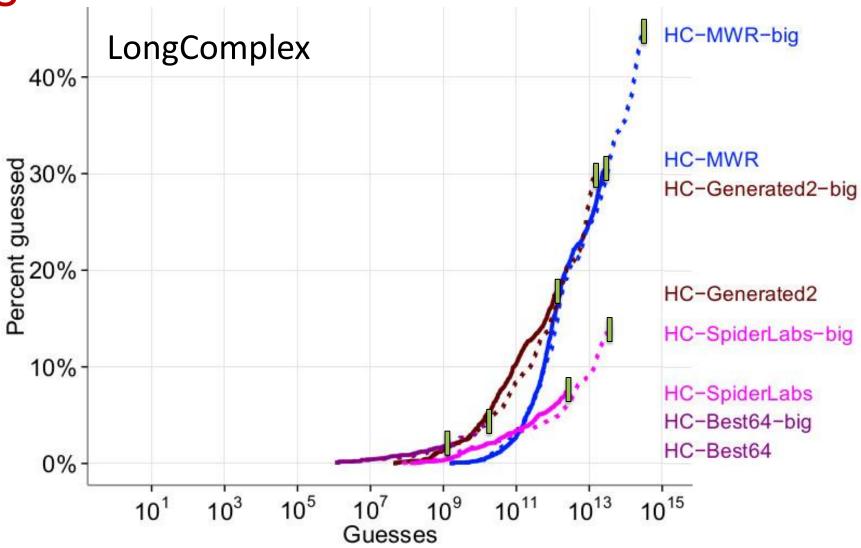
> pa\$\$word1234 12345678asDF !q1q!q1q!q1q



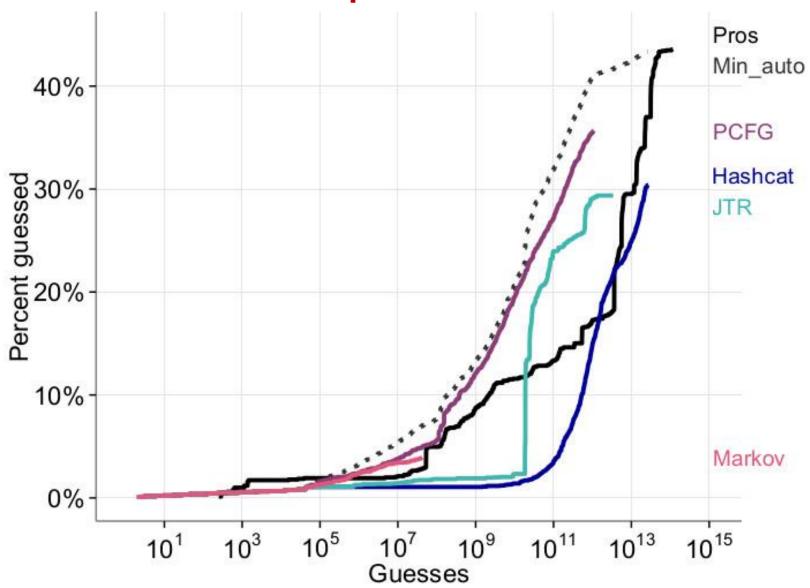




Configuration Is Crucial



Comparison for Complex Passwords



P@ssw0rd!

• JTR guess # 801

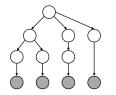


P@ssw0rd!

• JTR guess # 801 John



Not guessed in 10¹⁴ PCFG guesses

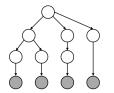


P@ssw0rd!

• JTR guess # 801

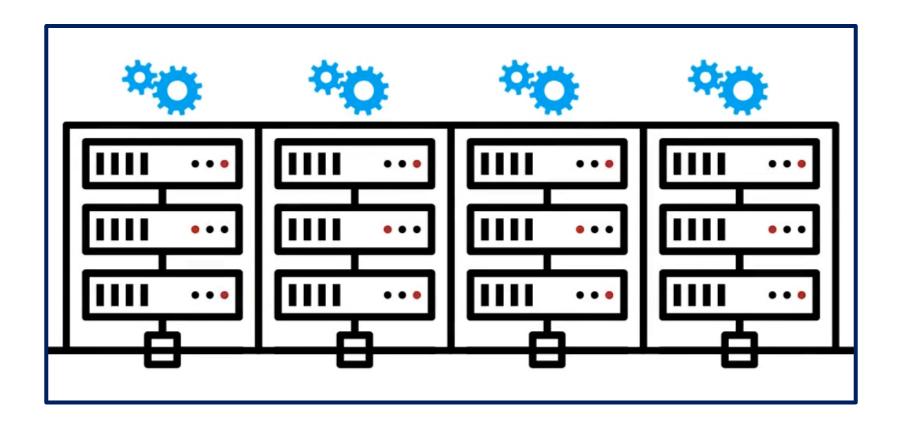


Not guessed in 10¹⁴ PCFG guesses





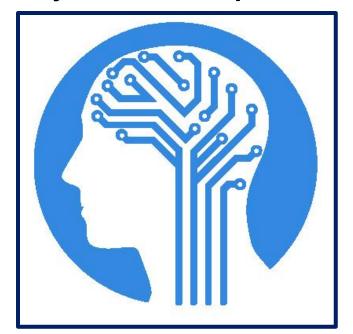
Neural Networks For Passwords



William Melicher, Blase Ur, Sean M. Segreti, Saranga Komanduri, Lujo Bauer, Nicolas Christin, Lorrie Faith Cranor. Fast, Lean, and Accurate: Modeling Password Guessability Using Neural Networks. In *Proc. USENIX Security Symposium*, 2016.

Better Password Scoring

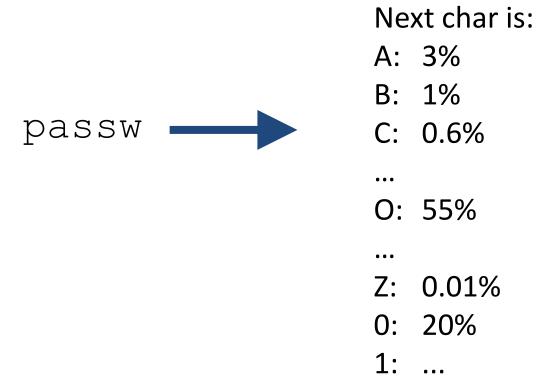
- Real-time feedback
- Runs entirely client-side
- Accurately models password guessability

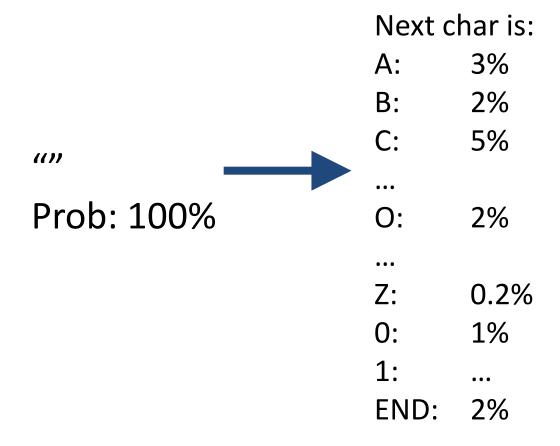


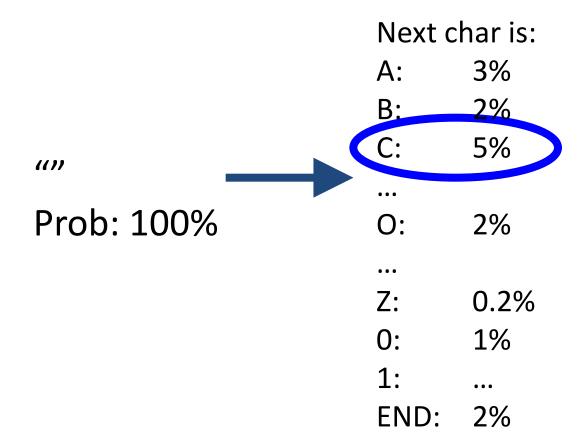
Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs)

LSTM Architecture



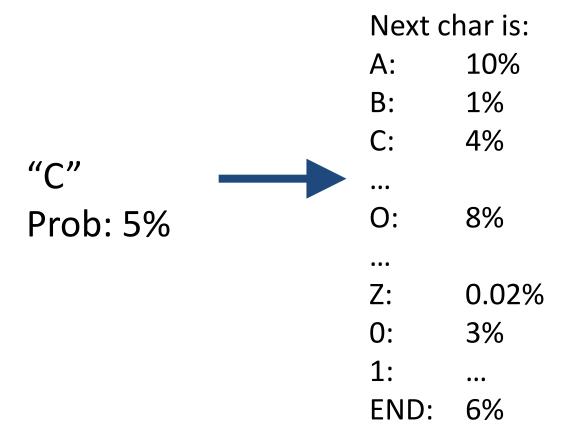


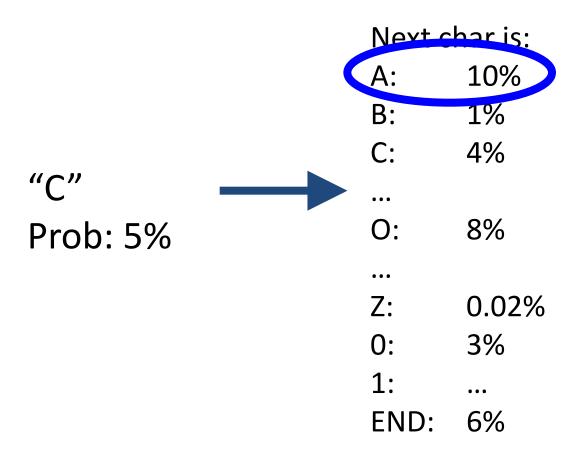


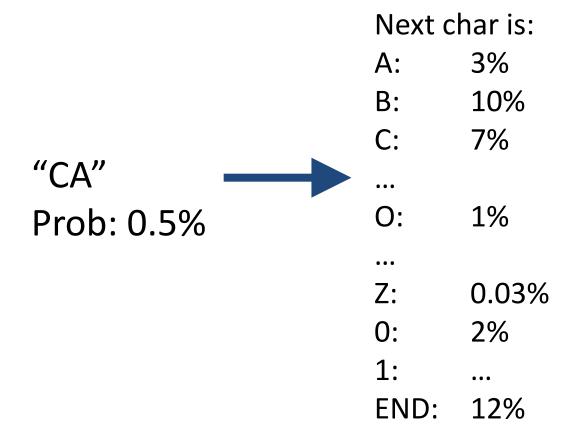


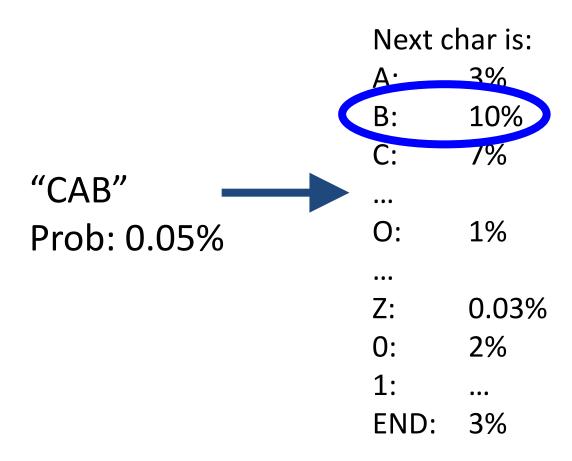
"C"

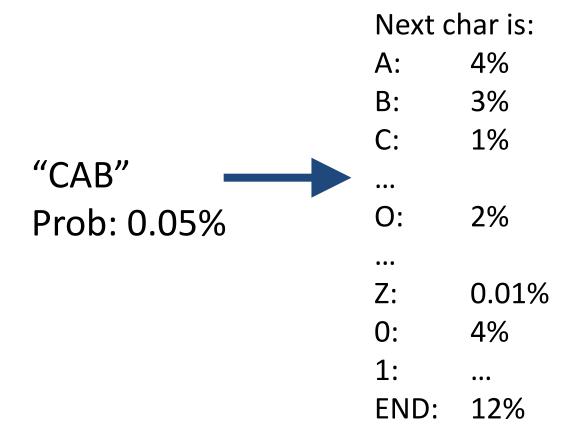
Prob: 5%

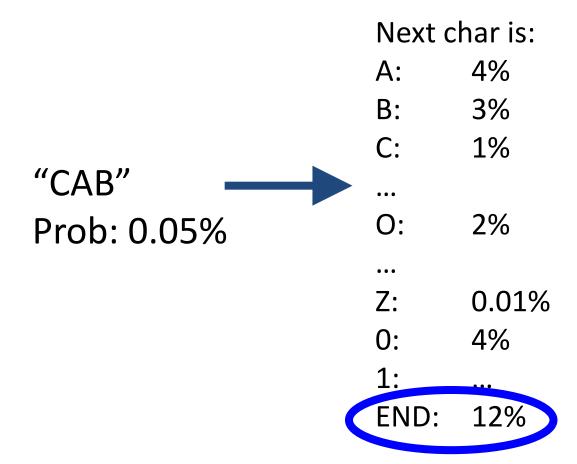












"CAB"

Prob: 0.006%

Generate in Descending Probability Order

```
CAB - 0.006%
```

CAC - 0.0042%

ADD1 - 0.002%

CODE - 0.0013%

• • •

Design Space

- Model size: 3mb (browser) vs. 60mb (GPU)
- Transference learning
 - Novel password-composition policies
- Training data
 - Natural language
- (Many others)