

# Assembly programming with Atmel AVR Micro Controllers

Felix Morgner and Manfred Morgner

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If you wish to follow our ways, it would be a good idea to get a copy of ,ATMEL 8bit AVR instruction set manual’:

[http://www.atmel.com/dyn/resources/prod\\_documents/doc0856.pdf](http://www.atmel.com/dyn/resources/prod_documents/doc0856.pdf)

We will not explain the command we are use because all explanation is already word out in this document. Clearly we will discuss why we are using specific commands if there are known (as in the context of the book) alternatives.

This book is mainly based on *ATmega8* because we need to push aside micro controller model specifics. At some point we have to start dealing with this problem but we try to prevent this from happening as hard as we possibly can.

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# **Part I**

## **Simple Samples**



# Chapter 1

## LED

In this chapter we will demonstrate the basics of assembly programming with AVR Micro Controllers. These samples will only require the simplest of additional hardware. If you use an Arduino, you will need only a simple wire for the first examples.

### 1.1 Let there be light

The first sample in this chapter is the smallest program I can think of which does something. This program will switch on the LED on your Arduino on pin 13.

Programming in Assembler means you're in control. But as you know, power requires knowledge and responsibility. If you're entering the world of assembly programming, you have absolute power if you wish to or not. Consequently you need both, knowledge to become responsible.

At first you need to know what 'Arduino pin 13' really means! As consequence of the Arduino design it is not pin 13 on your *ATmega8*. Knowing this is yet the half way thru. Knowing the pin is a step you need to know if are working with a plain chip. What you need to know is the MC internal addressing for Arduino pin 13. To find out, look at <http://arduino.cc/hu/Hacking/PinMapping>. After we know anything we have to know to be responsible, we generate our 8byte machine program that will set our 'LED 13' under power.

```
.DEVICE atmega8

.org 0x0000
        rjmp     start

start:
        sbi      DDRB,      5
        sbi      PORTB,     5

main:
        rjmp     main
```

As simple as the program is, I believe there is some need for explanation.

At first we have to declare the type of micro controller we are intuited to use with the program. This is necessary because different micro controllers do have different assignments in their inner structure and need different addressing for their components. We do this by:

```
.DEVICE atmega8
```

Next we need to declare where our world will start. Funny thing is, we don't really know! So we are forced to use symbols to deal with this necessity. As indicated below, different micro controllers will have different inner values. But not only this, to be honest, where our program lives is due to additional effect a most uncertain thing. We come to this later in the book.

As we are forced to use symbols, we have to do so. We will set a symbol to our programs starting point later and this symbol will be named 'start' in our code. Whatever starts our program it must be informed where to goto to do so:

```
.org 0x0000
        rjmp      start
```

With '.org' (don't forget the leading dot!) we build up a sequence of command positioned at the addressed position. This sequence, some times named a table, is a list of action to be taken for different requests. The only request we have is to start our program and fortunately the entry for this request is expected as the first in our table.

For those who really want to know: The addressing in this table is relative to wherever it is placed in real life! So it always starts with 0. Strictly speaking, at this point we already enter the realms of a dreamworld. We don't know what really happens! But sometimes this is irrelevant

To declare our first magic point, we only need to postulate:

```
start:
```

'start:' is a label and represent the final address for the first memory position used afterwards. In our case the address of the first command in our program.

The next label is already behind all things we need to do in our program. It is the starting point of an unconditional infinite loop. This sequence is necessary because the processor (CPU) of our MC is running as long as it has power. We can't stop it, so we have to lead it into a controlled way of doing nothing because we don't wish that our MC does anything after it did all things we expected it to do.

Between 'start:' und 'main:' is our program. I call this the 'first form of a standard program'. A program which runs ones after the system awakes. Such program may be of limited use, but not completely useless. And the schema of this 'first form' is the basic schema of all derived form. The program

- starts



- does something
- loops forever, possibly doing something

If the program does something in the 'infinite loop' then this may be called the 'second form of a standard program'. A third form should be expected to pop into existence later on. But anyway. Our program of the first form is specifically designed to show some important rules for good programming.

The two commands which full fill our programs mission will do two things:

- declare pin 5 at PORTB as output pin
- set pin 5 at PORTB under power to enlighten our LED

This is all the program does and there is nothing more about it. You will discover, that this program demonstrates prudence and thrift. But for the moment, our knowledge is insufficient to explain it.

## 1.2 Get me on, get me off

At first the code

```
.DEVICE atmega8

.org 0x0000
    rjmp    start

start:
    sbi     DDRB,      5
    cbi     DDRB,      4
    sbi     PORTB,     4

main:
    sbic    PINB,      4
    rjmp    led_on
    cbi     PORTB,     5
    rjmp    led_ok
led_on:
    sbi     PORTB,     5
led_ok:
    rjmp    main
```

## 1.3 Stable decisions

This program stores one of two states and sets the LED on or off, keeping it according to the stored state. This explanation is slightly wrong. I try it again.

This program recognises an input signal consisting of two phases. A complete input signal consist of a LOW phase followed by a HIGH phase. The signal ends with entering the HIGH phase. We are interested only in change, as we always should.

If the Input signal changes from HIGH to LOW, our program changes the LED from its current state to the other state. If the LED was ON it will be set to OFF and vice versa. The state is only changed as reaction of changing the Input state from HIGH to LOW because 'no action' at the Input device leads to HIGH state in the input register as the result of using an internal 'pull up resistor' who does what he is called - he pulls the input signal up - to HIGH.

The electrical signal we use on our micro controller input pin is: Pulling it down to LOW (GND) which is the signal we are waiting for. And finally this is the Code to do it:

```
.DEVICE atmega8

.org 0x0000
        rjmp     start

start:
        sbi      DDRB,      5
        cbi      DDRB,      4
        sbi      PORTB,     4

        ldi      r16,       1

main:
        sbic     PINB,      4
        rjmp     led_keep
        tst      r16
        breq     led_ok
        sbis     PINB,      5
        rjmp     led_on
        cbi      PORTB,     5
        clr      r16
        rjmp     led_ok
led_on:
        sbi      PORTB,     5
        clr      r16
        rjmp     led_ok
led_keep:
        ldi      r16,       1
led_ok:
        rjmp     main
```

As you can see, this Code is not easy to understand. To do better, we add symbolic names to the soup. The basics are easy:

- `.equ` means: 'a name for a number'
- `.def` means: 'a name for an entity'

So for example `DDRB` already is a number. This number is defined in an include file chosen by your device selection. But in our case, whatever number is hidden behind the name `DDRB` it will be our Input/Output control port. So we name it `ctl` as prefix for 'control' and `IO` as name for Input&Output.

In another example `bit` stands for 'bit number' and `Input` for 'Input bit' which makes `bitInput`, the bit where we read the input state.

You may define your own naming convention which should hold throughout your project.

```
.DEVICE atmega8

.equ  ctlIO      = DDRB      ; DDRB is our I/O control register
.equ  prtIO      = PORTB     ; PORTB is our I/O output port register
.equ  pinIO      = PINB      ; PINB is our I/O input pin register

.equ  bitOutput  = 5         ; pin 5 is our output bit
.equ  bitInput   = 4         ; pin 4 is our input bit

.equ  FALSE      = 0         ; 0 will be FALSE or OFF
.equ  TRUE       = 1         ; 1 will be TRUE or ON

.def  bStatus    = r16       ; the last state will be stored in
```

As you may not have expected, this makes the soup - or code - somehow better readable and so much easier to understand. Now it looks more like a higher language:

```
.org 0x0000
        rjmp     start

start:
        sbi      ctlIO,      bitOutput
        cbi      ctlIO,      bitInput
        sbi      prtIO,      bitInput

        ldi      bStatus,    TRUE

main:
        sbic     pinIO,      bitInput
        rjmp     led_keep
        tst      bStatus
        breq     led_ok
        sbis     pinIO,      bitOutput
```

	rjmp	led_on	
	cbi	prtIO,	bitOutput
	clr	bStatus	
	rjmp	led_ok	
led_on:			
	sbi	prtIO,	bitOutput
	clr	bStatus	
	rjmp	led_ok	
led_keep:			
	ldi	bStatus,	TRUE
led_ok:			
	rjmp	main	

Even if its a better reading, it seems no really to be easy to follow the program flow. So at first, we should introduce a program flow chart:

## **Part II**

### **External devices**



# Chapter 2

## Shift Registers

### 2.1 SRAM to Shift Register

Sending SRAM content/data to shift registers has some applications. Some of them are

- Light chains
- Raster displays

It is an important way to communicate with the technical environment in certain situations. Most importantly if you have more bit to output as pins on your micro controller.