

Modeling Memory in gem5

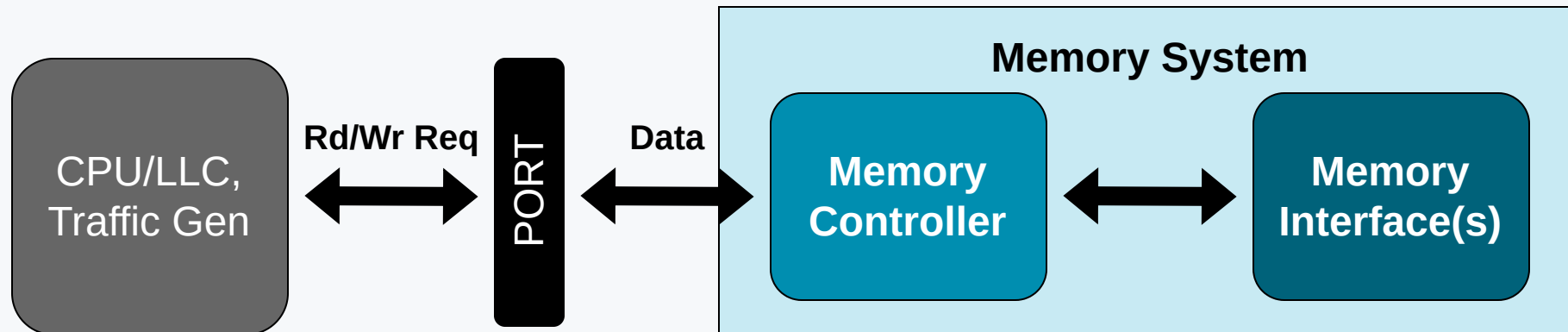
DRAM and other memory devices,
too!



Memory System

gem5's memory system consists of two main components

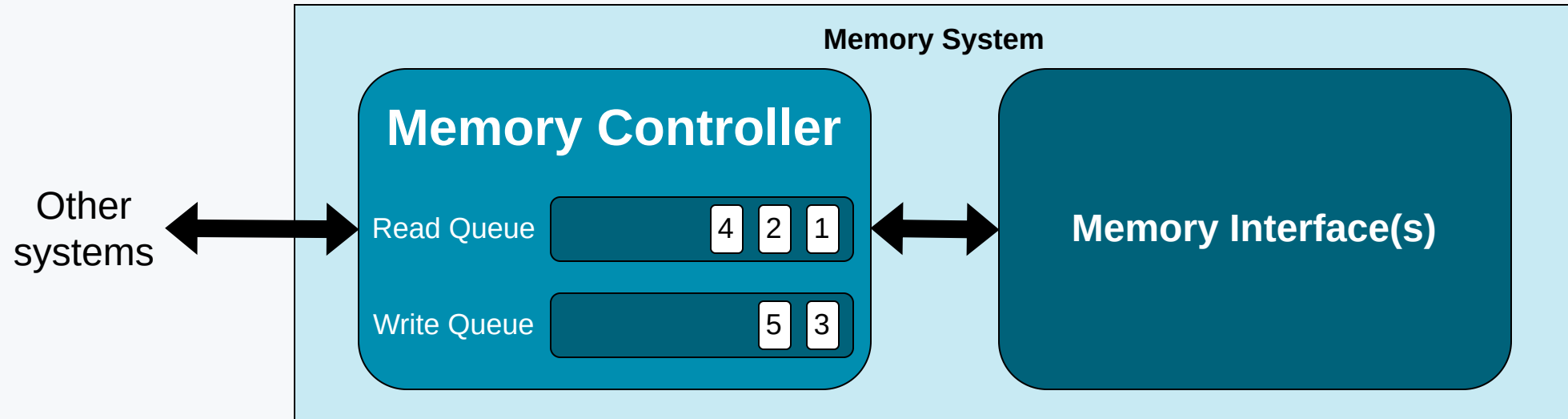
1. Memory Controller
2. Memory Interface(s)



Memory Controller

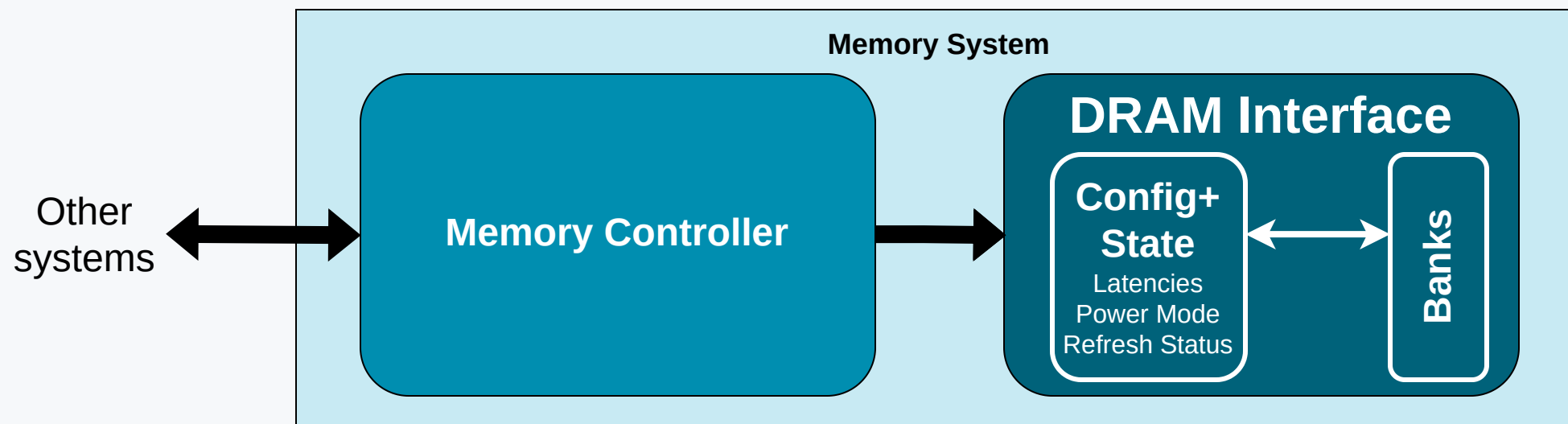
When MemCtrl receives packets...

1. Packets enqueued into the read and/or write queues
2. Applies **scheduling algorithm** (FCFS, FR-FCFS, ...) to issue read and write requests



Memory Interface

- The memory interface implements the **architecture** and **timing parameters** of the chosen memory type.
- It manages the **media specific operations** like activation, pre-charge, refresh and low-power modes, etc.



gem5's Memory Controllers



gem5's Memory Interfaces



Configuring Memory Controllers & Interfaces

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = MemCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4()
system.mem_ctrl.dram.range = AddrRange('512MB')
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

For full list of their configuration options, investigate their Python object files in: `gem5/src/mem`

Configuring Memory Controllers & Interfaces

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = HBMCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = HBM_1000_4H_1x128(range=AddrRange(start = '0', end = '512MB', masks = [1 << 6], intlvMatch = 0))
system.mem_ctrl.dram_2 = HBM_1000_4H_1x128(range=AddrRange(start = '0', end = '512MB', masks = [1 << 6], intlvMatch = 1))
# system.mem_ctrl.dram.range = addr_range
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64
system.mem_ctrl.dram_2.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram_2.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

For full list of their configuration options, investigate their Python object files in: `gem5/src/mem`

Configuring Memory Controllers & Interfaces

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = HeteroMemCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4(range=AddrRange(start = '0', end = '256MB'))
system.mem_ctrl.nvm = NVM_2400_1x64(range=AddrRange(start = '256MB', end = '512MB'))
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64
system.mem_ctrl.nvm.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.nvm.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

Configuring Memory Controllers & Interfaces

```
# memory controller parameters
num_chnls = 2
addr_ranges = [AddrRange('0', '256MB'), AddrRange('256MB', '512MB')]
system.mem_ctrls = [MemCtrl() for i in range(num_chnls)]

for i, mem_ctrl in enumerate(system.mem_ctrls):
    mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4(range=addr_ranges[i])
mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64

mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

Memory Controller/Interface Example

- Open up [materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/blank_memory.py](#)
- Look for the comment # insert memory controller and interface here
- Copy and paste any of the code blocks from the 4 slides above or the one below

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = MemCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4()
system.mem_ctrl.dram.range = AddrRange('512MB')
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

Memory Controller/Interface Example

- Run with `/gem5/build/NULL/gem5.opt materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/blank_memory.py`

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = MemCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4()
system.mem_ctrl.dram.range = AddrRange('512MB')
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

Memory in the standard library

- Find memory in standard library at [gem5/src/python/gem5/components/memory](https://github.com/gem5/gem5/blob/master/src/python/gem5/components/memory)
- Standard library has two types of memory
 1. SimpleMemory
 2. ChanneledMemory
- SimpleMemory() allows the user to not worry about timing parameters and instead, just give the desired latency, bandwidth, and latency variation
- ChanneledMemory() encompasses a whole memory system (both the controller and the interface)
- ChanneledMemory provides a simple way to use multiple memory channels
- ChanneledMemory handles things like scheduling policy and interleaving for you

Running an example with the standard library

- Open [materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/std_lib_mem.py](#)
- Look at the line:

```
memory = SingleChannelSimpleMemory(latency="50ns", bandwidth="32GiB/s", size="8GiB",  
latency_var="10ns")
```
- This shows how we can use SimpleMemory

Run with `gem5/build/NULL/gem5.opt`

Running Channeled Memory

- Open [gem5/src/python/gem5/components/memory/single_channel.py](https://github.com/gem5/gem5/blob/master/src/python/gem5/components/memory/single_channel.py)
- We see SingleChannel memories such as:

```
def SingleChannelDDR4_2400(  
    size: Optional[str] = None,  
) -> AbstractMemorySystem:  
    """  
    A single channel memory system using DDR4_2400_8x8 based DIMM.  
    """  
    return ChanneledMemory(DDR4_2400_8x8, 1, 64, size=size)
```

- We see the DRAMInterface=DDR4_2400_8x8, the number of channels=1, interleaving_size=64, and the size.

Running Channeled Memory

- Lets go back to our script and replace the SingleChannelSimpleMemory with this!

Replace

```
SingleChannelSimpleMemory(latency="50ns", bandwidth="32GiB/s", size="8GiB", latency_var="10ns")
```

with

```
SingleChannelDDR4_2400()
```


Adding a new channeled memory

- Open [materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/lpddr2.py](#)
- If we wanted to add LPDDR2 as a new memory in the standard library, we first make sure there's a DRAM interface for it in the [dram_interfaces directory](#)
- then we need to make sure we import it by adding

```
from typing import Optional
```

```
from gem5.components.memory.abstract_memory_system import AbstractMemorySystem
from gem5.components.memory.dram_interfaces.lpddr2 import LPDDR2_S4_1066_1x32
from gem5.components.memory.memory import ChanneledMemory
```

to the top of lpddr2.py

Adding a new channeled memory

Then add the following to the body of lpddr2.py

```
def SingleChannelLPDDR2_S4_1066_1x32(  
    size: Optional[str] = None,  
    ) -> AbstractMemorySystem:  
    return ChanneledMemory(LPDDR2_S4_1066_1x32, 1, 64, size=size)
```

then we import this new class to our script with

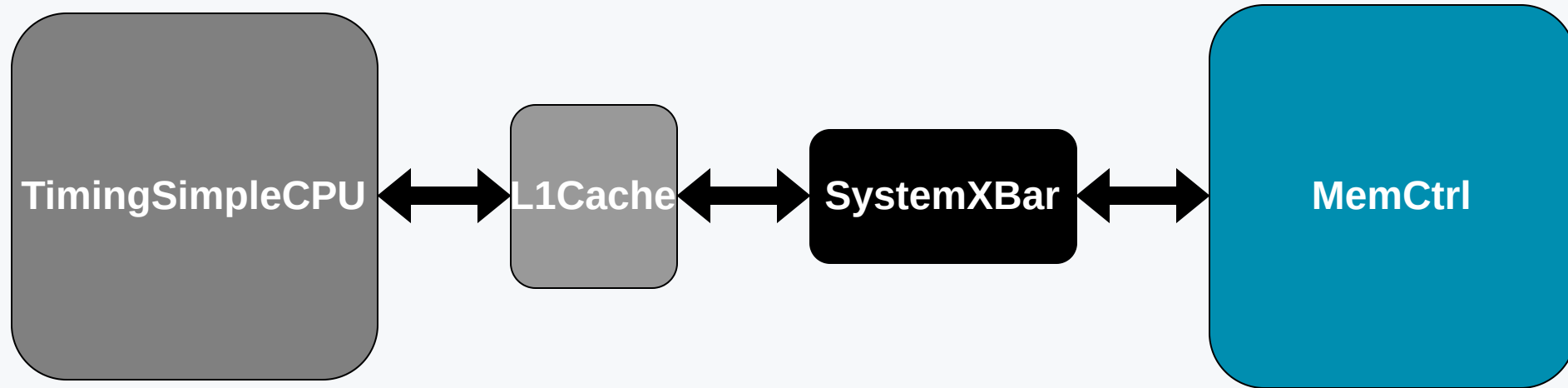
```
from lpddr2 import SingleChannelLPDDR2_S4_1066_1x32
```

CommMonitor

- SimObject monitoring communication happening between two ports
- Does not have any effect on timing
- `gem5/src/mem/CommMonitor.py`

CommMonitor

Simple system to modify

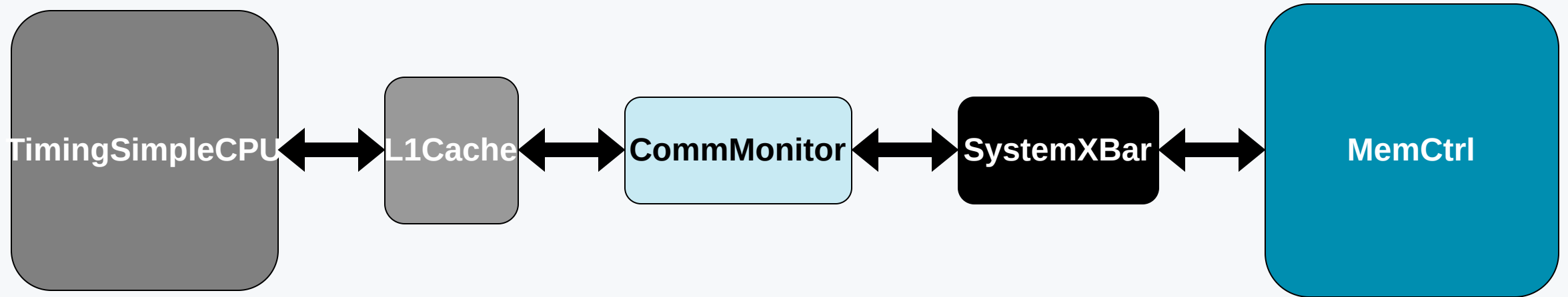


Let's simulate:

Run `gem5/build/NULL/gem5.opt materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/comm_monitor.py`

CommMonitor

Let's add the CommMonitor



CommMonitor

- Remove the line `system.l1cache.mem_side = system.membus.cpu_side_ports`
- Add the following block under the comment `# Insert CommMonitor here`

```
system.comm_monitor = CommMonitor()  
system.comm_monitor.cpu_side_port = system.l1cache.mem_side  
system.comm_monitor.mem_side_port = system.membus.cpu_side_ports
```

Run `gem5/build/NULL/gem5.opt materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/comm_monitor.py`

Address Interleaving

Idea: we can parallelize memory accesses

- For example, we can access multiple banks/channels/etc at the same time
- Use part of the address as a selector to choose which bank/channel to access
- Allows contiguous address ranges to interleave between banks/channels

Address Interleaving

For example...

```
addr = 0x00A76B82  
selector[0] = addr[8] XOR addr[11]  
selector[1] = addr[13] XOR addr[17]
```

```
selector = 0 → bank/channel 0  
selector = 1 → bank/channel 1  
selector = 2 → bank/channel 2  
selector = 3 → bank/channel 3
```

memory

Address Interleaving

Using address interleaving in gem5

- We can use AddrRange constructors to define a selector function
 - [src/base/addr_range.hh](#)
- Example: standard library's multi-channel memory
 - [gem5/src/python/gem5/components/memory/multi_channel.py](#)



Address Interleaving

There are two constructors

Constructor 1:

```
AddrRange(Addr _start,  
           Addr _end,  
           const std::vector<Addr> &_masks,  
           uint8_t _intlv_match)
```

`_masks`: an array of masks, where bit `k` of selector is the XOR of all bits specified by `masks[k]`

Address Interleaving

There are two constructors

Constructor 2 (legacy):

```
AddrRange(Addr _start,  
           Addr _end,  
           uint8_t _intlv_high_bit,  
           uint8_t _xor_high_bit,  
           uint8_t _intlv_bits,  
           uint8_t _intlv_match)
```

Selector defined as two ranges:

```
addr[_intlv_high_bit:_intlv_low_bit] XOR addr[_xor_high_bit:_xor_low_bit]
```