

COMP1521 23T2 — Files

<https://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/~cs1521/223T22T3/>

Operating system - What Does it Do.

- Operating system sits between the user and the hardware.
- Operating system effectively provides a virtual machine to each user.
- This virtual machine is much simpler than a real machine
 - much easier for user to write code
 - difficult (bug-prone) code implemented by operating system
- The virtual machine interface can stay the same across different hardware.
 - much easier for user to write portable code which works on different hardware
- Operating systems can coordinate/share access to resources between users.
- Operating systems can provide privileges/security.

Operating System - What Does it Need from Hardware.

- needs hardware to provide a **privileged** mode
 - code running in privileged mode can access all hardware and memory
 - code running in privileged mode has unlimited access to memory
- needs hardware to provide a **non-privileged** mode which:
 - code running in non-privileged mode can not access hardware directly
 - code running in non-privileged mode has limited access to memory
 - provides mechanism to make requests to operating system
- operating system (kernel) code runs in **privileged** mode
- operating system runs user code in **non-privileged** mode
 - with memory access restrictions so user code can only memory allocated to it
- user code can make requests to operating system called **system calls**
 - a system call transfers execution to operating system code in privileged mode
 - at completion of request operating system (usually) returns execution back to user code in non-privileged mode

System Call - What is It

- system call allow programs to request hardware operations
- system call transfers execution to OS code in **privileged** mode
 - includes arguments specifying details of request being made
 - OS checks operation is valid & permitted
 - OS carries out operation
 - transfers execution back to user code in **non-privileged** mode
- different operating system have different system calls
 - e.g Linux system calls very different Windows system calls
- Linux provides 400+ system calls
- examples of operations that might be provided by system call:
 - read or write bytes to a file
 - request more memory
 - create a process (run a program)
 - terminate a process
 - send information via a network

System Calls in mipsy

- mipsy provides a virtual machine which can execute MIPS programs
- mipsy also provides a tiny operating system
- small number of mipsy system calls for I/O and memory allocation
- access is via the **syscall** instruction
 - MIPS programs running on real hardware also use **syscall**
 - on Linux **syscall**, passes execution to operating system code
 - Linux operating system code carries out request specified in $\$v0$ and $\$a0$
- mipsy system calls are designed for students writing tiny MIPS programs without library functions
 - e.g system call **1** - print an integer, system call **5** read an integer
- system calls on real operating systems are more general
 - e.g. system call might be read ***n*** bytes, write ***n*** bytes
 - users don't normally access system calls directly
 - users call library functions e.g. **printf** & **fgets** which make system calls (often via other functions)

Experimenting with Linux System Calls

- like mipsy every Linux system call has a number, e.g write bytes to a file is system call **2**
- Linux provides 400+ system calls

```
$ cat /usr/include/x86_64-linux-gnu/asm/unistd_64.h
```

```
...
```

```
#define __NR_read 0
```

```
#define __NR_write 1
```

```
#define __NR_open 2
```

```
#define __NR_close 3
```

```
#define __NR_stat 4
```

```
...
```

```
#define __NR_pidfd_getfd 438
```

```
#define __NR_faccessat2 439
```

```
#define __NR_process_madvise 440
```

System Calls to Manipulate files

Some important Unix system calls:

- **0** – **read** – read some bytes from a file **descriptor**
- **1** – **write** – write some bytes to a file **descriptor**
- **2** – **open** – open a file system object, returning a **file descriptor**
- **3** – **close** – stop using a **file descriptor**
- **4** – **stat** – get file system metadata for a pathname
- **8** – **lseek** – move **file descriptor** to a specified offset within a file
- above system calls manipulate files as a *stream of bytes* accessed via a **file descriptor**
 - **file descriptors** are small integers
 - really index to a per-process array maintained by operating system
- On Unix-like systems: a **file** is sequence (array) of zero or more bytes.
 - no meaning for bytes associated with file
 - file metadata doesn't record that it is e.g. ASCII, MP4, JPG, ...
 - Unix-like files are just bytes

Using system calls to copy a file #1 - opening files

- the C function **syscall** allows to make a Linux system call without writing assembler
 - **syscall** itself is written partly/entirely in assembler
 - e.g.: https://code.woboq.org/userspace/glibc/sysdeps/unix/sysv/linux/x86_64/syscall.S.html
- **syscall** is not normally used by programmers in regular C code
 - most system calls have their own C wrapper function, these wrapper function are safer & more convenient
 - e.g. the write system call has a wrapper C function called **write**
- we only use **syscall** to experiment & learn

```
// cp <file1> <file2> with syscalls and no error handling
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    // system call number 2 is open, takes 3 arguments:
    // 1) address of zero-terminated string containing file pathname
    // 2) bitmap indicating whether to write, read, ... file
    // O_WRONLY | O_CREAT == 0x41 == write to file, creating if necessary
    // 3) permissions if file will be newly created
    // 0644 == readable to everyone, writeable by owner
    long read_file_descriptor = syscall(2, argv[1], O_RDONLY, 0);
    long write_file_descriptor = syscall(2, argv[2], O_WRONLY | O_CREAT, 0644);
}
```

source code for cp_syscalls.c

Using system calls to copy a file #2 - copying the bytes

```
while (1) {  
    // system call number 0 is read - takes 3 arguments:  
    // 1) file descriptor  
    // 2) memory address to put bytes read  
    // 3) maximum number of bytes read  
    // returns number of bytes actually read  
    char bytes[4096];  
    long bytes_read = syscall(0, read_file_descriptor, bytes, 4096);  
    if (bytes_read <= 0) {  
        break;  
    }  
    // system call number 1 is write - takes 3 arguments:  
    // 1) file descriptor  
    // 2) memory address to take bytes from  
    // 3) number of bytes to written  
    // returns number of bytes actually written  
    syscall(1, write_file_descriptor, bytes, bytes_read);  
}
```

C Library Wrappers for System Calls

- On Unix-like systems there are C library functions corresponding to each system call,
 - e.g. `open`, `read`, `write`, `close`
 - the **`syscall`** function is not used in normal coding
- These functions are not portable
 - C used on many non-Unix operating systems with different system calls
- POSIX standardizes a few of these functions
 - some non-Unix systems provide implementations of these functions
- but better to use functions from standard C library, available everywhere
 - e.g. `fopen`, `fgets`, `fputc` from **`stdio.h`**
 - on Unix-like systems these will call `open`, `read`, `write`
 - on other platforms, will call other low-level functions
- but sometimes we need to use lower level non-portable functions
 - e.g. a database implementation need more control over I/O operations

Extra Types for File System Operations

Unix-like (POSIX) systems add some extra file-system-related C types in these include files:

```
#include <sys/types.h>
#include <sys/stat.h>
```

- **off_t** – offsets within files
 - typically **int64_t** - signed to allow backward references
- **size_t** – number of bytes in some object
 - typically **uint64_t** - unsigned since objects can't have negative size
- **ssize_t** – sizes of read/written bytes
 - typically **uint64_t** - similar to **size_t**, but signed to allow for error values
- **struct stat** – file system object metadata
 - stores information *about* file, not its contents
 - requires other types: **ino_t**, **dev_t**, **time_t**, **uid_t**, ...

C library wrapper for open system call

```
int open(char *pathname, int flags)
```

- open file at **pathname**, according to **flags**
- **flags** is a bit-mask defined in `<fcntl.h>`
 - `O_RDONLY` — open for reading
 - `O_WRONLY` — open for writing
 - `O_APPEND` — append on each write
 - `O_RDWR` — open object for reading and writing
 - `O_CREAT` — create file if doesn't exist
 - `O_TRUNC` — truncate to size 0
- flags can be combined e.g. `(O_WRONLY | O_CREAT)`
- if successful, return file descriptor (small non-negative `int`)
- if unsuccessful, return `-1` and set **errno** to value indicating reason

errno - why did that system call fail?

- C library has an interesting way of returning error information
- functions typically return **-1** to indicate error
- and set **errno** to integer value indicating reason for error
- these integer values are `#define`-d in **errno.h**
- see **man errno** for more information
- convenient function **perror()** looks at `errno` and prints message with reason
- or **strerror()** converts `errno` integer value to string describing reason for error
- **errno** looks like **int** global variable
 - C library designed before multi-threaded systems in common use
 - `errno` can not really be a global variable on multi-threaded platform
 - each thread needs a separate **errno**
 - clever workaround: **errno** `#defined` to function which returns address of variable for this thread

C library wrapper for read system call

```
ssize_t read(int fd, void *buf, size_t count)
```

- read (up to) **count** bytes from **fd** into **buf**
 - **buf** should point to array of at least **count** bytes
 - read does (can) not check **buf** points to enough space
- if successful, number of bytes actually read is returned
- **0** returned, if no more bytes to read
- **-1** returned if error and **errno** set to reason
- associated with a file descriptor is a **current position** in file
- next call to **read()** will return next bytes from file
- repeated calls to reads will yield entire contents of file
- can also modify this current position with **lseek()**

C library wrapper for write system call

```
ssize_t write(int fd, const void *buf, size_t count)
```

- attempt to write **count** bytes from *buf* into stream identified by file descriptor **fd**
- if successful, number of bytes actually written is returned
- if unsuccessful, returns -1 and set **errno**
- does (can) not check **buf** points to **count** bytes of data
- associated with a file descriptor is a **current position** in file
- next call to **write** will follow bytes already written
- file often created by repeated calls to write
- can also modify this current position with `lseek`

Hello write!

```
// hello world implemented with libc
#include <unistd.h>
int main(void) {
    char bytes[13] = "Hello, Zac!\n";
    // write takes 3 arguments:
    // 1) file descriptor, 1 == stdout
    // 2) memory address of first byte to write
    // 3) number of bytes to write
    write(1, bytes, 12); // prints Hello, Zac! on stdout
    return 0;
}
```

source code for hello_libc.c

Using libc system call wrappers to copy a file

```
// cp <file1> <file2> implemented with libc and no error handling
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    // open takes 3 arguments:
    // 1) address of zero-terminated string containing pathname of file to open
    // 2) bitmap indicating whether to write, read, ... file
    // 3) permissions if file will be newly created
    // 0644 == readable to everyone, writeable by owner
    int read_file_descriptor = open(argv[1], O_RDONLY);
    int write_file_descriptor = open(argv[2], O_WRONLY | O_CREAT, 0644);
```

source code for cp_libc.c

Using libc system call wrappers to copy a file

```
while (1) {
    // read takes 3 arguments:
    //  1) file descriptor
    //  2) memory address to put bytes read
    //  3) maximum number of bytes read
    // returns number of bytes actually read
    char bytes[4096];
    ssize_t bytes_read = read(read_file_descriptor, bytes, 4096);
    if (bytes_read <= 0) {
        break;
    }
    // write takes 3 arguments:
    //  1) file descriptor
    //  2) memory address to take bytes from
    //  3) number of bytes to written
    // returns number of bytes actually written
    write(write_file_descriptor, bytes, bytes_read);
}
// good practice to close file descriptions as soon as finished using them
// not necessary needed here as program about to exit
close(read_file_descriptor);
close(write_file_descriptor);
```

source code for cp_libc.c

C library wrapper for close system call

```
int close(int fd)
```

- release open file descriptor **fd**
- if successful, return **0**
- if unsuccessful, return **-1** and set **errno**
 - could be unsuccessful if **fd** is not an open file descriptor
 - e.g. if **fd** has already been closed
- number of file descriptors may be limited (maybe to 1024)
 - limited number of file open at any time, so use **close()**

An aside: removing a file e.g. via `rm`

- removes the file's entry from a directory
- but the file (inode and data) persist until
 - all references to the file (inode) from other directories are removed
 - all processes accessing the file `close()` their file descriptor
- after this, the operating system reclaims the space used by the files

C library wrapper for lseek system call

```
off_t lseek(int fd, off_t offset, int whence)
```

- change the *current position* in stream indicated by **fd**
- **offset** is in units of bytes, and can be negative
- **whence** can be one of ...
 - SEEK_SET — set file position to **offset** from start of file
 - SEEK_CUR — set file position to **offset** from current position
 - SEEK_END — set file position to **offset** from end of file
- seeking beyond end of file leaves a gap which reads as 0's
- seeking back beyond start of file sets position to start of file
- for example:

```
lseek(fd, 42, SEEK_SET); // move to after 42nd byte in file
lseek(fd, 58, SEEK_CUR); // 58 bytes forward from current position
lseek(fd, -7, SEEK_CUR); // 7 bytes backward from current position
lseek(fd, -1, SEEK_END); // move to before last byte in file
```

stdio.h - C Standard Library I/O Functions

- system calls provide operations to manipulate files.
- libc provides a non-portable low-level API to manipulate files
- `stdio.h` provides a portable higher-level API to manipulate files.
- `stdio.h` is part of standard C library
- available in every C implementation that can do I/O
- `stdio.h` functions are portable, convenient & efficient
- use `stdio.h` functions for file operations unless you have a good reason not to
 - e.g. program with special I/O requirements like a database implementation
- on Unix-like systems they will call `open()/read()/write()/...`
 - but with buffering for efficiency

```
FILE *fopen(const char *pathname, const char *mode)
```

- **fopen()** is `stdio.h` equivalent to **open()**
- **mode** is string of 1 or more characters including:
 - **r** open text file for reading.
 - **w** open text file for writing truncated to 0 zero length if it exists created if does not exist
 - **a** open text file for writing writes append to it if it exists created if does not exist
- `fopen` returns a **FILE *** pointer
 - **FILE** is `stdio.h` equivalent to file descriptors
 - **FILE** is an opaque struct - we can not access fields
 - **FILE** stores file descriptor
 - **FILE** may also for efficiency store buffered data,

```
int fclose(FILE *stream)
```

- **fclose()** is `stdio.h` equivalent to **close()**
- call **fclose()** as soon as finished with stream
- number of streams open at any time is limited (to maybe 1024)
- `stdio` functions for efficiency may delay calling **write()**
 - only calls **write()** when it has enough data (perhaps 4096 bytes)
 - also calls **write()** if needed when program exits or **fclose()**
- so last data may not be written until **fclose** or program exit
 - good practice to call **fclose** as soon as finished using stream
- **fflush(stream)** forces any buffered data to be written

stdio.h - read and writing

```
int fgetc(FILE *stream)           // read a byte
int fputc(int c, FILE *stream)    // write a byte

char *fputs(char *s, FILE *stream) // write a string
char *fgets(char *s, int size, FILE *stream) // read a line

int fscanf(FILE *stream, const char *format, ...) // formatted input
int fprintf(FILE *stream, const char *format, ...) // formatted output

// read/write array of bytes (fgetc/fputc + loop often better)
size_t fread(void *ptr, size_t size, size_t nmemb, FILE *stream);
size_t fwrite(const void *ptr, size_t size, size_t nmemb, FILE *stream);
```

- fputs/fgets, fscanf/printf can not be used for binary data because may contain zero bytes
 - can use text (ASCII/Unicode) but can not use to e.g. read a *jpg*
- scanf/fscanf/sscanf often avoided in serious code
 - but fine while learning to code

stdio.h - convenience functions for stdin/stdout

- as we often read/write to stdin/stdout `stdio.h` provides convenience functions, we can use:

```
int getchar()           // fgetc(stdin)
int putchar(int c)     // fputc(c, stdout)

int puts(char *s)      // fputs(s, stdout)

int scanf(char *format, ...) // fscanf(stdin, format, ...)
int printf(char *format, ...) // fprintf(stdout, format, ...)

char *gets(char *s);   // NEVER USE - major security vulnerability
                       // string may overflow array

// also NEVER USE %s with scanf - similarly major security vulnerability
scanf("%s", array);
```

stdio.h - using fputc to output bytes

```
char bytes[] = "Hello, stdio!\n"; // 15 bytes
// write 14 bytes so we don't write (terminating) 0 byte
for (int i = 0; i < (sizeof bytes) - 1; i++) {
    fputc(bytes[i], stdout);
}
// or as we know bytes is 0-terminated
for (int i = 0; bytes[i] != '\0'; i++) {
    fputc(bytes[i], stdout);
}
// or if you prefer pointers
for (char *p = &bytes[0]; *p != '\0'; p++) {
    fputc(*p, stdout);
}
```

source code for hello_stdio.c

stdio.h - using fputs, fwrite & fprintf to output bytes

```
char bytes[] = "Hello, stdio!\n"; // 15 bytes
```

```
// fputs relies on bytes being 0-terminated  
fputs(bytes, stdout);  
// write 14 1 byte items  
fwrite(bytes, 1, (sizeof bytes) - 1, stdout);  
// %s relies on bytes being 0-terminated  
fprintf(stdout, "%s", bytes);
```

source code for hello_stdio.c

stdio.h - creating a file

```
// create file "hello.txt" containing 1 line: Hello, Zac!
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    FILE *output_stream = fopen("hello.txt", "w");
    if (output_stream == NULL) {
        perror("hello.txt");
        return 1;
    }
    fprintf(output_stream, "Hello, Zac!\n");
    // fclose will flush data to file, best to close file ASAP
    // optional here as fclose occurs automatically on exit
    fclose(output_stream);
    return 0;
}
```

source code for create_file_fopen.c

stdio.h - using fgetc to copy a file

```
FILE *input_stream = fopen(argv[1], "r");
if (input_stream == NULL) {
    perror(argv[1]); // prints why the open failed
    return 1;
}
FILE *output_stream = fopen(argv[2], "w");
if (output_stream == NULL) {
    perror(argv[2]);
    return 1;
}
int c; // not char!
while ((c = fgetc(input_stream)) != EOF) {
    fputc(c, output_stream);
}
fclose(input_stream); // optional here as fclose occurs
fclose(output_stream); // automatically on exit
```

source code for cp_fgetc.c

Copying One Byte Per Time with System Calls

```
// copy bytes one at a time from pathname passed as  
// command-line argument 1 to pathname given as argument 2  
int read_file_descriptor = open(argv[1], O_RDONLY);  
int write_file_descriptor = open(argv[2], O_WRONLY | O_CREAT, 0644);  
while (1) {  
    char bytes[1];  
    ssize_t bytes_read = read(read_file_descriptor, bytes, 1);  
    if (bytes_read <= 0) {  
        break;  
    }  
    write(write_file_descriptor, bytes, 1);  
}
```

source code for cp_libc_one_byte.c

I/O Performance & Buffering - Copying One Byte Per Time

```
$ clang -O3 cp_libc_one_byte.c -o cp_libc_one_byte
$ dd bs=1M count=10 </dev/urandom >random_file
10485760 bytes (10 MB, 10 MiB) copied, 0.183075 s, 57.3 MB/s
$ time ./cp_libc_one_byte random_file random_file_copy
real    0m5.262s
user    0m0.432s
sys     0m4.826s
```

- much slower than previous version which copies 4096 bytes at a time

```
$ clang -O3 cp_libc.c -o cp_libc
$ time ./cp_libc random_file random_file_copy
real    0m0.008s
user    0m0.001s
sys     0m0.007s
```

- main reason - system calls are expensive

I/O Performance & Buffering - stdio Copying 1 Byte Per Time

```
$ clang -O3 cp_fgetc.c -o cp_fgetc
$ time ./cp_fgetc random_file random_file_copy
real    0m0.059s
user    0m0.042s
sys     0m0.009s
```

- at the user level copies 1 byte at time using fgetc/fputc
- much faster than copying 1 byte at time using read/write
- little slower than copying 4096 bytes at time using read/write
- how?

I/O Performance & Buffering - stdio buffering

- assume stdio buffering size (BUFSIZ) is 4096 (typical)
- first **fgetc()** calls requests 4096 bytes via **read()**
 - returns 1 byte stores remaining 4095 bytes in an array, the *input buffer*
- next 4095 **fgetc()** calls return a byte from (*input buffer*) and do not to call **read()**
- 4097th **fgetc()** call requests 4096 bytes via **read()**
- returns 1 byte, stores remaining 4095 bytes in the (*input buffer*)
- and so on

- first 4095 **fputc()** calls put bytes in an array, the (*output buffer*)
- 4096th **fputc()** calls **write()** for all 4096 bytes in the *output buffer*
- and so on
- *output buffer** emptied by **exit** or **main** returning
- program can explicitly force empty of output buffer with **fflush()** call

```
int fseek(FILE *stream, long offset, int whence);
```

- **fseek()** is stdio equivalent to **lseek()**, just like lseek():
- **offset** is in units of bytes, and can be negative
- **whence** can be one of ...
 - SEEK_SET — set file position to **offset** from start of file
 - SEEK_CUR — set file position to **offset** from current position
 - SEEK_END — set file position to **offset** from end of file
- for example:

```
fseek(stream, 42, SEEK_SET); // move to after 42nd byte in file  
fseek(stream, 58, SEEK_CUR); // 58 bytes forward from current position  
fseek(stream, -7, SEEK_CUR); // 7 bytes backward from current position  
fseek(stream, -1, SEEK_END); // move to before last byte in file
```

Using fseek to read the last byte then the first byte of a file

```
FILE *input_stream = fopen(argv[1], "rb");  
// move to a position 1 byte from end of file  
// then read 1 byte  
fseek(input_stream, -1, SEEK_END);  
printf("last byte of the file is 0x%02x\n", fgetc(input_stream));  
// move to a position 0 bytes from start of file  
// then read 1 byte  
fseek(input_stream, 0, SEEK_SET);  
printf("first byte of the file is 0x%02x\n", fgetc(input_stream));
```

source code for fseek.c

- NOTE: important error checking is missing above

Using fseek to read bytes in the middle of a file

```
// move to a position 41 bytes from start of file  
// then read 1 byte  
fseek(input_stream, 41, SEEK_SET);  
printf("42nd byte of the file is 0x%02x\n", fgetc(input_stream));  
// move to a position 58 bytes from current position  
// then read 1 byte  
fseek(input_stream, 58, SEEK_CUR);  
printf("100th byte of the file is 0x%02x\n", fgetc(input_stream));
```

source code for fseek.c

- NOTE: important error checking is missing above

Using fseek to change a random file bit

```
FILE *f = fopen(argv[1], "r+"); // open for reading and writing
fseek(f, 0, SEEK_END); // move to end of file
long n_bytes = ftell(f); // get number of bytes in file
srandom(time(NULL)); // initialize random number
// generator with current time

long target_byte = random() % n_bytes; // pick a random byte
fseek(f, target_byte, SEEK_SET); // move to byte
int byte = fgetc(f); // read byte
int bit = random() % 8; // pick a random bit
int new_byte = byte ^ (1 << bit); // flip the bit
fseek(f, -1, SEEK_CUR); // move back to same position
fputc(new_byte, f); // write the byte
fclose(f);
```

source code for fuzz.c

- random changes to search for errors/vulnerabilities called fuzzing

Using fseek to create a gigantic sparse file (advanced topic)

```
// Create a 16 terabyte sparse file
// https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparse_file
// error checking omitted for clarity
#include <stdio.h>
int main(void) {
    FILE *f = fopen("sparse_file.txt", "w");
    fprintf(f, "Hello, Andrew!\n");
    fseek(f, 16L * 1000 * 1000 * 1000 * 1000, SEEK_CUR);
    fprintf(f, "Goodbye, Andrew!\n");
    fclose(f);
    return 0;
}
```

source code for create_gigantic_file.c

- almost all the 16Tb are zeros which the file system doesn't actually store

stdio.h - I/O to strings

stdio.h provides useful functions which operate on strings

```
// sscanf like scanf, but input comes from char array **str**  
int sscanf(const char *str, const char *format, ...);  
  
// snprintf is like printf, but output goes to char array str  
// handy for creating strings passed to other functions  
// size contains size of str  
int snprintf(char *str, size_t size, const char *format, ...);  
  
// also sprintf - more convenient - but can overflow str  
// major security vulnerability - DO NOT USE  
int sprintf(char *str, const char *format, ...); // DO NOT USE
```

What Really are Files and Directories?

- **file systems** manage persistent stored data e.g. on magnetic disk or SSD
- On Unix-like systems:
 - a **file** is sequence (array) of zero or more bytes.
 - no meaning for bytes associated with file
 - file metadata doesn't record that it is e.g. ASCII, MP4, JPG, ...
 - Unix-like files are just bytes
 - a **directory** is an object containing zero or more files or directories.
- file systems maintain metadata for files & directories, e.g. permissions

Unix-like Files & Directories

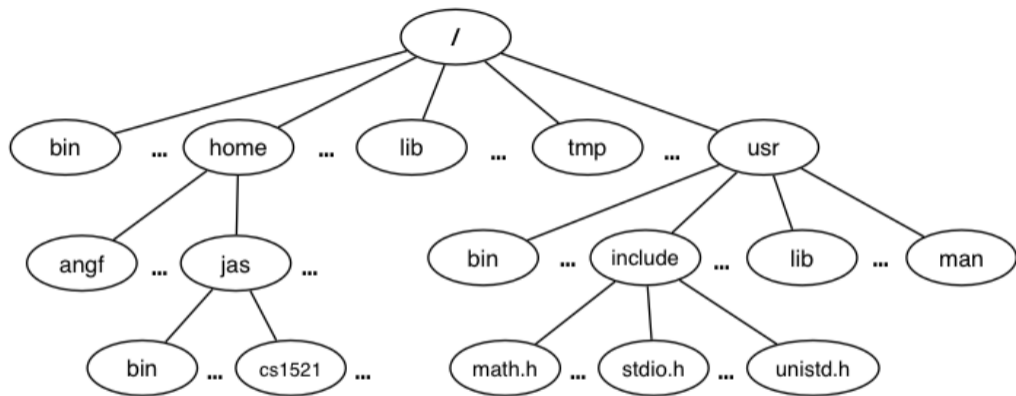
- Unix-like filenames are sequences of 1 or more bytes.
 - filenames can contain any byte except **0x00** and **0x2F**
 - **0x00** bytes (ASCII '\0') used to terminate filenames
 - **0x2F** bytes (ASCII '/') used to separate components of pathnames.
 - maximum filename length, depends on file system, typically 255
- Two filenames can not be used - they have a special meaning:
 - . current directory
 - .. parent directory
- Some programs (shell, ls) treat filenames starting with . specially.
- Unix-like directories are sets of files or directories

Unix/Linux Pathnames

- Files & directories accessed via pathnames, e.g: `/home/z5555555/lab07/main.c`
- *absolute* pathnames start with a leading `/` and give full path from root
 - e.g. `/usr/include/stdio.h`, `/cs1521/public_html/`
- every process (running program) has a *current working directory* (CWD)
 - this is an absolute pathname
- shell command `pwd` prints *current working directory*
- *relative* pathname do not start with a leading `/`
 - e.g. `../..../another/path/prog.c`, `./a.out`, `main.c`
- *relative* pathnames appended to *current working directory* of process using them
- Assume process *current working directory* is `/home/z5555555/lab07/`
 - `main.c` translated to absolute path `/home/z5555555/lab07/main.c`
 - `../a.out` translated to absolute path `/home/z5555555/lab07/../a.out`
 - which is equivalent to absolute path `/home/z5555555/a.out`

Everything is a File

- Originally files only managed data stored on a magnetic disk.
- Unix philosophy is: **Everything is a File.**
- File system used to access:
 - files
 - directories (folders)
 - storage devices (disks, SSD, ...)
 - peripherals (keyboard, mouse, USB, ...)
 - system information
 - inter-process communication
 - network
 - ...



- Unix/Linux file system is tree-like
- Exception: if you follow symbolic links it is a *graph*.
 - and you may infinitely loop attempting to traverse a file system
 - but only if you follow symbolic links

Metadata for file system objects is stored in **inodes**, which hold

- location of file contents in file systems
- file type (regular file, directory, ...)
- file size in bytes
- file ownership
- file access permissions - who can read, write, execute the file
- timestamps - times of file was created, last accessed, last updated

File system implementations often add complexity to improve performance

- e.g. very small files might be stored in an inode itself

File Inodes

- unix-like file systems effectively have a large array of inodes containing metadata
- an inode's index in this array is its **inode-number** (or **i-number**)
- inode-number uniquely identify files within a filesystem
 - just a zid uniquely identifies a student within UNSW
- directories are effectively a list of (name, inode-number) pairs
- **ls -i** prints **inode-numbers**

```
$ ls -i file.c
109988273 file.c
$
```

- note there is usually more than one file systems mounted on a Unix-like system
 - each file-systems has a separate set of **inode-numbers**
 - files on different file-systems could have the same **inode-number**

File Access: Behind the Scenes

Access to files by name proceeds (roughly) as...

- open directory and scan for *name*
- if not found, “No such file or directory”
- if found as (*name*, *i number*), access inode table `inodes [i number]`
- collect file metadata and...
 - check file access permissions given current user/group
 - if don't have required access, “Permission denied”
 - collect information about file's location and size
 - update access timestamp
- use data in inode to access file contents

Hard Links & Symbolic Links

File system *links* allow multiple paths to access the same file

- Hard links
 - multiple names referencing the same file (inode)
 - the two entries must be on the same filesystem
 - all hard links to a file have equal status
 - file destroyed when last hard link removed
 - can not create a (extra) hard link to directories
- Symbolic links (symlinks)
 - point to another path name
 - accessing the symlink (by default) accesses the file being pointed to
 - symbolic link can point to a directory
 - symbolic link can point to a pathname on another filesystems
 - symbolic links don't have permissions (just a pointer)

Hard Links & Symbolic Links

```
$ echo 'Hello Andrew' >hello
$ ln hello hola          # create hard link
$ ln -s hello selamat  # create symbolic link
$ ls -l hello hola selamat
-rw-r--r-- 2 andrewt 13 Oct 23 16:18 hello
-rw-r--r-- 2 andrewt 13 Oct 23 16:18 hola
lrwxrwxrwx 1 andrewt  5 Oct 23 16:20 selamat -> hello
$ cat hello
Hello Andrew
$ cat hola
Hello Andrew
$ cat selamat
Hello Andrew
```

C library wrapper for stat system call

```
int stat(const char *pathname, struct stat *statbuf)
```

- returns metadata associated with **pathname** in **statbuf**
- metadata returned includes:
 - inode number
 - type (file, directory, symbolic link, device)
 - size of file in bytes (if it is a file)
 - permissions (read, write, execute)
 - times of last access/modification/status-change
- returns `-1` and sets **errno** if metadata not accessible

```
int fstat(int fd, struct stat *statbuf)
```

- same as `stat()` but gets data via an open file descriptor

```
int lstat(const char *pathname, struct stat *statbuf)`
```

- same as `stat()` but doesn't follow symbolic links

definition of struct stat

```
struct stat {
    dev_t      st_dev;           /* ID of device containing file */
    ino_t      st_ino;          /* Inode number */
    mode_t     st_mode;         /* File type and mode */
    nlink_t    st_nlink;        /* Number of hard links */
    uid_t      st_uid;          /* User ID of owner */
    gid_t      st_gid;          /* Group ID of owner */
    dev_t      st_rdev;         /* Device ID (if special file) */
    off_t      st_size;         /* Total size, in bytes */
    blksize_t  st_blksize;      /* Block size for filesystem I/O */
    blkcnt_t   st_blocks;       /* Number of 512B blocks allocated */
    struct timespec st_atim;     /* Time of last access */
    struct timespec st_mtim;     /* Time of last modification */
    struct timespec st_ctim;     /* Time of last status change */
};
```

st_mode field of struct stat

st_mode is a bitwise-or of these values (& others):

S_IFLNK	0120000	symbolic link
S_IFREG	0100000	regular file
S_IFBLK	0060000	block device
S_IFDIR	0040000	directory
S_IFCHR	0020000	character device
S_IFIFO	0010000	FIFO
S_IRUSR	0000400	owner has read permission
S_IWUSR	0000200	owner has write permission
S_IXUSR	0000100	owner has execute permission
S_IRGRP	0000040	group has read permission
S_IWGRP	0000020	group has write permission
S_IXGRP	0000010	group has execute permission
S_IROTH	0000004	others have read permission
S_IWOTH	0000002	others have write permission
S_IXOTH	0000001	others have execute permission

Using stat

```
struct stat s;
if (stat(pathname, &s) != 0) {
    perror(pathname);
    exit(1);
}
printf("ino = %10ld # Inode number\n", s.st_ino);
printf("mode = %10o # File mode \n", s.st_mode);
printf("nlink =%10ld # Link count \n", (long)s.st_nlink);
printf("uid = %10u # Owner uid\n", s.st_uid);
printf("gid = %10u # Group gid\n", s.st_gid);
printf("size = %10ld # File size (bytes)\n", (long)s.st_size);
printf("mtime =%10ld # Modification time (seconds since 1/1/70)\n",
       (long)s.st_mtime);
```

source code for stat.c

mkdir

```
int mkdir(const char *pathname, mode_t mode)
```

- create a new directory called **pathname** with permissions **mode**
- if **pathname** is e.g. a/b/c/d
 - all of the directories a, b and c must exist
 - directory c must be writeable to the caller
 - directory d must not already exist
- the new directory contains two initial entries
 - . is a reference to itself
 - .. is a reference to its parent directory
- returns 0 if successful, returns -1 and sets `errno` otherwise

for example:

```
mkdir("newDir", 0755);
```

Example of using mkdir to create directories

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <sys/stat.h>
// create the directories specified as command-line arguments
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    for (int arg = 1; arg < argc; arg++) {
        if (mkdir(argv[arg], 0755) != 0) {
            perror(argv[arg]); // prints why the mkdir failed
            return 1;
        }
    }
    return 0;
}
```

source code for mkdir.c

Other useful Linux (POSIX) functions

```
chmod(char *pathname, mode_t mode) // change permission of file/...
```

```
unlink(char *pathname) // remove a file/directory/...
```

```
rename(char *oldpath, char *newpath) // rename a file/directory
```

```
chdir(char *path) // change current working directory
```

```
getcwd(char *buf, size_t size) // get current working directory
```

```
link(char *oldpath, char *newpath) // create hard link to a file
```

```
symlink(char *target, char *linkpath) // create a symbolic link
```


- file permissions are separated into three types:
 - ****read *** - permission to get bytes of file
 - ****write*** - permission to change bytes of file
 - ****execute*** - permission to execute file
- read/write/execute often represented as bits of an octal digit
- file permissions are specified for 3 groups of users:
 - **owner** - permissions for the file owner
 - **group** - permissions for users in the group of the file
 - **other** - permissions for any other user

changing file permissions

```
// first argument is mode in octal
mode_t mode = strtol(argv[1], &end, 8);
// check first argument was a valid octal number
if (argv[1][0] == '\\0' || end[0] != '\\0') {
    fprintf(stderr, "%s: invalid mode: %s\\n", argv[0], argv[1]);
    return 1;
}
for (int arg = 2; arg < argc; arg++) {
    if (chmod(argv[arg], mode) != 0) {
        perror(argv[arg]); // prints why the chmod failed
        return 1;
    }
}
}
```

source code for chmod.c

removing files

```
// remove the specified files
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    for (int arg = 1; arg < argc; arg++) {
        if (unlink(argv[arg]) != 0) {
            perror(argv[arg]); // prints why the unlink failed
            return 1;
        }
    }
    return 0;
}
```

source code for rm.c

```
$ gcc rm.c
$ ./a.out rm.c
$ ls -l rm.c
ls: cannot access 'rm.c': No such file or directory
```

renaming a file

```
// rename the specified file
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    if (argc != 3) {
        fprintf(stderr, "Usage: %s <old-filename> <new-filename>\n",
            argv[0]);
        return 1;
    }
    char *old_filename = argv[1];
    char *new_filename = argv[2];
    if (rename(old_filename, new_filename) != 0) {
        fprintf(stderr, "%s rename %s %s:", argv[0], old_filename,
            new_filename);
        perror("");
        return 1;
    }
    return 0;
}
```

source code for rename.c

cd-ing up one directory at a time

```
// use repeated chdir("../") to climb to root of the file system
char pathname[PATH_MAX];
while (1) {
    if (getcwd(pathname, sizeof pathname) == NULL) {
        perror("getcwd");
        return 1;
    }
    printf("getcwd() returned %s\n", pathname);
    if (strcmp(pathname, "/") == 0) {
        return 0;
    }
    if (chdir("../") != 0) {
        perror("chdir");
        return 1;
    }
}
```

source code for `getcwd.c`

making a 1000-deep directory (advanced)

```
for (int i = 0; i < 1000;i++) {
    char dirname[256];
    snprintf(dirname, sizeof dirname, "d%d", i);
    if (mkdir(dirname, 0755) != 0) {
        perror(dirname);
        return 1;
    }
    if (chdir(dirname) != 0) {
        perror(dirname);
        return 1;
    }
    char pathname[1000000];
    if (getcwd(pathname, sizeof pathname) == NULL) {
        perror("getcwd");
        return 1;
    }
    printf("\nCurrent directory now: %s\n", pathname);
}
```

source code for nest_directories.c

creating 1000 hard links to a file - creating the file (advanced)

```
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    char pathname[256] = "hello.txt";
    // create a target file
    FILE *f1;
    if ((f1 = fopen(pathname, "w")) == NULL) {
        perror(pathname);
        return 1;
    }
    fprintf(f1, "Hello Andrew!\n");
    fclose(f1);
}
```

source code for many_links.c

creating 1000 hard links to a file -checking the file (advanced)

```
for (int i = 0; i < 1000; i++) {
    printf("Verifying '%s' contains: ", pathname);
    FILE *f2;
    if ((f2 = fopen(pathname, "r")) == NULL) {
        perror(pathname);
        return 1;
    }
    int c;
    while ((c = fgetc(f2)) != EOF) {
        fputc(c, stdout);
    }
    fclose(f2);
}
```

source code for many_links.c

creating 1000 hard links to a file (creating a link)

```
char new_pathname[256];
snprintf(new_pathname, sizeof new_pathname,
         "hello_%d.txt", i);
printf("Creating a link %s -> %s\n",
       new_pathname, pathname);
if (link(pathname, new_pathname) != 0) {
    perror(pathname);
    return 1;
}
}
return 0;
}
```

source code for many_links.c

POSIX functions to access directory contents (advanced)

```
#include <sys/types.h>
#include <dirent.h>

// open a directory stream for directory name
DIR *opendir(const char *name);

// return a pointer to next directory entry
struct dirent *readdir(DIR *dirp);

// close a directory stream
int closedir(DIR *dirp);
```