

# Cryptographic Engineering

## Multiprecision arithmetic II and ECC

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## Where were we...?

- ▶ Last lecture: arithmetic on big integers
- ▶ Conclusion at the end:
  - ▶ Can use a *redundant representation* for big integers
  - ▶ Carries get accumulated in “unused” upper parts of registers
  - ▶ Arithmetic becomes essentially polynomial arithmetic
  - ▶ Need to carry en bloc whenever coefficients become too large

## Example: product-scanning multiplication

```
/* 256-bit integers in radix 216 */
typedef signed long long bigint[16];

void mul_prodscan(signed long long r[31],
                  const bigint x,
                  const bigint y)
{
    r[0]    = x[0] * y[0];
    r[1]    = x[1] * y[0];
    r[1] += x[0] * y[1];
    r[2]    = x[2] * y[0];
    r[2] += x[1] * y[1];
    r[2] += x[0] * y[2];
    ...
    r[29]   = x[15] * y[14];
    r[29] += x[14] * y[15];
    r[30]   = x[15] * y[15];
}
```

## Modular reduction

- ▶ We don't just need arithmetic on big integers
- ▶ We need arithmetic in finite fields
- ▶ In other words, we need reduction modulo a prime  $p$
- ▶ Let's fix some  $p$ , say  $p = 2^{255} - 19$
- ▶ We know that  $2^{255} \equiv 19 \pmod{p}$
- ▶ This means that  $2^{256} \equiv 38 \pmod{p}$
- ▶ Reduce 31-bit intermediate result  $r$  as follows:  

```
for(i=0;i<15;i++)  
    r[i] += 38*r[i+16];
```
- ▶ Result is in  $r[0], \dots, r[15]$

## Primes are not rabbits

- ▶ “You cannot just simply pull some nice prime out of your hat!”
- ▶ In fact, very often we can.
- ▶ For cryptography we construct curves over fields of “nice” order
- ▶ Examples:
  - ▶  $2^{192} - 2^{64} - 1$  (“NIST-P192”, FIPS186-2, 2000)
  - ▶  $2^{224} - 2^{96} + 1$  (“NIST-P224”, FIPS186-2, 2000)
  - ▶  $2^{256} - 2^{224} + 2^{192} + 2^{96} - 1$  (“NIST-P256”, FIPS186-2, 2000)
  - ▶  $2^{255} - 19$  (Bernstein, 2006)
  - ▶  $2^{251} - 9$  (Bernstein, Hamburg, Krasnova, Lange, 2013)
  - ▶  $2^{448} - 2^{224} - 1$  (Hamburg, 2015)
- ▶ All these primes come with (more or less) fast reduction algorithms
- ▶ More about *general primes* later
- ▶ For the moment let’s stick to  $2^{255} - 19$

## Carrying after multiplication

```
long long c;
for(i=0;i<15;i++)
{
    c = r[i] >> 16;
    r[i+1] += c;
    c <<= 16;
    r[i] -= c;
}
c = r[15] >> 16;
r[0] += 38*c;
c <<= 16;
r[15] -= c;
```

- ▶ Coefficient `r[0]` may still be too large: carry again to `r[1]`

How about squaring?

```
#define bigint_square(R,X) bigint_mul(R,X,X)
```

## How about squaring?

```
/* 256-bit integers in radix 216 */
typedef signed long long bigint[16];

void square_prodscan(signed long long r[31],
                    const bigint x)
{
    r[0]    = x[0] * x[0];
    r[1]    = x[1] * x[0];
    r[1]    += x[0] * x[1];
    r[2]    = x[2] * x[0];
    r[2]    += x[1] * x[1];
    r[2]    += x[0] * x[2];
    ...
    r[29]   = x[15] * x[14];
    r[29]   += x[14] * x[15];
    r[30]   = x[15] * x[15];
}
```



## How about squaring?

```
/* 256-bit integers in radix 2^16 */
typedef signed long long bigint[16];

void square_prodscale(signed long long r[31],
                     const bigint x)
{
    signed long long _2x[16];
    int i;
    for(i=0;i<16;i++)
        _2x[i] = 2*x[i];

    r[0]   =  x[0] * x[0];
    r[1]   = _2x[1] * x[0];
    r[2]   = _2x[2] * x[0];
    r[2] +=  x[1] * x[1];
    ...
    r[29]  = _2x[15] * x[14];
    r[30]  = x[15] * x[15];
}
```

# Squaring vs. multiplication

## Multiplication needs

- ▶ 256 multiplications
- ▶ 225 additions

## Squaring needs

- ▶ 136 multiplications
- ▶ 105 additions
- ▶ 15 additions or shifts or multiplications by 2 for precomputation

## How about other prime fields?

- ▶ So far: reductions only modulo “nice” primes
- ▶ What if somebody just throws an ugly prime at you?
- ▶ Example: German BSI is pushing the “Brainpool curves”, over fields  $\mathbb{F}_p$  with

```
p224 =2272162293245435278755253799591092807334073\  
      2145944992304435472941311  
      =0xD7C134AA264366862A18302575D1D787B09F07579\  
      7DA89F57EC8C0FF
```

or

```
p256 =7688495639704534422080974662900164909303795\  
      0200943055203735601445031516197751  
      =0xA9FB57DBA1EEA9BC3E660A909D838D726E3BF623D\  
      52620282013481D1F6E5377
```

- ▶ Another example: Pairing-friendly curves are typically defined over fields  $\mathbb{F}_p$  where  $p$  has *some* structure, but hard to exploit for fast arithmetic

# Montgomery representation

- ▶ We have the following problem:
  - ▶ We multiply two  $n$ -limb big integers and obtain a  $2n$ -limb result  $t$
  - ▶ We need to find  $t \bmod p$
- ▶ Idea: Perform big-integer division with remainder (expensive!)
- ▶ Better idea (Montgomery, 1985):
  - ▶ Let  $R$  be such that  $\gcd(R, p) = 1$  and  $t < p \cdot R$
  - ▶ Represent an element  $a$  of  $\mathbb{F}_p$  as  $aR \bmod p$
  - ▶ Multiplication of  $aR$  and  $bR$  yields  $t = abR^2$  ( $2n$  limbs)
  - ▶ Now compute *Montgomery reduction*:  $tR^{-1} \bmod p$
  - ▶ For *some* choices of  $R$  this is more efficient than division
  - ▶ Typical choice for radix- $b$  representation:  $R = b^n$

## Montgomery reduction (pseudocode)

**Require:**  $p = (p_{n-1}, \dots, p_0)_b$  with  $\gcd(p, b) = 1$ ,  $R = b^n$ ,  
 $p' = -p^{-1} \pmod b$  and  $t = (t_{2n-1}, \dots, t_0)_b$

**Ensure:**  $tR^{-1} \pmod p$

$A \leftarrow t$

**for**  $i$  from 0 to  $n - 1$  **do**

$u \leftarrow a_i p' \pmod b$

$A \leftarrow A + u \cdot p \cdot b^i$

**end for**

$A \leftarrow A/b^n$

**if**  $A \geq p$  **then**

$A \leftarrow A - p$

**end if**

**return**  $A$

## Some notes about Montgomery reduction

- ▶ Some cost for transforming to Montgomery representation and back
- ▶ Only efficient if many operations are performed in Montgomery representation
- ▶ The algorithm takes  $n^2 + n$  multiplication instructions
- ▶  $n$  of those are “shortened” multiplications (modulo  $b$ )
- ▶ The cost is roughly the same as schoolbook multiplication
- ▶ Careful about conditional subtraction (timing attacks!)
- ▶ One can merge schoolbook multiplication with Montgomery reduction: “Montgomery multiplication”

## Still missing: inversion

- ▶ Inversion is typically *much* more expensive than multiplication
- ▶ Efficient ECC arithmetic avoids frequent inversions
- ▶ ECC can typically not avoid *all* inversions
- ▶ We need inversion, but we do (usually) not need it often
- ▶ Two approaches to inversion:
  1. Extended Euclidean algorithm
  2. Fermat's little theorem

## Extended Euclidean algorithm

- ▶ Given two integers  $a, b$ , the Extended Euclidean algorithm finds
  - ▶ The greatest common divisor of  $a$  and  $b$
  - ▶ Integers  $u$  and  $v$ , such that  $a \cdot u + b \cdot v = \gcd(a, b)$
- ▶ It is based on the observation that

$$\gcd(a, b) = \gcd(b, a - qb) \quad \forall q \in \mathbb{Z}$$

- ▶ To compute  $a^{-1} \pmod{p}$ , use the algorithm to compute

$$a \cdot u + p \cdot v = \gcd(a, p) = 1$$

- ▶ Now it holds that  $u \equiv a^{-1} \pmod{p}$



## Extended Euclidean algorithm (pseudocode)

**Require:** Integers  $a$  and  $b$ .

**Ensure:** An integer tuple  $(u, v, d)$  satisfying  $a \cdot u + b \cdot v = d = \gcd(a, b)$

$u \leftarrow 1$

$v \leftarrow 0$

$d \leftarrow a$

$v_1 \leftarrow 0$

$v_3 \leftarrow b$

**while**  $(v_3 \neq 0)$  **do**

$q \leftarrow \lfloor \frac{d}{v_3} \rfloor$

$t_3 \leftarrow d \bmod v_3$

$t_1 \leftarrow u - qv_1$

$u \leftarrow v_1$

$d \leftarrow v_3$

$v_1 \leftarrow t_1$

$v_3 \leftarrow t_3$

**end while**

$v \leftarrow \frac{d-au}{b}$

**return**  $(u, v, d)$

## Some notes about the Extended Euclidean algorithm

- ▶ Core operation are divisions with remainder
- ▶ This lecture: no details about big-integer division
- ▶ Version without divisions: **binary extended gcd**:  
    [Handbook of applied cryptography](#), Alg. 14.61
- ▶ The running time (number of loop iterations) depends on the inputs
- ▶ We usually do not want this for cryptography (timing attacks!)
- ▶ Possible protection: blinding
  - ▶ Multiply  $a$  by random integer  $r$
  - ▶ Invert, obtain  $r^{-1}a^{-1}$
  - ▶ Multiply again by  $r$  to obtain  $a^{-1}$
- ▶ Note that this requires a source of randomness

# Fermat's little theorem

## Theorem

Let  $p$  be prime. Then for any integer  $a$  it holds that  $a^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p}$

- ▶ This implies that  $a^{p-2} \equiv a^{-1} \pmod{p}$
- ▶ Obvious algorithm for inversion: Exponentiation with  $p - 2$
- ▶ The exponent is quite large (e.g., 255 bits), is that efficient?
- ▶ Yes, fairly:
  - ▶ Exponent is fixed and known at compile time
  - ▶ Can spend quite some time on finding an efficient addition chain (next lecture)
  - ▶ Inversion modulo  $2^{255} - 19$  needs 254 squarings and 11 multiplications in  $\mathbb{F}_{2^{255}-19}$

## Inversion in $\mathbb{F}_{2^{255}-19}$

```
void gfe_invert(gfe r, const gfe x)
{
gfe z2, z9, z11, z2_5_0, z2_10_0, z2_20_0, z2_50_0, z2_100_0, t;
int i;
/* 2 */           gfe_square(z2,x);
/* 4 */           gfe_square(t,z2);
/* 8 */           gfe_square(t,t);
/* 9 */           gfe_mul(z9,t,x);
/* 11 */          gfe_mul(z11,z9,z2);
/* 22 */          gfe_square(t,z11);
/* 2^5 - 2^0 = 31 */ gfe_mul(z2_5_0,t,z9);
/* 2^6 - 2^1 */   gfe_square(t,z2_5_0);
/* 2^10 - 2^5 */  for (i = 1;i < 5;i++) { gfe_square(t,t); }
/* 2^10 - 2^0 */  gfe_mul(z2_10_0,t,z2_5_0);
/* 2^11 - 2^1 */  gfe_square(t,z2_10_0);
/* 2^20 - 2^10 */ for (i = 1;i < 10;i++) { gfe_square(t,t); }
/* 2^20 - 2^0 */  gfe_mul(z2_20_0,t,z2_10_0);
/* 2^21 - 2^1 */  gfe_square(t,z2_20_0);
/* 2^40 - 2^20 */ for (i = 1;i < 20;i++) { gfe_square(t,t); }
/* 2^40 - 2^0 */  gfe_mul(t,t,z2_20_0);
```

## Inversion in $\mathbb{F}_{2^{255}-19}$

```
/* 2^41 - 2^1 */      gfe_square(t,t);
/* 2^50 - 2^10 */     for (i = 1;i < 10;i++) { gfe_square(t,t); }
/* 2^50 - 2^0 */     gfe_mul(z2_50_0,t,z2_10_0);
/* 2^51 - 2^1 */     gfe_square(t,z2_50_0);
/* 2^100 - 2^50 */    for (i = 1;i < 50;i++) { gfe_square(t,t); }
/* 2^100 - 2^0 */    gfe_mul(z2_100_0,t,z2_50_0);
/* 2^101 - 2^1 */    gfe_square(t,z2_100_0);
/* 2^200 - 2^100 */  for (i = 1;i < 100;i++) { gfe_square(t,t); }
/* 2^200 - 2^0 */    gfe_mul(t,t,z2_100_0);
/* 2^201 - 2^1 */    gfe_square(t,t);
/* 2^250 - 2^50 */   for (i = 1;i < 50;i++) { gfe_square(t,t); }
/* 2^250 - 2^0 */   gfe_mul(t,t,z2_50_0);
/* 2^251 - 2^1 */   gfe_square(t,t);
/* 2^252 - 2^2 */   gfe_square(t,t);
/* 2^253 - 2^3 */   gfe_square(t,t);
/* 2^254 - 2^4 */   gfe_square(t,t);
/* 2^255 - 2^5 */   gfe_square(t,t);
/* 2^255 - 21 */   gfe_mul(r,t,z11);
}
```

# Multiprecision libraries

- ▶ Why would you write low-level arithmetic yourself?
- ▶ Aren't there some good libraries for this?
- ▶ There are:
  - ▶ GMP (<http://gmplib.org>), high-performance arithmetic on multiprecision numbers
  - ▶ NTL (<http://shoup.net/ntl/>), number-theory library, higher level than GMP, uses GMP
  - ▶ OpenSSL Bignum (<http://openssl.org>), low-level routines in OpenSSL
  - ▶  $\text{mp}\mathbb{F}_q$  (<http://mpfq.gforge.inria.fr/>), a finite-field library (generator)

## Limitations of libraries

- ▶ Libraries don't know the modulus (except for `mp $\mathbb{F}_q$` ), cannot optimize for a fixed modulus
- ▶ Libraries don't know the sequence of field operations you're computing (e.g., point addition), cannot use lazy reduction
- ▶ Libraries are not always timing-attack protected
- ▶ Consequence: ECC speed records are achieved with hand-optimized assembly implementations

# Part II

## Elliptic-curve cryptography from a crypto-engineering perspective



# Diffie-Hellman

- ▶ Let  $G$  be a cyclic, finite, abelian Group (written additively) and let  $P$  be a generator of  $G$
- ▶ Alice chooses random  $a \in \{0, \dots, |G| - 1\}$ , computes  $aP$ , sends to Bob
- ▶ Bob chooses random  $b \in \{0, \dots, |G| - 1\}$ , computes  $bP$ , sends to Alice
- ▶ Alice computes joint key  $a(bP)$
- ▶ Bob computes joint key  $b(aP)$
- ▶ DLP in  $G$ : given  $kP \in G$  and  $P$ , find  $k$
- ▶ Solving the DLP breaks security of Diffie-Hellman

## Groups with hard DLP

- ▶ Traditional answer:  $\mathbb{Z}_p^*$  with large prime-order subgroup
- ▶ Modern answer: Elliptic curve over  $\mathbb{F}_q$  with large prime-order subgroup
- ▶ Sophisticated answer (not in this lecture): hyperelliptic curves of genus 2

## Typical view on elliptic curves

### Definition

Let  $K$  be a field and let  $a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4, a_6 \in K$ . Then the following equation defines an elliptic curve  $E$ :

$$E : y^2 + a_1xy + a_3y = x^3 + a_2x^2 + a_4x + a_6$$

if the discriminant  $\Delta$  of  $E$  is not equal to zero. This equation is called the *Weierstrass form* of an elliptic curve.

### Characteristic $\neq 2, 3$

If  $\text{char}(K) \neq 2, 3$  we can use a simplified equation:

$$E : y^2 = x^3 + ax + b$$

### Characteristic 2

If  $\text{char}(K) = 2$  we can (usually) use a simplified equation:

$$E : y^2 + xy = x^3 + ax^2 + b$$

# Rational points

## Setup for cryptography

- ▶ Choose  $K = \mathbb{F}_q$
- ▶ Consider the set of  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -rational points:

$$E(\mathbb{F}_q) = \{(x, y) \in \mathbb{F}_q \times \mathbb{F}_q : y^2 + a_1xy + a_3y = x^3 + a_2x^2 + a_4x + a_6\} \cup \{\mathcal{O}\}$$

- ▶ The element  $\mathcal{O}$  is the “point at infinity”
- ▶ This set forms a group (together with addition law)
- ▶ Order of this group:  $|E(\mathbb{F}_q)| \approx |\mathbb{F}_q|$

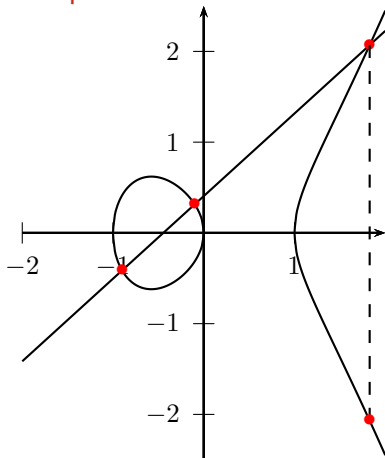
# The group law

Example curve:  $y^2 = x^3 - x$  over  $\mathbb{R}$

## Addition of points

- ▶ Add points  
 $P = (-0, 9; -0, 4135)$  and  
 $Q = (-0, 1; 0, 3146)$
- ▶ Compute line through the two points
- ▶ Determine third intersection  
 $T = (x_T, y_T)$  with the elliptic curve
- ▶ Result of the addition:  
 $P + Q = (x_T, -y_T)$

## Graph of $E$ over $\mathbb{R}$



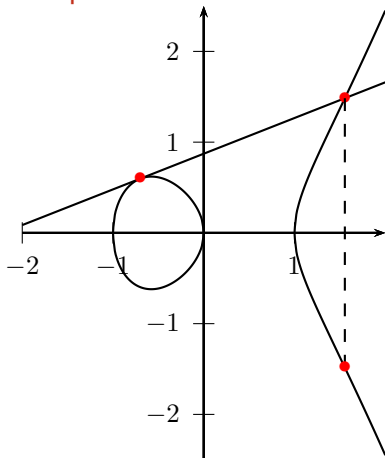
# The group law

Example curve:  $y^2 = x^3 - x$  over  $\mathbb{R}$

## Point doubling

- ▶ Double the point  
 $P = (-0.7, 0.5975)$
- ▶ Compute the tangent on  $P$
- ▶ Determine second intersection  
 $T = (x_T, y_T)$  with the elliptic curve
- ▶ Result of the addition:  
 $P + Q = (x_T, -y_T)$

## Graph of $E$ over $\mathbb{R}$



# Group law in formulas

Curve equation:  $y^2 = x^3 + ax + b$

## Point addition

- ▶  $P = (x_P, y_P), Q = (x_Q, y_Q) \rightarrow P + Q = R = (x_R, y_R)$  with
- ▶  $x_R = \left( \frac{y_Q - y_P}{x_Q - x_P} \right)^2 - x_P - x_Q$
- ▶  $y_R = \left( \frac{y_Q - y_P}{x_Q - x_P} \right) (x_P - x_R) - y_P$

## Point doubling

- ▶  $P = (x_P, y_P), 2P = (x_R, y_R)$  with
- ▶  $x_R = \left( \frac{3x_P^2 + a}{2y_P} \right)^2 - 2x_P$
- ▶  $y_R = \left( \frac{3x_P^2 + a}{2y_P} \right) (x_P - x_R) - y_P$

## More Weierstrass curve group law

- ▶ Neutral element is  $\mathcal{O}$
- ▶ Inverse of a point  $(x, y)$  is  $(x, -y)$
- ▶ Note: Formulas don't work for  $P + (-P)$ , also don't work for  $\mathcal{O}$
- ▶ Need to distinguish these cases!
- ▶ “Uniform” addition law in Hışıl's Ph.D. thesis, Section 5.5.2 (<http://eprints.qut.edu.au/33233/>):
  - ▶ Move special cases to other points
  - ▶ Not safe to use on arbitrary input points!
- ▶ Formulas for curves over  $\mathbb{F}_{2^k}$  look slightly different, but same special cases

# Finding a suitable curve

## Security requirements for ECC

- ▶  $\ell = |E(\mathbb{F}_q)|$  must have large prime-order subgroup
- ▶ For  $n$  bits of security we need  $2n$ -bit prime-order subgroup
- ▶ Impossible to transfer DLP to less secure groups:
  - ▶  $\ell$  must not be equal to  $q$
  - ▶ We need  $\ell \nmid p^k - 1$  for small  $k$

## Finding a curve

- ▶ Fix finite field  $\mathbb{F}_q$  of suitable size
- ▶ Fix curve parameter  $a$  (quite common:  $a = -3$ )
- ▶ Pick curve parameter  $b$  until  $E$  fulfills desired properties
- ▶ This requires efficient “point counting”
- ▶ This requires efficient factorization or primality proving



## Standardized curves

*“The nice thing about standards is that you have so many to choose from.”*  
– Andrew S. Tanenbaum

- ▶ Various standardized curves, most well-known: NIST curves:
  - ▶ Big-prime field curves with 192, 224, 256, 384, and 521 bits
  - ▶ Binary curves with 163, 233, 283, 409, and 571 bits
  - ▶ Binary Koblitz curves with 163, 233, 283, 409, and 571 bits
- ▶ SECG curves (Certicom), prime-field and binary curves
- ▶ Brainpool curves (BSI), only prime-field curves
- ▶ FRP256v1 (ANSSI), one prime-field curve (256 bits)

# Binary vs. big prime

## Curves over big-prime fields

- ▶ Many fields of a given size  $\Rightarrow$  many curves
- ▶ Efficient in software (can use hardware multipliers)
- ▶ Less efficient in hardware

## Curves over binary fields

- ▶ Important for security: exponent  $k$  in  $\mathbb{F}_{p^k}$  has to be prime
- ▶ Not many fields (not that many curves)
- ▶ More efficient in hardware
- ▶ Efficient in software only on some microarchitectures
- ▶ A hell to implement securely in software on some other microarchitectures

## Putting it together

- ▶ Choose security level (e.g., 128 bits)
- ▶ Decide whether you want binary or big-prime field arithmetic, let's say big prime
- ▶ Pick corresponding standard curve, e.g., NIST-P256
- ▶ Implement field arithmetic
- ▶ Implement ECC addition and doubling
- ▶ Implement scalar multiplication (next lecture)
- ▶ You're done with **BAD (!)** ECDH software

# Problem I: inversions

## Inversions

- ▶ Adding  $P = (x_P, y_P)$  and  $Q = (x_Q, y_Q)$  needs an inversion in  $\mathbb{F}_q$
- ▶ Inversions are expensive
- ▶ Constant-time inversions are even more expensive

## Solution: projective coordinates

- ▶ Store fractions of elements of  $\mathbb{F}_q$ , invert only once at the end
- ▶ Represent points in *projective coordinates*:  $P = (X_P : Y_P : Z_P)$  with  $x_P = X_P/Z_P$  and  $y_P = Y_P/Z_P$
- ▶ The point  $(1 : 1 : 0)$  is the point at infinity
- ▶ Also possible: weighted projective coordinates:
  - ▶ Jacobian coordinates:  $P = (X_P : Y_P : Z_P)$  with  $x_P = X_P/Z_P^2$  and  $y_P = Y_P/Z_P^3$
  - ▶ López-Dahab coordinates (for binary curves):  $P = (X_P : Y_P : Z_P)$  with  $x_P = X_P/Z_P$  and  $y_P = Y_P/Z_P^2$
- ▶ Important: Never *send* projective representation, always convert to affine!

## Problem II: group-law special cases

- ▶ Addition of  $P + Q$  needs to distinguish different cases:
  - ▶ If  $P = \mathcal{O}$  return  $Q$
  - ▶ Else if  $Q = \mathcal{O}$  return  $P$
  - ▶ Else if  $P = Q$  call doubling routine
  - ▶ Else if  $P = -Q$  return  $\mathcal{O}$
  - ▶ Else use addition formulas
- ▶ Similar for doubling  $P$ :
  - ▶ If  $P = \mathcal{O}$  return  $P$
  - ▶ Else if  $y_P = 0$  return  $\mathcal{O}$
  - ▶ Else use doubling formulas
- ▶ Constant-time implementations of this are horrible
- ▶ Good news: Can avoid the checks when computing  $k \cdot P$  and  $k < |E(\mathbb{F}_q)|$
- ▶ Bad news: Side-channel countermeasures use  $k > |E(\mathbb{F}_q)|$
- ▶ More bad news: Doesn't work for multi-scalar multiplication (next lecture)
- ▶ Baseline: *simple* implementations are likely to be wrong or insecure

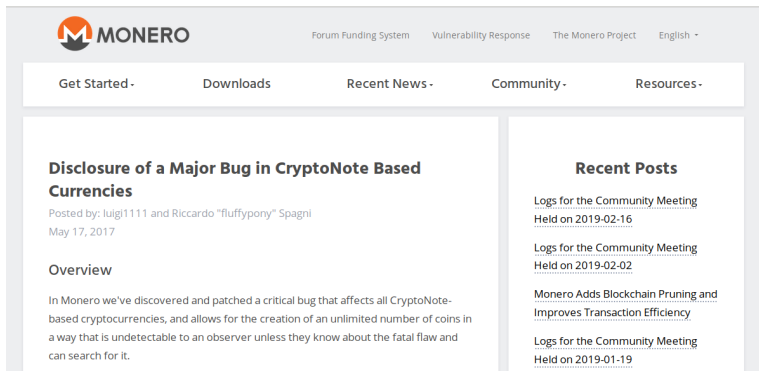
## Solution I: Montgomery ladder

- ▶ Use Montgomery curve:  $E_M : By^2 = x^3 + Ax^2 + x$ .
- ▶ Use  $x$ -coordinate-only differential addition chain (“Montgomery ladder”, next lecture)
- ▶ Advantages:
  - ▶ Works on all inputs, no special cases
  - ▶ Very regular structure, easy to protect against timing attacks
  - ▶ Point compression/decompression for free
  - ▶ Easy to implement, harder to screw up in hard-to-detect ways
  - ▶ Simple implementations are likely to be correct and secure
- ▶ Disadvantages:
  - ▶ Not all curves can be converted to Montgomery shape
  - ▶ Always have a cofactor of at least 4
  - ▶ Ladders on general Weierstrass curves are much less efficient
  - ▶ We only get the  $x$  coordinate of the result, tricky for signatures
  - ▶ Can reconstruct  $y$ , but that involves some additional cost

## Solution II: (twisted) Edwards curves

- ▶ Edwards, 2007: New form for elliptic curves (“Edwards curves”)
- ▶ Bernstein, Lange, 2007: very fast addition and doubling on these curves
- ▶ Bernstein, Birkner, Joye, Lange, Peters, 2008: generalize the idea to “twisted Edwards curves”
- ▶ Core advantage of (twisted) Edwards curves: **complete group law**
- ▶ No need to handle special cases
- ▶ No “point at infinity” to work with
- ▶ Can speed up doubling, but addition formulas work for  $P + P$
- ▶ Efficient (for cryptography) transformation from Weierstrass to (twisted) Edwards only for some curves
- ▶ Always efficient: transformation between Montgomery curves and twisted Edwards curves
- ▶ Again: simple implementations are likely to be correct and secure
- ▶ Disadvantage: always have a cofactor of at least 4

# So, what's the deal with the cofactor?



The screenshot shows the Monero website header with the logo and navigation links: Forum Funding System, Vulnerability Response, The Monero Project, and English. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for Get Started, Downloads, Recent News, Community, and Resources. The main content area features a news article titled "Disclosure of a Major Bug in CryptoNote Based Currencies" posted by luigi1111 and Riccardo "fluffypony" Spagni on May 17, 2017. The article includes an "Overview" section stating that a critical bug was discovered and patched, affecting all CryptoNote-based cryptocurrencies and allowing for unlimited coin creation. To the right, a "Recent Posts" sidebar lists three community meeting logs from February 2019 and January 2019.

**MONERO** Forum Funding System Vulnerability Response The Monero Project English

Get Started - Downloads Recent News - Community - Resources -

## Disclosure of a Major Bug in CryptoNote Based Currencies

Posted by: luigi1111 and Riccardo "fluffypony" Spagni  
May 17, 2017

### Overview

In Monero we've discovered and patched a critical bug that affects all CryptoNote-based cryptocurrencies, and allows for the creation of an unlimited number of coins in a way that is undetectable to an observer unless they know about the fatal flaw and can search for it.

### Recent Posts

- [Logs for the Community Meeting Held on 2019-02-16](#)
- [Logs for the Community Meeting Held on 2019-02-02](#)
- [Monero Adds Blockchain Pruning and Improves Transaction Efficiency](#)
- [Logs for the Community Meeting Held on 2019-01-19](#)

- ▶ Protocols need to be careful to avoid subgroup attacks
- ▶ Monero screwed this up, which allowed double-spending
- ▶ Elegant solution: "Ristretto" encoding by Hamburg, see: <https://github.com/otrv4/libgoldilocks>



## Solution III: Complete group law on Weierstrass curves

- ▶ Bosma, Lenstra, 1995: complete group law for Weierstrass curves
- ▶ Problem: Extremely inefficient
- ▶ Renes, Costello, Batina, 2016: Much faster complete group law for Weierstrass curves
- ▶ Somewhat less efficient than (twisted) Edwards
- ▶ Covers all curves

## Problem III: Wrong-curve attacks

### ECDH attack scenario

- ▶ Alice sends point on different (insecure) curve with small subgroup
- ▶ Bob computes “shared key” in that small subgroup
- ▶ Alice learns “shared key” through brute force
- ▶ Alice learns Bob’s secret scalar modulo the order of the small subgroup

### Countermeasures

- ▶ Check that input point is on the curve (functional tests will miss this!)
- ▶ Send compressed points  $(x, \text{parity}(y))$ ; decompression returns  $(x, y)$  on the curve or fails
- ▶ Send only  $x$  (Montgomery ladder); but:  $x$  could still be on the “twist” of  $E$
- ▶ Make sure that the twist is also secure (“twist security”)

## Problem IV: Backdoors in standards?

*"I no longer trust the [NIST Elliptic Curves] constants. I believe the NSA has manipulated them through their relationships with industry."* — Bruce Schneier, 2013.

- ▶ It is pretty clear that NSA put a backdoor in Dual\_EC\_DRBG
- ▶ Constants of NIST curves have been obtained by hashing random values
- ▶ No-backdoor claim: We know the preimages
- ▶ Possible attack if you know a class of vulnerable curves: Generate random seeds until you have found a vulnerable (and seemingly secure) curve
- ▶ Fact: There are no known insecurities of NIST curves
- ▶ Fact: There is no proof that there are no intentional vulnerabilities in NIST curves
- ▶ For more details, see [BADA55 elliptic curves](#)

## Choosing a safe curve

Overview of various elliptic curves and thorough security analysis by Bernstein and Lange:

<https://safecurves.cr.yp.to>

(doesn't list cofactor-1 curves, so best to combine with Ristretto)

## Point representation and arithmetic

Collection of elliptic-curve shapes, point representations and group-operation formulas by Bernstein and Lange:

<https://www.hyperelliptic.org/EFD/>