

Chapter 7 - OpenROAD flow scripts

Course authors (Git file)



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Section 1

Introduction



Introduction

What happen on the way to here:

- GDS-2-RTL: OpenROAD
- OpenROAD flow scripts (ORFS) overview
- ORFS flow steps and flow components
- First run of the flow scripts
- A Dive into the PDK (Klayout)
- Analysing: Heatmaps and more (ORFS GUI)

NOW:

- One day of using ORFS
- Getting a hands on with important data and features.



Section 2

ORFS Tutorial



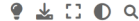
ORFS Tutorial

There is a good tutorial about ORFS in the official documentation:

<https://openroad-flow-scripts.readthedocs.io/en/latest/tutorials/FlowTutorial.html>

The ORFS online-tutorial was not written for the use with the IHP PDK especially, but we can adopt this easily.





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OpenROAD Flow Scripts Tutorial

Introduction

This document describes a tutorial to run the complete OpenROAD flow from RTL-to-GDS using [OpenROAD Flow Scripts](#). It includes examples of useful design and manual usage in key flow stages to help users gain a good understanding of the [OpenROAD](#) application flow, data organization, GUI and commands.

This is intended for:

- Beginners or new users with some understanding of basic VLSI design flow. Users will learn the basics of installation to use OpenROAD-flow-scripts for the complete RTL-to-GDS flow from here.
- Users already familiar with the OpenROAD application and flow but would like to learn more about specific features and commands.

Figure 1: ORFS Online Tutorial



Section 3

Multiple runs



Caveats of multiple runs in ORFS

- ORFS does not handle multiple runs for a single design.
- The design run must be cleared with `make clean_all`, before a new runs can be started.
- !!! The previous data from the previous run will be lost.

Side feature:

- A run can start over where you left it.



Workaround for saving the design data

- ❶ After a design run:
 - Rename the results directory to something different:
 - flow/results/ihp-sg13g2/designname/base
 - flow/results/ihp-sg13g2/designname/base_old_1
 - Rename the reports directory to something different:
 - flow/reports/ihp-sg13g2/designname/base
 - flow/reports/ihp-sg13g2/designname/base_old_1
- ❷ With the start of the next run (make):
 - The original directory gets created again.
- ❸ Repeat that before every new run of the same design.



Reviewing the older design data

- The command `make gui_final` only works on the enabled design (Makefile, DESIGN_CONFIG)
- To load an older design from a renamed folder, run `openroad -gui`
- This opens an empty GUI and you can load a GDS into it.
- This can be done multiple times in parallel.



Section 4

Structure of flow directories



Structure of flow directories

Inside the flow directory:

```
1 flow$ ls
2
3 Makefile      platforms    test
4 designs      reports     tutorials
5 results      util        logs
6 objects      scripts
```

- **Makefile:** Runs the RTL-2-GDS toolchain with a design
- **platforms:** Technology nodes and PDKs
- **designs:** Source and configuration files of the designs
- **reoprts:** Generated report files from the design runs
- **results:** Generated result files from the design runs



Section 5

TCL Console and commands



TCL Console and commands

At the bottom of the OpenROAD GUI is the TCL command console.

Type `help` into the console to get a list of the available commands and their syntax.

Some commands that were already used in this course:

- `save_image`
- `report_design_area`
- `report_power`
- `report_worst_slack`



Section 6

Reports



Reports

- Reports get generated for each design run.
- The reports are stored in the reports directory.
- These are the report files for the gcd example:

```
1 reports/ihp-sg13g2/gcd/base$ ls
2
3 2_floorplan_final.rpt  6_finish.rpt          final_resizer.webp
4 3_detailed_place.rpt  congestion.rpt         final_routing.webp
5 3_resizer.rpt         cts_core_clock.webp   grt_antennas.log
6 4_cts_final.rpt       drt_antennas.log      synth_check.txt
7 5_global_place.rpt    final_clocks.webp     synth_stat.txt
8 5_global_route.rpt    final_ir_drop.webp    VDD.rpt
9 5_route_drc.rpt       final_placement.webp  VSS.rpt
```



Section 7

Logs



Logs

- Logs get generated for each design run.
- The logs are stored in the logs directory.
- These are the log files for the gcd example:

```

1 logs/ihp-sg13g2/gcd/base$ ls
2
3 1_1_yosys_canonicalize.log  2_6_floorplan_pdn.json  4_1_cts.log
4 1_1_yosys_hier_report.log  2_6_floorplan_pdn.log  5_1_grt.json
5 1_1_yosys.log              3_1_place_gp_skip_io.json 5_1_grt.log
6 2_1_floorplan.json         3_1_place_gp_skip_io.log 5_2_route.json
7 2_1_floorplan.log          3_2_place_iop.json       5_2_route.log
8 2_2_floorplan_io.json      3_2_place_iop.log        5_3_fillcell.json
9 2_2_floorplan_io.log       3_3_place_gp.json        5_3_fillcell.log
10 2_3_floorplan_tdms.json    3_3_place_gp.log         6_1_fill.json
11 2_3_floorplan_tdms.log     3_4_place_resized.json   6_1_fill.log
12 2_4_floorplan_macro.json   3_4_place_resized.log    6_1_merge.log
13 2_4_floorplan_macro.log    3_5_place_dp.json        6_report.json
14 2_5_floorplan_tapcell.json 3_5_place_dp.log         6_report.log
15 2_5_floorplan_tapcell.log  4_1_cts.json

```



Section 8

Results



Results

- Results (mostly odb, GDS) get generated for each design run.
- The results are stored in the results directory.
- These are the result files for the gcd example:

```

1 flow/results/ihp-sg13g2/gcd/base$ ls
2
3 1_1_yosys.v          3_3_place_gp.odb      6_1_fill.sdc
4 1_synth.rtlil        3_4_place_resized.odb 6_1_fill.v
5 1_synth.sdc          3_5_place_dp.odb      6_1_merged.gds
6 1_synth.v            3_place.odb           6_final.def
7 2_1_floorplan.odb    3_place.sdc           6_final.gds
8 2_2_floorplan_io.odb 4_1_cts.odb           6_final.odb
9 2_3_floorplan_tdms.odb 4_cts.odb             6_final.sdc
10 2_4_floorplan_macro.odb 4_cts.sdc             6_final.spef
11 2_5_floorplan_tapcell.odb 5_1_grt.odb           6_final.v
12 2_6_floorplan_pdn.odb 5_2_route.odb          clock_period.txt
13 2_floorplan.odb      5_3_fillcell.odb      keep_hierarchy.tcl
14 2_floorplan.sdc      5_route.odb           mem.json
15 3_1_place_gp_skip_io.odb 5_route.sdc          route.guide
16 3_2_place_io.odb     6_1_fill.odb          updated_clks.sdc

```



Section 9

Basic design initialization



Design configuration (config.mk)

config.mk from the ibex example:

<https://github.com/The-OpenROAD-Project/OpenROAD-flow-scripts/blob/master/flow/designs/sky130hd/ibex/config.mk>

Tutorial about the design configuration;

<https://openroad-flow-scripts.readthedocs.io/en/latest/tutorials/FlowTutorial.html#design-configuration>



Variable Name	Description
<code>PLATFORM</code>	Specifies Process design kit.
<code>DESIGN_NAME</code>	The name of the top-level module of the design
<code>VERILOG_FILES</code>	The path to the design Verilog files or JSON files providing a description of modules (check <code>yosys -h write_json</code> for more details).
<code>SDC_FILE</code>	The path to design <code>.sdc</code> file
<code>CORE_UTILIZATION</code>	The core utilization percentage.
<code>PLACE_DENSITY</code>	The desired placement density of cells. It reflects how spread the cells would be on the core area. 1 = closely dense. 0 = widely spread

Figure 2: Design config variables



Clock constraints (constraints.sdc)

constraints.sdc from the ibex example:

```
1 current_design ibex_core
2
3 set clk_name core_clock
4 set clk_port_name clk_i
5 set clk_period 10.0
6 set clk_io_pct 0.2
7
8 set clk_port [get_ports $clk_port_name]
9
10 create_clock -name $clk_name -period $clk_period $clk_port
11
12 set non_clock_inputs [lsearch -inline -all -not -exact [all_inputs] $clk_port]
13
14 set_input_delay [expr $clk_period * $clk_io_pct] -clock $clk_name $non_clock_inputs
15 set_output_delay [expr $clk_period * $clk_io_pct] -clock $clk_name [all_outputs]
```

<https://openroad-flow-scripts.readthedocs.io/en/latest/tutorials/FlowTutorial.html#timing-constraints>



Design Verilog input

<https://openroad-flow-scripts.readthedocs.io/en/latest/tutorials/FlowTutorial.html#design-input-verilog>

These are the Verilog files of the ibex design example:

```

1 flow/designs/src/ibex$ ls
2
3 ibex_alu.v          ibex_ex_block.v      ibex_register_file_ff.v    prim_ram_1p.v
4 ibex_branch_predict.v  ibex_fetch_fifo.v    ibex_register_file_fpga.v  prim_secded_28_22_dec.v
5 ibex_compressed_decoder.v  ibex_icache.v        ibex_register_file_latch.v  prim_secded_28_22_enc.v
6 ibex_controller.v      ibex_id_stage.v      ibex_wb_stage.v            prim_secded_39_32_dec.v
7 ibex_core.v            ibex_if_stage.v      LICENSE                     prim_secded_39_32_enc.v
8 ibex_counter.v         ibex_load_store_unit.v  prim_badbit_ram_1p.v        prim_secded_72_64_dec.v
9 ibex_cs_registers.v    ibex_multdiv_fast.v    prim_clock_gating.v         prim_secded_72_64_enc.v
10 ibex_csr.v             ibex_multdiv_slow.v    prim_generic_clock_gating.v  prim_xilinx_clock_gating.v
11 ibex_decoder.v         ibex_pmp.v            prim_generic_ram_1p.v        README.md
12 ibex_dummy_instr.v     ibex_prefetch_buffer.v  prim_lfsr.v

```



Section 10

Design tweaking



Design tweaking

- OpenROAD is build on many different tools
- It does not feel consistent to configure the tools.
- To find and understand the possiblities of improving a design via tweaking one must read the documentation of the tools.
- It might take some time to become comforatable with tweaking.
- Don't give up!

In the following we present

- some easy tweaking possibilities to start with



Synthesis AREA or SPEED

<https://openroad-flow-scripts.readthedocs.io/en/latest/tutorials/FlowTutorial.html#area-and-timing-optimization>

In a nutshell:

- Set ABC_SPEED=1 or ABC_AREA=1 in the config.mk
- Rerun.



DIE_AREA and CORE_AREA

- Set DIE_AREA and CORE_AREA in the config.mk
- Rerun

This is an example for the two variables, taken from the config.mk in the masked_aes example earlier. The comments contain a list of added spaces around the core area.

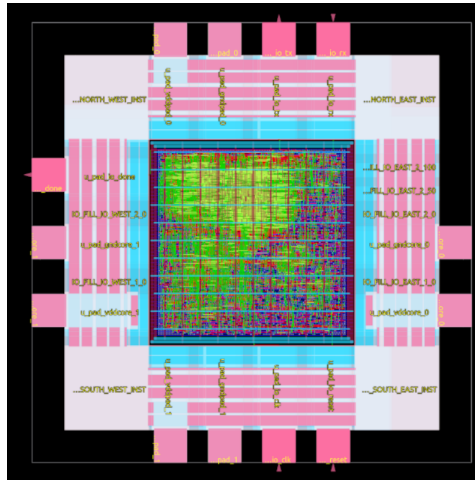
masked_aes config.mk:

```
1 # (Sealring: roughly 60um)
2 # I/O pads: 180um
3 # Bondpads: 70um
4 # Margin for core power ring: 20um
5 # Total margin to core area: 270um
6 export DIE_AREA = 0 0 940 940
7 export CORE_AREA = 270 270 670 670
```



masked_aes areas

The area calculations from the masked_aes config.mk in a GDS:



Density

In a nutshell:

- Change the PLACE_DENSITY value in the config
- Value between 0.2 and 0.95
- Rerun

```
export PLACE_DENSITY ?= 0.88
```



CORE_UTILIZATION

In a nutshell:

- Change the CORE_UTILIZATION value in the config
- Value between 20 and 80
- Rerun

```
export CORE_UTILIZATION = 45
```



Example for Utilization and Density with the ibex design

In the ORFS tutorial is a tweak example with these two variables:

<https://openroad-flow-scripts.readthedocs.io/en/latest/tutorials/FlowTutorial.html#defining-placement-density>

Read how this should change the GDS.



Further reading on the topic

- The chapters in the ORFS tutorial starting here:

<https://openroad-flow-scripts.readthedocs.io/en/latest/tutorials/FlowTutorial.html#understanding-and-analyzing-openroad-flow-stages-and-results>

- Synthesis Explorations
- Floorplanning
- Power Planning And Analysis
- Macro or Standard Cell Placement
- Timing Optimizations
- Clock Tree Synthesis
- ...



Section 11

Finishing a design



Footprint for IOPads

- A TCL script is needed to arrange the IOPads around the core design area.
- This TCL script must be referenced in the config.mk:

```
1 export FOOTPRINT_TCL = $(DESIGN_HOME)/$(PLATFORM)/$(DESIGN_NICKNAME)/footprint.tcl
```

A working example of such a footprint.tcl can be found inside the masked_aes example:

masked_aes footprint.tcl:

<https://github.com/HEP-Alliance/masked-aes-tapeout/blob/main/footprint.tcl>



Sealring

- A sealring GDS must be generated and merged with the design GDS.
- Information about how to create a sealring is available as an example in the masked_aes README:

Sealring

The sealring was generated using a script included with IHP's open PDK.

Clone the PDK and set up the technology in KLayout. The following command creates the sealring:

```
$ klayout -n sg13g2 -zz -r <IHP-repo-root>/ihp-sg13g2/libs.tech/klayout/tech/scripts/sealring.1
```

The generated sealring has to be moved by -60 in both directions, which can be done in KLayout.

Figure 4: Sealring Information masked_aes



<https://github.com/HEP-Alliance/masked-aes-tapeout/tree/main?tab=readme-ov-file#sealring>



Metal fill

- Ongoing issue discussion about the Metall fill:

<https://github.com/IHP-GmbH/IHP-Open-PDK/pull/229>

It is solved and merged to the repo, but the issue is kept open for enhancement reasons.

Metal Fill

Metal fill has to be performed on the output GDS using a KLayout script provided as part of the IHP PDK. The script is currently work-in-progress here: [IHP-GmbH/IHP-Open-PDK#229](#)

Figure 5: Metal fill information masked_aes

