

SE 350
Operating
Systems



Lecture 2: OS Concepts

Prof. Seyed Majid Zahedi

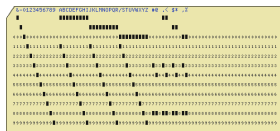
<https://ece.uwaterloo.ca/~smzahedi>

Outline

- Brief history of OSes
- Four fundamental OS concepts
 - Thread
 - Address space
 - Process
 - Dual-mode operation/protection

Serial Processing

- Machines did not have operating systems
- Run from console with display lights, toggle switches, input device, and printer
- Machine is used by a single user (users had to reserve time to use machines)
- Running programs had long lead time (users had to load compiler and source program, save compiled program, and then load and link it)
- Debugging programs was extremely hard



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Evolution of OSes

- **Simple batch OS**
 - Jobs with same requirement and grouped into batches
 - Special program, called **monitor**, monitors and manages each program
 - Erroneous or misbehaving jobs could corrupt entire system
 - Automatic job sequencing improves throughput, but I/O is still slow
- **Multiprogramming batch OS**
 - When running job requires I/O, OS switches to another job
 - While this maximizes CPU utilization, response time could still suffer
- **Time-sharing OS**
 - Multiple users simultaneously access system through terminals
 - Processor's time is shared among multiple users
 - Primary focus is to minimize response time

Very Brief History of OS

- Several distinct phases:
 - Hardware expensive, humans cheap
 - Eniac, ... Multics

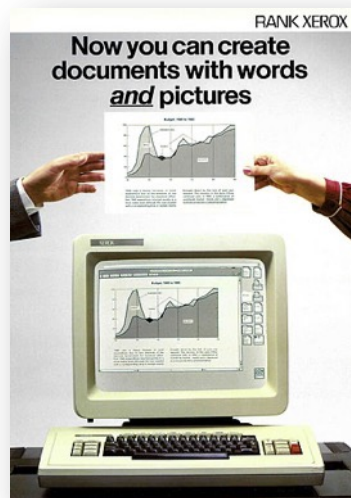


“I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.” – *Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943*

Thomas Watson was often called “the worlds greatest salesman” by the time of his death in 1956

Very Brief History of OS (cont.)

- Several distinct phases:
 - Hardware expensive, humans cheap
 - Eniac, ... Multics
 - Hardware cheaper, humans expensive
 - PCs, workstations, rise of GUIs
 - Hardware very cheap, humans very expensive
 - Ubiquitous devices, widespread networking

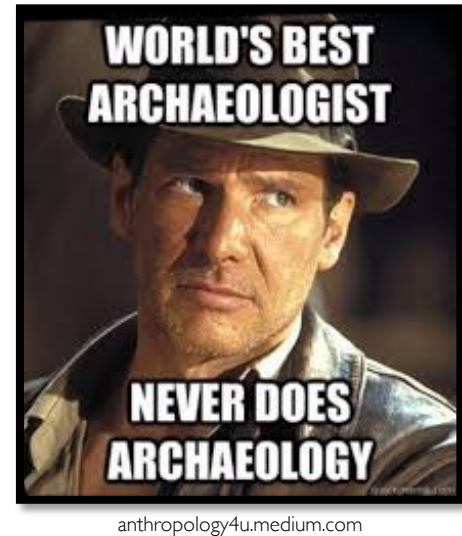


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 - Eniac, ... Multics
 - Hardware cheaper, humans expensive
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 - Hardware very cheap, humans very expensive
 - Ubiquitous devices, widespread networking
- Rapid change in hardware leads to changing OS
 - Batch \Rightarrow multiprogramming \Rightarrow timesharing \Rightarrow GUI \Rightarrow ubiquitous devices
 - Gradual migration of features into smaller machines
- Today
 - Small OS: 100K lines / Large: 20M lines (10M browser!)
 - 100-1000 people-years

OS Archaeology

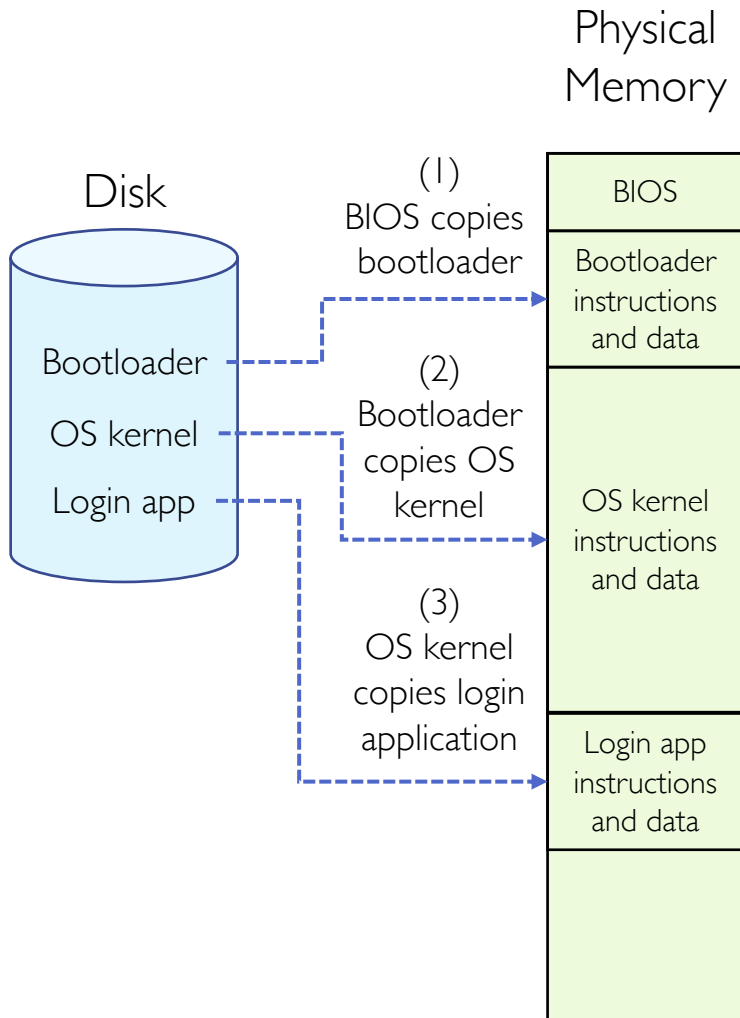
- Due to high cost of building OS from scratch, most modern OS's have long lineage
- Multics \Rightarrow AT&T Unix \Rightarrow BSD Unix \Rightarrow Ultrix, SunOS, NetBSD,...
- Mach (micro-kernel) + BSD \Rightarrow NextStep \Rightarrow XNU \Rightarrow Apple OS X, iPhone iOS
- MINIX \Rightarrow Linux \Rightarrow Android, Chrome OS, RedHat, Ubuntu, Fedora, Debian, Suse,...
- CP/M \Rightarrow QDOS \Rightarrow MS-DOS \Rightarrow Windows 3.1 \Rightarrow NT \Rightarrow 95 \Rightarrow 98 \Rightarrow 2000 \Rightarrow XP \Rightarrow Vista \Rightarrow 7 \Rightarrow 8 \Rightarrow 10 \Rightarrow ...



Today: Four Fundamental OS Concepts

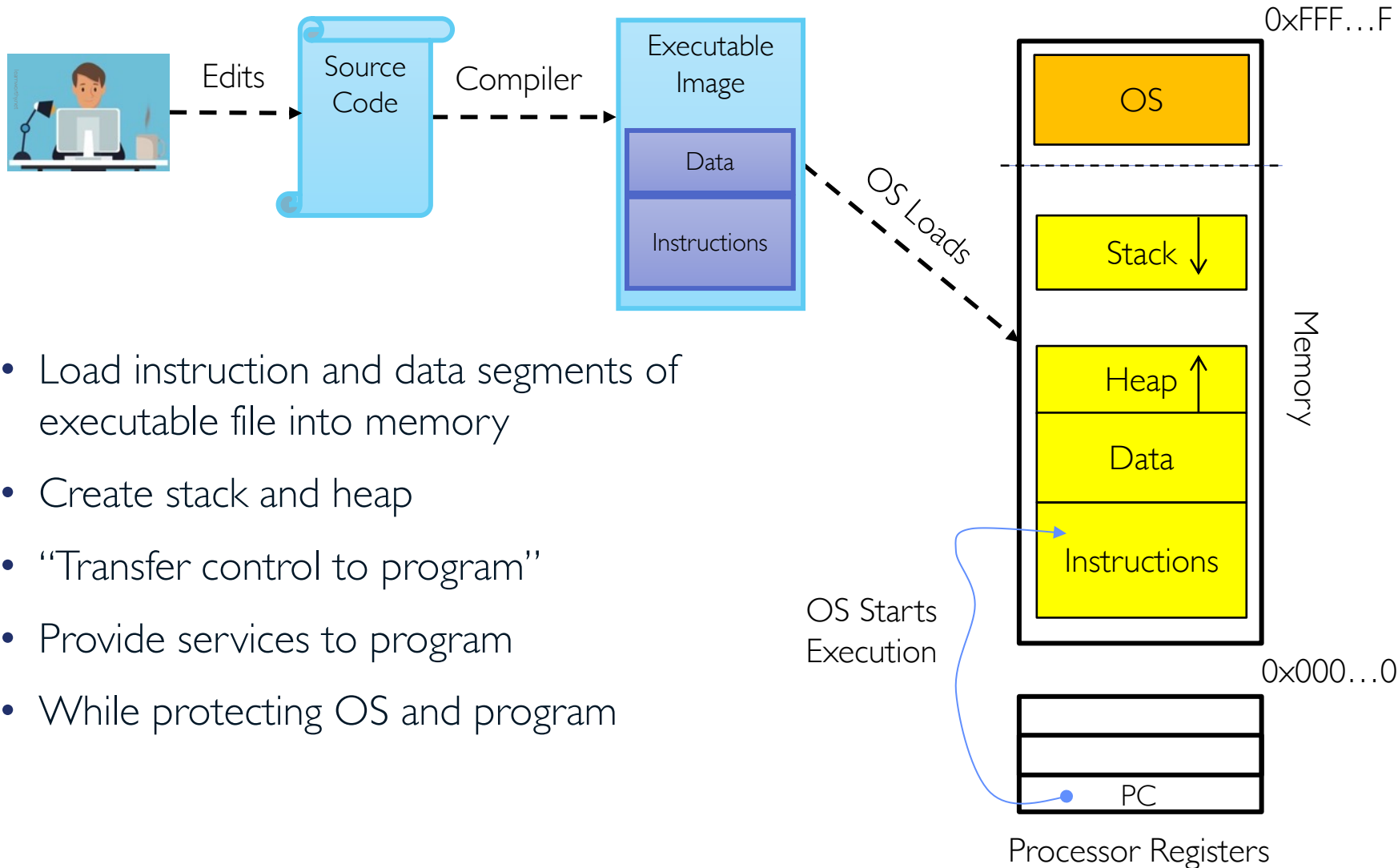
- **Thread**
 - Single unique execution context which fully describes program state
 - Program counter, registers, execution flags, stack
- **Address space (with translation)**
 - Address space which is distinct from machine's physical memory addresses
- **Process**
 - Instance of executing program consisting of address space and 1+ threads
- **Dual-mode operation/protection**
 - Only "system" can access certain resources
 - OS and hardware are protected from user programs
 - User programs are isolated from one another by controlling translation from program virtual addresses to machine physical addresses

Booting OS



- In most x86 systems, BIOS is stored on Boot ROM
 - Expensive and writing to it is slow
- Why not storing kernel on Boot ROM?
 - Hard to update (OS updates are frequent)
- Why does BIOS load bootloader not OS?
 - Might have multiple OSes installed
 - BIOS needs to read raw bytes from disk, whereas bootloader needs to know how to read from filesystem

OS Bottom Line: Run Programs

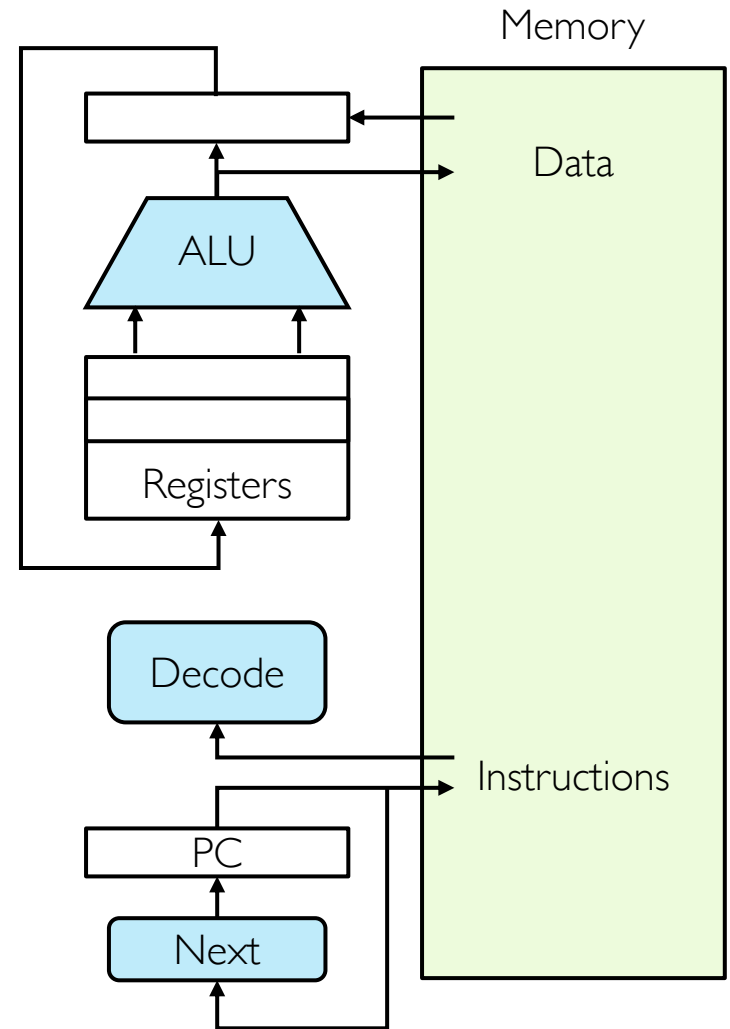


- Load instruction and data segments of executable file into memory
- Create stack and heap
- “Transfer control to program”
- Provide services to program
- While protecting OS and program

Instruction Cycle: Fetch, Decode, Execute

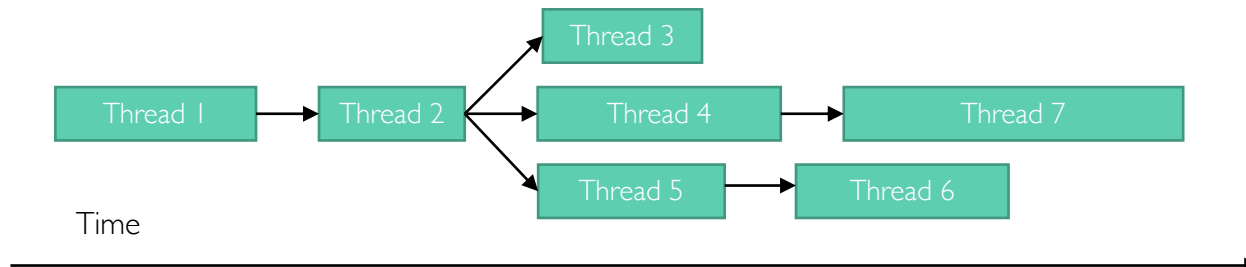
- Execution sequence
 - Fetch instruction at PC
 - Decode
 - Execute (possibly using registers)
 - Write results to registers/memory
 - $PC \leftarrow \text{Next}(PC)$
 - Repeat

Next instruction or jump
to new address ...



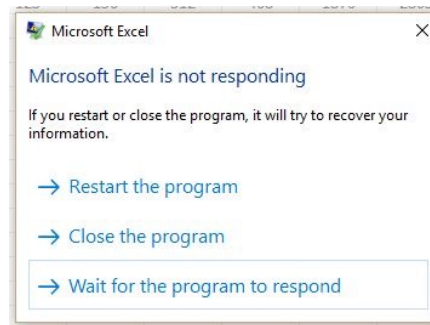
Thread (1st OS Concept)

- Thread is short for **thread of execution**
- Thread of execution is sequence of executable commands that can run on CPU
- Threads have some state and store some local variables
 - Execution state (ready, running, waiting, ...)
 - Saved context when not running
 - Execution stack
 - Local variables
 - ...
- Multithreaded programs use more than one thread (some of the time)
 - Program begins with single initial thread (where the **main** method is)
 - Threads can be created and destroyed within programs dynamically



Example: UI Thread

- One common way of dividing up program into threads is to separate user interface from other time-consuming actions
- If user interface and upload method share the same thread, then once file upload has started, user will not be able to use UI anymore
 - Not even to click the button that cancels the upload!

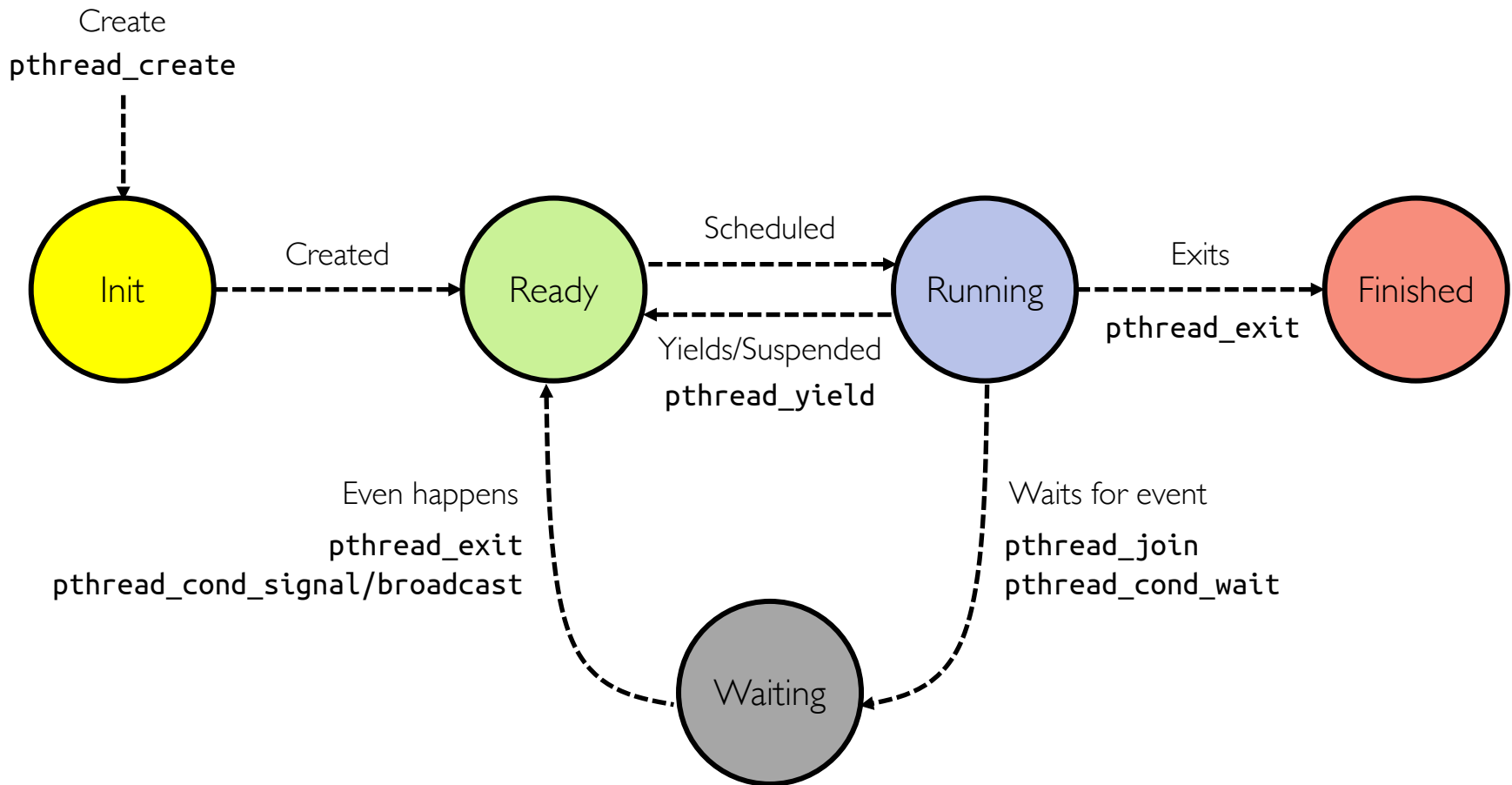


- UI thread can spawn new thread to handle the upload when user clicks “upload”
- UI thread remain responsive as it is not waiting for the upload method to complete

The POSIX Thread

- **pthread** refers to POSIX standard that defines thread behavior in UNIX
- **pthread_create**
 - Creates new thread to run a function
- **pthread_exit**
 - Quit thread and clean up, wake up joiner if any
 - To allow other threads to continue execution, the main thread should terminate by calling `pthread_exit()` rather than `exit(3)`
- **pthread_join**
 - In parent, wait for children to exit, then return
- **pthread_yield**
 - Relinquish CPU voluntarily
- ...

Thread Lifecycle



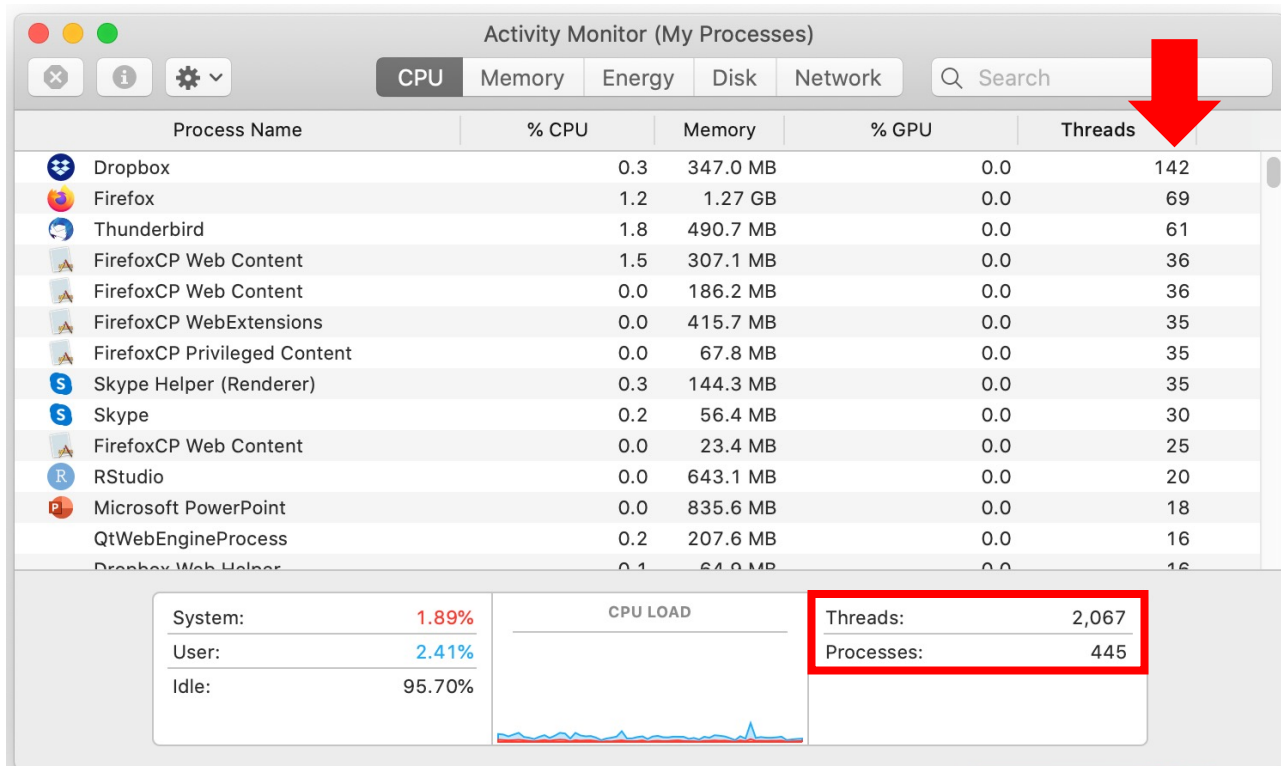
A process can go directly from ready or waiting to finished (example: main thread calls exit)

Thread Control Block (TCB)

- Data structure in OS containing information needed to manage a thread
 - Thread unique identifier (tid)
 - Stack pointer (points to thread's stack in the process)
 - Program counter (points to the current program instruction of the thread)
 - State of the thread (e.g., running, ready, waiting, etc.)
 - Thread's register values
 - Pointer to process control block (PCB) of the process that the thread lives on
(more on this soon)

Some Numbers

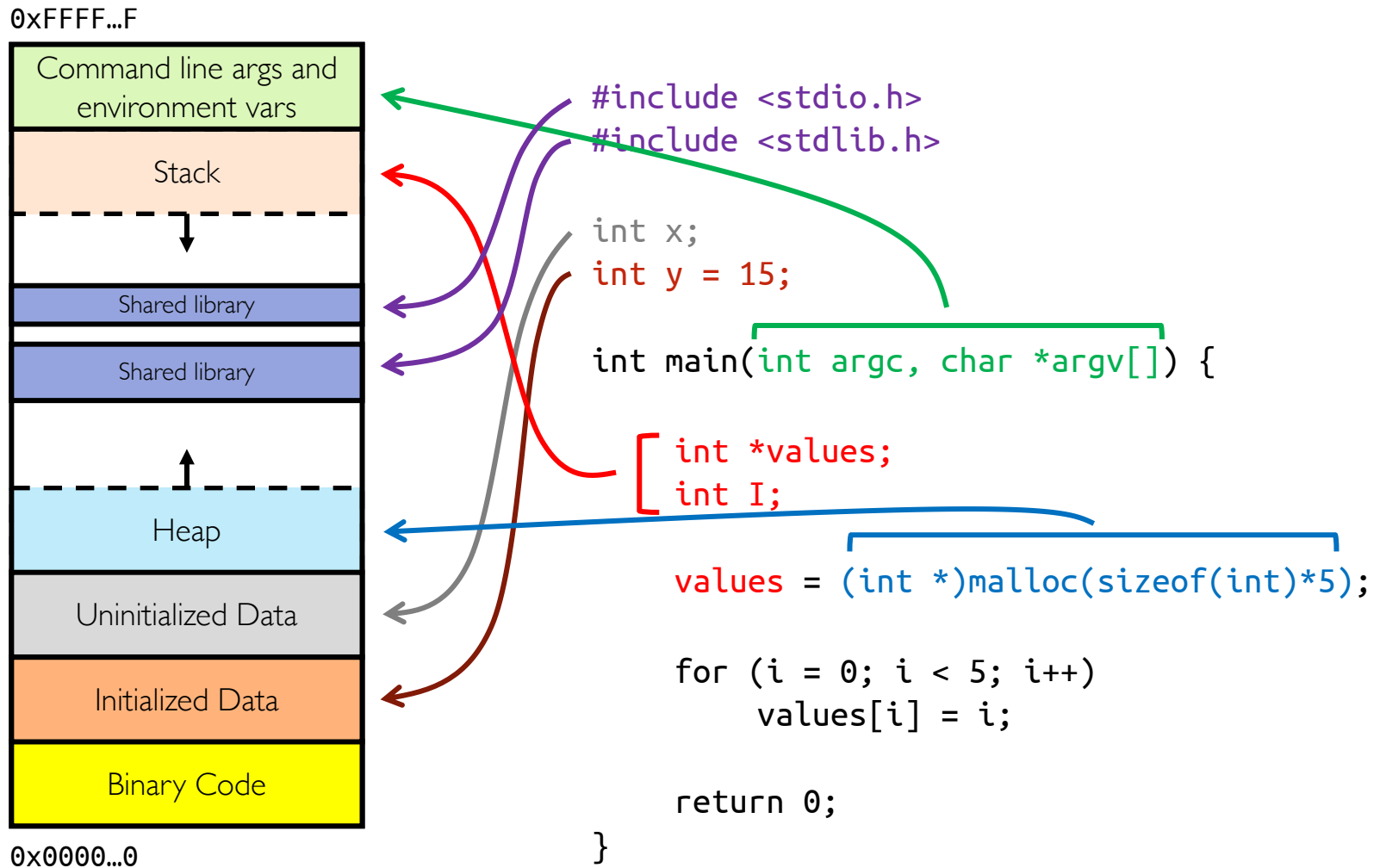
- Many processes are **multi-threaded**, so thread context switches may be either **within-process** or **across-processes**



Address Space (2nd OS Concept)

- **Address space**: set of accessible addresses and their state
- **Physical memory**: data storage medium
- **Physical addresses**: addresses available on physical memory
 - For 4GB of memory: 2^{32} B ~ 4 billion addresses
- **Virtual addresses**: addresses generated by program
 - For 64-bit processor: 2^{64} > 18 quintillion (10^{18}) addresses

Virtual Address Space Layout of C Programs



Stack Example

```
A0: A(int tmp) {  
A1:     if (tmp<2)  
A2:         B();  
A3:     printf(tmp);  
A4: }  
B0: B() {  
B1:     C();  
B2: }  
C0: C() {  
C1:     A(2);  
C2: }  
    A(1);  
ext:
```

Stack
Pointer →

```
tmp = 1  
ret = ext
```

- Stack holds temporary results
- Permits recursive execution
- Crucial to modern languages

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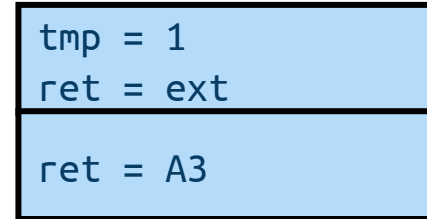
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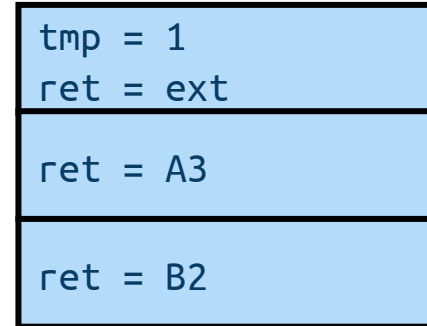


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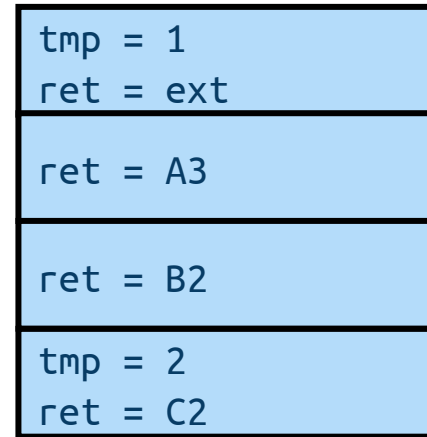


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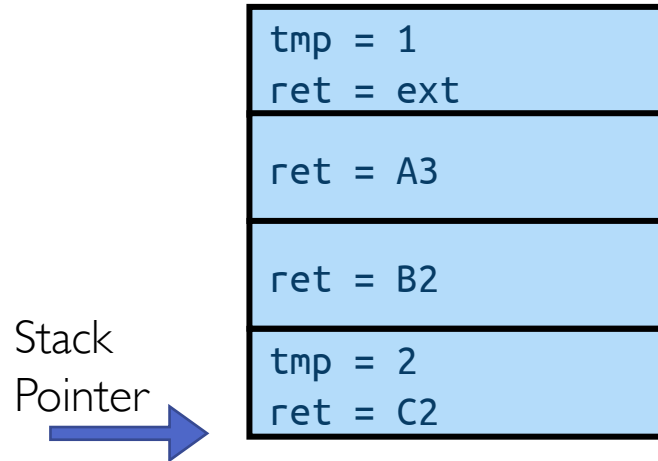
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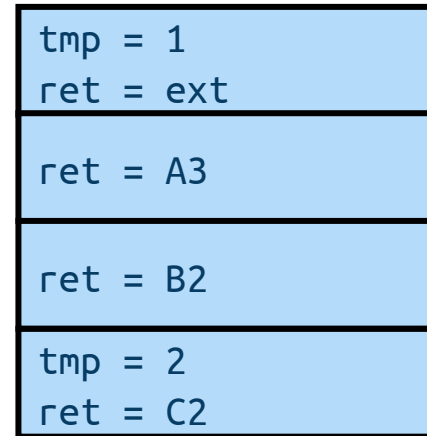
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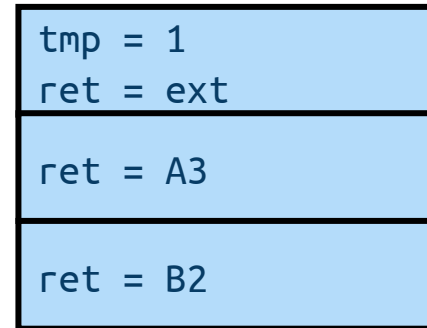
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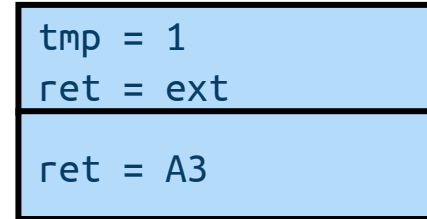
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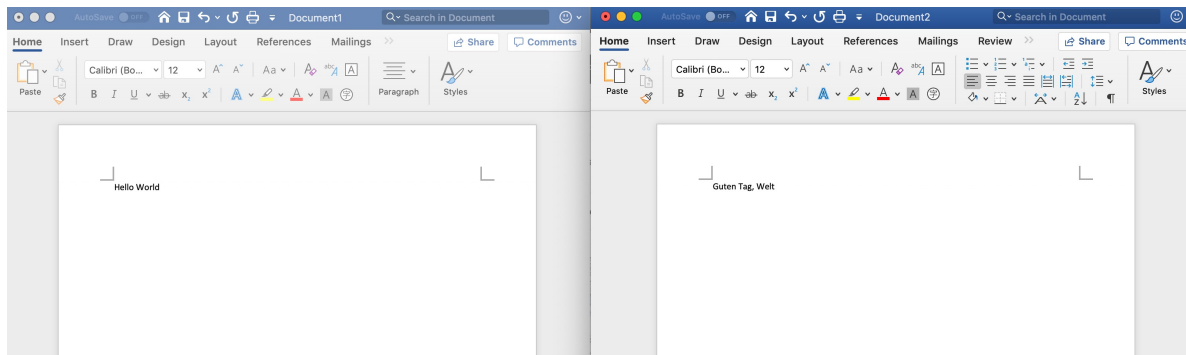
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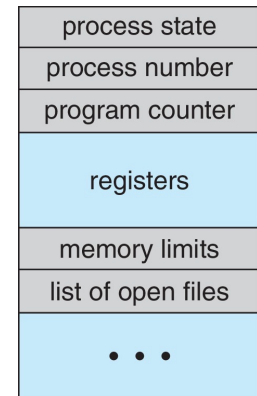
Process (3rd OS Concept)

- A process is a program in execution
- Two instances of same program running equals two processes
 - You may have two windows open for Microsoft Word, and even though they are the same program, they are separate processes
 - Similarly, two users who both use Firefox at the same time on a terminal server are interacting with two different processes



Process Control Block (PCB)

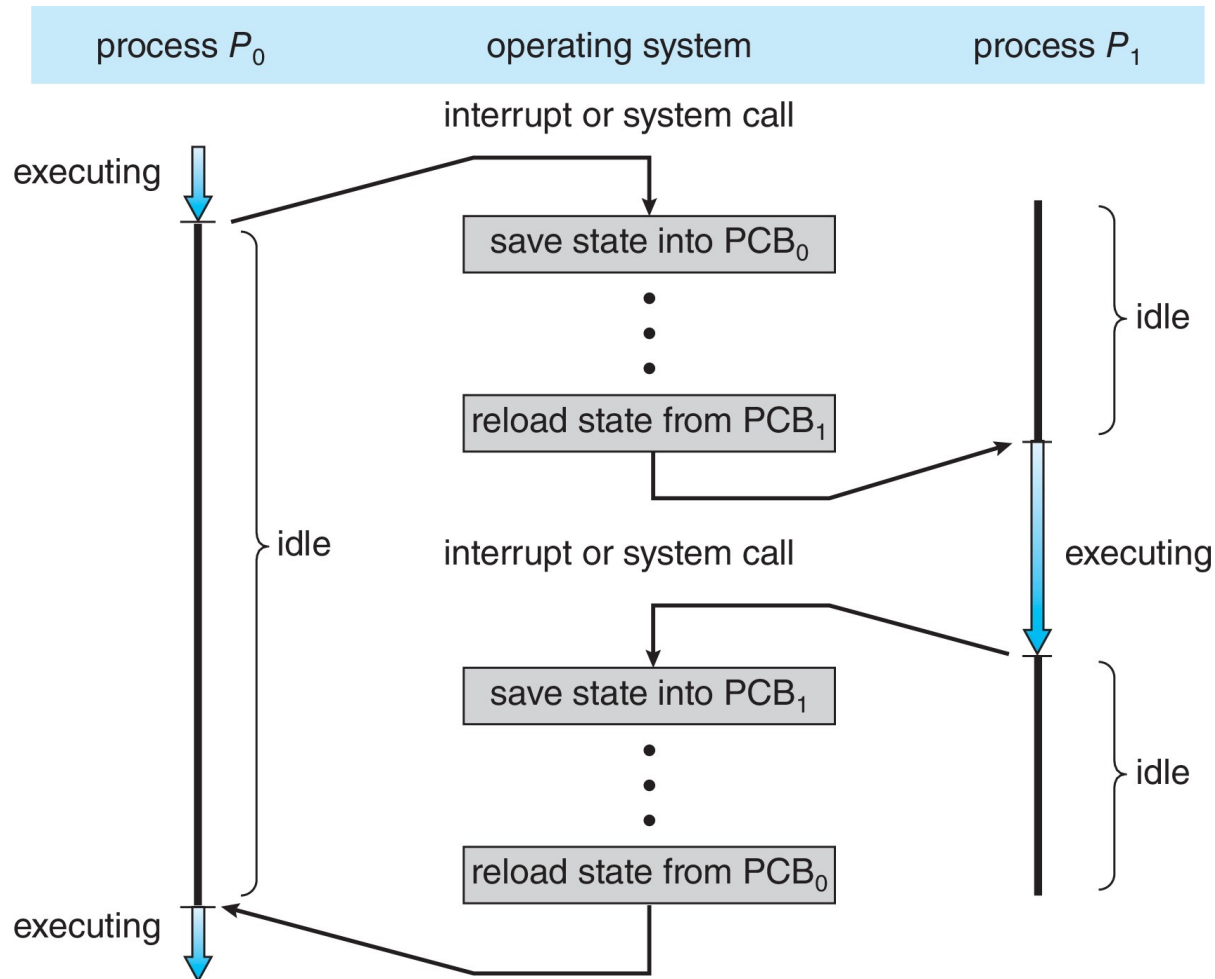
- Is a data structure for managing processes
- Is created and updated by OS for each running process
 - Is kept up to date constantly as process executes
- Is held in memory and maintained in some container (e.g., list) by kernel
- Contains everything OS needs to know about the process
 - Unique process identifier (PID), state, priority
 - Program counter (PC)
 - Register data
 - Memory pointers
 - I/O status information,
 - Accounting information
- PC and register data do not need to be updated when program is running
 - They are needed when a system call (trap) or process switch occurs



PCB During Process Life Cycle

- Upon creation, OS creates new PCB for the process
- OS initializes data in new PCB
 - Set variables to their initial values
 - Set initial program state
 - Set instruction pointer to first instruction in main
- OS then adds PCB to the list of PCBs
- After process is terminated and cleaned up, OS removes the PCB from its list of active processes
 - OS might collect some data before removing PCB (e.g., summary of accounting information)

Context Switch: CPU Switch Between Two Processes



Process Creation

- **System boot up**
 - E.g., login process in Linux
 - Embedded systems often create all processes they will ever run at bootup
- **User request**
 - E.g., double clicking on icons
- **One process spawns another**
 - E.g., clicking on a link in an email makes email process start a web browser
 - E.g., entering a command, like `ls` or `top`, makes shell process start a new process
 - Programs may break their work up into different logical parts
 - To promote parallelism or fault tolerance
 - Processes, unlike most plants and animals, reproduces asexually
 - Spawning process is the parent and the one spawned is the child
 - Each process has one parent and zero or more children
 - Each process and all its descendants form [process group](#)



fork(): Spawning New Process in Unix

- `fork()` creates new process as copy of itself with new PID
- Both parent and child continue after `fork()`
- Call to `fork` can return a value
 - Positive value means this is the parent
 - Value is PID of the **child**
 - Zero value means this is the child
 - Negative value means the **fork** failed
 - Error! Must be handled somehow
 - Running in original process
- All state of original process duplicated in both parent and child
 - Memory, file descriptors, etc.

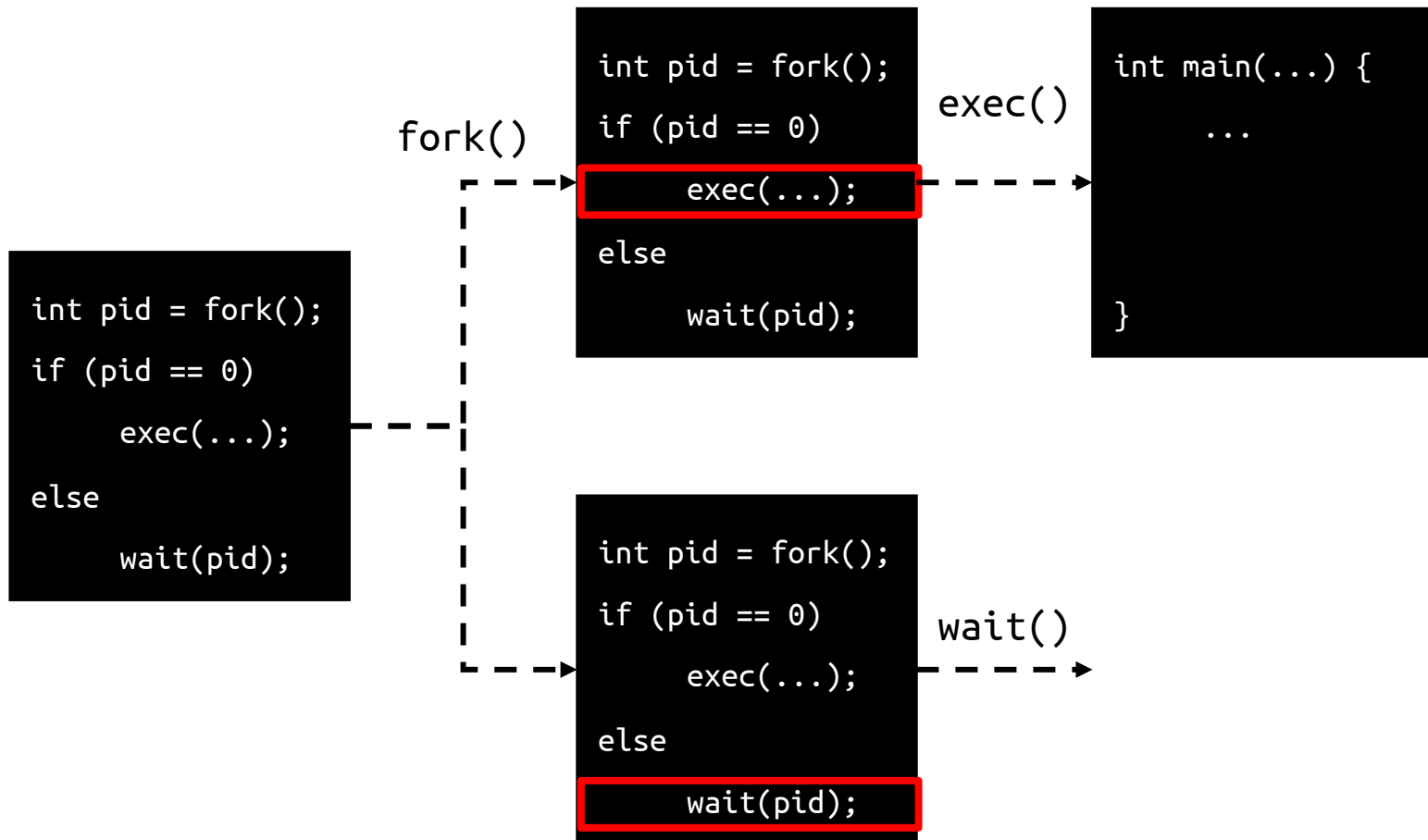


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UNIX Process Management

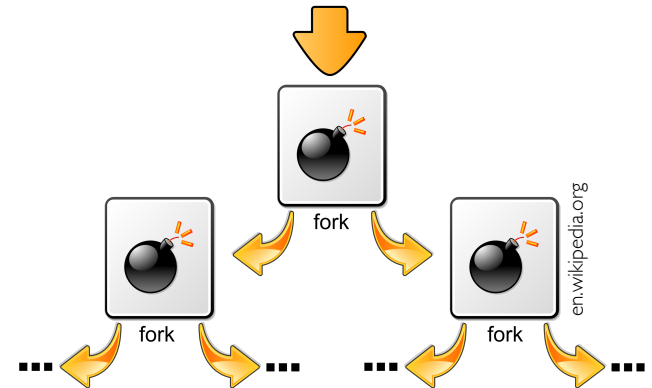
- `fork()`
 - Syscall to create copy of current process and start it
- `exec()`
 - Syscall to change program being run by current process
- `wait()`
 - Syscall to wait for process to finish
- `signal()`
 - Syscall to send notification to another process (e.g., `SIGKILL`, `SIGINT`)

fork() Example



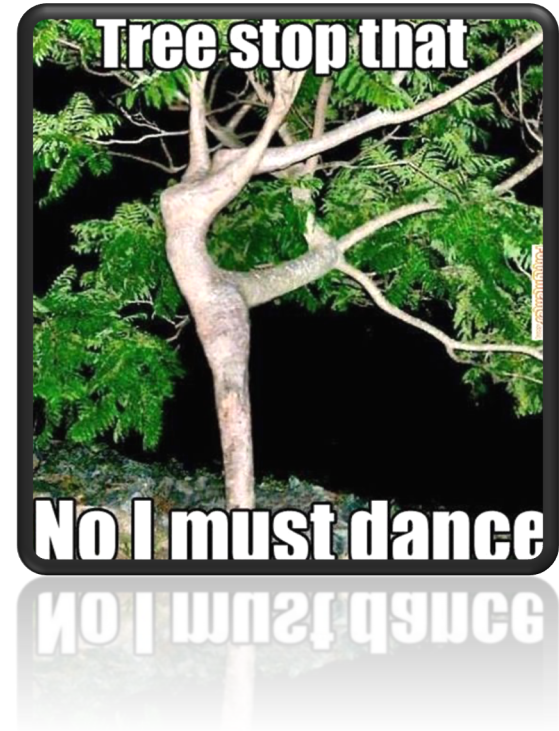
Aside: Fork Bomb

- The idea is to call **fork** repeatedly
- Keep doing this until the system crashes (or no work can get done)
- Exponential growth (2^n) processes after n calls
- OS can defend against this
 - Limit total number of processes per user
 - Limit rate of process spawning
- Note: do not attempt this on University computers



Process Family Tree in Unix

- First process created is called **init**
 - Assigned PID of 1
 - Grandparent of all processes
 - Like **object** class in Java which is superclass of all classes
- **init** is replaced by **systemd** in some newer distributions
- Parent of **init** is **swapper** (or **sched**)
 - Part of kernel and responsible for paging (will come back to this later in the course)
- If parent dies before its child, the child becomes orphan
 - Automatically adopted by **init** process



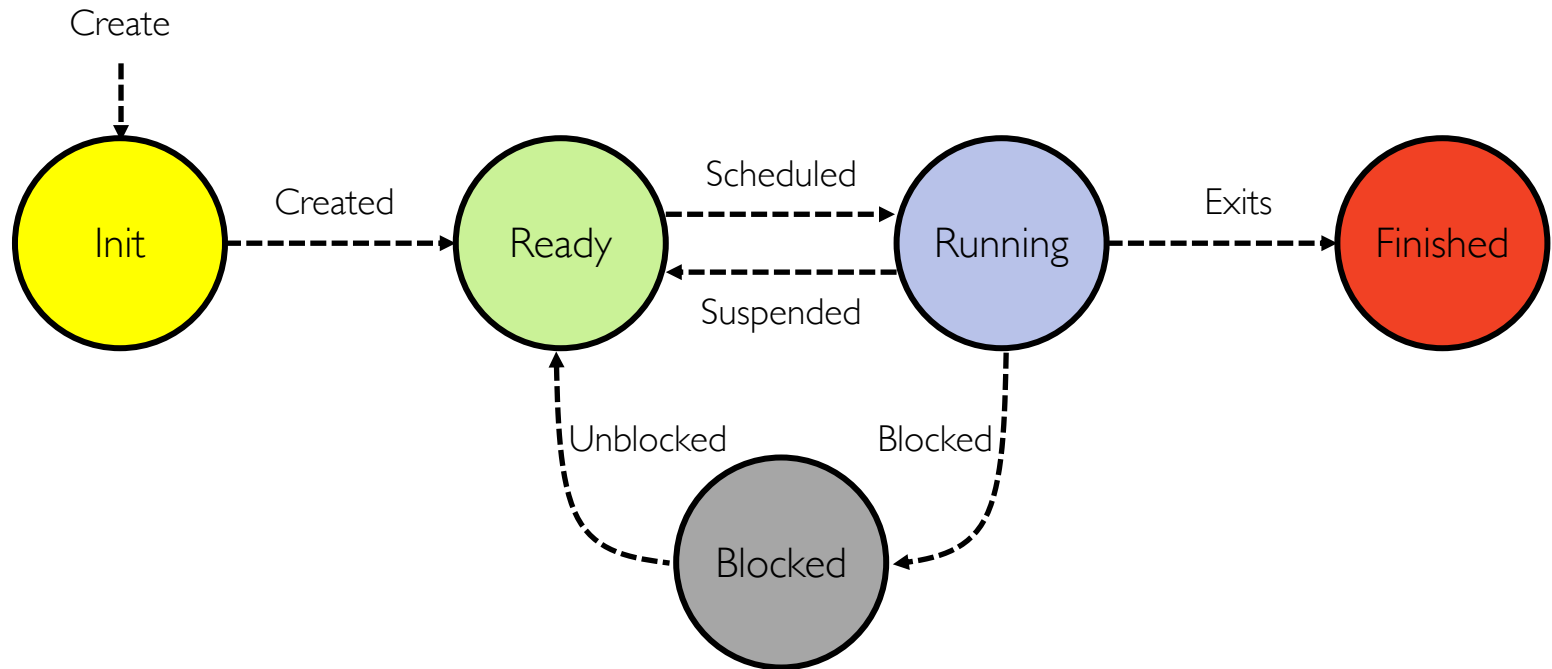
Example: pstree Output in FreeBSD

```
-+= 00000 root [swapper]
|-+= 00001 root /sbin/init --
| |--- 00196 root /sbin/devd
| |--- 00230 root /usr/sbin/syslogd -s
| |--- 00344 root sendmail: accepting connections (sendmail)
| |--- 00348 smmsp sendmail: Queue runner000:30:00 for /var/spool/clientmqueue
| |--- 00354 root /usr/sbin/cron -s
| |--- 00439 _dhcp dhclient: ed0 (dhclient)
| |-+= 00391 root login [pam] (login)
| | \-+= 00400 root -csh (csh)
| | | |-+= 00701 root /usr/local/bin/pstree
| | | | \-+- 00703 root sh -c ps -axwwo user,pid,ppid,pgid,command
| | | | | \--- 00704 root ps -axwwo user,pid,ppid,pgid,command
| | | \--- 00702 root less
| |--- 00406 root dhclient: ed0 [priv] (dhclient)
| |--- 00392 root /usr/libexec/getty Pc ttyv1
| |--- 00393 root /usr/libexec/getty Pc ttyv2
| |--- 00394 root /usr/libexec/getty Pc ttyv3
| |--- 00395 root /usr/libexec/getty Pc ttyv4
| |--- 00396 root /usr/libexec/getty Pc ttyv5
| |--- 00397 root /usr/libexec/getty Pc ttyv6
| |--- 00398 root /usr/libexec/getty Pc ttyv7
| |-+- 00387 root sh /etc/rc autoboot
| | \-+- 00390 root sh /etc/rc autoboot
```

Process Destruction

- **Normal exit (voluntary)**
 - E.g., when compilation is finished, compiler terminates normally
 - E.g., when you are done editing your document, you click on close button
- **Error exit (voluntary)**
 - E.g., computer exits with error if you ask it to compile a non-existent file
 - E.g., process required access to temporary directory, but it didn't have permission
- **Fatal error (involuntary)**
 - E.g., division by zero or segmentation fault
 - OS detects these errors and send it to the program
 - Processes may tell OS that they wish to handle some of these errors by themselves
 - If process can handle the error, it continues
 - Unhandled errors result in involuntary terminations
- **Killed by another process (involuntary)**
 - Typically, users may only kill processes they have created
 - Exception: system administrator.

Process Lifecycle (5 States)

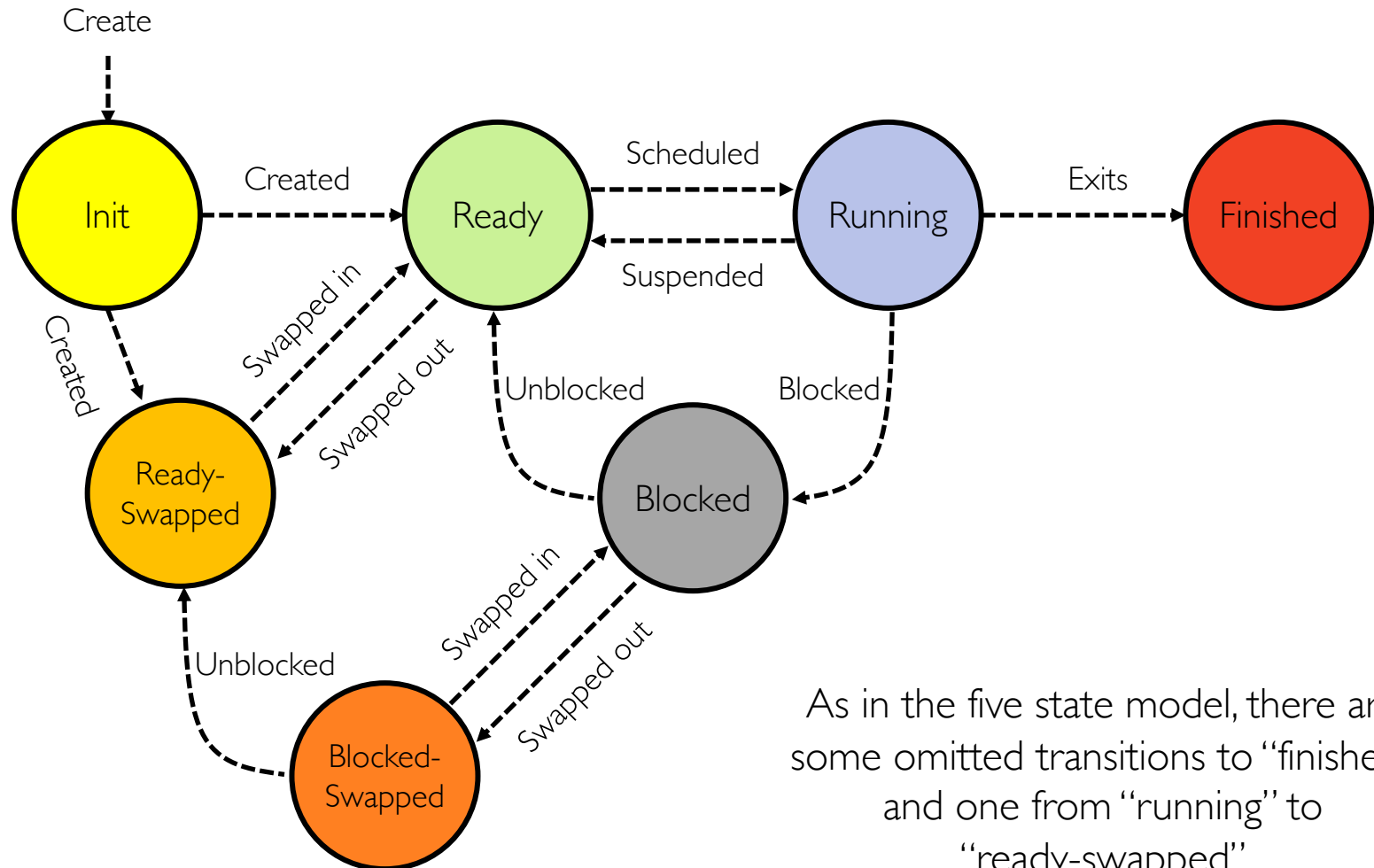


A process can go directly from ready or waiting to finished (example: process is killed!)

Processes and Limited Memory

- Users often want more processes running than fit in memory
- **Swapping**: when demands for memory exceed available memory, parts of processes will be moved to disk storage to make room
 - This is extremely expensive
- We need to know if a particular process is in memory or on disk
- Is adding a new state (e.g., swapped) be enough?
 - Ideally, we will only swap a process to disk if it is blocked
 - But what if there are no blocked process?
 - Or what if the event a swapped process waited for took place?

Process Lifecycle (7 States)



As in the five state model, there are some omitted transitions to "finished" and one from "running" to "ready-swapped"

Inter-process Communication (IPC)

- **Shared memory**
 - Normally, each region of memory is associated with one process (its owner)
 - Processes can designate memory as shared
 - OS is involved in setting up (and cleaning up) shared memory regions
- **Shared file**
 - Processes could read/write to/from files in agreed upon locations
 - OS is still involved in file creation and manipulation
- **Message passing**
 - Sender gives a message to OS and asks for it to be delivered to recipient
 - OS is obviously involved

Message Passing

- **Direct communication**
 - Processes must name each other explicitly
 - `send (P, message)` – send a message to process P
 - `receive(Q, message)` – receive a message from process Q
- **Indirect communication**
 - Messages are directed and received from mailboxes (also called ports)
 - `send(M, message)` – send a message to mailbox M
 - `receive(M, message)` – receive a message from mailbox M

Synchronization

- Message passing may be either **blocking** or **non-blocking**
- Blocking is considered **synchronous**
 - Sender is blocked until the message is received
 - Receiver is blocked until a message is available
- Non-blocking is considered **asynchronous**
 - Sender sends message and continues
 - Receiver receives a valid message, or Null message

Signals: Limited Form of Direct IPC

- Standardized messages sent to processes to trigger specific behavior
- They don't really contain a message
- The fact that signals contain no message is a limitation that means signals cannot be used for every single IPC scenario



Signals

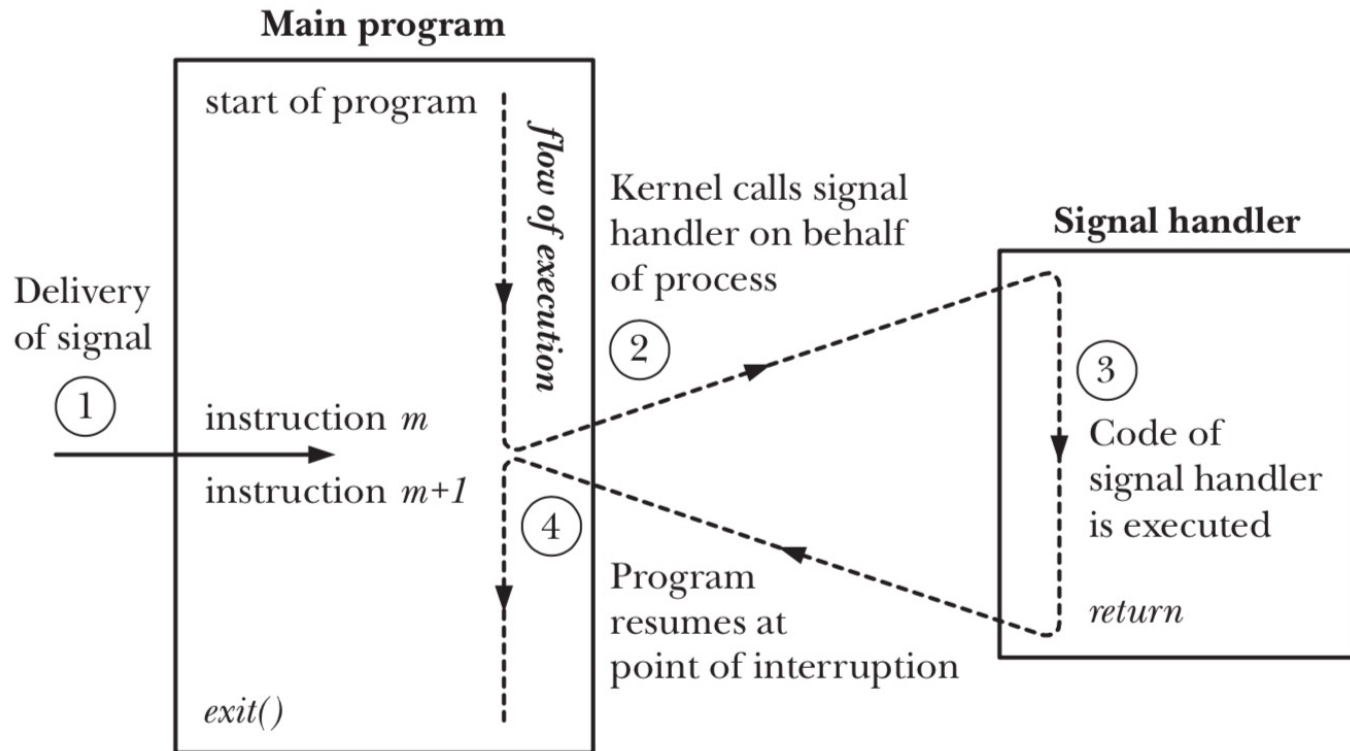
- UNIX systems use signals to indicate events
 - E.g., the Ctrl-C on the console
- It is synchronous if the signal is sent as a result of program execution
 - E.g., dividing by zero or segmentation fault
- It is asynchronous if it comes from outside the process
 - E.g., user pressing Ctrl-C or one process or thread sending a signal to another
- By default, OS handles signals sent to processes with the default handler
- Processes could inform OS they are prepared to handle signal themselves
 - E.g., doing some cleanup when Ctrl-C is received instead of just dying

Signals (cont.)

- Signals can be sent using command line
 - E.g., `kill -9 24601`
 - `-9` parameter sends signal 9 (**SIGKILL**)
 - `-0` is called the **null signal**
 - It does not actually send any signal
 - Can be used to check if the recipient process exists
- Process can block signals
 - Exceptions are **SIGKILL** and **SIGSTOP**
 - OS doesn't deliver signal to recipient
- Once signal is delivered, recipient can
 - Ignore it
 - Run the default action
 - Run a signal handler



Signal Handler



Signal Handler Example

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <signal.h>

volatile int quit = 0;

void handle_it (int signal_num) {
    quit = 1;
}

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    signal(SIGINT, handle_it);
    while(quit == 0){};

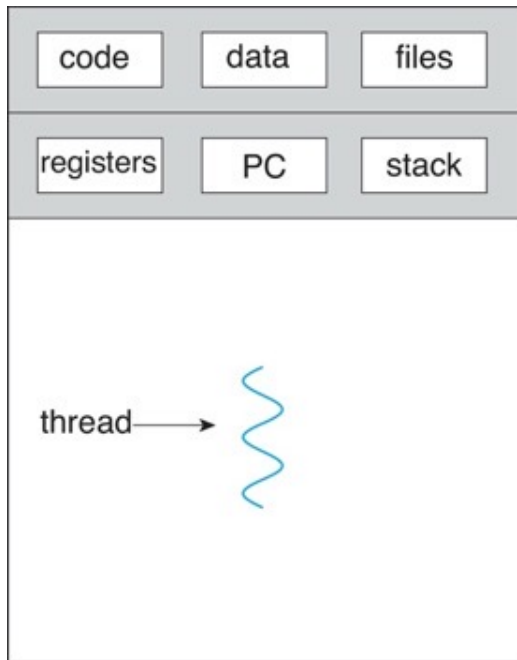
    printf("Time to die.\n");

    return 0;
}
```

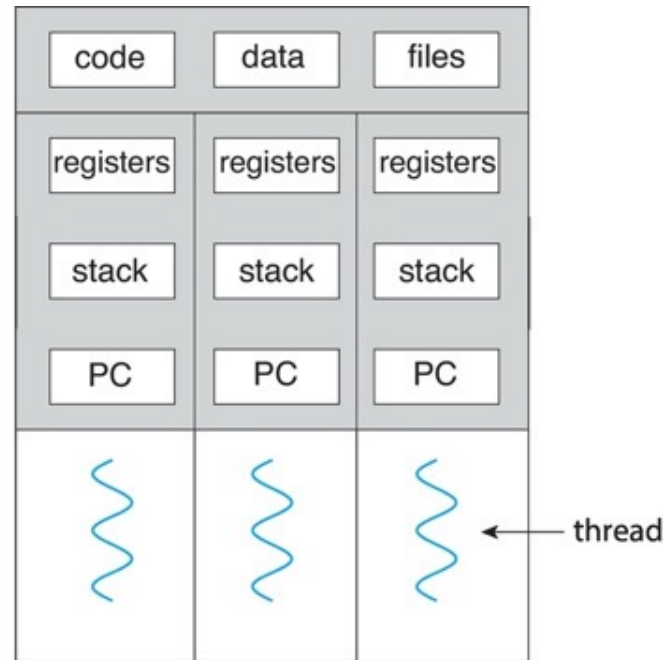
Signal Handler: Discussion

- Content of signal handler is restricted
- Because handler deals with interrupts and runs between two instructions, it is important to make sure that signal handler doesn't mess anything up
- If signal handler runs in the middle of `malloc` and signal handler itself calls `malloc` it could put memory management in invalid state
- Signal handler can only use functions that are **reentrant**
 - There are tables of *safe* functions to be invoked from within a signal handler.

Processes and Threads



single-threaded process



multithreaded process

Multithreaded Processes



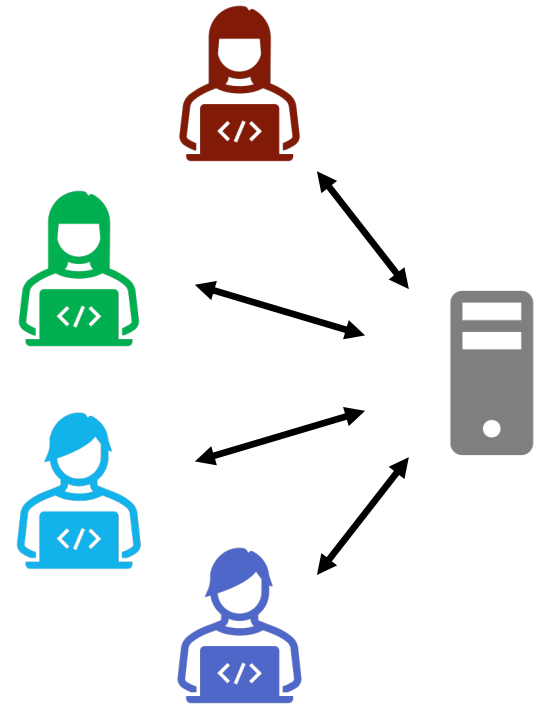
- Threads encapsulate **concurrency** and are **active** components
- Address spaces encapsulate **protection** and are **passive** part
 - Keeps buggy program from trashing system
- Why have multiple threads per address space?
 - Processes are expensive to start, switch between, and communicate between

Example: Web Server

- Server must handle many requests
- First option is **multiprogramming**

```
serverLoop() {  
    con = AcceptCon();  
    fork(ServiceWebpage, conn);  
}
```

- What are some disadvantages of this technique?
 - Expensive to start new process
 - Heavyweight context switch overhead



Example: Web Server (cont.)

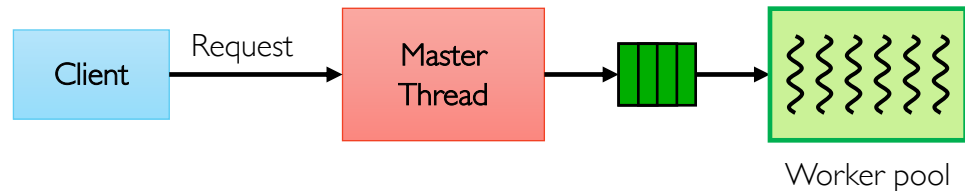
- Second option is multithreading

```
serverLoop() {  
    con = AcceptCon();  
    thread_create(ServiceWebpage, conn);  
}
```

- Looks almost the same, but has many advantages
 - Can share file caches kept in memory
 - Threads are cheaper to create than processes (lower per-request overhead)
- What about denial-of-service (DoS) attacks?

Example: Web Server (cont.)

- Problem with previous version: unbounded number of threads
 - When web-site becomes too popular, throughput sinks
- Solution: allocate bounded “pool” of threads, representing max level of parallelism



```
master() {
  allocThreads(worker, maxLevel);
  while(TRUE) {
    con = acceptCon();
    enqueue(queue, con);
    broadcastToWorkers();
  }
}
```

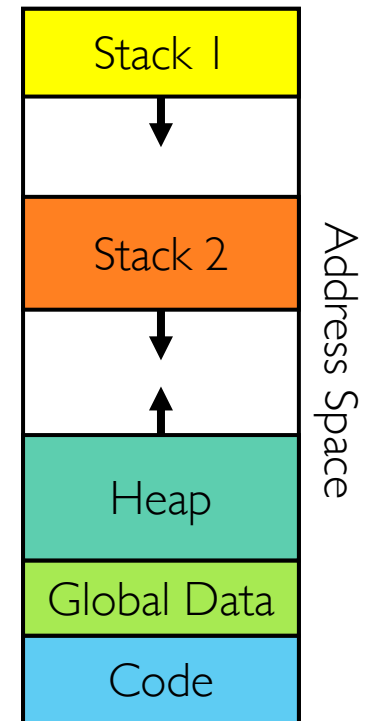
```
worker(queue) {
  while(TRUE) {
    con = dequeue(queue);
    if (con == null)
      waitForSignal();
    else
      serviceWebPage(con);
  }
}
```

Multiple Processes vs. Single Process With Multiple Threads

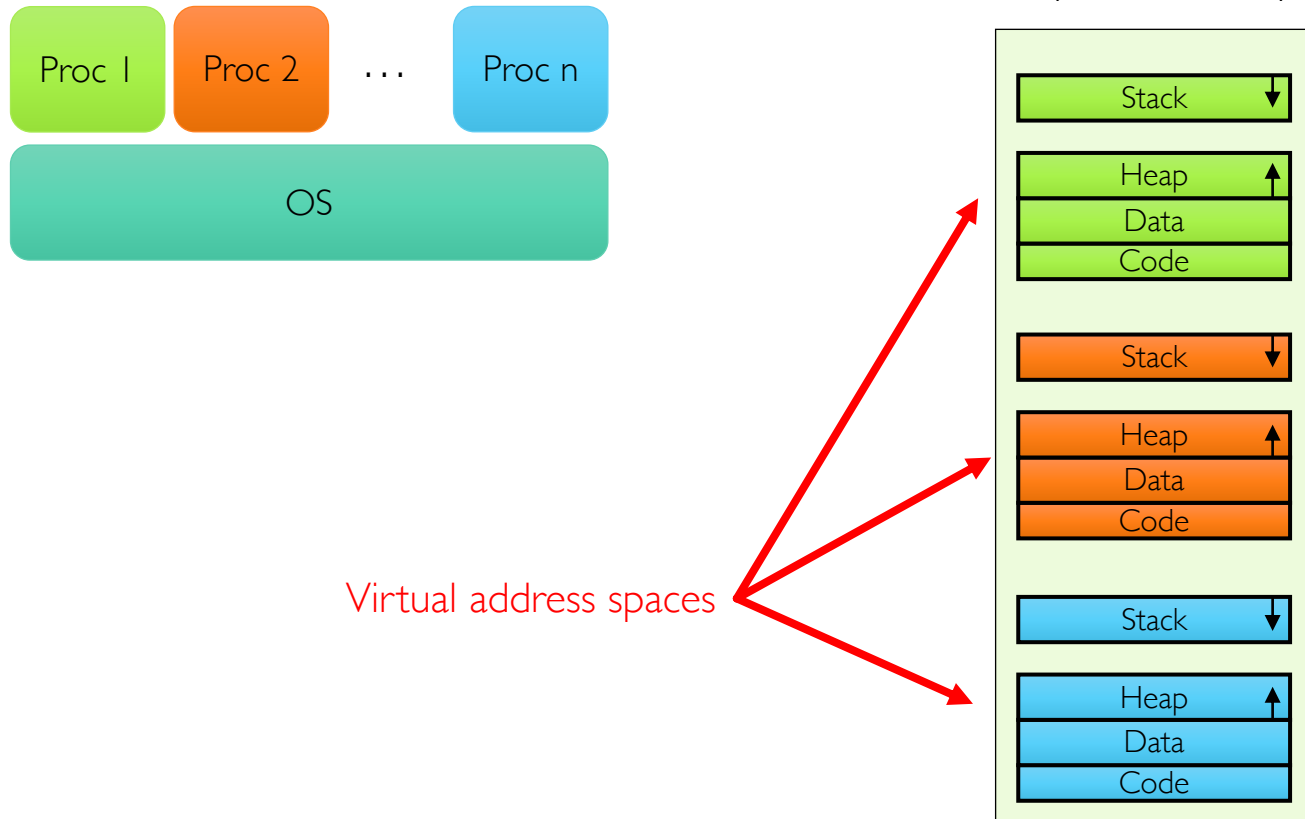
- Fundamental tradeoff between **protection and efficiency**
- Communication harder between processes
 - This is basically IPC
 - It necessarily involves OS
- Communication easier within a process
 - All threads of process share state and resources of process
 - If one thread opens a file, other threads in the process can access it
 - It does not involve OS

Memory Footprint of Multiple Threads

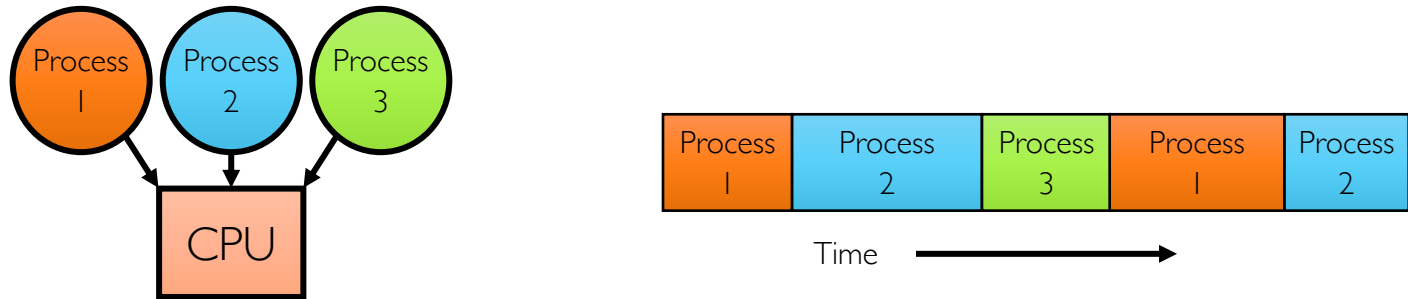
- How do we position stacks relative to each other?
- What maximum size should we choose for stacks?
 - 8KB for **kernel-level** stacks in Linux on x86
 - Less need for tight space constraint for user-level stacks
- What happens if threads violate this?
 - “... program termination and/or corrupted data”
- How might you catch violations?
 - Place guard values at top and bottom of each stack
 - Check values on every context switch



Multiprogramming: Running Multiple Processes



Time Sharing: Multiprogramming on Single CPU



- **Illusion**: infinite number of processors
 - Each thread runs on dedicated virtual processor
- **Reality**: few processors, multiple threads running at variable speed
- How can we give illusion of infinite number of processors?
 - **Multiplex in time!**
- How do we **switch** from one process to next?
 - Save PC, SP, and registers in current PCB
 - Load PC, SP, and registers from new PCB
- What **triggers** switch?
 - Timer, voluntary yield, I/O interrupts, ...

How Do We Multiplex Processes?

- **Scheduling:** OS decides which process uses CPU time
 - Only one process is “running” on each CPU at any time
 - Scheduler could give more time to *important* processes
- **Protection:** OS divides non-CPU resources among processes
 - E.g., give each process their own address space
 - E.g., multiplex I/O through system calls

Scheduling

- Kernel scheduler decides which processes/threads receive CPU
- There are variety of scheduling policies for ...
 - Fairness or
 - Realtime guarantees or
 - Latency optimization or ...
- Kernel scheduler maintains data structure containing PCBs

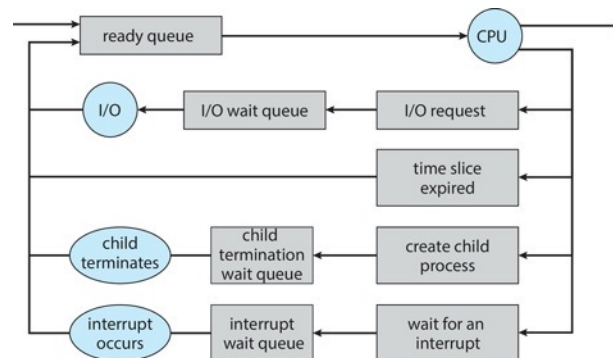


```
if (readyProcesses(PCBs)) {
    nextPCB = selectProcess(PCBs);
    run(nextPCB);
} else {
    run_idle_process();
}
```

Ready Queue

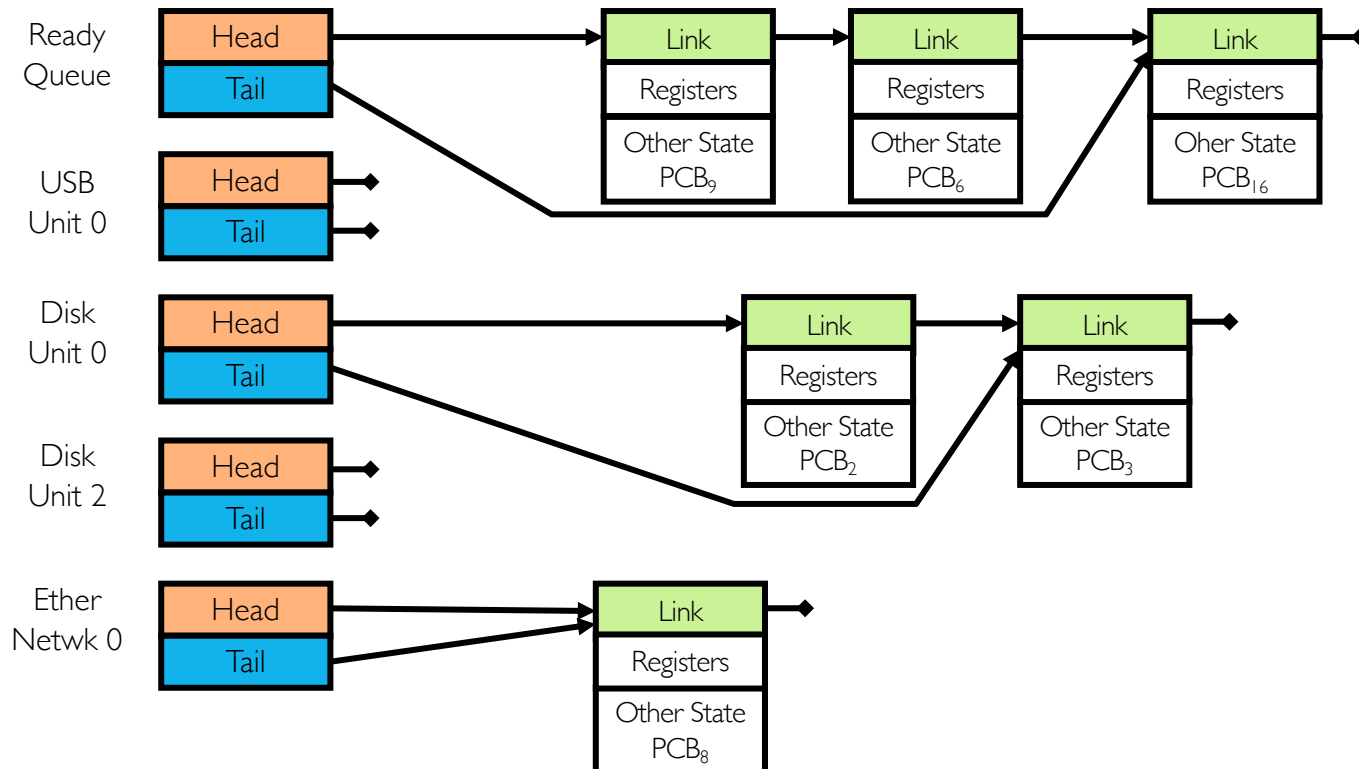


- PCBs move from queue to queue as they change state
 - Decisions about which order to remove from queues are **scheduling** decisions
 - Many algorithms possible (more on this in a few weeks)



Ready Queue And I/O Device Queues

- Process not running \Rightarrow PCB is in some scheduler queue
 - Separate queue for each device/signal/condition
 - Each queue can have different scheduler policy



Protection

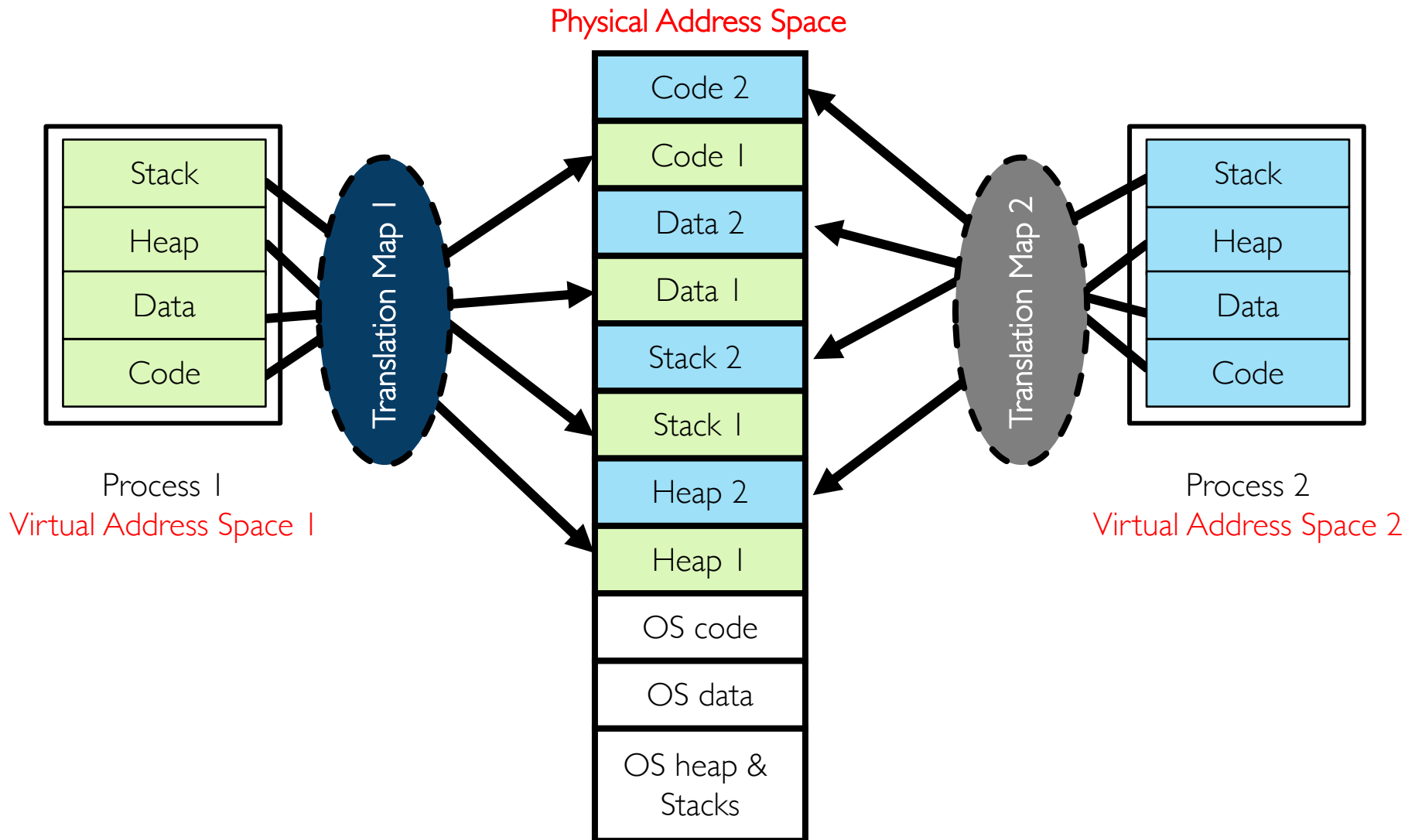


- OS must protect itself from user programs
 - **Reliability**: prevent OS from crashing
 - **Security**: limit scope of what processes can do
 - **Privacy**: limit data each process can access
 - **Fairness**: enforce appropriate share of HW
- It must protect user programs from one another
- Main method is to limit translation from virtual to physical address space

How to Protect Processes from One Another?

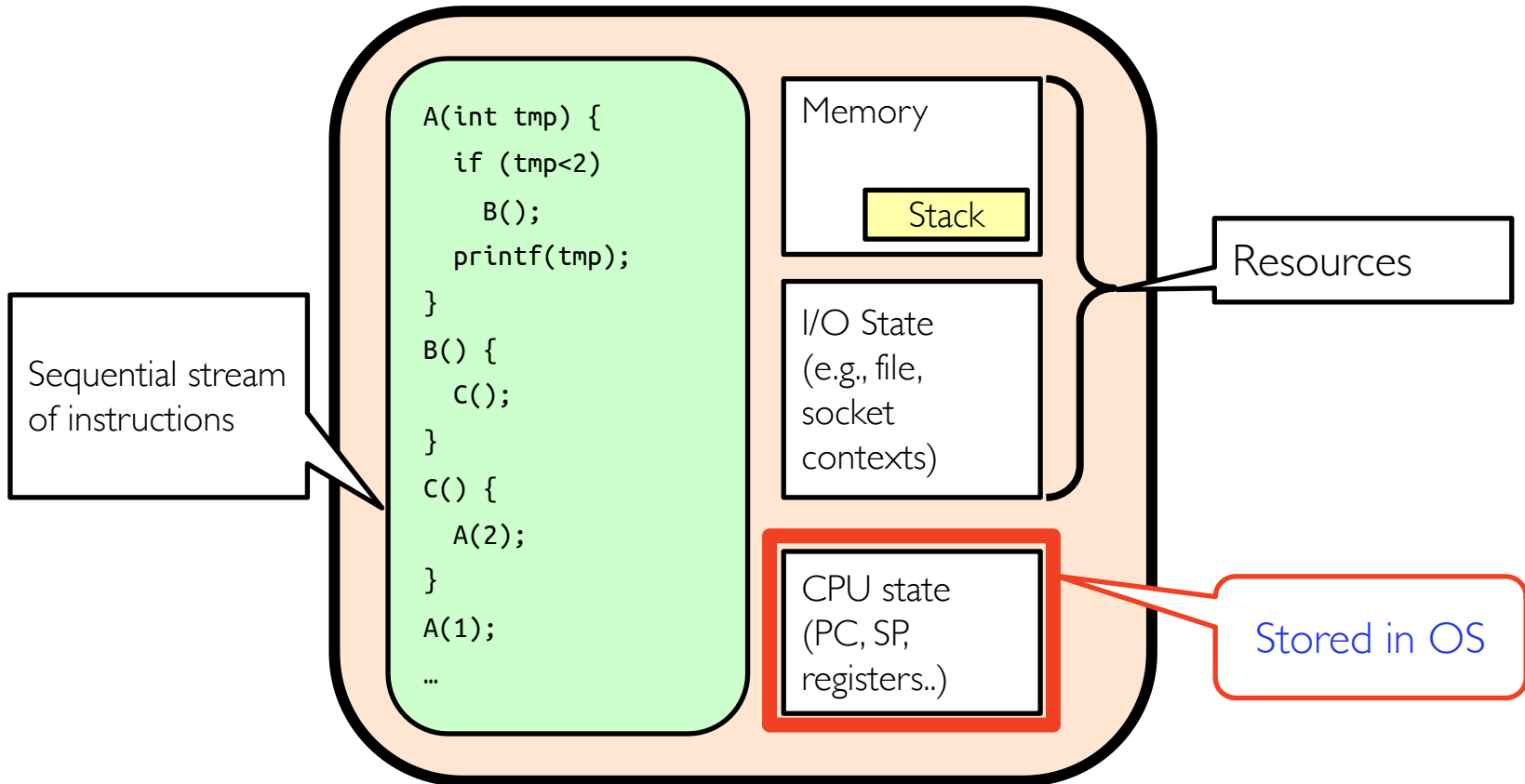
- Protection of **memory**
 - Every process does not have access to all memory
- Protection of **I/O devices**
 - Every process does not have access to every device
- Protection of access to **processor**
 - **Preemptive** switching from process to process
 - Use of **timer**
 - Must not be possible to disable timer from user code

Address Translation Maps: Illusion of Separate Address Space

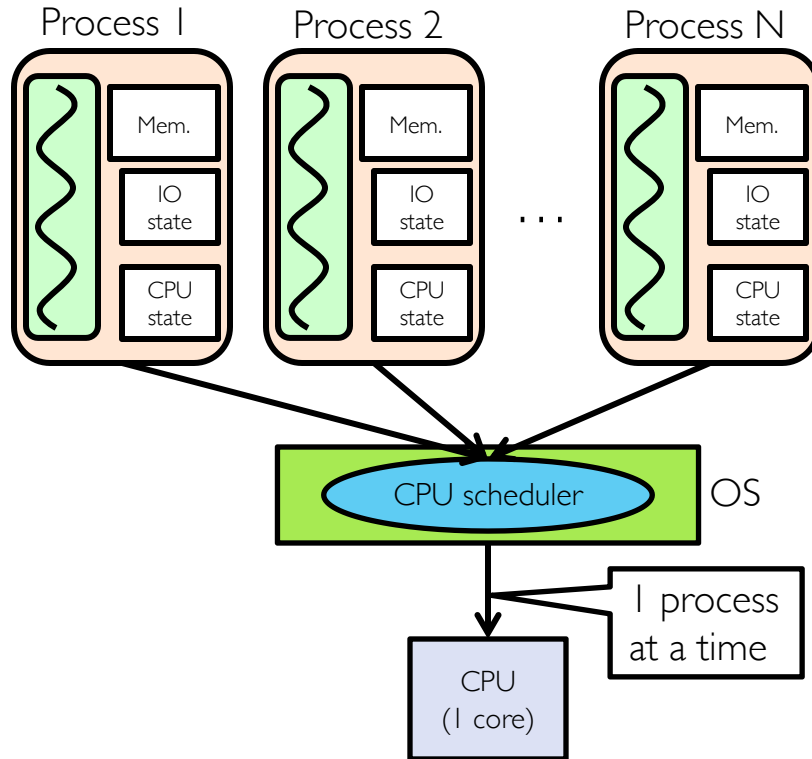


Putting it Together: Process

(Unix) Process

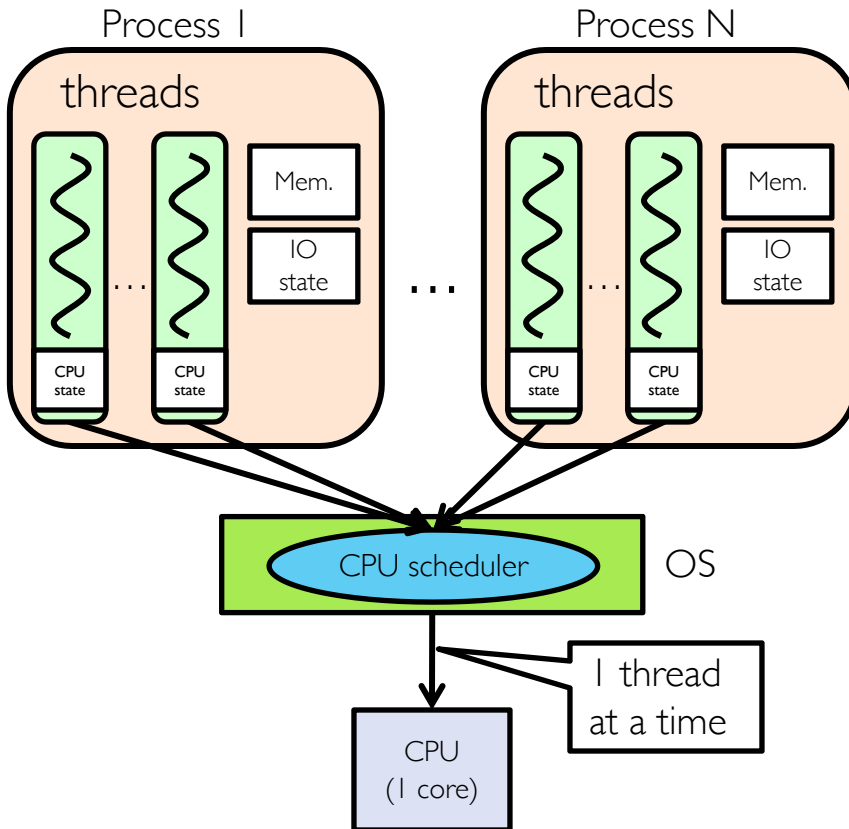


Putting it Together: Processes



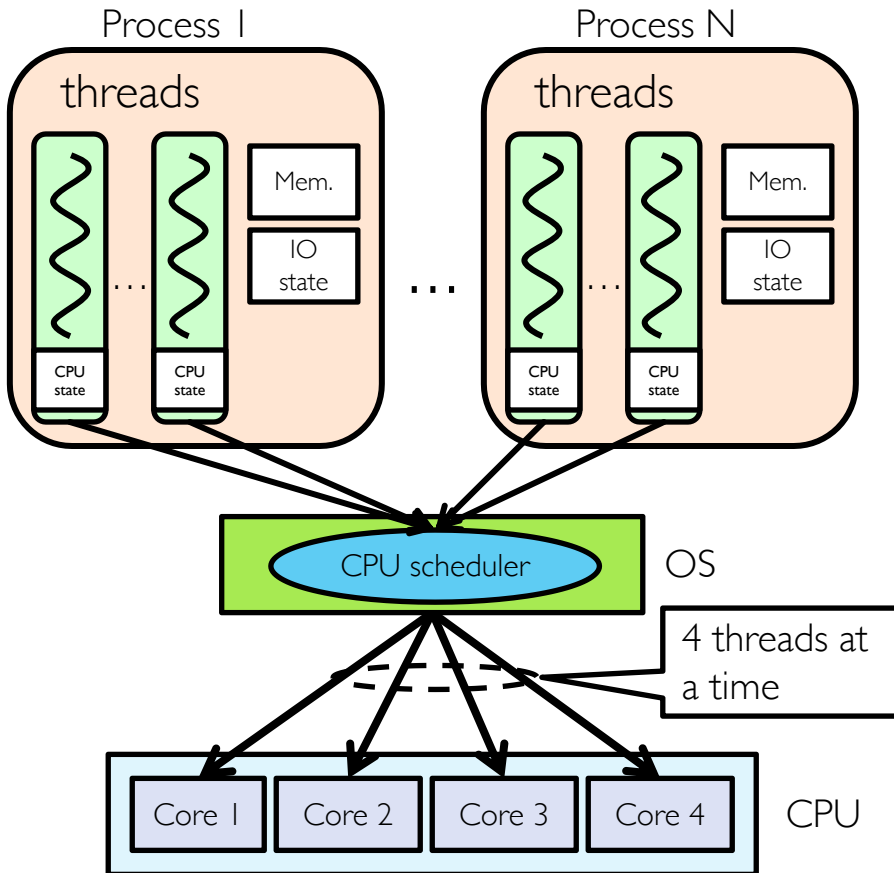
- Switch overhead: **high**
 - CPU state: **low**
 - Memory/IO state: **high**
- Process creation: **high**
- Protection
 - CPU: **yes**
 - Memory/IO: **yes**
- Sharing overhead: **high**
(involves at least one context switch)

Putting it Together: Threads



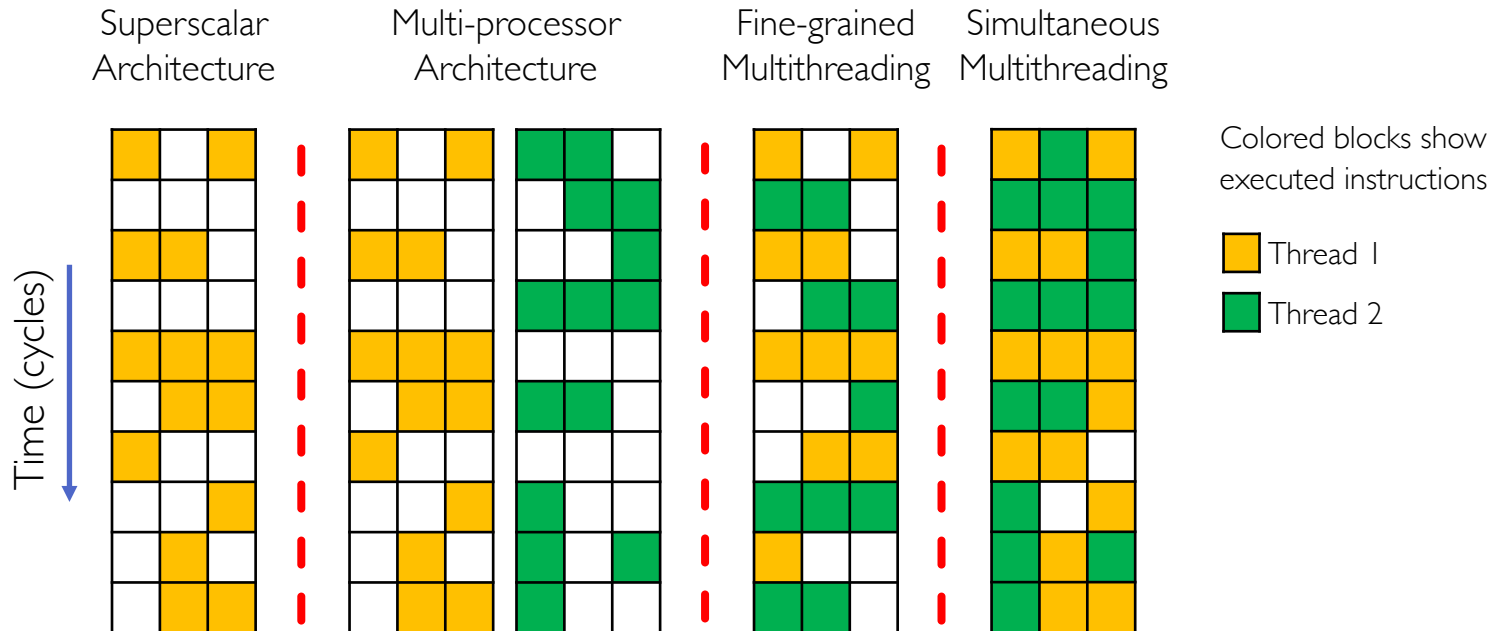
- Switch overhead: **medium**
 - CPU state: **low**
- Thread creation: **medium**
- Protection
 - CPU: **yes**
 - Memory/IO: **no**
- Sharing overhead: **low(ish)** (thread switch overhead low)

Putting it Together: Multi-cores



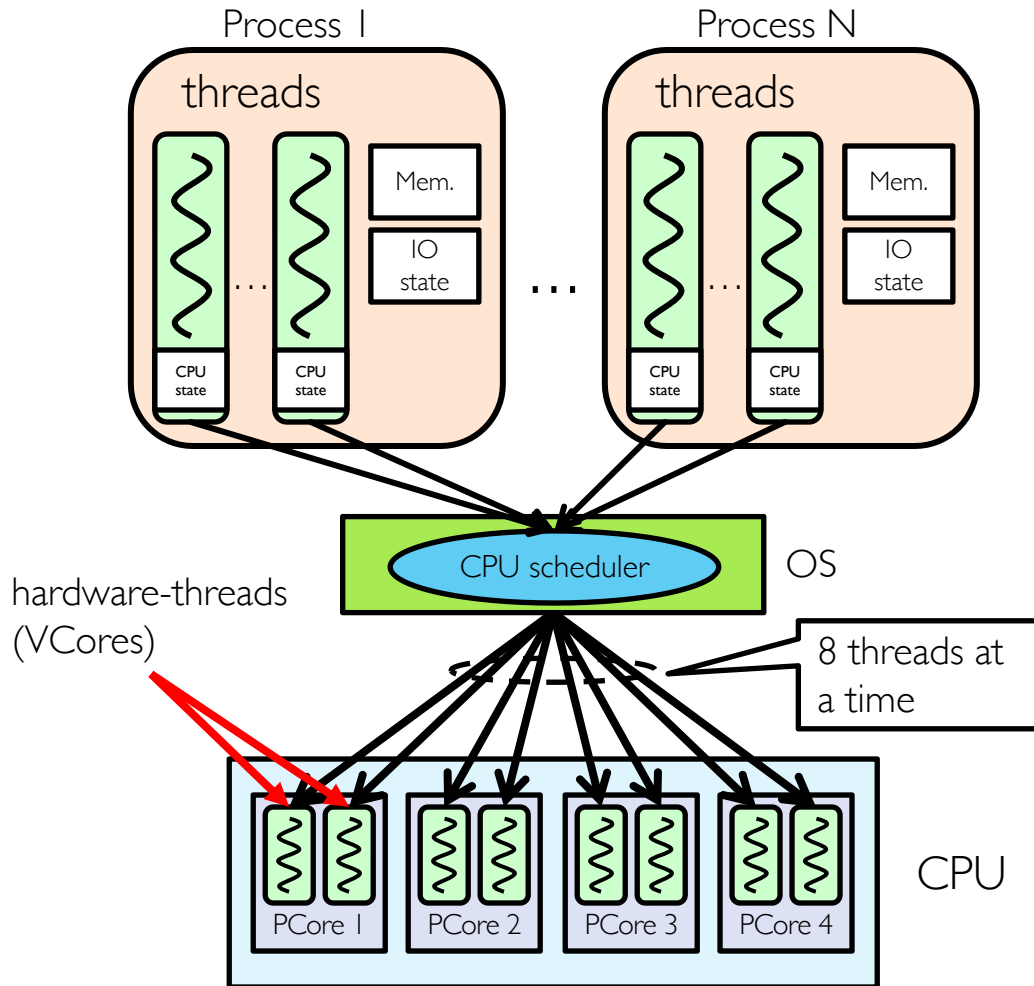
- Switch overhead: **low** (only CPU state)
- Thread creation: **low**
- Protection
 - CPU: **yes**
 - Memory/IO: **no**
- Sharing overhead: **low** (thread switch overhead **low**, may not need to switch at all!)

Hyperthreading



- Superscalar processors can execute multiple instructions that are independent
- Multiprocessors can execute multiple independent threads
- Fine-grained multithreading executes two independent threads by switches between them
- Hyperthreading duplicates register state to make second (hardware) “thread” (virtual core)
 - From OS’s point of view, virtual cores are separate CPUs
 - OS can schedule as many threads at a time as there are virtual cores (but, sub-linear speedup!)
 - See: <http://www.cs.washington.edu/research/smt/index.html>

Putting it Together: Hyperthreading



- Switch overhead between hardware-threads: **very-low** (done in hardware)
- Contention for ALUs/FPUs may **hurt** performance

Dual-mode Operation

(4th OS Concept)

- Hardware provides at least two modes
 - **Kernel mode** (or “supervisor” or “protected”)
 - **User mode**, which is how normal programs are executed
- How can hardware support dual-mode operation?
 - Single bit of state (user/system mode bit)
 - Certain operations/actions only permitted in system/kernel mode
 - In user mode they fail or trap
 - User to kernel transition sets system mode AND saves user PC
 - OS code carefully puts aside user state then performs necessary actions
 - Kernel to user transition clears system mode AND restores user PC
 - E.g., **rfi**: return-from-interrupt

Three Types of Mode Transfer

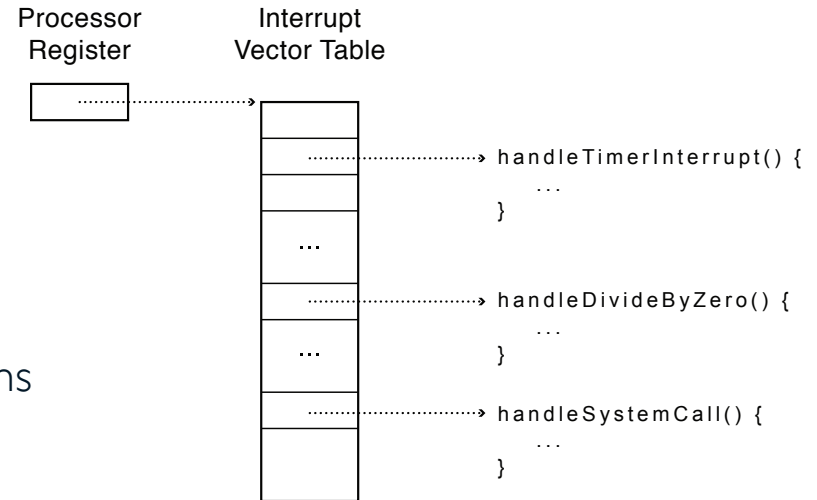
- **System call**: request for kernel services
 - E.g., `open`, `close`, `read`, `write`, `lseek`
 - Usually implemented by calling *trap* or *syscall* instruction
 - Special instruction is not strictly required; on some systems, processes trigger system calls by executing some instruction with specific invalid opcode
- **Processor exception**: internal, **synchronous**, hardware event
 - E.g., divide by zero, illegal instruction, segmentation fault, page fault
 - Caused by software behavior
- **Interrupt**: external **asynchronous** event
 - E.g., timer, disk ready, network
 - Interrupts can be disabled, exceptions and traps cannot!

Requirements for Safe Mode Transfer

- Limited entry into kernel
 - HW must ensure entry point into kernel is one set up by kernel
 - User programs cannot be allowed to jump to arbitrary locations in kernel
- Atomic changes to processor state
 - In user mode, PC and SP point to memory locations in user process
 - In kernel mode, PC and SP point to memory locations in kernel
 - Mode, PC, SP, and memory protection should all change atomically
- Transparent, restartable execution
 - User-level process could get interrupted between any two instructions
 - OS must restore state of user process exactly as it was before interrupt

Interrupt Vector Table

- Table set up by OS pointing to code to run on system calls, processor exceptions, and interrupts



- On x86, vector numbers 0-31 are for different types of processor exceptions (e.g., divide-by-zero)

- Vector numbers 32-255 are for different types of interrupts (e.g., timer)

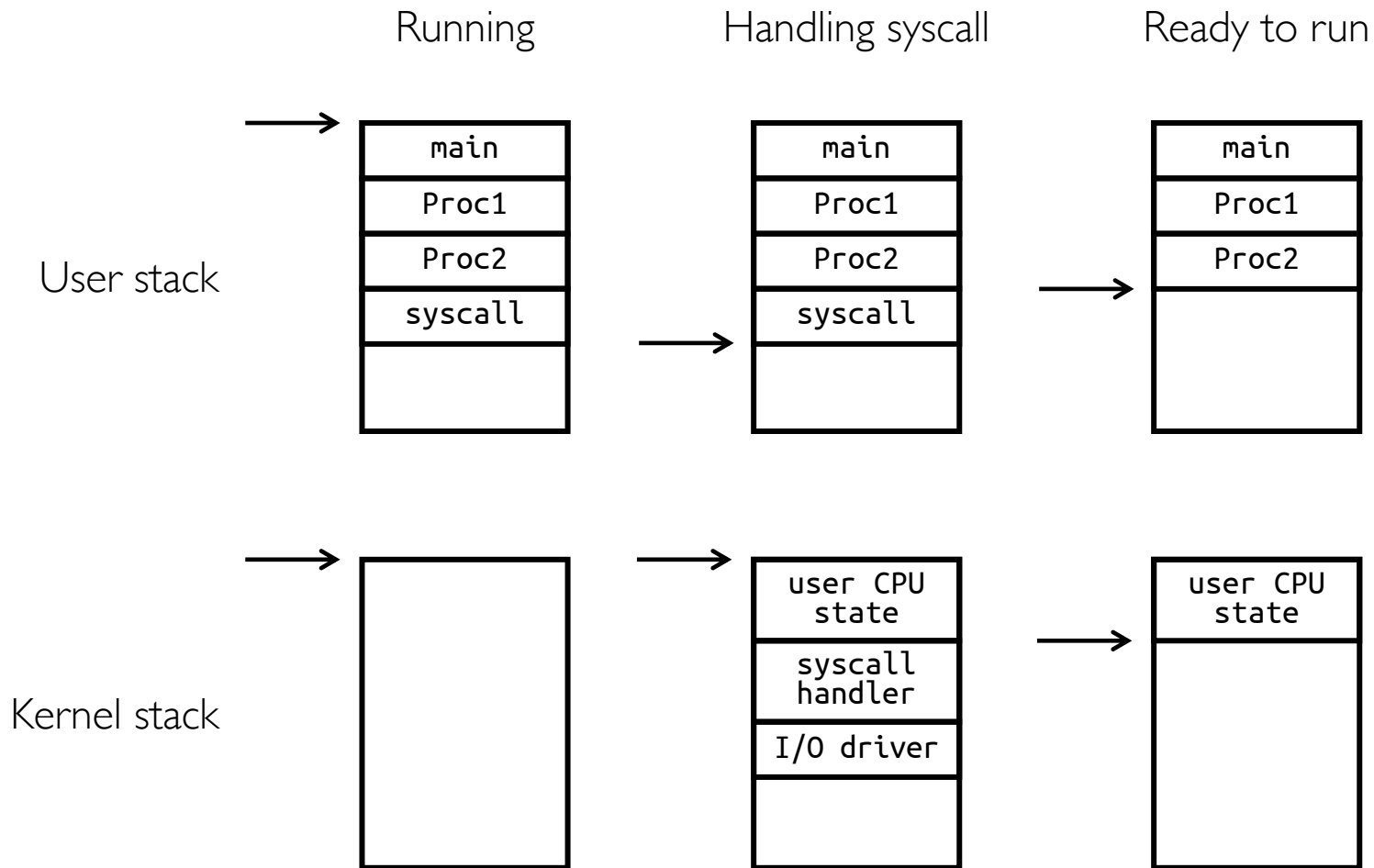
- Vector number 64 is for system call handler

Interrupt Stack

- User process state should be saved
- OS should not save anything on user stack (why?)
 - **Reliability**: what if user program's SP is not valid?
 - **Security**: what if other threads in process change kernel's return address?
- Most OSes go one step further and allocate separate **kernel interrupt stack** (also called **kernel stack**) for each user-level thread
 - PCB could store pointer to kernel stack



Two-stack Model Example



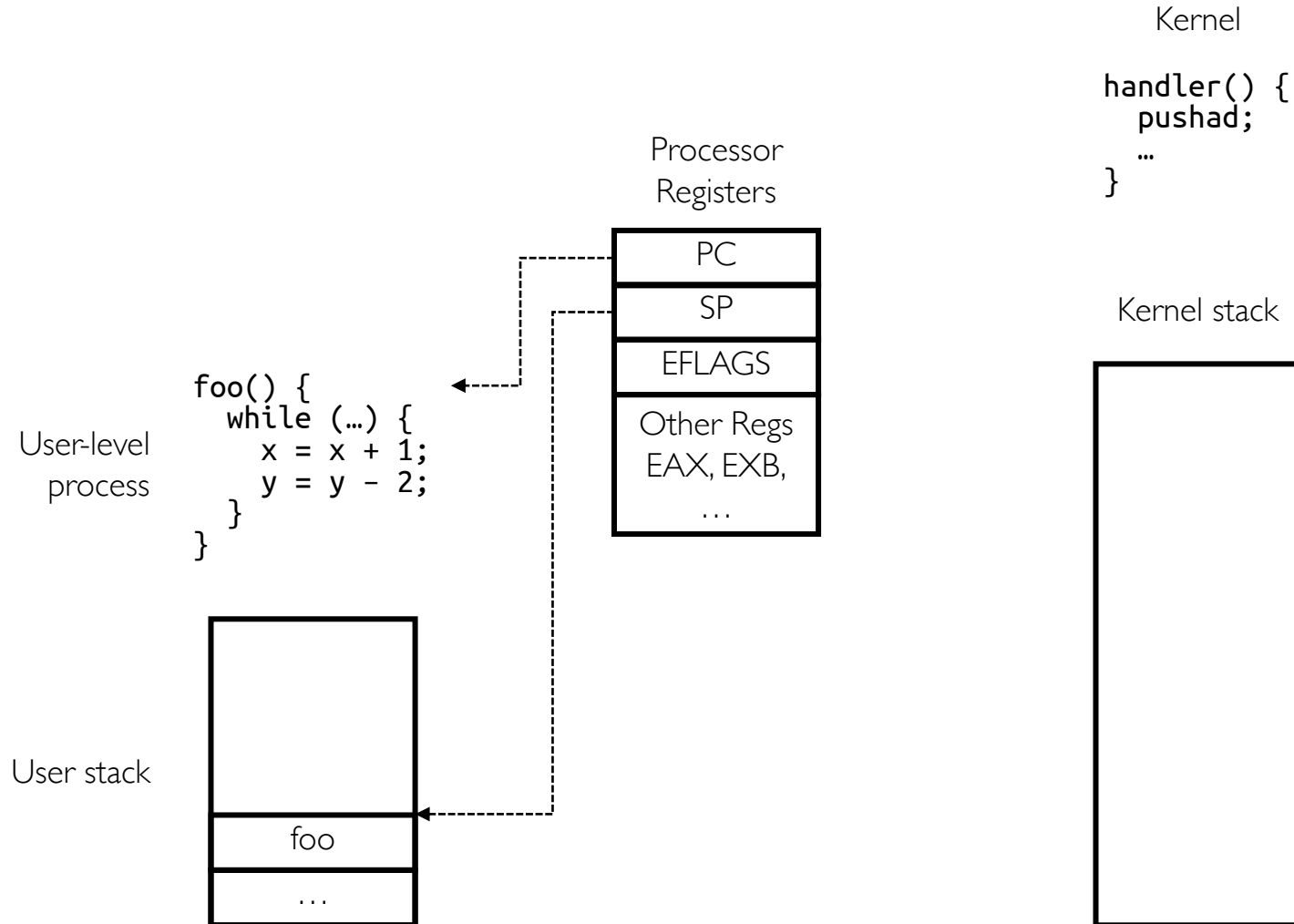
Interrupt Masking

- Interrupt handler runs with interrupts *disabled*
- This simplifies interrupt handling
- Interrupts are re-enabled when interrupt completes
- Interrupts are *deferred* (masked) not ignored
- HW buffers new interrupts until interrupts are re-enabled
- If interrupt are disabled for long time, some interrupts may be lost
- On x86, **cli** disables interrupts and **sti** enables interrupts
 - Only applies to current CPU (on a multicore)
 - User programs cannot use these instructions (why?)

Mode Transfer Steps in x86

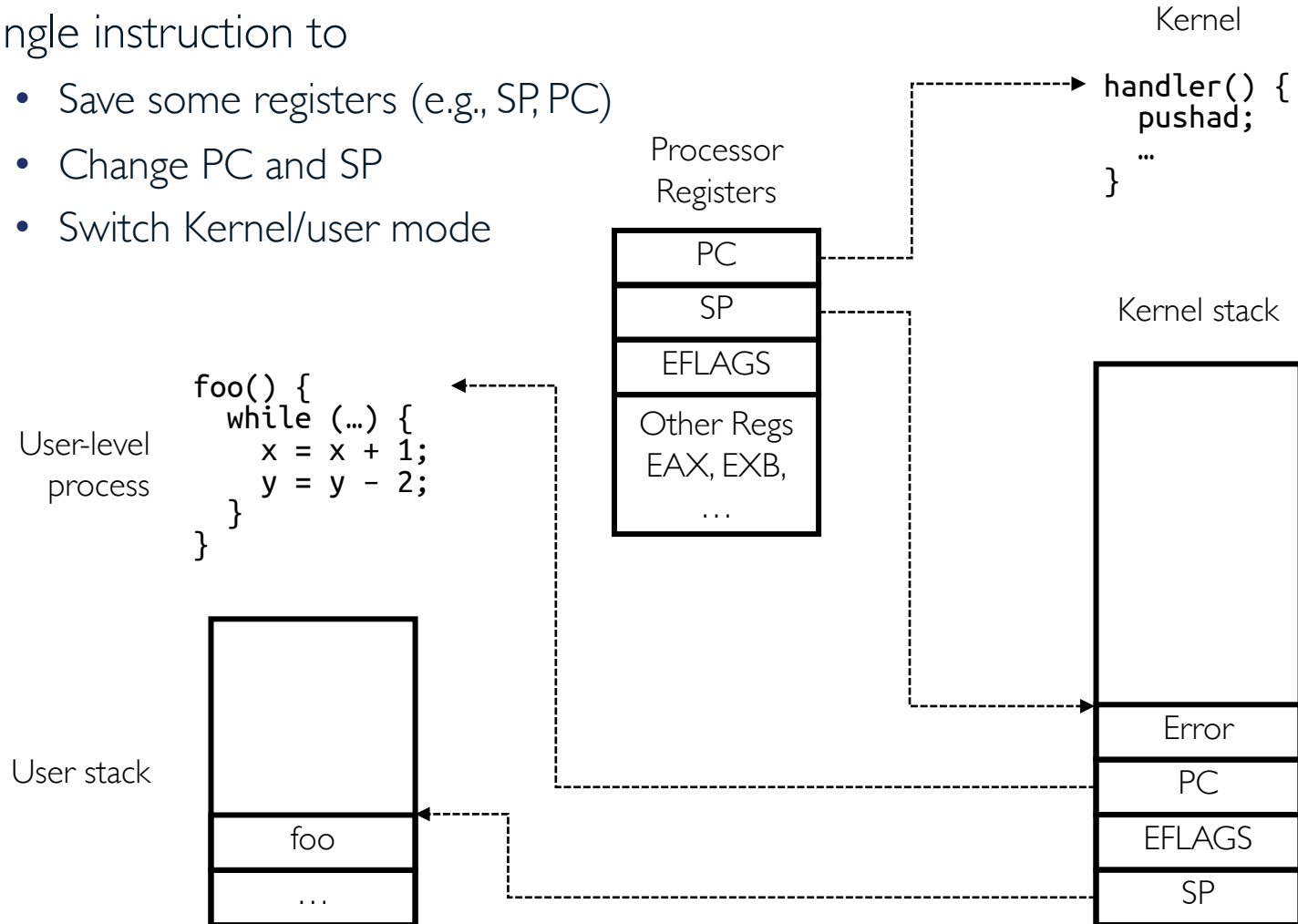
- Mask interrupts
- Save PS, SP, and execution flags in temporary HW registers
- Switch onto kernel interrupt stack (specified in special HW register)
- Push the three key values onto interrupt stack
- Optionally save an error code
- Invoke interrupt handler

Example: x86 Mode Transfer



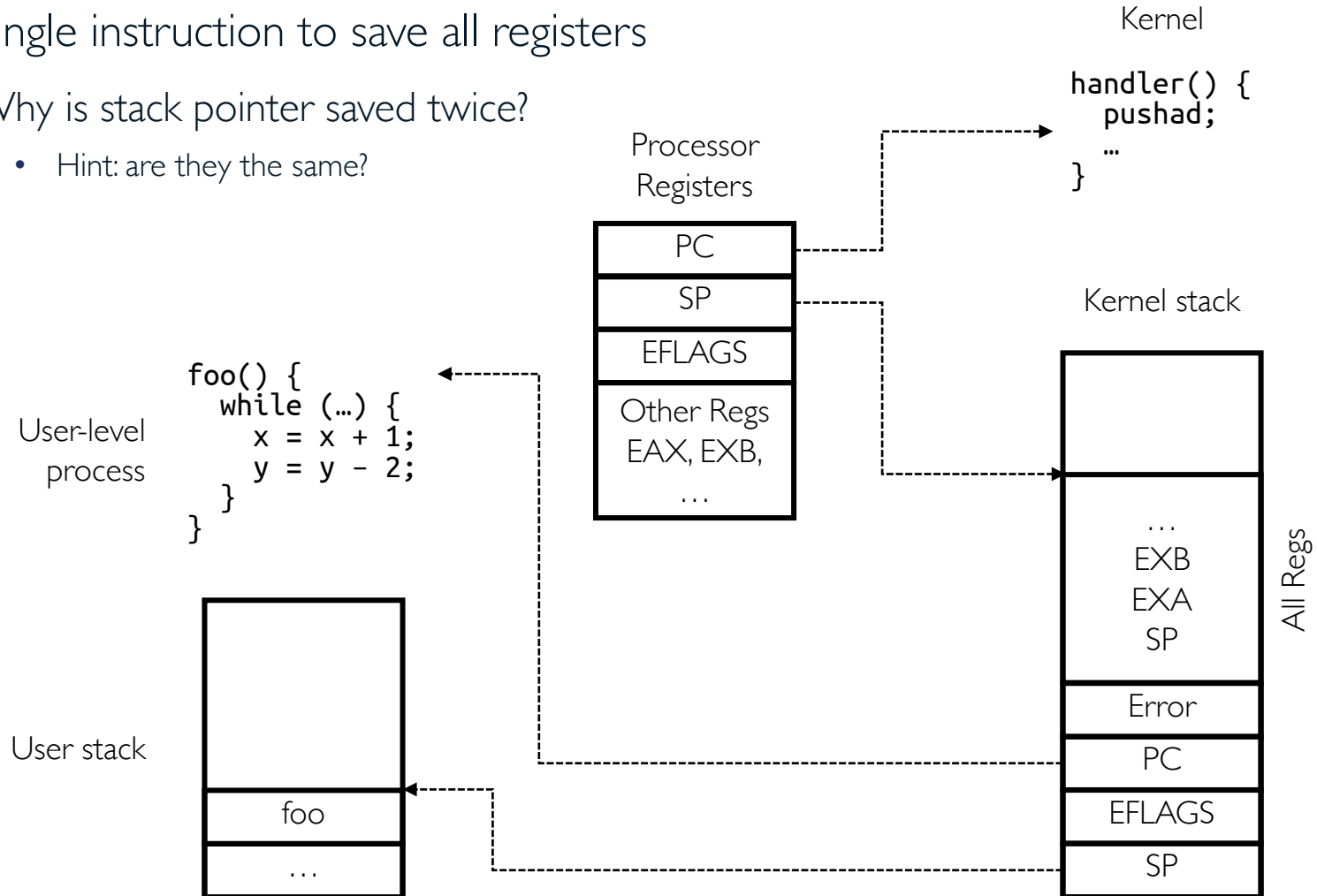
Example: x86 Mode Transfer (cont.)

- Single instruction to
 - Save some registers (e.g., SP, PC)
 - Change PC and SP
 - Switch Kernel/user mode



Example: x86 Mode Transfer (cont.)

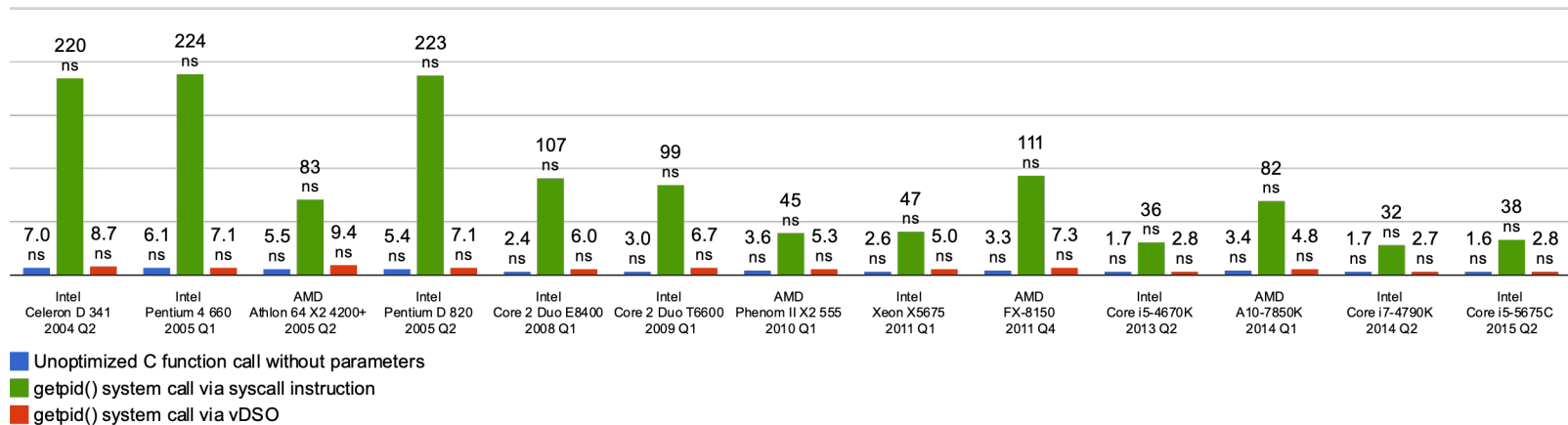
- Single instruction to save all registers
- Why is stack pointer saved twice?
 - Hint: are they the same?



Example: System Call Handler

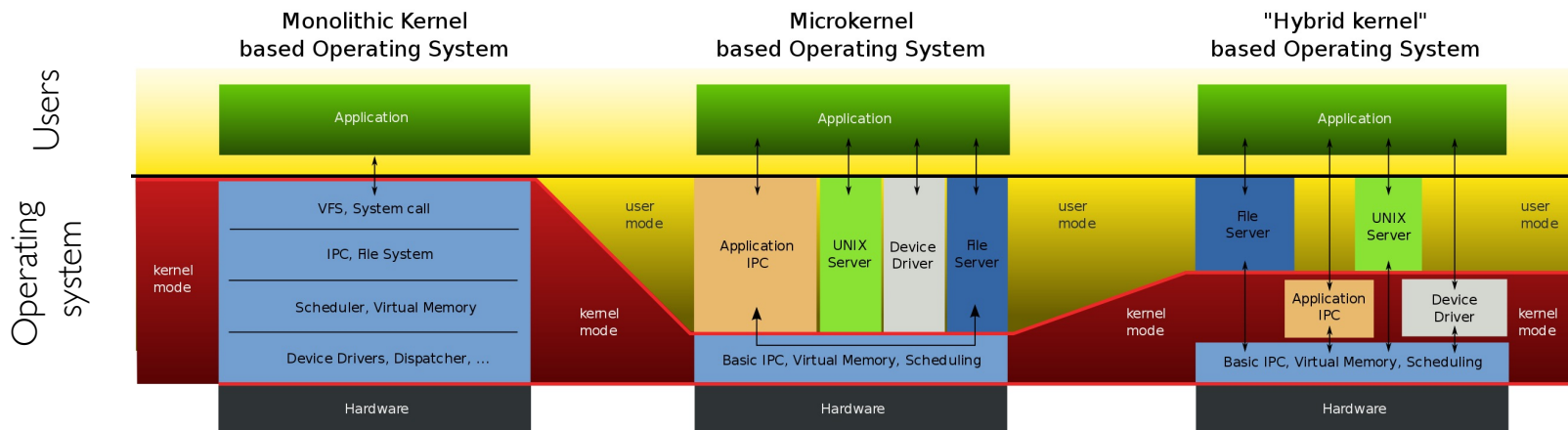
- Vector through well-defined system call entry points!
 - Table mapping system call number to handler
- Locate arguments
 - In registers or on user (!) stack
- Copy arguments (copy before check)
 - From user memory into kernel memory
 - Protect kernel from malicious code evading checks
- Validate arguments
 - Protect kernel from errors in user code
- Copy results back
 - Into user memory

Basic Cost of System Calls



- Min syscall has ~ 25x cost of function call
- Linux vDSO (virtual dynamic shared object) runs some system calls in user space
 - E.g., gettimeofday or getpid

Aside: Monolithic vs Microkernel OS



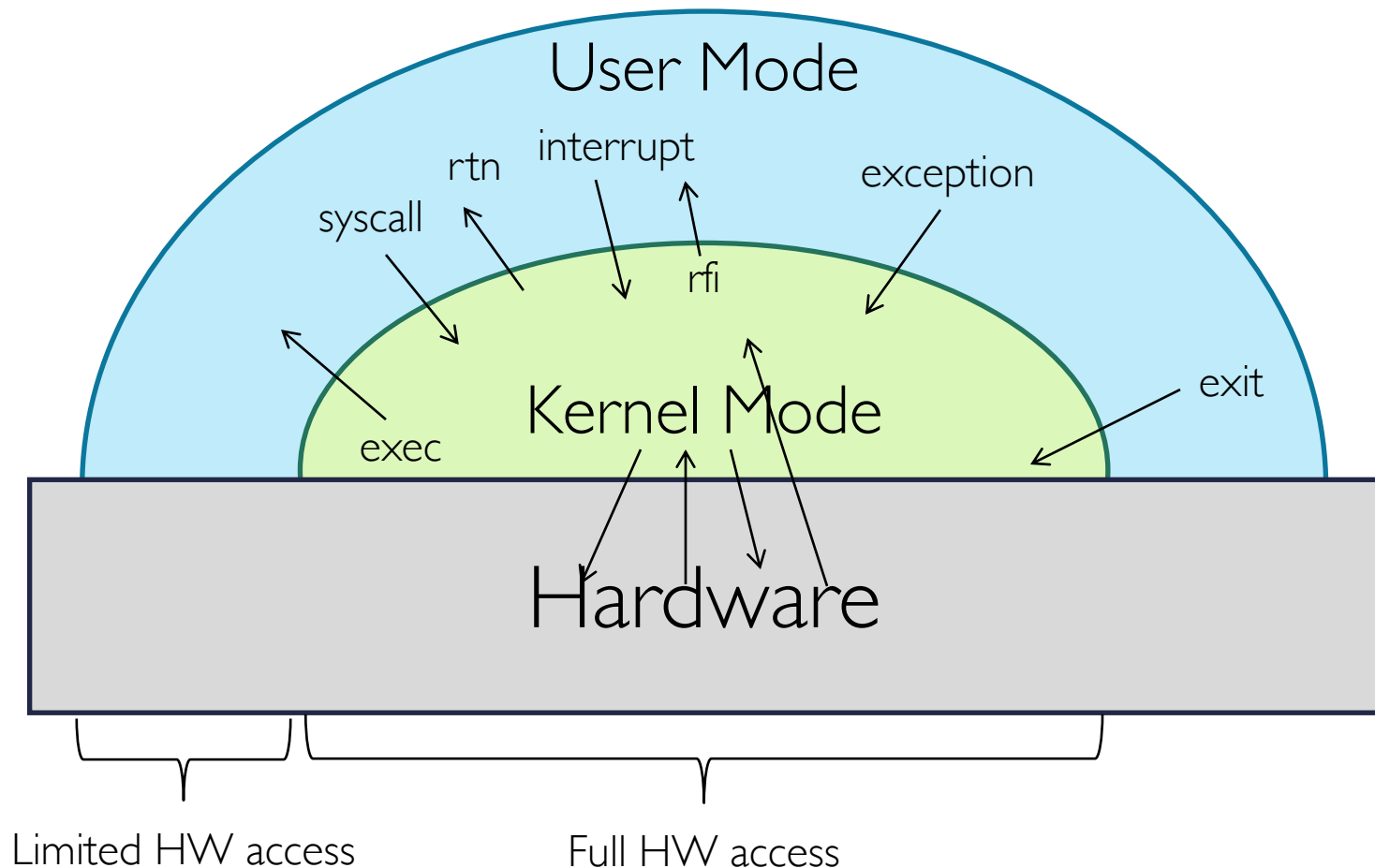
Aside: Influence of Microkernels

- Microkernels provide better modularity, security, and fault tolerance, but they introduce higher communication overhead
 - Too many context switches
- Many OSes provide some services externally, like microkernels
 - OS X and Linux: windowing (graphics and UI)
- Some currently monolithic OSes started as microkernels
 - Windows family originally had microkernel design
 - OS X is hybrid of Mach microkernel and FreeBSD monolithic kernel

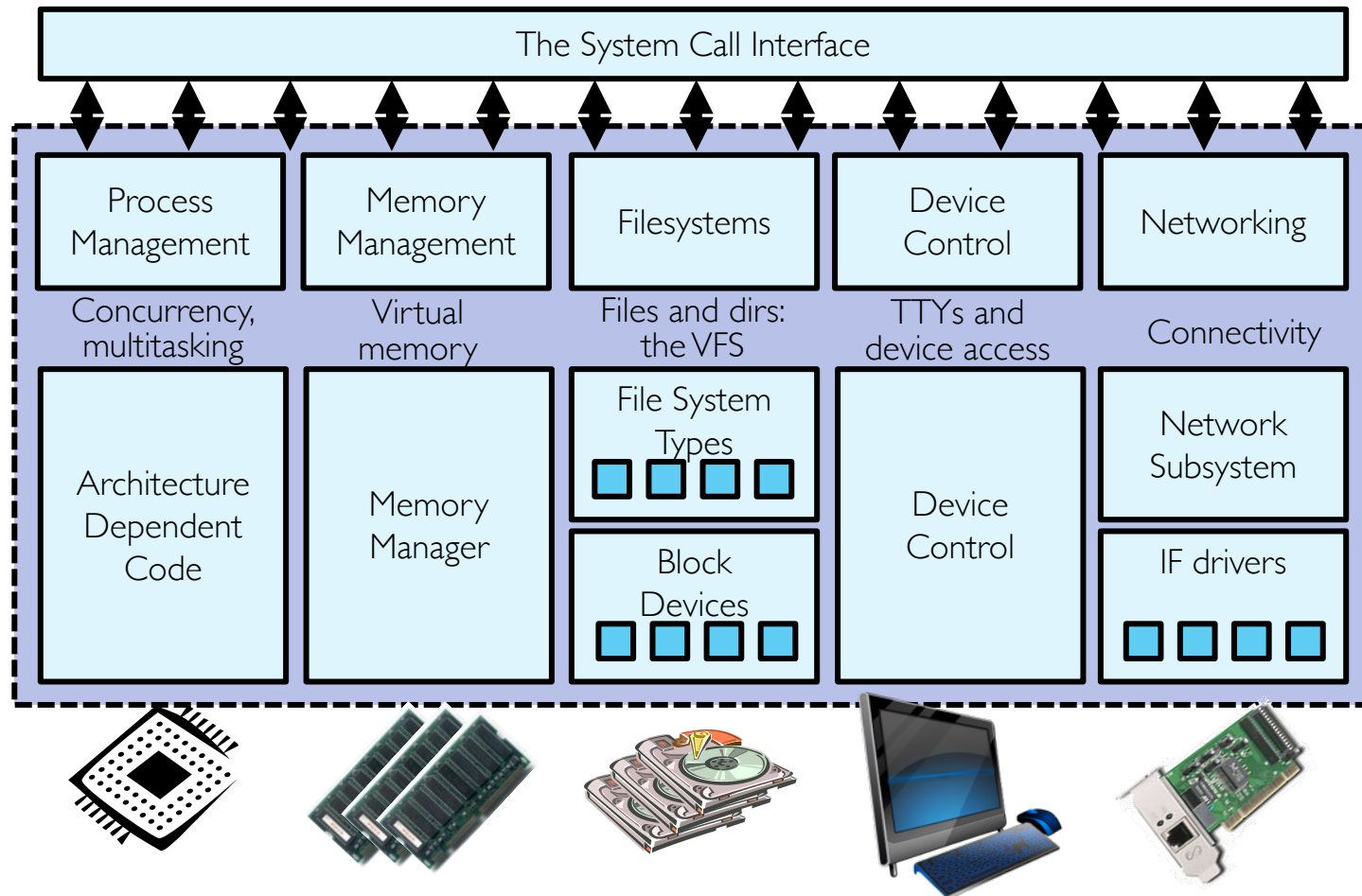
Kernel to User Mode Switch Examples

- New process/new thread start
 - Jump to first instruction in program/thread
- Return from interrupt, exception, system call
 - Resume suspended execution
- Process/thread context switch
 - Resume some other process
- User-level *upcall* (UNIX *signal*)
 - Asynchronous notification to user program
 - Preemptive user-level threads
 - Asynchronous I/O notification
 - Interprocess communication
 - User-level excepting handling
 - User-level resource allocation

Example: User/Kernel Mode Transfers



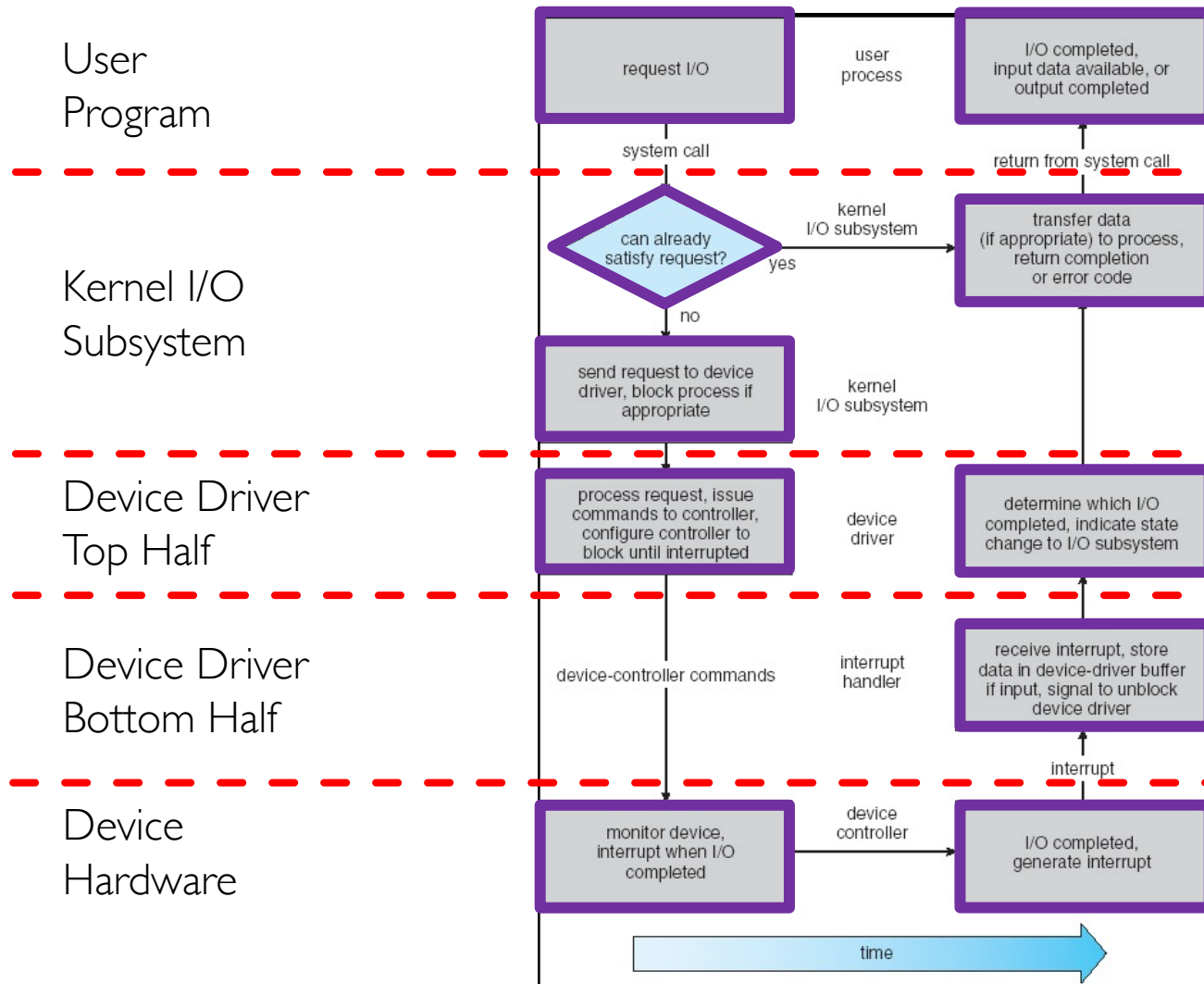
System Call Interface: Access Point to Hardware Resources



Device Drivers

- **Device-specific code** in kernel that interacts directly with device hardware
 - Supports standard, internal interface
 - Same kernel I/O system can interact easily with different device drivers
 - Special device-specific configuration supported with `ioctl()` syscall
- Device drivers are typically divided into two pieces
 - **Top half:** accessed in call path from system calls
 - implements a set of standard, cross-device calls like `open()`, `close()`, `read()`, `write()`, `ioctl()`, etc.
 - This is kernel's interface to device driver
 - Top half will start I/O to device, may put thread to sleep until finished
 - **Bottom half:** run as interrupt routine
 - Gets input or transfers next block of output
 - May wake sleeping threads if I/O now complete

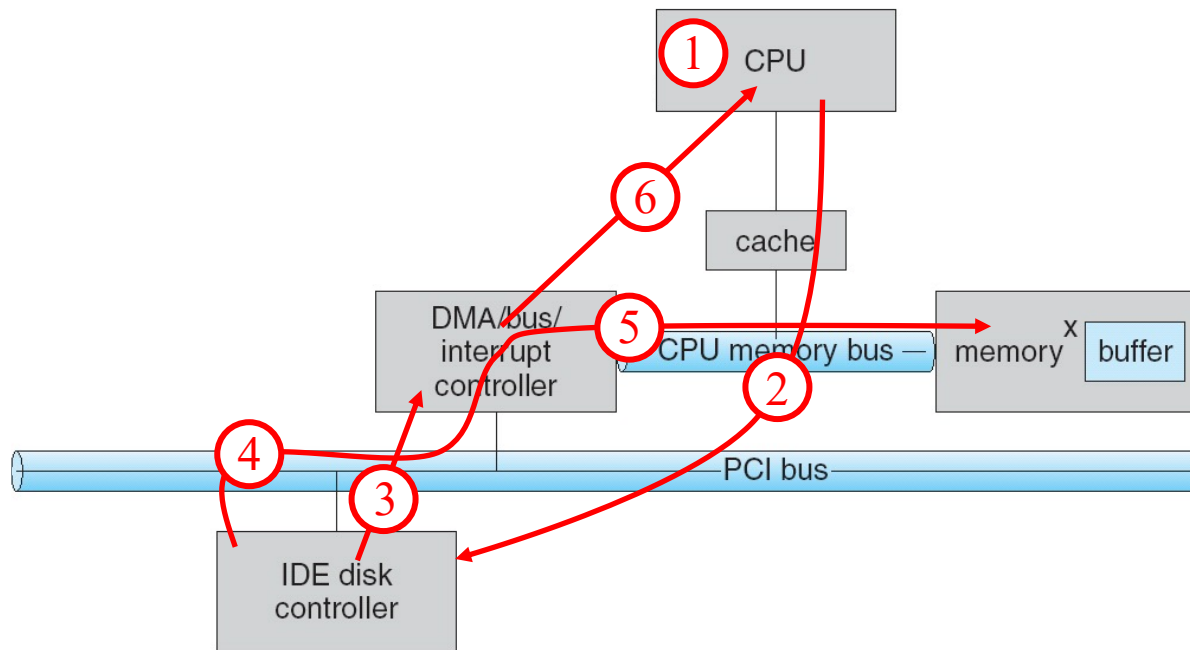
Life Cycle of an I/O Request



I/O Data Transfer

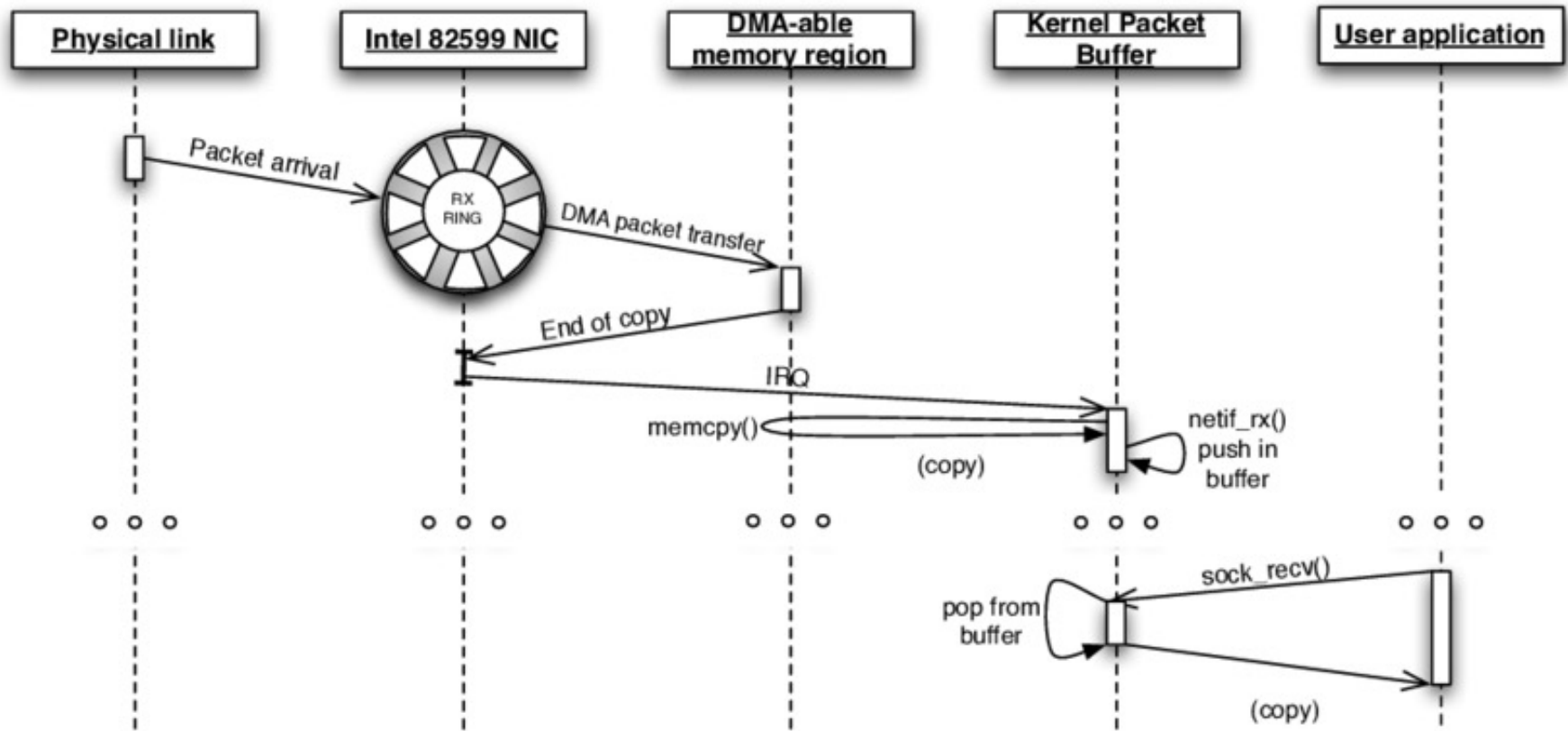
- Programmed I/O
 - Each byte transferred via processor in/out or load/store
 - + Simple hardware, easy to program
 - – Consumes processor cycles proportional to data size
- Direct memory access (DMA)
 - Give controller access to memory bus
 - Ask it to transfer data blocks to/from memory directly

DMA Transfer



1. Device driver is told to transfer disk data to buffer at address x
2. Device driver tells disk controller to transfer C bytes from disk to buffer at address x
3. Disk controller initiates DMA transfer
4. Disk controller send each byte to DMA controller
5. DMA controller transfers bytes to buffer x , increasing address and decreasing C
6. When $C = 0$, DMA interrupts CPU to signal transfer completion

DMA Example: Network Stack in Linux Kernels before 2.6

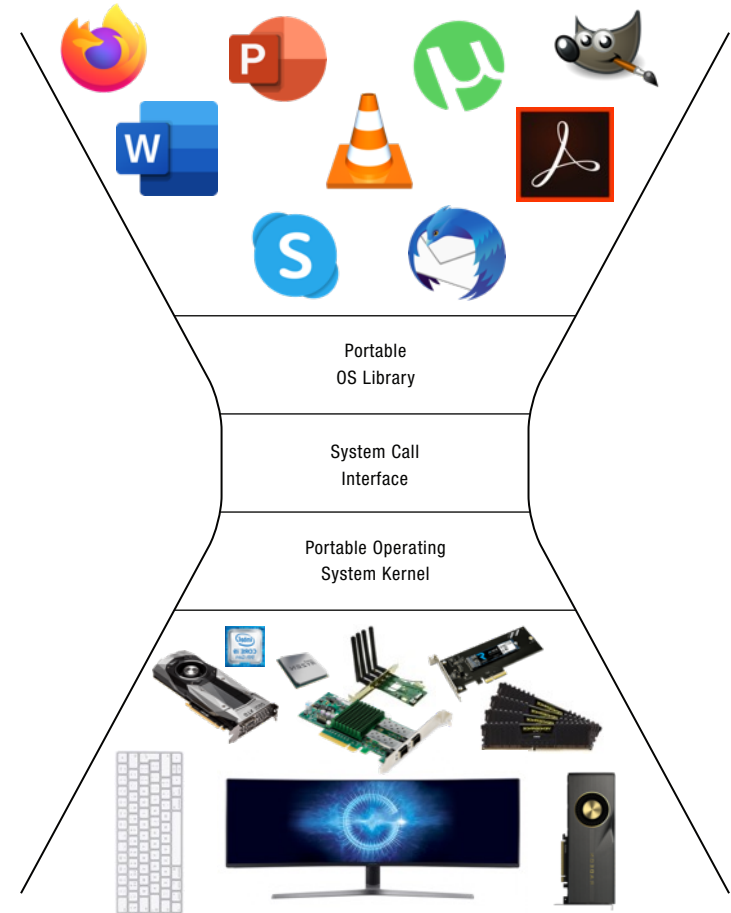
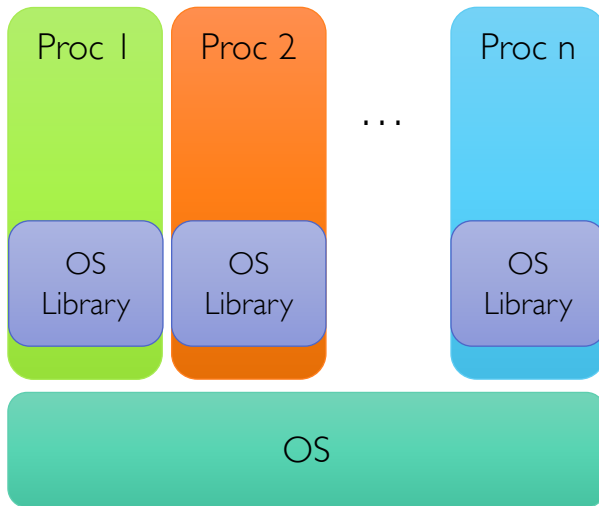


How Does Kernel Provide Services?



- You said that applications request services from OS via syscall, but ...
 - I've been writing all sorts of applications, and I never ever saw a "syscall" !!!
- That's right!
- It was buried in the programming language runtime library (e.g., libc.a)
 - ... Layering

OS Run-time Library



Putting it Together: Web Server



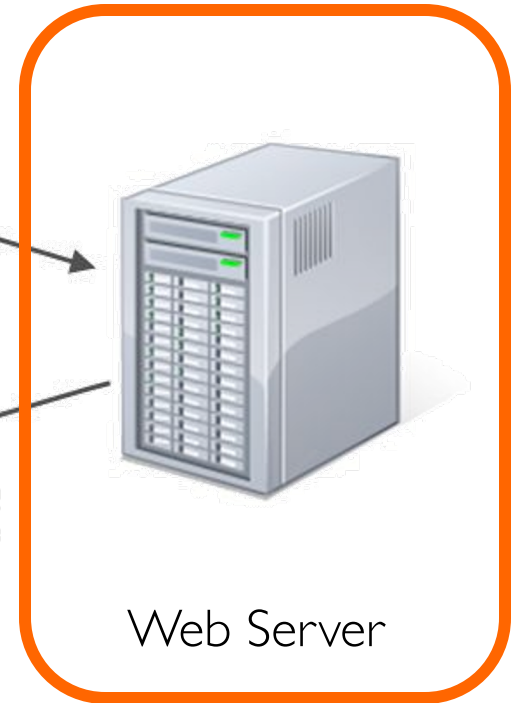
Client

Request



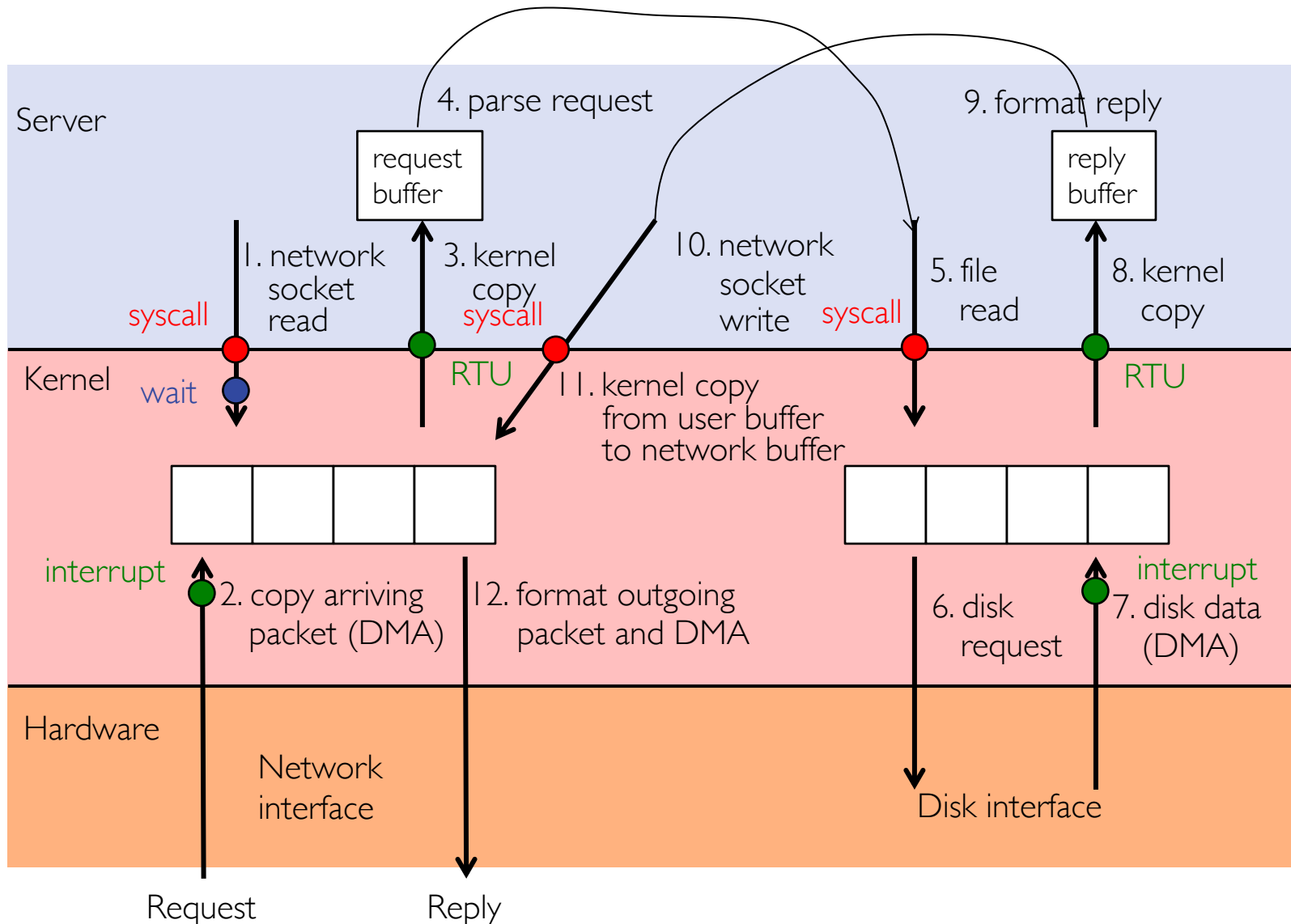
Reply

(retrieved by web server)



Web Server

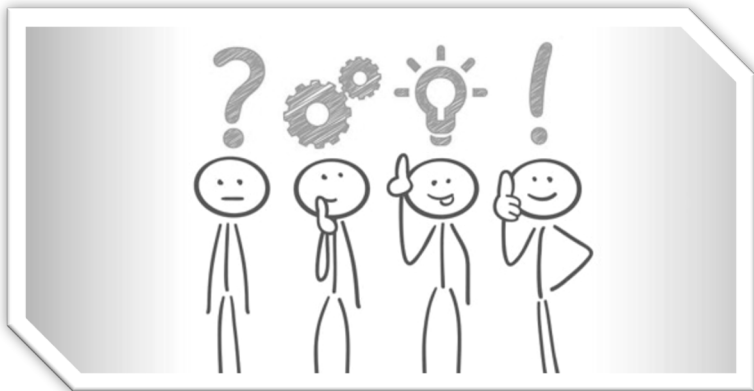
Putting it Together: Web Server (cont.)



Summery

- **Thread**
 - Single unique execution context which fully describes program state
 - Program counter, registers, execution flags, stack
- **Address space (with translation)**
 - Address space which is distinct from machine's physical memory addresses
- **Process**
 - Instance of executing program consisting of address space and 1 + threads
- **Dual-mode operation/protection**
 - Only "system" can access certain resources
 - OS and hardware are protected from user programs
 - User programs are isolated from one another by controlling translation from program virtual addresses to machine physical addresses

Questions?



Acknowledgment

- Slides by courtesy of Anderson, Culler, Stoica, Silberschatz, Joseph, Zarnett, and Canny