Carnegie Mellon Univ.
Dept. of Computer Science
15-415/615 - DB Applications

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Lecture#20: Overview of Transaction Management

Administrivia

- HW7 (Phase 1) is due Tues March 31st
- Recitations (always in WEH 5302):
  - Wed April 1st 1:30-2:20

Last Class

- Database Design
- Database Tuning

Today's Class

- Transactions Overview
- Concurrency Control
- Recovery

Motivation

Lost Updates
Concurrency Control

- We both change the same record ("Smith"); how to avoid race condition?

Durability
Recovery

- You transfer $100 from savings→checking; power failure – what happens?

Motivation

Lost Updates
Concurrency Control

- We both change the … record ("S… av…

Durability
Re…

- … from …checking; power …ailure – what happens?

DBMSs automatically handle both issues: 'transactions'

Concurrency Control & Recovery

- Valuable properties of DBMSs.
- Based on concept of transactions with **ACID** properties.
- Let's talk about transactions…

Transactions

- A ***transaction*** is the execution of a sequence of one or more operations (e.g., SQL queries) on a shared database to perform some higher-level function.
- It is the basic unit of change in a DBMS:
  - Partial transactions are not allowed!

Transaction Example

- *Move $100 from Christos' bank account to his bookie's account.*
- Transaction:
  - Check whether Christos has $100.
  - Deduct $100 from his account.
  - Add $100 to his bookie's account.

Strawman System

- Execute each txn one-by-one (i.e., ***serial order***) as they arrive at the DBMS.
  - One and only one txn can be running at the same time in the DBMS.
- Before a txn starts, copy the entire database to a new file and make all changes to that file.
  - If the txn completes successfully, overwrite the original file with the new one.
  - If the txn fails, just remove the dirty copy.

Problem Statement

- Better approach is to allow concurrent execution of independent transactions.
- **Q:** Why do we want that?
  - Utilization/throughput ("hide" waiting for I/Os)
  - Increased response times to users.
- But we also would like:
  - Correctness
  - Fairness

Transactions

- Hard to ensure correctness…
  - *What happens if Christos only has $100 and tries to pay off two bookies at the same time?*
- Hard to execute quickly…
  - *What happens if Christos needs to pay off his gambling debts very quickly all at once?*

Problem Statement

- Arbitrary interleaving can lead to
  - Temporary inconsistency (ok, unavoidable)
  - Permanent inconsistency (bad!)
- Need formal correctness criteria.

Definitions

- A txn may carry out many operations on the data retrieved from the database
- However, the DBMS is only concerned about what data is read/written from/to the database.
  - Changes to the "outside world" are beyond the scope of the DBMS.

Formal Definitions

- **Database**: A fixed set of named data objects (*A*, *B*, *C*, …)
- **Transaction:** A sequence of read and write operations (*R(A)*, *W(B)*, …)
  - DBMS's abstract view of a user program

Transactions in SQL

- A new txn starts with the **`begin`** command.
- The txn stops with either **`commit`** or **`abort`**:
  - If **`commit`**, all changes are saved.
  - If **`abort`**, all changes are undone so that it's like as if the txn never executed at all.

A txn can abort itself or the DBMS can abort it.

Correctness Criteria: **ACID**

- **Atomicity:** All actions in the txn happen, or none happen.
- **Consistency:** If each txn is consistent and the DB starts consistent, then it ends up consistent.
- **Isolation:** Execution of one txn is isolated from that of other txns.
- **Durability:** If a txn commits, its effects persist.

Correctness Criteria: **ACID**

- **Atomicity:** *"all or nothing"*
- **Consistency:** *"it looks correct to me"*
- **Isolation:** *"as if alone"*
- **Durability:** *"survive failures"*

Transaction Demo

Overview

- Problem definition & 'ACID'
- → **A**tomicity
- **C**onsistency
- **I**solation
- **D**urability

Atomicity of Transactions

- Two possible outcomes of executing a txn:
  - Txn might *commit* after completing all its actions.
  - or it could *abort* (or be aborted by the DBMS) after executing some actions.
- DBMS guarantees that txns are **atomic**.
  - From user's point of view: txn always either executes all its actions, or executes no actions at all.

Mechanisms for Ensuring Atomicity

- We take $100 out of Christos' account but then there is a power failure before we transfer it to his bookie.
- When the database comes back on-line, what should be the correct state of Christos' account?

Mechanisms for Ensuring Atomicity

- One approach: **LOGGING**
  - DBMS *logs* all actions so that it can *undo* the actions of aborted transactions.
- Think of this like the black box in airplanes…

Mechanisms for Ensuring Atomicity

- Logging used by all modern systems.
- **Q:** Why?

A

Mechanisms for Ensuring Atomicity

- Logging used by all modern systems.
- **Q:** Why?
- **A:** Audit Trail & Efficiency Reasons

- *What other mechanism can you think of?*

A

Mechanisms for Ensuring Atomicity

- Another approach: **SHADOW PAGING**
  - DBMS makes copies of pages and txns make changes to those copies. Only when the txn commits is the page made visible to others.
  - Originally from System R.
- Nobody actually does this…

Overview

- Problem definition & '**ACID**'
- **A**tomicity
- **C**onsistency
- **I**solation
- **D**urability

C

Database Consistency

- **Database Consistency:** Data in the DBMS is accurate in modeling the real world and follows integrity constraints

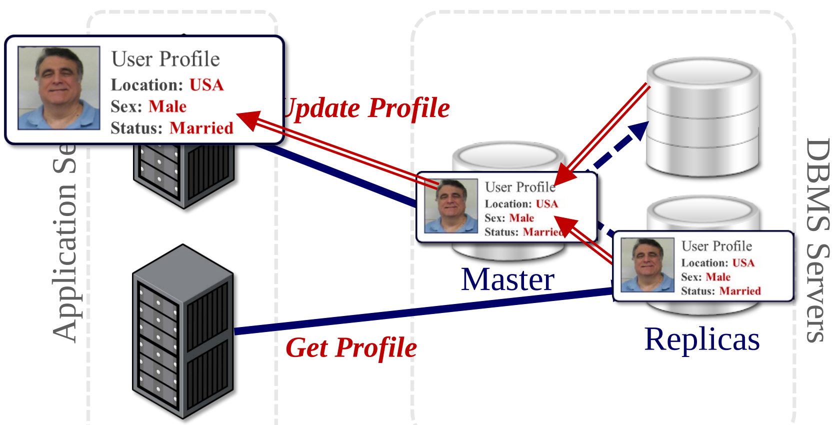
Transaction Consistency

- **Transaction Consistency:** if the database is consistent before the txn starts (running alone), it will be after also.
- Transaction consistency is the application's responsibility.
  - *We won't discuss this further…*

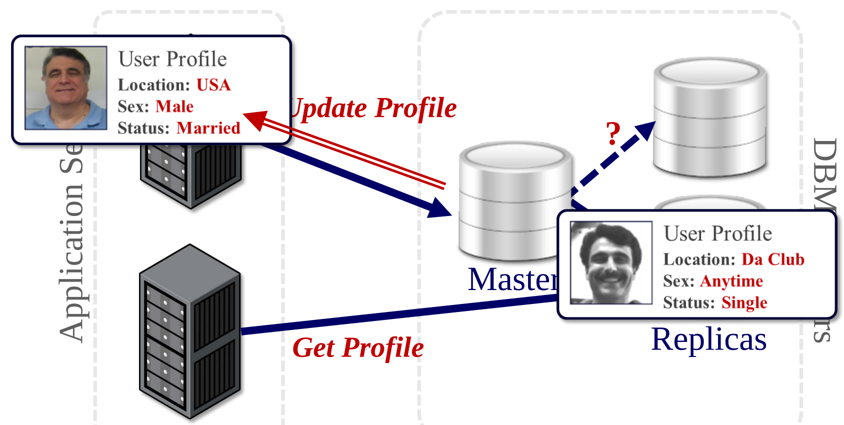
Strong vs. Weak Consistency

- In a distributed DBMS, the consistency level determines when other nodes see new data in the database:
  - **Strong:** Guaranteed to see all writes immediately, but txns are slower.
  - **Weak/Eventual:** Will see writes at some later point in time, but txns are faster.

Strong Consistency



Eventual Consistency



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Overview

- Problem definition & 'ACID'
- **A**tomicity
- **C**onsistency
- **I**solation
- **D**urability

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Isolation of Transactions

- Users submit txns, and each txn executes *as if it* was running *by itself*.
- Concurrency is achieved by DBMS, which interleaves actions (reads/writes of DB objects) of various transactions.
- **Q:** How do we achieve this?

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Isolation of Transactions

- **A:** Many methods - two main categories:
  - **Pessimistic** – Don't let problems arise in the first place.
  - **Optimistic** – Assume conflicts are rare, deal with them after they happen.

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Example

T1

```
BEGIN
A=A+100
B=B–100
COMMIT
```

T2

```
BEGIN
A=A*1.06
B=B*1.06
COMMIT
```

- Consider two txns:
  - T1 transfers $100 from B's account to A's
  - T2 credits both accounts with 6% interest.

Example

T1
```
BEGIN
A=A+100
B=B–100
COMMIT
```

T2
```
BEGIN
A=A*1.06
B=B*1.06
COMMIT
```

- Assume at first A and B each have $1000.
- **Q:** What are the *legal outcomes* of running T1 and T2?

Example

- **Q:** What are the possible outcomes of running T1 and T2 together?
- **A:** Many! But A+B should be:
  $2000*1.06=$2120
- There is no guarantee that T1 will execute before T2 or vice-versa, if both are submitted together. But, the net effect must be equivalent to these two transactions running **serially** in some order.

Example

- Legal outcomes:
  - A=1166, B=954 →**$2120**
  - A=1160, B=960 →**$2120**
- The outcome depends on whether T1 executes before T2 or vice versa.

Serial Execution Example

TIME

Schedule

T1	T2
BEGIN A=A+100 B=B–100 COMMIT	
	BEGIN A=A*1.06 B=B*1.06 COMMIT

A=1166, B=954

≡

Schedule

T1	T2
	BEGIN A=A*1.06 B=B*1.06 COMMIT
BEGIN A=A+100 B=B–100 COMMIT	

A=1160, B=960

Interleaving Transactions

- We can also interleave the txns in order to maximize concurrency.
  - Slow disk/network I/O.
  - Multi-core CPUs.

Interleaving Example (Good)

TIME

Schedule

T1	T2
BEGIN	
A=A+100	
	BEGIN
	A=A*1.06
B=B–100	
COMMIT	
	B=B*1.06
	COMMIT

A=1166, B=954

≡

Schedule

T1	T2
BEGIN	
A=A+100	
B=B–100	
COMMIT	
	BEGIN
	A=A*1.06
	B=B*1.06
	COMMIT

A=1166, B=954

Interleaving Example (Bad)

TIME

Schedule

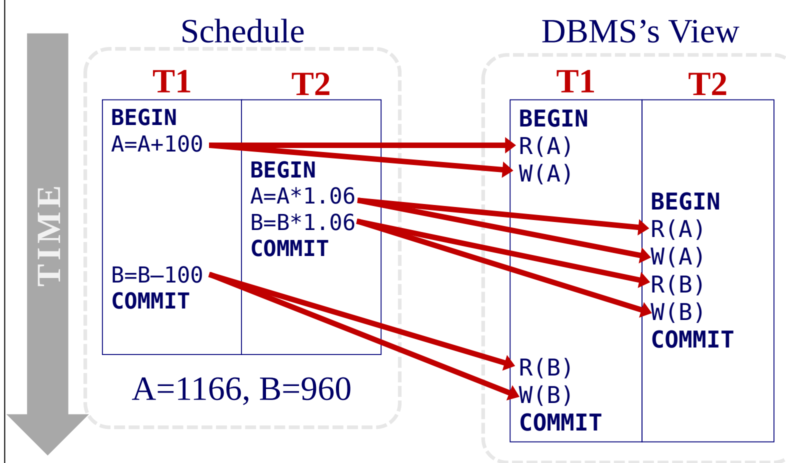
T1	T2
BEGIN	
A=A+100	
	BEGIN
	A=A*1.06
	B=B*1.06
	COMMIT
B=B–100	
COMMIT	

A=1166, B=960

The bank lost $6!

≠ A=1166, B=954 or A=1160, B=960

Interleaving Example (Bad)



Correctness

- **Q:** How do we judge that a schedule is correct?
- **A:** If it is ***equivalent*** to some ***serial*** execution

Formal Properties of Schedules

- **Serial Schedule:** A schedule that does not interleave the actions of different transactions.
- **Equivalent Schedules**: For any database state, the effect of executing the first schedule is identical to the effect of executing the second schedule.*****

(*) no matter what the arithmetic operations are!

Formal Properties of Schedules

- **Serializable Schedule:** A schedule that is *equivalent* to some serial execution of the transactions.
- Note: If each transaction preserves consistency, every serializable schedule preserves consistency.

Formal Properties of Schedules

- **Serializability** is a less intuitive notion of correctness compared to txn initiation time or commit order, but it provides the DBMS with significant additional flexibility in scheduling operations.

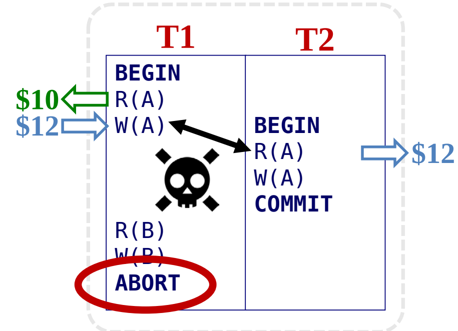
Interleaved Execution Anomalies

- **Read-Write** conflicts (R-W)
- **Write-Read** conflicts (W-R)
- **Write-Write** conflicts (W-W)

- **Q:** Why not R-R conflicts?

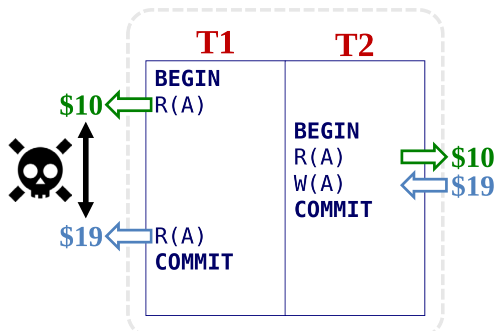
Write-Read Conflicts

- Reading Uncommitted Data, "Dirty Reads":



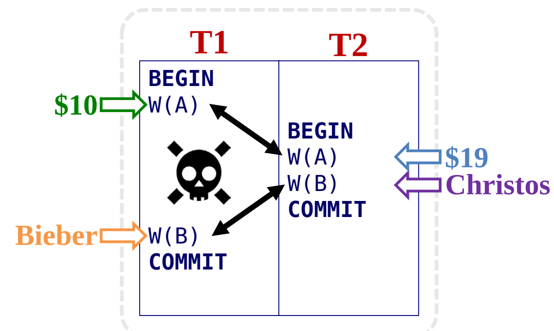
Read-Write Conflicts

- Unrepeatable Reads



Write-Write Conflicts

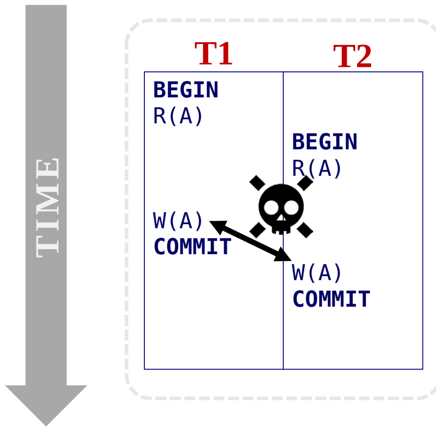
- Overwriting Uncommitted Data



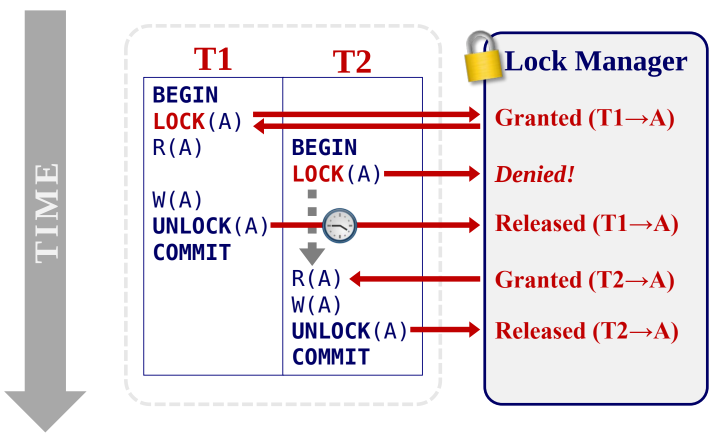
Solution

- **Q:** How could you guarantee that all resulting schedules are correct (i.e., serializable)?
- **A:** Use locks!

Executing without Locks



Executing with Locks



Executing with Locks

- **Q:** If a txn only needs to read 'A', should it still get a lock?
- **A:** Yes, but you can get a shared lock.

Lock Types

- Basic Types:
  - **S-LOCK** – Shared Locks (reads)
  - **X-LOCK** – Exclusive Locks (writes)

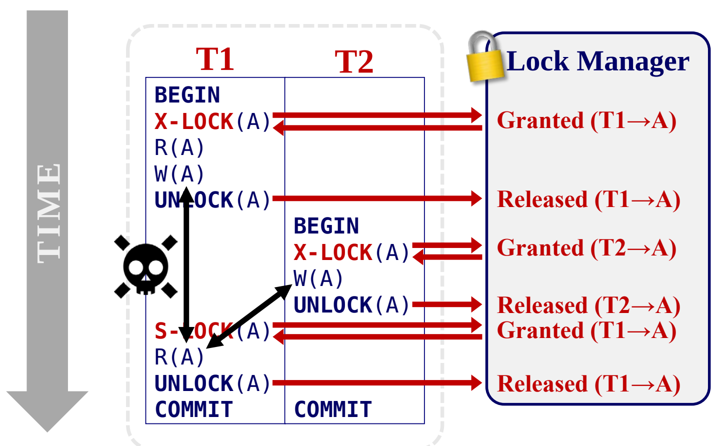
Compatibility Matrix

	Shared	Exclusive
Shared	✔	X
Exclusive	X	X

Executing with Locks

- Transactions request locks (or upgrades)
- Lock manager grants or blocks requests
- Transactions release locks
- Lock manager updates lock-table
- *But this is not enough…*

Executing with Locks



Concurrency Control

- We need to use a well-defined protocol that ensures that txns execute correctly.
- Two categories:
  - Two-Phase Locking (2PL)
  - Timestamp Ordering (T/O)

We will discuss T/O methods in future classes.

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Two-Phase Locking

- **Phase 1: Growing**
  - Each txn requests the locks that it needs from the DBMS’s lock manager.
  - The lock manager grants/denies lock requests.
- **Phase 2: Shrinking**
  - The txn is allowed to only release locks that it previously acquired. It cannot acquire new locks.

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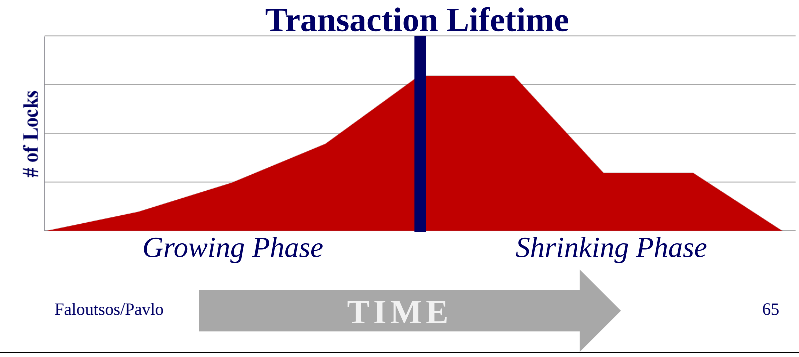
Two-Phase Locking

- The txn is not allowed to acquire/upgrade locks after the growing phase finishes.



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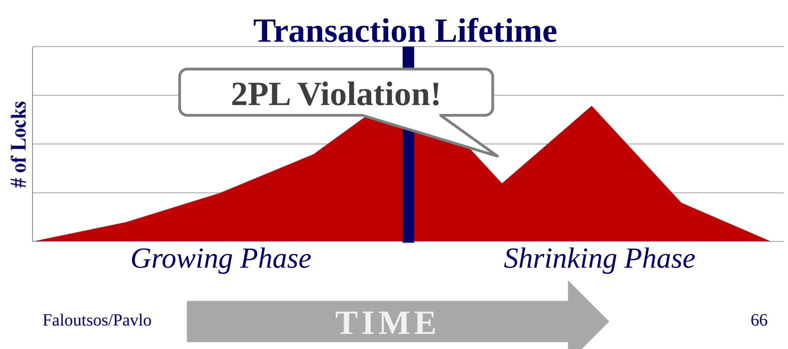
Two-Phase Locking

- The txn is not allowed to acquire/upgrade locks after the growing phase finishes.



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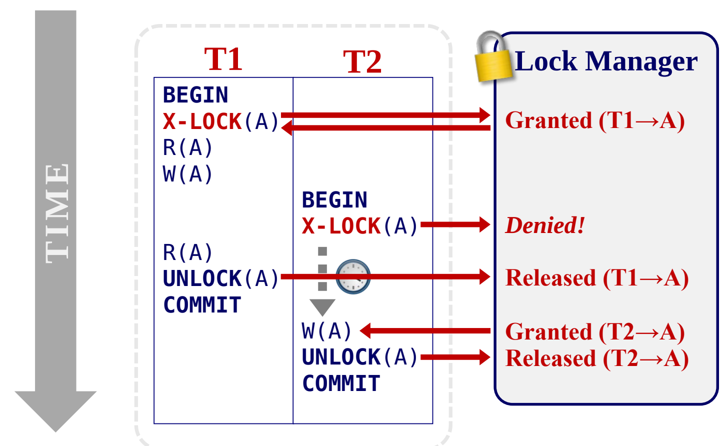
Executing with 2PL



2PL Observations

- There are schedules that are serializable but would not be allowed by 2PL.
- Locking limits concurrency.
- May lead to deadlocks.
- May still have "dirty reads"
  - Solution: **Strict 2PL**

Strict Two-Phase Locking

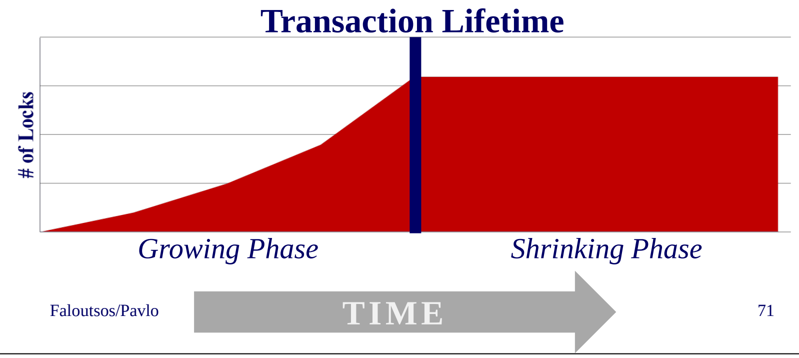
- A schedule is ***strict*** if a value written by a txn is not read or overwritten by other txns until that txn finishes.
- Advantages:
  - Recoverable.
  - Do not require cascading aborts.
  - Aborted txns can be undone by just restoring original values of modified tuples.

Strict Two-Phase Locking

- Txns hold all of their locks until commit.
- Good:
  - Avoids "dirty reads" etc
- Bad:
  - Limits concurrency even more
  - And still may lead to deadlocks

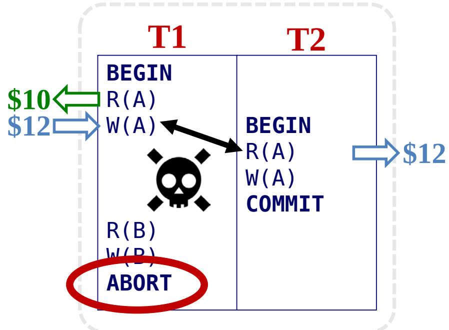
Strict Two-Phase Locking

- The txn is not allowed to acquire/upgrade locks after the growing phase finishes.



Strict Two-Phase Locking

- **Q:** Why is avoiding “dirty reads” important?



Strict Two-Phase Locking

- **Q:** Why is avoiding “dirty reads” important?
- **A:** If a txn aborts, all actions must be undone. Any txn that read modified data must also be aborted.

Locking in Practice

- You typically don’t set locks manually.
- Sometimes you will need to provide the DBMS with hints to help it to improve concurrency.
- Also useful for doing major changes.

Overview

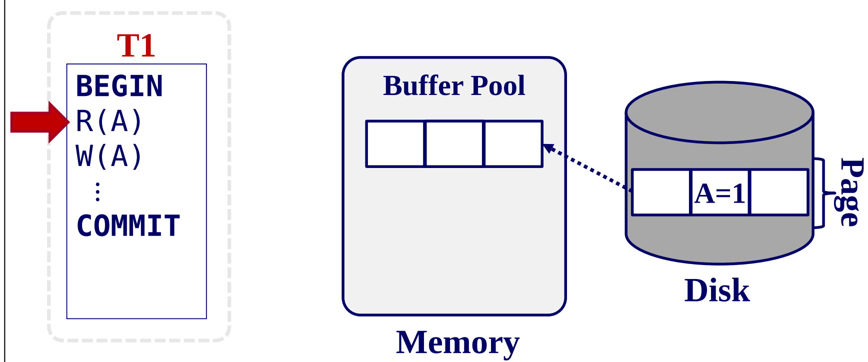
- Problem definition & ‘ACID’
- **A**tomicity
- **C**onsistency
- **I**solation
- **D**urability

Transaction Durability

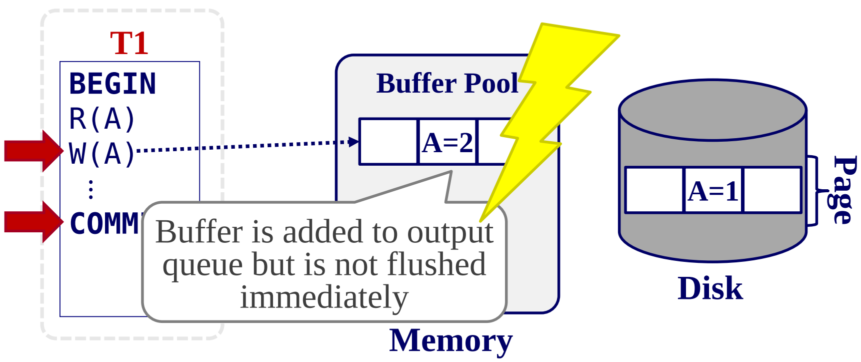
- Records are stored on disk.
- For updates, they are copied into memory and flushed back to disk at the discretion of the O.S.
  - Unless forced-output: `W(B)→fsync()`

This is slow!
Nobody does this!

Transaction Durability



Transaction Durability



Write-Ahead Log

- Record the changes made to the database in a log ***before*** the change is made.
- Assume that the log is on stable storage.

- **Q:** What to replicate?
  - The complete page?
  - Single tuple?

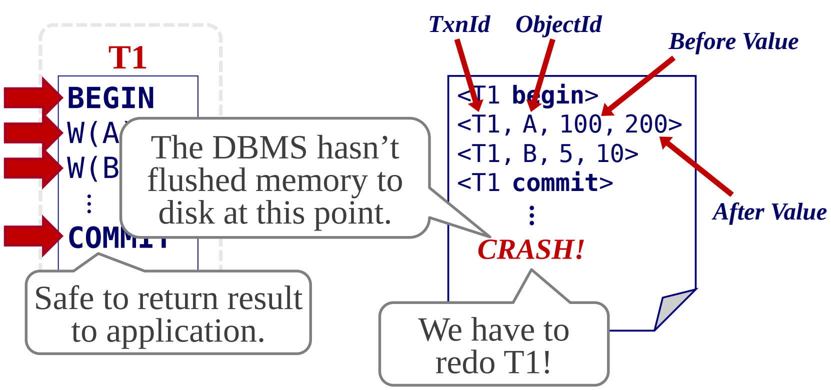
Write-Ahead Log

- Log record format:
  - **<txnId, objectId, beforeValue, afterValue>**
  - Each transaction writes a log record first, before doing the change
- When a txn finishes, the DBMS will:
  - Write a **<commit>** record on the log
  - Make sure that all log records are flushed before it returns an acknowledgement to application.

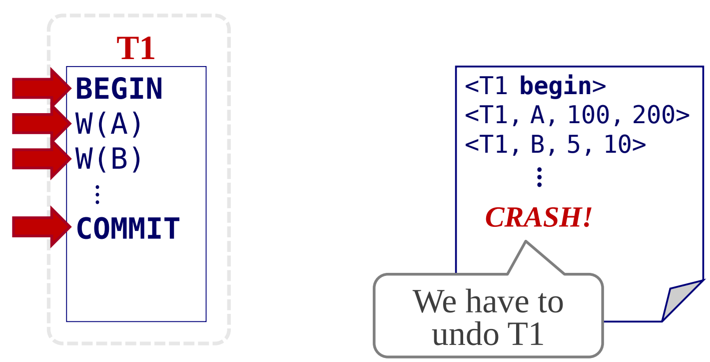
Write-Ahead Log

- After a failure, DBMS "replays" the log:
  - Undo uncommited transactions
  - Redo the committed ones

Write-Ahead Log



Write-Ahead Log



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Recovering After a Crash

- At the end – all committed updates and only those updates are reflected in the database.
- Some care must be taken to handle the case of a crash occurring during the recovery process!

WAL Problems

- The log grows infinitely…
- We have to take checkpoints to reduce the amount of processing that we need to do.

- We will discuss this in further detail in upcoming classes.

ACID Properties

- **Atomicity:** All actions in the txn happen, or none happen.
- **Consistency:** If each txn is consistent, and the DB starts consistent, it ends up consistent.
- **Isolation:** Execution of one txn is isolated from that of other txns.
- **Durability:** If a txn commits, its effects persist.

Summary

- Concurrency control and recovery are among the most important functions provided by a DBMS.
- Concurrency control is automatic
  – System automatically inserts lock/unlock requests and schedules actions of different txns.
  – Ensures that resulting execution is equivalent to executing the txns one after the other in some order.

Summary

- Write-ahead logging (WAL) and the recovery protocol are used to:
  - Undo the actions of aborted transactions.
  - Restore the system to a consistent state after a crash.

Overview

- **A**tomicity
- **C**onsistency
- **I**solation
- **D**urability