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# **Tutorial 08: ARM Data Definition Directives**

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# **ARM Assembly Directives**

☐ 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:
  - $\circ$  2\*50/3  $\rightarrow$  to be evaluated to 0x21 (i.e., 33)

  - $\circ$  "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** 



- □ Some symbols in Keil assembler have different meanings, based on their location within the instruction:
  - Equal sign "="
    - at the opcode column means DCB
    - as a prefix to the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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?

Example 2:

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
```

- o 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
          1,1,1,1; the "=" here means DCB
               ; the "&" here means an ASCII code in HEX (MUST BE between 00 and FF)
Letter DCB &41
                   ; The "0x" prefix is NOT allowed after the "&"
                   ; DCB can start at any memory location.
                   ; Must start at an even address location.
two
       DCW 2
                   ; 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
             4,4 ; the "&" here means DCD
four
                  ; DCD must start at a multiple of 4 address location
             2 1010 ; Binary positive number
       DCD
       DCD -\overline{2} 1010 ; Binary negative number
       DCD 8 12345670; Octal positive number
             -8 12345670; Octal negative number
       DCD
       DCB 1
                         ; Any data directive can be without label
data_1 SPACE 5 data_2 % 5
                       ; reserves a ZEROED 5 bytes block of memory
                         ; the "%" here means SPACE
       ALIGN : ADVANCE THE LOCATION COUNTER TO THE NEXT MULTIPLE OF 4 ADDRESS LOCATION
data 3 SPACE 5
       END
```

















































