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Tutorial 08: ARM Data Definition Directives

Computer Science Department

CS2208: Introduction to Computer Organization and Architecture

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☐ Assembly language directives include:

AREA To name a region of code or data

ENTRY The execution starting point

END The physical end of the program

name EQU v. expr Equate a name to the value of the v. expr

Will not make any memory allocation, i.e.,

Similar to #define in C

{label} DCD v. expr {, v. expr } ... Set up one or more 32-bit constant in memory

Must start at a multiple of 4 address location

{label} DCW v. expr {, v. expr } ... Set up one or more 16-bit constant in memory

Must start at an even address location

{label} DCB v. expr {, v. expr } ... Set up one or more 8-bit constant in memory

Can start anywhere

{label} SPACE size expr Reserves a zeroed block of memory

Can start anywhere

ALIGN Ensures that next instruction is

correctly aligned on 32-bit boundaries,

i.e., to start at a multiple of 4 address location



ARM Assembly Directives

- The "v. expr" can be any constant-value expression, i.e., its value MUST be evaluated during assembly phase, not during execution.
- ☐ The "v. expr" examples:
 - 2*50/3 → to be evaluated to 0x21 (i.e., 33)
 - \circ 'A' → to be evaluated to 0x41 (i.e., 65) \circ
 - o "ABC" → to be evaluated to 0x414243.

The single quotation for a single character only. It can be used with DCB, DCW or DCD

The double quotation for a string. It MUST be used with **DCB**



ARM Assembly Directives

- □ Some symbols in Keil assembler have different meanings, based on their location within the instruction:
 - o Equal sign "="
 - at the opcode column means DCB
 - as a prefix to the 2nd operand of an LDR instruction means pseudo instruction Example 1:

```
XYZ = 0x41; the = sign in this context means DCB, i.e.,

XYZ DCB 0x41

What will happen if the "=" sign is omitted?

LDR r0,=0x12345678; to LDR the 32-bit value 0x12345678 into r0

LDR r0,=PPP; to LDR the 32-bit address of PPP into r0

the = sign in this context means the LDR here is a pseudo instruction
```

- Ampersand sign "&"
 - at the opcode column means DCD
 - as a prefix to an operand *means* a HEX value (i.e., similar to 0x)

Example 3:

```
AAA & 0x123456 ;the & sign in this context means DCD, i.e.,

AAA DCD 0x123456

Example 4:

MOV r0,#&8F ;the & sign in this context means a HEX value
```

Percent sign "%"

at the opcode column means SPACE

```
Example 5:
```

```
BBB % 0x40 ;the % sign in this context means SPACE, i.e.,
BBB SPACE 0x40
```



Writing Numbers with Various Radix

☐ The Keil assembler uses

a prefix 0x or & to indicate hexadecimal constant, e.g.,

```
MOV r1, #0x9C
MOV r1, #&9C
or
DCD 0x9C
DCD &9C
```

a prefix 2_ to indicate binary constant, e.g.,

```
MOV r1, #2_10011100
or
DCD 2_10011100
```

a prefix 8_ to indicate octal constant, e.g.,

```
MOV r1, #8_234
or
DCD 8 234
```

no prefix to indicate decimal constant, e.g.,

```
MOV r1, #156
or
DCD 156
```

In ARM assembly, the "#" means Literal or immediate addressing mode

In ARM assembly,
It is *illegal* to use "#" with,
DCD, DCW, or DCB



```
AREA More data definitions, CODE, READONLY
       ENTRY
      MOV r0, # 0xFC; Store a Positive HEX number in r0
      MOV r1, #-0xFC; Store a negative HEX number in r1
      MOV r2, # 240; Store a Positive decimal number in r2
      MOV r3, # -240; Store a negative decimal number in r3
loop
           loop
      В
           1,1,1,1; the "=" here means DCB
one
Letter DCB &41
               ; the "&" here means an ASCII code in HEX (MUST BE between 00 and FF)
                   ; The "0x" prefix is NOT allowed after the "&"
                   ; DCB can start at any memory location.
                  ; Must start at an even address location.
      DCW 2
two
                   ; One byte to be skipped to adjust the location counter.
                   ; IF YOU PUT ALIGN BEFORE THIS DCW, IT WILL SKIP 3 BYTES, NOT JUST ONE,
                   ; TO MAKE THE ADDRESS MULTIPLE OF 4
four
             4.4; the "&" here means DCD
                  ; DCD must start at a multiple of 4 address location
             2 1010
                        ; Binary positive number
      DCD
      DCD -2_1010 ; Binary negative number
      DCD 8 12345670; Octal positive number
      DCD
            -8_12345670; Octal negative number
      DCB
                         ; Any data directive can be without label
                        ; reserves a ZEROED 5 bytes block of memory
data 1 SPACE 5
                         ; the "%" here means SPACE
data 2 %
       ALTGN
                 ; ADVANCE THE LOCATION COUNTER TO THE NEXT MULTIPLE OF 4 ADDRESS LOCATION
data_3 SPACE 5
       END
```

















































