

4.4.1 The X-register, Y-register, and Z-register

The registers R26..R31 have some added functions to their general purpose usage. These registers are 16-bit address pointers for indirect addressing of the data space. The three indirect address registers X, Y, and Z are defined as described in [Figure 4-3](#).

Figure 4-3. The X-, Y-, and Z-registers



In the different addressing modes these address registers have functions as fixed displacement, automatic increment, and automatic decrement (see the instruction set reference for details).

4.5 Stack Pointer

The Stack is mainly used for storing temporary data, for storing local variables and for storing return addresses after interrupts and subroutine calls. Note that the Stack is implemented as growing from higher to lower memory locations. The Stack Pointer Register always points to the top of the Stack. The Stack Pointer points to the data SRAM Stack area where the Subroutine and Interrupt Stacks are located. A Stack PUSH command will decrease the Stack Pointer.

The Stack in the data SRAM must be defined by the program before any subroutine calls are executed or interrupts are enabled. Initial Stack Pointer value equals the last address of the internal SRAM and the Stack Pointer must be set to point above start of the SRAM, see [Figure 5-3 on page 18](#).

See [Table 4-1](#) for Stack Pointer details.

Table 4-1. Stack Pointer instructions

Instruction	Stack pointer	Description
PUSH	Decrement by 1	Data is pushed onto the stack
CALL ICALL RCALL	Decrement by 2	Return address is pushed onto the stack with a subroutine call or interrupt
POP	Increment by 1	Data is popped from the stack
RET RETI	Increment by 2	Return address is popped from the stack with return from subroutine or return from interrupt

The AVR Stack Pointer is implemented as two 8-bit registers in the I/O space. The number of bits actually used is implementation dependent. Note that the data space in some implementations of the AVR architecture is so small that only SPL is needed. In this case, the SPH Register will not be present.