Synchronization: Basics

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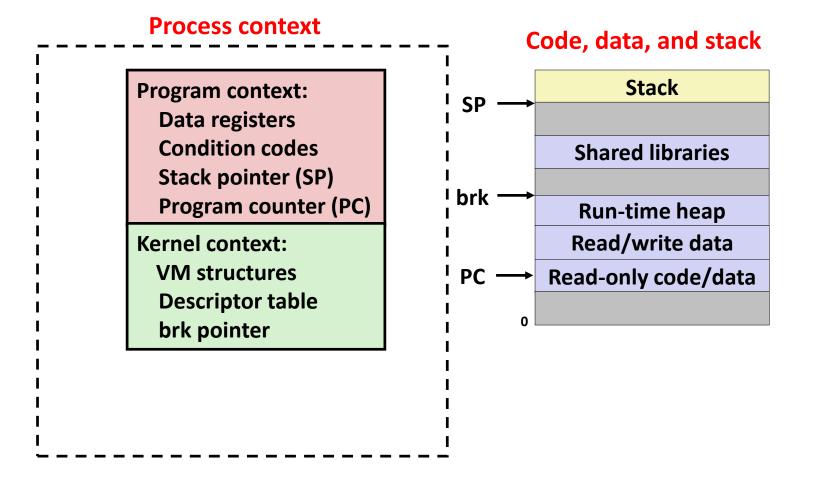
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Today

- **■** Threads review
- Sharing
- Mutual exclusion
- Semaphores

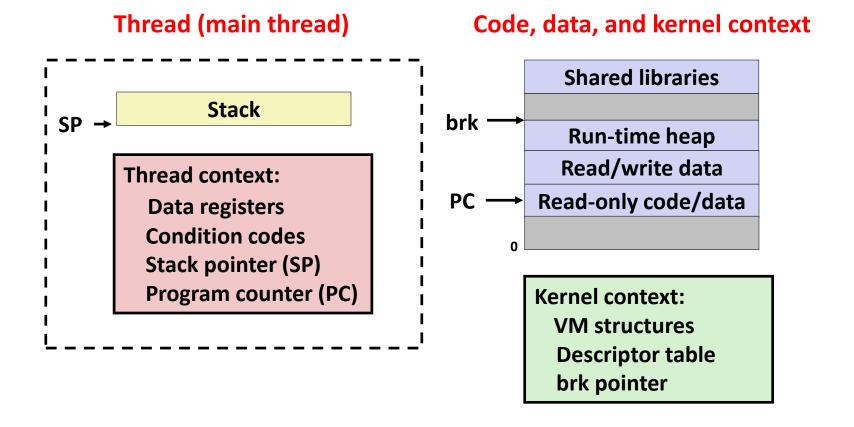
Traditional View of a Process

Process = process context + code, data, and stack



Alternate View of a Process

Process = thread + code, data, and kernel context



A Process With Multiple Threads

- Multiple threads can be associated with a process
 - Each thread has its own logical control flow
 - Each thread shares the same code, data, and kernel context
 - Each thread has its own stack for local variables
 - but not protected from other threads
 - Each thread has its own thread id (TID)

Thread 1 (main thread) Thread 2 (peer thread)

stack 1

Thread 1 context:

Data registers

Condition codes

SP₁

PC₁

stack 2

Thread 2 context:

Data registers

Condition codes

SP₂

PC₂

Shared code and data

shared libraries

run-time heap read/write data

read-only code/data

Kernel context:

VM structures
Descriptor table
brk pointer

Threads vs. Processes

Threads and processes: similarities

- Each has its own logical control flow
- Each can run concurrently with others
- Each is scheduled and context switched by the kernel

Threads and processes: differences

- Threads share code and data, processes (typically) do not
- Threads are less expensive than processes
 - Process control (creating and reaping) is more expensive than thread control
 - Context switches for processes more expensive than for threads

Pros and Cons of Thread-Based Designs

- + Easy to share data structures between threads
 - e.g., logging information, file cache
- + Threads are more efficient than processes
- Unintentional sharing can introduce subtle and hard-toreproduce errors!

Today

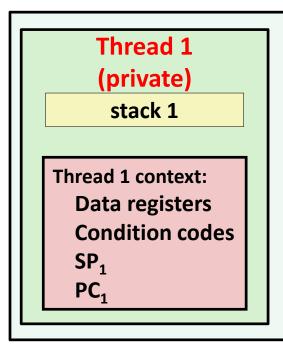
- **■** Threads review
- Sharing
- Mutual exclusion
- Semaphores
- Producer-Consumer Synchronization

Shared Variables in Threaded C Programs

- Question: Which variables in a threaded C program are shared?
 - The answer is not as simple as "global variables are shared" and "stack variables are private"
- Def: A variable x is shared if and only if multiple threads reference some instance of x.
- Requires answers to the following questions:
 - What is the memory model for threads?
 - How are instances of variables mapped to memory?
 - How many threads might reference each of these instances?

Threads Memory Model: Conceptual

- Multiple threads run within the context of a single process
- Each thread has its own separate thread context
 - Thread ID, stack, stack pointer, PC, condition codes, and GP registers
- All threads share the remaining process context
 - Code, data, heap, and shared library segments of the process virtual address space
 - Open files and installed handlers



Thread 2
(private)
stack 2

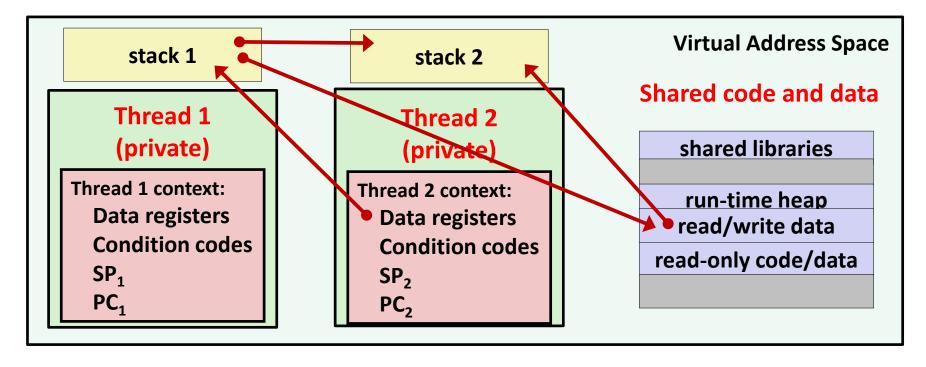
Thread 2 context:
Data registers
Condition codes
SP₂
PC₂

shared libraries

run-time heap
read/write data
read-only code/data

Threads Memory Model: Actual

- Separation of data is not strictly enforced:
 - Register values are truly separate and protected, but...
 - Any thread can read and write the stack of any other thread



The mismatch between the conceptual and operation model is a source of confusion and errors

Example Program to Illustrate Sharing

```
char **ptr; /* global var */
int main(int argc, char *argv[])
    long i;
   pthread t tid;
    char *msgs[2] = {
        "Hello from foo",
        "Hello from bar"
    };
   ptr = msqs;
    for (i = 0; i < 2; i++)
        Pthread create (&tid,
            NULL,
            thread,
            (void *)i); ←
    Pthread exit(NULL);
                            sharing.c
```

```
void *thread(void *vargp)
{
    long myid = (long)vargp;
    static int cnt = 0;

    printf("[%ld]: %s (cnt=%d)\n",
         myid, ptr[myid], ++cnt);
    return NULL;
}
```

Peer threads reference main thread's stack indirectly through global ptr variable

A common, but inelegant way to pass a single argument to a thread routine

Mapping Variable Instances to Memory

Global variables

- Def: Variable declared outside of a function
- Virtual memory contains exactly one instance of any global variable

Local variables

- Def: Variable declared inside function without static attribute
- Each thread stack contains one instance of each local variable

Local static variables

- Def: Variable declared inside function with the static attribute
- Virtual memory contains exactly one instance of any local static variable.

Mapping Variable Instances to Memory

Global var: 1 instance (ptr [data])

```
Local vars: 1 instance (i.m, msgs.m)
char **ptr; /* global var *
int main(int main, char *argv[])
    long i
    pthread t tid;
    char *msqs[2] = {
        "Hello from foo",
        "Hello from bar"
    };
    ptr = msgs;
    for (i = 0; i < 2; i++)
        Pthread create (&tid,
            NULL,
            thread,
             (void *)i);
    Pthread exit(NULL);
                            sharing.c
```

```
Local var: 2 instances (
  myid.p0 [peer thread 0's stack],
  myid.p1 [peer thread 1's stack]
void *thread(void *vargp)
    long myid = (long) vargp;
    static int cnt = 0;
    printf("[%ld]: %s (cnt=%d) \n",
         myid, ptr[myid], ++cnt);
    return NVLL;
```

Local static var: 1 instance (cnt [data])

Shared Variable Analysis

Which variables are shared?

```
Variable Referenced by Referenced by
                                         Referenced by
instance main thread? peer thread 0?
                                        peer thread 1?
ptr
              yes
                             yes
                                              yes
cnt
              no
                             yes
                                              yes
i.m
              yes
                             no
                                              no
msgs.m
              ves
                             yes
                                              yes
myid.p0
              no
                             yes
                                              no
myid.p1
              no
                             no
                                              yes
```

Shared Variable Analysis

Which variables are shared?

Variable instance	Referenced by main thread?	Referenced by peer thread 0?	Referenced by peer thread 1?
ptr	yes	yes	yes
cnt	no	yes	yes
i.m	yes	no	no
msgs.m	yes	yes	yes
myid.p0	no	yes	no
myid.p1	no	no	yes

- Answer: A variable x is shared iff multiple threads reference at least one instance of x. Thus:
 - ptr, cnt, and msgs are shared
 - i and myid are not shared

Today

- **■** Threads review
- Sharing
- Mutual exclusion
- Semaphores
- Producer-Consumer Synchronization

Synchronizing Threads

- Shared variables are handy...
- ...but introduce the possibility of nasty synchronization errors.

badcnt.c: Improper Synchronization

```
/* Global shared variable */
volatile long cnt = 0; /* Counter */
int main(int argc, char **argv)
    long niters;
    pthread t tid1, tid2;
    niters = atoi(argv[1]);
    Pthread create (&tid1, NULL,
        thread, &niters);
    Pthread create (&tid2, NULL,
        thread, &niters);
    Pthread join(tid1, NULL);
    Pthread join(tid2, NULL);
    /* Check result */
    if (cnt != (2 * niters))
        printf("BOOM! cnt=%ld\n", cnt);
    else
        printf("OK cnt=%ld\n", cnt);
    exit(0);
                                 badcnt.c
```

```
linux> ./badcnt 10000
OK cnt=20000
linux> ./badcnt 10000
BOOM! cnt=13051
linux>
```

cnt should equal 20,000.

What went wrong?

Assembly Code for Counter Loop

C code for counter loop in thread i

```
for (i = 0; i < niters; i++)
    cnt++;</pre>
```

Asm code for thread i

```
movq (%rdi), %rcx
    testq %rcx,%rcx
    ile .L2
    movl $0, %eax
.L3:
                              L_i: Load cnt
    movq cnt(%rip),%rdx
                              U_i: Update cnt
    addq $1, %rdx
                              S_i: Store cnt
    movq %rdx, cnt(%rip)
    addq $1, %rax
    cmpq %rcx, %rax
                              T_i: Tail
    jne
           . L3
.L2:
```

Concurrent Execution

- Key idea: In general, any sequentially consistent interleaving is possible, but some give an unexpected result!
 - I_i denotes that thread i executes instruction I
 - %rdx_i is the content of %rdx in thread i's context

i (thread)	instr _i	$%$ rd x_1	%rdx ₂	cnt
1	H ₁	-	-	0
1	L ₁	0	-	0
1	U ₁	1	-	0
1	S ₁	1	-	1
2	H ₂	-	-	1
2	L ₂	-	1	1
2	U ₂	-	2	1
2	S ₂	-	2	2
2	T ₂	-	2	2
1	T ₁	1	-	2

OK

Concurrent Execution

- Key idea: In general, any sequentially consistent interleaving is possible, but some give an unexpected result!
 - I_i denotes that thread i executes instruction I
 - %rdx_i is the content of %rdx in thread i's context

i (thread)	instr _i	$%$ rd x_1	%rdx ₂	cnt		
1	H ₁	-	-	0]	Thread 1
1	L ₁	0	-	0		critical section
1	U_1	1	-	0		critical section
1	S_1	1	-	1		Thread 2
2	H ₂	-	-	1		critical section
2	L ₂	-	1	1		
2	U ₂	-	2	1		
2	S ₂	-	2	2		
2	T ₂	-	2	2		
1	T ₁	1	_	2	ОК	

Concurrent Execution (cont)

Incorrect ordering: two threads increment the counter, but the result is 1 instead of 2

i (thread)	instr _i	$%$ rd x_1	%rdx ₂	cnt
1	H ₁	-	-	0
1	L ₁	0	-	0
1	U ₁	1	-	0
2	H_2	-	-	0
2	L ₂	-	0	0
1	S ₁	1	-	1
1	T ₁	1	-	1
2	U ₂	-	1	1
2	S ₂	-	1	1
2	T ₂	-	1	1

Oops!

Concurrent Execution (cont)

How about this ordering?

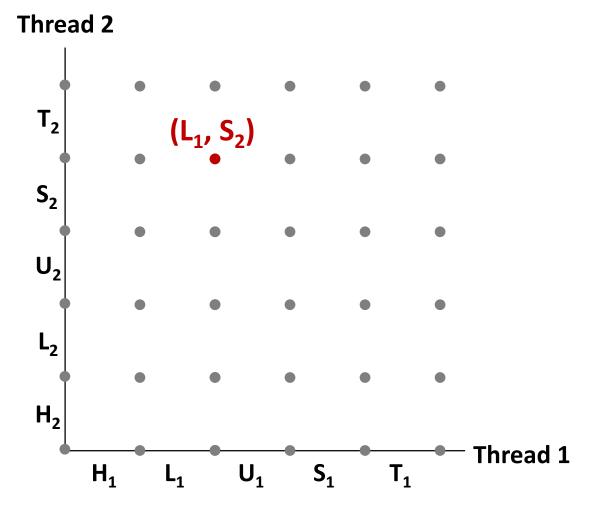
i (thread)	instr _i	$%$ rd x_1	$%$ rd x_2	cnt
1	H ₁			0
1	L_1	0		
2	H_2			
2	L_2		0	
2	U_2		1	
2	S ₂		1	1
1	U ₁	1		
1	S ₁	1		1
1				1
2	T ₂			1

Oops!

We can analyze the behavior using a progress graph

Progress Graphs

Piugiess Grapiis



A progress graph depicts the discrete execution state space of concurrent threads.

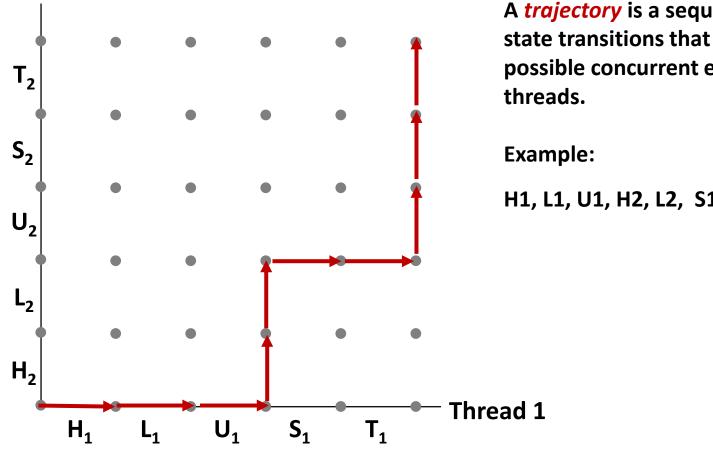
Each axis corresponds to the sequential order of instructions in a thread.

Each point corresponds to a possible *execution state* (Inst₁, Inst₂).

E.g., (L₁, S₂) denotes state where thread 1 has completed L₁ and thread 2 has completed S₂.

Trajectories in Progress Graphs

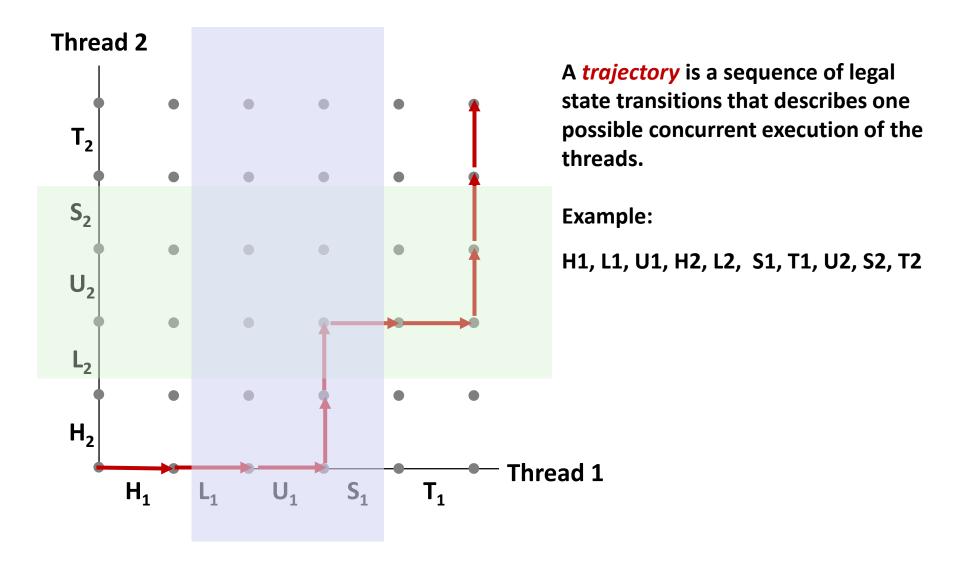
Thread 2



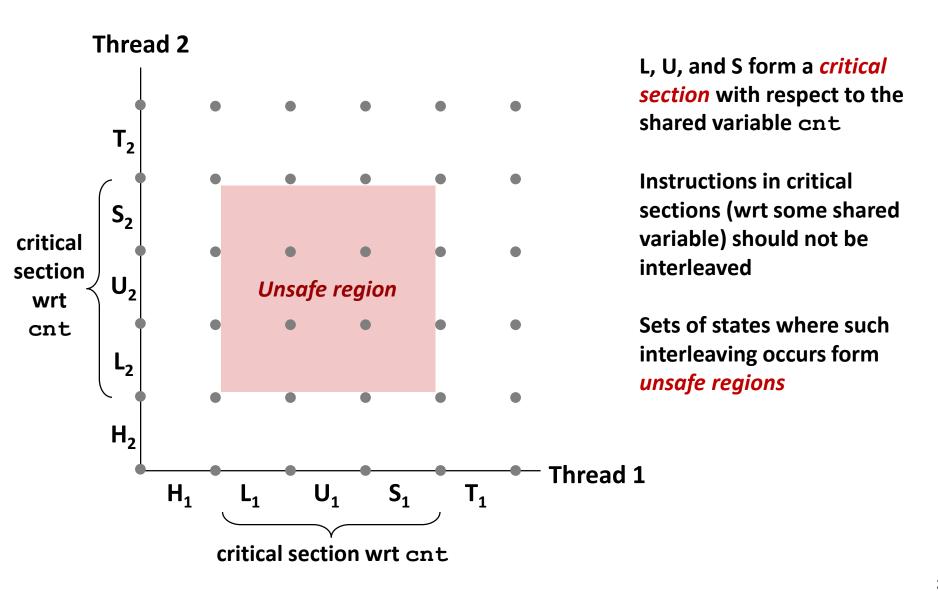
A trajectory is a sequence of legal state transitions that describes one possible concurrent execution of the

H1, L1, U1, H2, L2, S1, T1, U2, S2, T2

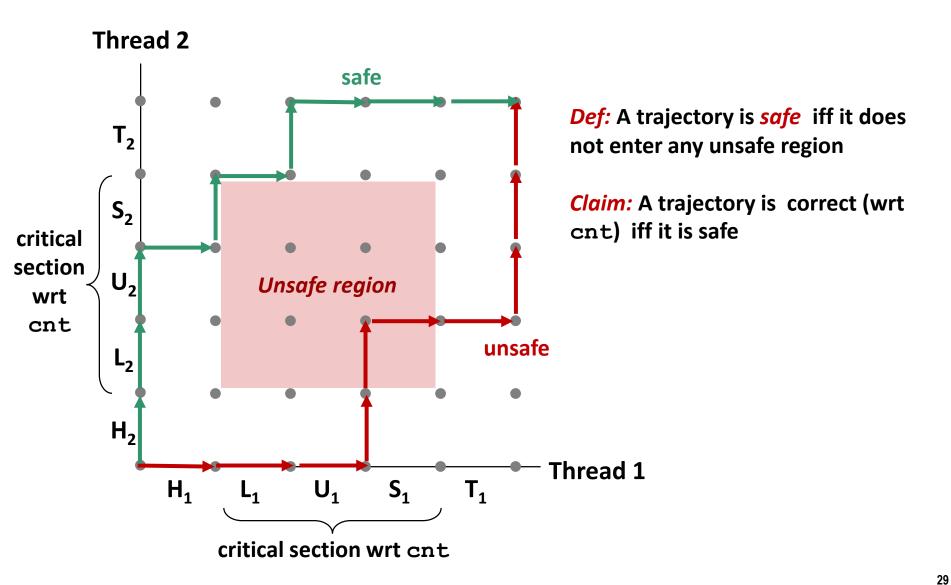
Trajectories in Progress Graphs



Critical Sections and Unsafe Regions



Critical Sections and Unsafe Regions



badcnt.c: Improper Synchronization

```
/* Global shared variable */
volatile long cnt = 0; /* Counter */
int main(int argc, char **argv)
    long niters;
    pthread t tid1, tid2;
    niters = atoi(argv[1]);
    Pthread create (&tid1, NULL,
        thread, &niters);
    Pthread create (&tid2, NULL,
        thread, &niters);
    Pthread join(tid1, NULL);
    Pthread join(tid2, NULL);
    /* Check result */
    if (cnt != (2 * niters))
        printf("BOOM! cnt=%ld\n", cnt);
    else
        printf("OK cnt=%ld\n", cnt);
    exit(0);
                                  badcnt.c
```

Variable	main	thread1	thread2			
cnt	yes*	yes	yes			
niters.m	yes	no	no			
tid1.m	yes	no	no			
i.1	no	yes	no			
i.2	no	no	yes			
niters.1	no	yes	no			
niters.2	no	no	yes			

Enforcing Mutual Exclusion

- Question: How can we guarantee a safe trajectory?
- Answer: We must synchronize the execution of the threads so that they can never have an unsafe trajectory.
 - i.e., need to guarantee mutually exclusive access for each critical section.
- Classic solution:
 - Semaphores (Edsger Dijkstra)

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Semaphores

- Semaphore: non-negative global integer synchronization variable.
 Manipulated by P and V operations.
- P(s)
 - If s is nonzero, then decrement s by 1 and return immediately.
 - Test and decrement operations occur atomically (indivisibly)
 - If s is zero, then suspend thread until s becomes nonzero and the thread is restarted by a V operation.
 - After restarting, the P operation decrements s and returns control to the caller.
- V(s):
 - Increment *s* by 1.
 - Increment operation occurs atomically
 - If there are any threads blocked in a P operation waiting for s to become non-zero, then restart exactly one of those threads, which then completes its P operation by decrementing s.
- Semaphore invariant: (s >= 0)

Semaphores

- Semaphore: non-negative global integer synchronization variable
- Manipulated by P and V operations:
 - P(s): [while (s == 0) wait(); s--;]
 - Dutch for "Proberen" (test)
 - V(s): [s++;]
 - Dutch for "Verhogen" (increment)
- OS kernel guarantees that operations between brackets [] are executed indivisibly
 - Only one P or V operation at a time can modify s.
 - When while loop in P terminates, only that P can decrement s
- Semaphore invariant: (s >= 0)

C Semaphore Operations

Pthreads functions:

```
#include <semaphore.h>
int sem_init(sem_t *s, 0, unsigned int val);} /* s = val */
int sem_wait(sem_t *s); /* P(s) */
int sem_post(sem_t *s); /* V(s) */
```

CS:APP wrapper functions:

```
#include "csapp.h"

void P(sem_t *s); /* Wrapper function for sem_wait */
void V(sem_t *s); /* Wrapper function for sem_post */
```

badcnt.c: Improper Synchronization

```
/* Global shared variable */
volatile long cnt = 0; /* Counter */
int main(int argc, char **argv)
    long niters;
    pthread t tid1, tid2;
    niters = atoi(argv[1]);
    Pthread create (&tid1, NULL,
        thread, &niters);
    Pthread create (&tid2, NULL,
        thread, &niters);
    Pthread join(tid1, NULL);
    Pthread join(tid2, NULL);
    /* Check result */
    if (cnt != (2 * niters))
        printf("BOOM! cnt=%ld\n", cnt);
    else
        printf("OK cnt=%ld\n", cnt);
    exit(0);
                                  badcnt.c
```

How can we fix this using semaphores?

Using Semaphores for Mutual Exclusion

Basic idea:

- Associate a unique semaphore mutex, initially 1, with each shared variable (or related set of shared variables).
- Surround corresponding critical sections with P(mutex) and V(mutex) operations.

Terminology:

- Binary semaphore: semaphore whose value is always 0 or 1
- Mutex: binary semaphore used for mutual exclusion
 - P operation: "locking" the mutex
 - V operation: "unlocking" or "releasing" the mutex
 - "Holding" a mutex: locked and not yet unlocked.
- Counting semaphore: used as a counter for set of available resources.

goodcnt.c: Proper Synchronization

Define and initialize a mutex for the shared variable cnt:

Surround critical section with P and V:

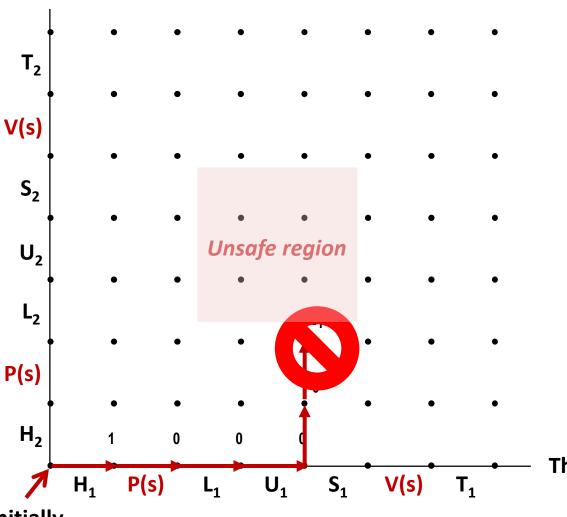
```
for (i = 0; i < niters; i++) {
    P(&mutex);
    cnt++;
    V(&mutex);
}
</pre>
```

```
linux> ./goodent 10000
OK cnt=20000
linux> ./goodent 10000
OK cnt=20000
linux>
```

Warning: It's orders of magnitude slower than badent.c.

Function	badcnt	goodcnt
Time (ms) niters = 10 ⁶	12	450
Slowdown	1.0	37.5

Thread 2

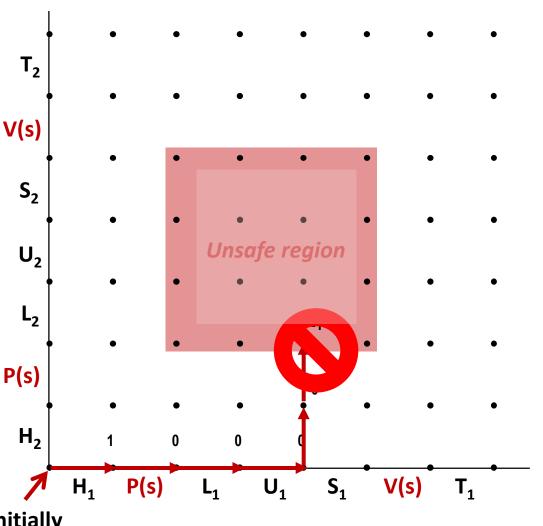


Provide mutually exclusive access to shared variable by surrounding critical section with *P* and *V* operations on semaphore s (initially set to 1)

Thread 1

Initially s = 1

Thread 2



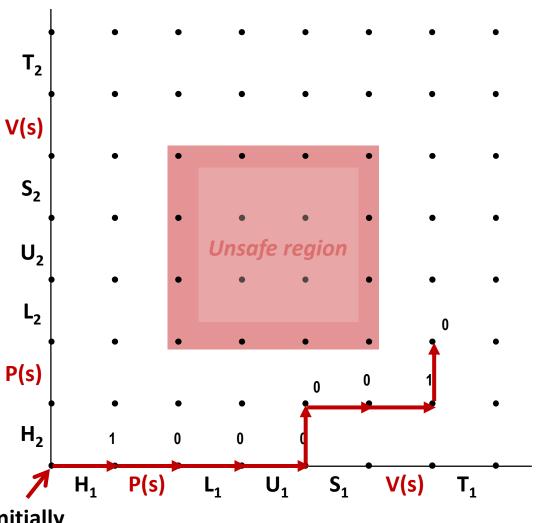
Provide mutually exclusive access to shared variable by surrounding critical section with *P* and *V* operations on semaphore s (initially set to 1)

Semaphore invariant creates a *forbidden region* that encloses unsafe region and that cannot be entered by any trajectory.

Thread 1

Initially s = 1

Thread 2



Provide mutually exclusive access to shared variable by surrounding critical section with *P* and *V* operations on semaphore s (initially set to 1)

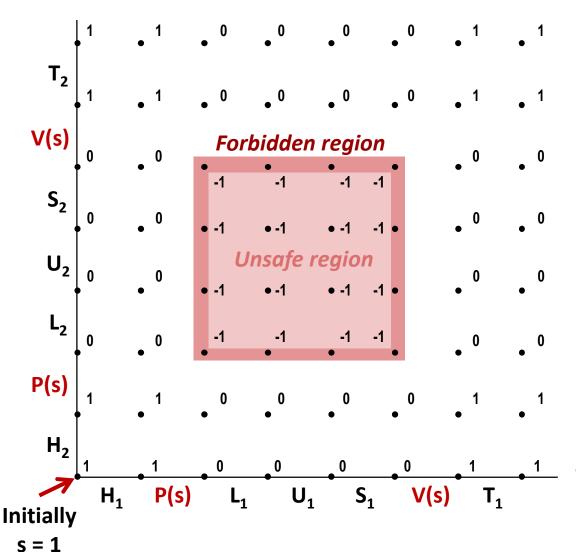
Semaphore invariant creates a *forbidden region* that encloses unsafe region and that cannot be entered by any trajectory.

Thread 1

Initially

s = 1

Thread 2



Provide mutually exclusive access to shared variable by surrounding critical section with *P* and *V* operations on semaphore s (initially set to 1)

Semaphore invariant creates a *forbidden region* that encloses unsafe region and that cannot be entered by any trajectory.

Thread 1

Enforcing Mutual Exclusion

- Mutex is special case of semaphore
 - Value either 0 or 1
- Pthreads provides pthread_mutex_t
 - Operations: lock, unlock
- Recommended over general semaphores when appropriate

goodmcnt.c: Mutex Synchronization

Define and initialize a mutex for the shared variable cnt:

```
volatile long cnt = 0; /* Counter */
pthread_mutex_t mutex;
pthread_mutex_init(&mutex, NULL); // No special attributes
```

Surround critical section with lock and unlock:

```
for (i = 0; i < niters; i++) {
    pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
    cnt++;
    pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
}</pre>
```

```
linux> ./goodment 10000
OK ent=20000
linux> ./goodment 10000
OK ent=20000
linux>
```

Function	badcnt	goodcnt	goodmcnt	
Time (ms) niters = 10 ⁶	12	450	214	
Slowdown	1.0	37.5	17.8	4

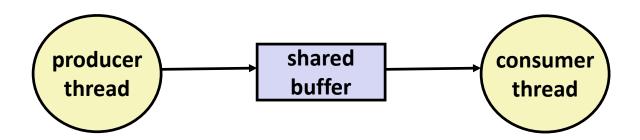
Today

- **■** Threads review
- Sharing
- Mutual exclusion
- Semaphores
- Producer-Consumer Synchronization

Using Semaphores to Coordinate Access to Shared Resources

- Basic idea: Thread uses a semaphore operation to notify another thread that some condition has become true
 - Use counting semaphores to keep track of resource state.
 - Use binary semaphores to notify other threads.
- The Producer-Consumer Problem
 - Mediating interactions between processes that generate information and that then make use of that information

Producer-Consumer Problem



Common synchronization pattern:

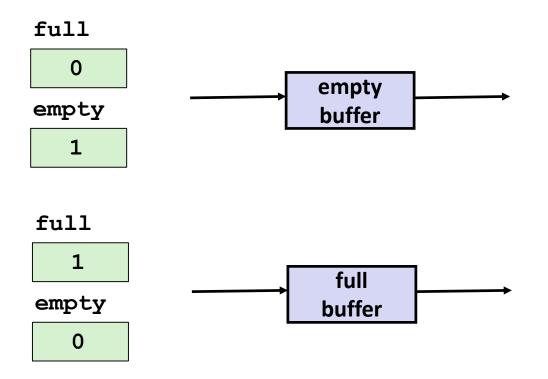
- Producer waits for empty slot, inserts item in buffer, and notifies consumer
- Consumer waits for *item*, removes it from buffer, and notifies producer

Examples

- Multimedia processing:
 - Producer creates video frames, consumer renders them
- Event-driven graphical user interfaces
 - Producer detects mouse clicks, mouse movements, and keyboard hits and inserts corresponding events in buffer
 - Consumer retrieves events from buffer and paints the display

Producer-Consumer on 1-element Buffer

■ Maintain two semaphores: full + empty



Producer-Consumer on 1-element Buffer

```
#include "csapp.h"

#define NITERS 5

void *producer(void *arg);
void *consumer(void *arg);

struct {
  int buf; /* shared var */
  sem_t full; /* sems */
  sem_t empty;
} shared;
```

```
int main(int argc, char** argv) {
 pthread t tid producer;
 pthread t tid consumer;
  /* Initialize the semaphores */
  Sem init(&shared.empty, 0, 1);
  Sem init(&shared.full, 0, 0);
  /* Create threads and wait */
 Pthread create (&tid producer, NULL,
                 producer, NULL);
 Pthread create (&tid consumer, NULL,
                 consumer, NULL);
 Pthread join(tid producer, NULL);
 Pthread join(tid consumer, NULL);
 return 0;
```

Producer-Consumer on 1-element Buffer

Initially: empty==1, full==0

Producer Thread

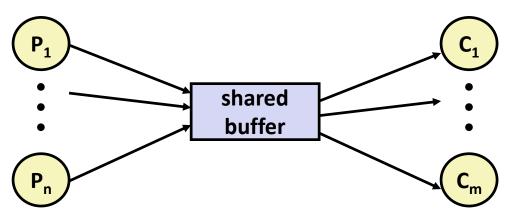
```
void *producer(void *arg) {
  int i, item;
  for (i=0; i<NITERS; i++) {
    /* Produce item */
    item = i;
    printf("produced %d\n",
            item);
    /* Write item to buf */
    P(&shared.empty);
    shared.buf = item;
    V(&shared.full);
  return NULL;
```

Consumer Thread

```
void *consumer(void *arg) {
  int i, item;
  for (i=0; i<NITERS; i++) {
    /* Read item from buf */
    P(&shared.full);
    item = shared.buf;
    V(&shared.empty);
    /* Consume item */
    printf("consumed %d\n", item);
  return NULL;
```

Why 2 Semaphores for 1-Entry Buffer?

Consider multiple producers & multiple consumers

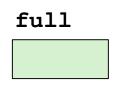


- Producers will contend with each to get empty
- Consumers will contend with each other to get full

Producers

```
P(&shared.empty);
shared.buf = item;
V(&shared.full);
```

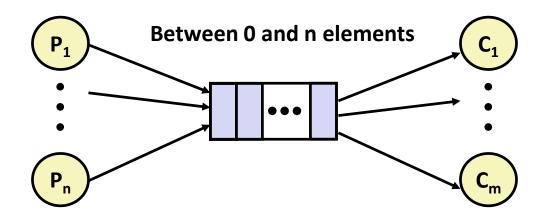




Consumers

P(&shared.full);
item = shared.buf;
V(&shared.empty);

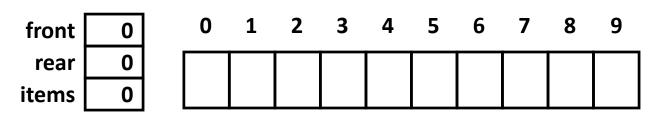
Producer-Consumer on an *n*-element Buffer



■ Implemented using a shared buffer package called sbuf.

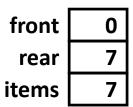
Circular Buffer (n = 10)

- Store elements in array of size n
- items: number of elements in buffer
- Empty buffer:
 - front = rear
- Nonempty buffer
 - rear: index of most recently inserted element
 - front: (index of next element to remove 1) mod n
- Initially:



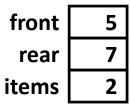
Circular Buffer Operation (n = 10)

Insert 7 elements



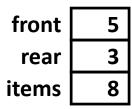
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

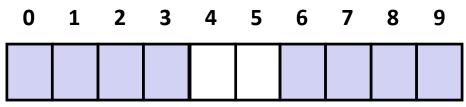
Remove 5 elements



0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Insert 6 elements





Remove 8 elements

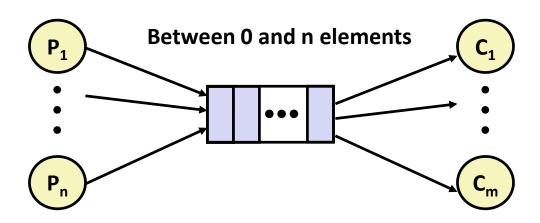
front	3
rear	3
items	0

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Sequential Circular Buffer Code

```
init(int v)
   items = front = rear = 0;
insert(int v)
   if (items \geq n)
       error();
   if (++rear >= n) rear = 0;
  buf[rear] = v;
   items++;
int remove()
   if (items == 0)
       error();
   if (++front >= n) front = 0;
   int v = buf[front];
   items--;
   return v;
```

Producer-Consumer on an *n*-element Buffer



Requires a mutex and two counting semaphores:

- mutex: enforces mutually exclusive access to the buffer and counters
- slots: counts the available slots in the buffer
- items: counts the available items in the buffer

Makes use of general semaphores

Will range in value from 0 to n

sbuf Package - Declarations

```
#include "csapp.h"
typedef struct {
   int *buf; /* Buffer array
                                                      */
   int n; /* Maximum number of slots
                                                      */
   int front;  /* buf[front+1 (mod n)] is first item */
   int rear;  /* buf[rear] is last item
                                                      */
   sem t mutex; /* Protects accesses to buf
                                                      */
   sem t slots; /* Counts available slots
                                                      */
   sem t items; /* Counts available items
                                                      */
} sbuf t;
void sbuf init(sbuf t *sp, int n);
void sbuf deinit(sbuf t *sp);
void sbuf insert(sbuf t *sp, int item);
int sbuf remove(sbuf t *sp);
```

sbuf.h

sbuf Package - Implementation

Initializing and deinitializing a shared buffer:

```
/* Create an empty, bounded, shared FIFO buffer with n slots */
void sbuf init(sbuf t *sp, int n)
   sp->buf = Calloc(n, sizeof(int));
                           /* Buffer holds max of n items */
   sp->n = n;
   sp->front = sp->rear = 0; /* Empty buffer iff front == rear */
   Sem init(&sp->mutex, 0, 1); /* Binary semaphore for locking */
   Sem init(&sp->slots, 0, n); /* Initially, buf has n empty slots */
   Sem init(&sp->items, 0, 0); /* Initially, buf has zero items */
/* Clean up buffer sp */
void sbuf deinit(sbuf t *sp)
   Free(sp->buf);
```

sbuf Package - Implementation

Inserting an item into a shared buffer:

```
/* Insert item onto the rear of shared buffer sp */
void sbuf insert(sbuf t *sp, int item)
   P(&sp->slots);
                                /* Wait for available slot */
   P(&sp->mutex);
                               /* Lock the buffer
                                                           */
    if (++sp->rear >= sp->n)
                                /* Increment index (mod n)
       sp->rear = 0;
    sp->buf[sp->rear] = item; /* Insert the item
                                                           */
                                                           */
                              /* Unlock the buffer
   V(&sp->mutex);
                                /* Announce available item */
   V(&sp->items);
                                                          sbuf.c
```

sbuf Package - Implementation

Removing an item from a shared buffer:

```
/* Remove and return the first item from buffer sp */
int sbuf remove(sbuf t *sp)
{
   int item;
                                /* Wait for available item */
   P(&sp->items);
   P(&sp->mutex);
                               /* Lock the buffer
                                                           */
   if (++sp-)front >= sp-)n /* Increment index (mod n) */
       sp->front = 0;
   item = sp->buf[sp->front];
                               /* Remove the item
                                                           */
                               /* Unlock the buffer
   V(&sp->mutex);
                                                           */
                                /* Announce available slot */
   V(&sp->slots);
   return item;
                                                             sbuf.c
```

Demonstration

- See program produce-consume.c in code directory
- 10-entry shared circular buffer
- 5 producers
 - Agent i generates numbers from 20*i to 20*i 1.
 - Puts them in buffer
- 5 consumers
 - Each retrieves 20 elements from buffer
- Main program
 - Makes sure each value between 0 and 99 retrieved once

Summary

- Programmers need a clear model of how variables are shared by threads.
- Variables shared by multiple threads must be protected to ensure mutually exclusive access.
- Semaphores are a fundamental mechanism for enforcing mutual exclusion
 - And can also support producer-consumer synchronization