

# CENG3420 Computer Organization & Design

Ryan Chan

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### **Abstract**

This is a note for **CENG3420 Computer Organization & Design** for self-revision purpose ONLY.  
Some contents are taken from lecture notes and reference book.  
Mistakes might be found. So please feel free to point out any mistakes.  
Contents are adapted from the lecture notes of CENG3420, prepared by **Bei Yu**, as well as some online resources.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This course is about how computers work.

### 1.1 The Manufacturing Process of Integrated Circuit

For this chapter, only a few calculations need to be considered:

1. Yield = The proportion of working dies per wafer.
2. Cost per die =  $\frac{\text{Cost per wafer}}{\text{Dies per wafer} \times \text{Yield}}$
3. Dies per wafer  $\approx \frac{\text{Wafer area}}{\text{Die area}}$  (since wafers are circle)
4. Yield =  $\frac{1}{\left[1 + \left(\frac{\text{Defects per area} \times \text{Die area}}{2}\right)\right]^2}$

**Remark.** Note that the defects on average = Defects per unit area  $\times$  Die area.

### 1.2 Power

$$\text{Power} = \text{Capacitive load} \times \text{Voltage}^2 \times \text{Frequency}$$

**Example.** For a simple processor, the capacitive load is reduced by 15%, voltage is reduced by 15%, and the frequency remains the same. Then, how much power consumption can be reduced?

**Solution:**

$$1 - (1 - 15\%) \times (1 - 15\%) \times 1 = 27.75\%$$

Thus, 27.75% of the power consumption can be reduced.

## Chapter 2

# Instruction Set Architecture (ISA)

### 2.1 Organization

Computer components include the processor, input, output, memory, and network. The primary focus of this course is on the processor and its interaction with the memory system. However, it is impossible to understand their operation by examining each transistor individually due to their enormous quantity. Therefore, abstraction is necessary.

Both the control unit and datapath need circuitry to manipulate instructions — for example, deciding the next instruction, decoding, and executing instructions.

There is also system software, such as the operating system and compiler, which translate programs written in high-level languages into machine instructions.

For example, after a program is written in a high-level language (like C), the compiler translates it into assembly language. Then, the assembler converts the assembly code into machine code (object code). The machine code is stored in memory, and the processor's control unit fetches an instruction from memory, decodes it to determine the operation, and signals the datapath to execute the instruction. The processor then fetches the next instruction from memory, and this cycle repeats.

### 2.2 Instruction Set Architecture

The instruction set architecture (ISA) is the bridge between hardware and software. It is the interface that separates software from hardware and includes all the information necessary to write a machine language program, such as instructions, registers, memory access, I/O, etc.

To put it simple, ISA is a formal specification of the instruction set that is implemented in the machine hardware. It defines how software can control the hardware by specifying the instructions, registers, memory addressing modes, and I/O operations that the processor can execute.

Assembly language instructions are the language of the machine. We aim to design an ISA that makes it easy to build hardware and compilers while maximizing performance and minimizing cost. Therefore, in this course, we focus on the RISC-V ISA.

In a Reduced Instruction Set Computer (RISC), we have fixed instruction lengths, a load-store instruction set, and a limited number of addressing modes and operations. Thus, it is optimized for speed.

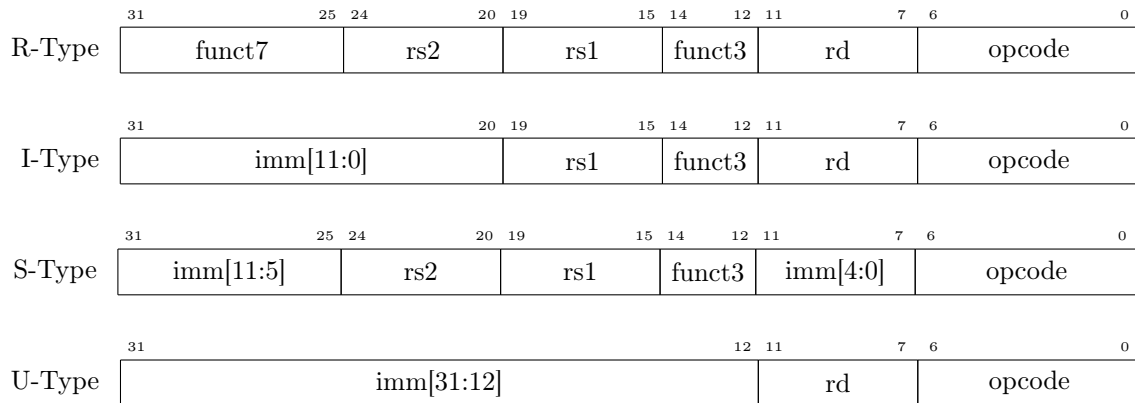
There are four design principles in RISC-V:

1. Simplicity favours regularity.
2. Smaller is faster.
3. Make the common case fast.
4. Good design demands good compromises.

## 2.3 RISC-V

There are five Instruction Categories:

1. Load and Store instruction
2. Bitwise instructions
3. Arithmetic instructions
4. Control transfer instructions
5. Pseudo instructions



Register names	ABI Names	Description
x0	zero	Hard-Wired Zero
x1	ra	Return Address
x2	sp	Stack Pointer
x3	gp	Global Pointer
x4	tp	Thread Pointer
x5	t0	Temporary / Alternate Link Register
x6-7	t1 - t2	Temporary Register
x8	s0 / fp	Saved Register / Frame Pointer
x9	s1	Saved Register
x10-11	a0 - a1	Function Argument / Return Value Registers
x12-17	a2 - a7	Function Argument Registers
x18-27	s2 - s11	Saved Register
x28-31	t3 - t6	Temporary Register

## Chapter 3

# Arithmetic Instructions

### 3.1 Introduction to RISC-V

Previously, we had the RV32I Unprivileged Integer Register table:

Register names	ABI Names	Description
x0	zero	Hard-Wired Zero
x1	ra	Return Address
x2	sp	Stack Pointer
x3	gp	Global Pointer
x4	tp	Thread Pointer
x5	t0	Temporary / Alternate Link Register
x6-7	t1 - t2	Temporary Register
x8	s0 / fp	Saved Register / Frame Pointer
x9	s1	Saved Register
x10-11	a0 - a1	Function Argument / Return Value Registers
x12-17	a2 - a7	Function Argument Registers
x18-27	s2 - s11	Saved Register
x28-31	t3 - t6	Temporary Register

There are some important registers to note:

Return address (ra): Used to save the function return address, usually  $PC + 4$ .

Stack pointer (sp): Holds the base address of the stack. It must be aligned to 4 bytes.

Global pointer (gp): Holds the base address of the location where global variables reside.

Argument registers (a0-a7): Used to pass arguments to functions.

Also, we have the RV32I base types:

R-Type	<div> <div>31</div> <div>25 24</div> <div>20 19</div> <div>15 14</div> <div>12 11</div> <div>7 6</div> <div>0</div> </div> <div> <div>funct7</div> <div>rs2</div> <div>rs1</div> <div>funct3</div> <div>rd</div> <div>opcode</div> </div>
I-Type	<div> <div>31</div> <div>20 19</div> <div>15 14</div> <div>12 11</div> <div>7 6</div> <div>0</div> </div> <div> <div>imm[11:0]</div> <div>rs1</div> <div>funct3</div> <div>rd</div> <div>opcode</div> </div>
S-Type	<div> <div>31</div> <div>25 24</div> <div>20 19</div> <div>15 14</div> <div>12 11</div> <div>7 6</div> <div>0</div> </div> <div> <div>imm[11:5]</div> <div>rs2</div> <div>rs1</div> <div>funct3</div> <div>imm[4:0]</div> <div>opcode</div> </div>
U-Type	<div> <div>31</div> <div>12 11</div> <div>7 6</div> <div>0</div> </div> <div> <div>imm[31:12]</div> <div>rd</div> <div>opcode</div> </div>

---

Here, the opcode (7 bits) specifies the operation. rs1 (5 bits) is the register file address of the first source operand. rs2 (5 bits) is the register file address of the second source operand. rd (5 bits) is the register file address of the destination for the result. imm (12 bits or 20 bits) is the immediate value field. funct (3 bits or 10 bits) is the function code that augments the opcode.

Note that the rs1 and rs2 fields are kept in the same place, which causes the imm field in S-type instructions to be separated into two parts.

## 3.2 Arithmetic and Logical Instructions

Here, we introduce some simple arithmetic and logical instructions.

### 3.2.1 Arithmetic Instructions

In RISC-V, each arithmetic instruction performs a single operation and specifies exactly three operands, all of which are contained in the datapath's register file.

For example, we have:

```
add t0, a1, a2    # t0 = a1 + a2
sub t0, a1, a2    # t0 = a1 - a2
```

which can be understood as:

```
destination = source1 op source2
```

These instructions follow the R-type format.

### 3.2.2 Immediate Instructions

Small constants are often used directly in typical assembly code to avoid load instructions. RISC-V provides special instructions that contain constants. For example:

```
addi sp, sp, 4    # sp = sp + 4
slti t0, s2, 15   # t0 = 1 if s2 < 15
```

These instructions follow the I-type format. The constants are embedded within the instructions, limiting their values to the range from  $-2^{11}$  to  $2^{11} - 1$ .

#### Example.

```
1  .global _start
2
3  .text
4  _start:
5      li a1, 20
6      li a2, 23
7      add t0, a1, a2
8      sub t1, a1, a2
```

This will give the result:  
**t0 = 0x2b, t1 = 0xffffffff**

**Note.** The calculation of t1 involves two's complement, which will be introduced later.

If we want to load a 32-bit constant into a register, we must use two instructions:

```
lui t0, 1010 1010 1010 1010 1010b
ori t0, t0, 1010 1010 1010b
```



Here, `lui` loads the upper 20 bits with an immediate value, and `ori` sets the lower 12 bits using an immediate value.

If a number is signed, then `1000 0000 ...` represents the most negative value, and `0111 1111 ...` represents the most positive value, since the first bit is used to distinguish between signed and unsigned values.

### 3.2.3 Shift Operations

We need operations to pack and unpack 8-bit characters into a 32-bit word, and we can achieve this by using shift operations. We can shift all the bits left or right:

```
slli t2, s0, 8    # t2 = s0 << 8 bits
srli t2, s0, 8    # t2 = s0 >> 8 bits
```

These instructions follow the I-type format. The above shifts are called logical because they fill the vacancy with zeros. Notice that a 5-bit `shamt` field is enough to shift a 32-bit value  $2^5 - 1$  or 31 bit positions.

#### Example.

```
1  .global _start
2
3  .text
4  _start:
5      li a1, 20
6      li a2, 23
7      slli t0, a1, 2
8      srli t1, a1, 1
```

Line 7: 10100 -> 1010000    # after slli 2 bits  
Line 8: 10111 -> 01011       # after srli 1 bits

### 3.2.4 Logical Operations

There are numbers of bitwise logical operations in RISC-V ISA. For example:

R format:

```
and t0, t1, t2    # t0 = t1 & t2
or  t0, t1, t2    # t0 = t1 | t2
xor t0, t1, t2    # t0 = t1 & (not t2) + (not t1) & t2
```

I format:

```
andi t0, t1, 0xFF00 # t0 = t1 & 0xFF00
ori  t0, t1, 0xFF00 # t0 = t1 | 0xFF00
```

#### Example.

```
1  .global _start
2
3  .text
4  _start:
5      li a1, 20
6      li a2, 23
7      and t0, a1, a2
8      or  t1, a1, a2
9      xor t2, a1, a2
10     andi t3, a1, 0x12
11     ori  t4, a2, 0x21
```

a1 = 10100, a2 = 10111  
Line 7: t0 = 10100 & 10111 -> 10100  
Line 8: t1 = 10100 | 10111 -> 10111  
Line 9: t2 = 10100 ^ 10111 -> 00011  
Line 10: t3 = 10100 & 10010 -> 10000  
Line 11: t4 = 10111 100001 -> 110111

### 3.3 Data Transfer Instruction

There are two basic data transfer instructions for accessing data memory:

```
lw t0, 4(s3)    # load word from memory to register
sw t0, 8(s3)    # store word from register to memory
```

The data is loaded or stored using a 5-bit address. The memory address is formed by adding the contents of the base address register to the offset value.

#### Example.

```
1  .global _start
2
3  .data
4  a: .word 1 2 3 4 5
5
6  .text
7  _start:
8      la a1, a
9      lw t0, 0(a1)
10     lw t1, 4(a1)
11     lw t2, 8(a1)
12     lw t3, 12(a1)
13     lw t4, 16(a1)
14     addi t4, t4, 1
15     sw t4, 20(a1)
16     lw t5, 20(a1)
```

t0 = 0x01, t1 = 0x02  
t2 = 0x03, t3 = 0x04  
t4 = 0x06, t5 = 0x06

**Remark.** Address is byte-base, thus the increment is 4 when accessing a1.

These instructions follow the I-type format.

Since 8-bit bytes are useful, most architectures address individual bytes in memory.

Note that in byte addressing, we have Big Endian, where the leftmost byte is the word address, and the rightmost byte is the word address for Little Endian. In RISC-V, we use Little Endian, where the leftmost byte is the least significant byte.

We also have loading and storing byte operations:

```
lb t0, 1(s3)    # load byte from memory
sb t0, 6(s3)    # store byte to memory
```

Here, `lb` places the byte from memory into the rightmost 8 bits of the destination register and performs signed extension. `sb` then takes the byte from the rightmost 8 bits of a register and writes it to memory.

**Example.** Assume that in memory, we have:

```
0xFFFFFFFF      4
0x009012A0       0
```

Now, we have the following operation:

```
add s3, zero, zero
lb t0, 1(s3)
sb t0, 6(s3)
```

---

What is the value left in `t0`? What word is changed in memory and to what? What if the machine was Big Endian?

**Solution:**

1. `t0 = 0x00000012`

2. New memory:

<code>0xFF12FFFF</code>	4
<code>0x009012A0</code>	0

3. `t0 = 0x00000090`, New memory:

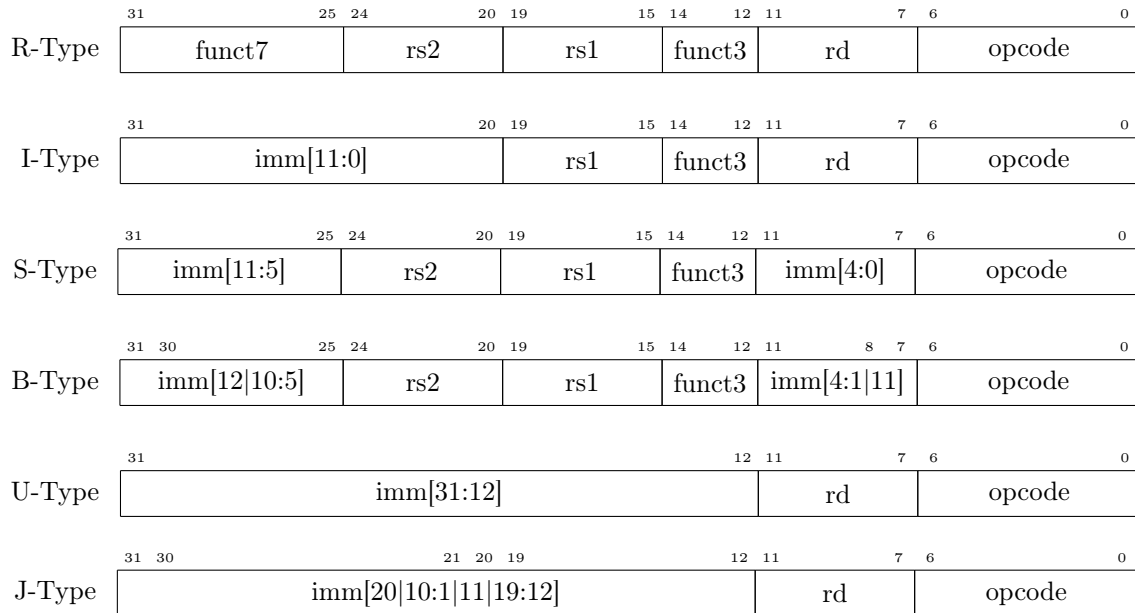
<code>0xFFFF90FF</code>	4
<code>0x009012A0</code>	0

# Chapter 4

## Control Instruction

### 4.1 Introduction to Register

Previously we have take a look on the instruction fields of RISC-V. Now, we can take a closer look on it.



There are a total of five instruction categories, including

1. Load and Store instruction
2. Bitwise instructions
3. Arithmetic instructions
4. Control transfer instructions
5. Pseudo instructions

The RISC-V register file holds 32 32-bit general-purpose registers, with two read ports and one write port. Thus, there are at most three operands. Registers are faster than main memory, and they are easier for the compiler to use. However, register files with more locations are slower.

### 4.2 Control Instructions

In RISC-V, we have control flow instructions. For example, we have conditional branch instructions:

```

bne s0, s1, Lbl    # go to Lbl if s0 != s1
beq s0, s1, Lbl    # go to Lbl if s0 == s1

```

These instructions follow the B-format.

#### Example.

```

1  .global _start
2
3  .text
4  _start:
5      li a0, 1
6      li a1, 1
7      li t0, 20
8      li t1, 23
9      bne t0, t1, inst1
10     addi a0, a0, 1
11     beq t0, t1, inst2
12     inst1: addi a0, a0, 2
13     bne t0, zero, end
14     inst2: addi a0, a0, 3
15     end:   sub a0, a0, a1

```

Line 5: a0 = 1  
Line 6: a1 = 1  
Line 7: t0 = 20  
Line 8: t1 = 23  
Line 9: t0 != t1 -> goto inst1  
Line 10 & 11 -> ignored  
Line 12: a0 = 3  
Line 13: t0 != 0 -> goto end  
Line 14 -> ignored  
Line 15: a0 = 2

We need some extra instructions to support branch instructions. For example, we can use `slt` to support the branch-if-less-than instruction.

```

slt t0, s0, s1      # if s0 < s1, then t0 = 1; else, t0 = 0
slti t0, s0, 25     # if s0 < 25, then t0 = 1; else, t0 = 0 (signed)
sltu t0, s0, s1     # if s0 < s1, then t0 = 1; else, t0 = 0 (unsigned)
sltiu t0, s0, 25    # if s0 < 25, then t0 = 1; else, t0 = 0 (immediate unsigned)

```

This instruction follows R format or I format.

#### Example.

```

1  .global _start
2
3  .text
4  _start:
5      li a0, 1
6      li t0, 20
7      li t1, 23
8      slt a1, t0, t1
9      beq a0, a1, inst1
10     addi a0, a0, 2
11     inst1: addi a0, a0, 3

```

Line 5: a0 = 1  
Line 6: t0 = 20  
Line 7: t1 = 23  
Line 8: t0 < t1 -> a1 = 1  
Line 9: a0 == a1 -> goto inst1  
Line 10: ignored  
Line 11: a0 = 4

We can then use these instructions to create other conditions. We can also check for boundaries using these instructions. For example, with `slt` and `bne`, we can implement a branch-if-less-than:

```

slt t0, s1, s2      # t0 set to 1 if s1 < s2
bne t0, zero, Label

```

Treating signed numbers as if they were unsigned provides a low-cost way to perform these checks. For example:

```

sltu t0, s1, t2     # t0 = 0 if s1 > t2 (max)
                   # or s1 < 0 (min)
beq t0, zero, IOOB  # go to IOOB if t0 = 0

```

Since negative numbers in 2's complement look like very large numbers in unsigned notation, it checks both if `t0` is less than or equal to zero and greater than `t2`.

There are also unconditional branch instructions:

```
jal zero, Label    # go to Label, Label can be immediate value
j Label            # go to Label and discard return address
```

These instructions follow J format.

#### Example.

```
1  .global _start
2
3  .text
4  _start:                                Line 5:  a0 = 1
5      li a0, 1                           Line 6:  t0 = 20
6      li t0, 20                           Line 7:  jump to Line 9
7      jal ra, loop                        Line 9:  a0 = 2, 3, ...
8  loop:                                Line 10: a0 != t0
9      addi a0, a0, 1                       Line 11: keep looping
10     beq a0, t0, end                      Line 13: a0 = 21
11     j loop
12  end:
13     addi a0, a0, 1
```

If the branch destination is further away than can be captured in 12 bits, we can use the following to perform a jump:

```
bne s0, s1, L2
j L1
L2: ...
```

**Example.** How a while-loop in C is compiled? For example

```
while (save[i] == k) i += 1;
```

Assume that `i` and `k` correspond to registers `s3` and `s5`, and the base of the array `save` is in `s6`.

**Solution:**

```
Loop: slli t1, s3, 2    # shift left 4 bytes (array operation)
      add t1, t1, s6    # t1 = address of save[i]
      lw t0, 0(t1)     # Temp reg t0 = save[i]
      bne t0, s5, Exit  # go to Exit if save[i] != k
      addi s3, s3, 1    # i = i + 1
      j Loop           # go to Loop
Exit:
```

**Remark.** Left shifting `s3` is used to align the word address (4 bytes), and it is increased by 1 in `addi`. Thus, each time it is increased by 4.

Address of `save[i]` = save array address + shift address ( $i \times 4$ ).

## 4.3 Accessing Procedures

Other than `jal`, we have branch instructions that return to the original location.

```
jal ra, label    # jump and link
jalr x0, 0(ra)   # return
```

Here, `jal` saves `PC + 4` by default into `ra`, so that when the procedure returns, it proceeds to the next instruction. `jalr` then uses the return address to return to the next procedure.

### Example.

```
1  .global _start
2
3  .text
4  _start:
5      li a0, 20
6      li a1, 23
7      jal ra, add_two_numbers
8      addi t1, a2, 0
9      j end
10 add_two_numbers:
11     mv a3, a0
12     mv a4, a1
13     add a2, a3, a4
14     jalr zero, 0(ra)
15 end:
16     addi t1, t1, 1
```

Line 5: a0 = 20  
Line 6: a1 = 23  
Line 7: jump to Line 11  
Line 11: a3 = 20  
Line 12: a4 = 23  
Line 13: a2 = 43  
Line 14: jump to Line 8  
Line 8: t1 = 43  
Line 9: jump to Line 16  
Line 16: t1 = 44

However, the number of registers is not enough for some operations. Thus, we use the stack, which is a last-in-first-out (LIFO) data structure. We use `sp` to address the stack, and it grows from high address to low address. To push data onto the stack, we use `sp = sp - 4`. To pop data from the stack, we use `sp = sp + 4`.

To allocate space on the stack, we have a frame pointer (`fp`) that points to the first word of the frame of a procedure, providing a stable base register for the procedure. `fp` is initialized using `sp` on a call, and `sp` is restored using `fp` on a return.

### Example.

```
1  .global _start
2
3  .text
4  _start:
5      li a0, 20
6      li a1, 23
7      jal ra, add_two_numbers
8      addi t1, a2, 0
9      j end
10 add_two_numbers:
11     addi sp, sp, -8
12     sw a0, 4(sp)
13     sw a1, 0(sp)
14     add a2, a0, a1
15     lw a0, 4(sp)
16     lw a1, 0(sp)
17     addi sp, sp, 8
18     jalr zero, 0(ra)
19 end:
20     addi t1, t1, 1
```

Line 5: a0 = 20  
Line 6: a1 = 23  
Line 7: jump to Line 11  
Line 11: assign 8 bytes in stack  
(from high to low)  
Line 12: save argument in stack 4(sp)  
Line 13: save argument in stack 0(sp)  
Line 14: a2 = 43  
Line 15: load argument from stack 4(sp)  
Line 16: load argument from stack 0(sp)  
Line 17: free stack  
Line 18: jump to Line 8  
Line 8: t1 = 43  
Line 9: jump to Line 16  
Line 16: t1 = 44

**Example.** Leaf procedures are ones that do not call other procedures. Give the RISC-V assembler code for the follows.

```
int leaf_ex (int g, int h, int i, int j)
{
    int f;
    f = (g + h) - (i + j)
    return f;
}
```

**Solution:** Suppose g, h, i, and j are in a0, a1, a2, a3:

```
leaf_ex:
    addi sp, sp, -8    # initialize stack room
    sw t1, 4(sp)       # save t1 on stack
    sw t0, 0(sp)       # save t0 on stack
    add t0, a0, a1
    add t1, a2, a3
    sub s0, t0, t1
    lw t0, 0(sp)       # restore t0
    lw t1, 4(sp)       # restore t1
    addi sp, sp, 8     # free stack
    jalr zero, 0(ra)
```

For nested procedures, we can store the return address on the stack so that, at the end, we can return to the original return address. For example, to find the factorial of a number, we can use:

```
fact:
    addi sp, sp, -8    # initialize stack pointer
    sw ra, 4(sp)       # save return address
    sw a0, 0(sp)       # save argument n
    slti t0, a0, 1     # test for n < 1
    beq t0, zero, L1   # if n >= 1, go to L1
    addi s0, zero, 1    # else return 1 in s0
    addi sp, sp, 8     # adjust stack pointer
    jalr zero, 0(ra)    # return to caller
L1:
    addi a0, a0, -1     # n >= 1, so decrement n
    jal ra, fact        # call fact with (n-1)
                        # this is where fact returns
bk_f:
    lw a0, 0(sp)       # restore argument n
    lw ra, 4(sp)       # restore return address
    addi sp, sp, 8     # free stack pointer
    mul s0, a0, s0      # s0 = n * fact(n-1)
    jalr zero, 0(ra)    # return to caller
```



# Chapter 5

## Logic basis

### 5.1 Numeral System

In common we use decimal, binary, octal and hexadecimal number systems. radix or base of the number system is the total number of digits allowed in the number system.

The conversion from a decimal integer to another number system is simple: divide the decimal number by the radix and save the remainder. Keep repeating the steps until the quotient is zero. The result is the reverse order of the remainders.

As shown in the previous chapter, we need to deal with signed integers. The original notation is simple, where we use the first bit of the binary string to represent the sign. For example,  $1001_2$  represents -1 and  $0001_2$  represents 1, which is called 1's complement. However, this leads to the situation where there are two types of zero: negative zero and positive zero.

Thus, we use 2's complement. We first complement all the bits and then add 1. For example, if we have -6 and want to represent it in binary notation, we have:

$$6_{10} = 0000\ 0000 \dots 0110_2 \Rightarrow 1111\ 1111 \dots 1001_2 + 1 \Rightarrow 1111\ 1111 \dots 1010 = -6$$

For an  $n$ -bit signed binary numeral system, the largest positive number is  $2^{n-1} - 1$ , and the smallest negative number is  $-2^{n-1}$ .

There are two types of signals: analog and digital. For an analog signal, it varies smoothly over time. For a digital signal, it maintains a constant level and then changes to another constant level at regular intervals. We can use 0 and 1 to represent a digital signal, with 1 being High/True/On/... and 0 being Low/False/Off/....

### 5.2 Logic Gates

Logic gates can produce different outputs for the same input signal. We can use a truth table to describe how the logic circuit's output depends on the logic levels of the inputs. For example, here is the truth table for an AND gate:

$A$	$B$	Output ( $A$ AND $B$ )
0	0	0
0	1	0
1	0	0
1	1	1

## Chapter 6

# Arithmetic Logic Unit

## Chapter 7

# Datapath

## Chapter 8

# Floating Number

## Chapter 9

# Pipeline

## Chapter 10

# More on Pipeline

## Chapter 11

# Performance

## Chapter 12

# Memory



## Chapter 13

# Cache

## Chapter 14

# Cache Disc

## Chapter 15

# Virtual Machine

## Chapter 16

# Instruction-Level Parallelism