Lecture 04
Machine-Level Programming – part 1

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Slides adapted from Randy Bryant and Dave O'Hallaron: Introduction to Computer Systems, CMU

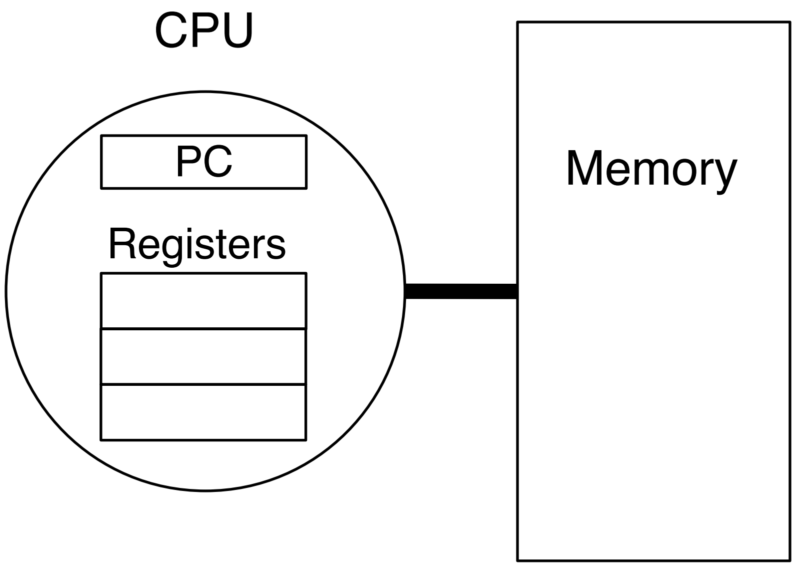
Definitions

- **Architecture (ISA):** The parts of a processor design that one needs to understand to write assembly code
  - "What is directly visible to software"
  - The "contract" or "blueprint" between hardware and software

- **Microarchitecture:** Implementation of the architecture

Instruction Set Architectures

- The ISA defines:
  - The system's **state** (*e.g.*, registers, memory, program counter)
  - The **instructions** the CPU can execute
  - The **effect** that each of these instructions will have on the system state



General ISA Design Decisions

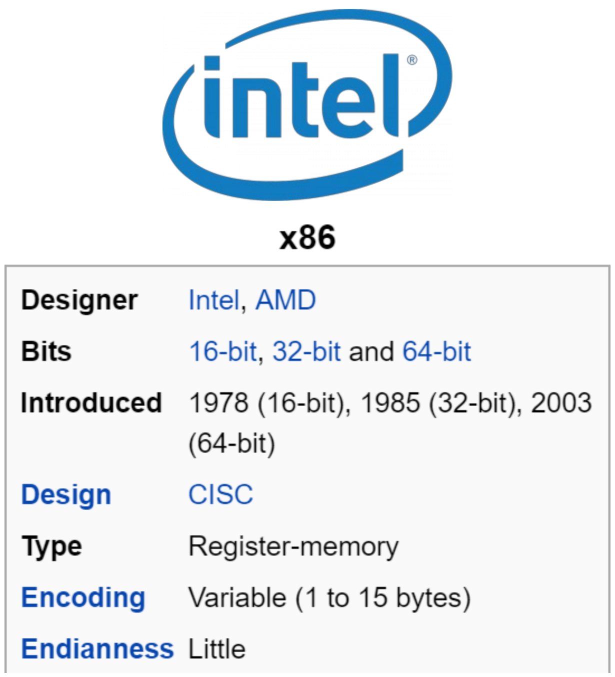
- Instructions
  - What instructions are available? What do they do?
  - How are they encoded?
- Registers
  - How many registers are there?
  - How wide are they?
- Memory
  - How do you specify a memory location?

Instruction Set Philosophies

- *Complex Instruction Set Computing* (CISC):
  Add more and more elaborate and specialized instructions as needed
  - Lots of tools for programmers to use, but hardware must be able to handle all instructions
  - x86-64 is CISC, but only a small subset of instructions encountered with Linux programs

- *Reduced Instruction Set Computing* (RISC):
  Keep instruction set small and regular
  - Easier to build fast hardware
  - Let software do the complicated operations by composing simpler ones

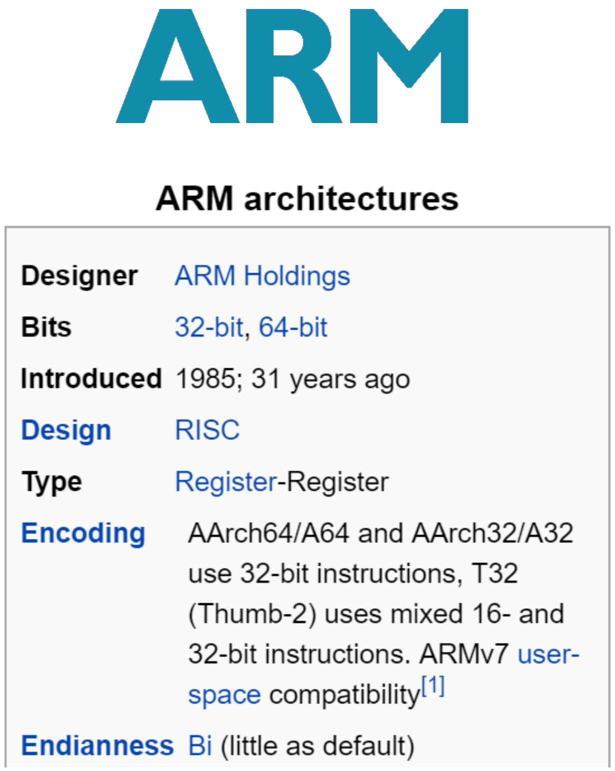
Mainstream ISAs



x86

Designer	Intel, AMD
Bits	16-bit, 32-bit and 64-bit
Introduced	1978 (16-bit), 1985 (32-bit), 2003 (64-bit)
Design	CISC
Type	Register-memory
Encoding	Variable (1 to 15 bytes)
Endianness	Little

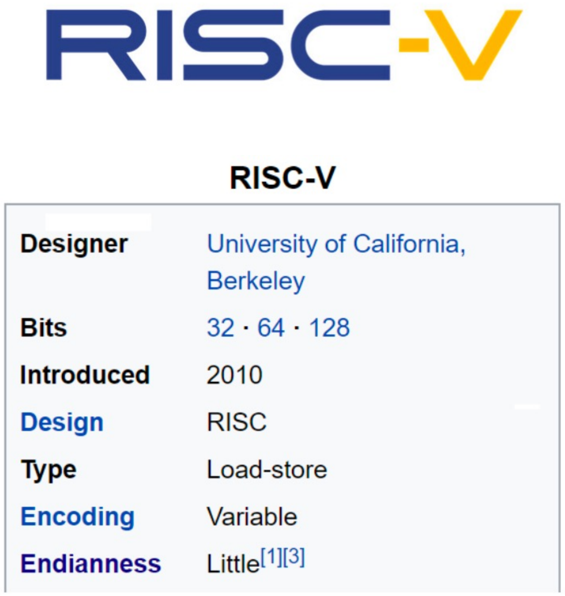
Macbooks & PCs
(Core i3, i5, i7, M)
x86-64 Instruction Set



ARM architectures

Designer	ARM Holdings
Bits	32-bit, 64-bit
Introduced	1985; 31 years ago
Design	RISC
Type	Register-Register
Encoding	AArch64/A64 and AArch32/A32 use 32-bit instructions, T32 (Thumb-2) uses mixed 16- and 32-bit instructions. ARMv7 user-space compatibility[1]
Endianness	Bi (little as default)

Smartphone-like devices
(iPhone, iPad, Raspberry Pi)
ARM Instruction Set



RISC-V

Designer	University of California, Berkeley
Bits	32 · 64 · 128
Introduced	2010
Design	RISC
Type	Load-store
Encoding	Variable
Endianness	Little[1][3]

Mostly research
(some traction in embedded)
RISC-V Instruction Set

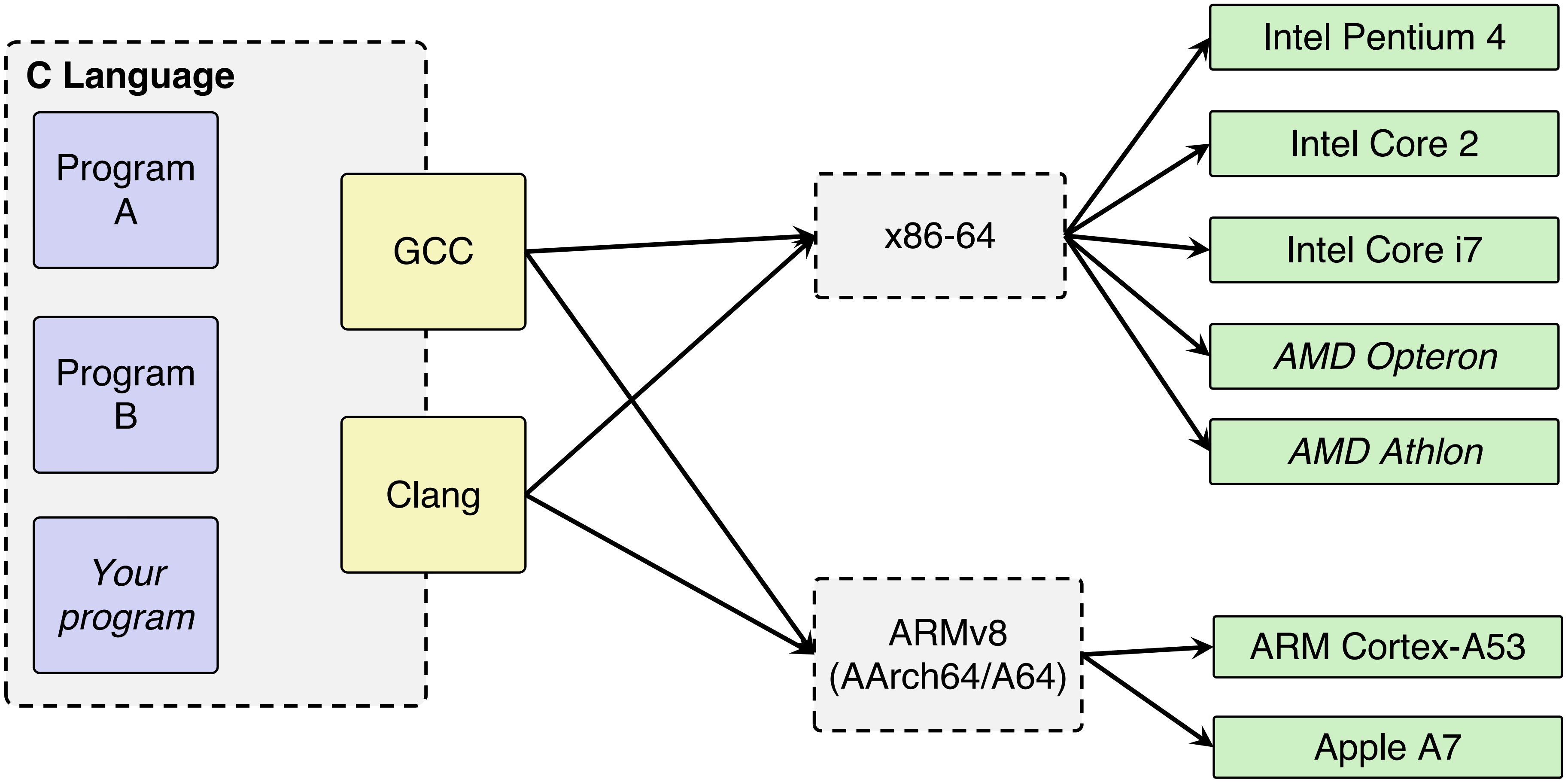
Architecture Sits at the Hardware Interface

Source code
Different applications or algorithms

Compiler
Perform optimizations, generate instructions

Architecture
Instruction set

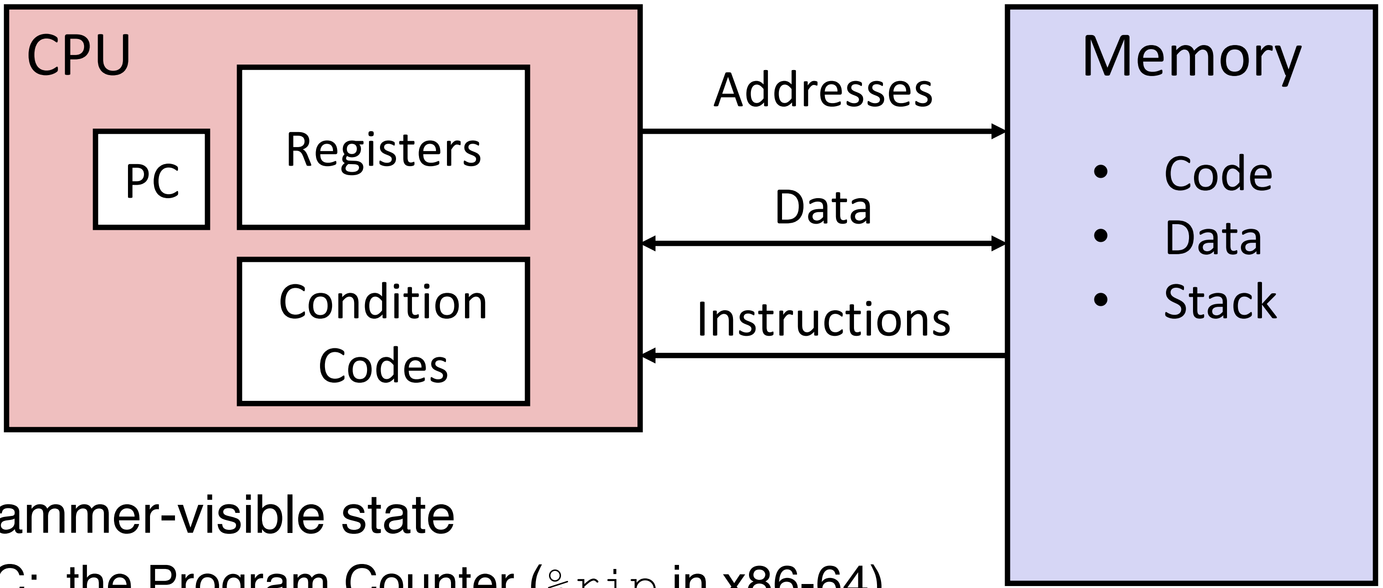
Hardware
Different implementations



Writing Assembly Code? In 2024?

- Chances are, you'll never write a program in assembly, but understanding assembly is the key to the machine-level execution model:
  - Behavior of programs in the presence of bugs
    - When high-level language model breaks down
  - Tuning program performance
    - Understand optimizations done/not done by the compiler
    - Understanding sources of program inefficiency
  - Implementing systems software
    - What are the "states" of processes that the OS must manage
    - Using special units (timers, I/O co-processors, etc.) inside processor!
  - Fighting malicious software
    - Distributed software is in binary form

Assembly Programmer's View



- Programmer-visible state
  - PC: the Program Counter (`%rip` in x86-64)
    - Address of next instruction
  - Named registers
    - Together in "register file"
    - Heavily used program data
  - Condition codes
    - Store status information about most recent arithmetic operation
    - Used for conditional branching

- Memory
  - Byte-addressable array
  - Code and user data
  - Includes *the Stack* (for supporting procedures)

x86-64 Assembly "Data Types"

- Integral data of 1, 2, 4, or 8 bytes
  - Data values
  - Addresses
- Floating point data of 4, 8, 10 or 2x8 or 4x4 or 8x2
  - Different registers for those (*e.g.*, `%xmm1`, `%ymm2`)
  - Come from *extensions to x86* (SSE, AVX, …)

$\Big\}$ Not covered in 3030

- No aggregate types such as arrays or structures
  - Just contiguously allocated bytes in memory
- Two common syntaxes
  - "AT&T": used by our course, slides, textbook, gnu tools, …
  - "Intel": used by Intel documentation, Intel tools, …
  - Must know which you're reading

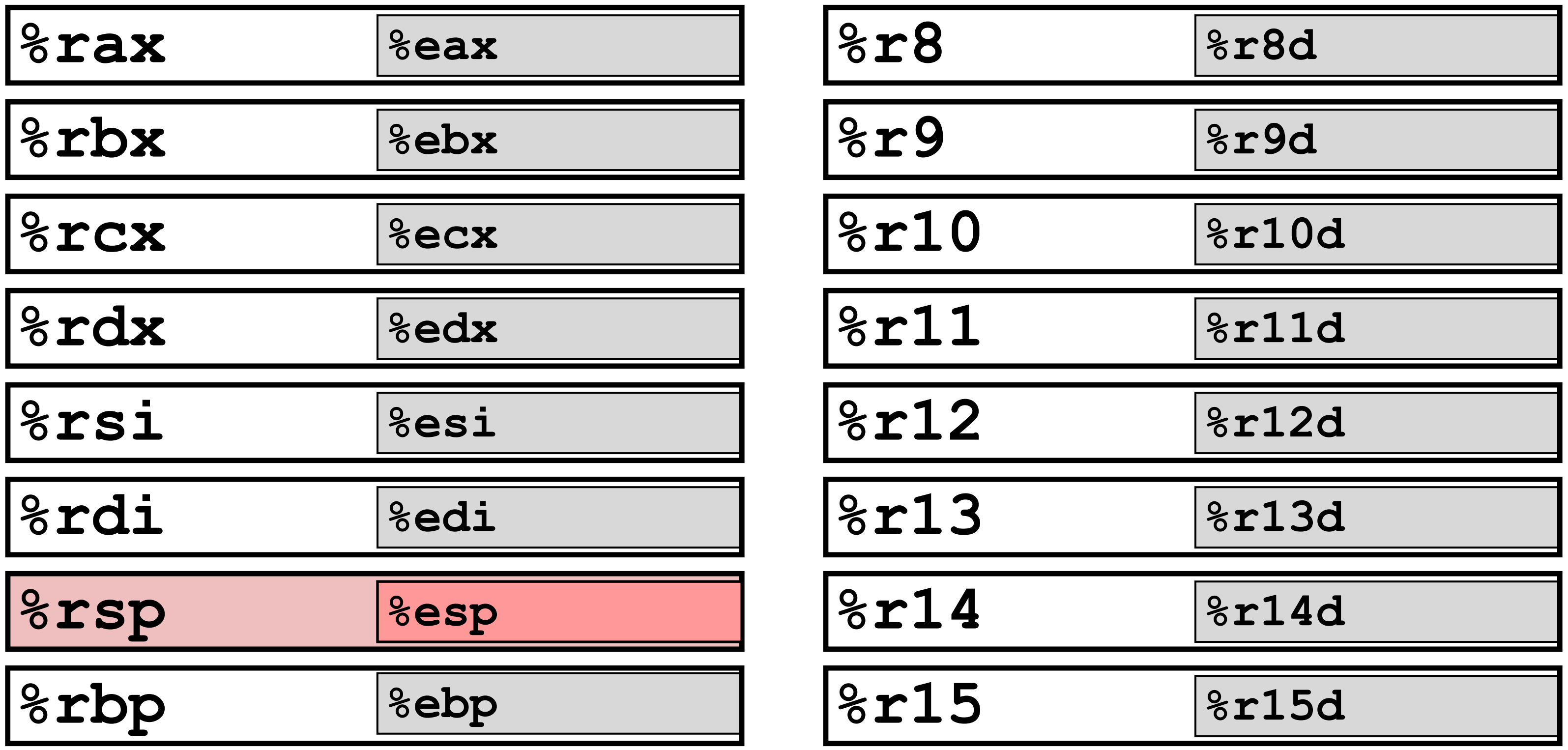
What is a Register?

- A location in the CPU that stores a small amount of data, which can be accessed very quickly (once every clock cycle)

- Registers have *names*, not *addresses*
  - In assembly, they start with `%` (*e.g.*, `%rsi`)

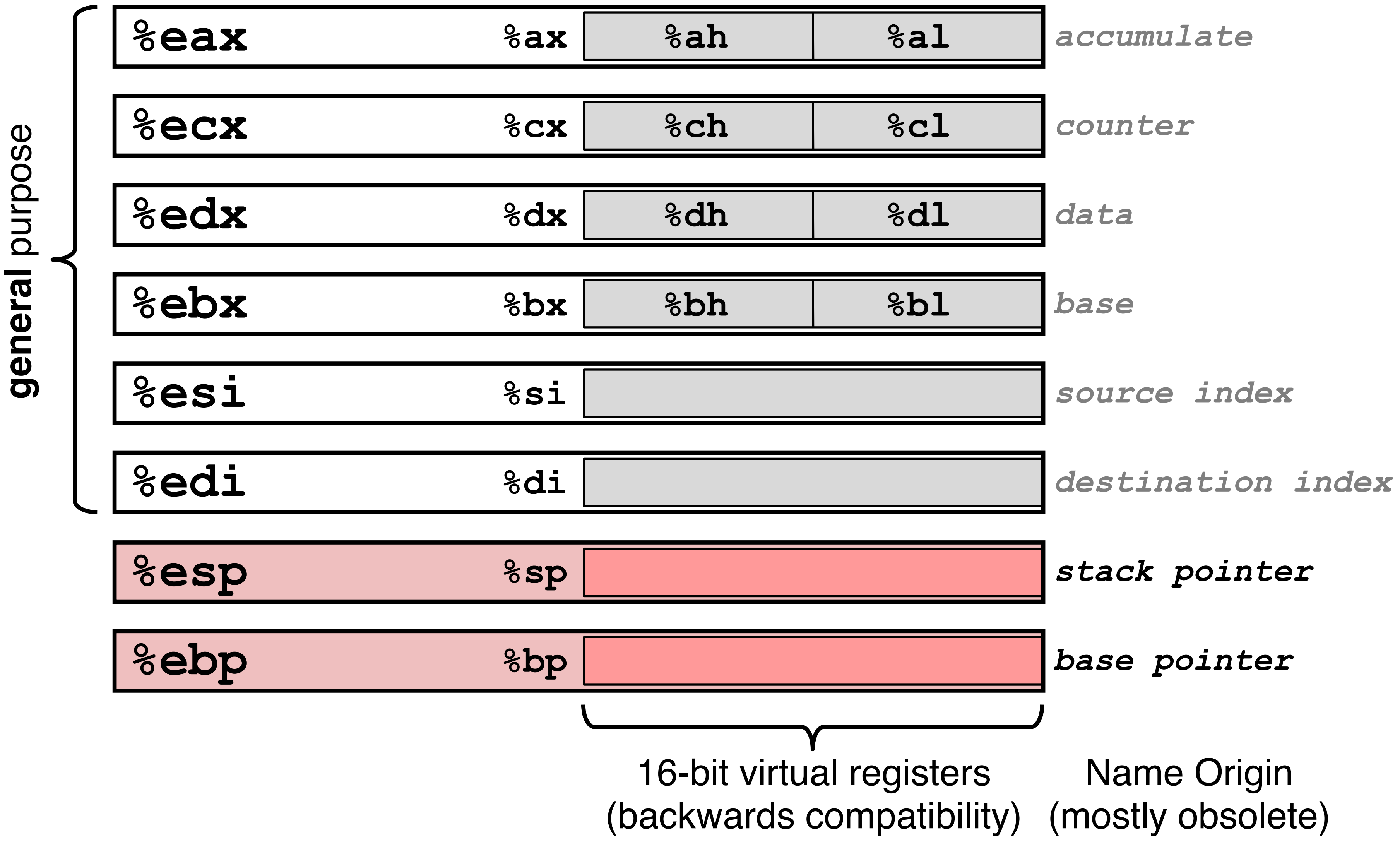
- Registers are at the heart of assembly programming
  - They are a precious commodity in all architectures, but *especially* x86

x86-64 Integer Registers – 64 bits wide



- Can reference low-order 4 bytes (also low-order 2 & 1 bytes)

Some History: IA32 Registers – 32 bits wide



Memory vs. Register

Memory		Register
• Addresses	**vs.**	Names
• `0x7FFFD024C3DC`		`%rdi`
• Big	**vs.**	Small
• ~ 8 GiB		(16 x 8 B) = 128 B
• Slow	**vs.**	Fast
• ~50-100 ns		sub-nanosecond timescale
• Dynamic	**vs.**	Static
• Can "grow" as needed while program runs		fixed number in hardware

Three Basic Kinds of Instructions

1) Transfer data between memory and register

- *Load* data from memory into register
  - `%reg` = Mem[address]
- *Store* register data into memory
  - Mem[address] = `%reg`

Remember: Memory is indexed just like an array of bytes!

2) Perform arithmetic operation on register or memory data

- `c = a + b;      z = x << y;      i = h & g;`

3) Control flow: what instruction to execute next

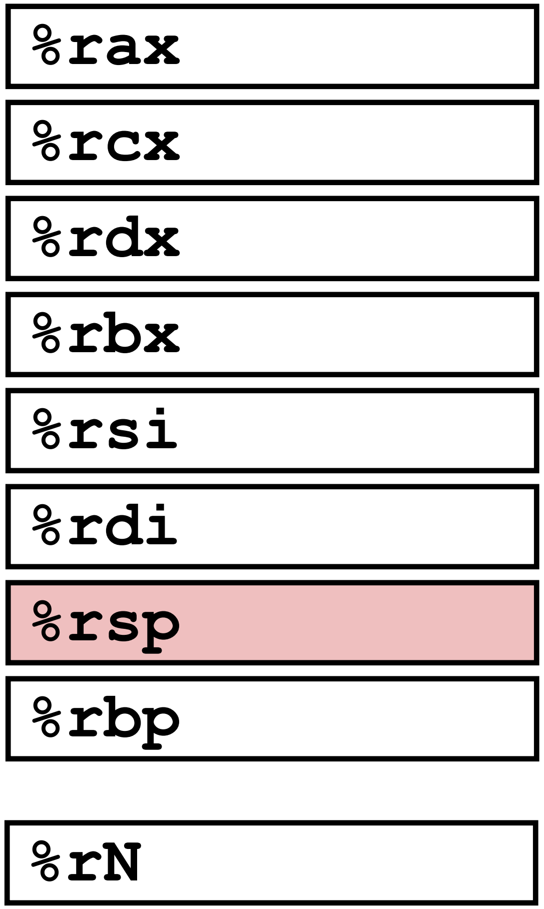
- Unconditional jumps to/from procedures
- Conditional branches

Instruction Sizes

- Size specifiers
  - **`b`** = 1-byte “byte” **`w`** = 2-byte “word”
    `l` = 4-byte “long word” **`q`** = 8-byte “quad word”
  - Note that due to backwards-compatible support for 8086 programs (16-bit machines!), “word” means 16 bits = 2 bytes in x86 instruction names

Operand Types

- ***Immediate:*** Constant integer data ($)
  - Examples: **`$0x400`**, **`$-533`**
  - Like C literal, but prefixed with **`'$'`**
  - Encoded with 1, 2, 4, or 8 bytes *depending on the instruction*
- ***Register:*** 1 of 16 integer registers (%)
  - Examples: **`%rax`**, **`%r13`**
  - But **`%rsp`** reserved for special use
  - Others have special uses for particular instructions
- ***Memory:*** Consecutive bytes of memory at a computed address (**`()`**)
  - Simplest example: **`(%rax)`**
  - Various other "address modes"



x86-64 Introduction

- Data transfer instruction (`mov`)
- Arithmetic operations
- Memory addressing modes
  - `swap` example

Moving Data

- General form: `mov_ source, destination`
  - Missing letter (_) specifies size of operands
  - Lots of these in typical code

- `movb src, dst`
  - Move 1-byte "**b**yte"
- `movw src, dst`
  - Move 2-byte "**w**ord"
- `movl src, dst`
  - Move 4-byte "long word"
- `movq src, dst`
  - Move 8-byte "quad word"

Operand Combinations

	Source	Dest	Src, Dest	C Analog
`movq`	Imm	Reg	`movq $0x4, %rax`	`var_a = 0x4;`
		Mem	`movq $-147, (%rax)`	`*p_a = -147;`
	Reg	Reg	`movq %rax, %rdx`	`var_d = var_a;`
		Mem	`movq %rax, (%rdx)`	`*p_d = var_a;`
	Mem	Reg	`movq (%rax), %rdx`	`var_d = *p_a;`

- *Cannot do memory-memory transfer with a single instruction*
  - How would you do it?

Some Arithmetic Operations

- Binary (two-operand) Instructions:
  - **Maximum of one memory operand**
  - Beware argument order!
  - No distinction between signed and unsigned
    - Only arithmetic vs. logical shifts

Format	Computation	
`addq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst + src*	(*dst += src*)
`subq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst – src*	
`imulq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst * src*	signed mult
`sarq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst >> src*	**A**rithmetic
`shrq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst >> src*	**L**ogical
`shlq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst << src*	(same as `salq`)
`xorq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst ^ src*	
`andq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst & src*	
`orq` `src, dst`	*dst = dst | src*	

↑ operand size specifier

- How do you implement "`rcx = rax + rbx`"?

Some Arithmetic Operations

- Unary (one-operand) Instructions:

Format	Computation	
`incq` *`dst`*	*dst = dst + 1*	increment
`decq` *`dst`*	*dst = dst – 1*	decrement
`negq` *`dst`*	*dst = –dst*	negate
`notq` *`dst`*	*dst = ~dst*	bitwise complement

- See CS:APP3e textbook Section 3.5.5 for more instructions:
  `mulq`, `cqto`, `idivq`, `divq`

Arithmetic Example

Register	Use(s)
`%rdi`	1st argument (`x`)
`%rsi`	2nd argument (`y`)
`%rax`	return value

```
long simple_arith(long x, long y)
{
  long t1 = x + y;
  long t2 = t1 * 3;
  return t2;
}
```

```
y += x;
y *= 3;
long r = y;
return r;
```

```
simple_arith:
  addq    %rdi, %rsi
  imulq     $3, %rsi
  movq    %rsi, %rax
  ret
```

Example of Basic Addressing Modes

```
void swap(long *xp, long *yp)
{
  long t0 = *xp;
  long t1 = *yp;
  *xp = t1;
  *yp = t0;
}
```

```
swap:
   movq   (%rdi), %rax
   movq   (%rsi), %rdx
   movq   %rdx, (%rdi)
   movq   %rax, (%rsi)
   ret
```

Compiler Explorer:
https://godbolt.org/z/zc4Pcq

Summary

- x86-64 is a complex instruction set computing (CISC) architecture
  - There are 3 types of operands in x86-64
    - Immediate, Register, Memory
  - There are 3 types of instructions in x86-64
    - Data transfer, Arithmetic, Control Flow