

17. Timer/Counter0 and Timer/Counter1 Prescalers

"8-bit Timer/Counter0 with PWM" on page 96 and "16-bit Timer/Counter1 with PWM" on page 115 share the same prescaler module, but the Timer/Counter can have different prescaler settings. The description below applies to both Timer/Counter1 and Timer/Counter0.

17.1 Internal Clock Source

The Timer/Counter can be clocked directly by the system clock (by setting the CSn2:0 = 1). This provides the fastest operation, with a maximum Timer/Counter clock frequency equal to system clock frequency ($f_{CLK_I/O}$). Alternatively, one of four taps from the prescaler can be used as a clock source. The prescaled clock has a frequency of either $f_{CLK_I/O}/8$, $f_{CLK_I/O}/64$, $f_{CLK_I/O}/256$, or $f_{CLK_I/O}/1024$.

17.2 Prescaler Reset

The prescaler is free running, i.e., operates independently of the Clock Select logic of the Timer/Counter, and it is shared by Timer/Counter1 and Timer/Counter0. Since the prescaler is not affected by the Timer/Counter's clock select, the state of the prescaler will have implications for situations where a prescaled clock is used. One example of prescaling artifacts occurs when the timer is enabled and clocked by the prescaler ($6 > CSn2:0 > 1$). The number of system clock cycles from when the timer is enabled to the first count occurs can be from 1 to N+1 system clock cycles, where N equals the prescaler divisor (8, 64, 256, or 1024).

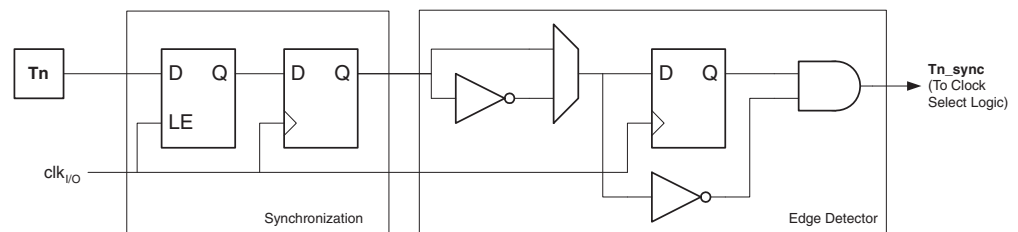
It is possible to use the prescaler reset for synchronizing the Timer/Counter to program execution. However, care must be taken if the other Timer/Counter that shares the same prescaler also uses prescaling. A prescaler reset will affect the prescaler period for all Timer/Counter it is connected to.

17.3 External Clock Source

An external clock source applied to the T1/T0 pin can be used as Timer/Counter clock (clk_{T1}/clk_{T0}). The T1/T0 pin is sampled once every system clock cycle by the pin synchronization logic. The synchronized (sampled) signal is then passed through the edge detector. Figure 17-1 shows a functional equivalent block diagram of the T1/T0 synchronization and edge detector logic. The registers are clocked at the positive edge of the internal system clock ($clk_{I/O}$). The latch is transparent in the high period of the internal system clock.

The edge detector generates one clk_{T1}/clk_{T0} pulse for each positive ($CSn2:0 = 7$) or negative ($CSn2:0 = 6$) edge it detects.

Figure 17-1. T1/T0 Pin Sampling



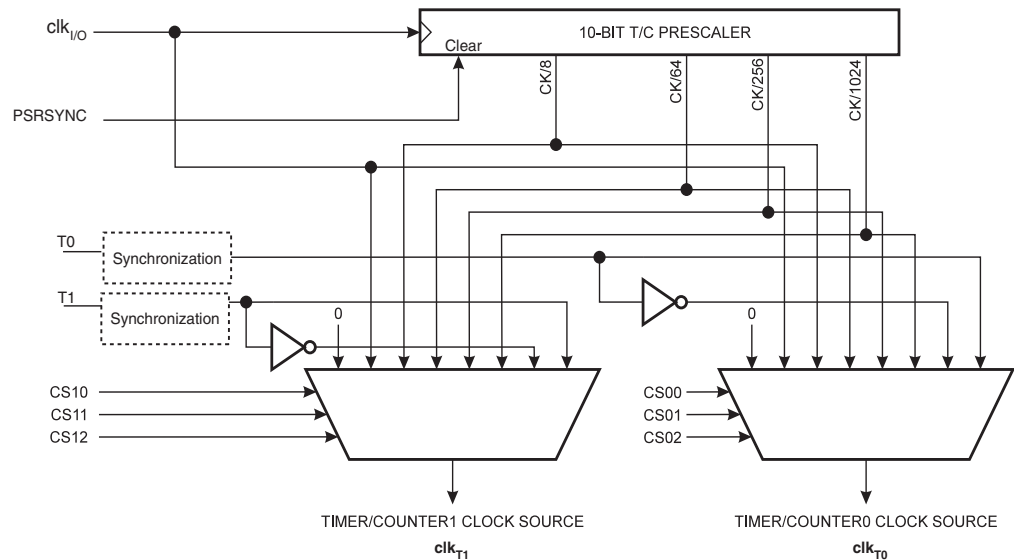
The synchronization and edge detector logic introduces a delay of 2.5 to 3.5 system clock cycles from an edge has been applied to the T1/T0 pin to the counter is updated.

Enabling and disabling of the clock input must be done when T1/T0 has been stable for at least one system clock cycle, otherwise it is a risk that a false Timer/Counter clock pulse is generated.

Each half period of the external clock applied must be longer than one system clock cycle to ensure correct sampling. The external clock must be guaranteed to have less than half the system clock frequency ($f_{ExtClk} < f_{clk_I/O}/2$) given a 50/50% duty cycle. Since the edge detector uses sampling, the maximum frequency of an external clock it can detect is half the sampling frequency (Nyquist sampling theorem). However, due to variation of the system clock frequency and duty cycle caused by Oscillator source (crystal, resonator, and capacitors) tolerances, it is recommended that maximum frequency of an external clock source is less than $f_{clk_I/O}/2.5$.

An external clock source can not be prescaled.

Figure 17-2. Prescaler for Timer/Counter0 and Timer/Counter1⁽¹⁾



Note: 1. The synchronization logic on the input pins (T1/T0) is shown in [Figure 17-1](#).

17.4 Register Description

17.4.1 GTCCR – General Timer/Counter Control Register

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
0x23 (0x43)	TSM	–	–	–	–	–	PSRASY	PSRSYNC	GTCCR
Read/Write	R/W	R	R	R	R	R	R/W	R/W	
Initial Value	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

- **Bit 7 – TSM: Timer/Counter Synchronization Mode**

Writing the TSM bit to one activates the Timer/Counter Synchronization mode. In this mode, the value that is written to the PSRASY and PSRSYNC bits is kept, hence keeping the corresponding prescaler reset signals asserted. This ensures that the corresponding Timer/Counters are halted and can be configured to the same value without the risk of one of them advancing during configuration. When the TSM bit is written to zero, the PSRASY and PSRSYNC bits are cleared by hardware, and the Timer/Counters start counting simultaneously.

- **Bit 0 – PSRSYNC: Prescaler Reset**

When this bit is one, Timer/Counter1 and Timer/Counter0 prescaler will be Reset. This bit is normally cleared immediately by hardware, except if the TSM bit is set. Note that Timer/Counter1 and Timer/Counter0 share the same prescaler and a reset of this prescaler will affect both timers.