Scheduling

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the role of the scheduler, and how its behaviour influences the performance of the system.
- Know the difference between I/O-bound and CPU-bound tasks, and how they relate to scheduling.

What is Scheduling?

- On a multi-programmed system
  - We may have more than one *Ready* process
- On a batch system
  - We may have many jobs waiting to be run
- On a multi-user system
  - We may have many users concurrently using the system

- The ***scheduler*** decides which process (or thread) to run next.
  - The process of choosing is called *scheduling.*

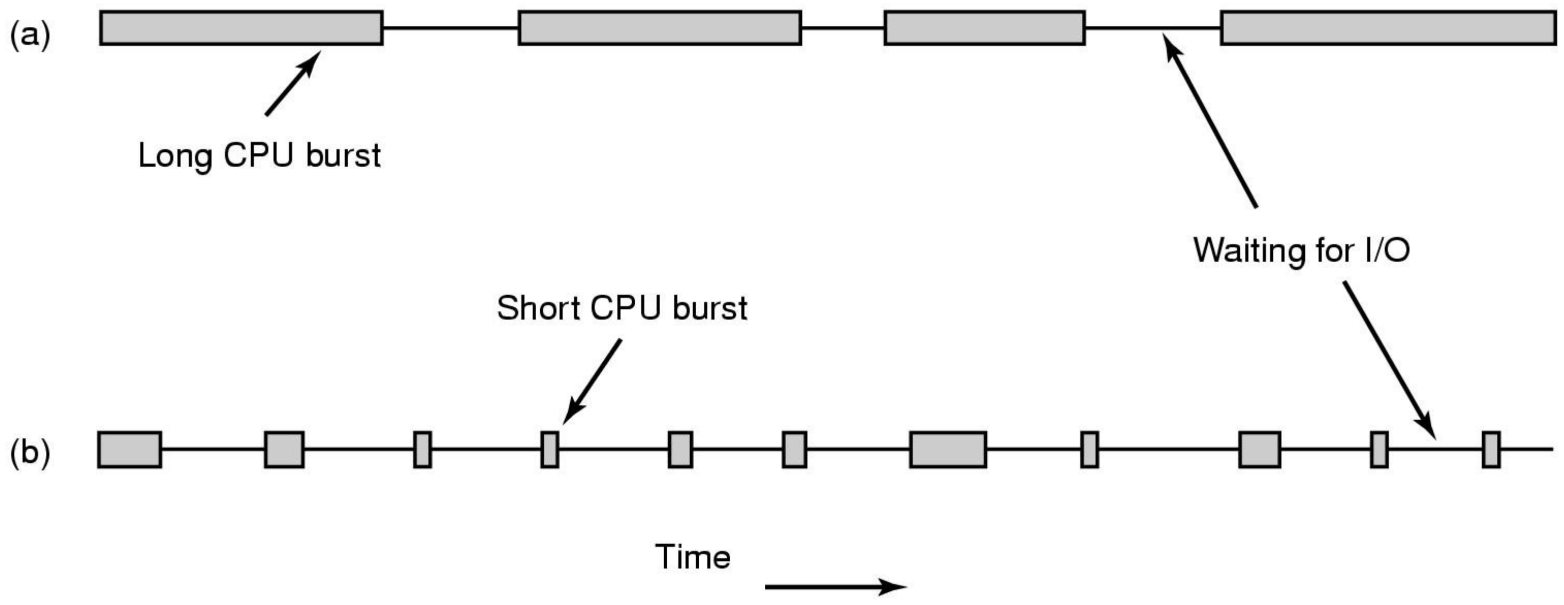
Is scheduling important?

- It is not in certain scenarios
  - If you have no choice
    - Early systems
      - Usually batching
      - Scheduling algorithm simple
        - » Run next on tape or next on punch tape
  - Only one thing to run
    - Simple PCs
      - Only ran a word processor, etc….
    - Simple Embedded Systems
      - TV remote control, washing machine, etc….

Is scheduling important?

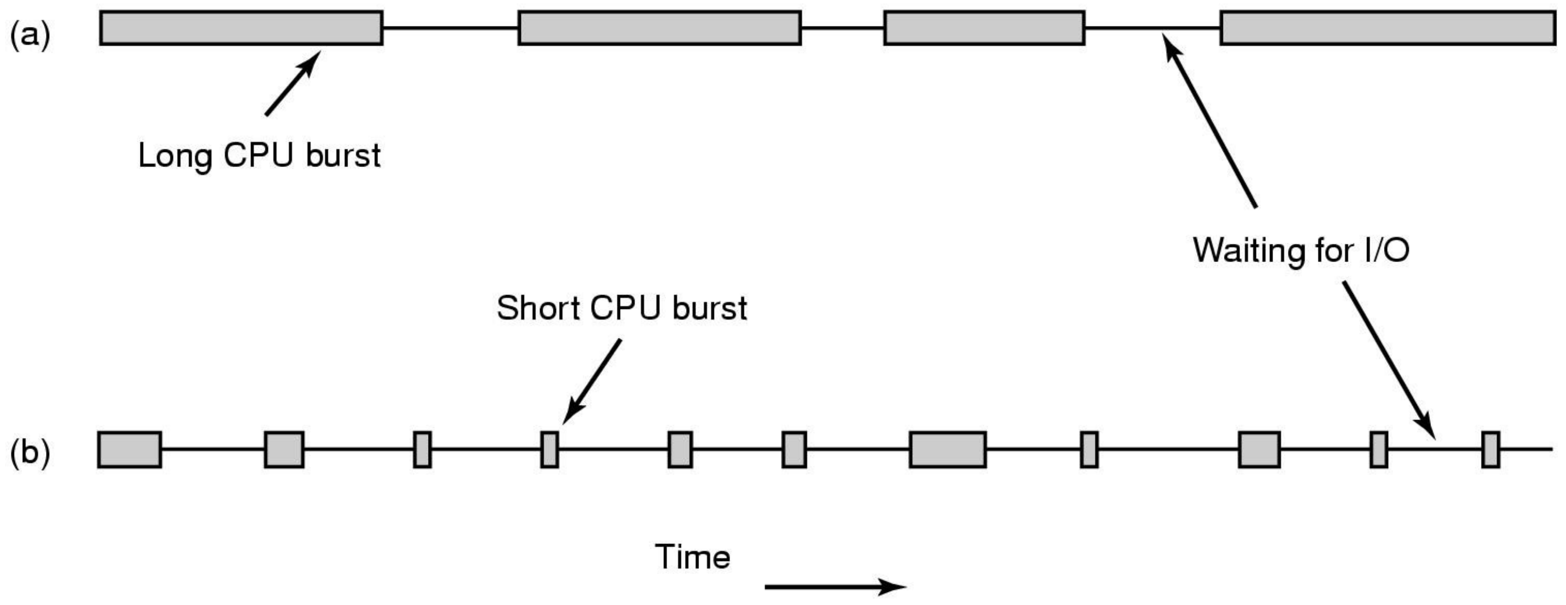
- It is in most realistic scenarios
  - Multitasking/Multi-user System
    - Example
      - Email daemon takes 2 seconds to process an email
      - User clicks button on application.
    - Scenario 1
      - Run daemon, then application
        - System appears really sluggish to the user
    - Scenario 2
      - Run application, then daemon
        - Application appears really responsive, small email delay is unnoticed
- Scheduling decisions can have a dramatic effect on the perceived performance of the system
  - Can also affect correctness of a system with deadlines

Application Behaviour



- Bursts of CPU usage alternate with periods of I/O wait

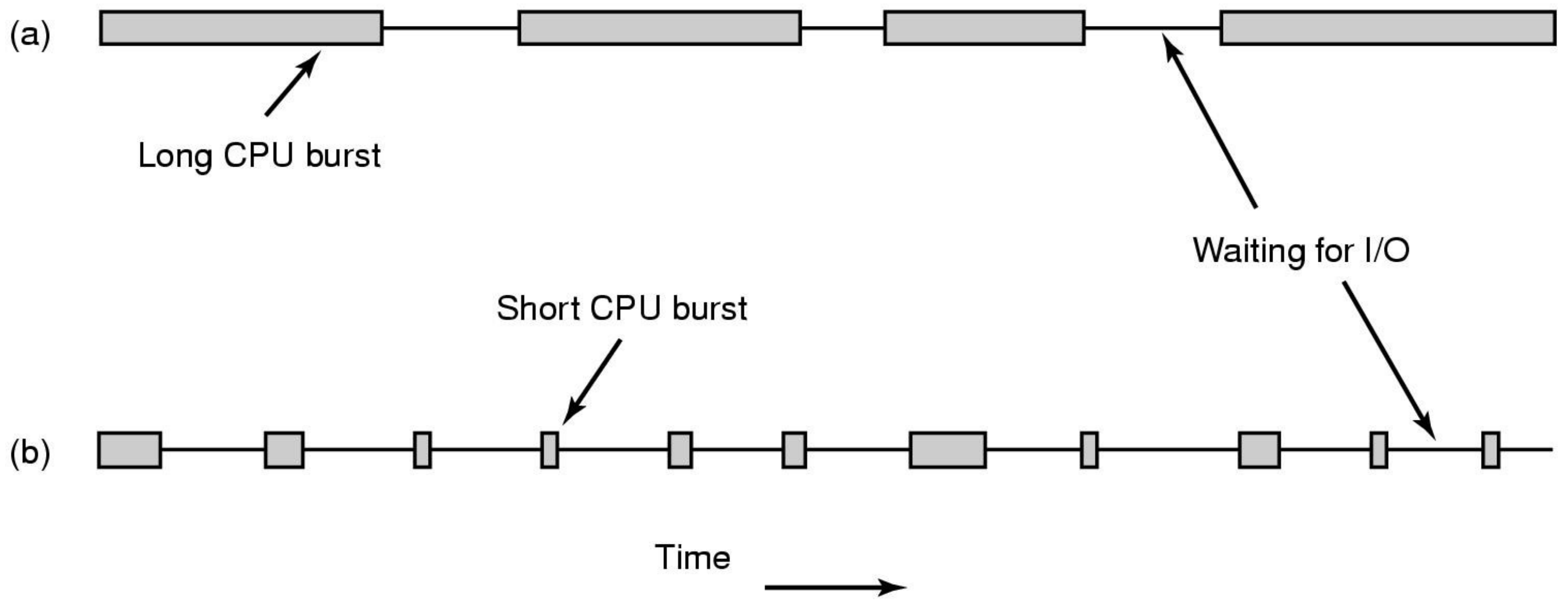
Application Behaviour



a) CPU-Bound process

- Spends most of its computing
- Time to completion largely determined by received CPU time

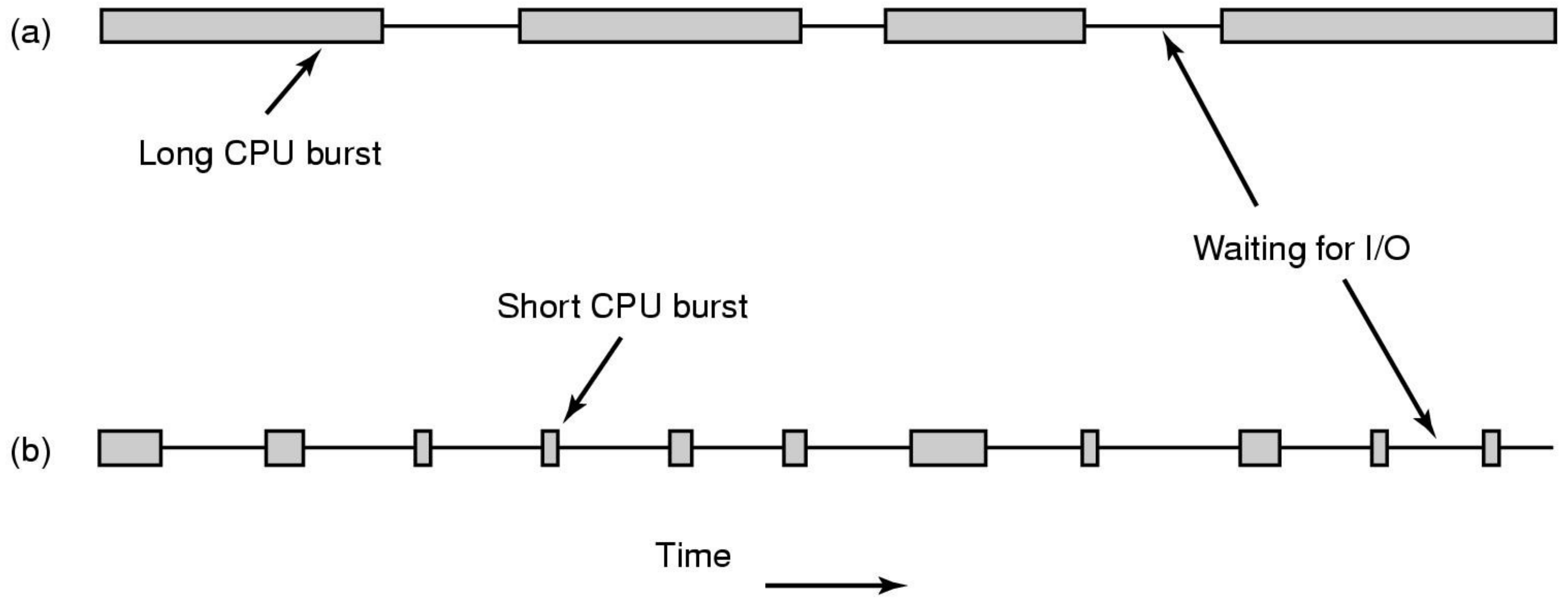
Application Behaviour



b) I/O-Bound process

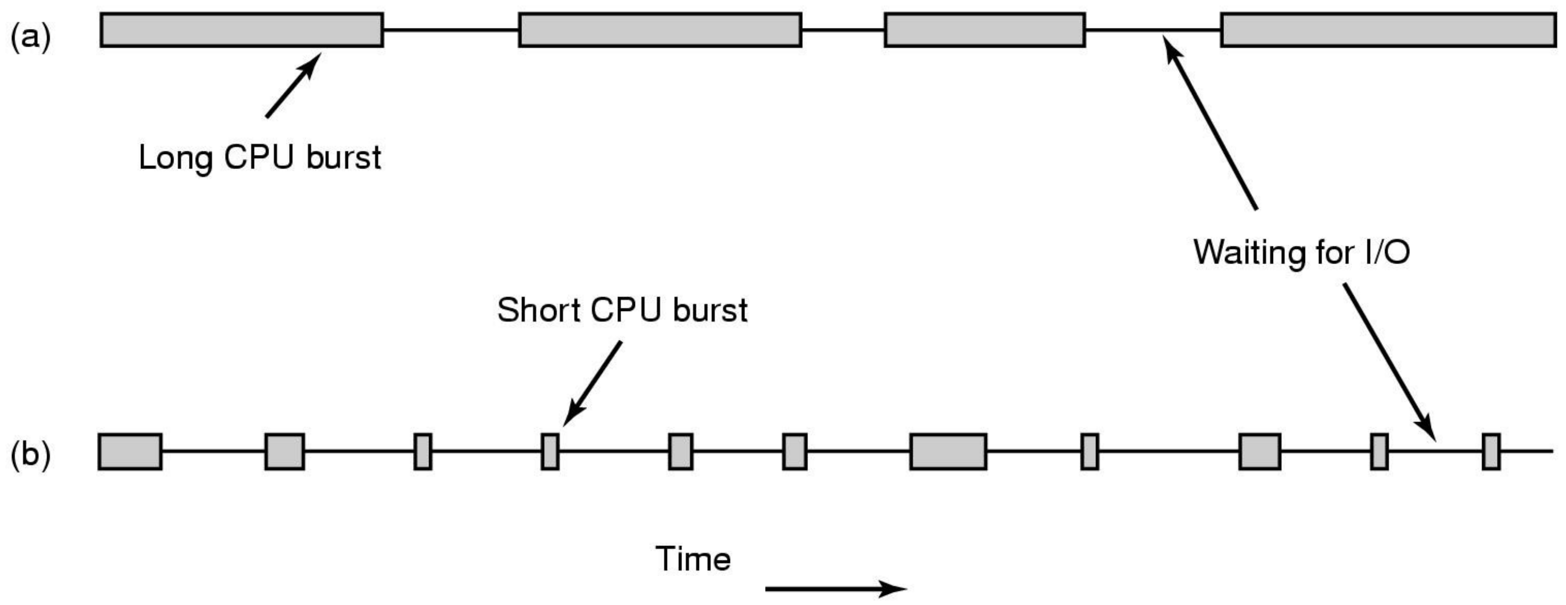
- Spend most of its time waiting for I/O to complete
  - Small bursts of CPU to process I/O and request next I/O
- Time to completion largely determined by I/O request time

Observation



- We need a mix of CPU-bound and I/O-bound processes to keep both CPU and I/O systems busy
- Processes change from CPU- to I/O-bound (or vice versa) in different phases of execution

Key Insight



- Choosing to run an I/O-bound process delays a CPU-bound process by very little
- Choosing to run a CPU-bound process prior to an I/O-bound process delays the next I/O request significantly
  - No overlap of I/O waiting with computation
  - Results in device (disk) not as busy as possible

⇒ Generally, favour I/O-bound processes over CPU-bound processes

When is scheduling performed?

- A new process
  - Run the parent or the child?
- A process exits
  - Who runs next?
- A process waits for I/O
  - Who runs next?
- A process blocks on a lock
  - Who runs next? The lock holder?
- An I/O interrupt occurs
  - Who do we resume, the interrupted process or the process that was waiting?
- On a timer interrupt? (See next slide)

- Generally, a scheduling decision is required when a process (or thread) can no longer continue, or when an activity results in more than one ready process.

Preemptive versus Non-preemptive Scheduling

- Non-preemptive
  - Once a thread is in the *running* state, it continues until it completes, blocks on I/O, or voluntarily yields the CPU
  - A single process can monopolised the entire system
- Preemptive Scheduling
  - Current thread can be interrupted by OS and moved to *ready* state.
  - Usually after a timer interrupt and process has exceeded its maximum run time
    - Can also be as a result of higher priority process that has become *ready* (after I/O interrupt).
  - Ensures fairer service as single thread can't monopolise the system
    - Requires a timer interrupt

Categories of Scheduling Algorithms

- The choice of scheduling algorithm depends on the goals of the application (or the operating system)
  - No one algorithm suits all environments
- We can roughly categorise scheduling algorithms as follows
  - Batch Systems
    - No users directly waiting, can optimise for overall machine performance
  - Interactive Systems
    - Users directly waiting for their results, can optimise for users perceived performance
  - Realtime Systems
    - Jobs have deadlines, must schedule such that all jobs (predictably) meet their deadlines.

Goals of Scheduling Algorithms

- All Algorithms
  - Fairness
    - Give each process a *fair* share of the CPU
  - Policy Enforcement
    - What ever policy chosen, the scheduler should ensure it is carried out
  - Balance/Efficiency
    - Try to keep all parts of the system busy

Goals of Scheduling Algorithms

- Interactive Algorithms
  - Minimise *response time* (*latency*)
    - Response time is the time difference between issuing a command and getting the result
      - E.g selecting a menu, and getting the result of that selection
    - Response time is important to the user's perception of the performance of the system.
  - Provide *Proportionality*
    - Proportionality is the user expectation that short jobs will have a short response time, and long jobs can have a long response time.
    - Generally, favour short jobs

Goals of Scheduling Algorithms

- Real-time Algorithms
  - Must meet deadlines
    - Each job/task has a deadline.
    - A missed deadline can result in data loss or catastrophic failure
      - Aircraft control system missed deadline to apply brakes
  - Provide Predictability
    - For some apps, an occasional missed deadline is okay
      - E.g. video decoder
    - Predictable behaviour allows smooth video decoding with only rare skips

Goals of Scheduling Algorithms

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Interactive Scheduling

General-purpose Scheduling

Challenges of General Scheduing

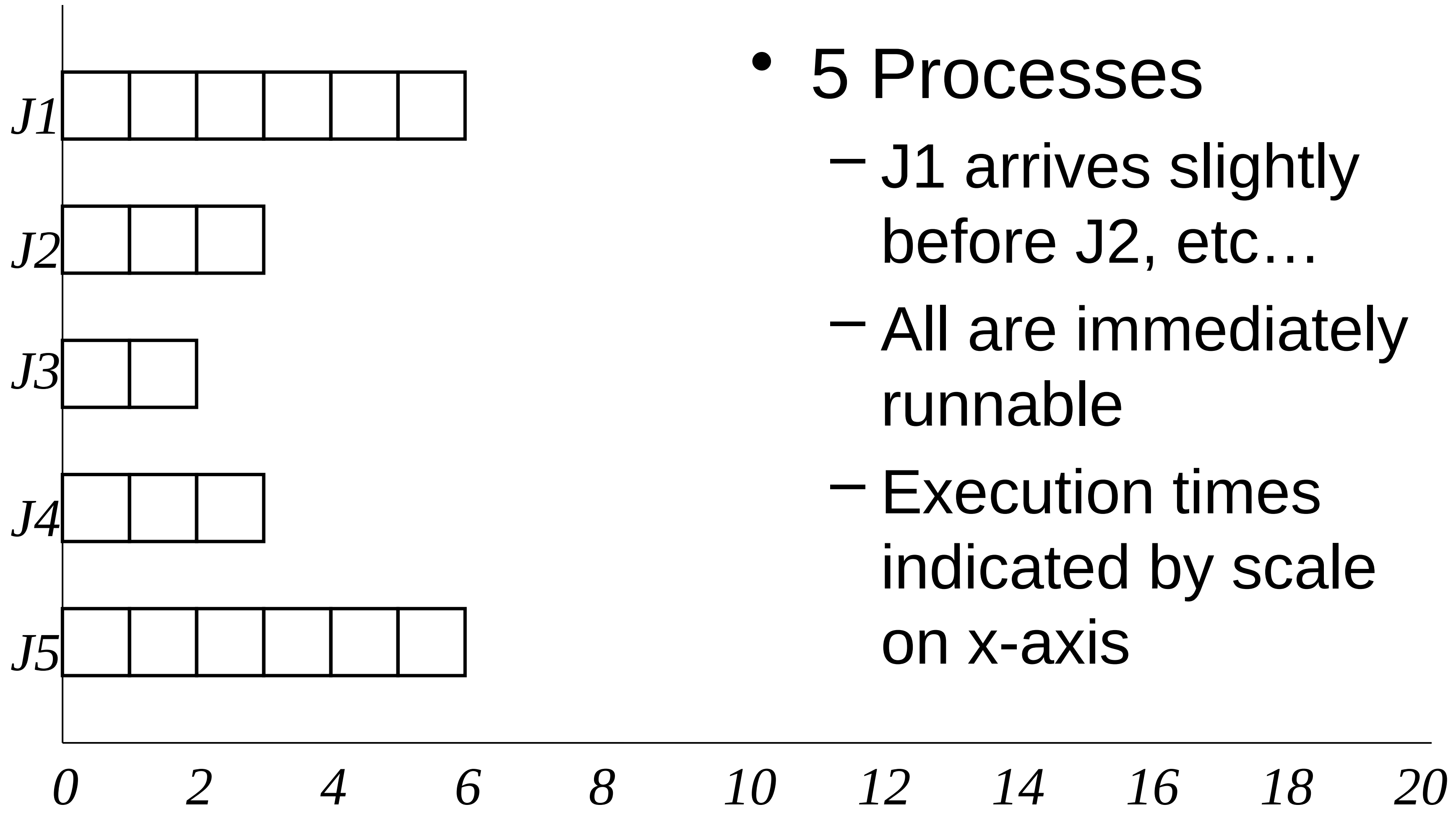
Often we do not know the actual goals or priorities of the user.

- Scenario A:
  - User gets a software update notification, accepts it and switches back to their video.
- Scenario B:
  - User starts their assignment building and switches to their music player.

Round Robin Scheduling

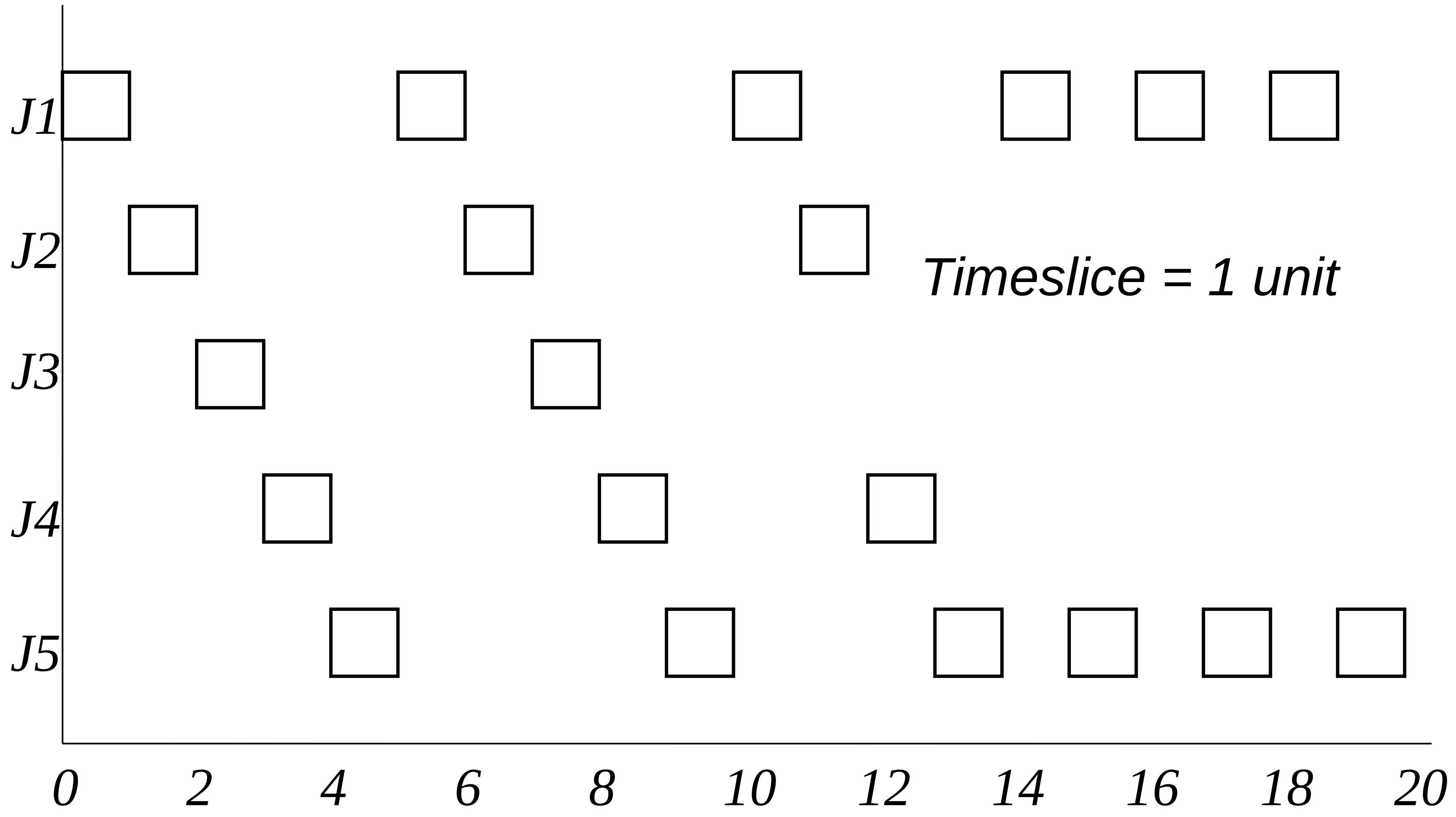
- Each process is given a *timeslice* to run in
- When the timeslice expires, the next process preempts the current process, and runs for its timeslice, and so on
  - The preempted process is placed at the end of the queue
- Implemented with
  - A ready queue
  - A regular timer interrupt

Example

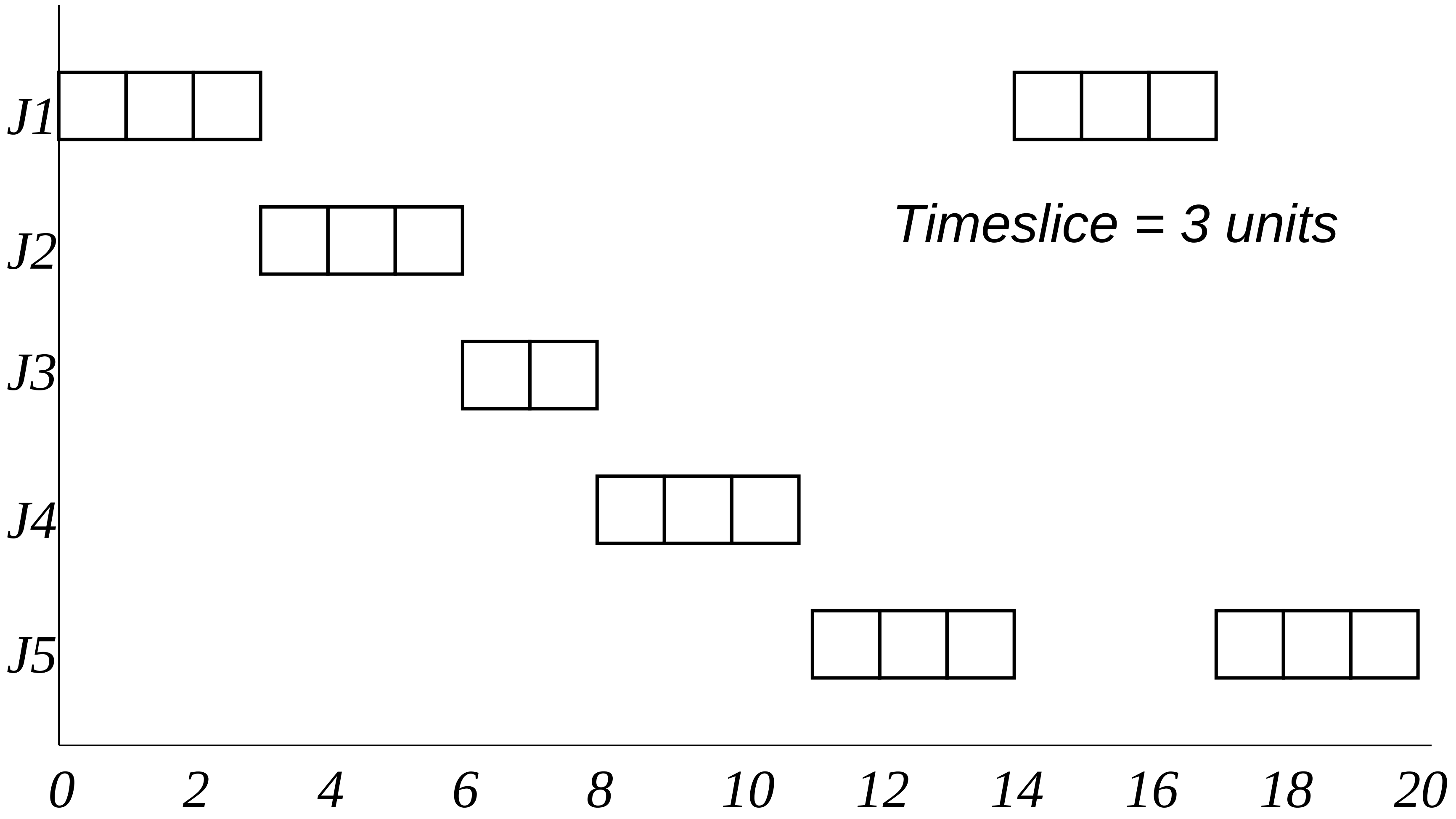


- 5 Processes
  - J1 arrives slightly before J2, etc…
  - All are immediately runnable
  - Execution times indicated by scale on x-axis

Round Robin Schedule



Round Robin Schedule



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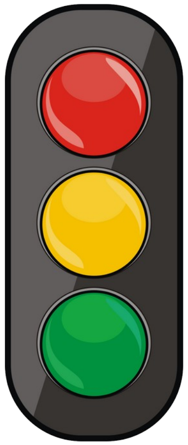
Round Robin

- Pros
  - Fair, easy to implement
- Con
  - Assumes everybody is equal
- Issue: What should the timeslice be?
  - Too short
    - Waste a lot of time switching between processes
    - Example: timeslice of 4ms with 1 ms context switch = 20% round robin overhead
  - Too long
    - System is not responsive
    - Example: timeslice of 100ms
      - If 10 people hit “enter” key simultaneously, the last guy to run will only see progress after 1 second.
    - Degenerates into FCFS if timeslice longer than burst length

Trade-offs

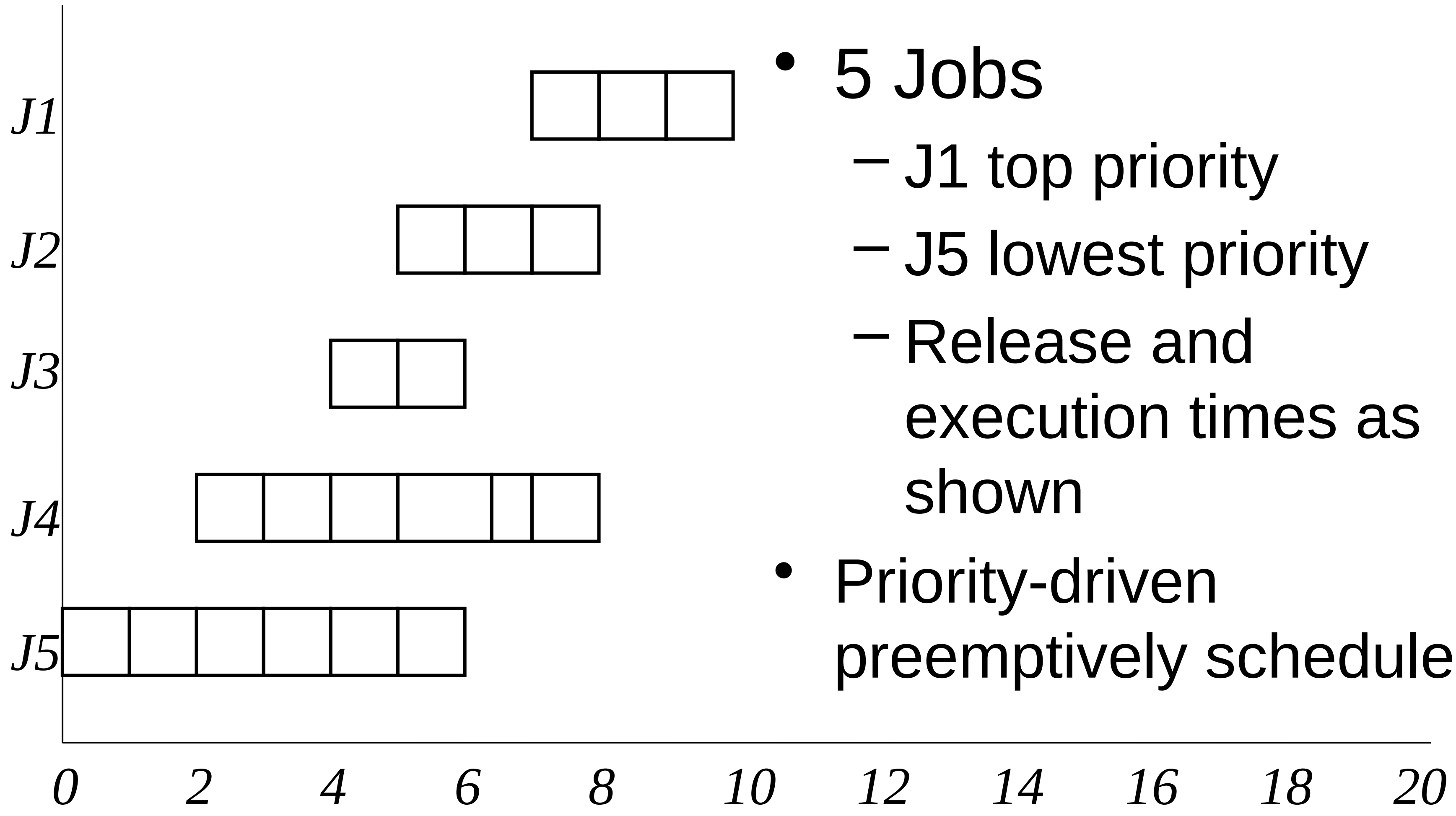
- Issue: What should the timeslice be?
- OS design is full of trade-offs. This is one of the biggest:
  - Throughput
  - Latency



Priorities

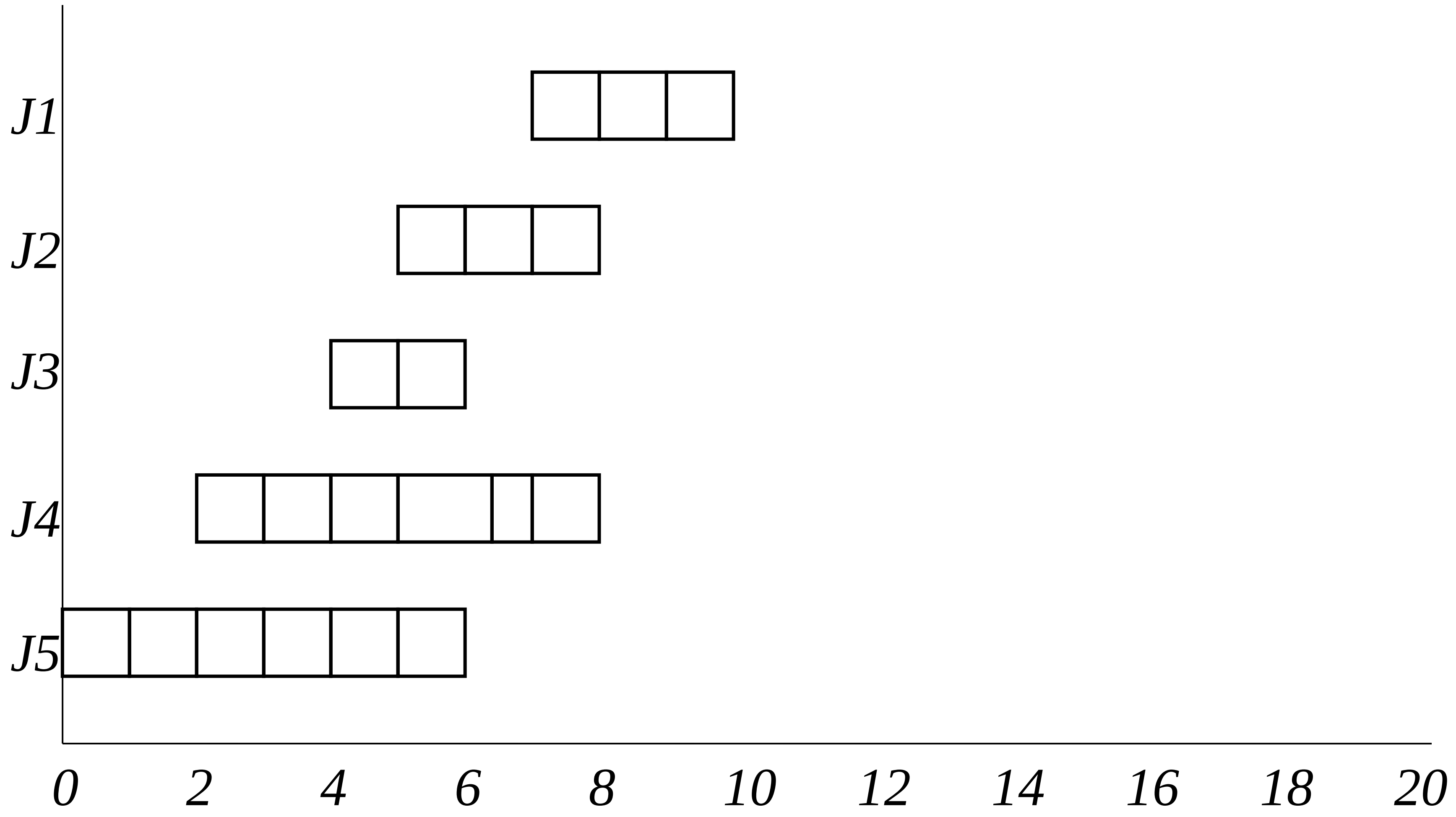
- Downside of round-robin: assumes equal priority
- Instead, each Process (or thread) is associated with a priority
- Provides basic mechanism to influence a scheduler decision:
  - Scheduler will always chooses a thread of higher priority over lower priority
- Priorities can be defined internally or externally
  - Internal: e.g. I/O bound or CPU bound
  - External: e.g. based on importance to the user

Example



- 5 Jobs
  - J1 top priority
  - J5 lowest priority
  - Release and execution times as shown
- Priority-driven preemptively scheduled

Example



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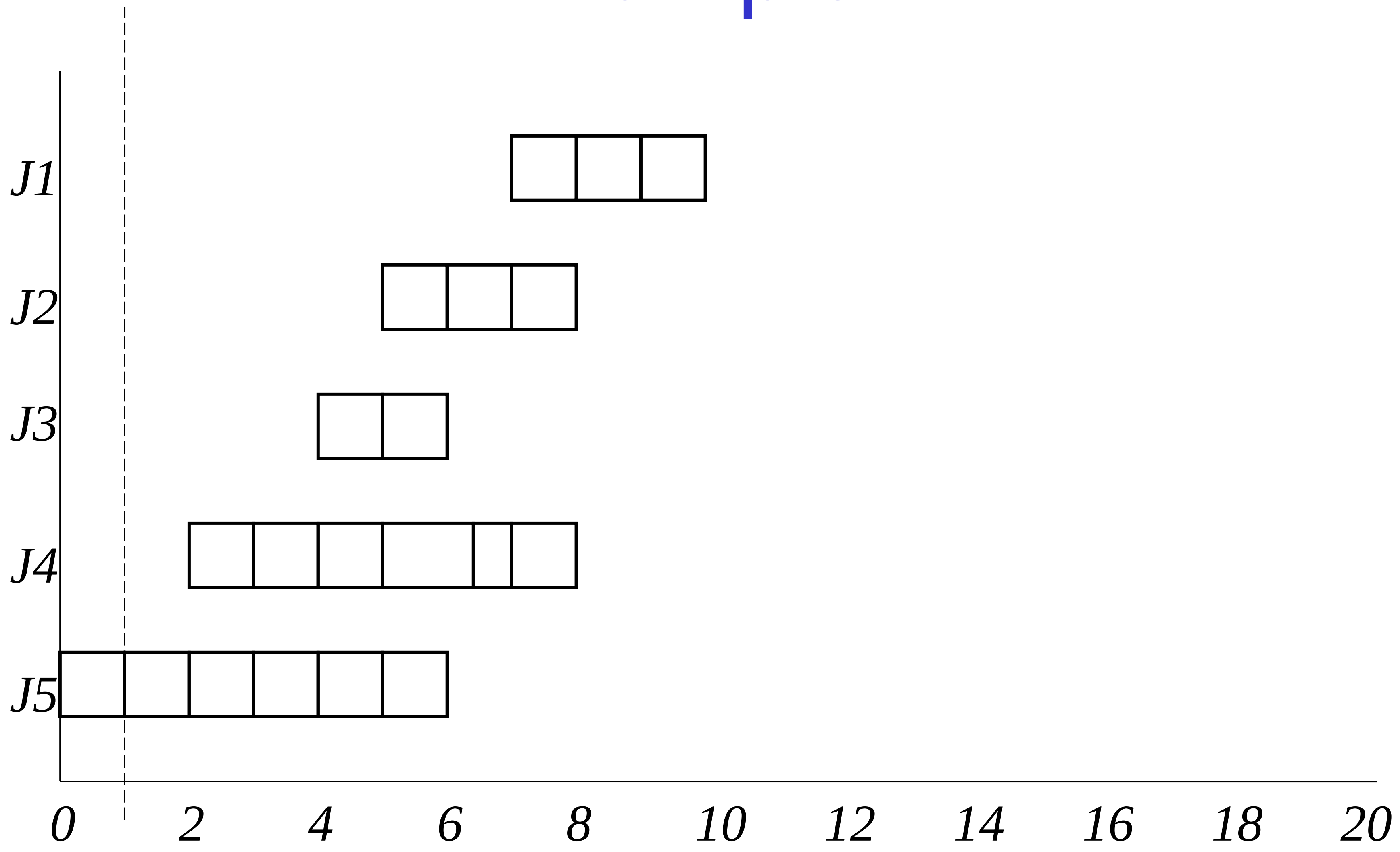

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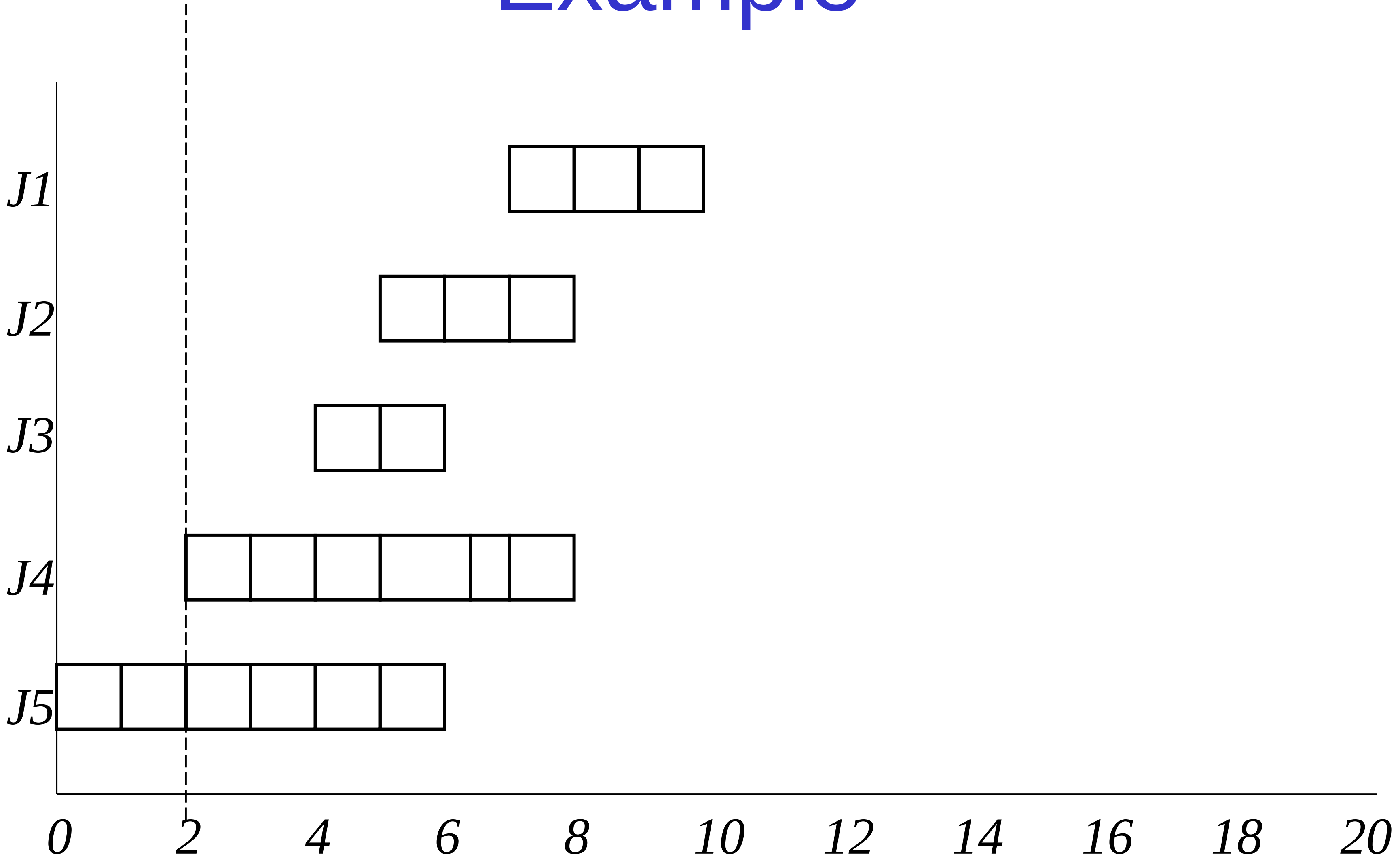

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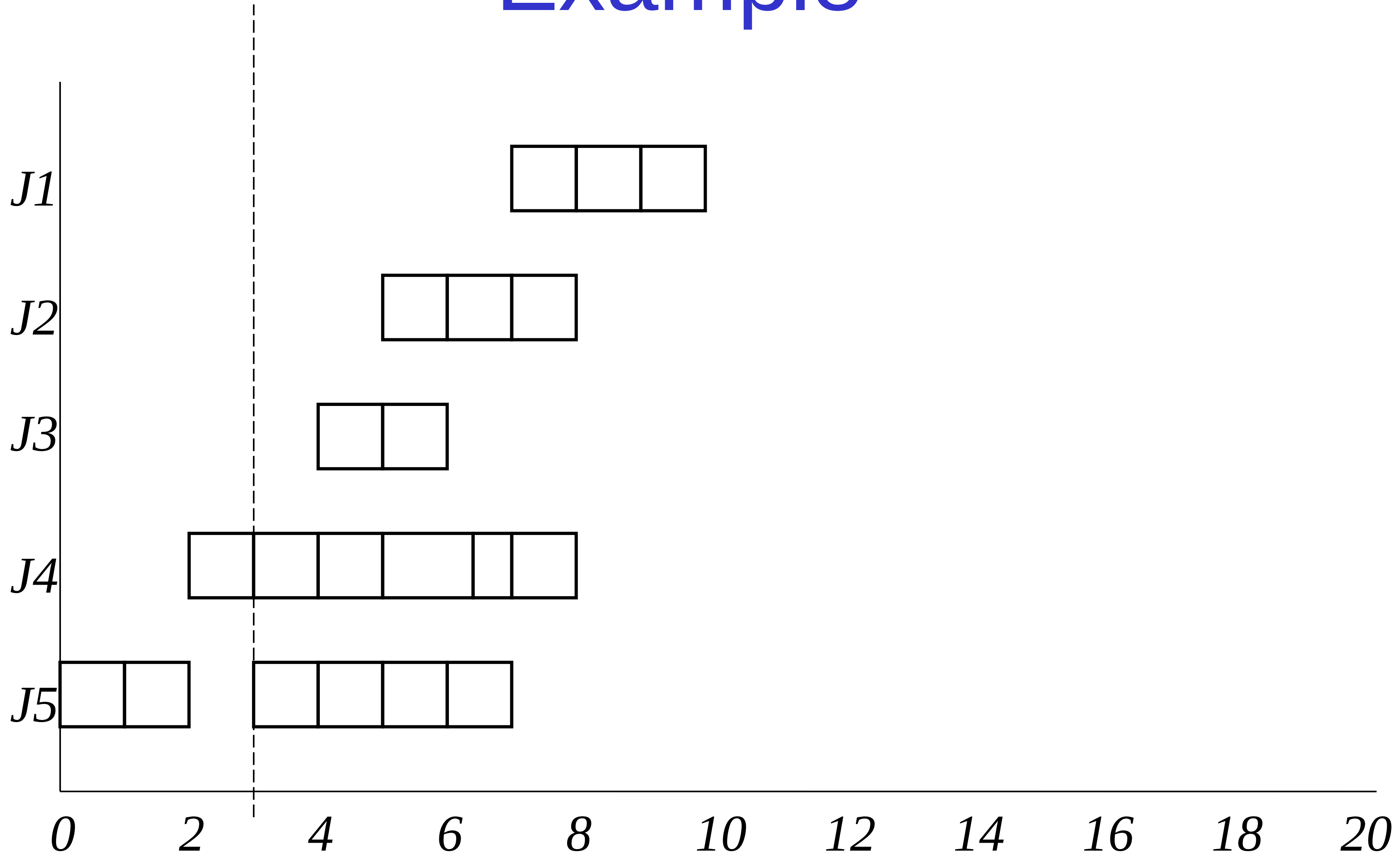

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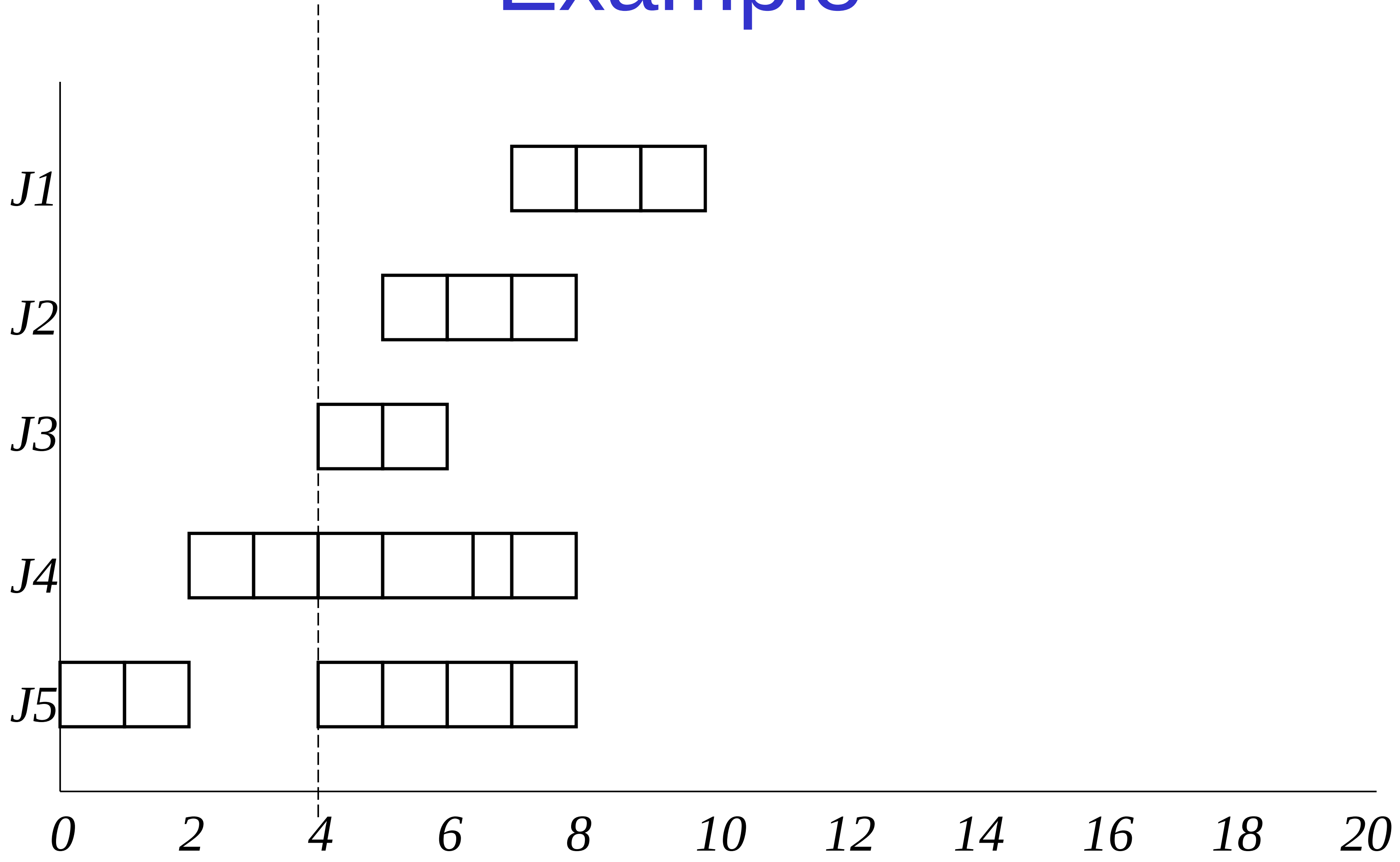

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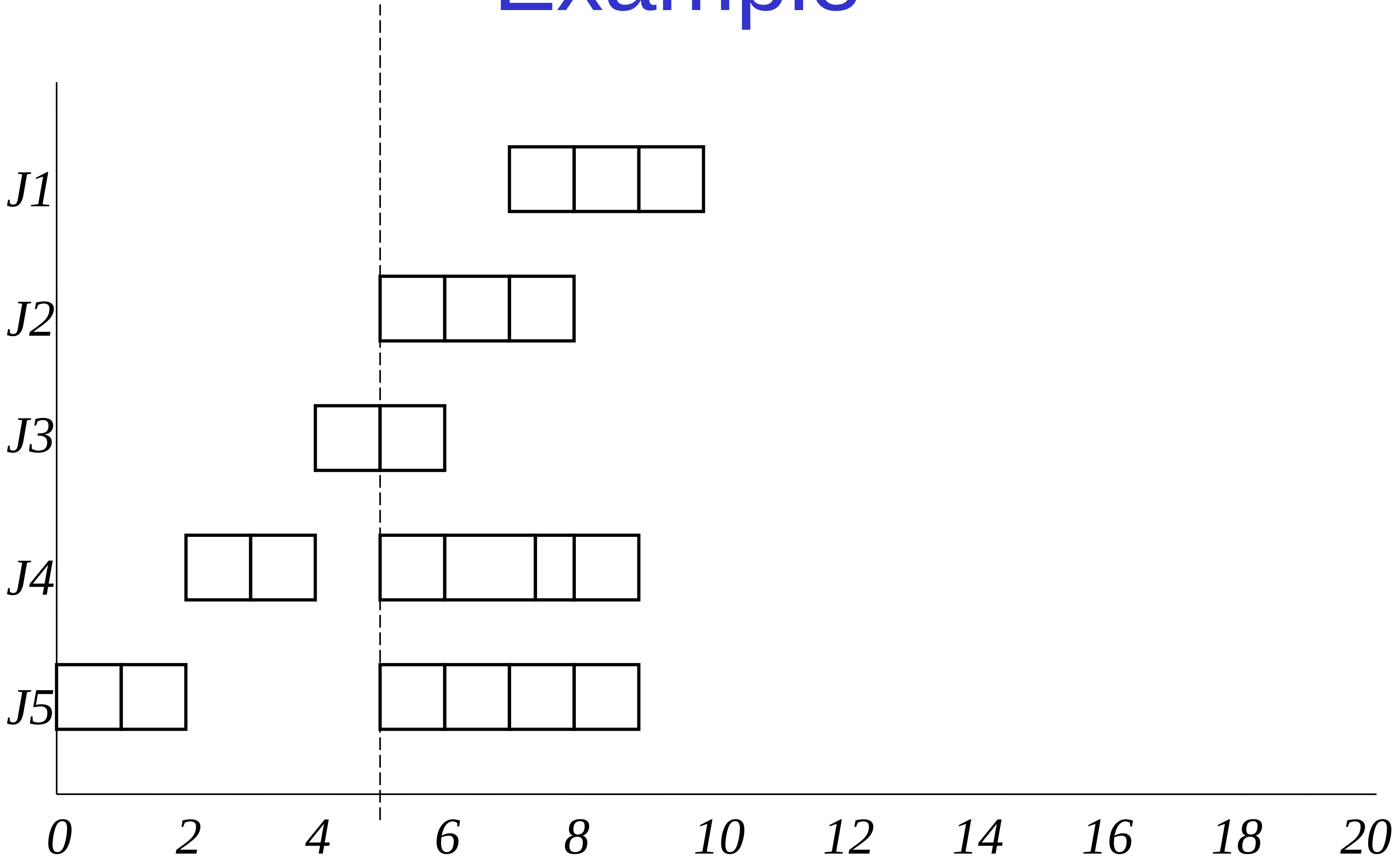

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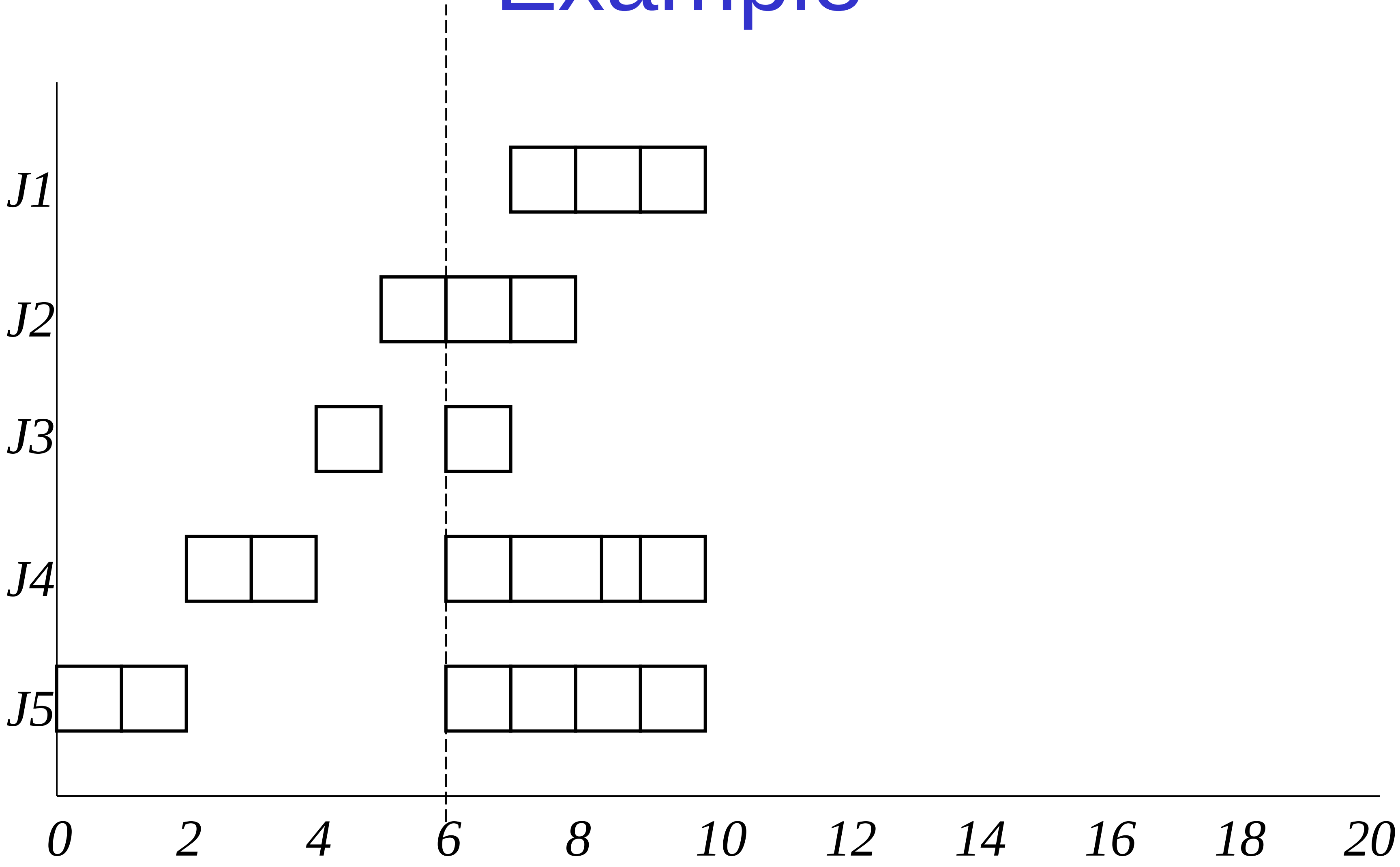

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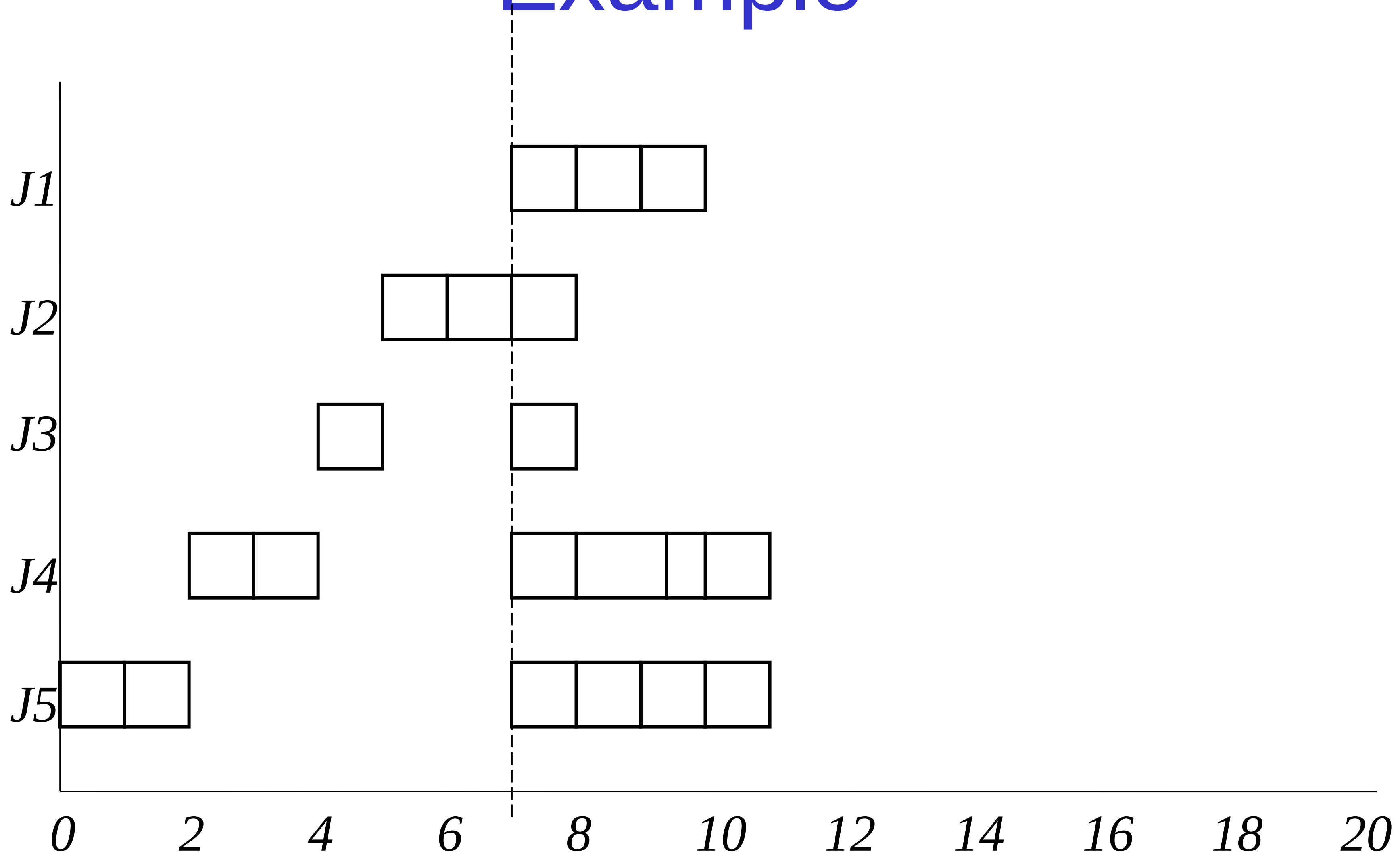

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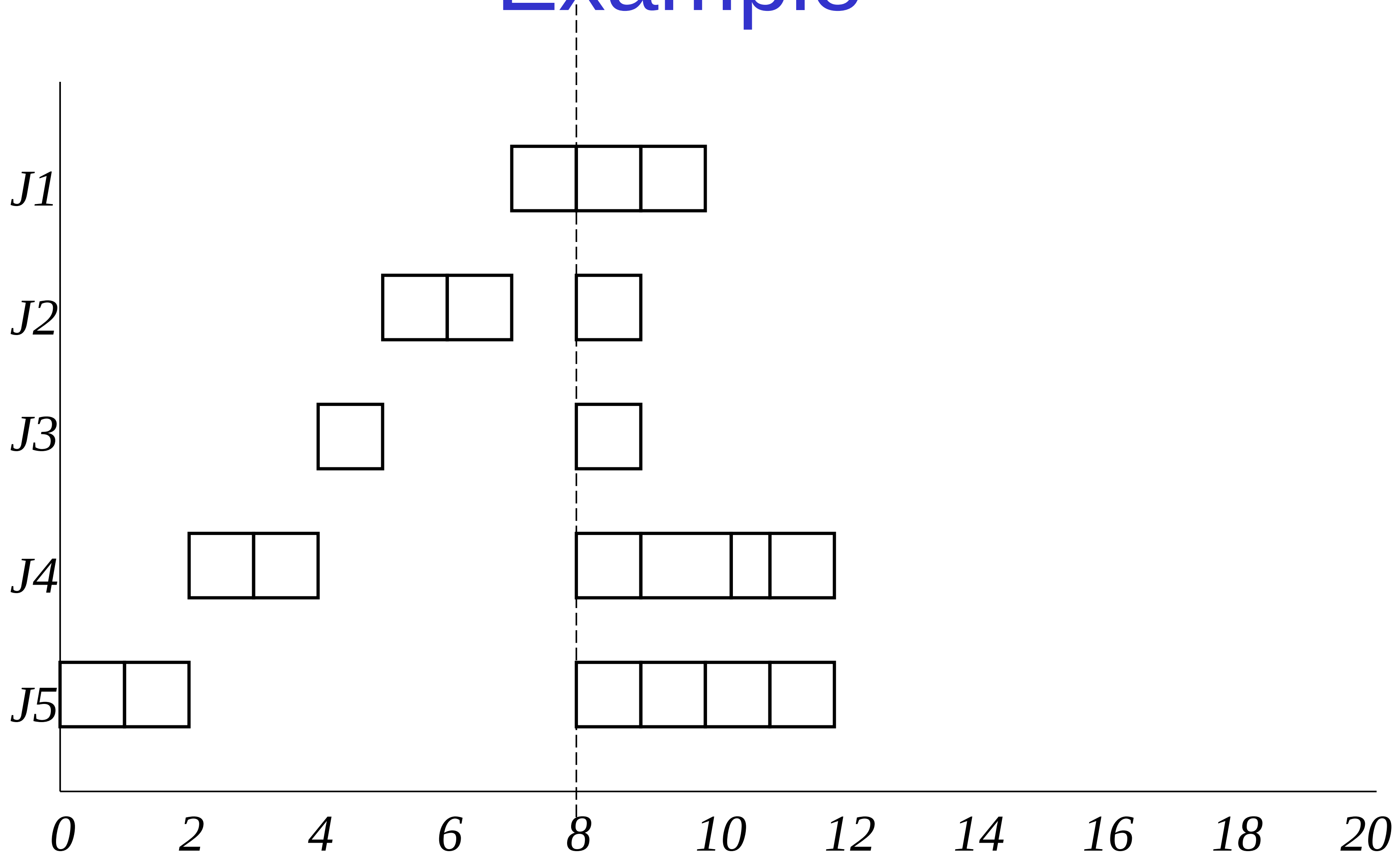

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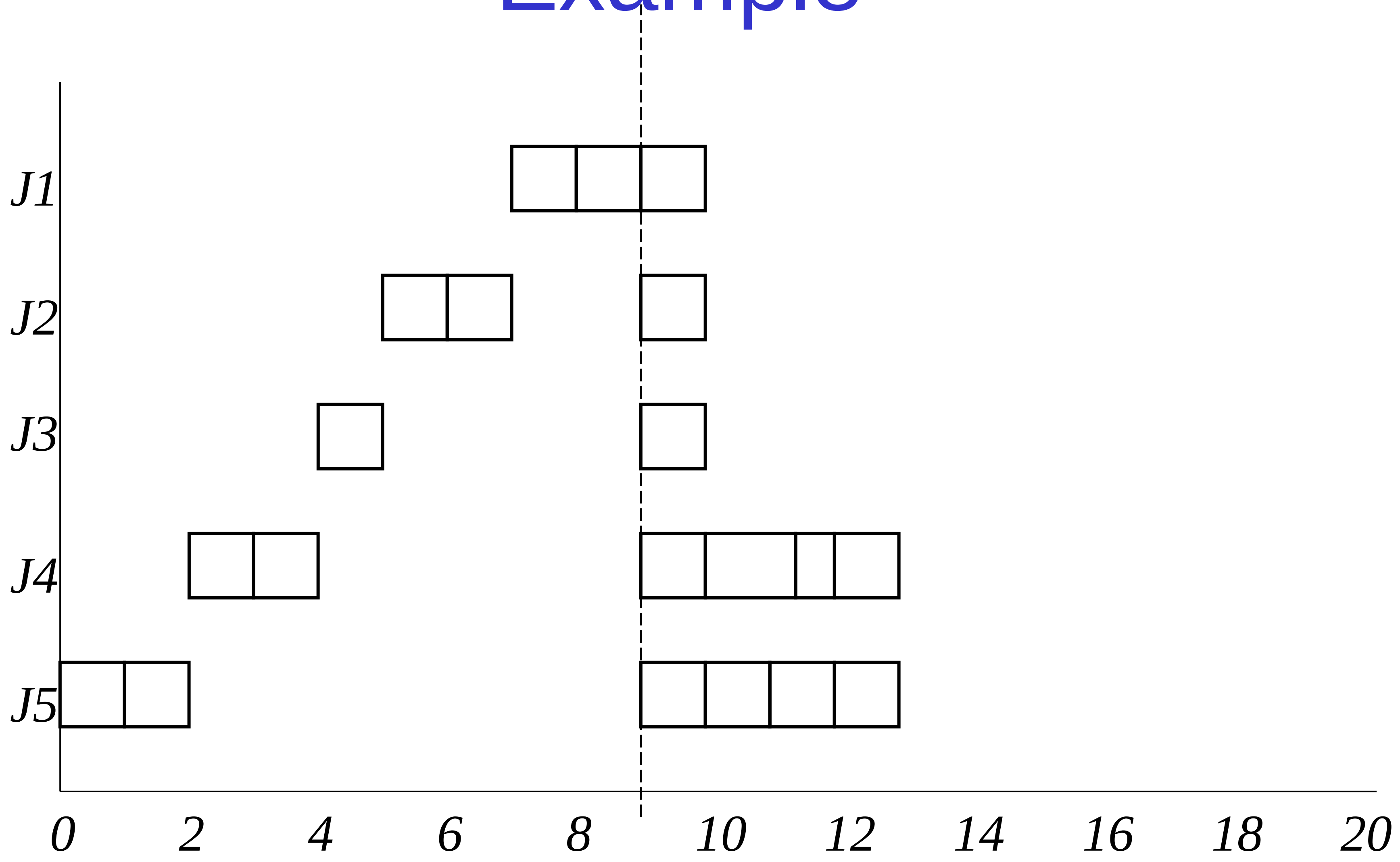

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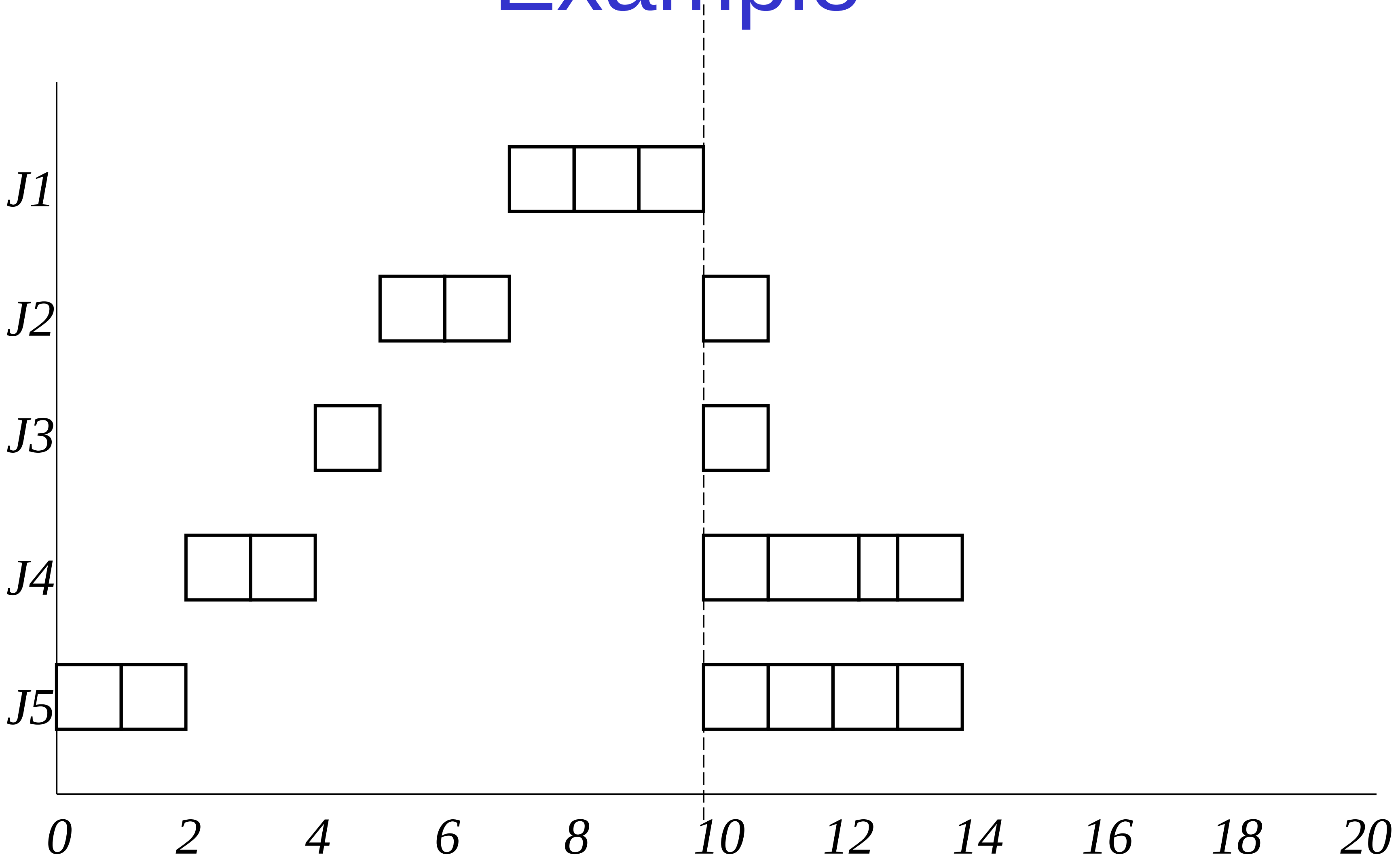

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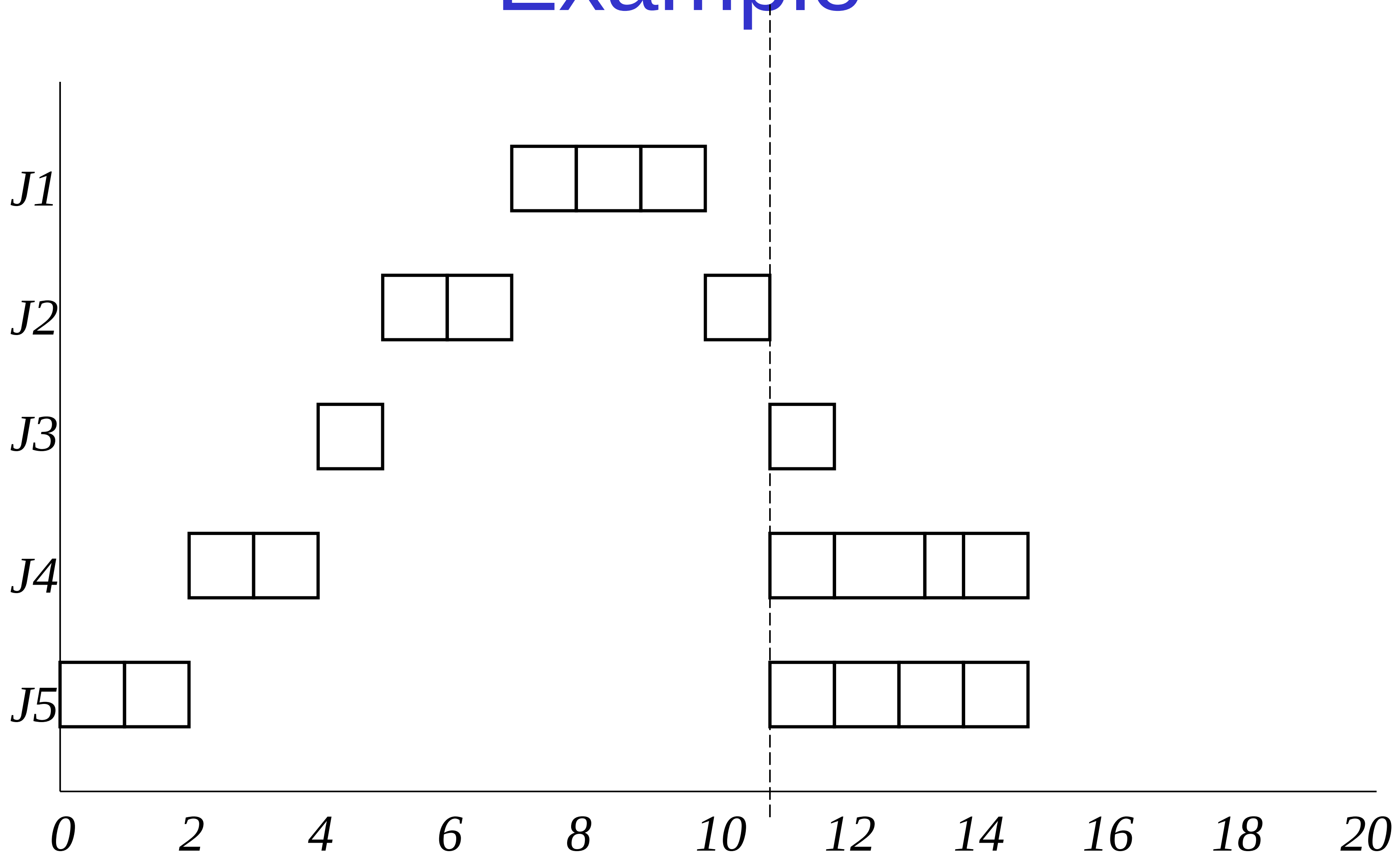

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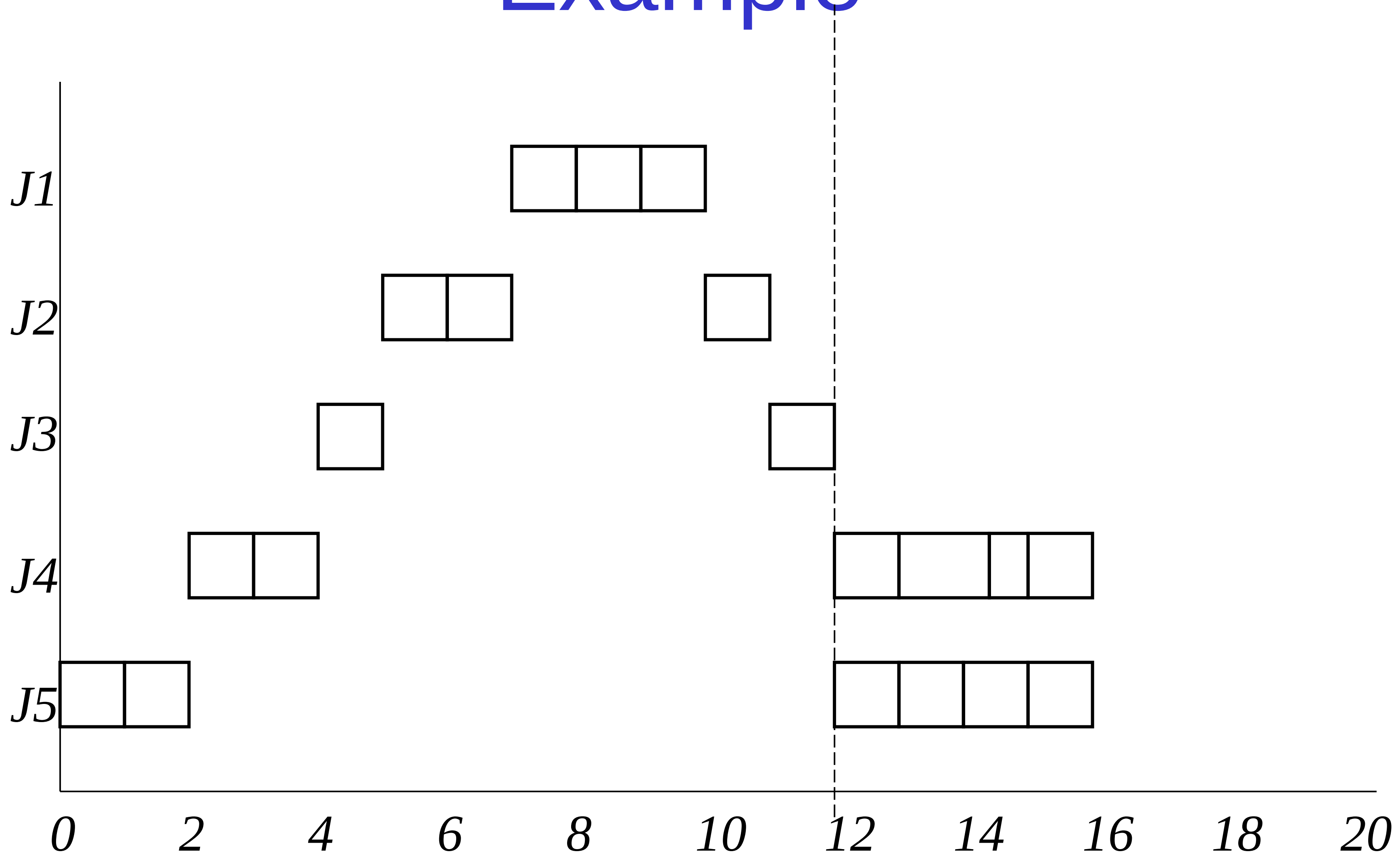

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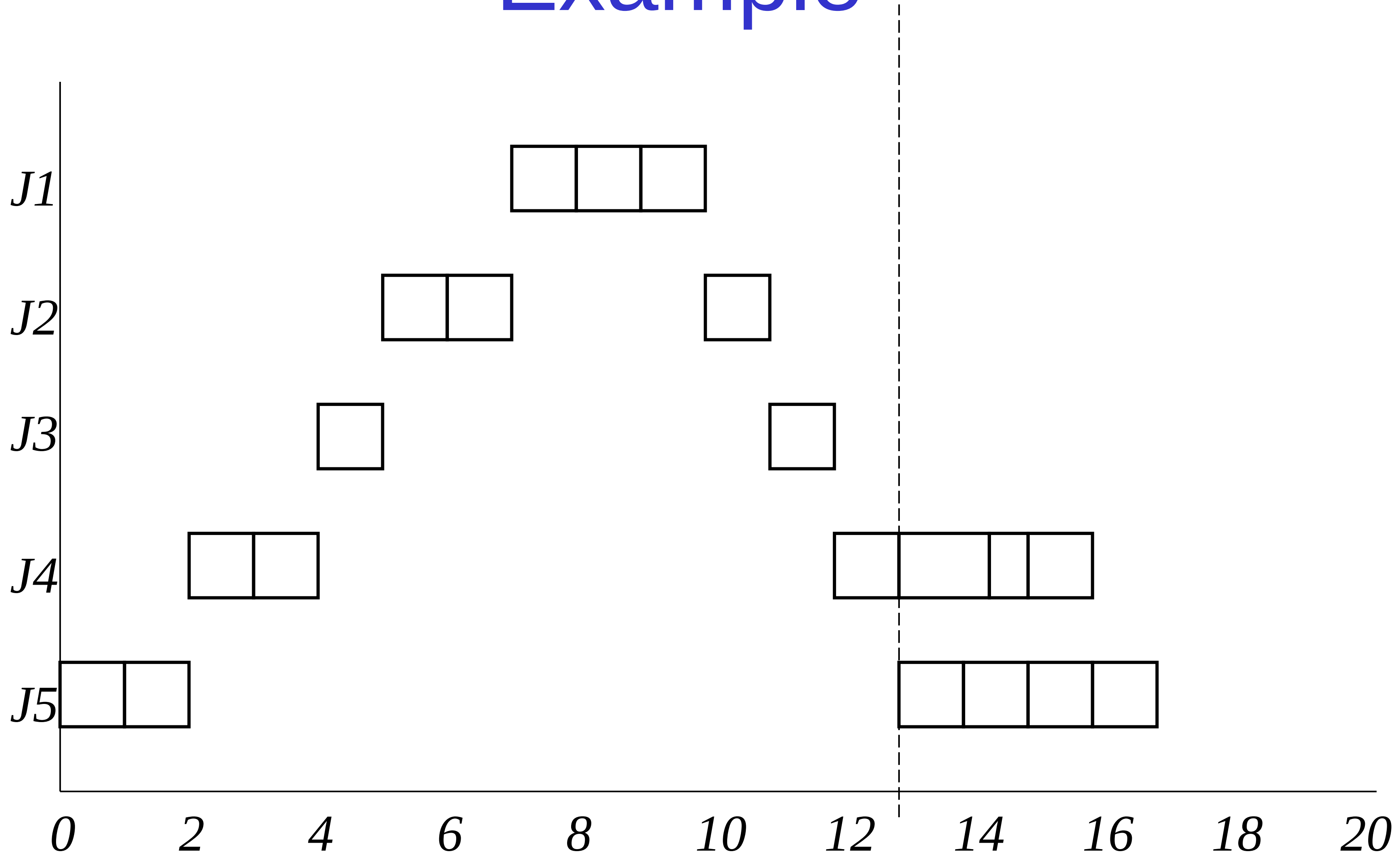

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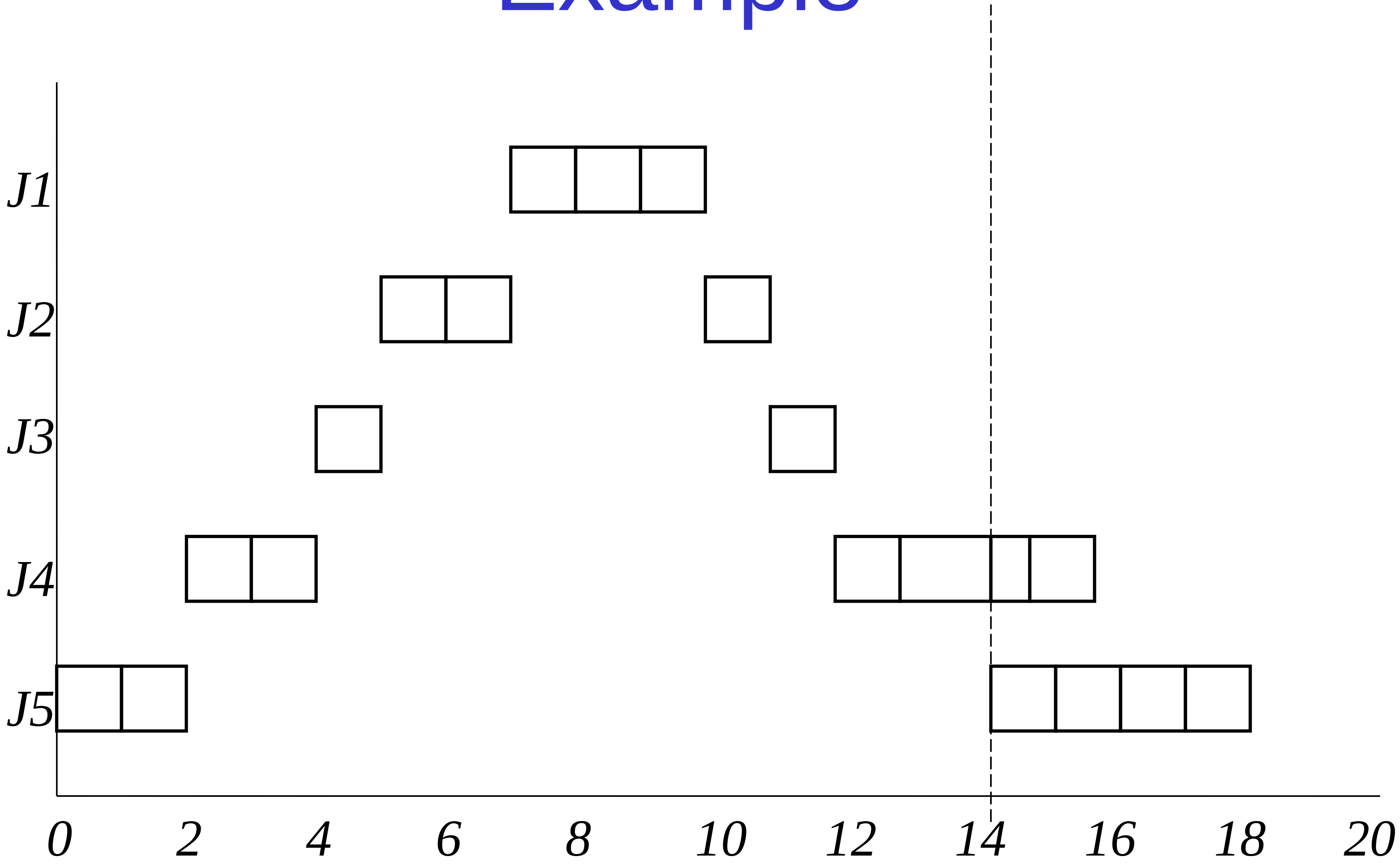

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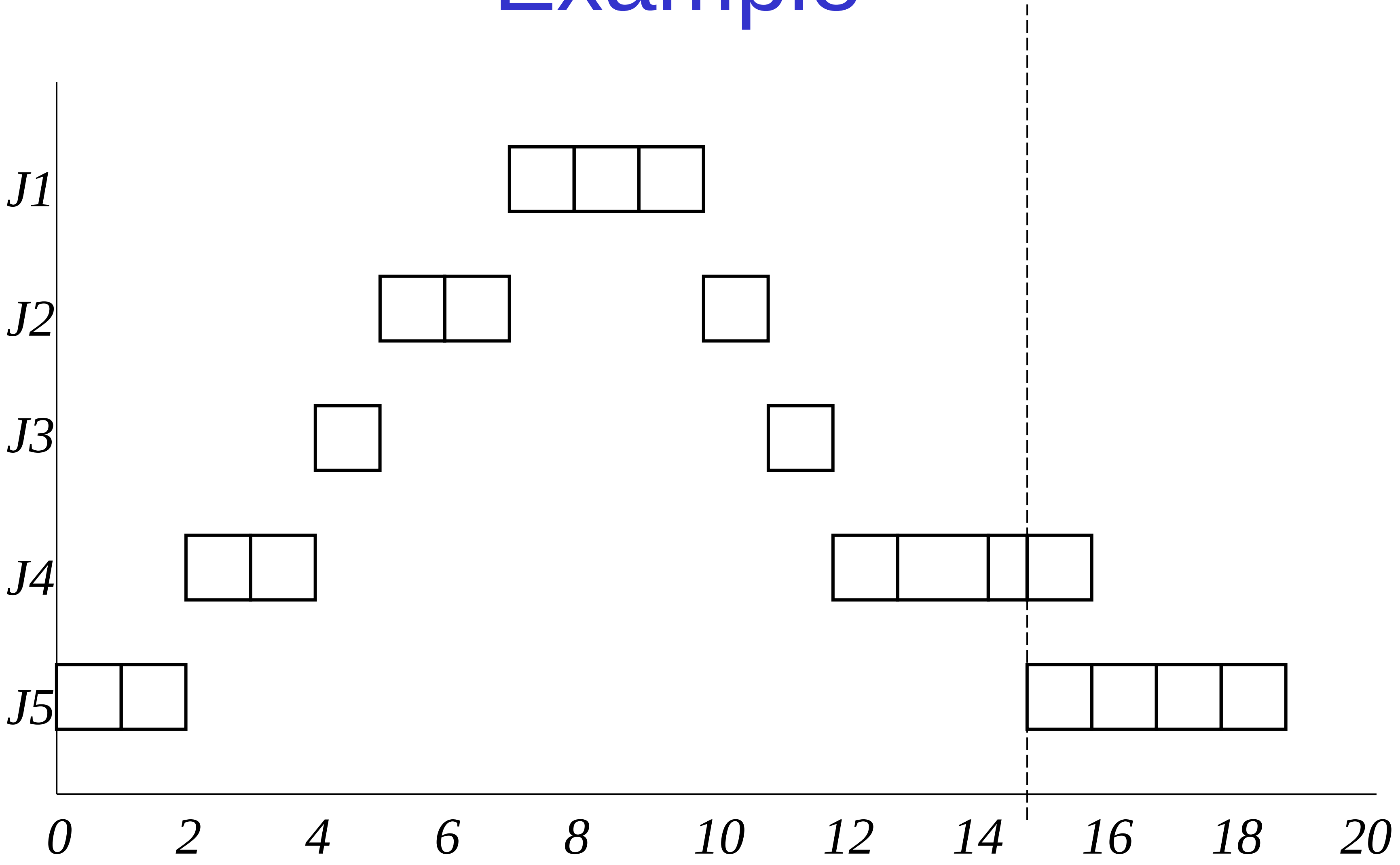

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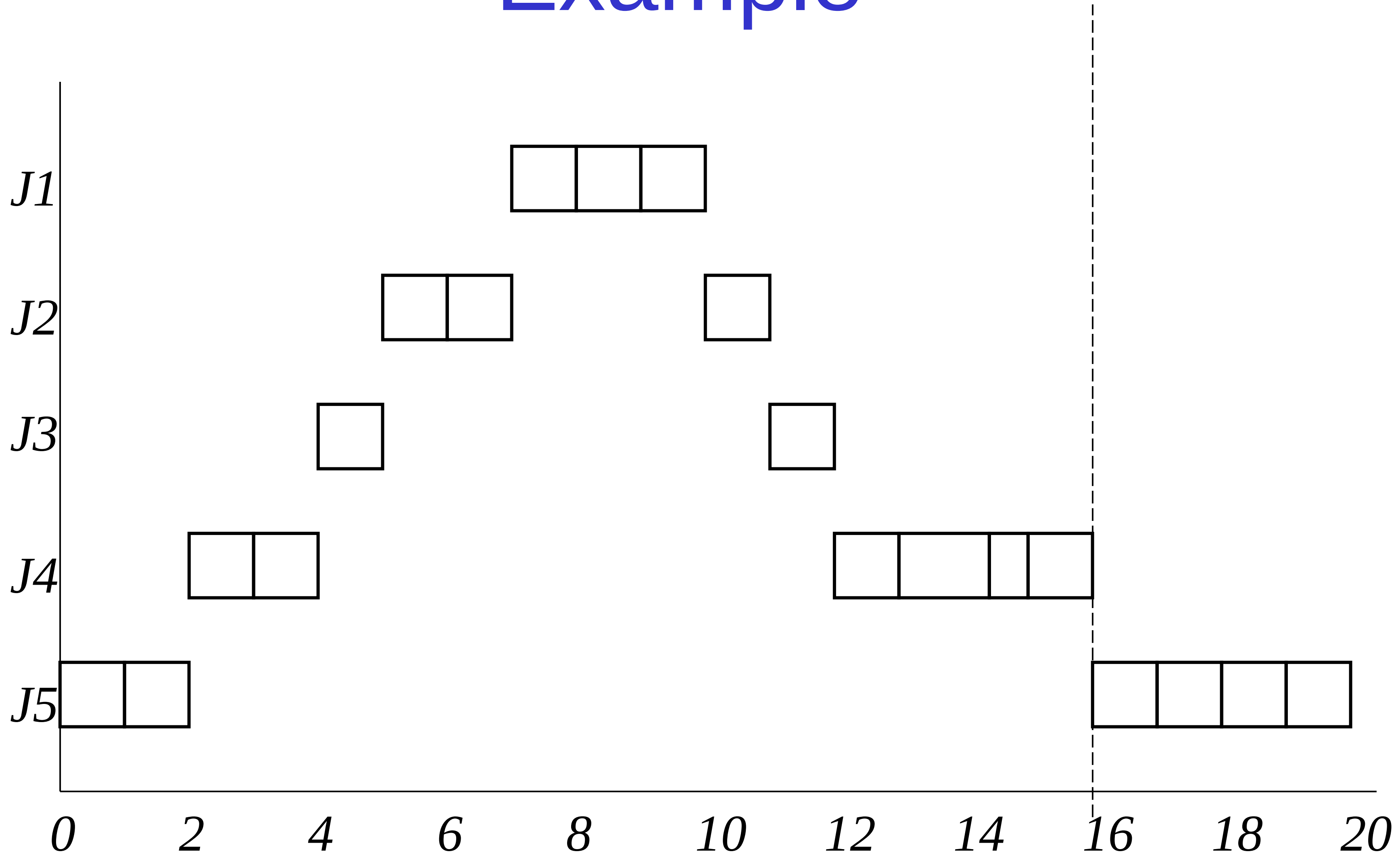

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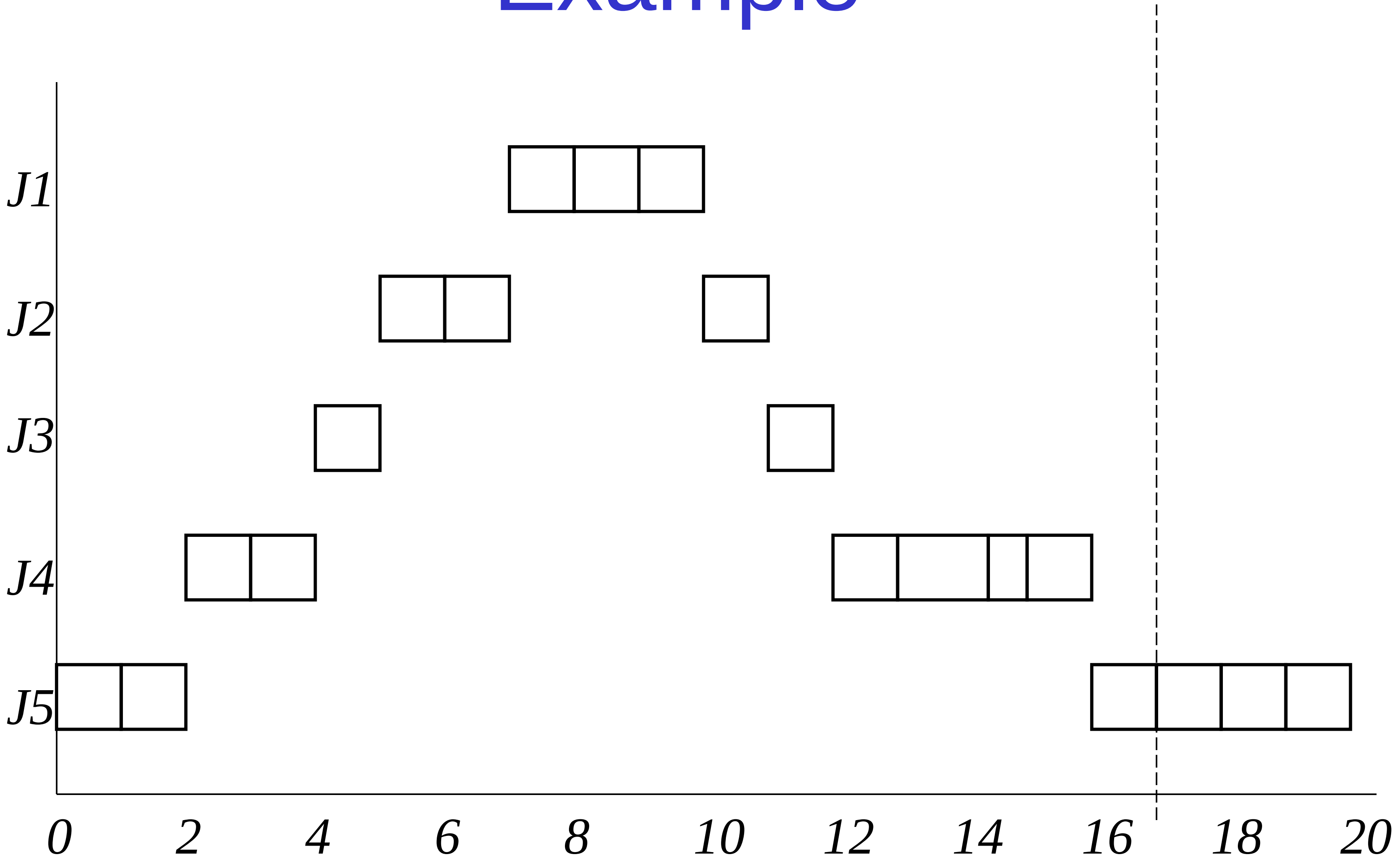

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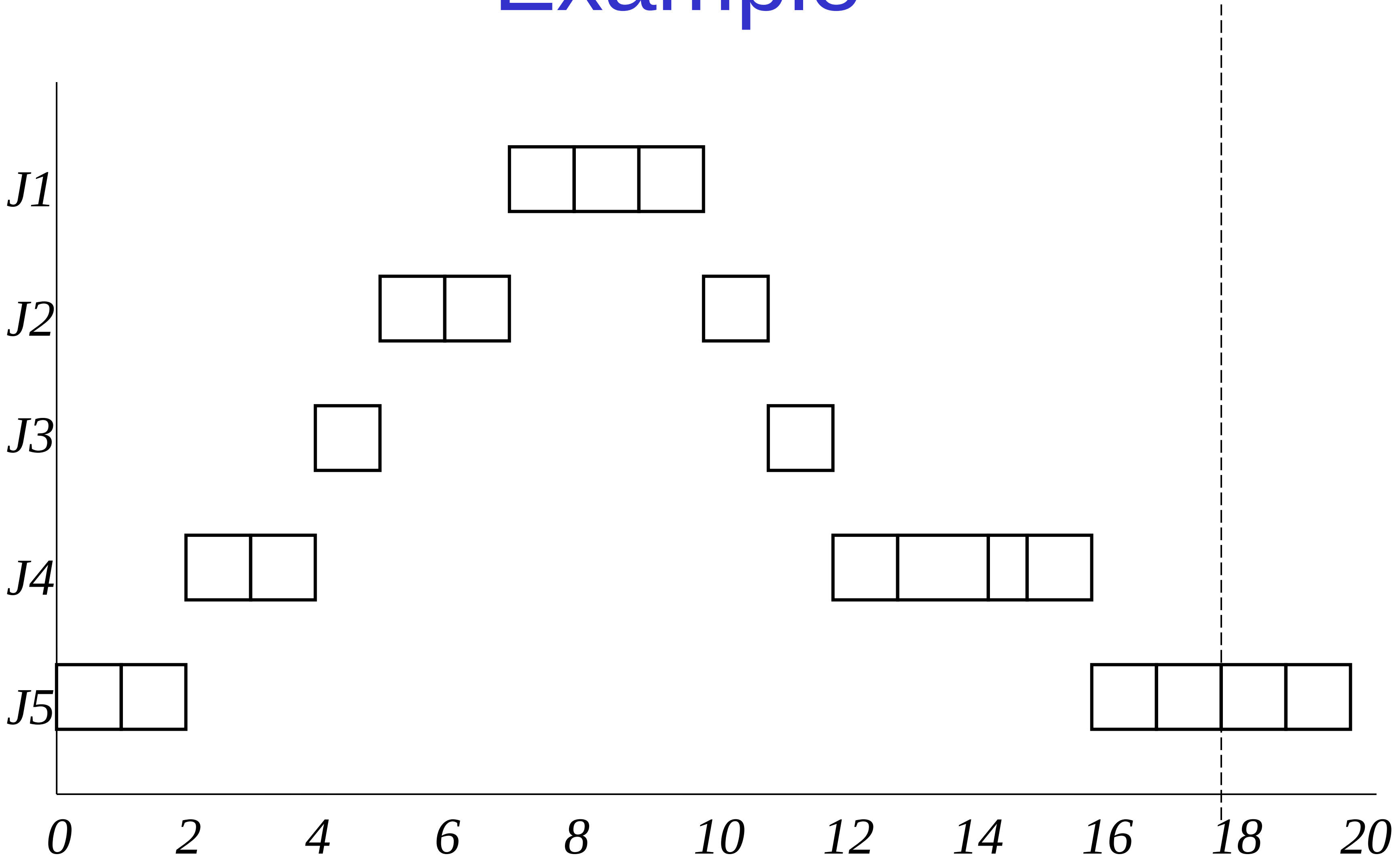

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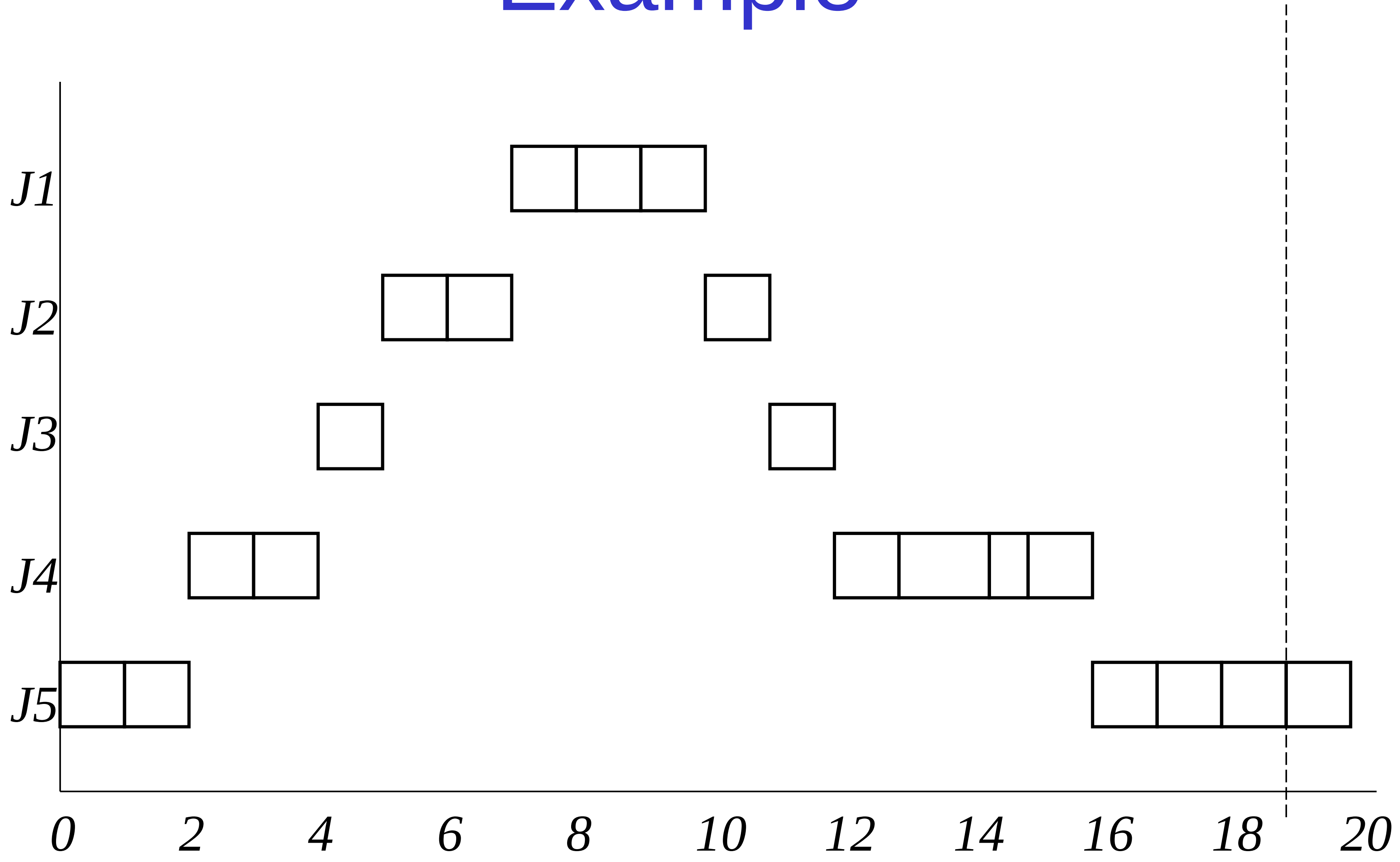

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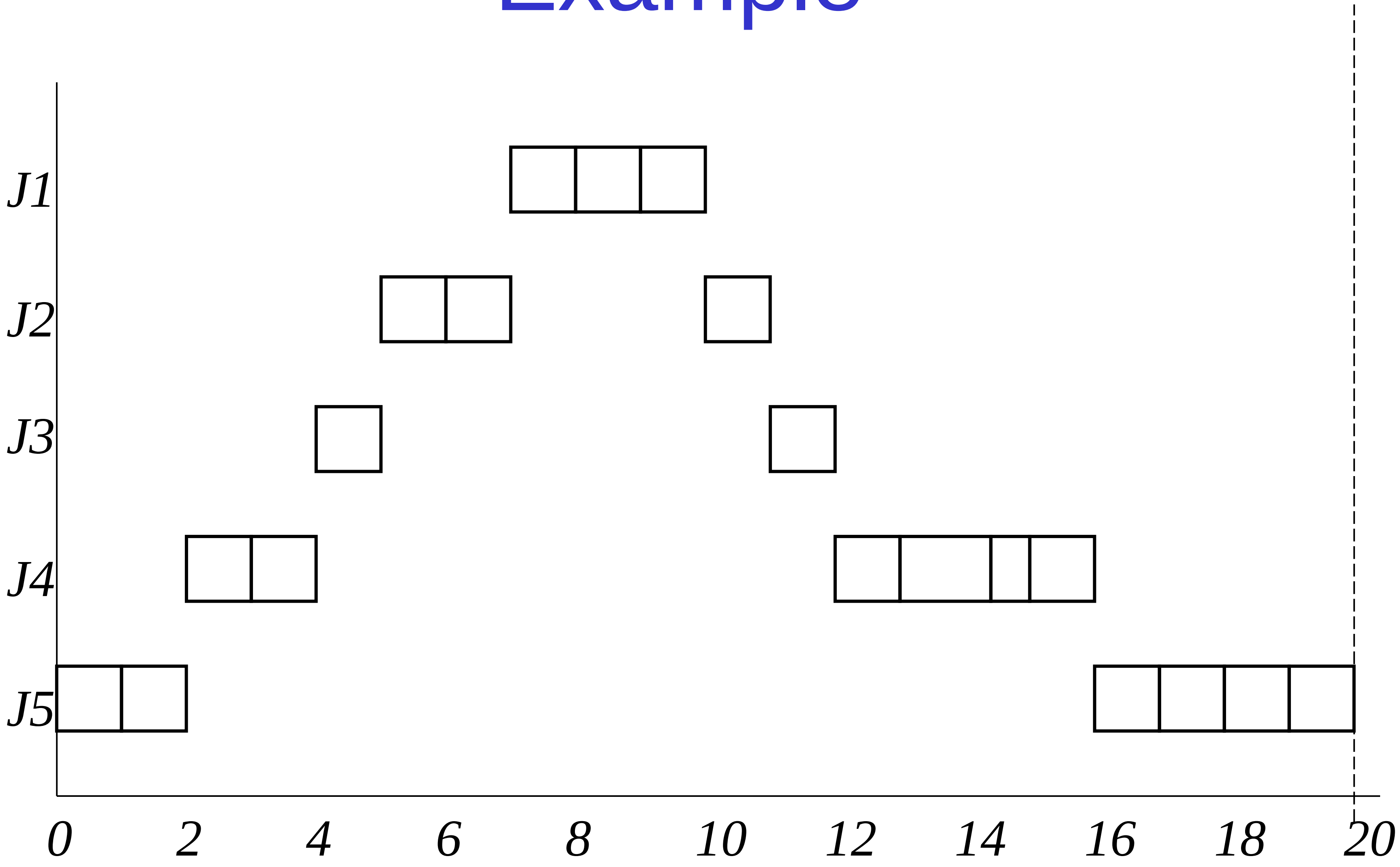
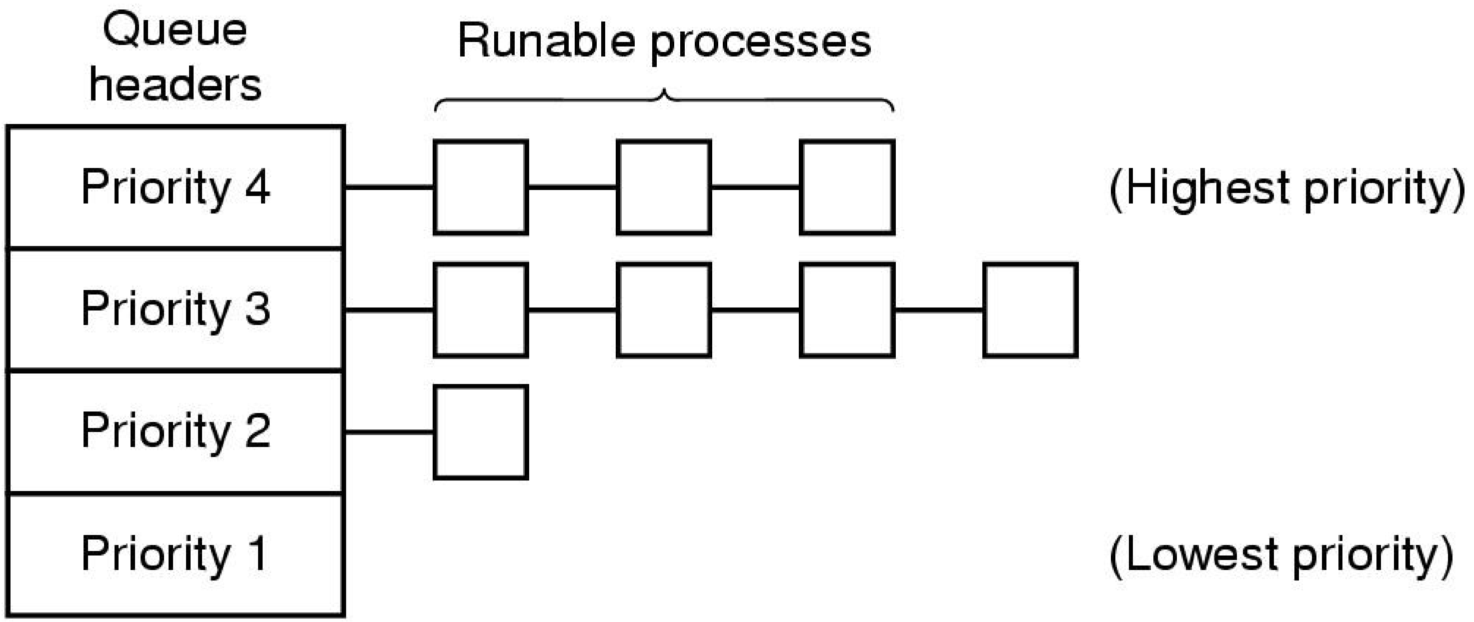


Priorities



- Usually implemented by multiple priority queues, with round robin on each queue
- Con
  - Low priorities can **starve**
    - Need to adapt priorities periodically
      - Based on ageing or execution history

Starvation

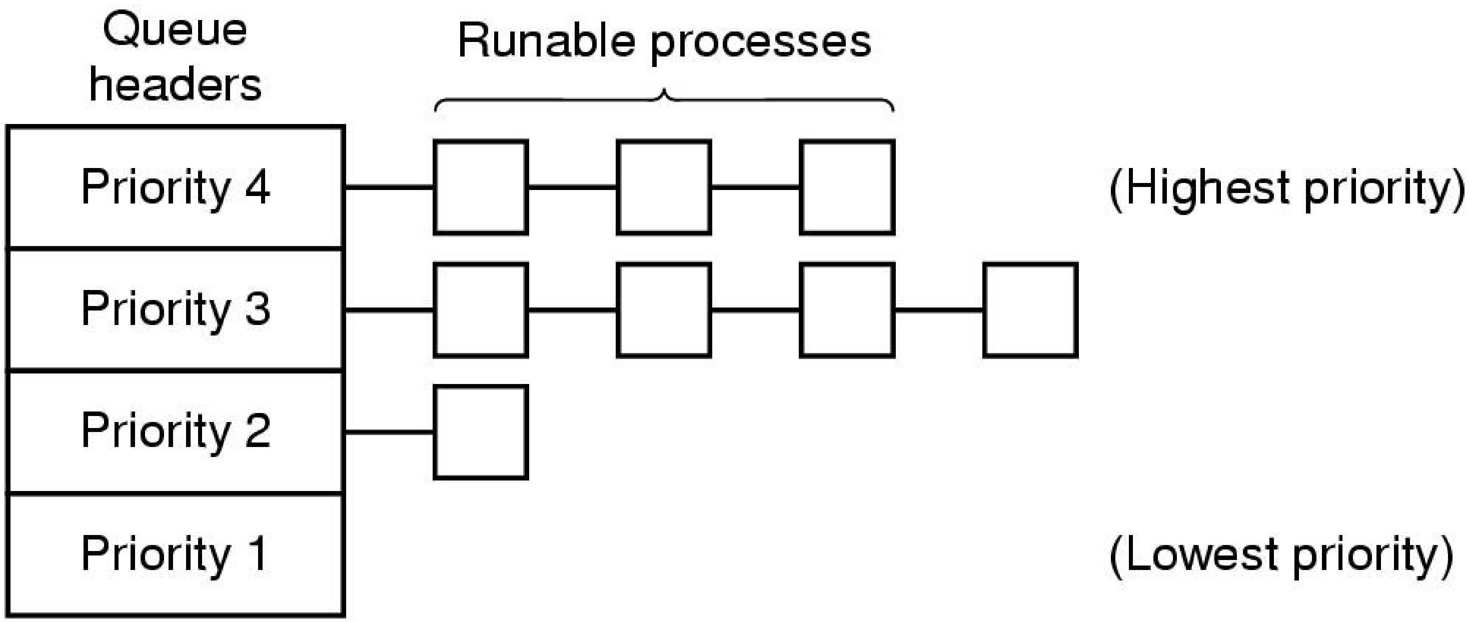
- We’ve seen the concept of **starvation** a few times.
- For synchronisation primitives, starvation is a bug.
  - e.g. If a lock prefers a particular thread.
- For distributed protocols, starvation is a bug.
  - e.g. Some busted approach to dining philosophers.

- For priority-based systems, starvation is a consequence of a rigid policy decision.
  - Not exactly a bug.
  - Qualitatively different to performance or fairness issues.

Starvation Trivia

- Roundabout intersections have a starvation problem.
- Starvation is an interesting metaphor for ethical questions in broader society.

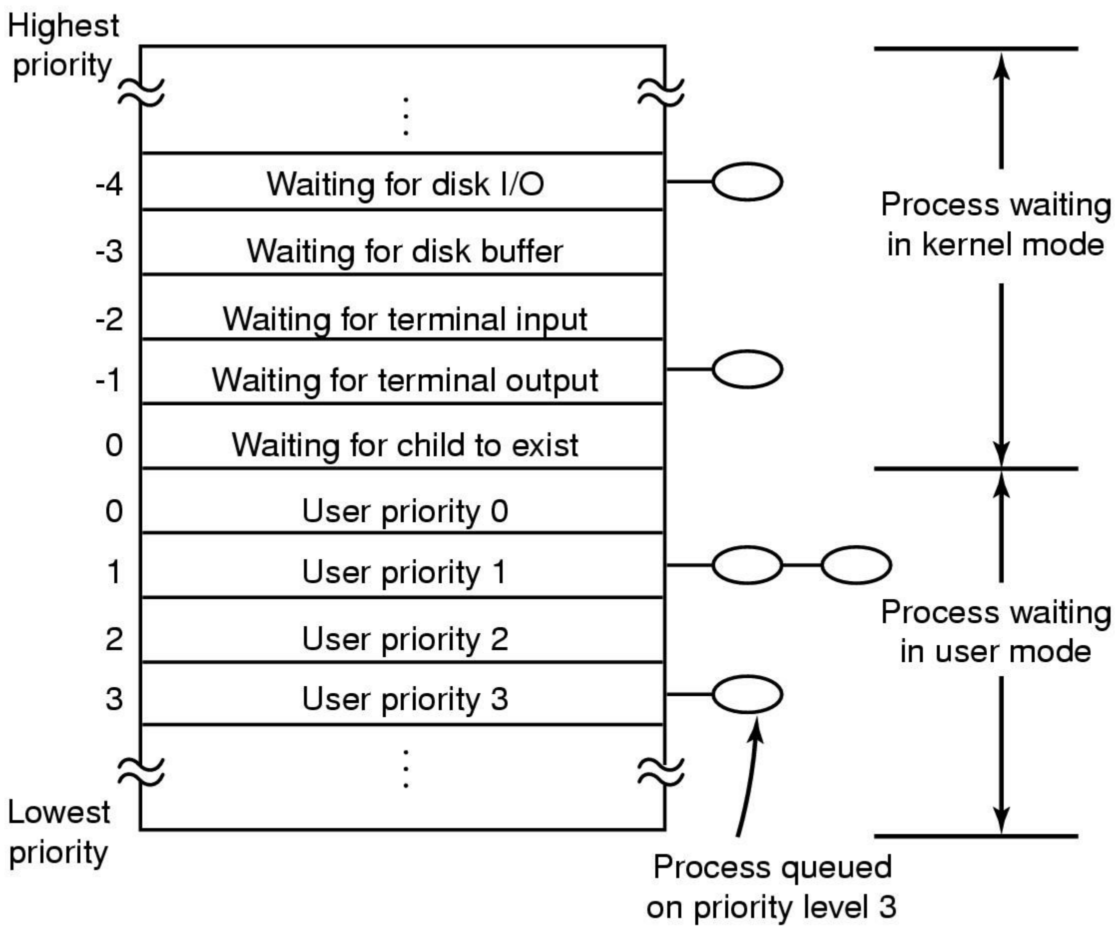
Priorities



- Recall: Low priorities can **starve**
  - Can be addressed by adapting priorities periodically
    - Based on ageing or execution history

Traditional UNIX Scheduler

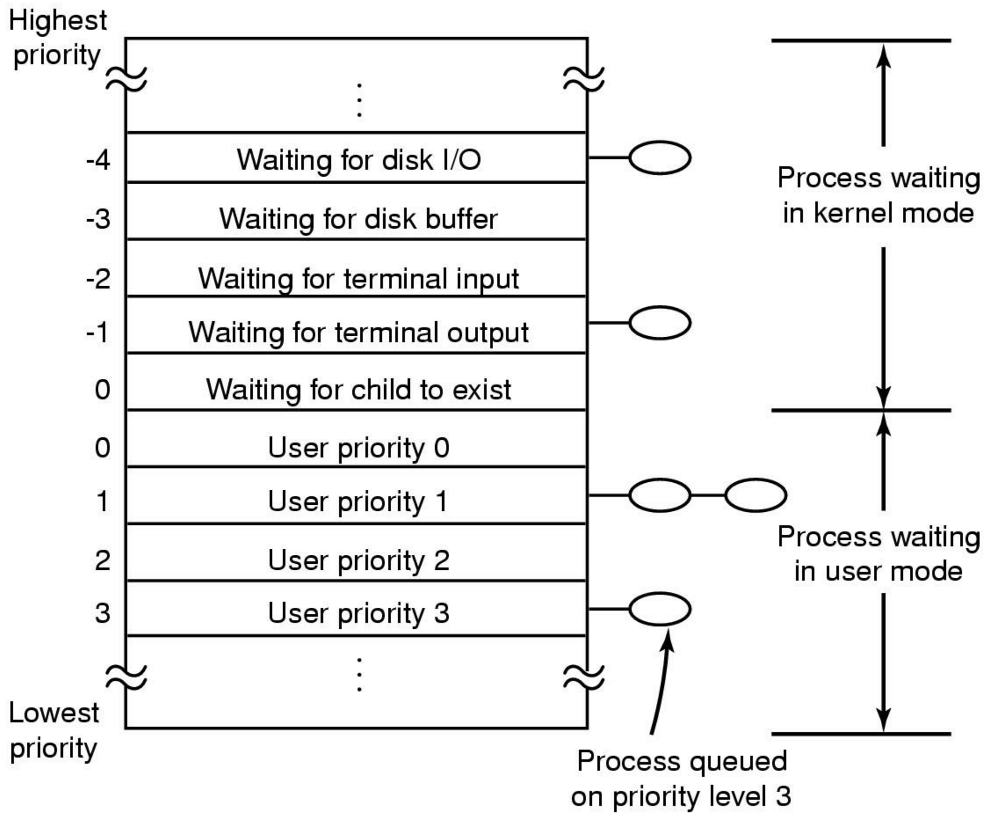
- Two-level scheduler
  - High-level scheduler schedules processes between memory and disk
  - Low-level scheduler is CPU scheduler
    - Based on a multi-level queue structure with round robin at each level



Highest priority
-4
Waiting for disk I/O
-3
Waiting for disk buffer
-2
Waiting for terminal input
-1
Waiting for terminal output
0
Waiting for child to exist
0
User priority 0
1
User priority 1
2
User priority 2
3
User priority 3
Lowest priority
Process waiting in kernel mode
Process waiting in user mode
Process queued on priority level 3

Traditional UNIX Scheduler

- The highest priority (lower number) is scheduled
- Priorities are re-calculated once per second, and re-inserted in appropriate queue
  - Avoid starvation of low priority threads
  - Penalise CPU-bound threads



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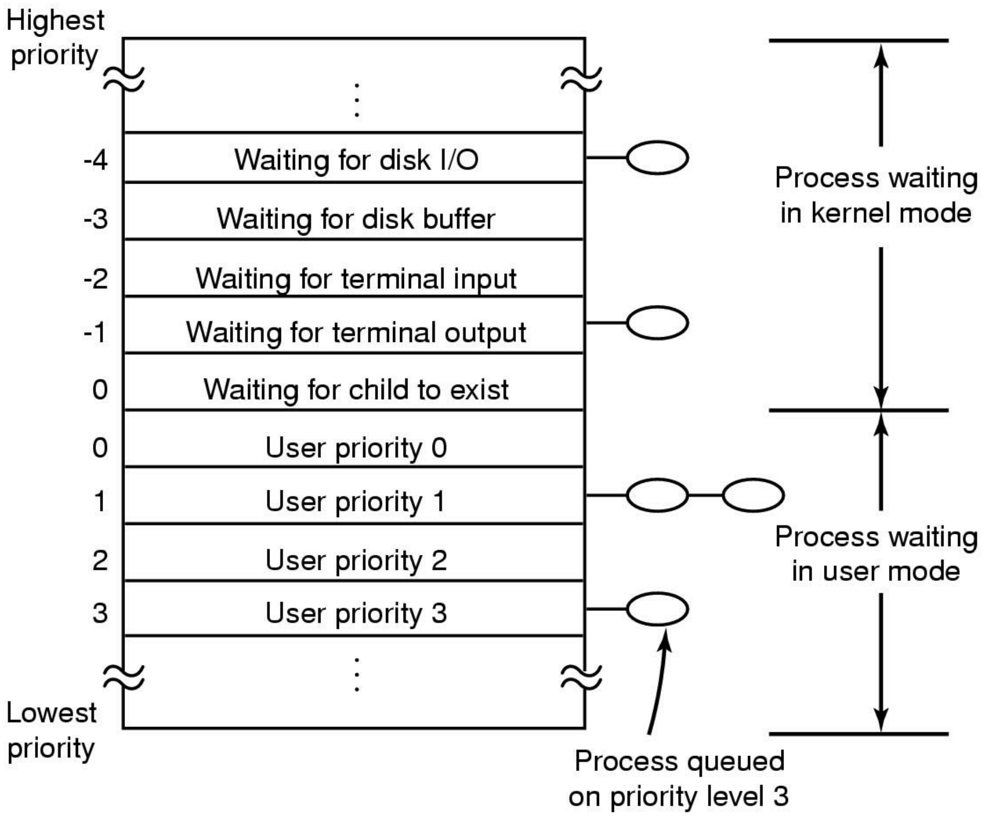
Traditional UNIX Scheduler

- *Priority = CPU_usage +nice +base*
  - *CPU_usage* = number of clock ticks
    - Decays over time to avoid permanently penalising the process
  - *Nice* is a value given to the process by a user to permanently boost or reduce its priority
    - Reduce priority of background jobs
  - *Base* is a set of hardwired, negative values used to boost priority of I/O bound system activities
    - Swapper, disk I/O, Character I/O



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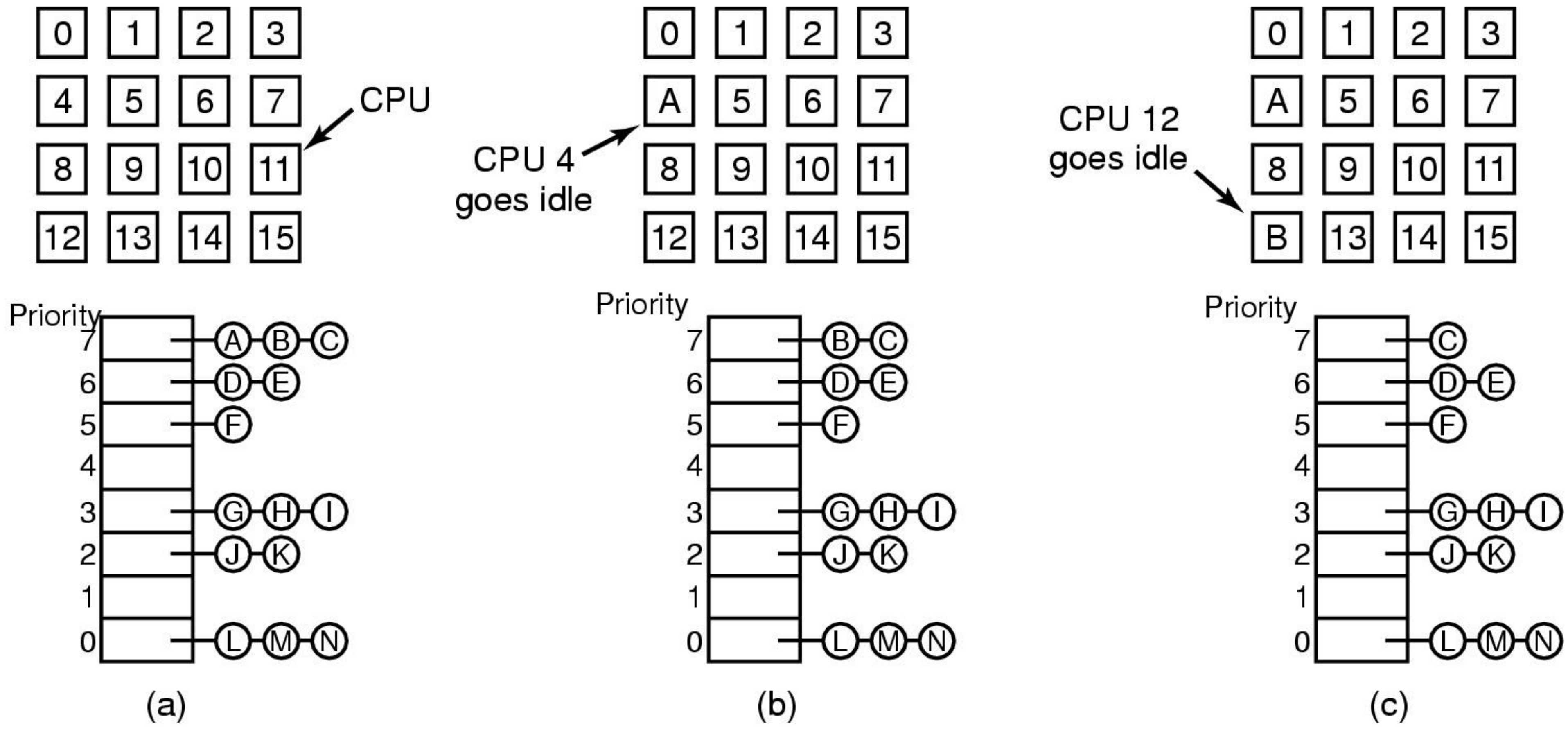
Multiprocessor Scheduling

- Given *X* processes (or threads) and *Y* CPUs,
  - how do we allocate them to the CPUs

A Single Shared Ready Queue

- When a CPU goes idle, it take the highest priority process from the shared ready queue



Single Shared Ready Queue

- Pros
  - Conceptually Simple
  - Automatic load balancing
- Cons
  - Lock contention on the ready queue can be a major bottleneck
    - Due to frequent scheduling or many CPUs or both
  - Not all CPUs are equal
    - The last CPU a process ran on is likely to have more related entries in the cache.

Affinity Scheduling

- Basic Idea
  - Try hard to run a process on the CPU it ran on last time

- One approach: *Multiple Queue Multiprocessor Scheduling*

Multiple Queue SMP Scheduling

- Each CPU has its own ready queue
- Coarse-grained algorithm assigns processes to CPUs
  - Defines their affinity, and roughly balances the load
- The bottom-level fine-grained scheduler:
  - Is the frequently invoked scheduler (e.g. on blocking on I/O, a lock, or exhausting a timeslice)
  - Runs on each CPU and selects from its own ready queue
    - Ensures affinity
  - If nothing is available from the local ready queue, it runs a process from another CPUs ready queue rather than go idle
    - Termed “Work stealing”

Multiple Queue SMP Scheduling

- Pros
  - No lock contention on per-CPU ready queues in the (hopefully) common case
  - Load balancing to avoid idle queues
  - Automatic affinity to a single CPU for more cache friendly behaviour

Today

- Scheduling decisions.
  - When to make them.
  - How to make them.
- I/O bound and CPU-bound tasks.
- Round robin and priority schedulers.
- Starvation and priority adjustments.
- Multi-CPU scheduling.