I/O Systems

Chapter 13

Objectives

- Explore the structure of an operating system's I/O subsystem
- Discuss the principles of I/O hardware and its complexity
- Provide details of the performance aspects of I/O hardware and software

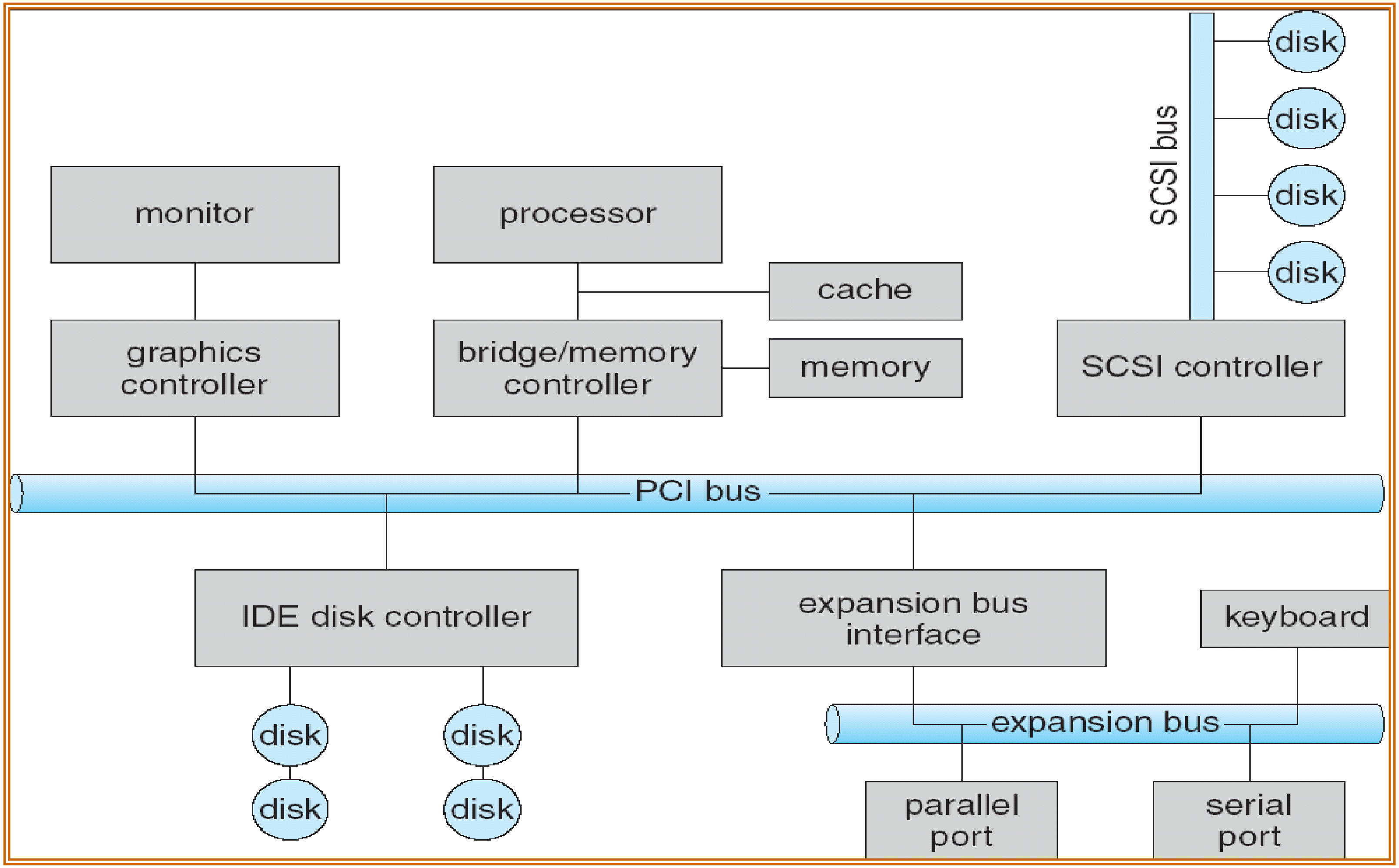
Chapter Outline

- I/O Hardware
- Application I/O Interface
- Kernel I/O Subsystem
- Transforming I/O Requests to Hardware Operations
- Performance

- I/O Hardware

- Incredible variety of I/O devices
- Common concepts
  - **Port**
  - **Bus** (**daisy chain** or shared direct access)
  - **Controller** (**host adapter**)
- I/O instructions control devices
- Devices have addresses, used by
  - Direct I/O instructions
  - **Memory-mapped** I/O

-- A Typical PC Bus Structure



-- Device I/O Port Locations on PCs (partial)

I/O address range (hexadecimal)	device
000–00F	DMA controller
020–021	interrupt controller
040–043	timer
200–20F	game controller
2F8–2FF	serial port (secondary)
320–32F	hard-disk controller
378–37F	parallel port
3D0–3DF	graphics controller
3F0–3F7	diskette-drive controller
3F8–3FF	serial port (primary)

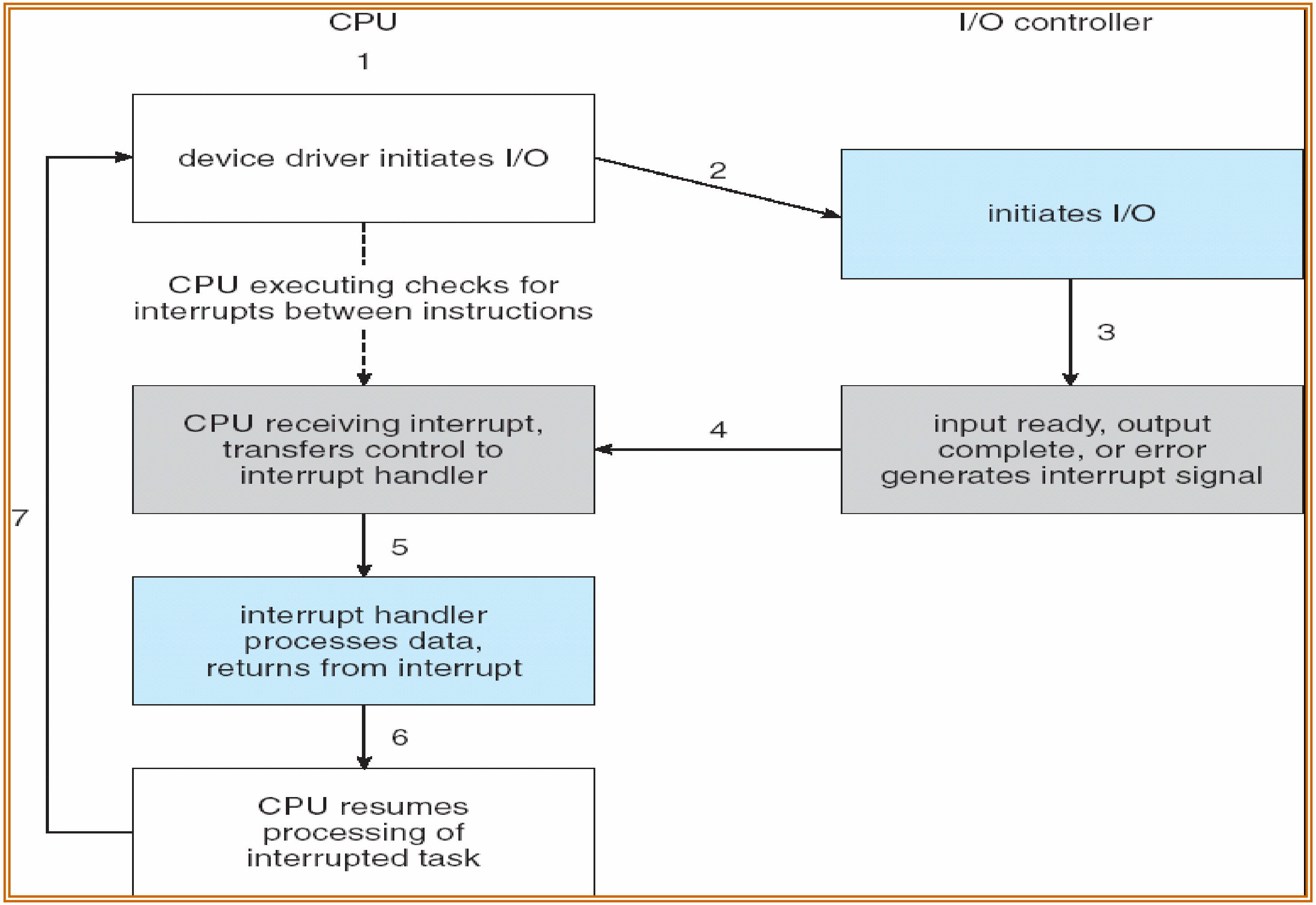
-- Polling

- Determines state of device
  - command-ready
  - busy
  - Error
- **Busy-wait** cycle to wait for I/O from device

-- Interrupts

- CPU **Interrupt-request line** triggered by I/O device
- **Interrupt handler** receives interrupts
- **Maskable** to ignore or delay some interrupts
- Interrupt vector to dispatch interrupt to correct handler
  - Based on priority
  - Some **nonmaskable**
- Interrupt mechanism also used for exceptions

-- Interrupt-Driven I/O Cycle



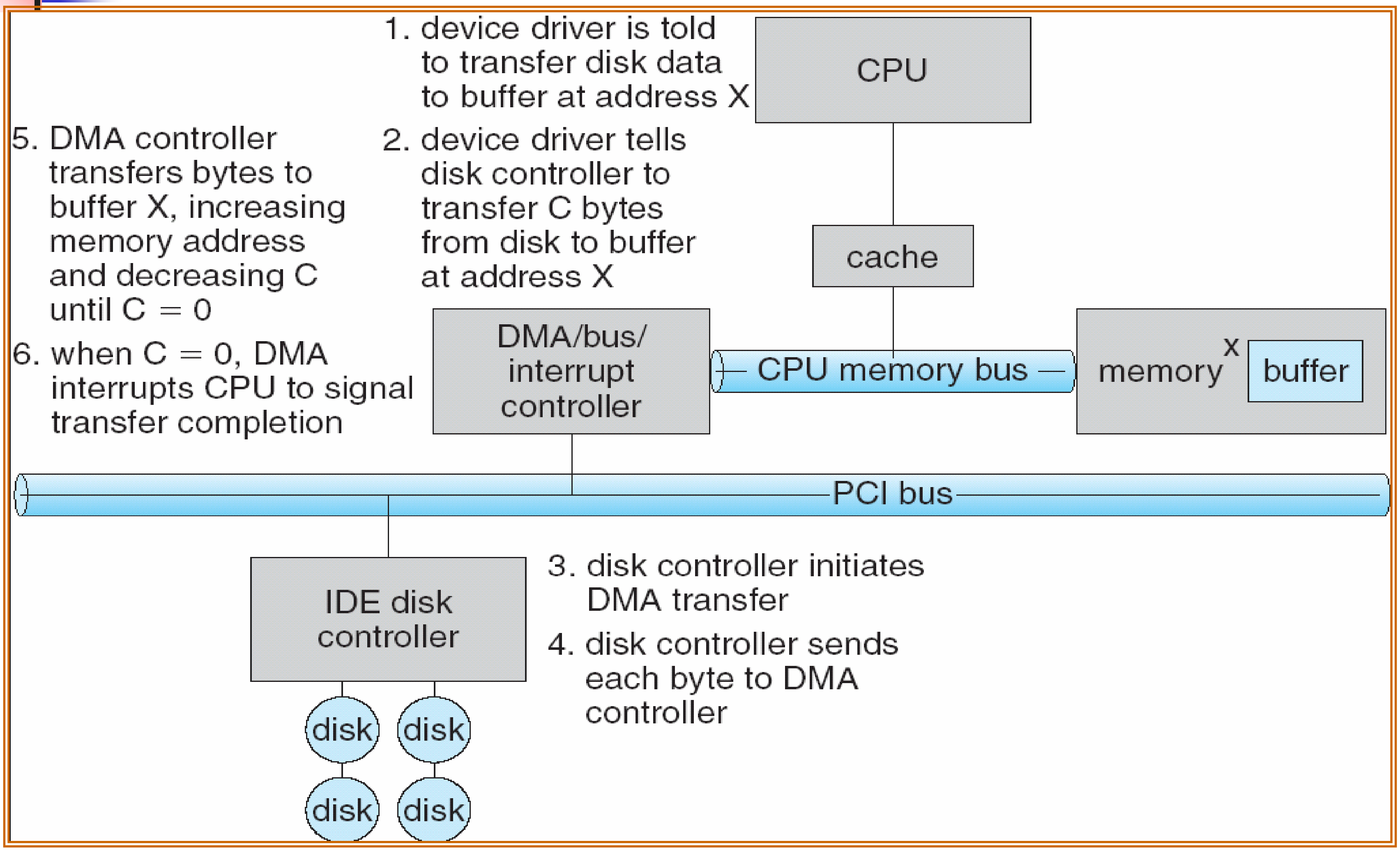
-- Intel Pentium Processor Event-Vector Table

vector number	description
0	divide error
1	debug exception
2	null interrupt
3	breakpoint
4	INTO-detected overflow
5	bound range exception
6	invalid opcode
7	device not available
8	double fault
9	coprocessor segment overrun (reserved)
10	invalid task state segment
11	segment not present
12	stack fault
13	general protection
14	page fault
15	(Intel reserved, do not use)
16	floating-point error
17	alignment check
18	machine check
19–31	(Intel reserved, do not use)
32–255	maskable interrupts

-- Direct Memory Access

- Used to avoid **programmed I/O** for large data movement
- Requires **DMA** controller
- Bypasses CPU to transfer data directly between I/O device and memory

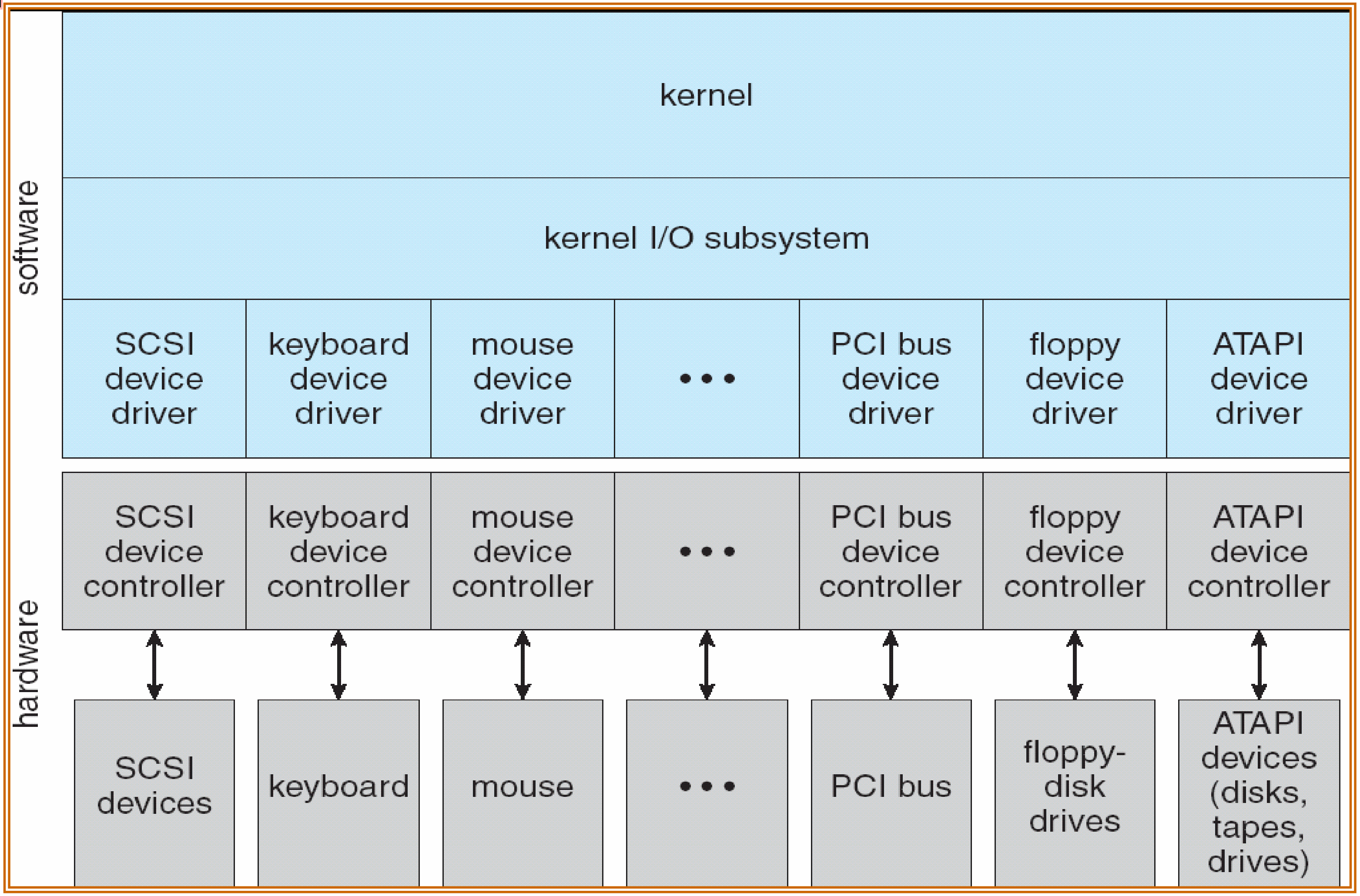
-- Six Step Process to Perform DMA Transfer



- Application I/O Interface

- Devices vary in many dimensions
  - Character-stream or block
  - Sequential or random-access
  - Sharable or dedicated
  - Speed of operation
  - read-write, read only, or write only
- I/O system-calls encapsulate device behaviors in generic classes
- Device-driver layer hides differences among I/O controllers from kernel

-- A Kernel I/O Structure



-- Characteristics of I/O Devices

aspect	variation	example
data-transfer mode	character block	terminal disk
access method	sequential random	modem CD-ROM
transfer schedule	synchronous asynchronous	tape keyboard
sharing	dedicated sharable	tape keyboard
device speed	latency seek time transfer rate delay between operations	
I/O direction	read only write only read–write	CD-ROM graphics controller disk

-- Block and Character Devices

- Block devices include disk drives
  - Commands include read, write, seek
  - Raw I/O or file-system access
  - Memory-mapped file access possible
- Character devices include keyboards, mice, serial ports
  - Commands include `get, put`
  - Libraries layered on top allow line editing

-- Network Devices

- Varying enough from block and character to have own interface
- Unix and Windows NT/9*x*/2000 include socket interface
  - Separates network protocol from network operation
  - Includes `select` functionality
- Approaches vary widely (pipes, FIFOs, streams, queues, mailboxes)

-- Clocks and Timers

- Most computers have
  - A hardware clock
  - A timer

- The **hardware clock** provides:
  - current time

- **The Programmable interval timer** (Hardware) is used for
  - Timings
  - periodic interrupts (typically between 18 and 60)

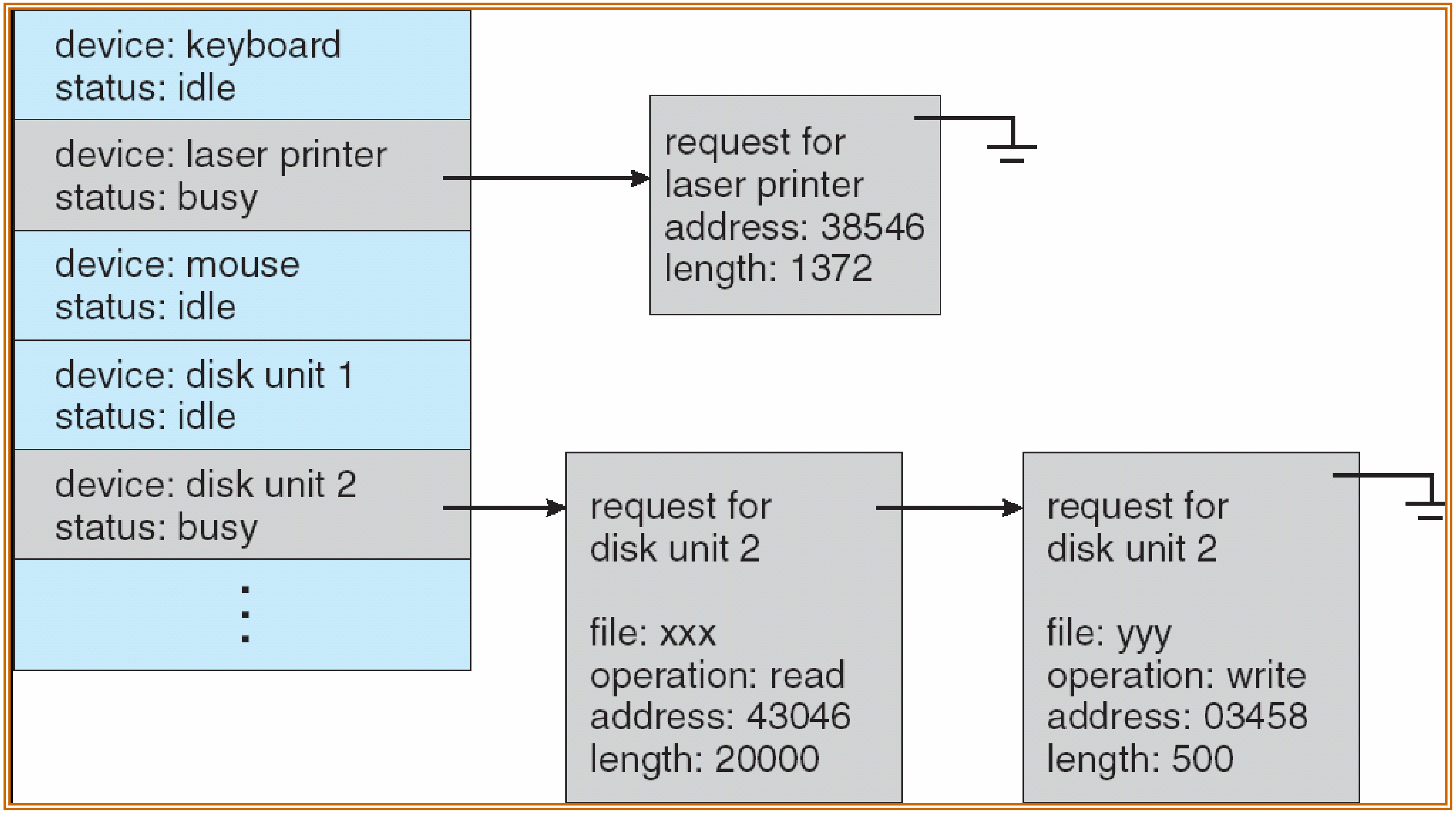
-- Blocking and Nonblocking I/O

- **Blocking** - process suspended until I/O completed
  - Easy to use and understand
  - Insufficient for some needs
  - For example, a read() operation on a socket in blocking mode will not return control if the socket buffer is empty until some data becomes available.
- **Nonblocking synchronous** - I/O call returns as much as available
  - Implemented via multi-threading
  - Returns quickly with count of bytes read or written
  - For example, a read() operation on a socket in non-blocking mode may return the number of read bytes or a special return code -1 with errno set to EWOULBLOCK/EAGAIN, meaning "not ready; try again later."
- **Nonblocking Asynchronous** - process runs while I/O executes
  - Difficult to use
  - I/O subsystem signals process when I/O completed
  - For example: An downloaded image in a browser.

- Kernel I/O Subsystem ...

- Scheduling
  - Some I/O request ordering via per-device queue
  - Some OSs try fairness
- Buffering - store data in memory while transferring between devices
  - To cope with device speed mismatch
  - To cope with device transfer size mismatch
  - To maintain “copy semantics”

-- Device-status Table



... - Kernel I/O Subsystem

- **Caching** - fast memory holding copy of data
  - Always just a copy
  - Key to performance
- **Spooling** - hold output for a device
  - If device can serve only one request at a time
  - i.e., Printing
- **Device reservation** - provides exclusive access to a device
  - System calls for allocation and deallocation
  - Watch out for deadlock

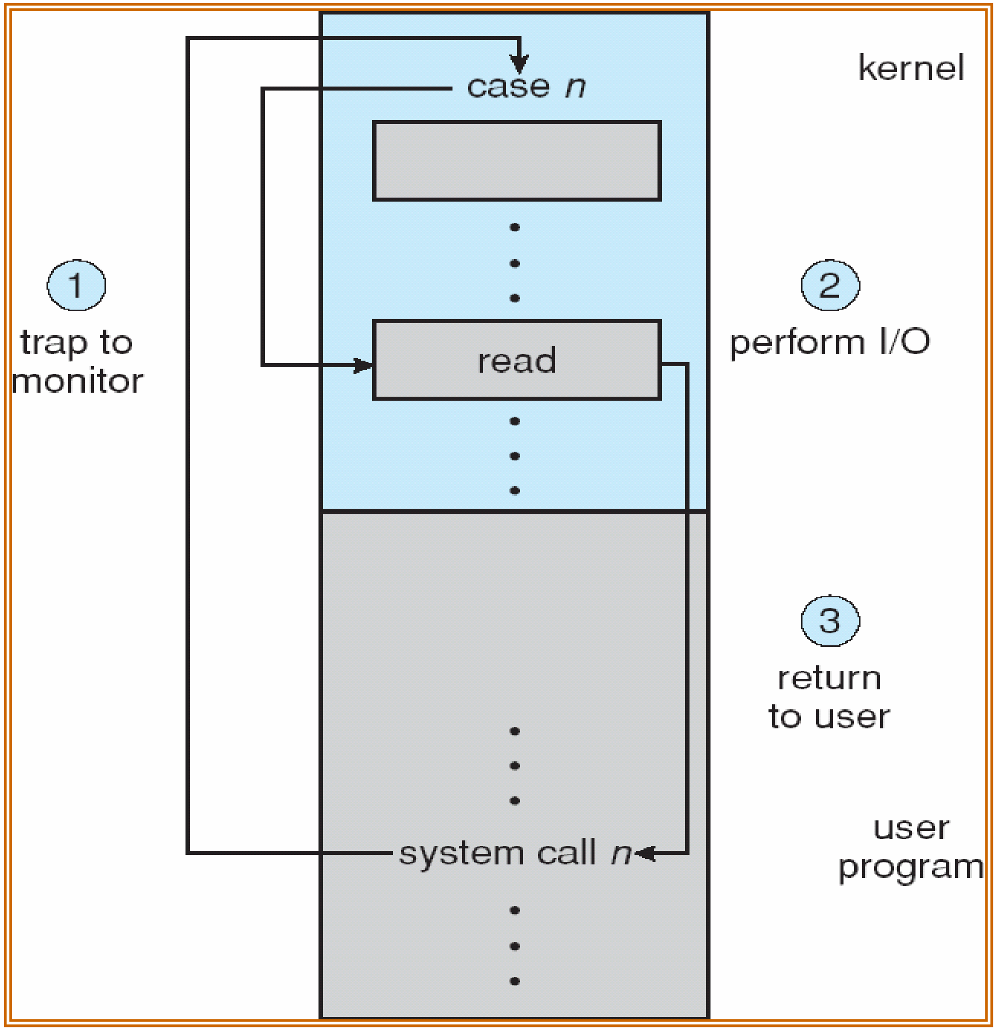
-- Error Handling

- OS can recover from disk read, device unavailable, transient write failures
- Most return an error number or code when I/O request fails
- System error logs hold problem reports

-- I/O Protection

- User process may accidentally or purposefully attempt to disrupt normal operation via illegal I/O instructions
  - All I/O instructions defined to be privileged
  - I/O must be performed via system calls
    - Memory-mapped and I/O port memory locations must be protected too

-- Use of a System Call to Perform I/O



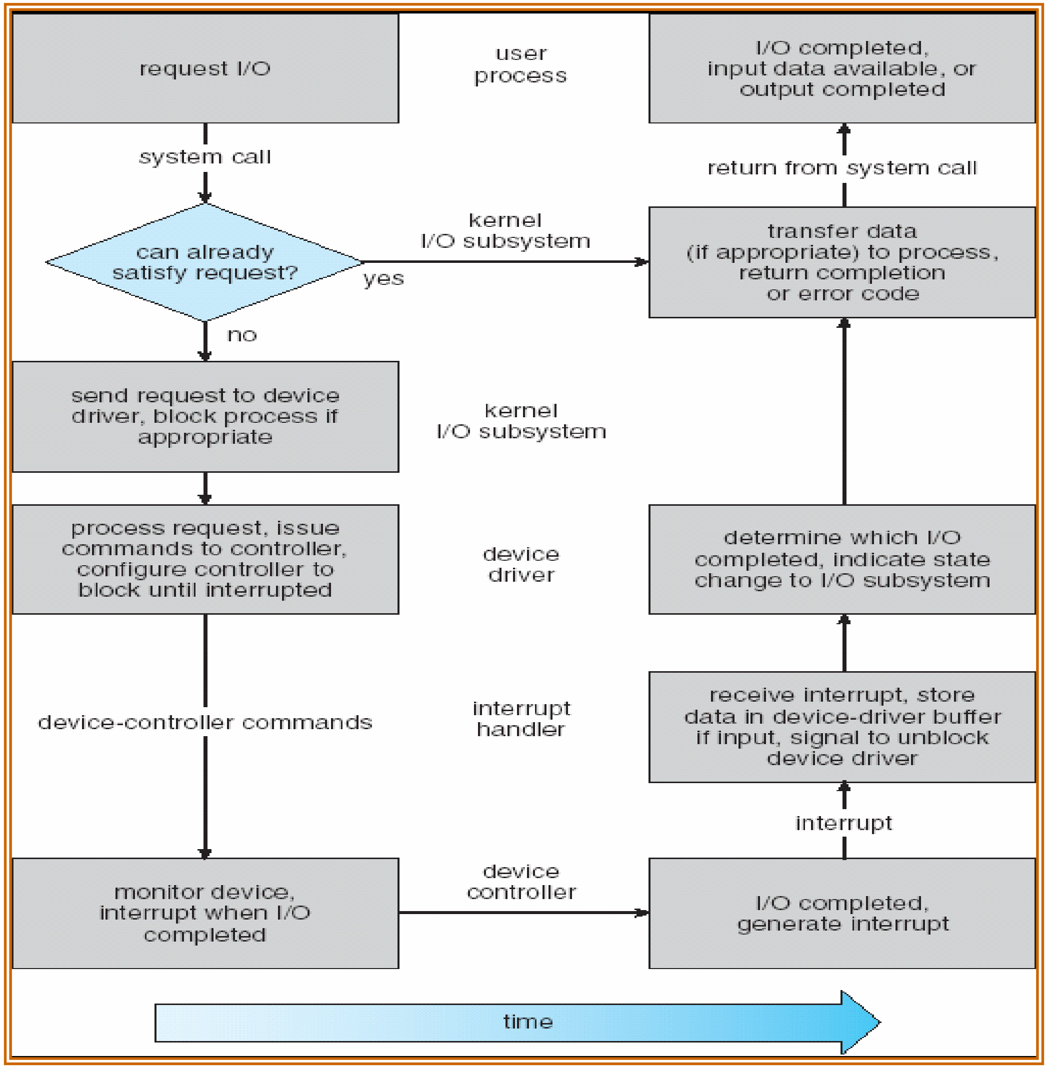
-- Kernel Data Structures

- Kernel keeps state info for I/O components, including open file tables, network connections, character device state
- Many, many complex data structures to track buffers, memory allocation, “dirty” blocks

- Transforming I/O Requests to Hardware Operations

- Consider reading a file from disk for a process:
  - Determine device holding file
  - Translate name to device representation
  - Physically read data from disk into buffer
  - Make data available to requesting process
  - Return control to process

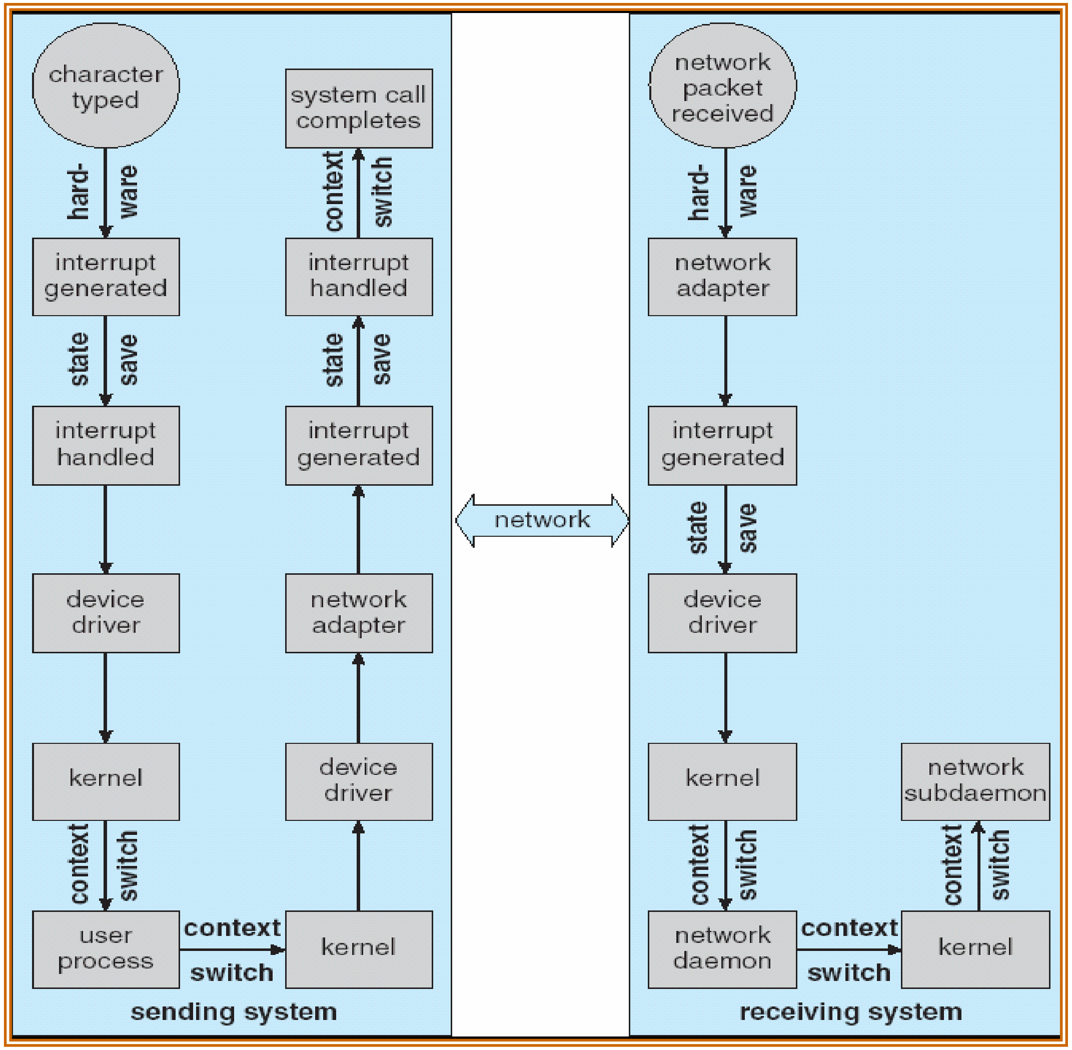
-- Life Cycle of An I/O Request



- Performance

- I/O a major factor in system performance:
  - Demands CPU to execute device driver, kernel I/O code
  - Context switches due to interrupts
  - Data copying
  - Network traffic especially stressful

-- Intercomputer Communications



-- Improving Performance

- Reduce number of context switches
- Reduce data copying
- Reduce interrupts by using large transfers, smart controllers, polling
- Use DMA
- Balance CPU, memory, bus, and I/O performance for highest throughput

End of Chapter 13