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Accelerating Applications with CUDA C/C++

TOPICS

GPU-accelerated vs. CPU-only Applications

CUDA Kernel Execution

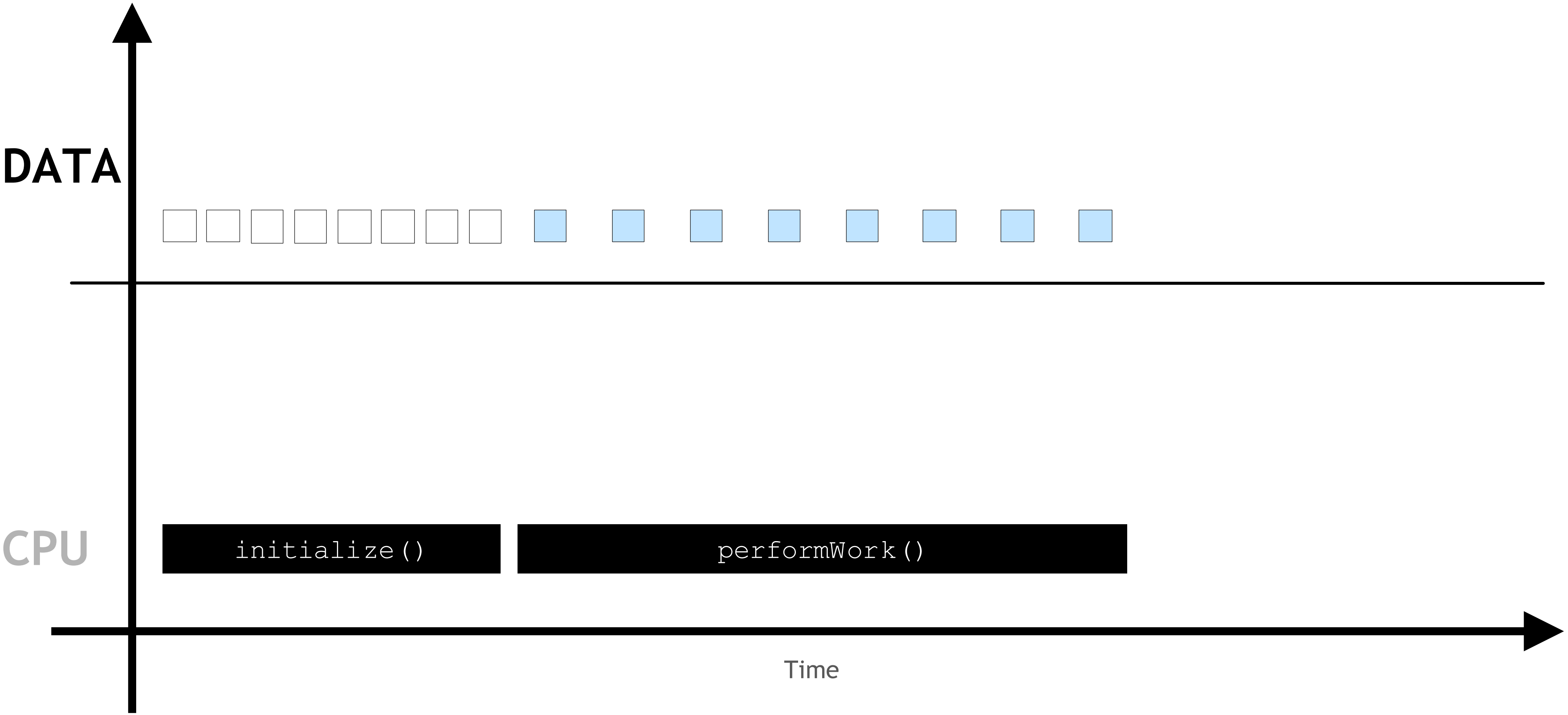
Parallel Memory Access

Appendix: Glossary

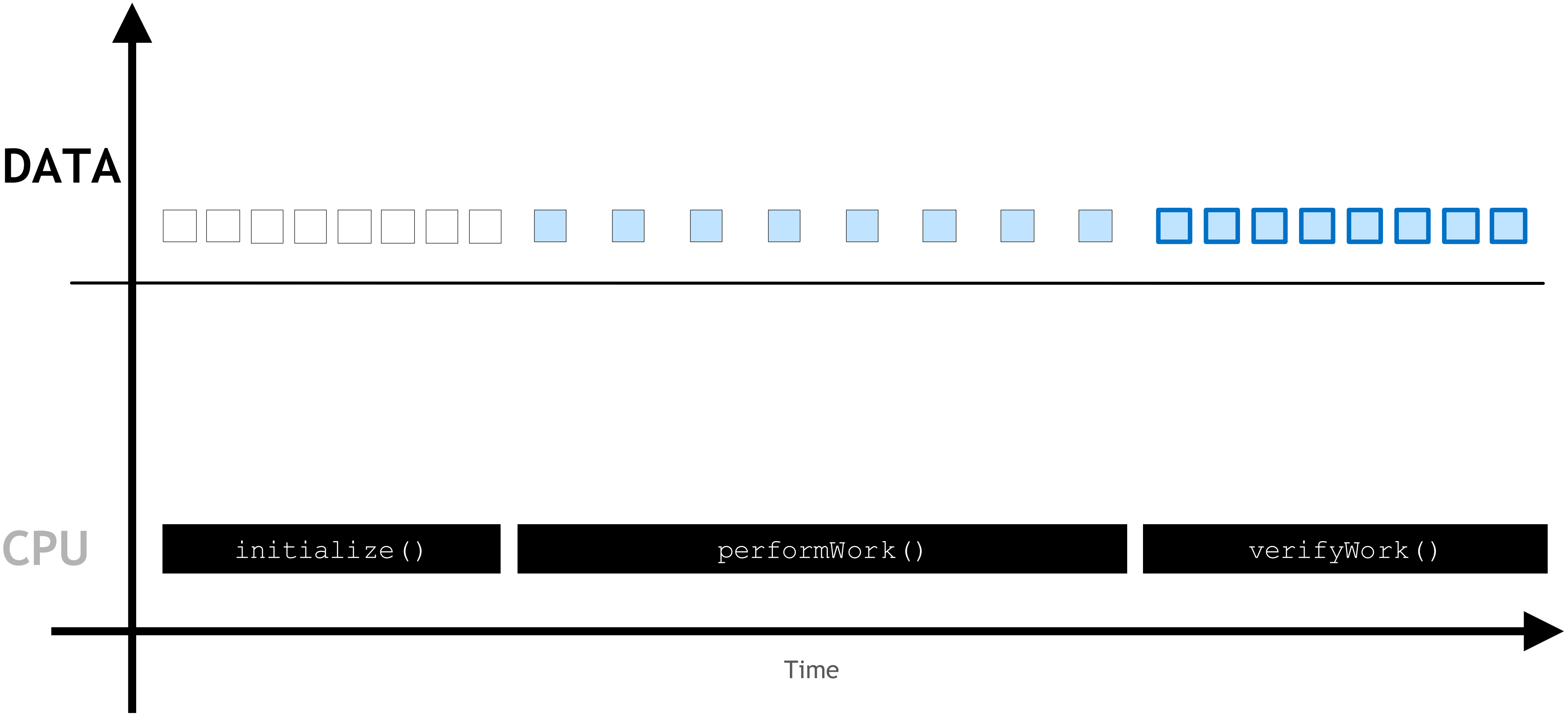
GPU-accelerated vs. CPU-only Applications

In **CPU-only applications** data is allocated on CPU

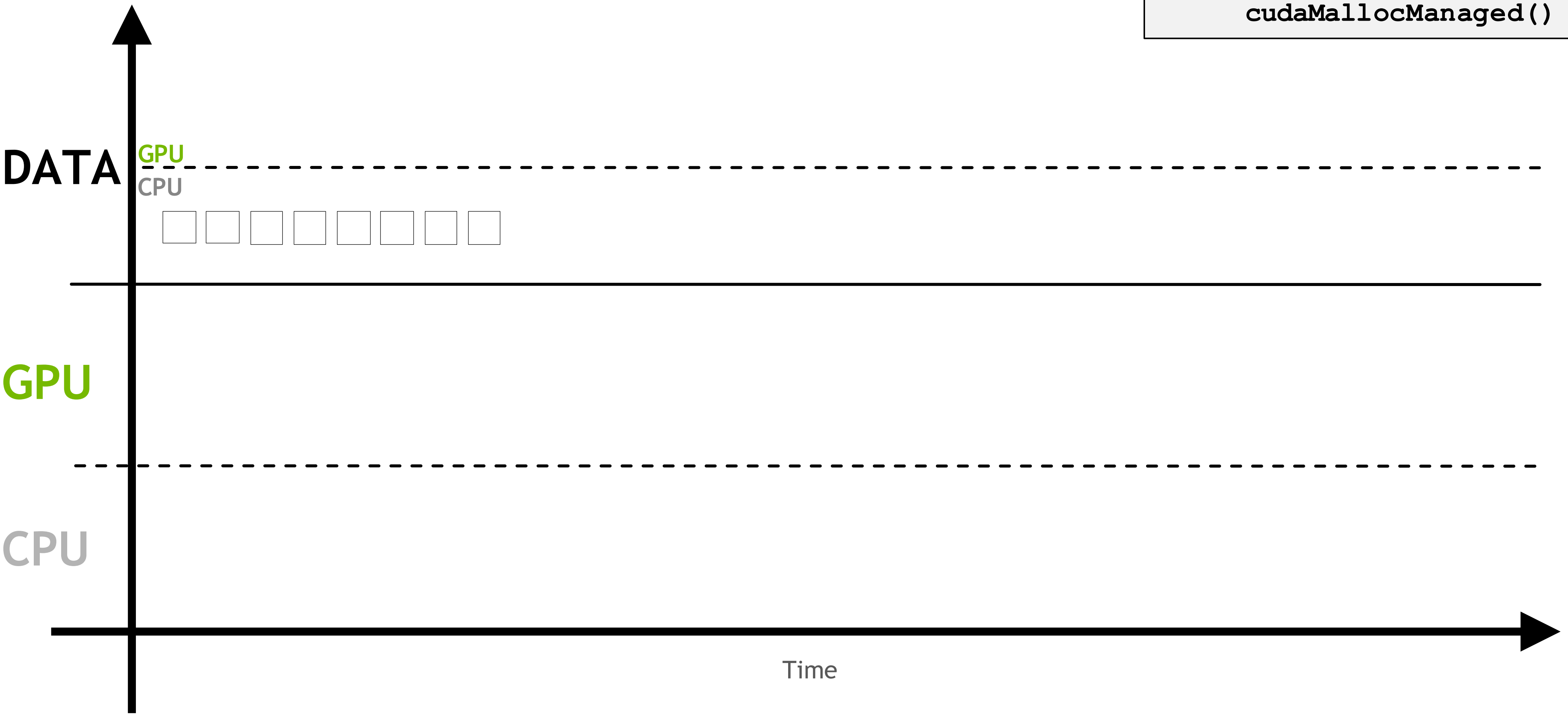
...and all work is performed on CPU



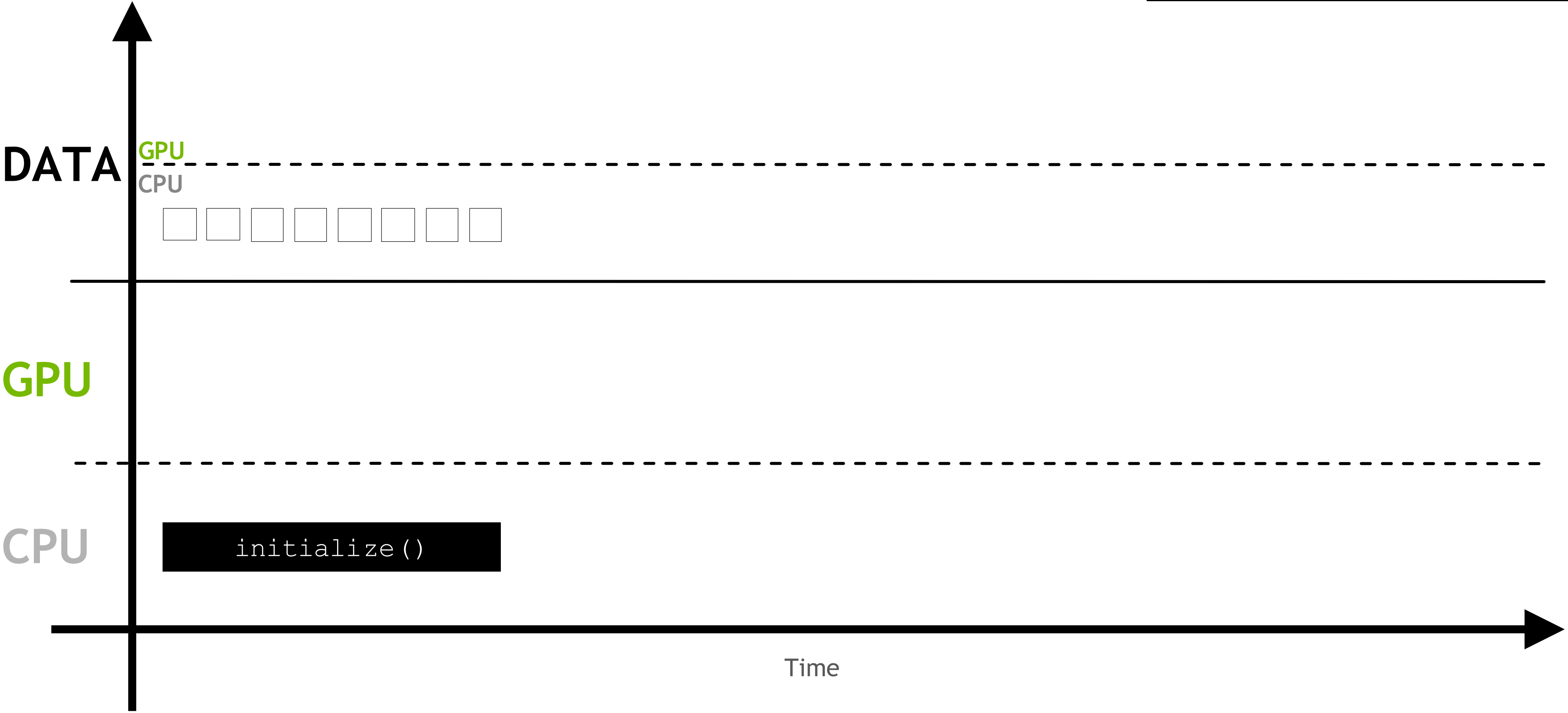
…and all work is performed on CPU



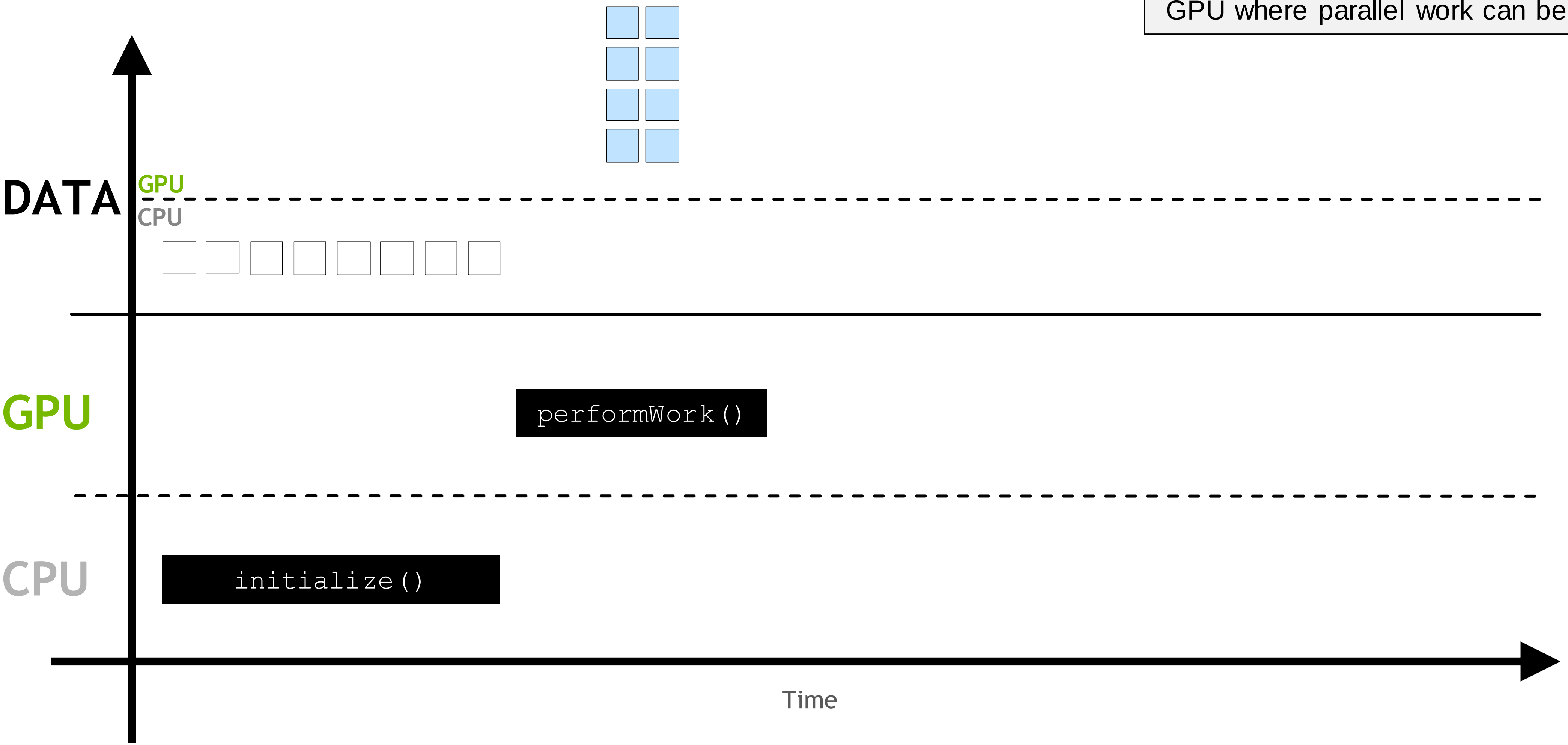
In **accelerated applications** data is allocated with **`cudaMallocManaged()`**



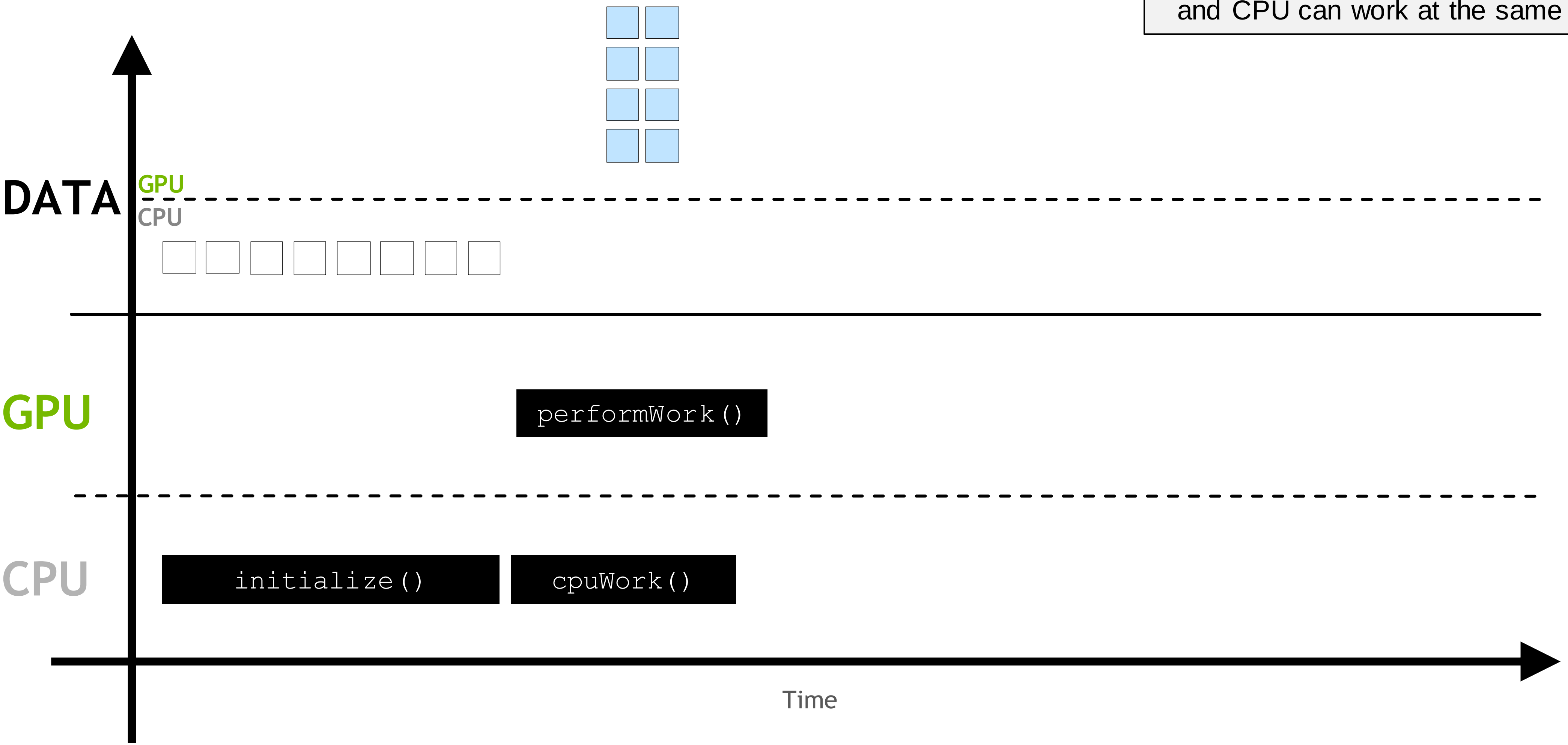
… where it can be accessed and worked on by the CPU

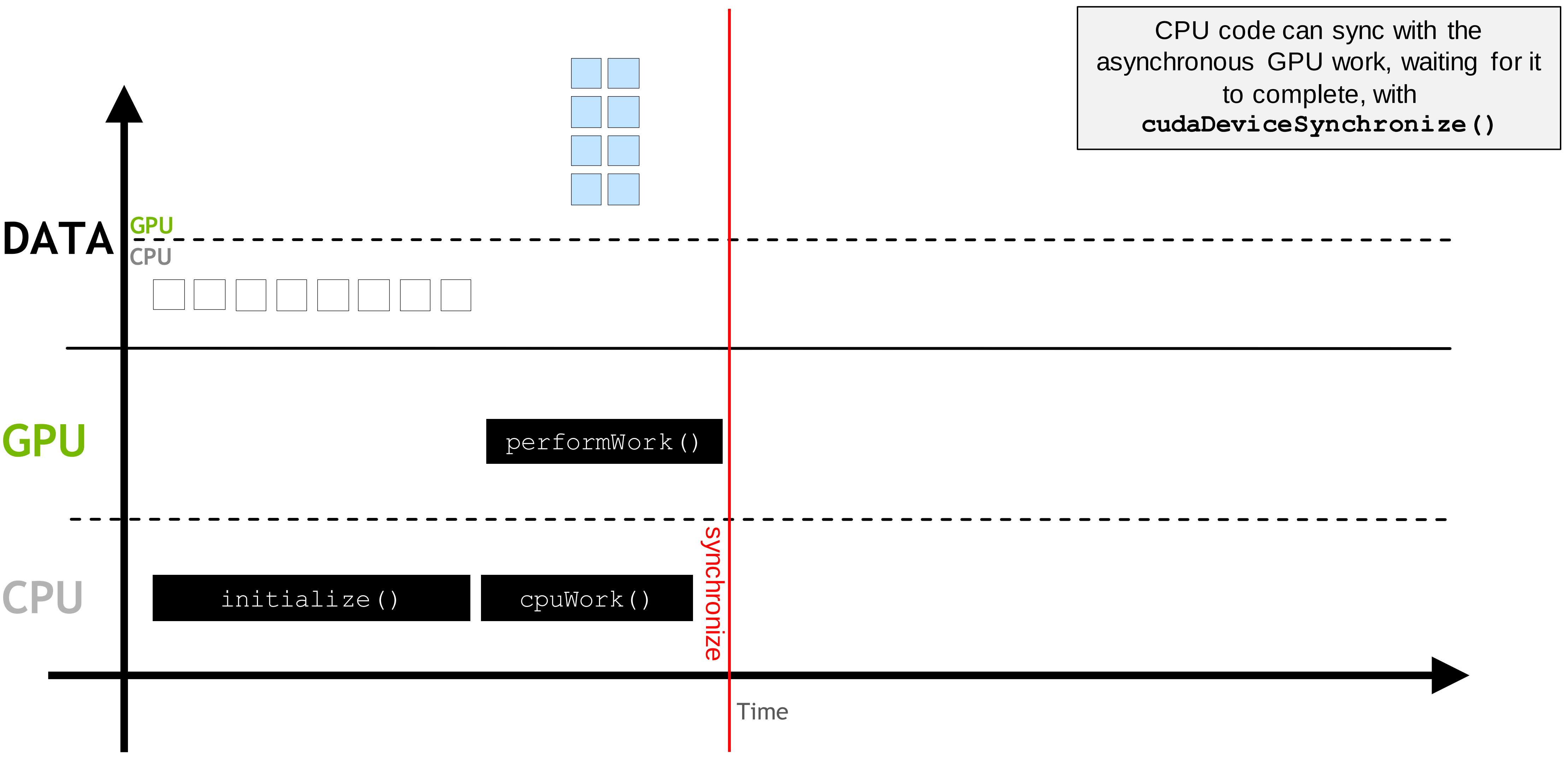


… and automatically migrated to the GPU where parallel work can be done

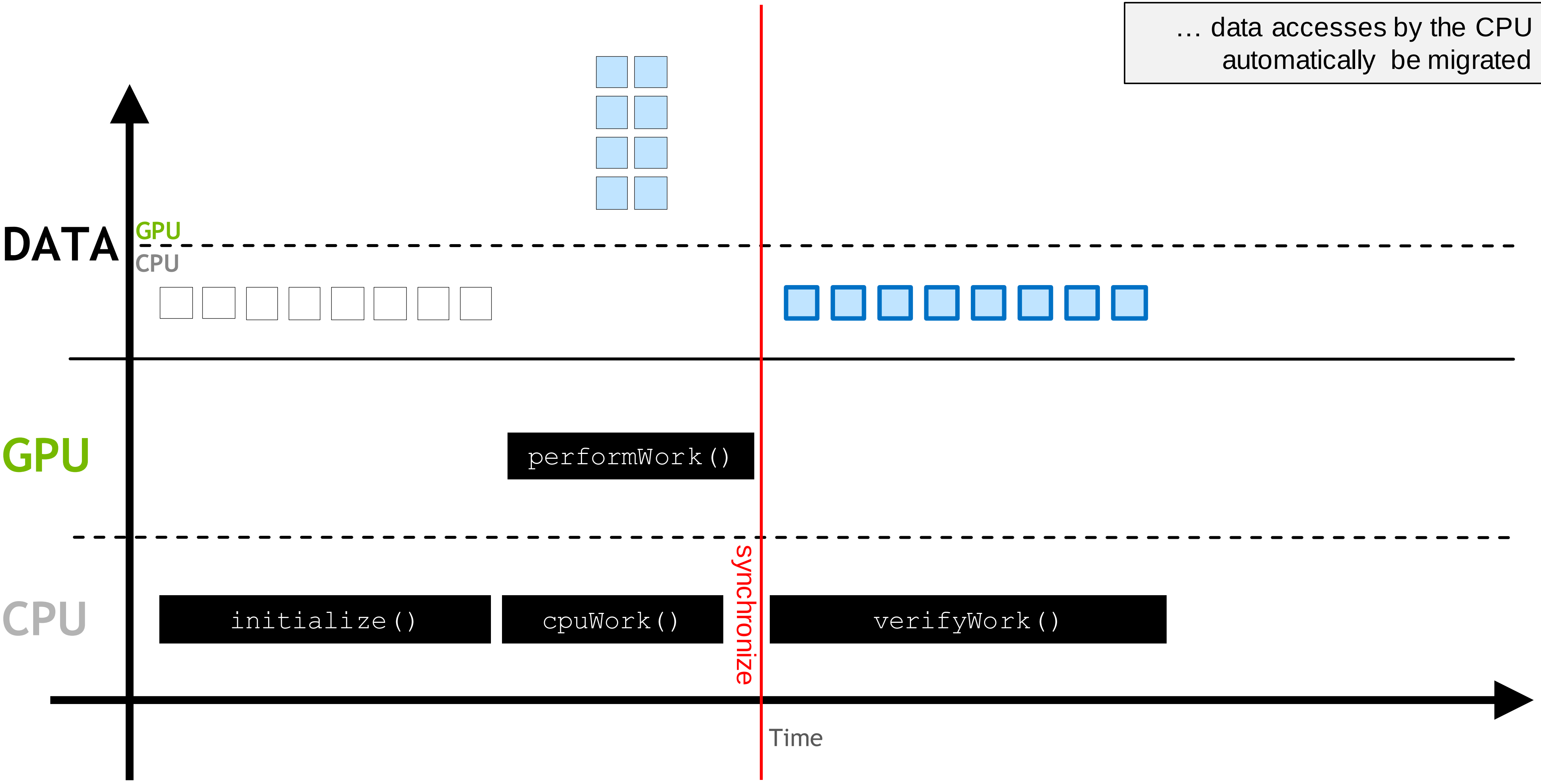


Work on the GPU is **asynchronous**, and CPU can work at the same time

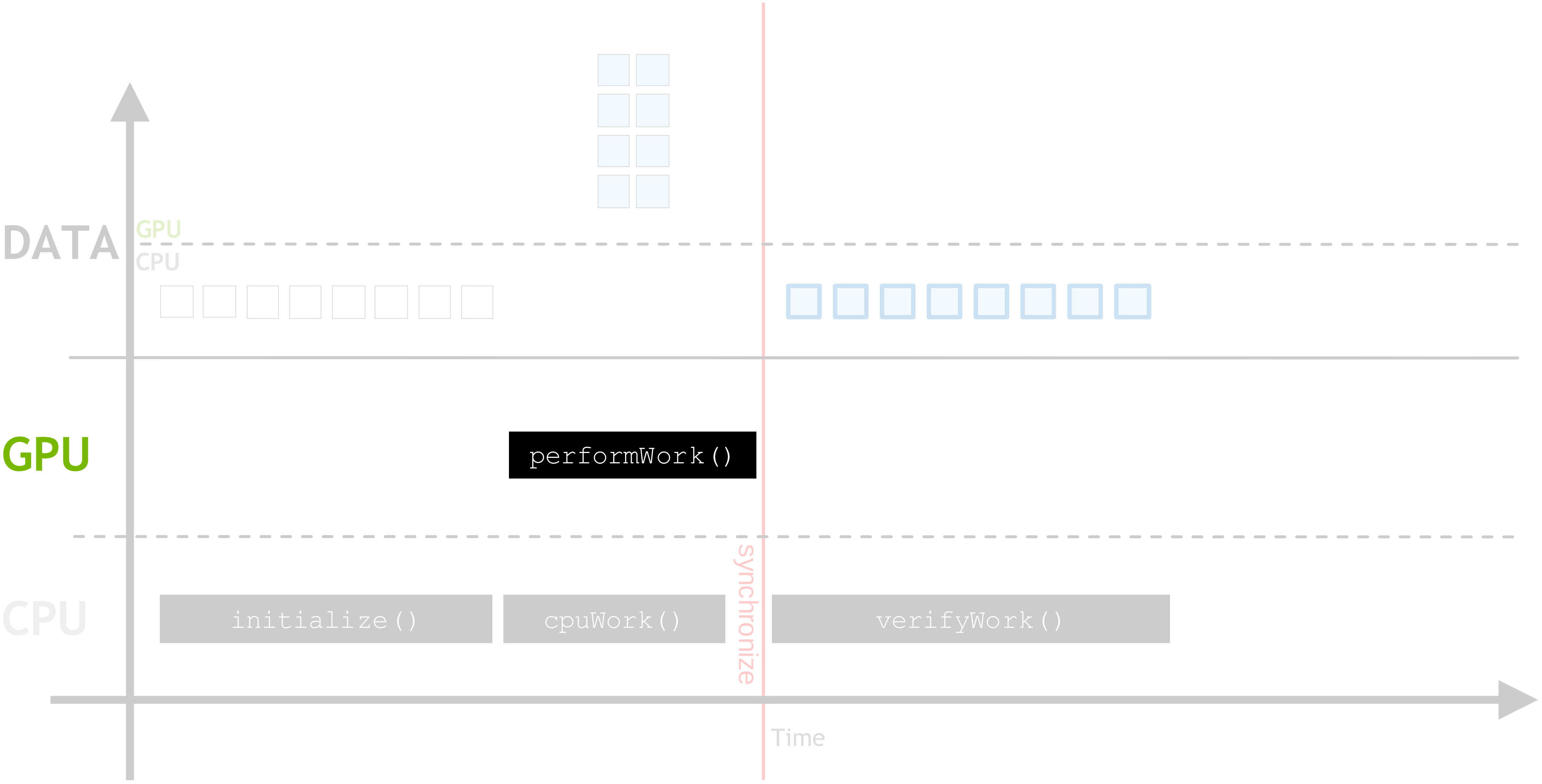



CPU code can sync with the asynchronous GPU work, waiting for it to complete, with **cudaDeviceSynchronize()**
DATA
GPU
CPU
GPU
performWork()
CPU
initialize()
cpuWork()
synchronize
Time

… data accesses by the CPU will automatically be migrated

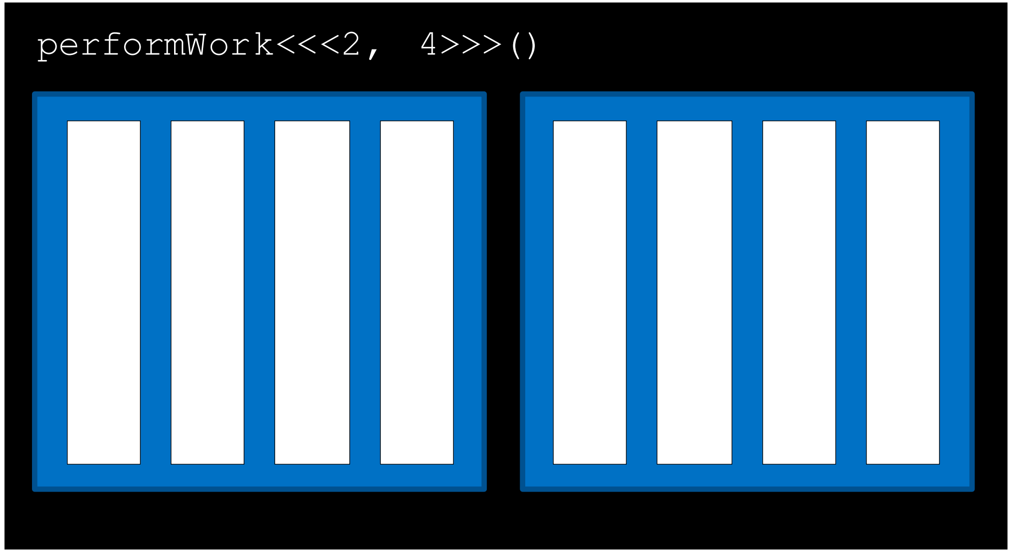


CUDA Kernel Execution


DATA
GPU
CPU
GPU
performWork()
CPU
initialize()
cpuWork()
synchronize
verifyWork()
Time

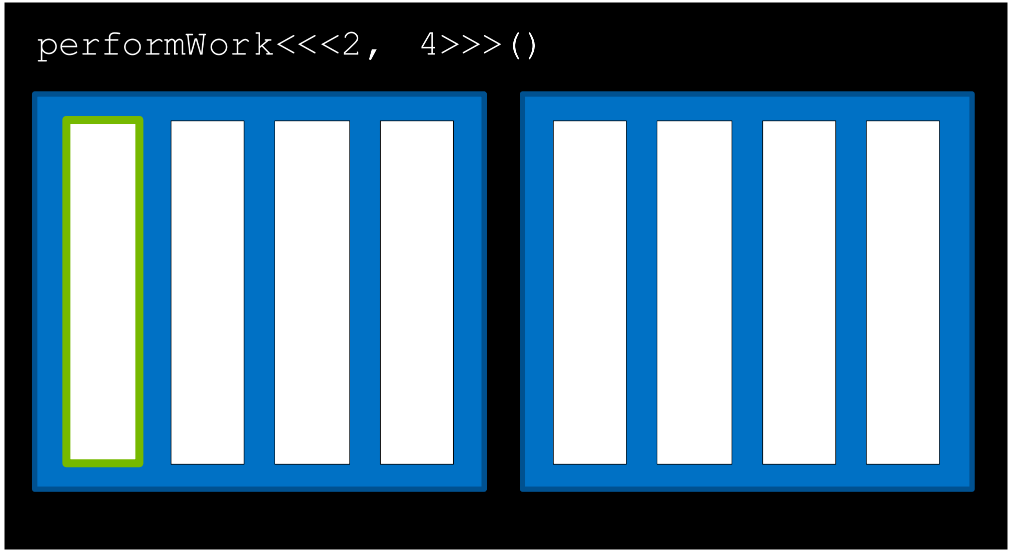
GPUs do work in parallel

GPU



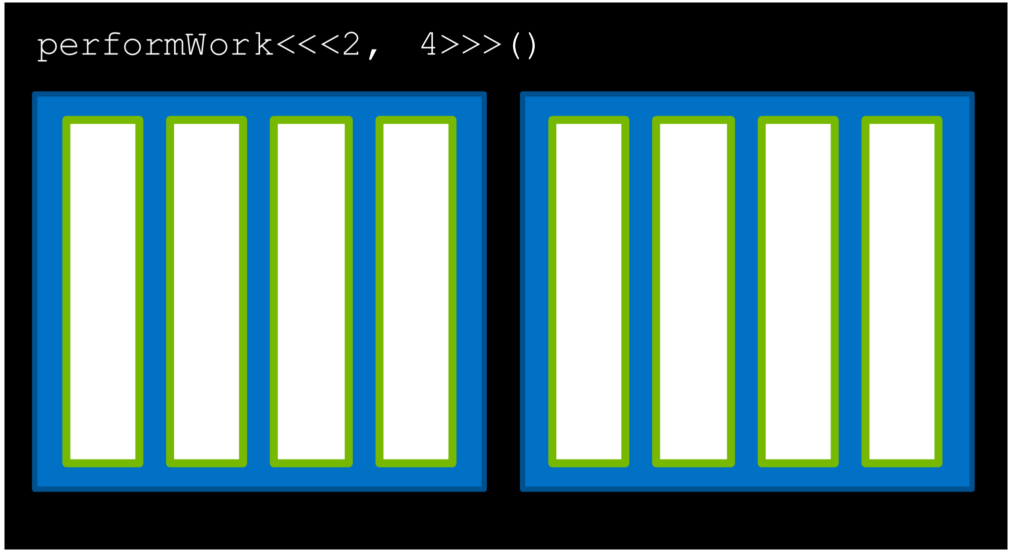
GPU work is done in a **thread**

GPU



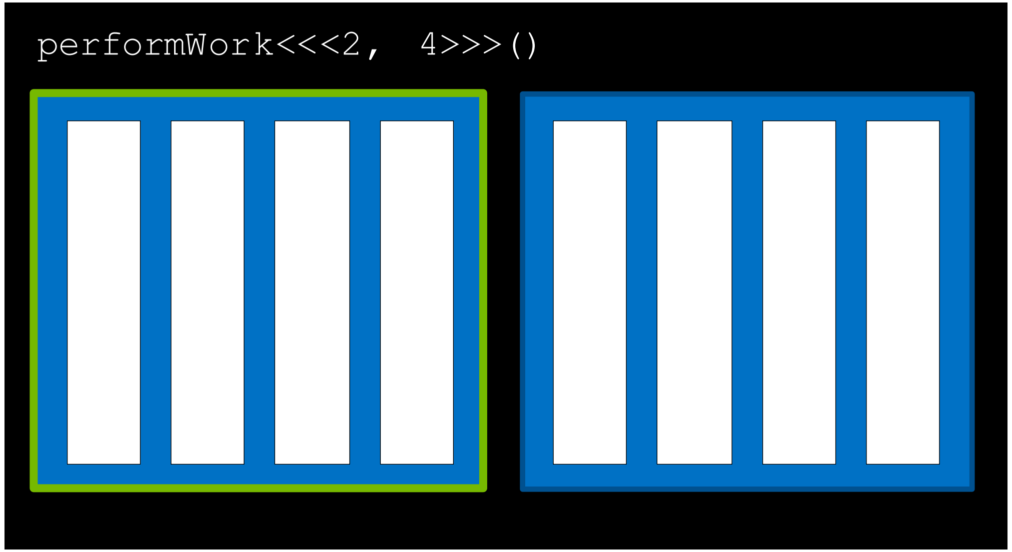
Many threads run in parallel

GPU



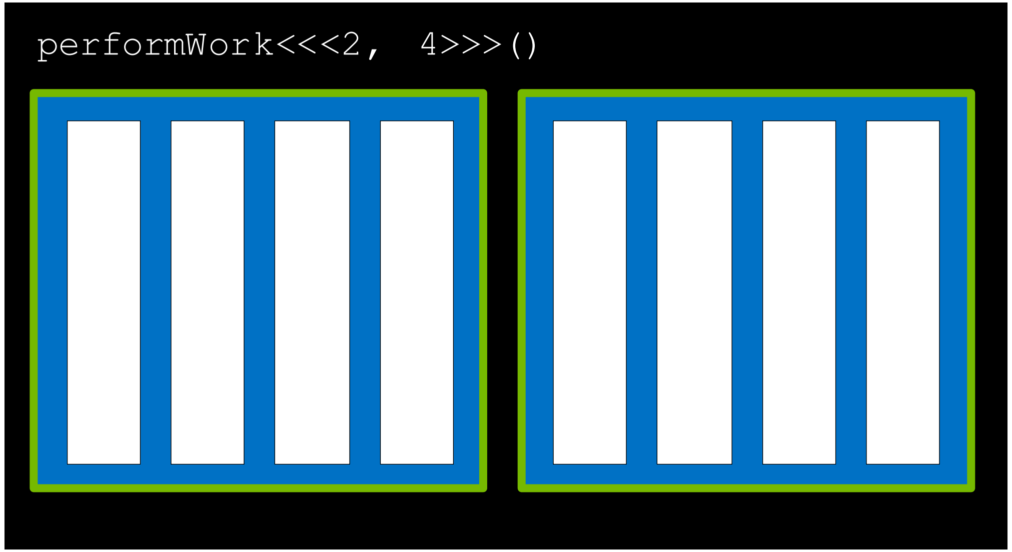
A collection of threads is a **block**

GPU



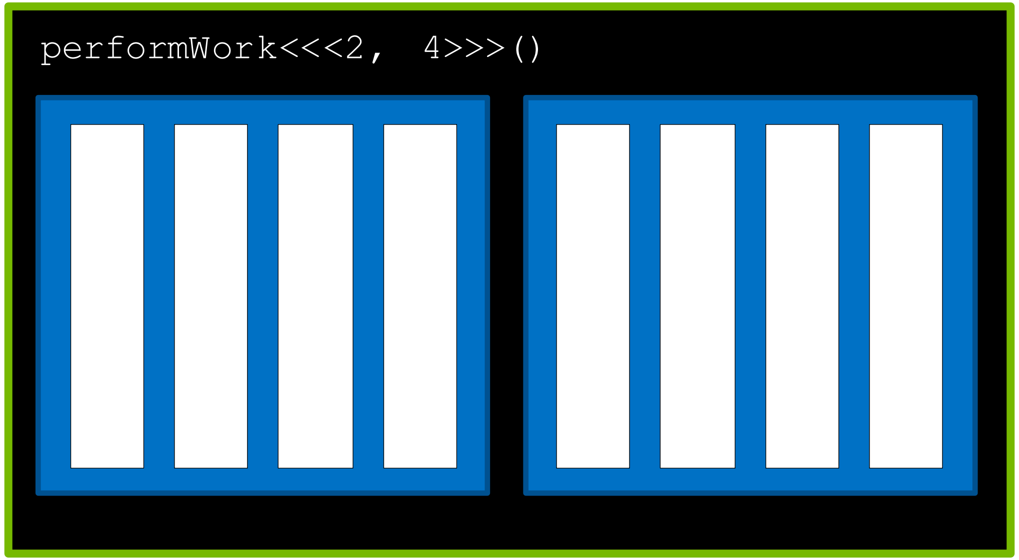
There are many blocks

GPU



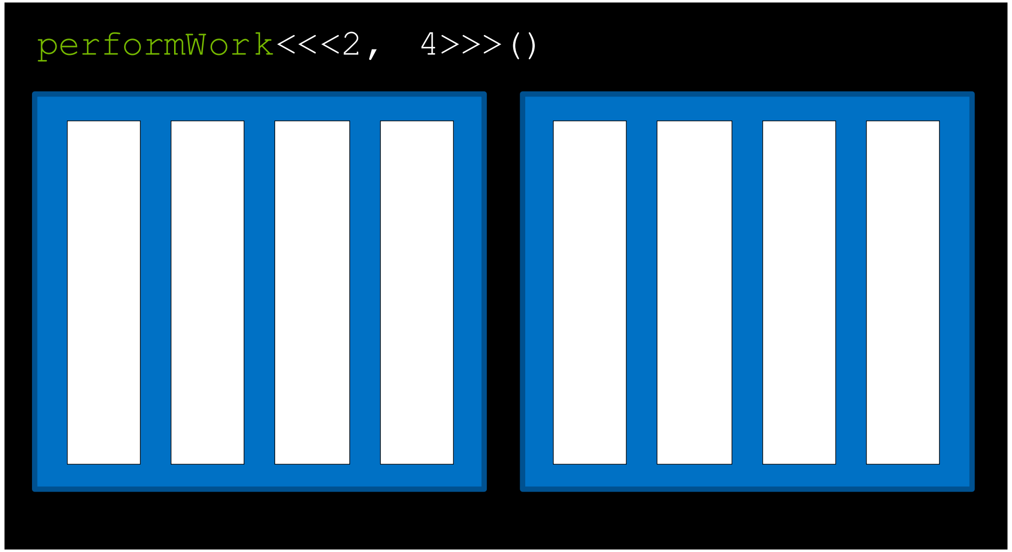
A collection of blocks is a **grid**

GPU



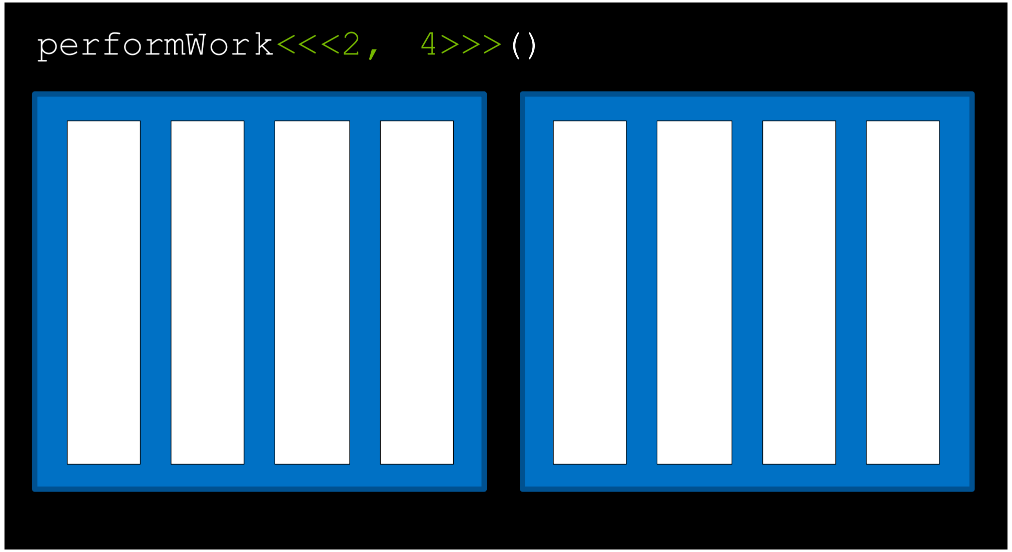
GPU functions are called **kernels**

GPU



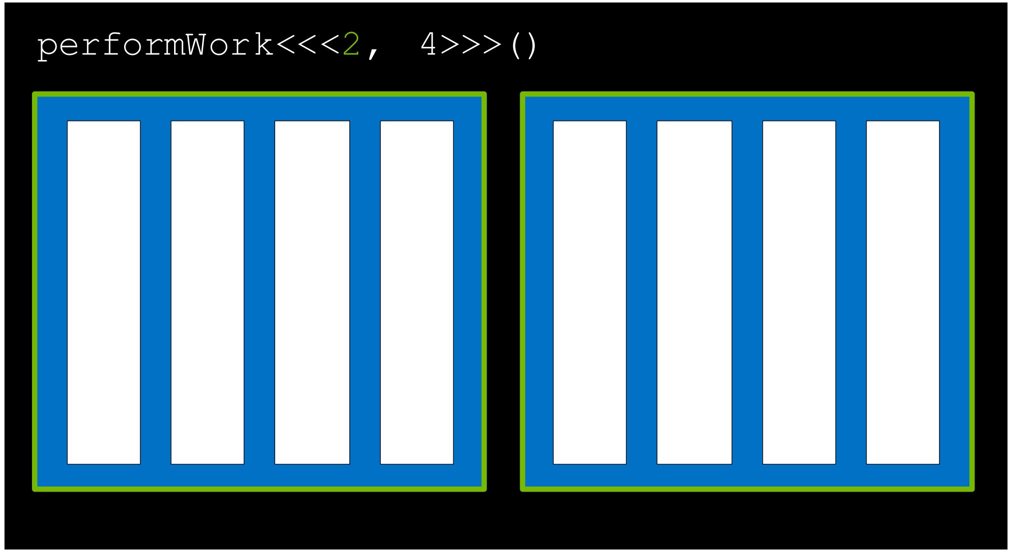
Kernels are **launched** with an **execution configuration**

GPU



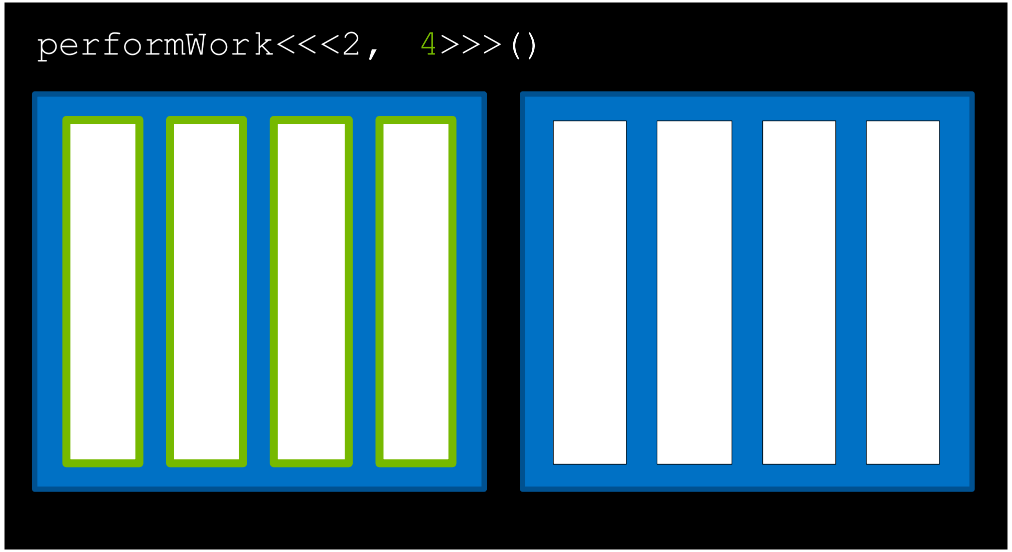
The execution configuration defines the number of blocks in the grid

GPU



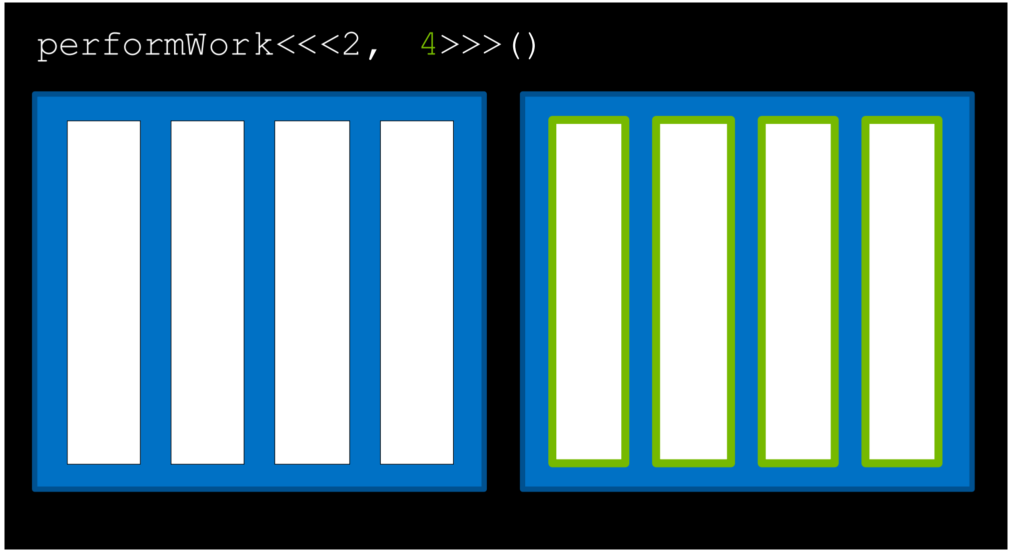
… as well as the number of threads in each block

GPU



Every block in the grid contains the same number of threads

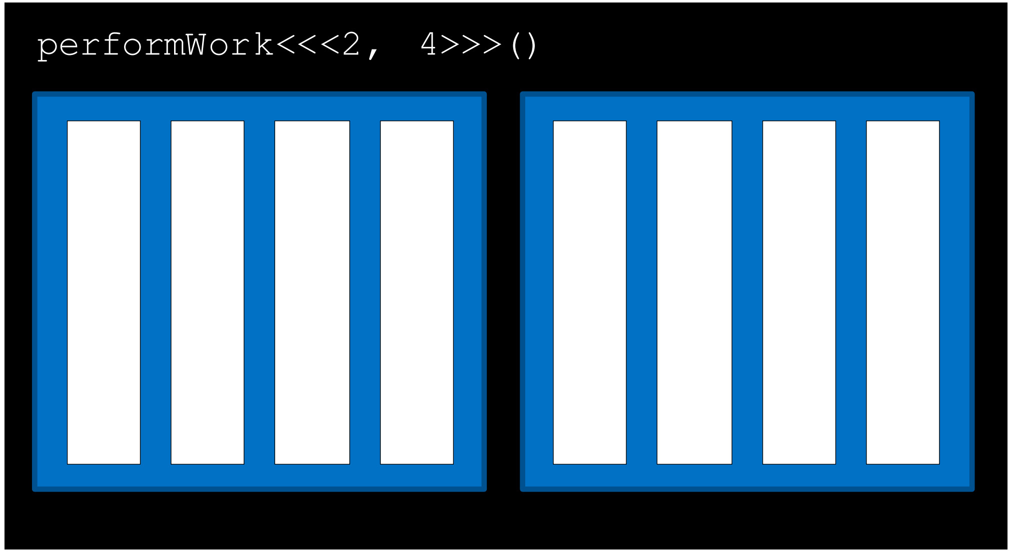
GPU



CUDA-Provided Thread Hierarchy Variables

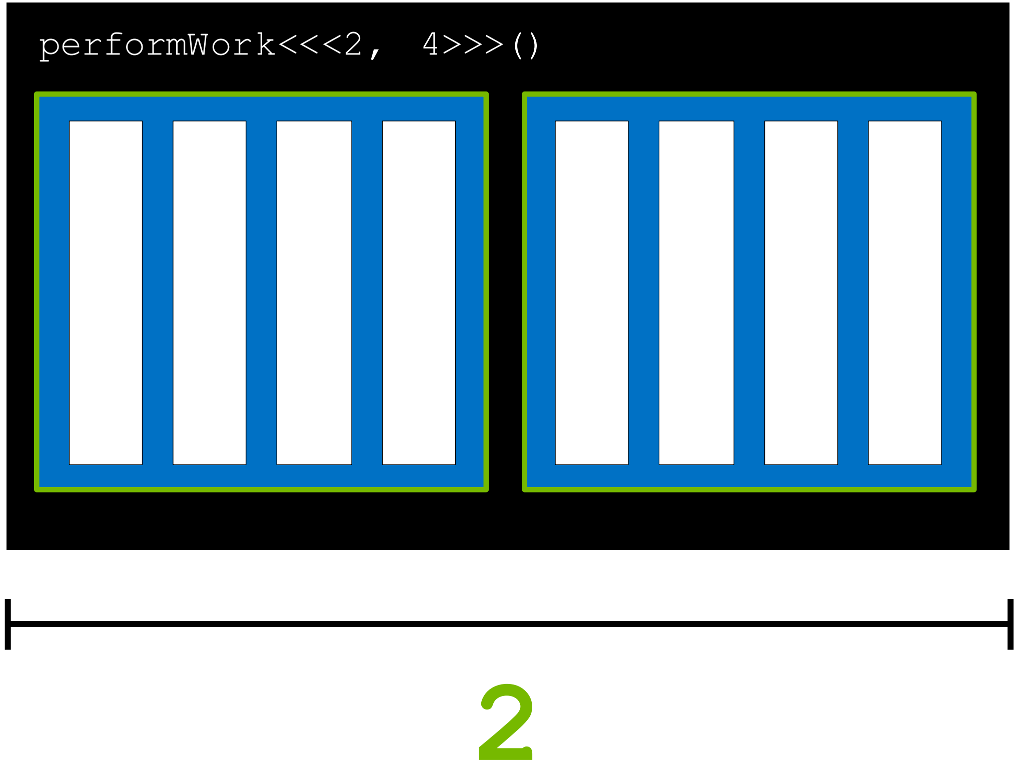
Inside kernels definitions, CUDA-provided variables describe its executing thread, block, and grid

GPU



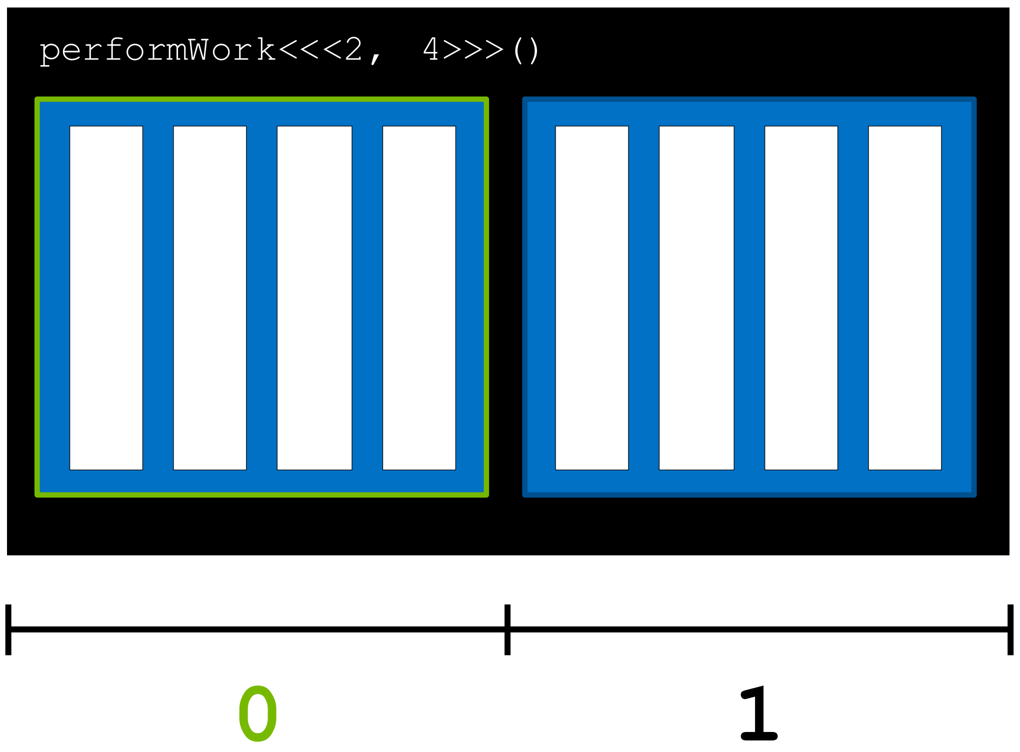
`gridDim.x` is the number of blocks in the grid, in this case **2**

GPU



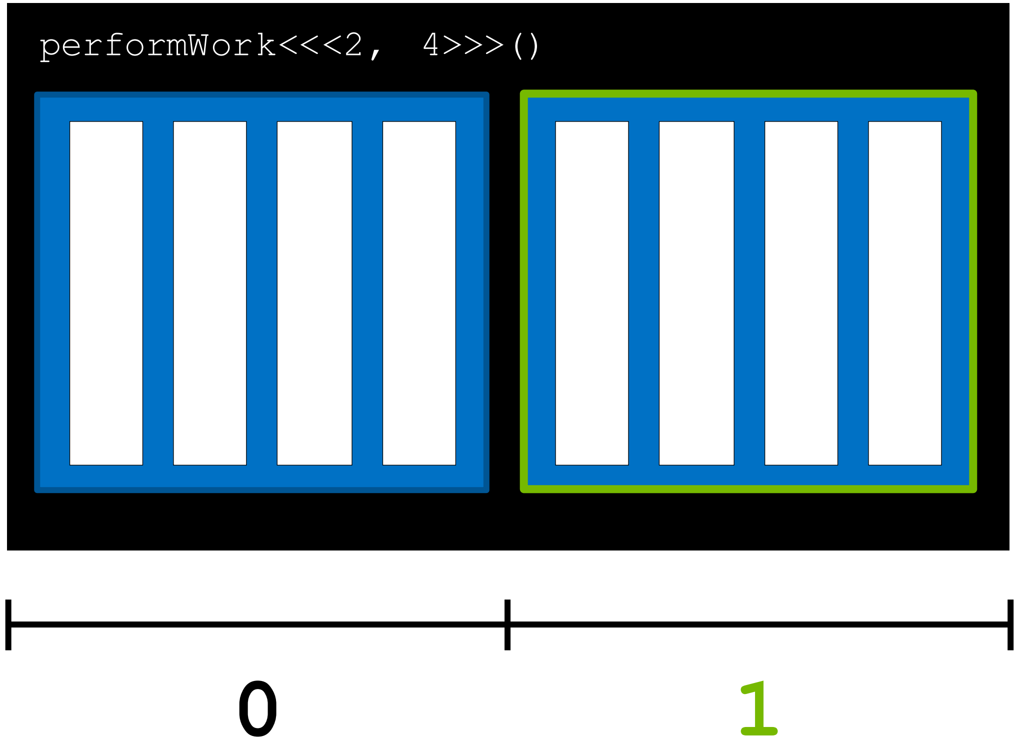
`blockIdx.x` is the index of the current block within the grid, in this case **0**

GPU



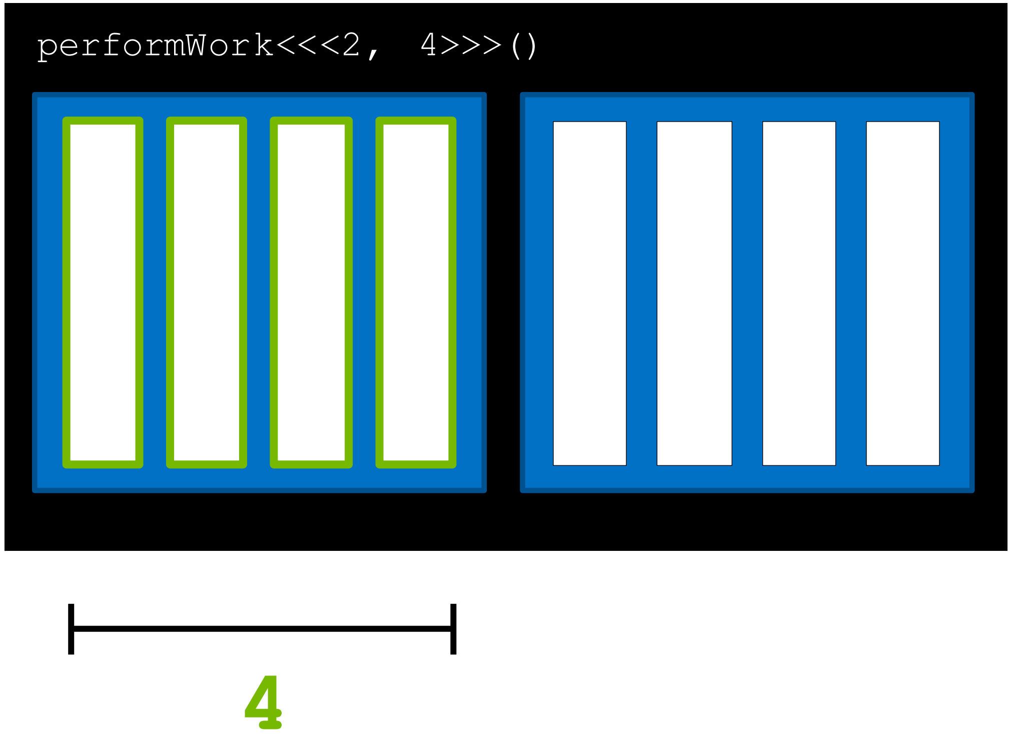
`blockIdx.x` is the index of the current block within the grid, in this case **`1`**

GPU



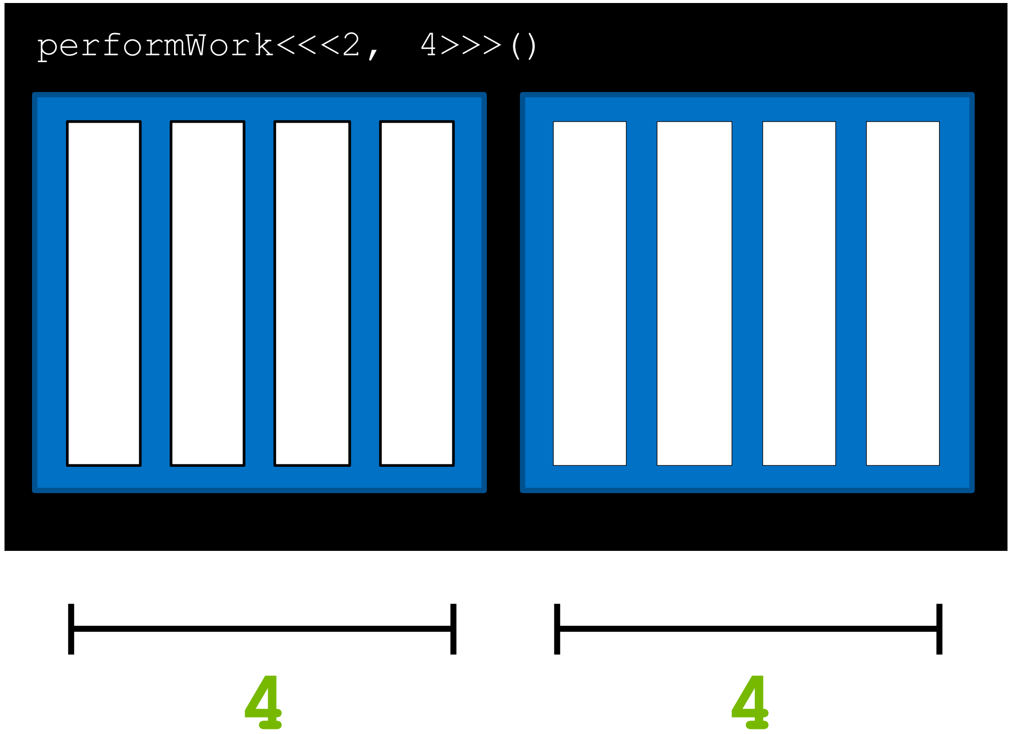
Inside a kernel **`blockDim.x`** describes the number of threads in a block. In this case **4**

GPU



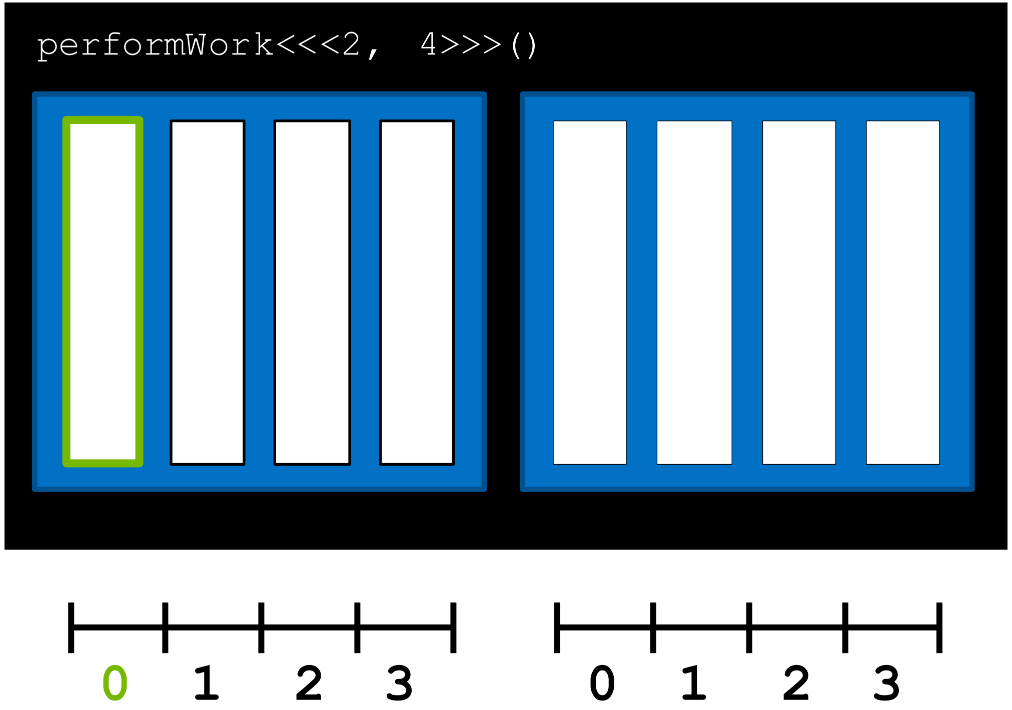
All blocks in a grid contain the same number of threads

GPU



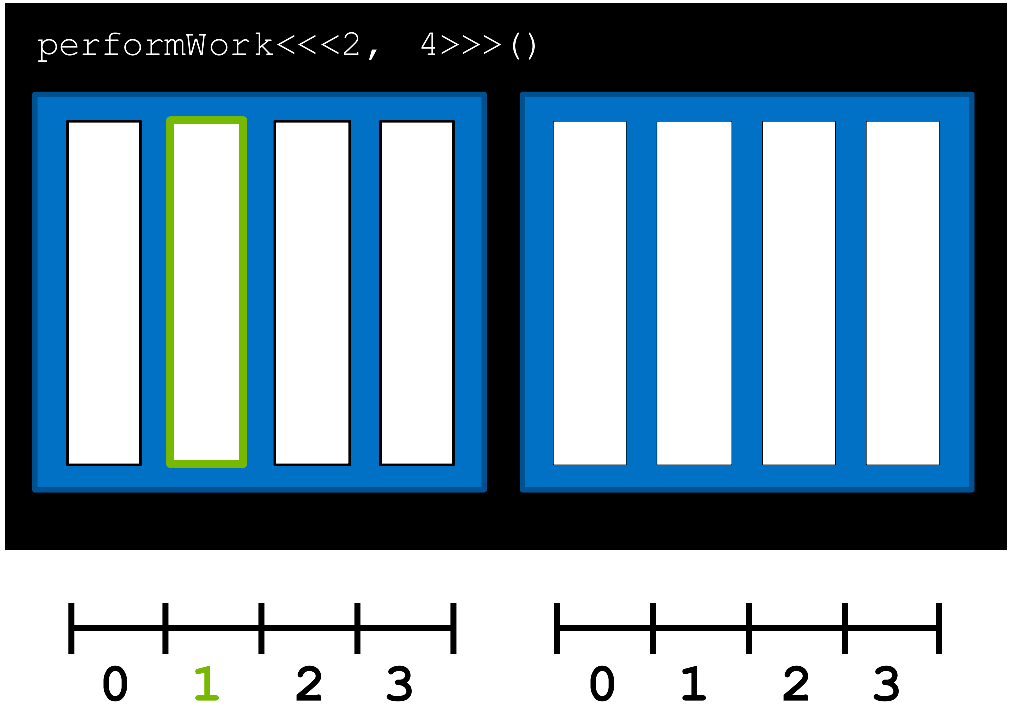
Inside a kernel `threadIdx.x` describes the index of the thread within a block. In this case `0`

GPU



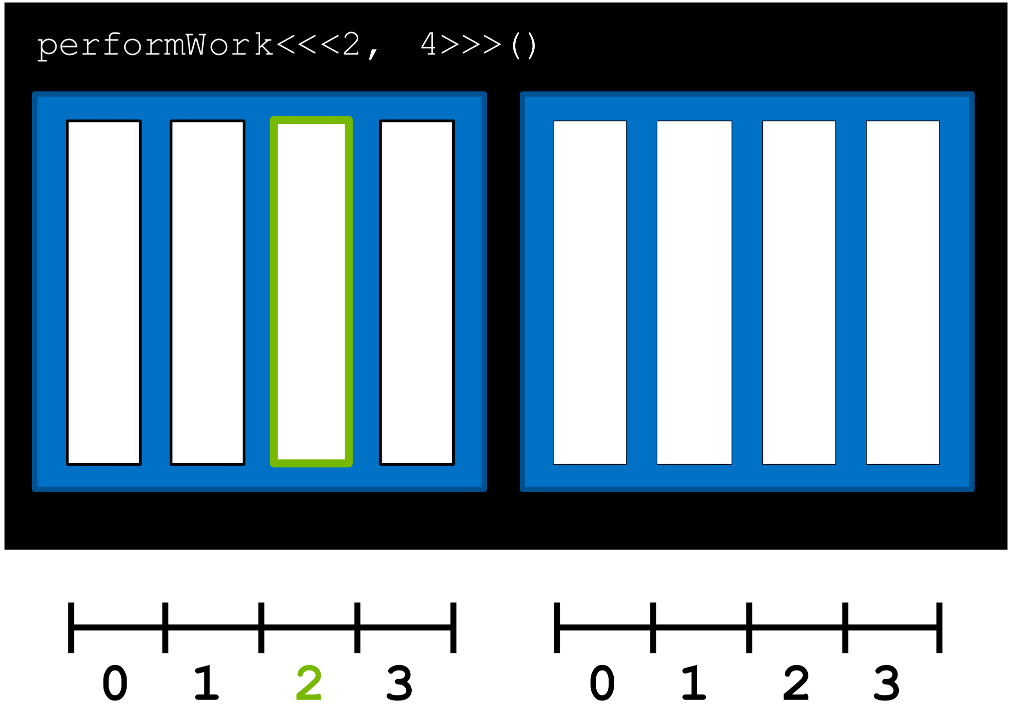
Inside a kernel **`threadIdx.x`** describes the index of the thread within a block. In this case **`1`**

GPU



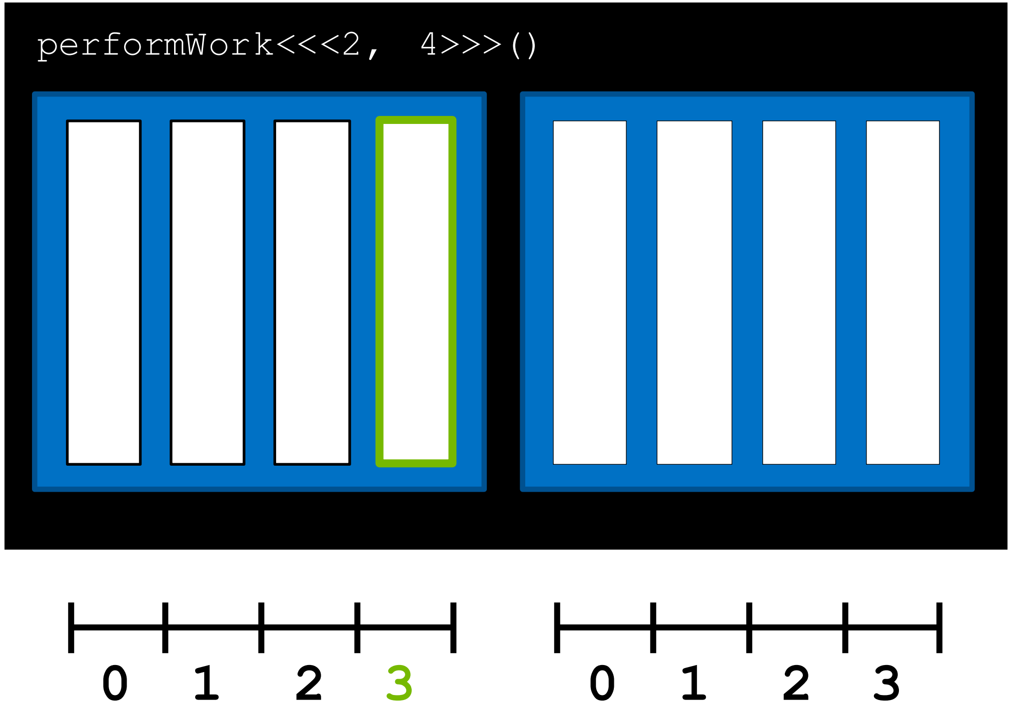
Inside a kernel **`threadIdx.x`** describes the index of the thread within a block. In this case **2**

GPU



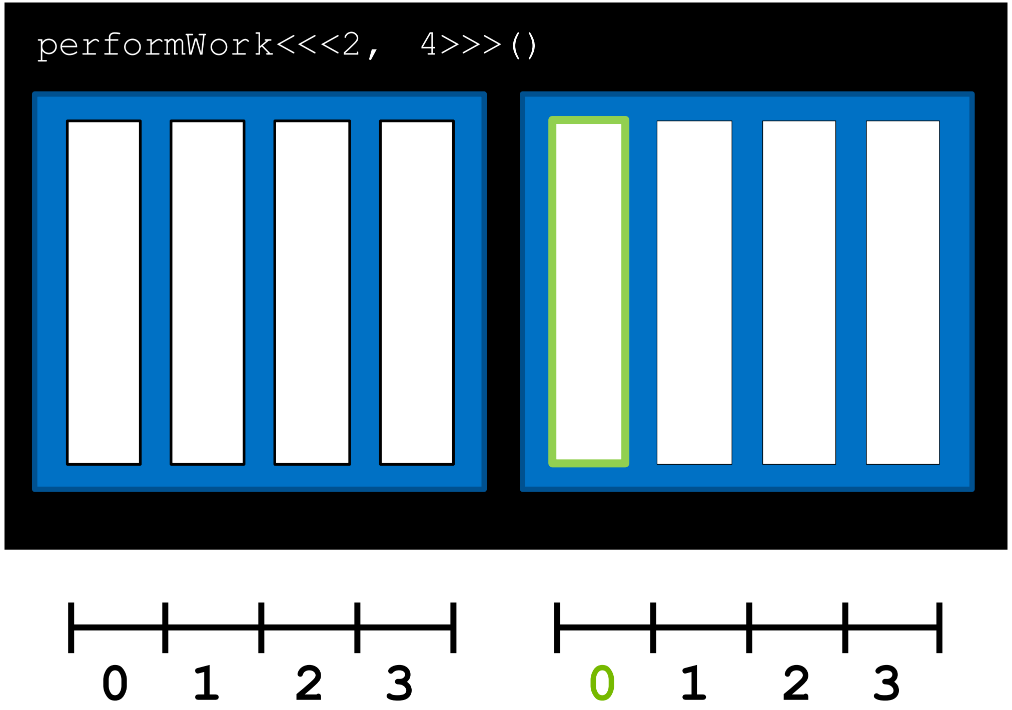
Inside a kernel **`threadIdx.x`** describes the index of the thread within a block. In this case **`3`**

GPU



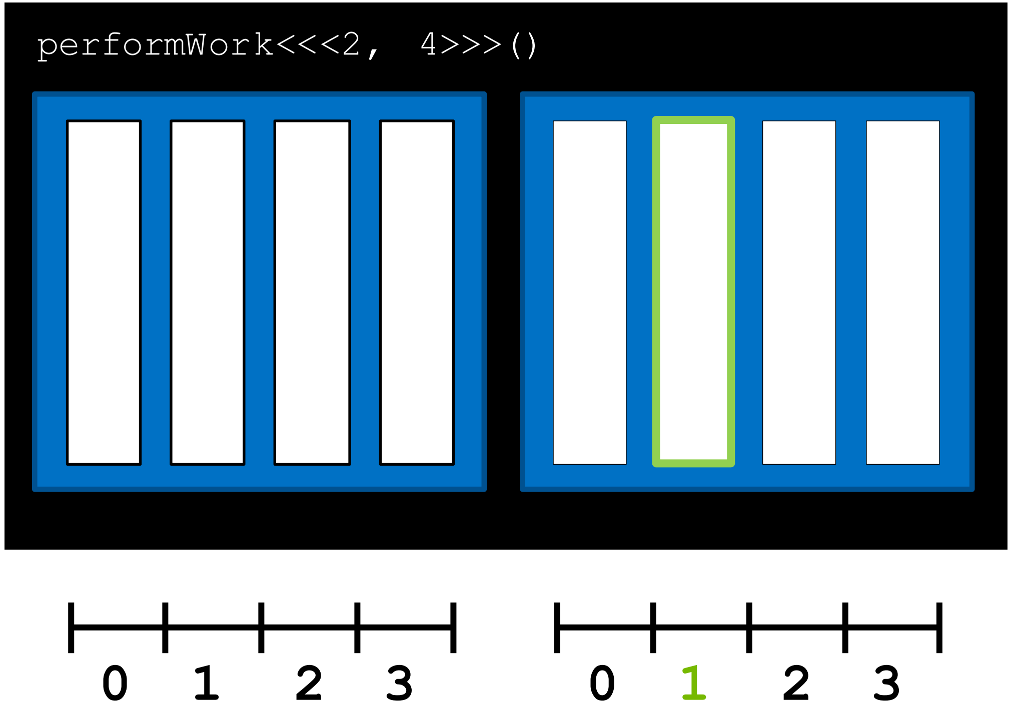
Inside a kernel `threadIdx.x` describes the index of the thread within a block. In this case `0`

GPU



Inside a kernel **`threadIdx.x`** describes the index of the thread within a block. In this case **`1`**

GPU



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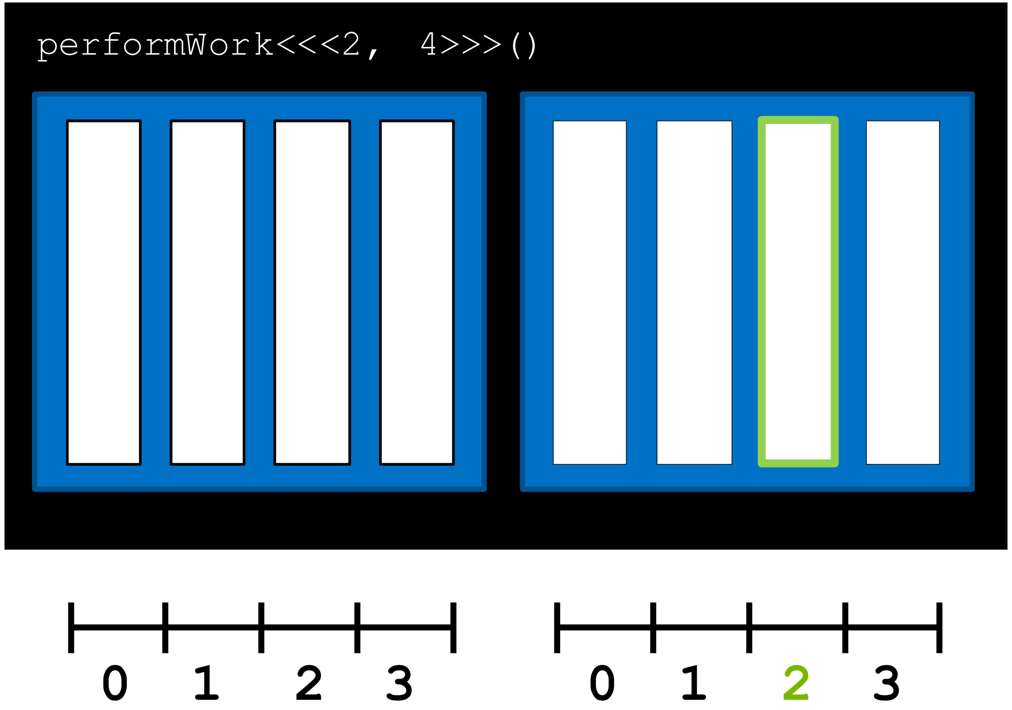
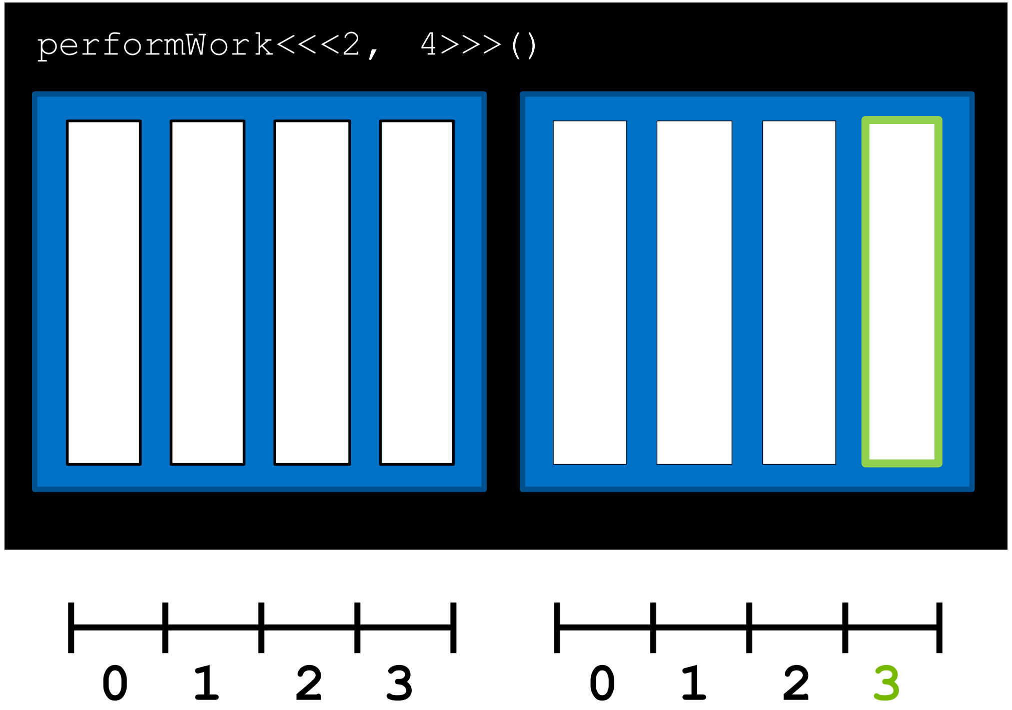
Inside a kernel **`threadIdx.x`** describes the index of the thread within a block. In this case **2**

GPU

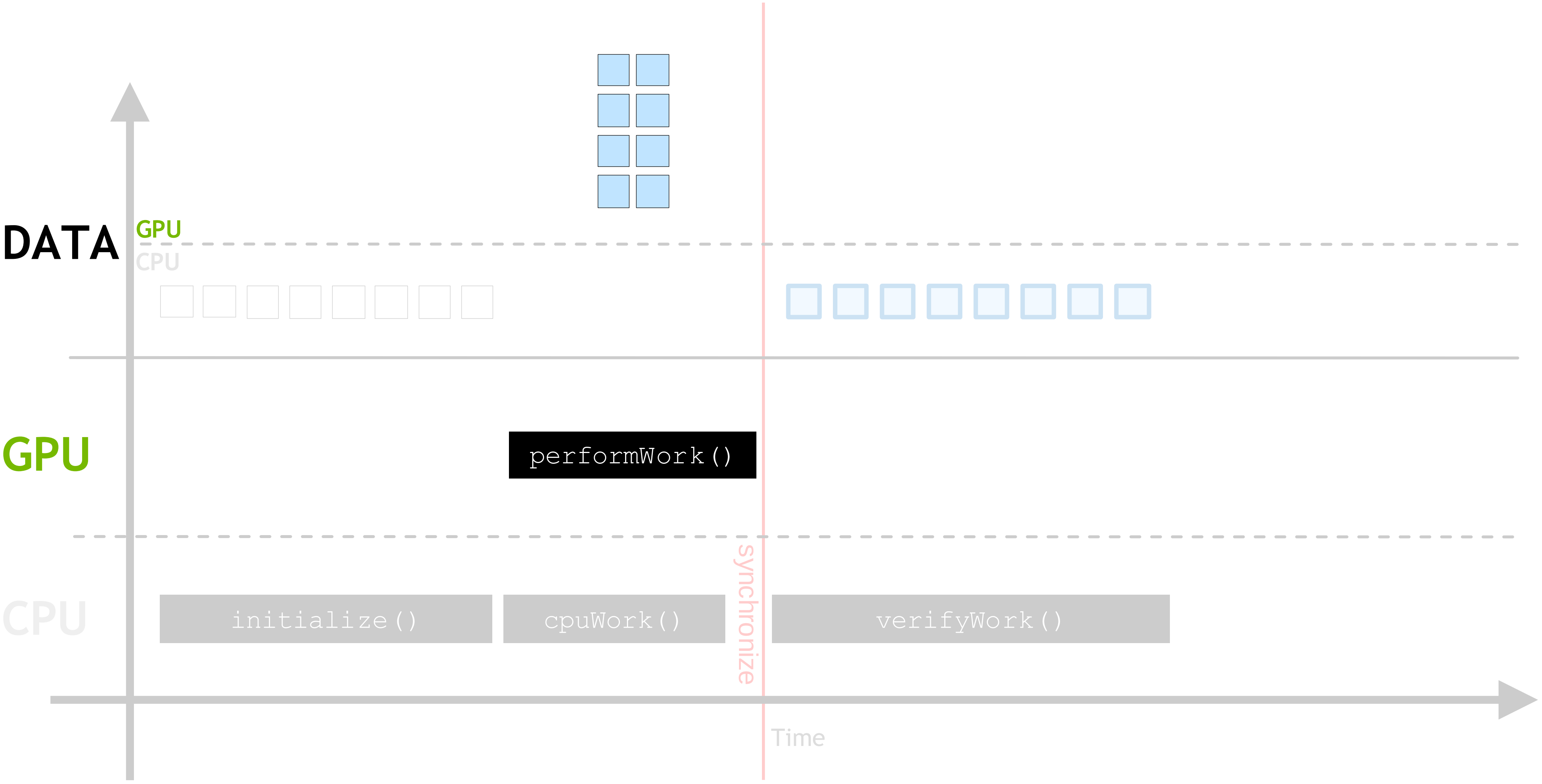


Inside a kernel **`threadIdx.x`** describes the index of the thread within a block. In this case **`3`**

GPU

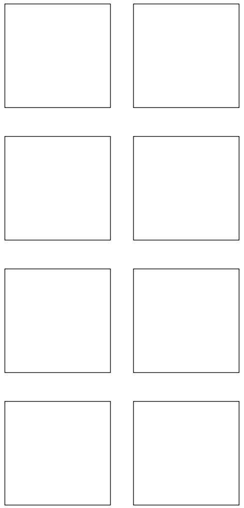


Coordinating Parallel Threads

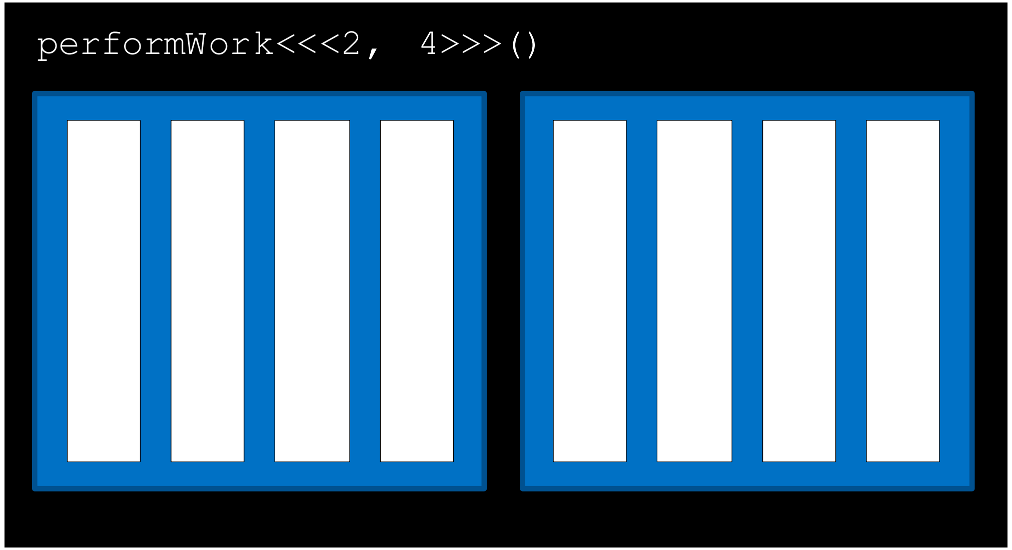

DATA
GPU
CPU
GPU
performWork()
CPU
initialize()
cpuWork()
synchronize
verifyWork()
Time

Assume data is in a 0 indexed vector

GPU
DATA



GPU

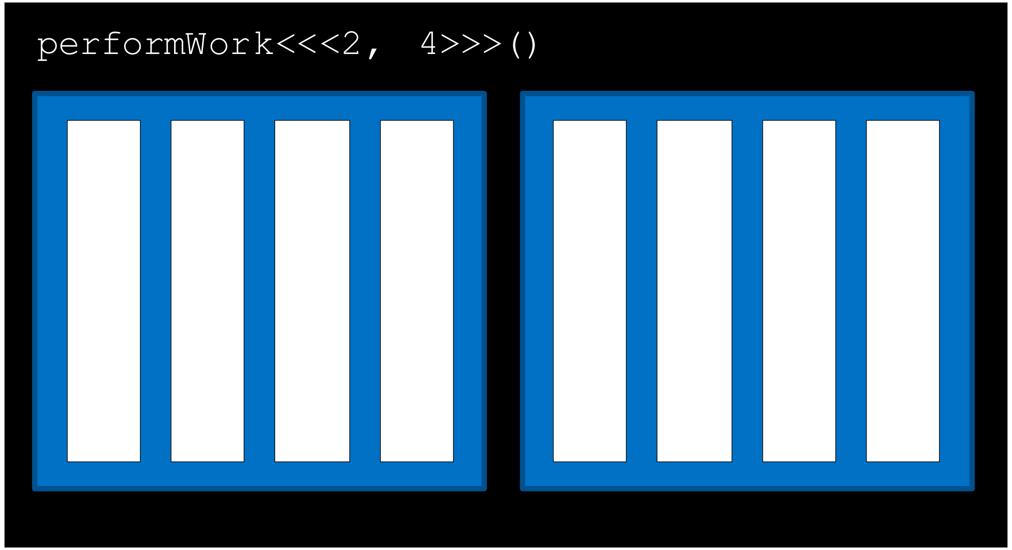


Assume data is in a 0 indexed vector

GPU
DATA

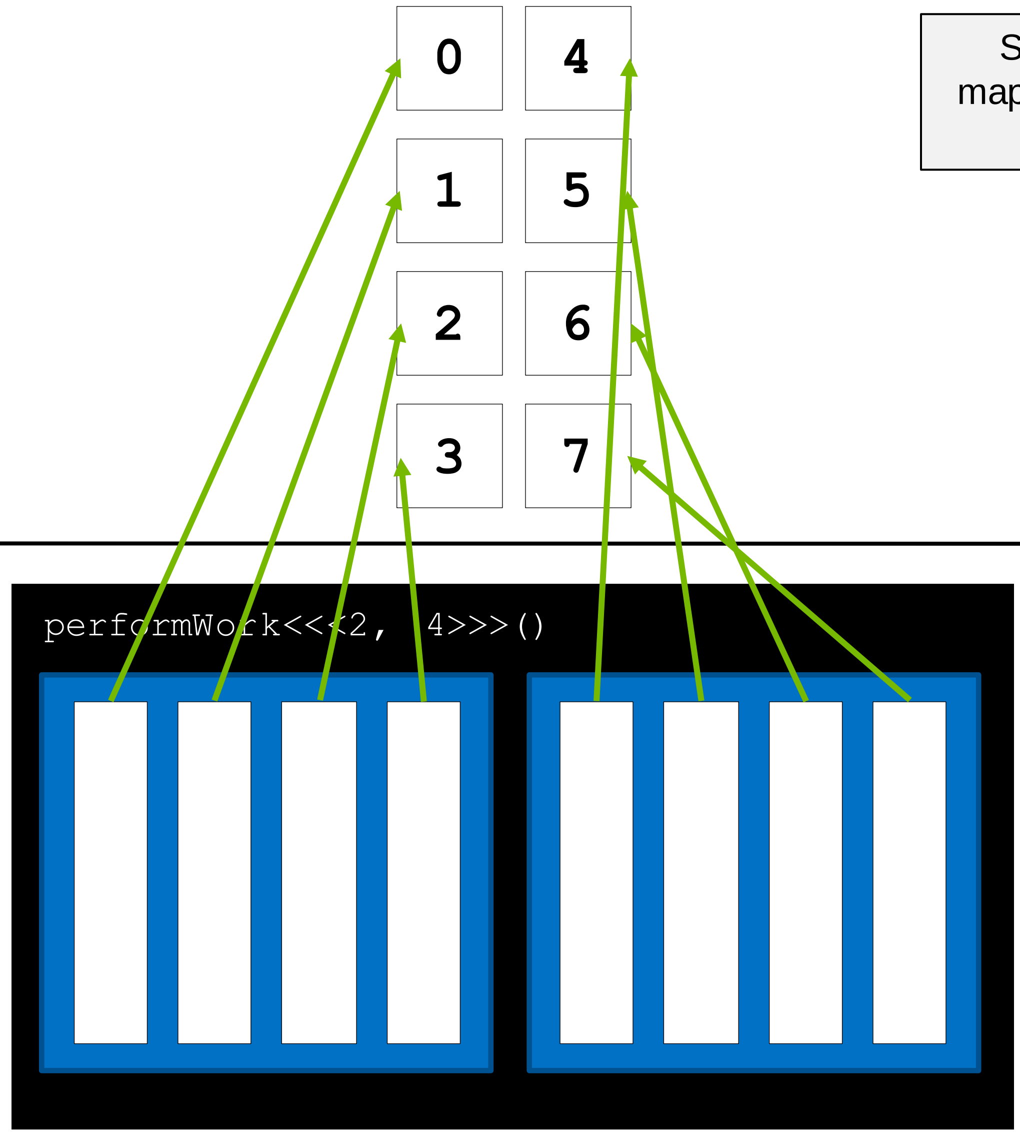
0	4
1	5
2	6
3	7

GPU



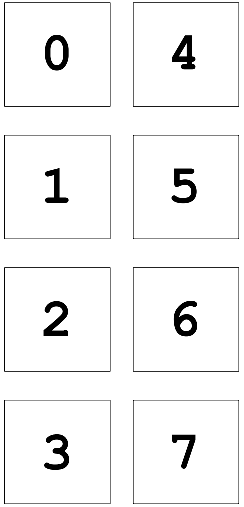
GPU
DATA

Somehow, each thread must be mapped to work on an element in the vector



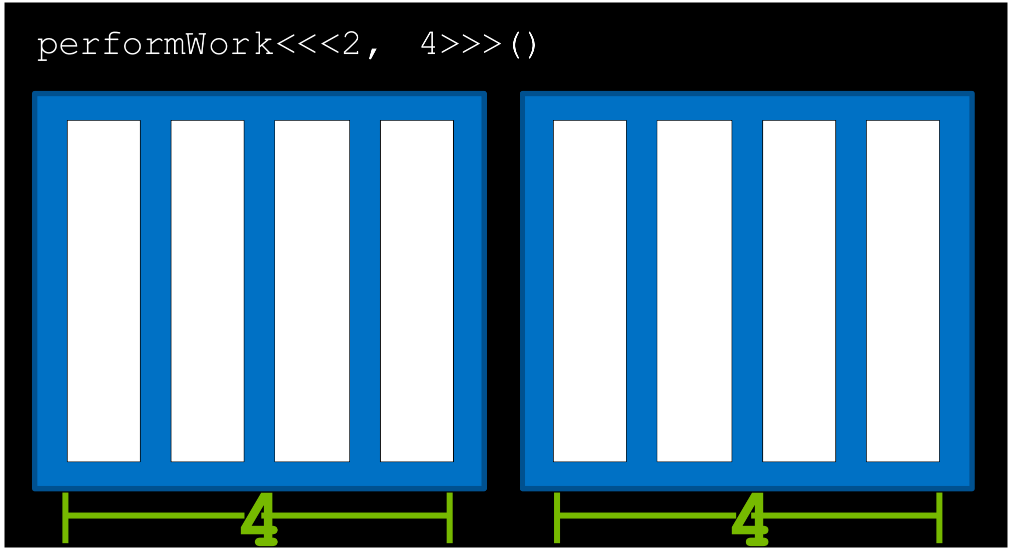
GPU

GPU
DATA

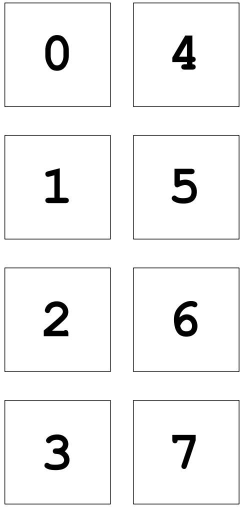


Recall that each thread has access to the size of its block via **`blockDim.x`**

GPU

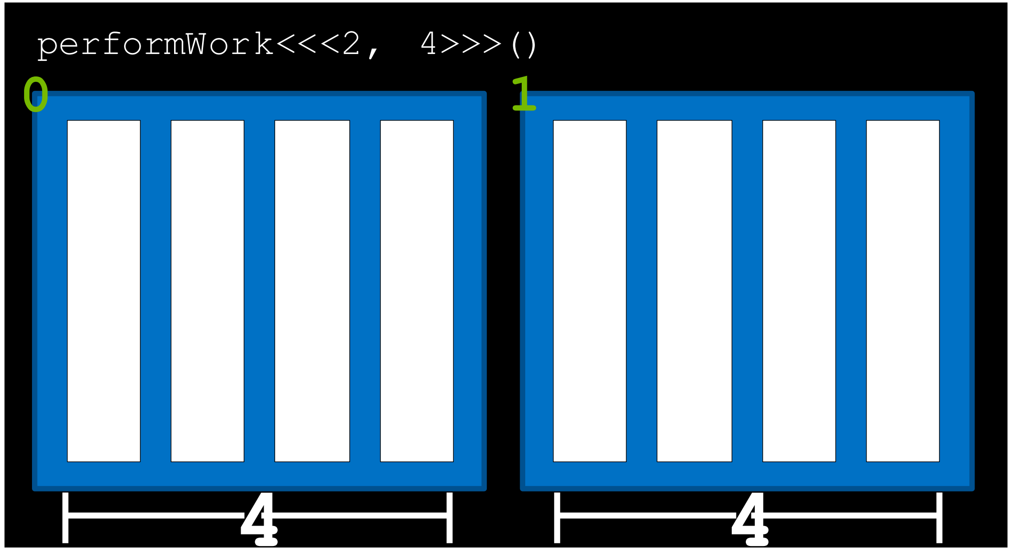


GPU
DATA

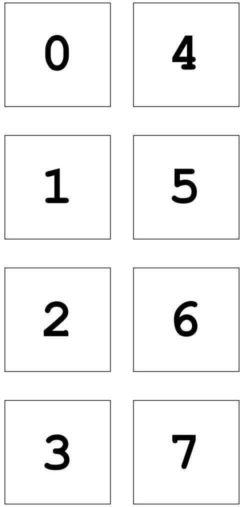


…and the index of its block within the grid via `blockIdx.x`

GPU

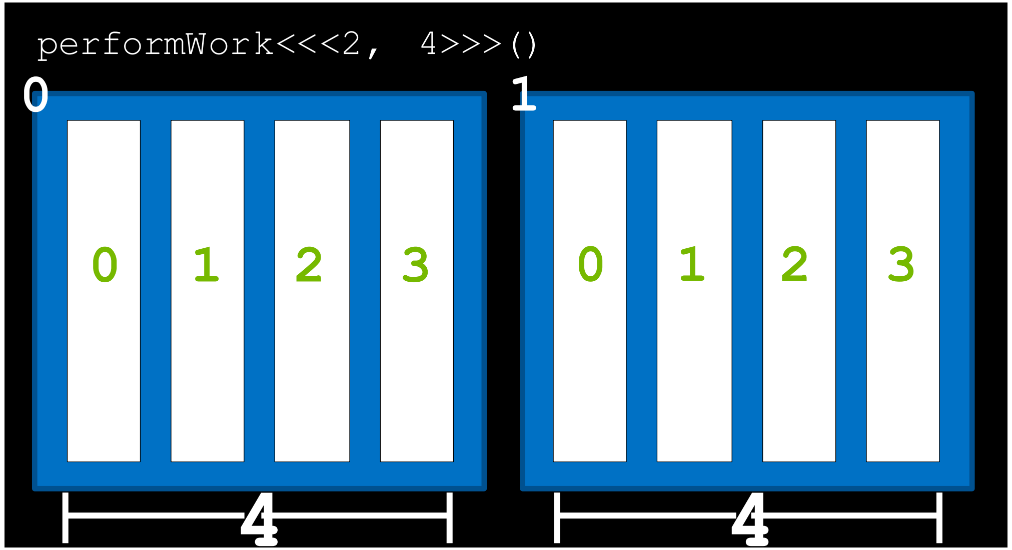


GPU
DATA

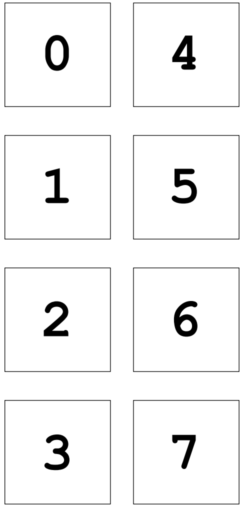


…and its own index within its block via **threadIdx.x**

GPU

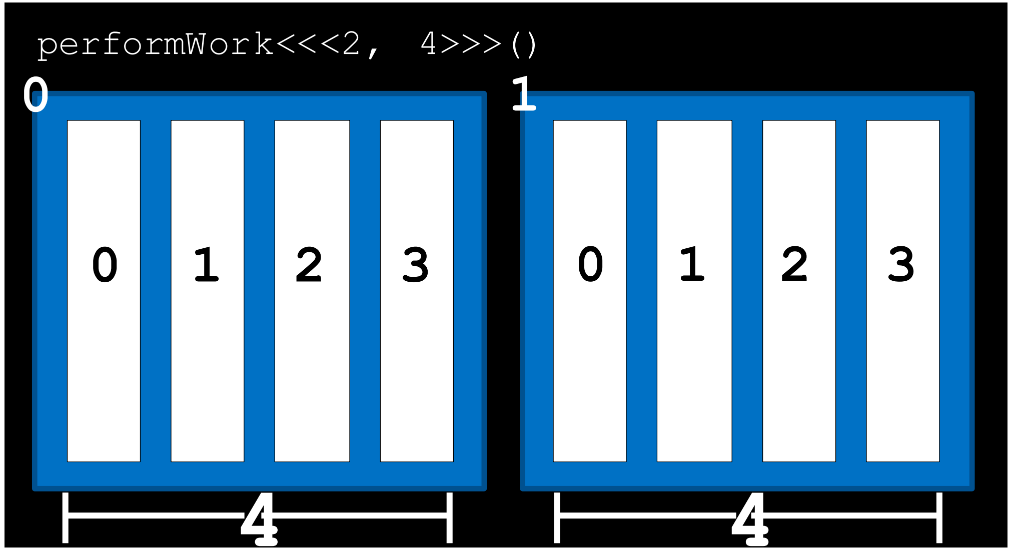


GPU
DATA



Using these variables, the formula **`threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x`** will map each thread to one element in the vector

GPU



GPU

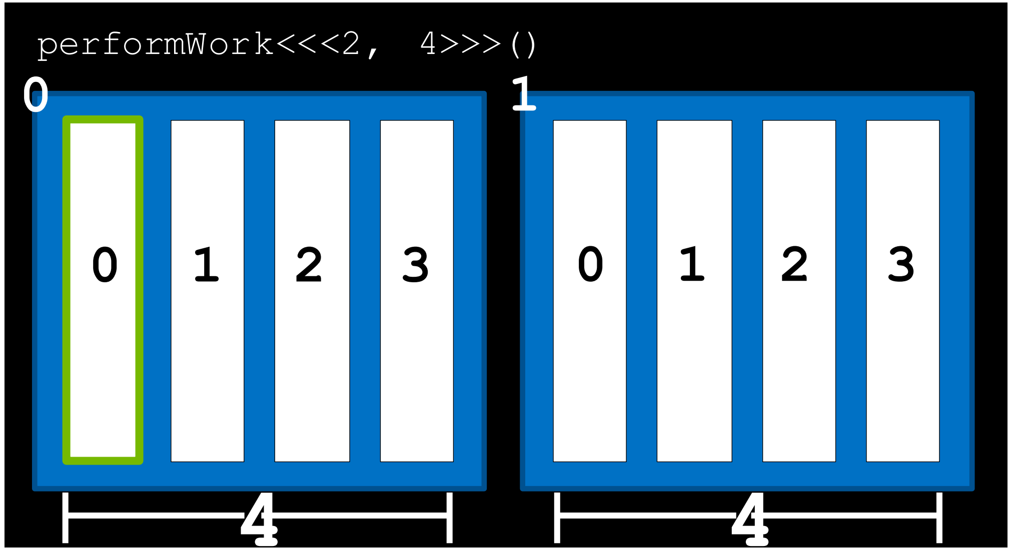
DATA

0	4
1	5
2	6
3	7

threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
0		0		4

dataIndex
?

GPU

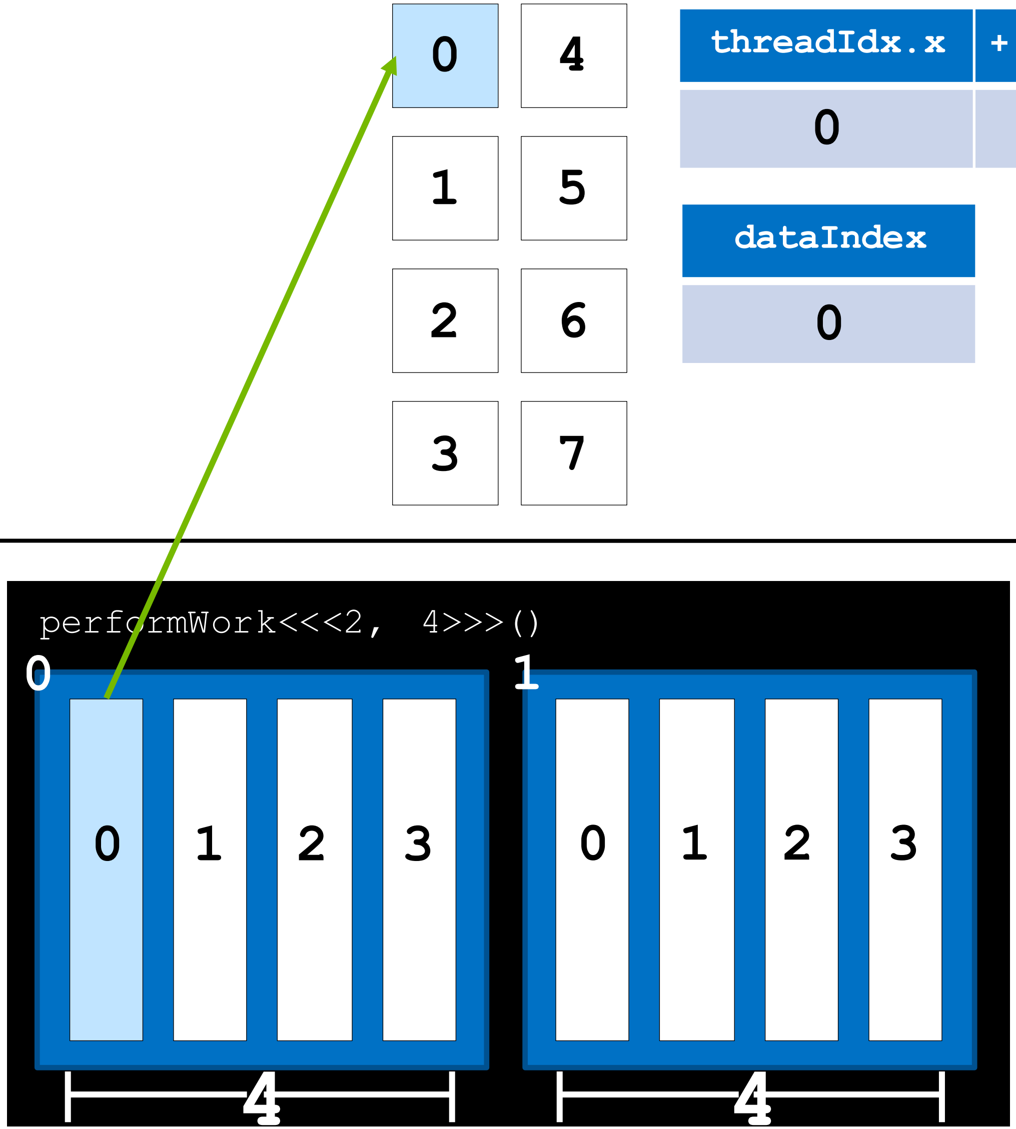


GPU
DATA

threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
0		0		4

dataIndex
0

GPU



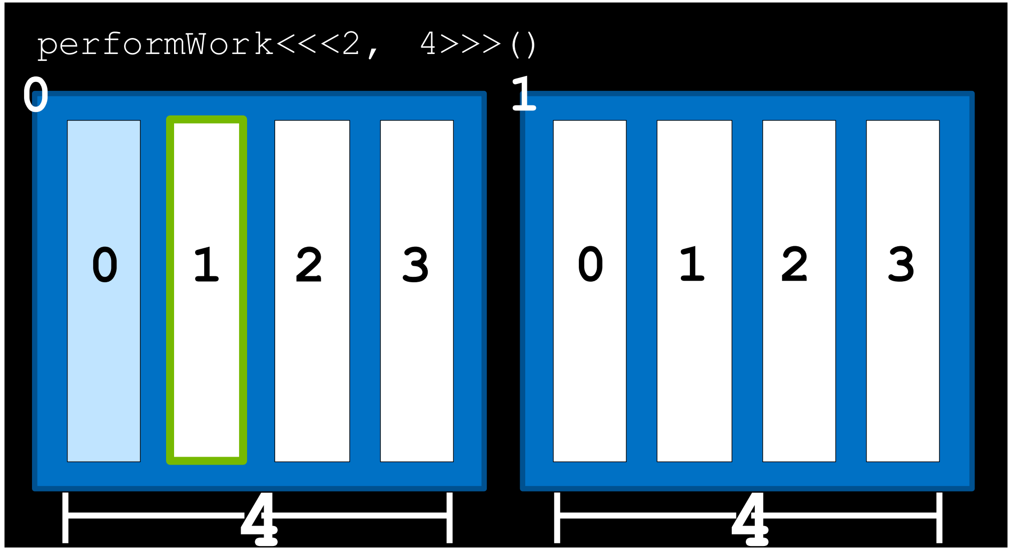
GPU
DATA

0	4
1	5
2	6
3	7

threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
1		0		4

dataIndex
?

GPU

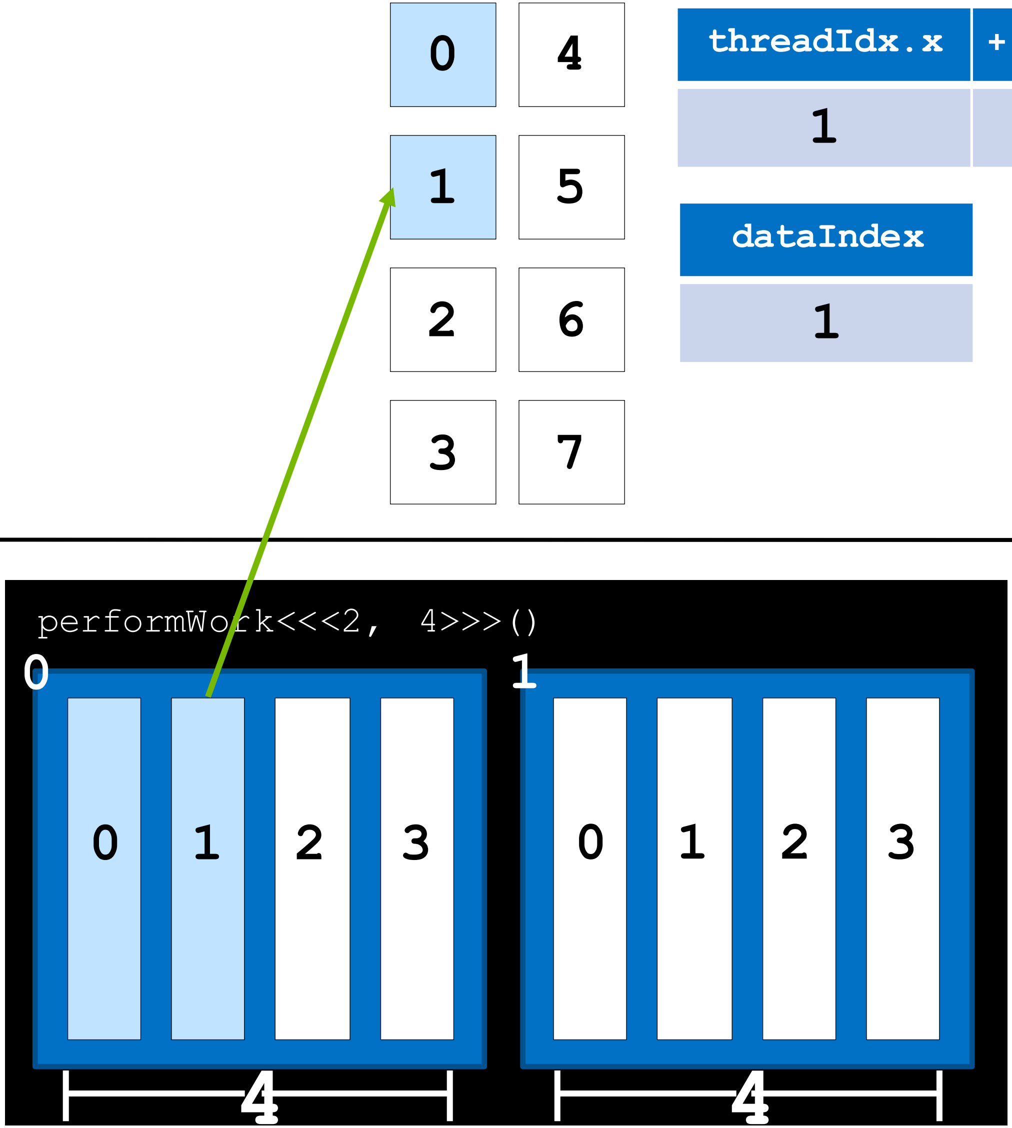


GPU
DATA

threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
1		0		4

dataIndex
1

GPU



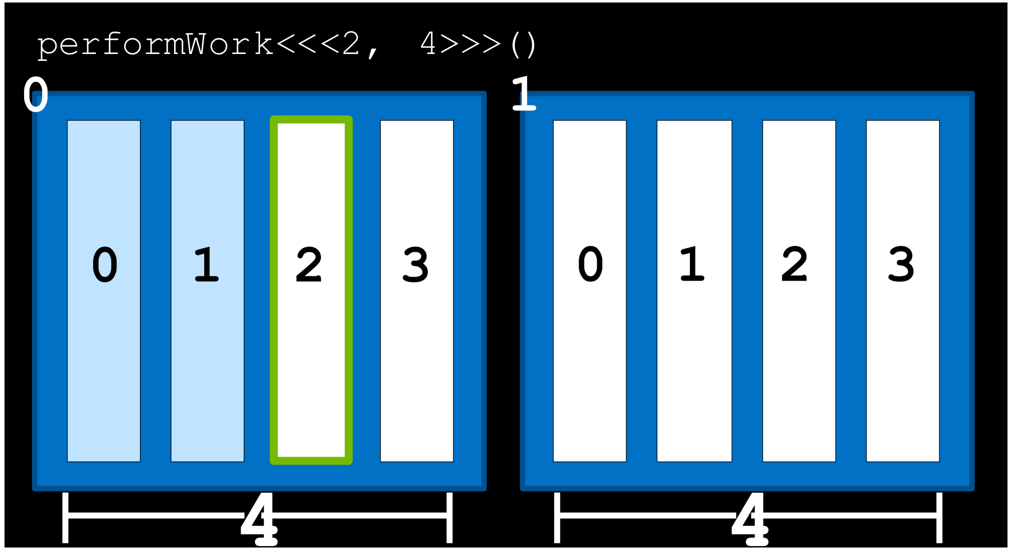
GPU
DATA

0	4
1	5
2	6
3	7

threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
2		0		4

dataIndex
?

GPU



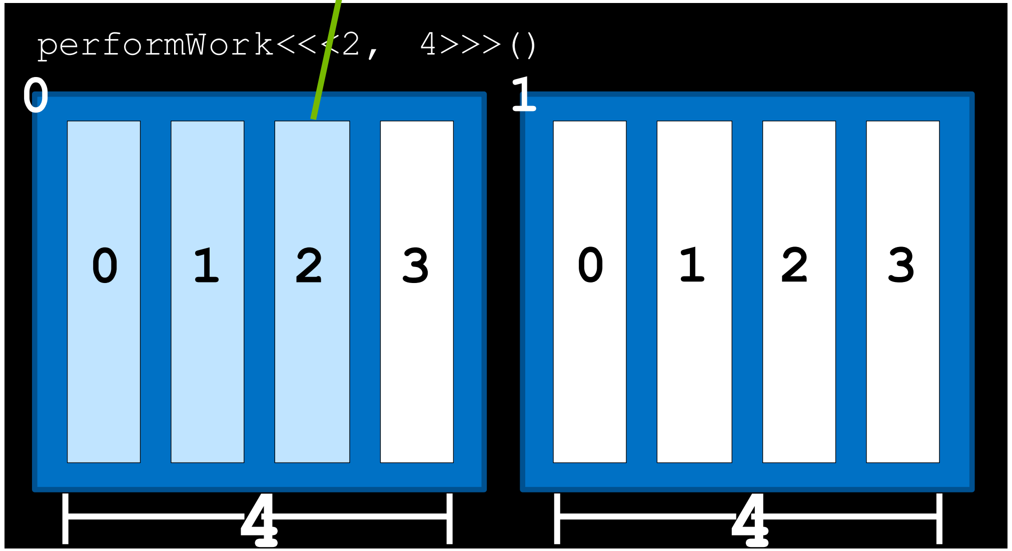
GPU
DATA

0	4
1	5
2	6
3	7

threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
2		0		4

dataIndex
2

GPU



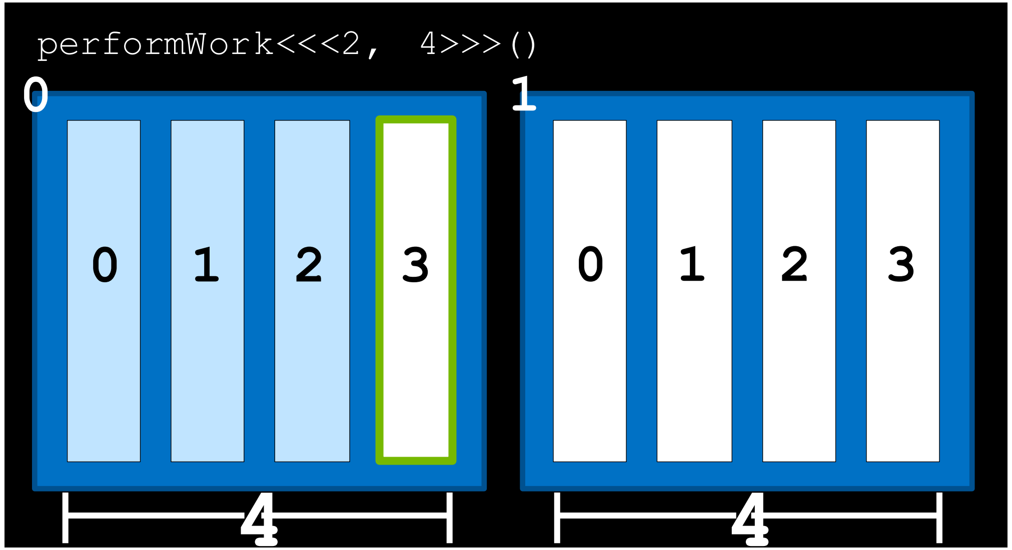
GPU
DATA

0	4
1	5
2	6
3	7

threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
3		0		4

dataIndex
?

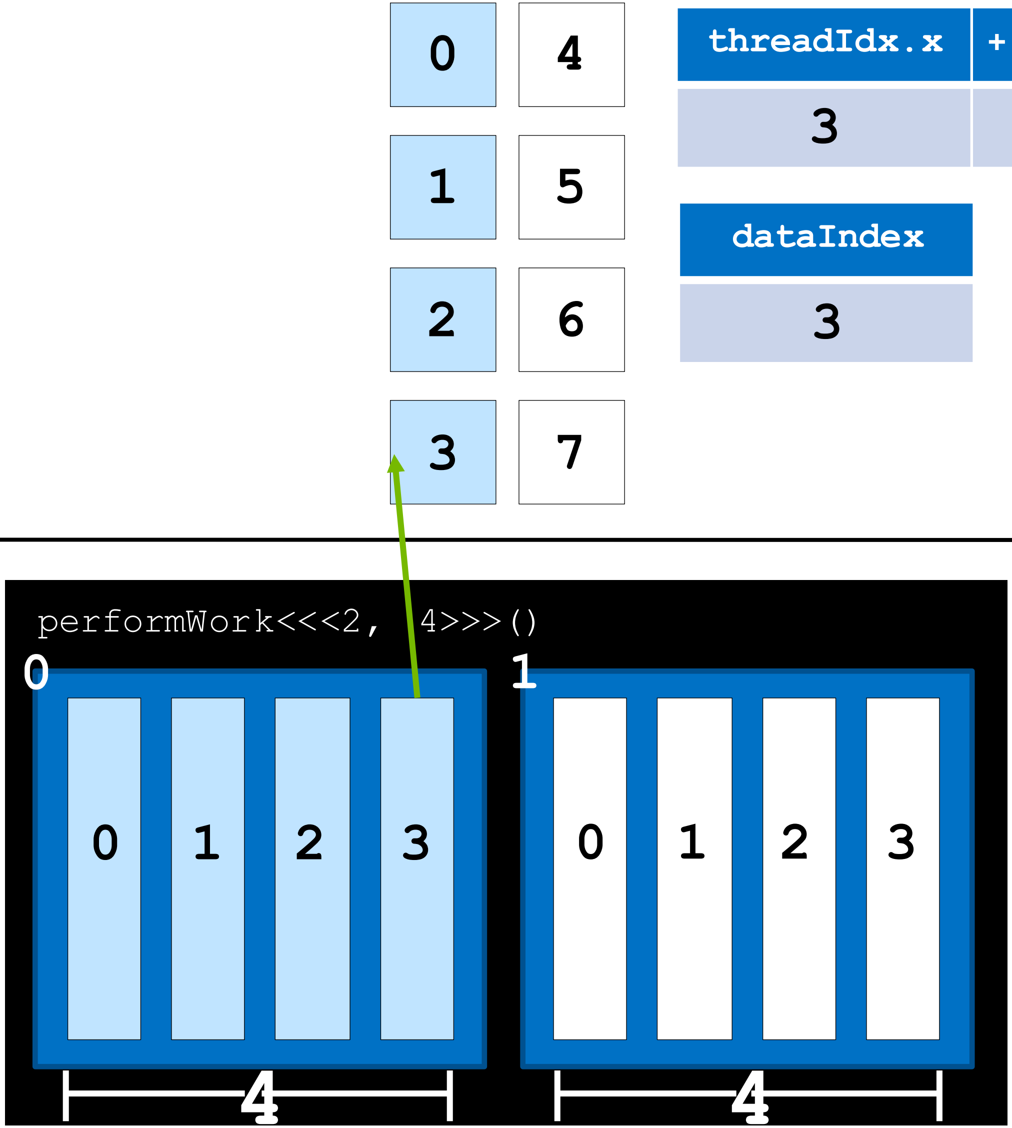
GPU



GPU
DATA

threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
3		0		4

dataIndex
3



GPU

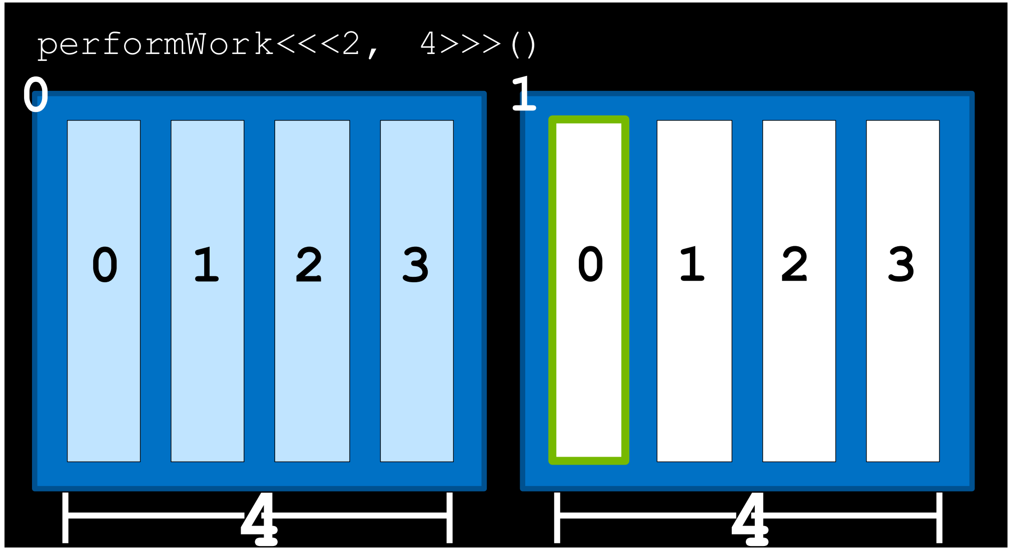
GPU
DATA

0	4
1	5
2	6
3	7

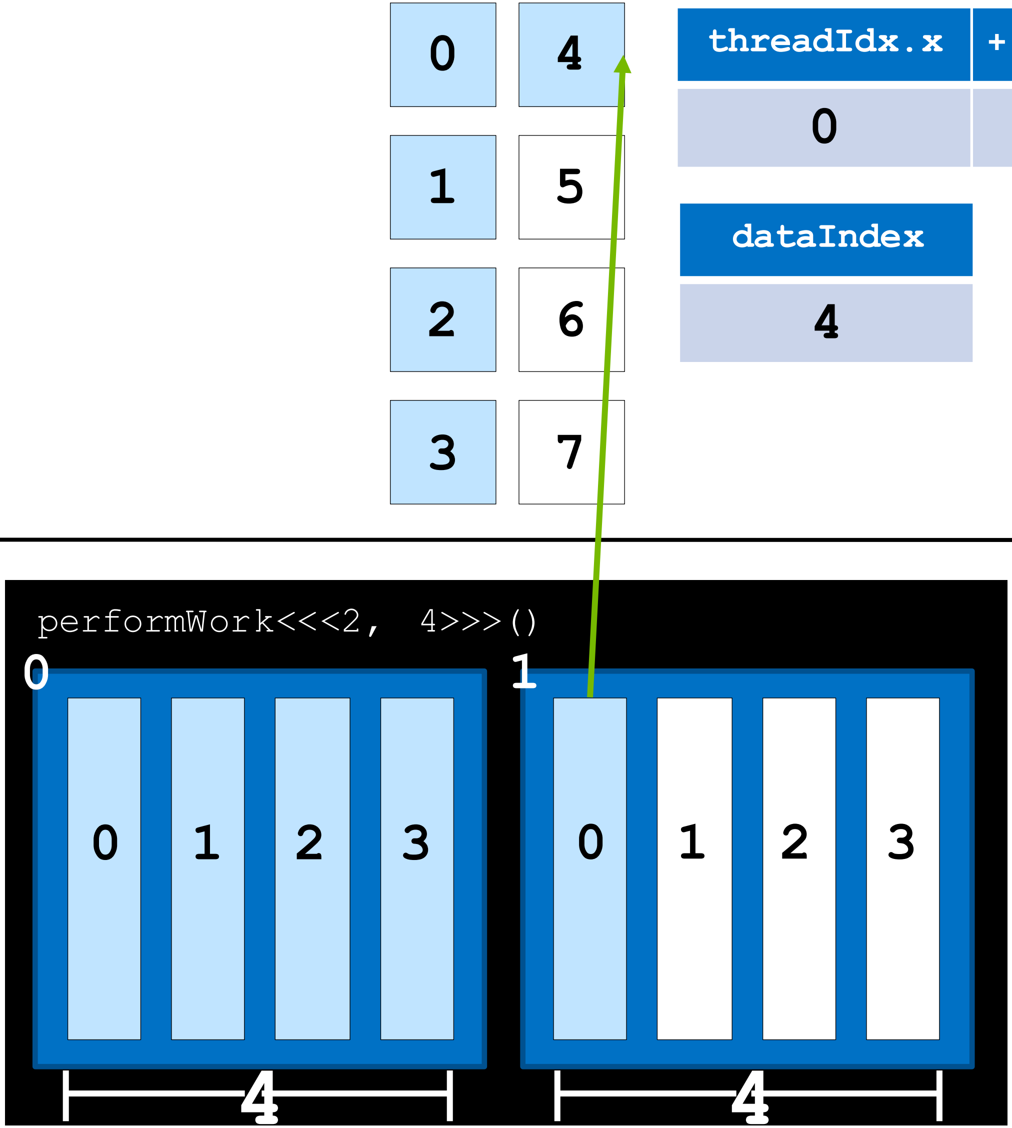
threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
0		1		4

dataIndex
?

GPU



GPU
DATA

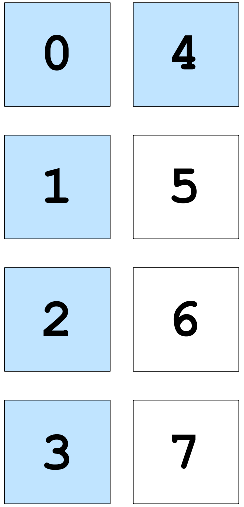


threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
0		1		4

dataIndex
4

GPU

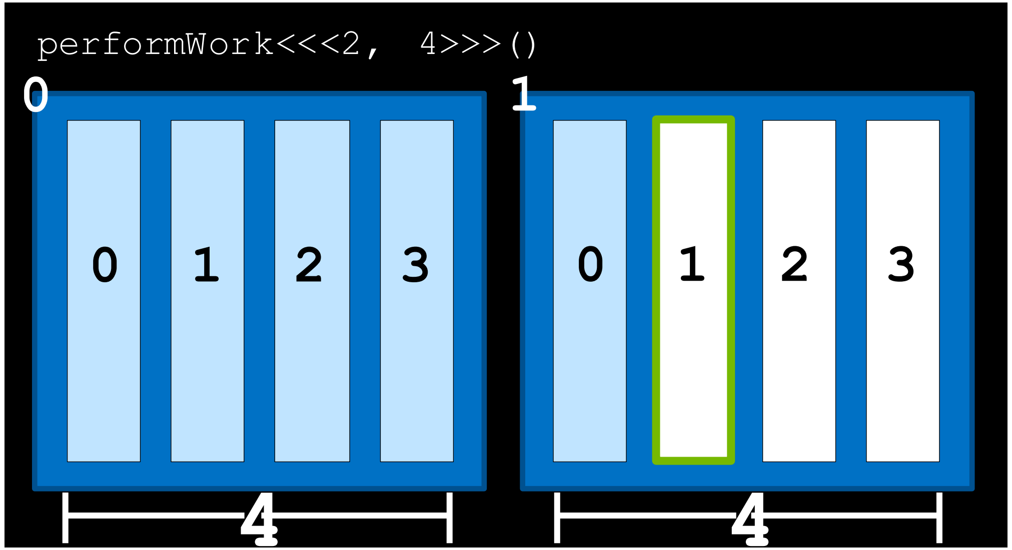
GPU
DATA

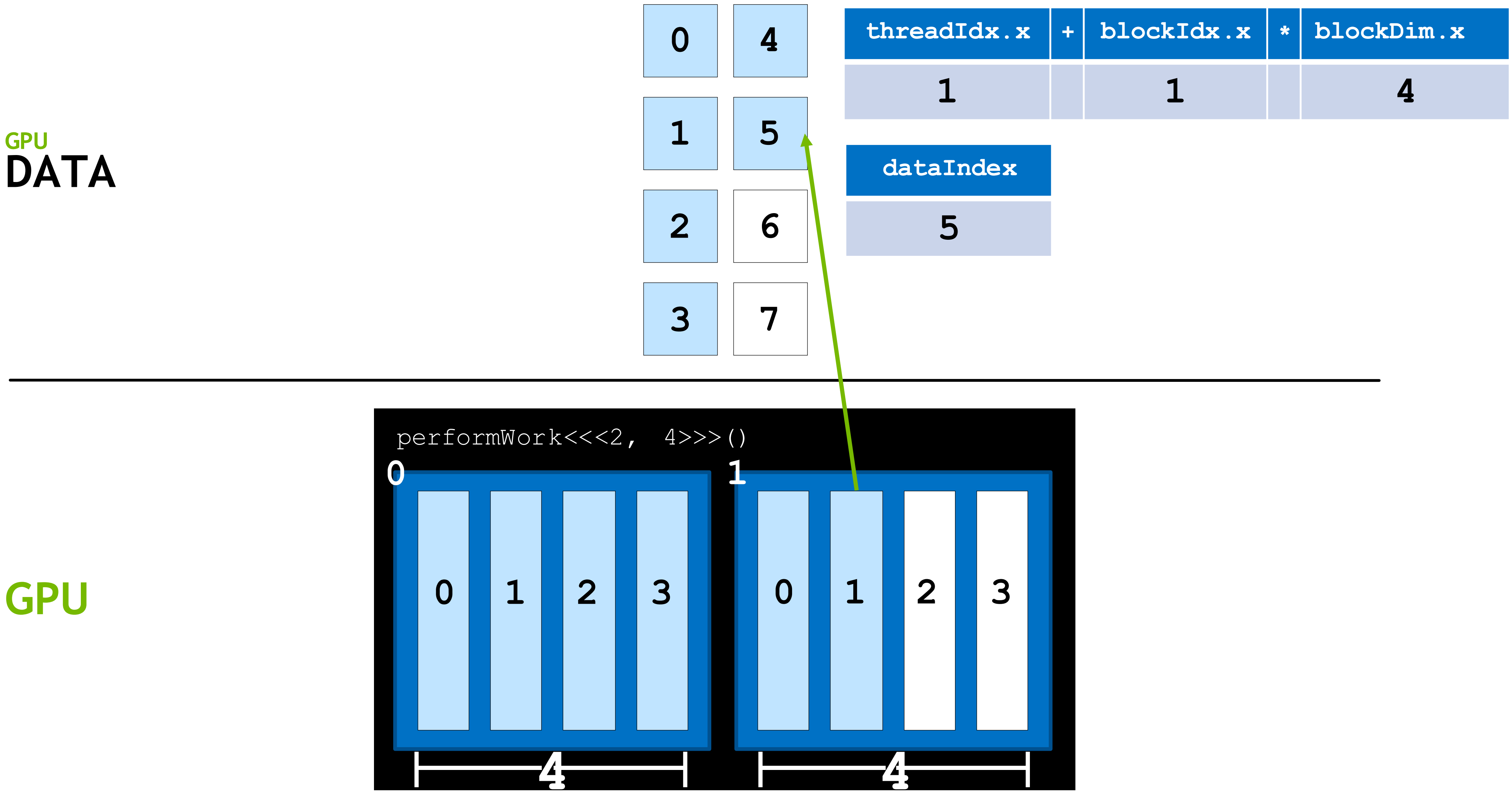


threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
1		1		4

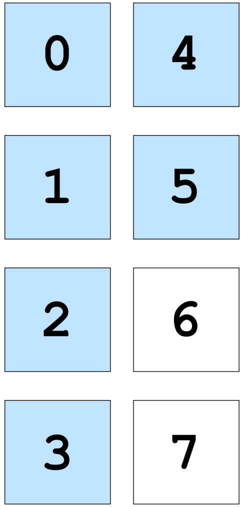
dataIndex
?

GPU




GPU
DATA
0
4
1
5
2
6
3
7
threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x
1 1 4
dataIndex
5
GPU
performWork<<<2, 4>>>()
0
0 1 2 3
4
1
0 1 2 3
4

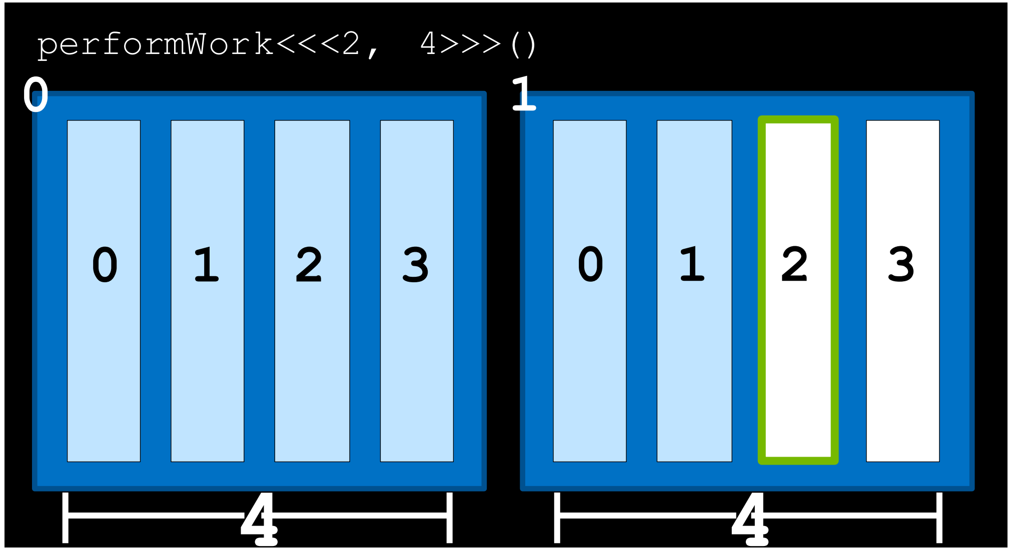
GPU
DATA



threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
2		1		4

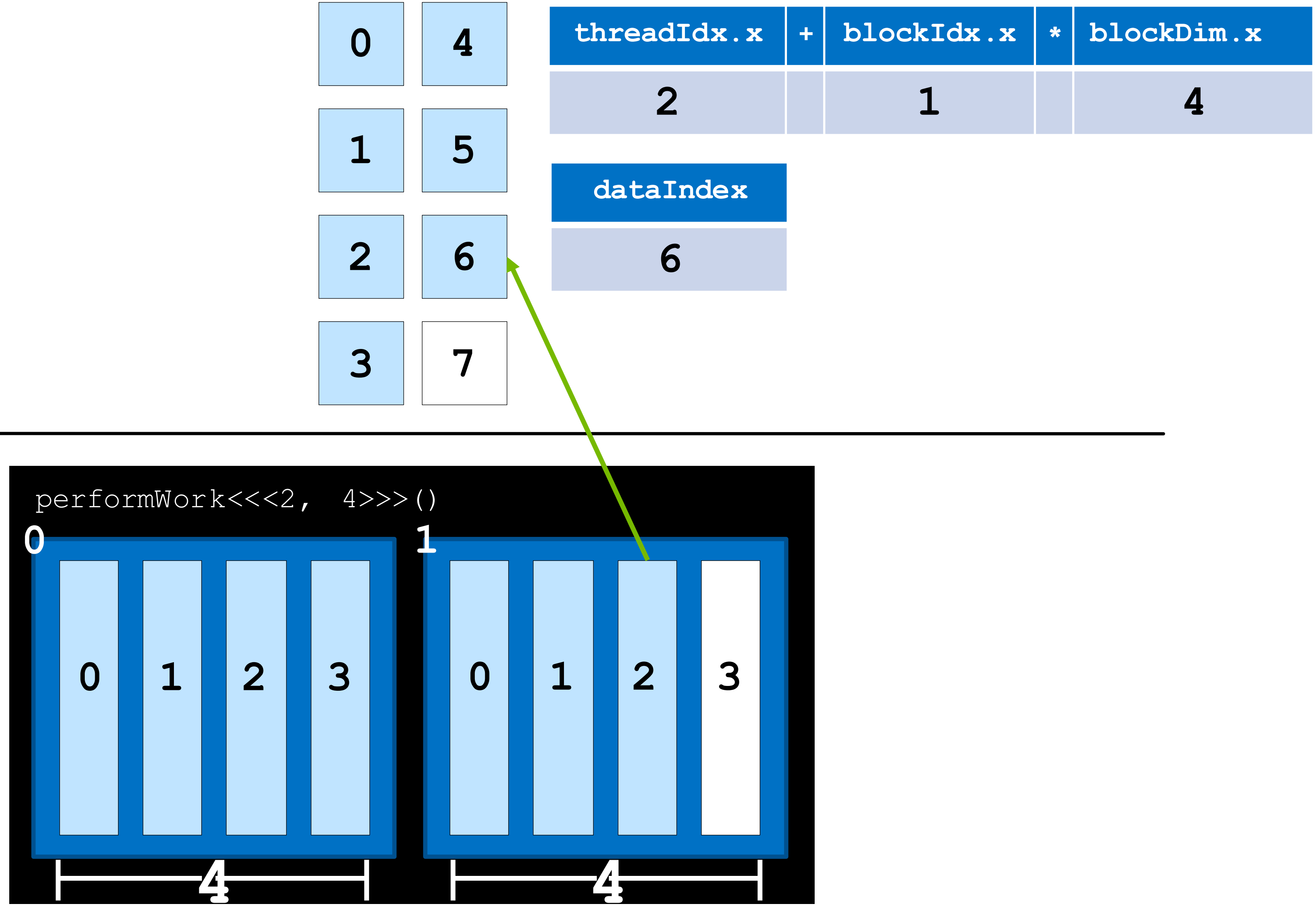
dataIndex
?

GPU



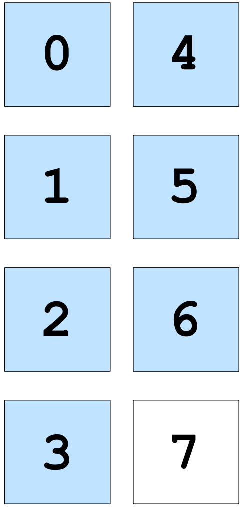
GPU
DATA

GPU



0
4
1
5
2
6
3
7
threadIdx.x
+
blockIdx.x
*
blockDim.x
2
1
4
dataIndex
6
performWork<<<2, 4>>>()
0
1
0
1
2
3
0
1
2
3
4
4

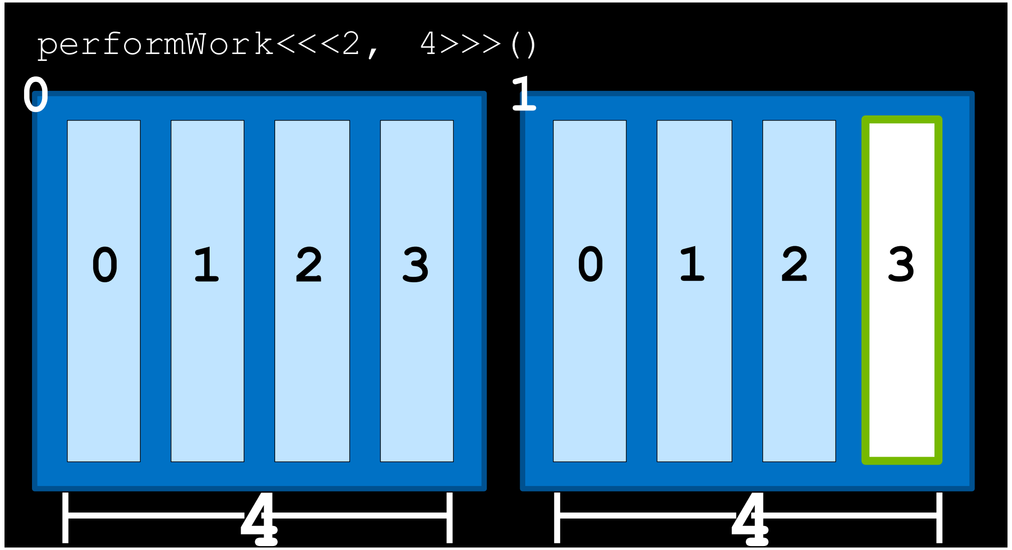
GPU DATA



threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
3		1		4

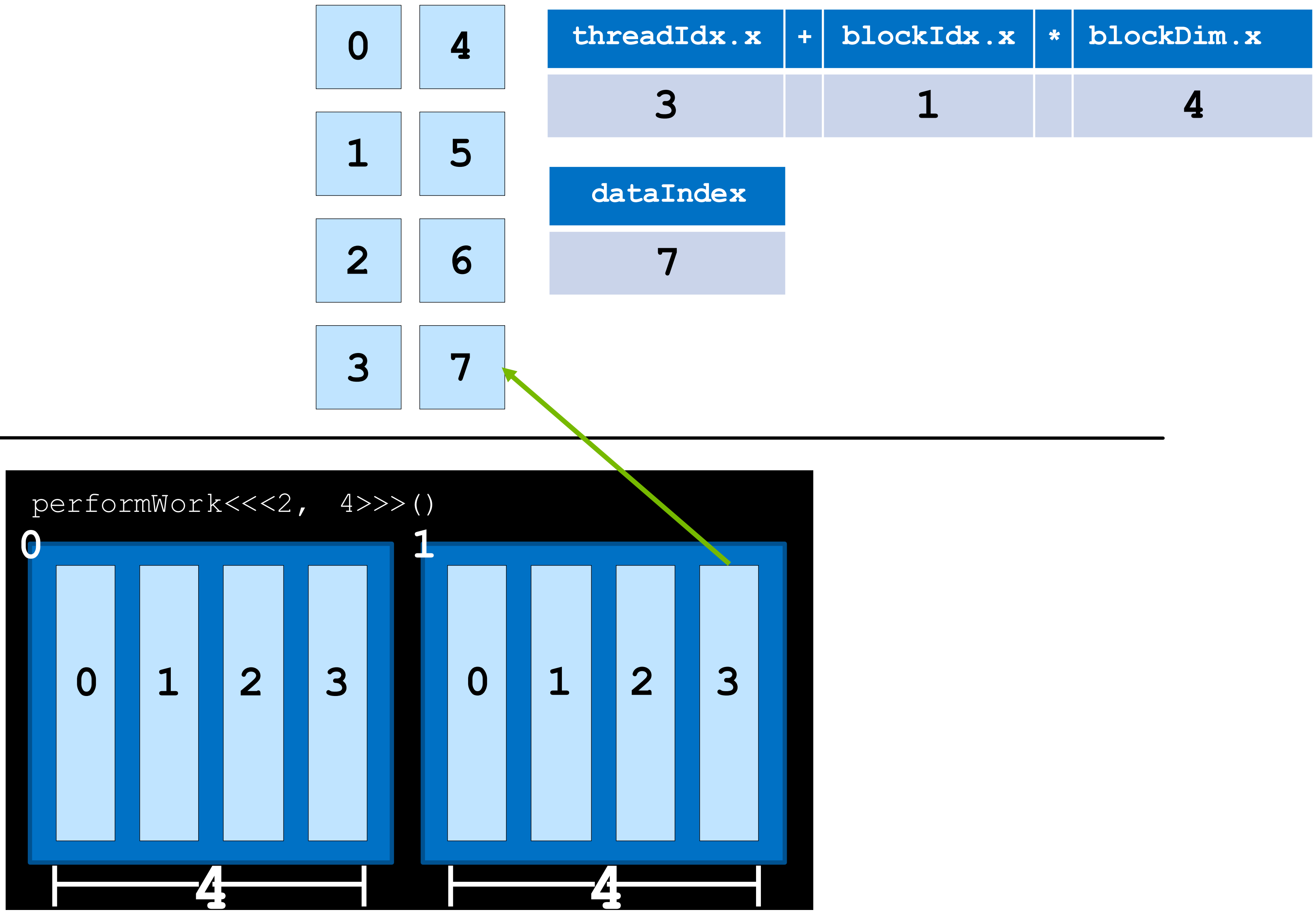
dataIndex
?

GPU



GPU
DATA

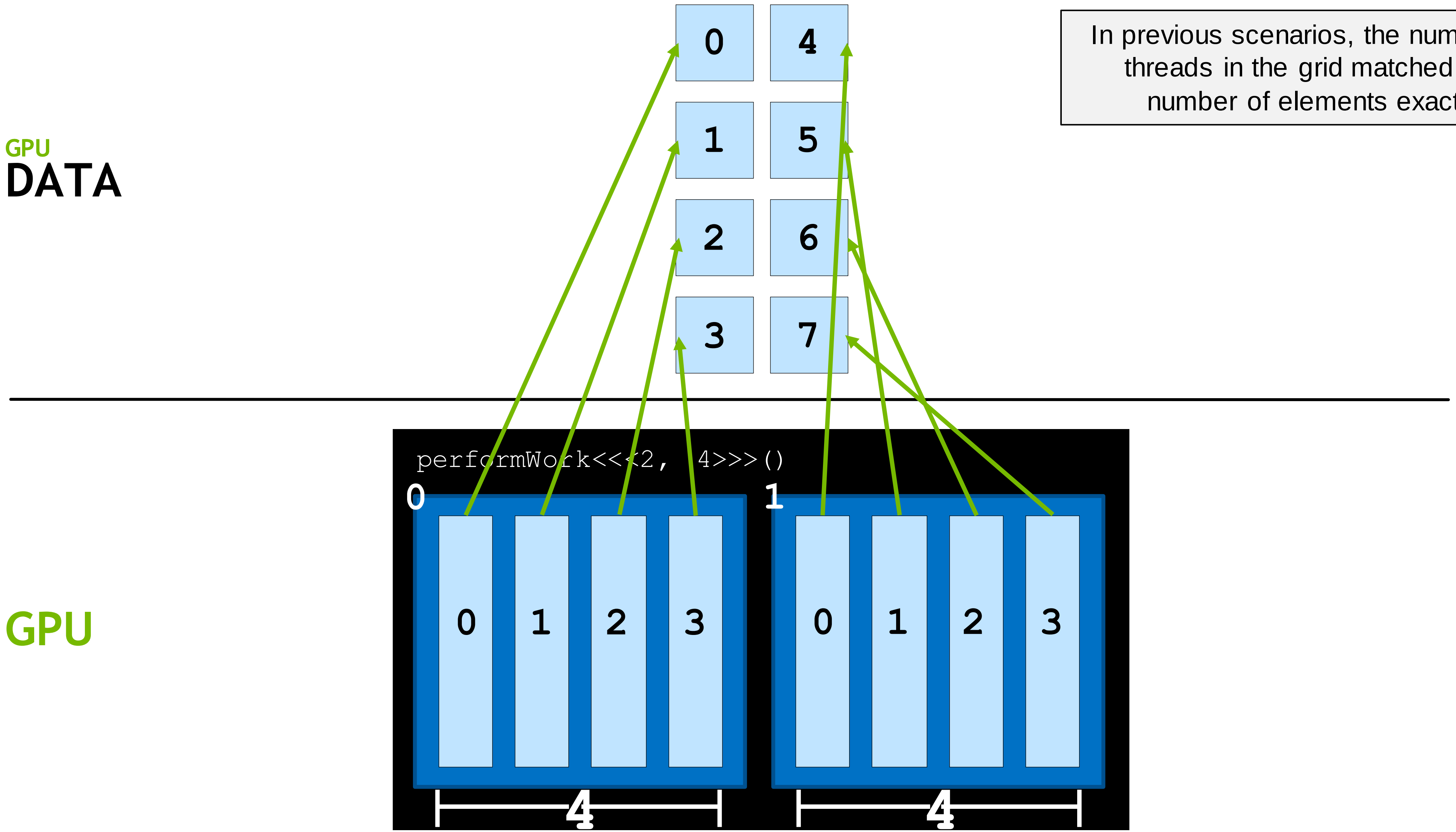
GPU



0
4
1
5
2
6
3
7
threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x
3
1
4
dataIndex
7
performWork<<<2, 4>>>()
0
0
1
2
3
4
1
0
1
2
3
4

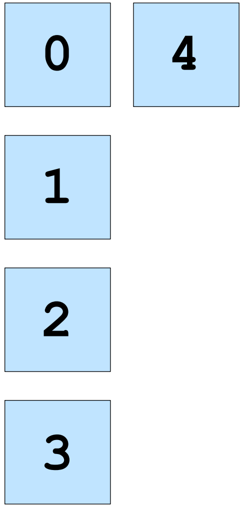
Grid Size Work Amount Mismatch

In previous scenarios, the number of threads in the grid matched the number of elements exactly

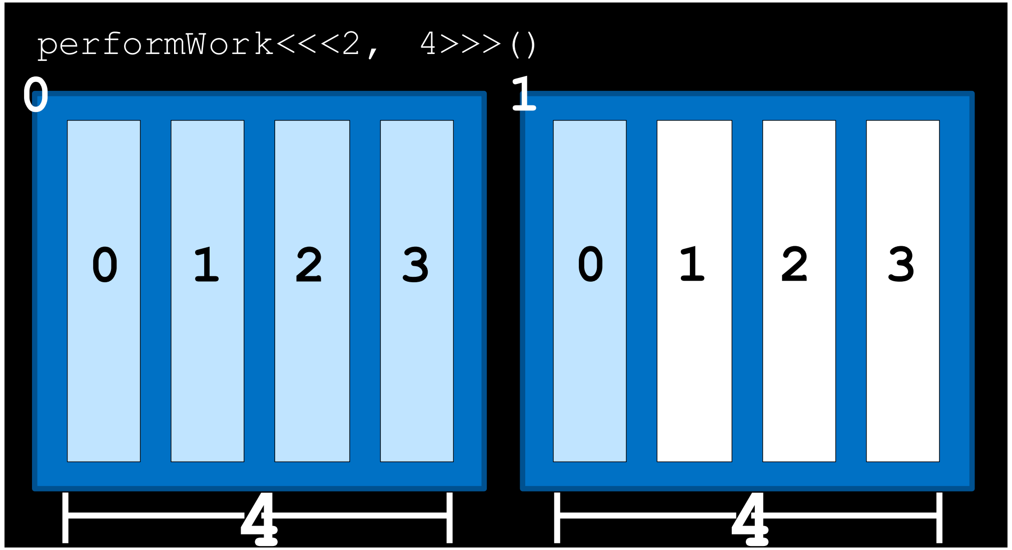


What if there are more threads than work to be done?

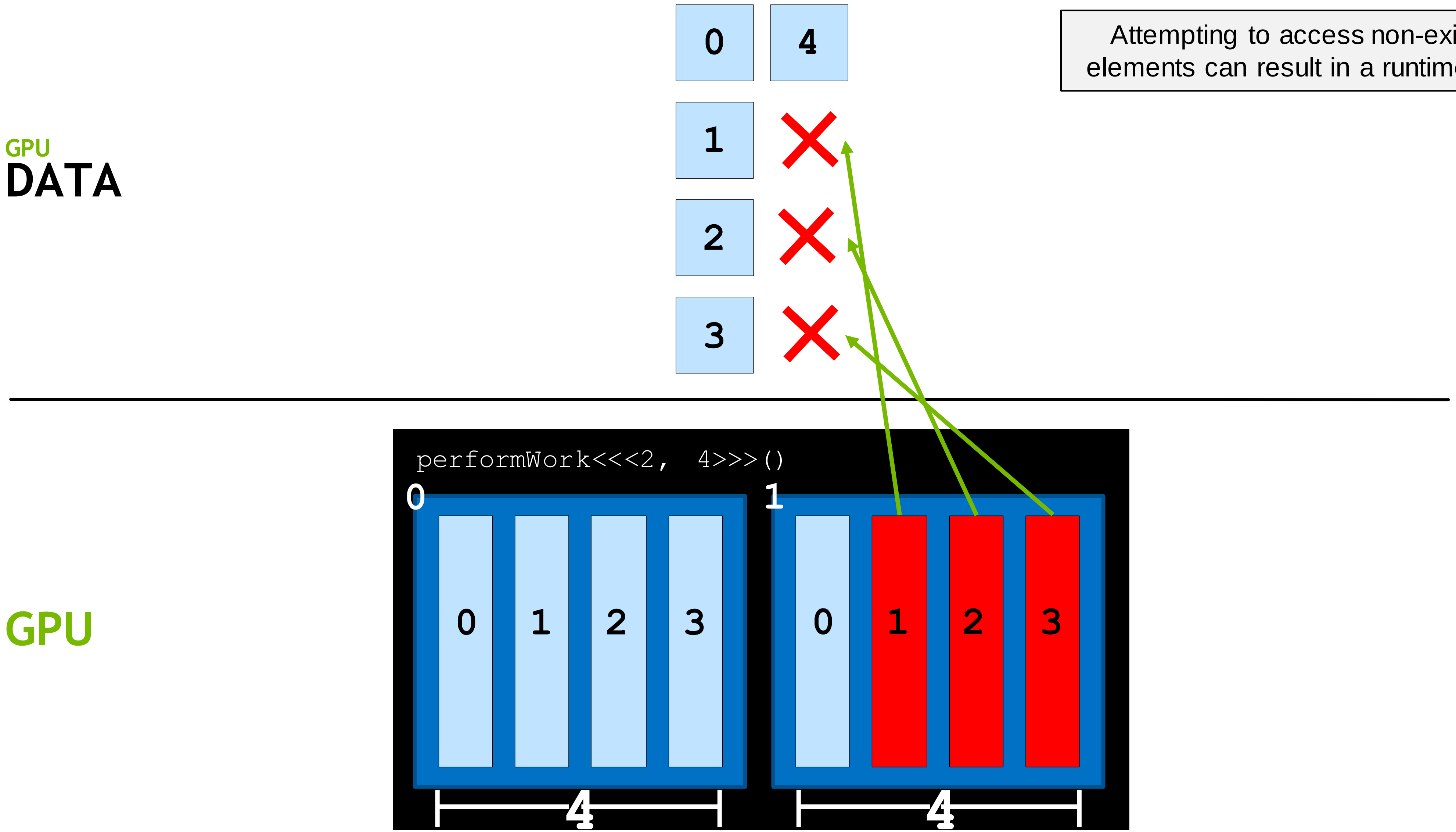
GPU DATA



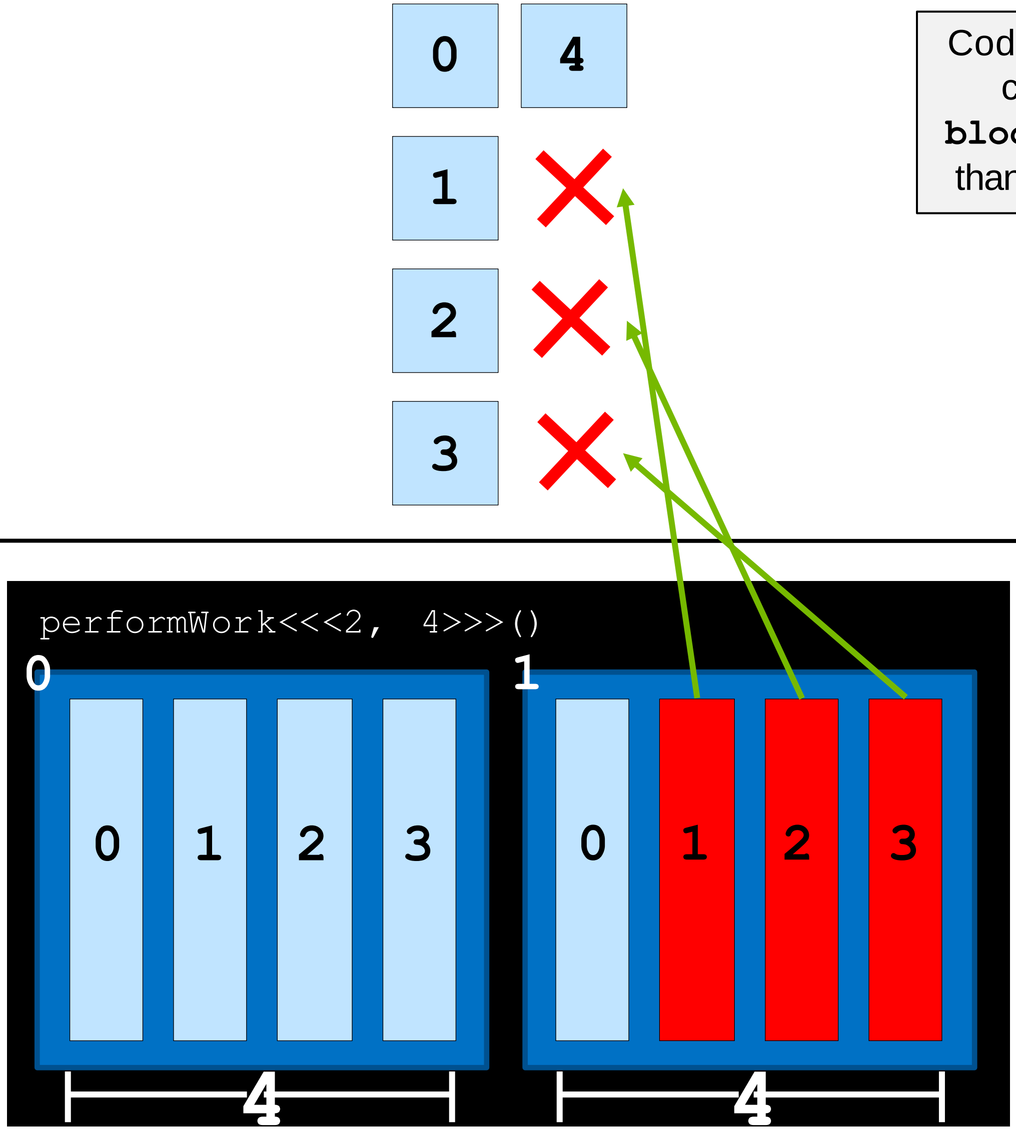
GPU



Attempting to access non-existent elements can result in a runtime error



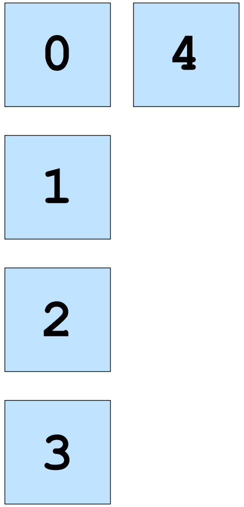
GPU
DATA



Code must check that the **`dataIndex`** calculated by **`threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x`** is less than **`N`**, the number of data elements.

GPU

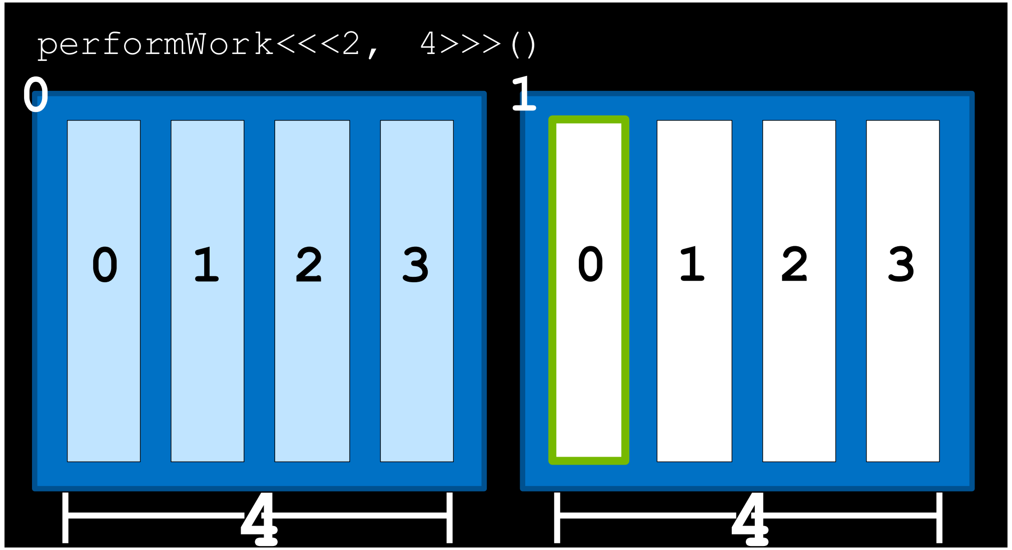
GPU
DATA



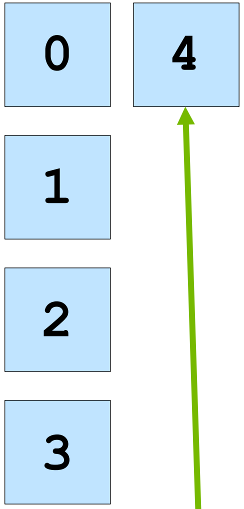
threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
0		1		4

dataIndex	<	N	=	Can work
4		5		?

GPU



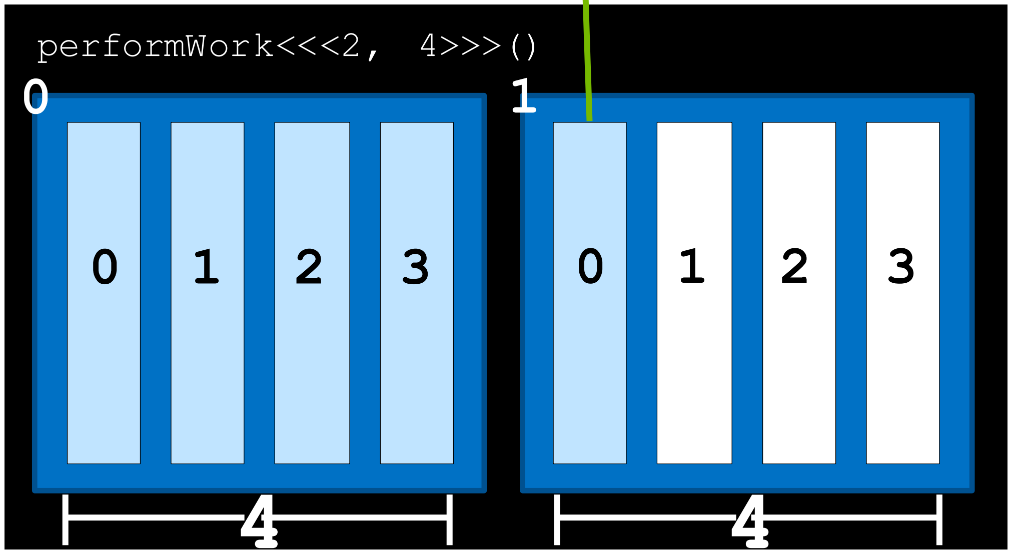
GPU
DATA



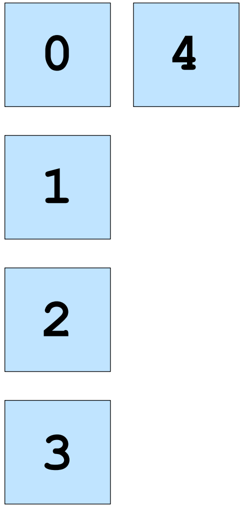
threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
0		1		4

dataIndex	<	N	=	Can work
4		5		true

GPU



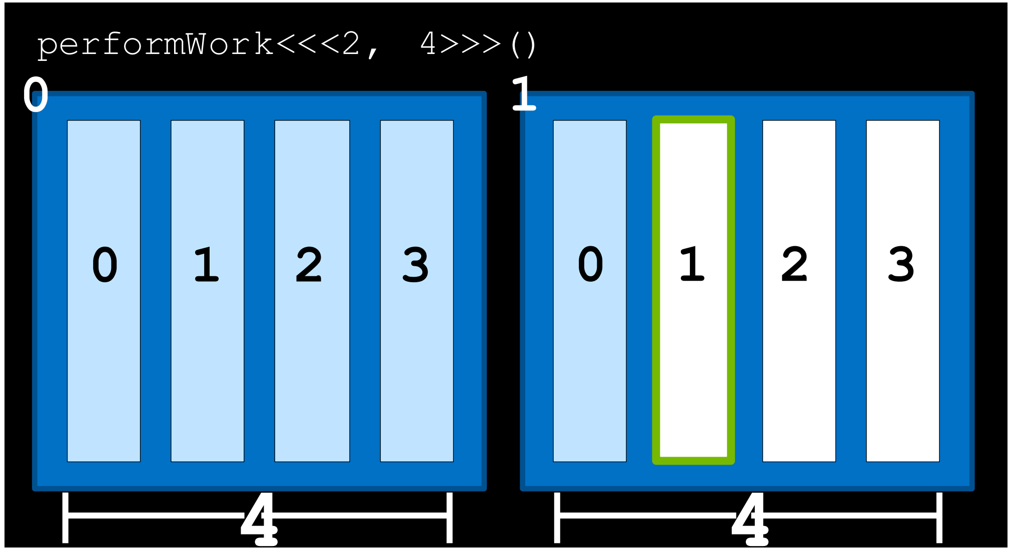
GPU
DATA



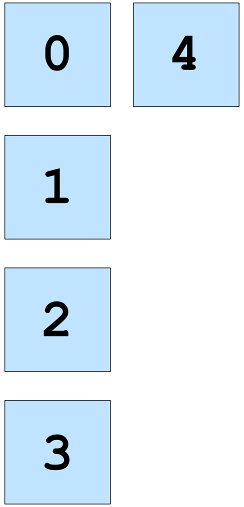
threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
1		1		4

dataIndex	<	N	=	Can work
5		5		?

GPU



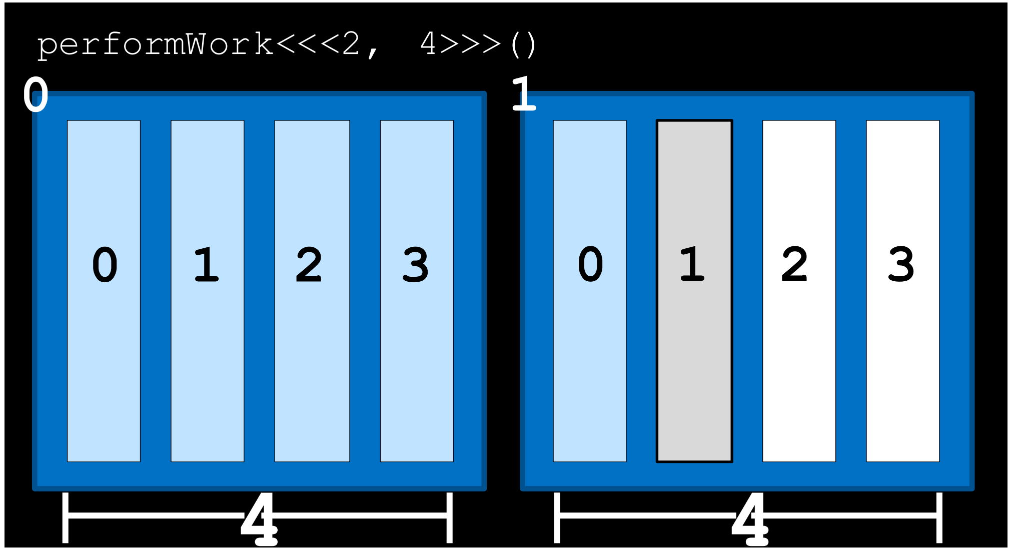
GPU
DATA



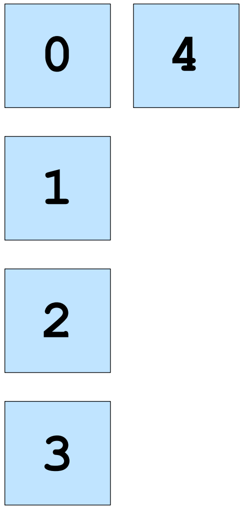
threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
1		1		4

dataIndex	<	N	=	Can work
5		5		false

GPU



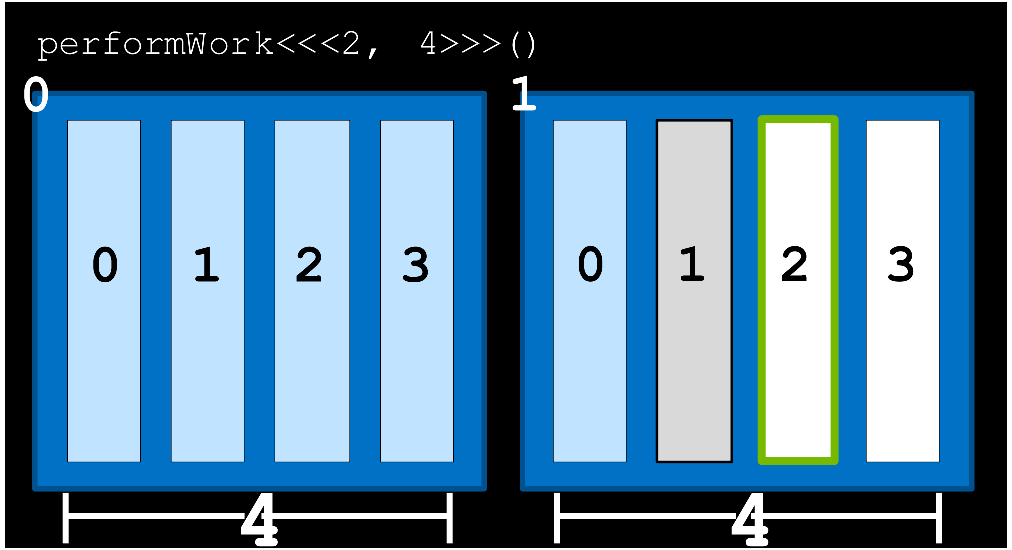
GPU
DATA



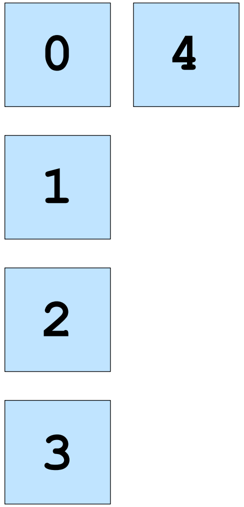
threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
2		1		4

dataIndex	<	N	=	Can work
6		5		?

GPU



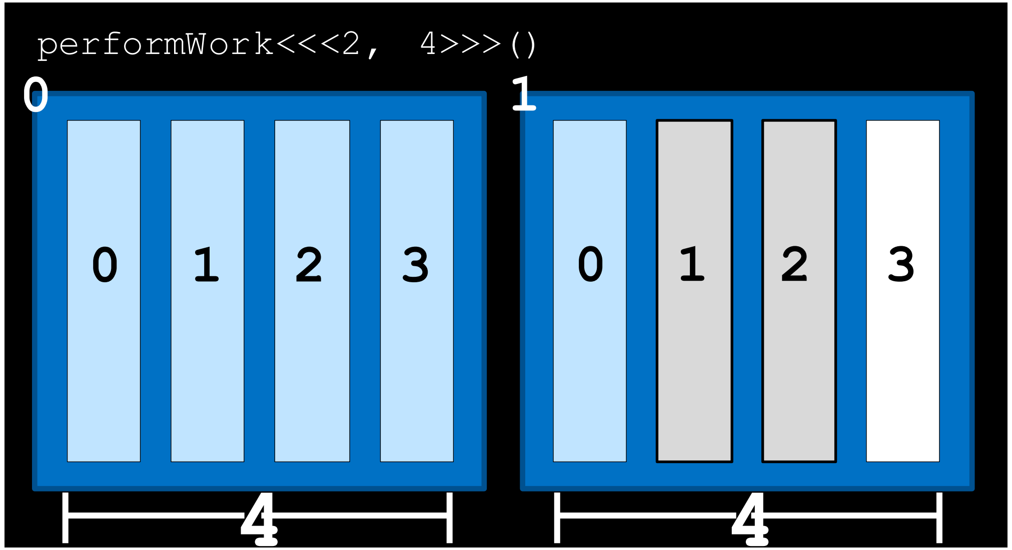
GPU
DATA



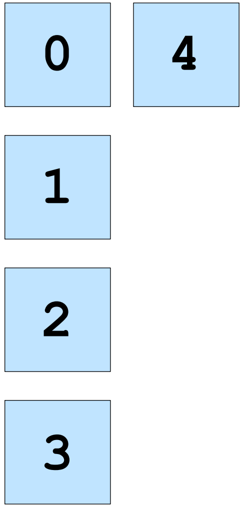
threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
2		1		4

dataIndex	<	N	=	Can work
6		5		false

GPU



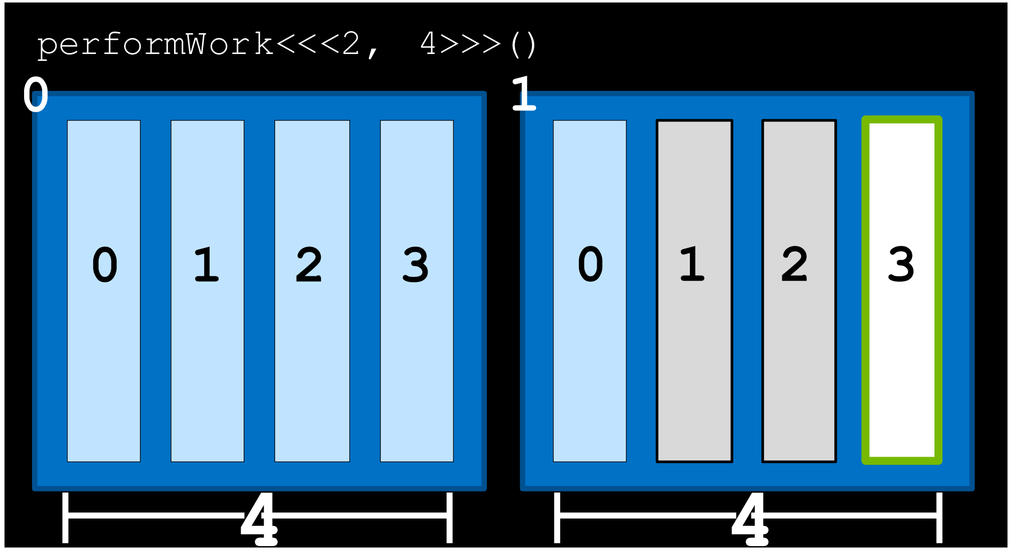
GPU
DATA



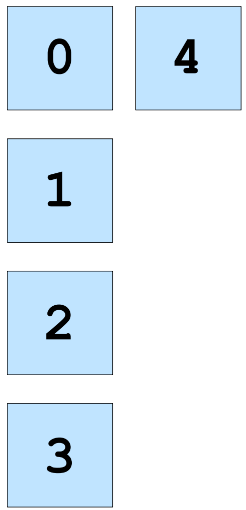
threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
2		1		4

dataIndex	<	N	=	Can work
6		5		?

GPU



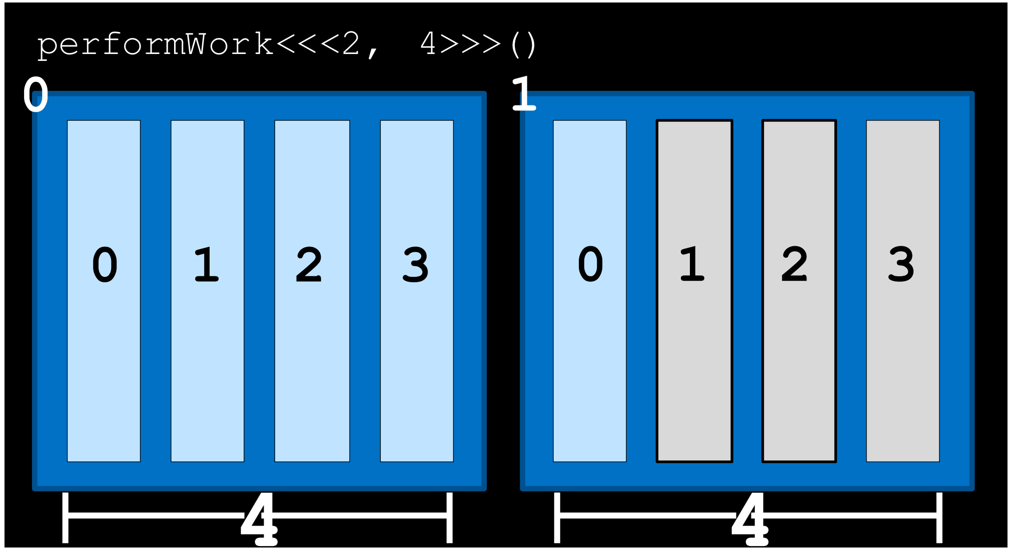
GPU
DATA



threadIdx.x	+	blockIdx.x	*	blockDim.x
2		1		4

dataIndex	<	N	=	Can work
6		5		false

GPU



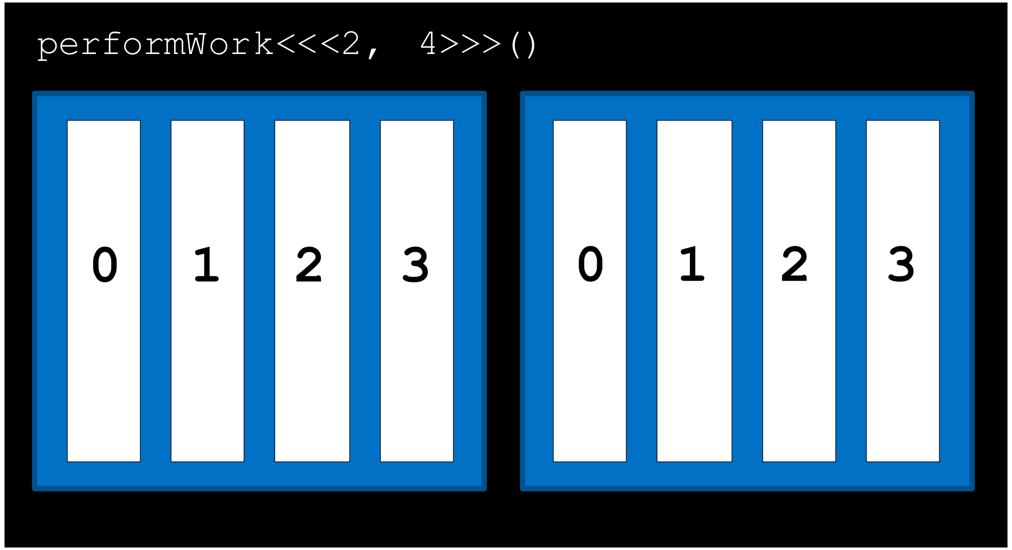
Grid-Stride Loops

GPU
DATA

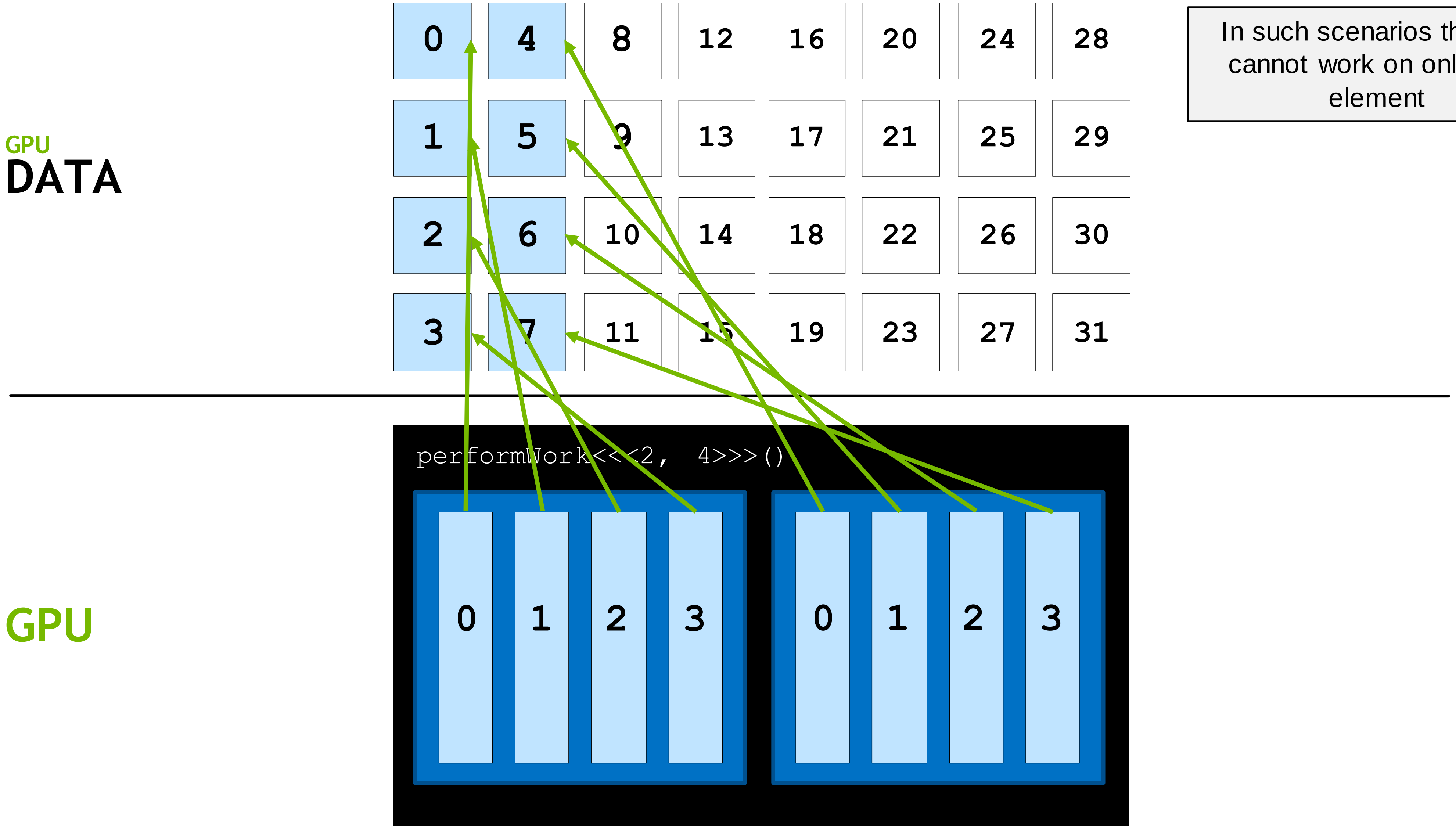
0	4	8	12	16	20	24	28
1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	30
3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31

Often there are more data elements than there are threads in the grid

GPU



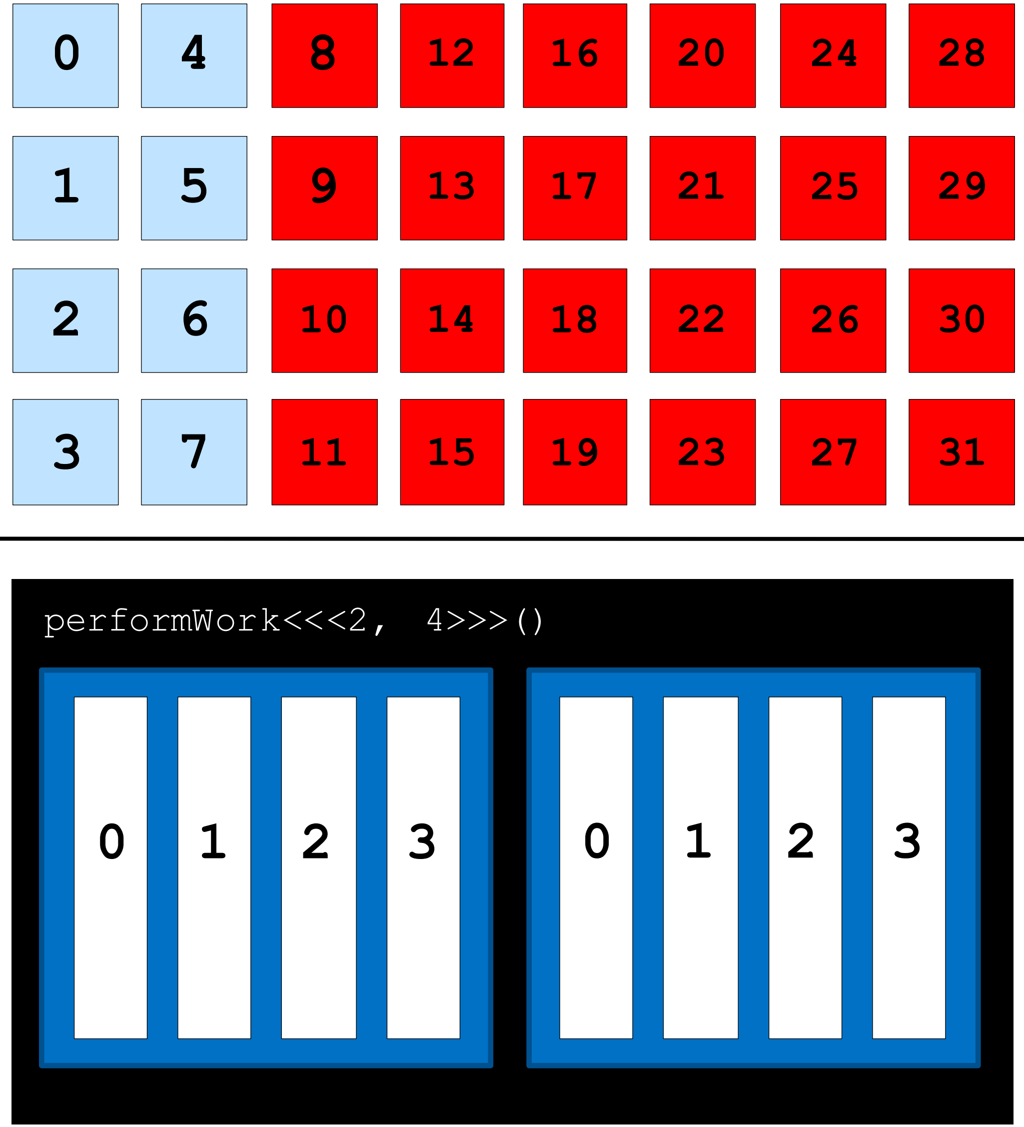
In such scenarios threads cannot work on only one element



... or else work is left undone

GPU
DATA

GPU

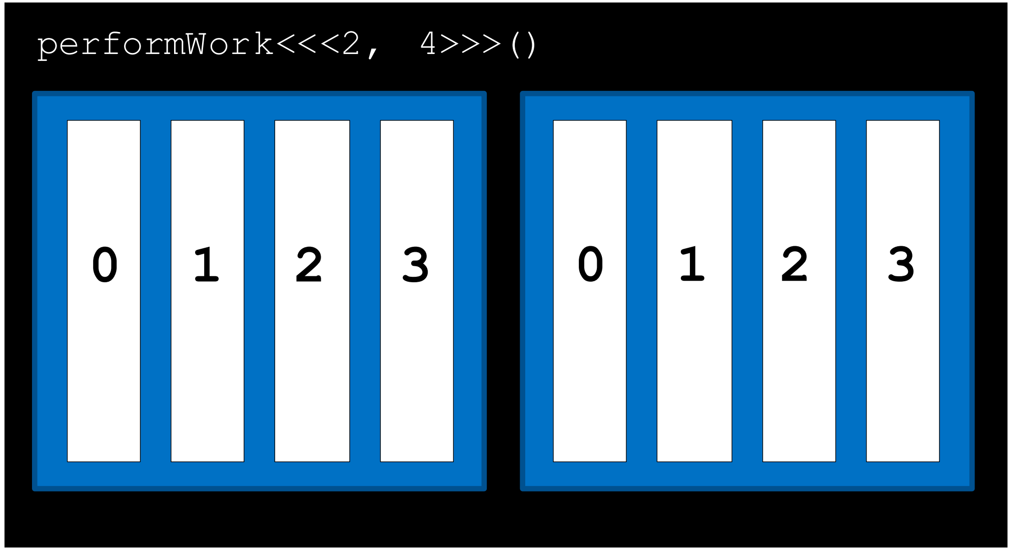


GPU
DATA

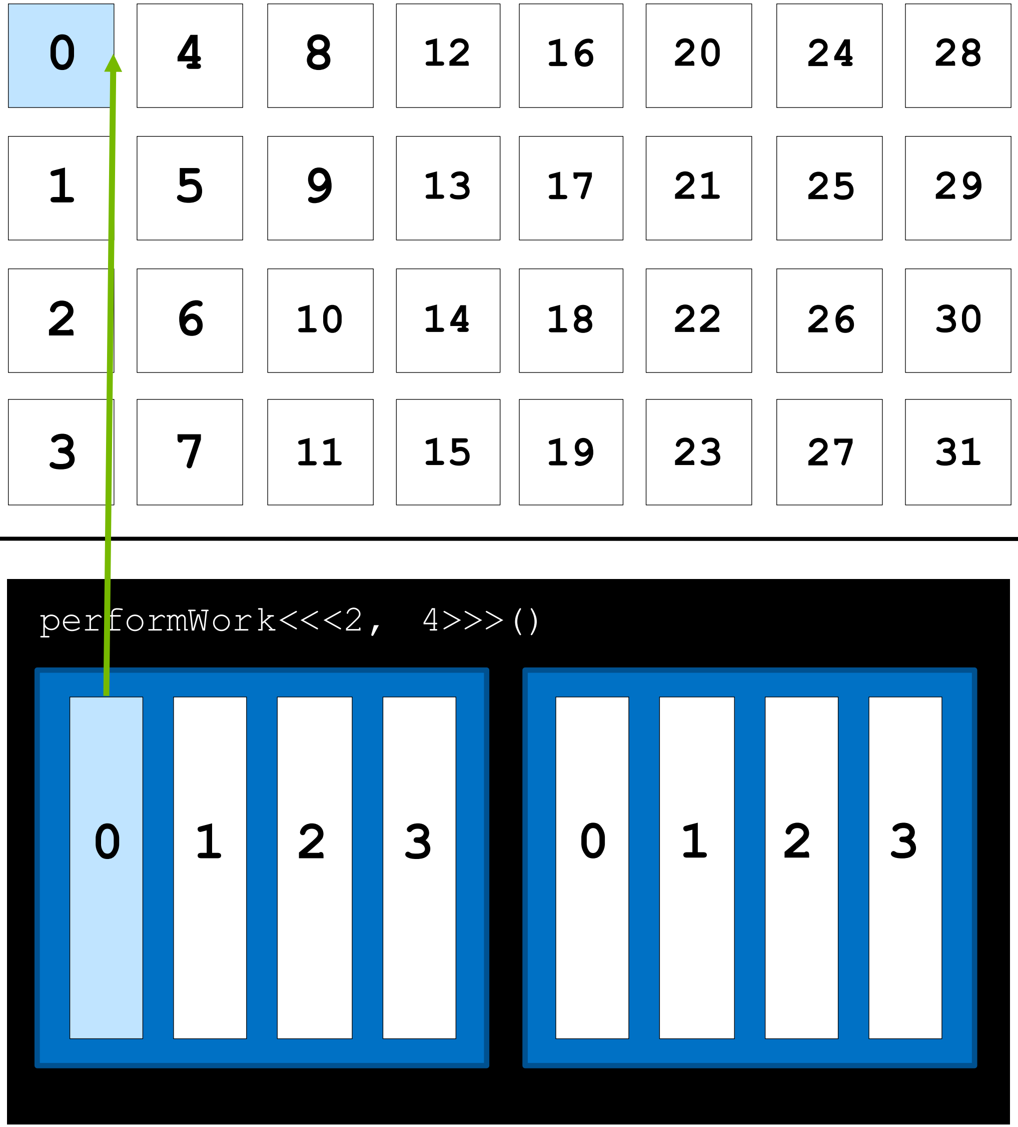
0	4	8	12	16	20	24	28
1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	30
3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31

One way to address this programmatically is with a **grid-stride loop**

GPU



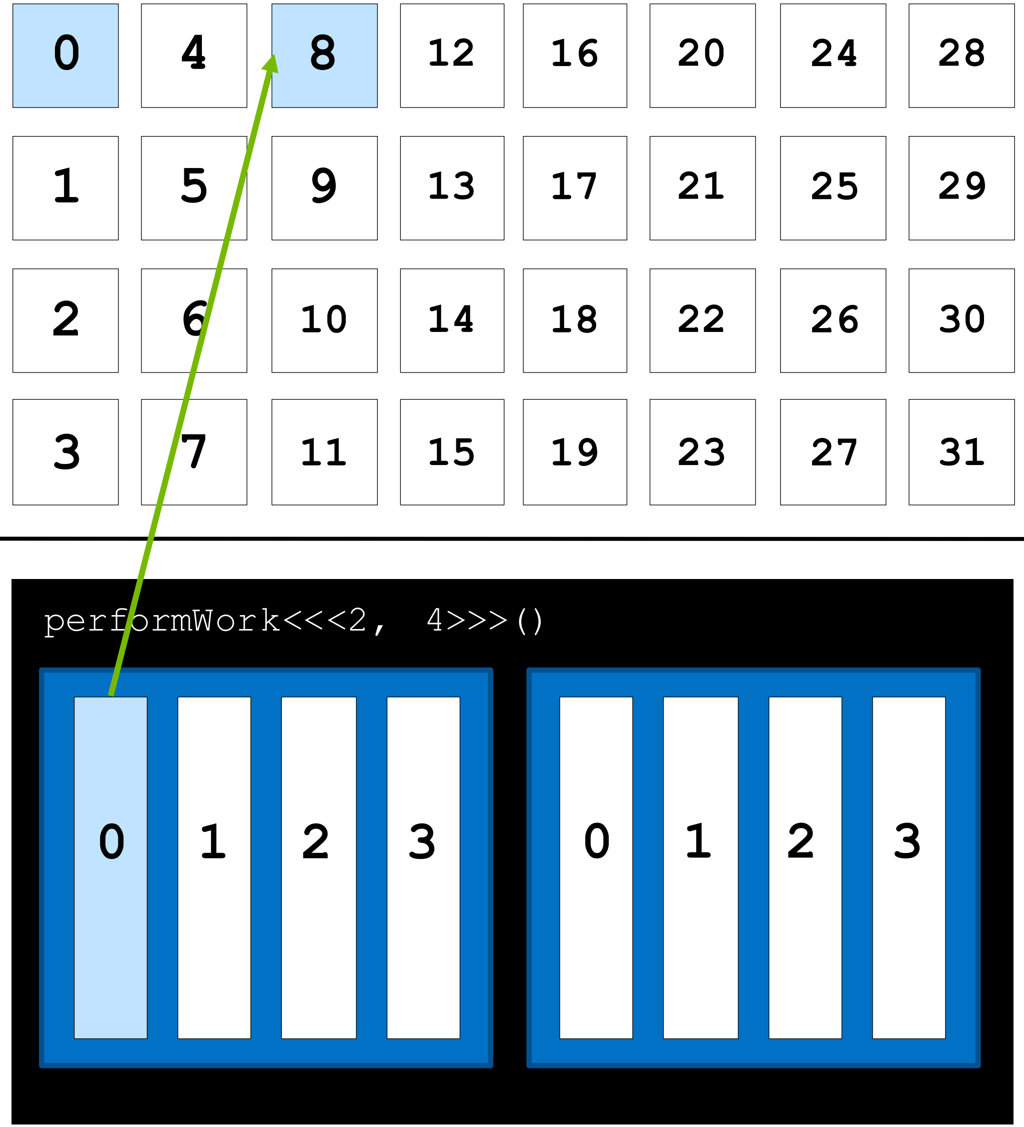
GPU
DATA



GPU

In a grid-stride loop, the thread's first element is calculated as usual, with `threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x`

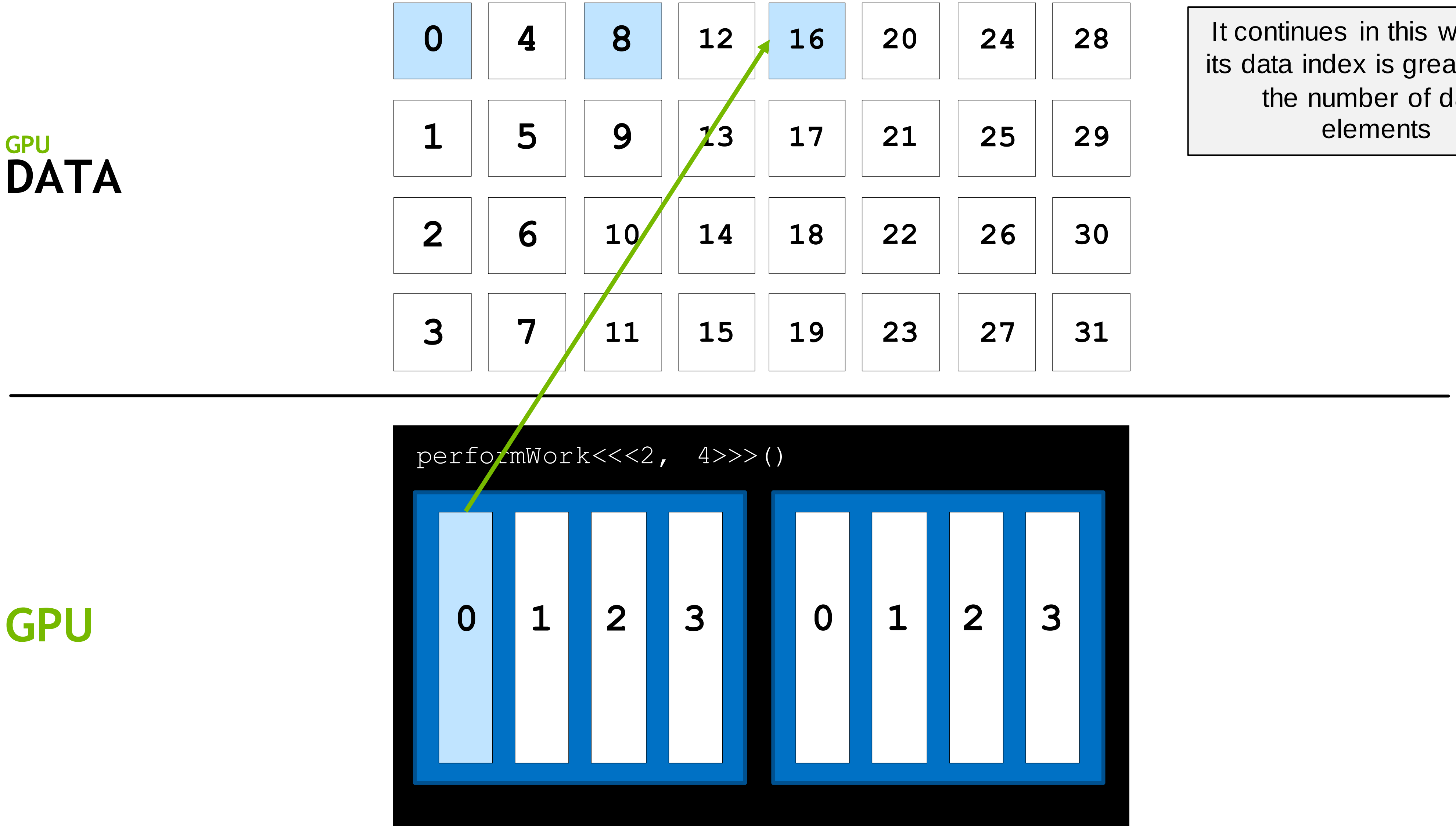
GPU
DATA



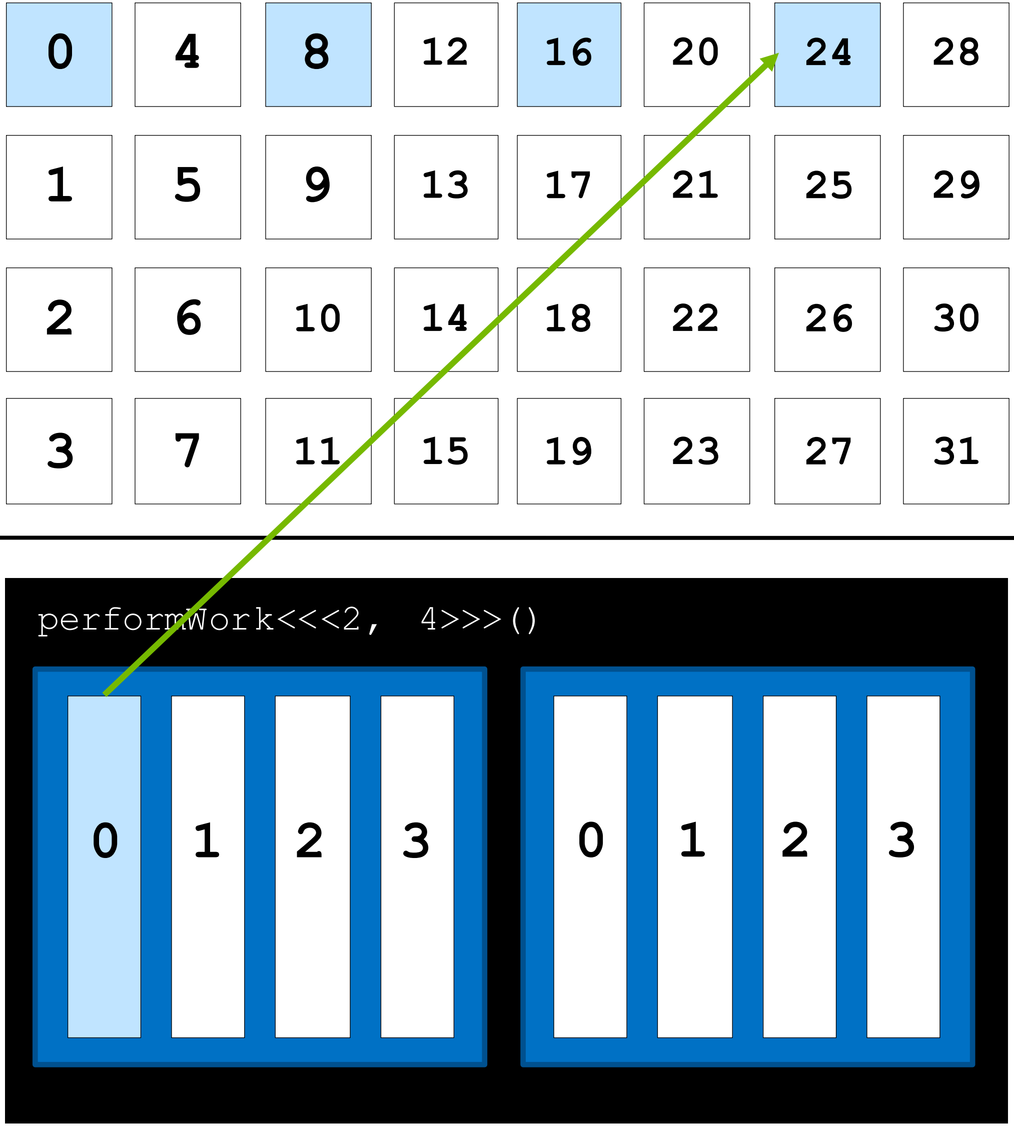
The thread then strides forward by the number of threads in the grid (**`blockDim.x * gridDim.x`**), in this case 8

GPU

It continues in this way until its data index is greater than the number of data elements



GPU
DATA



It continues in this way until its data index is greater than the number of data elements

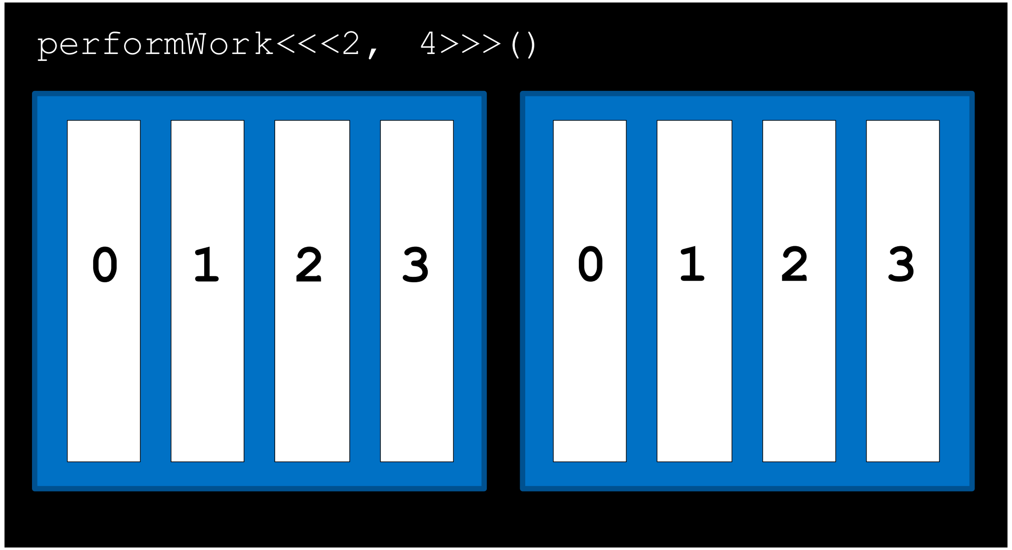
GPU

GPU
DATA

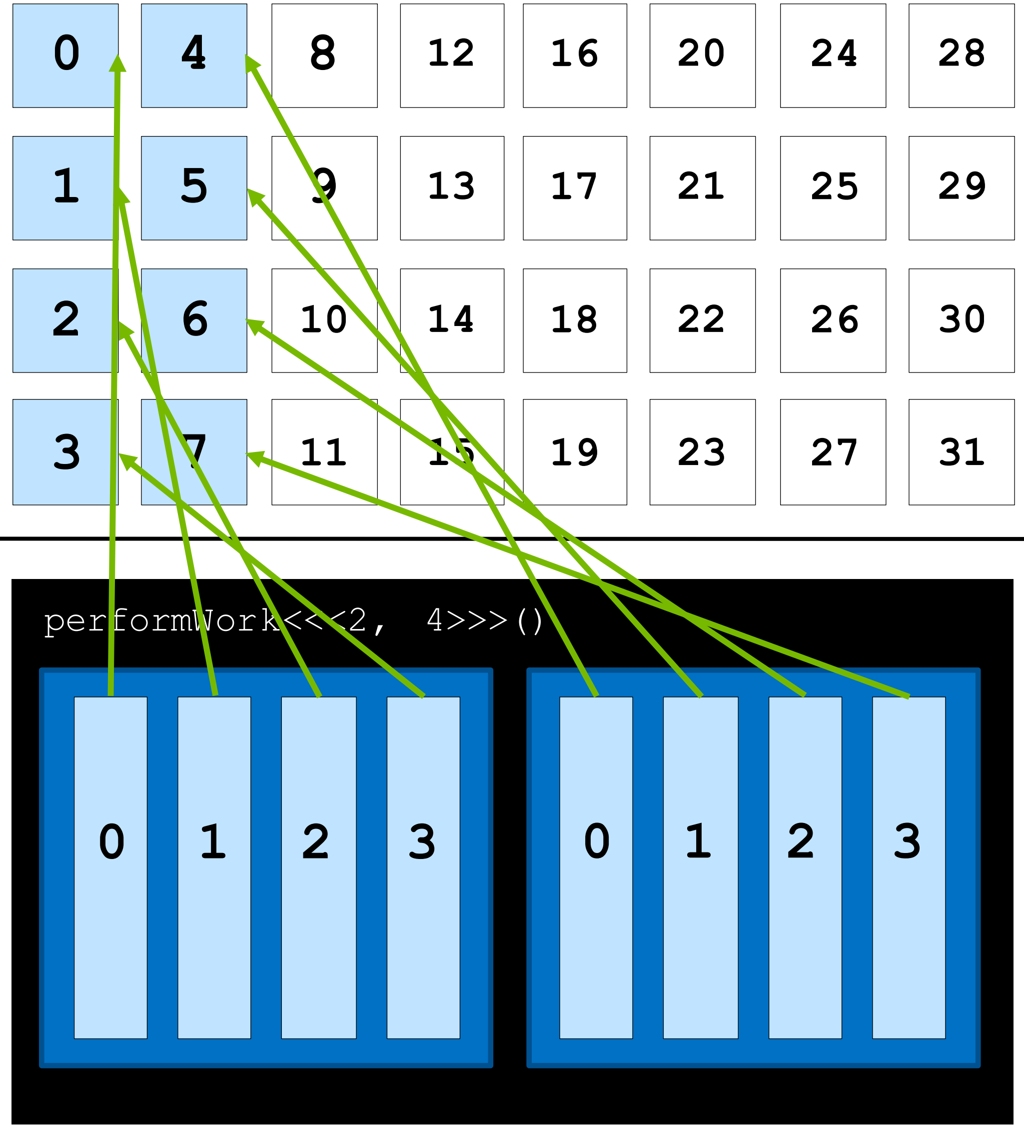
0	4	8	12	16	20	24	28
1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	30
3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31

With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered

GPU



GPU
DATA



With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered

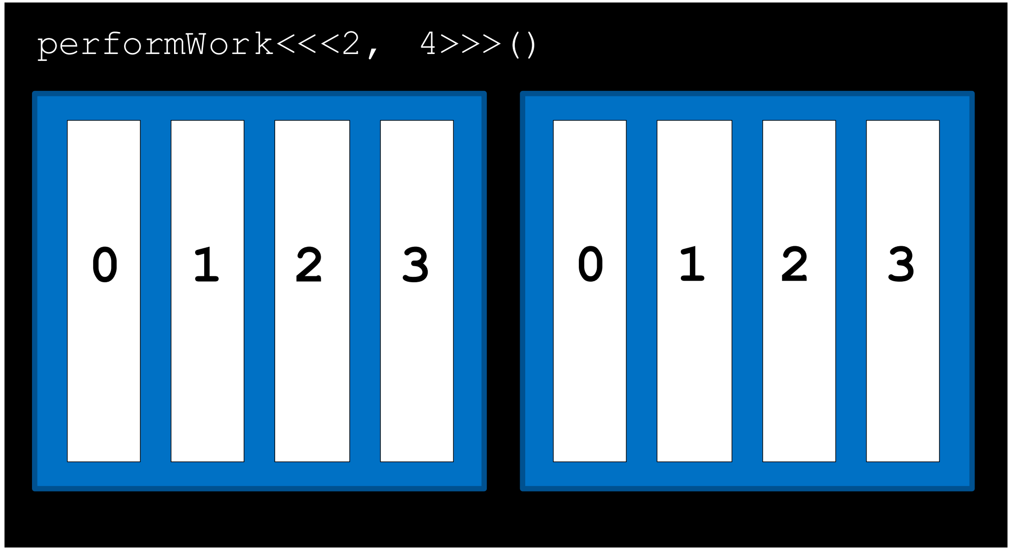
GPU

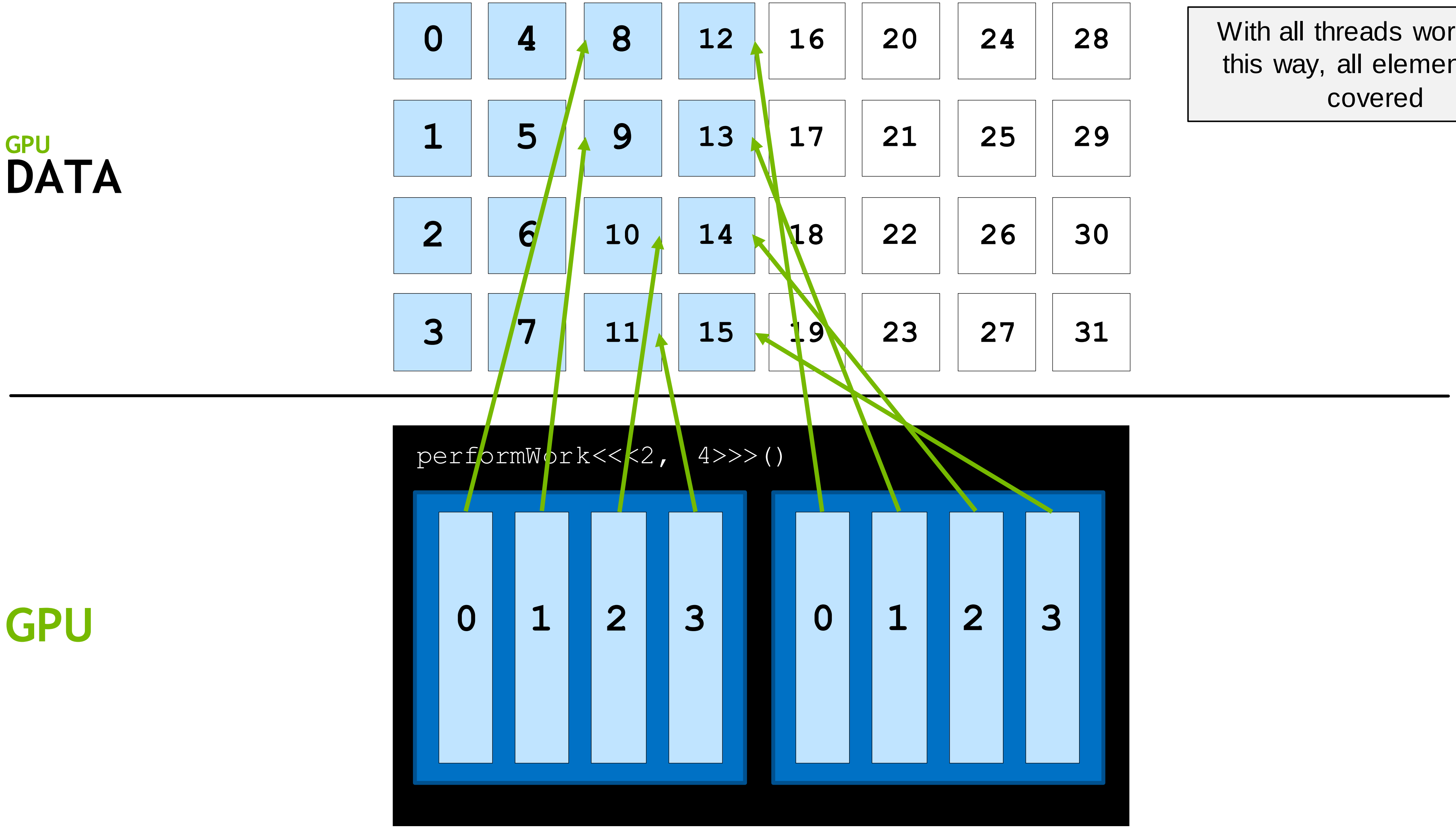
GPU
DATA

0	4	8	12	16	20	24	28
1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	30
3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31

With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered

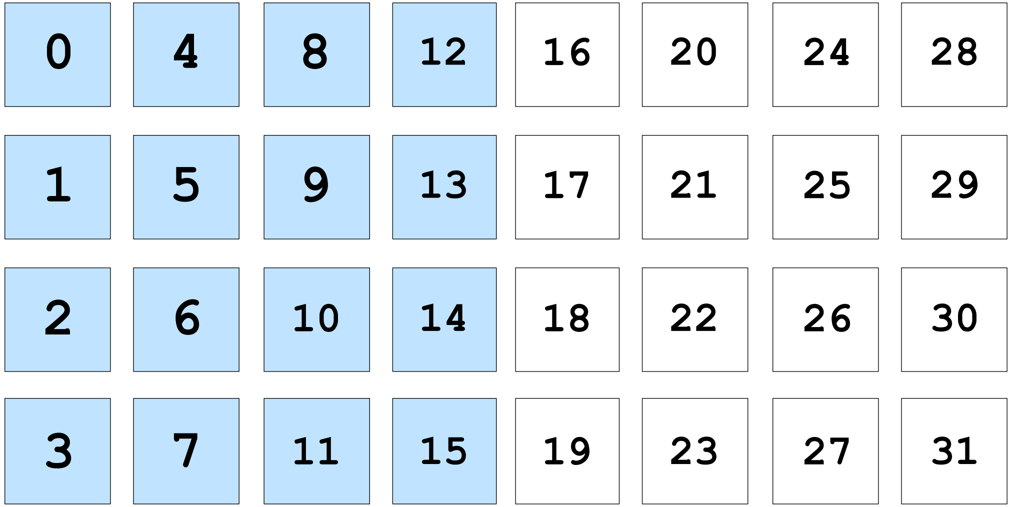
GPU





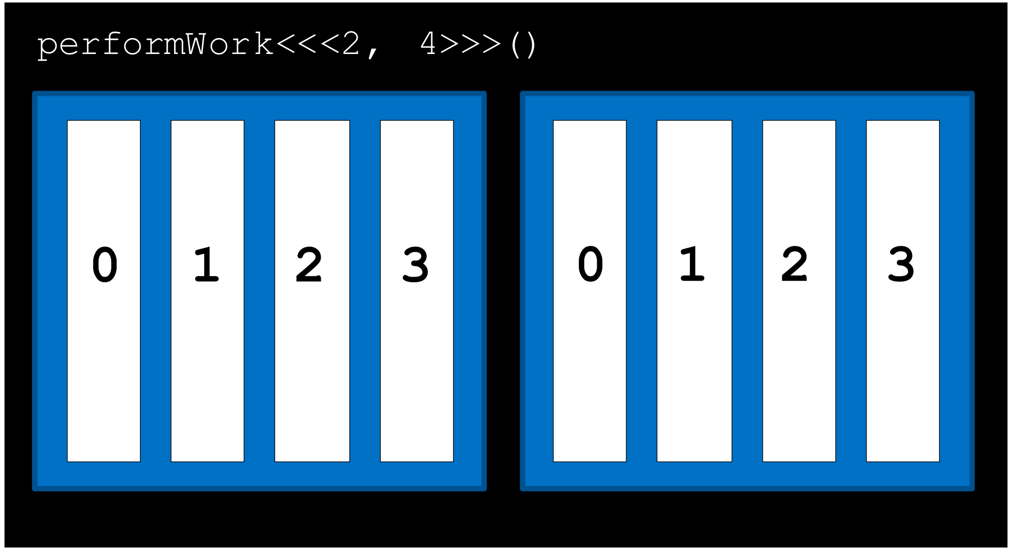
With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered

GPU
DATA



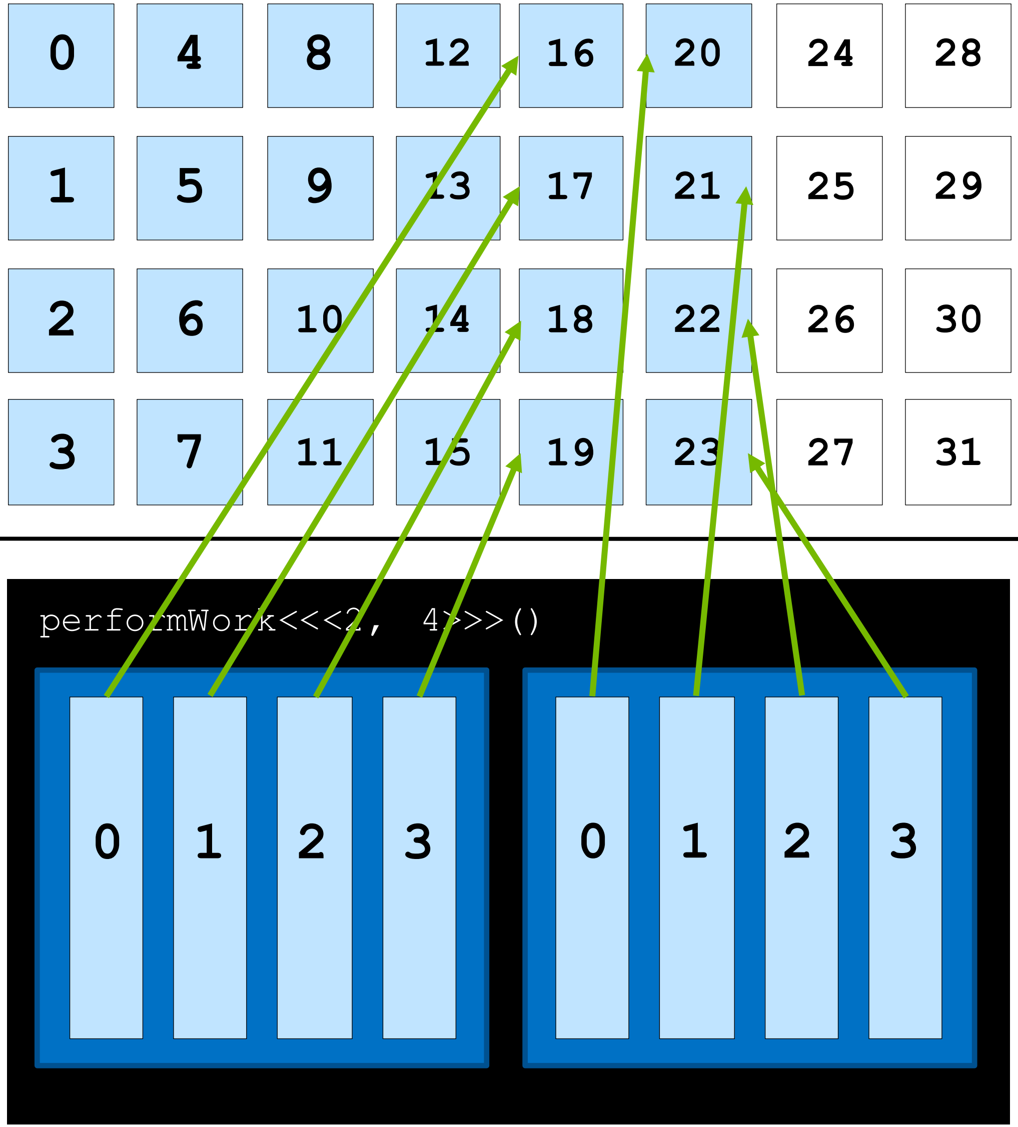
With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered

GPU



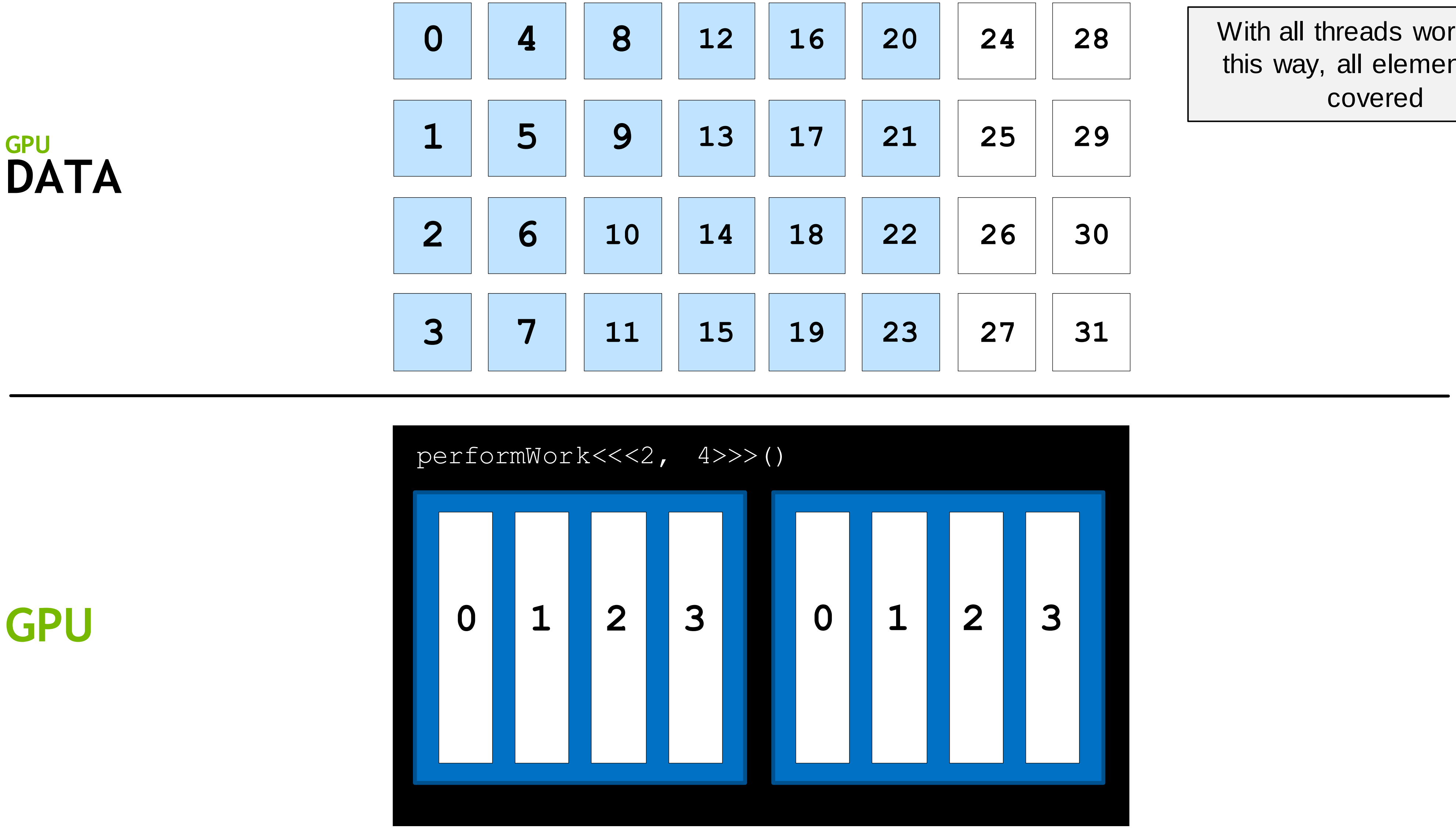
GPU
DATA

With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered



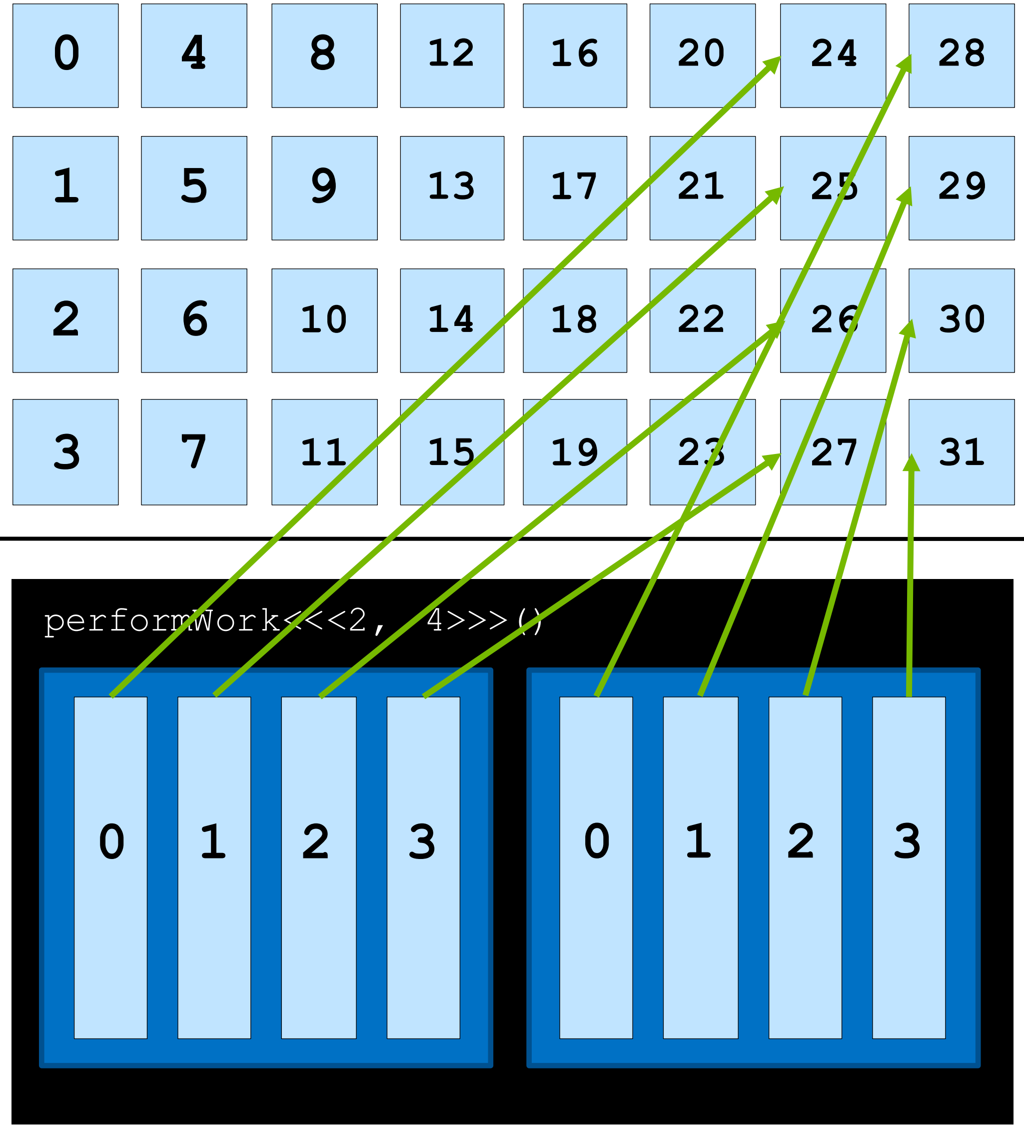
GPU

With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered



GPU
DATA

With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered



GPU

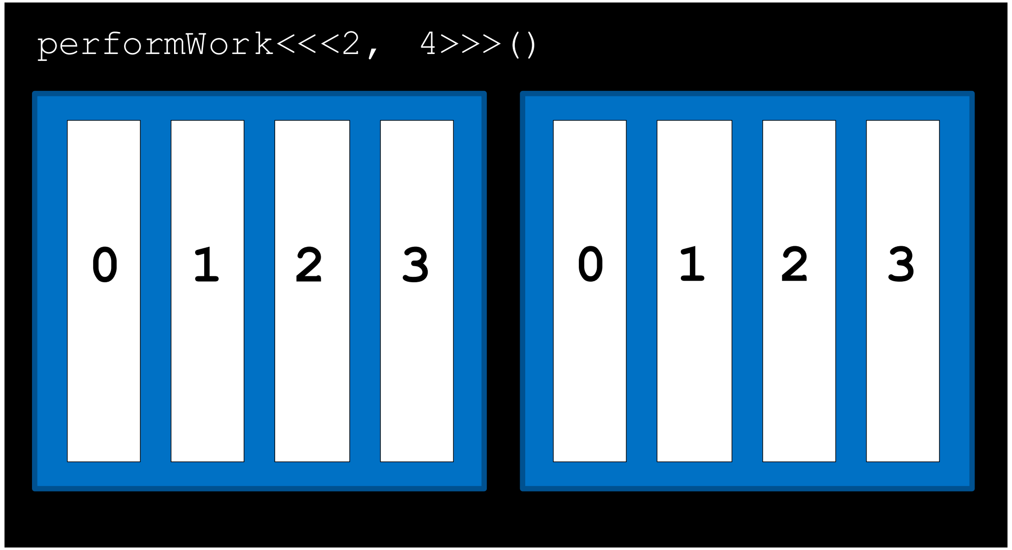
GPU
DATA

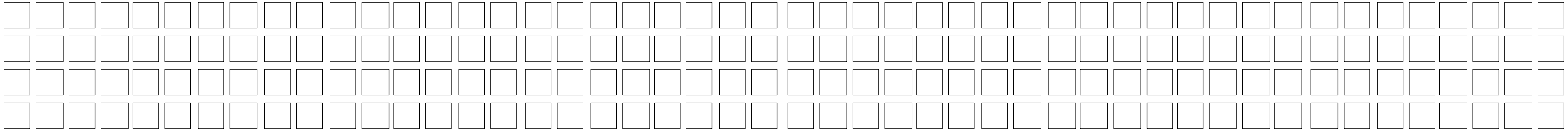
0	4	8	12	16	20	24	28
1	5	9	13	17	21	25	29
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	30
3	7	11	15	19	23	27	31

With all threads working in this way, all elements are covered

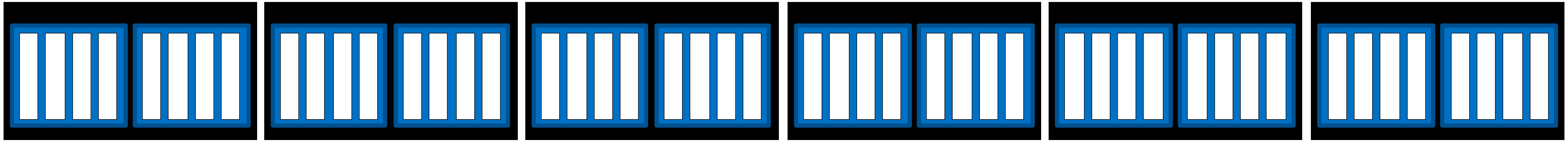
---

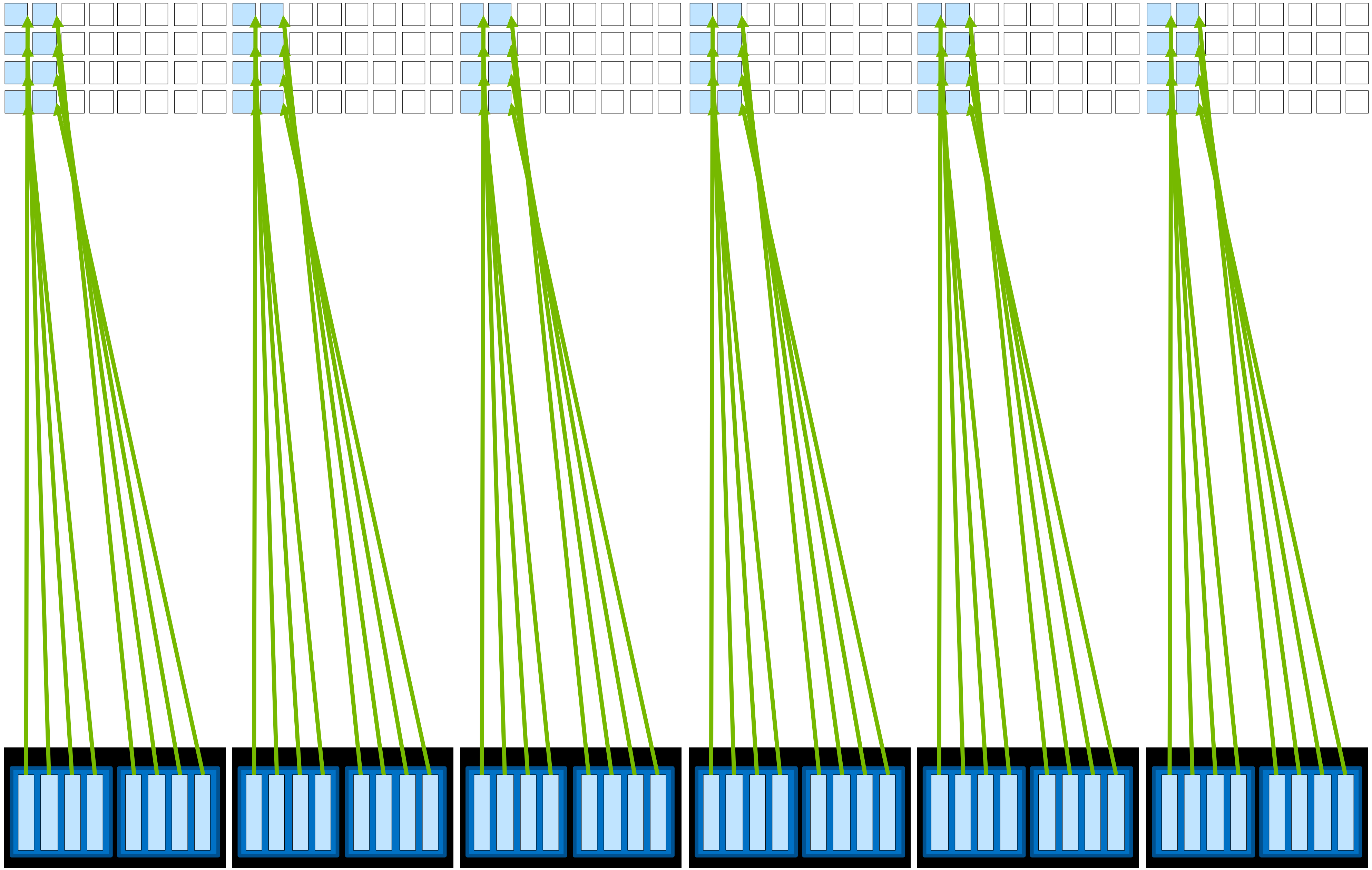
GPU



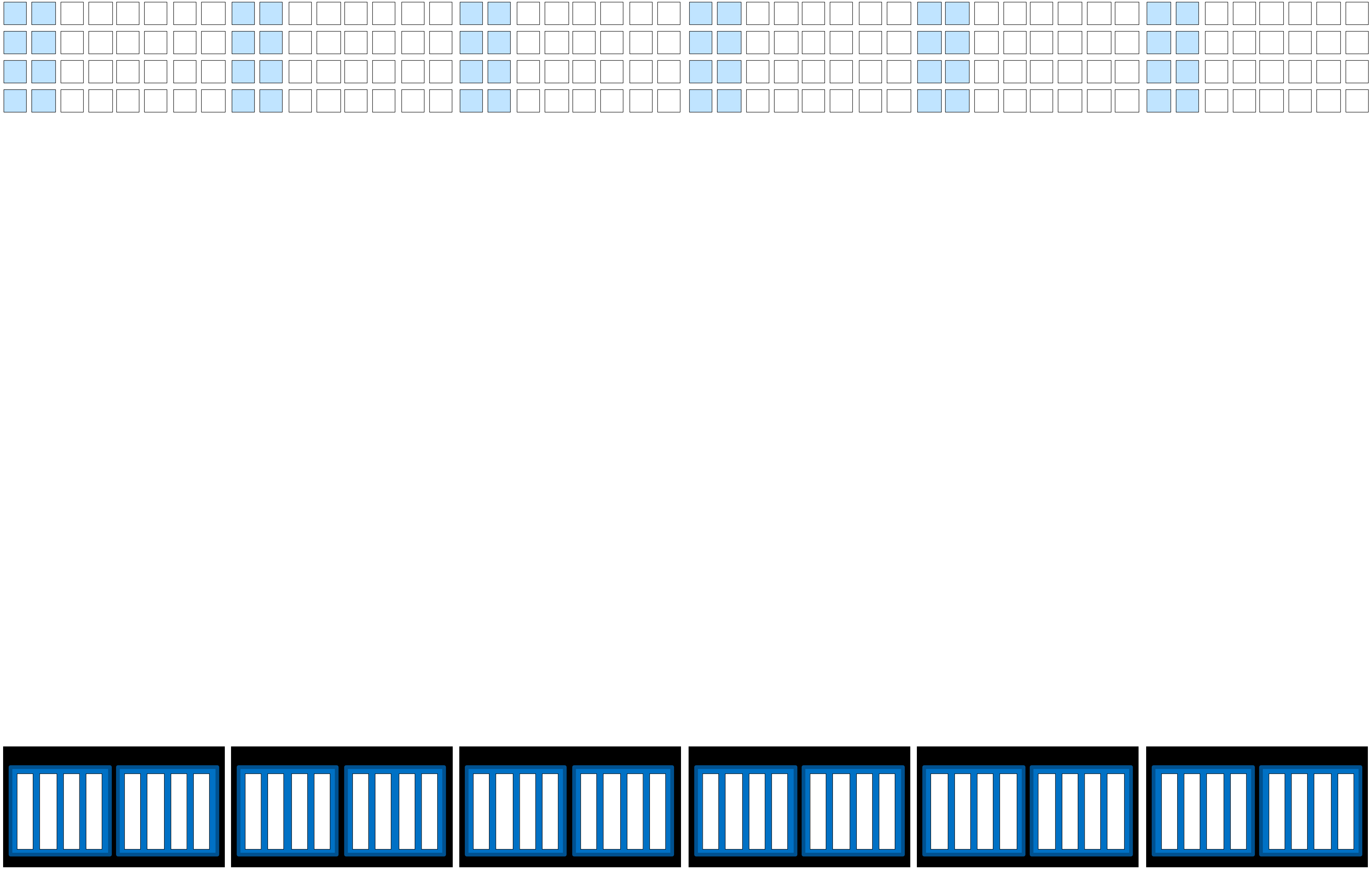


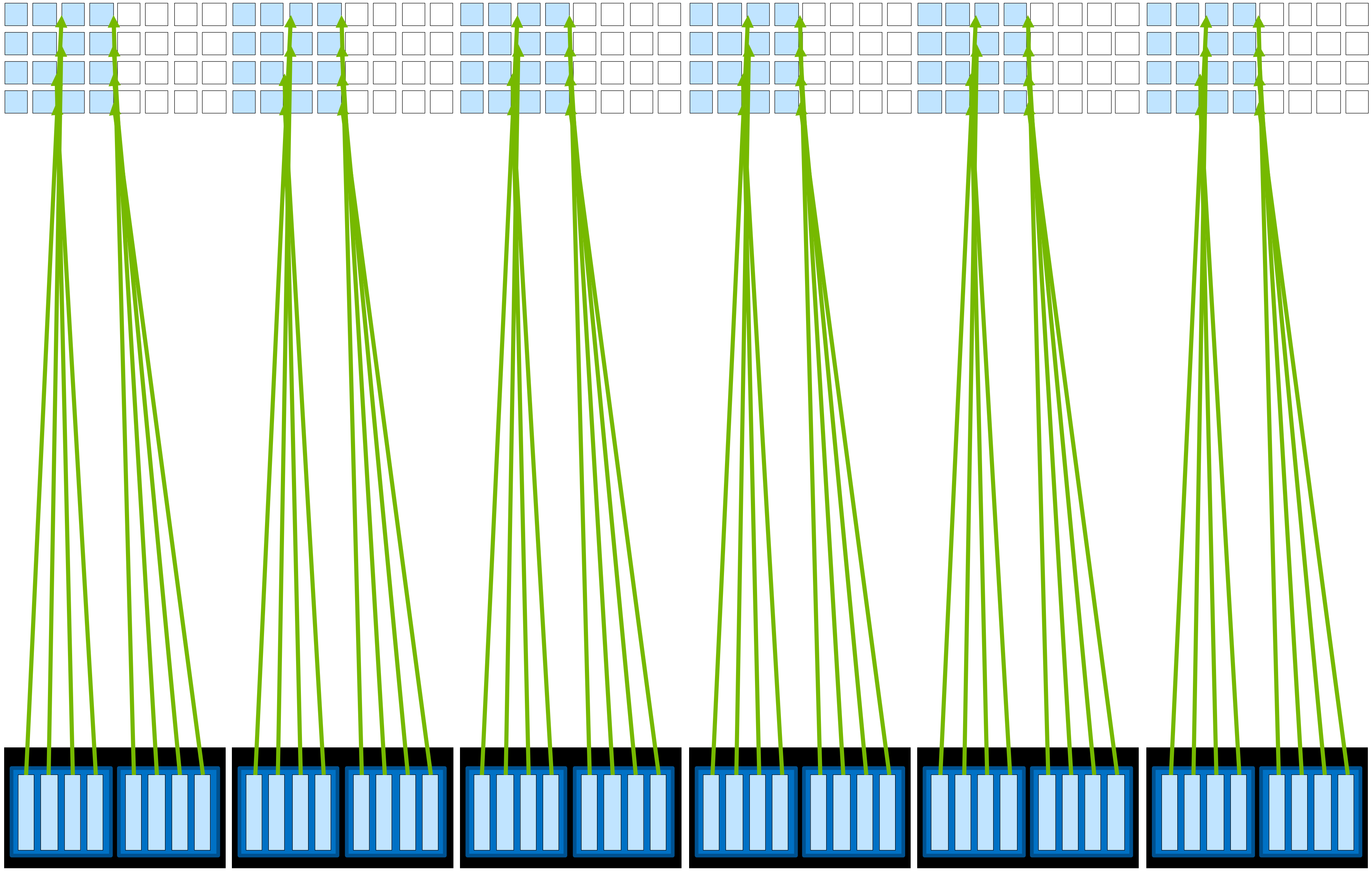
CUDA runs as many blocks in parallel at once as the GPU hardware supports, for massive parallelization



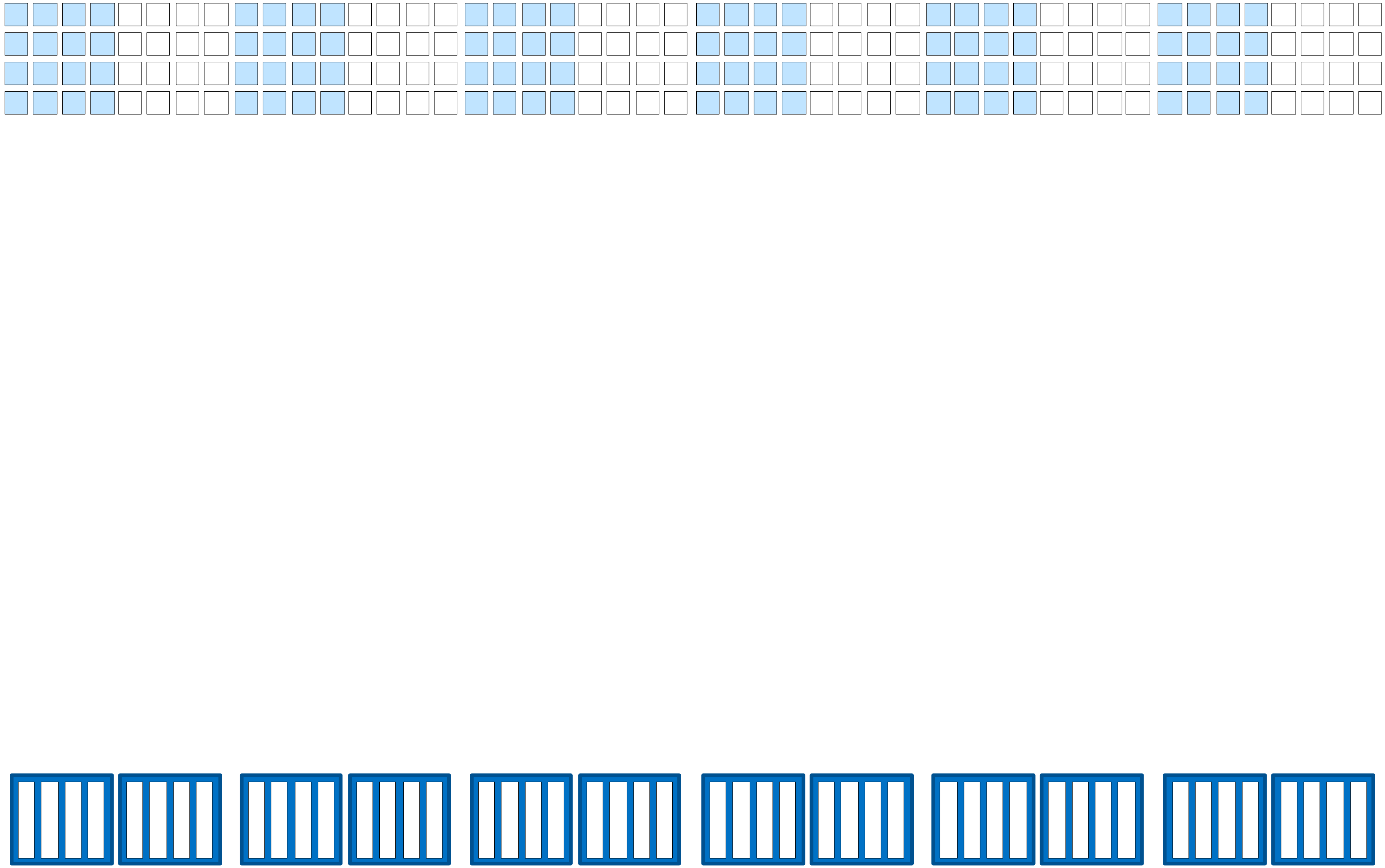


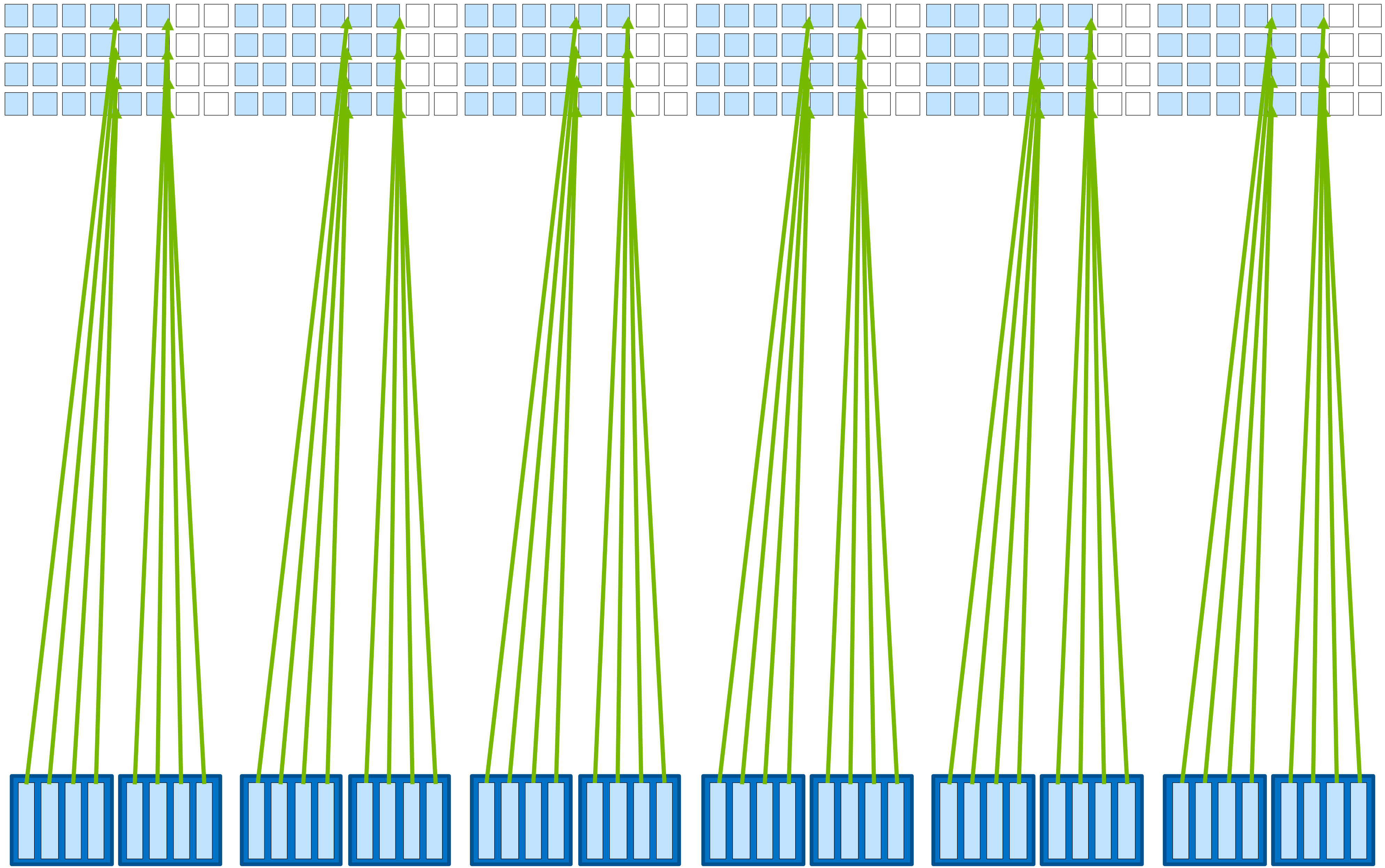
DEEP
LEARNING
INSTITUTE

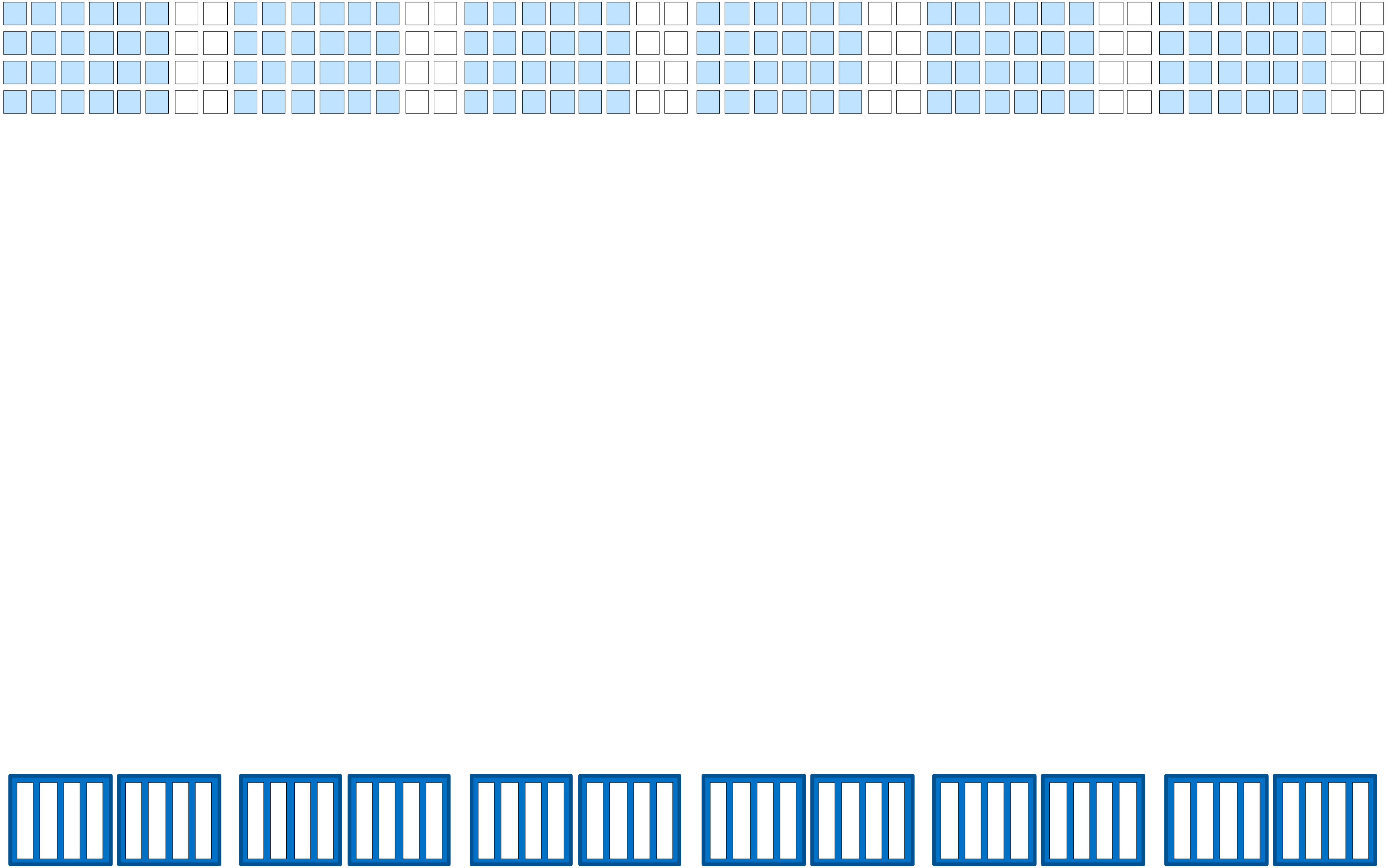


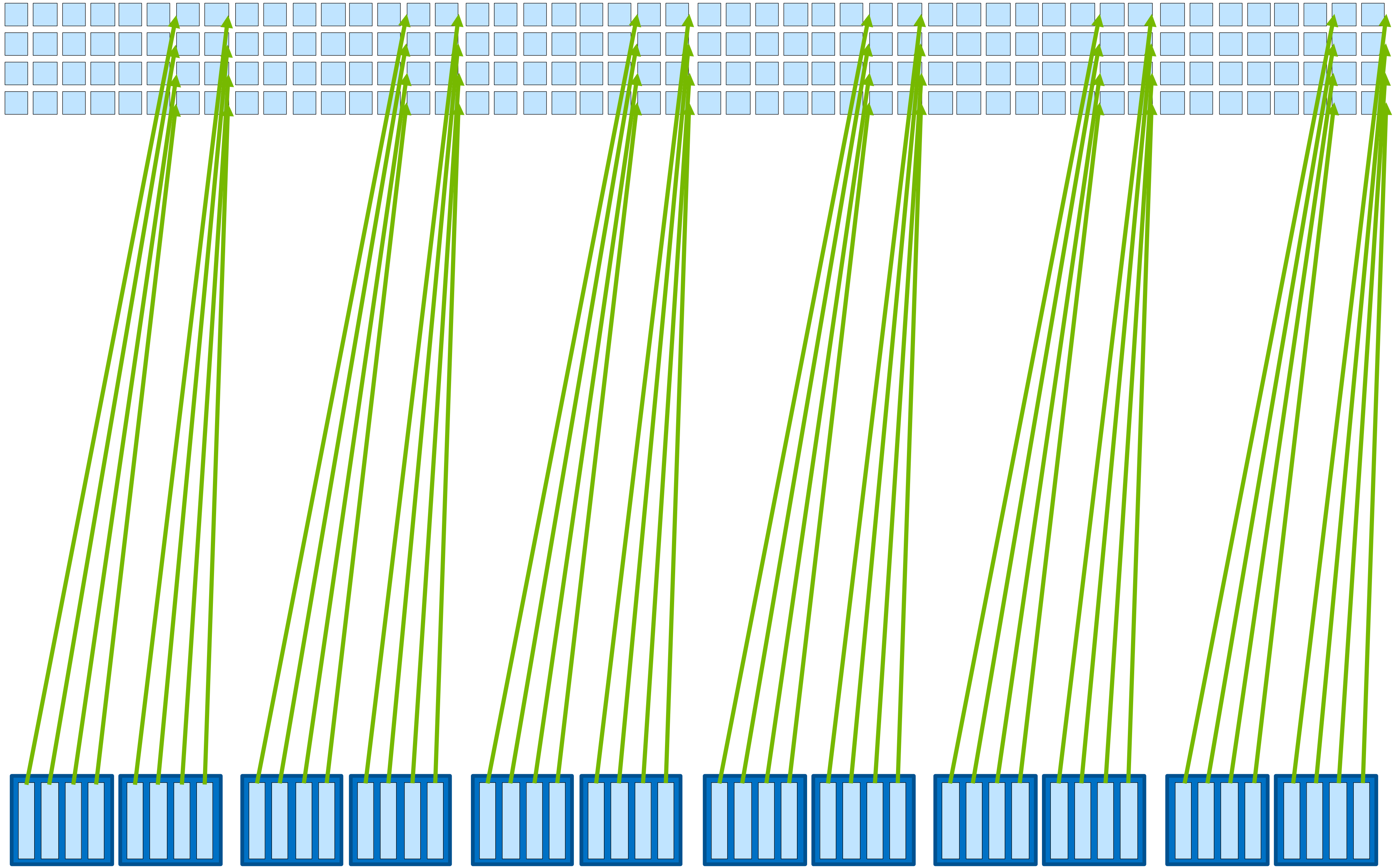


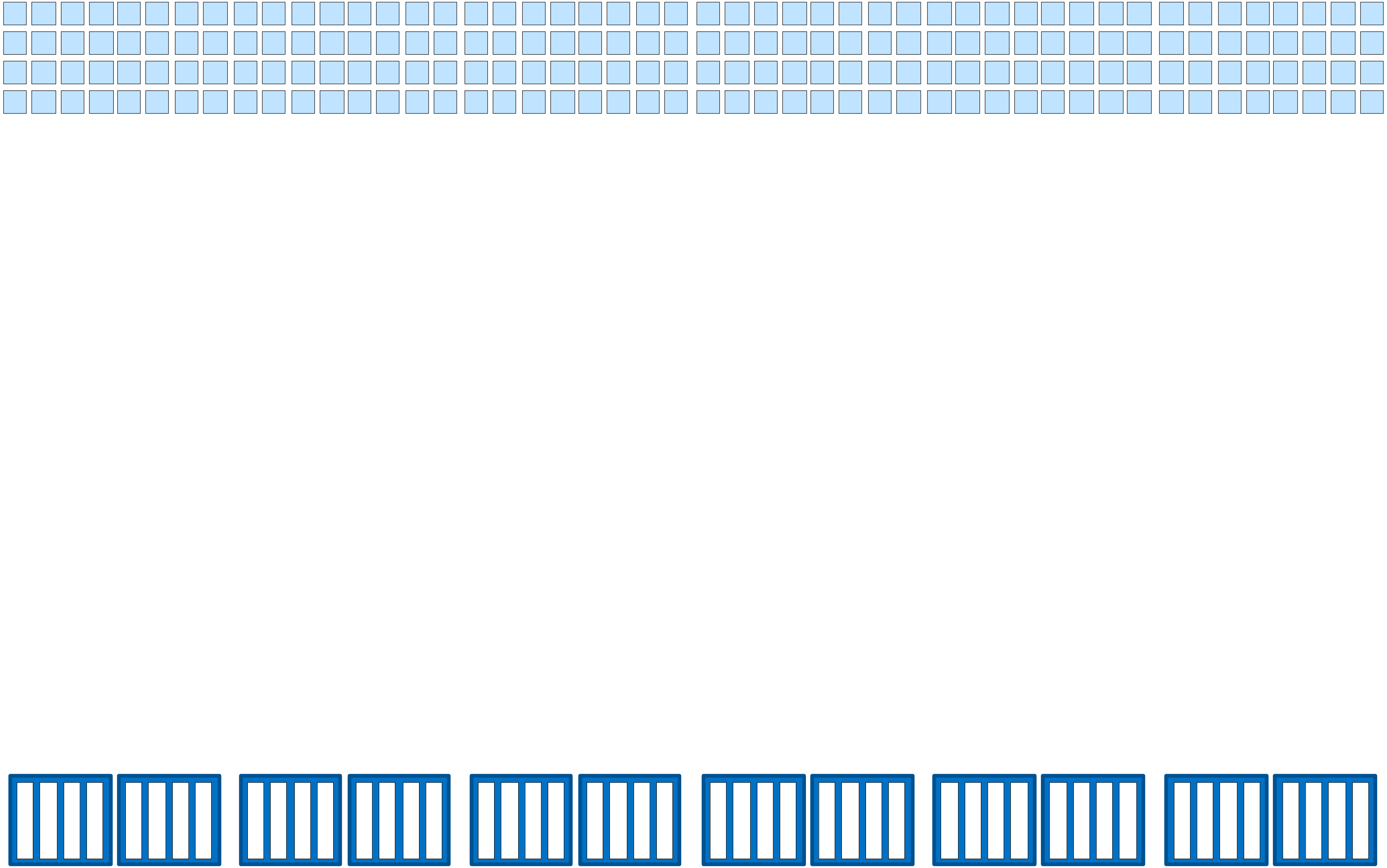
NVIDIA DEEP LEARNING INSTITUTE











Glossary

Glossary

- **`cudaMallocManaged()`**: CUDA function to allocate memory accessible by both the CPU and GPUs. Memory allocated this way is called *unified memory* and is automatically migrated between the CPU and GPUs as needed.
- **`cudaDeviceSynchronize()`**: CUDA function that will cause the CPU to wait until the GPU is finished working.
- **Kernel:** A CUDA function executed on a GPU.
- **Thread:** The unit of execution for CUDA kernels.
- **Block:** A collection of threads.
- **Grid:** A collection of blocks.
- **Execution context:** Special arguments given to CUDA kernels when launched using the <<<…>>> syntax. It defines the number of blocks in the grid, as well as the number of threads in each block.
- **`gridDim.x`**: CUDA variable available inside executing kernel that gives the number of blocks in the grid
- **`blockDim.x`**: CUDA variable available inside executing kernel that gives the number of threads in the thread's block
- **`blockIdx.x`**: CUDA variable available inside executing kernel that gives the index the thread's block within the grid
- **`threadIdx.x`**: CUDA variable available inside executing kernel that gives the index the thread within the block
- **`threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x`**: Common CUDA technique to map a thread to a data element
- **Grid-stride loop:** A technique for assigning a thread more than one data element to work on when there are more elements than the number of threads in the grid. The stride is calculated by **`gridDim.x * blockDim.x`**, which is the number of threads in the grid.

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