

Size=0x782b780 [0,0]

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Have many disks. More disk spindles brings more than capacity alone! (Same as in databases)

Speed

Disk platter transfer speed

If you think that disk has constant transfer speed, ZCAV has interesting graphs

Individual disks

Slow laptop 2.5" 5400 disk

```
dpavlin@llin:~$ sudo hdparm -i /dev/sda
```

```
/dev/sda:
```

```
Model=FUJITSU MHV2080BH, FwRev=00840028, SerialNo=NW05T6B29HM5
Config={ HardSect NotMFM HdSw>15uSec Fixed DTR>10Mbs }
RawCHS=16383/16/63, TrkSize=0, SectSize=0, ECCbytes=4
BuffType=DualPortCache, BuffSize=8192kB, MaxMultSect=16, MultSect=?16?
CurCHS=16383/16/63, CurSects=16514064, LBA=yes, LBAsects=156301488
IORDY=on/off, tPIO={min:240,w/IORDY:120}, tDMA={min:120,rec:120}
PIO modes: pio0 pio1 pio2 pio3 pio4
DMA modes: mdma0 mdma1 mdma2
UDMA modes: udma0 udma1 udma2 udma3 udma4 *udma5
AdvancedPM=yes: mode=0x80 (128) WriteCache=enabled
Drive conforms to: unknown: ATA/ATAPI-3,4,5,6,7
```

* signifies the current active mode

```
dpavlin@llin:~$ sudo hdparm -tT /dev/sda
```

```
/dev/sda:
```

```
Timing cached reads: 1566 MB in 2.00 seconds = 782.85 MB/sec
Timing buffered disk reads: 66 MB in 3.03 seconds = 21.79 MB/sec
```

Interesting numbers are `BuffSize` (cache in disk) and `MaxMultSect` which we want to use for read-ahead param:

```
hdparm -m 16 -a 16 /dev/sda
```

This will **decrease** a bit speed of linear buffer reads which `hdparm` uses, but we will pull from disk only blocks which are already in cache, improving random read/write performance.

To find optimal readahead for your drive using `hdparm` access pattern you can use [hdparm-readahead.pl](#) which will try different combinations for you.

Faster (!) external 3.5 USB disk (no `hdparm -i` on USB), but just because it's **another** disk not loaded by system.

```
dpavlin@llin:~$ sudo hdparm -tT /dev/sdb
```

```
/dev/sdb:
```

```
Timing cached reads:   1508 MB in  2.00 seconds = 753.72 MB/sec
```

```
Timing buffered disk reads:  56 MB in  3.03 seconds = 18.48 MB/sec
```

Software RAID

[Home-made RAID disk holder](#)

Home-made software md RAID 5 array from SATA drives:

[Content from RAID5 disk array](#)

- [dscf0002](#)

[Dobrica Pavlinusic](#) posted a photo:



- [dscf0001](#)

[Dobrica Pavlinusic](#) posted a photo:



Final position in case, notice empty space above 4th disk which was occupied by disks before (which didn't have enough airflow because of that)

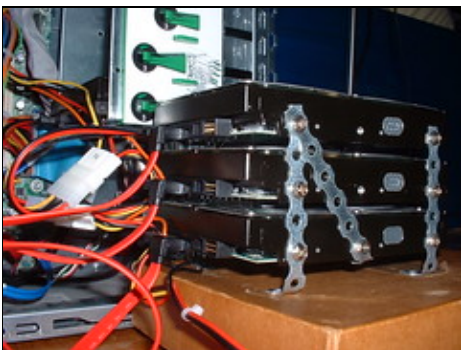
- [dscf0012](#)

[Dobrica Pavlinusic](#) posted a photo:



- [dscf0007](#)

[Dobrica Pavlinusic](#) posted a photo:



- [dscf0006](#)

[Dobrica Pavlinusic](#) posted a photo:



- [dscf0005](#)

[Dobrica Pavlinusic](#) posted a photo:



Note nice usage of construction metal stripes with holes which is usually used to hold fence. It has holes just the right size for screws to go through and hold disks nicely spaced (although a little bit more space would be ideal). It's soft enough to be bent at corners to produce nice and leveled space between it and case.

Blog post [RAID5 for home](#) describes setup in some details.

Drive info:

```
dpavlin@brr:~$ sudo hdparm -i /dev/sdd
```

```
/dev/sdd:
```

```
Model=WDC WD5000AAKS-00YGA0           , FwRev=12.01C02, SerialNo=      WD-WCAS80929678
Config={ HardSect NotMFM HdSw>15uSec SpinMotCtl Fixed DTR>5Mbs FmtGapReq }
RawCHS=16383/16/63, TrkSize=0, SectSize=0, ECCbytes=50
BuffType=unknown, BuffSize=16384kB, MaxMultSect=16, MultSect=?16?
CurCHS=16383/16/63, CurSects=16514064, LBA=yes, LBASects=976773168
IORDY=on/off, tPIO={min:120,w/IORDY:120}, tDMA={min:120,rec:120}
PIO modes:  pio0 pio3 pio4
DMA modes:  mdma0 mdma1 mdma2
UDMA modes: udma0 udma1 udma2 udma3 udma4 udma5 *udma6
AdvancedPM=no WriteCache=enabled
Drive conforms to: Unspecified:  ATA/ATAPI-1,2,3,4,5,6,7
```

* signifies the current active mode

Speed of individual drives in array:

```
dpavlin@brr:~$ sudo hdparm -tT /dev/sda /dev/sdb /dev/sdd

/dev/sda:
Timing cached reads:   1982 MB in  2.00 seconds = 991.18 MB/sec
Timing buffered disk reads:  232 MB in  3.03 seconds =  76.67 MB/sec

/dev/sdb:
Timing cached reads:   2010 MB in  2.00 seconds = 1004.95 MB/sec
Timing buffered disk reads:  228 MB in  3.01 seconds =  75.85 MB/sec

/dev/sdd:
Timing cached reads:   2006 MB in  2.00 seconds = 1003.01 MB/sec
Timing buffered disk reads:  230 MB in  3.01 seconds =  76.47 MB/sec
```

How are they assembled into /dev/md0 RAID 5 array:

```
dpavlin@brr:~$ cat /proc/mdstat
Personalities : [raid6] [raid5] [raid4]
md0 : active raid5 sdd1[0] sda1[2] sdb1[1]
      976767872 blocks level 5, 64k chunk, algorithm 2 [3/3] [UUU]
```

Speed of array

```
dpavlin@brr:~$ sudo hdparm -tT /dev/md0

/dev/md0:
Timing cached reads:   1986 MB in  2.00 seconds = 993.20 MB/sec
Timing buffered disk reads:  434 MB in  3.01 seconds = 144.41 MB/sec
```

As expected RAID 5 speed is $75 + 75 + 0$ (parity disk) ~ 144 MB/sec

Temperature

Disks don't like it hot!

```
root@brr:~# hddtemp /dev/sda /dev/sdb /dev/sdd
/dev/sda: WDC WD5000AAKS-00YGA0: 33Â°C
/dev/sdb: WDC WD5000AAKS-00YGA0: 32Â°C
/dev/sdd: WDC WD5000AAKS-00YGA0: 32Â°C
```

On output above, middle disk is /dev/sda so it's 1Â° hotter than other two. I could mitigate this with additional fan on front of case, but it's making enough noise already, so I'll leave it as is.

Data security

Smart

```
root@brr:~# smartctl --all /dev/sda | head -20
smartctl version 5.38 [i686-pc-linux-gnu] Copyright (C) 2002-8 Bruce Allen
Home page is http://smartmontools.sourceforge.net/

=== START OF INFORMATION SECTION ===
Model Family:      Western Digital Caviar Second Generation Serial ATA family
Device Model:      WDC WD5000AAKS-00YGA0
Serial Number:     WD-WCAS80815866
Firmware Version: 12.01C02
User Capacity:     500,107,862,016 bytes
Device is:         In smartctl database [for details use: -P show]
ATA Version is:    8
ATA Standard is:   Exact ATA specification draft version not indicated
Local Time is:     Sat Oct 11 00:27:01 2008 CEST
SMART support is: Available - device has SMART capability.
SMART support is: Enabled

=== START OF READ SMART DATA SECTION ===
SMART overall-health self-assessment test result: PASSED
```

Before you start to believe in SMART as solution to all disk health problems, read [Failure Trends in a Large Disk Drive Population](#)

See also [Bad block HOWTO for smartmontools](#) if you ever get smart errors and don't just want to throw out your disk.

RAID

Also interesting is [Some RAID Issues](#)

Read also [Why RAID 5 stops working in 2009](#)