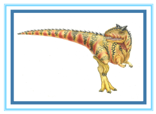
Chapter 11: Implementing File Systems



Chapter 11: Implementing File Systems

- File-System Structure
- File-System Implementation
- Directory Implementation
- Allocation Methods
- Free-Space Management
- Efficiency and Performance
- Recovery

Objectives

- To describe the details of implementing local file systems and directory structures
- To describe the implementation of remote file systems
- To discuss block allocation and free-block algorithms and trade-offs

File-System Structure

- File structure
  - Logical storage unit
  - Collection of related information
- **File system** resides on secondary storage (disks)
  - Provided user interface to storage, mapping logical to physical
  - Provides efficient and convenient access to disk by allowing data to be stored, located retrieved easily
- Disk provides in-place rewrite and random access
  - I/O transfers performed in **blocks** of **sectors** (usually 512 bytes)
- **File control block** – storage structure consisting of information about a file
- **Device driver** controls the physical device
- File system organized into layers

Layered File System

application programs
↓
logical file system
↓
file-organization module
↓
basic file system
↓
I/O control
↓
devices

File System Layers

- **Device drivers** manage I/O devices at the I/O control layer
  - Given commands like "read drive1, cylinder 72, track 2, sector 10, into memory location 1060" outputs low -level hardware specific commands to hardware controller
  - **Basic file system** given command like "retrieve block 123" translates to device driver
  - Also manages memory buffers and caches (allocation, freeing, replacement)
    - Buffers hold data in transit
    - Caches hold frequently used data
  - **File organization module** understands files, logical address, and physical blocks
  - Translates logical block # to physical block #
  - Manages free space, disk allocation

File System Layers (Cont.)

- **Logical file system** manages metadata information
  - Translates file name into file number, file handle, location by maintaining file control blocks (**inodes** in Unix)
  - Directory management
  - Protection
- Layering useful for reducing complexity and redundancy, but adds overhead and can decrease performance
  - Logical layers can be implemented by any coding method according to OS designer
- Many file systems, sometimes many within an operating system
  - Each with its own format (CD-ROM is ISO 9660; Unix has **UFS**, FFS; Windows has FAT, FAT32, NTFS as well as floppy, CD, DVD Blu-ray, Linux has more than 40 types, with **extended file system** ext2 and ext3 leading; plus distributed file systems, etc)
  - New ones still arriving – ZFS, GoogleFS, Oracle ASM, FUSE

File-System Implementation

- We have system calls at the API level, but how do we implement their functions?
  - On-disk and in-memory structures
- **Boot control block** contains info needed by system to boot OS from that volume
  - Needed if volume contains OS, usually first block of volume
- **Volume control block** (**superblock, master file table**) contains volume details
  - Total # of blocks, # of free blocks, block size, free block pointers or array
- Directory structure organizes the files
  - Names and inode numbers, master file table
- Per-file **File Control Block (FCB)** contains many details about the file
  - Inode number, permissions, size, dates
  - NFTS stores into in master file table using relational DB structures

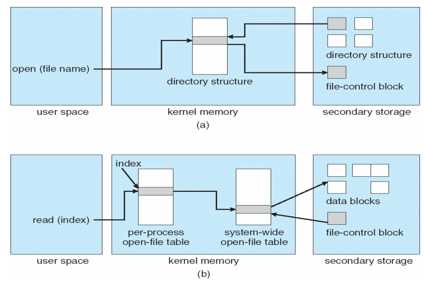
A Typical File Control Block

file permissions
file dates (create, access, write)
file owner, group, ACL
file size
file data blocks or pointers to file data blocks

In-Memory File System Structures

- Mount table storing file system mounts, mount points, file system types
- The following figure illustrates the necessary file system structures provided by the operating systems
- Figure 11-3(a) refers to opening a file
- Figure 11-3(b) refers to reading a file
- Plus buffers hold data blocks from secondary storage
- Open returns a file handle for subsequent use
- Data from read eventually copied to specified user process memory address

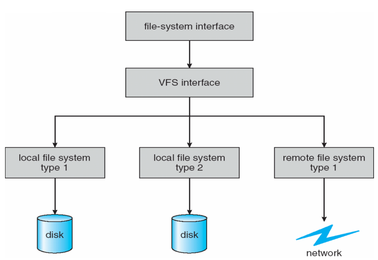
In-Memory File System Structures



Virtual File Systems

- Virtual File Systems (VFS) on Unix provide an object-oriented way of implementing file systems
- VFS allows the same system call interface (the API) to be used for different types of file systems
  - Separates file-system generic operations from implementation details
  - Implementation can be one of many file systems types, or network file system
    - Implements vnodes which hold inodes or network file details
  - Then dispatches operation to appropriate file system implementation routines
- The API is to the VFS interface, rather than any specific type of file system

Schematic View of Virtual File System



Virtual File System Implementation

- For example, Linux has four object types:
  - Inode: represents an individual file
  - File: represents an open file
  - Superblock: represents an entire file system
  - Dentry: represents an individual directory entry
- VFS defines set of operations on the objects that must be implemented
  - Every object has a pointer to a function table
    - Function table has addresses of routines to implement that function on that object

Directory Implementation

- **Linear list** of file names with pointer to the data blocks
  - Simple to program
  - Time-consuming to execute
    - Linear search time
    - Could keep ordered alphabetically via linked list or use B+ tree
- **Hash Table** – linear list with hash data structure
  - Decreases directory search time
  - **Collisions** – situations where two file names hash to the same location
  - Only good if entries are fixed size, or use chained-overflow method

Allocation Methods - Contiguous

- An allocation method refers to how disk blocks are allocated for files:
- **Contiguous allocation** – each file occupies set of contiguous blocks
  - Best performance in most cases
  - Simple – only starting location (block #) and length (number of blocks) are required
  - Problems include finding space for file, knowing file size, external fragmentation, need for **compaction off-line** (**downtime**) or **on-line**

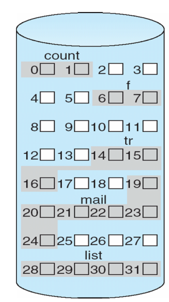
Contiguous Allocation

- Mapping from logical to physical

LA/512 → Q, R

Block to be accessed = Q + starting address
Displacement into block = R

Contiguous Allocation of Disk Space



directory

file	start	length
count	0	2
tr	14	3
mail	19	6
list	28	4
f	6	2

Extent-Based Systems

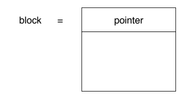
- Many newer file systems (i.e., Veritas File System) use a modified contiguous allocation scheme
- Extent-based file systems allocate disk blocks in extents
- An **extent** is a contiguous block of disks
  - Extents are allocated for file allocation
  - A file consists of one or more extents

Allocation Methods - Linked

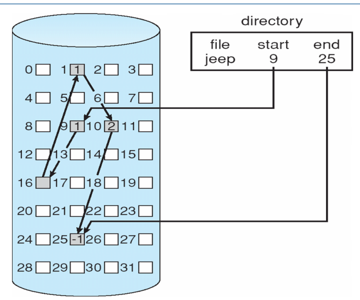
- **Linked allocation** – each file a linked list of blocks
  - File ends at nil pointer
  - No external fragmentation
  - Each block contains pointer to next block
  - No compaction, external fragmentation
  - Free space management system called when new block needed
  - Improve efficiency by clustering blocks into groups but increases internal fragmentation
  - Reliability can be a problem
  - Locating a block can take many I/Os and disk seeks
- FAT (File Allocation Table) variation
  - Beginning of volume has table, indexed by block number
  - Much like a linked list, but faster on disk and cacheable
  - New block allocation simple

Linked Allocation

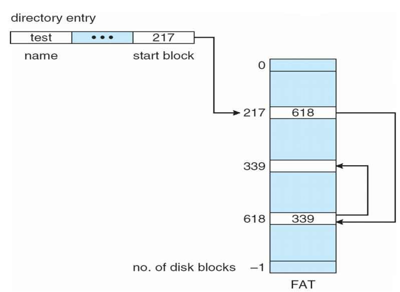
- Each file is a linked list of disk blocks: blocks may be scattered anywhere on the disk



Linked Allocation

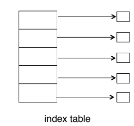


File-Allocation Table

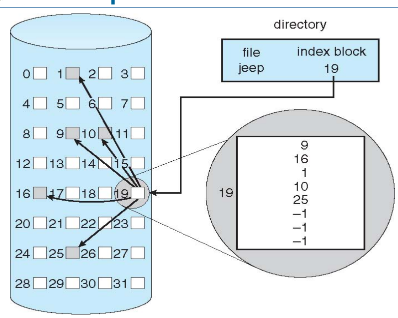


Allocation Methods - Indexed

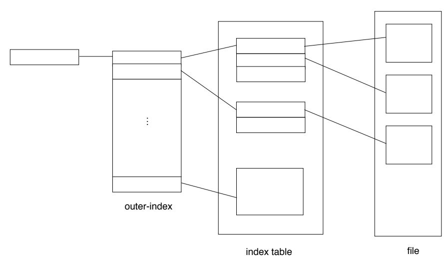
- **Indexed allocation**
  - Each file has its own **index block**(s) of pointers to its data blocks
- Logical view



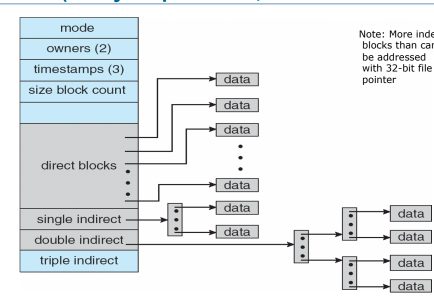
Example of Indexed Allocation



Indexed Allocation – Mapping (Cont.)



Combined Scheme: UNIX UFS (4K bytes per block, 32-bit addresses)

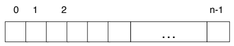


Performance

- Best method depends on file access type
  - Contiguous great for sequential and random
- Linked good for sequential, not random
- Declare access type at creation -> select either contiguous or linked
- Indexed more complex
  - Single block access could require 2 index block reads then data block read

Free-Space Management

- File system maintains **free-space list** to track available blocks/clusters
  - (Using term “block” for simplicity)
- **Bit vector** or **bit map** (*n* blocks)



$$\text{bit}[i] = \begin{cases} 1 \Rightarrow \text{block}[i] \text{ free} \\ 0 \Rightarrow \text{block}[i] \text{ occupied} \end{cases}$$

Block number calculation

(number of bits per word) *
(number of 0-value words) +
offset of first 1 bit

CPUs have instructions to return offset within word of first “1” bit

Free-Space Management (Cont.)

- Bit map requires extra space
  - Example:

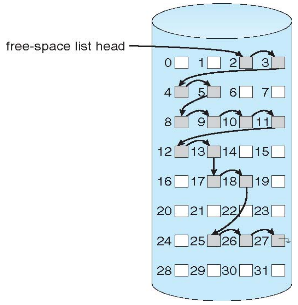
    block size = 4KB = 2^{12} bytes

    disk size = 2^{40} bytes (1 terabyte)

    $n = 2^{40}/2^{12} = 2^{28}$ bits (or 256 MB)

    if clusters of 4 blocks -> 64MB of memory
- Easy to get contiguous files
- Linked list (free list)
  - Cannot get contiguous space easily
  - No waste of space
  - No need to traverse the entire list (if # free blocks recorded)

Linked Free Space List on Disk



Free-Space Management (Cont.)

- Grouping
  - Modify linked list to store address of next *n-1* free blocks in first free block, plus a pointer to next block that contains free-block-pointers (like this one)
- Counting
  - Because space is frequently contiguously used and freed, with contiguous-allocation allocation, extents, or clustering
    - Keep address of first free block and count of following free blocks
    - Free space list then has entries containing addresses and counts

Efficiency and Performance

- Efficiency dependent on:
  - Disk allocation and directory algorithms
  - Types of data kept in file’s directory entry
  - Pre-allocation or as-needed allocation of metadata structures
  - Fixed-size or varying-size data structures

Efficiency and Performance (Cont.)

- Performance
  - Keeping data and metadata close together
  - **Buffer cache** – separate section of main memory for frequently used blocks
  - **Synchronous** writes sometimes requested by apps or needed by OS
    - No buffering / caching – writes must hit disk before acknowledgement
    - **Asynchronous** writes more common, buffer-able, faster
  - **Free-behind** and **read-ahead** – techniques to optimize sequential access
  - Reads frequently slower than writes

Recovery

- **Consistency checking** – compares data in directory structure with data blocks on disk, and tries to fix inconsistencies
  - Can be slow and sometimes fails
- Use system programs to **back up** data from disk to another storage device (magnetic tape, other magnetic disk, optical)
- Recover lost file or disk by **restoring** data from backup

Log Structured File Systems

- **Log structured** (or **journaling**) file systems record each metadata update to the file system as a **transaction**
- All transactions are written to a log
  - A transaction is considered committed once it is written to the log (sequentially)
  - Sometimes to a separate device or section of disk
  - However, the file system may not yet be updated
- The transactions in the log are asynchronously written to the file system structures
  - When the file system structures are modified, the transaction is removed from the log
- If the file system crashes, all remaining transactions in the log must still be performed
- Faster recovery from crash, removes chance of inconsistency of metadata