

Extending the Salsa20 nonce

D. J. Bernstein

University of Illinois at Chicago

DES had 64-bit block.

Highly troublesome by 1990s.

AES has 128-bit block.

Becoming troublesome now . . .

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Why do they say this?

Answer: Their security proof fails for $\#\text{messages} \approx 2^{n/2}$ (AES: $\#\text{messages} \approx 2^{64}$), and becomes quantitatively useless long before that.

So what *should* users do?

No advice from 2006 BHKKR.

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Common user response: Rekey
128-bit “master” AES key k
produces 128-bit “session keys”.
First session key: $\text{AES}_k(1)$.
Second session key: $\text{AES}_k(2)$.
etc.
Each session key k' is used
for limited #messages.
Typical use of session key:
AES-CTR, GCM, etc.
for at most (e.g.) 2^{40} blocks.

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In other words,
128-bit AES
 $\text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(1)}$,
 $\text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(2)}$,
 $\text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(3)}$,
and so on.

This is reasonable.
 $(m, n) \vdash$
with a detailed proof.

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z-Rogaway:
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This is really a new
 $(m, n) \mapsto \text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(n)}$
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Alert: User-designed cipher!
Is this cipher secure?

In user response: Rekeying.

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is 128-bit “session keys”.

session key: $\text{AES}_k(1)$.

session key: $\text{AES}_k(2)$.

session key k' is used
for $\# \text{messages}$.

Reuse of session key:

TIR, GCM, etc.

cost (e.g.) 2^{40} blocks.

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Build 2^4

each con

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Good ch

$k' = \text{AE}$

Find via

Then tri

$\text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(m)}$

Current

< 1 year

Response: Rekeying.

AES key k
‘session keys’.

$\text{AES}_k(1)$.

Next: $\text{AES}_k(2)$.

c' is used
ages.

Session key:

etc.

2^{40} blocks.

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Collect $\text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(n)}$
for 2^{40} inputs $(n, 1)$

Build 2^{40} tiny search
each computing 2^8
iterations of $k' \mapsto \text{AES}_{k'}$

Good chance of finding
 $k' = \text{AES}_k(n)$ for some n

Find via distinguisher

Then trivially compute

$\text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(n)}(1)$ etc.

Current chip technology

< 1 year, < 10^{10} U.S. dollars

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Is this cipher secure?

Not really. Feasible attack:

Collect $\text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(n)}(0)$
for 2^{40} inputs $(n, 0)$.

Build 2^{40} tiny search units,
each computing 2^{48}
iterations of $k' \mapsto \text{AES}_{k'}(0)$.

Good chance of collision
 $k' = \text{AES}_k(n)$ for some n, k

Find via distinguished points
Then trivially compute
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Two different
stopping rules:
1. “Use
Attack rule
same input
by many
... but rule
leaves more
and raises

: produces

$\text{AES}_{\text{AES}_k(1)}(2), \dots;$

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Two different philosophies
stopping this type of attack:

1. “Use random numbers”

Attack relies critical on
same input 0 being used
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... but randomization
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2. “Use longer keys.”

Master key produces
256-bit output block,
used as 256-bit session key.

We have good 256-bit ciphers!

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2^{10} tiny search units,
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$\text{AES}_k(n)(1)$ etc.

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I'll focus

Could get

$k' = (\text{AES}_k(n), 0)$

Use k' a

I'll focus on strate

Could generate 25

$k' = (\text{AES}_k(2n), A)$

Use k' as key for 2

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I'll focus on strategy #2.

Could generate 256-bit

$$k' = (\text{AES}_k(2n), \text{AES}_k(2n + 1), \dots)$$

Use k' as key for 256-bit AE

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But AES isn't a great cipher:

- Small block, so distinguishable.
- Not much security margin.
- Uninspiring key schedule.
- Invites cache-timing attacks.
- Slow on most CPUs.
- Mediocre speed in hardware.
- Even slower with key expansion.

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How about
• Large
• 150%
• Key at
• Natural
• Fast a
• Better
• No key
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How about Salsa20?

- Large block; aim for 256 bits.
- 150% security margin.
- Key at top, not bottom.
- Naturally constant time.
- Fast across CPU, GPU, FPGA.
- Better than AES.
- No key expansion.

Can generate 256-bit keys from first 256 bits of Salsa20 using 64-bit nonce.

Use k' as Salsa20 key.

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Could generate 256-bit

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Can generate 256-bit k' as first 256 bits of Salsa20 stream using 64-bit nonce n , key k .

Use k' as Salsa20 session key.

I'll focus on strategy #2.

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- Better than AES in hardware.
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Use key for 256-bit AES.

S is isn't a great cipher:
large block, so distinguishable.
not much security margin.
poor key schedule.
vulnerable to cache-timing attacks.
slow on most CPUs.
slow speed in hardware.
slower with key expansion.

How about Salsa20?

- Large block; aims to be PRF.
- 150% security margin.
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- Naturally constant time.
- Fast across CPUs.
- Better than AES in hardware.
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Use k' as Salsa20 session key.

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<p>gy #2.</p> <p>6-bit</p> <p>$\text{AES}_k(2n + 1)$.</p> <p>256-bit AES.</p> <p>reat cipher:</p> <p>distinguishable.</p> <p>ity margin.</p> <p>chedule.</p> <p>ning attacks.</p> <p>PUs.</p> <p>in hardware.</p> <p>n key expansion.</p>	<p>How about Salsa20?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large block; aims to be PRF. • 150% security margin. • Key at top, not on side. • Naturally constant time. • Fast across CPUs. • Better than AES in hardware. • No key expansion. <p>Can generate 256-bit k' as first 256 bits of Salsa20 stream using 64-bit nonce n, key k. Use k' as Salsa20 session key.</p>	<p>Improvement #1:</p> <p>Salsa20 is actually producing 512-bit 256-bit key, 128-b</p> <p>Conventionally 128 is interpreted as 64 and 64-bit block c (so output blocks but function is designed to be fast and secure giving random access So allow 128 bits Generate 256-bit k' as half of 512-bit k</p>
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Conventionally 128-bit input is interpreted as 64-bit nonce and 64-bit block counter (so output blocks are a stream) but function is designed to be fast and secure giving random access to blocks.

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Improvement #2:

Look more closely at how Salsa20 works. initializes 512-bit block publicly from input adds 256-bit key k applies many unknowns adds 256-bit key k'

Take k' as the other key.
⇒ Skip final k addition.

Important here that 512-bit block is much bigger than 256-bit key. Compare to Even-Mansfield.

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Look more closely at how Salsa20 works: initializes 512-bit block publicly from input n ; adds 256-bit key k ; applies many unkeyed rounds; adds 256-bit key k .

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What about security?

Recall feasible 128-round attack.
Moving from 128 to 256 rounds puts attack very far off.

Could there be better attacks?
1996 Bellare–Canetti–Krawczyk attack.
Can convert any q -query distinguisher into similarly efficient attack on original cipher with success probability factor $\leq 2q$ in success probability.

Warning: FOCS 1996 “theorem” omits first step.
Corrected in 2005.

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