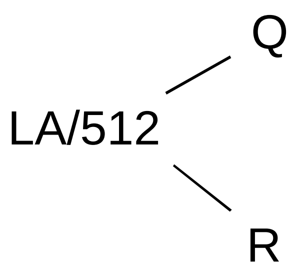
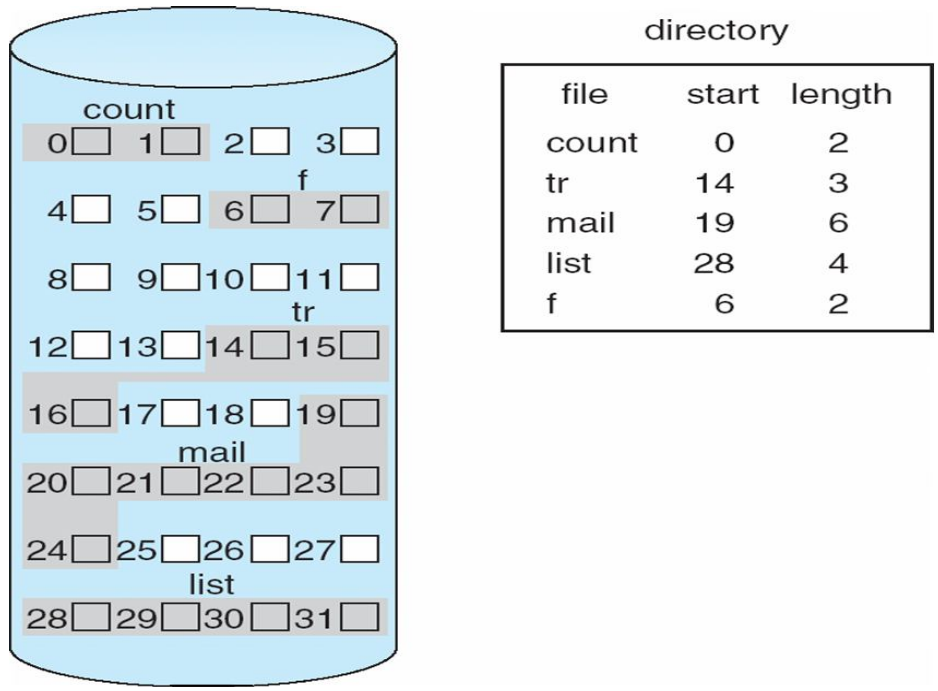
Allocation Methods - Contiguous

- An allocation method refers to how disk blocks are allocated for files:
- **Contiguous allocation** – each file occupies set of contiguous blocks
  - Best performance in most cases
  - Simple – only starting location (block #) and length (number of blocks) are required
  - Problems include finding space for file, knowing file size, external fragmentation, need for **compaction off-line** (**downtime**) or **on-line**

Contiguous Allocation

- Mapping from logical to physical





Block to be accessed = Q + starting address
Displacement into block = R

Extent-Based Systems

- Many newer file systems (i.e., Veritas File System) use a modified contiguous allocation scheme
- Extent-based file systems allocate disk blocks in extents
- An **extent** is a contiguous block of disks
  – Extents are allocated for file allocation
  – A file consists of one or more extents

Allocation Methods - Linked

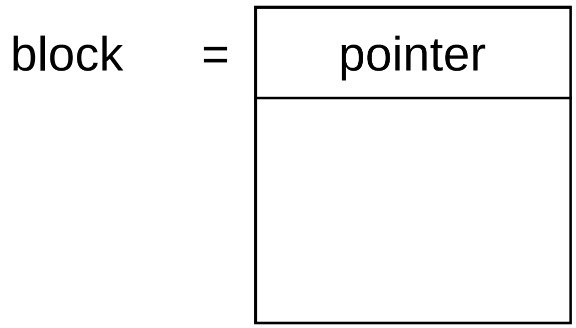
- **Linked allocation** – each file a linked list of blocks
  - File ends at nil pointer
  - No external fragmentation
  - Each block contains pointer to next block
  - No compaction, external fragmentation
  - Free space management system called when new block needed
  - Improve efficiency by clustering blocks into groups but increases internal fragmentation
  - Reliability can be a problem
  - Locating a block can take many I/Os and disk seeks

Allocation Methods – Linked (Cont.)

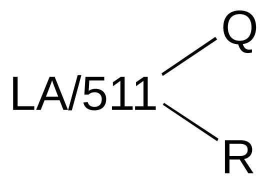
- FAT (File Allocation Table) variation
  - Beginning of volume has table, indexed by block number
  - Much like a linked list, but faster on disk and cacheable
  - New block allocation simple

Linked Allocation

- Each file is a linked list of disk blocks: blocks may be scattered anywhere on the disk



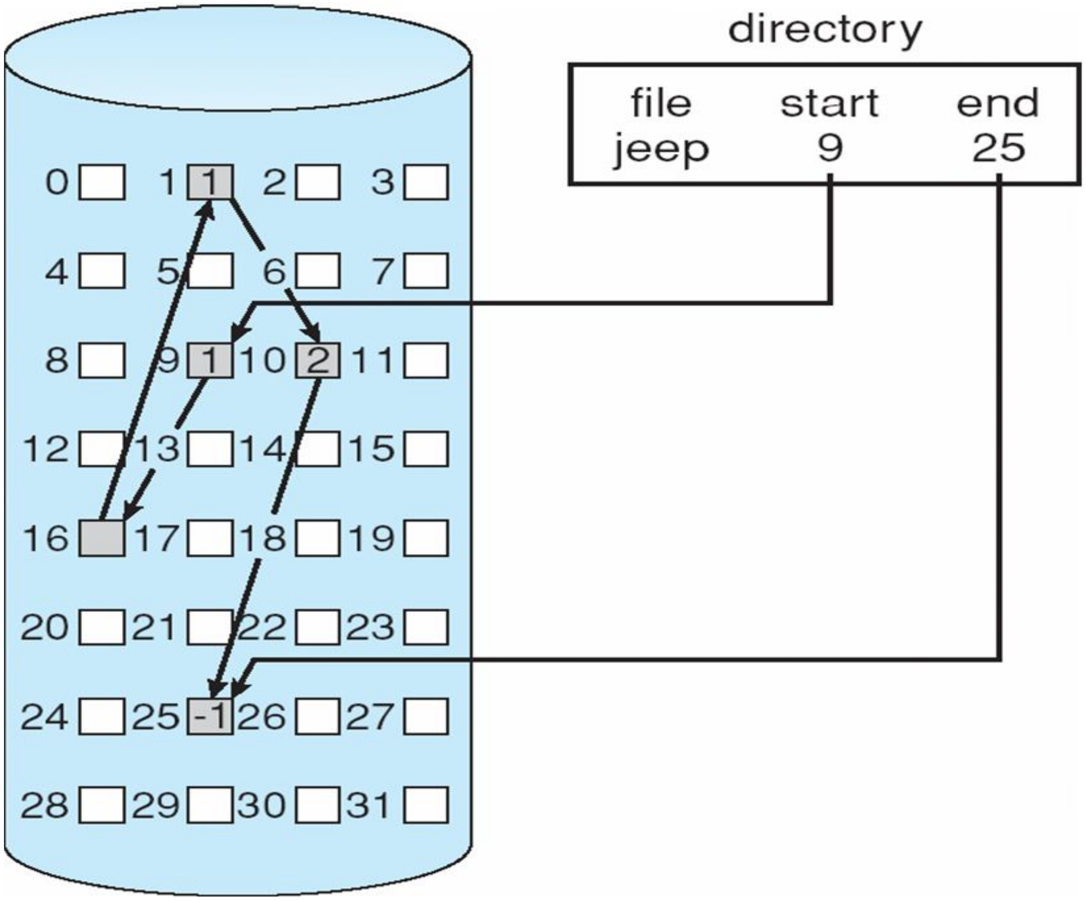
- Mapping



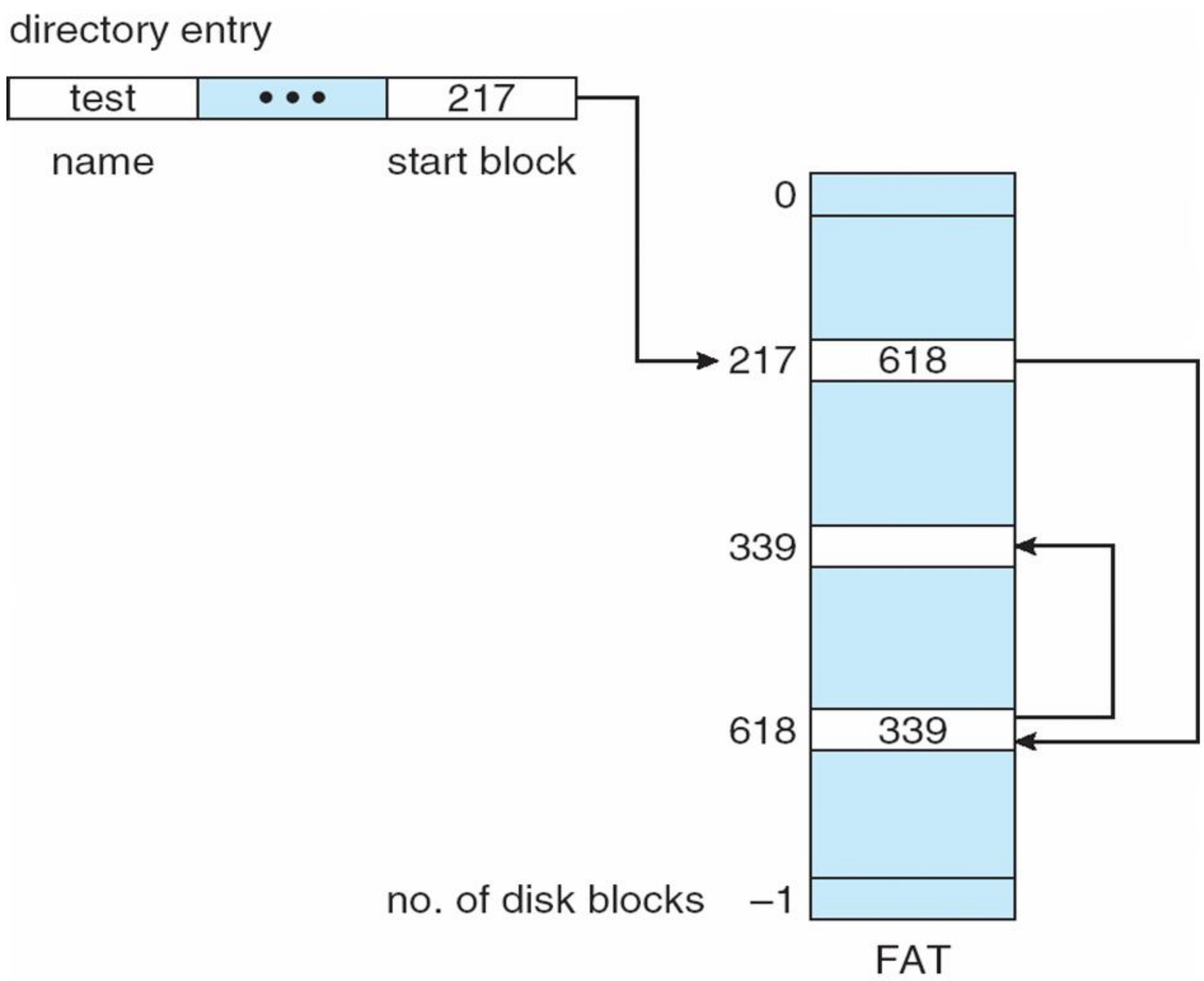
Block to be accessed is the Qth block in the linked chain of blocks representing the file.

Displacement into block = R + 1

Linked Allocation

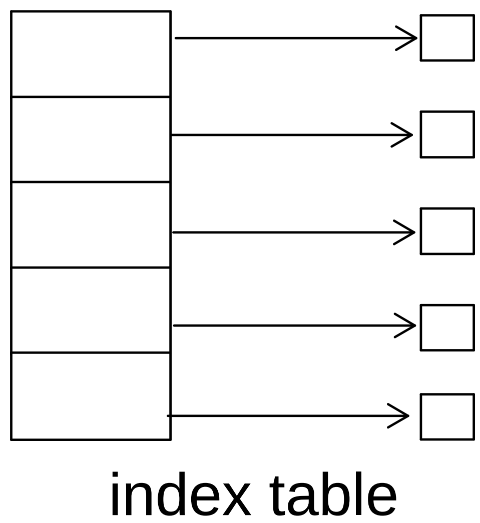


File-Allocation Table

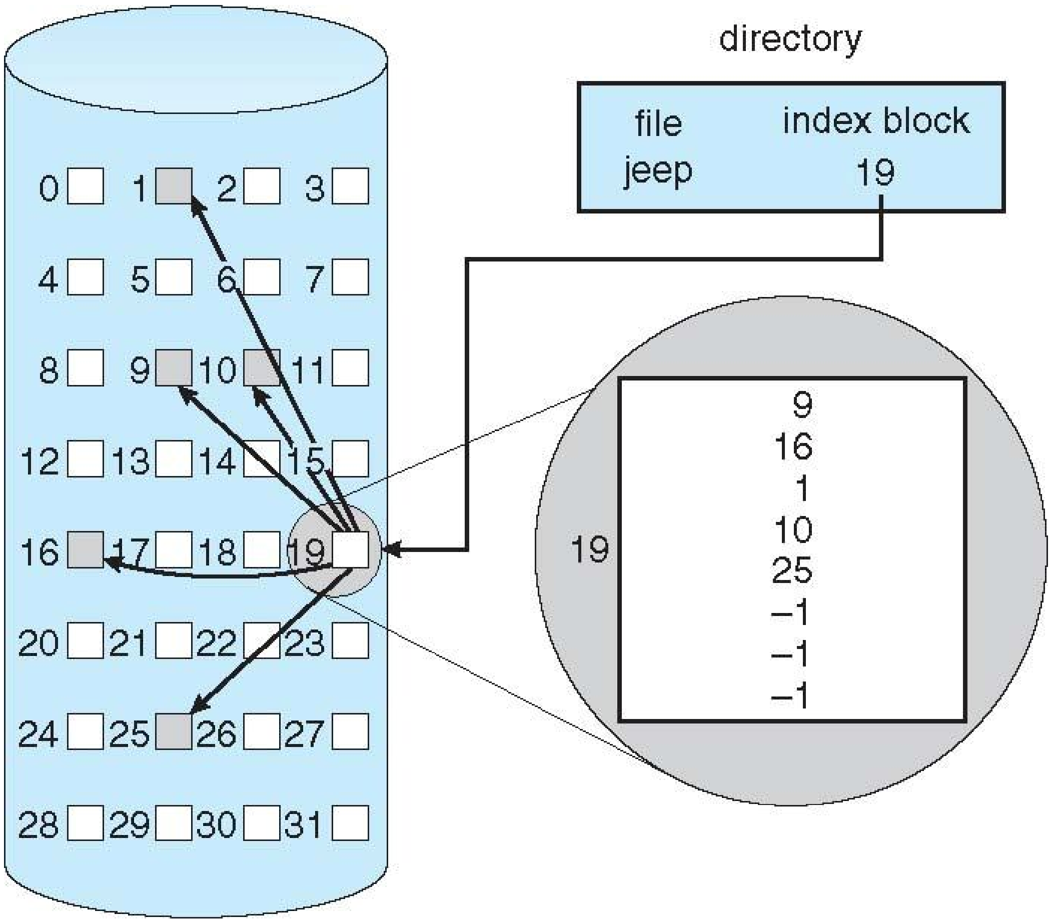


Allocation Methods -Indexed

- **Indexed allocation**
  - Each file has its own **index block**(s) of pointers to its data blocks
- Logical view



Example of Indexed Allocation



Indexed Allocation (Cont.)

- Need index table
- Random access
- Dynamic access without external fragmentation, but have overhead of index block
- Mapping from logical to physical in a file of maximum size of 256K bytes and block size of 512 bytes. We need only 1 block for index table

LA/512 → Q, R

Q = displacement into index table
R = displacement into block

Indexed Allocation – Mapping (Cont.)

- Mapping from logical to physical in a file of unbounded length (block size of 512 words)
- Linked scheme – Link blocks of index table (no limit on size)

Q_1 = block of index table
R_1 is used as follows:

LA / (512 x 511) → Q_1, R_1

R_1 / 512 → Q_2, R_2

Q_2 = displacement into block of index table
R_2 displacement into block of file:

Indexed Allocation – Mapping (Cont.)

- Two-level index (4K blocks could store 1,024 four-byte pointers in outer index -> 1,048,567 data blocks and file size of up to 4GB)

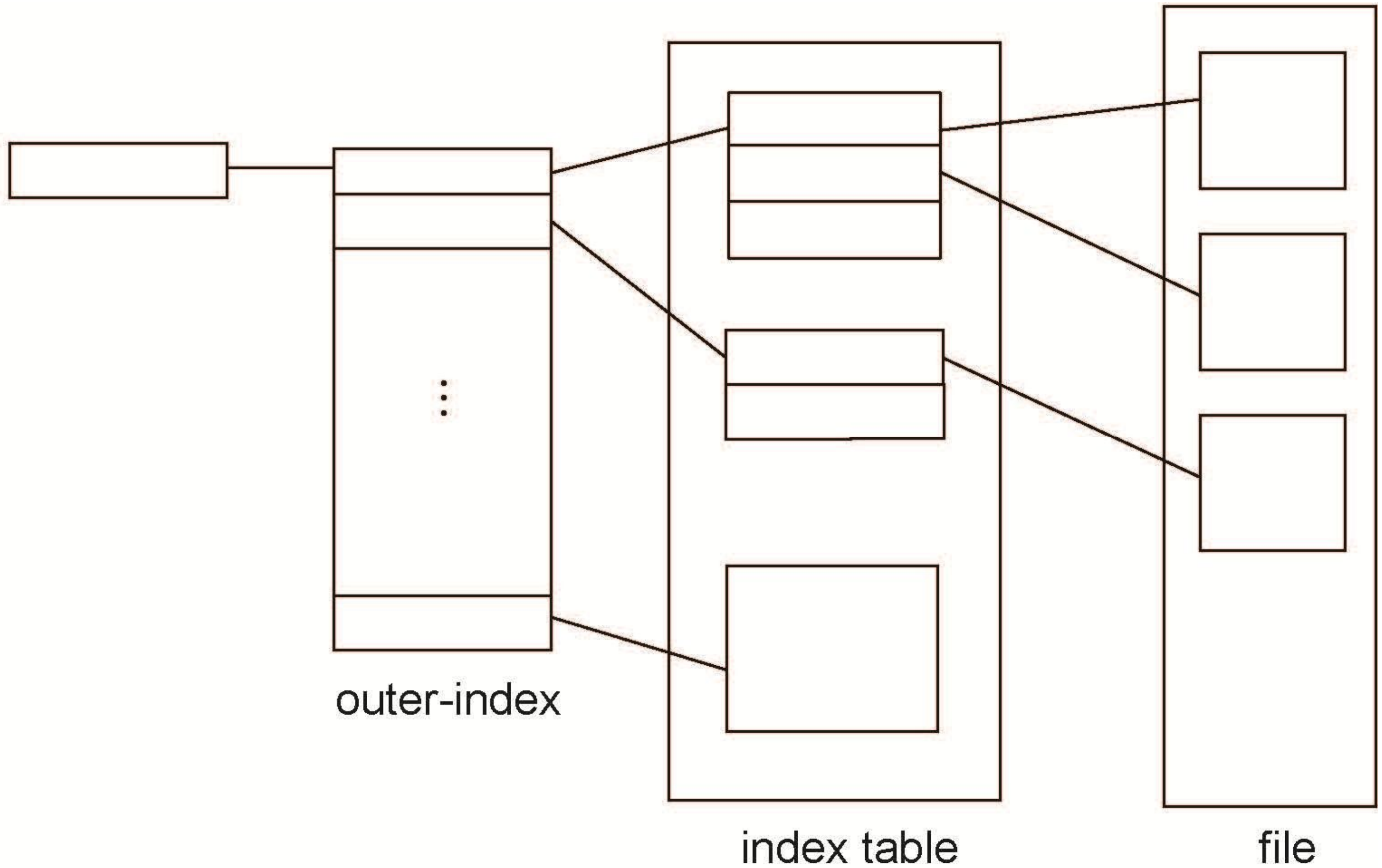
LA / (512 x 512) → Q_1, R_1

Q_1 = displacement into outer-index
R_1 is used as follows:

R_1 / 512 → Q_2, R_2

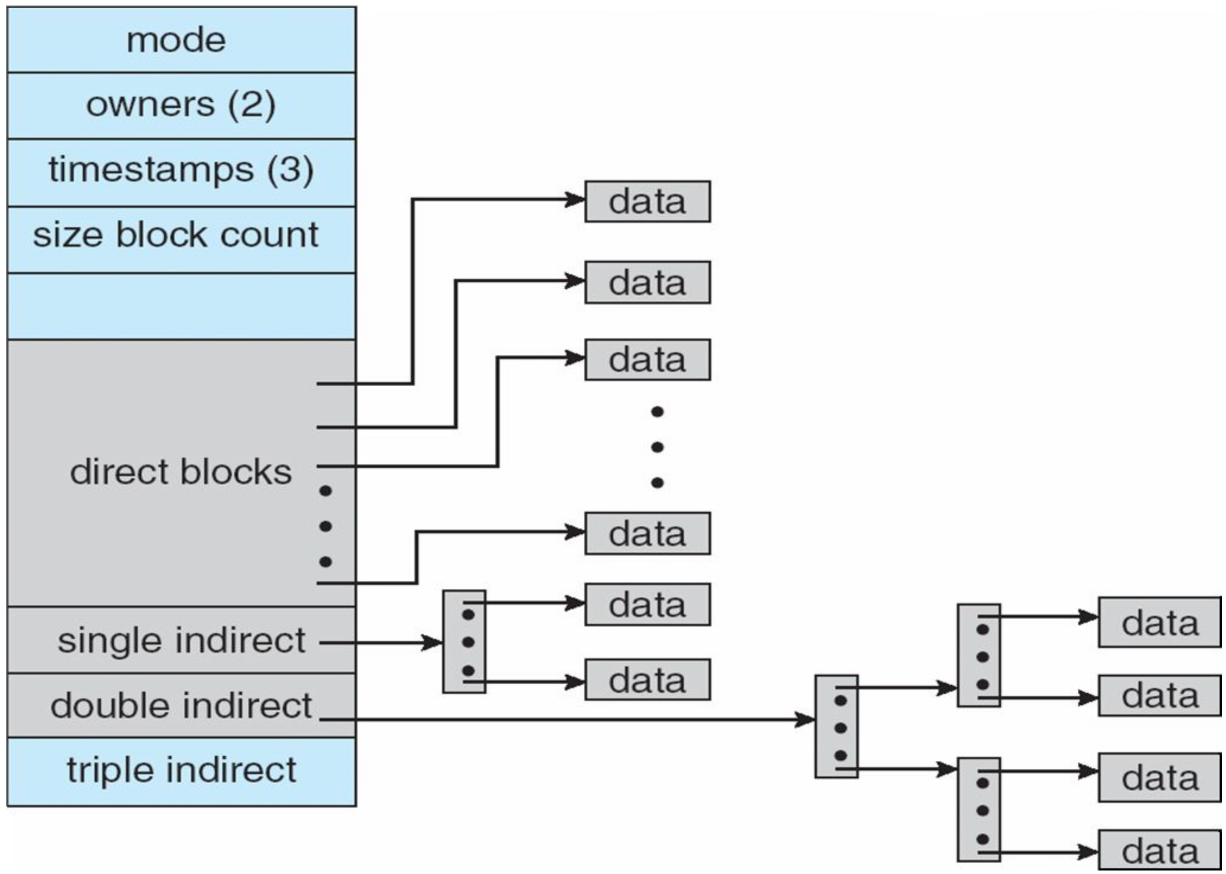
Q_2 = displacement into block of index table
R_2 displacement into block of file:

Indexed Allocation – Mapping (Cont.)



Combined Scheme: UNIX UFS

4K bytes per block, 32-bit addresses



More index blocks than can be addressed with 32-bit file pointer

Performance

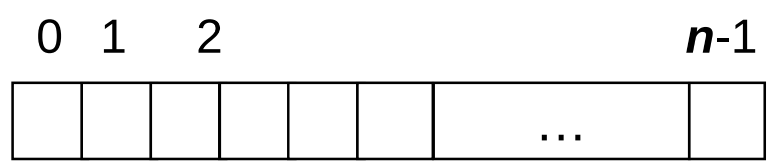
- Best method depends on file access type
  – Contiguous great for sequential and random
- Linked good for sequential, not random
- Declare access type at creation -> select either contiguous or linked
- Indexed more complex
  – Single block access could require 2 index block reads then data block read
  – Clustering can help improve throughput, reduce CPU overhead

Performance (Cont.)

- Adding instructions to the execution path to save one disk I/O is reasonable
  - Intel Core i7 Extreme Edition 990x (2011) at 3.46Ghz = 159,000 MIPS
  - Typical disk drive at 250 I/Os per second
    - 159,000 MIPS / 250 = 630 million instructions during one disk I/O
  - Fast SSD drives provide 60,000 IOPS
    - 159,000 MIPS / 60,000 = 2.65 millions instructions during one disk I/O

Free-Space Management

- File system maintains **free-space list** to track available blocks/clusters
  - (Using term “block” for simplicity)
- **Bit vector** or **bit map** (***n*** blocks)



$$\text{bit}[\boldsymbol{i}] = \begin{cases} 1 \Rightarrow \text{block}[\boldsymbol{i}] \text{ free} \\ 0 \Rightarrow \text{block}[\boldsymbol{i}] \text{ occupied} \end{cases}$$

Block number calculation

(number of bits per word) *
(number of 0-value words) +
offset of first 1 bit

CPUs have instructions to return offset within word of first “1” bit

Free-Space Management (Cont.)

- Bit map requires extra space
  - Example:

    block size = 4KB = 2^{12} bytes

    disk size = 2^{40} bytes (1 terabyte)

    $\boldsymbol{n}$ = $2^{40}/2^{12} = 2^{28}$ bits (or 32MB)

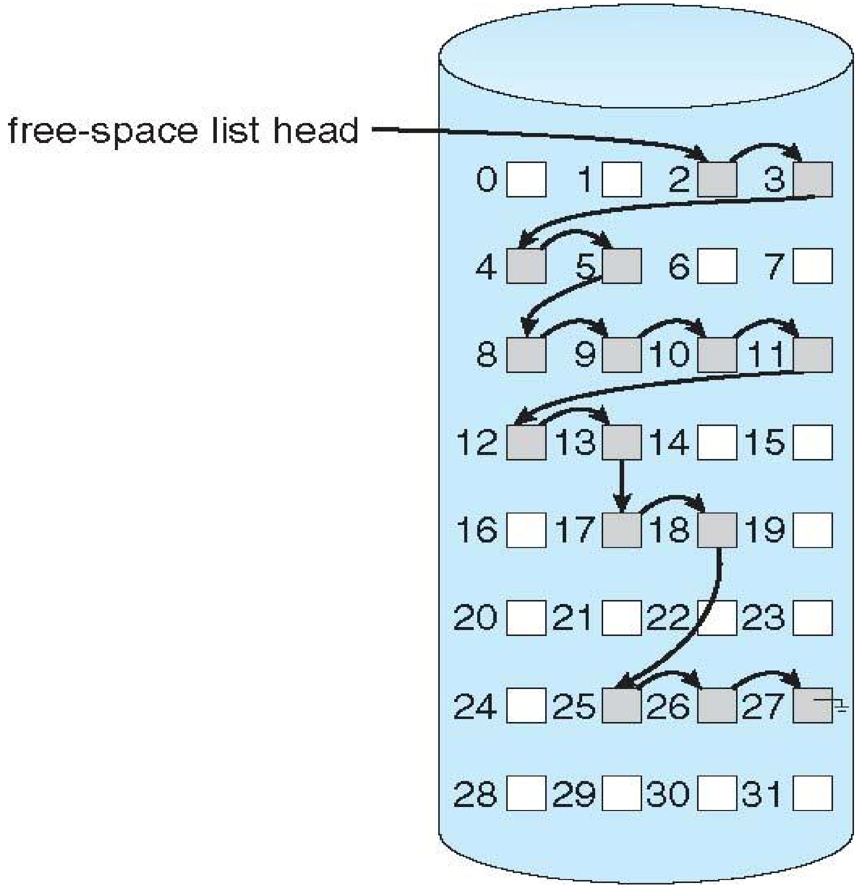
    if clusters of 4 blocks -> 8MB of memory

- Easy to get contiguous files

Linked Free Space List on Disk

Linked list (free list)

- Cannot get contiguous space easily
- No waste of space
- No need to traverse the entire list (if # free blocks recorded)



Free-Space Management (Cont.)

- Grouping
  - Modify linked list to store address of next *n-1* free blocks in first free block, plus a pointer to next block that contains free-block-pointers (like this one)
- Counting
  - Because space is frequently contiguously used and freed, with contiguous-allocation allocation, extents, or clustering
    - Keep address of first free block and count of following free blocks
    - Free space list then has entries containing addresses and counts

Free-Space Management (Cont.)

- Space Maps
  - Used in **ZFS**
  - Consider meta-data I/O on very large file systems
    - Full data structures like bit maps couldn't fit in memory -> thousands of I/Os
  - Divides device space into **metaslab** units and manages metaslabs
    - Given volume can contain hundreds of metaslabs
  - Each metaslab has associated space map
    - Uses counting algorithm
  - But records to log file rather than file system
    - Log of all block activity, in time order, in counting format
  - Metaslab activity -> load space map into memory in balanced-tree structure, indexed by offset
    - Replay log into that structure
    - Combine contiguous free blocks into single entry

Efficiency and Performance

- Efficiency dependent on:
  - Disk allocation and directory algorithms
  - Types of data kept in file ' s directory entry
  - Pre-allocation or as-needed allocation of metadata structures
  - Fixed-size or varying-size data structures

Efficiency and Performance (Cont.)

- Performance
  - Keeping data and metadata close together
  - **Buffer cache** – separate section of main memory for frequently used blocks
  - **Synchronous** writes sometimes requested by apps or needed by OS
    - No buffering / caching – writes must hit disk before acknowledgement
    - **Asynchronous** writes more common, buffer-able, faster
  - **Free-behind** and **read-ahead** – techniques to optimize sequential access
  - Reads frequently slower than writes