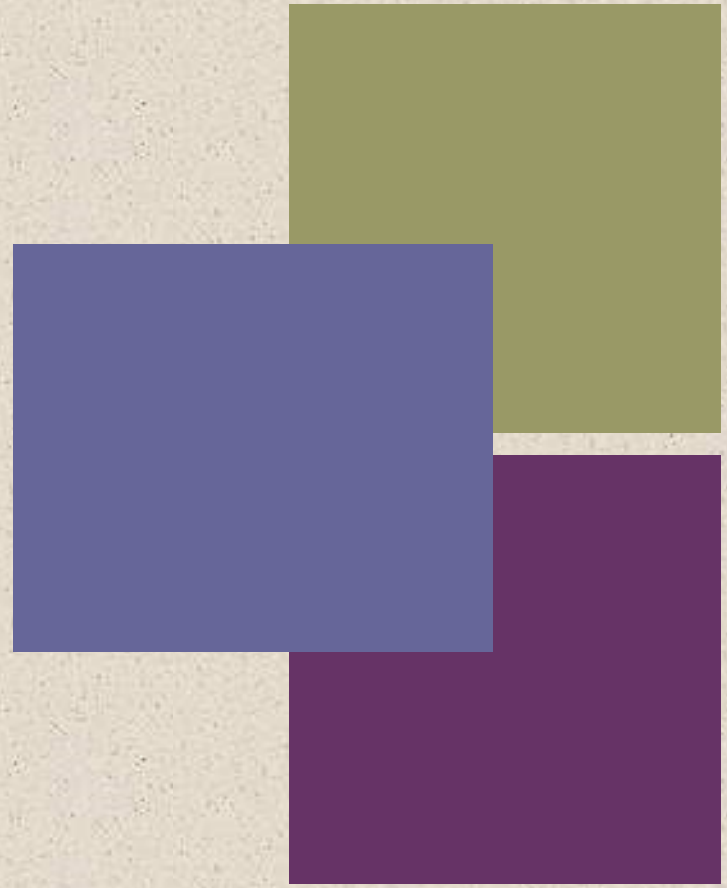
William Stallings Computer Organization and Architecture 10th Edition



Chapter 4

Cache Memory

Location Internal (e.g. processor registers, cache, main memory) External (e.g. optical disks, magnetic disks, tapes) **Capacity** Number of words Number of bytes **Unit of Transfer** Word Block **Access Method** Sequential Direct Random Associative	**Performance** Access time Cycle time Transfer rate **Physical Type** Semiconductor Magnetic Optical Magneto-optical **Physical Characteristics** Volatile/nonvolatile Erasable/nonerasable **Organization** Memory modules

Table 4.1
Key Characteristics of Computer Memory Systems

Characteristics of Memory Systems

- Location
  - Refers to whether memory is internal and external to the computer
  - Internal memory is often equated with main memory
  - Processor requires its own local memory, in the form of registers
  - Cache is another form of internal memory
  - External memory consists of peripheral storage devices that are accessible to the processor via I/O controllers
- Capacity
  - Memory is typically expressed in terms of bytes
- Unit of transfer
  - For internal memory the unit of transfer is equal to the number of electrical lines into and out of the memory module

Method of Accessing Units of Data

Sequential access

- Memory is organized into units of data called records
- Access must be made in a specific linear sequence
- Access time is variable

Direct access

- Involves a shared read-write mechanism
- Individual blocks or records have a unique address based on physical location
- Access time is variable

Random access

- Each addressable location in memory has a unique, physically wired-in addressing mechanism
- The time to access a given location is independent of the sequence of prior accesses and is constant
- Any location can be selected at random and directly addressed and accessed
- Main memory and some cache systems are random access

Associative

- A word is retrieved based on a portion of its contents rather than its address
- Each location has its own addressing mechanism and retrieval time is constant independent of location or prior access patterns
- Cache memories may employ associative access

Capacity and Performance:

The two most important characteristics of memory

Three performance parameters are used:

Access time (latency)

- For random-access memory it is the time it takes to perform a read or write operation
- For non-random-access memory it is the time it takes to position the read-write mechanism at the desired location

Memory cycle time

- Access time plus any additional time required before second access can commence
- Additional time may be required for transients to die out on signal lines or to regenerate data if they are read destructively
- Concerned with the system bus, not the processor

Transfer rate

- The rate at which data can be transferred into or out of a memory unit
- For random-access memory it is equal to 1/(cycle time)

Memory

- The most common forms are:
  - Semiconductor memory
  - Magnetic surface memory
  - Optical
  - Magneto-optical
- Several physical characteristics of data storage are important:
  - Volatile memory
    - Information decays naturally or is lost when electrical power is switched off
  - Nonvolatile memory
    - Once recorded, information remains without deterioration until deliberately changed
    - No electrical power is needed to retain information
  - Magnetic-surface memories
    - Are nonvolatile
  - Semiconductor memory
    - May be either volatile or nonvolatile
  - Nonerasable memory
    - Cannot be altered, except by destroying the storage unit
    - Semiconductor memory of this type is known as read-only memory (ROM)
- For random-access memory the organization is a key design issue
  - Organization refers to the physical arrangement of bits to form words

Memory Hierarchy

- Design constraints on a computer's memory can be summed up by three questions:
  - How much, how fast, how expensive
- There is a trade-off among capacity, access time, and cost
  - Faster access time, greater cost per bit
  - Greater capacity, smaller cost per bit
  - Greater capacity, slower access time
- The way out of the memory dilemma is not to rely on a single memory component or technology, but to employ a memory hierarchy

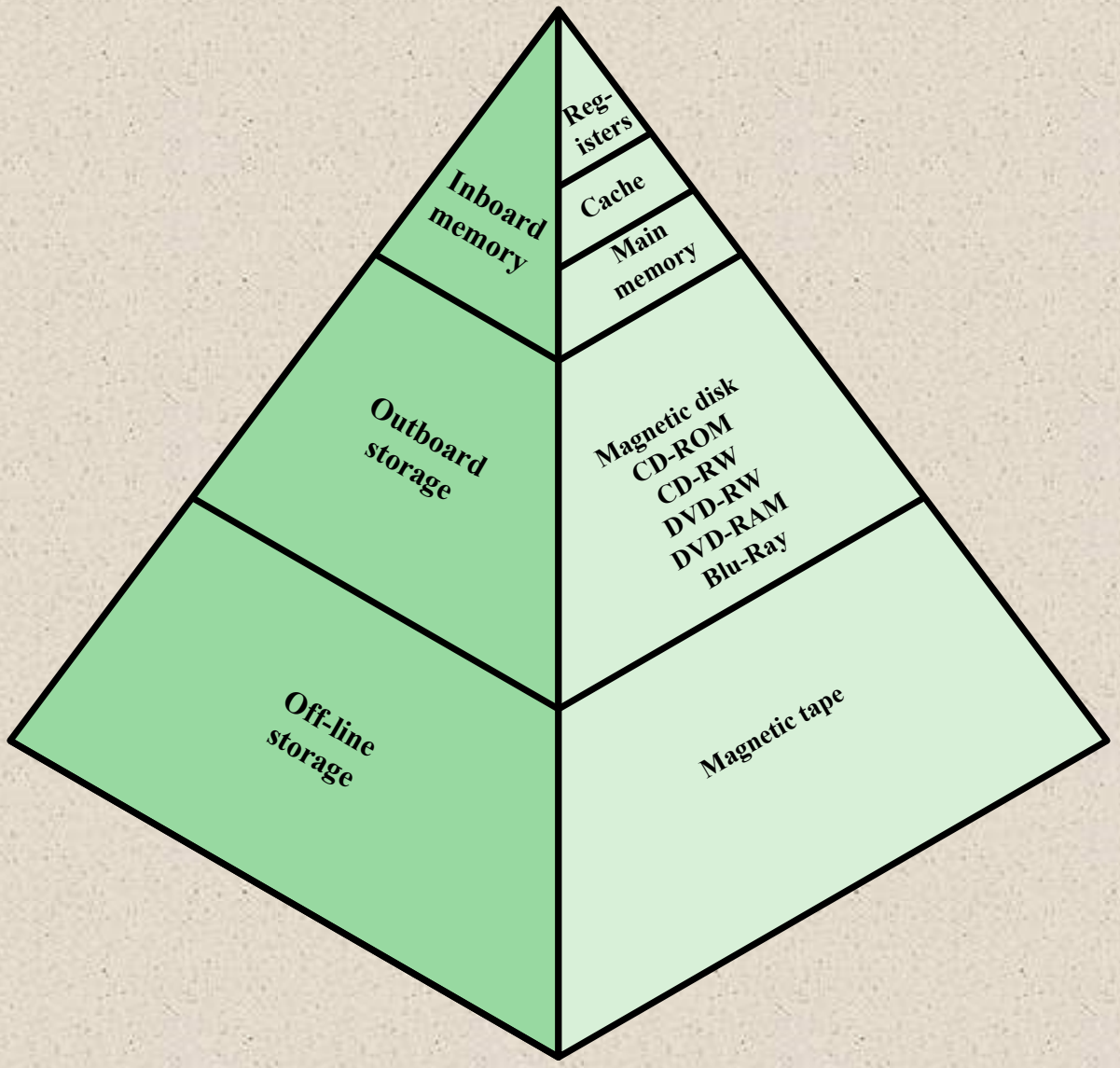


Figure 4.1 The Memory Hierarchy

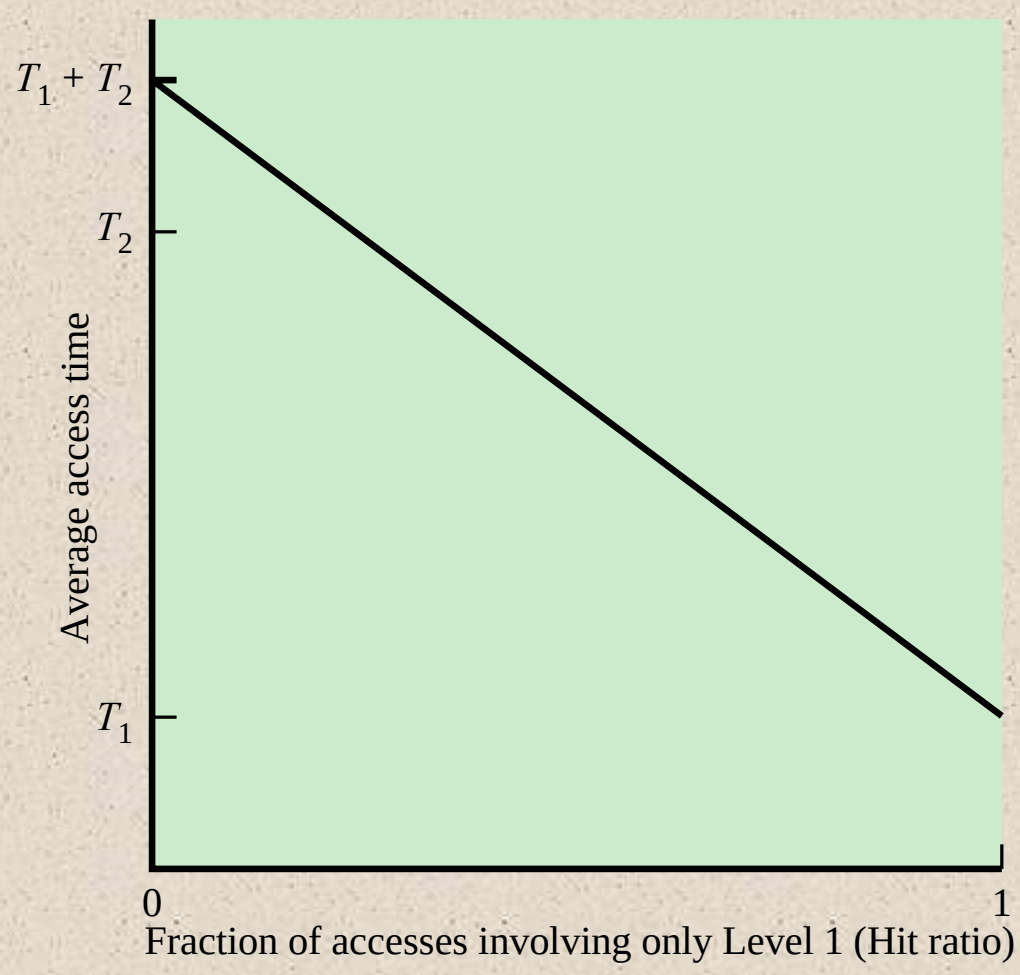


Figure 4.2 Performance of a Simple Two-Level Memory

Memory

- The use of three levels exploits the fact that semiconductor memory comes in a variety of types which differ in speed and cost
- Data are stored more permanently on external mass storage devices
- External, nonvolatile memory is also referred to as **secondary** memory or **auxiliary** memory
- Disk cache
  - A portion of main memory can be used as a buffer to hold data temporarily that is to be read out to disk
  - A few large transfers of data can be used instead of many small transfers of data
  - Data can be retrieved rapidly from the software cache rather than slowly from the disk

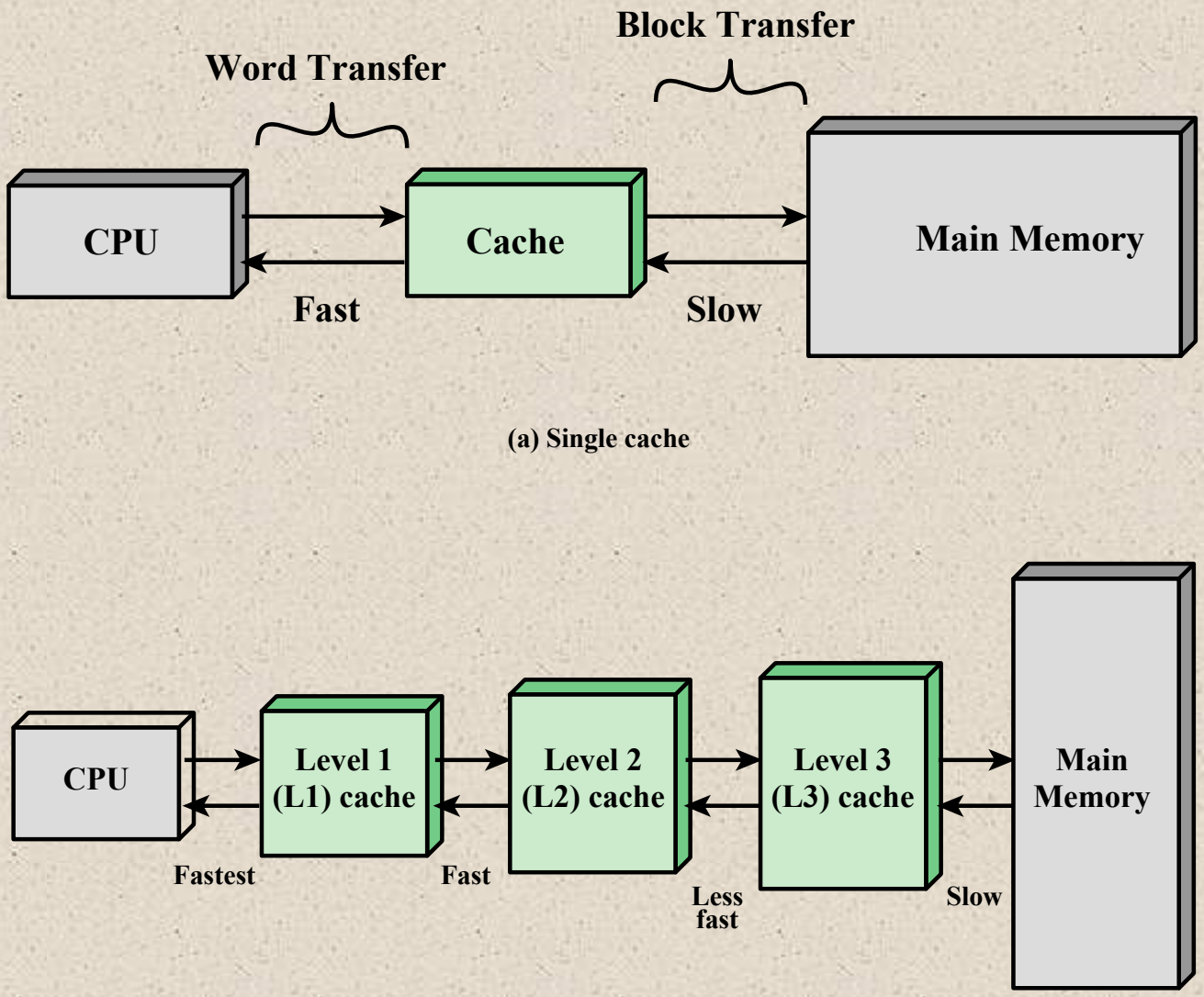


Figure 4.3 Cache and Main Memory

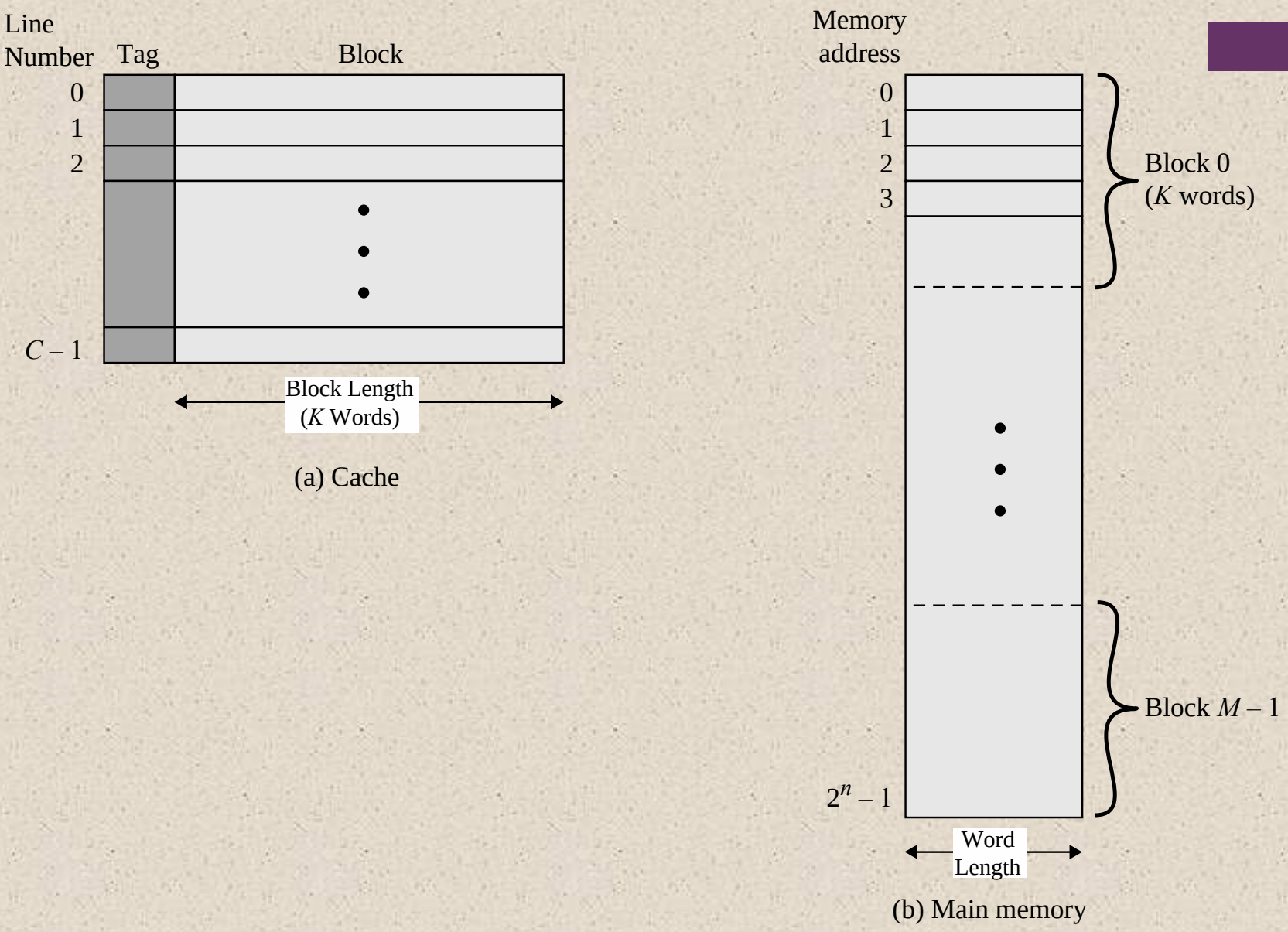


Figure 4.4 Cache/Main-Memory Structure

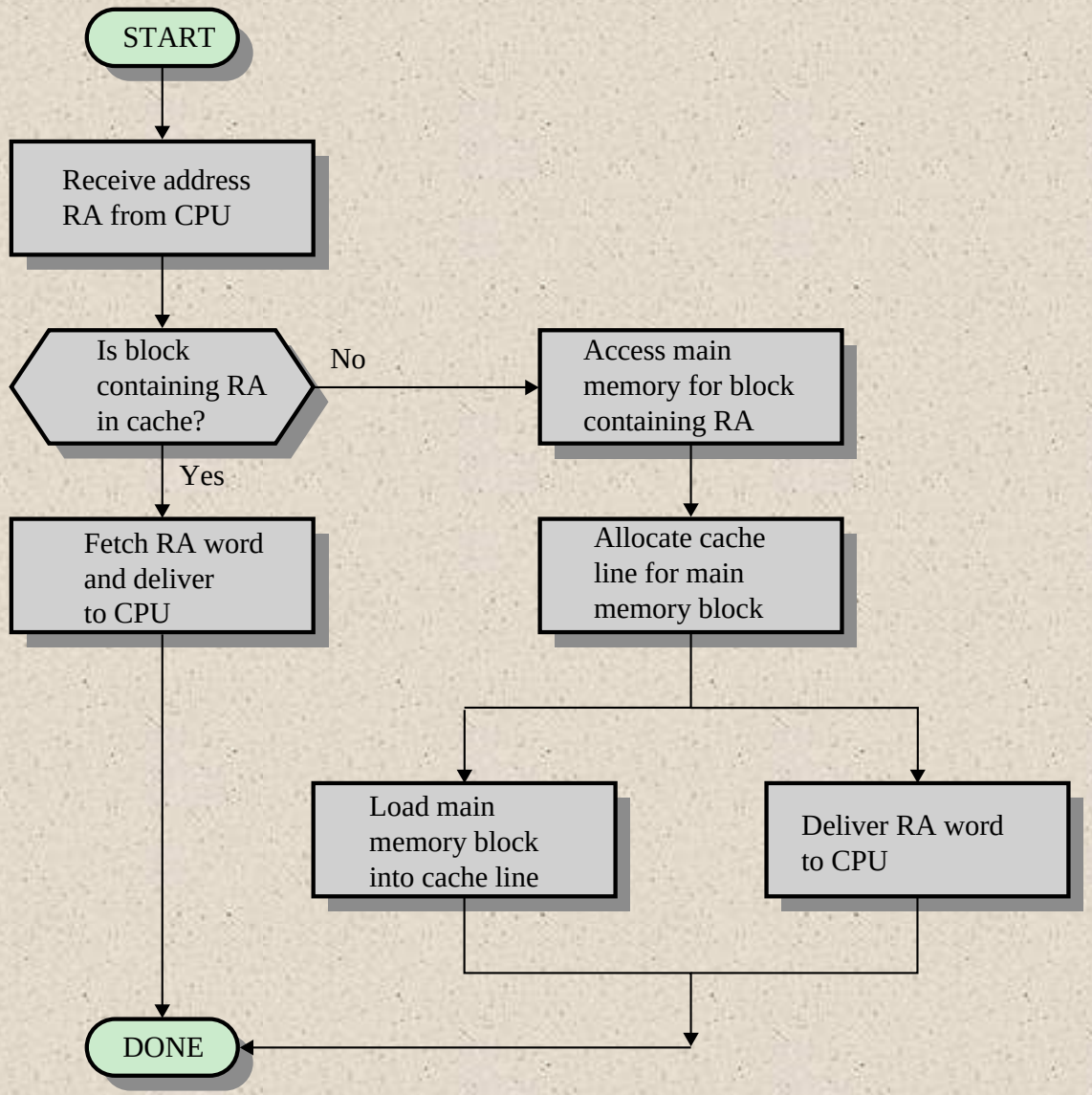


Figure 4.5 Cache Read Operation

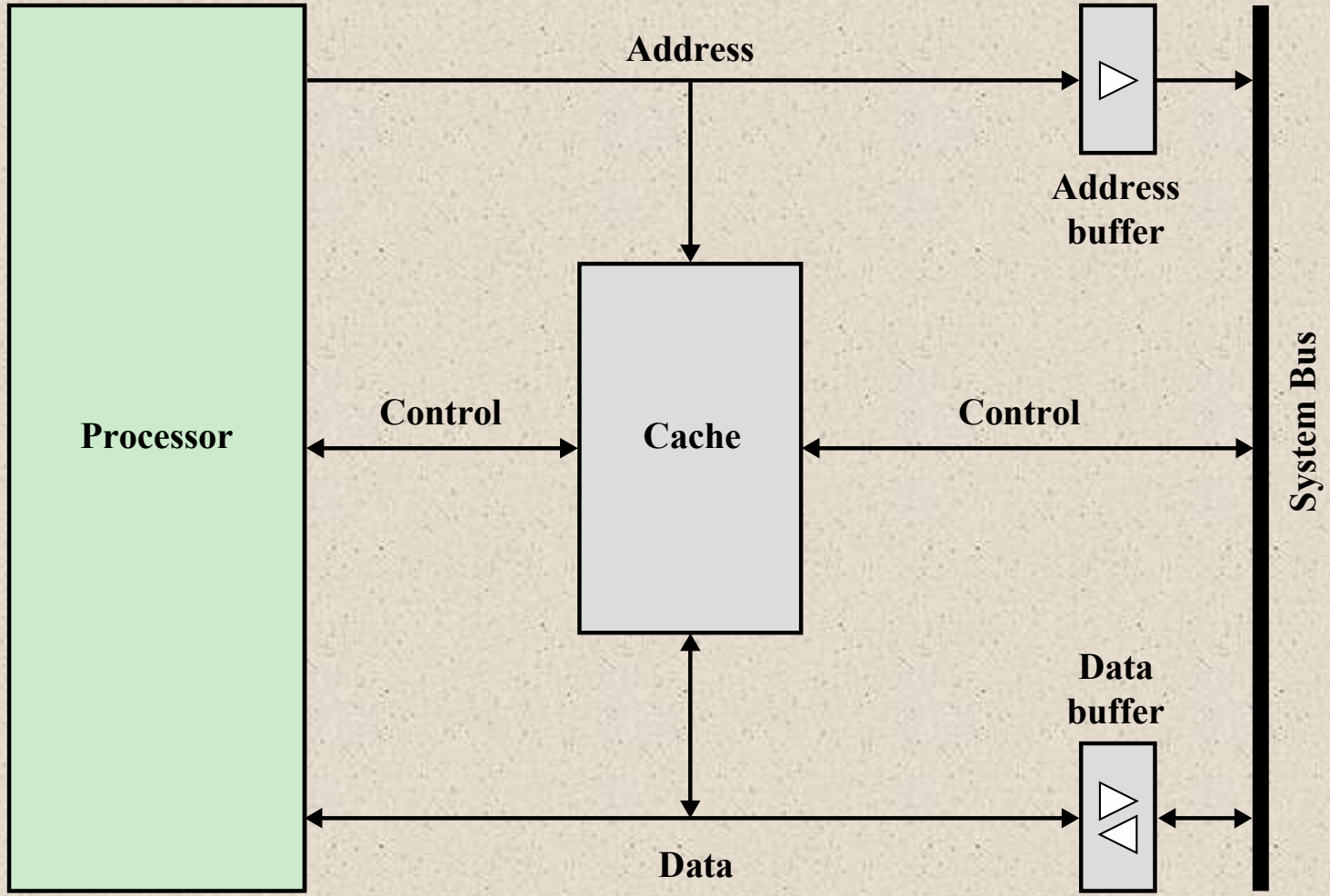
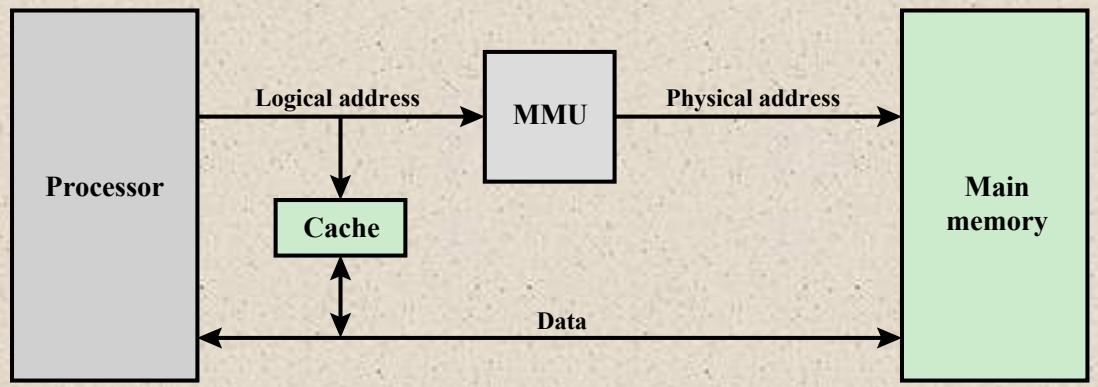


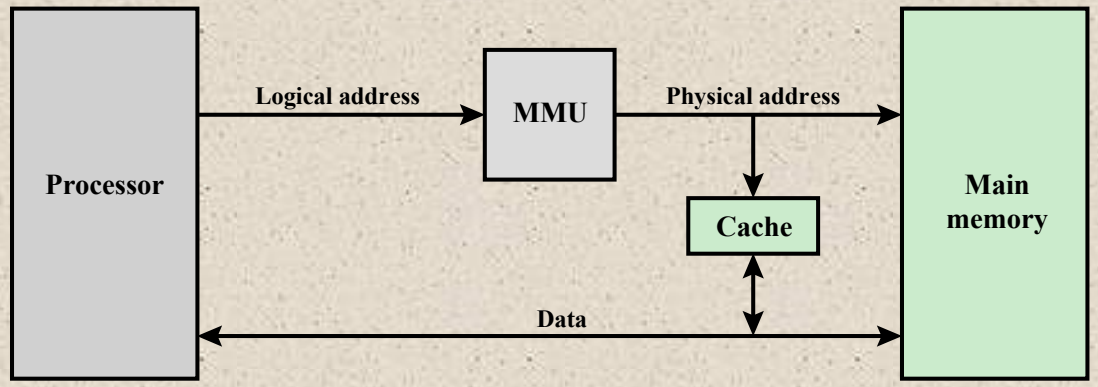
Figure 4.6 Typical Cache Organization

Cache Addresses	**Write Policy**
Logical	Write through
Physical	Write back
Cache Size	**Line Size**
Mapping Function	**Number of caches**
Direct	Single or two level
Associative	Unified or split
Set Associative	
Replacement Algorithm	
Least recently used (LRU)	
First in first out (FIFO)	
Least frequently used (LFU)	
Random	

Table 4.2
Elements of Cache Design



(a) Logical Cache



(b) Physical Cache

Figure 4.7 Logical and Physical Caches

Mapping Function

- Because there are fewer cache lines than main memory blocks, an algorithm is needed for mapping main memory blocks into cache lines
- Three techniques can be used:

Direct	Associative	Set Associative
• The simplest technique • Maps each block of main memory into only one possible cache line	• Permits each main memory block to be loaded into any line of the cache • The cache control logic interprets a memory address simply as a Tag and a Word field • To determine whether a block is in the cache, the cache control logic must simultaneously examine every line's Tag for a match	• A compromise that exhibits the strengths of both the direct and associative approaches while reducing their disadvantages

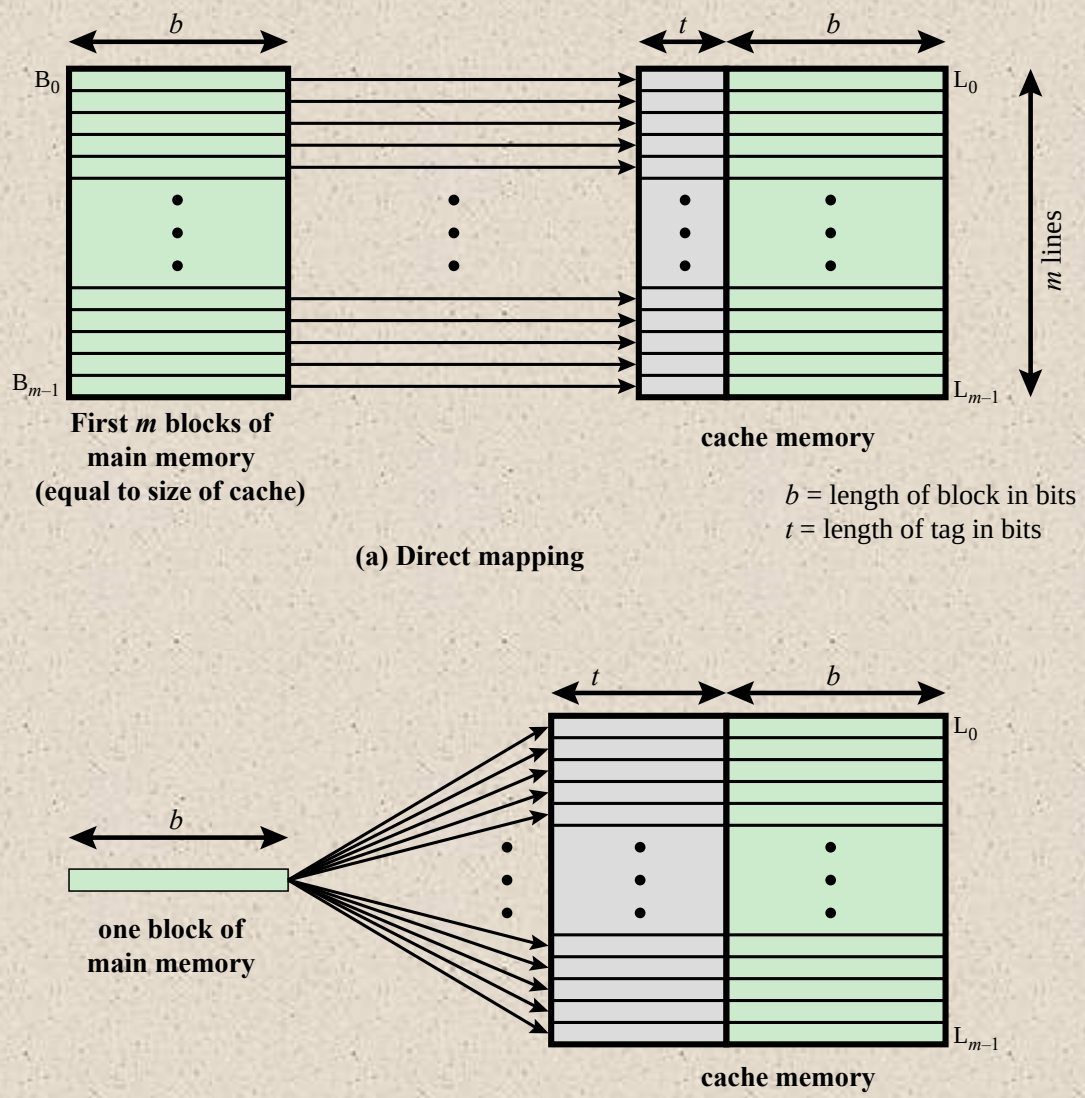


Figure 4.8 Mapping From Main Memory to Cache: Direct and Associative

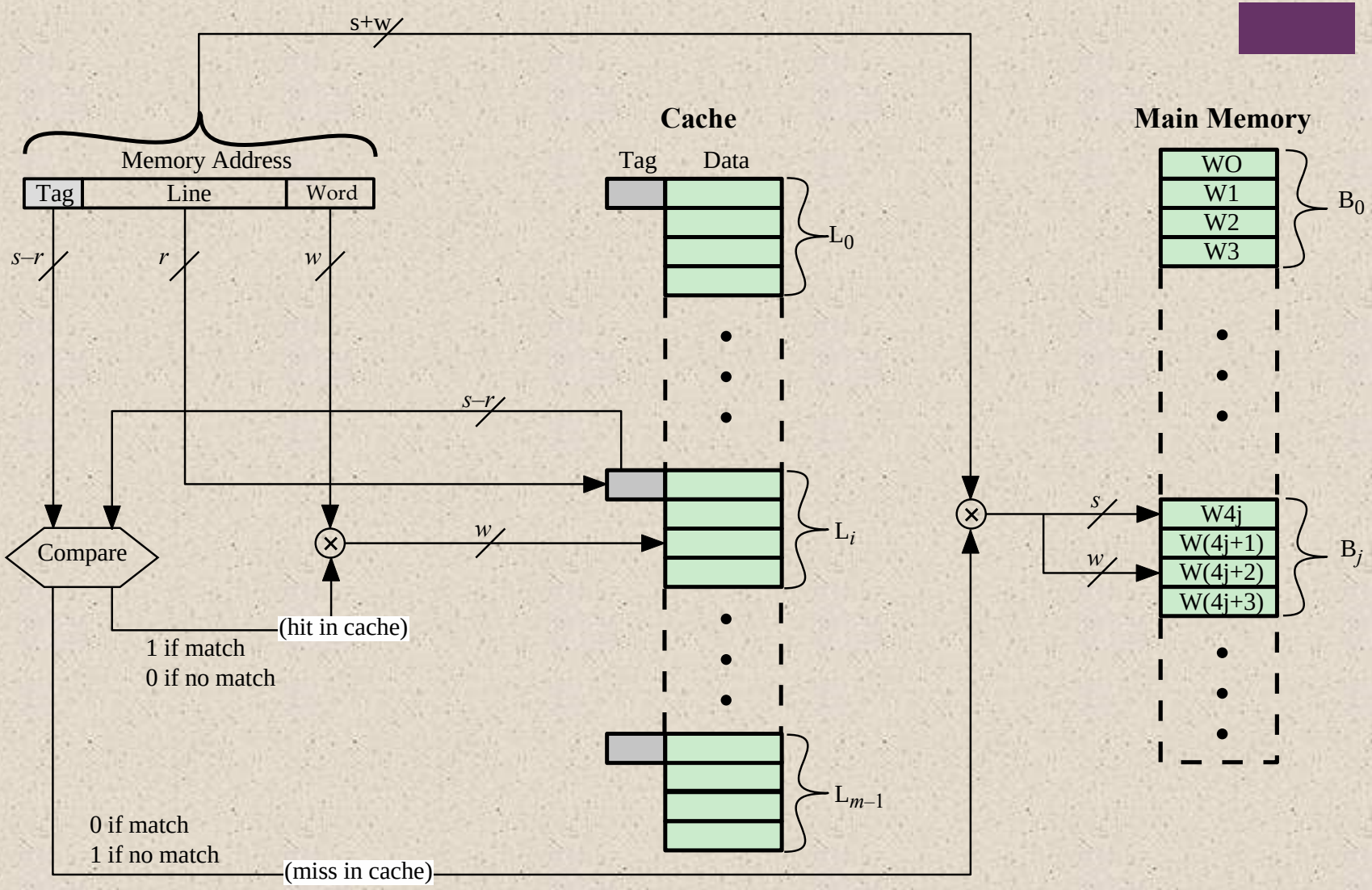


Figure 4.9 Direct-Mapping Cache Organization

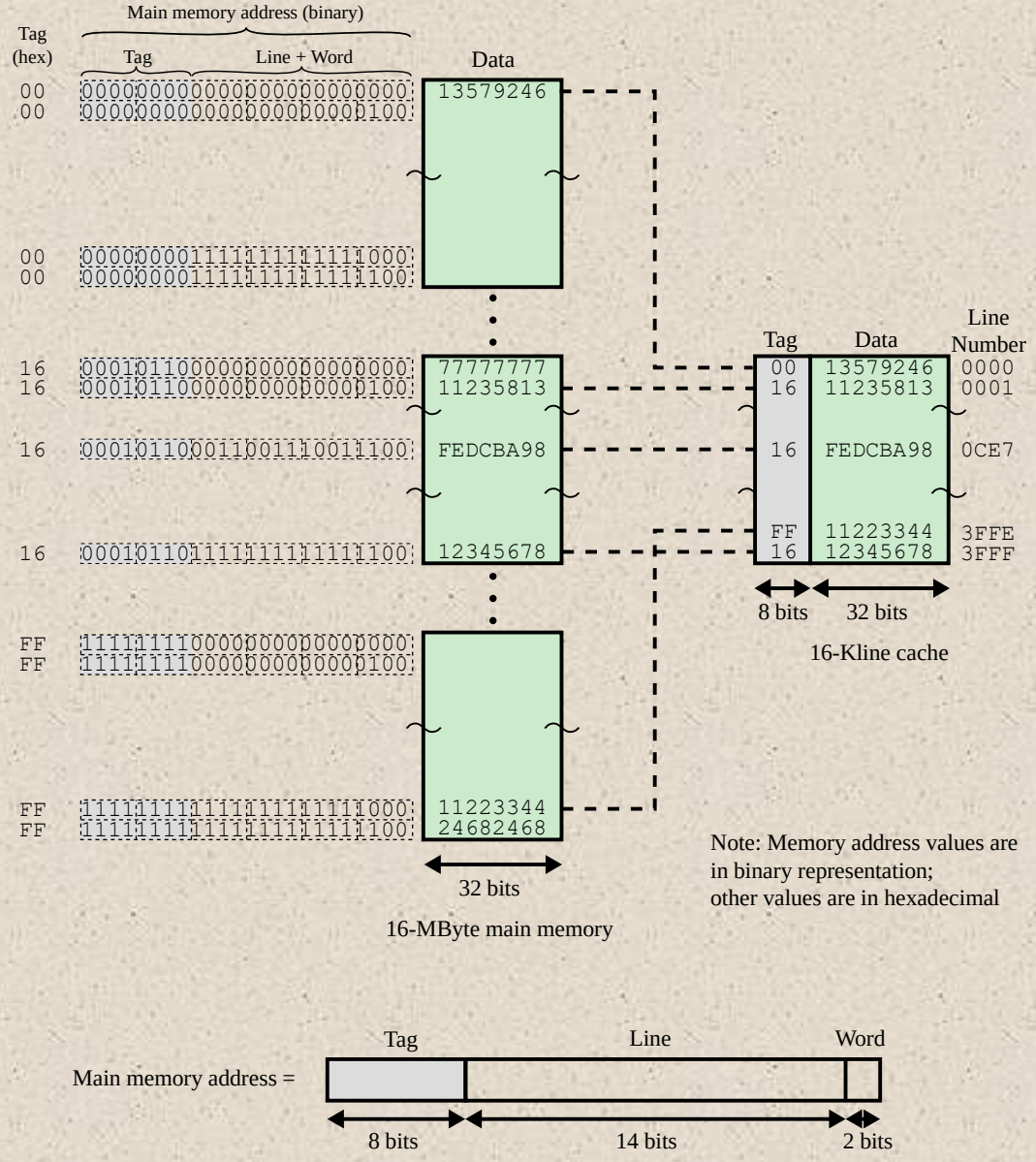


Figure 4.10 Direct Mapping Example

Direct Mapping Summary

- Address length = (s + w) bits
- Number of addressable units = 2^{s+w} words or bytes
- Block size = line size = 2^{w} words or bytes
- Number of blocks in main memory = $2^{s+w}/2^{w} = 2^{s}$
- Number of lines in cache = m = 2^{r}
- Size of tag = (s – r) bits

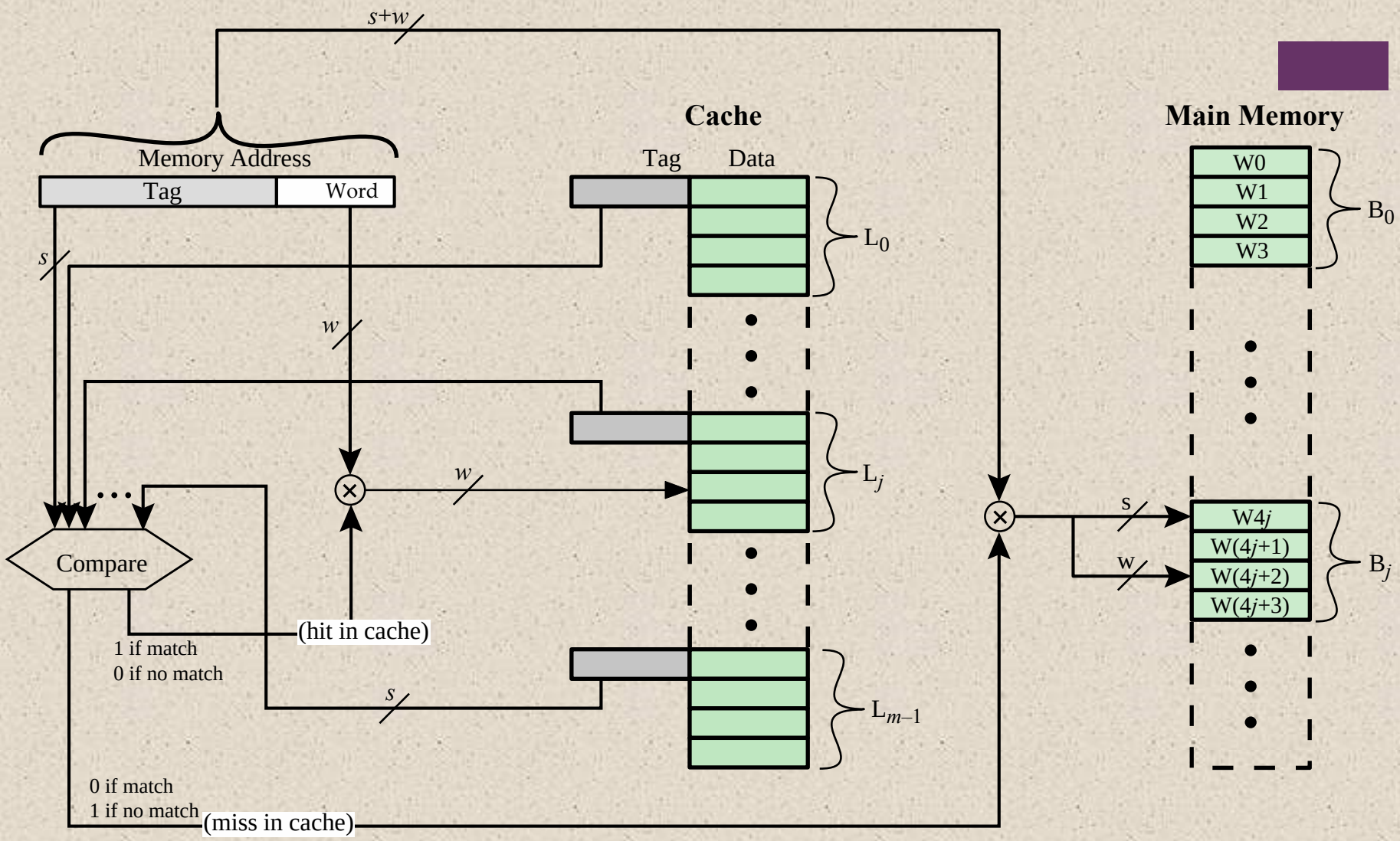


Figure 4.11 Fully Associative Cache Organization

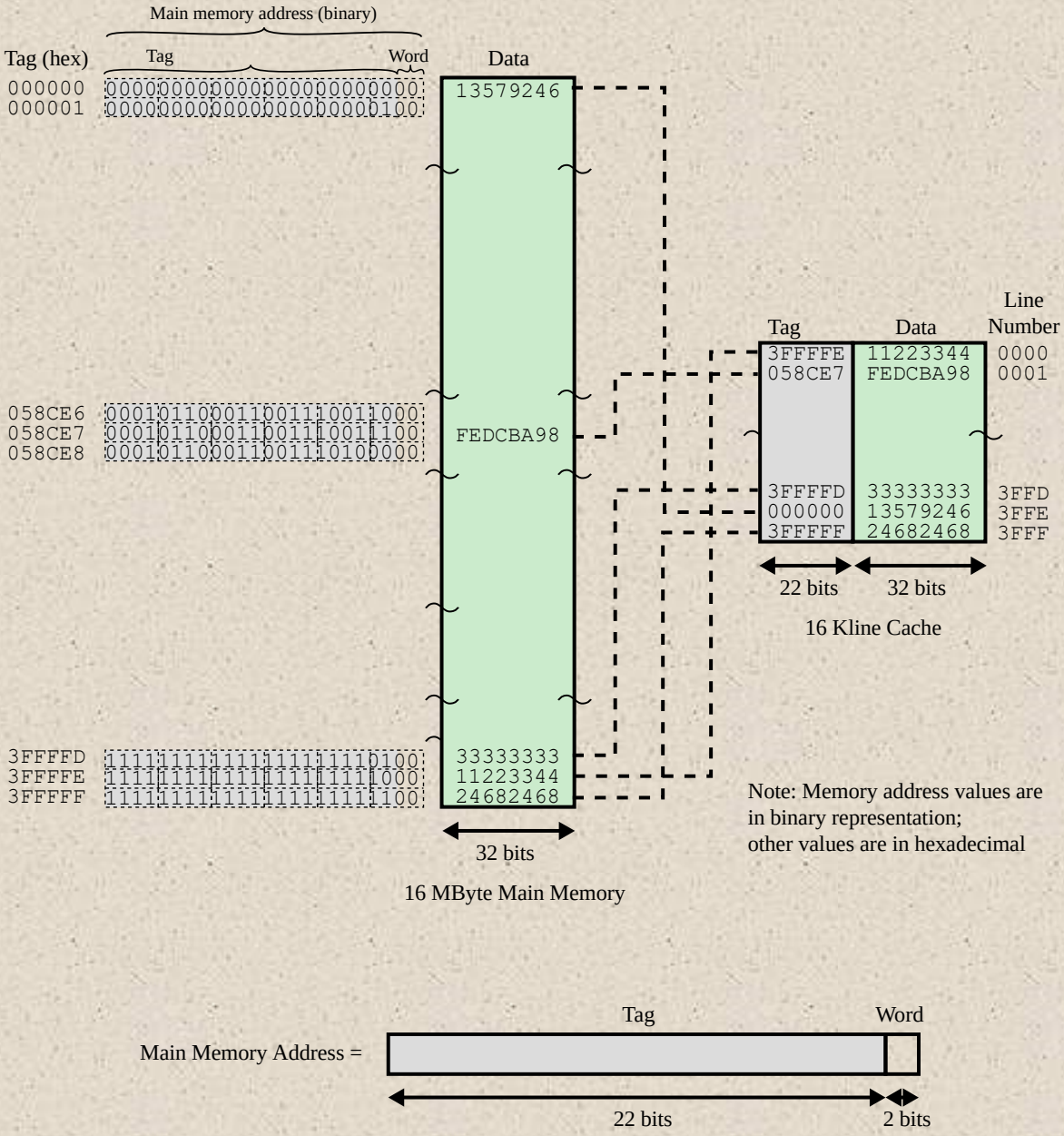


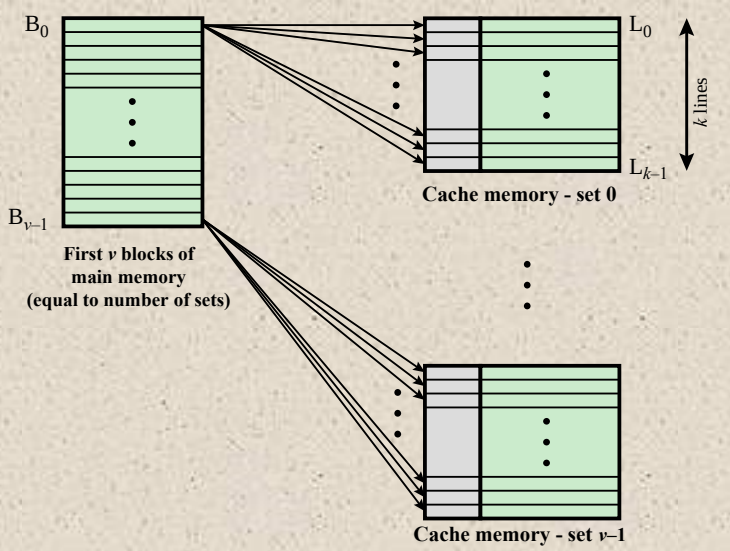
Figure 4.12 Associative Mapping Example

Associative Mapping Summary

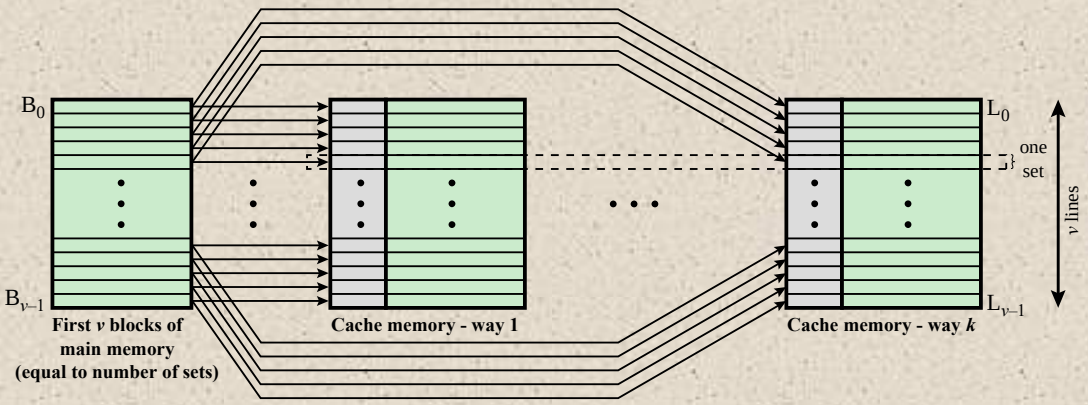
- Address length = (s + w) bits
- Number of addressable units = 2^{s+w} words or bytes
- Block size = line size = 2^{w} words or bytes
- Number of blocks in main memory = $2^{s+w}/2^{w} = 2^{s}$
- Number of lines in cache = undetermined
- Size of tag = s bits

Set Associative Mapping

- Compromise that exhibits the strengths of both the direct and associative approaches while reducing their disadvantages
- Cache consists of a number of sets
- Each set contains a number of lines
- A given block maps to any line in a given set
- e.g. 2 lines per set
  - 2 way associative mapping
  - A given block can be in one of 2 lines in only one set



(a) *v* associative-mapped caches



(b) *k* direct-mapped caches

Figure 4.13 Mapping From Main Memory to Cache: *k*-way Set Associative

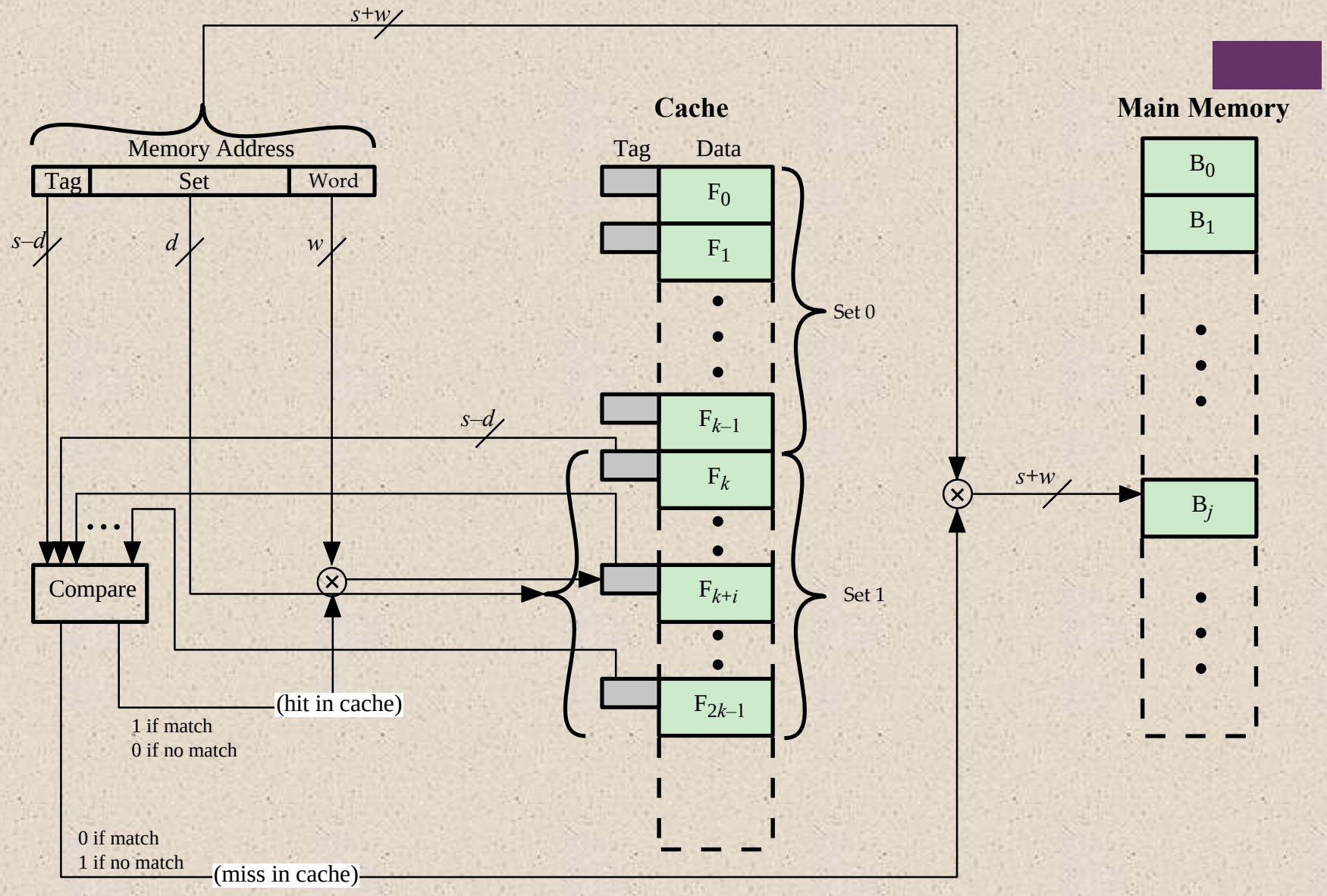


Figure 4.14 *k*-Way Set Associative Cache Organization

Set Associative Mapping Summary

- Address length = (s + w) bits
- Number of addressable units = 2^{s+w} words or bytes
- Block size = line size = 2^{w} words or bytes
- Number of blocks in main memory = $2^{s+w}/2^{w}=2^{s}$
- Number of lines in set = k
- Number of sets = v = 2^{d}
- Number of lines in cache = m=kv = k * 2^{d}
- Size of cache = $k * 2^{d+w}$ words or bytes
- Size of tag = (s – d) bits

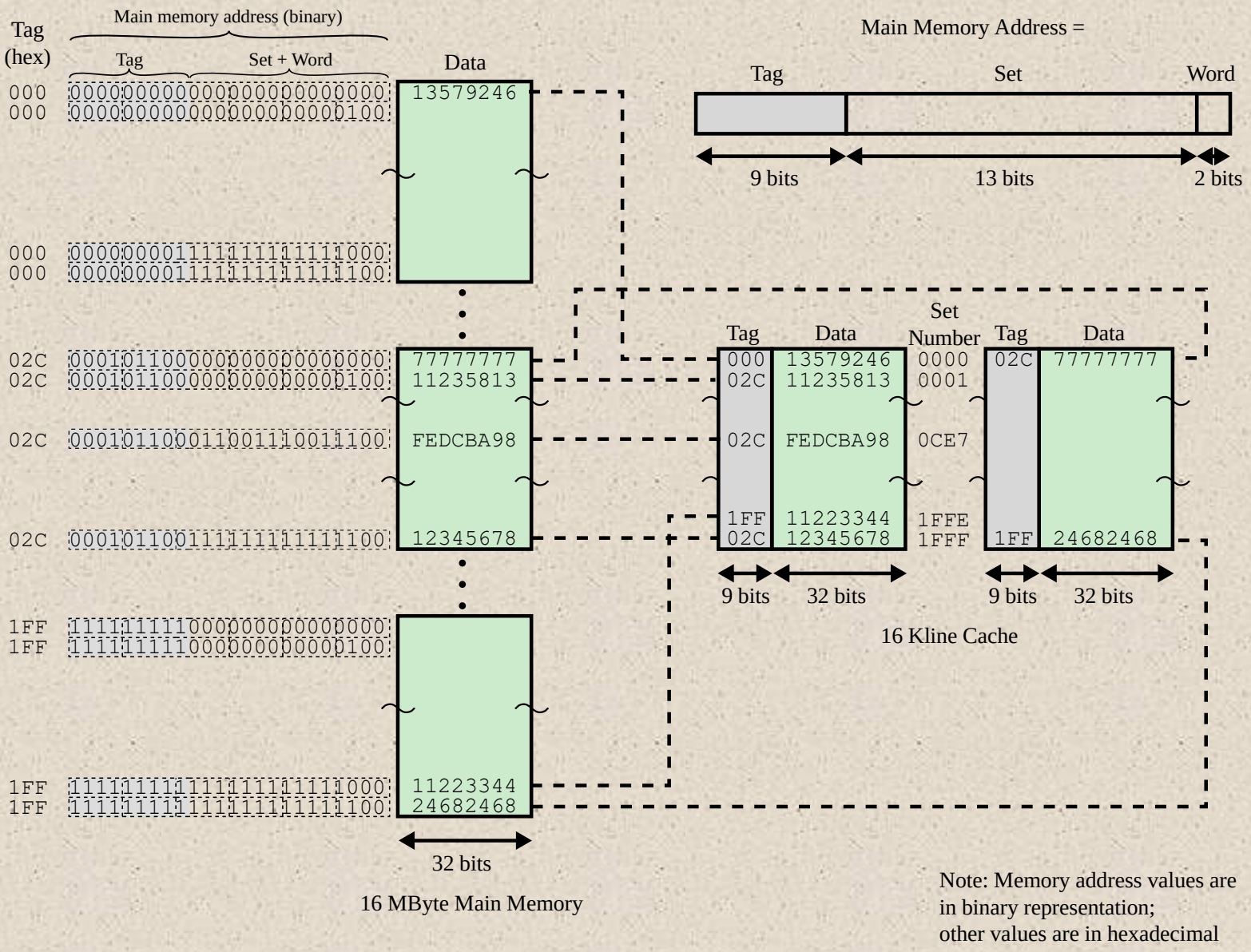


Figure 4.15 Two-Way Set Associative Mapping Example

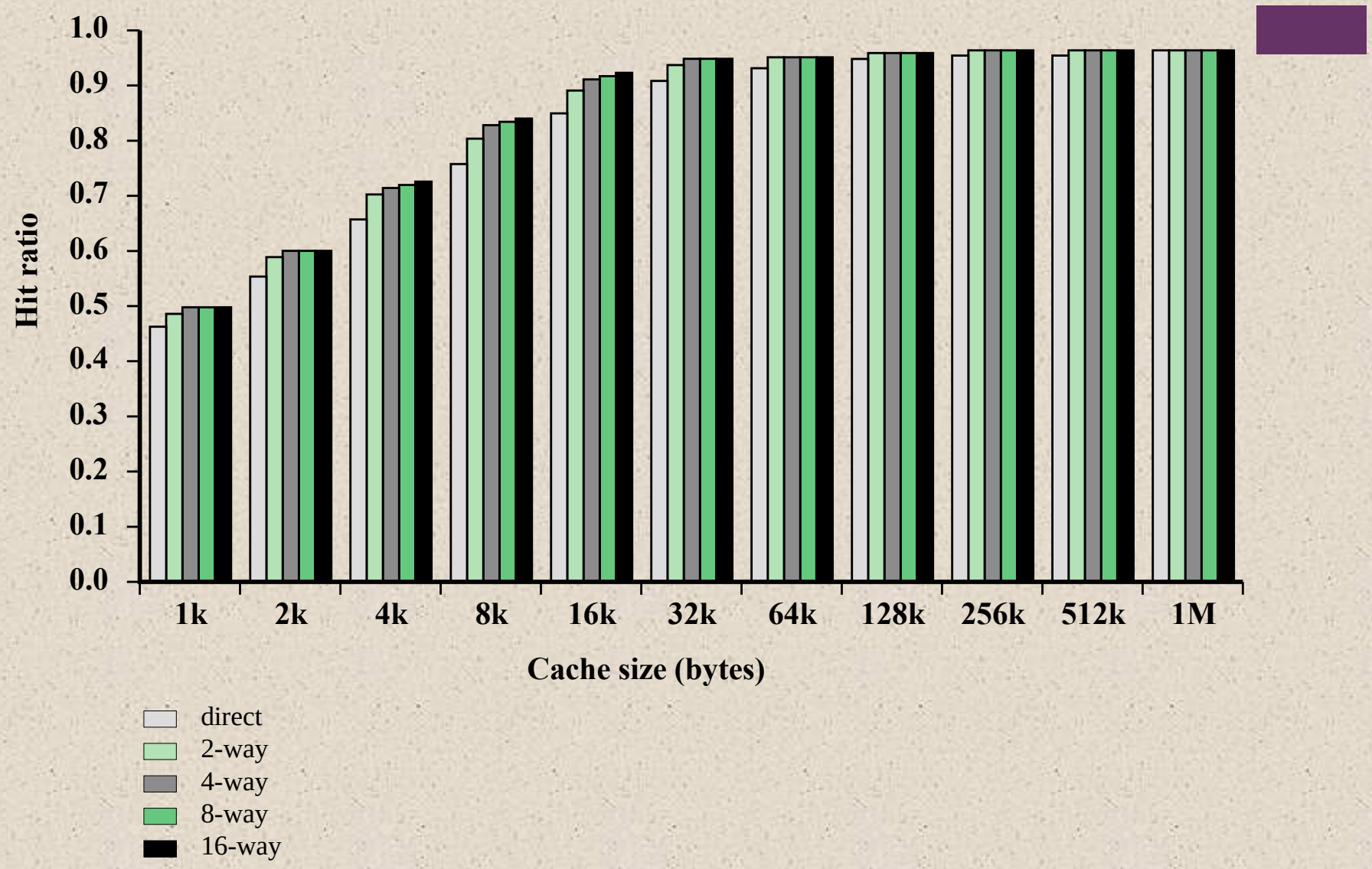
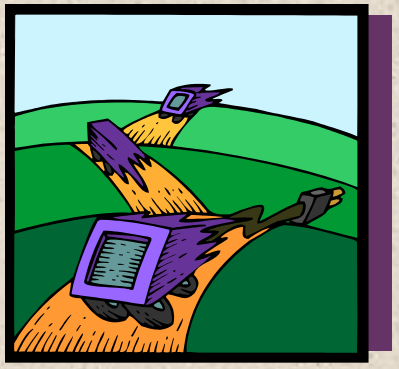


Figure 4.16 Varying Associativity over Cache Size

Replacement Algorithms



- Once the cache has been filled, when a new block is brought into the cache, one of the existing blocks must be replaced
- For direct mapping there is only one possible line for any particular block and no choice is possible
- For the associative and set-associative techniques a replacement algorithm is needed
- To achieve high speed, an algorithm must be implemented in hardware

The most common replacement algorithms are:

- Least recently used (LRU)
  - Most effective
  - Replace that block in the set that has been in the cache longest with no reference to it
  - Because of its simplicity of implementation, LRU is the most popular replacement algorithm
- First-in-first-out (FIFO)
  - Replace that block in the set that has been in the cache longest
  - Easily implemented as a round-robin or circular buffer technique
- Least frequently used (LFU)
  - Replace that block in the set that has experienced the fewest references
  - Could be implemented by associating a counter with each line

Write Policy

When a block that is resident in the cache is to be replaced there are two cases to consider:

If the old block in the cache has not been altered then it may be overwritten with a new block without first writing out the old block

If at least one write operation has been performed on a word in that line of the cache then main memory must be updated by writing the line of cache out to the block of memory before bringing in the new block

There are two problems to contend with:

More than one device may have access to main memory

A more complex problem occurs when multiple processors are attached to the same bus and each processor has its own local cache - if a word is altered in one cache it could conceivably invalidate a word in other caches

Write Through and Write Back

- Write through
  - Simplest technique
  - All write operations are made to main memory as well as to the cache
  - The main disadvantage of this technique is that it generates substantial memory traffic and may create a bottleneck
- Write back
  - Minimizes memory writes
  - Updates are made only in the cache
  - Portions of main memory are invalid and hence accesses by I/O modules can be allowed only through the cache
  - This makes for complex circuitry and a potential bottleneck

Line Size

When a block of data is retrieved and placed in the cache not only the desired word but also some number of adjacent words are retrieved

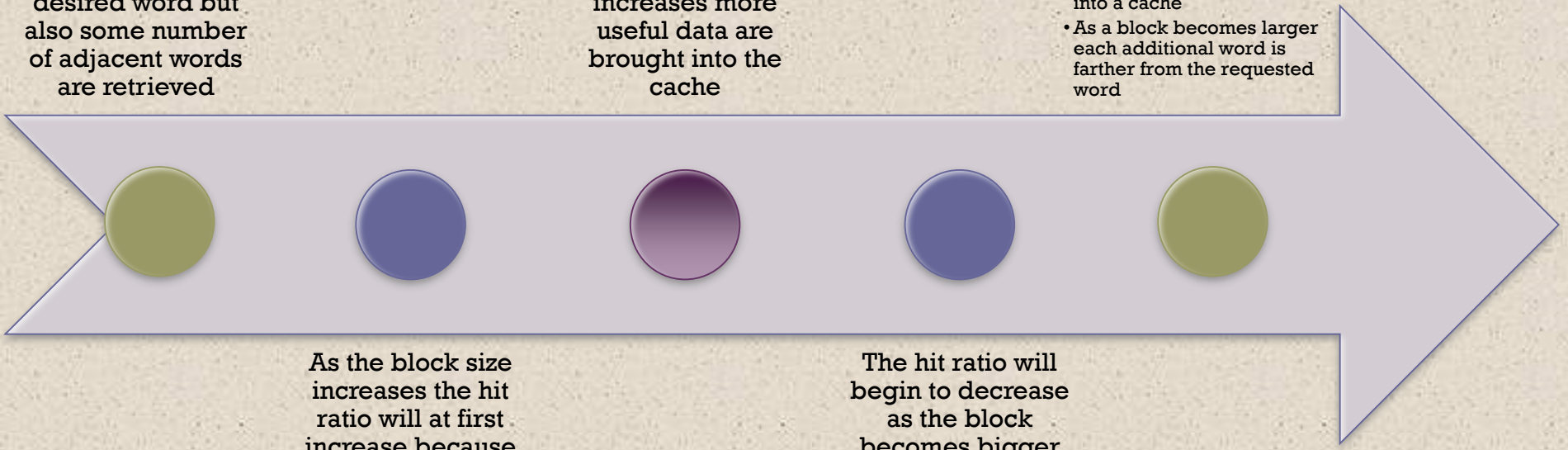
As the block size increases the hit ratio will at first increase because of the principle of locality

As the block size increases more useful data are brought into the cache

The hit ratio will begin to decrease as the block becomes bigger and the probability of using the newly fetched information becomes less than the probability of reusing the information that has to be replaced

Two specific effects come into play:

- Larger blocks reduce the number of blocks that fit into a cache
- As a block becomes larger each additional word is farther from the requested word



Multilevel Caches

- As logic density has increased it has become possible to have a cache on the same chip as the processor
- The on-chip cache reduces the processor's external bus activity and speeds up execution time and increases overall system performance
  - When the requested instruction or data is found in the on-chip cache, the bus access is eliminated
  - On-chip cache accesses will complete appreciably faster than would even zero-wait state bus cycles
  - During this period the bus is free to support other transfers
- Two-level cache:
  - Internal cache designated as level 1 (L1)
  - External cache designated as level 2 (L2)
- Potential savings due to the use of an L2 cache depends on the hit rates in both the L1 and L2 caches
- The use of multilevel caches complicates all of the design issues related to caches, including size, replacement algorithm, and write policy

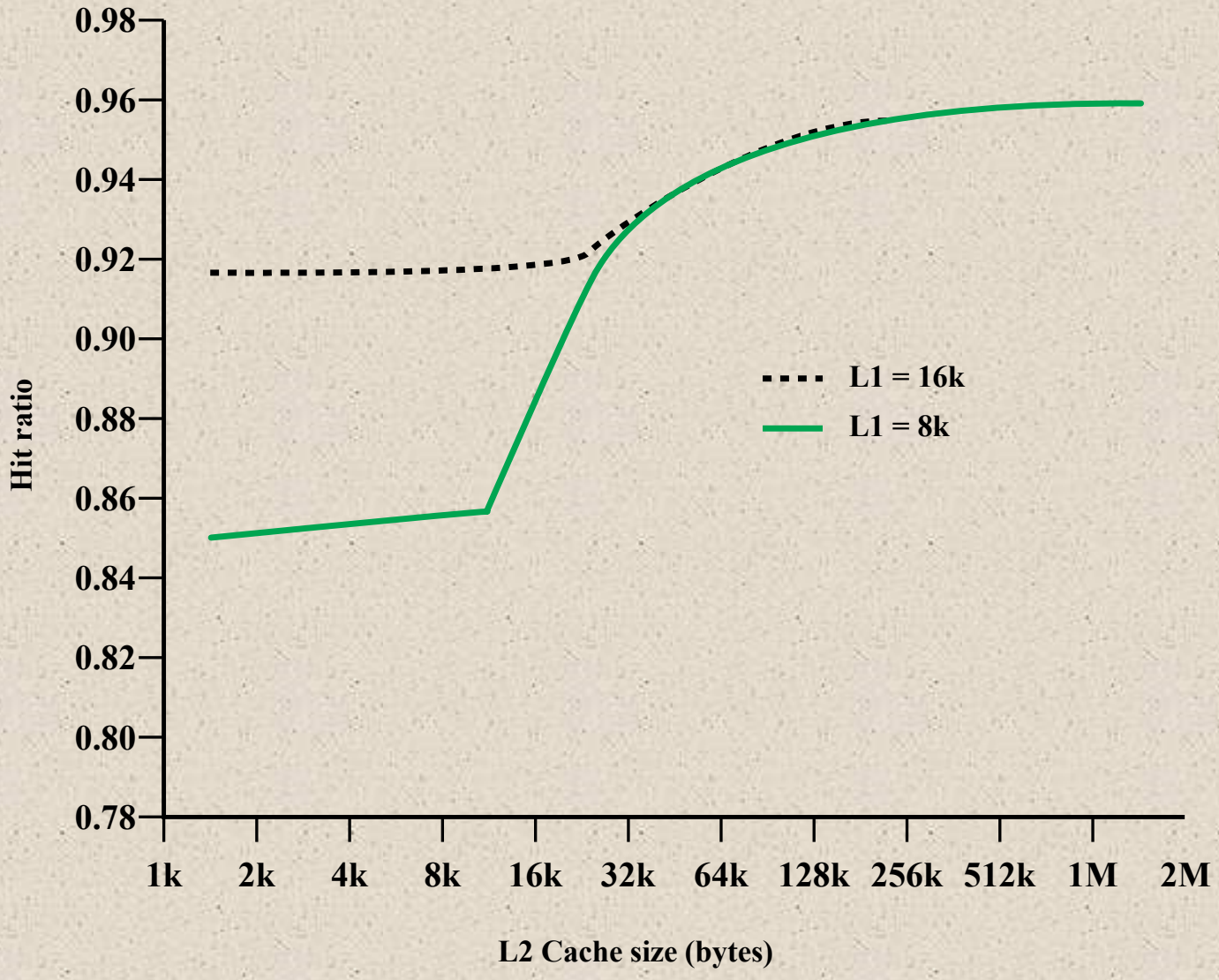


Figure 4.17 Total Hit Ratio (L1 and L2) for 8 Kbyte and 16 Kbyte L1

Unified Versus Split Caches

- Has become common to split cache:
  - One dedicated to instructions
  - One dedicated to data
  - Both exist at the same level, typically as two L1 caches
- Advantages of unified cache:
  - Higher hit rate
    - Balances load of instruction and data fetches automatically
    - Only one cache needs to be designed and implemented
- Trend is toward split caches at the L1 and unified caches for higher levels
- Advantages of split cache:
  - Eliminates cache contention between instruction fetch/decode unit and execution unit
    - Important in pipelining

Summary

Chapter 4

- Computer memory system overview
  - Characteristics of Memory Systems
  - Memory Hierarchy
- Cache memory principles

Cache Memory

- Elements of cache design
  - Cache addresses
  - Cache size
  - Mapping function
  - Replacement algorithms
  - Write policy
  - Line size
  - Number of caches