

CS61C Spring 2015 Discussion 9

Floating Point

The IEEE 754 standard defines a binary representation for floating point values using three fields:

- The *sign* determines the sign of the number (0 for positive, 1 for negative)
- The *exponent* is in **biased notation** with a bias of 127
- The *significand* is akin to unsigned, but used to store a fraction instead of an integer.

The below table shows the bit breakdown for the single precision (32-bit) representation:

Sign	Exponent	Significand
1 bit	8 bits	23 bits

There is also a double precision encoding format that uses 64 bits. This behaves the same as the single precision but uses 11 bits for the exponent (and thus a bias of 1023) and 52 bits for the significand.

How a float is interpreted depends on the values in the exponent and significand fields:

For normalized floats:

$$\text{Value} = (-1)^{\text{Sign}} \times 2^{(\text{Exponent} - \text{Bias})} \times 1.\text{significand}_2$$

For denormalized floats:

$$\text{Value} = (-1)^{\text{Sign}} \times 2^{(\text{Exponent} - \text{Bias} + 1)} \times 0.\text{significand}_2$$

Exponent	Significand	Meaning
0	Anything	Denorm
1-254	Anything	Normal
255	0	Infinity
255	Nonzero	NaN

Exercises

1. How many zeroes can be represented using a float? **2**

2. What is the largest finite positive value that can be stored using a single precision float?

$$\text{0x7FFFFFFF} = (2 - 2^{-23}) \times 2^{127}$$

3. What is the smallest positive value that can be stored using a single precision float?

$$\text{0x00000001} = 2^{-23} \times 2^{-126}$$

4. What is the smallest positive normalized value that can be stored using a single precision float?

$$\text{0x00800000} = 2^{-126}$$

5. Convert the following numbers from binary to decimal or from decimal to binary:

0x00000000 8.25 0x00000F00 39.5625 0xFF94BEEF $-\infty$

$$\text{0x00000000} = 0$$

$$8.25 = \text{0x41040000}$$

$$\text{0x00000F00} = (2^{-12} + 2^{-13} + 2^{-14} + 2^{-15}) \times 2^{-126}$$

$$39.5625 = \text{0x421E4000}$$

$$\text{0xFF94BEEF} = \text{NaN}$$

$$-\infty = \text{0xFF800000}$$

AMAT

AMAT is the average (expected) time it takes for memory access. It can be calculated using this formula:

$$\text{AMAT} = \text{hit time} + \text{miss rate} \times \text{miss penalty}$$

Miss rates can be given in terms of either local miss rates or global miss rates. The *local miss rate* of a cache is the percentage of accesses into the particular cache that miss at the cache, while the *global miss rate* is the percentage of all accesses that miss at the cache.

Exercises

Suppose your system consists of:

- A L1\$ that hits in 2 cycles and has a local miss rate of 20%
- A L2\$ that hits in 15 cycles and has a global miss rate of 5%
- Main memory hits in 100 cycles

1. What is the local miss rate of L2\$?

$$\text{Local miss rate} = 5\% / 20\% = 0.25 = 25\%$$

2. What is the AMAT of the system?

$$\text{AMAT} = 2 + 20\% \times 15 + 5\% \times 100 = 10 \text{ (using global miss rates)}$$

$$\text{Alternatively, } \text{AMAT} = 2 + 20\% \times (15 + 25\% \times 100) = 10$$

3. Suppose we want to reduce the AMAT of the system to 8 or lower by adding in a L3\$. If the L3\$ has a local miss rate of 30%, what is the largest hit time that the L3\$ can have?

Let H = hit time of the cache. Using the AMAT equation, we can write:

$$2 + 20\% \times (15 + 25\% \times (H + 30\% \times 100)) \leq 8$$

Solving for H , we find that $H \leq 30$. So the largest hit time is 30 cycles.

Flynn Taxonomy

1. Explain SISD and give an example if available.

Single Instruction Single Data; each instruction is executed in order, acting on a single stream of data. For example, traditional computer programs.

2. Explain SIMD and give an example if available.

Single Instruction Multiple Data; each instruction is executed in order, acting on multiple streams of data. For example, the SSE Intrinsics.

3. Explain MISD and give an example if available.

Multiple Instruction Single Data; multiple instructions are executed simultaneously, acting on a single stream of data. There are no good modern examples.

4. Explain MIMD and give an example if available.

Multiple Instruction Multiple Data; multiple instructions are executed simultaneously, acting on multiple streams of data. For example, map reduce or multithreaded programs.