

# Computer System- B Security

Introduction to OS Security  
Memory Protection

Sanjay Rawat  
bristol.ac.uk

Intel x86 32/64

## Segmentation and Paging mechanism

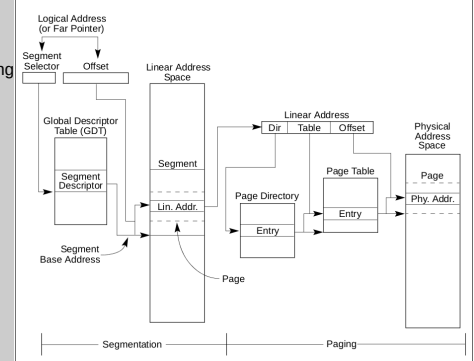
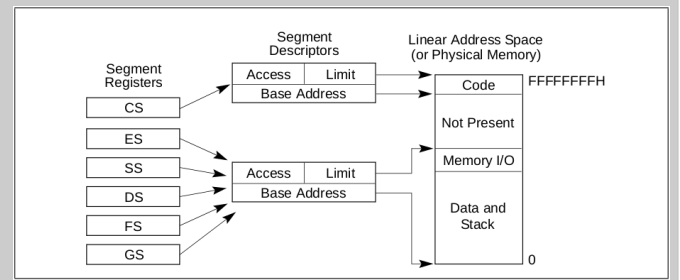


Fig from:  
Intel 64 & IA-32 Manual  
Vol. 3, sec 3.1

## We know that...

- Modern systems allow multiple processes to run concurrently.
- Virtual memory address space is used to facilitate this
- We need to make sure that
  - A process does not access memory not allocate to it.
  - One process (malicious) does not affect the other processes, including OS.

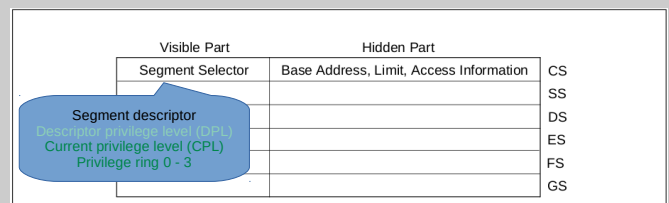
## Segment based protection



## What we do

- Segmentation
  - refers to dividing a computer's memory into segments (code, data, ...) with specific access rights
- Virtual memory
  - Illusion that a process has full access to the entire memory address space
  - Abstracting the memory as VM and then dividing VM into blocks
  - Page table is used to translate virtual address to physical address

## Segmentation Registers



## Paging Based Protection

- Paging provides finer mapping of linear address to physical address → finer protection at page level
- Apart from mapping and swapping in/out, page entries also provide protection

## TLB Level Protection

- The access control bits are almost same as we have for PTE.
- 

Virtual	Phy.	valid	prot
100	250	1	r

## 32-bit page entries

31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
PFN																							G	PAT	D	A	PCD	PWT	US	R/W	P

Bit Position(s)	Contents
0 (P)	Present; must be 1 to map a 4-KByte page
1 (R/W)	Read/write; if 0, writes may not be allowed to the 4-KByte page referenced by this entry (see Section 4.6)
2 (US)	User/supervisor; if 0, user-mode accesses are not allowed to the 4-KByte page referenced by this entry (see Section 4.8)
3 (PWT)	Page-level write-through; indirectly determines the memory type used to access the 4-KByte page referenced by this entry (see Section 4.9)
4 (PCD)	Page-level cache disable; indirectly determines the memory type used to access the 4-KByte page referenced by this entry (see Section 4.9)
5 (A)	Accessed; indicates whether software has accessed the 4-KByte page referenced by this entry (see Section 4.8)
6 (D)	Dirty; indicates whether software has written to the 4-KByte page referenced by this entry (see Section 4.8)
7 (PAT)	If the PAT is supported, indirectly determines the memory type used to access the 4-KByte page referenced by this entry (see Section 4.9.2); otherwise, reserved (must be 0)
8 (G)	Global; if CR4/PGE = 1, determines whether the translation is global (see Section 4.10); ignored otherwise
11:9	Ignored
31:12	Physical address of the 4-KByte page referenced by this entry

## Page level protection Summary

- Page-level protection can be used alone or with segments.
- When combined, page-level read/write protection allows more protection granularity within segments.
- The processor performs two page-level protection checks:
  - Restriction of addressable domain (supervisor and user modes).
  - Page type (read only or read/write)
- An Intel 64 or IA-32 processor with the **execute-disable bit** capability can prevent data pages from being used by malicious software to execute code
  - If the execute-disable bit of a memory page is set, that page can be used only as data.