

Linux Kernel Development

A thorough guide to the design and implementation of the Linux kernel

Developer's Library



Linux Kernel Development

Third Edition

Linux Kernel Development

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

1 Introduction to the Linux Kernel

History of Unix

Along Came Linus: Introduction to Linux

Overview of Operating Systems and Kernels

Linux Versus Classic Unix Kernels

Linux Kernel Versions

The Linux Kernel Development Community

Before We Begin

2 Getting Started with the Kernel

Obtaining the Kernel Source

Using Git

Installing the Kernel Source

Using Patches

The Kernel Source Tree

Building the Kernel

Configuring the Kernel

Minimizing Build Noise

Spawning Multiple Build Jobs

Installing the New Kernel

A Beast of a Different Nature

No libc or Standard Headers

GNU C



No Memory Protection

No (Easy) Use of Floating Point

Small, Fixed-Size Stack

Synchronization and Concurrency

Importance of Portability

Conclusion

3 Process Management

The Process

Process Descriptor and the Task Structure

Allocating the Process Descriptor

Storing the Process Descriptor

Process State

Manipulating the Current Process State

Process Context

The Process Family Tree

Process Creation

Copy-on-Write

Forking

vfork()

The Linux Implementation of Threads

Creating Threads

Kernel Threads

Process Termination

Removing the Process Descriptor

The Dilemma of the Parentless Task

Conclusion

4 Process Scheduling



Multitasking

Linuxs Process Scheduler

Policy

I/O-Bound Versus Processor-Bound Processes

Process Priority

Timeslice

The Scheduling Policy in Action

The Linux Scheduling Algorithm

Scheduler Classes

Process Scheduling in Unix Systems

Fair Scheduling

The Linux Scheduling Implementation

Time Accounting

Process Selection

The Scheduler Entry Point

Sleeping and Waking Up

Preemption and Context Switching

User Preemption

Kernel Preemption

Real-Time Scheduling Policies

Scheduler-Related System Calls

Scheduling Policy and Priority-Related System Calls

Processor Affinity System Calls

Yielding Processor Time

Conclusion

5 System Calls

Communicating with the Kernel

APIs, POSIX, and the C Library



Syscalls

System Call Numbers

System Call Performance

System Call Handler

Denoting the Correct System Call

Parameter Passing

System Call Implementation

Implementing System Calls

Verifying the Parameters

System Call Context

Final Steps in Binding a System Call

Accessing the System Call from User-Space

Why Not to Implement a System Call

Conclusion

6 Kernel Data Structures

Linked Lists

Singly and Doubly Linked Lists

Circular Linked Lists

Moving Through a Linked List

The Linux Kernels Implementation

Manipulating Linked Lists

Traversing Linked Lists

Queues

kfifo

Creating a Queue

Enqueuing Data

Dequeuing Data

Obtaining the Size of a Queue



Resetting and Destroying the Queue

Example Queue Usage

Maps

Initializing an idr

Allocating a New UID

Looking Up a UID

Removing a UID

Destroying an idr

Binary Trees

Binary Search Trees

Self-Balancing Binary Search Trees

What Data Structure to Use, When

Algorithmic Complexity

Algorithms

Big-O Notation

Big Theta Notation

Time Complexity

Conclusion

7 Interrupts and Interrupt Handlers

Interrupts

Interrupt Handlers

Top Halves Versus Bottom Halves

Registering an Interrupt Handler

Interrupt Handler Flags

An Interrupt Example

Freeing an Interrupt Handler

Writing an Interrupt Handler



Shared Handlers

A Real-Life Interrupt Handler

Interrupt Context

Implementing Interrupt Handlers

/proc/interrupts

Interrupt Control

Disabling and Enabling Interrupts

Disabling a Specific Interrupt Line

Status of the Interrupt System

Conclusion

8 Bottom Halves and Deferring Work

Bottom Halves

Why Bottom Halves?

A World of Bottom Halves

Softirqs

Implementing Softirqs

Using Softirqs

Tasklets

Implementing Tasklets

Using Tasklets

ksoftirqd

The Old BH Mechanism

Work Queues

Implementing Work Queues

Using Work Queues

The Old Task Queue Mechanism

Which Bottom Half Should I Use?

Locking Between the Bottom Halves



Disabling Bottom Halves

Conclusion

9 An Introduction to Kernel Synchronization

Critical Regions and Race Conditions

Why Do We Need Protection?

The Single Variable

Locking

Causes of Concurrency

Knowing What to Protect

Deadlocks

Contention and Scalability

Conclusion

10 Kernel Synchronization Methods

Atomic Operations

Atomic Integer Operations

64-Bit Atomic Operations

Atomic Bitwise Operations

Spin Locks

Spin Lock Methods

Other Spin Lock Methods

Spin Locks and Bottom Halves

Reader-Writer Spin Locks

Semaphores

Counting and Binary Semaphores

Creating and Initializing Semaphores

Using Semaphores

Reader-Writer Semaphores



Mutexes

Semaphores Versus Mutexes

Spin Locks Versus Mutexes

Completion Variables

BKL: The Big Kernel Lock

Sequential Locks

Preemption Disabling

Ordering and Barriers

Conclusion

11 Timers and Time Management

Kernel Notion of Time

The Tick Rate: HZ

The Ideal HZ Value

Advantages with a Larger HZ

Disadvantages with a Larger HZ

Jiffies

Internal Representation of Jiffies

Jiffies Wraparound

User-Space and HZ

Hardware Clocks and Timers

Real-Time Clock

System Timer

The Timer Interrupt Handler

The Time of Day

Timers

Using Timers

Timer Race Conditions



```
Timer Implementation
   Delaying Execution
       Busy Looping
       Small Delays
       schedule_timeout()
   Conclusion
12 Memory Management
   Pages
   Zones
   Getting Pages
       Getting Zeroed Pages
       Freeing Pages
   kmalloc()
       gfp_mask Flags
       kfree()
   vmalloc()
   Slab Layer
       Design of the Slab Layer
       Slab Allocator Interface
   Statically Allocating on the Stack
       Single-Page Kernel Stacks
       Playing Fair on the Stack
   High Memory Mappings
       Permanent Mappings
       Temporary Mappings
   Per-CPU Allocations
   The New percpu Interface
```



Per-CPU Data at Compile-Time

Per-CPU Data at Runtime

Reasons for Using Per-CPU Data

Picking an Allocation Method

Conclusion

13 The Virtual Filesystem

Common Filesystem Interface

Filesystem Abstraction Layer

Unix Filesystems

VFS Objects and Their Data Structures

The Superblock Object

Superblock Operations

The Inode Object

Inode Operations

The Dentry Object

Dentry State

The Dentry Cache

Dentry Operations

The File Object

File Operations

Data Structures Associated with Filesystems

Data Structures Associated with a Process

Conclusion

14 The Block I/O Layer

Anatomy of a Block Device

Buffers and Buffer Heads



The bio Structure

I/O vectors

The Old Versus the New

Request Queues

I/O Schedulers

The Job of an I/O Scheduler

The Linus Elevator

The Deadline I/O Scheduler

The Anticipatory I/O Scheduler

The Complete Fair Queuing I/O Scheduler

The Noop I/O Scheduler

I/O Scheduler Selection

Conclusion

15 The Process Address Space

Address Spaces

The Memory Descriptor

Allocating a Memory Descriptor

Destroying a Memory Descriptor

The mm_struct and Kernel Threads

Virtual Memory Areas

VMA Flags

VMA Operations

Lists and Trees of Memory Areas

Memory Areas in Real Life

Manipulating Memory Areas

find_vma()

find_vma_prev()

find vma intersection()



mmap() and do_mmap(): Creating an Address Interval munmap() and do_munmap(): Removing an Address Interval

Page Tables

Conclusion

16 The Page Cache and Page Writeback

Approaches to Caching

Write Caching

Cache Eviction

The Linux Page Cache

The address_space Object

address_space Operations

Radix Tree

The Old Page Hash Table

The Buffer Cache

The Flusher Threads

Laptop Mode

History: bdflush, kupdated, and pdflush

Avoiding Congestion with Multiple Threads

Conclusion

17 Devices and Modules

Device Types

Modules

Hello, World!

Building Modules

Installing Modules

Generating Module Dependencies

Loading Modules



Managing Configuration Options

Module Parameters

Exported Symbols

The Device Model

Kobjects

Ktypes

Ksets

Interrelation of Kobjects, Ktypes, and Ksets

Managing and Manipulating Kobjects

Reference Counts

sysfs

Adding and Removing kobjects from sysfs

Adding Files to sysfs

The Kernel Events Layer

Conclusion

18 Debugging

Getting Started

Bugs in the Kernel

Debugging by Printing

Robustness

Loglevels

The Log Buffer

syslogd and klogd

Transposing printf() and printk()

Oops

ksymoops

kallsyms

Kernel Debugging Options



Asserting Bugs and Dumping Information Magic SysRq Key The Saga of a Kernel Debugger gdb kgdb Poking and Probing the System Using UID as a Conditional Using Condition Variables **Using Statistics** Rate and Occurrence Limiting Your Debugging Binary Searching to Find the Culprit Change Binary Searching with Git When All Else Fails: The Community Conclusion 19 Portability Portable Operating Systems History of Portability in Linux Word Size and Data Types Opaque Types

Special Types

Explicitly Sized Types

Signedness of Chars

Data Alignment

Avoiding Alignment Issues

Alignment of Nonstandard Types

Structure Padding

Byte Order



Time Page Size **Processor Ordering** SMP, Kernel Preemption, and High Memory Conclusion 20 Patches, Hacking, and the Community The Community Linux Coding Style Indention Switch Statements Spacing **Braces** Line Length Naming **Functions** Comments **Typedefs** Use Existing Routines Minimize ifdefs in the Source Structure Initializers Fixing Up Code Ex Post Facto Chain of Command Submitting Bug Reports **Patches** Generating Patches Generating Patches with Git Submitting Patches Conclusion



Bibliography Index

