

Lecture 8:

# Instruction-Level Parallelism

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15-418 Parallel Computer Architecture and Programming

CMU 15-418/15-618, Fall 2025

# Many kinds of processors



CPU



GPU



FPGA

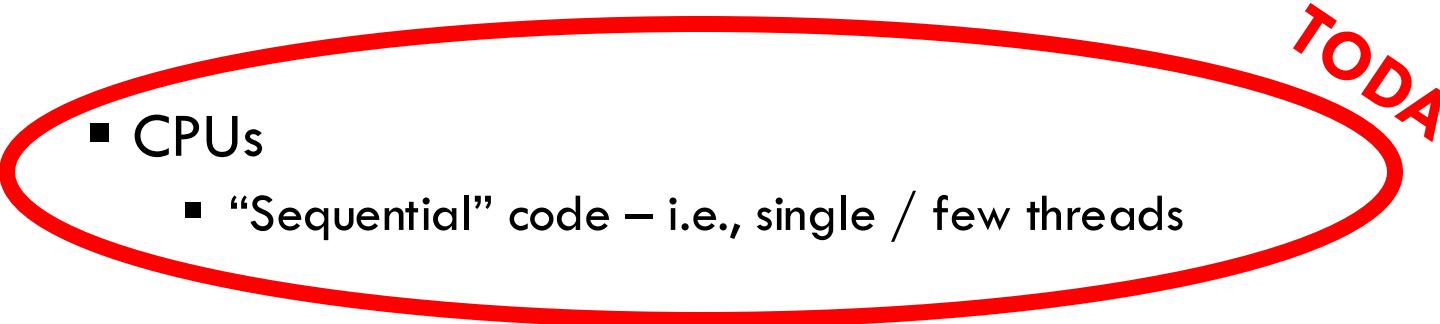


Etc.

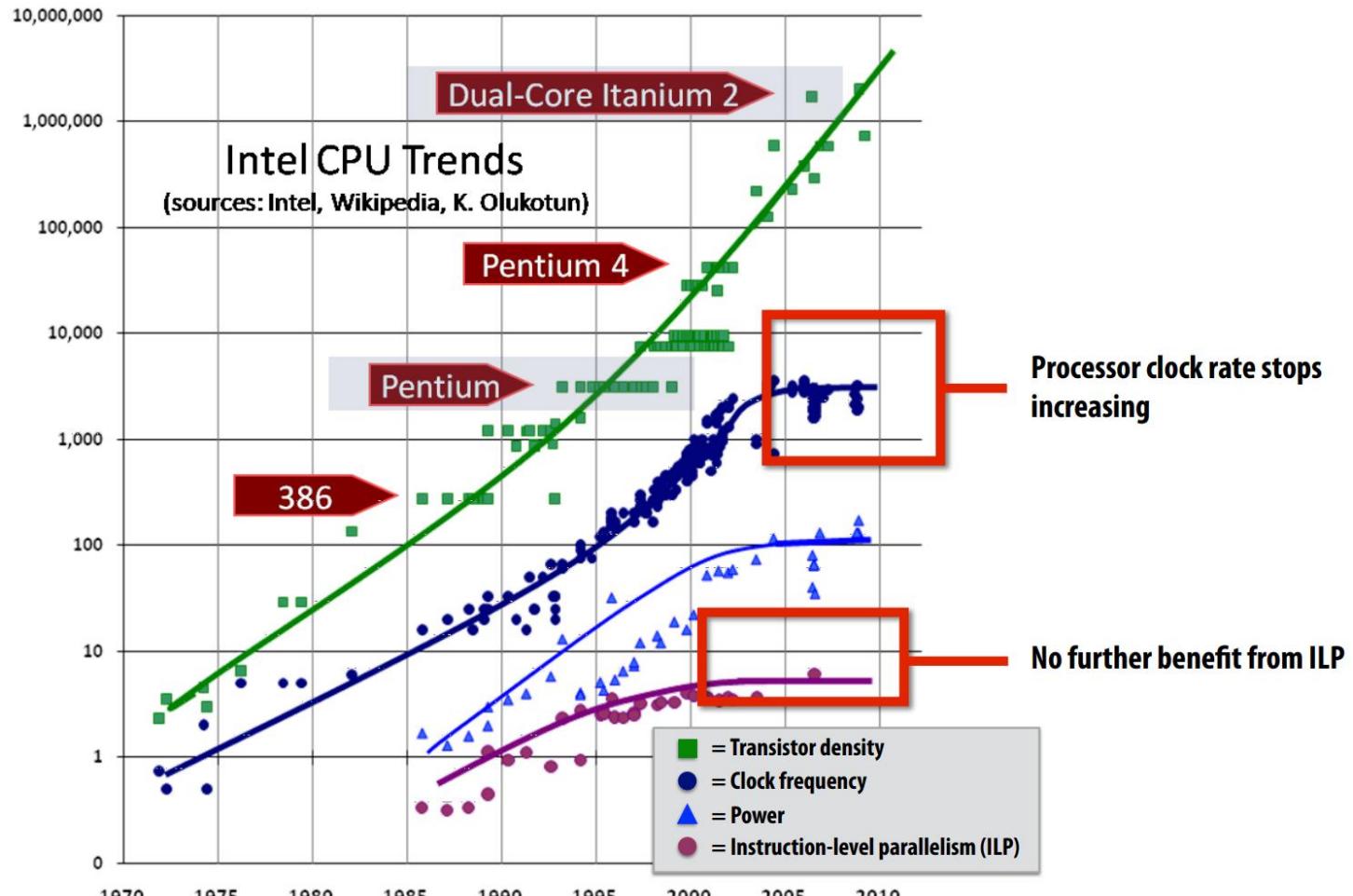
*Why so many? What differentiates these processors?*

# Why so many kinds of processors?

**Each processor is designed for different kinds of programs**

- 
- CPUs
    - “Sequential” code – i.e., single / few threads
  - GPUs
    - Programs with lots of independent work → “Embarrassingly parallel”
  - Many others: Deep neural networks, Digital signal processing, Etc.

# Recall from last time: ILP & pipelining tapped out... why?



# Parallelism pervades architecture

- Speeding up programs is all about parallelism
  - 1) Find independent work
  - 2) Execute it in parallel
  - 3) Profit
- Key questions:
  - Where is the parallelism?
  - Whose job is it to find parallelism?

# Where is the parallelism?

Different processors take radically different approaches

- CPUs: Instruction-level parallelism
  - Implicit
  - Fine-grain
- GPUs: Thread- & data-level parallelism
  - Explicit
  - Coarse-grain

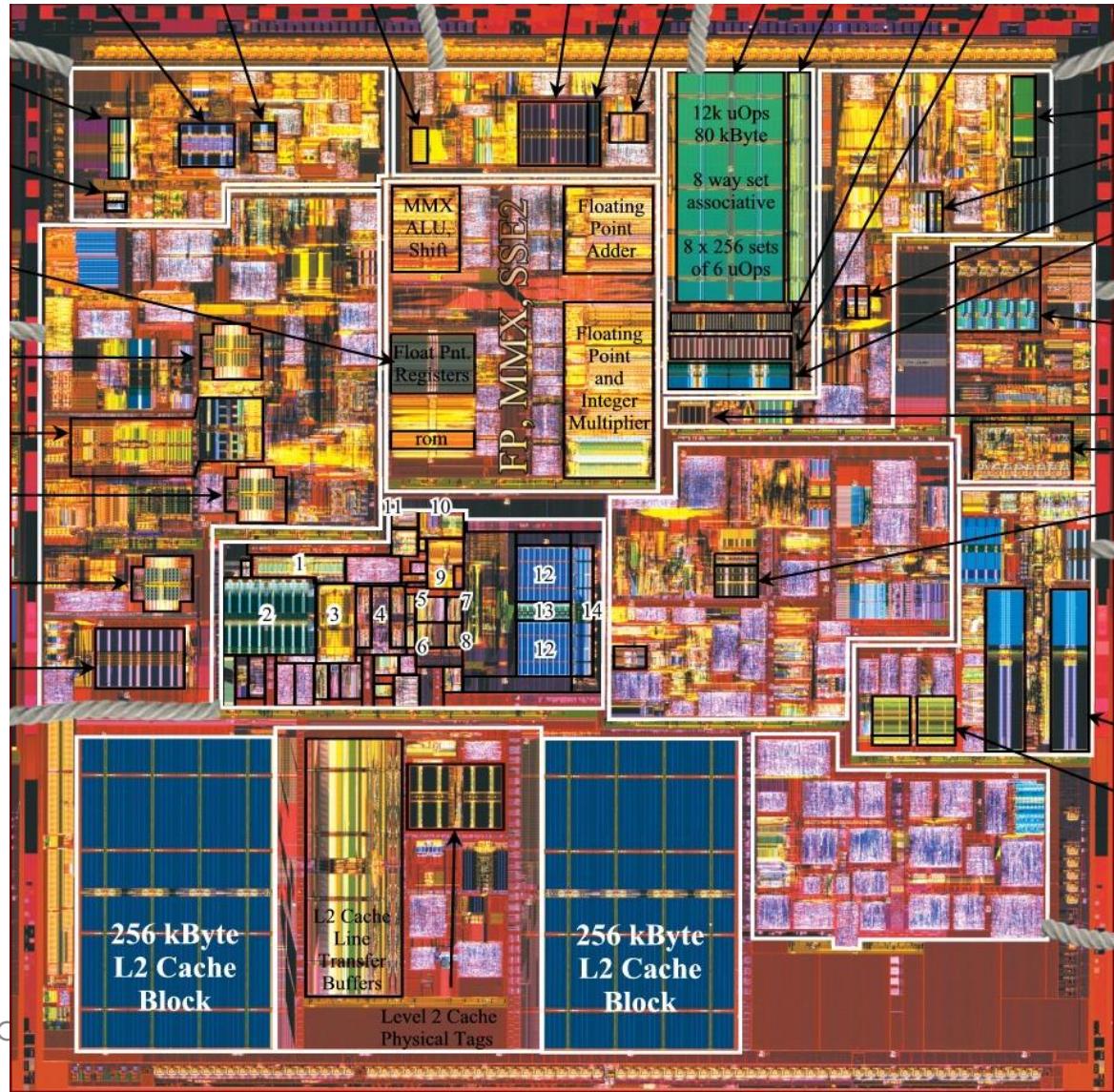
# Whose job to find parallelism?

Different processors take radically different approaches

- CPUs: Hardware dynamically schedules instructions
  - Expensive, complex hardware → Few cores (tens)
  - (Relatively) Easy to write fast software
- GPUs: Software makes parallelism explicit
  - Simple, cheap hardware → Many cores (thousands)
  - (Often) Hard to write fast software

# Visualizing these differences

- Pentium 4  
“Northwood” (2002)



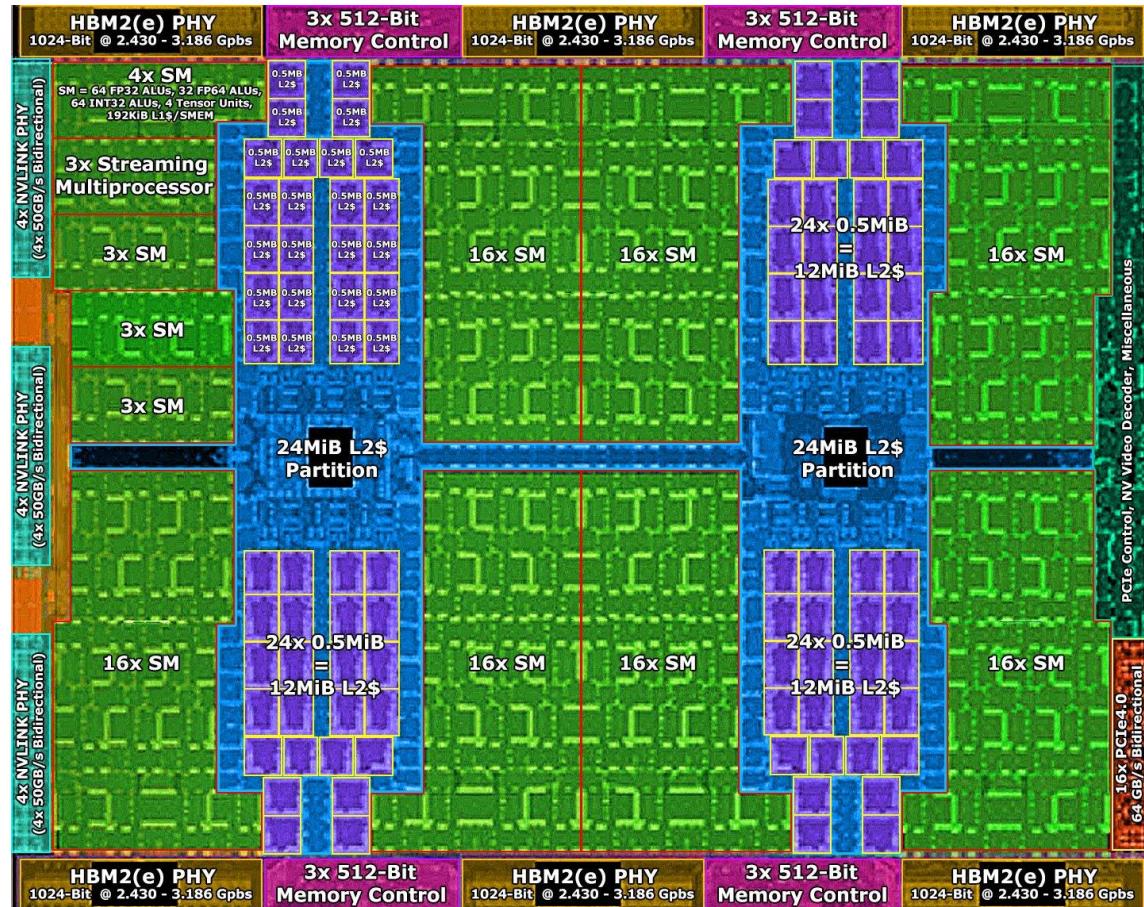
# Visualizing these differences

- Pentium 4  
“Northwood” (2002)
- Highlighted areas  
actually execute  
instructions
  - Most area spent  
on scheduling  
(not on executing the  
program)



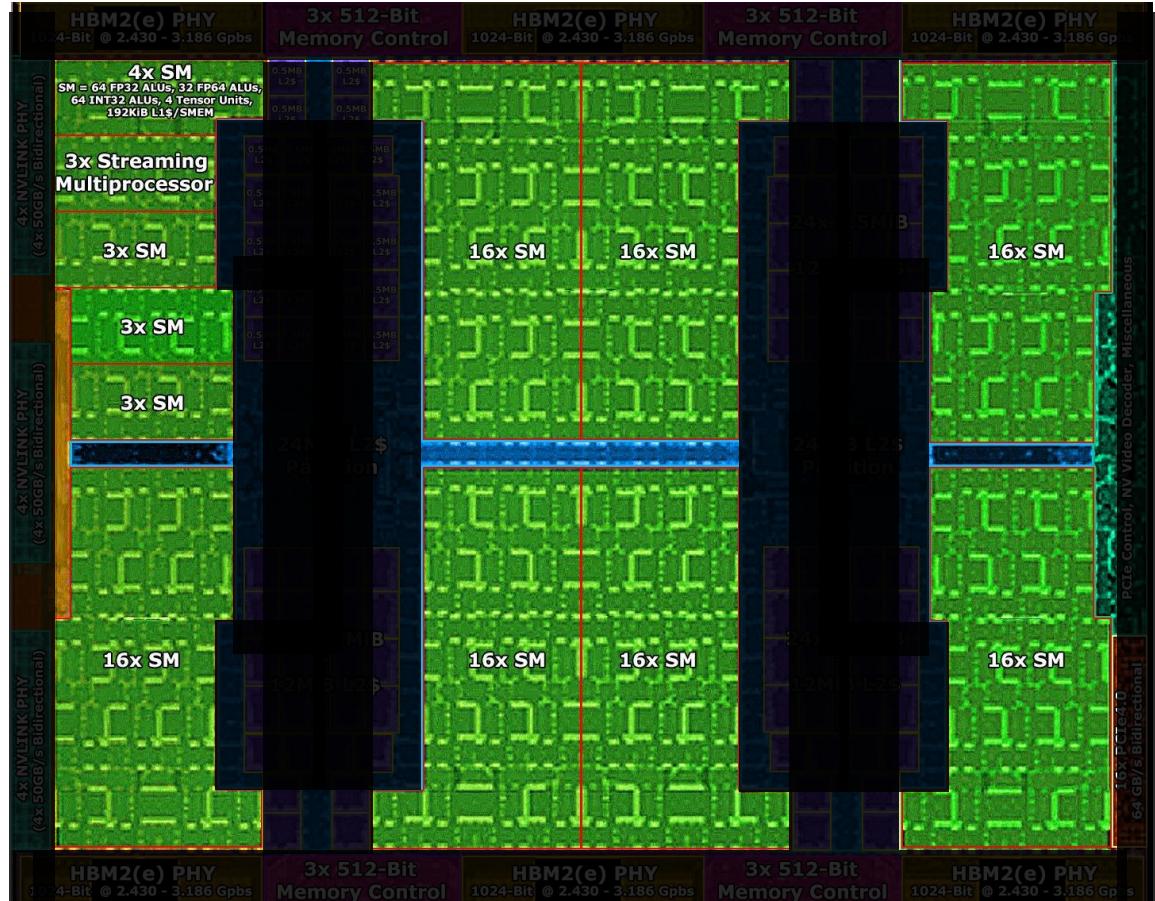
# Visualizing these differences

- NVIDIA H100  
(2022)



# Visualizing these differences

- NVIDIA H100 (2022)
- Highlighted areas actually execute instructions
  - Most area spent executing the program
    - (Rest is mostly I/O & memory, not scheduling)

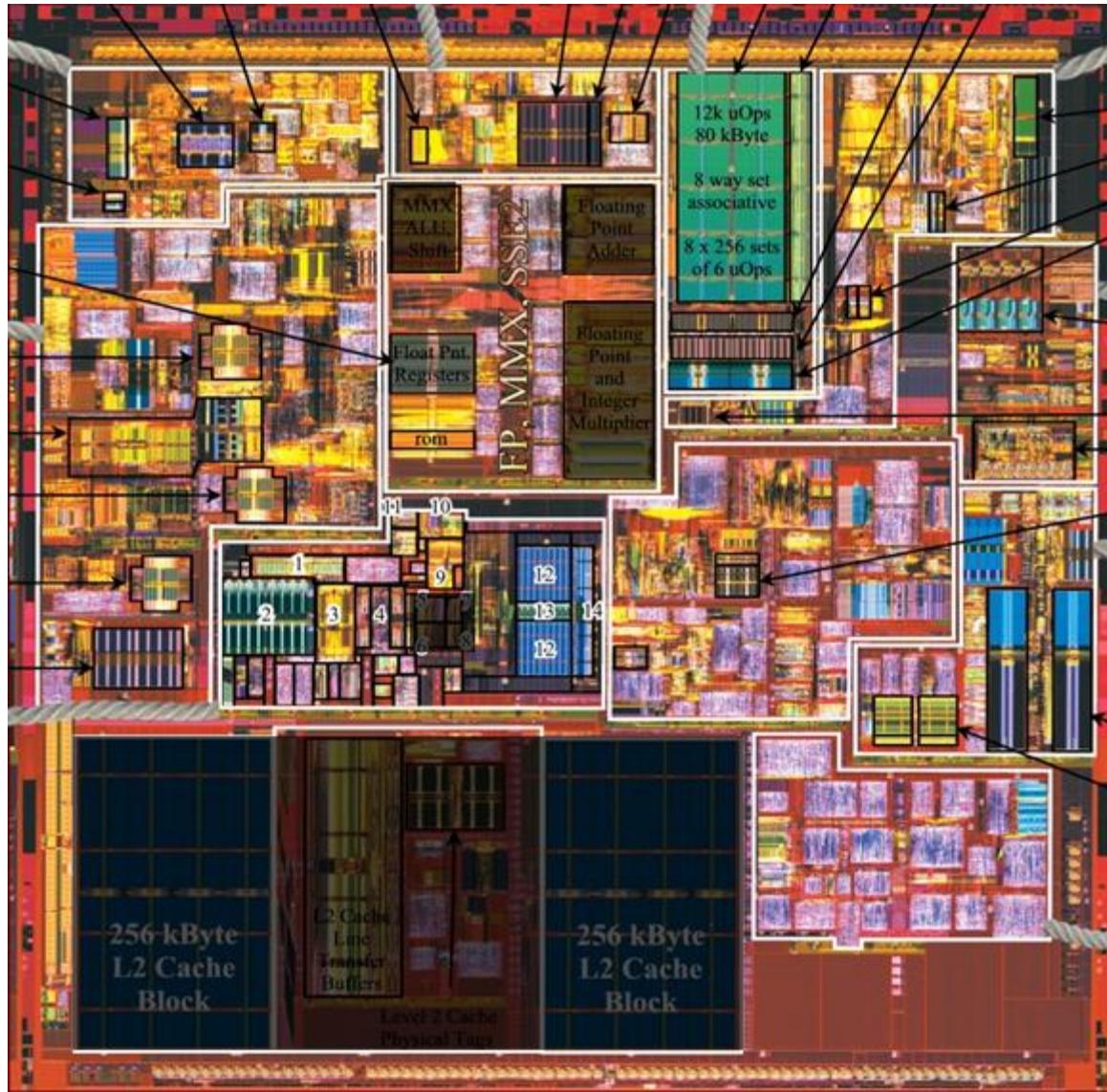


# Today you will learn...

## How CPUs exploit ILP to speed up sequential code

- Key ideas:
  - Pipelining & Superscalar: Work on multiple instructions at once
  - Out-of-order execution: Dynamically schedule instructions whenever they are “ready”
  - Speculation: Guess what the program will do next to discover more independent work, “rolling back” incorrect guesses
- CPUs must do all of this while preserving the illusion that instructions execute in-order, one-at-a-time

# In other words... Today is about:



**Buckle up!**

**...But please ask questions!**

# Example:

## Polynomial evaluation

```
int poly(int *coef,
         int terms, int x) {
    int power = 1;
    int value = 0;
    for (int j = 0; j < terms; j++) {
        value += coef[j] * power;
        power *= x;
    }
    return value;
}
```

# Example:

## Polynomial evaluation

- Compiling on ARM

```
int poly(int *coef,
          int terms, int x) {
    int power = 1;
    int value = 0;
    for (int j = 0; j < terms; j++) {
        value += coef[j] * power;
        power *= x;
    }
    return value;
}
```

r0: value
r1: &coef[terms]
r2: x
r3: &coef[j]
r4: power
r5: coef[j]

```
poly:
    cmp    r1, #0
    ble   .L4
    push   {r4, r5}
    mov    r3, r0
    add    r1, r0, r1, ls1 #2
    movs   r4, #1
    movs   r0, #0
.L3:
    ldr    r5, [r3], #4
    cmp    r1, r3
    mla    r0, r4, r5, r0
    mul    r4, r2, r4
    bne   .L3
    pop    {r4, r5}
    bx    lr
.L4:
    movs   r0, #0
    bx    lr
```

# Example: Polynomial evaluation

## ■ Compiling on ARM

```
int poly(int *coef,
         int terms, int x) {
    int power = 1;
    int value = 0;
    for (int j = 0; j < terms; j++) {
        value += coef[j] * power;
        power *= x;
    }
    return value;
}
```

r0: value  
r1: &coef[terms]  
r2: x  
r3: &coef[j]  
r4: power  
r5: coef[j]

poly:

cmp	r1, #0	Preamble
ble	.L4	
push	{r4, r5}	
mov	r3, r0	
add	r1, r0, r1, ls1 #2	
movs	r4, #1	
movs	r0, #0	

.L3:

ldr	r5, [r3], #4	Iteration
cmp	r1, r3	
mla	r0, r4, r5, r0	
mul	r4, r2, r4	
bne	.L3	

pop {r4, r5}

bx lr

.L4:

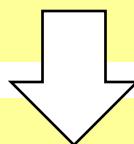
movs	r0, #0	Fini
bx	lr	

# Example: Polynomial evaluation

## ■ Compiling on ARM

r0: value
r1: &coef[terms]
r2: x
r3: &coef[j]
r4: power
r5: coef[j]

```
for (int j = 0; j < terms; j++) {  
    value += coef[j] * power;  
    power *= x;  
}
```



```
.L3:  
ldr    r5, [r3], #4      // r5 <- coef[j]; j++  (two operations)  
cmp    r1, r3            // compare: j < terms?  
mla    r0, r4, r5, r0    // value += r5 * power  (mul + add)  
mul    r4, r2, r4        // power *= x  
bne    .L3              // repeat?
```

# Example:

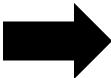
## Polynomial evaluation

- Executing poly(A, 3, x)

```
cmp      r1, #0
ble     .L4
push    {r4, r5}
mov     r3, r0
add     r1, r0, r1, lsl #2
movs   r4, #1
movs   r0, #0
ldr     r5, [r3], #4
cmp     r1, r3
mla     r0, r4, r5, r0
mul     r4, r2, r4
bne     .L3
...
...
```

# Example: Polynomial evaluation

- Executing `poly(A, 3, x)`



```
cmp      r1, #0
ble     .L4
push    {r4, r5}
mov     r3, r0
add     r1, r0, r1, ls1 #2
movs   r4, #1
movs   r0, #0

ldr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
m1a    r0, r4, r5, r0
mul     r4, r2, r4
bne     .L3
```

Preamble

J=0 iteration

...

# Example:

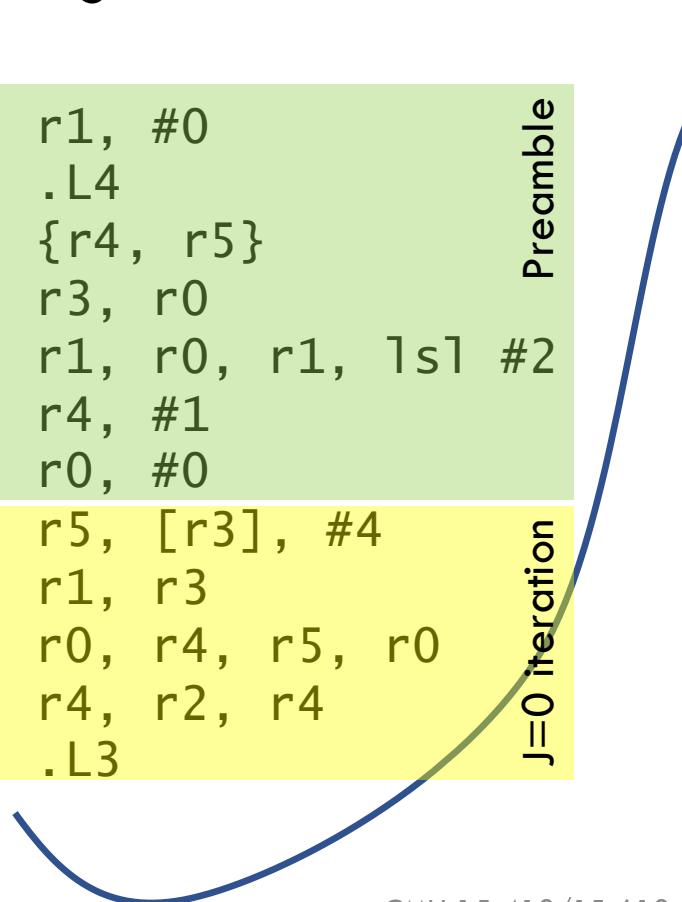
## Polynomial evaluation

- Executing `poly(A, 3, x)`

```
cmp      r1, #0  
b1e     .L4  
push    {r4, r5}  
mov      r3, r0  
add      r1, r0, r1, lsl #2  
movs    r4, #1  
movs    r0, #0  
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
m1a    r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3  
...  
...
```

Preamble

J=0 iteration



```
...  
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
m1a    r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3  
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
m1a    r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3  
pop    {r4, r5}  
bx      lr  
...
```

J=1 iteration

J=2 iteration

Fin

# Example: Polynomial evaluation

- Executing `poly(A, 3, x)`

```
cmp      r1, #0  
ble     .L4  
push    {r4, r5}  
mov      r3, r0  
add      r1, r0, r1, lsl #2  
movs    r4, #1  
movs    r0, #0  
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla     r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul     r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3  
...  
J=0 iteration
```

The diagram illustrates the execution flow of the assembly code. A large black arrow points from the 'Preamble' stage to the 'J=1 iteration' stage. Another curved blue arrow points from the 'J=1 iteration' stage down to the 'J=2 iteration' stage. Finally, another curved blue arrow points from the 'J=2 iteration' stage down to the 'Fin' stage.

```
...  
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla     r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul     r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3  
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla     r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul     r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3  
pop    {r4, r5}  
bx      lr  
J=1 iteration  
J=2 iteration  
Fin
```

# The software-hardware boundary

- The *instruction set architecture (ISA)* is a functional contract between hardware and software
  - It says **what** each instruction does, but not **how**
  - Example: Ordered sequence of x86 instructions
- A processor's *microarchitecture* is how the ISA is implemented

Arch :  $\mu$ Arch :: Interface : Implementation

# Simple CPU model

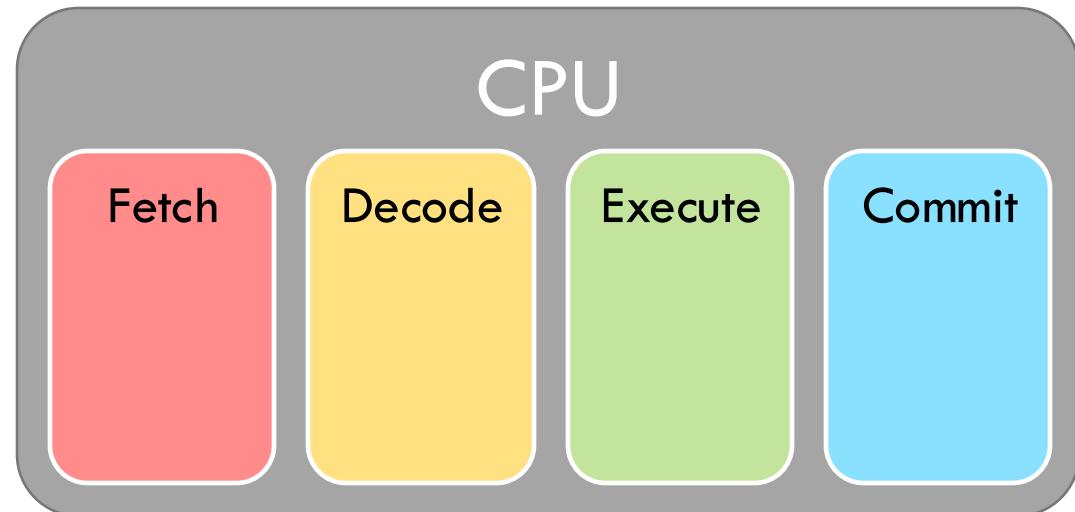
- Execute instructions in program order
- Divide instruction execution into stages, e.g.:
  - 1. Fetch – get the next instruction from memory
  - 2. Decode – figure out what to do & read inputs
  - 3. Execute – perform the necessary operations
  - 4. Commit – write the results back to registers / memory
- (Real processors have many more stages)

# Evaluating polynomial on the simple CPU model



```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```



...

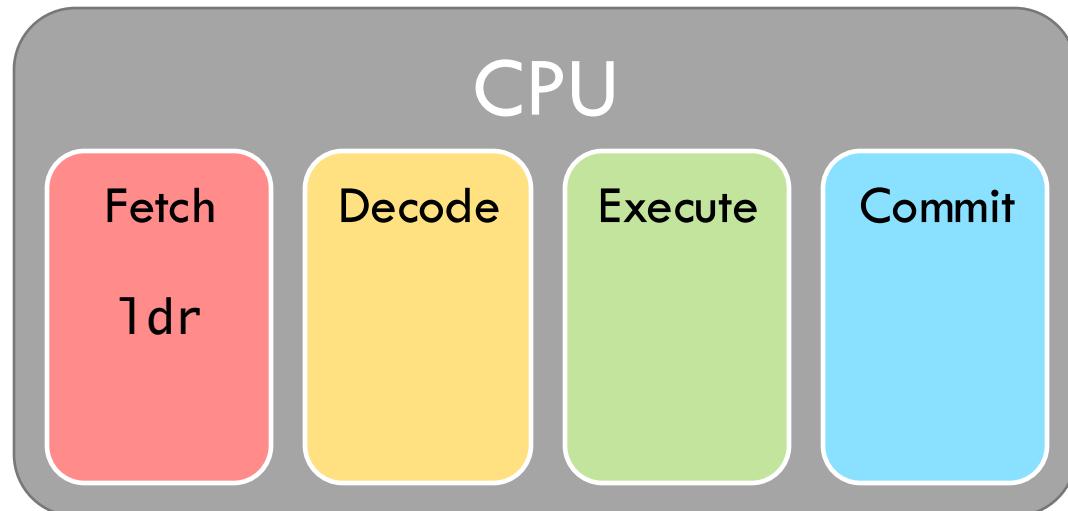
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```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

...



1. Read “`ldr r5, [r3] #4`  
from memory

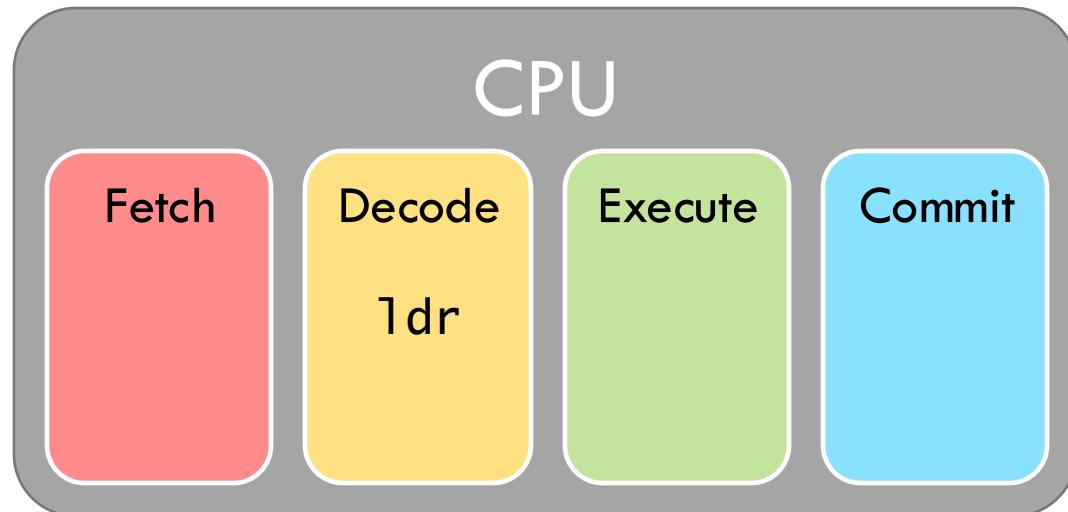
# Evaluating polynomial on the simple CPU model



```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

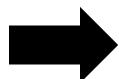
```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

...



**2. Decode “ldr r5, [r3] #4”  
and read input regs**

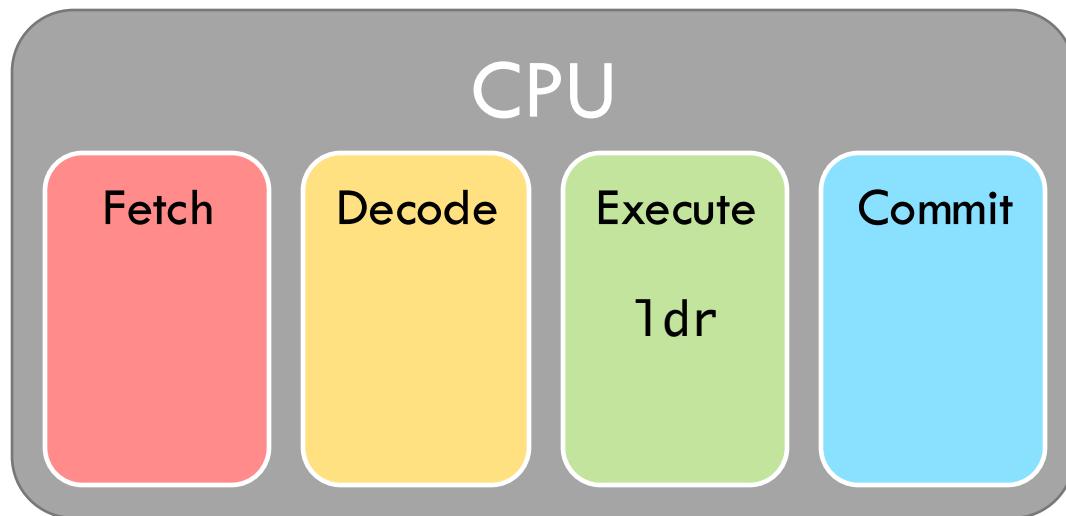
# Evaluating polynomial on the simple CPU model



```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

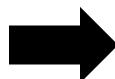
```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

...



**3. Load memory at r3 and compute  $r3 + 4$**

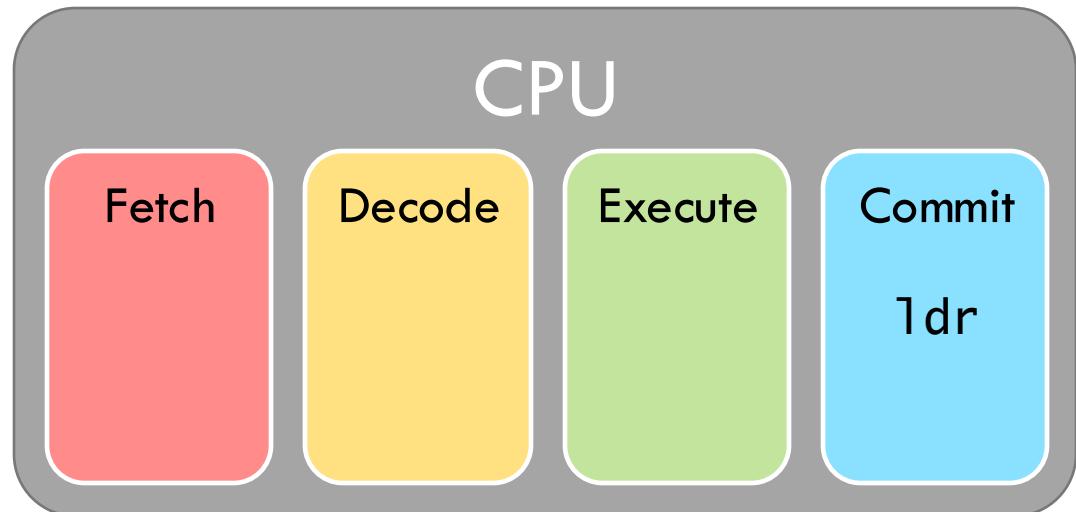
# Evaluating polynomial on the simple CPU model



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ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
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mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
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```

```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
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mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

...



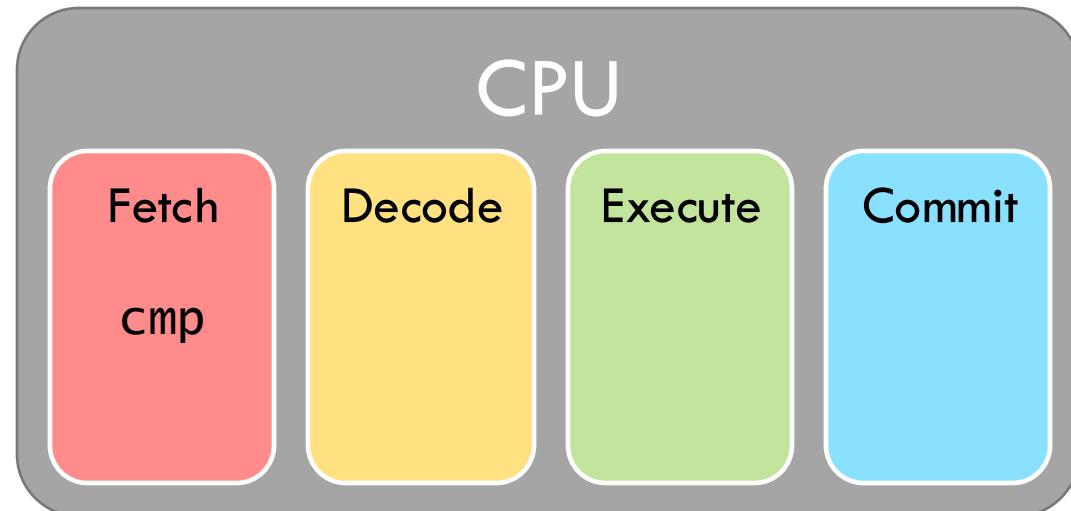
4. Write values  
into regs r5 and r3

# Evaluating polynomial on the simple CPU model



```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```

```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
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mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```



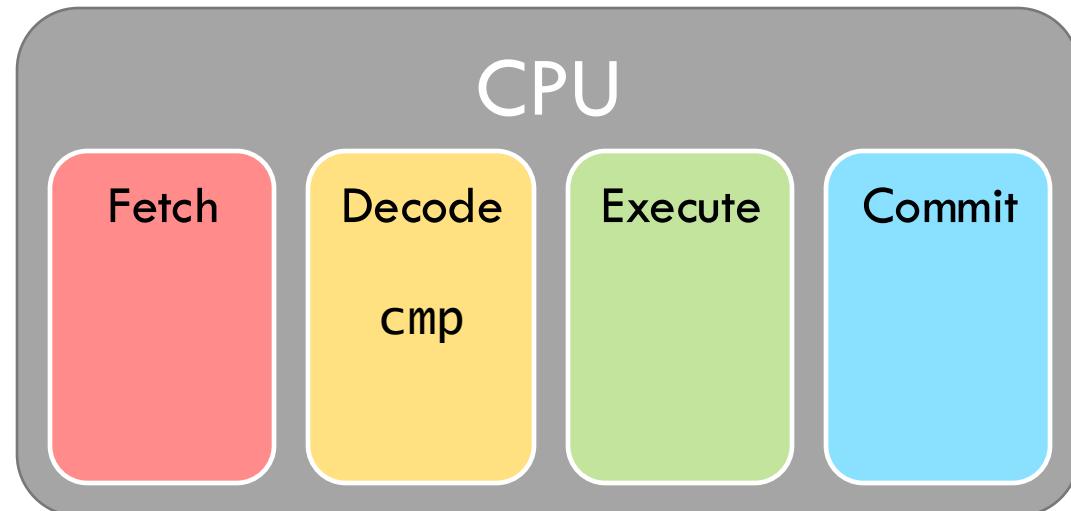
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mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
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bne     .L3
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ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
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mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne     .L3
```



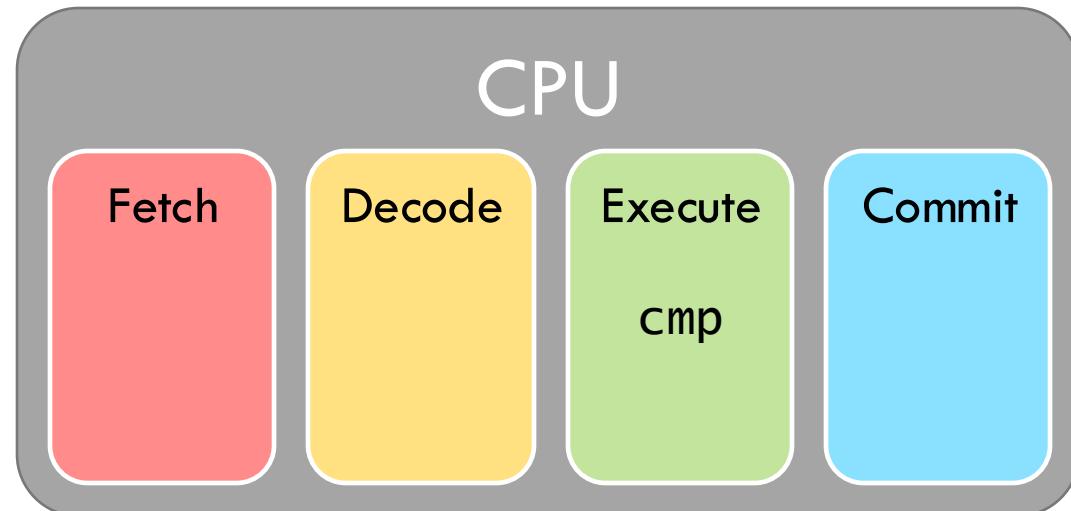
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# Evaluating polynomial on the simple CPU model



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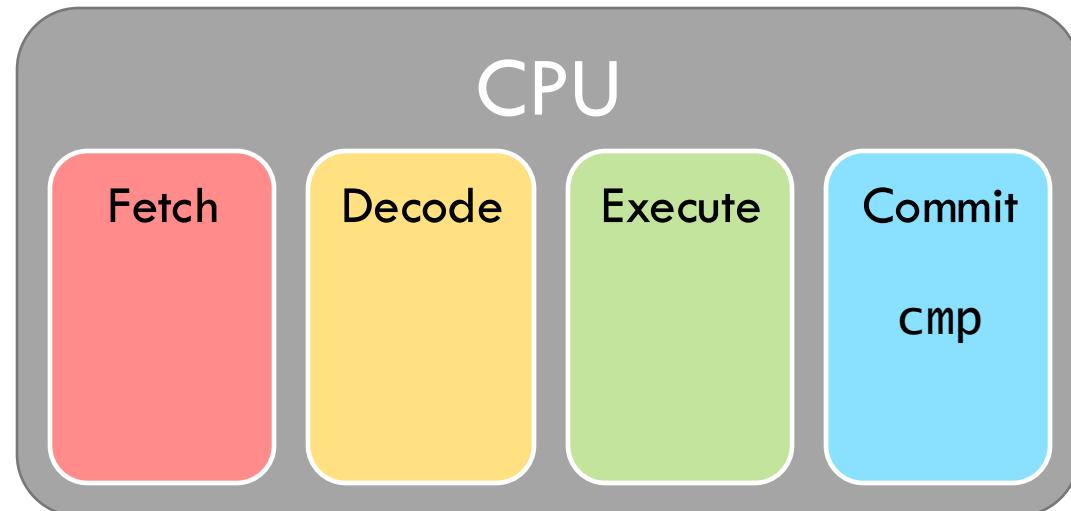
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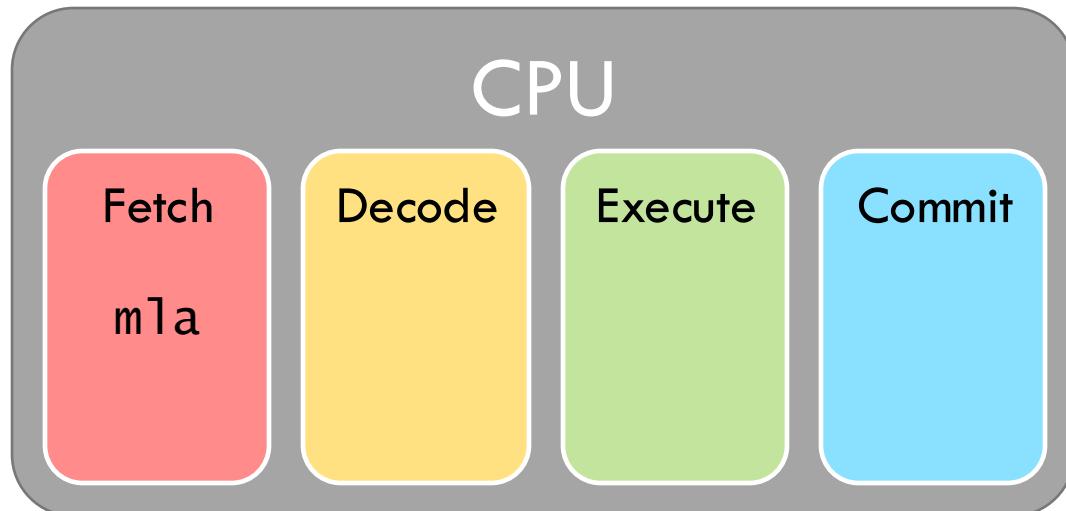
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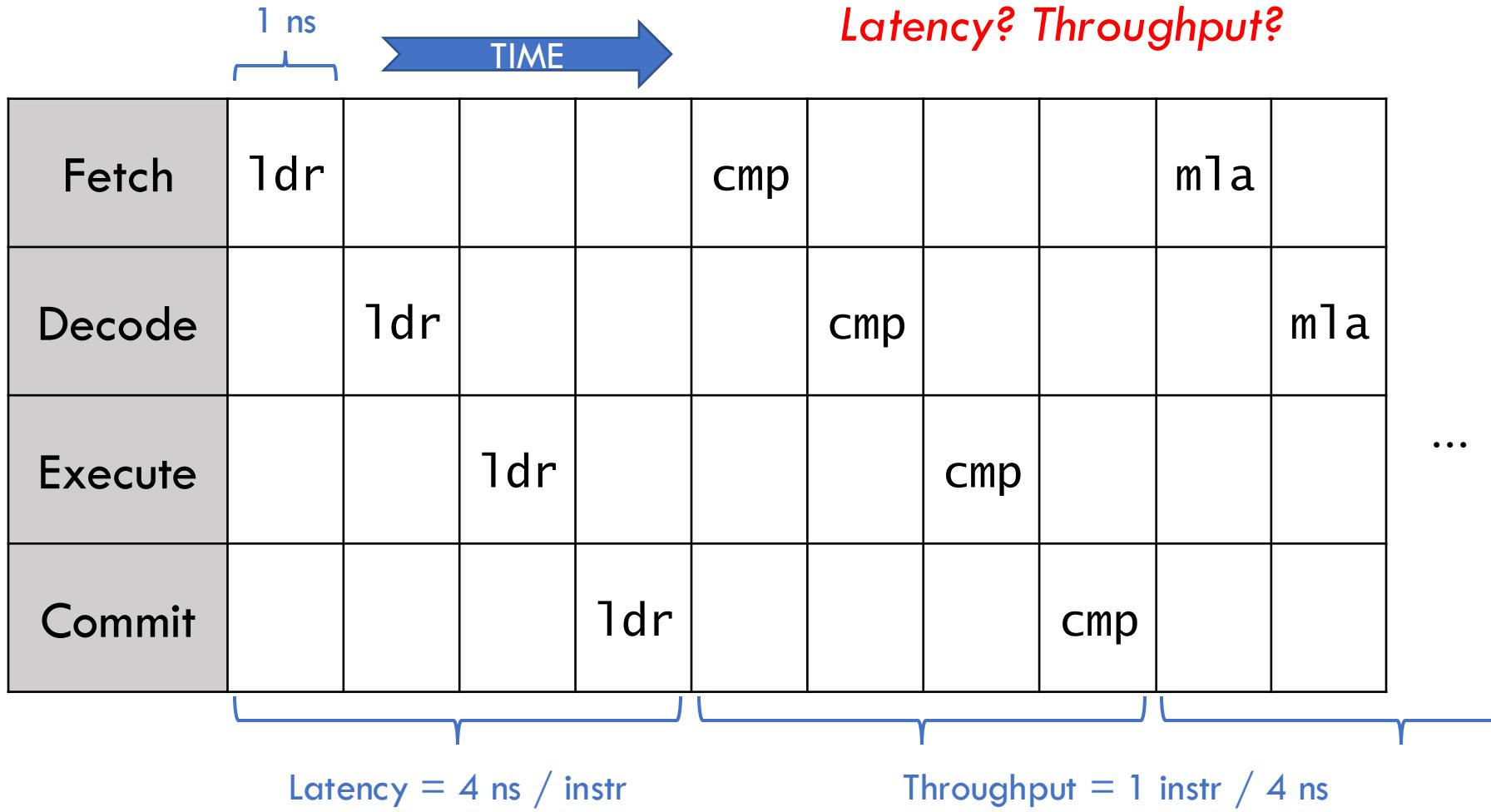
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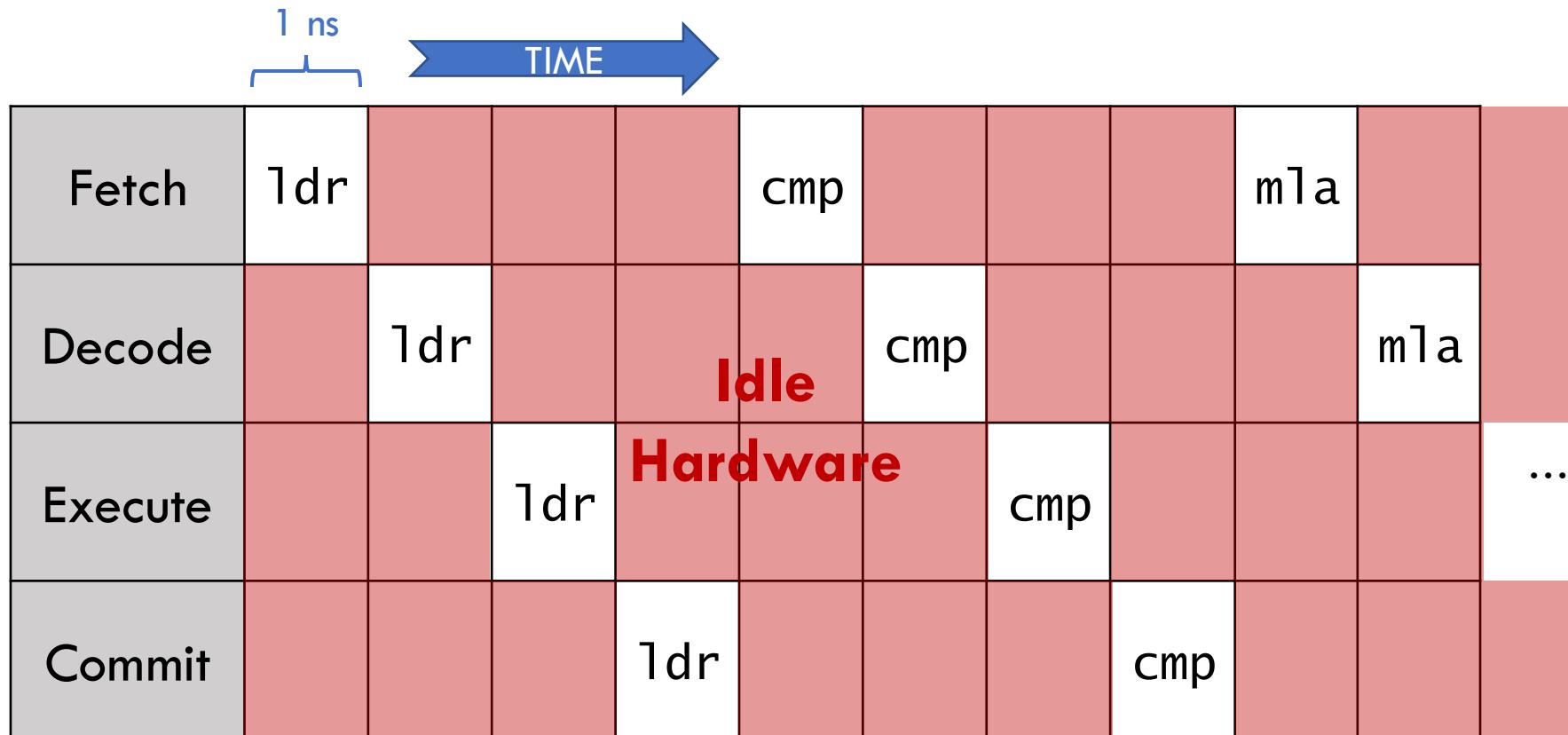


# Evaluating polynomial on the simple CPU model

*How fast is this processor?  
Latency? Throughput?*



# Simple CPU is very wasteful



# Pipelining

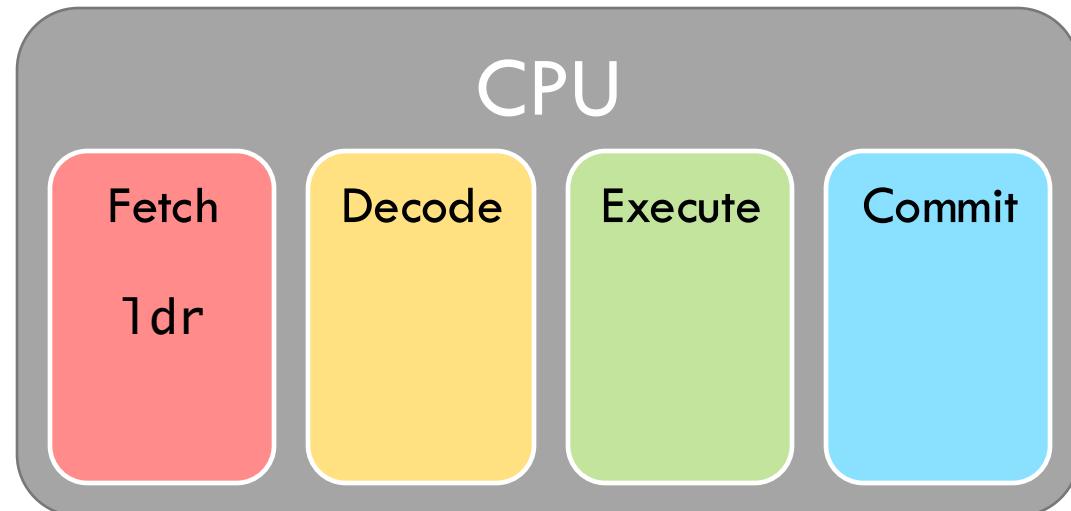
# Pipelining keeps CPU busy through instruction-level parallelism

- Idea: Start on the next instr'n immediately



```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne      .L3
```

```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
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mul      r4, r2, r4  
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```



...

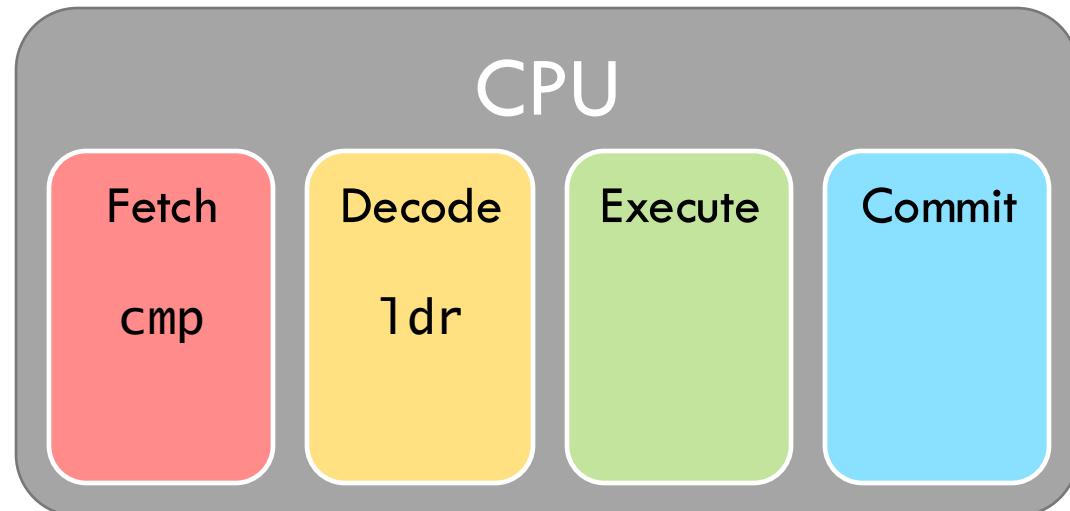
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```



...

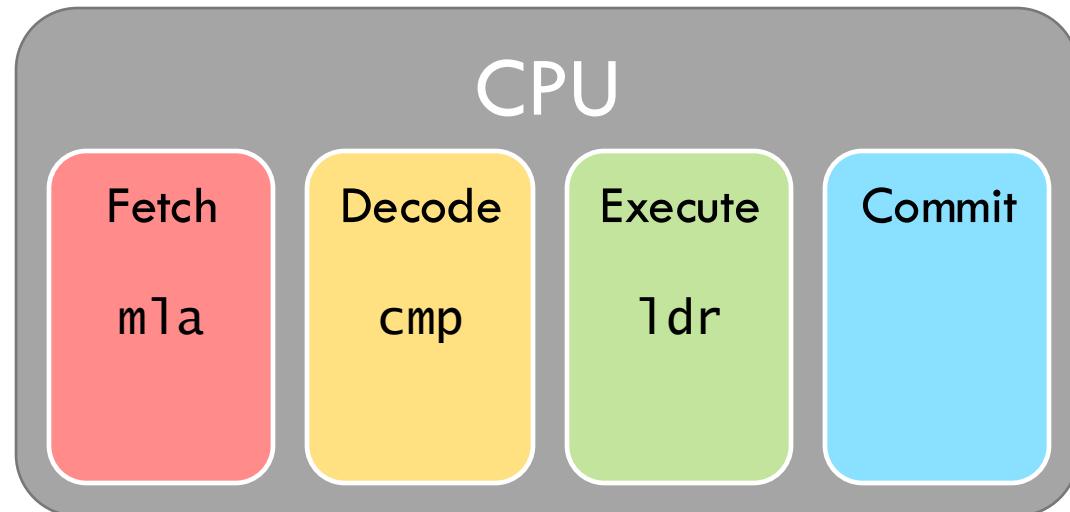
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...

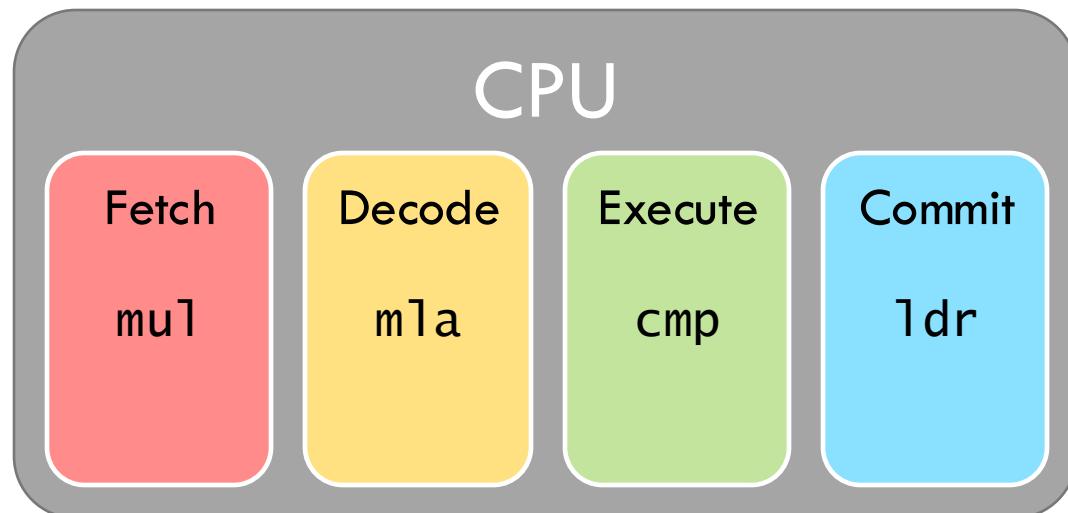
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bne .L3

ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
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mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3

...

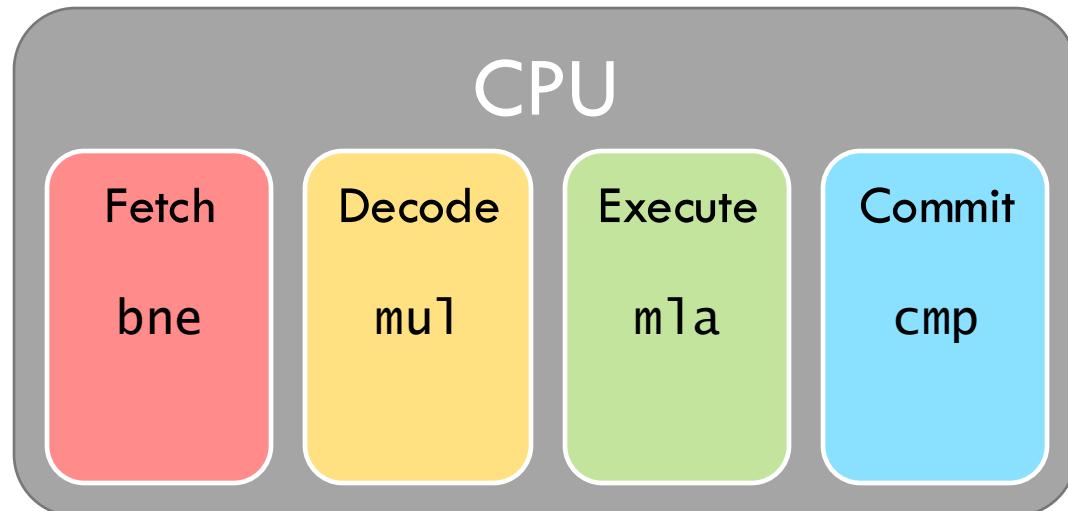


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- Idea: Start on the next instr'n immediately

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cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3

ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
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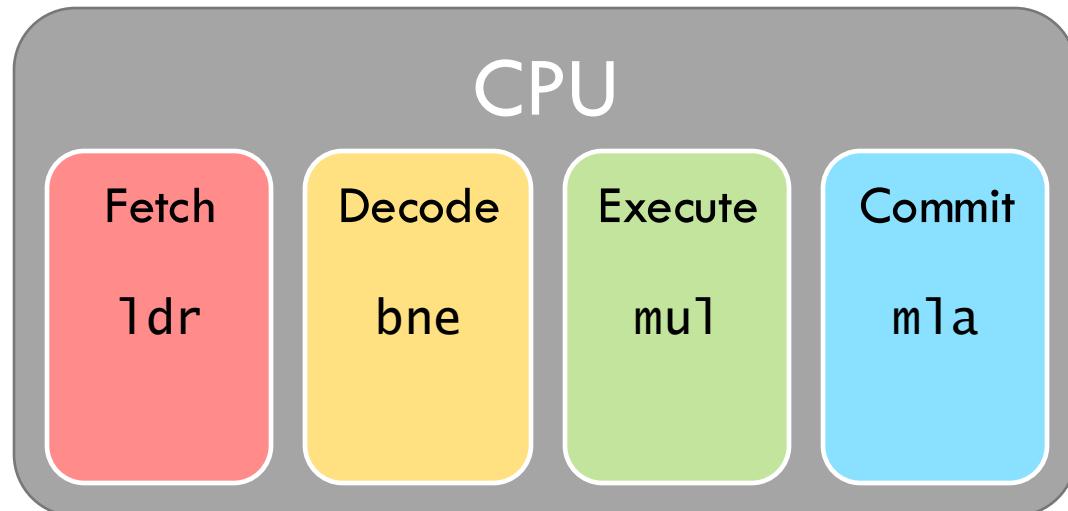
...

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bne      .L3
```

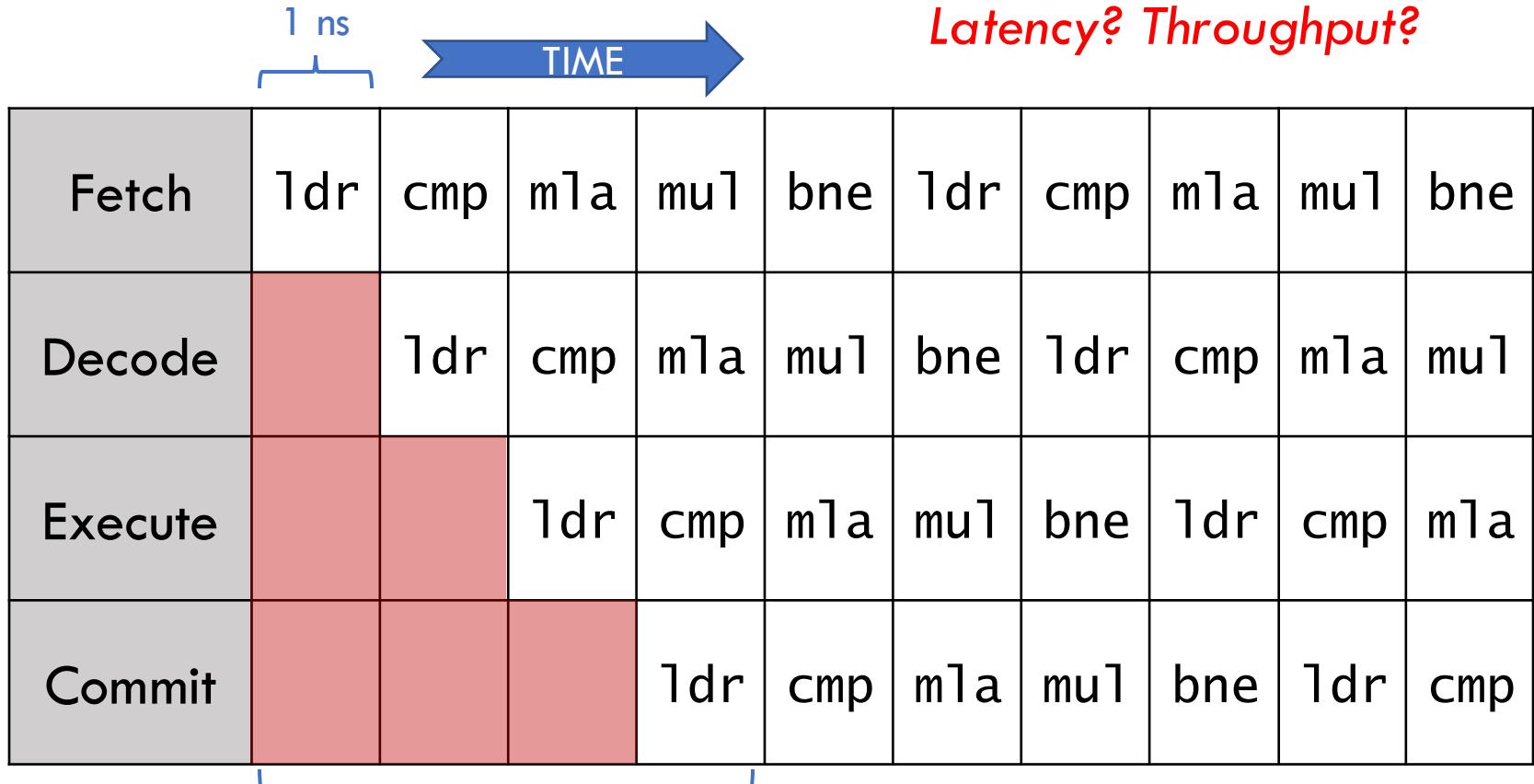
```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne      .L3
```



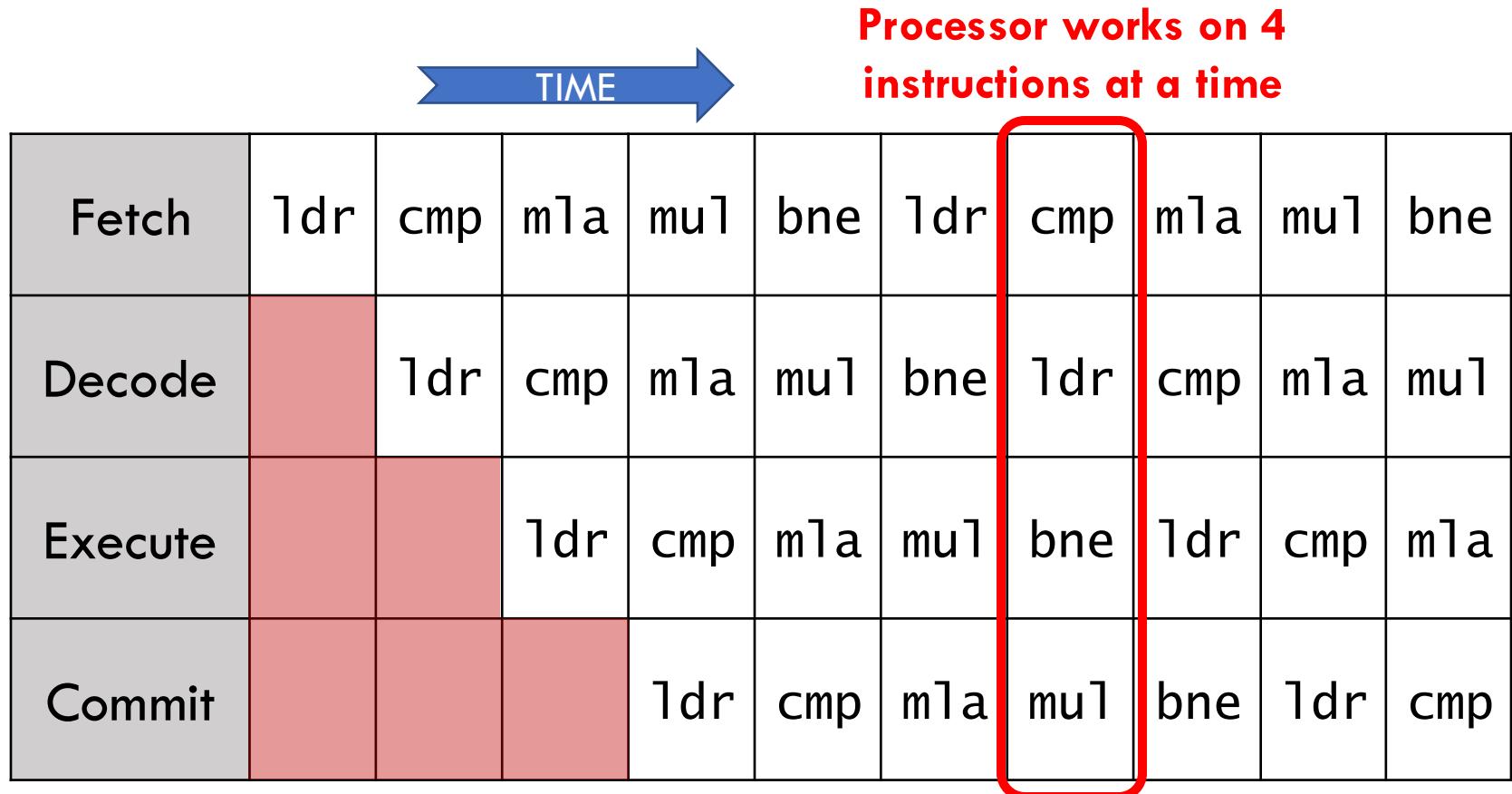
...

# Evaluating polynomial on the pipelined CPU

*How fast is this processor?  
Latency? Throughput?*



# Speedup achieved through pipeline parallelism



# Limitations of pipelining

- Parallelism requires independent work
- Q: Are instructions independent?
- A: No! Many possible *hazards* limit parallelism...

# Data hazards

```
ldr ra, [rb], #4 // ra ← Memory[rb]; rb ← rb + 4  
cmp rc, rd      // rc ← rd == re
```

Q: When can the CPU pipeline the cmp behind ldr?

Fetch	ldr	cmp	...	...	...	...
Decode		ldr	cmp	...	...	...
Execute			ldr	cmp	...	...
Commit				ldr	cmp	...

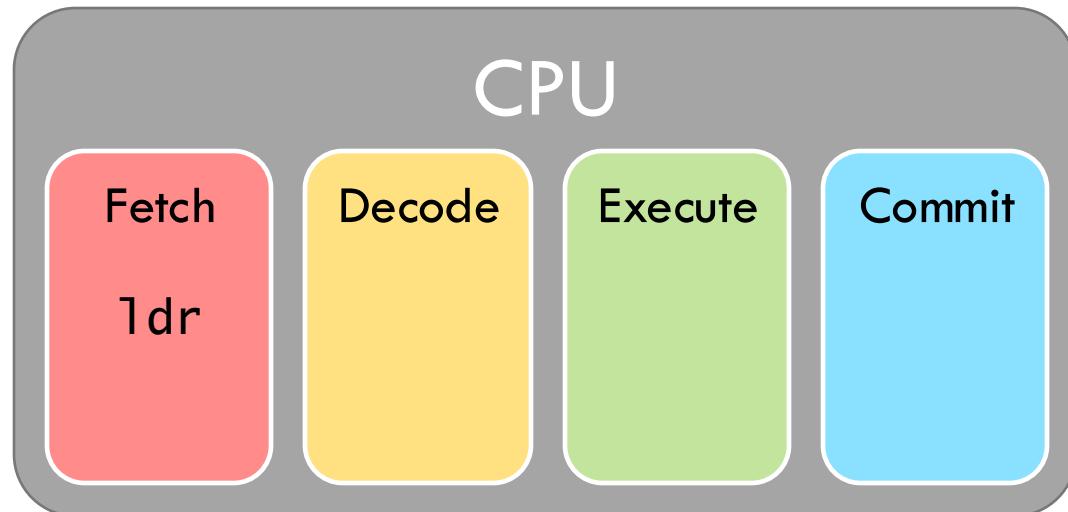
- A: When they use **different registers**
  - Specifically, when cmp does not read any data written by ldr
  - E.g.,  $rb \neq rd$

# Dealing with data hazards: Stalling the pipeline

- Cannot pipeline cmp (ldr writes r3)

→  
ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3

ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3



...

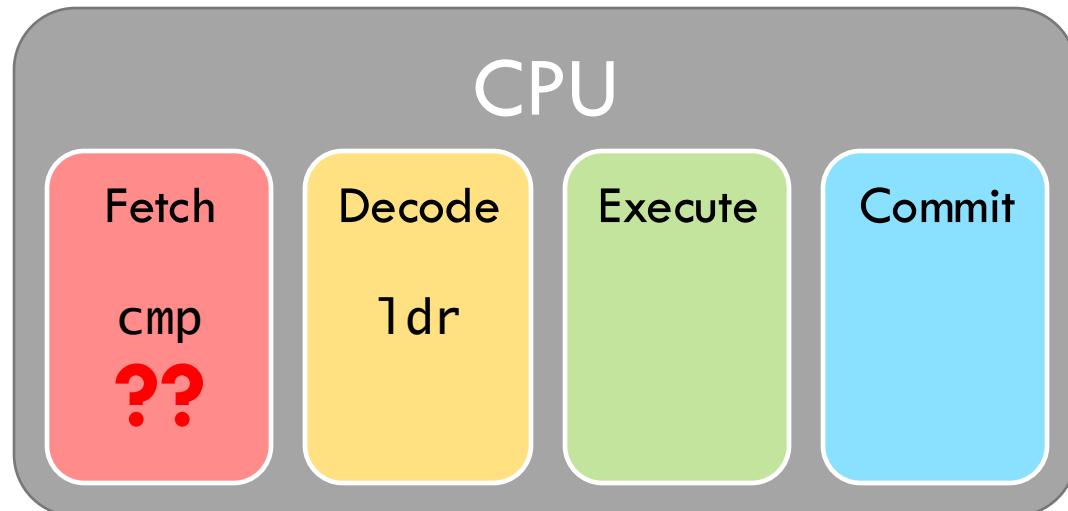
# Dealing with data hazards: Stalling the pipeline

- Cannot pipeline cmp (ldr writes r3)

ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3

ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3

...

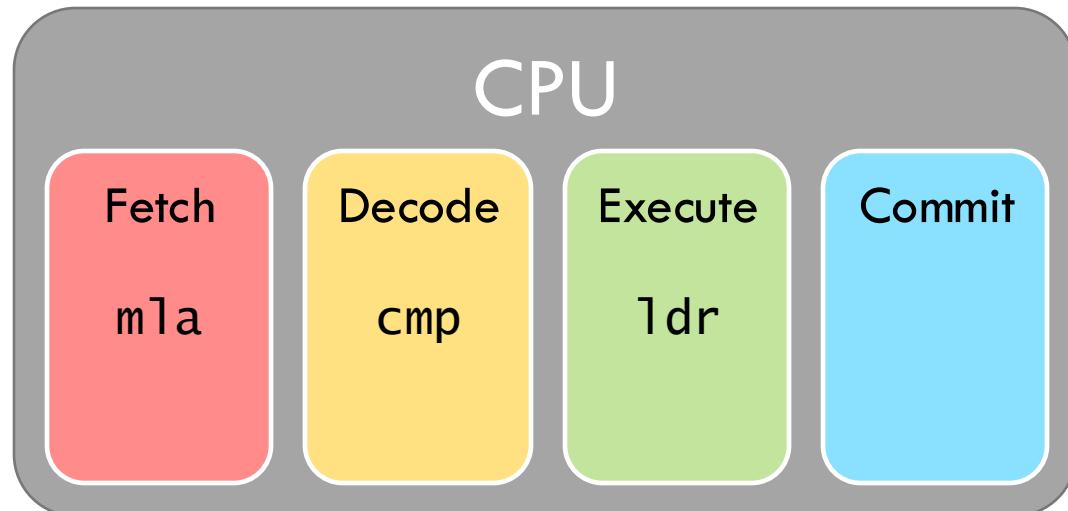


# Dealing with data hazards: Stalling the pipeline

- Cannot pipeline cmp (ldr writes r3)

→ ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3

ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3



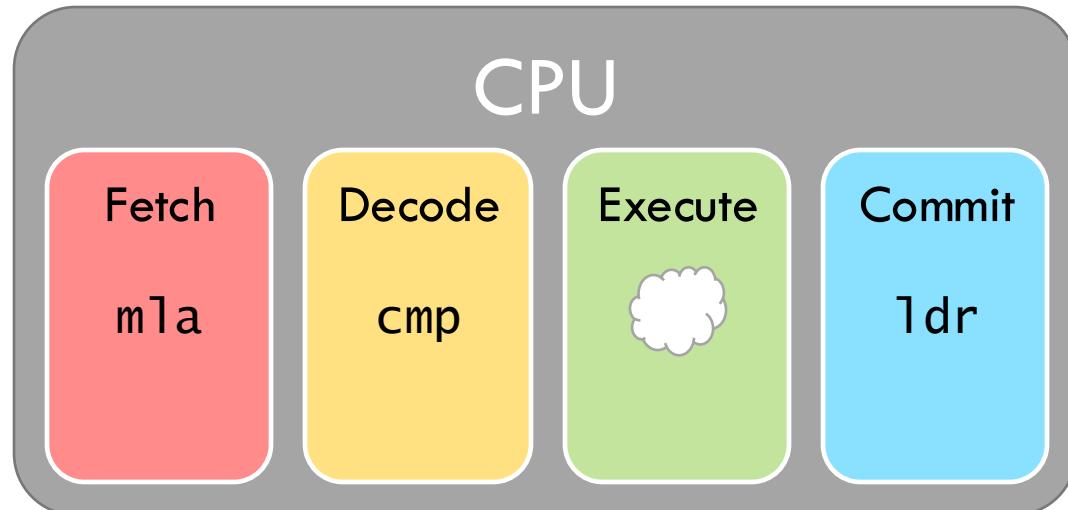
...

# Dealing with data hazards: Stalling the pipeline

- Cannot pipeline cmp (ldr writes r3)

→ ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3

ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3



...

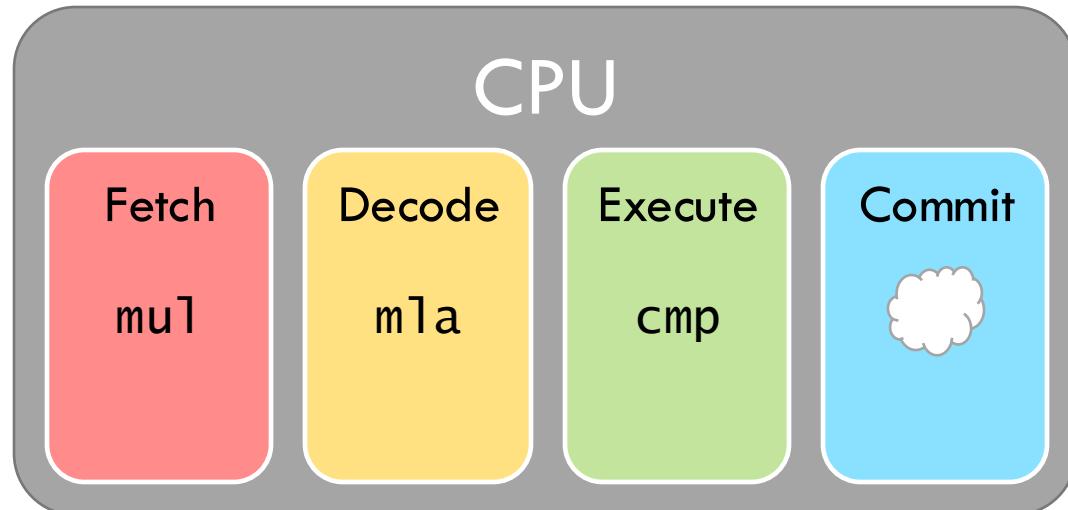
# Dealing with data hazards: Stalling the pipeline

- Cannot pipeline cmp (ldr writes r3)

ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3



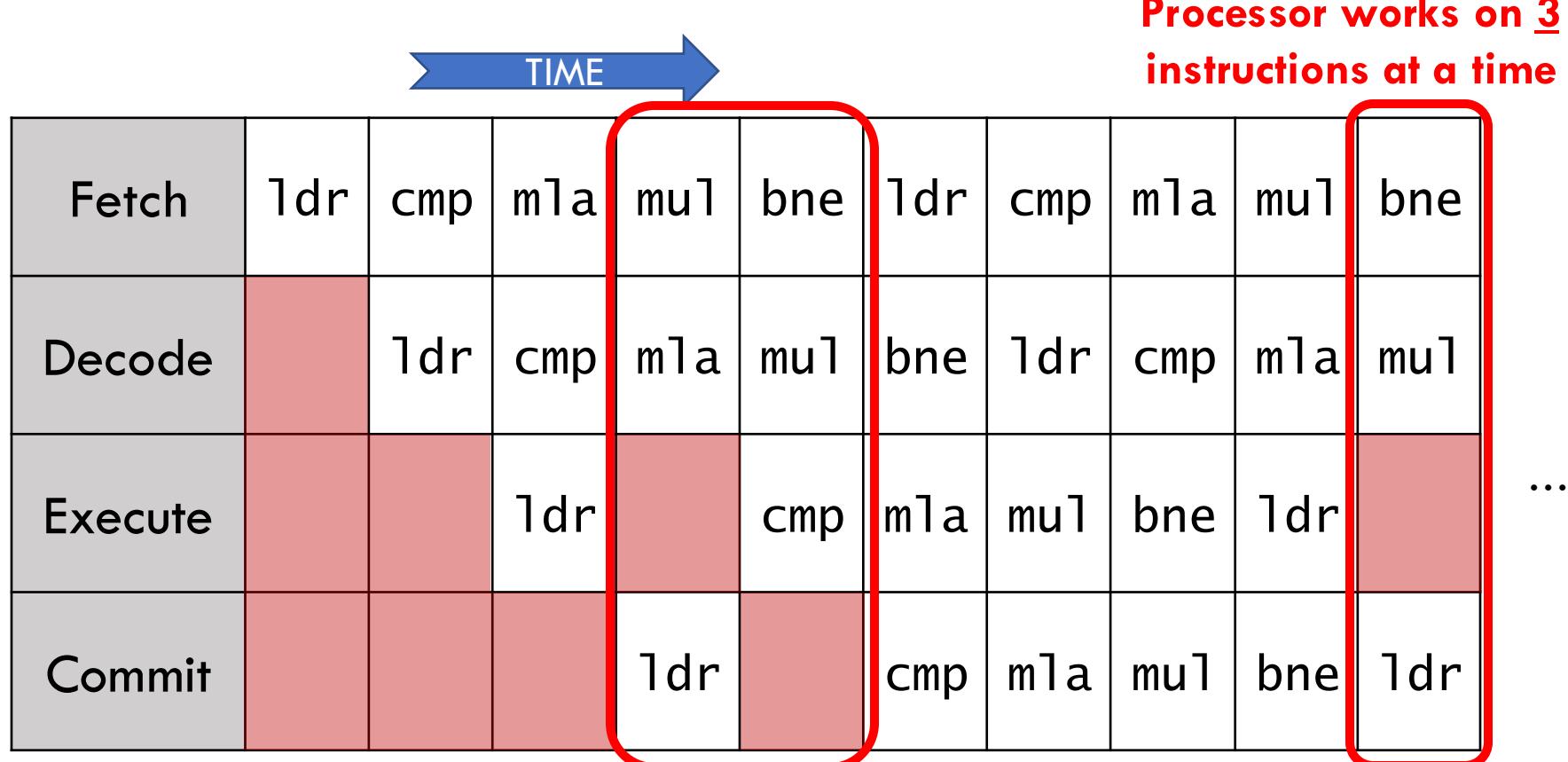
ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3



**cmp proceeds once ldr  
has committed**

...

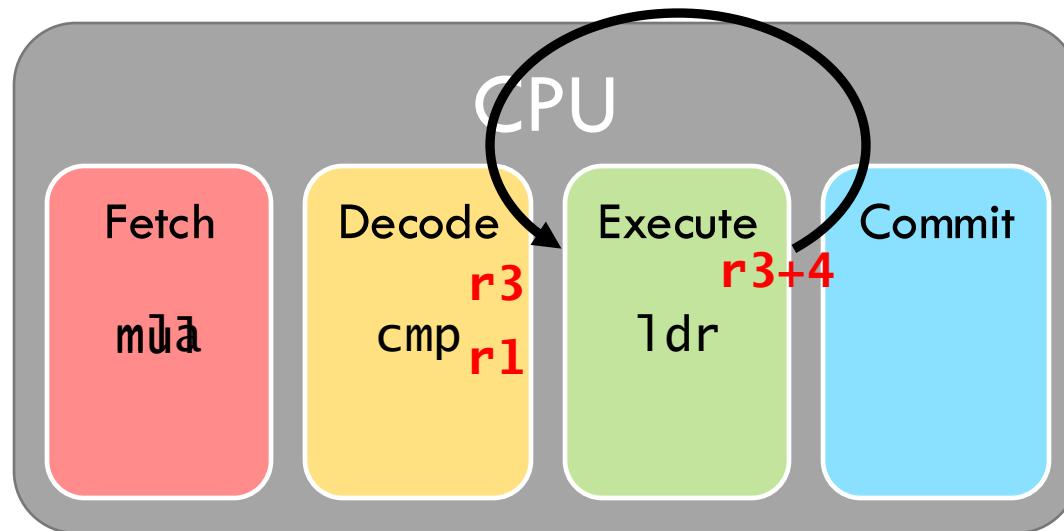
# Stalling degrades performance



- But stalling is sometimes unavoidable
  - E.g., long-latency instructions (divide, cache miss)

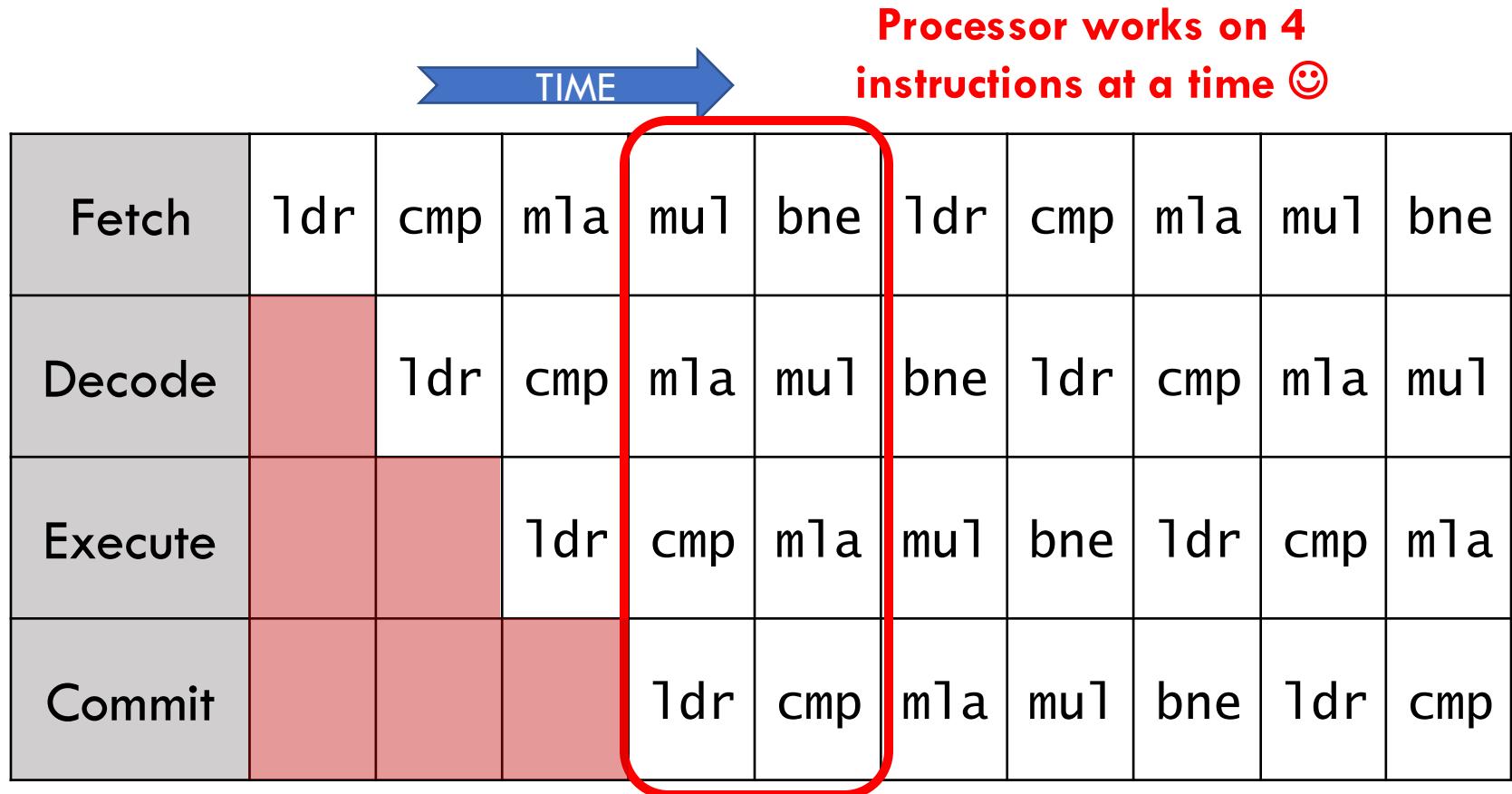
# Dealing with data hazards: Forwarding data

- Wait a second... data is available after Execute!



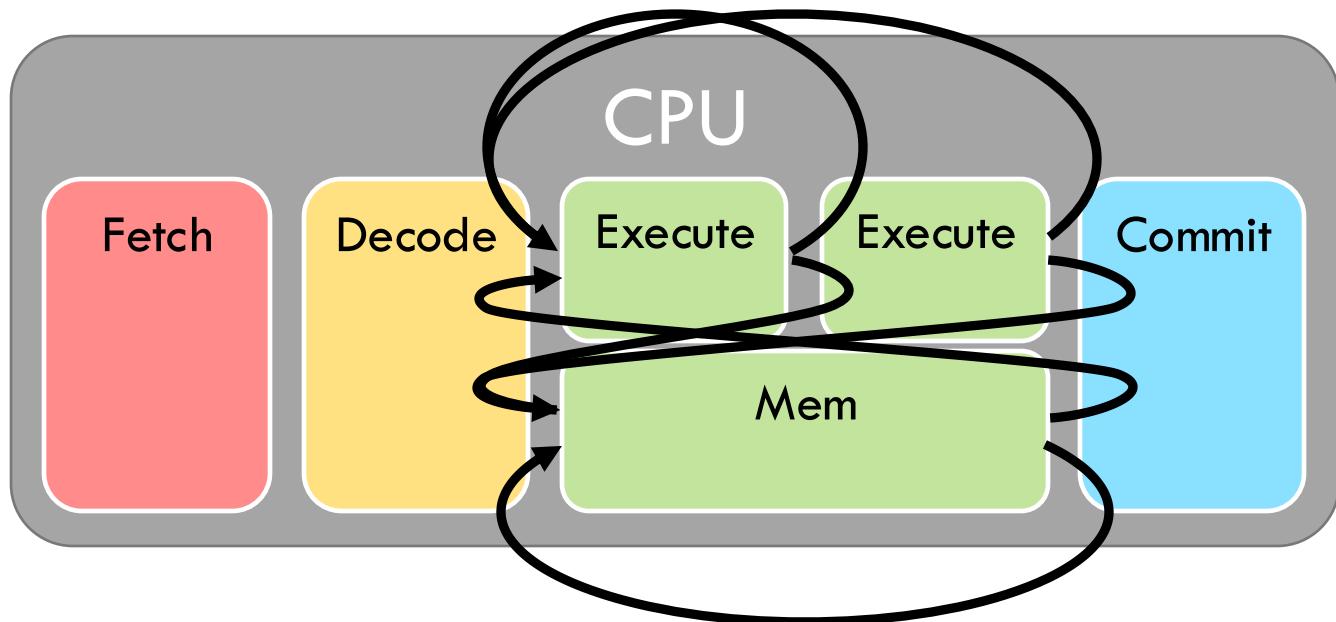
- Forwarding eliminates many (not all) pipeline stalls

# Speedup achieved through pipeline parallelism



# Pipelining is not free!

- Q: How well does forwarding scale?
- A: Not well... many forwarding paths in deep & complex pipelines



# Control hazards + Speculation

- Programs must appear to execute *in program order*  
→ All instructions depend on earlier ones
- Most instructions implicitly continue at the next...
- But **branches** redirect execution to new location

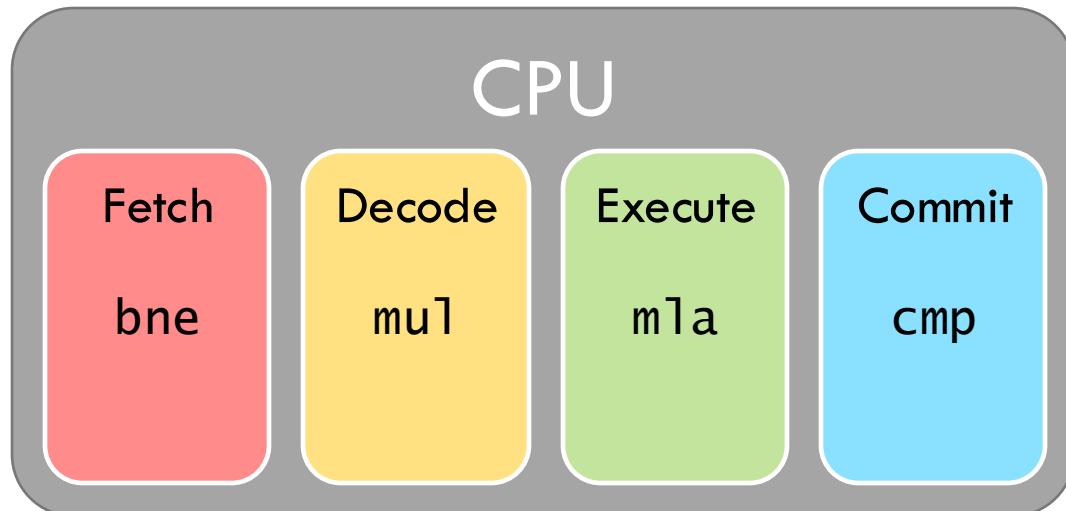
# Dealing with control hazards: Flushing the pipeline

- What if we always fetch the next instruction?

The diagram illustrates a static instruction sequence and its execution in a CPU pipeline. On the left, a vertical stack of colored arrows (blue, green, yellow, red) points downwards, indicating the flow of instructions. Below this stack is a list of instructions:

ldr	r5, [r3], #4
cmp	r1, r3
mla	r0, r4, r5, r0
mul	r4, r2, r4
bne	.L3
pop	{r4, r5}
bx	lr

Static instruction sequence  
(i.e., program layout in memory)

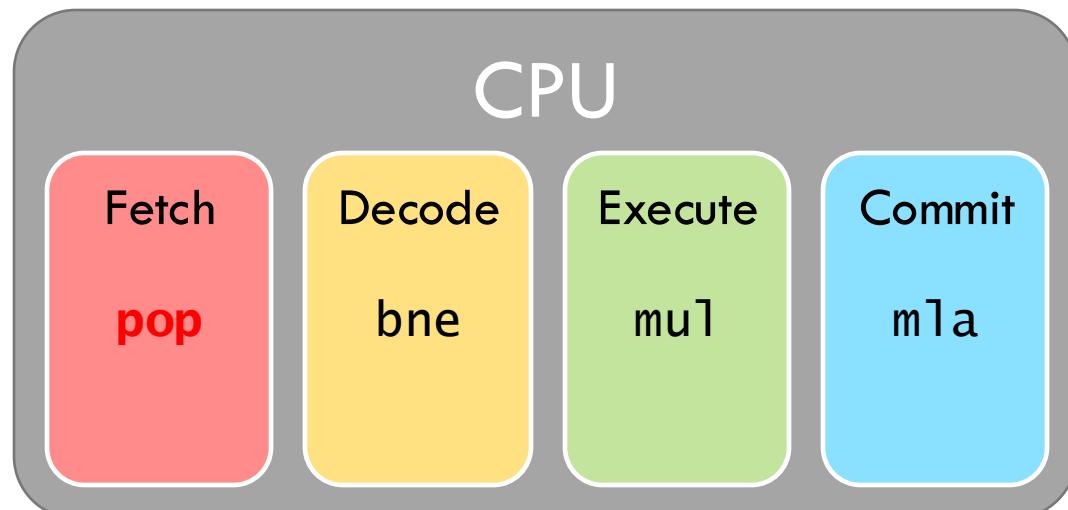


# Dealing with control hazards: Flushing the pipeline

- What if we always fetch the next instruction?

The diagram illustrates a static instruction sequence and its execution in a pipeline. On the left, a vertical list of instructions is shown, each with a colored arrow pointing to it. The first five instructions (ldr, cmp, mla, mul, bne) have blue arrows and are grouped in a yellow box. The last two instructions (pop, bx) have red arrows and are grouped in a red box. An arrow points from the bottom of the red box to the text "Static instruction sequence (i.e., program layout in memory)".

ldr	r5, [r3], #4
cmp	r1, r3
mla	r0, r4, r5, r0
mul	r4, r2, r4
bne	.L3
pop	{r4, r5}
bx	lr



Static instruction sequence  
(i.e., program layout in memory)

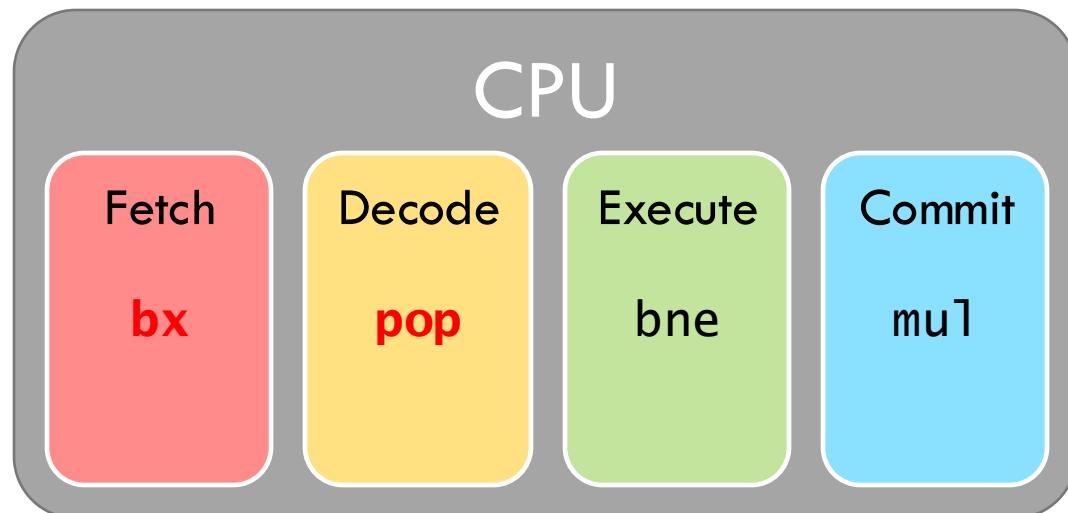
# Dealing with control hazards: Flushing the pipeline

- What if we always fetch the next instruction?

The diagram illustrates a static instruction sequence and a CPU pipeline. On the left, a vertical list of instructions is shown, each preceded by a colored arrow pointing right:

- ldr r5, [r3], #4 (blue arrow)
- cmp r1, r3 (green arrow)
- mla r0, r4, r5, r0 (yellow arrow)
- mul r4, r2, r4 (orange arrow)
- bne .L3 (red arrow)
- pop {r4, r5} (purple arrow)
- bx lr (pink arrow)

An arrow points from the bottom of the sequence to the text: Static instruction sequence (i.e., program layout in memory).



**Whoops! We fetched the  
wrong instructions!  
(Loop not finished)**

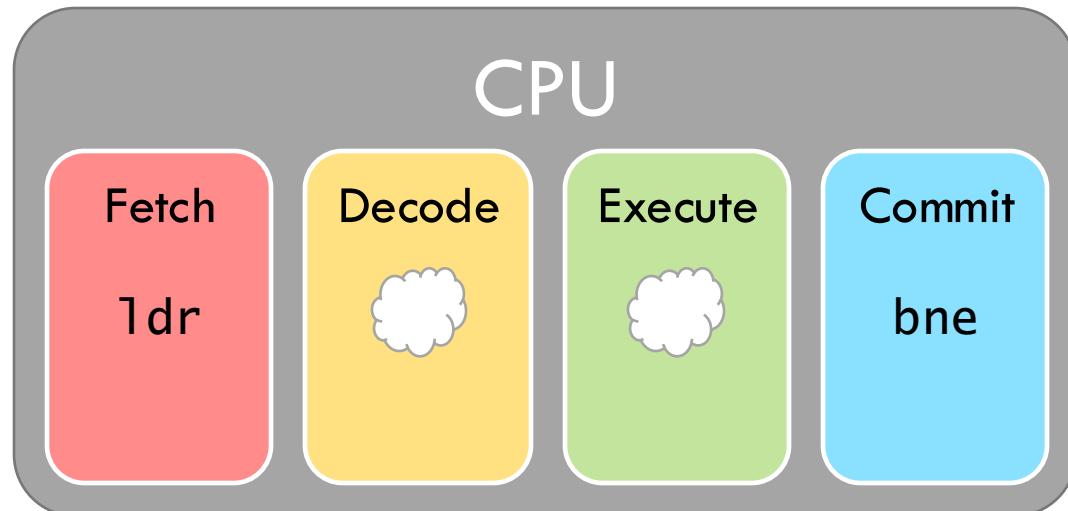
# Dealing with control hazards: Flushing the pipeline

(Next loop iteration)

- What if we always fetch the next instruction?

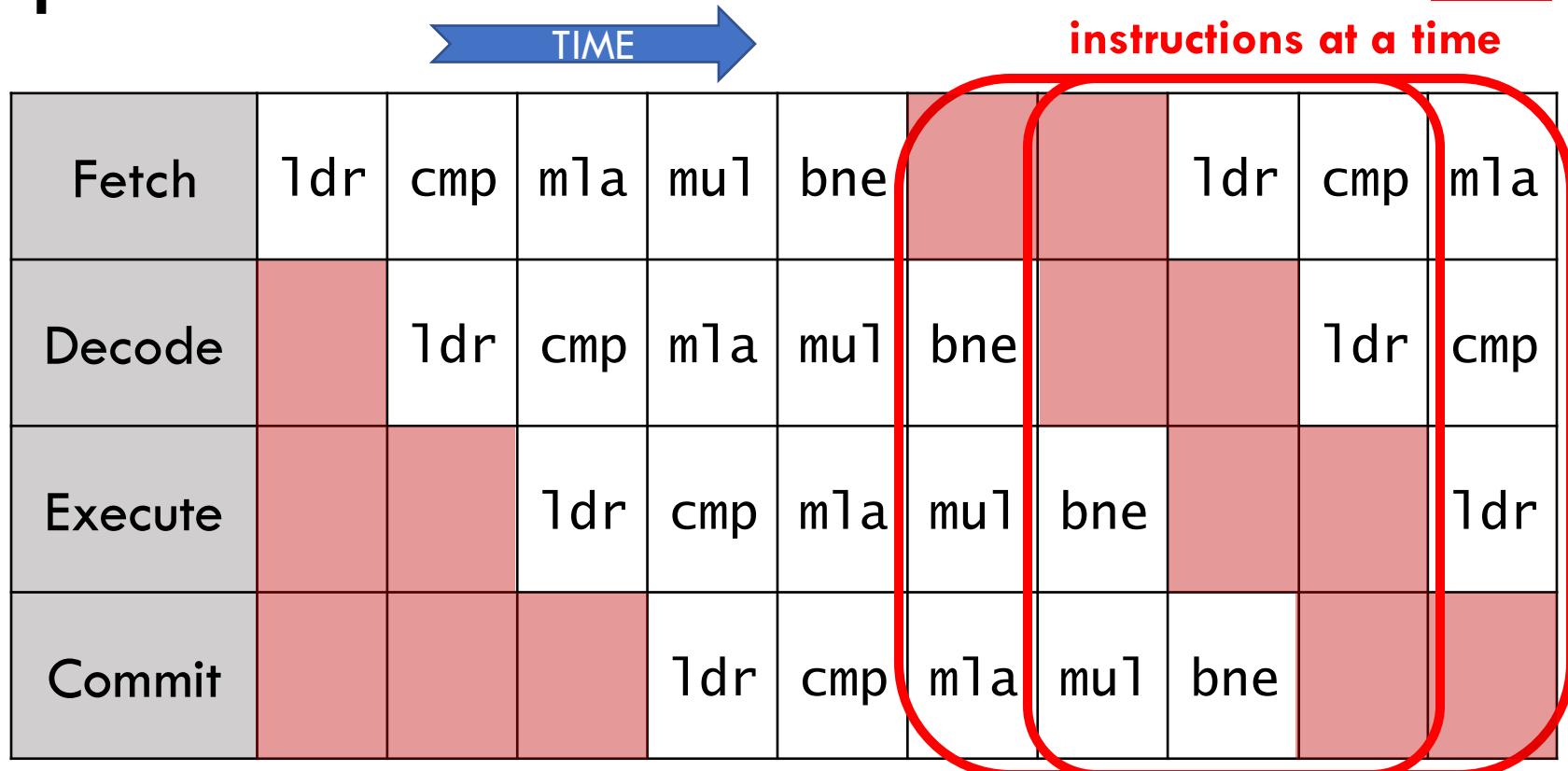
```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4  
cmp      r1, r3  
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul      r4, r2, r4  
bne      .L3  
  
pop      {r4, r5}  
bx       lr
```

Static instruction sequence  
(i.e., program layout in memory)



**Whoops! We fetched the wrong instructions!  
(Loop not finished)**

# Pipeline flushes destroy performance



- Penalty increases with deeper pipelines

# Dealing with control hazards: *Speculation!*

- Processors do not wait for branches to execute
- Instead, they speculate (i.e., guess) where to go next + start fetching
- Modern processors use very sophisticated mechanisms
  - E.g., speculate in Fetch stage—before processor even knows instrn is a branch!
  - >95% prediction accuracy
  - Still, branch mis-speculation is major problem

# Pipelining Summary

- Pipelining is a simple, effective way to improve throughput
    - $N$ -stage pipeline gives up to  $N \times$  speedup
  - Pipelining has limits
    - Hard to keep pipeline busy because of hazards
    - Forwarding is expensive in deep pipelines
    - Pipeline flushes are expensive in deep pipelines
- Pipelining is ubiquitous, but tops out at  $N \approx 15$

# Software Takeaways

- Processors with a simple “in-order” pipeline are very sensitive to running “good code”
  - Compiler should target a specific model of CPU
  - Low-level assembly hacking
- ...But very few CPUs are in-order these days
  - E.g., embedded, ultra-low-power applications
- Instead,  $\approx$ all modern CPUs are “out-of-order”
  - Even in classic “low-power domains” (like mobile)

# Out-of-Order Execution

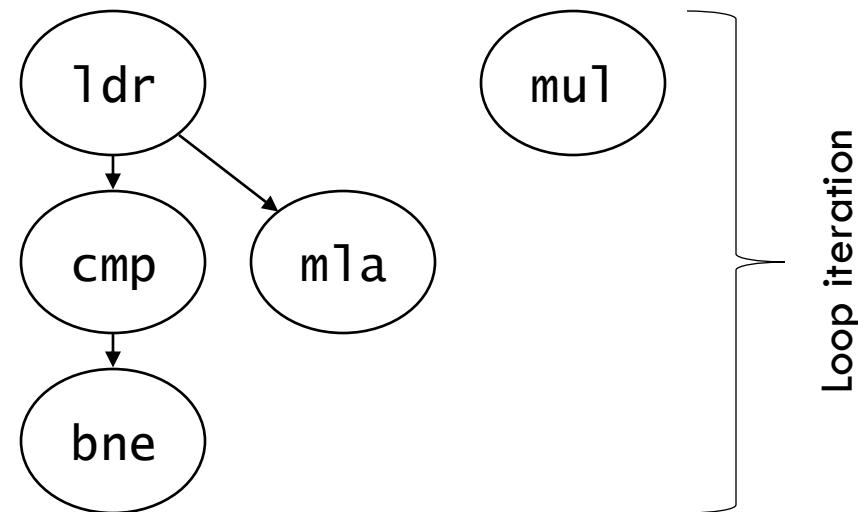
# Increasing parallelism via dataflow

- Parallelism limited by many *false dependencies*, particularly sequential program order
- Dataflow tracks how instructions actually depend on each other
  - *True dependence*: read-after-write

*Dataflow increases parallelism by eliminating unnecessary dependences*

# Example: Dataflow in polynomial evaluation

```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0
mul      r4, r2, r4
bne      .L3
```



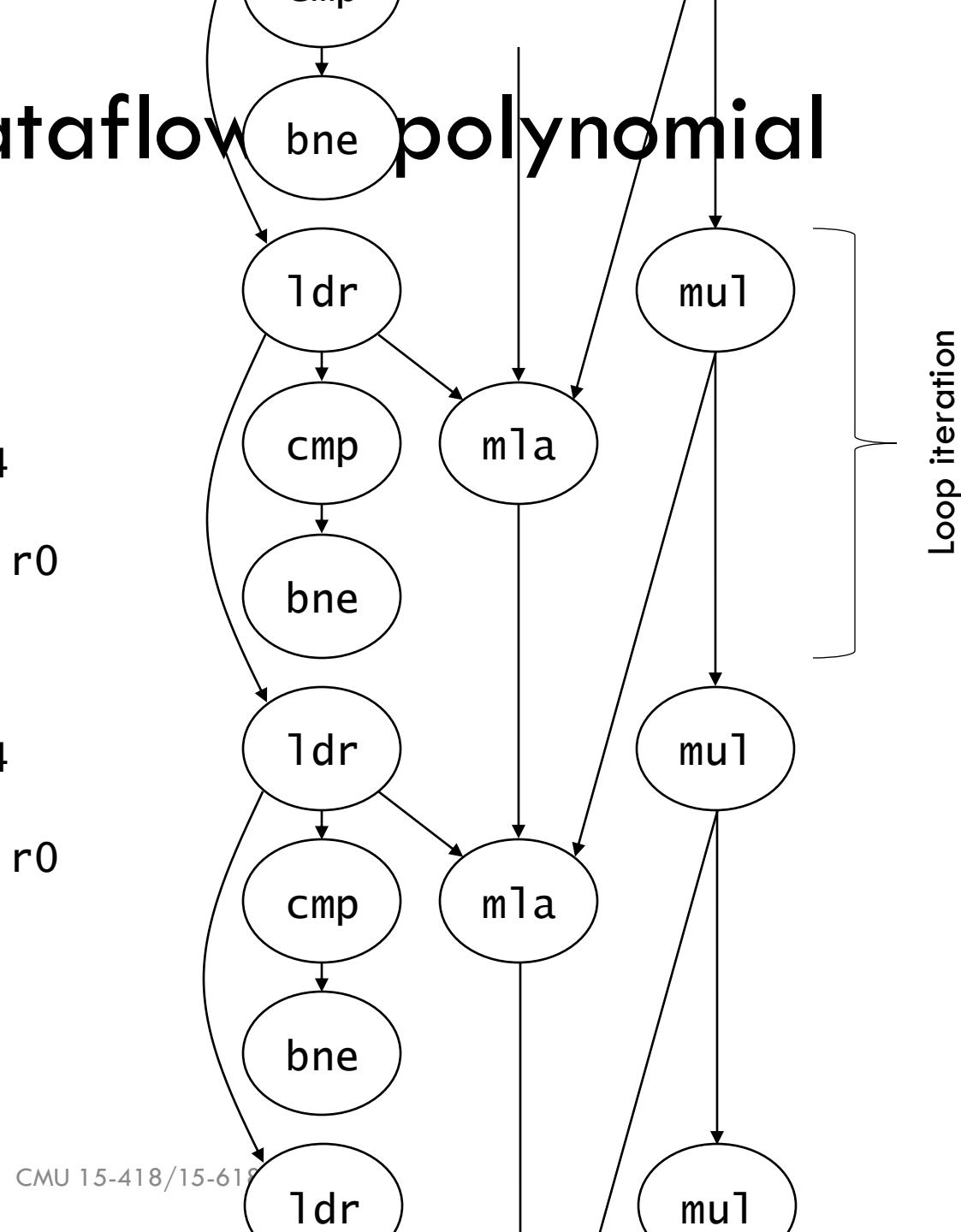
```
ldr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0
mul      r4, r2, r4
bne      .L3
```

...

# Example: Dataflow polynomial evaluation

```
ldr    r5, [r3], #4
cmp    r1, r3
mla    r0, r4, r5, r0
mul    r4, r2, r4
bne    .L3

ldr    r5, [r3], #4
cmp    r1, r3
mla    r0, r4, r5, r0
mul    r4, r2, r4
bne    .L3
```

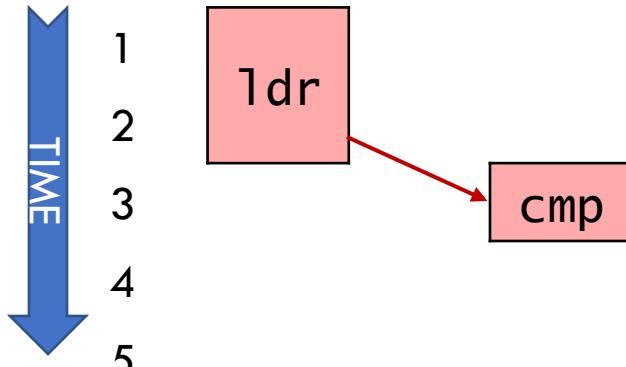


# Example: Dataflow polynomial execution

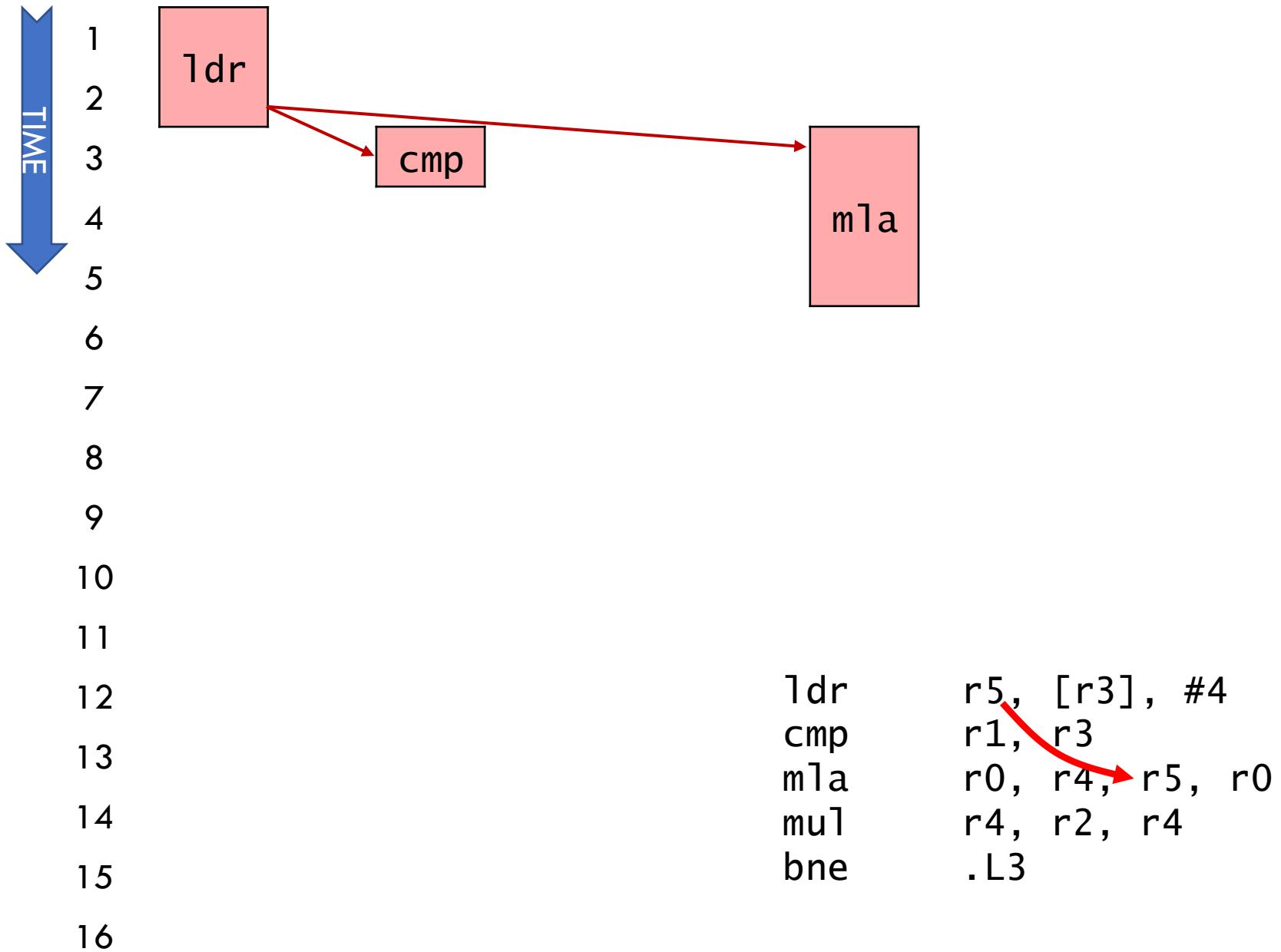
- Execution only, with perfect scheduling & unlimited execution units
  - ldr, mul execute in 2 cycles
  - cmp, bne execute in 1 cycle
  - mla executes in 3 cycles
- Q: Does dataflow speedup execution? By how much?
- Q: What is the performance bottleneck?

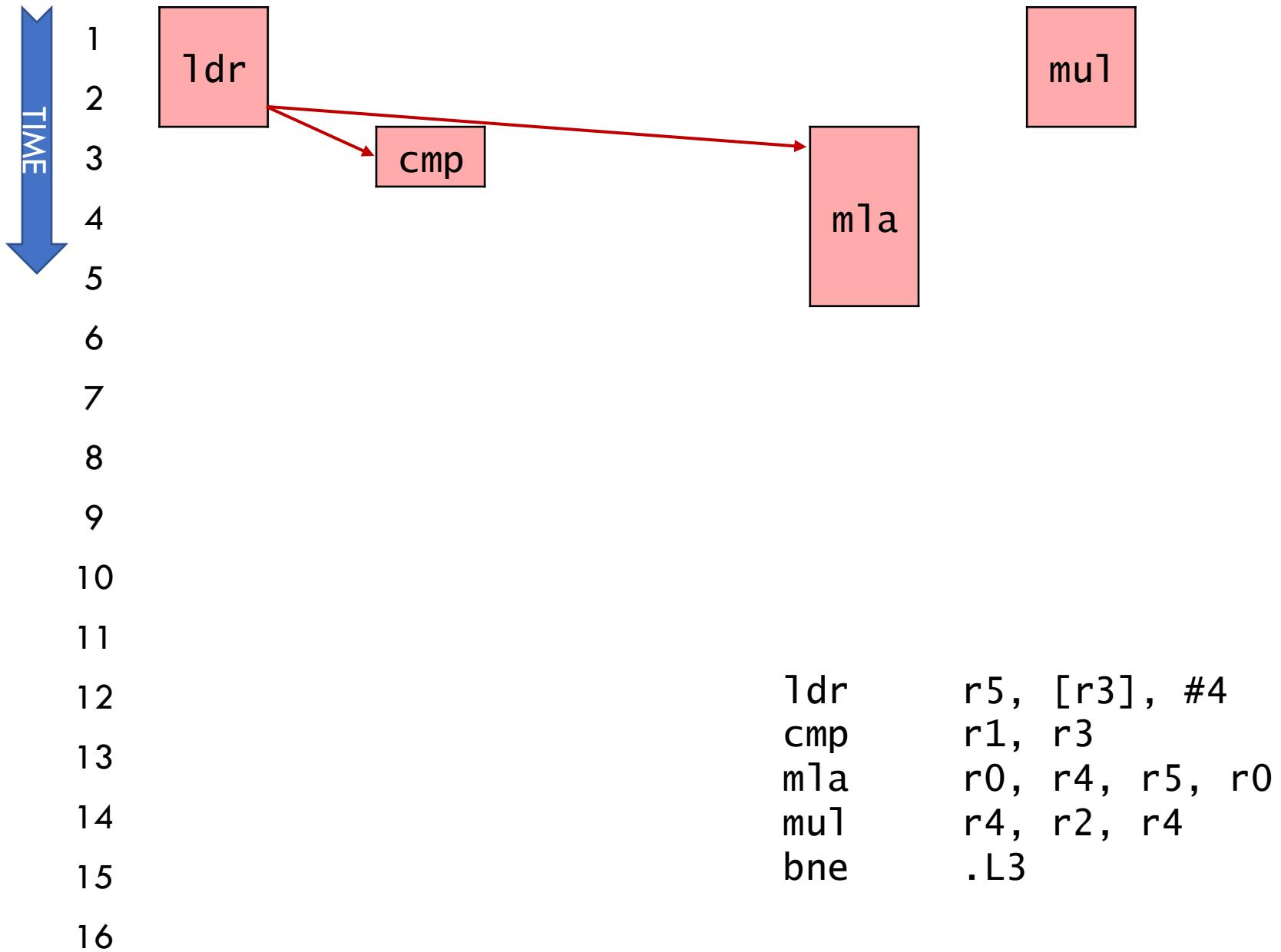


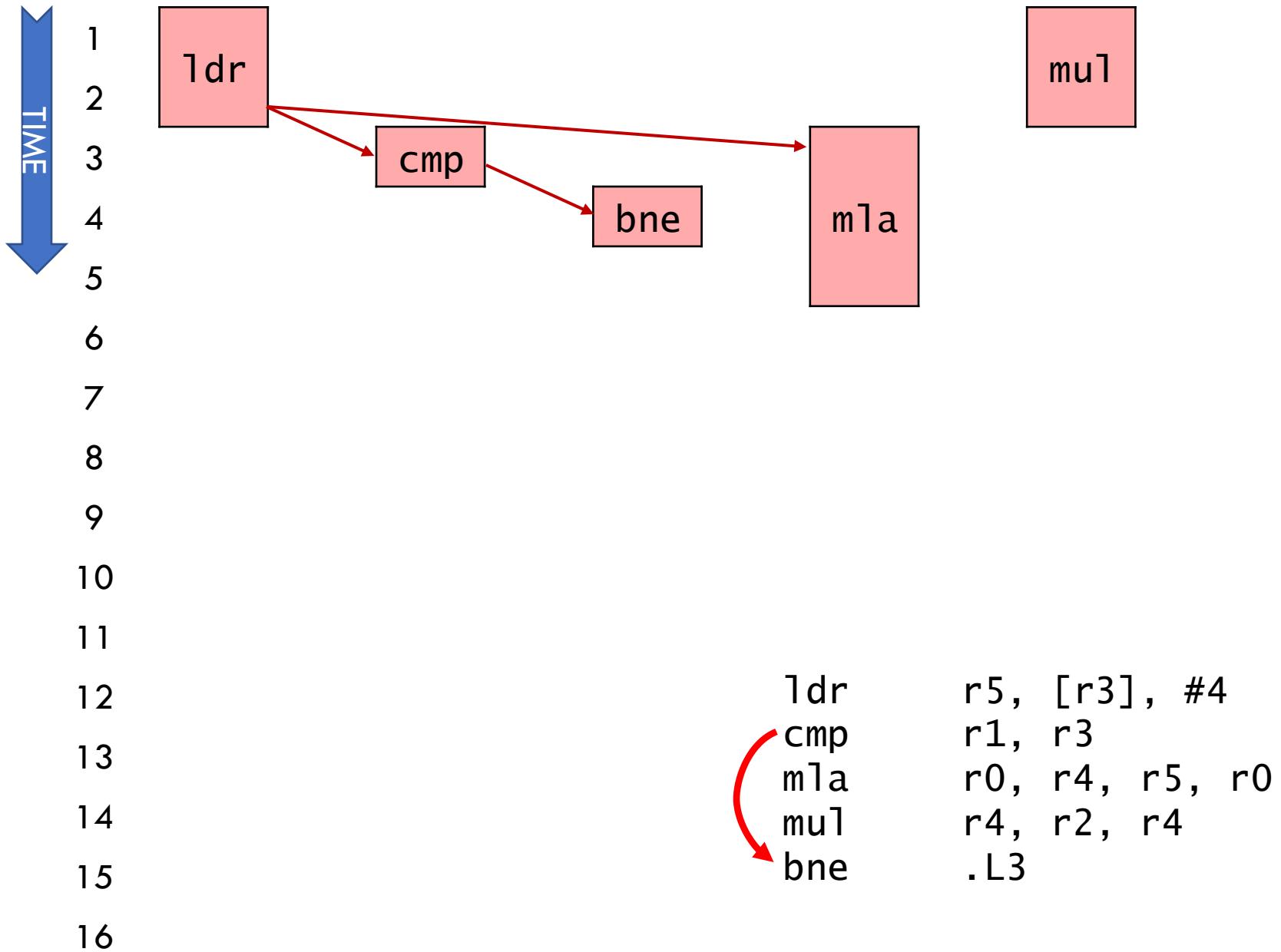
1	ldr	
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12	ldr	r5, [r3], #4
13	cmp	r1, r3
14	mla	r0, r4, r5, r0
15	mul	r4, r2, r4
16	bne	.L3

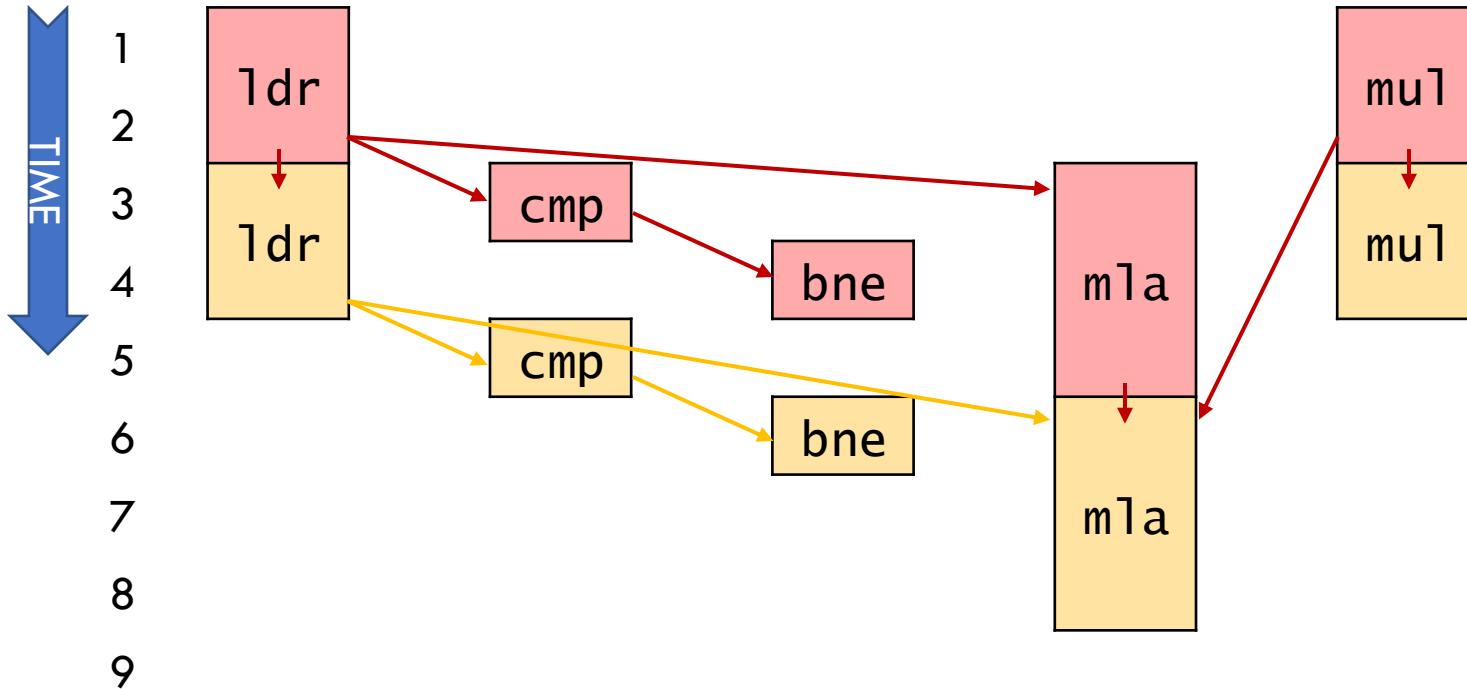


12	ldr	r5, [r3], #4
13	cmp	r1, r3
14	mla	r0, r4, r5, r0
15	mul	r4, r2, r4
	bne	.L3
16		

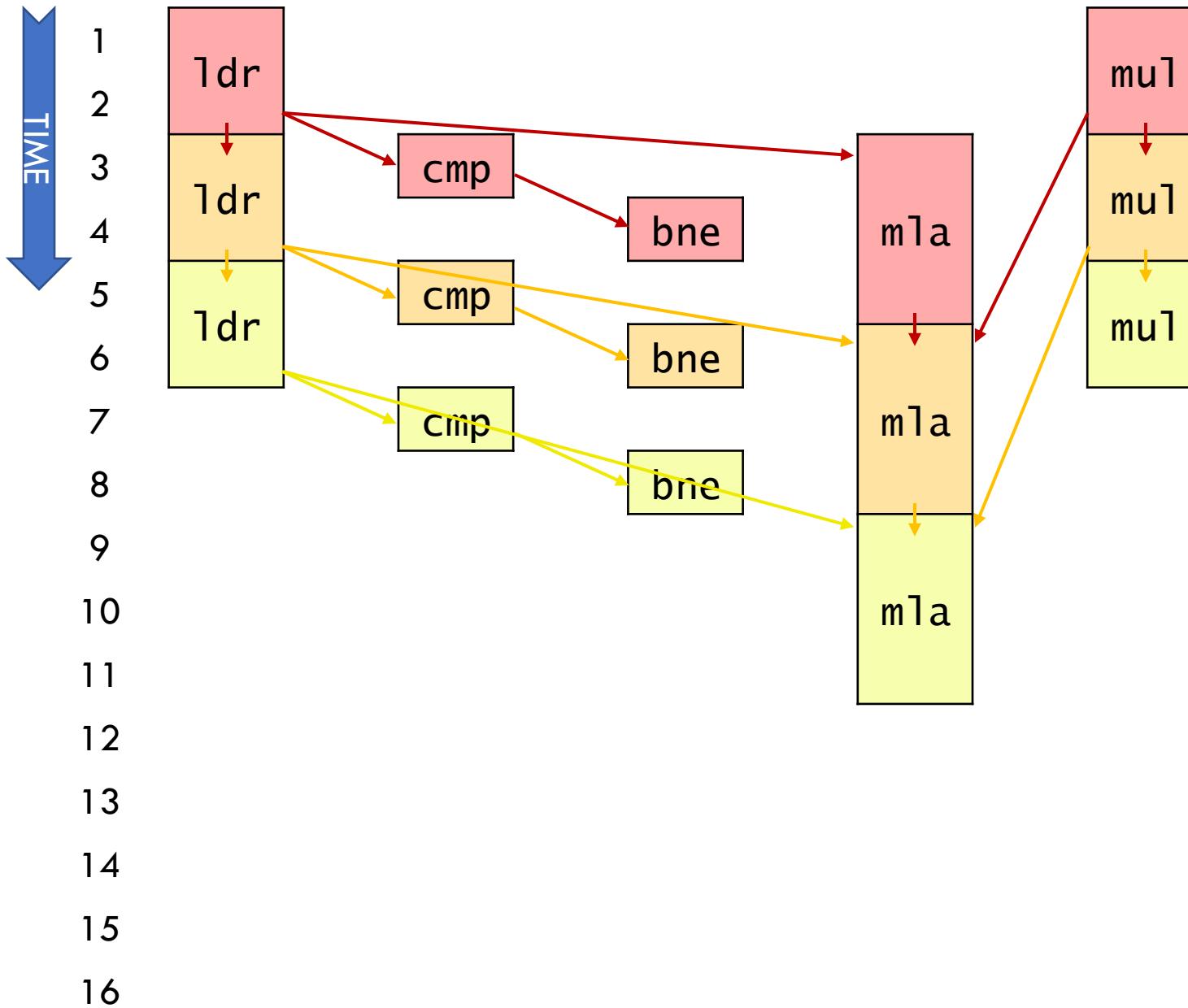


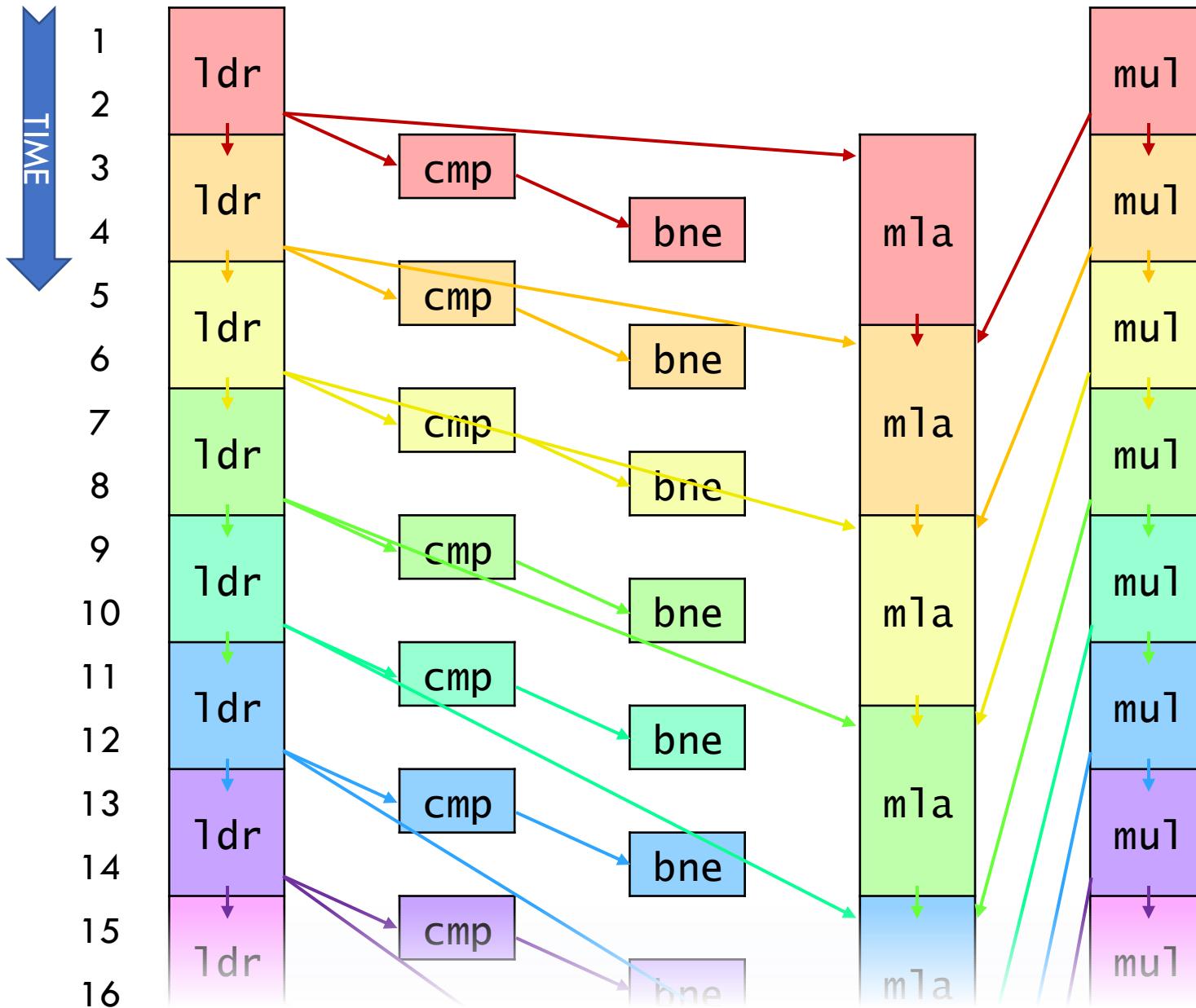






10 ldr r5, [r3], #4  
 11 cmp r1, r3  
 12 mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
 13 mul r4, r2, r4  
 14 bne .L3  
 15 ldr r5, [r3], #4  
 16 cmp r1, r3  
 17 mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
 18 mul r4, r2, r4  
 19 bne .L3





# Example: Dataflow polynomial execution

- Q: Does dataflow speedup execution? By how much?
  - Yes! 3 cycles / loop iteration
  - Instructions per cycle (IPC) =  $5/3 \approx 1.67$  (vs. 1 for perfect pipelining)
- Q: What is the performance bottleneck?
  - m1a: Each m1a depends on previous m1a & takes 3 cycles
  - → This program is **latency-bound**

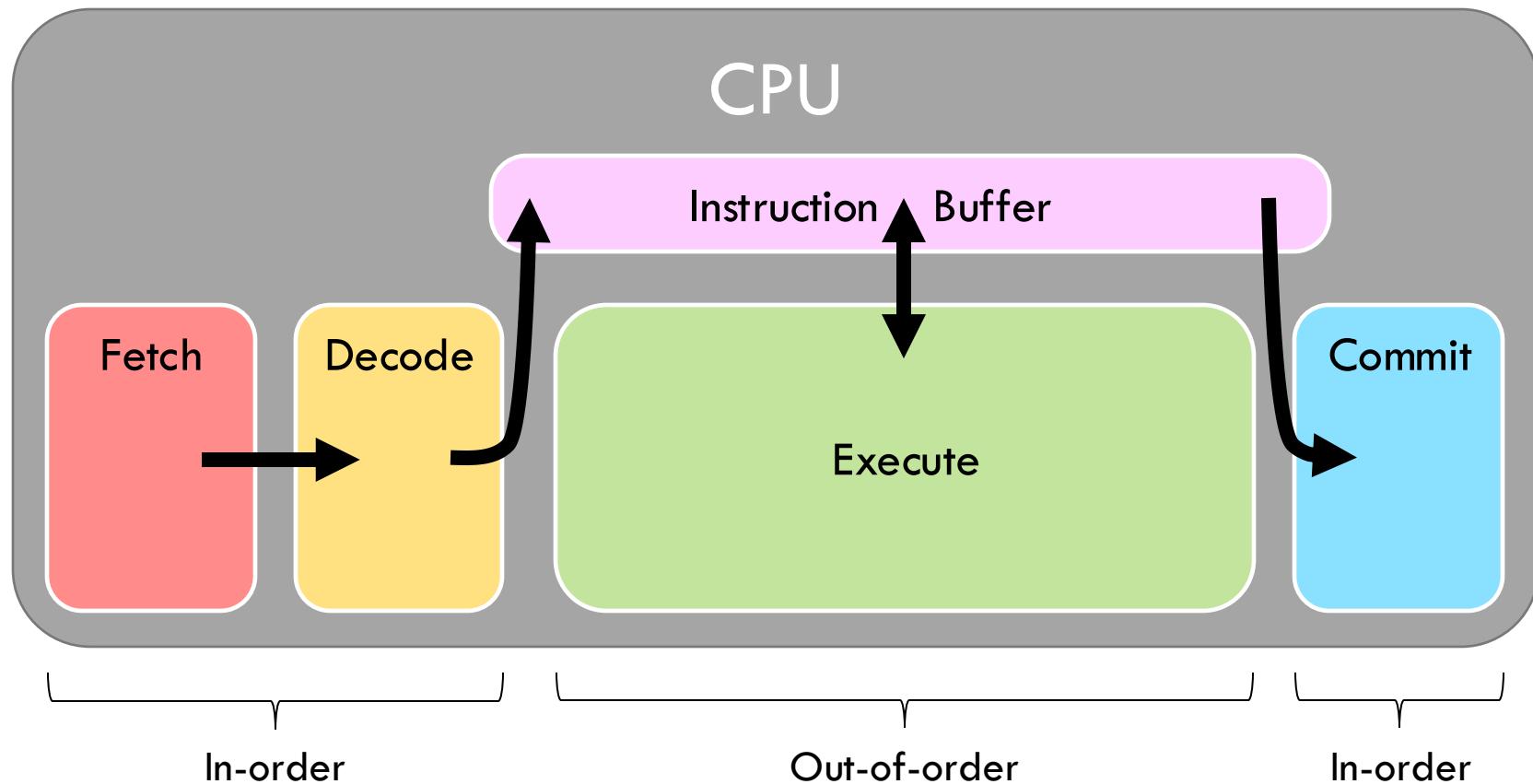
# Latency Bound

- What is the “critical path” of the computation?
  - Longest path across iterations in dataflow graph
  - E.g., `m1a` in last slide (but could be multiple ops)
- Critical path limits maximum performance
- Real CPUs may not achieve latency bound, but useful mental model + tool for program analysis

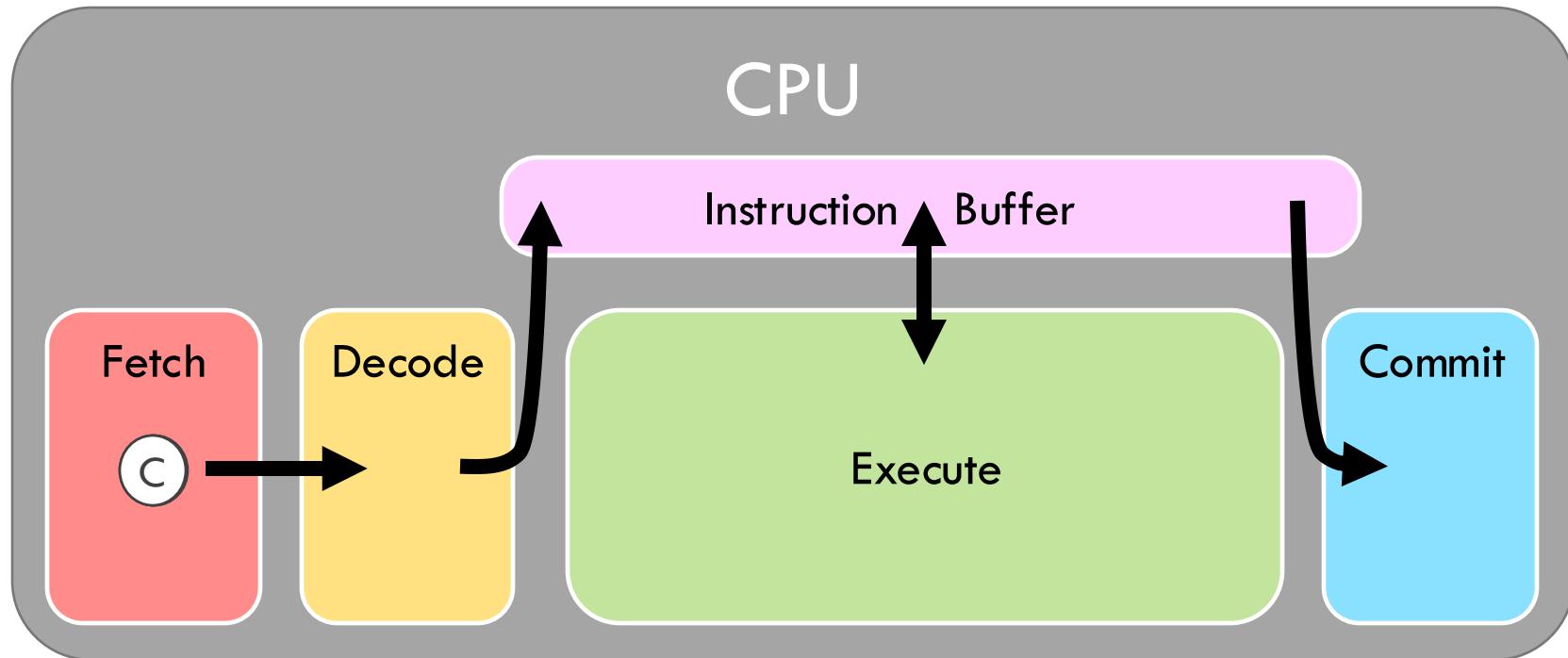
# Out-of-order (OoO) execution uses dataflow to increase parallelism

- Idea: Execute programs in dataflow order, but give the *illusion* of sequential execution

# High-level OoO microarchitecture



# OoO is hidden behind in-order frontend & commit

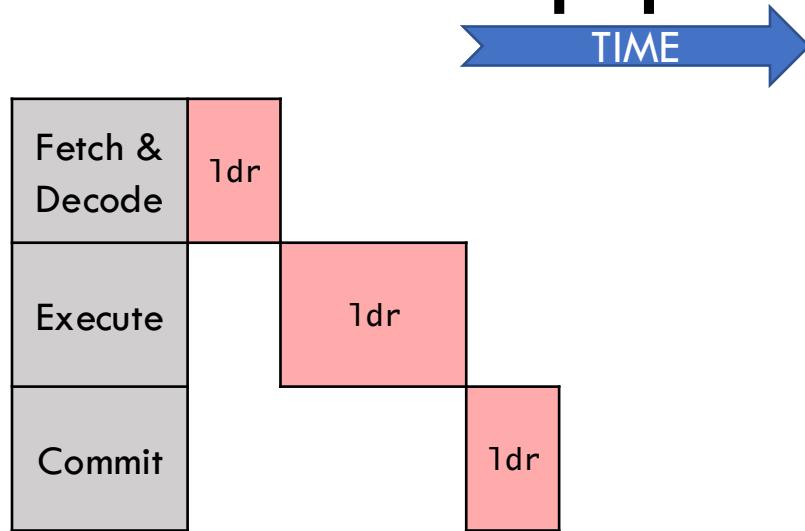


- Instructions only enter & leave instruction buffer in program order; all bets are off in between!

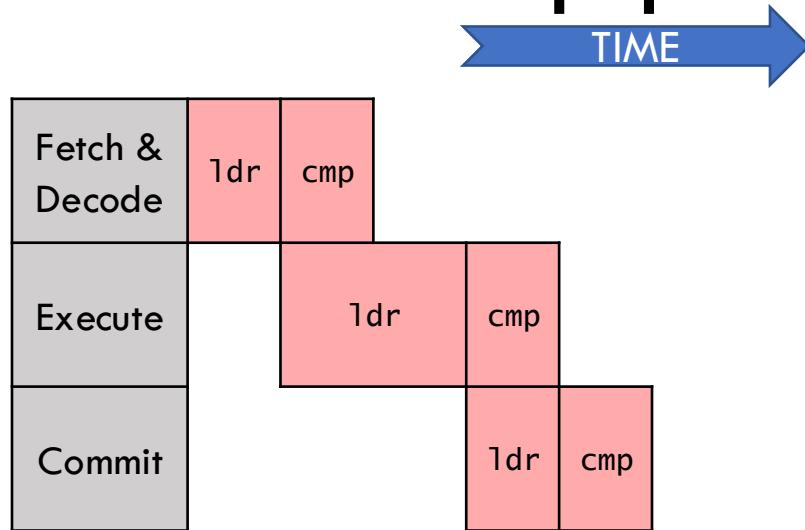
# Example: OoO polynomial evaluation

- Q: Does OoO speedup execution? By how much?
- Q: What is the performance bottleneck?
- Assume perfect forwarding & branch prediction

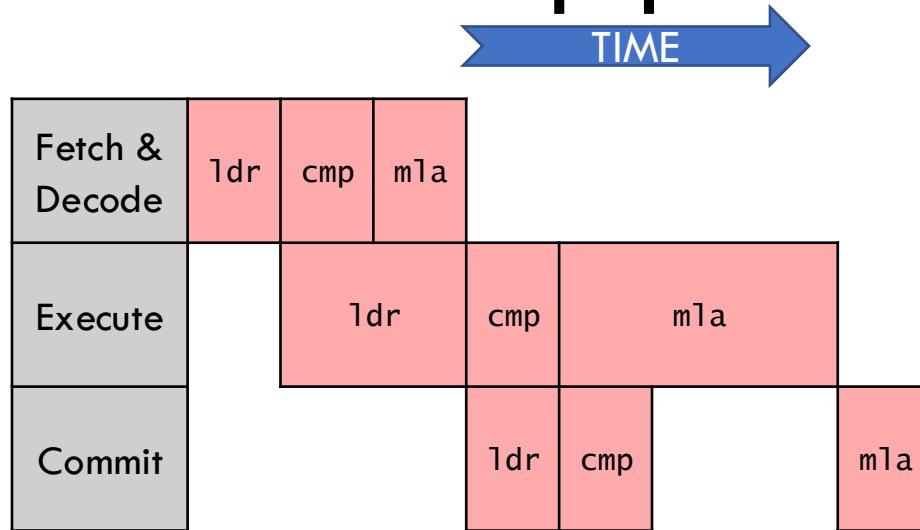
# Example: OoO polynomial evaluation pipeline diagram



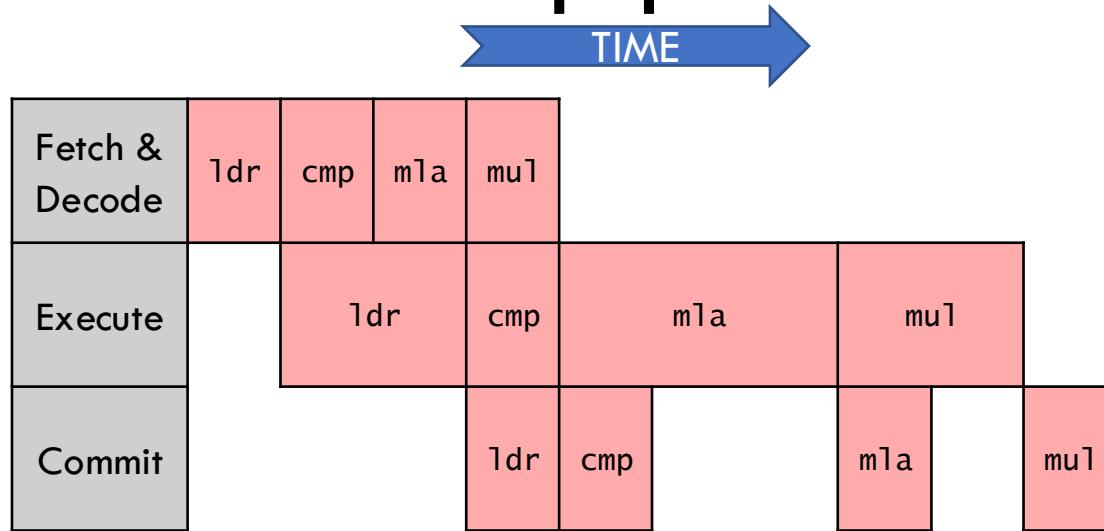
# Example: OoO polynomial evaluation pipeline diagram



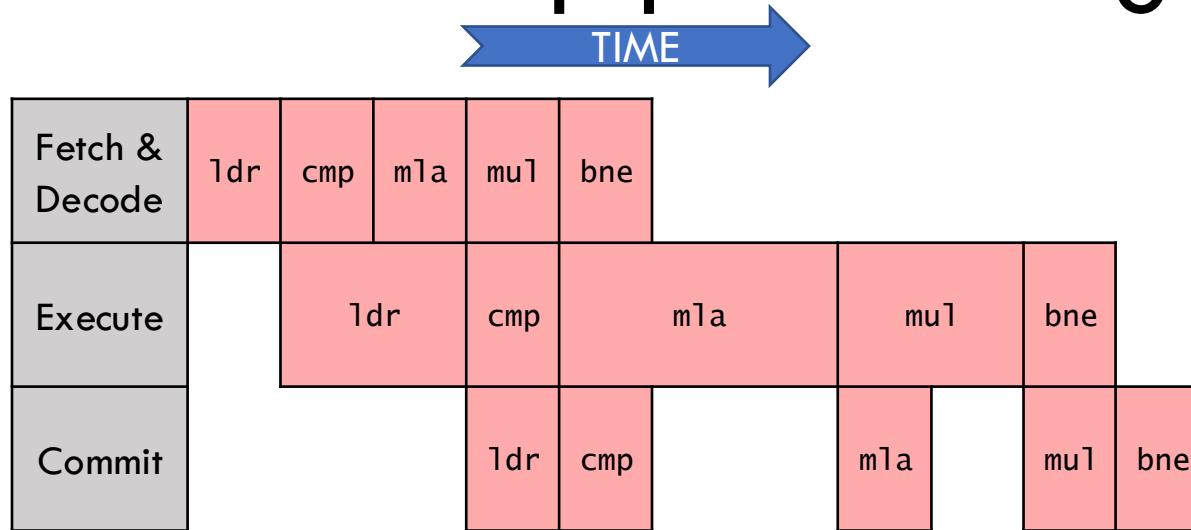
# Example: OoO polynomial evaluation pipeline diagram



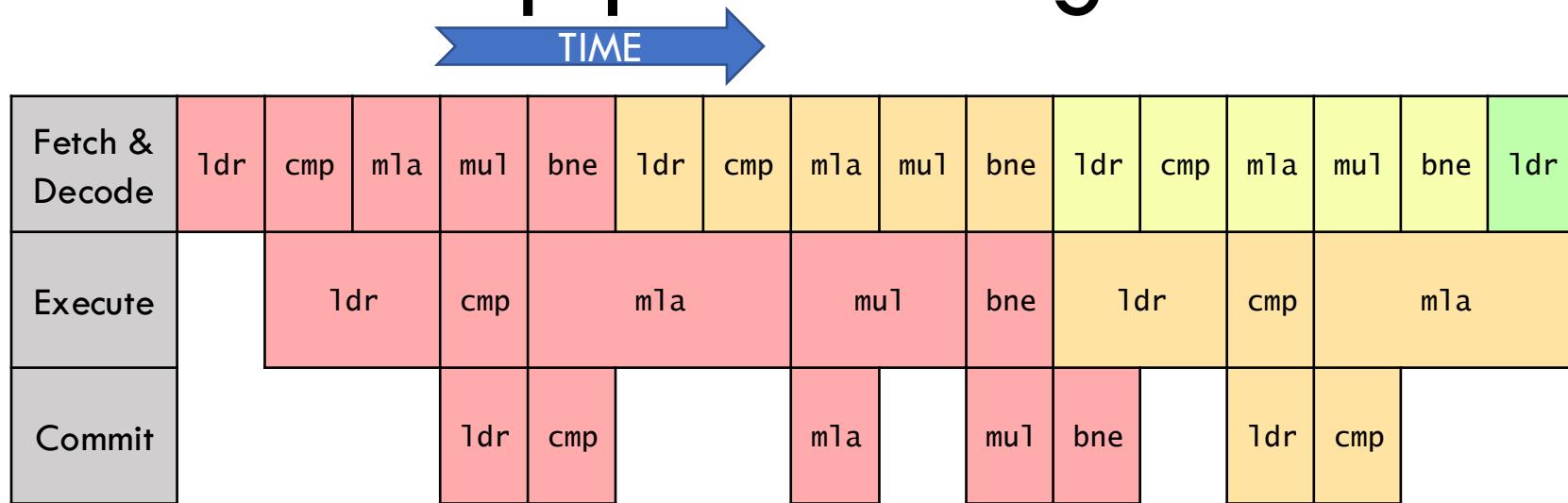
# Example: OoO polynomial evaluation pipeline diagram



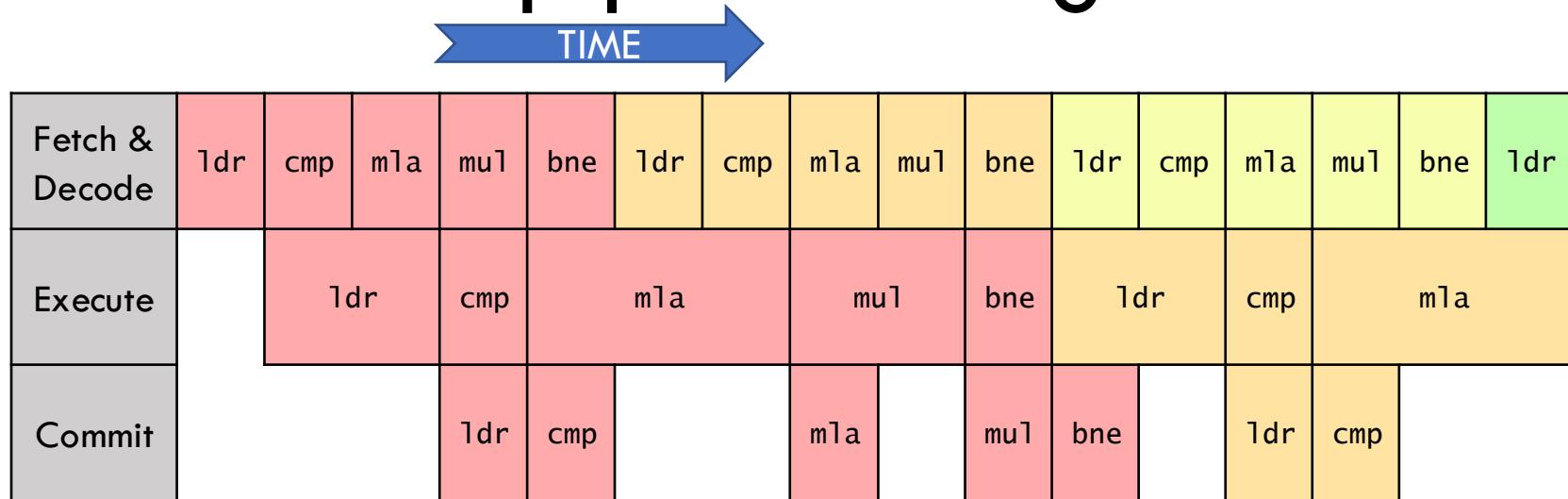
# Example: OoO polynomial evaluation pipeline diagram



# Example: OoO polynomial evaluation pipeline diagram



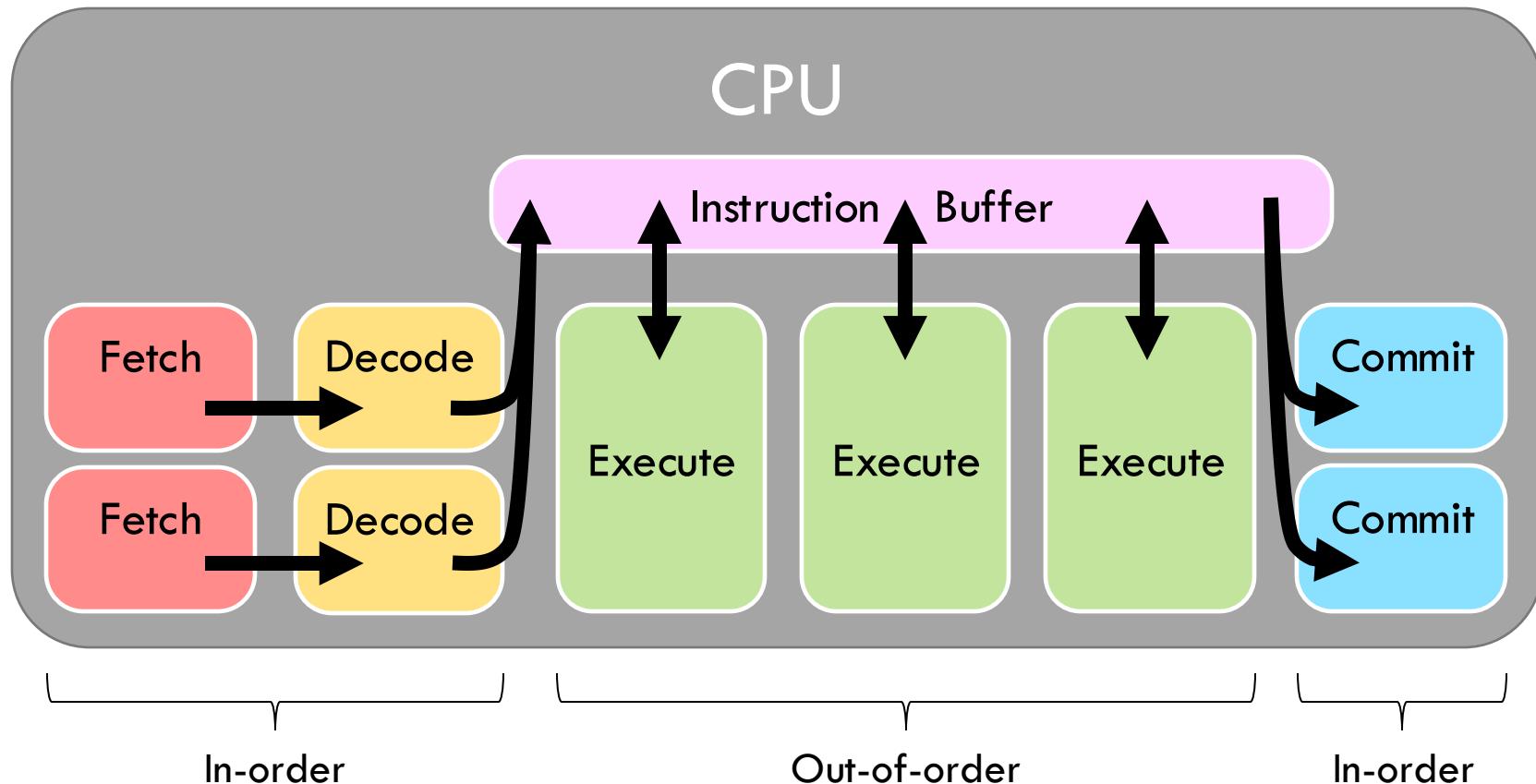
# Example: OoO polynomial evaluation pipeline diagram



- Wait a minute... this isn't OoO... or even faster than a simple pipeline!
- Q: What went wrong?
- A: We're **throughput-limited**: can only exec 1 instrn

# High-level Superscalar OoO microarchitecture

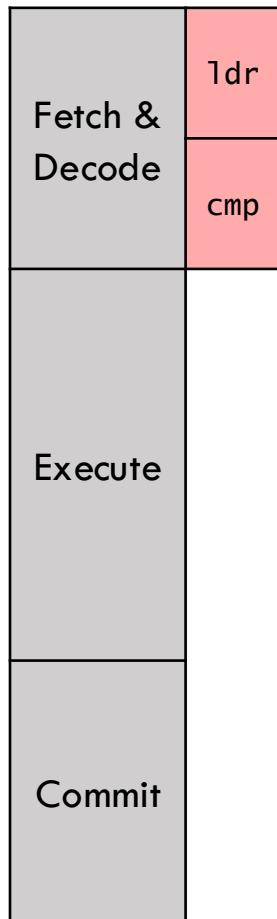
- Must increase *pipeline width* to increase  $IPC > 1$



# Focus on Execution, not Fetch & Commit

- Goal of OoO design is to only be limited by dataflow execution
- Fetch and commit are *over-provisioned* so that they (usually) do not limit performance  
→ Programmers can (usually) ignore fetch/commit
- **Big Caveat:** Programs with *inherently unpredictable* control flow will often be limited by fetch stalls (branch misprediction)
  - E.g., branching based on random data

# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation



ldr	r5, [r3], #4
cmp	r1, r3
mla	r0, r4, r5, r0
mul	r4, r2, r4
bne	.L3
ldr	r5, [r3], #4
cmp	r1, r3
mla	r0, r4, r5, r0
mul	r4, r2, r4
bne	.L3

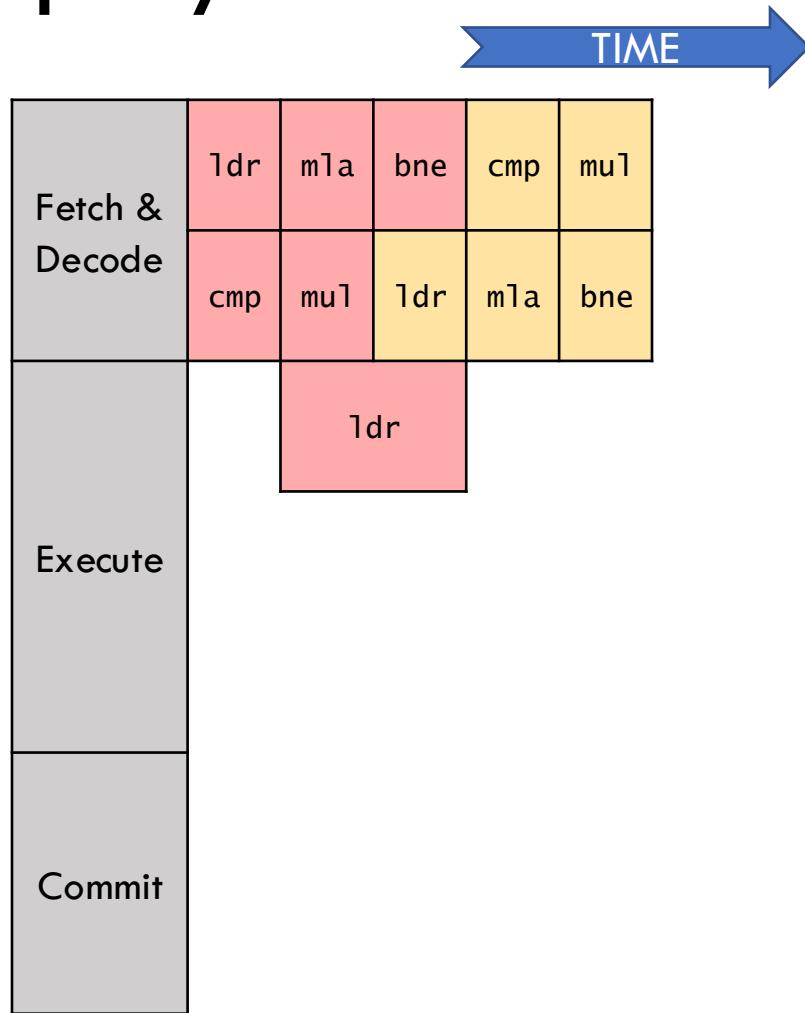
# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation



Fetch & Decode	ldr	m1a	bne	cmp	mul
	cmp	mul	ldr	m1a	bne
Execute					
Commit					

ldr	r5, [r3], #4
cmp	r1, r3
m1a	r0, r4, r5, r0
mul	r4, r2, r4
bne	.L3
ldr	r5, [r3], #4
cmp	r1, r3
m1a	r0, r4, r5, r0
mul	r4, r2, r4
bne	.L3

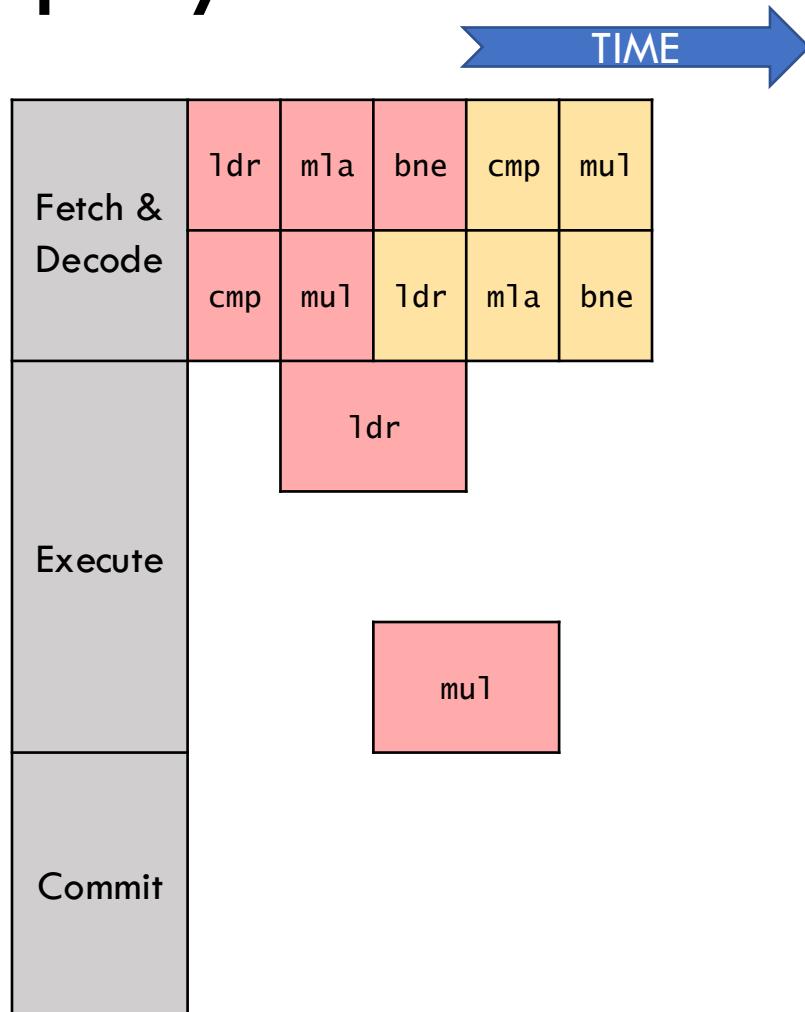
# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation



1dr                  r5, [r3], #4  
cmp                  r1, r3  
m1a                  r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul                  r4, r2, r4  
bne                  .L3  
1dr                  r5, [r3], #4  
cmp                  r1, r3  
m1a                  r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul                  r4, r2, r4  
bne                  .L3

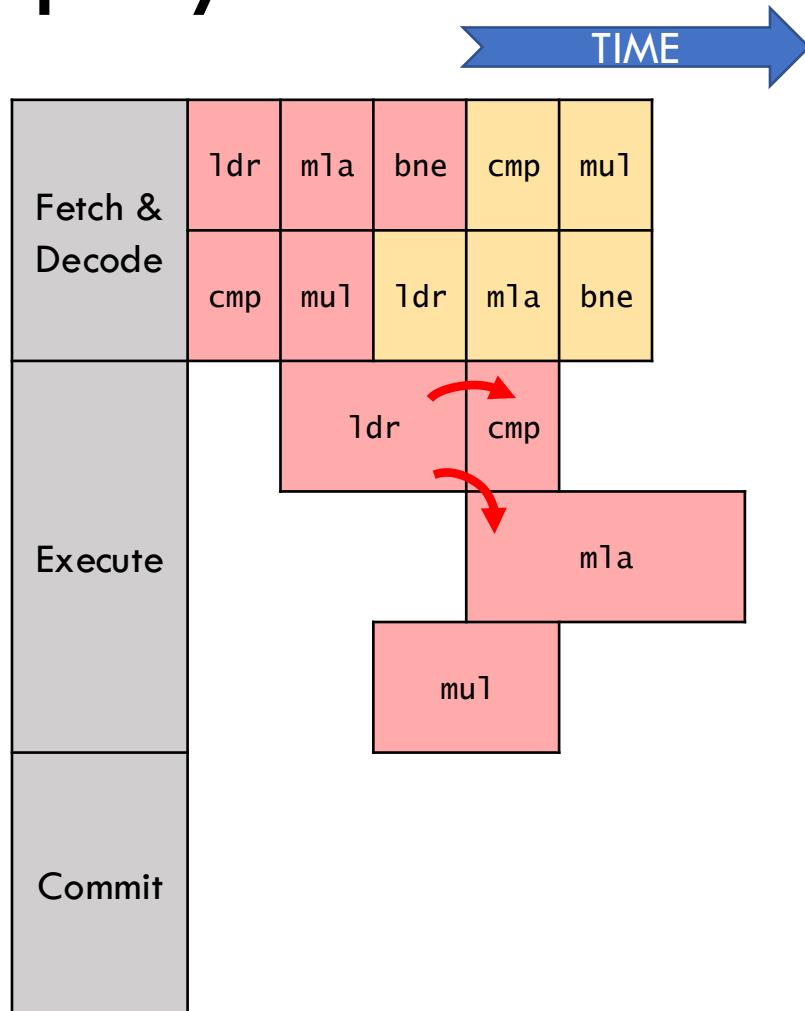
A red curved arrow highlights the dependency between the first '1dr' instruction's memory read (r5) and its write (r5, [r3], #4).

# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation



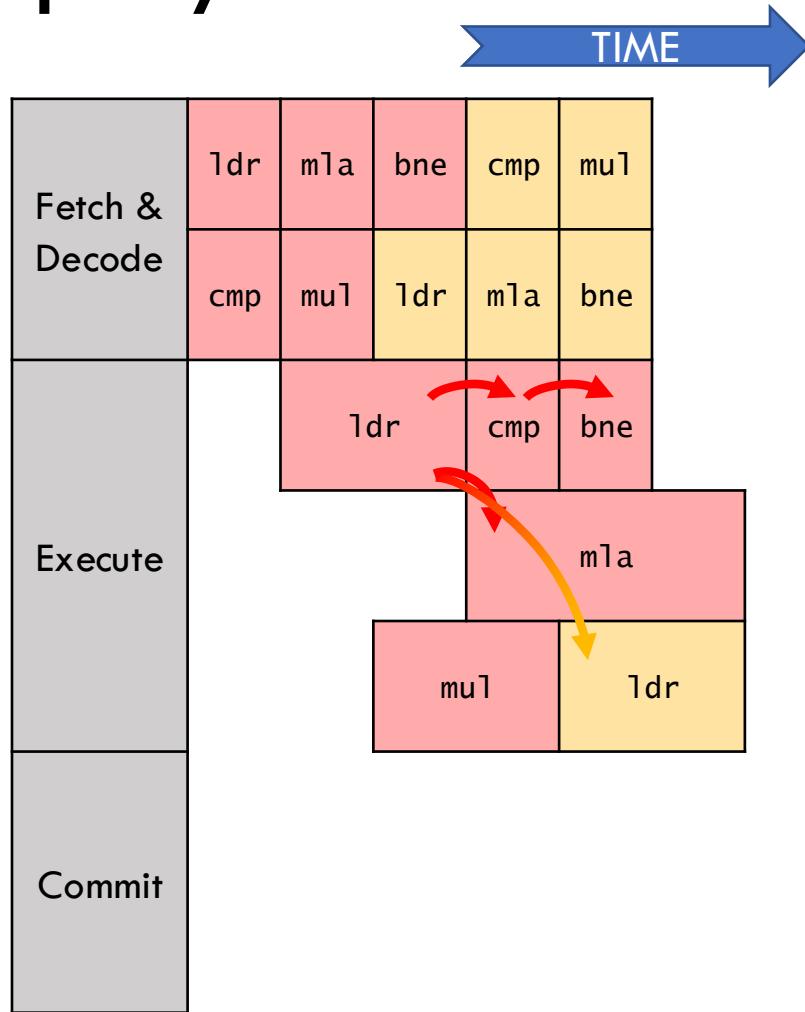
```
1dr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0
mul      r4, r2, r4
bne      .L3
1dr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
mla      r0, r4, r5, r0
mul      r4, r2, r4
bne      .L3
```

# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation



ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
bne .L3  
ldr r5, [r3], #4  
cmp r1, r3  
mla r0, r4, r5, r0  
mul r4, r2, r4  
.L3

# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation

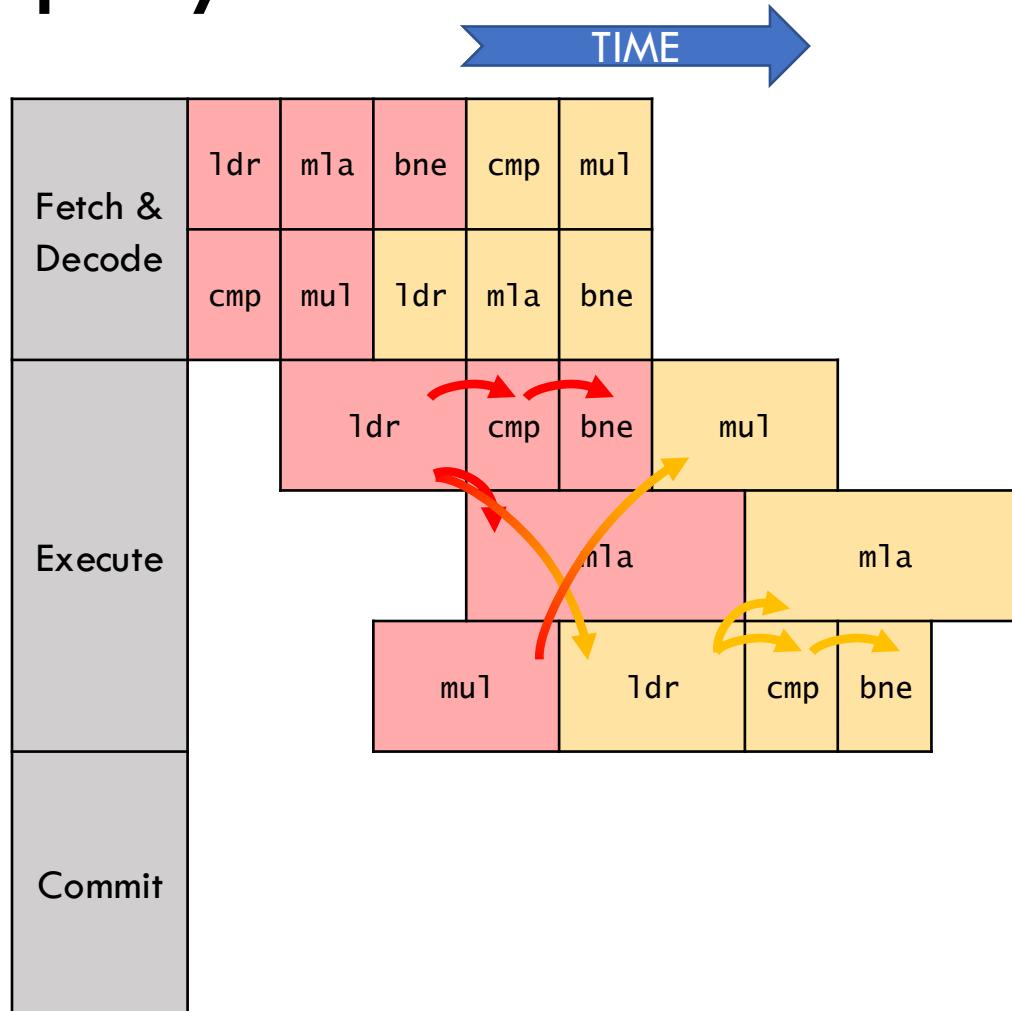


```

1dr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
mla     r0, r4, r5, r0
mul     r4, r2, r4
bne   .L3
1dr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
mla     r0, r4, r5, r0
mul     r4, r2, r4
bne   .L3

```

# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation

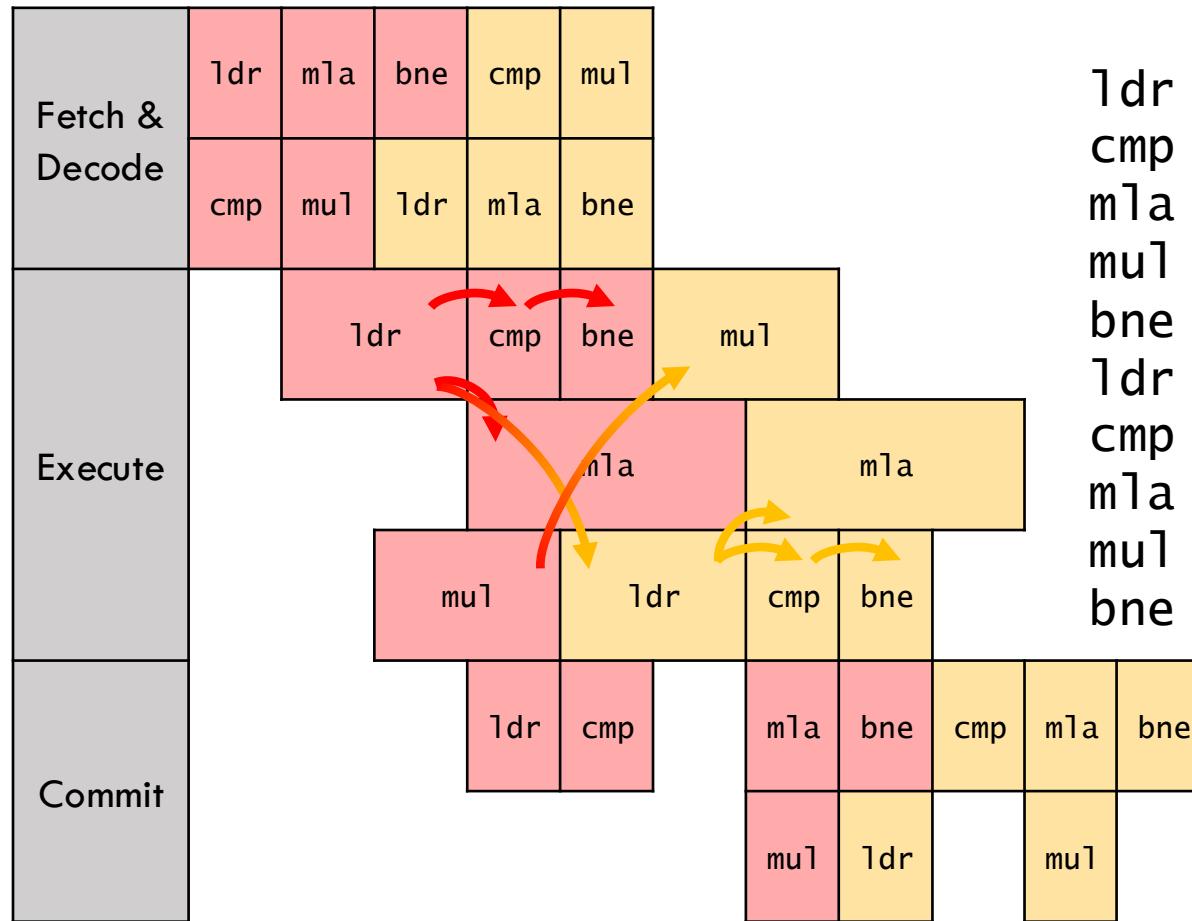


```

ldr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
m1a     r0, r4, r5, r0
mul      r4, r2, r4
bne     .L3
ldr      r5, [r3], #4
cmp      r1, r3
m1a     r0, r4, r5, r0
mul      r4, r2, r4
bne     .L3

```

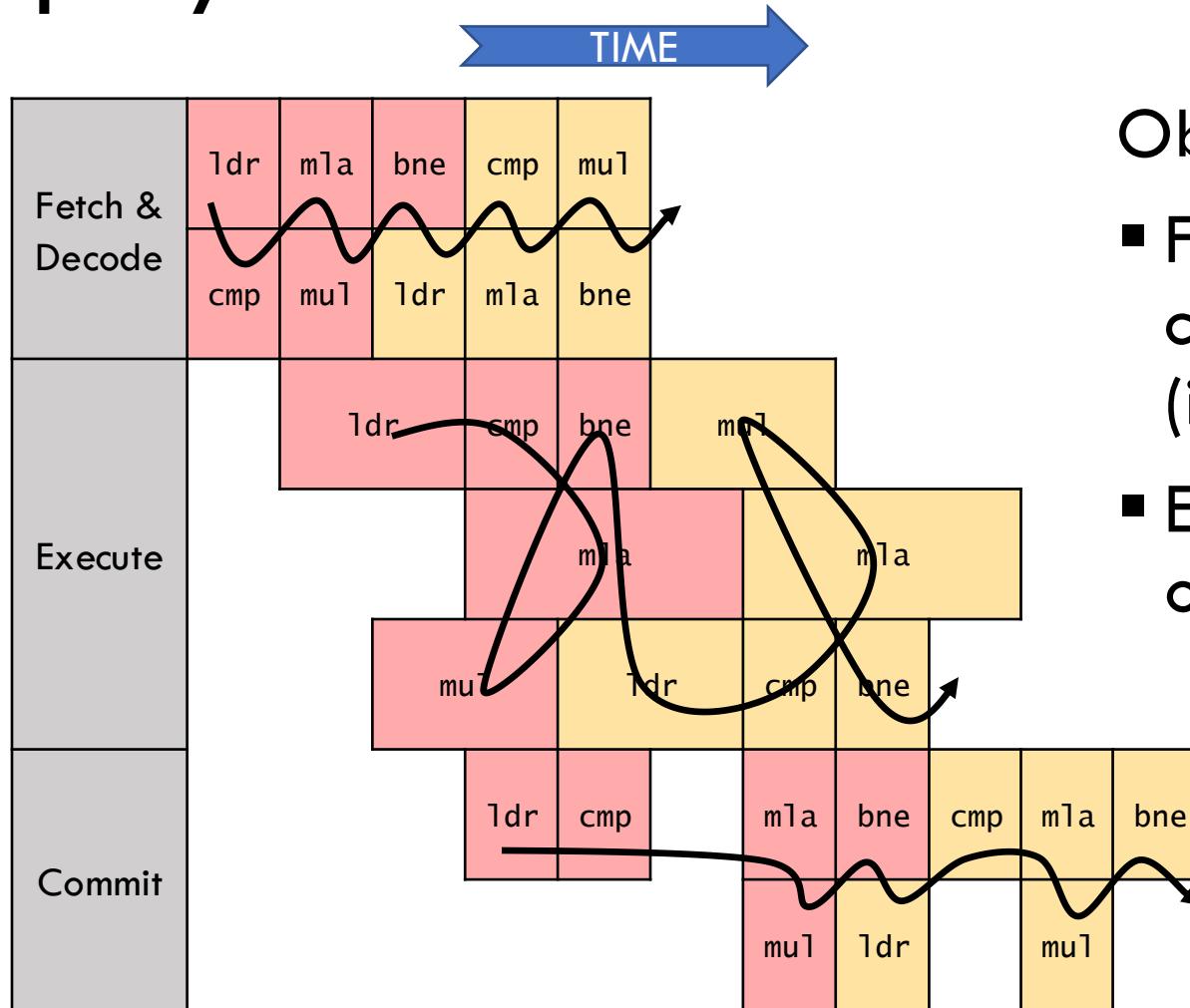
# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation



```

    ldr      r5, [r3], #4
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    mul     r4, r2, r4
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```

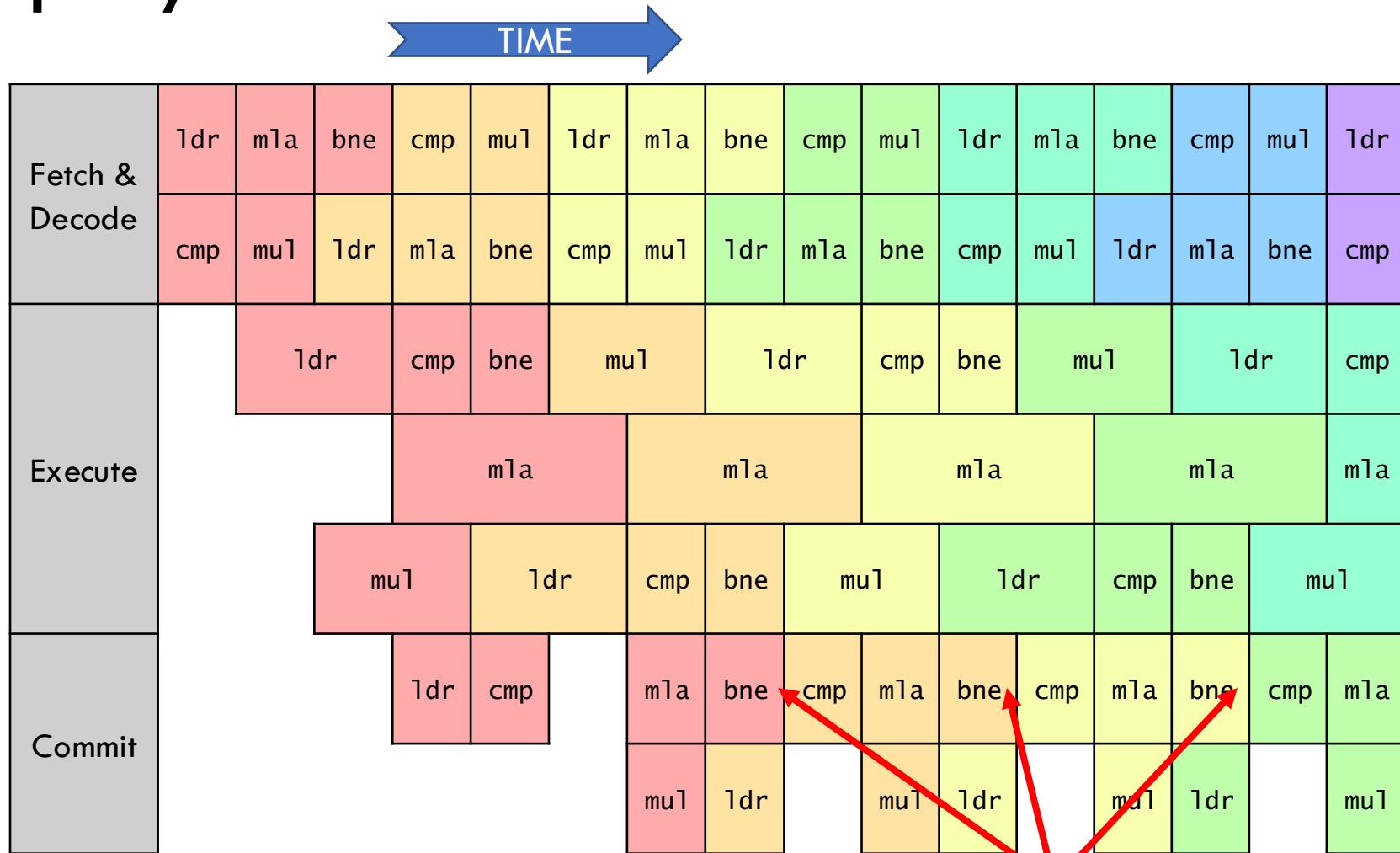
# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation



Observe:

- Front-end & commit in-order (i.e., left-to-right)
- Execute out-of-order

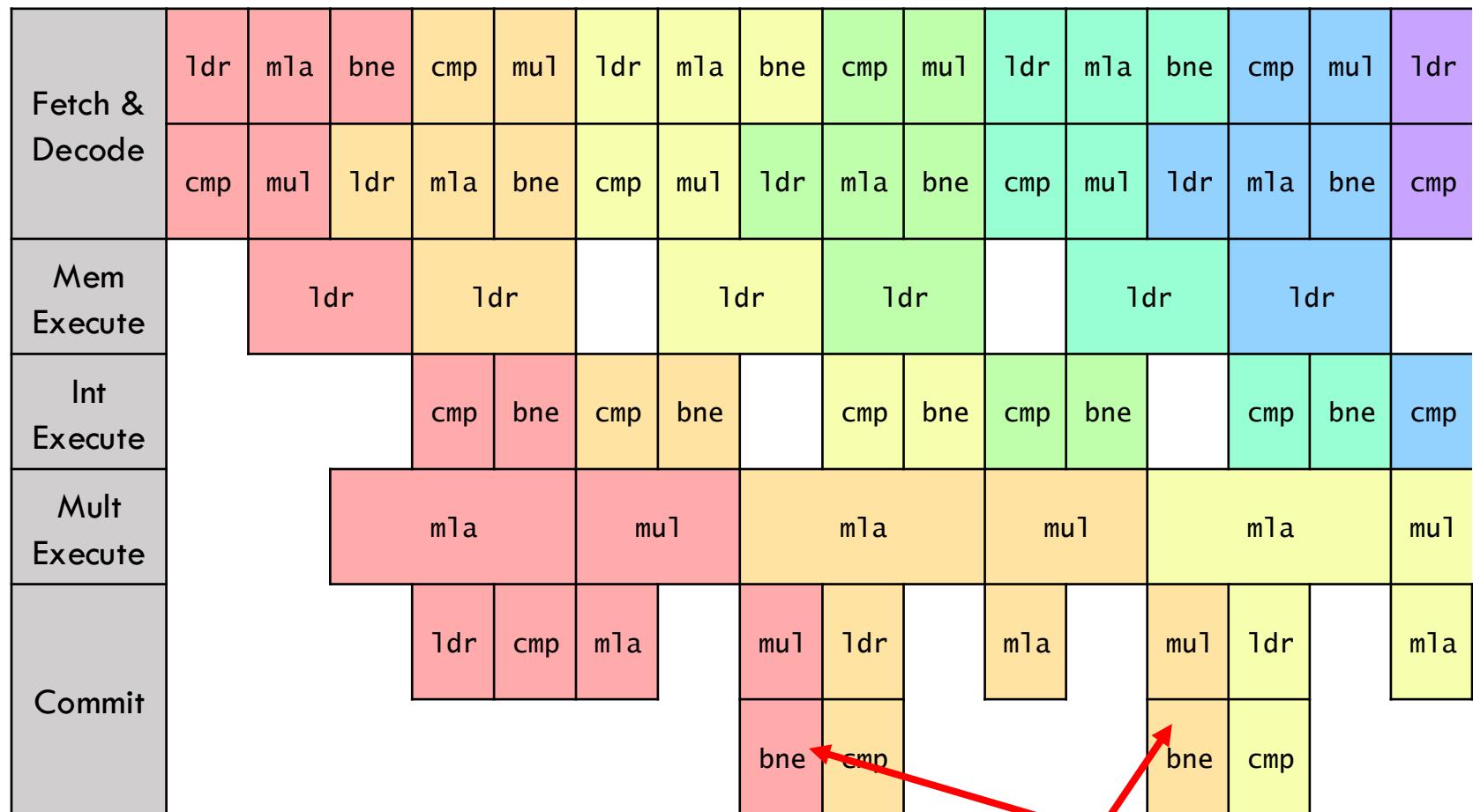
# Example: Superscalar OoO polynomial evaluation



# Structural hazards: Other throughput limitations

- Execution units are specialized
  - Floating-point (add/multiply)
  - Integer (add/multiply/compare)
  - Memory (load/store)
- Processor designers must choose which execution units to include and how many
- *Structural hazard:* Data is ready, but instr cannot issue because no hardware is available

# Example: Structural hazards can severely limit performance



# Throughput Bound

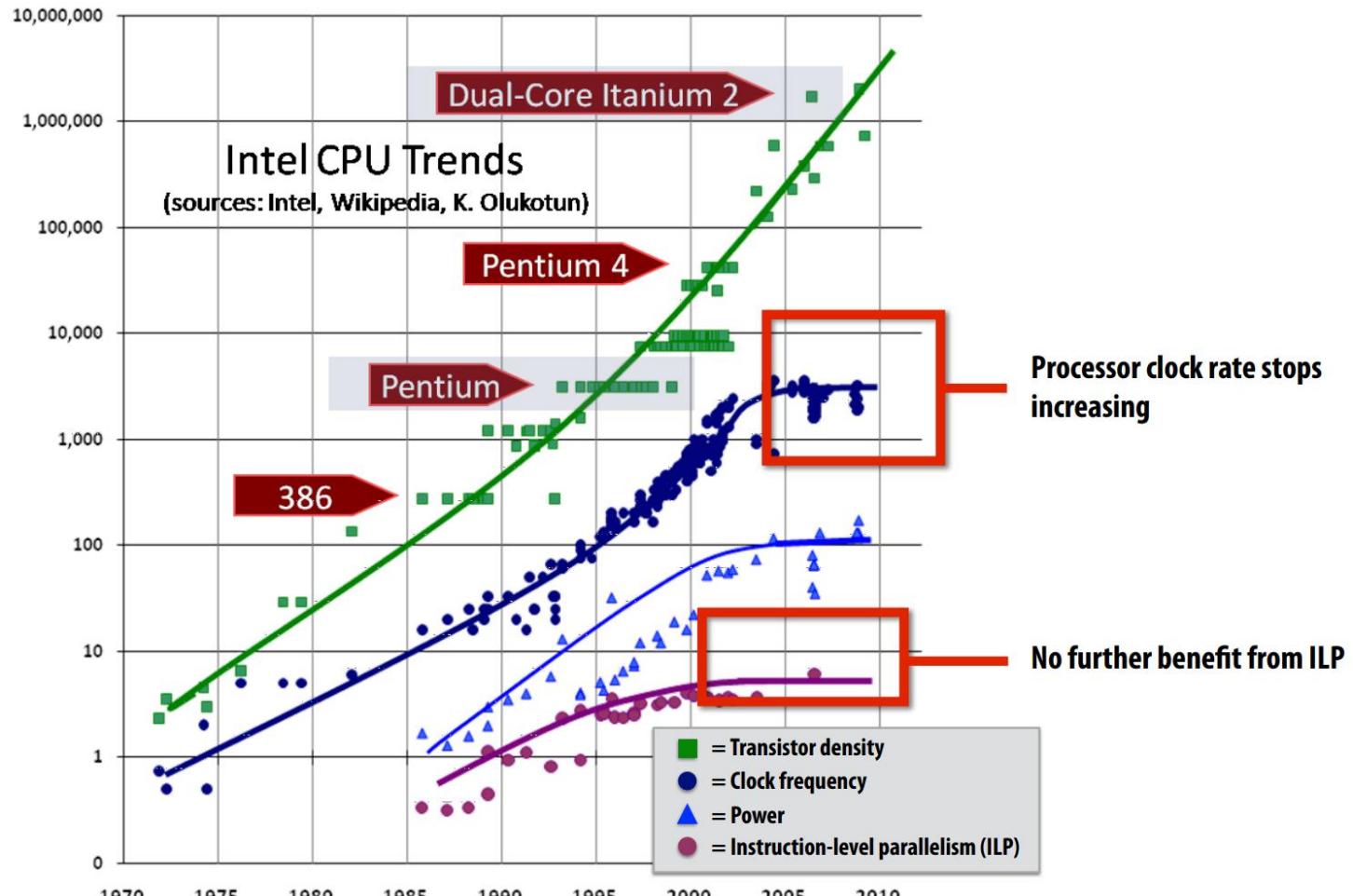
- Ingredients:
  - Number of operations to perform (of each type)
  - Number & issue rate of “execution ports”/“functional units” (of each type)
- Throughput bound = ops / issue rate
  - E.g.,  $(1 \text{ mla} + 1 \text{ mul}) / (2 + 3 \text{ cycles})$
- Again, a real CPU might not exactly meet this bound

# Software Takeaway

- OoO is much less sensitive to “good code”
  - Better performance portability
  - Of course, compiler still matters, but much less
- OoO makes performance analysis much simpler
  - **Throughput bound:** Availability of execution ports
  - **Latency bound:** “Critical path” latency
  - Slowest gives good approximation of program perf

# Scaling Instruction-Level Parallelism

# Recall from last time: ILP & pipelining tapped out... why?



# Superscalar scheduling is complex & hard to scale

- Q: When is it safe to issue two instructions?
- A: When they are independent
  - Must compare all pairs of input and output registers
- Scalability:  $O(W^2)$  comparisons where  $W$  is “issue width” of processor
  - Not great!

# Limitations of ILP

- **Programs have limited ILP**
  - Even with perfect scheduling, >8-wide issue doesn't help
- 4-wide superscalar  $\times$  20-stage pipeline = **80** instrns in flight
- High-performance OoO buffers *hundreds* of instructions
- Pipelines can only go so deep
  - Branch misprediction penalty grows
  - Frequency (GHz) limited by power
- Dynamic scheduling overheads are significant
- Out-of-order scheduling is expensive

# Limitations of ILP → Multicore

- ILP works great! ...But is complex + hard to scale
- From hardware perspective, multicore is much more efficient, but...
- **Parallel software is hard!**
  - Industry resisted multicore for as long as possible
  - When multicore finally happened, CPU  $\mu$ arch simplified  
→ more cores
  - Many program(mer)s still struggle to use multicore effectively