

Data Protection

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MCYBERS, UPC, Fall 2025

Outline

- 1 Stream Ciphers
- 2 Block Ciphers
- 3 Block Chaining Modes
- 4 Key Management
- 5 Message Authentication Codes



Construction Strategies

- **Stream ciphers:** For arbitrarily long messages (e.g., data streams).

A key $k \in \mathcal{K}$ and a nonce r are expanded to a **pseudorandom** stream, $g(r, k)$, used as a one-time pad.

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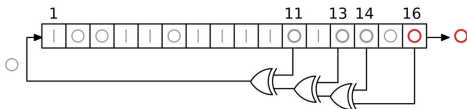
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with a **chaining mode** can encrypt arbitrarily long messages

Examples of stream ciphers

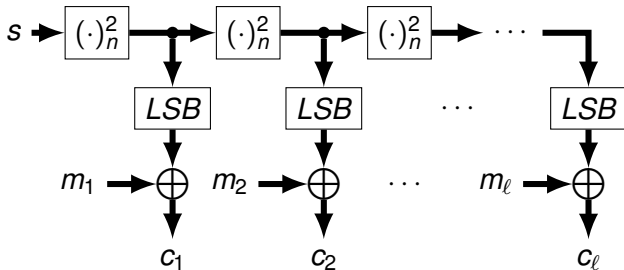
- **Linear Feedback Shift Registers.** Ultra fast but insecure.



(image based on <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=60225898>)

- **Blum-Blum-Shub generator.** Very slow. Provably secure.
- **Non-Linear Feedback Shift Registers.** Very fast. Widely used (GSM, Bluetooth, ...). In general, they lead to weak symmetric encryption schemes.
- **Other designs:** RC4 (obsolete), chacha, ...

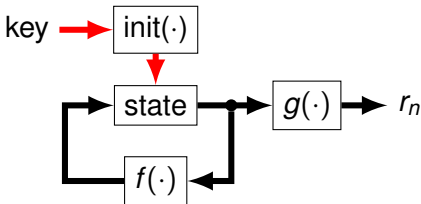
Stream Cipher from Blum-Blum-Shub Generator



$n = pq$, $p = 2p' + 1$, $q = 2q' + 1$
 p, q, p', q' primes (512 to 1024 bits).

RC4 Stream Cipher

- Internal state: a permutation s of $\{0, \dots, 255\}$ and two counters i, j .

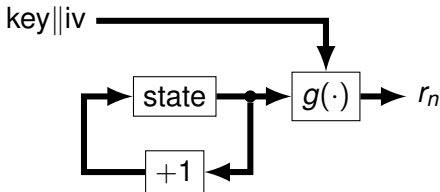


- initial state: computed from the key.
- Every message byte m_n is XORed with the output byte r_n .

- The key is too short (from 40 bits to 128 bits).
- No specified way to use an initialization value (iv).
- Some real systems using RC4 have been attacked.

Chacha Stream Cipher

- Internal state: just a counter i .
- It works with 512 bit words.



- initial state: $i = 0$.
- Every message word m_n is XORed with the output word r_n .

- key has 256 bits and the iv has 64 bits.
- fully parallelizable (random access to words)
- No successful attack is currently known.

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Practical Construction of Block Ciphers

Heuristic constructions based on:

- **Confusion:** every bit in the ciphertext must depend on several bits of the key.
- **Diffusion:** flipping a single plaintext bit must change half of the ciphertext bits.
- **Iteration:** the encryption procedure consists of a given number of rounds.

Structure:

- **Key expansion:** a set of round keys is generated from the original key
- **Mixing** of permutation (**shuffling, shifting...**), substitution (**S-boxes**) and XORing the subkeys in each round.

Example: DES

Key size: 56 bits

Message and ciphertext block size: 64 bits

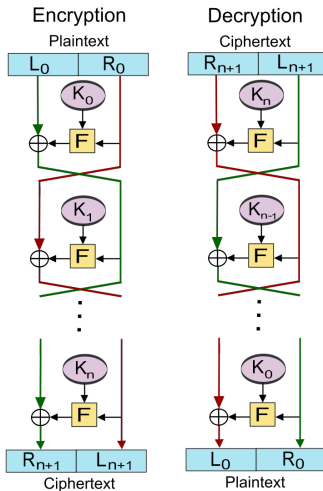
Number of encryption rounds: 16

Key expansion: from 56 bits to 768 bits (16 subkeys, each one of 48 bits)

Encryption rounds: Feistel Network

- Start with the 64 bit message block
- In each iteration, divide the intermediate block into two halves (L_i, R_i)
- Apply a transformation to compute next block
 $(L_{i+1}, R_{i+1}) = (R_i, L_i \oplus F(k_i, R_i))$
- The resulting ciphertext block is (R_{16}, L_{16}) .

Feistel Network



Example: DES (II)

The function F combines:

- Expands the 32 bit half-block into 48 bits, and XORs the round subkey.
- Divides the 48 bits into 8 6-bit words.
- Transforms each word into a 4 bit word with a table (S-box).
- Glues the 4 bit words to obtain a 32 bit half-block.
- Applies a fixed permutation to the 32 bits.

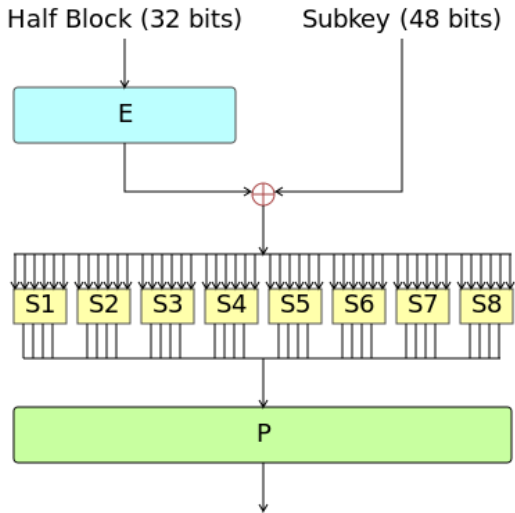
3DES combines three independent keys (168 bits in total) and it is still considered secure.

$$3DES_{k_1, k_2, k_3}(m) = DES_{k_3} \circ DES_{k_2}^{-1} \circ DES_{k_1}(m)$$

More details in

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Data_Encryption_Standard

Example: DES Round Function



Example: AES256

Key size: 256 bits

Message and ciphertext block size: 128 bits (4×4 byte matrix)

Number of encryption rounds: 14

Key expansion: from 256 bits to 1920 bits (15 subkeys, each one a 4×4 matrix of bytes) in an iterative procedure (it adds 4 new bytes in each iteration)

Encryption round:

- Apply a substitution box to each byte
- Perform rotation operations to rows
- Perform linear transformation to columns
- XOR with the round key

More details in

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ECB (Electronic Codebook):

$$c_i = \text{Enc}(k, m_i)$$



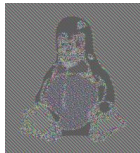
(from Wikipedia)

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Equal message blocks result in equal ciphertext blocks!

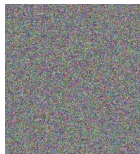
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CBC (Cipher Block Chaining):

$$c_0 = iv$$

$$c_i = \text{Enc}(k, m_i \oplus c_{i-1})$$



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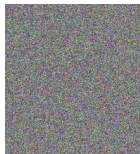
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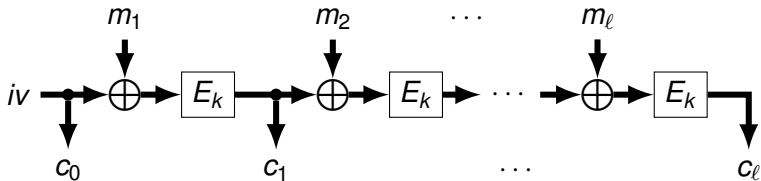
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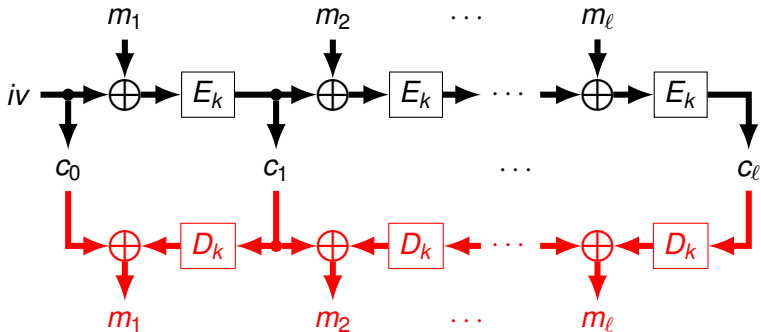
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The ciphertext has an extra random block c_0 , the “initialization vector”

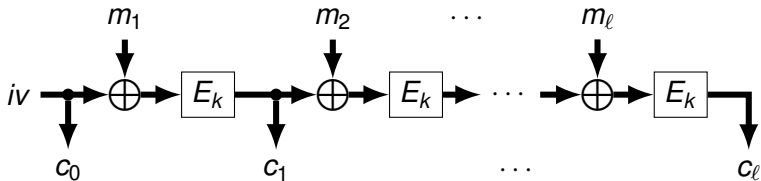
CBC Mode

[▶ Comp...](#)

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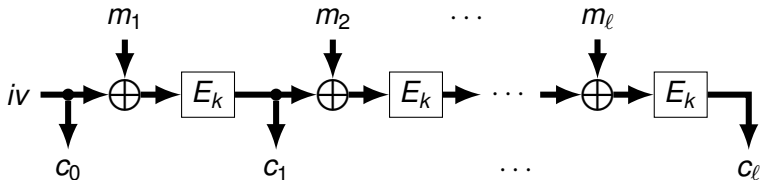
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$$c_i = c_j \Rightarrow m_i \oplus c_{i-1} = m_j \oplus c_{j-1} \Rightarrow m_i \oplus m_j \text{ revealed!}$$

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Collision probability must be small

Other Block Chaining Modes

- CFB (Cipher Feedback) operation mode:

$$c_0 = iv$$

$$c_j = \text{Enc}(k, c_{j-1}) \oplus m_j$$

- OFB (Output Feedback) operation mode:

$$r_0 = iv$$

$$r_j = \text{Enc}(k, r_{j-1})$$

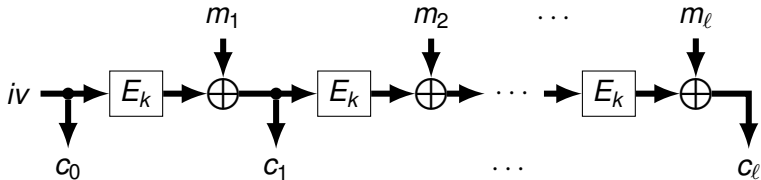
$$c_j = m_j \oplus r_j$$

- CTR (Counter) operation mode:

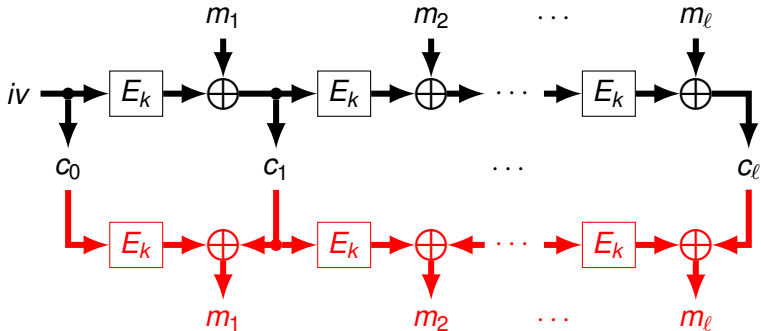
$$r_j = \text{Enc}(k, iv + i)$$

$$c_j = m_j \oplus r_j$$

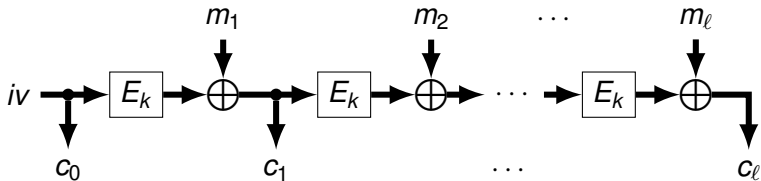
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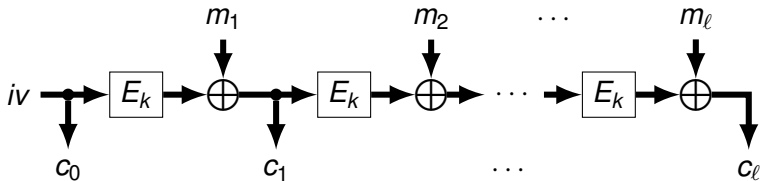
[Comp...](#)

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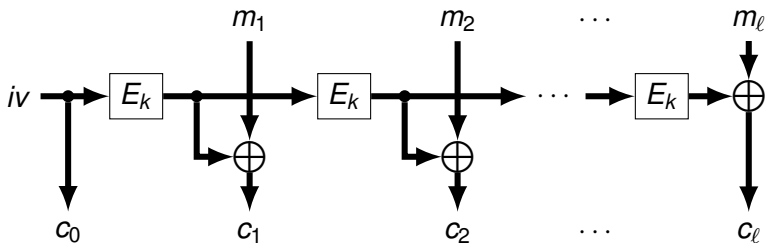
CFB Mode

[▶ Comp...](#)

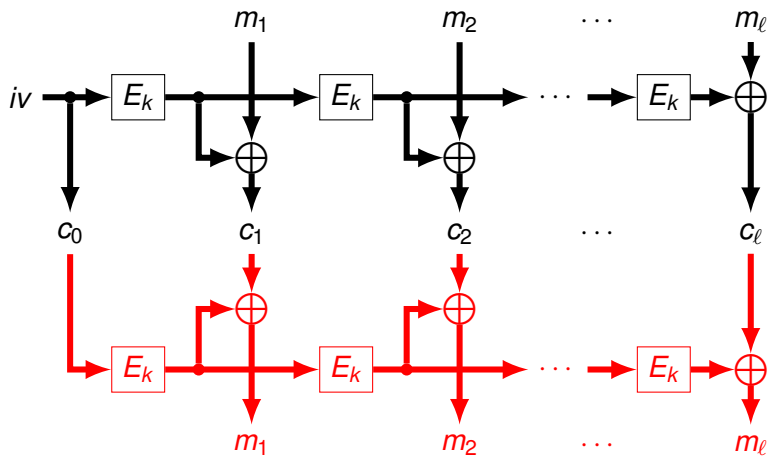
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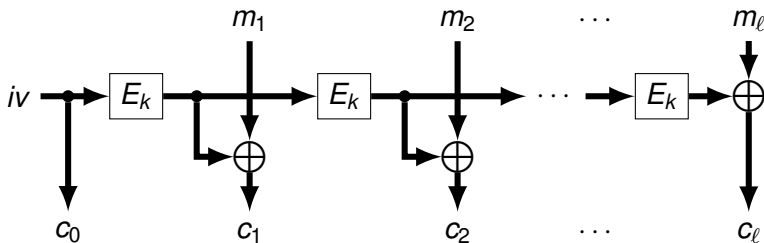
OFB Mode

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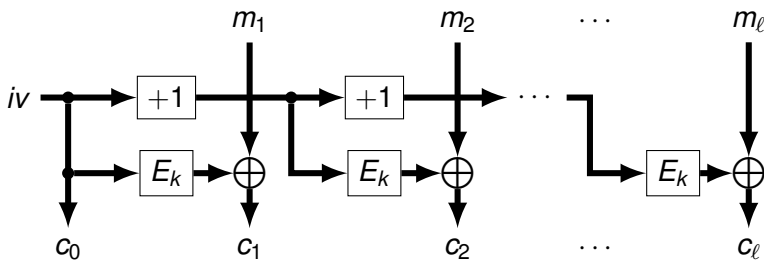
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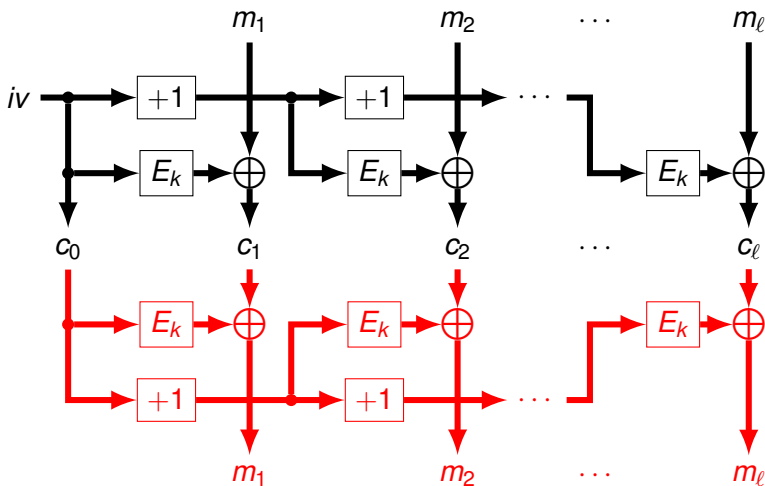
[▶ Comp...](#)

A short cycle of E_k of length r reveals $m_i \oplus m_{i+r}$ for all i

CTR Mode

[▶ Comp...](#)

CTR Mode

[▶ Comp...](#)

Comparison of Block Chaining Modes

- CFB, OFB and CTR require only the encryption box (even for decryption)
- CBC and CFB are “self-synchronizable”
- CTR can use random access for encryption and decryption (i.e., it is parallelizable)
- CBC and CFB decryption are also parallelizable (random access)
- A corrupted *iv* in OFB and CTR makes all blocks undecryptable
- Only ECB and CBC require padding of the last incomplete message block

▶ CBC...

▶ CFB...

▶ OFB...

▶ CTR...

Plaintext Padding

If the last message block is not complete, a bit string is appended such that:

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- It has to not introduce any ambiguity in decryption.

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Example:

- Append a string: “1” followed by zero or more “0”.
- The empty string is not a valid padding. **A last complete block also needs to be padded!**
- In decryption, the last “1” and all trailing zeros (if any) are discarded.

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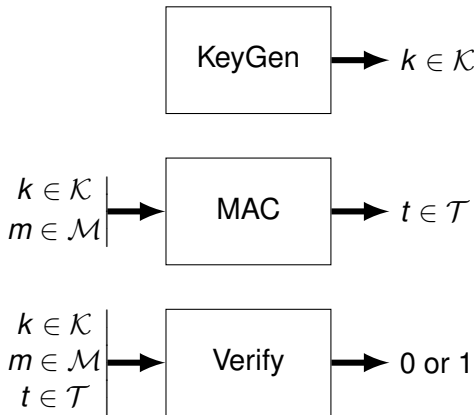
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- Use hierarchical encryption: encrypt some keys under a common dedicated key.
- Can incur in **circularity**: plaintext depending on the key!
- Use a **Key Derivation Function** applied to a passphrase and a (public) nonce.

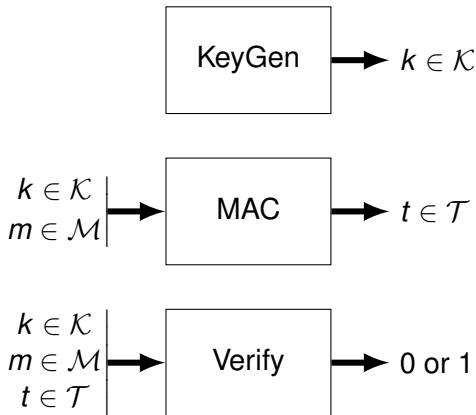
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Message Authentication Codes: Syntax

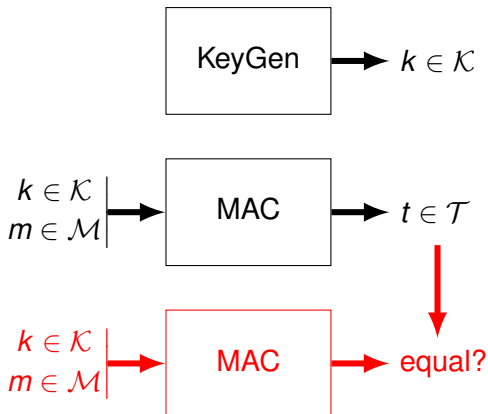


Message Authentication Codes: Correctness



$$\forall m \in \mathcal{M}, \forall k \in \mathcal{K}, \text{Verify}(k, m, \text{MAC}(k, m)) = 1$$

Typical Verification Procedure



$$\text{Verify}(k, m, t) = 1 \Leftrightarrow t = \text{MAC}(k, m)$$

MAC: Perfect Unforgeability

Informal definition:

“Impossible to find a new pair (m', t') from (m, t) without k ”

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Definition (Perfect One-Time Unforgeability)

For a uniformly distributed $K \in \mathcal{K}$ and for any different $m, m' \in \mathcal{M}$, **the tags $\text{MAC}(K, m)$ and $\text{MAC}(K, m')$ are independent random variables.**

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Definition (Perfect n -Times Unforgeability)

For a uniformly distributed $K \in \mathcal{K}$ and for any different $m_1, m_2, \dots, m_n, m' \in \mathcal{M}$, **the $n + 1$ tags $T_1 = \text{MAC}(K, m_1), \dots, T_n = \text{MAC}(K, m_n)$ and $T' = \text{MAC}(K, m')$ are independent random variables.**

One-Time Perfect MAC

q is a ℓ -bit long prime, $\mathcal{M} = \mathcal{T} = \mathbb{Z}_q = \{0, 1, \dots, q - 1\}$ and $\mathcal{K} = \mathbb{Z}_q \times \mathbb{Z}_q$.

Construction

Public Parameters(ℓ) :

Choose a ℓ -bit long prime q ;

output $pp = (q)$;

KeyGen(pp) :

Parse $pp = (q)$;

Choose random $a, b \leftarrow \mathbb{Z}_q$;

output $k = (a, b)$;

MAC(k, m) :

Parse $k = (a, b)$;

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Unforgeability (one time): Even knowing a valid pair $(m, t = am + b)$, still $t' = am' + b$ remains random for any $m' \neq m$.

n -Times Perfect MAC

$$\text{Now } \mathcal{K} = \mathbb{Z}_q^{n+1} = \underbrace{\mathbb{Z}_q \times \dots \times \mathbb{Z}_q}_{n+1 \text{ copies}}$$

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Unforgeability (n times): Even knowing n valid pairs $(m_1, t_1 = P(m_1)), \dots, (m_n, t_n = P(m_n))$, still $t' = P(m')$ remains random for any $m' \notin \{m_1, \dots, m_n\}$. (By Lagrange polynomial interpolation.)

Practical MAC Constructions

Perfect MACs are not practical:

- The key is larger than the message.
- Even in the n -times secure MAC, the key is larger than the size of the n messages together.
- The tag has the same size as the message.

Known efficient (non-perfect) constructions are based on

- hash functions (see next topic)
- block ciphers
- ...

Block Cipher Based MAC

CBC-MAC is a MAC based on any block cipher in CBC mode.

- A short long-term key is used to compute many tags.
- The tag length is independent of the message length.
- The computational complexity is similar to encrypting the message.

Construction

Public Parameters(ℓ) :

Choose a block cipher with message block size ℓ and a padding mechanism;

KeyGen(pp) :

Generate a random key k for the block cipher;

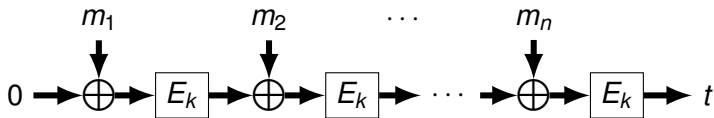
output k ;

MAC(k, m) :

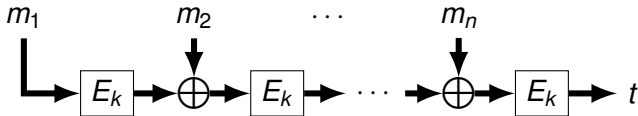
Encrypt (padded) m with key k using CBC mode and taking $iv = 0$;

output the last block of the encryption;

CBC-MAC Diagram



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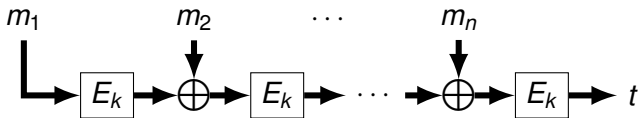


Unforgeability:

- CBC-MAC for messages of a fixed length (exact multiple of the block size) is **proven** to be as secure as the block cipher in CBC mode.

Any attack against CBC-MAC implies a similar attack against the encryption scheme.

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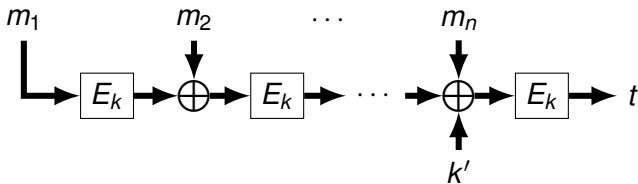
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- A known (concatenation) attack exists against CBC-MAC for any block cipher.

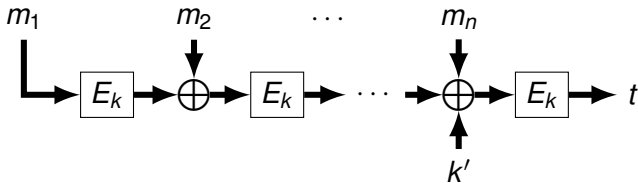
$$t = \text{MAC}(k, m_1, \dots, m_n) = \text{MAC}(k, m_1, \dots, m_n, m_1 \oplus t, m_2, \dots, m_n)$$

One-Key MAC



CMAC solves the variable length security problem of CBC-MAC without increasing the size of the key.

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CMAC solves the variable length security problem of CBC-MAC without increasing the size of the key.

- The last message block is “tweaked” with a key k' derived from k .
- Two different values of k' are generated: one is used when the last block requires to be padded, and the other when no padding is necessary.

Data Protection

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END