

# CENG 3420

# Computer Organization & Design



## Lecture 02: ISA Introduction

Bei Yu

CSE Department, CUHK

[byu@cse.cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:byu@cse.cuhk.edu.hk)

(Textbook: Chapters 1.3 & 2.1)

2024 Spring



# Organization – First Glance



## Components

- processor (datapath, control)
- input (mouse, keyboard)
- output (display, printer)
- memory (cache, main memory, disk drive, CD/DVD)
- network

**Our primary focus: the processor (datapath and control) and its interaction with memory systems**

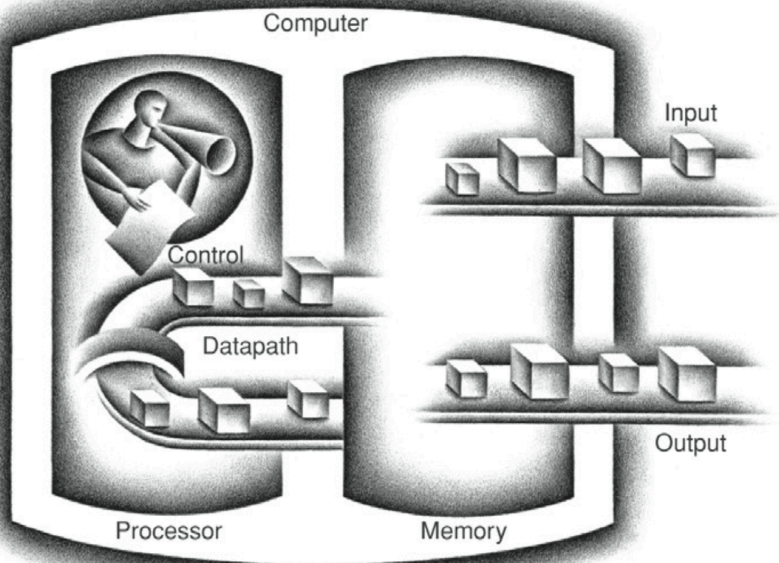
- Implemented using tens/hundreds of millions of transistors
- Impossible to understand by looking at each transistor
- We need abstraction!

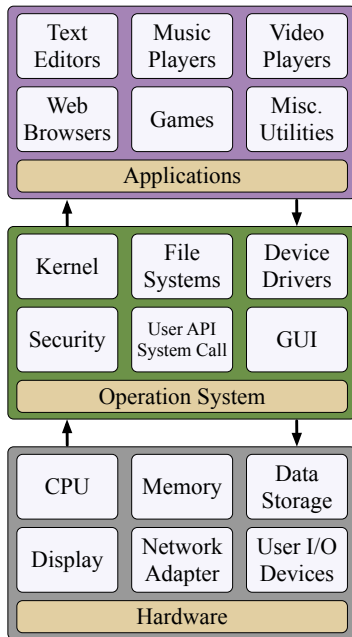


Which one is not a component of a computer?

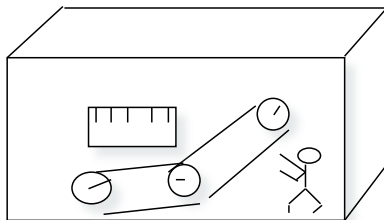
- A: processor
- B: I/O
- C: memory
- D: fan

# Major Components of a Computer





- Capabilities and performance characteristics of the principal Functional Units (FUs). (e.g., register file, ALU, multiplexors, memories, ...)
- The ways those FUs are interconnected (e.g., buses)
- Logic and means by which information flow between FUs is controlled
- The machine's Instruction Set Architecture (ISA)
- Register Transfer Level (RTL) machine description





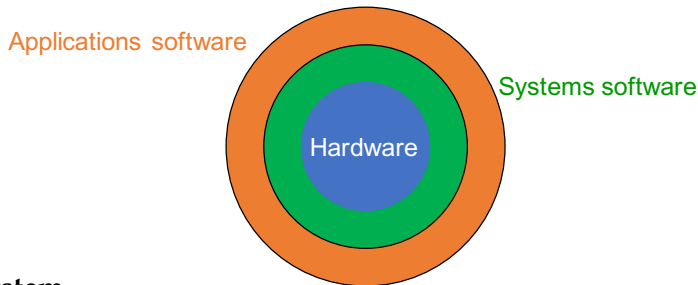
## Control needs to have **circuitry** to

- Decide which is the next instruction and input it from memory
- Decode the instruction
- Issue signals that control the way information flows between datapath components
- Control what operations the datapath's functional units perform

## Datapath needs to have **circuitry** to

- Execute instructions - functional units (e.g., adder) and storage locations (e.g., register file)
- Interconnect the functional units so that the instructions can be executed as required
- Load data from and store data to memory





## Operating System

- Supervising program that interfaces the user's program with the hardware (e.g., Linux, iOS, Windows)
- Handles basic input and output operations
- Allocates storage and memory
- Provides for protected sharing among multiple applications

## Compiler

- Translate programs written in a high-level language (e.g., C, Java) into instructions that the hardware can execute



Which one is not a task of an operating system?

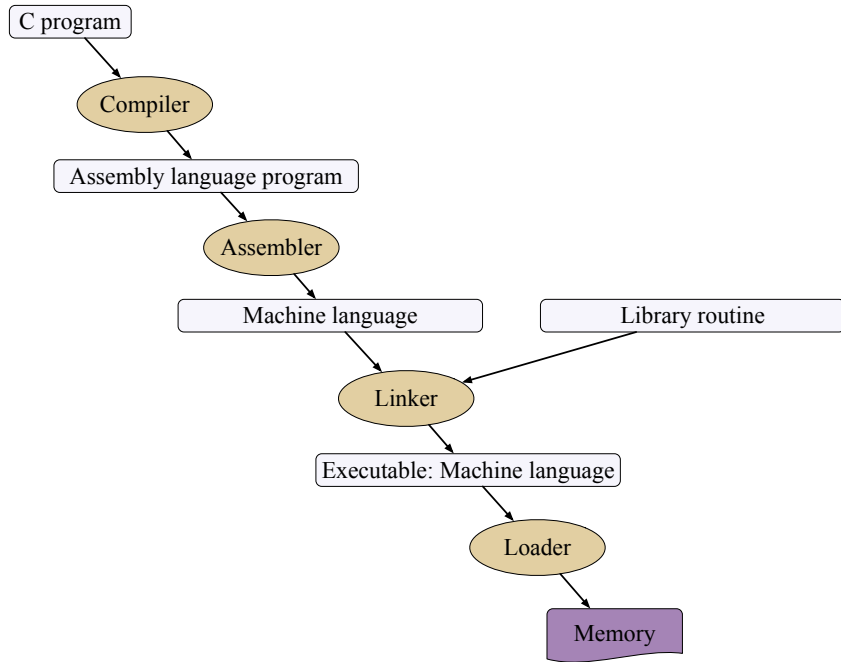
- A: output images to the screen
- B: create files
- C: translate C program to assembly language
- D: switch the processes that run on the processor



- Allow the programmer to think in a **more natural language** and for their intended use (Fortran for scientific computation, Cobol for business programming, Lisp for symbol manipulation, Java for web programming, ...)
- Improve programmer **productivity** – more understandable code that is easier to debug and validate
- Improve program **maintainability**
- Allow programs to be **independent** of the computer on which they are developed (compilers and assemblers can translate high-level language programs to the binary instructions of any machine)
- Emergence of optimizing compilers that produce very efficient assembly code optimized for the target machine

As a result, very little programming is done today at the assembler level

# Traditional Compilation Flow





- High-level language program (in C)

```
swap (int v[], int k)
(int temp;
    temp = v[k];
    v[k] = v[k+1];
    v[k+1] = temp;
)
```

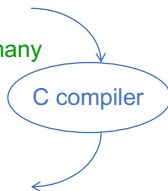
- Assembly language program

```
swap:  sll    $2, $5, 2
        add   $2, $4, $2
        lw    $15, 0($2)
        lw    $16, 4($2)
        sw    $16, 0($2)
        sw    $15, 4($2)
        jr    $31
```

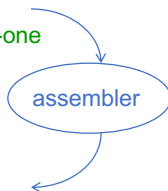
- Machine (object) code

```
000000 00000 00101 0001000010000000
000000 00100 00010 0001000000100000
. . .
```

one-to-many



one-to-one





- High-level language program (in C)

```
swap (int v[], int k)
(int temp;
    temp = v[k];
    v[k] = v[k+1];
    v[k+1] = temp;
)
```

one-to-many

C compiler

- Assembly language program

```
swap:  sll    $2, $5, 2
       add    $2, $4, $2
       lw     $15, 0($2)
       lw     $16, 4($2)
       sw     $16, 0($2)
       sw     $15, 4($2)
       jr     $31
```

one-to-one

assembler

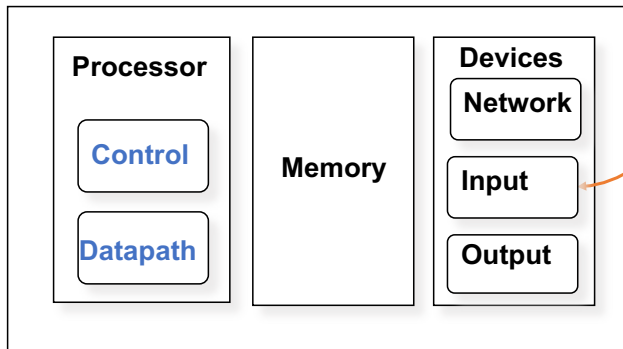
- Machine (object) code

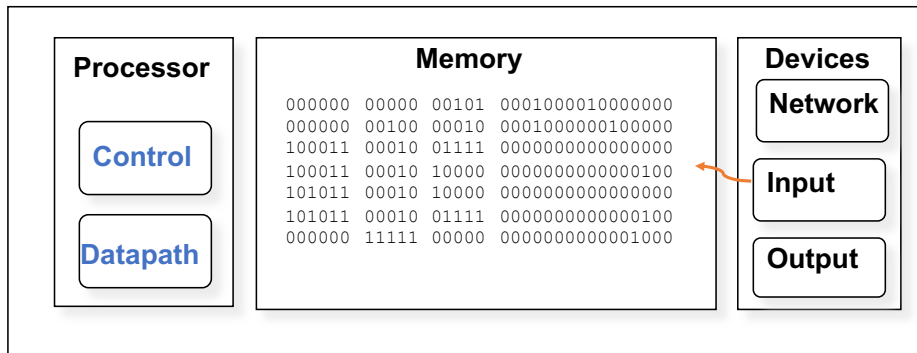
```
000000 00000 00101 0001000010000000
000000 00100 00010 0001000000100000
. . .
```

Max # of operations?

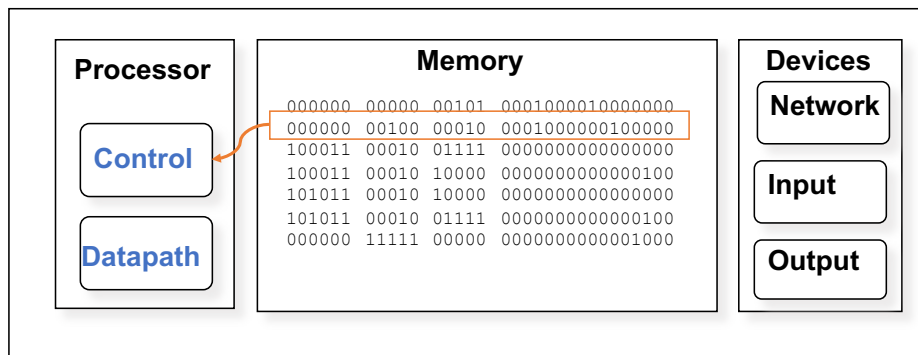


```
000000 00000 00101 00010000010000000
000000 00100 00010 00010000000100000
100011 00010 01111 00000000000000000
100011 00010 10000 00000000000000010
101011 00010 10000 00000000000000000
101011 00010 01111 00000000000000010
000000 11111 00000 00000000000001000
```

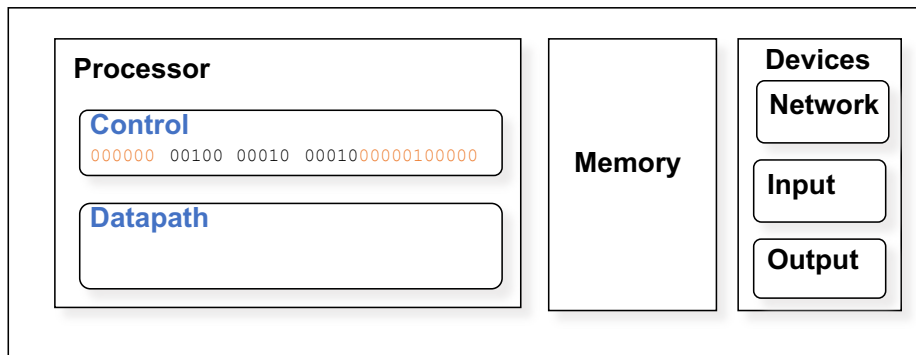




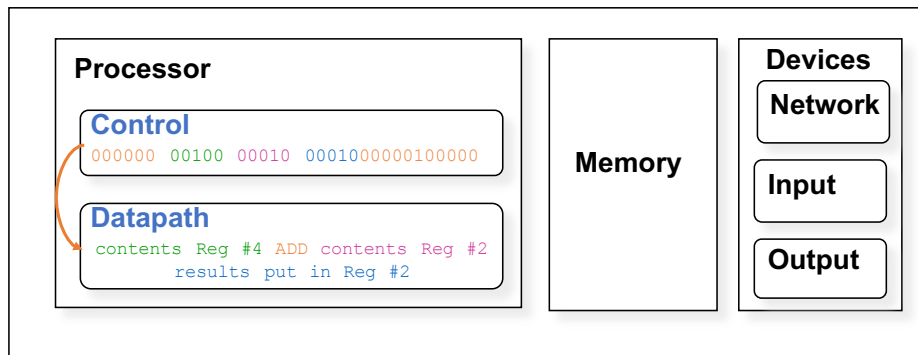




Processor **fetches** an instruction from memory

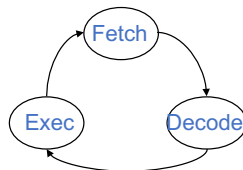
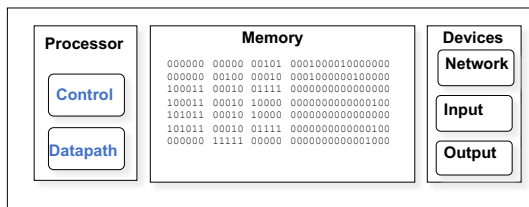


- Control **decodes** the instruction to determine what to execute

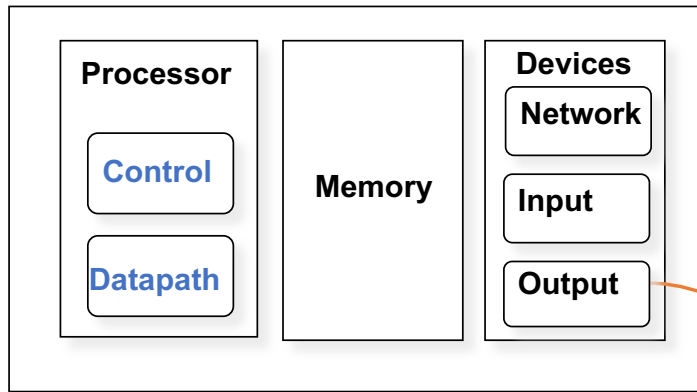


- Control **decodes** the instruction to determine what to execute
- Datapath **executes** the instruction as directed by control

# What Happens Next?



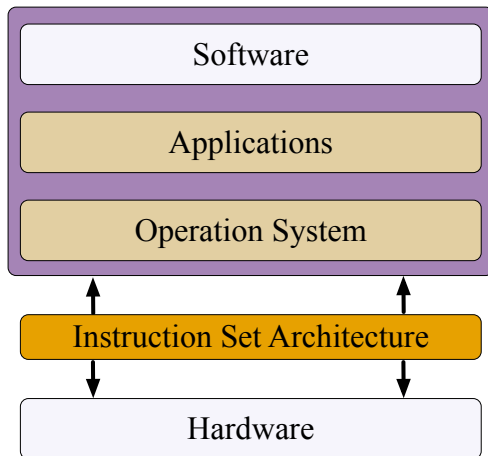
- Processor fetches the next instruction from memory
- How does it know which **location** in memory to fetch from next?

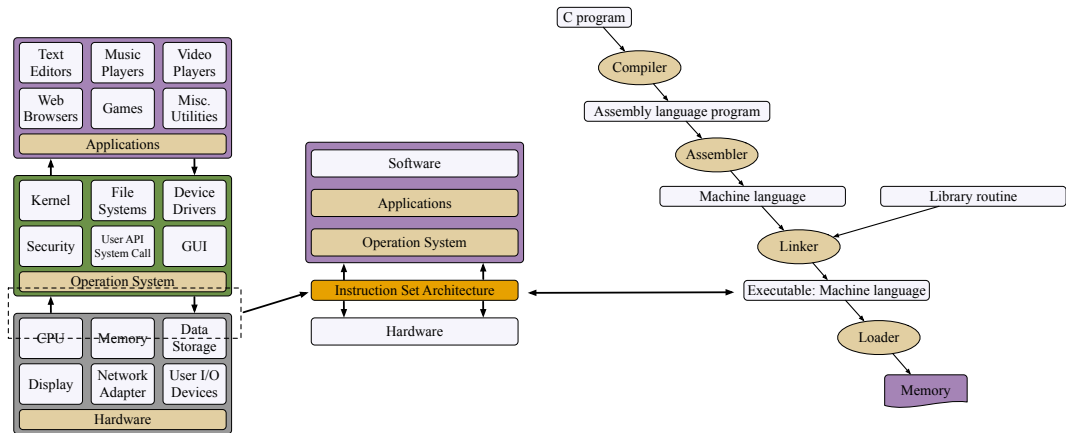


00000100010100000000000000000000  
000000000100111100000000000000100  
0000001111100000000000000000001000



ISA

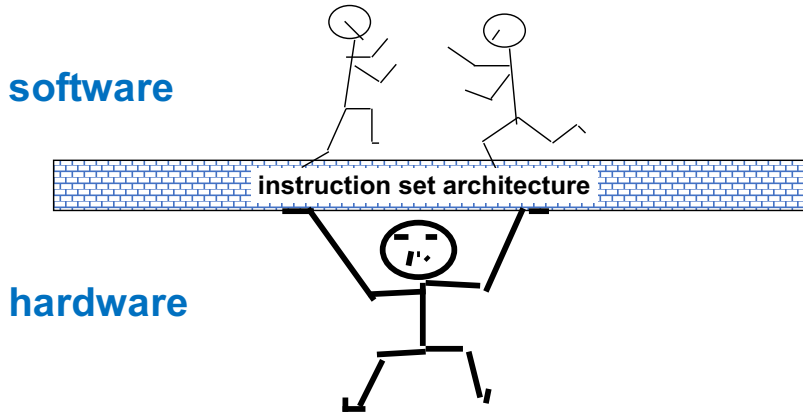






## Instruction Set Architecture (ISA)

The interface description separating the software and hardware





- ISA, or simply architecture – the abstract interface between the hardware and the lowest level software that includes all the information necessary to write a machine language program, including instructions, registers, memory access, I/O, ...
- Enables **implementations** of varying cost and performance to run identical software
- The combination of the basic instruction set (the ISA) and the operating system interface is called the application binary interface (**ABI**)
- **ABI**: The user portion of the instruction set plus the operating system interfaces used by application programmers. Defines a standard for binary portability across computers.



- 1 Instructions are represented as numbers and, as such, are indistinguishable from data
- 2 Programs are stored in alterable memory (that can be read or written to) just like data

## Memory

### Stored-Program Concept

- Programs can be shipped as files of binary numbers – **binary compatibility**
- Computers can inherit ready-made software provided they are compatible with an existing ISA – leads industry to align around a small number of ISAs

Accounting prg  
(machine code)

C compiler  
(machine code)

Payroll  
data

Source code in  
C for Acct prg



## The language of the machine

- Want an ISA that makes it easy to build the hardware and the compiler while maximizing performance and minimizing cost

## Our target: the **RISC-V** ISA

- similar to other ISAs developed since the 1980's
- RISC-V is originated from MIPS, the latter of which is used by Broadcom, Cisco, NEC, Nintendo, Sony, ...

## Design Goals

Maximize performance, minimize cost, reduce design time (time-to-market), minimize memory space (embedded systems), minimize power consumption (mobile systems)



# RISC-V



## Complex Instruction Set Computer (CISC)

Lots of instructions of variable size, very memory optimal, typically less registers.

- Intel x86

## Reduced Instruction Set Computer (RISC)

Instructions, all of a fixed size, more registers, optimized for speed. Usually called a “Load/Store” architecture.

- [RISC-V](#), LC-3b, [MIPS](#), ARM, Sun SPARC, HP PA-RISC, IBM PowerPC ...

- Used in many embedded systems
- E.g., Nintendo-64, Playstation 1, Playstation 2





## RISC-V

- An open standard instruction set architecture (ISA)
- A clean break from the earlier MIPS-inspired designs
- Modular ISA organization
- Open standards, numerous proprietary and open-source cores
- Managed by RISC-V Foundation

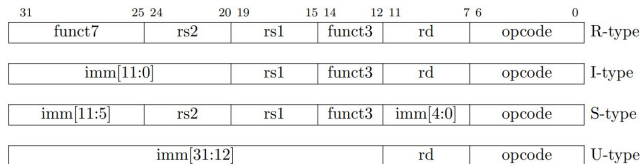




## Instruction Categories

- Load and Store instructions
- Bitwise instructions
- Arithmetic instructions
- Control transfer instructions
- Pseudo instructions

## 4 Base Instruction Formats: all 32 bits wide





Which one is not a part of ISA?

- A: load/store instructions
- B: arithmetic operations
- C: printf function
- D: control transfer instructions



Which one is not a part of ISA?

- A: load/store instructions
- B: arithmetic operations
- C: printf function
- D: control transfer instructions

Ans: C



Register Names	ABI Names	Description
x0	zero	Hard-wired zero
x1	ra	Return address
x2	sp	Stack pointer
x3	gp	Global pointer
x4	tp	Thread pointer
x5	t0	Temporary / Alternate link register
x6-7	t1 - t2	Temporary register
x8	s0 / fp	Saved register / Frame pointer
x9	s1	Saved register
x10-11	a0-a1	Function argument / Return value registers
x12-17	a2-a7	Function argument registers
x18-27	s2-s11	Saved registers
x28-31	t3-t6	Temporary registers



Which register **cannot** we store an operand when we call “max(a, b)”?

- A: x0 (zero)
- B: x3 (gp)
- C: x9 (s1)
- D: x11 (a1)



Which register **cannot** we store an operand when we call “max(a, b)”?

- A: x0 (zero)
- B: x3 (gp)
- C: x9 (s1)
- D: x11 (a1)

Ans: A