Administrivia

- **Friday 10am section: different zoom link, same password**
  - Please attend first section this Friday to learn about project 1
- **Project 1 due Friday, Jan 21 at 10am**
  - 5pm if you attend/watch lecture
- **Ask `cs212-staff` for extension if you can't finish**
  - Tell us where you are with the project,
  - How much more you need to do, and
  - How much longer you need to finish
- **No credit for late assignments w/o extension**
- **Project groups should be 2–3 people**
  - Solo groups by permission only, under extenuating circumstances (e.g., time zone more than 3 hours away from California)

In-person update

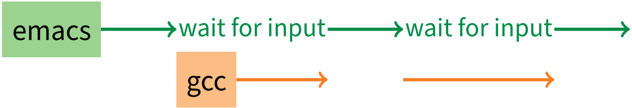
- **Classroom B03 seems like it can support hybrid instruction**
  - When practical, I hope to move to in-person lectures with synchronous zoom participation and archived video
- **Current placeholder midterm policy: in-person**
  - Come to classroom to take exam, with printed notes
  - We book you a conference room if you have a time conflict
  - SCPD students can use proctors
- **Will revise one week before exams prior in light of current COVID situation/policy**
  - No mater what, we will accommodate remote SCPD students & students who have schedule conflicts
- **Suggestions welcome (now or to cs212-staff). Priorities:**
  - No one spends more than 90 minutes on midterm
  - Give students high confidence that peers aren't cheating

Processes

- **A *process* is an instance of a program running**
- **Modern OSes run multiple processes simultaneously**
- **Examples (can all run simultaneously):**
  - `gcc file_A.c` – compiler running on file A
  - `gcc file_B.c` – compiler running on file B
  - `emacs` – text editor
  - `firefox` – web browser
- **Non-examples (implemented as one process):**
  - Multiple emacs frames or firefox windows (can be one process)
- **Why processes?**
  - Simplicity of programming
  - Speed: Higher throughput, lower latency

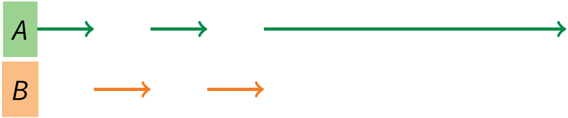
Speed

- **Multiple processes can increase CPU utilization**
  - Overlap one process's computation with another's wait



- **Multiple processes can reduce latency**
  - Running *A* then *B* requires 100 sec for *B* to complete

  - Running *A* and *B* concurrently makes *B* finish faster

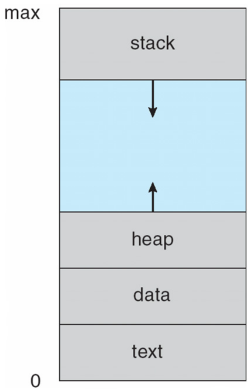


  - *A* is slower than if it had whole machine to itself, but still $<$ 100 sec unless both *A* and *B* completely CPU-bound

Processes in the real world

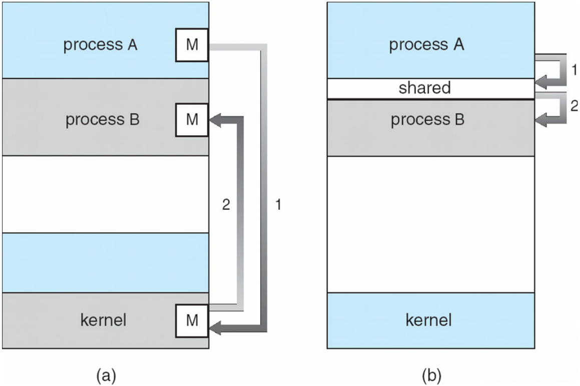
- **Processes and parallelism have been a fact of life much longer than OSes have been around**
  - E.g., say takes 1 worker 10 months to make 1 widget
  - Company may hire 100 workers to make 100 widgets
  - Latency for first widget $\gg 1/10$ month
  - Throughput may be < 10 widgets per month (if can't perfectly parallelize task)
  - Or 100 workers making 10,000 widgets may achieve > 10 widgets/month (e.g., if workers never idly wait for paint to dry)
- **You will see these effects in you Pintos project group**
  - May block waiting for partner to complete task
  - Takes time to coordinate/explain/understand one another's code
  - Labs won't take $1/3$ time with three people
  - But you will graduate faster than if you took only 1 class at a time

A process's view of the world



- **Each process has own view of machine**
  - Its own address space – `*(char *)0xc000` different in P_1 & P_2
  - Its own open files
  - Its own virtual CPU (through preemptive multitasking)
- **Simplifies programming model**
  - `gcc` does not care that `firefox` is running
- **Sometimes want interaction between processes**
  - Simplest is through files: `emacs` edits file, `gcc` compiles it
  - More complicated: Shell/command, Window manager/app.

Inter-Process Communication



- **How can processes interact in real time?**
  (a) By passing messages through the kernel
  (b) By sharing a region of physical memory
  (c) Through asynchronous signals or alerts

Outline

1. (UNIX-centric) User view of processes
2. Kernel view of processes
3. Threads
4. Thread implementation details

Creating processes

- Original UNIX paper is a great reference on core system calls
- `int fork (void);`
  - Create new process that is exact copy of current one
  - Returns *process ID* of new process in "parent"
  - Returns 0 in "child"
- `int waitpid (int pid, int *stat, int opt);`
  - `pid` – process to wait for, or -1 for any
  - `stat` – will contain exit value, or signal
  - `opt` – usually 0 or `WNOHANG`
  - Returns process ID or -1 on error

Deleting processes

- `void exit (int status);`
  - Current process ceases to exist
  - `status` shows up in `waitpid` (shifted)
  - By convention, `status` of 0 is success, non-zero error
- `int kill (int pid, int sig);`
  - Sends signal `sig` to process `pid`
  - `SIGTERM` most common value, kills process by default (but application can catch it for “cleanup”)
  - `SIGKILL` stronger, kills process always

Running programs

- `int execve (char *prog, char **argv, char **envp);`
  - `prog` – full pathname of program to run
  - `argv` – argument vector that gets passed to `main`
  - `envp` – environment variables, e.g., `PATH`, `HOME`
- **Generally called through a wrapper functions**
  - `int execvp (char *prog, char **argv);`
    Search `PATH` for prog, use current environment
  - `int execlp (char *prog, char *arg, ...);`
    List arguments one at a time, finish with `NULL`
- **Example:** `minish.c`
  - Loop that reads a command, then executes it
- **Warning: Pintos `exec` more like combined fork/exec**

minish.c (simplified)

```
pid_t pid; char **av;
void doexec () {
  execvp (av[0], av);
  perror (av[0]);
  exit (1);
}

    /* ... main loop: */
    for (;;) {
      parse_next_line_of_input (&av, stdin);
      switch (pid = fork ()) {
      case -1:
        perror ("fork"); break;
      case 0:
        doexec ();
      default:
        waitpid (pid, NULL, 0); break;
      }
    }
```

Manipulating file descriptors

- `int dup2 (int oldfd, int newfd);`
  - Closes `newfd`, if it was a valid descriptor
  - Makes `newfd` an exact copy of `oldfd`
  - Two file descriptors will share same offset
    (`lseek` on one will affect both)
- `int fcntl (int fd, int cmd, ...)` – **misc fd configuration**
  - `fcntl (fd, F_SETFD, val)` – sets close-on-exec flag
    When `val == 0`, `fd` not inherited by spawned programs
  - `fcntl (fd, F_GETFL)` – get misc fd flags
  - `fcntl (fd, F_SETFL, val)` – set misc fd flags
- **Example:** `redirsh.c`
  - Loop that reads a command and executes it
  - Recognizes `command < input > output 2> errlog`

redirsh.c

```
void doexec (void) {
  int fd;
  if (infile) {     /* non-NULL for "command < infile" */
    if ((fd = open (infile, O_RDONLY)) < 0) {
      perror (infile);
      exit (1);
    }
    if (fd != 0) {
      dup2 (fd, 0);
      close (fd);
    }
  }

  /* ... do same for outfile→fd 1, errfile→fd 2 ... */

  execvp (av[0], av);
  perror (av[0]);
  exit (1);
}
```

Pipes

- `int pipe (int fds[2]);`
  - Returns two file descriptors in `fds[0]` and `fds[1]`
  - Data written to `fds[1]` will be returned by `read` on `fds[0]`
  - When last copy of `fds[1]` closed, `fds[0]` will return EOF
  - Returns 0 on success, -1 on error
- **Operations on pipes**
  - `read`/`write`/`close` – as with files
  - When `fds[1]` closed, `read(fds[0])` returns 0 bytes
  - When `fds[0]` closed, `write(fds[1])`:
    - ▷ Kills process with `SIGPIPE`
    - ▷ Or if signal ignored, fails with EPIPE
- **Example:** `pipesh.c`
  - Sets up pipeline `command1 | command2 | command3 ...`

pipesh.c (simplified)

```
void doexec (void) {
  while (outcmd) {
    int pipefds[2]; pipe (pipefds);
    switch (fork ()) {
    case -1:
      perror ("fork"); exit (1);
    case 0:
      dup2 (pipefds[1], 1);
      close (pipefds[0]); close (pipefds[1]);
      outcmd = NULL;
      break;
    default:
      dup2 (pipefds[0], 0);
      close (pipefds[0]); close (pipefds[1]);
      parse_command_line (&av, &outcmd, outcmd);
      break;
    }
  }
  ⋮
```

Multiple file descriptors

- **What if you have multiple pipes to multiple processes?**
- `poll` **system call lets you know which fd you can read/write**[1]

```
typedef struct pollfd {
  int fd;
  short events;   // OR of POLLIN, POLLOUT, POLLERR, ...
  short revents;  // ready events returned by kernel
};
int poll(struct pollfd *pfds, int nfds, int timeout);
```

- **Also put pipes/sockets into *non-blocking* mode**

```
  if ((n = fcntl (s.fd_, F_GETFL)) == -1
      || fcntl (s.fd_, F_SETFL, n | O_NONBLOCK) == -1)
    perror("O_NONBLOCK");
```

  - Returns errno `EGAIN` instead of waiting for data
  - Does not work for normal files (see aio for that)

[1] In practice, more efficient to use `epoll` on linux or `kqueue` on *BSD

Why fork?

- **Most calls to `fork` followed by `execve`**
- **Could also combine into one *spawn* system call (like Pintos `exec`)**
- **Occasionally useful to fork one process**
  - Unix *dump* utility backs up file system to tape
  - If tape fills up, must restart at some logical point
  - Implemented by forking to revert to old state if tape ends
- **Real win is simplicity of interface**
  - Tons of things you might want to do to child: Manipulate file descriptors, alter namespace, manipulate process limits …
  - Yet `fork` requires *no* arguments at all

Examples

- `login` – **checks username/password, runs user shell**
  - Runs with administrative privileges
  - Lowers privileges to user before exec'ing shell
  - Note doesn't need `fork` to run shell, just `execve`
- `chroot` – **change root directory**
  - Useful for setting/debugging different OS image in a subdirectory
- **Some more linux-specific examples**
  - `systemd-nspawn` – runs program in container-like environment
  - `ip netns` – runs program with different network namespace
  - `unshare` – decouple namespaces from parent and exec program

Spawning a process without fork

- **Without fork, needs tons of different options for new process**
- **Example: Windows `CreateProcess` system call**
  - Also `CreateProcessAsUser`, `CreateProcessWithLogonW`, `CreateProcessWithTokenW`, ...

```
BOOL WINAPI CreateProcess(
  _In_opt_      LPCTSTR lpApplicationName,
  _Inout_opt_   LPTSTR lpCommandLine,
  _In_opt_      LPSECURITY_ATTRIBUTES lpProcessAttributes,
  _In_opt_      LPSECURITY_ATTRIBUTES lpThreadAttributes,
  _In_          BOOL bInheritHandles,
  _In_          DWORD dwCreationFlags,
  _In_opt_      LPVOID lpEnvironment,
  _In_opt_      LPCTSTR lpCurrentDirectory,
  _In_          LPSTARTUPINFO lpStartupInfo,
  _Out_         LPPROCESS_INFORMATION lpProcessInformation
);
```

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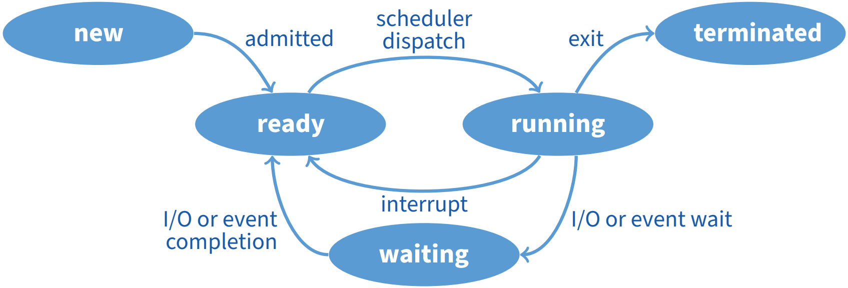
Implementing processes

- **Keep a data structure for each process**
  - Process Control Block (PCB)
  - Called `proc` in Unix, `task_struct` in Linux, and just `struct thread` in Pintos
- **Tracks *state* of the process**
  - Running, ready (runnable), waiting, etc.
- **Includes information necessary to run**
  - Registers, virtual memory mappings, etc.
  - Open files (including memory mapped files)
- **Various other data about the process**
  - Credentials (user/group ID), signal mask, controlling terminal, priority, accounting statistics, whether being debugged, which system call binary emulation in use, ...

Process state
Process ID
User id, etc.
Program counter
Registers
Address space (VM data structs)
Open files

PCB

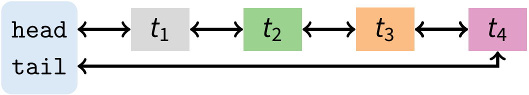
Process states



- **Process can be in one of several states**
  - *new* & *terminated* at beginning & end of life
  - *running* – currently executing (or will execute on kernel return)
  - *ready* – can run, but kernel has chosen different process to run
  - *waiting* – needs async event (e.g., disk operation) to proceed
- **Which process should kernel run?**
  - if 0 runnable, run idle loop (or halt CPU), if 1 runnable, run it
  - if $>$1 runnable, must make scheduling decision

Scheduling

- **How to pick which process to run**
- **Scan process table for first runnable?**
  - Expensive. Weird priorities (small pids do better)
  - Divide into runnable and blocked processes
- **FIFO?**
  - Put threads on back of list, pull them from front:



  - Pintos does this—see `ready_list` in `thread.c`
- **Priority?**
  - Give some threads a better shot at the CPU

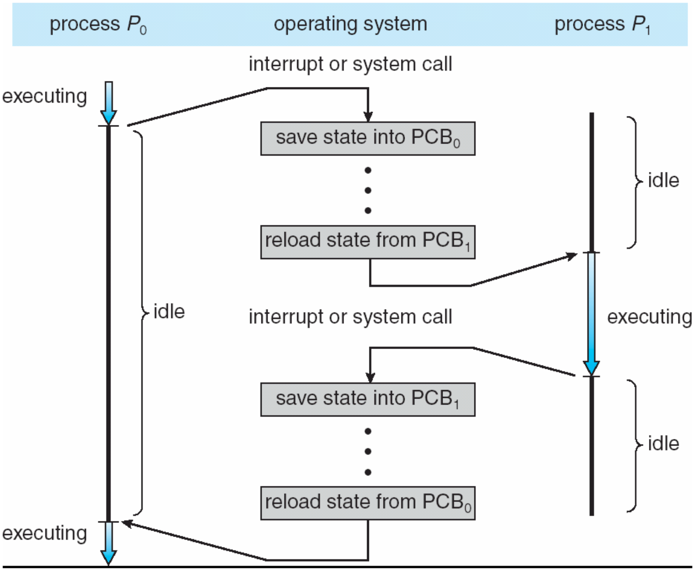
Scheduling policy

- **Want to balance multiple goals**
  - *Fairness* – don't starve processes
  - *Priority* – reflect relative importance of procs
  - *Deadlines* – must do *X* (play audio) by certain time
  - *Throughput* – want good overall performance
  - *Efficiency* – minimize overhead of scheduler itself
- **No universal policy**
  - Many variables, can't optimize for all
  - Conflicting goals (e.g., throughput or priority vs. fairness)
- **We will spend a whole lecture on this topic**

Preemption

- **Can preempt a process when kernel gets control**
- **Running process can vector control to kernel**
  - System call, page fault, illegal instruction, etc.
  - May put current process to sleep—e.g., read from disk
  - May make other process runnable—e.g., fork, write to pipe
- **Periodic timer interrupt**
  - If running process used up quantum, schedule another
- **Device interrupt**
  - Disk request completed, or packet arrived on network
  - Previously waiting process becomes runnable
  - Schedule if higher priority than current running proc.
- **Changing running process is called a *context switch***

Context switch



Context switch details

- **Very machine dependent. Typical things include:**
  - Save program counter and integer registers (always)
  - Save floating point or other special registers
  - Save condition codes
  - Change virtual address translations
- **Non-negligible cost**
  - Save/restore floating point registers expensive
    - ▷ Optimization: only save if process used floating point
  - May require flushing TLB (memory translation hardware)
    - ▷ HW Optimization 1: don't flush kernel's own data from TLB
    - ▷ HW Optimization 2: use tag to avoid flushing any data
  - Usually causes more cache misses (switch working sets)

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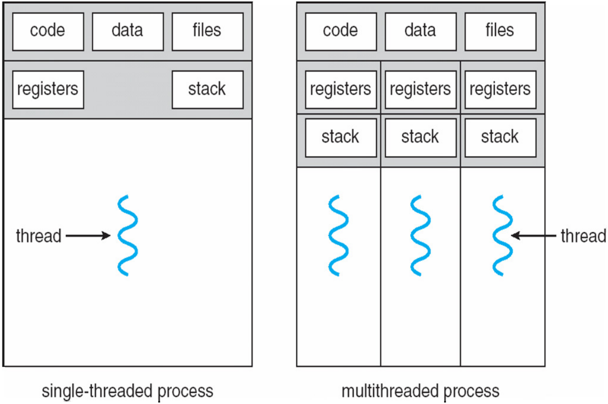
Threads



- **A thread is a schedulable execution context**
  - Program counter, stack, registers, . . .
- **Simple programs use one thread per process**
- **But can also have multi-threaded programs**
  - Multiple threads running in same process's address space

Why threads?

- **Most popular abstraction for concurrency**
  - Lighter-weight abstraction than processes
  - All threads in one process share memory, file descriptors, etc.
- **Allows one process to use multiple CPUs or cores**
- **Allows program to overlap I/O and computation**
  - Same benefit as OS running `emacs` & `gcc` simultaneously
  - E.g., threaded web server services clients simultaneously:

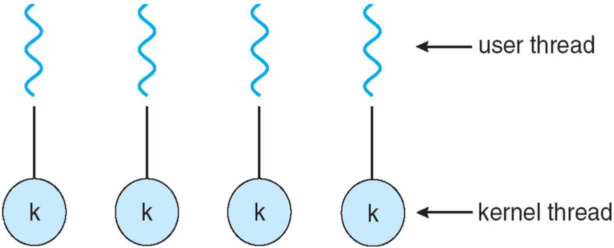
```
for (;;) {
  c = accept_client();
  thread_create(service_client, c);
}
```

- **Most kernels have threads, too**
  - Typically at least one kernel thread for every process
  - Switch kernel threads when preempting process

Thread package API

- `tid thread_create (void (*fn) (void *), void *);`
  - Create a new thread, run `fn` with `arg`
- `void thread_exit ();`
  - Destroy current thread
- `void thread_join (tid thread);`
  - Wait for thread `thread` to exit
- **Plus lots of support for synchronization [in 3 weeks]**
- **See [Birell] for good introduction**
- **Can have preemptive or non-preemptive threads**
  - Preemptive causes more race conditions
  - Non-preemptive can't take advantage of multiple CPUs
  - Before prevalence of multicore, most kernels non-preemptive

Kernel threads[2]



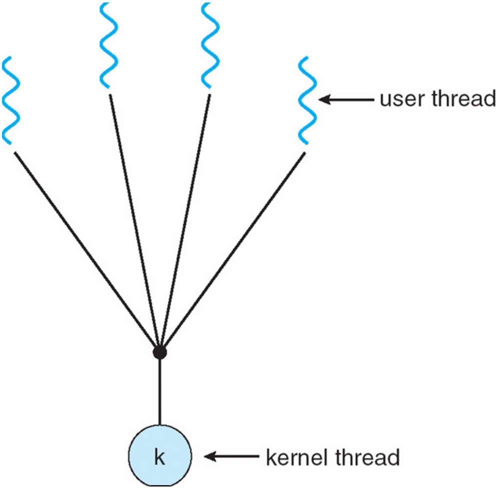
- **Can implement `thread_create` as a system call**
- **To add `thread_create` to an OS that doesn't have it:**
  - Start with process abstraction in kernel
  - `thread_create` like process creation with features stripped out
    - ▷ Keep same address space, file table, etc., in new process
    - ▷ `rfork`/`clone` syscalls actually allow individual control
- **Faster than a process, but still very heavy weight**

[2] i.e., *native* or non-green threads; "kernel threads" can also mean threads inside the kernel, which typically implement native threads)

Limitations of kernel-level threads

- **Every thread operation must go through kernel**
  - create, exit, join, synchronize, or switch for any reason
  - On my laptop: syscall takes 100 cycles, fn call 5 cycles
  - Result: threads 10x-30x slower when implemented in kernel
- **One-size fits all thread implementation**
  - Kernel threads must please all people
  - Maybe pay for fancy features (priority, etc.) you don't need
- **General heavy-weight memory requirements**
  - E.g., requires a fixed-size stack within kernel
  - Other data structures designed for heavier-weight processes

Alternative: User threads



- **Implement as user-level library (a.k.a. *green* threads)**
  - One kernel thread per process
  - `thread_create`, `thread_exit`, etc., just library functions

Implementing user-level threads

- **Allocate a new stack for each** `thread_create`
- **Keep a queue of runnable threads**
- **Replace networking system calls (**`read`**/**`write`**/etc.)**
  - If operation would block, switch and run different thread
- **Schedule periodic timer signal (**`setitimer`**)**
  - Switch to another thread on timer signals (preemption)
- **Multi-threaded web server example**
  - Thread calls `read` to get data from remote web browser
  - "Fake" `read` *function* makes `read` *syscall* in non-blocking mode
  - No data? schedule another thread
  - On timer or when idle check which connections have new data

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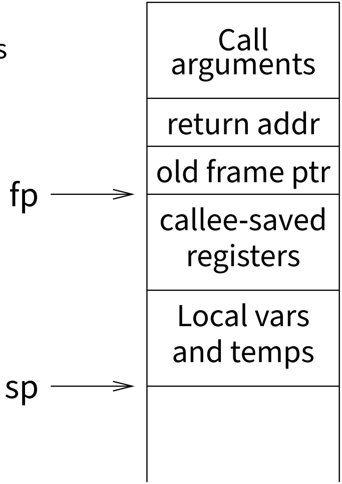
Background: calling conventions

- **Registers divided into 2 groups**
  - Functions free to clobber *caller-saved* regs (`%eax` [return val], `%edx`, & `%ecx` on x86)
  - But must restore *callee-saved* ones to original value upon return (on x86, `%ebx`, `%esi`, `%edi`, plus `%ebp` and `%esp`)
- ***sp* register always base of stack**
  - Frame pointer (*fp*) is old *sp*
- **Local variables stored in registers and on stack**
- **Function arguments go in caller-saved regs and on stack**
  - With 32-bit x86, all arguments on stack



Background: procedure calls

Procedure call

save active caller registers
push arguments to stack
call `foo` (pushes pc) →

→ save needed callee registers
...do stuff...
restore callee saved registers
jump back to calling function

← restore stack+caller regs.

- **Caller must save some state across function call**
  - Return address, caller-saved registers
- **Other state does not need to be saved**
  - Callee-saved regs, global variables, stack pointer

Pintos thread implementation

- **Pintos implements user processes on top of its own threads**
  - Code for threads in kernel very similar to green threads
- **Per-thread state in thread control block structure**

```
struct thread {
    ...
    uint8_t *stack;  /* Saved stack pointer. */
    ...
};
uint32_t thread_stack_ofs = offsetof(struct thread, stack);
```

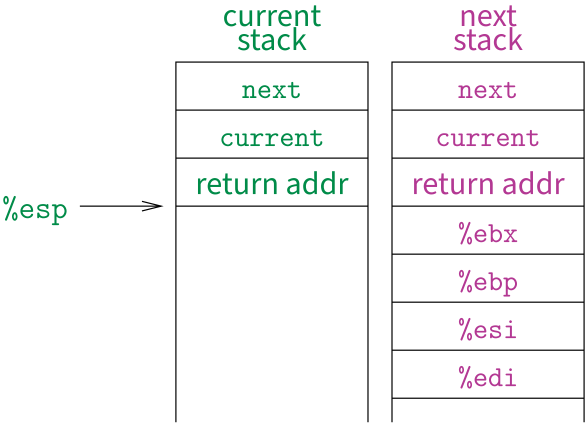
- **C declaration for asm thread-switch function:**
  - `struct thread *switch_threads (struct thread *cur, struct thread *next);`
- **Also thread initialization function to create new stack:**
  - `void thread_create (const char *name, thread_func *function, void *aux);`

i386 `switch_threads`

```
pushl %ebx; pushl %ebp          # Save callee-saved regs
pushl %esi; pushl %edi

mov thread_stack_ofs, %edx      # %edx = offset of stack field
                                #        in thread struct

movl 20(%esp), %eax             # %eax = cur
movl %esp, (%eax,%edx,1)        # cur->stack = %esp

movl 24(%esp), %ecx             # %ecx = next
movl (%ecx,%edx,1), %esp        # %esp = next->stack

popl %edi; popl %esi            # Restore calle-saved regs
popl %ebp; popl %ebx

ret                             # Resume execution
```

- **This is actual code from Pintos `switch.S` (slightly reformatted)**
  - See Thread Switching in documentation

i386 `switch_threads`



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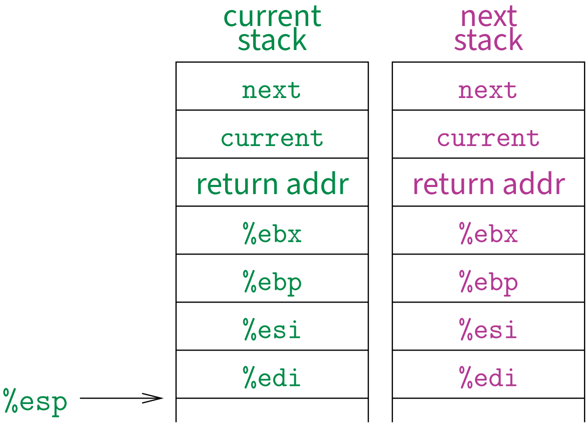

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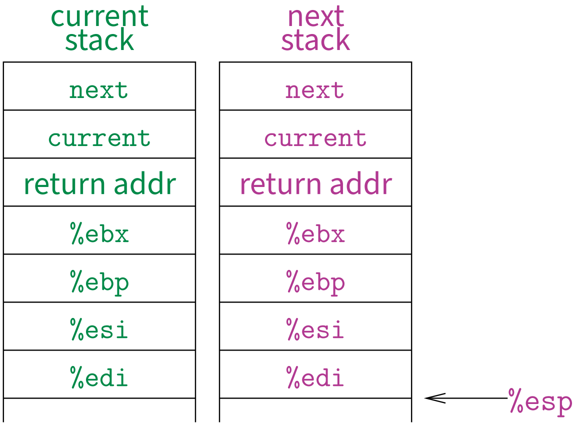

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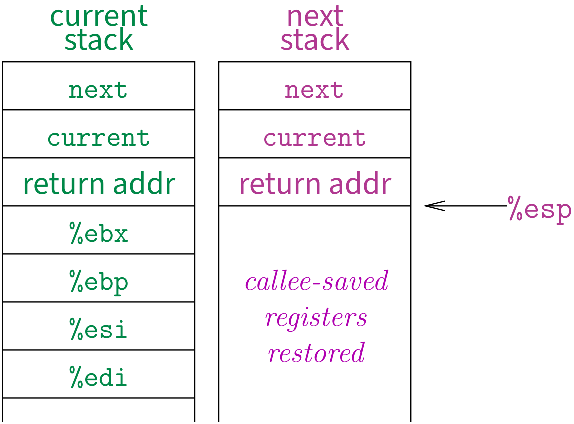
i386 switch_threads



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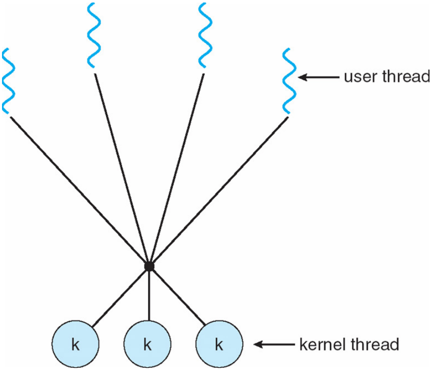
  - See Thread Switching in documentation

Limitations of user-level threads

- **A user-level thread library can do the same thing as Pintos**
- **Can't take advantage of multiple CPUs or cores**
- **A blocking system call blocks all threads**
  - Can use `O_NONBLOCK` to avoid blocking on network connections
  - But doesn't work for disk (e.g., even aio doesn't work for metadata)
  - So one uncached disk read/synchronous write blocks all threads
- **A page fault blocks all threads**
- **Possible deadlock if one thread blocks on another**
  - May block entire process and make no progress
  - [More on deadlock in future lectures.]

User threads on kernel threads



- **User threads implemented on kernel threads**
  - Multiple kernel-level threads per process
  - `thread_create`, `thread_exit` still library functions as before
- **Sometimes called $n : m$ threading**
  - Have n user threads per m kernel threads
    (Simple user-level threads are $n : 1$, kernel threads $1 : 1$)

Limitations of $n : m$ threading

- **Many of same problems as $n : 1$ threads**
  - Blocked threads, deadlock, …
- **Hard to keep same # ktrheads as available CPUs**
  - Kernel knows how many CPUs available
  - Kernel knows which kernel-level threads are blocked
  - But tries to hide these things from applications for transparency
  - So user-level thread scheduler might think a thread is running while underlying kernel thread is blocked
- **Kernel doesn't know relative importance of threads**
  - Might preempt kthread in which library holds important lock

Lessons

- **Threads best implemented as a library**
  - But kernel threads not best interface on which to do this
- **Better kernel interfaces have been suggested**
  - See Scheduler Activations [Anderson et al.]
  - Maybe too complex to implement on existing OSes (some have added then removed such features)
- **Standard threads still fine for most purposes**
  - Use kernel threads if I/O concurrency main goal
  - Use $n : m$ threads for highly concurrent (e.g,. scientific applications) with many thread switches
- **But concurrency greatly increases complexity**
  - More on that in concurrency, synchronization lectures…