Surviving Verilog

avoiding pain in 378
Agenda

• Pep talk
• Lab overview
• Mapping code to hardware
• Verilog tips and traps
My desktop circa 1998

RAL 1989 Annual Report
Your processor

>>

Sun 3/50
What can we do?

http://www.xkl.com

http://pulse-sequencer.sourceforge.net
Free as in

{ freedom | beer }

simulation: Icarus Verilog; GTKWave
schematics/board design: gEDA
chips/implementaton: Xilinx, Altera, etc.
boards: cheap PCB houses; toaster oven
programming/debugging: OpenOCD
Not doing it for you?
PARALLEL CRISIS!!!

The Landscape of Parallel Computing Research: A View From Berkeley
Funky parallelism

- Hardware is inherently parallel
- FPGA = Fine-grained massively parallel computer
- Verilog = Funky parallel programming language
Lab Process and Goals
Four main lab tasks

- One: build single-cycle datapath; create jump/branch logic
- Two: build control logic for single-cycle CPU
- Three: add pipeline registers
- Four: finish pipeline with forwarding and hazard detection
First task

• Mostly connecting things together in BDE; write Verilog for jumps and branches

• We provide testbenches, but they’re incomplete (add tests?)

• Final step: write small program to flash lights
Our hardware

- Altera Cyclone II EP2C20
- 18,752 4-input lookup tables
- 18,752 one-bit registers
- 240 kilobytes of memory
A few tools

• Aldec Active-HDL simulates Verilog and BDE
  • Assembler turns code into bits for memory

• Altera Quartus does three things:
  • translates Verilog to hardware primitives
  • arranges hardware primitives on the chip
  • downloads design to chip
Hardware primitives
module foo (a, b, f, g);
    input wire a, b;
    output wire f;
    output reg g;

    assign f = a & b;
    always @(*)
        g = a & b;
endmodule
 Registers

input wire nextFoo;
reg foo;

always @(posedge clk)
  foo <= nextFoo;
Each LE's programmable register can be configured for D, T, JK, or SR operation. Each register has data, clock, clock enable, and clear inputs. Signals that use the global clock network, general-purpose I/O pins, or any internal logic can drive the register's clock and clear control signals. Either general-purpose I/O pins or internal logic can drive the clock enable. For combinational functions, the LUT output bypasses the register and drives directly to the LE outputs.

Each LE has three outputs that drive the local, row, and column routing resources. The LUT or register output can drive these three outputs independently. Two LE outputs drive column or row and direct link routing connections and one drives local interconnect resources, allowing the LUT to drive one output while the register drives another output. This feature, register packing, improves device utilization because the device can use the register and the LUT for unrelated functions. When using register packing, the LAB-wide synchronous load control signal is not available. See "LAB Control Signals" on page 2–8 for more information.
Muxes

- assign f =
  s[1] ?
    (s[0] ? a : b) :
    (s[0] ? c : d);

always @(*)
case (s)
  2'b00 : g = a;
  2'b01 : g = b;
  2'b10 : g = c;
  2'b11 : g = d;
endcase

always @(*)
  if (s == 2'b00)
    h = a;
  else if (s == 2'b01)
    h = b;
  else if (s == 2'b10)
    h = c;
  else  // s == 2'b1
    h = d;
Adders/subtractors

• assign f = a + b;
  assign g = a - b;

• wire [8:0] s;
  wire [7:0] a, b;
  assign s = {0,a} + {0,b};  // pick up carry out

• How big are they? How fast?
Comparators

- assign isZero = (a == 0);
- assign isGreater = (a > b); // unsigned!!!
  assign isLTZ = (a < 0); // is this ever true?
- can do signed compares if ALL signals involved are declared “signed”.
  wire signed [7:0] a, b;
- How big? How fast?
Check with RTL view
Verilog tips and traps
HW Tools: pain in digital form?

• We should teach ideas, not tools! But tools help express ideas

• HW tools often kind of suck, but don’t blame tools for bad craftsmanship, do good craftsmanship with bad tools.

• Patience and care will win
Constants: 32 bits, decimal

- wire [7:0] foo = 127;  // synthesis warning!
- wire [7:0] foo = 8’d127;
- wire [7:0] foo = 8’b11111111;
- wire [7:0] foo = 8’hff;
- wire [7:0] foo = 8’hFF;
- watch out: 1010 looks like 4’b1010!
wire [7:0] a = 8'hAB;
wire b;               // oops! forgot width
wire [7:0] c;

assign b = a;        // synthesis warning if lucky.
assign c = a;
reg vs. wire

- wire f; reg g, h;

assign f = a & b;

always @(posedge clk)
g <= a & b;

always @(*)
h = a & b;
input wire a, b;
output reg f;

always @(posedge clk)
  if (a) f <= 1'b0; // race!

always @(posedge clk)
  if (b) f <= 1'b1; // race!
• Simple rule:
  • If you want sequential logic, use always `@`(posedge clk) with `<=`.
  • If you want combinational logic, use always `@`(*) with `=`.
always @(posedge clk)
begin
  f <= a + b;
  g <= f + c;
end

always @(posedge clk)
begin
  f = a + b;
  g = f + c; // a + b + c
end

always @(posedge clk)
begin
  f2 <= f1;
  f3 <= f2;
  f4 = f3;
  f5 = f4;  // f5 = f3 !
  f7 = f6;
  f6 = f5;
end
More specifically,

```
initial
  state = 0;

always @(posedge clk)
begin
  if (state == 0) state = 1;
  if (state == 1) state = 2;
  if (state == 2) state = 0;
end
```
Nonblocking Ev
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simula
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Events
queue.
RHS ex
inputs followed by
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The
EEE
1.2
A
cc
c
A
argh.

Active Events

Blocking assignments
Evaluate RHS of nonblocking assignments
Continuous assignments
$display command execution
Evaluate inputs and change outputs of primitives

Inactive Events

#0 blocking assignments

Nonblocking Events

Update LHS of nonblocking assignments

Monitor Events

$monitor command execution
$strobe command execution
Other specific PLI commands

These events may be scheduled in any order

Figure 1 - Verilog "stratified event queue"

from Cliff Cummings' "Nonblocking Assignments in Verilog Synthesis, Coding Styles That Kill!"
Incomplete sensitivity lists

- always @(a or b)  // it’s or, not ||
  f = a & b;
- always @(a)
  f = a & b;
- always
  f = a & b;
- Just use always@(*) for combinational logic
Enables and Latches

- always @(posedge clk)
  if (a == 1)
    f <= 1;
  else if (a == 2)
    f <= 2;
  else if (a == 3)
    f <= 3;
- implicitly:
  else
    f <= f;

- always @(*)
  if (a == 1)
    f = 1;
  else if (a == 2)
    f = 2;
  else if (a == 3)
    f = 3;
- implicitly:
  else
    f = f;
  this is memory!
• Simple rule:
  • If you want sequential logic, use `always @(posedge clk)` with `<=`.
  • If you want combinational logic, use `always @(*)` with `=`.
Combinational and Sequential

input wire a, b, s;
output reg f, g, h;

always @(posedge clk)
begin
  f <= (a & ~s) | (b & s);
  if (s)
    h <= a;
  else
    h <= b;
  g <= s ? a : b;
end
Displaying things

- works for most stuff:
  \$display("the answer is %h.", ans);

- for nonblocking assignments, you may sometimes want:
  \$strobe("the answer is %h.", ans);
  (see Aargh. for reason)
X’s

• X’s are for undefined values:
  wire a;
  $display(a);  // prints an X

• Pins that aren’t hooked up will be X’s:
  Often, 32’hxxxxxxxxf4 indicates an Active-HDL bus with default width.

• 1’b1 & 1’bX yields 1’bX
  1’b1 + 1’bX yields 1’bX
Z’s

- Z’s are for bus sharing. You won’t need this.
- \( a \leq 1'bZ; \ b \leq 1'bZ; \)
  \( a \leq 2'b0; \ b \leq 1'b1; \)
  // a will be 0 and b will be 1
- Z’s turn into X’s sometimes:
  \( 1'b1 \& 1'bZ \) yields \( 1'bX. \)
  \( 1'b1 \+ 1'bZ \) yields \( 1'bX. \)
Initial values

• Synthesis doesn’t always pay attention. (!?!)
  Better to design in a reset line.

• Maybe:
  reg foo = 1'b1;

• Maybe:
  initial begin
    foo = 1'b1;
  end
Whew.
Questions?