Introduction

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For the course "Introduction to VHDL"



What are FPGAs ?

Field Programmable Gate Array : We have a bunch of digital circuit primitives with user programmable connections *designer*

There are several ways to design digital circuits on FPGAs One option is to use a HDL

Hardware Description Language :

We describe the circuits in plain text just like a programming language. But it is not a programming language! it is a description language.



In this course, we will be using VHDL

Start with a Simple Digital Example

Consider the following combinatorial digital circuit and truth table



We can describe the function as

X = A when S=0, B when S=1 or

X = (A and not S) or (B and S)







It is a 1-bit 2-to-1 multiplexer as we know



We can make other multiplexers using this basic mux.



Programmable / Configurable devices basically work just like that

In a device, we have a finite number of

- 1. Flip-Flops, Registers
- 2. RAMs
- 3. Look Up Tables (LUTs)
- 4. Gates
- 5. Arithmetic Units
- 6. MUXs
- 7. Other (clock managers, buses, I/O blocks etc)

that we can interconnect them as we wish and design the digital circuit needed

or we can use a **HDL** and let a compiler/synthesizer do the design and optimization for the resource/performance balance.

Example (Xilinx-Spartan3E structure)





It may not be what it looks like

Combinatorial functions are usually implemented with look-up tables



with N being the number of variables in the function.

Steps of VHDL Design Flow



Since we have Spartan3E kits in the lab. we will be referring Xilinx ISE tool from now on, remembering that other vendors/manufacturers provide similar tools too. Tools for the steps mentioned here are mostly device/vendor specific.

Hello World



How we do it using ISE tool (ver 14.7)



Click Next



Select your device

If you cannot find your board in this list, select '*none specified*' and just select your FPGA chip

These should be as shown here - -

New Project Wizard × Project Settings Specify device and project properties. -Select the device and design flow for the project Value. Property Name **Evaluation Development Board** 5partan-3E Starter Board Product Category Family Spartan3E XC35500E Device Package FG320 -4 -Speed Top-Level Source Type ∇ Synthesis Tool XST (VHDL/Verilog) • Simulator • ISim (VHDL/Verilog) • Preferred Language VHDL Store all values • Property Specification in Project File Manual Compile Order • VHDL Source Analysis Standard VHDL-93 Enable Message Filtering More Info $\underline{N}ext >$ < <u>B</u>ack Cancel

Click Next

and click 'Finish' on the Project Summary dialog box



need to add the file to the project later.



Define ports of the entity

The convention is to create a source file for each entity (circuit). Here you may define inputs/outputs of this entity.

Since source files are text files, many coders skip this step and insert/edit the port description by hand.

New Source Wiz	zard					х
Define Module Specify ports	s for module.					
Entity name	mux2to1					
Architecture name	Behavioral					
	Port Name	Direction	Bus	MSB	LSB	
A		in 💌				
В		in 💌				
5		in 💌				
X		out				
		in 💌				
		in 💌				
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More Info		< [<u>ack</u>	<u>N</u> ext >	Cance	el 🗌

Default signal type is STD_LOGIC.

```
entity mux2to1 is
    Port ( A : in STD_LOGIC;
        B : in STD_LOGIC;
        S : in STD_LOGIC;
        X : out STD_LOGIC);
end mux2to1;
```

Click Next

and click 'Finish' on the Summary dialog box

We now have a source file editor window with entity description, some comments and library definitions and an empty architecture section. Architecture section is where you describe your circuit's behaviour.

```
Edit/Insert VHDL Code
 6
                                     library IEEE;
                                     use IEEE.STD LOGIC 1164.ALL;
                                     entity mux2to1 is
                                         Port ( A : in STD LOGIC;
                                                 B : in STD LOGIC;
                                                 S : in STD LOGIC;
                                                 X : out STD LOGIC);
                                     end mux2to1:
                                     architecture Behavioral of mux2to1 is
                                     begin
Insert logical expressions here ---- X <= (A and not S) or (B and S)
(between begin and end keywords of
Architecture section)
                                     end Behavioral;
```

Click Save icon

When saving, automatic syntax check is performed. Watch Console for error messages



You can also check syntax by right clicking on the *Check Syntax* item in *Design Tab* and selecting *Run*, or double click on *Check Syntax*





This time, the syntax error is caused by a missing; in $X \le (A \text{ and } not S)$ or (B and S)





You should see the green checkmark on Synthesize item too, after synthesizing

Now we need to implement a physical circuit for our selected device from this workable circuit description

It is imperative to define actual input output pins for a correct implementation as our design is a complete circuit and we need to test it by applying actual signals to the inputs and monitoring the outputs.

Therefore, we need to tell "which signal goes to which pin of the device" before this step. We do this by creating a constraint file.



Click Next

and click 'Finish' on the Summary dialog box

we will see a new editor window named as mux2to1.ucf (User Constraint File)

User Constraint File is a text file used for describing various constraints. There is a complete book on the possible contents of this file. This time we are just interested in pin connections.

Enter the following lines in the window and save it.

;	"H18"	=	LOC	"A"	NET
;	"L14"	=	LOC	"B"	NET
;	"N17"	=	LOC	"S"	NET
;	"F12"	=	LOC	"X"	NET

It tells the implementor to connect the I/Os of our multiplexer to the physical switches and LEDs on our Spartan 3E Evaluation Board.



X (LED)

For example: A is the signal name, H18 is the pin number of the FPGA which is physically connected to the second switch on the board

Note : Instead of editing UCF as described above, you may also enter the following into the declaration part of the architecture section of the VHDL file. Differences will be mentioned later.

attribute LOC: string; attribute LOC of "A" : signal is "H18"; attribute LOC of "B" : signal is "L14"; attribute LOC of "S" : signal is "N17"; attribute LOC of "X" : signal is "F12";



Programming File is a binary file with *.BIT extension.

This file will be loaded onto FPGA through FPGA's programming pins.

Our Spartan 3E Starter Board has a USB programming feature

through which this file can be sent.

For this purpose, we will be using IMPACT program which can be

initiated by Configure Target Device item. -

(IMPACT can also be started externally)





Right Click on the blank window and select Initialize Chain to search for devices on the board

We should see the devices on the board in a chain configuration.

We also see a warning message about the configuration file(s). This time we will asssign the configuration file manually, therefore, dismiss this dialog box and the next one.



For the Spartan 3E Starter Board, there should be 3 programmable devices in the chain. The first one (xc3s500e) is the FPGA device and the one we are to program.

Click on xc3s500e to select device. Right click and select Assign New Configuration File...

🛃 Assign New Configuration	File		X			
VHDL_Proj	ects 🕶 mux2to1 👻 🔫	Search mux2to1	2		(SP178P1 2?	
Organize 🔻 New folder			- 🗆 🕐	трі	E XILINX"	
🔶 Favorites	Name *	Date modified	Туре			Get Device ID
Nesktop	🐌 _ngo	26.09.2016 10:54	File folder			Get Device ID
Downloads	鷆 _xmsgs	26.09.2016 11:02	File folder		xc3s500e	Get Device Signature/Usercode
🔠 Recent Places	퉬 ipcore_dir	26.09.2016 08:43	File folder	тро	bypass	Add SPI/BPI Flash
🔁 Libraries	퉬 iseconfig	26.09.2016 09:08	File folder	100		Assign New Configuration File
Documents	퉬 xlnx_auto_0_xdb	26.09.2016 10:54	File folder			Set Programming Properties
🌙 Music	鷆 xst	26.09.2016 10:16	File folder			
Pictures	mux2to1.bit	26.09.2016 11:02	BIT File			
Videos —	 Type: Size: 2 Date:	BIT File	;			
Local Disk (C:)			-	Find ar	nd sele	ct mux2to1.bit file and click Open
File <u>n</u> a	ame: mux2to1.bit	All Design Files (*.bit *	*.rbt *.nky 💌			
		<u>O</u> pen v	Cancel			



Dismiss the dialog box about attachment of the SPI / PROM devices by clicking No

Select xc3s500e again, right click on the device and select Program



We should see the Program Succeeded message in the window

Program Succeeded

We can now test our multiplexer using switches and observing the LED

warning : Please try not to load files for xcf04s and xc2c64a devices and program them. This will destroy their original content and disables us to use simple test feature at the power up

Reusability



Back to Code



(it may be more efficient and readable too)

STD_LOGIC Type

STD LOGIC types can take the following values



Hmw : design a 4 to 1 mux using two 2 to 1 mux with oe inputs ©

STD_LOGIC_VECTOR Type

A collection of STD LOGIC types

Example: signal sel, sel2 : STD_LOGIC_VECTOR (0 to 3); signal LEDS : STD LOGIC VECTOR (7 downto 0);

```
sel <= "0110";
sel2(2 to 3) <= "01";
LEDS <= (7=>'1', 6=>'0', others=>'Z');
LEDS(4) <= '0'; -- notice single quotes
LEDS <= LEDS +1;
-- requires use IEEE.STD_LOGIC_ARITH.ALL;
LEDS(7 downto 4) <= sel;</pre>
```

Since Hi-Z based bus systems are not possible within FPGAs



Another Combinatorial Example



LEDS <=	"00000001"	when	SWS="000"	else	
	"00000010"	when	SWS="001"	else	
	"00000100"	when	SWS="010"	else	
	"00001000"	when	SWS="011"	else	
	"00010000"	when	SWS="100"	else	
	"00100000"	when	SWS="101"	else	
	"01000000"	when	SWS="110"	else	
	"10000000"	;			

with SWS select LEDS <= "00000001" when "000", "00000010" when "001", "0000100" when "010", "0001000" when "011", "00100000" when "100", "00100000" when "101", "01000000" when "110",

LEDS(0)	<=	'1'	when	SWS	=	"000"	else	'0';
LEDS(1)	<=	'1'	when	SWS	=	"001"	else	'0';
LEDS(2)	<=	'1'	when	SWS	=	"010"	else	'0';
LEDS(3)	<=	'1'	when	SWS	=	"011"	else	'0';
LEDS(4)	<=	'1'	when	SWS	=	"100"	else	'0';
LEDS(5)	<=	'1'	when	SWS	=	"101"	else	'0';
LEDS(6)	<=	'1'	when	SWS	=	"110"	else	'0';
LEDS(7)	<=	'1'	when	SWS	=	"111"	else	'0';

do not forget to cover all possibilities
 when using select

if(SWS="000") LEDS<="00000001";
elsif(SWS="001") LEDS<="00000010";
...
else ...
end if;</pre>

classic if-elsif-else-end if; can be
used in processes

3 to 7 Decoder

```
library IEEE;
use IEEE.STD LOGIC 1164.ALL;
entity decoder3to7 is
    Port ( D : in STD LOGIC VECTOR(2 downto 0);
           Q : out STD LOGIC VECTOR(7 downto 0));
end decoder3to7;
architecture decoder3to7 of decoder3to7 is
begin
  Q <= "00000001" when D="000" else
       "00000010" when D="001" else
       "00000100" when D="010" else
       "00001000" when D="011" else
       "00010000" when D="100" else
       "00100000" when D="101" else
       "01000000" when D="110" else
       "1000000";
end decoder3to7 ;
```

What is Sequential?

If a circuit needs some values calculated from previous input values, it has to have some way of remembering these values.



One would design such circuits using two well known models; Mealy (output depends on the inputs and stored values) and Moore (output depends only on the stored values)

Today, to make things simpler, almost all digital circuits are designed as clocked *sequential* machines (Moore). Things are done *synchronous*ly with the rising or falling (or both) edge of a clock signal.





"Sequential", for digital circuits, does not mean that circuit pieces described by each of our VHDL code lines do their stuff one after another. It means that, outputs of designed circuits are someway affected from the previous input sequences.

Remember that, VHDL is not a programming language. It is a description language. We are describing a digital circuit * that does things *concurrent*ly (keeping in mind the delays caused by the electronics and the finite speed of EM waves on silicon of course).

Some Attributes

```
Given
signal D : STD LOGIC VECTOR(7 downto 0);
signal X : STD LOGIC VECTOR(2 to 5);
                (lower array index)
D'LOW is 0
X'LOW is 2
D'HIGH is 7
                (upper array index)
X'HIGH is 5
D'LEFT is 7
                (leftmost array index)
X'LEFT is 2
                (rightmost array index)
D'RIGHT is 0
X'RIGHT is 5
D'LENGTH is 8 (size of the array)
X'LENGTH is 4
D'RANGE is (7 downto 0) (range of the array)
X'RANGE is (2 to 5)
D'REVERSE RANGE is (0 to 7) (range of the array in reverse order)
X'REVERSE RANGE is (5 downto 2)
```

```
signal Y: STD_LOGIC_VECTOR(D'RANGE);
...
D(D'RIGHT) <= '1'; -- set righmost bit to 1</pre>
```

Some Attributes

Given
signal CLK : STD_LOGIC;

CLK'EVENT	is TRUE if there is an event on CLK
CLK'STABLE[t]	is TRUE if there is no event on CLK in last t time unit
CLK'ACTIVE	is TRUE when there is a transaction on (assignment) CLK
CLK'QUIET[t]	is TRUE if there is no transaction on CLK during the last t time unit

'EVENT and 'STABLE attributes are synthesizable, others are for simulation only



processes



Other Synthesizable Pre-Defined Simple Types

STD ULOGIC : U stands for unresolved

- **BOOLEAN** : True or False
- **INTEGER** : 32 (max) bit integers (-2147483647 to +2147483647)
- **NATURAL** : non-negative integers

...and arrays of these...

```
signal OE : STD_LOGIC;
signal count : integer;
signal IsOK, DOIT : BOOLEAN;
```

```
OE <= 'Z';
count <= count + 1;
IsOK <= not DOIT ;
DOIT <= False;</pre>
```

we need to use related library for some types

Vectors

Notice that integer and natural are actually collections of bits. We have other collections too.

```
BIT VECTOR : collection of BITS
   STD LOGIC VECTOR : collection of STD LOGIC types
   STD ULOGIC VECTOR :
   SIGNED, UNSIGNED : kinda integerS
signal sel,sel2 : BIT VECTOR (0 to 3);
signal LEDS : STD LOGIC VECTOR (7 downto 0);
signal count : integer range 0 to 15;
                                          inherently creates a 4 bit signal
sel <= "0110";</pre>
sel2(2 to 3) <= "01";
LEDS <= (7=>'1', 6=>'0', others=>'Z');
count <= count +1; -- counts up to 15
```

LEDS(7 downto 4) <= sel; -- error, incompatible types</pre>

Homework : Read sections 1, 2, 3, 4 Do problems 3.2, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2. Design a 7-segment decoder using a 10x7 ROM array.

An Up-Counter With Asynchronous Reset



simple counters roll over at 11...1 to 00...0

Model of the Simulation



VHDL Test Bench & Simulation



Associate it with the implementation file and close the summary dialog

2

Create Generators

```
ARCHITECTURE behavior OF cntr4 tb IS
  COMPONENT CntrWRst
    PORT (
         clk : IN std logic;
         Rst : IN std logic;
         Data : INOUT std logic vector(3 downto 0));
  END COMPONENT;
  signal clk : std logic := '0';
  signal Rst : std logic := '0';
  signal Data : std logic vector(3 downto 0);
BEGIN
 uut: CntrWRst PORT MAP (
    clk => clk,
    Rst => Rst,
    Data => Data
  );
  clk process :process begin
    clk <= '0';
    wait for 10ns;
    clk <= '1';
    wait for 10ns;
   end process;
  stim proc: process
   begin
     wait for 5ns;
     Rst <= '1';
     wait for 35ns; Rst <= '0';</pre>
     wait for 400ns; Rst <= '1';</pre>
     wait for 60ns; Rst <= '0';</pre>
     wait;
   end process;
END;
```





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