

# **EECS 489**

# **Computer Networks**

**Winter 2025**

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*Material with thanks to Aditya Akella, Sugih Jamin, Philip Levis, Sylvia Ratnasamy, Peter Steenkiste, and many other colleagues.*

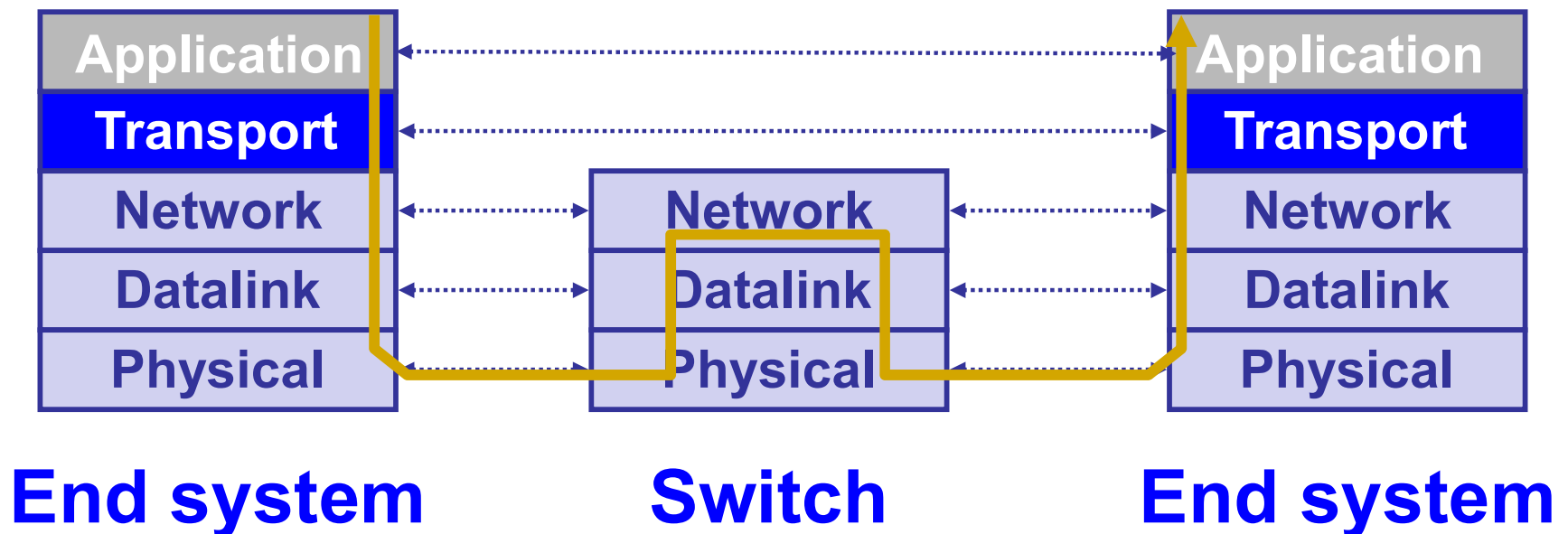
# Agenda

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- Transport layer basics
- UDP
- Designing a reliable transport protocol

# Transport layer

- Layer at **end hosts**, between the application and network layer



# Why a transport layer?

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- ❑ IP addresses capture hosts, but end-to-end communication happens between applications
  - Need a way to **decide which packets go to which applications** (multiplexing/demultiplexing)
- ❑ IP provides a weak service model (best-effort)
  - Packets can be corrupted, delayed, dropped, reordered, duplicated
  - No guidance on how much traffic to send and when
  - Dealing with this is tedious for application developers

# Multiplexing & demultiplexing

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## ❑ Multiplexing (Mux)

- Gather and combining data chunks at the source from different applications and delivering to the network layer

## ❑ Demultiplexing (Demux)

- Delivering correct data to corresponding sockets from a multiplexed stream

# Role of the transport layer

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- Communication between processes
  - Mux and demux from/to application processes
  - Implemented using *ports*

# Role of the transport layer

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- Communication between processes
- Provide common end-to-end services for app layer [optional]
  - Reliable, in-order data delivery
  - Well-paced data delivery
    - » Too fast may overwhelm the network
    - » Too slow is not efficient

# Role of the transport layer

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- ❑ Communication between processes
- ❑ Provide common end-to-end services for app layer [optional]
- ❑ TCP and UDP are the common transport protocols
  - Also SCTP, MPTCP, SST, RDP, DCCP, ...



# Role of the transport layer

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- ❑ Communication between processes
- ❑ Provide common end-to-end services for app layer [optional]
- ❑ TCP and UDP are the common transport protocols
- ❑ **UDP is a minimalist transport protocol**
  - Only provides mux/demux capabilities

# Role of the transport layer

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- ❑ Communication between processes
- ❑ Provide common end-to-end services for app layer [optional]
- ❑ TCP and UDP are the common transport protocols
- ❑ UDP is a minimalist transport protocol
- ❑ TCP offers a reliable, in-order, byte stream abstraction
  - With congestion control, but w/o performance guarantees (delay, b/w, etc.)

# Applications and sockets

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- ❑ **Socket**: software abstraction for an application process to exchange network messages with the (transport layer in the) operating system
- ❑ Two important types of sockets
  - UDP socket: TYPE is SOCK\_DGRAM
  - TCP socket: TYPE is SOCK\_STREAM

# Ports

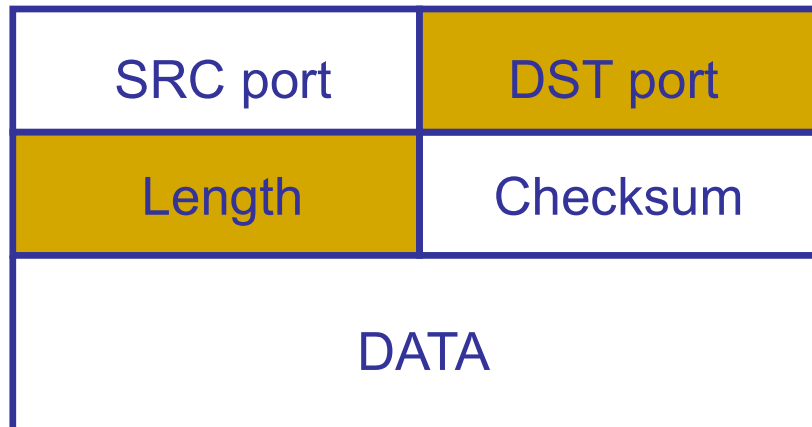
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- 16-bit numbers that help distinguishing apps
  - Packets carry src/dst port no in transport header
  - Well-known (0-1023) and ephemeral ports
- OS stores mapping between sockets and ports
  - Port in packets and sockets in OS
  - For UDP ports (SOCK\_DGRAM)
    - » OS stores (local port, local IP address)  $\leftrightarrow$  socket
  - For TCP ports (SOCK\_STREAM)
    - » OS stores (local port, local IP, remote port, remote IP)  $\leftrightarrow$  socket

# UDP: User Datagram Protocol

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- ❑ Lightweight communication between processes
  - Avoid overhead and delays of order & reliability
- ❑ UDP described in RFC 768 – (1980!)
  - Destination IP address and port to support demultiplexing



# UDP (cont'd)

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- ❑ Optional error checking on the packet contents
  - (checksum field = 0 means “don’t verify checksum”)
- ❑ Source port is also optional
  - Useful to respond back to the sender in some cases

# Why a transport layer?

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- ❑ IP packets are addressed to a host but end-to-end communication is between application processes at hosts
  - Need a way to decide which packets go to which applications (mux/demux)
- ❑ IP provides a weak service model (best-effort)
  - Packets can be corrupted, delayed, dropped, reordered, duplicated
  - No guidance on how much traffic to send and when
  - Dealing with this is tedious for application developers

# Reliable transport

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- In a perfect world, reliable transport is easy

@Sender

- Send packets

@Receiver

- Wait for packets

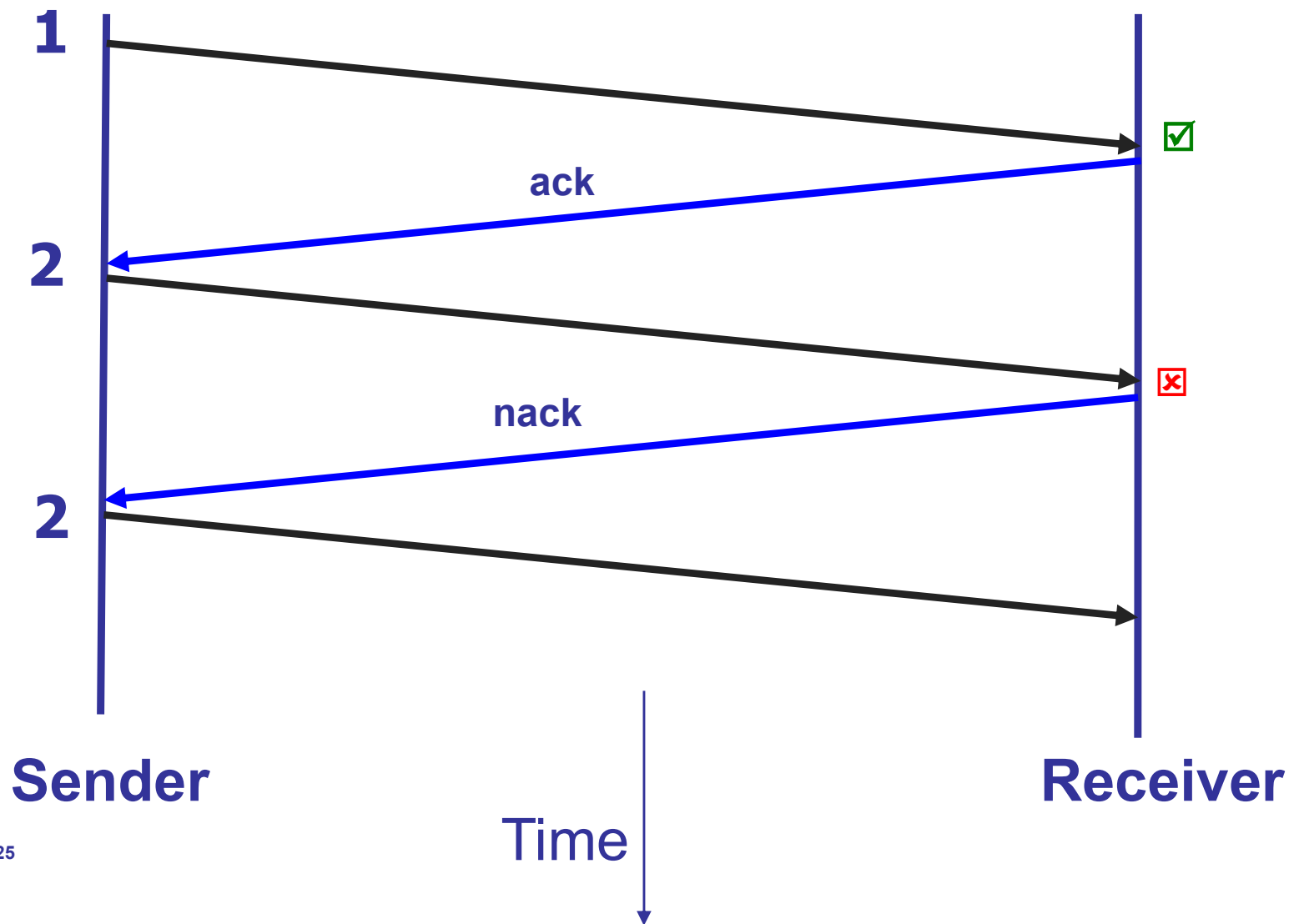


# Reliable transport

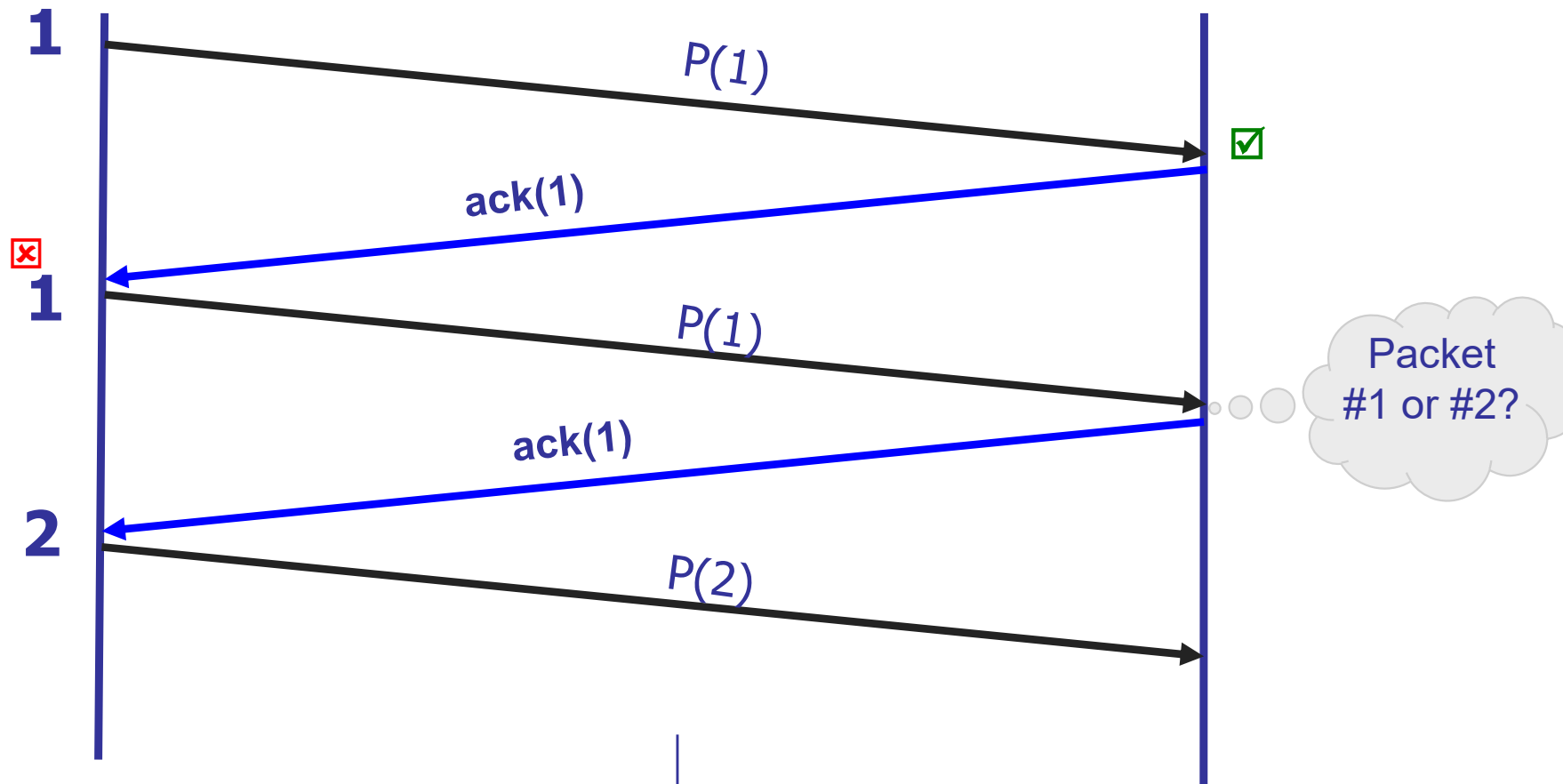
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- ❑ In a perfect world, reliable transport is easy
- ❑ All the bad things best-effort can do
  - A packet is corrupted (bit errors)
  - A packet is lost (*why?*)
  - A packet is delayed (*why?*)
  - Packets are reordered (*why?*)
  - A packet is duplicated (*why?*)

# Dealing with packet corruption

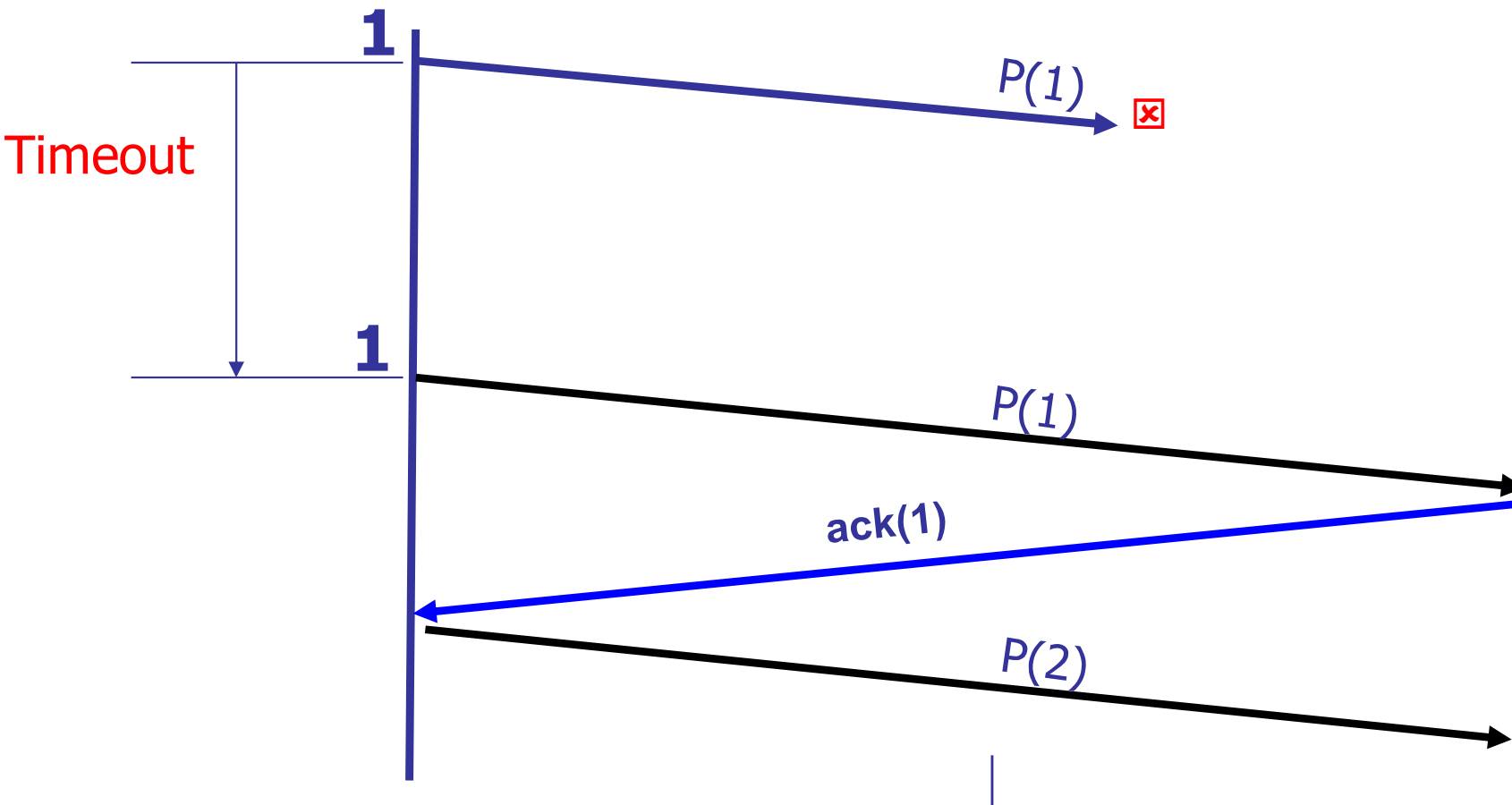


# Dealing with packet corruption



Data and ACK packets carry sequence numbers

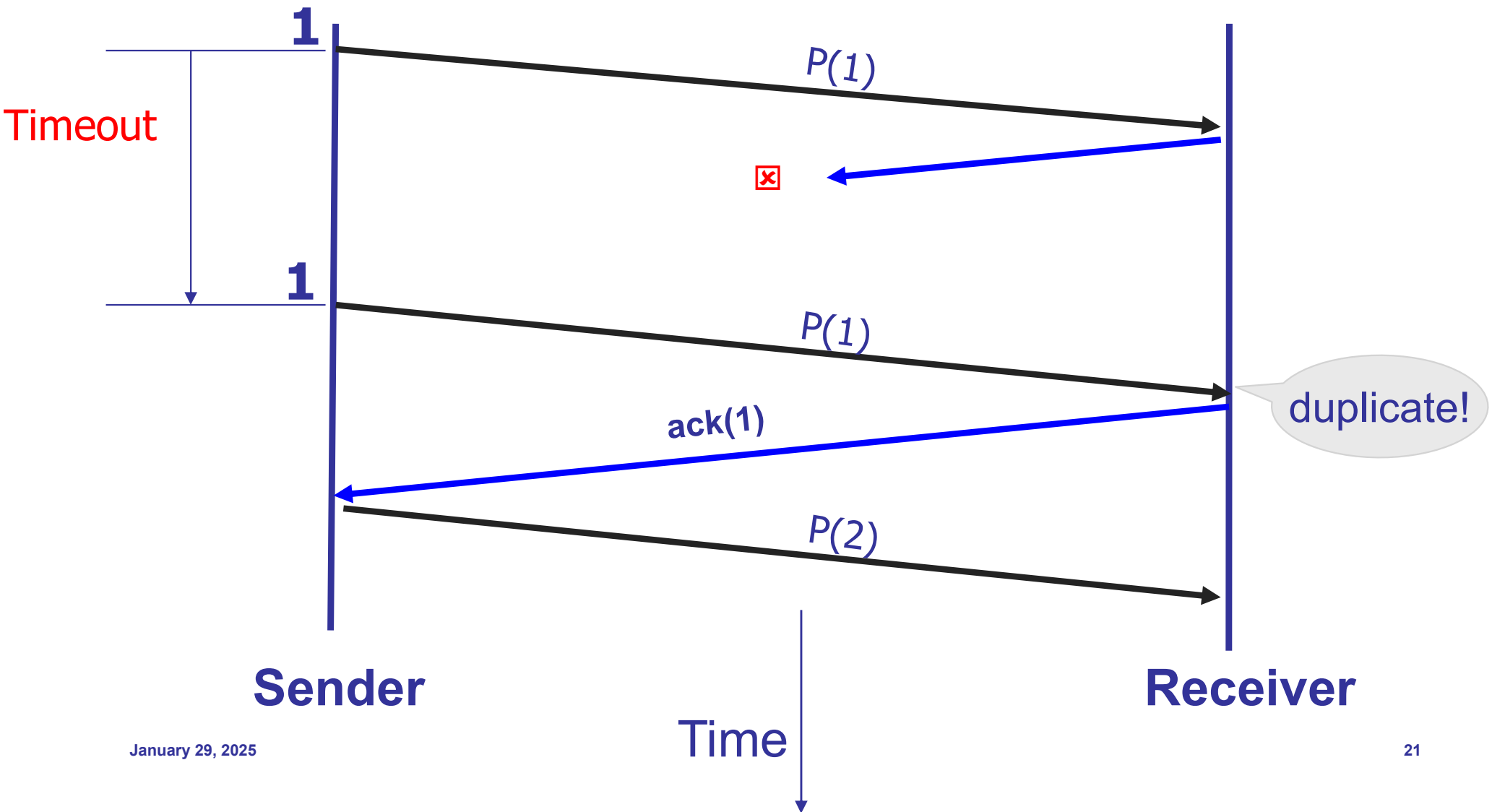
# Dealing with packet loss



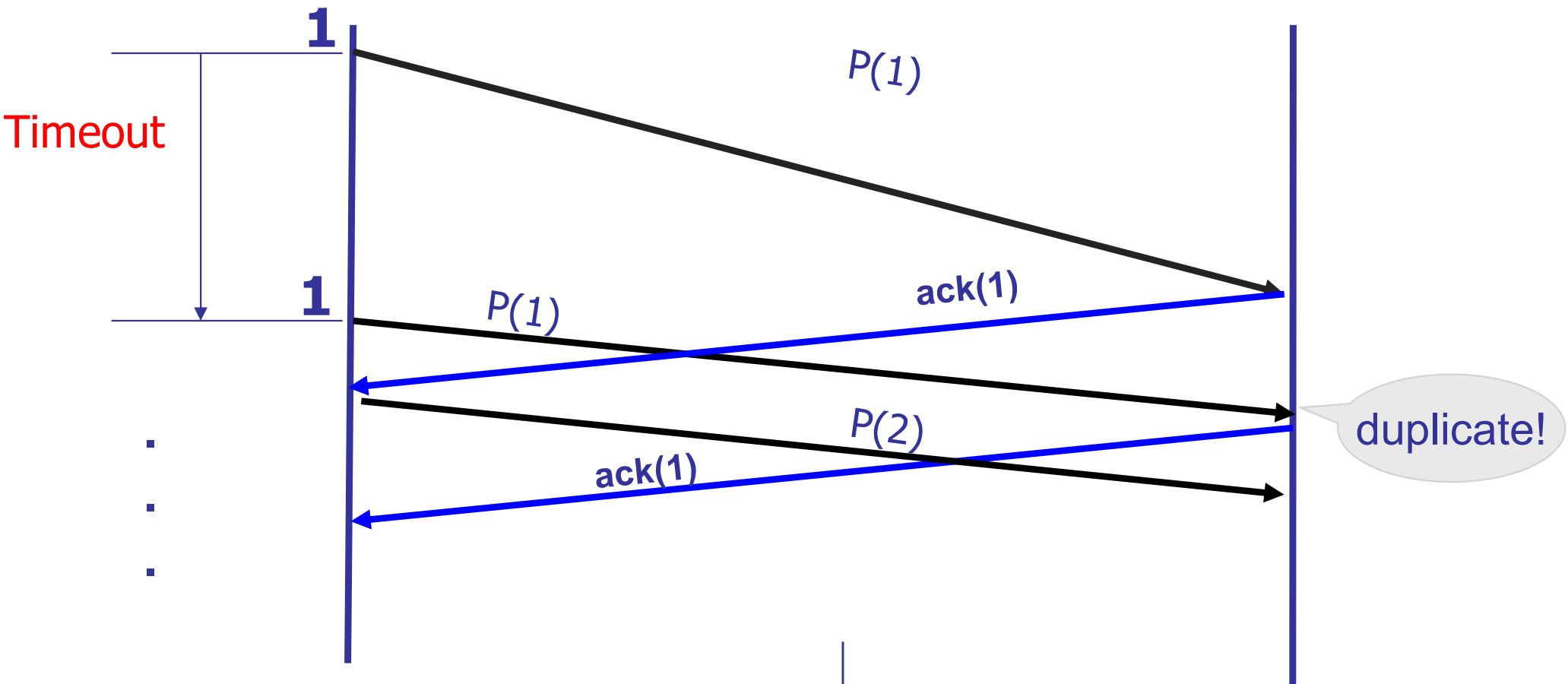
Timer-driven loss detection

Set timer when packet is sent; retransmit on timeout

# Dealing with packet loss (of ack)



# Dealing with delay



Timer-driven retransmission can lead to duplicates

# Components of a solution

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- ❑ Checksums (to detect bit errors)
- ❑ Timers (to detect loss)
- ❑ Acknowledgements (positive or negative)
- ❑ Sequence numbers (to deal with duplicates)

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**5-MINUTE BREAK!**



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# **DESIGNING A RELIABLE TRANSPORT**

# A Solution: “Stop and Wait”

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## @Sender

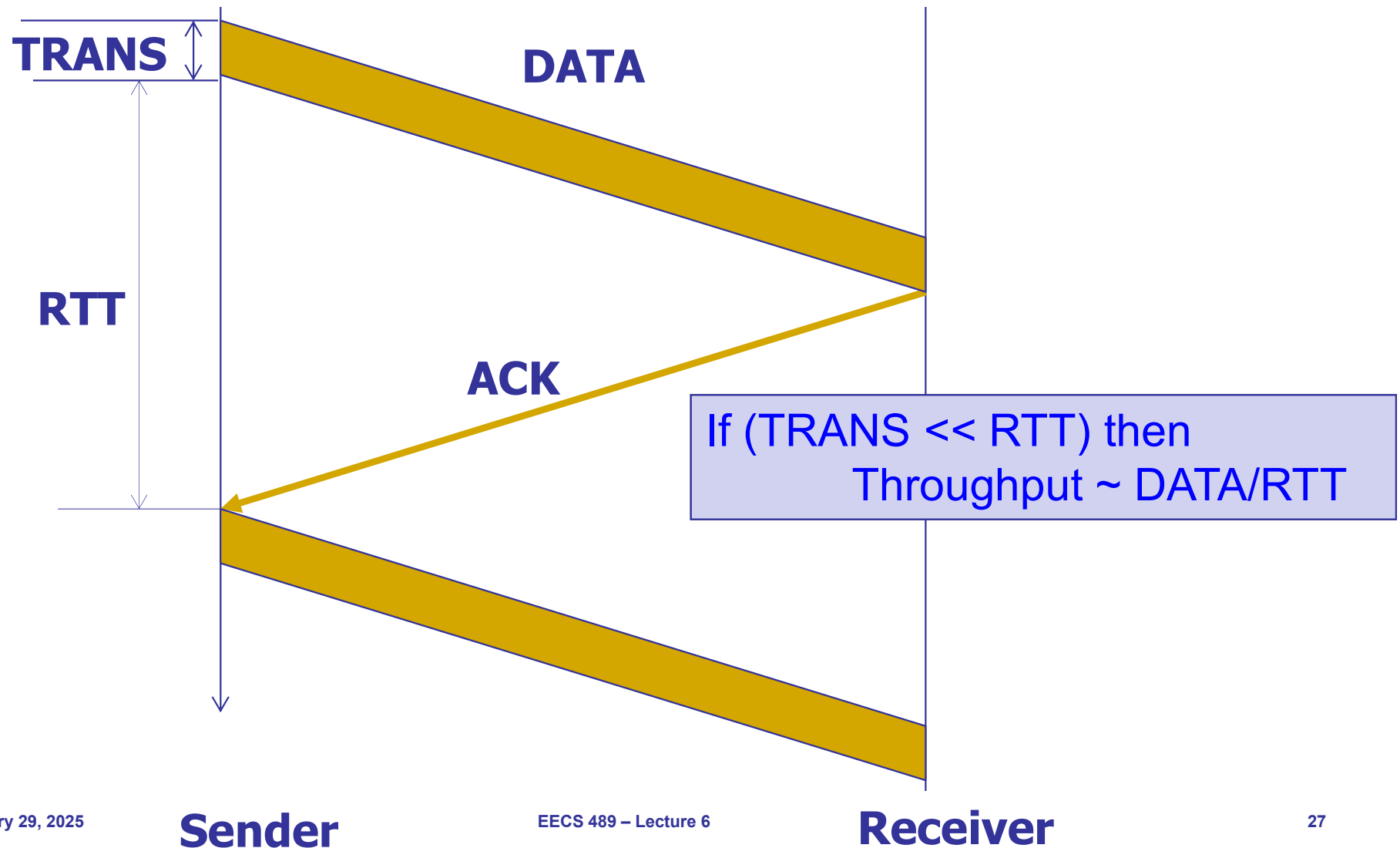
- Send packet(I); (re)set timer; wait for ack
- If (ACK)
  - I++; repeat
- If (NACK or TIMEOUT)
  - repeat

## @Receiver

- Wait for packet
- If packet is OK, send ACK
- Else, send NACK or DISCARD
- Repeat

❓ A **correct** reliable transport protocol, but an **extremely inefficient** one

# Stop & Wait is inefficient



# Orders of magnitude

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- Transmission time for 10Gbps link:
  - ~ microsecond for 1500-byte packet
- RTT:
  - 1,000 kilometers ~  $O(10)$  milliseconds

# Three design decisions

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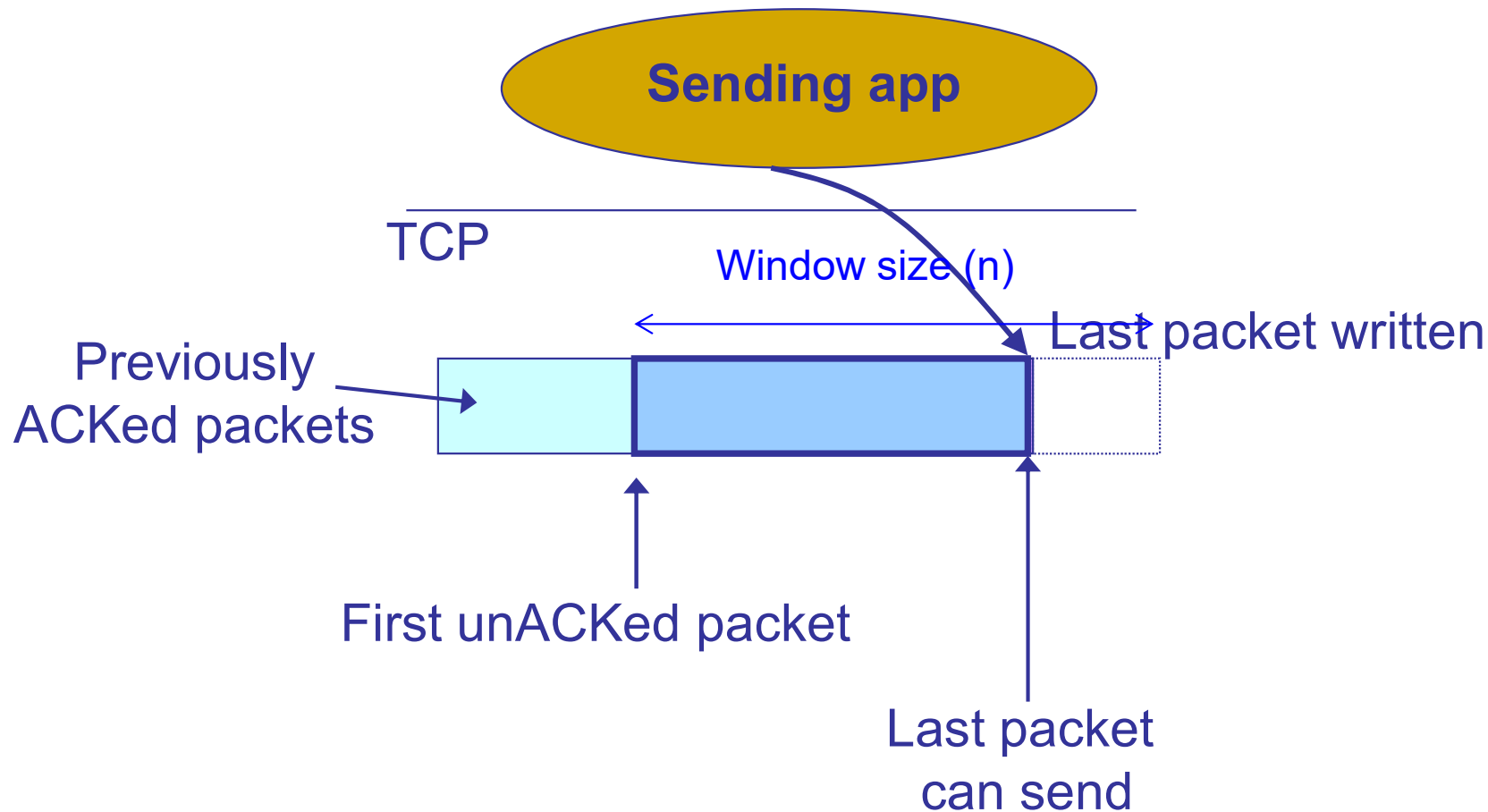
- ❑ Which **packets** can sender send?
- ❑ How does receiver ack packets?
- ❑ Which packets does sender resend?

# Sliding window

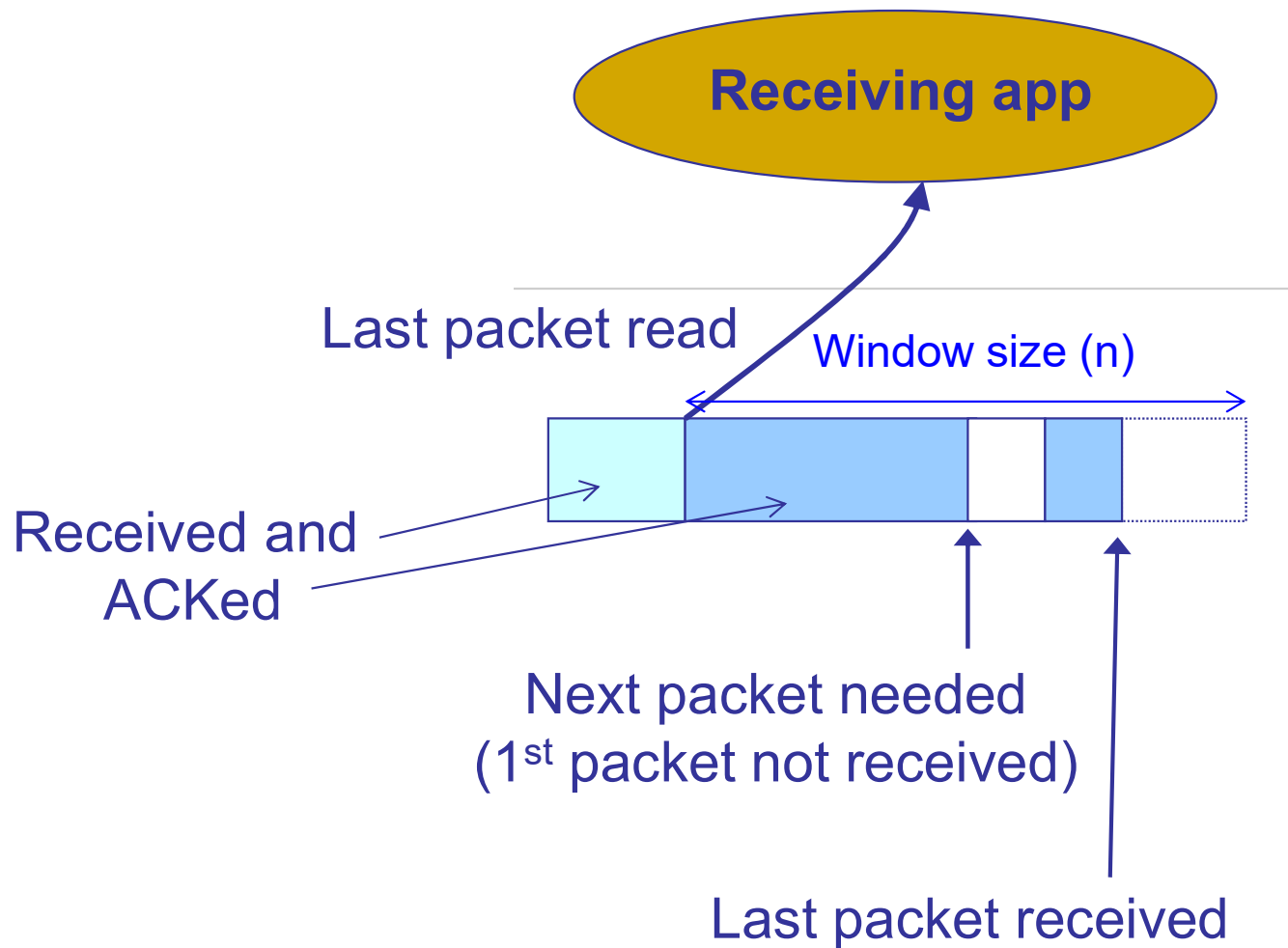
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- ❑ Window = set of adjacent sequence numbers
  - The size of the set is the window size; assume window size is  $n$
- ❑ General idea: send up to  $n$  packets at a time
  - Sender can send packets in its window
  - Receiver can accept packets in its window
  - Window of acceptable packets “slides” on successful reception/acknowledgement
  - Window contains all packets that might still be in transit
- ❑ Sliding window often called “**packets in flight**”

# Sliding window at sender



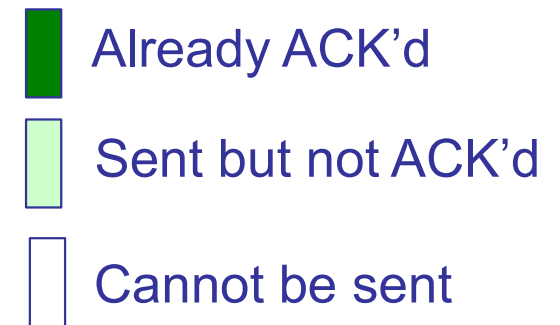
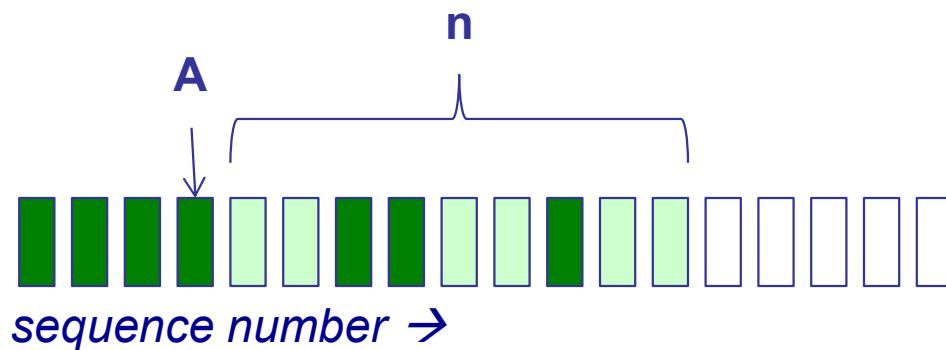
# Sliding window at receiver



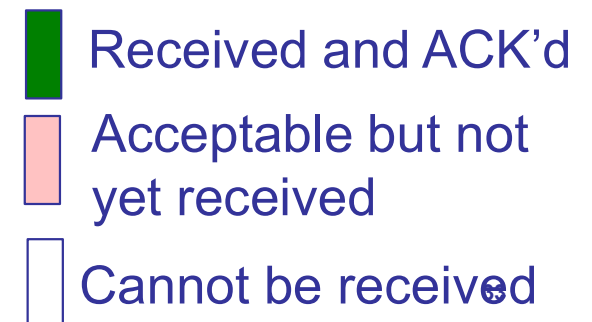
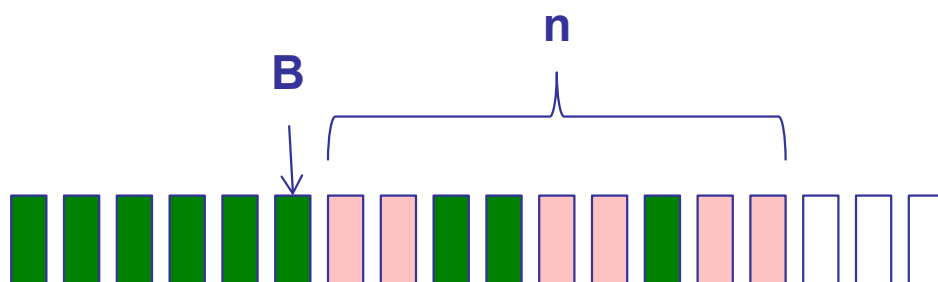


# Sliding window

- Let A be the **last ack'd packet of sender without gap**;  
then window of sender =  $\{A+1, A+2, \dots, A+n\}$



- Let B be the **last received packet without gap** by receiver, then window of receiver =  $\{B+1, \dots, B+n\}$



# Throughput of sliding window

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- If window size is  $n$ , then throughput is roughly
  - $\text{MIN}(n * \text{DATA} / \text{RTT}, \text{Link Bandwidth})$
- Compare to Stop and Wait:  $\text{Data} / \text{RTT}$
- What happens when  $n$  gets too large?

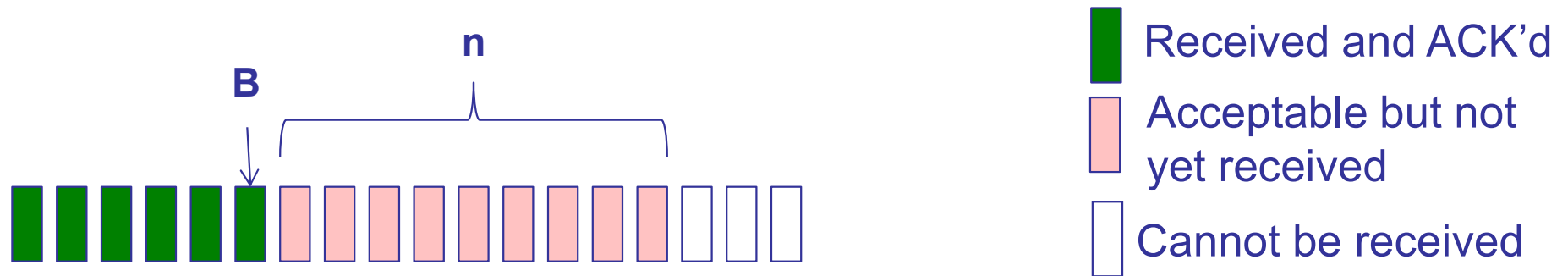
# Acknowledgements w/ sliding window

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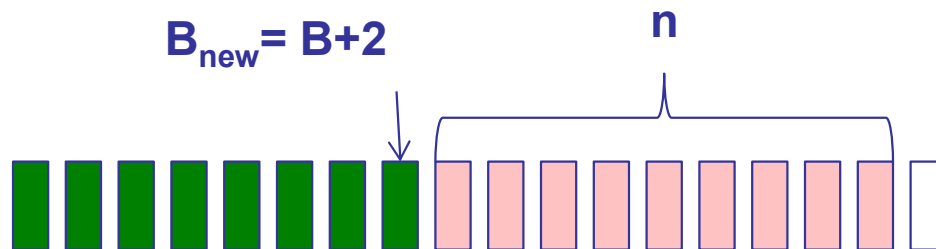
- Two common options
  - Cumulative ACKs: ACK carries next in-order sequence number that the receiver expects

# Cumulative acknowledgements

□ At receiver



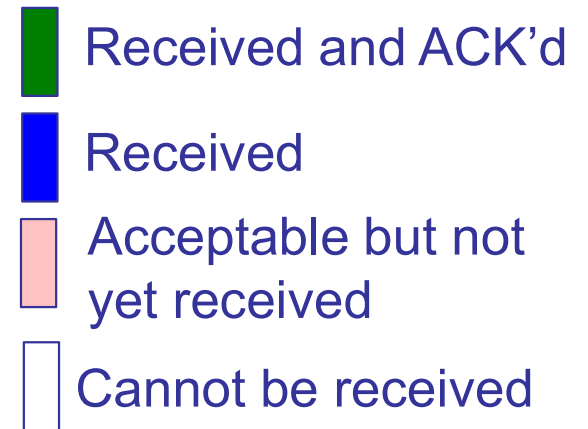
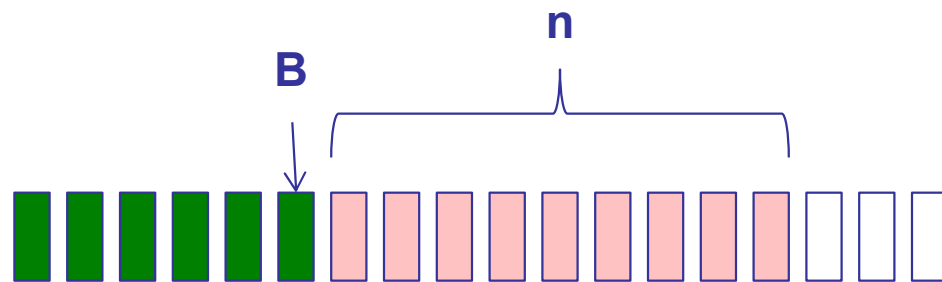
- After receiving B+1, B+2



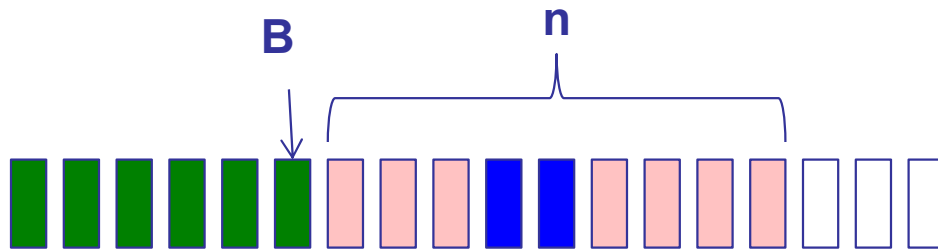
- Receiver sends  $\text{ACK}(B+3) = \text{ACK}(B_{\text{new}}+1)$

# Cumulative acknowledgements (cont'd)

□ At receiver



- After receiving B+4, B+5



- Receiver sends  $ACK(B+1)$

# Acknowledgements w/ sliding window

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- Two common options
  - Cumulative ACKs: ACK carries next in-order sequence number the receiver expects
  - Selective ACKs: ACK individually acknowledges correctly received packets
  
- Selective ACKs offer more precise information but require more complicated book-keeping

# Sliding window protocols

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- ❑ Resending packets: two canonical approaches
  - Go-Back-N
  - Selective Repeat
- ❑ Many variants that differ in implementation details

# Go-Back-N (GBN)

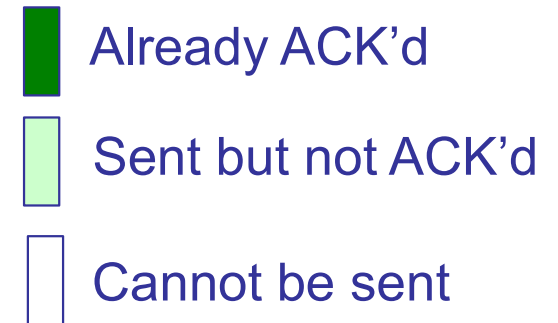
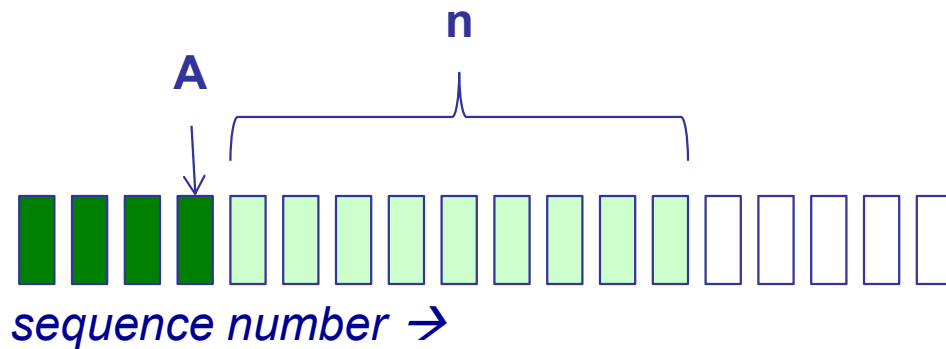
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- ❑ Sender transmits up to  $n$  unacknowledged packets
- ❑ Receiver only accepts packets in order
  - Discards out-of-order packets (i.e., packets other than  $B+1$ )
- ❑ Receiver uses cumulative acknowledgements
  - i.e., sequence# in ACK = next expected in-order sequence#
- ❑ Sender sets timer for 1st outstanding ack ( $A+1$ )
- ❑ If timeout, retransmit  $A+1, \dots, A+n$

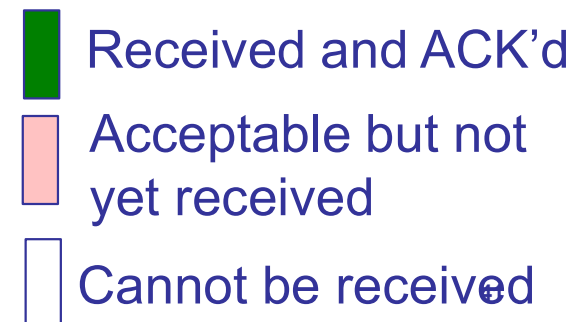
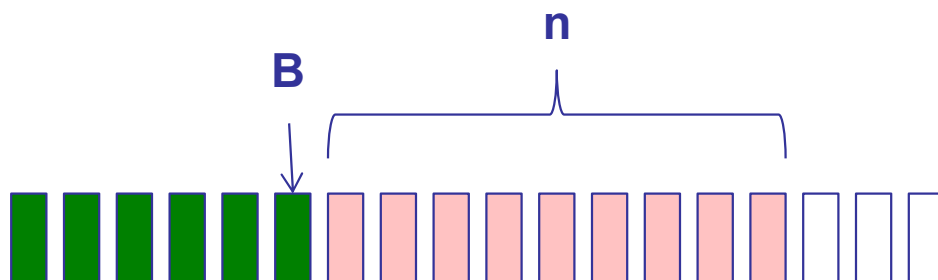


# Sliding window with GBN

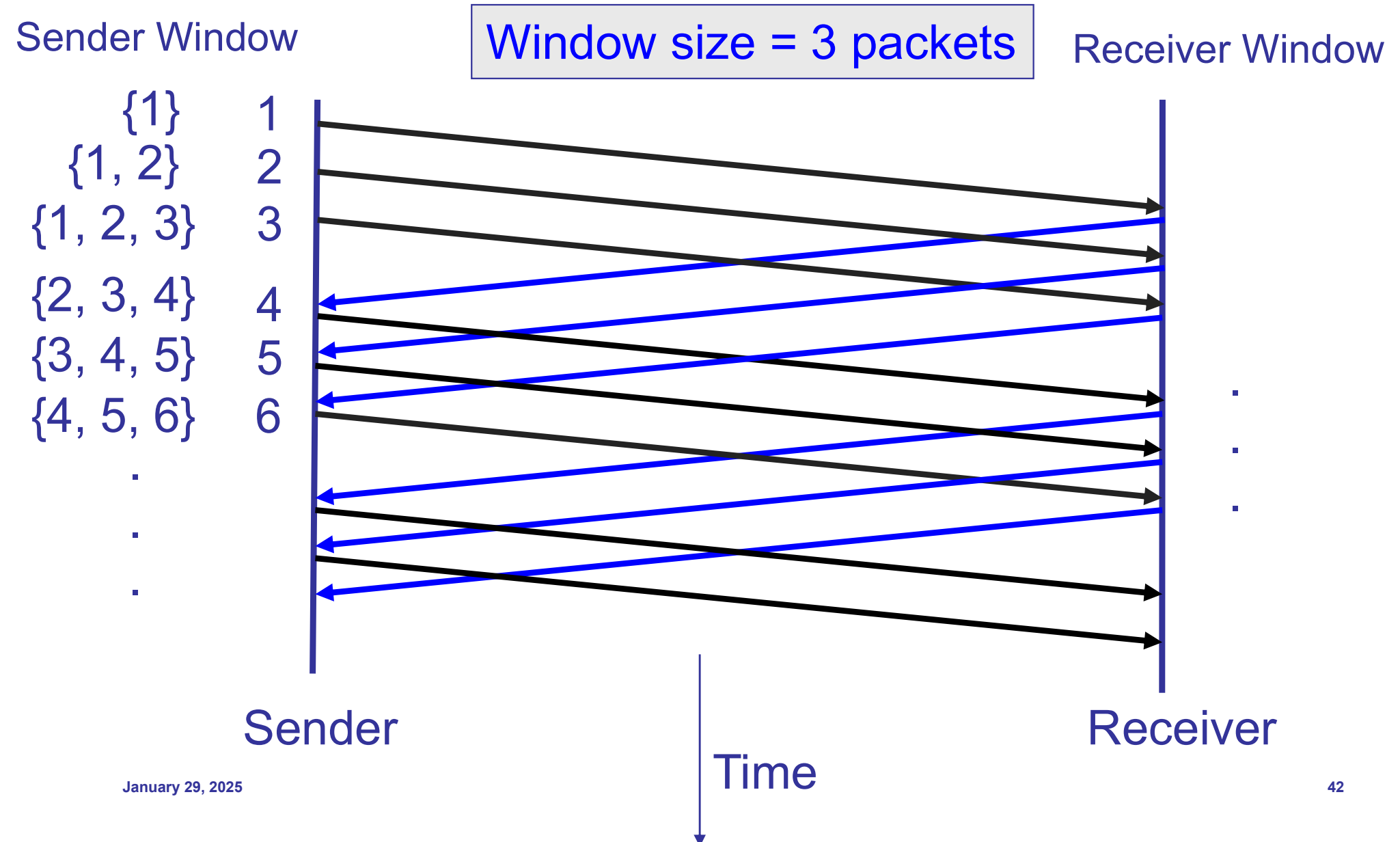
- Let A be the last ack'd packet of sender without gap; then window of sender =  $\{A+1, A+2, \dots, A+n\}$



- Let B be the last received packet without gap by receiver, then window of receiver =  $\{B+1, \dots, B+n\}$



# GBN example w/o errors



# GBN example with errors

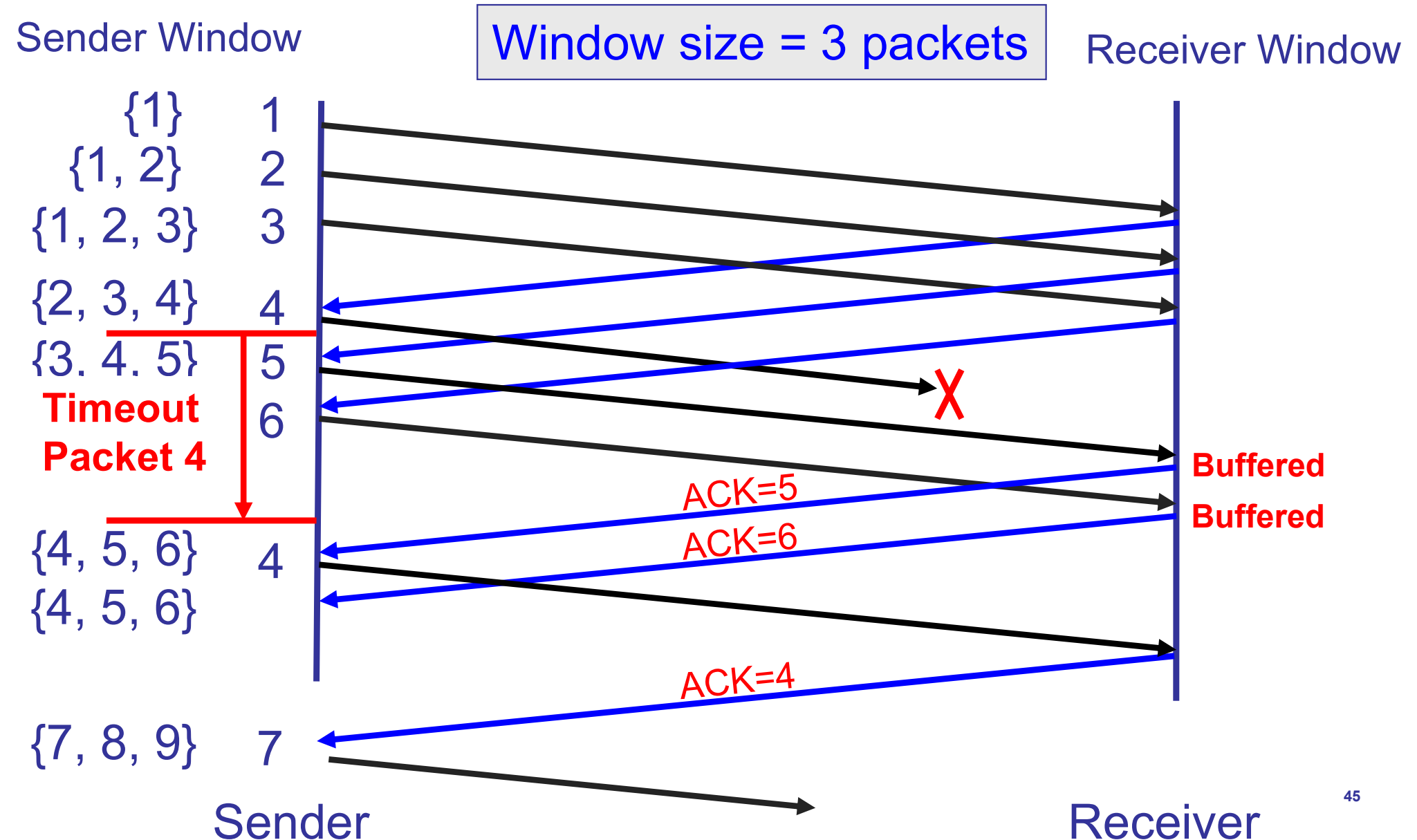


# Selective Repeat (SR)

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- ❑ Sender: transmit up to  $n$  unacknowledged packets
- ❑ Assume packet  $k$  is lost,  $k+1$  is not
  - Receiver: indicates packet  $k+1$  correctly received
  - Sender: retransmit only packet  $k$  on timeout
- ❑ Efficient in retransmissions but complex book-keeping
  - Need a timer per packet

# SR example with errors



# GBN vs. Selective Repeat

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- When would GBN be better?
  - When error rate is low; wastes bandwidth otherwise
  
- When would SR be better?
  - When error rate is high; otherwise, too complex

# Observations

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- ❑ For a large-enough **window**, it is possible to fully utilize a link with sliding windows
- ❑ Sender has to **buffer** all unacknowledged packets, because they may require retransmission
- ❑ Receiver may be able to accept out-of-order packets, but only up to its **buffer** limits
- ❑ Implementation complexity depends on protocol details (GBN vs. SR)

# Components of a solution

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- ❑ Checksums (for error detection)
- ❑ Timers (for loss detection)
- ❑ Acknowledgments
  - Cumulative
  - Selective
- ❑ Sequence numbers (duplicates, windows)
- ❑ Sliding windows (for efficiency)
- ❑ Reliability protocols use the above to decide when and what to retransmit or acknowledge



# Summary

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- ❑ Transport layer allows applications to communicate with each other
- ❑ Provides unreliable and reliable mechanisms
- ❑ Possible to build reliable transport over unreliable medium
  
- ❑ Next lecture
  - TCP