Memory Management

Chapter 7

Memory Management

- Is the task carried out by the OS and hardware to accommodate multiple processes in main memory
- If only a few processes can be kept in main memory, then much of the time all processes will be waiting for I/O and the CPU will be idle
- Hence, memory needs to be allocated efficiently in order to pack as many processes into memory as possible

Memory Management

- **In most schemes, the kernel occupies some fixed portion of main memory and the rest is shared by multiple processes**

Memory Management Requirements

- **Relocation**
  - programmer cannot know where the program will be placed in memory when it is executed
  - a process may be (often) relocated in main memory due to swapping
  - swapping enables the OS to have a larger pool of ready-to-execute processes
  - memory references in code (for both instructions and data) must be translated to actual physical memory address

Memory Management Requirements

- **Protection**
  - processes should not be able to reference memory locations in another process without permission
  - impossible to check addresses at compile time in programs since the program could be relocated
  - address references must be checked at run time by hardware

Memory Management Requirements

- **Sharing**
  - must allow several processes to access a common portion of main memory without compromising protection
    - cooperating processes may need to share access to the same data structure
    - better to allow each process to access the same copy of the program rather than have their own separate copy

Memory Management Requirements

- **Logical Organization**
  - users write programs in modules with different characteristics
    - instruction modules are execute-only
    - data modules are either read-only or read/write
    - some modules are private others are public
  - To effectively deal with user programs, the OS and hardware should support a basic form of module to provide the required protection and sharing

Memory Management Requirements

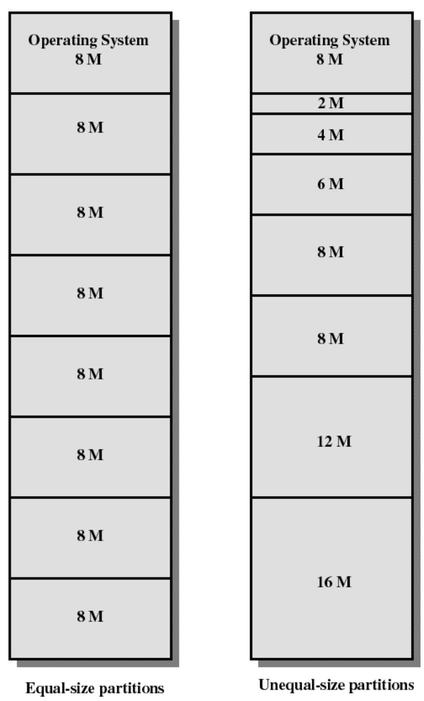
- **Physical Organization**
  - secondary memory is the long term store for programs and data while main memory holds program and data currently in use
  - moving information between these two levels of memory is a major concern of memory management (OS)
    - it is highly inefficient to leave this responsibility to the application programmer

Simple Memory Management

- First we study the simpler case where there is no virtual memory
- An executing process must be loaded entirely in main memory (if overlays are not used)
- Although the following simple memory management techniques are not used in modern OS, they lay the ground for a proper discussion of virtual memory (to be discussed later)
  - fixed partitioning
  - dynamic partitioning
  - simple paging
  - simple segmentation

Fixed Partitioning

- Partition main memory into a set of non overlapping regions called partitions
- Partitions can be of equal or unequal sizes



Fixed Partitioning

- **any process whose size is less than or equal to a partition size can be loaded into the partition**
- **if all partitions are occupied, the operating system can swap a process out of a partition**
- **a program may be too large to fit in a partition. The programmer must then design the program with overlays**
  - when the module needed is not present the user program must load that module into the program's partition, overlaying whatever program or data are there

Fixed Partitioning

- **Main memory use is inefficient. Any program, no matter how small, occupies an entire partition. This is called internal fragmentation.**
- **Unequal-size partitions lessens these problems but they still remain...**
- **Equal-size partitions was used in early IBM's OS/MFT (Multiprogramming with a Fixed number of Tasks)**

Placement Algorithm with Partitions

- **Equal-size partitions**
  - If there is an available partition, a process can be loaded into that partition
    - because all partitions are of equal size, it does not matter which partition is used
  - If all partitions are occupied by blocked processes, choose one process to swap out to make room for the new process

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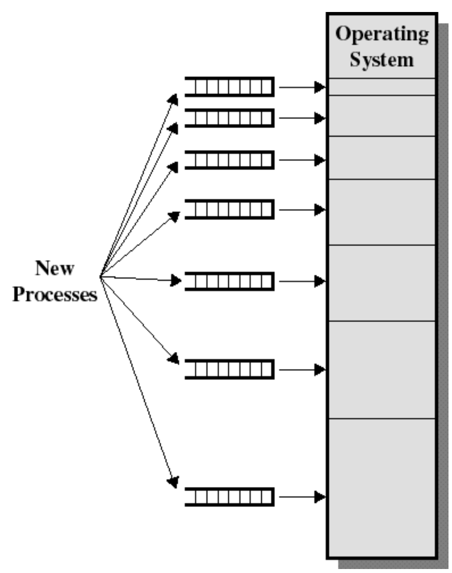
Placement Algorithm with Partitions

- **Unequal-size partitions: use of multiple queues**
  - assign each process to the smallest partition within which it will fit
  - A queue for each partition size
  - tries to minimize internal fragmentation
  - Problem: some queues will be empty if no processes within a size range is present



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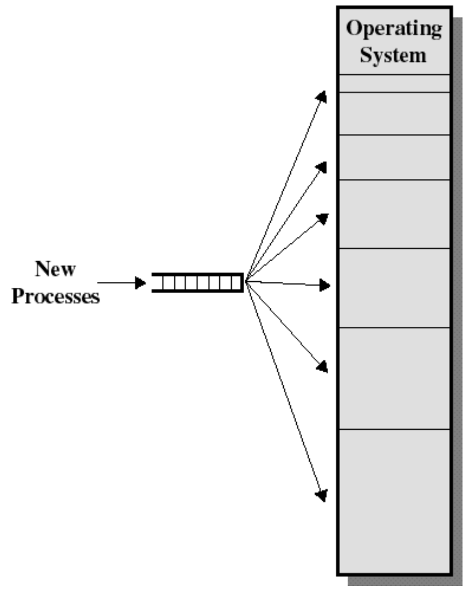
Placement Algorithm with Partitions

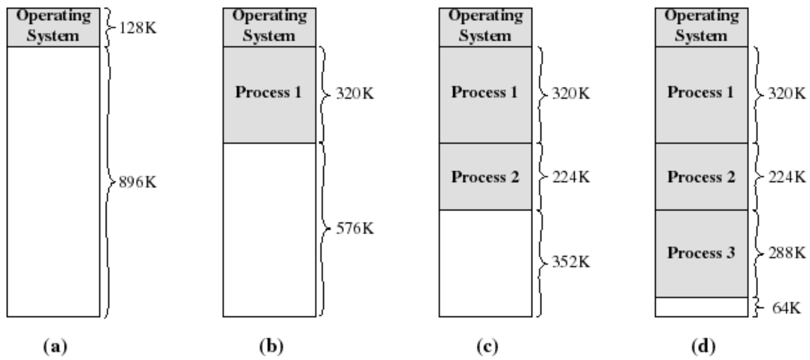
- **Unequal-size partitions: use of a single queue**
  - When its time to load a process into main memory the smallest available partition that will hold the process is selected
  - increases the level of multiprogramming at the expense of internal fragmentation



Dynamic Partitioning

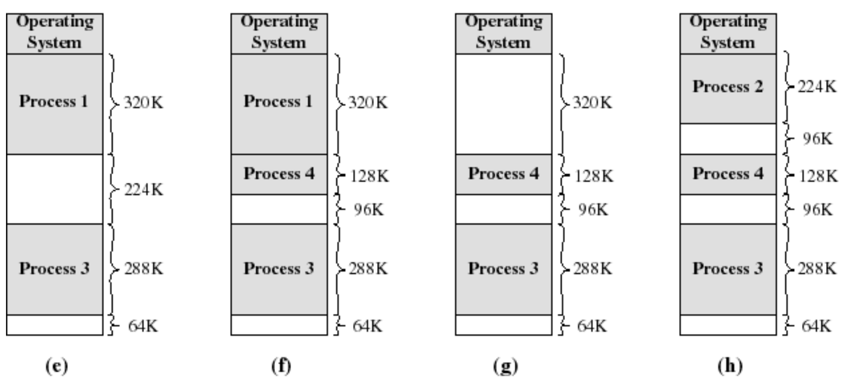
- **Partitions are of variable length and number**
- **Each process is allocated exactly as much memory as it requires**
- **Eventually holes are formed in main memory. This is called external fragmentation**
- **Must use compaction to shift processes so they are contiguous and all free memory is in one block**
- **Used in IBM's OS/MVT (Multiprogramming with a Variable number of Tasks)**

Dynamic Partitioning: an example



- A hole of 64K is left after loading 3 processes: not enough room for another process
- Eventually each process is blocked. The OS swaps out process 2 to bring in process 4

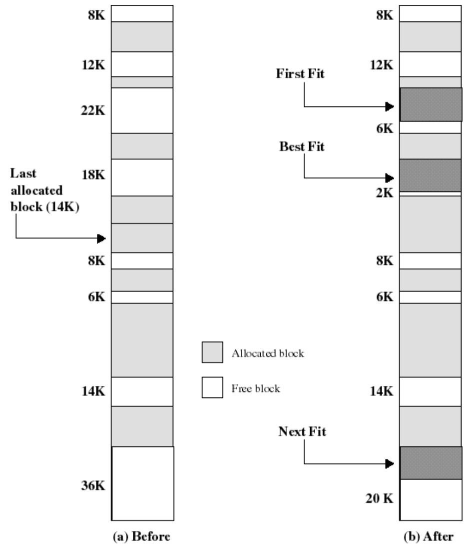
Dynamic Partitioning: an example



- another hole of 96K is created
- Eventually each process is blocked. The OS swaps out process 1 to bring in again process 2 and another hole of 96K is created...
- Compaction would produce a single hole of 256K

Placement Algorithm

- **Used to decide which free block to allocate to a process**
- **Goal: to reduce usage of compaction (time consuming)**
- **Possible algorithms:**
  - Best-fit: choose smallest hole
  - First-fit: choose first hole from beginning
  - Next-fit: choose first hole from last placement



Example Memory Configuration Before and After Allocation of 16 Kbyte Block

Placement Algorithm: comments

- **Next-fit often leads to allocation of the largest block at the end of memory**
- **First-fit favors allocation near the beginning: tends to create less fragmentation then Next-fit**
- **Best-fit searches for smallest block: the fragment left behind is small as possible**
  - main memory quickly forms holes too small to hold any process: compaction generally needs to be done more often

Replacement Algorithm

- **When all processes in main memory are blocked, the OS must choose which process to replace**
  - A process must be swapped out (to a Blocked-Suspend state) and be replaced by a new process or a process from the Ready-Suspend queue
  - We will discuss later such algorithms for memory management schemes using virtual memory

Relocation

- **Because of swapping and compaction, a process may occupy different main memory locations during its lifetime**
- **Hence physical memory references by a process cannot be fixed**
- **This problem is solved by distinguishing between logical address and physical address**

Address Types

- A physical address (absolute address) is a physical location in main memory
- A logical address is a reference to a memory location independent of the physical structure/organization of memory
- Compilers produce code in which all memory references are logical addresses
- A relative address is an example of logical address in which the address is expressed as a location relative to some known point in the program (ex: the beginning)

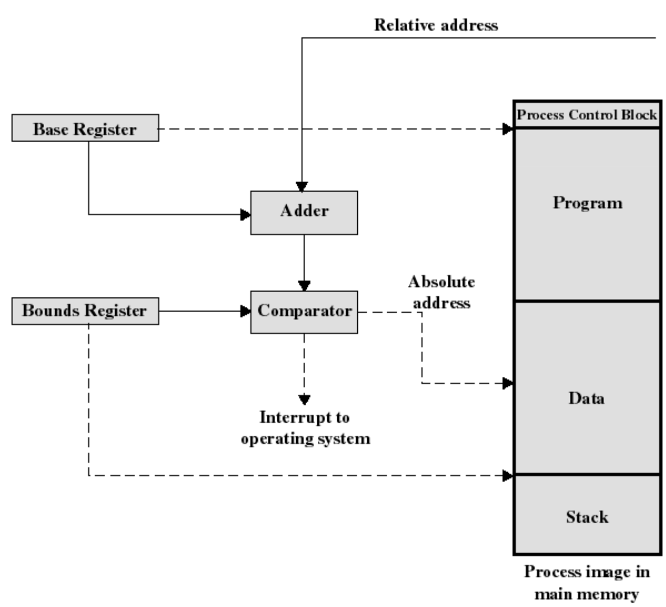
Address Translation

- Relative address is the most frequent type of logical address used in pgm modules
- Such modules are loaded in main memory with all memory references in relative form
- Physical addresses are calculated "on the fly" as the instructions are executed
- This is called dynamic run-time loading
- For adequate performance, the translation from relative to physical address must by done by hardware

Hardware translation of addresses

- When a process is assigned to the running state, a base register (in CPU) gets loaded with the starting physical address of the process
- A bound register gets loaded with the process's ending physical address
- When a relative addresses is encountered, it is added with the content of the base register to obtain the physical address which is compared with the content of the bound register
- This provides hardware protection: each process can only access memory within its process image

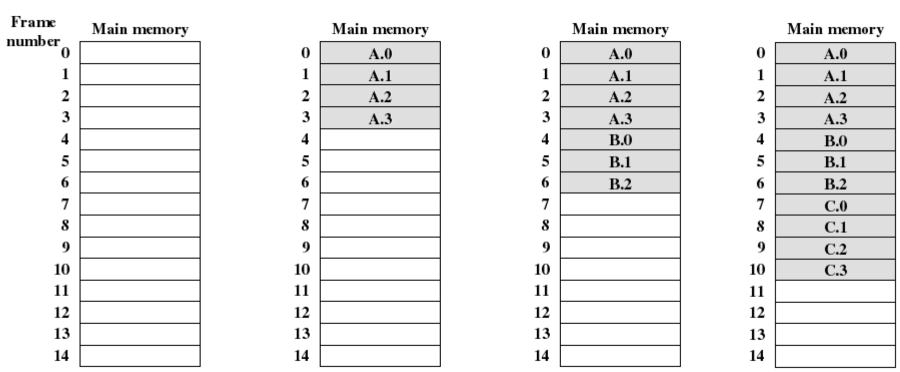
Example Hardware for Address Translation



Simple Paging

- Main memory is partition into equal fixed-sized chunks (of relatively small size)
- Trick: each process is also divided into chunks of the same size called pages
- The process pages can thus be assigned to the available chunks in main memory called frames (or page frames)
- Consequence: a process does not need to occupy a contiguous portion of memory

Example of process loading

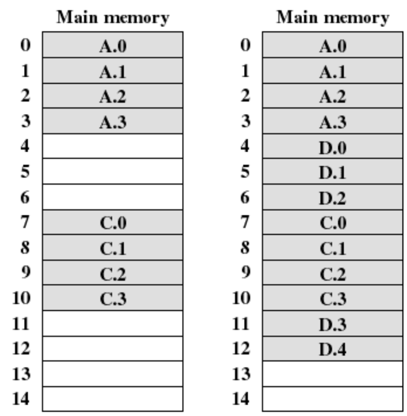


(a) Fifteen Available Pages (b) Load Process A (b) Load Process B (d) Load Process C

- Now suppose that process B is swapped out

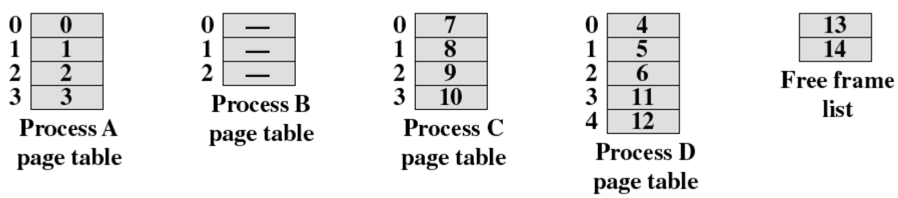
Example of process loading (cont.)

- When process A and C are blocked, the pager loads a new process D consisting of 5 pages
- Process D does not occupied a contiguous portion of memory
- There is no external fragmentation
- Internal fragmentation consist only of the last page of each process



(e) Swap out B (f) Load Process D

Page Tables

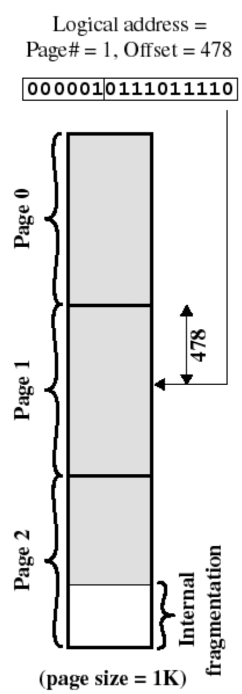


- The OS now needs to maintain (in main memory) a page table for each process
- Each entry of a page table consist of the frame number where the corresponding page is physically located
- The page table is indexed by the page number to obtain the frame number
- A free frame list, available for pages, is maintained

Logical address used in paging

- Within each program, each logical address must consist of a page number and an offset within the page
- A CPU register always holds the starting physical address of the page table of the currently running process
- Presented with the logical address (page number, offset) the processor accesses the page table to obtain the physical address (frame number, offset)

Logical address in paging

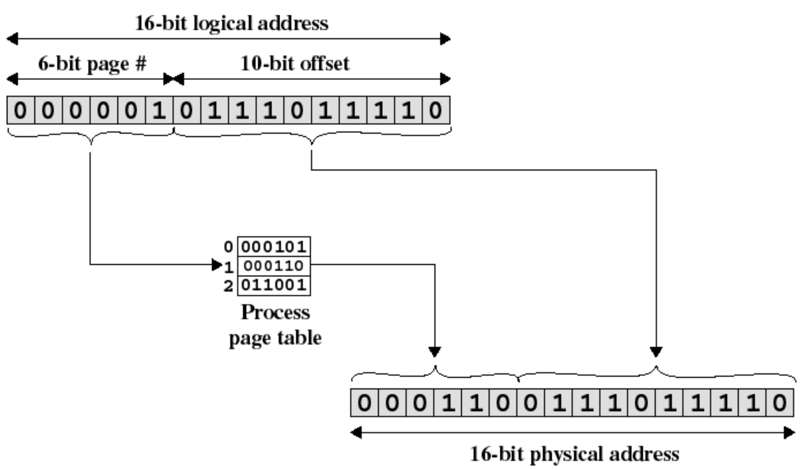


- The logical address becomes a relative address when the page size is a power of 2
- Ex: if 16 bits addresses are used and page size = 1K, we need 10 bits for offset and have 6 bits available for page number
- Then the 16 bit address obtained with the 10 least significant bit as offset and 6 most significant bit as page number is a location relative to the beginning of the process

Logical address in paging

- **By using a page size of a power of 2, the pages are invisible to the programmer, compiler/assembler, and the linker**
- **Address translation at run-time is then easy to implement in hardware**
  - logical address (n,m) gets translated to physical address (k,m) by indexing the page table and appending the same offset m to the frame number k

Logical-to-Physical Address Translation in Paging



Simple Segmentation

- **Each program is subdivided into blocks of non-equal size called segments**
- **When a process gets loaded into main memory, its different segments can be located anywhere**
- **Each segment is fully packed with instructs/data: no internal fragmentation**
- **There is external fragmentation; it is reduced when using small segments**

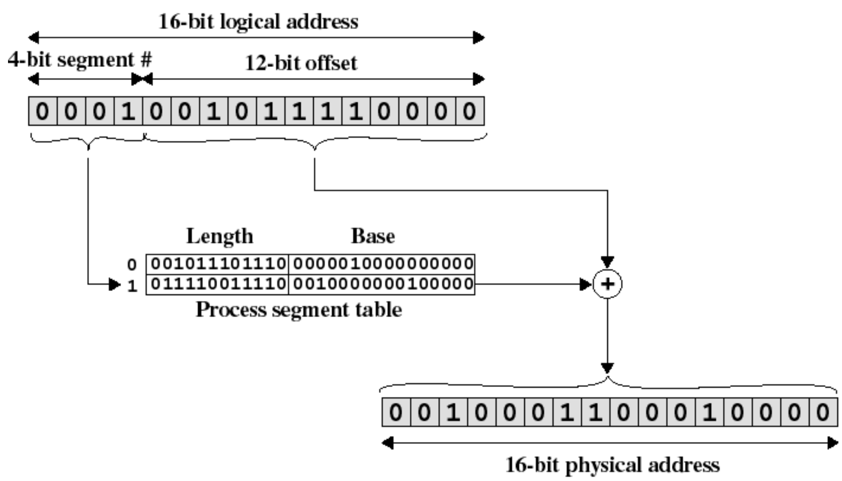
Simple Segmentation

- **In contrast with paging, segmentation is visible to the programmer**
  - provided as a convenience to organize logically programs (ex: data in one segment, code in another segment)
  - must be aware of segment size limit
- **The OS maintains a segment table for each process. Each entry contains:**
  - the starting physical addresses of that segment.
  - the length of that segment (for protection)

Logical address used in segmentation

- **When a process enters the Running state, a CPU register gets loaded with the starting address of the process's segment table.**
- **Presented with a logical address (segment number, offset) = (n,m), the CPU indexes (with n) the segment table to obtain the starting physical address k and the length l of that segment**
- **The physical address is obtained by adding m to k (in contrast with paging)**
  - the hardware also compares the offset m with the length l of that segment to determine if the address is valid
  - we cannot directly obtain the logical address from the physical address (in contrast with paging)

Logical-to-Physical Address Translation in segmentation



Simple segmentation and paging comparison

- **Segmentation requires more complicated hardware for address translation**
- **Segmentation suffers from external fragmentation**
- **Paging only yield a small internal fragmentation**
- **Segmentation is visible to the programmer whereas paging is transparent**
- **Segmentation can be viewed as commodity offered to the programmer to organize logically a program into segments and using different kinds of protection (ex: execute-only for code but read-write for data)**
  - for this we need to use protection bits in segment table entries