What is this Parallel Computing Thing?

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www.rc.colorado.edu Questions? #RC_BasicSC

Link to survey on this topic: http://tinyurl.com/rcpresurvey

Slides:
https://github.com/ResearchComputing/Final_Tutorials/tree/master/Basics_Supercomputing/2017_January

Outline

- Serial vs. Parallel processing
- Shared vs. Distributed Memory
- OpenMP vs. MPI
- Matlab
- When to Parallel Program
- Overhead

What Is Parallelism?

- What is parallelism?
  - Idea where many instructions are carried out simultaneously across a computing system
  - Can divide a large problem up into many smaller problems
  - The idea of splitting up mowing the lawn with your spouse
  - Or of you and your spouse mowing your lawn and your neighbor’s lawn
    - Potentially faster, more efficient

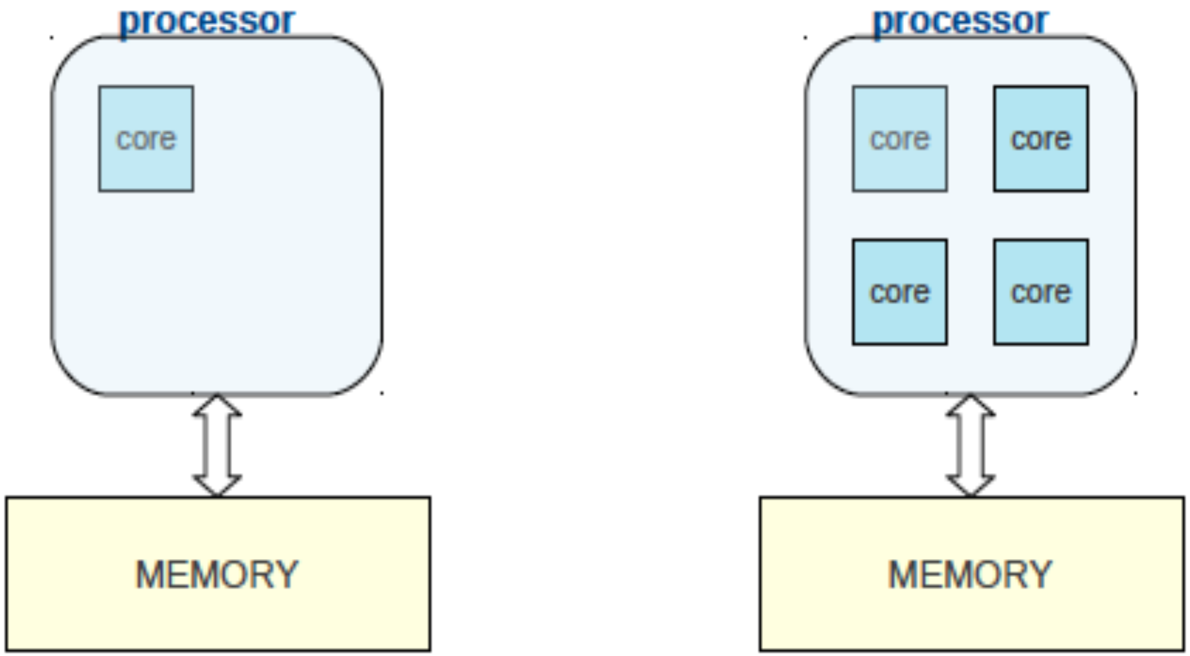
Why Parallelize?

- Single core too slow for solving the problem in a "reasonable" time
  - "Reasonable" time: overnight, over lunch, duration of a PhD thesis
- Memory requirements
  - Larger problem
  - More physics
  - More particles

Basic Architecture

Older processor had only one cpu core to execute instructions

Modern processors have 4 or more independent cpu cores to execute instructions



Source: http://people.math.umass.edu/~johnston/PHI_WG_2014/OpenMPSlides_tamu_sc.pdf

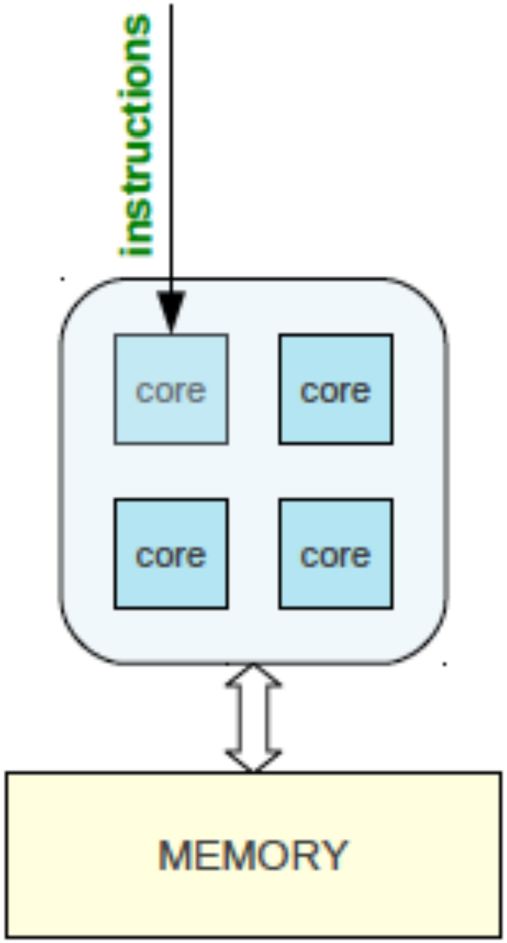
Serial Processing – Thought Experiment

- Jigsaw puzzle analogy**
- Have a 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle
  - You can do it yourself, maybe it will take 1 hour to do
  - Serial processing
- Maybe you have three friends sitting nearby willing to help, but you won't let them
  - Wasted resources

**from Henry Neeman, OSCER, "Supercomputing in Plain English"

Serial Processing

- Instructions are executed on one core
- The other cores sit idle
- If a task is running, Task 2 waits for Task 1 to complete, etc.
- Wasting resources
- Want to instead parallelize and use all cores



Source: http://people.math.umass.edu/~johnston/PHI_WG_2014/OpenMPSlides_tamu_sc.pdf

Shared Memory Parallel Processing – Thought Experiment

- Jigsaw puzzle analogy**
  - Let’s say you decide to let one of your friends, Stacey, join you
  - Stacey and you sit at a table and each work on half the puzzle
    - In theory you reduce the puzzle time completion by half
    - However, other time sinks
      - Reaching for the same puzzle pieces
        - Resource contention
      - Communicating about puzzle interfaces
    - Might take 35 minutes instead of 30

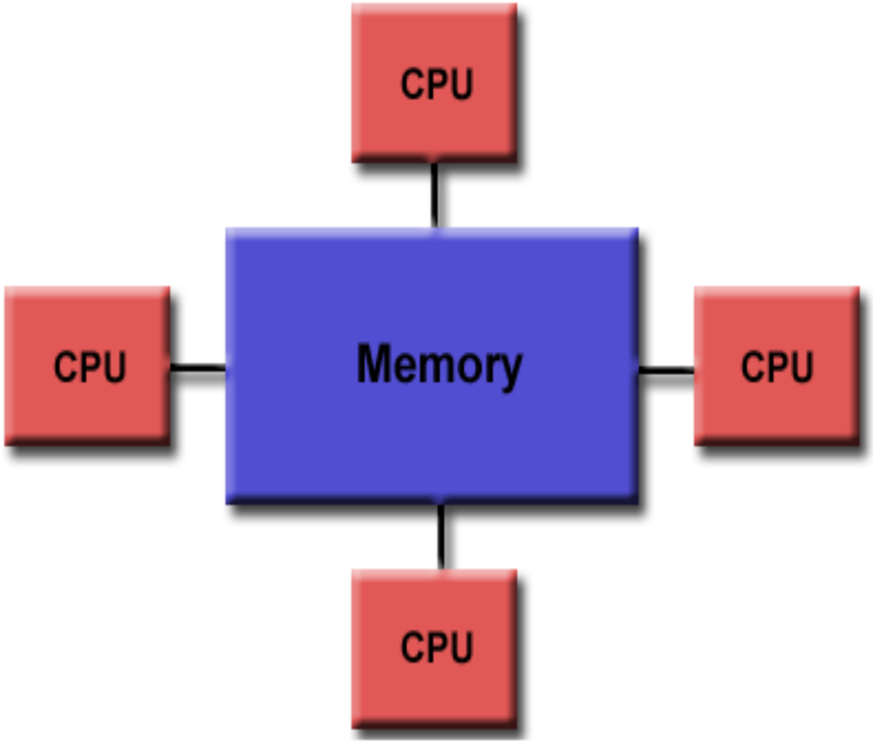
**from Henry Neeman, OSCER, “Supercomputing in Plain English”

Shared Memory Parallel Processing – Thought Experiment

- Jigsaw puzzle analogy**
  - Now you let your other two friends, Fred and Jim, join in
    - Now conceivably could finish in ¼ the time (15 minutes)
  - But there's even more contention for resources
  - More communication
  - Slows down the process even more (maybe takes 23 minutes to complete instead)
  - Too many people slows down the process too much to make it worthwhile
    - Eventually have a "diminishing return"

**from Henry Neeman, OSCER, "Supercomputing in Plain English"

Shared-memory Model

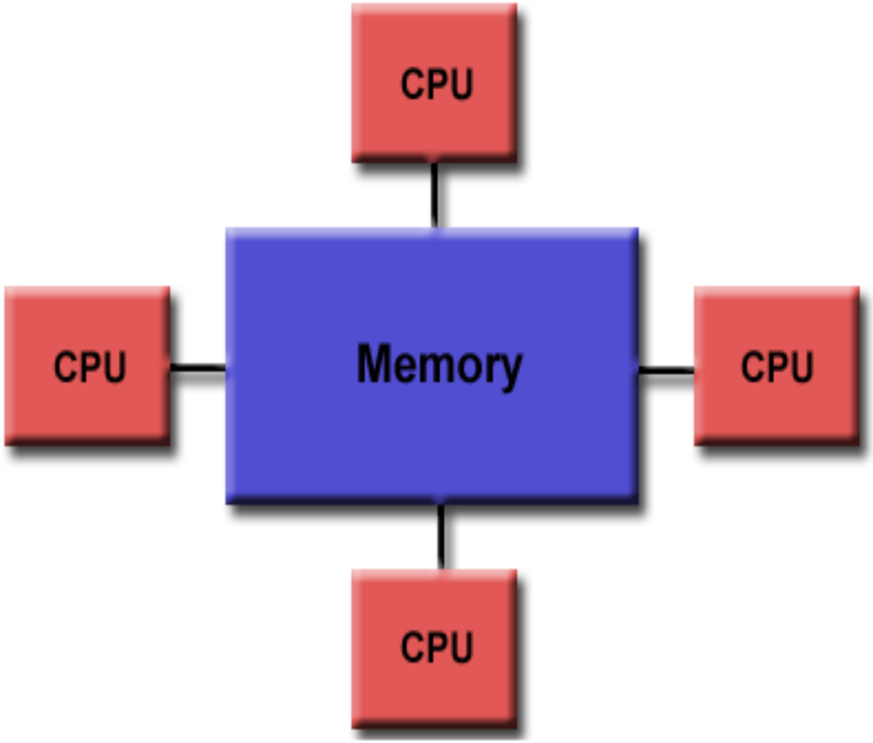


The concept is that all processors can access all memory available

Multiple processors can perform tasks on their own but share the same memory

Source: https://computing.llnl.gov/tutorials/parallel_comp/#ModelsShared

Shared-memory Model



Advantage: data sharing is fast and uniform

Disadvantage: adding more processors can cause performance issues when accessing the same shared memory resource

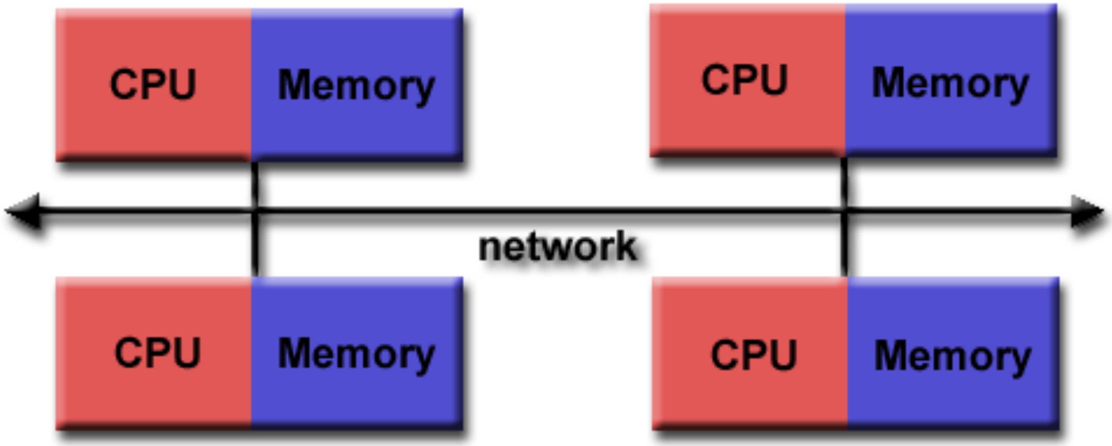
Source: https://computing.llnl.gov/tutorials/parallel_comp/#ModelsShared

Distributed Memory Parallel Processing – Thought Experiment

- Jigsaw puzzle analogy**
  - Now we have two tables with one person at each table doing the puzzle
  - We split the puzzle equally between tables
  - Each person works completely independently
  - But to communicate costs more
    - How do you work out connecting the puzzle?
  - Can you really divide up the puzzle evenly?

**from Henry Neeman, OSCER, “Supercomputing in Plain English”

Distributed-memory Model

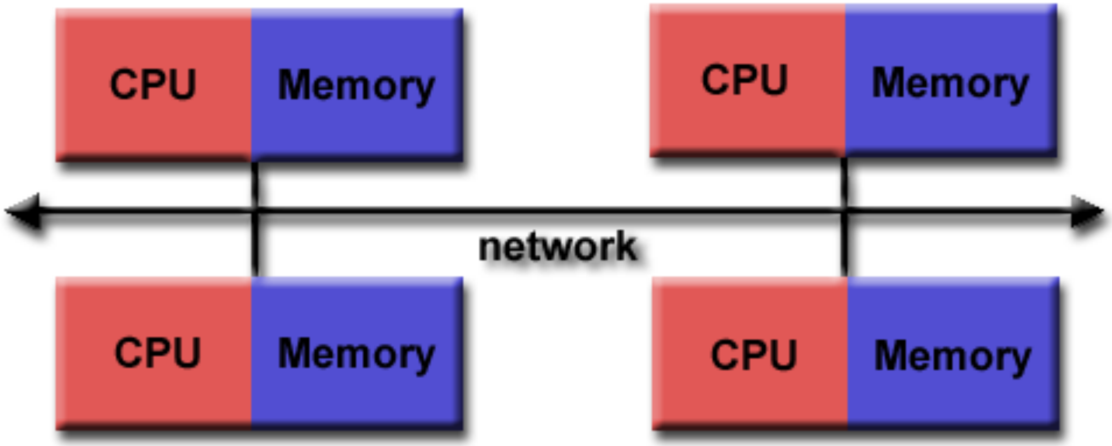


Distributed memory requires a communication network to connect memory

Processors have own memory and don't map globally

Source: https://computing.llnl.gov/tutorials/parallel_comp/#ModelsShared

Distributed-memory Model



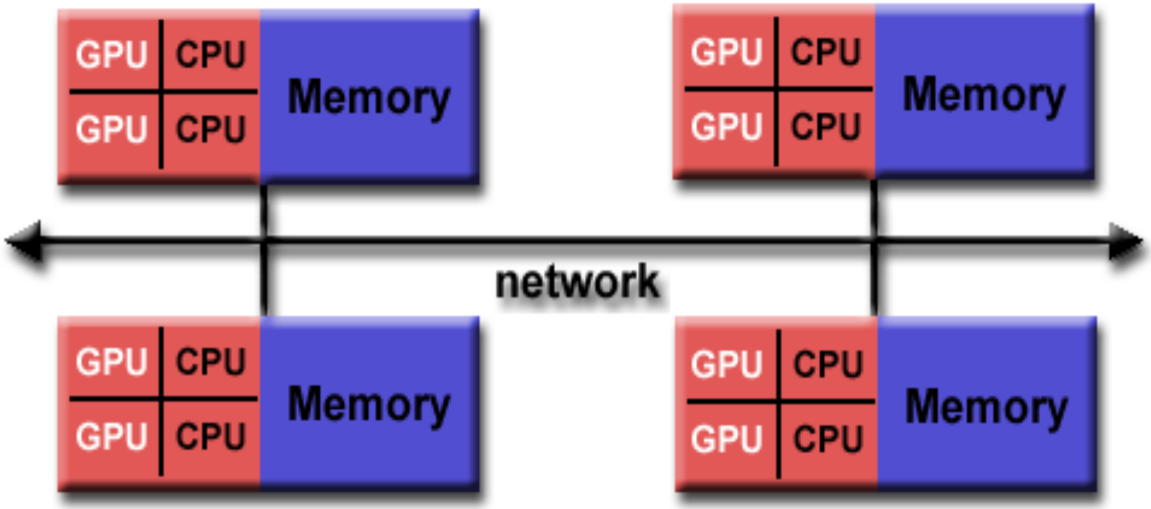
Programmers explicitly define how processors access other processor’s memory

Advantage: scalable memory

Disadvantage: need to know parallel programming!

Source: https://computing.llnl.gov/tutorials/parallel_comp/#ModelsShared

Distributed-Shared Memory



Most large and fast computers now

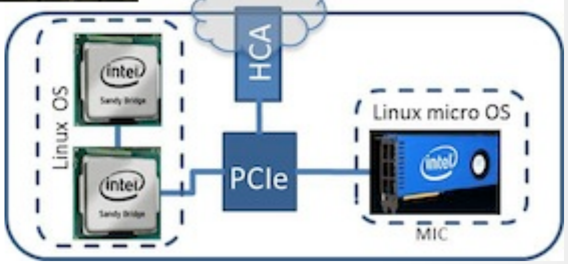
Shared memory machines connected to other shared memory machines

Source: https://computing.llnl.gov/tutorials/parallel_comp/#ModelsShared

Programming to Use Parallelism

- Parallelism across processors/threads - OpenMP

- Parallelism across multiple nodes - MPI



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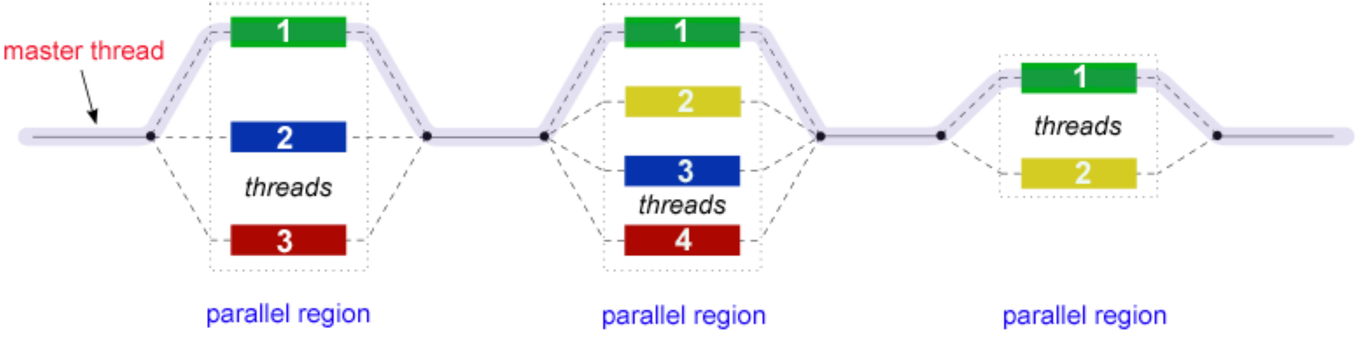
OpenMP

- OpenMP: An application programming interface (API) for parallel programming on multiprocessors
- Uses shared memory
- OpenMP is used through compiler directives embedded in Fortran, C, or C++ code
- Directs multi-threaded, shared memory parallelism
- Can do a lot with only a handful of commands
- Intended to be easy to use

Source: https://computing.llnl.gov/tutorials/openMP/#Introduction

OpenMP – Fork/Join

- OpenMP programs start with a single thread (master)
- Then Master creates a team of parallel "worker" threads (FORK)
- Statements in block are executed in parallel by every thread
- At end, all threads synchronize and join master thread



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MPI

- MPI is a library specification for message passing Based on consensus of many organizations
  - Provides widely used standard for writing message passing programs
- Operates on a distributed model
- Exchange data through communication between tasks – send and receive data
- MPI can get complicated
- Programmers must explicitly implement parallelism using MPI constructs

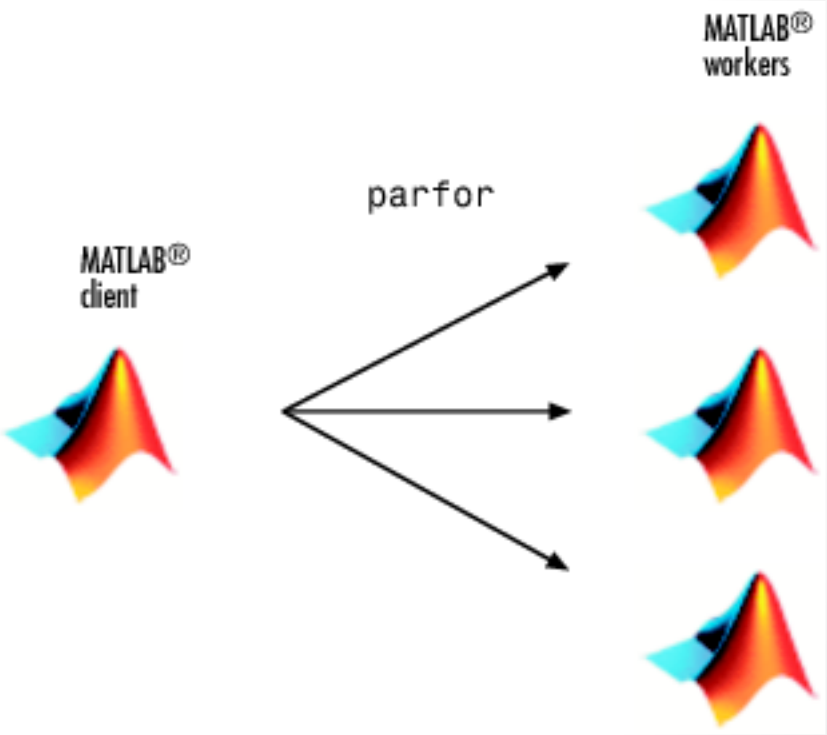
https://computing.llnl.gov/tutorials/mpi/

MPI or OpenMP?

- OpenMP
  - Don’t understand parallel programming
  - Only need to run on one node
  - Just want to speed up application
  - Program is not complicated
- MPI
  - Multiple nodes
    - Running out of memory and need to use more nodes
  - Can use MPI on shared memory

Running Matlab in Parallel

- **Workers:** copies of the original client created to assist in computation



Parallel Computing Toolbox (PCT)

- Additional toolbox as part of Matlab
- Perform parallel computations on multicore computers, GPUs, and computer clusters
- Many Matlab functions work in concert with the PCT
- Simple to utilize with just the use of certain commands

Parallel and Not Parallel

Not Parallel:

```
for i=1:10
   x=x(i)+1;
end
```

Parallel:

```
matlabpool open 4
   parfor i=1:10
      x=x(i)+1;
   end
matlabpool close
```

parfor

- Easy to use
- Allows parallelism in terms of loops
- When client reaches a parfor loop iterations of loop are automatically divided up among workers
- Parfor requires results be completely independent
- Cannot determine how loops are divided

Parallel Processing Musts and Tricks

- Need to be able to break the problem up into parts that can work independently of each other
  - Can't have the results from one CPU depend on another at each time step

- Do loops are a great place to start looking for bottlenecks in your code

Parallel Overhead

- Should you convert your serial code to parallel?
- Usually do it to speed up
- But need to consider things like overhead
- Overhead because of
  - Startup time
  - Synchronizations
  - Communication
  - Overhead by libraries, compilers
  - Termination time

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Questions?

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