



# Chapter 15: Transactions

**Database System Concepts, 5th Ed.**

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# Chapter 15: Transactions

- Transaction Concept
- Transaction State
- Concurrent Executions
- Serializability
- Recoverability
- Implementation of Isolation
- Transaction Definition in SQL
- Testing for Serializability.





# Transaction Concept

- A **transaction** is a *unit* of program execution that accesses and possibly updates various data items.
- E.g. transaction to transfer \$50 from account A to account B:
  1. **read(A)**
  2.  $A := A - 50$
  3. **write(A)**
  4. **read(B)**
  5.  $B := B + 50$
  6. **write(B)**
- Two main issues to deal with:
  - Failures of various kinds, such as hardware failures and system crashes
  - Concurrent execution of multiple transactions





- Transaction to transfer \$50 from account A to account B:
  1. **read(A)**
  2.  $A := A - 50$
  3. **write(A)**
  4. **read(B)**
  5.  $B := B + 50$
  6. **write(B)**
- **Atomicity requirement**
  - if the transaction fails after step 3 and before step 6, money will be “lost” leading to an inconsistent database state
    - 4 Failure could be due to software or hardware
  - the system should ensure that updates of a partially executed transaction are not reflected in the database
- **Durability requirement** — once the user has been notified that the transaction has completed (i.e., the transfer of the \$50 has taken place), the updates to the database by the transaction must persist even if there are software or hardware failures.





# Example of Fund Transfer (Cont.)

- Transaction to transfer \$50 from account A to account B:
  1. **read(A)**
  2.  $A := A - 50$
  3. **write(A)**
  4. **read(B)**
  5.  $B := B + 50$
  6. **write(B)**
- **Consistency requirement** in above example:
  - the sum of A and B is unchanged by the execution of the transaction
- In general, consistency requirements include
  - 4 Explicitly specified integrity constraints such as primary keys and foreign keys
  - 4 Implicit integrity constraints
    - e.g. sum of balances of all accounts, minus sum of loan amounts must equal value of cash-in-hand
  - A transaction must see a consistent database.
  - During transaction execution the database may be temporarily inconsistent.
  - When the transaction completes successfully the database must be consistent
  - 4 Erroneous transaction logic can lead to inconsistency





# Example of Fund Transfer (Cont.)

- **Isolation requirement** — if between steps 3 and 6, another transaction T2 is allowed to access the partially updated database, it will see an inconsistent database (the sum  $A + B$  will be less than it should be).

**T1**

1. **read(A)**
2.  $A := A - 50$
3. **write(A)**
4. **read(B)**
5.  $B := B + 50$
6. **write(B)**

**T2**

read(A), read(B), print(A+B)

- Isolation can be ensured trivially by running transactions **serially**
  - that is, one after the other.
- However, executing multiple transactions concurrently has significant benefits, as we will see later.





# ACID Properties

A **transaction** is a unit of program execution that accesses and possibly updates various data items. To preserve the integrity of data the database system must ensure:

- **Atomicity.** Either all operations of the transaction are properly reflected in the database or none are.
- **Consistency.** Execution of a transaction in isolation preserves the consistency of the database.
- **Isolation.** Although multiple transactions may execute concurrently, each transaction must be unaware of other concurrently executing transactions. Intermediate transaction results must be hidden from other concurrently executed transactions.
  - That is, for every pair of transactions  $T_i$  and  $T_j$ , it appears to  $T_i$  that either  $T_j$  finished execution before  $T_i$  started, or  $T_j$  started execution after  $T_i$  finished.
- **Durability.** After a transaction completes successfully, the changes it has made to the database persist, even if there are system failures.





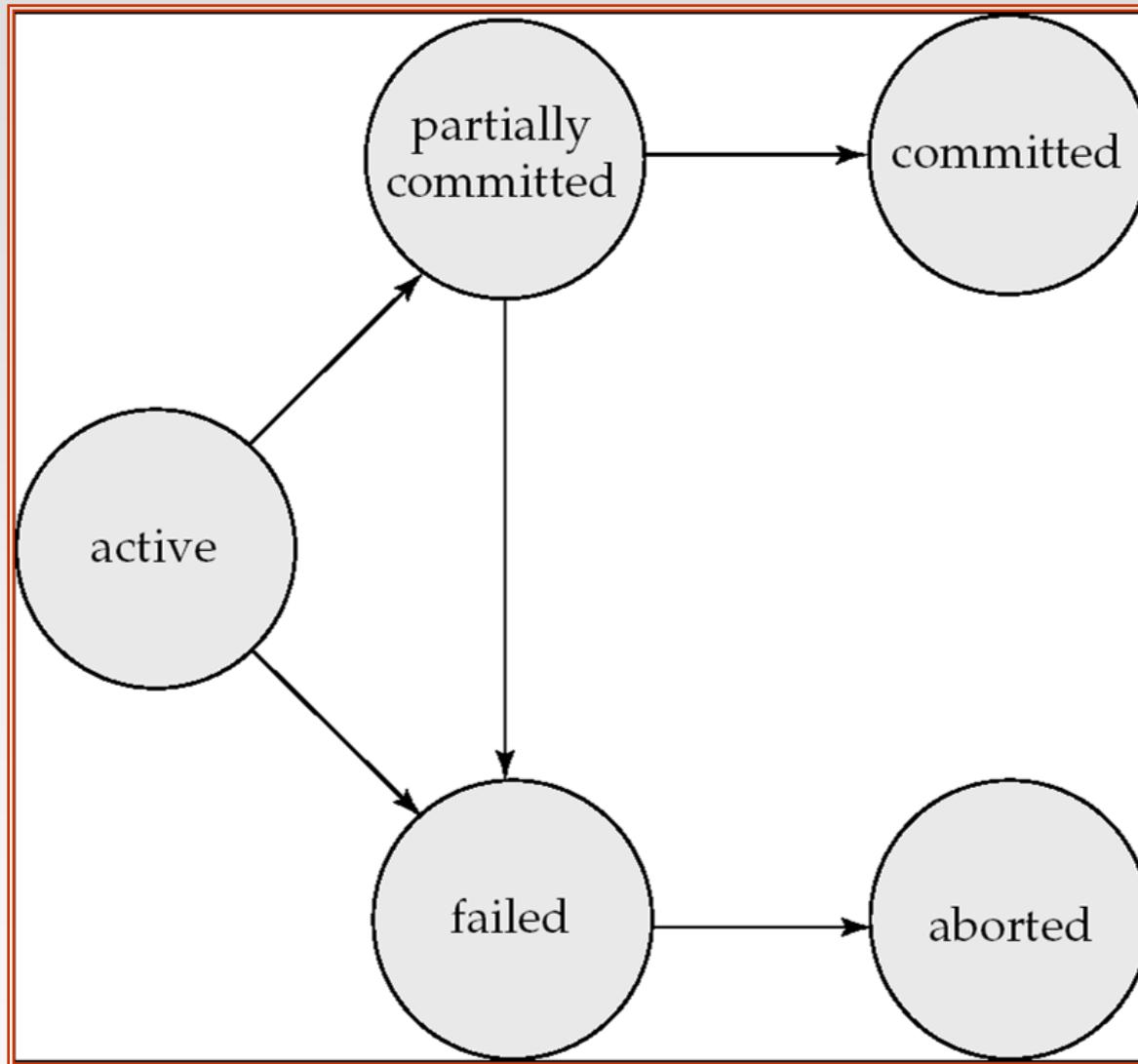
# Transaction State

- **Active** – the initial state; the transaction stays in this state while it is executing
- **Partially committed** – after the final statement has been executed.
- **Failed** -- after the discovery that normal execution can no longer proceed.
- **Aborted** – after the transaction has been rolled back and the database restored to its state prior to the start of the transaction. Two options after it has been aborted:
  - restart the transaction
    - 4 can be done only if no internal logical error
  - kill the transaction
- **Committed** – after successful completion.





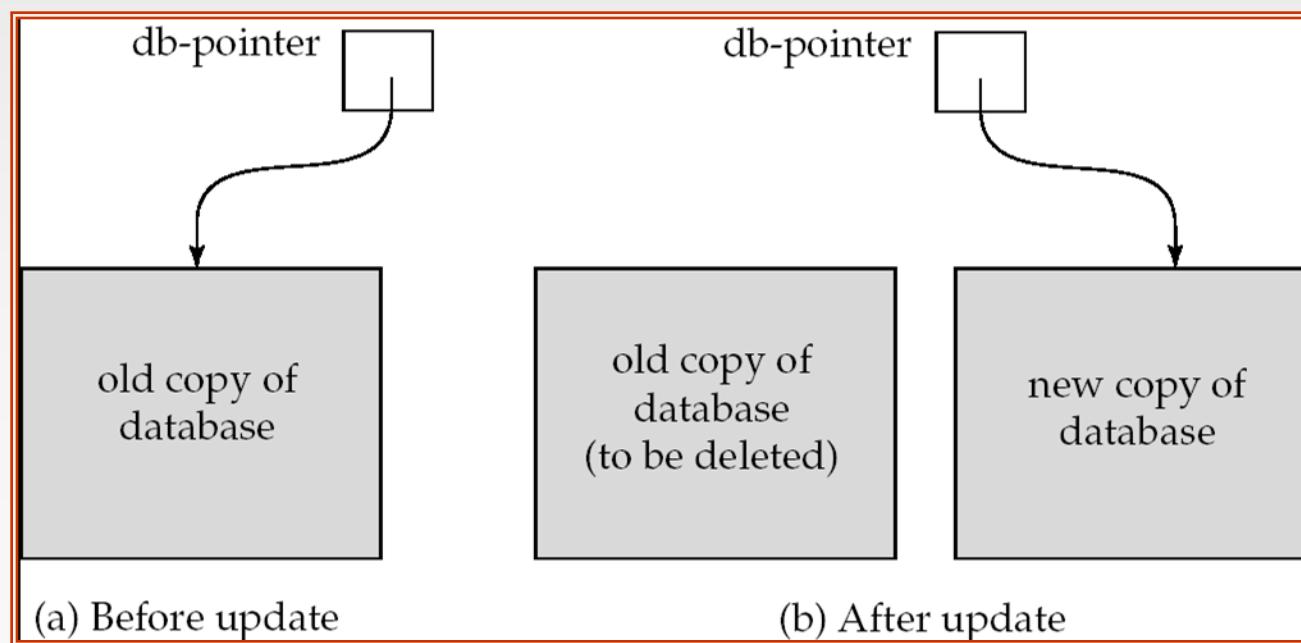
# Transaction State (Cont.)





# Implementation of Atomicity and Durability

- The **recovery-management** component of a database system implements the support for atomicity and durability.
- E.g. the **shadow-database** scheme:
  - all updates are made on a *shadow copy* of the database
    - 4 db\_pointer** is made to point to the updated shadow copy after
      - the transaction reaches partial commit and
      - all updated pages have been flushed to disk.





# Implementation of Atomicity and Durability (Cont.)

- db\_pointer always points to the current consistent copy of the database.
  - In case transaction fails, old consistent copy pointed to by **db\_pointer** can be used, and the shadow copy can be deleted.
- The shadow-database scheme:
  - Assumes that only one transaction is active at a time.
  - Assumes disks do not fail
  - Useful for text editors, but
    - extremely inefficient for large databases (why?)
      - Variant called shadow paging reduces performance efficiency(takes more time) by copying of data, but is still not practical for large databases
    - Does not handle concurrent transactions
- Will study better schemes in Chapter 17.





# Concurrent Executions

- Multiple transactions are allowed to run concurrently in the system.  
Advantages are:
  - **increased processor and disk utilization**, leading to better transaction *throughput*
    - 4 E.g. one transaction can be using the CPU while another is reading from or writing to the disk
  - **reduced average response time** for transactions: short transactions need not wait behind long ones.
- **Concurrency control schemes** – mechanisms to achieve isolation
  - that is, to control the interaction among the concurrent transactions in order to prevent them from destroying the consistency of the database
    - 4 Will study in Chapter 16, after studying notion of correctness of concurrent executions.





# Schedules

- **Schedule** – a sequences of instructions that specify the chronological order in which instructions of concurrent transactions are executed
  - a schedule for a set of transactions must consist of all instructions of those transactions
  - must preserve the order in which the instructions appear in each individual transaction.
- A transaction that successfully completes its execution will have a commit instruction as the last statement
  - by default transaction assumed to execute commit instruction as its last step
- A transaction that fails to successfully complete its execution will have an abort instruction as the last statement





# Schedule 1

- Let  $T_1$  transfer 50 from  $A$  to  $B$ , and  $T_2$  transfer 10% of the balance from  $A$  to  $B$ .
- A **serial** schedule in which  $T_1$  is followed by  $T_2$ :

$T_1$	$T_2$
<code>read(A)</code> $A := A - 50$ <code>write (A)</code> <code>read(B)</code> $B := B + 50$ <code>write(B)</code>	<code>read(A)</code> $temp := A * 0.1$ $A := A - temp$ <code>write(A)</code> <code>read(B)</code> $B := B + temp$ <code>write(B)</code>





# Schedule 2

- A serial schedule where  $T_2$  is followed by  $T_1$

$T_1$	$T_2$
	<b>read(A)</b> $temp := A * 0.1$ $A := A - temp$ <b>write(A)</b> <b>read(B)</b> $B := B + temp$ <b>write(B)</b>
<b>read(A)</b> $A := A - 50$ <b>write(A)</b> <b>read(B)</b> $B := B + 50$ <b>write(B)</b>	





# Schedule 3

- Let  $T_1$  and  $T_2$  be the transactions defined previously. The following schedule is not a serial schedule, but it is *equivalent* to Schedule 1.

$T_1$	$T_2$
$\text{read}(A)$ $A := A - 50$ $\text{write}(A)$	$\text{read}(A)$ $temp := A * 0.1$ $A := A - temp$ $\text{write}(A)$
$\text{read}(B)$ $B := B + 50$ $\text{write}(B)$	$\text{read}(B)$ $B := B + temp$ $\text{write}(B)$

In Schedules 1, 2 and 3, the sum  $A + B$  is preserved.





# Schedule 4

- The following concurrent schedule does not preserve the value of  $(A + B)$ .

$T_1$	$T_2$
$\text{read}(A)$ $A := A - 50$	$\text{read}(A)$ $temp := A * 0.1$ $A := A - temp$ $\text{write}(A)$ $\text{read}(B)$
$\text{write}(A)$ $\text{read}(B)$ $B := B + 50$ $\text{write}(B)$	$B := B + temp$ $\text{write}(B)$





# Serializability

- **Basic Assumption** – Each transaction preserves database consistency.
- Thus serial execution of a set of transactions preserves database consistency.
- A (possibly concurrent) schedule is serializable if it is equivalent to a serial schedule. Different forms of schedule equivalence give rise to the notions of:
  1. **conflict serializability**
  2. **view serializability**
- *Simplified view of transactions*
  - We ignore operations other than **read** and **write** instructions
  - We assume that transactions may perform arbitrary computations on data in local buffers in between reads and writes.
  - Our simplified schedules consist of only **read** and **write** instructions.





# Conflicting Instructions

- Instructions  $I_i$  and  $I_j$  of transactions  $T_i$  and  $T_j$  respectively, **conflict** if and only if there exists some item  $Q$  accessed by both  $I_i$  and  $I_j$ , and at least one of these instructions wrote  $Q$ .
  1.  $I_i = \text{read}(Q)$ ,  $I_j = \text{read}(Q)$ .  $I_i$  and  $I_j$  don't conflict.
  2.  $I_i = \text{read}(Q)$ ,  $I_j = \text{write}(Q)$ . They conflict.
  3.  $I_i = \text{write}(Q)$ ,  $I_j = \text{read}(Q)$ . They conflict
  4.  $I_i = \text{write}(Q)$ ,  $I_j = \text{write}(Q)$ . They conflict
- Intuitively, a conflict between  $I_i$  and  $I_j$  forces a (logical) temporal order between them.
  - If  $I_i$  and  $I_j$  are consecutive in a schedule and they do not conflict, their results would remain the same even if they had been interchanged in the schedule.





# Conflict Serializability

- If a schedule  $S$  can be transformed into a schedule  $S'$  by a series of swaps of non-conflicting instructions, we say that  $S$  and  $S'$  are **conflict equivalent**.
- We say that a schedule  $S$  is **conflict serializable** if it is conflict equivalent to a serial schedule





# Conflict Serializability (Cont.)

- Schedule 3 can be transformed into Schedule 6, a serial schedule where  $T_2$  follows  $T_1$ , by series of swaps of non-conflicting instructions.
  - Therefore Schedule 3 is conflict serializable.
  - T3 & T6 are conflict serializable

$T_1$	$T_2$
read( $A$ ) write( $A$ )	read( $A$ ) write( $A$ )
read( $B$ ) write( $B$ )	read( $B$ ) write( $B$ )

Schedule 3

$T_1$	$T_2$
read( $A$ ) write( $A$ ) read( $B$ ) write( $B$ )	read( $A$ ) write( $A$ ) read( $B$ ) write( $B$ )
	read( $A$ ) write( $A$ ) read( $B$ ) write( $B$ )

Schedule 6





# Conflict Serializability (Cont.)

- Example of a schedule that is not conflict serializable:

$T_3$	$T_4$
read( $Q$ )	
write( $Q$ )	write( $Q$ )

- We are unable to swap instructions in the above schedule to obtain either the serial schedule  $\langle T_3, T_4 \rangle$ , or the serial schedule  $\langle T_4, T_3 \rangle$ .





# View Serializability

- Let  $S$  and  $S'$  be two schedules with the same set of transactions.  $S$  and  $S'$  are **view equivalent** if the following three conditions are met, for each data item  $Q$ ,
  - If in schedule  $S$ , transaction  $T_i$  reads the initial value of  $Q$ , then in schedule  $S'$  also transaction  $T_i$  must read the initial value of  $Q$ .**
  - The transaction (if any) that performs the final write( $Q$ ) operation in schedule  $S$  must also perform the final write( $Q$ ) operation in schedule  $S'$ .**





3. If in schedule  $S$  transaction  $T_i$  executes  $\text{read}(Q)$ , and that value was produced by transaction  $T_j$  (if any), then in schedule  $S'$  also transaction  $T_i$  must read the value of  $Q$  that was produced by the same  $\text{write}(Q)$  operation of transaction  $T_j$ .

As can be seen, view equivalence is also based purely on **reads** and **writes** alone.





# View Serializability (Cont.)

- Schedule x can be transformed into Schedule y, a serial schedule where  $T_2$  follows  $T_1$ , by series of swaps of instructions.

$T_1$	$T_2$
read( $A$ )	
write( $A$ )	read( $A$ )
	write( $A$ )
read( $B$ )	
write( $B$ )	read( $B$ )
	write( $B$ )

Schedule x

$T_1$	$T_2$
read( $A$ )	
write( $A$ )	read( $A$ )
read( $B$ )	write( $A$ )
write( $B$ )	read( $B$ )
	write( $B$ )

Schedule y

- A schedule X is view equivalent to a serial schedule Y





# View Serializability (Cont.)

- A schedule  $S$  is **view serializable** if it is view equivalent to a serial schedule.
- So schedule  $X$  is **view serializable**, since it is view equivalent to a serial schedule  $Y$
- Every conflict serializable schedule is also view serializable.





# View Serializability (Cont.)

- what serial schedule is above equivalent to?
- Below is a schedule which is view-serializable but *not* conflict serializable.
- Every view serializable schedule that is not conflict serializable has **blind writes**.
- The write operations which are not read later are called **blind writes**

$T_3$	$T_4$	$T_6$
read( $Q$ )	write( $Q$ )	
write( $Q$ )		write( $Q$ )



# Other Notions of Serializability

- The schedule below produces same outcome as the serial schedule  $\langle T_1, T_5 \rangle$ , yet is not conflict equivalent or view equivalent to it.

$T_1$	$T_5$
read( $A$ ) $A := A - 50$ write( $A$ )	read( $B$ ) $B := B - 10$ write( $B$ )
read( $B$ ) $B := B + 50$ write( $B$ )	read( $A$ ) $A := A + 10$ write( $A$ )

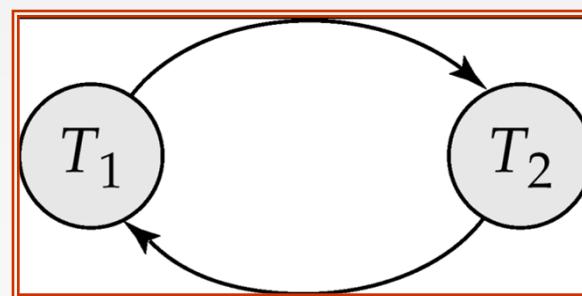
- Determining such equivalence requires analysis of operations other than read and write.





# Testing for Serializability

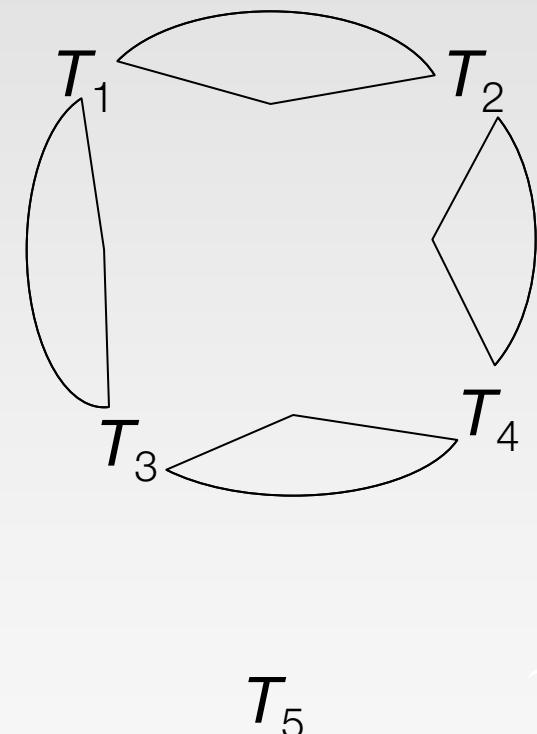
- Consider some schedule of a set of transactions  $T_1, T_2, \dots, T_n$
- **Precedence graph** — a direct graph where the vertices are the transactions (names).
- We draw an arc from  $T_i$  to  $T_j$  if the two transaction conflict, and  $T_i$  accessed the data item on which the conflict arose earlier.
- We may label the arc by the item that was accessed.
- Example 1





# Example Schedule (Schedule A) + Precedence Graph

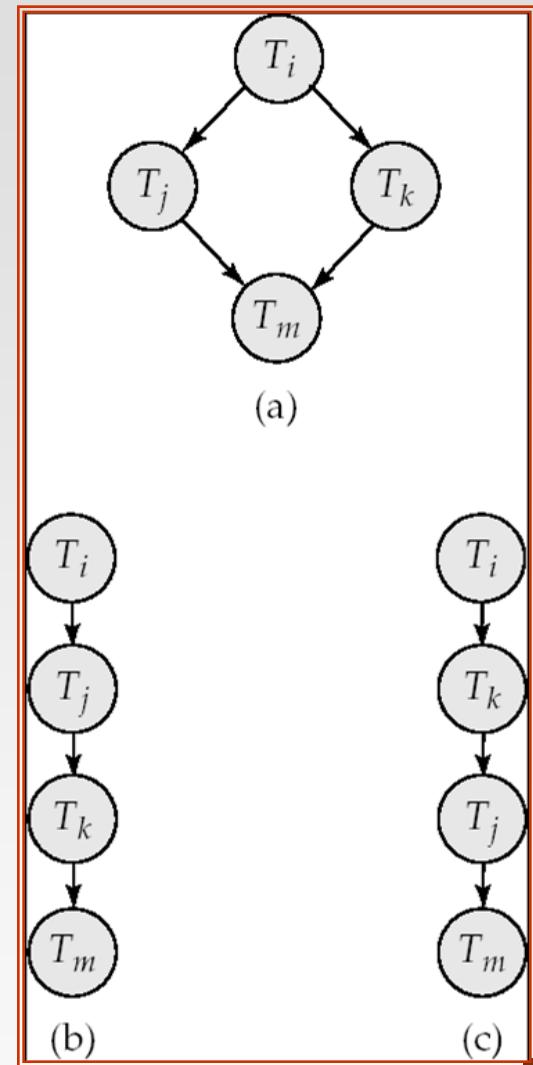
$T_1$		$T_2$	$T_3$
$T_4$		$T_5$	
read(Y)	read(X)		
read(Z)			
	read(V)		
	read(W)		
	read(W)		
	read(Y)		
	write(Y)		
read(U)		write(Z)	
read(Y)			
write(Y)			
read(Z)			





# Test for Conflict Serializability

- A schedule is conflict serializable if and only if its precedence graph is acyclic.
- Cycle-detection algorithms exist which take order  $n^2$  time, where  $n$  is the number of vertices in the graph.
  - (Better algorithms take order  $n + e$  where  $e$  is the number of edges.)
- If precedence graph is acyclic, the serializability order can be obtained by a *topological sorting* of the graph.
  - This is a linear order consistent with the partial order of the graph.
  - For example, a serializability order for Schedule A would be
$$T_5 \rightarrow T_1 \rightarrow T_3 \rightarrow T_2 \rightarrow T_4$$
    - 4 Are there others?





# Test for View Serializability

- The precedence graph test for conflict serializability cannot be used directly to test for view serializability.
  - Extension to test for view serializability has cost exponential in the size of the precedence graph.
- The problem of checking if a schedule is view serializable falls in the class of *NP*-complete problems.
  - Thus existence of an efficient algorithm is *extremely* unlikely.
- However practical algorithms that just check some **sufficient conditions** for view serializability can still be used.





# Recoverable Schedules

Need to address the effect of transaction failures on concurrently running transactions.

- **Recoverable schedule** — if a transaction  $T_j$  reads a data item previously written by a transaction  $T_i$ , then the commit operation of  $T_i$  appears before the commit operation of  $T_j$
- The following schedule (Schedule 11) is not recoverable if  $T_9$  commits immediately after the read

$T_8$	$T_9$
read( $A$ )	
write( $A$ )	
read( $B$ )	read( $A$ )

- If  $T_8$  should abort,  $T_9$  would have read (and possibly shown to the user) an inconsistent database state. Hence, database must ensure that schedules are recoverable.





# Cascading Rollbacks

- **Cascading rollback** – a single transaction failure leads to a series of transaction rollbacks. Consider the following schedule where none of the transactions has yet committed (so the schedule is recoverable)

$T_{10}$	$T_{11}$	$T_{12}$
$\text{read}(A)$		
$\text{read}(B)$		
$\text{write}(A)$	$\text{read}(A)$	$\text{read}(A)$

- If  $T_{10}$  fails,  $T_{11}$  and  $T_{12}$  must also be rolled back.
- Can lead to the undoing of a significant amount of work





# Cascadeless Schedules

- **Cascadeless schedules** — cascading rollbacks cannot occur; for each pair of transactions  $T_i$  and  $T_j$  such that  $T_j$  reads a data item previously written by  $T_i$ , the commit operation of  $T_i$  appears before the read operation of  $T_j$ .
- Every cascadeless schedule is also recoverable
- It is desirable to restrict the schedules to those that are cascadeless





# Concurrency Control

- A database must provide a mechanism that will ensure that all possible schedules are
  - either conflict or view serializable, and
  - are recoverable and preferably cascadeless
- A policy in which only one transaction can execute at a time generates serial schedules, but provides a poor degree of concurrency
  - Are serial schedules recoverable/cascadeless?
- Testing a schedule for serializability *after* it has executed is a little too late!
- **Goal** – to develop concurrency control protocols that will assure serializability.





# Concurrency Control vs. Serializability Tests

- Concurrency-control protocols allow concurrent schedules, but ensure that the schedules are conflict/view serializable, and are recoverable and cascadeless .
- Concurrency control protocols generally do not examine the precedence graph as it is being created
  - Instead a protocol imposes a discipline that avoids nonserializable schedules.
  - We study such protocols in Chapter 16.
- Different concurrency control protocols provide different tradeoffs between the amount of concurrency they allow and the amount of overhead that they incur.
- Tests for serializability help us understand why a concurrency control protocol is correct.





# Weak Levels of Consistency

- Some applications are willing to live with weak levels of consistency, allowing schedules that are not serializable
  - E.g. a read-only transaction that wants to get an approximate total balance of all accounts
  - E.g. database statistics computed for query optimization can be approximate (why?)
  - Such transactions need not be serializable with respect to other transactions
- Tradeoff accuracy for performance





# Levels of Consistency in SQL-92

- **Serializable** — default
  - **Repeatable read** — only committed records to be read, repeated reads of same record must return same value. However, a transaction may not be serializable – it may find some records inserted by a transaction but not find others.
  - **Read committed** — only committed records can be read, but successive reads of record may return different (but committed) values.
  - **Read uncommitted** — even uncommitted records may be read.
- 
- Lower degrees of consistency useful for gathering approximate information about the database
  - Warning: some database systems do not ensure serializable schedules by default
    - E.g. Oracle and PostgreSQL by default support a level of consistency called snapshot isolation (not part of the SQL standard)





# Transaction Definition in SQL

- Data manipulation language must include a construct for specifying the set of actions that comprise a transaction.
- In SQL, a transaction begins implicitly.
- A transaction in SQL ends by:
  - **Commit work** commits current transaction and begins a new one.
  - **Rollback work** causes current transaction to abort.
- In almost all database systems, by default, every SQL statement also commits implicitly if it executes successfully
  - Implicit commit can be turned off by a database directive
    - 4 E.g. in JDBC, `connection.setAutoCommit(false);`





# End of Chapter

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$T_1$	$T_2$
$\text{read}(A)$	
$\text{write}(A)$	
$\text{read}(B)$	
$\text{write}(B)$	
	$\text{read}(A)$
	$\text{write}(A)$
	$\text{read}(B)$
	$\text{write}(B)$





$T_1$	$T_2$
$\text{read}(A)$	
$\text{write}(A)$	
$\text{read}(B)$	$\text{read}(A)$
$\text{write}(B)$	$\text{write}(A)$
	$\text{read}(B)$
	$\text{write}(B)$





# Schedule 7

$T_3$	$T_4$
read( $Q$ )	write( $Q$ )
write( $Q$ )	



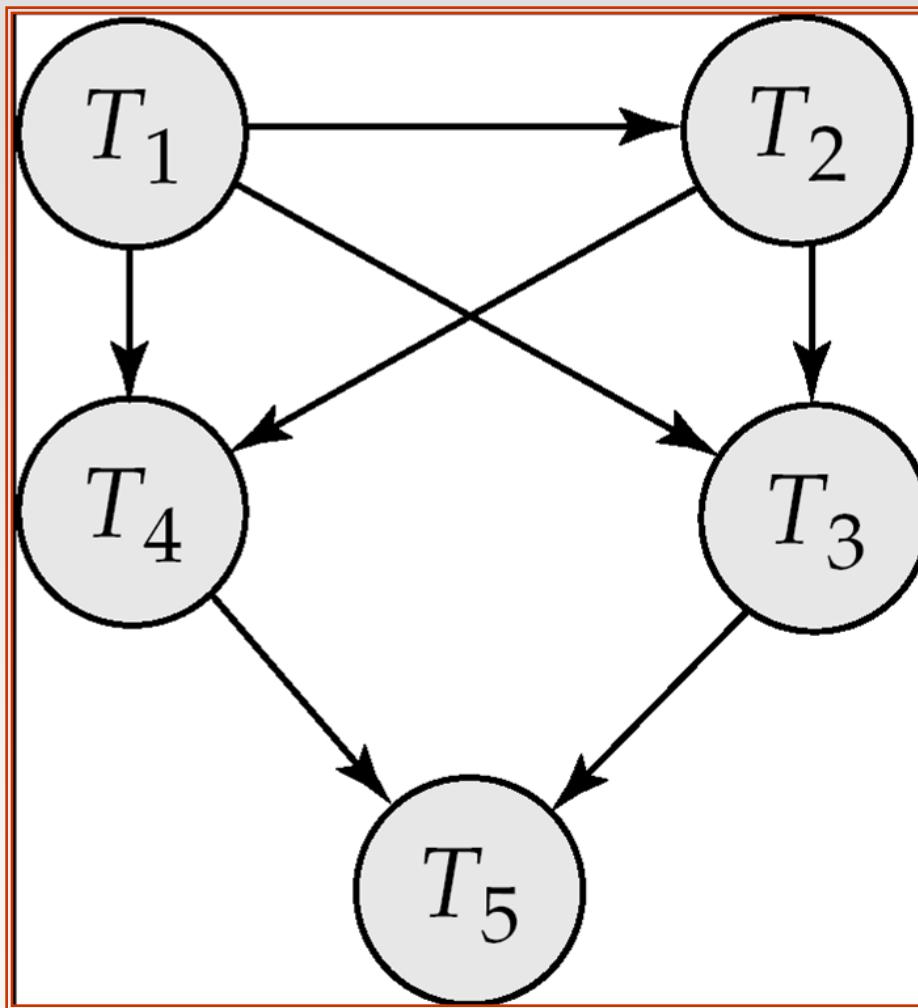


# Precedence Graph for (a) Schedule 1 and (b) Schedule 2





# Precedence Graph





# fig. 15.21

$T_3$	$T_4$	$T_7$
read( $Q$ )	write( $Q$ )	read( $Q$ )
write( $Q$ )		write( $Q$ )





# Implementation of Isolation

- Schedules must be conflict or view serializable, and recoverable, for the sake of database consistency, and preferably cascadeless.
- A policy in which only one transaction can execute at a time generates serial schedules, but provides a poor degree of concurrency.
- Concurrency-control schemes tradeoff between the amount of concurrency they allow and the amount of overhead that they incur.
- Some schemes allow only conflict-serializable schedules to be generated, while others allow view-serializable schedules that are not conflict-serializable.





# Figure 15.6

$T_1$	$T_2$
$\text{read}(A)$ $A := A - 50$  $\text{write}(A)$ $\text{read}(B)$ $B := B + 50$ $\text{write}(B)$	$\text{read}(A)$ $temp := A * 0.1$ $A := A - temp$ $\text{write}(A)$ $\text{read}(B)$  $B := B + temp$ $\text{write}(B)$

