



Computer Organization & Architecture

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Floating Point Standard

- **Defined by IEEE Std 754-1985**
- **Developed in response to divergence of representations**
 - Portability issues for scientific code
- **Now almost universally adopted**
- **Two representations**
 - Single precision (32-bit)
 - Double precision (64-bit)

IEEE Floating-Point Format

single: 8 bits
double: 11 bits

single: 23 bits
double: 52 bits

S	Exponent	Fraction
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$$x = (-1)^S \times (1 + \text{Fraction}) \times 2^{(\text{Exponent} - \text{Bias})}$$

- **S:** sign bit (0 \Rightarrow non-negative, 1 \Rightarrow negative)
- **Normalize significand:** $1.0 \leq |\text{significand}| < 2.0$
 - Always has a leading pre-binary-point 1 bit, so no need to represent it explicitly (hidden bit)
 - Significand is Fraction with the “1.” restored
- **Exponent:** excess representation: actual exponent + Bias
 - Ensures exponent is unsigned
 - Single: Bias = 127; Double: Bias = 1203

Single-Precision Range

- Exponents 00000000 and 11111111 reserved
- Smallest value
 - Exponent: 00000001
 \Rightarrow actual exponent = $1 - 127 = -126$
 - Fraction: 000...00 \Rightarrow significand = 1.0
 - $\pm 1.0 \times 2^{-126} \approx \pm 1.2 \times 10^{-38}$
- Largest value
 - exponent: 11111110
 \Rightarrow actual exponent = $254 - 127 = +127$
 - Fraction: 111...11 \Rightarrow significand ≈ 2.0
 - $\pm 2.0 \times 2^{+127} \approx \pm 3.4 \times 10^{+38}$

Double-Precision Range

- Exponents 0000...00 and 1111...11 reserved
- Smallest value
 - Exponent: 000000000001
 \Rightarrow actual exponent = $1 - 1023 = -1022$
 - Fraction: 000...00 \Rightarrow significand = 1.0
 - $\pm 1.0 \times 2^{-1022} \approx \pm 2.2 \times 10^{-308}$
- Largest value
 - Exponent: 111111111110
 \Rightarrow actual exponent = $2046 - 1023 = +1023$
 - Fraction: 111...11 \Rightarrow significand ≈ 2.0
 - $\pm 2.0 \times 2^{+1023} \approx \pm 1.8 \times 10^{+308}$

Floating-Point Precision

- **Relative precision**
 - all fraction bits are significant
 - **Single:** approx 2^{-23}
 - Equivalent to $23 \times \log_{10} 2 \approx 23 \times 0.3 \approx 6$ decimal digits of precision
 - **Double:** approx 2^{-52}
 - Equivalent to $52 \times \log_{10} 2 \approx 52 \times 0.3 \approx 16$ decimal digits of precision

Floating-Point Example

- Represent -0.75
 - $-0.75 = (-1)^1 \times 1.1_2 \times 2^{-1}$
 - $S = 1$
 - Fraction = $1000...00_2$
 - Exponent = $-1 + \text{Bias}$
 - Single: $-1 + 127 = 126 = 01111110_2$
 - Double: $-1 + 1023 = 1022 = 0111111110_2$
- Single: $1011111101000...00$
- Double: $1011111111101000...00$

Floating-Point Example

What number is represented by the single-precision float

11000000**1**01000...00

- $S = 1$
- Fraction = $01000...00_2$
- Exponent = $10000001_2 = 129$
- $x = (-1)^1 \times (1 + 01_2) \times 2^{(129 - 127)}$
 $= (-1) \times 1.25 \times 2^2$
 $= -5.0$