

SQL Injection

Definition:

SQL injection is the placement of malicious code in SQL statements, via web page input.

Example:

Malicious user inputs SQL code as value for text input

Threat Level (Medium-High):

ActiveRecord, in most cases, protects against SQL Injection by default, however, there are ways in which it can be used insecurely which can lead to SQL Injection.

Rails Fix:

Avoid using `find_by_sql`
Do not pass params directly into queries use '?' vars
Explicitly force IDs to `i` for queries
Use "Strong Parameters" in Controller

Potentially Dangerous Methods:

`Calculations (average, sum, maximum...){n}exists?(id)`
`delete_all / destroy_all`
`find_by(id)`
<https://rails-sqli.org/>

This is one of the most common web hacking techniques.
Malicious SQL could destroy your database.

Cross-Site Scripting (XSS)

Definition:

XSS is a code injection attack that allows an attacker to execute malicious JavaScript in another user's browser. The only way for the attacker to run his malicious JavaScript in the victim's browser is to inject it into one of the pages that the victim downloads from the website.

Persistent XSS

Malicious JS has been saved to DB by attacker. Is executed when victim loads page

Cross-Site Scripting (XSS) (cont)

Reflected XSS

In a reflected XSS attack, the malicious string is part of the victim's request to the website. The website then includes this malicious string in the response sent back to the user. Think Phishing.

Threat Level (High for Persistent XSS)

Data must be sanitized before being saved to DB

Rails Fix:

Data must be sanitized before being saved to DB

<https://excess-xss.com/>

Session Hijacking

Definition:

Stealing a user's session ID lets an attacker use the web application in the victim's name.

Example:

Man in the middle sniffs out valid session id

Threat Level (Medium-Low):

Man in the middle attack

Rails Fix:

Expire Sessions
Use https to thwart man-in-the-middle attacks
Call `reset_session` when logging users in and out to avoid session fixation.
Sanitize user input to avoid XSS.
Use Devise (it will automatically expire sessions on sign in and sign out)

Rails Fix (Enabled by default)

EncryptedCookieStore: Session is encrypted before being stored in cookie (`config/secrets.yml`)

Session Fixation:

Using a fixed/permanent session id. Call `reset_session` after login/logout to prevent this.



Cross-Site Request Forgery (CSRF) (Built In)

Definition:

An attack that forces an end user to execute unwanted actions on a web application in which they're currently authenticated.

Example:

Phishing example. User clicks on link to page that looks like legit site. Victim is tricked into submitting a malicious request. It inherits the identity and privileges of the victim to perform an undesired function on the victim's behalf.

Threat Level (LOW):

Modern browsers enforce same-origin policy restrictions on scripts.

Rails Fix (Enabled by default)

Rails protects against CSRF attacks by default by including a token named `authenticity_token` within HTML responses. That token is also stored in user session and they are compared when Request is made. To confirm it's enabled verify `protect_from_forgery` is in `ApplicationController`.

Developer Fix:

Use GET and POST properly (CSRF is on POST only)

Develop Responsibly

Filter params saved in logs

```
config.filter_parameters << :password, :credit_card
```

Do not Redirect based on a URL in the Request

BAD: `http://www.example.com/site/redirect?to=www.attacker.com`
`redirect_to(params[:to])`

Think through file uploads

Check extensions. Beware executable files

Restrict File Downloads

Make sure users cannot download arbitrary files.
`send_file("/var/www/uploads/" + params[:filename])`

Brute Force login attacks

Think about using a CAPTCHA

