

## CHAPTER

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We begin our study of operating systems (OSs) with a brief history. This history is itself interesting and also serves the purpose of providing an overview of OS principles. The first section examines the objectives and functions of operating systems. Then we look at how operating systems have evolved from primitive batch systems to sophisticated multitasking, multiuser systems. The remainder of the chapter looks at the history and general characteristics of the two operating systems that serve as examples throughout this book. All of the material in this chapter is covered in greater depth later in the book.

### 2.1 OPERATING SYSTEM OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

An OS is a program that controls the execution of application programs and acts as an interface between applications and the computer hardware. It can be thought of as having three objectives:

- **Convenience:** An OS makes a computer more convenient to use.
- **Efficiency:** An OS allows the computer system resources to be used in an efficient manner.
- **Ability to evolve:** An OS should be constructed in such a way as to permit the effective development, testing, and introduction of new system functions without interfering with service.

Let us examine these three aspects of an OS in turn.

#### The Operating System as a User/Computer Interface

The hardware and software used in providing applications to a user can be viewed in a layered or hierarchical fashion, as depicted in Figure 2.1. The user of those applications, the end user, generally is not concerned with the details of computer hardware. Thus, the end user views a computer system in terms of a set of applications. An application can be expressed in a programming language and is developed by an application programmer. If one were to develop an application program as a set of machine instructions that is completely responsible for controlling the computer hardware, one would be faced with an overwhelmingly complex undertaking. To ease this chore, a set of system programs is provided. Some of these programs are referred to as utilities. These implement frequently used functions that assist in program creation, the management of files, and the control of I/O devices. A programmer will make use of these facilities in developing an application, and the application, while it is running, will invoke the utilities to perform certain functions. The most important collection of system programs comprises the OS. The OS masks the details of the hardware from the programmer and provides the programmer with a convenient interface for using the system. It acts as mediator, making it easier for the programmer and for application programs to access and use those facilities and services.

Briefly, the OS typically provides services in the following areas:

- **Program development:** The OS provides a variety of facilities and services, such as editors and debuggers, to assist the programmer in creating programs. Typically, these services are in the form of utility programs that, while not

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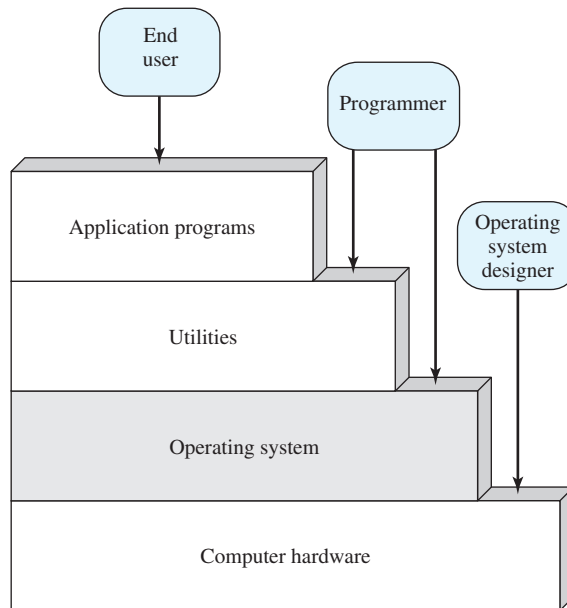


Figure 2.1 Layers and Views of a Computer System

strictly part of the core of the OS, are supplied with the OS and are referred to as application program development tools.

- **Program execution:** A number of steps need to be performed to execute a program. Instructions and data must be loaded into main memory, I/O devices and files must be initialized, and other resources must be prepared. The OS handles these scheduling duties for the user.
- **Access to I/O devices:** Each I/O device requires its own peculiar set of instructions or control signals for operation. The OS provides a uniform interface that hides these details so that programmers can access such devices using simple reads and writes.
- **Controlled access to files:** For file access, the OS must reflect a detailed understanding of not only the nature of the I/O device (disk drive, tape drive) but also the structure of the data contained in the files on the storage medium. In the case of a system with multiple users, the OS may provide protection mechanisms to control access to the files.
- **System access:** For shared or public systems, the OS controls access to the system as a whole and to specific system resources. The access function must provide protection of resources and data from unauthorized users and must resolve conflicts for resource contention.
- **Error detection and response:** A variety of errors can occur while a computer system is running. These include internal and external hardware errors, such as a memory error, or a device failure or malfunction; and various software errors, such as division by zero, attempt to access forbidden memory location,

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and inability of the OS to grant the request of an application. In each case, the OS must provide a response that clears the error condition with the least impact on running applications. The response may range from ending the program that caused the error, to retrying the operation, to simply reporting the error to the application.

- **Accounting:** A good OS will collect usage statistics for various resources and monitor performance parameters such as response time. On any system, this information is useful in anticipating the need for future enhancements and in tuning the system to improve performance. On a multiuser system, the information can be used for billing purposes.

### The Operating System as Resource Manager

A computer is a set of resources for the movement, storage, and processing of data and for the control of these functions. The OS is responsible for managing these resources.

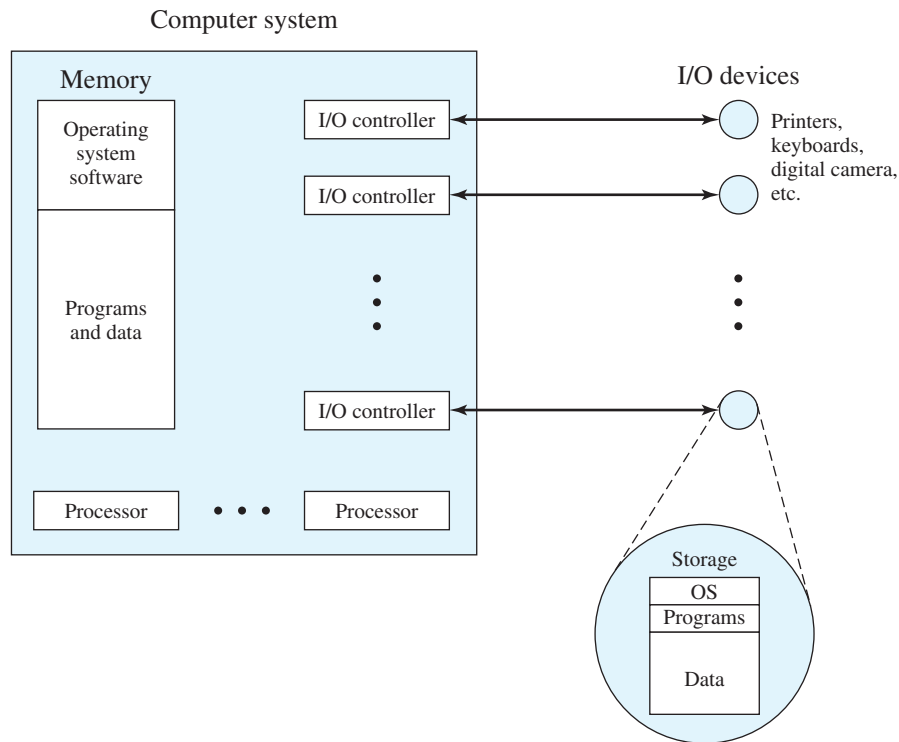
Can we say that it is the OS that controls the movement, storage, and processing of data? From one point of view, the answer is yes: By managing the computer's resources, the OS is in control of the computer's basic functions. But this control is exercised in a curious way. Normally, we think of a control mechanism as something external to that which is controlled, or at least as something that is a distinct and separate part of that which is controlled. (For example, a residential heating system is controlled by a thermostat, which is separate from the heat-generation and heat-distribution apparatus.) This is not the case with the OS, which as a control mechanism is unusual in two respects:

- The OS functions in the same way as ordinary computer software; that is, it is a program or suite of programs executed by the processor.
- The OS frequently relinquishes control and must depend on the processor to allow it to regain control.

Like other computer programs, the OS provides instructions for the processor. The key difference is in the intent of the program. The OS directs the processor in the use of the other system resources and in the timing of its execution of other programs. But in order for the processor to do any of these things, it must cease executing the OS program and execute other programs. Thus, the OS relinquishes control for the processor to do some "useful" work and then resumes control long enough to prepare the processor to do the next piece of work. The mechanisms involved in all this should become clear as the chapter proceeds.

Figure 2.2 suggests the main resources that are managed by the OS. A portion of the OS is in main memory. This includes the **kernel**, or **nucleus**, which contains the most frequently used functions in the OS and, at a given time, other portions of the OS currently in use. The remainder of main memory contains user programs and data. The allocation of this resource (main memory) is controlled jointly by the OS and memory management hardware in the processor, as we shall see. The OS decides when an I/O device can be used by a program in execution and controls access to and use of files. The processor itself is a resource, and the OS must determine how much processor time is to be devoted to the execution of a particular user program. In the case of a multiple-processor system, this decision must span all of the processors.

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**Figure 2.2** The Operating System as Resource Manager

### Ease of Evolution of an Operating System

A major operating system will evolve over time for a number of reasons:

- **Hardware upgrades plus new types of hardware:** For example, early versions of UNIX and the Macintosh operating system did not employ a paging mechanism because they were run on processors without paging hardware.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent versions of these operating systems were modified to exploit paging capabilities. Also, the use of graphics terminals and page-mode terminals instead of line-at-a-time scroll mode terminals affects OS design. For example, a graphics terminal typically allows the user to view several applications at the same time through “windows” on the screen. This requires more sophisticated support in the OS.
- **New services:** In response to user demand or in response to the needs of system managers, the OS expands to offer new services. For example, if it is found to be difficult to maintain good performance for users with existing tools, new measurement and control tools may be added to the OS.
- **Fixes:** Any OS has faults. These are discovered over the course of time and fixes are made. Of course, the fix may introduce new faults.

<sup>1</sup>Paging is introduced briefly later in this chapter and is discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

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The need to change an OS regularly places certain requirements on its design. An obvious statement is that the system should be modular in construction, with clearly defined interfaces between the modules, and that it should be well documented. For large programs, such as the typical contemporary OS, what might be referred to as straightforward modularization is inadequate [DENN80a]. That is, much more must be done than simply partitioning a program into modules. We return to this topic later in this chapter.

## 2.2 THE EVOLUTION OF OPERATING SYSTEMS

In attempting to understand the key requirements for an OS and the significance of the major features of a contemporary OS, it is useful to consider how operating systems have evolved over the years.

### Serial Processing

With the earliest computers, from the late 1940s to the mid-1950s, the programmer interacted directly with the computer hardware; there was no OS. These computers were run from a console consisting of display lights, toggle switches, some form of input device, and a printer. Programs in machine code were loaded via the input device (e.g., a card reader). If an error halted the program, the error condition was indicated by the lights. If the program proceeded to a normal completion, the output appeared on the printer.

These early systems presented two main problems:

- **Scheduling:** Most installations used a hardcopy sign-up sheet to reserve computer time. Typically, a user could sign up for a block of time in multiples of a half hour or so. A user might sign up for an hour and finish in 45 minutes; this would result in wasted computer processing time. On the other hand, the user might run into problems, not finish in the allotted time, and be forced to stop before resolving the problem.
- **Setup time:** A single program, called a **job**, could involve loading the compiler plus the high-level language program (source program) into memory, saving the compiled program (object program) and then loading and linking together the object program and common functions. Each of these steps could involve mounting or dismounting tapes or setting up card decks. If an error occurred, the hapless user typically had to go back to the beginning of the setup sequence. Thus, a considerable amount of time was spent just in setting up the program to run.

This mode of operation could be termed *serial processing*, reflecting the fact that users have access to the computer in series. Over time, various system software tools were developed to attempt to make serial processing more efficient. These include libraries of common functions, linkers, loaders, debuggers, and I/O driver routines that were available as common software for all users.

### Simple Batch Systems

Early computers were very expensive, and therefore it was important to maximize processor utilization. The wasted time due to scheduling and setup time was unacceptable.

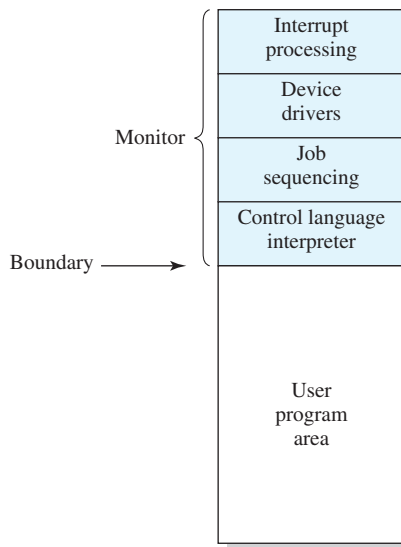
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To improve utilization, the concept of a batch operating system was developed. It appears that the first batch operating system (and the first OS of any kind) was developed in the mid-1950s by General Motors for use on an IBM 701 [WEIZ81]. The concept was subsequently refined and implemented on the IBM 704 by a number of IBM customers. By the early 1960s, a number of vendors had developed batch operating systems for their computer systems. IBSYS, the IBM operating system for the 7090/7094 computers, is particularly notable because of its widespread influence on other systems.

The central idea behind the simple batch-processing scheme is the use of a piece of software known as the **monitor**. With this type of OS, the user no longer has direct access to the processor. Instead, the user submits the job on cards or tape to a computer operator, who batches the jobs together sequentially and places the entire batch on an input device, for use by the monitor. Each program is constructed to branch back to the monitor when it completes processing, at which point the monitor automatically begins loading the next program.

To understand how this scheme works, let us look at it from two points of view: that of the monitor and that of the processor.

- **Monitor point of view:** The monitor controls the sequence of events. For this to be so, much of the monitor must always be in main memory and available for execution (Figure 2.3). That portion is referred to as the **resident monitor**. The rest of the monitor consists of utilities and common functions that are loaded as subroutines to the user program at the beginning of any job that requires them. The monitor reads in jobs one at a time from the input device (typically a card reader or magnetic tape drive). As it is read in, the current job is placed in the user program area, and control is passed to this job. When the job is completed, it returns control to the monitor, which immediately reads in



**Figure 2.3** Memory Layout for a Resident Monitor

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the next job. The results of each job are sent to an output device, such as a printer, for delivery to the user.

- **Processor point of view:** At a certain point, the processor is executing instructions from the portion of main memory containing the monitor. These instructions cause the next job to be read into another portion of main memory. Once a job has been read in, the processor will encounter a branch instruction in the monitor that instructs the processor to continue execution at the start of the user program. The processor will then execute the instructions in the user program until it encounters an ending or error condition. Either event causes the processor to fetch its next instruction from the monitor program. Thus the phrase “control is passed to a job” simply means that the processor is now fetching and executing instructions in a user program, and “control is returned to the monitor” means that the processor is now fetching and executing instructions from the monitor program.

The monitor performs a scheduling function: A batch of jobs is queued up, and jobs are executed as rapidly as possible, with no intervening idle time. The monitor improves job setup time as well. With each job, instructions are included in a primitive form of **job control language (JCL)**. This is a special type of programming language used to provide instructions to the monitor. A simple example is that of a user submitting a program written in the programming language FORTRAN plus some data to be used by the program. All FORTRAN instructions and data are on a separate punched card or a separate record on tape. In addition to FORTRAN and data lines, the job includes job control instructions, which are denoted by the beginning \$. The overall format of the job looks like this:

```

$JOB
$FTN
•   }
•   }   FORTRAN instructions
•   }

$LOAD
$RUN
•   }
•   }   Data
•   }

$END

```

To execute this job, the monitor reads the \$FTN line and loads the appropriate language compiler from its mass storage (usually tape). The compiler translates the user's program into object code, which is stored in memory or mass storage. If it is stored in memory, the operation is referred to as “compile, load, and go.” If it is stored on tape, then the \$LOAD instruction is required. This instruction is read by the monitor, which regains control after the compile operation. The monitor invokes the loader, which loads the object program into memory (in place of the compiler)



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and transfers control to it. In this manner, a large segment of main memory can be shared among different subsystems, although only one such subsystem could be executing at a time.

During the execution of the user program, any input instruction causes one line of data to be read. The input instruction in the user program causes an input routine that is part of the OS to be invoked. The input routine checks to make sure that the program does not accidentally read in a JCL line. If this happens, an error occurs and control transfers to the monitor. At the completion of the user job, the monitor will scan the input lines until it encounters the next JCL instruction. Thus, the system is protected against a program with too many or too few data lines.

The monitor, or batch operating system, is simply a computer program. It relies on the ability of the processor to fetch instructions from various portions of main memory to alternately seize and relinquish control. Certain other hardware features are also desirable:

- **Memory protection:** While the user program is executing, it must not alter the memory area containing the monitor. If such an attempt is made, the processor hardware should detect an error and transfer control to the monitor. The monitor would then abort the job, print out an error message, and load in the next job.
- **Timer:** A timer is used to prevent a single job from monopolizing the system. The timer is set at the beginning of each job. If the timer expires, the user program is stopped, and control returns to the monitor.
- **Privileged instructions:** Certain machine level instructions are designated privileged and can be executed only by the monitor. If the processor encounters such an instruction while executing a user program, an error occurs causing control to be transferred to the monitor. Among the privileged instructions are I/O instructions, so that the monitor retains control of all I/O devices. This prevents, for example, a user program from accidentally reading job control instructions from the next job. If a user program wishes to perform I/O, it must request that the monitor perform the operation for it.
- **Interrupts:** Early computer models did not have this capability. This feature gives the OS more flexibility in relinquishing control to and regaining control from user programs.

Considerations of memory protection and privileged instructions lead to the concept of modes of operation. A user program executes in a **user mode**, in which certain areas of memory are protected from the user's use and in which certain instructions may not be executed. The monitor executes in a system mode, or what has come to be called **kernel mode**, in which privileged instructions may be executed and in which protected areas of memory may be accessed.

Of course, an OS can be built without these features. But computer vendors quickly learned that the results were chaos, and so even relatively primitive batch operating systems were provided with these hardware features.

With a batch operating system, processor time alternates between execution of user programs and execution of the monitor. There have been two sacrifices: Some main memory is now given over to the monitor and some processor time is consumed by the monitor. Both of these are forms of overhead. Despite this overhead, the simple batch system improves utilization of the computer.

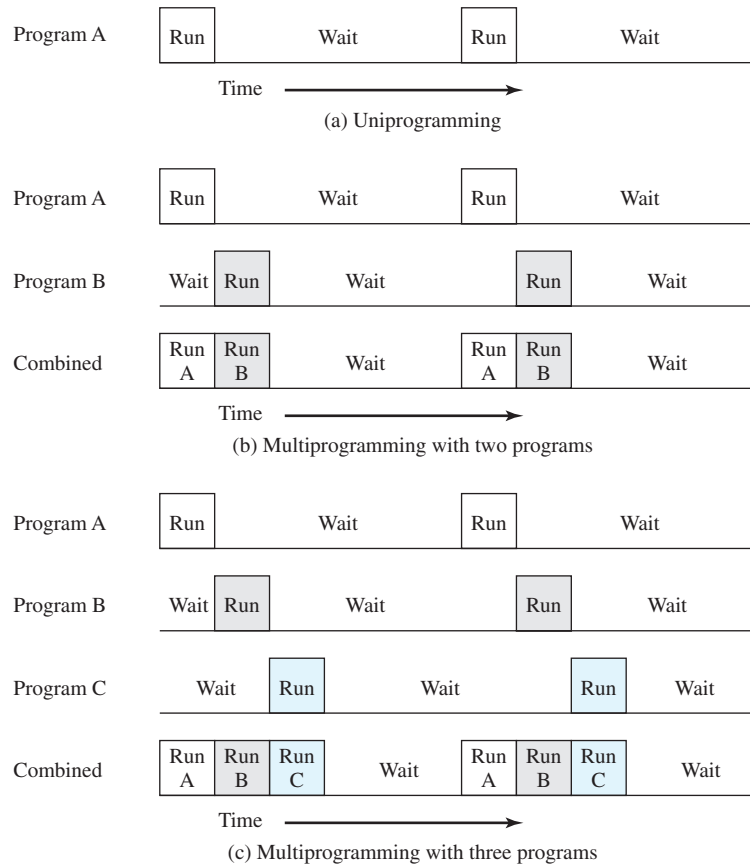
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Read one record from file	15 $\mu s$
Execute 100 instructions	1 $\mu s$
Write one record to file	15 $\mu s$
Total	31 $\mu s$
Percent CPU Utilization = $\frac{1}{31} = 0.032 = 3.2\%$	

**Figure 2.4** System Utilization Example

### Multiprogrammed Batch Systems

Even with the automatic job sequencing provided by a simple batch operating system, the processor is often idle. The problem is that I/O devices are slow compared to the processor. Figure 2.4 details a representative calculation. The calculation concerns a program that processes a file of records and performs, on average, 100 machine instructions per record. In this example the computer spends over 96% of its time waiting for I/O devices to finish transferring data to and from the file. Figure 2.5a illustrates this situation, where we have a single program, referred to



**Figure 2.5** Multiprogramming Example

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**Table 2.1** Sample Program Execution Attributes

	JOB1	JOB2	JOB3
<b>Type of job</b>	Heavy compute	Heavy I/O	Heavy I/O
<b>Duration</b>	5 min	15 min	10 min
<b>Memory required</b>	50 M	100 M	75 M
<b>Need disk?</b>	No	No	Yes
<b>Need terminal?</b>	No	Yes	No
<b>Need printer?</b>	No	No	Yes

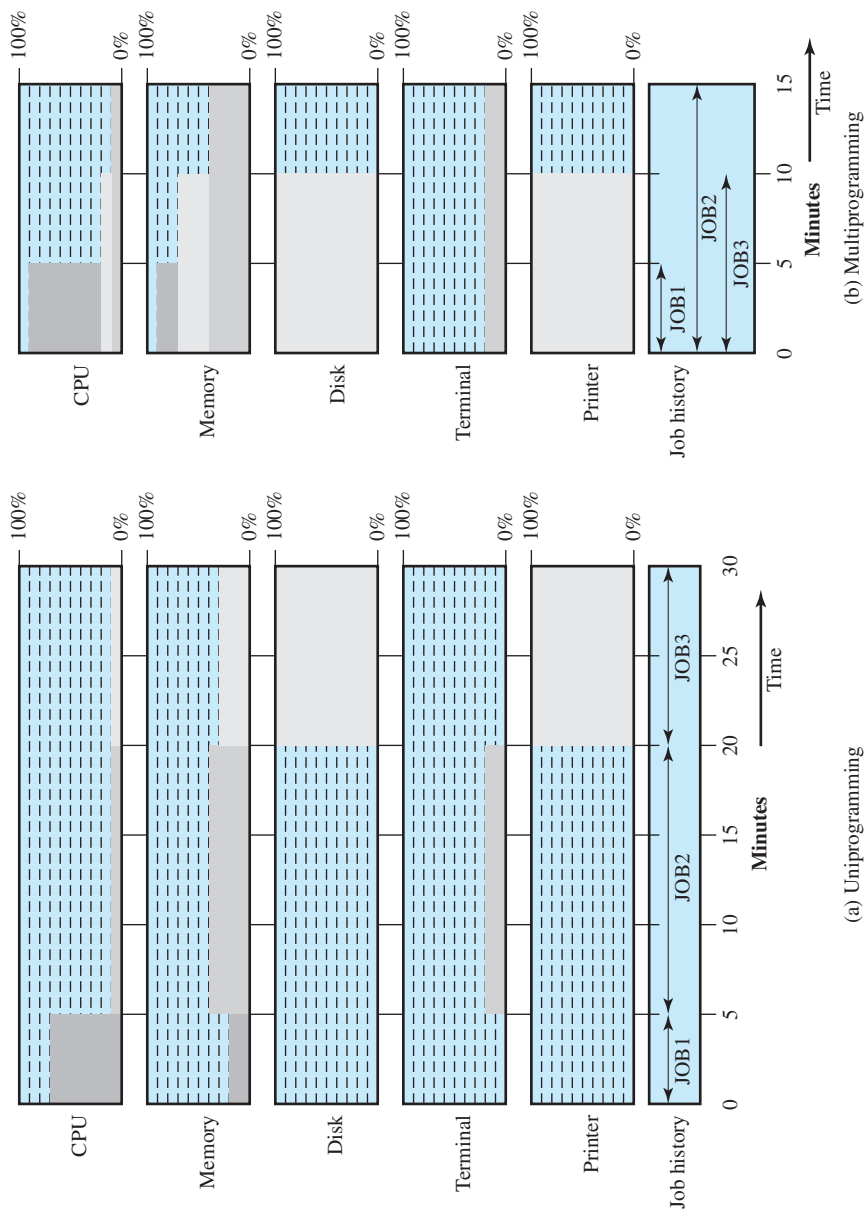
as uniprogramming. The processor spends a certain amount of time executing, until it reaches an I/O instruction. It must then wait until that I/O instruction concludes before proceeding.

This inefficiency is not necessary. We know that there must be enough memory to hold the OS (resident monitor) and one user program. Suppose that there is room for the OS and two user programs. When one job needs to wait for I/O, the processor can switch to the other job, which is likely not waiting for I/O (Figure 2.5b). Furthermore, we might expand memory to hold three, four, or more programs and switch among all of them (Figure 2.5c). The approach is known as **multiprogramming**, or **multitasking**. It is the central theme of modern operating systems.

To illustrate the benefit of multiprogramming, we give a simple example. Consider a computer with 250 Mbytes of available memory (not used by the OS), a disk, a terminal, and a printer. Three programs, JOB1, JOB2, and JOB3, are submitted for execution at the same time, with the attributes listed in Table 2.1. We assume minimal processor requirements for JOB2 and JOB3 and continuous disk and printer use by JOB3. For a simple batch environment, these jobs will be executed in sequence. Thus, JOB1 completes in 5 minutes. JOB2 must wait until the 5 minutes are over and then completes 15 minutes after that. JOB3 begins after 20 minutes and completes at 30 minutes from the time it was initially submitted. The average resource utilization, throughput, and response times are shown in the uniprogramming column of Table 2.2. Device-by-device utilization is illustrated in Figure 2.6a. It is evident that there is gross underutilization for all resources when averaged over the required 30-minute time period.

**Table 2.2** Effects of Multiprogramming on Resource Utilization

	Uniprogramming	Multiprogramming
<b>Processor use</b>	20%	40%
<b>Memory use</b>	33%	67%
<b>Disk use</b>	33%	67%
<b>Printer use</b>	33%	67%
<b>Elapsed time</b>	30 min	15 min
<b>Throughput</b>	6 jobs/hr	12 jobs/hr
<b>Mean response time</b>	18 min	10 min



**Figure 2.6** Utilization Histograms

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Now suppose that the jobs are run concurrently under a multiprogramming operating system. Because there is little resource contention between the jobs, all three can run in nearly minimum time while coexisting with the others in the computer (assuming that JOB2 and JOB3 are allotted enough processor time to keep their input and output operations active). JOB1 will still require 5 minutes to complete, but at the end of that time, JOB2 will be one-third finished and JOB3 half finished. All three jobs will have finished within 15 minutes. The improvement is evident when examining the multiprogramming column of Table 2.2, obtained from the histogram shown in Figure 2.6b.

As with a simple batch system, a multiprogramming batch system must rely on certain computer hardware features. The most notable additional feature that is useful for multiprogramming is the hardware that supports I/O interrupts and DMA (direct memory access). With interrupt-driven I/O or DMA, the processor can issue an I/O command for one job and proceed with the execution of another job while the I/O is carried out by the device controller. When the I/O operation is complete, the processor is interrupted and control is passed to an interrupt-handling program in the OS. The OS will then pass control to another job.

Multiprogramming operating systems are fairly sophisticated compared to single-program, or **uniprogramming**, systems. To have several jobs ready to run, they must be kept in main memory, requiring some form of **memory management**. In addition, if several jobs are ready to run, the processor must decide which one to run, this decision requires an algorithm for scheduling. These concepts are discussed later in this chapter.

### Time-Sharing Systems

With the use of multiprogramming, batch processing can be quite efficient. However, for many jobs, it is desirable to provide a mode in which the user interacts directly with the computer. Indeed, for some jobs, such as transaction processing, an interactive mode is essential.

Today, the requirement for an interactive computing facility can be, and often is, met by the use of a dedicated personal computer or workstation. That option was not available in the 1960s, when most computers were big and costly. Instead, time sharing was developed.

Just as multiprogramming allows the processor to handle multiple batch jobs at a time, multiprogramming can also be used to handle multiple interactive jobs. In this latter case, the technique is referred to as **time sharing**, because processor time is shared among multiple users. In a time-sharing system, multiple users simultaneously access the system through terminals, with the OS interleaving the execution of each user program in a short burst or quantum of computation. Thus, if there are  $n$  users actively requesting service at one time, each user will only see on the average  $1/n$  of the effective computer capacity, not counting OS overhead. However, given the relatively slow human reaction time, the response time on a properly designed system should be similar to that on a dedicated computer.

Both batch processing and time sharing use multiprogramming. The key differences are listed in Table 2.3.

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**Table 2.3** Batch Multiprogramming versus Time Sharing

	Batch Multiprogramming	Time Sharing
Principal objective	Maximize processor use	Minimize response time
Source of directives to operating system	Job control language commands provided with the job	Commands entered at the terminal

One of the first time-sharing operating systems to be developed was the Compatible Time-Sharing System (CTSS) [CORB62], developed at MIT by a group known as Project MAC (Machine-Aided Cognition, or Multiple-Access Computers). The system was first developed for the IBM 709 in 1961 and later transferred to an IBM 7094.

Compared to later systems, CTSS is primitive. The system ran on a computer with 32,000 36-bit words of main memory, with the resident monitor consuming 5000 of that. When control was to be assigned to an interactive user, the user's program and data were loaded into the remaining 27,000 words of main memory. A program was always loaded to start at the location of the 5000th word; this simplified both the monitor and memory management. A system clock generated interrupts at a rate of approximately one every 0.2 seconds. At each clock interrupt, the OS regained control and could assign the processor to another user. This technique is known as **time slicing**. Thus, at regular time intervals, the current user would be preempted and another user loaded in. To preserve the old user program status for later resumption, the old user programs and data were written out to disk before the new user programs and data were read in. Subsequently, the old user program code and data were restored in main memory when that program was next given a turn.

To minimize disk traffic, user memory was only written out when the incoming program would overwrite it. This principle is illustrated in Figure 2.7. Assume that there are four interactive users with the following memory requirements, in words:

- JOB1: 15,000
- JOB2: 20,000
- JOB3: 5000
- JOB4: 10,000

Initially, the monitor loads JOB1 and transfers control to it (a). Later, the monitor decides to transfer control to JOB2. Because JOB2 requires more memory than JOB1, JOB1 must be written out first, and then JOB2 can be loaded (b). Next, JOB3 is loaded in to be run. However, because JOB3 is smaller than JOB2, a portion of JOB2 can remain in memory, reducing disk write time (c). Later, the monitor decides to transfer control back to JOB1. An additional portion of JOB2 must be written out when JOB1 is loaded back into memory (d). When JOB4 is loaded, part of JOB1 and the portion of JOB2 remaining in memory are retained (e). At this point, if either JOB1 or JOB2 is activated, only a partial load will be required. In this example, it is JOB2 that runs next. This requires that JOB4 and the remaining resident portion of JOB1 be written out and that the missing portion of JOB2 be read in (f).

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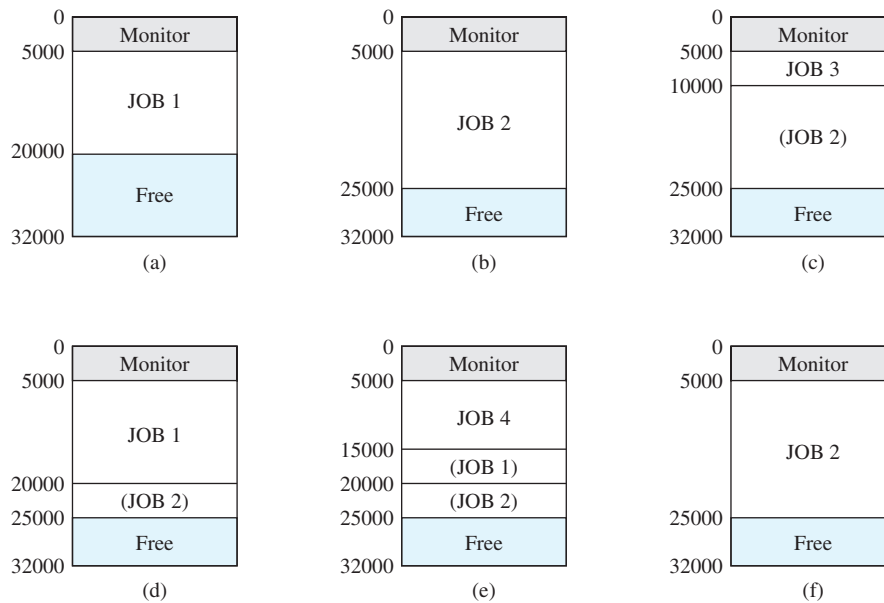


Figure 2.7 CTSS Operation

The CTSS approach is primitive compared to present-day time sharing, but it worked. It was extremely simple, which minimized the size of the monitor. Because a job was always loaded into the same locations in memory, there was no need for relocation techniques at load time (discussed subsequently). The technique of only writing out what was necessary minimized disk activity. Running on the 7094, CTSS supported a maximum of 32 users.

Time sharing and multiprogramming raise a host of new problems for the OS. If multiple jobs are in memory, then they must be protected from interfering with each other by, for example, modifying each other's data. With multiple interactive users, the file system must be protected so that only authorized users have access to a particular file. The contention for resources, such as printers and mass storage devices, must be handled. These and other problems, with possible solutions, will be encountered throughout this text.

## 2.3 MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Operating systems are among the most complex pieces of software ever developed. This reflects the challenge of trying to meet the difficult and in some cases competing objectives of convenience, efficiency, and ability to evolve. [DENN80a] proposes that there have been five major theoretical advances in the development of operating systems:

- Processes
- Memory management

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- Information protection and security
- Scheduling and resource management
- System structure

Each advance is characterized by principles, or abstractions, developed to meet difficult practical problems. Taken together, these five areas span many of the key design and implementation issues of modern operating systems. The brief review of these five areas in this section serves as an overview of much of the rest of the text.

### The Process

The concept of process is fundamental to the structure of operating systems. This term was first used by the designers of Multics in the 1960s [DALE68]. It is a somewhat more general term than job. Many definitions have been given for the term *process*, including

- A program in execution
- An instance of a program running on a computer
- The entity that can be assigned to and executed on a processor
- A unit of activity characterized by a single sequential thread of execution, a current state, and an associated set of system resources

This concept should become clearer as we proceed.

Three major lines of computer system development created problems in timing and synchronization that contributed to the development of the concept of the process: multiprogramming batch operation, time sharing, and real-time transaction systems. As we have seen, multiprogramming was designed to keep the processor and I/O devices, including storage devices, simultaneously busy to achieve maximum efficiency. The key mechanism is this: In response to signals indicating the completion of I/O transactions, the processor is switched among the various programs residing in main memory.

A second line of development was general-purpose time sharing. Here, the key design objective is to be responsive to the needs of the individual user and yet, for cost reasons, be able to support many users simultaneously. These goals are compatible because of the relatively slow reaction time of the user. For example, if a typical user needs an average of 2 seconds of processing time per minute, then close to 30 such users should be able to share the same system without noticeable interference. Of course, OS overhead must be factored into such calculations.

Another important line of development has been real-time transaction processing systems. In this case, a number of users are entering queries or updates against a database. An example is an airline reservation system. The key difference between the transaction processing system and the time-sharing system is that the former is limited to one or a few applications, whereas users of a time-sharing system can engage in program development, job execution, and the use of various applications. In both cases, system response time is paramount.

The principal tool available to system programmers in developing the early multiprogramming and multiuser interactive systems was the interrupt. The activity



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of any job could be suspended by the occurrence of a defined event, such as an I/O completion. The processor would save some sort of context (e. g., program counter and other registers) and branch to an interrupt-handling routine, which would determine the nature of the interrupt, process the interrupt, and then resume user processing with the interrupted job or some other job.

The design of the system software to coordinate these various activities turned out to be remarkably difficult. With many jobs in progress at any one time, each of which involved numerous steps to be performed in sequence, it became impossible to analyze all of the possible combinations of sequences of events. In the absence of some systematic means of coordination and cooperation among activities, programmers resorted to ad hoc methods based on their understanding of the environment that the OS had to control. These efforts were vulnerable to subtle programming errors whose effects could be observed only when certain relatively rare sequences of actions occurred. These errors were difficult to diagnose because they needed to be distinguished from application software errors and hardware errors. Even when the error was detected, it was difficult to determine the cause, because the precise conditions under which the errors appeared were very hard to reproduce. In general terms, there are four main causes of such errors [DENN80a]:

- **Improper synchronization:** It is often the case that a routine must be suspended awaiting an event elsewhere in the system. For example, a program that initiates an I/O read must wait until the data are available in a buffer before proceeding. In such cases, a signal from some other routine is required. Improper design of the signaling mechanism can result in signals being lost or duplicate signals being received.
- **Failed mutual exclusion:** It is often the case that more than one user or program will attempt to make use of a shared resource at the same time. For example, two users may attempt to edit the same file at the same time. If these accesses are not controlled, an error can occur. There must be some sort of mutual exclusion mechanism that permits only one routine at a time to perform an update against the file. The implementation of such mutual exclusion is difficult to verify as being correct under all possible sequences of events.
- **Nondeterminate program operation:** The results of a particular program normally should depend only on the input to that program and not on the activities of other programs in a shared system. But when programs share memory, and their execution is interleaved by the processor, they may interfere with each other by overwriting common memory areas in unpredictable ways. Thus, the order in which various programs are scheduled may affect the outcome of any particular program.
- **Deadlocks:** It is possible for two or more programs to be hung up waiting for each other. For example, two programs may each require two I/O devices to perform some operation (e.g., disk to tape copy). One of the programs has seized control of one of the devices and the other program has control of the other device. Each is waiting for the other program to release the desired resource. Such a deadlock may depend on the chance timing of resource allocation and release.

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What is needed to tackle these problems is a systematic way to monitor and control the various programs executing on the processor. The concept of the process provides the foundation. We can think of a process as consisting of three components:

- An executable program
- The associated data needed by the program (variables, work space, buffers, etc.)
- The execution context of the program

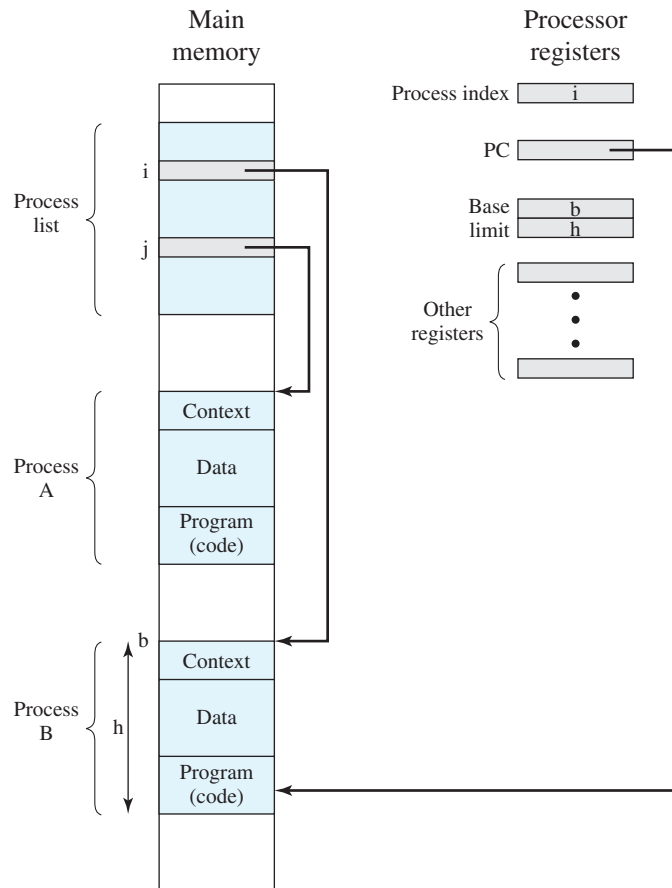
This last element is essential. The **execution context**, or **process state**, is the internal data by which the OS is able to supervise and control the process. This internal information is separated from the process, because the OS has information not permitted to the process. The context includes all of the information that the OS needs to manage the process and that the processor needs to execute the process properly. The context includes the contents of the various processor registers, such as the program counter and data registers. It also includes information of use to the OS, such as the priority of the process and whether the process is waiting for the completion of a particular I/O event.

Figure 2.8 indicates a way in which processes may be managed. Two processes, A and B, exist in portions of main memory. That is, a block of memory is allocated to each process that contains the program, data, and context information. Each process is recorded in a process list built and maintained by the OS. The process list contains one entry for each process, which includes a pointer to the location of the block of memory that contains the process. The entry may also include part or all of the execution context of the process. The remainder of the execution context is stored elsewhere, perhaps with the process itself (as indicated in Figure 2.8) or frequently in a separate region of memory. The process index register contains the index into the process list of the process currently controlling the processor. The program counter points to the next instruction in that process to be executed. The base and limit registers define the region in memory occupied by the process: The base register is the starting address of the region of memory and the limit is the size of the region (in bytes or words). The program counter and all data references are interpreted relative to the base register and must not exceed the value in the limit register. This prevents interprocess interference.

In Figure 2.8, the process index register indicates that process B is executing. Process A was previously executing but has been temporarily interrupted. The contents of all the registers at the moment of A's interruption were recorded in its execution context. Later, the OS can perform a process switch and resume execution of process A. The process switch consists of storing the context of B and restoring the context of A. When the program counter is loaded with a value pointing into A's program area, process A will automatically resume execution.

Thus, the process is realized as a data structure. A process can either be executing or awaiting execution. The entire **state** of the process at any instant is contained in its context. This structure allows the development of powerful techniques for ensuring coordination and cooperation among processes. New features can be designed and incorporated into the OS (e.g., priority) by expanding the context to include any new information needed to support the feature. Throughout this book,

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**Figure 2.8** Typical Process Implementation

we will see a number of examples where this process structure is employed to solve the problems raised by multiprogramming and resource sharing.

### Memory Management

The needs of users can be met best by a computing environment that supports modular programming and the flexible use of data. System managers need efficient and orderly control of storage allocation. The OS, to satisfy these requirements, has five principal storage management responsibilities:

- **Process isolation:** The OS must prevent independent processes from interfering with each other's memory, both data and instructions.
- **Automatic allocation and management:** Programs should be dynamically allocated across the memory hierarchy as required. Allocation should be transparent to the programmer. Thus, the programmer is relieved of concerns relating to memory limitations, and the OS can achieve efficiency by assigning memory to jobs only as needed.

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- **Support of modular programming:** Programmers should be able to define program modules, and to create, destroy, and alter the size of modules dynamically.
- **Protection and access control:** Sharing of memory, at any level of the memory hierarchy, creates the potential for one program to address the memory space of another. This is desirable when sharing is needed by particular applications. At other times, it threatens the integrity of programs and even of the OS itself. The OS must allow portions of memory to be accessible in various ways by various users.
- **Long-term storage:** Many application programs require means for storing information for extended periods of time, after the computer has been powered down.

Typically, operating systems meet these requirements with virtual memory and file system facilities. The file system implements a long-term store, with information stored in named objects, called files. The file is a convenient concept for the programmer and is a useful unit of access control and protection for the OS.

Virtual memory is a facility that allows programs to address memory from a logical point of view, without regard to the amount of main memory physically available. Virtual memory was conceived to meet the requirement of having multiple user jobs reside in main memory concurrently, so that there would not be a hiatus between the execution of successive processes while one process was written out to secondary store and the successor process was read in. Because processes vary in size, if the processor switches among a number of processes, it is difficult to pack them compactly into main memory. Paging systems were introduced, which allow processes to be comprised of a number of fixed-size blocks, called pages. A program references a word by means of a **virtual address** consisting of a page number and an offset within the page. Each page of a process may be located anywhere in main memory. The paging system provides for a dynamic mapping between the virtual address used in the program and a **real address**, or physical address, in main memory.

With dynamic mapping hardware available, the next logical step was to eliminate the requirement that all pages of a process reside in main memory simultaneously. All the pages of a process are maintained on disk. When a process is executing, some of its pages are in main memory. If reference is made to a page that is not in main memory, the memory management hardware detects this and arranges for the missing page to be loaded. Such a scheme is referred to as **virtual memory** and is depicted in Figure 2.9.

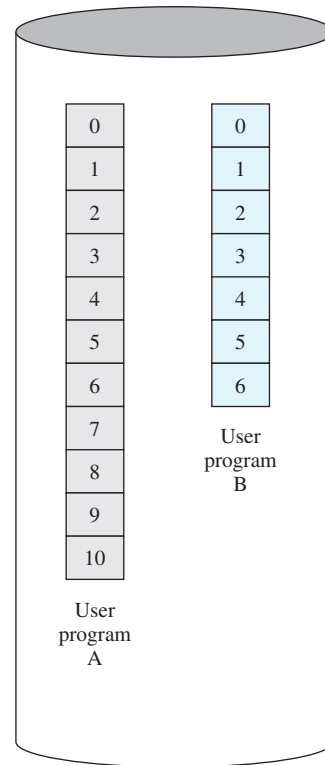
The processor hardware, together with the OS, provides the user with a “virtual processor” that has access to a virtual memory. This memory may be a linear address space or a collection of segments, which are variable-length blocks of contiguous addresses. In either case, programming language instructions can reference program and data locations in the virtual memory area. Process isolation can be achieved by giving each process a unique, nonoverlapping virtual memory. Memory sharing can be achieved by overlapping portions of two virtual memory spaces. Files are maintained in a long-term store. Files and portions of files may be copied into the virtual memory for manipulation by programs.

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A.1			
	A.0	A.2	
	A.5		
B.0	B.1	B.2	B.3
		A.7	
	A.9		
		A.8	
	B.5	B.6	

Main memory

Main memory consists of a number of fixed-length frames, each equal to the size of a page. For a program to execute, some or all of its pages must be in main memory.



Disk

Secondary memory (disk) can hold many fixed-length pages. A user program consists of some number of pages. Pages for all programs plus the operating system are on disk, as are files.

**Figure 2.9 Virtual Memory Concepts**

Figure 2.10 highlights the addressing concerns in a virtual memory scheme. Storage consists of directly addressable (by machine instructions) main memory and lower-speed auxiliary memory that is accessed indirectly by loading blocks into main memory. Address translation hardware (memory management unit) is interposed between the processor and memory. Programs reference locations using virtual addresses, which are mapped into real main memory addresses. If a reference is made to a virtual address not in real memory, then a portion of the contents of real memory is swapped out to auxiliary memory and the desired block of data is swapped in. During this activity, the process that generated the address reference must be suspended. The OS designer needs to develop an address translation mechanism that generates little overhead and a storage allocation policy that minimizes the traffic between memory levels.

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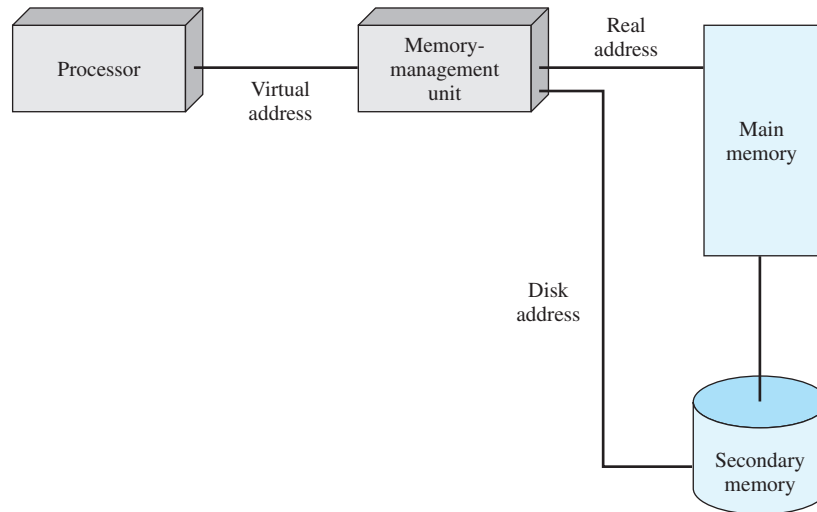


Figure 2.10 Virtual Memory Addressing

### Information Protection and Security

The growth in the use of time-sharing systems and, more recently, computer networks has brought with it a growth in concern for the protection of information. The nature of the threat that concerns an organization will vary greatly depending on the circumstances. However, there are some general-purpose tools that can be built into computers and operating systems that support a variety of protection and security mechanisms. In general, we are concerned with the problem of controlling access to computer systems and the information stored in them.

Much of the work in security and protection as it relates to operating systems can be roughly grouped into four categories:

- **Availability:** Concerned with protecting the system against interruption
- **Confidentiality:** Assures that users cannot read data for which access is unauthorized
- **Data integrity:** Protection of data from unauthorized modification
- **Authenticity:** Concerned with the proper verification of the identity of users and the validity of messages or data

### Scheduling and Resource Management

A key responsibility of the OS is to manage the various resources available to it (main memory space, I/O devices, processors) and to schedule their use by the various active processes. Any resource allocation and scheduling policy must consider three factors:

- **Fairness:** Typically, we would like all processes that are competing for the use of a particular resource to be given approximately equal and fair access to that

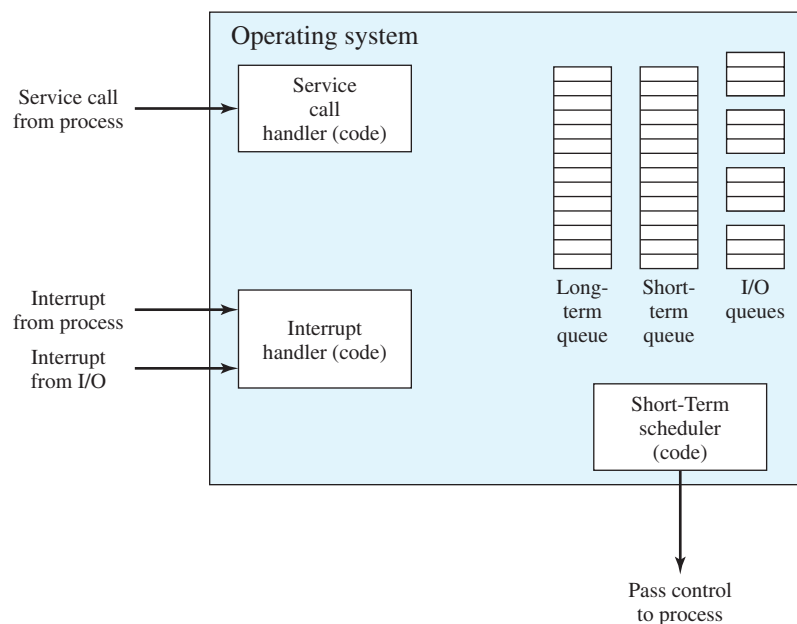
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resource. This is especially so for jobs of the same class, that is, jobs of similar demands.

- **Differential responsiveness:** On the other hand, the OS may need to discriminate among different classes of jobs with different service requirements. The OS should attempt to make allocation and scheduling decisions to meet the total set of requirements. The OS should also make these decisions dynamically. For example, if a process is waiting for the use of an I/O device, the OS may wish to schedule that process for execution as soon as possible to free up the device for later demands from other processes.
- **Efficiency:** The OS should attempt to maximize throughput, minimize response time, and, in the case of time sharing, accommodate as many users as possible. These criteria conflict; finding the right balance for a particular situation is an ongoing problem for operating system research.

Scheduling and resource management are essentially operations-research problems and the mathematical results of that discipline can be applied. In addition, measurement of system activity is important to be able to monitor performance and make adjustments.

Figure 2.11 suggests the major elements of the OS involved in the scheduling of processes and the allocation of resources in a multiprogramming environment. The OS maintains a number of queues, each of which is simply a list of processes waiting for some resource. The short-term queue consists of processes that are in main memory (or at least an essential minimum portion of each is in main memory) and are ready to run as soon as the processor is made available. Any one of these processes



**Figure 2.11** Key Elements of an Operating System for Multiprogramming

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could use the processor next. It is up to the short-term scheduler, or dispatcher, to pick one. A common strategy is to give each process in the queue some time in turn; this is referred to as a **round-robin** technique. In effect, the round-robin technique employs a circular queue. Another strategy is to assign priority levels to the various processes, with the scheduler selecting processes in priority order.

The long-term queue is a list of new jobs waiting to use the processor. The OS adds jobs to the system by transferring a process from the long-term queue to the short-term queue. At that time, a portion of main memory must be allocated to the incoming process. Thus, the OS must be sure that it does not overcommit memory or processing time by admitting too many processes to the system. There is an I/O queue for each I/O device. More than one process may request the use of the same I/O device. All processes waiting to use each device are lined up in that device's queue. Again, the OS must determine which process to assign to an available I/O device.

The OS receives control of the processor at the interrupt handler if an interrupt occurs. A process may specifically invoke some operating system service, such as an I/O device handler by means of a service call. In this case, a service call handler is the entry point into the OS. In any case, once the interrupt or service call is handled, the short-term scheduler is invoked to pick a process for execution.

The foregoing is a functional description; details and modular design of this portion of the OS will differ in various systems. Much of the research and development effort in operating systems has been directed at picking algorithms and data structures for this function that provide fairness, differential responsiveness, and efficiency.

### System Structure

As more and more features have been added to operating systems, and as the underlying hardware has become more capable and versatile, the size and complexity of operating systems has grown. CTSS, put into operation at MIT in 1963, consisted of approximately 32,000 36-bit words of storage. OS/360, introduced a year later by IBM, had more than a million machine instructions. By 1975, the Multics system, developed by MIT and Bell Laboratories, had grown to more than 20 million instructions. It is true that more recently, some simpler operating systems have been introduced for smaller systems, but these have inevitably grown more complex as the underlying hardware and user requirements have grown. Thus, the UNIX of today is far more complex than the almost toy system put together by a few talented programmers in the early 1970s, and the simple MS-DOS has given way to the rich and complex power of OS/2 and Windows. For example, Windows NT 4.0 contains 16 million lines of code, and Windows 2000 has well over twice that number.

The size of a full-featured OS, and the difficulty of the problem it addresses, has led to four unfortunate but all-too-common problems. First, operating systems are chronically late in being delivered. This goes for new operating systems and upgrades to older systems. Second, the systems have latent bugs that show up in the field and must be fixed and reworked. Third, performance is often not what was expected. Fourth, it has proved impossible to deploy a complex OS that is not vulnerable to a variety of security attacks, including viruses, worms, and unauthorized access.



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To manage the complexity of operating systems and to overcome these problems, there has been much focus over the years on the software structure of the OS. Certain points seem obvious. The software must be modular. This will help organize the software development process and limit the effort of diagnosing and fixing errors. The modules must have well-defined interfaces to each other, and the interfaces must be as simple as possible. Again, this eases the programming burden. It also facilitates system evolution. With clean, minimal interfaces between modules, one module can be changed with minimal impact on other modules.

For large operating systems, which run from millions to tens of millions of lines of code, modular programming alone has not been found to be sufficient. Instead there has been increasing use of the concepts of hierarchical layers and information abstraction. The hierarchical structure of a modern OS separates its functions according to their characteristic time scale and their level of abstraction. We can view the system as a series of levels. Each level performs a related subset of the functions required of the OS. It relies on the next lower level to perform more primitive functions and to conceal the details of those functions. It provides services to the next higher layer. Ideally, the levels should be defined so that changes in one level do not require changes in other levels. Thus, we have decomposed one problem into a number of more manageable subproblems.

In general, lower layers deal with a far shorter time scale. Some parts of the OS must interact directly with the computer hardware, where events can have a time scale as brief as a few billionths of a second. At the other end of the spectrum, parts of the OS communicate with the user, who issues commands at a much more leisurely pace, perhaps one every few seconds. The use of a set of levels conforms nicely to this environment.

The way in which these principles are applied varies greatly among contemporary operating systems. However, it is useful at this point, for the purpose of gaining an overview of operating systems, to present a model of a hierarchical OS. Let us consider the model proposed in [BROW84] and [DENN84]. Although it does not correspond to any particular OS, this model provides a useful high-level view of OS structure. The model is defined in Table 2.4 and consists of the following levels:

- **Level 1:** Consists of electronic circuits, where the objects that are dealt with are registers, memory cells, and logic gates. The operations defined on these objects are actions, such as clearing a register or reading a memory location.
- **Level 2:** The processor's instruction set. The operations at this level are those allowed in the machine language instruction set, such as add, subtract, load, and store.
- **Level 3:** Adds the concept of a procedure or subroutine, plus the call/return operations.
- **Level 4:** Introduces interrupts, which cause the processor to save the current context and invoke an interrupt-handling routine.

These first four levels are not part of the OS but constitute the processor hardware. However, some elements of the OS begin to appear at these levels, such as the interrupt-handling routines. It is at level 5 that we begin to reach the OS proper and that the concepts associated with multiprogramming begin to appear.

**Table 2.4** Operating System Design Hierarchy

Level	Name	Objects	Example Operations
13	Shell	User programming environment	Statements in shell language
12	User processes	User processes	Quit, kill, suspend, resume
11	Directories	Directories	Create, destroy, attach, detach, search, list
10	Devices	External devices, such as printers, displays, and keyboards	Open, close, read, write
9	File system	Files	Create, destroy, open, close, read, write
8	Communications	Pipes	Create, destroy, open, close, read, write
7	Virtual memory	Segments, pages	Read, write, fetch
6	Local secondary store	Blocks of data, device channels	Read, write, allocate, free
5	Primitive processes	Primitive processes, semaphores, ready list	Suspend, resume, wait, signal
4	Interrupts	Interrupt-handling programs	Invoke, mask, unmask, retry
3	Procedures	Procedures, call stack, display	Mark stack, call, return
2	Instruction set	Evaluation stack, microprogram interpreter, scalar and array data	Load, store, add, subtract, branch
1	Electronic circuits	Registers, gates, buses, etc.	Clear, transfer, activate, complement

Gray shaded area represents hardware.

- Level 5:** The notion of a process as a program in execution is introduced at this level. The fundamental requirements on the OS to support multiple processes include the ability to suspend and resume processes. This requires saving hardware registers so that execution can be switched from one process to another. In addition, if processes need to cooperate, then some method of synchronization is needed. One of the simplest techniques, and an important concept in OS design, is the semaphore, a simple signaling technique that is explored in Chapter 5.
- Level 6:** Deals with the secondary storage devices of the computer. At this level, the functions of positioning the read/write heads and the actual transfer of blocks of data occur. Level 6 relies on level 5 to schedule the operation and to notify the requesting process of completion of an operation. Higher levels are concerned with the address of the needed data on the disk and provide a request for the appropriate block to a device driver at level 5.
- Level 7:** Creates a logical address space for processes. This level organizes the virtual address space into blocks that can be moved between main memory and secondary memory. Three schemes are in common use: those using fixed-size pages, those using variable-length segments, and those using both. When a needed block is not in main memory, logic at this level requests a transfer from level 6.

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Up to this point, the OS deals with the resources of a single processor. Beginning with level 8, the OS deals with external objects such as peripheral devices and possibly networks and computers attached to the network. The objects at these upper levels are logical, named objects that can be shared among processes on the same computer or on multiple computers.

- **Level 8:** Deals with the communication of information and messages between processes. Whereas level 5 provided a primitive signal mechanism that allowed for the synchronization of processes, this level deals with a richer sharing of information. One of the most powerful tools for this purpose is the pipe, which is a logical channel for the flow of data between processes. A pipe is defined with its output from one process and its input into another process. It can also be used to link external devices or files to processes. The concept is discussed in Chapter 6.
- **Level 9:** Supports the long-term storage of named files. At this level, the data on secondary storage are viewed in terms of abstract, variable-length entities. This is in contrast to the hardware-oriented view of secondary storage in terms of tracks, sectors, and fixed-size blocks at level 6.
- **Level 10:** Provides access to external devices using standardized interfaces.
- **Level 11:** Is responsible for maintaining the association between the external and internal identifiers of the system's resources and objects. The external identifier is a name that can be employed by an application or user. The internal identifier is an address or other indicator that can be used by lower levels of the OS to locate and control an object. These associations are maintained in a directory. Entries include not only external/internal mapping, but also characteristics such as access rights.
- **Level 12:** Provides a full-featured facility for the support of processes. This goes far beyond what is provided at level 5. At level 5, only the processor register contents associated with a process are maintained, plus the logic for dispatching processes. At level 12, all of the information needed for the orderly management of processes is supported. This includes the virtual address space of the process, a list of objects and processes with which it may interact and the constraints of that interaction, parameters passed to the process upon creation, and any other characteristics of the process that might be used by the OS to control the process.
- **Level 13:** Provides an interface to the OS for the user. It is referred to as the **shell** because it separates the user from OS details and presents the OS simply as a collection of services. The shell accepts user commands or job control statements, interprets these, and creates and controls processes as needed. For example, the interface at this level could be implemented in a graphical manner, providing the user with commands through a list presented as a menu and displaying results using graphical output to a specific device such as a screen.

This hypothetical model of an OS provides a useful descriptive structure and serves as an implementation guideline. The reader may refer back to this structure during the course of the book to observe the context of any particular design issue under discussion.

## 2.4 DEVELOPMENTS LEADING TO MODERN OPERATING SYSTEMS

Over the years, there has been a gradual evolution of OS structure and capabilities. However, in recent years a number of new design elements have been introduced into both new operating systems and new releases of existing operating systems that create a major change in the nature of operating systems. These modern operating systems respond to new developments in hardware, new applications, and new security threats. Among the key hardware drivers are multiprocessor systems, greatly increased processor speed, high-speed network attachments, and increasing size and variety of memory storage devices. In the application arena, multimedia applications, Internet and Web access, and client/server computing have influenced OS design. With respect to security, Internet access to computers has greatly increased the potential threat and increasingly sophisticated attacks, such as viruses, worms, and hacking techniques, have had a profound impact on OS design.

The rate of change in the demands on operating systems requires not just modifications and enhancements to existing architectures but new ways of organizing the OS. A wide range of different approaches and design elements has been tried in both experimental and commercial operating systems, but much of the work fits into the following categories:

- Microkernel architecture
- Multithreading
- Symmetric multiprocessing
- Distributed operating systems
- Object-oriented design

Most operating systems, until recently, featured a large **monolithic kernel**. Most of what is thought of as OS functionality is provided in these large kernels, including scheduling, file system, networking, device drivers, memory management, and more. Typically, a monolithic kernel is implemented as a single process, with all elements sharing the same address space. A **microkernel architecture** assigns only a few essential functions to the kernel, including address spaces, interprocess communication (IPC), and basic scheduling. Other OS services are provided by processes, sometimes called servers, that run in user mode and are treated like any other application by the microkernel. This approach decouples kernel and server development. Servers may be customized to specific application or environment requirements. The microkernel approach simplifies implementation, provides flexibility, and is well suited to a distributed environment. In essence, a microkernel interacts with local and remote server processes in the same way, facilitating construction of distributed systems.

**Multithreading** is a technique in which a process, executing an application, is divided into threads that can run concurrently. We can make the following distinction:

- **Thread:** A dispatchable unit of work. It includes a processor context (which includes the program counter and stack pointer) and its own data area for a

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stack (to enable subroutine branching). A thread executes sequentially and is interruptable so that the processor can turn to another thread.

- **Process:** A collection of one or more threads and associated system resources (such as memory containing both code and data, open files, and devices). This corresponds closely to the concept of a program in execution. By breaking a single application into multiple threads, the programmer has great control over the modularity of the application and the timing of application-related events.

Multithreading is useful for applications that perform a number of essentially independent tasks that do not need to be serialized. An example is a database server that listens for and processes numerous client requests. With multiple threads running within the same process, switching back and forth among threads involves less processor overhead than a major process switch between different processes. Threads are also useful for structuring processes that are part of the OS kernel as described in subsequent chapters.

Until recently, virtually all single-user personal computers and workstations contained a single general-purpose microprocessor. As demands for performance increase and as the cost of microprocessors continues to drop, vendors have introduced computers with multiple microprocessors. To achieve greater efficiency and reliability, one technique is to employ **symmetric multiprocessing (SMP)**, a term that refers to a computer hardware architecture and also to the OS behavior that exploits that architecture. A symmetric multiprocessor can be defined as a standalone computer system with the following characteristics:

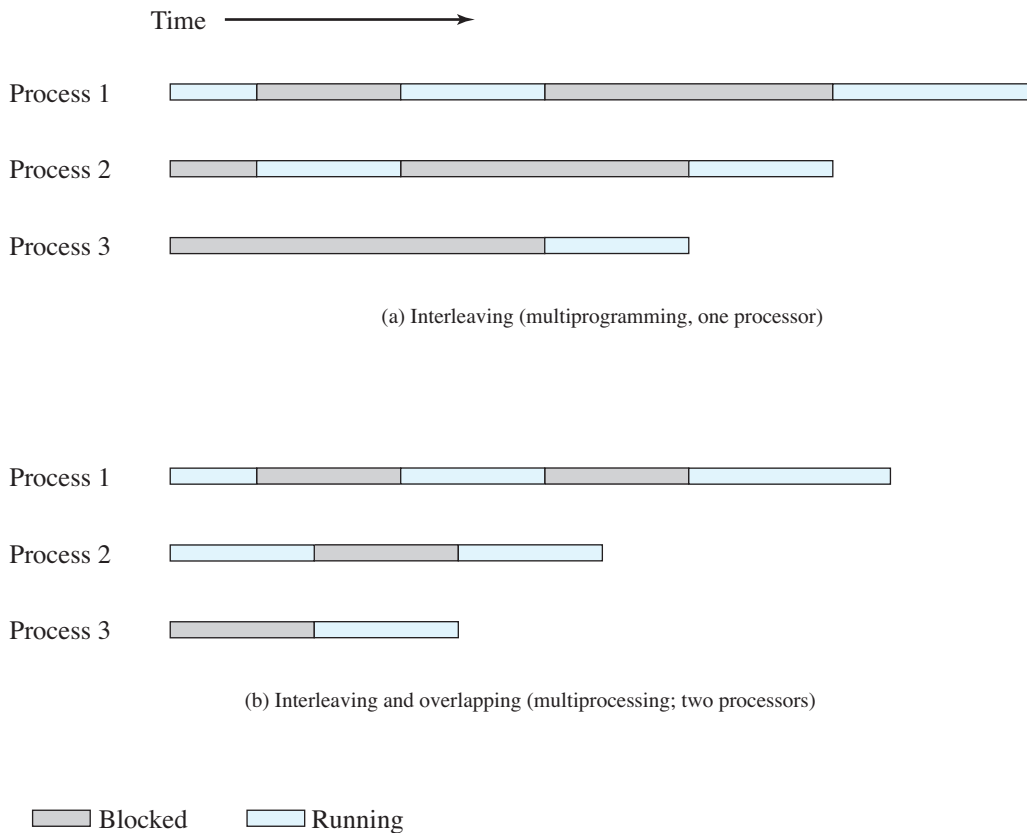
1. There are multiple processors.
2. These processors share the same main memory and I/O facilities, interconnected by a communications bus or other internal connection scheme.
3. All processors can perform the same functions (hence the term *symmetric*).

In recent years, systems with multiple processors on a single chip have become widely used, referred to as chip multiprocessor systems. Many of the design issues are the same, whether dealing with a chip multiprocessor or a multiple-chip SMP.

The OS of an SMP schedules processes or threads across all of the processors. SMP has a number of potential advantages over uniprocessor architecture, including the following:

- **Performance:** If the work to be done by a computer can be organized so that some portions of the work can be done in parallel, then a system with multiple processors will yield greater performance than one with a single processor of the same type. This is illustrated in Figure 2.12. With multiprogramming, only one process can execute at a time; meanwhile all other processes are waiting for the processor. With multiprocessing, more than one process can be running simultaneously, each on a different processor.
- **Availability:** In a symmetric multiprocessor, because all processors can perform the same functions, the failure of a single processor does not halt the system. Instead, the system can continue to function at reduced performance.
- **Incremental growth:** A user can enhance the performance of a system by adding an additional processor.

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**Figure 2.12** Multiprogramming and Multiprocessing

- **Scaling:** Vendors can offer a range of products with different price and performance characteristics based on the number of processors configured in the system.

It is important to note that these are potential, rather than guaranteed, benefits. The OS must provide tools and functions to exploit the parallelism in an SMP system.

Multithreading and SMP are often discussed together, but the two are independent facilities. Even on a uniprocessor system, multithreading is useful for structuring applications and kernel processes. An SMP system is useful even for nonthreaded processes, because several processes can run in parallel. However, the two facilities complement each other and can be used effectively together.

An attractive feature of an SMP is that the existence of multiple processors is transparent to the user. The OS takes care of scheduling of threads or processes on individual processors and of synchronization among processors. This book discusses the scheduling and synchronization mechanisms used to provide the single-system appearance to the user. A different problem is to provide the appearance of a single system for a cluster of separate computers—a multicomputer system. In this case, we are dealing with a collection of entities (computers), each with its own main memory,

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secondary memory, and other I/O modules. A **distributed operating system** provides the illusion of a single main memory space and a single secondary memory space, plus other unified access facilities, such as a distributed file system. Although clusters are becoming increasingly popular, and there are many cluster products on the market, the state of the art for distributed operating systems lags that of uniprocessor and SMP operating systems. We examine such systems in Part Eight.

Another innovation in OS design is the use of object-oriented technologies. **Object-oriented design** lends discipline to the process of adding modular extensions to a small kernel. At the OS level, an object-based structure enables programmers to customize an OS without disrupting system integrity. Object orientation also eases the development of distributed tools and full-blown distributed operating systems.

### 2.5 MICROSOFT WINDOWS OVERVIEW

#### History

The story of Windows begins with a very different OS, developed by Microsoft for the first IBM personal computer and referred to as MS-DOS or PC-DOS. The initial version, DOS 1.0, was released in August 1981. It consisted of 4000 lines of assembly language source code and ran in 8 Kbytes of memory using the Intel 8086 microprocessor.

When IBM developed a hard disk-based personal computer, the PC XT, Microsoft developed DOS 2.0, released in 1983. It contained support for the hard disk and provided for hierarchical directories. Heretofore, a disk could contain only one directory of files, supporting a maximum of 64 files. While this was adequate in the era of floppy disks, it was too limited for a hard disk, and the single-directory restriction was too clumsy. This new release allowed directories to contain subdirectories as well as files. The new release also contained a richer set of commands embedded in the OS to provide functions that had to be performed by external programs provided as utilities with Release 1. Among the capabilities added were several UNIX-like features, such as I/O redirection, which is the ability to change the input or output identity for a given application, and background printing. The memory-resident portion grew to 24 Kbytes.

When IBM announced the PC AT in 1984, Microsoft introduced DOS 3.0. The AT contained the Intel 80286 processor, which provided extended addressing and memory protection features. These were not used by DOS. To remain compatible with previous releases, the OS simply used the 80286 as a “fast 8086.” The OS did provide support for new keyboard and hard disk peripherals. Even so, the memory requirement grew to 36 Kbytes. There were several notable upgrades to the 3.0 release. DOS 3.1, released in 1984, contained support for networking of PCs. The size of the resident portion did not change; this was achieved by increasing the amount of the OS that could be swapped. DOS 3.3, released in 1987, provided support for the new line of IBM computers, the PS/2. Again, this release did not take advantage of the processor capabilities of the PS/2, provided by the 80286 and the 32-bit 80386 chips. The resident portion at this stage had grown to a minimum of 46 Kbytes, with more required if certain optional extensions were selected.



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By this time, DOS was being used in an environment far beyond its capabilities. The introduction of the 80486 and then the Intel Pentium chip provided power and features that could not be exploited by the simple-minded DOS. Meanwhile, beginning in the early 1980s, Microsoft began development of a graphical user interface (GUI) that would be interposed between the user and DOS. Microsoft's intent was to compete with Macintosh, whose OS was unsurpassed for ease of use. By 1990, Microsoft had a version of the GUI, known as Windows 3.0, which incorporated some of the user friendly features of Macintosh. However, it was still hamstrung by the need to run on top of DOS.

After an abortive attempt by Microsoft to develop with IBM a next-generation OS, which would exploit the power of the new microprocessors and which would incorporate the ease-of-use features of Windows, Microsoft struck out on its own and developed a new OS from the ground up, Windows NT. Windows NT exploits the capabilities of contemporary microprocessors and provides multitasking in a single-user or multiple-user environment.

The first version of Windows NT (3.1) was released in 1993, with the same GUI as Windows 3.1, another Microsoft OS (the follow-on to Windows 3.0). However, NT 3.1 was a new 32-bit OS with the ability to support older DOS and Windows applications as well as provide OS/2 support.

After several versions of NT 3.x, Microsoft released NT 4.0. NT 4.0 has essentially the same internal architecture as 3.x. The most notable external change is that NT 4.0 provides the same user interface as Windows 95 (an enhanced upgrade to Windows 3.1). The major architectural change is that several graphics components that ran in user mode as part of the Win32 subsystem in 3.x have been moved into the Windows NT Executive, which runs in kernel mode. The benefit of this change is to speed up the operation of these important functions. The potential drawback is that these graphics functions now have direct access to low-level system services, which could impact the reliability of the OS.

In 2000, Microsoft introduced the next major upgrade: Windows 2000. Again, the underlying Executive and Kernel architecture is fundamentally the same as in NT 4.0, but new features have been added. The emphasis in Windows 2000 is the addition of services and functions to support distributed processing. The central element of Windows 2000's new features is Active Directory, which is a distributed directory service able to map names of arbitrary objects to any kind of information about those objects. Windows 2000 also added the plug-and-play and power-management facilities that were already in Windows 98, the successor to Windows 95. These features are particularly important for laptop computers, which frequently use docking stations and run on batteries.

One final general point to make about Windows 2000 is the distinction between Windows 2000 Server and Windows 2000 desktop. In essence, the kernel and executive architecture and services remain the same, but Server includes some services required to use as a network server.

In 2001, a new desktop version of Windows was released, known as Windows XP. Both home PC and business workstation versions of XP were offered. In 2003, Microsoft introduced a new server version, known as Windows Server 2003, supporting both 32-bit and 64-bit processors. The 64-bit versions of Server 2003 was designed specifically for the 64-bit Intel Itanium hardware. With the first service pack



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update for Server 2003, Microsoft introduced support for the AMD64 processor architecture for both desktops and servers.

In 2007, the latest desktop version of Windows was released, known as Windows Vista. Vista supports both the Intel x86 and AMD x64 architectures. The main features of the release were changes to the GUI and many security improvements. The corresponding server release is Windows Server 2008.

### Single-User Multitasking

Windows (from Windows 2000 onward) is a significant example of what has become the new wave in microcomputer operating systems (other examples are Linux and MacOS). Windows was driven by a need to exploit the processing capabilities of today's 32-bit and 64-bit microprocessors, which rival mainframes of just a few years ago in speed, hardware sophistication, and memory capacity.

One of the most significant features of these new operating systems is that, although they are still intended for support of a single interactive user, they are multitasking operating systems. Two main developments have triggered the need for multitasking on personal computers, workstations, and servers. First, with the increased speed and memory capacity of microprocessors, together with the support for virtual memory, applications have become more complex and interrelated. For example, a user may wish to employ a word processor, a drawing program, and a spreadsheet application simultaneously to produce a document. Without multitasking, if a user wishes to create a drawing and paste it into a word processing document, the following steps are required:

1. Open the drawing program.
2. Create the drawing and save it in a file or on a temporary clipboard.
3. Close the drawing program.
4. Open the word processing program.
5. Insert the drawing in the correct location.

If any changes are desired, the user must close the word processing program, open the drawing program, edit the graphic image, save it, close the drawing program, open the word processing program, and insert the updated image. This becomes tedious very quickly. As the services and capabilities available to users become more powerful and varied, the single-task environment becomes more clumsy and user unfriendly. In a multitasking environment, the user opens each application as needed, and leaves it open. Information can be moved around among a number of applications easily. Each application has one or more open windows, and a graphical interface with a pointing device such as a mouse allows the user to navigate quickly in this environment.

A second motivation for multitasking is the growth of client/server computing. With client/server computing, a personal computer or workstation (client) and a host system (server) are used jointly to accomplish a particular application. The two are linked, and each is assigned that part of the job that suits its capabilities. Client/server can be achieved in a local area network of personal computers and servers or by means of a link between a user system and a large host such as a mainframe. An

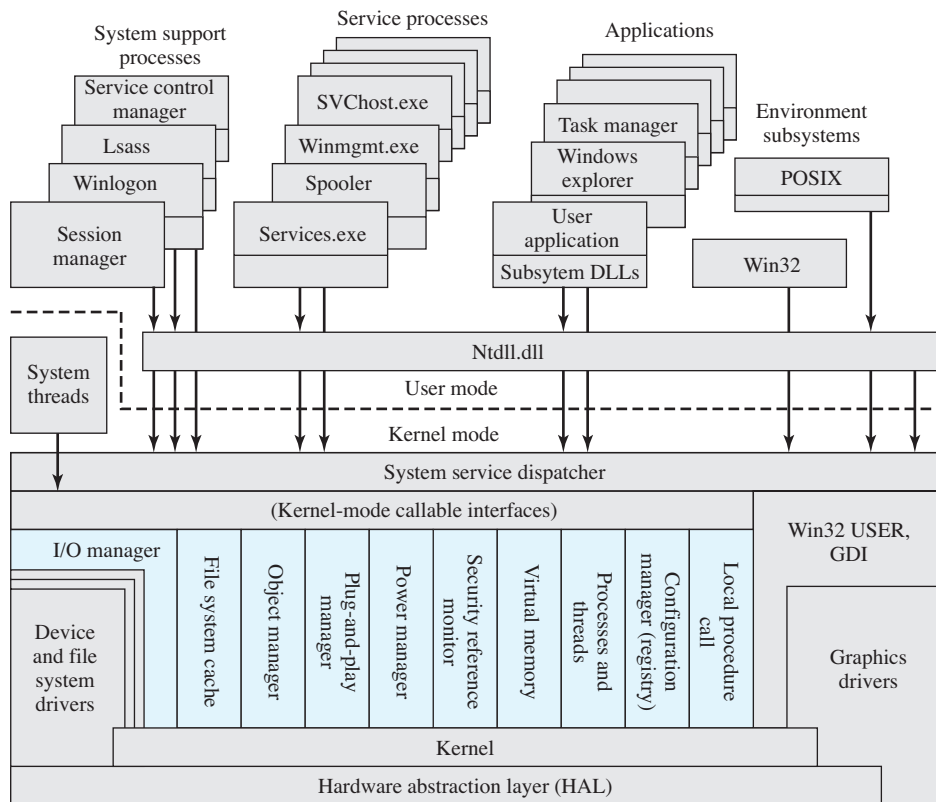
## 2.5 /MICROSOFT WINDOWS OVERVIEW 83

application may involve one or more personal computers and one or more server devices. To provide the required responsiveness, the OS needs to support high-speed networking interfaces and the associated communications protocols and data transfer architectures while at the same time supporting ongoing user interaction.

The foregoing remarks apply to the desktop versions of Windows. The Server versions are also multitasking but may support multiple users. They support multiple local server connections as well as providing shared services used by multiple users on the network. As an Internet server, Windows may support thousands of simultaneous Web connections.

### Architecture

Figure 2.13 illustrates the overall structure of Windows 2000; later releases of Windows, including Vista, have essentially the same structure at this level of detail. Its modular structure gives Windows considerable flexibility. It is designed to execute



Lsass = local security authentication server  
 POSIX = portable operating system interface  
 GDI = graphics device interface  
 DLL = dynamic link libraries

Colored area indicates Executive

**Figure 2.13 Windows and Windows Vista Architecture [RUSS05]**

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on a variety of hardware platforms and supports applications written for a variety of other operating systems. As of this writing, desktop Windows is only implemented on the Intel x86 and AMD64 hardware platforms. Windows server also supports the Intel IA64 (Itanium).

As with virtually all operating systems, Windows separates application-oriented software from the core OS software. The latter, which includes the Executive, the Kernel, device drivers, and the hardware abstraction layer, runs in kernel mode. Kernel mode software has access to system data and to the hardware. The remaining software, running in user mode, has limited access to system data.

**Operating System Organization** Windows has a highly modular architecture. Each system function is managed by just one component of the OS. The rest of the OS and all applications access that function through the responsible component using standard interfaces. Key system data can only be accessed through the appropriate function. In principle, any module can be removed, upgraded, or replaced without rewriting the entire system or its standard application program interface (APIs).

The kernel-mode components of Windows are the following:

- **Executive:** Contains the base OS services, such as memory management, process and thread management, security, I/O, and interprocess communication.
- **Kernel:** Controls execution of the processor(s). The Kernel manages thread scheduling, process switching, exception and interrupt handling, and multi-processor synchronization. Unlike the rest of the Executive and the user level, the Kernel's own code does not run in threads.
- **Hardware abstraction layer (HAL):** Maps between generic hardware commands and responses and those unique to a specific platform. It isolates the OS from platform-specific hardware differences. The HAL makes each computer's system bus, direct memory access (DMA) controller, interrupt controller, system timers, and memory module look the same to the Executive and Kernel components. It also delivers the support needed for symmetric multiprocessing (SMP), explained subsequently.
- **Device drivers:** Dynamic libraries that extend the functionality of the Executive. These include hardware device drivers that translate user I/O function calls into specific hardware device I/O requests and software components for implementing file systems, network protocols, and any other system extensions that need to run in kernel mode.
- **Windowing and graphics system:** Implements the graphical user interface (GUI) functions, such as dealing with windows, user interface controls, and drawing.

The Windows Executive includes components for specific system functions and provides an API for user-mode software. Following is a brief description of each of the Executive modules:

- **I/O manager:** Provides a framework through which I/O devices are accessible to applications, and is responsible for dispatching to the appropriate device drivers for further processing. The I/O manager implements all the Windows I/O APIs and enforces security and naming for devices, network protocols, and file systems (using the object manager). Windows I/O is discussed in Chapter 11.

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- **Cache manager:** Improves the performance of file-based I/O by causing recently referenced file data to reside in main memory for quick access, and by deferring disk writes by holding the updates in memory for a short time before sending them to the disk.
- **Object manager:** Creates, manages, and deletes Windows Executive objects and abstract data types that are used to represent resources such as processes, threads, and synchronization objects. It enforces uniform rules for retaining, naming, and setting the security of objects. The object manager also creates object handles, which consist of access control information and a pointer to the object. Windows objects are discussed later in this section.
- **Plug-and-play manager:** Determines which drivers are required to support a particular device and loads those drivers.
- **Power manager:** Coordinates power management among various devices and can be configured to reduce power consumption by shutting down idle devices, putting the processor to sleep, and even writing all of memory to disk and shutting off power to the entire system.
- **Security reference monitor:** Enforces access-validation and audit-generation rules. The Windows object-oriented model allows for a consistent and uniform view of security, right down to the fundamental entities that make up the Executive. Thus, Windows uses the same routines for access validation and for audit checks for all protected objects, including files, processes, address spaces, and I/O devices. Windows security is discussed in Chapter 15.
- **Virtual memory manager:** Manages virtual addresses, physical memory, and the paging files on disk. Controls the memory management hardware and data structures which map virtual addresses in the process's address space to physical pages in the computer's memory. Windows virtual memory management is described in Chapter 8.
- **Process/thread manager:** Creates, manages, and deletes process and thread objects. Windows process and thread management are described in Chapter 4.
- **Configuration manager:** Responsible for implementing and managing the system registry, which is the repository for both system wide and per-user settings of various parameters.
- **Local procedure call (LPC) facility:** Implements an efficient cross-process procedure call mechanism for communication between local processes implementing services and subsystems. Similar to the remote procedure call (RPC) facility used for distributed processing.

**User-Mode Processes** Four basic types of user-mode processes are supported by Windows:

- **Special system processes:** User mode services needed to manage the system, such as the session manager, the authentication subsystem, the service manager, and the logon process
- **Service processes:** The printer spooler, the event logger, user mode components that cooperate with device drivers, various network services, and many, many others. Services are used by both Microsoft and external software developers to

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extend system functionality as they are the only way to run background user mode activity on a Windows system.

- **Environment subsystems:** Provide different OS personalities (environments). The supported subsystems are Win32/WinFX and POSIX. Each environment subsystem includes a subsystem process shared among all applications using the subsystem and dynamic link libraries (DLLs) that convert the user application calls to LPC calls on the subsystem process, and/or native Windows calls.
- **User applications:** Executables (EXEs) and DLLs that provide the functionality users run to make use of the system. EXEs and DLLs are generally targeted at a specific environment subsystems; although some of the programs that are provided as part of the OS use the native system interfaces (NTAPI). There is also support for running 16-bit programs written for Windows 3.1 or MS-DOS.

Windows is structured to support applications written for multiple OS personalities. Windows provides this support using a common set of kernel mode components that underlie the protected environment subsystems. The implementation of each subsystem includes a separate process, which contains the shared data structures, privileges, and Executive object handles needed to implement a particular personality. The process is started by the Windows Session Manager when the first application of that type is started. The subsystem process runs as a system user, so the Executive will protect its address space from processes run by ordinary users.

A protected subsystem provides a graphical or command-line user interface that defines the look and feel of the OS for a user. In addition, each protected subsystem provides the API for that particular operating environment. This means that applications created for a particular operating environment may run unchanged on Windows, because the OS interface that they see is the same as that for which they were written.

The most important subsystem is Win32. Win32 is the API implemented on both Windows NT and Windows 95 and later releases of Windows 9x. Many Win32 applications written for the Windows 9x line of operating systems run on NT systems unchanged. At the release of Windows XP, Microsoft focused on improving compatibility with Windows 9x so that enough applications (and device drivers) would run that they could cease any further support for 9x and focus on NT.

The most recent programming API for Windows is WinFX, which is based on Microsoft's .NET programming model. WinFX is implemented in Windows as a layer on top of Win32 and not as a distinct subsystem type

### Client/Server Model

The Windows operating system services, the protected subsystems, and the applications are structured using the client/server computing model, which is a common model for distributed computing and which is discussed in Part Six. This same architecture can be adopted for use internal to a single system, as is the case with Windows.

The native NT API is a set of kernel-based services which provide the core abstractions used by the system, such as processes, threads, virtual memory, I/O, and communication. Windows provides a far richer set of services by using the client/server model to implement functionality in user-mode processes. Both the environment

## 2.5 /MICROSOFT WINDOWS OVERVIEW 87

subsystems and the Windows user-mode services are implemented as processes that communicate with clients via RPC. Each server process waits for a request from a client for one of its services (for example, memory services, process creation services, or networking services). A client, which can be an application program or another server program, requests a service by sending a message. The message is routed through the Executive to the appropriate server. The server performs the requested operation and returns the results or status information by means of another message, which is routed through the Executive back to the client.

Advantages of a client/server architecture include the following:

- It simplifies the Executive. It is possible to construct a variety of APIs implemented in user-mode servers without any conflicts or duplications in the Executive. New APIs can be added easily.
- It improves reliability. Each new server runs outside of the kernel, with its own partition of memory, protected from other servers. A single server can fail without crashing or corrupting the rest of the OS.
- It provides a uniform means for applications to communicate with services via RPCs without restricting flexibility. The message-passing process is hidden from the client applications by function stubs, which are small pieces of code which wrap the RPC call. When an application makes an API call to an environment subsystem or service, the stub in the client application packages the parameters for the call and sends them as a message to a server subsystem that implements the call.
- It provides a suitable base for distributed computing. Typically, distributed computing makes use of a client/server model, with remote procedure calls implemented using distributed client and server modules and the exchange of messages between clients and servers. With Windows, a local server can pass a message on to a remote server for processing on behalf of local client applications. Clients need not know whether a request is serviced locally or remotely. Indeed, whether a request is serviced locally or remotely can change dynamically based on current load conditions and on dynamic configuration changes.

### Threads and SMP

Two important characteristics of Windows are its support for threads and for symmetric multiprocessing (SMP), both of which were introduced in Section 2.4. [RUSS05] lists the following features of Windows that support threads and SMP:

- OS routines can run on any available processor, and different routines can execute simultaneously on different processors.
- Windows supports the use of multiple threads of execution within a single process. Multiple threads within the same process may execute on different processors simultaneously.
- Server processes may use multiple threads to process requests from more than one client simultaneously.
- Windows provides mechanisms for sharing data and resources between processes and flexible interprocess communication capabilities.



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### Windows Objects

Windows draws heavily on the concepts of object-oriented design. This approach facilitates the sharing of resources and data among processes and the protection of resources from unauthorized access. Among the key object-oriented concepts used by Windows are the following:

- **Encapsulation:** An object consists of one or more items of data, called attributes, and one or more procedures that may be performed on those data, called services. The only way to access the data in an object is by invoking one of the object's services. Thus, the data in the object can easily be protected from unauthorized use and from incorrect use (e.g., trying to execute a nonexecutable piece of data).
- **Object class and instance:** An object class is a template that lists the attributes and services of an object and defines certain object characteristics. The OS can create specific instances of an object class as needed. For example, there is a single process object class and one process object for every currently active process. This approach simplifies object creation and management.
- **Inheritance:** Although the implementation is hand coded, the Executive uses inheritance to extend object classes by adding new features. Every Executive class is based on a base class which specifies virtual methods that support creating, naming, securing, and deleting objects. Dispatcher objects are Executive objects that inherit the properties of an event object, so they can use common synchronization methods. Other specific object types, such as the device class, allow classes for specific devices to inherit from the base class, and add additional data and methods.
- **Polymorphism:** Internally, Windows uses a common set of API functions to manipulate objects of any type; this is a feature of polymorphism, as defined in Appendix B. However, Windows is not completely polymorphic because there are many APIs that are specific to specific object types.

The reader unfamiliar with object-oriented concepts should review Appendix B at the end of this book.

Not all entities in Windows are objects. Objects are used in cases where data are intended for user mode access or when data access is shared or restricted. Among the entities represented by objects are files, processes, threads, semaphores, timers, and windows. Windows creates and manages all types of objects in a uniform way, via the object manager. The object manager is responsible for creating and destroying objects on behalf of applications and for granting access to an object's services and data.

Each object within the Executive, sometimes referred to as a kernel object (to distinguish from user-level objects not of concern to the Executive), exists as a memory block allocated by the kernel and is directly accessible only by kernel mode components. Some elements of the data structure (e.g., object name, security parameters, usage count) are common to all object types, while other elements are specific to a particular object type (e.g., a thread object's priority). Because these object data structures are in the part of each process's address space accessible only by the kernel, it is impossible for an application to reference these data structures and read or write them directly. Instead, applications manipulate objects indirectly through the set of object manipulation functions supported by the Executive. When an object is

## 2.5 /MICROSOFT WINDOWS OVERVIEW 89

created, the application that requested the creation receives back a handle for the object. In essence a handle is an index into a Executive table containing a pointer to the referenced object. This handle can then be used by any thread within the same process to invoke Win32 functions that work with objects, or can be duplicated into other processes.

Objects may have security information associated with them, in the form of a Security Descriptor (SD). This security information can be used to restrict access to the object based on contents of a token object which describes a particular user. For example, a process may create a named semaphore object with the intent that only certain users should be able to open and use that semaphore. The SD for the semaphore object can list those users that are allowed (or denied) access to the semaphore object along with the sort of access permitted (read, write, change, etc.).

In Windows, objects may be either named or unnamed. When a process creates an unnamed object, the object manager returns a handle to that object, and the handle is the only way to refer to it. Named objects are also given a name that other processes can use to obtain a handle to the object. For example, if process A wishes to synchronize with process B, it could create a named event object and pass the name of the event to B. Process B could then open and use that event object. However, if A simply wished to use the event to synchronize two threads within itself, it would create an unnamed event object, because there is no need for other processes to be able to use that event.

There are two categories of objects used by Windows for synchronizing the use of the processor:

- **Dispatcher objects:** The subset of Executive objects which threads can wait on to control the dispatching and synchronization of thread-based system operations. These are described in Chapter 6.
- **Control objects:** Used by the Kernel component to manage the operation of the processor in areas not managed by normal thread scheduling. Table 2.5 lists the Kernel control objects.

**Table 2.5** Windows Kernel Control Objects

Asynchronous Procedure Call	Used to break into the execution of a specified thread and to cause a procedure to be called in a specified processor mode.
Deferred Procedure Call	Used to postpone interrupt processing to avoid delaying hardware interrupts. Also used to implement timers and inter-processor communication
Interrupt	Used to connect an interrupt source to an interrupt service routine by means of an entry in an Interrupt Dispatch Table (IDT). Each processor has an IDT that is used to dispatch interrupts that occur on that processor.
Process	Represents the virtual address space and control information necessary for the execution of a set of thread objects. A process contains a pointer to an address map, a list of ready threads containing thread objects, a list of threads belonging to the process, the total accumulated time for all threads executing within the process, and a base priority.
Thread	Represents thread objects, including scheduling priority and quantum, and which processors the thread may run on.
Profile	Used to measure the distribution of run time within a block of code. Both user and system code can be profiled.



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Windows is not a full-blown object-oriented OS. It is not implemented in an object-oriented language. Data structures that reside completely within one Executive component are not represented as objects. Nevertheless, Windows illustrates the power of object-oriented technology and represents the increasing trend toward the use of this technology in OS design.

### 2.6 TRADITIONAL UNIX SYSTEMS

#### History

The history of UNIX is an oft-told tale and will not be repeated in great detail here. Instead, we provide a brief summary.

UNIX was initially developed at Bell Labs and became operational on a PDP-7 in 1970. Some of the people involved at Bell Labs had also participated in the time-sharing work being done at MIT's Project MAC. That project led to the development of first CTSS and then Multics. Although it is common to say that the original UNIX was a scaled-down version of Multics, the developers of UNIX actually claimed to be more influenced by CTSS [RITC78]. Nevertheless, UNIX incorporated many ideas from Multics.

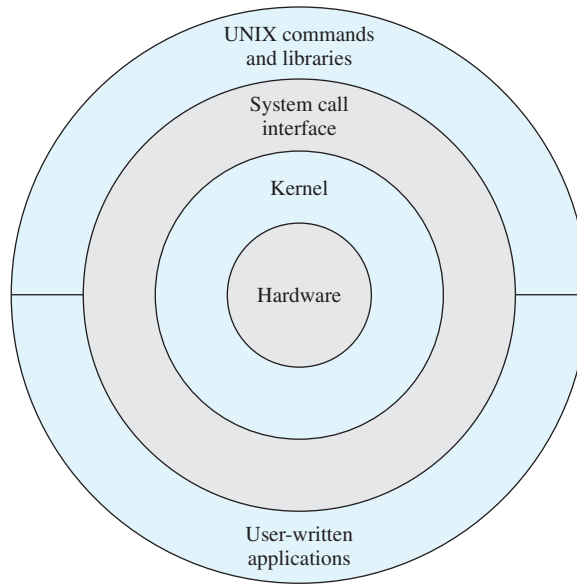
Work on UNIX at Bell Labs, and later elsewhere, produced a series of versions of UNIX. The first notable milestone was porting the UNIX system from the PDP-7 to the PDP-11. This was the first hint that UNIX would be an operating system for all computers. The next important milestone was the rewriting of UNIX in the programming language C. This was an unheard-of strategy at the time. It was generally felt that something as complex as an operating system, which must deal with time-critical events, had to be written exclusively in assembly language. Reasons for this attitude include the following:

- Memory (both RAM and secondary store) was small and expensive by today's standards, so effective use was important. This included various techniques for overlaying memory with different code and data segments, and self-modifying code.
- Even though compilers had been available since the 1950s, the computer industry was generally skeptical of the quality of automatically generated code. With resource capacity small, efficient code, both in terms of time and space, was essential.
- Processor and bus speeds were relatively slow, so saving clock cycles could make a substantial difference in execution time.

The C implementation demonstrated the advantages of using a high-level language for most if not all of the system code. Today, virtually all UNIX implementations are written in C.

These early versions of UNIX were popular within Bell Labs. In 1974, the UNIX system was described in a technical journal for the first time [RITC74]. This spurred great interest in the system. Licenses for UNIX were provided to commercial institutions as well as universities. The first widely available version outside Bell Labs was Version 6, in 1976. The follow-on Version 7, released in 1978, is the ancestor

## 2.6 / TRADITIONAL UNIX SYSTEMS 91



**Figure 2.14** General UNIX Architecture

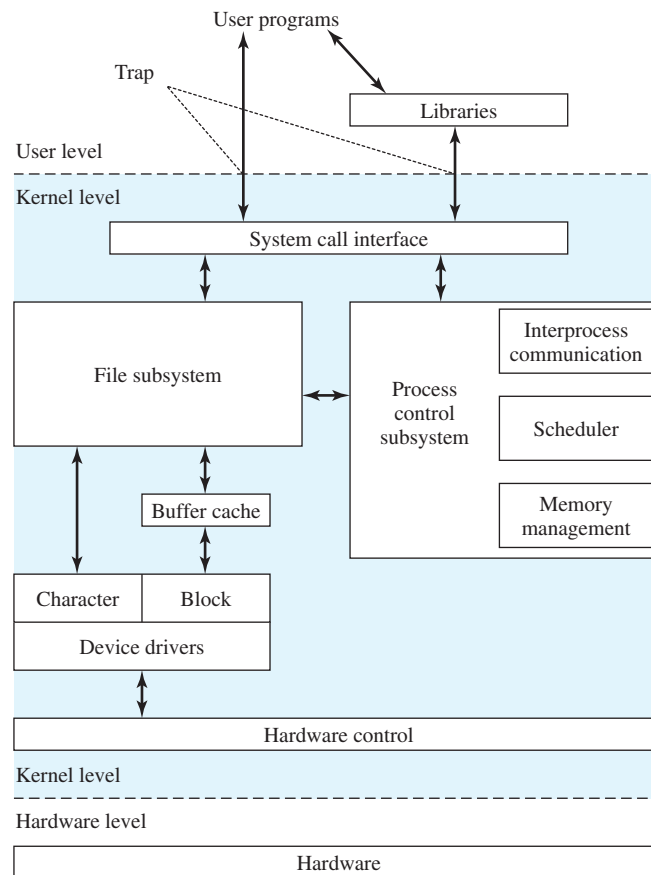
of most modern UNIX systems. The most important of the non-AT&T systems to be developed was done at the University of California at Berkeley, called UNIX BSD (Berkeley Software Distribution), running first on PDP and then VAX computers. AT&T continued to develop and refine the system. By 1982, Bell Labs had combined several AT&T variants of UNIX into a single system, marketed commercially as UNIX System III. A number of features was later added to the operating system to produce UNIX System V.

### Description

Figure 2.14 provides a general description of the classic UNIX architecture. The underlying hardware is surrounded by the OS software. The OS is often called the system kernel, or simply the kernel, to emphasize its isolation from the user and applications. It is the UNIX kernel that we will be concerned with in our use of UNIX as an example in this book. UNIX also comes equipped with a number of user services and interfaces that are considered part of the system. These can be grouped into the shell, other interface software, and the components of the C compiler (compiler, assembler, loader). The layer outside of this consists of user applications and the user interface to the C compiler.

A closer look at the kernel is provided in Figure 2.15. User programs can invoke OS services either directly or through library programs. The system call interface is the boundary with the user and allows higher-level software to gain access to specific kernel functions. At the other end, the OS contains primitive routines that interact directly with the hardware. Between these two interfaces, the system is divided into two main parts, one concerned with process control and the other concerned with file management and I/O. The process control subsystem is responsible

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**Figure 2.15** Traditional UNIX Kernel

for memory management, the scheduling and dispatching of processes, and the synchronization and interprocess communication of processes. The file system exchanges data between memory and external devices either as a stream of characters or in blocks. To achieve this, a variety of device drivers are used. For block-oriented transfers, a disk cache approach is used: a system buffer in main memory is interposed between the user address space and the external device.

The description in this subsection has dealt with what might be termed traditional UNIX systems; [VAHA96] uses this term to refer to System V Release 3 (SVR3), 4.3BSD, and earlier versions. The following general statements may be made about a traditional UNIX system. It is designed to run on a single processor and lacks the ability to protect its data structures from concurrent access by multiple processors. Its kernel is not very versatile, supporting a single type of file system, process scheduling policy, and executable file format. The traditional UNIX kernel is not designed to be extensible and has few facilities for code reuse. The result is that, as new features were added to the various UNIX versions, much new code had to be added, yielding a bloated and unmodular kernel.

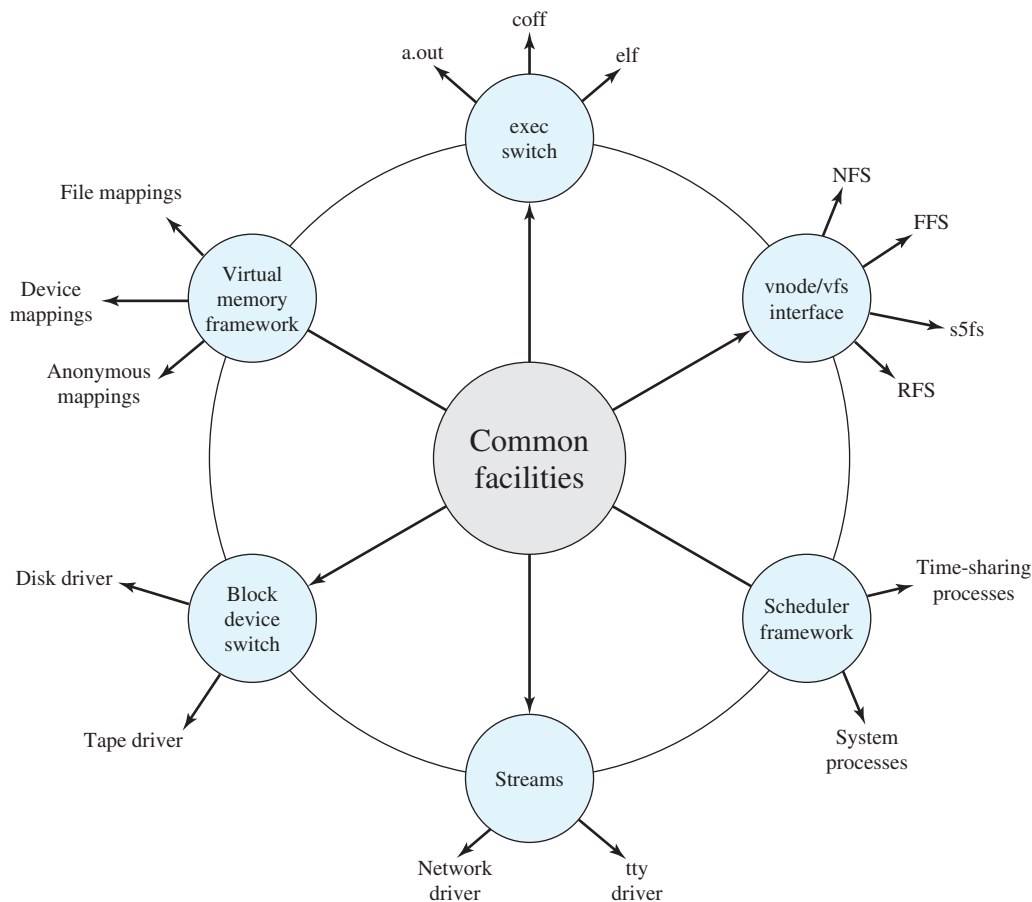
## 2.7 MODERN UNIX SYSTEMS

As UNIX evolved, the number of different implementations proliferated, each providing some useful features. There was a need to produce a new implementation that unified many of the important innovations, added other modern OS design features, and produced a more modular architecture. Typical of the modern UNIX kernel is the architecture depicted in Figure 2.16. There is a small core of facilities, written in a modular fashion, that provide functions and services needed by a number of OS processes. Each of the outer circles represents functions and an interface that may be implemented in a variety of ways.

We now turn to some examples of modern UNIX systems.

### System V Release 4 (SVR4)

SVR4, developed jointly by AT&T and Sun Microsystems, combines features from SVR3, 4.3BSD, Microsoft Xenix System V, and SunOS. It was almost a total rewrite



**Figure 2.16** Modern UNIX Kernel

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of the System V kernel and produced a clean, if complex, implementation. New features in the release include real-time processing support, process scheduling classes, dynamically allocated data structures, virtual memory management, virtual file system, and a preemptive kernel.

SVR4 draws on the efforts of both commercial and academic designers and was developed to provide a uniform platform for commercial UNIX deployment. It has succeeded in this objective and is perhaps the most important UNIX variant. It incorporates most of the important features ever developed on any UNIX system and does so in an integrated, commercially viable fashion. SVR4 runs on processors ranging from 32-bit microprocessors up to supercomputers.

### BSD

The Berkeley Software Distribution (BSD) series of UNIX releases have played a key role in the development of OS design theory. 4.xBSD is widely used in academic installations and has served as the basis of a number of commercial UNIX products. It is probably safe to say that BSD is responsible for much of the popularity of UNIX and that most enhancements to UNIX first appeared in BSD versions.

4.4BSD was the final version of BSD to be released by Berkeley, with the design and implementation organization subsequently dissolved. It is a major upgrade to 4.3BSD and includes a new virtual memory system, changes in the kernel structure, and a long list of other feature enhancements.

One of the most widely used and best documented versions of BSD is FreeBSD. FreeBSD is popular for Internet-based servers and firewalls and is used in a number of embedded systems.

The latest version of the Macintosh operating system, Mac OS X, is based on FreeBSD 5.0 and the Mach 3.0 microkernel.

### Solaris 10

Solaris is Sun's SVR4-based UNIX release, with the latest version being 10. Solaris provides all of the features of SVR4 plus a number of more advanced features, such as a fully preemptable, multithreaded kernel, full support for SMP, and an object-oriented interface to file systems. Solaris is the most widely used and most successful commercial UNIX implementation.

## 2.8 LINUX

### History

Linux started out as a UNIX variant for the IBM PC (Intel 80386) architecture. Linus Torvalds, a Finnish student of computer science, wrote the initial version. Torvalds posted an early version of Linux on the Internet in 1991. Since then, a number of people, collaborating over the Internet, have contributed to the development of Linux, all under the control of Torvalds. Because Linux is free and the source code is available, it became an early alternative to other UNIX workstations, such as those offered by Sun Microsystems and IBM. Today, Linux is a full-featured UNIX system that runs on all of these platforms and more, including Intel Pentium and Itanium, and the Motorola/IBM PowerPC.

WINDOWS/LINUX COMPARISON		
Windows Vista		Linux
General		
A commercial OS, with strong influences from VAX/VMS and requirements for compatibility with multiple OS personalities, such as DOS/Windows, POSIX, and, originally, OS/2		An open-source implementation of UNIX, focused on simplicity and efficiency. Runs on a very large range of processor architectures
Environment which influenced fundamental design decisions		
32-bit program address space Mbytes of physical memory Virtual memory Multiprocessor (4-way) Micro-controller based I/O devices Client/Server distributed computing Large, diverse user populations		16-bit program address space Kbytes of physical memory Swapping system with memory mapping Uniprocessor State-machine based I/O devices Standalone interactive systems Small number of friendly users
Compare these with today's environment: 64-bit addresses Gbytes of physical memory Virtual memory, Virtual Processors Multiprocessor (64-128) High-speed internet/intranet, Web Services Single user, but vulnerable to hackers worldwide		
Although both Windows and Linux have adapted to changes in the environment, the original design environments (i.e. in 1989 and 1973) heavily influenced the design choices:		
Unit of concurrency:	threads vs. processes	[address space, uniprocessor]
Process creation:	CreateProcess() vs. fork()	[address space, swapping]
I/O:	Async vs sync	[swapping, I/O devices]
Security:	Discretionary Access vs. uid/gid	[user populations]
System structure		
Modular core kernel, with explicit publishing of data structures and interfaces by components Three layers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hardware Abstraction Layer manages processor, interrupt, DMA, BIOS details</li><li>• Kernel Layer manages CPU scheduling, interrupts, and synchronization</li><li>• Executive Layer implements the major OS functions in a fully threaded, mostly preemptive environment</li></ul>		Monolithic kernel
Dynamic data structures and kernel address space organization; initialization code discarded after boot. Much kernel code and data is pageable. Non-pageable kernel code and data uses large pages for TLB efficiency		Kernel code and data is statically allocated to non-pageable memory

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File systems, networking, devices are loadable/unloadable drivers (dynamic link libraries) using the extensible I/O system interfaces	Extensive support for loading/unloading kernel modules, such as device drivers and file systems.
Dynamically loaded drivers can provide both pageable and non-pageable sections	Modules cannot be paged, but can be unloaded
Namespace root is virtual with file systems mounted underneath; types of system objects easily extended, and leverage unified naming, referencing, lifetime management, security, and handle-based synchronization	
OS personalities implemented as user-mode subsystems. Native NT APIs are based on the general kernel handle/object architecture and allow cross-process manipulation of virtual memory, threads, and other kernel objects	Namespace is rooted in a file system; adding new named system objects require file system changes or mapping onto device model Implements a POSIX-compatible, UNIX-like interface; Kernel API is far simpler than Windows; Can understand various types of executables
Discretionary Access Controls, discrete privileges, auditing	User/group IDs; capabilities similar to NT privileges can also be associated with processes

Key to the success of Linux has been the availability of free software packages under the auspices of the Free Software Foundation (FSF). FSF's goal is stable, platform-independent software that is free, high quality, and embraced by the user community. FSF's GNU project<sup>2</sup> provides tools for software developers, and the GNU Public License (GPL) is the FSF seal of approval. Torvalds used GNU tools in developing his kernel, which he then released under the GPL. Thus, the Linux distributions that you see today are the product of FSF's GNU project, Torvald's individual effort, and many collaborators all over the world.

In addition to its use by many individual programmers, Linux has now made significant penetration into the corporate world. This is not only because of the free software, but also because of the quality of the Linux kernel. Many talented programmers have contributed to the current version, resulting in a technically impressive product. Moreover, Linux is highly modular and easily configured. This makes it easy to squeeze optimal performance from a variety of hardware platforms. Plus, with the source code available, vendors can tweak applications and utilities to meet specific requirements. Throughout this book, we will provide details of Linux kernel internals based on the most recent version, Linux 2.6.

### Modular Structure

Most UNIX kernels are monolithic. Recall from earlier in this chapter that a monolithic kernel is one that includes virtually all of the OS functionality in one large block of code

<sup>2</sup>GNU is a recursive acronym for *GNU's Not Unix*. The GNU project is a free software set of packages and tools for developing a UNIX-like operating system; it is often used with the Linux kernel.

that runs as a single process with a single address space. All the functional components of the kernel have access to all of its internal data structures and routines. If changes are made to any portion of a typical monolithic OS, all the modules and routines must be re-linked and reinstalled and the system rebooted before the changes can take effect. As a result, any modification, such as adding a new device driver or file system function, is difficult. This problem is especially acute for Linux, for which development is global and done by a loosely associated group of independent programmers.

Although Linux does not use a microkernel approach, it achieves many of the potential advantages of this approach by means of its particular modular architecture. Linux is structured as a collection of modules, a number of which can be automatically loaded and unloaded on demand. These relatively independent blocks are referred to as **loadable modules** [GOYE99]. In essence, a module is an object file whose code can be linked to and unlinked from the kernel at runtime. Typically, a module implements some specific function, such as a filesystem, a device driver, or some other feature of the kernel's upper layer. A module does not execute as its own process or thread, although it can create kernel threads for various purposes as necessary. Rather, a module is executed in kernel mode on behalf of the current process.

Thus, although Linux may be considered monolithic, its modular structure overcomes some of the difficulties in developing and evolving the kernel.

The Linux loadable modules have two important characteristics:

- **Dynamic linking:** A kernel module can be loaded and linked into the kernel while the kernel is already in memory and executing. A module can also be unlinked and removed from memory at any time.
- **Stackable modules:** The modules are arranged in a hierarchy. Individual modules serve as libraries when they are referenced by client modules higher up in the hierarchy, and as clients when they reference modules further down.

Dynamic linking [FRAN97] facilitates configuration and saves kernel memory. In Linux, a user program or user can explicitly load and unload kernel modules using the `insmod` and `rmmod` commands. The kernel itself monitors the need for particular functions and can load and unload modules as needed. With stackable modules, dependencies between modules can be defined. This has two benefits:

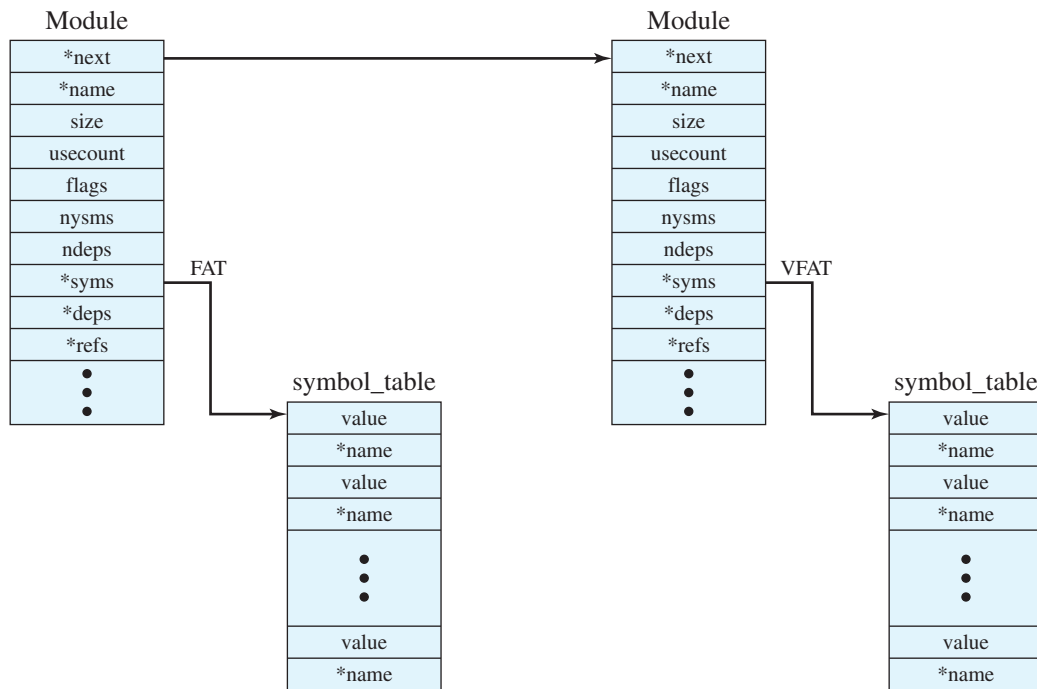
1. Code common to a set of similar modules (e.g., drivers for similar hardware) can be moved into a single module, reducing replication.
2. The kernel can make sure that needed modules are present, refraining from unloading a module on which other running modules depend, and loading any additional required modules when a new module is loaded.

Figure 2.17 is an example that illustrates the structures used by Linux to manage modules. The figure shows the list of kernel modules after only two modules have been loaded: FAT and VFAT. Each module is defined by two tables, the module table and the symbol table. The module table includes the following elements:

- **\*next:** Pointer to the following module. All modules are organized into a linked list. The list begins with a pseudomodule (not shown in Figure 2.17).
- **\*name:** Pointer to module name.
- **size:** Module size in memory pages.



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**Figure 2.17** Example List of Linux Kernel Modules

- `usecount`: Module usage counter. The counter is incremented when an operation involving the module's functions is started and decremented when the operation terminates.
- `flags`: Module flags.
- `nsyms`: Number of exported symbols.
- `ndeps`: Number of referenced modules
- `*syms`: Pointer to this module's symbol table.
- `*deps`: Pointer to list of modules the are referenced by this module.
- `*refs`: Pointer to list of modules that use this module.

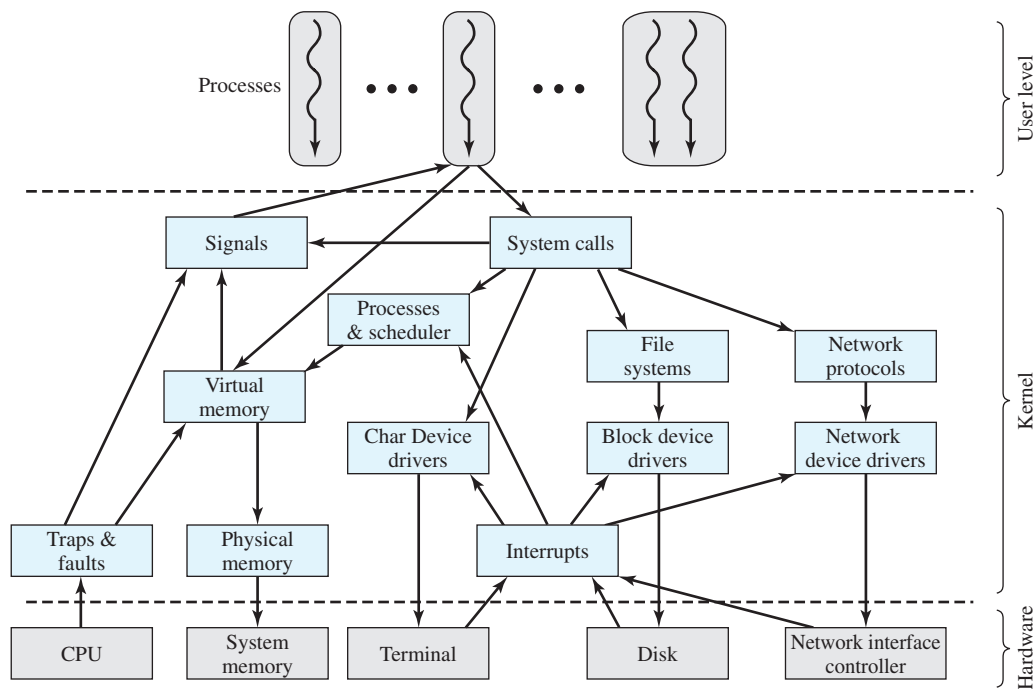
The symbol table defines those symbols controlled by this module that are used elsewhere.

Figure 2.17 shows that the VFAT module was loaded after the FAT module and that the VFAT module is dependent on the FAT module.

### Kernel Components

Figure 2.18, taken from [MOSB02] shows the main components of the Linux kernel as implemented on an IA-64 architecture (e.g., Intel Itanium). The figure shows several processes running on top of the kernel. Each box indicates a separate process, while each squiggly line with an arrowhead represents a thread of execution.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>3</sup>In Linux, there is no distinction between the concepts of processes and threads. However, multiple threads in Linux can be grouped together in such a way that, effectively, you can have a single process comprising multiple threads. These matters are discussed in Chapter 4.



**Figure 2.18** Linux Kernel Components

kernel itself consists of an interacting collection of components, with arrows indicating the main interactions. The underlying hardware is also depicted as a set of components with arrows indicating which kernel components use or control which hardware components. All of the kernel components, of course, execute on the processor but, for simplicity, these relationships are not shown.

Briefly, the principal kernel components are the following:

- **Signals:** The kernel uses signals to call into a process. For example, signals are used to notify a process of certain faults, such as division by zero. Table 2.6 gives a few examples of signals.

**Table 2.6** Some Linux Signals

SIGHUP	Terminal hangup	SIGCONT	Continue
SIGQUIT	Keyboard quit	SIGTSTP	Keyboard stop
SIGTRAP	Trace trap	SIGTTOU	Terminal write
SIGBUS	Bus error	SIGXCPU	CPU limit exceeded
SIGKILL	Kill signal	SIGVTALRM	Virtual alarm clock
SIGSEGV	Segmentation violation	SIGWINCH	Window size unchanged
SIGPIPE	Broken pipe	SIGPWR	Power failure
SIGTERM	Termination	SIGRTMIN	First real-time signal
SIGCHLD	Child status unchanged	SIGRTMAX	Last real-time signal

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- **System calls:** The system call is the means by which a process requests a specific kernel service. There are several hundred system calls, which can be roughly grouped into six categories: filesystem, process, scheduling, interprocess communication, socket (networking), and miscellaneous. Table 2.7 defines a few examples in each category.

**Table 2.7** Some Linux System Calls

Filesystem related	
<b>close</b>	Close a file descriptor.
<b>link</b>	Make a new name for a file.
<b>open</b>	Open and possibly create a file or device.
<b>read</b>	Read from file descriptor.
<b>write</b>	Write to file descriptor
Process related	
<b>execve</b>	Execute program.
<b>exit</b>	Terminate the calling process.
<b>getpid</b>	Get process identification.
<b>setuid</b>	Set user identity of the current process.
<b>ptrace</b>	Provides a means by which a parent process may observe and control the execution of another process, and examine and change its core image and registers.
Scheduling related	
<b>sched_getparam</b>	Sets the scheduling parameters associated with the scheduling policy for the process identified by <code>pid</code> .
<b>sched_get_priority_max</b>	Returns the maximum priority value that can be used with the scheduling algorithm identified by <code>policy</code> .
<b>sched_setscheduler</b>	Sets both the scheduling policy (e.g., FIFO) and the associated parameters for the process <code>pid</code> .
<b>sched_rr_get_interval</b>	Writes into the <code>timespec</code> structure pointed to by the parameter <code>tp</code> the round robin time quantum for the process <code>pid</code> .
<b>sched_yield</b>	A process can relinquish the processor voluntarily without blocking via this system call. The process will then be moved to the end of the queue for its static priority and a new process gets to run.
Interprocess Communication (IPC) related	
<b>msgrcv</b>	A message buffer structure is allocated to receive a message. The system call then reads a message from the message queue specified by <code>msqid</code> into the newly created message buffer.
<b>semctl</b>	Performs the control operation specified by <code>cmd</code> on the semaphore set <code>semid</code> .
<b>semop</b>	Performs operations on selected members of the semaphore set <code>semid</code> .
<b>shmat</b>	Attaches the shared memory segment identified by <code>shmid</code> to the data segment of the calling process.
<b>shmctl</b>	Allows the user to receive information on a shared memory segment, set the owner, group, and permissions of a shared memory segment, or destroy a segment.

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Table 2.7 (Continued)

Socket (Networking) related	
<b>bind</b>	Assigns the local IP address and port for a socket. Returns 0 for success and -1 for error.
<b>connect</b>	Establishes a connection between the given socket and the remote socket associated with sockaddr.
<b>gethostname</b>	Returns local host name.
<b>send</b>	Send the bytes contained in buffer pointed to by *msg over the given socket.
<b>setsockopt</b>	Sets the options on a socket
Miscellaneous	
<b>create_module</b>	Attempts to create a loadable module entry and reserve the kernel memory that will be needed to hold the module.
<b>fsync</b>	Copies all in-core parts of a file to disk, and waits until the device reports that all parts are on stable storage.
<b>query_module</b>	Requests information related to loadable modules from the kernel.
<b>time</b>	Returns the time in seconds since January 1, 1970.
<b>vhangup</b>	Simulates a hangup on the current terminal. This call arranges for other users to have a “clean” tty at login time.

- **Processes and scheduler:** Creates, manages, and schedules processes.
- **Virtual memory:** Allocates and manages virtual memory for processes.
- **File systems:** Provides a global, hierarchical namespace for files, directories, and other file related objects and provides file system functions.
- **Network protocols:** Supports the Sockets interface to users for the TCP/IP protocol suite.
- **Character device drivers:** Manages devices that require the kernel to send or receive data one byte at a time, such as terminals, modems, and printers.
- **Block device drivers:** Manages devices that read and write data in blocks, such as various forms of secondary memory (magnetic disks, CD-ROMs, etc.).
- **Network device drivers:** Manages network interface cards and communications ports that connect to network devices, such as bridges and routers.
- **Traps and faults:** Handles traps and faults generated by the processor, such as a memory fault.
- **Physical memory:** Manages the pool of page frames in real memory and allocates pages for virtual memory.
- **Interrupts:** Handles interrupts from peripheral devices.

## 2.9 RECOMMENDED READING AND WEB SITES

[BRIN01] is an excellent collection of papers covering major advances in OS design over the years. [SWAI07] is a provocative and interesting short article on the future of operating systems.

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An excellent treatment of UNIX internals, which provides a comparative analysis of a number of variants, is [VAHA96]. For UNIX SVR4, [GOOD94] provides a definitive treatment, with ample technical detail. For the popular open-source FreeBSD, [MCKU05] is highly recommended. [MCDO07] provides a good treatment of Solaris internals. Good treatments of Linux internals are [BOVE06] and [LOVE05].

Although there are countless books on various versions of Windows, there is remarkably little material available on Windows internals. The book to read is [RUSS05]; its coverage stops with Windows Server 2003, but much of the content is valid for Vista.

**BOVE06** Bovet, D., and Cesati, M. *Understanding the Linux Kernel*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly, 2006.

**BRIN01** Brinch Hansen, P. *Classic Operating Systems: From Batch Processing to Distributed Systems*. New York: Springer-Verlag, 2001.

**GOOD94** Goodheart, B., and Cox, J. *The Magic Garden Explained: The Internals of UNIX System V Release 4*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994.

**LOVE05** Love, R. *Linux Kernel Development*. Waltham, MA: Novell Press, 2005.

**MCDO07** McDougall, R., and Mauro, J. *Solaris Internals: Solaris 10 and OpenSolaris Kernel Architecture*. Palo Alto, CA: Sun Microsystems Press, 2007.

**MCKU05** McKusick, M., and Neville-Neil, J. *The Design and Implementation of the FreeBSD Operating System*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 2005.

**RUSS05** Russinovich, M., and Solomon, D. *Microsoft Windows Internals: Microsoft Windows Server(TM) 2003, Windows XP, and Windows 2000*. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Press, 2005.

**SWAI07** Swaine, M. "Wither Operating Systems?" *Dr. Dobb's Journal*, March 2007.

**VAHA96** Vahalia, U. *UNIX Internals: The New Frontiers*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996.



### Recommended Web sites:

- **The Operating System Resource Center:** A useful collection of documents and papers on a wide range of operating system topics.
- **Review of Operating Systems:** A comprehensive review of commercial, free, research and hobby operating systems.
- **Operating System Technical Comparison:** Includes a substantial amount of information on a variety of operating systems.
- **ACM Special Interest Group on Operating Systems:** Information on SIGOPS publications and conferences.
- **IEEE Technical Committee on Operating Systems and Application Environments:** Includes an online newsletter and links to other sites.
- **The comp. os.research FAQ:** Lengthy and worthwhile FAQ covering operating system design issues.

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- **UNIX Guru Universe:** Excellent source of UNIX information.
- **Linux Documentation Project:** The name describes the site.
- **IBM's Linux Web site:** Provides a wide range of technical and user information on Linux. Much of it is devoted to IBM products, but there is a lot of useful general technical information.
- **Windows Development:** Good source of information on Windows internals.

## 2.10 KEY TERMS, REVIEW QUESTIONS, AND PROBLEMS

## Key Terms

batch processing batch system execution context interrupt job job control language kernel memory management microkernel monitor monolithic kernel multiprogrammed batch system	multiprogramming multitasking multithreading nucleus operating system (OS) physical address privileged instruction process process state real address resident monitor round robin scheduling	serial processing symmetric multiprocessing task thread time sharing time-sharing system uniprogramming virtual address
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## Review Questions

- 2.1 What are three objectives of an OS design?
- 2.2 What is the kernel of an OS?
- 2.3 What is multiprogramming?
- 2.4 What is a process?
- 2.5 How is the execution context of a process used by the OS?
- 2.6 List and briefly explain five storage management responsibilities of a typical OS.
- 2.7 Explain the distinction between a real address and a virtual address.
- 2.8 Describe the round-robin scheduling technique.
- 2.9 Explain the difference between a monolithic kernel and a microkernel.
- 2.10 What is multithreading?

## Problems

- 2.1 Suppose that we have a multiprogrammed computer in which each job has identical characteristics. In one computation period,  $T$ , for a job, half the time is spent in I/O and the other half in processor activity. Each job runs for a total of  $N$  periods. Assume that a simple round-robin scheduling is used, and that I/O operations can overlap with processor operation. Define the following quantities:
  - Turnaround time = actual time to complete a job
  - Throughput = average number of jobs completed per time period  $T$
  - Processor utilization = percentage of time that the processor is active (not waiting)

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Compute these quantities for one, two, and four simultaneous jobs, assuming that the period  $T$  is distributed in each of the following ways:

- a.** I/O first half, processor second half
  - b.** I/O first and fourth quarters, processor second and third quarter
- 2.2** An I/O-bound program is one that, if run alone, would spend more time waiting for I/O than using the processor. A processor-bound program is the opposite. Suppose a short-term scheduling algorithm favors those programs that have used little processor time in the recent past. Explain why this algorithm favors I/O-bound programs and yet does not permanently deny processor time to processor-bound programs.
- 2.3** Contrast the scheduling policies you might use when trying to optimize a time-sharing system with those you would use to optimize a multiprogrammed batch system.
- 2.4** What is the purpose of system calls, and how do system calls relate to the OS and to the concept of dual-mode (kernel mode and user mode) operation?
- 2.5** In IBM's mainframe operating system, OS/390, one of the major modules in the kernel is the System Resource Manager (SRM). This module is responsible for the allocation of resources among address spaces (processes). The SRM gives OS/390 a degree of sophistication unique among operating systems. No other mainframe OS, and certainly no other type of OS, can match the functions performed by SRM. The concept of resource includes processor, real memory, and I/O channels. SRM accumulates statistics pertaining to utilization of processor, channel, and various key data structures. Its purpose is to provide optimum performance based on performance monitoring and analysis. The installation sets forth various performance objectives, and these serve as guidance to the SRM, which dynamically modifies installation and job performance characteristics based on system utilization. In turn, the SRM provides reports that enable the trained operator to refine the configuration and parameter settings to improve user service.

This problem concerns one example of SRM activity. Real memory is divided into equal-sized blocks called frames, of which there may be many thousands. Each frame can hold a block of virtual memory referred to as a page. SRM receives control approximately 20 times per second and inspects each and every page frame. If the page has not been referenced or changed, a counter is incremented by 1. Over time, SRM averages these numbers to determine the average number of seconds that a page frame in the system goes untouched. What might be the purpose of this and what action might SRM take?