

§3.4 Defining Data

Portions from slides by Kip Irvine for Assembly Language for x86 Processors, 6th Edition.
© Pearson Education, 2010. All rights reserved.

Intrinsic Data Types

- ▶ BYTE, SBYTE – 8-bit unsigned, signed integer
- ▶ WORD, SWORD – 16-bit unsigned, signed integer
- ▶ DWORD, SDWORD – 32-bit unsigned, signed integer
- ▶ QWORD – 64-bit integer
- ▶ REAL4 – 4-byte IEEE short real (floating point)
- ▶ REAL8 – 8-byte IEEE long real (floating point)
- ▶ REAL10 – 10-byte IEEE extended real (floating point)

Data Definition Statement

- ▶ A data definition statement sets aside storage in memory for a variable.
- ▶ May optionally assign a name (label) to the data
- ▶ Syntax:

`[name] directive initializer [,initializer] ...`

`value1 BYTE 10`

- ▶ All initializers become binary data in memory

Defining BYTE & SBYTE Data

Each of the following defines a single byte of storage:

```
value1 BYTE 'A'           ; character constant
value2 BYTE 0              ; smallest unsigned byte
value3 BYTE 255            ; largest unsigned byte
value4 SBYTE -128          ; smallest signed byte
value5 SBYTE +127         ; largest signed byte
value6 BYTE ?              ; uninitialized byte
```

MASM does not prevent you from initializing a BYTE with a negative value, but it's considered poor style.

If you declare a SBYTE variable, the debugger will display its value in decimal with a leading sign.

Defining Byte Arrays

Examples that use multiple initializers:

```
list1 BYTE 10,20,30,40
list2 BYTE 10,20,30,40
        BYTE 50,60,70,80
        BYTE 81,82,83,84
list3 BYTE ?,32,41h,00100010b
list4 BYTE 0Ah,20h,'A',22h
```

Defining Strings (1 of 2)

- ▶ A string is implemented as an array of bytes
 - ▶ For convenience, it is usually enclosed in quotation marks
 - ▶ It often will be null-terminated
- ▶ Examples:

```
str1 BYTE "Enter your name",0
str2 BYTE 'Error: halting program',0
str3 BYTE 'A','E','I','O','U'
greeting BYTE "Welcome to the Encryption Demo program "
        BYTE "created by Kip Irvine.",0
```

Defining Strings (2 of 2)



- To continue a single string across multiple lines, end each line with a comma:

```
menu BYTE "Checking Account",0dh,0ah,0dh,0ah,
      "1. Create a new account",0dh,0ah,
      "2. Open an existing account",0dh,0ah,
      "3. Credit the account",0dh,0ah,
      "4. Debit the account",0dh,0ah,
      "5. Exit",0ah,0ah,
      "Choice> ",0
```

Using the DUP Operator



- Use DUP to allocate (create space for) an array or string. Syntax:
counter DUP (*argument*)

Counter and *argument* must be constants or constant expressions

```
var1 BYTE 20 DUP(0)      ; 20 bytes, all equal to zero
var2 BYTE 20 DUP(?)      ; 20 bytes, uninitialized
var3 BYTE 4 DUP("STACK") ; 20 bytes: "STACKSTACKSTACKSTACK"
var4 BYTE 10,3 DUP(0),20 ; 5 bytes
```

Defining WORD & SWORD Data



- Define storage for 16-bit integers
 - single value or array (multiple values)

```
word1 WORD 65535      ; largest unsigned value
word2 SWORD -32768    ; smallest signed value
word3 WORD ?          ; uninitialized, unsigned
word4 WORD "AB"       ; double characters
myList WORD 1,2,3,4,5 ; array of words
array WORD 5 DUP(?)   ; uninitialized array
```

Defining DWORD & SDWORD Data



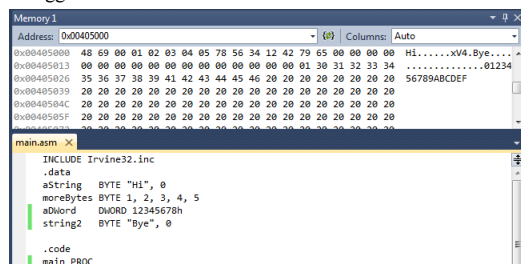
Storage definitions for signed and unsigned 32-bit integers:

```
val1 DWORD 12345678h ; unsigned
val2 SDWORD -2147483648 ; signed
val3 DWORD 20 DUP(?) ; unsigned array
val4 SDWORD -3,-2,-1,0,1 ; signed array
```

VS Memory Window



- Recall from Lab 2 how to use the Memory Window in the Visual Studio debugger

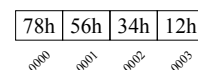


Little Endian Order



- General purpose registers store 32-bit values; memory stores bytes
- For all data types larger than a byte:
 - The *least* significant byte is stored in the *lowest* memory address
 - This is called *little endian* byte ordering
- Example:

```
val1 DWORD 12345678h
```



Big Endian Order



- ▶ **x86 processors use little endian byte ordering**, but...
- ▶ Some other processors use *big endian*, where 12345678h would be stored as

12h	34h	56h	78h
-----	-----	-----	-----

0000

0001

0002

0003
- ▶ Big endian is also called *network byte order*
 - ▶ The Internet Protocol (IP) and many other protocols transfer 16- and 32-bit values in big-endian order, i.e., the most significant byte is transmitted first

Using Data in Memory (1 of 2)



- ▶ You know two versions of the mov instruction:
 - ▶ *mov register, immediate* `mov eax, 5`
 - ▶ *mov register, register* `mov eax, ebx`
- ▶ You can also move data to and from memory:
 - `.data`
`myVar DWORD 135`
 - ▶ *mov register, memory* `mov eax, myVar`
 - ▶ *mov memory, register* `mov myVar, ebx`
 - ▶ *mov memory, immediate* `mov myVar, 9876`
 - ▶ *mov immediate, memory* — **Q.** Is this possible?

Using Data in Memory (2 of 2)



```
TITLE Add and Subtract, Version 2          (AddSub2.asm)
; This program adds and subtracts 32-bit unsigned
; integers and stores the sum in a variable.
INCLUDE Irvine32.inc

.data
val1 DWORD 10000h
val2 DWORD 40000h
val3 DWORD 20000h
finalVal DWORD ?

.code
main PROC
    mov eax, val1          ; start with 10000h - load from memory into register
    add eax, val2          ; add 40000h - load operand from memory
    sub eax, val3          ; subtract 20000h - load operand from memory
    mov finalVal, eax      ; store the result (30000h) - store result operand
    call DumpRegs         ; display the registers
    exit
main ENDP
END main
```

Declaring Uninitialized Data



- ▶ Use the `.data?` directive to declare an uninitialized data segment:
 - `.data?`
- ▶ Within the segment, declare variables with "?" initializers:
 - `smallArray DWORD 10 DUP(?)`

Advantage: the program's EXE file size is reduced.