

Swapping in 2.6.10 and 2.6.11.11 on a desktop system

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Hi,

[1] With swappiness = 60 I either get swap hell (2.6.10) or the oom killer kicks in (2.6.11.11)

[2] I upgraded to 2.6.11.11 from 2.6.8.1 yesterday and tried to compile something. After some time I come back and the compile has aborted because the oom killer killed the compiler process. There is no additional use of swap space (although some applications that were also running could have been swapped out). There was a similar bugreport with this behaviour some time ago for 2.6.11.8 but that one included a swappiness value of 0, i got 60.

Then I tried 2.6.10. The oom bugs were gone, the compile finished over night. About an hour ago I started a very RAM consuming application and at 2/3 RAM usage I get swap hell. The system constantly swaps, yet ram usage `_and_` swap usage stay about the same. Even setting swappiness to 0 from an ssh login (switching to a console does not work) did not help, only killing the consuming application.

I also applied the `ck hard-swappiness` Patch to my 2.6.10 and tested a bit further. Depending on the swappiness I get hellish swapping behaviour at different levels of RAM usage and even managed to get the oom killer to step in (at swappiness=20). I had about 250MB of RAM used and boom -> oom killer shoots down some bigger java processes. At swappiness=80 I get massive swapping with 250MB of RAM usage. When reaching that level, the fs cache goes up to 300MB while the applications that need the ram are left with about 120 megs. Rest was buffers.

I'm really out of ideas. 2.6.8.1 with swappiness=0 is by far the best I've managed to get by now. With that I can use my system until RAM and swap are completely full. No swap hell and no oom killer yet. Maybe I just have to search the lkml a bit more to find something usable. If someone else already has, please tell me (and tell me why it's not in the mainline kernel already :))

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I have 512MB of RAM and another 512MB of swap.

Please cc me in replies as I'm not on the list.

Alex

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