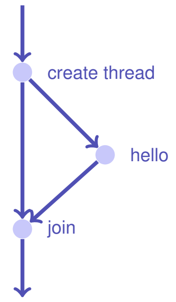
28. Parallel Programming II

C++ Threads, Shared Memory, Concurrency, Excursion: lock algorithm (Peterson), Mutual Exclusion Race Conditions [C++ Threads: Anthony Williams, *C++ Concurrency in Action*]

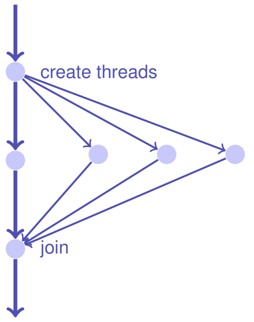
C++11 Threads

```
#include <iostream>
#include <thread>

void hello(){
  std::cout << "hello\n";
}

int main(){
  // create and launch thread t
  std::thread t(hello);
  // wait for termination of t
  t.join();
  return 0;
}
```



C++11 Threads

```
void hello(int id){
  std::cout << "hello from " << id << "\n";
}

int main(){
  std::vector<std::thread> tv(3);
  int id = 0;
  for (auto & t:tv)
    t = std::thread(hello, ++id);
  std::cout << "hello from main \n";
  for (auto & t:tv)
        t.join();
  return 0;
}
```



Nondeterministic Execution!

One execution:	Other execution:	Other execution:
hello from main hello from 2 hello from 1 hello from 0	hello from 1 hello from main hello from 0 hello from 2	hello from main hello from 0 hello from hello from 1 2

Technical Detail

To let a thread continue as background thread:

```
void background();

void someFunction(){
  ...
  std::thread t(background);
  t.detach();
  ...
} // no problem here, thread is detached
```


More Technical Details

- With allocating a thread, reference parameters are copied, except explicitly std::ref is provided at the construction.
- Can also run Functor or Lambda-Expression on a thread
- In exceptional circumstances, joining threads should be executed in a catch block

More background and details in chapter 2 of the book *C++ Concurrency in Action*, Anthony Williams, Manning 2012. also available online at the ETH library.

28.2 Shared Memory, Concurrency

Sharing Resources (Memory)

- Up to now: fork-join algorithms: data parallel or divide-and-conquer
- Simple structure (data independence of the threads) to avoid race conditions
- Does not work any more when threads access shared memory.

Managing state

Managing state: Main challenge of concurrent programming.

Approaches:

- Immutability, for example constants.
- Isolated Mutability, for example thread-local variables, stack.
- Shared mutable data, for example references to shared memory, global variables

Protect the shared state

- Method 1: locks, guarantee exclusive access to shared data.
- Method 2: lock-free data structures, exclusive access with a much finer granularity.
- Method 3: transactional memory (not treated in class)

Canonical Example

```
class BankAccount {
  int balance = 0;
public:
  int  getBalance(){ return balance; }
  void setBalance(int x) { balance = x; }
  void withdraw(int amount) {
    int b = getBalance();
    setBalance(b - amount);
  }
  // deposit etc.
};
```

(correct in a single-threaded world)

Bad Interleaving

Parallel call to `widthdraw(100)` on the same account

t	Thread 1	Thread 2
↓	`int b = getBalance();`	
		`int b = getBalance();`
		`setBalance(b-amount);`
	`setBalance(b-amount);`	

Tempting Traps

WRONG:

```
void withdraw(int amount) {
  int b = getBalance();
  if (b==getBalance())
        setBalance(b - amount);
}
```

Bad interleavings cannot be solved with a repeated reading

Tempting Traps

also WRONG:

```
void withdraw(int amount) {
        setBalance(getBalance() - amount);
}
```

Assumptions about atomicity of operations are almost always wrong

Mutual Exclusion

We need a concept for mutual exclusion

Only one thread may execute the operation withdraw *on the same account* at a time.

The programmer has to make sure that mutual exclusion is used.

More Tempting Traps

```
class BankAccount {
  int balance = 0;
  bool busy = false;
public:
  void withdraw(int amount) {
    while (busy); // spin wait
    busy = true;
    int b = getBalance();
    setBalance(b - amount);
    busy = false;
  }

  // deposit would spin on the same boolean
};
```

does not work!

Just moved the problem!

Thread 1

```
while (busy); //spin

busy = true;

int b = getBalance();

setBalance(b - amount);
```

Thread 2

```
while (busy); //spin

busy = true;

int b = getBalance();
setBalance(b - amount);
```

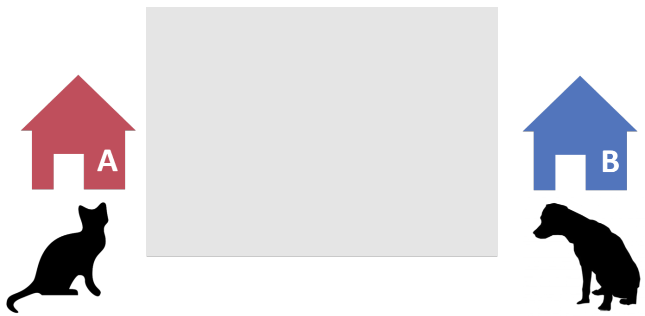
t

How ist this correctly implemented?

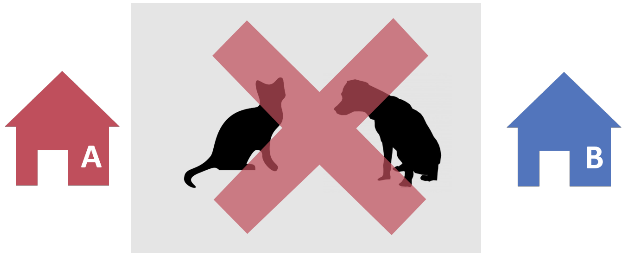
- We use *locks* (mutexes) from libraries
- They use hardware primitives, *Read-Modify-Write* (RMW) operations that can, in an atomic way, read and write depending on the read result.
- Without RMW Operations the algorithm is non-trivial and requires at least atomic access to variable of primitive type.

28.3 Excursion: lock algorithm

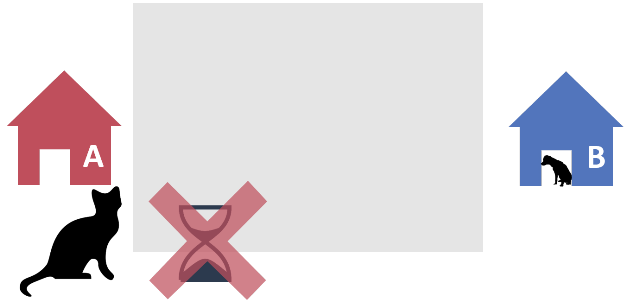
Alice's Cat vs. Bob's Dog



Required: Mutual Exclusion



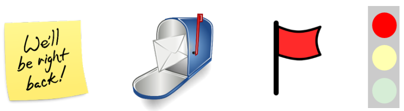
Required: No Lockout When Free



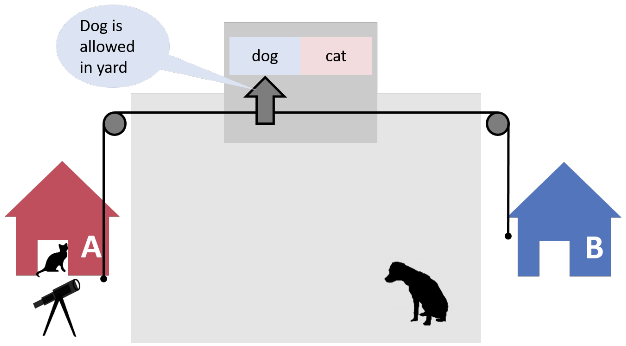
Communication Types

- Transient: Parties participate at the same time

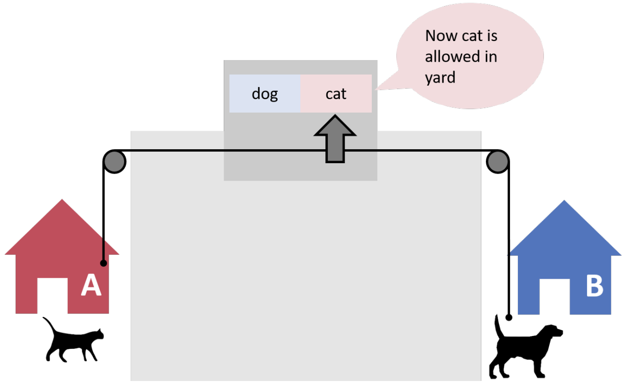
- Persistent: Parties participate at different times



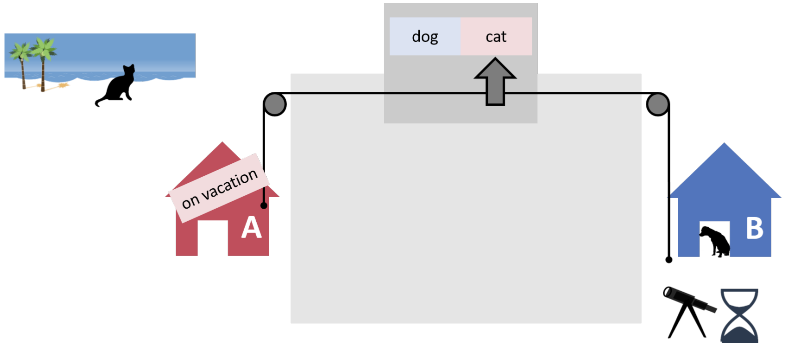
Communication Idea 1



Access Protocol

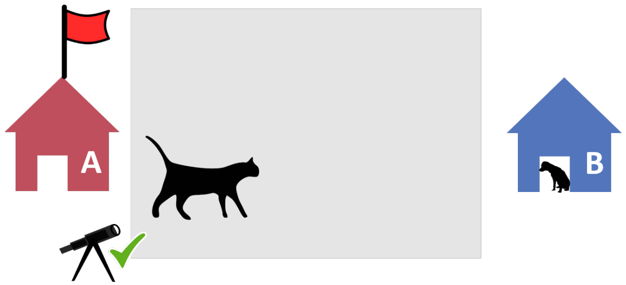


Problem!

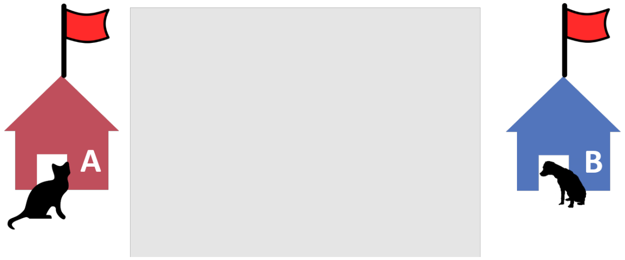


Communication Idea 2

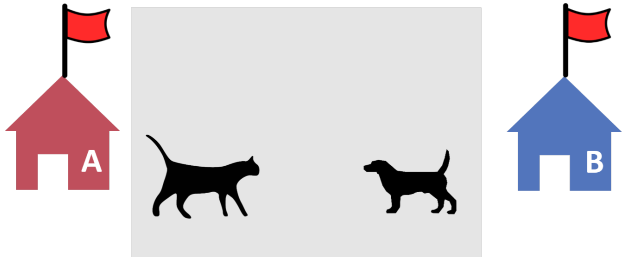
Access Protocol 2.1



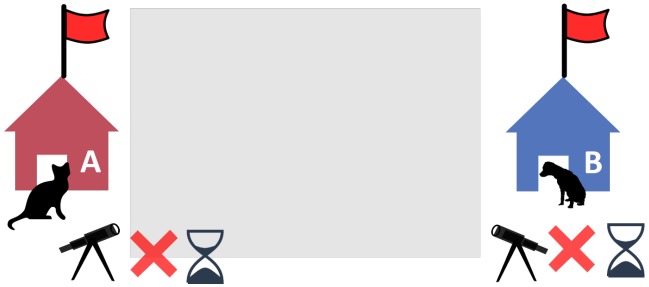
Different Scenario



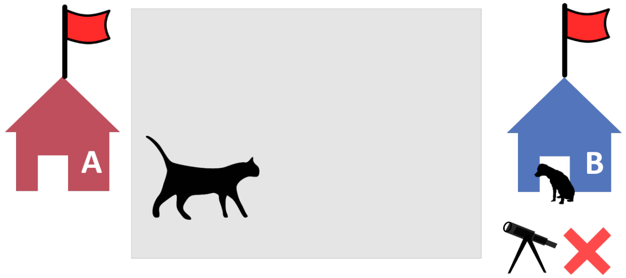
Problem: No Mutual Exclusion



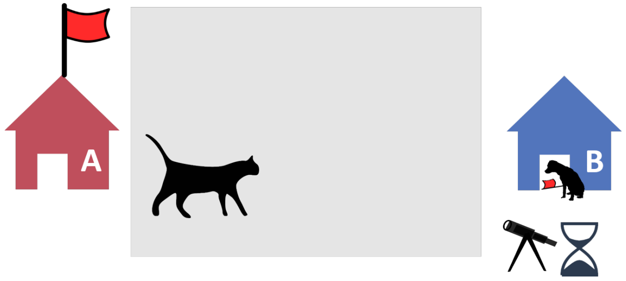
Checking Flags Twice: Deadlock



Access Protocol 2.2

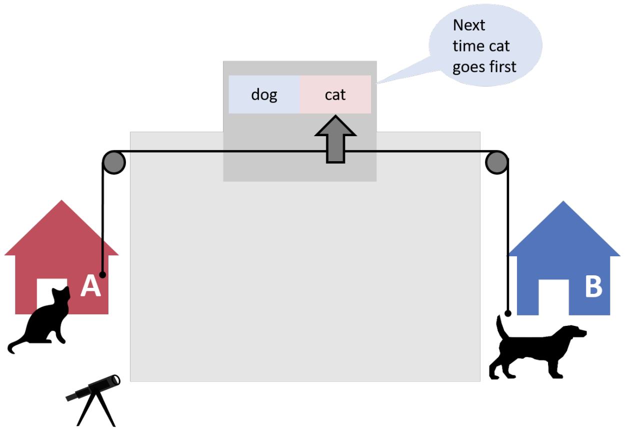


Access Protocol 2.2:Provably Correct

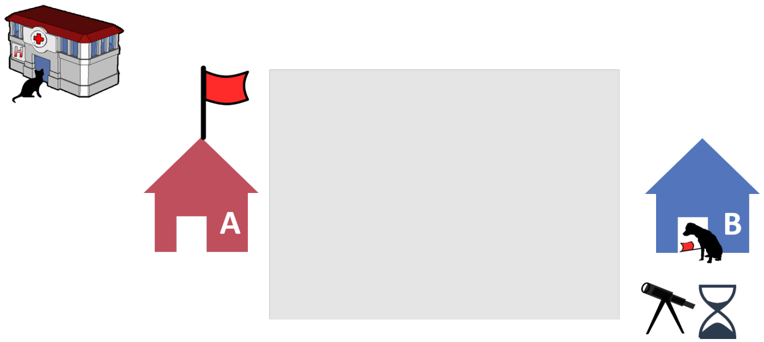


Weniger schwerwiegend: Starvation

Final Solution



General Problem of Locking remains



Peterson's Algorithm[36]

for two processes is provable correct and free from starvation

```
non-critical section

flag[me] = true // I am interested
victim = me // but you go first
// spin while we are both interested and you go first:
while (flag[you] && victim == me) {};

critical section

flag[me] = false
```

The code assumes that the access to flag / victim is atomic and particularly linearizable or sequential consistent. An assumption that – as we will see below – is not necessarily given for normal variables. The Peterson-lock is not used on modern hardware.

[36] not relevant for the exam

28.4 Mutual Exclusion

Critical Sections and Mutual Exclusion

Critical Section
Piece of code that may be executed by at most one process (thread) at a time.

Mutual Exclusion
Algorithm to implement a critical section

```
acquire_mutex();   // entry algorithm\\
...                // critical section
release_mutex();   // exit algorithm
```

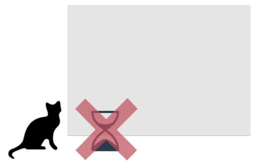

Required Properties of Mutual Exclusion

Correctness (Safety)

- At most one process executes the critical section code

Liveness

- Acquiring the mutex must terminate in finite time when no process executes in the critical section



Almost Correct

```cpp
class BankAccount {
  int balance = 0;
  std::mutex m; // requires #include <mutex>
public:
  ...
  void withdraw(int amount) {
    m.lock();
    int b = getBalance();
    setBalance(b - amount);
    m.unlock();
  }
};
```

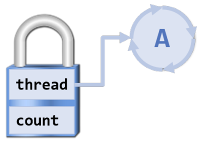
What if an exception occurs?

RAII Approach

```cpp
class BankAccount {
  int balance = 0;
  std::mutex m;
public:
  ...
  void withdraw(int amount) {
    std::lock_guard<std::mutex> guard(m);
    int b = getBalance();
    setBalance(b - amount);
  } // Destruction of guard leads to unlocking m
};
```

What about getBalance / setBalance?

Reentrant Locks



Reentrant Lock (recursive lock)

- remembers the currently affected thread;
- provides a counter
  - Call of lock: counter incremented
  - Call of unlock: counter is decremented. If counter = 0 the lock is released.

Account with reentrant lock

```cpp
class BankAccount {
  int balance = 0;
  std::recursive_mutex m;
  using guard = std::lock_guard<std::recursive_mutex>;
public:
  int  getBalance(){ guard g(m); return balance;
  }
  void setBalance(int x) { guard g(m); balance = x;
  }
  void withdraw(int amount) { guard g(m);
    int b = getBalance();
    setBalance(b - amount);
  }
};
```

28.5 Race Conditions

Race Condition

- A *race condition* occurs when the result of a computation depends on scheduling.
- We make a distinction between *bad interleavings* and *data races*
- *Bad interleavings* can occur even when a mutex is used.

Example: Stack

Stack with correctly synchronized access:

```
template <typename T>
class stack{
  ...
  std::recursive_mutex m;
  using guard = std::lock_guard<std::recursive_mutex>;
public:
  bool isEmpty(){ guard g(m); ...   }
  void push(T value){ guard g(m);   ... }
  T pop(){ guard g(m); ...}
};
```


Peek

Forgot to implement peek. Like this?

```
template <typename T>
T peek (stack<T> &s){
  T value = s.pop();
  s.push(value);
  return value;
}
```

not thread-safe!

Despite its questionable style the code is correct in a sequential world. Not so in concurrent programming.

Bad Interleaving!

Initially empty stack s, only shared between threads 1 and 2.

Thread 1 pushes a value and checks that the stack is then non-empty. Thread 2 reads the topmost value using peek().

t ↓	Thread 1	Thread 2
	`s.push(5);`	
		`int value = s.pop();`
	`assert(!s.isEmpty());`	
		`s.push(value);`
		`return value;`

The fix

Peek must be protected with the same lock as the other access methods

Bad Interleavings

Race conditions as bad interleavings can happen on a high level of abstraction

In the following we consider a different form of race condition: data race.

How about this?

```
class counter{
  int count = 0;
  std::recursive_mutex m;
  using guard = std::lock_guard<std::recursive_mutex>;
public:
  int increase(){
    guard g(m); return ++count;
  }
  int get(){
    return count;
  }
}
```

not thread-safe!

Why wrong?

It looks like nothing can go wrong because the update of count happens in a “tiny step”.

But this code is still wrong and depends on language-implementation details you cannot assume.

This problem is called *Data-Race*

Moral: *Do not introduce a data race, even if every interleaving you can think of is correct. Don’t make assumptions on the memory order.*

A bit more formal

Data Race (low-level Race-Conditions) Erroneous program behavior caused by insufficiently synchronized accesses of a shared resource by multiple threads, e.g. Simultaneous read/write or write/write of the same memory location

Bad Interleaving (High Level Race Condition) Erroneous program behavior caused by an unfavorable execution order of a multithreaded algorithm, even if that makes use of otherwise well synchronized resources.

We look deeper

```
class C {
  int x = 0;
  int y = 0;
public:
  void f() {
Ⓐ   x = 1;
Ⓑ   y = 1;
  }
  void g() {
Ⓒ   int a = y;
Ⓓ   int b = x;
    assert(b >= a);   ← Can this fail?
  }
}
```

There is no interleaving of f and g that would cause the assertion to fail:

- A B C D ✓
- A C B D ✓
- A C D B ✓
- C A B D ✓
- C C D B ✓
- C D A B ✓

It can nevertheless fail!

One Resason: Memory Reordering

Rule of thumb: Compiler and hardware allowed to make changes that do not affect the *semantics of a sequentially* executed program

```
void f() {
        x = 1;
        y = x+1;
        z = x+1;
}
```

⟺ sequentially equivalent

```
void f() {
        x = 1;
        z = x+1;
        y = x+1;
}
```

From a Software-Perspective

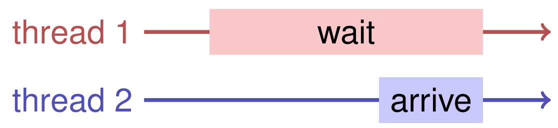
Modern compilers do not give guarantees that a global ordering of memory accesses is provided as in the sourcecode:

- Some memory accesses may be even optimized away completely!
- Huge potential for optimizations – and for errors, when you make the wrong assumptions

Example: Self-made Rendevouz

```
int x; // shared

void wait(){
  x = 1;
  while(x == 1);
}

void arrive(){
  x = 2;
}
```

Assume thread 1 calls wait, later thread 2 calls arrive. What happens?



Compilation

Source

```
int x; // shared

void wait(){
  x = 1;
  while(x == 1);
}

void arrive(){
  x = 2;
}
```

Without optimisation

```
wait:
movl $0x1, x
test:
mov x, %eax
cmp $0x1, %eax
je  test        (if equal → test)

arrive:
movl $0x2, x
```

With optimisation

```
wait:
movl $0x1, x
test:
jmp test        (always → test)

arrive
movl $0x2, x
```


Hardware Perspective

Modern multiprocessors do not enforce global ordering of all instructions for performance reasons:

- Most processors have a pipelined architecture and can execute (parts of) multiple instructions simultaneously. They can even reorder instructions internally.
- Each processor has a local cache, and thus loads/stores to shared memory can become visible to other processors at different times

Memory Hierarchy

Registers — fast,low latency, high cost, low capacity

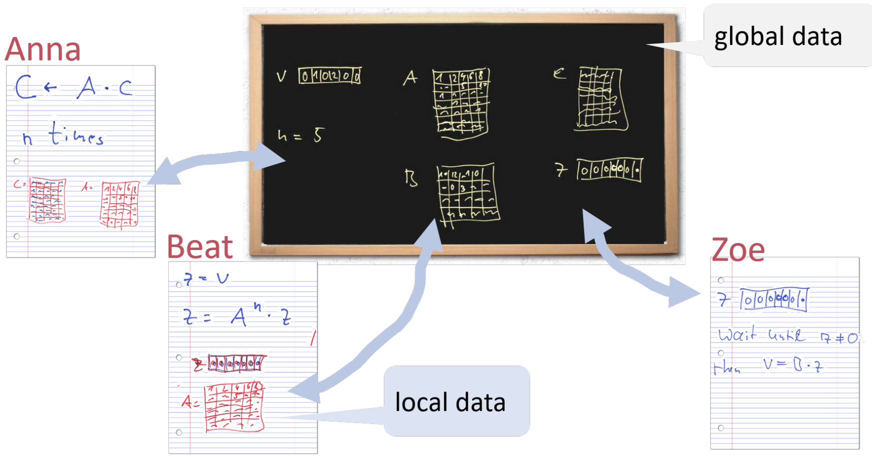
L1 Cache

L2 Cache

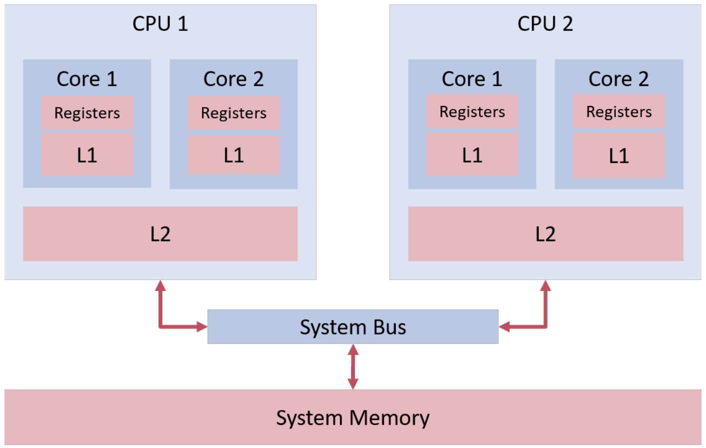
...

System Memory — slow,high latency,low cost,high capacity

An Analogy



Schematic



Memory Models

When and if effects of memory operations become visible for threads, depends on hardware, runtime system and programming language.

A *memory model* (e.g. that of C++) provides minimal guarantees for the effect of memory operations

- leaving open possibilities for optimisation
- containing guidelines for writing thread-safe programs

For instance, C++ provides *guarantees when synchronisation with a mutex* is used.

Fixed

```
class C {
  int x = 0;
  int y = 0;
  std::mutex m;
public:
  void f() {
    m.lock(); x = 1; m.unlock();
    m.lock(); y = 1; m.unlock();
  }
  void g() {
    m.lock(); int a = y; m.unlock();
    m.lock(); int b = x; m.unlock();
    assert(b >= a); // cannot happen
  }
};
```


Atomic

Here also possible:

```
class C {
  std::atomic_int x{0}; // requires #include <atomic>
  std::atomic_int y{0};
public:
  void f() {
    x = 1;
    y = 1;
  }
  void g() {
    int a = y;
    int b = x;
    assert(b >= a); // cannot happen
  }
};
```