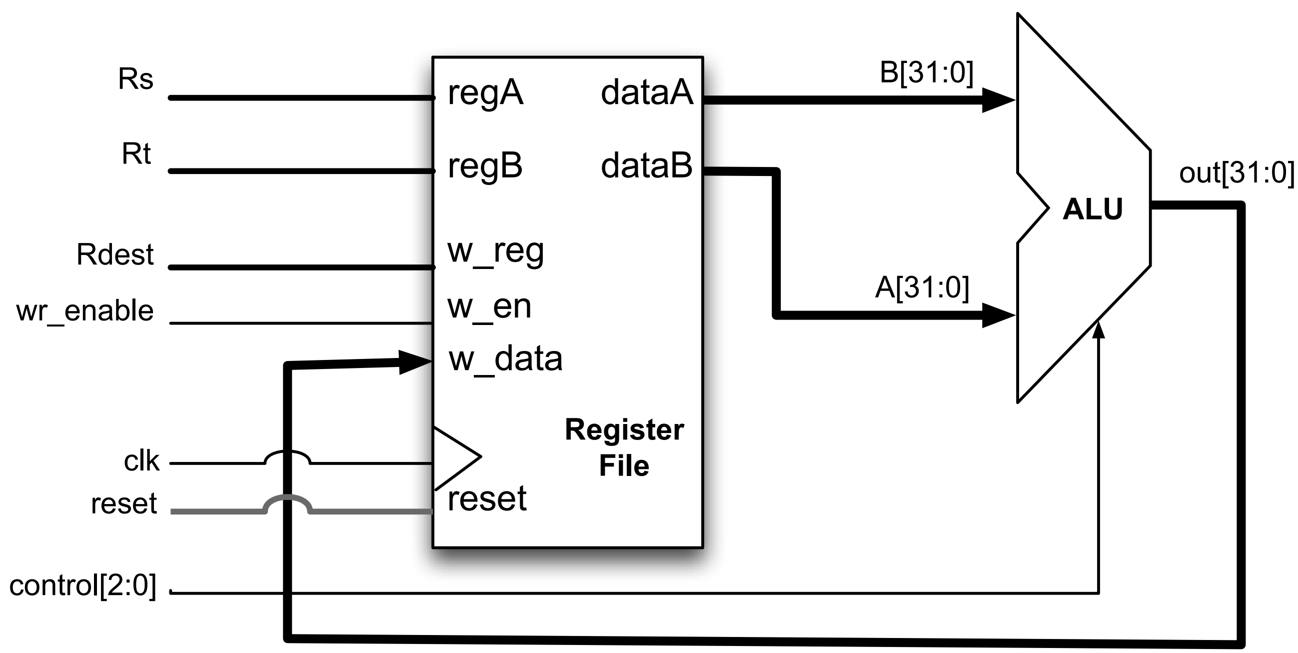
Building an Arithmetic Machine

Today's lecture

- The Arithmetic Machine
  - Programmable hardware
  - Instruction Set Architectures (ISA)
  - Instructions & Registers
    - Assembly Language
    - Machine Language

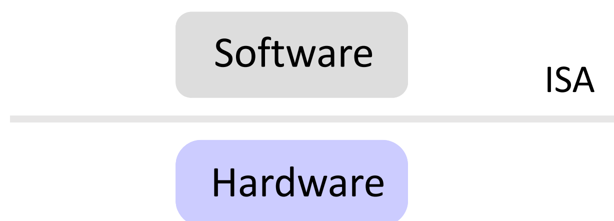
Building an “arithmetic machine”

- With an ALU and a register file, we can build a calculator
  - Here are the essential parts.



Building a computer processor.

- The key feature that distinguishes a computer processor from other digital systems is programmability.
- A processor is a hardware system controlled by software



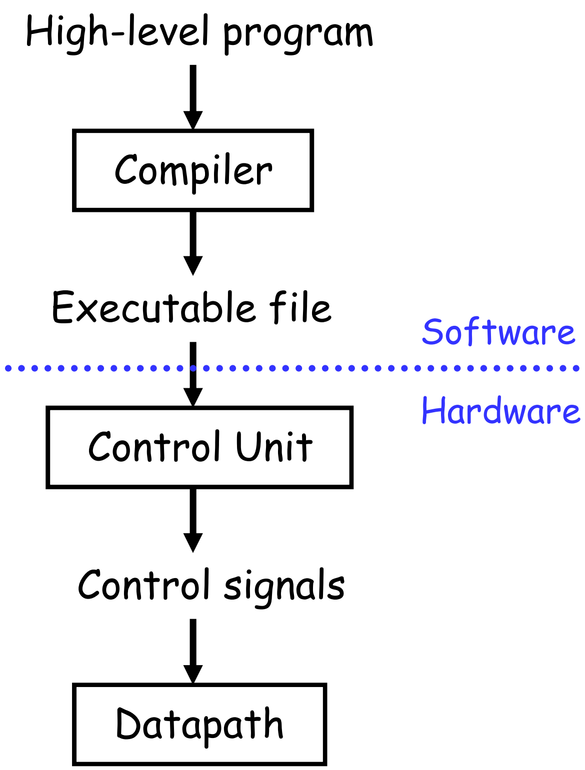
- An Instruction Set Architecture (ISA) describes the interface between the software and the hardware.
  - Specifies what operations are available
  - Specifies the effects of each operation

A MIPS ISA processor

- Different processor families (x86, PowerPC, ARM, MIPS, …) use their own instruction set architectures.
- The processor we'll build will execute a subset of the MIPS ISA
  - Of course, the concepts are not MIPS-specific
  - MIPS is just convenient because it is real, yet simple
- The MIPS ISA is widely used. Primarily in embedded systems:
  - Various routers from Cisco
  - Game machines like the Nintendo 64 and Sony Playstation 2


Programming and CPUs

- Programs written in a high-level language like C++ must be **compiled** to produce an executable program.
- The result is a CPU-specific **machine language** program. This can be loaded into memory and executed by the processor.
- Machine language serves as the **interface** between hardware and software.



High-level languages vs. machine language

- High-level languages are designed for human usage:
  - Useful programming constructs (for loops, if/else)
  - Functions for code abstraction; variables for naming data
  - Safety features: type checking, garbage collection
  - Portable across platforms
- Machine language is designed for efficient hardware implementation
  - Consists of very simple statements, called **instructions**
  - Data is named by where it is being stored
  - Loops, if/else implemented by branch and jump instructions
  - Little error checking provided; no portability

Assembly Language & Instructions

- Machine language is a binary representation of instructions
- Assembly language is a human-readable version
- There is an (almost) one-to-one correspondence between assembly and machine languages; we'll see the relation later.

- Instructions consist of:
  - Operation code (*opcode*): names the operation to perform
  - Operands: names the data to operate on
- Example:

operation $\downarrow$

$\texttt{ADD}\quad \overbrace{\texttt{\$17,}\quad \texttt{\$6,}\quad \texttt{\$15}}^{\text{operands}}$

MIPS: register-to-register, “three address”

- MIPS uses three-address instructions for arithmetic.
  - Each ALU instruction contains a destination and two sources.
- MIPS is a register-to-register architecture.
  - For arithmetic instructions, the destination and sources must all be registers (or constants).
  - Special instructions move values between the register file and memory.
- For example, an addition (a = b + c) might look like:

operation　　operands

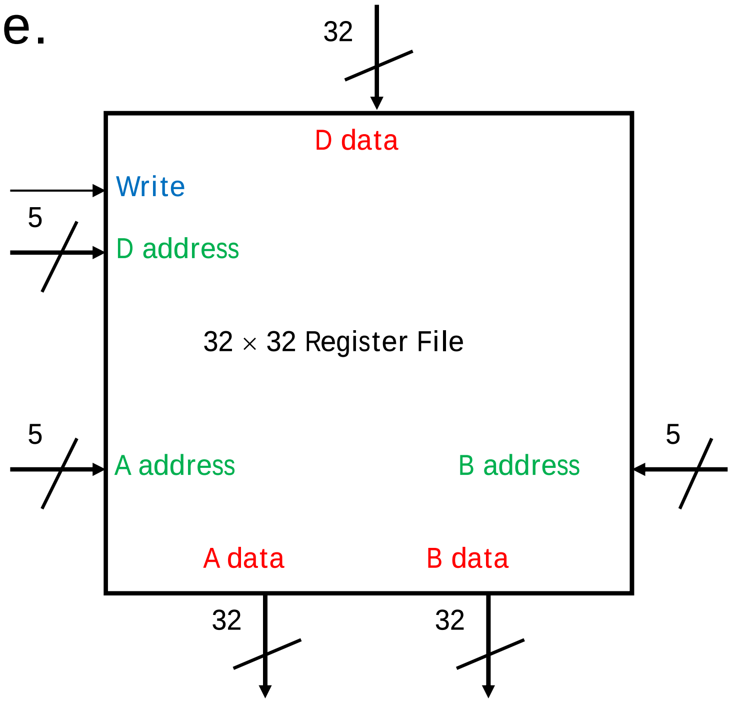
```
ADD    $17,    $6,    $15
```

destination　　sources

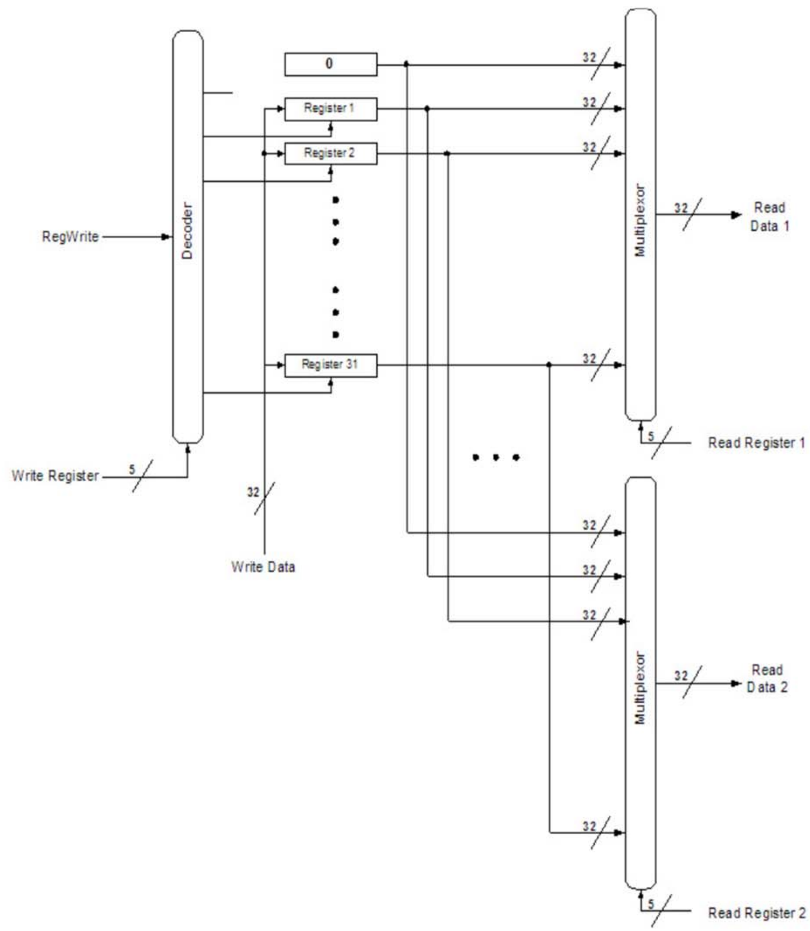
$6 = register #6

MIPS register file

- MIPS processors have 32 registers, each of which holds a 32-bit value.
  - Register specifiers (addresses) are 5 bits long.
  - The data inputs and outputs are 32-bits wide.
- Register 0 is special
  - It is always read as the value 0.
  - Writes to it are ignored.
- Two naming conventions for regs:
  - By number: \$0,…, \$17,…, \$31
  - By name: \$zero,…, \$s1,…, \$ra



A 32 x 32b Register File



Basic arithmetic and logic operations

- MIPS provides basic integer arithmetic operations:

  add   sub   mul*   div*

- And logical operations:

  and   or   nor   xor   not

- Remember that these all require three register operands; for example:

```
add $14, $18, $3      # $14 = $18 + $3
mul $22, $22, $11     # $22 = $22 x $11
```

Note: a full MIPS ISA reference can be found in Appendix A (linked from website)

** We won't implement these in our implementation*

Larger expressions

- More complex arithmetic expressions may require multiple operations at the instruction level.

$$\$4 = (\$1 + \$2) \times (\$3 - \$4)$$

```
add  $6, $1, $2        # $6 contains $1 + $2
sub  $5, $3, $4        # Temporary value $5 = $3 - $4
mul  $4, $6, $5        # $4 contains the final product
```

- Temporary registers may be necessary, since each MIPS instructions can access only two source registers and one destination.
  - could have re-used \$1,\$3 instead of introducing \$5,\$6.
  - But be careful not to modify registers that are needed again later.

Immediate operands

- So far, the instructions expect register operands. How do you get data into registers in the first place?
  - Some instructions allow you to specify a signed constant, or "immediate" value, for the second source instead of a register.
  - For example, here is the immediate add instruction, addi:

```
addi $15, $1, 4     # $15 = $1 + 4
```

  - Immediate operands can be used in conjunction with the $zero register to write constants into registers:

```
addi $15, $0, 4     # $15 = 4
```

A more complete example

- What if we wanted to compute the following?

$$1 + 2 + 3 + 4$$

To be continued elsewhere…

- MIPS reference documents
- SPIM simulator
  - add.s