# Meltdown and Spectre Samples

Written in Assembly

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March 26, 2018

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

TBD

#### 1.2 Conventions

#### 1.2.1 Introduction

In this section we define some convention that are specific for this document.

#### 1.2.2 Data Sections

The data is divided into three parts: read-only data, initialized data and uninitialized data. Code chunks with this type of data will all have defined sufficies.

**Definition 1** Read-only data is data that is not modified during program execution. The suffix for read-only data is **-rodata**.

**Definition 2** Initialized data is data that is changeable during program execution. The data is already initialized with data when the program starts. The suffix for initialized data is **-idata**.

**Definition 3** Uninitialized data is data that is changeable during program execution. The data is not initialized. The suffix for uninitialized data is **-udata**.

## 1.3 Nasm

```
TBD

 \langle preamble \ 5 \rangle \equiv 
bits 64
 \langle license \ 68 \rangle 
global _start
pagesize equ 4096

Defines:
_start, used in chunks 9c and 13a.
```

pagesize, used in chunks 8, 9, 13, 14, 17-19, and 23.

# 2 Cache Access Timing

# 2.1 Introduction

TBD

## 2.2 Detect Cache Access Time

### 2.2.1 High Resolution Timer

First we need a high resolution timer to determine the cache access time. For this we use the time stamp counter. The time stamp counter is monotonically incrementing. When reading the time stamp counter (with rdtsc) the result is delivered back in the registers EDX and EAX forming a 64bit value. The time stamp counter is not an absolute value but a relative value, meaning that you cannot (easily) calculate from the time stamp counter to some time units (e.g. ns). But this is no problem as we only want to measure relative times.

To retrieve a 64bit value for the time we shift the value in EDX 32 bits to the left and add the value of EAX to this.

7 
$$\langle tsc\text{-}64bit \ 7 \rangle \equiv$$
 (8a)

rdtsc

shl RDX,32

add RAX,RDX

#### 2.2.2 Cache Access Time Routine

Next we need a routine that calculates the cache access time for us.

First we have to ensure in this routine that the speculative execution of the processor does not interfere with our time measurement. For this we use the instruction lfence which ensures that all previous reads are done before executing the next instructions.

Next we access a memory location with the address RDI by loading this into RCX and measure the time before and after the access.

The command lfence before reading the time stamp counter is needed because we have to ensure that all reads before the time measurements are done.

At last we calculate the relative time needed to access the memory location. In theory we should see a difference whether the memory location is accessed before or not.

#### **Parameters**

RDI the address of the memory which is loaded either from the cache or from memory

```
\langle calculate\text{-}cache\text{-}access\text{-}time \ 8a \rangle \equiv
                                                                                                                              (12\ 23)
8a
            _calccachetime:
                     lfence
            \langle tsc-64bit 7 \rangle
                     mov
                                      R8, RAX
                     mov
                                      RCX, [RDI]
                     lfence
            \langle tsc-64bit 7 \rangle
                     sub
                                      RAX,R8
                     ret
         Defines:
            _calccachetime, used in chunks 10c, 11b, and 16.
```

#### 2.3 Measure Cache Access Time

#### 2.3.1 **Setup**

To measure the cache timing we create a standalone program that shows us the time for a cached and for an uncached memory access.

First we need some area in memory with data which we can later read from. This data area goes into the area .bss which contains uninitialized data. We align the data at a page boundary and reserve one pages for our data.

```
8b \langle cache\text{-}data \ 8b \rangle \equiv (9b 23)

data: resb pagesize

Defines:
data, used in chunks 9-11, 13a, 14b, 18b, 22b, and 23.
Uses pagesize 5.
```

From time to time we need a small scratch area so we define an area with 32 bytes.

9a 
$$\langle scratch\text{-}udata 9a \rangle \equiv$$
 (9b)

scratch: resb 32

Defines:

scratch, used in chunk 11.

9b 
$$\langle cachetiming\text{-}udata \text{ 9b} \rangle \equiv$$
 (12)

align pagesize

 $\langle cache\text{-}data \ 8b \rangle$ 

⟨scratch-udata 9a⟩

Uses pagesize 5.

The program begins with the label \_start.

9c 
$$\langle cachetiming\text{-}program \text{ 9c} \rangle \equiv$$
 (12) 9d  $\triangleright$ 

\_start:

9d

Uses \_start 5.

Now we start with initialising the data area with some random data. For this we load RDI with the address of the data area.

$$\langle cachetiming\text{-}program \ 9c \rangle + \equiv$$
 (12)  $\triangleleft 9c \ 9e \triangleright$ 

mov RDI, data

Uses data 8b.

Next we load the number of bytes to fill into RSI. For this we load the pagesize into RSI.

9e 
$$\langle cachetiming-program \ 9c \rangle + \equiv$$
 (12)  $\triangleleft 9d \ 9f \triangleright$ 

mov RSI, pagesize

Uses pagesize 5.

At last we load EDX with some random seed. For this we use rdtsc and only use the lower 32 bit of the value.

9f 
$$\langle cachetiming\text{-}program 9c \rangle + \equiv$$
 (12)  $\triangleleft 9e 9g \triangleright$ 

rdtsc

mov EDX, EAX

Now we call \_xorshift to fill the data area.

9g 
$$\langle cachetiming-program \ 9c \rangle + \equiv$$
 (12)  $\triangleleft 9f \ 10a \triangleright$ 

call \_xorshift

Uses \_xorshift 28a.

#### 2.3.2 Measure Time

Now that we have setup our data area we can now cache data from the first page by loading it into a register which also loads this into the cache.

For this we load RDI with the address of the data area.

10a  $\langle cachetiming\text{-}program 9c \rangle + \equiv$  (12)  $\triangleleft 9g$  10b  $\triangleright$  mov RDI, data

Uses data 8b.

Before we load the data into a register now we will clear the cache lines with the given address. For this we use the instruction clflush. After flushing the cache line we ensure (with lfence) that all reads from memory are finished before we load the data into a register again (and filling the cache).

10b ⟨cachetiming-program 9c⟩+≡ (12) ⊲10a 10c⊳
clflush [RDI]
lfence
mov RCX,[RDI]

Now we can determine the time that is needed to load this data once again. We do not need to load RDI again because it has not changed.

10c  $\langle cachetiming\text{-}program \text{ 9c} \rangle + \equiv$  (12)  $\triangleleft$  10b  $| 10f \rangle$  call \_calcachetime

Uses \_calccachetime 8a.

Now we have the relative cache access time in register RAX. We store this value to the stack and print out an explaining text.

For this we define the text to print.

10d  $\langle cachetiming-rodata \ 10d \rangle \equiv$  (12) 11c>  $\langle common-rodata \ 10e \rangle$ 

scached: db "Cached Access Time: ",0x00

Defines:

scached, used in chunk 10f.

Additionally we define some helper data, in this case carriage return (CR).

10e  $\langle common\text{-}rodata \ 10e \rangle \equiv$  (10d 19d) scr: db 0x0a

Defines:

scr, used in chunks 11 and 21.

Now we can print the text.

10f  $\langle cachetiming\text{-}program 9c \rangle + \equiv$  (12)  $\triangleleft$  10c 11a $\triangleright$ 

push RAX

mov RDI, scached

call \_print

Uses \_print 30a and scached 10d.

Then we restore the value and print the measured time to stdout. At last we append a CR to the output.

```
11a \langle cachetiming\text{-}program \ 9c \rangle + \equiv (12) \triangleleft 10f 11b> pop RDI mov RSI,scratch call _printdu64bit mov RSI,scr mov RDI,1 call _nprint
```

Uses \_nprint 29b, \_printdu64bit 31a, scr 10e, and scratch 9a.

Now we do the same with an uncached value. The difference is that we do not load the value before.

```
11b ⟨cachetiming-program 9c⟩+≡ (12) ⊲11a 11d⊳
mov RDI,data
clflush [RDI]
lfence
call _calccachetime
```

Uses \_calccachetime 8a and data 8b.

Now we have the time of the uncached data access in RAX and can print it out with some explaining text.

```
11c \langle cachetiming\text{-}rodata \ 10d \rangle + \equiv (12) \triangleleft 10d suncached: db "Uncached Access Time: ",0x00
```

Defines:

suncached, used in chunk 11d.

```
11d
        \langle cachetiming-program \ 9c \rangle + \equiv
                                                                                      (12) ⊲11b 11e⊳
                push
                             RAX
                mov
                             RDI, suncached
                call
                             _print
                             RDI
                pop
                             RSI, scratch
                mov
                             _printdu64bit
                call
                             RSI,scr
                mov
                             RDI,1
                mov
                             _nprint
                call
```

Uses \_nprint 29b, \_print 30a, \_printdu64bit 31a, scr 10e, scratch 9a, and suncached 11c.

At last we exit the program.

```
11e \langle cachetiming-program \ 9c \rangle + \equiv (12) \langle exitProgram \ 27b \rangle
```

# 2 Cache Access Timing

Now we can put everything together and have our cachetiming program that we can now execute.

```
12 \langle cachetiming.asm \ 12 \rangle \equiv \langle preamble \ 5 \rangle

section .rodata \langle cachetiming-rodata \ 10d \rangle

section .bss \langle cachetiming-udata \ 9b \rangle

section .text \langle cachetiming-program \ 9c \rangle
\langle calculate-cache-access-time \ 8a \rangle
\langle xorshift-prng \ 28a \rangle
\langle utilities \ 27a \rangle
```

The program is placed in asm/. With make in the folder we can create an executable which is moved to bin/. There we can execute this program.

#### \$ ./cachetiming

Cached Access Time: 72 Uncached Access Time: 372

# 2.4 Read Array via Cache Access Time

#### 2.4.1 Introduction

Now that we have seen that we can determine if a value was in the cache or not (see 2.3 Measure Cache Access Time) we will read a complete array of data by only measuring the cache access time.

# 2.4.2 **Setup**

13a

For this we start with some data area that we can read later as defined before.

So start with the program and fill the data area with some random data (similar to the chunks 9c, 9d, 9e, 9f and 9g).

```
⟨cacheread-program 13a⟩

_start:

mov RDI,data

mov RSI,pagesize

rdtsc

mov EDX,EAX

call _xorshift

(23) 14a⊳
```

Uses \_start 5, \_xorshift 28a, data 8b, and pagesize 5.

Next we will create a probe area that is 256 \* pagesize. We only access the first byte of each page but we divide the data over such a large area (1 MiB) to ensure that the cache lines that we use do not interfere each other.

```
13b ⟨cacheread-udata 13b⟩≡ probe: times 256 resb pagesize

Defines: probe, used in chunks 14 and 18.

Uses pagesize 5. (23) 17b⊳
```

Next we fill this area also with some random data.

```
14a
        \langle cacheread\text{-}program \ 13a \rangle + \equiv
                                                                                              (23) ⊲13a 19c⊳
                               RDI, probe
                 mov
                 mov
                                RAX, pagesize
                                RCX,256
                 mov
                                RCX
                 mul
                 mov
                                RSI,RCX
                 rdtsc
                                EDX, EAX
                 mov
                 call
                                _xorshift
```

Uses \_xorshift 28a, pagesize 5, and probe 13b.

### 2.4.3 Reading Bytes via Cache

As we saw we can determine if a memory datum is in cache or not. For reading a complete byte we have to do a little bit more. Basically we use the byte accessed to index a different probe area. Because the memory is not cached byte by byte but in so called cache lines we cannot use a simple 256 bytes sized probe array but must at least have a space between the accessed bytes that is larger than a cache line size. This is the reason why we use a probe array of 256 \* pagesize bytes of size.

Basically we use the following code to access the data. We load the content of the address we want to probe into a register. Then we multiply the register with some arbitary value (we use pagesize) and the access the probe area with the calculated offset. We can then test the cache which page was cached and have our value from the data.

```
14b ⟨cacheread-sample 14b⟩≡
mov RAX,[data]
mul RAX,pagesize
mov RBX,[probe+RAX]
Uses data 8b, pagesize 5, and probe 13b.
```

First we write a subroutine to clear the cache lines from data from our probe area. We assume that we use 256 values (0...255) for the indexing into the probe array. Also the probe area must be at least 256 \* RSI bytes in size.

#### **Parameters**

```
RDI the address of the probe array
```

\_clearcache, used in chunk 18a.

RSI the interval between the probe addresses used

```
\langle clear\text{-}cache \ 15 \rangle \equiv
15
                                                                                                       (23)
          _clearcache:
                cld
                mov
                              RCX,256
                xor
                              RAX, RAX
          .clear_next:
                clflush
                              [RDI+RAX]
                add
                              RAX,RSI
                              .clear_next
                loop
                lfence
                ret
       Defines:
```

#### 2 Cache Access Timing

Next we need a subroutine that determines the cache line access times for the data in the probe area. So we create a subroutine that loops similar to the \_clearcache subroutine over all addresses and measures the cache access time for each page.

the address of the probe array

#### **Parameters**

RDI

```
RSI
                   the interval between the probe addresses used
                   the address of the results of the cache measurements. The area needs to be
       RDX
                   256 * 8 bytes in size
16
       \langle detect\text{-}cache\text{-}area\text{-}time \ 16 \rangle \equiv
                                                                                                  (23)
         _calcareacachetime:
                            RCX, RCX
               xor
         .next_timing:
               push
                            RCX
                            RDX
               push
                            RDI
               push
               push
                            RSI
               call
                            _calccachetime
                            RSI
               pop
                            RDI
               pop
                            RDX
               pop
                            RCX
               pop
                             [RDX+8*RCX], RAX
               mov
               add
                            RDI,RSI
                            RCX
               inc
               cmp
                            RCX,256
```

Defines:

 $\_{\tt calcareacachetime}, \, used in chunk \, 17a.$ 

.next\_timing

Uses \_calccachetime 8a.

jb ret

We now can determine the cache line with the lowest access time. This is the cache line that was cached before.

#### **Parameters**

RDI the address of the probe array

RSI the interval between the probe addresses used

RDX the address of the results of the cache measurements. The area needs to be 256 \* 8 bytes in size

#### Return

RAX

**TBD**  $\langle detect\text{-}byte 17a \rangle \equiv$ 17a (23)\_detectbytebycl: push call \_calcareacachetime pop RDI RSI, RDX mov RCX, RCX xor R8,0xffffffffffffff mov R9,R9 xor .nextbyte: RAX, [RDI+8\*RCX] mov RAX,R8 cmpjb .foundbyte RCX inc cmpRCX,256 .done jae .foundbyte: mov R8, RAX R9, RCX mov .nextbyte jmp .done: RAX,R9 mov

the byte (in AL) which is found by cache timing analysis

Uses \_calcareacachetime 16.

ret

Now we need some area to store all the data. Once we use an area for the timing data and another area for the read memory data.

```
17b \langle cacheread\text{-}udata \ 13b \rangle + \equiv (23) \triangleleft 13b result: resb pagesize timing: resq 256 Uses pagesize 5.
```

Now we have the base for reading a complete memory area via a cache covert channel. We now create a subroutine to loop over the memory we want to read and read the values back via the cache access time.

First we create a area where we can store the read bytes.

```
17c ⟨readback-udata 17c⟩≡
readback: align pagesize, resb pagesize

Defines:
readback, used in chunk 22b.
Uses pagesize 5. (23)
```

#### 2 Cache Access Timing

Now we create the subroutine that reads the bytes from the source array data and writes the results from the cache access time into readback.

First we setup a counter in R8 and clear the cache.

```
\langle cache\text{-}readback \ 18a \rangle \equiv
18a
                                                                                                    (23) 18b⊳
           _cachereadback:
                                R8,R8
                  xor
           .nextbyte:
                                R8
                  push
                                RDI, probe
                  mov
                                RSI, pagesize
                  mov
                                _clearcache
                  call
                  pop
                                R8
        Defines:
```

\_cachereadback, used in chunk 19c.

Uses \_clearcache 15, pagesize 5, and probe 13b.

Next we read in the data from the array.

```
18b \langle cache\text{-}readback \ 18a \rangle + \equiv (23) \triangleleft 18a \mid 18c \triangleright mov RSI, data xor RAX, RAX mov AL, [RSI+R8]
```

Uses data 8b.

Next we use the read byte to index into our probe array.

```
18c ⟨cache-readback 18a⟩+≡ (23) ⊲18b 18d⊳
mov RDX,pagesize
mul RDX
mov RSI,probe
mov AL,[RSI+RAX]
```

Uses pagesize 5 and probe 13b.

Uses pagesize 5 and probe 13b.

Now we have put data into the cache that depends on the value read from data. Next we will read the cache access times to determine the data read.

```
18d \langle cache\text{-}readback \ 18a \rangle + \equiv (23) \triangleleft 18c \ 19a \triangleright mov RDI,probe mov RSI,pagesize mov RDX,timing push R8 call _detectbytebycl pop R8
```

Next we store the read byte into our result array.

19a  $\langle cache\text{-}readback \ 18a \rangle + \equiv$  (23)  $\triangleleft 18d \ 19b \triangleright$  mov RDI,result mov [RDI+R8],AL

Now we can increment our counter and check if there are more bytes to read. If no more bytes need to be read we leave our subroutine.

19b  $\langle cache\text{-}readback \ 18a \rangle + \equiv$  (23)  $\triangleleft$  19a inc R8 cmp R8, pagesize jb .nextbyte ret

Uses pagesize 5.

After all we can now call this new subroutine and read our data by detecting the cache access times.

19c  $\langle cacheread\text{-}program \ 13a \rangle + \equiv$  (23)  $\triangleleft$  14a 22b  $\triangleright$  call \_cachereadback Uses \_cachereadback 18a.

### 2.4.4 Printing the Results

sresetstyle, never used.

Now we want to see the results so we now read a byte from the origin (data) and from our read back data (readback).

First we define some helpful data for colorizing the output.

#### 2 Cache Access Timing

First we define a subroutine which prints out up to 16 bytes each side by side on the screen. If two bytes in the arrays are different then the value at the right side (from the second array) will be printed with read background.

At the start of the subroutine we prepare a stack frame for further operations as we will need to save and restore the registers RDI, RSI, RDX and RCX multiple times

#### **Parameters**

```
RDI the address of the first array

RSI the address of the second array

RDX number of bytes to print (up to 16). If the value is above 16 then nothing is printed out
```

20  $\langle print\text{-}comparision16 \ 20 \rangle \equiv$ 

(23) 21⊳

\_printcompare16:

push RBP
mov RBP,RSP
sub RSP,32
mov [RBP-8],RDI
mov [RBP-16],RSI
mov [RBP-24],RDX

Uses  $\_$ printcompare16 21.

```
21
      \langle print\text{-}comparision16 \ 20 \rangle + \equiv
                                                                                     (23) \triangleleft 20
              cmp
                          RDX,0x10
              ja
                          .done
                          RCX,RCX
              xor
         .nextbyteleft:
              cmp
                          RCX, RDX
              jb
                          .leftbytesdone
                          RCX
              inc
                          .nextbyteleft
              jmp
         .leftbytesdone:
                          RCX,0x10
              cmp
              jb
                          .leftdone
              inc
                          RCX
                          .leftbytesdone
              jmp
         .leftdone:
              mov
                          RDI,sblank
                          _print
              call
                          RDX, [RBP-24]
              mov
                          RCX,RCX
              xor
         .nextbyteright:
              cmp
                          RCX,RDX
              jb
                          .rightbytesdone
              inc
              jmp
                          .nextbyteright
         .rightbytesdone:
              cmp
                          RCX,0x10
              jb
                          .rightdone
              inc
                          RCX
                          .rightbytesdone
              jmp
         .rightdone:
         .done:
                          RDI,1
              mov
              mov
                          RSI,scr
              call
                          _nprint
                          RSP,RBP
              mov
                          RBP
              pop
              ret
      Defines:
```

\_printcompare16, used in chunks 20 and 22a. Uses \_nprint 29b, \_print 30a, and scr 10e.

## 2 Cache Access Timing

TBD

#### **Parameters**

```
RDI
                      the address of the first array
        RSI
                      the address of the second array
        RDX
                      number of bytes to print. In each line 16 bytes from the first and 16 bytes
                      from the right side are printed
22a
        \langle print\text{-}comparision 22a \rangle \equiv
                                                                                                            (23)
           _printcompare:
                  call
                                _printcompare16
                  ret
        Defines:
           _printcompare, used in chunk 22b.
        Uses \_printcompare16\ 21.
           TBD
        \langle cacheread\text{-}program \ 13a \rangle + \equiv
22b
                                                                                                      (23) ⊲ 19c
                                RDI, data
                  mov
                  mov
                                RSI, readback
                                RDX,16
                  mov
                  call
                                _printcompare
        Uses _printcompare 22a,\,\mbox{data}\ 8b,\,\mbox{and}\ \mbox{readback}\ 17c.
```

```
\langle cacheread.asm 23 \rangle \equiv
23
                \langle preamble 5 \rangle
                section .bss
                           align
                                                             pagesize
                \langle cache-data 8b \rangle
                \langle cacheread\text{-}udata \ 13b \rangle
                \langle readback-udata 17c \rangle
                section .data
                \langle cacheread\text{-}rodata \ 19d \rangle
                section .text
                \langle cacheread\text{-}program \ 13a \rangle
                \langle exitProgram 27b \rangle
                \langle print\text{-}comparision 22a \rangle
                \langle print\text{-}comparision 16 \ 20 \rangle
                \langle cache\text{-}readback 18a \rangle
                \langle clear\text{-}cache \ 15 \rangle
                \langle calculate\text{-}cache\text{-}access\text{-}time \ 8a \rangle
                \langle detect\text{-}cache\text{-}area\text{-}time \ 16 \rangle
                \langle detect\text{-}byte 17a \rangle
                \langle xorshift\text{-}prng 28a \rangle
                \langle utilities 27a \rangle
```

Uses data 8b and pagesize 5.

# 3 Signals

# 3.1 Basics

TBD

# 3.2 Detecting Signals

TBD

# 3.3 Handling Signals

TBD

# 4 Utilities

# 4.1 Introduction

```
TBD

27a \langle utilities 27a \rangle \equiv \langle nprint 29b \rangle
\langle print 30a \rangle
\langle printdu64bit 31a \rangle
\langle printh8bit 34a \rangle
```

# 4.2 Exit Program

```
TBD
```

```
27b \langle exitProgram \ 27b \rangle \equiv (11e 23) xor RDI,RDI mov RAX,60 syscall
```

 $(12\ 23)$ 

# 4.3 Random Number Generator

To initialize the data a random number generator (RNG) is used. The sample programs use xorshift<sup>1</sup> as RNG.

First we clear the direction flag to ensure that we are incrementing the data pointer RDI.

Next we move the number of values to be generated to RCX (which is a counter in x86 processors) and divide it by 4 (because we use a 32bit RNG). Additionally we move the seed to EAX.

#### **Parameters**

RDI the address of the memory which is to be filled with random numbers

RSI the number of bytes that are filled with random numbers. This must be a multiple of 4

EDX the seed of the RNG

Defines:

\_xorshift, used in chunks 9g, 13a, and 14a.

Now we can generate the next 32bit random number.

```
28b ⟨xorshift-prng 28a⟩+≡ (12 23) ⊲28a 29a⊳
.next_random:

mov EBX,EAX
shl EAX,13
xor EAX,EBX
mov EBX,EAX
```

shr EAX,17
xor EAX,EBX
mov EBX,EAX
shl EAX,5
xor EAX,EBX

<sup>1</sup>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xorshift

Because we want to generate multiple random numbers we store the value of EAX to [RDI] and loop for the next random number.

```
29a \langle xorshift\text{-}prng \ 28a \rangle + \equiv (12 23) \triangleleft 28b stosd loop .next_random ret
```

# 4.4 Printing Strings

### 4.4.1 Printing Strings with Length

At the end we return to the caller.

The routine \_nprint prints a string with the given length to stdout.

We move the number of bytes to print to RDX which is the 3rd parameter to the systemcall. Next we move the address of the bytes to print to RSI which is the 2nd parameter to the systemcall. The 1st argument (in RDI) to the systemcall is the file descriptor (1 is stdout). Additionally the number of the systemcall (1) is passed in RAX. The systemcall (syscall) now prints RDX bytes from [RSI] to the file descriptor RDI.

#### **Parameters**

```
RDI the number of bytes to print to stdout
```

RSI the address to the bytes to print to stdout

Defines:

29b

\_nprint, used in chunks 11, 21, 30d, and 33b.

#### 4.4.2 Printing C-Strings

The routine \_print prints a null-terminated string to stdout.

First we clear the direction flag to increment the address in RDI while scanning the data.

Next we start with clearing AL (setting it to null) and saving the address of the string to RSI. We're using RSI because we later need the address to calculate the length of the string.

#### **Parameters**

RDI the address to the null-terminated bytes to print to stdout

```
30a ⟨print 30a⟩≡
_print:
cld
xor AL,AL
mov RSI,RDI
```

Defines:

\_print, used in chunks 10f, 11d, and 21.

Next we search for the terminating null ('\0') character. For this we use the instruction scasb (scan string byte) which compares the byte at the address [RDI] with the value in AL and sets the flags accordingly. When the byte at [RDI] is not the value of AL the next instruction (jne) jumps to the given label (.next\_char in this case).

scasb additionally increments RDI so that we go through the string until '\0' is found.

```
30b ⟨print 30a⟩+≡ (27a) ⊲30a 30c⊳
.next_char:
scasb
jne .next_char
```

After we have found the string termination we calculate the number of bytes that the string has. In RSI we now have the starting address of the bytes to print and in RDI we have the end address of the bytes to print. After that we calculate the number of bytes to print.

30c 
$$\langle print \ 30a \rangle + \equiv$$
 (27a)  $\triangleleft 30b \ 30d \triangleright$  sub RDI,RSI

Now we have the address of the string in RDI and the length of the string in RSI which are the 1st and 2nd argument in the call of \_nprint.

# 4.5 Printing Numbers

### 4.5.1 Printing a Decimal 64bit Unsigned Integer

The routine \_printdu64bit prints a given 64bit integer as unsigned decimal number to stdout.

To print a decimal number we have to divide the number by 10 and get the remainder for printing (from right to left). For this we move the divisor to a register and the dividend to RAX. We have to use RAX because this is the only register we can use for division.

Additionally we need the address of the scratch area in RDI for storing the result. We also save the address of the scratch area to R8 for later use.

To increment the address during the processing we clear the direction flag.

#### **Parameters**

RDI the number number to print to stdout

RSI the address of a scratch area with a size of at least 20 bytes

Defines: \_printdu64bit, used in chunk 11.

Now we define a label to jump back when we see that there are still more digits to print. Then we test RAX for 0 and end the processing of the digits.

```
31b \langle printdu64bit 31a \rangle + \equiv (27a) \triangleleft 31a 31c \triangleright .next: cmp RAX,0 je .done
```

Next we divide RAX by RCX. For this we have to clear RDX because this is the higher value of the dividend. The result is then placed into RAX and the remainder into RDX.

```
31c \langle printdu64bit 31a \rangle + \equiv (27a) \triangleleft 31b 32a \triangleright xor RDX,RDX div RCX
```

We now exchange the result and the remainder because we now need the remainder in RAX (or AL) for further processing. Now we can add the ASCII character '0' to AL and have the correct ASCII value in AL. Now we can store the ASCII character to the scratch area.

```
32a \langle printdu64bit 31a \rangle + \equiv (27a) \triangleleft 31c 32b \triangleright xchg RDX,RAX add AL,'0' stosb
```

Now we restore RAX (which we saved to RDX) to go into the next round.

```
32b \langle printdu64bit 31a \rangle + \equiv (27a) \triangleleft 32a 32c \triangleright mov RAX,RDX jmp .next
```

Now that we have all the numbers as ASCII characters we are nearly done. We now have to reverse the number in memory because the number saved at the lowest address is the digit with the least significance.

We now start with checking if we have written any character. If not then we write the ASCII character '0' into the memory. We use the instruction stosb for this to adjust the address in RDI at the same time.

```
32c ⟨printdu64bit 31a⟩+≡ (27a) ⊲32b 32d⊳
.done:

cmp RDI,RSI
jne .printout
mov AL,'0'
stosb
.printout:
```

Next we calculate the number of digits that the number has. For this we move the address of the last digit to RDX and subtract the start of the scratch area from this. Next we adjust RDI because it points to the first address after the number.

```
32d \langle printdu64bit 31a \rangle + \equiv (27a) \triangleleft 32c 33a \triangleright mov RDX,RDI sub RDX,RSI dec RDI
```

We now have RSI with the address of the start of the number and RDI with the address of the end. We now have to exchange the digits from the front and the end to get the right number. For this we increment RSI and decrement RDI after each exchange and when the addresses pass each other we are done.

```
\langle printdu64bit 31a\rangle + \equiv
33a
                                                                                        (27a) ⊲32d 33b⊳
           .reverse:
                 mov
                              AL, [RSI]
                              AH, [RDI]
                 mov
                               [RSI], AH
                 mov
                               [RDI],AL
                 mov
                              RDI
                 dec
                 inc
                              RSI
                 cmp
                              RSI,RDI
                 jb
                               .reverse
```

Now we restore the address of the scratch area to RSI and move the number of digits (which we stored in RDX) to RDI and can the call \_nprint to print the number.

```
33b ⟨printdu64bit 31a⟩+≡ (27a) ⊲33a

mov RSI,R8

mov RDI,RDX

call _nprint

ret

Uses _nprint 29b.
```

#### 4.5.2 Printing a Hexadecimal 8bit Integer

The routine \_printh8bit prints a given 8bit integer as hexadecimal number to stdout.

To print a hexadecimal number we mask a nibble (4bit) and have the number to print. First we clear the register RAX and move the number to AX for further processing and

First we clear the register RAX and move the number to AX for further processing and clear the higher 8bit (AH). Additionally we move it to R8 for later restore.

Additionally we need the address of the scratch area in RDI for storing the result.

To increment the address during the processing we clear the direction flag.

#### **Parameters**

DI the number number to print to stdout. Only the lower 8bit are used.

RSI the address of a scratch area with a size of at least 2 bytes

```
34a
         \langle printh8bit 34a \rangle \equiv
                                                                                                      (27a) 34b ⊳
           _printh8bit:
                                 RAX, RAX
                  xor
                                 AX,DI
                  mov
                                 AH, AH
                  xor
                  mov
                                 R8,RAX
                                 RDI, RSI
                  mov
                  cld
        Defines:
```

\_printh8bit, never used.

Now we mask the higher 4 bit of AL by shifting it 4 bits to the right and mask out all but the lower 4 bit. Next we call the internal method printh8bit.printh4bit to print out this nibble.

```
34b \langle printh8bit\ 34a\rangle + \equiv (27a) \triangleleft 34a 34c\triangleright shr AL,4 and AL,0x0f call .printh4bit
```

Next we restore the number and print out the lower 4 bits.

```
34c \langle printh8bit\ 34a \rangle + \equiv (27a) \triangleleft34b mov RAX,R8 and AL,0x0f call .printh4bit ret \langle printh8bit.printh4bit\ 35a \rangle
```

Now we define the internal method to print a hexadecimal digit.

First we test if the digit is above or equal to 10. In this case we have to print out a character between 'a' and 'f' else we print out a decimal digit (between '0' and '9').

## Parameters (internal)

AL the lower 4 bit contain the hexadecimal digit print to stdout

RDI the address of a scratch area

35a  $\langle printh8bit.printh4bit$  35a $\rangle \equiv$  (34c) 35b $\triangleright$  .printh4bit:

cmp AL,10 jae .printa2f

Defines:

printh8bit.printh4bit, never used.

Now we add '0' to get the code for the digit between '0' and '9'.

35b  $\langle printh8bit.printh4bit$  35a $\rangle + \equiv$  (34c)  $\triangleleft$  35a 35c $\triangleright$  add AL,'0'

add AL,'0'
jmp .printout

Else we print a digit between 'a' and 'f'. We first subtract 10 because the value in AL is now between 10 and 15.

 $35c \quad \langle printh8bit.printh4bit \ 35a \rangle + \equiv$  (34c)  $\triangleleft 35b \ 35d \triangleright$ 

.printa2f:

sub AL,10 add AL,'a'

Now we store the character into the storage area.

 $\langle printh8bit.printh4bit 35a \rangle + \equiv \tag{34c}$ 

.printout:

stosb

ret

# A Glossary

 ${\bf x86}\,$  x86 denotes a microprocessor architecture based on the 8086/8088 28

# **B** Acronyms

**ASCII** American Standard Code for Information Interchange 32

CR carriage return 10, 11

 ${\bf RNG}$  random number generator 28

# C x86-Instructions

```
clflush Flush Cache Line, introduced with Intel<sup>®</sup> Pentium<sup>®</sup> 4 10

lfence Load Fence, introduced with Intel<sup>®</sup> Pentium<sup>®</sup> 4 8, 10

rdtsc Read Time Stamp Counter, introduced with Intel<sup>®</sup> Pentium<sup>®</sup> 7, 9
```

# **D** Code Chunks

```
⟨cache-data 8b⟩
\langle cache - readback | 18a \rangle
\langle cacheread\text{-}program 13a \rangle
\langle cacheread\text{-}rodata \ 19d \rangle
\langle cacheread\text{-}sample | 14b \rangle
\langle cacheread\text{-}udata \text{ 13b} \rangle
\langle cacheread.asm 23 \rangle
\langle cachetiming-program \ 9c \rangle
\langle cachetiming\text{-}rodata \ 10d \rangle
\langle cachetiming-udata 9b \rangle
\langle cachetiming.asm 12 \rangle
\langle calculate\text{-}cache\text{-}access\text{-}time \ 8a \rangle
\langle clear\text{-}cache \ 15 \rangle
\langle common-rodata \ 10e \rangle
\langle detect\text{-}byte 17a \rangle
\langle detect\text{-}cache\text{-}area\text{-}time \ 16 \rangle
\langle exitProgram 27b \rangle
\langle license 68 \rangle
\langle nprint 29b \rangle
\langle preamble 5 \rangle
\langle print 30a \rangle
\langle print\text{-}comparision 22a \rangle
\langle print\text{-}comparision 16 \ 20 \rangle
\langle printdu64bit 31a \rangle
\langle printh8bit 34a \rangle
⟨printh8bit.printh4bit 35a⟩
\langle readback-udata 17c \rangle
\langle scratch\text{-}udata 9a \rangle
\langle tsc-64bit 7 \rangle
\langle utilities 27a \rangle
\langle xorshift\text{-}prng 28a \rangle
```

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