

Advanced Javascript

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Outline

- The Javascript Event Loop
- Dealing with asynchronism (promises and async/await)
- Web workers

Javascript Execution Model

a.k.a The Event Loop

Trivia

```
3 // begin timeout
4 ▼ setTimeout(function(){
5     console.info('1. Timeout');
6 ▲ }, 5000);
7
8 // generating the array
9 let a = Array.from({length: 10000000}, () => Math.random());
10 console.info('2. Array created');
11
12 // sorting the array
13 a.sort();
14 console.info('3. Array sorted');
```

In what order 1, 2 and 3 are going to be printed?

Synchronous and Asynchronous Function Calls

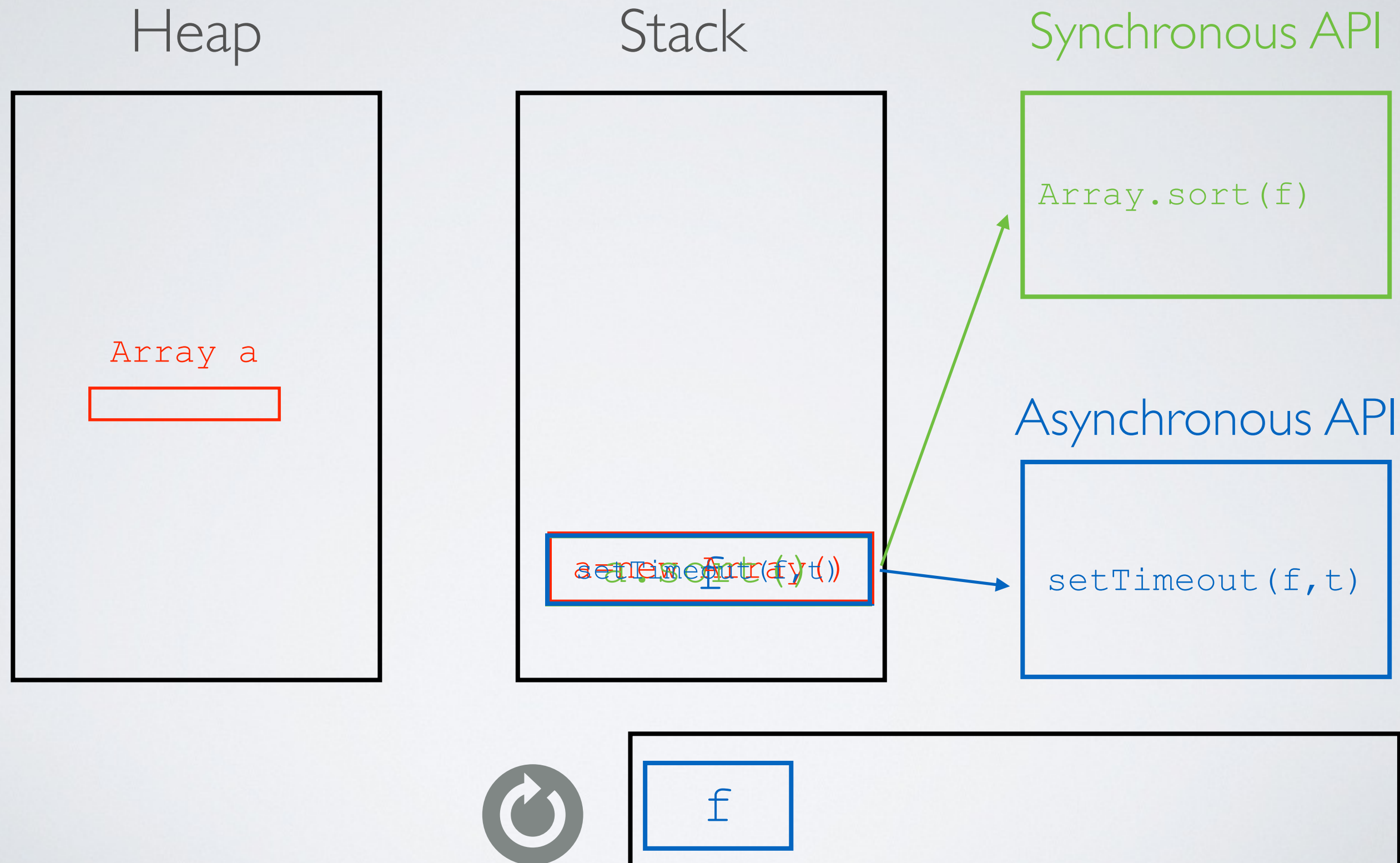
There are two types of function calls

- **Asynchronous** calls pushed to the event loop
- **Synchronous** calls pushed to the call stack

Asynchronous function calls

- DOM events (browser)
 - Ajax requests (browser)
 - Timer (browser and NodeJs)
 - any non-blocking I/O (NodeJs)
- ◉ but promises are not necessarily asynchronous by default

The Javascript Event Loop



Multi-threaded vs Single-threaded

Multi-threading does necessarily means things are executed in parallel

➡ We only have one CPU !

So, why do we need multithreading ?

➡ Because programming languages have blocking I/O, and by default, programs wait for the I/O to be completed

But multithreading is expensive

- in terms of software design (synchronization)
- in terms of performances (context switch)

What is the alternative to multi-threading?

➡ Single-threaded with non-blocking I/O

Can you run a single-threaded web server?

Good performance, as long as the requests handlers :

- do some asynchronous I/O
(filesystem, database, cache, network and so on)
- do NOT do any heavy but yet synchronous computations
(complex math, intensive data processing and so on)

Asynchronism

Callback - the building block for asynchronism

```
fs.readFile(filepath, 'utf8', function (err, data) {  
    if (err) console.log(err);  
    else console.log(data);  
});
```

Defining a promise

```
const readFile = function(filepath){  
  return new Promise(function(resolve, reject){  
    fs.readFile(filepath, 'utf8', function (err, data) {  
      if (err) return reject(err);  
      return resolve(data);  
    });  
  });  
}
```

Calling a promise

```
readFile(filepath)
  .then(function(data){
    console.log(data);
  })
  .catch(function(err){
    console.log(data);
  });
```


Microtasks vs Macrotasks in the Event Loop

- **Microtasks** (like Promise `.then()` callbacks) have higher priority than macrotasks
- **Macrotasks** (like `setTimeout()`, I/O operations, and DOM events) are processed only after the microtask queue is empty

```
1▼ setTimeout(function(){
2    console.info('1. 5s timeout');
3▲ }, 5000);
4
5 let a = Array.from({length: 10000000}, () => Math.random());
6 console.info('2. array created');
7
8▼ const p = new Promise(function(resolve, reject){
9    a.sort();
10    console.info('3. array sorted');
11    resolve();
12▲ });
13
14▼ p.then(function(){
15    console.info('4. promise resolved');
16▲ })
17
18 console.info('5. done');
19 |
```

➡ Prints 2, 3, 5, 4, 1

Calling a promise with async/await

```
async function run() {  
    const data = await readFile(filepath);  
    console.log(data);  
};  
  
run().catch(err => console.error(err));
```

✓ **Async** returns a promise

● **Await** suspends the computation and waits for the promise to resolve

➔ The remaining code after the **await** expression is placed into the **microtask queue**

Web Workers

<http://afshinm.github.io/50k/>

How about multi-threaded Javascript?

But, if needed, Javascript can be multi-threaded

- Node cluster (NodeJS only)
 - Web Workers (Browser and NodeJS)
- ✓ Good for heavy but yet synchronous computations
- ✓ Takes advantages of multicore machine

Web Workers for parallelism

- Create threads in Javascript (now frontend and backend)
- These threads can run in parallel (separate event loop)

What a web worker can/cannot do **on the frontend**

✓ XMLHttpRequest

✓ indexedDB

✓ location (read only)

⦿ window

⦿ document (not thread safe)

Create a web worker

doSomething.mjs

```
// receive message
self.addEventListener('message', function(e){
  const data = e.data;
  // send the same data back
  self.postMessage(data);
}, false);
```

Instantiate a web worker

main.mjs

```
const worker = new Worker('doSomething.mjs');

// sending a message to the web worker
worker.postMessage({myList:[1, 2, 3, 4]});

// receive message from web worker
worker.addEventListener('message', function(e) {
    console.log(e.data);
}, false);
```