CACHE OPTIMIZATION

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Overview

- Cache replacement policies
  - LRU, MRU, random
- Cache write policies
  - Write misses
  - Write hits
- Reducing miss penalty
  - Multilevel, read priority, sub-blocks, critical word
Miss Rates: Example Problem

- 100,000 loads and stores are generated; L1 cache has 3,000 misses; L2 cache has 1,500 misses. What are the various miss rates?
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- L1 local and global miss rates
  - \( \frac{3,000}{100,000} = 3\% \)

- L2 cache local miss rate = \( \frac{1,500}{3,000} = 50\% \)

- L3 cache global miss rate = \( \frac{1,500}{100,000} = 1.5\% \)
Cache Replacement Policies

- Which block to replace on a miss?
  - Only one candidate in direct-mapped cache
  - Multiple candidates in set/fully associative cache

- Ideal replacement (Belady’s algorithm)
  - Replace the block accessed farthest in the future
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cache Set</th>
<th>Requested Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A B</td>
<td>B C B B B C A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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- Random replacement
  - Hardware randomly selects a cache block to replace
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   - LRU : 100%
   - MRU : 66%

   - LRU : 66%
   - MRU : 44%
Cache Write Policies

- Write vs. read
  - Data and tag are accessed for both read and write
  - Only for write, data array needs to be updated

- Cache write policies
Write back

- On a write access, write to cache only
  - write cache block to memory only when replaced from cache
  - dramatically decreases bus bandwidth usage
  - keep a bit (called the dirty bit) per cache block
Write through

- Write to both cache and memory (or next level)
  - Improved miss penalty
  - More reliable because of maintaining two copies

- Use write buffer alongside cache
- works fine if
  - rate of stores < 1 / DRAM write cycle
- otherwise
  - write buffer fills up
  - stall processor to allow memory to catch up
Write (No-)Allocate

- **Write allocate**
  - allocate a cache line for the new data, and replace old line
  - just like a read miss

- **Write no allocate**
  - do not allocate space in the cache for the data
  - only really makes sense in systems with write buffers

- How to handle read miss after write miss?
Reducing Miss Penalty

- Some cache misses are inevitable
  - when they do happen, want to service as quickly as possible
- Other miss penalty reduction techniques
  - Multilevel caches
  - Giving read misses priority over writes
  - Sub-block placement
  - Critical word first