

# Introduction to x86-64 Reverse Engineering

Marion Marschalek | @pinkflawd | @blackhoodie\_re



# What is assembly?

Assembly is textual representation of machine code instructions Assembler creates executable from assembly source file Disassembler creates (dis)assembly from machine code bytes

Intel 64 and IA-32 Architectures Software Developer's Manuals
http://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/processors/architectures-softwaredeveloper-manuals.html

x86 Opcode and Instruction Reference http://ref.x86asm.net/coder32.html

x86-64 Cheatsheet from Brown University https://cs.brown.edu/courses/cs033/docs/guides/x64\_cheatsheet.pdf

## **Hello World!**

```
.LCO:
         .string "Hello world!"
main:
        push
                 rbp
                 rbp, rsp
        MOV
                 edi, OFFSET FLAT:.LC0
        mov
        call
                 puts
                 eax, 0
        MOV
                 rbp
        pop
        ret
```

### Instruction Flow 101

Fetch instruction at program counter

Decode instruction

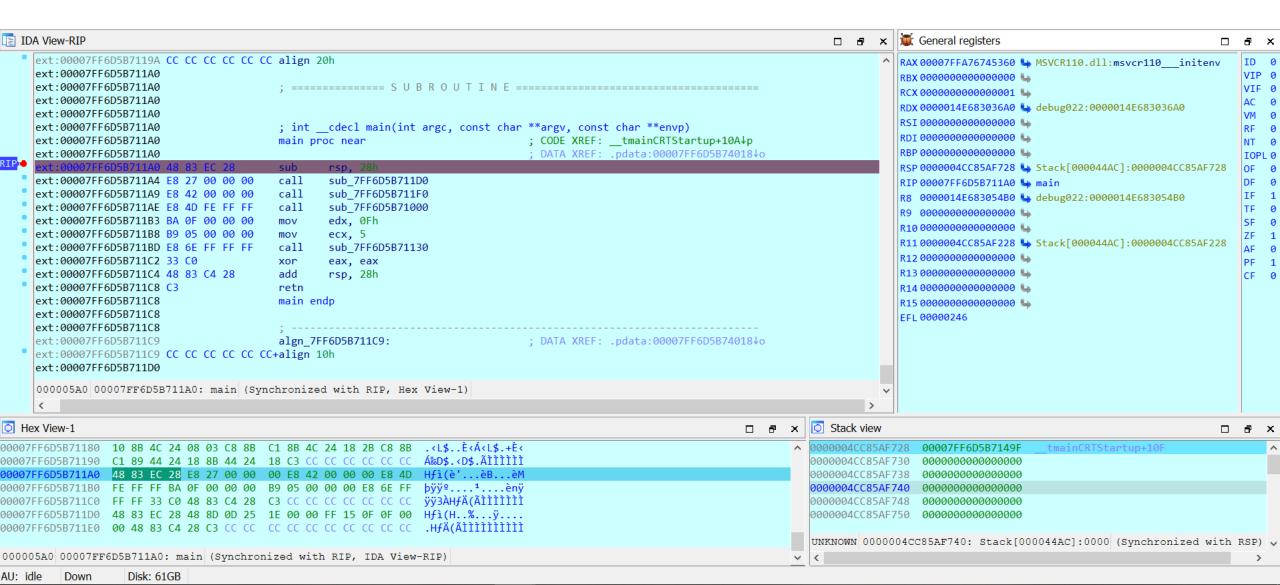
Increment program counter

Prepare components (ALU, memory, I/O)

**Execute instruction** 

Store results

## Program counter, byte code, assembly, sry wot?





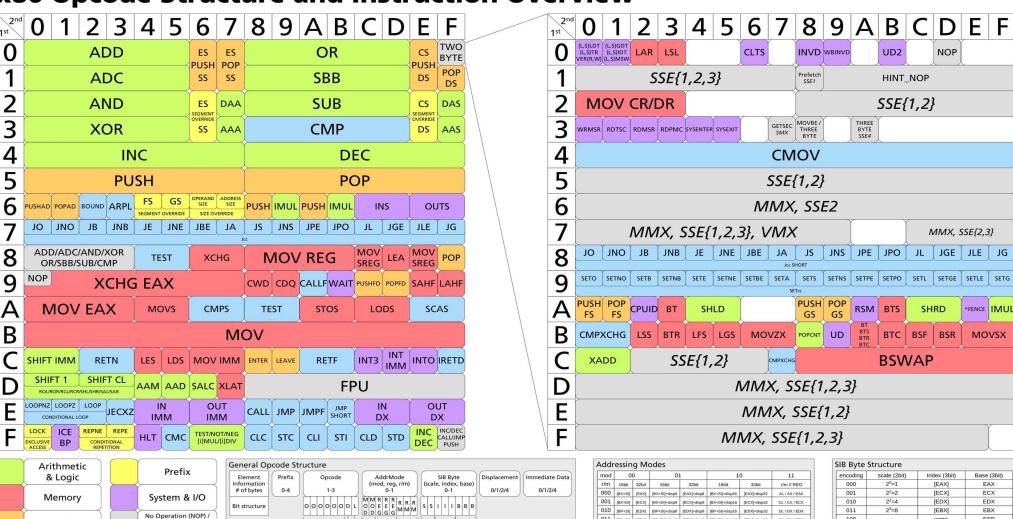
FRAUNHOFER-INSTITUT FÜR KOMMUNIKATION, INFORMATIONSVERARBEITUNG UND ERGONOMIE FKIE

### **x86 Opcode Structure and Instruction Overview**

Main Opcode bits

Operand length bit +

Direction bit +



→ Scale field

→ Register/Opcode modifier, defined by primary opcode

v1.0 - 30.08.2011

Stack

Control Flow

& Conditional

Contact: Daniel Plohmann - +49 228 73 54 228 - daniel.plohmann@fkie.fraunhofer.de

**Extended Instruction Set** 

none

[EBP]

ESP

ESI

EDI

100

111

101

011 [BP+DI] [EBX] [BP+DI]+disp8 [EBX]+disp8 [BP+DI]+disp16 [EBX]+disp32 BL/BX/EBX

100 [SI] SIB [SI]+disp8 SIB+disp8 [SI]+disp16 SIB+disp32 AH / SP / ESP

101 [DI] disp32 [DI]+disp8 [EBP]+disp8 [DI]+disp16 [EBP]+disp32 CH/BP/EBP

111 [BX] [EDI] [BX]+disp8 [EDI]+disp8 [BX]+disp16 [EDI]+disp32 BH / DI / EDI

110 disp16 [ESI] [BP]+disp8 [ESI]+disp8 [BP]+disp16 [ESI]+disp32

### INC-Increment by 1

Opcode	Instruction	Op/ En	64-Bit Mode	Compat/ Leg Mode	Description
FE /0	INC r/m8	М	Valid	Valid	Increment r/m byte by 1.
REX + FE /0	INC r/m8*	М	Valid	N.E.	Increment r/m byte by 1.
FF /0	INC r/m16	М	Valid	Valid	Increment r/m word by 1.
FF /0	INC r/m32	М	Valid	Valid	Increment r/m doubleword by 1.
REX.W + FF /0	INC r/m64	М	Valid	N.E.	Increment <i>r/m</i> quadword by 1.
40+ rw**	INC r16	0	N.E.	Valid	Increment word register by 1.
40+ rd	INC r32	0	N.E.	Valid	Increment doubleword register by 1.

#### NOTES:

### Instruction Operand Encoding

Op/En	Operand 1	Operand 2	Operand 3	Operand 4
М	ModRM:r/m (r, w)	NA	NA	NA
0	opcode + rd (r, w)	NA	NA	NA

### Description

Adds 1 to the destination operand, while preserving the state of the CF flag. The destination operand can be a register or a memory location. This instruction allows a loop counter to be updated without disturbing the CF flag. (Use a ADD instruction with an immediate operand of 1 to perform an increment operation that does updates the CF flag.)

This instruction can be used with a LOCK prefix to allow the instruction to be executed atomically.

In 64-bit mode, INC r16 and INC r32 are not encodable (because opcodes 40H through 47H are REX prefixes). Otherwise, the instruction's 64-bit mode default operation size is 32 bits. Use of the REX.R prefix permits access to additional registers (R8-R15). Use of the REX.W prefix promotes operation to 64 bits.

### Operation

 $\mathsf{DEST} \leftarrow \mathsf{DEST} + 1;$ 

## Intel SDM

### **INC** instruction

<sup>\*</sup> In 64-bit mode, r/m8 can not be encoded to access the following byte registers if a REX prefix is used: AH, BH, CH, DH.

<sup>\*\* 40</sup>H through 47H are REX prefixes in 64-bit mode.



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## Static Analysis Tools on Linux

**GNU Binutils** 

Binary toolsuite

building, modification, analysis

### All time favorites:

File

Readelf

Objdump

Strings

Nm

strip

### **GNU Binutils**

The GNU Binutils are a collection of binary tools. The main ones are:

- **ld** the GNU linker.
- as the GNU assembler.

#### But they also include:

- **addr2line** Converts addresses into filenames and line numbers.
- ar A utility for creating, modifying and extracting from archives.
- **c++filt** Filter to demangle encoded C++ symbols.
- **dlltool** Creates files for building and using DLLs.
- gold A new, faster, ELF only linker, still in beta test.
- gprof Displays profiling information.
- **nlmconv** Converts object code into an NLM.
- **nm** Lists symbols from object files.
- objcopy Copies and translates object files.
- **objdump** Displays information from object files.
- ranlib Generates an index to the contents of an archive.
- readelf Displays information from any ELF format object file.
- size Lists the section sizes of an object or archive file.
- strings Lists printable strings from files.
- **strip** Discards symbols.
- windmc A Windows compatible message compiler.
- windres A compiler for Windows resource files.

# Registers Memory Instructions

# General Purpose Registers

Eight 32-bit registers:

EAX: Accumulator

EBX: Base

ECX: Counter

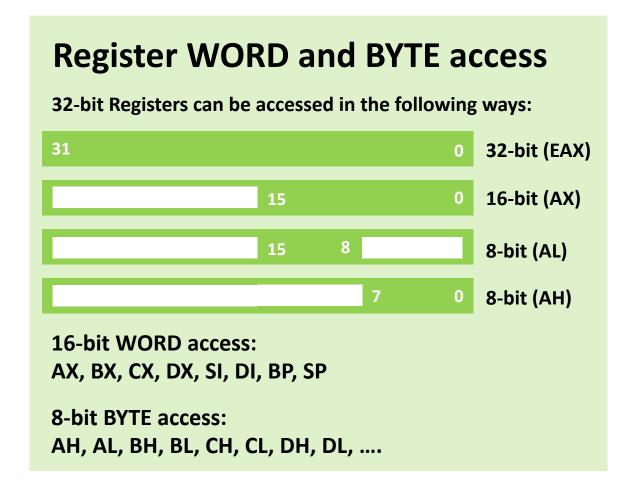
EDX: Data

ESI: Source Index

EDI: Destination Index

EBP: Base pointer

ESP: Stack pointer



Byte, Word, DoubleWord, (64-bit) QuadWord

# General Purpose Registers

Sixteen 64-bit registers:

R8 RAX R9 RBX R10 RCX RDX R11 RSI R12 RDI R13 RBP R14 R15 RSP

Access modes, eg.:

RAX - EAX - AX - AL

RBX - EBX - BX - BL

Etc. Etc.

R10 - R10d - R10w - R10b

Etc. Etc.

Register purpose decided by system ABI, compiler convention and instruction set convention

There's also 128bit SSE registers etc. etc.

## Instruction Pointer

### EIP or RIP

- Points to the next instruction
- Cannot be accessed directly
- Can be modified by control flow instructions
- Can be read by function call and popping from stack

## FLAGS, EFLAGS and RFLAGS

Status register

Respectively 16, 32 or 64 bits wide (although 64b RFLAGS' upper 32 bit aren't currently used)

Carry flag (CF, bit 0): unsigned overflow

Parity flag (PF, bit 2): LSByte contains even amount of 1s

Zero flag (ZF, bit 6): result is zero

Sign flag (SF, bit 7): MSBit is 1

Trap flag (TF, bit 8): single-step mode

Direction flag (DF, bit 10): increment or decrement on string instructions

Overflow flag (OF, bit 11): signedoverflow

## Example

```
. . .
            eax, DWORD PTR [rbp-24]
   mov
   movsx
            rdx, eax
            rax, QWORD PTR [rbp-32]
   mov
    add
            rax, rdx
            eax, BYTE PTR [rax]
   MOVZX
            al, 95
    cmp
    jne
            .L5
            DWORD PTR [rbp-20], 1
    add
.L5:
            DWORD PTR [rbp-24], 1
    add
```

### CMP instruction

Compares the first source operand with the second source operand and sets the status flags in the EFLAGS register according to the results. The comparison is performed by subtracting the second operand from the first operand and then setting the status flags [...] => Will set ZF (ZF=1) if result is 0

### JNE instruction

Jump near if not equal (ZF=0)

# Registers Memory Instructions

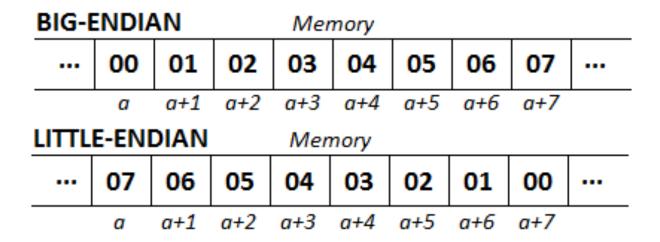
## **Data Endianness**

Byte order

Memory: Little Endian (least significant byte first)

Register: Big Endian most significant byte first)

Bit order: Big Endian (most significant bit first)



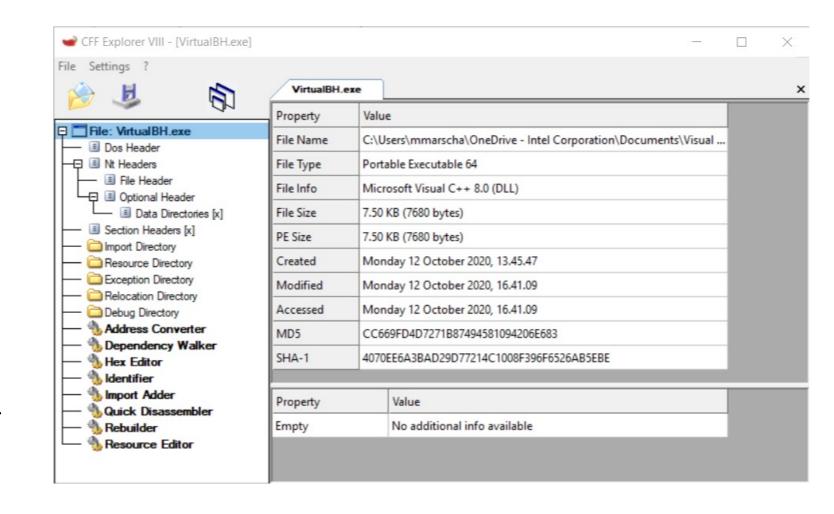
https://thebittheories.com/little-endian-vs-big-endian-b4046c63e1f2

## **Executable File Formats**

Portable Executable (PE) Executable and Linkable Format (ELF)

TL;DR Loader fetches executable, maps it into virtual memory space

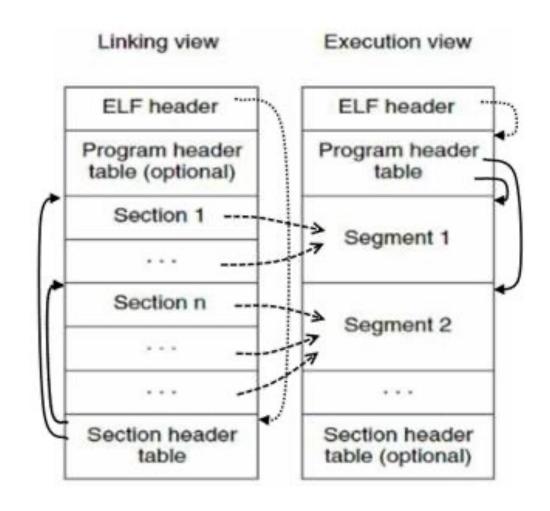
Entry point, sections, imports/exports, many many other things => executable file header



### **ELF – The Executable & Linkable Format**

Standard file format for executable files, object code and shared libraries Flexible, extensible, cross-platform => has grown complex over time

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executable\_and\_Linkable\_Format



1	Name	Start	End	R	w	Χ	D	L	Align	Base	Туре	Class	AD	es	SS	ds	fs	gs
4	🔒 debug024	00000014CBDD6000	00000014CBE00000	?	?	?	D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug005	00000014CBE00000	00000014CBEF9000	?	?	?	D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	Stack_PAGE_GUARD[00006	00000014CBEF9000	00000014CBEFC000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	STACK	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 Stack[000066A4]	00000014CBEFC000	00000014CBF00000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	STACK	64	00	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug025	00000014CBF00000	00000014CBFFC000	?	?	?	D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64			00	0 0	10
4	🔒 debug026	00000014CBFFC000	00000014CBFFF000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	
4	🔒 debug027	00000014CBFFF000	00000014CC000000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug020	000001FF20E40000	000001FF20E50000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	00
4	🔒 debug007	000001FF20E60000	000001FF20E7A000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	00	0'	0 (	00 0
4	🔒 debug008	000001FF20E80000	000001FF20E84000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0 1	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug009	000001FF20E90000	000001FF20E91000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug010	000001FF20EA0000	000001FF20EA2000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 locale.nls	000001FF20EB0000	000001FF20F75000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug030	000001FF20FD0000	000001FF20FE1000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	[ AT	<b>34</b> V	Win (		0.00	FOCE	
4	🔒 debug031	000001FF20FE1000	000001FF210D0000	?	?	?	D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000		0000
4	🔒 debug022	00007FF4A94C0000	00007FF4A94C5000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug023	00007FF4A94C5000	00007FF4A95C0000	?	?	?	D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug017	00007FF4A95C0000	00007FF5A95E0000	?	?	?	D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug018	00007FF5A95E0000	00007FF5AB5E0000	?	?	?	D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug019	00007FF5AB5E0000	00007FF5AB5E1000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug011	00007FF5AB5F0000	00007FF5AB5F1000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 debug012	00007FF5AB600000	00007FF5AB623000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🔒 VirtualBH.exe	00007FF61BB80000	00007FF61BB81000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	🗦 .text	00007FF61BB81000	00007FF61BB82000	R		Χ		L	para	0001	public	CODE	64	0000	0000	0003	FFFFFFF	FFFFFFF
	🔒 .idata	00007FF61BB82000	00007FF61BB82100	R				L	para	0005	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0003	FFFFFFF	FFFFFFF
4	🔒 .rdata	00007FF61BB82100	00007FF61BB83000	R				L	para	0002	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0003	FFFFFFF	FFFFFFF
4	🔒 .data	00007FF61BB83000	00007FF61BB84000	R	W			L	para	0003	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0003	FFFFFFF	FFFFFFF
4	🔒 .pdata	00007FF61BB84000	00007FF61BB85000	R				L	para	0004	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0003	FFFFFFF	FFFFFFF
4	🔒 VirtualBH.exe	00007FF61BB85000	00007FF61BB87000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	MSVCR110.dll	00007FFCBF910000	00007FFCBF911000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	MSVCR110.dll	00007FFCBF911000	00007FFCBF9A3000	R		Χ	D		byte	0000	public	CODE	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	MSVCR110.dll	00007FFCBF9A3000	00007FFCBF9D1000	R			D		byte	0000	public	CONST	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	MSVCR110.dll	00007FFCBF9D1000	00007FFCBF9D3000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	MSVCR110.dll	00007FFCBF9D3000	00007FFCBF9D4000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
4	MSVCR110.dll	00007FFCBF9D4000	00007FFCBF9D7000	R	W		D		byte	0000	public	DATA	64	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000
	_																	

# Memory Manipulation in Assembly

Instruction (+ Operand)

Immediate values e.g. mov r8d, 6Eh

Registers e.g. mov rcx, rbx

Memory addresses

Virtual address e.g. mov rax,

[0x7FF6AB373000]

Pointer dereferentiation e.g. mov rax, [rax]

Calculation e.g. mov rax, [rbx+rdx+10h]

# Heap

Memory that can be dynamically allocated (eg. malloc)

One heap per process

Operating system provides functions for memory de-/allocation

Threads need to synchronize memory de-/allocation

```
int a = 25;
char* b = (char*) malloc(250);
heap buffer
```

# Stack

One stack per thread

PUSH and POP instructions interact with the stack, direct access of stack variables common too

Operating system provides stack memory block, and guard page

It's a 64 bit wide LIFO buffer (64b systems.., 32 on 32 bit)

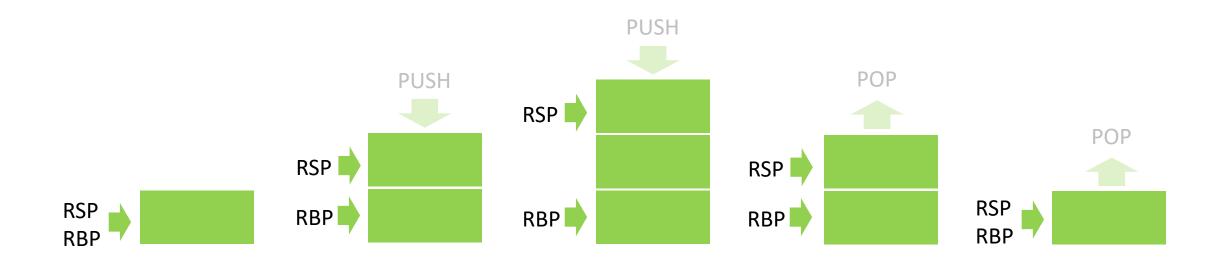
RSP and RBP manage function frame on stack

## **Abstract Depiction of Stack**

RBP = Base Pointer

RSP = Stack Pointer

PUSH/POP increment/decrement RSP



## Calling Conventions and ABIs

Application Binary Interface – defines how functions are called (parameter handling, stack usage, special register designation)

History: "convention madness" on Windows x86 cdecl, stdcall, fastcall, thiscall, safecall,....

### Calling conventions define:

How arguments are passed to the callee

Which registers may be used, which must be saved before use

How function stack is set up and torn down after callee is done

# Little Less Abstract Depiction of Stack

Low Addresses



Local Variables Function2

**Return Address** 

Arguments Function2

Local Variables
Function1

Return Address

Arguments Function1

Stack grows downwards

**ESP** 



Stack Frame for Function1

High Addresses

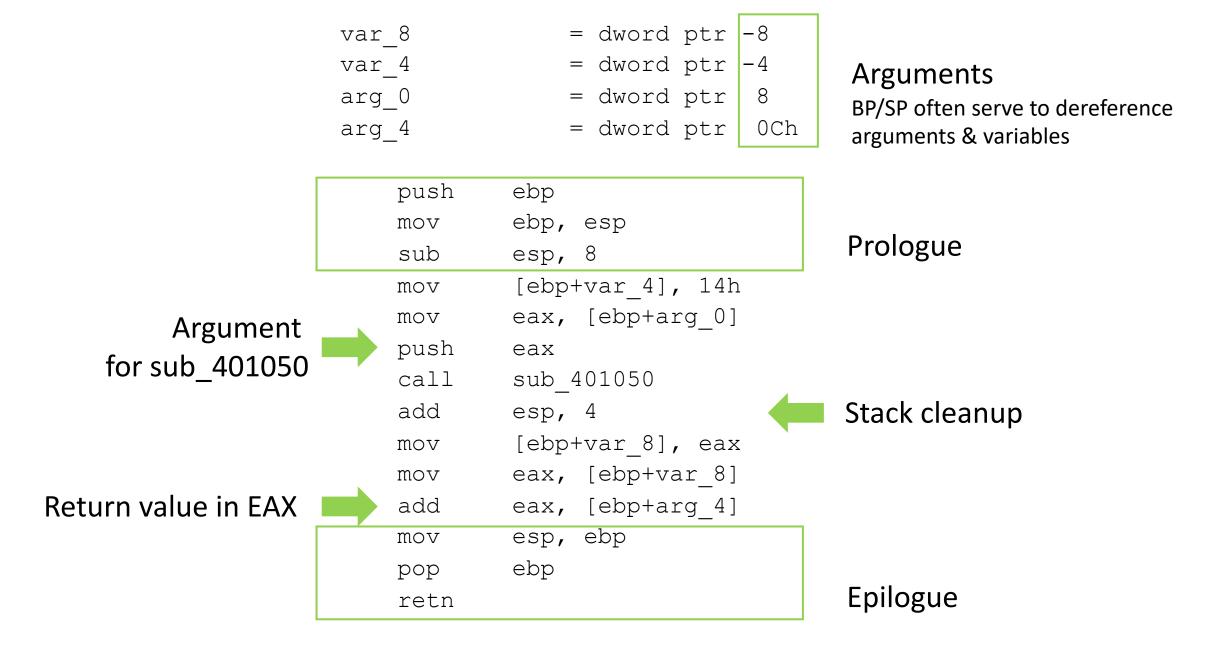
The classic: **32-bit cdecl** calling convention

Caller pushes function arguments, in reverse order

CALL instruction pushes return address

Callee sets up local stack variables

Return: Stack cleanup & jump to stored FIP



## System V 64bit Calling Convention

**Function Parameters:** 

RDI, RSI, RDX, RCX, R8, R9, or stack in reverse order RAX will hold return value, or RAX and RDX if 128-bit value

https://wiki.osdev.org/System\_V\_ABI

## Other x64 "Eastereggs"

Vararg functions

Tailcall optimization

Creative home space utilization

RIP-relative addressing

Struct arguments

Fancy processor extensions

Alignment ftw...

Etc. etc. lots of things I'm not aware of myself;)

# Registers Memory Instructions

### - Data transfer

- -MOV
- PUSH/POP
- PUSHA/POPA
- PUSHF/POPF
- XCHG

### - Control transfer

- JMP
- Jxx
- LOOP
- CALL
- LEAVE
- RET

# - Logical instructions

- AND
- TEST
- OR
- XOR
- NOT

# - Arithmetic instructions

- ADD/SUB
- CMP
- INC/DEC
- MUL/DIV
- NEG

### - Other instructions

- NOP
- LEA
- RDTSC
- SYSCALL/SYSENTER
- SYSRET/SYSEXIT
- IN/OUT
- ROL/ROR
- SHL/SHR
- SETxx
- LODS
- STOS
- MOVS

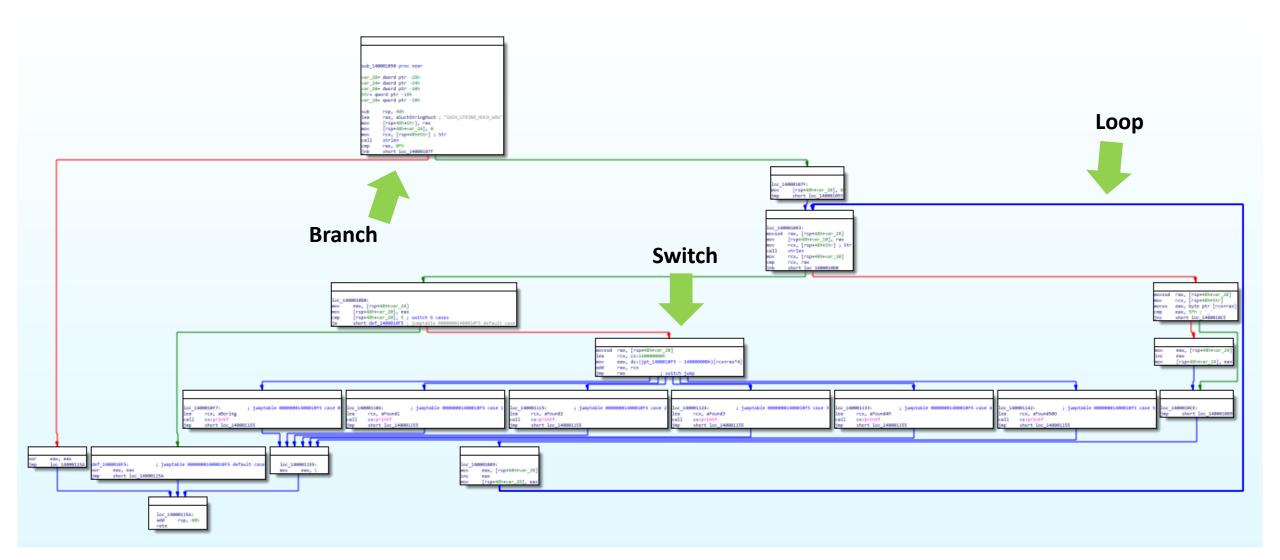
And many MANY more Intel SDM, Volume 2;)

## Jump variations

Instruction	Jump if/on	Flag conditions
JE	equal	ZF = 1
JG	greater (signed)	ZF = 0 and SF = OF
JGE	greater or equal (signed)	SF = OF
JL	less (signed)	SF != OF
JLE	less or equal (signed)	ZF = 1 or SF != OF
JA	above (unsigned)	CF = 0 and ZF = 0
JAE	above or equal (unsigned)	CF = 0
JB	below (unsigned)	CF = 1
JBE	below or equal (unsigned)	CF = 1 or ZF = 1
JC	carry	CF = 1
10	overflow	OF = 1
JP	parity	PF = 1
JS	sign	SF = 1
JZ	zero	ZF = 1

Instruction	Jump if/on	Flag conditions
JNE	not equal	ZF = 0
JNG	not greater (signed)	ZF = 1 or SF != OF
JNGE	not greater or equal (signed)	SF != OF
JNL	not less (signed)	SF = OF
JNLE	not less or equal (signed)	ZF = 0 and SF = OF
JNA	not above (unsigned)	CF = 1 or ZF = 1
JNAE	not above or equal (unsigned)	CF = 1
JNB	not below (unsigned)	CF = 0
JNBE	not below or equal (unsigned)	CF = 0 and ZF = 0
JNC	not carry	CF = 0
JNO	not overflow	OF = 0
JNP	not parity	PF = 0
JNS	not sign	SF = 0
JNZ	not zero	ZF = 0

## **Control Flow**



## Branches

```
int show branch(int val)
    int ret;
    if (val < 10)
        ret = 10;
    else
        ret = 5;
    return ret;
```

```
🚾 🎿 🚾
          : Attributes: bp-based frame
          sub 401001 proc near
          var 4= dword ptr -4
          arg 4= dword ptr 8
                   ebp, esp
          mov
          push
                   ecx
                   [ebp+arq 4], OAh
          CMP
                   short loc_401013
          jge
4 44 45
                           🝱 🎿 🚾
mov
        [ebp+var_4], 0Ah
                          loc 401013:
jmp
        short loc 40101A
                                   [ebp+var_4], 5
                          mov
            🔤 🎿 🖂
            loc 40101A:
                    eax, [ebp+var_4]
            mov
                    esp, ebp
            mov
            pop
                    ebp
            retn
            sub 401001 endp
```

# Switch

```
int multibranch(int val)
    int ret = 0;
    switch (val)
    case 0:
        ret = 1; break;
    case 1:
        ret = 2; break;
    case 2:
        ret = 4; break;
    case 3:
        ret = 8; break;
    return ret;
```

```
; Attributes: bp-based frame
                                              sub_401030 proc near
                                             var 8= dword ptr -8
                                             var 4= dword ptr -4
                                             arg 0= dword ptr 8
                                                     ebp, esp
                                                     esp, 8
                                                     [ebp+var_4], 0
                                                     eax, [ebp+arg_0]
                                                     [ebp+var 8], eax
                                                     [ebp+var_8], 3 ; switch 4 cases
                                                     short loc 401075
                                              pai 3
                                                    ecx, [ebp+var_8]
                                                    ds:off_401080[ecx*4] ; switch jump
                                                                                                   🜃 🎮 🖼
4 p4 5
                                 🔤 🎮 🖼
                                                                  🜃 pai 😘
                                                                                         ; case 2 loc_40106E:
1oc 401053:
                       ; case 0 loc 40105C:
                                                        ; case 1 10c 401065:
                                                                                                                          ; case 3
                                        [ebp+var_4], 2
       [ebp+var_4], 1
                                mov
                                                                         [ebp+var_4], 4
                                                                                                          [ebp+var_4], 8
                                        short loc 401075
                                                                         short loc 401075
       short loc_401075
                                                            * * * * *
                                                      ii ii
                                                      loc 401075:
                                                              eax, [ebp+var_4]
                                                             esp, ebp
                                                      retn
                                                      sub_401030 endp
                                                   align 10h
                  .text:0040107E
                                                                             ; DATA XREF: sub 401030+1C1r
                                                   dd offset loc 401053
                  .text:00401080 off_401080
                                                   dd offset loc 40105C
                                                                             ; jump table for switch statement
                  .text:00401080
                                                   dd offset loc 401065
                  .text:00401080
                  .text:00401080
                                                   dd offset loc 40106E
```

# Loops

```
int show_loop(int val)
{
   int ret = 0;

   for (; val > 0; val--)
      ret += val;

   return ret;
}
```

```
; Attributes: bp-based frame
         sub_401090 proc near
         var 4= dword ptr -4
         arg 0= dword ptr 8
         push
                 ebp
                 ebp, esp
          MOV
         push
                 ecx
                 [ebp+var_4], 0
          mov
                 short loc 4010A6
            loc 4010A6:
                    [ebp+arg 0], 0
                   short loc 4010B7
ecx, [ebp+var_4]
mov
       ecx, [ebp+arg_0] | loc_4010B7:
add
       [ebp+var 4], ecx
                                eax, [ebp+var_4]
                        mov
mov
       short loc 40109D
                                esp, ebp
jmp
                        pop
                                ebp
                        retn
                        sub 401090 endp
loc_40109D:
       eax, [ebp+arg_0]
mov
       eax, 1
sub
       [ebp+arg_0], eax
mov
```