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Use the WLAN Pi Cookbook as a Curriculum

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If you own a WLAN Pi and you have only ever read its spec sheet, you are leaving most of the device's capabilities unused.

The WLAN Pi Cookbook (wlanpi.gitbook.io/cookbook) is where the WLAN Pi community wrote down how to actually wield the thing. It is the part nobody else in our field gives away: a graded, hands-on lab course that takes you from a box on your desk to packet captures, client profiling, server modes, and live dashboards.

Treat it as a curriculum, not documentation.

You get numbered labs that build on each other. Pick your hardware, then walk the labs in order. The labs span the full line, from the WLAN Pi Pro through the M4, the M4+, and the newest WLAN Pi Go, and the coverage already reaches Wi-Fi 7, 6 GHz, and MLO.

Three tracks earn their keep in the field:

Packet capture. Run this lab first. It stands up a capture pipeline from the Pi into Wireshark on Windows, macOS, or iOS, including 6 GHz and Wi-Fi 7 management frames that most engineers never get a clean look at. Do it once on your own bench before you need it on a customer site.

Profiling. The "what is this client actually capable of" workflow, taught three ways: command line, app, and web interface. You learn the client's real capabilities, not the partial picture it gives when it joins an ordinary AP.

Server modes. RADIUS, 802.1X, DHCP, or a hotspot, all from this single device. Carrying a test authentication server may change how you validate an enterprise deployment.

Add the Grafana dashboards and Tailscale remote access, and you have a device you can leave on site and reach from anywhere. I've found the Tailscale lab to be most helpful in

teaching me to use Tailscale for all sorts of other uses as well as with a WLAN Pi.

CWNP candidates, this is for you too. Learning frame analysis and 802.1X on real hardware beats learning it from slides or books. Do the packet captures yourself, and you'll really learn about what you need for the CWAP.

Most of what we collectively know in this field lives in people's heads and sometimes dies there. The WLAN Pi community wrote their's down, organized it as a course, and keeps it current with the hardware.

(As a side note, these cookbooks are the teaching tools used in the WLAN Pi Deep Dives at #WLPC events.)

When a volunteer community hands you a free course in frame capture, client profiling, and 802.1X on hardware you already own, what is your excuse for not knowing the device inside and out?

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