Local Area Networks
LANs

Building Blocks of Local Area Networks

1. Network Interface Card built in the host
   - 'Intelligent' hardware
   - runs Data Link Control (MAC)protocol
   - For each type of physical media supported, NIC is different
     - e.g. Ethernet NIC for wired interface is different from Wi-Fi interface
     - Link protocol for each type of physical interface is different

2. Physical media to connect to other hosts or interconnecting devices
   - Wire
     - Twisted pair
     - Coaxial cable
     - Fiber
   - Wireless
     - Radio
     - Optical (Infrared)

Building Blocks of Local Area Networks

3. Interconnecting devices
    - Hubs/ Repeaters
4. Inter-LAN device

    - Bridge / Switch
5. Software / Network operating system at every host

Hubs

Hubs are essentially physical-layer repeaters:

- bits coming from one link go out all other links
- at the same rate
- no frame buffering
- no CSMA/CD at hub: adapters detect collisions
- provides net management functionality

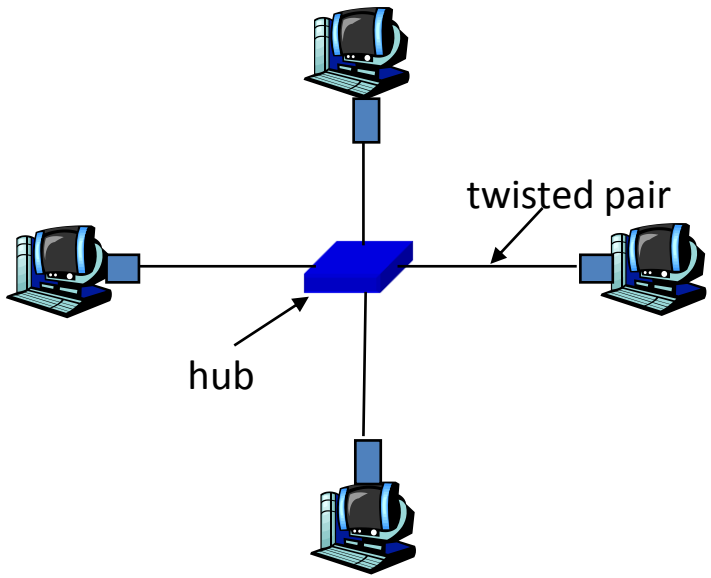
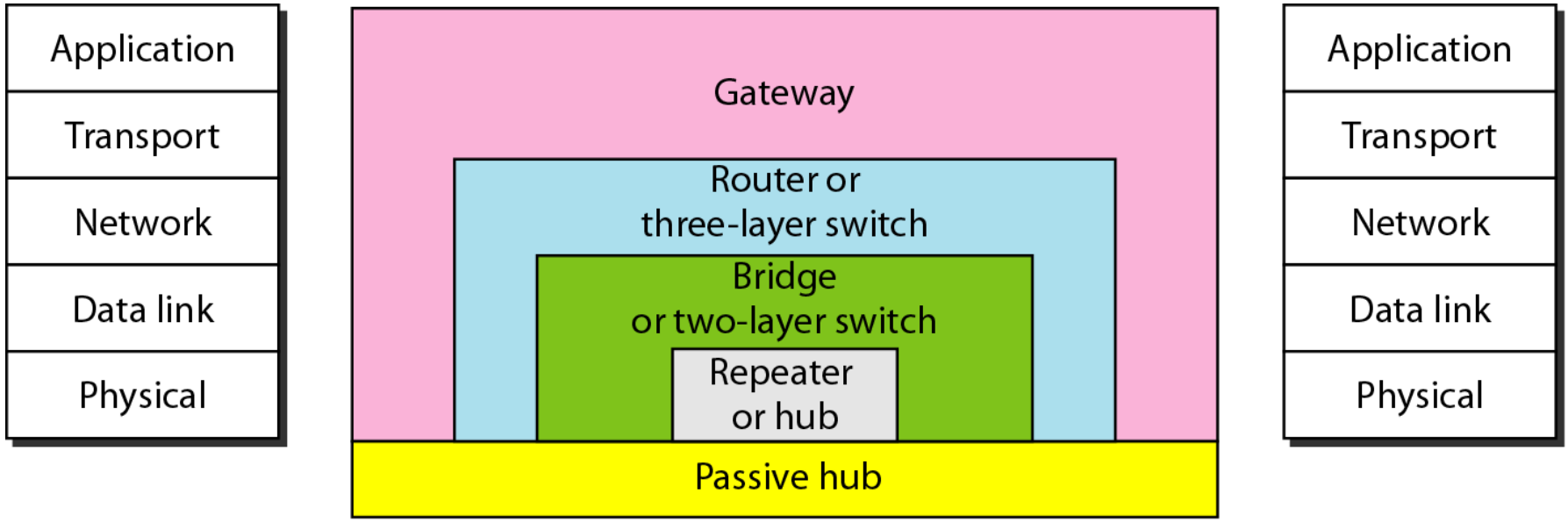
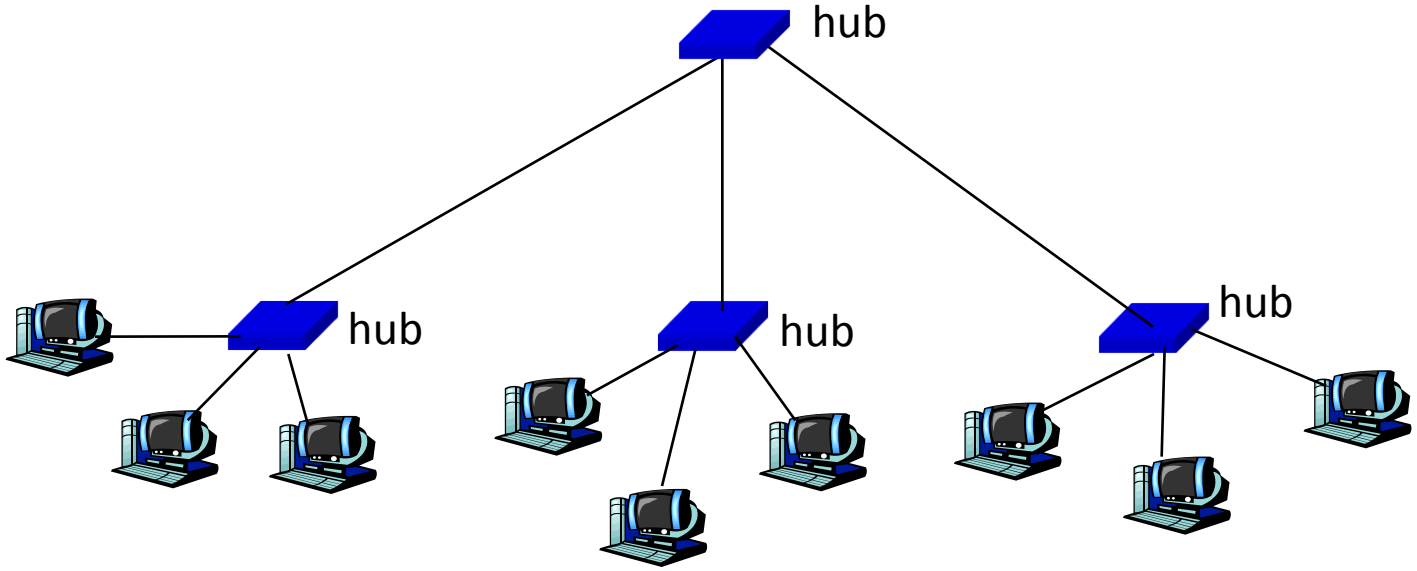


Figure 15.1 *Five categories of connecting devices*

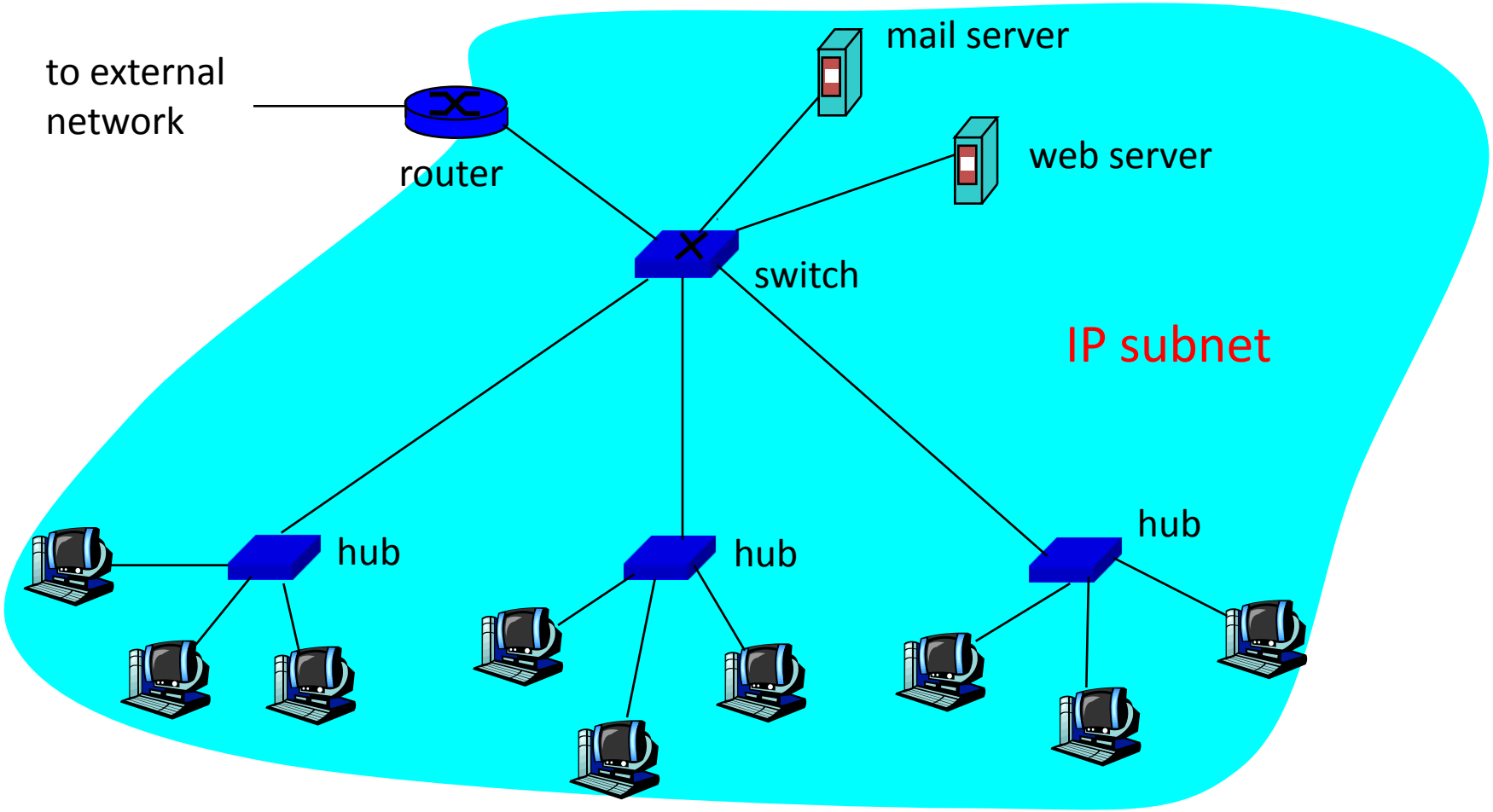


Interconnecting with hubs

- Backbone hub interconnects LAN segments
- Extends max distance between nodes
- But individual segment collision domains become one large collision domain
- Can’t interconnect 10BaseT & 100BaseT



Institutional network

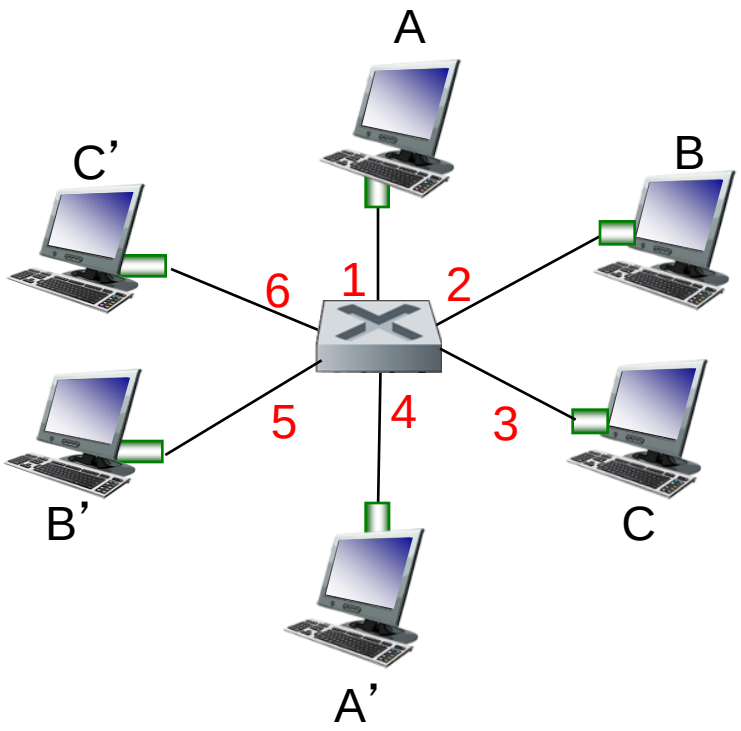


Ethernet switch

- link-layer device: takes an *active* role
  - store, forward Ethernet frames
  - examine incoming frame's MAC address, selectively forward frame to one-or-more outgoing links when frame is to be forwarded on segment, uses CSMA/CD to access segment
- *transparent*
  - hosts are unaware of presence of switches
- *plug-and-play, self-learning*
  - switches do not need to be configured

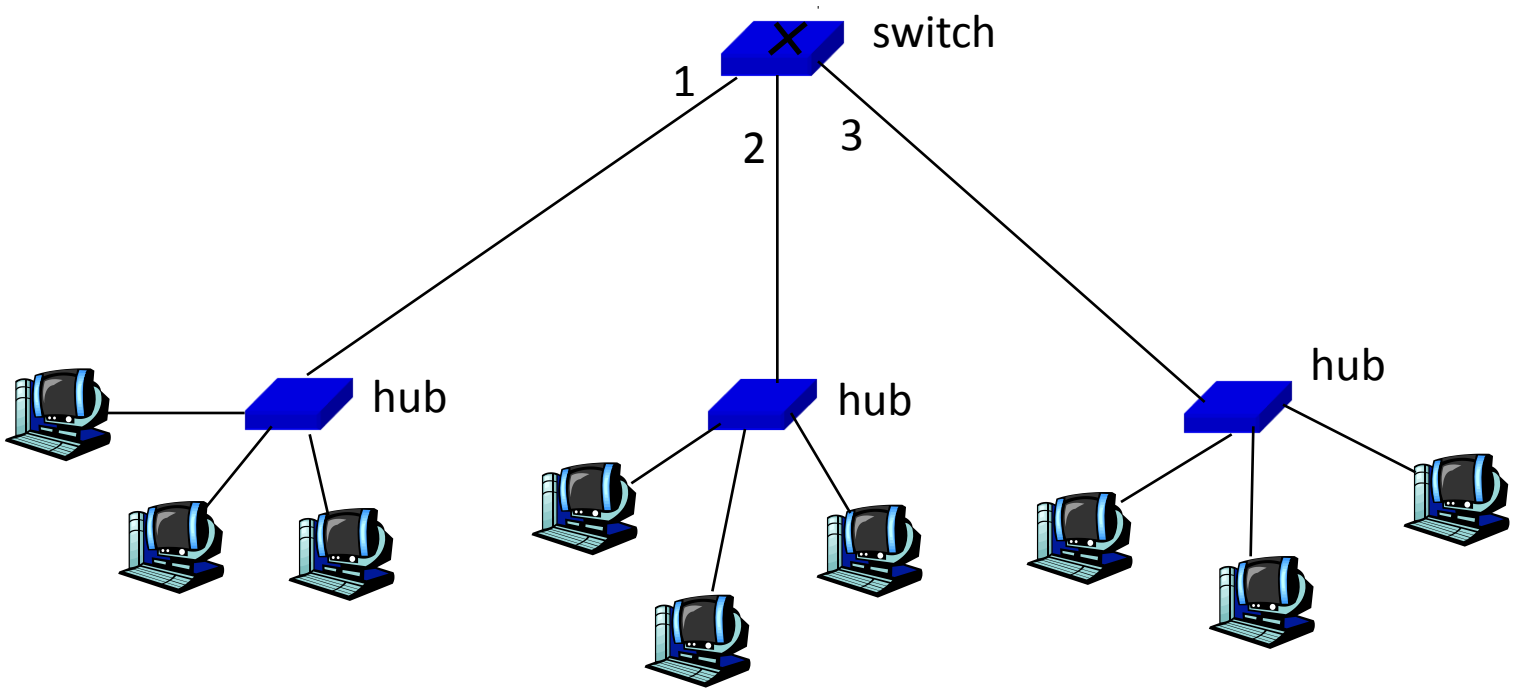
Switch: *multiple* simultaneous transmissions

- hosts have dedicated, direct connection to switch
- switches buffer packets
- Ethernet protocol used on *each* incoming link, but no collisions; full duplex
  - each link is its own collision domain
- *switching:* A-to-A' and B-to-B' can transmit simultaneously, without collisions



switch with six interfaces (1,2,3,4,5,6)

Forwarding

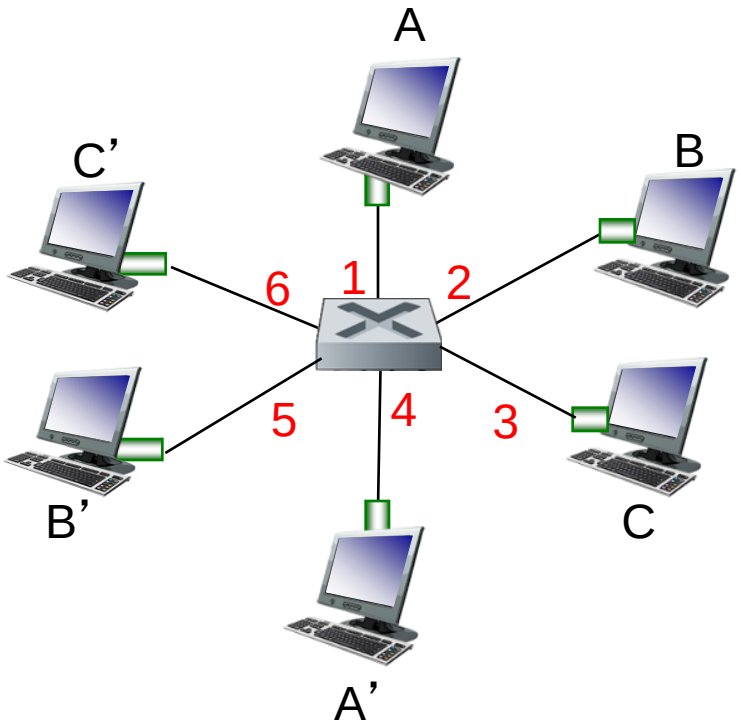


- How do determine onto which LAN segment to forward frame?
- Looks like a routing problem...

Switch forwarding table

Q: how does switch know A' reachable via interface 4, B' reachable via interface 5?

- A: each switch has a switch table, each entry:
  - (MAC address of host, interface to reach host, time stamp)
  - looks like a routing table!



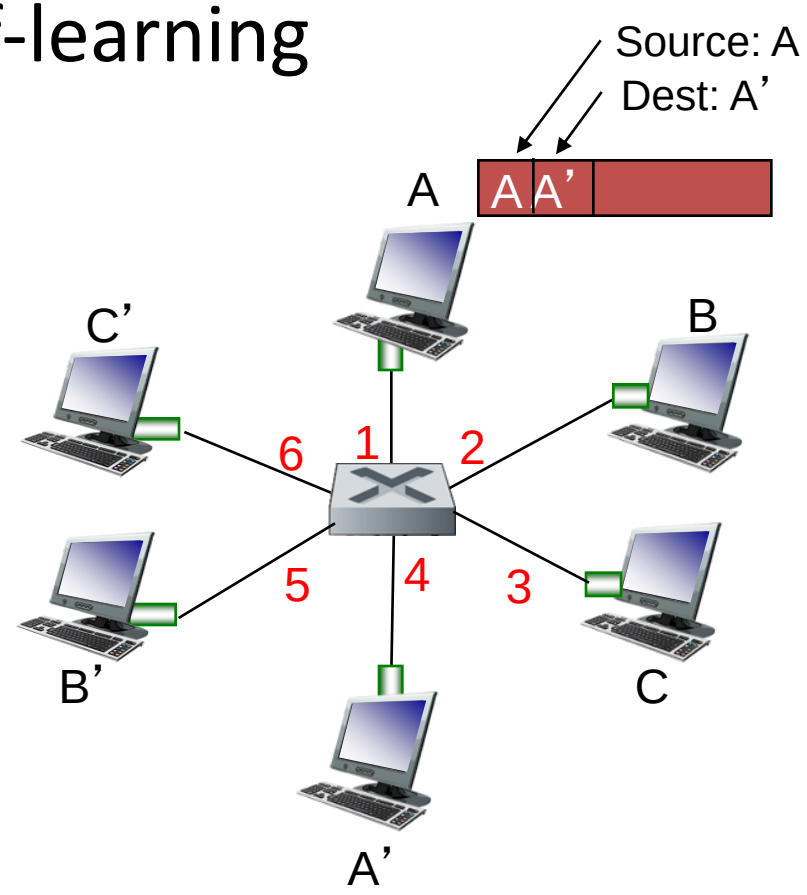
switch with six interfaces (1,2,3,4,5,6)

Q: how are entries created, maintained in switch table?

- something like a routing protocol?

Switch: self-learning

- switch *learns* which hosts can be reached through which interfaces
  - when frame received, switch "learns" location of sender: incoming LAN segment
  - records sender/location pair in switch table



MAC addr	interface	TTL
A	1	60

Switch table (initially empty)

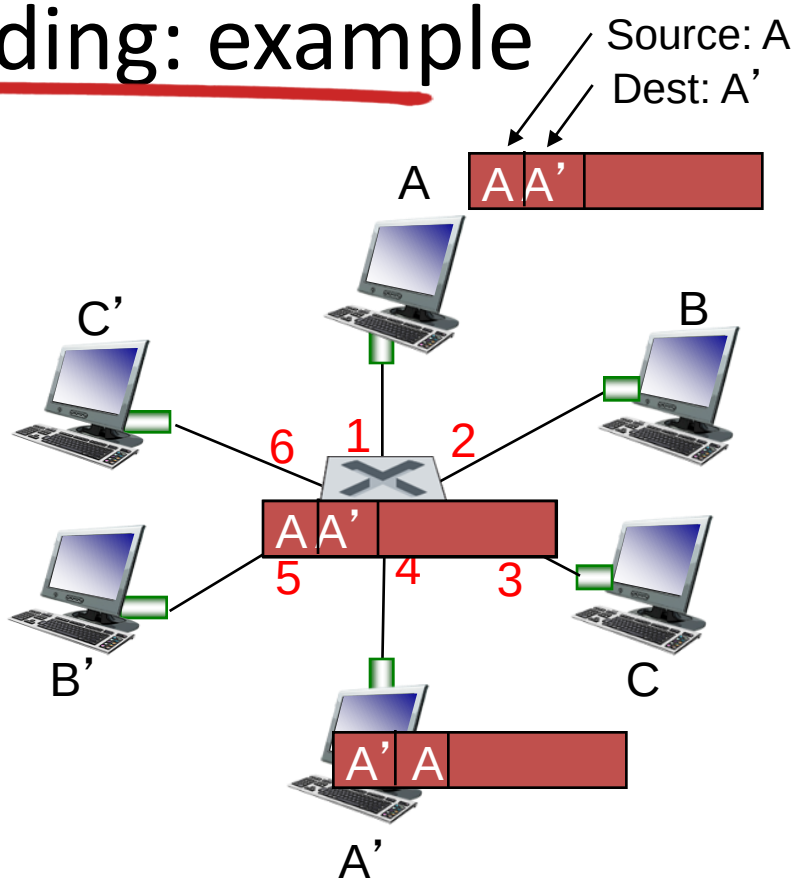
Switch: frame filtering/forwarding

when frame received at switch:

1. record incoming link, MAC address of sending host
2. index switch table using MAC destination address
3. if entry found for destination
   then {
   if destination on segment from which frame arrived
   then drop frame
   else forward frame on interface indicated by

Self-learning, forwarding: example

- frame destination, A', locaton unknown: flood
  - destination A location known: selectively send on just one link

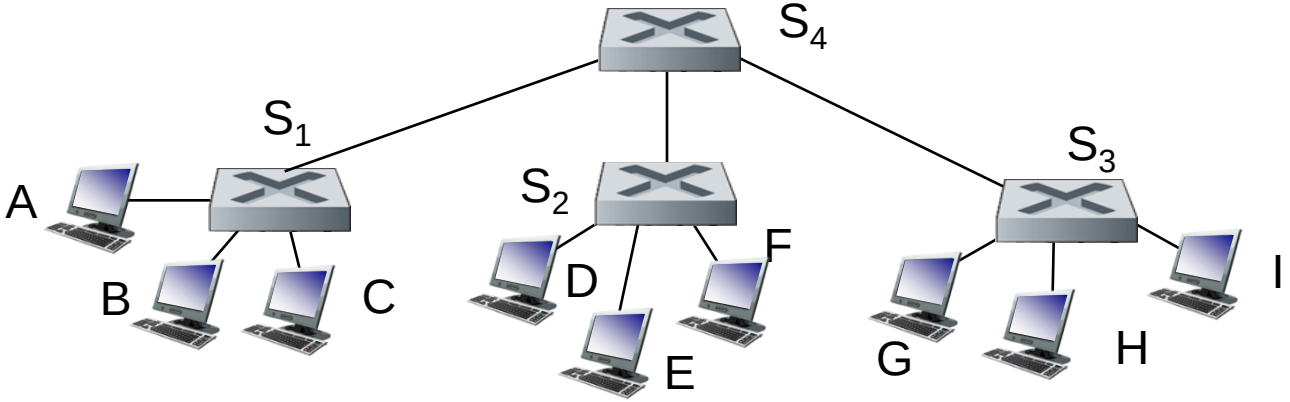


MAC addr	interface	TTL
A	1	60
A'	4	60

switch table (initially empty)

Interconnecting switches

❖switches can be connected together

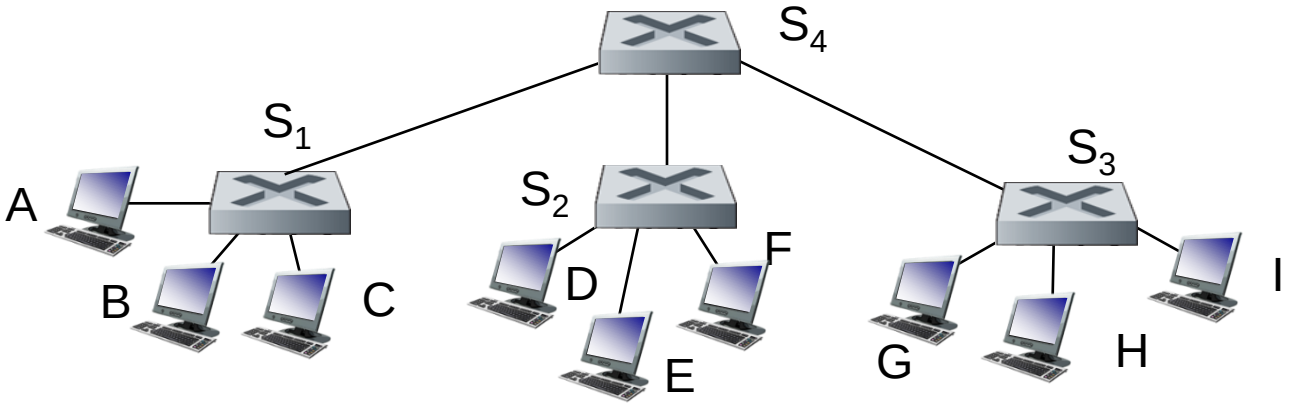


Q: sending from A to G - how does S_1 know to forward frame destined to F via S_4 and S_3?

- A: self learning! (works exactly the same as in single-switch case!)

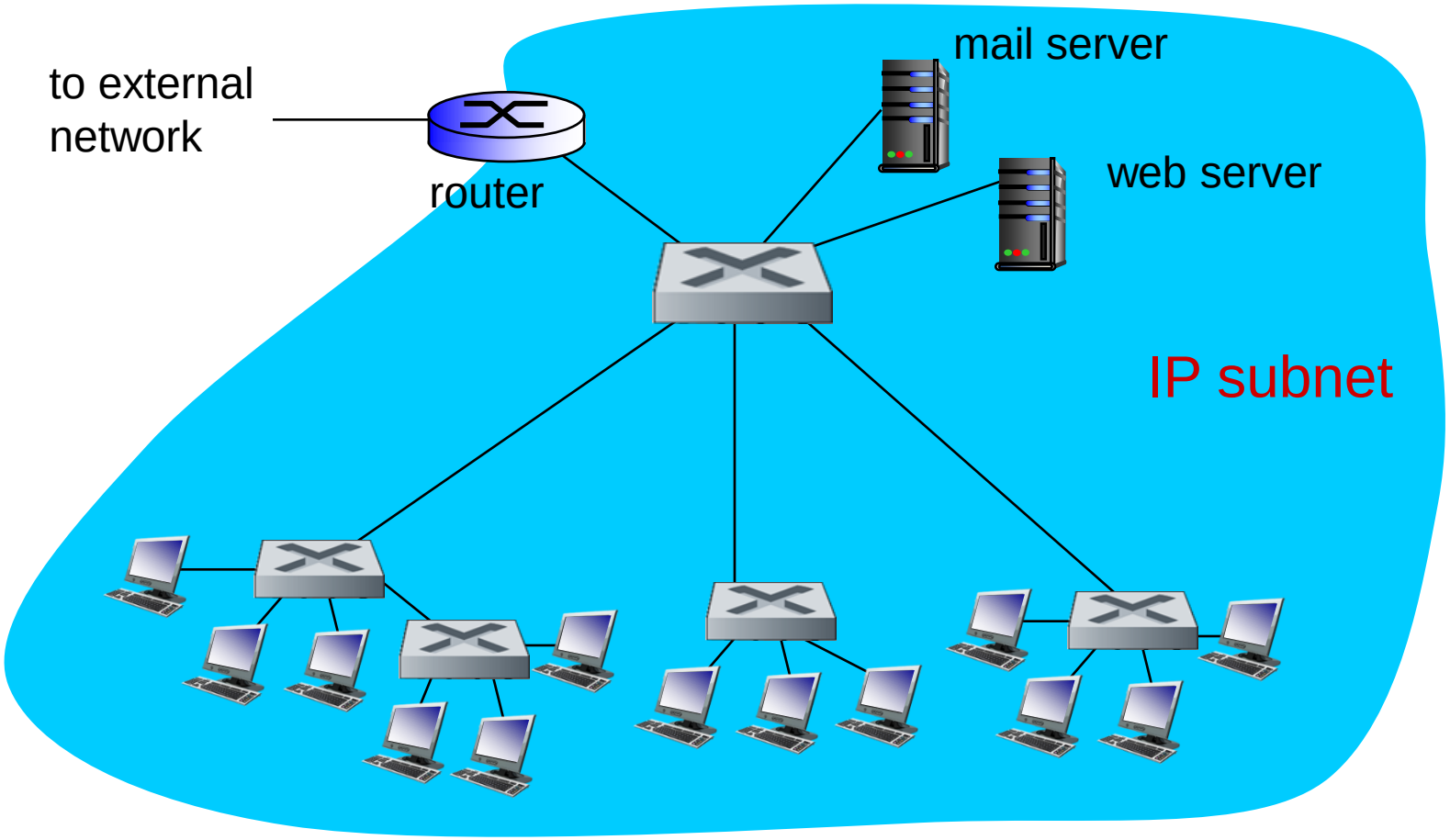
Self-learning multi-switch example

Suppose C sends frame to I, I responds to C



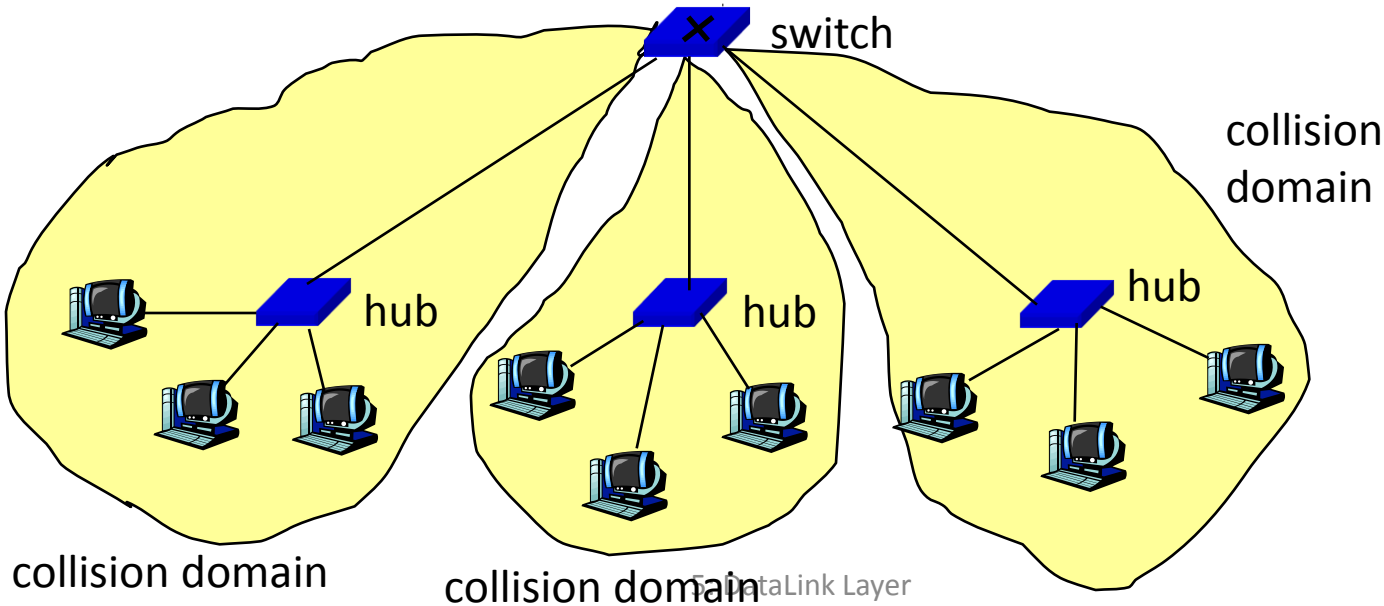
- Q: show switch tables and packet forwarding in S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4

Institutional network



Switch: traffic isolation

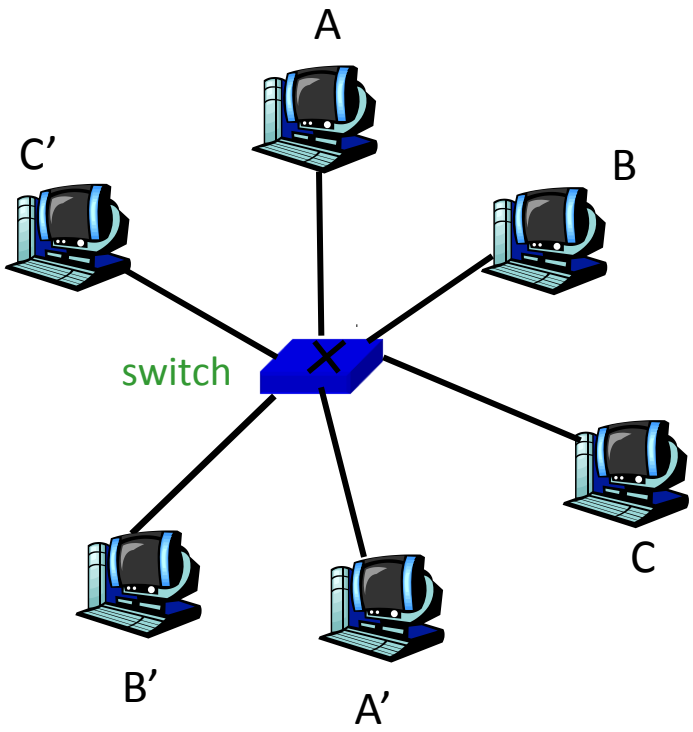
- switch installation breaks subnet into LAN segments
- switch filters packets:
  - same-LAN-segment frames not usually forwarded onto other LAN segments
  - segments become separate collision domains



Switches: dedicated access

- Switch with many interfaces
- Hosts have direct connection to switch
- No collisions; full duplex

Switching: A-to-A’ and B-to-B’ simultaneously, no collisions



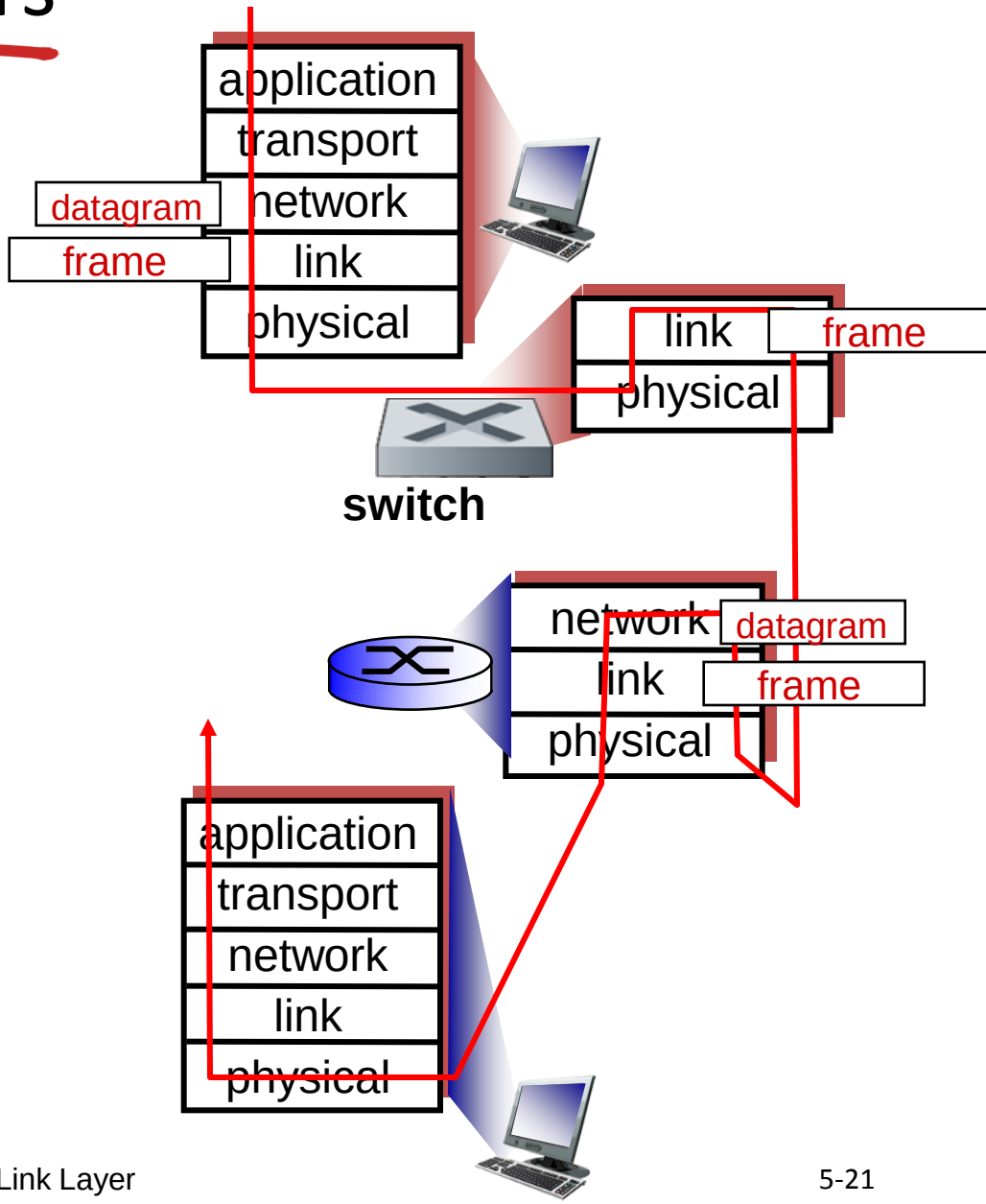
Switches vs. routers

both are store-and-forward:

- *routers:* network-layer devices (examine network-layer headers)
- *switches:* link-layer devices (examine link-layer headers)

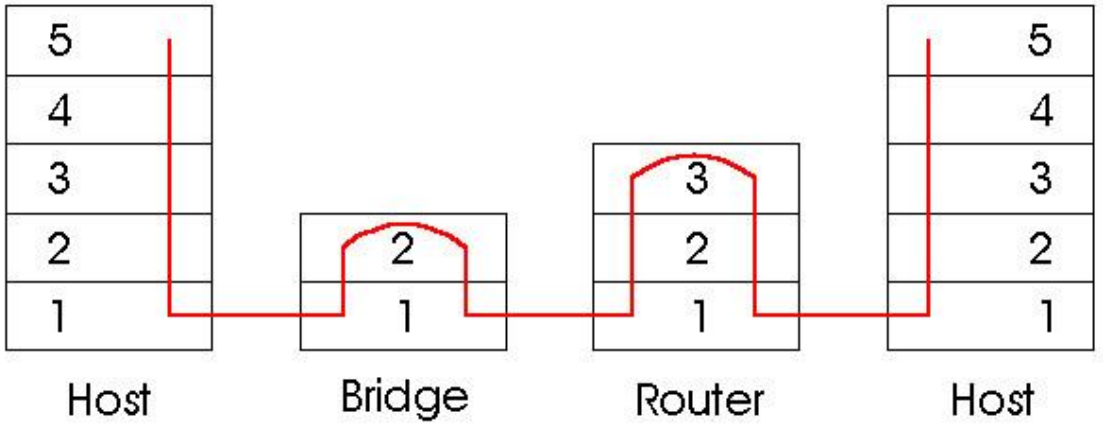
both have forwarding tables:

- *routers:* compute tables using routing algorithms, IP addresses
- *switches:* learn forwarding table using flooding, learning, MAC addresses



Switches vs. Routers

- both store-and-forward devices
  - routers: network layer devices (examine network layer headers)
  - switches are link layer devices
- routers maintain routing tables, implement routing algorithms
- switches maintain switch tables, implement filtering, learning algorithms



Summary comparison

	hubs	routers	switches
traffic isolation	no	yes	yes
plug & play	yes	no	yes
optimal routing	no	yes	no
cut through	yes	no	yes