

# **CS / EE 320**

# **Computer Organization and Assembly Language**

## **Lecture 19**

## **Spring 2025**

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**Topics: Examples of Pipelining Hazards and Performance,  
Branch Prediction in Pipelining**

- Removal of Data Hazards – Some Examples
- Control Hazards in Pipelined MIPS
- Branch Predictors
  - Static – Compiler level
    - Branch Always Taken, Never Taken, Forward Taken, Backward Taken, etc.
    - Some improvement over no prediction
- Dynamic Branch Predictors - Introduction

**QUIZ**  
**after Eid**  
**Break**

# Question 1 Eliminate Data Hazard using NOP



## Given Code

```
lw $t0, 0($s0)
lw $t1, 0($t0)
lw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $t2, $t2, 5
sw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $s0, $s0, 4
add $t6, $t4, $t5
```

## Show Dependence

```
lw $t0, 0($s0)
lw $t1, 0($t0)
lw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $t2, $t2, 5
sw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $s0, $s0, 4
add $t6, $t4, $t5
```

## With NOP for hazard removal

```
lw $t0, 0($s0)
NOP
NOP
lw $t1, 0($t0)
NOP
NOP
lw $t2, 0($t1)
NOP
NOP
addi $t2, $t2, 5
NOP
NOP
sw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $s0, $s0, 4
add $t6, $t4, $t5
```

# Question 2 Eliminate Data Hazard using NOP



## Given Code

```
addi $sp, $sp-8
sw $s0, 0($sp)
sw $ra, 4($sp)
add $s0, $t0, $t7
sub $a0, $s0, $t3
lw $s0, 0($sp)
lw $ra, 4($sp)
addi $sp, $sp, 8
Jr $ra
```

## Show Dependence

```
addi $sp, $sp-8
sw $s0, 0($sp)
sw $ra, 4($sp)
add $s0, $t0, $t7
sub $a0, $s0, $t3
lw $s0, 0($sp)
lw $ra, 4($sp)
addi $sp, $sp, 8
Jr $ra
```

## With NOP

```
addi $sp, $sp-8
NOP
NOP
sw $s0, 0($sp)
sw $ra, 4($sp)
add $s0, $t0, $t7
NOP
NOP
sub $a0, $s0, $t3
lw $s0, 0($sp)
lw $ra, 4($sp)
addi $sp, $sp, 8
NOP
Jr $ra
```

# Question 3 Eliminate Data Hazard using Reordering



## Given Code

```
# a=b+e; c=b+f
```

```
lw $t1, 0($t0)
lw $t2, 4($t0)
add $t3, $t1, $t2
sw $t3, 12($t0)
lw $t4, 8($t0)
add $t5, $t1, $t4
sw $t5, 16($t0)
```

## Show Dependence

```
lw $t1, 0($t0)
lw $t2, 4($t0)
add $t3, $t1, $t2
sw $t3, 12($t0)
lw $t4, 8($t0)
add $t5, $t1, $t4
sw $t5, 16($t0)
```

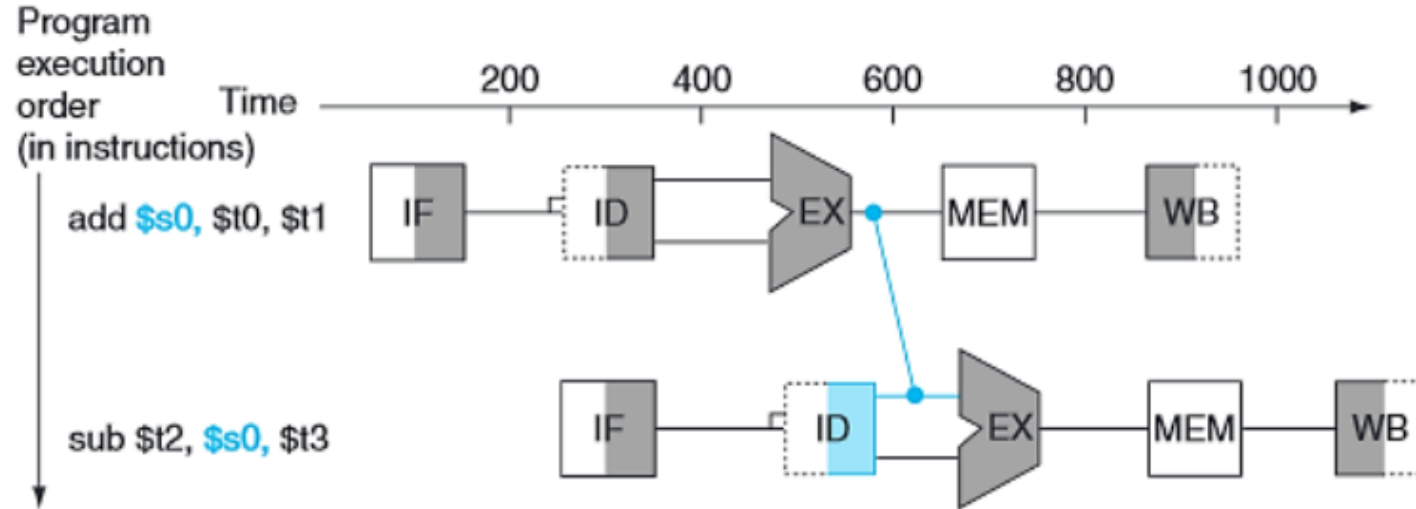
Stall

Stall

## With Reordering

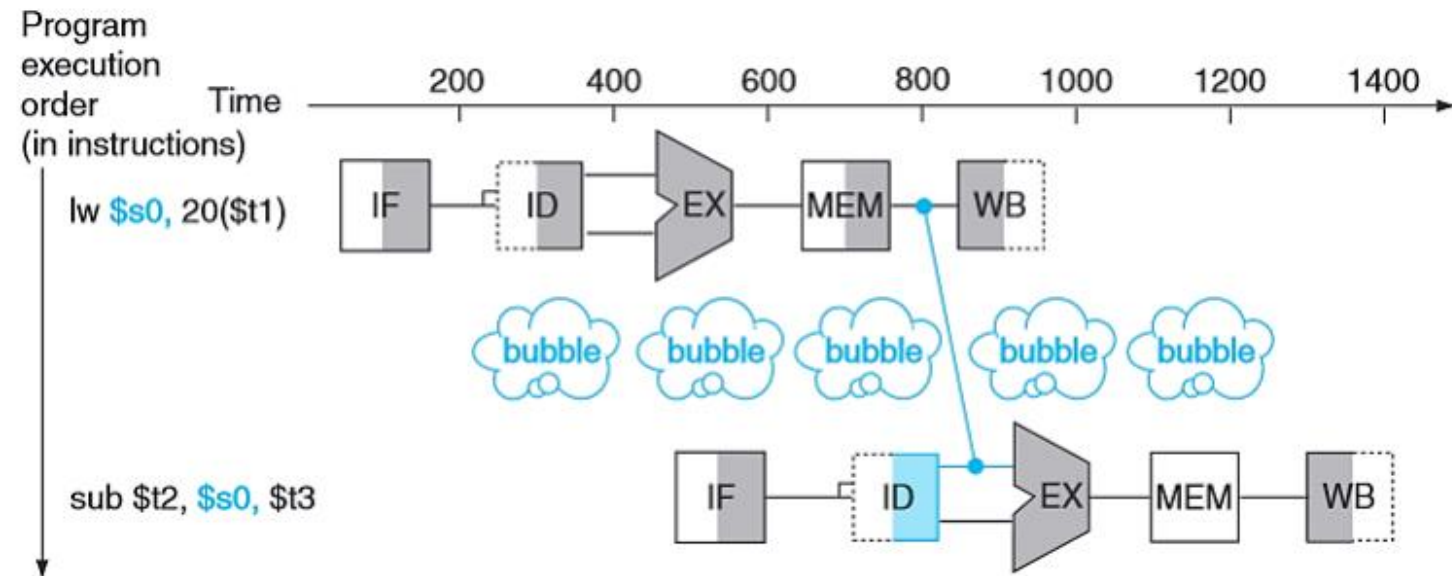
```
lw $t1, 0($t0)
lw $t2, 4($t0)
lw $t4, 8($t0)
add $t3, $t1, $t2
sw $t3, 12($t0)
lw $t4, 8($t0)
add $t5, $t1, $t4
sw $t5, 16($t0)
```

# Forwarding Types

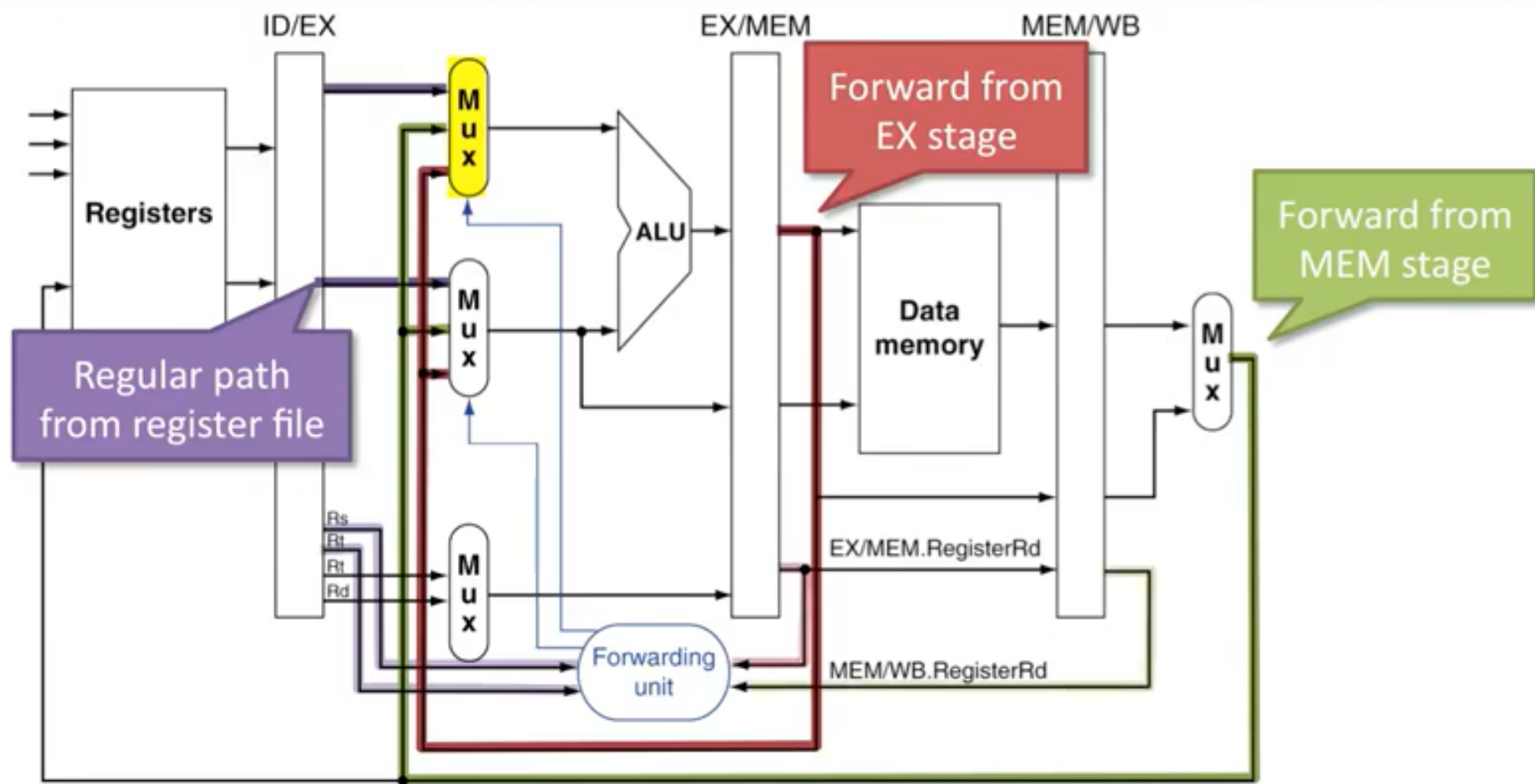


ALU Forwarding

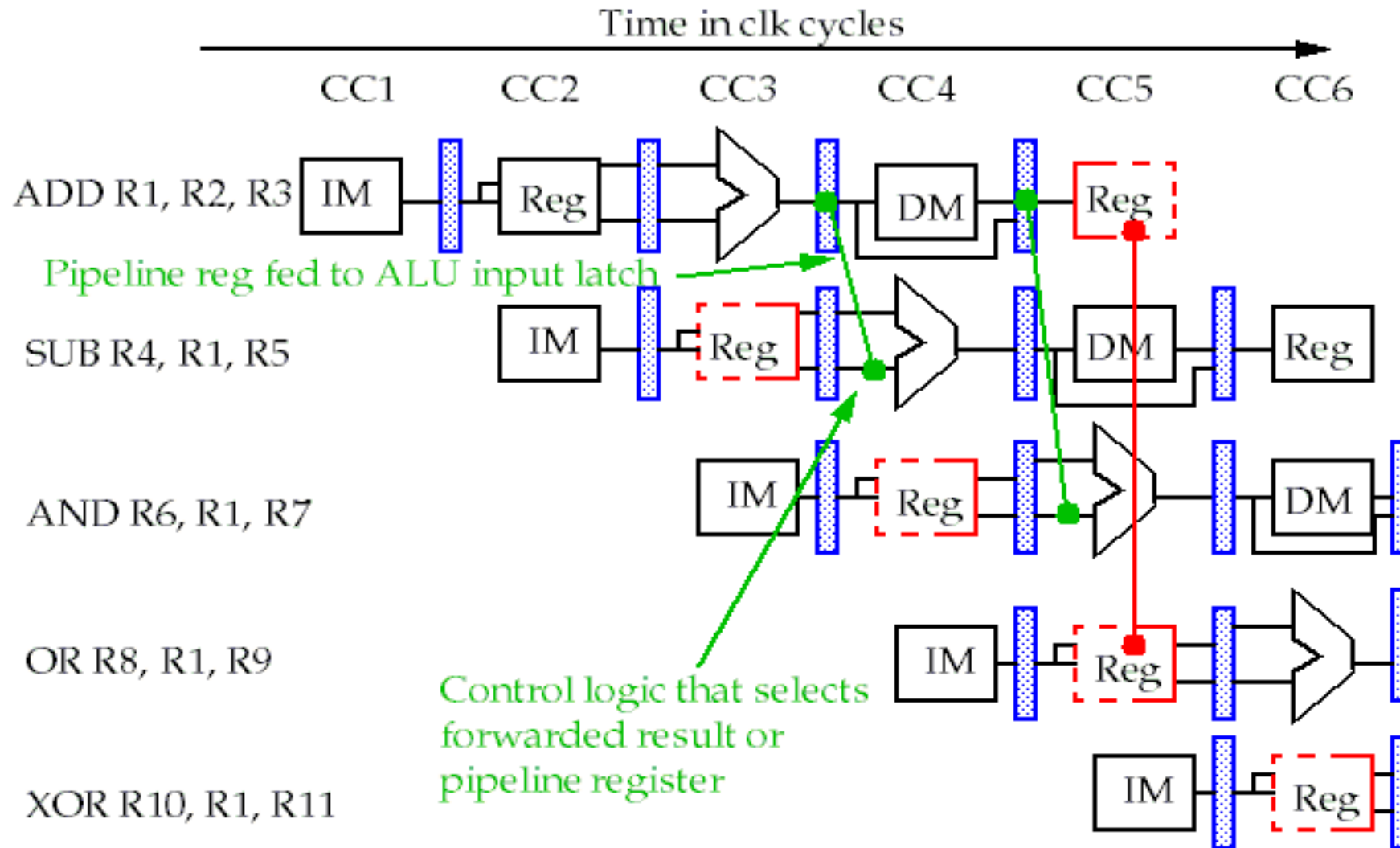
Memory Forwarding



# Forwarding Paths in MIPS Pipeline



# Forwarding Possibility





# Question 4 Eliminate Data Hazard with Forwarding & NOP



**Forwarding:**  
1. After Mem  
2. After ALU  
3. RF R/W

## Given Code

```
lw $t0, 0($s0)
lw $t1, 0($t0)
lw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $t2, $t2, 5
sw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $s0, $s0, 4
add $t6, $t4, $t5
```

## Show Dependence

```
lw $t0, 0($s0)
lw $t1, 0($t0)
lw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $t2, $t2, 5
sw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $s0, $s0, 4
add $t6, $t4, $t5
```

Blue arrows indicate data hazards: from the first 'lw \$t0' to 'lw \$t1', from 'lw \$t1' to 'lw \$t2', and from 'lw \$t2' to 'addi \$t2'.

## With NOP

```
lw $t0, 0($s0)
NOP
lw $t1, 0($t0)
NOP
lw $t2, 0($t1)
NOP
lw $t2, 0($t1)
NOP
addi $t2, $t2, 5
sw $t2, 0($t1)
addi $s0, $s0, 4
add $t6, $t4, $t5
```

# Instruction Execution on Pipeline Diagram / Table



If we are using a pipelined processor with forwarding, we have the following stages executing in each cycle:

cycle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
lw \$t1,0(\$t0)	IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB								
lw \$t2,4(\$t0)		IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB							
add \$t3,\$t1,\$t2				IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB					
sw \$t3,12(\$t0)					IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB				
lw \$t4,8(\$t0)						IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB			
add \$t5,\$t1,\$t4								IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB	
sw \$t5,16(\$t0)									IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB

# Instruction Execution with Forwarding & Reordering



The reordering allows us to execute the program in two fewer cycles than before.

cycle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
lw \$t1,0(\$t0)	IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB								
lw \$t2,4(\$t0)		IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB							
lw \$t4,8(\$t0)			IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB						
add \$t3,\$t1,\$t2				IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB					
sw \$t3,12(\$t0)					IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB				
add \$t5,\$t1,\$t4						IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB			
sw \$t5,16(\$t0)							IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB		

# Question 5 Eliminate Data Hazard with Forwarding & NOP



## Forwarding:

1. After Mem
2. After ALU
3. RF R/W

### Given Code

```
lw $t0, 0($a0)
add $t2, $t0, $a1
addi $t2, $zero, 4
addi $t1, $zero, 2
sll $t1, $t1, 2
add $t1, $a0, $t1
sw $t2, 0($t1)
jr $ra
```

### Show Dependence

```
lw $t0, 0($a0)
add $t2, $t0, $a1
addi $t2, $zero, 4
addi $t1, $zero, 2
sll $t1, $t1, 2
add $t1, $a0, $t1
sw $t2, 0($t1)
jr $ra
```

### With NOP

```
lw $t0, 0($a0)
NOP
add $t2, $t0, $a1
addi $t2, $zero, 4
addi $t1, $zero, 2
sll $t1, $t1, 2
add $t1, $a0, $t1
sw $t2, 0($t1)
jr $ra
```

Only One  
NOP,  
With  
Forwarding

# Question 4.16 from 6<sup>th</sup> Ed P&H

**4.16** In this exercise, we examine how pipelining affects the clock cycle time of the processor. Problems in this exercise assume that individual stages of the datapath have the following latencies:

IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB
250ps	350ps	150ps	300ps	200ps

Also, assume that instructions executed by the processor are broken down as follows:

ALU/Logic	Jump/Branch	Load	Store
45%	20%	20%	15%

**4.16.1** [5] <§4.6> What is the clock cycle time in a pipelined and non-pipelined processor?

**4.16.2** [10] <§4.6> What is the total latency of an lw instruction in a pipelined and non-pipelined processor?

**4.16.3** [10] <§4.6> If we can split one stage of the pipelined datapath into two new stages, each with half the latency of the original stage, which stage would you split and what is the new clock cycle time of the processor?

**4.16.4** [10] <§4.6> Assuming there are no stalls or hazards, what is the utilization of the data memory?

**4.16.5** [10] <§4.6> Assuming there are no stalls or hazards, what is the utilization of the write-register port of the "Registers" unit?

# End of Chapter Questions – Example 2

**4.9** In this exercise, we examine how data dependences affect execution in the basic 5-stage pipeline described in Section 4.5. Problems in this exercise refer to the following sequence of instructions:

```
or r1,r2,r3
or r2,r1,r4
or r1,r1,r2
```

Also, assume the following cycle times for each of the options related to forwarding:

Without Forwarding	With Full Forwarding	With ALU-ALU Forwarding Only
250ps	300ps	290ps

**4.9.1** [10] <§4.5> Indicate dependences and their type.

**4.9.2** [10] <§4.5> Assume there is no forwarding in this pipelined processor. Indicate hazards and add `nop` instructions to eliminate them.

**4.9.3** [10] <§4.5> Assume there is full forwarding. Indicate hazards and add `NOP` instructions to eliminate them.

**4.9.4** [10] <§4.5> What is the total execution time of this instruction sequence without forwarding and with full forwarding? What is the speedup achieved by adding full forwarding to a pipeline that had no forwarding?

**4.9.5** [10] <§4.5> Add `nop` instructions to this code to eliminate hazards if there is ALU-ALU forwarding only (no forwarding from the MEM to the EX stage).

**4.9.6** [10] <§4.5> What is the total execution time of this instruction sequence with only ALU-ALU forwarding? What is the speedup over a no-forwarding pipeline?

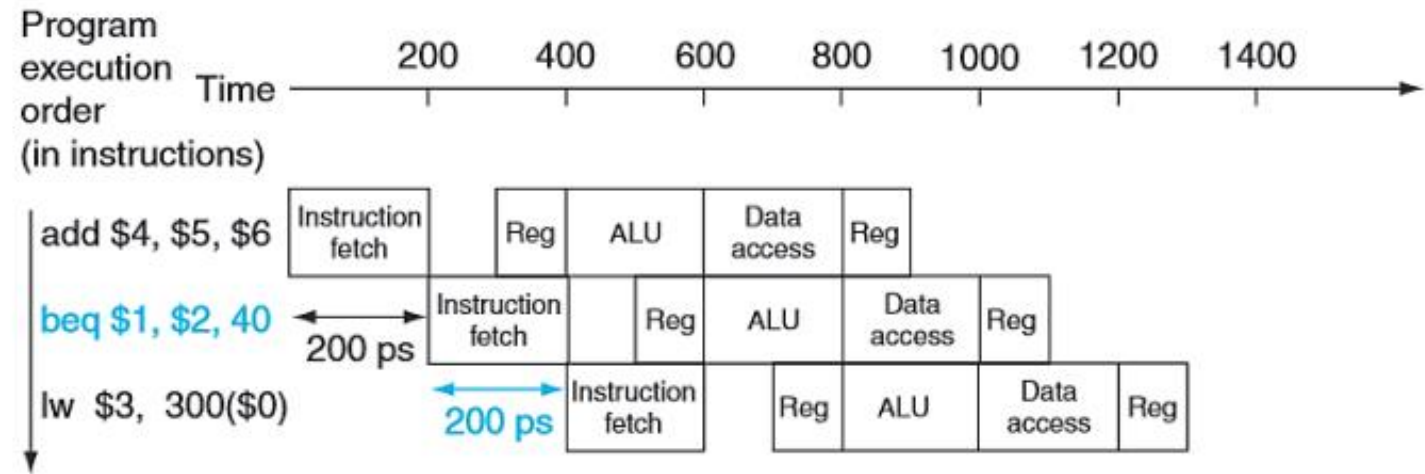
Cycles →	Cyc 1	Cyc 2	Cyc 3	Cyc 4	Cyc 5	Cyc 6	Cyc 7	Cyc 8	Cyc 9	Cyc 10	Cyc 11	Cyc 12	Cyc 13	Cyc 14	Cyc 15
Instructions ↓															
INSTR 1	IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB										

# Pipelining and Branch Instructions

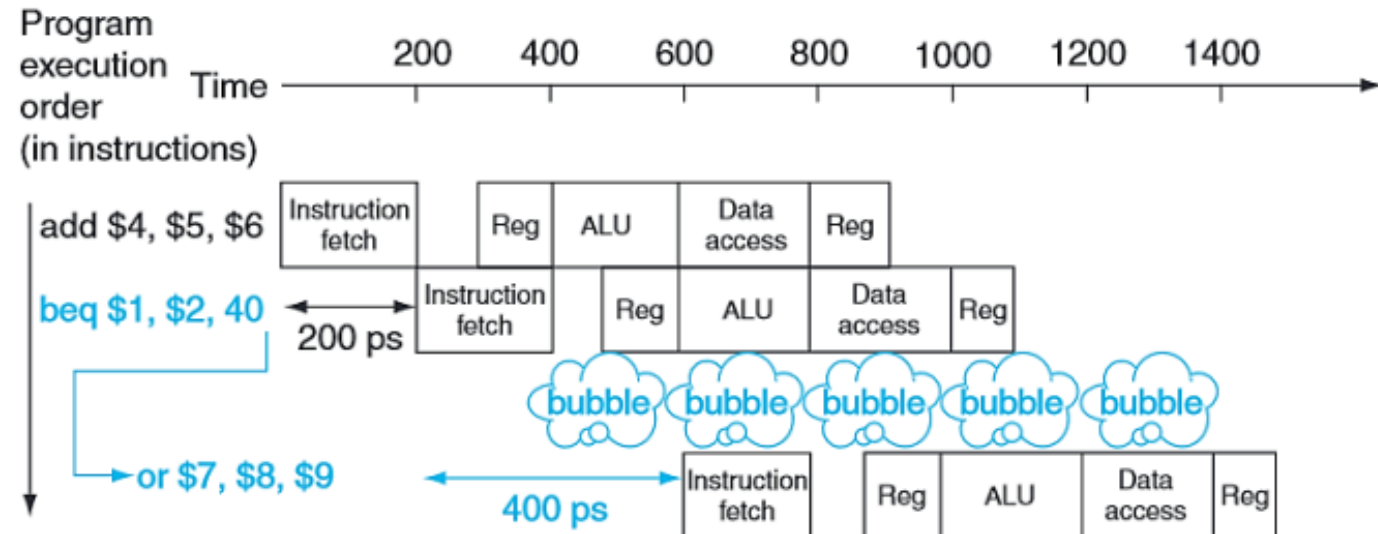


# Branch Penalty

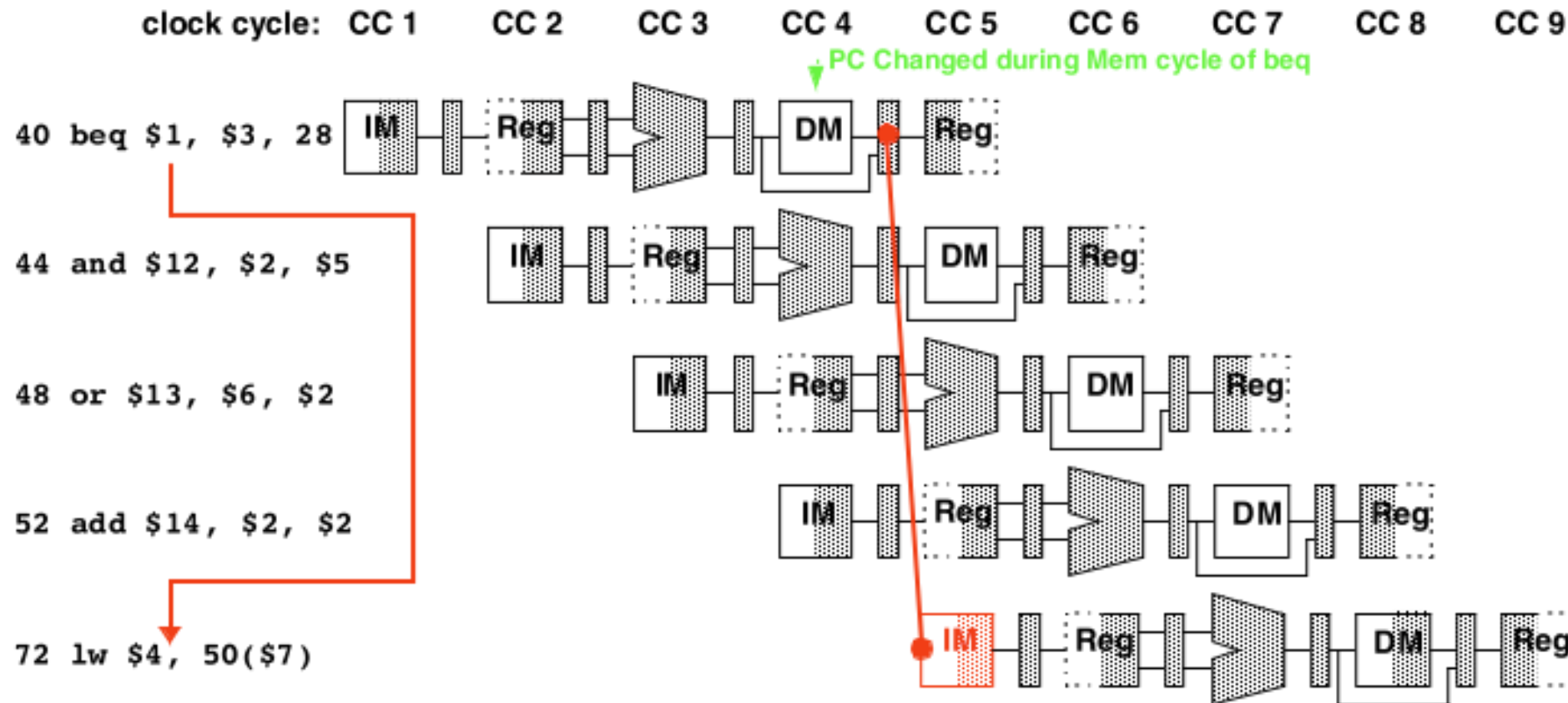
When predicting that a branch is not taken, we proceed as normal. If the branch is not taken, there is no issue.



If the branch is taken, however, we incur a stalling penalty. This penalty can vary but even in a highly optimized pipeline we will have to essentially “stall” for a cycle.

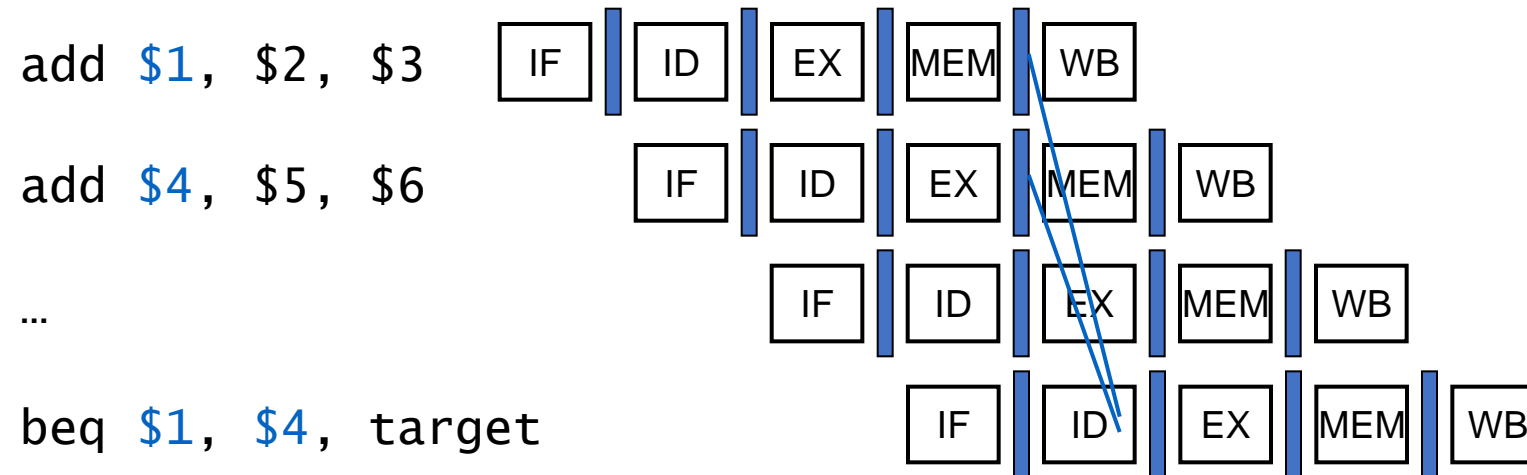


# How Branches Impact Pipelined Instructions?



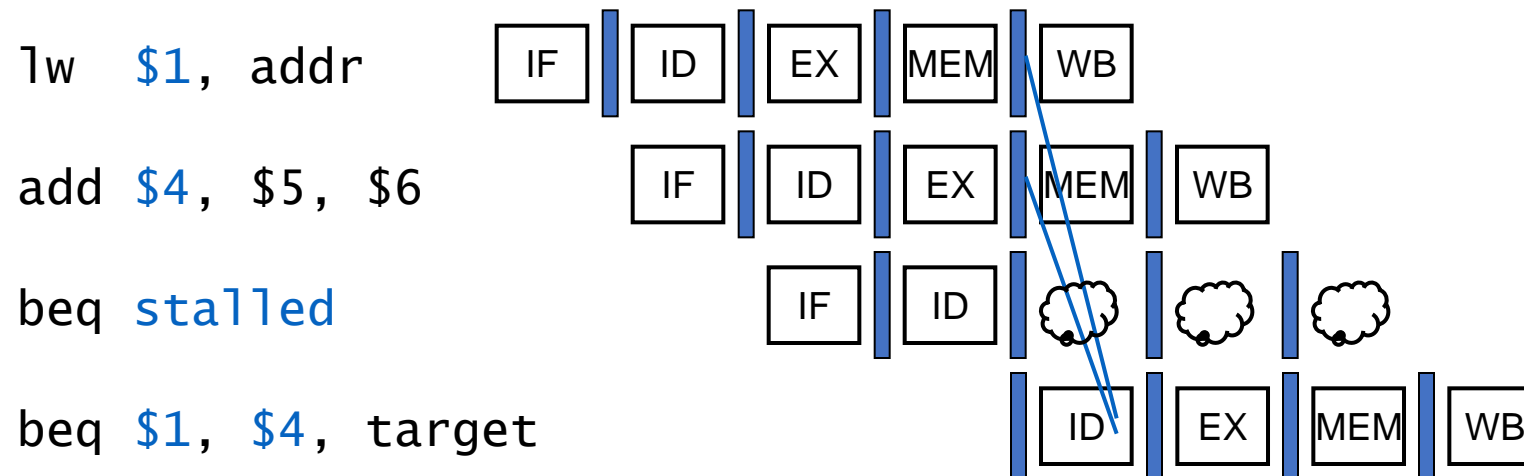
- If branch condition true, must skip 44, 48, 52
  - But, these have already started down the pipeline
  - They will complete unless we do something about it
- How do we deal with this?
  - We'll consider 2 possibilities

- If a comparison register is a destination of 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> preceding ALU instruction

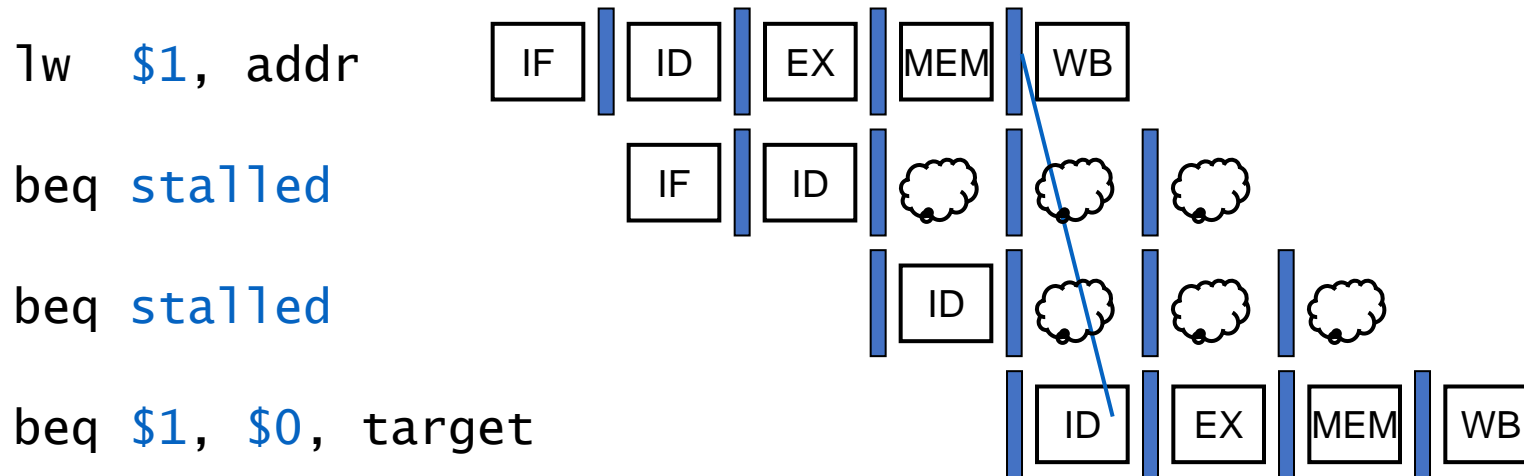


- Can resolve using forwarding

- If a comparison register is a destination of preceding ALU instruction or 2<sup>nd</sup> preceding load instruction
  - Need 1 stall cycle

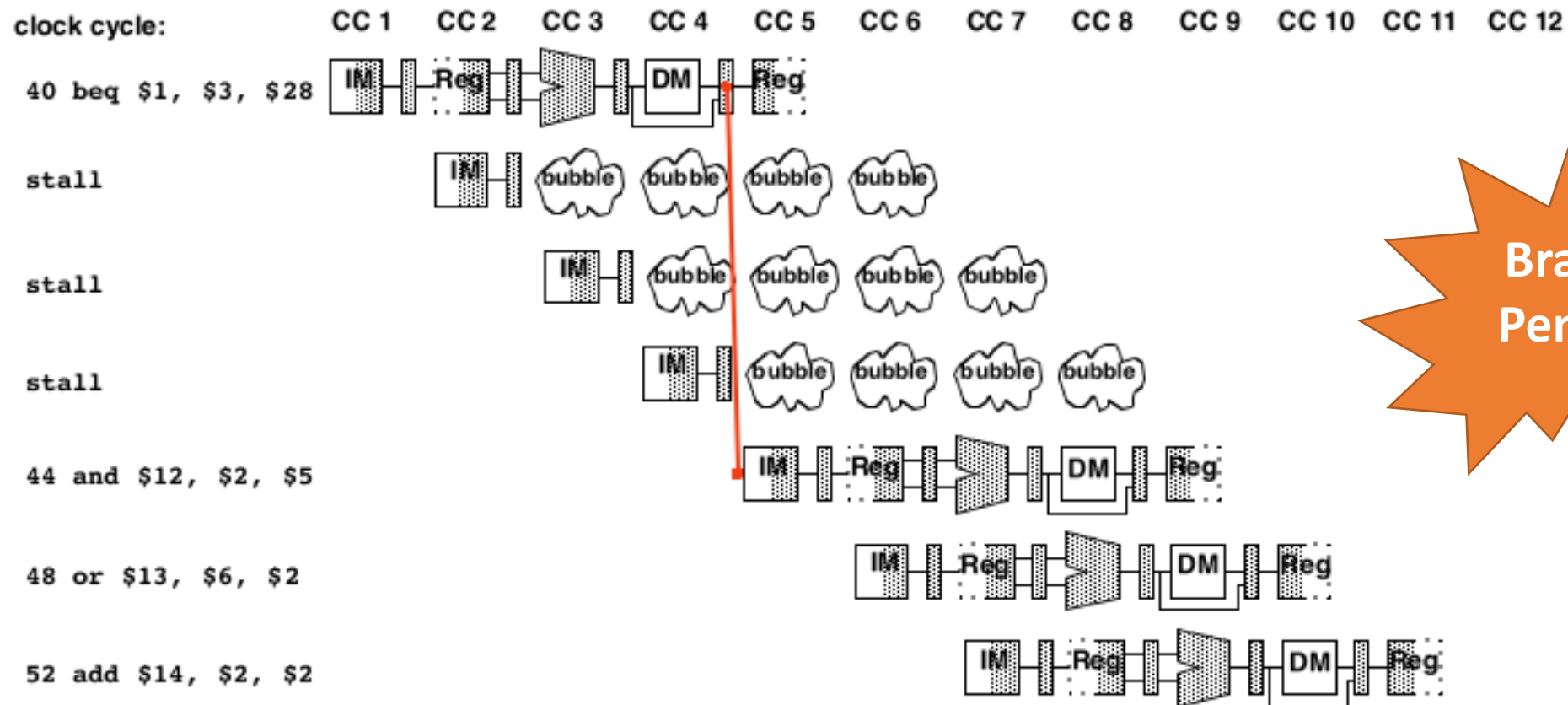


- If a comparison register is a destination of immediately preceding load instruction
  - Need 2 stall cycles



# Branch Hazards – One possibility Always Stall

- **Branch not taken**
  - Still must wait 3 cycles
  - Time lost
  - Could have spent CCs fetching, decoding next instructions

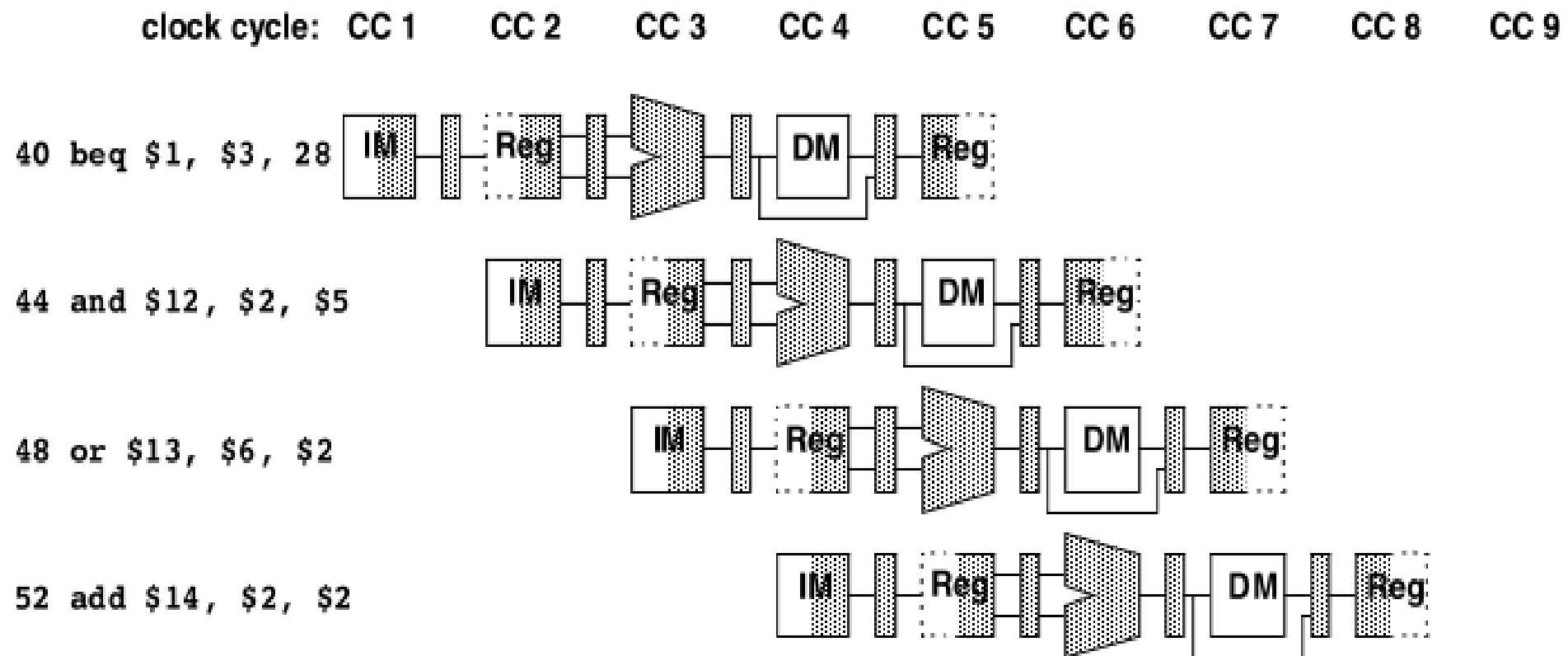


**Branch  
Penalty**

- On average, branches are **taken  $\frac{1}{2}$  the time**
  - If branch not taken...
    - Continue normal processing
  - Else, if branch is taken...
    - Need to flush improper instruction from pipeline
- One approach:
  - Always assume branch will NOT be taken
    - Cuts overall time for branch processing in  $\frac{1}{2}$
  - If prediction is incorrect, just flush the pipeline

# Impact of “predict not taken”

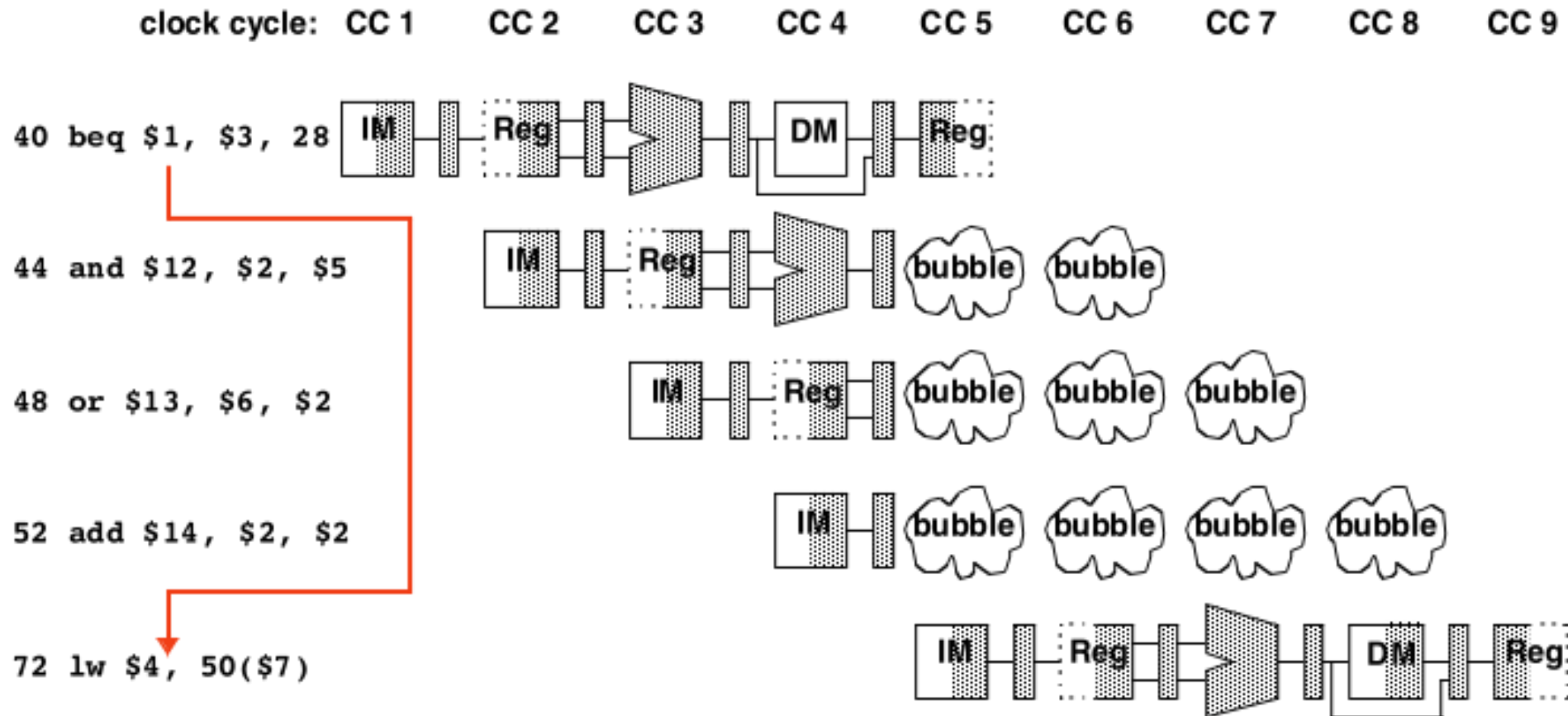
- Execution proceeds normally – no penalty





# Impact of “predict not taken”

- Bubbles injected into 3 stages during cycle 5



- Pipelining changes the timing as to when the result(s) of an instruction are produced
- Additional HW is needed to ensure that the correct program results are produced while maintaining the speedups offered from the introduction of pipelining
- We must also account for the efficient pipelining of control instructions (e.g. beq) to preserve performance gains *and* program correctness

# Branch Prediction

In *branch prediction*, we attempt to predict the branching decisions and act accordingly.

When we assumed the branch wasn't taken, we were making a simple *static prediction*.

In *dynamic branch prediction*, we look up the address of the instruction to see if the branch was taken last time. If so, we will **predict** that the branch will be taken again and **optimistically fetch the instructions** from the branch target rather than the subsequent instructions.

- Definition: Instead of adding NOP bubble, try running potential instructions instead
- Speculation: Run an instruction that may not be the right one to be executing
- Branch Prediction - Choose which possible instruction to run:
  - Static Branch Prediction – Fixed prediction scheme
  - Dynamic Branch Prediction – Prediction depends upon recent Branch decisions

- **Guess possible outcome of Branch Instruction**
  - **Technique is called “branch predicting”; needs 2 parts:**
    - “Predictor” to guess where / if instruction will branch
      - (and to where)
    - “Recovery Mechanism”:
      - i.e. a way to fix your mistake
  - **Prior strategy: (Static)**
    - Predictor: always guess branch never taken
    - Recovery: flush instructions if branch taken
  - **Alternative: accumulate info. in IF stage as to... (Dynamic)**
    - Whether or not for any particular PC value a branch was taken next
    - To where it is taken
    - How to update with information from later stages

- Choose a method of Branch Prediction independent of the code running  
“Static Branch Prediction”:
  - Assume Branches are Never Taken
  - Assume Branches are Always Taken
  - Assume Forward Branches are Taken and Backward Branches are Not Taken
- **Speculatively load next instruction** as per above scheme
- Properties of overall code and program need to be studied to come up with a good Static Prediction

- Choose a method for speculative instruction based on **evaluating the code** that is running:
  - **(m,n) Branch Predictors**
  - **Tournament Branch Predictors**
  - **Perceptron Branch Predictors**
- (m,n) Predictor looks at some past Branch Decisions
- Tournament Predictor can select between (m,n) and Static Predictor based on some algorithm, also looking at code
- Perceptron Predictor in modern hardware looks at surrounding code (before and after branch) and how it could impact Branch Decisions



- 1-Bit and 2-Bit Branch Predictors
- (m,n) branch predictors that consider multiple loops in programs
- Branch History Table
- Cache memory for Branch Target Addresses
- State Machines of 1-Bit and 2-Bit Predictors

A branch prediction buffer is a small memory indexed by the lower portion of the address of the branch instruction. The memory simply contains one bit indicating whether the branch was taken last time or not.

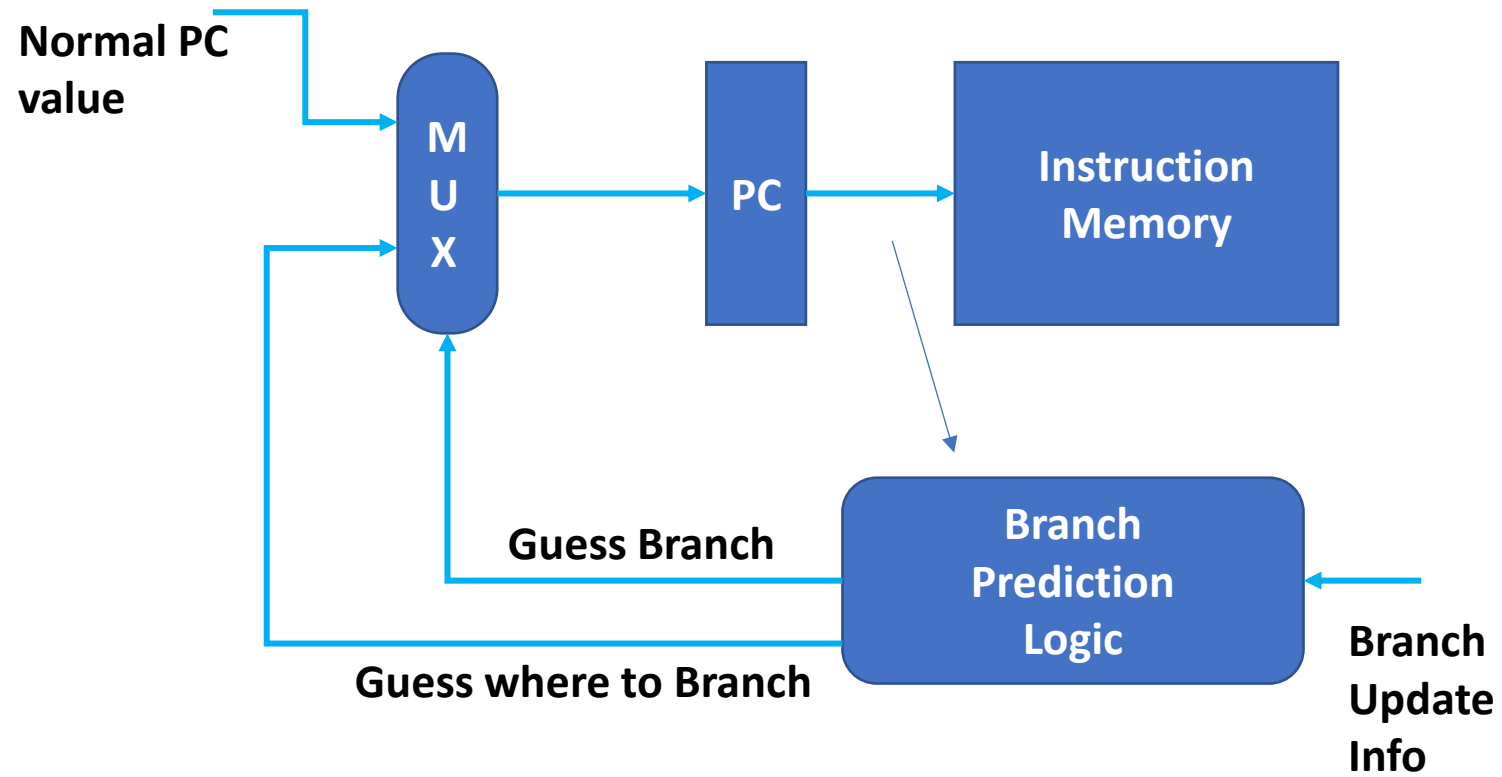
It's just a simple mechanism that might give us a hint as to what the right decision might be.

## Note:

- The buffer is shared between branches with the same lower addresses. A buffer value may reflect another branch instruction.
- The branch instruction may simply make a different decision than it did before.

# 1 Bit Branch Prediction

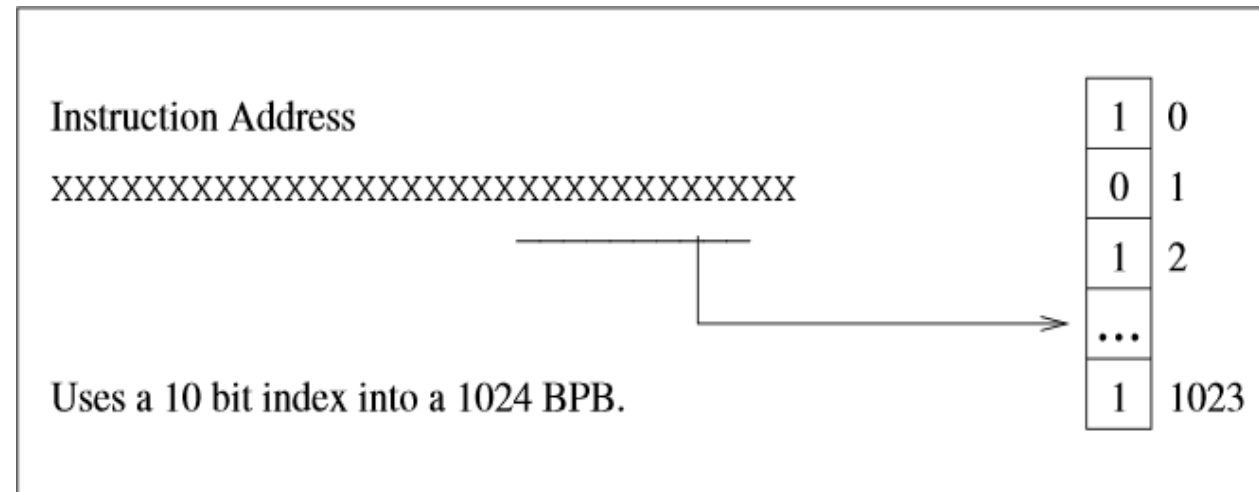
# A Branch Predictor



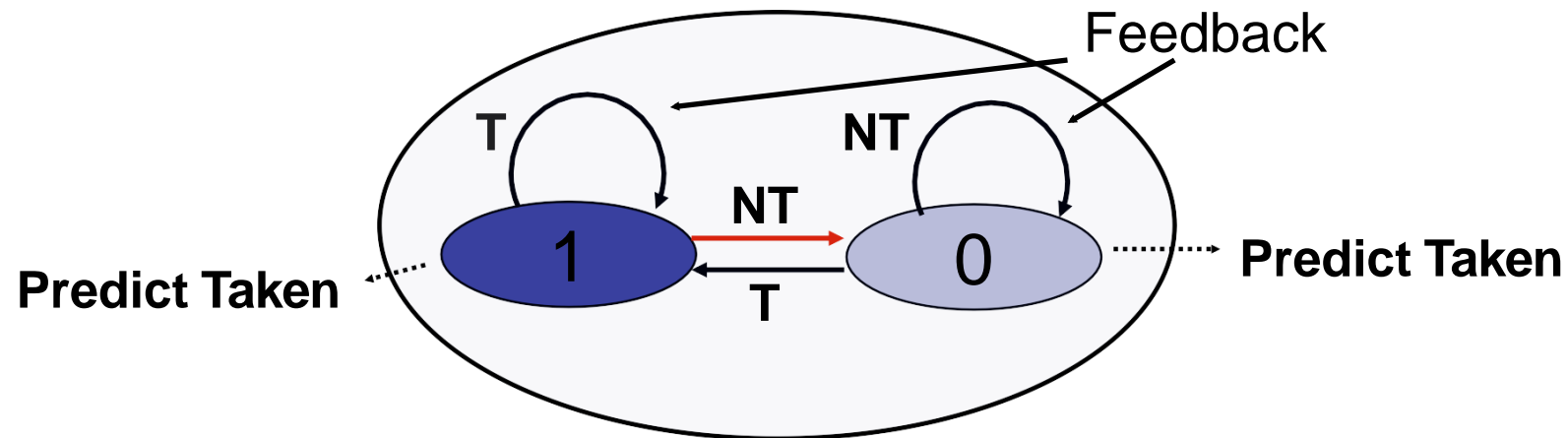
# 1 Bit Branch Prediction Buffer

Here's how the 1-bit branch prediction buffer works:

- Each element in the buffer contains a single bit indicating whether the branch prediction was taken last time.
- We make our prediction based on the bit found in the buffer.
- If the prediction turns out to be incorrect, then we flip the bit in the buffer and correct the pipeline.



## 1-bit prediction

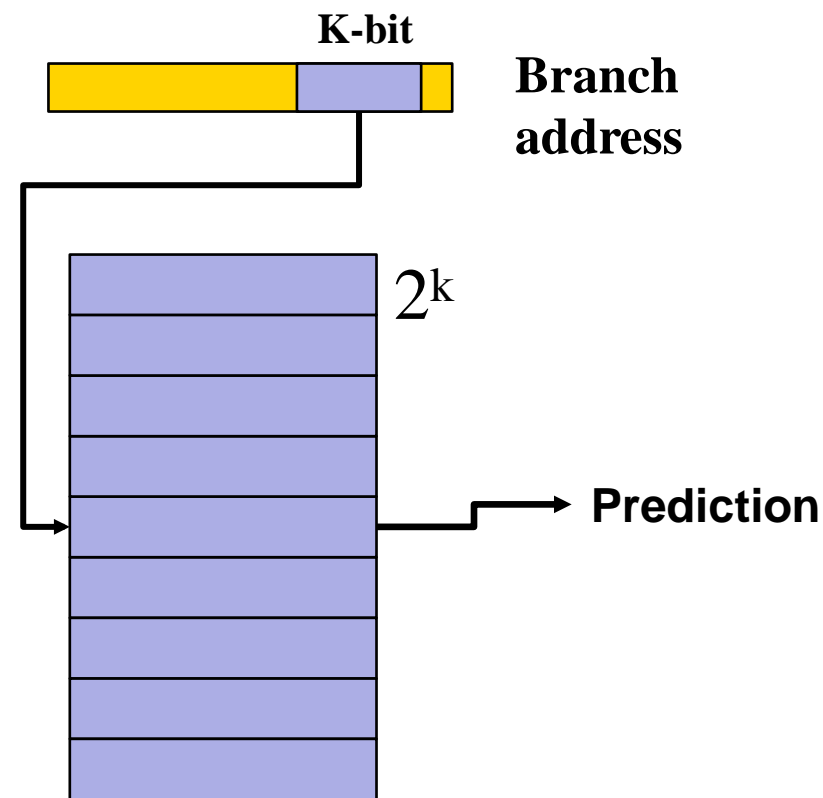


T = Taken

NT = Not Taken

**BHT** also called branch prediction buffer

- Can use only one 1-bit predictor, but accuracy is low
- BHT: use a table of simple predictors, indexed by bits from PC
- More entries, more cost, but less conflicts, higher accuracy
- BHT can contain complex predictors



# Example of Branch Prediction 1 Bit



Consider a loop that branches nine times in a row, then is not taken once. What is the **prediction accuracy** for this branch, assuming the prediction bit for this branch remains in the prediction buffer?

```
int i = 0;
do{
    /* loop body */
    i = i + 1
}while(i < 10);
```

```

L1:      add    $t0, $0, $0
          /* loop body*/
          addi   $t0, $t0, 1
          slti   $t1, $t0, 10
          bne    $t1, $0, L1
```

- The prediction behavior will **mispredict on both the first and last loop iterations**.
- The last loop iteration prediction happens because we've already taken the branch nine-times so far.
- The first loop iteration happens because the bit was flipped on the last iteration of the previous execution.
- So, the prediction accuracy is 80%.



- **Example:**
  - in a loop, 1-bit BHT will cause 2 mispredictions
- **Consider a loop of 9 iterations before exit:**

```
for (...) {  
    for (i=0; i<9; i++)  
        a[i] = a[i] * 2.0;  
}
```

  - End of loop case, when it exits instead of looping as before
  - First time through loop on *next* time through code, when it predicts *exit* instead of looping
  - Only 80% accuracy even if loop 90% of the time

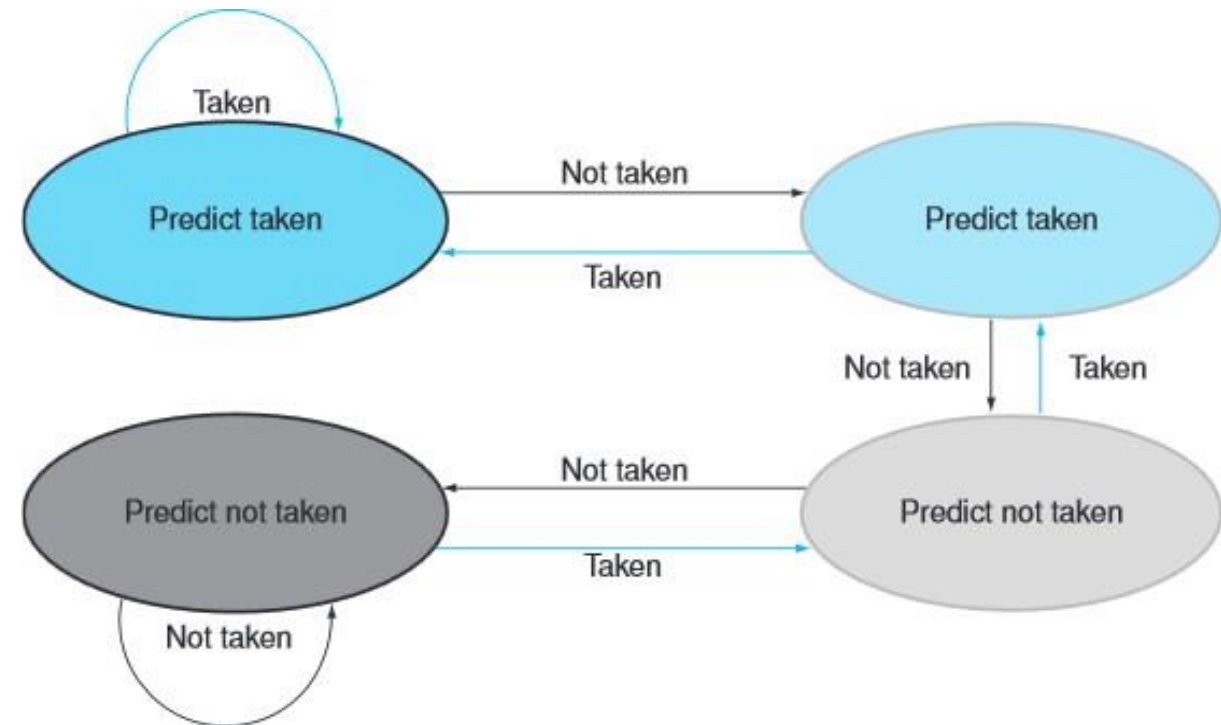
## 2 Bit Branch Prediction

# 2 Bit Branch Prediction

To increase this prediction accuracy, we can use a 2-bit prediction buffer. In the 2-bit scheme, a prediction must be wrong twice before the bit is flipped.

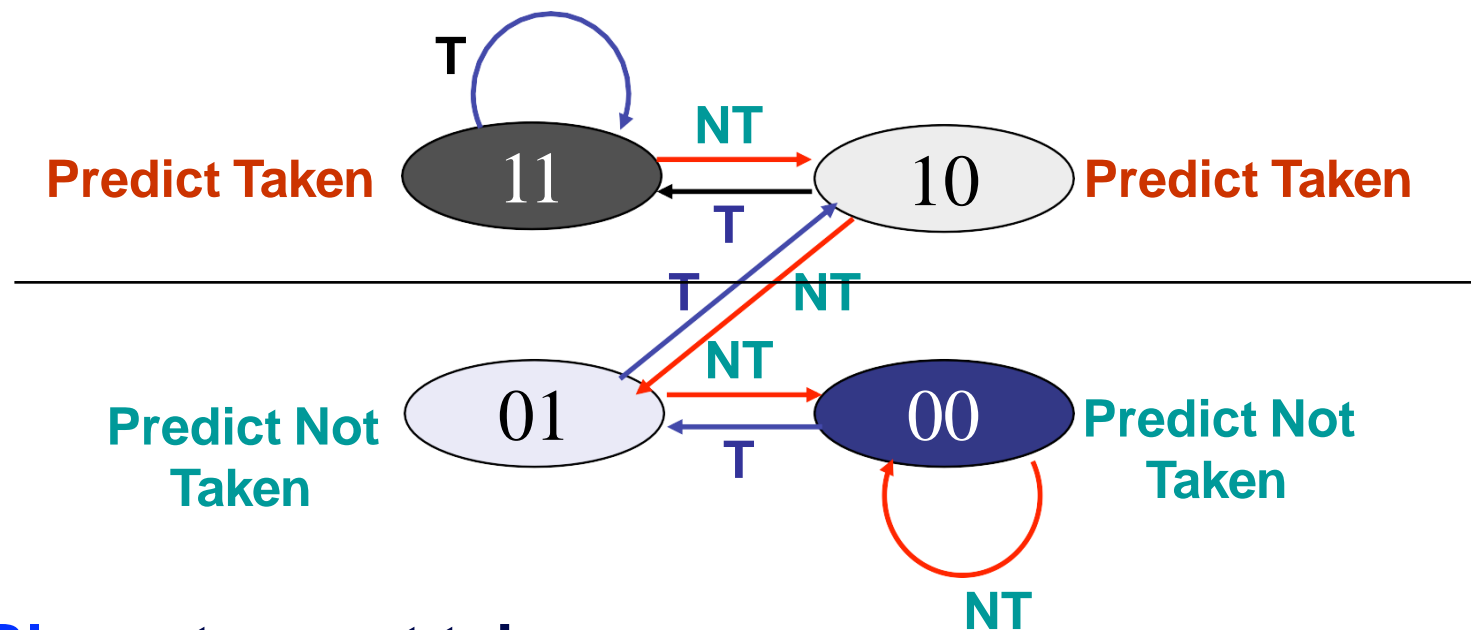
This way, a branch that strongly favors a particular decision will be wrong only once.

We can access the buffer during the IF stage to determine whether the next instruction needs to be calculated, or we can continue with sequential execution.



# Using a 2-bit saturating counter

- **Solution: 2-bit scheme where change prediction only if get misprediction *twice*:**



- **Blue:** stop, not taken
- **Gray:** go, taken
- Adds *hysteresis* to decision making process

- Chap 4, P&H Textbook