Process Management

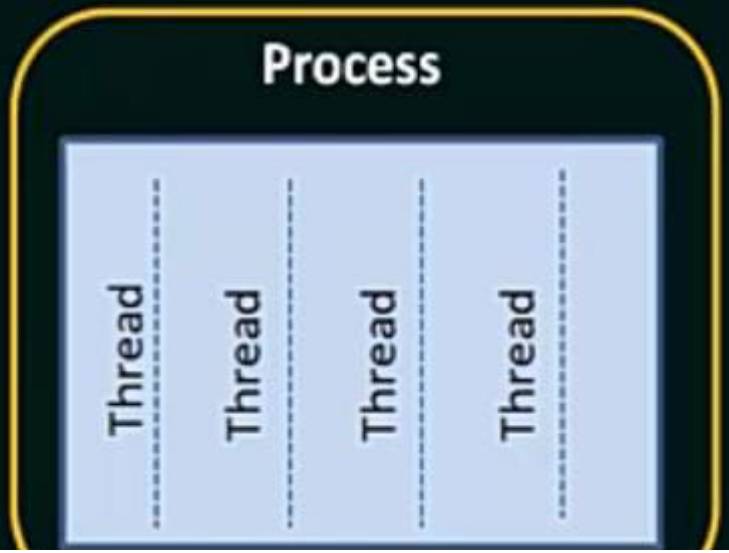
(Processes and Threads)

Process:

A process can be thought of as a program in execution.

Thread:

A thread is the unit of execution within a process. A process can have anywhere from just one thread to many threads.



Threads

A thread is a basic unit of CPU utilization.

It comprises

- A thread ID
- A program counter
- A register set and
- A stack

It shares with other threads belonging to the same process its code section, data section, and other operating-system resources, such as open files and signals.

A traditional / heavyweight process has a single thread of control.

If a process has multiple threads of control, it can perform more than one task at a time.

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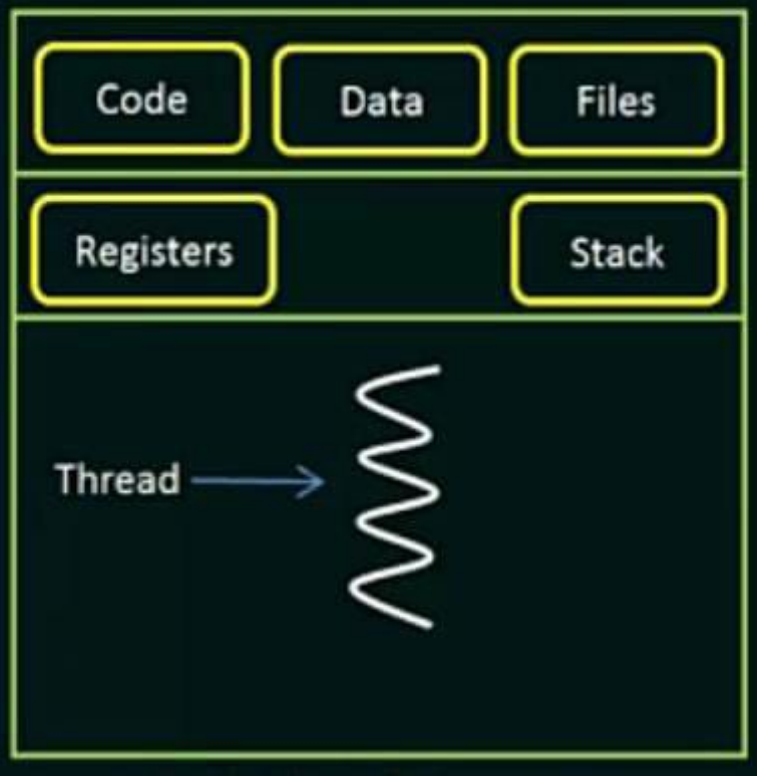

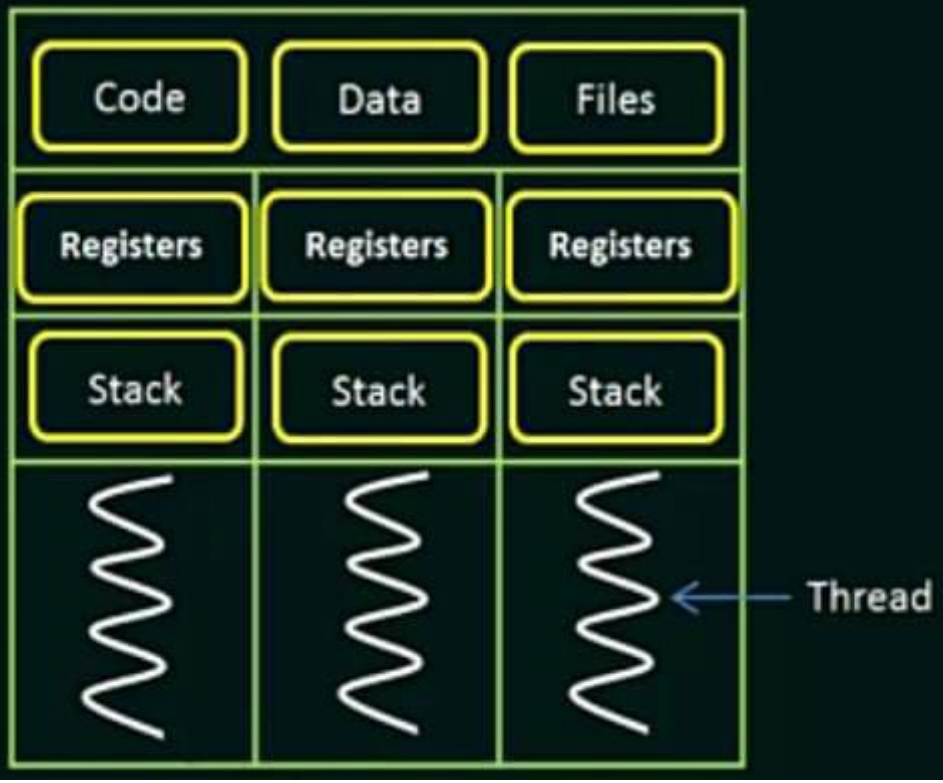

The benefits of multithreaded programming can be broken down into four major categories:

Responsiveness	Multithreading an interactive application may allow a program to continue running even if part of it is blocked or is performing a lengthy operation, thereby increasing responsiveness to the user.
Resource sharing	By default, threads share the memory and the resources of the process to which they belong. The benefit of sharing code and data is that it allows an application to have several different threads of activity within the same address space.
Economy	Allocating memory and resources for process creation is costly. Because threads share resources of the process to which they belong, it is more economical to create and context-switch threads.
Utilization of multiprocessor architectures	The benefits of multithreading can be greatly increased in a multiprocessor architecture, where threads may be running in parallel on different processors. A single-threaded process can only run on one CPU, no matter how many are available. Multithreading on a multi-CPU machine increases