Sandboxing

CS-576 Systems Security

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Spring 2018

Sandboxing Means Isolation

Why?

Software has bugs

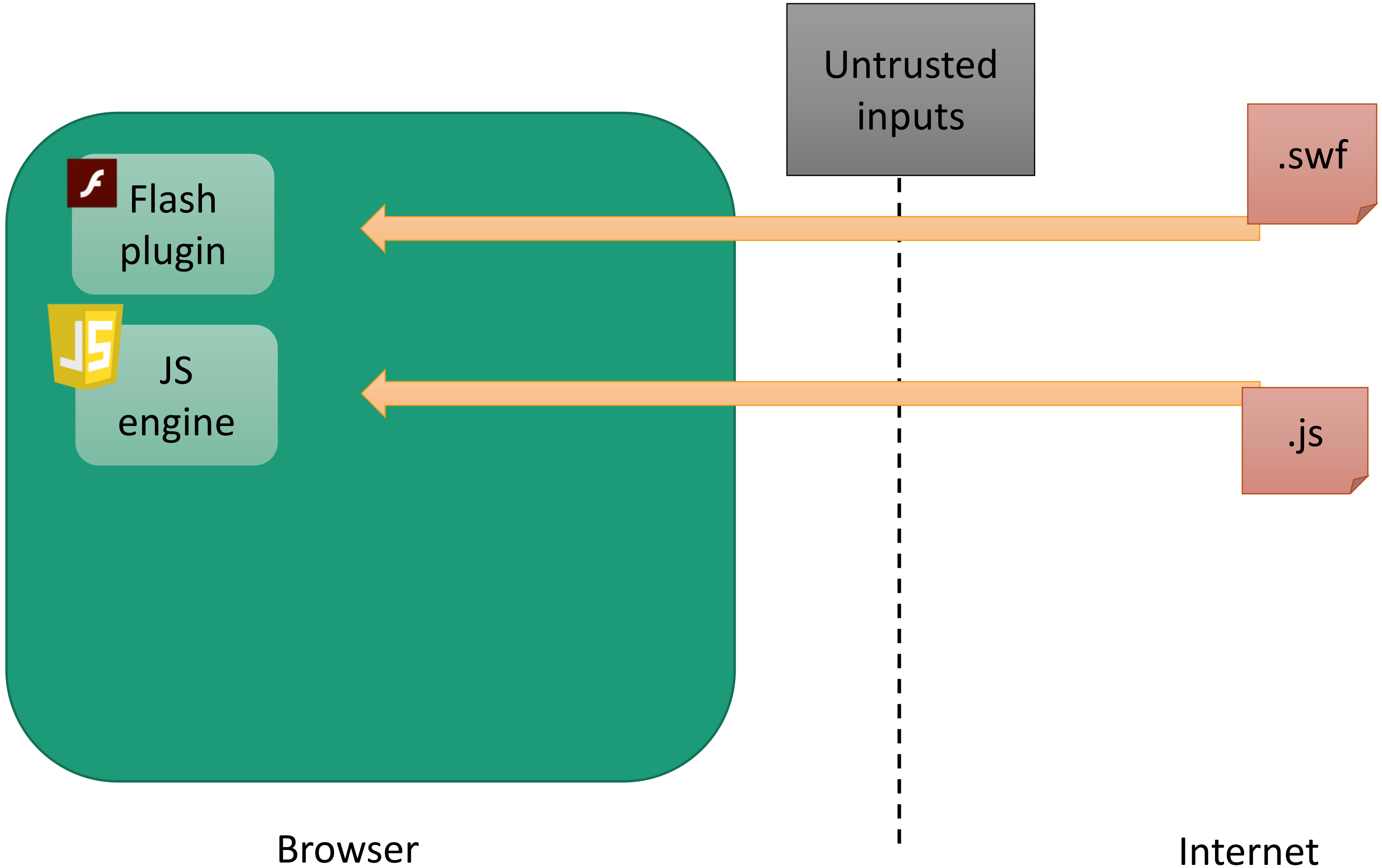
Defenses slip

Untrusted code

Compartmentalization limits interference and damage!

"a sandbox is a security mechanism for separating running programs"
-- wikipedia

Opportunities for Sandboxing: Browsers



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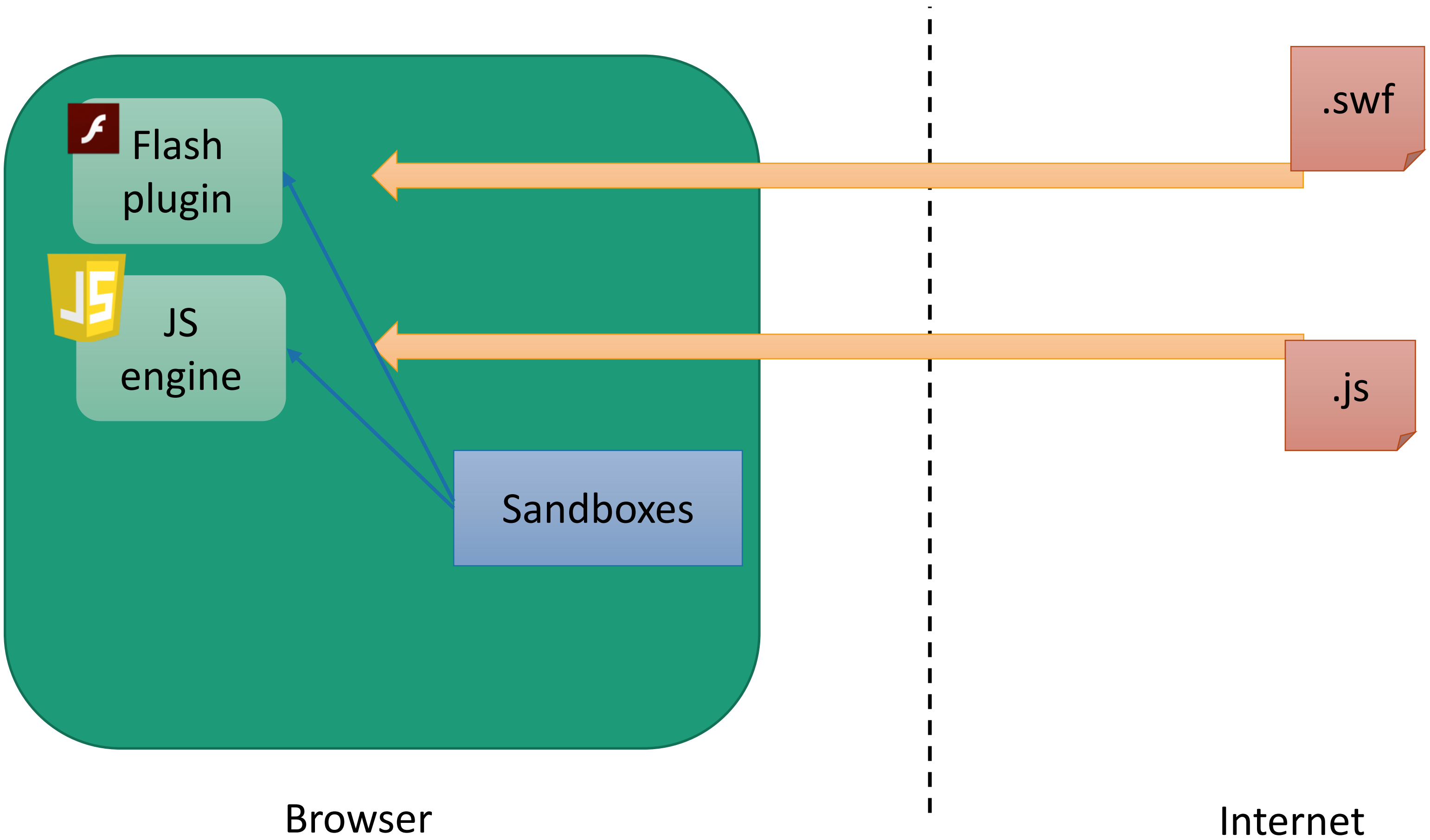
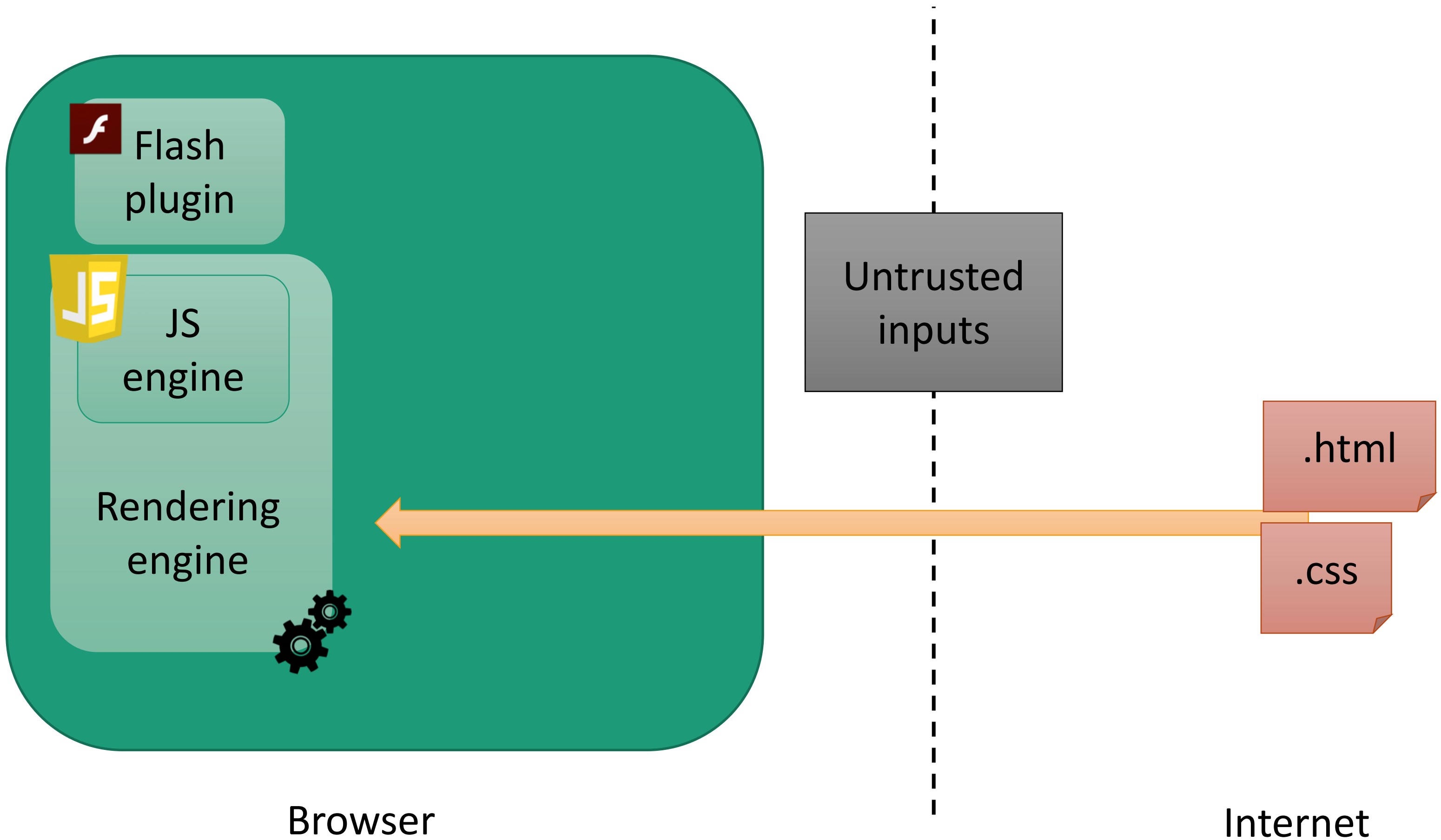


Untrusted Code in Browsers



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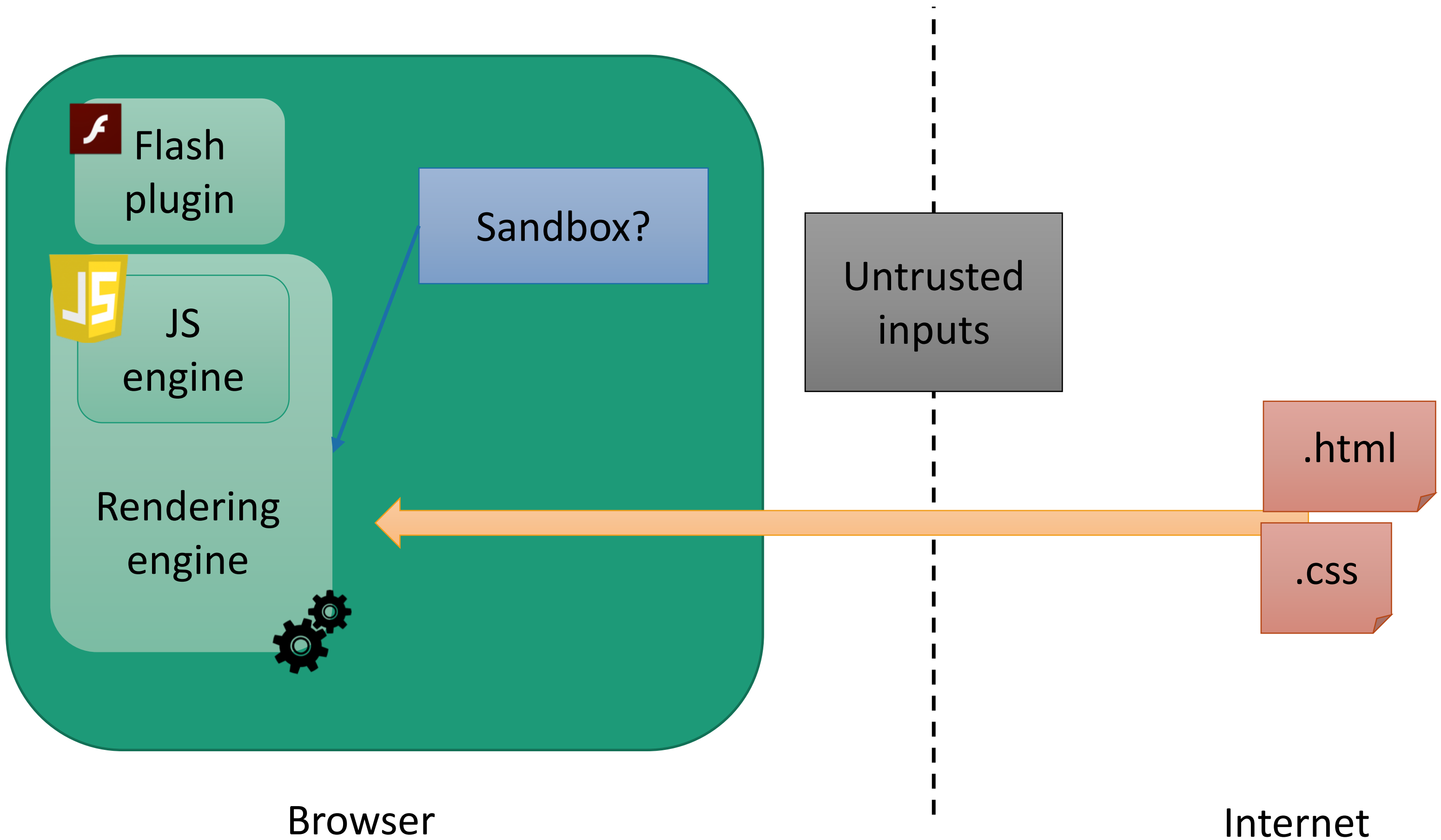

Sandboxing Methods

VM-based

- Run entire OS in isolation

OS-based

- Process-wide
- Available system calls and capabilities are restricted

Language-based

- Language isolates components

Inline reference monitor

- Integrated into untrusted code during compilation, code generation, or through emulation
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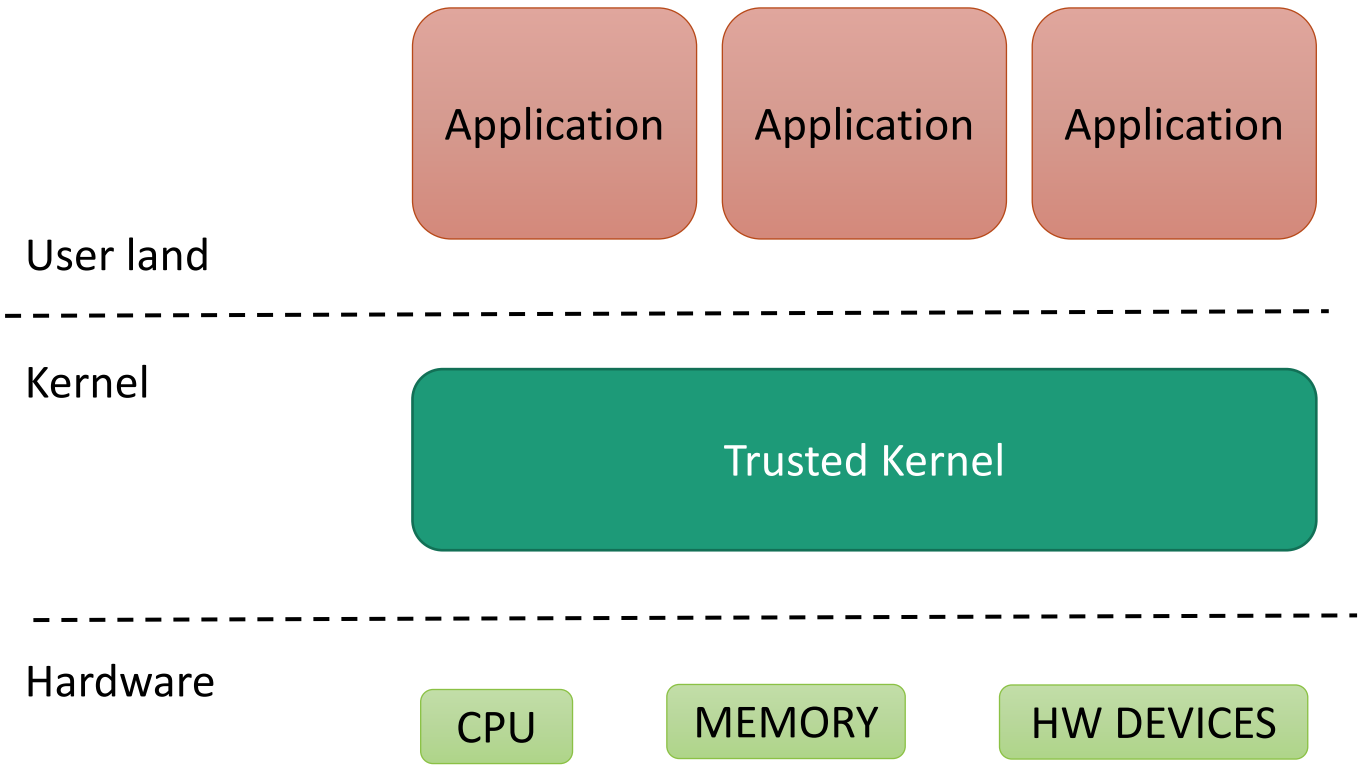
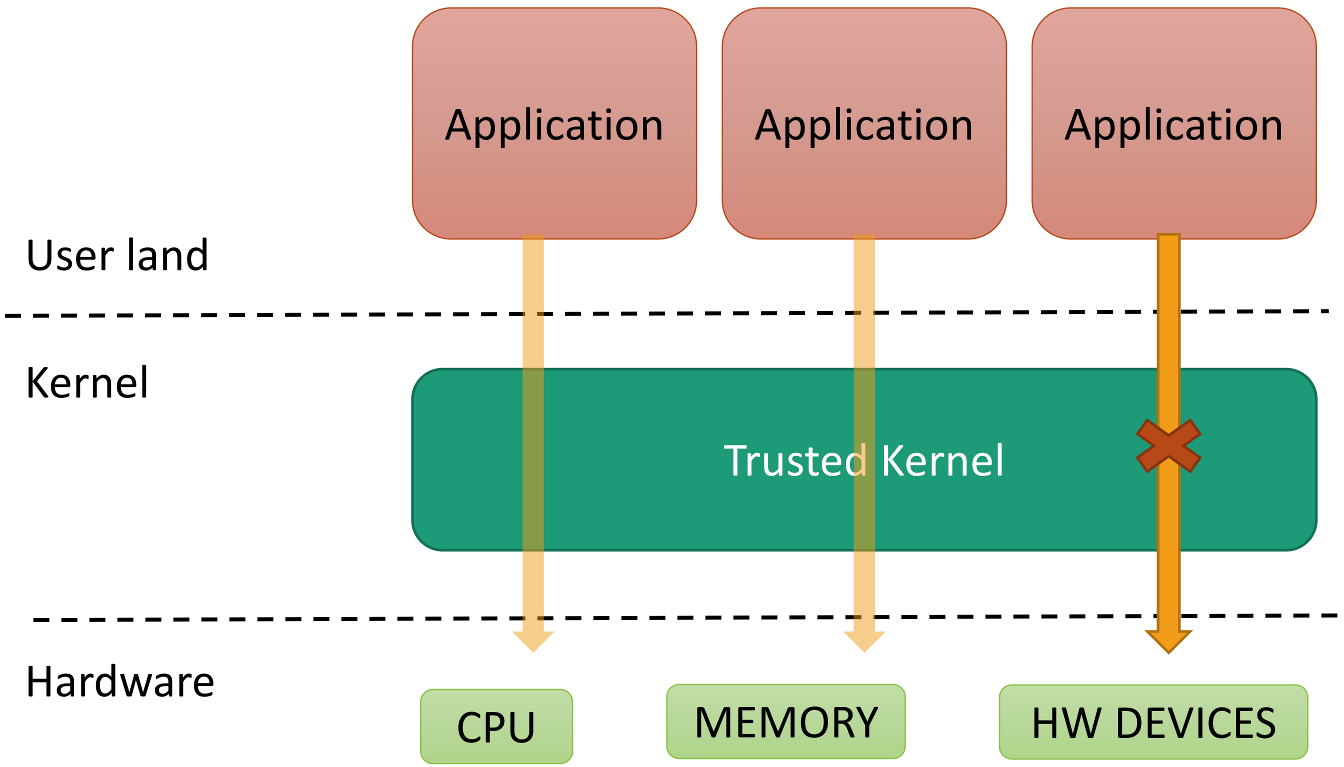
Lets Refresh What We Know About OSes

OS Access Control of HW



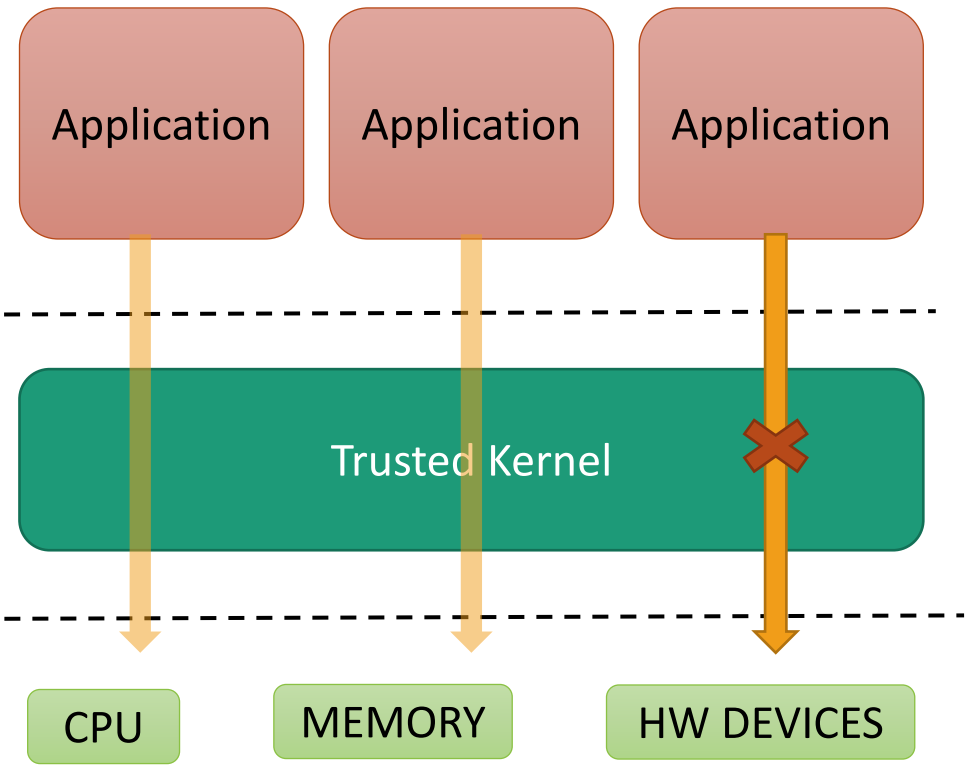
OS Access Control of HW



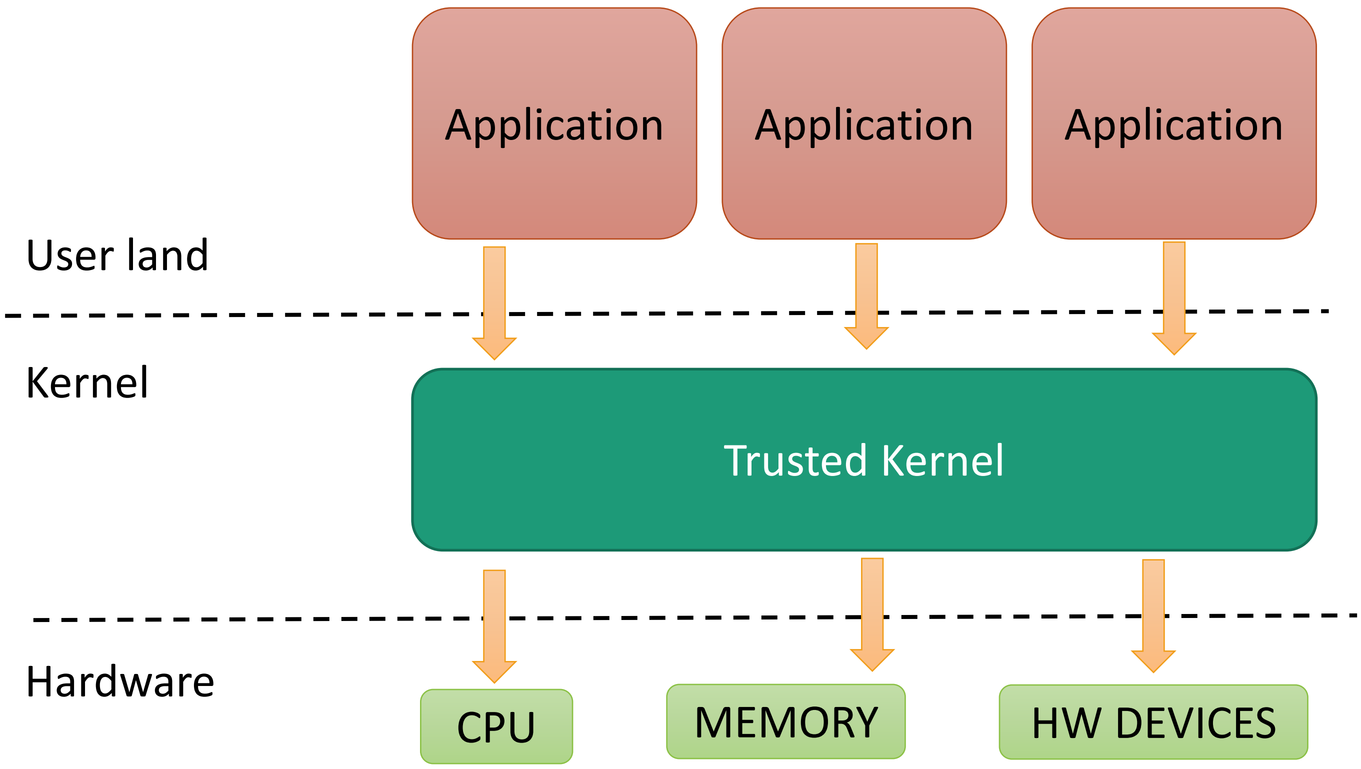
OS Access Control of HW

User space has restricted access to CPU and memory

User space cannot access HW devices



OS Access Control of HW



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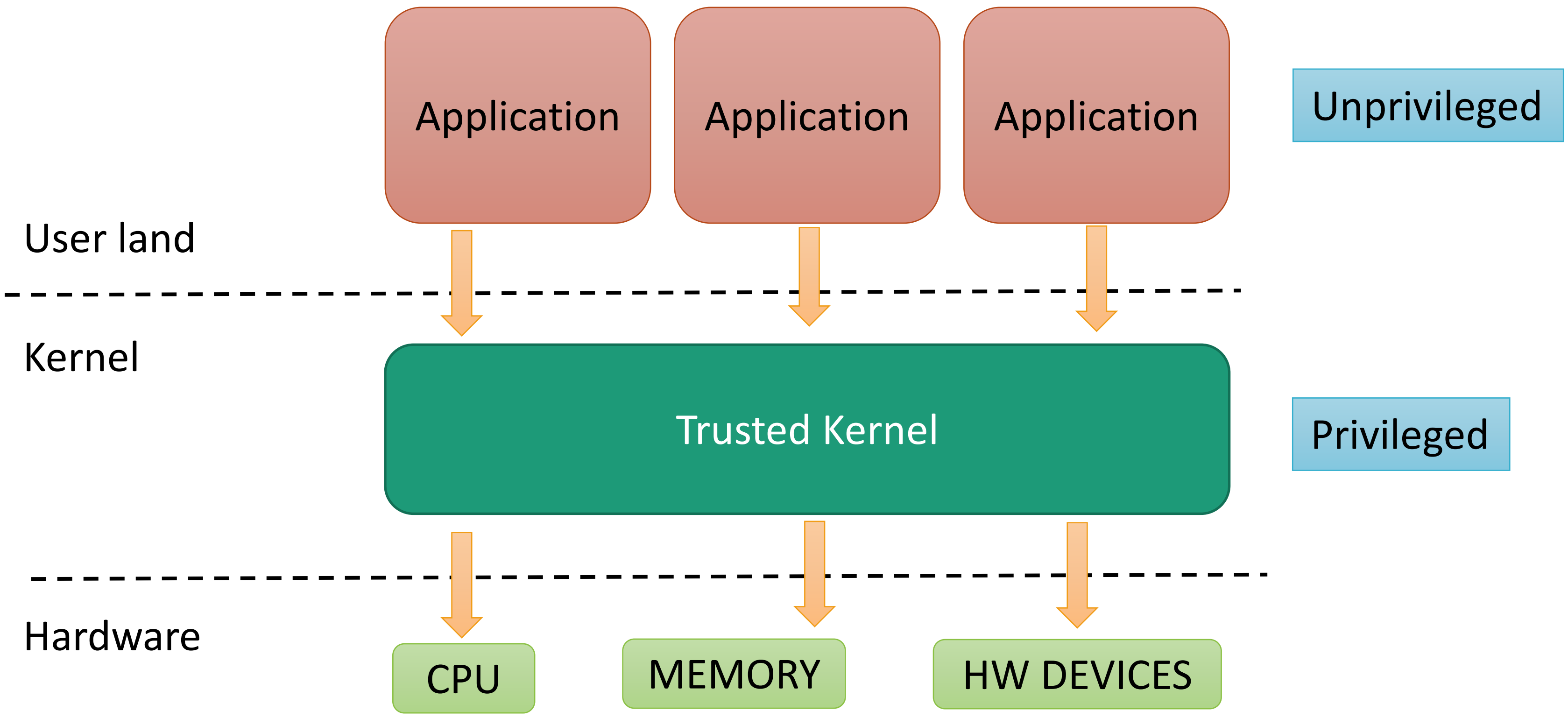
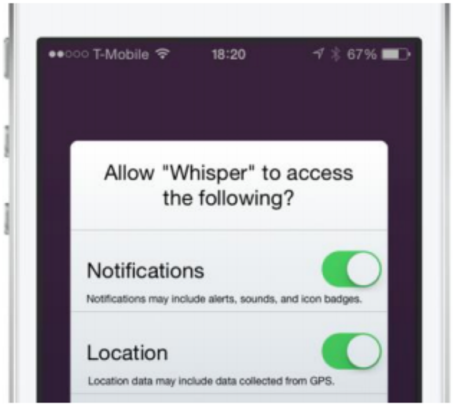
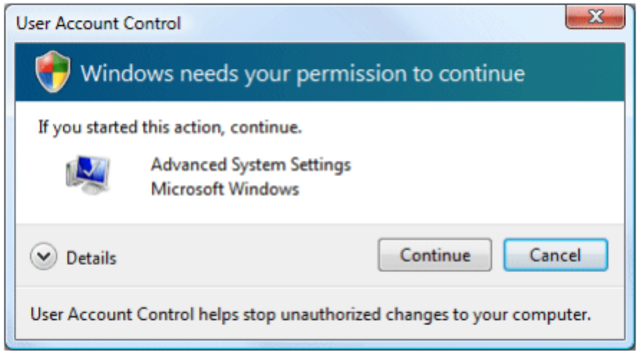
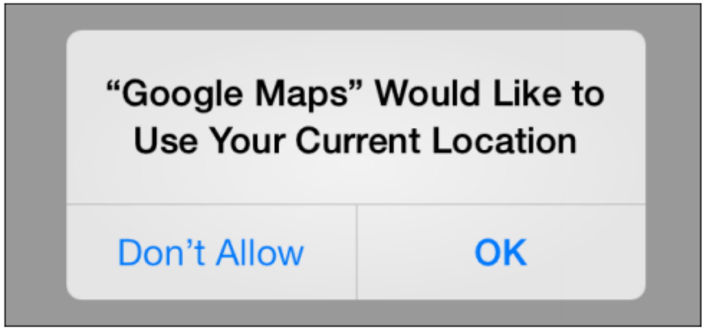


Example of OS-Level Access Control to HW

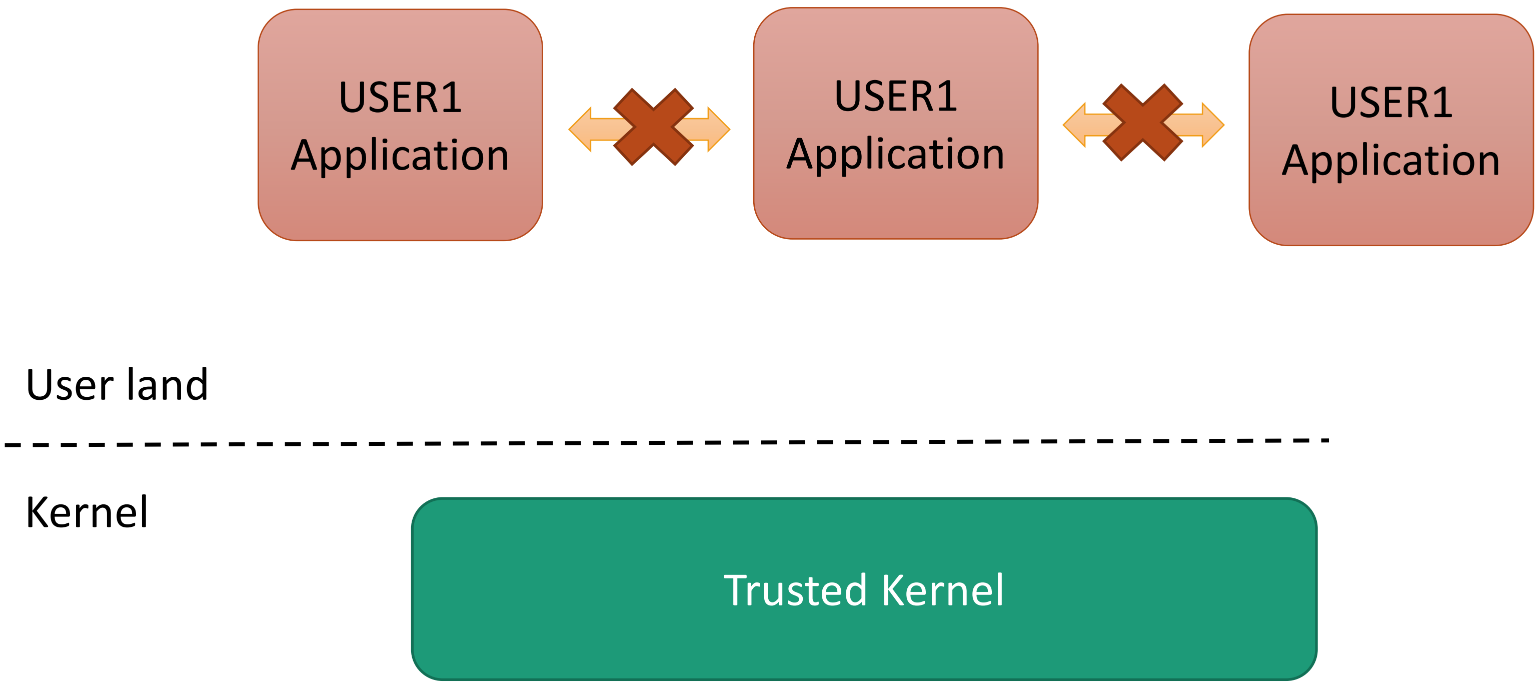






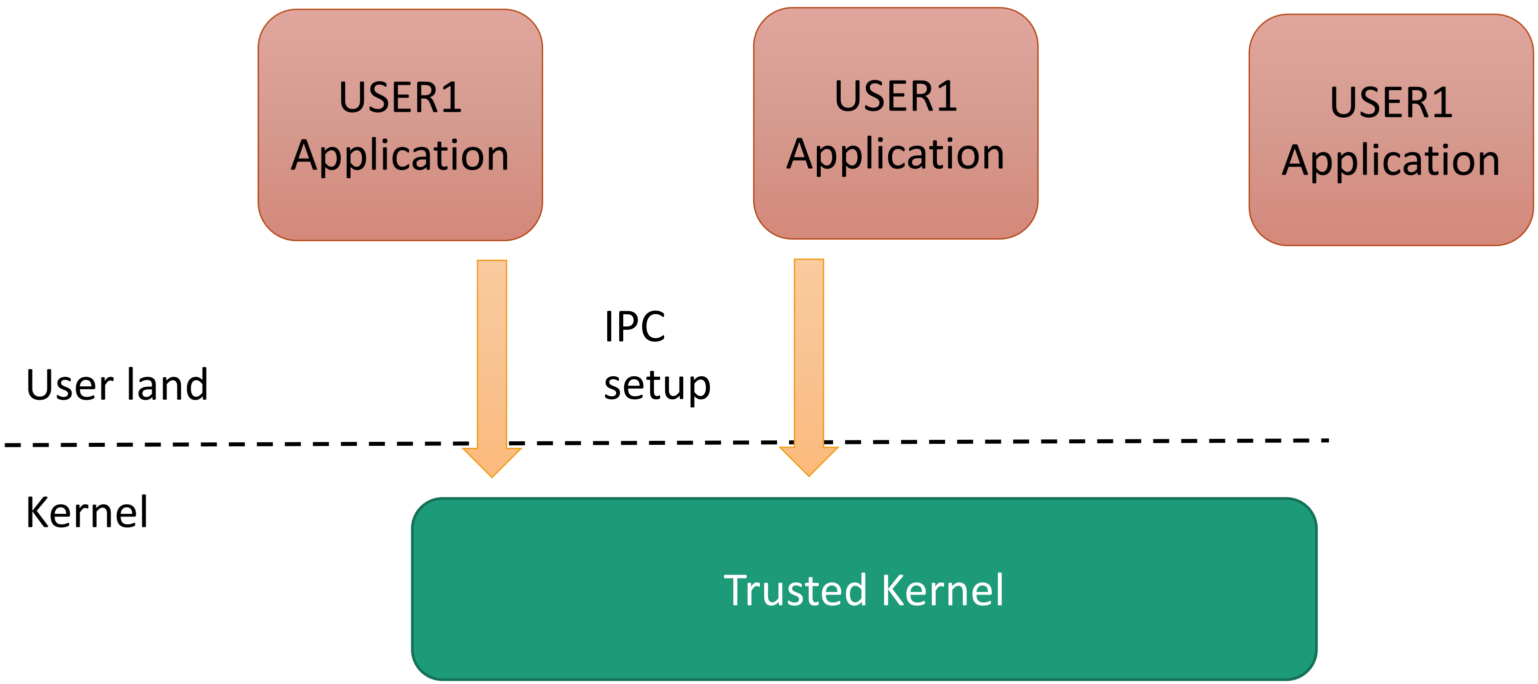
Process-level Isolation

Processes cannot directly access each other's state



Process-level Isolation

The kernel can setup inter-process communication



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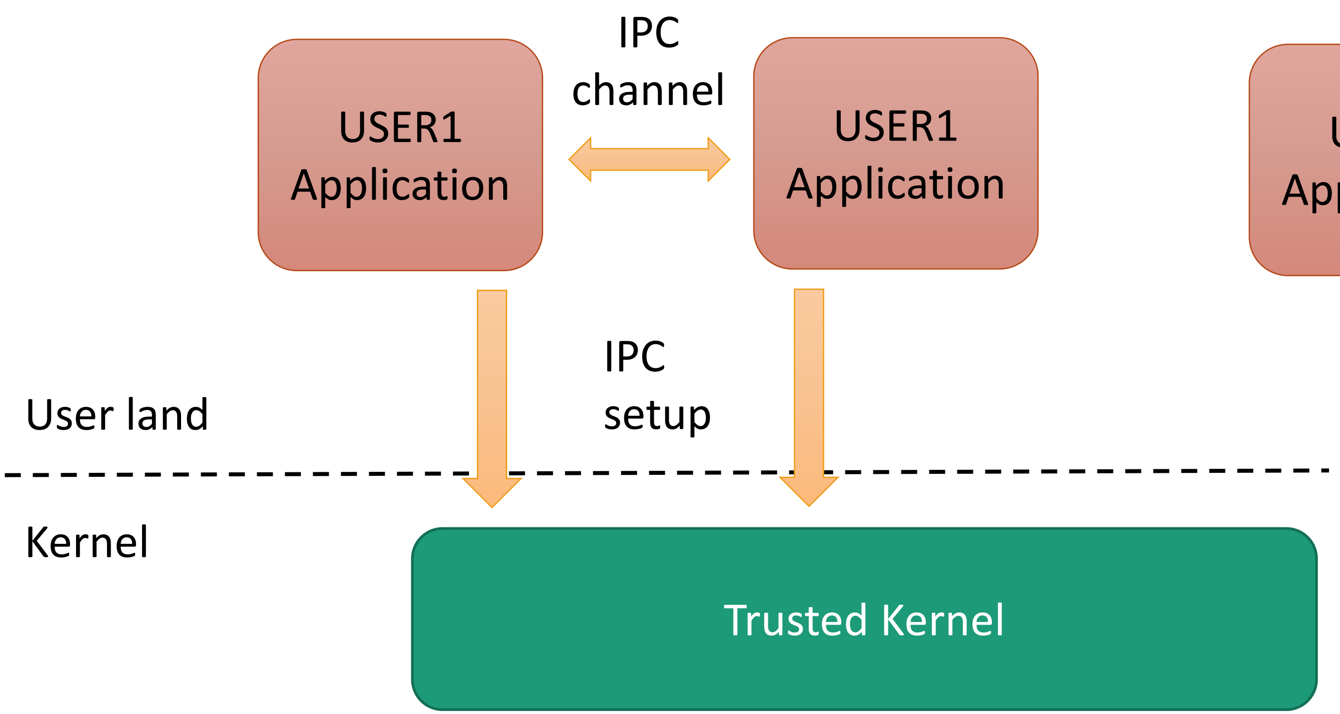
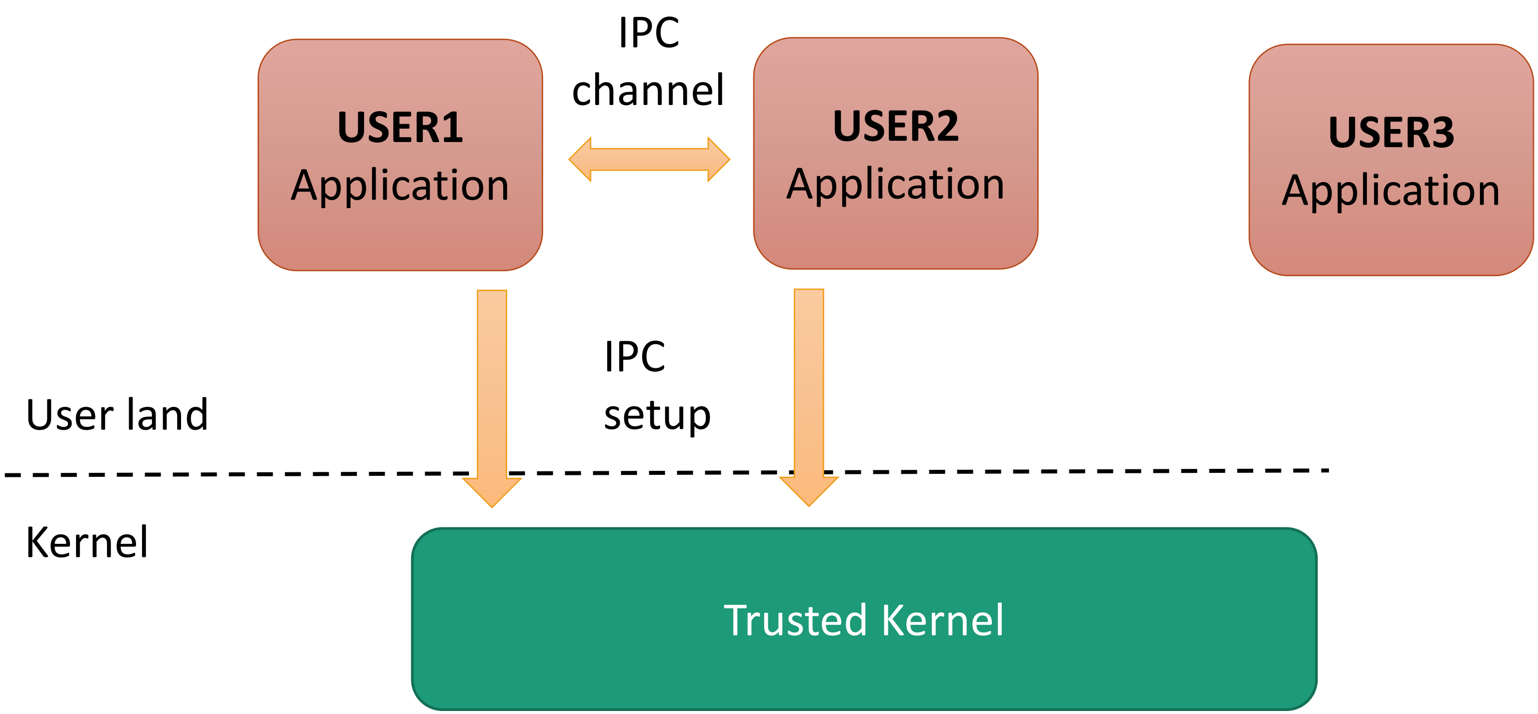


Process-level Isolation

Same for processes owned by different users



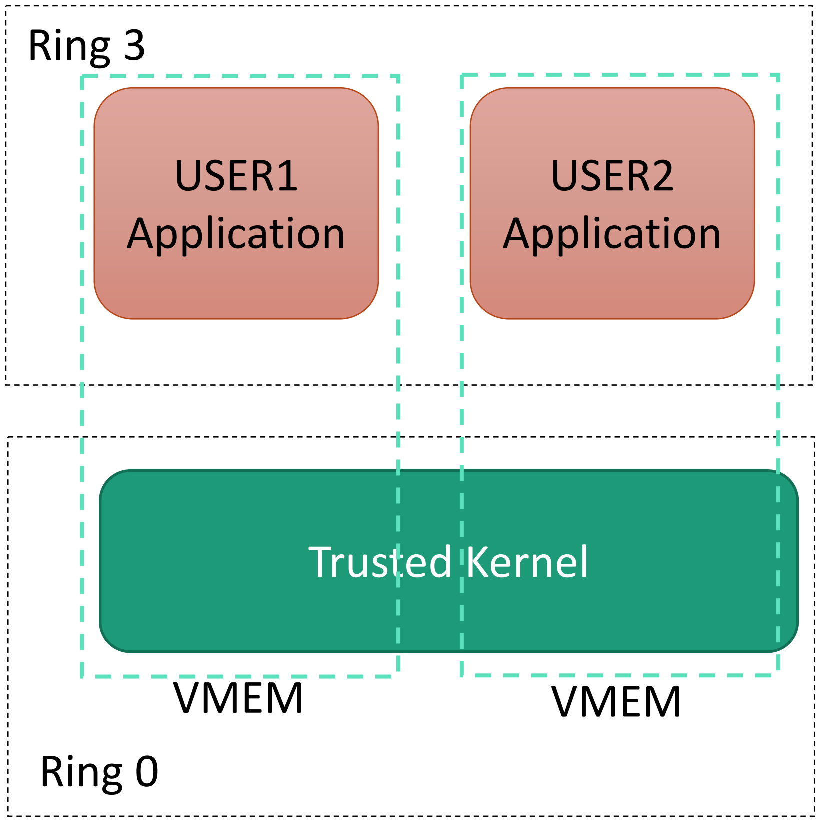
Hardware-based Enforcement

The memory-management unit (MMU) provides virtual memory

Execution rings separate user and kernel space

- Indicated by bits in CPU status register

Processes are isolated into different virtual memory address spaces



Back to Sandboxing

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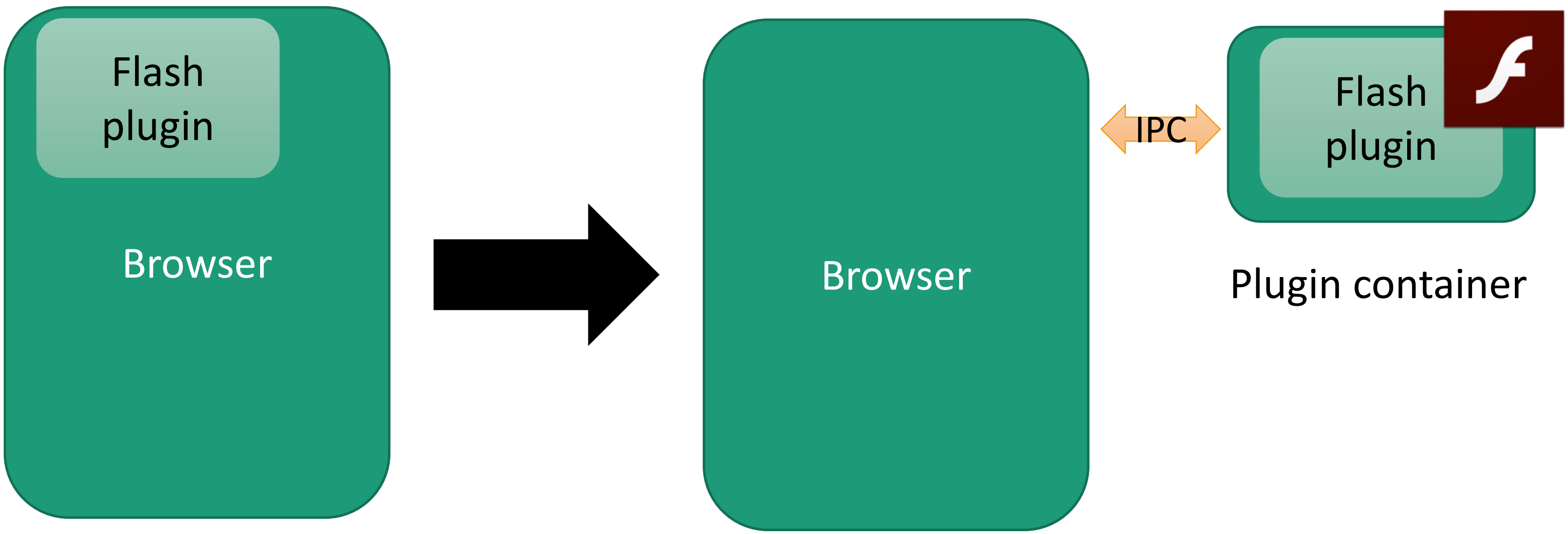
Building on Process Isolation

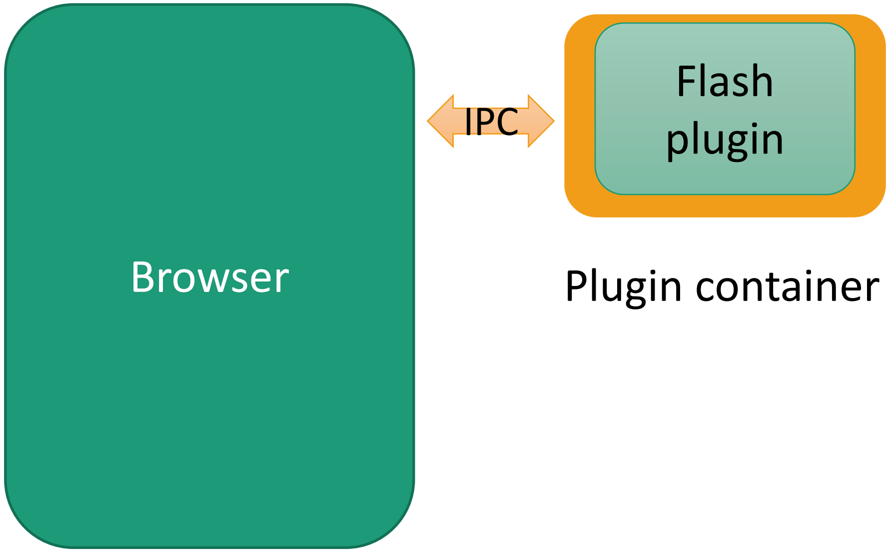
Run code in its own process space to isolate it from browser process

Congratulations you have just executed untrusted code from the Internet!



Building on Process Isolation

Container must have limited privileges



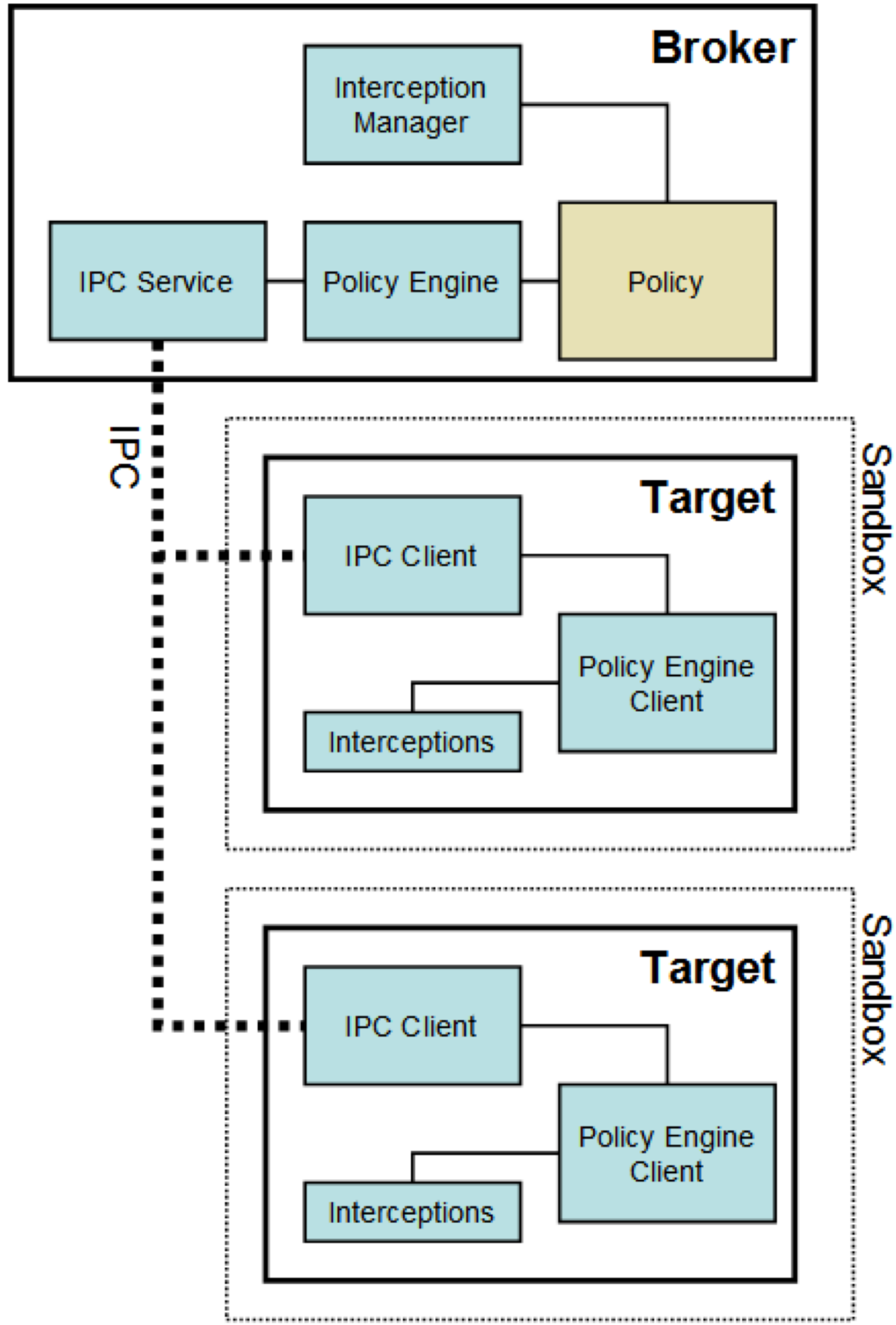
Chromium Sandboxing in Linux

Chromium runs plugins and the rendering engine for each tab in a separate process

Rendering processes are sandboxed

Sandboxed processes are managed by a broker process over IPC

https://chromium.googlesource.com/chromium/src/+/master/docs/linux_sandboxing.md


Broker
Interception Manager
IPC Service
Policy Engine
Policy
IPC
Sandbox
Target
IPC Client
Policy Engine Client
Interceptions
Sandbox
Target
IPC Client
Policy Engine Client
Interceptions

Process Sandbox: SUID

A helper binary with the setuid bit set is used

The SUID bit causes the execution of the process as root

- Enables access to privileged kernel APIs

chroot() is used to change the process’ root directory

- Take away file system access from the process

Process is placed in new PID namespace

- Process cannot terminate or signal processes outside the namespace

Process is placed in new network namespace

- Restrict network access of process

Finally drop super-user privileges

Process Sandbox: User Namespaces

User namespaces are an unprivileged API

Used as an alternative to SUID sandbox

A process is placed a new namespace

Isolates:

- Filesystem
- Network
- PID
- IPC

User Namespaces

A newly launched process can be put in a new namespace

- Through the clone() system call

Available namespaces

Namespace	Constant	Isolates
Cgroup	CLONE_NEWCGROUP	Cgroup root directory
IPC	CLONE_NEWIPC	System V IPC, POSIX message queues
Network	CLONE_NEWNET	Network devices, stacks, ports, etc.
Mount	CLONE_NEWNS	Mount points
PID	CLONE_NEWPID	Process IDs
User	CLONE_NEWUSER	User and group IDs
UTS	CLONE_NEWUTS	Hostname and NIS domain name

Reading material: https://lwn.net/Articles/531114/

Process Sandbox: SECCOMP BPF

Filters the kernel APIs available to a process

Used together with previous sandboxes

Aims to protect the kernel from a malicious process

Available system calls are defined using **Berkeley packet filters**

- Filters are compiled to a program that enforces policy

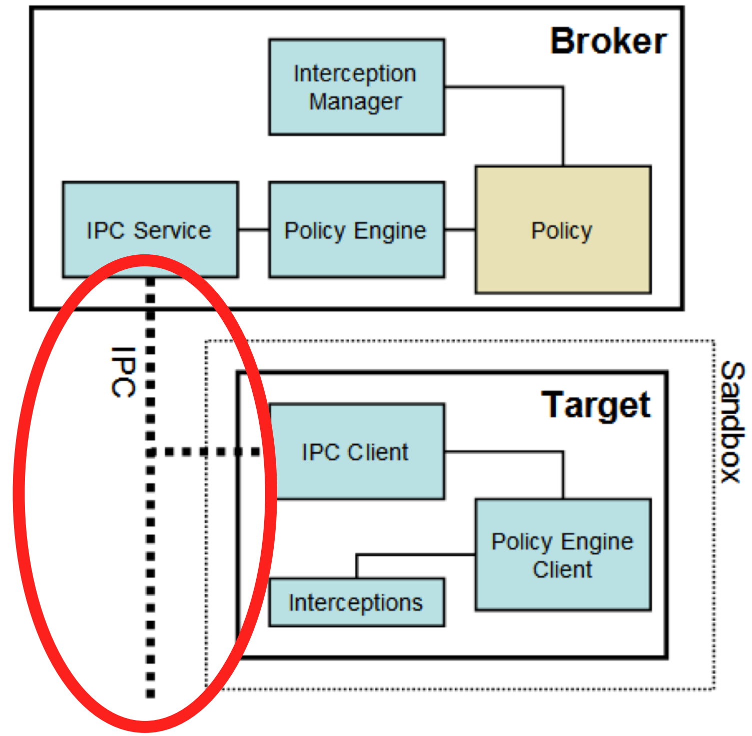
```c
static int install_syscall_filter(void)
{
        struct sock_filter filter[] = {
                /* Validate architecture. */
                VALIDATE_ARCHITECTURE,
                /* Grab the system call number. */
                EXAMINE_SYSCALL,
                /* List allowed syscalls. */
                ALLOW_SYSCALL(rt_sigreturn),
#ifdef __NR_sigreturn
                ALLOW_SYSCALL(sigreturn),
#endif
                ALLOW_SYSCALL(exit_group),
                ALLOW_SYSCALL(exit),
                ALLOW_SYSCALL(read),
                ALLOW_SYSCALL(write),
                KILL_PROCESS,
        };
        struct sock_fprog prog = {
                .len = (unsigned short)(sizeof(filter)/sizeof(filter[0])),
                .filter = filter,
        };
```

```
        if (prctl(PR_SET_NO_NEW_PRIVS, 1, 0, 0, 0)) {
                perror("prctl(NO_NEW_PRIVS)");
                goto failed;
        }
        if (prctl(PR_SET_SECCOMP, SECCOMP_MODE_FILTER, &prog)) {
                perror("prctl(SECCOMP)");
                goto failed;
        }
        return 0;

failed:
        if (errno == EINVAL)
                fprintf(stderr, "SECCOMP_FILTER is not available. :(\n");
        return 1;
}
```

Limitations of OS and VM-based Sandboxing

Context switches between broker and sandboxed processes can be expensive



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Example: JS/Java

The language and the runtime environment/VM is enforcing security

- Memory safe languages
- Memory corruption or leakage is not possible (at least in theory)

Access control done at the API level, for example:

- Which files can be loaded
- Which frames are accessible through the DOM
- Where can code be loaded from
- **The VM acts as a reference monitor**

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Sandboxing Unsafe Languages

Pointers can be used to potential read/write arbitrary memory

Memory accesses need to be isolated first

- Can rarely rely on HW to contain memory operations
- Software checks are introduced in application code

Software-fault Isolation

Run multiple programs in the same address space that run in isolation

Each program runs in a different logical fault domain

Programs can access memory within their domain

- Ensures memory secrecy and integrity

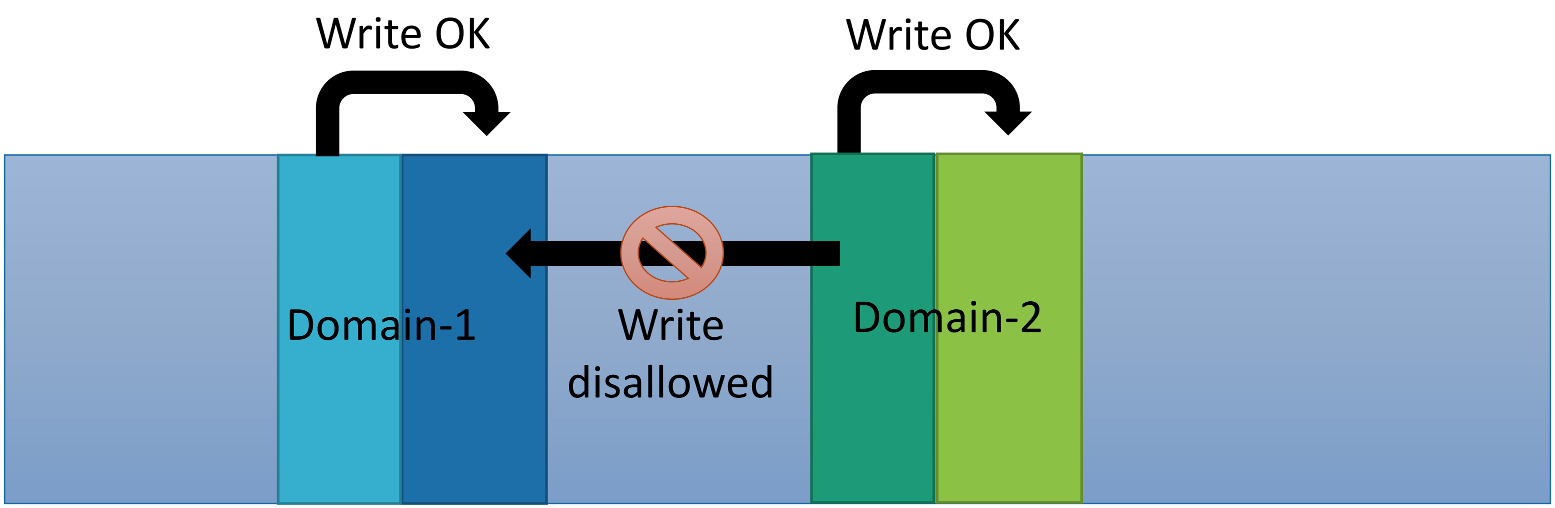
Code within a domain cannot call/jump to code in other domains

- Unless through secure interfaces

Software-fault Isolation

Programs can only access memory within their domain

- **Ensures memory secrecy and integrity**



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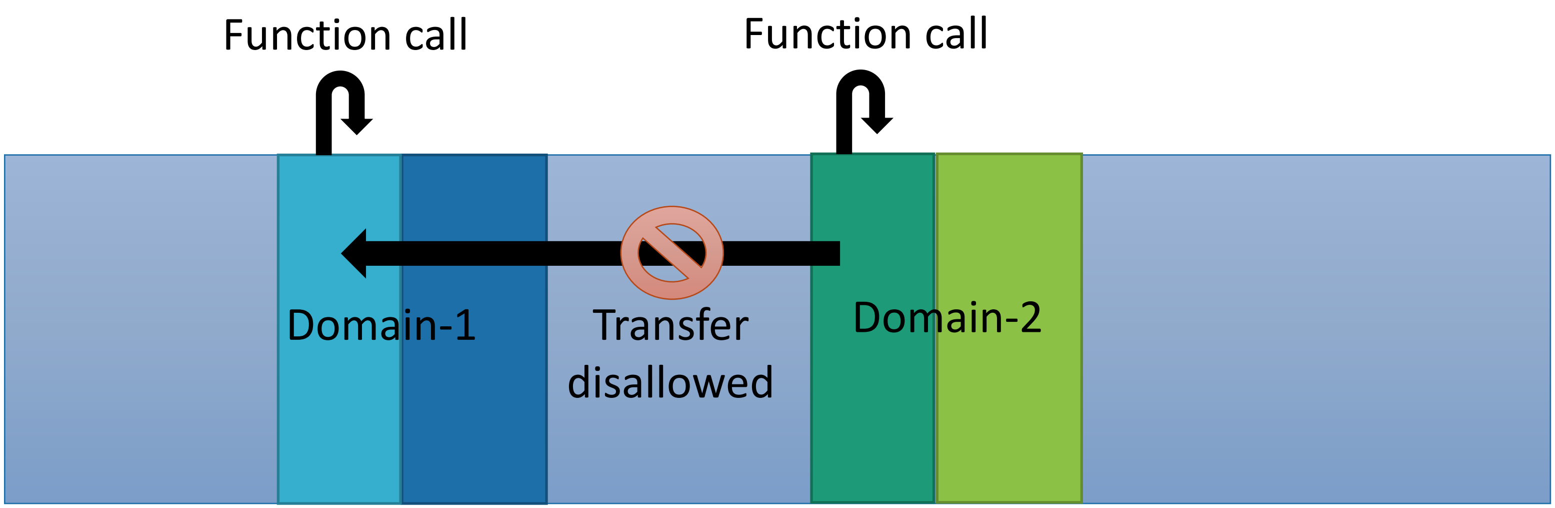

Software-fault Isolation

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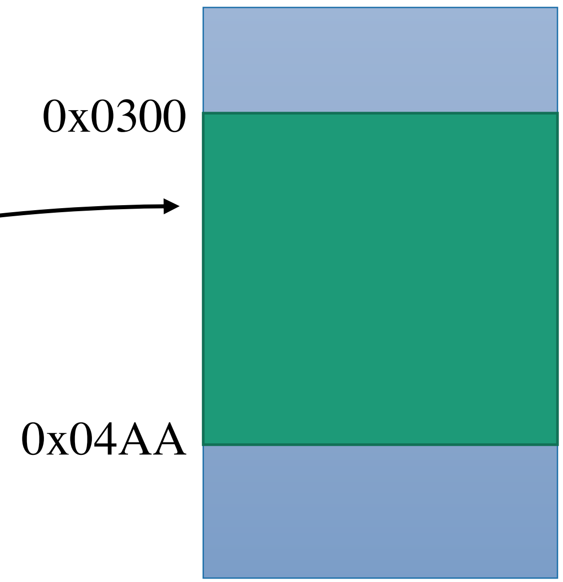
Modify programs during compilation or by rewriting to enforce these properties

Constraining Memory Accesses

Through boundary checking

cmp 0x0300
if less Error
cmp 0x04AA
if greater Error
write x

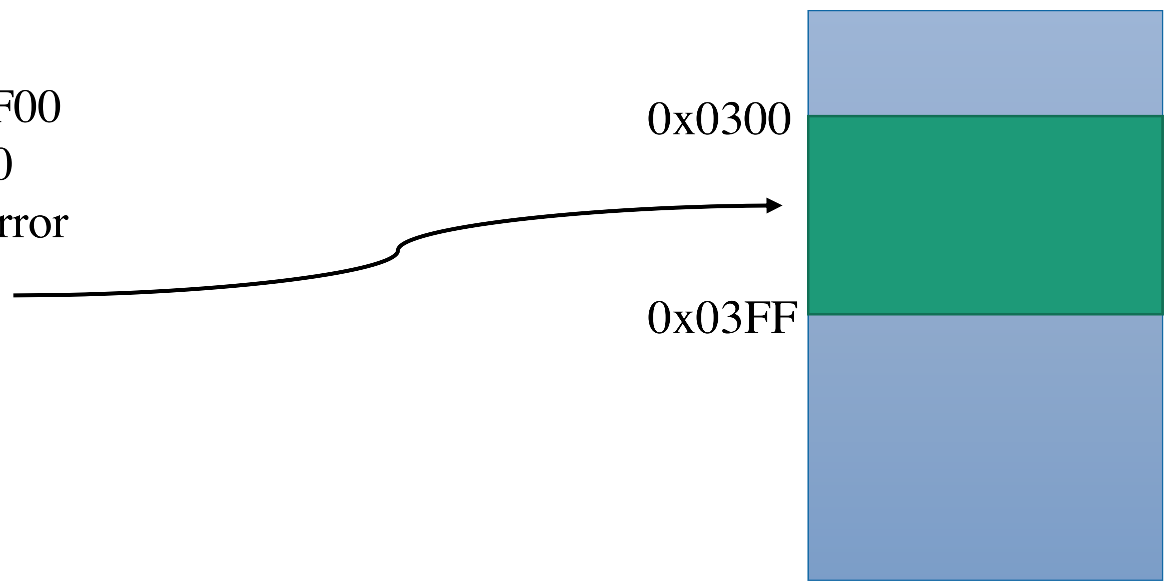


Constraining Memory Accesses

We can improve the boundary checks

- By allocating domains in aligned memory ranges
- Using bit masking to help with checking

```
tmp := x & FF00
cmp tmp 0300
if not equal Error
write x
```

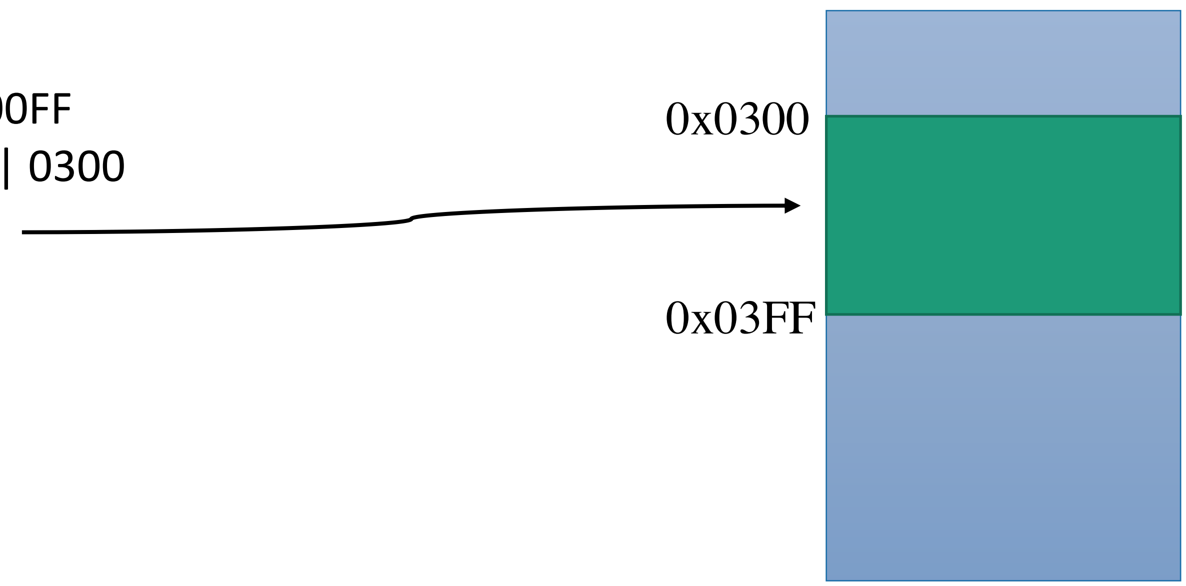


Constraining Memory Accesses

Further improvements

- Do not detect error
- Constrain memory access to domain

tmp : = x & 00FF
tmp : = tmp | 0300
write tmp

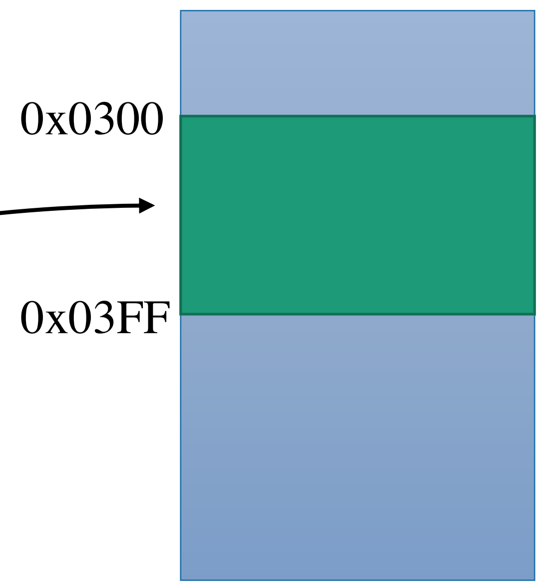


Constraining Memory Accesses

Eliminating temporary registers is not always a good idea

Malicious code could bypass masking operations

```
…
x := x & 00FF
x := x | 0300
write x
```

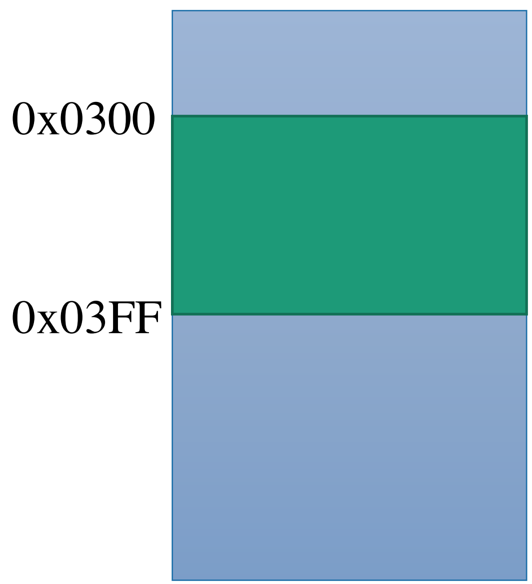


Time Of Check Time Of Use (TOCTOU)

Constraining Memory Accesses

Can malicious code bypass checks with temporary registers?

```
tmp : = x & 00FF
tmp : = tmp | 0300
```
write tmp



Constraining Memory Accesses

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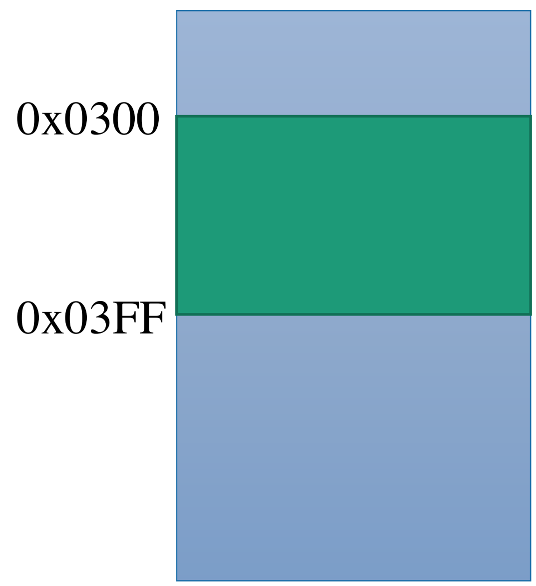
```

write tmp → ?



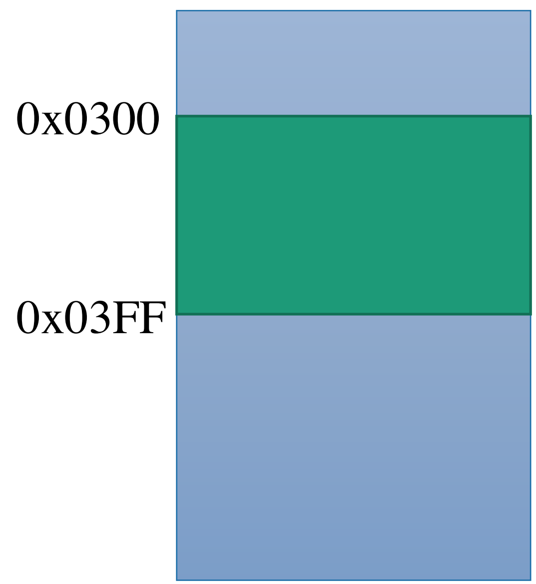
- tmp has not been initialized and will probably cause the program to crash.
- Can be forced to crash by setting tmp to bad address (e.g., 0xffffffff) after write

Constraining Memory Accesses

Can malicious code bypass checks with temporary registers?

```
tmp : = x & 00FF
tmp : = tmp | 0300
```
write tmp → **?**

This will also not work



Constraining Control Flow

Sandboxes are mainly to used to constrain untrusted code so obviously this is a general problem

…

jmp ptr → **?**

Constraining Control Flow

Similar tricks can be applied

… **jmp ptr**	→	… tptr : = ptr & 00FF tptr : = tptr | 0300 **jmp tptr**
… **call ptr**	→	… tptr : = ptr & 00FF tptr : = tptr | 0300 **call tptr**
… **ret**	→	?

Constraining Control Flow

Naive approach

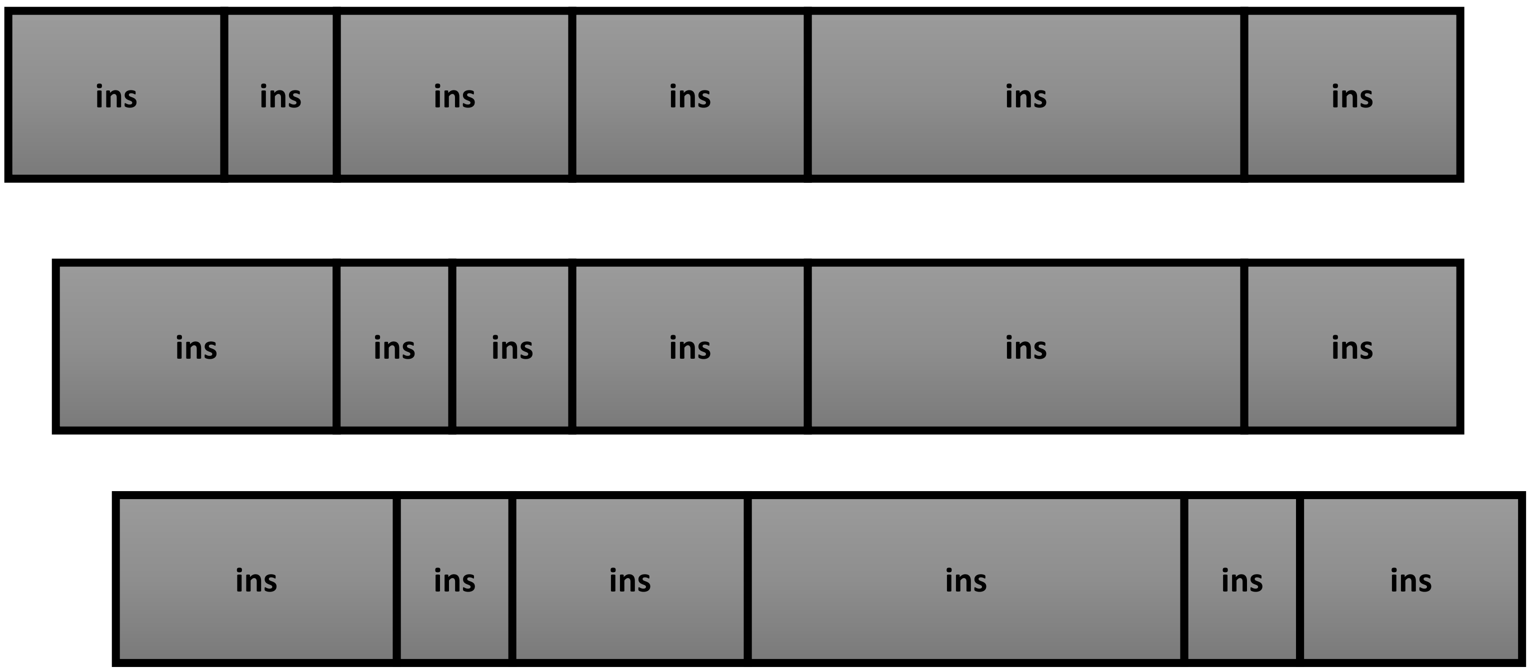
ret →

pop tptr
tptr : = tptr & 00FF
tptr : = tptr | 0300
jmp ptr

CISC Trouble

Constraining within the domain is not enough

- Instructions may be hidden within instructions in CISC programs



Pseudo Fixed-size Instructions

Align every “pseudo” instruction on a 32-byte boundary

- 0x1F bits are always zero

Force pointer so it can only point to a pseudo instruction

```
pop tptr
tptr : = tptr & 00E0
tptr : = tptr | 0300
jmp ptr
```

Benefits of SFI

No context switches

Faster if run-time checks are faster than context switching

Google Native Client (NaCL)

A sandboxing technology for running a subset of Intel x86, ARM, or MIPS **native** code in a sandbox

https://developer.chrome.com/native-client

NaCL programs are compiled with modified compiler

Supports subset of language

Produces sandboxed programs

Escaping Sandboxes

Exploitation of a sandboxed component grants limited control

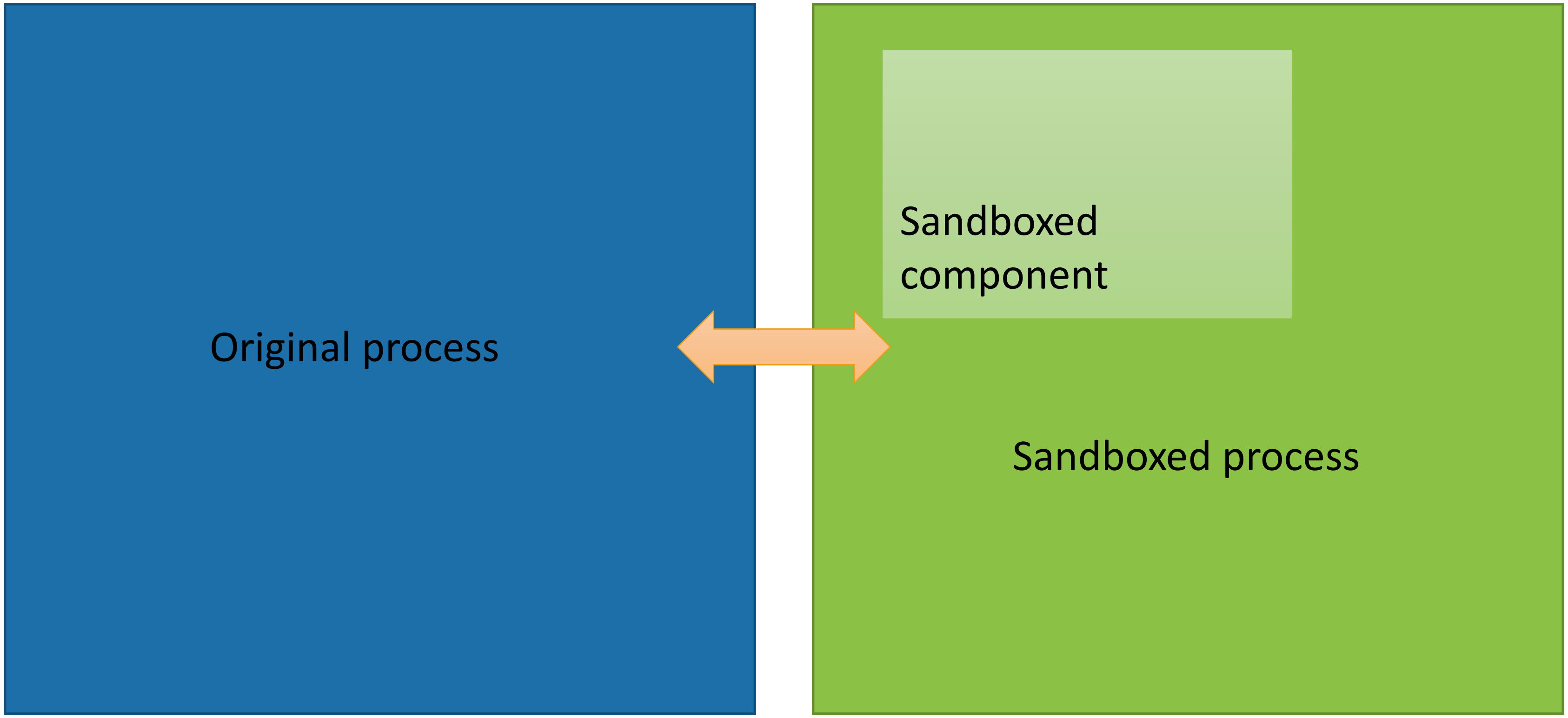
But sandboxes may have bugs

Multiple exploits in different components are usually required

In 2012's pwnium competition 14 bugs where needed to take down chrome

- http://blog.chromium.org/2012/05/tale-of-two-pwnies-part-1.html

Multiple Layers of Sandboxes

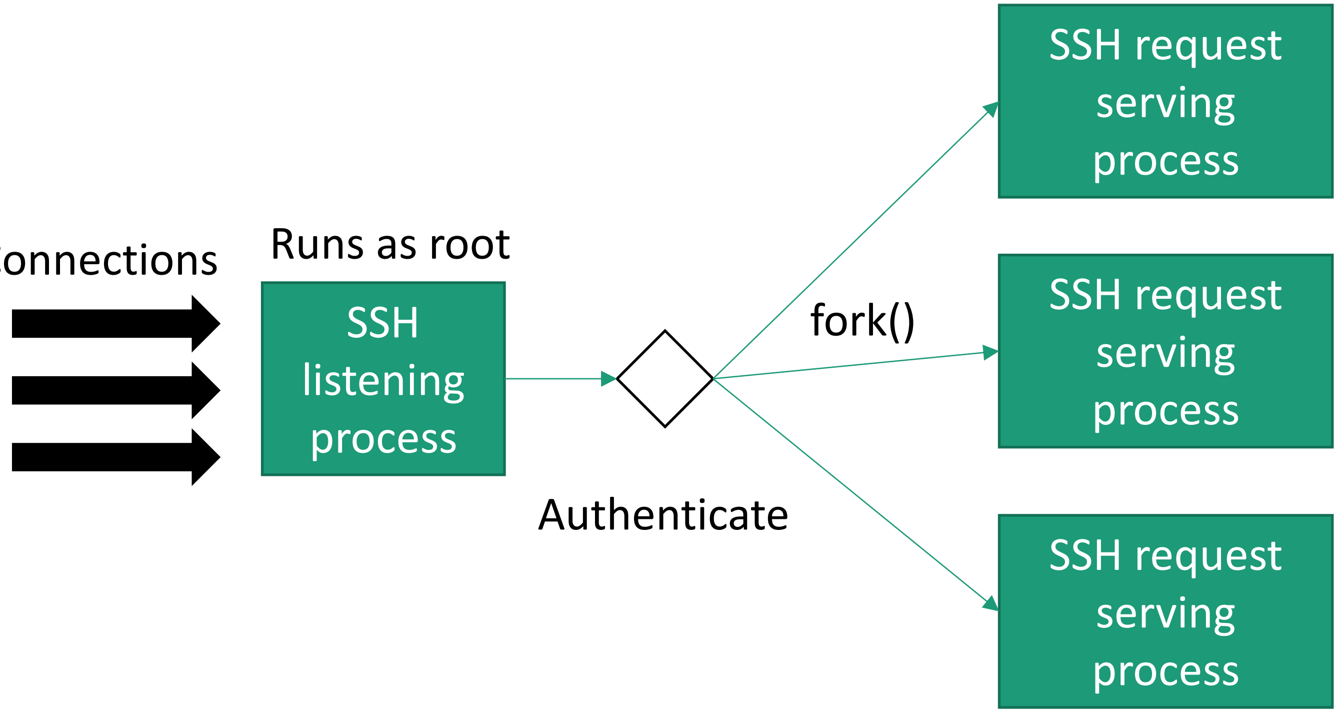


Other Use Cases for Isolation

Process-level Isolation from the OS is frequently used to realize the principle of least privilege in servers

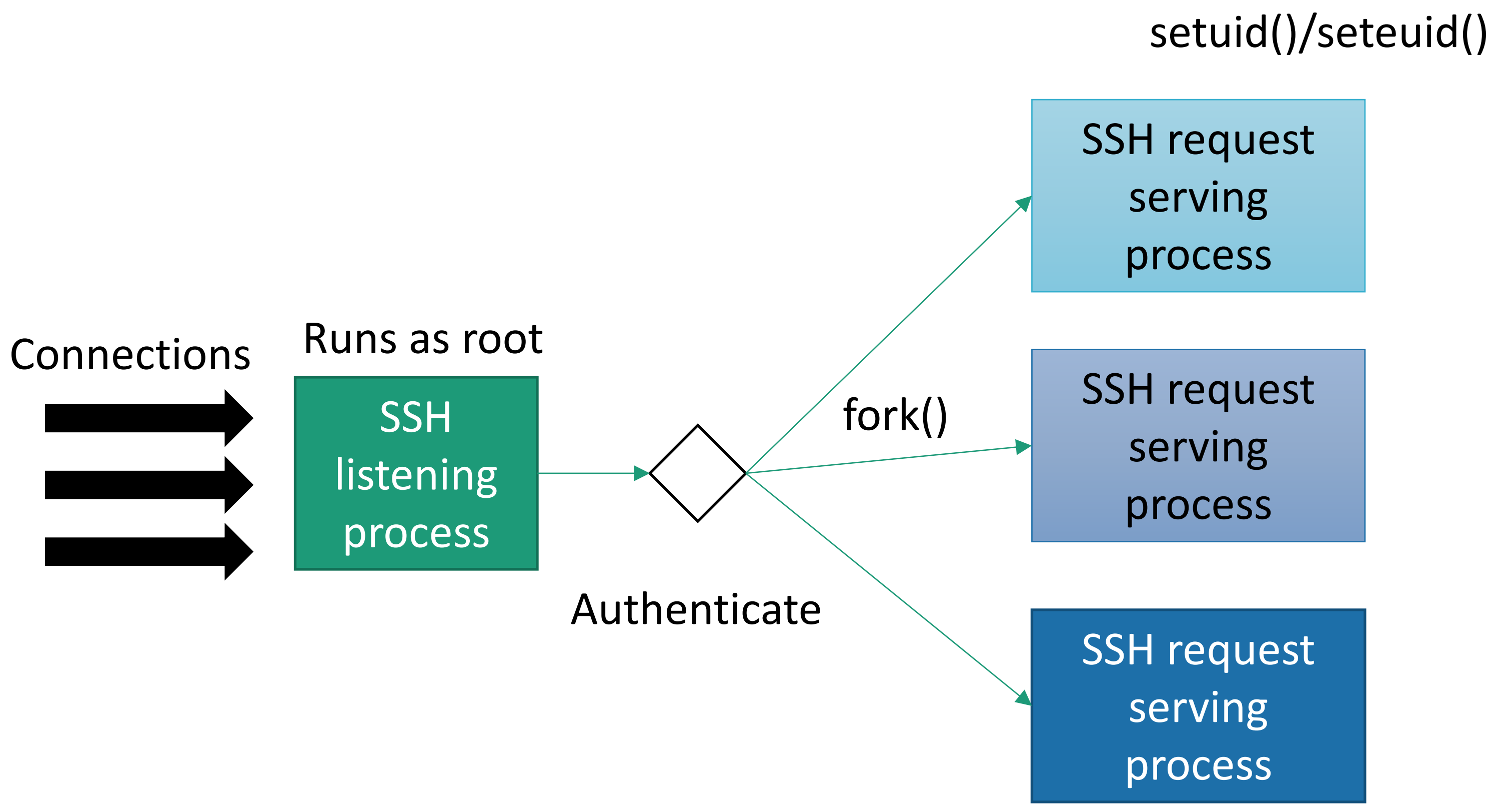
Examples: SSH, Web servers

SSH



How is access control done here?

SSH



Process drop privileges and run as the authenticated user