Chapter 6: Link layer

our goals:

- understand principles behind link layer services:
  - sharing a broadcast channel: multiple access
  - link layer addressing
  - local area networks: Ethernet
- instantiation, implementation of various link layer technologies

Link layer, LANs: outline

6.1 introduction, services

6.2 multiple access protocols

6.3 LANs

- addressing, ARP
- Ethernet
- switches

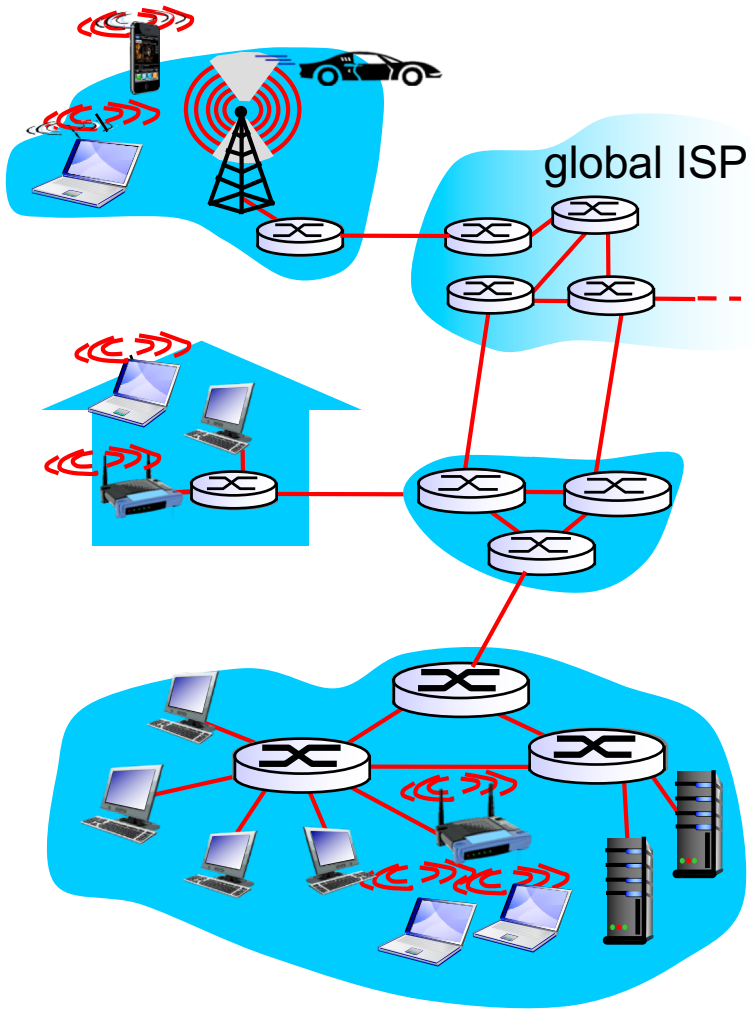
6.4 data center networking

6.6 a day in the life of a web request

Link layer: introduction

terminology:

- hosts and routers: nodes
- communication channels that connect adjacent nodes along communication path: links
  - wired links
  - wireless links
  - LANs
- layer-2 packet: frame, encapsulates datagram



data-link layer has responsibility of transferring datagram from one node to physically adjacent node over a link

Link layer: context

- datagram transferred by different link protocols over different links:
  - e.g., Ethernet on first link, frame relay on intermediate links, 802.11 on last link
- each link protocol provides different services
  - e.g., may or may not provide rdt over link

transportation analogy:

- trip from Princeton to Lausanne
  - limo: Princeton to JFK
  - plane: JFK to Geneva
  - train: Geneva to Lausanne
- tourist = datagram
- transport segment = communication link
- transportation mode = link layer protocol
- travel agent = routing algorithm

Link layer services

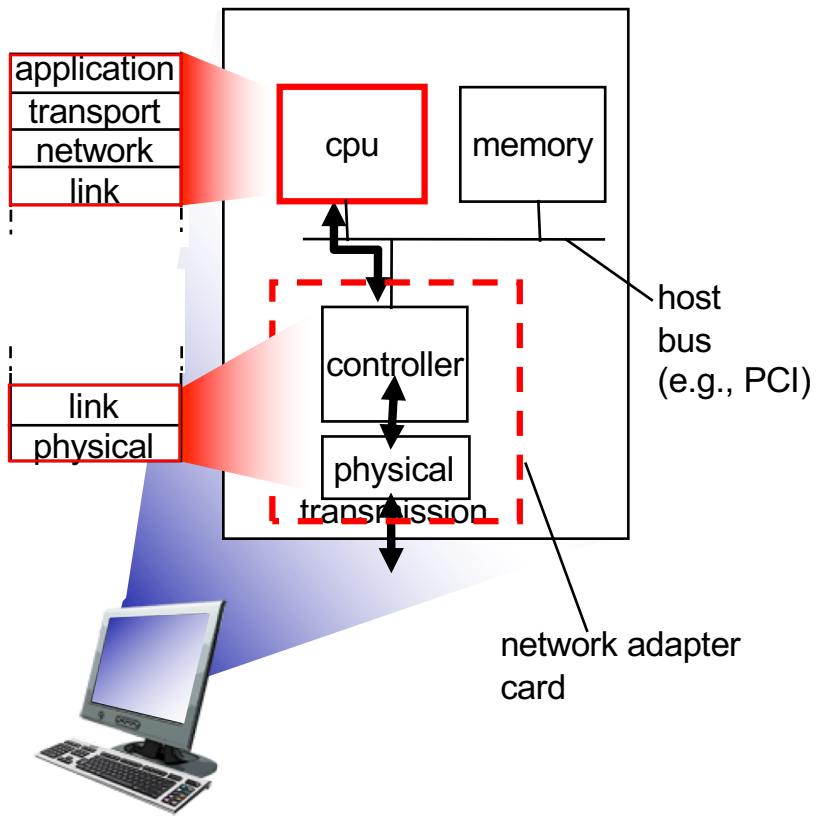
- framing, link access:
  - encapsulate datagram into frame, adding header, trailer
  - channel access if shared medium
  - "MAC" addresses used in frame headers to identify source, dest
    - different from IP address!
- reliable delivery between adjacent nodes
  - we learned how to do this already (chapter 3)!
  - seldom used on low bit-error link (fiber, some twisted pair)
  - wireless links: high error rates
    - Q: why both link-level and end-end reliability?

Link layer services (more)

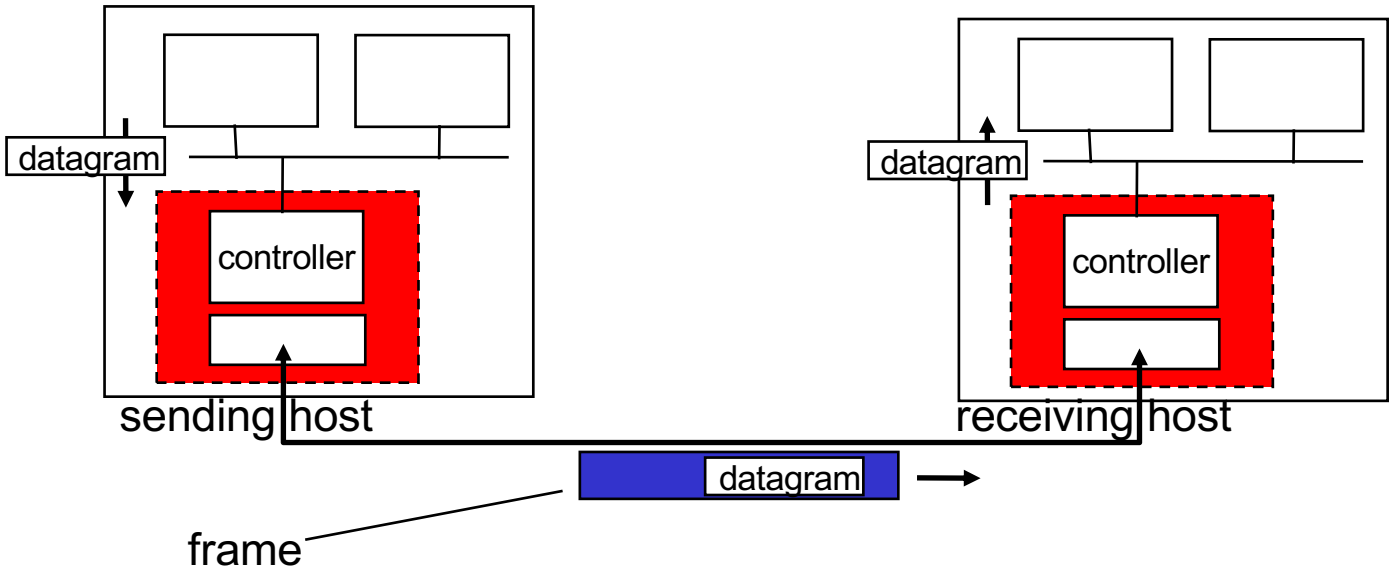
- flow control:
  - pacing between adjacent sending and receiving nodes
- error detection:
  - errors caused by signal attenuation, noise.
  - receiver detects presence of errors:
    - signals sender for retransmission or drops frame
- error correction:
  - receiver identifies and corrects bit error(s) without resorting to retransmission
- half-duplex and full-duplex
  - with half duplex, nodes at both ends of link can transmit, but not at same time

Where is the link layer implemented?

- in each and every host
- link layer implemented in "adaptor" (aka network interface card NIC) or on a chip
  - Ethernet card, 802.11 card; Ethernet chipset
  - implements link, physical layer
- attaches into host's system buses
- combination of hardware, software, firmware



Adaptors communicating



- sending side:
  - encapsulates datagram in frame
  - adds error checking bits, rdt, flow control, etc.
- receiving side
  - looks for errors, rdt, flow control, etc
  - extracts datagram, passes to upper layer at receiving side

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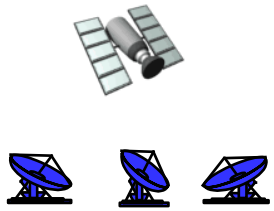
Multiple access links, protocols

two types of "links":

- point-to-point
  - PPP for dial-up access
  - point-to-point link between Ethernet switch, host
- broadcast (shared wire or medium)
  - old-fashioned Ethernet
  - upstream HFC
  - 802.11 wireless LAN

shared wire (e.g., cabled Ethernet)

shared RF (e.g., 802.11 WiFi)



shared RF (satellite)

humans at a cocktail party (shared air, acoustical)

Multiple access protocols

- single shared broadcast channel
- two or more simultaneous transmissions by nodes: interference
  - collision if node receives two or more signals at the same time

multiple access protocol

- distributed algorithm that determines how nodes share channel, i.e., determine when node can transmit
- communication about channel sharing must use channel itself!
  - no out-of-band channel for coordination

An ideal multiple access protocol

given: broadcast channel of rate R bps

desiderata:

1. when one node wants to transmit, it can send at rate R.
2. when M nodes want to transmit, each can send at average rate R/M
3. fully decentralized:
   - no special node to coordinate transmissions
   - no synchronization of clocks, slots
4. simple

MAC protocols: taxonomy

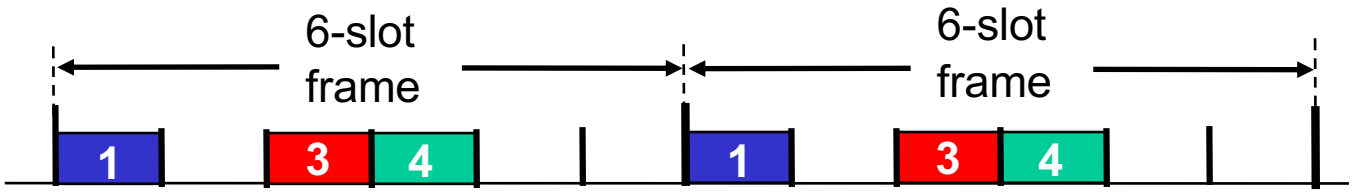
three broad classes:

- channel partitioning
  - divide channel into smaller "pieces" (time slots, frequency, code)
  - allocate piece to node for exclusive use
- random access
  - channel not divided, allow collisions
  - "recover" from collisions
- "taking turns"
  - nodes take turns, but nodes with more to send can take longer turns

Channel partitioning MAC protocols: TDMA

TDMA: time division multiple access

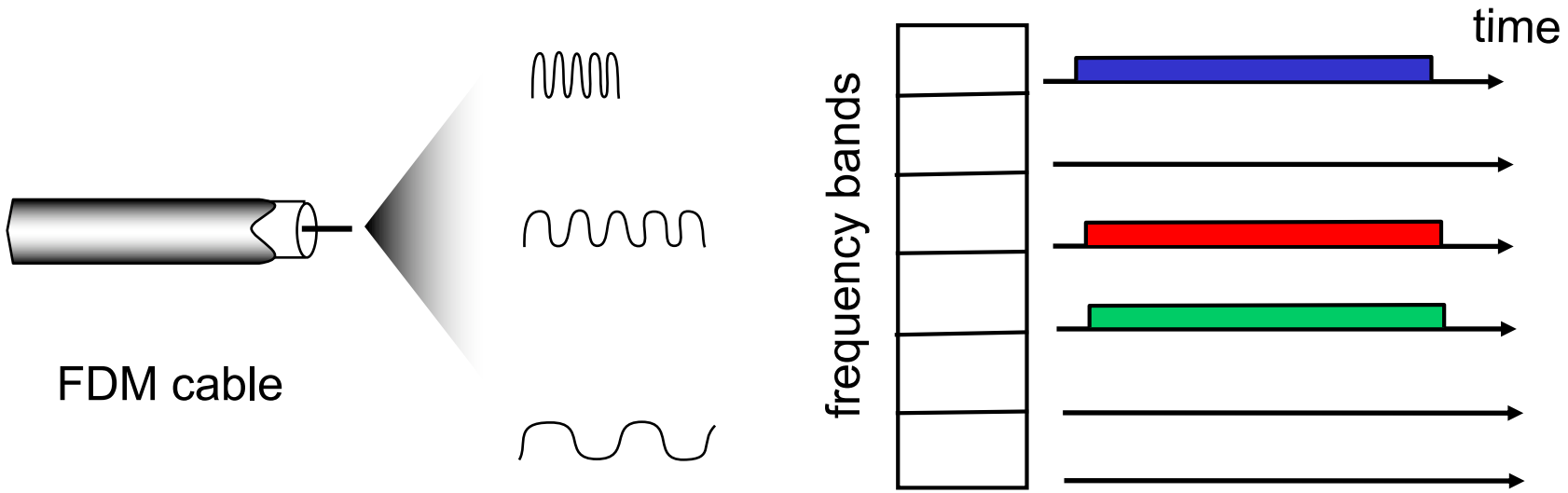
- access to channel in "rounds"
- each station gets fixed length slot (length = pkt trans time) in each round
- unused slots go idle
- example: 6-station LAN, 1,3,4 have pkt, slots 2,6,6 idle



Channel partitioning MAC protocols: FDMA

FDMA: frequency division multiple access

- channel spectrum divided into frequency bands
- each station assigned fixed frequency band
- unused transmission time in frequency bands go idle
- example: 6-station LAN, 1,3,4 have pkt, frequency bands 2,6,6 idle



Random access protocols

- when node has packet to send
  - transmit at full channel data rate R.
  - no a priori coordination among nodes
- two or more transmitting nodes ➜ "collision",
- random access MAC protocol specifies:
  - how to detect collisions
  - how to recover from collisions (e.g., via delayed retransmissions)
- examples of random access MAC protocols:
  - slotted ALOHA
  - ALOHA
  - CSMA, CSMA/CD, CSMA/CA

CSMA (carrier sense multiple access)

CSMA: listen before transmit:

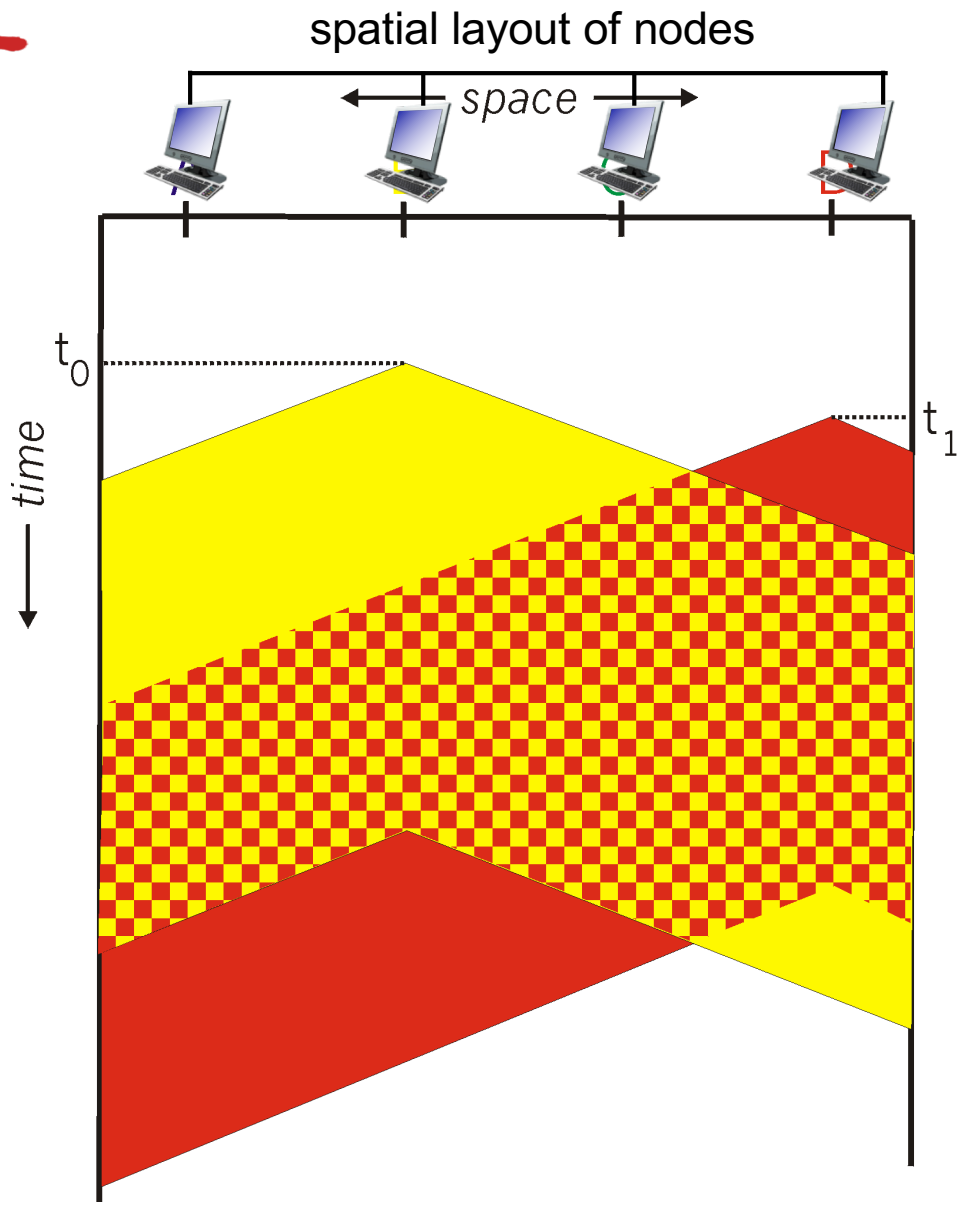
if channel sensed idle: transmit entire frame

- if channel sensed busy, defer transmission

- human analogy: don't interrupt others!

CSMA collisions

- collisions can still occur: propagation delay means two nodes may not hear each other's transmission
- collision: entire packet transmission time wasted
  - distance & propagation delay play role in in determining collision probability



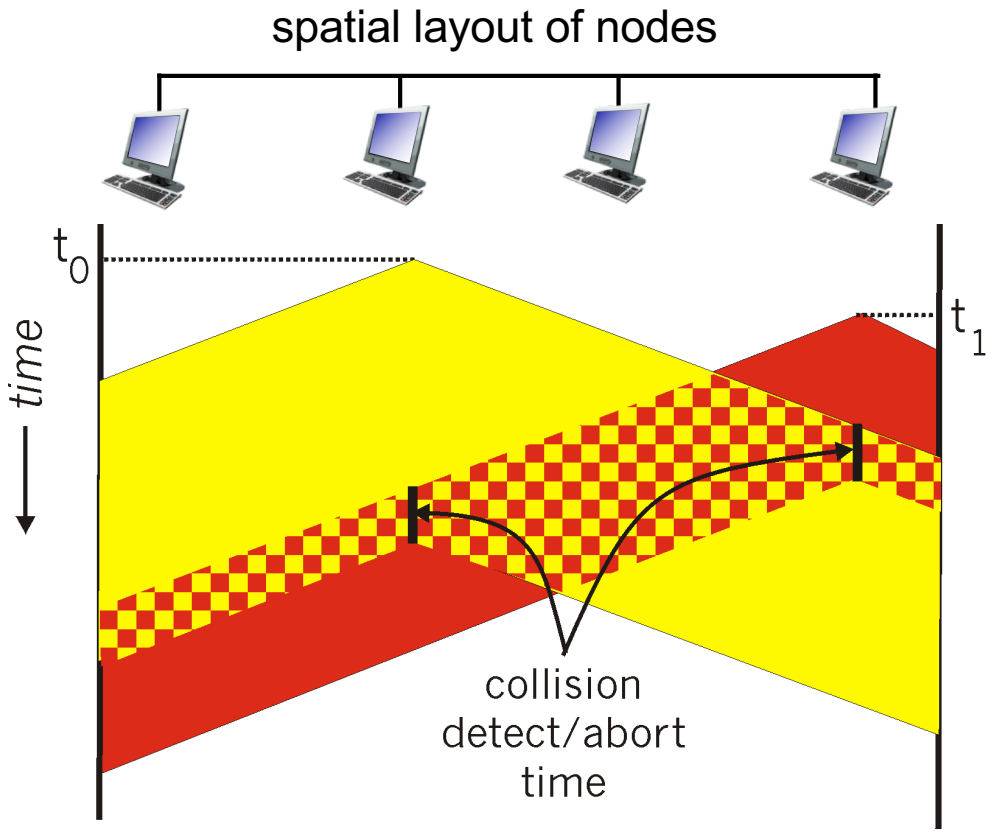
CSMA/CD (collision detection)

CSMA/CD: carrier sensing, deferral as in CSMA

- collisions detected within short time
- colliding transmissions aborted, reducing channel wastage

- collision detection:
  - easy in wired LANs: measure signal strengths, compare transmitted, received signals
  - difficult in wireless LANs: received signal strength overwhelmed by local transmission strength
- human analogy: the polite conversationalist

CSMA/CD (collision detection)



Ethernet CSMA/CD algorithm

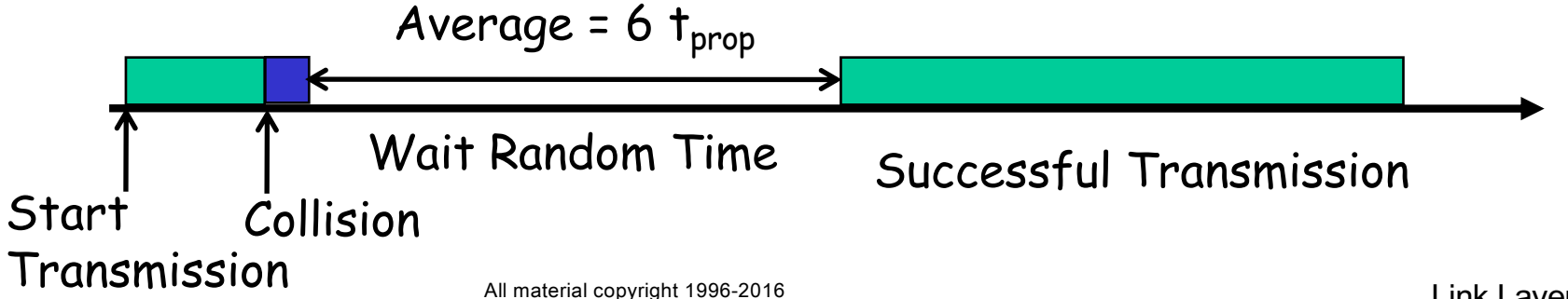
1. NIC receives datagram from network layer, creates frame
2. If NIC senses channel idle, starts frame transmission. If NIC senses channel busy, waits until channel idle, then transmits.
3. If NIC transmits entire frame without detecting another transmission, NIC is done with frame !
4. If NIC detects another transmission while transmitting, aborts and sends jam signal
6. After aborting, NIC enters binary (exponential) backoff:
   - after mth collision, NIC chooses K at random from {0,1,2, …, 2^m-1}. NIC waits K·612 bit times, returns to Step 2
   - longer backoff interval with more collisions

CSMA/CD efficiency

- t_{prop} = max prop delay between 2 nodes in LAN
- t_{trans} = time to transmit max-size frame

$$\text{efficiency} = \frac{1}{1 + 6\, t_{prop}/t_{trans}}$$

- efficiency goes to 1
  - as t_{prop} goes to 0
  - as t_{trans} goes to infinity



"Taking turns" MAC protocols

channel partitioning MAC protocols:

- share channel efficiently and fairly at high load
- inefficient at low load: delay in channel access, 1/N bandwidth allocated even if only 1 active node!

random access MAC protocols

- efficient at low load: single node can fully utilize channel
- high load: collision overhead

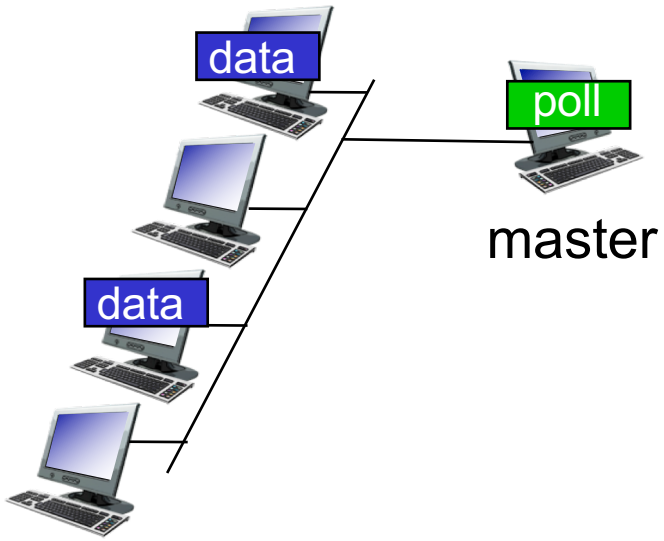
"taking turns" protocols

look for best of both worlds!

"Taking turns" MAC protocols

polling:

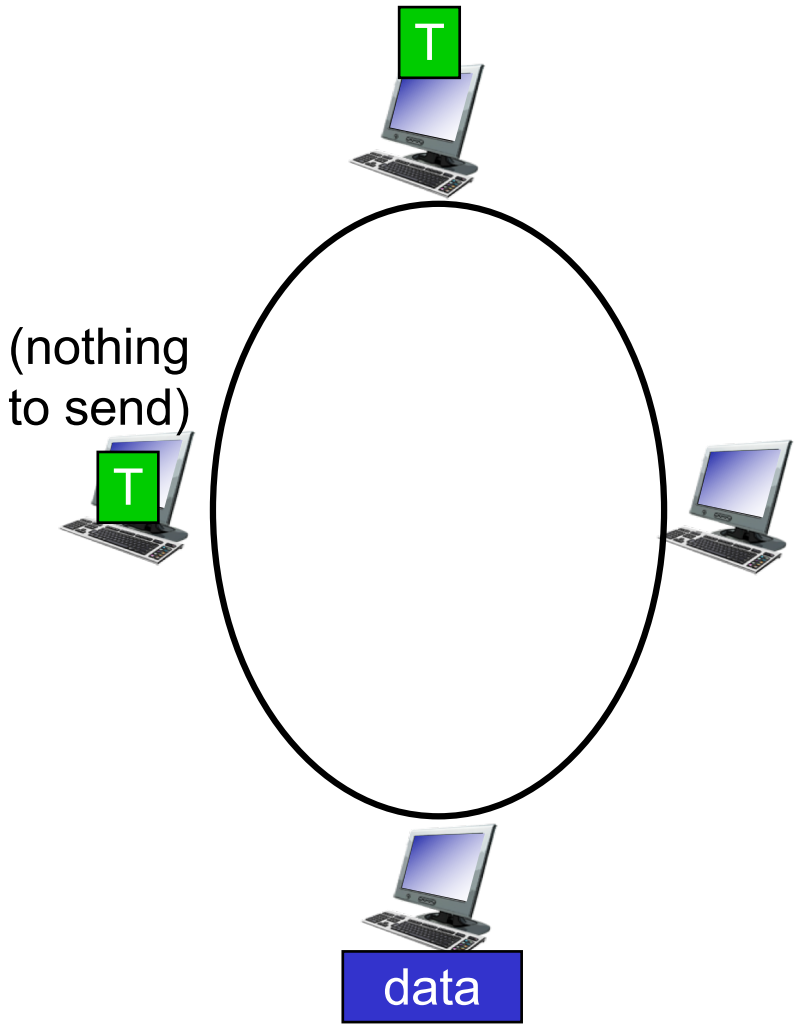
- master node "invites" slave nodes to transmit in turn
- typically used with "dumb" slave devices
- concerns:
  - polling overhead
  - latency
  - single point of failure (master)



"Taking turns" MAC protocols

token passing:

- control token passed from one node to next sequentially.
- token message
- concerns:
  - token overhead
  - latency
  - single point of failure (token)

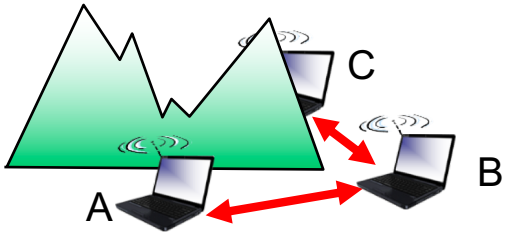


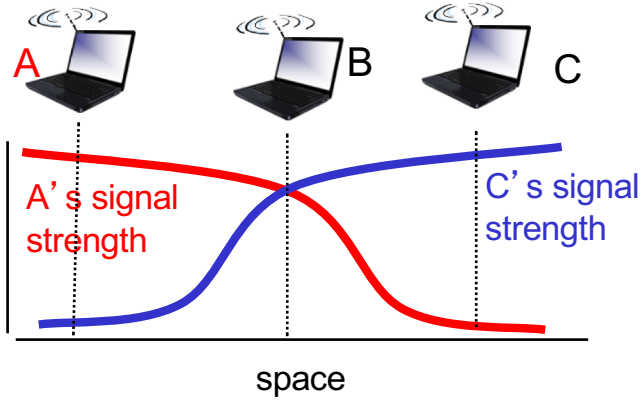
Summary of MAC protocols

- channel partitioning, by time, frequency or code
  - Time Division, Frequency Division
- random access (dynamic),
  - ALOHA, S-ALOHA, CSMA, CSMA/CD
  - carrier sensing: easy in some technologies (wire), hard in others (wireless)
  - CSMA/CD used in Ethernet
  - CSMA/CA used in 802.11
- taking turns
  - polling from central site, token passing
  - bluetooth, FDDI, token ring

Why CSMA/CA?

- avoid collisions: 2^+ nodes transmitting at same time
- CSMA - sense before transmitting
  - don't collide with ongoing transmission by other node
- 802.11: no collision detection!
  - difficult to receive (sense collisions) when transmitting due to weak received signals (fading)
  - can't sense all collisions in any case: hidden terminal, fading
  - goal: avoid collisions: CSMA/C(ollision)A(voidance)





Link layer, LANs: outline

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- addressing, ARP
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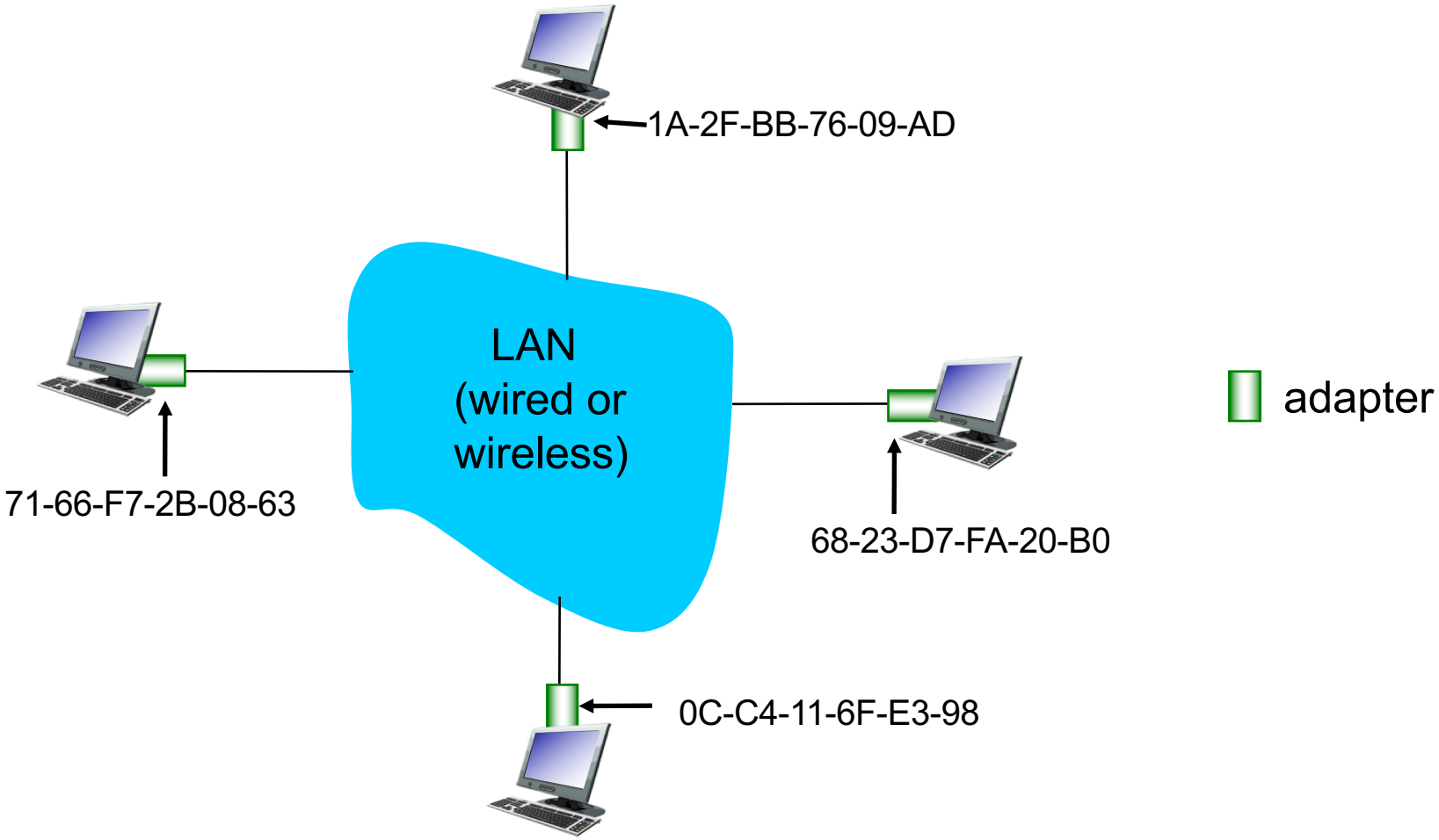
MAC addresses and ARP

- 32-bit IP address:
  - network-layer address for interface
  - used for layer 3 (network layer) forwarding
- MAC (or LAN or physical or Ethernet) address:
  - function: used 'locally" to get frame from one interface to another physically-connected interface (same network, in IP-addressing sense)
  - 48 bit MAC address (for most LANs) burned in NIC ROM, also sometimes software settable
  - e.g.: 1A-2F-BB-76-09-AD

hexadecimal (base 16) notation
(each "number" represents 4 bits)

LAN addresses and ARP

each adapter on LAN has unique LAN address

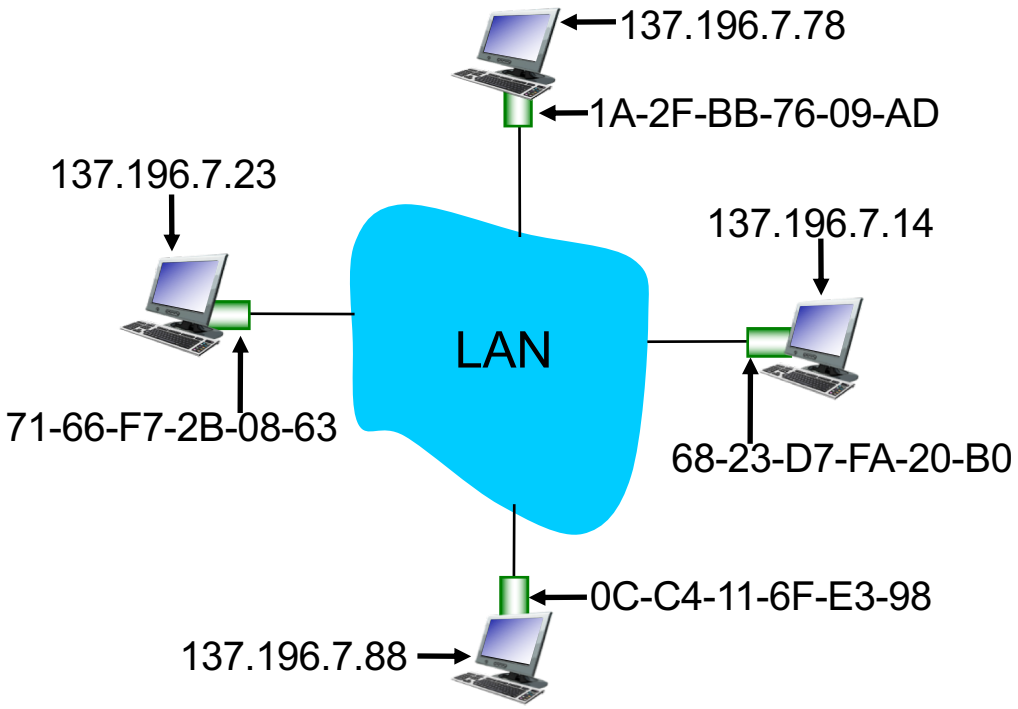


LAN addresses (more)

- MAC address allocation administered by IEEE
- manufacturer buys portion of MAC address space (to assure uniqueness)
- analogy:
  - MAC address: like Social Security Number
  - IP address: like postal address
- MAC flat address ➜ portability
  - can move LAN card from one LAN to another
- IP hierarchical address not portable
  - address depends on IP subnet to which node is attached

ARP: address resolution protocol

Question: how to determine interface's MAC address, knowing its IP address?



ARP table: each IP node (host, router) on LAN has table

- IP/MAC address mappings for some LAN nodes:

  < IP address; MAC address; TTL>

- TTL (Time To Live): time after which address mapping will be forgotten (typically 20 min)

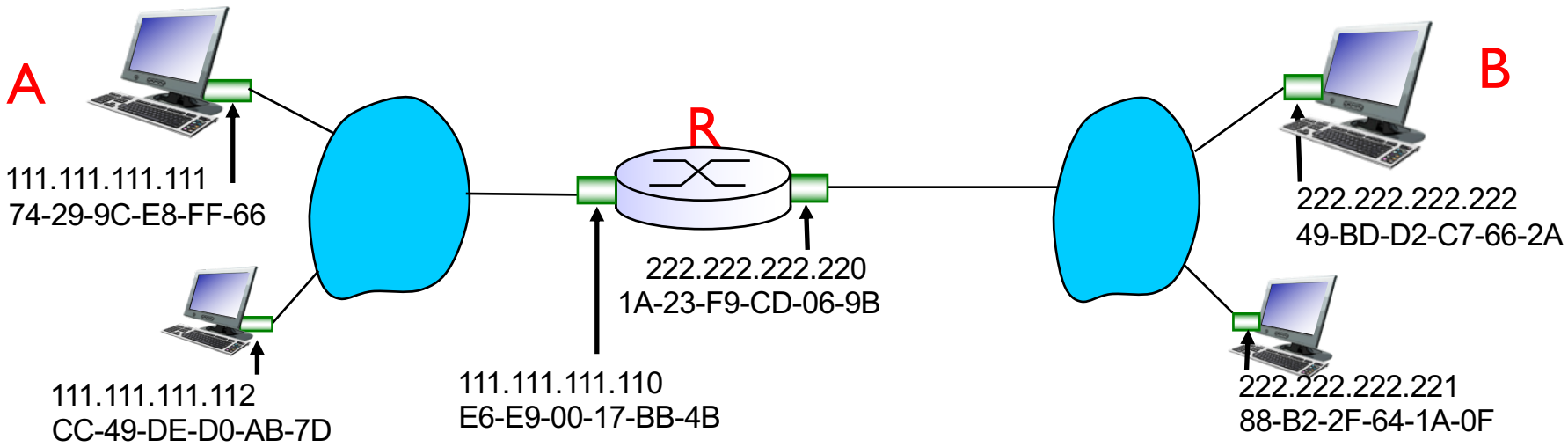
ARP protocol: same LAN

- A wants to send datagram to B
  - B's MAC address not in A's ARP table.
- A broadcasts ARP query packet, containing B's IP address
  - dest MAC address = FF-FF-FF-FF-FF-FF
  - all nodes on LAN receive ARP query
- B receives ARP packet, replies to A with its (B's) MAC address
  - frame sent to A's MAC address (unicast)
- A caches (saves) IP-to-MAC address pair in its ARP table until information becomes old (times out)
  - soft state: information that times out (goes away) unless refreshed
- ARP is "plug-and-play":
  - nodes create their ARP tables without intervention from net administrator

Addressing: routing to another LAN

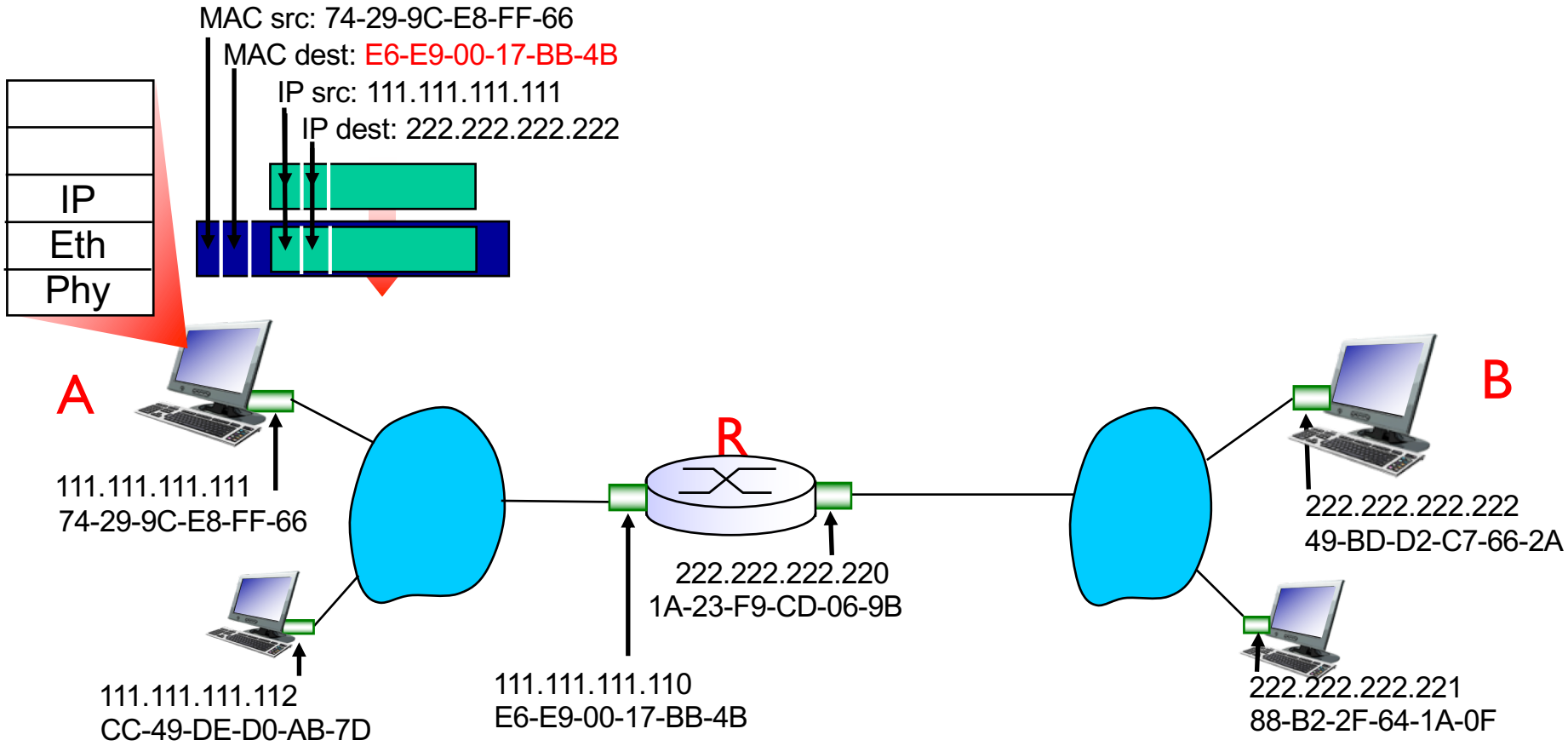
walkthrough: send datagram from A to B via R

- focus on addressing – at IP (datagram) and MAC layer (frame)
- assume A knows B's IP address
- assume A knows IP address of first hop router, R (how?)
- assume A knows R's MAC address (how?)



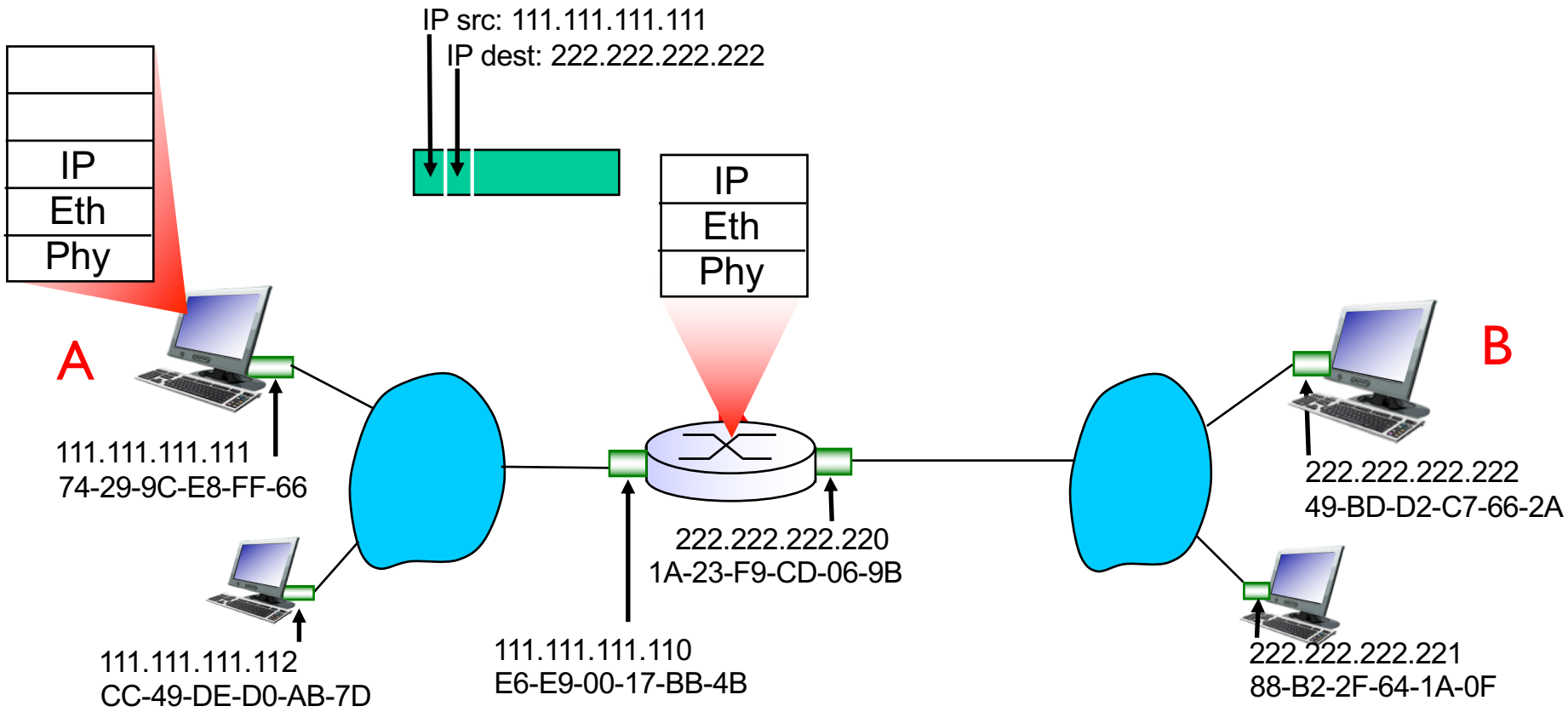
Addressing: routing to another LAN

- A creates IP datagram with IP source A, destination B
- A creates link-layer frame with R's MAC address as dest, frame contains A-to-B IP datagram



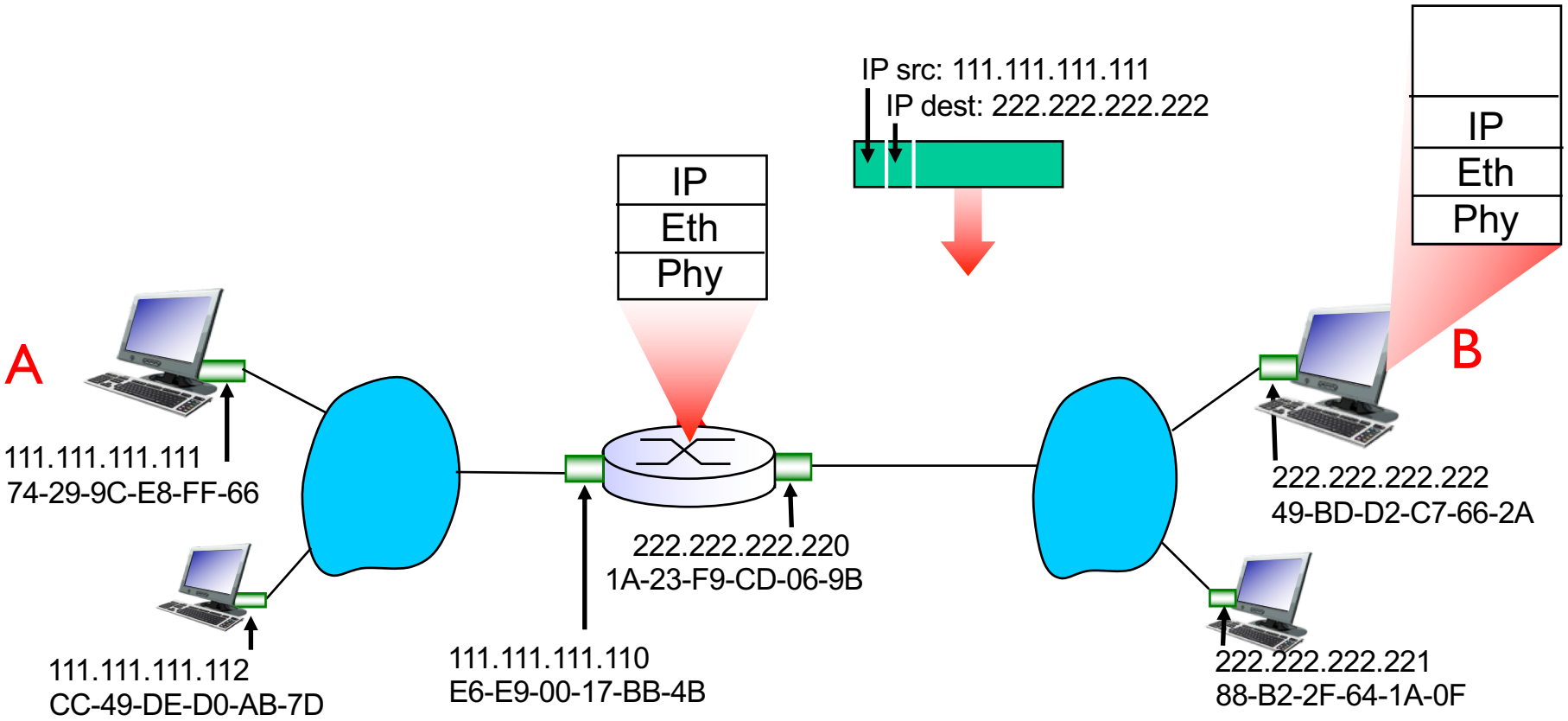
Addressing: routing to another LAN

- frame sent from A to R
- frame received at R, datagram removed, passed up to IP



Addressing: routing to another LAN

- R forwards datagram with IP source A, destination B
- R creates link-layer frame with B's MAC address as dest, frame contains A-to-B IP datagram



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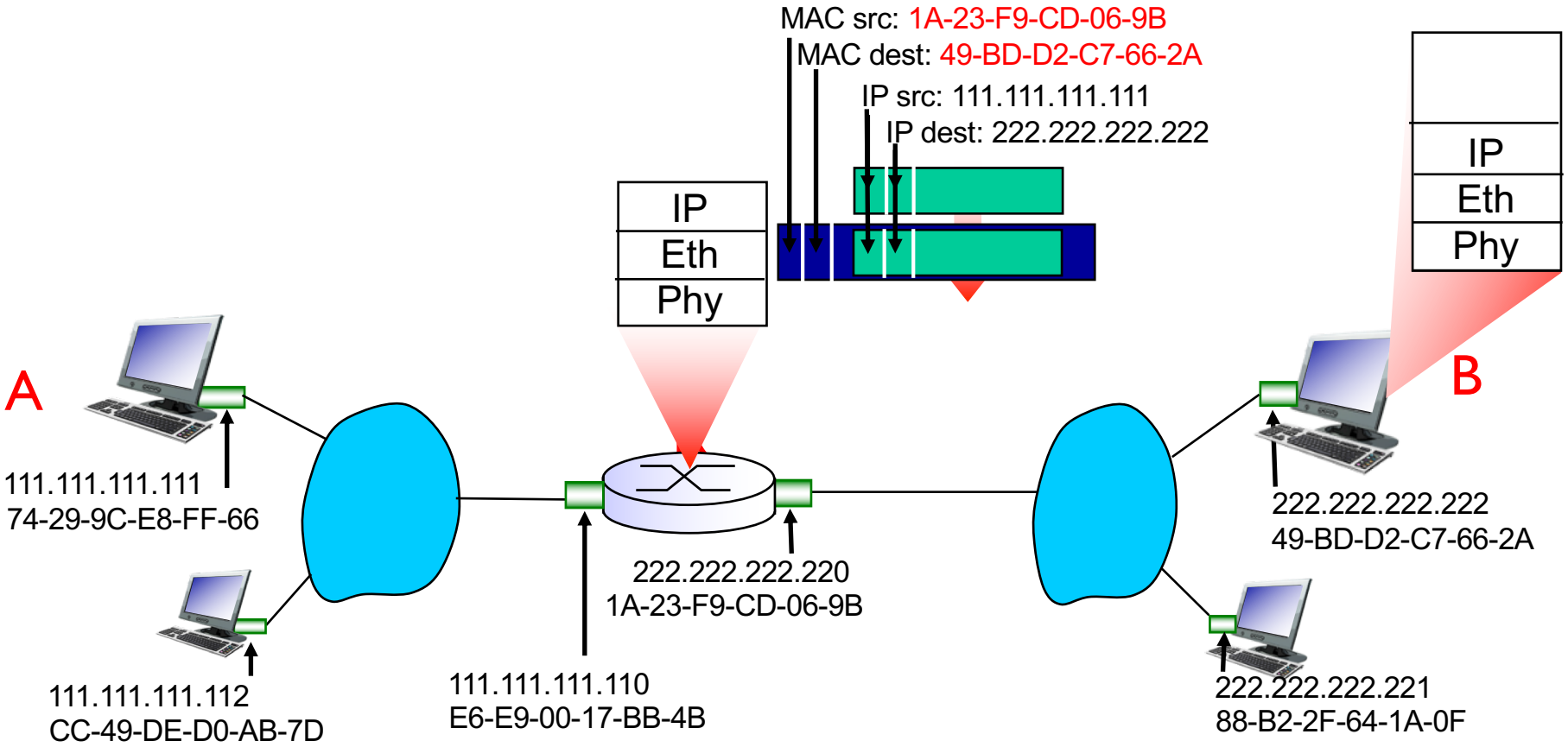

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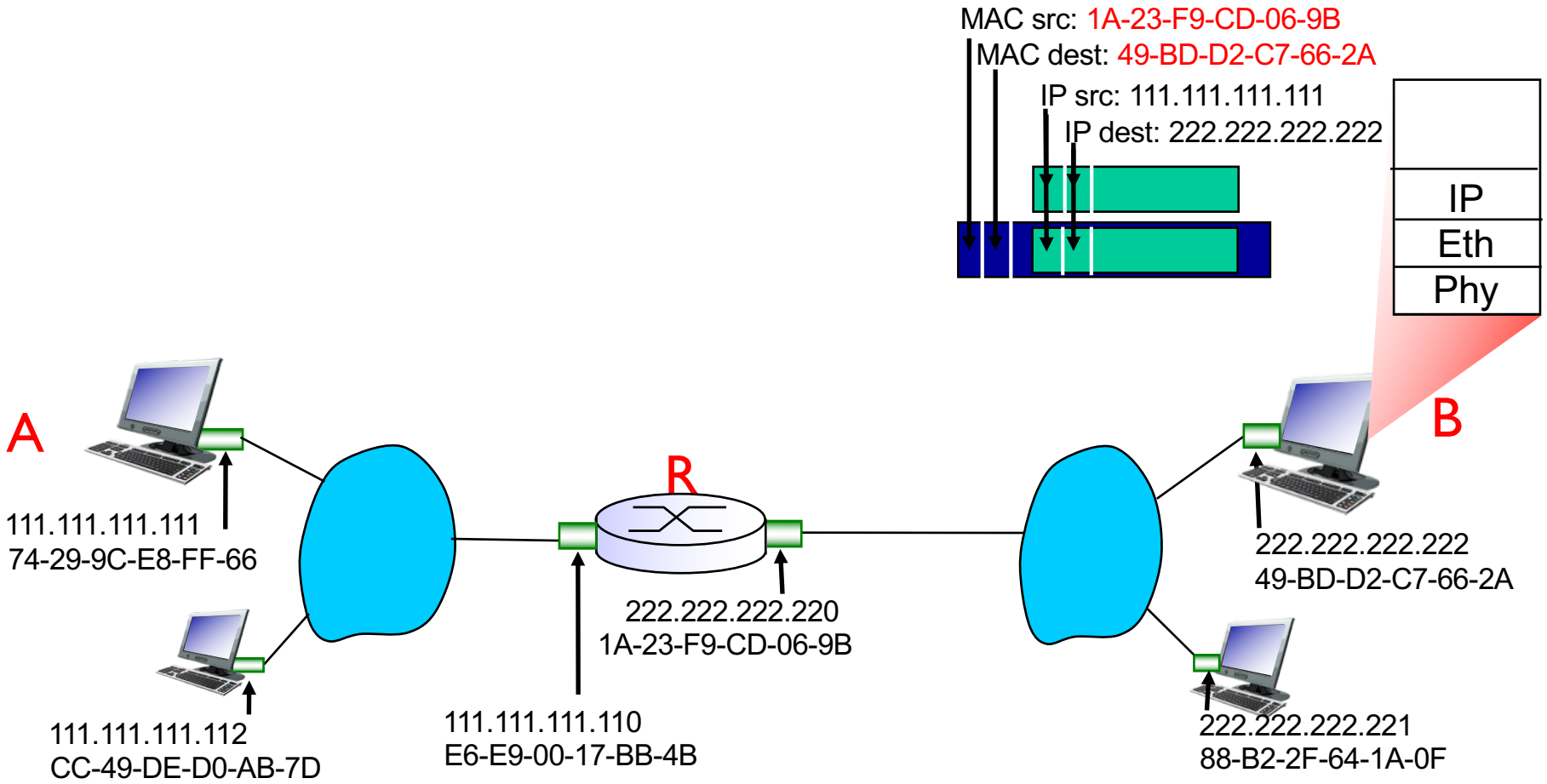

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6.4 WLANs

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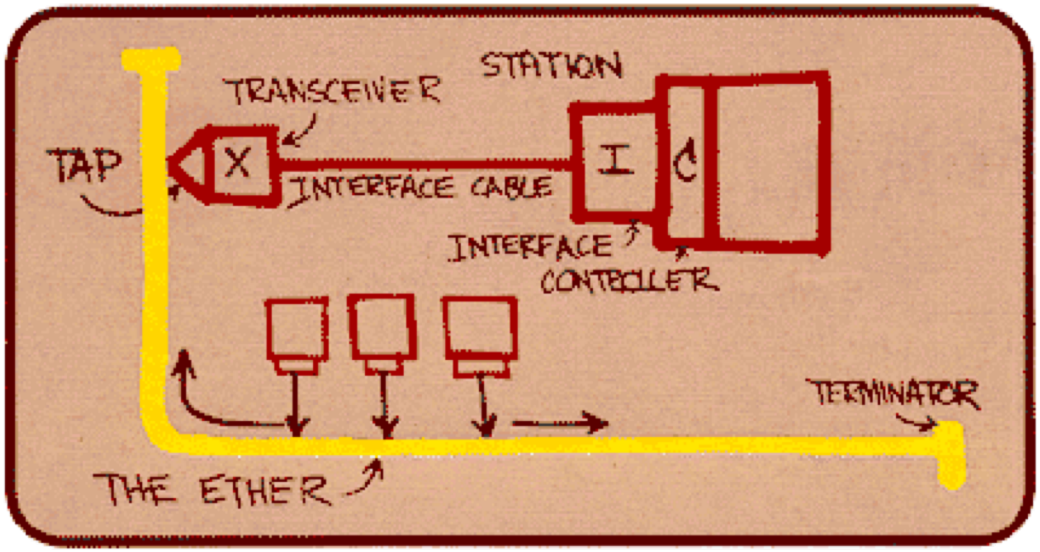
6.6 a day in the life of a web request

Ethernet

"dominant" wired LAN technology:

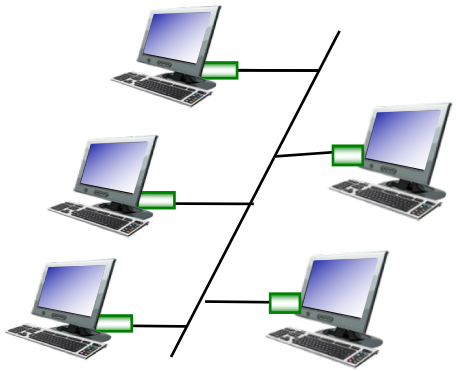
- cheap $20 for NIC
- first widely used LAN technology
- simpler, cheaper than token LANs and ATM
- kept up with speed race: 10 Mbps – 10 Gbps



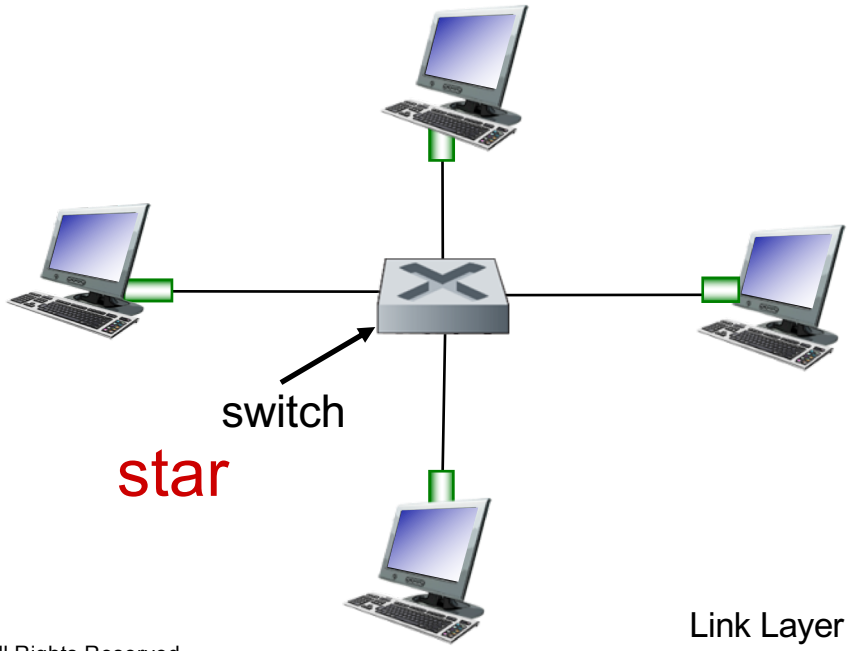
Metcalfe's Ethernet sketch

Ethernet: physical topology

- bus: popular through mid 90s
  - all nodes in same collision domain (can collide with each other)
- star: prevails today
  - active switch in center
  - each "spoke" runs a (separate) Ethernet protocol (nodes do not collide with each other)



bus: coaxial cable



star

Ethernet frame structure

sending adapter encapsulates IP datagram (or other network layer protocol packet) in Ethernet frame

preamble:

- 7 bytes with pattern 10101010 followed by one byte with pattern 10101011
- used to synchronize receiver, sender clock rates

Ethernet frame structure (more)

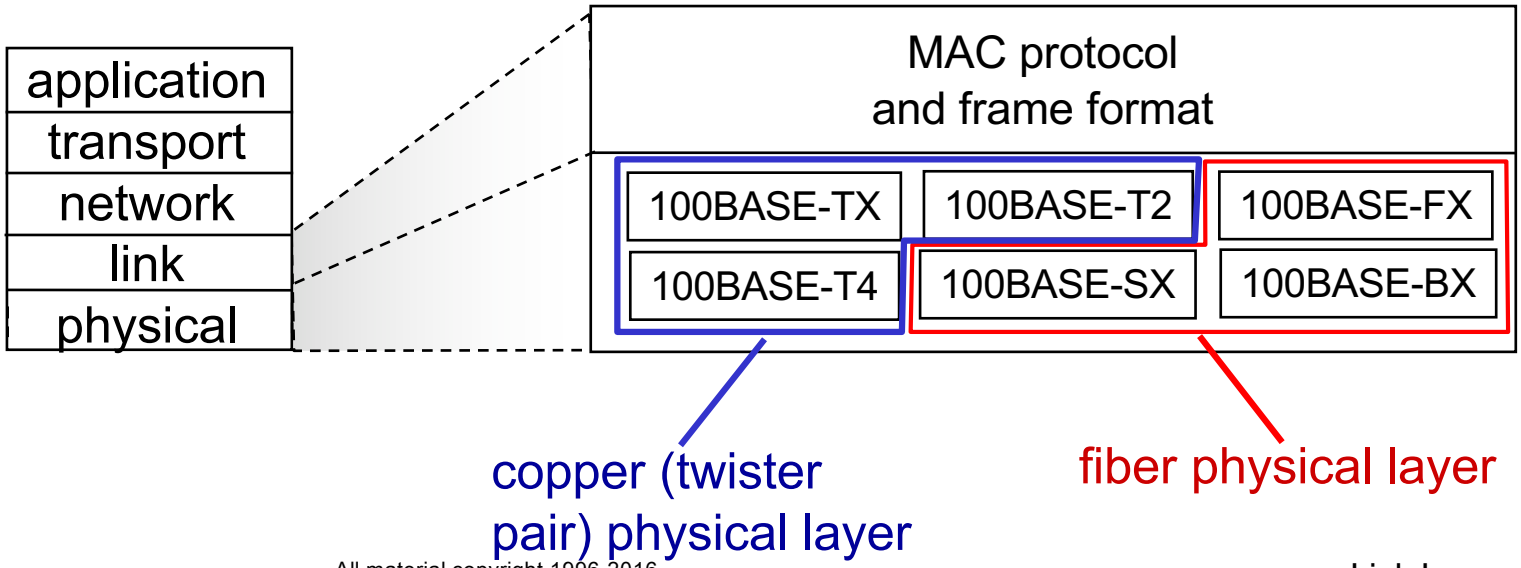
- addresses: 6 byte source, destination MAC addresses
  - if adapter receives frame with matching destination address, or with broadcast address (e.g. ARP packet), it passes data in frame to network layer protocol
  - otherwise, adapter discards frame
- type: indicates higher layer protocol (mostly IP but others possible, e.g., Novell IPX, AppleTalk)
- CRC: cyclic redundancy check at receiver
  - error detected: frame is dropped

Ethernet: unreliable, connectionless

- connectionless: no handshaking between sending and receiving NICs
- unreliable: receiving NIC doesn't send acks or nacks to sending NIC
  - data in dropped frames recovered only if initial sender uses higher layer rdt (e.g., TCP), otherwise dropped data lost
- Ethernet's MAC protocol: unslotted CSMA/CD with binary backoff

802.3 Ethernet standards: link & physical layers

- many different Ethernet standards
  - common MAC protocol and frame format
  - different speeds: 2 Mbps, 10 Mbps, 100 Mbps, 1Gbps, 10G bps
  - different physical layer media: fiber, cable



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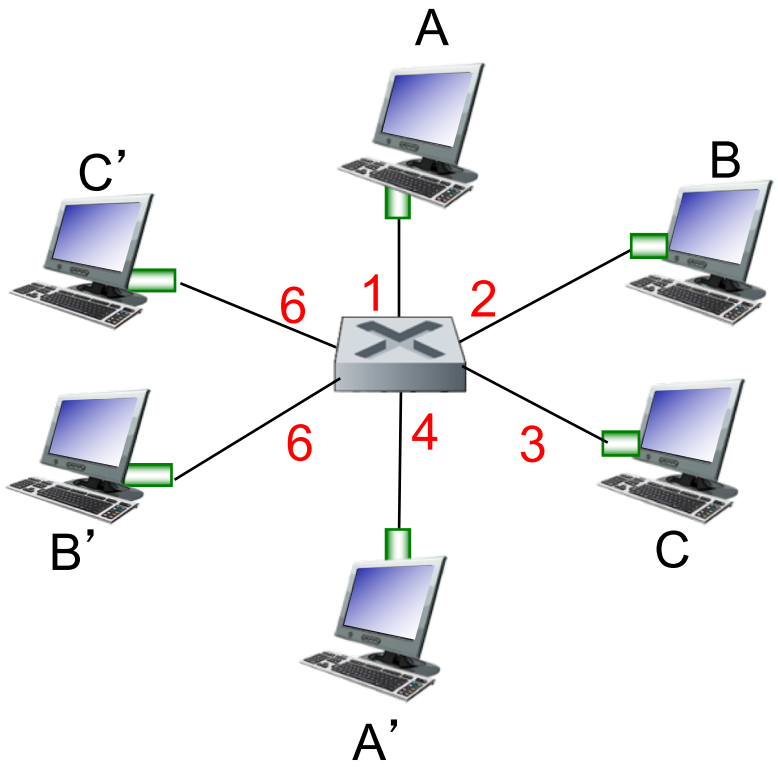
Ethernet switch

- link-layer device: takes an active role
  - store, forward Ethernet frames
  - examine incoming frame's MAC address, selectively forward frame to one-or-more outgoing links when frame is to be forwarded on segment, uses CSMA/CD to access segment
- transparent
  - hosts are unaware of presence of switches
- plug-and-play, self-learning
  - switches do not need to be configured

Switch: multiple simultaneous transmissions

- hosts have dedicated, direct connection to switch
- switches buffer packets
- Ethernet protocol used on each incoming link, but no collisions; full duplex
  - each link is its own collision domain
- switching: A-to-A' and B-to-B' can transmit simultaneously, without collisions

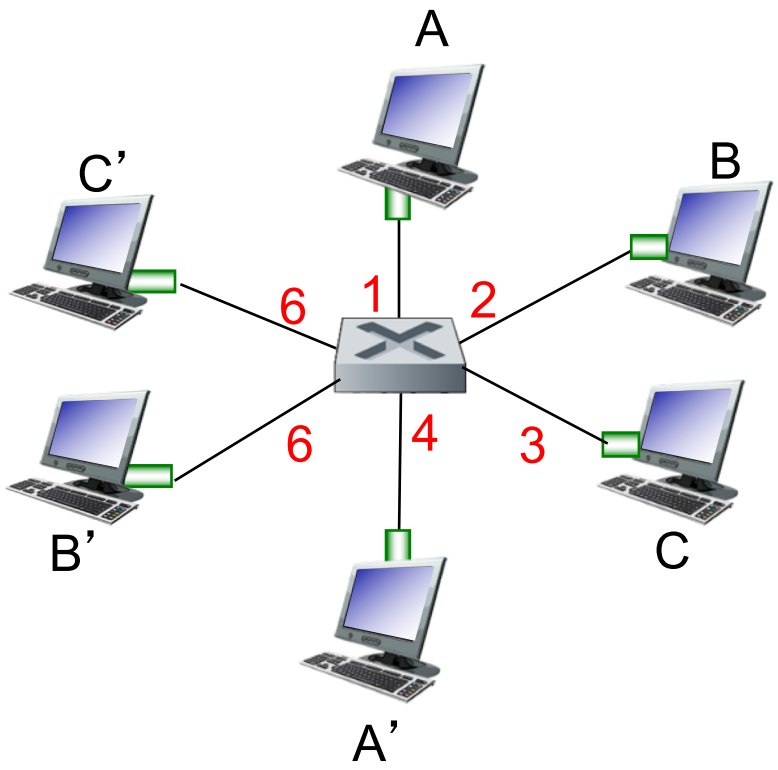


switch with six interfaces (1,2,3,4,6,6)

Switch forwarding table

Q: how does switch know A' reachable via interface 4, B' reachable via interface 6?

- A: each switch has a switch table, each entry:
  - (MAC address of host, interface to reach host, time stamp)
  - looks like a routing table!



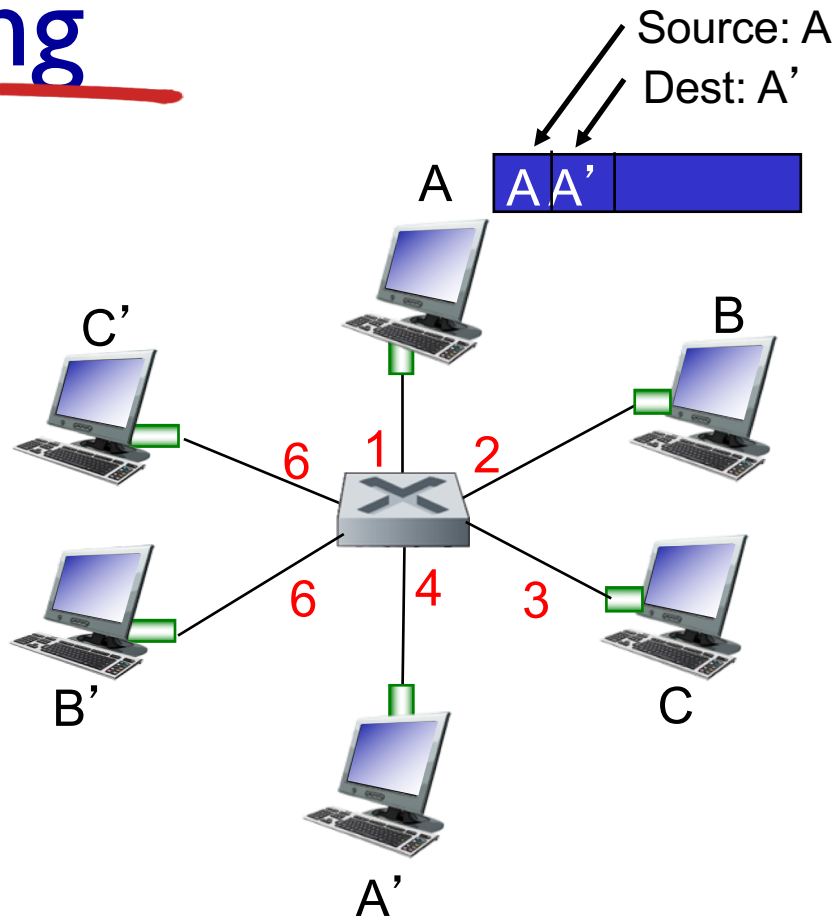
switch with six interfaces (1,2,3,4,6,6)

Q: how are entries created, maintained in switch table?

- something like a routing protocol?

Switch: self-learning

- switch learns which hosts can be reached through which interfaces
  - when frame received, switch "learns" location of sender: incoming LAN segment
  - records sender/location pair in switch table



MAC addr	interface	TTL
A	1	60

Switch table (initially empty)

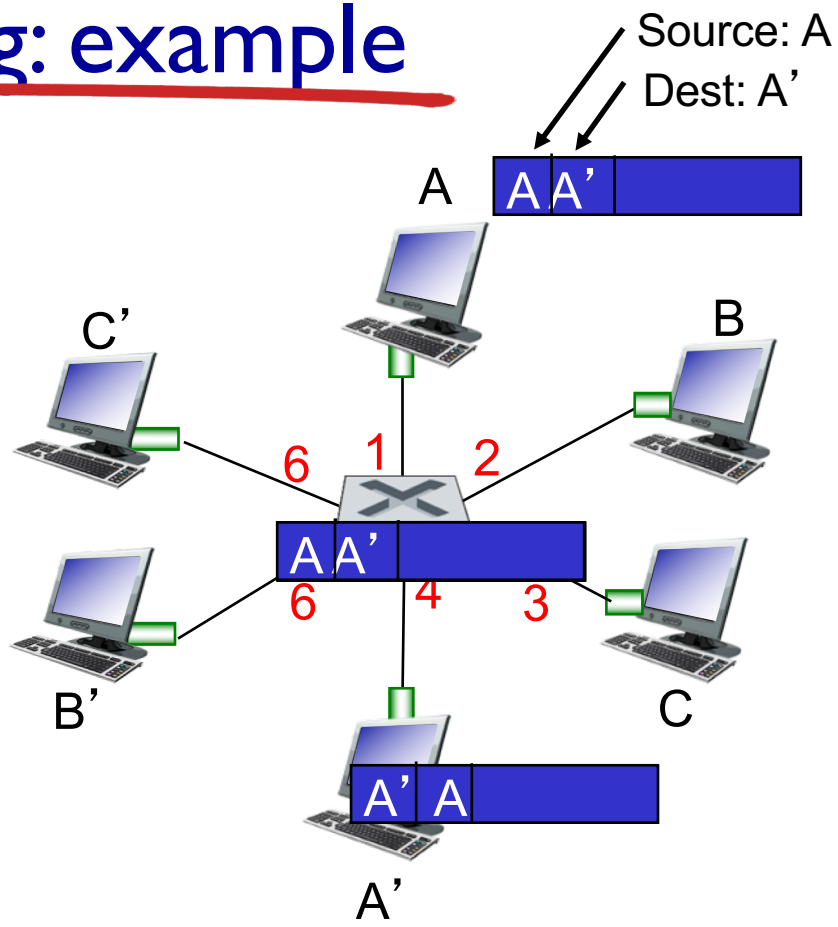
Switch: frame filtering/forwarding

when frame received at switch:

1. record incoming link, MAC address of sending host
2. index switch table using MAC destination address
3. if entry found for destination
   then {
   if destination on segment from which frame arrived
   then drop frame
   else forward frame on interface indicated by entry
   }
   else flood /* forward on all interfaces except arriving interface */

Self-learning, forwarding: example

- frame destination, A', locaton unknown: flood
- destination A location known: selectively send on just one link

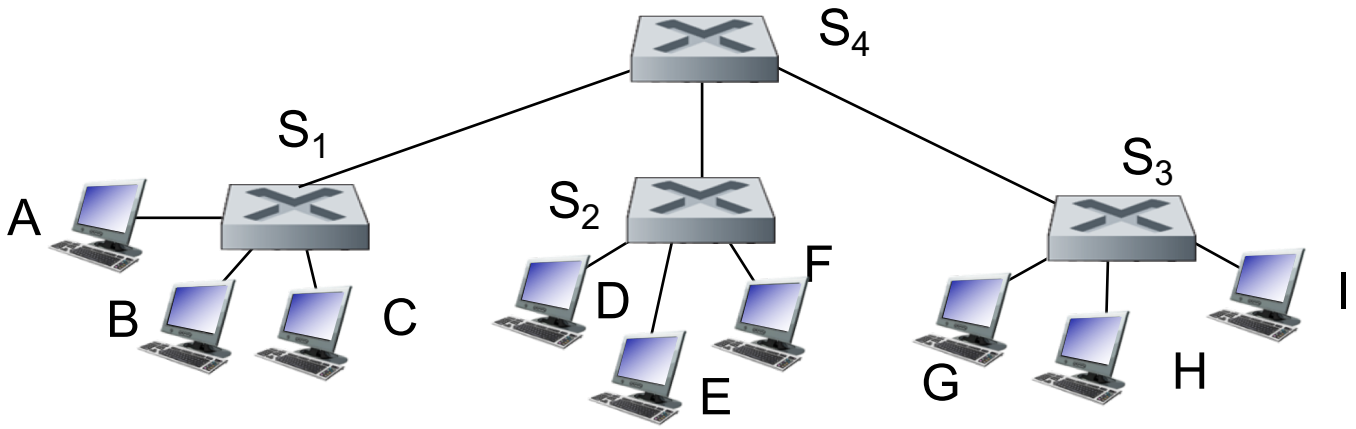


MAC addr	interface	TTL
A	1	60
A'	4	60

switch table (initially empty)

Interconnecting switches

- switches can be connected together



Q: sending from A to G - how does S_1 know to forward frame destined to F via S_4 and S_3?

- A: self learning! (works exactly the same as in single-switch case!)

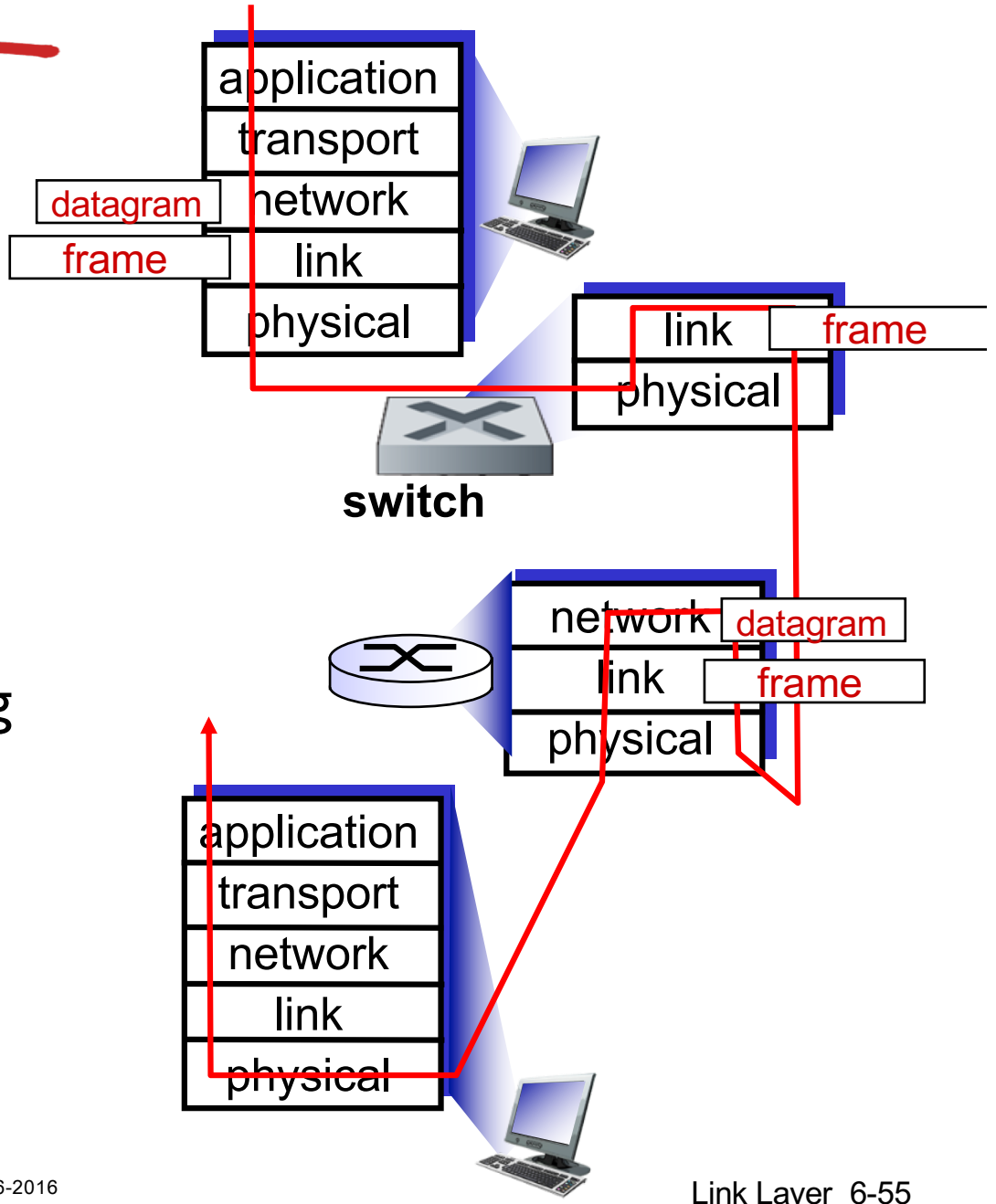
Switches vs. routers

both are store-and-forward:

- routers: network-layer devices (examine network-layer headers)
- switches: link-layer devices (examine link-layer headers)

both have forwarding tables:

- routers: compute tables using routing algorithms, IP addresses
- switches: learn forwarding table using flooding, learning, MAC addresses



Link layer, LANs: outline

6.1 introduction, services

6.2 multiple access protocols

6.3 LANs

- addressing, ARP
- Ethernet
- switches

6.4 data center networking

6.6 a day in the life of a web request

Data center networks

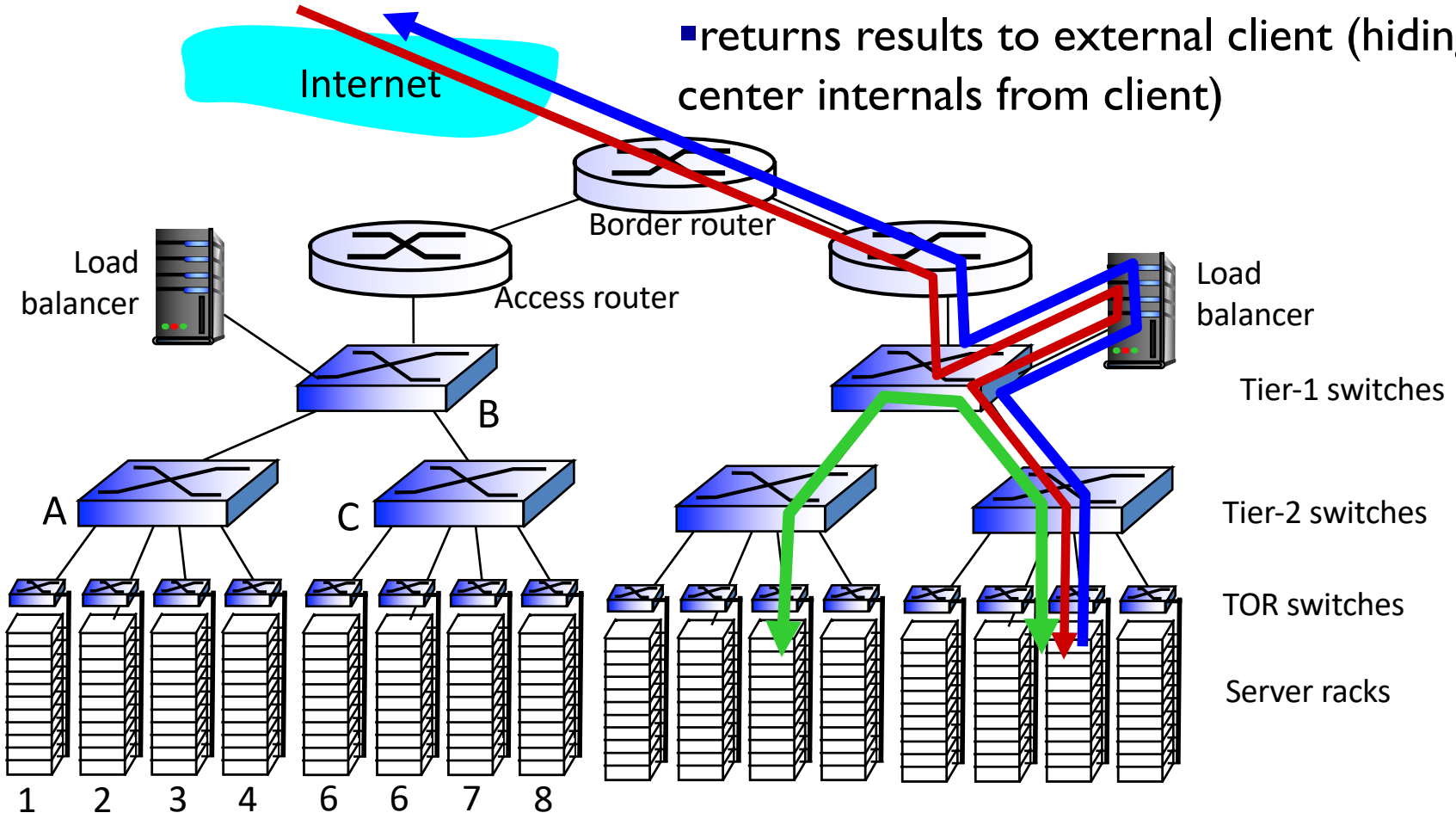
- 10's to 100's of thousands of hosts, often closely coupled, in close proximity:
  - e-business (e.g. Amazon)
  - content-servers (e.g., YouTube, Akamai, Apple, Microsoft)
  - search engines, data mining (e.g., Google)
- challenges:
  - multiple applications, each serving massive numbers of clients
  - managing/balancing load, avoiding processing, networking, data bottlenecks

Inside a 40-ft Microsoft container, Chicago data center

Data center networks

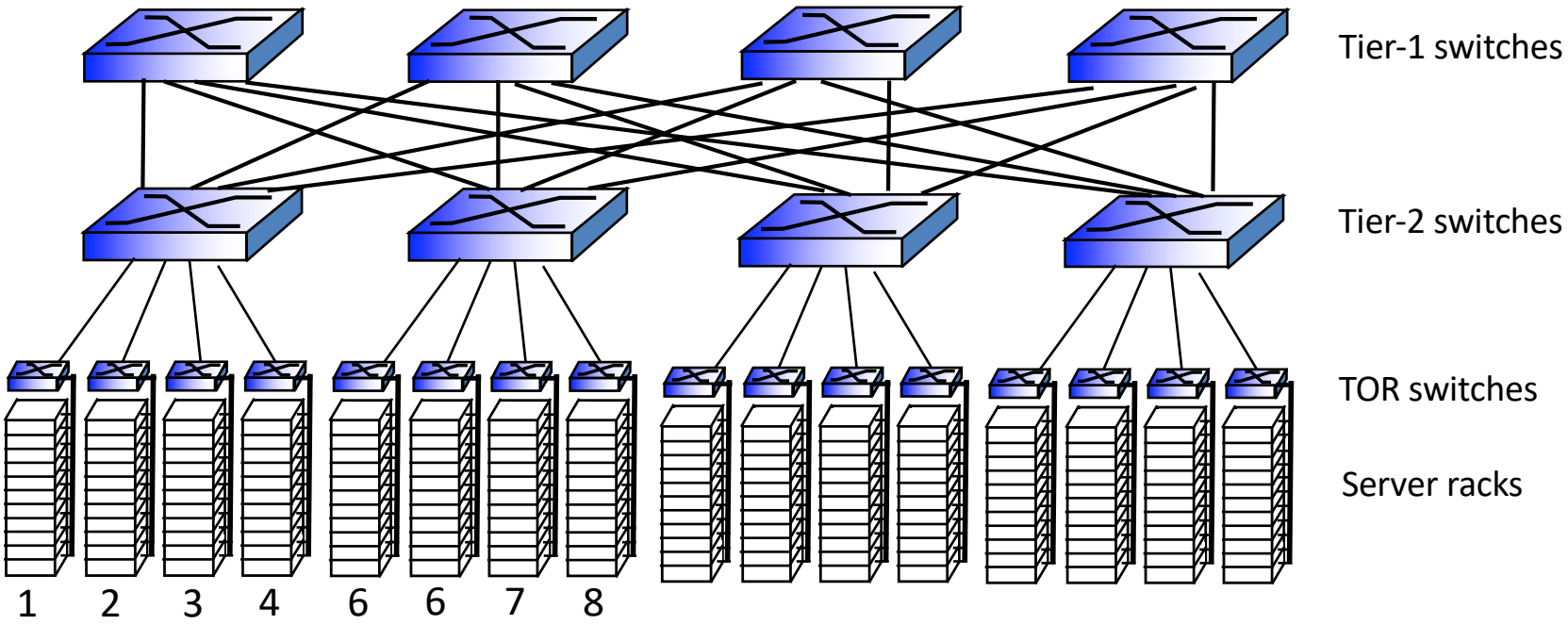
load balancer: application-layer routing

- receives external client requests
- directs workload within data center
- returns results to external client (hiding data center internals from client)



Data center networks

- rich interconnection among switches, racks:
  - increased throughput between racks (multiple routing paths possible)
  - increased reliability via redundancy



Link layer, LANs: outline

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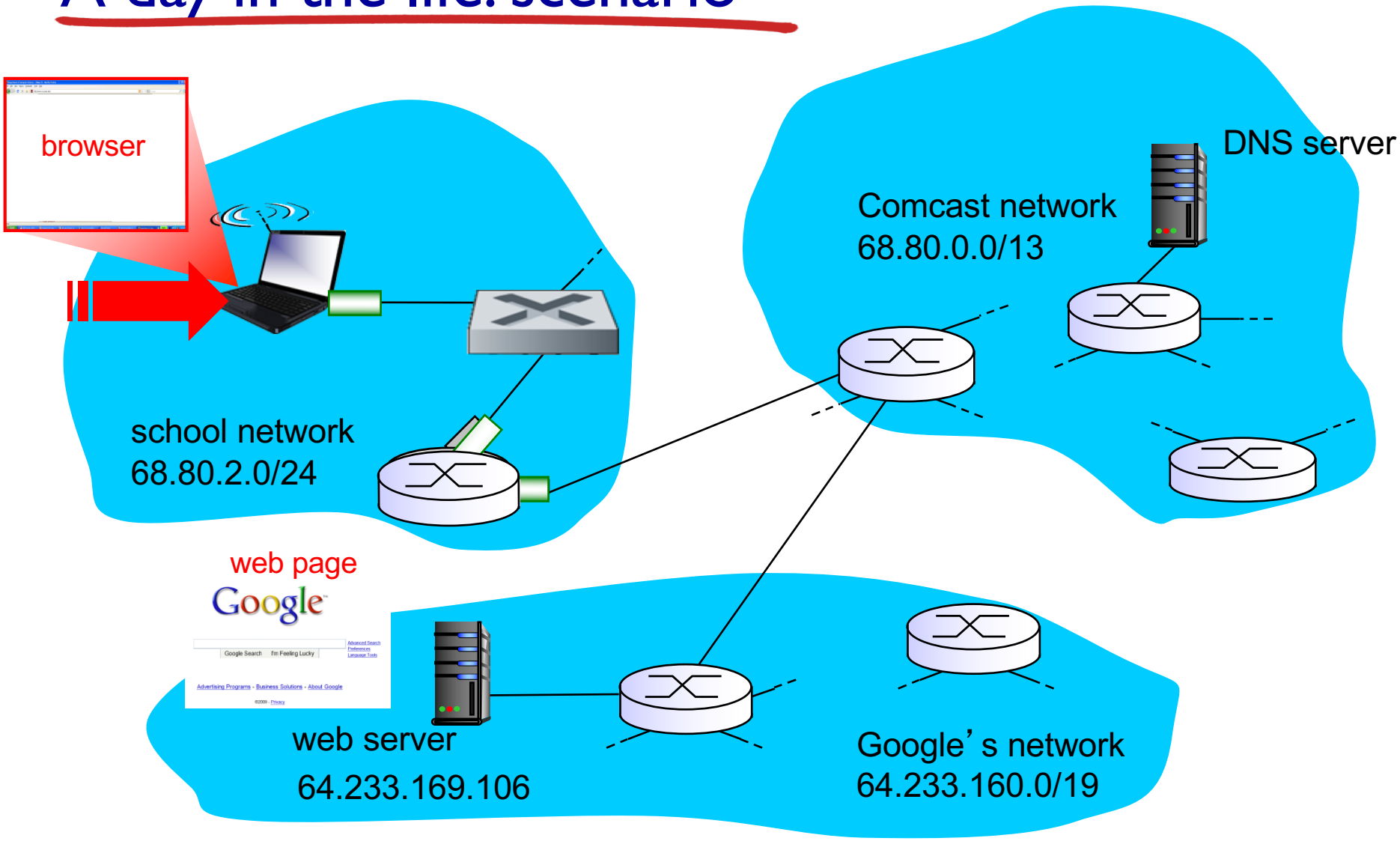
6.6 a day in the life of a web request

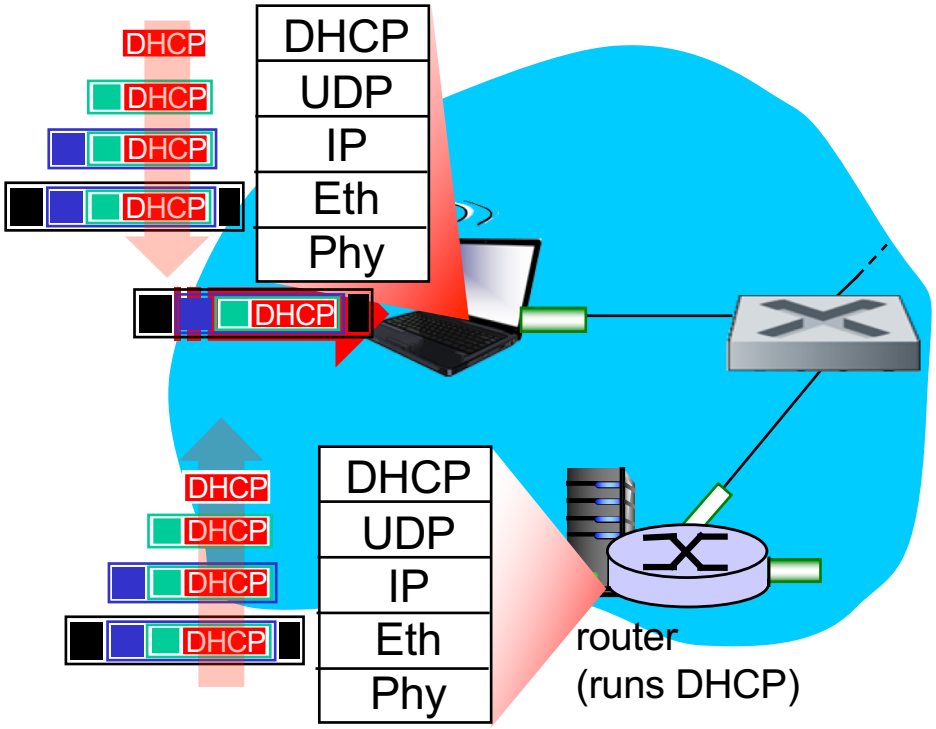
Synthesis: a day in the life of a web request

- journey down protocol stack complete!
  - application, transport, network, link
- putting-it-all-together: synthesis!
  - goal: identify, review, understand protocols (at all layers) involved in seemingly simple scenario: requesting www page
  - scenario: student attaches laptop to campus network, requests/receives www.google.com

A day in the life: scenario

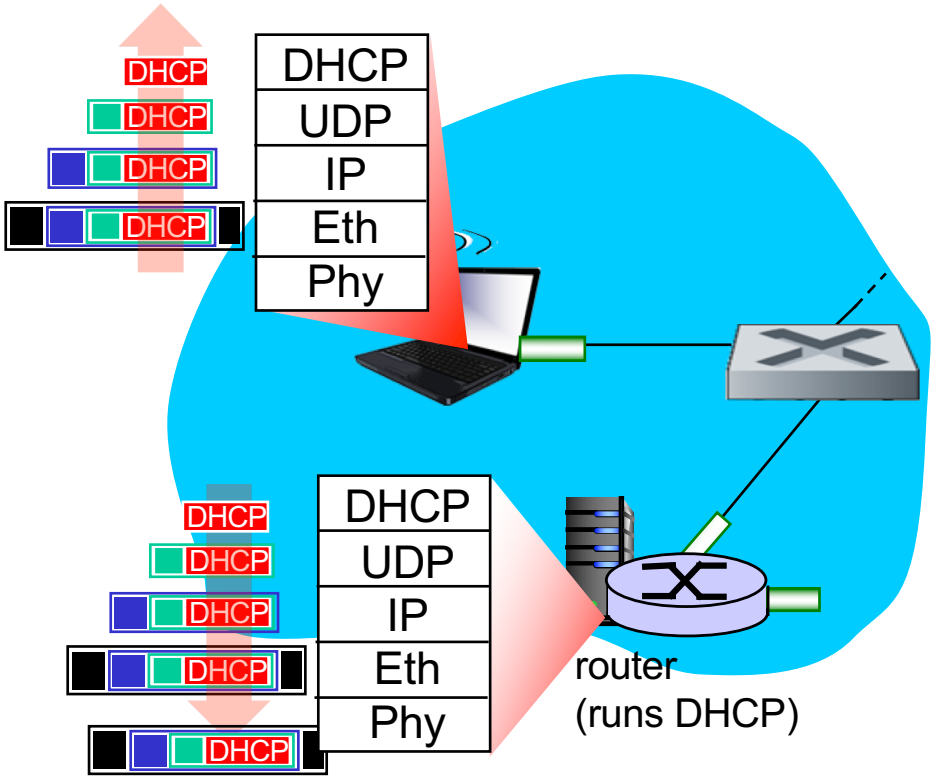


A day in the life… connecting to the Internet



- connecting laptop needs to get its own IP address, addr of first-hop router, addr of DNS server: use DHCP
- DHCP request encapsulated in UDP, encapsulated in IP, encapsulated in 802.3 Ethernet
- Ethernet frame broadcast (dest: FFFFFFFFFFFF) on LAN, received at router running DHCP server
- Ethernet demuxed to IP demuxed, UDP demuxed to DHCP

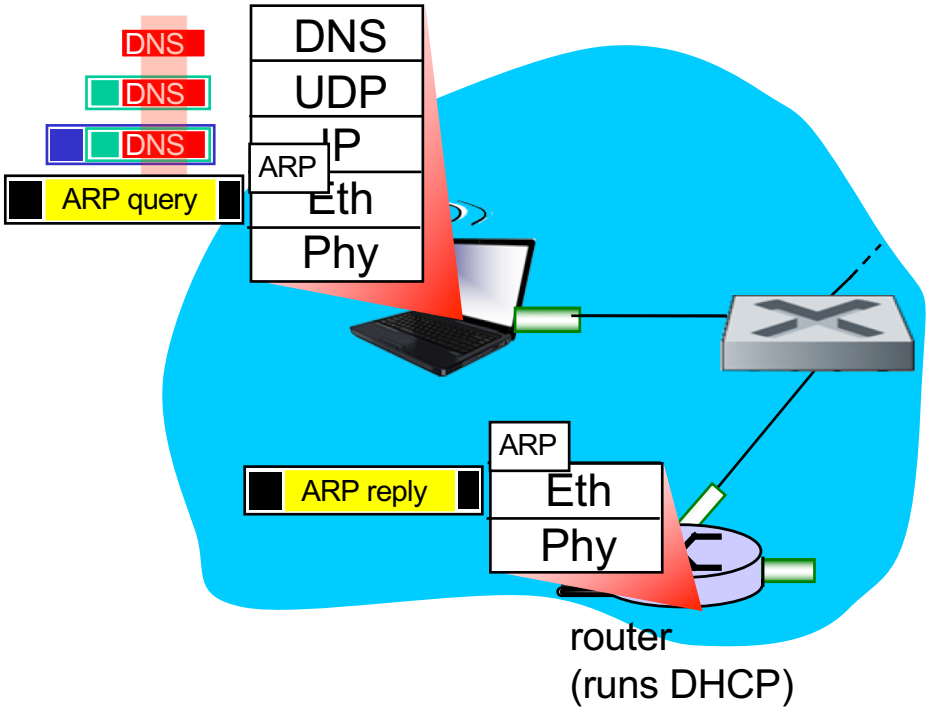
A day in the life… connecting to the Internet



- DHCP server formulates DHCP ACK containing client's IP address, IP address of first-hop router for client, name & IP address of DNS server
- encapsulation at DHCP server, frame forwarded (switch learning) through LAN, demultiplexing at client
- DHCP client receives DHCP ACK reply

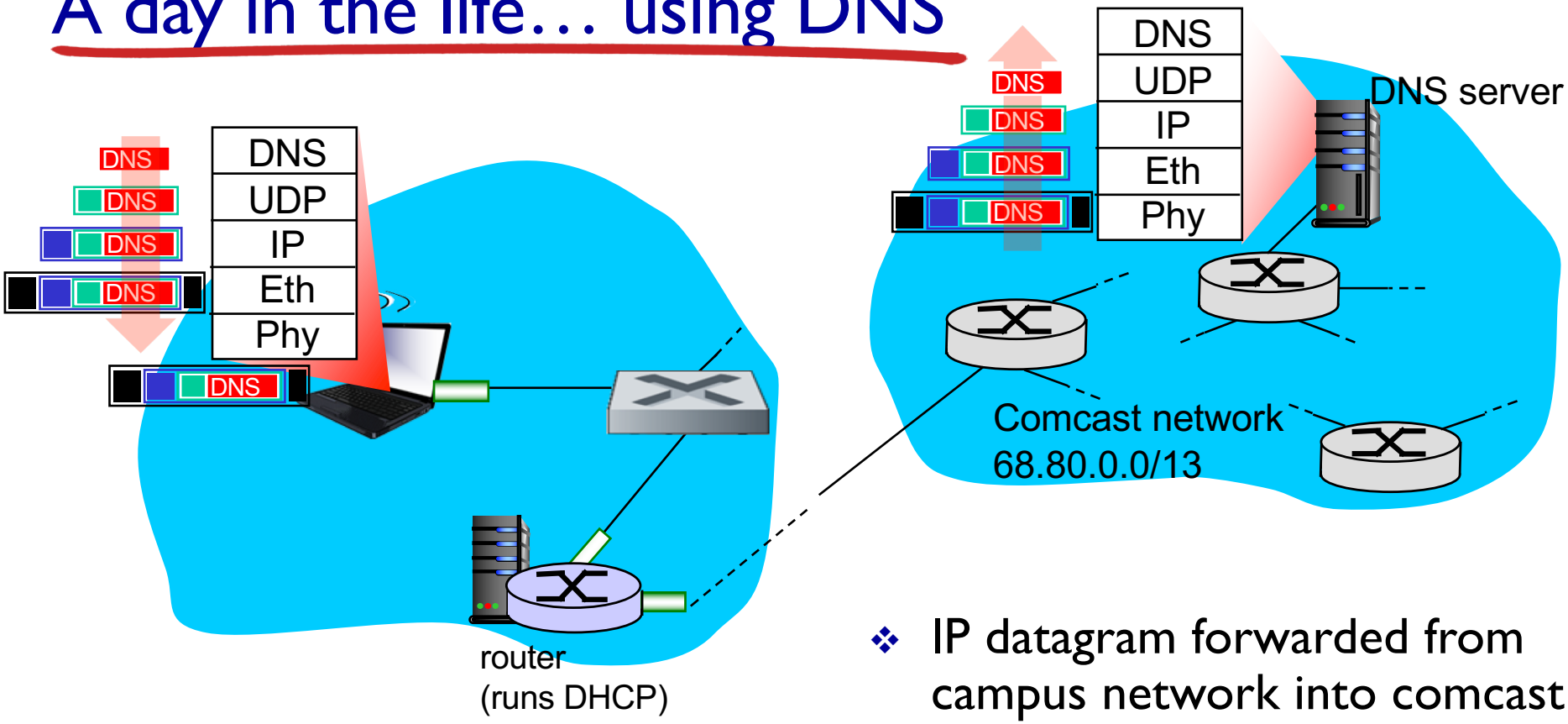
Client now has IP address, knows name & addr of DNS server, IP address of its first-hop router

A day in the life… ARP (before DNS, before HTTP)



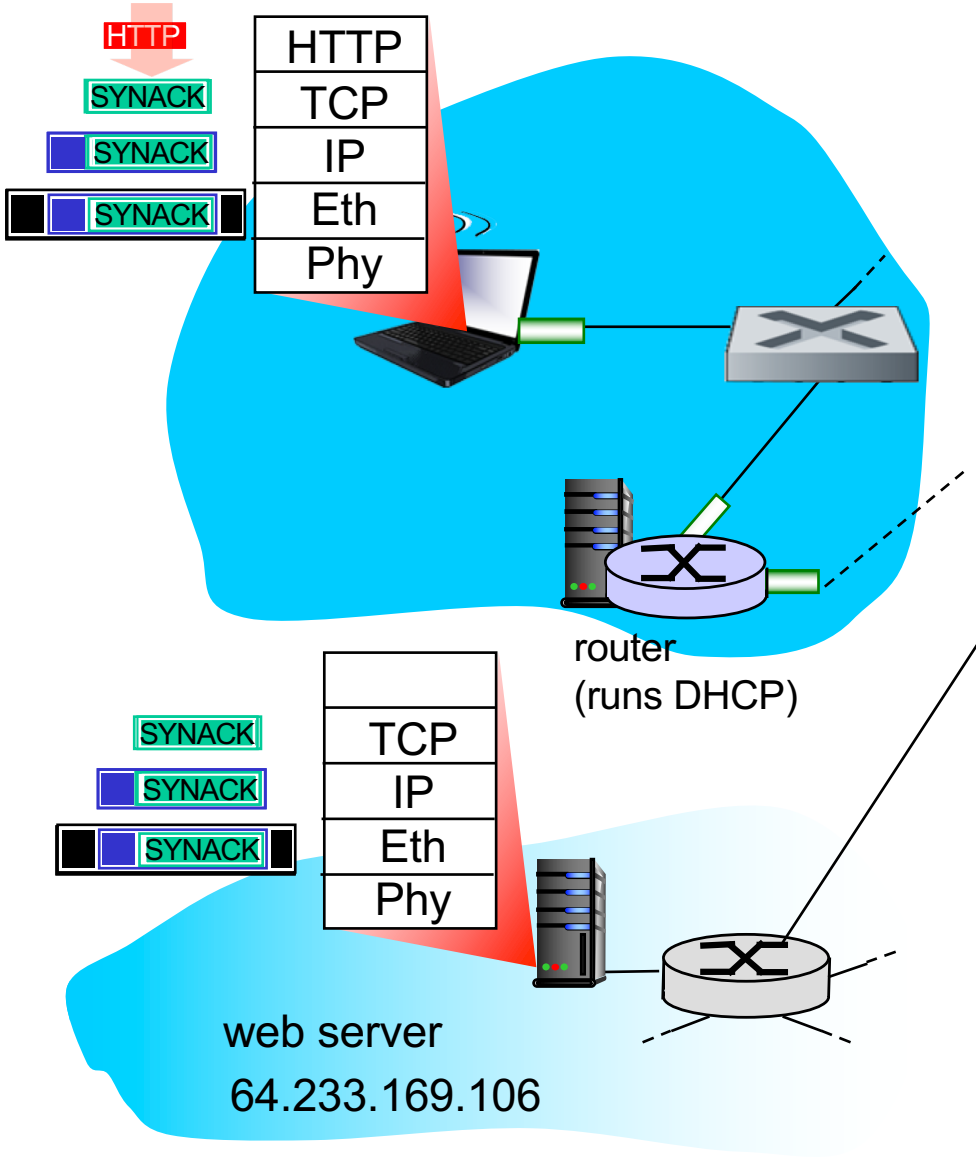
- before sending HTTP request, need IP address of www.google.com: DNS
- DNS query created, encapsulated in UDP, encapsulated in IP, encapsulated in Eth. To send frame to router, need MAC address of router interface: ARP
- ARP query broadcast, received by router, which replies with ARP reply giving MAC address of router interface
- client now knows MAC address of first hop router, so can now send frame containing DNS query

A day in the life… using DNS



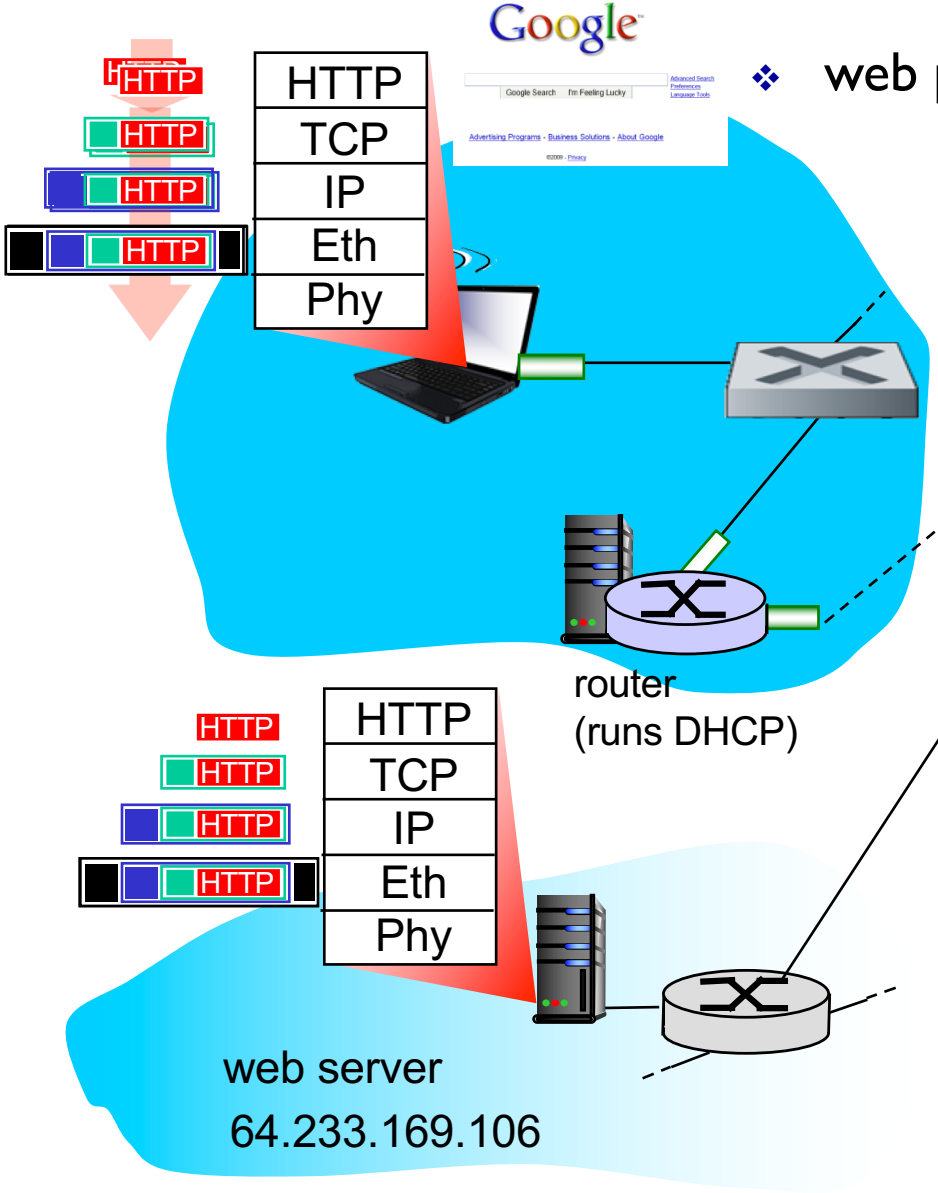
- IP datagram containing DNS query forwarded via LAN switch from client to 1st hop router
- IP datagram forwarded from campus network into comcast network, routed (tables created by RIP, OSPF, IS-IS and/or BGP routing protocols) to DNS server
- demux'ed to DNS server
- DNS server replies to client with IP address of www.google.com

A day in the life…TCP connection carrying HTTP



- to send HTTP request, client first opens TCP socket to web server
- TCP SYN segment (step 1 in 3-way handshake) inter-domain routed to web server
- web server responds with TCP SYNACK (step 2 in 3-way handshake)
- TCP connection established!

A day in the life… HTTP request/reply



- web page finally (!!!) displayed

- HTTP request sent into TCP socket
- IP datagram containing HTTP request routed to www.google.com
- web server responds with HTTP reply (containing web page)
- IP datagram containing HTTP reply routed back to client

Chapter 6: let's take a breath

- journey down protocol stack complete (except PHY)
- solid understanding of networking principles, practice
- ….. could stop here ….or learn more!