Multicore

Dan Sorin and Tyler Bletsch
Duke University
Multicore and Multithreaded Processors

- Why multicore?
- Thread-level parallelism
- Multithreaded cores
- Multiprocessors
- Design issues
- Examples
Readings

- Patterson and Hennessy
  - Chapter 6
Why Multicore?

- Why is everything now multicore?
  - This is a fairly new trend

- Reason #1: Running out of “ILP” that we can exploit
  - Can’t get much better performance out of a single core that’s running a single program at a time

- Reason #2: Power/thermal constraints
  - Even if we wanted to just build fancier single cores at higher clock speeds, we’d run into power and thermal obstacles

- Reason #3: Moore’s Law
  - Lots of transistors → what else are we going to do with them?
  - Historically: use transistors to make more complicated cores with bigger and bigger caches
  - But this strategy has run into problems
How do we keep multicores busy?

- Single core processors exploit ILP
- Multicore processors exploit TLP: thread-level parallelism

What’s a thread?
- A program can have 1 or more threads of control
- Each thread has own PC
- All threads in a given program share resources (e.g., memory)

OK, so where do we find more than one thread?

Option #1: Multiprogrammed workloads
- Run multiple single-threaded programs at same time

Option #2: Explicitly multithreaded programs
- Create a single program that has multiple threads that work together to solve a problem
Parallel Programming

- How do we break up a problem into sub-problems that can be worked on by separate threads?
- ICQ: How would you create a multithreaded program that searches for an item in an array?
- ICQ: How would you create a multithreaded program that sorts a list?

- Fundamental challenges
  - Breaking up the problem into many reasonably sized tasks
    - What if tasks are too small? Too big? Too few?
  - Minimizing the communication between threads
    - Why?
Writing a Parallel Program

• Would be nice if compiler could turn sequential code into parallel code...
  • Been an active research goal for years, no luck yet...

• Can use an explicitly parallel language or extensions to an existing language
  • Map/reduce (Google), Hadoop
  • Pthreads
  • Java threads
  • Message passing interface (MPI)
  • CUDA
  • OpenCL
  • High performance Fortran (HPF)
  • Etc.
Parallel Program Challenges

- Parallel programming is HARD!
  - Why?
- Problem: #cores is increasing, but parallel programming isn’t getting easier → how are we going to use all of these cores???
forall(i=1:100, j=1:200){
    MyArray[i,j] = X[i-1, j] + X[i+1, j];
}

// “forall” means we can do all i,j combinations in parallel
// I.e., no dependences between these operations
Some Problems Are “Easy” to Parallelize

- Database management system (DBMS)
- Web search (Google)
- Graphics
- Some scientific workloads (why?)
- Others??
Multicore and Multithreaded Processors

- Why multicore?
- Thread-level parallelism
- Multithreaded cores
- Multiprocessors
- Design issues
- Examples
Multithreaded Cores

• So far, our core executes one thread at a time
• Multithreaded core: execute multiple threads at a time
• Old idea ... but made a big comeback fairly recently
• How do we execute multiple threads on same core?
  • Coarse-grain switching
  • Fine-grain switching
  • Simultaneous multithreading (SMT) \(\rightarrow\) “hyperthreading” (Intel)
• Benefits?
  • Better instruction throughput
    • Greater resource utilization
    • Tolerates long latency events (e.g., cache misses)
  • Cheaper than multiple complete cores
Multiprocessors

- Multiprocessors have been around a long time ... just not on a single chip
  - Mainframes and servers with 2-64 processors
  - Supercomputers with 100s or 1000s of processors
- Now, multiprocessor on a single chip
  - “multicore processor” (sometimes “chip multiprocessor”)
- Why does “single chip” matter so much?
  - ICQ: What’s fundamentally different about having a multiprocessor that fits on one chip vs. on multiple chips?

Multiprocessor: Two drive-throughs, each with its own kitchen
Multicore and Multithreaded Processors

- Why multicore?
- Thread-level parallelism
- Multithreaded cores
- Multiprocessors
- Design issues
- Examples
Multiprocessor Microarchitecture

• Many design issues unique to multiprocessors
  • Interconnection network
  • Communication between cores
  • Memory system design
  • Others?
Interconnection Networks

- Networks have many design aspects
  - We focus on one design aspect here (topology) → see ECE 552 (CS 550) and ECE 652 (CS 650) for more on this

- Topology is the structure of the interconnect
  - Geometric property → topology has nice mathematical properties

- Direct vs Indirect Networks
  - Direct: All switches attached to host nodes (e.g., mesh)
  - Indirect: Many switches not attached to host nodes (e.g., tree)
Direct Topologies: k-ary d-cubes

- Often called k-ary n-cubes

- General class of regular, direct topologies
  - Subsumes rings, tori, cubes, etc.

- d dimensions
  - 1 for ring
  - 2 for mesh or torus
  - 3 for cube
  - Can choose arbitrarily large d, except for cost of switches

- k switches in each dimension
  - Note: k can be different in each dimension (e.g., 2,3,4-ary 3-cube)
Examples of k-ary d-cubes (for N cores)

- **1D Ring =** k-ary 1-cube
  - \( d = 1 \) [always]
  - \( k = N \) [always] = 4 [here]
  - Ave dist = ?

- **2D Torus =** k-ary 2-cube
  - \( d = 2 \) [always]
  - \( k = \log_d N \) (always) = 3 [here]
  - Ave dist = ?
Compaq Alpha 21364 (and 21464, R.I.P.)
  • 2D torus (k-ary 2-cube)
Cray T3D and T3E
  • 3D torus (k-ary, 3-cube)
Intel’s MIC (formerly known as Larrabee)
  • 1D ring
Intel’s SandyBridge (one flavor of core i7)
  • 2D mesh
Indirect Topologies

- Indirect topology – most switches not attached to nodes
- Some common indirect topologies
  - Crossbar
  - Tree
  - Butterfly
- Each of the above topologies comes in many flavors
Indirect Topologies: Crossbar

- Crossbar = single switch that directly connects n inputs to m outputs
  - Logically equivalent to m n:1 muxes
- Very useful component that is used frequently
Indirect Topologies: Butterflies

- Multistage: nodes at ends, switches in middle
- Exactly one path between each pair of nodes
- Each node sees a tree rooted at itself
Indirect Networks in Real World (ancient)

- Thinking Machines CM-5 (really old machine)
  - Fat tree
- Sun UltraEnterprise E10000 (old machine)
  - 4 trees (interleaved by address)
- And lots and lots of buses!
Multiprocessor Microarchitecture

- Many design issues unique to multiprocessors
  - Interconnection network
  - Communication between cores
  - Memory system design
  - Others?
Communication Between Cores (Threads)

• How should threads communicate with each other?
• Two popular options
  • **Shared memory**
    • Perform loads and stores to shared addresses
    • Requires synchronization (can’t read before write)
  • **Message passing**
    • Send messages between threads (cores)
    • No shared address space
What is (Hardware) Shared Memory?

- Take multiple microprocessors
- Implement a memory system with a single global physical address space (usually)
  - Special HW does the “magic” of cache coherence
Some (Old) Memory System Options

(a) Shared cache

(b) Bus-based shared memory

(c) Dancehall

(d) Distributed-memory
A (Newer) Memory System Option

L2 cache

Core

L1 I$

L1 D$

Core

L1 I$

L1 D$

Core

L1 I$

L1 D$

To off-chip DRAM
Cache Coherence

- According to Webster’s dictionary ...
  - **Cache**: a secure place of storage
  - **Coherent**: logically consistent

- Cache Coherence: keep storage logically consistent
  - Coherence requires enforcement of 2 properties per block

1) At any time, only one writer or \( \geq 0 \) readers of block
   - Can’t have writer at same time as other reader or writer

2) Data propagates correctly
   - A request for a block gets the most recent value
CPU2 loads from address $5$, it’s a cache miss, so we load that block into CPU2’s cache.

Assume $5$ is the same in both CPUs and refers to a shared memory address.
Cache Coherence Problem (Step 2)

CPU1 also loads from address $5$, it’s a cache miss, so we load that block into CPU1’s cache.

Assume $5$ is the same in both CPUs and refers to a shared memory address.
Cache Coherence Problem (Step 3a)

Assume $5$ is the same in both CPUs and refers to a shared memory address.

If it's a write-back cache, then only the cache changes.

CPU1 also stores a different value into that same memory location.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lw} & \quad 3, \quad 0(5) \\
\text{addi} & \quad 2, \quad 2, \quad 97 \\
\text{store} & \quad 2, \quad 0(5)
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lw} & \quad 2, \quad 0(5) \\
\text{addi} & \quad 2, \quad 2, \quad 97 \\
\text{store} & \quad 2, \quad 0(5)
\end{align*}
\]
Cache Coherence Problem (Step 3b)

CPU1 also stores a different value into that same memory location. 
*If it’s a write-through cache, then memory also changes.*
The cache coherence problem will occur either way!

Assume $5$ is the same in both CPUs and refers to a shared memory address.
CPU2 loads the thing at address $5$ again, and it’s a cache hit, so we get the OLD value! **PROBLEM!!** CPU2’s cache is stale!!

The correct value is in CPU1’s cache (if write-back) or main memory (if write-through, as shown).

Assume $5$ is the same in both CPUs and refers to a shared memory address.
Snooping Cache-Coherence Protocols

- Each cache controller “snoops” all bus transactions
  - Transaction is relevant if it is for a block this cache contains
  - Take action to ensure coherence
    - Invalidate
    - Update
    - Supply value to requestor if Owner
  - Actions depend on the state of the block and the protocol

- Main memory controller also snoops on bus
  - If no cache is owner, then memory is owner

- Simultaneous operation of independent controllers
Processor and Bus Actions

• Processor:
  • Load
  • Store
  • Writeback on replacement of modified block

• Bus
  • GetShared (GETS): Get without intent to modify, data could come from memory or another cache
  • GetExclusive (GETX): Get with intent to modify, must invalidate all other caches’ copies
  • PutExclusive (PUTX): cache controller puts contents on bus and memory is updated
  • Definition: cache-to-cache transfer occurs when another cache satisfies GETS or GETX request

• Let’s draw it!
Simple 2-State Invalidate Snooping Protocol

- Write-through, no-write-allocate cache
- Proc actions: Load, Store
- Bus actions: GETS, GETX

Notation: observed event / action taken
A 3-State Write-Back Invalidation Protocol

- **2-State Protocol**
  - Simple hardware and protocol
  - Uses lots of bandwidth (every write goes on bus!)

- **3-State Protocol (MSI)**
  - **Modified**
    - One cache exclusively has valid (modified) copy ➔ Owner
    - Memory is stale
  - **Shared**
    - >= 1 cache and memory have valid copy (memory = owner)
    - Invalid (only memory has valid copy and memory is owner)

- Must invalidate all other copies before entering Modified state
- Requires bus transaction (order and invalidate)
Note: we never take any action on an OtherPUTX
An MSI Protocol Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proc Action</th>
<th>P1 State</th>
<th>P2 state</th>
<th>P3 state</th>
<th>Bus Act</th>
<th>Data from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initially</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. P1 load u</td>
<td>I→S</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>GETS</td>
<td>Memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. P3 load u</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I→S</td>
<td>GETS</td>
<td>Memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. P3 store u</td>
<td>S→I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>S→M</td>
<td>GETX</td>
<td>Memory or P1 (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. P1 load u</td>
<td>I→S</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>M→S</td>
<td>GETS</td>
<td>P3’s cache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. P2 load u</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>I→S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>GETS</td>
<td>Memory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Single writer, multiple reader protocol
- Why Modified to Shared in line 4?
- What if not in any cache? Memory responds
- Read then Write produces 2 bus transactions
  - Slow and wasteful of bandwidth for a common sequence of actions
Multicore and Multithreaded Processors

- Why multicore?
- Thread-level parallelism
- Multithreaded cores
- Multiprocessors
- Design issues
- Examples
Some Real-World Multicores

- Intel/AMD 2/4/8/12/16-core chips
  - Pretty standard
- Sun’s Niagara (UltraSPARC T1-T3)
  - 4-16 simple, in-order, multithreaded cores
- Sun’s Rock processor: 16 cores
- Cell Broadband Engine: in PlayStation 3
- Intel’s MIC/Larrabee chip: 80 simple x86 cores in a ring
- Cisco CRS-1 Processor: 188 in-order cores
- Graphics processing units (GPUs): hundreds of “cores”