



A GENERATION AHEAD

SEMINAR SERIES



TCL, the Tool Control Language, and Vivado



Agenda

- Expectations
- Controlling Vivado with TCL
- Vivado Physical Constraints
- Vivado Timing Constraints
- More Information



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I. Expectations

Expectations for the Next 44 Minutes

- There is NO WAY I can teach you the entire TCL language and how to use it with Vivado in 43 minutes
- It is absolutely possible to expose you to enough TCL in 42 minutes such that you'll get it
 - And this will be done in the context of using Vivado
- For now don't think of TCL as a language. Think of it as a bunch of similarly structured commands.
 - As you write more powerful scripts, and you find that you need more power and flexibility in your scripts, TCL enables that

Homework: Get a TCL book, explore TCL on the WEB, play in Vivado



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II. Controlling Vivado with TCL

Vivado Tcl

Include in .xdc file

➤ SDC - Synopsys Design Constraints

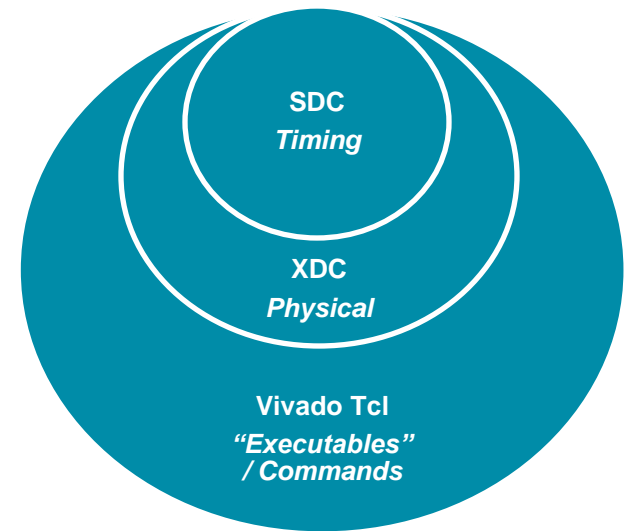
- Timing Constraints

➤ XDC - Xilinx Design Constraints

- Physical Constraints

➤ Vivado Tcl

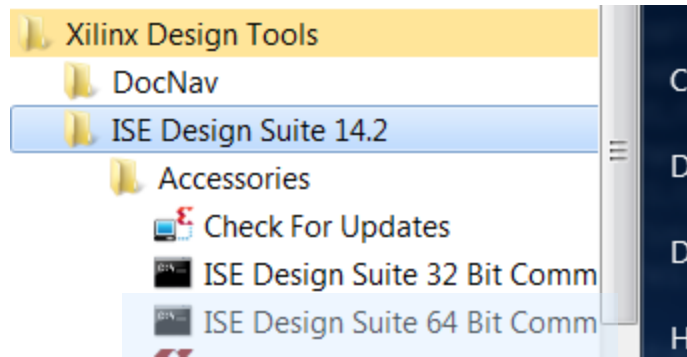
- SDC + XDC
- Xilinx commands
 - Project management, synthesize, place and route, compilation, report,...
- Xilinx objects
 - Netlist, device, timing, project,...
- General Tcl (8.5)
 - List-related commands are overloaded to support primary objects
 - Primary objects can directly be used with general commands



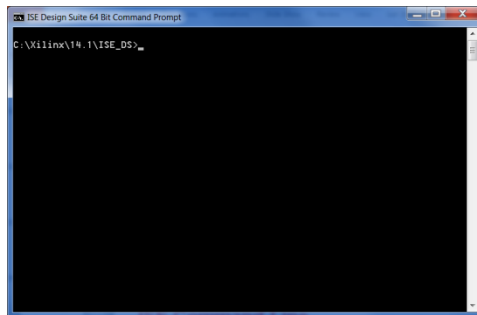
Things that used to go in a UCF are now TCL commands and are now included in a .xdc constraints file

Things that used to be separate executables in ISE are now TCL commands and can be included in a .tcl batch file

Launching Vivado From the ISE Command Prompt



Launches Xilinx
Command Prompt



Then type

Vivado	Launches GUI
vivado -mode tcl	Launches Vivado in command line mode
vivado -mode batch - source <filename.tcl>	Launches Vivado in command line, executes filename.tcl

- — **mode tcl**
 - Vivado is running, no GUI
 - **start_GUI** TCL command will launch the GUI without forgetting what you've done
- — **mode batch**
 - Same as –mode tcl, but executes a tcl script on start-up

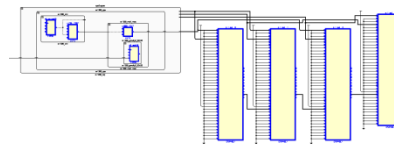
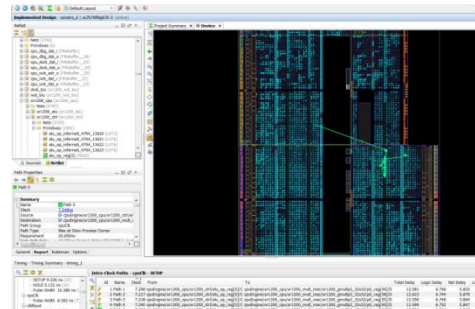
A Vivado “Batch Mode” TCL Script Might Look Something Like this

Commands Used
to Synthesize /
Implement Design

You can still load the design into
PlanAhead GUI for Design Analysis

```
read_verilog
read_vhdl
read_edif
synth_design
report_timing_summary
write_checkpoint
opt_design
place_design
report_timing_summary
write_checkpoint
route_design
report_timing_summary
write_checkpoint
```

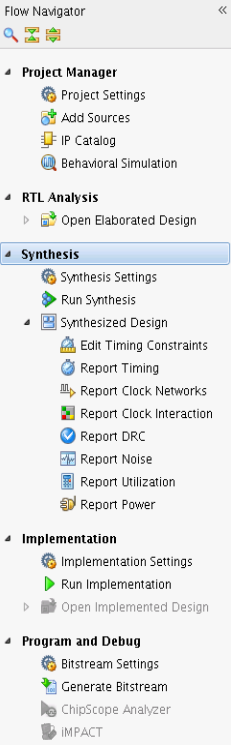
```
start_gui
read_checkpoint
```



ISE Command Line Equivalence in Vivado

ISE Command Line Tool	Vivado Equivalent TCL Commands
xst	synth_design
Ngdbuild (Translate)	link_design (Not required if running synth_design)
map	opt_design power_opt_design (optional) phys_opt_design (optional)
par	place_design route_design
trce	report_timing
bitgen	write_bitstream

A Separate “Project Flow” Uses DIFFERENT TCL Commands

Vivado IDE for Project Management	Commands Used to Accomplish Same Thing
	<pre> create_project ... add_files ... import_files launch_run synth_1 wait_on_run ... open_run ... report_timing_summary launch_runs impl_1 wait_on_run ... open_run ... </pre>

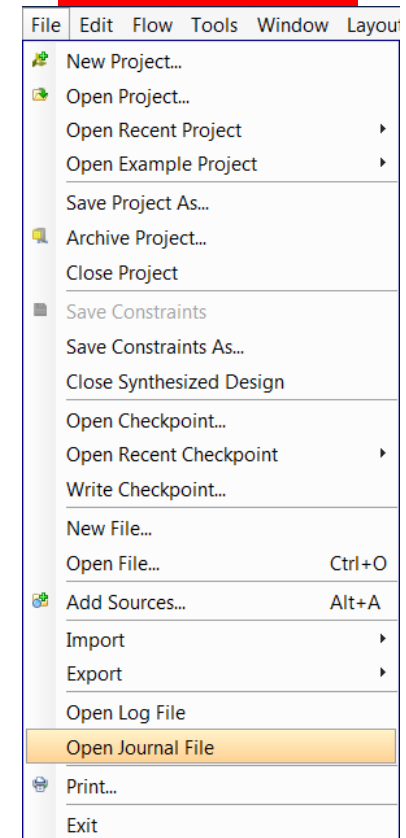
➤ Design runs use specific source sets

- Design Sources
- Constraints Sets
- Simulation Sets

➤ Uses the concept of design runs

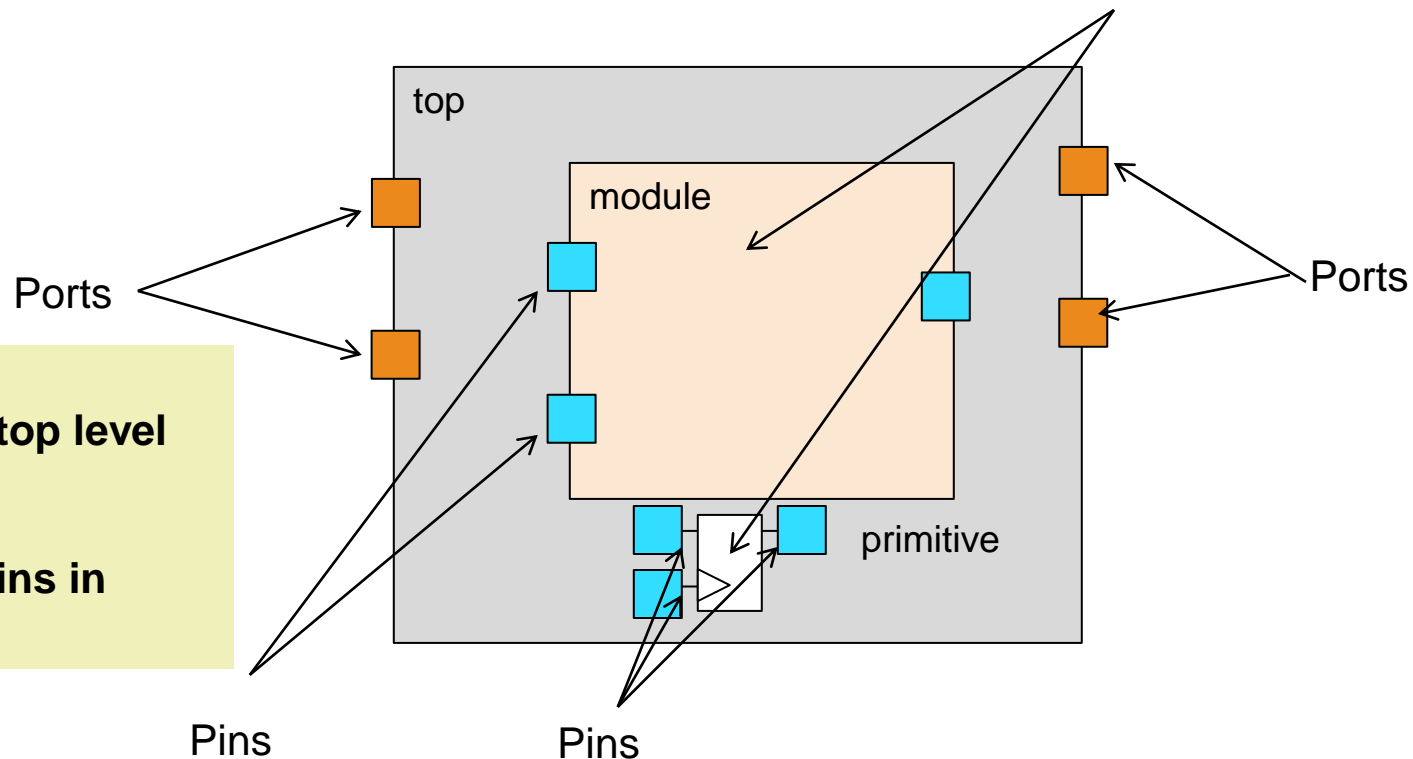
- launch_run (synthesis / implementation)
- wait_on_run
- open_run (synthesis / implementation)

Confused?



Pins and Ports May Not Be What you Expect

- Ports are the pads or balls of the FPGA. Literally.
 - You apply things like LOC and IOSTANDARD to *ports*
- There's also CELLS and PINS
 - The I/O of an instantiated module or primitive is the **PIN** of a **CELL**Cells



EXAMPLE

`get_ports` returns all top level IO ports of the design

`get_pins` returns all pins in design



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III Vivado Physical Constraints

Finding Netlist Objects in the Design

Command	Description
get_cells	Cell objects based on name/hierarchy or connectivity
get_pins	Pin objects based name/hierarchy or connectivity
get_nets	Net objects by name/hierarchy or connectivity
get_ports	Top-level netlist ports by name or connectivity
get_iobanks	IO Bank objects, needed for constraining
all_inputs	Get a list of all input ports in the current design
all_outputs	Get a list of all output ports in the current design
all_ffs	Get a list of all flip flops in current design
all_latches	Get a list of all latches in current design
all_dsps	Get a list of dsp cells in the current design
all_rams	Get a list of ram cells in the current design

To create constraints or analyze designs, you need to access netlist objects

Simple Example 1: Utilization

➤ Utilization

- `get_cells` : returns list of all cells in the design on one line
- `join [get_cells] "\n"` : return list of all cells in the design, but on separate lines
- `llength [get_cells [all_dsp]]` : How many are DSPs are in the design

OR

➤ `report_utilization`

- Just a bunch of stuff scrolling by

➤ `report_utilization -file my_util.txt`

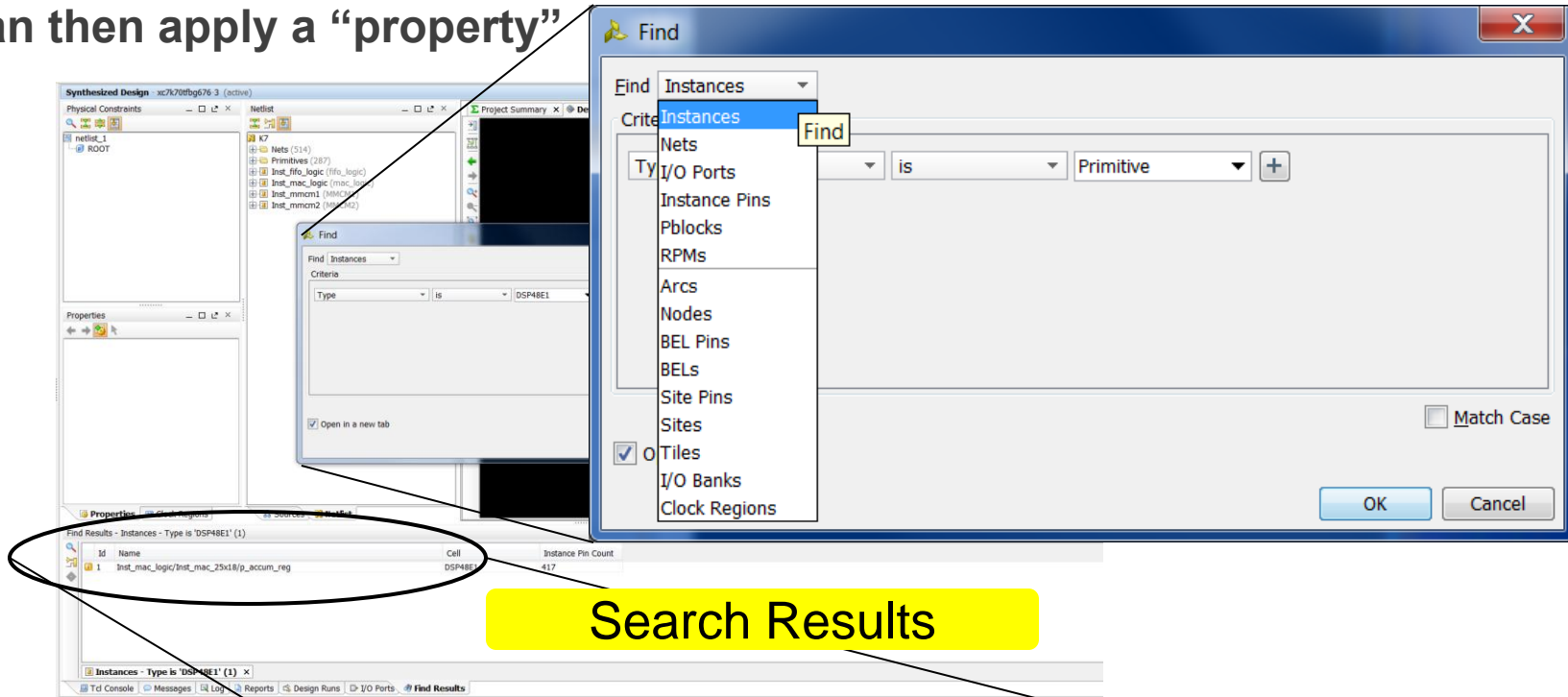
- Creates a file, sticks it . . . somewhere

➤ Click the GUI button that says Report Utilization.

- Gives you a great table
- But you didn't learn as much TCL

Simple Example #2: Find Netlist Objects

- Use the Find (Ctrl-F) function in the Vivado GUI to find objects in the netlist:
 - Choose Instances to search for Cells
- Use the Search Results with “get_cells”.
- You can then apply a “property”



`place_cell [get_cells Inst_mac_logic/Inst_mac_25x18/p_accum_reg] DSP48_X0Y24`

Simple Example #3: Checking Your Work

```
➤ set_property PACKAGE_PIN A25 [get_ports COUNT_OUT_OSERDES_N]
➤ set_property IOSTANDARD LVDS_25 [get_ports COUNT_OUT_OSERDES_N]

➤ set_property IOSTANDARD LVCMOS18 [get_ports MAC_OUT[*]]
➤ set_property DRIVE 12 [get_ports MAC_OUT[*]]
➤ set_property SLEW SLOW [get_ports MAC_OUT[*]]
```

Check your work!

```
➤ get_property PACKAGE_PIN [get_port MAC_OUT[47]]
➤ get_property SLEW [get_port MAC_OUT[47]]
➤ get_property DRIVE [get_port MAC_OUT[47]]
```

Simple Example #4: More Sanity Checking

- You've set Location Constraints on all of your I/O
 - `length [get_ports]`: Returns number of I/O in your design
 - `length [get_property PACKAGE_PIN [get_ports]]`
 - *Should return the same number*
- Of course the tools will tell you this too after you `place_design`

Master Class: PROBES (1)

➤ In ISE, PROBES allows you to tap off of a net, connecting it to an unused I/O. *How would you do the same thing in Vivado TCL?*

1. *Create a port*
2. *Select an I/O Standard*
3. *Select an unused pin location*
4. *Connect the net from the design to the port created in 1.*

Master Class: PROBES (2)

"FIND" the net

Pick a
pin

Pick
whatever
works

Fred

```
proc addProbe {signal pin IOStandard name} {  
    create_port -direction OUT $name  
    set_property IOSTANDARD $IOStandard [get_port $name]  
    set_property LOC $pin [get_port $name]  
    connect_net -net $signal -objects [get_port $name]  
}
```

- Save this file as probes.tcl
- After design is loaded, type "source probes.tcl" at the TCL prompt
- Type "addProbe mem_en V25 LVCMOS18 Fred" at the TCL prompt



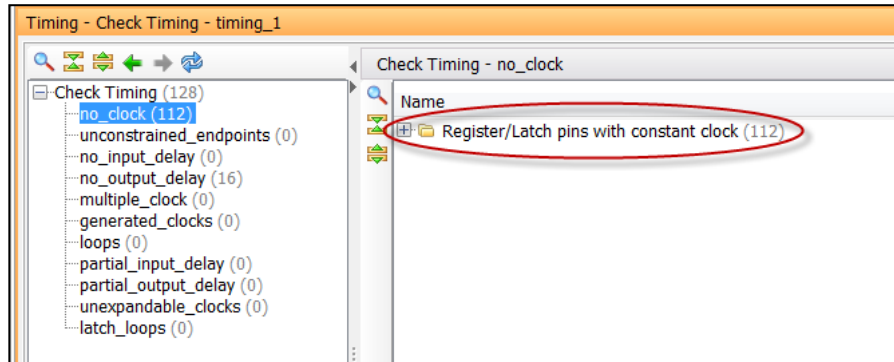
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IV. Vivado Timing Constraints

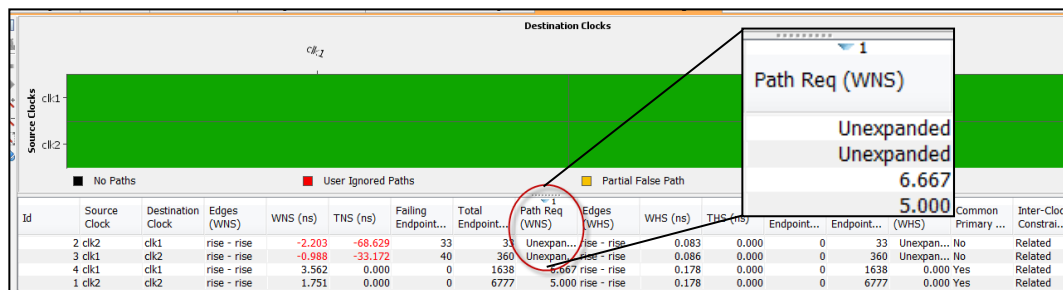
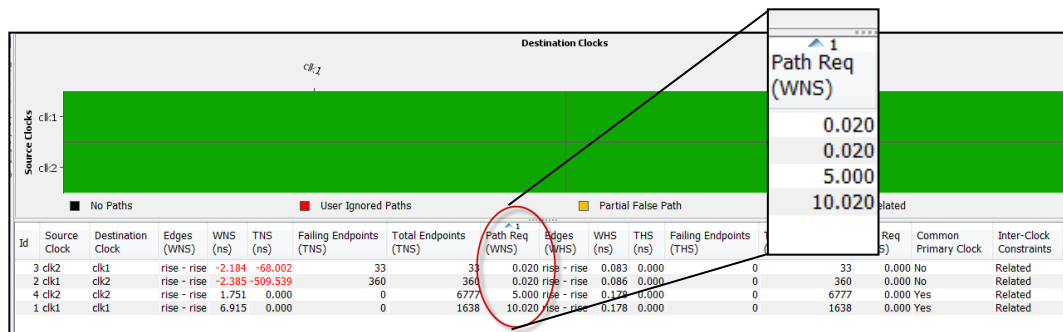
Baselining Designs With Vivado

➤ Need a common starting point for wide variety of designs



➤ Constraint Development

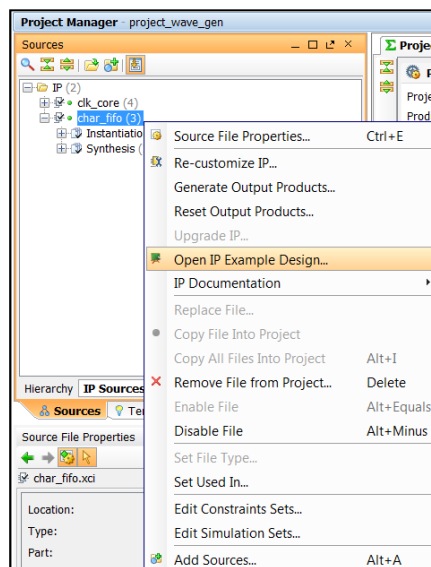
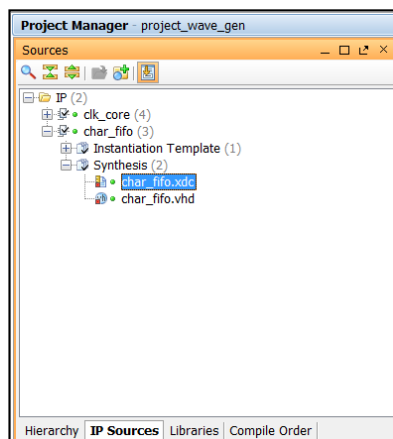
- `check_timing`: no unconstrained clocks
- No unreasonable (ie. 20 ps) path requirements
- No unexpanded clocks



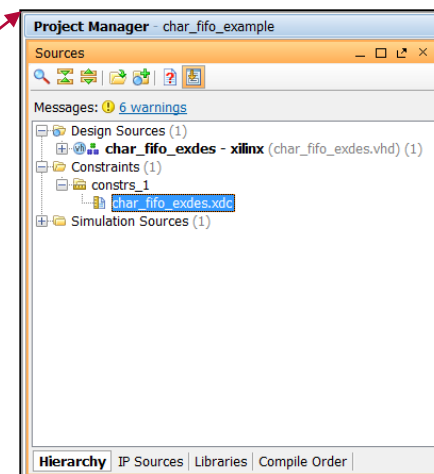
Constraint Development Tips For Baselineing

➤ Do Not Forget To Include IP Timing Constraints

- Native IP: review BOTH xdc file that comes with core AND example project xdc for timing exceptions



Opens new Vivado session



Constraint Development Tips For Baselining

➤ Do Not Forget To Include IP Timing Constraints

- Many cores have their own timing constraints that include important exceptions (PCIE, MIG, 2-clock distributed FIFOs...)
- Use `report_compile_order -constraints` to identify all constraint file sources

Tcl Console

```
report_compile_order -constraints
```

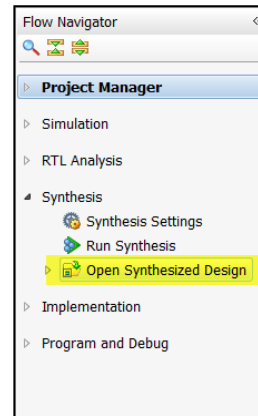
Index	File Name	Used_In	Scoped_To_Ref	Scoped_To_Cells	Processing_Order	Full Path Name
1	clk_core.xdc	Synth & Impl	clk_core	inst	EARLY	c:/projects/project_wave_gen/project_wave_gen.srcs/sources_1/ip/clk_core/clk_core.xdc
2	wave_gen_timing.xdc	Synth & Impl			NORMAL	C:/projects/project_wave_gen/project_wave_gen.srcs/constrs_1/imports/verilog/wave_gen_timing.xdc
3	char_fifo.xdc	Synth & Impl	char_fifo	U0	NORMAL	c:/projects/project_wave_gen/project_wave_gen.srcs/sources_1/ip/char_fifo/char_fifo/char_fifo.xdc

Index	File Name	Used_In	Scoped_To_Ref	Scoped_To_Cells	Processing_Order	Full Path Name
1	clk_core.xdc	Synth & Impl	clk_core	inst	EARLY	c:/projects/project_wave_gen/project_wave_gen.srcs/sources_1/ip/clk_core/clk_core.xdc
2	wave_gen_timing.xdc	Synth & Impl			NORMAL	C:/projects/project_wave_gen/project_wave_gen.srcs/constrs_1/imports/verilog/wave_gen_timing.xdc
3	wave_gen_pins.xdc	Impl			NORMAL	C:/projects/project_wave_gen/project_wave_gen.srcs/constrs_1/imports/verilog/wave_gen_pins.xdc
4	char_fifo.xdc	Synth & Impl	char_fifo	U0	NORMAL	c:/projects/project_wave_gen/project_wave_gen.srcs/sources_1/ip/char_fifo/char_fifo/char_fifo.xdc

Developing Constraints From Scratch

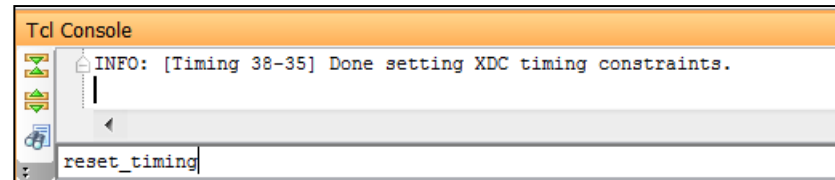
➤ Q. How do I start?

- A. Open synthesized design in Vivado IDE



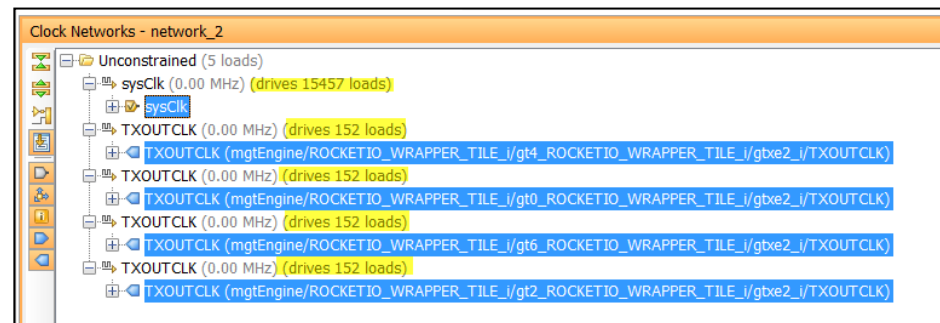
➤ Q. How do I make sure I'm starting from scratch?

- A. tcl_console> `reset_timing`



➤ Q. How do I know what to constrain?

- A. `report_clock_networks`



Developing Constraints From Scratch

- Q. How do I know when I'm done constraining clocks?
- A. When `report_clock_networks` shows no unconstrained networks

The sequence of screenshots illustrates the workflow for creating and verifying clock constraints in Xilinx ISE:

- Tools Menu:** The 'Report Clock Networks...' option is selected under the 'Tools' menu.
- Clock Networks - network_2:** A window showing a list of unconstrained clock networks:
 - Unconstrained (5 loads)
 - sysClk (0.00 MHz) (drives 15457 loads)
 - TXOUTCLK (0.00 MHz) (drives 152 loads)
 - TXOUTCLK (0.00 MHz) (drives 152 loads)
 - TXOUTCLK (0.00 MHz) (drives 152 loads)
 - TXOUTCLK (0.00 MHz) (drives 152 loads)
- Project Manager:** The 'Timing Constraints' option is selected under the 'Project Manager' window.
- Create Clock Dialog:** A dialog box for creating a new clock object with the following settings:
 - Clock Name: (empty)
 - Source Objects: (empty)
 - Waveform: (empty)
 - Period: 10 ns
 - Rise at: 0 ns
 - Fall at: 5 ns
 - ☐ Add this clock to the existing clock (no overwriting)
 - Command: create_clock -period 10.000 -waveform (0.000 5.000)
- Clock Networks - network_1:** A window showing a list of constrained clock networks:
 - sysClk (100.00 MHz) (drives 15457 loads)
 - gt0_busrclk_i (78.12 MHz) (drives 152 loads)
 - gt2_busrclk_i (78.12 MHz) (drives 152 loads)
 - gt4_busrclk_i (78.12 MHz) (drives 152 loads)
 - gt6_busrclk_i (78.12 MHz) (drives 152 loads)

Developing Constraints From Scratch

➤ Q. How do I make sure my clocks are correct?

- A. [report_clocks](#) – shows period and waveform of every clock in the design

```
*****
* Report : Clocks
* Design : top
* Part : Device=7k70t, Package=fbg676, Speed=-2
* Version : Vivado v2012.3 (64-bit) Build 209282 by xbuild on Thu Oct 18 20:50:53 MDT 2012
* Date : Thu Dec 06 10:10:19 2012
*****
```

Attributes
P: Propagated
G: Generated
V: Virtual
I: Inverted

Clock	Period	Waveform	Attributes	Sources
sysClk	10.00000	{0.00000 5.00000}	P	{sysClk}
gt0_txusrclk_i	12.80000	{0.00000 6.40000}	P	{mgtEngine/ROCKETIO_WRAPPER_TILE_i/gt0_ROCKETIO_WRAPPER_TILE_i/gtxe2_i/TXOUTCLK}
gt2_txusrclk_i	12.80000	{0.00000 6.40000}	P	{mgtEngine/ROCKETIO_WRAPPER_TILE_i/gt2_ROCKETIO_WRAPPER_TILE_i/gtxe2_i/TXOUTCLK}
gt4_txusrclk_i	12.80000	{0.00000 6.40000}	P	{mgtEngine/ROCKETIO_WRAPPER_TILE_i/gt4_ROCKETIO_WRAPPER_TILE_i/gtxe2_i/TXOUTCLK}
gt6_txusrclk_i	12.80000	{0.00000 6.40000}	P	{mgtEngine/ROCKETIO_WRAPPER_TILE_i/gt6_ROCKETIO_WRAPPER_TILE_i/gtxe2_i/TXOUTCLK}
clkfbout	10.00000	{0.00000 5.00000}	P,G	{clkgen/mmc Adv_inst/CLKFBOUT}
cpuClk	20.00000	{0.00000 10.00000}	P,G	{clkgen/mmc Adv_inst/CLKOUT0}
wbClk	20.00000	{0.00000 10.00000}	P,G	{clkgen/mmc Adv_inst/CLKOUT1}
usbClk	10.00000	{0.00000 5.00000}	P,G	{clkgen/mmc Adv_inst/CLKOUT2}
phyClk0	10.00000	{0.00000 5.00000}	P,G	{clkgen/mmc Adv_inst/CLKOUT3}
phyClk1	10.00000	{0.00000 5.00000}	P,G	{clkgen/mmc Adv_inst/CLKOUT4}
fftClk	10.00000	{0.00000 5.00000}	P,G	{clkgen/mmc Adv_inst/CLKOUT5}

Developing Constraints From Scratch

➤ Q. How do I know what clocks should be related?

- A. [report_clock_interaction](#) – sort by Common Primary Clock

Destination Clocks

clk_rx_clk_core

clk_samp

clk_tx_clk_core

spi_clk

virtual_clock

Source Clocks

clk_pin_P

clk_rx_clk_core

clk_samp

clk_tx_clk_core

spi_clk

virtual_clock

No Paths

User Ignored Paths

Partial False Path

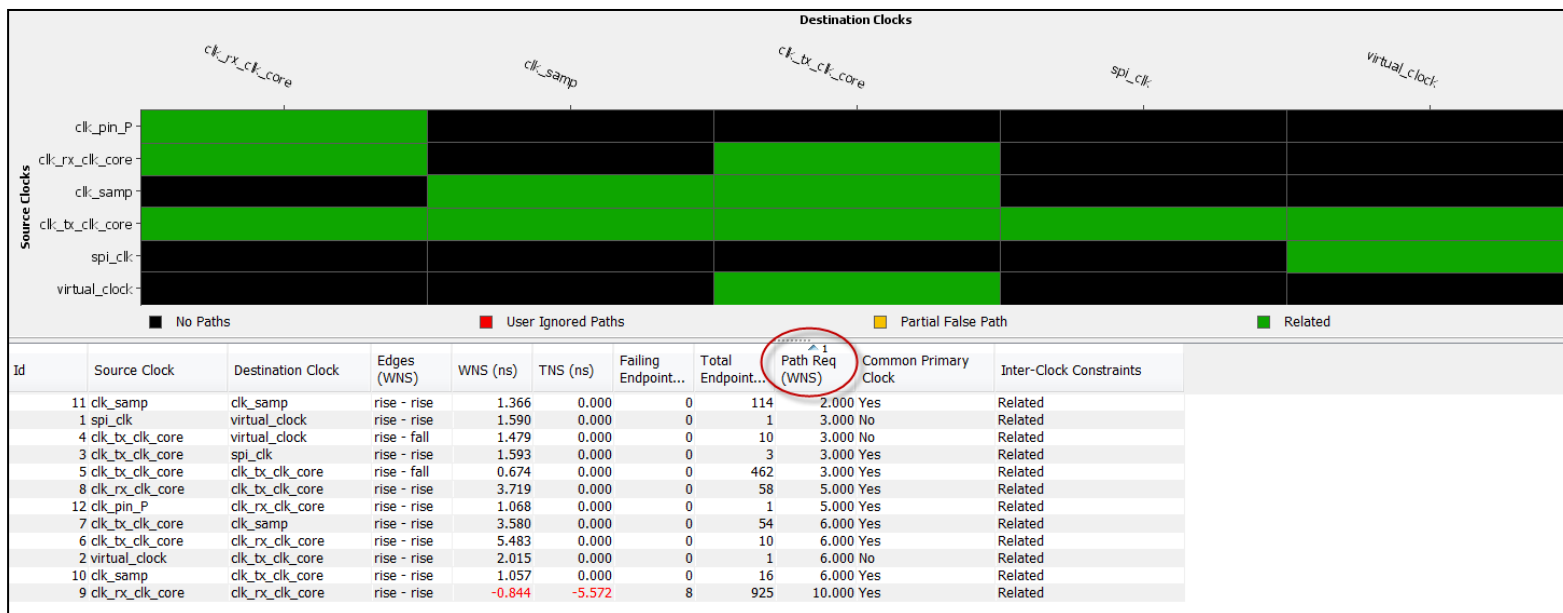
Related

Id	Source Clock	Destination Clock	Edges (WNS)	WNS (ns)	TNS (ns)	Failing Endpoint...	Total Endpoint...	Path Req (WNS)	Common Primary Clock	Inter-Clock Constraints
1	spi_clk	virtual_clock	rise - rise	1.590	0.000	0	1	3.000	No	Related
2	virtual_clock	clk_tx_clk_core	rise - rise	2.015	0.000	0	1	6.000	No	Related
3	clk_tx_clk_core	spi_clk	rise - rise	1.593	0.000	0	3	3.000	Yes	Related
4	clk_tx_clk_core	virtual_clock	rise - fall	1.479	0.000	0	10	3.000	No	Related
5	clk_tx_clk_core	clk_tx_clk_core	rise - fall	0.674	0.000	0	462	3.000	Yes	Related
6	clk_tx_clk_core	clk_rx_clk_core	rise - rise	5.483	0.000	0	10	6.000	Yes	Related
7	clk_tx_clk_core	clk_samp	rise - rise	3.580	0.000	0	54	6.000	Yes	Related
8	clk_rx_clk_core	clk_tx_clk_core	rise - rise	3.719	0.000	0	58	5.000	Yes	Related
9	clk_rx_clk_core	clk_rx_clk_core	rise - rise	-0.844	-5.572	8	925	10.000	Yes	Related
10	clk_samp	clk_tx_clk_core	rise - rise	1.057	0.000	0	16	6.000	Yes	Related
11	clk_samp	clk_samp	rise - rise	1.366	0.000	0	114	2.000	Yes	Related
12	clk_pin_P	clk_rx_clk_core	rise - rise	1.068	0.000	0	1	5.000	Yes	Related

Developing Constraints From Scratch

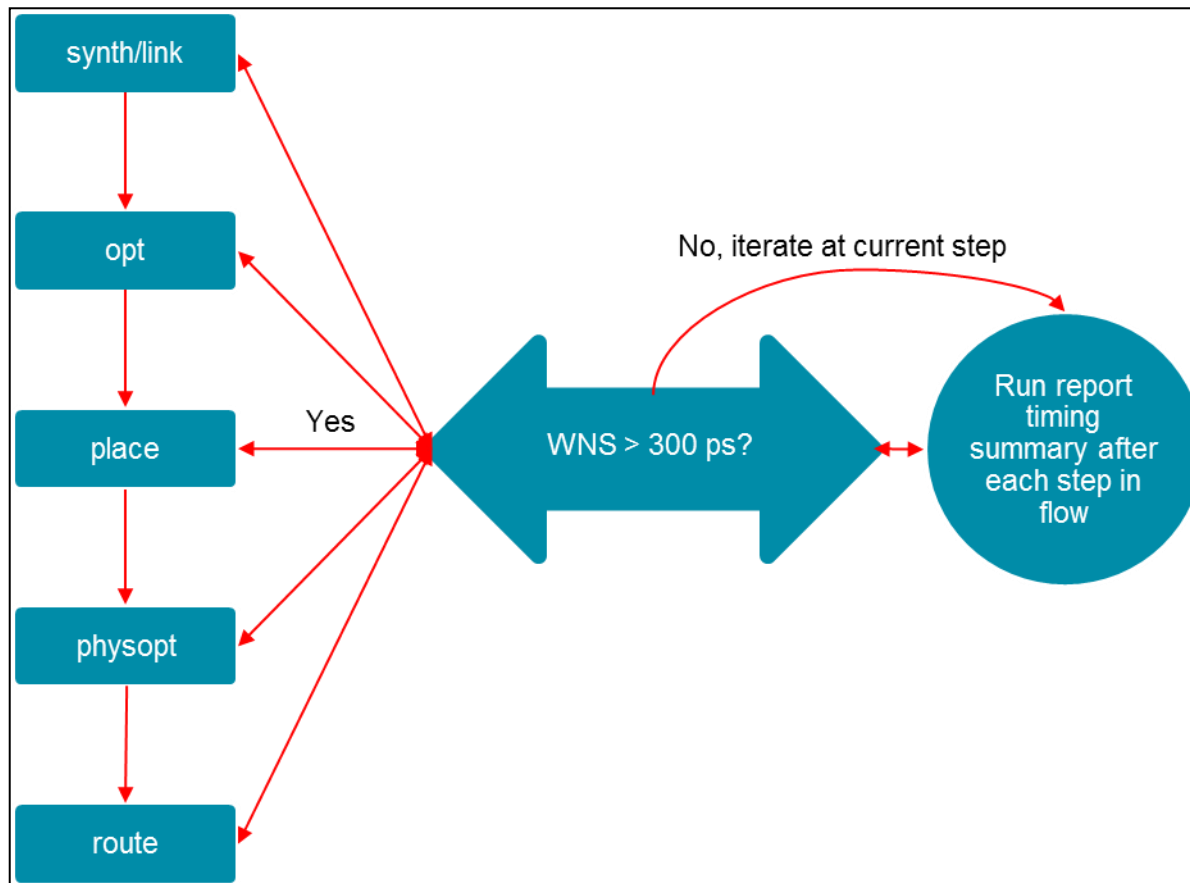
➤ Q. How do I know if I have unrealistic path requirements?

– A. [report_clock_interaction](#) – sort by Path Req (WNS)



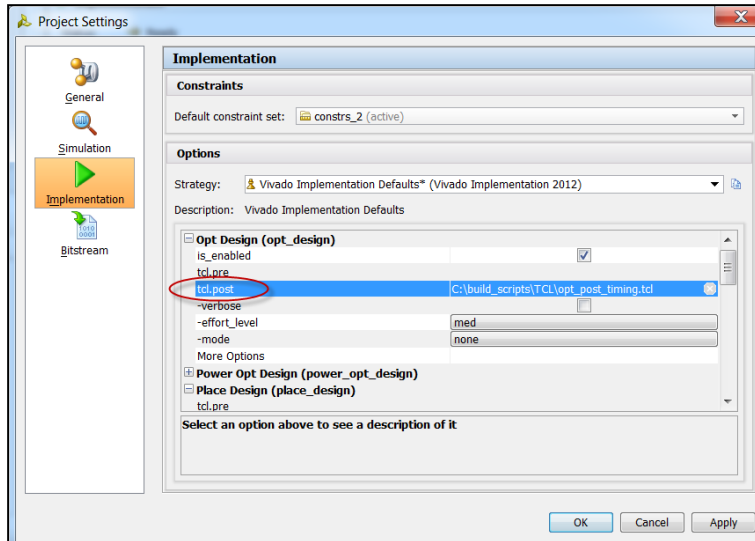
Baseline Stage 2

- Run **report_timing_summary** after each step
- Ensure $WNS < 300$ ps



Setting Up report_timing_summary

➤ GUI



opt_post_timing.tcl file:
report_timing_summary -file opt_timing.rpt

➤ Batch

Build.tcl file:

```
link_design -name top -part xc7vx1140tflg1928-2  
read_xdc top.xdc
```

```
opt_design  
report_timing_summary -file opt_timing.rpt  
write_checkpoint -force opt.dcp
```

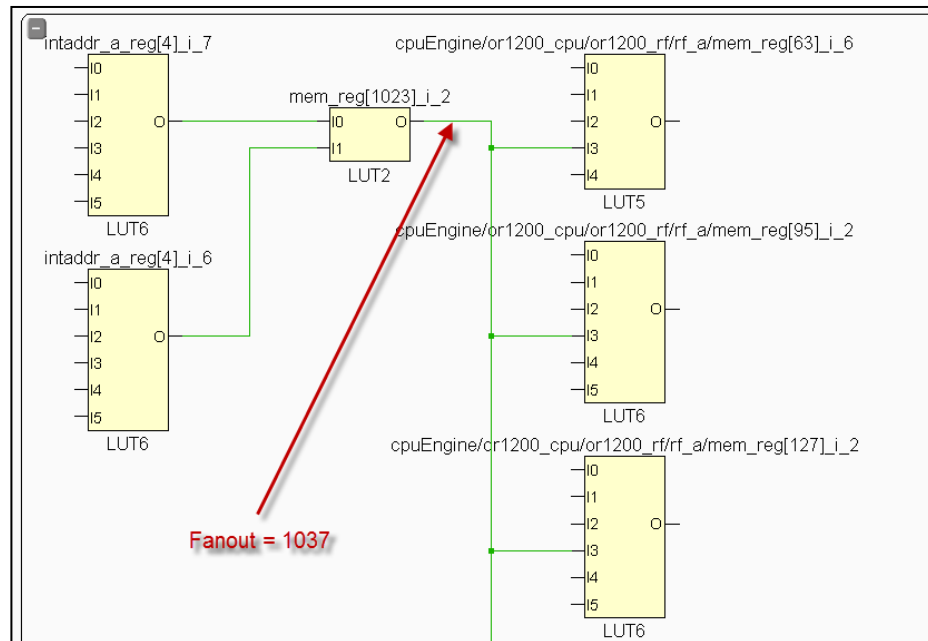
```
place_design  
report_timing_summary -file place_timing.rpt  
write_checkpoint -force place.dcp
```

```
phys_opt_design  
report_timing_summary -file popt_timing.rpt  
write_checkpoint -force popt.dcp
```

```
route_design  
report_timing_summary -file routed_timing.rpt  
write_checkpoint -force routed.dcp
```

High Fanout Nets Driven by LUTs

- Recommended to drive high fanout nets from a synchronous start point
 - Identify high fanout nets driven by LUTs
- report_high_fanout_nets – load_types –max_nets 100**
- 2012.4 requires placed design
 - 2013.1 hope to be able to do this before placement



Tcl Console

Device : xc7k70tffg676-2

Fanout	Driver Type	Clock Enable			Set/Reset			Data & Other			Clock			Net Name
		Slice	IO	BRAM/DSP/OTHER	Slice	IO	BRAM/DSP/OTHER	Slice	IO	BRAM/DSP/OTHER	Slice	IO	BRAM/DSP/OTHER	
10213	FDCE	0	0	0	10157	0	0	56	0	0	0	0	0	rectify_reset
1037	LUT2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1037	0	0	0	0	cpuEngine/or1200_cpu/or1200_rf/rf_a/n_12332_mem_reg[1023]_i_2
1027	RAMB36E1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1027	0	0	0	0	usbEngine0/usb_dma_wb_in/buffer_fifo/fifo_out[3]
1027	RAMB36E1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1027	0	0	0	0	usbEngine1/usb_dma_wb_in/buffer_fifo/fifo_out[3]
1020	RAMB36E1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1020	0	0	0	0	usbEngine0/usb_dma_wb_in/buffer_fifo/fifo_out[2]
1020	RAMB36E1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1020	0	0	0	0	usbEngine1/usb_dma_wb_in/buffer_fifo/fifo_out[2]
560	FDCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	560	0	0	0	0	usbEngine0/u1/u3/buf0_r1
560	FDCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	560	0	0	0	0	usbEngine1/u1/u3/buf0_r1

Incremental Placement

- Design checkpoint from near-timing-closed run can be used to guide placement for a second run through the tools

opt_design

place_design

phys_opt_design

route_design

write_checkpoint -guide.dcp

place_design -incremental guide.dcp

phys_opt_design

route_design

Vivado Strategies

- 2013.1 will include TCL based strategies
 - Requires manual application until 2013.3 (est)
- Useful for that last mile of timing closure

```
./run1/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.109 | TNS=-1.78 | WHS=0.0173 | THS=0 |
./run2/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.15 | TNS=-8.78 | WHS=0.00986 | THS=0 |
./run3/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.159 | TNS=-16.8 | WHS=0.00986 | THS=0 |
./run4/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.072 | TNS=-0.187 | WHS=0.0172 | THS=0 |
./run5/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.0774 | TNS=-0.0817 | WHS=0.018 | THS=0 |
./run6/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=0.0232 | TNS=0 | WHS=0.0208 | THS=0 |
./run7/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.109 | TNS=-1.78 | WHS=0.0173 | THS=0 |
./run8/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.127 | TNS=-3.29 | WHS=0.0172 | THS=0 |
./run9/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.154 | TNS=-6.63 | WHS=0.0162 | THS=0 |
./run10/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.053 | TNS=-0.177 | WHS=0.0182 | THS=0 |
./run11/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.15 | TNS=-8.78 | WHS=0.00986 | THS=0 |
./run12/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.159 | TNS=-16.8 | WHS=0.00986 | THS=0 |
./run13/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.072 | TNS=-0.187 | WHS=0.0172 | THS=0 |
./run15/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.155 | TNS=-12.2 | WHS=0.0124 | THS=0 |
./run17/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.042 | TNS=-0.292 | WHS=0.0137 | THS=0 |
./run18/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.155 | TNS=-12.2 | WHS=0.0124 | THS=0 |
./run19/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.155 | TNS=-12.2 | WHS=0.0124 | THS=0 |
./run21/log1:INFO: [Route 35-20] Post Routing Timing Summary | WNS=-0.148 | TNS=-27.6 | WHS=0.0208 | THS=0 |
```



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V. For More Information

There is No Shortage of Information on TCL

- Vivado Design Suite Tcl Command Reference Guide (Xilinx.com)
- Vivado Design Suite Properties Reference Guide (Xilinx.com)
- The GUI
 - `help` returns a number of categories, `help [category]` returns additional detail
 - `[command] -help` returns detail on the command
- Xilinx Tcl Cheat Sheet
- Tcl and the TK Toolkit (John K. Ousterhout, Amazon.com)