Parallel Computing with GPUs: Shared Memory

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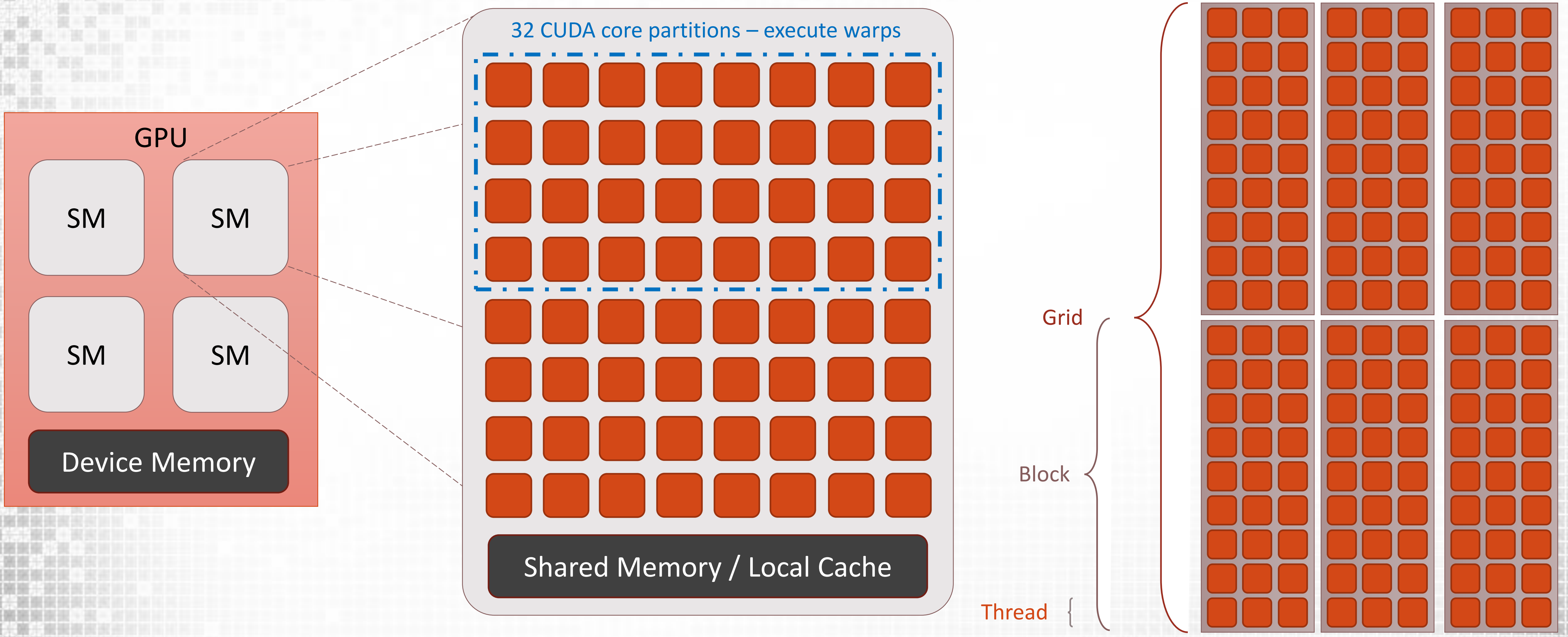
Grids, Blocks, Warps & Threads


GPU
SM
SM
SM
SM
Device Memory
32 CUDA core partitions – execute warps
Shared Memory / Local Cache
Grid
Block
Thread

Grids, Blocks, Warps & Threads

- ❑Blocks map to SMs
    - ❑SMs may have more than one block
    - ❑Blocks are split into warps by hardware (always pick block size multiple of 32)
    - ❑Blocks do not migrate between SMs
    - ❑No guarantee of order of block execution
    - ❑No communication or synchronisation between blocks
- ❑Threads map to CUDA cores
    - ❑Executed in partitions of 32, called warps
    - ❑Lots of warps means lots of opportunity to hide memory movement

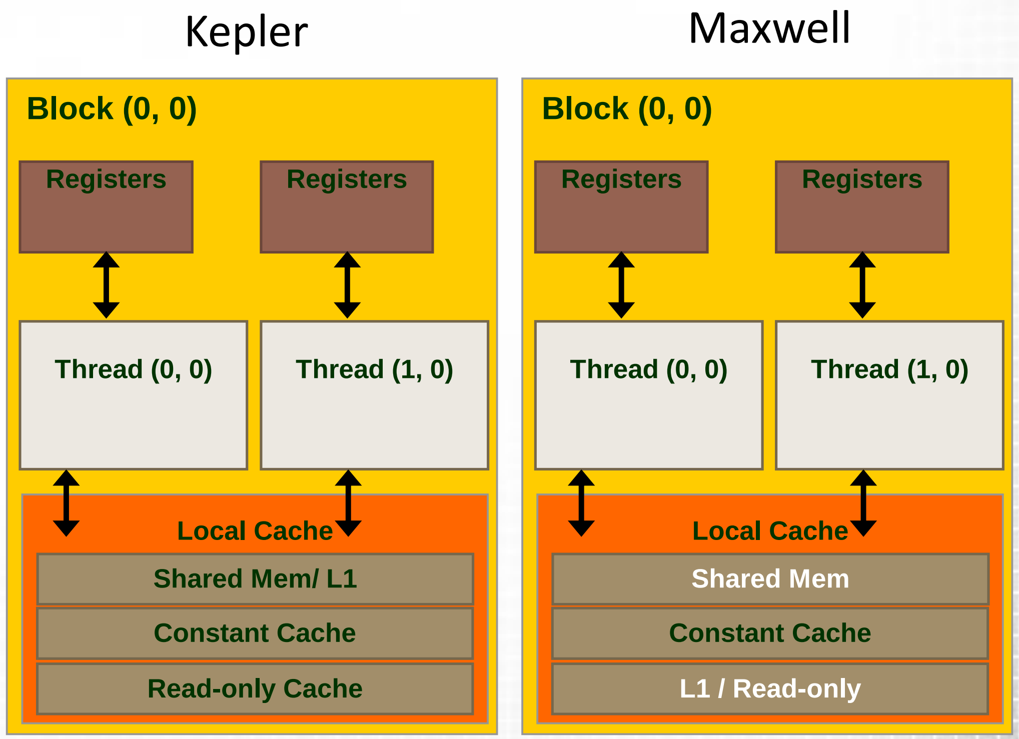
Review

- ❑We have seen the importance of different types of memory
  - ❑And observed the performance improvement from read-only and constant cache usage
- ❑So far we have seen how CUDA can be used for performing thread local computations; e.g.
  - ❑Load data from memory to registers
  - ❑Perform thread-local computations
  - ❑Store results back to global memory
- ❑We will now consider another important type of memory
  - ❑Shared memory

- ❑Shared Memory
- ❑Shared Memory Bank Conflicts
- ❑2D Shared Memory Bank Conflicts
- ❑Boundary Conditions for Shared Memory Loading
- ❑Host-side Configurations for Shared Memory

Shared Memory

- ❑Architecture Details
  - ❑In Kepler (64KB) of Shared Memory is split between Shared Memory and L1 cache
    - ❑The ratio to SM and L1 can be configured
  - ❑In Maxwell 64KB of Shared Memory is dedicated
- ❑Its just another Cache, right?
  - ❑User configurable
  - ❑Requires manually loading and synchronising data



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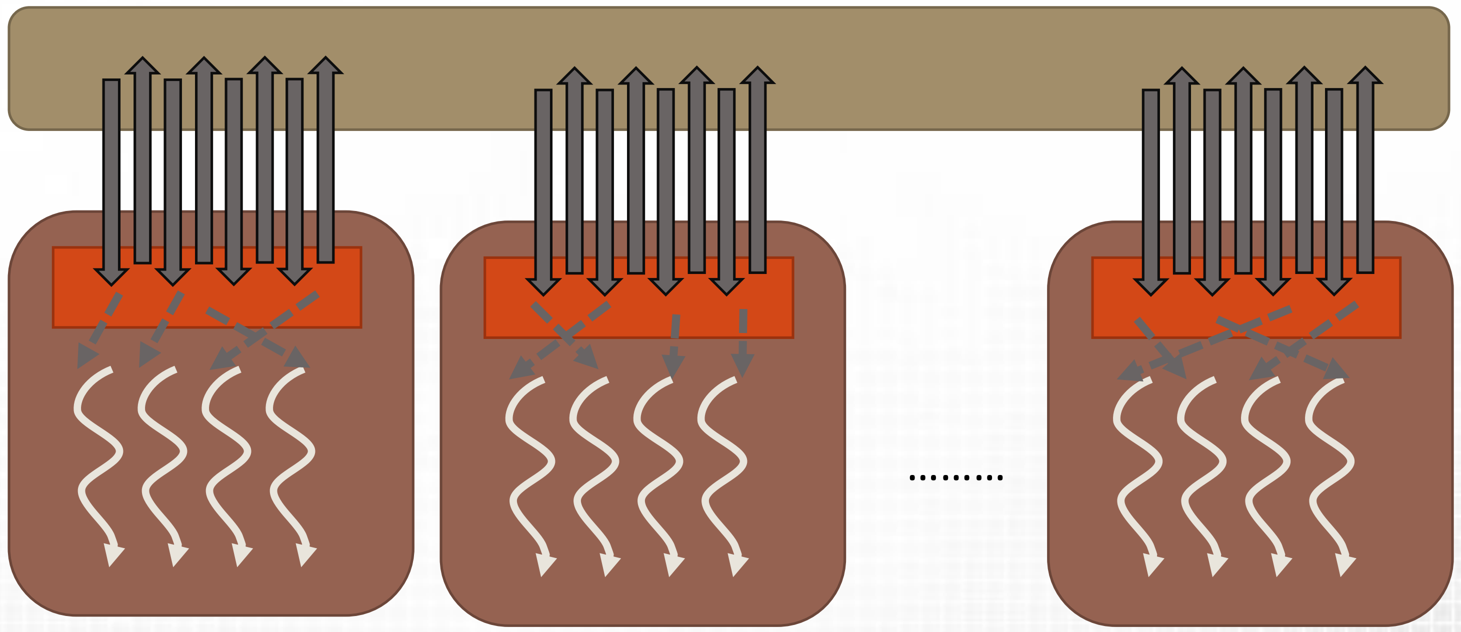
Shared Memory

- Performance
  - Shared memory is very fast
  - Bandwidth > 1 TB/s
- Block level computation
  - Challenges the thread level view…
  - Allows data to be shared between threads in the same block
  - User configurable cache at the thread block level
  - Still no broader synchronisation beyond the level of thread blocks

Block Local Computation

- ❑Partition data into groups that fit into shared memory
- ❑Load subset of data into shared memory
- ❑Perform computation on the subset
- ❑Copy subset back to global memory



Move, execute, move

- From Host view
  - Move: Data to GPU memory
  - Execute: Kernel
  - Move: Data back to host
- From Device view
  - Move: Data from device memory to registers
  - Execute: instructions
  - Move: Data back to device memory

Thread level parallelism

- From Host view
  - Move: Data to GPU memory
  - Execute: Kernel
  - Move: Data back to host
- From Device view
  - Move: Data from device memory to local cache
  - Execute: subset of kernel (reusing cached values)
  - Move: Data back to device memory
- From Block View
  - Move: Data from local cache
  - Execute: instructions
  - Move: Data back to local cache (or device memory)

Block level parallelism

A Case for Shared Memory

```
__global__ void sum3_kernel(int *c, int *a)
{
    int i = blockIdx.x*blockDim.x + threadIdx.x;
    int left, right;

    //load value at i-1
    left = 0;
    if (i > 0)
      left = a[i - 1];

    //load value at i+1
    right = 0;
    if (i < (N - 1))
      right = a[i + 1];

    c[i] = left + a[i] + right; //sum three values
}
```

Do we have a candidate for block level parallelism using shared memory?

A Case for Shared Memory

```
__global__ void sum3_kernel(int *c, int *a)
{
    int i = blockIdx.x*blockDim.x + threadIdx.x;
    int left, right;

    //load value at i-1
    left = 0;
    if (i > 0)
      left = a[i - 1];

    //load value at i+1
    right = 0;
    if (i < (N - 1))
      right = a[i + 1];

    c[i] = left + a[i] + right; //sum three values
}
```

- ❑Currently: Thread-local computation
- ❑Bandwidth limited
    - ❑Requires three loads per thread (at index `i-1`, `i`, and `i+1`)
- ❑Block level solution: load each value only once!

CUDA Shared memory

- ❑Shared memory between threads in the same block can be defined using `__shared__`
- ❑Shared variables are only accessible from within device functions
  - ❑Not addressable in host code
- ❑Must be careful to avoid race conditions
  - ❑Multiple threads writing to the same shared memory variable
    - ❑Results in undefined behaviour
  - ❑Typically write to shared memory using `threadIdx`
  - ❑Thread level synchronisation is available through `__syncthreads()`
    - ❑Synchronises threads in the block

```
__shared__ int s_data[BLOCK_SIZE];
```

Example

```
__global__ void sum3_kernel(int *c, int *a)
{
  __shared__ int s_data[BLOCK_SIZE];

  int i = blockIdx.x*blockDim.x + threadIdx.x;
  int left, right;

  s_data[threadIdx.x] = a[i];
  __syncthreads();

  //load value at i-1
  left = 0;
  if (i > 0){
    left = s_data[threadIdx.x - 1];
  }

  //load value at i+1
  right = 0;
  if (i < (N - 1)){
    right = s_data[threadIdx.x + 1];
  }

  c[i] = left + s_data[threadIdx.x] + right; //sum
}
```

- ❑Allocate a shared array
  - ❑One integer element per thread
- ❑Each thread loads a single item to shared memory
- ❑Call `__syncthreads` to ensure shared memory data is populated by all threads
- ❑Load all elements through shared memory

What is wrong with this code?

Example

```
__global__ void sum3_kernel(int *c, int *a)
{
  __shared__ int s_data[BLOCK_SIZE];

  int i = blockIdx.x*blockDim.x + threadIdx.x;
  int left, right;

  s_data[threadIdx.x] = a[i];
  __syncthreads();

  //load value at i-1
  left = 0;
  if (i > 0){
    if (threadIdx.x > 0)
      left = s_data[threadIdx.x - 1];
    else
      left = a[i - 1];
  }

  //load value at i+1
  right = 0;
  if (i < (N - 1)){
    if (threadIdx.x <(BLOCK_SIZE-1))
      right = s_data[threadIdx.x + 1];
    else
      right = a[i + 1];
  }

  c[i] = left + s_data[threadIdx.x] + right; //sum
}
```

- Additional step required!
- **Check boundary conditions for the edge of the block**

Problems with Shared memory

- In the example we saw the introduction of boundary conditions
  - Global loads still present at boundaries
  - We have introduced divergence in the code (remember the SIMD model)
  - This is even more prevalent in 2D examples where we *tile* data into shared memory

```
//boundary condition
left = 0;
if (i > 0){
  if (threadIdx.x > 0)
    left = s_data[threadIdx.x - 1];
  else
    left = a[i - 1];
}
```

Shared Memory Bank Conflicts

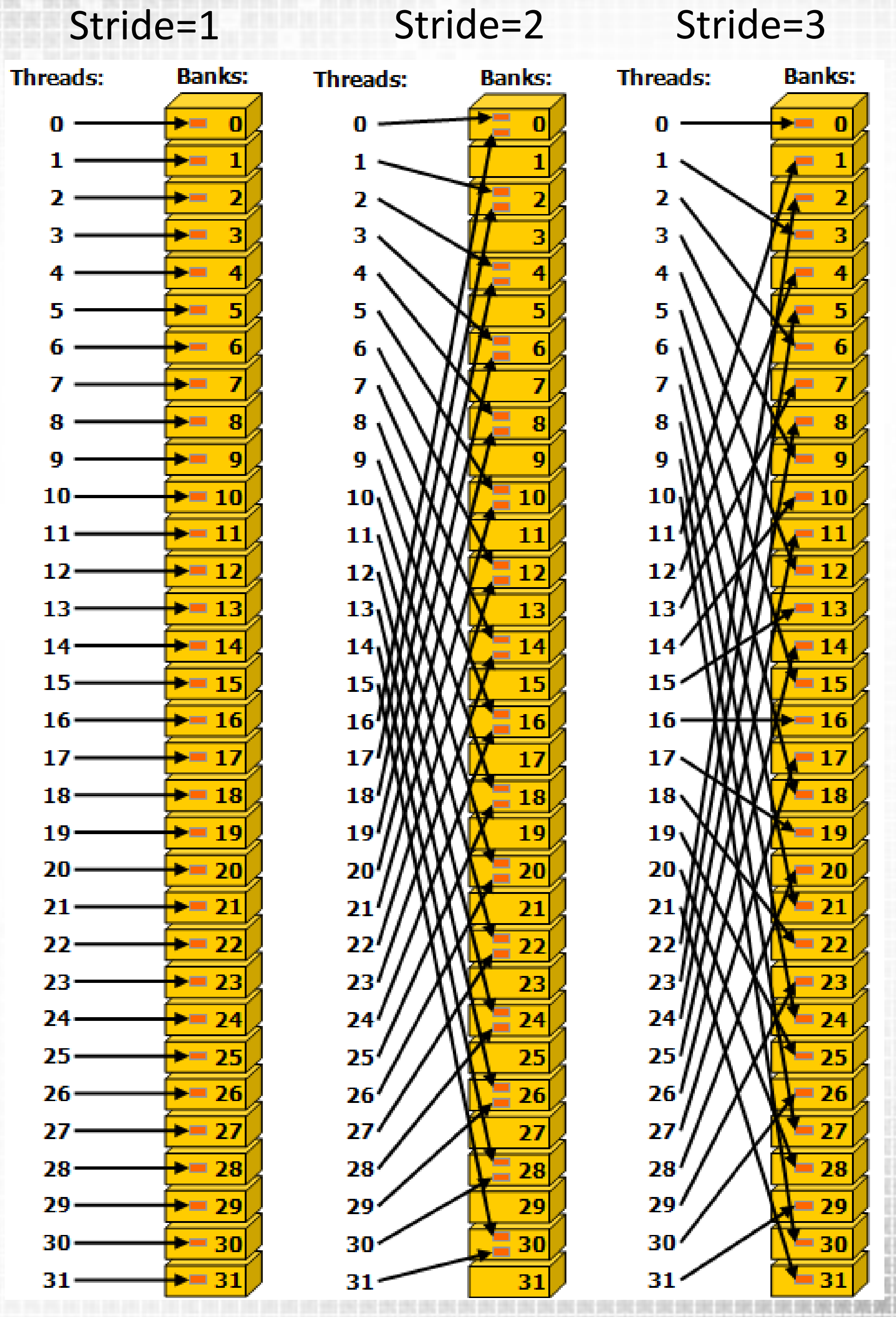
- ❑Shared memory is arranged into 4byte (32bit banks)
  - ❑A load or store of N addresses spanning N distinct banks can be serviced simultaneously
    - ❑Overall bandwidth of $\times N$ a single module
    - ❑Kepler+ can also serve broadcast accesses simultaneously
- ❑A bank conflict occurs when two threads request addresses from the same bank
  - ❑Results in serialisation of the access
- ❑Bank conflicts only occur between threads in a warp
  - ❑There are 32 banks and 32 threads per warp (device of compute capability 2.0)
  - ❑If two threads in a warp access the same bank this is said to be a 2-way bank conflict

Think about you block sized array of floats

```
bank = (index * stride) % 32
```

Access Strides

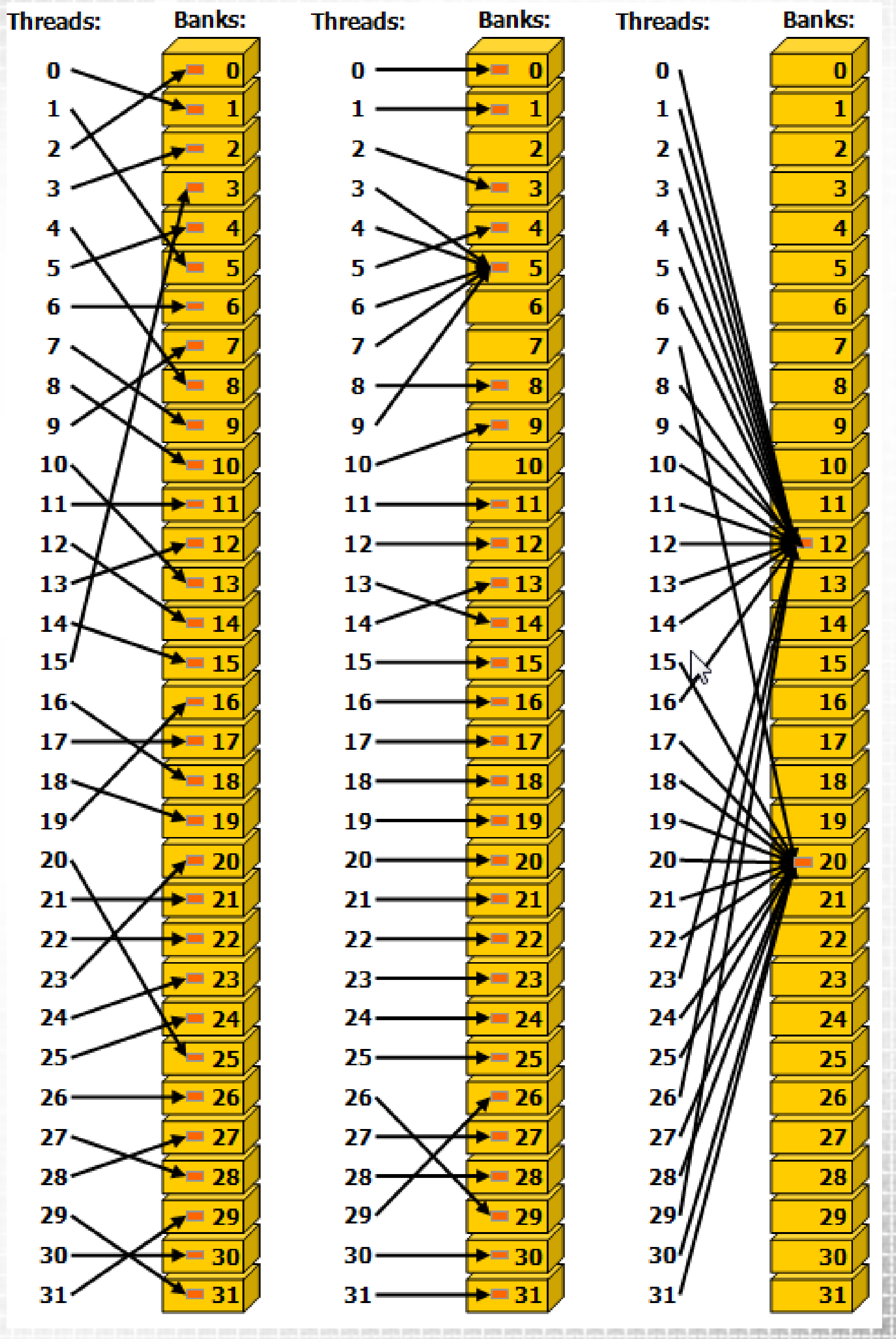
- ❑Stride refers to the size (in increments of the bank size) between each threads memory access pattern
  - ❑If threads access consecutive 4 byte values (e.g. `int` or `float`) then the stride is 1.
    - ❑No conflicts
  - ❑If a thread accesses consecutive 8 bytes values (e.g. `double`) then the stride is 2.
    - ❑2 way conflicts
  - ❑In general odd strides result in no conflicts



More on SM banks

- ❑Irregular access is fine as long as no bank conflicts
- ❑Multiple threads can access the same bank conflict free **if** they access addresses in broadcast
- ❑Broadcast can be to any number of threads in a warp

```
__shared__ float s_data[??];
//read from shared memory using broadcast

some_thread_value = s_data[0] ;
```



Strided access example

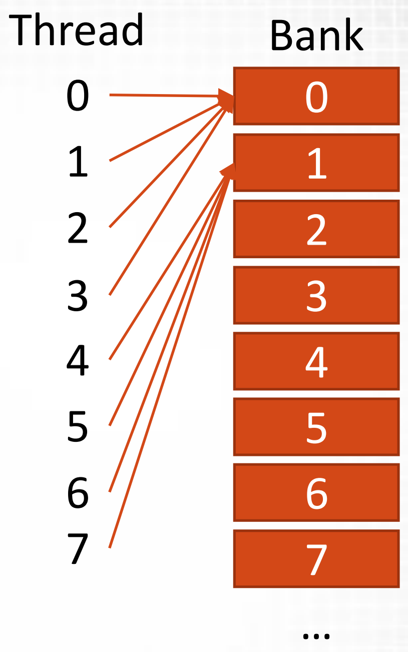
```
__shared__ char s_data[BLOCK_SIZE];

//load or calculate some_thread_value

s_data[threadIdx.x] = some_thread_value;
__syncthreads();
```

Thread	Bank
0	0
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
	…
31	31

- ❑What is the stride?
- ❑What is the level of conflict?
- ❑How can this be improved?

Strided access example

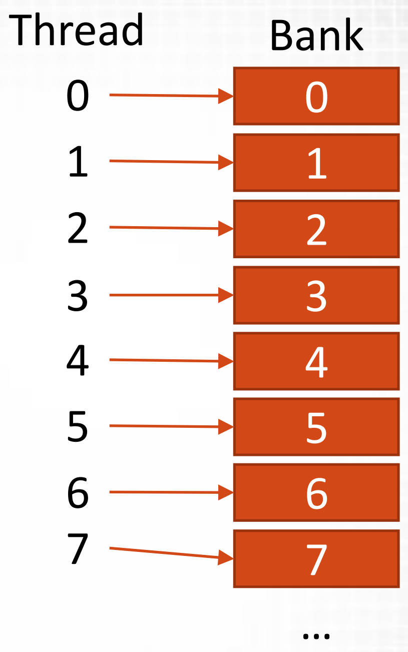
```
__shared__ char s_data[BLOCK_SIZE];

//load or calculate some_thread_value

s_data[threadIdx.x] = some_thread_value;
__syncthreads();
```



- ❑What is the stride? Less than 1 (0.25)
- ❑What is the level of conflict? 4 way
- ❑How can this be improved? Increase the stride

Increase the stride (OK solution)

```
__shared__ char s_data[BLOCK_SIZE*4];

//load or calculate some_thread_value

s_data[threadIdx.x*4] = some_thread_value;
__syncthreads();
```



- ❑What is the stride? 1
- ❑What is the level of conflict? 1 way (no conflict)
- ❑How can this be improved? Use less memory!

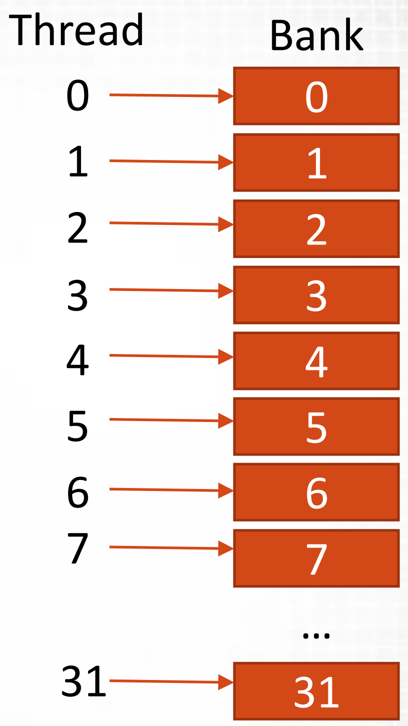
Increase the stride (good solution)

```
__shared__ char s_data[BLOCK_SIZE+1];

//load or calculate some_thread_value

s_data[CONFLICT_FREE(threadIdx.x)] = some_thread_value;
__syncthreads();
```

where

```
#define CHAR_MULTIPLIER 4
#define CONFLICT_FREE(x) (x*CHAR_MULTIPLIER % (BLOCK_SIZE+1))
```

- ❑What is the stride? 1
- ❑What is the level of conflict? 1 way (no conflict)
- ❑How much shared memory is required? `BLOCK_SIZE+1`



Increase the stride (good solution)

stride	0.25			
multipier	4			
block_size	128			
threadIdx.x			adjusted index	bank
0			0	0
1			4	1
2			8	2
3			12	3
4			16	4
5			20	5
6			24	6
7			28	7
8			32	8
9			36	9
10			40	10
…			…	…
127			**121**	30
		Banks Used		32
		Max Conflicts		1

`=(tid*multiplier) % (block_size+1)`

`=(index*stride) % 32`

- ❑`BLOCK_SIZE+1` unique indices
- ❑Much better than `BLOCK_SIZE*4` unique indices

- ❑Shared Memory
- ❑Shared Memory Bank Conflicts
- ❑2D Shared Memory Bank Conflicts
- ❑Boundary Conditions for Shared Memory Loading
- ❑Host-side Configurations for Shared Memory

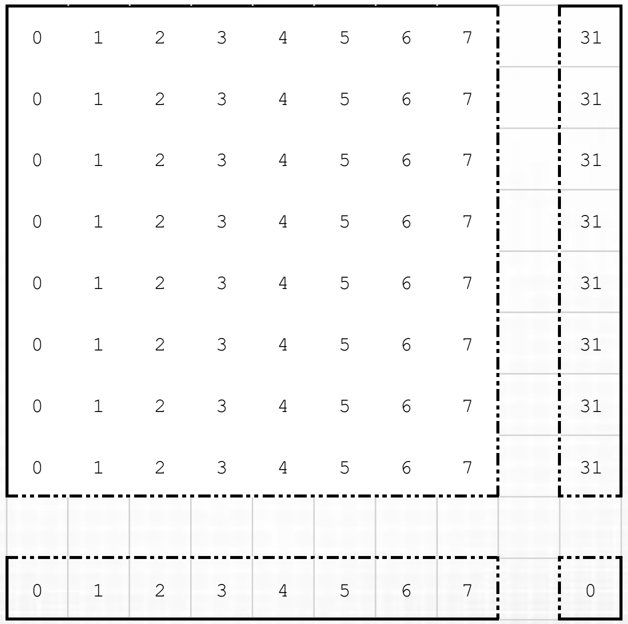
Bank conflicts with 2D tiles

```
__global__ void image_kernel(float *image)
{
  __shared__ float s_data[BLOCK_DIM][BLOCK_DIM];

  for (int i = 0; i < BLOCK_DIM; i++){
    some_thread_value += f(s_data[threadIdx.x][i]);
}
```

```
bank = threadIdx.x * stride % 32
```

- ❑Example where each thread (of 2D block) operates on a row
  - ❑Loads values by column

Shared Memory Bank



Bank conflicts with 2D tiles

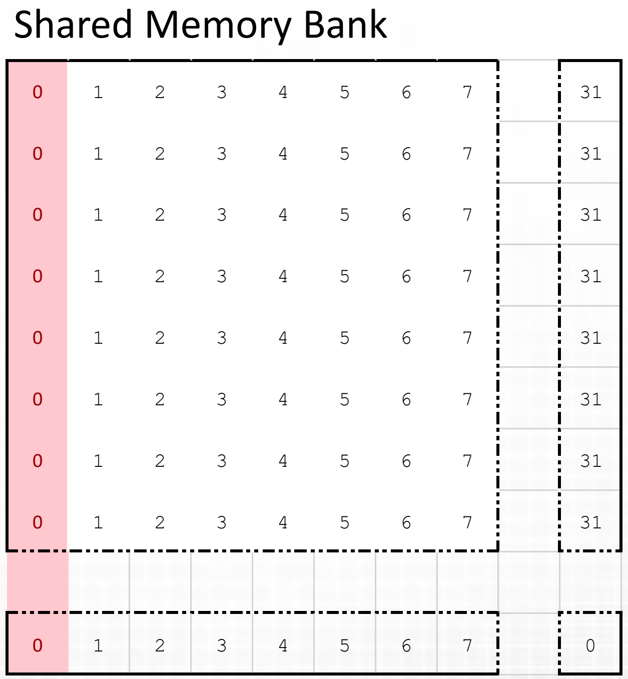
```
__global__ void image_kernel(float *image)
{
  __shared__ float s_data[BLOCK_DIM][BLOCK_DIM];

  for (int i = 0; i < BLOCK_DIM; i++){
    some_thread_value += f(s_data[threadIdx.x][i]);
}
```

- Example where each thread (of 2D block) operates on a row
  - Loads values by column

```
bank = threadIdx.x * stride % 32
```

BLOCK_DIM=32

i=0



- 32 way bank conflicts!
  - Very bad
- Stride = 32

Bank conflicts with 2D tiles

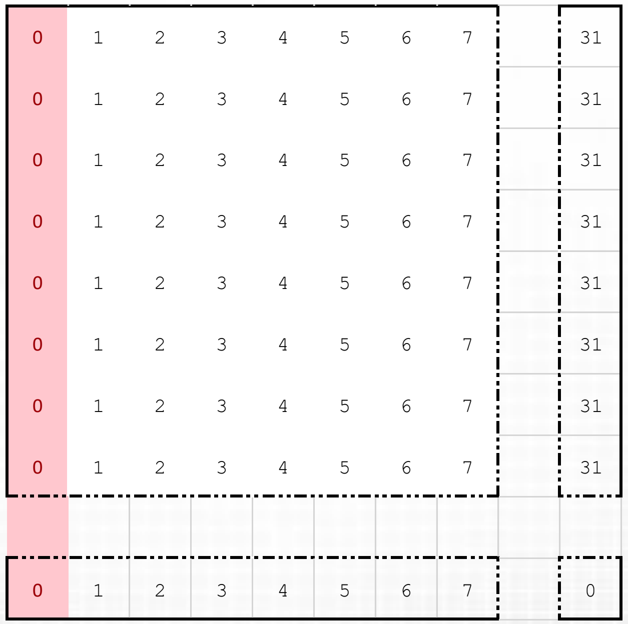
```
__global__ void image_kernel(float *image)
{
  __shared__ float s_data[BLOCK_DIM][BLOCK_DIM];

  for (int i = 0; i < BLOCK_DIM; i++){
    some_thread_value += f(s_data[threadIdx.x][i]);
}
```

```
bank = threadIdx.x * stride % 32
```

```
BLOCK_DIM=32
```

i=0

Shared Memory Bank



- Example where each thread (of 2D block) operates on a row
  - Loads values by column

- **How to fix**
  - **Memory padding**
  - **Transpose the matrix**
    - **Or operate on columns (loading by row) if possible**

Bank conflicts with 2D tiles

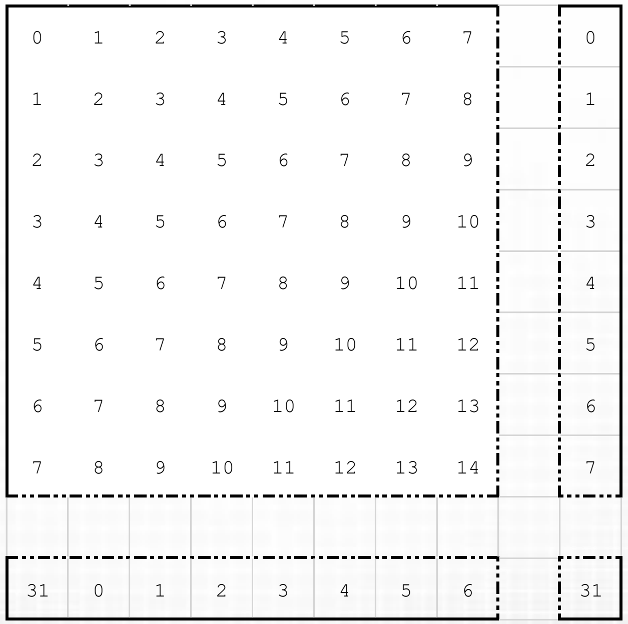
```
__global__ void image_kernel(float *image)
{
  __shared__ float s_data[BLOCK_DIM][BLOCK_DIM+1];

  for (int i = 0; i < BLOCK_DIM; i++){
    some_thread_value += f(d_data[threadIdx.x][i]);
}
```

❑ **Memory Padding Solution**

```
bank = threadIdx.x * stride %32
```

```
BLOCK_DIM+1=33
```

Shared Memory Bank



0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		0
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		7
31	0	1	2	3	4	5	6		31

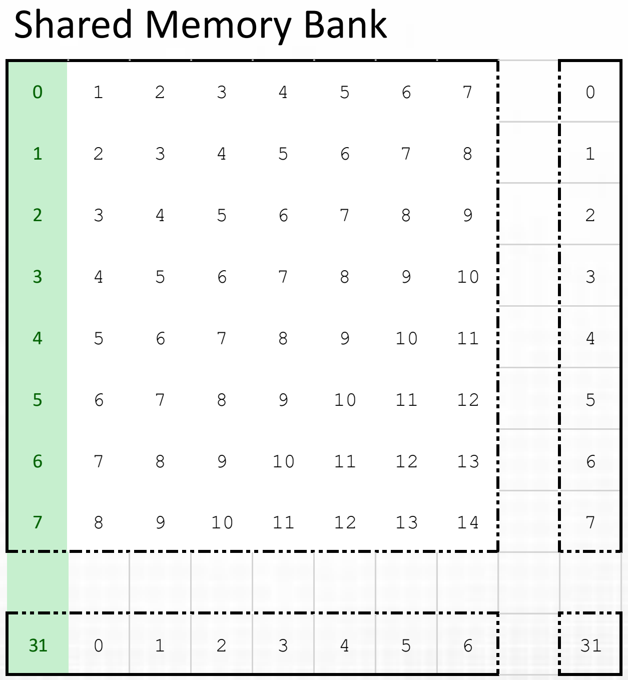
Bank conflicts with 2D tiles

```
__global__ void image_kernel(float *image)
{
  __shared__ float s_data[BLOCK_DIM][BLOCK_DIM+1];

  for (int i = 0; i < BLOCK_DIM; i++){
    some_thread_value += f(d_data[threadIdx.x][i]);
}
```

```
bank = threadIdx.x * stride % 32
```

```
BLOCK_DIM+1=33
```

i=0

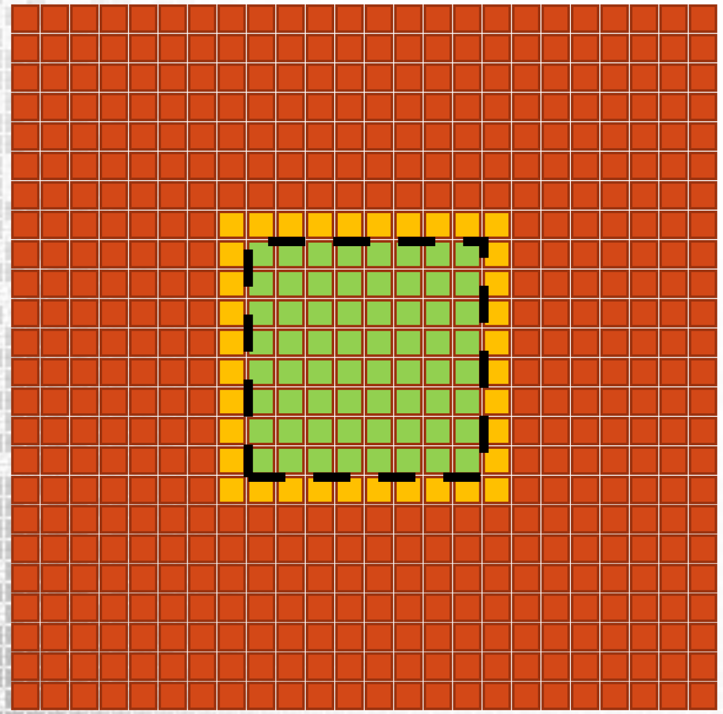


- ❑**Memory Padding Solution**
- ❑Every thread in warp reads from different bank
- ❑*Alternative: Transpose solution left to you!*

- ❑Shared Memory
- ❑Shared Memory Bank Conflicts
- ❑2D Shared Memory Bank Conflicts
- ❑Boundary Conditions for Shared Memory Loading
- ❑Host-side Configurations for Shared Memory

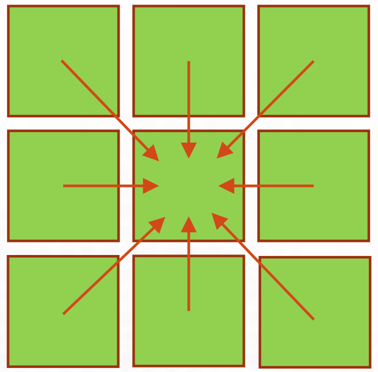
Boundary Conditions & Shared Memory Tiling

- Consider a 2D problem where data is gathered from neighbouring cells
  - Each cell reads 8 values (gather pattern)
  - Sounds like a good candidate for shared memory
    - We can tile data into memory



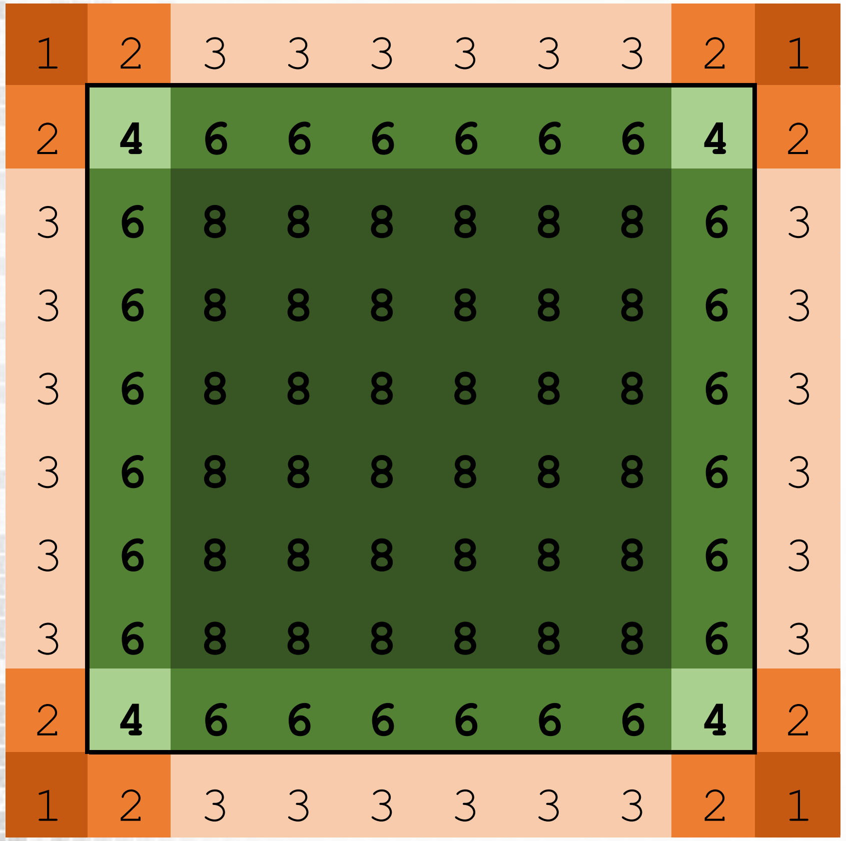
Thread Block size is 8x8

🟩 Data tiled into shared memory
🟨 Data not tiled into shared memory



Gather pattern

Problem with our tiling approach



1	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	1
2	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	2
3	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	3
3	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	3
3	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	3
3	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	3
3	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	3
3	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	3
2	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	2
1	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	1

- ❑Memory access pattern is good for values inside the boundary
  - ❑448 cached reads
  - ❑64 loads
- ❑Memory outside of boundary is loaded multiple times
  - ❑92 un-cached reads
  - ❑92 loads

Boundary Condition Improvements

$$Utilisation = \frac{DIM^2}{(DIM+2)^2}$$

DIM	Utilisation
8	64%
12	73%
16	79%
20	83%
24	85%
28	87%
32	89%
36	90%
40	91%
44	91%
48	92%

- Launch more threads
  - Launch thread block of `DIM+2 × DIM+2`
  - Allocate one element of space per thread in SM
  - Every thread loads one value
  - Only threads in inner DIM x DIM compute values
    - Causes under utilisation
- Use more shared memory per thread
  - Launch same `DIM × DIM` threads
  - Allocate `DIM+2 × DIM+2` elements of space in SM
  - Threads on boundary load multiple elements
    - Causes unbalanced loads
  - All threads perform compute values

- ❑Shared Memory
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Dynamically Assigned Shared Memory

- It is possibly to dynamically assign shared memory at runtime.
- Requires both a host and device modification to code
  - Device: Must declare shared memory as extern
  - Host: Must declare shared memory size in kernel launch parameters

```
unsigned int sm_size = sizeof(float)*DIM*DIM;
image_kernel<<<blocksPerGrid, threadsPerBlock, sm_size >>>(d_image);

__global__ void image_kernel(float *image)
{
  extern __shared__ float s_data[];

}
```

Is equivalent to

```
image_kernel<<<blocksPerGrid, threadsPerBlock>>>(d_image);

__global__ void image_kernel(float *image)
{
  __shared__ float *s_data[DIM][DIM];

}
```

Summary

- Shared Memory introduces the idea of block level computation rather than just thread level computation
- Shared Memory is a limited resource but can be very useful for reducing global memory bandwidth
  - Where data is reused
- Shared Memory requires user synchronisation unlike other general purpose caches (i.e. L1, texture)
- For optimal performance memory banks must be considered and boundary conditions must be handled
- There are hardware specific options for configuring how Shared Memory is used

Acknowledgements and Further Reading

- http://cuda-programming.blogspot.co.uk/2013/02/bank-conflicts-in-shared-memory-in-cuda.html
- http://acceleware.com/blog/maximizing-shared-memory-bandwidth-nvidia-kepler-gpus