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Optimizing CUDA

Outline



- Overview
- Hardware
- Memory Optimizations
- Execution Configuration Optimizations
- Instruction Optimizations
- Summary

Optimize Algorithms for the GPU



Maximize independent parallelism

- Maximize arithmetic intensity (math/bandwidth)
- Sometimes it's better to recompute than to cache GPU spends its transistors on ALUs, not memory

Do more computation on the GPU to avoid costly data transfers

Even low parallelism computations can sometimes be faster than transferring back and forth to host

Optimize Memory Access



Coalesced vs. Non-coalesced = order of magnitude Global/Local device memory

Optimize for spatial locality in cached texture memory

In shared memory, avoid high-degree bank conflicts

Take Advantage of Shared Memory



- Hundreds of times faster than global memory
- Threads can cooperate via shared memory
- Use one / a few threads to load / compute data shared by all threads
 - Use it to avoid non-coalesced access
 Stage loads and stores in shared memory to re-order non-coalesceable addressing

Use Parallelism Efficiently



Partition your computation to keep the GPU multiprocessors equally busy Many threads, many thread blocks

Keep resource usage low enough to support multiple active thread blocks per multiprocessor

Registers, shared memory

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10-Series Architecture



240 Scalar Processor (SP) cores execute kernel threads

30 Streaming Multiprocessors (SMs) each contain

- 8 scalar processors
- ² 2 Special Function Units (SFUs)
- 1 double precision unit

Shared memory enables thread cooperation







Threads are executed by scalar processors

Thread blocks are executed on multiprocessors

Thread blocks do not migrate

Several concurrent thread blocks can reside on one multiprocessor - limited by multiprocessor resources (shared memory and register file)





Device

A kernel is launched as a grid of thread blocks

Only one kernel can execute on a device at one time

Warps and Half Warps





A thread block consists of 32thread warps

A warp is executed physically in parallel (SIMD) on a multiprocessor



A half-warp of 16 threads can coordinate global memory accesses into a single transaction

Memory Architecture





Memory Architecture



Memory	Location	Cached	Access	Scope	Lifetime
Register	On-chip	N/A	R/W	One thread	Thread
Local	Off-chip	No	R/W	One thread	Thread
Shared	On-chip	N/A	R/W	All threads in a block	Block
Global	Off-chip	No	R/W	All threads + host	Application
Constant	Off-chip	Yes	R	All threads + host	Application
Texture	Off-chip	Yes	R	All threads + host	Application

Outline



Overview Hardware Memory Optimizations Data transfers between host and device
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Host-Device Data Transfers



Device to host memory bandwidth much lower than device to device bandwidth
8 GB/s peak (PCI-e x16 Gen 2) vs. 141 GB/s peak (GTX 280)

Minimize transfers

Intermediate data can be allocated, operated on, and deallocated without ever copying them to host memory

Group transfers

One large transfer much better than many small ones

Page-Locked Data Transfers



cudaMallocHost() allows allocation of pagelocked ("pinned") host memory

Enables highest cudaMemcpy performance 3.2 GB/s on PCI-e x16 Gen1

5.2 GB/s on PCI-e x16 Gen2

See the "bandwidthTest" CUDA SDK sample

Use with caution!!

- Allocating too much page-locked memory can reduce overall system performance
 - Test your systems and apps to learn their limits

Overlapping Data Transfers and Computation



- Async and Stream APIs allow overlap of H2D or D2H data transfers with computation
 - CPU computation can overlap data transfers on all CUDA capable devices



Kernel computation can overlap data transfers on devices with "Concurrent copy and execution" (roughly compute capability >= 1.1)

Stream = sequence of operations that execute in order on GPU

- **Operations from different streams can be interleaved**
- Stream ID used as argument to async calls and kernel launches

Asynchronous Data Transfers



Asynchronous host-device memory copy returns control immediately to CPU

cudaMemcpyAsync(dst, src, size, dir, stream);



requires *pinned* host memory (allocated with "cudaMallocHost")

Overlap CPU computation with data transfer 0 = default stream

```
cudaMemcpyAsync(a_d, a_h, size,
    cudaMemcpyHostToDevice, 0);
cpuFunction();
cudaThreadSynchronize();
kernel<<<qrid, block>>>(a d);
```

GPU/CPU Synchronization



Context based

- cudaThreadSynchronize()
 - Blocks until all previously issued CUDA calls from a CPU thread complete

Stream based

- cudaStreamSynchronize(stream)
 - Blocks until all CUDA calls issued to given stream complete
- cudaStreamQuery(stream)
 - Indicates whether stream is idle
 - Returns cudaSuccess, cudaErrorNotReady, ...
 - Does not block CPU thread

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GPU/CPU Synchronization



Stream based using events

Events can be inserted into streams:

cudaEventRecord (event, stream)

Event is recorded when GPU reaches it in a stream

- Recorded = assigned a timestamp (GPU clocktick)
- Useful for timing

cudaEventSynchronize(event)

Blocks until given event is recorded

cudaEventQuery(event)

- Indicates whether event has recorded
- Returns cudaSuccess, cudaErrorNotReady, ...
- Does not block CPU thread

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Overlapping kernel and data transfer



Requires:

- "Concurrent copy and execute"
 - deviceOverlap field of a cudaDeviceProp variable
- Kernel and transfer use different, non-zero streams
 - A CUDA call to stream-0 blocks until all previous calls complete and cannot be overlapped

Example:

```
cudaStreamCreate(&stream1);
cudaStreamCreate(&stream2);
cudaMemcpyAsync(dst, src, size, dir, stream1);
kernel<<<grid, block, 0, stream2>>>(...);
cudaStreamSynchronize(stream2);
```

Zero copy



Access host memory directly from device code Transfers implicitly performed as needed by device code **Introduced in CUDA 2.2** Check canMapHostMemory field of cudaDeviceProp variable All set-up is done on host using mapped memory cudaSetDeviceFlags(cudaDeviceMapHost); cudaHostAlloc((void **)&a_h, nBytes, cudaHostAllocMapped); cudaHostGetDevicePointer((void **)&a_d, (void *)a_h, 0); for (i=0; i<N; i++) a_h[i] = i;</pre> increment << <grid, block >>> (a_d, N);

Zero copy considerations



- Zero copy will always be a win for integrated devices that utilize CPU memory (you can check this using the integrated field in cudaDeviceProp)
 - Zero copy will be faster if data is only read/written from/to global memory once, for example:
 - Copy input data to GPU memory
 - Run one kernel
 - Copy output data back to CPU memory
 - Potentially easier and faster alternative to using

cudaMemcpyAsync

For example, can both read and write CPU memory from within one kernel

Note that current devices use pointers that are 32-bit so there is a limit of 4GB per context

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 - Coalescing
 - Shared Memory
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Theoretical Bandwidth



Device Bandwidth of GTX 280





- Use 10⁹ B/GB conversion rather than 1024³
- Whichever you use, be consistent



(or 10⁹)

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Coalescing



- Global memory access of 32, 64, or 128-bit words by a halfwarp of threads can result in as few as one (or two) transaction(s) if certain access requirements are met
 - Depends on compute capability
 - 1.0 and 1.1 have stricter access requirements
- Float (32-bit) data example:

32-byte segments

64-byte segments

128-byte segments

Global Memory



Half-warp of threads

Coalescing Compute capability 1.0 and 1.1



K-th thread must access k-th word in the segment (or k-th word in 2 contiguous 128B segments for 128-bit words), not all threads need to participate





Coalescing Examples



Effective bandwidth of small kernels that copy data
Effects of offset and stride on performance

Two GPUs

- GTX 280
 - Compute capability 1.3
 - Peak bandwidth of 141 GB/s
- FX 5600
 - Compute capability 1.0
 - Peak bandwidth of 77 GB/s





Coalescing Examples



 Strided memory access is inherent in many multidimensional problems
 Stride is generally large (>> 18)

However ...

Strided access to global memory can be avoided using shared memory



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Shared Memory



- ~Hundred times faster than global memory
- Cache data to reduce global memory accesses
- Threads can cooperate via shared memory
 - Use it to avoid non-coalesced access
 - Stage loads and stores in shared memory to re-order noncoalesceable addressing

Shared Memory Architecture



Many threads accessing memory

- Therefore, memory is divided into banks
- Successive 32-bit words assigned to successive banks

Each bank can service one address per cycle A memory can service as many simultaneous accesses as it has banks

Multiple simultaneous accesses to a bank result in a bank conflict

Conflicting accesses are serialized





Bank Addressing Examples





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Shared memory bank conflicts



- Shared memory is ~ as fast as registers if there are no bank conflicts
 - warp_serialize profiler signal reflects conflicts

The fast case:

- If all threads of a half-warp access different banks, there is no bank conflict
- If all threads of a half-warp read the identical address, there is no bank conflict (broadcast)

The slow case:

- Bank Conflict: multiple threads in the same half-warp access the same bank
- Must serialize the accesses

Cost = max # of simultaneous accesses to a single bank

Shared Memory Example: Transpose



Each thread block works on a tile of the matrix
 Naïve implementation exhibits strided access to global memory



Elements transposed by a half-warp of threads

Naïve Transpose



Loads are coalesced, stores are not (strided by height)

```
global void transposeNaive(float *odata, float *idata,
                                   int width, int height)
  {
    int xIndex = blockIdx.x * TILE DIM + threadIdx.x;
    int yIndex = blockIdx.y * TILE_DIM + threadIdx.y;
    int index_in = xIndex + width * yIndex;
    int index_out = yIndex + height * xIndex;
    odata[index_out] = idata[index_in];
  }
                      idata
                                           odata
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```

Coalescing through shared memory



- Access columns of a tile in shared memory to write contiguous data to global memory
- Requires _____syncthreads() since threads access data in shared memory stored by other threads



Elements transposed by a half-warp of threads

Coalescing through shared memory



__global___ void transposeCoalesced(float *odata, float *idata, int width, int height)

__shared___float tile[TILE_DIM][TILE_DIM];

```
int xIndex = blockIdx.x * TILE_DIM + threadIdx.x;
int yIndex = blockIdx.y * TILE_DIM + threadIdx.y;
int index_in = xIndex + (yIndex)*width;
```

```
xIndex = blockIdx.y * TILE_DIM + threadIdx.x;
yIndex = blockIdx.x * TILE_DIM + threadIdx.y;
int index_out = xIndex + (yIndex)*height;
```

```
tile[threadIdx.y][threadIdx.x] = idata[index_in];
```

```
____syncthreads();
```

```
odata[index_out] = tile[threadIdx.x][threadIdx.y];
```

{

Bank Conflicts in Transpose



16x16 shared memory tile of floats Data in columns are in the same bank 16-way bank conflict reading columns in tile Solution - pad shared memory array shared____float tile[TILE_DIM][TILE_DIM+1]; Data in anti-diagonals are in same bank idata odata tile

Elements transposed by a half-warp of threads

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Textures in CUDA



Texture is an object for reading data



Texture Addressing





Wrap

Out-of-bounds coordinate is wrapped (modulo arithmetic)



Clamp

Out-of-bounds coordinate is replaced with the closest boundary



CUDA Texture Types



Bound to linear memory

- Global memory address is bound to a texture
- Only 1D
- Integer addressing
- No filtering, no addressing modes

Bound to CUDA arrays

- Block linear CUDA array is bound to a texture
- 1D, 2D, or 3D
- Float addressing (size-based or normalized)
- Filtering

Addressing modes (clamping, repeat)

- **Bound to pitch linear (CUDA 2.2)**
 - Global memory address is bound to a texture 2D

Float/integer addressing, filtering, and clamp/repeat addressing modes similar to CUDA arrays

CUDA Texturing Steps



Host (CPU) code:

- Allocate/obtain memory (global linear/pitch linear, or CUDA array)
- Create a texture reference object
 - Currently must be at file-scope
- Bind the texture reference to memory/array
- When done:
 - Unbind the texture reference, free resources

Device (kernel) code:

- Fetch using texture reference
- Linear memory textures: tex1Dfetch()
- Array textures: tex1D() or tex2D() or tex3D()
- Pitch linear textures: tex2D()

Texture Example



```
_global___ void
                                                       Copy with Shift
shiftCopy(float *odata,
                                              Using Global Memory and Textures
           float *idata,
                                             140
           int shift)
                                          Effective Bandwidth (GB/s)
                                             120
                                                                          -GTX 280
  int xid = blockIdx.x * blockDim.x
                                                                            Global
                                             100
           + threadIdx.x;
                                                                          GTX 280
  odata[xid] = idata[xid+shift];
                                              80
                                                                            Texture
                                                                          -FX 5600
                                              Global
                                                                          ▲ FX 5600
                                              40
                                                                            Texture
texture <float> texRef;
                                              20
  global void
                                               0
textureShiftCopy(float *odata,
                                                0
                                                            8
                                                               10
                                                                  12
                                                                    14
                                                                       16
                  float *idata,
                                                         Shift
                  int shift)
  int xid = blockIdx.x * blockDim.x
           + threadIdx.x;
  odata[xid] = tex1Dfetch(texRef, xid+shift);
```

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Occupancy



- Thread instructions are executed sequentially, so executing other warps is the only way to hide latencies and keep the hardware busy
- Occupancy = Number of warps running concurrently on a multiprocessor divided by maximum number of warps that can run concurrently
- Limited by resource usage:
 Registers
 Shared memory

Blocks per Grid Heuristics



of blocks > # of multiprocessors

So all multiprocessors have at least one block to execute

of blocks / # of multiprocessors > 2

- Multiple blocks can run concurrently in a multiprocessor
- Blocks that aren't waiting at a __syncthreads() keep the hardware busy
- Subject to resource availability registers, shared memory

of blocks > 100 to scale to future devices

- Blocks executed in pipeline fashion
- ¹⁰⁰⁰ blocks per grid will scale across multiple generations

Register Dependency



Read-after-write register dependency
Instruction's result can be read ~24 cycles later

Scenarios: CUDA:



PTX:

To completely hide the latency:
 Run at least 192 threads (6 warps) per multiprocessor
 At least 25% occupancy (1.0/1.1), 18.75% (1.2/1.3)
 Threads do not have to belong to the same thread block

Register Pressure



- Hide latency by using more threads per multiprocessor
- Limiting Factors:
 - Number of registers per kernel
 - 8K/16K per multiprocessor, partitioned among concurrent threads
 - Amount of shared memory
 - 16KB per multiprocessor, partitioned among concurrent threadblocks
- Compile with -ptxas-options=-v flag
 - Use -maxrregcount=N flag to NVCC
 - N = desired maximum registers / kernel
 - At some point "spilling" into local memory may occur
 - Reduces performance local memory is slow

Occupancy Calculator





Optimizing threads per block



- Choose threads per block as a multiple of warp size
 - Avoid wasting computation on under-populated warps
 - Facilitates coalescing
- Want to run as many warps as possible per multiprocessor (hide latency)
- Multiprocessor can run up to 8 blocks at a time

Heuristics

- Minimum: 64 threads per block
 - Only if multiple concurrent blocks
- 192 or 256 threads a better choice
 - Usually still enough regs to compile and invoke successfully
- This all depends on your computation, so experiment!

Occupancy != Performance



Increasing occupancy does not necessarily increase performance

BUT ...

Low-occupancy multiprocessors cannot adequately hide latency on memory-bound kernels

(It all comes down to arithmetic intensity and available parallelism)

Parameterize Your Application



Parameterization helps adaptation to different GPUs

GPUs vary in many ways

- # of multiprocessors
- Memory bandwidth
- Shared memory size
- Register file size
- Max. threads per block

You can even make apps self-tuning (like FFTW and ATLAS)

"Experiment" mode discovers and saves optimal configuration

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CUDA Instruction Performance



Instruction cycles (per warp) = sum of

- Operand read cycles
- Instruction execution cycles
- Result update cycles

Therefore instruction throughput depends on

- Nominal instruction throughput
- Memory latency
- Memory bandwidth

"Cycle" refers to the multiprocessor clock rate 1.3 GHz on the Tesla C1060, for example

Maximizing Instruction Throughput



Maximize use of high-bandwidth memory

- Maximize use of shared memory
- Minimize accesses to global memory.
- Maximize coalescing of global memory accesses

Optimize performance by overlapping memory accesses with HW computation

- High arithmetic intensity programs
 - i.e. high ratio of math to memory transactions
- Many concurrent threads

Arithmetic Instruction Throughput



int and float add, shift, min, max and float mul, mad:
 4 cycles per warp

- int multiply (*) is by default 32-bit
 - requires multiple cycles / warp

Use <u>mul24()/_umul24()</u> intrinsics for 4-cycle 24-bit int multiply

Integer divide and modulo are more expensive

Compiler will convert literal power-of-2 divides to shifts

But we have seen it miss some cases



Useful trick: foo%n==foo&(n-1) if n is a power of 2

Runtime Math Library





GPU results may not match CPU



Many variables: hardware, compiler, optimization settings

 CPU operations aren't strictly limited to 0.5 ulp
 Sequences of operations can be more accurate due to 80bit extended precision ALUs

Floating-point arithmetic is not associative!

FP Math is Not Associative!



In symbolic math, (x+y)+z == x+(y+z)
 This is not necessarily true for floating-point addition
 Try x = 10³⁰, y = -10³⁰ and z = 1 in the above equation

When you parallelize computations, you potentially change the order of operations

Parallel results may not exactly match sequential results

This is not specific to GPU or CUDA – inherent part of parallel execution

Control Flow Instructions



Main performance concern with branching is divergence

Threads within a single warp take different paths

Different execution paths must be serialized

Avoid divergence when branch condition is a function of thread ID

- Example with divergence:
 - if (threadIdx.x > 2) { }

Branch granularity < warp size

- Example without divergence:
 - if (threadIdx.x / WARP_SIZE > 2) { }
 - Branch granularity is a whole multiple of warp size

Summary



GPU hardware can achieve great performance on data-parallel computations if you follow a few simple guidelines:

- Use parallelism efficiently
- Coalesce memory accesses if possible
- Take advantage of shared memory
- Explore other memory spaces
 - Texture
 - Constant
- Reduce bank conflicts

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