
AVR Interfacing

Timer

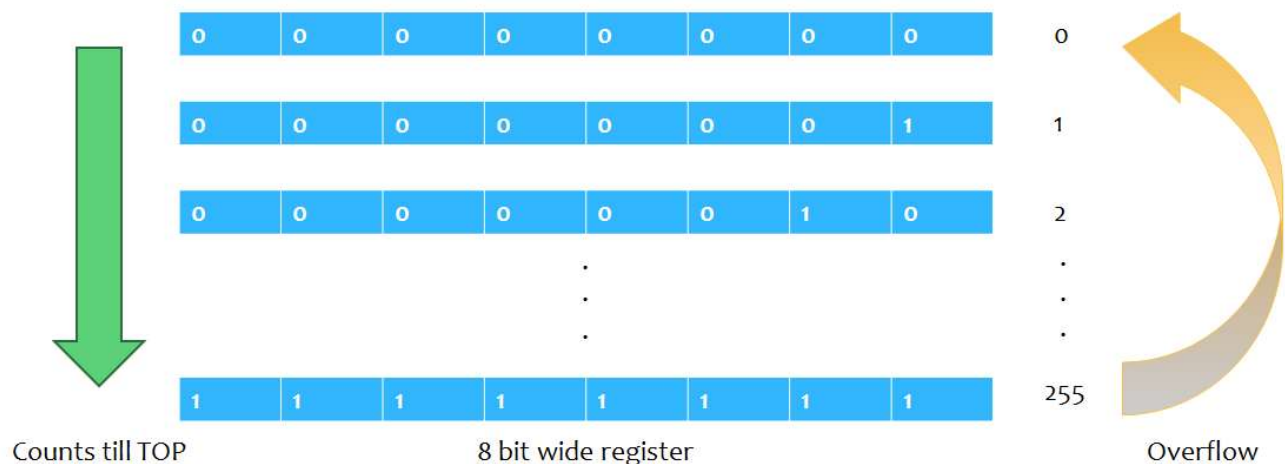
Agenda

- Introduction to AVR Timer.
 - AVR Overflow mode
 - AVR Compare match mode (CTC)
-

Timer Introduction

Timers is an important concept in the field of electronics. It can be generated a time base using a timer circuit, using a microcontroller, etc.

- In Microcontroller, timer is a register, but not a normal one.
- The value of this register increases/decreases automatically.
- In AVR, timers are of two types: 8-bit and 16-bit timers.
 - In an 8-bit timer, the register used is 8-bit wide whereas in 16-bit timer, the register width is of 16 bits.
 - The 8-bit timer is capable of counting $2^8=256$ steps from 0 to 255 as demonstrated below. A 16 bit timer is capable of counting $2^{16}=65536$ steps from 0 to 65535.



Timer Introduction

- Timer can be used as
 - Precise timer
 - Counter
 - PWM (Pulse width modulation)
 - ICU (Input Capture unit)
- The best part is that the timer is totally independent of the CPU. Thus, it runs parallel to the CPU and there is no CPU's intervention, which makes the timer quite accurate.

$$\text{Time Period} = \frac{1}{\text{Frequency}}$$

- If Microcontroller works at frequency=4MHz, hence the timer will take $1/\text{freq} = 1/4\text{M} = 0.00025$ ms for the one count that called “system tick”.
- To calculate the number of counts needed for a specific delay the following formula is used:

$$\text{Timer Count} = \frac{\text{Required Delay}}{\text{Clock Time Period}} - 1$$

Timer Introduction

$$\text{Timer Count} = \frac{\text{Required Delay}}{\text{Clock Time Period}} - 1$$

- If required delay needs more counts than the max counts in the timer, prescaler (frequency division) can be used.

- For example:

Required Delay = 184 ms

F_CPU = 4 MHz

- $t_{\text{sys_tick}} = \frac{1}{\text{clock freq}} = \frac{\text{prescaler}}{F_{\text{cpu}}}$

Prescaler	Clock Frequency	Timer Count
8	500 kHz	91999
64	62.5 kHz	11499
256	15.625 kHz	2874
1024	3906.25 Hz	717.75

- In 8 bit timer max counts=255 and in 16 bit timer max counts=65535. Therefore, To obtain the required delay, we can use prescaler 64, 256 or 1024.

AVR Overflow mode

Problem Statement

Let's define a problem statement for us. The simplest one being the LED flasher. Let's say, we need to flash an LED every 6 ms and we have a CPU clock frequency of 32 kHz.

Methodology

Now, as per the following formula, with a clock frequency of 32 kHz and 8-bit counter, the maximum delay possible is of 8 ms. This is quite low. Hence for a delay of 6 ms, we need a timer count of 191. This can easily be achieved with an 8-bit counter (MAX = 255).

Thus, what we need to do is quite simple. We need to keep a track of the counter value. As soon as it reaches 191, we toggle the LED value and reset the counter.

AVR Overflow mode

- In AVR, there are three types of timers Timer0, Timer1 and Timer2
- TIMER1 is a 16-bit timer whereas others are 8-bit timers.
- To configure the timer as we need. Knowing the registers details will the help.

TCNT0 Register Timer/Counter Register

This is where the 8-bit counter of the timer resides. The value of the counter is stored here and it increases automatically each clock cycle. Data can be both read/written from this register. The initial value of the counter is set by writing it.

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
	<div>TCNT0[7:0]</div>								TCNT0
Read/Write	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

AVR Overflow mode

TCCR0B Register — Timer/Counter Control Register B

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
0x25 (0x45)	FOC0A	FOC0B	—	—	WGM02	CS02	CS01	CS00	TCCR0B
Read/Write	W	W	R	R	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Right now, we will concentrate on the highlighted bits. The other bits will be discussed as and when necessary. By selecting these three **Clock Select Bits, CS02:00**, we set the timer up by choosing proper prescaler. The possible combinations are shown below.

CS02	CS01	CS00	Description
0	0	0	No clock source (Timer/Counter stopped).
0	0	1	$\text{clk}_{I/O}/(\text{No prescaling})$
0	1	0	$\text{clk}_{I/O}/8$ (From prescaler)
0	1	1	$\text{clk}_{I/O}/64$ (From prescaler)
1	0	0	$\text{clk}_{I/O}/256$ (From prescaler)
1	0	1	$\text{clk}_{I/O}/1024$ (From prescaler)
1	1	0	External clock source on T0 pin. Clock on falling edge.
1	1	1	External clock source on T0 pin. Clock on rising edge.

AVR Overflow mode

For the previous Problem statement example: we need to flash an LED every 6 ms and we are have a CPU clock frequency of 32 kHz.

```
#include <avr/io.h>
void timer0_init(){
    // set up timer with no prescaling
    TCCR0B |= (1 << CS00);
    // initialize counter
    TCNT0 = 0;}
void main(void){
    // connect led to pin PC0
    DDRC |= (1 << PC0);
    // initialize timer
    timer0_init();
    while(1){
        // check if the timer count reaches 191
        if (TCNT0 >= 191){
            PORTC ^= (1 << PC0);    // toggles the led
            TCNT0 = 0;               // reset counter
        }
    }
}
```

AVR Overflow mode

Problem Statement Redefined Again

Let's flash an LED every 50 ms with CPU frequency 16 MHz using Interrupt.

- The concept here is that the hardware generates an interrupt every time the timer overflows. Since the required delay is greater than the maximum possible delay, obviously the timer will overflow. And whenever the timer overflows, an interrupt is fired. Now the question is *how many times should the interrupt be fired?*
 - *If we used prescaler as 256*
 - For this, let's do some calculation. it should take 4.096 ms for the timer to overflow. Now as soon as the timer overflows, an interrupt is fired and an Interrupt Service Routine (ISR) is executed. Now,
$$50 \text{ ms} \div 4.096 \text{ ms} = 12.207$$
-

AVR Overflow mode

Problem Statement Redefined Again

- The timer has overflown 12 times, 49.152 ms would have passed. After that, when the timer undergoes 13th iteration, it would achieve a delay of 50 ms. Thus, in the 13th iteration, we need a delay of $50 - 49.152 = 0.848$ ms. At a frequency of 62.5 kHz (prescaler = 256), each tick takes 0.016 ms. Thus to achieve a delay of 0.848 ms, it would require 53 ticks. Thus, in the 13th iteration, we only allow the timer to count up to 53, and then reset it. All this can be achieved in the ISR as follows:

```
// global variable to count the number of overflows
volatile uint8_t tot_overflow;
// TIMER0 overflow interrupt service routine
// called whenever TCNT0 overflows
ISR(TIMER0_OVF_vect)
{
    // keep a track of number of overflows
    tot_overflow++;
}
```

AVR Overflow mode

```
void main(void)
{
    // connect led to pin PC0
    DDRC |= (1 << PC0);
    // initialize timer
    timer0_init();
    // loop forever
    while(1){
        // check if no. of overflows = 12
        if (tot_overflow >= 12) // NOTE: '>=' is used
        {
            // check if the timer count reaches 53
            if (TCNT0 >= 53){
                PORTC ^= (1 << PC0); // toggles the led
                TCNT0 = 0; // reset counter
                tot_overflow = 0; // reset overflow counter
            }
        }
    }
}
```

AVR Overflow mode

- How to enable the interrupt feature. For this, you should be aware of the following registers.
- TIMSK0 Register – Timer/Counter Interrupt Mask Register**

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
(0x6E)	–	–	–	–	–	OCIE0B	OCIE0A	TOIE0	TIMSK0
Read/Write	R	R	R	R	R	R/W	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

It is a common register for all the three timers. Setting **TOIE0** (Timer/Counter0 Overflow Interrupt Enable) bit to '1' enables the TIMER0 overflow interrupt.

- TIFR Register (Flag register) – Timer/Counter 0 Interrupt Flag Register**

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
0x15 (0x35)	–	–	–	–	–	OCF0B	OCF0A	TOV0	TIFR0
Read/Write	R	R	R	R	R	R/W	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

The bit **TOV0** (Timer/Counter0 Overflow Flag) is set (one) when an overflow occurs in Timer/Counter0. TOV0 is cleared by hardware when executing the corresponding interrupt handling vector.

AVR Overflow mode

- Enabling Global Interrupts

In the AVR, there's only one single bit which handles all the interrupts. Thus, to enable it, we need to enable the global interrupts. This is done by calling a function named `sei()`. According to the previous regs the init function will be as follows:

```
#include <avr/io.h>
#include <avr/interrupt.h>
// initialize timer, interrupt and variable
void timer0_init(){
    // set up timer with prescaler = 256
    TCCR0B |= (1 << CS02);
    // initialize counter
    TCNT0 = 0;
    // enable overflow interrupt
    TIMSK0 |= (1 << TOIE0);
    // enable global interrupts
    sei();
    // initialize overflow counter variable
    tot_overflow = 0; }
```

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

AVR timers can operate not only in overflow mode but there are different modes it can be operated in as follows:

- Normal mode (Overflow).
- Clear Timer on Compare mode (CTC) or Compare Match mode.
- Pulse Width Modulation mode (PWM).

Clear Timer on Compare (CTC) Mode:

Suppose that We had two timer values with us – Set Point (SP) and Process Value (PV). In every iteration, we used to compare the process value with the set point. Once the process value becomes equal (or exceeds) the set point, the process value is reset.

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

Problem Statement

We need to flash an LED every 100 ms with CPU frequency 16 MHz.

Methodology – Using CTC Mode

Now, given Freq_CPU = 16 MHz, with a prescaler of 64, the frequency of the clock pulse reduces to 250 kHz. With a Required Delay = 100 ms, we get the Timer Count to be equal to 24999. Up until now, we would have let the value of the timer increment, and check its value every iteration, whether it's equal to 24999 or not, and then reset the timer. Now, the same will be done in hardware! We won't check its value every time in software! We will simply check whether the flag bit is set or not.

$$\text{Timer Count} = \frac{\text{Required Delay}}{\text{Clock Time Period}} - 1$$

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

Now, let me introduce you to the register bits which help you to implement this CTC Mode.

- TCCR1A and TCCR1B Registers (Timer/Counter1 Control Register)**

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
(0x80)	COM1A1	COM1A0	COM1B1	COM1B0	–	–	WGM11	WGM10	TCCR1A
Read/Write	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	R	R	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
(0x81)	ICNC1	ICES1	–	WGM13	WGM12	CS12	CS11	CS10	TCCR1B
Read/Write	R/W	R/W	R	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

- We are already aware of the Clock Select Bits – CS12:10 which set the prescaler.
- Right now, we are concerned with the **Wave Generation Mode Bits – WGM13:10**, which configures the operating mode of the timer. We have discussed before normal mode (overflow mode)

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

- The following table shows how to configure the different modes by configure the values of **WGM13:0**

Mode	WGM13	WGM12 (CTC1)	WGM11 (PWM11)	WGM10 (PWM10)	Timer/Counter Mode of Operation	TOP	Update of OCR1x	TOV1 Flag Set on
0	0	0	0	0	Normal	0xFFFF	Immediate	MAX
1	0	0	0	1	PWM, Phase Correct, 8-bit	0x00FF	TOP	BOTTOM
2	0	0	1	0	PWM, Phase Correct, 9-bit	0x01FF	TOP	BOTTOM
3	0	0	1	1	PWM, Phase Correct, 10-bit	0x03FF	TOP	BOTTOM
4	0	1	0	0	CTC	OCR1A	Immediate	MAX
5	0	1	0	1	Fast PWM, 8-bit	0x00FF	TOP	TOP
6	0	1	1	0	Fast PWM, 9-bit	0x01FF	TOP	TOP
7	0	1	1	1	Fast PWM, 10-bit	0x03FF	TOP	TOP
8	1	0	0	0	PWM, Phase and Frequency Correct	ICR1	BOTTOM	BOTTOM
9	1	0	0	1	PWM, Phase and Frequency Correct	OCR1A	BOTTOM	BOTTOM
10	1	0	1	0	PWM, Phase Correct	ICR1	TOP	BOTTOM
11	1	0	1	1	PWM, Phase Correct	OCR1A	TOP	BOTTOM
12	1	1	0	0	CTC	ICR1	Immediate	MAX
13	1	1	0	1	Reserved	–	–	–
14	1	1	1	0	Fast PWM	ICR1	TOP	TOP
15	1	1	1	1	Fast PWM	OCR1A	TOP	TOP

- We have discussed before normal mode (overflow mode) which requires WGM13:0=0000. By default, these bit are zero unless it is not configured.

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

- See that there are two possible selections for CTC Mode. Practically, both are the same, except the fact that we store the timer compare value in different registers. Right now, let's move on with the first option (0100). Thus, the initialization of TCCR1A and TCCR1B is as follows.

//Mode CTC and prescaler= 64

TCCR1A |=0;

TCCR1B |= (1<< WGM12)
| (1<< CS00)
| (1<< CS01);

Mode	WGM13	WGM12 (CTC1)	WGM11 (PWM11)	WGM10 (PWM10)	Timer/Counter Mode of Operation	TOP	Update of OCR1x	TOV1 Flag Set on
0	0	0	0	0	Normal	0xFFFF	Immediate	MAX
1	0	0	0	1	PWM, Phase Correct, 8-bit	0x00FF	TOP	BOTTOM
2	0	0	1	0	PWM, Phase Correct, 9-bit	0x01FF	TOP	BOTTOM
3	0	0	1	1	PWM, Phase Correct, 10-bit	0x03FF	TOP	BOTTOM
4	0	1	0	0	CTC	OCR1A	Immediate	MAX
5	0	1	0	1	Fast PWM, 8-bit	0x00FF	TOP	TOP
6	0	1	1	0	Fast PWM, 9-bit	0x01FF	TOP	TOP
7	0	1	1	1	Fast PWM, 10-bit	0x03FF	TOP	TOP
8	1	0	0	0	PWM, Phase and Frequency Correct	ICR1	BOTTOM	BOTTOM
9	1	0	0	1	PWM, Phase and Frequency Correct	OCR1A	BOTTOM	BOTTOM
10	1	0	1	0	PWM, Phase Correct	ICR1	TOP	BOTTOM
11	1	0	1	1	PWM, Phase Correct	OCR1A	TOP	BOTTOM
12	1	1	0	0	CTC	ICR1	Immediate	MAX
13	1	1	0	1	Reserved	–	–	–
14	1	1	1	0	Fast PWM	ICR1	TOP	TOP
15	1	1	1	1	Fast PWM	OCR1A	TOP	TOP

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

- TIFR1 Register (Timer/Counter1 Interrupt Flag Register)

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
0x16 (0x36)	–	–	ICF1	–	–	OCF1B	OCF1A	TOV1	TIFR1
Read/Write	R	R	R/W	R	R	R/W	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

We are interested in **Bit 2:1 – OCF1A:B – Timer/Counter1, Output Compare A/B Match Flag Bit**. This bit is set (one) by the AVR whenever a match occurs i.e. TCNT1 becomes equal to OCR1A (or OCR1B). It is cleared automatically whenever the corresponding Interrupt Service Routine (ISR) is executed. Alternatively, it can be cleared by writing '1' to it!

❖ Now return back to our problem statement: We need to flash an LED every 100 ms with CPU frequency 16 MHz using timer1 in AVR.

```
#include <avr/io.h>
// initialize timer, interrupt and variable
void timer1_init(){
    // set up timer with prescaler = 64 and CTC mode
    TCCR1B |= (1 << WGM12) | (1 << CS01) | (1 << CS00);
    // initialize counter
    TCNT1 = 0;
    // initialize compare value
    OCR1A = 24999;
}
```

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

```
void main(void)
{
    // connect led to pin PC0
    DDRC |= (1 << PC0);
    // initialize timer
    timer1_init();
    while(1)
    {
        // check whether the flag bit is set
        // if set, it means that there has been a compare match
        // and the timer has been cleared
        // use this opportunity to toggle the led
        if (!(TIFR1 & (1 << OCF1A)))
        {
            PORTC ^= (1 << PC0); // toggles the led
            // wait! we are not done yet!
            // clear the flag bit manually since there is no ISR to execute
            // clear it by writing '1' to it (as per the datasheet)
            TIFR1 |= (1 << OCF1A);
        }
    }
}
```

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

Methodology – Using Interrupts with CTC Mode

- In the previous methodology, we simply used the CTC Mode of operation. We used to check every time for the flag bit (OCF1A). Now let's shift this responsibility to the AVR itself. now we *do not need to check* for the flag bit at all! The AVR will compare TCNT1 with OCR1A. Whenever a match occurs, it sets the flag bit OCF1A, and *also* fires an interrupt.
- There are three kinds of interrupts in AVR – *overflow*, *compare* and *capture*. We have already discussed the *overflow* interrupt. For this case, we need to enable the *compare* interrupt. The following register is used to enable interrupts.

➤ TIMSK1 Register – Timer/Counter1 Interrupt Mask Register

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
(0x6F)	–	–	ICIE1	–	–	OCIE1B	OCIE1A	TOIE1	TIMSK1
Read/Write	R	R	R/W	R	R	R/W	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

We have already come across TOIE1 bit. Now, the **Bit 2:1 – OCIE1A:B – Timer/Counter1, Output Compare A/B Match Interrupt Enable** bits are of our interest here. Enabling it ensures that an interrupt is fired whenever a match occurs. Since there are two CTC channels (unit) in Timer1, we have two different bits OCIE1A and OCIE1B for them.

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

➤ Now let's proceed to write an ISR for this. The ISR is defined as follows:

❖ Note: Executing the ISR clears the OCF1A flag bit automatically and the timer value (TCNT1) is reset.

```
ISR (TIMER1_COMPA_vect)
{
    // toggle led here
    PORTC ^= (1<<PC0);
}
```

➤ Init function will be as follows:

```
#include <avr/io.h>
#include <avr/interrupt.h>
// initialize timer, interrupt and variable
void timer1_init(){
    // set up timer with prescaler = 64 and CTC mode
    TCCR1B |= (1 << WGM12) | (1 << CS01) | (1 << CS00);
    // initialize counter
    TCNT1 = 0;
    // initialize compare value
    OCR1A = 24999;
    // enable compare interrupt
    TIMSK1 |= (1 << OCIE1A);
    // enable global interrupts
    sei();
}
```


AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

```
void main(void)
{
    // connect led to pin PC0
    DDRC |= (1 << PC0);
    // initialize timer
    timer1_init();
    // loop forever
    while(1)
    {
        // do nothing
        // whenever a match occurs, ISR is fired
        // toggle the led every 100ms in the ISR itself
        // no need to keep track of any flag bits here
        // done!
    }
}
```

- ❖ Now, we have seen how to implement the CTC mode using interrupts, reducing the code size, comparisons and processing time.
-

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

Methodology – Using Hardware CTC Mode

- The pins PD6, PD5, PB1, PB2, PB3 and PD3 have their special functions are mentioned in the brackets (OC0A, OC0B, OC1A, OC1B , OC2A and OC2A). These are the Output Compare pins of TIMER0, TIMER1 and TIMER2

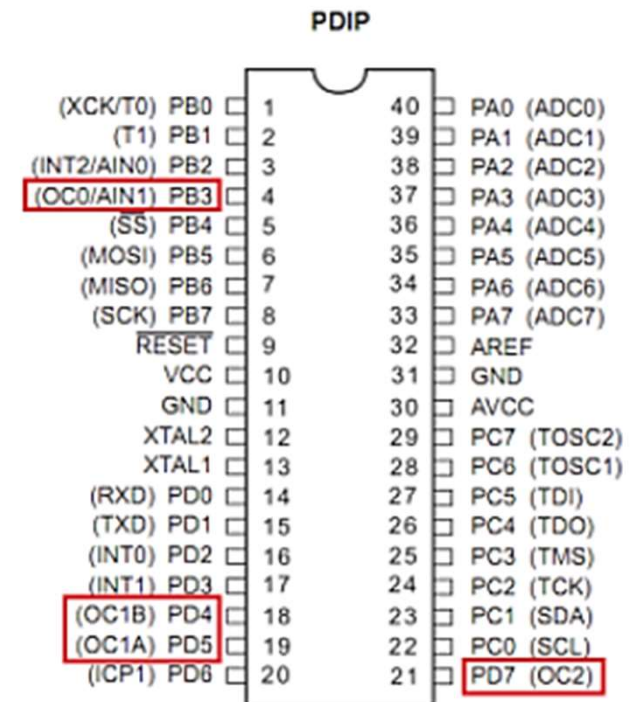
- TCCR1A Register Timer/Counter1 Control Register A**

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
(0x80)	COM1A1	COM1A0	COM1B1	COM1B0	–	–	WGM11	WGM10	TCCR1A
Read/Write	R/W	R/W	R/W	R/W	R	R	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

- Now time for us to concentrate on Bit 7:6 – COM1A1:0 and Bit 5:4 – COM1B1:0 – Compare Output Mode for Compare Unit A/B. These bits control the behavior of the Output Compare (OC) pins.

The behavior changes depending upon the following modes:

- Non-PWM mode (normal / CTC mode)
- Fast PWM mode
- Phase Correct / Phase & Frequency Correct PWM mode



AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

- The following options hold good for non-PWM mode

COM1A1/COM1B1	COM1A0/COM1B0	Description
0	0	Normal port operation, OC1A/OC1B disconnected.
0	1	Toggle OC1A/OC1B on compare match
1	0	Clear OC1A/OC1B on compare match (Set output to low level)
1	1	Set OC1A/OC1B on compare match (Set output to high level)

Compare Output Mode, non-PWM

- Since we need to toggle the LED, we choose the second option (01). Well, that's all we need to do! No need to check any flag bit, no need to attend to any interrupts, nothing. Just set the timer to this mode and we are done! Whenever a compare match occurs, the OC1A pin is automatically toggled.
- But we need to compromise on the hardware. Only PB1 or PB2 (OC1A or OC1B) can be controlled this way, which means that we should connect the LED to PB1 (since we are using channel A) instead of PC0 (which we had been using in all the examples till now).

AVR Compare match mode (CTC)

```
#include <avr/io.h>
#include <avr/interrupt.h>
// initialize timer, interrupt and variable
void timer1_init()
{
    // set up timer with prescaler = 64 and CTC mode
    TCCR1B |= (1 << WGM12) | (1 << CS01) | (1 << CS00);
    // set up timer OC1A pin in toggle mode
    TCCR1A |= (1 << COM1A0);
    // initialize counter
    TCNT1 = 0;
    // initialize compare value
    OCR1A = 24999;
}

void main(void) {
    // connect led to pin PB1
    DDRB |= (1 << PB1);
    // initialize timer
    timer1_init();
    while(1) {
        // do nothing
        // whenever a match occurs
        // OC1A is toggled automatically!
        // no need to keep track of any flag bits or ISR
    }
}
```
