

Welcome to [DrRacket](#), version 8.15 [cs].

Language: racket, with debugging; memory limit: 128 MB.

A Java program, and how information is placed on the run-time stack at three moments in time.

The purpose is to help understand how the run-time stack holds the current function's local variables (incl. its parameters), as well as a vital piece of book-keeping: what program-instruction to resume at, when the current helper function finishes.

This is important cybersecurity, since it explains how an attacker, if they can get a stack overflow to both (a) place malicious code onto the stack, *and* (b) overwrite the return-instruction-pointer so that the program 'returns' to that malicious code rather than the real return-site, then the attacker has achieved "running of arbitrary code".

It's important to programmers, since knowing which data are on the heap vs the stack explains why local variables are local, and what overhead function-calls might incur.

Notes:

- "%rip" is a local system variable for "return instruction pointer" -- where to resume the program at, when finishing the current helper function.
- "%rsp" is a local system variable for "return stack pointer" -- where to adjust the top-of-stack to, when finishing the current helper function.

"The sample Java program:"

```
class StackDiagram {
```

```

public static void main( String... argv ) {
    System.out.printf("This program verifies whether 5
to the 300th power is bigger than 0.\n");
    int x = 5;
    int y = 300;
    String report = "Yes!";
    boolean overflow;

    if (power(x,y) >= 0) {
        System.out.printf("%s\n",report);
        overflow = false;
    }
    else {
        System.out.printf( "It's not!  Hmmm; overflow?\n"
);
        overflow = true;
    }
    System.exit(overflow ? 1 : 0);  // indicate an
error, to the shell / caller.
}

// Return a^b.
//
static int power(int a, int b) {
    int product = 1;
    while (b!=0) {
        product = multiply(product, a);
        b--;
    }
    return product;
}

```

```

// Return x*y.
//
static int multiply(int x, int y) {
    return x*y;
}
}
"""

```

"The stack, as main first calls power first and it in turn calls multiply the first time:"

@F48A	false	overflow	}	main
@F48B	@BC2E7	report		
@F48C	300	y		
@F48D	5	x		
@F48E	@8803K4	argv		
@F48F	[shell:?]	%rip		
(list @F490	+??	%rsp		

@F485	1	product	}	power
@F486	300	b		
@F487	5	a		
@F488	[main:4]	%rip		
@F489	+7	%rsp		
@F48A	false	overflow	}	main
@F48B	@BC2E7	report		
@F48C	300	y		
@F48D	5	x		
@F48E	@8803K4	argv		
@F48F	[shell:?]	%rip		
@F490	+??	%rsp		

@F481	5	y	}	multiply	
@F482	1	x			
@F483	[power:3]	%rip			
@F484	+5	%rsp			
@F485	1	product	}	power	
@F486	300	b			
@F487	5	a			
@F488	[main:4]	%rip			
@F489	+7	%rsp	}	main	
@F48A	false	overflow			
@F48B	@BC2E7	report			
@F48C	300	y			
@F48D	5	x			
@F48E	@8803K4	argv			
@F48F	[shell:?]	%rip	}		
@F490	+??	%rsp			

>