

# CUDA C/C++ BASICS

Modified from NVIDIA Corporation Slide Sets

# What is CUDA?

- CUDA Architecture
  - Expose GPU parallelism for general-purpose computing
  - Retain performance
- CUDA C/C++
  - Based on industry-standard C/C++
  - Small set of extensions to enable heterogeneous programming
  - Straightforward APIs to manage devices, memory etc.
- This session introduces CUDA C/C++

# Introduction to CUDA C/C++

- What will you learn with this slide set?
  - Start from “Hello World!”
  - Write and launch CUDA C/C++ kernels
  - Manage GPU memory
  - Manage communication and synchronization

# Prerequisites

- You (probably) need experience with C or C++
- You don't need GPU experience
- You don't need parallel programming experience
- You don't need graphics experience

# CONCEPTS



Heterogeneous Computing

Blocks

Threads

Indexing

Shared memory

`__syncthreads()`

Asynchronous operation

Handling errors

Managing devices

# HELLO WORLD!

## CONCEPTS



Heterogeneous Computing

Blocks

Threads

Indexing

Shared memory

\_\_syncthreads()

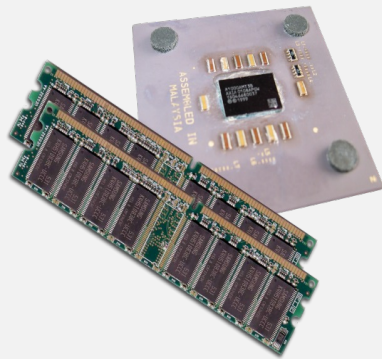
Asynchronous operation

Handling errors

Managing devices

# Heterogeneous Computing

- Terminology:
  - *Host* The CPU and its memory (host memory)
  - *Device* The GPU and its memory (device memory)

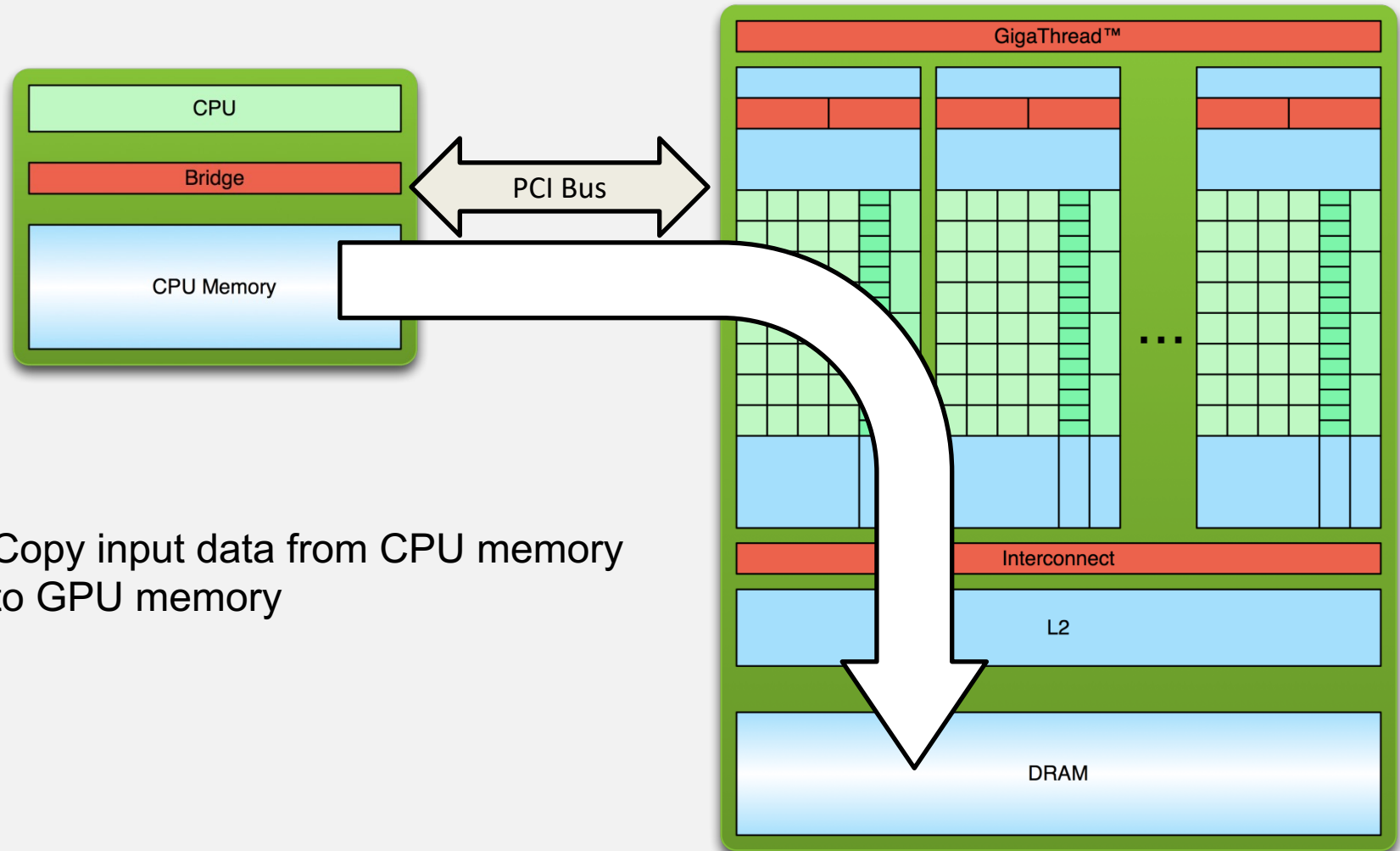


Host



Device

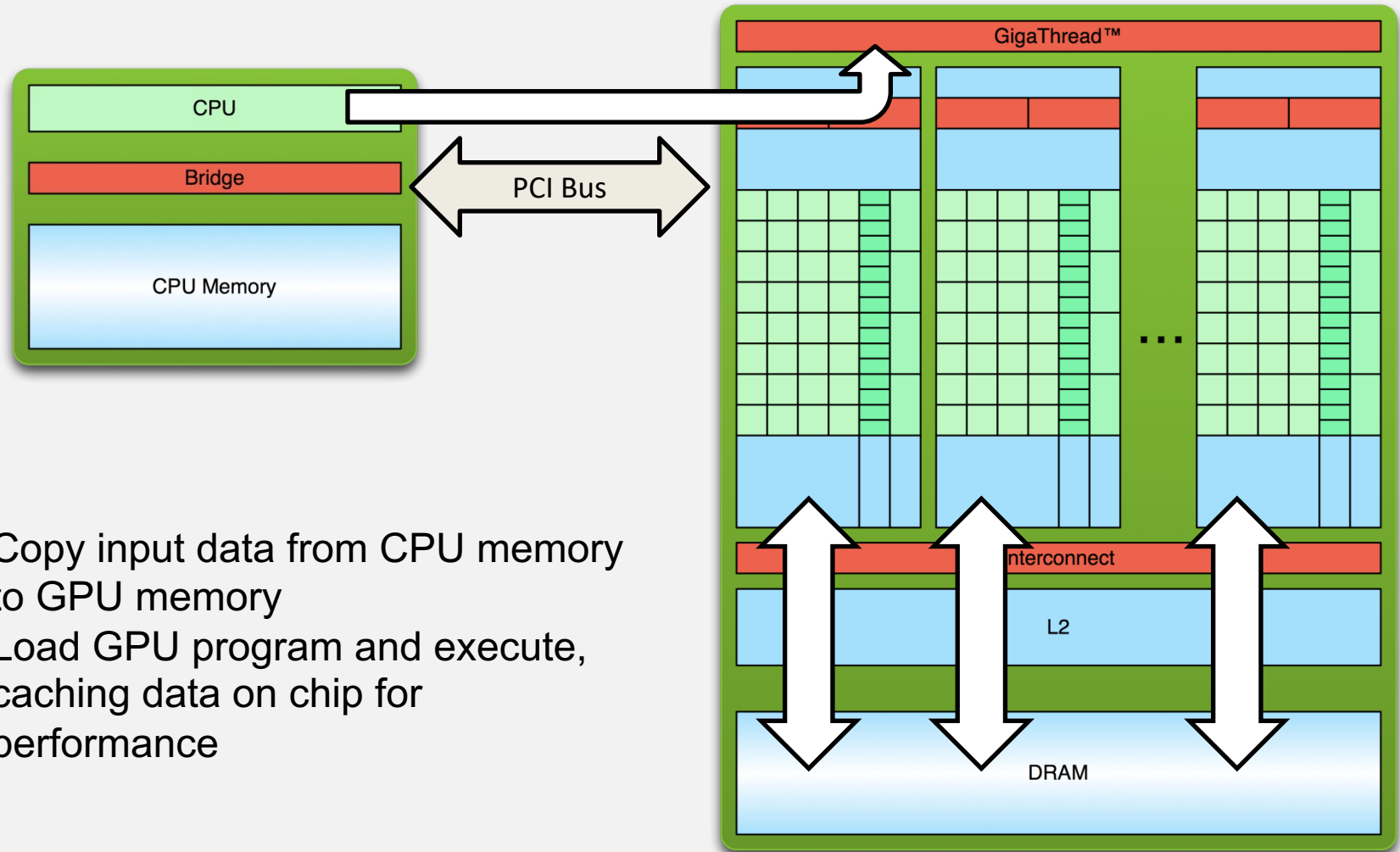
# Simple Processing Flow



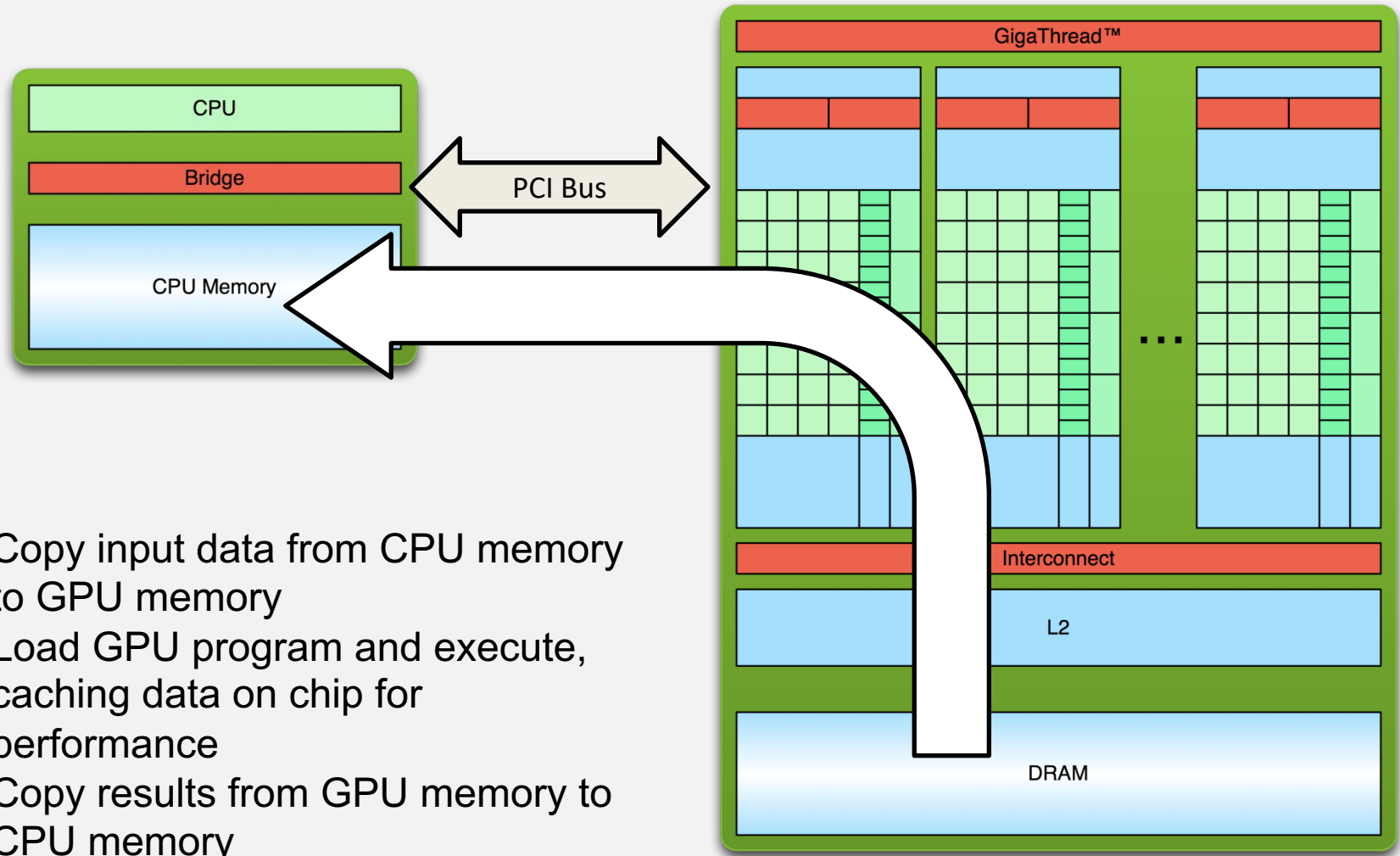
1. Copy input data from CPU memory to GPU memory



# Simple Processing Flow



# Simple Processing Flow



# Hello World!

```
int main(void) {  
    printf("Hello World!\n");  
    return 0;  
}
```

- Standard C that runs on the host
- NVIDIA compiler (nvcc) can be used to compile programs with no *device* code

Output:

```
$ nvcc  
hello_world.  
cu  
$ a.out  
Hello World!  
$
```

# Hello World! with Device Code

```
__global__ void mykernel(void) {...}
```

```
int main(void) {  
    mykernel<<<1,1>>>();  
    printf("Hello World!\n");  
    return 0;  
}
```

- Two new syntactic elements...

# Hello World! with Device Code

```
__global__ void mykernel(void) {.....}
```

- CUDA C/C++ keyword `__global__` indicates a function that:
  - Runs on the device
  - Is called from host code
- `nvcc` separates source code into host and device components
  - Device functions (e.g. `mykernel()`) processed by NVIDIA compiler
  - Host functions (e.g. `main()`) processed by standard host compiler
    - `gcc, cl.exe`

# Hello World! with Device Code

```
mykernel<<<1,1>>>();
```

- Triple angle brackets mark a call from *host* code to *device* code
  - Also called a “kernel launch”
  - We’ll return to the parameters (1,1) in a moment
- That’s all that is required to execute a function on the GPU!

# Hello World! with Device Code

```
__global__ void mykernel(void) {.....}
```

```
int main(void) {  
    mykernel<<<1,1>>>();  
    printf("Hello World!\n");  
    return 0;  
}
```

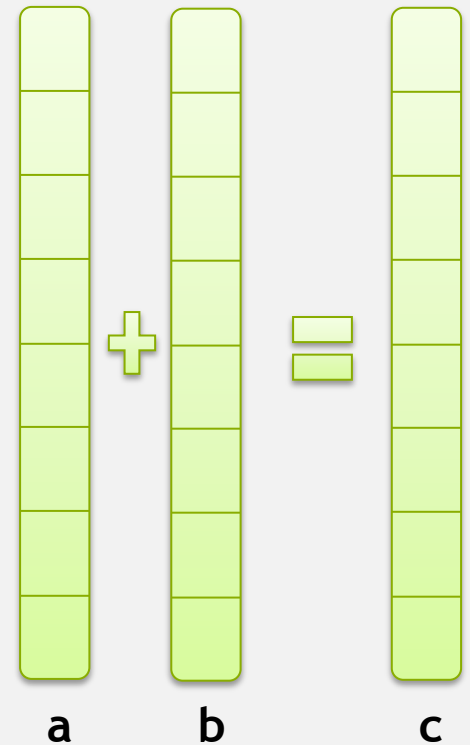
- `mykernel()` does nothing,  
somewhat anticlimactic!

Output:

```
$ nvcc  
hello.cu  
$ a.out  
Hello World!  
$
```

# Parallel Programming in CUDA C/C++

- But wait... GPU computing is about massive parallelism!
- We need a more interesting example...
- We'll start by adding two integers and build up to vector addition





# Addition on the Device

- A simple kernel to add two integers

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    *c = *a + *b;  
}
```

- As before `__global__` is a CUDA C/C++ keyword meaning
  - `add()` will execute on the device
  - `add()` will be called from the host

# Addition on the Device

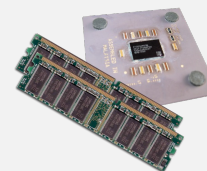
- Note that we use pointers for the variables

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    *c = *a + *b;  
}
```

- `add()` runs on the device, so `a`, `b` and `c` must point to device memory
- We need to allocate memory on the GPU

# Memory Management

- Host and device memory are separate entities
  - *Device* pointers point to GPU memory
    - May be passed to/from host code
    - May *not* be dereferenced in host code
  - *Host* pointers point to CPU memory
    - May be passed to/from device code
    - May *not* be dereferenced in device code
- Simple CUDA API for handling device memory
  - `cudaMalloc()`, `cudaFree()`, `cudaMemcpy()`
  - Similar to the C equivalents `malloc()`, `free()`, `memcpy()`



# Addition on the Device: `add()`

- Returning to our `add()` kernel

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    *c = *a + *b;  
}
```

- Let's take a look at `main()`...

# Addition on the Device: `main()`

```
int main(void) {  
    int a, b, c;           // host copies of a, b, c  
    int *d_a, *d_b, *d_c; // device copies of a, b, c  
    int size = sizeof(int);  
  
    // Allocate space for device copies of a, b, c  
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_a, size);  
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_b, size);  
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_c, size);  
  
    // Setup input values  
    a = 2;  
    b = 7;
```

# Addition on the Device: `main()`

```
// Copy inputs to device
```

```
cudaMemcpy(d_a, &a, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
```

```
cudaMemcpy(d_b, &b, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
```

```
// Launch add() kernel on GPU
```

```
add<<<1,1>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c);
```

```
// Copy result back to host
```

```
cudaMemcpy(&c, d_c, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);
```

```
// Cleanup
```

```
cudaFree(d_a); cudaFree(d_b); cudaFree(d_c);
```

```
return 0;
```

```
}
```

# RUNNING IN PARALLEL

## CONCEPTS

Heterogeneous Computing

Blocks

Threads

Indexing

Shared memory

\_\_syncthreads()

Asynchronous operation

Handling errors

Managing devices

# Moving to Parallel

- GPU computing is about massive parallelism
  - So how do we run code in parallel on the device?

```
add<<< 1, 1 >>>() ;
```



```
add<<< N, 1 >>>() ;
```

- Instead of executing `add()` once, execute `N` times in parallel



# Vector Addition on the Device

- With `add()` running in parallel we can do vector addition
- Terminology: each parallel invocation of `add()` is referred to as a **block**
  - The set of blocks is referred to as a **grid**
  - Each invocation can refer to its block index using `blockIdx.x`

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    c[blockIdx.x] = a[blockIdx.x] + b[blockIdx.x];  
}
```

- By using `blockIdx.x` to index into the array, each block handles a different index

# Vector Addition on the Device

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    c[blockIdx.x] = a[blockIdx.x] + b[blockIdx.x];  
}
```

- On the device, each block can execute in parallel:

Block 0

`c[0] = a[0] + b[0];`

Block 1

`c[1] = a[1] + b[1];`

Block 2

`c[2] = a[2] + b[2];`

Block 3

`c[3] = a[3] + b[3];`

# Vector Addition on the Device: `add()`

- Returning to our parallelized `add()` kernel

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    c[blockIdx.x] = a[blockIdx.x] + b[blockIdx.x];  
}
```

- Let's take a look at `main()`...

# Vector Addition on the Device: `main()`

```
#define N 512

int main(void) {
    int *a, *b, *c;           // host copies of a, b, c
    int *d_a, *d_b, *d_c;    // device copies of a, b, c
    int size = N * sizeof(int);

    // Alloc space for device copies of a, b, c
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_a, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_b, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_c, size);

    // Alloc space for host copies of a, b, c and setup input values
    a = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(a, N);
    b = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(b, N);
    c = (int *)malloc(size);
```

# Vector Addition on the Device: `main()`

```
// Copy inputs to device
```

```
cudaMemcpy(d_a, a, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
```

```
cudaMemcpy(d_b, b, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
```

```
// Launch add() kernel on GPU with N blocks
```

```
add<<<N,1>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c);
```

```
// Copy result back to host
```

```
cudaMemcpy(c, d_c, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);
```

```
// Cleanup
```

```
free(a); free(b); free(c);
```

```
cudaFree(d_a); cudaFree(d_b); cudaFree(d_c);
```

```
return 0;
```

```
}
```

# Review (1 of 2)

- Difference between *host* and *device*
  - *Host* CPU
  - *Device* GPU
- Using `__global__` to declare a function as device code
  - Executes on the device
  - Called from the host
- Passing parameters from host code to a device function

# Review (2 of 2)

- Basic device memory management
  - `cudaMalloc()`
  - `cudaMemcpy()`
  - `cudaFree()`
- Launching parallel kernels
  - Launch `N` copies of `add()` with `add<<<N,1>>>(...)` ;
  - Use `blockIdx.x` to access block index

# INTRODUCING THREADS

## CONCEPTS

Heterogeneous Computing

Blocks

Threads

Indexing

Shared memory

\_\_syncthreads()

Asynchronous operation

Handling errors

Managing devices



# CUDA Threads

- Terminology: a block can be split into parallel **threads**
- Let's change `add()` to use parallel *threads* instead of parallel *blocks*

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    c[threadIdx.x] = a[threadIdx.x] + b[threadIdx.x];  
}
```

- We use **threadIdx.x** instead of **blockIdx.x**
- Need to make one change in `main()` ...

# Vector Addition Using Threads: `main()`

```
#define N 512

int main(void) {
    int *a, *b, *c;                // host copies of a, b, c
    int *d_a, *d_b, *d_c;         // device copies of a, b, c
    int size = N * sizeof(int);

    // Alloc space for device copies of a, b, c
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_a, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_b, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_c, size);

    // Alloc space for host copies of a, b, c and setup input values
    a = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(a, N);
    b = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(b, N);
    c = (int *)malloc(size);
```

# Vector Addition Using Threads: `main()`

```
// Copy inputs to device
```

```
cudaMemcpy(d_a, a, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
```

```
cudaMemcpy(d_b, b, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
```

```
// Launch add() kernel on GPU with N threads
```

```
add<<<1,N>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c);
```

```
// Copy result back to host
```

```
cudaMemcpy(c, d_c, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);
```

```
// Cleanup
```

```
free(a); free(b); free(c);
```

```
cudaFree(d_a); cudaFree(d_b); cudaFree(d_c);
```

```
return 0;
```

```
}
```

# COMBINING THREADS AND BLOCKS

## CONCEPTS

Heterogeneous Computing

Blocks

Threads

Indexing

Shared memory

\_\_syncthreads()

Asynchronous operation

Handling errors

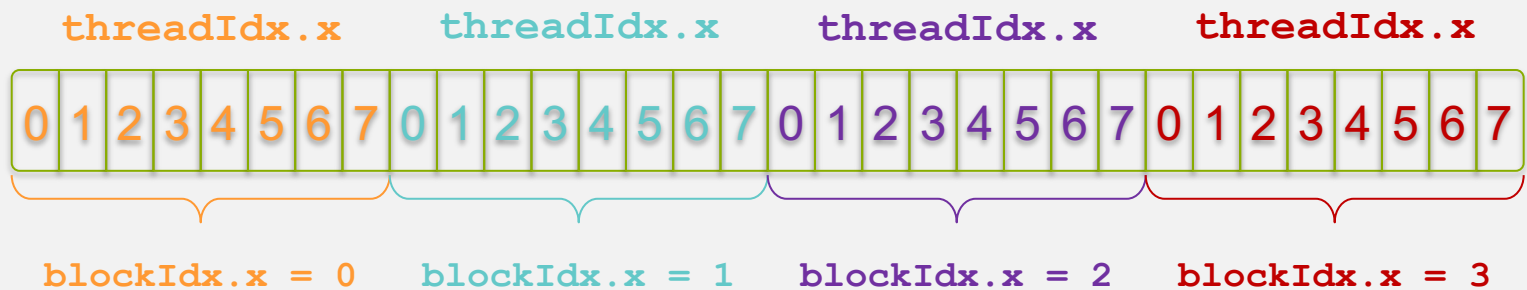
Managing devices

# Combining Blocks and Threads

- We've seen parallel vector addition using:
  - Many blocks with one thread each
  - One block with many threads
- Let's adapt vector addition to use both blocks and threads
- Why? We'll come to that...
- First let's discuss data indexing...

# Indexing Arrays with Blocks and Threads

- No longer as simple as using `blockIdx.x` and `threadIdx.x`
  - Consider indexing an array with one element per thread (8 threads/block)

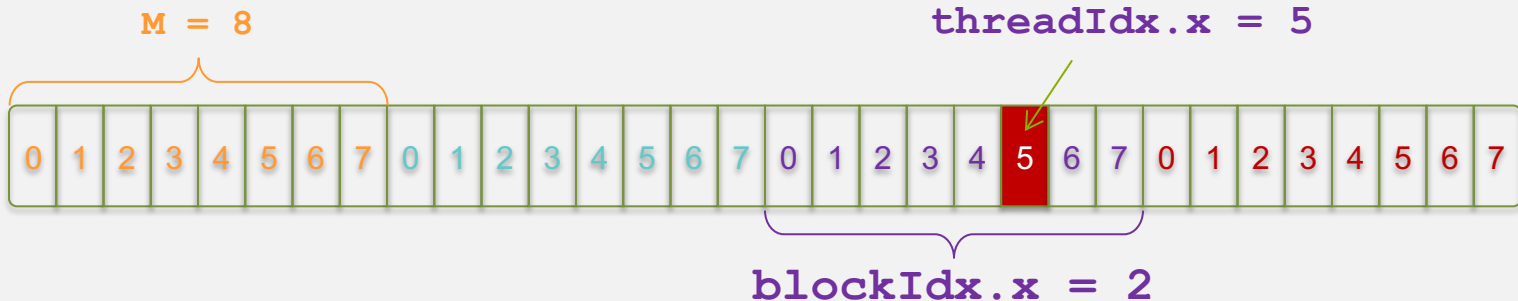
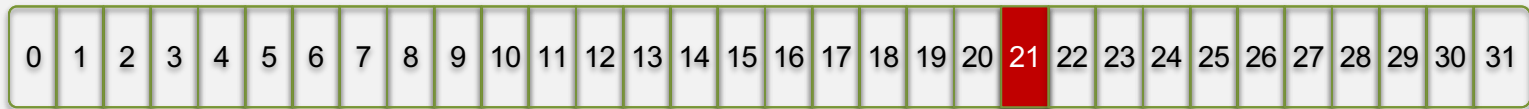


- With M threads/block a unique index for each thread is given by:

```
int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * M;
```

# Indexing Arrays: Example

- Which thread will operate on the red element?



```
int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * M;  
          =           5      +           2      * 8;  
          = 21;
```

# Vector Addition with Blocks and Threads

- Use the built-in variable `blockDim.x` for threads per block

```
int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;
```

- Combined version of `add()` to use parallel threads *and* parallel blocks

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;  
    c[index] = a[index] + b[index];  
}
```

- What changes need to be made in `main()`?



# Addition with Blocks and Threads: `main()`

```
#define N (2048*2048)
#define THREADS_PER_BLOCK 512
int main(void) {
    int *a, *b, *c;           // host copies of a, b, c
    int *d_a, *d_b, *d_c;     // device copies of a, b, c
    int size = N * sizeof(int);

    // Alloc space for device copies of a, b, c
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_a, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_b, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_c, size);

    // Alloc space for host copies of a, b, c and setup input values
    a = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(a, N);
    b = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(b, N);
    c = (int *)malloc(size);
```

# Addition with Blocks and Threads: `main()`

```
// Copy inputs to device
```

```
cudaMemcpy(d_a, a, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
```

```
cudaMemcpy(d_b, b, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
```

```
// Launch add() kernel on GPU
```

```
add<<<N/THREADS_PER_BLOCK, THREADS_PER_BLOCK>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c);
```

```
// Copy result back to host
```

```
cudaMemcpy(c, d_c, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);
```

```
// Cleanup
```

```
free(a); free(b); free(c);
```

```
cudaFree(d_a); cudaFree(d_b); cudaFree(d_c);
```

```
return 0;
```

```
}
```

# Handling Arbitrary Vector Sizes

- Typical problems are not friendly multiples of `blockDim.x`
- Avoid accessing beyond the end of the arrays:

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c, int n) {  
    int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;  
    if (index < n)  
        c[index] = a[index] + b[index];  
}
```

- Update the kernel launch:

```
add<<< (N + M-1) / M, M >>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c, N);
```

# Why Bother with Threads?

- Threads seem unnecessary
  - They add a level of complexity
  - What do we gain?
- Unlike parallel blocks, threads have mechanisms to:
  - Communicate
  - Synchronize
- To look closer, we need a new example...

# COOPERATING THREADS

## CONCEPTS

Heterogeneous Computing

Blocks

Threads

Indexing

Shared memory

\_\_syncthreads()

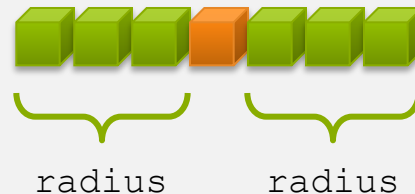
Asynchronous operation

Handling errors

Managing devices

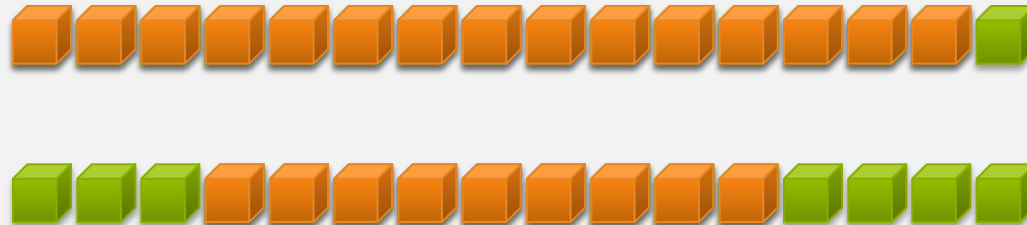
# 1D Stencil

- Consider applying a 1D stencil to a 1D array of elements
  - Each output element is the sum of input elements within a radius
- If radius is 3, then each output element is the sum of 7 input elements:



# Implementing Within a Block

- Each thread processes one output element
  - blockDim.x elements per block
- Input elements are read several times
  - With radius 3, each input element is read seven times



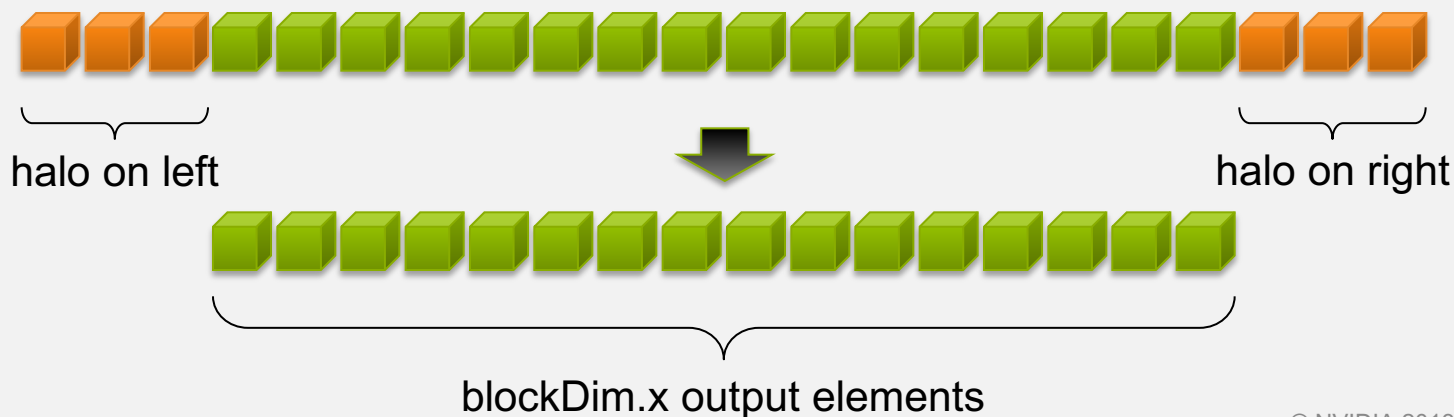
# Sharing Data Between Threads

- Terminology: within a block, threads share data via `shared memory`
- Extremely fast on-chip memory, user-managed
- Declare using `__shared__`, allocated per block
- Data is not visible to threads in other blocks



# Implementing With Shared Memory

- Cache data in shared memory
  - Read ( $\text{blockDim.x} + 2 * \text{radius}$ ) input elements from global memory to shared memory
  - Compute  $\text{blockDim.x}$  output elements
  - Write  $\text{blockDim.x}$  output elements to global memory
- Each block needs a **halo** of radius elements at each boundary



# Stencil Kernel

```
__global__ void stencil_1d(int *in, int *out) {  
    __shared__ int temp[BLOCK_SIZE + 2 * RADIUS];  
    int gindex = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;  
    int lindex = threadIdx.x + RADIUS;
```



```
    // Read input elements into shared memory
```

```
    temp[lindex] = in[gindex];  
    if (threadIdx.x < RADIUS) {  
        temp[lindex - RADIUS] = in[gindex - RADIUS];  
        temp[lindex + BLOCK_SIZE] =  
            in[gindex + BLOCK_SIZE];  
    }
```



# Stencil Kernel

```
// Apply the stencil
```

```
int result = 0;
```

```
for (int offset = -RADIUS ; offset <= RADIUS ; offset++)  
    result += temp[lindex + offset];
```


```
// Store the result
```


```
out[gindex] = result;
```

```
}
```

# Data Race!

- The stencil example will not work...
- Suppose thread 15 reads the halo before thread 0 has fetched it...

```
temp[lindex] = in[gindex];           Store at temp[18] 
if (threadIdx.x < RADIUS) {
    temp[lindex - RADIUS] = in[gindex - RADIUS];    Skipped, threadIdx > RADIUS
    temp[lindex + BLOCK_SIZE] = in[gindex + BLOCK_SIZE];
}

int result = 0;
result += temp[lindex + 1];           Load from temp[19] 
```

# \_\_syncthreads()

- `void __syncthreads();`
- Synchronizes all threads within a block
  - Used to prevent RAW / WAR / WAW hazards
- All threads must reach the barrier
  - In conditional code, the condition must be uniform across the block

# Stencil Kernel

```
__global__ void stencil_1d(int *in, int *out) {
    __shared__ int temp[BLOCK_SIZE + 2 * RADIUS];
    int gindex = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;
    int lindex = threadIdx.x + radius;

    // Read input elements into shared memory
    temp[lindex] = in[gindex];
    if (threadIdx.x < RADIUS) {
        temp[lindex - RADIUS] = in[gindex - RADIUS];
        temp[lindex + BLOCK_SIZE] = in[gindex + BLOCK_SIZE];
    }

    // Synchronize (ensure all the data is available)
    __syncthreads();
}
```

# Stencil Kernel

```
// Apply the stencil  
int result = 0;  
for (int offset = -RADIUS ; offset <= RADIUS ; offset++)  
    result += temp[lindex + offset];  
  
// Store the result  
out[gindex] = result;  
}
```

# Review (1 of 2)

- Launching parallel threads
  - Launch  $N$  blocks with  $M$  threads per block with  
`kernel<<<N,M>>> (...);`
  - Use `blockIdx.x` to access block index within grid
  - Use `threadIdx.x` to access thread index within block
- Allocate elements to threads:  
  
`int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;`



# Review (2 of 2)

- Use `__shared__` to declare a variable/array in shared memory
  - Data is shared between threads in a block
  - Not visible to threads in other blocks
- Use `__syncthreads()` as a barrier
  - Use to prevent data hazards

# MANAGING THE DEVICE

## CONCEPTS

Heterogeneous Computing

Blocks

Threads

Indexing

Shared memory

\_\_syncthreads()

Asynchronous operation

Handling errors

Managing devices

# Coordinating Host & Device

- Kernel launches are **asynchronous**
  - Control returns to the CPU immediately
- CPU needs to synchronize before consuming the results

**cudaMemcpy ( )**

Blocks the CPU until the copy is complete  
Copy begins when all preceding CUDA calls have completed

**cudaMemcpyAsync ( )**

Asynchronous, does not block the CPU

**cudaDeviceSynchronize ( )**

Blocks the CPU until all preceding CUDA calls have completed

# Reporting Errors

- All CUDA API calls return an error code (`cudaError_t`)
  - Error in the API call itself
  - OR
  - Error in an earlier asynchronous operation (e.g. kernel)

- Get the error code for the last error:

```
cudaError_t cudaGetLastError(void)
```

- Get a string to describe the error:

```
char *cudaGetErrorString(cudaError_t)
```

```
printf("%s\n", cudaGetErrorString(cudaGetLastError()));
```

# Device Management

- Application can query and select GPUs

```
cudaGetDeviceCount(int *count)
```

```
cudaSetDevice(int device)
```

```
cudaGetDevice(int *device)
```

```
cudaGetDeviceProperties(cudaDeviceProp *prop, int device)
```

- Multiple threads can share a device
- A single thread can manage multiple devices

```
cudaSetDevice(i) to select current device
```

```
cudaMemcpy(...) for peer-to-peer copies†
```

<sup>†</sup> requires OS and device support

# Introduction to CUDA C/C++

- What have we learned?
  - Write and launch CUDA C/C++ kernels
    - `__global__, blockIdx.x, threadIdx.x, <<<>>>`
  - Manage GPU memory
    - `cudaMalloc(), cudaMemcpy(), cudaFree()`
  - Manage communication and synchronization
    - `__shared__, __syncthreads()`
    - `cudaMemcpy() VS cudaMemcpyAsync(), cudaDeviceSynchronize()`

# IDs and Dimensions

– A kernel is launched as a grid of blocks of threads

- `blockIdx` and `threadIdx` are 3D
- We showed only one dimension (x)

• Built-in variables:

- `threadIdx`
- `blockIdx`
- `blockDim`
- `gridDim`

