

Filesystem Implementation

CSC 343, Operating Systems

Topics covered in this lecture

- Filesystem implementation
- Special requirements (write back)

This slide deck covers chapters 40, 41 in OSTEP.

Last week: API and abstractions

- Highlevel API and abstractions
- Filesystem API
- Different names for different use cases
 - Inodes and devices
 - Path
 - File descriptor

Different names for different use cases

- inode/device id (53135/2)
 - Unique internal name
 - Records metadata about the file (size, permissions, owner)
- path (/foo/bar/baz)
 - Human readable name
 - Organizes files in a hierarchical layout
- file descriptor (5)
 - Process internal view
 - Avoids frequent path to inode traversal
 - Remembers offset for next read/write

Common file API

- `int open(char *path, int flag, mode_t mode)`
- `size_t read(int fd, char *buf, size_t nbyte)`
- `size_t write(int fd, char *buf, size_t nbyte)`
- `int close(int fd)`

What kind of on disk data structures do we need? How is data accessed?

Virtual File System

- File systems (EXT4, NTFS, FAT) use different data structures
- A Virtual File System (VFS) abstracts from the real filesystem
- VFS abstracts the FS as objects with specific operations
 - Superblock (mount): a file system
 - File (open): a file opened by a process (“open file description”)
 - Directory entry cache: speeds up path to inode translation
 - Inode (lookup): a filesystem object (e.g., file or directory)
- System call logic (open, seek, ...) maps to VFS operations
- When implementing a new FS, implement the VFS API
- System calls are now independent of FS implementation

Challenge: renaming files

- How would you implement `rename`?
- Renaming only changes the name of the file
- Directory contains the name of the file
- No data needs to be moved, inode remains unchanged
- Note, you may need to move the data if it is on another disk/partition!

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Filesystem implementation

- A filesystem is an exercise in data management
- Given: a large set (N) of blocks
- Need: data structures to encode (1) file hierarchy and (2) per file metadata
 - Overhead (metadata size versus file data) should be low
 - Internal fragmentation should be low
 - File contents must be accessed efficiently (external fragmentation, number of metadata accesses)
 - Define operations for file API
- Many different choices are possible!
 - Similar to virtual memory!
 - Software implementation enables experimentation with strategies

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Allocating file data

- Contiguous
- Linked blocks (blocks end with a next pointer)
- File-allocation tables (table that contains block references)
- Indexed (inode contains data pointers)
- Multi-level indexed (tree of pointers)

For each approach, think about fragmentation, ability to grow/shrink files, sequential access performance, random access performance, overhead of meta data.

File allocation: contiguous

Each file is allocated contiguously



- Terrible external fragmentation (OS must anticipate)
- Likely unable to grow file
- Excellent read and seek performance
- Small overhead for metadata
- Great for read-only file systems (CD/DVD/BlueRay)

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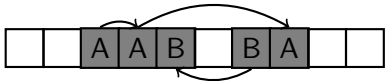
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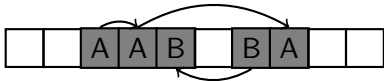
Each file consists of a linked list of blocks



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- Reasonable read cost (depending on layout), high seek cost
- One pointer per block metadata overhead

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File allocation: File Allocation Table (FAT)

Idea: keep linked list information in a single table. Instead of storing the next pointer at the end of the block, store all next pointers in a central table

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Block number
		A	A	B		B	A			
-1	-1	3	7	0	-1	4	0	-1	-1	Block pointer

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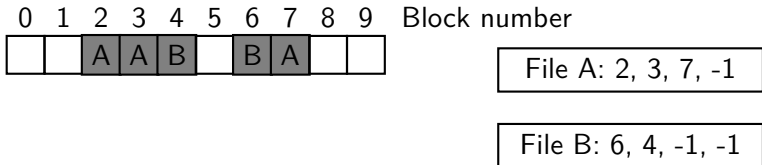
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File allocation: indexed

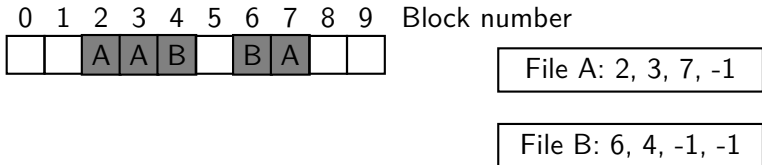
Idea: metadata contains an array of block pointers



- No external fragmentation
- Files can grow easily up to maximum size
- Reasonable read and low seek cost
- *Large metadata overhead* (wastes space as most files are small)

File allocation: indexed

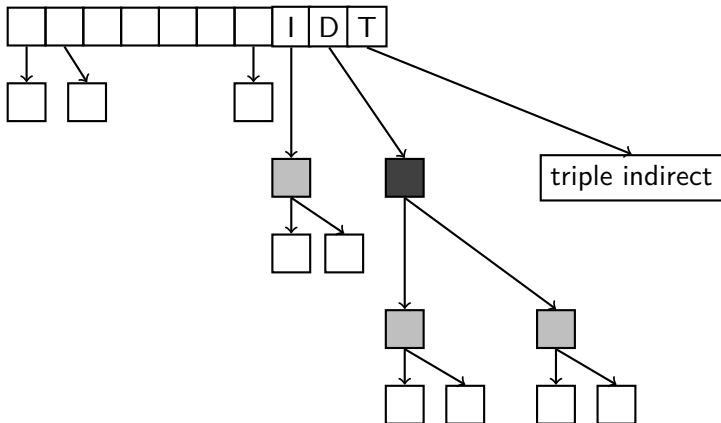
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File allocation: multi-level indexing (1/3)

Idea: have a mix of direct, indirect, double indirect, and triple indirect pointers



File allocation: multi-level indexing (2/3)

Idea: have a mix of direct, indirect, double indirect, and triple indirect pointers

```
struct inode {
    umode_t          i_mode;
    unsigned short   i_opflags;
    kuid_t           i_uid;
    kgid_t           i_gid;
    unsigned int     i_flags;
    ...
    // direct pointers to data blocks
    struct dblock    *direct[10];
    // block of N ptrs to data blocks
    struct dblock    **dindirect;
    // block of N ptrs to each N ptrs to data blocks
    struct dblock    ***tindirect;
};
```

File allocation: multi-level indexing (3/3)

Idea: have a mix of direct, indirect, double indirect, and triple indirect pointers

- No external fragmentation
- Files can grow easily up to maximum size
- Reasonable read and low seek cost
- Low metadata overhead but needs extra reads for indirect/double indirect access

Simple FS



- Superblock (S): file system metadata
- Bitmaps (i, d): indicates free blocks
- Inodes (I): hold file/directory metadata, reference data blocks
- Data blocks (D): file contents, referenced by an inode

The inode size may be different (smaller) from the data block size.

Simple FS: superblock

- The superblock stores the characteristics of the filesystem
- What do you store in the superblock?
 - Magic number and revision level
 - Mount count and maximum mount count
 - Block size of the filesystem (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64K for ext4)
 - Name of the filesystem
 - Number of inodes/data blocks
 - Number of free inodes/data blocks
 - Number of “first” inode (i.e., root directory)

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Simple FS: inode

- The inode stores all file metadata
- What would you store in an inode?
 - File type
 - File uid, gid
 - File permissions (for user, group, others)
 - Size
 - Access time
 - Create time
 - Number of links

Simple FS: inode

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Maximum file size

- Maximum file size is related to
 - Block size
 - Number of direct inodes
 - Number of indirect inodes
 - Number of double indirect inodes
 - Number of triple indirect inodes
- $\text{blocksize} * (\text{direct} + \text{inodeblock} + \text{inodeblock}^2 + \text{inodeblock}^3)$

Directories

- Directories are special files (`inode->type`)
- Store a set of file name to inode mappings
- Special entries `.` for current directory and `..` for parent directory

File operation: create /foo/bar

- Read root inode (locate directory data)
- Read root data (read directory)
- Read foo inode (locate directory data)
- Read foo data (read directory)
- Read/write inode bitmap (allocate inode)
- Write foo data (add file name)
- Read/write bar inode (create file)
- Write foo inode (update date, maybe allocate data block)

File operation: open /foo/bar

- Read root inode (locate directory data)
- Read root data (read directory)
- Read foo inode (locate directory data)
- Read foo data (read directory)
- Read bar inode (read file metadata)

File operation: write to /foo/bar

- First: `open("/foo/bar")`
- Read bar inode (read file metadata)
- Read/write data bitmap (allocate data blocks)
- Write bar data (write data)
- Write bar inode (update inode)

File operation: read from /foo/bar

- First: `open("/foo/bar")`
- Read bar inode (read file metadata)
- Read bar data (read data)
- Write bar inode (update time)

File operation: close /foo/bar

- No disk I/O

File operation: observations

- Path traversal and translation is costly
 - Reduce number of lookups (file descriptors!)
 - Introduce caching (dcache)
- Lookup aside, operations are cheap and local

Summary

- Filesystem implementation
- Inodes for metadata
- Bitmaps for inodes/data blocks
- Superblock for global metadata