Zero Knowledge Protocols

CSG 252     Lecture 10

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Mise en Situation

Suppose Alice knows a secret $S$

- You want to check that Alice knows the secret
- How can Alice convince you she does?
Mise en Situation

Suppose Alice knows a secret $S$

- You want to check that Alice knows the secret
- How can Alice convince you she does?

... without actually revealing $S$!
Example 1: The Magic Cave

Consider a cave looking as follows: [Picture missing]

- Alice knows the magic word to open the door
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Repeat until Bob is convinced
Example 2: Rubik’s Cube

Bob has a scrambled Rubik’s cube

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• She secretly scrambles it further (remembering how)
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To convince Bob that she knows how to unscramble it

- Bob gives her the scrambled cube
- She secretly scrambles it further (remembering how)
- Bob asks her to either: unscramble the cube now, or restore the original scrambling
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Bob has a scrambled Rubik’s cube

- Alice knows how to unscramble that cube

To convince Bob that she knows how to unscramble it

- Bob gives her the scrambled cube
- She secretly scrambles it further (remembering how)
- Bob asks her to either: unscramble the cube now, or restore the original scrambling
- Alice can do either if she knows how to unscramble the original cube; not otherwise
Zero Knowledge Protocols

Introduced by Goldwasser, Micali, and Rackoff in 1985

• Refined and explored by Goldreich, Micali, and Wigderson in 1986

There is a constantly changing definition of zero knowledge protocols and many papers are still coming out

• We will remain informal here
The Setup

The **Prover**
- has a secret
- Usually a probabilistic polynomial time (interactive) Turing machine
  - Sometimes completely unconstrained

The **Verifier**
- Usually a probabilistic polynomial time (interactive) Turing machine

No limits on the number of rounds of communication
Properties

Completeness

• A prover who knows the secret (honest prover) can prove it with probability 1

Soundness

• The probability that a cheating prover can get away with it can be made arbitrarily small

Zero Knowledge

• If the prover knows the secret, no verifier learns anything beyond that fact
Properties

Completeness

• A prover who knows the secret (honest prover) can prove it with probability 1

Soundness

• The probability that a cheating prover can get away with it can be made arbitrarily small

Zero Knowledge

• If the prover knows the secret, no verifier learns anything useful beyond that fact

More precisely:

... does not learn anything useful beyond that fact
Applications

Zero-knowledge protocols can be used when secret knowledge too sensitive to reveal needs to be verified

• Key authentication
• PIN numbers
• Smart cards
Example 3: Discrete Log

P wants to convince V that $\alpha^k = \beta$ for some $k$ in $[0..\lambda]$

- $\alpha$, $\beta$ known
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Assume this is a group for which the discrete log problem is hard, as usual.

The secret here is the $k$
Example 3: Discrete Log

P wants to convince V that $\alpha^k = \beta$ for some $k$ in $[0..\lambda]$

- $\alpha, \beta$ known

$P \xrightarrow{\alpha^j} V$

rand $j \in [0,\lambda-1]$
Example 3: Discrete Log

P wants to convince V that $\alpha^k = \beta$ for some $k$ in $[0..\lambda]$

- $\alpha$, $\beta$ known

P \quad \alpha^j \quad V

rand $j \in [0, \lambda - 1]$

You want to avoid 0 or 1 here (why?)

So pick $j \in [j_0, \lambda - 1]$ where $1 < j_0 \leq \lambda - 1$
Example 3: Discrete Log

P wants to convince V that $\alpha^k = \beta$ for some $k$ in $[0..\lambda]$

- $\alpha, \beta$ known

---

\[
\begin{align*}
P & \quad \alpha^j \\ 
\text{rand } j & \in [0, \lambda - 1] \\ 
V & \quad \text{rand } i \in \{0, 1\}
\end{align*}
\]
Example 3: Discrete Log

P wants to convince V that $\alpha^k = \beta$ for some $k$ in $[0..\lambda]$

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```
P rand j \in [0,\lambda-1] \rightarrow \alpha^j \rightarrow V
rand i \in \{0,1\}
```

```
\begin{align*}
\text{j + ik mod } \lambda & \quad \text{j + ik mod } \lambda \\
\end{align*}
```
Example 3: Discrete Log

P wants to convince V that $\alpha^k = \beta$ for some $k$ in $[0..\lambda]$

- $\alpha$, $\beta$ known

\[
p \xrightarrow{\alpha^j \text{ rand } j \in [0,\lambda-1]} \alpha^j \xleftarrow{i \text{ rand } i \in \{0,1\}} \beta \text{ if } j + ik \mod \lambda = 0 \Rightarrow \alpha^j \beta^i \]
Example 3: Discrete Log

P wants to convince V that $\alpha^k = \beta$ for some $k$ in $[0..\lambda]$

- $\alpha, \beta$ known

P

\[\text{rand } j \in [0, \lambda - 1]\]

\[j + ik \mod \lambda\]

V

\[\alpha^j\]

\[l_i \in \{0, 1\}\]

When you repeat the protocol (to help convince verifier) make sure you pick a different random $j$ every time
Example 4: Graph 3-Coloring

G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) 3-coloring

- Wants to convince Verifier she has one

P  V
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G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) 3-coloring

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\[ \text{P} \quad \frac{\text{encrypted recoloring}}{\text{(one key per node)}} \quad \text{V} \]

rand recoloring of G
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G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) 3-coloring

- Wants to convince Verifier she has one

\[ P \xrightarrow{\text{encrypted recoloring}} V \]

\[ \text{(one key per node)} \]

\[ i, j \]

\[ \text{keys for i and j colors} \]

\[ \text{rand i,j} \in \text{Nodes} \]

\[ \text{color}(i) \neq \text{color}(j) \]
Example 4: Graph 3-Coloring

G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) 3-coloring

- Wants to convince Verifier she has one

\[ P \xrightarrow{\text{encrypted recoloring (one key per node)}} V \]

When you repeat the protocol (to help convince verifier) make sure you pick a different coloring every iteration.
Example 5: Hamiltonian Path

Let G be a known graph, Prover has a (secret) Hamiltonian path.
- Wants to convince Verifier she has one.

\[ P \quad V \]
Example 5: Hamiltonian Path

G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) Hamiltonian path

- Wants to convince Verifier she has one

\[ P \rightarrow H \rightarrow V \]

rand isomorphic copy H of G

(\( \pi \) is the matching)
Example 5: Hamiltonian Path

G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) Hamiltonian path

- Wants to convince Verifier she has one

P
rand
isomorphic
copy H of G
(\pi is the
matching)

H

V
rand \{give me
\pi, give me
Hamiltonian
path in H\}

choice
Example 5: Hamiltonian Path

G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) Hamiltonian path

- Wants to convince Verifier she has one

\[ P \xrightarrow{\text{rand}} \text{isomorphic copy } H \text{ of } G (\pi \text{ is the matching}) \]
\[ \xrightarrow{\text{choice}} H \]
\[ \xrightarrow{\text{requested answer}} V \]
\[ \text{rand } \{\text{give me } \pi, \text{ give me Hamiltonian path in } H\} \]
\[ \xrightarrow{\text{check iso or check path}} \]
Example 5: Hamiltonian Path

G a known graph, Prover has a (secret) Hamiltonian path
• Wants to convince Verifier she has one

V \text{rand} \{\text{isomorphic copy } H \text{ of } G \} \quad \begin{align*}
\text{(π is the matching)} \\
\text{check iso or check path}
\end{align*}

Even if V knows H, it is hard to reconstruct π from G and H

(Although no one knows quite how hard...)

requested answer
Commitment Scheme

A key ingredient in many zero knowledge protocols

- Interesting in its own right

How do you flip a coin in real life?

(1) Bob "calls" the coin flip
(2) Alice flips the coin, and if Bob's call is correct, he wins, otherwise Alice does
Flipping a Coin Over the Phone

How do you do this over the telephone?

• Bob cannot trust Alice to reply honestly

Need commitment:

• A value of 0 or 1 is committed to by encrypting it or hashing it with a one-way function to get a “blob”
• We can verify the commitment by “unwrapping” this blob after revealing the key
Flipping a Coin Over the Phone

How do you do this over the telephone?

- Bob cannot trust Alice to reply honestly

(1) Bob "calls" the coin flip and tells Alice only a commitment to his call
(2) Alice flips the coin and reports the result
(3) Bob reveals what he committed to; if that matches the coin result Alice reported, Bob wins
Flipping a Coin Over the Phone

For Alice to be able to skew the results in her favor, she must be able to understand the call hidden in Bob's commitment, so if the commitment scheme is a good one, Alice cannot affect the results.

Similarly, Bob cannot affect the result if he cannot change the value he commits to.

(3) Bob reveals what he committed to; if that matches the coin result Alice reported, Bob wins.
Bit Commitment Properties

Concealment:

• Receiver cannot determine the value of the bit from the "blob"

Binding:

• Sender cannot open the "blob" as both a zero and a one
Given an instance of an NP-complete problem
ZK from NP-Complete Problems

Given an instance of an NP-complete problem

- Prover generates a new isomorphic instance based on the original one
ZK from NP-Complete Problems

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- Prover commits the solution to the new problem to Verifier with a commitment protocol
ZK from NP-Complete Problems

Given an instance of an NP-complete problem

- Prover generates a new isomorphic instance based on the original one
- Prover commit the solution to the new problem to Verifier with a commitment protocol
- Verifier can challenge Prover with one of the questions:
  - Prove the two instances are isomorphic
  - Or show me the solution to the new instance
ZK from NP-Complete Problems

Given an instance of an NP-complete problem

- Prover generates a new isomorphic instance based on the original one
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As usual, repeat until procedure until Verifier is satisfied.
ZK from NP-Complete Problems

Given an instance of an NP-complete problem

- Prover generates a new isomorphic instance based on the original one
- Prover commits the solution to the new problem to Verifier with a commitment protocol
- Verifier can challenge Prover with one of the questions:
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Tricky bit: Verifier should not be able to transfer a solution back to the original instance
Graph Isomorphism

$G_0$ and $G_1$ are known graphs.

Prover knows a (secret) isomorphism $\pi$ between them.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\mathcal{P} \\
\mathcal{V}
\end{array}
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Graph Isomorphism

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$\sigma_0 = \mu$

$\sigma_1 = \mu \circ \pi^{-1}$
**Graph Isomorphism**

$G_0$ and $G_1$ are known graphs.

Prover knows a (secret) isomorphism $\pi$ between them.

- Random $H$ and isomorphism $\mu$ between $G_0$ and $H$
- $\sigma_0 = \mu$
- $\sigma_1 = \mu \circ \pi^{-1}$

$\text{rand } i \in \{0,1\}$
Graph Isomorphism

$G_0$ and $G_1$ are known graphs.

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$P$

random $H$ and isomorphism $\mu$ between $G_0$ and $H$

$\sigma_0 = \mu$

$\sigma_1 = \mu \circ \pi^{-1}$

$H$

$V$

rand $i \in \{0,1\}$

check that $\sigma_i$ is an isomorphism between $G_i$ and $H$
More about NPC Problems

Every NPC problem yields a zero knowledge protocol

- Assumes existence of one-way functions
- Or existence of an encryption scheme
- Basically, for commitment scheme

Variant that does not require such an assumption:

- Use multiple independent provers instead of only one, allowing the verifier to validate prover results against each others to avoid being misled.
ZK Proofs of Identity

If a private key is used as an identity, we can use a zero-knowledge proof for identity

- Chess Master problem: When Alice is proving her identity to a malicious node, the malicious node may be proving to a third party
- Cf wormhole attacks on wireless networks

Proposed solutions:

- Accurately synchronized clocks