
Systems Notes

Computer Science

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Chapter 8: Shell

1 Process

The first thing to understand is that a **computer program** is a passive collection of instructions; a **process** is the actual execution of those instructions.

A **process** in user mode is not allowed to execute privileged instructions. The only way for the process to change from user mode to kernel mode is via an exception such as an **interrupt**, a **fault** or a **trapping system call**.

2 Context switching

In computing, a **context switch** is the process of storing and restoring the state (context) of a process so that execution can be resumed from the same point at a later time. This enables multiple processes to share a single CPU and is an essential feature of a multitasking operating system. What constitutes the context is determined by the processor and the operating system.

A context switch follows these 3 steps:

1. saves the contents of the current process.
2. restores the saved context of some previously preempted process
3. passes control to this newly restored process

3 File Descriptor

A file descriptor is an indicator for a way of accessing a file.

4 Signal

A **signal** is a message that notifies a process that an event of some type has occurred in the system (just like when you press a button on your phone, a message is sent to the operating system). Each signal corresponds to some kind of system event. For example, a signal can be used to cancel background jobs.

Integer Value	Name
0	Standard Input (Stdin)
1	Standard Output (Stdout)
2	Standard Error (Stderr)

Table 1: Integer Values and their File descriptors

A pending signal is a signal that has been sent but not received. A process can also block a CERTAIN signal. In this case, blocked signals can be sent but will not be received until the signal is unblocked.

Signal Name	Source	Possible Actions	Default Action
SIGKILL	program		terminate
SIGTERM	program	block, catch, ignore	terminate
SIGSTOP	program		stop
SIGINT (C-c)	terminal	block, catch, ignore	terminate
SIGQUIT (C-\)	terminal	block, catch, ignore	terminate
SIGTSTP (C-z)	terminal	block, catch, ignore	stop
SIGCHLD	kernel	block, catch, ignore	ignore

Figure 1: Table of possible signals

5 Pipelining

Pipelining works by setting the standard output(1) of the first command to the standard input(0) of the second command in the pipeline. here are a couple

of system calls that you may be interested to understand what is happening in more detail, in particular, `fork(2)`, `execve(2)`, `pipe(2)`, `dup2(2)`, `read(2)` and `write(2)`.

6 Fork

This is an example of the fork method in c. `fork()` clones a process from a process. This new process can be used to execute another process or do other things. NOTE: Once you clone a process you have no idea which order your clones will run in, your code should not depend on the order. Another thing to remember is that fork returns twice, once in the parent and once in the child (the new process you just created). The cloned process is exactly the same except for the return value of `fork()`. In the child process fork will always return 0 and in the parent it will return the process ID of itself so your code can just check for the child process with `== 0` and the parent with an else.

```
#include <unistd.h>
#include <stdio.h>

int main(){
    int x = 1;
    if (fork() == 0)
        { // only child executes this
            printf("Child, x = %d\n", ++x);
        }
    else {
        // only parent executes this
        printf("Parent, x = %d\n", --x);
    } // parent and child execute this
    printf("Exiting with x = %d\n", x);
    return 0;}
```

Friday, 26 March 2010

1 This shows a sample table

Groups	Treatment X	Treatment Y
1	0.2	0.8
2	0.17	0.7
3	0.24	0.75
4	0.68	0.3

Table 1: The effects of treatments X and Y on the four groups studied.

Table **1** shows that groups 1-3 reacted similarly to the two treatments but group 4 showed a reversed reaction.

Saturday, 27 March 2010

1 Bulleted list example

This is a bulleted list:

- Item 1
- Item 2
- ... and so on

2 This is an example experiment

Suspendisse vel felis. Ut lorem lorem, interdum eu, tincidunt sit amet, laoreet vitae, arcu. Aenean faucibus pede eu ante. Praesent enim elit, rutrum at, molestie non, nonummy vel, nisl. Ut lectus eros, malesuada sit amet, fermentum eu, sodales cursus, magna. Donec eu purus. Quisque vehicula, urna sed ultricies auctor, pede lorem egestas dui, et convallis elit erat sed nulla. Donec luctus. Curabitur et nunc. Aliquam dolor odio, commodo pretium, ultricies non, pharetra in, velit. Integer arcu est, nonummy in, fermentum faucibus, egestas vel, odio.

3 This is another example experiment

Sed commodo posuere pede. Mauris ut est. Ut quis purus. Sed ac odio. Sed vehicula hendrerit sem. Duis non odio. Morbi ut dui. Sed accumsan risus eget odio. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Pellentesque non elit. Fusce sed justo eu urna porta tincidunt. Mauris felis odio, sollicitudin sed, volutpat a, ornare ac, erat. Morbi quis dolor. Donec pellentesque, erat ac sagittis semper, nunc dui lobortis purus, quis congue purus metus ultricies tellus. Proin et quam. Class aptent taciti sociosqu ad litora torquent per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos. Praesent sapien turpis, fermentum vel, eleifend faucibus, vehicula eu, lacus.

Formulae and Media Recipes

Media

Media 1

Compound	1L	0.5L
Compound 1	10g	5g
Compound 2	20g	10g

Table 1: Ingredients in Media 1.

Formulae

Formula 1 - Pythagorean theorem

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$