Java Semaphore: Introduction

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Learning Objectives in this Part of the Module

- Understand the concept of semaphores
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• Understand the concept of semaphores

• Be aware of the two types of semaphores
Learning Objectives in this Part of the Module

• Understand the concept of semaphores
• Be aware of the two types of semaphores
• Note a human-known use of semaphores
Introduction to Semaphores
A semaphore is conceptually an “object” that can be atomically incremented & decremented to control access to a shared resource.

See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semaphore_(programming)](en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semaphore_(programming))
• A semaphore is conceptually an “object” that can be atomically incremented & decremented to control access to a shared resource
• e.g., originally used to control access to a shared railroad track
Introduction to Semaphores

- Concurrent programs use semaphores to coordinate interactions between multiple threads.

See tutorials.jenkov.com/java-concurrency/semaphores.html
Concurrent programs use semaphores to coordinate interactions between multiple threads, e.g.,

- A semaphore can control the access of threads to a limited # of resources

See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAv71VbdkBc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAv71VbdkBc) for the Semaphore anthem ;-)
Introduction to Semaphores

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- Threads can wait (timed or blocking) until a unit of the resource is available
- When a thread is done with a resource the permit count is incremented atomically & another waiting thread can acquire it
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This example “fully brackets” the acquiring & releasing of permits, i.e., the thread that acquires a semaphore is the same as the one that releases it.
Introduction to Semaphores

- There are two types of semaphores
Introduction to Semaphores

• There are two types of semaphores
  • **Counting semaphores**

See [javarevisited.blogspot.com/2012/05/counting-semaphore-example-in-java-5.html](javarevisited.blogspot.com/2012/05/counting-semaphore-example-in-java-5.html)
Introduction to Semaphores

- There are two types of semaphores
  - **Counting semaphores**
    - Have # of permits defined by a counter (N) with precise meaning
There are two types of semaphores

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  - Have # of permits defined by a counter (N) with precise meaning
    - **Negative**
      - exactly -N threads queued waiting to acquire semaphore
There are two types of semaphores

- **Counting semaphores**
  - Have # of permits defined by a counter (N) with precise meaning
    - **Negative**
    - **Zero** == no waiting threads
      - an acquire operation will block the invoking thread until the counter N is positive
• There are two types of semaphores
  • **Counting semaphores**
    • Have # of permits defined by a counter (N) with precise meaning
      • **Negative**
      • **Zero** == no waiting threads
    • **Positive** == no waiting threads
      • an acquire operation will not block the invoking thread
There are two types of semaphores

- Counting semaphores
- Binary semaphores
Introduction to Semaphores

- There are two types of semaphores
  - Counting semaphores
  - **Binary semaphores**
    - Have only 2 states: acquired (0) & not acquired (1)
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- There are two types of semaphores
  - Counting semaphores
  - **Binary semaphores**
    - Have only 2 states: acquired (0) & not acquired (1)
    - Restrict the counter N to the values 0 & 1

In practice, binary semaphores are often implemented via counting semaphores
Introduction to Semaphores

• We’ll analyze examples of counting & binary semaphores later
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- The PalantiriSimulator app use a counting semaphore

See github.com/douglascraigschmidt/CS891/tree/master/assignments
**Introduction to Semaphores**

- We’ll analyze examples of counting & binary semaphores later, e.g.
  - The PalantiriSimulator app uses a counting semaphore
  - The Ping/Pong app uses a pair of binary semaphores

See [github.com/douglasraigschmidt/LiveLessons/tree/master/PingPongApplication](github.com/douglasraigschmidt/LiveLessons/tree/master/PingPongApplication)
Human Known Use of Semaphores
Human Known Uses of Semaphores

- A human known use of counting semaphores applies them to schedule access to beach volleyball courts

See [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corona_del_Mar_State_Beach](en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corona_del_Mar_State_Beach)
Human Known Uses of Semaphores

- A human known use of counting semaphores applies them to schedule access to beach volleyball courts
- A bag full of balls is used to limit the number of teams that can concurrently play volleyball
End of Java Semaphores: Introduction