CS4450

Computer Networks:
Architecture and Protocols

Lecture 7: Link Layer
CSMA/CD
"Why" Frames
"Why" Switched Ethernet

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Announcements

- **Problem set 2 solutions out today**
  - First four questions included in the first exam
- **Practice prelim released today**
  - Hard to “closely” reflect the actual exam, but should be close
  - Solutions released by Friday

Goals for Today's Lecture

- **Dive deep into Link layer design**
    - Finish the core link layer protocol: CSMA/CD
    - Why Frames? — Implementing Link Layer on top of Physical Layer
    - Why Switched Ethernet? — Understanding scalability problems

- Next lecture: THE **Spanning Tree Protocol**

Recap from last lecture

Recap: Data Link Layer

- **Communication Medium**
  - Point-to-point
    - The high-level ideas discussed so far were for point-to-point
  - **Broadcast**
    - **Original design of Link layer protocols**
    - **More recent versions have moved to point-to-point**
      - Today, we will discuss why so!

- **Network Adapters (e.g., NIC — network interface card)**
  - The hardware that connects a machine to the network
  - Has a “name” — MAC (Medium access control) address



Recap: Sharing a broadcast channel

- **Context: a shared broadcast channel**
  - Must avoid/handle having multiple sources speaking at once
  - Otherwise collisions lead to garbled data
  - Need **distributed algorithm** for sharing channel
  - Algorithm determines **when** and **which** source can transmit

Questions?

Techniques for sharing a broadcast channel

- **Context: a shared broadcast channel**
  - Must avoid/handle having multiple sources speaking at once
  - Otherwise collisions lead to garbled data
  - Need **distributed algorithm** for sharing channel
  - Algorithm determines **when** and **which** source can transmit

- **Three classes of techniques**
  - **Frequency-division multiple access**: coordinated sharing in space
  - **Time-division multiple access**: coordinated sharing in time
  - **Random access**: uncoordinated sharing
    - Detect collisions, and if needed, recover from collisions
    - **Carrier Sense Multiple Access (CSMA)**

Frequency-Division Multiple Access (FDMA)

- **Frequency sharing**
  - Divide the channel into **frequencies**
  - **Every source is assigned a subset of frequencies**
    - And transmits data only on its assigned frequency

- **Goods: no collisions**

- **Not-so-good:**
  - A source may have nothing to send (frequency wasted)
  - Interference may cause disruption
  - Hard to implement for wired networks

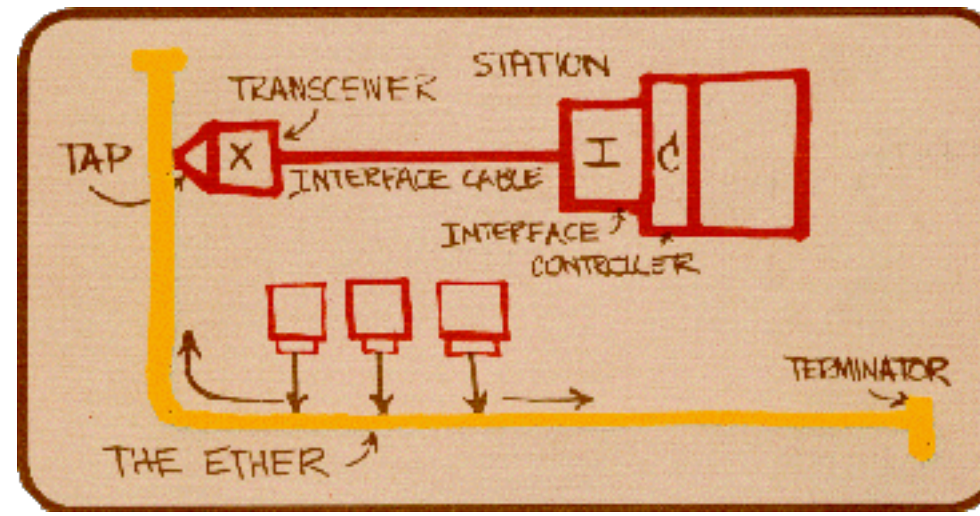
- Used in many wireless networks
  - E.g., radio

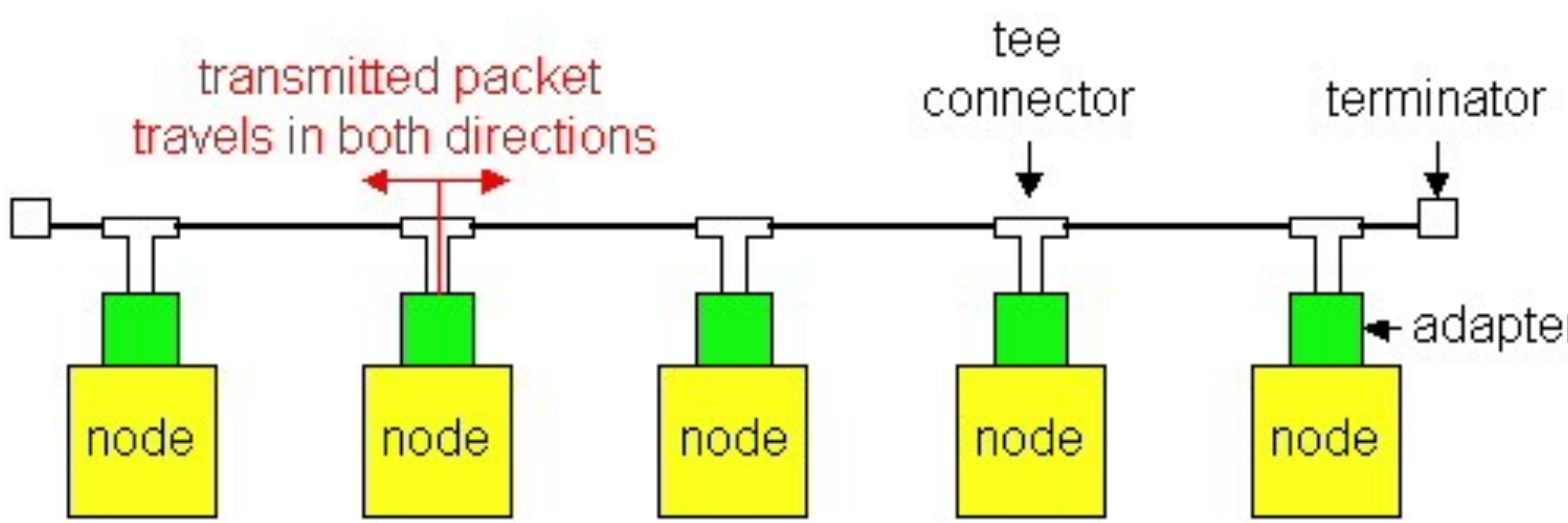
Time-Division Multiple Access (TDMA)

- **Time sharing**
  - Divide time into **slots**
  - Divide data into **frames**
    - Such that a frame can be transmitted in one slot
  - **Every source is assigned a subset of slots**
    - And transmits a frame only in its assigned slot
- **Goods: no collisions**
- **Not-so-good: Underutilization of resources**
  - During a slot, a source may have nothing to send
  - When the source has something to send, wait for its slot

Random Access

- **Bob Metcalfe:**
  - Xerox PARC
  - Visits Hawaii, and gets the idea
  - Shared wired medium





Life lesson:

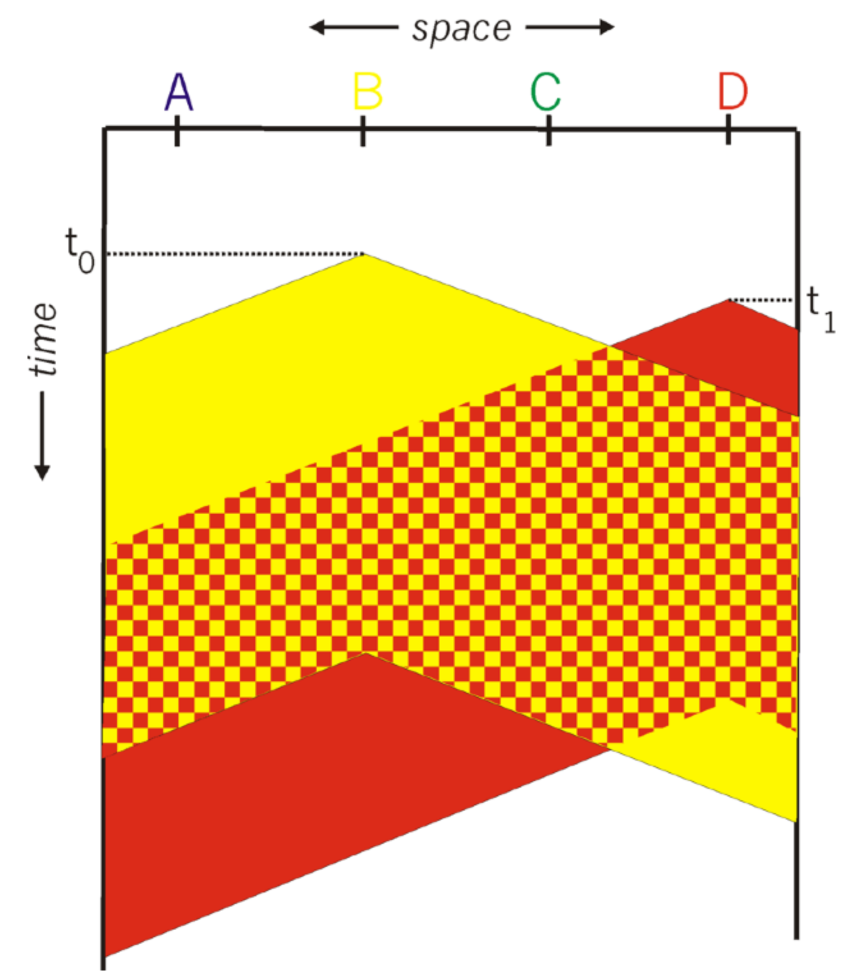
If you want to invent great things,
go to Hawaii :-)

Link Layer (Media Access Control, or MAC) Protocol

- **When source has a frame to send**
    - Transmit at full bandwidth
    - No a priori coordination among nodes
- **Two or more transmitting sources => collision**
    - Frame lost
- **Link-layer protocol specifies:**
    - How to detect collision
    - How to recover from collisions

CSMA (Carrier Sense Multiple Access)

- CSMA: **listen** before transmit
  - If channel sensed idle: transmit entire frame
  - If channel sensed busy: defer transmission
- Human analogy: don't interrupt others!
- Does this eliminate all collisions?
  - **No**, because of nonzero propagation delay
- Solution:
  - Include a **Collision Detection (CD)** mechanism
  - If a collision detected
    - Retransmit



CSMA/CD (Carrier Sense Multiple Access, Collision Detection)

- CSMA/CD: carrier sensing
    - **Collisions detected within short time**
    - Colliding transmissions aborted, reducing wastage
- Collision detection easy in wired (broadcast) LANs
    - Compare transmitted and received signals
- Collision detection difficult in wireless LANs

CSMA/CD

Once a collision is detected …

- **When should the frame be retransmitted?**

- Immediately?
  - Every NIC would start sending immediately
  - Collision again!

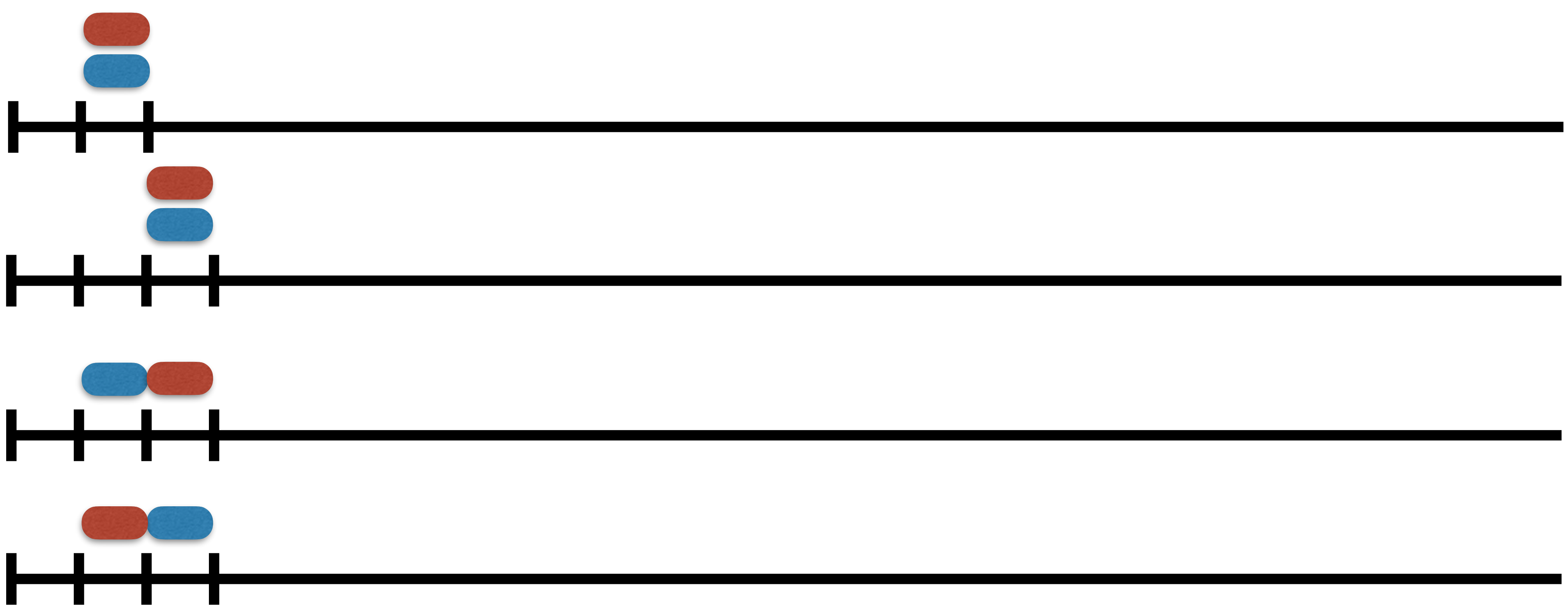
- Take turns?
  - Back to time division multiplexing
  - Problem?
    - Underutilization

CSMA/CD in one slide!

- **Carrier Sense: continuously listen to the channel**
  - If idle: start transmitting
  - If busy: wait until idle
- **Collision Detection: listen while transmitting**
  - No collision: transmission complete
  - Collision: abort transmission
- **When to retransmit?: exponential back off**
  - After collision, transmit after "waiting time"
  - After k collisions, choose "waiting time" from {0, …, 2^k-1)
  - Exponentially increasing waiting times
  - But also, exponentially larger success probability

CSMA/CD—Exponential Back-off: An example

Attempt 1: Suppose a collision happens



Attempt 2: Four possibilities

Success with Probability = 0.5

Questions?

Group Exercise:

What is the success probability in attempt 3?

Answer: **0.75**

Why Frames?

(Layering: Link Layer on top of Physical Layer)

Building Link Layer on top of Physical Layer

- Physical layer sends/receives bits on a link, and forwards to link layer

- View at the destination side physical layer:

  0101011001111110111111011111100101000111

- Challenge: how to take the above bits and convert to:

  0101011001111110111111011111100101000111

- **Problem**: how does the link layer separate data into correct "chunks"?
  - Chunks belonging to different applications

- Data link layer **interfaces** with **physical layer** using **frames**
  - Implemented by the network adaptor
  - **Finally: What are these frames?**

Frames

Identifying start/end of frames: Sentinel Bits

- Delineate frame with special “sentinel” bit pattern
  - e.g., **01111110** -> start, **01111111** -> end

01111110	**Frame contents**	**01111111**

- **Problem: what if the sentinel occurs within the frame?**

- Solution: **bit stuffing**
  - Sender always inserts a **0** after five **1**s in the frame content
  - Receiver always removes a **0** appearing after five **1**s

When Receiver sees five 1s…

01111110	Frame contents	01111111

- If next bit is 0, remove it, and begin counting again
    - Because this must be a stuffed bit
    - we can't be at beginning/end of frame (those had six/seven 1s)

- If next bit is 1 (i.e., we have six 1s) then:
    - If following bit is 0, this is the start of the frame
        - Because the receiver has seen 01111110
    - If following bit is 1, this is the end of the frame
        - Because the receiver has seen 01111111

Example: Sentinel Bits

- Original data, including start/end of frame:

01111110011111101111110111110010111111

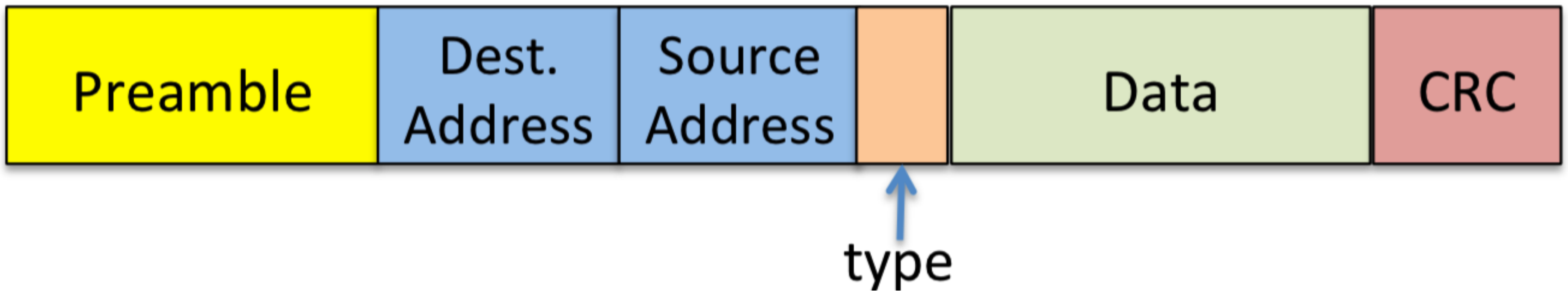
- Sender rule: five 1s -> insert a 0
- After bit stuffing at the sender:

0111111001111101011111000111110001 01111111

- Receiver rule: five 1s and next bit 0 -> remove 0

0111111001111101111101111100101111111

Ethernet “Frames”



- **Preamble:**
  - 7 bytes for clock synchronization
  - 1 byte to indicate start of the frame
- **Names:** 6 + 6 bytes (MAC names/addresses)
- **Protocol type:** 2 bytes, indicating higher layer protocol (e.g., IP)
- **Data payload:** max 1500 bytes, minimum 46 bytes
- **CRC:** 4 bytes for error detection

What about source/destination Addresses?

- **Frames are at Layer-2**
  - **Thus, use Layer-2 addresses (MAC names/addresses)**

- **MAC address**
  - Numerical address associated with the network adapter
  - Flat namespace of 6 bytes (e.g., 00-15-C5-49-04-A9 in HEX)
  - Unique, hard coded in the adapter when it is built

- **Hierarchical Allocation**
  - Blocks: assigned to vendors (e.g., Dell) by IEEE
    - First 24 bits (e.g., 00-15-C5-**-**-**)
  - Adapter: assigned by the vendor from its block
    - Last 24 bits

Questions?

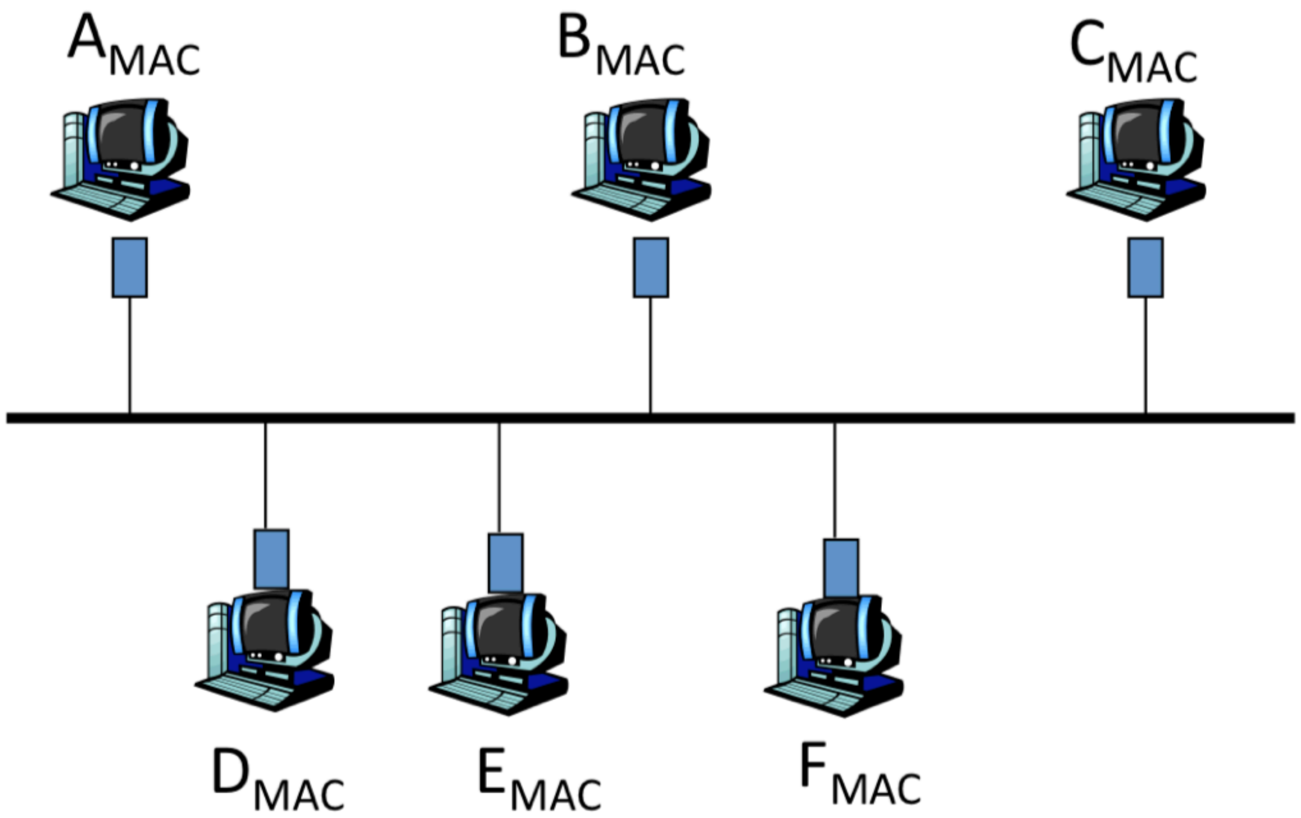
Putting it all together

(Traditional Ethernet)

Traditional Ethernet

- **(Source) Link layer receives data from the network layer (more later)**
- **(Source) Link layer divides data into frames**
    - How does it know source/destination MAC names?
    - Source name is easy … destination name is tricky (more later)
- **(Source) Link layer passes the frame to physical layer**
    - Frames up the frames (using sentinel bits)
    - **And broadcasts on the broadcast Ethernet**
- **(EACH) physical layer regenerates the frame…**
    - And sends it up to the (destination) link layer ….
        - Which sends the data to the network layer …. **If and only if:**
            - destination name matches the receiver's MAC name
            - Or, the destination name is the broadcast address (FF:FF:FF:FF:FF:FF)

Traditional Ethernet



- Ethernet is "plug-n'play"
    - A new host plugs into the Ethernet is good to go
    - No configuration by users or network operators
    - Broadcast as a means of bootstrapping communication

Performance of CSMA/CD

- **Time spent transmitting a frame (collision)**
  - Proportional to distance d; why?
- **Time spent transmitting a frame (no collision)**
  - Frame length p divided by bandwidth b
- **Rough estimate for efficiency (K some constant)**

$$E \sim \frac{\frac{p}{b}}{\frac{p}{b} + Kd}$$

- Observations:
  - For large frames AND small distances, E ~ 1
  - **Right frame length depends on b, K, d**
  - **As bandwidth increases, E decreases**
    - That is why high-speed LANs are switched

Questions?