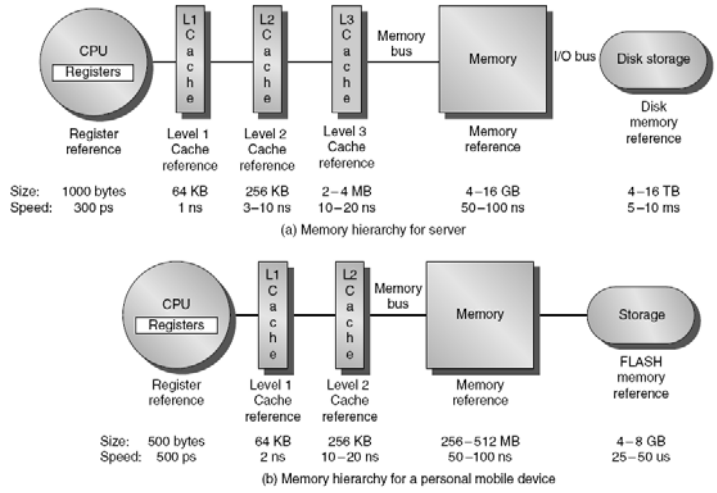
Chapter 2

Memory Hierarchy Design

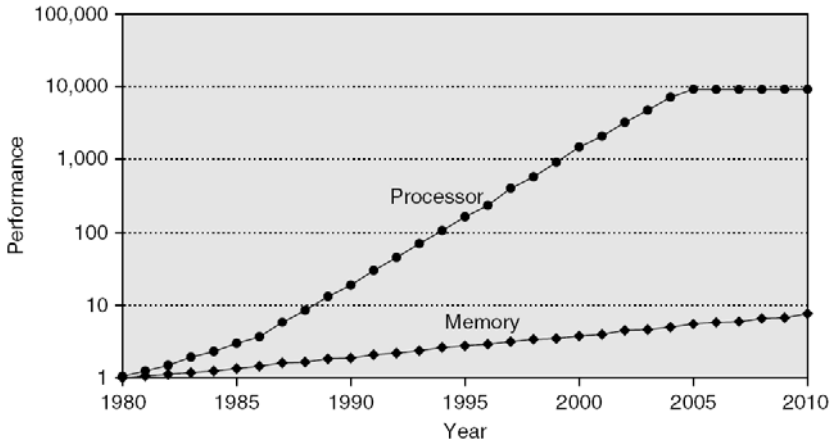
Introduction

- Programmers want unlimited amounts of memory with low latency
- Fast memory technology is more expensive per bit than slower memory
- Solution: organize memory system into a hierarchy
  - Entire addressable memory space available in largest, slowest memory
  - Incrementally smaller and faster memories, each containing a subset of the memory below it, proceed in steps up toward the processor
- Temporal and spatial locality insures that nearly all references can be found in smaller memories
  - Gives the allusion of a large, fast memory being presented to the processor

Memory Hierarchy



Memory Performance Gap



Memory Hierarchy Design

- Memory hierarchy design becomes more crucial with recent multi-core processors:
  - Aggregate peak bandwidth grows with # cores:
    - Intel Core i7 can generate two references per core per clock
    - Four cores and 3.2 GHz clock
      - 25.6 billion 64-bit data references/second +
      - 12.8 billion 128-bit instruction references
      - = 409.6 GB/s!
    - DRAM bandwidth is only 6% of this (25 GB/s)
    - Requires:
      - Multi-port, pipelined caches
      - Two levels of cache per core
      - Shared third-level cache on chip

Performance and Power

- High-end microprocessors have >10 MB on-chip cache
  - Consumes large amount of area and power budget

Terminology

- A Block: The smallest unit of information transferred between two levels.
- Hit: Item is found in some block in the upper level (example: Block X)
- Miss: Item needs to be retrieved from a block in the lower level (Block Y)
  - Miss Rate = 1 - (Hit Rate)
  - Miss Penalty: Time to replace a block in the upper level + Time to deliver the block the processor

Cache operation

- Questions

1. Where a block be placed in the cache (placement)
2. How is a block is found if it is in the cache (identification)
3. Which block should be replaced on a miss (replacement)
4. What happens on a write (write strategy)

Cache Organization: Placement

1. Direct mapped cache: A block can be placed in only one location (cache block frame), given by the mapping function:
   index= (Block address) MOD (Number of blocks in cache)
2. Fully associative cache: A block can be placed anywhere in cache. (no mapping function).
3. Set associative cache: A block can be placed in a restricted set of places, or cache block frames. A set is a group of block frames in the cache. A block is first mapped onto the set and then it can be placed anywhere within the set. The set in this case is chosen by:
   index = (Block address) MOD (Number of sets in cache)

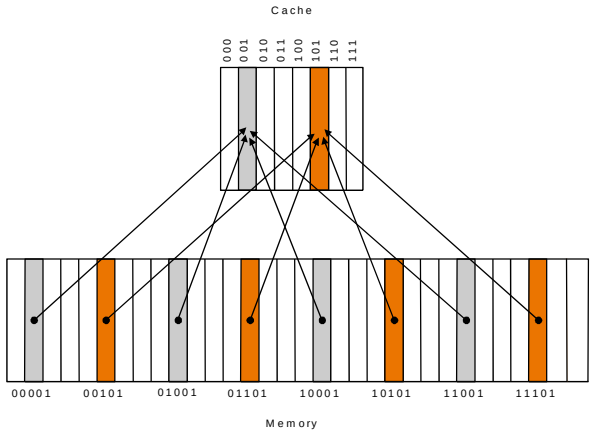
If there are *n* blocks in a set the cache placement is called *n*-way set-associative.

Cache Miss

- **Compulsory**: The very first access to a block is always a miss– Occurs even if you have an infinite cache
- **Capacity**: The cache is not big enough to hold all the blocks required for the execution of the program– A bigger cache helps
- **Conflict**: If not a fully associative, a block may be discarded and brought back again.

Cache Organization: Placement

- Direct mapped Cache



Placement: DM

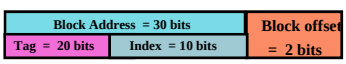
1K = 1024 Blocks
Each block = one word

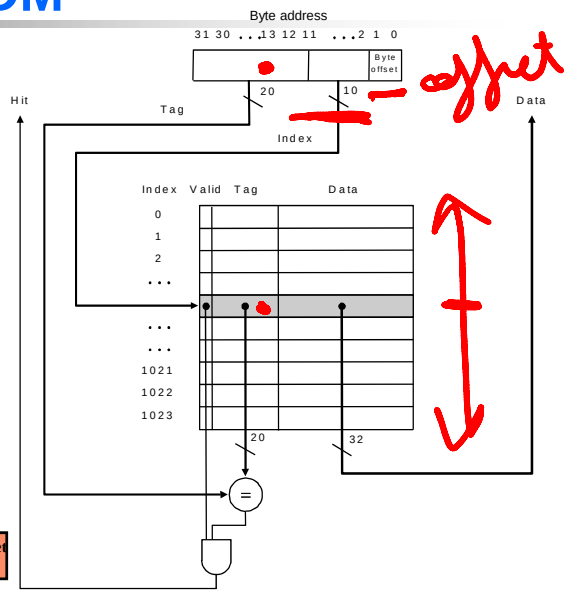
Can cache up to
2^{32} bytes = 4 GB
of memory

Mapping function:

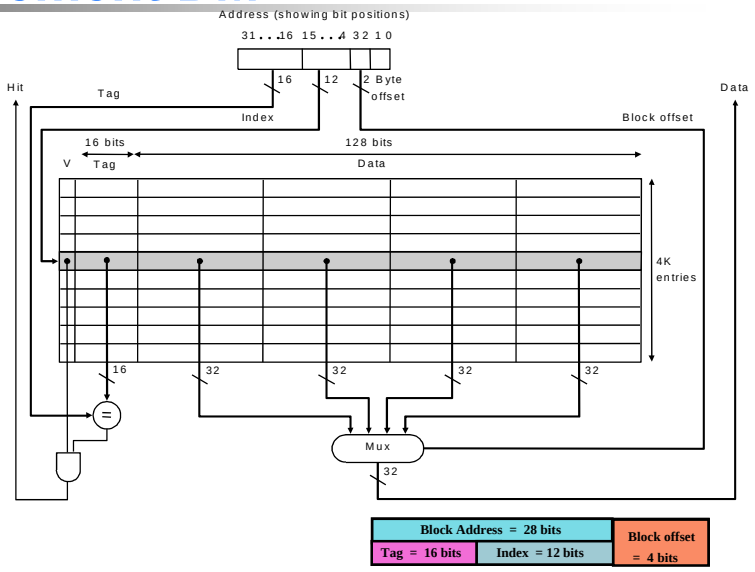
Cache Block frame number =
(Block address) MOD (1024)

i.e. index field or
10 low bit of block address

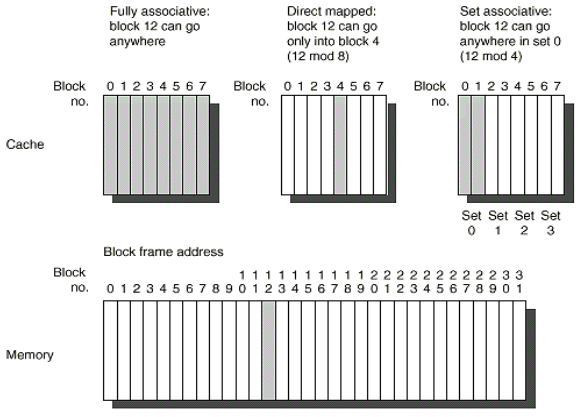




Placement DM



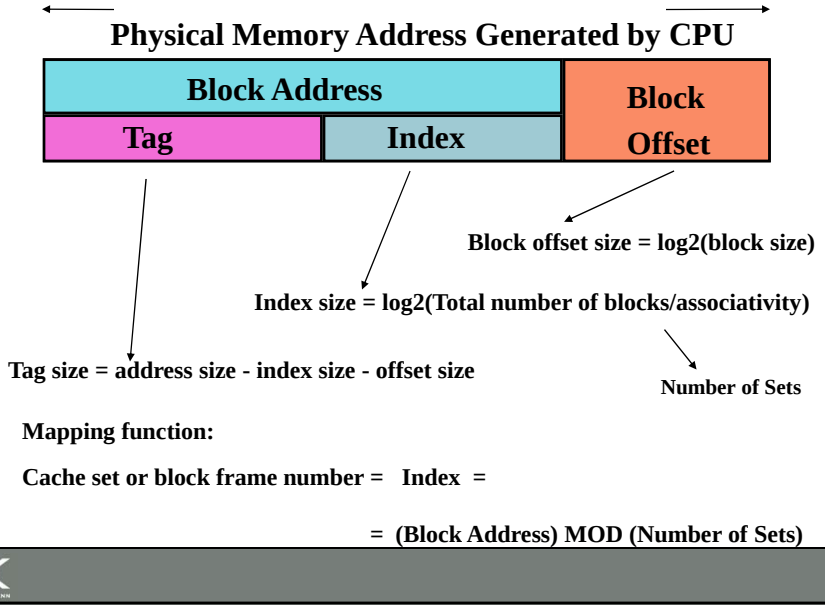
Cache Organization



Cache Organization

- Each block frame in cache has an address tag.
- The tags of every cache block that might contain the required data are checked in parallel.
- A valid bit is added to the tag to indicate whether this entry contains a valid address.
- The address from the CPU to cache is divided into:
  - A block address, further divided into:
    - An index field to choose a block set in cache.
    - (no index field when fully associative).
    - A tag field to search and match addresses in the selected set.
  - A block offset to select the data from the block.

Cache Organization



Mapping function:

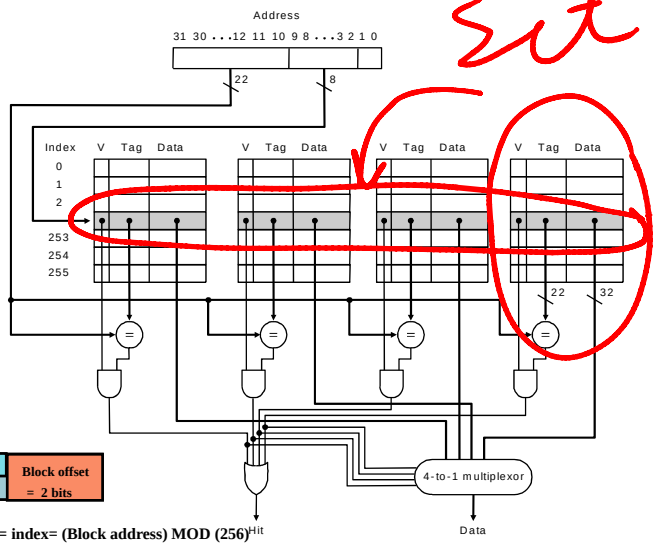
Cache set or block frame number = Index =

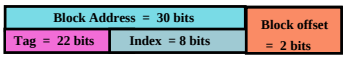
= (Block Address) MOD (Number of Sets)

Set Associative: 4KB 4Way

1024 block frames
Each block = one word
4-way set associative
1024 / 4= 256 sets

Can cache up to
2^{32} bytes = 4 GB
of memory





Mapping Function: **Cache Set Number = index= (Block address) MOD (256)**

Miss Rate

Associativity:	2-way		4-way		8-way	
Size	LRU	Random	LRU	Random	LRU	Random
16 KB	5.18%	5.69%	4.67%	5.29%	4.39%	4.96%
64 KB	1.88%	2.01%	1.54%	1.66%	1.39%	1.53%
256 KB	1.15%	1.17%	1.13%	1.13%	1.12%	1.12%

Cache Performance

- CPUtime = Instruction count x CPI x Clock cycle time
- CPIexecution = CPI with ideal memory
- CPI = CPIexecution + Mem Stall cycles per instruction
- Mem Stall cycles per instruction =
  Mem accesses per instruction x Miss rate x Miss penalty
- CPUtime = Instruction Count x (CPIexecution + Mem Stall cycles per instruction) x Clock cycle time
- CPUtime = IC x (CPIexecution + Mem accesses per instruction x Miss rate x Miss penalty) x Clock cycle time
- Misses per instruction = Memory accesses per instruction x Miss rate
- CPUtime = IC x (CPIexecution + Misses per instruction x Miss penalty) x Clock cycle time

Cache Performance

- Assuming the following execution and cache parameters:
  - Cache miss penalty = 50 cycles
  - Normal instruction execution CPI ignoring memory stalls = 2.0 cycles
  - Miss rate = 2%
  - Average memory references/instruction = 1.33
- CPU time = IC x [CPI execution + Memory accesses/instruction x Miss rate x Miss penalty] x Clock cycle time
- CPUtime with cache = IC x (2.0 + (1.33 x 2% x 50)) x clock cycle time
- = IC x 3.33 x Clock cycle time
- *Lower CPI execution increases the impact of cache miss clock cycles*

Cache Performance

- Suppose a CPU executes at Clock Rate = 200 MHz (5 ns per cycle) with a single level of cache.
- CPIexecution = 1.1
- Instruction mix: 50% arith/logic, 30% load/store, 20% control
- Assume a cache miss rate of 1.5% and a miss penalty of 50 cycles.
- CPI = $CPI_{execution}$ + mem stalls per instruction
- Mem Stalls per instruction =
- Mem accesses per instruction x Miss rate x Miss penalty
- Mem accesses per instruction = 1 + .3 = 1.3
- Mem Stalls per instruction = 1.3 x .015 x 50 = 0.975
- CPI = 1.1 + .975 = 2.075
- The ideal memory CPU with no misses is 2.075/1.1 = 1.88 times faster

Cache Performance

- Suppose for the previous example we double the clock rate to 400 MHZ, how much faster is this machine, assuming similar miss rate, instruction mix?
- Since memory speed is not changed, the miss penalty takes more CPU cycles:
- Miss penalty = 50 x 2 = 100 cycles.
- CPI = 1.1 + 1.3 x .015 x **100** = 1.1 + 1.95 = 3.05
- Speedup = (CPIold x Cold)/ (CPInew x Cnew)
- = 2.075 x 2 / 3.05 = 1.36
- The new machine is only 1.36 times faster rather than 2 times faster due to the increased effect of cache misses.
- *CPUs with higher clock rate, have more cycles per cache miss and more memory impact on CPI.*

Cache Performance

- Suppose a CPU uses separate level one (L1) caches for instructions and data (Harvard memory architecture) with different miss rates for instruction and data access:
  - $CPI_{execution}$ = 1.1
  - Instruction mix: 50% arith/logic, 30% load/store, 20% control
  - Assume a cache miss rate of 0.5% for instruction fetch and a cache data miss rate of 6%.
  - A cache hit incurs no stall cycles while a cache miss incurs 200 stall cycles for both memory reads and writes. Find the resulting CPI using this cache? How much faster is the CPU with ideal memory?

CPI = $CPI_{execution}$ + mem stalls per instruction

Mem Stall cycles per instruction = Instruction Fetch Miss rate x Miss Penalty + Data Memory Accesses Per Instruction x Data Miss Rate x Miss Penalty

Mem Stall cycles per instruction = 1 x 0.5/100 x 200 + 0.3 x 6/100 x 200 = 1 + 3.6 = 4.6

CPI = $CPI_{execution}$ + mem stalls per instruction = 1.1 + 4.6 = 5.7

The CPU with ideal cache (no misses) is 5.7/1.1 = 5.18 times faster

With no cache the CPI would have been = 1.1 + 1.3 X 200 = 261.1

Cache Performance

Size	Instruction cache	Data cache	Unified cache
1 KB	3.06%	24.61%	13.34%
2 KB	2.26%	20.57%	9.78%
4 KB	1.78%	15.94%	7.24%
8 KB	1.10%	10.19%	4.57%
16 KB	0.64%	6.47%	2.87%
32 KB	0.39%	4.82%	1.99%
64 KB	0.15%	3.77%	1.35%
128 KB	0.02%	2.88%	0.95%

Write Policy

1 Write Though: Data is written to both the cache block and to a block of main memory.
- The lower level always has the most updated data; an important feature for I/O and multiprocessing.
- Easier to implement than write back.
- A write buffer is often used to reduce CPU write stall while data is written to memory.

2 Write back: Data is written or updated only to the cache block. The modified or dirty cache block is written to main memory when it's being replaced from cache.
- Writes occur at the speed of cache
- A status bit called a dirty or modified bit, is used to indicate whether the block was modified while in cache; if not the block is not written back to main memory when replaced.
- Uses less memory bandwidth than write through.

Write Policy

Write Allocate:

The cache block is loaded on a write miss followed by write hit actions.

No-Write Allocate:

The block is modified in the lower level (lower cache level, or main

memory) and not loaded into cache.