Basic Operational Concepts

- Activity in a computer is governed by instructions.
- To perform a task, an appropriate program consisting of a list of instructions is stored in the memory.
- Individual instructions are brought from the memory into the processor, which executes the specified operations.
- Data to be used as operands are also stored in the memory.

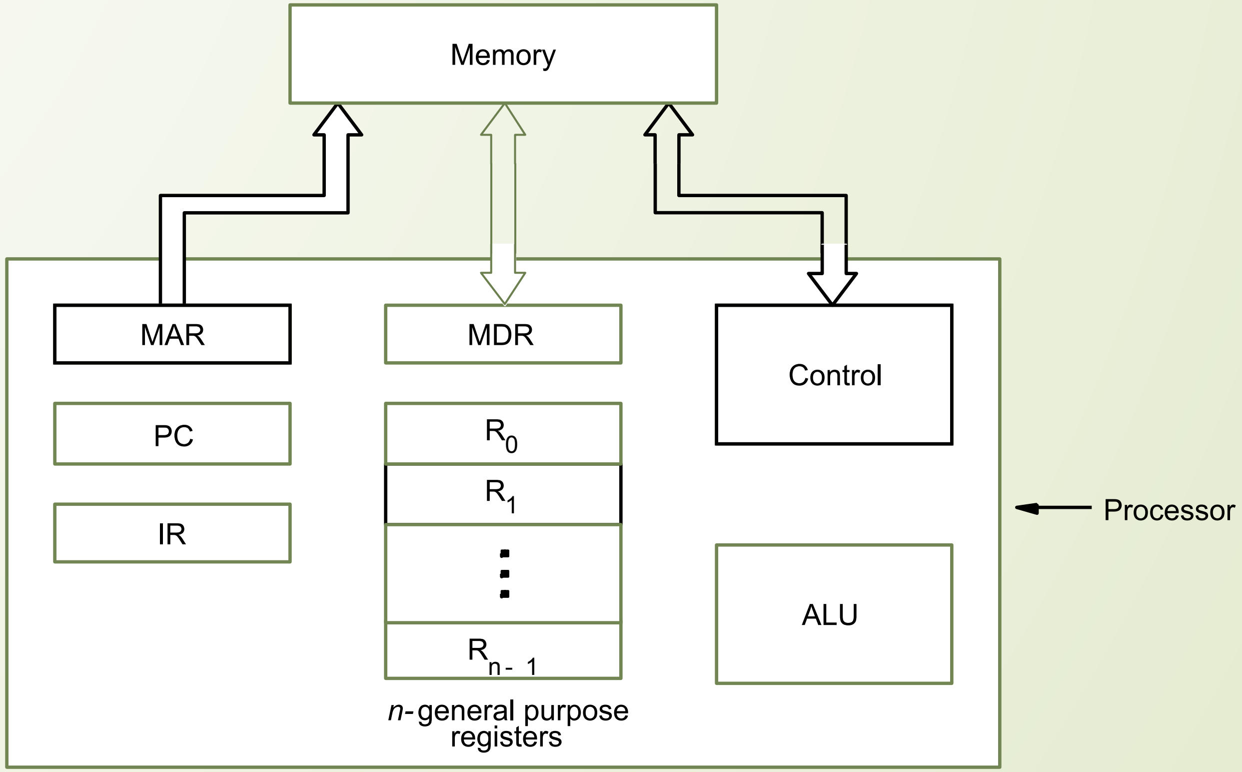
A Typical Instruction

- Add LOCA, R0
- Add the operand at memory location LOCA to the operand in a register R0 in the processor.
- Place the sum into register R0.
- The original contents of LOCA are preserved.
- The original contents of R0 is overwritten.
- Instruction is fetched from the memory into the processor – the operand at LOCA is fetched and added to the contents of R0 – the resulting sum is stored in register R0.

Separate Memory Access and ALU Operation

- Load LOCA, R1
- Add R1, R0
- Whose contents will be overwritten?

Connection Between the Processor and the Memory



Connections between the processor and the memory.

Registers

- Instruction register (IR)
- Program counter (PC)
- General-purpose register (R_0 – R_{n-1})
- Memory address register (MAR)
- Memory data register (MDR)

Typical Operating Steps

- Programs reside in the memory through input devices
- PC is set to point to the first instruction
- The contents of PC are transferred to MAR
- A Read signal is sent to the memory
- The first instruction is read out and loaded into MDR
- The contents of MDR are transferred to IR
- Decode and execute the instruction

Typical Operating Steps (Cont')

- Get operands for ALU
  - General-purpose register
  - Memory (address to MAR – Read – MDR to ALU)
- Perform operation in ALU
- Store the result back
  - To general-purpose register
  - To memory (address to MAR, result to MDR – Write)
- During the execution, PC is incremented to the next instruction

Interrupt

- Normal execution of programs may be preempted if some device requires urgent servicing.
- The normal execution of the current program must be interrupted – the device raises an *interrupt* signal.
- Interrupt-service routine
- Current system information backup and restore (PC, general-purpose registers, control information, specific information)

Bus Structures

- There are many ways to connect different parts inside a computer together.
- A group of lines that serves as a connecting path for several devices is called a *bus*.
- Address/data/control

Bus Structure

- Single-bus

Input Output Memory Processor

Figure 1.3. Single-bus structure.

- Multiple Buses

Speed Issue

- Different devices have different transfer/operate speed.
- If the speed of bus is bounded by the slowest device connected to it, the efficiency will be very low.
- How to solve this?
- A common approach – use buffers.

  e.g.- Printing the characters

Performance

- The most important measure of a computer is how quickly it can execute programs.
- Three factors affect performance:
  - Hardware design
  - Instruction set
  - Compiler

Performance

- Processor time to execute a program depends on the hardware involved in the execution of individual machine instructions.

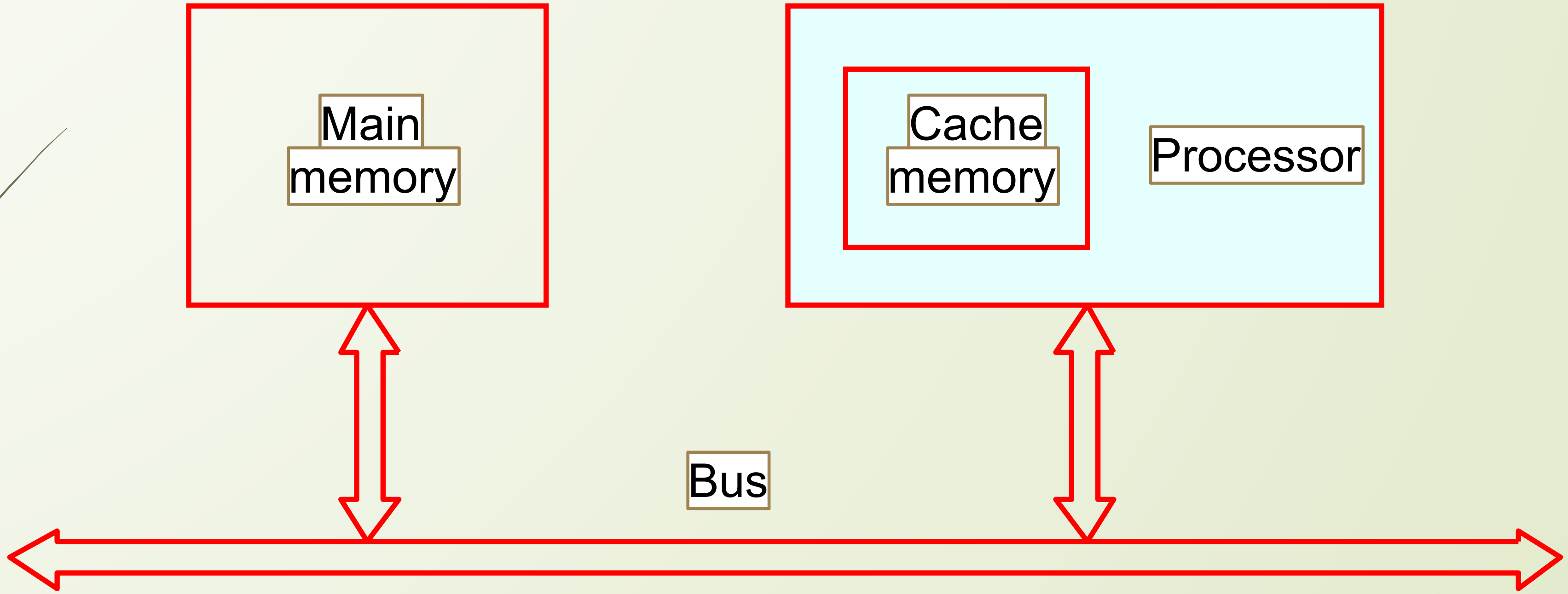


Figure 1.5. The processor cache.

Performance

- The processor and a relatively small cache memory can be fabricated on a single integrated circuit chip.
  - Speed
  - Cost
  - Memory management

Processor Clock

- Clock, clock cycle (P), and clock rate (R=1/P)
- The execution of each instruction is divided into several steps (Basic Steps), each of which completes in one clock cycle.
- Hertz – cycles per second

Basic Performance Equation

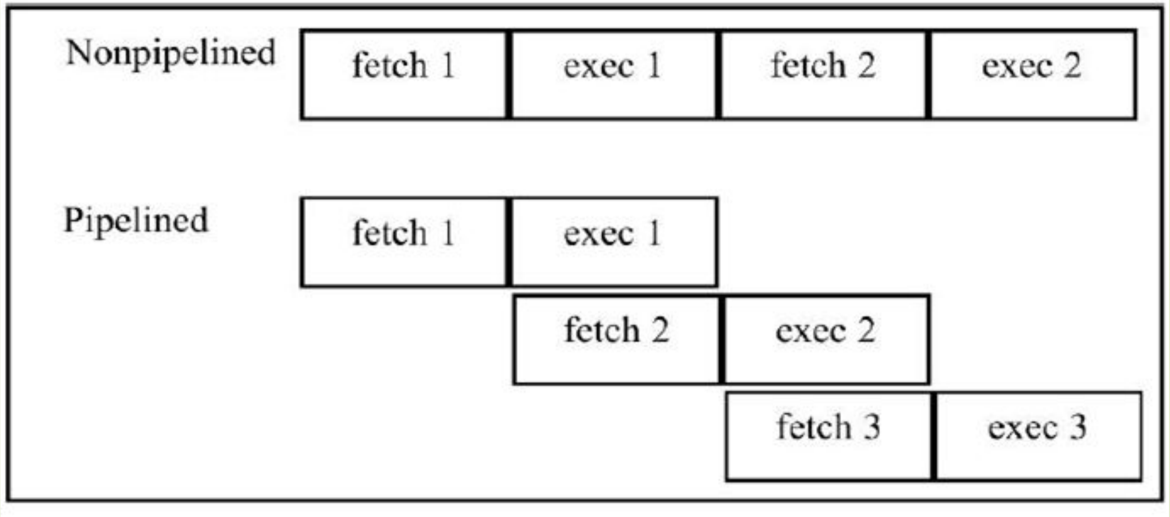
- T – processor time required to execute a program that has been prepared in high-level language
- N – number of actual machine language instructions needed to complete the execution (note: loop)
- S – average number of basic steps needed to execute one machine instruction. Each step completes in one clock cycle
- R – clock rate
- Note: these are not independent to each other

$$T = \frac{N \times S}{R}$$

- How to improve T?
- Reduce N and S, Increase R, but these affect one another

Pipeline and Superscalar Operation

- Instructions are not necessarily executed one after another.
- The value of S doesn't have to be the number of clock cycles to execute one instruction.
- Pipelining – overlapping the execution of successive instructions.
- Add R1, R2, R3 at the same time processor reads next instruction in memory.



Pipeline and Superscalar Operation

- Superscalar operation – multiple instruction pipelines are implemented in the processor.
- Goal – reduce S (could become <1!)

Clock Rate

- Increase clock rate
- Improve the integrated-circuit (IC) technology to make the circuits faster
- Reduce the amount of processing done in one basic step (however, this may increase the number of basic steps needed)
- Increases in R that are entirely caused by improvements in IC technology affect all aspects of the processor's operation equally except the time to access the main memory.

CISC and RISC

- Tradeoff between N and S
- A key consideration is the use of pipelining
  - S is close to 1 even though the number of basic steps per instruction may be considerably larger
  - It is much easier to implement efficient pipelining in processor with simple instruction sets
- Reduced Instruction Set Computers (RISC) (Large value N , Small Value of S)
- Complex Instruction Set Computers (CISC) (Small value N , Large Value of S)

Compiler

- A compiler translates a high-level language program into a sequence of machine instructions.
- To reduce N, we need a suitable machine instruction set and a compiler that makes good use of it.
- Goal – reduce $N \times S$
- A compiler may not be designed for a specific processor; however, a high-quality compiler is usually designed for, and with, a specific processor.

Performance Measurement

- T is difficult to compute.
- Measure computer performance using benchmark programs.
- System Performance Evaluation Corporation (SPEC) selects and publishes representative application programs for different application domains, together with test results for many commercially available computers.
- Compile and run (no simulation)
- Reference computer

$$SPEC\ rating = \frac{\text{Running time on the reference computer}}{\text{Running time on the computer under test}}$$

$$SPEC\ rating = \left(\prod_{i=1}^{n} SPEC_i\right)^{\frac{1}{n}}$$

- n is the number of program in the suite

Multiprocessors and Multicomputers

- Multiprocessor computer
- Execute a number of different application tasks in parallel
- Execute subtasks of a single large task in parallel
- All processors have access to all of the memory – shared-memory multiprocessor
- Cost – processors, memory units, complex interconnection networks
- Multicomputers
- Each computer only have access to its own memory
- Exchange message via a communication network – message-passing multicomputers