

Spyglass nLint

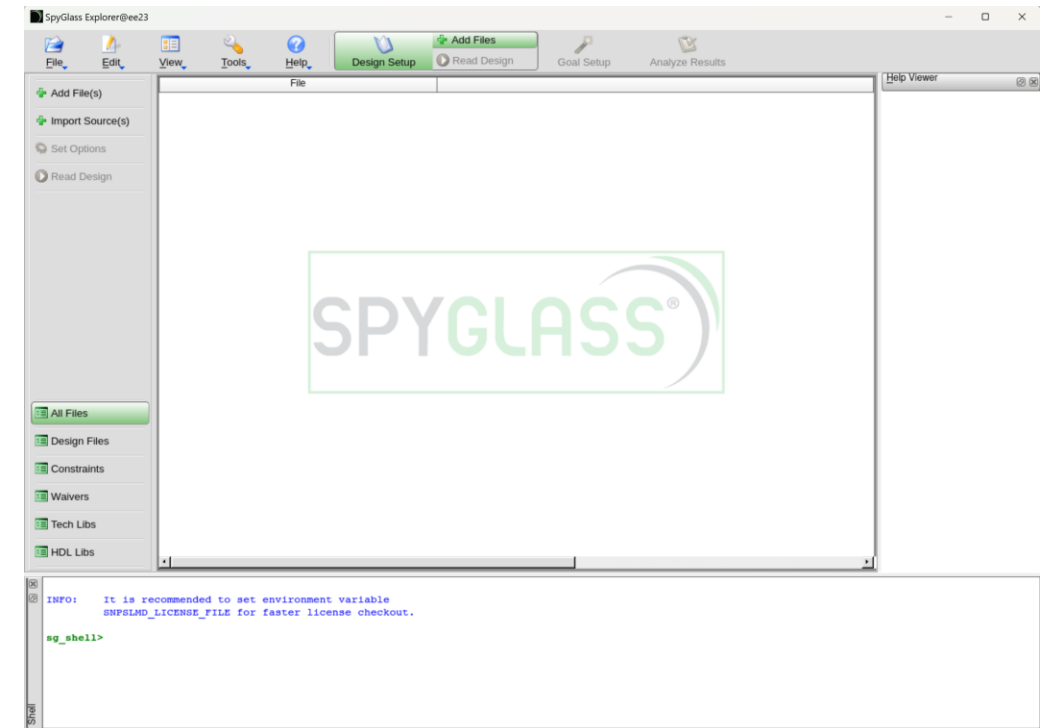
- Verilog Linting Tool

Introduction to Spyglass nLint

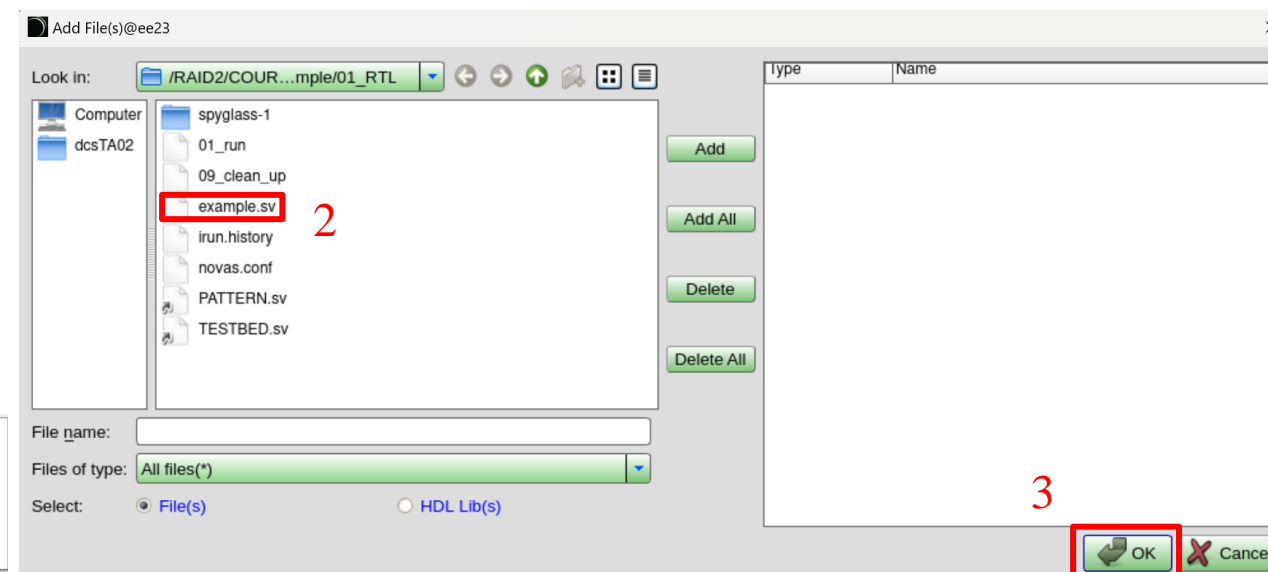
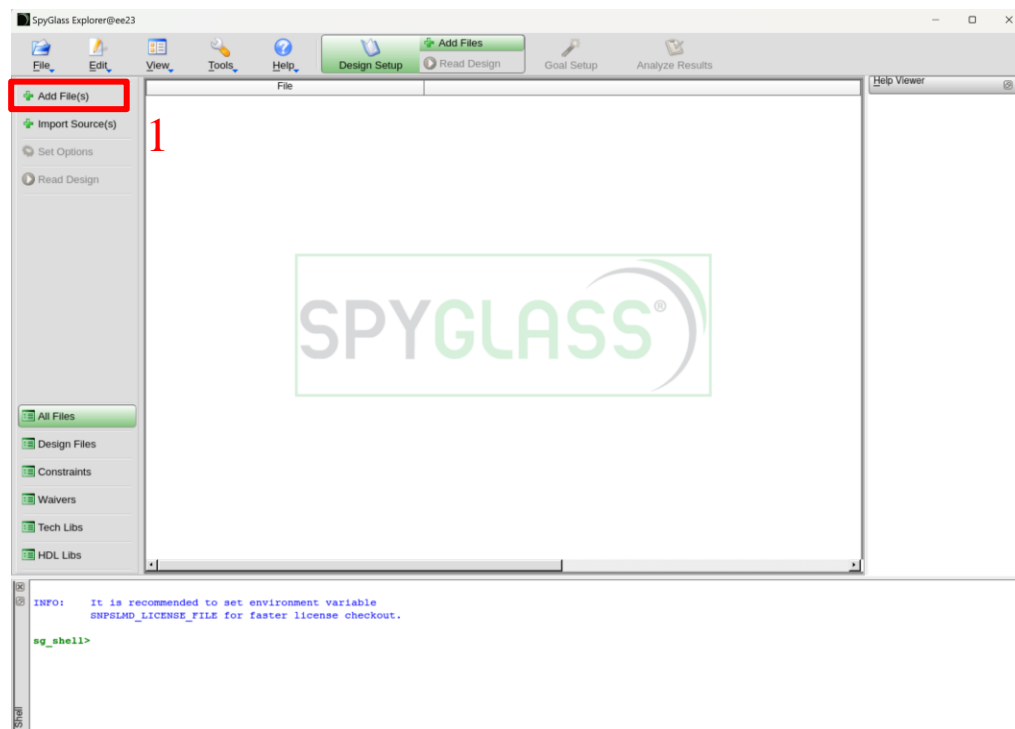
- The Spyglass nLint tool is designed for the verification & analysis of digital designs with multiple powerful functions: What we focus now!
 1. Coding Standard Checks in early design stages.
 2. Design Rule Checks such as unintentional latches, combinational loops, multiple drivers, etc.
 3. Linting for Power, Clock, and CDC Domains.
- Benefits:
 1. Early Bug Detection
 2. Improved Design Quality

Start Spyglass nLint

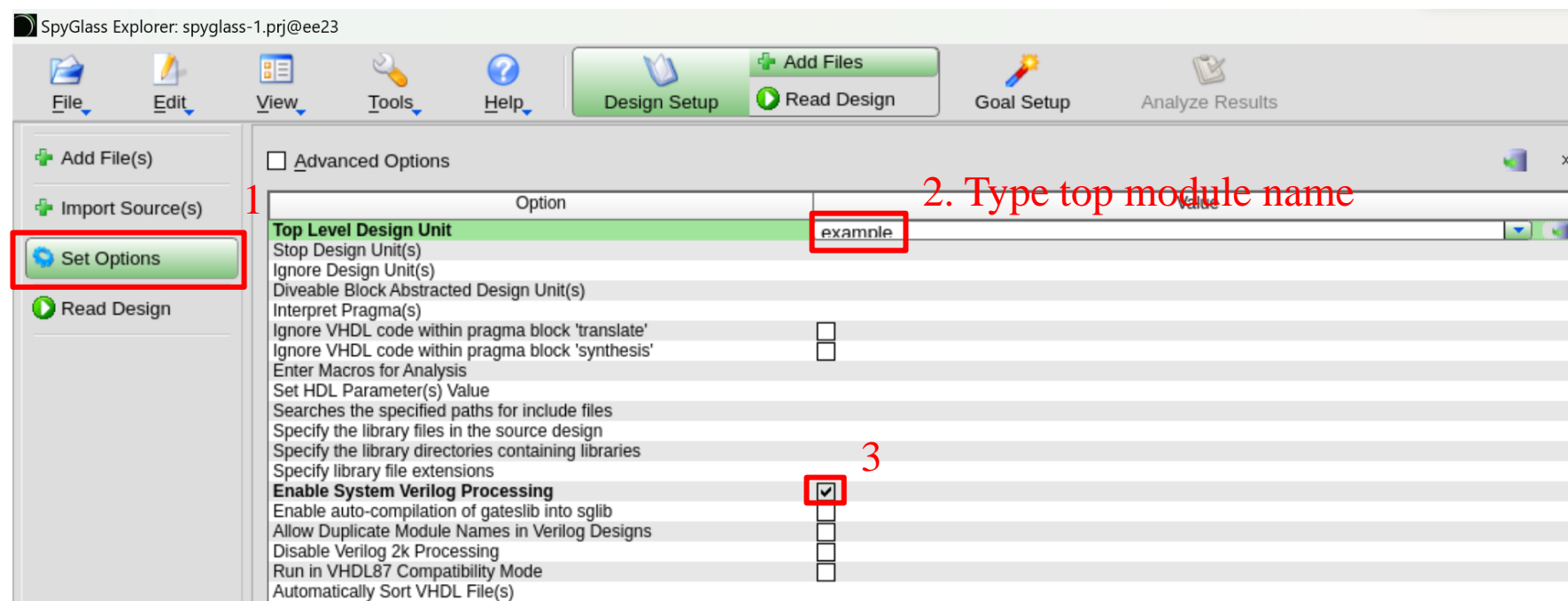
- Type the following command on the terminal:
 - `spyglass &`
 - Also, the token “&” enable you to use the terminal while Spyglass is running in the background.



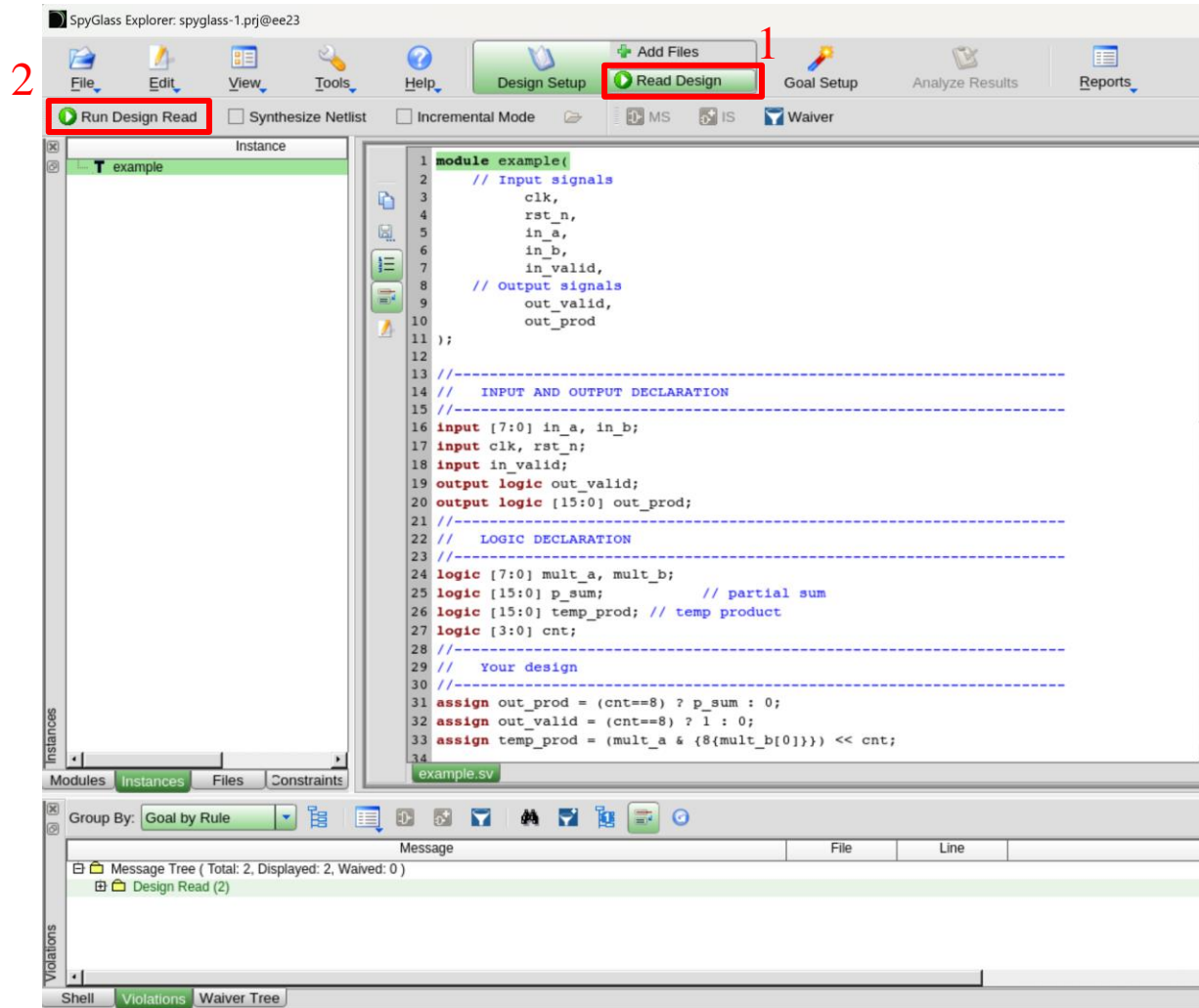
Add files



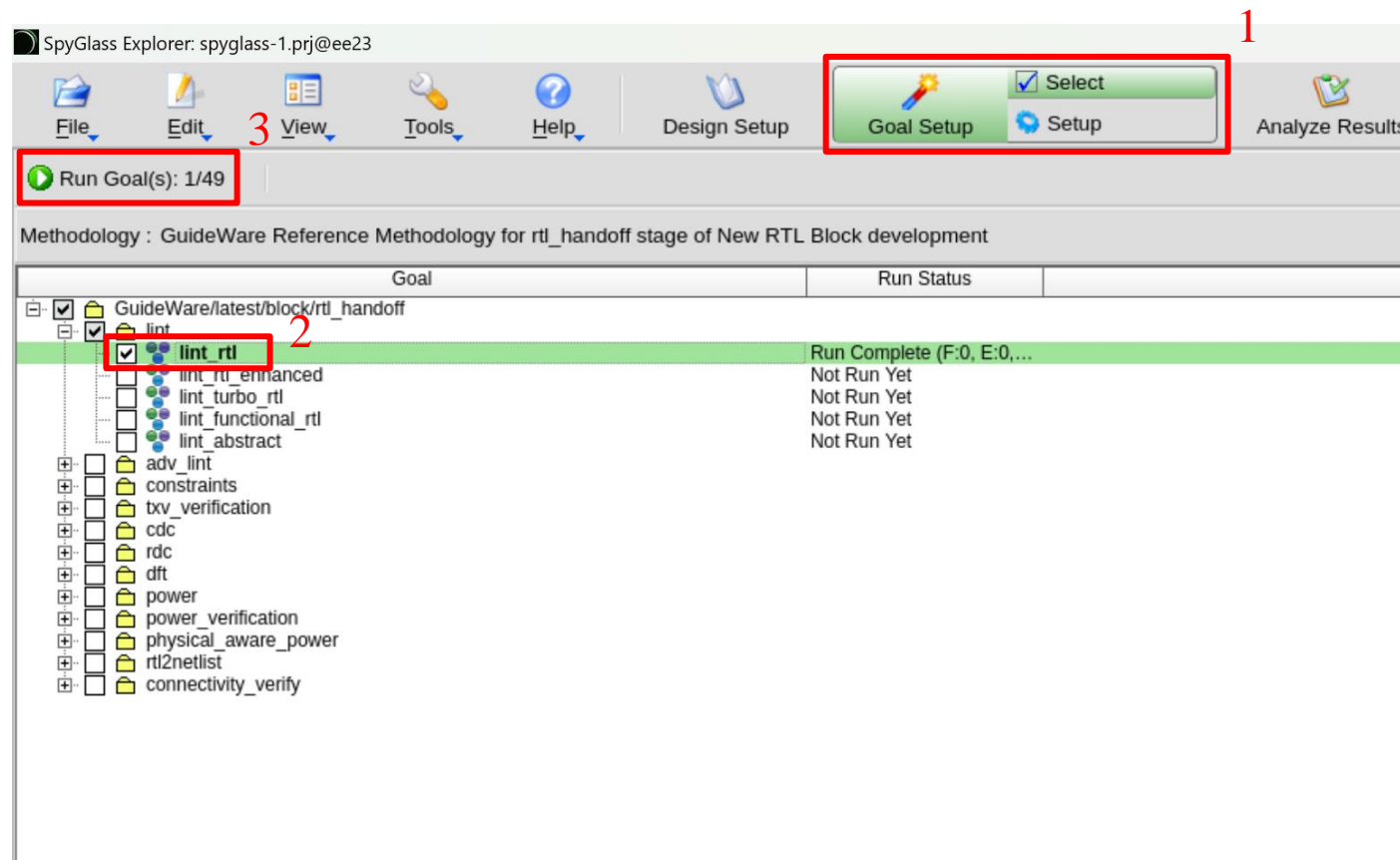
Set Options



Read Design & Compile



Goal Setup



Goal : lint/lint_rtl

Checks the design for basic Connectivity issues
Checks the design for basic Simulation issues
Checks the design for recommended design practices and Structural issues
Checks the design for basic Synthesis issues

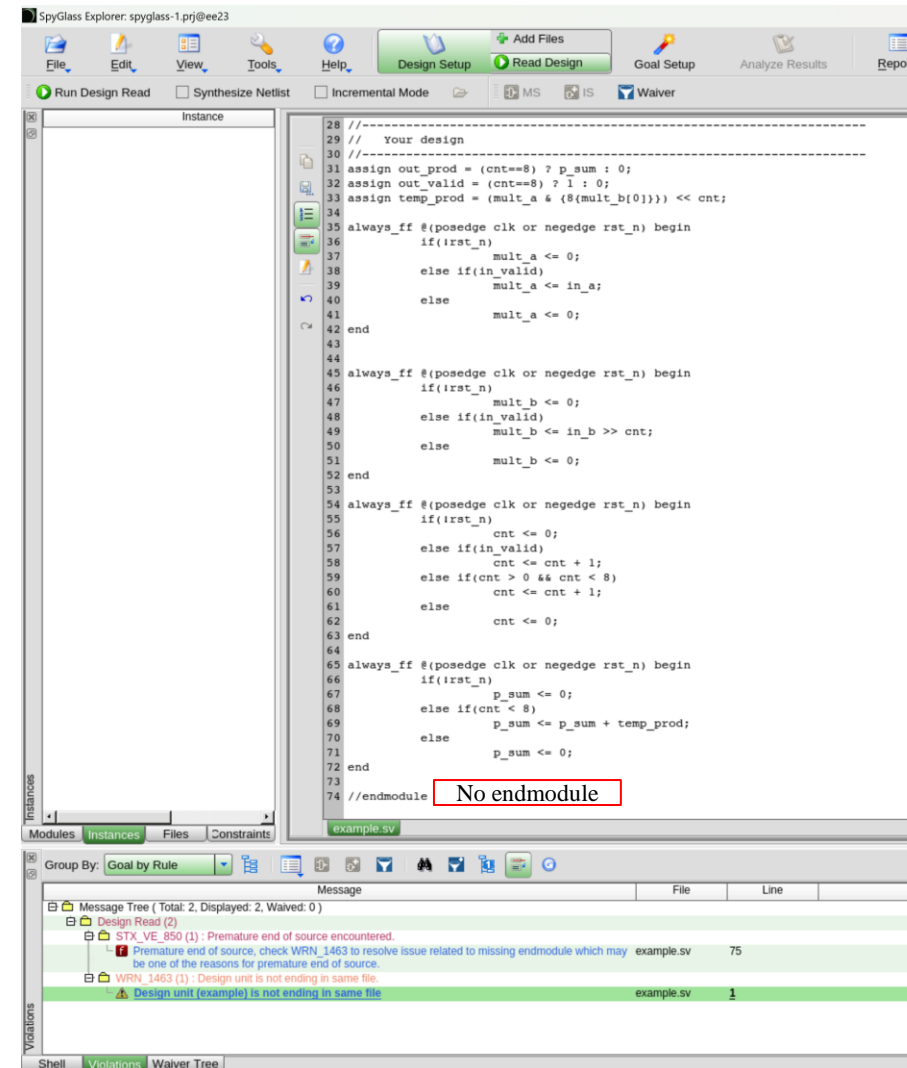
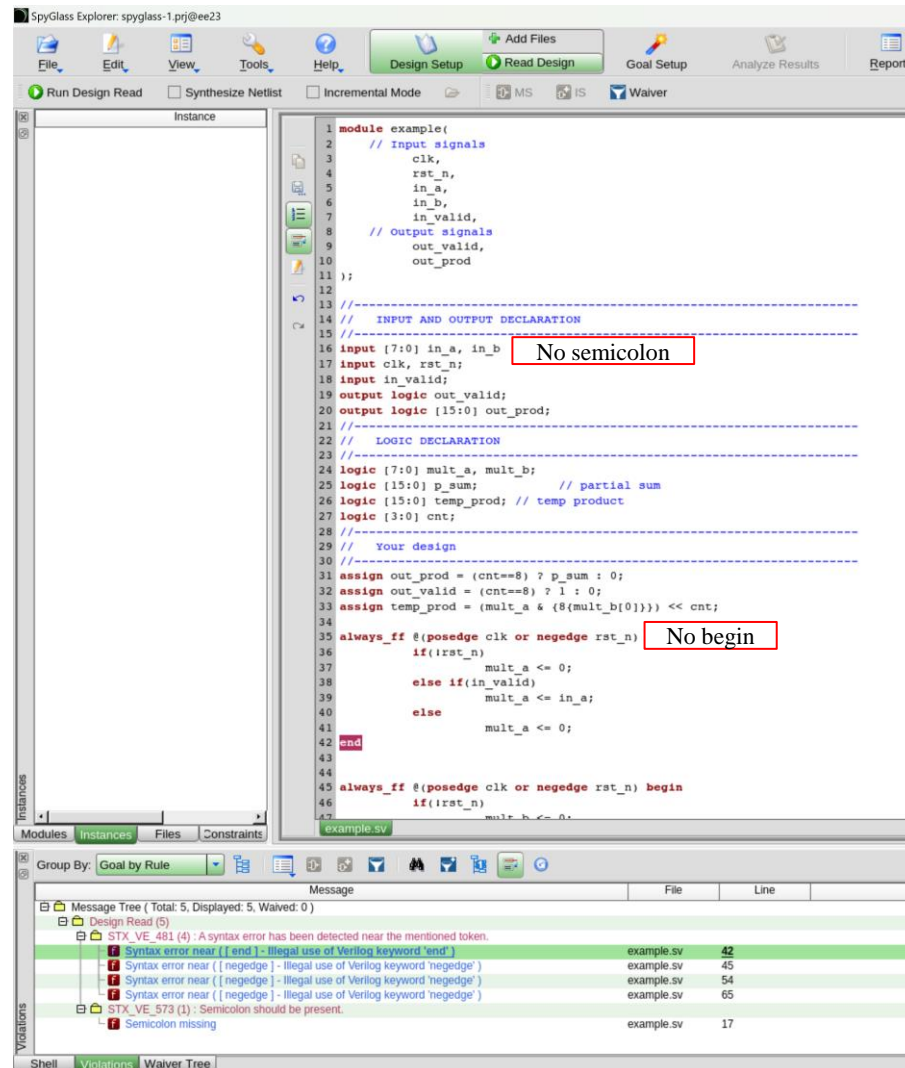
Description:

This goal checks basic connectivity issues in the design, such as floating input, width mismatch, etc. These checks should be run after every change in RTL code prior to code check-in. This goal checks simulation issues in the design, such as

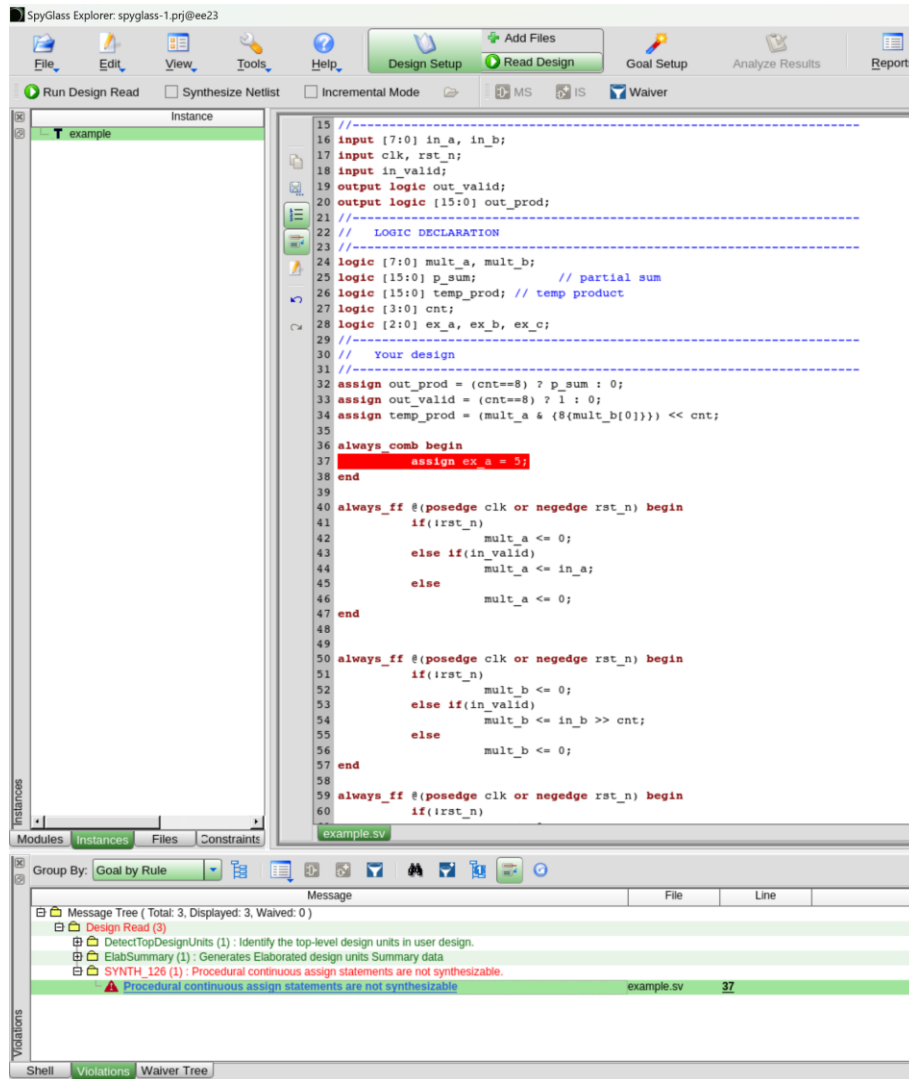
- incomplete sensitivity list
- incorrect use of blocking/ non-blocking assignments
- potential functional errors
- possible simulation hang cases, and
- simulation race cases

These checks should be run, and reported messages should be reviewed prior to all simulation runs. This goal identifies the structural issues in the design that affect the post-implementation functionality or performance of the design. Examples include multiple drivers, high fan-in mux, and synchronous/asynchronous use of resets. These checks should be run once every week and before handoff to implementation. This goal reports unsynthesizable constructs in the design and code which can cause RTL vs. gate simulation mismatch. These checks should be run twice a week, and before handoff to synthesis team.

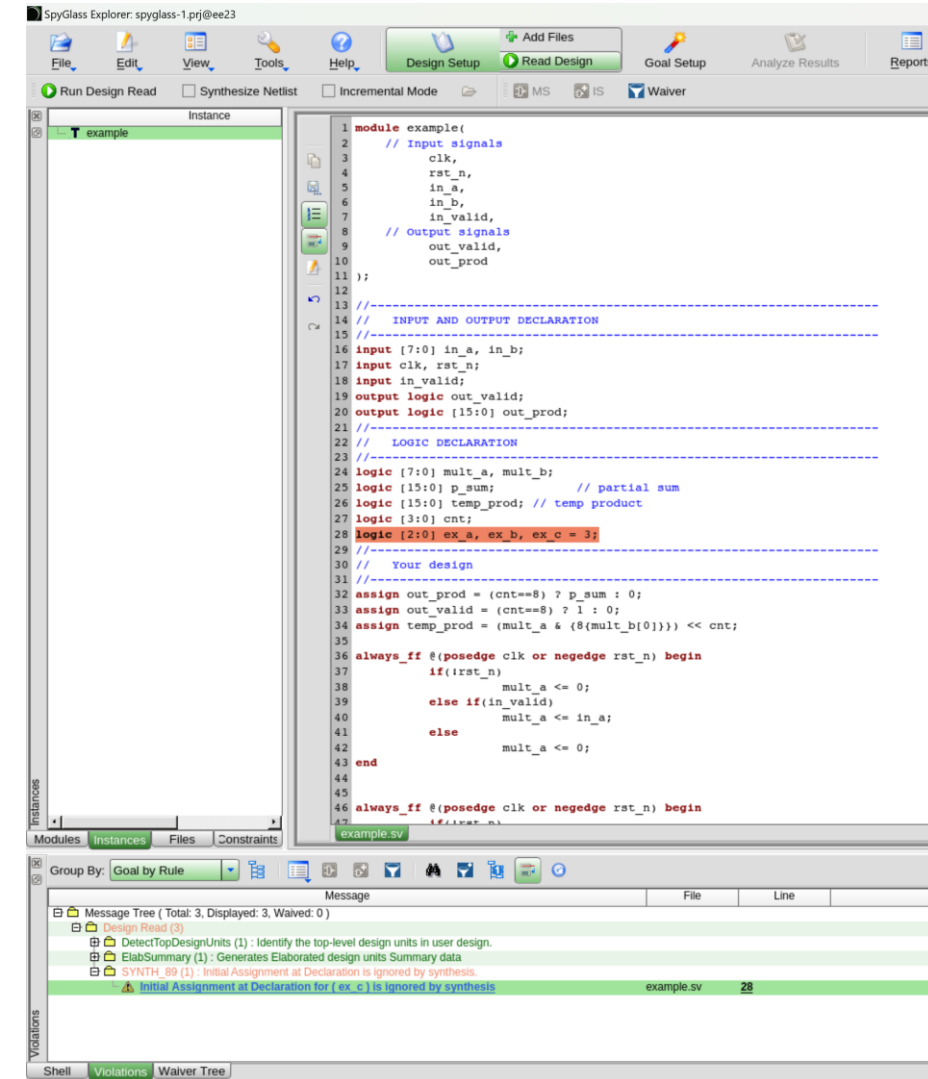
Coding Standard Checks – Basic Syntax Error



Design Rule Checks – Combinational Logic



No assign within always block (legal but not synthesizable)



Initial value for combinational logic will be ignored for synthesis

Design Rule Checks – Combinational Loop

A variable cannot be assigned by itself in combinational logic

The screenshot shows the SpyGlass Explorer interface with the file `example.v` open. The code defines a combinational logic block `always_comb` where a variable `ex_a` is assigned a value that depends on itself, creating a combinational loop. The error message at the bottom states: "Combinational loop exists at 'example.ex_a[0]'".

```

15 //-----
16 input [7:0] in_a, in_b;
17 input clk, rst_n;
18 input in_valid;
19 output logic out_valid;
20 output logic [15:0] out_prod;
21 //-----
22 // LOGIC DECLARATION
23 //-----
24 logic [7:0] mult_a, mult_b;
25 logic [15:0] p_sum; // partial sum
26 logic [15:0] temp_prod; // temp product
27 logic [3:0] cnt;
28 logic [2:0] ex_a, ex_b, ex_c;
29 //-----
30 // Your design
31 //-----
32 assign out_prod = (cnt==8) ? p_sum : 0;
33 assign out_valid = (cnt==8) ? 1 : 0;
34 assign temp_prod = (mult_a & {8{mult_b[0]}}) << cnt;
35
36 always_comb begin
37     ex_a = 5 + ex_a;
38 end
39
40 always_ff @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n) begin
41     if(!rst_n)
42         mult_a <= 0;
43     else if(in_valid)
44         mult_a <= in_a;
45     else
46         mult_a <= 0;
47 end
48
49 always_ff @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n) begin
50     if(!rst_n)
51         mult_b <= 0;
52     else if(in_valid)
53         mult_b <= in_b >> cnt;
54     else
55         mult_b <= 0;
56 end
57
58 always_ff @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n) begin
59     if(!rst_n)
60         cnt <= 0;

```

The Message Tree shows 4 violations related to combinational loops. The Waiver Tree is empty.

The screenshot shows the SpyGlass Explorer interface with the file `example.v` open. The code defines a combinational logic block `always_comb` where a variable `ex_a` is assigned a value that depends on itself, creating a combinational loop. The error message at the bottom states: "Combinational loop exists at 'example.ex_a[0]-example.ex_a[1]-example.synth_gen_net-'".

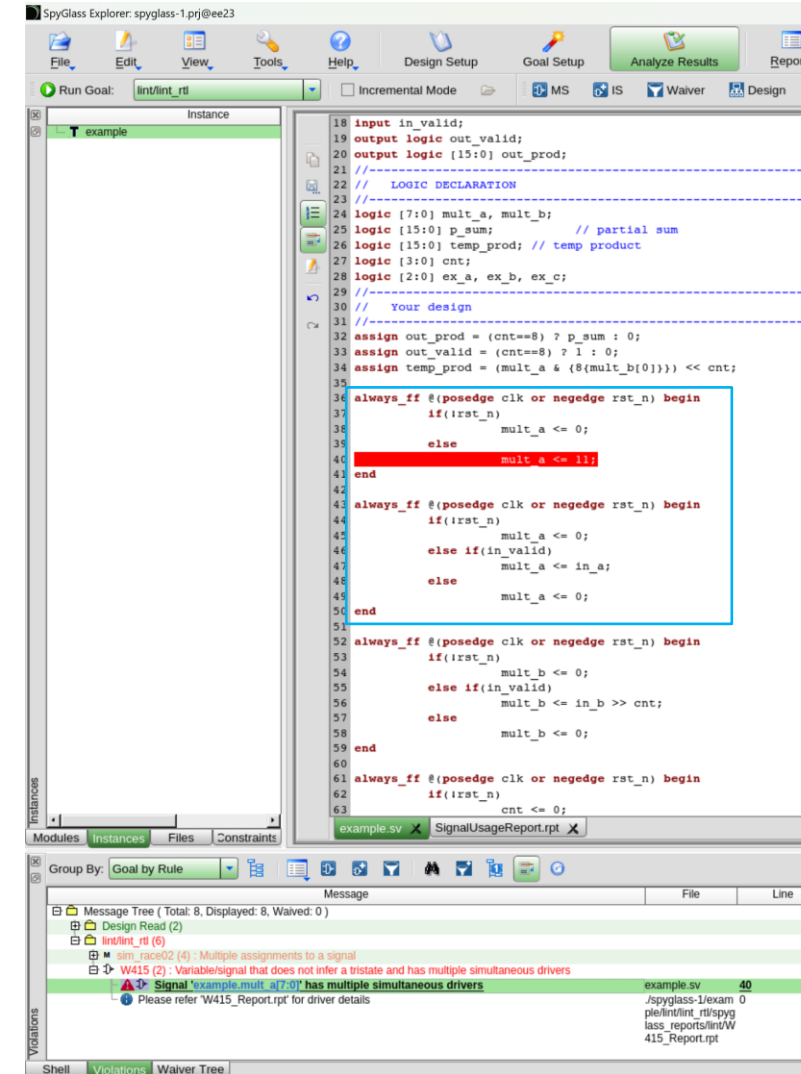
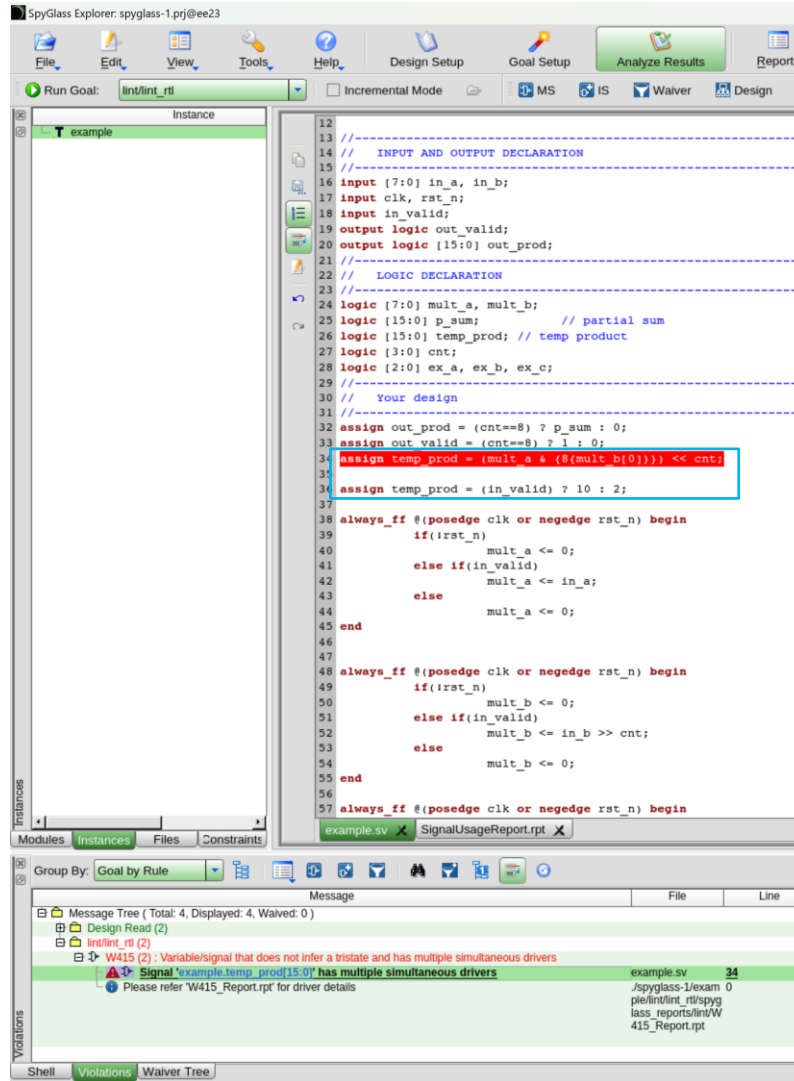
```

18 input in_valid;
19 output logic out_valid;
20 output logic [15:0] out_prod;
21 //-----
22 // LOGIC DECLARATION
23 //-----
24 logic [7:0] mult_a, mult_b;
25 logic [15:0] p_sum; // partial sum
26 logic [15:0] temp_prod; // temp product
27 logic [3:0] cnt;
28 logic [2:0] ex_a, ex_b, ex_c;
29 //-----
30 // Your design
31 //-----
32 assign out_prod = (cnt==8) ? p_sum : 0;
33 assign out_valid = (cnt==8) ? 1 : 0;
34 assign temp_prod = (mult_a & {8{mult_b[0]}}) << cnt;
35
36 always_comb begin
37     if(ex_a==2)
38         ex_a = 0;
39     else
40         ex_a = 3;
41 end
42
43 always_ff @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n) begin
44     if(!rst_n)
45         mult_a <= 0;
46     else if(in_valid)
47         mult_a <= in_a;
48     else
49         mult_a <= 0;
50 end
51
52 always_ff @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n) begin
53     if(!rst_n)
54         mult_b <= 0;
55     else if(in_valid)
56         mult_b <= in_b >> cnt;
57     else
58         mult_b <= 0;
59 end
60
61 always_ff @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n) begin
62     if(!rst_n)
63         cnt <= 0;

```

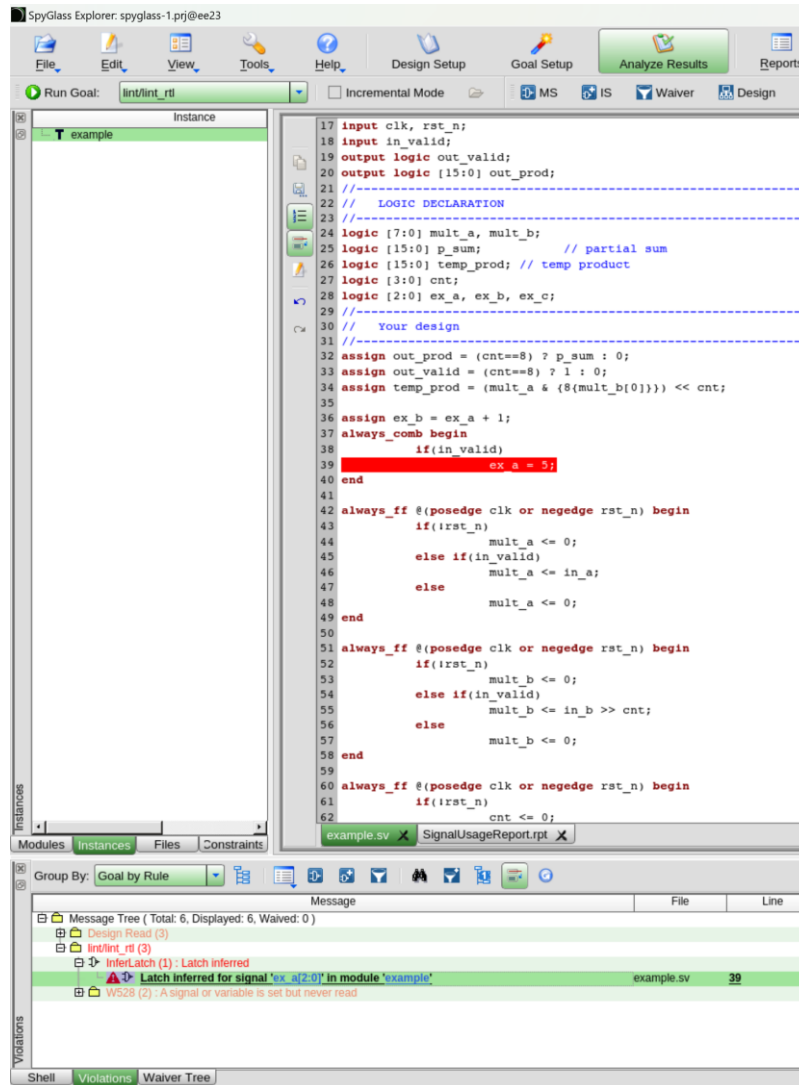
The Message Tree shows 3 violations related to combinational loops. The Waiver Tree is empty.

Design Rule Checks – Multiple Drives



One variable can only be assigned in one always block or in one assign

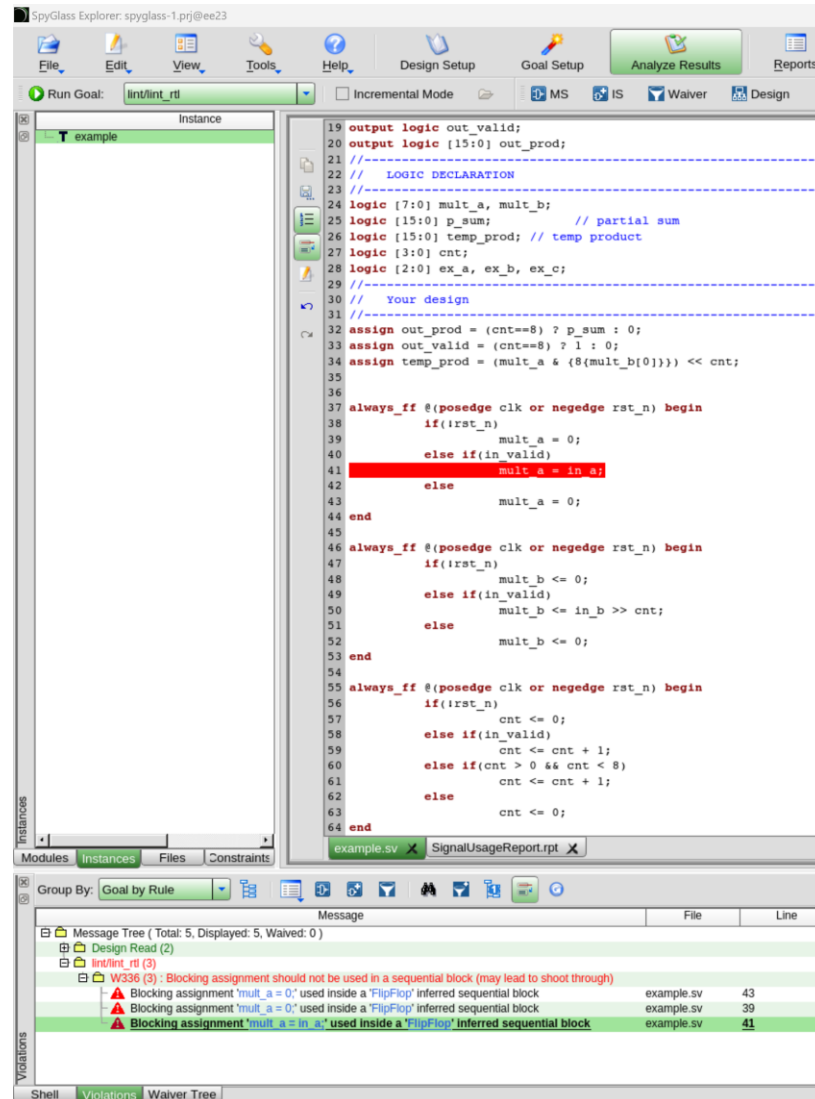
Design Rule Checks – Unintentional latch



Incomplete conditional statements in combinational logic

- If/else
- Case
- Ternary operator

Design Rule Checks – Blocking assignment in sequential circuit



Blocking assignment (for combinational circuit)

- The assignment will be carried consequently.

Non-blocking assignment (for sequential circuit)

- The assignment will be carried in parallel.

Reference

- <https://hackmd.io/@qpalm60409/ryEip2A6h#伍、Spyglass>
- https://blog.csdn.net/qq_30843953/article/details/109629618