Lecture 4: MIPS Instruction Set

- Today's topics:
  - MIPS instructions
  - Code examples

HW 1 due today/tomorrow!

Instruction Set

- Important design principles when defining the instruction set architecture (ISA):
  - keep the hardware simple – the chip must only implement basic primitives and run fast
  - keep the instructions regular – simplifies the decoding/scheduling of instructions

We will later discuss RISC vs CISC

Example

C code   a = b + c + d + e;

translates into the following assembly code:

```
add  a, b, c                add  a, b, c
add  a, a, d        or      add  f, d, e
add  a, a, e                add  a, a, f
```

- Instructions are simple: fixed number of operands (unlike C)
- A single line of C code is converted into multiple lines of assembly code
- Some sequences are better than others… the second sequence needs one more (temporary) variable f

Subtract Example

C code f = (g + h) – (i + j);

translates into the following assembly code:

```
add  t0, g, h           add  f, g, h
add  t1,  i, j     or   sub   f, f, i
sub  f,   t0, t1        sub   f, f, j
```

- Each version may produce a different result because floating-point operations are not necessarily associative and commutative… more on this later

Operands

- In C, each “variable” is a location in memory
- In hardware, each memory access is expensive – if variable *a* is accessed repeatedly, it helps to bring the variable into an on-chip scratchpad and operate on the scratchpad (registers)
- To simplify the instructions, we require that each instruction (add, sub) only operate on registers
- Note: the number of operands (variables) in a C program is very large; the number of operands in assembly is fixed… there can be only so many scratchpad registers

Registers

- The MIPS ISA has 32 registers (x86 has 8 registers) – Why not more? Why not less?

- Each register is 32 bits wide (modern 64-bit architectures have 64-bit wide registers)

- A 32-bit entity (4 bytes) is referred to as a word

- To make the code more readable, registers are partitioned as $s0-$s7 (C/Java variables), $t0-$t9 (temporary variables)…

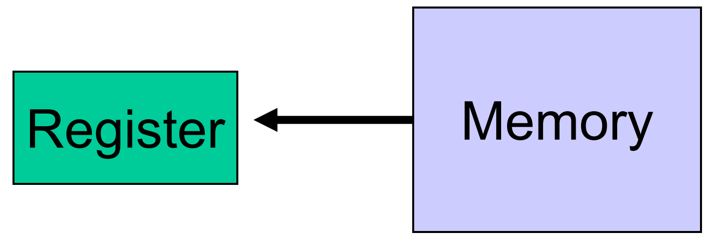
Binary Stuff

- 8 bits = 1 Byte, also written as 8b = 1B
- 1 word = 32 bits = 4B
- 1KB = 1024 B = 2^{10} B
- 1MB = 1024 x 1024 B = 2^{20} B
- 1GB = 1024 x 1024 x 1024 B = 2^{30} B
- A 32-bit memory address refers to a number between 0 and $2^{32} - 1$, i.e., it identifies a byte in a 4GB memory

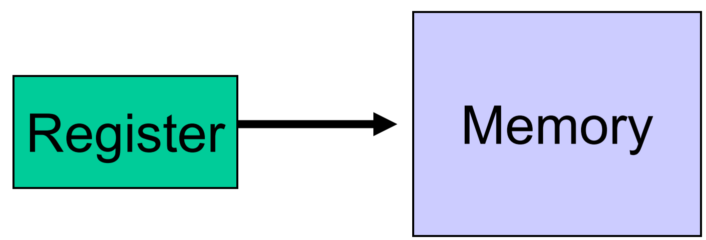
Memory Operands

- Values must be fetched from memory before (add and sub) instructions can operate on them

Load word
lw $t0, memory-address



Store word
sw $t0, memory-address



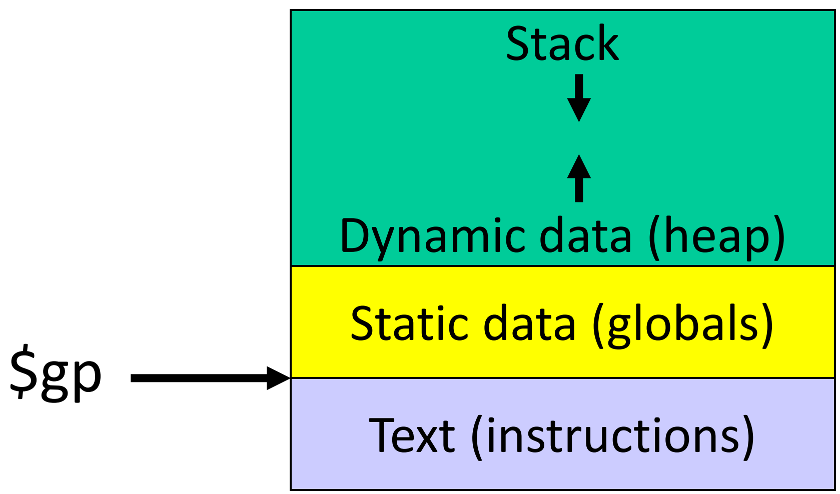
How is memory-address determined?

Memory Address

- The compiler organizes data in memory… it knows the location of every variable (saved in a table)… it can fill in the appropriate mem-address for load-store instructions

Memory Organization

$gp points to area in memory that saves global variables



Memory Instruction Format

- The format of a load instruction:

destination register

source address

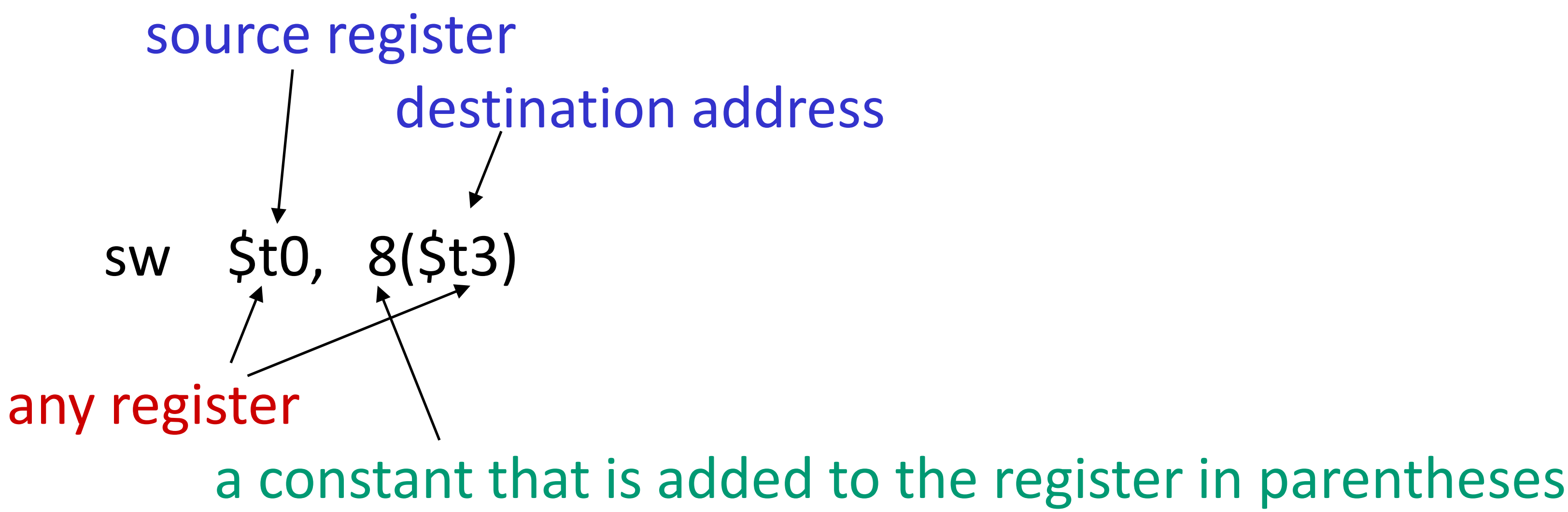
lw $t0, 8($t3)

any register

a constant that is added to the register in parentheses

Memory Instruction Format

- The format of a store instruction:



Example

int a, b, c, d[10];

```
addi   $gp, $zero, 1000   # assume that data is stored at
                          # base address 1000; placed in $gp;
                          # $zero is a register that always
                          # equals zero
lw   $s1, 0($gp)         # brings value of a into register $s1
lw   $s2, 4($gp)         # brings value of b into register $s2
lw   $s3, 8($gp)         # brings value of c into register $s3
lw   $s4, 12($gp)        # brings value of d[0] into register $s4
lw   $s5, 16($gp)        # brings value of d[1] into register $s5
```

Example

Convert to assembly:

C code: d[3] = d[2] + a;

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Assembly (same assumptions as previous example):

```
lw    $s0, 0($gp)     #  a is brought into $s0
lw    $s1, 20($gp)    #  d[2] is brought into $s1
add   $s2, $s0, $s1   #  the sum is in $s2
sw    $s2, 24($gp)    #  $s2 is stored into d[3]
```

Assembly version of the code continues to expand!

Memory Organization

- The space allocated on stack by a procedure is termed the activation record (includes saved values and data local to the procedure) – frame pointer points to the start of the record and stack pointer points to the end – variable addresses are specified relative to $fp as $sp may change during the execution of the procedure
- $gp points to area in memory that saves global variables
- Dynamically allocated storage (with malloc()) is placed on the heap