



Cookie Crumbles: Unveiling Web Session Integrity Vulnerabilities

Marco Squarcina

TU Wien

 @blueminimal


 <https://infosec.exchange/@minimalblue>

 marco.squarcina@tuwien.ac.at




Pedro Adão

IST, Universidade de Lisboa

 @pedromigueladao

 <https://infosec.exchange/@pedroadao>

 pedro.adao@tecnico.ulisboa.pt



Joint work with **Lorenzo Veronese** and **Matteo Maffei**

Who Are We

- **PhD** @ Ca' Foscari, Venice, IT 🇮🇹
- **Senior Scientist** @ TU Wien, Vienna, AT 🇦🇹
- **Web & Mobile (in)Security**
- **CTF player / organizer** since 2009
- Founder of **mhackeroni** 🍷
(5x **DEF CON CTF** finalist)
Playing with **WE_OWN_YOU** 🇦🇹
- IT security education projects with
ENISA 🇪🇺, **CSA**, formerly **Cyberchallenge.IT**
- <https://minimalblue.com/>



Marco Squarcina

Who Are We



Pedro Adão

- **PhD** @ Técnico-Lisboa, PT 🇵🇹
- **Associate Prof.** @ Técnico-Lisboa, PT 🇵🇹
- **Programming Lang & Web (in)Security**
- **CTF player** since 2013
- Founder of **STT** and **CyberSecurity ChallengePT**
- **Coach Team PT** 🇵🇹 (ECSC 2019-...)
- **Coach Team Europe** 🇪🇺 (ICC 2022, 2023)





Have Weak Integrity

2013



blackhat[®]
EU 2013

THE DEPUTIES ARE STILL CONFUSED

RICH LUNDEEN

2013

2015

Cookies Lack Integrity: Real-World Implications

Xiaofeng Zheng^{1,2,3}, Jian Jiang⁷, Jinjin Liang^{1,2,3}, Haixin Duan^{1,3,4}, Shuo Chen⁵, Tao Wan⁶, and Nicholas Weaver^{4,7}

¹Institute for Network Science and Cyberspace, Tsinghua University

²Department of Computer Science and Technology, Tsinghua University

³Tsinghua National Laboratory for Information Science and Technology

⁴International Computer Science Institute

⁵Microsoft Research Redmond

⁶Huawei Canada

⁷UC Berkeley



Abstract

A cookie can contain a “secure” flag, indicating that it should be only sent over an HTTPS connection. Yet there is no corresponding flag to indicate how a cookie was set: attackers who act as a man-in-the-middle even temporarily on an HTTP session can inject cookies which will be attached to subsequent HTTPS connections. Similar attacks can also be launched by a web attacker from a related domain. Although an acknowledged threat, it has not yet been studied thoroughly. This paper aims to fill this gap with an in-depth empirical assessment of cookie injection attacks. We find that cookie-related vulnerabilities are present in important sites (such as Google and Bank of America), and can be made worse by the implementation weaknesses we discovered in major web browsers (such as Chrome, Firefox, and Safari). Our successful attacks have included privacy violation, on-line victimization, and even financial loss and account

man-in-the-middle (MITM). However, there is no similar measure to protect its integrity from the same adversary: an HTTP response is allowed to set a secure cookie for its domain. An adversary controlling a related domain is also capable to disrupt a cookie’s integrity by making use of the shared cookie scope. Even worse, there is an asymmetry between cookie’s read and write operations involving pathing, enabling more subtle form of cookie integrity violation.

The lack of cookie integrity is a known problem, noted in the current specification [2]. However, the real-world implications are under-appreciated. Although the problem has been discussed by several previous researchers [4, 5, 30, 32, 24, 23], none provided in-depth and real-world empirical assessment. Attacks enabled by merely injecting malicious cookies could be elusive, and the consequence could be serious. For example, a cautious user might only visit news websites at open wireless

2013

2015

2019

Cookies Lack I

Xiaofeng Zheng^{1,2,3}, Jian Jiang⁷, Ji

¹Institute for Network

²Department of Compu

³Tsinghua National Lab

⁴Intern

⁵M



Abstract

A cookie can contain a “secure” flag, indi should be only sent over an HTTPS connect is no corresponding flag to indicate how set: attackers who act as a man-in-the-middle porarily on an HTTP session can inject co will be attached to subsequent HTTPS connilar attacks can also be launched by a web at related domain. Although an acknowledged not yet been studied thoroughly. This pape this gap with an in-depth empirical assessm injection attacks. We find that cookie-relate ities are present in important sites (such as Bank of America), and can be made wors plementation weaknesses we discovered in browsers (such as Chrome, Firefox, and successful attacks have included privacy v lica victimization, and even financial loss

The cookie monster in our browsers



@filedescriptor
HITCON 2019

2013

2015

2019

2023

blackhat

Cookies Lack Integrity


Xiaofeng Zheng^{1,2,3}, Jian Jiang⁷, Ji

8.6. Weak Integrity

Cookies do not provide integrity guarantees for sibling domains (and their subdomains). For example, consider `foo.site.example` and `bar.site.example`. The `foo.site.example` server can set a cookie with a Domain attribute of "`site.example`" (possibly overwriting an existing "`site.example`" cookie set by `bar.site.example`), and the user agent will include that cookie in HTTP requests to `bar.site.example`. In the worst case, `bar.site.example` will be unable to distinguish this cookie from a cookie it set itself. The `foo.site.example` server might be able to leverage this ability to mount an attack against `bar.site.example`. [...]

An active network attacker can also inject cookies into the Cookie header field sent to `https://site.example/` by impersonating a response from `http://site.example/` and injecting a Set-Cookie header field. The HTTPS server at `site.example` will be unable to distinguish these cookies from cookies that it set itself in an HTTPS response. An active network attacker might be able to leverage this ability to mount an attack against `site.example` even if `site.example` uses HTTPS exclusively. [...]

Finally, an attacker might be able to force the user agent to delete cookies by storing a large number of cookies. Once the user agent reaches its storage limit, the user agent will be forced to evict some cookies. Servers SHOULD NOT rely upon user agents retaining cookies.

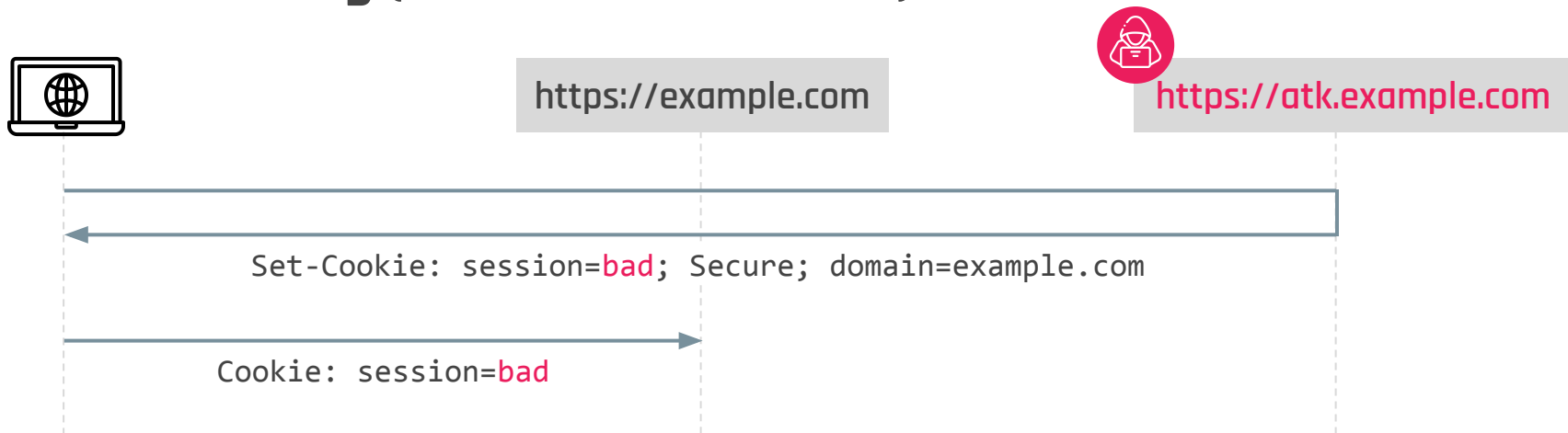


cookie monster our browsers

@filedescriptor
HITCON 2019

rfc6265bis-12

Cookie Tossing (Same-site Attacker)

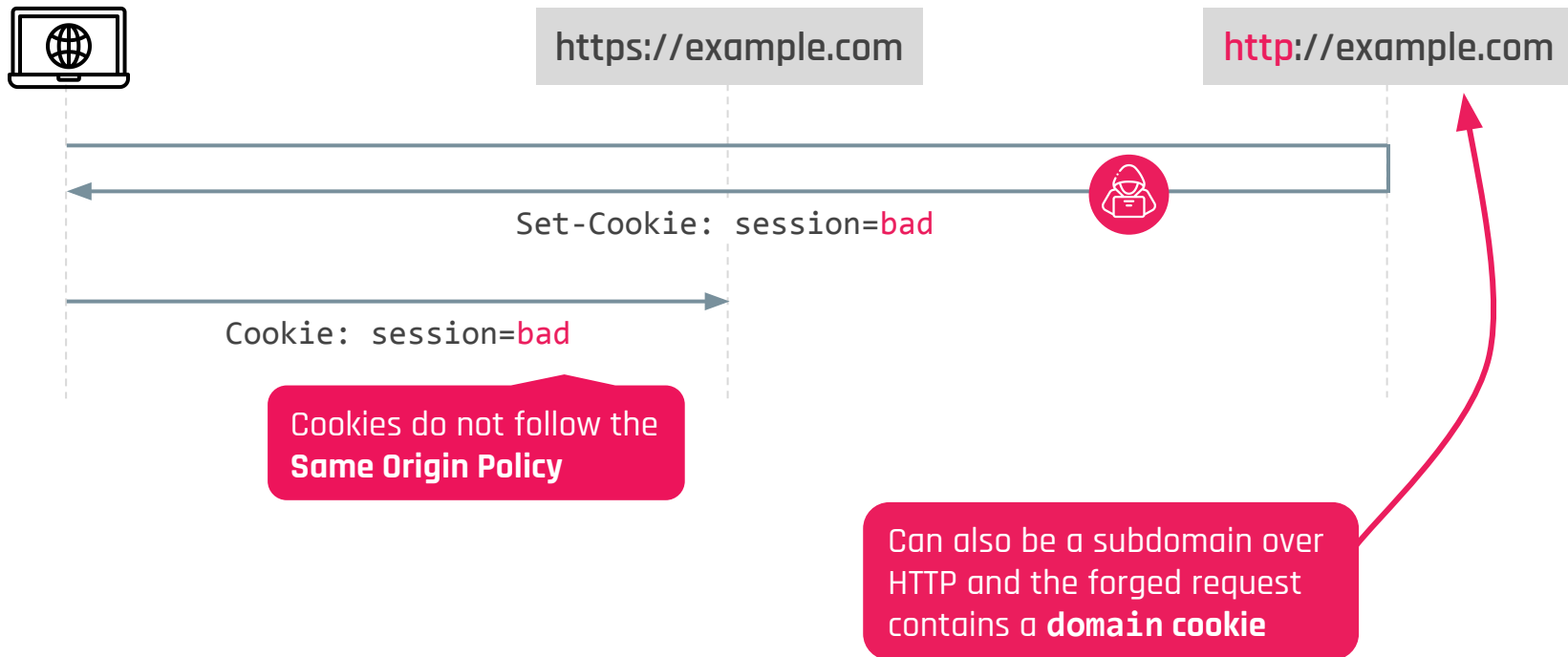


Attributes				Flags		
Expires	Max-Age	Domain	Path	SameSite	Secure	HttpOnly

Path useful to
prioritize cookies

SameSite does
not matter here!

Cookie Tossing (Network Attacker)



Cookie Eviction (Same-site & Network Attacker)



https://example.com



https://atk.example.com

Cookie: session=good

Name ▲	Value	Domain	Path	E...	S...	HttpOnly
session	good	example.com	/	S...	11	✓

Cookie Eviction (Same-site & Network Attacker)



https://example.com



https://atk.example.com

Cookie: session=good

Name	Value	Domain	Path	E...	S...	HttpOnly
session	good	example.com	/	S...	11	✓

Set-Cookie: x0=_

...

Set-Cookie: x199=_

Set-Cookie: session=bad; domain=example.com

```
> for(i=0;i<200;i++) document.cookie=`x${i}=_`;
< 'x199=_ '
> document.cookie = 'session=bad; domain=example.com';
< 'session=bad; domain=example.com'
```

Cookie Eviction (Same-site & Network Attacker)



https://example.com



https://atk.example.com

Cookie: session=**good**

Name	Value	Domain	Path	E...	S...	HttpOnly
session	bad	.example.co...	/	S...	10	<input type="checkbox"/>

Set-Cookie: x0=_

...

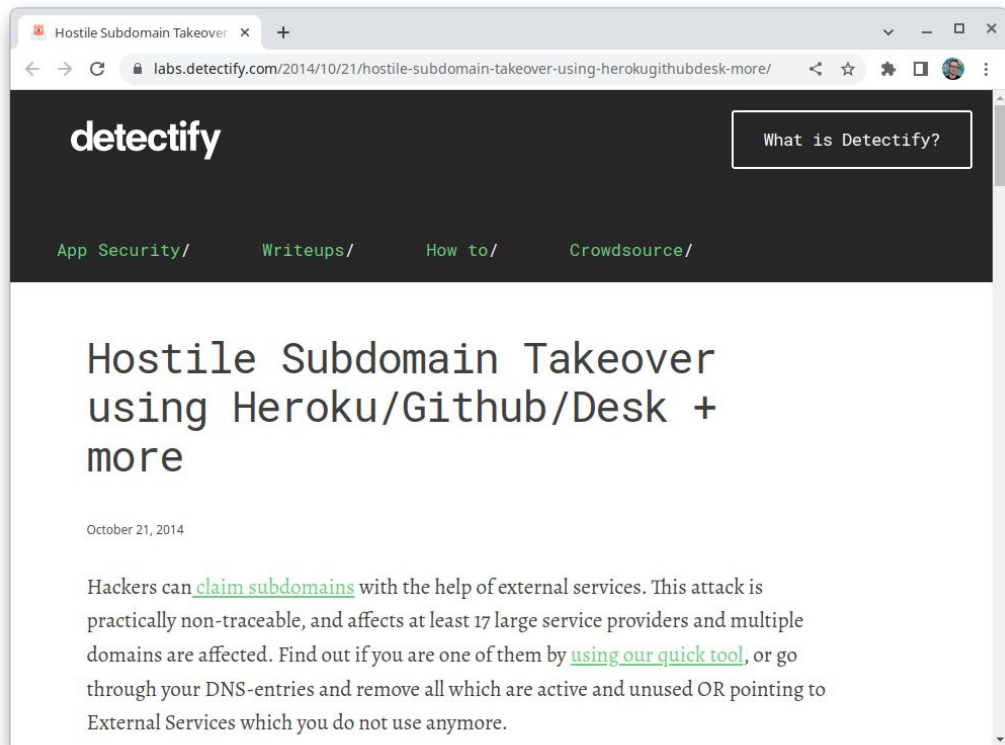
Set-Cookie: x199=_

Set-Cookie: session=**bad**; domain=example.com

Cookie: session=**bad**

```
> for(i=0;i<200;i++) document.cookie=`x${i}=_`;
< 'x199=_'
> document.cookie = 'session=bad; domain=example.com';
< 'session=bad; domain=example.com'
```

Threat Models



Dangling DNS Records

**Discontinued
Services**

Threat Models

1520 vulnerable subdomains

Can I Take Your Subdomain? Exploring Same-Site Attacks in the Modern Web

Marco Squarcina¹ Mauro Tempesta¹ Lorenzo Veronese¹ Stefano Calzavara² Matteo Maffei¹
¹ TU Wien ² Università Ca' Foscari Venezia & OWASP



2021

Abstract

Related-domain attackers control a sibling domain of their target web application, e.g., as the result of a subdomain takeover. Despite their additional power over traditional web attackers, related-domain attackers received only limited attention from the research community. In this paper we define and quantify for the first time the threats that related-domain attackers pose to web application security. In particular, we first clarify the capabilities that related-domain attackers can acquire through different attack vectors, showing that different instances of the related-domain attacker concept are worth attention. We then study how these capabilities can be abused to compromise web application security by focusing on different angles, including cookies, CSP, CORS, postMessage, and domain relaxation. By building on this framework, we report on a large-scale security measurement on the top 50k domains from the Tranco list that led to the discovery of vulnerabilities in 887 sites, where we quantified the threats posed by related-domain attackers to popular web applications.

attacker is traditionally defined as a web attacker with an extra twist, i.e., its malicious website is hosted on a sibling domain of the target web application. For instance, when reasoning about the security of `www.example.com`, one might assume that a related-domain attacker controls `evil.example.com`. The privileged position of a related-domain attacker endows it, for instance, with the ability to compromise cookie confidentiality and integrity, because cookies can be shared between domains with a common ancestor, reflecting the assumption underlying the original Web design that related domains are under the control of the same entity. Since client authentication on the Web is mostly implemented on top of cookies, this represents a major security threat.

`cnn.com, nih.gov, cisco.com, f-secure.com, harvard.edu, lenovo.com, ...`

Dangling DNS Records

Discontinued Services

Corporate Networks

Expired Domains

Roaming Services

Deprovisioned Cloud Instances

Dynamic DNS Providers

Threat Models

Can I Take Your Subdomain? Exploring Same-Site

Marco Squarcina¹ Mauro Tempesta¹ Lorenzo Veronese¹ Stefano
¹ TU Wien ² Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

Abstract

Related-domain attackers control a sibling domain of their target web application, e.g., as the result of a subdomain takeover. Despite their additional power over traditional web attackers, related-domain attackers received only limited attention from the research community. In this paper we define and quantify for the first time the threats that related-domain attackers pose to web application security. In particular, we first clarify the capabilities that related-domain attackers can acquire through different attack vectors, showing that different instances of the related-domain attacker concept are worth attention. We then study how these capabilities can be abused to compromise web application security by focusing on different angles, including cookies, CSP, CORS, postMessage, and domain relaxation. By building on this framework, we report on a large-scale security measurement on the top 50k domains from the Tranco list that led to the discovery of vulnerabilities in 887 sites, where we quantified the threats posed by related-domain attackers to popular web applications.

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Web Almanac
By HTTP Archive

Web Almanac

HTTP Archive's annual
state of the web report

Our mission is to combine the raw stats and trends of the HTTP Archive with the expertise of the web community. The Web Almanac is a comprehensive report on the state of the web, backed by real data and trusted web experts. The 2022 edition is comprised of 23 chapters spanning aspects of page content, user experience, publishing, and distribution.

Start exploring

cnn.com
f-secure.com
lenovo.com, ...

90% of websites deploy
partial HSTS
(no IncludeSubdomain)



Session Fixation & Login CSRF



Session Fixation

- bank.com **does not refresh the session ID after login**
- Attacker obtains a pre-session `sid=s1` and tosses that cookie into Bob's browser
- Bob authenticates, promoting `sid=s1` to an authenticated session
- **Attacker hijacks Bob's session** using `s1`

Login CSRF

- Attacker has an account on bank.com, with cookie `sid=s2`
- Attacker tosses that cookie into Bob's browser
- When Bob visits bank.com, Bob is **authenticated as the attacker**, leaking sensitive information that can be later accessed by the attacker

Cross-Origin Request Forgery (CORF)



https://bank.com

https://atk.bank.com



POST /action

Cookie: s=x; csrf=y
- csrf-tok=y



Done!

Double-Submit

```
if cookie(csrf)==POST(csrf-tok):  
    return True  
return False
```

Cross-Origin Request Forgery (CORF)



https://bank.com

https://atk.bank.com

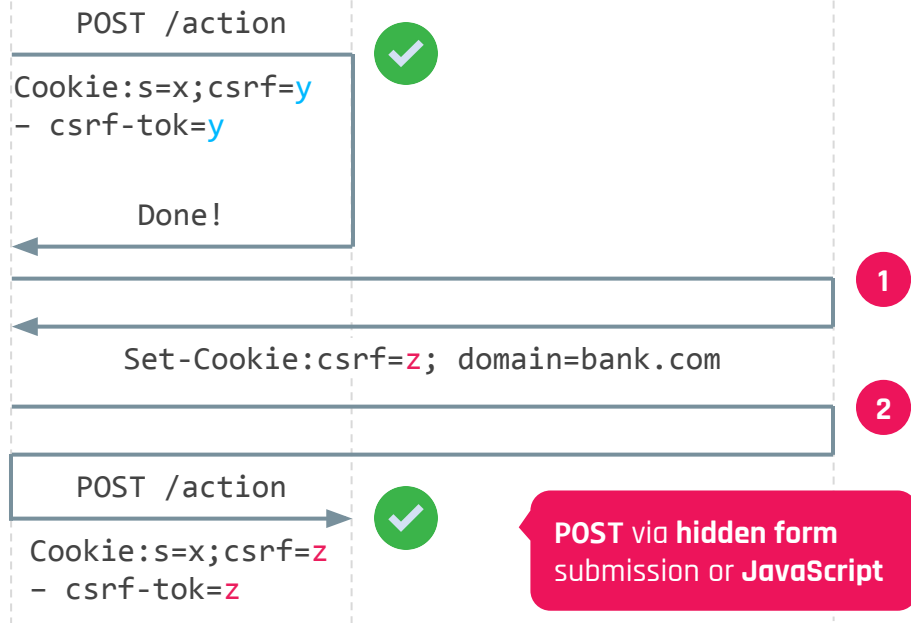


Double-Submit

```
if cookie(csrf)==POST(csrf-tok):  
    return True  
return False
```

Wrong assumption: attacker can only manipulate the token, but not the cookie!

Trivially **vulnerable** against same-site attackers, just **toss** and **submit!**



Synchronizer Token Pattern

- Fixes Double Submit problems by **binding the CSRF token to the session**
- Store a **CSRF secret in the session** and use it to **generate CSRF tokens**

`generate_func(CSRF_secret, params...) = CSRF_token`

Attached to HTTP requests via hidden form field

Session  := `<id, CSRF_secret>`

Stored in the session

Verify := `generate_func(CSRF_secret, params...) == CSRF_token`

- Overwrite the session cookie? Deauth the user, **NO CORF**, attacker sad :'(

Synchronizer Token Pattern (Flask-login + Flask-WTF)



https://bank.com

1

GET /login

```
<input csrf_token=t0 type="hidden">
```

```
Set-Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=None}#sign
```

2

POST /login

```
Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=None}#sign  
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t0
```

```
Hi Bob <input csrf_token=t1 type="hidden">
```

```
Set-Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=bob}#sign
```

3

POST /action

```
Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=bob}#sign  
- csrf_token=t1
```

```
s = sha1(os.urandom(64)).hexdigest()
```

```
t0 = exp_time0##HMAC(SECRET,s#exp_time0)
```

```
t1 = exp_time1##HMAC(SECRET,s#exp_time1)
```

Verification:

```
exp_time, hmac = token.split("##")  
if hmac == HMAC(SECRET, s#exp_time):  
    return True  
return False
```



Synchronizer Token Pattern (Flask-login + Flask-WTF)



https://bank.com

1

GET /login

```
<input csrf_token=t0 type="hidden">
```

```
Set-Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=None}#sign
```

2

POST /login

```
Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=None}#sign  
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t0
```

```
Hi Bob <input csrf_token=t1 type="hidden">
```

```
Set-Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=bob}#sign
```

3

POST /action

```
Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=bob}#sign  
- csrf_token=t1
```

```
s = sha1(os.urandom(64)).hexdigest()
```

```
t0 = exp_time0##HMAC(SECRET,s#exp_time0)
```

```
t1 = exp_time1##HMAC(SECRET,s#exp_time1)
```

Verification:

```
exp_time, hmac = token.split("##")  
if hmac == HMAC(SECRET, s#exp_time):  
    return True  
return False
```

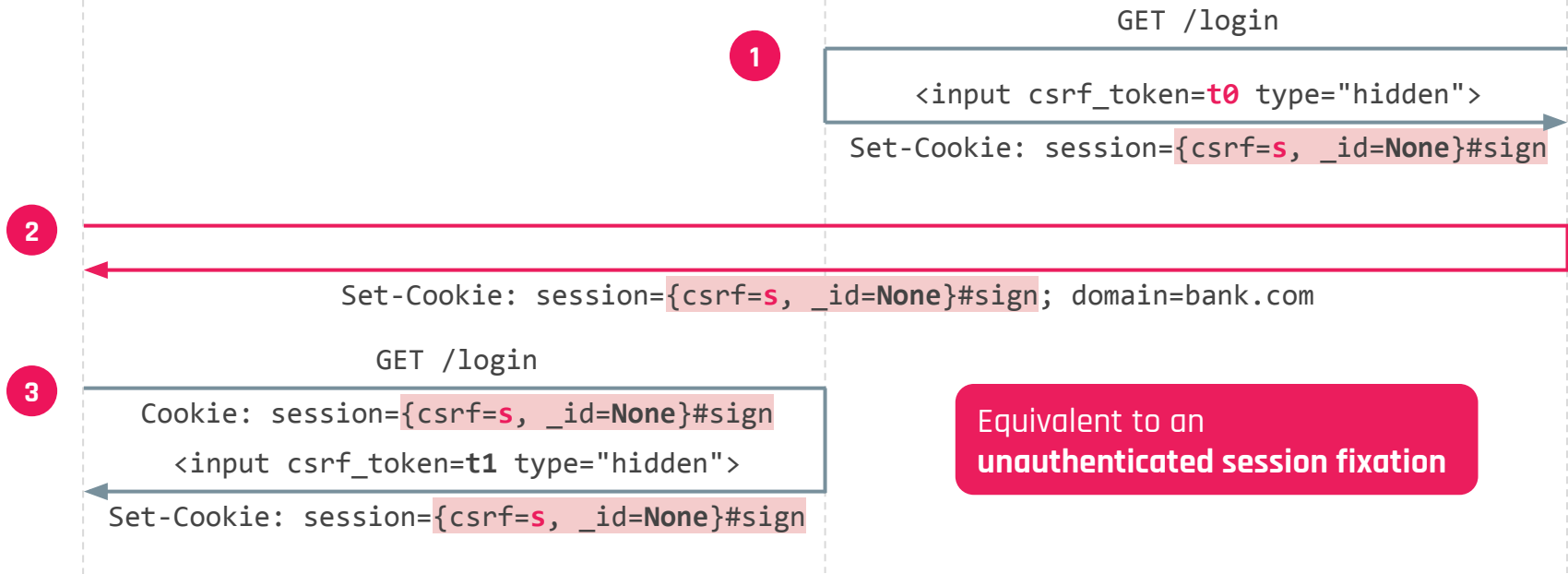


CORF Token Fixation (Flask-login + Flask-WTF)



https://bank.com

https://atk.bank.com



Equivalent to an **unauthenticated session fixation**

CORF Token Fixation (Flask-login + Flask-WTF)



https://bank.com



https://atk.bank.com

4

POST /login

```
Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=None}#sign  
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t1
```

Welcome Bob!

```
Set-Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=bob}#sign
```



Bob authenticates

CORF Token Fixation (Flask-login + Flask-WTF)



https://bank.com



https://atk.bank.com

4

POST /login

```
Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=None}#sign  
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t1
```



Bob authenticates

Welcome Bob!

```
Set-Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=bob}#sign
```

5

POST /action

```
Cookie: session={csrf=s, _id=bob}#sign  
- csrf_token=t0
```



The **CSRF secret s** is not refreshed during login!
The **CSRF token t0** known by the attacker is valid for Bob's session!

CORF Token Fixation

- Bypasses faulty implementations of the **Synchronizer Token Pattern**
- Caused by the **CSRF secret** in the session **not being renewed** upon login
- The attacker does not need to know the CSRF secret, but only an **unauthenticated session id** and a **valid CSRF token** for that session
- Works against **server-side** and **client-side** session handling implementations
- User already logged-in? No problem, **force a deauth** and toss the attacker's pre-session, either via eviction or request to `/logout` endpoint

CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://bank.com

1

GET /login

<input csrf_token=t0 type="hidden">

Set-Cookie: session=sess0

```
__ci_last_regenerate|i:1690849755;  
csrf_test_name|s:32:"47be9758fe558  
98f1958bd201764a0be";
```

CSRF secret s0

CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://bank.com

1

GET /login

```
<input csrf_token=t0 type="hidden">
```

Set-Cookie: session=sess0

2

POST /login

Cookie: session=sess0

- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t0

Welcome Bob!

Set-Cookie: session=sess1

```
__ci_last_regenerate|i:1690849755;  
csrf_test_name|s:32:"1f5b0c83a29e9  
f9725d219e53a6d2be1";
```



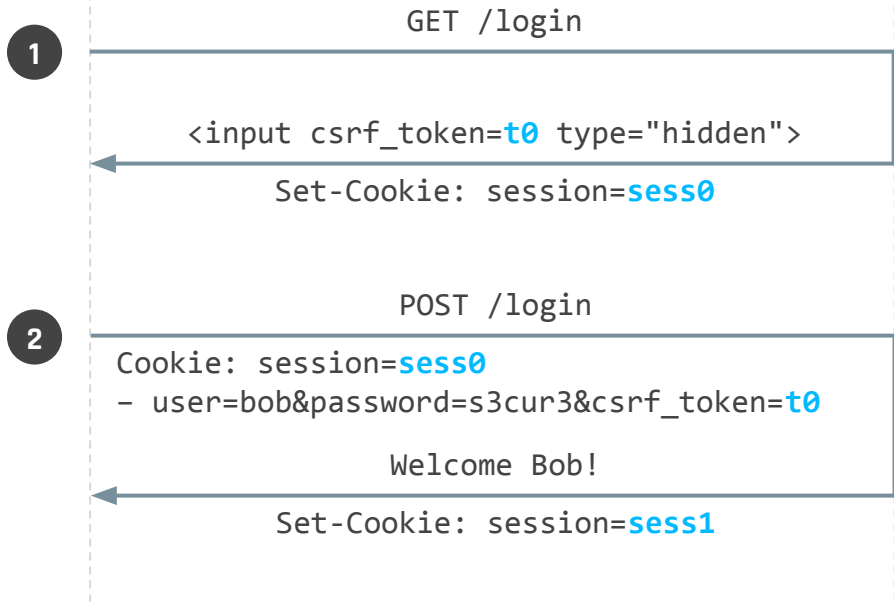
```
__ci_last_regenerate|i:1690849755;  
csrf_test_name|s:32:"1f5b0c83a29e9  
f9725d219e53a6d2be1";user|a:1:{s:2  
:"id";s:1:"1";}
```

CSRF secret s1

CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://bank.com



```
__ci_last_regenerate|i:1690849755;
csrf_test_name|s:32:"1f5b0c83a29e9
f9725d219e53a6d2be1";
```

CSRF secret s1



```
__ci_last_regenerate|i:169084975;
csrf_test_name|s:32:"1f5b0c83a29e9
f9725d219e53a6d2be1";user|a:1:{s:2
:"id";s:1:"1";}
```

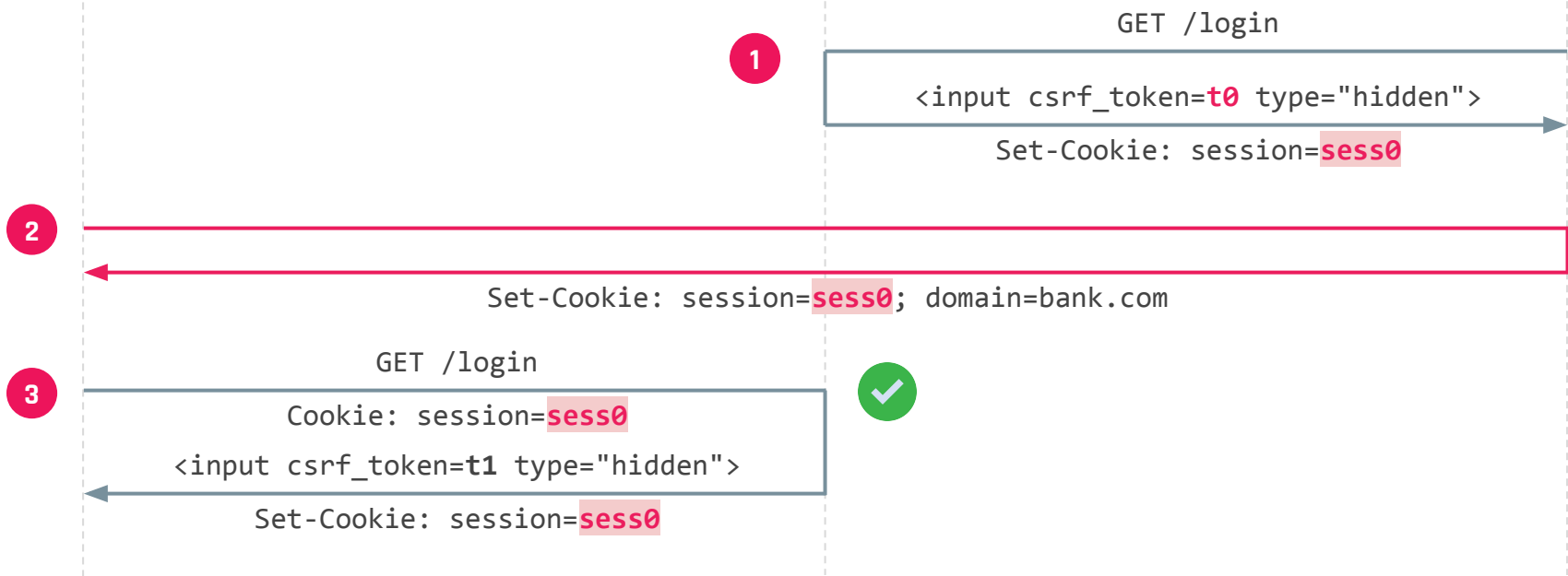
CSRF secret s1

CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://bank.com

https://atk.bank.com



CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://bank.com

4

POST /login

Cookie: session=**sess0**
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t1

Welcome Bob!

Set-Cookie: session=**sess1**

Bob authenticates. A new
CSRF secret s1 is generated
for **session sess1**



 CodeIgniter



https://atk.bank.com

CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://bank.com



https://atk.bank.com

4

POST /login

Cookie: session=**sess0**
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t1

Welcome Bob!

Set-Cookie: session=**sess1**



The CSRF token **t0** known by the attacker (associated with **s0**) is no longer valid for Bob's session **sess1**!

Bob authenticates. A new **CSRF secret s1** is generated for **session sess1**

CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://bank.com



https://atk.bank.com

4

POST /login

Cookie: session=**sess0**
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t1

Welcome Bob!

Set-Cookie: session=**sess1**

Bob authenticates. A new
CSRF secret s1 is generated
for **session sess1**



The CSRF token **t0** known by the attacker (associated with **s0**) is no longer valid for Bob's session **sess1**!

But **sess0** was also updated with the new CSRF secret **s1**

CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://bank.com



https://atk.bank.com

4

POST /login

Cookie: session=**sess0**
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t1



Welcome Bob!

Set-Cookie: session=**sess1**

5

GET /login

Cookie: session=**sess0**
<input csrf_token=**t2** type="hidden">

Set-Cookie: session=**sess0**

CORF Token Fixation (CodeIgniter4)



https://atk.bank.com

https://bank.com



4

POST /login

Cookie: session=**sess0**
- user=bob&password=s3cur3&csrf_token=t1



Welcome Bob!

Set-Cookie: session=**sess1**

5

GET /login

Cookie: session=**sess0**
<input csrf_token=**t2** type="hidden">
Set-Cookie: session=**sess0**

6

POST /action

Cookie: session=**sess1**
- csrf_token=**t2**



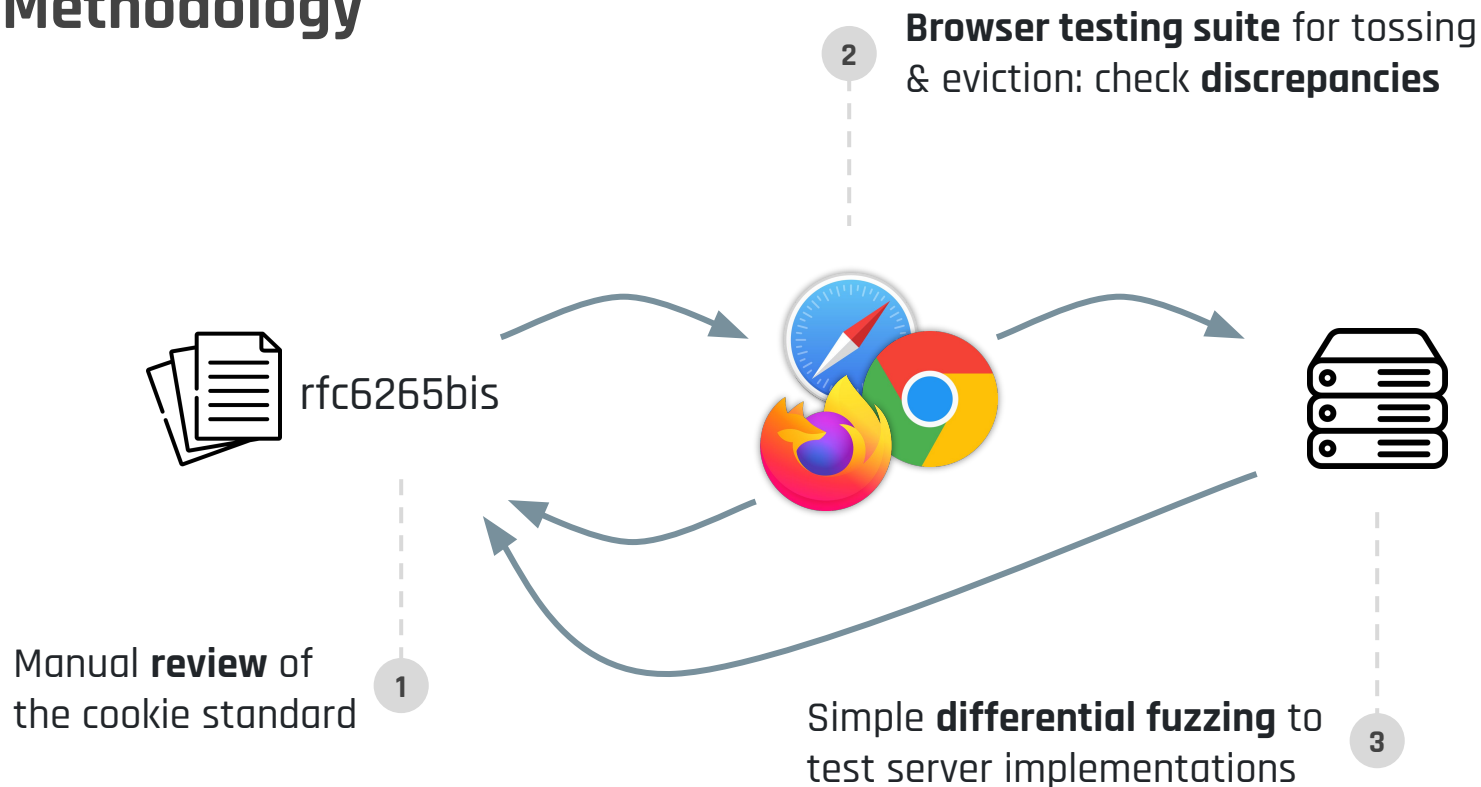
Web Frameworks Analysis

Framework (9/13 vulnerable)	Broken STP	Default DS	Session Fixation	
Express (passport + csrf)	●		●	CVE-2022-25896
Koa (koa-passport + csrf)	●			
Fastify (fastify/passport + csrf-protection)	●	●	●	CVE-2023-29020 CVE-2023-27495 CVE-2023-29019
Sails* (csrf)	●		●	
Flask (flask-login+flask-wtf)	●			
Tornado		●		
Symfony (security-bundle)	●			CVE-2022-24895
CodeIgniter4 (shield)	●	●		CVE-2022-35943
Yii2		●		

*affects the bootstrap template app

Are Getting Better?

Methodology



Strict Secure



http://atk.bank.com



https://bank.com

Set-Cookie: session=good; Secure



Set-Cookie: session=bad

HTTP Working Group
Internet-Draft
Updates: [6265](#) (if approved)
Intended status: Standards Track
Expires: March 9, 2017

M. West
Google, Inc
September 5, 2016

Deprecate modification of 'secure' cookies from non-secure origins
draft-ietf-httpbis-cookie-alone-01

Browsers now **block setting a cookie without the Secure flag** if there is already a secure cookie in that site with the same name.

Prevents tossing from network attackers. Also **eviction doesn't work** as secure cookies are partitioned separately from non-secure cookies.



Prefixes



https://atk.bank.com



https://bank.com

Set-Cookie: __Host-session=good;
Secure; Path=/
←



Set-Cookie: Host-session=bad; Secure;
Path=/.; domain=bank.com
←

HTTP Working Group
Internet-Draft
Updates: [6265](#) (if approved)
Intended status: Standards Track
Expires: August 26, 2016

M. West
Google, Inc
February 23, 2016

Cookie Prefixes
draft-ietf-httpbis-cookie-prefixes-00

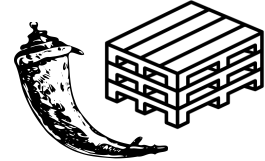
__Secure- cookies must be set from a secure origin and include the Secure attribute.

__Host- cookies, additionally, must **NOT be set with the Domain** attribute and **Path=**/.

__Host- cookies are **high-integrity cookies** even against same-site attackers!



Collisions

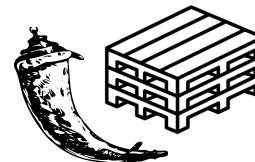


Werkzeug <2.2.3

Set-Cookie:	Cookie:	Key	Value	Server <key, value>
foo=	foo=	foo		<foo, >
=foo	foo		foo	
=foo=	foo=		foo=	
==foo	=foo		=foo	
foo	foo		foo	



Collisions

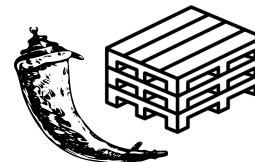


Werkzeug <2.2.3

Set-Cookie:	Cookie:	Key	Value	Server <key, value>
foo=	foo=	foo		<foo, >
=foo	foo		foo	<foo, >
=foo=	foo=		foo=	<foo, >
==foo	=foo		=foo	<foo, >
foo	foo		foo	<foo, >



Collisions



Werkzeug <2.2.3

Set

foo

=foo

=foo

==foo

foo

[RFC6265bis] Accept nameless cookies. (#1018)

Browse files

This patch alters the cookie parsing algorithm to treat `Set-Cookie: token` as creating a cookie with an empty name and a value of "token". It also rejects cookies with neither names nor values (e.g. `Set-Cookie:` and `Set-Cookie: =`).

Closes [#159](#).

main (#1018)

draft-ietf-httpbis-unprompted-auth-02 ... b68e4ff

committed on Jan 10, 2020

1 parent [c43cdae](#) commit [0178223](#)

Server <key, value>

<foo, >

<foo, >

<foo, >

<foo, >

<foo, >

Bypassing __Host-



<http://atk.bank.com>



<https://bank.com>

Set-Cookie: __Host-session=good;
Secure; Path=/
←

Bypassing __Host-



<http://atk.bank.com>



<https://bank.com>

Set-Cookie: __Host-session=good;
Secure; Path=/

Set-Cookie: **=__Host-session=bad**; Path=/app;
domain=bank.com

Bypassing __Host-



<http://atk.bank.com>



<https://bank.com>

Set-Cookie: __Host-session=good;
Secure; Path=/
←

Set-Cookie: **=__Host-session=bad;** Path=/app;
domain=bank.com
←

Cookie: **__Host-session=bad;**
__Host-session=good;
→

Bypassing __Host-



http://atk.bank.com



https://bank.com

CVE-2022-2860*

CVE-2022-40958*

Set-Cookie: __Host-session=good;
Secure; Path=/

Set-Cookie: **=__Host-session=bad**; Path=/app;
domain=bank.com

Cookie: **__Host-session=bad**;
__Host-session=good;

Fixed in browsers and rfc6265bis by blocking nameless cookies with value starting for **__Host-** or **__Secure-**

* Reported almost simultaneously with **Axel Chong**, our issues were merged to jointly discuss mitigations and additional security implications. See also <https://github.com/httpwg/http-extensions/issues/2229>


Bypassing `__Host-` (after the **fix**)



Amazon API Gateway

CVE-2022-2860*

CVE-2022-40958*

- **Serialization collisions** could still be used to bypass `__Host-` against chains of `pair`s 
- Fixed in **AWS Lambda proxy integration for HTTP APIs** after our report

Fixed in browsers and rfc6265bis by blocking nameless cookies with value starting for `__Host-` or `__Secure-`

* Reported almost simultaneously with **Axel Chong**, our issues were merged to jointly discuss mitigations and additional security implications. See also <https://github.com/httpwg/http-extensions/issues/2229>

Bypassing Strict Secure



<http://atk.bank.com>



<https://bank.com>

Set-Cookie: session=good; Secure

Set-Cookie: =session=bad; Path=/app;
domain=bank.com

Cookie: session=bad; session=good;

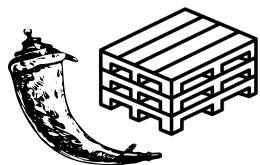
Still working!

Set-Cookie: =session=bad

Name	Value	Domain	Path	E...	S...	H...	Secure
session	good	bank.com	/	S...	11		✓
	session=bad	.bank.com	/app	S...	11		

Bypassing `__Host-` (with the help of the **server**)

- Popular programming languages / Web frameworks **diverge from the spec**
- Client / server inconsistencies. Security implications?



Werkzeug <2.2.3

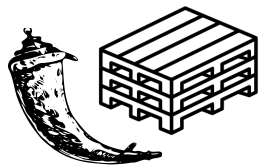
Cookie: `__Host-sess=bad`

Cookie: `=__Host-sess=bad`

Cookie: `=====__Host-sess=bad`

Bypassing `__Host-` (with the help of the **server**)

- Popular programming languages / Web frameworks **diverge from the spec**
- Client / server inconsistencies. Security implications?



Werkzeug <2.2.3

CVE-2023-23934

Cookie: `__Host-sess=bad`
Cookie: `=__Host-sess=bad`
Cookie: `=====__Host-sess=bad`

Parsed as the
same cookie

Leading '=' are stripped out while parsing the cookie string!

Bypass with, e.g.,

Set-Cookie: `==__Host-sess=bad`

Bypassing `_Host-` (with the help of the **server**)

- Popular programming languages / Web frameworks **diverge from the spec**
- Client / server inconsistencies. Security implications?



PHP <8.1.11

Cookie:  Host-sess=bad
Cookie:  Host-sess=bad
Cookie:  Host-sess=bad

Parsed as the
same cookie



Bypassing `__Host-` (with the help of the **server**)

- Popular programming languages / Web frameworks **diverge from the spec**
- Client / server inconsistencies. Security implications?



PHP <8.1.11

CVE-2022-31629

Cookie:  Host-sess=bad
Cookie:  Host-sess=bad
Cookie:  Host-sess=bad



Parsed as the
same cookie

`register_globals` heritage:
' ' . [are replaced by `_` in the
`$_COOKIE` superglobal array

Did you know? Cookie: `a[b]=c`
Parsed as `{"a":{"b":"c"}}`



Desynchronization Issues

- 1 `https://bank.com` set a secure 
Set-Cookie: `sess=good`; Secure
- 2 `http://bank.com` sets a non-secure  vja JS
`document.cookie = 'sess=bad'`

CVE-2023-29547

Fixed in Firefox 112

Caused by restrictions imposed by the FF implementation of **Site Isolation (Project Fission)**

EXPECTATION

`sess=bad` is not set (Strict Secure )

REALITY

Cookie not set, but `document.cookie` at `http://bank.com` returns `sess=bad`



Desynchronization Issues

1 <https://atk.bank.com>

Fixed in Firefox 115

```
>> for(let i=0; i<400; i++) document.cookie = `a${i}=_; domain=bank.com`  
⚠ Some cookies are misusing the recommended "SameSite" attribute 400  
← "a399=_; domain=bank.com"  
>> document.cookie.split('; ').length  
← 400  
>> window.open("https://bank.com")
```

Could introduce vulnerabilities in frontends trusting `document.cookie` to set custom HTTP headers like ASP.NET and Angular

2 Delete 🍪 via Set-Cookie (exp. date), Clear-Site-Data header, or manually

3 The first 240 🍪 are still in `Document.cookie` in the original and opened window (survives reloads and schemeful navigations)

Takeaways

- Many battle-tested Web frameworks and libraries had **concerning session integrity vulnerabilities**. Causes & consequences?
- **Legacy design** is still cursing modern applications: can we **move on without breaking the Web**?
- Developers are falling behind in **keeping track of Web standards**
- Composition issues or lack of understanding of the threat models? Apps in the wild?
- Backward compatibility issues? Is it possible to make deployment easier without trading on security?
- Lack of cohesiveness between browser vendors, developers, and authors of Web standards? Web platform changing too fast?






... and that's the way the cookie crumbles!




Thank You! Questions?



Marco Squarcina (TU Wien)

 @blueminimal
 <https://infosec.exchange/@minimalblue>
 marco.squarcina@tuwien.ac.at

Pedro Adão (IST, Universidade de Lisboa)

 @pedromigueladao
 <https://infosec.exchange/@pedroadao>
 pedro.adao@tecnico.ulisboa.pt

Paper available at <https://github.com/SecPriv/cookiecrumbles>