Goals of memory management

• Allocate memory resources among competing processes, maximizing memory utilization and system throughput

• Provide isolation between processes
  – We have come to view “addressability” and “protection” as inextricably linked, even though they’re really orthogonal

• Provide a convenient abstraction for programming (and for compilers, etc.)
Tools of memory management

• Base and limit registers
• Swapping
• Paging (and page tables and TLB’s)
• Segmentation (and segment tables)
• Page faults => page fault handling => virtual memory
• The policies that govern the use of these mechanisms
Today’s server, desktop, laptop, tablet, and phone systems

• The basic abstraction that the OS provides for memory management is virtual memory (VM)
  – Efficient use of hardware (real memory)
    • VM enables programs to execute without requiring their entire address space to be resident in physical memory
    • Many programs don’t need all of their code or data at once (or ever – branches they never take, or data they never read/write)
    • No need to allocate memory for it, OS should adjust amount allocated based on run-time behavior
  – Program flexibility
    • Programs can execute on machines with less RAM than they “need”
      – On the other hand, paging is really slow, so must be minimized!
  – Protection
    • Virtual memory isolates address spaces from each other
    • One process cannot name addresses visible to others; each process has its own isolated address space
VM requires hardware and OS support

- MMU’s, TLB’s, page tables, page fault handling, …
- Typically accompanied by swapping, and at least limited segmentation
A trip down Memory Lane …

• Why?
  – Because it’s instructive
  – Because embedded processors (98% or more of all processors) typically don’t have virtual memory
  – Because some aspects are pertinent to allocating portions of a virtual address space – e.g., malloc()

• First, there was job-at-a-time batch programming
  – programs used physical addresses directly
  – OS loads job (perhaps using a relocating loader to “offset” branch addresses), runs it, unloads it
  – what if the program wouldn’t fit into memory?
    • manual overlays!

• An embedded system may have only one program!
• **Swapping**
  – save a program’s entire state (including its memory image) to disk
  – allows another program to be run
  – first program can be swapped back in and re-started right where it was

• **The first timesharing system, MIT’s “Compatible Time Sharing System” (CTSS), was a uni-programmed swapping system**
  – only one memory-resident user
  – upon request completion or quantum expiration, a swap took place
  – bow wow wow … but it worked!
• Then came multiprogramming
  – multiple processes/jobs in memory at once
    • to overlap I/O and computation between processes/jobs, easing the task of the application programmer
  – memory management requirements:
    • protection: restrict which addresses processes can use, so they can’t stomp on each other
    • fast translation: memory lookups must be fast, in spite of the protection scheme
    • fast context switching: when switching between jobs, updating memory hardware (protection and translation) must be quick
Virtual addresses for multiprogramming

- To make it easier to manage memory of multiple processes, make processes use virtual addresses (which is not what we mean by “virtual memory” today!)
  - virtual addresses are independent of location in physical memory (RAM) where referenced data lives
    - OS determines location in physical memory
  - instructions issued by CPU reference virtual addresses
    - e.g., pointers, arguments to load/store instructions, PC …
  - virtual addresses are translated by hardware into physical addresses (with some setup from OS)
• The set of virtual addresses a process can reference is its **address space**
  – many different possible mechanisms for translating virtual addresses to physical addresses
    • we’ll take a historical walk through them, ending up with our current techniques

• **Note:** We are not yet talking about paging, or virtual memory
  – Only that the program issues addresses in a virtual address space, and these must be **translated** to reference memory (the physical address space)
  – For now, think of the program as having a contiguous virtual address space that starts at 0, and a contiguous physical address space that starts somewhere else
Old technique #1: Fixed partitions

- Physical memory is broken up into fixed partitions
  - partitions may have different sizes, but partitioning never changes
  - hardware requirement: base register, limit register
    - physical address = virtual address + base register
    - base register loaded by OS when it switches to a process
  - how do we provide protection?
    - if (physical address > base + limit) then… ?

- Advantages
  - Simple

- Problems
  - internal fragmentation: the available partition is larger than what was requested
  - external fragmentation: two small partitions left, but one big job – what sizes should the partitions be??
Mechanics of fixed partitions

- **offset**: virtual address
- **< ?**: yes
- **+**: physical memory
- **limit register**: 2K
- **base register**: P2’s base: 6K
- **no**: raise protection fault
- **partition 0**
- **partition 1**
- **partition 2**
- **partition 3**
Old technique #2: Variable partitions

• Obvious next step: physical memory is broken up into partitions dynamically – partitions are tailored to programs
  – hardware requirements: base register, limit register
  – physical address = virtual address + base register
  – how do we provide protection?
    • if (physical address > base + limit) then… ?

• Advantages
  – no internal fragmentation
    • simply allocate partition size to be just big enough for process
      (assuming we know what that is!)

• Problems
  – external fragmentation
    • as we load and unload jobs, holes are left scattered throughout physical memory
    • slightly different than the external fragmentation for fixed partition systems
Mechanics of variable partitions

- **offset**: virtual address
- **limit register**: P3’s size
- **base register**: P3’s base
- **physical memory**
  - partition 0
  - partition 1
  - partition 2
  - partition 3
  - partition 4

- If offset < limit register, then:
  - yes: physical memory
  - no: raise protection fault
Dealing with fragmentation

- Compact memory by copying
  - Swap a program out
  - Re-load it, adjacent to another
  - Adjust its base register
  - “Lather, rinse, repeat”
  - Ugh
Modern technique: Paging

- Solve the external fragmentation problem by using fixed sized units in both physical and virtual memory
- Solve the internal fragmentation problem by making the units small

![Diagram showing virtual address space and physical address space with pages and frames](image-url)
Life is easy …

• For the programmer …
  – Processes view memory as a contiguous address space from bytes 0 through N – a **virtual address space**
  – N is independent of the actual hardware
  – In reality, virtual pages are scattered across physical memory frames – not contiguous as earlier
    • Virtual-to-physical mapping
    • This mapping is **invisible** to the program

• For the memory manager …
  – Efficient use of memory, because very little internal fragmentation
  – No external fragmentation at all
    • No need to copy big chunks of memory around to coalesce free space
• For the protection system
  – One process cannot “name” another process’s memory – there is complete isolation
    • The virtual address 0xDEADBEEF maps to different physical addresses for different processes

Note: Assume for now that all pages of the address space are resident in memory – no “page faults”
Address translation

• Translating virtual addresses
  – a virtual address has two parts: virtual page number & offset
  – virtual page number (VPN) is index into a page table
  – page table entry contains page frame number (PFN)
  – physical address is PFN::offset

• Page tables
  – managed by the OS
  – one page table entry (PTE) per page in virtual address space
    • i.e., one PTE per VPN
  – map virtual page number (VPN) to page frame number (PFN)
    • VPN is simply an index into the page table
Paging (K-byte pages)

**Process 0**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>page</th>
<th>frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Process 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>page</th>
<th>frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Virtual Address Space**

- page 0
- page 1
- page 2
- page 3

**Physical Memory**

- page frame 0
- page frame 1
- page frame 2
- page frame 3
- page frame 4
- page frame 5
- page frame 6
- page frame 7
- page frame 8
- page frame 9

Page fault – next lecture!
Mechanics of address translation

- Virtual address
  - Virtual page #
  - Offset

- Page table
  - Page frame #

- Physical address
  - Page frame #
  - Offset

- Physical memory
  - Page frame 0
  - Page frame 1
  - Page frame 2
  - Page frame 3
  - ...
Example of address translation

• Assume 32 bit addresses
  – assume page size is 4KB (4096 bytes, or $2^{12}$ bytes)
  – VPN is 20 bits long ($2^{20}$ VPNs), offset is 12 bits long

• Let’s translate virtual address 0x13325328
  – VPN is 0x13325, and offset is 0x328
  – assume page table entry 0x13325 contains value 0x03004
    • page frame number is 0x03004
    • VPN 0x13325 maps to PFN 0x03004
  – physical address = PFN::offset = 0x03004328
Page Table Entries – an opportunity!

• As long as there’s a PTE lookup per memory reference, we might as well add some functionality
  – We can add protection
    • A virtual page can be read-only, and result in a fault if a store to it is attempted
    • Some pages may not map to anything – a fault will occur if a reference is attempted
  – We can add some “accounting information”
    • Can’t do anything fancy, since address translation must be fast
    • Can keep track of whether or not a virtual page is being used, though
      – This will help the paging algorithm, once we get to paging
Page Table Entries (PTE’s)

• PTE’s control mapping
  – the valid bit says whether or not the PTE can be used
    • says whether or not a virtual address is valid
    • it is checked each time a virtual address is used
  – the referenced bit says whether the page has been accessed
    • it is set when a page has been read or written to
  – the modified bit says whether or not the page is dirty
    • it is set when a write to the page has occurred
  – the protection bits control which operations are allowed
    • read, write, execute
  – the page frame number determines the physical page
    • physical page start address = PFN
Paging advantages

• Easy to allocate physical memory
  – physical memory is allocated from free list of frames
    • to allocate a frame, just remove it from the free list
  – external fragmentation is not a problem
    • managing variable-sized allocations is a huge pain in the neck
      – “buddy system”

• Leads naturally to virtual memory
  – entire program need not be memory resident
  – take page faults using “valid” bit
  – all “chunks” are the same size (page size)
  – but paging was originally introduced to deal with external fragmentation, not to allow programs to be partially resident
Paging disadvantages

• Can still have internal fragmentation
  – Process may not use memory in exact multiples of pages
  – But minor because of small page size relative to address space size

• Memory reference overhead
  – 2 references per address lookup (page table, then memory)
  – Solution: use a hardware cache to absorb page table lookups
    • translation lookaside buffer (TLB) – next class

• Memory required to hold page tables can be large
  – need one PTE per page in virtual address space
  – 32 bit AS with 4KB pages = $2^{20}$ PTEs = 1,048,576 PTEs
  – 4 bytes/PTE = 4MB per page table
    • OS’s have separate page tables per process
    • 25 processes = 100MB of page tables
  – Solution: page the page tables (!!!)
    • (ow, my brain hurts…more later)
Segmentation
(We will be back to paging soon!)

• Paging
  – mitigates various memory allocation complexities (e.g., fragmentation)
  – view an address space as a linear array of bytes
  – divide it into pages of equal size (e.g., 4KB)
  – use a page table to map virtual pages to physical page frames
    • page (logical) => page frame (physical)

• Segmentation
  – partition an address space into logical units
    • stack, code, heap, subroutines, …
  – a virtual address is <segment #, offset>
What’s the point?

• More “logical”
  – absent segmentation, a linker takes a bunch of independent modules that call each other and linearizes them
  – they are really independent; segmentation treats them as such

• Facilitates sharing and reuse
  – a segment is a natural unit of sharing – a subroutine or function

• A natural extension of variable-sized partitions
  – variable-sized partition = 1 segment/process
  – segmentation = many segments/process
Hardware support

• Segment table
  – multiple base/limit pairs, one per segment
  – segments named by segment #, used as index into table
    • a virtual address is <segment #, offset>
  – offset of virtual address added to base address of segment to yield physical address
Segment lookups

virtual address

<?

yes

no

raise protection fault

Segment table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>limit</th>
<th>base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

physical memory

segment 0

segment 1

segment 2

segment 3

segment 4
Pros and cons

• Yes, it’s “logical” and it facilitates sharing and reuse
• But it has all the horror of a variable partition system
  – except that linking is simpler, and the “chunks” that must be
    allocated are smaller than a “typical” linear address space
• What to do?
Combining segmentation and paging

• Can combine these techniques
  – modern architectures support both segments and paging

• Use segments to manage logical units
  – segments vary in size, but are typically large (multiple pages)

• Use pages to partition segments into fixed-size chunks
  – each segment has its own page table
    • there is a page table per segment, rather than per user address space
  – memory allocation becomes easy once again
    • no contiguous allocation, no external fragmentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment #</th>
<th>Page #</th>
<th>Offset within page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Offset within segment

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• Linux:
  – 1 kernel code segment, 1 kernel data segment
  – 1 user code segment, 1 user data segment
  – all of these segments are paged

• Note: this is a very limited/boring use of segments!