

ECE 435 – Network Engineering

Lecture 21

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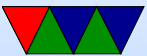
6 April 2023

Announcements

- Project status reports due next Thursday
 - See pdf on website for full details
 - One sentence description of project topic
 - Briefly describe any progress made
 - Say whether you want to present the 25th or 27th
- HW#10 will be posted



Wireless



Why Wireless?

- Pros
 - Use anywhere
 - No wires
- Cons
 - Less reliability, noise
 - Less power availability
 - Less security



Wireless LAN

- 802.11. Started in 1990, no standard until 1997
- Operates in fixed ISM bands
 - Industrial/Scientific/Medical, no license needed
 - 900MHz, 2.4GHz, 5GHz
 - What issues come up with these bands?
Microwave oven? Cordless phones, Bluetooth
 - Until 2002 ISM usage had to be spread spectrum
 - Up to 1W transmission power (50mW typical)



Wireless LAN Standards

- All of the various 802.11 have been sort of merged together, but people use the old letters out of habit



Wi-Fi

- What does Wi-Fi mean? Wireless Fidelity?
Or Empty Marketing Term?
- Retroactively numbers given to older protocols
 - 802.11 = Wi-Fi 0
 - 802.11b = Wi-Fi 1
 - 802.11a = Wi-Fi 2
 - 802.11g = Wi-Fi 3
 - 802.11n = Wi-Fi 4
 - 802.11ac = Wi-Fi 5
 - 802.11ax = Wi-Fi 6/6E
 - 802.11be = Wi-Fi 7



802.11 (1997) (Wi-Fi 0)

- Original, 1 or 2MBps, 2.4GHz, three implementations
 - infrared(?)
 - direct-sequence spread spectrum (DSSS)
Takes a signal and spreads it along a wider frequency band but adding pseudo-random noise, then subtracting out at the other side.
 - frequency-hopping spread spectrum (FHSS)
rapidly switch signal among a bunch of different frequencies in a pseudo-random fashion. Harder to



jam, causes less interference?
Initial seed, dwell time



802.11b (1999) (Wi-Fi 1)

- 5.5Mbps and 11Mbps
- HR-DSSS (High Rate Direct Sequence Spread Spectrum)
- Walsh-Hadamard codes (error correction)
- actually came to market before 802.11a
- In the 2.4GHz frequency band, no licensing
- Various channels, 22MHz wide. Not all available in all countries. Some channels overlap.
- In the US have channels 1 through 11, but 1, 6, 11 are only non-overlapping ones



802.11a (1999) (Wi-Fi 2)

- 1.5 - 54Mbps
- Not compatible with B, 54Mbps in 5GHz band
- 5GHz less crowded, but signal doesn't go as far (7x less than b)
- OFDM (Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing)
Data is sent on multiple channels in parallel
- 52 channels: 48 data channels 4 pilot subcarriers



802.11g (2003) (Wi-Fi 3)

- 54Mbps, 2.4GHz
- Uses OFDM like 802.11a, but in the 2.4GHz band
- Backward compatible with b, which slows it down



802.11n (2009) (Wi-Fi 4)

- 54Mbps - 600Mbps
- MIMO (multiple input/multiple output antennas)
- Can do spatial multiplexing, two antennas broadcast on same frequency by aiming signal



802.11ac (2009) (Wi-Fi 5)

- Most common currently (2022?)
- Wider channels, 80MHz-160MHz (vs 40MHz)
- 256 Quadrature Amplitude Modulation (QAM)
- MU-MIMO (multi-user MIMO)
- Theoretical max speed 7Gbps
- Up to 8 MIMO streams (spatial?)
- Downlink multi-user MIMO (4 clients), with 4 antennas
- Beam forming



802.11ax (2019) (Wi-Fi 6)

- 2.4/5/6GHz
- Up to 11Gbps? (1Gbps more typical)
- high efficiency?
- Wi-Fi 6E
 - Extension that uses the “6 GHz” band 5.925 - 7.125GHz
 - 1.2GHz of spectrum (old one only 400MHz)
 - Indoors this is fine, stopped by walls
 - Outdoors might conflict with other users of the band,



so has to do automatic frequency co-ordination where it checks database before using frequency



802.11be (20??) (Wi-Fi 7)

- To be released soon(?)
- 2.4/5/6GHz
- Up to 40Gbps?
- 4096-QAM



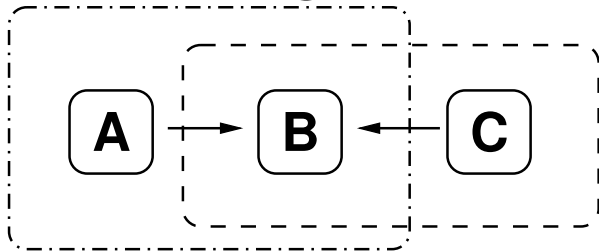
More obscure 802.11 variants

- 802.11ad – 7Gbps, 60GHz freq (frequency that high short distance, limited to inside room) “WiGig”
- 802.11af – white wi-fi, super wi-fi, operates in vacant UHF/VHF TV bands. Receiver uses GPS to find out where it is and what channels are free
- Many more



802.11 – Why not just Ethernet over the Air

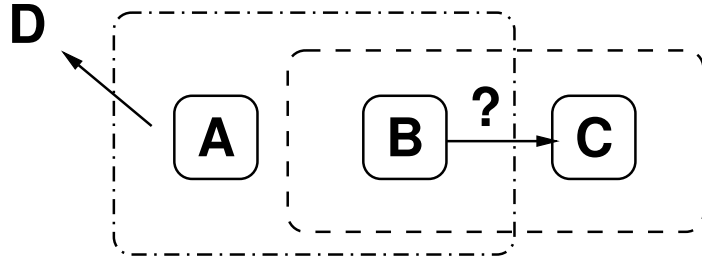
- Hidden station/terminal problem A in range of B, B in range of C, but A cannot see C. If A and C transmit at same time, they'll not get collision, only way of knowing is if not get ACK.



- Exposed station problem. A and C not overlap, but B



does not know this so it sees A transmitted to D and doesn't transmit to B even though it wouldn't cause collision.



- To deal with this, Distributed Coordination Function (DCF) and point coordination function (PCF)



DCF – Distributed Coordination Function

- No central control
- Carrier Sense Multiple Access with Collision Avoidance (CSMA/CA)
- Different from Ethernet CSMA/CD (D=detection)
- Every time ready to transmit, looks to see if can transmit (listen to see if channel clear)
- If clear, waits DIFS (inter frame) waits random time (to avoid two waiters starting simultaneously, to try to pre-emptively avoid collisions), then transmits



- If busy, waits until clear. Then it will wait a random backoff time before starting. Why? Multiple transmitters might have all been waiting and they would all instantly collide once clear.
- There is a short inter-frame interval (SIFS) which gives time for receiver to transmit an ACK packet.
- If source does not get an ACK, then it backs off and retries
- DCF not optimal, can take 60us to transmit ACK, whereas a 54MB connection could have send 3k of data in same time.



DCF: Fragmentation

- In some situations can fragment frames into smaller parts
- This is completely separate from IP fragmentation
- Why do it? – the longer the frame, the more likely it is to lose bits to interference. So split things up into smaller chunks likely to get through



DCF: RTS/CTS Mode

- Optional (rarely used) RTS/CTS mode
 - Before sending data, sends short RTS (request to send) packet
 - Receiver responds with short CTS (clear to send)
 - Data only sent if CTS sent properly
 - All stations can see both CTS *and* RTS, this and hopefully avoids collisions.
 - There's a duration field that hints how long it will take
 - ACK at end



DCF: PCF – Point Coordination Function

- Also rarely used
- PCF provides central control. A point coordinator in the AP periodically transmits a beacon to announce a contention-free period (CFP). Stations keep quiet.
- Sort of like time-division multiplexing
- Guaranteed a certain fraction of bandwidth
- For power saving, base station can tell receiver to go to sleep, and buffer packets for it until wakes up
- Can combine PCF and DCF in same cell.



- Problem can happen if two different APs in range, in this case PCF won't be able to help collision problem if it's the other AP causing it



Does my router use PCF or DCF

- It appears that most use DCF, PCF is somewhat uncommon
- There is 802.11e which enhances this to Enhanced distributed channel access (EDCA)
- Introduces HCF (Hybrid Coordination Function)
- Still most are using DCF



Wireless Frames

Different types have different layout



Wireless Data Frames

FC	Duration	Addr 1	Addr 2	Addr 3	SEQ	Addr 4	Body	FCS
2	2	6	6	6	2	6	0-2312	4



Wireless Frames – Frame Control (FC)

- Frame Control (2 bytes) (starting with most significant bit)
 - Subtype (4 bits) [rts,cts]
 - Type (2 bits): data (2), control, management
 - Protocol Version (2 bits) [only 0 in practice]
 - O(1) frames must be in-order
 - W(1) or Protection: WEP (or other encryption)
 - More(1) (more coming, more than 1 frame being sent)
 - Power Management(1) (into or out of sleep)



- Retry(1)
- MF (1) more fragments to follow
- ToDS/FromDS(1,1) (going to or from the access point)



Wireless Frames – Duration

- Duration/ID (2 bytes) – how long will occupy channel
- Network Allocation Vector (NAV)
- TODO: this varies based on various things, including fragmentation



Wireless Frames – Addresses

- Note that destination/receiver are not necessarily same
Destination: where the bytes will be used
Receiver: device that is going to decode the radio waves
- Same with transmitter/sender
Sender is the device who put together the bytes in the packet
Transmitter is device that sent it out over the radio waves
- Special case when broadcast/multicast, BSSID also



checked

- See table (source IEEE 802-11 2012 Table 8-19)
- How addresses defined depends on tods/fromds fields
- Addr1 (6 bytes) Receiver
Usually destination, not always
- Addr2 (6 bytes) Transmitter
- Addr3 (6 bytes) Base Station Source? filtering?
- Address4 (6 bytes) Base Station Dest (for wireless bridges, uncommon to use)
- More on addresses
 - basic service set identifier (BSSID)



MAC address of the access point (randomly generated?)

- source address (SA)
- destination address (DA)
- transmitting address (TA) who sent it,
- receiving STA address (RA) destination, this might not be addr1 on CTS/ACK frames.



Wireless Frames – Sequence/Fragment

- Sequence control (2 bytes) Frame (12) and fragment (4)



Wireless Frames – Body

- Frame body (0-2312)
- Actually can be a bit more
- Why that size? Idea is for about 2k of data, then with the additional frame/packet/encryption overhead
- In practice rarely would see much bigger than 1500 bytes because things would have to be fragmented once they hit wired ethernet



Wireless Frames – CRC

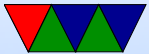
- FCS CRC (4 bytes)



Control Frames



Control Frames – RTS



Control Frames – CTS



Control Frames – ACK



Control Frames – PS-Poll



Management Frames

- Authentication
- Capabilities
- Beacon Interval
- Listen Interval



Wireless Network Topology

- Ad-hoc mode – peer to peer
- Distribution / Infrastructure mode – many to access point (AP) which has a wired connection
- In infrastructure mode all access goes through the AP



Service Sets

- A basic service set (BSS) is a group of nodes that all recognize each other
- An extended service set (ESS) is a group of overlapping BSSes with APs that are connected together
- An AP keeps the BSSes in line by periodically transmitting beacon frames



Reliability

- Wireless can be noisy and unreliable
- What do you do if there's packet loss?
 - Send slower
 - Send shorter frames
 - Fragment frames



802.11e QoS

- Leaves idle time before sending next frame
- Different sizes for different traffic
- DIFS – DCF inter-frame spacing
 - SIFS – short (control frames)
 - AIFS1 – Arbitrary (high priority)
 - DIFS – regular DIFS
 - AIFS4 – low priority
 - EIFS – extended, for errors
- TXOP – transmission opportunity



- Usually fixed number of frames so faster devices held back
- Instead, provide equal airtime rather than equal frames



Power Saving

- Important for mobile devices
- AP beacon frames from AP every 100ms
- Can indicate you want power saving, then go to sleep, on next beacon wake up and notice from beacon if data available to read (AP will buffer)
- APSD – auto power-save, AP will buffer frames until device sends something, send buffered data knowing it's awake



Wireless Services

Must provide 9 services

- intracell for dealing with things outside of a cell
 - Association – allow stations to connect to base stations. When arriving announce its identity and capability
 - Disassociation – either side may break the association, should do it before shutting down
 - Reassociation – can change preferred base station, useful for handover (but best-effort)

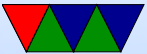


- Distribution – determines best way to route frames
- Integration – in case frame needs to be sent through a non-802.11 network
- Intercell
 - Authentication – check password
 - Deauthentication – to leave network
 - Privacy – encryption
 - Data delivery – modeled on Ethernet, no guarantees frames will get in



Encryption

- Important as anyone can eavesdrop, even from a distance
- <https://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2019/03/802-eleventy-who-goes-there-wpa3-wi-fi-security-and-what->



WEP (obsolete)

- WEP – Wired Equivalent Privacy
 - Used RC4 and CRC32
 - Deprecated 2004
 - Meant to be 64 bit, originally 40 but due to export limitations
 - Later 128-bit. Can enter in hex or ASCII chars
 - Can be cracked fairly quickly these days (10 mins on a laptop)



WPA (obsolete)

- WPA – Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA)
 - 802.11i – Temporal Key Integrity Protocol (TKIP)
 - 64 or 128 bit encryption key
 - TKIP replace CRC, harder to crack, RC4
 - WPA-personal Pre-shared key, AKA the password. 128 bits derived from 256 bits. If ASCII, PBKDF2 applied and then SSID used as salt (to prevent rainbow tables)
 - WPA-enterprise is more complicated key setup



WPA2

- WPA2 Wi-Fi Protected Access II (WPA2)
- IEEE 802.11i-2004
 - 4-way handshake (recent issues with that on many Linux machines), Ironically had issues for too closely following IEEE standard
 - AES?
- Was broke in 2017, have to do with key exchange?



WPA3

- WPA3 – 2018
 - 802.11-2016
 - Replaces PSK (pre-shared key exchange) with SAE
 - Simultaneous Authentication of Equals instead of pre-shared key
- Supposed to help with weak passwords, and also configuring devices without displays



Wireless encryption security notes

- Rainbow tables
- WPA/WPA2 can try to crack weak passwords offline
- WPA3 need active connection to network to do it
- WPA/WPA2 lack of forward secrecy, once password broke can decrypt all future and past traffic



Authenticated

- Three states: not authenticated, authenticated but not associated, authenticated and associated
- device sends probe requests. Advertise data rates and what version of 802.11 supported. BSSID of ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff so all access points that hear it will respond
- if an access point (AP) supports a common data rate, it will respond with SSID, data rate, encryption mode, etc
- device chooses an access point and authenticates.



Originally this would have been WEP, but deprecated so often happens in open and usually succeeds. Device sends a 802.11 open authentication frame, seq 0x01

- AP responds saying open with seq 0x02
- if AP receives frames other than auth or probe from device, responds with a deauth to make it start over
- A device can be authenticated to multiple APs but only associated with one
- device determines who to associate with and requests



- AP responds and creates association ID
- once associated then WPA/WPA2 has to happen still before data can flow



Encryption Issues

- News from last year, security issues with WiFi:
- KRACK attack (key reinstallation attack)
 - 4-way WPA2 handshake
 - You can resend 3rd way of handshake with the key, and other side will accept it (in case it was lost) and re-start encryption from beginning
 - This leads to same key being used to encrypt multiple frames
 - That makes reversing the key trivial



- Frag attack

- <https://lwn.net/Articles/856044/>

- (fragmentation bit is outside of the encrypted/protected, so by messing with that you can get rogue chunks of encrypted data inserted into frames)



Security Issues

- Packet sniffing
- Easier to tap into a network undetected. Long range antennas
- Malicious association – go into an area with own access point that machines will connect to
- MAC spoofing, set your MAC to an existing machines
- Denial of Service – flood the router so it can't respond



- Deauthentication attack— continually spoof an "I'm leaving" packet from all MAC addresses on network
- Hide you SSID? How effective is that?
- Encryption breaking, see long list of issues on WPA Wikipedia page



Transmission Power

- 802.11b signal typically around 32mW
- Often use dBmW (often shorted dBm) where
0dBm=1mW
- 1dBm = 0.001258925W
- Convert -68 dBm to Watts
 - $P = 1W * 10^{P_{dBm}/10} / 1000$
 - -68 dBm = 160pW
- Convert 1W to dBm



- $P_{dBm} = 10 * \log_{10}(1000 * P_W / 1W)$
- $1W = 30dBm$
- Juno space probe (13 Oct 2016)
 - 8.4GHz, received -135.75dBm ($2.7e-20kW$) 18kb/s



Channels

- 802.11b, DSSS 2.4GHz, 2412MHz as first channel, 14 channels 5MHz apart 1-14.
- 802.11g same as 802.11b when talking to b, but a modes when talking to other g
- 802.11a 5GHz band, channels 1-199 starting at 5005MHz 5MHz apart
- CMA/CA – uses RTS/CTS. 802.11g needs to do this if 802.11b present, slowing things down 20-50%



Linux Interface

- iwconfig
- iw dev
- iwlist scanning

```
wlan0      IEEE 802.11abg  ESSID:"Whatever"  
          Mode:Managed  Frequency:2.452 GHz  
          Access Point: 00:1C:10:11:B4:C6  
          Bit Rate=54 Mb/s   Tx-Power=200 dBm  
          Retry short limit:7   RTS thr:off   Fragment thr:off  
          Encryption key:XXXXX  
          Power Management:off  
          Link Quality=42/70   Signal level=-68 dBm  
          Rx invalid nwid:0   Rx invalid crypt:0   Rx invalid frag:0
```



Tx excessive retries:0 Invalid misc:0 Missed beacon:0

What does some of this mean? RTS threshold: can old
do CTS/RTS if file is too big
same with Fragment threshold



Capturing 802.11 packets

- Is it possible to gather raw 802.11 packets, like you can with ethernet/tcpdump?
- Tricky. Often wireless networks restrict raw access to the transmitter/receiver for regulatory issues (don't want random code on computer able to blast out radio signals that could interfere with shared network)
- There is a special "monitor" mode you can put some wifi cards into
- None of my machines support it by default



- For pi3/pi4 there are custom firmware replacements (nexmon) that in theory enable it plus other hacking

