

Lecture 25: DDH Assumption, Key Agreement, and ElGamal Encryption

Problem Statement

- 1 The objective of this lecture is to build key agreement and public-key encryption protocols from the Decisional Diffie-Hellman (DDH) assumption
- 2 Moreover, understand the relationship between the DDH assumption and other computational hardness assumptions like the discrete log assumption and Computational Diffie-Hellman (CDH) assumption

Decisional Diffie-Hellman Assumption

- 1 Consider a group (G, \times) with generator g and order n ; i.e., $g^n = e$, the identity and $\{g^1, g^2, \dots, g^n = e\} = G$
- 2 The Decisional Diffie-Hellman (DDH) assumption states that it is computationally infeasible to have a non-trivial advantage in predicting whether the given sample $(\alpha, \beta, \gamma) \in G^3$ was sampled from the distribution (g^a, g^b, g^r) , where $a, b, r \in_R \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$, or (g^a, g^b, g^{ab}) , where $a, b \in_R \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$
- 3 Intuitively, given (g^a, g^b) , the element g^{ab} is computationally indistinguishable from the random g^r

Diffie-Hellman Key Agreement

- 1 Alice samples $a \in_R \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ and sends $A := g^a$ to Bob
 - 2 Bob samples $b \in_R \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ and sends $B := g^b$ to Alice
 - 3 Alice computes $k := B^a$ and Bob also computes $k := A^b$
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- Given (g^a, g^b) , for an eavesdropper, the distribution of the key $k = g^{ab}$ seems indistinguishable from the random element g^r
 - Alice and Bob can perform steps 1 and 2 simultaneously

ElGamal Encryption Scheme

- 1 Any two-message key agreement protocol can be converted into a public-key encryption scheme
- 2 $\text{Gen}()$: Return a public key $\text{pk} = A := g^a$ and a secret key $\text{sk} = a$
- 3 $\text{Enc}_{\text{pk}}(m)$: Compute $B := g^b$ and $c := m \cdot A^b$. The ciphertext is (B, c)
- 4 $\text{Dec}_{\text{sk}}(\tilde{B}, \tilde{c})$: Compute $\tilde{m} / (\tilde{B})^a$, where $\text{sk} = a$.

Groups where DDH holds

- 1 The subgroup of k -th residues modulo a prime $p = k \cdot q + 1$, where q is also a prime. When $k = 2$, it is quadratic residues modulo a safe prime
- 2 For a safe prime $p = 2 \cdot q + 1$, the quotient group $\mathbb{Z}_p^*/\{\pm 1\}$
- 3 A prime-order elliptic curve over a prime field (with some additional technical restrictions)
- 4 A Jacobian of a hyper-elliptic curve over a prime field (with some additional technical restrictions)

Security Game for DDH.

- 1 The honest challenge samples a bit $u \in_R \{0, 1\}$
- 2 If $u = 0$, then it samples (α, β, γ) from the distribution (g^a, g^b, g^{ab}) , where $a, b \in_R \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$. If $u = 1$, then it samples (α, β, γ) from the distribution (g^a, g^b, g^r) , where $a, b, r \in_R \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$
- 3 The honest challenge sends (α, β, γ) to the adversary
- 4 Adversary replies back with $\tilde{u} \in \{0, 1\}$ (its guess of the bit u)
- 5 The adversary wins the game if (and only if) $u = \tilde{u}$.
- 6 The DDH assumption states that any computationally efficient adversary only has a small (or, negligible) advantage in predicting the bit u

Relation with Other Assumptions: Discrete Log

- 1 Suppose (G, \times) be a group generated by g , and *discrete log* is easy to compute. That is, given $X := g^x$ as input, it is easy to compute $x \in \{1, 2, \dots, |X|\}$ (say, using an algorithm \mathcal{A})
- 2 Using such an algorithm, it is easy to construct a DDH adversary and break that assumption.
 - 1 Our adversary receives (α, β, γ) from the honest challenger
 - 2 Feeds α as input to the algorithm \mathcal{A} and recovers a
 - 3 Compute $\delta := \beta^a$
 - 4 If $\gamma = \delta$, set $\tilde{u} = 0$; otherwise, set $\tilde{u} = 1$
- 3 Food for thought: Compute the advantage of our adversary
- 4 The contrapositive of this statement is that if DDH is hard for a group, then DL is also hard for that group

Attack using Legendre Symbol

- 1 Suppose there is an algorithm that, given $X = g^x$ as input, can determine whether x is even or not
- 2 Note that when $\gamma = g^{ab}$, the exponent ab is even with probability $3/4$
- 3 However, when $\gamma = g^r$, the exponent r is even with probability $1/2$
- 4 So, using the algorithm mentioned above, we can construct an adversary who has a constant advantage in predicting u
- 5 Food for thought: Construct this adversary and compute its distinguishing advantage

Relation with Other Assumptions: Computational Diffie-Hellman

- 1 The computational Diffie-Hellman assumption (CDH) states that given (g^a, g^b) , where $a, b \in_R \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$, it is computationally inefficient to compute g^{ab}
- 2 Note that if CDH is easy in a group, there is an algorithm to compute g^{ab} from (g^a, g^b) . In this group, using this algorithm, an adversary can show that DDH is easy
- 3 The contrapositive of this statement is that if DDH is hard for a group, then CDH is also hard for that group