DESIGN OF DIGITAL CIRCUITS AND SYSTEMS

Algos to Hardware II, Timing Review

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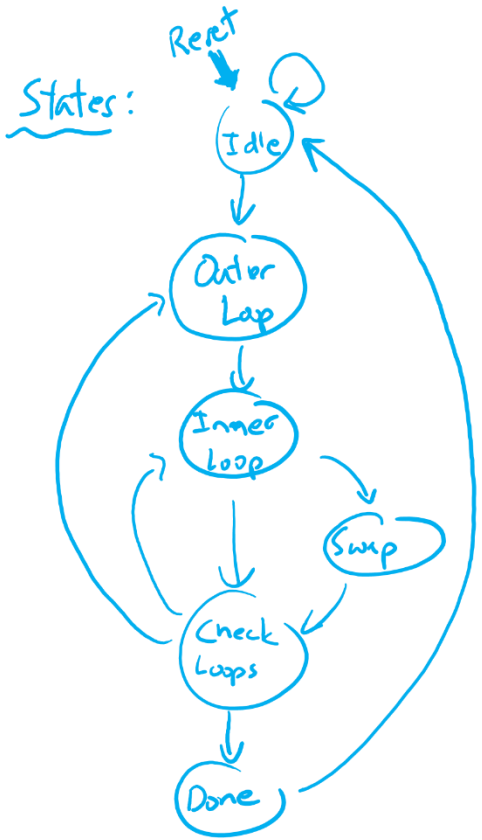
Relevant Course Information

- Anonymous mid-quarter survey on Canvas (due 5/4)
- Homework 4 due on Monday (5/4)
- Lab 3 due Friday (5/1)
- Lab 4 due next Friday (5/8)
- Lab 5 will be released next week, due 5/22
- Quiz 3 (ASM, ASMD) next Thursday (5/7)

Lecture Outline (1/2)

- **Algorithm → Hardware Wrap-up**
- Timing Constraints Review

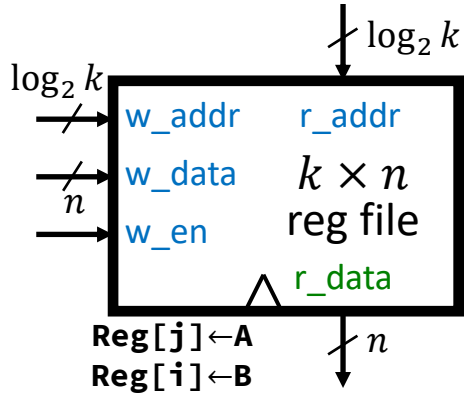
Sorting Algorithm: ASMD Chart

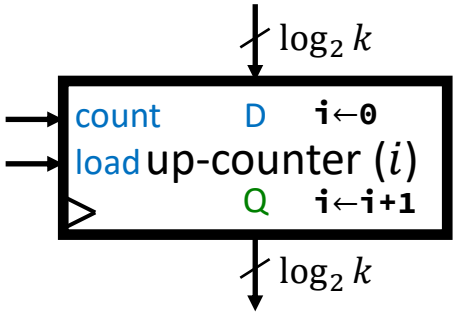


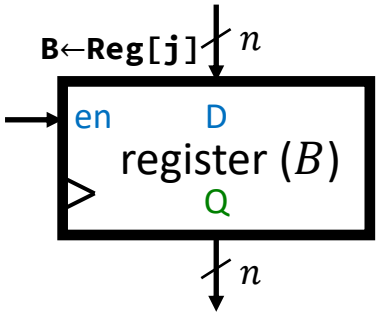
Sorting Algorithm Datapath

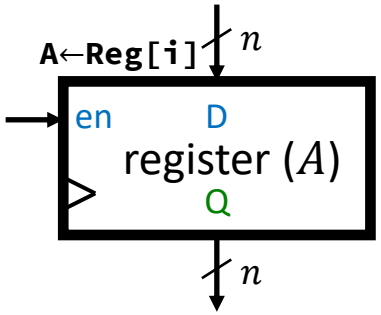
Control Signals:
`Init_i, Incr_i`
`Init_j, Incr_j`
`Load_A, Store_A`
`Load_B, Store_B`

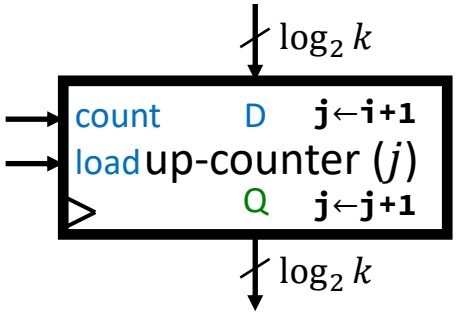
Status Signals:
`B_lt_A`
`i_done`
`j_done`











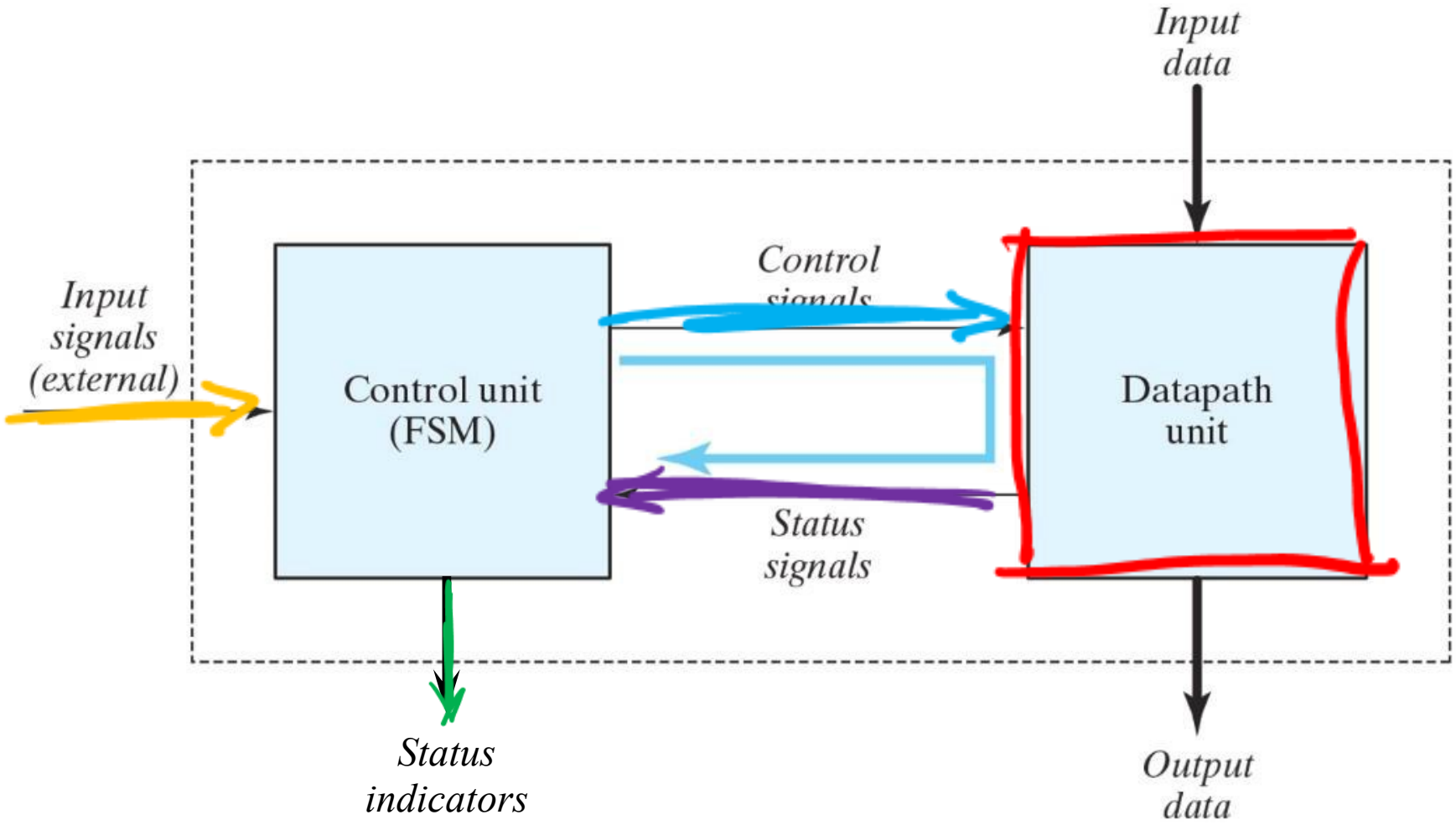
isPrime Algorithm

- Design a sequential circuit that determines if an input Num is a prime number (*e.g.*, 2, 3, 5, 7) or not
  - Num has width W, output P is 1 (prime) or 0 (not prime)
  - Assume the usual Ready, Done, Start, Reset
- Algorithm:

```
N = Num
if N < 3 do              // handle special cases
   return (N == 2)
for F = 2 to N/2 do  // factor to check
   if (N % F == 0) do
      return 0
   endif
endfor
return 1
```

isPrime: ASMD Chart

isPrime: Block Diagram



SHORT TECH BREAK

Download starter code for live coding from the course schedule!

isPrime Live Coding Demo

```
isPrime_control:
    // port definitions
    // define state names and variables
    // controller logic w/synchronous reset
    // next state logic
    // output assignments

isPrime_datapath:
    // port definitions
    // internal datapath signals and registers
    // datapath logic
    // output assignments

isPrime:
    // port definitions
    // define status and control signals
    // instantiate control and datapath
```

Basic Testbench Review

- How to start a testbench:
  1) Create a `<name>_tb` module with no ports
  2) Create variables that match the module's ports
  3) Instantiate an instance of the module can call it `dut` or `uut`
  4) If needed, create a simulated clock
  5) Create an `initial` block to define your test inputs

- Tools we know about:
  - Timing controls: `#<time>;`, `@(posedge <signal>);`
  - Loops:
```
integer i; for (i = 0; i < 2**3; i++)
    repeat (2**4)
```

Testing Your Algorithm

- Create a testbench for our `isPrime` module:

```
module isPrime_tb ();
   // define parameters

   // define module port connections

   // instantiate module

   // create simulated clock

   // define test inputs

endmodule
```

Testing Your Algorithm

- Create a testbench for our `isPrime` module:
  - Single `Num` value (arbitrary wait):

```
// define test inputs

initial begin
   Num = 3;
   Reset = 1; Start = 0;  @(posedge clk);
   Reset = 0;             @(posedge clk);
   Start = 1;             @(posedge clk);
   Start = 0;

   repeat (2**4)       // wait 16 clock cycles
      @(posedge clk);

   @(posedge clk);  // extra cycle of output
   $stop();
end
```

Testing Your Algorithm

- Create a testbench for our `isPrime` module:
  - Single Num value (check Ready):

```
// define test inputs

initial begin
   Num = 3;
   Reset = 1; Start = 0;  @(posedge clk);
   Reset = 0;             @(posedge clk);
   Start = 1;             @(posedge clk);
   Start = 0;

   @(posedge Ready);  // wait until module says it's ready


   @(posedge clk);  // extra cycle of output
   $stop();
end
```

Testing Your Algorithm

- Create a testbench for our `isPrime` module:
  - All Num values:

```
// define test inputs
integer i;
initial begin
   Reset = 1; Start = 0;  @(posedge clk);
   Reset = 0;             @(posedge clk);

   for (i = 0; i < 2**W; i++) begin
      Start = 1; Num = i; @(posedge clk);
      Start = 0;          @(posedge Ready);
   end


   @(posedge clk);  // extra cycle of output
   $stop();
end
```

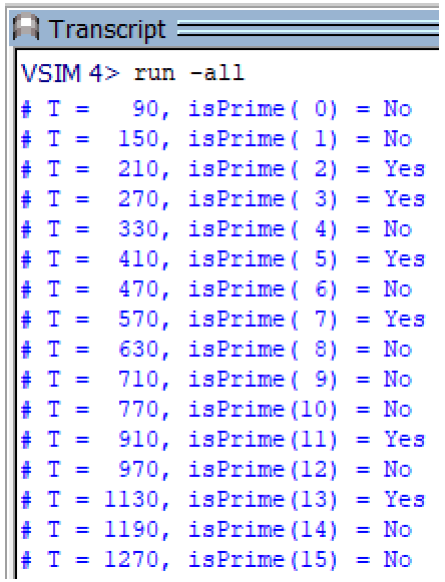
Testing Your Algorithm: `$display`

- Triggers once when encountered, prints the given format string and adds a new line:

```
// define test inputs
integer i;
initial begin
  Reset = 1; Start = 0;  @(posedge clk);
  Reset = 0;             @(posedge clk);
  for (i = 0; i < 2**W; i++) begin
    Start = 1; Num = i; @(posedge clk);
    Start = 0;          @(posedge Ready);

    $display("T = %4t, isPrime(%2d) = %s",
             $time, Num, P ? "Yes" : "No ");

  end
  @(posedge clk);  // extra cycle of output
  $stop();
end
```



SHORT TECH

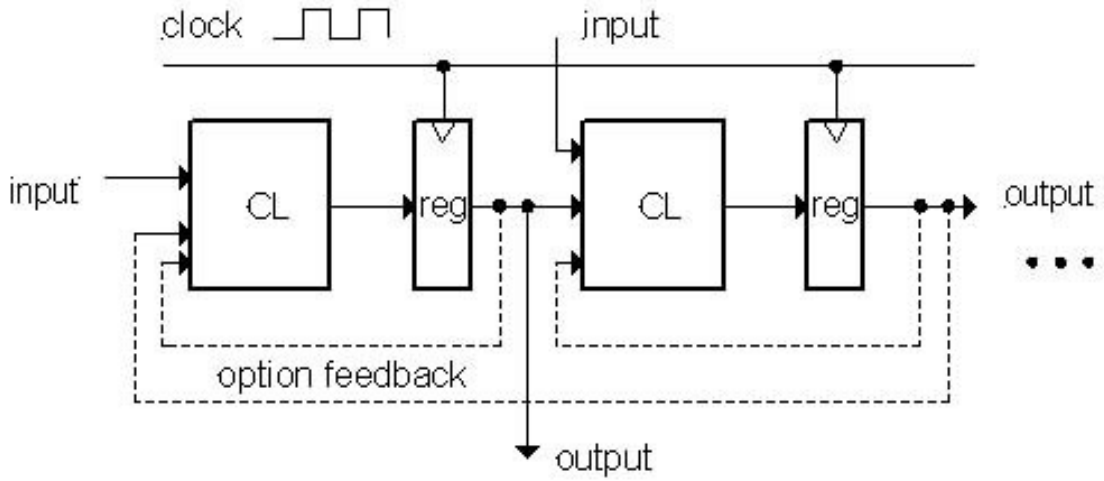
BREAK

Lecture Outline (2/2)

- Algorithm → Hardware Wrap-up
- **Timing Constraints Review**

Why Are Timing Constraints Important?

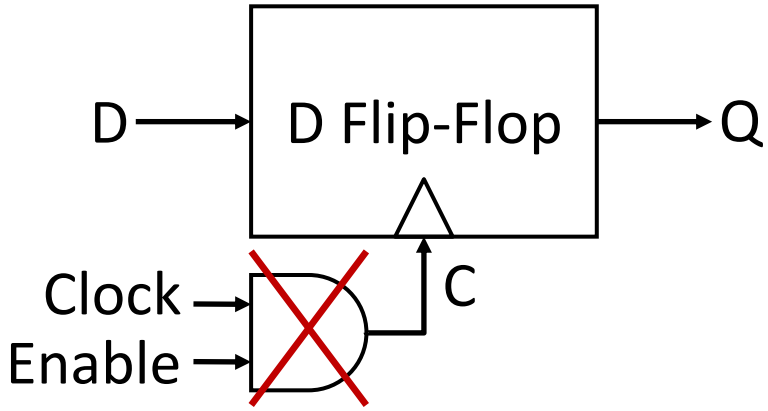
- Our model of synchronous digital systems relies on timing behavior of the clock and logic stages
  - Combinational logic blocks separated by registers



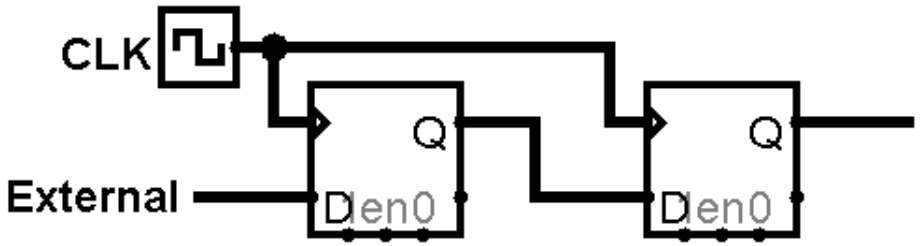
  - Violations can cause incorrect behavior or can cause produced semiconductor circuits to fail!
  - Timing considerations can limit how fast our system/clock can run

Review: Timing Issues

- **NEVER GATE THE CLOCK!!!**
  - Delays can cause part of a circuit to get out of sync with the rest
    - Adds to *clock skew*
  - Hard to track non-uniform triggers

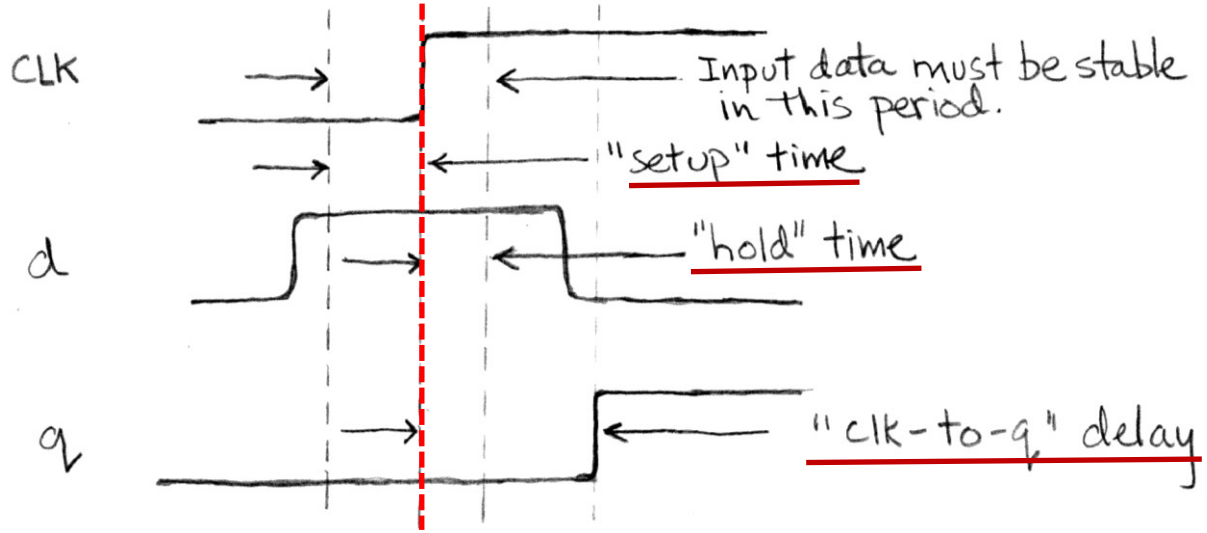


- **Metastability** is the ability of a digital system to persist for an unbounded time in an unstable equilibrium or metastable state
  - Add chains of registers to allow to settle:



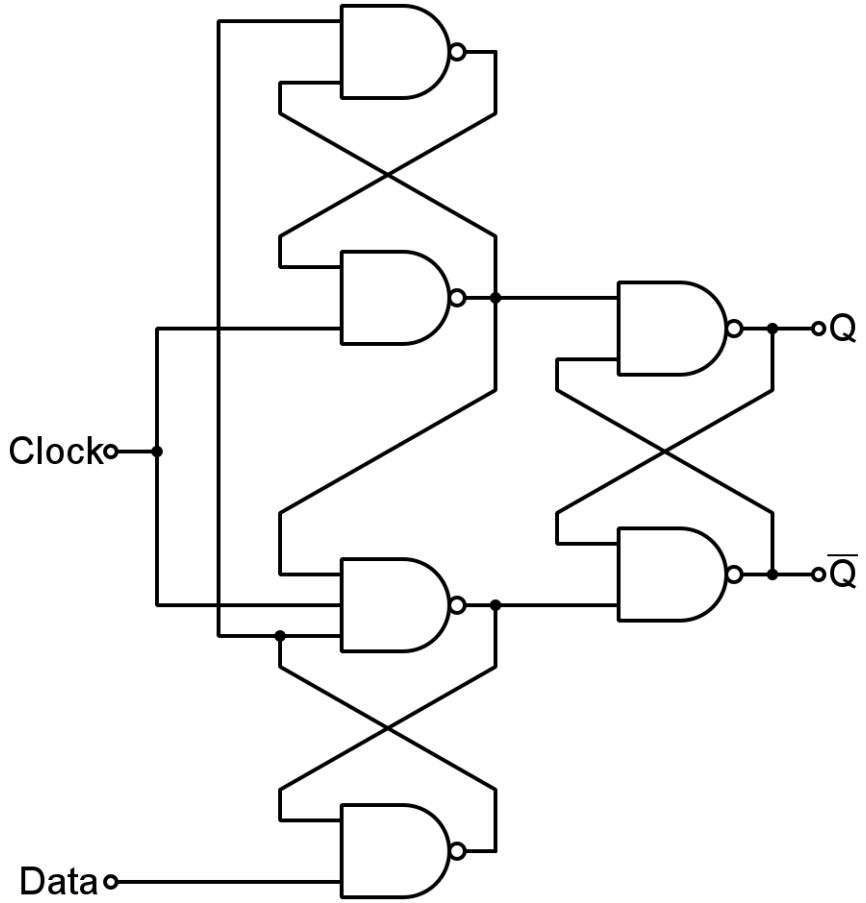
Review: Sequential Timing Constraints

- *Setup Time (t_s or t_{su}):* How long the input must be stable *before* the CLK trigger for proper input read
- *Hold Time (t_h):* How long the input must be stable *after* the CLK trigger for proper input read
- *"CLK-to-Q" Delay (t_{C2Q} or t_{CO}):* How long it takes the output to change, measured from the CLK trigger



Where Do Timing Terms Come From?

- Edge-triggered D flip-flop:



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When Can the Input Change?

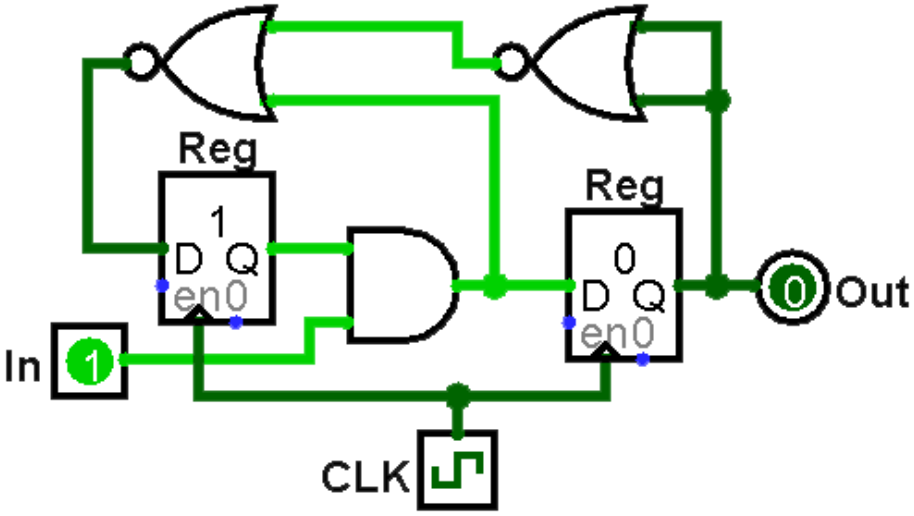
- When a register input changes shouldn't violate hold time (t_h) or setup time (t_{su}) constraints within a clock period (T)
- Let $t_{input,i}$ be the time it takes for the input of a register to change for the i-th time in a single clock cycle, measured from the CLK trigger:
  - Then we need $t_h \leq t_{input,i} \leq T - t_{su}$ for all i
  - Two separate constraints!

Timing Constraint Considerations

- Use *worst-case analysis*
  - Asynchronous inputs are *really* problematic
  - Use the critical path – the longest delay between *any* two registers in a circuit – for setup time constraint
  - Use the shortest path for the hold time constraint
- A timing violation could be caused by a signal change from the *previous* clock cycle
  - *i.e.*, a really late input change could violate the hold time constraint in the *next* clock cycle
- Setup time constraint helps determine feasibility of clock frequency: max freq = 1/(min period)

Timing Constraint Worked Example

- $t_{su} = 12$ ns, $t_h = 18$ ns, $t_{CO} = 8$ ns, $t_{AND} = 25$ ns, and $t_{NOR} = 20$ ns



  - If `In` changes t_{CO} after each clock trigger, what is the **minimum clock period** we can use?

  - If we use the minimum clock period, when within a clock period [0, T] can In change without causing a timing violation?