Little Book of Semaphores, Chapter 1

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January 2, 2015

Synchronization

- When more than one thread is running, synchronization may be important:
- **Serialization:** Event A must happen before event B.
- **Mutual exclusion:** Events A and B must not happen at the same time.

Threads

- For a single core, there is only one instruction happening at a time.
- A sequence of such instructions is a *thread*.
- A desktop computer will have many threads running at one time.
- The OS may run threads in parallel, on different CPUs.
- The OS may run only one thread at a time, and interleave many threads on a single CPU.

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- You could call and ask the time, but how would you know if your clocks were synchronized?

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Eat lunch
Call Bob
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Bob

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Wait for call
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- Two events are concurrent if we cannot tell by looking at the program which will happen first.

Lunch Synchronization with Shared Variables

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- Keep a rock in a box.

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Eat lunch
Put rock back in box
```

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- You ate lunch concurrently (order undetermined).
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- Can you find a version that enforces order?
- Can you find a message version that enforces mutual exclusion?

Shared variables

Thread A

```
x = 5
print x
```

Thread B

```
x = 7
```

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- What path yields output 5 and final value 5?
- What path yields output 7 and final value 7?

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- What path yields output 7 and final value 5?
- What paths are possible and what are their effects?
- Can we prove bad effects impossible, and desirable effects certain?

Concurrent Updates

Thread A

```
x = x + 1
```

Thread B

```
x = x + 1
```

Concurrent Updates

Thread A

```
x = x + 1
```

Thread B

```
x = x + 1
```

Thread A

```
load x
add 1
store x
```

Thread B

```
load x
add 1
store x
```

Concurrent Updates

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```
x = x + 1
```

Thread B

```
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```

Thread A

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add 1
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Thread B

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load x
add 1
store x
```

Any operation that cannot be interrupted is said to be **atomic**.