

AMBA AXI

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August 7, 2020

AXI - Advacned eXtensible Interface

0.0.1 Objectives

- high-performance, high frequency system for high-speed submicron interconnect
- high-bandwidth, low-latency
- flexibility in implementation of interconnect architecture
- backward-compatible with AHB and APB Interface

0.0.2 Features

- seperate address/control and data phases
- unaligned data transfers using byte strobes
- burst-based transactions
- seperate read and write data channels to enabled low-cost DMA
- issue multiple outstanding addressess
- out-of-order transaction completion
- easy addition of register stages to provide timing closure

1 Architecture

- AXI protocol is *burst-based*.
- Every transaction has address and control information on the address channel which describes the nature of data transfers
- Data is transferred between master and slave
 - Using a write data channel to the slave
 - Using a read data channel to the master
- In write transaction, all data flows from master to slave
- In write response channel, the slave signals the completion of write transaction to master.

The read transaction can be seen below which uses *Read address* and *Read data* channel

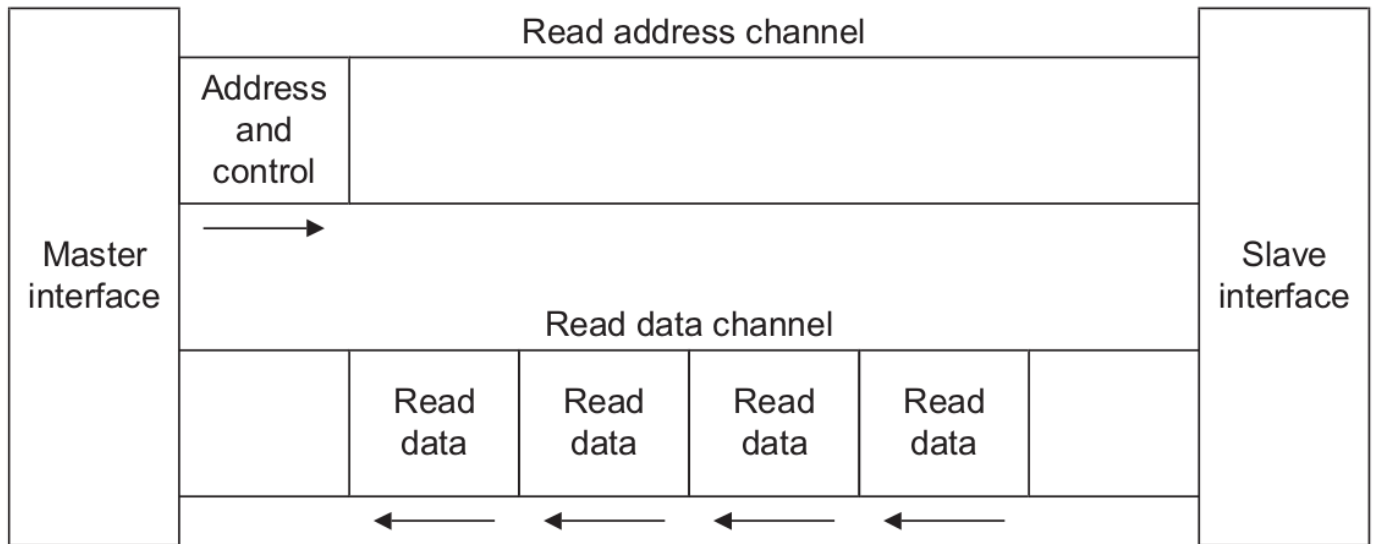


Figure 1: Read transaction

The write transaction can be seen below which uses *Write address*, *Write Data* and *Write Response* channel

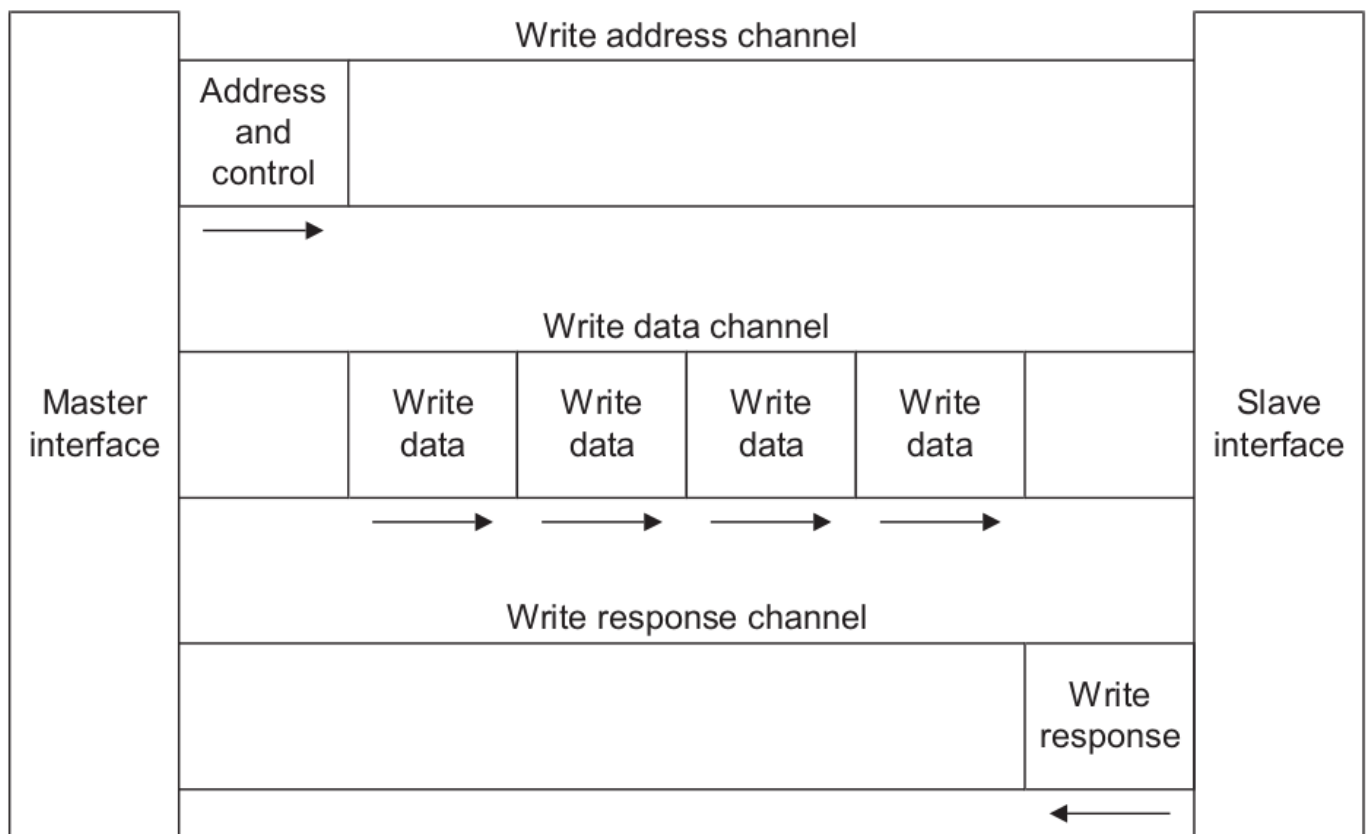


Figure 2: Write transaction

1.1 Channel Definition

- There are five channels namely *Read Address* channel, *Read Data* channel, *Write Address* channel, *Write Data* channel and *Write Response* channel.
- All the five independent channels use a two-way **VALID** and **READY** handshake mechanism.
 - The information Source uses the **VALID** signal to show when valid data or control information is available on the channel.

- The Destination uses the **READY** signal to show it can accept the data.
- The *Read data* and *Write data* channel uses the **LAST** signal to indicate the transfer of final data item withing a transaction.

1.1.1 Supported Mechanisms

- Variable-length bursts from 1 to 16 data transfers per burst.
- Each data transfer can have a transfer size 8 to 1024 bits.
- Gives ID tag to every transaction across interface.
- wrapping, incrementing and non-incrementing burts.
- atopic operations using exclusive or locked accesses
- system-level caching and buffering control
- secure and priviledged access.

1.1.2 Read Address Channel

- Read Tranaction has it's own address channel.
- Carries the required address and control information for the read transaction.

1.1.3 Read Data Channel

- *Read Data* channel conveys both read data and read response information from slave back to master.
- includes a data data bus which can be 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, 1024 bit width
- read response indicating the completion of read transaction.

1.1.4 Write Address Channel

- Write Tranaction has it's own address channel.
- Carries the required address and control information for the write transaction.

1.1.5 Write Data Channel

- *Write data* channels conveys the write data from master to slave.
- include a data data bus which can be 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, 1024 bit width
- include one byte(8-bit) lane strobe for every eight data bits indicate which bytes of data bus are valid.
- *Write data* channel information is buffered, so master can perfrom wirte transaction without slave acknowledgemnt of previous write transaction.

1.1.6 Write Response Channel

- *Write Response* channel proives a way for the slave to respond to write transactions
- All write transaction uses completion signalling.
- The completion signalling occurs once for each burst and not for each individual data transfer within a burst.

1.2 Interface and Interconnect

Consist of master and slave devices connected together through some interconnect.

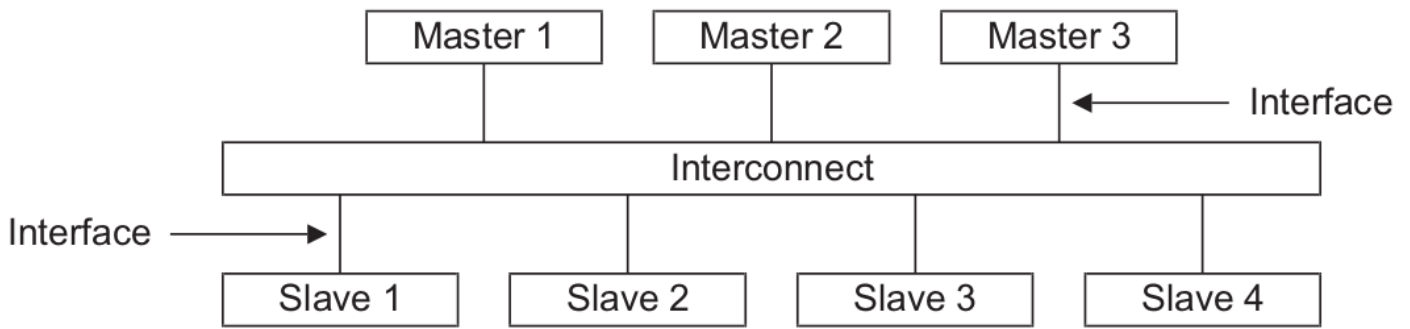


Figure 3: Interconnects

1.3 Register Slices

- Each AXI channel transfer information in only one direction.
- Enables insertion of register slices in any channel at the cost of additional cycle of latency.
- Register slices can be used at any point within a interconnect.

1.4 Read Burst example

The following describes the read burst of four transfer.

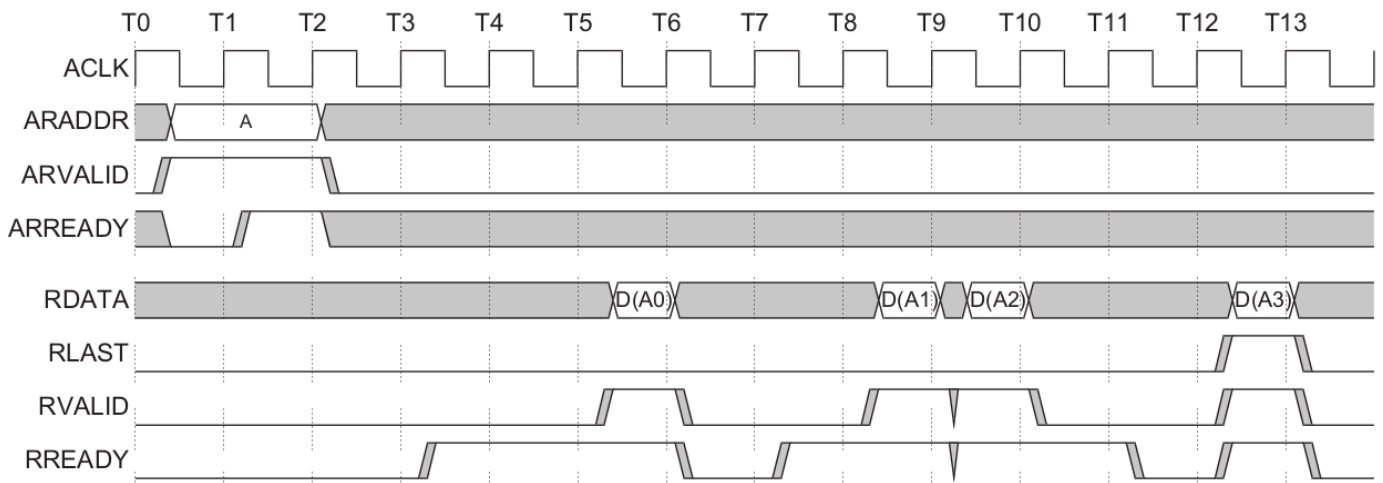


Figure 4: Read Burst Example

- The *read address* and *read data* channels are used for this read transaction.
- Master drives the address and slave accept in one cycle.
 - Master places the address on **ARADDR** bus in the *read address* channel.
 - Master makes the **ARVALID** HIGH to indicate that read address is available and its valid.
 - Then, the slave makes the **ARREADY** signal HIGH to indicate its ready to accept the address
- The master on receiving the **ARREADY** signal of the *read address* channel from the slave, makes the **RREADY** signal of the *Read data* channel HIGH.
- Now, the slave sends the data through the *read data* channels.

- Slave places the data on to the **RDATA** bus and makes the **RVALID** signal HIGH to start the data transfer.
- Now, the master on receives the first data by checking the **RVALID** signal form the slave.
- On receiving the data, the master makes the **RREADY** signal LOW untill it can process the recieved data from slave.
- When master is ready to receive, the master makes the **RREADY** singal HIGH to indicate it can receive further data.
- Now, the slave places the second data onto the **RDATA** bus and makes the **RVALID** signal HIGH.
- The above process repeates.
- When the last data is to be sent, the slave placeess the last data onto the **RDATA** bus and makes the **RLAST** and **RVALID** HIGH.

1.5 Overlapping read example

- Master drives another burst address after slave accpets the first address.
- this enables the slave to begin processing data for second burst in parallel with completion of first bus.
- The following describes the Overlapping read burst example.

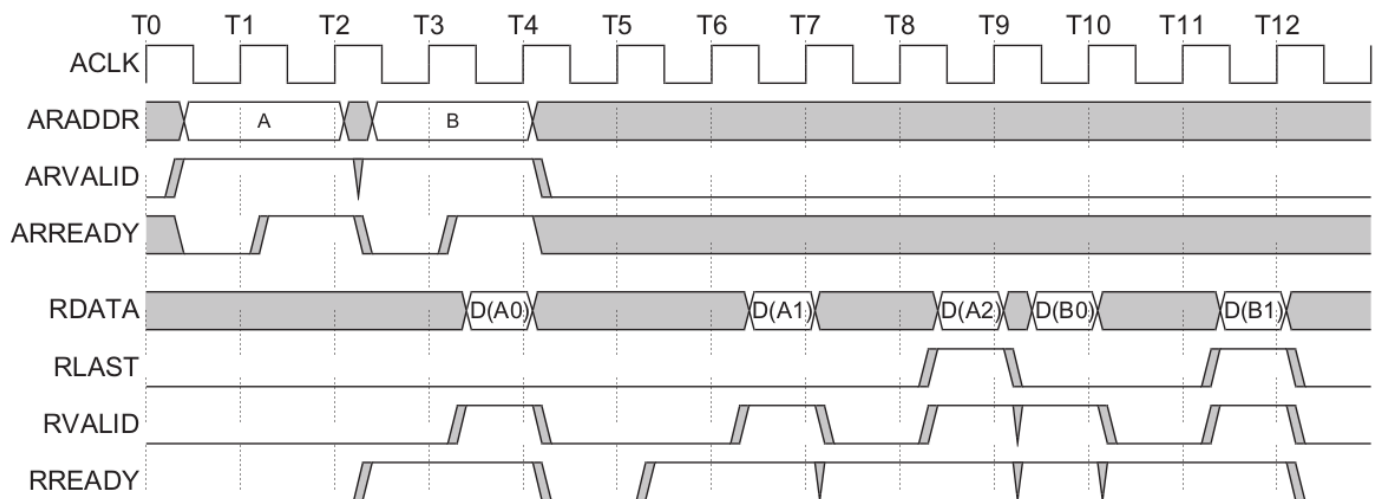


Figure 5: Overlapping Burst Example

- The *read address* and *read data* channels are used for this read transaction.
- Master drives the address and slave accept in one cycle.
 - Master places the address on **ARADDR** bus in the *read address* channel.
 - Master makes the **ARVALID** HIGH to indicate that read address is available and its valid.
 - Then, the slave makes the **ARREADY** signal HIGH to indicate its ready to accept the address
- The master on receiving the **ARREADY** signal of the *read address* channel from the slave, makes the **RREADY** signal of the *Read data* channel HIGH.
- Now, the slave sends the data throught the *read data* channels.
- During the above process, the master places the next address to be read for next read burst onto the **ARADDR** bus and makes the **ARVALID** singal.

- Now, the slave along with responding to the previous read transaction, it makes the **ARREADY** HIGH to indicate it can receive data.
- As soon as the slave completes the first data transaction, the slave begins the next transaction by placing the data onto **RDATA** bus and making the **RVALID** signal HIGH.

1.6 Write Burst example

The following describes the write burst example.

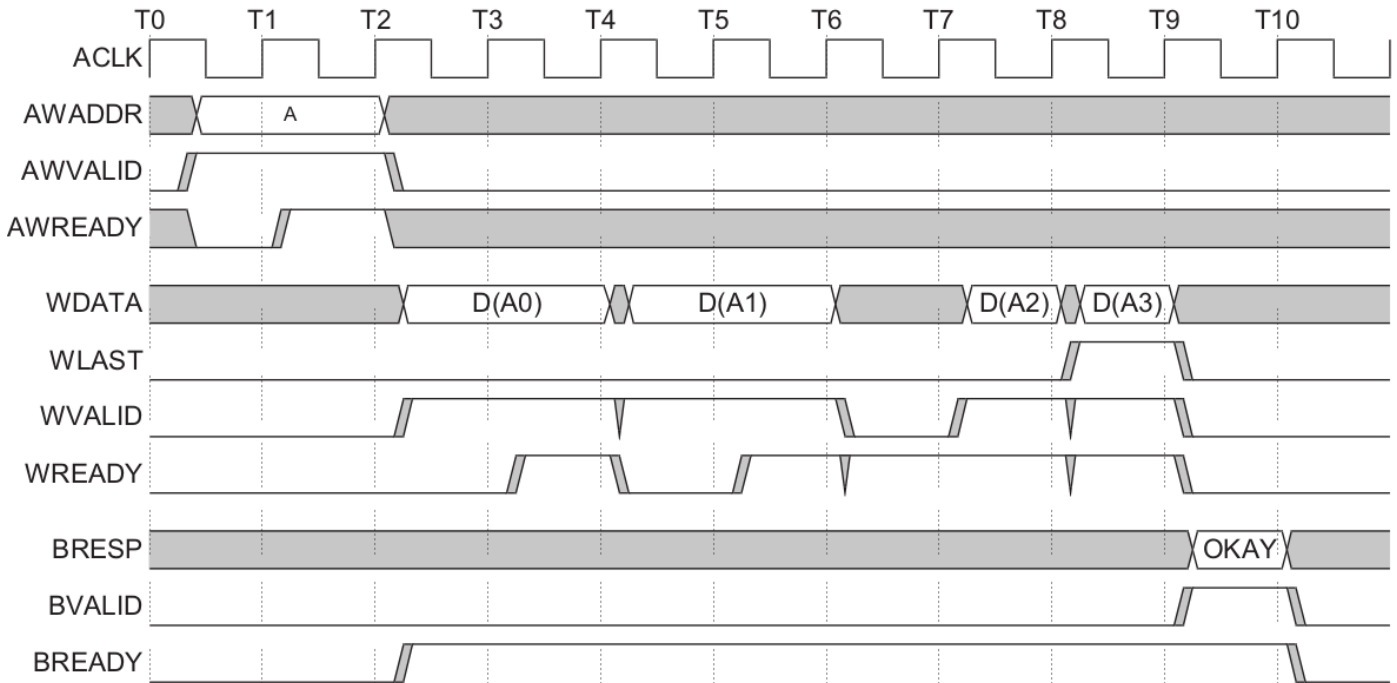


Figure 6: Write Burst Example

- The *Write address*, *Write Data* and *Write Response* channel are used for this write transaction.
- The process is started by master placing the address and control information onto the *write address* channel.
 - Master places the address onto the **AWADDR** bus and makes the **AWVALID** signal HIGH.
 - Now, the slave accepts the address from master after one cycle by making the **AWREADY** signal HIGH.
- Also, the master makes the **BREADY** signal HIGH in the *write response* channel for getting the response of this write transaction.
- After the slave responds by making the **AWREADY** HIGH, the master starts sending the data and control information in the *write data* channel.
 - The master places the first data to be sent onto the **WDATA** bus and makes the **WVALID** signal HIGH.
 - After one cycle, the slave accepts the data from master by making the **WREADY** signal HIGH.
 - After accepting the data, the slave makes the **WREADY** signal LOW for processing.
- Now, the master sends the next data onto the **WDATA** bus and makes the **WVALID** signal HIGH.
- The above process is repeated for further data.
- When sending the last data, the master places the data onto the **WDATA** bus and makes the **WVALID** signal and **WLAST** signal HIGH.

- The slave makes the **WREADY** for the last time for that write transaction and accepts the data.
- Now, the slave responds to master by driving the *Write Response* channel to indicate the completion of write transaction.
 - The slave makes the **BRESP** signal to be **OKAY** to indicate the success and makes the **BVALID** signal HIGH.

2 Signal Description

2.1 Global Signals

- **ACLK** - Global AXI clock - All signals are sampled at rising edge of this Global clock.
- **ARESETn** - Global Reset - Active LOW global reset.

2.2 Write Address channel

Signals	Source	Name	Description
AWID[3:0]	Master	Write Address ID	ID tag for write address group of signal.
AWADDR[31:0]	Master	Write Address	The actual write address for first transfer in a write burst transaction.
AWLEN[3:0]	Master	Burst length	Number of data transfers in a burst associated with address.
AWSIZE[2:0]	Master	Burst size	Size of each data transfer in a burst.
AWBURST[1:0]	Master	Burst Type	Burst type along with size information calculates addresses for each transfer within burst.
AWLOCK[1:0]	Master	Lock Type	Atomic Characteristics of transfer.
AWCACHE[3:0]	Master	Cache Type	indicates the bufferable, cacheable, write-through, write-back and allocate attributes of the transaction.
AWPROT[2:0]	Master	Projection Type	indicates the normal, privileged, or secure protection level of the transaction and whether the transaction is a data access or an instruction access.
AWVALID	Master	Write address valid	1 - address and control information are available and valid. Address and control information should be stable until address acknowledgement signal AWREADY goes HIGH.
AWREADY	Slave	Write address ready	1 - slave ready to accept an address and associated control signal.

2.3 Write Data channel

Signals	Source	Name	Description
WID[3:0]	Master	Write ID	ID tag for write data group of signal. WID must be equal to AWID for write transaction.
WDATA[31:0]	Master	Write Data	The actual write data. Can be 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512 or 1024 bits wide
WSTRB[3:0]	Master	Write Strobes	indicates which byte lanes to update in memory. One write strobe for each eight bits of write data bus. $WSTRB[n] = WDATA[(8 * n) + 7 : (8 * n)]$
WLAST	Master	Write last	indicate the last data transfer in a write burst.
WVALID	Master	Write valid	1 - write data and strobes are available and valid.
WREADY	Slave	Write ready	1 - slave ready to accept write data.

2.4 Write Response channel

Signals	Source	Name	Description
BID[3:0]	Slave	Response ID	ID tag for write response group of signal. BID must be equal to AWID for write transaction.
BRESP[1:0]	Slave	Write Response	indicates the status of write transaction and can take <i>OKAY</i> , <i>EXOKAY</i> , <i>SLVERR</i> and <i>DECERR</i> .
BVALID	Slave	Write responds valid	1 - write response is available and valid.
BREADY	Master	Write response ready	1 - master ready to accept response information.

2.5 Read Address channel

Signals	Source	Name	Description
ARID[3:0]	Master	Read address ID	ID tag for read address group of signal.
ARADDR[31:0]	Master	Read Address	The actual read address for first transfer in a read burst transaction.
ARLEN[3:0]	Master	Burst length	Number of data transfers in a burst associated with address.
ARSIZE[2:0]	Master	Burst size	Size of each data transfer in a burst.
ARBURST[1:0]	Master	Burst Type	Burst type along with size information calculates addresses for each transfer within burst.
ARLOCK[1:0]	Master	Lock Type	Atomic Characteristics of transfer.
ARCACHE[3:0]	Master	Cache Type	indicates cacheable attributes of the transaction.
ARPROT[2:0]	Master	Projection Type	indicates the protection unit information transaction.
ARVALID	Master	Read address valid	1 - address and control information are available and valid. Address and control information should be stable until address acknowledged signal ARREADY goes HIGH.
ARREADY	Slave	Read address ready	1 - slave ready to accept an address and associated control signal.

2.6 Read Data channel

Signals	Source	Name	Description
RID[3:0]	Slave	Read ID	ID tag for read data group of signal. RID must be equal to ARID for read transaction.
RDATA[31:0]	Slave	Read Data	The actual read data. Can be 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512 or 1024 bits wide
RRESP[1:0]	Slave	Read Response	indicate the status of read transfer and can be <i>OKAY</i> , <i>EX-OKAY</i> , <i>SLVERR</i> and <i>DECERR</i> .
RLAST	Slave	Read last	indicate the last data transfer in a read burst.
RVALID	Slave	Read valid	1 - read data are available and valid. read transfer is complete
RREADY	Master	Read ready	1 - master ready to accept read data and response information.

3 Channel Handshake

3.1 Handshake Procedure

- All five channels use the **VALID** and **READY** signal for handshaking.
- Control the rate at which data and control information moves.
- The source generates the **VALID** signal indicating the data or control information is available.
- The Destination generates the **READY** signal indicating that it can accept the data or control information.
- Transfer occurs only when both **VALID** and **READY** signals are HIGH.

3.1.1 Example Handshake sequence

VALID before READY

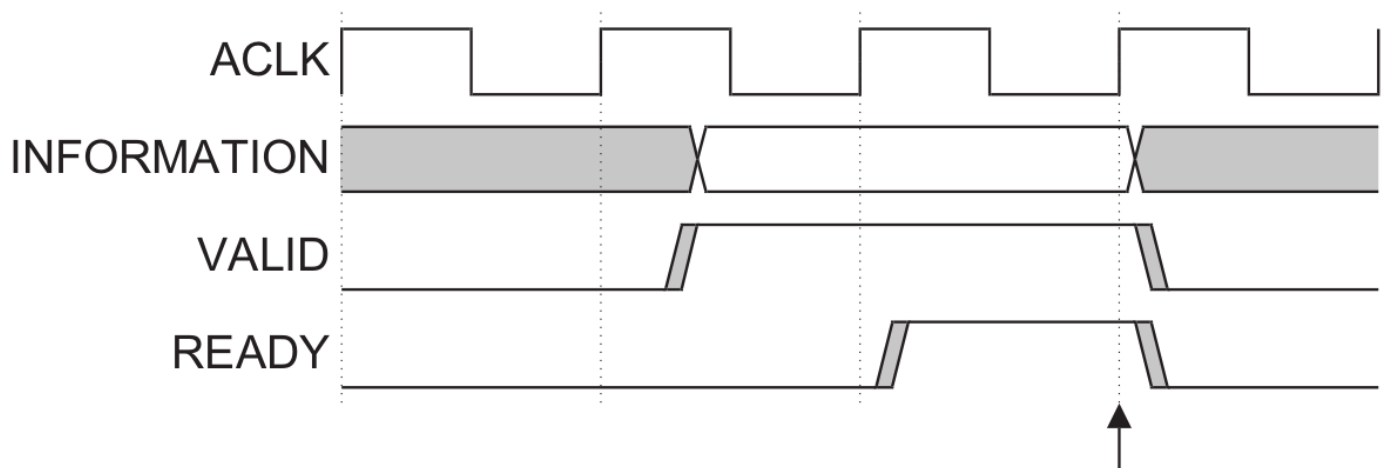


Figure 7: VALID before READY

- The source presents the data or control information and drives the **VALID** signal HIGH.
- The data or control information from the source remains stable until the destination drives the READY signal HIGH, indicating that it accepts the data or control information.
- The arrow shows when the transfer occurs.

READY before VALID

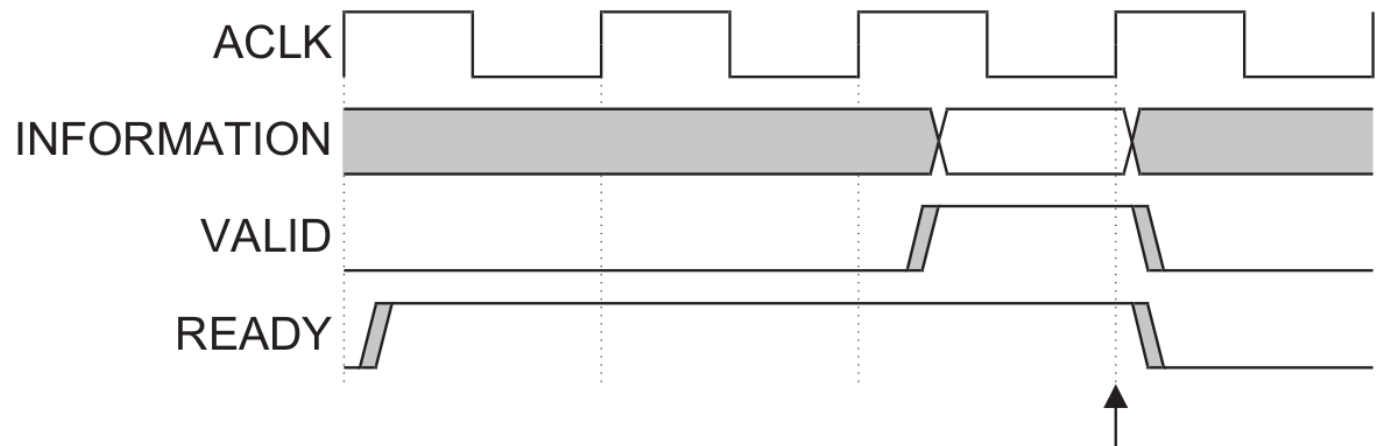


Figure 8: VALID before READY

- The destination drives **READY** HIGH before the data or control information is valid.
- This indicates that destination can accept data or control information in a single cycle as soon as it becomes valid.
- The arrow shows when the transfer occurs.

VALID with READY

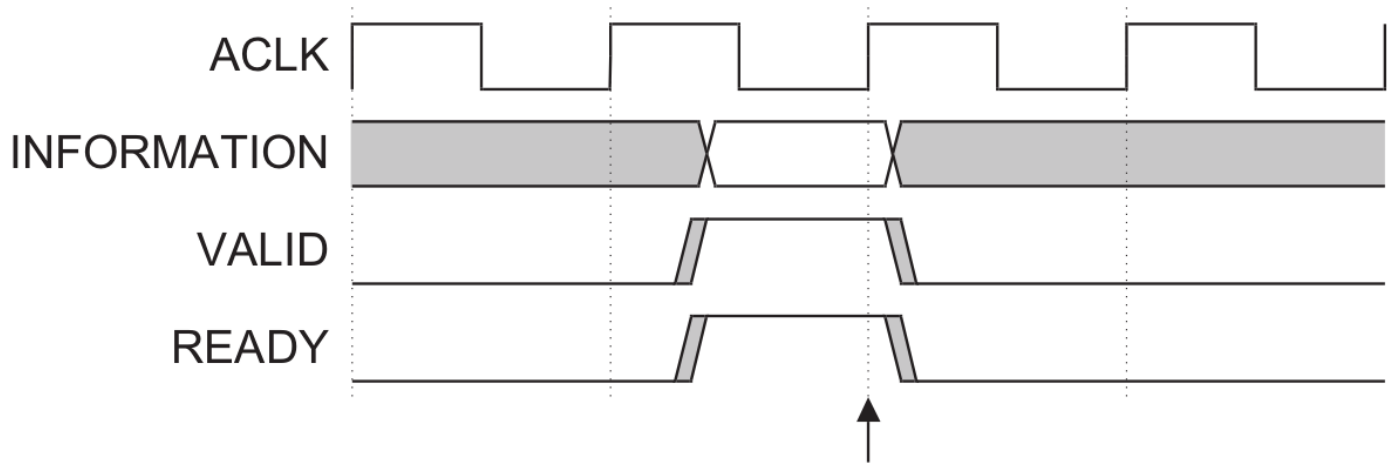


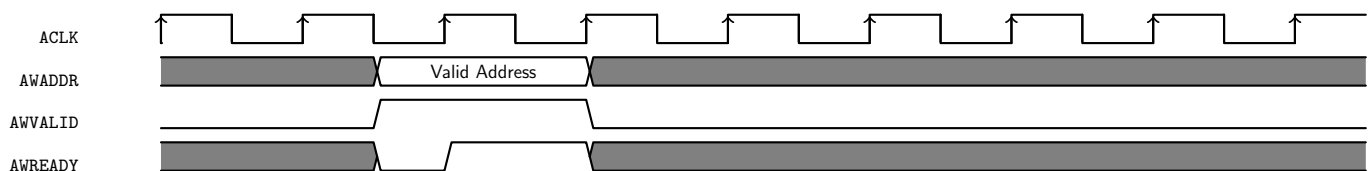
Figure 9: VALID before READY

- Both the source and destination happens to indicate in same cycle that they can transfer data or control information.
- The transfer occurs immediately.
- The arrow shows when the transfer occurs.

Notes: In all the above cases, we can see the **VALID** is made high only when data is valide.

3.2 Write Address Channel

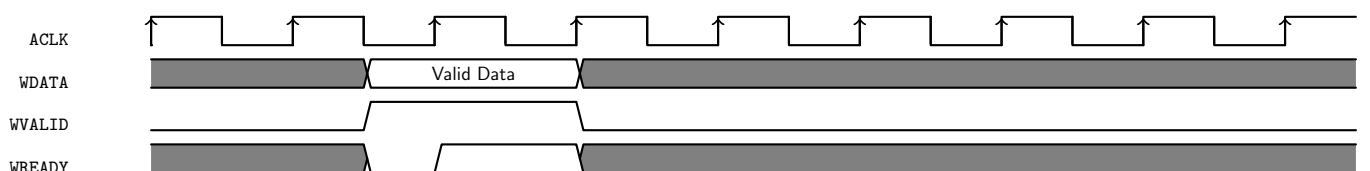
- Master places the valid addresses and control information and makes the **AWVALID** singal HIGH.
- The address and control information and **AWVALID** remains in that statue until slave accepts the address and control information.
- Now the salve makes the **AWREADY** singal HIGH.



Note: The default value for **AWREADY** should be HIGH.

3.3 Write Data channel

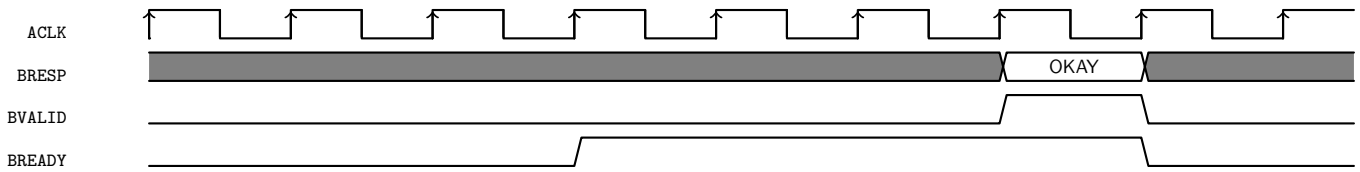
- Master places the valid write data and makes the **WVALID** signal HIGH.
- This **WVALID** singal must remain in that state untill the slave accepts the write data and makes the **WREADY** singal HIGH.
- The master must drive **WLAST** singal HIGH when writing the final write data transfer in a burst.
- When the **WVALID** is LOW, **WSTRB[3:0]** must be LOW or held at previous value.



Note: The default value for **WREADY** should be HIGH only if the slave can always accept write data in a single cycle.

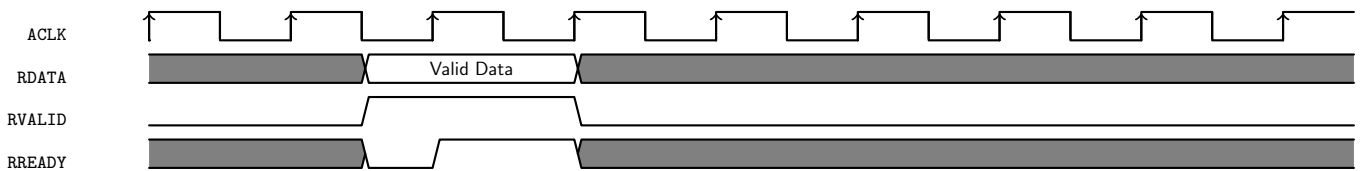
3.4 Write Response channel

- Slave makes the **BVALID** signal HIGH when it drives the valid write response.
- **BVALID** must be HIGH until the master accepts the response and asserts the **BREADY** signal.
- The default value of **BREADY** is HIGH only if master can always accept the write response in a single cycle.



3.5 Read Data channel

- Slave places the valid read data and makes the **RVALID** signal HIGH.
- This **RVALID** signal must remain in that state until the master accepts the read data and makes the **RREADY** signal HIGH.
- The slave must drive **RLAST** signal HIGH indicating that its transfering the last data transfer in the read burst.



Note: The default value for **RREADY** should be HIGH only if the master can always accept the read data immediately..

3.6 Relationship of handshake signals among channels

- Make **READY** signal HIGH before **VALID** for better efficiency.
- The single-headed arrow point to signal that can be asserted before or after the previous signal.
- The double-headed arrow point to signal that must be asserted only after the previous signal.
- For read transaction,

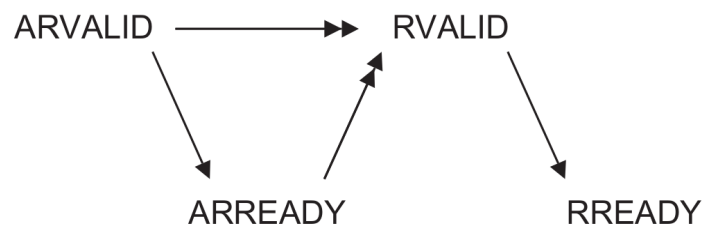


Figure 10: Read transaction handshake dependencies

- the slave can wait for **ARVALID** to be asserted before it asserts **ARREADY** signal.
- the slave must wait for both **ARVALID** and **ARREADY** to be asserted before it starts to return data by asserting **RVALID**.
- For Write transaction,

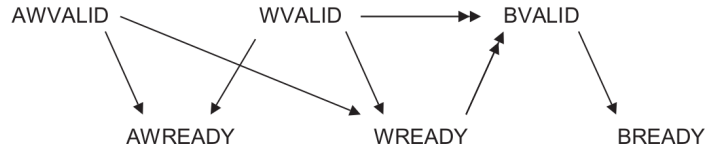


Figure 11: Write transaction handshake dependencies

- the master must not wait for the slave to assert **AWREADY** or **WREADY** before asserting **AWVALID** or **WVALID**
- the slave can wait for **AWVALID** or **WVALID**, or both, before asserting **AWREADY** and/or **WREADY**
- the slave must wait for both **WVALID** and **WREADY** to be asserted before asserting **BVALID**

4 Addressing Options

- AXI protocol is burst-based.
- The master begin each burst by driving transfer control information and address of the first byte in the transfer.
- As the burst progresses, the slave must calculate the address of subsequent transfers in the burst.
- Burst must not cross 4KB boundaries.

4.1 Burst Length

- The **AWLEN** or **ARLEN** signal specifies the Number of data transfer withing each burst.
- The **AWLEN** or **ARLEN** signal can take values between 1(4'b0000) to 16(4'b1111).

4.2 Burst Size

- The **AWSIZE** or **ARSIZE** signal specifies the Number of data bytes in each beat or data transfer.
- The **AWSIZE** or **ARSIZE** signal can take values as shown

ARSIZE[2:0] or AWSIZE[2:0]	Bytes in each transfer
3'b000	1
3'b001	2
3'b010	4
3'b011	8
3'b100	16
3'b101	32
3'b110	64
3'b111	128

- AXI determines the transfer address and also which byte lane to use.

4.3 Burst Type

ARBURST[1:0] or AWBURST[1:0]	Burst type	Access	Description
2'b00	FIXED	FIFO-type	Fixed-address burst – address remains same for every data transfer in the burst; Used in case of repeated accesses to same location such as when loading or emptying peripheral FIFO.
2'b01	INCR	Normal sequential memory	incrementing-address burst – the address for each transfer in the burst in an increment of the previous transfer address. The incrementing value depends on the size of the transfer. If the burst size is 4, then the address of each transfer is previous address plus 4
2'b10	WRAP	Cache line	incrementing-address burst that wraps to a lower address at wrap boundaries – wrap boundary is the size of each transfer in burst multiplied by total number of transfer in the burst.

4.4 Burst address

The Variables used are

- *Start_Address* - Start address issued by the master.
- *Numbe_Bytes* - Maximum Number of bytes in each data transfer.
- *Data_Bus_Bytes* - Number of byte lanes in the data bus.
- *Aligned_Addres* - Aligned version of start address.
- *Burst_Length* - total Number of data transfers within a burst.
- *Address_N* - address of transfer N within a burst.
- *Wrap_Boundary* - Lowest address withing a wrapping burst.
- *Lower_Byte_Lane* - Byte lane of lowest addressed byte of a transfer.
- *Upper_Byte_Lane* - Byte lane of highest addressed byte of a transfer.
- *INT(x)* - Rounded-down integer value of x.
- Addresses of tranfers within a burst

$$* \text{Start_Address} = \text{ADDR}$$

$$* \text{Number_Bytes} = 2^{\text{SIZE}}$$

$$* \text{Burst_Lenght} = \text{LEN} + 1$$

$$* \text{Aligned_Address} = \text{INT}\left(\frac{\text{Start_Address}}{\text{Number_Bytes}}\right) * \text{Number_Bytes}$$

- First Address

$$* \text{Address}_1 = \text{Start_Address}$$

- Address of any tranfer after the first transfer in a burst

$$* \text{Address}_N = \text{Aligned_Address} + (N - 1) * \text{Number_Bytes}$$

- The wrapping boundary in wrapping burst

$$* \text{Wrap_Boundary} = \text{INT}\left(\frac{\text{Start_Address}}{\text{Number_Bytes} * \text{Burst_Length}}\right) * \text{Number_Bytes} * \text{Burst_Length}$$

$$* \text{Address}_N = \text{Wrap_Boundary}.$$

- Data is transferred on

$$* \text{DATA}[(8 * \text{Upper_Byte_Lane}) + 7 : (8 * \text{Lower_Byte_Lane})]$$