Pipelined Design

CPE380, Fall 2025

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Different Implementations

Multi-cycle MIPS, multiple CPI:

http://aggregate.org/EE380/multiv.html

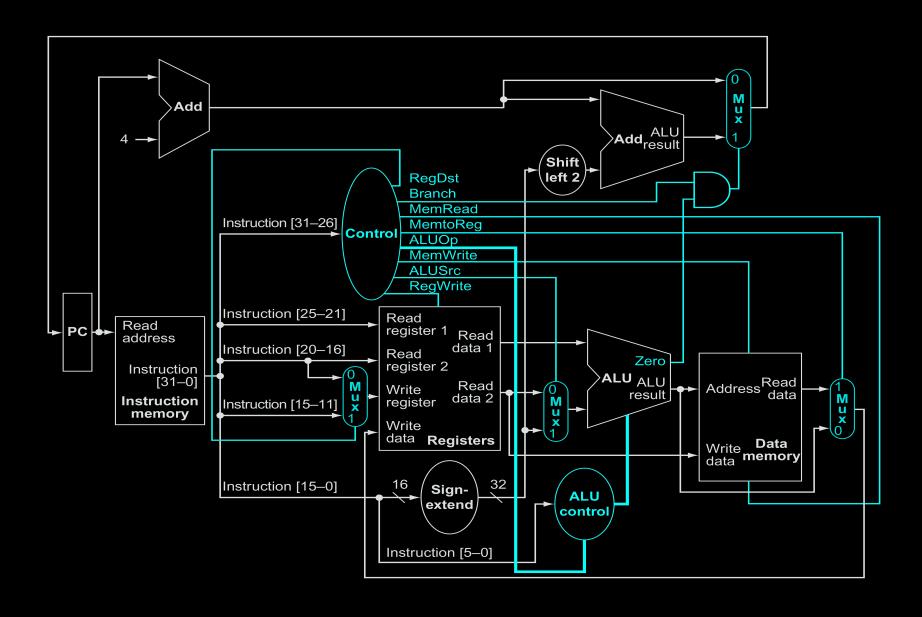
• Single-cycle MIPS, 1 CPI, but slow clock:

http://aggregate.org/EE380/onebeq.html

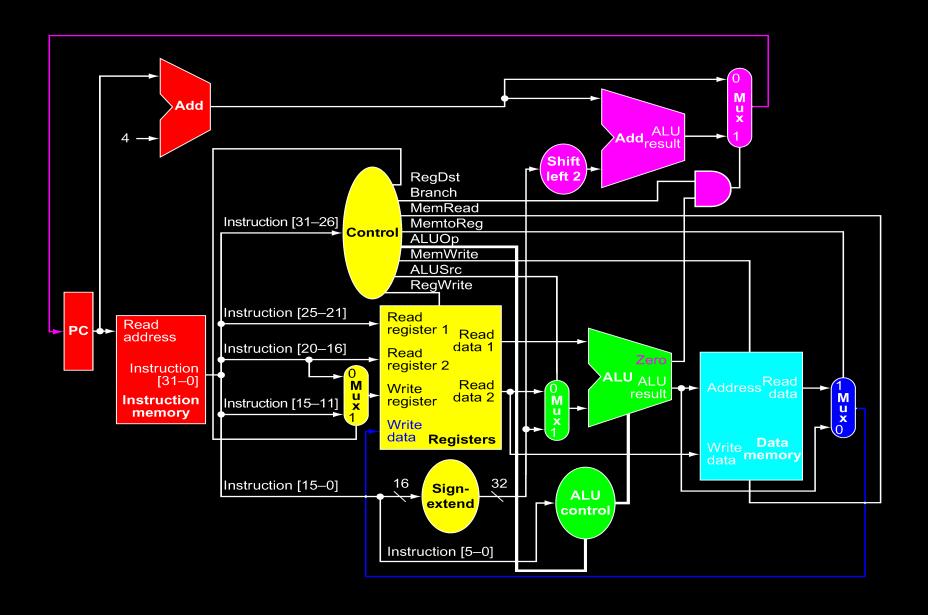
• Pipelined MIPS, multiple CPI, but fast clock and *throughput* up to 1 instruction/cycle

Basic Pipelining

- Single-cycle control signals move through the pipe along with the data
- Divide single-cycle design into equal-delay stages, adding buffers between stages
 - Ideally, *n* stages gives *n*X throughput
 - Usually <nX, and n can't be arbitrarily large
- Throughput comes from having useful work in all stages all the time – avoiding bubbles

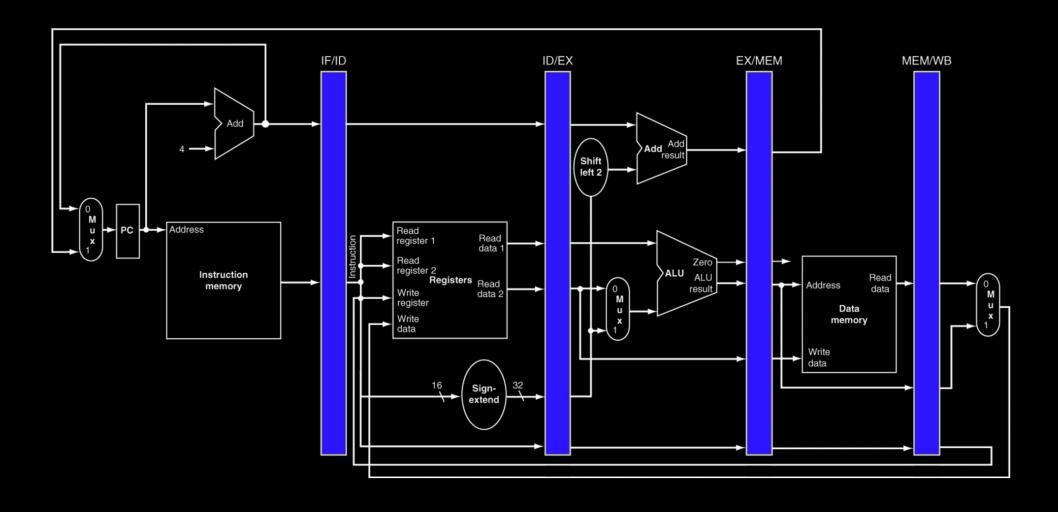


The single cycle design...



ID: Instruction Decode MEM: Memory Access what is this?

WB: Write Back Access what is this?



Add buffers between pipe stages...

Pipeline Throughput

IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB
addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2	
and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5	and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5	and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5	and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5
				and 400,401,400
IF	TD			
	ID	EX	MEM	WB

Pipeline Bubble: nop

IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB
addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) sw \$t1,4(\$t9) beq \$t1,\$t2,lab	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) sw \$t1,4(\$t9) beq \$t1,\$t2,lab 	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) sw \$t1,4(\$t9) beq \$t1,\$t2,lab 	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) sw \$t1,4(\$t9) beq \$t1,\$t2,lab 	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) sw \$t1,4(\$t9) beq \$t1,\$t2,lab
IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB
addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) sw \$t1,4(\$t7) beq \$t1,\$t2,lab beq \$t1,\$t2,lab beq \$t1,\$t2,lab	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) sw \$t1,4(\$t7) sw \$t1,4(\$t7) sw \$t1,4(\$t7)	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) nop nop	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8) nop	addu \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 and \$t3,\$t4,\$t5 addiu \$t6,\$0,1 lw \$t7,0(\$t8)
 	sw \$t1,4(\$t7) beq \$t1,\$t2,lab 	<pre>nop sw \$t1,4(\$t7) beq \$t1,\$t2,lab</pre>	nop sw \$t1,4(\$t7) beg \$t1,\$t2,lab	nop nop sw \$t1,4(\$t7)

Setting The Stages

Instruction	IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB	Circuit delay
addu	250	100	300	_	100	750ps
and addiu	250 250	100 100	100 300	_	100 100	550ps 750ps
lw	250	100	300	250	100	1000ps
sw beq	250 250	100 100	300 300	100	100	850ps 750ps

- Single-cycle limited by 1w to 1GHz clock
- 5-stage pipeline limited by Ex
 - 300ps latency might allow 3.33GHz clock
 - If buffer between stages is 100ps, 2.5GHz
- Multi-cycle might be 5 cycles @2.5GHz

Why A Bubble?

- Structural hazards: can't do 2 things on one unit of HW simultaneously single-cycle cures this!
- Data dependence: need results from previous computations, which might not be done yet
- Control dependence
 - Computation of branch target address
 - Conditional branch/jump taken vs. not taken

Dependence Analysis

- Use or R: reads the value bound to a name
- Def or W: binds a new value to a name
- True dependence: carries a value, D→U, RAW
 add \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 or \$t3,\$t0,\$t4
- Anti-dependence: kills a value, U←D, WAR
 add \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 or \$t1,\$t3,\$t4
- Output dependence: kills a value, D→D, WAW
 add \$t0,\$t1,\$t2 or \$t0,\$t3,\$t4

When Dependence Matters

True dependence causes a delay

```
add $t0,$t1,$t2
or $t3,$t0,$t4 //wait for $t0
```

Other types don't

How To Handle Dependence

- Have programmer/assembler pad with NOPs
 - Violates ISA concept (how much padding?);
 too little padding gives wrong answers,
 too much wastes time
 - Makes program bigger

```
TF
                   ID
                                      EX
                                                        MEM
add $t0,$t1,$t2
                       $t0,$t1,$t2
                   add
nop
                                      add $t0,$t1,$t2
nop
                   nop
                                                        add $t0,$t1,$t2
nop
                   nop
                                     nop
or $t3, $t0, $t4
                                                                           add $t0,$t1,$t2
                                     nop
                                                        nop
                   or $t3, $t0, $t4
                                      nop
                                                        nop
                                                                           nop
                                      or $t3, $t0, $t4
                                                         nop
                                                                           nop
                                                        or $t3, $t0, $t4
                                                                           nop
                                                                           or $t3, $t0, $t4
```

How To Handle Dependence

- Hardware interlock
 - rs or rt in ID same as dest in EX, MEM, WB
 - Detects dependence & stalls until satisfied
 - nop is really or with side-effects disabled:
 MemRead, MemWrite, RegWrite, & Branch

IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB
add \$t0,\$t1,\$t2				
or \$t3, <mark>\$t0</mark> ,\$t4	add \$t0 ,\$t1,\$t2	•••	•••	•••
•••	or \$t3, <mark>\$t0</mark> ,\$t4	add <mark>\$t0</mark> ,\$t1,\$t2	•••	
•••	or \$t3, <mark>\$t0</mark> ,\$t4	nop	add \$t0 ,\$t1,\$t2	
•••	or \$t3, <mark>\$t0</mark> ,\$t4	nop	nop	add \$t0 , \$t1, \$t2
•••	or \$t3, <mark>\$t0</mark> ,\$t4	nop	nop	nop
•••	•••	or \$t3, <mark>\$t0</mark> ,\$t4	nop	nop
•••	•••	•••	or \$t3, <mark>\$t0</mark> ,\$t4	nop
			•••	or \$t3, <mark>\$t0</mark> , \$t4

How To Handle Dependence

- Value forwarding: use interlock circuitry to find value & forward it to ID stage output buffer
 - ALU result ready from EX, so NO DELAY!
 - 1w result ready from MEM, so 1 cycle delay
 - Value still gets stored in register in WB
 - Works great, but adds lots of datapath...

IF	ID	EX	MEM	WB
<pre>lw \$t0,0(\$t1) or \$t3,\$t0,\$t4</pre>	 lw \$t0,0(\$t1)			
	or \$t3, \$t0, \$t4 or \$t3, \$t0, \$t4	lw <pre>\$t0,0(\$t1)</pre>	 lw <mark>\$t0</mark> ,0(\$t1)	
		or \$t3, \$t0, \$t4	nop or \$t3, \$t0, \$t4	lw \$t0,0(\$t1)
				or \$t3, \$t0, \$t4

Using Dependence Information

True dependence causes a delay

```
lw $t0,0($t1)
or $t3,$t0,$t4  //wait for $t0
xor $t5,$t6,$t7  //takes a cycle
```

 Use code motion or out-of-order execution to execute useful instructions while waiting!

```
lw $t0,0($t1)
xor $t5,$t6,$t7  //this is free!
or $t3,$t0,$t4  //wait for $t0
```

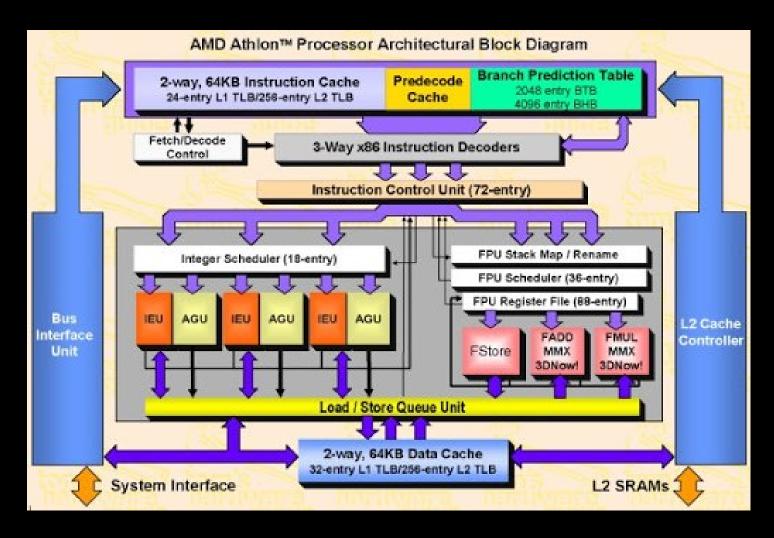
Reordering Instructions

- Code motion by compiler/assembler:
 - + Sees whole program, has time for analysis
 - Limited number of registers, imperfect info (e.g., does not know function unit details)
- Out-of-order execution by hardware:
 - + Perfect info, can use register renaming (with more registers than an instruction can name)
 - Limited to instructions buffered
- Modern systems do both

Computing "May Move"

- No dependence allows code to move
- Anti-dependence and output-dependence impose an ordering constraint... but renaming can remove that constraint:

A Real Processor: AMD Athlon

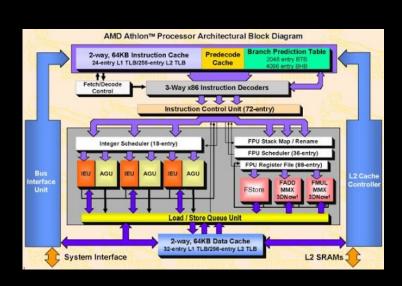


E.g., IA32 has 8 float registers, but this has 88!

Parallel Execution Orders

- IF stage can fork to feed multiple pipes
 - SIMD: GPU, SWAR, and Vector
 - VLIW: Very Long Instruction Word
 - EPIC: Explicitly Parallel Instruction Computer
 - Superscalar: instructions grouped at runtime

Athlon can sustain 3 IPC: 3 Integer Execution Units 3 Address Generation Units Float store, add, & multiply



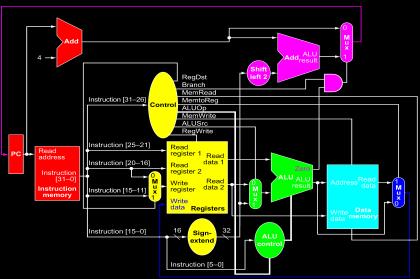
Computing The Branch Target

- Branch instructions encode offset, not address
 - Add PC + offset typically takes a cycle
 - What do we do while waiting for address?
- Hardware interlock & stall
- Delayed branch: branch after next instruction
- BTB: Branch Target Buffer
 - Caches branch {PC: target} pairs and looks
 'em up at same time as fetching instruction
 - No help 1st time, but no delay on repeats

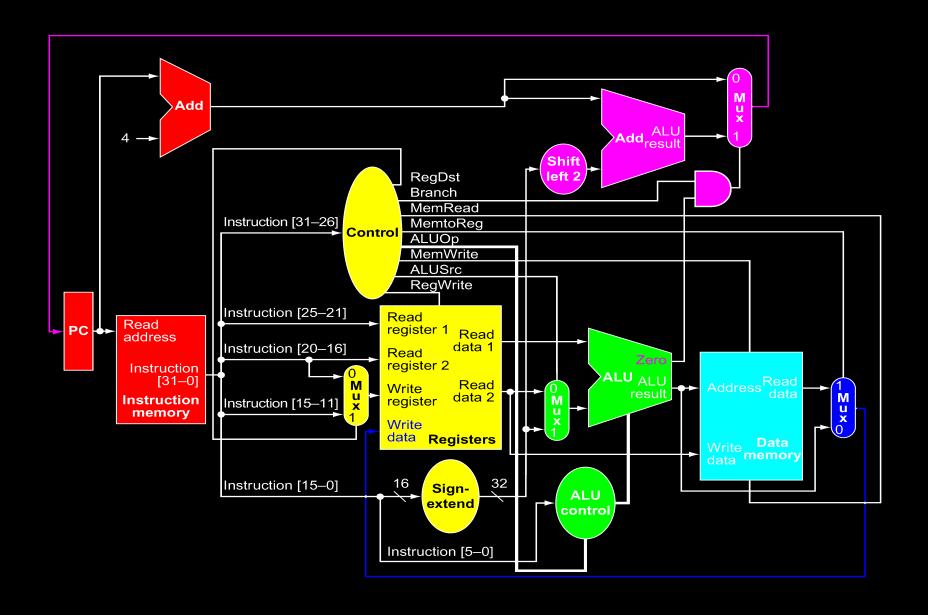
To Take, Or Not To Take?

 When do we know if conditional jump or branch is taken or not taken?

Determined only after EX stage?

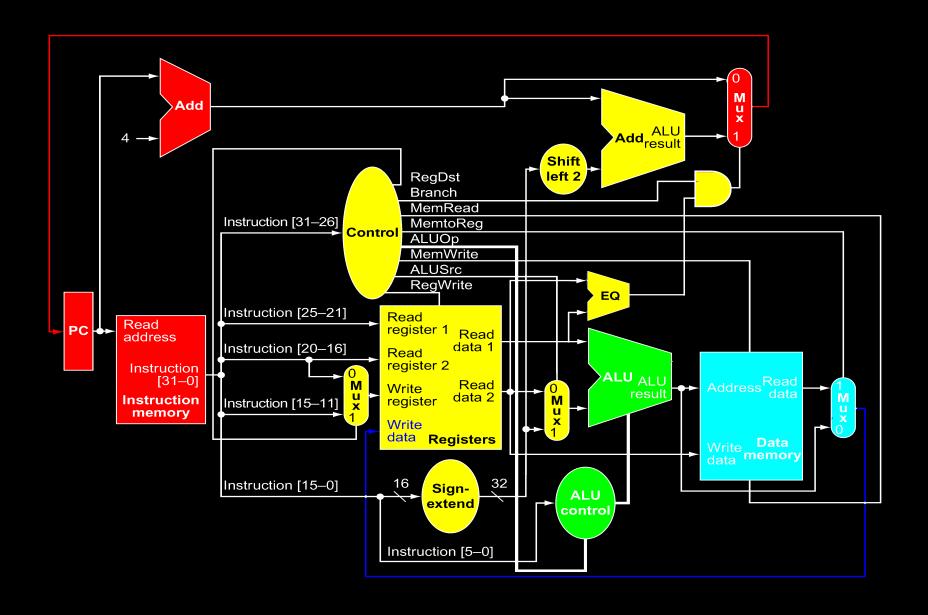


- NOP padding or HW interlock very inefficient!
 - Usually determined in a late pipe stage
 - Blocks ALL progress (including superscalar)



ID: Instruction Decode MEM: Memory Access what is this?

WB: Write Back Access what is this?



ID: Instruction Decode MEM: Memory Access

Branch Prediction. Do I Feel Lucky?



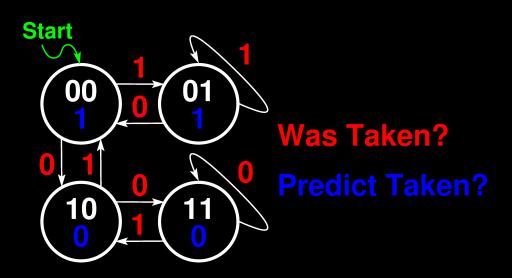
Guess wrong and some instructions are gonna die (well, we actually say they're squashed)

- Always not taken the easiest guess
- Always taken more often right for do loops
- Always BOTH not taken and taken
 - Was tried using dual pipe of Pentium Pro
 - Always wastes 50% of instruction fetch!
- Forward not, backward taken

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. – G. Santayana

- BHB: Branch History Buffer
 - Jump & branch taken/not-taken "history," but actually records a prediction state, *not* history
 - Indexed by PC; can be merged with BTB

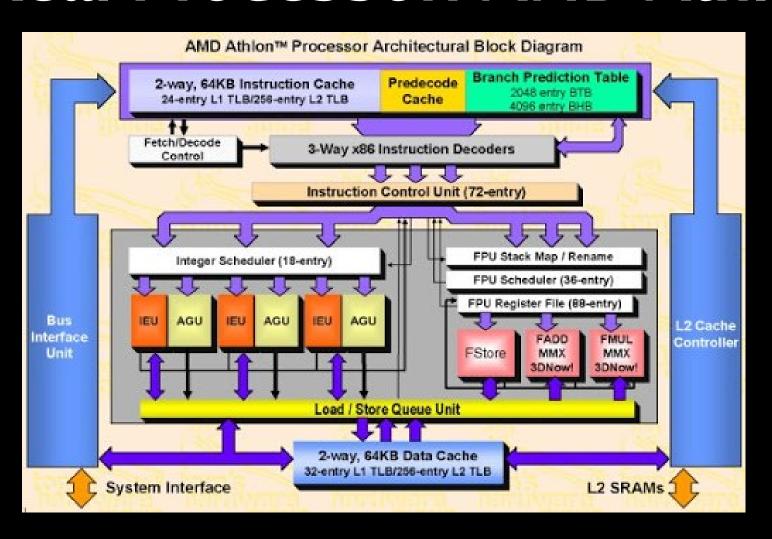
Simplest is 4-state, just 2 bits/entry:



Fancier Prediction Methods

- Two types of prediction history recorded:
 - History of this particular branch/jump
 - History of *last K* branches/jumps anywhere
- More complex state machines can recognize much more complex patterns; also can combine multiple predictors as a tournament predictor
- Some systems also allow compiler hints by marking usually taken vs. usually not taken

A Real Processor: AMD Athlon



Note 2048-entry BTB and 4096-entry BHB

Verilog Implementation

- Like you'd expect:
 - Can reuse basic single-cycle design
 - Each stage becomes it's own always
 - Need multiple copies of some signals,
 one for each stage that uses them
- Not like you'd expect:
 - Some things don't follow pipe flow
 - Some non-stages should be separate things

Owner Computes

- For example, who updates the PC?
 - IF sets PC = PC + 4
 - ID sets PC = branch target
 - EX, MEM, or WB forces PC = PC because data dependence blocks the pipe
- How to coordinate access to shared data?
 - Multiple readers is fine, with one writer
 - Could use locks, semaphores, etc.
 - Easiest is only one entity can update each:
 the owner picks the value and is only writer

A Pipelined Verilog Version

- Organized as parallel-executing chunks for:
 - IF stage: reads and writes IF_
 - D stage: reads IF_, writes ID_
 - EX stage: reads ID_, writes EX_
 - MEM stage: reads Ex_, writes MEM_
 - WB stage: reads MEM_
 - Are we running?
 - Are mispredicted instructions squashed?
 - Are we blocked by data dependence or forwarding values?
 - Simulation tracing support

A Pipelined Verilog Version

Color key: initialization IF squashed ID blocked EX MEM WB debugging

```
// First data factory access timps begin if it is consistent with a first of a consistent of the consi
```

F: Instruction Fetch stage

- Really simple...
 - Memory is `word, not byte, so address>>2
 - The only thing setting IF_ir and IF_pc

```
// IF: Instruction Fetch stage
always @(posedge clk) if (running && !blocked) begin
   IF_ir <= m[(squash ? target : IF_pc) >> 2];
   IF_pc <= (squash ? target : IF_pc) + 4;
end</pre>
```

D: Instruction Decode stage

- Decodes the instruction
- Reads from register file r[]
- Computes beq comparison & target

EX: Execute stage

Contains the ALU for integers & addresses

```
// EX: EXecute stage
always @(posedge clk) if (running) begin
  case (ID_ALUOp)
    `ALUAND: alu = ID_s & ID_src;
    `ALUOR: alu = ID_s | ID_src;
    `ALUADD: alu = ID_s + ID_src;
    `ALUSUB: alu = ID s - ID src;
    `ALUSLT: alu = ID_s < ID_src;
    `ALUXOR: alu = ID_s ^ ID_src;
    default: alu = (ID_src << 16);</pre>
  endcase
  EX alu <= alu;
  EX t <= ID t;
  EX rd <= ID rd;</pre>
  EX MemRead <= ID MemRead;</pre>
  EX MemWrite <= ID MemWrite;</pre>
  EX Bad <= ID Bad;</pre>
end
```

MEM: MEMory access stage

- Does a memory read or write
- Uses EX_MemRead for both read and mux v

```
// MEM: data MEMory access stage
always @(posedge clk) if (running) begin
  if (EX_MemRead) v = m[EX_alu >> 2]; else v = EX_alu;
  if (EX_MemWrite) m[EX_alu >> 2] <= EX_t;

MEM_v <= v;
  MEM_rd <= EX_rd;
  MEM_Bad <= EX_Bad;
end</pre>
```

WB: Write Back stage

- Writes result into register...
 - Register \$0 is read only
 - Not writing? Say we write to register 0....
- An instruction isn't done until it's here, so this is where halting really happens

```
// WB: register Write Back stage
always @(posedge clk) if (running) begin
  if (MEM_rd) r[MEM_rd] <= MEM_v;
  if (MEM_Bad) halt <= 1;
end</pre>
```

Running?

- Enables normal operation of stages
- Not running normally if:
 - Halted
 - There's a reset in progress; reset writes into stuff it doesn't own, so we need owners off

```
// Running state?
wire running;
assign running = ((!halt) && (!reset));
```

Squashed?

- For beq, we'll predict not taken, so IF_pc+4
- If we were right, no bubble
- If wrong, need to squash fetched instructions
 - No side-effects to undo yet
 - Just convert into `NOP to prevent future s-e

Data Dependence / Forwarding

- Need \$rs, \$rt unless either is \$0
- Desired value could be in EX, MEM, or WB
- Forward gives priority to EX over MEM over WB
- Can't forward 1w value from EX stage!

Simulation Tracing

Yet another (complex!) parallel-executing thing:

```
// State-by-state trace
`ifdef TRACE
always @(posedge clk) if (running) begin
  $display("IF ir=%x pc=%1d", IF_ir, IF_pc);
  case (IF_ir `OP)
    `RTYPE: begin
      case (IF_ir `FUNCT)
        `ADDU: $display("IF addu $%1d,$%1d,$%1d",
                 IF_ir `RD, IF_ir `RS, IF_ir `RT); ...
  endcase endcase
  if (ID_Bad) $display("ID illegal instruction");
    else $display("ID s=%1d t=%1d src=%1d rd=%1d
      MemRead=%b ALUOp=%b MemWrite=%b", ID_s, ID_t,
      ID_src, ID_rd, ID_MemRead, ID_ALUOp, ID_MemWrite);
end
`endif
endmodule
```

A Pipelined Verilog Version

Color key: initialization IF squashed ID blocked EX MEM WB debugging

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// First data factory access timps begin if it is consistent with a first of a consistent of the consi
```

Three Verilog Implementations

Multi-cycle MIPS, multiple CPI:

```
http://aggregate.org/EE380/multiv.html
```

• Single-cycle MIPS, 1 CPI, but slow clock:

```
http://aggregate.org/EE380/onebeq.html
```

Pipelined MIPS, fast clock, ~1 CPI throughput:

```
http://aggregate.org/EE380/pipe.html
```

Out-Of-Order Implementation?

- Beyond the scope of this class, but it's dataflow
- CDC6600 Scoreboard
 - Need both operands in registers
 - Instruction waits @ function unit
- Tomasulo Scheduling
 - Copies operands when each one is available
 - Instruction waits @ reservation station
 - Common data bus broadcasts each result
- Now rename registers, no serial bottleneck