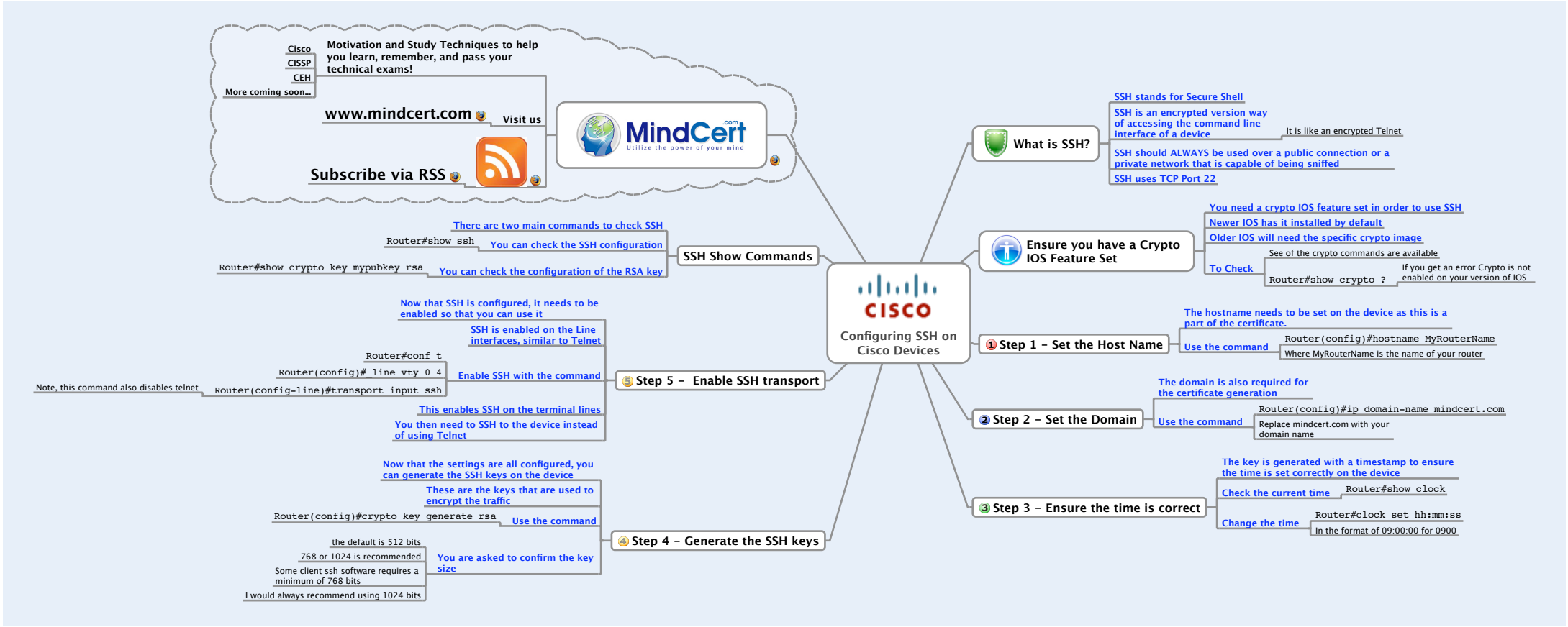
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Configuring SSH on Cisco Devices
What is SSH?
SSH stands for Secure Shell
SSH is an encrypted version way of accessing the command line interface of a device
It is like an encrypted Telnet
SSH should ALWAYS be used over a public connection or a private network that is capable of being sniffed
SSH uses TCP Port 22
Ensure you have a Crypto IOS Feature Set
You need a crypto IOS feature set in order to use SSH
Newer IOS has it installed by default
Older IOS will need the specific crypto image
To Check
See of the crypto commands are available
Router#show crypto ?
If you get an error Crypto is not enabled on your version of IOS
1 Step 1 - Set the Host Name
The hostname needs to be set on the device as this is a part of the certificate.
Use the command
Router(config)#hostname MyRouterName
Where MyRouterName is the name of your router
2 Step 2 - Set the Domain
The domain is also required for the certificate generation
Use the command
Router(config)#ip domain-name mindcert.com
Replace mindcert.com with your domain name
3 Step 3 - Ensure the time is correct
The key is generated with a timestamp to ensure the time is set correctly on the device
Check the current time
Router#show clock
Change the time
Router#clock set hh:mm:ss
In the format of 09:00:00 for 0900
4 Step 4 - Generate the SSH keys
Now that the settings are all configured, you can generate the SSH keys on the device
These are the keys that are used to encrypt the traffic
Router(config)#crypto key generate rsa
Use the command
You are asked to confirm the key size
the default is 512 bits
768 or 1024 is recommended
Some client ssh software requires a minimum of 768 bits
I would always recommend using 1024 bits
5 Step 5 - Enable SSH transport
Now that SSH is configured, it needs to be enabled so that you can use it
SSH is enabled on the Line interfaces, similar to Telnet
Router#conf t
Router(config)#_line vty 0 4
Router(config-line)#transport input ssh
Enable SSH with the command
Note, this command also disables telnet
This enables SSH on the terminal lines
You then need to SSH to the device instead of using Telnet
SSH Show Commands
There are two main commands to check SSH
Router#show ssh
You can check the SSH configuration
Router#show crypto key mypubkey rsa
You can check the configuration of the RSA key