

Parallel Programming Patterns

lecture 04 (2021-04-12)

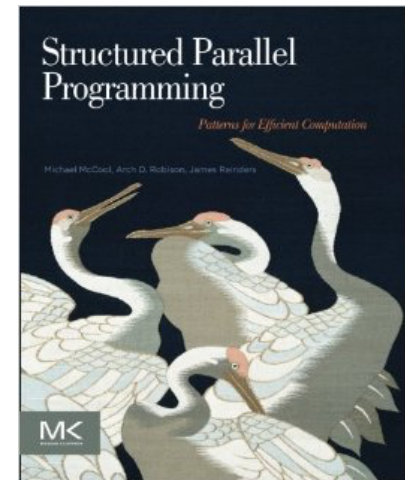
Master in Computer Science and Engineering

— Concurrency and Parallelism / 2020-21 —

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Outline

- Structured programming patterns overview
 - Concept of programming patterns
 - Serial and parallel control flow patterns
 - Serial and parallel data management patterns
- Bibliography:
 - **Chapter 3** of book
McCool M., Arch M., Reinders J.;
Structured Parallel Programming: Patterns for
Efficient Computation;
Morgan Kaufmann (2012);
ISBN: 978-0-12-415993-8



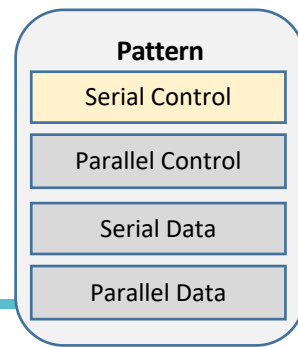
Parallel Patterns

- **Parallel Patterns:** A recurring combination of task distribution and data access that solves a specific problem in parallel algorithm design.
- Patterns provide us with a “vocabulary” for algorithm design
- It can be useful to compare parallel patterns with serial patterns
- Patterns are universal – they can be used in *any* parallel programming system

Parallel Patterns

- Nesting Pattern
- Serial / Parallel Control Patterns
- Serial / Parallel Data Management Patterns
- Other Patterns
- Programming Model Support for Patterns

Nesting Pattern



- **Nesting** is the ability to hierarchically compose patterns
- This pattern appears in both serial and parallel algorithms
- “Pattern diagrams” are used to visually show the pattern idea where each “task block” is a location of general code in an algorithm
- Each “task block” can in turn be another pattern in the **nesting pattern**

Nesting Pattern

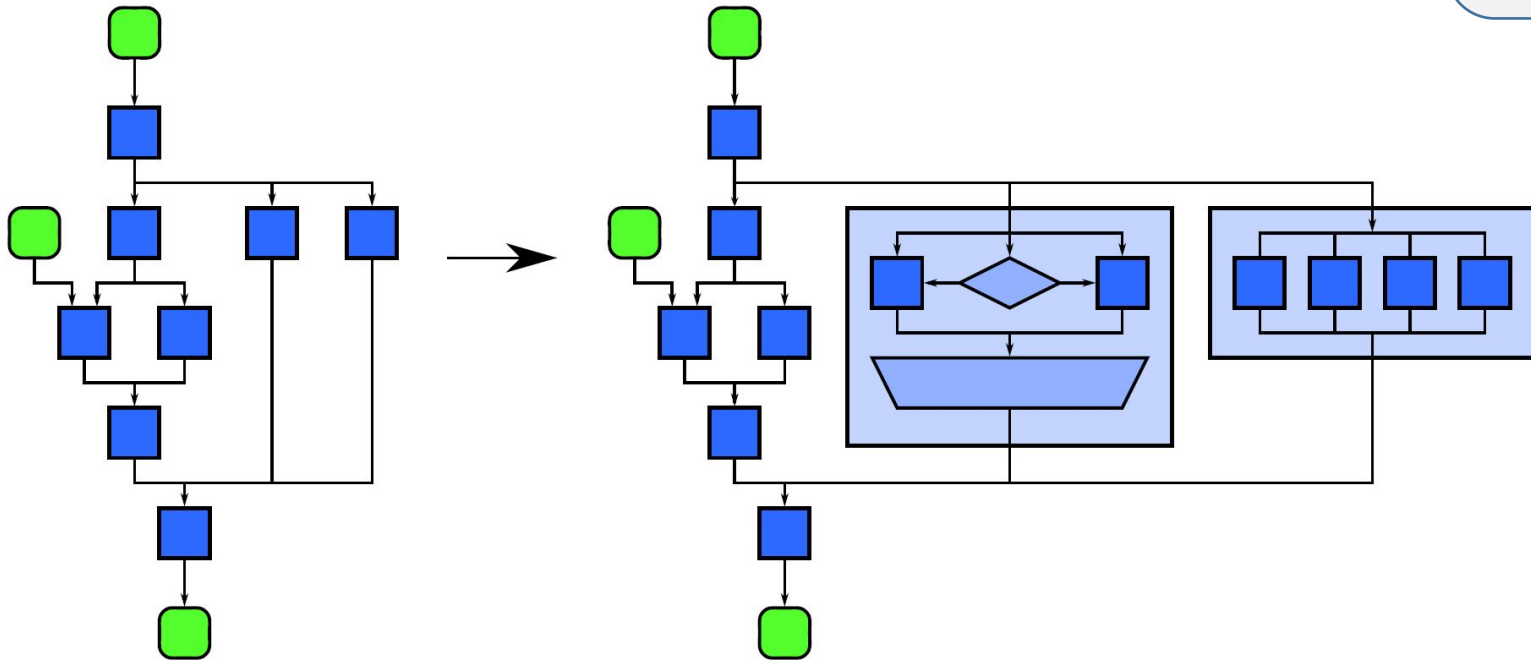
Pattern

Serial Control

Parallel Control

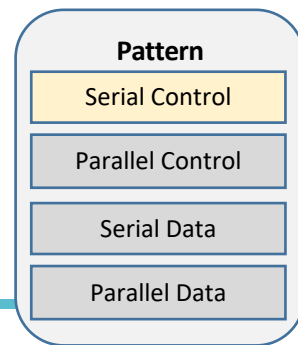
Serial Data

Parallel Data



Nesting Pattern: A compositional pattern. Nesting allows other patterns to be composed in a hierarchy so that any task block in the above diagram can be replaced with a pattern with the same input/output and dependencies.

Serial Control Patterns

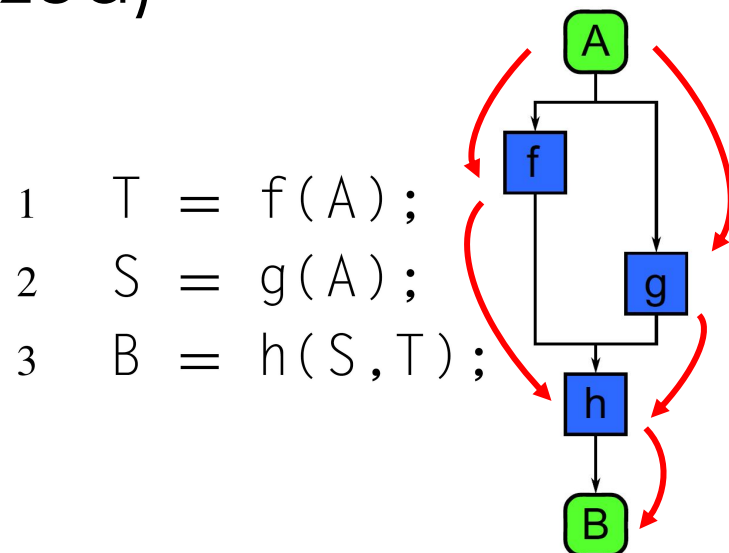
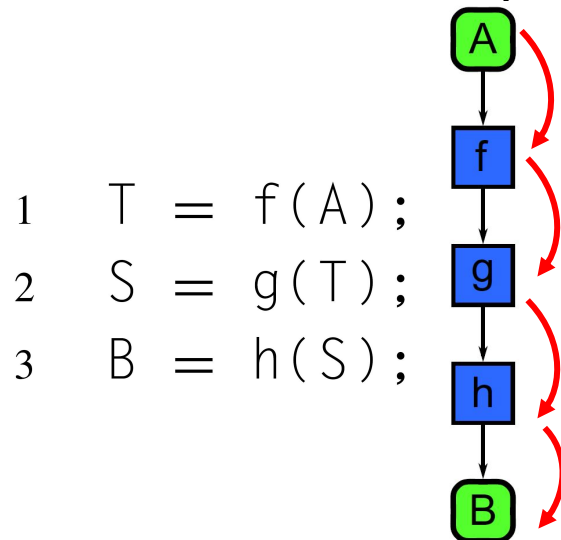


- Structured serial programming is based on these patterns: **sequence**, **selection**, **iteration**, and **recursion**
- The **nesting** pattern can also be used to hierarchically compose these four patterns
- Though you should be familiar with these, it's extra important to understand these patterns when parallelizing serial algorithms based on these patterns

Serial Control Patterns: Sequence

Pattern
Serial Control
Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

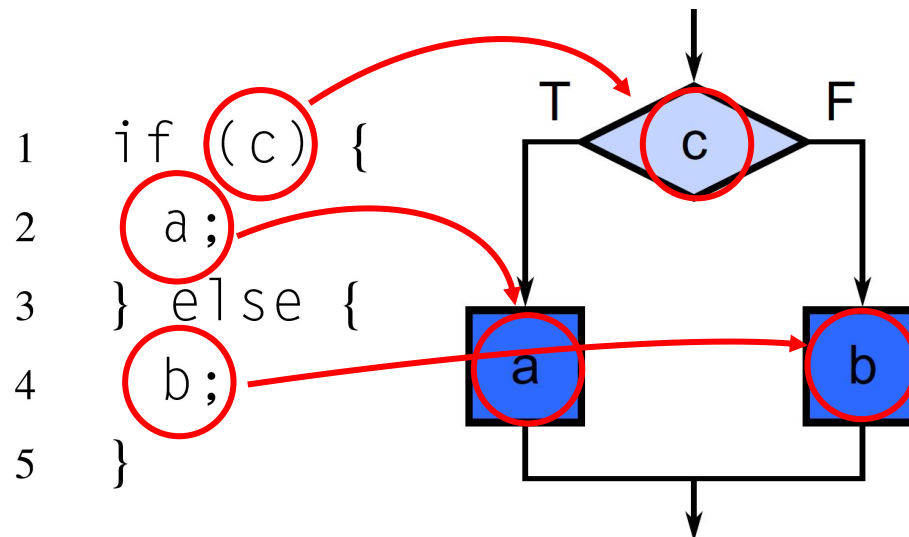
- **Sequence:** Ordered list of tasks that are executed in a specific order
- Assumption – program text ordering will be followed (seems obvious... but this will be important when parallelized)



Serial Control Patterns: Selection

Pattern
Serial Control
Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

- **Selection:** condition c is first evaluated. Either task a or b is executed depending on the true or false result of c .
- Assumptions – a and b are never executed before c , and either a or b is executed — never both



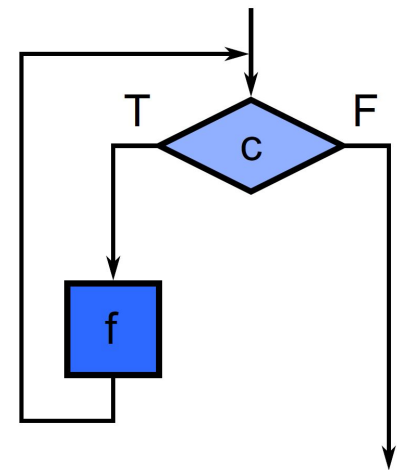
Serial Control Patterns: Iteration

Pattern
Serial Control
Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

- **Iteration:** condition c is evaluated. If it is true, a is evaluated, and then c is evaluated again. This repeats until c is false.
- Complication when parallelizing: potential for dependencies to exist between previous iterations

```
for (i = 0; i < n; i++) {  
    f();  
}
```

```
while (c) {  
    f();  
}
```

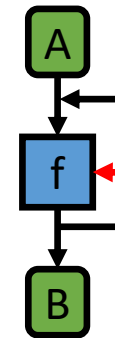


Serial Control Patterns: Recursion

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Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

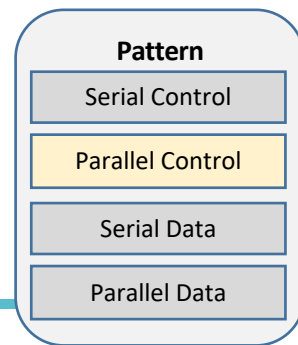
- **Recursion:** dynamic form of nesting allowing functions to call themselves
- Tail recursion is a special recursion that can be converted into iteration – important for functional languages

```
int fact (int n) {  
    if (n == 0)  
        return 1  
    else  
        return n*fact (n-1);  
}
```



We are using nesting here!

Parallel Control Patterns

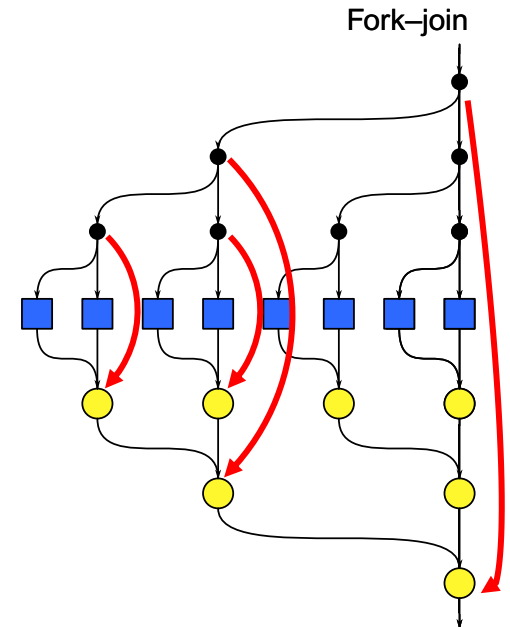


- Parallel control patterns extend serial control patterns
- Each parallel control pattern is related to at least one serial control pattern, but relaxes assumptions of serial control patterns
- Parallel control patterns: **fork-join, map, stencil, reduction, scan, recurrence**

Parallel Control Patterns: Fork-Join

Pattern
Serial Control
Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

- **Fork-join**: allows control flow to fork into multiple parallel flows, then rejoin later
- Cilk Plus implements this with **spawn** and **sync**
 - The call tree is a parallel call tree and functions are spawned instead of called
 - Functions that spawn another function call will continue to execute
 - Caller syncs with the spawned function to join the two



Parallel Control Patterns: Fork-Join

Pattern
Serial Control
Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

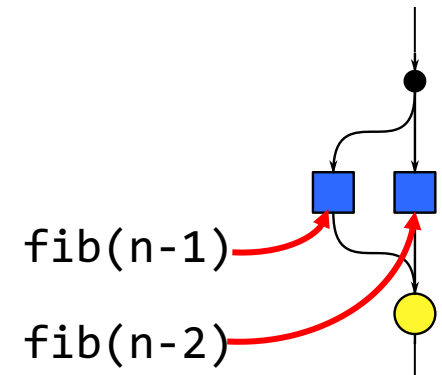
- **Fork-join:** allows control flow to fork into multiple parallel flows, then rejoin later

Sequential

```
int fib(int n)
{
    if (n < 2)
        return n;
    int x = fib(n-1);
    int y = fib(n-2);
    return x + y;
}
```

Parallel — Cilk+

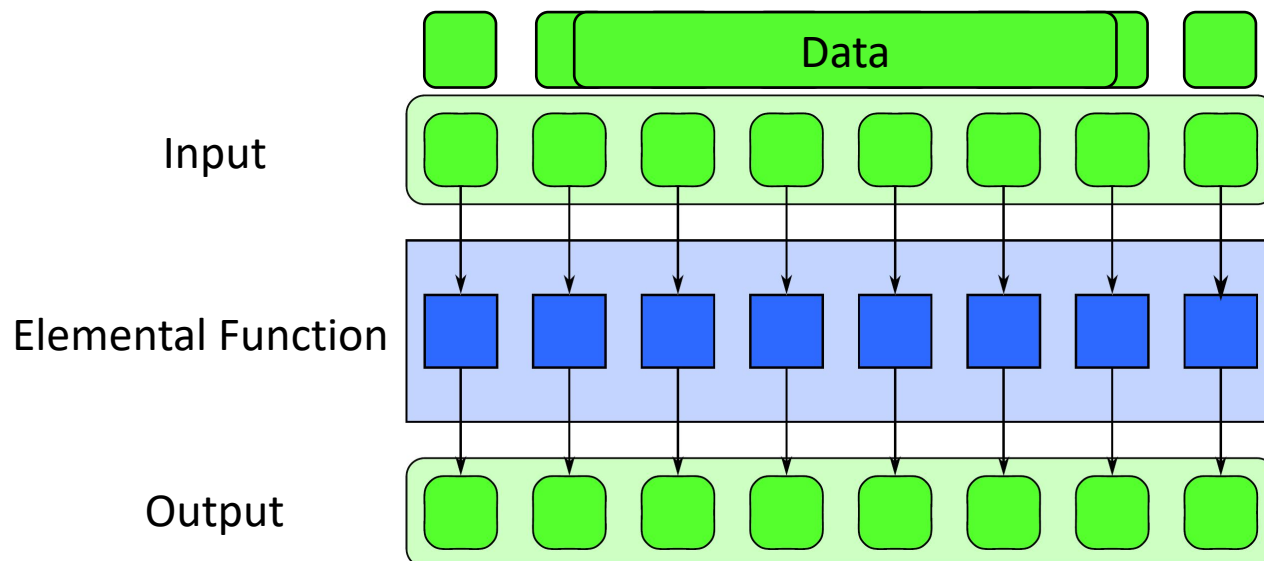
```
int fib(int n)
{
    if (n < 2)
        return n;
    int x = cilk_spawn fib(n-1);
    int y = fib(n-2);
    cilk_sync;
    return x + y;
}
```



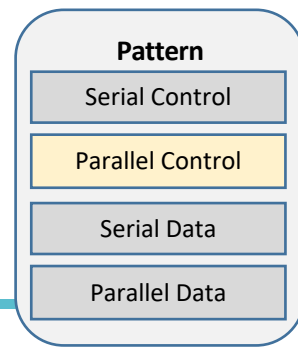
Parallel Control Patterns: Map

Pattern
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Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

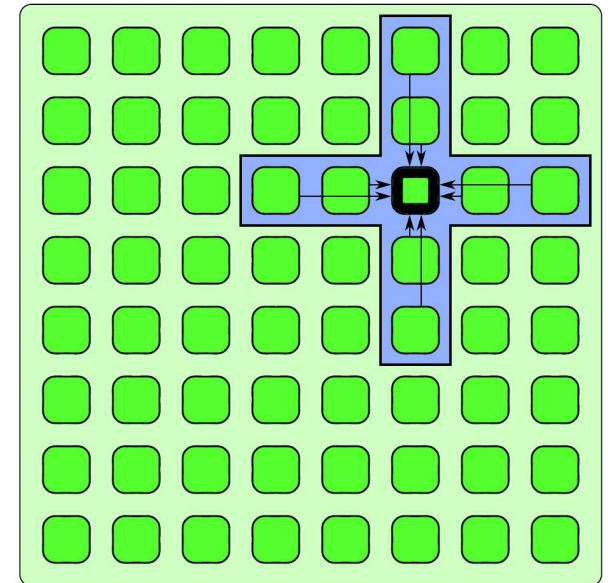
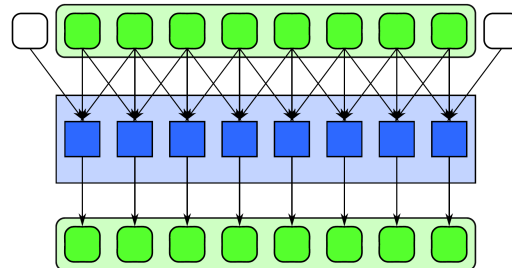
- **Map**: performs a function over every element of a collection
- Map replicates a serial iteration pattern where
 - each iteration is independent of the others,
 - the number of iterations is known in advance, and
 - computation only depends on the iteration count and data from the input collection
- The replicated function is referred to as an “elemental function”



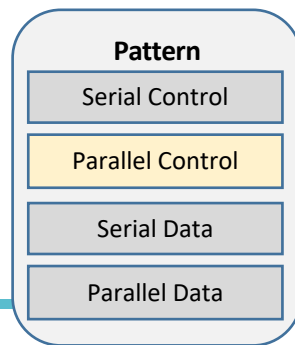
Parallel Control Patterns: Stencil



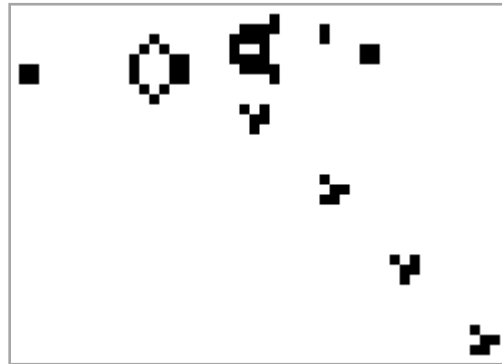
- **Stencil:** Elemental function accesses a set of “neighbors”, stencil is a generalization of map
- Often combined with iteration – used with iterative solvers or to evolve a system through time
- Boundary conditions must be handled carefully in the stencil pattern



Conway's Game of Life



- The **Game of Life** is a cellular automaton created by John Conway in 1970
- The evolution of the game is entirely based on the input state – zero player game
- To play: create initial state, observe how the system evolves over successive time steps



2D landscape

Conway's Game of Life

Pattern

Serial Control

Parallel Control

Serial Data

Parallel Data

- Typical rules for the Game of Life
 - Infinite 2D grid of square cells, each cell is either “alive” or “dead”
 - Each cell will interact with all 8 of its neighbors
 - Any cell with < 2 live neighbors dies (under-population)
 - Any cell with 2 or 3 live neighbors lives to next gen.
 - Any cell with > 3 live neighbors dies (overcrowding)
 - Any dead cell with 3 live neighbors becomes a live cell



2D landscape

Conway's Game of Life: Examples

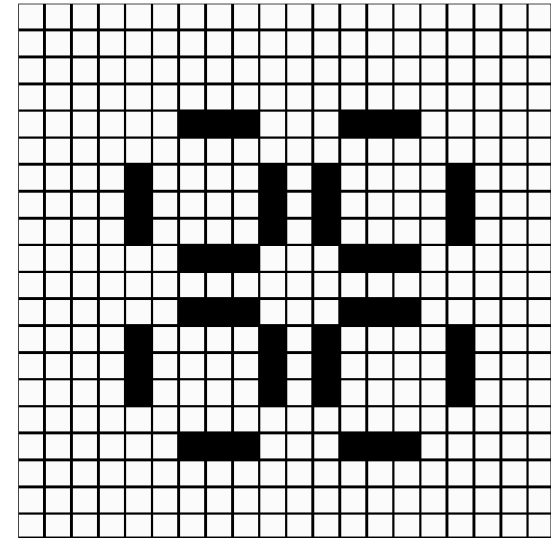
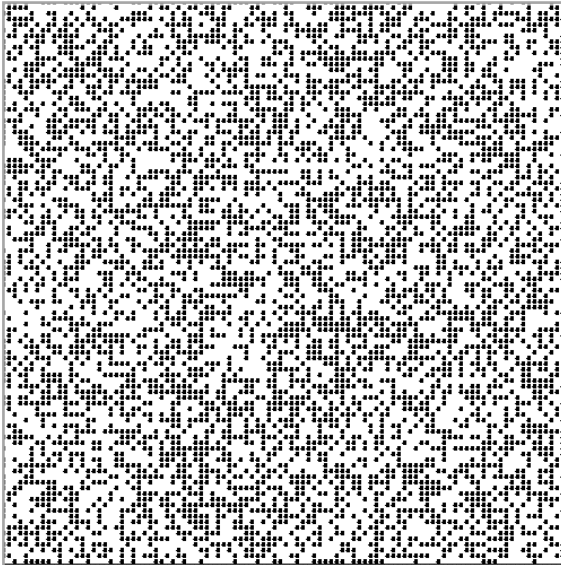
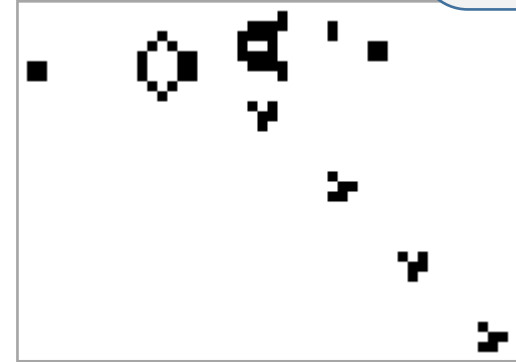
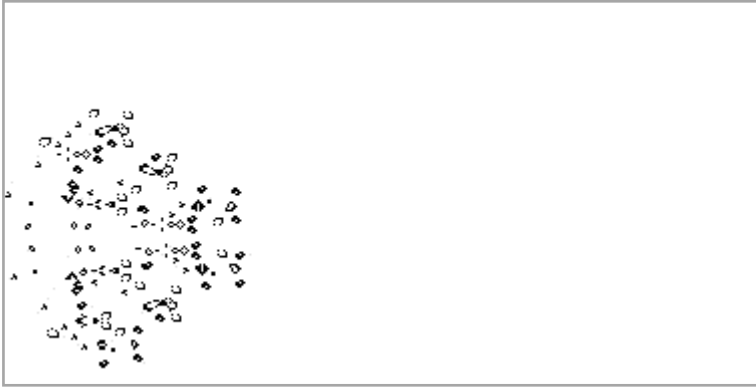
Pattern

Serial Control

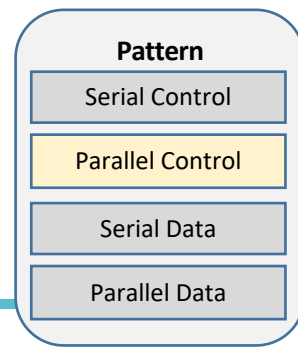
Parallel Control

Serial Data

Parallel Data



Parallel Control Patterns: Reduction



- **Reduction:** Combines every element in a collection using an associative “combiner function”
- Because of the associativity of the combiner function, different orderings of the reduction are possible
- Examples of combiner functions: addition, multiplication, maximum, minimum, and Boolean AND, OR, and XOR

Parallel Control Patterns: Reduction

Pattern

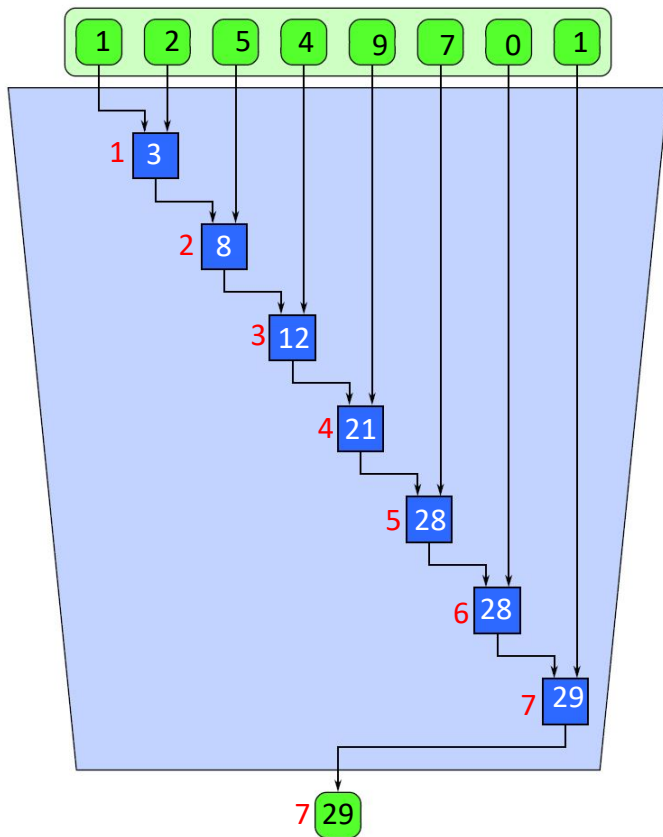
Serial Control

Parallel Control

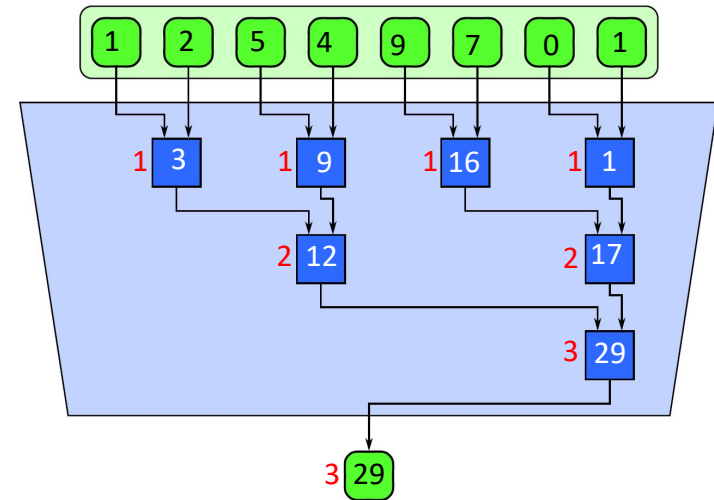
Serial Data

Parallel Data

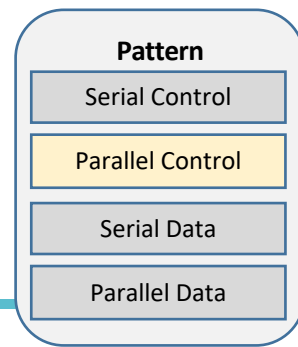
Serial Reduction



Parallel Reduction



Parallel Control Patterns: Scan



- **Scan:** computes all partial reductions of a collection
- For every output in a collection, a reduction of the input up to that point is computed
- If the function being used is associative, the scan can be parallelized
- Parallelizing a scan is not obvious at first, because of dependencies to previous iterations in the serial loop
- A parallel scan will require more operations than a serial version

Parallel Control Patterns: Scan

Pattern

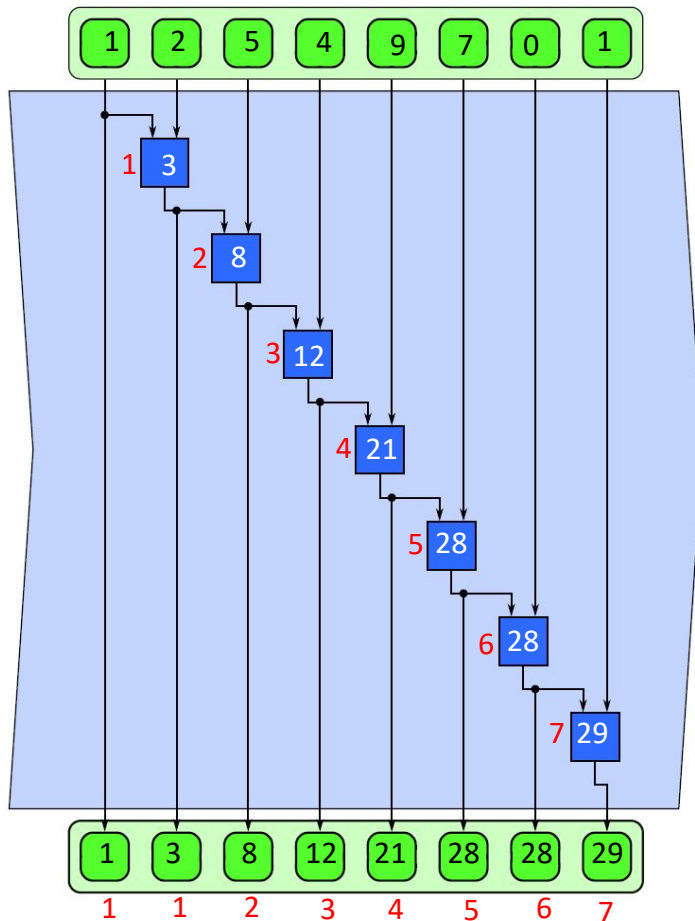
Serial Control

Parallel Control

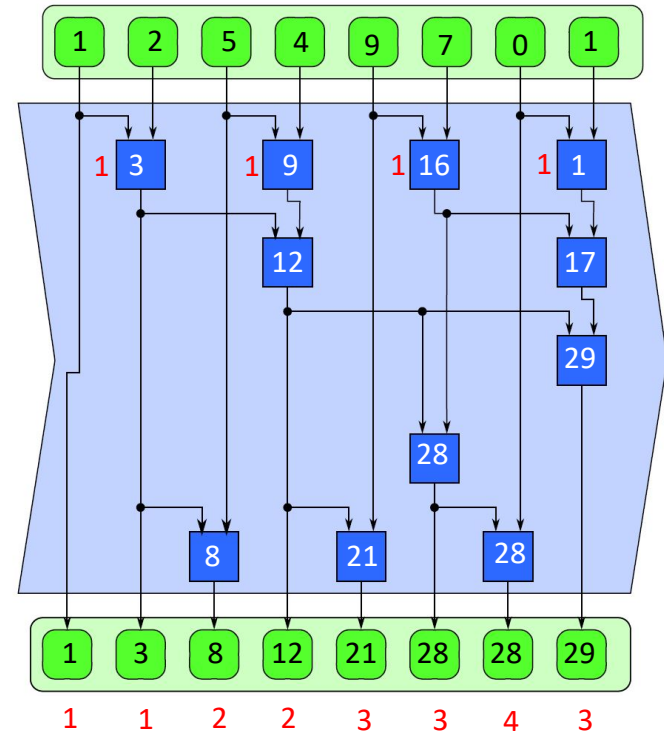
Serial Data

Parallel Data

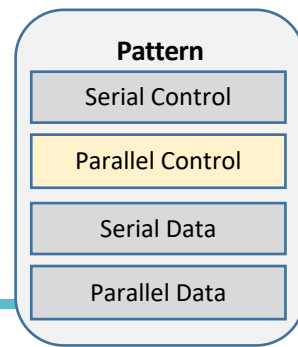
Serial Scan



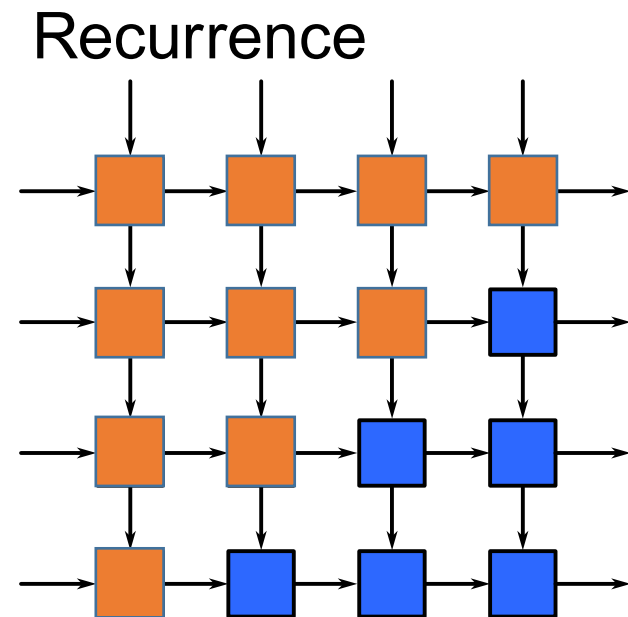
Parallel Scan



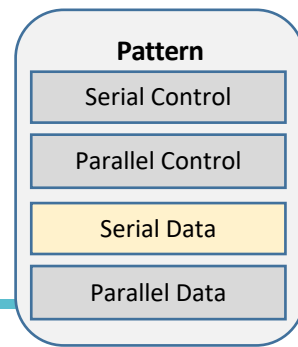
Parallel Control Patterns: Recurrence



- **Recurrence:** More complex version of map, where the loop iterations can depend on one another
- Similar to map, but elements can use outputs of adjacent elements as inputs
- For a recurrence to be computable, there *must* be a serial ordering of the recurrence elements so that elements can be computed using previously computed outputs

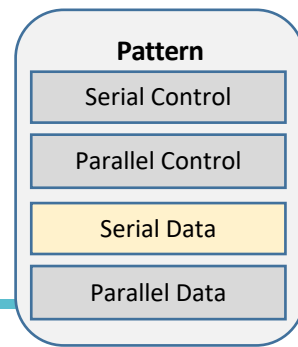


Serial Data Management Patterns



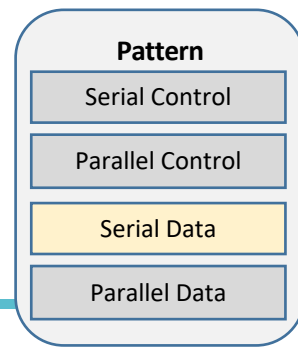
- Serial programs can manage data in many ways
- Data management deals with how data is allocated, shared, read, written, and copied
- Serial Data Management Patterns: **random read and write, stack allocation, heap allocation, objects**

Serial Data Manag. Pat.: random read and write



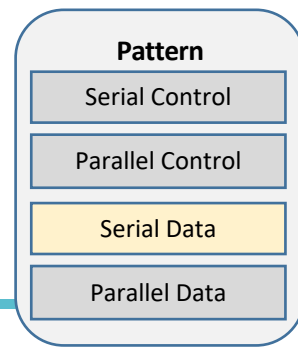
- Memory locations indexed with addresses
- Pointers are typically used to refer to memory addresses
- Aliasing (uncertainty of two pointers referring to the same object) can cause problems when serial code is parallelized

Serial Data Manag. Pat.: Stack Allocation



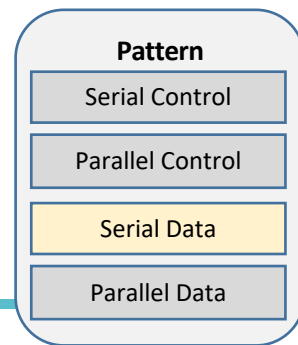
- Stack allocation is useful for dynamically allocating data in LIFO manner
- Efficient – arbitrary amount of data can be allocated in constant time
- Stack allocation also preserves locality
- When parallelized, typically each thread will get its own stack, so thread locality is preserved

Serial Data Manag. Pat.: Heap Allocation



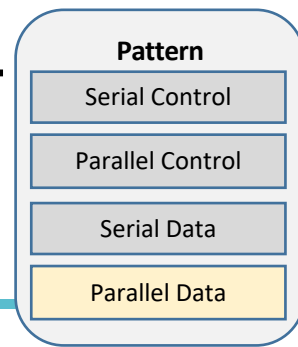
- Heap allocation is useful when data cannot be allocated in a LIFO fashion
- But heap allocation is slower and more complex than stack allocation
- A parallelized heap allocator should be used when dynamically allocating memory in parallel
 - This type of allocator will keep separate pools for each parallel worker

Serial Data Manag. Pat.: Objects



- Objects are language constructs to associate data with code to manipulate and manage that data
- Objects can have member functions, and they also are considered members of a class of objects
- Parallel programming models will generalize objects in various ways

Parallel Data Management Patterns

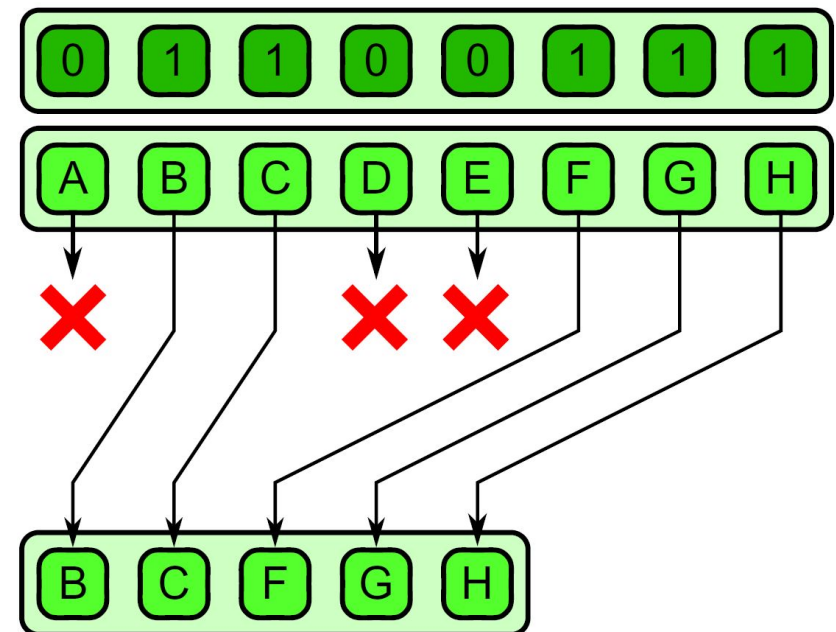


- To avoid things like race conditions, it is critically important to know when data is, and isn't, potentially shared by multiple parallel workers
- Some parallel data management patterns help us with data locality
- Parallel data management patterns: **pack**, **pipeline**, **geometric decomposition**, **gather**, and **scatter**

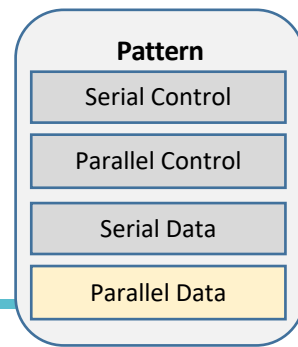
Parallel Data Manag. Pat: Pack

Pattern
Serial Control
Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

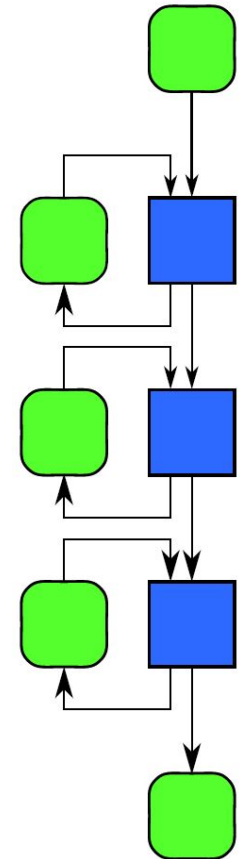
- **Pack** is used to eliminate unused space in a collection (like a filter)
- Elements marked *false* are discarded, the remaining elements are placed in a contiguous sequence in the same order
- Useful when used with map
- **Unpack** is the inverse and is used to place elements back in their original locations



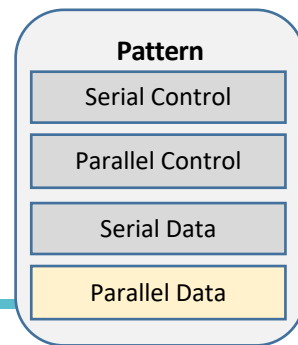
Parallel Data Manag. Pat: Pipeline



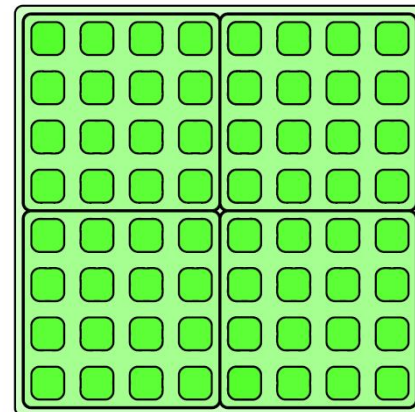
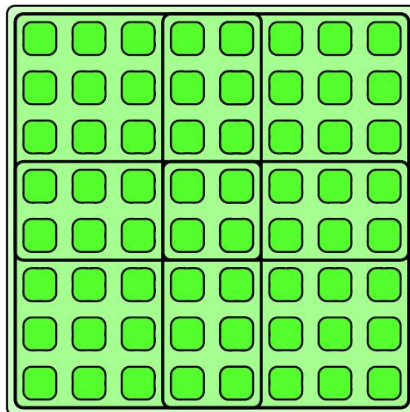
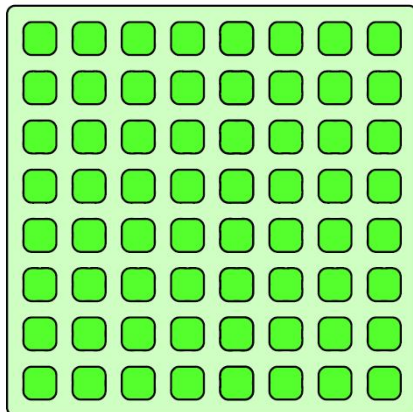
- **Pipeline** connects tasks in a producer-consumer manner
- A linear pipeline is the basic pattern idea, but a pipeline in a DAG is also possible
- Pipelines are most useful when used with other patterns as they can multiply available parallelism



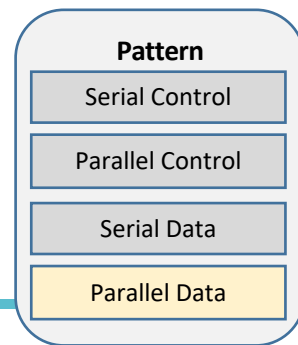
Parallel Data Manag. Pat: Geometric Decomposition



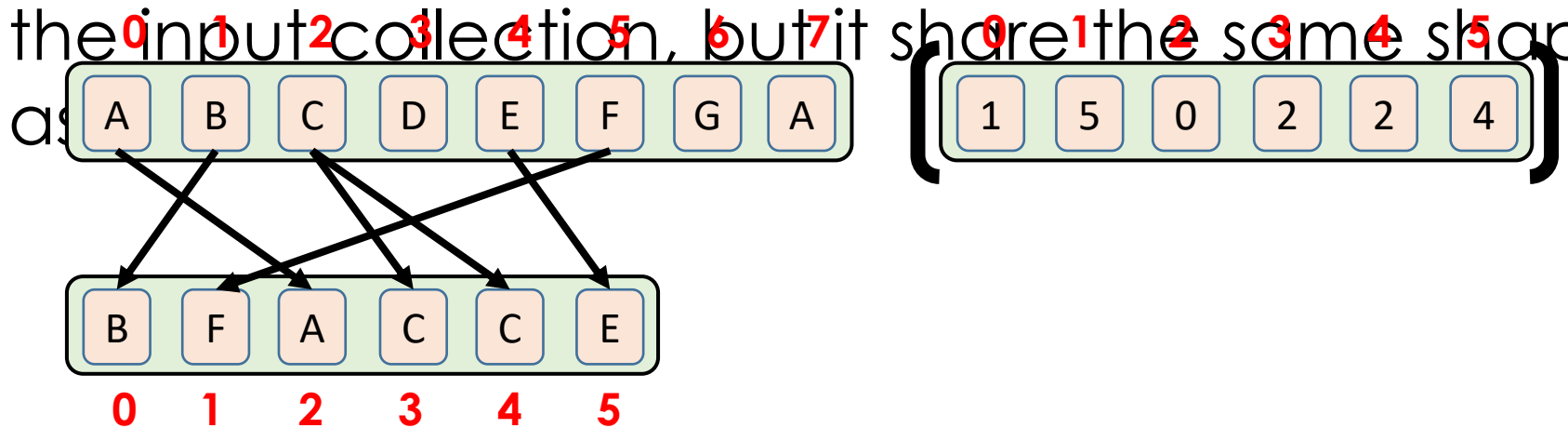
- **Geometric Decomposition** – arranges data into subcollections
- Overlapping and non-overlapping decompositions are possible
- This pattern doesn't necessarily move data, it just gives us another perspective



Parallel Data Manag. Pat: Gather



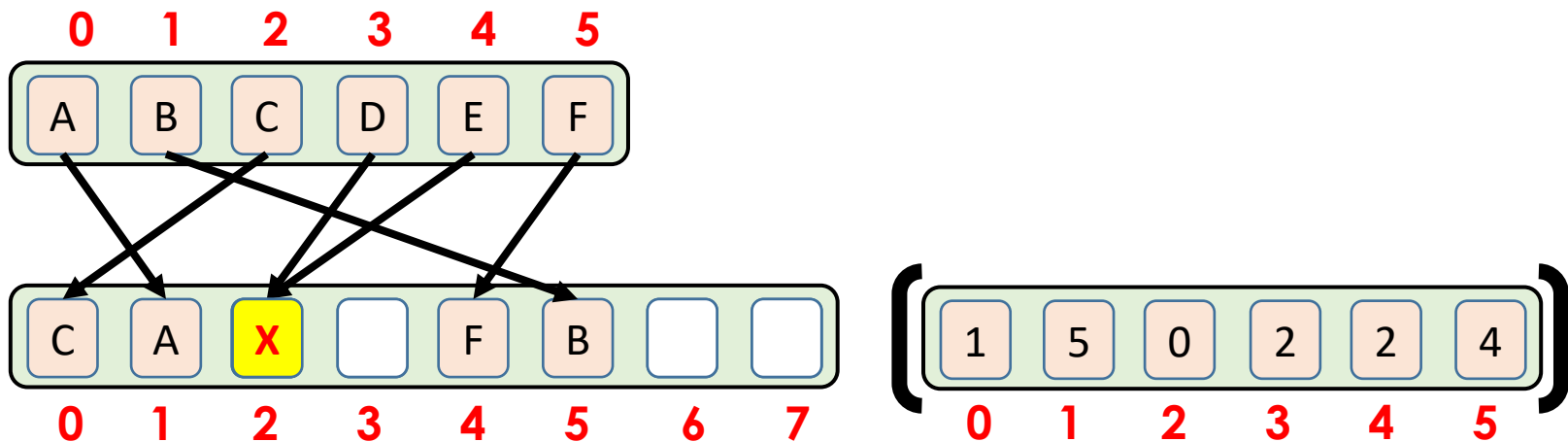
- **Gather** reads a collection of data given a collection of indices
- Think of a combination of map and random serial reads
- The output collection shares the same type as the input collection, but it share the same shape as



Parallel Data Manag. Pat: Scatter

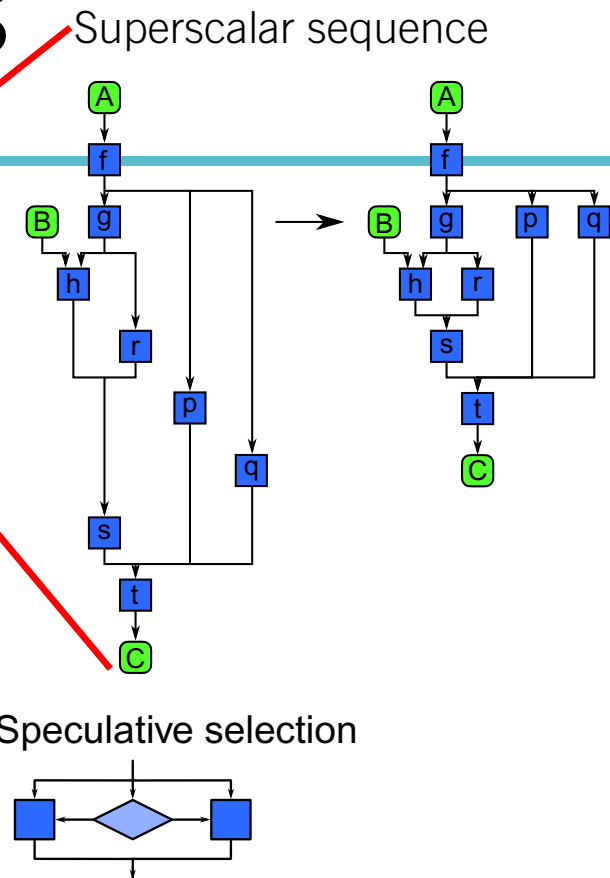
Pattern
Serial Control
Parallel Control
Serial Data
Parallel Data

- **Scatter** is the inverse of gather
- A set of input and indices is required, but each element of the input is written to the output at the given index instead of read from the input at the given index
- Race conditions can occur when we have two writes to the same location!



Other Parallel Patterns

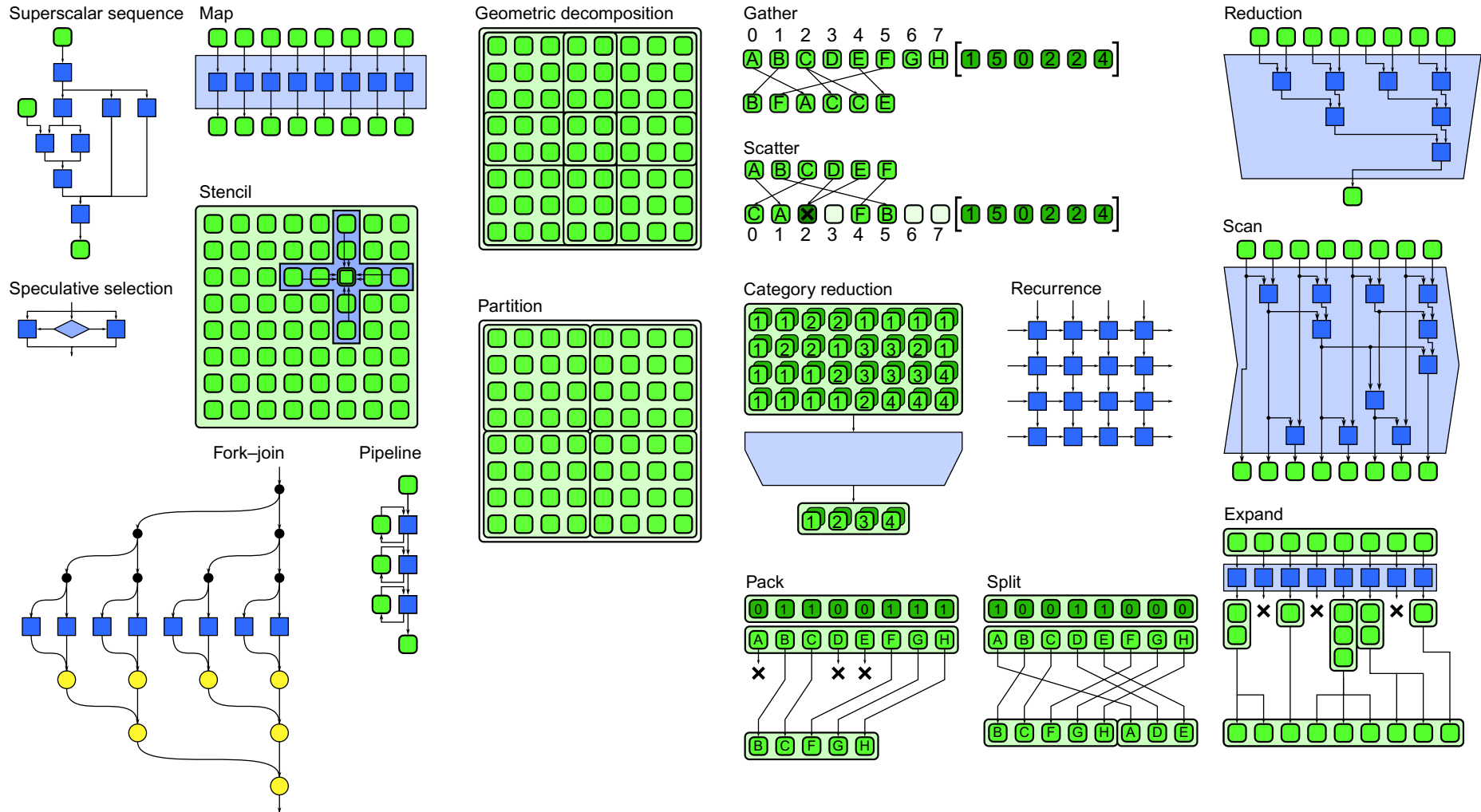
- **Superscalar Sequences:** write a sequence of tasks, ordered only by dependencies
- **Futures:** like fork-join, but tasks do not need to be nested hierarchically
- **Speculative Selection:** general version of serial selection where the condition and both outcomes can all run in parallel
- **Workpile:** general map pattern where each instance of elemental function can generate more instances, adding to the “pile” of work



Other Parallel Patterns

- **Search:** finds some data in a collection that meets some criteria
- **Segmentation:** operations on subdivided, non-overlapping, non-uniformly sized partitions of 1D collections
- **Expand:** a combination of pack and map
- **Category Reduction:** Given a collection of elements each with a label, find all elements with same label and reduce them

Overview of Parallel Patterns



The END
