On-Chip Networks II: Router Microarchitecture & Routing

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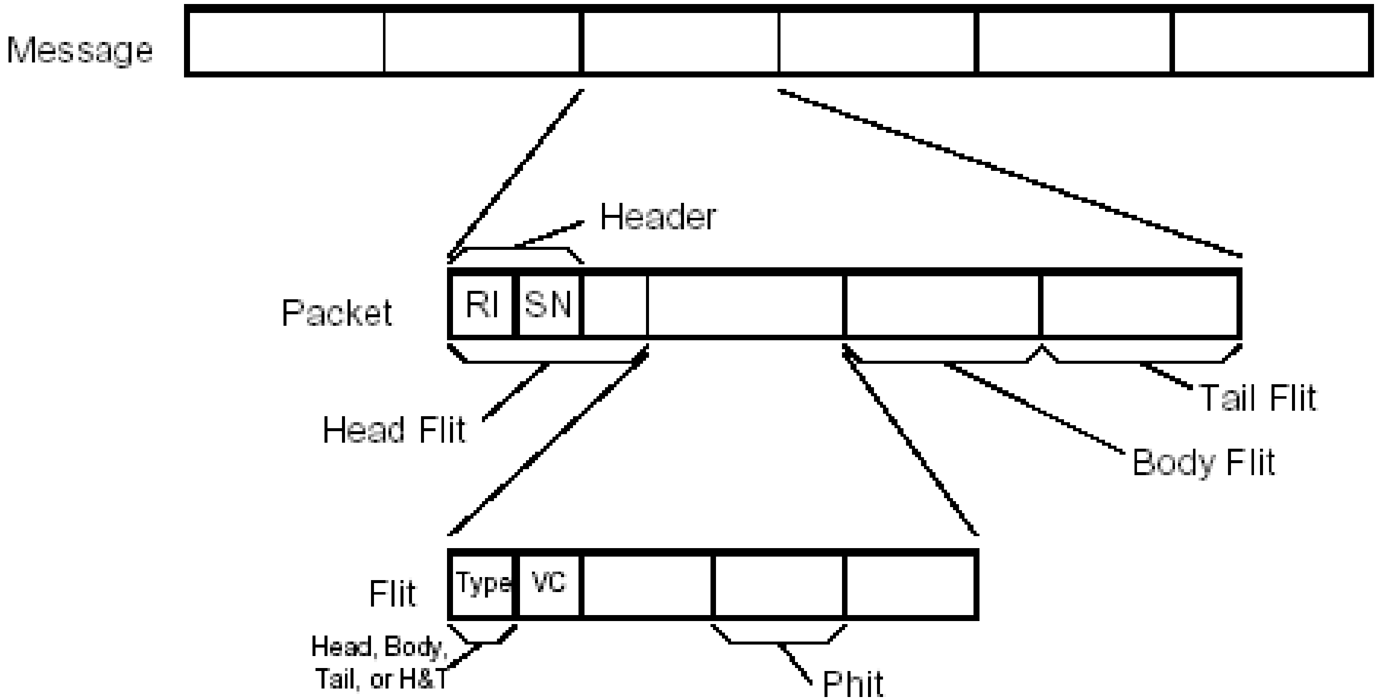
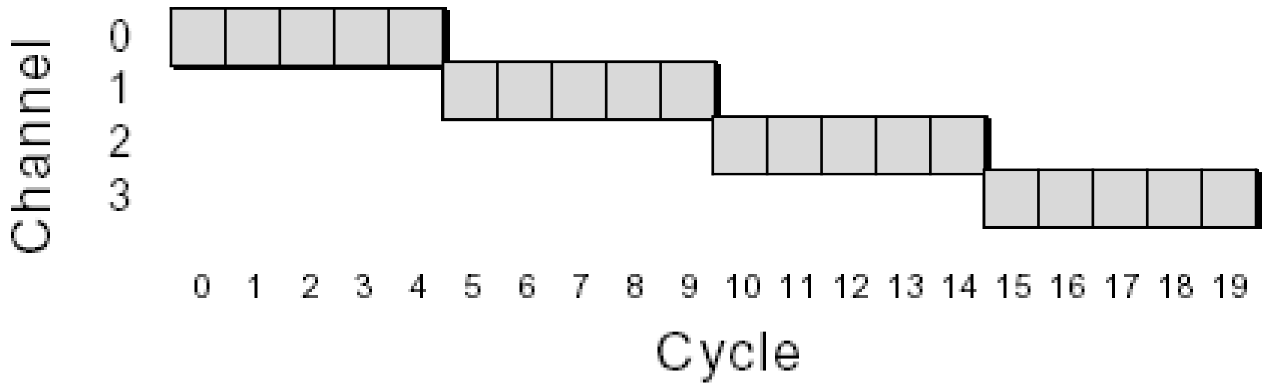
Reminder: Packets, Flits, Phits



- Packet: Basic unit of routing and sequencing
  - Limited size (e.g. 64 bits – 64 KB)
- Flit (flow control digit): Basic unit of bandwidth/storage allocation
  - All flits in packet follow the same path
- Phit (physical transfer digit): data transferred in single clock

Reminder: Packet-Based Buffered Flow Control (no flits)

- Store-and-forward



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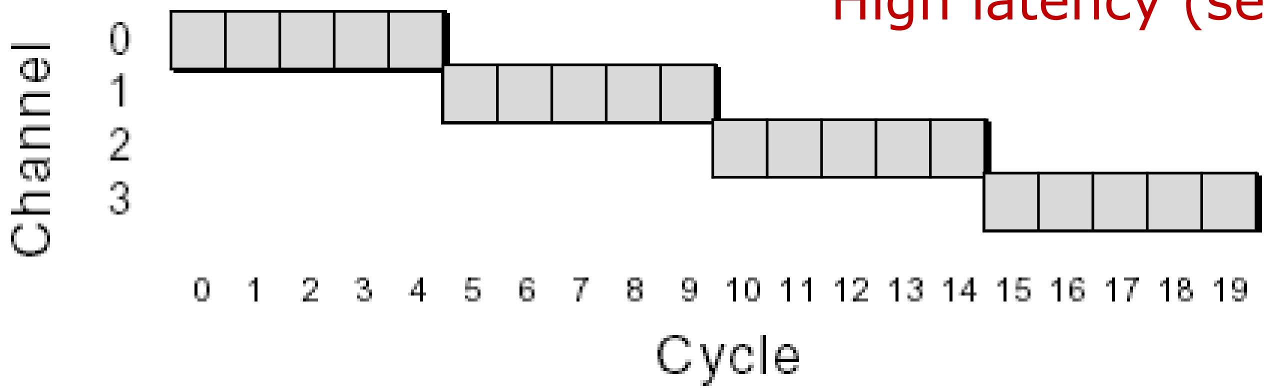
High latency (serialization)



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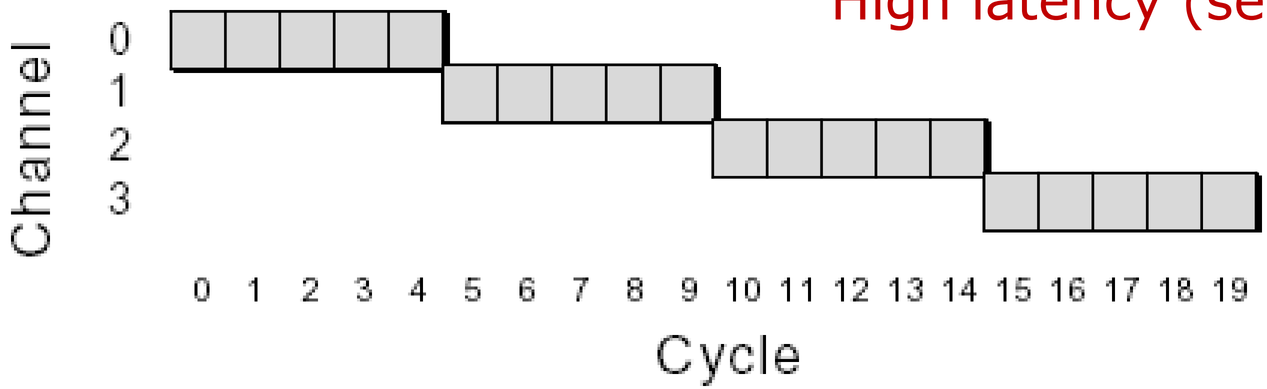
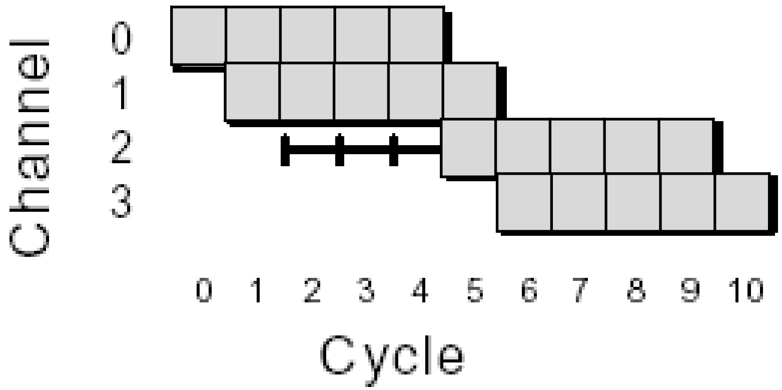


- Virtual cut-through: Do not wait for whole packet



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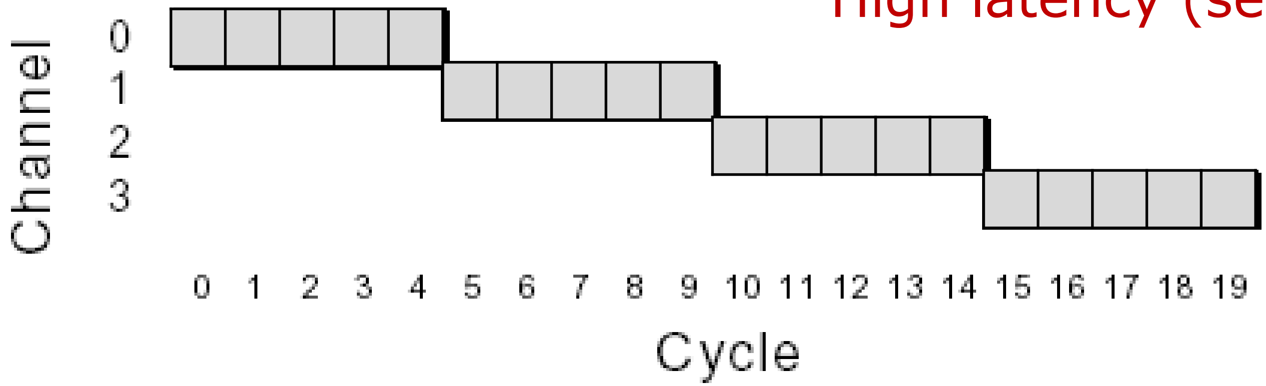

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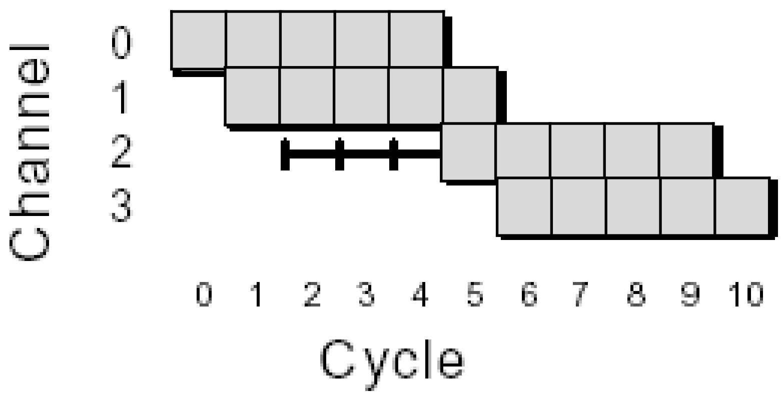
Lower latency



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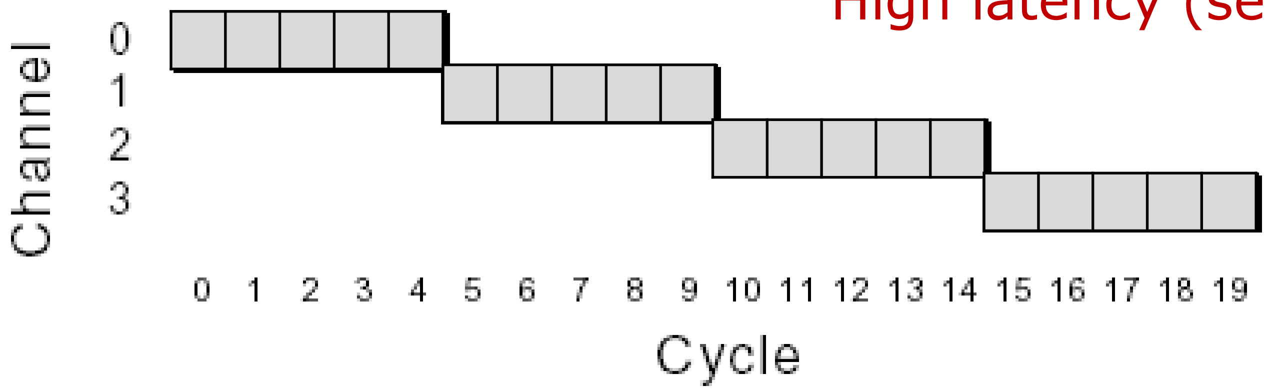

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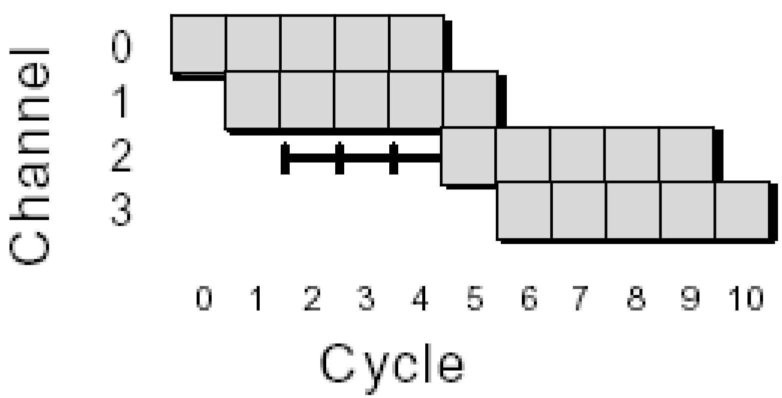


Lower latency

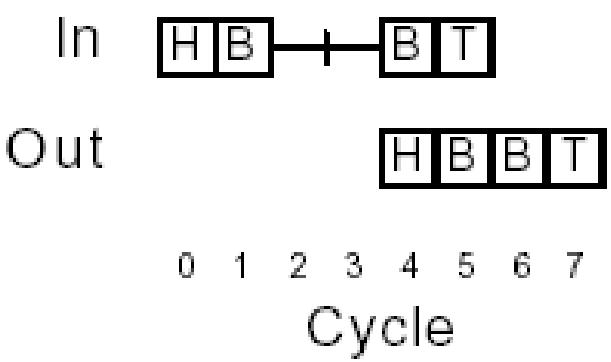
Buffers allocated in packets
→ large buffers & low utilization

Channels allocated in packets
→ unfairness & low utilization

Wormhole Flow Control (Flit-Based)

- Operates like cut-through but with buffers allocated to flits rather than packets

- When a packet blocks, just block wherever the flits of the packet are at that time



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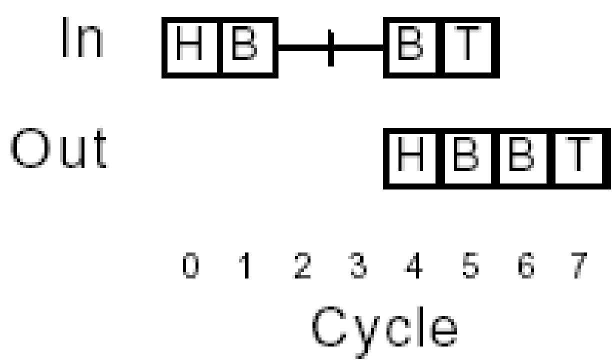

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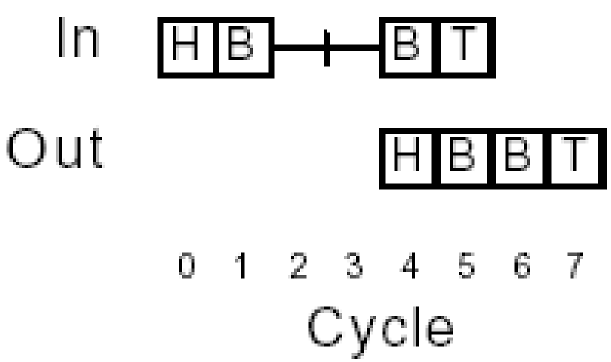

Buffers allocated in flits
→ smaller buffers

Channels still allocated in packets
→ channels blocked mid-packet can't be used

Virtual-Channel (VC) Flow Control

- When a packet blocks, instead of holding on to channel, hold on to virtual channel
- Virtual channel = channel state + flit buffers
- Multiple virtual channels reduce blocking

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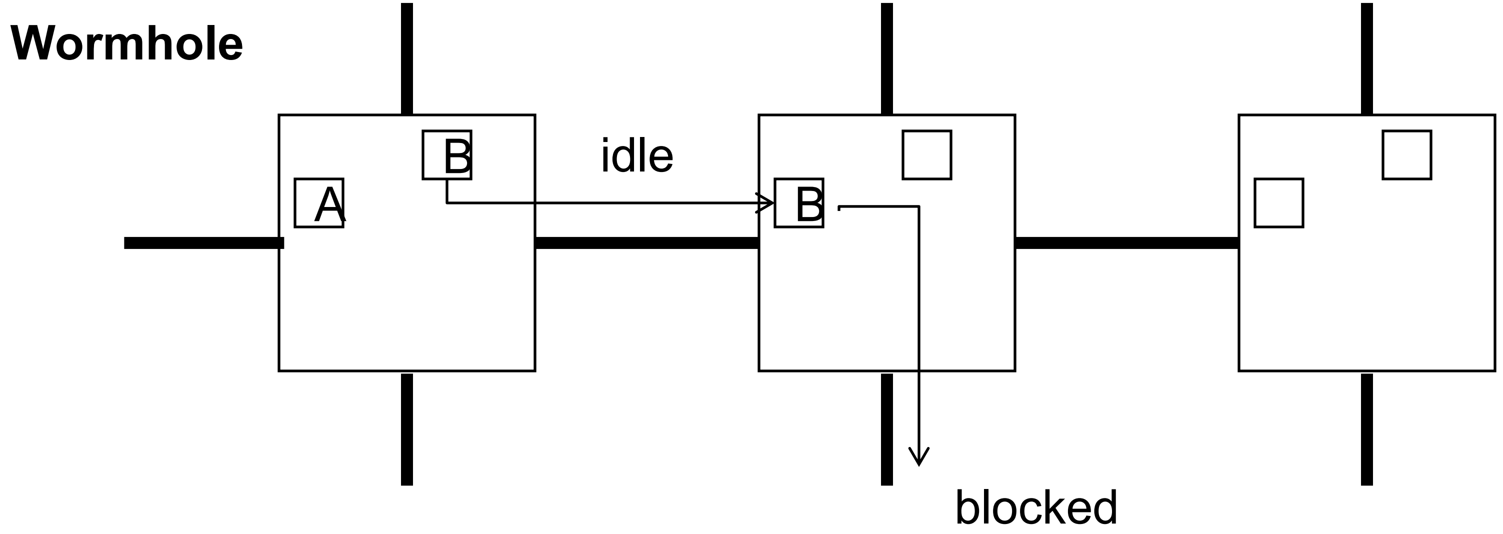

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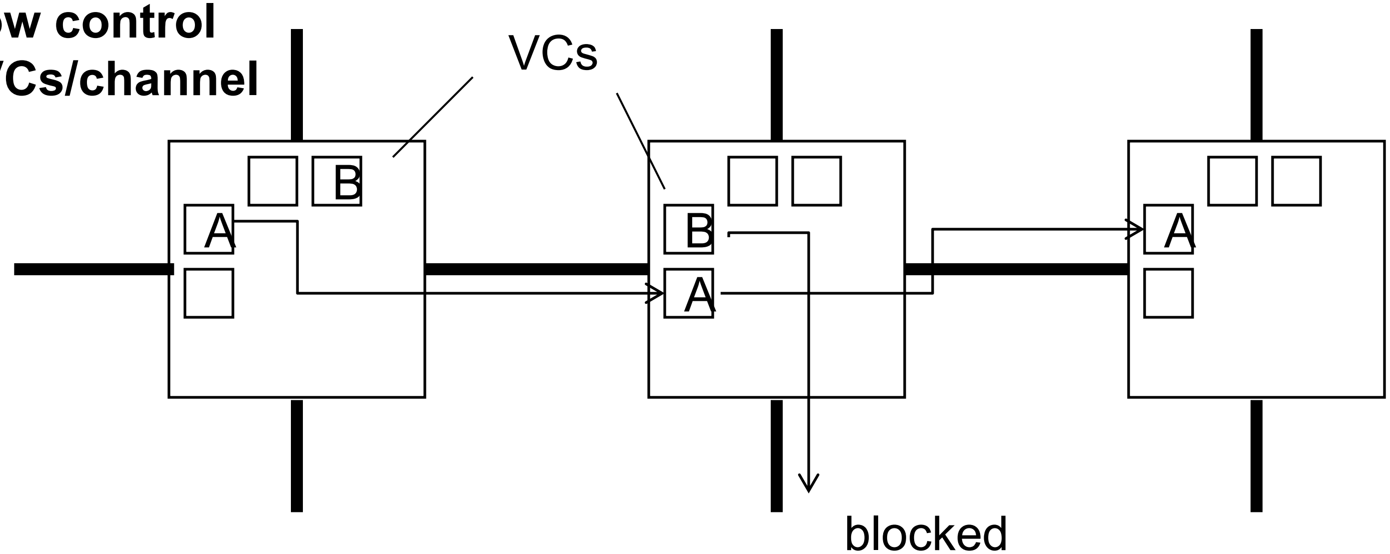
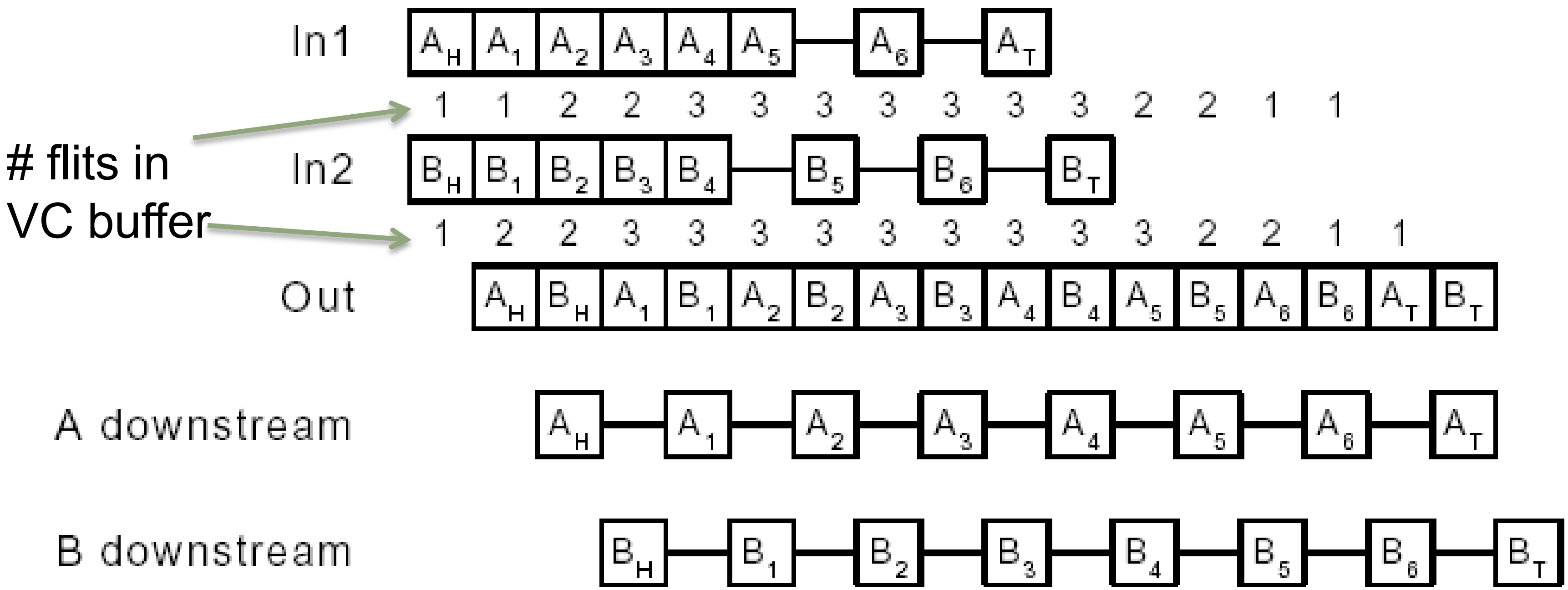
VC flow control with 2 VCs/channel



Time-Space View: Virtual-Channel



- Advantages?
- Disadvantages?

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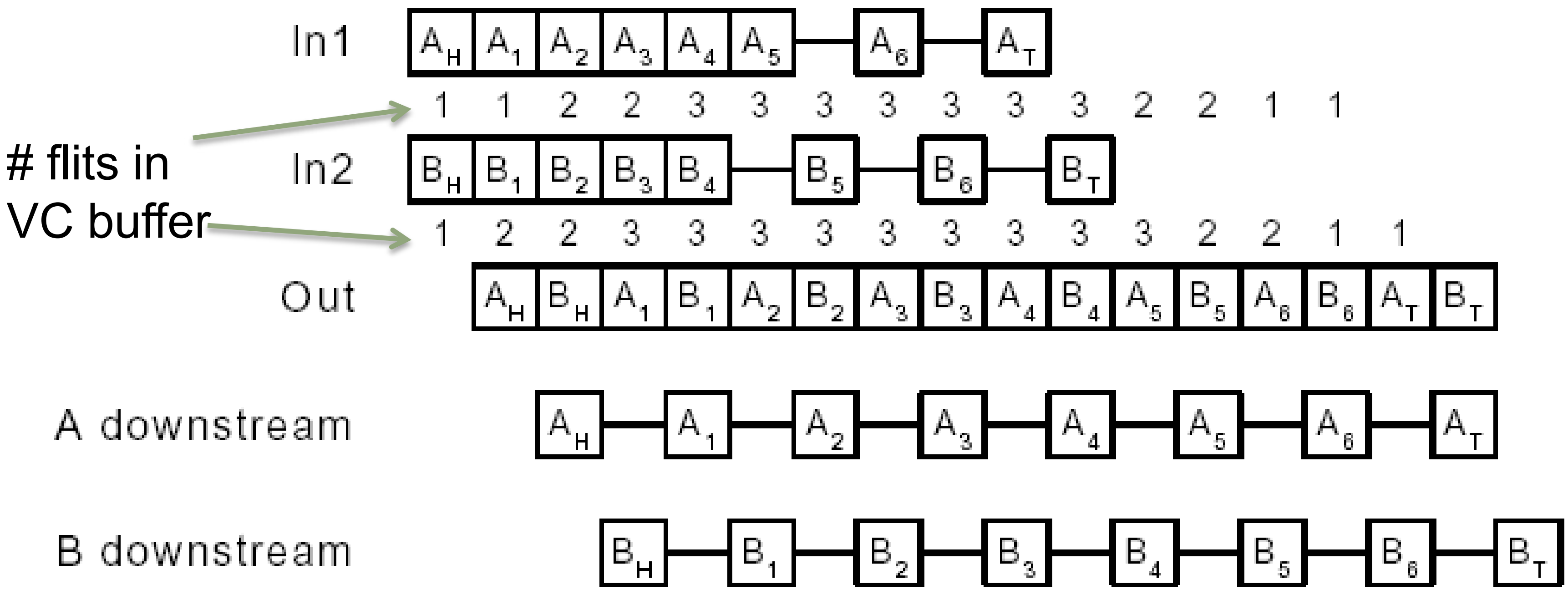
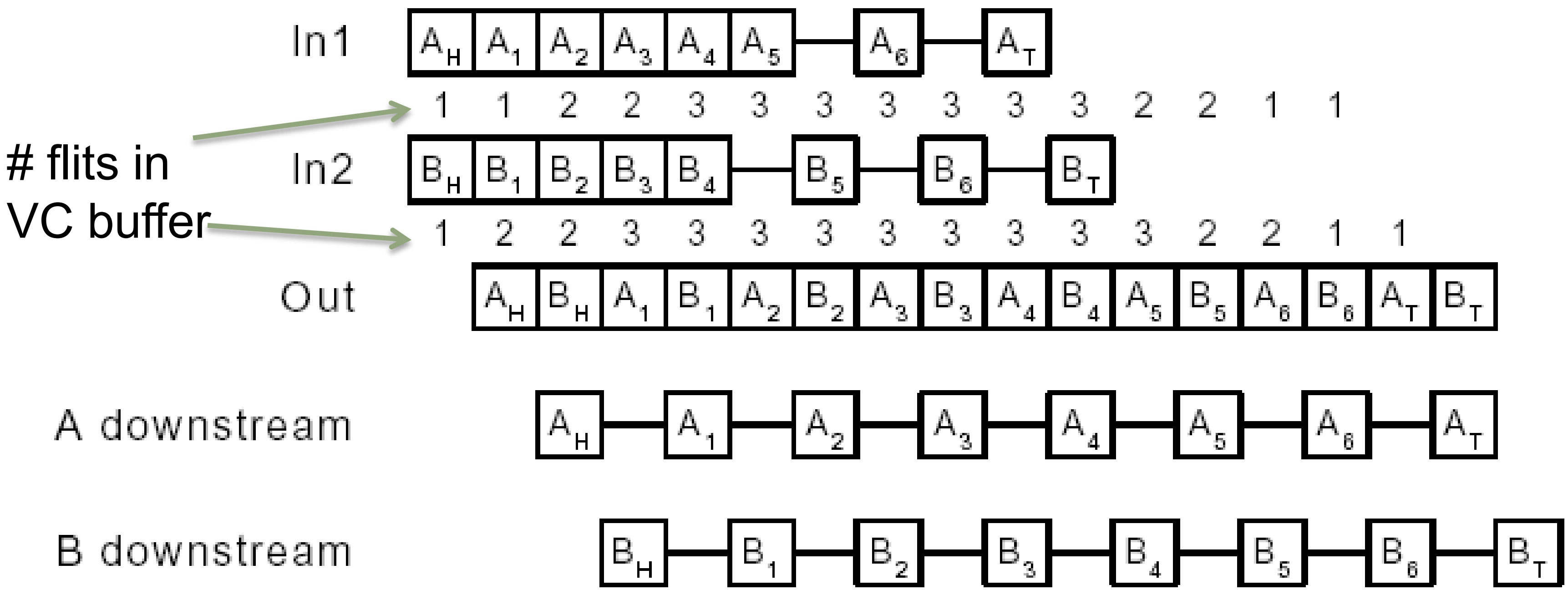


- Advantages? Significantly reduces blocking
- Disadvantages?

Time-Space View: Virtual-Channel



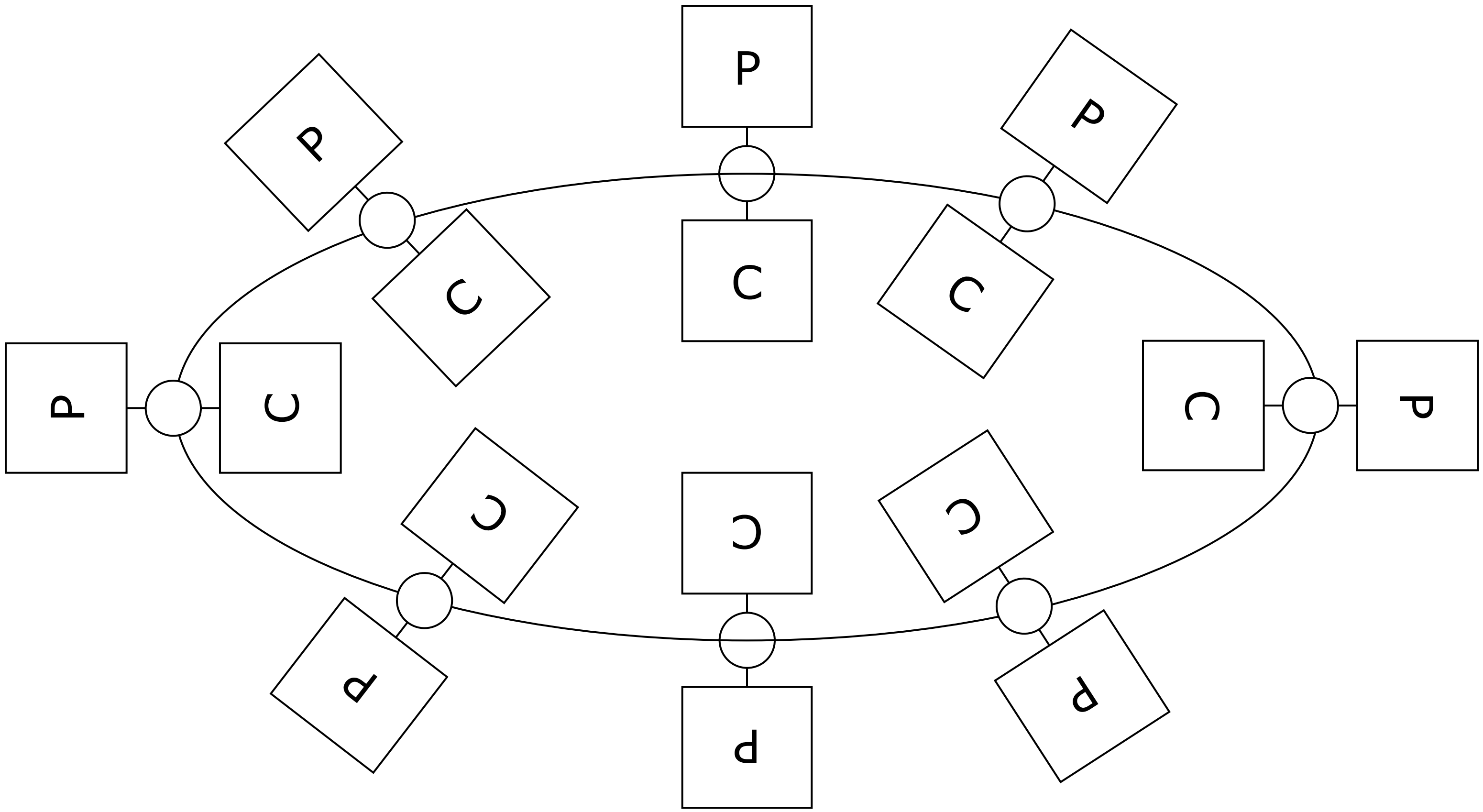
- Advantages? Significantly reduces blocking
- Disadvantages? More complex router, fair VC allocation required

Interconnection Network Architecture

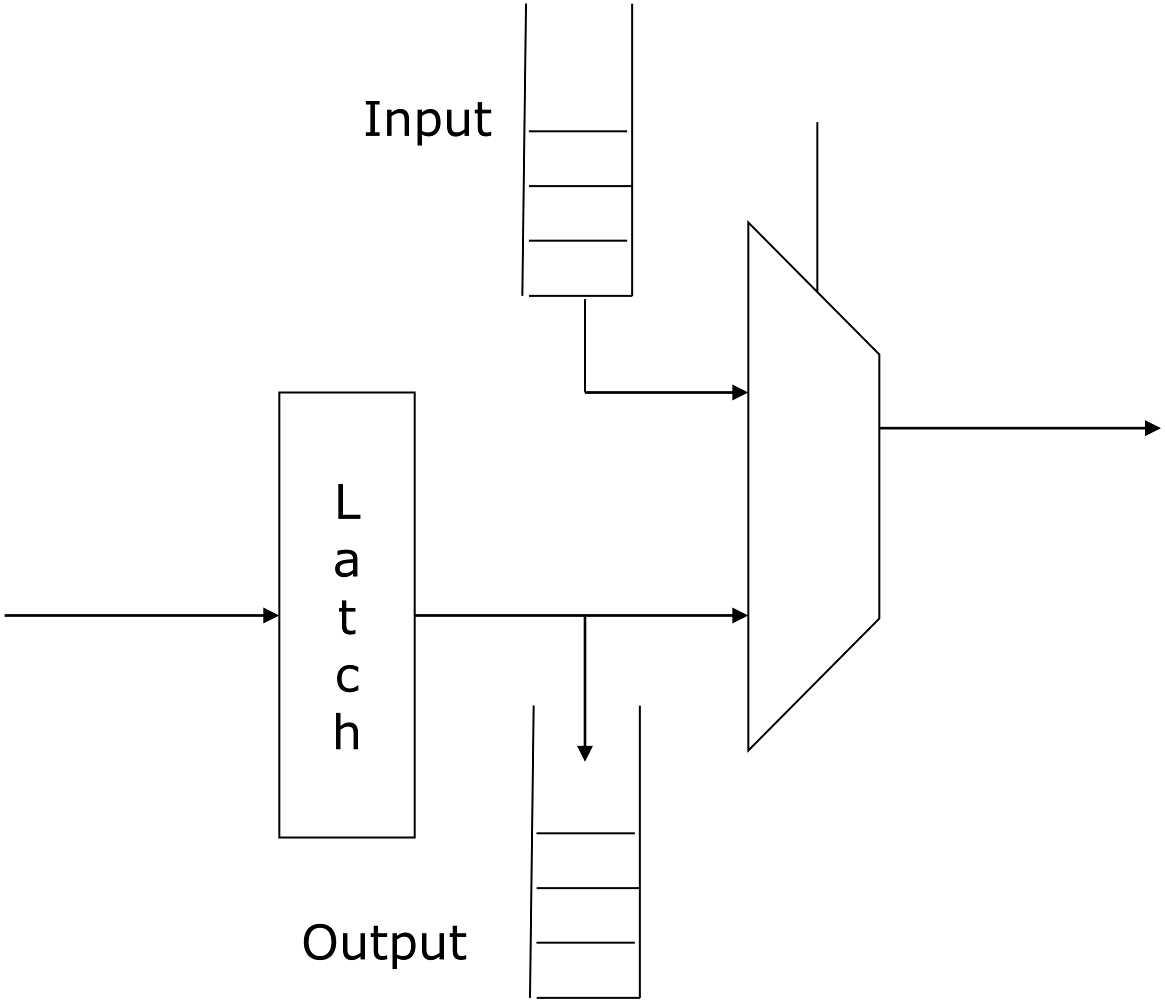
- *Topology*: How to connect the nodes up? (processors, memories, router line cards, …)
- *Routing*: Which path should a message take?
- *Flow control*: How is the message actually forwarded from source to destination?
- *Router microarchitecture*: How to build the routers?
- *Link microarchitecture*: How to build the links?

Router Microarchitecture

Ring-based Interconnect



Ring Stop



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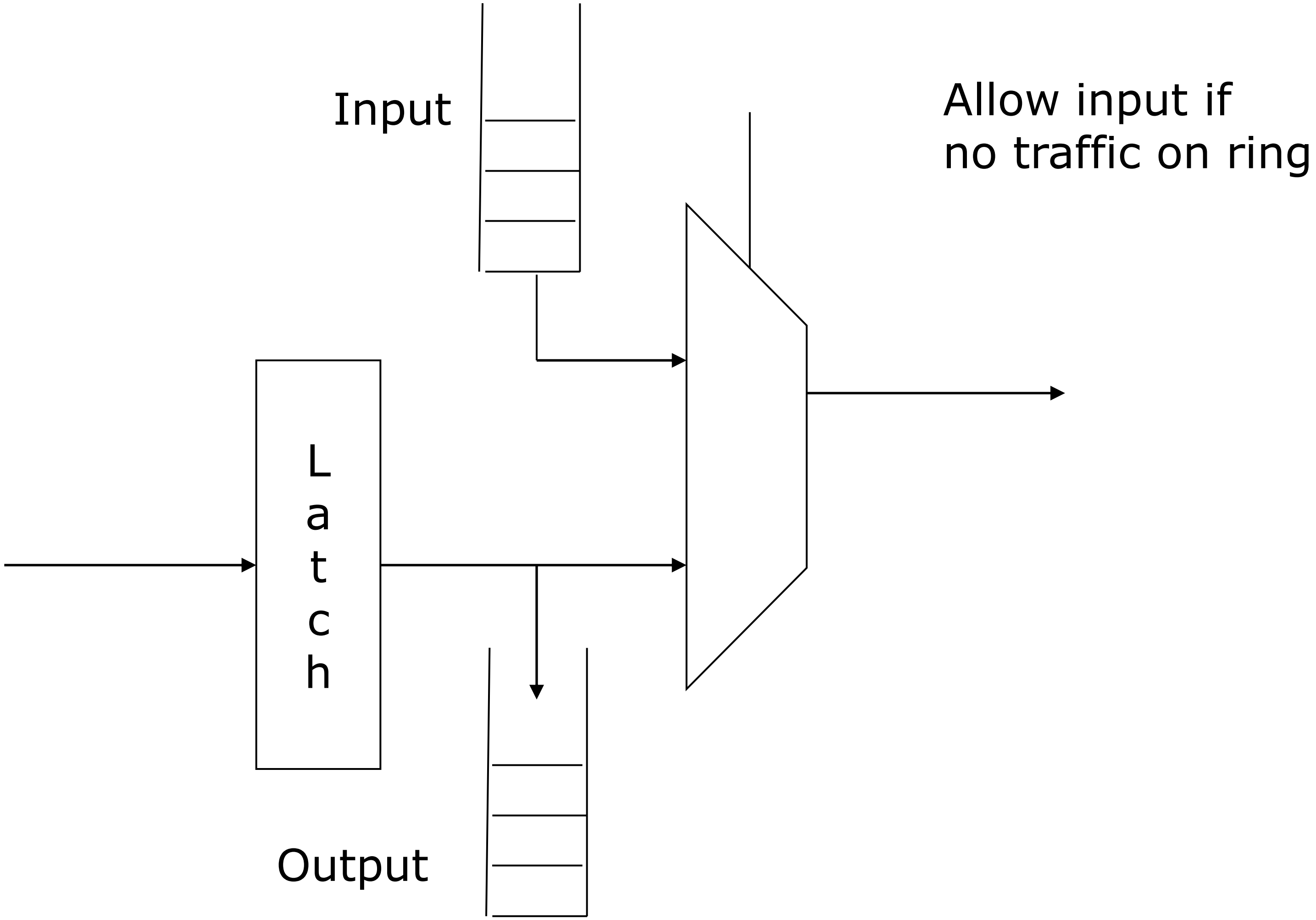

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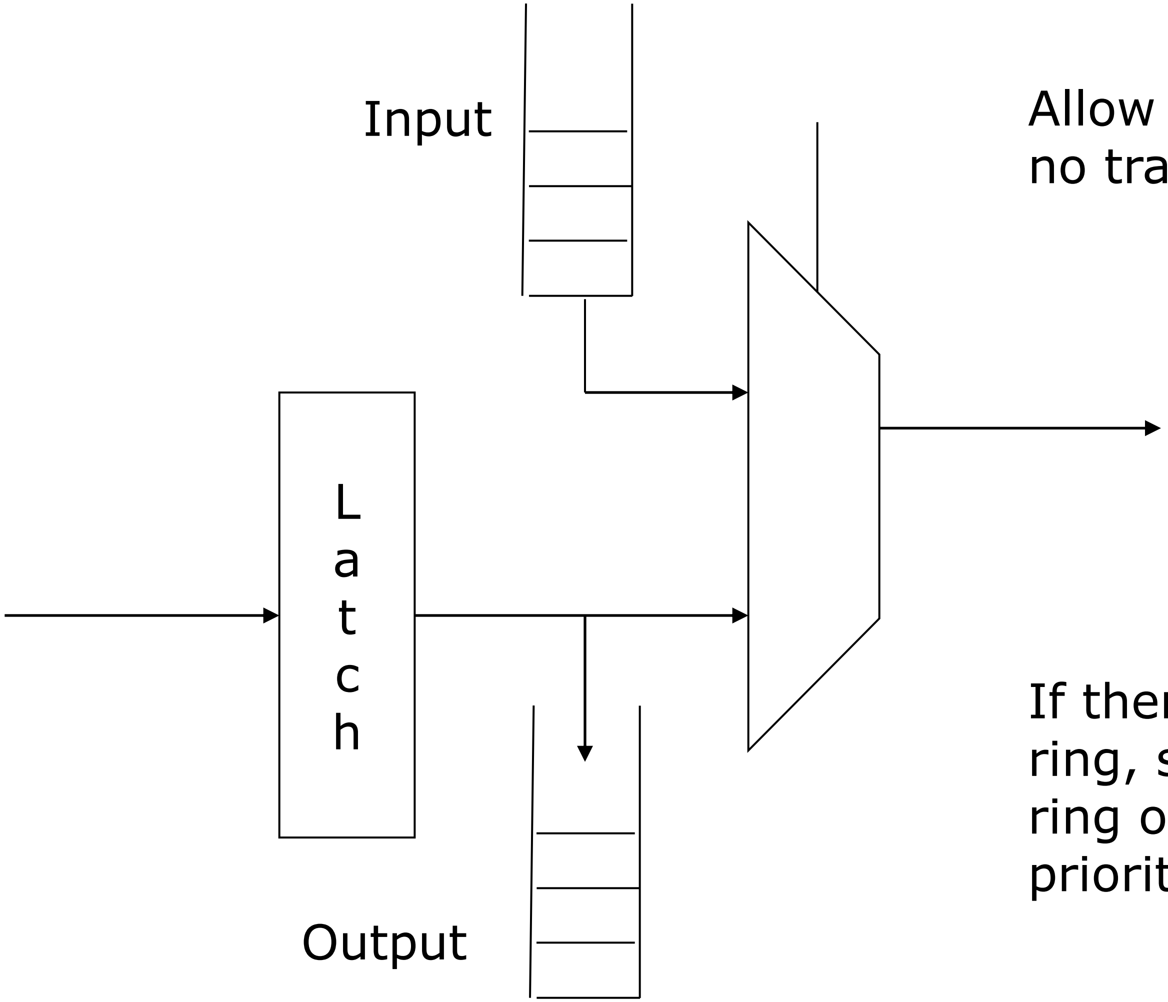

Allow input if no traffic on ring

If there is traffic on ring, should traffic on ring or new input get priority?

Ring Flow Control: Priorities

Rotary Rule – traffic in ring has priority

Ring Flow Control: Bounces

What if traffic on the ring cannot get delivered, e.g., if output FIFO is full?

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One alternative: Continue on ring (bounce)

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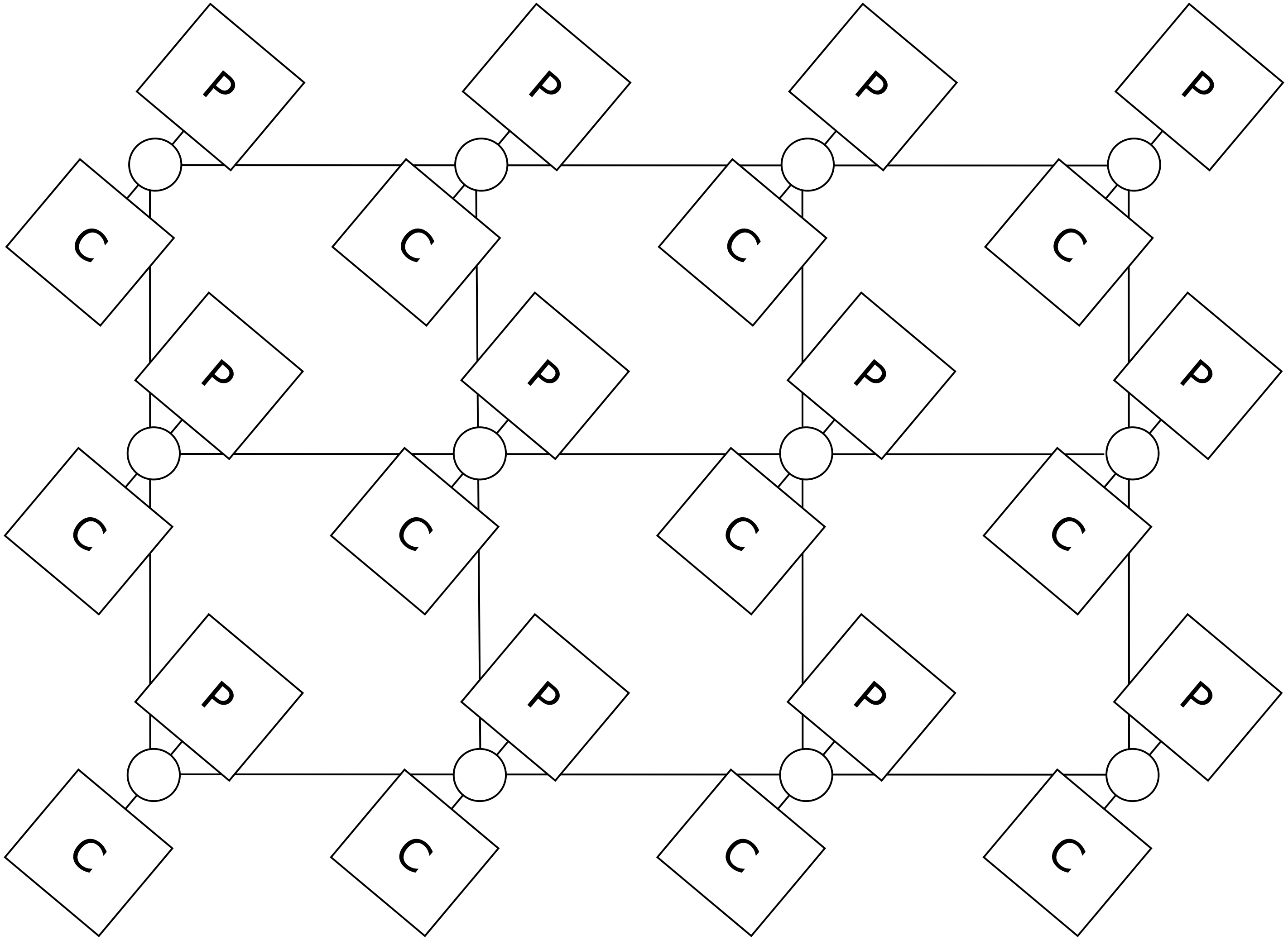
What are the consequences of such bounces?

Traffic on ring no longer FIFO

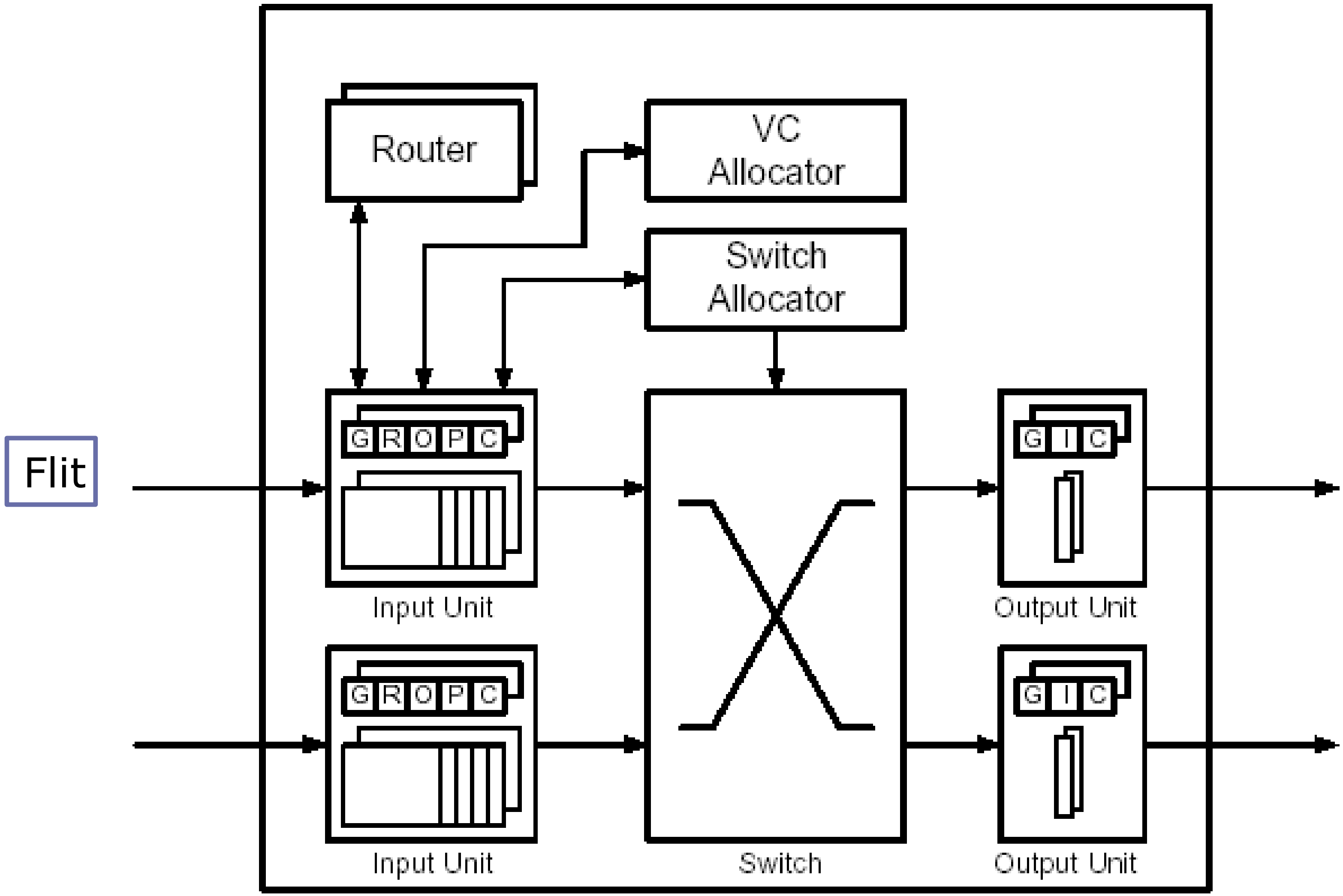
General Interconnect
Tilera, Knights Landing…



What's In A Router?

- It's a system as well
  - Logic – State machines, Arbiters, Allocators
    - Control data movement through router
    - Idle, Routing, Waiting for resources, Active
  - Memory – Buffers
    - Store flits before forwarding them
    - SRAMs, registers, processor memory
  - Communication – Switches
    - Transfer flits from input to output ports
    - Crossbars, multiple crossbars, fully-connected, bus

Virtual-channel Router



Router Pipeline vs. Processor Pipeline

- Logical stages:
  - BW
  - RC
  - VA
  - SA
  - BR
  - ST
  - LT
- Different flits go through different stages
- Different routers have different variants
  - E.g. speculation, lookaheads, bypassing
- Different implementations of each pipeline stage

- Logical stages:
  - IF
  - ID
  - EX
  - MEM
  - WB
- Different instructions go through different stages
- Different processors have different variants
  - E.g. speculation, ISA
- Different implementations of each pipeline stage

Baseline Router Pipeline

Head	BW	RC	VA	SA	ST	LT			
Body 1		BW			SA	ST	LT		
Body 2			BW			SA	ST	LT	
Tail				BW			SA	ST	LT

- Route computation performed once per packet
- Virtual channel allocated once per packet
- Body and tail flits inherit this info from head flit

Allocators In Routers

- VC Allocator
  - Input VCs requesting for a range of output VCs
  - Example: A packet of VC0 arrives at East input port. It's destined for west output port, and would like to get any of the VCs of that output port.
- Switch Allocator
  - Input VCs of an input port request for different output ports (e.g., One's going North, another's going West)
- "Greedy" algorithms used for efficiency

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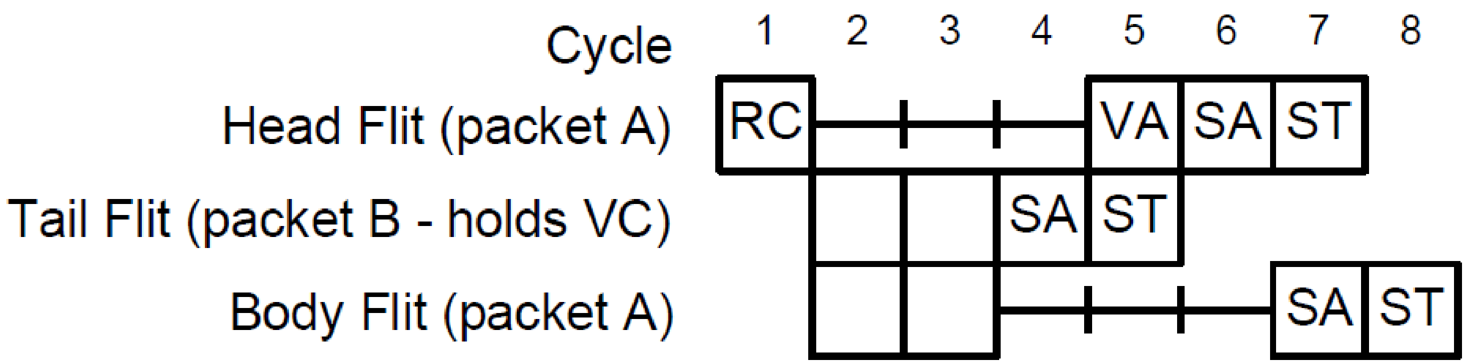
- “Greedy” algorithms used for efficiency
- What happens if allocation fails on a given cycle?

VC & Switch Allocation Stalls



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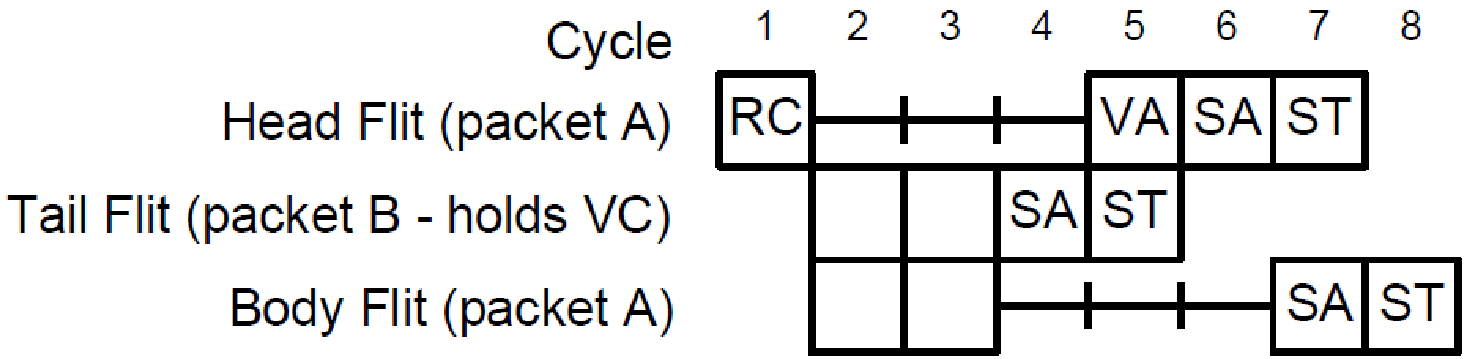

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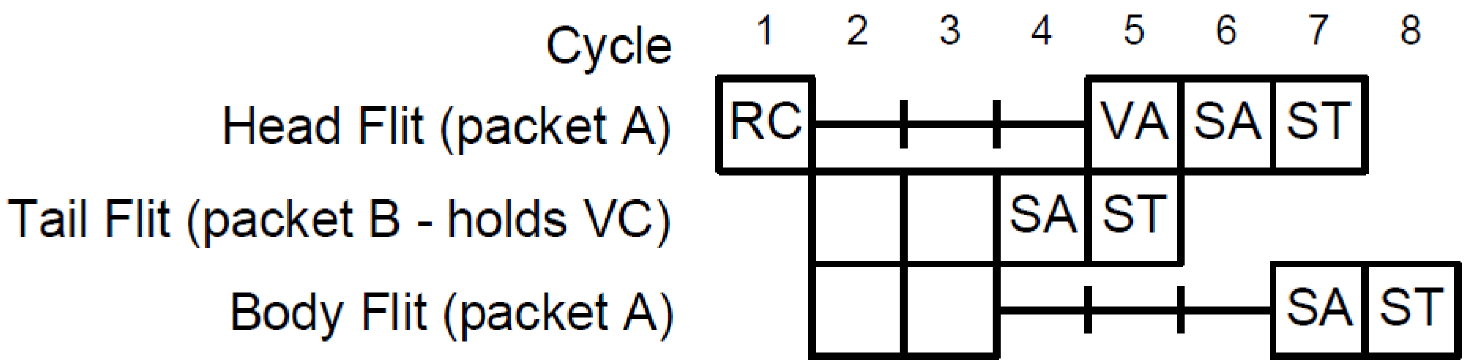
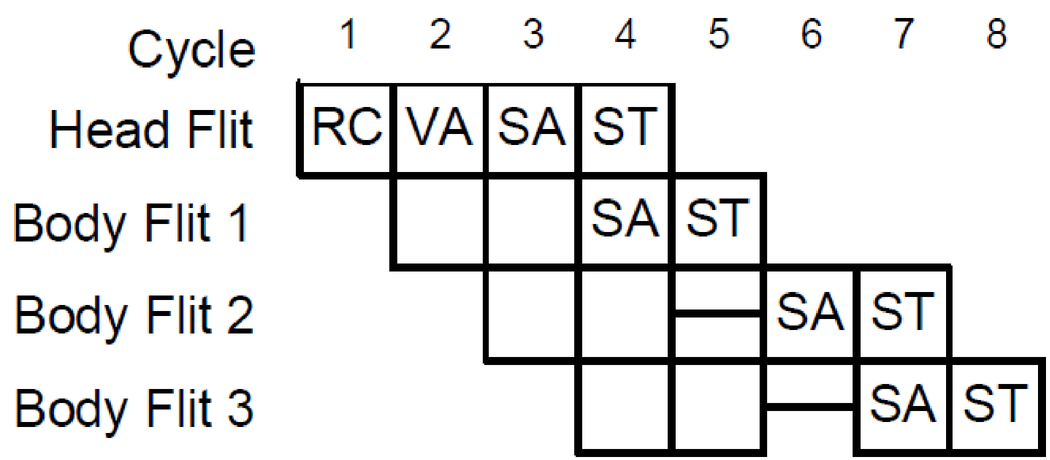




Pipeline Optimizations: Lookahead Routing [Galles, SGI Spider Chip]

- At current router, perform route computation for next router

BW RC	VA NRC	SA	ST	LT

  - Head flit already carries output port for next router
  - RC just has to read output → fast, can be overlapped with BW
  - Precomputing route allows flits to compete for VCs immediately after BW
  - Routing computation for the next hop (NRC) can be computed in parallel with VA

- Or simplify RC (e.g., X-Y routing is very fast)

Pipeline Optimizations: Speculative Switch Allocation [Peh&Dally, 2001]

- Assume that Virtual Channel Allocation stage will be successful
  - Valid under low to moderate loads
- If both successful, VA and SA are done in parallel

BW RC	VA SA	ST	LT

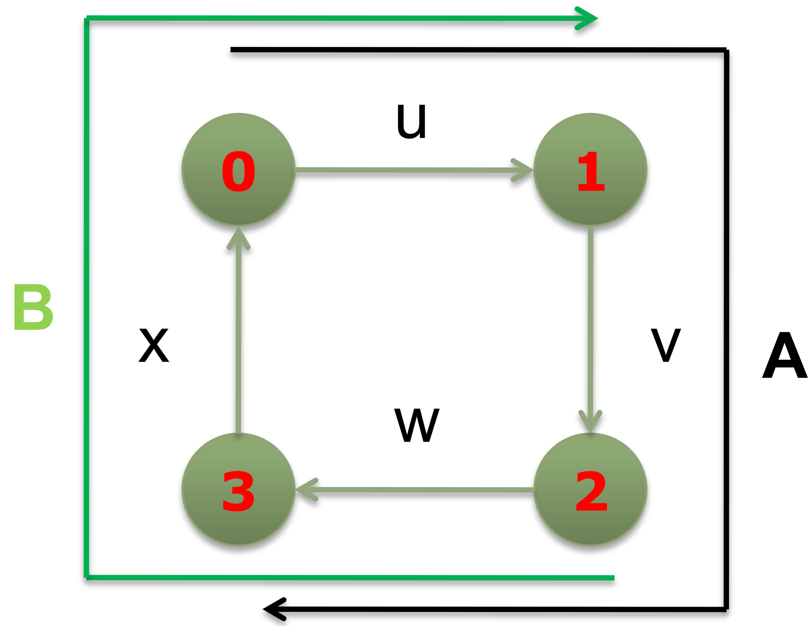
- If VA unsuccessful (no virtual channel returned)
  - Must repeat VA/SA in next cycle
- Prioritize non-speculative requests

Routing

Properties of Routing Algorithms

- Deterministic/Oblivious
  - route determined by (source, dest),
  - not intermediate state (i.e. traffic)
- Adaptive
  - route influenced by traffic along the way
- Minimal
  - only selects shortest paths
- Deadlock-free
  - no traffic pattern can lead to a situation where no packets move forward

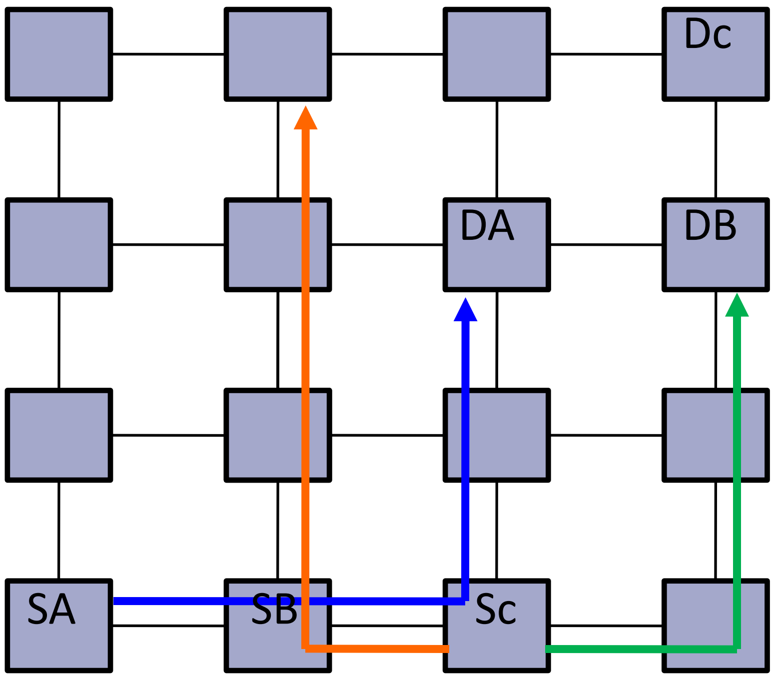
Network Deadlock



- Flow A holds u and v but cannot make progress until it acquires channel w
- Flow B holds channels w and x but cannot make progress until it acquires channel u

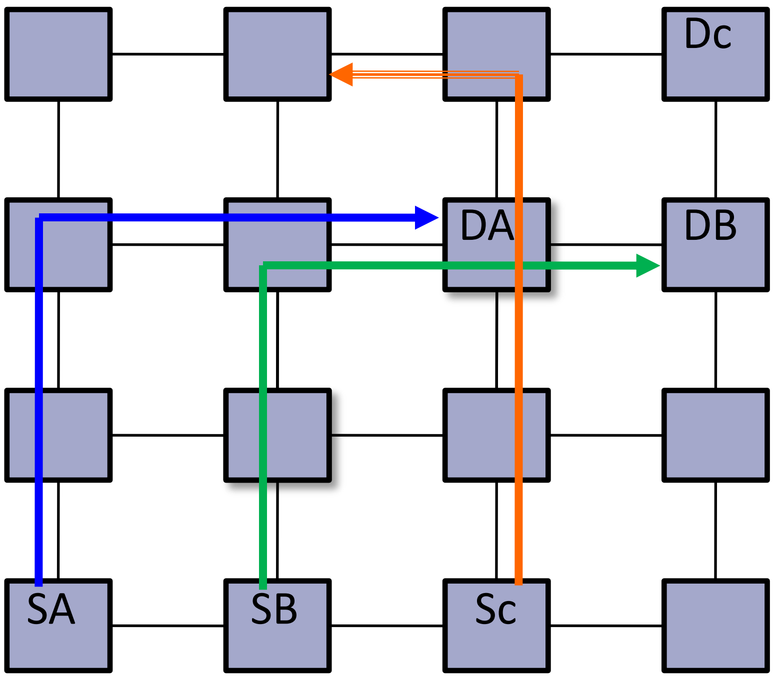
Dimension-Order Routing

XY-order



Uses 2 out of 4 turns

YX-order



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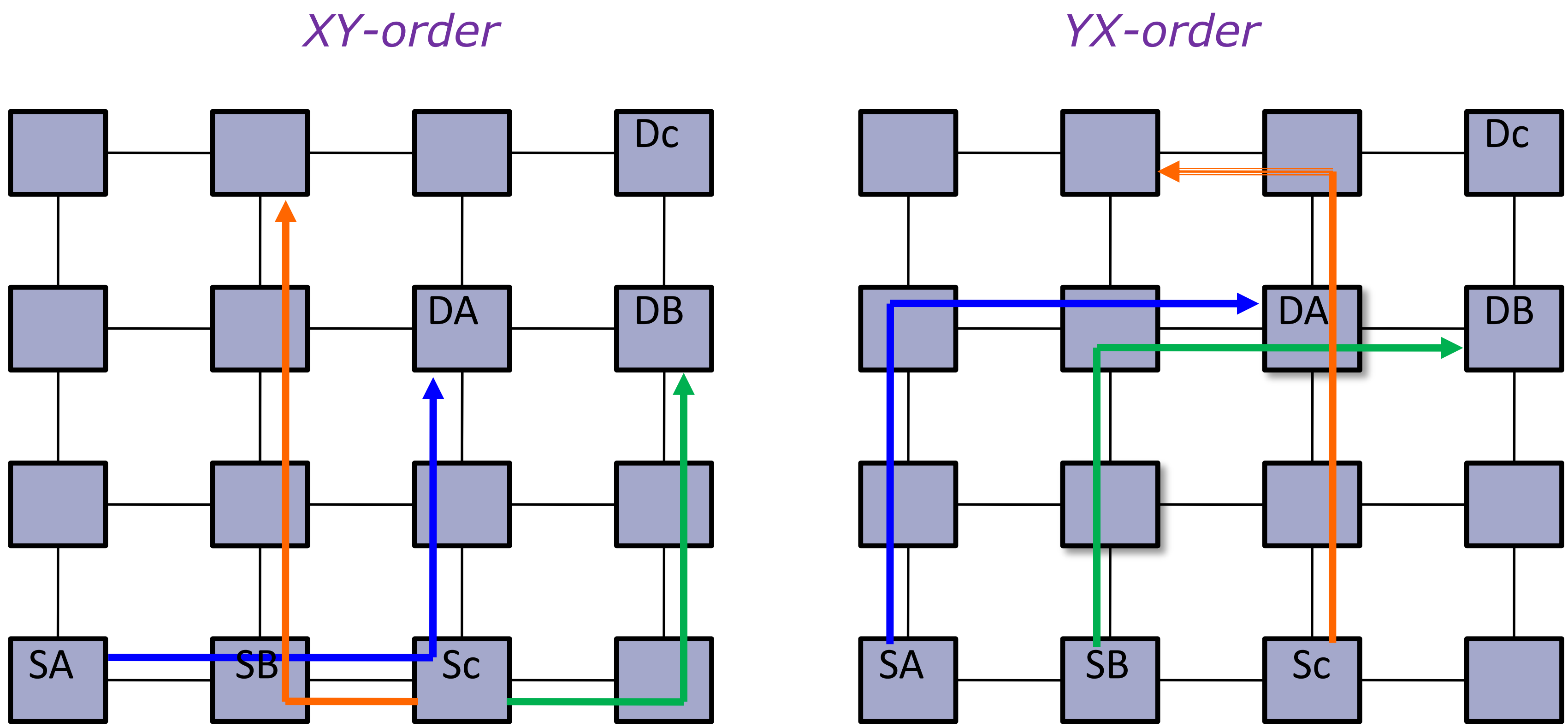
XY is deadlock free, YX is deadlock free, what about XY+YX?

Dimension-Order Routing



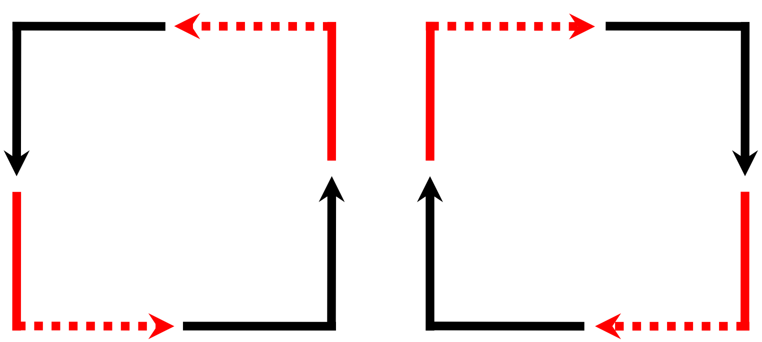
Uses 2 out of 4 turns **Uses 2 out of 4 turns**

XY is deadlock free, YX is deadlock free, what about XY+YX?

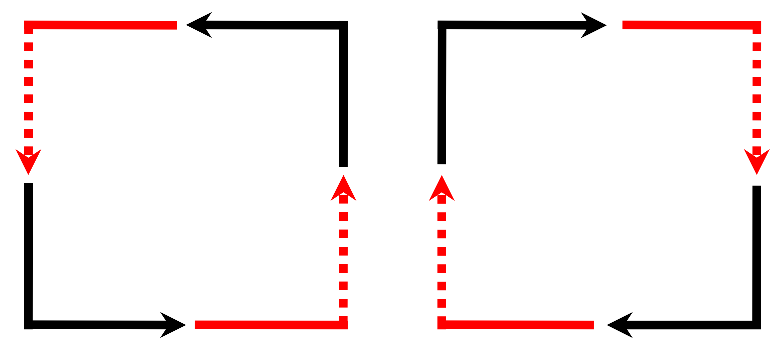
NO!

DOR – Turns allowed

- One way of looking at whether a routing algorithm is deadlock free is to look at the turns allowed.
- Deadlocks may occur if turns can form a cycle



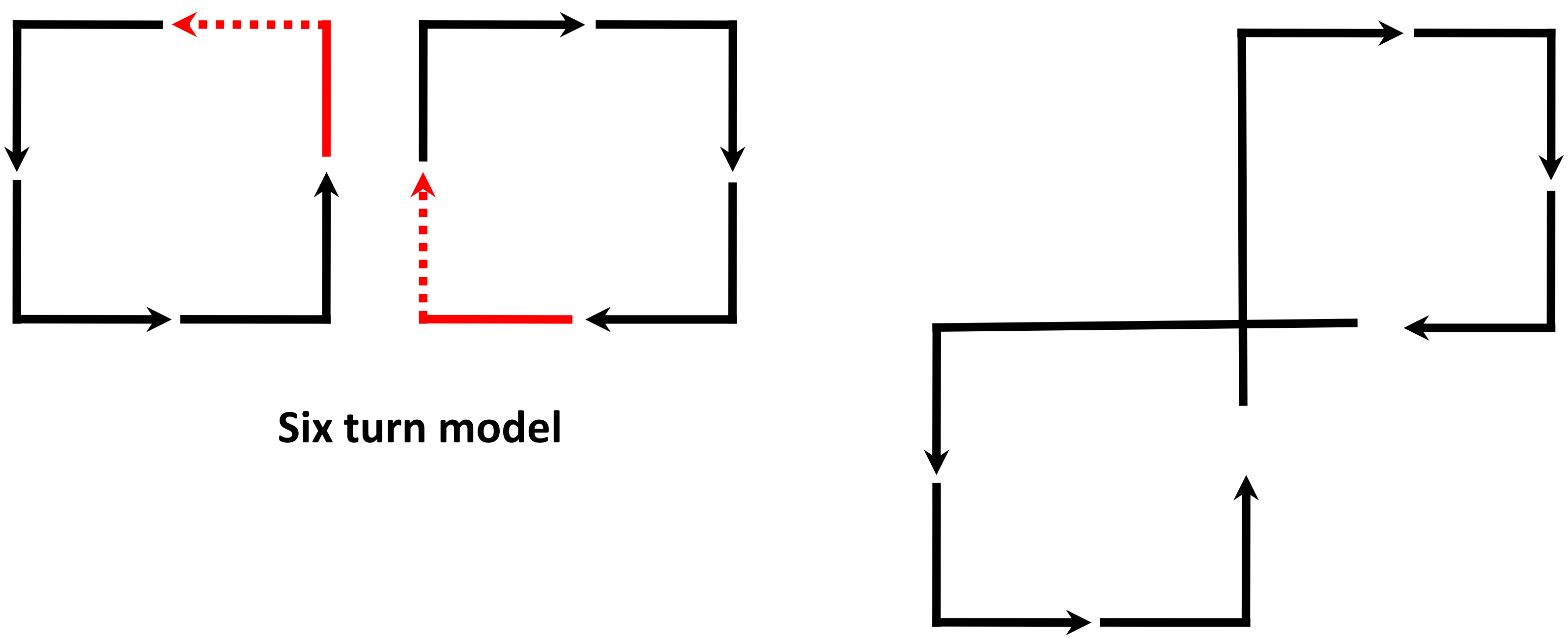
XY Model



YX Model

Allowing more turns

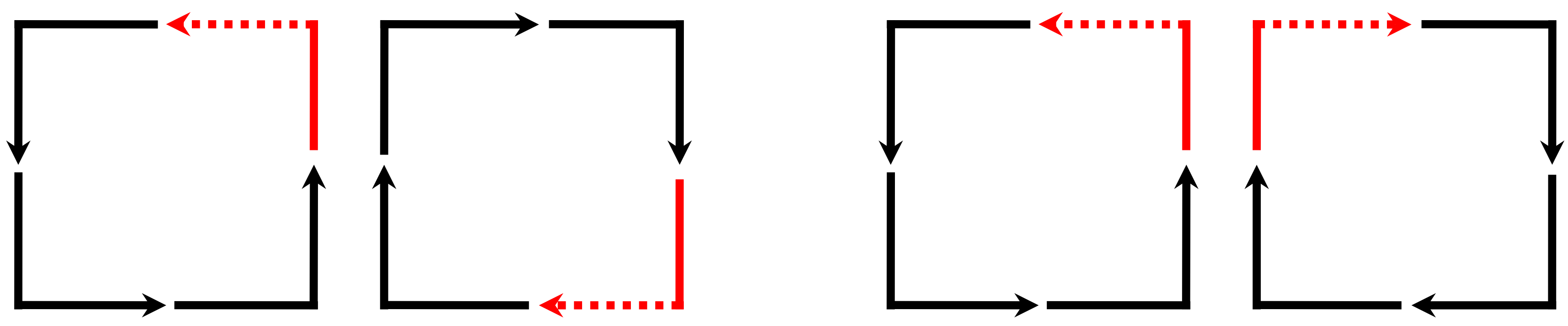
- Allowing more turns may allow adaptive routing, but also deadlock



Turn Model [Glass and Ni, 1994]

- A systematic way of generating deadlock-free routes with small number of prohibited turns

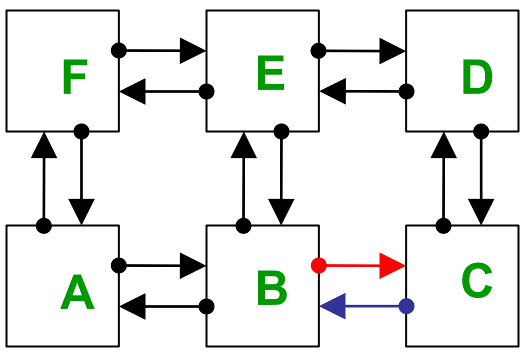
- Deadlock-free if routes conform to at least ONE of the turn models (acyclic channel dependence graph)



West-First Turn Model **North-Last Turn Model**

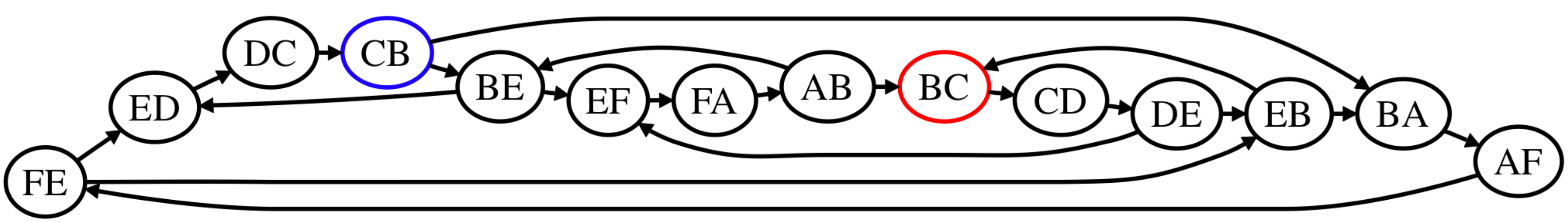
2-D Mesh and CDG

Can create a channel dependency graph (CDG) of the network.



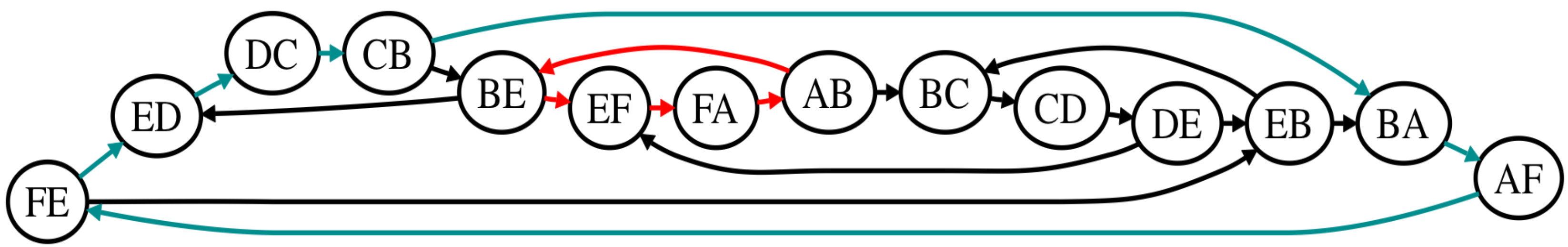
Vertices in the CDG represent network *links*

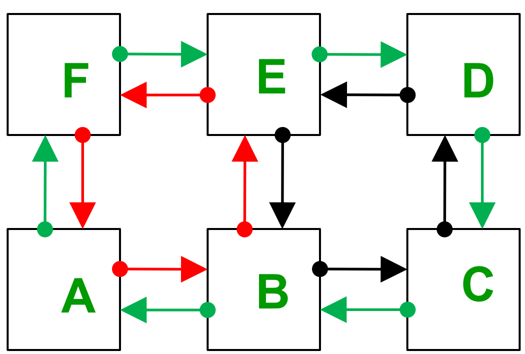
Disallowing 180^{o} turns, e.g., AB → BA



Cycles in CDG

The channel dependency graph D derived from the network topology may contain many cycles

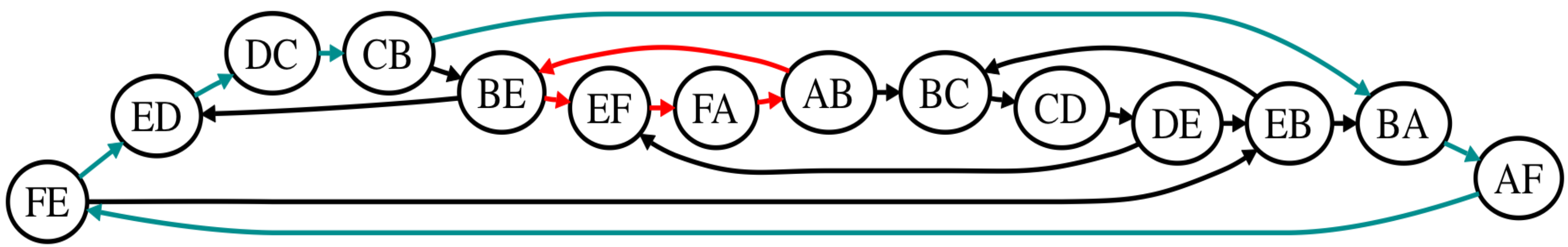


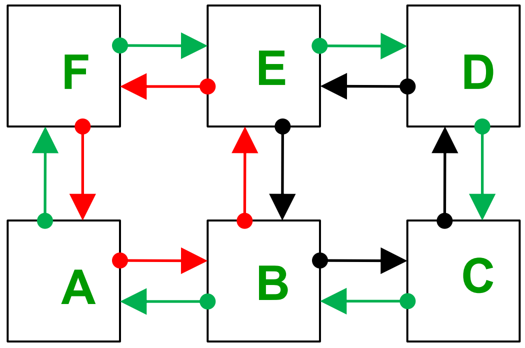


Flow routed through links AB, BE, EF
Flow routed through links EF, FA, AB
Deadlock!

Key Insight

If routes of flows conform to acyclic CDG, then there will be no possibility of deadlock!



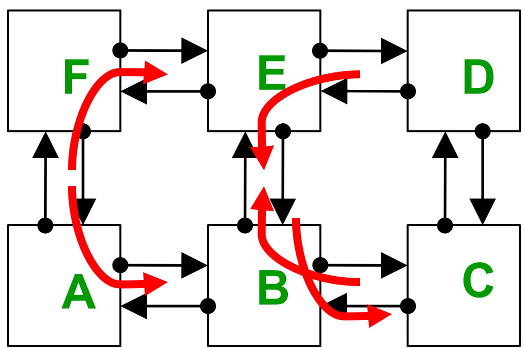


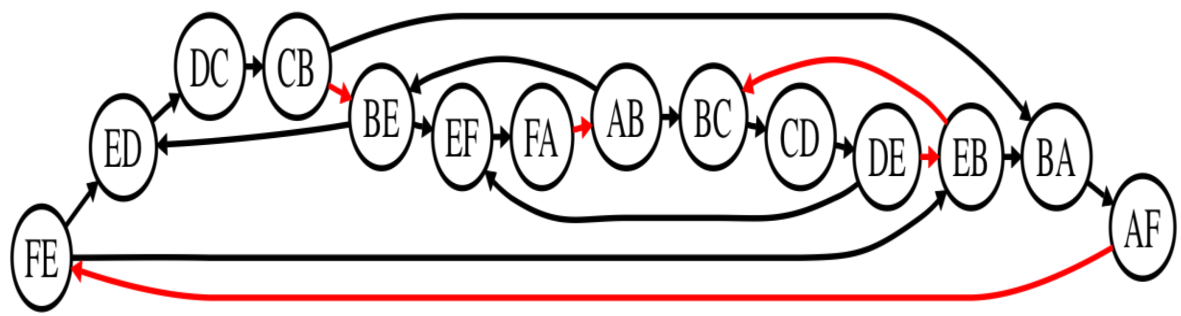
Disallow/Delete certain edges in CDG

Edges in CDG correspond to turns in network!

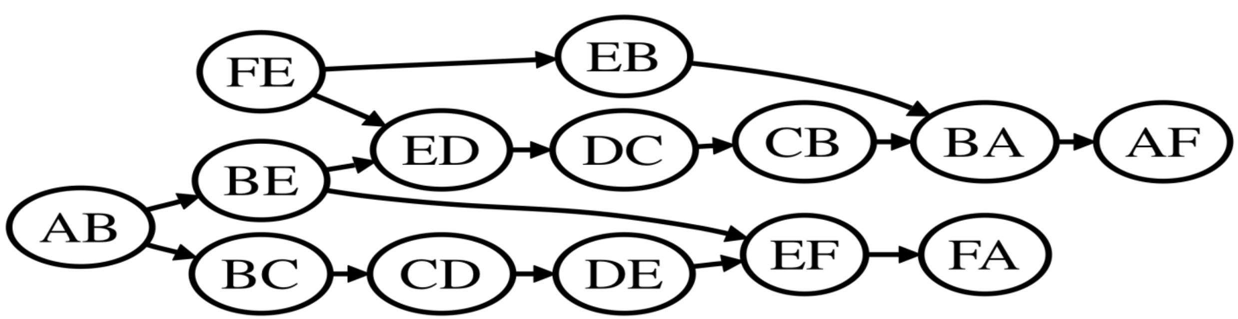
Acyclic CDG-> Deadlock-free routes

Turns could be prohibited ad-hoc, all the edges in red are deleted



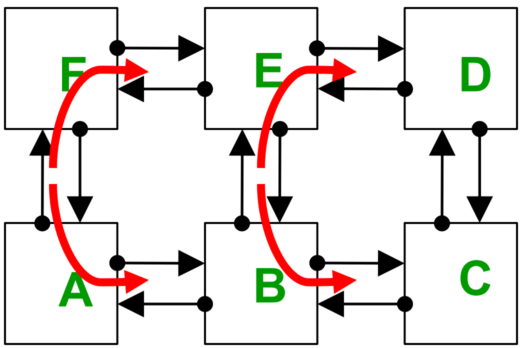


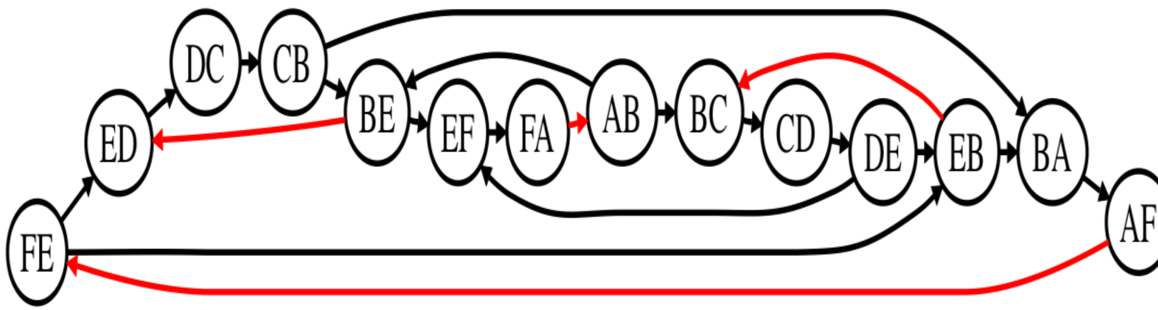
Ad-hoc Acyclic CDG



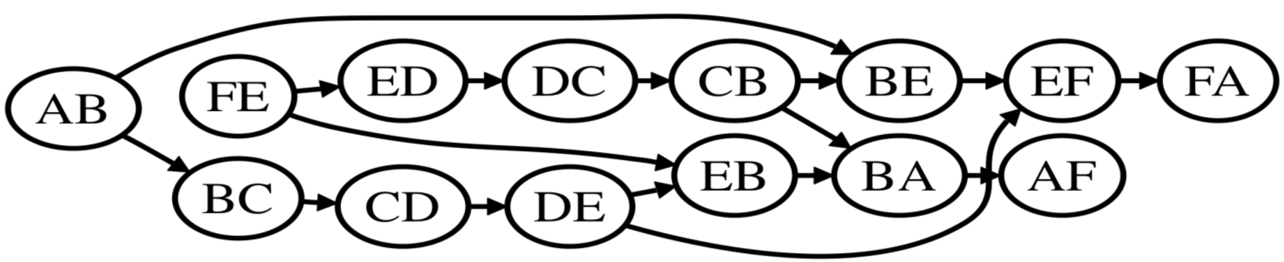
West-first → Deadlock-free routes

Per the West-First prohibited turns, all the edges in red are deleted

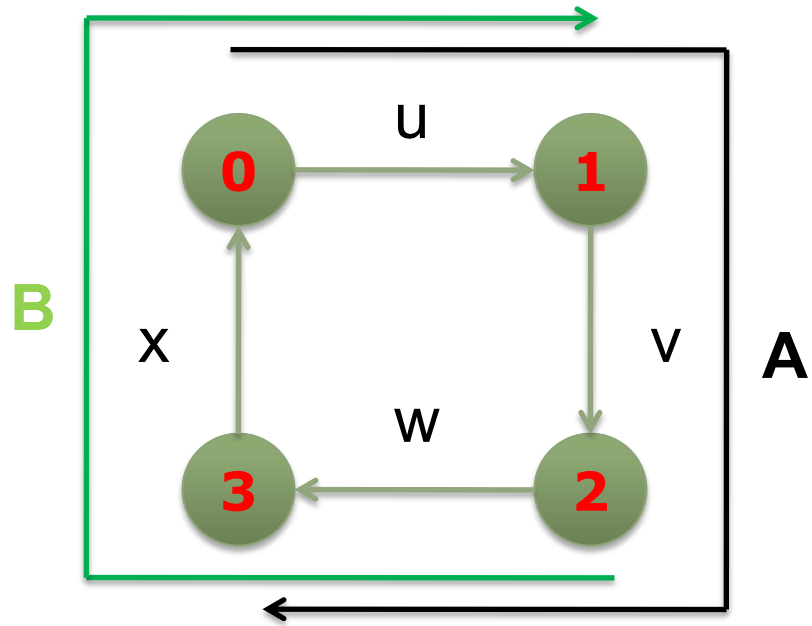




West-First Acyclic CDG



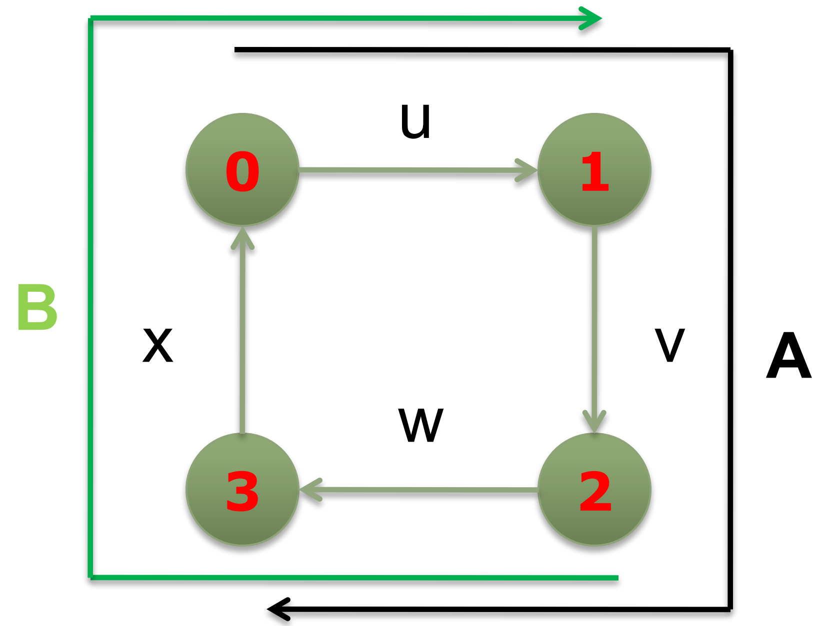
Resource Conflicts → Deadlock



Routing deadlocks in wormhole routing result from Structural hazard at router resources, e.g., buffers.

How can structural hazards be avoided?

Resource Conflicts → Deadlock



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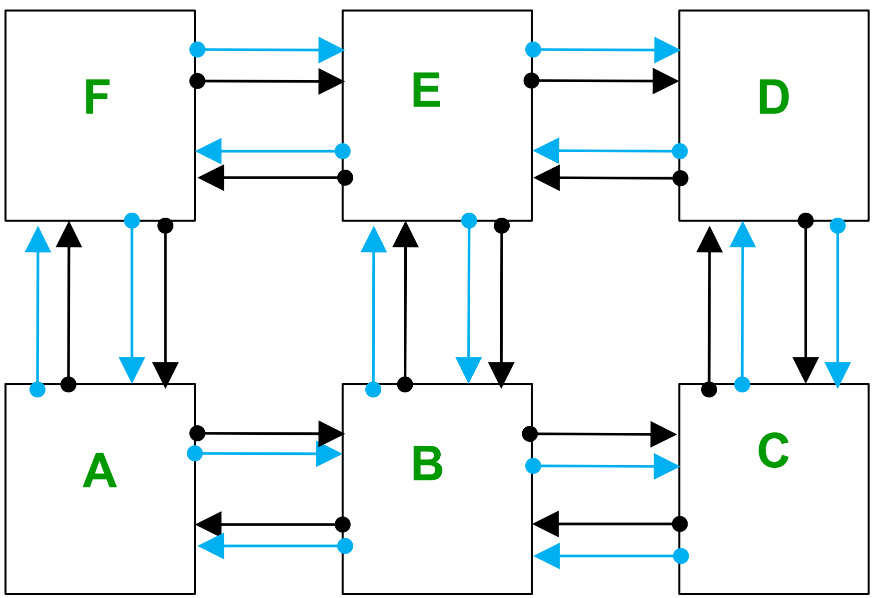
How can structural hazards be avoided?

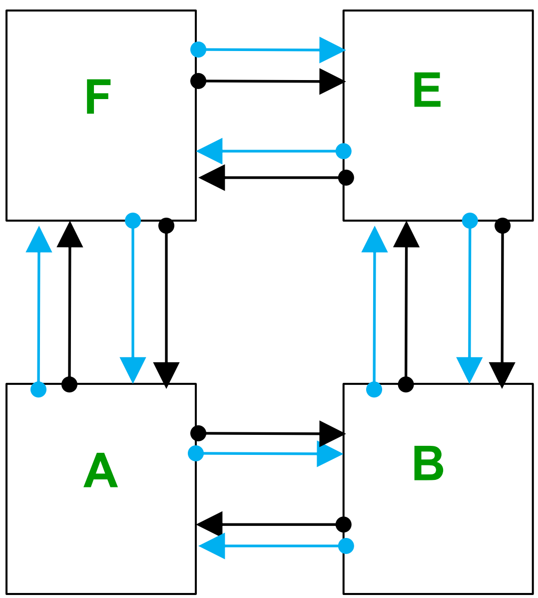
Adding more resources

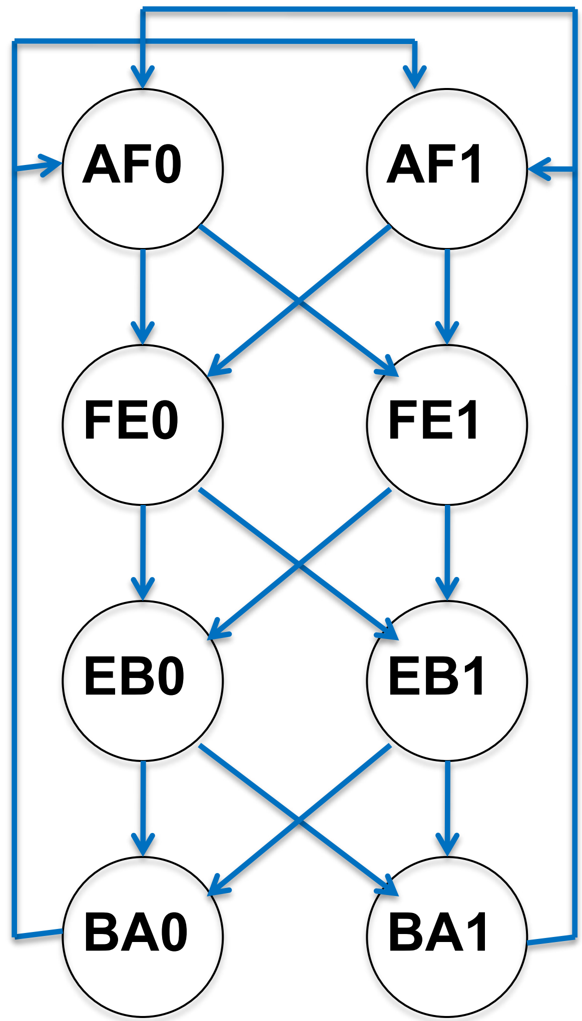
Virtual Channels

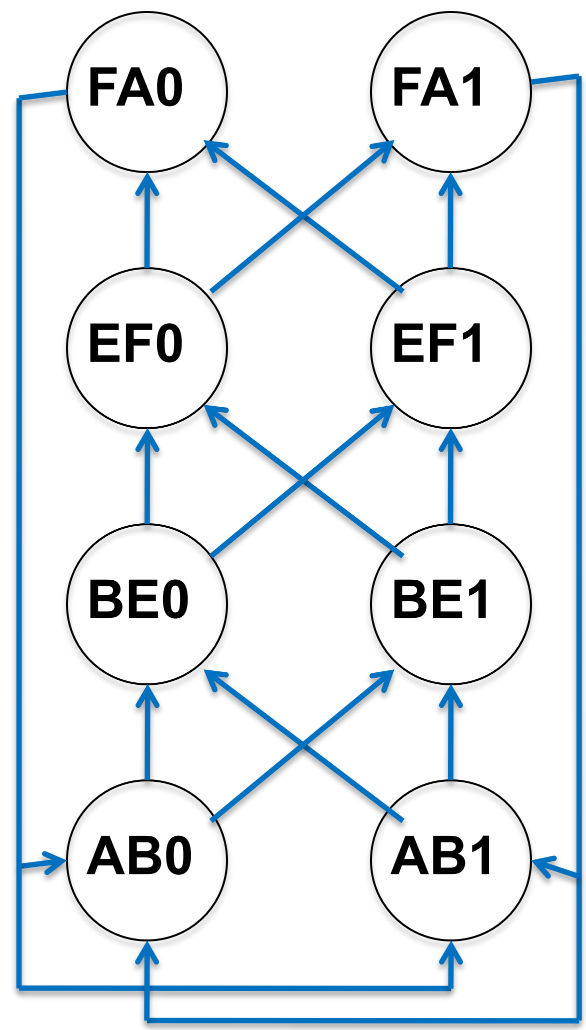
- Virtual channels can be used to avoid deadlock by restricting VC allocation



CDG and Virtual Channels

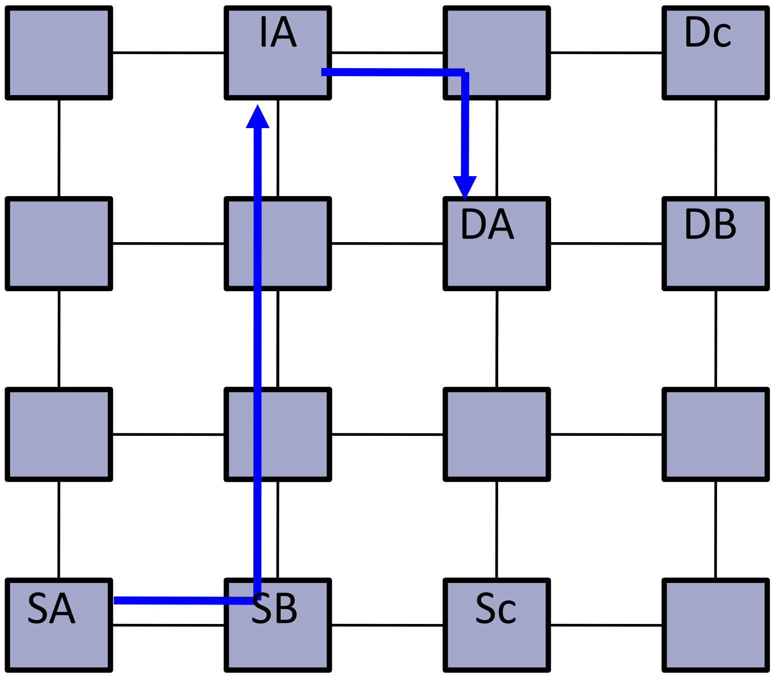






Randomized Routing: Valiant

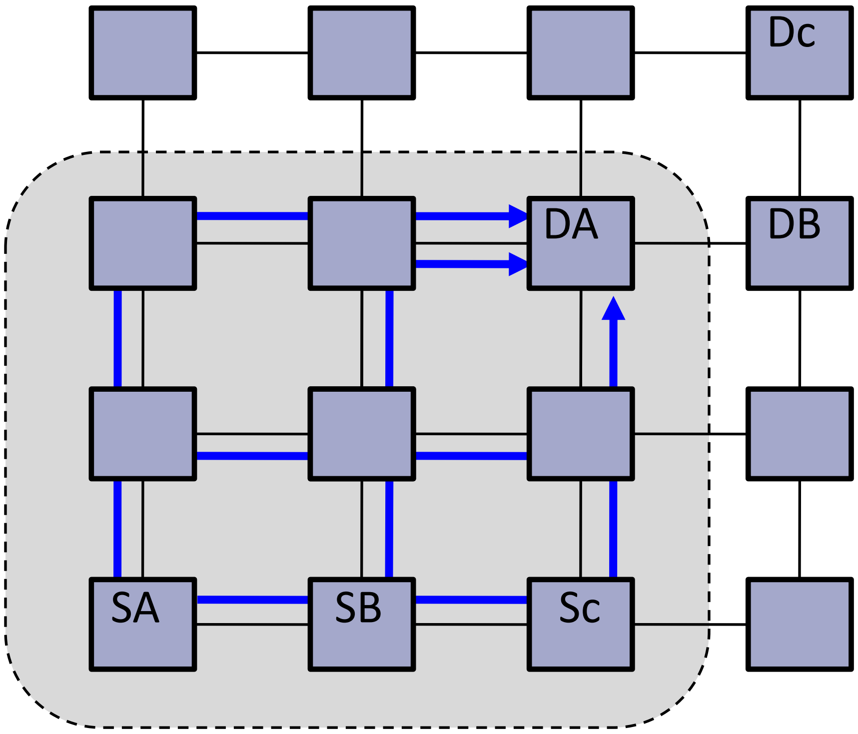
- Route each packet through a randomly chosen intermediate node



A packet, going from node SA to node DA, is first routed from SA to a randomly chosen intermediate node IA, before going from IA to final destination DA.

It helps load-balance the network and has a good worst-case performance at the expense of locality.

ROMM: Randomized, Oblivious Multi-phase Minimal Routing



To retain locality, choose intermediate node in the minimal quadrant

Equivalent to randomly selecting among the various minimal paths from source to destination