

# **CS202 (003): Operating Systems**

## **File System I**

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# Last Time

# What does file system do?

Provide persistence

Provide a way to “name” a set of bytes on the disk (files)

Provide a way to map from human-friendly-names to “names” (directories)

# Where are file systems implemented?

Disk, over network, in memory, in NVRAM, on tape, with paper...

We are going to focus on the disk and generalize later

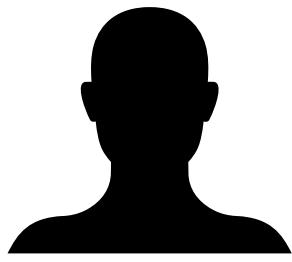
## **Important properties of disks:**

- (a) information don't go away
- (b) we can modify most of the information (except BIOS ROM, ...)

## **Therefore:**

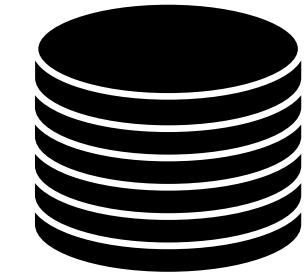
- (a) we are going to put all our important state on the disk
- (b) we have to live with what we put on the disk

# What is a file?



a bunch of named bytes on the disk

collection of disk blocks

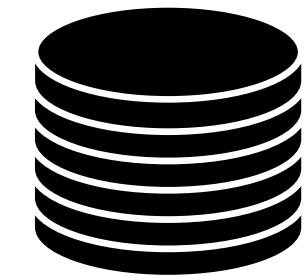


# What FS does...



a bunch of named bytes on the disk

collection of disk blocks



Map name and offset to disk blocks

Operations

create (file), delete (file), read, write

Goal: operations have as few disk access as possible and minimal space overhead

Why care about space overhead when disks are huge?

while disk space might be plentiful, efficient space usage is crucial for performance because it affects both cache utilization and I/O efficiency.

# Address translations



The inode contains the mapping between file offsets and disk block addresses



Directories provide the mapping from human-readable names to inode numbers

# Implementing files

Goal: operations have as few disk access as possible and minimal space overhead

*for now we're going to assume that the file's metadata is known to the system*

access pattern  
we could support

## Sequential

File data processed in sequential order

*By far the most common mode*  
Example: editor writes out new file,  
compiler reads in file, etc

## Random

Address any block in file directly without  
passing through the rest of the blocks

*Examples: large data sets, demand  
paging, databases*

## Keyed

Search for block with particular values

*Examples: associative database, index  
This thing is everywhere in the field of  
databases, search engine, but not  
usually provided by a FS in a OS*

Some  
observations

All blocks in file tend to be used together, sequentially

Most files are small

Much of the disk is allocated to large files

All files in directory tend to be used together

Many of the I/O operations are made to large files

All **names** in directory tend to be used together

Want good sequential and good random access

# Candidate Designs

## Contiguous

"extend based"

User must declare the file size upfront before creation

The entire space for the file is allocated at once

File metadata tracks: starting location, file size

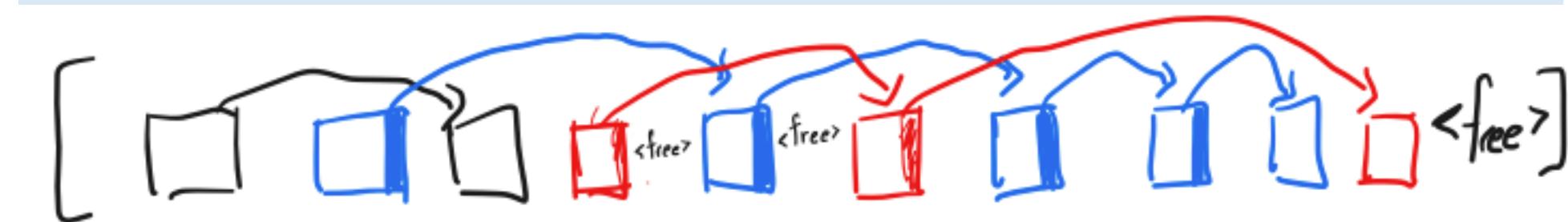
[<free> a1 a2 a3 <5 free> b1 b2 <free>]

*what if a file c needs 7 sectors?!*

**Advantages:** simple implementation, fast file access  
(both sequential and random)

**Disadvantages:** fragmentation

## Linked Files



Keep a linked list of free blocks

Each block holds pointer to the next one

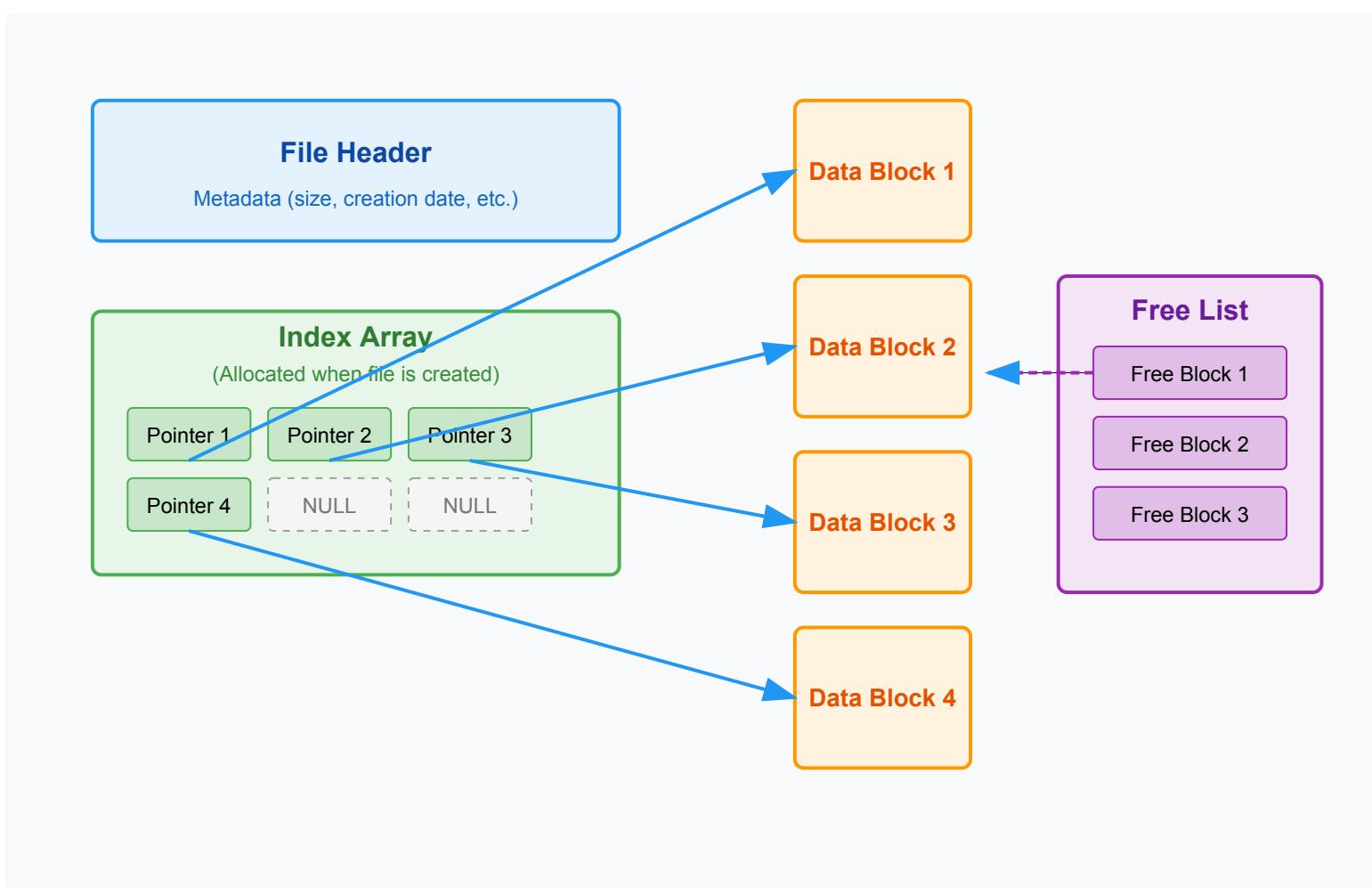
Metadata: pointer to file's first block

**Advantages:** no more fragmentation,  
easy sequential access

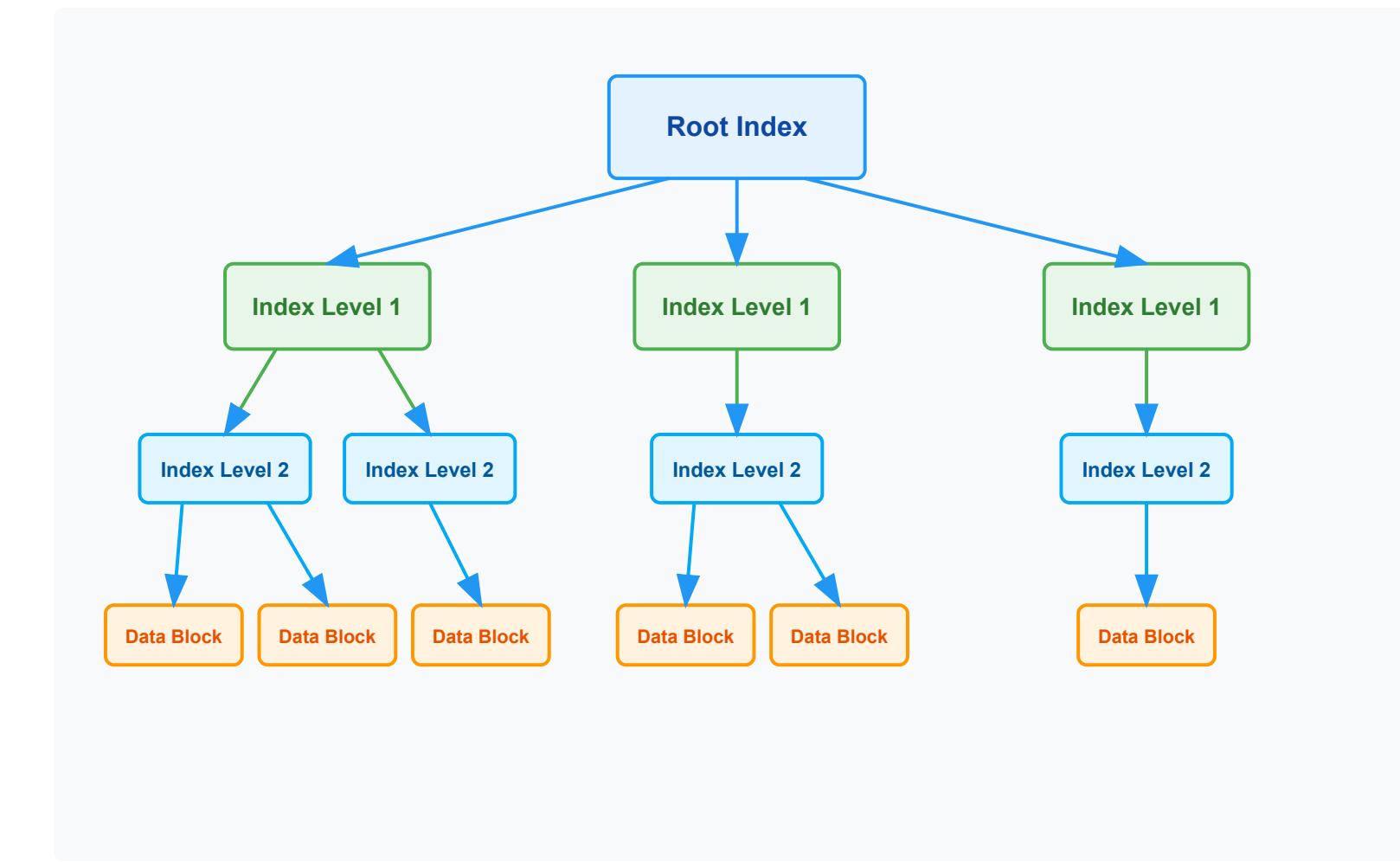
**Disadvantages:** bad random access, pointers  
take up room in blocks (mess up data alignment)

# Candidate Designs - Indexed Files

## Basic Indexed Files



## Multi-level Indexed Files



Each file has an array containing pointers to all its data blocks

The array is allocated when the file is created

Blocks are allocated dynamically using a free list system

**Advantages:** sequential and random access are both easy

**Disadvantages:** need to store the array somewhere

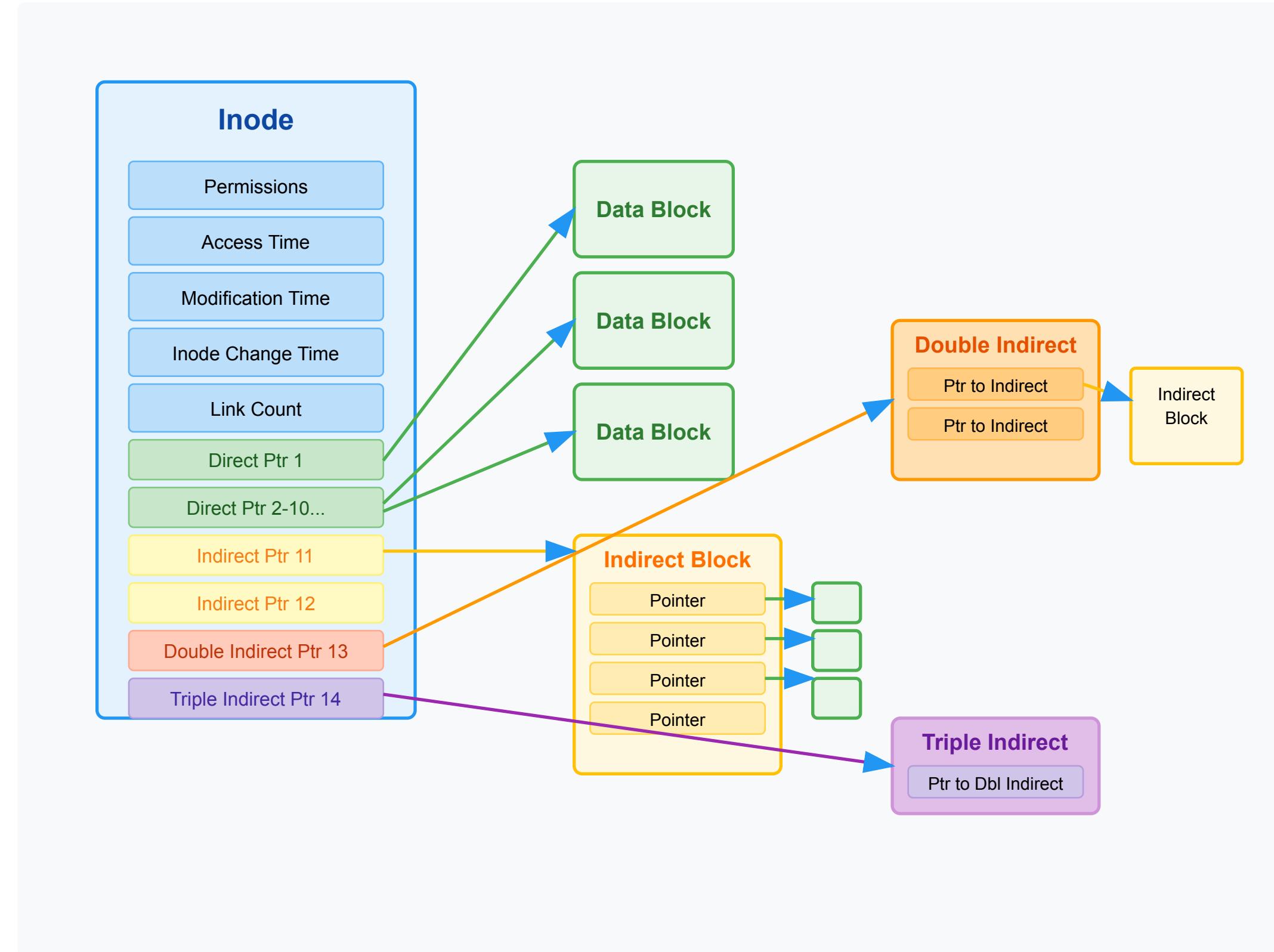
Address the limitation of basic indexed files

**Advantages:** more efficient space utilization, flexible allocation

**Disadvantages:** multiple disk accesses required to reach data blocks, performance penalty for each level traversed

# Candidate Designs - Unix Inode Structure

link count (# directories containing file)



***“Why is this intentionally imbalanced?”***

optimize for short files. each level of this tree requires a disk seek

**Advantages:** simple, easy to build; fast access to small files; maximum file length can be enormous

**Disadvantages:** worst case # of accesses pretty bad, worst case overhead pretty bad, because you allocate blocks by taking them off unordered freelist, metadata and data get strewn across disk

# Some notes about inode

Fixed-size array storage

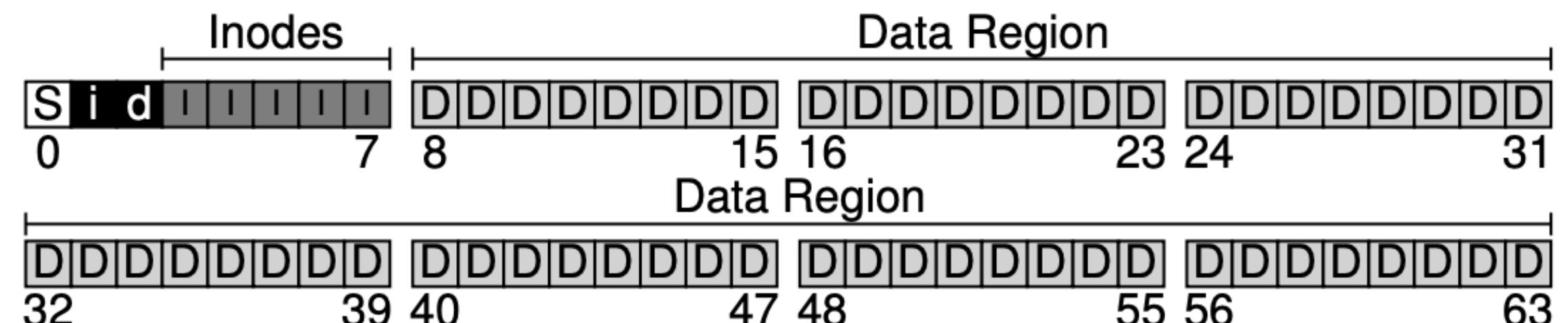
Fixed array size during initialization

Multiple inodes per disk block

Lives in known location, originally at one side of disk,  
now lives in pieces across disk (helps keep metadata close to data)

The index of an inode in the inode array is called an  
**i-number** (OS refers to files by i-numbers)

When a file is opened, the inode brought in memory (written  
back to disk when modified and file closed or time elapses)



*(a FS layout from the text book)*