

Forwarding

- Now, we'll introduce some problems that data hazards can cause for our pipelined processor, and show how to handle them with forwarding.

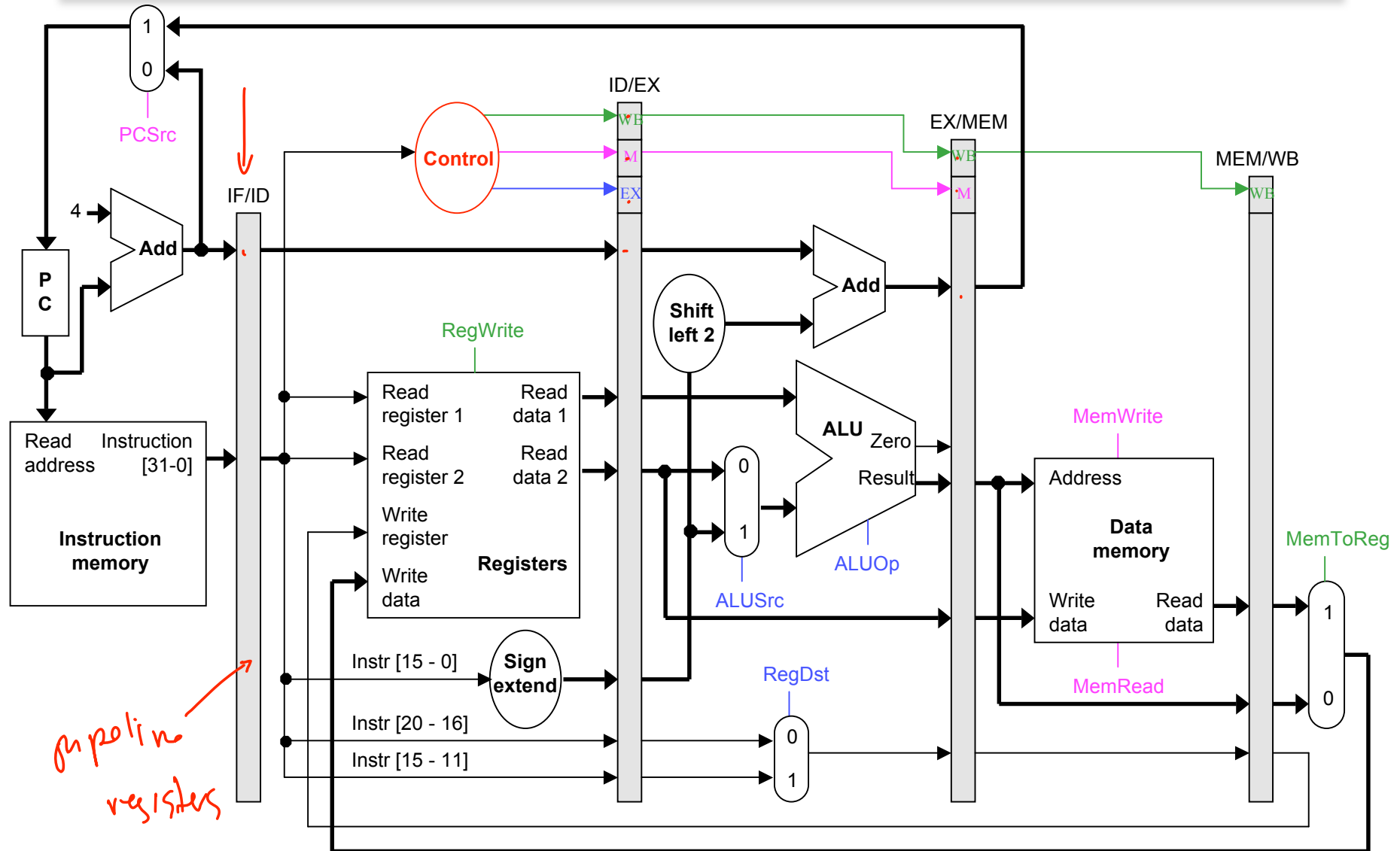
Pick-up hand-out!



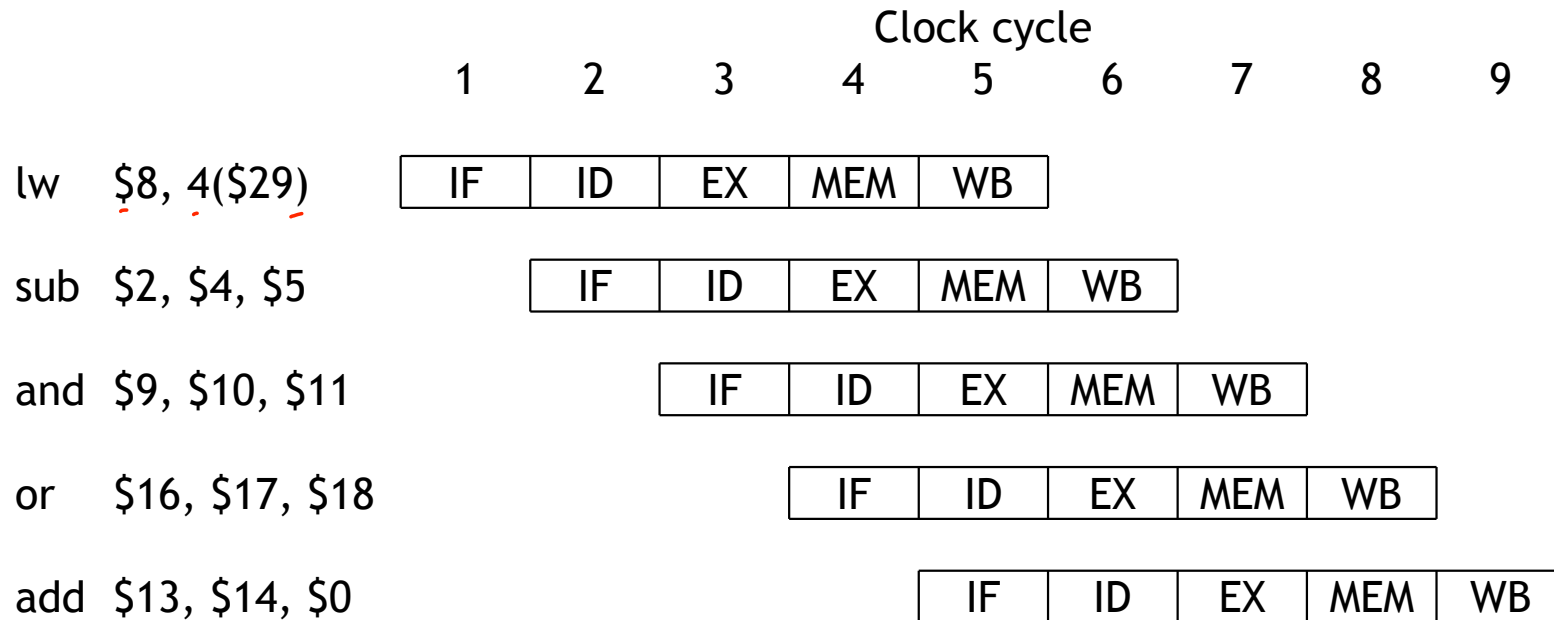
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The pipelined datapath



Pipeline diagram review



- This diagram shows the execution of an ideal code fragment.
 - Each instruction needs a total of five cycles for execution.
 - One instruction begins on every clock cycle for the first five cycles.
 - One instruction completes on each cycle from that time on.

Our examples are too simple

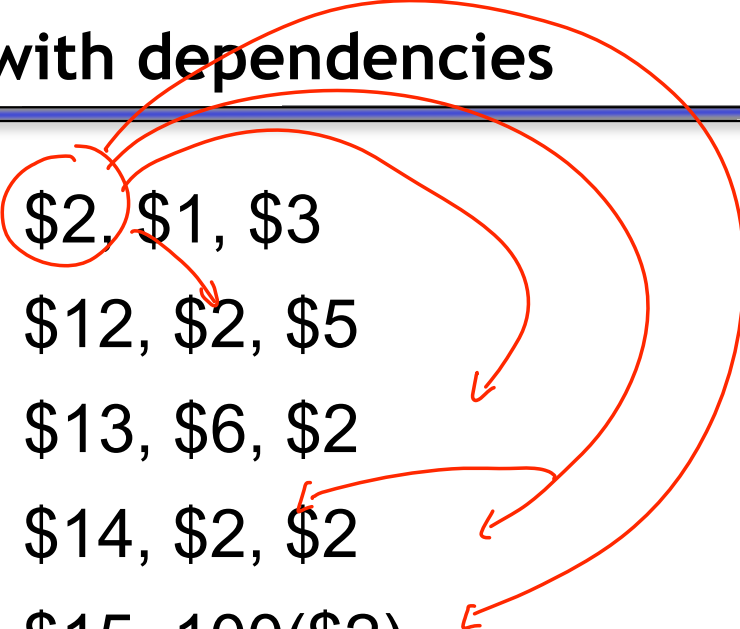
- Here is the example instruction sequence used to illustrate pipelining on the previous page.

```
lw    $8, 4($29)
sub   $2, $4, $5
and   $9, $10, $11
or    $16, $17, $18
add   $13, $14, $0
```

- The instructions in this example are **independent**.
 - Each instruction reads and writes completely different registers.
 - Our datapath handles this sequence easily, as we saw last time.
- But most sequences of instructions are *not* independent!

An example with dependencies

✓ sub \$2, \$1, \$3
✓ and \$12, \$2, \$5
or \$13, \$6, \$2
add \$14, \$2, \$2
sw \$15, 100(\$2)

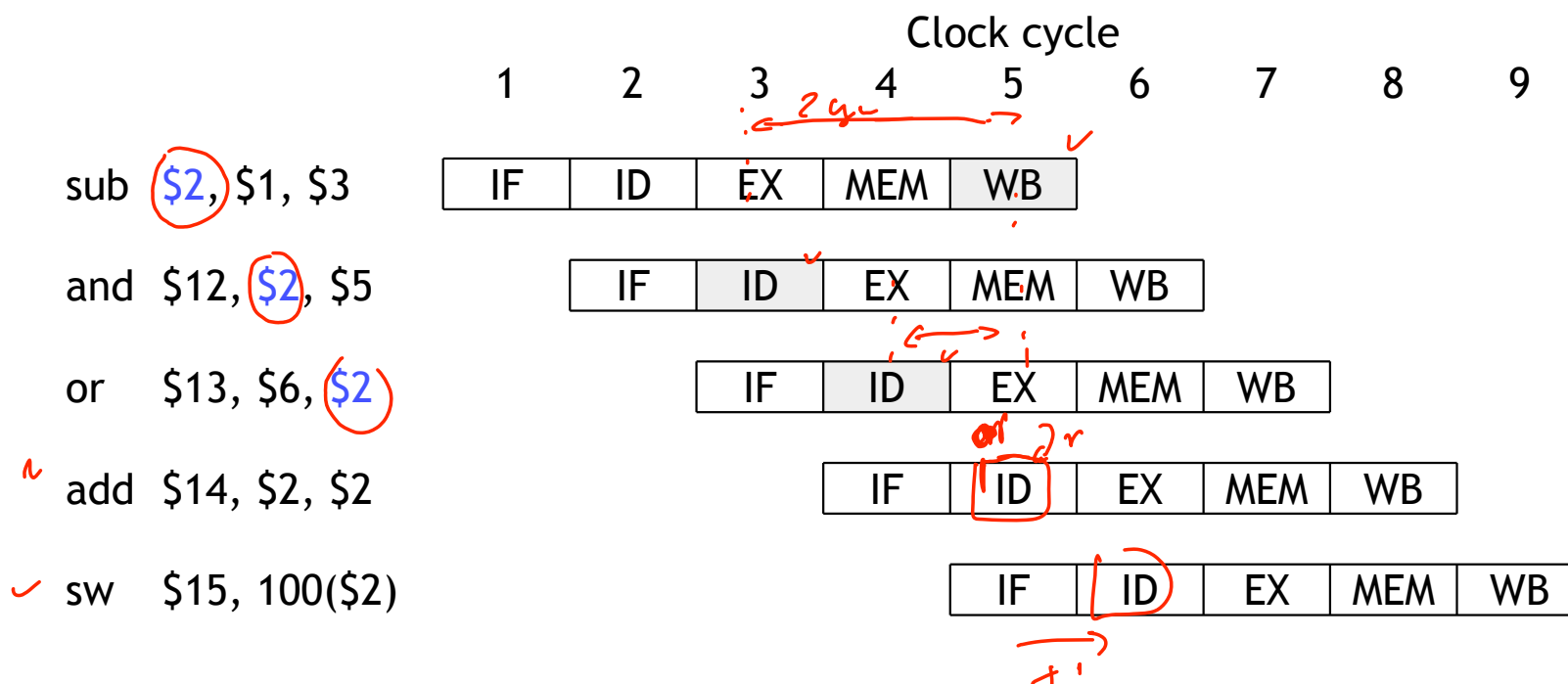


An example with dependencies

```
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or     $13, $6, $2
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```

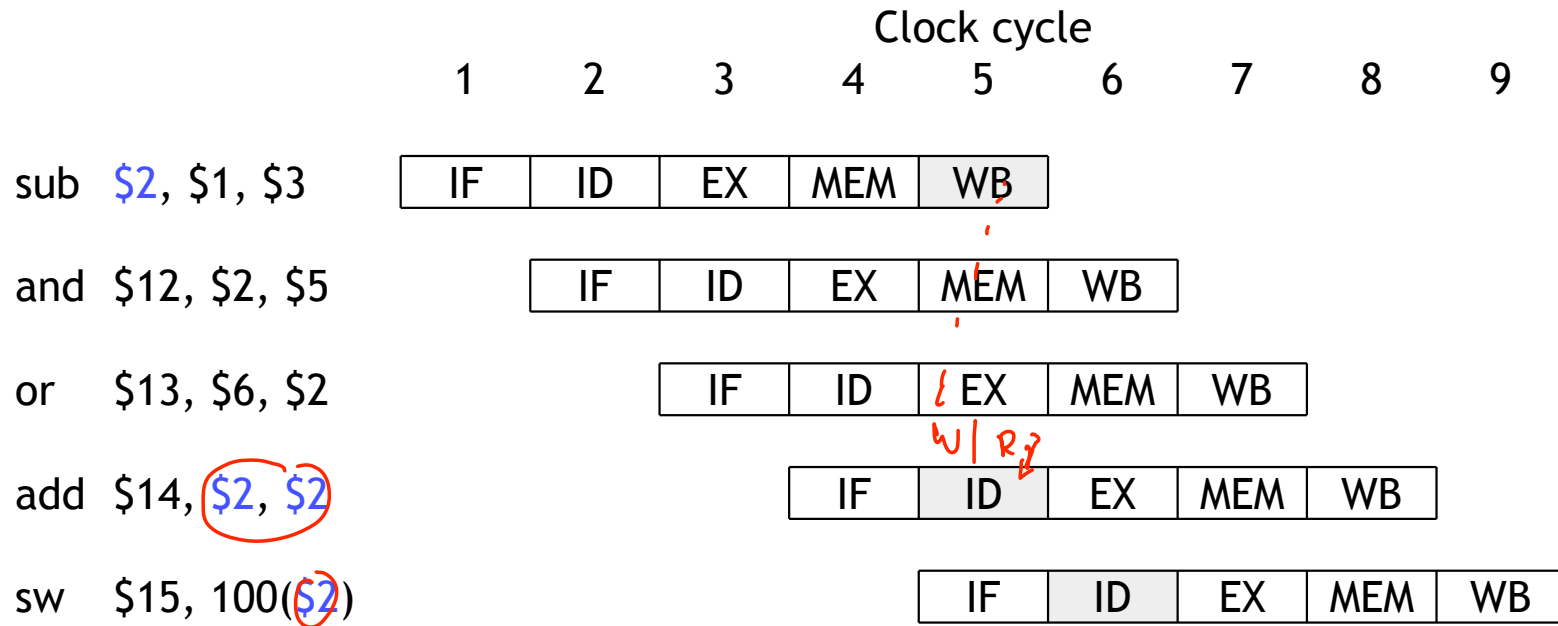
- There are several **dependencies** in this new code fragment.
 - The first instruction, SUB, stores a value into \$2.
 - That register is used as a source in the rest of the instructions.
- This is not a problem for the single-cycle and multicycle datapaths.
 - Each instruction is executed completely before the next one begins.
 - This ensures that instructions 2 through 5 above use the new value of \$2 (the sub result), just as we expect.
- How would this code sequence fare in our pipelined datapath?

Data hazards in the pipeline diagram



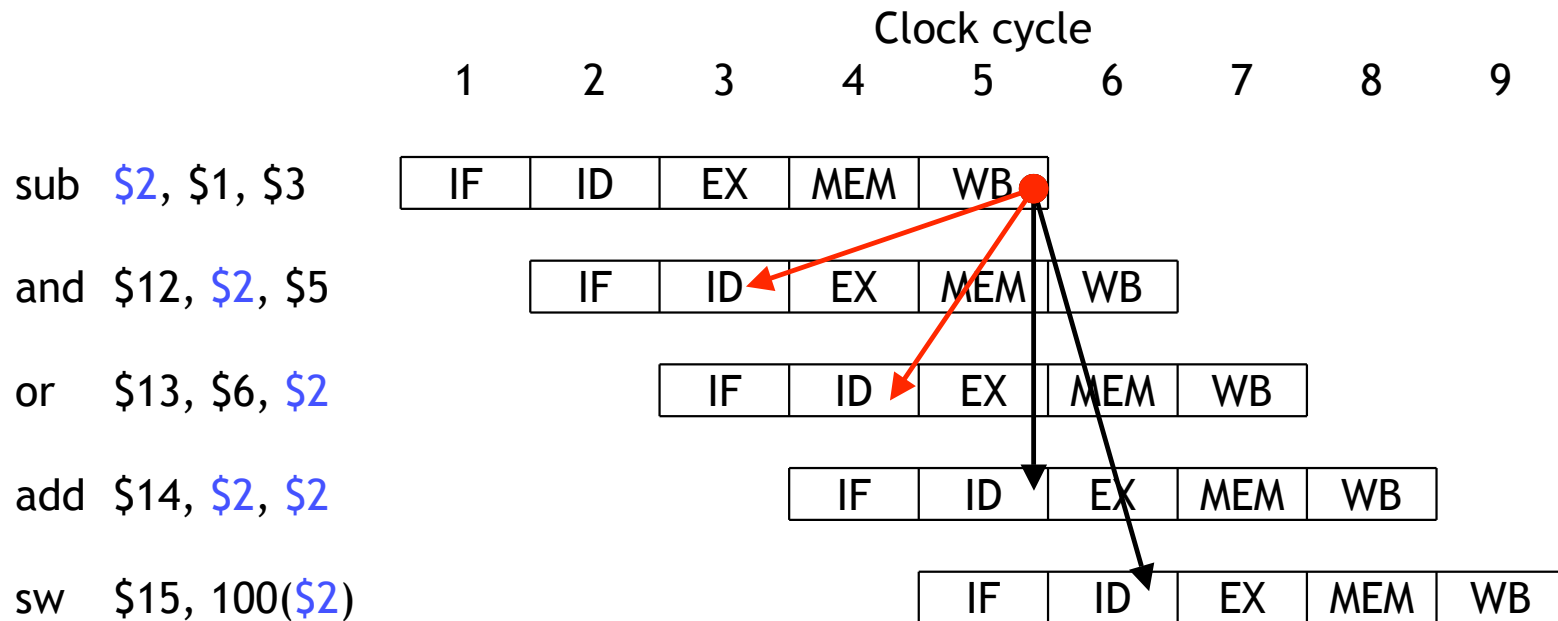
- The SUB instruction does not write to register \$2 until clock cycle 5. This causes two **data hazards** in our current pipelined datapath.
 - The AND reads register \$2 in cycle 3. Since SUB hasn't modified the register yet, this will be the *old* value of \$2, not the new one.
 - Similarly, the OR instruction uses register \$2 in cycle 4, again before it's actually updated by SUB.

Things that are okay



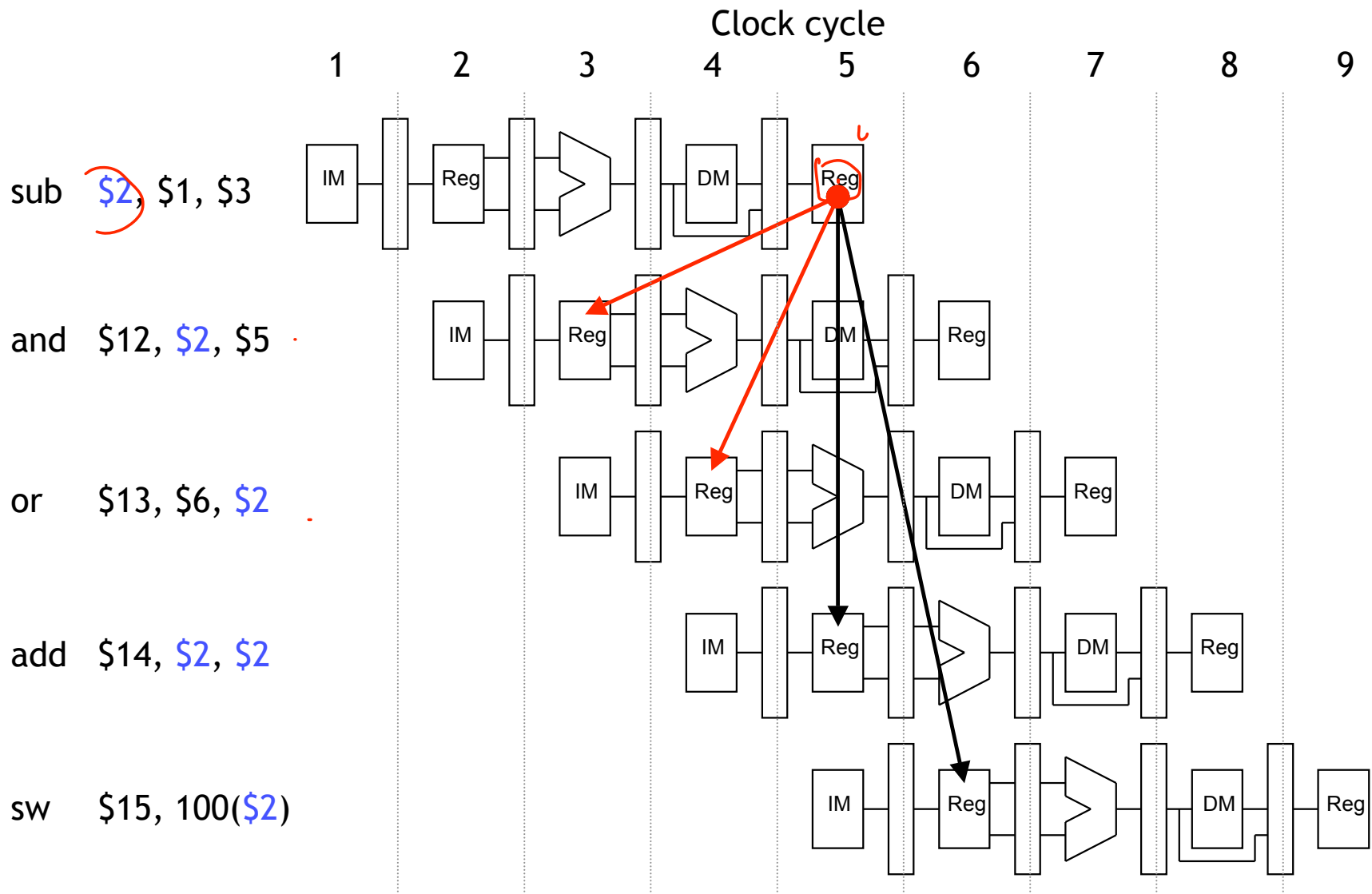
- The ADD instruction is okay, because of the register file design.
 - Registers are written at the beginning of a clock cycle.
 - The new value will be available by the end of that cycle.
- The SW is no problem at all, since it reads \$2 after the SUB finishes.

Dependency arrows



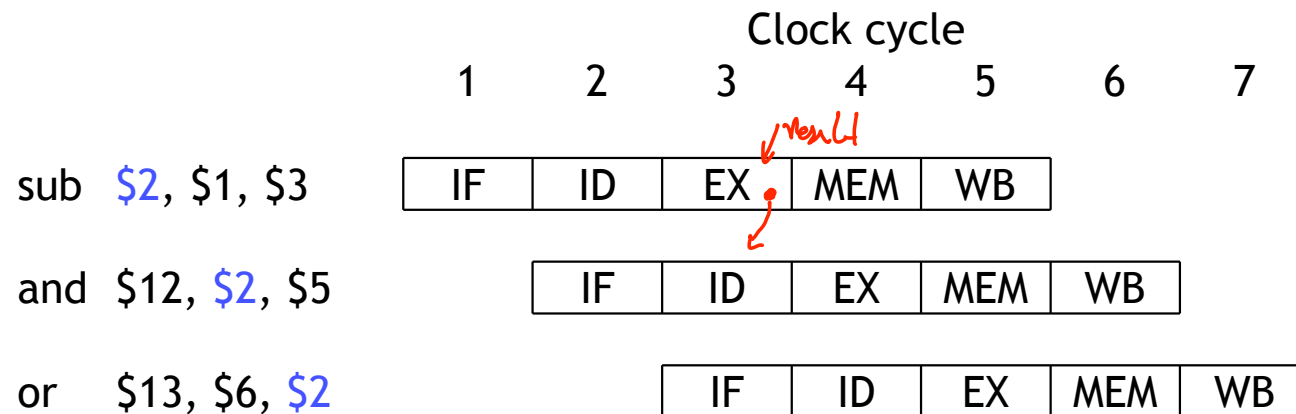
- Arrows indicate the flow of data between instructions.
 - The tails of the arrows show when register \$2 is written.
 - The heads of the arrows show when \$2 is read.
- Any arrow that points backwards in time represents a data hazard in our basic pipelined datapath. Here, hazards exist between instructions 1 & 2 and 1 & 3.

A fancier pipeline diagram



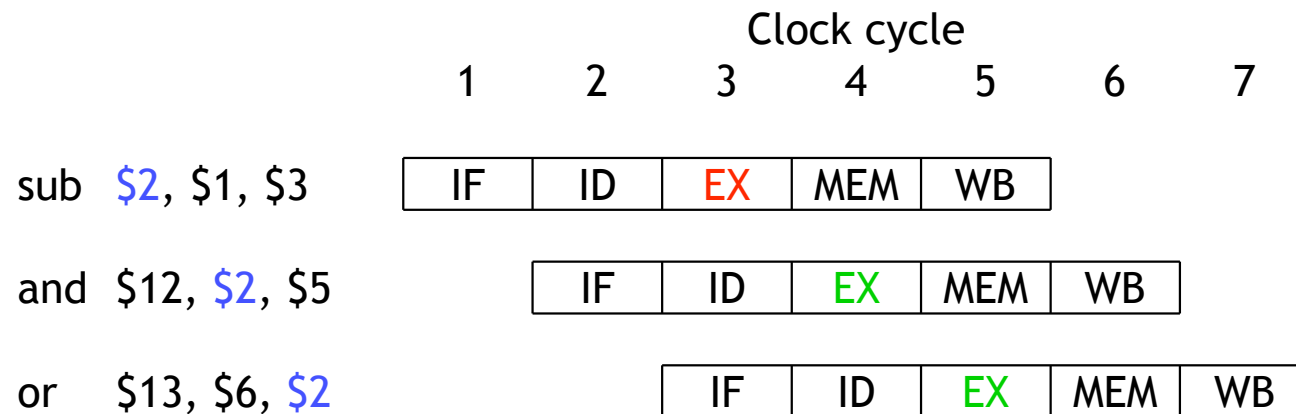
A more detailed look at the pipeline

- We have to eliminate the hazards, so the AND and OR instructions in our example will use the correct value for register \$2.
- When is the data actually produced and consumed?
- What can we do?



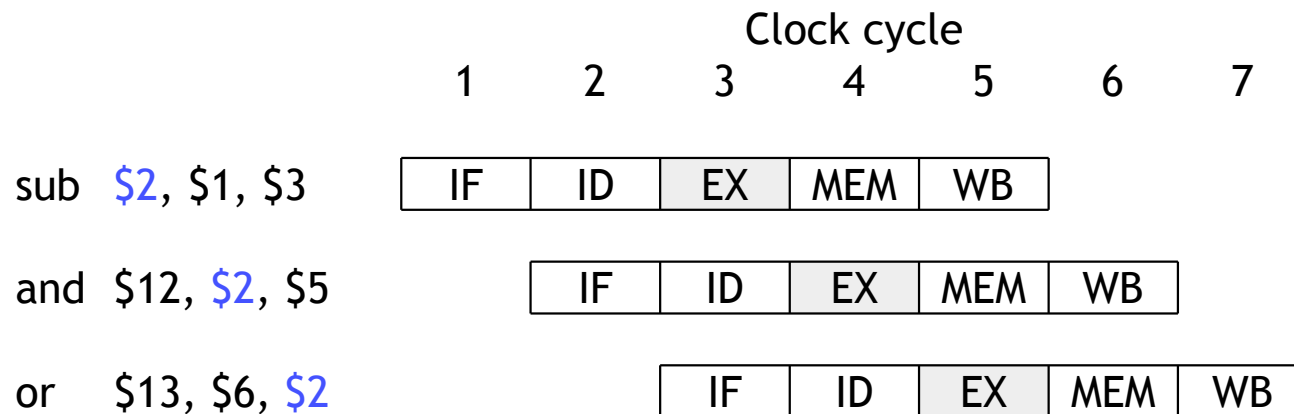
A more detailed look at the pipeline

- We have to eliminate the hazards, so the AND and OR instructions in our example will use the correct value for register \$2.
- Let's look at when the data is actually produced and consumed.
 - The SUB instruction produces its result in its **EX** stage, during cycle 3 in the diagram below.
 - The AND and OR need the new value of \$2 in their **EX** stages, during clock cycles 4-5 here.



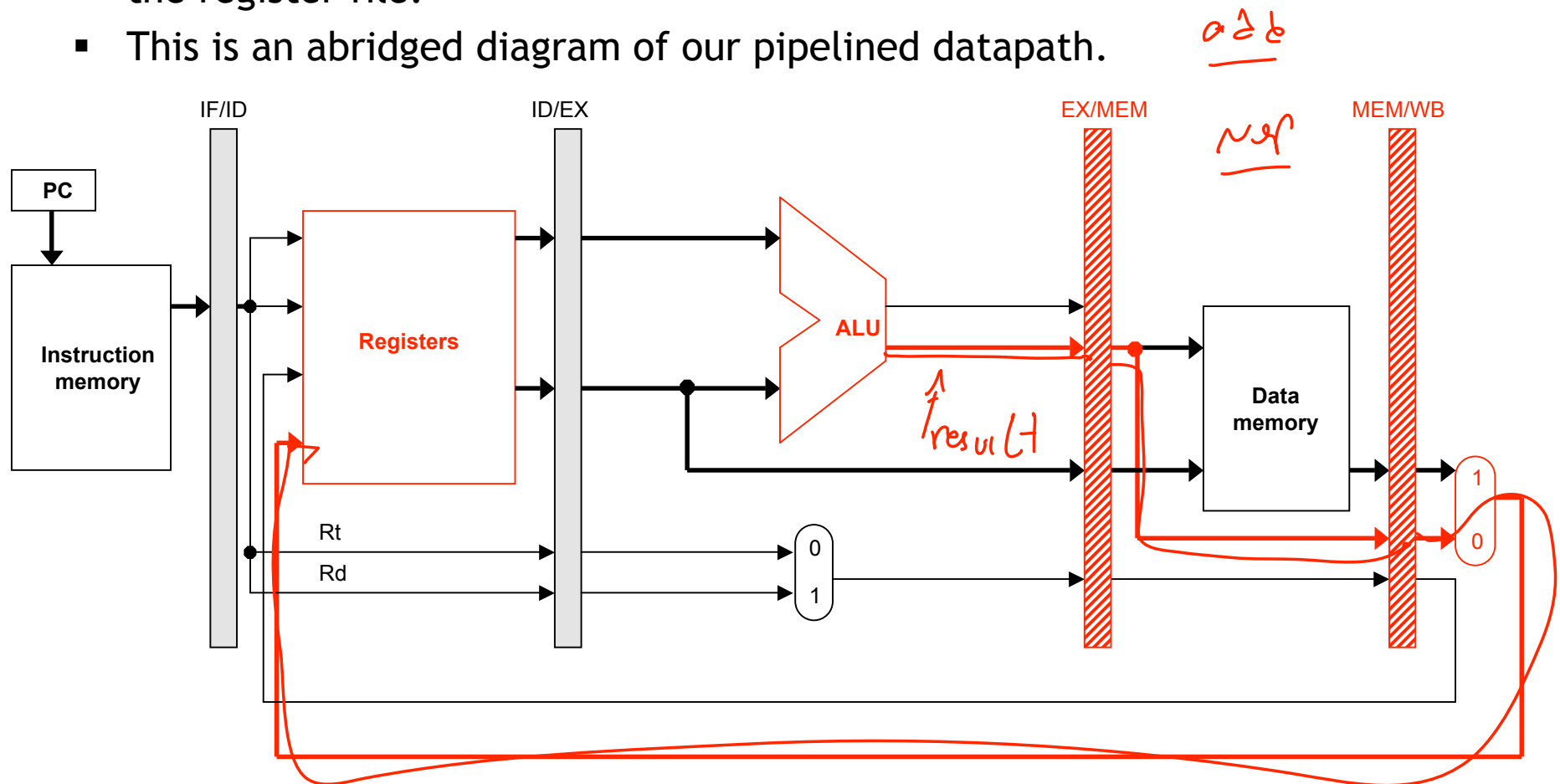
Bypassing the register file

- The actual result \$1 - \$3 is computed in clock cycle 3, *before* it's needed in cycles 4 and 5.
- If we could somehow bypass the writeback and register read stages when needed, then we can eliminate these data hazards.
 - Today we'll focus on hazards involving arithmetic instructions.
 - Next time, we'll examine the lw instruction.
- Essentially, we need to pass the ALU output from SUB directly to the AND and OR instructions, without going through the register file.



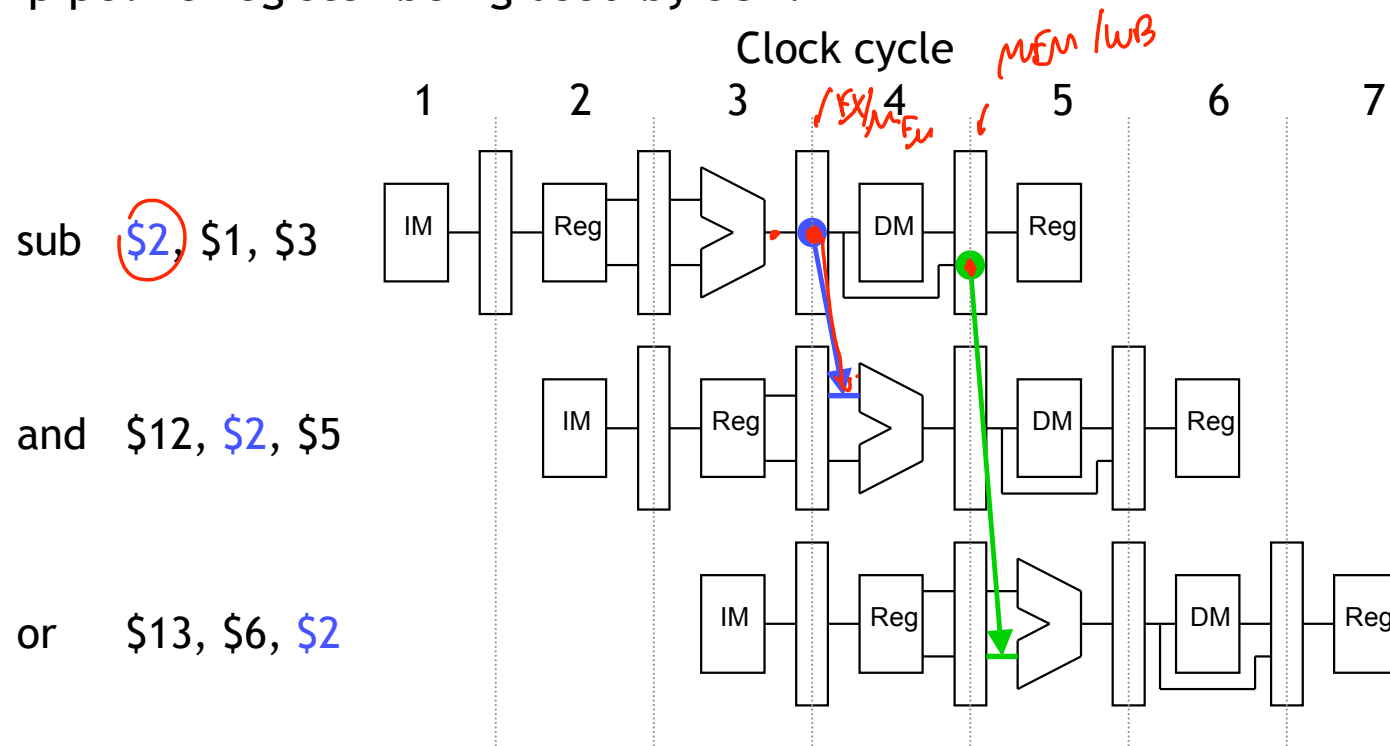
Where to find the ALU result

- The ALU result generated in the EX stage is normally passed through the pipeline registers to the MEM and WB stages, before it is finally written to the register file.
- This is an abridged diagram of our pipelined datapath.



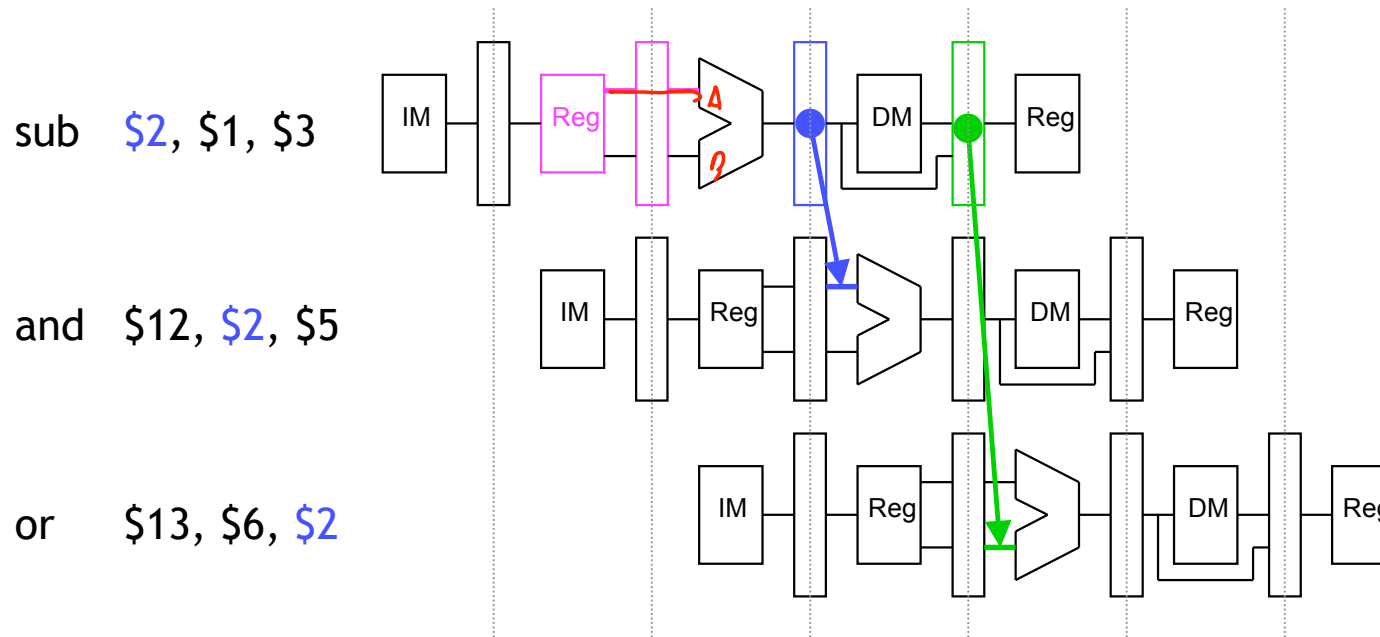
Forwarding

- Since the pipeline registers already contain the ALU result, we could just forward that value to subsequent instructions, to prevent data hazards.
 - In clock cycle 4, the AND instruction can get the value \$1 - \$3 from the EX/MEM pipeline register used by sub.
 - Then in cycle 5, the OR can get that same result from the MEM/WB pipeline register being used by SUB.

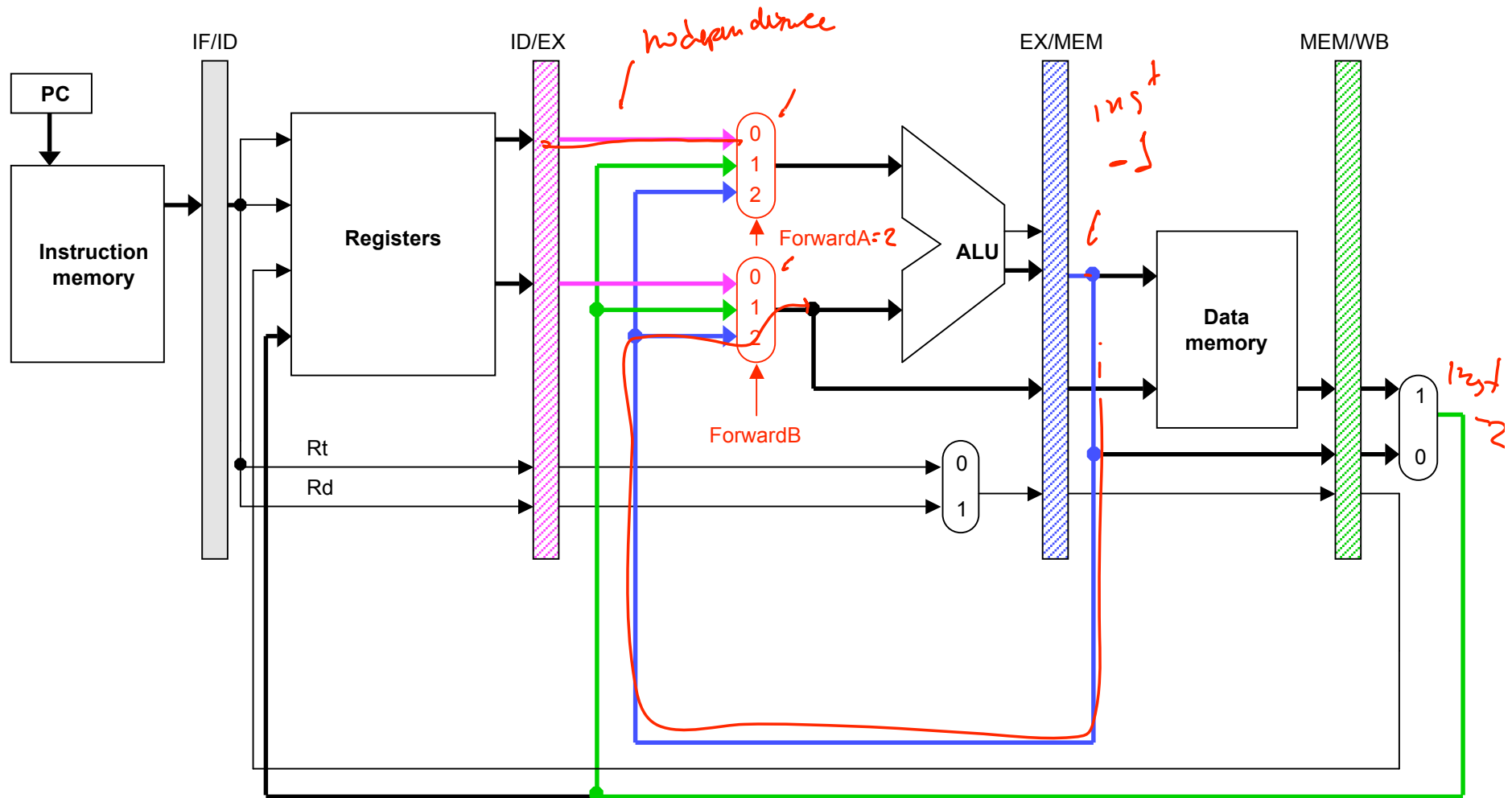


Outline of forwarding hardware

- A forwarding unit selects the correct ALU inputs for the EX stage.
 - If there is no hazard, the ALU's operands will come from the register file, just like before.
 - If there is a hazard, the operands will come from either the EX/MEM or MEM/WB pipeline registers instead.
- The ALU sources will be selected by two new multiplexers, with control signals named ForwardA and ForwardB.

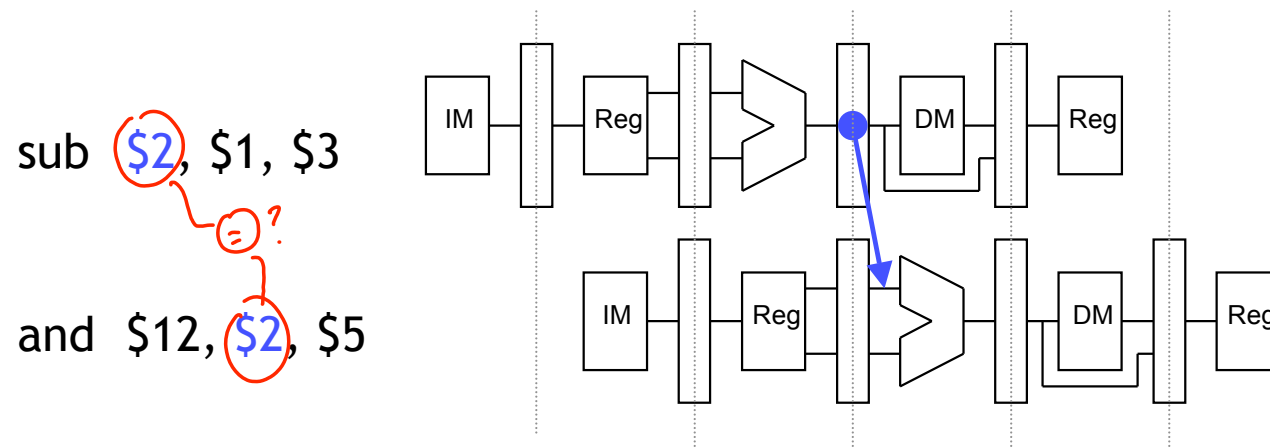


Simplified datapath with forwarding muxes



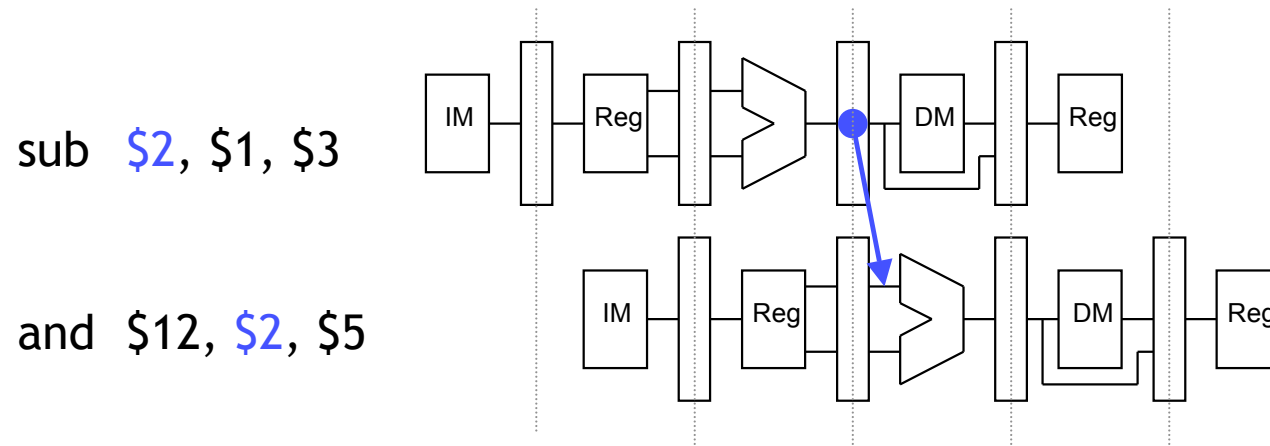
Detecting EX/MEM data hazards

- So how can the hardware determine if a hazard exists?



Detecting EX/MEM data hazards

- So how can the hardware determine if a hazard exists?
- An **EX/MEM hazard** occurs between the instruction currently in its EX stage and the previous instruction if:
 1. The previous instruction will write to the register file, *and*
 2. The destination is one of the ALU source registers in the EX stage.
- There is an EX/MEM hazard between the two instructions below.



- Data in a pipeline register can be referenced using a class-like syntax. For example, `ID/EX.RegisterRt` refers to the `rt` field stored in the ID/EX pipeline.

EX/MEM data hazard equations

- The first ALU source comes from the pipeline register when necessary.

if (EX/MEM.RegWrite = 1 ✓
 and EX/MEM.RegisterRd = ID/EX.RegisterRs)
 then ForwardA = 2

- The second ALU source is similar.

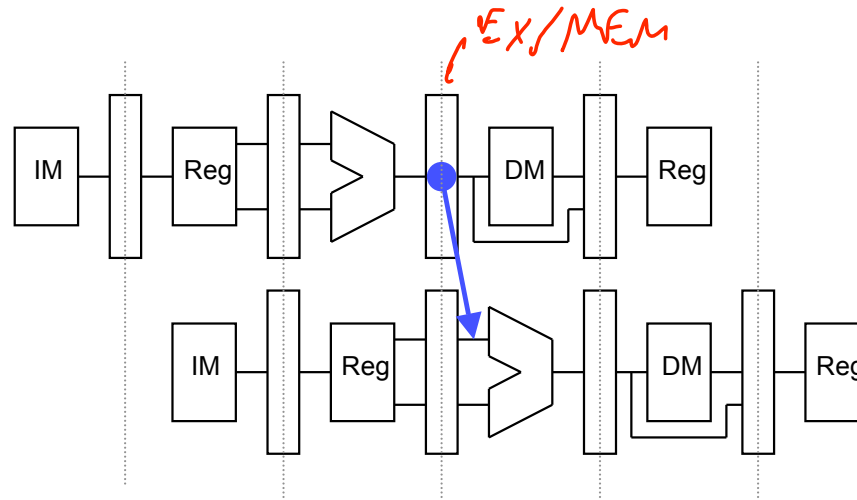
if (EX/MEM.RegWrite = 1
 and EX/MEM.RegisterRd = ID/EX.RegisterRt)
 then ForwardB = 2

R-hyp

rd = rs or rt

→ sub \$2, \$1, \$3

.and \$12, \$2, \$5

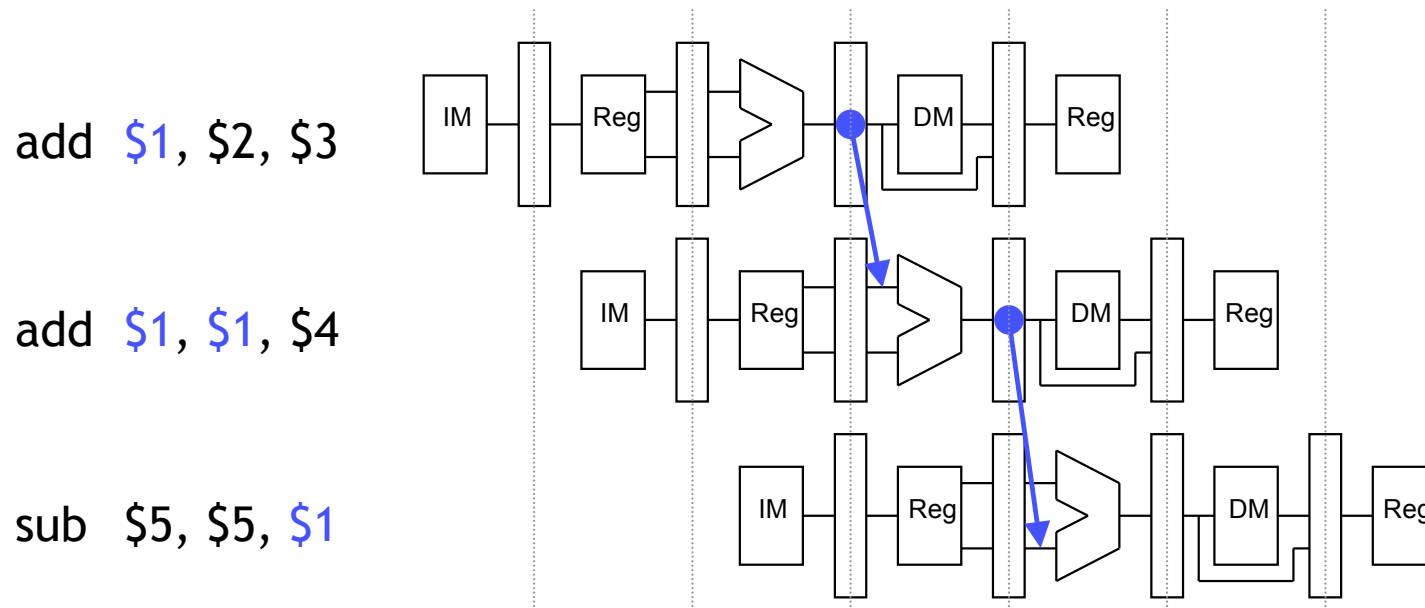


Detecting MEM/WB data hazards

- A MEM/WB hazard may occur between an instruction in the EX stage and the instruction from two cycles ago.
- One new problem is if a register is updated twice in a row.

x
v
add \$1, \$2, \$3
add \$1, \$1, \$4
sub \$5, \$5, \$1

- Register \$1 is written by both of the previous instructions, but only the most recent result (from the second ADD) should be forwarded.



MEM/WB hazard equations

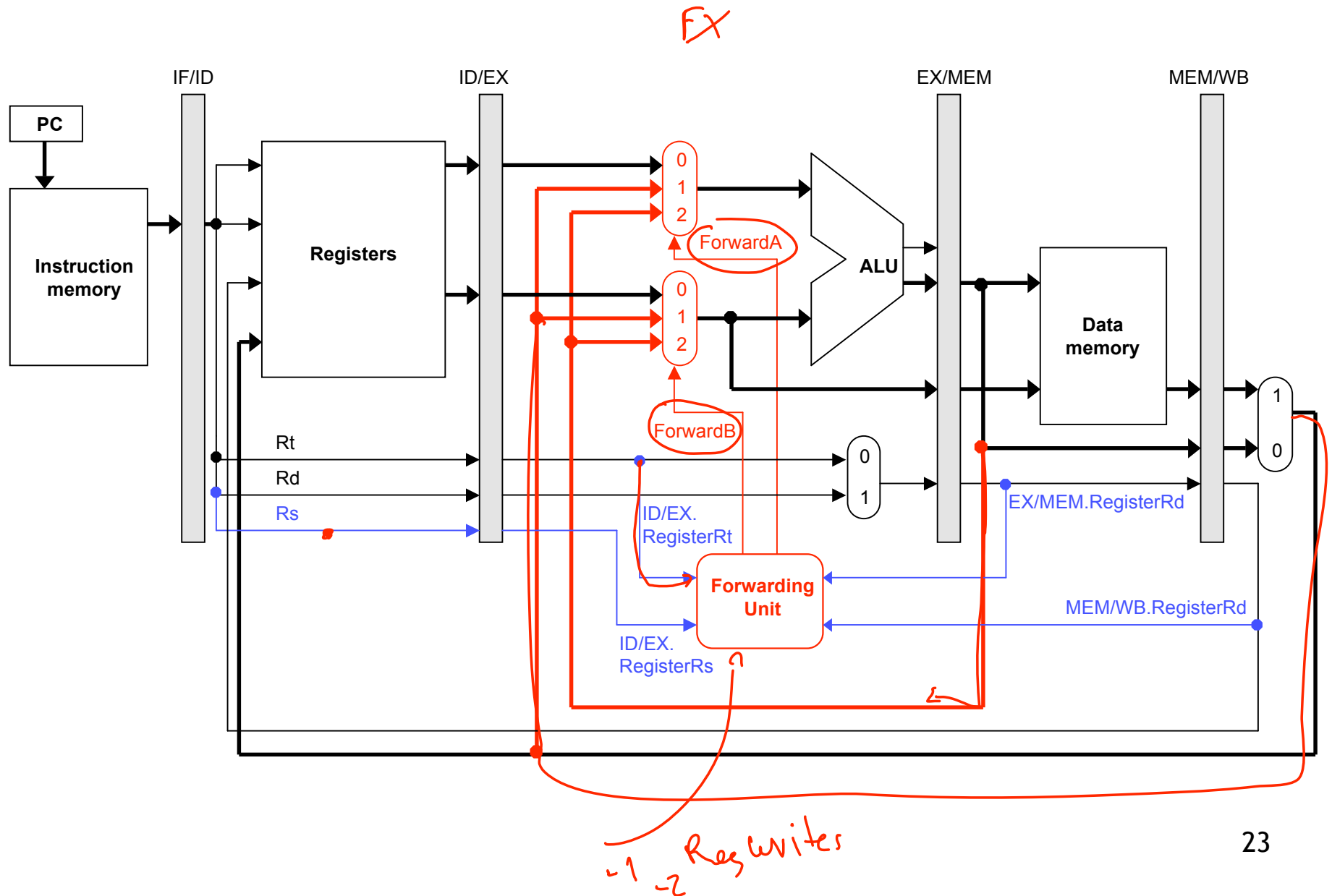
- Here is an equation for detecting and handling MEM/WB hazards for the first ALU source.

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} & & & & IF/ID & ID/EX & EX/MEM & MEM/WB \\ & & & & & & 0 & -1 & -2 & -3 \\ & & & & & & & & & \uparrow \end{array}$$
 if (MEM/WB.RegWrite = 1 ✓
 and MEM/WB.RegisterRd = ID/EX.RegisterRs ✓
 and (EX/MEM.RegisterRd ≠ ID/EX.RegisterRs or EX/MEM.RegWrite = 0) ✓
 then ForwardA = 1

- The second ALU operand is handled similarly.

if (MEM/WB.RegWrite = 1
 and MEM/WB.RegisterRd = ID/EX.RegisterRt
 and (EX/MEM.RegisterRd ≠ ID/EX.RegisterRt or EX/MEM.RegWrite = 0)
 then ForwardB = 1

Simplified datapath with forwarding



The forwarding unit

- The forwarding unit has several control signals as inputs.

ID/EX.RegisterRs ✓

ID/EX.RegisterRt ✓

EX/MEM.RegisterRd ✓

EX/MEM.RegWrite

MEM/WB.RegisterRd ✓

MEM/WB.RegWrite

(The two RegWrite signals are not shown in the diagram, but they come from the control unit.)

- The forwarding unit outputs are selectors for the ForwardA and ForwardB multiplexers attached to the ALU. These outputs are generated from the inputs using the equations on the previous pages.
- Some new buses route data from pipeline registers to the new muxes.

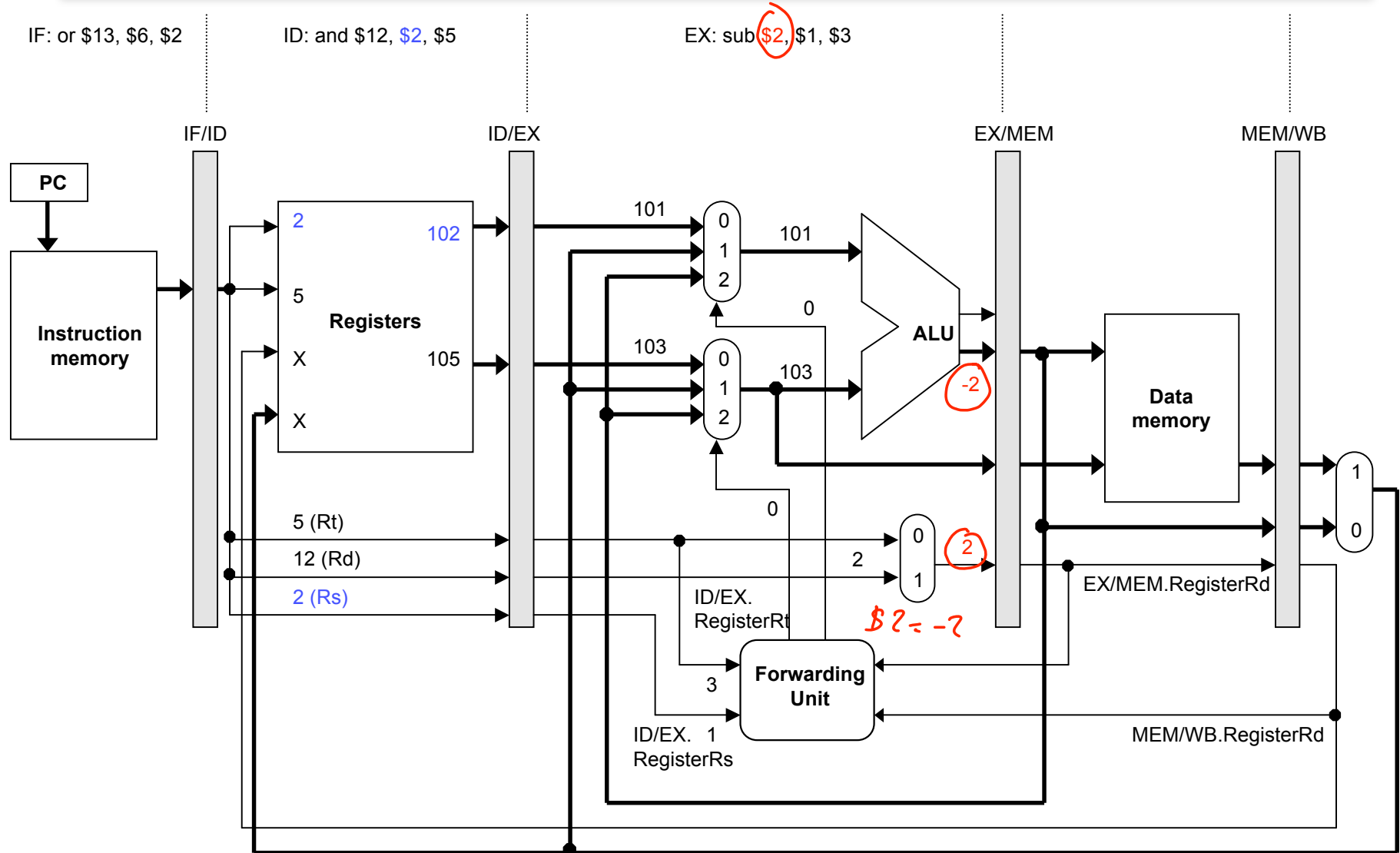
Example

sub \$2, \$1, \$3
and \$12, \$2, \$5
or \$13, \$6, \$2
add \$14, \$2, \$2
sw \$15, 100(\$2)

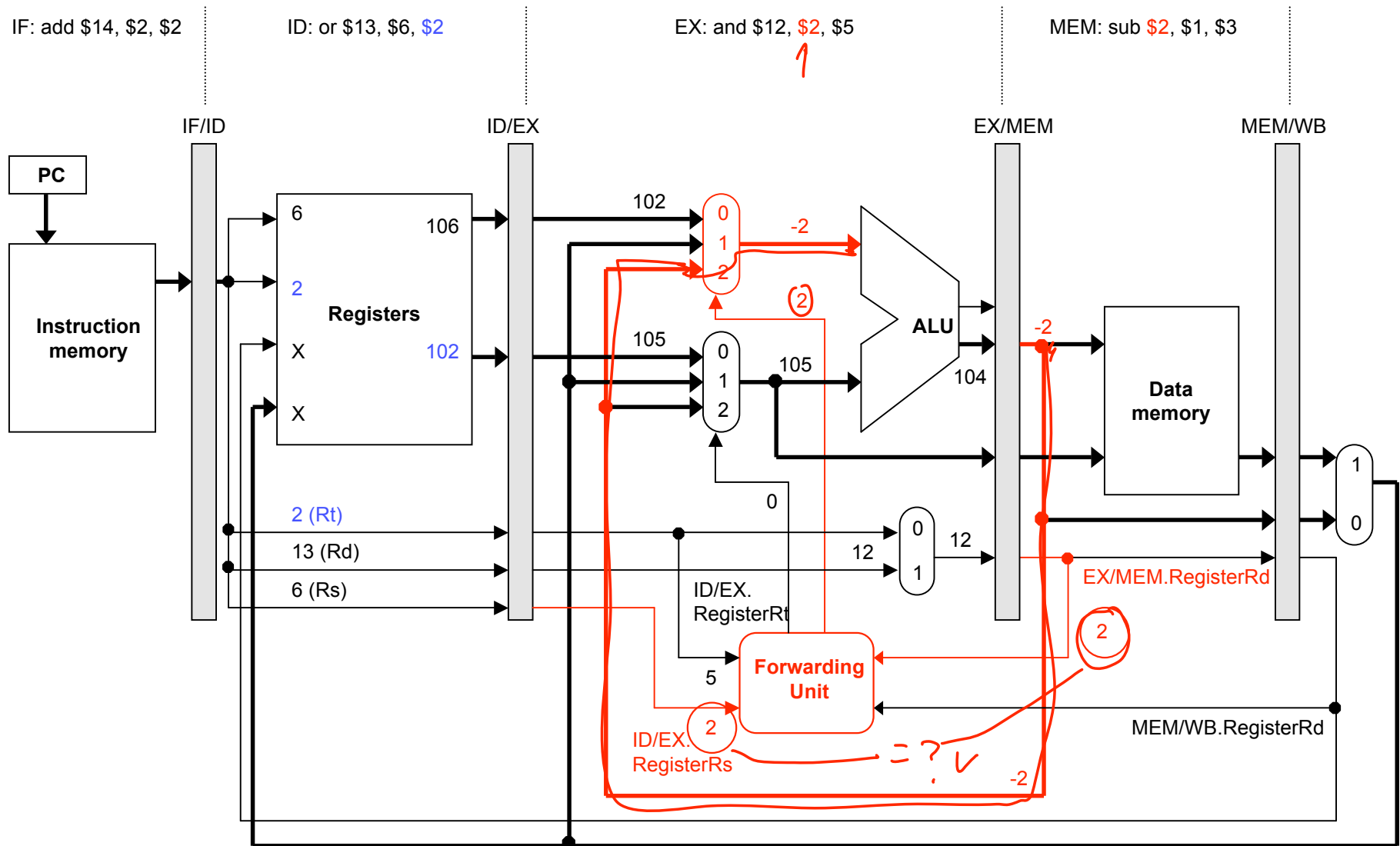
$$\begin{array}{cc} \$1 & \$3 \\ \sim & \sim \\ \$2 = 101 - 103 = -2 \end{array}$$

- Assume again each register initially contains its number plus 100.
 - After the first instruction, \$2 should contain -2 (101 - 103).
 - The other instructions should all use -2 as one of their operands.
- We'll try to keep the example short.
 - Assume no forwarding is needed except for register \$2.
 - We'll skip the first two cycles, since they're the same as before.

Clock cycle 3



Clock cycle 4: forwarding \$2 from EX/MEM

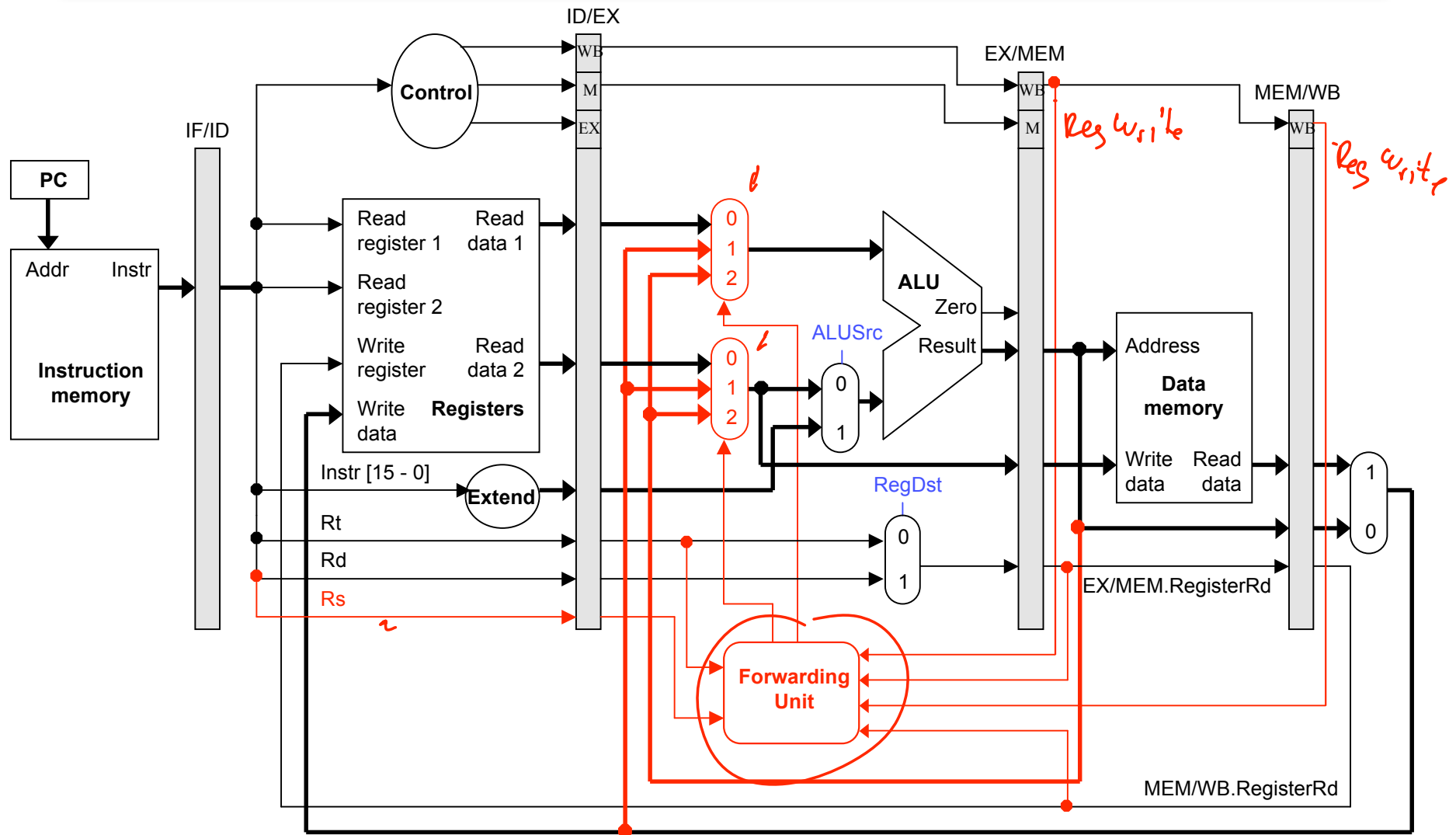




Lots of data hazards

- The first data hazard occurs during cycle 4. ✓
 - The forwarding unit notices that the ALU's first source register for the AND is also the destination of the SUB instruction.
 - 1 – The correct value is forwarded from the EX/MEM register, overriding the incorrect old value still in the register file.
- A second hazard occurs during clock cycle 5.
 - 2 – The ALU's second source (for OR) is the SUB destination again.
 - This time, the value has to be forwarded from the MEM/WB pipeline register instead.
- There are no other hazards involving the SUB instruction.
 - During cycle 5, SUB writes its result back into register \$2.
 - The ADD instruction can read this new value from the register file in the same cycle.

Complete pipelined datapath...so far

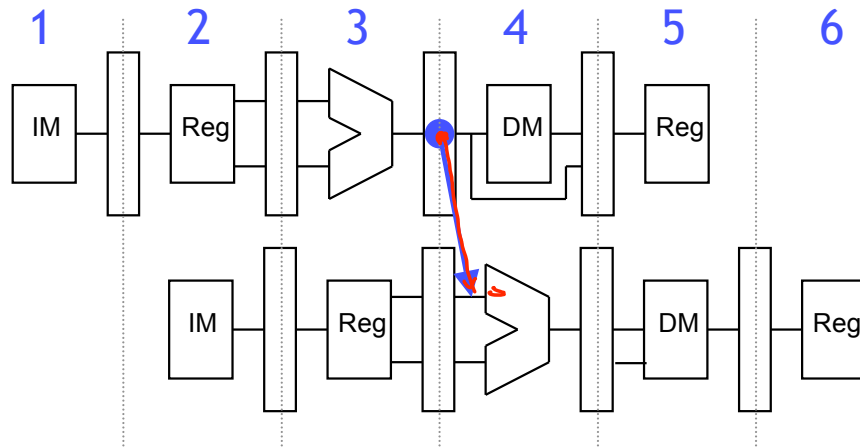


What about stores?

- Two “easy” cases:

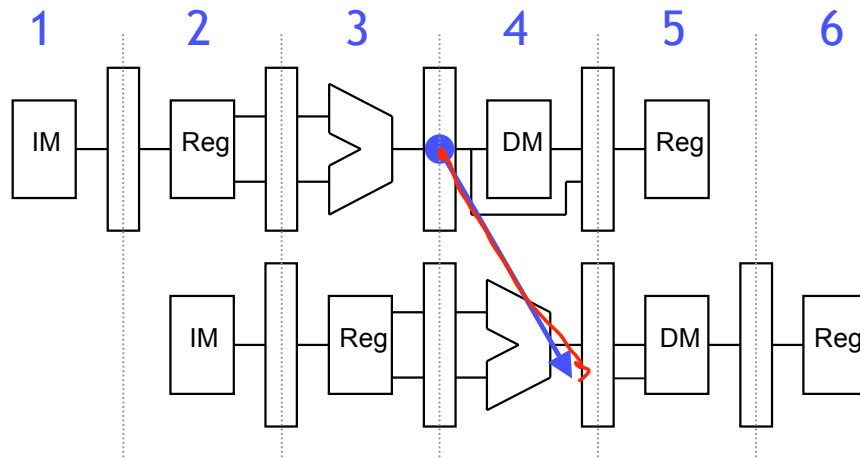
add **\$1**, \$2, \$3

sw \$4, 0(**\$1**)

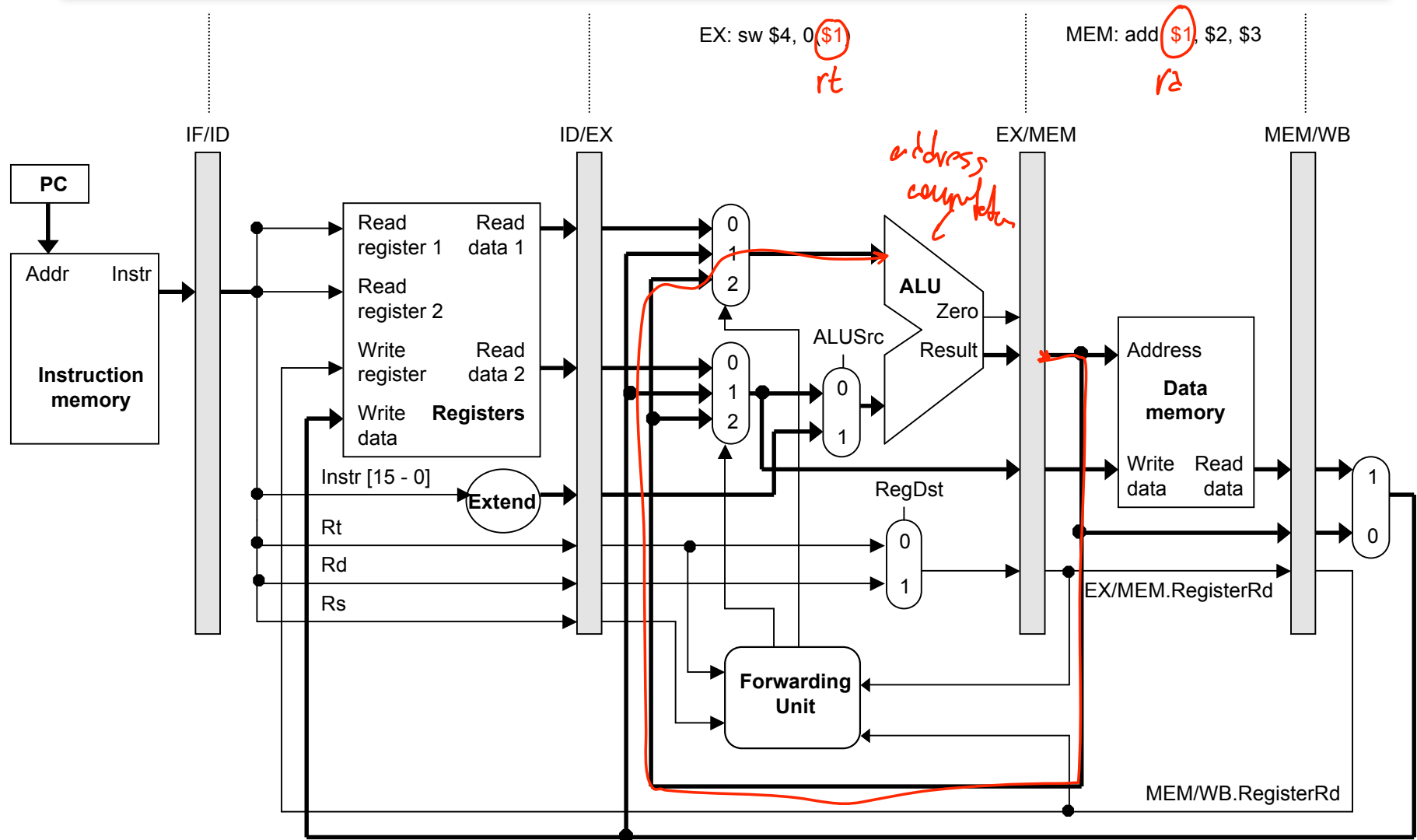


add **\$1**, \$2, \$3

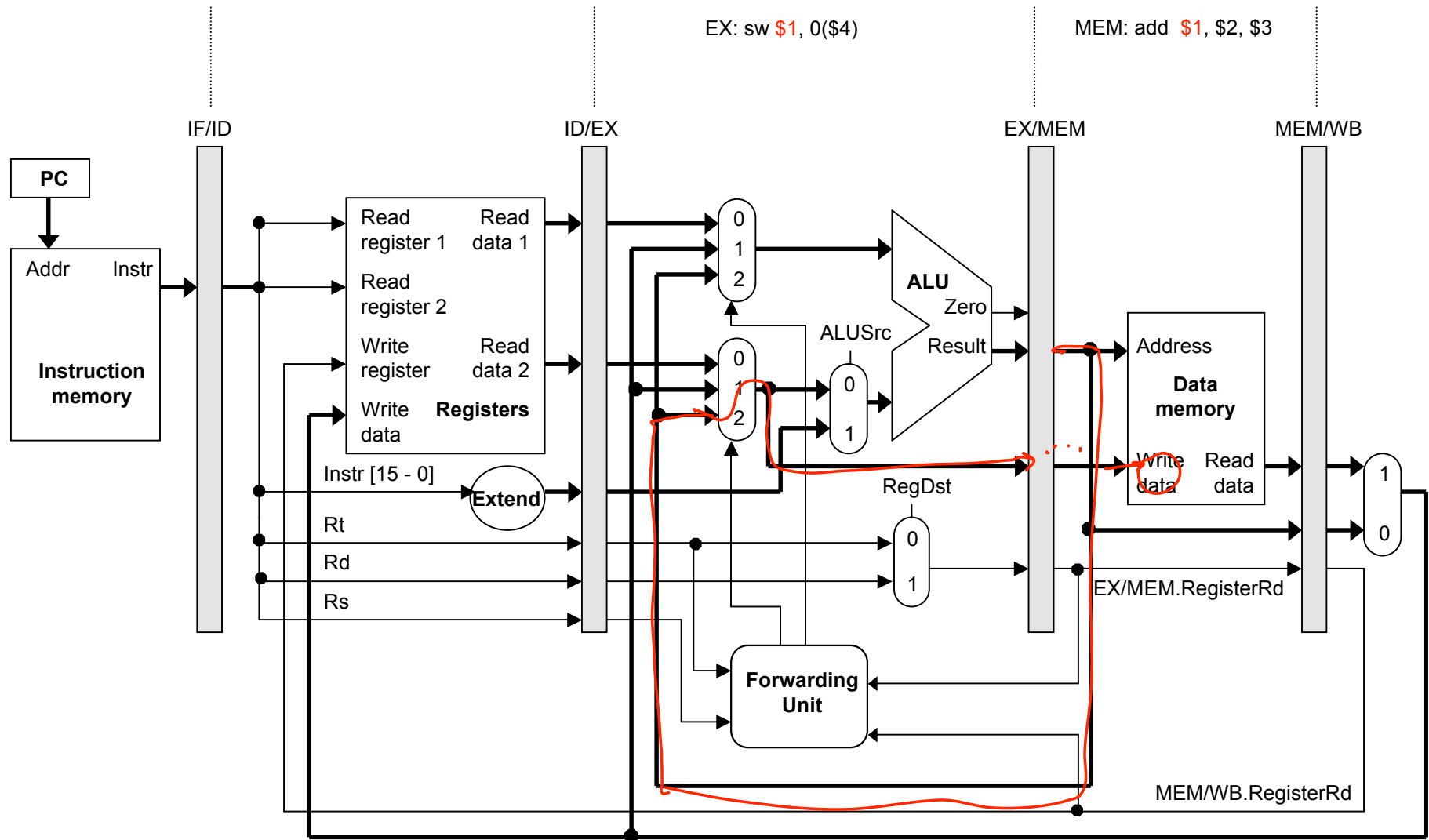
sw **\$1**, 0(\$4)



Store Bypassing: Version 1

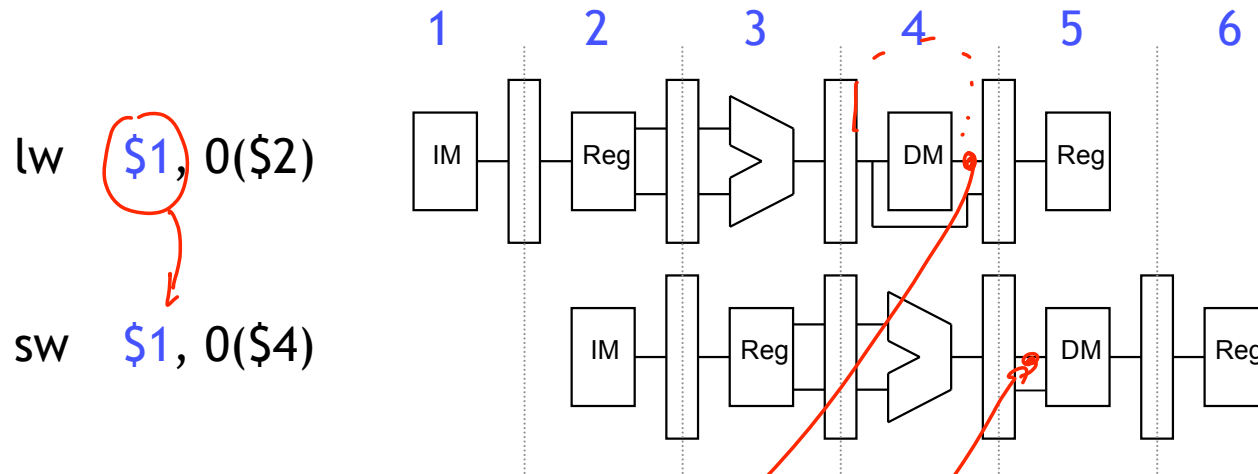


Store Bypassing: Version 2



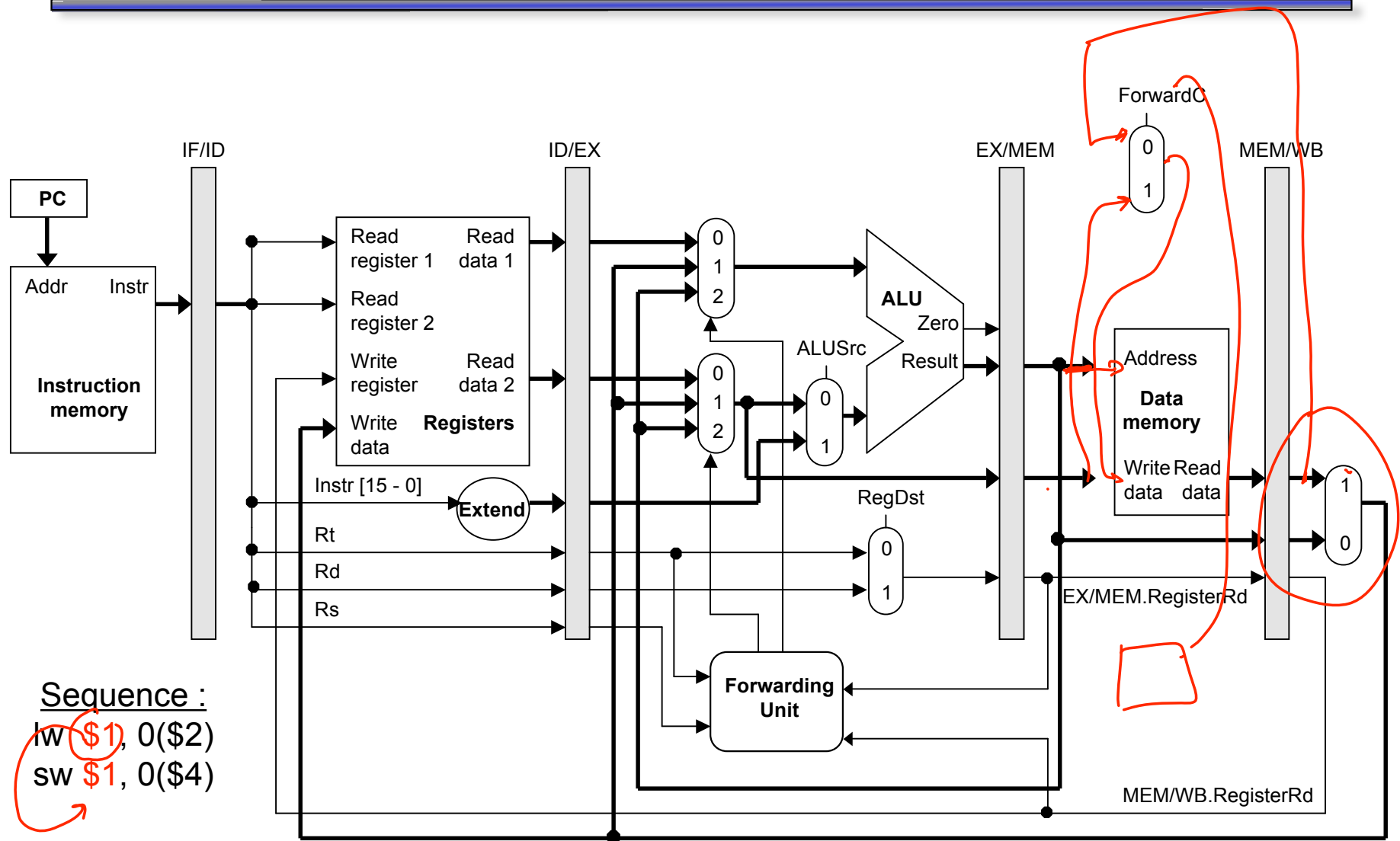
What about stores?

- A harder case:



- In what cycle is:
 - The load value available?
 - The store value needed?
- What do we have to add to the datapath?

Load/Store Bypassing: Extend the Datapath



Miscellaneous comments

- Each MIPS instruction writes to at most one register.
 - This makes the forwarding hardware easier to design, since there is only one destination register that ever needs to be forwarded.
- Forwarding is especially important with deep pipelines like the ones in all current PC processors.
- Section 6.4 of the textbook has some additional material not shown here.
 - Their hazard detection equations also ensure that the source register is not \$0, which can never be modified.
 - There is a more complex example of forwarding, with several cases covered. Take a look at it!

Summary

- In real code, most instructions are dependent upon other ones.
 - This can lead to **data hazards** in our original pipelined datapath.
 - Instructions can't write back to the register file soon enough for the next two instructions to read.
- **Forwarding** eliminates data hazards involving arithmetic instructions.
 - The forwarding unit detects hazards by comparing the destination registers of previous instructions to the source registers of the current instruction.
 - Hazards are avoided by grabbing results from the pipeline registers *before* they are written back to the register file.
- Next, we'll finish up pipelining.
 - Forwarding can't save us in some cases involving lw.
 - We still haven't talked about branches for the pipelined datapath.

