

File System Reliability

Main Points

- Problem posed by machine/disk failures
- Transaction concept
- Four approaches to reliability
 - Careful sequencing of file system operations
 - Copy-on-write (WAFL, ZFS)
 - Journalling (NTFS, linux ext4)
 - Log structure (flash storage)

Last Time: File System Layout

- Tree structure
 - Asymmetric: FFS
 - Balanced: NTFS
- Disk oriented free space allocation
 - Disk block groups
 - Files in the same directory near each other
 - Metadata near data
 - Extents: efficient contiguous allocation
- Late binding on file size

File System Reliability

- What can happen if disk loses power or machine software crashes?
 - Some operations in progress may complete
 - Some operations in progress may be lost
 - Overwrite of a block may only partially complete
- File system wants durability (as a minimum!)
 - Data previously stored can be retrieved (maybe after some recovery step), regardless of failure

Storage Reliability Problem

- Single logical file operation can involve updates to multiple physical disk blocks
 - inode, indirect block, data block, bitmap, ...
 - With remapping, single update to physical disk block can require multiple (even lower level) updates
- At a physical level, operations complete one at a time
 - Want concurrent operations for performance
- How do we guarantee consistency regardless of when crash occurs?

Transaction Concept

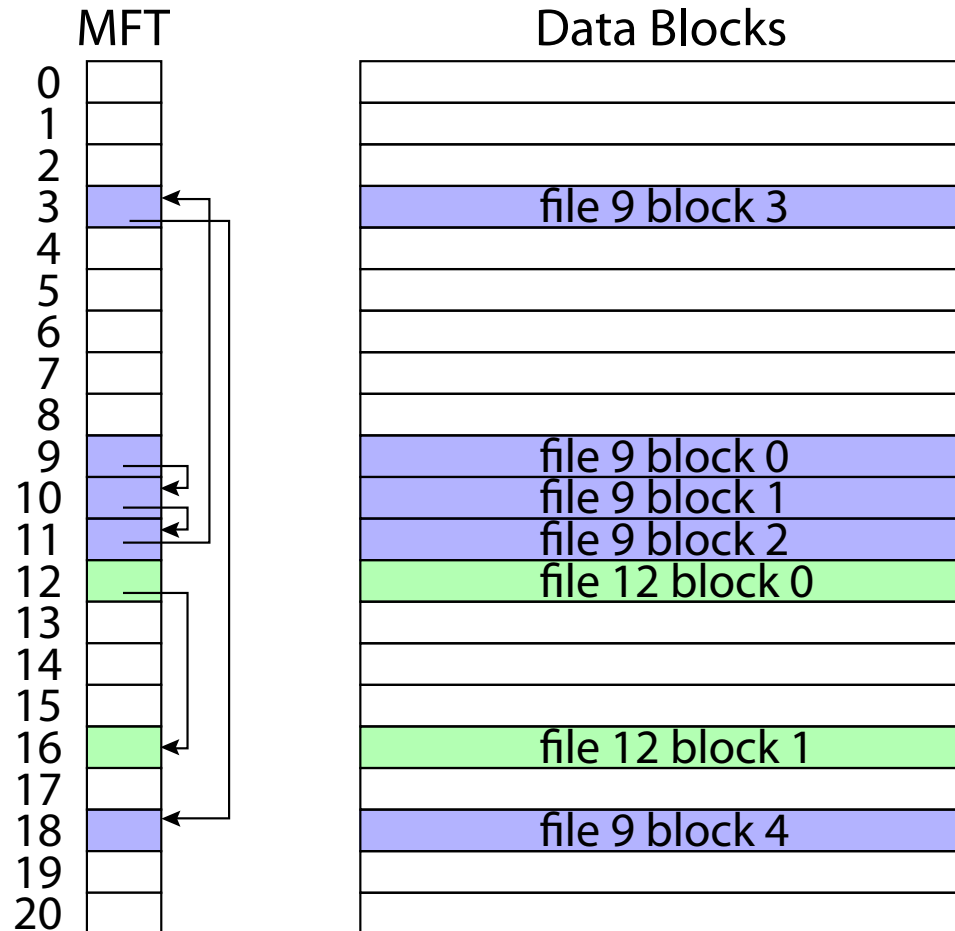
- Transaction is a group of operations
 - Atomic: operations appear to happen as a group, or not at all (at logical level)
 - At physical level, only single disk/flash write is atomic
 - Durable: operations that complete stay completed
 - Future failures do not corrupt previously stored data
 - Isolation: other transactions do not see results of earlier transactions until they are committed
 - Consistency: sequential memory model

Reliability Approach #1: Careful Ordering

- Sequence operations in a specific order
 - Careful design to allow sequence to be interrupted safely
- Post-crash recovery
 - Read data structures to see if there were any operations in progress
 - Clean up/finish as needed
- Approach taken in FAT, FFS (fsck), and many app-level recovery schemes (e.g., Word)

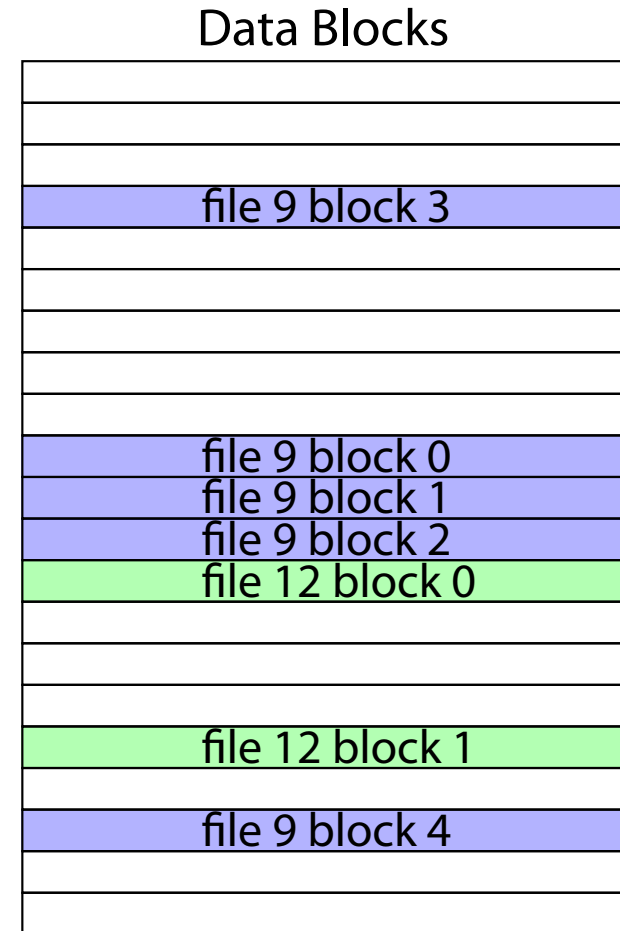
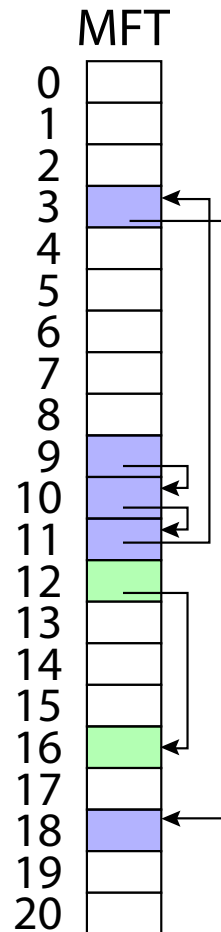
FAT: Append Data to File

- Add data block
- Add pointer to data block
- Update file tail to point to new MFT entry
- Update access time at head of file



FAT: Append Data to File

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FAT: Append Data to File

Normal operation:

- Add data block
- Add pointer to data block
- Update file tail to point to new MFT entry
- Update access time at head of file

Recovery:

- Scan MFT
- If entry is unlinked, delete data block
- If access time is incorrect, update

FAT: Create New File

Normal operation:

- Allocate data block
- Update MFT entry to point to data block
- Update directory with file name -> file number
 - What if directory spans multiple disk blocks?
- Update modify time for directory

Recovery:

- Scan MFT
- If any unlinked files (not in any directory), delete
- Scan directories for missing update times

FFS: Create a File

Normal operation:

- Allocate data block
- Write data block
- Allocate inode
- Write inode block
- Update bitmap of free blocks
- Update directory with file name -> file number
- Update modify time for directory

Recovery:

- Scan inode table
- If any unlinked files (not in any directory), delete
- Compare free block bitmap against inode trees
- Scan directories for missing update/access times

Time proportional to size of disk

FFS: Move a File

Normal operation:

- Remove filename from old directory
- Add filename to new directory

Recovery:

- Scan all directories to determine set of live files
- Consider files with valid inodes and not in any directory
 - New file being created?
 - File move?
 - File deletion?

FFS: Move and Grep

Process A

move file from x to y

```
mv x/file y/
```

Process B

grep across x and y

```
grep x/* y/*
```

Will grep always see
contents of file?

Application Level

Normal operation:

- Write name of each open file to app folder
- Write changes to backup file
- Rename backup file to be file (atomic operation provided by file system)
- Delete list in app folder on clean shutdown

Recovery:

- On startup, see if any files were left open
- If so, look for backup file
- If so, ask user to compare versions

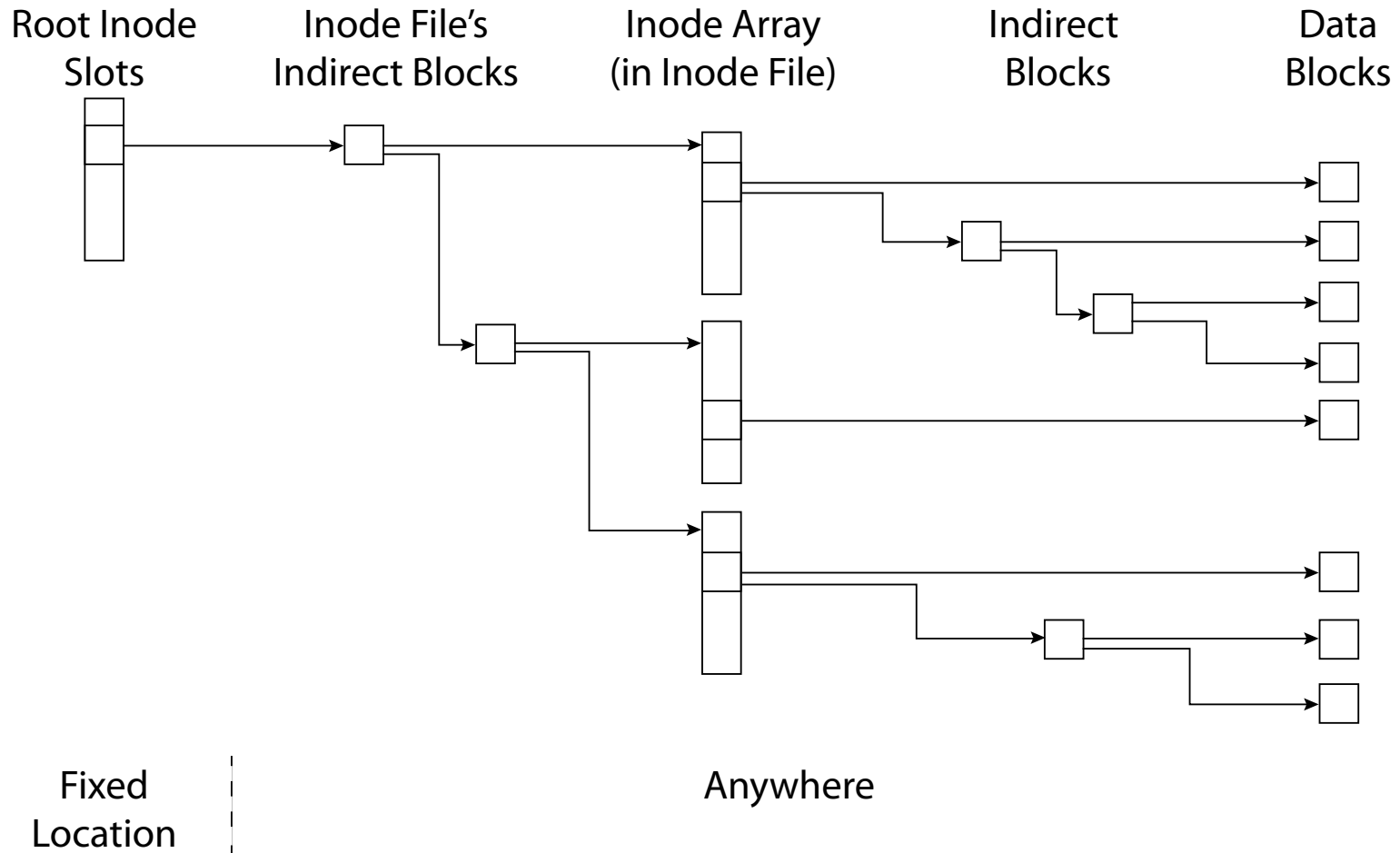
Careful Ordering

- Pros
 - Works with minimal support in the disk drive
 - Works for most multi-step operations
- Cons
 - Can require time-consuming recovery after a failure
 - Difficult to reduce every operation to a safely interruptible sequence of writes
 - Difficult to achieve consistency when multiple operations occur concurrently

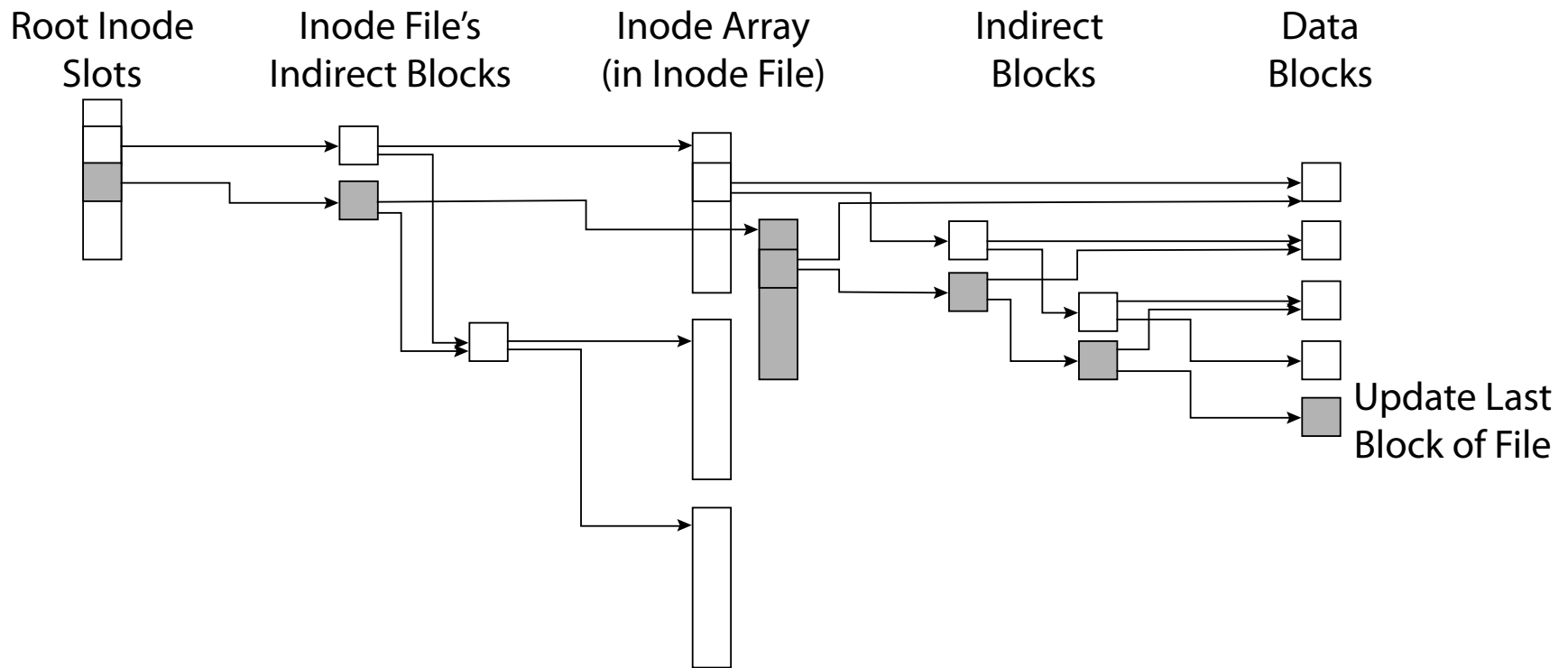
Copy on Write File Layout

- To update file system, write a new version of the file system containing the update
 - Never update in place
 - Reuse existing unchanged disk blocks
- Seems expensive! But
 - Updates can be batched
 - Almost all disk writes can occur in parallel

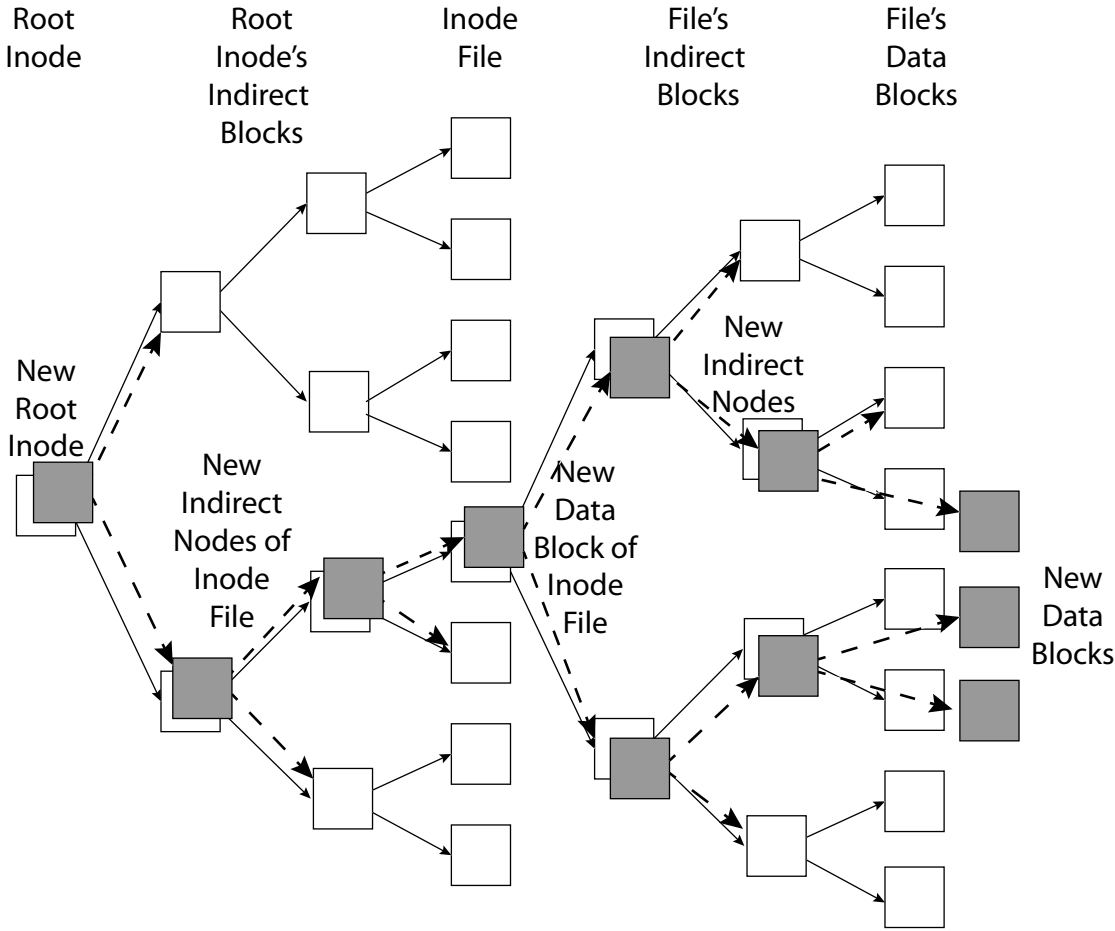
Copy on Write/Write Anywhere



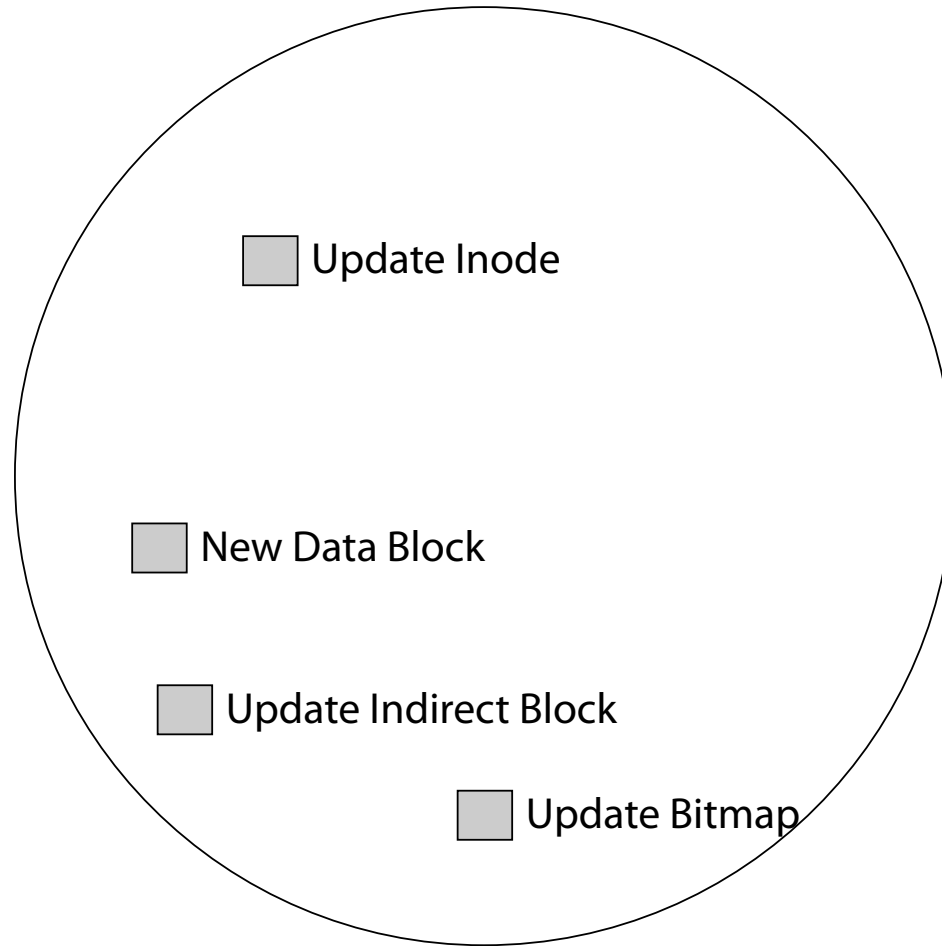
Copy on Write/Write Anywhere



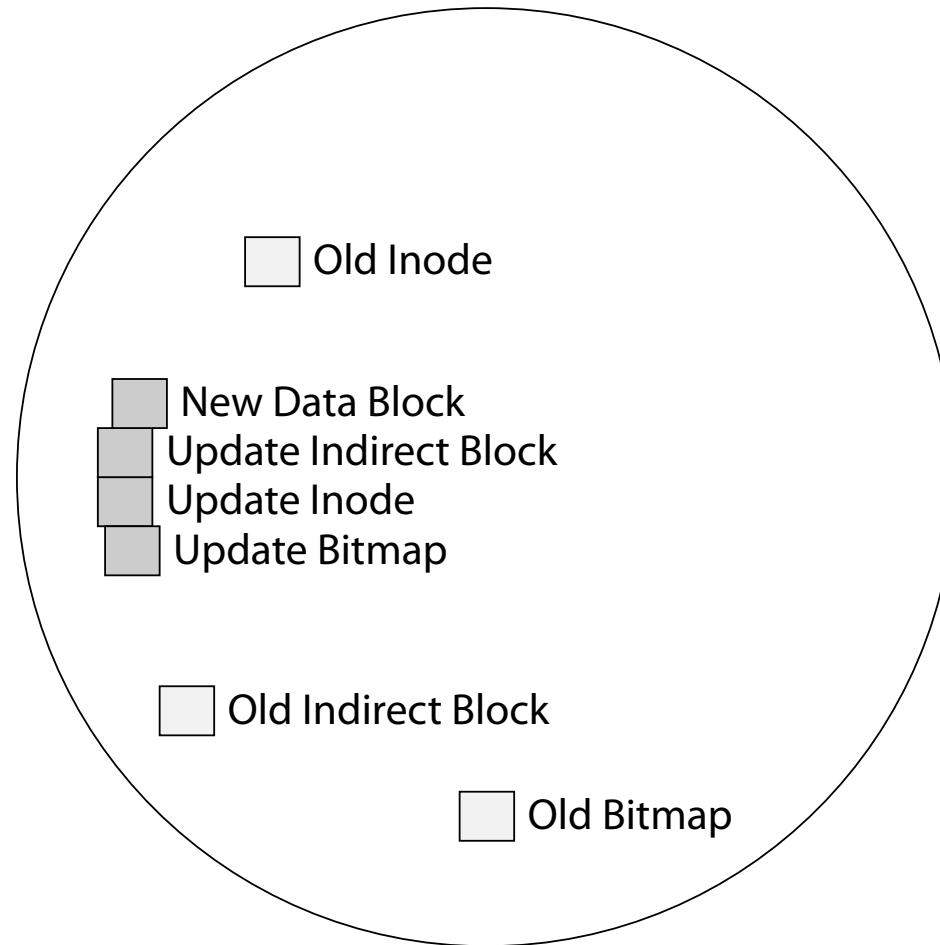
Copy on Write Batch Update



FFS Update in Place



Copy on Write Write Location



Copy on Write Garbage Collection

- For write efficiency, want contiguous sequences of free blocks
 - Spread across all block groups
 - Updates leave dead blocks scattered
 - For read efficiency, want data read together to be in the same block group
 - Write anywhere leaves related data scattered
- => Background coalescing of live/dead blocks

Copy On Write

- Pros
 - Correct behavior regardless of failures
 - Fast recovery (root block array)
 - High throughput (best if updates are batched)
- Cons
 - Potential for high latency
 - Small changes require many writes
 - Garbage collection essential for performance

Logging File Systems

- Instead of modifying data structures on disk directly, write changes to a journal/log
 - Intention list: set of changes we intend to make
 - Log/Journal is **append-only**
- Once changes are on log, safe to apply changes to data structures on disk
 - Recovery can read log to see what changes were intended
- Once changes are copied, safe to remove log

Redo Logging

- Prepare
 - Write all changes (in transaction) to log
- Commit
 - Single disk write to make transaction durable
- Redo
 - Copy changes to disk
- Garbage collection
 - Reclaim space in log

Redo Logging

- Recovery
 - Read log
 - Redo any operations for committed transactions
 - Garbage collect log

Before Transaction Start

Cache

Tom = \$200

Mike = \$100

Nonvolatile
Storage

Tom = \$200

Mike = \$100

Log:



After Updates Are Logged

Cache

Tom = \$100

Mike = \$200

Nonvolatile
Storage

Tom = \$200

Mike = \$100

Log: Tom = \$100 Mike = \$200



After Commit Logged

Cache

Tom = \$100

Mike = \$200

Nonvolatile
Storage

Tom = \$200

Mike = \$100

Log: Tom = \$100 Mike = \$200 COMMIT

A diagram of a database cylinder. The top part of the cylinder is labeled 'Cache' and contains the text 'Tom = \$100' and 'Mike = \$200'. The bottom part of the cylinder is labeled 'Nonvolatile Storage' and contains the text 'Tom = \$200' and 'Mike = \$100'. Inside the nonvolatile storage section, there is a rectangular box containing the text 'Log: Tom = \$100 Mike = \$200 COMMIT'.

After Copy Back

Cache

Tom = \$100

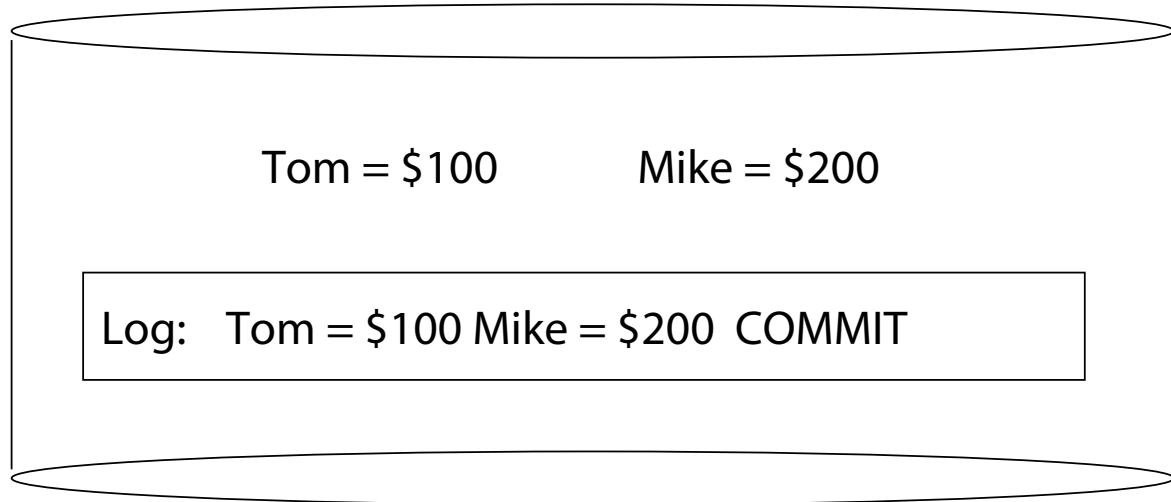
Mike = \$200

Nonvolatile
Storage

Tom = \$100

Mike = \$200

Log: Tom = \$100 Mike = \$200 COMMIT



After Garbage Collection

Cache

Tom = \$100

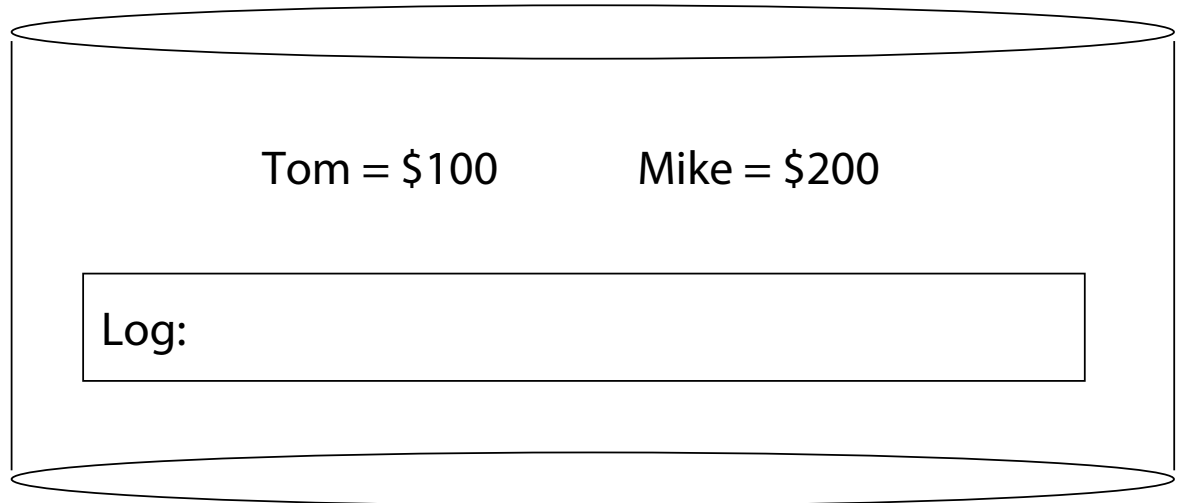
Mike = \$200

Nonvolatile
Storage

Tom = \$100

Mike = \$200

Log:

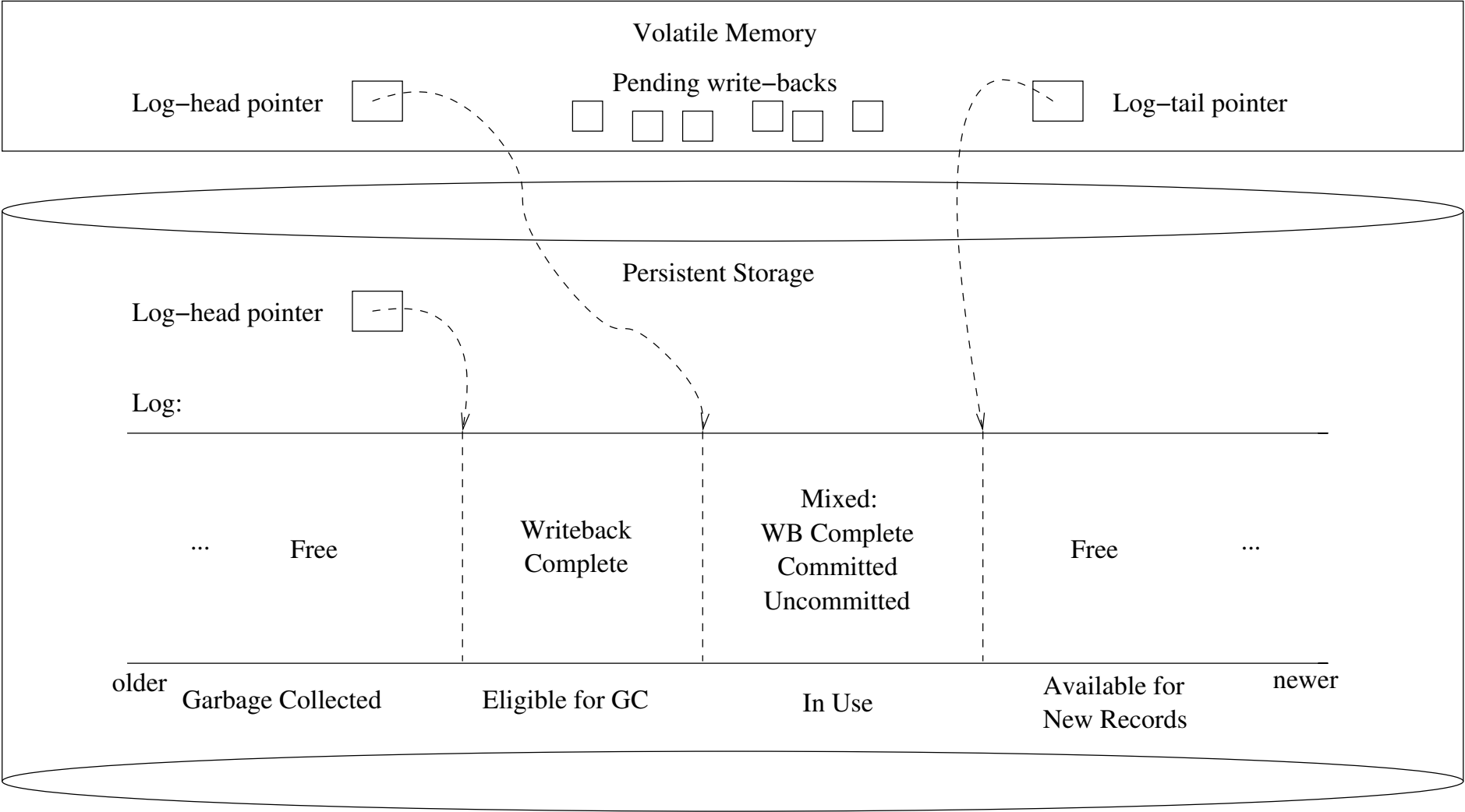


Question

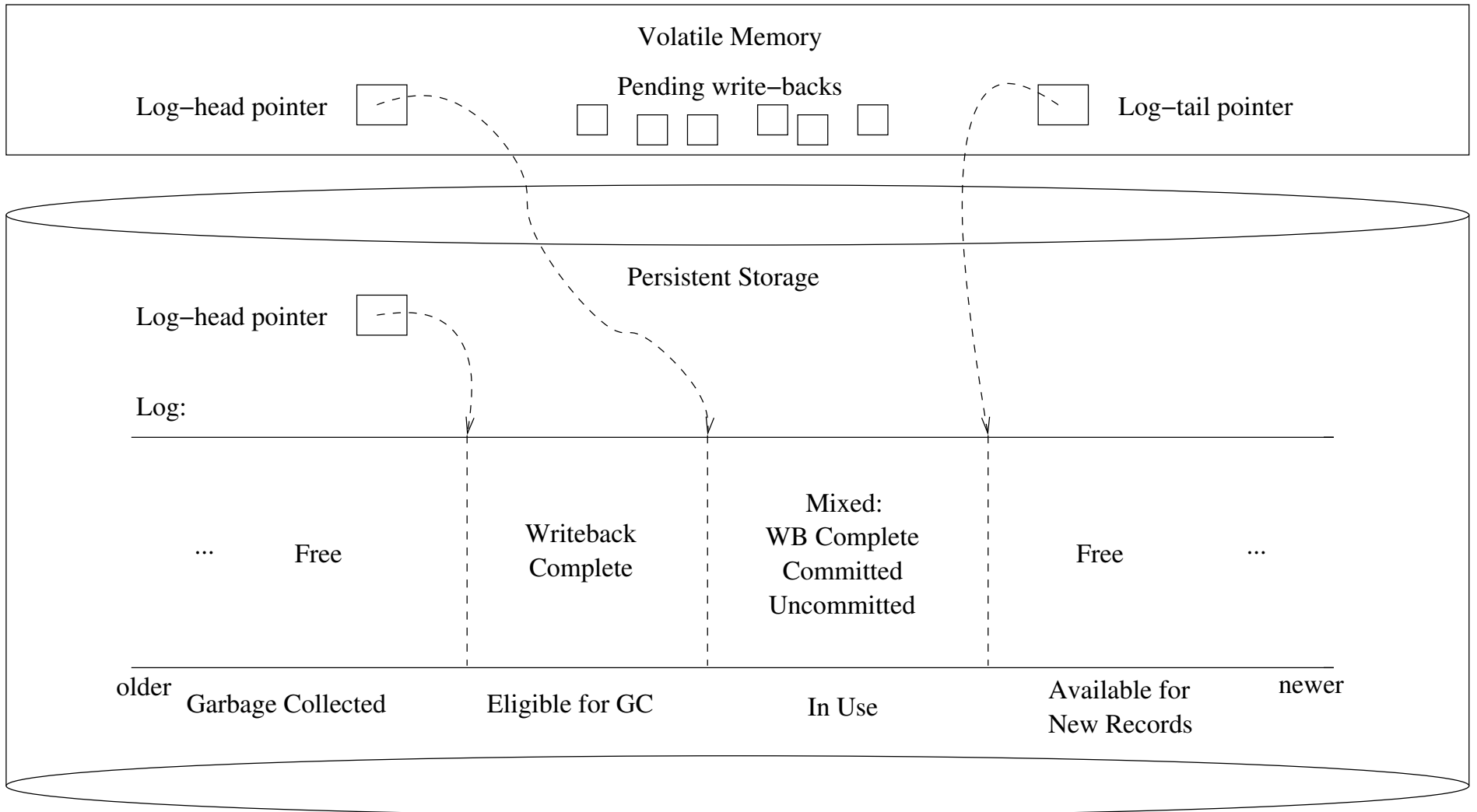
- What happens if machine crashes?
 - Before transaction start
 - After transaction start, before operations are logged
 - After operations are logged, before commit
 - After commit, before write back
 - After write back before garbage collection
- What happens if machine crashes during recovery?
 - Write back is idempotent – redo can be redone

Performance

- Log written sequentially
 - Often kept in flash storage
- Asynchronous write back
 - Any order as long as all changes are logged before commit, and all write backs occur after commit
- Can process multiple transactions
 - Transaction ID in each log entry
 - Transaction completed iff its commit record is in log



Redo Log Implementation



Transaction Isolation

Process A

move file from x to y

```
mv x/file y/
```

Process B

grep across x and y

```
grep x/* y/* > log
```

What if grep starts after
changes are logged, but
before commit?

Two Phase Locking

- Two phase locking: release locks only AFTER transaction commit
 - Prevents a process from seeing results of another transaction that might not commit

Transaction Isolation

Process A

Lock x, y

move file from x to y

```
mv x/file y/
```

Commit and release x,y

Process B

Lock x, y, log

grep across x and y

```
grep x/* y/* > log
```

Commit and release x, y, log

What if grep starts after
changes are logged, but
before commit?

Caveat

- Most file systems implement a transactional model internally
 - Copy on write
 - Redo logging
- Most file systems provide a transactional model for individual system calls
 - File rename, move, ...
- Most file systems do NOT provide a transactional model for user data
 - Historical artifact (imo)

Log Structure

- Can we eliminate the copy back?