

Electronics Systems (938II)

Lecture 2.5

Building Blocks of Electronic Systems – Simulation with testbench



Simulation

- We have seen how to perform simulations with Modelsim
 - By using the commands
 - force
 - run
- This approach was useful to get familiarity the SV code, the simulation of modules designed in SV, and Modelsim
- However, in the typical design flow of electronic circuits with HDL, the simulation is performed using a testbench



- Another 'module' without ports used to verify the functionality of the designed circuit(s) by
 - Providing stimuli
 - Checking the output(s)

- The stimuli generation and the output(s) verification are performed with commands that are not-synthesizable
 - Such commands do not describe a realistic circuit, but only describe procedures
 - Or, in other words, such commands cannot be converted in a hardware circuit

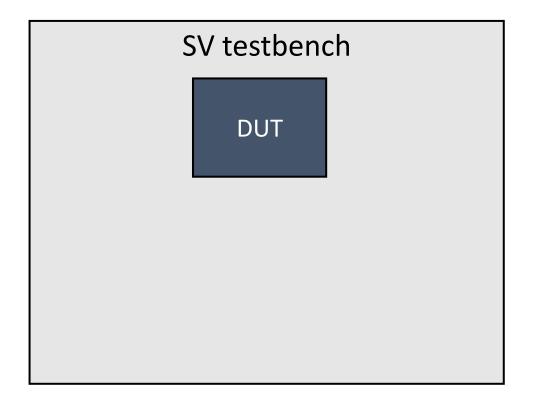


Main components

SV testbench

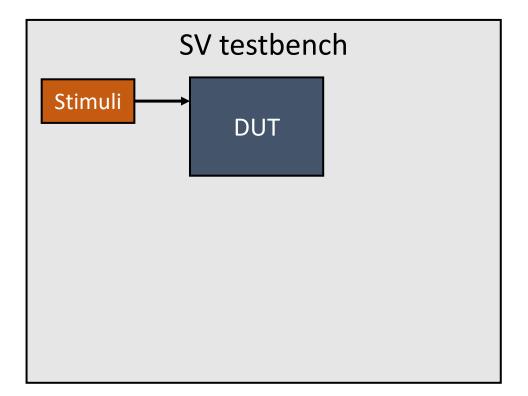


- Main components
 - Device Under Test (DUT)
 - I.e., the instance of (the top-level of) your module



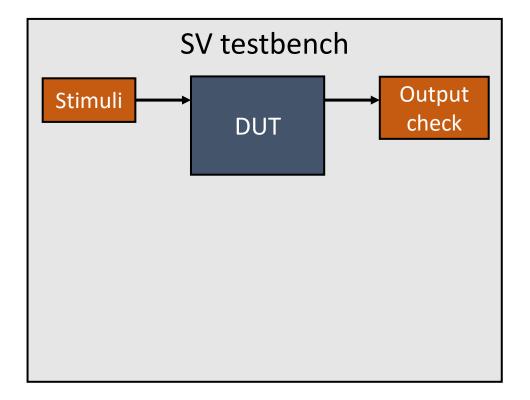


- Main components
 - Device Under Test (DUT)
 - I.e., the instance of (the top-level of) your module
 - The stimuli procedure(s)



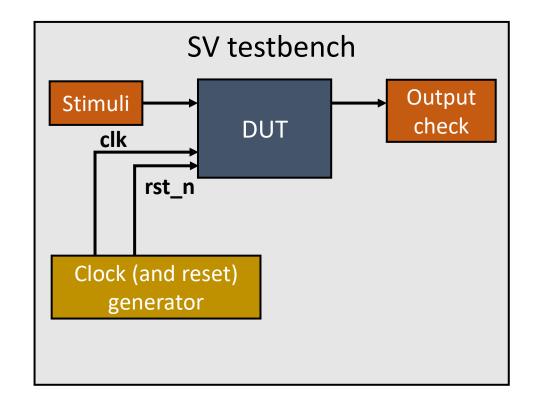


- Main components
 - Device Under Test (DUT)
 - I.e., the instance of (the top-level of) your module
 - The stimuli procedure(s)
 - The output(s) check procedure(s)





- Main components
 - Device Under Test (DUT)
 - I.e., the instance of (the top-level of) your module
 - The stimuli procedure(s)
 - The output(s) check procedure(s)
 - The clock (and reset) generator
 - In case the DUT is a sequential circuit





Main structure

```
module tb;
 reg clk = 1'b0;
 reg rst_n = 1'b0;
 reg [31:0] data in;
 wire [31:0] data out;
 my module U0 (
  .clk (clk)
   ,.rst n (rst n)
   ,.din (data in)
   ,.dout (data out)
 initial begin
  // ...
 end
endmodule
```



- Main structure
 - Module without ports

```
module tb;
      clk = 1'b0;
 reg
        rst_n = 1'b0;
 reg
 reg [31:0] data in;
 wire [31:0] data out;
 my module U0 (
   .clk (clk)
   ,.rst n (rst n)
   ,.din (data in)
   ,.dout (data out)
 initial begin
   // ...
 end
endmodule
```



- Main structure
 - Module without ports
 - Declaration of signals for stimuli and probes

```
module tb;
 reg clk = 1'b0;
 reg rst_n = 1'b0;
 reg [31:0] data in;
 wire [31:0] data_out;
 my module U0 (
   .clk (clk)
   ,.rst n (rst n)
   ,.din (data in)
   ,.dout (data out)
 initial begin
   // ...
  end
endmodule
```



- Main structure
 - Module without ports
 - Declaration of signals for stimuli and probes
 - Instance of module to be tested (DUT)

```
module tb;
             clk = 1'b0;
  reg
          rst n = 1'b0;
  reg
  reg [31:0] data in;
  wire [31:0] data out;
  my module U0 (
    .clk (clk)
    ,.rst n (rst n)
    ,.din (data in)
    ,.dout (data out)
  initial begin
   // ...
  end
endmodule
```



- Main structure
 - Module without ports
 - Declaration of signals for stimuli and probes
 - Instance of module to be tested
 - Procedural blocks for driving stimuli and checking outputs

```
module tb;
              clk
                   = 1'b0;
  reg
             rst n = 1'b0;
  req
  reg [31:0] data in;
  wire [31:0] data out;
  my module U0 (
    .clk (clk)
    ,.rst n (rst n)
    ,.din (data in)
    ,.dout (data out)
  initial begin
   // ...
  end
```

endmodule



• Module instance – example

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
);
```



- Module instance example
 - Module name
 - The same used for the declaration of the module (in the corresponding SV file)

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
);
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)
,.rst_n (rst_n)
,.data_out (dout)
,.done (done)
,.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Instance name
 - Any arbitrary single word, e.g., DUT
 - The same module name can be used

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
);
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)
,.rst_n (rst_n)
,.data_out (dout)
,.done (done)
,.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Delimiters

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
);
```

```
module_name instance_name (
    .clk (clk)
    ,.rst_n (rst_n)
    ,.data_out (dout)
    ,.done (done)
    ,.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
);
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)
,.rst_n (rst_n)
,.data_out (dout)
,.done (done)
,.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection
 - By ordered list: the same ports order used in the module declaration

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
):
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)
,.rst_n (rst_n)
,.data_out (dout)
,.done (done)
,.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection
 - By port name: .<port name> (<signal>)
 - The order of the ports can be modified

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
):
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)
,.rst_n (rst_n)
,.data_out (dout)
,.done (done)
,.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection Pay attention!
 - These are the signals (internal to the testbench) that are connected to the module ports

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
):
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection Pay attention!
 - These are module ports
 - Only in case of the connection by port name

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
):
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)

.rst_n (rst_n)

.data_out (dout)

.done (done)

.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection In both cases:
 - Connecting signals can have any name
 - The same module port name can be used, but it is not mandatory

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
):
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection In both cases:
 - Connections must be separated by comma

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
)
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)
.rst_n (rst_n)
.data_out (dout)
.done (done)
.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection In both cases:
 - It is not mandatory, but strictly recommended, that the module port and the connecting signal have the same bit width (otherwise the two vectors are aligned starting from the LSB)

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
);
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)
,.rst_n (rst_n)
,.data_out (dout)
,.done (done)
,.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection In both cases:
 - Ports can be left unconnected

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
):
```

```
module_name instance_name (
.clk (clk)
,.rst_n (rst_n)
,.data_out (dout)
,.done (
,.data_in (din)
```



- Module instance example
 - Ports connection In both cases:
 - As rule of thumb, use reg signals to connect to input ports of the module
 - And wire signals to connect to the output ports of the module

```
module_name instance_name (
    clk
    ,rst_n
    ,din
    ,done
    ,dout
):
```



- Stimuli and probes
 - Stimuli are signals that you are going to drive with specific values
 - reg type (because assigned inside an initial block that we will see later)
 - Connected to the input ports of the module to be tested
 - Probes are used as reading signals to check the values of outputs
 - wire type (just a connection)
 - Connected to the output ports of the module to be tested



Clock generation

```
reg clk = 1'b0;
always #10 clk = !clk;
```



- Clock generation
 - Declaration of clock signal (clk) as reg

```
reg clk = 1'b0;
always #10 clk = !clk;
```



- Clock generation
 - Declaration of clock signal (clk) as reg
 - With initialization value
 - Attention: initialization values are not synthesizable, so do not use them in design modules

```
reg clk = 1'b0;
always #10 clk = !clk;
```



- Clock generation
 - Definition of clock waveform
 - invert signal clk

```
reg clk = 1'b0;
always #10 clk = !clk;
```



- Clock generation
 - Definition of clock waveform
 - invert signal clk
 - after 10 (time units)

```
reg clk = 1'b0;
always #10 clk = !clk;
```



- Clock generation
 - Definition of clock waveform
 - invert signal clk
 - after 10 (time units)
 - always

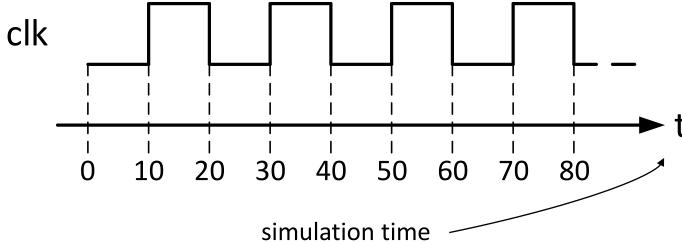
```
reg clk = 1'b0;
always #10 clk = !clk;
```



- Clock generation
 - Definition of clock waveform
 - invert signal clk
 - after 10 (time units)
 - always

```
reg clk = 1'b0;
always #10 clk = !clk;
```







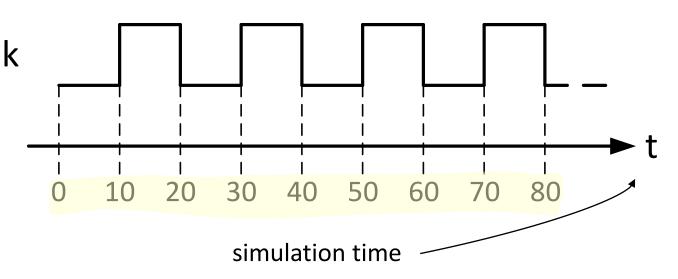
- Clock generation
 - Definition of clock waveform
 - invert signal clk
 - after 10 (time units)
 - always

```
reg clk = 1'b0;
always #10 clk = !clk;
```



Time unit

- By default, it depends on the tool (Modelsim) settings
 - nanosecond (ns) or picosecond (ps)
- However, you can also explicitly specify with the delay
 - #10ns, #10ps, #10us, ...





- Reset and Power-on Reset (PoR)
 - Typically, a reset condition is imposed at power-up to bring the system/circuit (and all its parts) to a known state
 - Reset state
 - All zeros (typically)
 - Registers and other sequential logic elements
 - It is defined Power-on Reset (PoR)



• Reset and Power-on Reset (PoR) – active-low reset

```
reg rst_n = 1'b0;
initial #35.4ns rst_n = 1'b1;
```



- Reset and Power-on Reset (PoR) active-low reset
 - Declaration of reset signal (rst_n) as reg

```
reg rst_n = 1'b0;
initial #35.4ns rst_n = 1'b1;
```



- Reset and Power-on Reset (PoR) active-low reset
 - Declaration of clock signal (clk) as reg
 - With initialization value
 - To impose the PoR, you must specify the active value
 - In this case (active-low), it is 0

```
reg rst_n = 1'b0;
initial #35.4ns rst_n = 1'b1;
```



- Reset and Power-on Reset (PoR) active-low reset
 - Definition of reset waveform
 - after 35.4 (time units)

```
reg rst_n = 1'b0;
initial #35.4ns rst_n = 1'b1;
```



- Reset and Power-on Reset (PoR) active-low reset
 - Definition of reset waveform
 - after 35.4 (time units)
 - from the beginning (of the simulation)

```
reg rst_n = 1'b0;
initial #35.4ns rst_n = 1'b1;
```



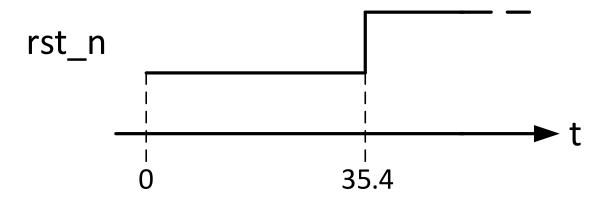
- Reset and Power-on Reset (PoR) active-low reset
 - Definition of reset waveform
 - after 35.4 (time units)
 - from the beginning (of the simulation)
 - set the signal rst_n to 1 (inactive value)

```
reg rst_n = 1'b0;
initial #35.4ns rst_n = 1'b1;
```



- Reset and Power-on Reset (PoR) active-low reset
 - Definition of reset waveform
 - after 35.4 (time units)
 - from the beginning (of the simulation)
 - set the signal rst_n to 1 (inactive value)

```
reg rst_n = 1'b0;
initial #35.4ns rst_n = 1'b1;
```





- The **initial** block
 - It is used to drive the stimuli (mainly)
 - The signal used as stimuli must be of reg type and assigned with operator = (blocking assignment)
 - It is not synthesizable

```
initial begin

#10 start = 1'b1;

#13 in_a = 4'd2;
    in_b = 4'd3;

#37 in_a = 4'd15;
    in_b = 4'd7;

//...
end
```



- The **initial** block
 - It starts at the beginning of the simulation
 - Time 0

```
#10 start = 1'b1;
#13 in_a = 4'd2;
    in_b = 4'd3;
#37 in_a = 4'd15;
    in_b = 4'd7;
//...
end
```





- The **initial** block
 - begin end delimiters if more than one statement

```
initial begin

#10 start = 1'b1;

#13 in_a = 4'd2;
    in_b = 4'd3;

#37 in_a = 4'd15;
    in_b = 4'd7;

//...
end
```





- The **initial** block
 - Stimuli assignment example

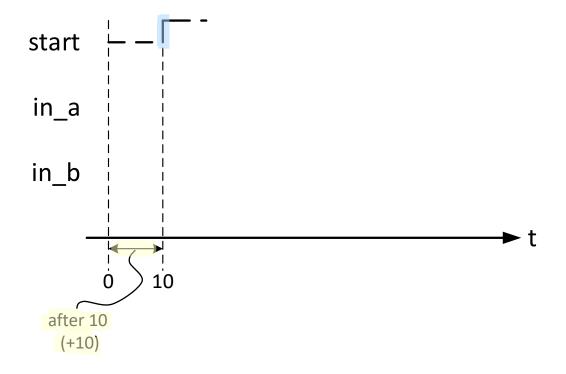
```
#10 start = 1'b1;
#13 in_a = 4'd2;
    in_b = 4'd3;
#37 in_a = 4'd15;
    in_b = 4'd7;
//...
end
```





- The **initial** block
 - Stimuli assignment example

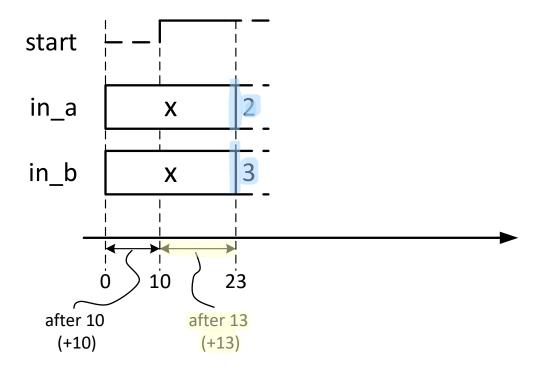
```
#10 start = 1'b1;
#13 in_a = 4'd2;
    in_b = 4'd3;
#37 in_a = 4'd15;
    in_b = 4'd7;
//...
end
```





- The **initial** block
 - Stimuli assignment example

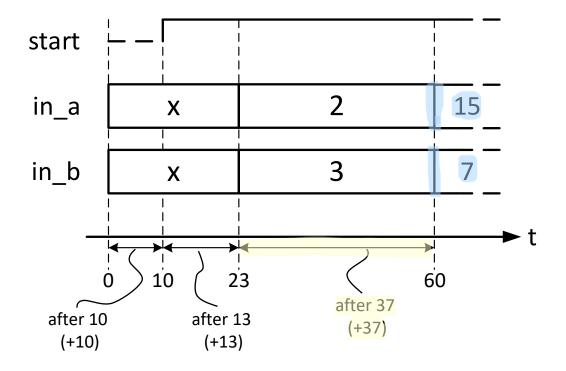
```
#10 start = 1'b1;
#13 in_a = 4'd2;
in_b = 4'd3;
#37 in_a = 4'd15;
in_b = 4'd7;
//...
end
```





- The **initial** block
 - Stimuli assignment example

```
#10 start = 1'b1;
#13 in_a = 4'd2;
    in_b = 4'd3;
#37 in_a = 4'd15;
    in_b = 4'd7;
//...
end
```





- The **initial** block
 - A useful command for stimuli assignment: \$random() / \$urandom()
 - \$random() → returns a signed 32-bit value
 - **\$urandom()** → returns an unsigned 32-bit value

```
initial begin

// ...
#15 a = $urandom();

// ...
end
```



- The **initial** block
 - But used also for output(s) check

```
initial begin

//...

if(dout == 8'h9C)
    $display("OK");
else
    $display("ERROR");

//...
end
```



- The **initial** block
 - Command \$display(<...>)
 - Used to print message(s) on the Transcript terminal (of Modelsim)

```
initial begin

// ...

if (dout == 8'h9C)
   $display("OK");

else
   $display("ERROR");

// ...
end
```



- The initial block
 - Command \$\forall \text{display}(<...>)
 - Used to print message(s) on the Transcript terminal (of Modelsim)
 - Examples:
 - ϕ' ϕ' -
 - \$\frac{1}{2}\text{display}("Output value is %8h'', dout); \rightarrow as above, but printing on 8 digits
 - \$display("Output value is %08h", dout); → as above, but filling head with 0s
 - \$display("Output value is %10d", dout); → print 'dout' in decimal format on 10 digits
 - \$\psi display("Output value is %32b", dout); \rightarrow print 'dout' in binary format on 32 digits
 - ϕ = \$\display("Output value is \%032b", dout); \rightarrow as above, but filling head with 0s



- The **initial** block
 - Also \$write(<...>) command can be used
 - Like \$display(<...>), but it does not include the new line
 - Examples:
 - \$write("Output value is %h", dout); \rightarrow print 'dout' in hexadecimal format
 - \$write("Output value is %8h", dout); → as above, but printing on 8 digits
 - swrite("Output value is "08h"), dout); \rightarrow as above, but filling head with 0s
 - \$write("Output value is %10d", dout); \rightarrow print 'dout' in decimal format on 10 digits
 - \$write("Output value is %32b", dout); \rightarrow print 'dout' in binary format on 32 digits
 - \$write("Output value is %032b", dout); → as above, but filling head with 0s



- The **initial** block
 - Control commands for simulation
 - The simulation lasts as long as an event is scheduled
 - For instance, if using clock as shown before, simulation never stops, unless...
 - ... you manually stop the simulation with the command of the simulation tool (Modelsim)
 - ... you automatically stop the simulation with command \$stop (inside an initial block)



- The **initial** block
 - Control commands for simulation: \$stop command
 - Automatically stops the simulation (when the simulation reaches that line of code) ...

```
initial begin
  //...
$stop;
  //...
end
```



- The **initial** block
 - Control commands for simulation: \$stop command
 - Automatically stops the simulation (when the simulation reaches that line of code) ...
 - ... when you run all the simulation: [Transcript terminal] run -all

```
initial begin
  //...
$stop;
  //...
end
```



Simulation with testbench

- In practice, the **run –all** (instead of run 1, run 10, run 10ns, ...) run all the simulation until its end (if any)
 - The \$stop command sets the (automatic) end of the simulation



Simulation with testbench

- In conclusion, to perform the simulation (on Modelsim) with a testbench
 - 1. Include also the testbench file (.sv) in the Modelsim project
 - 2. Compile also the testbench file
 - 3. When launching the simulation, choose the testbench module
 - 4. Run the simulation

```
[Transcript terminal] >> run –all (if you included the $stop command)
```

- Or >> run 1, run 10, ...
- Or >> run 100ps, run 100ns, ...



Simulation with testbench

- In conclusion, to perform the simulation (on Modelsim) with a testbench
 - 1. Include also the testbench file (.sv) in the Modelsim project
 - 2. Compile also the testbench file
 - 3. When launching the simulation, choose the testbench module
 - 4. Run the simulation

```
    [Transcript terminal] >> run –all (if you included the $stop command)
    Or >> run 1, run 10, ...
```

• Or >> run 100ps, run 100ns, ...

^{*} If useful, please remember to create the waveform after launching the simulation (3), but before running it (4)

- It may happen to confuse the reset with the initialization, since ...
 - ... the reset is a mechanisms to bring the system to a known state (typically at the power-on), which is why it is sometimes referred to as the initial state
 - ... initialization means assign an initial (specific) value

- It may happen to confuse the reset with the initialization, since ...
 - ... the reset is a mechanisms to bring the system to a known state (typically at the power-on), which is why it is sometimes referred to as the initial state
 - ... initialization means assign an initial (specific) value

But they are not the same: they differ in several ways!!!



- Let's assume the following example to better appreciate the difference
 - In a computer, the reset occurs when you press the reboot button
 - Everything is "turned off"
 - You lose the current content of RAM , the current state of programs, all unsaved progress, ...
 - The computer (re-)starts from an initial state, which is well known and expected
 - Initialization may occur, for example, if you want to open a new blank document (to start writing it or filling it from the "beginning")
 - All other programs are left untouched
 - The overall computer state does not restart from the initial state
 - At most, only the document management program starts from an "initial state" (i.e., the blank document)

- Assume you want to execute an algorithm that generates a ciphertext C made of bytes C[i] computed as:
 - $C[i] = P[i] \oplus K[i]$
 - K[i] = K[i-1] + 1
 - for i = 1, 2, ...
 - P[i] is the ith byte of plaintext
 - K[0] = K, the initial key
- Assume that the reset state for K[i] corresponds to K (and not all zeros)
 - If you reset, you can restart the algorithm to encrypt a new message, because it re-initialize the K[i] value

- Assume you want to execute an algorithm that generates a ciphertext C made of bytes C[i] computed as:
 - $C[i] = P[i] \oplus K[i]$
 - K[i] = K[i-1] + 1
 - for i = 1, 2, ...
 - P[i] is the ith byte of plaintext
 - K[0] = K, the initial key
- Assume that the reset state for K[i] corresponds to K (and not all zeros)
 - Now assume that at a certain point you agree on a different initial key value, K_2 , because the other initial key is no longer valid (it has been compromised, for example)
 - You encrypt the first message, and everything is ok. And if you want to start encrypting a new second message?
 what do you do? Do you reset the system?
 - If you reset the system, K_2 is lost and you will start encrypting the second message using K instead of K_2



- To conclude, reset and initialization are different because of
 - Timing/occurrence
 - The reset is aimed to recover the system from a failing state, bringing it to a known (initial) state, so it is used at the power-on and only if necessary
 - The purpose of initialization is to assign an initial value, and its use falls within the typical operation of a program, or circuit, ...
 - Scope
 - The reset is global: when you reset, you reset the whole system
 - The initialization is local: it involves only a few specific parts (of a program, or of a circuit, ...)



- This to say that ...
 - Don't assume reset logic/resources to be used to perform initialization
 - Also reset logic/resources can be used for initialization, but not only them
 - Initialization requires specific dedicated logic/resources
 - For example, when you design a circuit using HDL



 Implementation of a sequential circuit and simulation with Modelsim and testbench

- Implementation of a sequential circuit and simulation with Modelsim and testbench
 - Design a module that perform the following operation at every clock cycle, if it receives a valid data input
 - out[i] = in[i] + in[i-1]
 - i = ith clock cycle (with a valid input data)
 - in[0] = 3
 - out[i] and in[i] are bytes



- Implementation of a sequential circuit and simulation with Modelsim and testbench
 - Assume that your module gets the following valid input bytes: B_1 , B_2 , B_3 , B_4 , ...
 - So
 - At the first clock cycle (with a valid input byte, i = 1):
 - At the second clock cycle (*i* = 2):
 - At the third clock cycle (i = 3):
 - At the fourth clock cycle (i = 4):
 - ...

out =
$$B_1 + 3$$

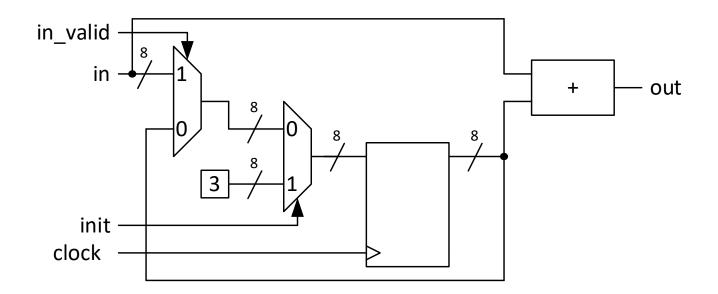
out =
$$B_2 + B_1$$

out =
$$B_3 + B_2$$

out =
$$B_4 + B_3$$



- Implementation of a sequential circuit and simulation with Modelsim and testbench
 - In other words, a circuit like this
 - Omitting reset (asynchronous, active-low)





- Implementation of a sequential circuit and simulation with Modelsim and testbench
 - Implement also the testbench
 - Clock generator
 - Power-on reset
 - Initialize the module, give some inputs, then re-initialize (without resetting), and give other inputs
 - Using the waveform, check that after the re-initialization the register contains the value 8'd3



- Implementation of a sequential circuit and simulation with Modelsim and testbench
 - You can find all the files about this exercise in the dedicated folder on the Team of the course
 - File > Electronics Systems module > Crocetti > Exercises > 2.5
 - Try to simulate on your own



Thank you for your attention

Luca Crocetti (luca.crocetti@unipi.it)