Operating Systems and the Process Model

Process model
Process management
(Unix/Linux/macOS)

Operating Systems

Problem: unwieldy hardware resources
complex and varied
limited

Solution: operating system
Manage, abstract, and virtualize hardware resources
Simpler, common interface to varied hardware
Share limited resources among
Protect

Operating Systems, a 240 view

Key abstractions provided by kernel
process
virtual memory

Virtualization mechanisms and hardware support:
context-switching
exceptional control flow
address translation, paging, TLBs
Processes

Program = code (static)
Process = a running program instance (dynamic)
   code + state (contents of registers, memory, other resources)

Key illusions:
Logical control flow
   Each process seems to have exclusive use of the CPU
Private address space
   Each process seems to have exclusive use of full memory

Why? How?

Implementing logical control flow

Abstraction: every process has full control over the CPU

Implementation: time-sharing

Context Switching

Kernel (shared OS code) switches between processes

Control flow passes between processes via context switch.
Context =

fork

pid_t fork()
1. Clone current parent process to create identical* child process,
   including all state (memory, registers, program counter, ...).
2. Continue executing both copies with one difference:
   • returns 0 to the child process
   • returns child's process ID (pid) to the parent process

fork is unique: called in one process, returns in two processes!
   (once in parent, once in child)

*almost. See man 3 fork for exceptions.
Creating a new process with `fork`

```c
int pid = fork();
if (pid == 0) {
    printf("hello from child\n");
} else {
    printf("hello from parent\n");
}
```

**Child Process m**

```c
int pid = fork();
if (pid == 0) {
    printf("hello from child\n");
} else {
    printf("hello from parent\n");
}
```

**Parent and child continue from private copies of same state.**

Memory contents (code, globals, heap, stack, etc.),
Register contents, program counter, file descriptors...

Only difference: return value from `fork()`

Relative execution order of parent/child after `fork()` undefined

```c
void forkl() {
    int x = 1;
    pid_t pid = fork();
    if (pid == 0) {
        printf("Child has x = %d\n", ++x);
    } else {
        printf("Parent has x = %d\n", --x);
    }
    printf("Bye from process %d with x = %d\n", getpid(), x);
}
```

**fork and private copies**

Parent and child continue from private copies of same state.

Executing a new program

```c
// Example arguments: path="/usr/bin/ls",
void fork_exec(char* path, char* argv[]) {
    pid_t pid = fork();
    if (pid != 0) {
        printf("Parent: created a child %d\n", pid);
    } else {
        printf("Child: exec-ing new program now\n");
        execv(path, argv);
    }
    printf("This line printed by parent only!\n");
}
```
### execv: load/start a program

```c
int execv(char* filename, char* argv[]) {
    loads/starts program in current process:
    Executable filename
    With argument list argv
    overwrites code, data, and stack
    Keeps pid, open files, a few other items
    **does not return** unless error

    Also sets up environment. See also: execve.
}
```

### exit: end a process

```c
void exit(int status) {
    **End process** with status: 0 = normal, nonzero = error.
    **atexit()** registers functions to be executed upon exit
}
```

### wait for child processes to terminate

```c
pid_t waitpid(pid_t pid, int* stat, int ops) {
    Suspend current process (i.e. parent) until child with pid ends.
    On success:
    Return pid when child terminates.
    Reap child.
    If stat != NULL, waitpid saves termination reason where it points.
    See also: man 3 waitpid
}
```

### waitpid example

```c
void fork_wait() {
    int child_status;
    pid_t child_pid = fork();
    if (child_pid == 0) {
        printf("HC: hello from child\n");
    } else {
        if (-1 == waitpid(child_pid, &child_status, 0) {
            perror("waitpid");
            exit(1);
        }
        printf("CT: child %d has terminated\n", child_pid);
    }
    printf("Bye\n");
    exit(0);
}
```
Zombies!

Terminated process still consumes system resources

Reaping with `wait/waitpid`

What if parent doesn’t reap?
If any parent terminates without reaping a child, then child will be reaped by `init` process (pid == 1)
What if parent runs a long time? e.g., shells and servers

Error-checking

Check return results of system calls for errors! (No exceptions.)
Read documentation for return values.
Use `perror` to report error, then exit.

```c
void perror(char* message)
    Print "<message>: <reason that last system call failed.>"
```

Examining processes on Linux (demo)

`ps`
`pstree`
`top`
`/proc`