
Shared-memory Parallel Programming with Cilk Plus

Milind Chabbi

Nikhil Hegde

**Department of Computer Science
IIT Dharwad**

Outline for Today

- Threaded programming models
- Introduction to Cilk Plus
 - tasks
 - algorithmic complexity measures
 - scheduling
 - performance and granularity
 - task parallelism examples
 - vector addition using divide and conquer
 - nqueens: exploratory search

What is a Thread?

- Thread: an independent flow of control
 - software entity that executes a sequence of instructions
- Thread requires
 - program counter
 - a set of registers
 - an area in memory, including a call stack
 - a thread id
- A process consists of one or more threads that share
 - address space
 - attributes including user id, open files, working directory, ...

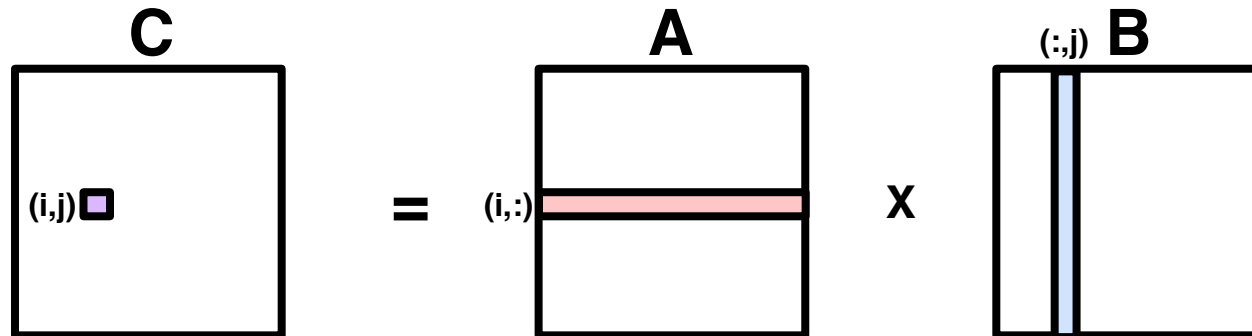
An Abstract Example of Threading

A sequential program for matrix multiply

```
for (i = 0; i < n; i++)
```

```
  for (j = 0; j < n; j++)
```

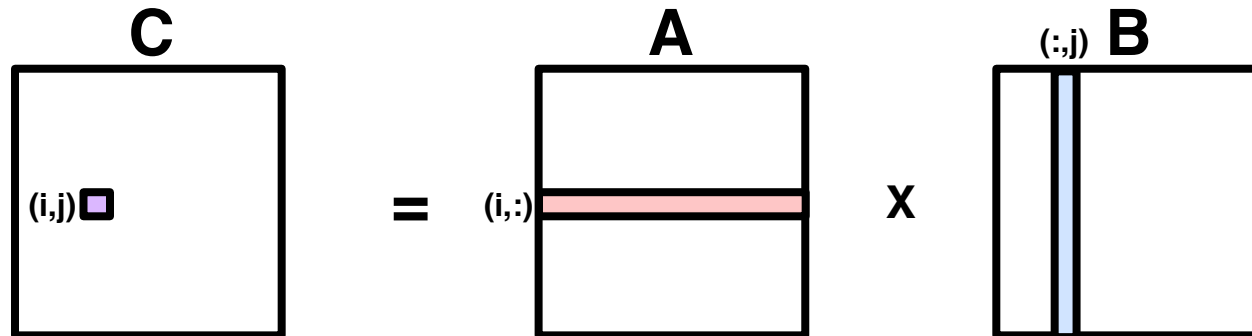
```
    c[i][j] = dot_product(get_row(a, i), get_col(b, j))
```



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for (i = 0; i < n; i++)  
  for (j = 0; j < n; j++)  
    c[i][j] = dot_product(get_row(a, i), get_col(b, j))
```



can be transformed to use multiple threads

```
for (i = 0; i < n; i++)  
  for (j = 0; j < n; j++)  
    c[i][j] = spawn dot_product(get_row(a, i), get_col(b, j))  
sync
```

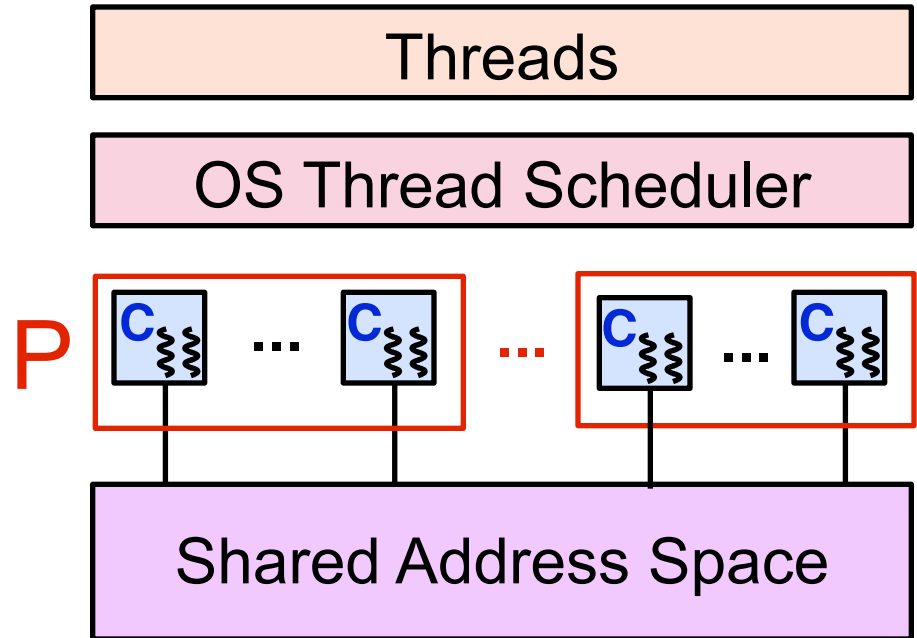
Why Threads?

Well matched to multicore hardware

- Employ parallelism to compute on **shared data**
 - boost performance on a fixed memory footprint (strong scaling)
- Useful for hiding latency
 - e.g. latency due to memory, communication, I/O
- Useful for scheduling and load balancing
 - especially for dynamic concurrency
- Relatively easy to program
 - easier than message-passing? you be the judge!

Threads and Memory

- All memory is globally accessible to every thread
- Each thread's stack is treated as local to the thread
- Additional local storage can be allocated on a per-thread basis
- Idealization: treat all memory as equidistant



Schema for SMP Node

Targets for Threaded Programs

Shared-memory parallel systems

- Multicore processor
- Workstations or cluster nodes with multiple processors
- Xeon Phi Knights Landing manycore processor
 - over 250 threads on one processor

Threaded Programming Models

- **Library-based models**
 - all data is shared, unless otherwise specified
 - examples: Pthreads, C++11 threads, Intel Threading Building Blocks, Java Concurrency Library, Boost
- **Directive-based models, e.g., OpenMP**
 - shared and private data
 - pragma syntax simplifies thread creation and synchronization
- **Programming languages**
 - Cilk Plus (Intel)
 - CUDA (NVIDIA)
 - Habanero-Java (Rice/Georgia Tech)

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Cilk Plus Programming Model

- A simple and powerful model for writing multithreaded programs
- Extends C/C++ with three new keywords
 - cilk_spawn**: invoke a function (potentially) in parallel
 - cilk_sync**: wait for a procedure's spawned functions to finish
 - cilk_for**: execute a loop in parallel
- Cilk Plus programs specify logical parallelism
 - what computations can be performed in parallel, i.e., tasks
 - not mapping of work to threads or cores
- Faithful language extension
 - if Cilk Plus keywords are elided → C/C++ program semantics
- Availability
 - Intel icpc compiler
 - OpenCilk (clang)

Cilk Plus Tasking Example: Fibonacci

Fibonacci sequence

0 1 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 34 55 89 144 233 377 610 987

Cilk Plus Tasking Example: Fibonacci

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0 +1 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 34 55 89 144 233 377 610 987



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Cilk Plus Tasking Example: Fibonacci

Fibonacci sequence

0 +1 +1 +2 3 5 8 13 21 34 55 89 144 233 377 610 987



The diagram shows the Fibonacci sequence from 0 to 987. The first four terms (0, 1, 1, 2) are highlighted with colored plus signs: red for 0+1, purple for 1+1, and red for 1+2. A purple curved arrow points from the first two 1s to the 2, and two red curved arrows point from the first 1 and the 1 to the 2, illustrating the recursive calculation of the fourth term.

Cilk Plus Tasking Example: Fibonacci

Fibonacci sequence

0 +1 +1 +2 +3 5 8 13 21 34 55 89 144 233 377 610 987



The diagram shows the Fibonacci sequence from 0 to 987. The first five terms (0, 1, 1, 2, 3) are connected by colored arrows indicating the addition process. Red arrows point from 0 to 1, 1 to 1, and 1 to 2. Purple arrows point from 1 to 2 and 2 to 3. The remaining terms (5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, 233, 377, 610, 987) are listed without arrows, representing the continuation of the sequence.

Cilk Plus Tasking Example: Fibonacci

Fibonacci sequence



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- Computing Fibonacci recursively

```
unsigned int fib(unsigned int n) {  
    if (n < 2) return n;  
    else {  
        unsigned int n1, n2;  
        n1 = fib(n-1);  
        n2 = fib(n-2);  
        return (n1 + n2);  
    }  
}
```

Cilk Plus Tasking Example: Fibonacci

Fibonacci sequence



- Computing Fibonacci recursively **in parallel with Cilk Plus**

```
unsigned int fib(unsigned int n) {  
    if (n < 2) return n;  
    else {  
        unsigned int n1, n2;  
        n1 = cilk_spawn fib(n-1);  
        n2 = fib(n-2);  
        cilk_sync;  
        return (n1 + n2);  
    }  
}
```

Cilk Plus Terminology

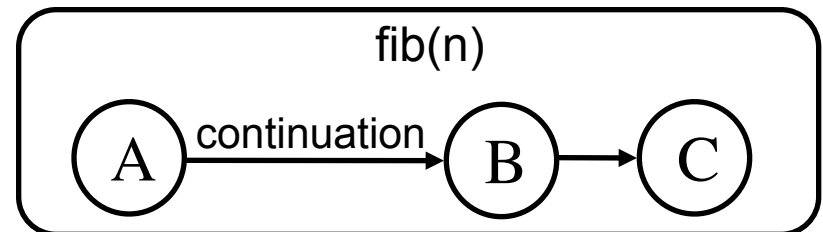
- Parallel control
 - cilk_spawn**, **cilk_sync**
 - return** from spawned function
- **Strand**
 - maximal sequence of instructions not containing parallel control

```
unsigned int fib(n) {  
  if (n < 2) return n;  
  else {  
    unsigned int n1, n2;  
    n1 = cilk_spawn fib(n - 1);  
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    cilk_sync;  
    return (n1 + n2);  
  }  
}
```

Strand A: **code before first spawn**

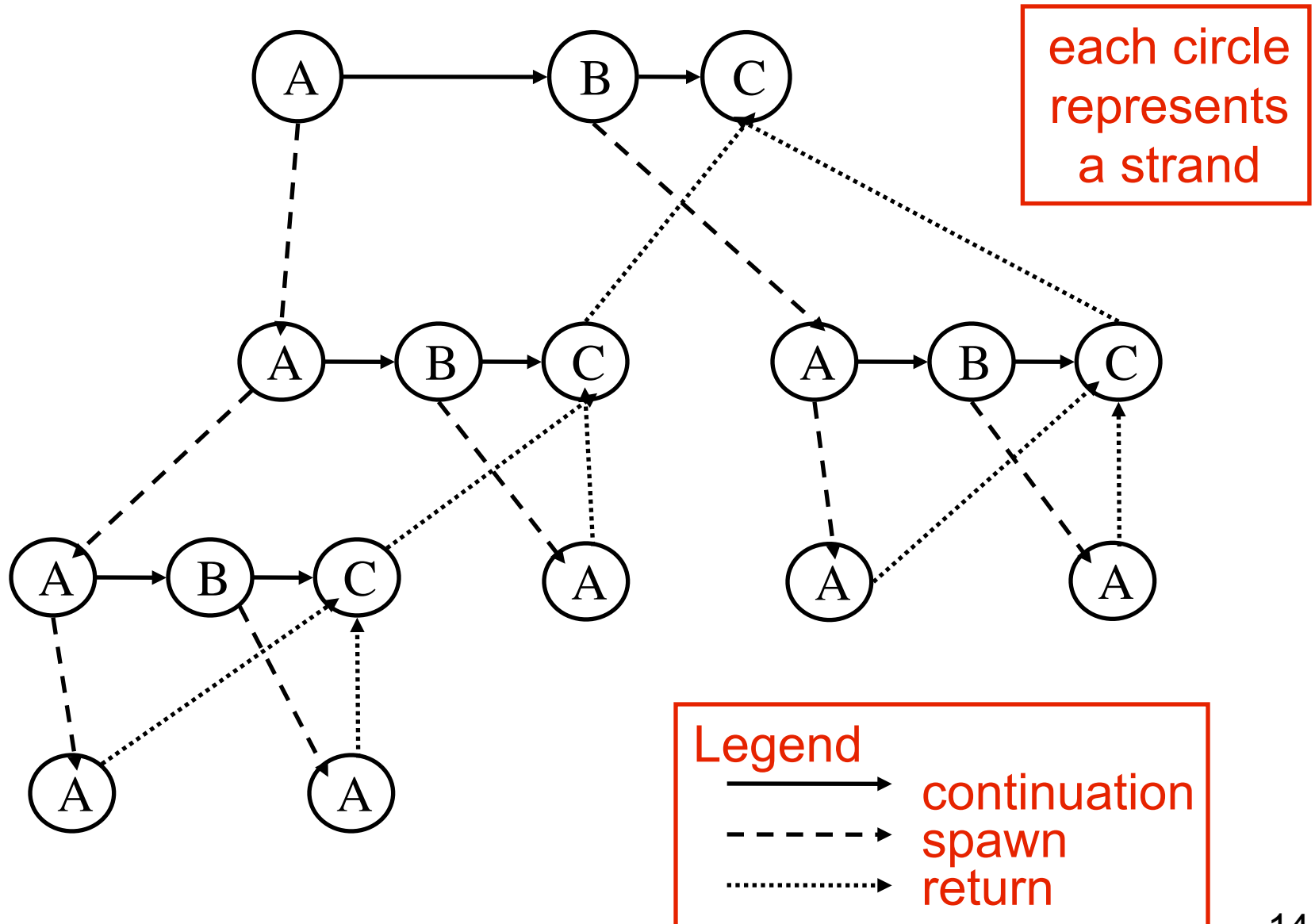
Strand B: **compute n-2 before 2nd spawn**

Strand C: **n1 + n2 before the return**

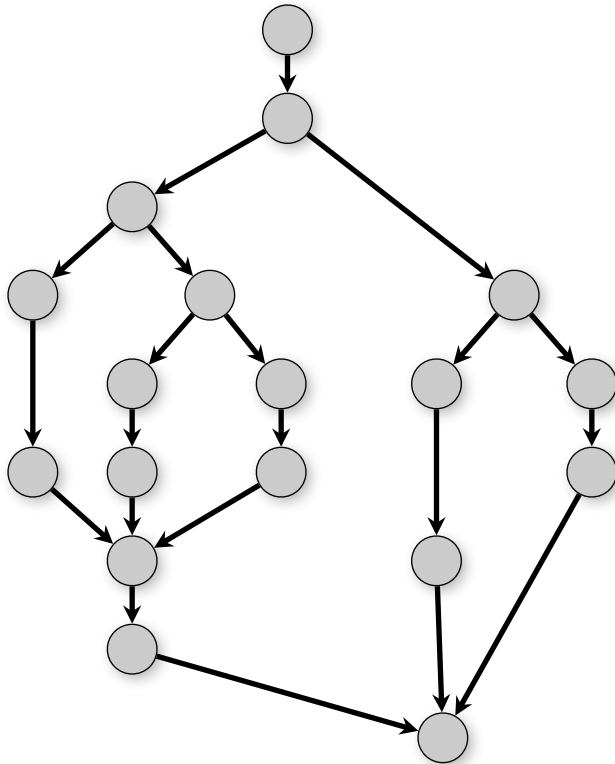




Cilk Program Execution as a DAG



T_P = execution time on P processors



PROC₀

• • •

PROC_{P-1}

Computation graph abstraction:

- node = arbitrary sequential computation
- edge = dependence (successor node can only execute after predecessor node has completed)
- Directed Acyclic Graph (DAG)

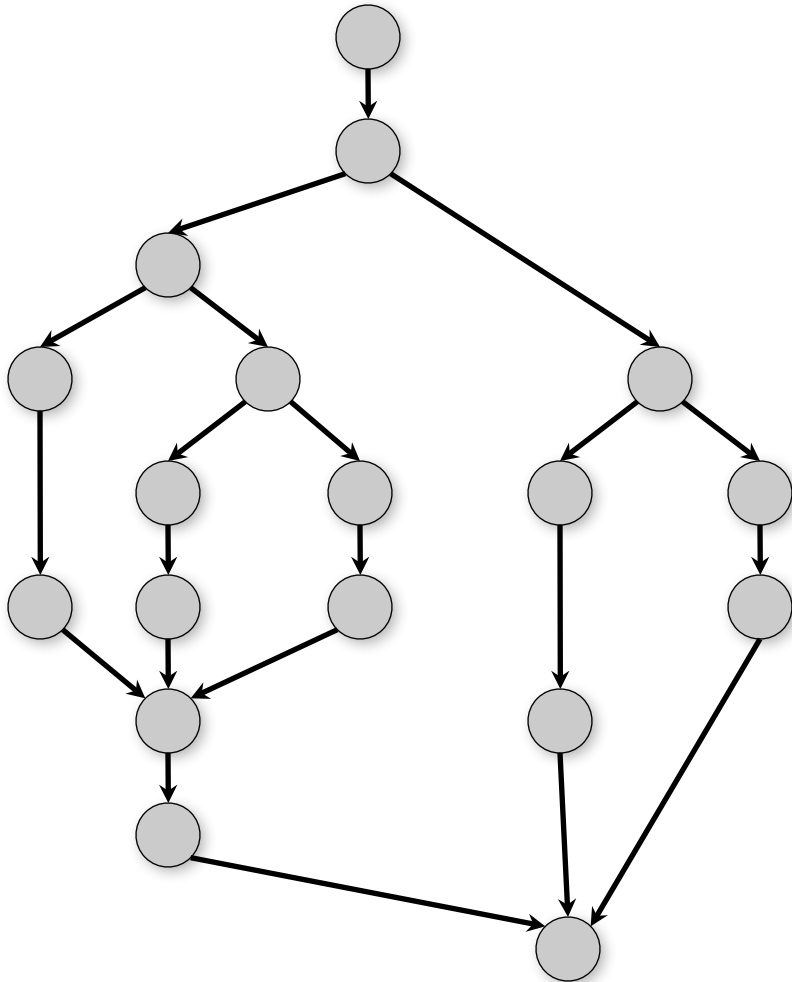
Processor abstraction:

- P identical processors
- each processor executes one node at a time

Algorithmic Complexity Measures

T_P = execution time on P processors

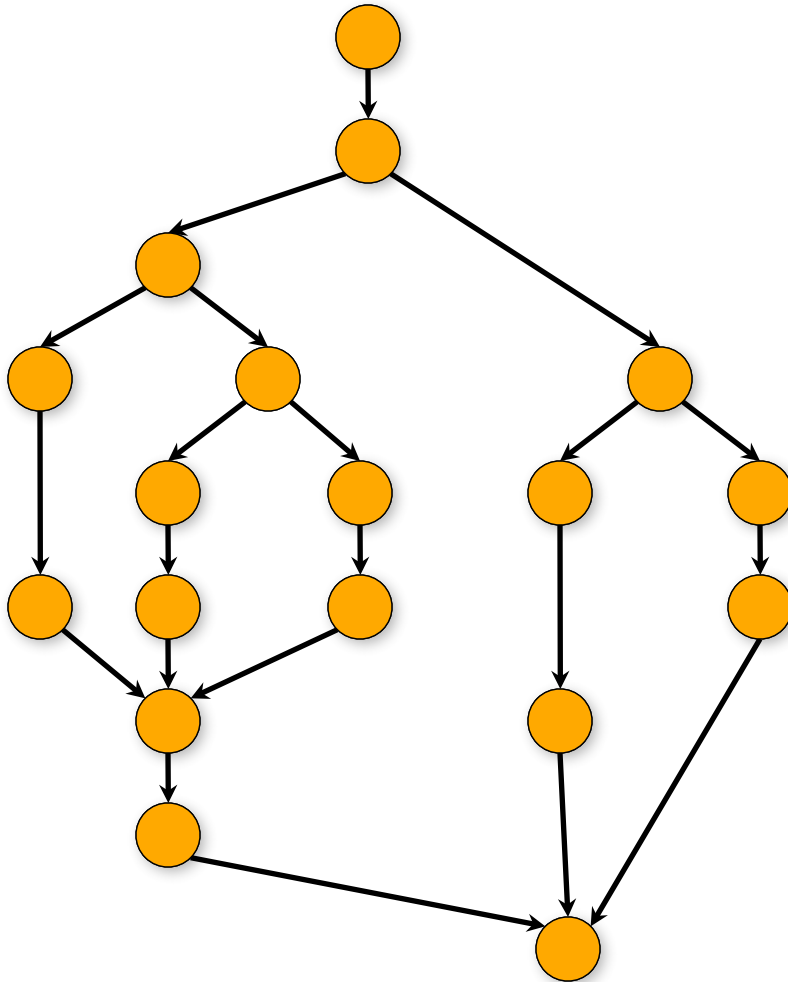
T_1 = *work*



Algorithmic Complexity Measures

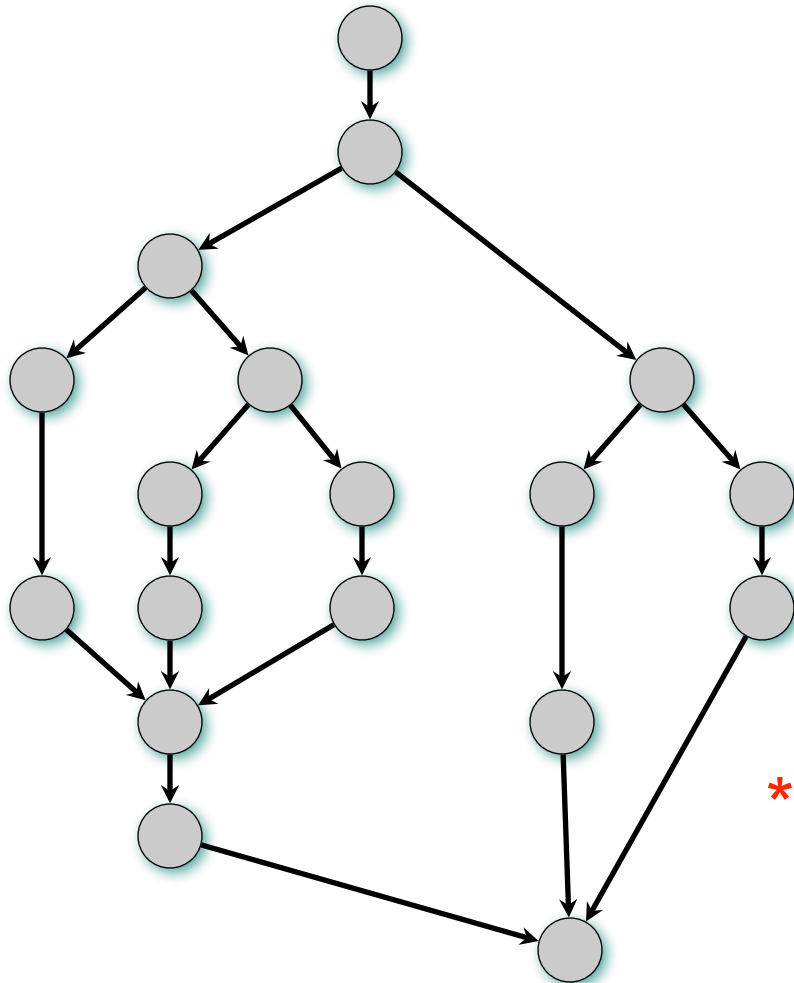
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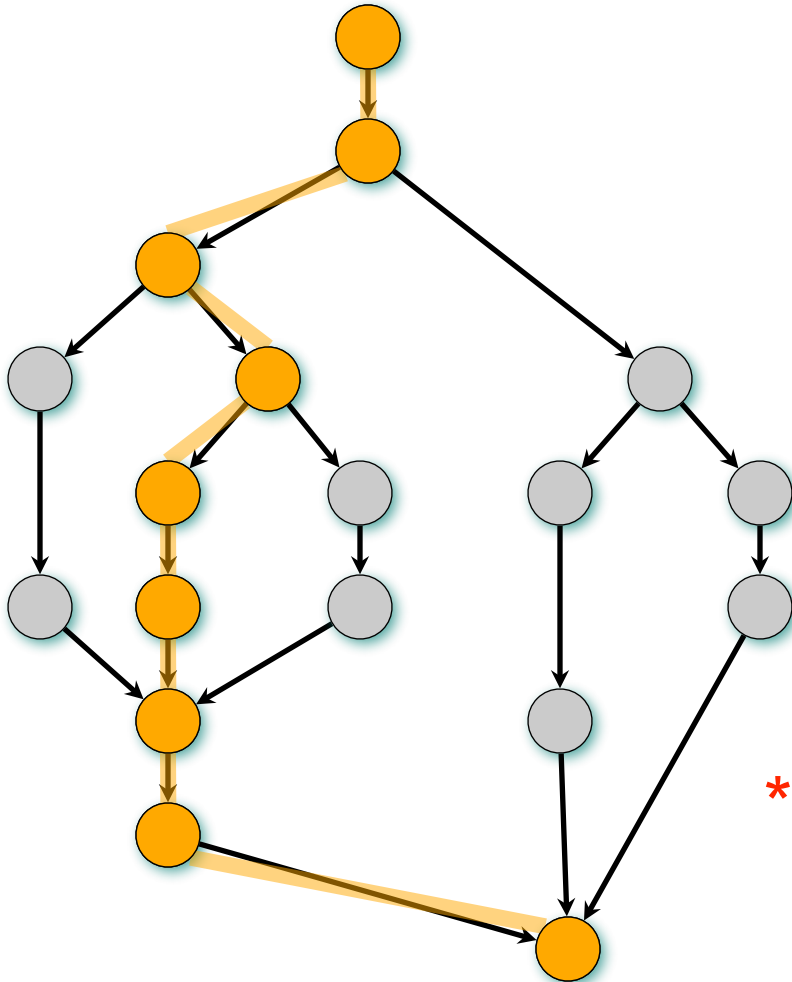
T_1 = *work*

T_∞ = *span**

*Also called *critical-path length*

Algorithmic Complexity Measures

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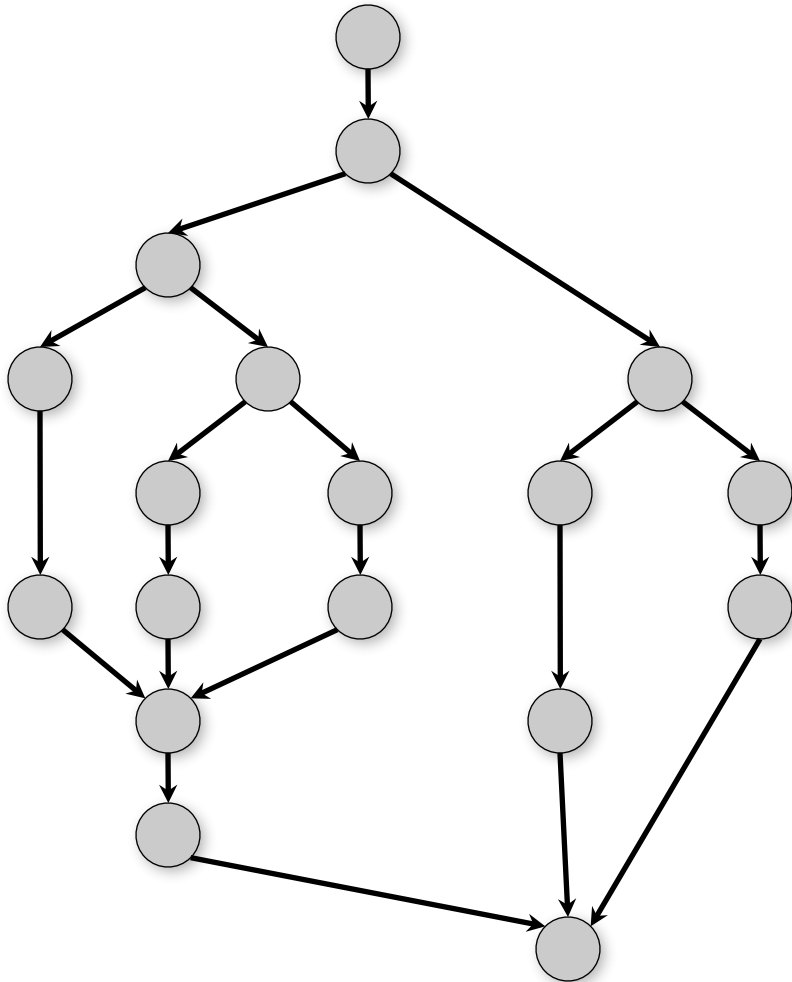
$T_1 = work$

$$T_\infty = \text{span}^*$$

*Also called *critical-path length*

Algorithmic Complexity Measures

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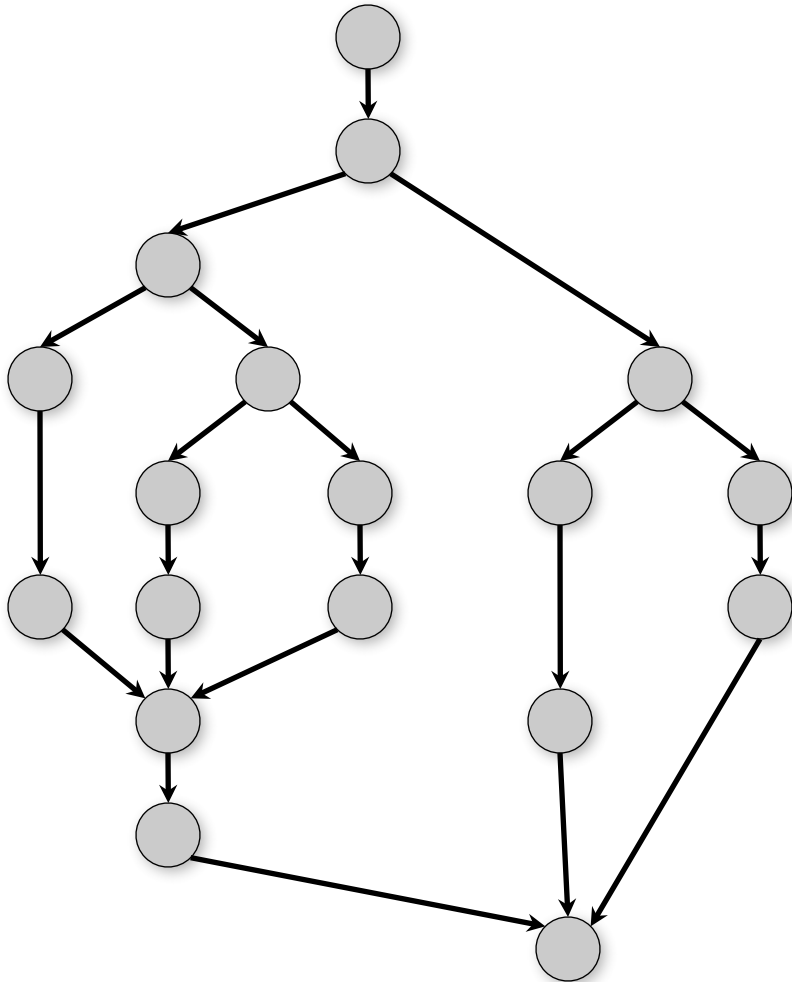


T_1 = *work*

T_∞ = *span*

Algorithmic Complexity Measures

T_P = execution time on P processors



$$T_1 = \text{work}$$

$$T_\infty = \text{span}$$

LOWER BOUNDS

- $T_P \geq T_1/P$
- $T_P \geq T_\infty$

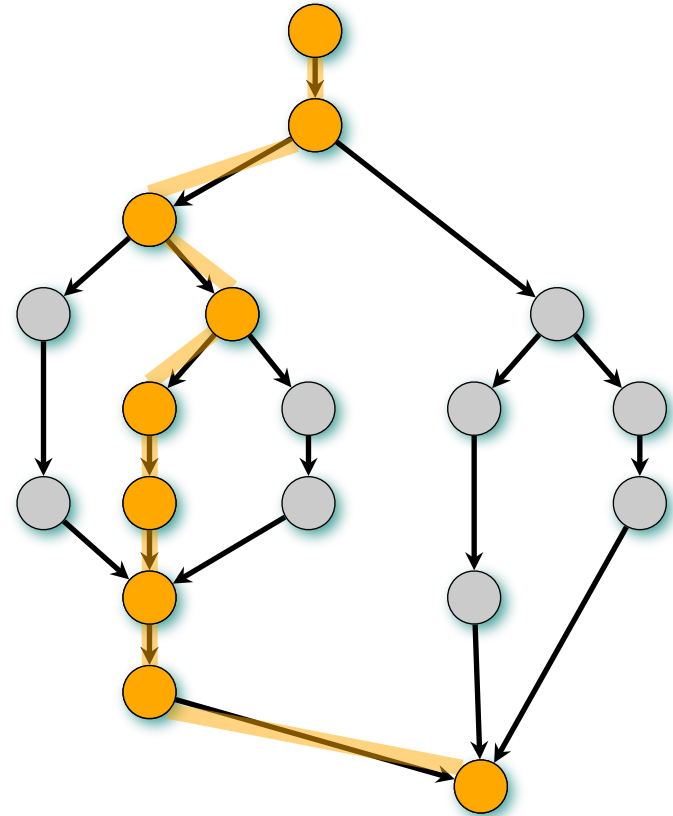
Definition: T_1/T_P = *speedup* on P processors

If $T_1/T_P = \Theta(P)$, we have *linear speedup*;
= P , we have *perfect linear speedup*;
> P , we have *superlinear speedup*,

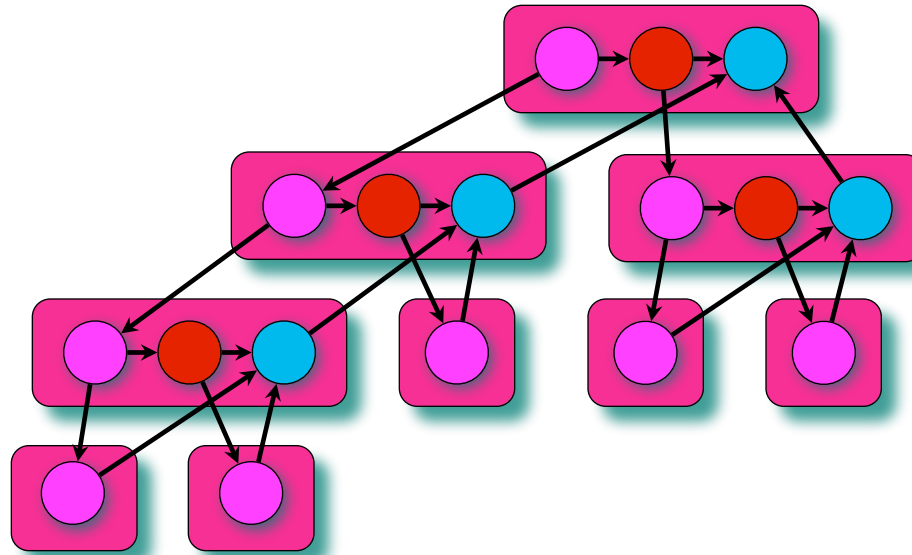
Superlinear speedup is not possible in this model because of the lower bound $T_P \geq T_1/P$, but it can occur in practice (e.g., due to cache effects)

Parallelism (“Ideal Speedup”)

- T_P depends on the schedule of computation graph nodes on the processors
 - two different schedules can yield different values of T_P for the same P
- For convenience, define *parallelism* (or ideal speedup) as the ratio T_1/T_∞
- Parallelism is independent of P , and only depends on the computation graph
- Also define *parallel slackness* as the ratio, $(T_1/T_\infty)/P$; the larger the slackness, the less the impact of T_∞ on performance



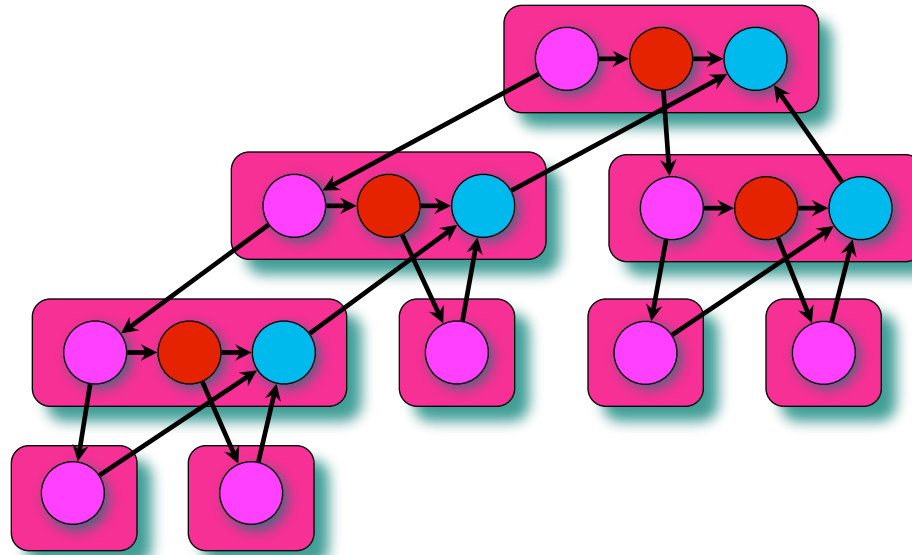
Example: `fib(4)`



Assume for simplicity that each strand in `fib()` takes unit time to execute.

Work: $T_1 = 17$ (T_P refers to execution time on P processors)

Example: `fib(4)`



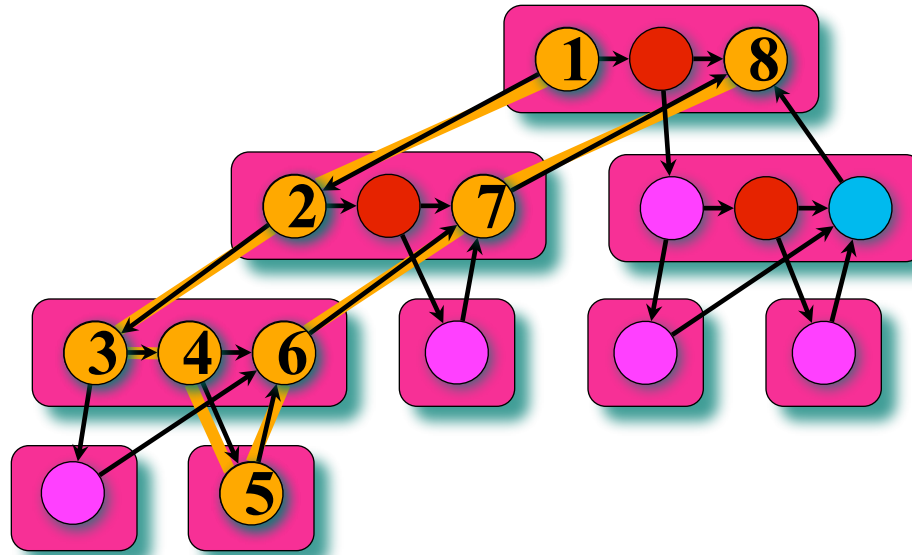
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Span: $T_\infty = ?$



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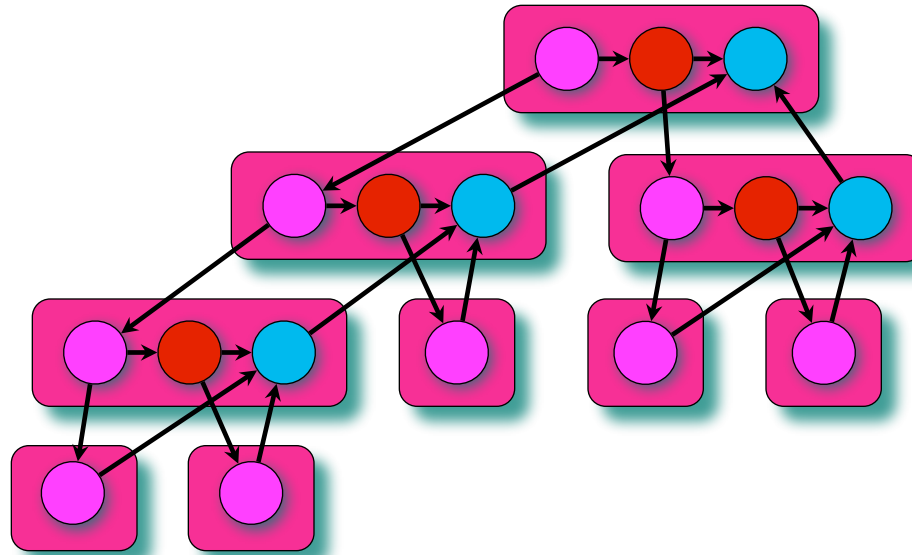


Assume for simplicity that each strand in `fib()` takes unit time to execute.

Work: $T_1 = 17$ (T_P refers to execution time on P processors)

Span: $T_\infty = 8$ (Span = “critical path length”)

Example: `fib(4)`



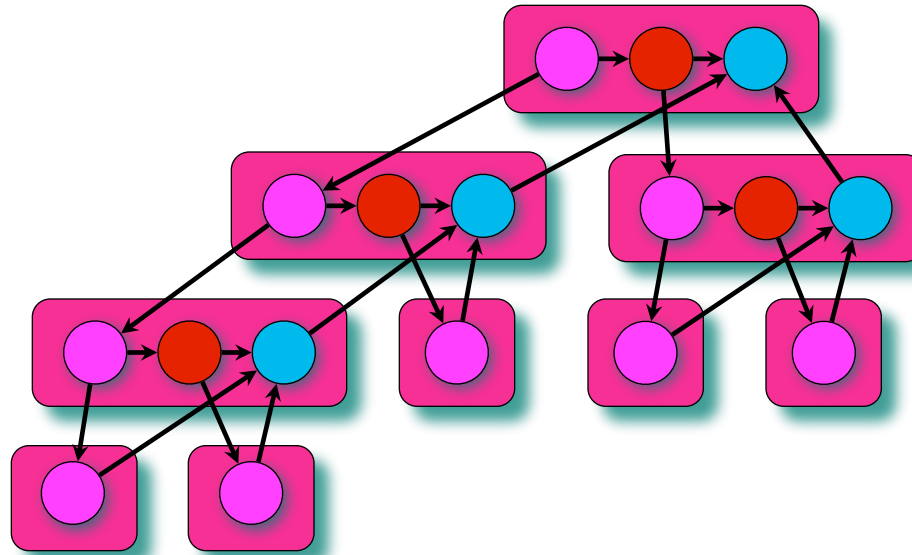
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Work: $T_1 = 17$

Span: $T_\infty = 8$

Ideal Speedup: $T_1 / T_\infty = 2.125$

*Using more than
2 processors
makes little sense*

Task Scheduling

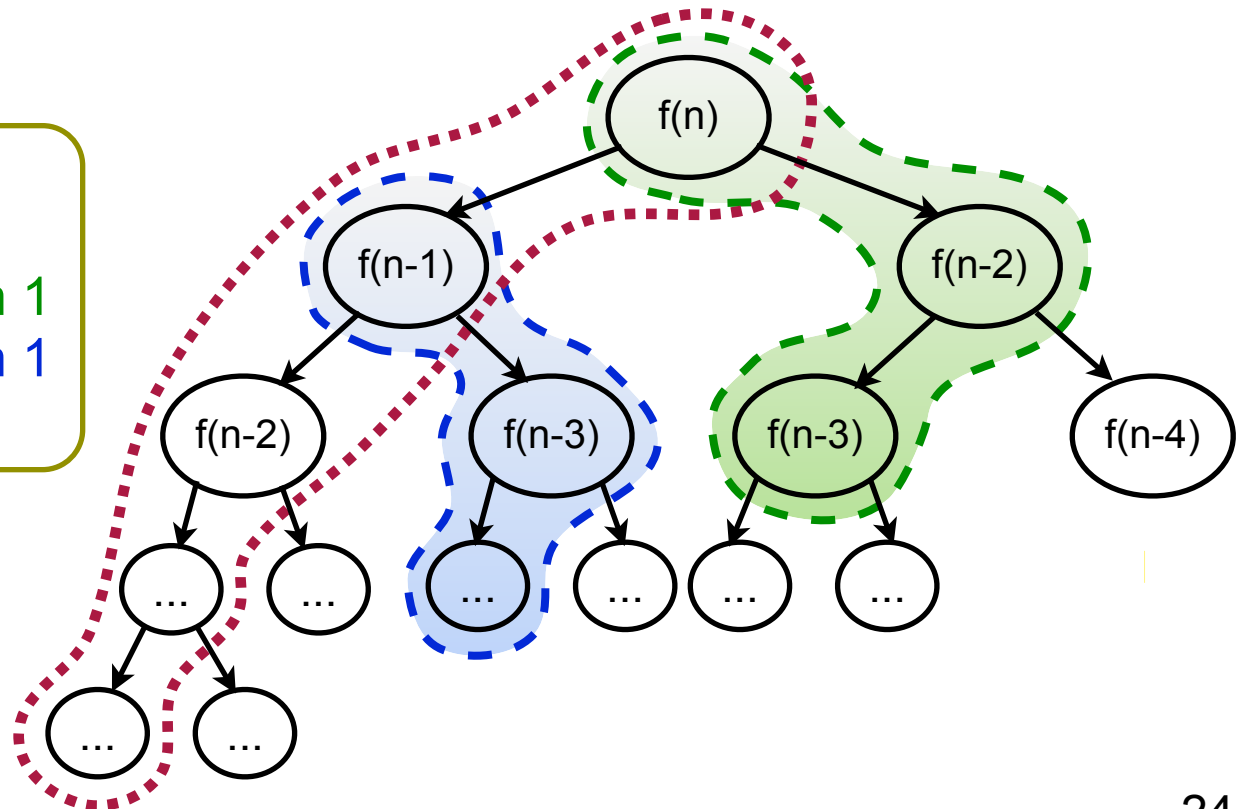
- Popular scheduling strategies
 - work-sharing**: task scheduled to run in parallel at every spawn
 - benefit: maximizes parallelism
 - drawback: cost of setting up new tasks is high → should be avoided
 - work-stealing**: processor looks for work when it becomes idle
 - lazy parallelism: put off setting up parallel execution until necessary
 - benefits: executes with precisely as much parallelism as needed
 - minimizes the number of tasks that must be set up
 - runs with same efficiency as serial program on uniprocessor
- Cilk uses **work-stealing** rather than **work-sharing**

Cilk Execution using Work Stealing

- Cilk runtime maps logical tasks to threads/cores
- Approach:
 - lazy task creation plus work-stealing scheduler
 - `cilk_spawn`: a potentially parallel task is available
 - an idle thread steals a task from a random working thread

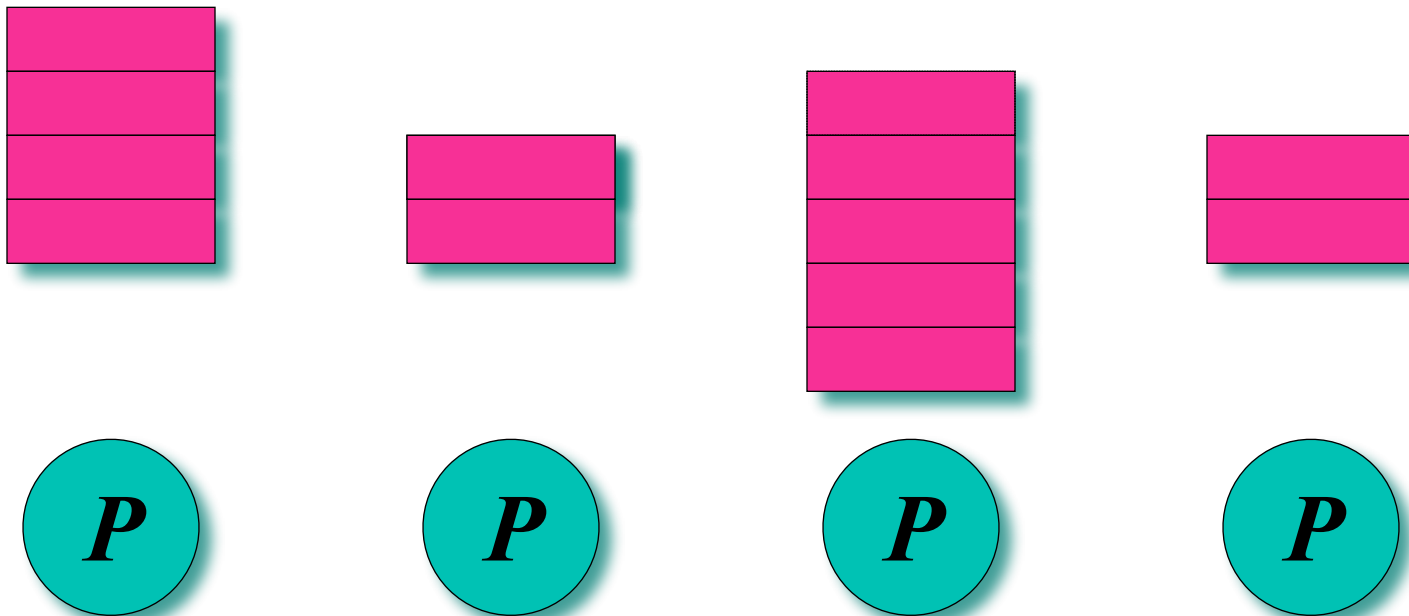
Possible Execution:

thread 1 begins
thread 2 steals from 1
thread 3 steals from 1
etc...



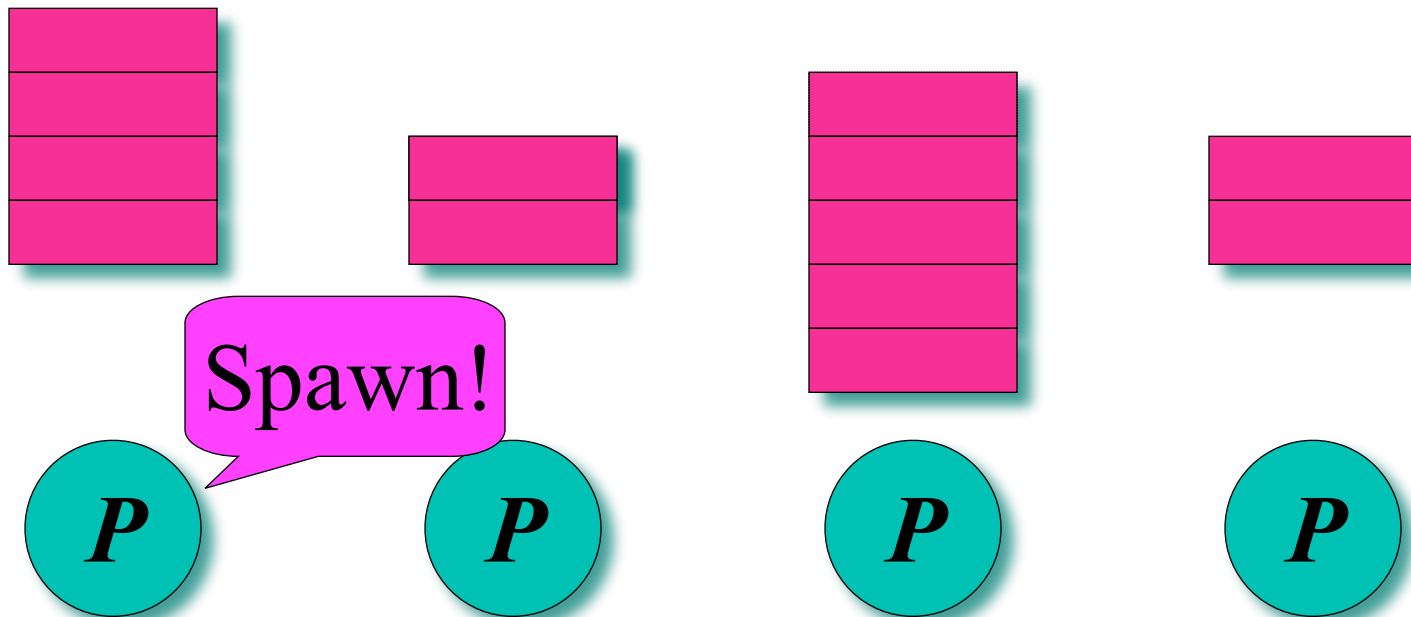
Cilk's Work-Stealing Scheduler

Each processor maintains a **work deque** of ready strands, and it manipulates the bottom of the deque like a stack.



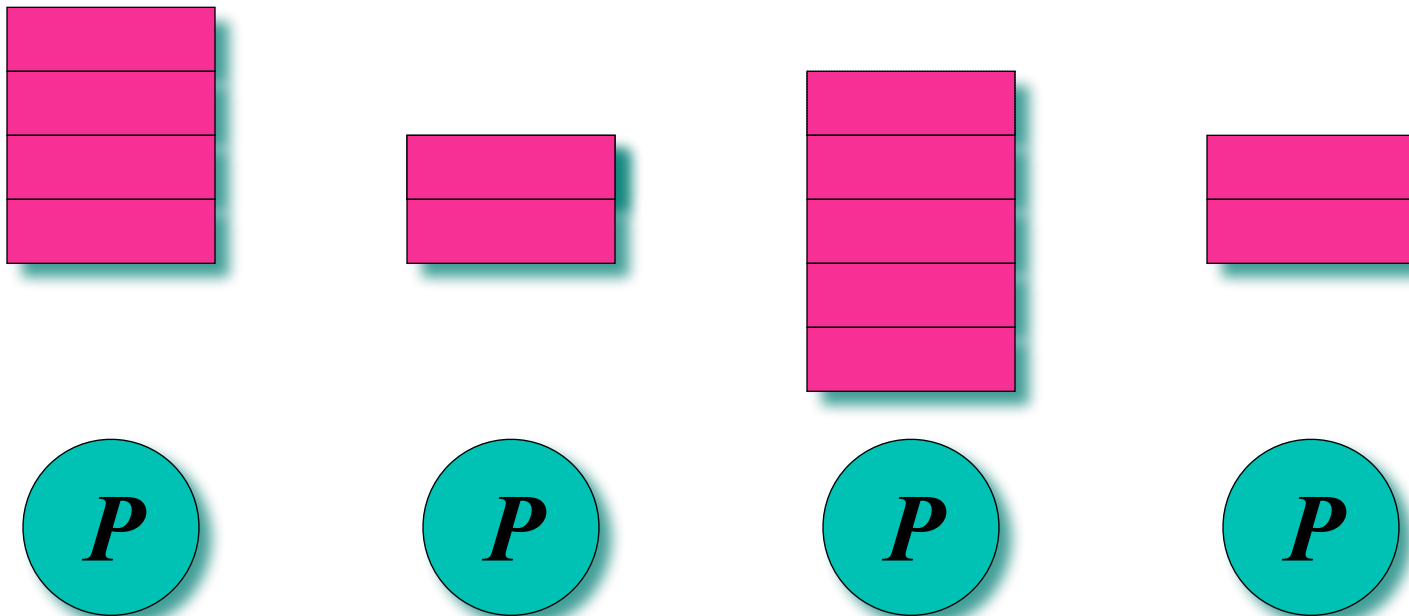
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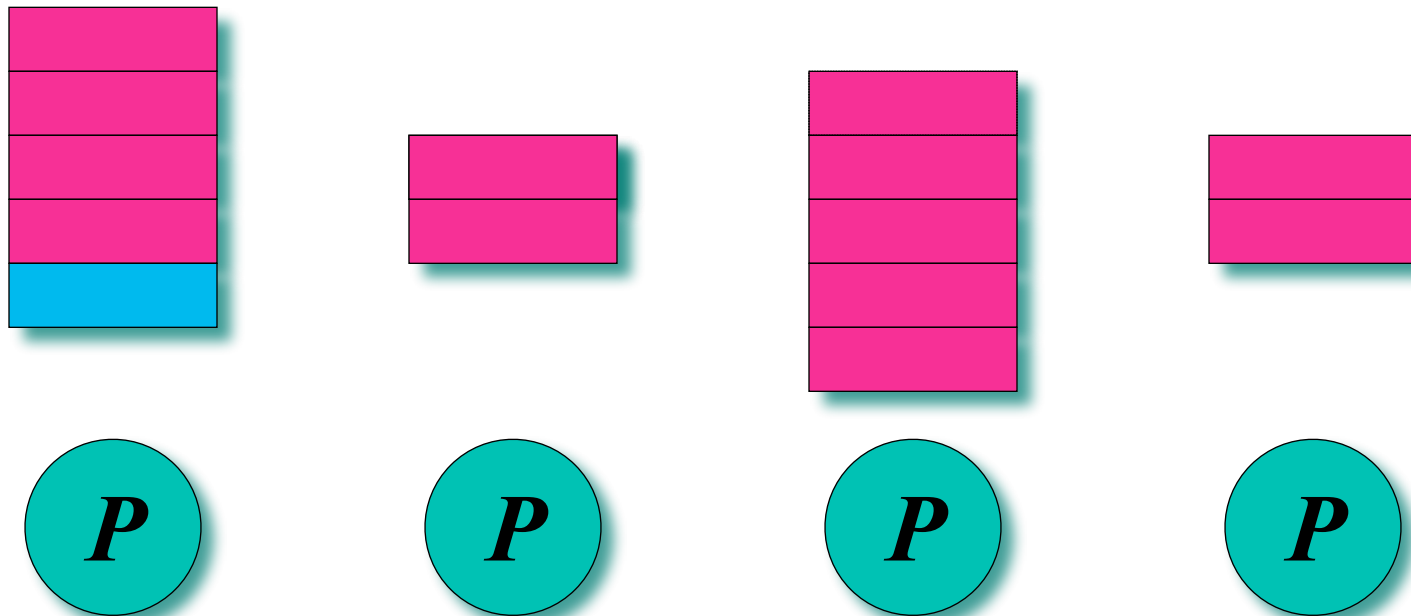
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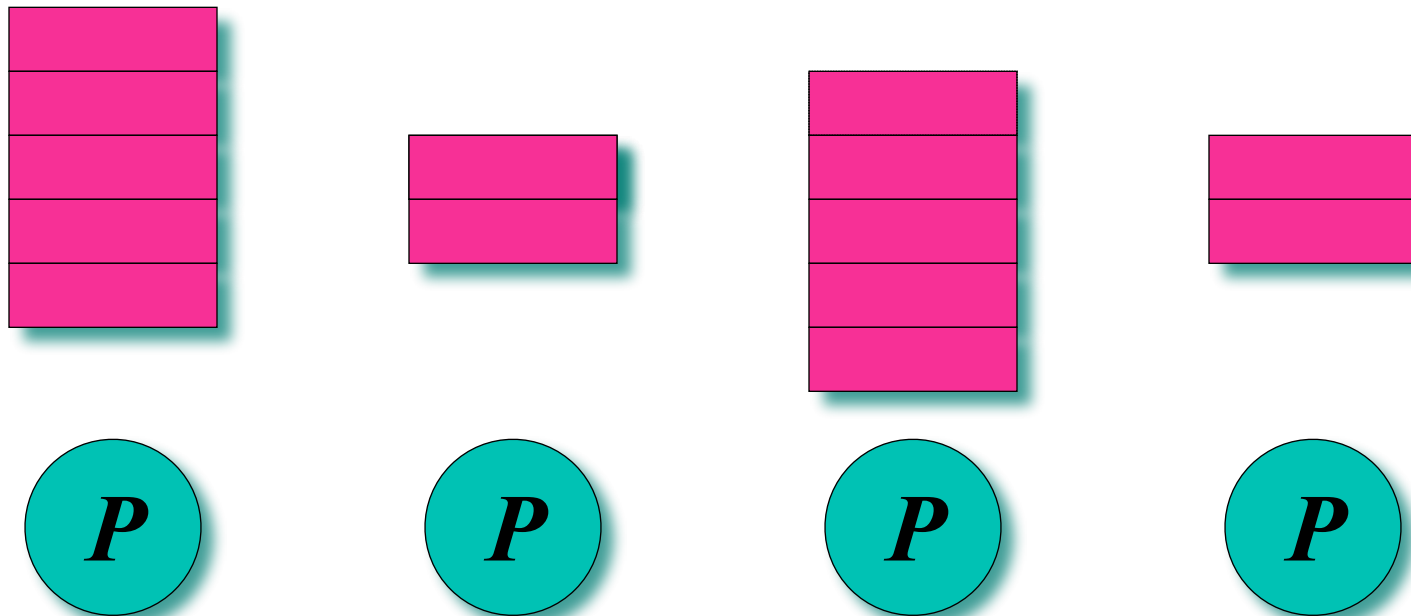
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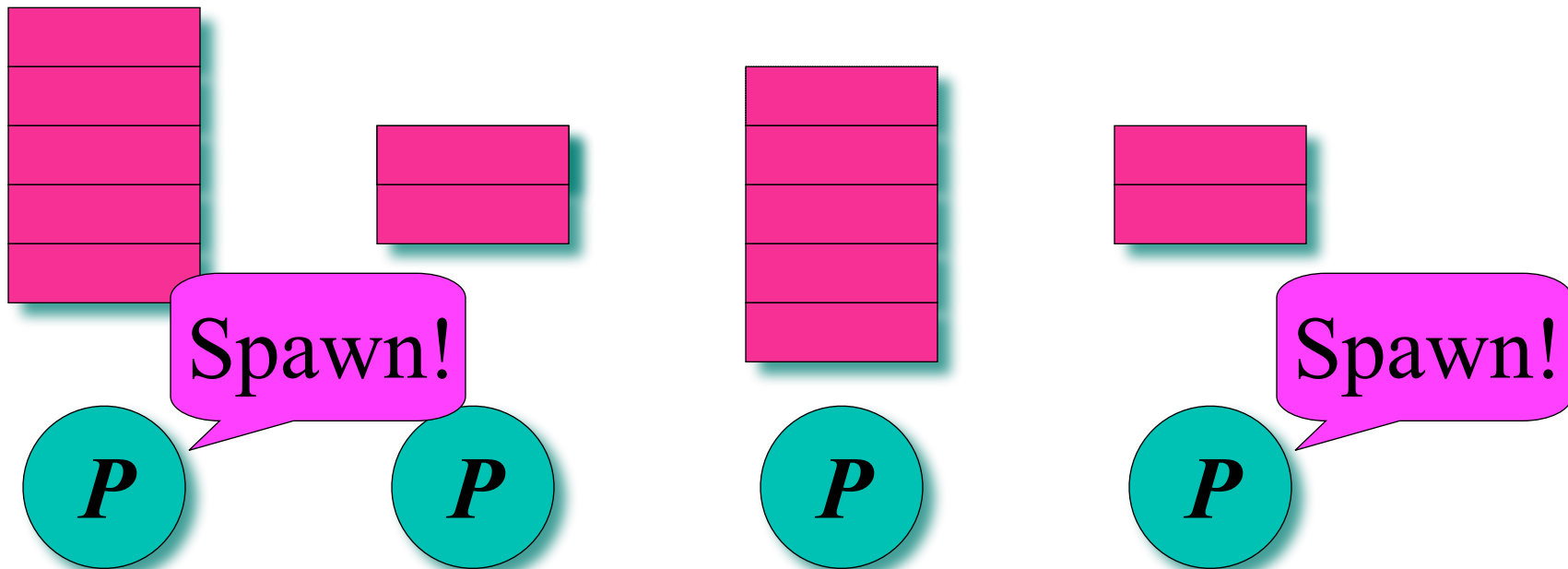
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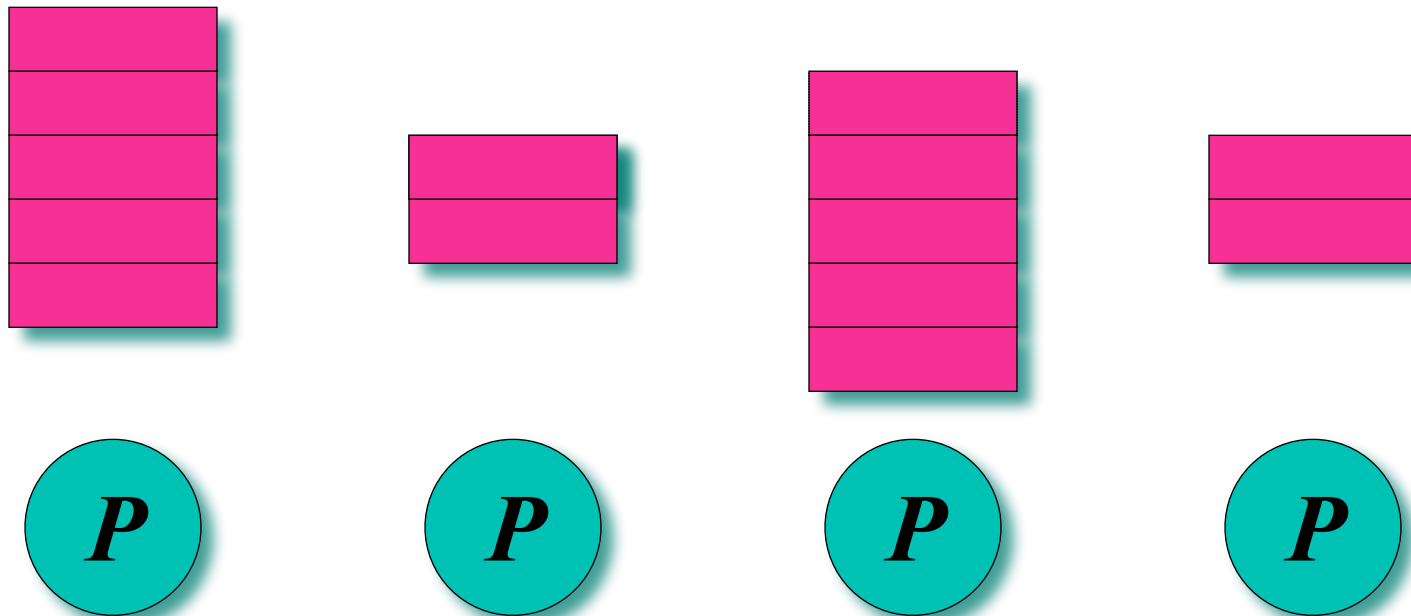
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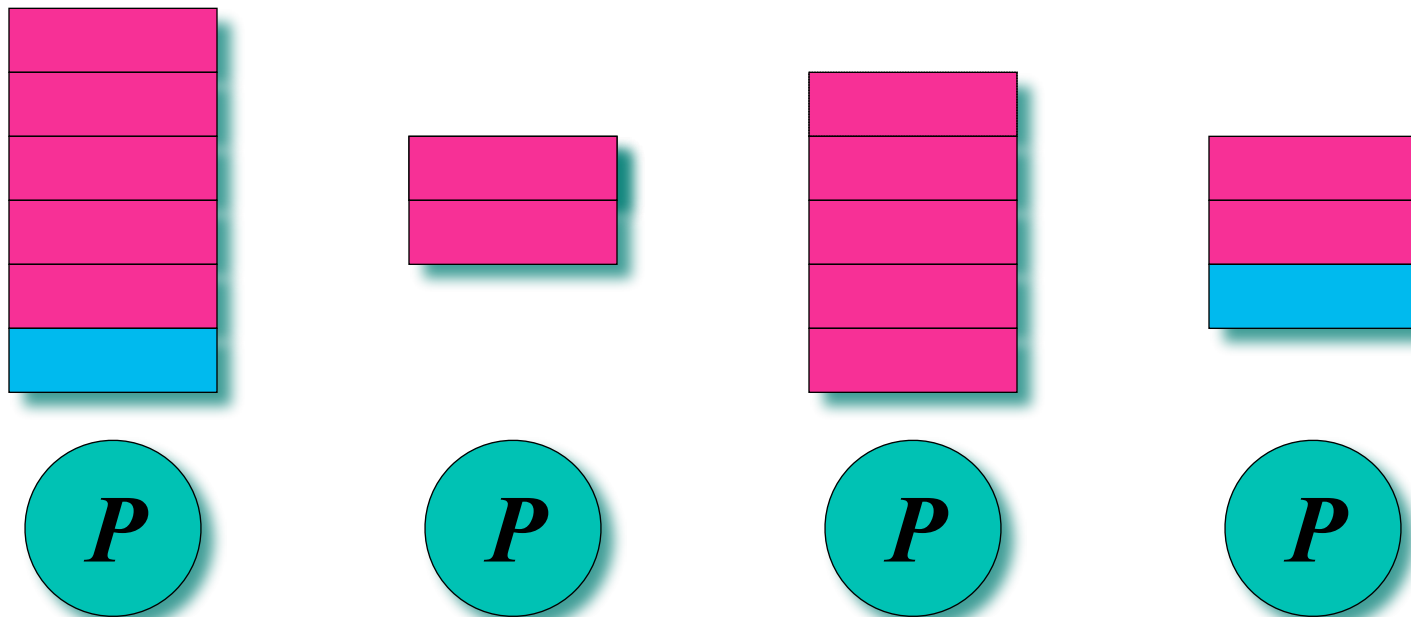
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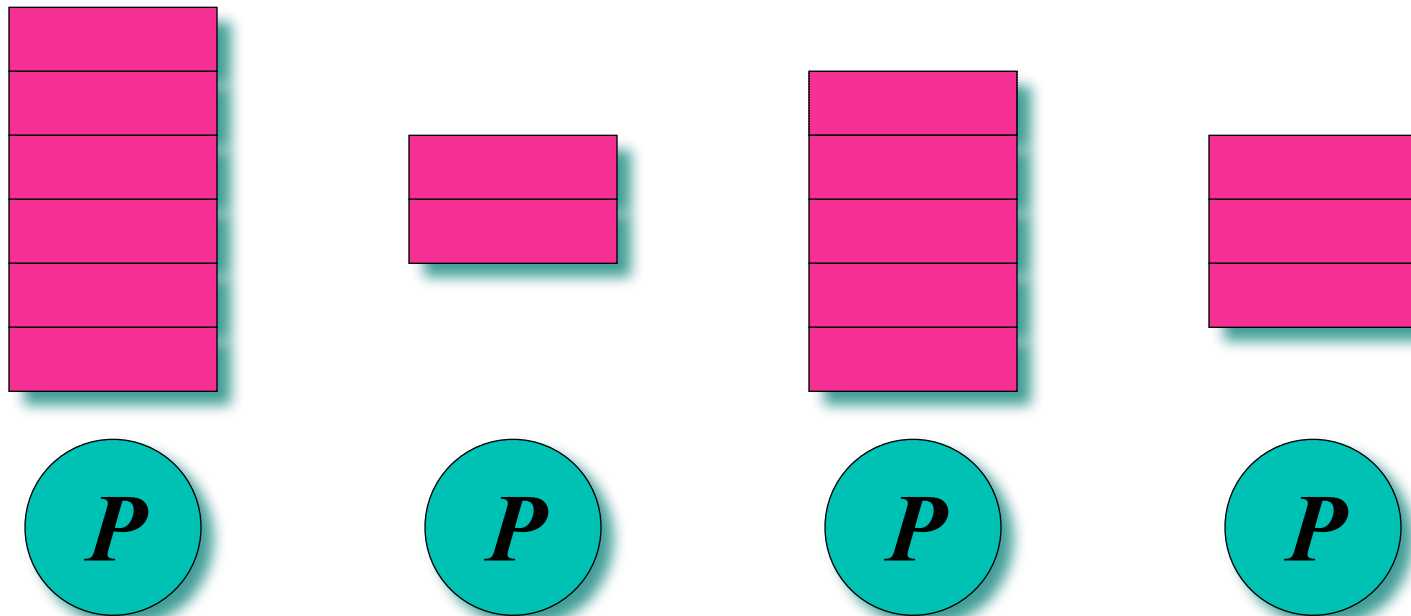
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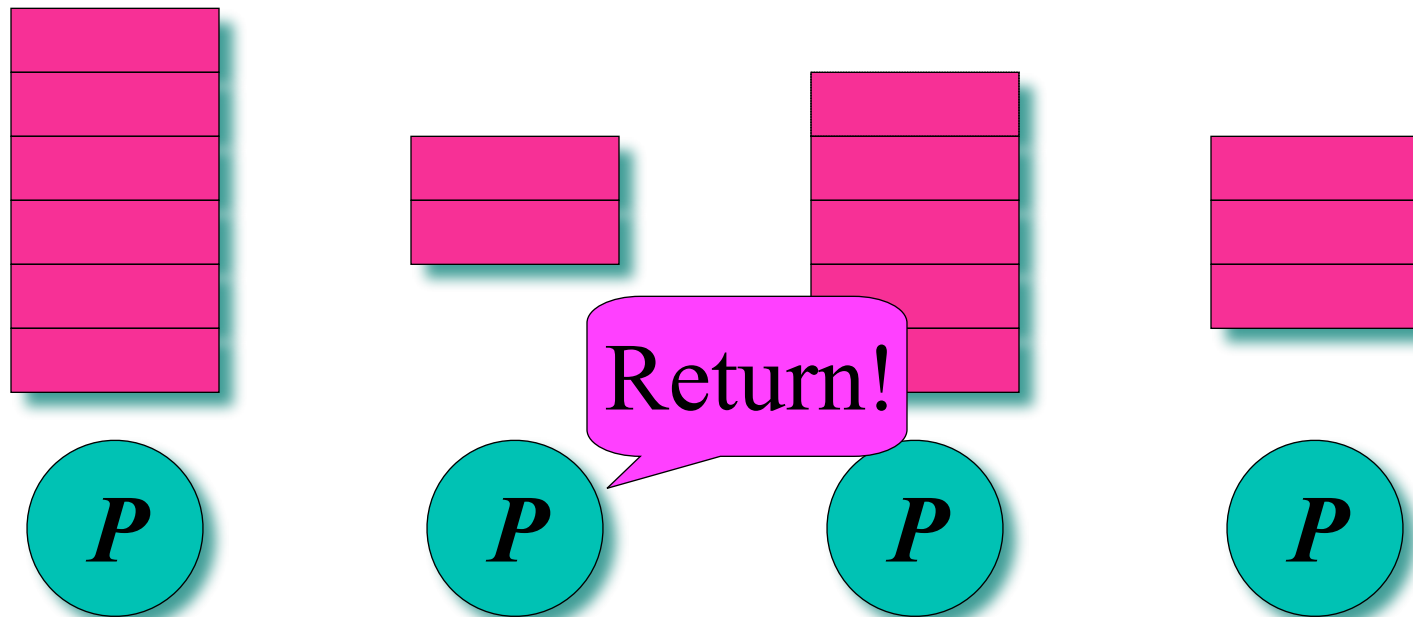
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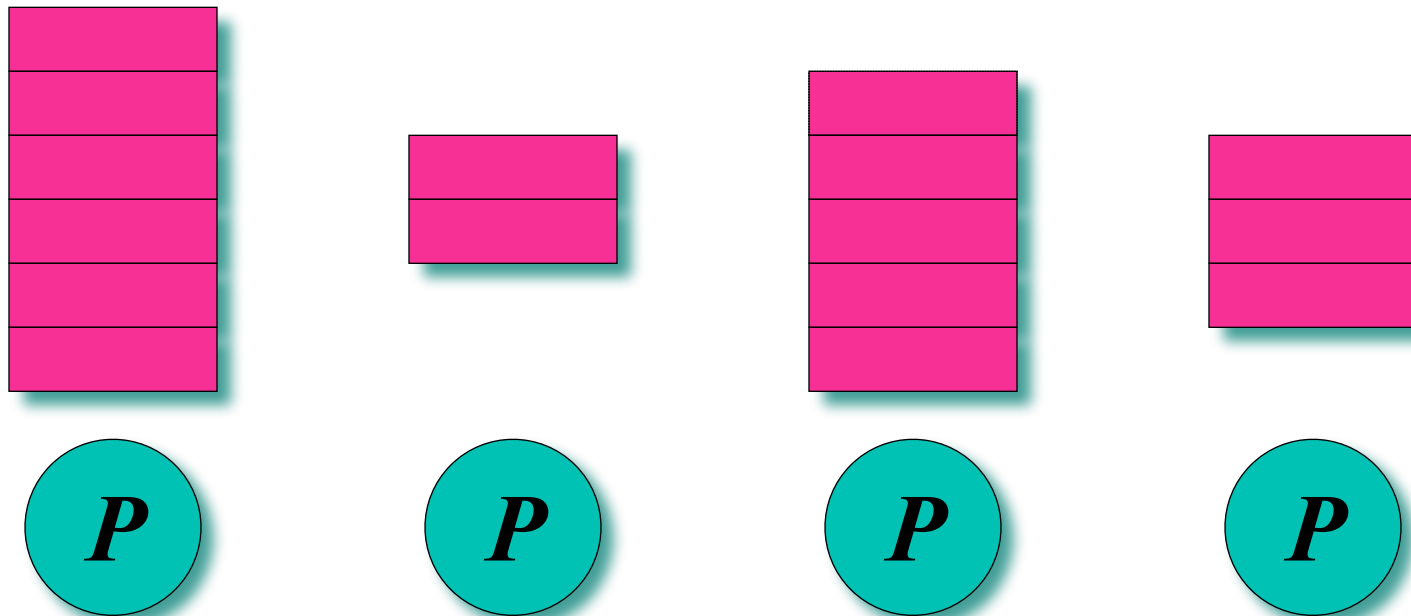
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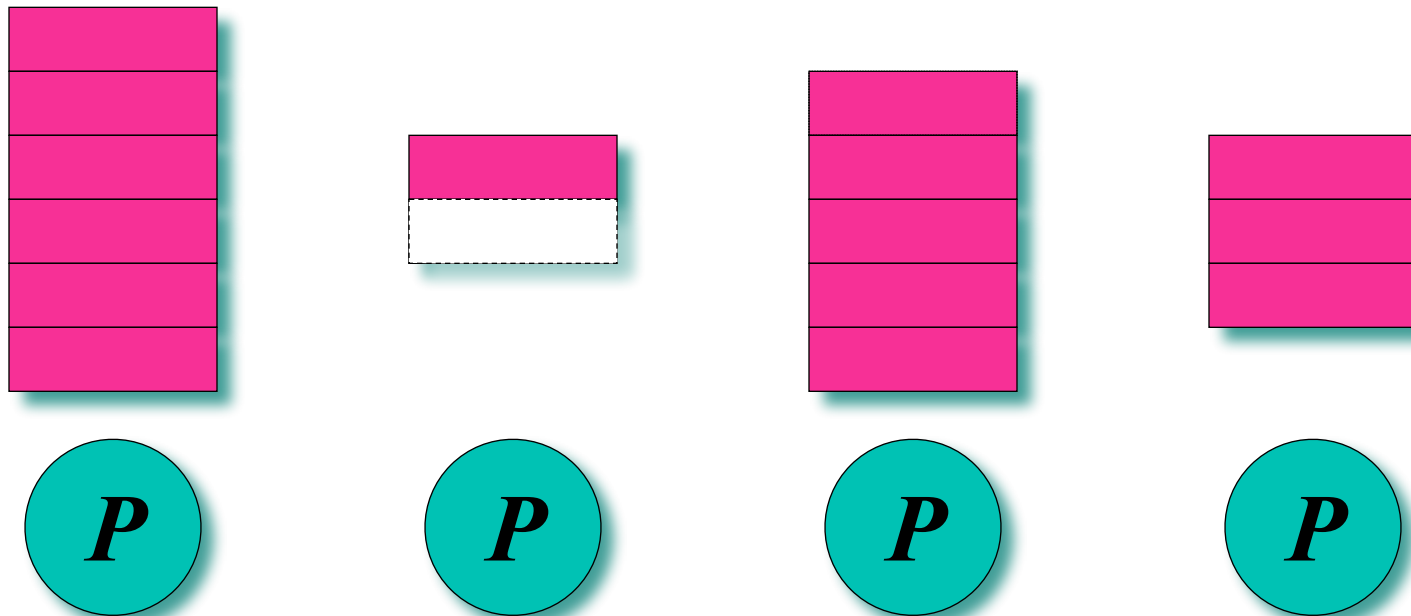
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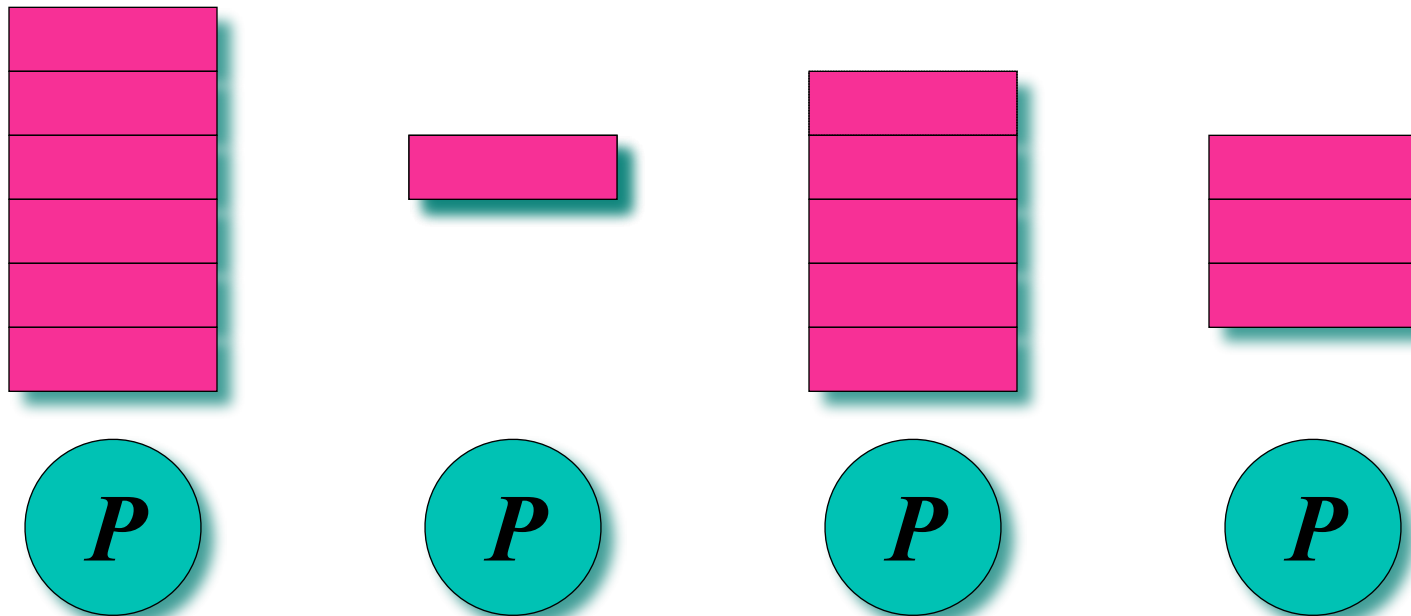
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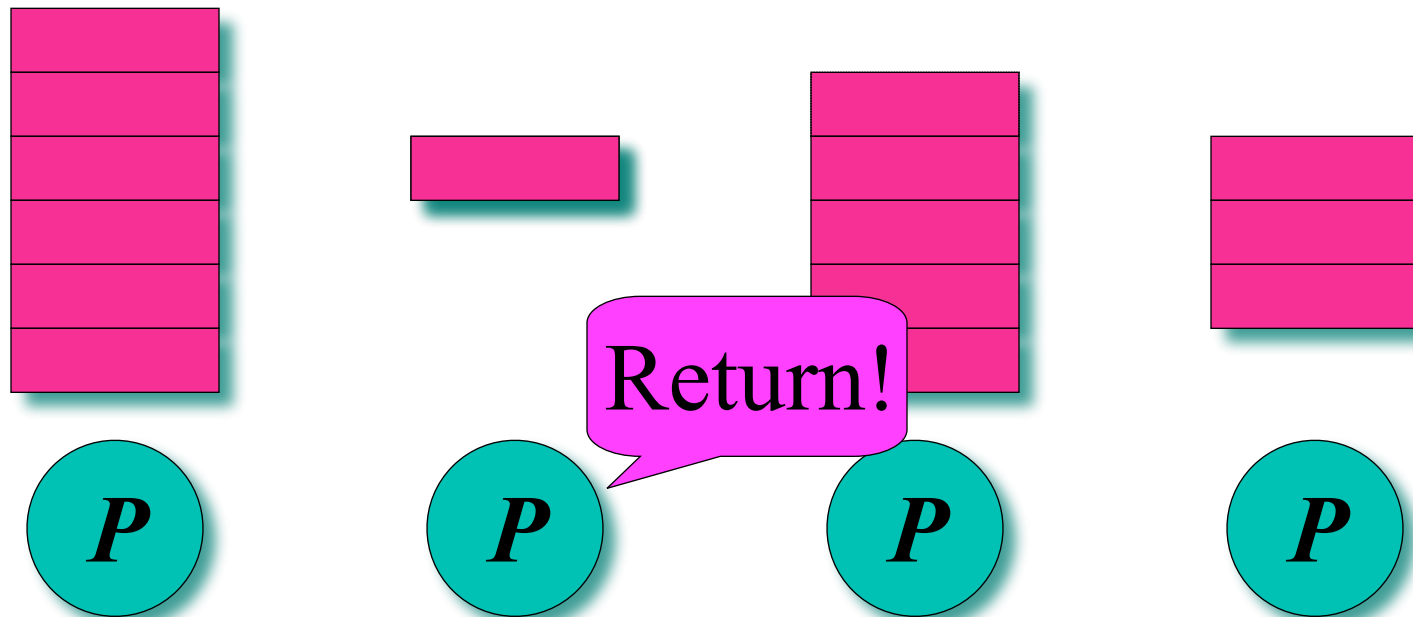
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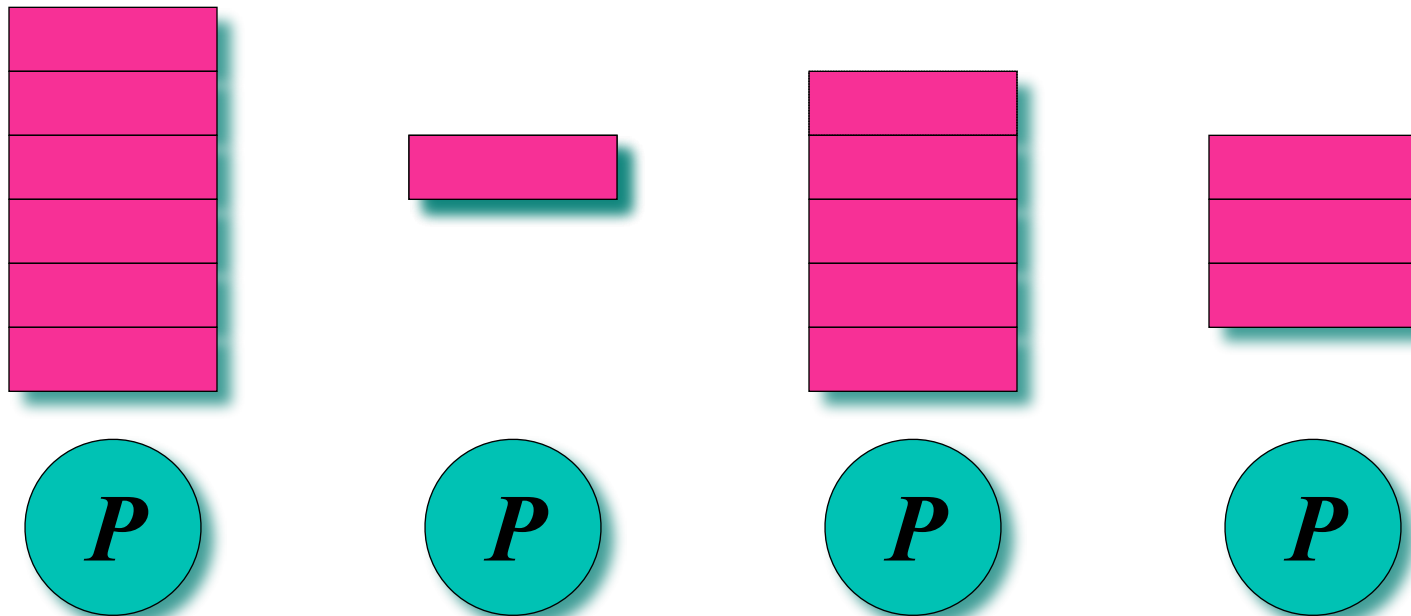
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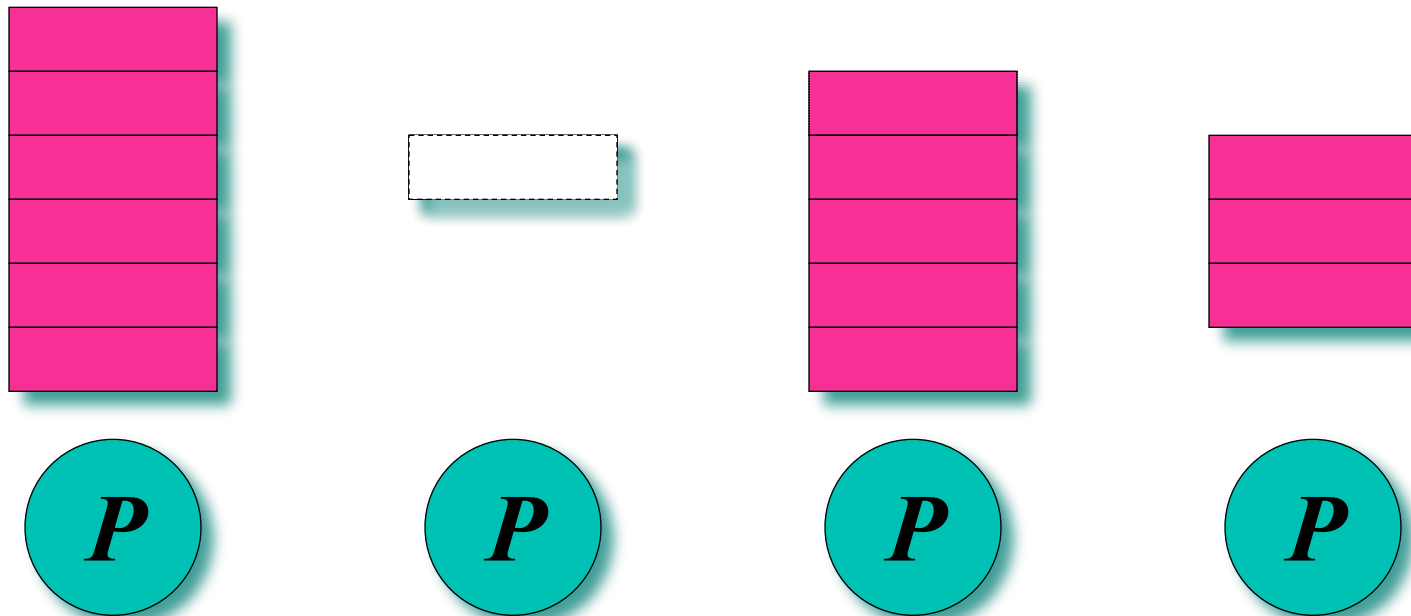
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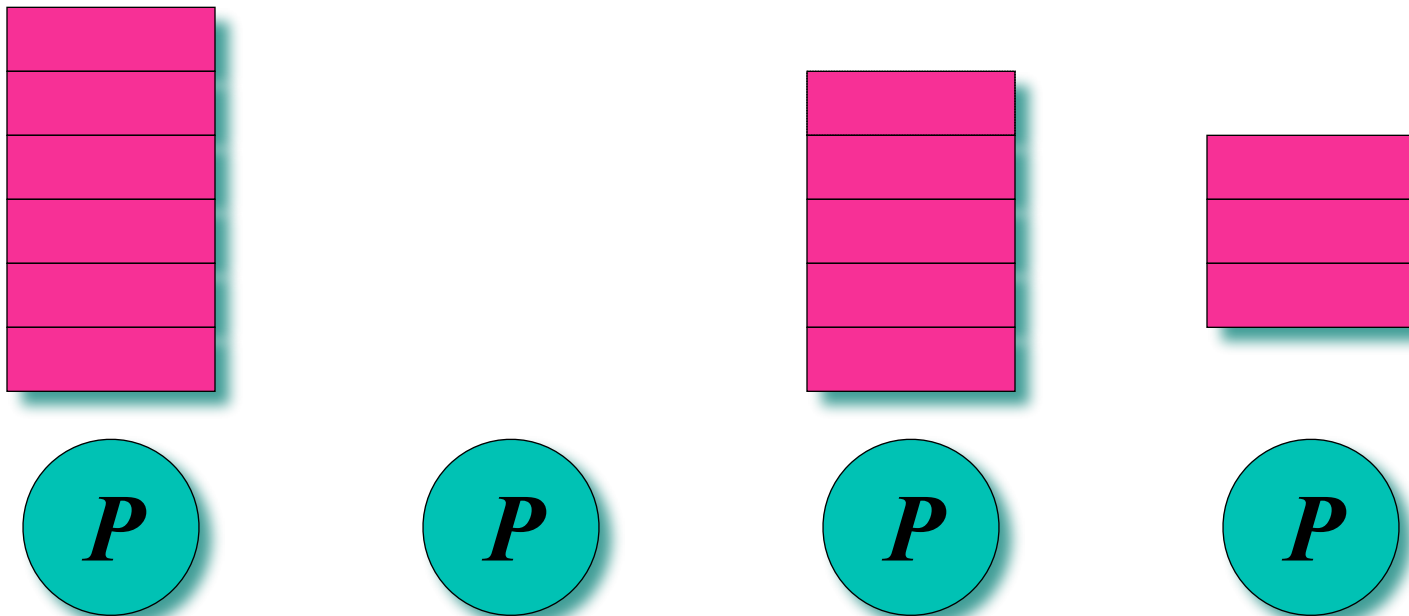
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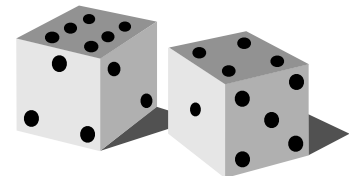


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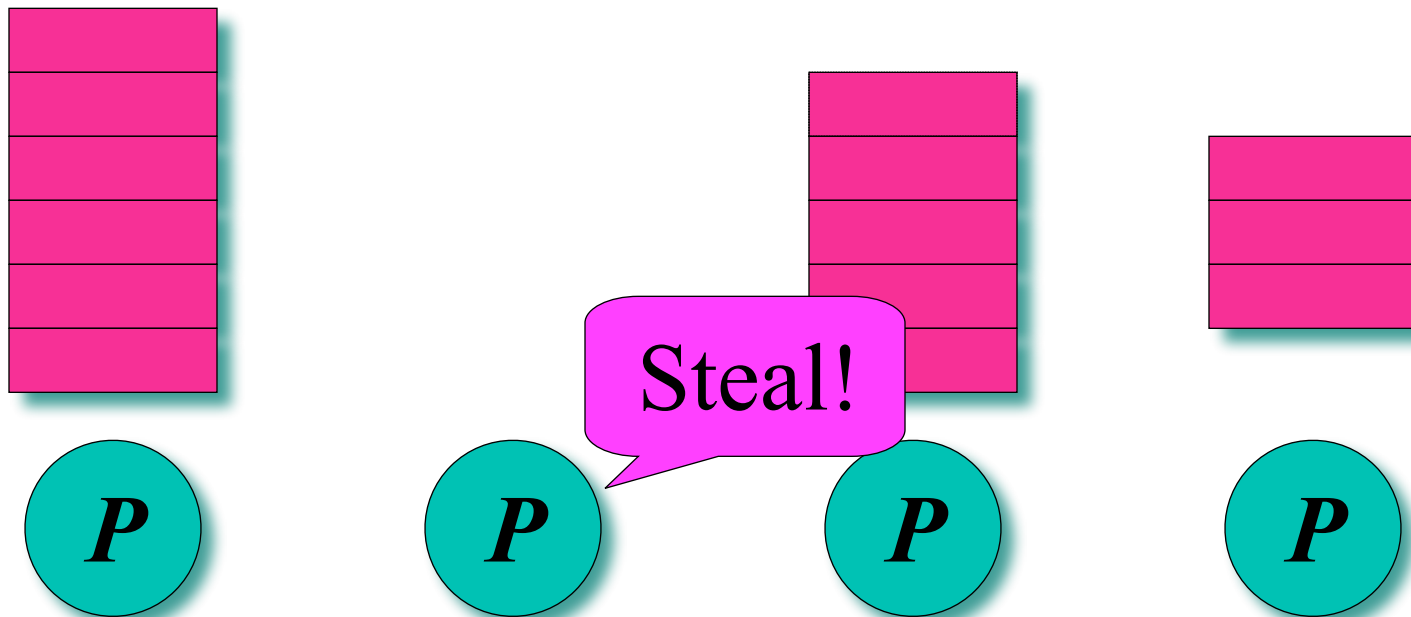


When a processor runs out of work, it **steals** a strand from the top of a **random** victim's deque

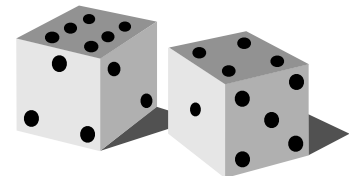


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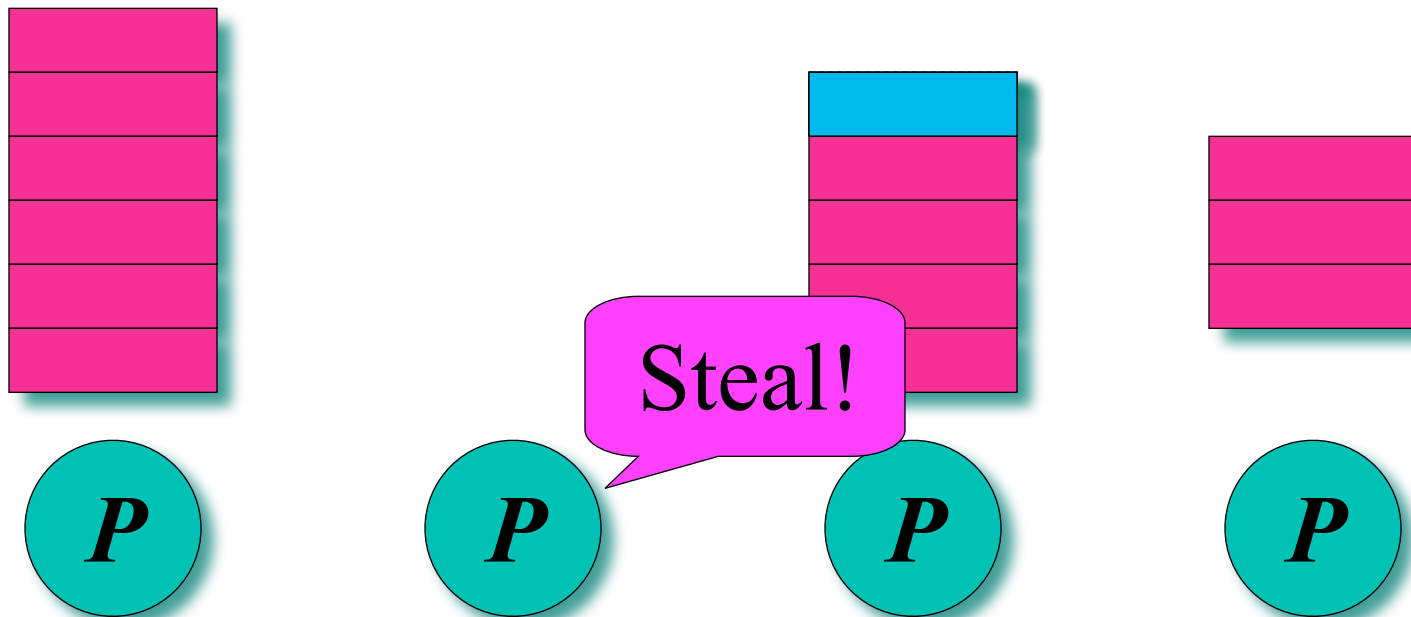


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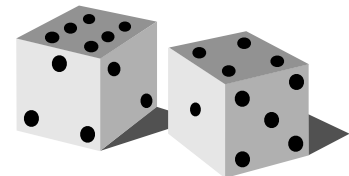


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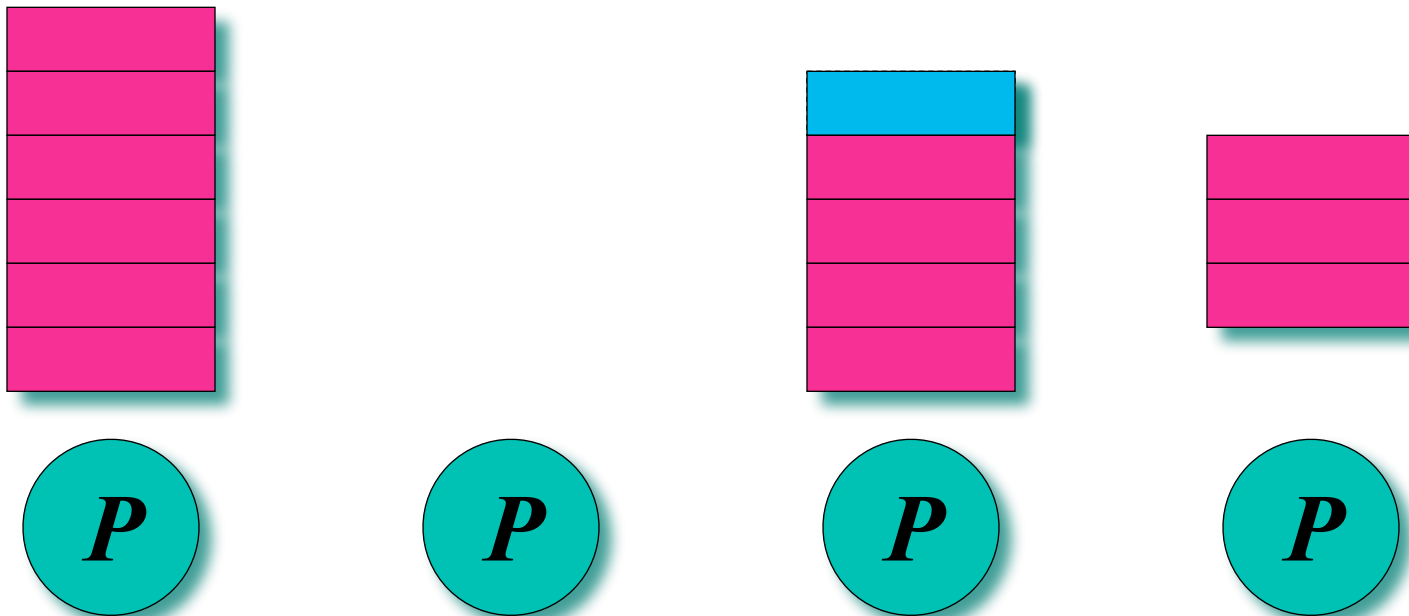


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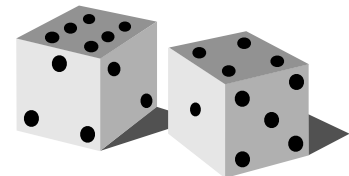


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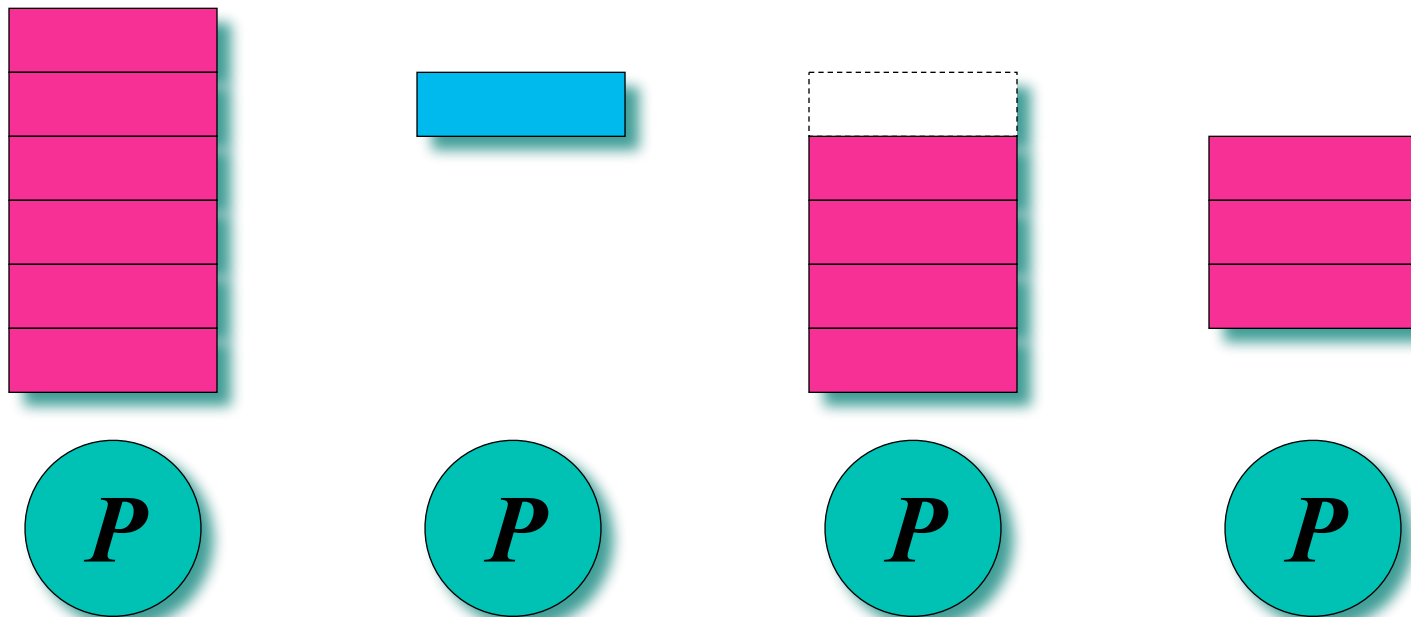


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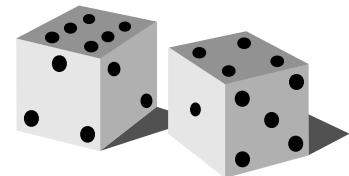


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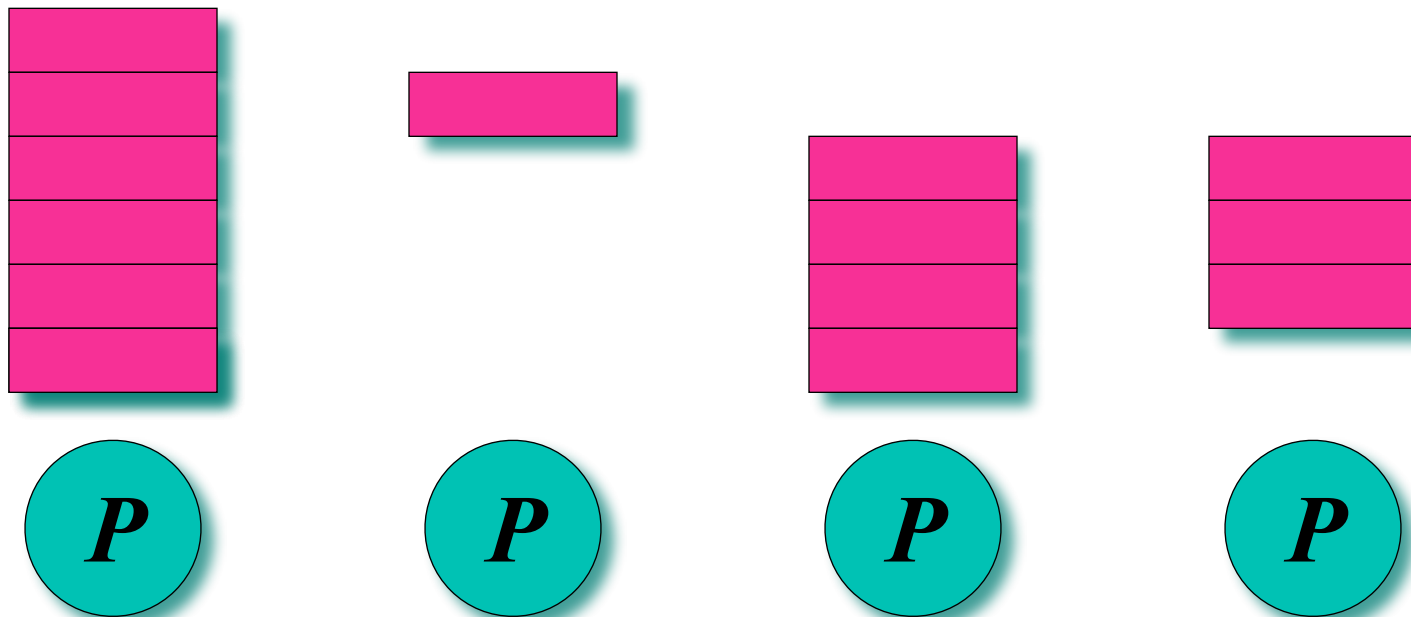


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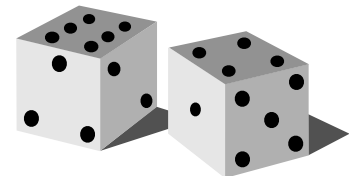


Cilk's Work-Stealing Scheduler

Each processor maintains a **work deque** of ready strands, and it manipulates the bottom of the deque like a stack.

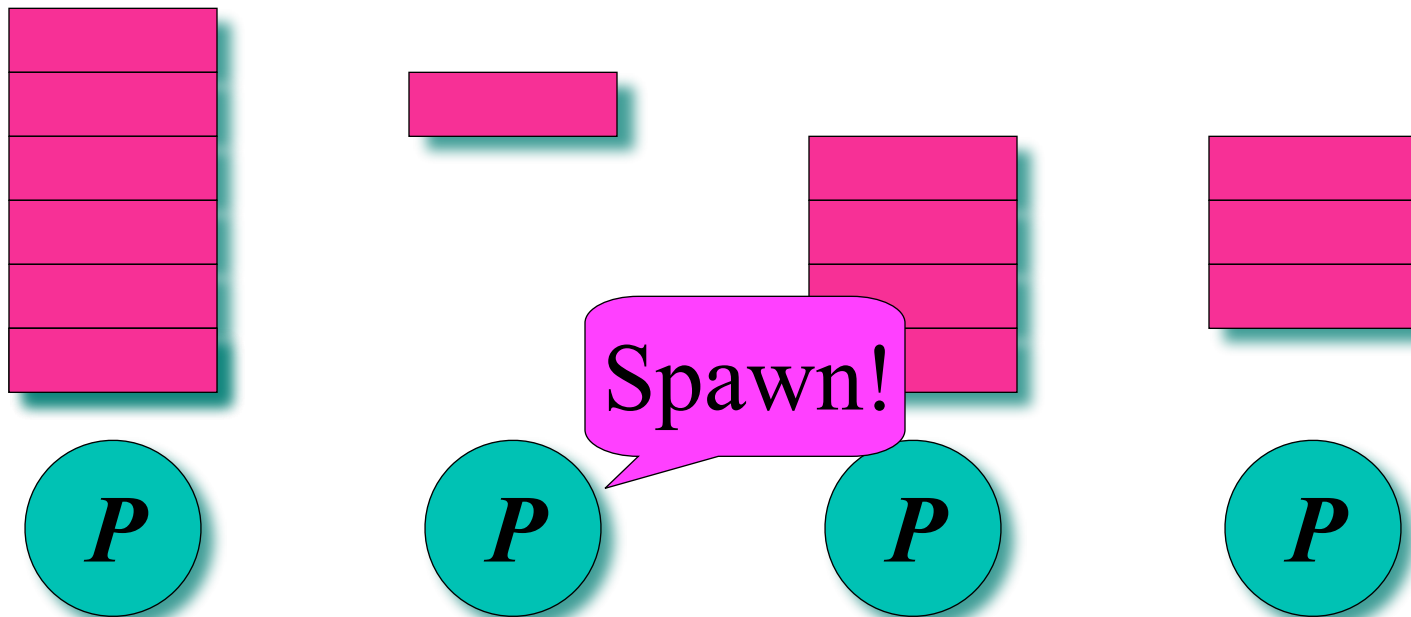


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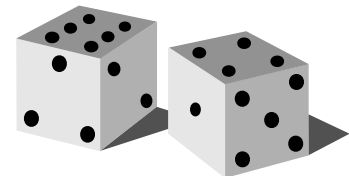


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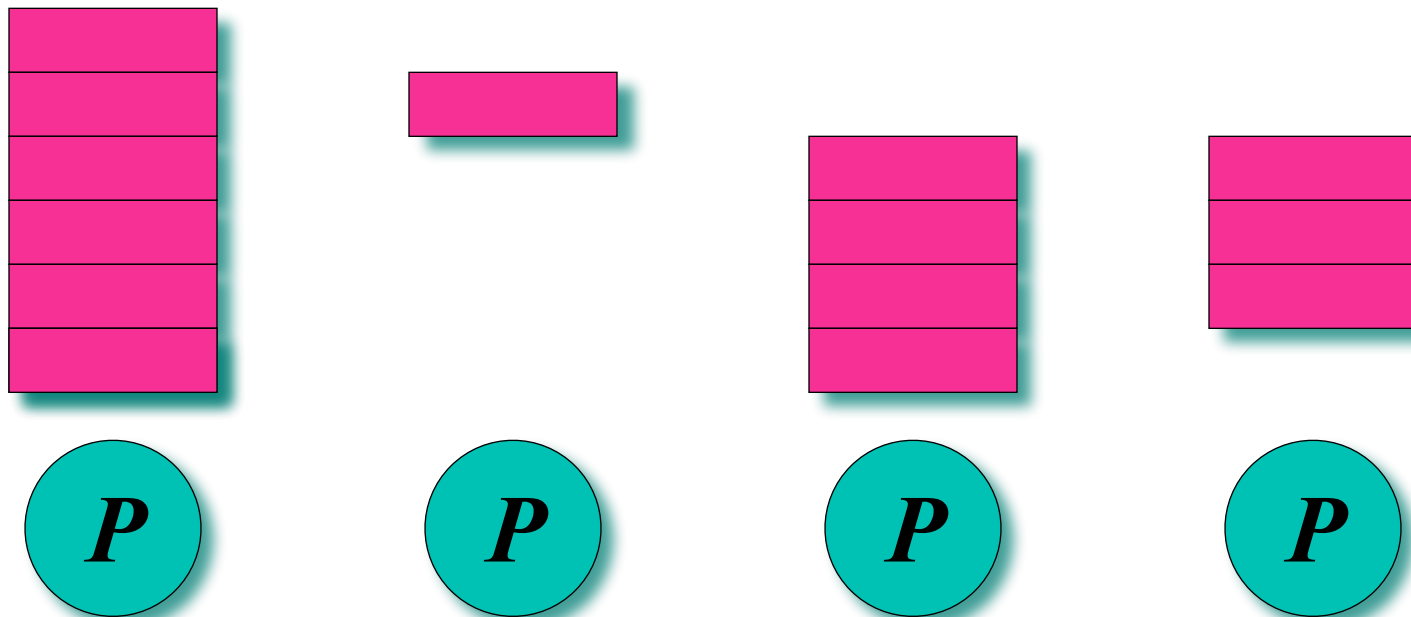


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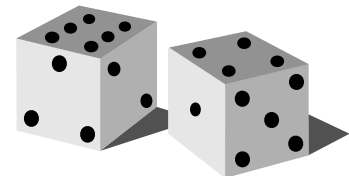


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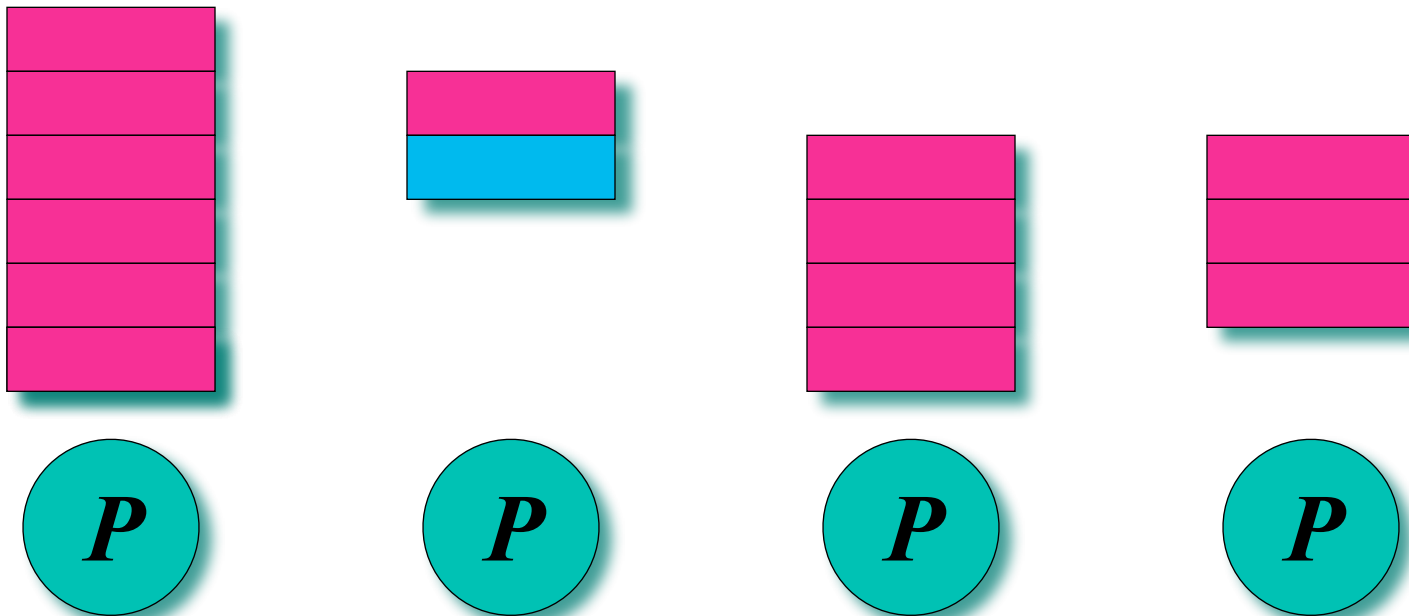


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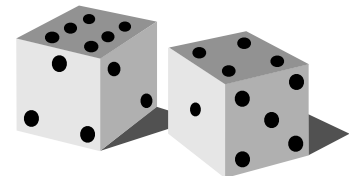


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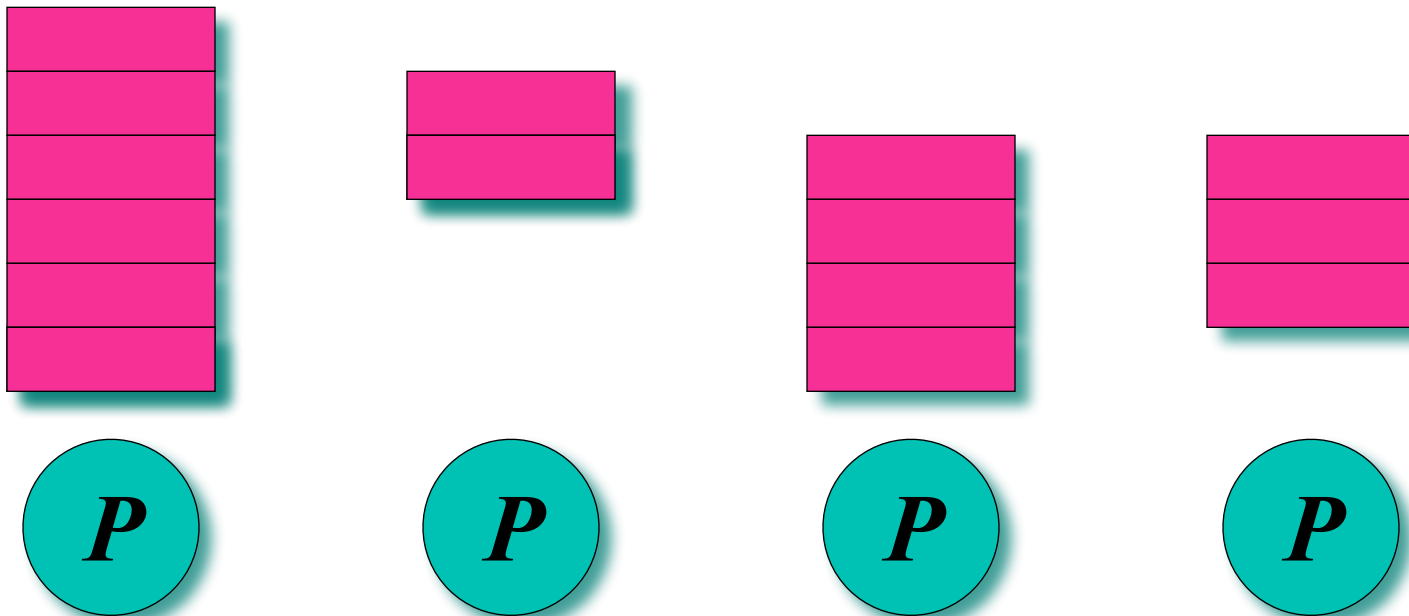


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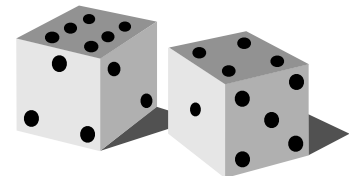


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Each processor maintains a **work deque** of ready strands, and it manipulates the bottom of the deque like a stack.



When a processor runs out of work, it **steals** a strand from the top of a **random** victim's deque



Performance of Work-Stealing

Theorem: Cilk's work-stealing scheduler achieves an expected running time of $T_P \leq T_1/P + O(T_\infty)$ on P processors

Greedy Scheduling Theorem

- Types of schedule steps
 - complete step
 - at least P operations ready to run
 - select any P and run them
 - incomplete step
 - strictly $< P$ operations ready to run
 - greedy scheduler runs them all

Theorem: On P processors, a greedy scheduler executes any computation G with work T_1 and critical path of length T_∞ in time $T_p \leq T_1/P + T_\infty$

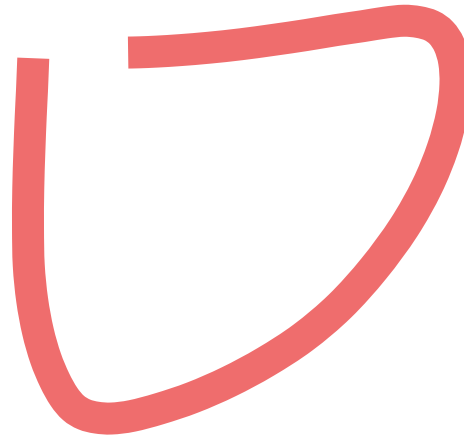
Proof sketch

- only two types of scheduler steps: complete, incomplete
- cannot be more than T_1/P complete steps, else work $> T_1$
- every incomplete step reduces remaining critical path length by 1
 - no more than T_∞ incomplete steps

Parallel Slackness Revisited

critical path overhead = smallest constant c_∞ such that

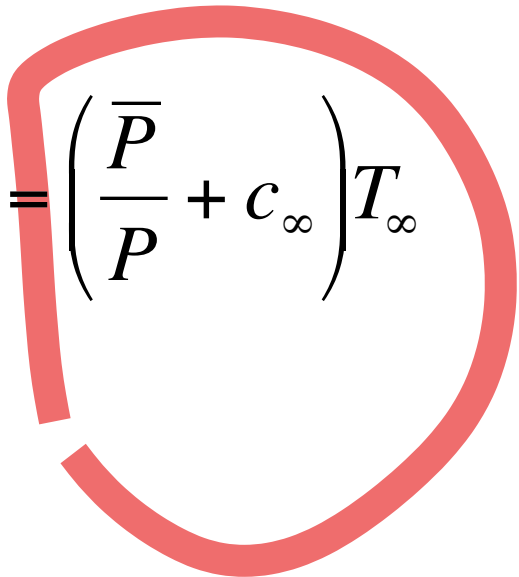
$$T_p \leq \frac{T_1}{P} + c_\infty T_\infty$$



Parallel Slackness Revisited

critical path overhead = smallest constant c_∞ such that

$$T_p \leq \frac{T_1}{P} + c_\infty T_\infty$$

$$T_p \leq \left(\frac{T_1}{T_\infty P} + c_\infty \right) T_\infty = \left(\frac{\bar{P}}{P} + c_\infty \right) T_\infty$$


Let $\bar{P} = T_1/T_\infty =$
parallelism =
max speedup on
 ∞ processors

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$$\bar{P} / P \gg c_\infty$$

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thus

$$\frac{T_1}{P} \gg c_\infty T_\infty$$

$$T_p \approx \frac{T_1}{P}$$

linear speedup

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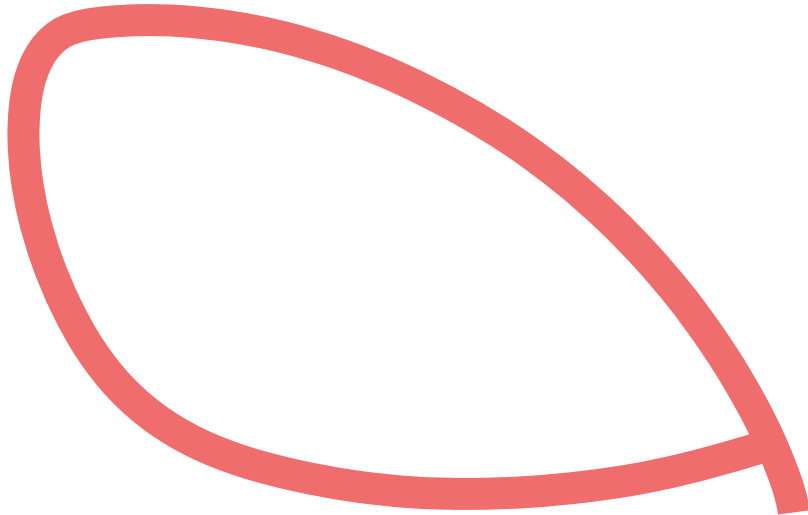
$$T_p \approx \frac{T_1}{P}$$

linear speedup

“critical path overhead has
little effect on performance
when sufficient parallel
slackness exists”

Work Overhead

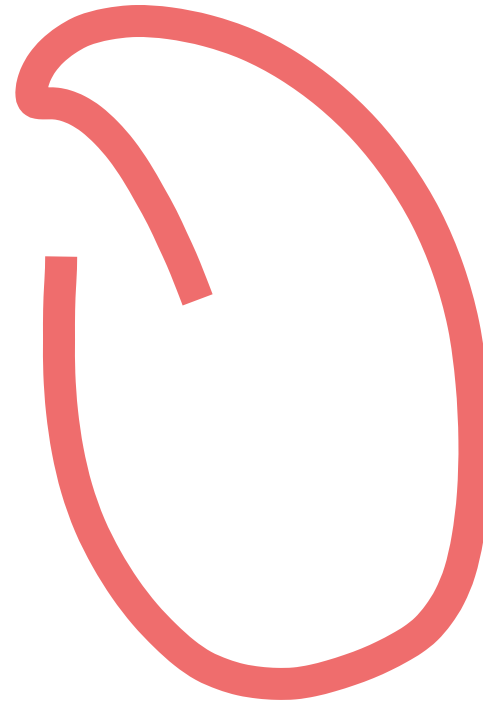
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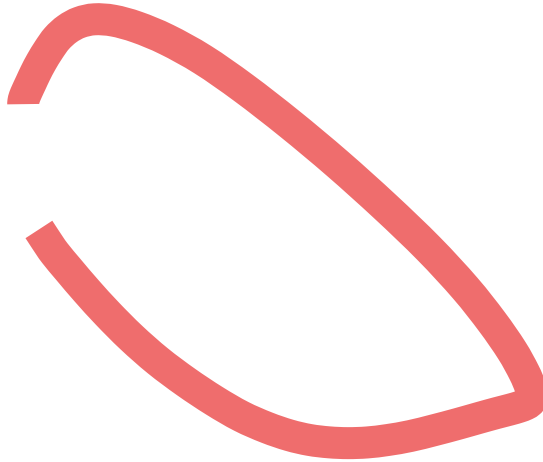


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“Minimize work overhead (c_1)
at the expense of a larger
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work overhead

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assuming parallel slackness

You can reduce C_1 by increasing
the granularity of parallel work

Parallelizing Vector Addition

C

```
void vadd (real *A, real *B, int n){  
    int i; for (i=0; i<n; i++) A[i]+=B[i];  
}
```

Divide and Conquer

- **An effective parallelization strategy**
 - creates a good mix of large and small sub-problems
- **Work-stealing scheduler can allocate chunks of work efficiently to the cores, as long as**
 - not only a few large chunks
 - if work is divided into just a few large chunks, there may not be enough parallelism to keep all the cores busy
 - not too many very small chunks
 - if the chunks are too small, then scheduling overhead may overwhelm the benefit of parallelism

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Parallelization strategy:

1. Convert loops to recursion.

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    int i; for (i=0; i<n; i++) A[i]+=B[i];  
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```
void vadd (real *A, real *B, int n){  
    if (n<=BASE) {  
        int i; for (i=0; i<n; i++) A[i]+=B[i];  
    } else {  
        vadd (A, B, n/2);  
        vadd (A+n/2, B+n/2, n-n/2);  
    }  
}
```

Parallelization strategy:

1. Convert loops to recursion.

Parallelizing Vector Addition

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void vadd (real *A, real *B, int n){  
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Parallelization strategy:

1. Convert loops to recursion.
2. Insert Cilk Plus keywords.

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*Cilk
Plus*

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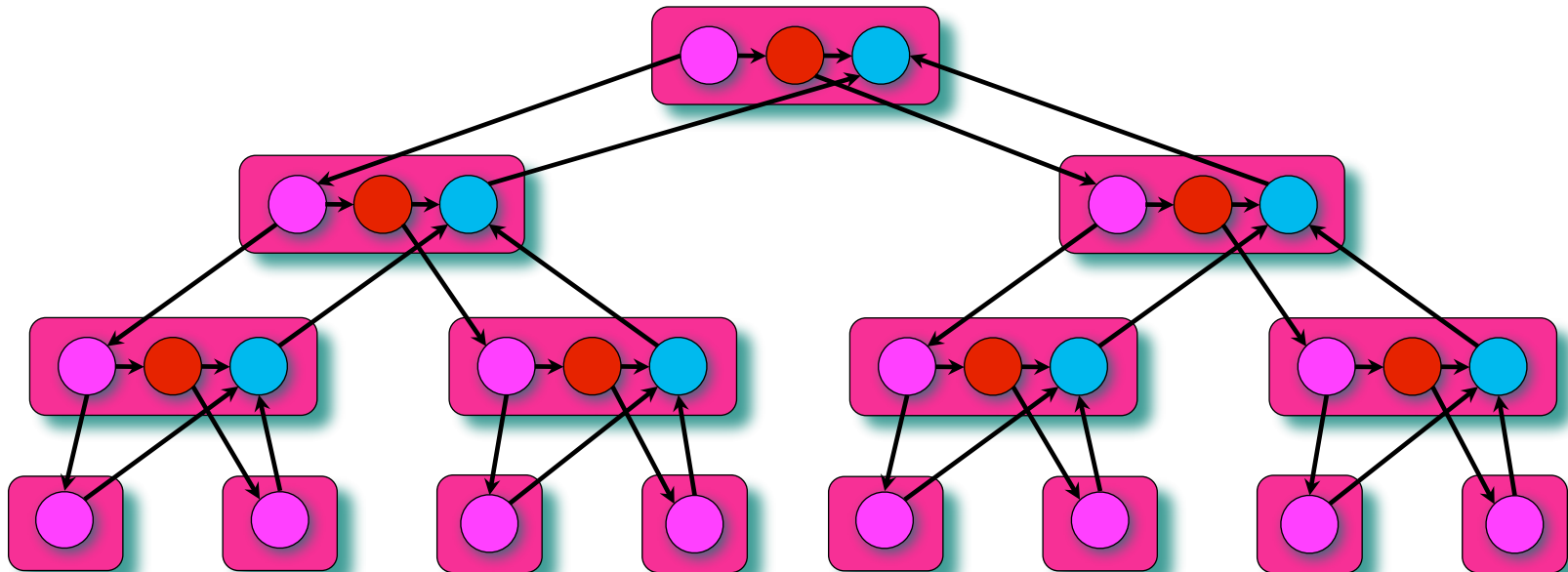
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void vadd (real *A, real *B, int n){
    if (n<=BASE) {
        int i; for (i=0; i<n; i++) A[i]+=B[i];
    } else {
        cilk_spawn vadd (A, B, n/2);
        vadd (A+n/2, B+n/2, n-n/2);
    }
}
```

Parallelization strategy:

1. Convert loops to recursion.
2. Insert Cilk Plus keywords.

Vector Addition

```
void vadd (real *A, real *B, int n){  
    if (n<=BASE) {  
        int i; for (i=0; i<n; i++) A[i]+=B[i];  
    } else {  
        cilk_spawn vadd (A, B, n/2);  
        vadd_(A+n/2, B+n/2, n-n/2);  
    }  
}
```



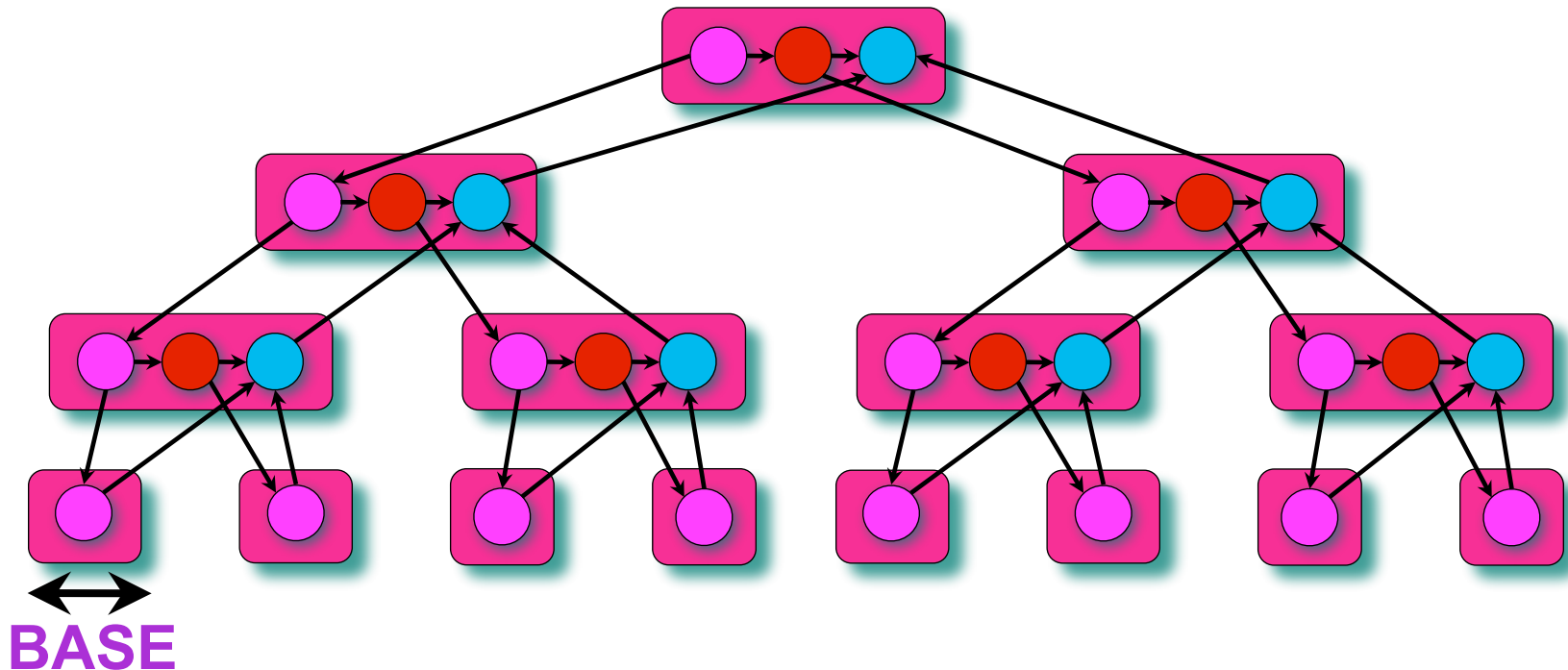
Vector Addition Analysis

To add two vectors of length n , where $\text{BASE} = \Theta(1)$:

Work: $T_1 = ?$

Span: $T_\infty = ?$

Parallelism: $T_1 / T_\infty = ?$



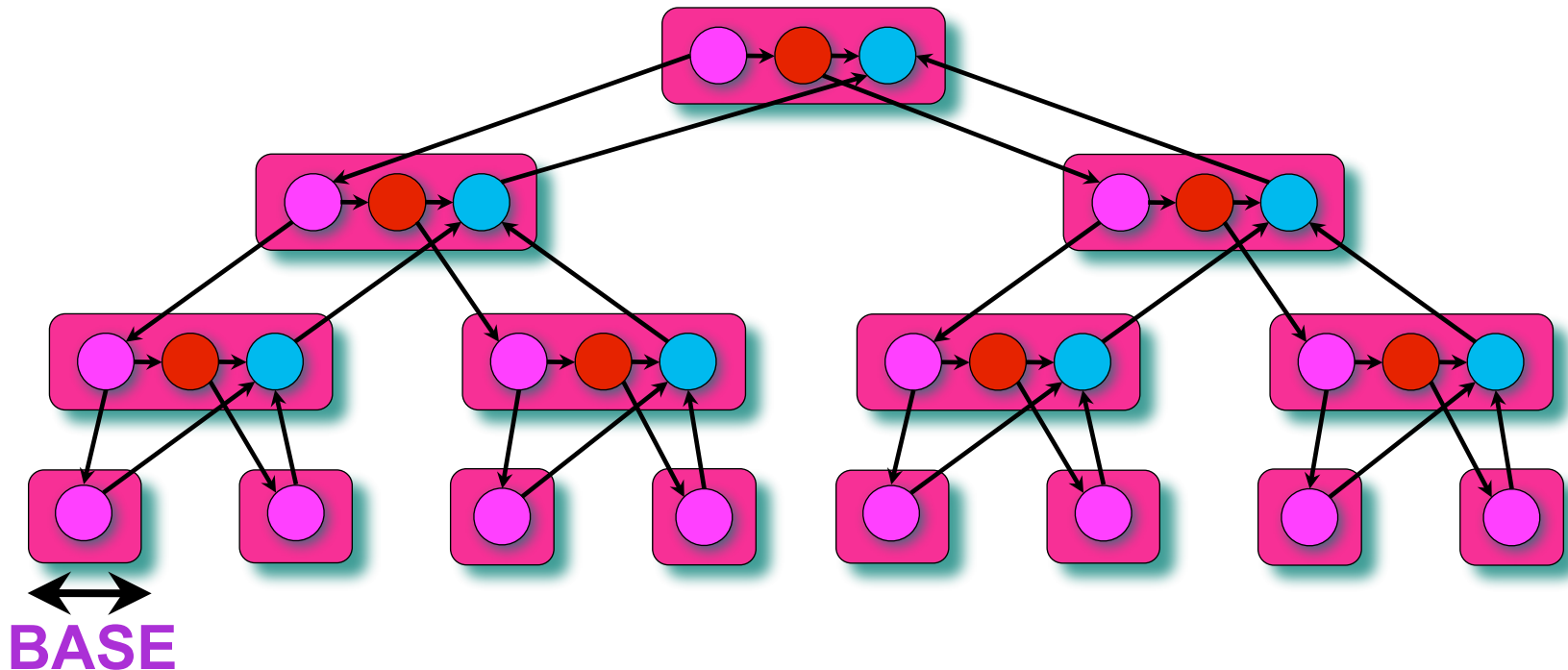
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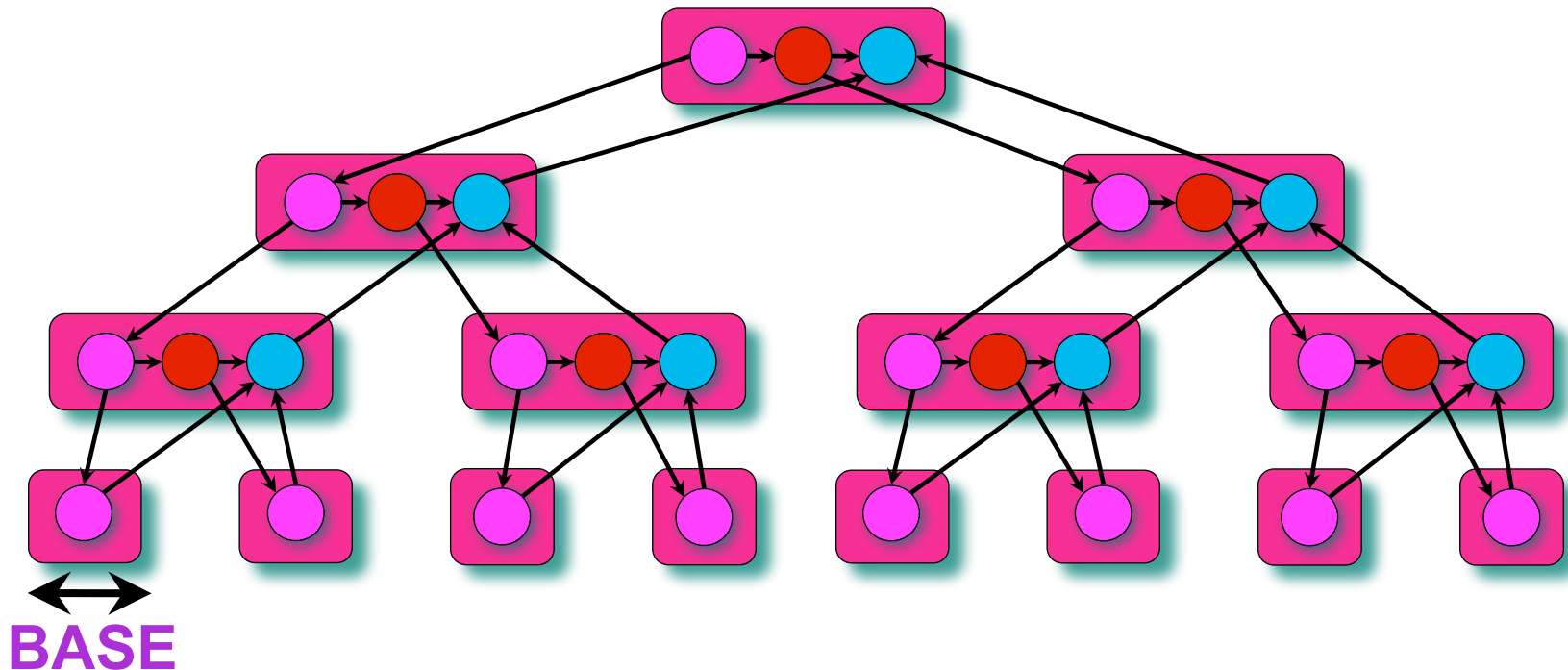
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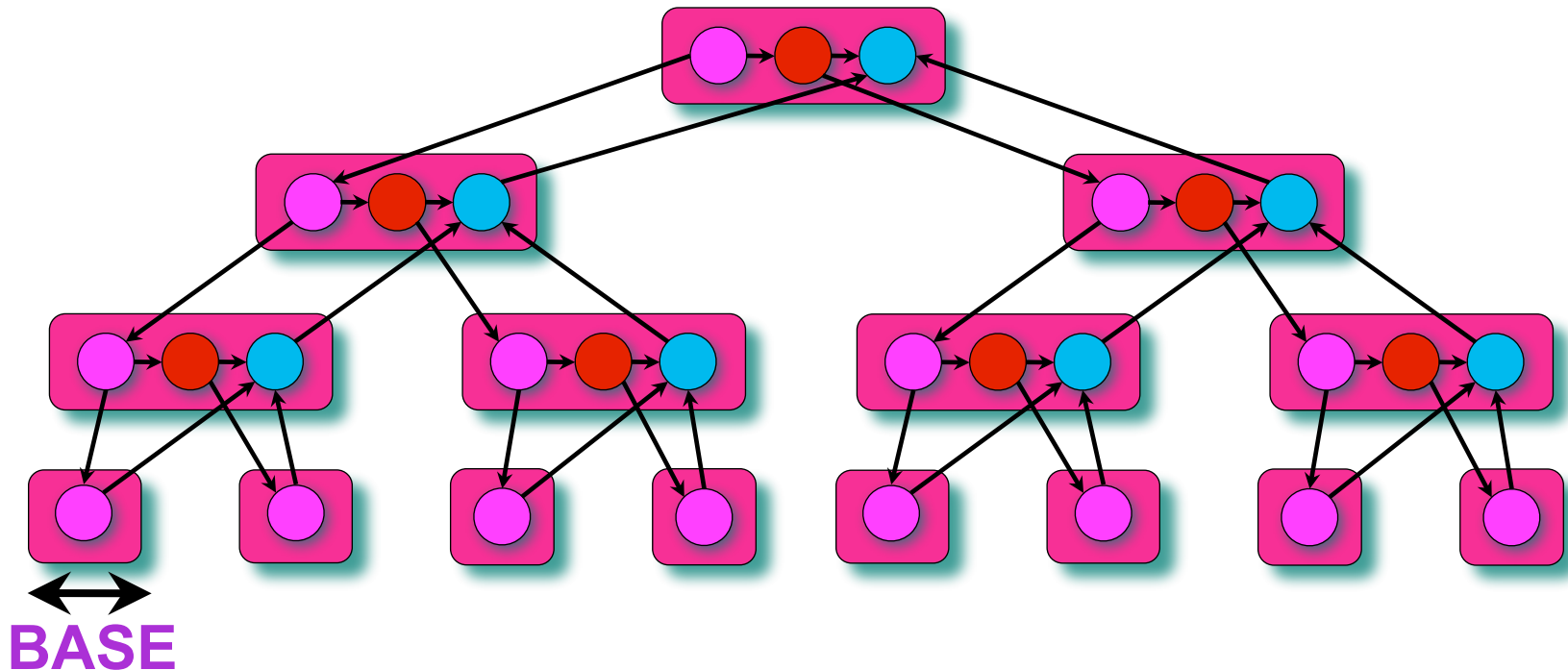
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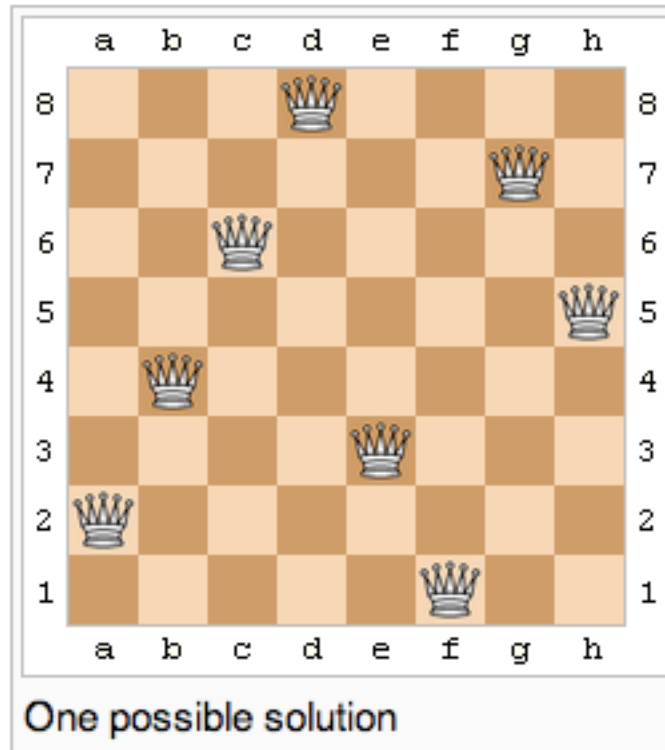
Span: $T_\infty = \Theta(\log_2 n)$

Parallelism: $T_1 / T_\infty = \Theta(n / \log_2 n)$



Example: N Queens

- **Problem**
 - place N queens on an $N \times N$ chess board
 - no 2 queens in same row, column, or diagonal
- **Example: a solution to 8 queens problem**



N Queens: Many Solutions Possible

Example: 8 queens

- 92 distinct solutions
- 12 unique solutions; others are rotations & reflections

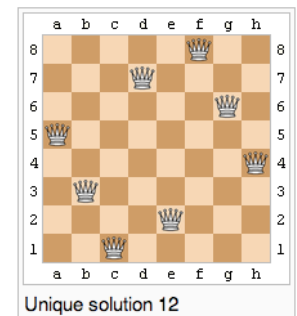
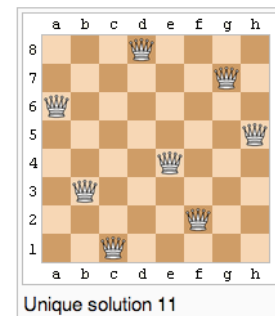
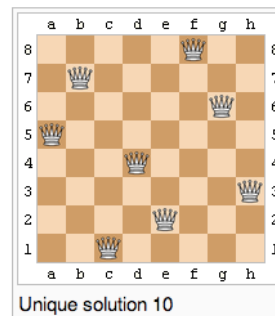
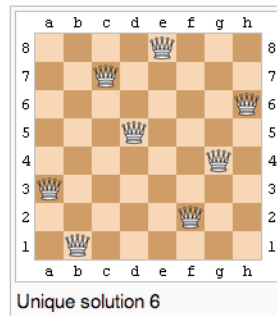
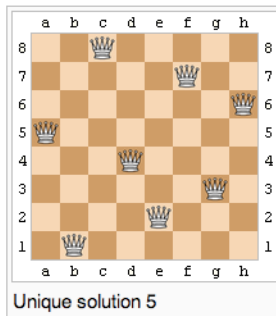
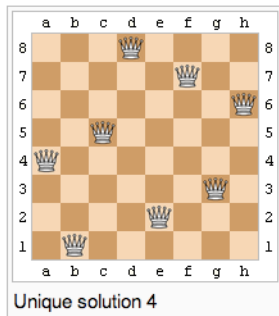
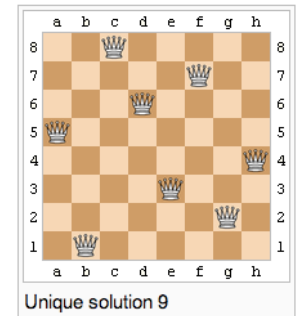
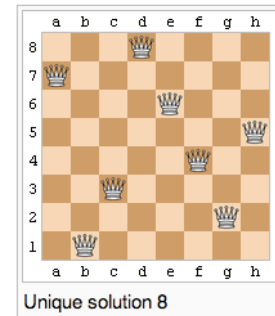
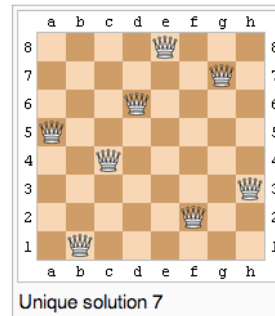
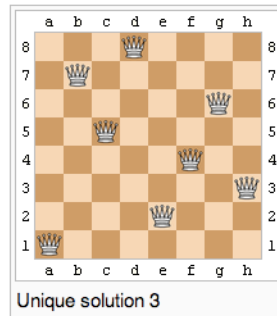
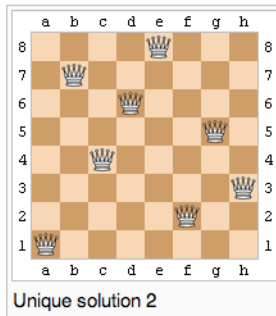
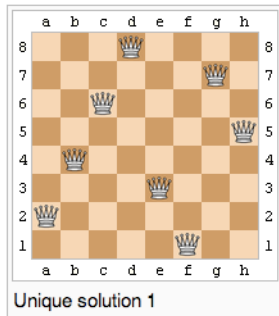


Image credit: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eight_queens_puzzle

N Queens Solution Sketch

Sequential Recursive Enumeration of All Solutions

```
int nqueens(n, j, placement) {  
    // precondition: placed j queens so far  
    if (j == n) { print placement; return; }  
    for (k = 0; k < n; k++)  
        if putting j+1 queen in kth position in row j+1 is legal  
            add queen j+1 in kth position to placement  
            cilk_spaw nqueens(n, j+1, placement)  
            remove queen j+1 in kth position from placement  
}
```

- Where's the potential for parallelism?
- What issues must we consider?

Parallel N Queens Solution Sketch

```
void nqueens(n, j, placement) {  
    // precondition: placed j queens so far  
    if (j == n) { /* found a placement */ process placement; return; }  
    for (k = 1; k <= n; k++)  
        if putting j+1 queen in kth position in row j+1 is legal  
            copy placement into newplacement and add extra queen  
            cilk_spawn nqueens(n, j+1, newplacement)  
            cilk_sync  
            discard placement  
}
```

Parallel N Queens Solution Sketch

```
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}
```

Issues regarding placements

Parallel N Queens Solution Sketch

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Issues regarding placements

—how can we report placements?

Parallel N Queens Solution Sketch

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Issues regarding placements

- how can we report placements?
- what if a single placement suffices?

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- how can we report placements?
- what if a single placement suffices?
 - no need to compute all legal placements

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```

Issues regarding placements

- how can we report placements?
- what if a single placement suffices?
 - no need to compute all legal placements
 - so far, no way to terminate children exploring alternate placement

Approaches to Managing Placements

- **Choices for reporting multiple legal placements**
 - **count them**
 - **print them on the fly**
 - **collect them on the fly; print them at the end**
- **If only one placement desired, can skip remaining search**