

From Novice to Professional

Starting a Career in Cybercrime Forensics



Andrew Moore - PGCE, FHEA, BSc, CSIR, CFIP

Lecturer Practitioner / Digital Forensics Consultant

Cambridge, UK

Andrew.Moore@aru.ac.uk



Speaker Bio

Andrew Moore, Anglia Ruskin University and Cybercrime Forensics Consultant

- Digital forensics professional - Consulted in digital forensics, e-Discovery & academic roles across the last eight years
- Course leader for BSc(Hons) Digitech (Cyber, Network, Software) at ARU
- Consults for **Botprobe**, a Cambridge start-up
- Worked on and completed a range of UK & EU projects from **Cyber ASAP** and **ECTEG**
- Holds qualifications such as **CFIP**, **CSIR** and a **BSc(Hons)** in **Information Security & Forensic Computing**
- Plays guitar, football and computer games



What we will cover

- Digital Forensics and its various types such as cybercrime forensics
- Advice for getting starting in these roles
- Common soft & hard skills across these various roles
- DEMO on Prefetch files
- Widely available resources to help you succeed in this career path:
 - Free tools & building a home lab
 - Evidence samples to freely analysis
 - Resources for learning



Overview

What is Digital Forensics?



Advice for Getting Starting



Common Soft & Hard Skills



Demo on Prefetch Files



Home Lab Setup



Free Tools for Different Roles



List of Evidence Samples



Resources for Learning



Conclusion

- What is digital forensics
- The roles
- Advice for starting
- Soft and hard skills to succeed
- Tools
- Evidence samples
- Resources



What is Digital Forensics?



What is Digital Forensics?

- Digital forensics is the practice of **identifying, extracting** and **considering evidence** from digital media such as computer hard drives
- Digital evidence is both **fragile** and **volatile** and requires the attention of a certified specialist to ensure that materials of evidentiary value can be:
 - Effectively isolated
 - Extracted in a scientific manner
 - Will stand up to the scrutiny of a court of law



The Value to Our Society

- A report from the police-foundation states:
 - ***“The importance of digital forensics as a core capability within policing and criminal justice cannot be overstated.”*** – which is true, many (potential) crimes have some form of digital evidence to be analysed (CCTV, phones, fitbits, cars etc)
 - ***“It is not easy to assess the public value delivered by digital forensics for a number of reasons***
 - *no consolidated picture of the value generated by digital forensics*
 - *An area of considerable change and flux, there is little academic research on the impact of digital forensic work.”*
- **“Later the report states on the benefits to the public**
 - **Swifter justice through the early identification of offenders, and speedier exoneration of innocent suspects.**
 - **The prevention of potentially large numbers of future crimes by supporting the identification and conviction in court of prolific offenders.**
 - **Reductions in investigation times allowing the police to move on to other cases and solve more crimes.”**

Digital Forensics Professions

- Within the area of Digital Forensics there are a selection of specific roles that could become your area of expertise:
 - **Data Recovery** – Recovering data from damaged devices (CCTV, HDD, Memory cards)
 - **E-Discovery** – Based on the EDRM (Electronical Discovery Reference Model)
 - **Mobile Forensics** – Mobile device specific such as Android or Apple phones & tablets
 - **Network/Cloud Forensics** – Network devices, internet investigations, cloud providers
 - **Malware Forensics** – Malicious software such as viruses, rootkits, trojans, worms
 - **IoT Forensics** – IoT devices such as amazon Alexa or Samsung smart things



Typical Starting Jobs For These Areas

- Most people in forensics start as an **Analyst** or **Technician**. Though this is shown differently with many industry buzz words from job to job
- In the Police you will typically have a job in a **High-Tech Crime Unit** (Bedfordshire is the closest to us) ([link](#)) (iCait, CCIT, DFIT)
- Other non-civilian based ways include becoming a **police officer first**, then moving internally to a **computing** role or via the **military**
- **Consulting** is another direction, you can go. you may need to be a little further in your development for this type of job. ([more on helping with this later!](#))



Advice for Getting Starting



Advice on Education

- Typically a technical honours degree:
 - Digital forensics & information security
 - Cyber security
 - Computer Science
 - Networking
 - Investigation studies
 - Criminology
- } May require a computing top-up depending on the structure of the degree pathways taken
- Additionally:
 - GCSEs (or equivalents) Computing + Maths
 - A levels (or equivalents) Computing + Maths



Advice Continued...

- Fundamentals are key to your success
- Start in one place and build up your knowledge before moving on (start in **windows forensics**, then move to other **operating systems** only when you have a good level of **experience**)
- Depending on the employer, you will need to pass some form of security check (baseline, SC, CTC, DV). Information is linked here: [Link](#)



Advice Continued...

- You will need a **home lab** to start/continue your development. (be it **locally virtualised** or **cloud based**)
 - There is a section coming on getting start on this, so don't worry!
- This can amount to a **portfolio** that you can show/demonstrate to an employer of your current skills and interests
 - This way you are a known quantity and know what you need training wise
 - *"If they are this driven by themselves, imagine what they would be like with professional training and guidance"*



Common Soft & Hard Skills



Common Soft Skills

It would be ideal if you were able to:

- Work in a team
 - Work by yourself
 - Taking notes
 - (build a **user guide** for tasks when shown) refer to this when stuck
 - Travel if remote collections are not an option (can include outside of the UK)
- Manage your own time
 - (You might be involved in different cases at any given time)
 - Interact with clients or law enforcement directly

Common Hard Skills

It would be ideal if you were able to:

- Have a good grasp on current legislation
 - (RIPA, PACE, CMA, GDPR)
- Have a good understanding of current ISO/regulations
 - (27001, 17025, ACPO)
- Not be afraid of command lines
 - (CMD, PowerShell, Terminal)

- Show a good understanding of networking
 - (IP addresses, ports, protocols, OSI/TCP/IP models, devices & their function on a network)
- Show good understanding of computer hardware
 - (CPU, RAM, HDD but also types of computer)
- Have an understanding of what artefacts you can gain from a popular operating system such as windows 10
 - (Prefetch, Shell bags, Jump lists, SAM)

Demo on Prefetch Files



What is an Artefact?

- “*Every contact **leaves a trace.***”
 - Dr Edmond Locard
- Artefacts are something that have been **left behind** that could contain information of a an event/person from the **past**.
 - In digital forensics, we know these as: “**Historical Artefacts**”
- Based on these findings they could help us learn something about our future too! (or the person we are investigating)



DEMO - Prefetch

- Prefetch files are created by the windows operating system whenever an application is run from a specific location for the first time. Prefetch files are used to speed up the application start-up process.
 - (so it can start faster the next time its loaded)
- Analysis of prefetch files reveal evidence of **program execution** for a particular user or from a particular location.
- Prefetch entries may still remain even after the program has been **deleted or un-installed**.
- Location WinXP/7/8/10:
 - **C:\Windows\Prefetch**
 - If you want to learn more check out the SANS cheat sheets later on!



Demo removed due to space issues

Checkout the YouTube video for it 😊

Home Lab Setup



Why Build a Home Lab?

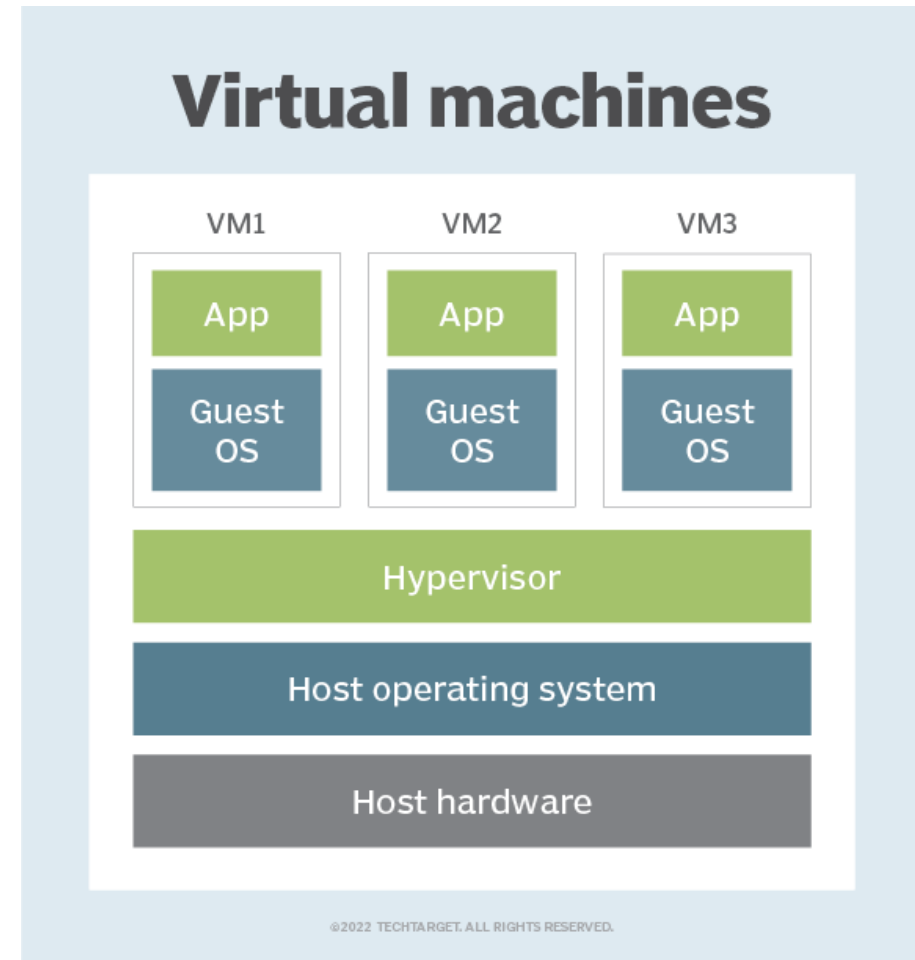
- Home labs offer you a unique chance to craft a **custom learning environment**, just for you
- The environment can be self hosted (on your PC) or in the cloud on AWS/Azure etc (though they come with large costs)
- A Raspberry Pi, may also be an option if you happen to have the latest models with enough RAM
- This could be a fantastic tool to build skills and show a potential employer that there is a low risk to hiring you!



Home Lab Hardware

- Typically you will need a computer that will be able to run two operating systems at one time (Host & Guest)
 - Software details included in the next section
- Recommendations would include:
 - 4 Cores/8Threads
 - 16GB of RAM
 - An SSD with 500GB of storage
 - Two screens if you happen to have one (I used my TV for years)

Image taken from [techtarget.com](https://www.techtarget.com) [link](#)



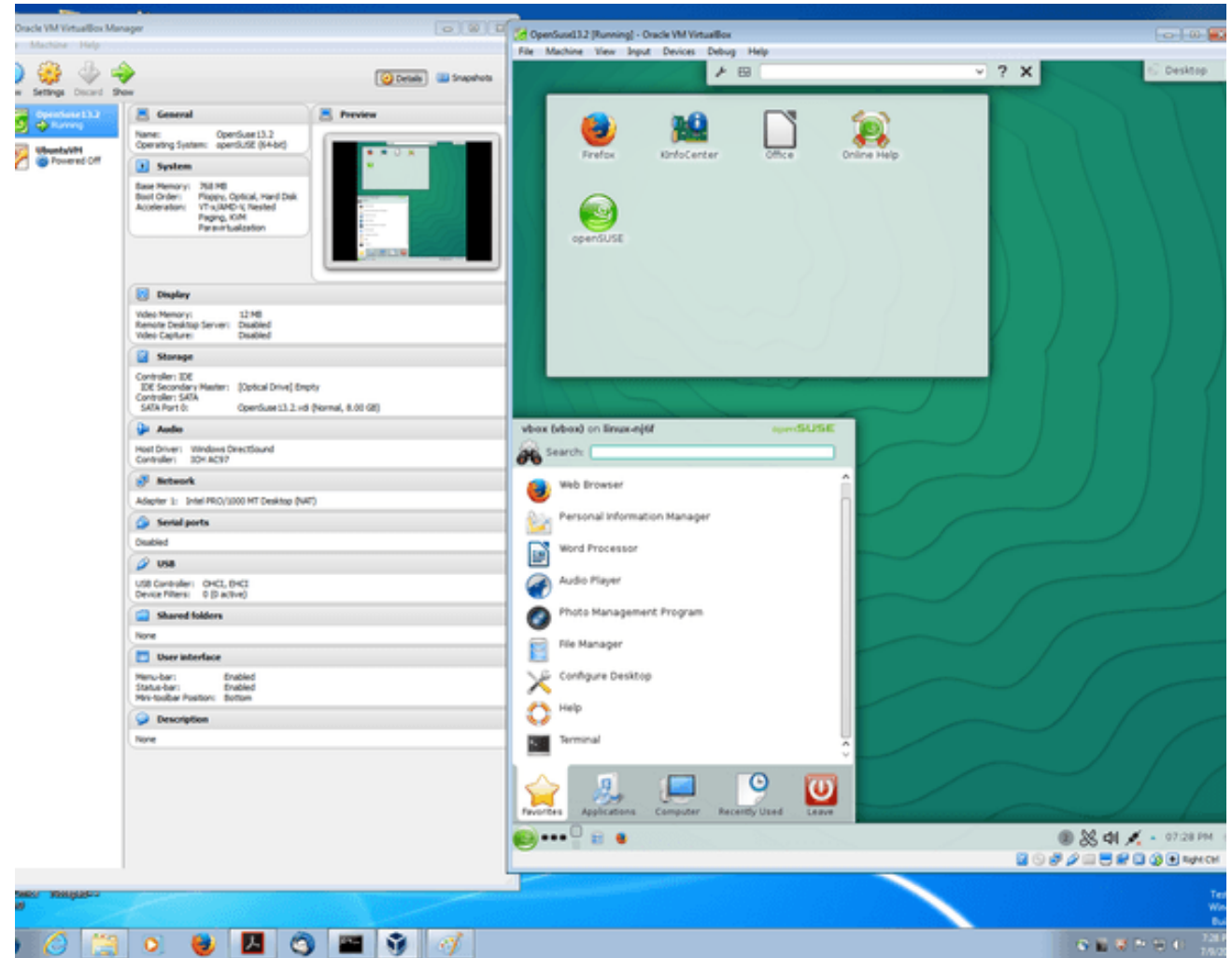
Free Tools for Different Roles



Virtual Box

- This software allows you to have an operating system, nested inside of your own current one.
- This allows you to play in a “sandbox”
- Install any tools you want
- Change specific sets such as turning of your antivirus or changing your network settings
- Allows the use of snapshots (reset button or save specifics to go back to)

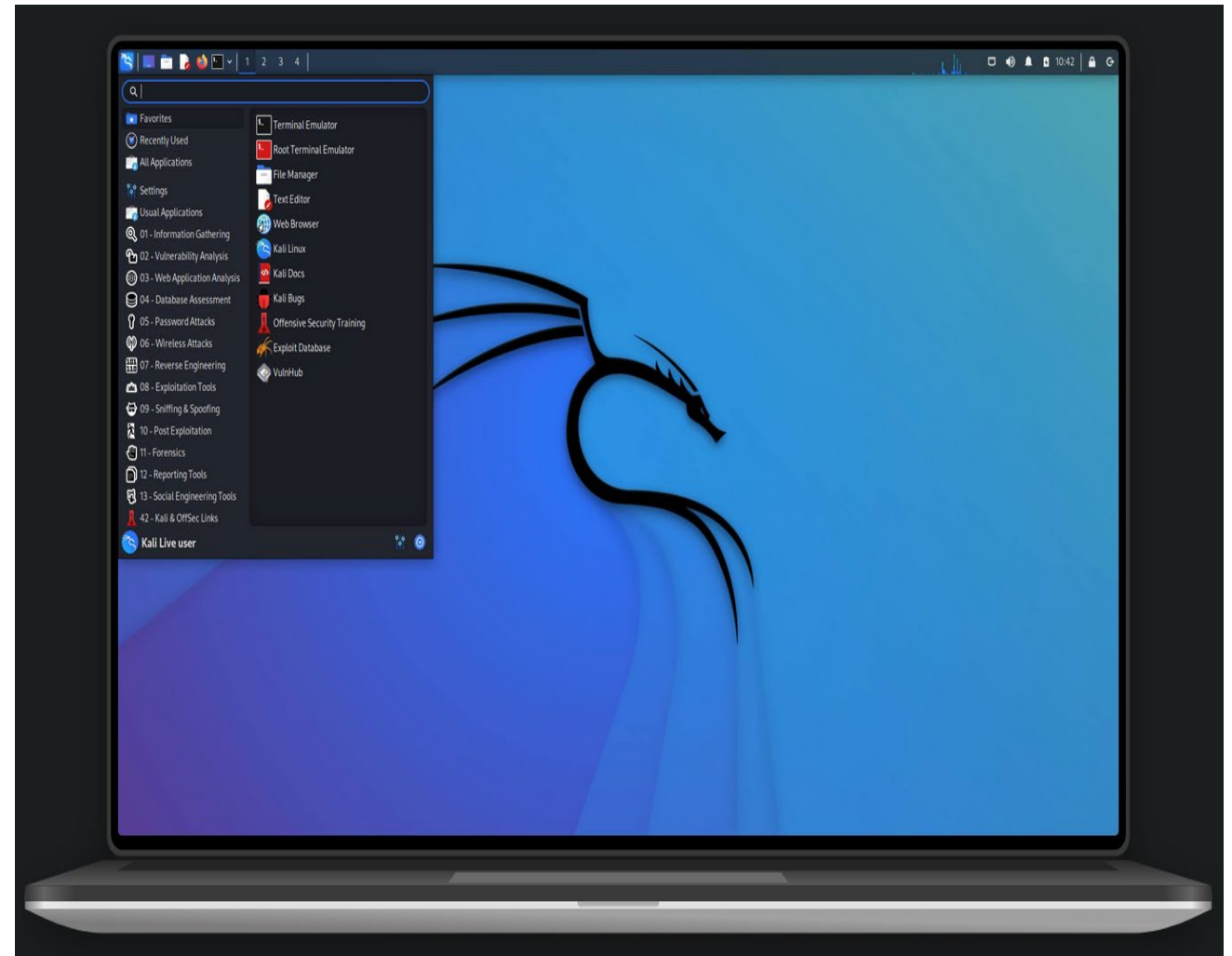
Image taken from VirtualBox [Link](#)



Imaging Software

- Kali is an opensource cyber security operating system. It can be used for penetration testing, Wi-Fi hacking or digital forensics etc
- The OS is Linux based
- This OS contains software such as:
 - Guymager, which allows imaging of computer devices
 - Range of popular Hex editors

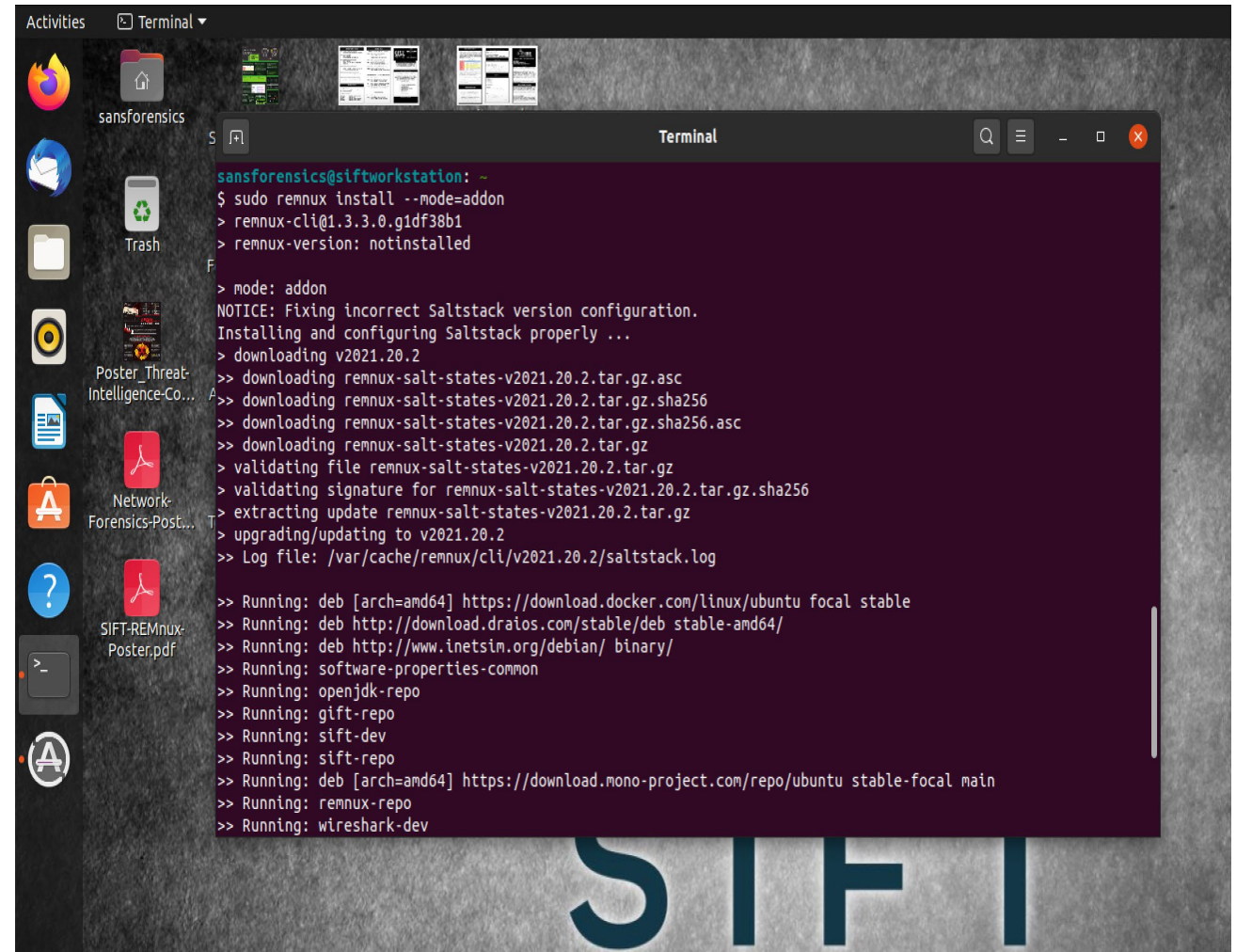
Image taken from Kali.org [Link](#)



SIFT


- The SIFT Workstation is a collection of free and open-source incident response and forensic tools designed to perform detailed digital forensic examinations in a variety of settings
- SIFT demonstrates that advanced incident response capabilities and deep-dive digital forensic techniques
- Uses cutting-edge open-source tools that are freely available, frequently updated and links with REMnux (next slide)

Image taken from sans.org [Link](#)



REMnux

- REMnux is a Linux toolkit for reverse-engineering and analysing malicious software.
- REMnux provides a curated collection of free tools created by the community.
- Analysts can use it to investigate malware without having to find, install, and configure the tools.
- Images taken from REMnux [Link](#)



10 YEARS

REMnux®

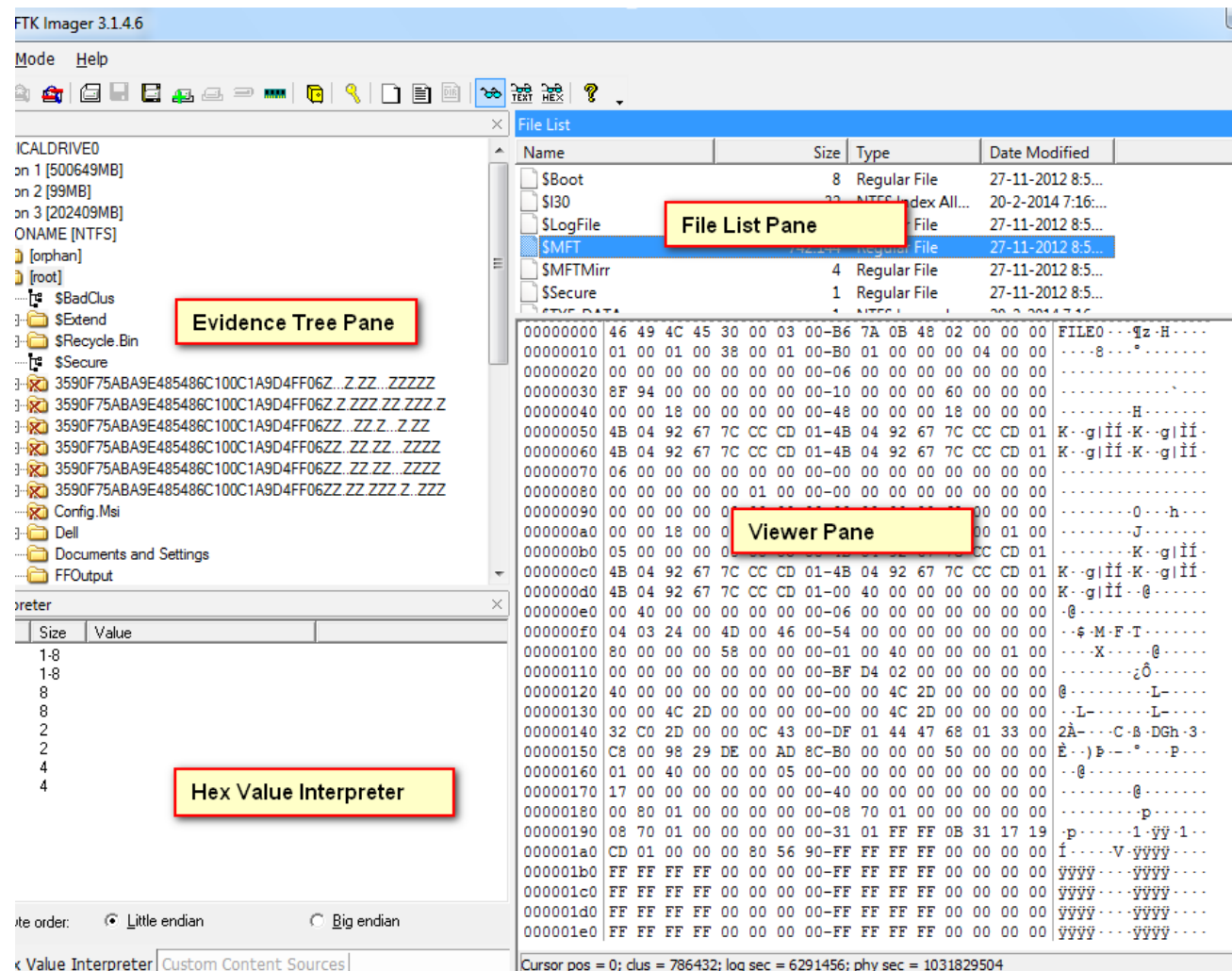
v7

```
— docker run --rm -it --entrypoint /bin/bash remnux/thug — 152x
--rm -it --entrypoint "/bin/bash" remnux/thug
d image 'remnux/thug:latest' locally
ng from remnux/thug
Pull complete
Pull complete
Pull complete
Pull complete
Downloading [=====>] 42.45MB/272.8MB
Download complete
Downloading [=====>] 15.56MB/60.87MB
Downloading [=====>] 4.422MB/7.676MB
Waiting
Waiting
```

FTK Imager

- This software allows you to copy all addressable data from a device that is connected to your computer
- It will then put this data into an evidence file (such as E01), so it is stored safely
- This can then safely be searched for potentially relevant data


Image taken from eForensics [Link](#)



Zimmerman Tools

- Eric Zimmerman, is a forensics specialist who has created many tools to help us in our daily job
- The site contains many tools (including the Prefetch parser which was in the demo)
- Can be downloaded using a script and are “mostly” command line based with some GUI tools




Image taken from ericzimmerman.github.io [Link](#)



TL;DR

1. READ the Requirements and troubleshooting section!!
2. Use `Get-ZimmermanTools` to download all programs at once and keep your tool set current
 - Use `-Dest` to control where the tools ends up, else things end up in same directory as the script (recommended!)
 - Use `-NetVersion` to control which flavor of tool you get: 4 for .net 4.6.2 and 6 for .net 6 (recommended!)
3. All GUI tools will be updated to use .net 6 only but the legacy version will be kept in place as well (just not updated anymore)
4. All CLI tools will continue to be built for both .net 4.6.2 and .net 6

Contribute/support opportunities

-  [GitHub Sponsors](#)
-  [PayPal](#)
-  [Patreon](#)

Forensic tools

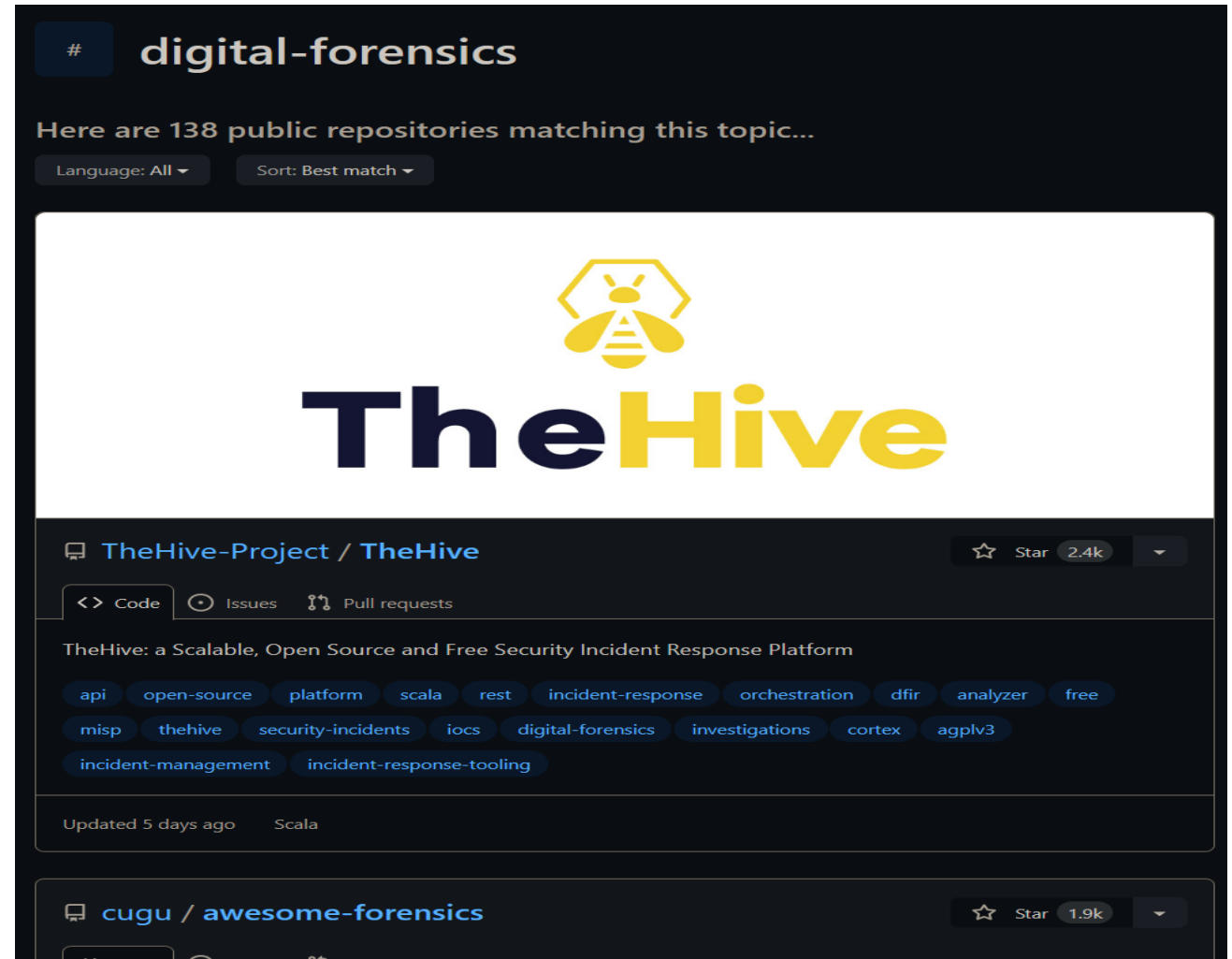
Need everything at once? Here are ALL the tools as a single zip file: [.net 4](#) | [.net 6](#)

Name	Version (.net 4 6)	Purpose
AmcacheParser	1.5.1.0 1.5.1.0	Amcache.hve parser with lots of extra features. Handles locked files
AppCompatCacheParser	1.5.0.0 1.5.0.0	AppCompatCache aka ShimCache parser. Handles locked files
bstrings	1.5.2.0 1.5.2.0	Find them strings yo. Built in regex patterns. Handles locked files
EvtxECmd	1.5.0.0 1.5.0.0	Event log (evtx) parser with standardized CSV, XML, and json output! Custom maps, locked file support, and more!
EZViewer	1.0.0.0 2.0.0.0	Standalone, zero dependency viewer for .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .txt, .log, .rtf, .otd, .htm, .html, .mht, .csv, and .pdf. Any non-supported files are shown in a hex editor (with data interpreter!)
Hasher	2.0.0.0 -	Hash all the things
JLECmd	1.5.0.0 1.5.0.0	Jump List parser
JumpList Explorer	1.4.0.0 2.0.0.0	GUI based Jump List viewer
LECcmd	1.5.0.0 1.5.0.0	Parse Ink files
MFTCmd	1.1.0.0 1.1.0.0	\$MFT, \$Boot, \$J, \$SDS, and \$LogFile (coming soon) parser. Handles locked files
MFTExplorer	0.5.1.0 2.0.0.0	Graphical \$MFT viewer

GitHub Tools

- GitHub is a place where you can download software from various creators around the world
- There is a specific section that covers digital forensics and incident response
- Currently has 138 repositories of data to check out!

Image taken from GitHub [Link](#)



List of Evidence Samples



NIST Computer Forensic Reference DataSet Portal

- This portal is your gateway to documented digital forensic image datasets.
- These datasets can assist in a variety of tasks including tool testing, developing familiarity with tool behaviour for given tasks and general practitioner training
- Most datasets have a description of the type and locations of significant artifacts present in the dataset.
- There are descriptions and finding aides to help you locate datasets by the year produced, by author, or by attributes of the dataset.

Image taken from nist.gov [Link](#)

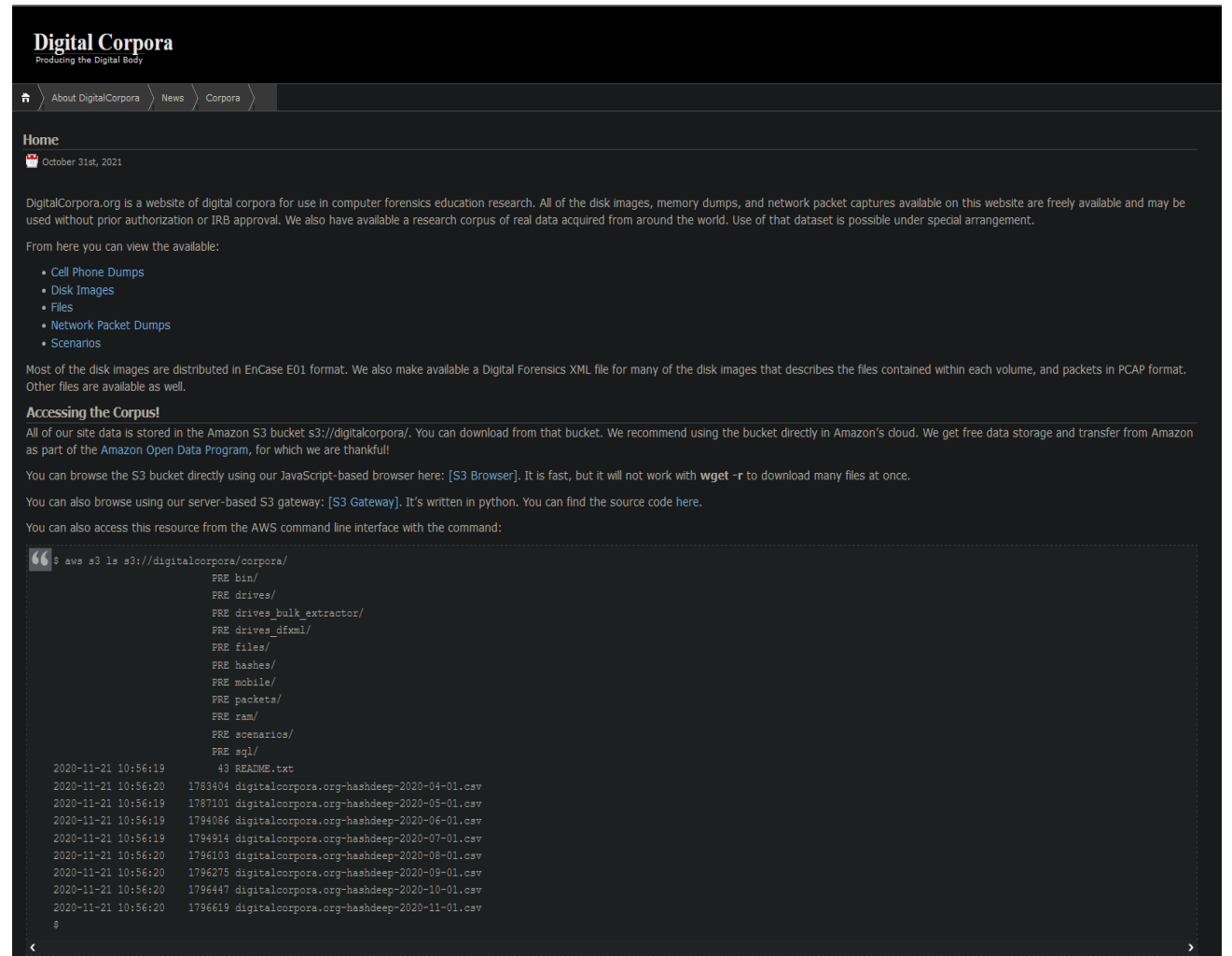
The screenshot shows the NIST Computer Forensic Reference DataSet Portal. At the top, there is a green banner with the text "What is CFReDS?". Below this, a welcome message states: "Welcome to the new and improved Computer Forensic Reference DataSet Portal. This portal is your gateway to documented digital forensic image datasets. These datasets can assist in a variety of tasks including tool testing, developing familiarity with tool behavior for given tasks, general practitioner training and other unforeseen uses that the user of the datasets can devise. Most datasets have a description of the type and locations of significant artifacts present in the dataset. There are descriptions and finding aides to help you locate datasets by the year produced, by author, or by attributes of the dataset. All of the datasets produced by NIST to support the Computer Forensic Tool Testing and Federated Testing projects are included here as well as many other collections. See the icon on the left sidebar for a list of the major collections." Below the welcome message, there are two buttons: "Browse Data-Sets" and "Contribute". A "News" section follows, dated "2021-07-01 AT 15:15:01" by "MEHDI SHAHID", with the headline "THE NEW CFReDS IS LIVE!". Below the news section, there are two main columns: "Newest Data-Sets" and "Popular Data-Sets". The "Newest Data-Sets" column lists five datasets: "Android 12 Image Creation", "iOS 13-14 - iOS 14 + Big Sur", "Android 11 Image with Documentation", "SQLite Database containing BLOB data", and "SQLite Data Recovery (deleted and modified records)". The "Popular Data-Sets" column lists five datasets: "Hacking Case", "Data Leakage Case", "2019 Narcos Scenario", "Rhino Hunt", and "File Carving". Each dataset entry includes a "NEW" or "POPULAR" icon, a title, a date, and a download count.

Newest Data-Sets	Popular Data-Sets
Android 12 Image Creation NEW 01/24/2022 at 20:00 Celebrite	Hacking Case 02/26/2020 NIST 4711
iOS 13-14 - iOS 14 + Big Sur NEW 01/24/2022 at 19:59 Joshua Hickman	Data Leakage Case 02/26/2020 NIST 2916
Android 11 Image with Documentation NEW 01/24/2022 at 19:54 Joshua Hickman	2019 Narcos Scenario 06/11/2020 Digital Corpora 1092
SQLite Database containing BLOB data NEW 11/30/2021 at 20:07 NIST	Rhino Hunt 02/26/2020 NIST 1007
SQLite Data Recovery (deleted and modified records) NEW 11/30/2021 at 20:02 NIST	File Carving 10/01/2021 NIST 944

Digital Corpora

- DigitalCorpora.org is a website for use in computer forensics education research
- All of the disk images, memory dumps, and network packet captures on this website are freely available
- They also have a research corpus of real data acquired from around the world. Use of that dataset is possible under special arrangement

Image taken from digitalcopora.org
[Link](#)



Resources for Learning



ENISA

- The European union agency for cybersecurity is a great resource for learning digital forensics
- The guides show what tools, prebuild virtual images and evidence files you can use
- The time commitment is also displayed (likely higher on your first attempt)

Image taken from enisa.eu [Link](#)

Building artefact handling and analysis environment

Artifact	Target Audience	Duration	Download
	Technical CERT staff.	7 hours	Handbook Toolset Virtual Image Windows Tools Windows Cuckoo
The main objective is to create safe and useful artifact analysis environment, based on current best practices.			

Processing and storing artefacts

Threat	Target Audience	Duration	Download
	Technical CERT staff.	5 hours	Handbook Toolset Virtual Image
Present the trainees various methods of malicious artifacts acquisition with emphasis on artifacts collected through spam e-mails monitoring. Teach how to correctly set up spam collecting environment and simple artifacts repository. Exercise also provides knowledge how to modify and patch created system to better suit lab environment needs.			

SANs

- SANs have many posters and cheat sheets to help anyone from a beginner to an expert in all things digital forensics & incident response to malware
- The posters and cheat sheets are free, you just need to sign up

Image taken from SANs.org [Link](#)

Posters & Cheat Sheets

Filters:

10 per page ▾

Focus Areas

- ☐ Cloud Security
- ☐ Cyber Defense
- ☐ Cybersecurity and IT Essentials
- ☐ DevSecOps
- ☐ Digital Forensics and Incident Response
- ☐ Industrial Control Systems Security
- ☐ Penetration Testing and Ethical Hacking
- ☐ Security Awareness
- ☐ Security Management, Legal, and Audit

New Digital Forensics and Incident Response February 10, 2022

En Español: Inteligencia de Amenazas Cibernética

[Read More](#) →



Cloud Security, Security Management, Legal, and Audit February 3, 2022

En Español - Powershell para el Cumplimiento de la Empresa y la Nube

[Read More](#) →



Industrial Control Systems Security February 2, 2022

En Español - Evaluación ICS: Guía de Inicio Rápido

[Read More](#) →



Conclusion

- What is digital forensics
- The roles
- Advice for starting
- Soft and hard skills to succeed
- Tools
- Evidence samples
- Resources



Any questions?

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