

CMOS VLSI Design

Lab 2: Datapath Design and Verification

In this lab, you will begin designing an 8-bit MIPS processor. You will first review and simulate a Verilog model of the overall processor. You will learn about datapath design by assembling and connecting wordslices into an ALU. As with all labs, read the whole writeup thoroughly before starting to avoid surprises.

I. Verilog Model RTL Simulation

In the lab2 directory find `mips.sv` and `memfile.dat`. Make a subdirectory in your directory. Copy these files into your subdirectory and rename them, adding your initials. `mips.sv` is System Verilog RTL for the 8-bit MIPS processor and `memfile.dat` contains test vectors. The processor is detailed in Chapter 1 of CMOS VLSI. The testbench for the processor is different from the previous lab.

Instead of `testbench` applying and asserting vectors, the external memory module `exmemory` loads a test program stored in `memfile.dat`. The program tests basic functionality of the processor and, if successful, writes a 7 to memory address 0x4C. `testbench` checks that the processor wrote the success value. The program is shown below; study it to see what it does.

```
# mipstest.asm
# 9/16/03 David Harris David_Harris@hmc.edu
#
# Test MIPS instructions. Assumes little-endian memory was
# initialized as:
# word 16: 3
# word 17: 5
# word 18: 12

main:  #Assembly Code          effect                      Machine Code
      lb $2, 68($0)           # initialize $2 = 5         80020044
      lb $7, 64($0)           # initialize $7 = 3         80070040
      lb $3, 69($7)           # initialize $3 = 12        80e30045
      or $4, $7, $2           # $4 <= 3 or 5 = 7         00e22025
      and $5, $3, $4          # $5 <= 12 and 7 = 4       00642824
      add $5, $5, $4           # $5 <= 4 + 7 = 11         00a42820
      beq $5, $7, end         # shouldn't be taken       10a70008
      slt $6, $3, $4          # $6 <= 12 < 7 = 0        0064302a
      beq $6, $0, around      # should be taken          10c00001
      lb $5, 0($0)           # shouldn't happen         80050000
around: slt $6, $7, $2        # $6 <= 3 < 5 = 1         00e2302a
      add $7, $6, $5          # $7 <= 1 + 11 = 12        00c53820
      sub $7, $7, $2          # $7 <= 12 - 5 = 7        00e23822
      j end                   # should be taken         0800000f
      lb $7, 0($0)           # shouldn't happen         80070000
end:   sb $7, 71($2)          # write adr 76 <= 7       a0470047
      .dw 3                   00000003
      .dw 5                   00000005
      .dw 12                  0000000c
```

Read through the `testbench` and `exmemory` modules and `memfile.dat` to see how the RTL works. Compile and simulate it by invoking `sim-nc mips.sv`. You should see `Simulation completed successfully` if the RTL is working. You may wish to run the simulation with the GUI (`sim-ncg`) and watch the top level signals to observe the processor executing the program.

II. Library Organization

The MIPS processor uses an assortment of libraries: `muddlib10`, `wordlib8`, and `mips8`. `muddlib10` is the 2010 release of a simple standard cell library from Harvey Mudd College. `wordlib8` contains 8-bit wordslices used in the MIPS datapath and potentially other datapaths. `mips8` contains cells unique to the 8-bit MIPS processor.

Copy these libraries to your own directory so you have your own working versions to edit. From your cadence directory, enter

```
cp -r /courses/e158/10/lab2/muddlib10 .
cp -r /courses/e158/10/lab2/wordlib8 .
cp -r /courses/e158/10/lab2/mips8 .
```

Add these libraries to your library path by choosing `Edit • Library Path` in the Library Manager window. In a blank row at the bottom of the Library Path Editor, enter

```
muddlib10    muddlib10
```

Do the same with `wordlib8` and `mips8`. Use `File • Save As...` to save the new path in your `cds.lib` file (you could have also made these changes by editing the file directly). You should now be able to scroll down and see the new libraries in the Library Manager.

III. Wordslices

The Verilog and schematic contain functional units organized as 8-bit *wordslices*. This is a convenient way to group cells together. Wordslices can be connected with busses, which is much simpler than drawing eight separate wires. To see how a wordslice is created, open the 8-bit `flopenr_1x_8` (flip-flops with enable and reset) schematic in `wordlib8z`. Observe that it is formed from an array of eight flip-flops named `flopenr_dp_1x <7:0>` without having to draw each one. This part of the cell is called the datapath. Inputs and outputs (`d<7:0>` and `q<7:0>`) are connected to 8-bit busses. For clarity, the busses are drawn with wide wires. Note that Cadence uses angle brackets (`<` `>`) rather than square brackets (`[]`) to represent busses and arrays.

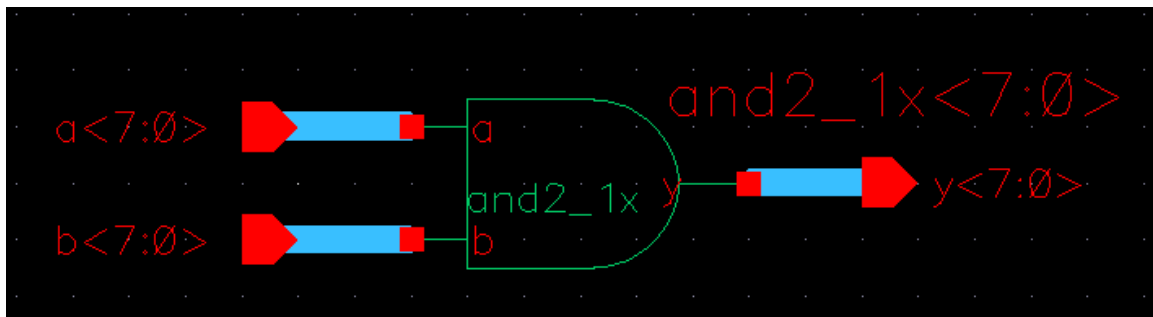
Datapath cells can factor out the inverters from select, clock, and enable signals because it is more efficient to place one inverter at the top of the datapath than one in each bit cell. These inverters are placed in a zipper at the top of the wordslice so that they can drive the

entire slice. `flopnr_1x_8` also has a zipper, made of inverters and buffers factored out of the individual one-bit `flopnr_1x` cells. In this cell, there is an inverter and buffer to drive the enable signal, an inverter to drive reset, and a pair of inverters and buffers to drive the two-phase clocks. The gates in the zipper are typically 4x normal size so that they can drive the entire wordslice in a timely fashion.

Also, look at the 8-bit `adder8` schematic, which is constructed from 8 full adders. Notice how the comma notation is used for the carry in and carry out signals in the schematic. This is much easier to draw than 8 separate full adders chained together.

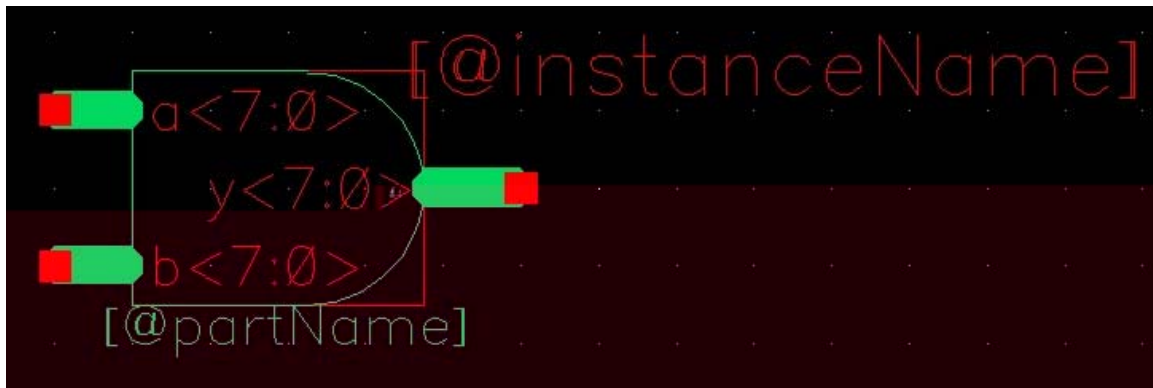
The ALU includes an AND, OR, adder, and SLT. Your first step is to design a wordslice for an 8-bit AND that will be used in the ALU unit. Later in this lab you will design an 8-bit OR and hook the two up to the ALU, and then the ALU to the datapath. The two cells you will create do not have zippers because there are no circuits to factor out.

Create a new schematic called `and2_1x_8` in `wordlib8`. When it is all done, it should look like the one below. Unless otherwise stated, use 1x cells in wordslices.



First instantiate an `and2_1x` from `muddlib10`. Choose Edit • Properties • Object... and change the Instance Name to `and2_1x<7:0>` to create 8 copies. Create the input pins (`a<7:0>` and `b<7:0>`) and output pins (`y<7:0>`). Choose Add • Wire (wide) and draw busses between the pins and the gate. Check and save and ensure you have no errors.

Next, create a symbol for the gate. The easiest approach is to use the Library Manager to copy the symbol from the `and2_1x` in `muddlib10` to the `and2_1x_8` in `wordlib8`. Ignore any complaints about the `prop.xx` file. Edit the new symbol. Use Edit • Properties • Object to select each of the three pins and modify its name by adding `<7:0>` (e.g. changing `a` to `a<7:0>`). (Make sure you are editing the pin and not just the label next to the pin.) Move the label to an attractive location. Also edit the properties of each of the lines and modify the width to wide. When you are done, the symbol should look like the one below. Check and save.



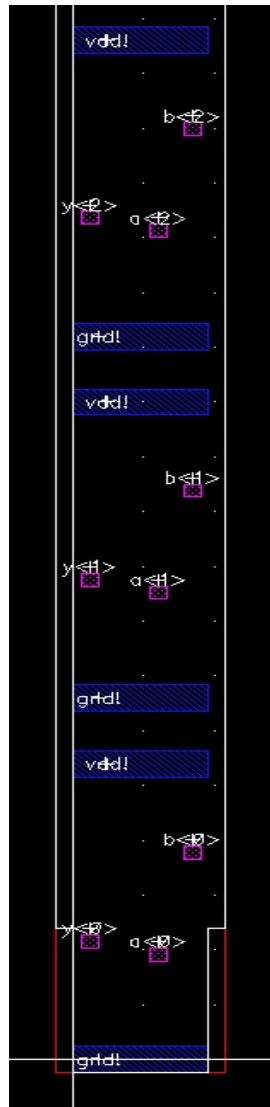
Once the schematic is finished, create the layout for the `and2_1x_8`. Press 'i' to add an instance. Browse to select the `and2_1x` layout from `muddlib10`. In the 'Mosaic' area, change the number of rows to 8 then click somewhere else in the window, 'View' for example, to make the change register. The 'Names' field should have automatically changed from 'I0' to 'M0'. Then change the delta Y to 33 so that each row is spaced 110λ ($33 \mu\text{m}$) apart. Now place the instance the same way you would have placed a single cell. There should now be eight copies of the `and2_1x` layout that are all part of a single instance. Use Options • Display and set the Stop Levels so that you can see the contents of the wordslice.

Next create the pins. Select metal2 in the LSW. Open the create pin window (hotkey 'ctrl-p') and under Terminal Names enter '`a<0:7>`'. Note that the order is reversed from usual (`<7:0>`) because we will be placing bit 0 at the bottom. Select something else in the window to make the change register; for instance make sure the I/O type is input and that 'Display Pin Names' is checked. The boxes next to 'X Pitch' and 'Y Pitch' should no longer be grayed out. Change the Y Pitch to 33. Make sure metal2 is selected and draw the pin over the 'a' pin on the bottom `and2_1x` gate. When you are placing the pin name it should display as '`a<0:7>`' and once you've placed it you should see the name change to just '`a<0>`'. Look at the other and gates and you should see that the pins '`a<1>`' through `a<7>`' were automatically placed over the other 'a' pins.

Place the b and y pins. Make sure all the settings are correct before placing the pins. Immediately check that the pins were placed correctly because if they were not, or the I/O direction was wrong or the wrong metal was used, the easiest way to get rid of the pins is to 'undo' (hotkey 'u'). Otherwise you will have to manually delete each pin.

Now place a metal1 `gnd!` pin in the bottom row over the entire ground wire. Since ground is not a bus you will not be able to use the Y Pitch in the Create Pin. Instead you will make seven copies of the `gnd!` pin. Go to the CIW (command interpreter window) which is the window that first opens when starting the Cadence tools. Go to Options -> User Preferences and check the 'Option Displayed When Commands Start' box. You may not always want that option checked, however it is necessary for this step. Click on 'Apply' or 'OK' and go back to the layout. Select the `gnd!` pin you just created. Now copy the pin (hotkey 'c') and you should see a Copy window open. In the Copy window make sure Snap Mode is set to 'orthogonal', change Rows to 7, set Delta Y to 33, and

click Apply XY twice. The `gnd!` pin should have been copied onto the seven other and gates. Next create the `vdd!` pins. When you are done the layout should look something like the figure below.



Finally, as with any layout, run DRC, Extract, and LVS. The only difference with this cell is that you will need to check the 'Join Nets With Same Name' box in both the DRC and Extract windows so that the tools know you intend to connect `gnd!` and `vdd!` later on. Be sure that you eventually do so before finishing your chip; in our case, we will provide power and ground rings in Lab 4.

IV. OR Wordslice

Now that you know how to create a wordslice, design a schematic, symbol, and layout for an 8-bit OR wordslice named `or2_1x_8` using `or2_1x` cells. Verify that your design passes DRC and LVS.

V. ALU Assembly

Open the `alu` schematic in `mips8`. You'll see named buses for the inputs and outputs of the 8-bit AND/OR cells. Place and connect each. Check and save.

Next, you will complete the `alu` layout. Change your display options so you can see all of the cells. Study the layout until you can relate it to the schematic. You will see a space in the middle for the AND/OR wordslices. Place the AND wordslice on the left and the OR wordslice on the right.

The `alu` already has metal3 bitlines for `a`, `b`, `andresult`, and `orresult` in each of the 8 bitslices. It also has `via2s` conveniently located so that you can connect the inputs and outputs of the `and2_1x_8` and `or2_1x_8` gates to the bitlines using vertical metal2 wires. If you've placed your two wordslices properly, all you need to do is add six vertical metal2 wires in each bitslice to connect the wordslices to the metal3. Even though `a` and `b` might seem symmetric, be sure to connect the proper bitline to the proper input or LVS will complain. If you add the six wires to the bottom bitslice, then use the copy command to create 7 more rows of the same thing, you can do this with a minimum of labor.

Verify the layout passes DRC and LVS.

VI. Datapath Assembly

Next, open the `datapath` schematic and layout. Study them and until you can identify the parts and understand why the layout looks as it does. Compare the schematic to Figure 1.53 of the textbook. Compare the datapath to the slice plan in Figure 1.68. Observe how the datapath uses 8 horizontal metal3 tracks per bitslice for routing (centered at 10, 20, ..., 80 λ) corresponding to the 8 tracks shown in the slice plan.

The `alu` was already part of the `datapath`, so now that you have added the AND and OR wordslices, the datapath should be complete. Make sure it passes DRC and LVS.

VII. Datapath Simulation

Our final goal is to simulate the `datapath` schematic and verify that it is correct. Because generating a good set of test vectors for just the datapath would take a good deal of thought, an easier strategy is to resimulate the entire chip with the datapath schematic replacing the behavioral Verilog model of the datapath. If the entire chip works with the schematic, then the datapath is likely correct.

Open the `datapath` schematic and generate a netlist in a new run directory such as `datapath_run1`. Poke around the run directory. `verilog.inpfiles` contains a list of all the modules involved in the datapath. Identify where the `datapath` schematic has been netlisted (e.g. `ihnl/cds41/netlist`). Open this netlist in a text editor.

Look at the structural Verilog that was produced by the netlister. Note the order of the inputs and outputs in the module declaration.

Then copy `mips.sv` and `memfile.dat` from where you simulated them in the first part of this lab. Our goal is to remove the versions of the datapath and its submodules from `mips.sv` and replace them with the structural netlisted files.

Open `mips.sv` in a text editor. Comment out the modules from datapath through the end of the file because we will be replacing them with the real datapath. Then look in the `mips` module. It instantiates a controller and a datapath. We need to replace the datapath instantiation with a new one that puts the ports in the correct order. An easy way to do this is to comment out the old datapath instantiation. Copy the datapath module declaration from the schematic netlist and paste it in, then comment it out as well. It will serve as a reference to get the order correct. Then type in a new datapath call that puts the ports in the same order as they are expected in the netlist. Note that `instr[5:0]` must be connected to `funct` and `instr[31:26]` must be connected to `op` to pass these fields to the controller. When you are done, your `mips` module may look like the one below.

```
/* ORIGINAL datapath instantiation, wrong port order for netlist
datapath    dp(.ph1, .ph2, .reset, .memdata, .alusrca, .memptoreg, .iord, .pcen,
               .regwrite, .regdst, .pcsrc, .alusrcb, .irwrite, .alucontrol,
               .zero, .op, .funct, .adr, .writedata);*/

/* Datapath module declaration from ihnl/cds41/netlist

module datapath ( adr[7:0], instr[5:0], instr[31:26], writedata[7:0],
               zero, ALUControl[2:0], ALUSrcA, ALUSrcB[1:0], IRWrite[3:0], IorD,
               MemtoReg, PCEn, PCSrc[1:0], RegDst, RegWrite, memdata[7:0], ph1,
               ph2, reset );*/

/* New datapath instantiation with corrected port order */
datapath    dp(adr, funct, op, writedata, zero,
               alucontrol, alusrca, alusrcb, irwrite, iord, memptoreg,
               pcen, pcsrc, regdst, regwrite, memdata, ph1, ph2, reset);
```

Invoke the simulation with the following command:

```
sim-nc mips.sv -f verilog.inpfiles
```

`mips.sv` is the first file to read. The `-f` options asks NCVerilog to also load all the files specified by `verilog.inpfiles`. If all goes well, you will get a “Simulation completed successfully” message. If not, look for compilation errors and fix them (e.g. a typo in your new datapath instantiation). If that doesn’t find the error, fire up `sim-ncg`, add some key waveforms, and track down your error. It is often helpful to open two simulations simultaneously, with one showing the expected results using the golden behavioral Verilog module and the other showing the erroneous results with the actual design.

VIII. What to Turn In

Please provide a hard copy of each of the following items:

1. Please indicate how many hours you spent on this lab. This will not affect your grade, but will be helpful for calibrating the workload for the future.
2. A printout of your 8-bit AND wordslice schematic and layout.
3. A printout of your 8-bit OR wordslice schematic and layout.
4. A printout of your ALU schematic and layout
5. What is the verification status of your layout? Do `and2_1x_8`, `or2_1x_8`, `alu`, and `datapath` all pass DRC and LVS? Does the datapath simulate correctly?