Motivation

- Operating systems (and application programs) often need to be able to handle multiple things happening at the same time
  - Process execution, interrupts, background tasks, system maintenance
- Humans are not very good at keeping track of multiple things happening simultaneously
- Threads are an abstraction to help bridge this gap
Why concurrency?

- Servers (expressing logically concurrent tasks)
  - Multiple connections handled simultaneously

- Parallel programs
  - To achieve better performance

- Programs with user interfaces
  - To achieve user responsiveness while doing computation

- Network and disk bound programs
  - To hide network/disk latency

The multi-threading illusion

- Each thread has its illusion of own CPU
  - yet on a uni-processor all threads share the same physical CPU!
  - How does this work?

- Two key pieces:
  - TCB --- thread control block, one per thread, holds execution state

- dispatching loop: while(1)
  interrupt thread
  save state
  get next thread
  load state, jump to it
Definitions

- A thread is a single execution sequence that represents a separately schedulable task
  - Single execution sequence: familiar programming model
  - Separately schedulable: OS can run or suspend a thread at any time

- Protection is an orthogonal concept
  - Can have one or many threads per protection domain

- Different processes have different privileges (& address spaces): switch OS's idea of who is running
  - switch page table, etc.

- Problems for processes: How to share data? How to communicate?
- The PL world does not know how to model "process" yet.

Thread abstraction

- Infinite number of processors
- Threads execute with variable speed
  - Programs must be designed to work with any schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmer Abstraction</th>
<th>Physical Reality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threads</td>
<td>Running Threads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$$ $ $ $ $</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>$$ $ $ $ $</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processes</th>
<th>Ready Threads</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2</td>
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</table>
## Programmer vs. processor view

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmer’s View</th>
<th>Possible Execution #1</th>
<th>Possible Execution #2</th>
<th>Possible Execution #3</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

### Possible executions

**One Execution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thread 1</th>
<th>Thread 2</th>
<th>Thread 3</th>
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<tbody>
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**Another Execution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thread 1</th>
<th>Thread 2</th>
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**Another Execution**

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Thread operations

- thread_create(thread, func, args)
  - Create a new thread to run func(args)

- thread_yield()
  - Relinquish processor voluntarily

- thread_join(thread)
  - In parent, wait for forked thread to exit, then return

- thread_exit
  - Quit thread and clean up, wake up joiner if any

Example: threadHello

```c
#define NTHREADS 10
thread_t threads[NTHREADS];
main() {
    for (i = 0; i < NTHREADS; i++)
        thread_create(&threads[i], &go, i);
    for (i = 0; i < NTHREADS; i++) {
        exitValue = thread_join(threads[i]);
        printf("Thread \%d returned with \%ld\n", i, exitValue);
    }
    printf("Main thread done.\n");
}
void go (int n) {
    printf("Hello from thread \%d\n", n);
    thread_exit(100 + n);
    // REACHED?
}
```
threadHello: example output

- Why must “thread returned” print in order?
- What is maximum # of threads running when thread 5 prints hello?
- Minimum?

bash-3.2$ ./threadHello
Hello from thread 0
Hello from thread 1
Thread 0 returned 100
Hello from thread 3
Hello from thread 4
Thread 1 returned 101
Hello from thread 5
Hello from thread 2
Hello from thread 6
Hello from thread 8
Hello from thread 7
Hello from thread 9
Thread 2 returned 102
Thread 3 returned 103
Thread 4 returned 104
Thread 5 returned 105
Thread 6 returned 106
Thread 7 returned 107
Thread 8 returned 108
Thread 9 returned 109
Main thread done.

Fork/Join concurrency

- Threads can create children, and wait for their completion
- Data only shared before fork/after join
- Examples:
  - Web server: fork a new thread for every new connection
    * As long as the threads are completely independent
  - Merge sort
  - Parallel memory copy
bzero with fork/join concurrency

```c
void blockzero (unsigned char *p, int length) {
    int i, j;
    thread_t threads[NTHREADS];
    struct bzeroparams params[NTHREADS];

    // For simplicity, assumes length is divisible by NTHREADS.
    for (i=0, j=0; i<NTHREADS; i++, j+=length/NTHREADS) {
        params[i].buffer = p + i * length/NTHREADS;
        params[i].length = length/NTHREADS;
        thread_create_p(&threads[i], &go, &params[i]);
    }
    for (i = 0; i < NTHREADS; i++) {
        thread_join(threads[i]);
    }
}
```

Thread data structures
Thread context

- Can be classified into two types:
  - Private
  - Shared

- Shared state
  - Contents of memory (global variables, heap)
  - File system

- Private state
  - Program counter
  - Registers
  - Stack

Classifying program variables

```c
int x;

void foo() {
    int y;
    x = 1;
    y = 1;
}

main() {
    int *p;
    p = (int *)malloc(sizeof(int));
    *p = 1;
}
```

- global variable
- stack variable
- heap access
Classifying program variables (cont’d)

Addresses of stack variables defined at “call-time”

```c
void foo() {
    int x;
    printf("%x", &x);
}
void bar() {
    int y;
    foo();
}
main() {
    foo();
    bar();
}  // different addresses will get printed
```

Thread control block (TCB)

- Current state
  - Ready: ready to run
  - Running: currently running
  - Waiting: waiting for resources

- Registers
- Status (EFLAGS)
- Program counter (EIP)
- Stack
Thread lifecycle

- **Init**
  - Thread Creation
  - `sthread_create()`

- **Ready**
  - Scheduler Resumes Thread
  - `Thread Exit`/Scheduler Suspends Thread
  - `sthread_exit()`

- **Running**
  - Thread Yield/Scheduler Suspends Thread
  - `sthread_yield()`

- **Waiting**
  - Event Occurs
  - Other Thread Calls `sthread_join()`

- **Finished**
  - Thread Waits for Event
  - `sthread_join()`

Implementing threads

- **Thread_create(thread, func, args)**
  - Allocate thread control block
  - Allocate stack
  - Build stack frame for base of stack (stub)
  - Put `func`, `args` on stack
  - Put thread on ready list
  - Will run sometime later (maybe right away!)

- **stub(func, args):**
  - Call `(*func)(args)`
  - If return, call `thread_exit()`
Pseudo code for thread_create

```c
void thread_create(thread_t *thread, void (*func)(int), int arg) {
    TCB *tcb = new TCB(); // Allocate TCB and stack
    thread->tcb = tcb;
    tcb->stack_size = INITIAL_STACK_SIZE;
    tcb->stack = new Stack(INITIAL_STACK_SIZE);
    // Initialize registers so that when thread is resumed, it will start running at stub.
    tcb->sp = tcb->stack + INITIAL_STACK_SIZE;
    tcb->pc = stub;
    // Create a stack frame by pushing stub's arguments and start address onto the stack: func, arg
    *(tcb->sp) = arg; tcb->sp--;
    *(tcb->sp) = func; tcb->sp--;
    // Create another stack frame so that thread_switch works correctly
    thread_dummySwitchFrame(tcb);
    tcb->state = readyThreadState; // Put tcb on ready list
    readyList.add(tcb);    // Put tcb on ready list
}

void stub(void *(*func)(int), int arg) {
    (*func)(arg);   // Execute the function func()
    thread_exit(0); // If func() does not call exit, call it here.
}
```

Thread context switch

- **Voluntary**
  - Thread_yield
  - Thread_join (if child is not done yet)

- **Involuntary**
  - Interrupt or exception
  - Some other thread is higher priority
Voluntary thread context switch

- Save registers on old stack
- Switch to new stack, new thread
- Restore registers from new stack
- Return
- Exactly the same with kernel threads or user threads

Pseudo code for thread_switch

// We enter as oldThread, but we return as newThread.
// Returns with newThread’s registers and stack.

void thread_switch(oldThreadTCB, newThreadTCB) {
    pushad;                    // Push general register values onto the old stack.
    oldThreadTCB->sp = %esp;   // Save the old thread’s stack pointer.
    %esp = newThreadTCB->sp;   // Switch to the new stack.
    popad;                     // Pop register values from the new stack.
    return;
}
Pseudo code for thread_yield

```c
void thread_yield() {
    TCB *chosenTCB, *finishedTCB;
    // Prevent an interrupt from stopping us in the middle of a switch.
    disableInterrupts();
    // Choose another TCB from the ready list.
    chosenTCB = readyList.getNextThread();
    if (chosenTCB == NULL) {
        // Nothing else to run, so go back to running the original thread.
    } else {
        // Move running thread onto the ready list.
        runningThread->state = #readyThreadState#;
        readyList.add(runningThread);
        thread_switch(runningThread, chosenTCB); // Switch to the new thread.
        runningThread->state = #runningThreadState#;
    }
    // Delete any threads on the finished list.
    while ((finishedTCB = finishedList->getNextThread()) != NULL) {
        delete finishedTCB->stack;
        delete finishedTCB;
    }
    enableInterrupts();
}
```

A subtlety

- Thread_create puts new thread on ready list
- When it first runs, some thread calls **thread_switch**
  - Saves old thread state to stack
  - Restores new thread state from stack
- Set up new thread's stack as if it had saved its state in **thread_switch**
  - "returns" to stub at base of stack to run func
### Pseudo code for dummySwitchFrame

```c
// thread_create must put a dummy frame at the top of its stack:
// the return PC & space for pushad to have stored a copy of the
// registers. This way, when someone switches to a newly created
// thread, the last two lines of thread_switch work correctly.

void thread_dummySwitchFrame(newThread) {
    *(tcb->sp) = stub;     // Return to the beginning of stub.
tcb->sp--;
tcb->sp -= SizeOfPopad;
}
```

### Two threads call Yield

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thread 1's instructions</th>
<th>Thread 2's instructions</th>
<th>Processor's instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“return” from thread_switch into stub</td>
<td>“return” from thread_switch into stub</td>
<td>“return” from thread_switch into stub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call go</td>
<td>call go</td>
<td>call go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call thread_yield</td>
<td>call thread_yield</td>
<td>call thread_yield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>choose another thread</td>
<td>choose another thread</td>
<td>choose another thread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call thread_switch</td>
<td>call thread_switch</td>
<td>call thread_switch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>save thread 1 state to TCB</td>
<td>save thread 2 state to TCB</td>
<td>save thread 1 state to TCB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>load thread 2 state</td>
<td>load thread 2 state</td>
<td>load thread 2 state</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...
Involuntary thread switch

- Timer or I/O interrupt
  - Tells OS some other thread should run

- Simple version
  - End of interrupt handler calls switch()
  - When resumed, return from handler resumes kernel thread or user process
  - Thus, processor context is saved/restored twice (once by interrupt handler, once by thread switch)

A quick recap

- Thread = pointer to instruction + state
- Process = thread + address space + OS env (open files, etc.)
- Thread encapsulates concurrency; address space encapsulates protection
- Key aspects:
  - per-thread state
  - picking a thread to run
  - switching between threads

- The Future:
  - how to share state among threads?
  - how to pick the right thread/process to run?
  - how to communicate between two processes?
Threads in the kernel and at user-level

- **Multi-threaded kernel**
  - multiple threads, sharing kernel data structures, capable of using privileged instructions

- **Multiprocess kernel**
  - Multiple single-threaded processes
  - System calls access shared kernel data structures

- **Multiple multi-threaded user processes**
  - Each with multiple threads, sharing same data structures, isolated from other user processes

---

Threads revisited

(a) Three processes each with one thread
(b) One process with three threads
Implementation of processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process management</th>
<th>Memory management</th>
<th>File management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registers</td>
<td>Pointer to text segment</td>
<td>Root directory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program counter</td>
<td>Pointer to data segment</td>
<td>Working directory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program status word</td>
<td>Pointer to stack segment</td>
<td>File descriptors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stack pointer</td>
<td></td>
<td>User ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process state</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduling parameters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Process ID</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time when process started</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPU time used</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children's CPU time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time of next alarm</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Potential fields of a PCB

Implementation of processes (cont’d)

1. Hardware stacks program counter, etc.
2. Hardware loads new program counter from interrupt vector.
3. Assembly language procedure saves registers.
4. Assembly language procedure sets up new stack.
5. C interrupt service runs (typically reads and buffers input).
6. Scheduler decides which process is to run next.
7. C procedure returns to the assembly code.
8. Assembly language procedure starts up new current process.

Skeleton of what lowest level of OS does when an interrupt occurs
Threads (cont’d)

Each thread has its own stack

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per process items</th>
<th>Per thread items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address space</td>
<td>Program counter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global variables</td>
<td>Registers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open files</td>
<td>Stack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child processes</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pending alarms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signals and signal handlers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting information</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Items shared by all threads in a process
- Items private to each thread
Thread usage

A word processor with three threads

Thread usage (cont’d)

A multithreaded Web server
Thread usage (cont’d)

- Rough outline of code for previous slide
  (a) Dispatcher thread
  (b) Worker thread

Implementing threads: roadmap

- Kernel threads
  - Thread abstraction only available to kernel
  - To the kernel, a kernel thread and a single threaded user process look quite similar

- Multithreaded processes using kernel threads (Linux, MacOS)
  - Kernel thread operations available via syscall

- User-level threads
  - Thread operations without system calls
Multithreaded OS Kernel

Kernel
- Code
- Globals
- Stack
- Heap

User-Level Processes
- Code
- Globals
- Stack
- Heap

Faster thread/process switch

- What happens on a timer (or other) interrupt?
  - Interrupt handler saves state of interrupted thread
  - Decides to run a new thread
  - Throw away current state of interrupt handler!
  - Instead, set saved stack pointer to trapframe
  - Restore state of new thread
  - On resume, pops trapframe to restore interrupted thread
Multithreaded user processes (Take 1)

- User thread = kernel thread (Linux, MacOS)
  - System calls for thread fork, join, exit (and lock, unlock,...)
  - Kernel does context switch
  - Simple, but a lot of transitions between user and kernel mode
**Multithreaded user processes (Take 2)**

- **Green threads (early Java)**
  - User-level library, within a single-threaded process
  - Library does thread context switch
  - Preemption via upcall/UNIX signal on timer interrupt
  - Use multiple processes for parallelism
    * Shared memory region mapped into each process

**Multithreaded user processes (Take 3)**

- **Scheduler activations (Windows 8)**
  - Kernel allocates processors to user-level library
  - Thread library implements context switch
  - Thread library decides what thread to run next
  - Upcall whenever kernel needs a user-level scheduling decision
    - Process assigned a new processor
    - Processor removed from process
    - System call blocks in kernel