Preliminary Information

AMD Athlon[™] Processor x86 Code Optimization Guide

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Introduction

The AMD Athlon™ processor is the newest microprocessor in the AMD K86™ family of microprocessors. The advances in the AMD Athlon processor take superscalar operation and out-of-order execution to a new level. The AMD Athlon processor has been designed to efficiently execute code written for previous-generation x86 processors. However, to enable the fastest code execution with the AMD Athlon processor, programmers should write software that includes specific code optimization techniques.

This document contains information to assist programmers in creating optimized code for the AMD Athlon processor. In addition, this document is targeted at compiler and assembler designers and assembly language programmers writing execution-sensitive code sequences.

This document assumes that the reader possesses in-depth knowledge of the x86 instruction set, the x86 architecture (registers, programming modes, etc.), and the IBM PC-AT platform.

This guide has been written specifically for the AMD Athlon processor, but it includes considerations for previous-generation processors and how those optimizations are applicable to the AMD Athlon processor.

AMD Athlon™ Processor Family

The AMD Athlon processor family uses state-of-the-art decoupled decode/execution design techniques to deliver next-generation performance with x86 binary software compatibility. This next-generation processor family advances x86 code execution by using flexible instruction predecoding, wide and balanced decoders, aggressive out-of-order execution, parallel integer execution pipelines, parallel floating-point execution pipelines, deep pipelined execution for higher delivered operating frequency, dedicated backside cache memory, and a new high-performance double-rate 64-bit local bus. As an x86 binary-compatible processor, the AMD Athlon processor implements the industry-standard x86 instruction set by decoding and executing the x86 instructions using a proprietary microarchitecture. This microarchitecture allows the delivery of maximum performance when running x86-based PC software.

AMD Athlon™ Processor

The AMD Athlon processor brings superscalar performance and high operating frequency to PC systems running industry-standard x86 software. A brief summary of the next-generation design features implemented in the AMD Athlon processor is as follows:

- High-speed double-rate local bus interface
- Large, split 128-Kbyte level-one (L1) cache
- Dedicated backside level-two (L2) cache
- Instruction predecode and branch detection during cache line fills
- Decoupled decode/execution core
- Three-way x86 instruction decoding
- Dynamic scheduling and speculative execution
- Three-way integer execution
- Three-way address generation
- Three-way floating-point execution

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- 3DNow![™] technology and MMX[™] single-instruction multiple-data (SIMD) instruction extensions
- Super data forwarding
- Deep out-of-order integer and floating-point execution
- Register renaming
- Dynamic branch prediction

The AMD Athlon processor communicates through a next-generation high-speed local bus that is beyond the current Socket 7 or Super7™ bus standard. The local bus can transfer data at twice the rate of the bus operating frequency by using both the rising and falling edges of the clock (see ["AMD Athlon™ System Bus" on page 119](#page-134-1) for more information).

To reduce on-chip cache miss penalties and to avoid subsequent data load or instruction fetch stalls, the AMD Athlon processor has a dedicated high-speed backside L2 cache. The large 128-Kbyte L1 on-chip cache and the backside L2 cache allow the AMD Athlon execution core to achieve and sustain maximum performance.

As a decoupled decode/execution processor, the AMD Athlon processor makes use of a proprietary microarchitecture, which defines the heart of the AMD Athlon processor. With the inclusion of all these features, the AMD Athlon processor is capable of decoding, issuing, executing, and retiring multiple x86 instructions per cycle, resulting in superior scaleable performance.

The AMD Athlon processor includes both the industry-standard MMX SIMD integer instructions and the 3DNow! SIMD floating-point instructions that were first introduced in the $\text{AMD-K6}^{\circledR}$ -2 processor. The design of 3DNow! technology was based on suggestions from leading graphics and independent software vendors (ISVs). Using SIMD format, the AMD Athlon processor can generate up to four 32-bit, single-precision floating-point results per clock cycle.

The 3DNow! execution units allow for high-performance floating-point vector operations, which can replace x87 instructions and enhance the performance of 3D graphics and other floating-point-intensive applications. Because the 3DNow! architecture uses the same registers as the MMX

instructions, switching between MMX and 3DNow! has no penalty.

The AMD Athlon processor designers took another innovative step by carefully integrating the traditional x87 floating-point, MMX, and 3DNow! execution units into one operational engine. With the introduction of the AMD Athlon processor, the switching overhead between x87, MMX, and 3DNow! technology is virtually eliminated. The AMD Athlon processor combined with 3DNow! technology brings a better multimedia experience to mainstream PC users while maintaining backwards compatibility with all existing x86 software.

Although the AMD Athlon processor can extract code parallelism on-the-fly from off-the-shelf, commercially available x86 software, specific code optimization for the AMD Athlon processor can result in even higher delivered performance. This document describes the proprietary microarchitecture in the AMD Athlon processor and makes recommendations for optimizing execution of x86 software on the processor.

The coding techniques for achieving peak performance on the AMD Athlon processor include, but are not limited to, those for the AMD-K6, AMD-K6-2, Pentium®, Pentium Pro, and Pentium II processors. However, many of these optimizations are not necessary for the AMD Athlon processor to achieve maximum performance. Due to the more flexible pipeline control and aggressive out-of-order execution, the AMD Athlon processor is not as sensitive to instruction selection and code scheduling. This flexibility is one of the distinct advantages of the AMD Athlon processor.

The AMD Athlon processor uses the latest in processor microarchitecture design techniques to provide the highest x86 performance for today's PC. In short, the AMD Athlon processor offers true next-generation performance with x86 binary software compatibility.

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Top Optimizations

■ **Avoid Placing Code and Data in the Same 64-Byte Cache Line**

Optimization Star

The top optimizations described in this chapter are flagged with a star. In addition, the star appears beside the more detailed descriptions found in subsequent chapters.

Group I Optimizations — Essential Optimizations

Memory Size and Alignment Issues

See ["Memory Size and Alignment Issues" on page 37](#page-52-3) for more details.

Avoid Memory Size Mismatches

Avoid memory size mismatches when instructions operate on the same data. For instructions that store and reload the same data, keep operands aligned and keep the loads/stores of each operand the same size.

Align Data Where Possible

Avoid misaligned data references. A misaligned store or load operation suffers a minimum one-cycle penalty in the AMD Athlon processor load/store pipeline.

Use the 3DNow!™ PREFETCH and PREFETCHW Instructions

For code that can take advantage of prefetching, use the 3DNow! PREFETCH and PREFETCHW instructions to increase the effective bandwidth to the AMD Athlon processor, which significantly improves performance. Use the following formula to determine prefetch distance:

Prefetch Length = 200 ($^{DS}/c$ **)**

- Round up to the nearest cache line.
- DS is the data stride per loop iteration.
- C is the number of cycles per loop iteration when hitting in the L1 cache.

See ["Use the 3DNow!™ PREFETCH and PREFETCHW](#page-53-2) [Instructions" on page 38](#page-53-2) for more details.

Select DirectPath Over VectorPath Instructions

Use DirectPath instructions rather than VectorPath instructions. DirectPath instructions are optimized for decode and execute efficiently by minimizing the number of operations per x86 instruction. Using VectorPath instructions may block DirectPath instructions from decoding simultaneously.

See [Appendix E,](#page-190-3) ["DirectPath versus VectorPath Instructions"](#page-190-4) [on page 175](#page-190-4) for a list of DirectPath and VectorPath instructions.

Group II Optimizations—Secondary Optimizations

Load-Execute Instruction Usage

See ["Load-Execute Instruction Usage" on page 26](#page-41-4) for more details.

Use Load-Execute Instructions

Wherever possible, use load-execute instructions to increase code density with the one exception described below. The split-instruction form of load-execute instructions can be used to avoid scheduler stalls for longer executing instructions and to explicitly schedule the load and execute operations.

Avoid Load-Execute Floating-Point Instructions with Integer Operands

Do not use load-execute floating-point instructions with **integer operands**. The floating-point load-execute instructions with integer operands are VectorPath and generate two OPs in a cycle, while the discrete equivalent enables a third DirectPath instruction to be decoded in the same cycle.

Take Advantage of Write Combining

This guideline applies only to operating system, device driver, and BIOS writers. In order to improve system performance, the AMD Athlon processor aggressively combines multiple memory-write cycles of any data size that address locations within a 64-byte cache line aligned write buffer.

See [Appendix C,](#page-150-2) ["Implementation of Write Combining" on](#page-150-3) [page 135](#page-150-3) for more details.

Use 3DNow!™ Instructions

Unless accuracy requirements dictate otherwise, perform floating-point computations using the 3DNow! instructions instead of x87 instructions. The SIMD nature of 3DNow! instructions achieves twice the number of FLOPs that are achieved through x87 instructions. 3DNow! instructions also provide for a flat register file instead of the stack-based approach of x87 instructions.

See [Table 15 on page 171](#page-186-1) for a list of 3DNow! instructions. For information about instruction usage, see the *3DNow!™ Technology Manual*, order# 21928.

Avoid Branches Dependent on Random Data

Avoid data-dependent branches around a single instruction. Data-dependent branches acting upon basically random data can cause the branch prediction logic to mispredict the branch about 50% of the time. Design branch-free alternative code sequences, which results in shorter average execution time.

See ["Avoid Branches Dependent on Random Data" on page 49](#page-64-2) for more details.

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Avoid Placing Code and Data in the Same 64-Byte Cache Line

Consider that the AMD Athlon processor cache line is twice the size of previous processors. Code and data should not be shared in the same 64-byte cache line, especially if the data ever becomes modified. In order to maintain cache coherency, the AMD Athlon processor may thrash its caches, resulting in lower performance.

In general the following should be avoided:

- Self-modifying code
- Storing data in code segments

See ["Avoid Placing Code and Data in the Same 64-Byte Cache](#page-57-2) [Line" on page 42](#page-57-2) for more details.

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C Source Level Optimizations

This chapter details C programming practices for optimizing code for the AMD Athlon™ processor. Guidelines are listed in order of importance.

Ensure Floating-Point Variables and Expressions are of Type Float

For compilers that generate 3DNow!™ instructions, make sure that all floating-point variables and expressions are of type float. Pay special attention to floating-point constants. These require a suffix of "F" or "f" (for example, 3.14f) in order to be of type float, otherwise they default to type double. To avoid automatic promotion of float arguments to double, always use function prototypes for all functions that accept float arguments.

Use 32-Bit Data Types for Integer Code

Use 32-bit data types for integer code. Compiler implementations vary, but typically the following data types are included—*int, signed, signed int, unsigned, unsigned int, long, signed long, long int, signed long int, unsigned long,* and *unsigned long int*.

Use Unsigned Integer Types over Signed Integer Types

If possible, use unsigned integer types over signed integer types. The unsigned types convey to the compiler that data cannot be negative, which allows some optimizations not possible with signed and potentially negative data.

In most programs, certain variables have to be of signed types due to the nature of the data stored in them (for example, temperatures). In some cases, aggressive use of unsigned types can create many mixed expressions containing both signed and unsigned terms. It can be difficult to determine the exact semantics of such expressions.

Completely Unroll Small Loops

Take advantage of the AMD Athlon processor's large, 64-Kbyte instruction cache and completely unroll small loops. Unrolling loops can be beneficial to performance, especially if the loop body is small and the loop overhead is, therefore, significant. Many compilers are not aggressive at unrolling loops. For loops that have a small fixed loop count and a small loop body, completely unrolling the loops at the source level is recommended.

Example 1 (Avoid):

```
// 3D-transform: multiply vector V by 4x4 transform matrix M
for (i=0; i<4; i++) {
   r[i] = 0;for (j=0; j<4; j++) {
      r[i] += M[j][i] *V[j];
    }
}
```

```
// 3D-transform: multiply vector V by 4x4 transform matrix M
r[0] = M[0][0] * V[0] + M[1][0] * V[1] + M[2][0] * V[2] +M[3][0]*V[3];
r[1] = M[0][1] * V[0] + M[1][1] * V[1] + M[2][1] * V[2] +M[3][1]*V[3];
r[2] = M[0][2]*V[0] + M[1][2]*V[1] + M[2][2]*V[2] +
       M[3][2]*V[3];
r[3] = M[0][3]*V[0] + M[1][3]*V[1] + M[2][3]*V[2] +
       M[3][3]*v[3];
```
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Avoid Unnecessary Store-to-Load Dependencies

A store-to-load dependency exists when data is stored to memory, only to be read back shortly thereafter. See ["Store-to-Load Forwarding Restrictions" on page 42](#page-57-3) for more details. The AMD Athlon processor contains hardware to accelerate such store-to-load dependencies, allowing the load to obtain the store data before it has been written to memory. However, it is still faster to avoid such dependencies altogether and keep the data in an internal register.

Avoiding store-to-load dependencies is especially important if they are part of a long dependency chains, as might occur in a recurrence computation. If the dependency occurs while operating on arrays, many compilers are unable to optimize the code in a way that avoids the store-to-load dependency. In some instances the language definition may prohibit the compiler from using code transformations that would remove the storeto-load dependency. It is therefore recommended that the programmer remove the dependency manually, e.g., by introducing a temporary variable that can be kept in a register. This can result in a significant performance increase. The following is an example of this.

Example 1 (Avoid):

```
double x[VECLEN], y[VECLEN], z[VECLEN];
unsigned int k;
for (k = 1: k < VECLEN: k++) {
  x[k] = x[k-1] + y[k];}
for (k = 1; k < VECLEN; k++) {
  x[k] = z[k] * (y[k] - x[k-1]);}
```

```
double x[VECLEN], y[VECLEN], z[VECLEN];
unsigned int k;
double t;
t = x[0]:
for (k = 1: k < VECLEN: k++) {
   t = t + y[k];x[k] = t;}
```

```
t = x[0];for (k = 1; k < VECLEN; k++) {
   t = z[k] * (y[k] - t);x[k] = t;}
```
Switch Statement Usage

Optimize Switch Statements

Switch statements are translated using a variety of algorithms. The most common of these are jump tables and comparison chains/trees. It is recommended to sort the cases of a switch statement according to the probability of occurrences, with the most probable first. This will improve performance when the switch is translated as a comparison chain. It is further recommended to make the case labels small, contiguous integers, as this will allow the switch to be translated as a jump table.

Example 1 (Avoid):

int days in month, short months, normal months, long months;

switch (days_in_month) { case 28: case 29: short_months++; break; case 30: normal_months++; break; case 31: long_months++; break; default: printf ("month has fewer than 28 or more than 31 days\n"); }

```
int days_in_month, short_months, normal_months, long_months;
switch (days_in_month) {
  case 31: long_months++; break;
 case 30: normal months++; break;
  case 28:
 case 29: short months++; break;
  default: printf ("month has fewer than 28 or more than 31 
days\n");
}
```
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Use Prototypes for All Functions

In general, use prototypes for all functions. Prototypes can convey additional information to the compiler that might enable more aggressive optimizations.

Use Const Type Qualifier

Use the "const" type qualifier as much as possible. This optimization makes code more robust and may enable higher performance code to be generated due to the additional information available to the compiler. For example, the C standard allows compilers to not allocate storage for objects that are declared "const", if their address is never taken.

Generic Loop Hoisting

To improve the performance of inner loops, it is beneficial to reduce redundant constant calculations (i.e., loop invariant calculations). However, this idea can be extended to invariant control structures.

The first case is that of a constant "if()" statement in a "for()" loop.

```
Example 1: 
for( i ... ) {
  if( CONSTANT0 ) {
        DoWork0( i ): // does not affect CONSTANTO
   } else {
         DoWork1( i ); // does not affect CONSTANTO
   }
}
```
The above loop should be transformed into:

```
if( CONSTANT0 ) {
   for( i ... ) {
         DoWork0( i );
   }
} else {
   for( i ... ) {
         DoWork1( i );
   }
}
```
This will make your inner loops tighter by avoiding repetitious evaluation of a known "if()" control structure. Although the branch would be easily predicted, the extra instructions and decode limitations imposed by branching are saved, which are usually well worth it.

Generalization for Multiple Constant Control Code

To generalize this further for multiple constant control code some more work may have to be done to create the proper outer loop. Enumeration of the constant cases will reduce this to a simple switch statement.

```
Example 2:
```

```
for(i ... ) {
  if( CONSTANT0 ) {
        DoWorkO( i ); //does not affect CONSTANTO
                          // or CONSTANT1
   } else {
        DoWork1( i ): //does not affect CONSTANTO
                          // or CONSTANT1
   }
  if( CONSTANT1 ) {
        DoWork2( i ); //does not affect CONSTANT0
                          // or CONSTANT1
   } else {
        DoWork3( i ): //does not affect CONSTANTO
                          // or CONSTANT1
   }
}
```
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The above loop should be transformed into:

```
#define combine( c1, c2 ) (((c1) \leq 1) + (c2))switch( combine( CONSTANT0!=0, CONSTANT1!=0 ) ) {
         case combine( 0, 0 ):
               for( i ... ) {
                      DoWork0( i );
                      DoWork2( i );
               }
               break;
         case combine( 1, 0 ):
               for( i ... ) {
                      DoWork1( i );
                      DoWork2( i );
               }
               break;
         case combine( 0, 1 ):
               for( i ... ) {
                      DoWork0( i );
                      DoWork3( i );
               }
               break;
         case combine( 1, 1 ):
               for( i ... ) {
                      DoWork1( i );
                      DoWork3( i );
               }
               break;
         default:
               break;
}
```
The trick here is that there is some up-front work involved in generating all the combinations for the switch constant and the total amount of code has doubled. However, it is also clear that the inner loops are "if()-free". In ideal cases where the "DoWork \star ()" functions are inlined, the successive functions will have greater overlap leading to greater parallelism than would be possible in the presence of intervening "if()" statements.

The same idea can be applied to constant "switch()" statements, or combinations of "switch()" statements and "if()" statements inside of "for()" loops. The method for combining the input constants gets more complicated but will be worth it for the performance benefit.

However, the number of inner loops can also substantially increase. If the number of inner loops is prohibitively high, then

only the most common cases need to be dealt with directly, and the remaining cases can fall back to the old code in a "default:" clause for the "switch()" statement.

This typically comes up when the programmer is considering runtime generated code. While runtime generated code can lead to similar levels of performance improvement, it is much harder to maintain, and the developer must do their own optimizations for their code generation without the help of an available compiler.

Declare Local Functions as Static

Functions that are not used outside the file in which they are defined should always be declared static, which forces internal linkage. Otherwise, such functions default to external linkage, which might inhibit certain optimizations with some compilers—for example, aggressive inlining.

Dynamic Memory Allocation Consideration

Dynamic memory allocation ('malloc' in C language) should always return a pointer that is suitably aligned for the largest base type (quadword alignment). Where this aligned pointer cannot be guaranteed, use the technique shown in the following code to make the pointer quadword aligned, if needed. This code assumes the pointer can be cast to a long.

Example:

```
double* p;
double* np;
p = (double * )malloc(sizeof(double)*number of doubles+7L);np = (double *)((((long)(p))+7L) & (-8L));
```
Then use 'np' instead of 'p' to access the data. 'p' is still needed in order to deallocate the storage.

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Introduce Explicit Parallelism into Code

Where possible, long dependency chains should be broken into several independent dependency chains which can then be executed in parallel exploiting the pipeline execution units. This is especially important for floating-point code, whether it is mapped to x87 or 3DNow! instructions because of the longer latency of floating-point operations. Since most languages, including ANSI C, guarantee that floating-point expressions are not re-ordered, compilers can not usually perform such optimizations unless they offer a switch to allow ANSI noncompliant reordering of floating-point expressions according to algebraic rules.

Note that re-ordered code that is algebraically identical to the original code does not necessarily deliver identical computational results due to the lack of associativity of floating point operations. There are well-known numerical considerations in applying these optimizations (consult a book on numerical analysis). In some cases, these optimizations may lead to unexpected results. Fortunately, in the vast majority of cases, the final result will differ only in the least significant bits.

Example 1 (Avoid):

```
double a[100],sum;
int i;
sum = 0.0f:
   for (i=0; i<100; i++) {
         sum += a[i]:
   }
```

```
double a[100],sum1,sum2,sum3,sum4,sum;
int i;
sum1 = 0.0:
sum2 = 0.0:
sum3 = 0.0:
sum4 = 0.0:
for (i=0; i<100; i+4) {
   sum1 \leftarrow a[i];sum2 += a[i+1]:
   sum3 += a[i+2]:
   sum4 \leftarrow a[i+3]:
   }
sum = (sum4+sum3)+(sum1+sum2):
```
Notice that the 4-way unrolling was chosen to exploit the 4-stage fully pipelined floating-point adder. Each stage of the floatingpoint adder is occupied on every clock cycle, ensuring maximal sustained utilization.

Explicitly Extract Common Subexpressions

In certain situations, C compilers are unable to extract common subexpressions from floating-point expressions due to the guarantee against reordering of such expressions in the ANSI standard. Specifically, the compiler can not re-arrange the computation according to algebraic equivalencies before extracting common subexpressions. In such cases, the programmer should manually extract the common subexpression. It should be noted that re-arranging the expression may result in different computational results due to the lack of associativity of floating-point operations, but the results usually differ in only the least significant bits.

C Language Structure Component Considerations

Many compilers have options that allow padding of structures to make their size multiples of words, doublewords, or quadwords, in order to achieve better alignment for structures. In addition, to improve the alignment of structure members, some compilers might allocate structure elements in an order that differs from the order in which they are declared. However, some compilers might not offer any of these features, or their implementation might not work properly in all situations. Therefore, to achieve the best alignment of structures and structure members while minimizing the amount of padding regardless of compiler optimizations, the following methods are suggested.

Sort by Base Type Size Sort structure members according to their base type size, declaring members with a larger base type size ahead of members with a smaller base type size.

Pad by Multiple of Largest Base Type Size

Pad the structure to a multiple of the largest base type size of any member. In this fashion, if the first member of a structure is naturally aligned, all other members are naturally aligned as well. The padding of the structure to a multiple of the largest based type size allows, for example, arrays of structures to be perfectly aligned.

The following example demonstrates the reordering of structure member declarations:

Original ordering (Avoid):

```
struct {
       char a[5];
      long k;
       double x;
} baz;
```
New ordering, with padding (Preferred):

```
struct {
        double x;
        long k;
       char a<sup>[5]</sup>:
        char pad[7];
} baz;
```
See ["C Language Structure Component Considerations" on](#page-62-0) [page 47](#page-62-0) for a different perspective.

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Sort Local Variables According to Base Type Size

When a compiler allocates local variables in the same order in which they are declared in the source code, it can be helpful to declare local variables in such a manner that variables with a larger base type size are declared ahead of the variables with smaller base type size. Then, if the first variable is allocated so that it is naturally aligned, all other variables are allocated contiguously in the order they are declared, and are naturally aligned without any padding.

Some compilers do not allocate variables in the order they are declared. In these cases, the compiler should automatically allocate variables in such a manner as to make them naturally aligned with the minimum amount of padding. In addition, some compilers do not guarantee that the stack is aligned suitably for the largest base type (that is, they do not guarantee quadword alignment), so that quadword operands might be misaligned, even if this technique is used and the compiler does allocate variables in the order they are declared.

The following example demonstrates the reordering of local variable declarations:

Original ordering (Avoid):

short ga, gu, gi; long foo, bar; double x, y, z[3]; char a, b; float baz;

Improved ordering (Preferred):

double z[3]; double x, y; long foo, bar; float baz; short ga, gu, gi;

See ["Sort Variables According to Base Type Size" on page 47](#page-62-1) for more information from a different perspective.

Avoid Unnecessary Integer Division

Integer division is the slowest of all integer arithmetic operations and should be avoided wherever possible. One possibility for reducing the number of integer divisions is multiple divisions, in which division can be replaced with multiplication as shown in the following examples. This replacement is possible only if no overflow occurs during the computation of the product. This can be determined by considering the possible ranges of the divisors.

Example 1 (Avoid):

int i,j,k,m;

 $m = i / j / k;$

Example 2 (Preferred):

int i,j,k,l;

 $m = i / (j * k);$

Copy Frequently De-referenced Pointer Arguments to Local Variables

Avoid frequently de-referencing pointer arguments inside a function. Since the compiler has no knowledge of whether aliasing exists between the pointers, such de-referencing can not be optimized away by the compiler. This prevents data from being kept in registers and significantly increases memory traffic.

Note that many compilers have an "assume no aliasing" optimization switch. This allows the compiler to assume that two different pointers always have disjoint contents and does not require copying of pointer arguments to local variables.

Otherwise, copy the data pointed to by the pointer arguments to local variables at the start of the function and if necessary copy them back at the end of the function.

Example 1 (Avoid):

```
//assumes pointers are different
void isqrt ( unsigned long a, 
              unsigned long *q, 
               unsigned long *r)
{
*q = a;if (a > 0){
   while (*q > (*r = a / *q)){
          *_q = (*q + *r) \gg 1;}
    }
\starr = a - \starq \star \starq;
}
```
Example 2 (Preferred):

```
//assumes pointers are different
void isqrt ( unsigned long a, 
              unsigned long *q, 
              unsigned long *r)
{
unsigned long qq, rr;
qq = a;if (a > 0){
   while (qq > (rr = a / qq)){
         qq = (qq + rr) \gg 1;}
    }
rr = a - qq * qq;* q = qq;
\starr = rr;
}
```
4

Instruction Decoding Optimizations

This chapter discusses ways to maximize the number of instructions decoded by the instruction decoders in the AMD Athlon™ processor. Guidelines are listed in order of importance.

Overview

The AMD Athlon processor instruction fetcher reads 16-byte aligned code windows from the instruction cache. The instruction bytes are then merged into a 24-byte instruction queue. On each cycle, the in-order front-end engine selects for decode up to three x86 instructions from the instruction-byte queue.

All instructions (x86, x87, 3DNow!™, and MMX™) are classified into two types of decodes—DirectPath and VectorPath (see ["DirectPath Decoder"](#page-128-0) and ["VectorPath](#page-128-1) [Decoder" on page 113](#page-128-1) for more information). DirectPath instructions are common instructions that are decoded directly in hardware. VectorPath instructions are more complex instructions that require the use of a sequence of multiple operations issued from an on-chip ROM.

Up to three DirectPath instructions can be selected for decode per cycle. Only one VectorPath instruction can be selected for decode per cycle. DirectPath instructions and VectorPath instructions cannot be simultaneously decoded.

Select DirectPath Over VectorPath Instructions

Use DirectPath instructions rather than VectorPath instructions. DirectPath instructions are optimized for decode and execute efficiently by minimizing the number of operations per x86 instruction, which includes 'register←register op memory' as well as 'register←register op register' forms of instructions. Up to three DirectPath instructions can be decoded per cycle. VectorPath instructions may also block the decoding of DirectPath instructions. See [Appendix D,](#page-156-0) ["Instruction Dispatch and Execution Timing" on page 141](#page-156-1) and [Appendix E,](#page-190-0) ["DirectPath versus VectorPath Instructions" on](#page-190-1) [page 175](#page-190-1) for tables of DirectPath and VectorPath instructions.

Load-Execute Instruction Usage

Use Load-Execute Integer Instructions

Most load-execute integer instructions are DirectPath decodable and can be decoded at the rate of three per cycle. Splitting a load-execute integer instruction into two separate instructions—a load instruction and a "reg, reg" instruction reduces decoding bandwidth and increases register pressure, which results in lower performance. The split-instruction form can be used to avoid scheduler stalls for longer executing instructions and to explicitly schedule the load and execute operations.

Use Load-Execute Floating-Point Instructions with Floating-Point Operands

When operating on single-precision or double-precision floating-point data, wherever possible use floating-point load-execute instructions to increase code density.

Note: This optimization applies only to floating-point instructions with floating-point operands and not with integer operands, as described in the next optimization.

This coding style helps in two ways. First, denser code allows more work to be held in the instruction cache. Second, the denser code generates fewer internal OPs and, therefore, the FPU scheduler holds more work, which increases the chances of extracting parallelism from the code.

Example 1 (Avoid):

Example 2 (Preferred):

Avoid Load-Execute Floating-Point Instructions with Integer Operands

Do not use load-execute floating-point instructions with *integer* operands: FIADD, FISUB, FISUBR, FIMUL, FIDIV, FIDIVR, FICOM, and FICOMP. Remember that floating-point instructions can have integer operands while integer instruction cannot have floating-point operands.

Floating-point computations involving integer-memory operands should use separate FILD and arithmetic instructions. This optimization has the potential to increase decode bandwidth and OP density in the FPU scheduler. The floatingpoint load-execute instructions with integer operands are VectorPath and generate two OPs in a cycle, while the discrete equivalent enables a third DirectPath instruction to be decoded in the same cycle. In some situations this optimizations can also reduce execution time if the FILD can be scheduled several instructions ahead of the arithmetic instruction in order to cover the FILD latency.

Example 1 (Avoid):

Example 2 (Preferred):

Align Branch Targets

Place branch targets at or near the beginning of 16-byte aligned code windows. This technique helps to maximize the number of instructions that are filled into the instruction-byte queue.

Use Short Instruction Lengths

Assemblers and compilers should generate the tightest code possible to optimize use of the I-Cache and increase average decode rate. Wherever possible, use instructions with shorter lengths. Using shorter instructions increases the number of instructions that can fit into the instruction-byte queue. For example, use 8-bit displacements as opposed to 32-bit displacements. In addition, use the single-byte format of simple integer instructions whenever possible, as opposed to the 2-byte Opcode ModR/M format.

Example 1 (Avoid):

Avoid Partial Register Reads and Writes

In order to handle partial register writes, the AMD Athlon processor execution core implements a data-merging scheme.

In the execution unit, an instruction writing a partial register merges the modified portion with the current state of the remainder of the register. Therefore, the dependency hardware can potentially force a false dependency on the most recent instruction that writes to any part of the register.

Example 1 (Avoid):

In addition, an instruction that has a read dependency on any part of a given architectural register has a read dependency on the most recent instruction that modifies any part of the same architectural register.

Example 2 (Avoid):

Replace Certain SHLD Instructions with Alternative Code

Certain instances of the SHLD instruction can be replaced by alternative code using SHR and LEA. The alternative code has lower latency and requires less execution resources. SHR and LEA (32-bit version) are DirectPath instructions, while SHLD is a VectorPath instruction. SHR and LEA preserves decode bandwidth as it potentially enables the decoding of a third DirectPath instruction.

Example 1 (Avoid): SHLD REG1, REG2, 1

> **(Preferred):** SHR REG2, 31 LEA REG1, [REG1*2 + REG2]

Example 2 (Avoid): SHLD REG1, REG2, 2

> **(Preferred):** SHR REG2, 30 LEA REG1, [REG1*4 + REG2]

Example 3 (Avoid): SHLD REG1, REG2, 3

> **(Preferred):** SHR REG2, 29 LEA REG1, [REG1*8 + REG2]

Use 8-Bit Sign-Extended Immediates

Using 8-bit sign-extended immediates improves code density with no negative effects on the AMD Athlon processor. For example, ADD BX, –5 should be encoded "83 C3 FB" and not "81 C3 FF FB".

Use 8-Bit Sign-Extended Displacements

Use 8-bit sign-extended displacements for conditional branches. Using short, 8-bit sign-extended displacements for conditional branches improves code density with no negative effects on the AMD Athlon processor.

Code Padding Using Neutral Code Fillers

Occasionally a need arises to insert neutral code fillers into the code stream, e.g., for code alignment purposes or to space out branches. Since this filler code can be executed, it should take up as few execution resources as possible, not diminish decode density, and not modify any processor state other than advancing EIP. A one byte padding can easily be achieved using the NOP instructions (XCHG EAX,EAX; opcode 0x90). In the x86 architecture, there are several multi-byte "NOP" instructions available that do not change processor state other than EIP:

- MOV REG, REG
- XCHG REG, REG
- CMOVcc REG, REG
- \blacksquare SHR REG, 0
- \blacksquare SAR REG, 0
- \blacksquare SHL REG, 0
- SHRD REG, REG, 0
- SHLD REG, REG, 0
- LEA REG, [REG]
- \blacksquare LEA REG, [REG+00]
- \blacksquare LEA REG, $[REG^{\star}1+00]$
- LEA REG, [REG+00000000]
- LEA REG, [REG*1+00000000]

Not all of these instructions are equally suitable for purposes of code padding. For example, SHLD/SHRD are microcoded which reduces decode bandwidth and takes up execution resources.

Recommendations for the AMD Athlon™ Processor

For code that is optimized specifically for the AMD Athlon processor, the optimal code fillers are NOP instructions (opcode 0x90) with up to two REP prefixes (0xF3). In the AMD Athlon processor, a NOP with up to two REP prefixes can be handled by a single decoder with no overhead. As the REP prefixes are redundant and meaningless, they get discarded, and NOPs are handled without using any execution resources. The three

decoders of AMD Athlon processor can handle up to three NOPs, each with up to two REP prefixes each, in a single cycle, for a neutral code filler of up to nine bytes. If a larger amount of code padding is required, it is recommended to use a JMP instruction to jump across the padding region. The following assembly language macros show this:

```
NOP1_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 090h>
NOP2_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 0F3h, 090h>
NOP3_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h>
NOP4_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h, 090h>
NOP5_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h, 0F3h, 090h>
NOP6_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h, 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h>
NOP7_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h, 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h,
                     090h>
NOP8_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h, 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h, 
                     0F3h, 090h>
NOP9_ATHLON TEXTEQU <DB 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h, 0F3h, 0F3h, 090h, 
                     0F3h, 0F3h, 090h>
NOP10_ATHLONTEXTEQU <DB 0EBh, 008h, 90h, 90h, 90h, 90h,
                     90h, 90h, 90h, 90h>
```
Recommendations for AMD-K6® Family and AMD Athlon™ Processor Blended Code

On x86 processors other than the AMD Athlon processor (including the AMD-K6 family of processors), the REP prefix and especially multiple prefixes cause decoding overhead, so the above technique is not recommended for code that has to run well both on AMD Athlon processor **and** other x86 processors (blended code). In such cases the instructions and instruction sequences below are recommended. For neutral code fillers longer than eight bytes in length, the JMP instruction can be used to jump across the padding region.

Note that each of the instructions and instruction sequences below utilizes an x86 register. To avoid performance degradation, the register used in the padding should be selected so as to not lengthen existing dependency chains, i.e., one should select a register that is not used by instructions in the vicinity of the neutral code filler. Note that certain instructions use registers implicitly. For example, PUSH, POP, CALL, and RET all make implicit use of the ESP register. The 5-byte filler sequence below consists of two instructions. If flag changes across the code padding are acceptable, the following

instructions may be used as single instruction, 5-byte code fillers:

- TEST EAX, 0FFFF0000h
- CMP EAX, 0FFFF0000h

The following assembly language macros show the recommended neutral code fillers for code optimized for the AMD Athlon processor that also has to run well on other x86 processors. Note for some padding lengths, versions using ESP or EBP are missing due to the lack of fully generalized addressing modes.

NOP2_EAX TEXTEQU <DB 08Bh,0C0h> ;mov eax, eax NOP2_EBX TEXTEQU <DB 08Bh,0DBh> ;mov ebx, ebx NOP2_ECX TEXTEQU <DB 08Bh,0C9h> ;mov ecx, ecx NOP2_EDX TEXTEQU <DB 08Bh,0D2h> ;mov edx, edx NOP2_ESI TEXTEQU <DB 08Bh,0F6h> ;mov esi, esi NOP2_EDI TEXTEQU <DB 08Bh,0FFh> ;mov edi, edi NOP2_ESP TEXTEQU <DB 08Bh,0E4h> ;mov esp, esp NOP2_EBP TEXTEQU <DB 08Bh,0EDh> ;mov ebp, ebp NOP3_EAX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,004h,020h> ;lea eax, [eax] NOP3 EBX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,01Ch,023h> ;lea ebx, [ebx] NOP3_ECX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,00Ch,021h> ;lea ecx, [ecx] NOP3 EDX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,014h,022h> ;lea edx, [edx] NOP3_ESI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,024h,024h> ;lea esi, [esi] NOP3_EDI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,034h,026h> ;lea edi, [edi] NOP3_ESP TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,03Ch,027h> ;lea esp, [esp] NOP3_EBP TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,06Dh,000h> ;lea ebp, [ebp] NOP4_EAX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,044h,020h,000h> ;lea eax, [eax+00] NOP4_EBX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,05Ch,023h,000h> ;lea ebx, [ebx+00] NOP4_ECX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,04Ch,021h,000h> ;lea ecx, [ecx+00] NOP4_EDX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,054h,022h,000h> ;lea edx, [edx+00] NOP4_ESI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,064h,024h,000h> ;lea esi, [esi+00] NOP4_EDI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,074h,026h,000h> ;lea edi, [edi+00] NOP4_ESP TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,07Ch,027h,000h> ;lea esp, [esp+00] ;lea eax, [eax+00];nop NOP5_EAX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,044h,020h,000h,090h> ;lea ebx, [ebx+00];nop NOP5_EBX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,05Ch,023h,000h,090h> ;lea ecx, [ecx+00];nop NOP5_ECX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,04Ch,021h,000h,090h> ;lea edx, [edx+00];nop NOP5_EDX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,054h,022h,000h,090h>

;lea esi, [esi+00];nop NOP5_ESI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,064h,024h,000h,090h> ;lea edi, [edi+00];nop NOP5_EDI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,074h,026h,000h,090h> ;lea esp, [esp+00];nop NOP5_ESP TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,07Ch,027h,000h,090h> ;lea eax, [eax+00000000] NOP6_EAX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,080h,0,0,0,0> ;lea ebx, [ebx+00000000] NOP6_EBX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,09Bh,0,0,0,0> ;lea ecx, [ecx+00000000] NOP6_ECX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,089h,0,0,0,0> ;lea edx, [edx+00000000] NOP6_EDX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,092h,0,0,0,0> ;lea esi, [esi+00000000] NOP6_ESI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,0B6h,0,0,0,0> ;lea edi ,[edi+00000000] NOP6_EDI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,0BFh,0,0,0,0> ;lea ebp ,[ebp+00000000] NOP6_EBP TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,0ADh,0,0,0,0> ;lea eax,[eax*1+00000000] NOP7_EAX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,004h,005h,0,0,0,0> ;lea ebx,[ebx*1+00000000] NOP7_EBX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,01Ch,01Dh,0,0,0,0> ;lea ecx,[ecx*1+00000000] NOP7_ECX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,00Ch,00Dh,0,0,0,0> ;lea edx,[edx*1+00000000] NOP7_EDX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,014h,015h,0,0,0,0> ;lea esi,[esi*1+00000000] NOP7_ESI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,034h,035h,0,0,0,0> ;lea edi,[edi*1+00000000] NOP7_EDI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,03Ch,03Dh,0,0,0,0> ;lea ebp,[ebp*1+00000000] NOP7_EBP TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,02Ch,02Dh,0,0,0,0>

;lea eax,[eax*1+00000000] ;nop NOP8_EAX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,004h,005h,0,0,0,0,90h> ;lea ebx,[ebx*1+00000000] ;nop NOP8_EBX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,01Ch,01Dh,0,0,0,0,90h> ;lea ecx,[ecx*1+00000000] ;nop NOP8_ECX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,00Ch,00Dh,0,0,0,0,90h> ;lea edx,[edx*1+00000000] ;nop NOP8_EDX TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,014h,015h,0,0,0,0,90h> ;lea esi,[esi*1+00000000] ;nop NOP8_ESI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,034h,035h,0,0,0,0,90h> ;lea edi,[edi*1+00000000] ;nop NOP8_EDI TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,03Ch,03Dh,0,0,0,0,90h> ;lea ebp,[ebp*1+00000000] ;nop NOP8_EBP TEXTEQU <DB 08Dh,02Ch,02Dh,0,0,0,0,90h>

;JMP NOP9 TEXTEQU <DB 0EBh,007h,90h,90h,90h,90h,90h,90h,90h>

5

Cache and Memory Optimizations

This chapter describes code optimization techniques that take advantage of the large L1 caches and high-bandwidth buses of the AMD Athlon™ processor. Guidelines are listed in order of importance.

Memory Size and Alignment Issues

Avoid Memory Size Mismatches

Avoid memory size mismatches when instructions operate on the same data. **For instructions that store and reload the same data, keep operands aligned and keep the loads/stores of each operand the same size.** The following code examples result in a store-to-load-forwarding (STLF) stall:

Example 1 (Avoid):
MOV DWORD PTR

MOV ^{DWORD PTR [FOO], EAX
MOV DWORD PTR [FOO+4]. F} MOV DWORD PTR [FOO+4], EDX
FLD OWORD PTR [FOO] QWORD PTR [FOO]

Avoid large-to-small mismatches, as shown in the following code:

Example 2 (Avoid):

FST QWORD PTR [FOO] MOV EAX, DWORD PTR [FOO]
MOV FDX, DWORD PTR [FOO+ EDX, DWORD PTR [FOO+4]

Align Data Where Possible

In general, avoid misaligned data references. All data whose size is a power of 2 is considered aligned if it is *naturally* aligned. For example:

- QWORD accesses are aligned if they access an address divisible by 8.
- DWORD accesses are aligned if they access an address divisible by 4.
- WORD accesses are aligned if they access an address divisible by 2.
- TBYTE accesses are aligned if they access an address divisible by 8.

A misaligned store or load operation suffers a minimum one-cycle penalty in the AMD Athlon processor load/store pipeline. In addition, using misaligned loads and stores increases the likelihood of encountering a store-to-load forwarding pitfall. For a more detailed discussion of store-toload forwarding issues, see ["Store-to-Load Forwarding](#page-57-0) [Restrictions" on page 42.](#page-57-0)

Use the 3DNow!™ PREFETCH and PREFETCHW Instructions

PREFETCHW Usage Code that intends to modify the cache line brought in through prefetching should use the PREFETCHW instruction. While PREFETCHW works the same as a PREFETCH on the AMD-K6-2 and AMD-K6-III processors, PREFETCHW gives a hint to the AMD Athlon processor of an intent to modify the cache line. The AMD Athlon processor will mark the cache line being brought in by PREFETCHW as Modified. Using PREFETCHW can save an additional 15-25 cycles compared to a PREFETCH and the subsequent cache state change caused by a write to the prefetched cache line.

Multiple Prefetches Programmers can initiate multiple outstanding prefetches on the AMD Athlon processor. While the AMD-K6-2 and AMD-K6-III processors can have only one outstanding prefetch, the AMD Athlon processor can have up to six outstanding prefetches. For example, when traversing more than one array, the programmer should initiate multiple prefetches.

Example (Multiple Prefetches):


```
FMUL QWORD PTR [ECX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+8] ;b[i+1]*c[i+1]
FSTP QWORD PTR [EAX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+8] ;a[i+1] =
                                     ; b[i+1]*c[i+1]
FLD QWORD PTR [EDX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+16];b[i+2]
FMUL QWORD PTR [ECX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+16];b[i+2]*c[i+2]
FSTP QWORD PTR [EAX+ECX*8+ARR SIZE+16];a[i+2] =
                                     ; [i+2]*c[i+2]
FLD QWORD PTR [EDX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+24];b[i+3]
FMUL QWORD PTR [ECX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+24];b[i+3]*c[i+3]
FSTP QWORD PTR [EAX+ECX*8+ARR SIZE+24];a[i+3] =
                                     ; b[i+3]*c[i+3]
FLD QWORD PTR [EDX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+32];b[i+4]
FMUL QWORD PTR [ECX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+32];b[i+4]*c[i+4]
FSTP QWORD PTR [EAX+ECX*8+ARR SIZE+32];a[i+4] =; b[i+4]*c[i+4]
FLD QWORD PTR [EDX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+40];b[i+5]
FMUL QWORD PTR [ECX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+40];b[i+5]*c[i+5]
FSTP QWORD PTR [EAX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+40];a[i+5] =
                                     ; b[i+5]*c[i+5]
FLD QWORD PTR [EDX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+48];b[i+6]
FMUL QWORD PTR [ECX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+48];b[i+6]*c[i+6]
FSTP QWORD PTR [EAX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+48];a[i+6] =
                                     ; b[i+6]*c[i+6]
FLD QWORD PTR [EDX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+56];b[i+7]
FMUL QWORD PTR [ECX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+56];b[i+7]*c[i+7]
FSTP QWORD PTR [EAX+ECX*8+ARR_SIZE+56];a[i+7] =
                                     \pm 0[i+7]*c[i+7]
ADD ECX, 8 ;next 8 products
JNZ $loop ;until none left
```
END

The following optimization rules were applied to this example.

- Loops should be unrolled to make sure that the data stride per loop iteration is equal to the length of a cache line. This avoids overlapping PREFETCH instructions and thus optimal use of the available number of outstanding PREFETCHes.
- Since the array "array_a" is written rather than read, PREFETCHW is used instead of PREFETCH to avoid overhead for switching cache lines to the correct MESI state. The PREFETCH lookahead has been optimized such that each loop iteration is working on three cache lines while six active PREFETCHes bring in the next six cache lines.
- Index arithmetic has been reduced to a minimum by use of complex addressing modes and biasing of the array base addresses in order to cut down on loop overhead.

Determining Prefetch Distance Given the latency of a typical AMD Athlon processor system and expected processor speeds, the following formula should be used to determine the prefetch distance in bytes:

Prefetch Distance = 200 ($^{DS}/C$ **) bytes**

- Round up to the nearest 64-byte cache line.
- The number 200 is a constant that is based upon expected AMD Athlon processor clock frequencies and typical system memory latencies.
- DS is the data stride in bytes per loop iteration.
- C is the number of cycles for one loop to execute entirely from the L1 cache.

Prefetch at Least 64 Bytes Away from Surrounding Stores

The PREFETCH and PREFETCHW instructions can be affected by false dependencies on stores. If there is a store to an address that matches a request, that request (the PREFETCH or PREFETCHW instruction) may be blocked until the store is written to the cache. Therefore, code should prefetch data that is located at **least** 64 bytes away from any surrounding store's data address.

Take Advantage of Write Combining

Operating system and device driver programmers should take advantage of the write-combining capabilities of the AMD Athlon processor. The AMD Athlon processor has a very aggressive write-combining algorithm, which improves performance significantly.

See [Appendix C,](#page-150-1) ["Implementation of Write Combining" on](#page-150-0) [page 135](#page-150-0) for more details.

Avoid Placing Code and Data in the Same 64-Byte Cache Line

Sharing code and data in the same 64-byte cache line may cause the L1 caches to thrash (unnecessary castout of code/data) in order to maintain coherency between the separate instruction and data caches. The AMD Athlon processor has a cache-line size of 64-bytes, which is twice the size of previous processors. Programmers must be aware that code and data should not be shared within this larger cache line, especially if the data becomes modified.

For example, programmers should consider that a memory indirect JMP instruction may have the data for the jump table residing in the same 64-byte cache line as the JMP instruction, which would result in lower performance.

Although rare, do not place critical code at the border between 32-byte aligned code segments and a data segments. The code at the start or end of your data segment should be as rarely executed as possible or simply padded with garbage.

In general, the following should be avoided:

- self-modifying code
- storing data in code segments

Store-to-Load Forwarding Restrictions

Store-to-load forwarding refers to the process of a load reading (forwarding) data from the store buffer (LS2). There are instances in the AMD Athlon processor load/store architecture when either a load operation is not allowed to read needed data from a store in the store buffer, or a load OP detects a false data dependency on a store in the store buffer.

In either case, the load cannot complete (load the needed data into a register) until the store has retired out of the store buffer and written to the data cache. A store-buffer entry cannot retire and write to the data cache until *every* instruction before the store has completed and retired from the reorder buffer.

The implication of this restriction is that all instructions in the reorder buffer, up to and including the store, must complete and retire out of the reorder buffer before the load can complete. Effectively, the load has a false dependency on every instruction up to the store.

The following sections discuss store-to-load forwarding examples that are acceptable and those that should be avoided.

Store-to-Load Forwarding Pitfalls—True Dependencies

A load is allowed to read data from the store-buffer entry only if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- The start address of the load matches the start address of the store.
- The load operand size is equal to or smaller than the store operand size.
- Neither the load or store is misaligned.
- The store data is not from a high-byte register (AH, BH, CH, or DH).

The following sections describe common-case scenarios to avoid whereby a load has a true dependency on a LS2-buffered store but cannot read (forward) data from a store-buffer entry.

If the following conditions are present, there is a narrow-to-wide store-buffer data forwarding restriction:

- The operand size of the store data is smaller than the operand size of the load data.
- The range of addresses spanned by the store data covers some sub-region of range of addresses spanned by the load data.

Avoid the type of code shown in the following two examples.

Example 1 (Avoid):

```
MOV EAX, 10h
MOV WORD PTR [EAX], BX ; word store
...
MOV ECX, DWORD PTR [EAX] : doubleword load
                           ;cannot forward upper
                           ; byte from store buffer
```
Narrow-to-Wide Store-Buffer Data Forwarding Restriction

```
Example 2 (Avoid): 
MOV EAX, 10h
MOV BYTE PTR [EAX + 3], BL ;byte store
...
MOV ECX, DWORD PTR [EAX] : doubleword load
                             ;cannot forward upper byte
                             ; from store buffer
```
Wide-to-Narrow Store-Buffer Data Forwarding Restriction

If the following conditions are present, there is a wide-to-narrow store-buffer data forwarding restriction:

- The operand size of the store data is greater than the operand size of the load data.
- The start address of the store data does not match the start address of the load.

Example 3 (Avoid):

```
MOV EAX, 10h
ADD DWORD PTR [EAX], EBX ; doubleword store
MOV CX, WORD PTR [EAX + 2] ;word load-cannot forward high
                           ; word from store buffer
```
Use Example 5 instead of Example 4.

Example 4 (Avoid): MOVQ [foo], MM1 ; store upper and lower half ... ADD EAX, [foo] ;fine ADD EDX, [foo+4] ;uh-oh!

Example 5 (Preferred):

Misaligned Store-Buffer Data Forwarding Restriction

If the following condition is present, there is a misaligned store-buffer data forwarding restriction:

■ The store or load address is misaligned. For example, a quadword store is not aligned to a quadword boundary, a doubleword store is not aligned to doubleword boundary, etc.

A common case of misaligned store-data forwarding involves the passing of misaligned quadword floating-point data on the

doubleword-aligned integer stack. Avoid the type of code shown in the following example.

If the following condition is present, there is a high-byte store-data buffer forwarding restriction:

High-Byte Store-Buffer Data Forwarding Restriction

■ The store data is from a high-byte register (AH, BH, CH, DH).

Avoid the type of code shown in the following example.

Example 7 (Avoid):

One Supported Storeto-Load Forwarding Case

There is one case of a mismatched store-to-load forwarding that is supported by the by AMD Athlon processor. The lower 32 bits from an aligned QWORD write feeding into a DWORD read is allowed.

Example 8 (Allowed):
MOVQ [AlignedQw [AlignedQword], mm0

... MOV EAX, [AlignedQword]

Summary of Store-to-Load Forwarding Pitfalls to Avoid

To avoid store-to-load forwarding pitfalls, code should conform to the following guidelines:

- Maintain consistent use of operand size across all loads and stores. Preferably, use doubleword or quadword operand sizes.
- Avoid misaligned data references.
- Avoid narrow-to-wide and wide-to-narrow forwarding cases.

■ When using word or byte stores, avoid loading data from anywhere in the same doubleword of memory other than the identical start addresses of the stores.

Stack Alignment Considerations

With this technique, function arguments can be accessed via EBP, and local variables can be accessed via ESP. In order to free EBP for general use, it needs to be saved and restored between the prolog and the epilog.

Align TBYTE Variables on Quadword Aligned Addresses

Align variables of type TBYTE on quadword aligned addresses. In order to make an array of TBYTE variables that are aligned, array elements are 16-bytes apart. In general, TBYTE variables should be avoided. Use double-precision variables instead.

C Language Structure Component Considerations

Structures ('struct' in C language) should be made the size of a multiple of the largest base type of any of their components. To meet this requirement, padding should be used where necessary.

Language definitions permitting, to minimize padding, structure components should be sorted and allocated such that the components with a larger base type are allocated ahead of those with a smaller base type. For example, consider the following code:

Example:

struct { char a^[5]: long k; doublex; } baz;

The structure components should be allocated (lowest to highest address) as follows:

x, k, a[4], a[3], a[2], a[1], a[0], padbyte6, ..., padbyte0

See ["C Language Structure Component Considerations" on](#page-36-0) [page 21](#page-36-0) for more information from a C source code perspective.

Sort Variables According to Base Type Size

Sort local variables according to their base type size and allocate variables with larger base type size ahead of those with smaller base type size. Assuming the first variable allocated is naturally aligned, all other variables are naturally aligned **AMD**

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without any padding. The following example is a declaration of local variables in a C function:

Example:

```
ga, gu, gi;
long foo, bar;
double x, y, z[3];
char a, b;
float baz;
```
Allocate in the following order from left to right (from higher to lower addresses):

x, y, z[2], z[1], z[0], foo, bar, baz, ga, gu, gi, a, b;

See ["Sort Local Variables According to Base Type Size" on page](#page-37-0) [22](#page-37-0) for more information from a C source code perspective.

6

Branch Optimizations

While the AMD Athlon[™] processor contains a very sophisticated branch unit, certain optimizations increase the effectiveness of the branch prediction unit. This chapter discusses rules that improve branch prediction and minimize branch penalties. Guidelines are listed in order of importance.

Avoid Branches Dependent on Random Data

Avoid conditional branches depending on random data, as these are difficult to predict. For example, a piece of code receives a random stream of characters "A" through "Z" and branches if the character is before "M" in the collating sequence. Data-dependent branches acting upon basically random data causes the branch prediction logic to mispredict the branch about 50% of the time.

If possible, design branch-free alternative code sequences, which results in shorter average execution time. This technique is especially important if the branch body is small. Examples 1 and 2 illustrate this concept using the CMOV instruction. Note that the $\text{AMD-K6}^{\circledR}$ processor does not support the CMOV instruction. Therefore, blended AMD-K6 and AMD Athlon processor code should use Examples 3 and 4.

AMD Athlon™ Processor Specific Code

Example 2 – Unsigned integer min function $(z = x < y$ **?** $x : y)$ **:**

Blended AMD-K6® and AMD Athlon™ Processor Code

Example 3 — Signed integer ABS function (X = labs(X)):

Example 4 – Unsigned integer min function $(z = x < y$ **?** $x : y)$ **:**

Example 5 — Hexadecimal to ASCII conversion (y=x < 10 ? x + 0x30: x + 0x41):

Example 6 — Increment Ring Buffer Offset:

```
//C Code
char buf[BUFSIZE]:
   int a;
   if (a < (BUFSIZE-1)) {
      a++;
    } else {
     a = 0; } 
;-------------
;Assembly Code
MOV EAX, [a] ; old offset
CMP EAX, (BUFSIZE-1) ; a < (BUFSIZE-1) ? CF : NC
INC EAX ; a++<br>SBB EDX, EDX ; a <
SBB EDX, EDX ; a < (BUFSIZE-1) ? 0xffffffff :0
AND EAX, EDX ; a < (BUFSIZE-1) ? a++ : 0 
MOV [a], EAX : store new offset
```
Example 7 — Integer Signum Function:

```
//C Code
int a, s;
if (!a) {
    s = 0;} else if (a < 0) {
    s = -1;} else {
    s = 1;
}
;-------------
;Assembly Code
MOV EAX, [a] ;load a
CDQ ; t = a \leq 0 ? 0xfffffffff : 0
CMP EDX, EAX ; a > 0 ? CF : NC
ADC EDX, 0 :a > 0 ? t+1 : t
MOV [s], EDX ; signum(x)
```
Always Pair CALL and RETURN

When the 12 entry return address stack gets out of synchronization, the latency of returns increase. The return address stack becomes out of sync when:

- calls and returns do not match
- the depth of the return stack is exceeded because of too many levels of nested functions calls

Replace Branches with Computation in 3DNow!™ Code

Branches negatively impact the performance of 3DNow! code. Branches can operate only on one data item at a time, i.e., they are inherently scalar and inhibit the SIMD processing that makes 3DNow! code superior. Also, branches based on 3DNow! comparisons require data to be passed to the integer units, which requires either transport through memory, or the use of "MOVD reg, MMreg" instructions. If the body of the branch is small, one can achieve higher performance by replacing the branch with computation. The computation simulates predicated execution or conditional moves. The principal tools for this are the following instructions: PCMPGT, PFCMPGT, PFCMPGE, PFMIN, PFMAX, PAND, PANDN, POR, PXOR.

Muxing Constructs

The most important construct to avoiding branches in 3DNow!™ and MMX™ code is a 2-way muxing construct that is equivalent to the ternary operator "?:" in C and C++. It is implemented using the PCMP/PFCMP, PAND, PANDN, and POR instructions. To maximize performance, it is important to apply the PAND and PANDN instructions in the proper order.

Example 1 (Avoid):

Because the use of PANDN destroys the mask created by PCMP, the mask needs to be saved, which requires an additional register. This adds an instruction, lengthens the dependency chain, and increases register pressure. Therefore 2-way muxing constructs should be written as follows.

Example 2 (Preferred):

; r = (x < y) ? a : b ; ; in: mm0 a $mm1$ b ; mm2 x ; mm3 y ; out: mm1 r PCMPGTD MM3, MM2 ; $y > x$? 0xfffffffff : 0 PAND MM1, MM3 ; y > x ? b : 0 PANDN MM3, MM0 ; $y > x > 0$: a POR MM1, MM3 ; $r = y > x ? b : a$

Sample Code Translated Into 3DNow!™ Code

The following examples use scalar code translated into 3DNow! code. Note that it is not recommended to use 3DNow! SIMD instructions for scalar code, because the advantage of 3DNow! instructions lies in their "SIMDness". These examples are meant to demonstrate general techniques for translating source code with branches into branchless 3DNow! code. Scalar source code was chosen to keep the examples simple. These techniques work in an identical fashion for vector code.

Each example shows the C code and the resulting 3DNow! code.

```
Example 1: C code: 
                   float x,y,z;
                   if (x < y) {
                     z += 1.0;
                   }
                   else {
                     z = 1.0;
                   }
                   3DNow! code: 
                   ;in: MM0 = x
                   ; MM1 = y; MM2 = z
                   ;out: MM0 = z
                   MOVQ MM3, MM0 ;save x
                   MOVQ MM4, one ;1.0
                   PFCMPGE MMO, MM1 ; x \leq y ? 0 : 0xfffffffff
                   PSLLD MM0, 31 ; x < y ? 0 : 0x80000000
                   PXOR MM0, MM4 ;x < y ? 1.0 : -1.0
                   PFADD MM0, MM2 ;x < y ? z+1.0 : z-1.0
```
Example 2: C code: float x,z; $z = abs(x);$ if $(z \ge 1)$ { $z = 1/z$: } **3DNow! code:** ;in: MM0 = x ;out: MM0 = z MOVQ MM5, mabs ;0x7fffffff PAND MM0, MM5 $;z=abs(x)$ PFRCP MM2, MM0 ;1/z approx MOVQ MM1, MM0 ;save z PFRCPIT1 MM0, MM2 ; 1/z step PFRCPIT2 MM0, MM2 ;1/z final PFMIN MM0, MM1 ; $z = z \le 1$? z : 1/z **Example 3: C code:** float x,z,r,res; $z = fabs(x)$ if (z < 0.575) { $res = r$; } else { $res = PI/2 - 2*r;$ } **3DNow! code:** ;in: MM0 = x ; MM1 = r ;out: MM0 = res MOVQ MM7, mabs ;mask for absolute value PAND MM0, MM7 ; $z = abs(x)$
MOVQ MM2, bnd ; 0.575 MM2, bnd PCMPGTD MM2, MM0 ;z < 0.575 ? 0xffffffff : 0 MOVQ MM3, pio2 ;pi/2 MOVQ MM0, MM1 ;save r PFADD MM1, MM1 ;2*r PFSUBR MM1, MM3 ;pi/2 - 2*r PAND MM0, MM2 ;z < 0.575 ? r : 0 PANDN MM2, MM1 ;z < 0.575 ? 0 : pi/2 - 2*r POR MM0, MM2 ;z < 0.575 ? r : pi/2 - 2 * r

Example 4: C code: #define PI 3.14159265358979323 float x,z,r,res; /* 0 \leq r \leq PI/4 */ $z = abs(x)$ if (z < 1) { $res = r;$ } else { $res = PI/2-r;$ } **3DNow! code:** $:$ in: $MM0 = x$; MM1 = r ;out: MM1 = res MOVQ MM5, mabs ; mask to clear sign bit MOVQ MM6, one ; 1.0 PAND MM0, MM5 ; $z = abs(x)$
PCMPGTD MM6, MM0 ; $z < 1$? PCMPGTD MM6, MM0 ; z < 1 ? 0xffffffff : 0 MOVQ MM4, pio2 ; pi/2 PFSUB MM4, MM1 ; pi/2-r PANDN MM6, MM4 ; z < 1 ? 0 : pi/2-r PFMAX MM1, MM6 ; res = $z < 1$? r : pi/2-r **Example 5: C code:** #define PI 3.14159265358979323 float x,y,xa,ya,r,res; int xs,df; $xs = x < 0$? 1 : 0; $xa = fabs(x);$ $ya = fabs(y);$ df = (xa < ya); if (xs && df) { $res = PI/2 + r$; } else if (xs) { $res = PI - r$; } else if (df) { $res = PI/2 - r$; } else { $res = r;$ }

3DNow! code: ;in: MM0 = r $:$ $MM1$

Avoid the Loop Instruction

The LOOP instruction in the AMD Athlon processor requires eight cycles to execute. Use the preferred code shown below:

Example 1 (Avoid):
LOOP

 I ABEL

Example 2 (Preferred):

Avoid Far Control Transfer Instructions

Avoid using far control transfer instructions. Far control transfer branches can not be predicted by the branch target buffer (BTB).
Avoid Recursive Functions

Avoid recursive functions due to the danger of overflowing the return address stack. Convert end-recursive functions to iterative code. An end-recursive function is when the function call to itself is at the end of the code.

Example 1 (Avoid):

```
long fac(long a)
{
   if (a == 0) {
         return (1);
   } else {
         return (a*fac(a–1));
   }
   return (t);
}
```
Example 2 (Preferred):

```
long fac(long a)
{
   long t=1;
   while (a > 0) {
         t * = a;a--;
   }
   return (t);
}
```
7

Scheduling Optimizations

This chapter describes how to code instructions for efficient scheduling. Guidelines are listed in order of importance.

Schedule Instructions According to Their Latency

The AMD Athlon™ processor can execute up to three x86 instructions per cycle, with each x86 instruction possibly having a different latency. The AMD Athlon processor has flexible scheduling, but for absolute maximum performance, schedule instructions, especially FPU and 3DNow! instructions, according to their latency. Dependent instructions will then not have to wait on instructions with longer latencies.

See [Appendix D,](#page-156-0) ["Instruction Dispatch and Execution Timing"](#page-156-1) [on page 141](#page-156-1) for a list of latency numbers.

Unrolling Loops

Complete Loop Unrolling

Make use of the large AMD Athlon processor 64-Kbyte instruction cache and unroll loops to get more parallelism and reduce loop overhead, even with branch prediction. Complete

unrolling reduces register pressure by removing the loop counter. To completely unroll a loop, remove the loop control and replicate the loop body N times. In addition, completely unrolling a loop increases scheduling opportunities.

Only unrolling very large code loops can result in the inefficient use of the L1 instruction cache. Loops can be unrolled completely, if all of the following conditions are true:

- The loop is in a frequently executed piece of code.
- The loop count is known at compile time.
- The loop body, once unrolled, is less than 100 instructions, which is approximately 400 bytes of code.

Partial Loop Unrolling

Partial loop unrolling can increase register pressure, which can make it inefficient due to the small number of registers in the x86 architecture. However, in certain situations, partial unrolling can be efficient due to the performance gains possible. Partial loop unrolling should be considered if the following conditions are met:

- Spare registers are available
- The loop body is small, so that loop overhead is significant
- The number of loop iterations is likely > 10

Consider the following piece of C code:

```
double a[MAX_LENGTH], b[MAX_LENGTH];
    for (i=0; i< MAX_LENGTH; i++) {
      a[i] = a[i] + b[i]; }
```
Without loop unrolling, the code looks like the following:

Without Loop Unrolling:

MOV ECX, MAX_LENGTH MOV EAX, OFFSET A MOV EBX, OFFSET B \$add_loop: FLD QWORD PTR [EAX] FADD OWORD PTR **[EBX]** FSTP QWORD PTR [EAX] ADD EAX, 8 ADD EBX, 8 DEC ECX JNZ \$add_loop

The loop consists of seven instructions. The AMD Athlon processor can decode/retire three instructions per cycle, so it cannot execute faster than three iterations in seven cycles, or 3/7 floating-point adds per cycle. However, the pipelined floating-point adder allows one add every cycle. In the following code, the loop is partially unrolled by a factor of two, which creates potential endcases that must be handled outside the loop:

With Partial Loop Unrolling:

Now the loop consists of 10 instructions. Based on the decode/retire bandwidth of three OPs per cycle, this loop goes

no faster than three iterations in 10 cycles, or 6/10 floating-point adds per cycle, or 1.4 times as fast as the original loop.

Deriving Loop Control For Partially Unrolled Loops A frequently used loop construct is a counting loop. In a typical case, the loop count starts at some lower bound lo, increases by some fixed, positive increment inc for each iteration of the loop, and may not exceed some upper bound hi. The following example shows how to partially unroll such a loop by an unrolling factor of fac, and how to derive the loop control for the partially unrolled version of the loop.

Example 1 (rolled loop):

```
for (k = 10; k \leq h i; k == inc) {
   x[k] = ...
```

```
 }
```
Example 2 (partially unrolled loop):

```
for (k = 10; k \leq (hi - (fac-1)*inc); k += fac*inc) {
   x[k] = ...
   x[k+inc] = ...
    ...
   x[k+(fac-1)*inc] = ...
 } 
 /* handle end cases */
for (k = k; k \leq h i; k == inc) {
   x[k] = ...
 }
```
Use Function Inlining

Overview

Make use of the AMD Athlon processor's large 64-Kbyte instruction cache by inlining small routines to avoid procedure-call overhead. Consider the cost of possible increased register usage, which can increase load/store instructions for register spilling.

Function inlining has the advantage of eliminating function call overhead and allowing better register allocation and instruction scheduling at the site of the function call. The disadvantage is decreasing code locality, which can increase execution time due to instruction cache misses. Therefore, function inlining is an optimization that has to be used judiciously.

In general, due to its very large instruction cache, the AMD Athlon processor is less susceptible than other processors to the negative side effect of function inlining. Function call overhead on the AMD Athlon processor can be low because calls and returns are executed at high speed due to the use of prediction mechanisms. However, there is still overhead due to passing function arguments through memory, which creates STLF (store-to-load-forwarding) dependencies. Some compilers allow for a reduction of this overhead by allowing arguments to be passed in registers in one of their calling conventions, which has the drawback of constraining register allocation in the function and at the site of the function call.

In general, function inlining works best if the compiler can utilize feedback from a profiler to identify the function call sites most frequently executed. If such data is not available, a reasonable heuristic is to concentrate on function calls inside loops. Functions that are directly recursive should not be considered candidates for inlining. However, if they are end-recursive, the compiler should convert them to an iterative equivalent to avoid potential overflow of the AMD Athlon processor return prediction mechanism (return stack) during deep recursion. For best results, a compiler should support function inlining across multiple source files. In addition, a compiler should provide inline templates for commonly used library functions, such as sin(), strcmp(), or memcpy().

Always Inline Functions If Called From One Site

A function should always be inlined if it can be established that it is called from just one site in the code. For the C language, determination of this characteristic is made easier if functions are explicitly declared static unless they require external linkage. This case occurs quite frequently, as functionality that could be concentrated in a single large function is split across

multiple small functions for improved maintainability and readability.

Always Inline Functions with Fewer Than 25 Machine Instructions

In addition, functions that create fewer than 25 machine instructions once inlined should always be inlined because it is likely that the function call overhead is close to or more than the time spent executing the function body. For large functions, the benefits of reduced function call overhead gives diminishing returns. Therefore, a function that results in the insertion of more than 500 machine instructions at the call site should probably not be inlined. Some larger functions might consist of multiple, relatively short paths that are negatively affected by function overhead. In such a case, it can be advantageous to inline larger functions. Profiling information is the best guide in determining whether to inline such large functions.

Avoid Address Generation Interlocks

Loads and stores are scheduled by the AMD Athlon processor to access the data cache in program order. Newer loads and stores with their addresses calculated can be blocked by older loads and stores whose addresses are not yet calculated – this is known as an address generation interlock. Therefore, it is advantageous to schedule loads and stores that can calculate their addresses quickly, ahead of loads and stores that require the resolution of a long dependency chain in order to generate their addresses. Consider the following code examples.

Example 1 (Avoid):

Example 2 (Preferred):

Use MOVZX and MOVSX

Use the MOVZX and MOVSX instructions to zero-extend and sign-extend byte-size and word-size operands to doubleword length. For example, typical code for zero extension creates a superset dependency when the zero-extended value is used, as in the following code:

Example 1 (Avoid):

XOR EAX, EAX MOV AL, [MEM]

Example 2 (Preferred): MOVZX EAX, BYTE PTR [MEM]

Minimize Pointer Arithmetic in Loops

Minimize pointer arithmetic in loops, especially if the loop body is small. In this case, the pointer arithmetic would cause significant overhead. Instead, take advantage of the complex addressing modes to utilize the loop counter to index into memory arrays. Using complex addressing modes does not have any negative impact on execution speed, but the reduced number of instructions preserves decode bandwidth.

Example 1 (Avoid):

```
int a[MAXSIZE], b[MAXSIZE], c[MAXSIZE], i;
for (i=0; i < MAXSIZE; i++) {
       c [i] = a[i] + b[i];
}
MOV ECX, MAXSIZE ;initialize loop counter
XOR ESI, ESI ; initialize offset into array a
XOR EDI, EDI ;initialize offset into array b
XOR EBX, EBX ;initialize offset into array c
```

```
$add_loop:
MOV EAX, [ESI + a] ;get element a
MOV EDX, [EDI + b]; get element b<br>ADD EAX, EDX : afi1 + bfi1ADD EAX, EDX ; a[i] + b[i]MOV [EBX + c], EAX ; write result to c
ADD ESI, 4 ; increment offset into a
ADD EDI, 4 ;increment offset into b
ADD EBX, 4 ;increment offset into c
DEC ECX ; decrement loop count
JNZ $add_loop ;until loop count 0
Example 2 (Preferred): 
int a[MAXSIZE], b[MAXSIZE], c[MAXSIZE], i;
for (i=0; i < MAXSIZE; i++) {
       c [i] = a[i] + b[i];
}
MOV ECX, MAXSIZE-1 ; initialize loop counter
$add_loop:
MOV EAX, [ECX*4 + a] ;get element a
MOV EDX, [ECX*4 + b] ;get element b
ADD EAX, EDX ;a[i] + b[i]MOV [ECX*4 + c], EAX ;write result to c
DEC ECX ;decrement index
JNS $add_loop ;until index negative
```
Note that the code in example 2 traverses the arrays in a downward direction (i.e., from higher addresses to lower addresses), whereas the original code in example 1 traverses the arrays in an upward direction. Such a change in the direction of the traversal is possible if each loop iteration is completely independent of all other loop iterations, as is the case here.

In code where the direction of the array traversal can't be switched, it is still possible to minimize pointer arithmetic by appropriately biasing base addresses and using an index variable that starts with a negative value and reaches zero when the loop expires. Note that if the base addresses are held in registers (e.g., when the base addresses are passed as arguments of a function) biasing the base addresses requires additional instructions to perform the biasing at run time and a small amount of additional overhead is incurred. In the examples shown here the base addresses are used in the displacement portion of the address and biasing is

accomplished at compile time by simply modifying the displacement.

```
Example 3 (Preferred): 
int a[MAXSIZE], b[MAXSIZE], c[MAXSIZE], i;
for (i=0; i < MAXSIZE; i++) {
   c [i] = a[i] + b[i];
}
MOV ECX, (-MAXSIZE) ; initialize index
$add_loop:
MOV EAX, \text{ECX}^*4 + a + \text{MAXSIZE}^*4]; get a element<br>MOV EDX. \text{ECX}^*4 + b + \text{MAXSIZE}^*4]: get b element
      EDX, [ECX*4 + b + MAXSIZE*4]; get b element
ADD EAX, EDX = \{a[i] + b[i]MOV [ECX*4 + c + MAXSIZE*4], EAX ; write result to c
INC ECX : increment index
JNZ $add_loop :until index==0
```
Push Memory Data Carefully

Carefully choose the best method for pushing memory data. To reduce register pressure and code dependencies, follow example 2 below.

Example 1 (Avoid):

 $EAX, [MEM]$ PUSH EAX

Example 2 (Preferred):

PUSH [MEM]

8

Integer Optimizations

This chapter describes ways to improve integer performance through optimized programming techniques. The guidelines are listed in order of importance.

Replace Divides with Multiplies

Replace integer division by constants with multiplication by the reciprocal. Because the AMD Athlon™ processor has a very fast integer multiply (5–9 cycles signed, 4–8 cycles unsigned) and the integer division delivers only one bit of quotient per cycle (22–47 cycles signed, 17–41 cycles unsigned), the equivalent code is much faster. The user can follow the examples in this chapter that illustrate the use of integer division by constants, or access the executables in the opt_utilities directory in the AMD documentation CD-ROM (PID 21860) to find alternative code for dividing by a constant.

Multiplication by Reciprocal (Division) Utility

The code for the utilities can be found at ["Derivation of](#page-99-0) [Multiplier Used For Integer Division by Constants" on page 84.](#page-99-0) All utilities were compiled for the Microsoft Windows^{\circ} 95, Windows 98, and Windows NT® environments. All utilities are provided 'as is' and are not supported by AMD.

Unsigned Division by Multiplication of Constant

Simpler Code for Restricted Dividend

Integer division by a constant can be made faster if the range of the dividend is limited, which removes a shift associated with most divisors. For example, for a divide by 10 operation, use the following code if the dividend is less than 40000005h:

Signed Division by Multiplication of Constant

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Use Alternative Code When Multiplying by a Constant

A 32-bit integer multiply by a constant has a latency of five cycles. Therefore, use alternative code when multiplying by certain constants. In addition, because there is just one multiply unit, the replacement code may provide better throughput.

The following code samples are designed such that the original source also receives the final result. Other sequences are possible if the result is in a different register. Adds have been favored over shifts to keep code size small. Generally, there is a fast replacement if the constant has very few 1 bits in binary.

More constants are found in the file multiply_by_constants.txt located in the "opt_utilities" directory of the documentation CDROM.

Use MMX™ Instructions for Integer-Only Work

In many programs it can be advantageous to use MMX instructions to do integer-only work, especially if the function already uses 3DNow!™ or MMX code. Using MMX instructions relieves register pressure on the integer registers. As long as data is simply loaded/stored, added, shifted, etc., MMX instructions are good substitutes for integer instructions. Integer registers are freed up with the following results:

- May be able to reduce the number of integer registers to saved/restored on function entry/edit.
- Free up integer registers for pointers, loop counters, etc., so that they do not have to be spilled to memory, which reduces memory traffic and latency in dependency chains.

Be careful with regards to passing data between MMX and integer registers and of creating mismatched store-to-load forwarding cases. See ["Unrolling Loops" on page 59](#page-74-0).

In addition, using MMX instructions increases the available parallelism. The AMD Athlon processor can issue three integer OPs and two MMX OPs per cycle.

Repeated String Instruction Usage

Latency of Repeated String Instructions

[Table 1](#page-91-0) shows the latency for repeated string instructions on the AMD Athlon processor.

Instruction		ECX=0 (cycles)	$DF = 0$ (cycles)	$DF = 1$ (cycles)
REP	MOVS	11	$15 + (4/3 * c)$	$25 + (4/3*c)$
	REP STOS	11	$14 + (1*c)$	$24 + (1*c)$
REP	LODS	11	$15 + (2*c)$	$15 + (2*c)$
	REP SCAS	11	$15 + (5/2*c)$	$15 + (5/2*c)$
REP	CMPS	11	$16 + (10/3 * c)$	$16 + (10/3 * c)$
Note:				
$c =$ value of ECX, (ECX > 0)				

Table 1. Latency of Repeated String Instructions

[Table 1](#page-91-0) lists the latencies with the direction flag $(DF) = 0$ (increment) and $DF = 1$. In addition, these latencies are assumed for aligned memory operands. Note that for MOVS/STOS, when DF = 1 (DOWN), the overhead portion of the latency increases significantly. However, these types are less commonly found. The user should use the formula and round up to the nearest integer value to determine the latency.

Guidelines for Repeated String Instructions

To help achieve good performance, this section contains guidelines for the careful scheduling of VectorPath repeated string instructions.

- **Use the Largest Possible Operand Size** Always move data using the largest operand size possible. For example, use REP MOVSD rather than REP MOVSW and REP MOVSW rather than REP MOVSB. Use REP STOSD rather than REP STOSW and REP STOSW rather than REP MOVSB.
- **Ensure DF=0 (UP)** Always make sure that $DF = 0$ (UP) (after execution of CLD) for REP MOVS and REP STOS. DF = 1 (DOWN) is only needed for certain cases of overlapping REP MOVS (for example, source and destination overlap).

Use MOVQs for Moving a Quadword Aligned Block of Data

For moving a large quadword-aligned block of data, use a partially unrolled loop that uses MOVQs. The following example is for Microsoft Visual C inline code and works equally well on the AMD-K6[®] and AMD Athlon processors.

Example:.

```
asm {
mov eax, [src]
mov edx, [dst]
mov ecx, (SIZE \gg 6)align 16
xfer:
movq mm0, [eax]
add edx, 64
movq mm1, [eax+8]
add eax, 64
movq mm2, [eax–48]
movq [edx–64], mm0
movq mm3, [eax–40]
```
movq [edx–56], mm1 movq mm4, [eax–32] movq [edx–48], mm2 movq mm5, [eax–24] movq [edx–40], mm3 movq mm6, [eax–16] movq [edx–32], mm4 movq mm7, [eax–8] movq [edx–24], mm5 movq [edx–16], mm6 dec ecx movq [edx–8], mm7 jnz xfer }

Use XOR Instruction to Clear Integer Registers

To clear an integer register to all 0s, use "XOR reg, reg". The AMD Athlon processor is able to avoid the false read dependency on the XOR instruction.

Example 1 (Acceptable): MOV REG, 0

Example 2 (Preferred): XOR REG, REG

Efficient 64-Bit Integer Arithmetic

This section contains a collection of code snippets and subroutines showing the efficient implementation of 64-bit arithmetic. Addition, subtraction, negation, and shifts are best handled by inline code. Multiplies, divides, and remainders are less common operations and should usually be implemented as subroutines. If these subroutines are used often, the programmer should consider inlining them. Except for division and remainder, the code presented works for both signed and unsigned integers. The division and remainder code shown works for unsigned integers, but can easily be extended to handle signed integers.

Example 1 (Addition):

;add operand in ECX:EBX to operand EDX:EAX, result in ; EDX:EAX ADD EAX, EBX ADC EDX, ECX

Example 2 (Subtraction):

;subtract operand in ECX:EBX from operand EDX:EAX, result in ; EDX:EAX SUB EAX, EBX
SBB EDX, ECX EDX, ECX

Example 3 (Negation):

;negate operand in EDX:EAX NOT NEG EAX SBB EDX, –1 ;fixup: increment hi-word if low-word was 0

Example 4 (Left shift):

;shift operand in EDX:EAX left, shift count in ECX (count ; applied modulo 64) SHLD EDX, EAX, CL ; first apply shift count SHL EAX, CL ; mod 32 to EDX:EAX TEST ECX, 32 ;need to shift by another 32? JZ \$lshift done ;no, done MOV EDX, EAX ;left shift EDX:EAX XOR EAX, EAX ; by 32 bits

\$lshift_done:

Example 5 (Right shift):

\$rshift_done:

```
Example 6 (Multiplication): 
;_llmul computes the low-order half of the product of its
; arguments, two 64-bit integers
;
;INPUT: [ESP+8]:[ESP+4] multiplicand
        [ESP+16]: [ESP+12] multiplier
;
;OUTPUT: EDX:EAX (multiplicand * multiplier) % 2^64
;
;DESTROYS: EAX,ECX,EDX,EFlags
_llmul PROC
MOV EDX, [ESP+8] ; multiplicand hi
MOV ECX, [ESP+16] ;multiplier_hi
OR EDX, ECX ;one operand >= 2^{\circ}32?
MOV EDX, [ESP+12] ;multiplier_lo
MOV EAX, [ESP+4] ; multiplicand lo
JNZ $twomul ;yes, need two multiplies
MUL EDX ;multiplicand_lo * multiplier_lo
RET ;done, return to caller
$twomul:
IMUL EDX, [ESP+8]: p3 lo = multiplicand hi*multiplier lo
IMUL ECX, EAX ;p2 lo = multiplier hi*multiplicand lo
ADD ECX, EDX ; p2_lo + p3_lo
MUL DWORD PTR [ESP+12] ;p1=multiplicand_lo*multiplier_lo
ADD EDX, ECX : p1+p21o+p3 lo = result in EDX:EAX
RET :done, return to caller
_llmul ENDP
Example 7 (Division): 
;_ulldiv divides two unsigned 64-bit integers, and returns
; the quotient.
;
;INPUT: [ESP+8]:[ESP+4] dividend
         [ESP+16]: [ESP+12] divisor
;
;OUTPUT: EDX:EAX quotient of division
;
;DESTROYS: EAX,ECX,EDX,EFlags
_ulldiv PROC
PUSH EBX ; save EBX as per calling convention
MOV ECX, [ESP+20] ;divisor_hi
MOV EBX, [ESP+16] ;divisor lo
MOV EDX, [ESP+12] ;dividend_hi
MOV EAX, [ESP+8] ;dividend lo
TEST ECX, ECX ;divisor > 2^s32-1?
JNZ $big divisor ;yes, divisor > 32^32-1
CMP EDX, EBX ;only one division needed? (ECX = 0)
JAE $two_divs ;need two divisions
DIV EBX ;EAX = quotient lo
```
הכ

_ulldiv ENDP

Example 8 (Remainder): ;_ullrem divides two unsigned 64-bit integers, and returns ; the remainder. ; ;INPUT: [ESP+8]:[ESP+4] dividend [ESP+16]: [ESP+12] divisor ; ;OUTPUT: EDX:EAX remainder of division ; ;DESTROYS: EAX,ECX,EDX,EFlags _ullrem PROC PUSH EBX ; save EBX as per calling convention MOV ECX, [ESP+20] ;divisor_hi MOV EBX, [ESP+16] ;divisor_lo MOV EDX, [ESP+12] ;dividend_hi MOV EAX, [ESP+8] ;dividend_lo TEST ECX , ECX ;divisor > $2^{\wedge}32-1$? JNZ \$r_big_divisor ;yes, divisor > 32^32–1 CMP EDX, EBX ; only one division needed? (ECX = 0) JAE \$r_two_divs ;need two divisions DIV EBX ;EAX = quotient_lo MOV EAX , EDX \qquad EAX = remainder lo MOV EDX , ECX ; EDX = remainder hi = 0 POP EBX ; restore EBX as per calling convention RET ;done, return to caller \$r_two_divs: MOV ECX, EAX ; save dividend lo in ECX MOV EAX, EDX ; get dividend hi XOR EDX, EDX ;zero extend it into EDX:EAX DIV EBX ; EAX = quotient_hi, EDX = intermediate ; remainder MOV EAX, ECX ; EAX = dividend lo DIV EBX ;EAX = quotient lo MOV EAX, EDX ;EAX = remainder_lo XOR EDX, EDX ; EDX = remainder hi = 0 POP EBX ;restore EBX as per calling convention RET ;done, return to caller \$r_big_divisor: PUSH EDI ; save EDI as per calling convention
MOV EDI. ECX : save divisor hi MOV EDI, ECX ; save divisor hi SHR EDX, 1 ; shift both divisor and dividend right RCR EAX, 1 ; by 1 bit ROR EDI, 1 RCR EBX, 1 BSR ECX, ECX : ECX = number of remaining shifts SHRD EBX, EDI, CL ; scale down divisor and dividend such SHRD EAX, EDX, CL ; that divisor is less than 2^32 SHR EDX, CL ; (i.e. fits in EBX)

_ullrem ENDP

Derivation of Multiplier Used For Integer Division by Constants

Unsigned Derivation for Algorithm, Multiplier, and Shift Factor

The utility udiv.exe was compiled using the code shown in this section.

The following code derives the multiplier value used when performing integer division by constants. The code works for unsigned integer division and for odd divisors between 1 and 2^{31} –1, inclusive. For divisors of the form $d = d' \star 2^n$, the multiplier is the same as for d' and the shift factor is $s + n$.

```
\prime* Code snippet to determine algorithm (a), multiplier (m),
and shift factor (s) to perform division on unsigned 32-bit
integers by constant divisor. Code is written for the
Microsoft Visual C compiler. */
/* 
In: d = divisor, 1 \le d \le 2^3, d d odd
0ut: a = algorithm
     m = multiplier
     s = shift factor;algorithm 0
MOV EDX, dividend
MOV EAX, m
MUL EDX
SHR EDX, s ;EDX=quotient
;algorithm 1
MOV EDX, dividend
MOV EAX, m
MUL EDX
ADD EAX, m
ADC EDX, 0
SHR EDX, s ; EDX=quotient
*/
typedef unsigned int64 U64;
typedef unsigned long U32;
U32 d, l, s, m, a, r;
U64 m_low, m_high, j, k;
U32 log2 (U32 i)
{
```

```
U32 t = 0;
  i = i \gg 1;
  while (i) {
   i = i \gg 1;
   t++:
   }
  return (t);
}
/* Generate m, s for algorithm 0. Based on: Granlund, T.;
Montgomery, P.L.:"Division by Invariant Integers using
Multiplication". SIGPLAN Notices, Vol. 29, June 1994, page
61. */1 = log2(d) + 1;j = (((U64)(0xffffffff)) % ((U64)(d)));k = (((U64)(1)) \leq (32+1)) / ((U64)(0xffffffff-j));m_low = ((U64)(1)) << (32+1)) / d;m high = (((U64)(1)) \leq (32+1)) + k) / d;
while (((m_low >> 1) < (m_high >> 1)) && (l > 0)) {
  m low = m low \gg 1;
   m_high = m_high >> 1;
  | = | - 1;}
if ((m high > 32) == 0) {
  m = ((U32)(m high));
   s = 1:
   a = 0:
}
/* Generate m, s for algorithm 1. Based on: Magenheimer,
D.J.; et al: "Integer Multiplication and Division on the HP
Precision Architecture". IEEE Transactions on Computers, Vol
37, No. 8, August 1988, page 980. */
else {
   s = \log(10);m_low = (((U64)(1)) << (32+s)) / ((U64)(d));r = ((U32)((((U64)(1))\times(32+s))\%((U64)(d))));
  m = (r \langle ((d \rangle)1)+1)) ? ((U32)(m low)) : ((U32)(m low))+1;
   a = 1:
}
/* Reduce multiplier/shift factor for either algorithm to
smallest possible */
while (!(m&1)) {
  m = m \gg 1;
  S––;
}
```
Signed Derivation for Algorithm, Multiplier, and Shift Factor

The utility sdiv.exe was compiled using the following code.

```
/* Code snippet to determine algorithm (a), multiplier (m),
and shift count (s) for 32-bit signed integer division, 
given divisor d. Written for Microsoft Visual C compiler. */
/* 
IN: d = divisor, 2 \le d \le 2^31OUT: a = algorithm
     m = multiplier
      s = shift count;algorithm 0
MOV EAX, m 
MOV EDX, dividend
MOV ECX, EDX
IMUL EDX 
SHR ECX, 31
SAR EDX, s
ADD EDX, ECX ; quotient in EDX
;algorithm 1
MOV EAX, m
MOV EDX, dividend 
MOV ECX, EDX
IMUL EDX
ADD EDX, ECX
SHR ECX, 31
SAR EDX, s
ADD EDX, ECX ; quotient in EDX
*/
typedef unsigned __ int64 U64;
typedef unsigned long U32;
U32 log2 (U32 i)
{
 U32 t = 0;
 i = i \rightarrow 1;
  while (i) {
   i = i \gg 1;
    t++;
   }
   return (t);
}
U32 d, l, s, m, a;
U64 m_low, m_high, j, k;
```

```
/* Determine algorithm (a), multiplier (m), and shift count 
(s) for 32-bit signed integer division. Based on: Granlund, 
T.; Montgomery, P.L.: "Division by Invariant Integers using 
Multiplication". SIGPLAN Notices, Vol. 29, June 1994, page 
61. */1 = \log(2(d));j = ((U64)(0x80000000)) % ((U64)(d)));k = (((U64)(1)) \le (32+1)) / ((U64)(0 \times 800000000-j));m_low = ((U64)(1)) << (32+1)) / d;m_{high} = ((( (064)(1)) \leq (32+1)) + k ) / d;while (((m_low >> 1) < (m_high >> 1)) && (l > 0)) {
   m low = m low \gg 1;
   m_high = m_high >> 1;
   \vert = \vert - 1;
}
m = ((U32)(m_high));
s = 1;
```
 $a = (m high \gg 31)$? 1 : 0;

9

Floating-Point Optimizations

This chapter details the methods used to optimize floating-point code to the pipelined floating-point unit (FPU). Guidelines are listed in order of importance.

Ensure All FPU Data is Aligned

As discussed in ["Memory Size and Alignment Issues" on page](#page-52-0) [37](#page-52-0), floating-point data should be naturally aligned. That is, words should be aligned on word boundaries, doublewords on doubleword boundaries, and quadwords on quadword boundaries. Misaligned memory accesses reduce the available memory bandwidth.

Use Multiplies Rather Than Divides

If accuracy requirements allow, floating-point division by a constant should be converted to a multiply by the reciprocal. Divisors that are powers of two and their reciprocal are exactly representable, except in the rare case that the reciprocal overflows or underflows, and therefore does not cause an accuracy issue. Unless such an overflow or underflow occurs, a division by a power of two should always be converted to a multiply. Although the AMD Athlon™ processor has high-performance division, multiplies are significantly faster than divides.

Use FFREEP Macro to Pop One Register from the FPU Stack

In FPU intensive code, frequently accessed data is often pre-loaded at the bottom of the FPU stack before processing floating-point data. After completion of processing, it is desirable to remove the pre-loaded data from the FPU stack as quickly as possible. The classical way to clean up the FPU stack is to use either of the following instructions:

FSTP ST(0) ; removes one register from stack FCOMPP : removes two registers from stack

On the AMD Athlon processor, a faster alternative is to use the FFREEP instruction below. Note that the FFREEP instruction, although insufficiently documented in the past, is supported by all 32-bit x86 processors. The opcode bytes for FFREEP ST(i) are listed in [Table 14 on page 166](#page-181-0).

FFREEP ST(0) : removes one register from stack

On the AMD Athlon processor, the FFREEP instruction converts to an internal NOP, which can go down any pipe with no dependencies.

Many assemblers do not support the FFREEP instruction. In these cases, a simple text macro can be created to facilitate use of the FFREEP ST(0).

FFREEP_ST0 TEXTEQU <DB 0DFh, 0C0h>

Floating-Point Compare Instructions

For branches that are dependent on floating-point comparisons, use the FCOMI/FCOMIP/FUCOMI/FUCOMIP instructions. These instructions are much faster than the classical approach using FSTSW, because FSTSW is essentially a serializing instruction on the AMD Athlon processor. When FSTSW cannot be avoided (for example, backward compatibility of code with older processors), no FPU instruction should occur between an FCOM[P], FICOM[P], FUCOM[P], or FTST and a dependent FSTSW. This optimization allows the use of a fast forwarding mechanism for the FPU condition codes internal to the AMD Athlon processor FPU and increases performance.

Use the FXCH Instruction Rather Than FST/FLD Pairs

Increase parallelism by breaking up dependency chains or by evaluating multiple dependency chains simultaneously by explicitly switching execution between them. Although the AMD Athlon processor FPU has a deep scheduler, which in most cases can extract sufficient parallelism from existing code, long dependency chains can stall the scheduler while issue slots are still available. The maximum dependency chain length that the scheduler can absorb is about six 4-cycle instructions.

To switch execution between dependency chains, use of the FXCH instruction is recommended because it has an apparent latency of zero cycles and generates only one OP. The AMD Athlon processor FPU contains special hardware to handle up to three FXCH instructions per cycle. Using FXCH is preferred over the use of FST/FLD pairs, even if the FST/FLD pair works on a register. An FST/FLD pair adds two cycles of latency and consists of two OPs.

Avoid Using Extended-Precision Data

Store data as either single-precision or double-precision quantities. Loading and storing extended-precision data is comparatively slower.

Minimize Floating-Point-to-Integer Conversions

C++, C, and Fortran define floating-point-to-integer conversions as truncating. This creates a problem because the active rounding mode in an application is typically round-to-nearesteven. The classical way to do a double-to-int conversion therefore works as follows:

Example 1 (Fast):
SUB [I], **ED** $\begin{array}{ccc} \text{[} \text{1}, & \text{EDX} & \text{:} \text{trunc}(X) = \text{radint}(X) \text{ - correction} \end{array}$ FLD QWORD PTR [X] ; load double to be converted FSTCW [SAVE_CW] ; save current FPU control word MOVZX EAX, WORD PTR[SAVE_CW];retrieve control word OR EAX, OCOOh ; rounding control field = truncate

The AMD Athlon processor contains special acceleration hardware to execute such code as quickly as possible. In most situations, the above code is therefore the fastest way to perform floating-point-to-integer conversion and the conversion is compliant both with programming language standards and the IEEE-754 standard.

The speed of the above code is somewhat dependent on the nature of the code surrounding it. For applications in which the speed of floating-point-to-integer conversions is extremely critical for application performance, experiment with either of the following substitutions, which may or may not be faster than the code above.

The first substitution simulates a truncating floating-point to integer conversion provided that there are no NaNs, infinities, and overflows. This conversion is therefore not IEEE-754 compliant. This code works properly only if the current FPU rounding mode is round-to-nearest-even, which is usually the case.

Example 2 (Potentially faster).

The second substitution simulates a truncating floating-point to integer conversion using only integer instructions and therefore works correctly independent of the FPU's current rounding mode. It does not handle NaNs, infinities, and overflows
according to the IEEE-754 standard. Note that the first instruction of this code may cause an STLF size mismatch resulting in performance degradation if the variable to be converted has been stored recently.

Example 3 (Potentially faster):

For applications which can tolerate a floating-point-to-integer conversion that is not compliant with existing programming language standards (but is IEEE-754 compliant), perform the conversion using the rounding mode that is currently in effect (usually round-to-nearest-even).

Example 4 (Fastest):

Some compilers offer an option to use the code from example 4 for floating-point-to-integer conversion, using the default rounding mode.

Lastly, consider setting the rounding mode throughout an application to truncate and using the code from example 4 to perform extremely fast conversions that are compliant with language standards and IEEE-754. This mode is also provided as an option by some compilers. Note that use of this technique also changes the rounding mode for all other FPU operations inside the application, which can lead to significant changes in numerical results and even program failure (for example, due to lack of convergence in iterative algorithms).

Floating-Point Subexpression Elimination

There are cases which do not require an FXCH instruction after every instruction to allow access to two new stack entries. In the cases where two instructions share a source operand, an FXCH is not required between the two instructions. When there is an opportunity for subexpression elimination, reduce the number of superfluous FXCH instructions by putting the shared source operand at the top of the stack. For example, using the function:

func($(x*y)$, $(x+z)$)

Example 1 (Avoid):

FLD Z FLD Y FLD X FADD ST, ST(2) FXCH ST(1) FMUL ST, ST(2) CALL FUNC FSTP ST(0)

Example 2 (Preferred):

10

3DNow!™ and MMX™ Optimizations

This chapter describes 3DNow! and MMX code optimization techniques for the AMD Athlon™ processor. Guidelines are listed in order of importance. 3DNow! porting guidelines can be found in the *3DNow!™ Instruction Porting Guide*, order# 22621.

Use 3DNow!™ Instructions

Unless accuracy requirements dictate otherwise, perform floating-point computations using the 3DNow! instructions instead of x87 instructions. The SIMD nature of 3DNow! achieves twice the number of FLOPs that are achieved through x87 instructions. 3DNow! instructions provide for a flat register file instead of the stack-based approach of x87 instructions.

See the *3DNow!™ Technology Manual*, order# 21928 for information on instruction usage.

Use FEMMS Instruction

Though there is no penalty for switching between x87 FPU and 3DNow!/MMX instructions in the AMD Athlon processor, the FEMMS instruction should be used to ensure the same code also runs optimally on the AMD-K6® processor. The FEMMS

instruction is supported for backward compatibility with the AMD-K6 processor, and is aliased to the EMMS instruction.

Use 3DNow!™ Instructions for Fast Division

3DNow! instructions can be used to compute a very fast, highly accurate reciprocal or quotient.

Optimized 15-Bit Precision Divide

This divide operation executes with a total latency of seven cycles, assuming that the program hides the latency of the first MOVD/MOVQ instructions within preceding code.

Example: MOVD MM0, [MEM] ; 0 | W PFRCP MMO, MMO ; 1/W | 1/W MOVQ MM2, [MEM] ; Y | X PFMUL MM2, MM0 ; Y/W | X/W

Optimized Full 24-Bit Precision Divide

This divide operation executes with a total latency of 15 cycles, assuming that the program hides the latency of the first MOVD/MOVQ instructions within preceding code.

Example:

Pipelined Pair of 24-Bit Precision Divides

This divide operation executes with a total latency of 21 cycles, assuming that the program hides the latency of the first MOVD/MOVQ instructions within preceding code.

Newton-Raphson Reciprocal

Consider the quotient $q = \frac{a}{b}$. An (on-chip) ROM-based table lookup can be used to quickly produce a 14-to-15-bit precision approximation of $\frac{1}{b}$ using just one PFRCP instruction. A full 24-bit precision reciprocal can then be quickly computed from this approximation using a Newton Raphson algorithm.

The general Newton-Raphson recurrence for the reciprocal is as follows:

 $X_{i+1} = X_i \bullet (2 - b \bullet X_i)$

Given that the initial approximation, X_{0} is accurate to at least 14 bits, and that a full IEEE single-precision mantissa contains 24 bits, just one Newton-Raphson iteration is required. The following sequence shows the 3DNow! instructions that produce the initial reciprocal approximation, compute the full precision reciprocal from the approximation, and finally, complete the desired divide of a_{h} .

 X_0 = PFRCP(b) X_1 = PFRCPIT1(b,X₀) X_2 = PFRCPIT2(X_1, X_0) $q = PFMUL(a, X₂)$

The 24-bit final reciprocal value is X_2 . In the AMD Athlon processor 3DNow! technology implementation the operand X_2 contains the correct round-to-nearest single precision reciprocal for approximately 99% of all arguments.

Use 3DNow!™ Instructions for Fast Square Root and Reciprocal Square Root

3DNow! instructions can be used to compute a very fast, highly accurate square root and reciprocal square root.

Optimized 15-Bit Precision Square Root

This square root operation can be executed in only 7 cycles, assuming a program hides the latency of the first MOVD instruction within previous code. The reciprocal square root operation requires four less cycles than the square root operation.

Example:

Optimized 24-Bit Precision Square Root

This square root operation can be executed in only 19 cycles, assuming a program hides the latency of the first MOVD instruction within previous code. The reciprocal square root operation requires four less cycles than the square root operation.

Example:

Newton-Raphson Reciprocal Square Root

The general Newton-Raphson reciprocal square root recurrence is:

 $X_{i+1} = 1/2 \bullet X_i \bullet (3 - b \bullet X_i^2)$

To reduce the number of iterations, X_0 is an initial approximation read from a table. The 3DNow! reciprocal square root approximation is accurate to at least 15 bits. Accordingly, to obtain a single-precision 24-bit reciprocal square root of an input operand b, one Newton-Raphson iteration is required, using the following sequence of 3DNow! instructions:

 X_0 = PFRSQRT(b) $X_1 = PFMUL(X_0, X_0)$ X_2 = PFRSQIT1(b, X_1) X_3 = PFRCPIT2(X_2 , X_0) X_4 = PFMUL(b, X_3)

The 24-bit final reciprocal square root value is X_3 . In the AMD Athlon processor 3DNow! implementation, the estimate contains the correct round-to-nearest value for approximately 87% of all arguments. The remaining arguments differ from the correct round-to-nearest value by one unit-in-the-last-place. The square root (X_4) is formed in the last step by multiplying by the input operand b.

Use MMX™ PMADDWD Instruction to Perform Two 32-Bit Multiplies in Parallel

The MMX PMADDWD instruction can be used to perform two signed $16x16 \rightarrow 32$ bit multiplies in parallel, with much higher performance than can be achieved using the IMUL instruction. The PMADDWD instruction is designed to perform four $16x16 \rightarrow 32$ bit signed multiplies and accumulate the results pairwise. By making one of the results in a pair a zero, there are now just two multiplies. The following example shows how to multiply 16-bit signed numbers a,b,c,d into signed 32-bit products $a \times c$ and $b \times d$:

3DNow!™ and MMX™ Intra-Operand Swapping

If the swapping of MMX register halves is necessary, use the PSWAPD instruction, which is a new AMD Athlon MMX extension. Use of this instruction should only be for AMD Athlon specific code. See the *AMD Extensions to the 3DNow! and MMX Instruction Set Manual,* order #22466 for correct usage of this instruction.

Otherwise, for blended code, which needs to run well on AMD-K6 and AMD Athlon family processors, the following code is recommended:

Example 1 (Preferred, faster):

Example 2 (Preferred, fast):

Both examples accomplish the swapping, but the first example should be used if the original contents of the register do not need to be preserved. The first example is faster due to the fact that the MOVQ and PUNPCKLDQ instructions can execute in parallel. The instructions in the second example are dependent on one another and take longer to execute.

Fast Conversion of Signed Words to Floating-Point

In many applications there is a need to quickly convert data consisting of packed 16-bit signed integers into floating-point

numbers. The following two examples show how this can be accomplished efficiently on AMD processors.

The first example shows how to do the conversion on a processor that supports AMD's 3DNow! extensions, such as the AMD Athlon processor. It demonstrates the increased efficiency from using the PI2FW instruction. Use of this instruction should only be for AMD Athlon specific code. See the *AMD Extensions to the 3DNow! and MMX Instruction Set Manual*, order #22466 for more information on this instruction.

The second example demonstrates how to accomplish the same task in blended code that achieves good performance on the AMD Athlon processor as well as on the AMD-K6 family processors that support 3DNow! technology.

Example 1 (AMD Athlon specific code using 3DNow! DSP instruction):

Example 2 (AMD K6 Family and AMD Athlon blended code):

Use MMX™ PXOR to Change the Sign Bit in 3DNow!™ Code

For both the AMD Athlon and AMD-K6 processors, it is recommended that code use the MMX PXOR instruction to change the sign bit of 3DNow! operations instead of the 3DNow! PFMUL instruction. On the AMD Athlon processor, using PXOR allows for more parallelism, as it can execute in either the FADD or FMUL pipes. PXOR has an execution latency of two, but because it is a MMX instruction, there is an initial one cycle bypassing penalty, and another one cycle penalty if the result goes to a 3DNow! operation. The PFMUL execution latency is four, therefore, in the worst case, the PXOR and PMUL instructions are the same in terms of latency. On the AMD-K6 processor, there is only a one cycle latency for PXOR, versus a two cycle latency for the 3DNow! PFMUL instruction.

Use MMX™ PCMP Instead of 3DNow!™ PFCMP

Use MMX™ PXOR to Clear an MMX Register

To set all the bits in an MMX register to 0s, use:

PXOR mmreg, mmreg

Note that "PXOR mmreg, mmreg" is dependent on previous writes to mmreg. Therefore, using PXOR in the manner described can lengthen dependency chains, which in return may lead to reduced performance. In such instances, a MOVD should be used to load a zero from a statically initialized memory location.

Use MMX™ PCMPEQD to Set an MMX Register

To set all the bits in an MMX register to 1s, use:

PCMPEQD mmreg, mmreg

Note that "PCMPEQD mmreg, mmreg" is dependent on previous writes to mmreg. Therefore, using PCMPEQD in the manner described can lengthen dependency chains, which in return may lead to reduce performance. In such instances, MOVQ should be used to load the constant 0xFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF from a statically initialized memory location.

Use MMX™ PAND to Find Absolute Value in 3DNow!™ Code

Use the following to compute the absolute value of 3DNow! floating-point operands:

mabs DO 7FFFFFFF7FFFFFFFFh PAND MM0, [mabs] ;mask out sign bit

Use MMX™ PXOR to Negate 3DNow!™ Data

Use the following code to negate 3DNow! data:

msgn DQ 80000000800000000h PXOR MMO, [msgn] ;toggle sign bit

Use 3DNow!™ PAVGUSB for MPEG-2 Motion Compensation

Use the 3DNow! PAVGUSB instruction for MPEG-2 motion compensation. The PAVGUSB instruction produces the rounded averages of the eight unsigned 8-bit integer values in the source operand (a MMX register or a 64-bit memory location) and the eight corresponding unsigned 8-bit integer values in the destination operand (a MMX register). The PAVGUSB instruction is extremely useful in DVD (MPEG-2) decoding where motion compensation performs a lot of byte averaging between and within macroblocks. The PAVGUSB instruction

helps speed up these operations. In addition, PAVGUSB can free up some registers and make unrolling the averaging loops possible.

The following code fragment uses original MMX code to perform averaging between the source macroblock and destination macroblock:

Example 1 (Avoid):

ADD ESI, EDX
ADD EDI. ERX EDI, EBX LOOP L1

The following code fragment uses the 3DNow! PAVGUSB instruction to perform averaging between the source macroblock and destination macroblock:

Example 2 (Preferred):

Stream of Packed Unsigned Bytes

The following code is an example of how to process a stream of packed unsigned bytes (like RGBA information) with faster 3DNow! instructions.

Example:

```
outside loop:
PXOR MMO, MMO
inside loop:
MOVD MM1, [VAR] ; 0 | v[3],v[2],v[1],v[0]
PUNPCKLBW MM1, MM0 ;0,v[3],0,v[2] | 0,v[1],0,v[0]
MOVQ MM2, MM1 ;0,v[3],0,v[2] | 0,v[1],0,v[0]
PUNPCKLWD MM1, MM0 ; 0,0,0,v[1] | 0,0,0,v[0]<br>PUNPCKHWD MM2, MM0 ; 0,0,0,v[3] | 0,0,0,v[2]
                          \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} | 0,0,0,0,0
PI2FD MM1, MM1 ; float(v[1]) | float(v[0])
PI2FD MM2, MM2 ; float(v[3]) | float(v[2])
```
11

General x86 Optimization Guidelines

This chapter describes general code optimization techniques specific to superscalar processors (that is, techniques common to the AMD-K6[®] processor, AMD Athlon[™] processor, and Pentium-family processors). In general, all optimization techniques used for the AMD-K6 processor, Pentium®, and Pentium Pro processors either improve the performance of the AMD Athlon processor or are not required and have a neutral effect (usually due to fewer coding restrictions with the AMD Athlon processor).

Short Forms

Use shorter forms of instructions to increase the effective number of instructions that can be examined for decoding at any one time. Use 8-bit displacements and jump offsets where possible.

Example 1 (Avoid): CMP REG, 0

Example 2 (Preferred): REG. REG

Although both of these instructions have an execute latency of one, fewer opcode bytes need to be examined by the decoders for the TEST instruction.

Dependencies

Spread out true dependencies to increase the opportunities for parallel execution. Anti-dependencies and output dependencies do not impact performance.

Register Operands

Maintain frequently used values in registers rather than in memory. This technique avoids the comparatively long latencies for accessing memory.

Stack Allocation

When allocating space for local variables and/or outgoing parameters within a procedure, adjust the stack pointer and use moves rather than pushes. This method of allocation allows random access to the outgoing parameters so that they can be set up when they are calculated instead of being held somewhere else until the procedure call. In addition, this method reduces ESP dependencies and uses fewer execution resources.

Appendix A

AMD Athlon™ Processor Microarchitecture

Introduction

When discussing processor design, it is important to understand the following terms—*architecture*, *microarchitecture*, and *design implementation*. The term *architecture* refers to the instruction set and features of a processor that are visible to software programs running on the processor. The architecture determines what software the processor can run. The architecture of the AMD Athlon processor is the industry-standard x86 instruction set.

The term *microarchitecture* refers to the design techniques used in the processor to reach the target cost, performance, and functionality goals. The AMD Athlon processor microarchitecture is a decoupled decode/execution design approach. In other words, the decoders essentially operate independent of the execution units, and the execution core uses a small number of instructions and simplified circuit design for fast single-cycle execution and fast operating frequencies.

The term *design implementation* refers to the actual logic and circuit designs from which the processor is created according to the microarchitecture specifications.

AMD Athlon™Processor Microarchitecture

The innovative AMD Athlon processor microarchitecture approach implements the x86 instruction set by processing simpler operations (OPs) instead of complex x86 instructions. These OPs are specially designed to include direct support for the x86 instructions while observing the high-performance principles of fixed-length encoding, regularized instruction fields, and a large register set. Instead of executing complex x86 instructions, which have lengths from 1 to 15 bytes, the AMD Athlon processor executes the simpler fixed-length OPs, while maintaining the instruction coding efficiencies found in x86 programs. The enhanced microarchitecture used in the AMD Athlon processor enables higher processor core performance and promotes straightforward extendibility for future designs.

Superscalar Processor

The AMD Athlon processor is an aggressive, out-of-order, three-way superscalar x86 processor. It can fetch, decode, and issue up to three x86 instructions per cycle with a centralized instruction control unit (ICU) and two independent instruction schedulers — an integer scheduler and a floating-point scheduler. These two schedulers can simultaneously issue up to nine OPs to the three general-purpose integer execution units (IEUs), three address-generation units (AGUs), and three floating-point/3DNow!™/MMX™ execution units. The AMD Athlon moves integer instructions down the integer execution pipeline, which consists of the integer scheduler and the IEUs, as shown in [Figure 1 on page 111](#page-126-0). Floating-point instructions are handled by the floating-point execution pipeline, which consists of the floating-point scheduler and the x87/3DNow!/MMX execution units.

Figure 1. AMD Athlon™ Processor Block Diagram

Instruction Cache

The out-of-order execute engine of the AMD Athlon processor contains a very large 64-Kbyte L1 instruction cache. The L1 instruction cache is organized as a 64-Kbyte, two-way, set-associative array. Each line in the instruction array is 64 bytes long. Functions associated with the L1 instruction cache are instruction loads, instruction prefetching, instruction predecoding, and branch prediction. Requests that miss in the L1 instruction cache are fetched from the backside L2 cache or, subsequently, from the local memory using the bus interface unit (BIU).

The instruction cache generates fetches on the naturally aligned 64 bytes containing the instructions and the next sequential line of 64 bytes (a prefetch). The principal of *program spatial locality* makes data prefetching very effective and avoids or reduces execution stalls due to the amount of time wasted reading the necessary data. Cache line

replacement is based on a least-recently used (LRU) replacement algorithm.

The L1 instruction cache has an associated two-level translation look-aside buffer (TLB) structure. The first-level TLB is fully associative and contains 24 entries (16 that map 4-Kbyte pages and eight that map 2-Mbyte or 4-Mbyte pages). The second-level TLB is four-way set associative and contains 256 entries, which can map 4-Kbyte pages.

Predecode

Predecoding begins as the L1 instruction cache is filled. Predecode information is generated and stored alongside the instruction cache. This information is used to help efficiently identify the boundaries between variable length x86 instructions, to distinguish DirectPath from VectorPath early-decode instructions, and to locate the opcode byte in each instruction. In addition, the predecode logic detects code branches such as CALLs, RETURNs and short unconditional JMPs. When a branch is detected, predecoding begins at the target of the branch.

Branch Prediction

The fetch logic accesses the branch prediction table in parallel with the instruction cache and uses the information stored in the branch prediction table to predict the direction of branch instructions.

The AMD Athlon processor employs combinations of a branch target address buffer (BTB), a global history bimodal counter (GHBC) table, and a return address stack (RAS) hardware in order to predict and accelerate branches. Predicted-taken branches incur only a single-cycle delay to redirect the instruction fetcher to the target instruction. In the event of a mispredict, the minimum penalty is ten cycles.

The BTB is a 2048-entry table that caches in each entry the predicted target address of a branch.

In addition, the AMD Athlon processor implements a 12-entry return address stack to predict return addresses from a near or far call. As CALLs are fetched, the next EIP is pushed onto the

return stack. Subsequent RETs pop a predicted return address off the top of the stack.

Early Decoding

Instruction Control Unit

The instruction control unit (ICU) is the control center for the AMD Athlon processor. The ICU controls the following resources—the centralized in-flight reorder buffer, the integer scheduler, and the floating-point scheduler. In turn, the ICU is responsible for the following functions—MacroOP dispatch,

MacroOP retirement, register and flag dependency resolution and renaming, execution resource management, interrupts, exceptions, and branch mispredictions.

The ICU takes the three MacroOPs per cycle from the early decoders and places them in a centralized, fixed-issue reorder buffer. This buffer is organized into 24 lines of three MacroOPs each. The reorder buffer allows the ICU to track and monitor up to 72 in-flight MacroOPs (whether integer or floating-point) for maximum instruction throughput. The ICU can simultaneously dispatch multiple MacroOPs from the reorder buffer to both the integer and floating-point schedulers for final decode, issue, and execution as OPs. In addition, the ICU handles exceptions and manages the retirement of MacroOPs.

Data Cache

The L1 data cache contains two 64-bit ports. It is a write-allocate and writeback cache that uses an LRU replacement policy. The data cache and instruction cache are both two-way set-associative and 64-Kbytes in size. In addition, this cache supports the MOESI (Modified, Owner, Exclusive, Shared, and Invalid) cache coherency protocol and data parity.

The L1 data cache has an associated two-level TLB structure. The first-level TLB is fully associative and contains 32 entries (24 that map 4-Kbyte pages and eight that map 2-Mbyte or 4-Mbyte pages). The second-level TLB is four-way set associative and contains 256 entries, which can map 4-Kbyte pages.

Integer Scheduler

The integer scheduler is based on a three-wide queuing system (also known as a reservation station) that feeds three integer execution positions or pipes. Each reservation station divides the MacroOPs into integer and address generation OPs, as required.

Integer Execution Unit

The integer execution pipeline consists of three identical pipes—0, 1, and 2. Each integer pipe consists of an integer execution unit (IEU) and an address generation unit (AGU). The integer execution pipeline is organized to match the three MacroOP dispatch pipes in the ICU as shown in [Figure 2 on](#page-130-0) [page 115](#page-130-0). MacroOPs are broken down into OPs in the schedulers. OPs issue when their operands are available either from the register file or result buses.

OPs are executed when their operands are available. OPs from a single MacroOP can execute out-of-order. In addition, a particular integer pipe can be executing two OPs from different MacroOPs (one in the IEU and one in the AGU) at the same time.

Figure 2. Integer Execution Pipeline

Each of the three IEUs are general purpose in that each performs logic functions, arithmetic functions, conditional functions, divide step functions, status flag multiplexing, and branch resolutions. The AGUs calculate the logical addresses for loads, stores, and LEAs. A load and store unit reads and writes data to and from the L1 data cache. The integer scheduler sends a completion status to the ICU when the outstanding OPs for a given MacroOP are executed.

All integer operations can be handled within any of the three IEUs with the exception of multiplies. Multiplies are handled by a pipelined multiplier that is attached to the pipeline at pipe 0. See [Figure 2 on page 115](#page-130-0).

Floating-Point Scheduler

The AMD Athlon processor floating-point logic is a high-performance, fully-pipelined, superscalar, out-of-order execution unit. It is capable of accepting three MacroOPs of any mixture of x87 floating-point, 3DNow! or MMX operations per cycle.

The floating-point scheduler handles register renaming and has a dedicated 36-entry scheduler buffer organized as 12 lines of three MacroOPs each. It also performs OP issue, and out-of-order execution. The floating-point scheduler communicates with the ICU to retire a MacroOP, to manage comparison results from the FCOMI instruction, and to back out results from a branch misprediction.

Floating-Point Execution Unit

The floating-point execution unit (FPU) is implemented as a coprocessor that has its own out-of-order control in addition to the data path. The FPU handles all register operations for x87 instructions, all 3DNow! operations, and all MMX operations. The FPU consists of a stack renaming unit, a register renaming unit, a scheduler, a register file, and three parallel execution units. [Figure 3](#page-132-0) shows a block diagram of the dataflow through the FPU.

Figure 3. Floating-Point Unit Block Diagram

As shown in [Figure 3 on page 117,](#page-132-0) the floating-point logic uses three separate execution positions or pipes for superscalar x87, 3DNow! and MMX operations. The first of the three pipes is generally known as the adder pipe (FADD), and it contains 3DNow! add, MMX ALU/shifter, and floating-point add execution units. The second pipe is known as the multiplier (FMUL). It contains a 3DNow!/MMX multiplier/reciprocal unit, an MMX ALU and a floating-point multiplier/divider/square root unit. The third pipe is known as the floating-point load/store (FSTORE), which handles floating-point constant loads (FLDZ, FLDPI, etc.), stores, FILDs, as well as many OP primitives used in VectorPath sequences.

Load-Store Unit (LSU)

The load-store unit (LSU) manages data load and store accesses to the L1 data cache and, if required, to the backside L2 cache or system memory. The 44-entry LSU provides a data interface for both the integer scheduler and the floating-point scheduler. It consists of two queues—a 12-entry queue for L1 cache load and store accesses and a 32-entry queue for L2 cache or system memory load and store accesses. The 12-entry queue can request a maximum of two L1 cache loads and two L1 cache (32-bits) stores per cycle. The 32-entry queue effectively holds

requests that missed in the L1 cache probe by the 12-entry queue. Finally, the LSU ensures that the architectural load and store ordering rules are preserved (a requirement for x86 architecture compatibility).

Figure 4. Load/Store Unit

L2 Cache Controller

The AMD Athlon processor contains a very flexible onboard L2 controller. It uses an independent backside bus to access up to 8-Mbytes of industry-standard SRAMs. There are full on-chip tags for a 512-Kbyte cache, while larger sizes use a partial tag system. In addition, there is a two-level data TLB structure. The first-level TLB is fully associative and contains 32 entries (24 that map 4-Kbyte pages and eight that map 2-Mbyte or 4-Mbyte pages). The second-level TLB is four-way set associative and contains 256 entries, which can map 4-Kbyte pages.

Write Combining

See [Appendix C,](#page-150-0) ["Implementation of Write Combining" on](#page-150-1) [page 135](#page-150-1) for detailed information about write combining.

AMD Athlon™ System Bus

The AMD Athlon system bus is a high-speed bus that consists of a pair of unidirectional 13-bit address and control channels and a bidirectional 64-bit data bus. The AMD Athlon system bus supports low-voltage swing, multiprocessing, clock forwarding, and fast data transfers. The clock forwarding technique is used to deliver data on both edges of the reference clock, therefore doubling the transfer speed. A four-entry 64-byte write buffer is integrated into the BIU. The write buffer improves bus utilization by combining multiple writes into a single large write cycle. By using the AMD Athlon system bus, the AMD Athlon processor can transfer data on the 64-bit data bus at 200 MHz, which yields an effective throughput of 1.6-Gbyte per second.

Appendix B

Pipeline and Execution Unit Resources Overview

The AMD Athlon™ processor contains two independent execution pipelines—one for integer operations and one for floating-point operations. The integer pipeline manages x86 integer operations and the floating-point pipeline manages all x87, 3DNow!™ and MMX™ instructions. This appendix describes the operation and functionality of these pipelines.

Fetch and Decode Pipeline Stages

[Figure 5 on page 122](#page-137-0) and [Figure 6 on page 122](#page-137-1) show the AMD Athlon processor instruction fetch and decoding pipeline stages. The pipeline consists of one cycle for instruction fetches and four cycles of instruction alignment and decoding. The three ports in stage 5 provide a maximum bandwidth of three MacroOPs per cycle for dispatching to the instruction control unit (ICU).

Figure 5. Fetch/Scan/Align/Decode Pipeline Hardware

The most common x86 instructions flow through the DirectPath pipeline stages and are decoded by hardware. The less common instructions, which require microcode assistance, flow through the VectorPath. Although the DirectPath decodes the common x86 instructions, it also contains VectorPath instruction data, which allows it to maintain dispatch order at the end of cycle 5.

Figure 6. Fetch/Scan/Align/Decode Pipeline Stages

operands mapped to registers. Both integer and floating-point MacroOPs are placed into the ICU.

Integer Pipeline Stages

The integer execution pipeline consists of four or more stages for scheduling and execution and, if necessary, accessing data in the processor caches or system memory. There are three integer pipes associated with the three IEUs.

Figure 7. Integer Execution Pipeline

[Figure 7](#page-139-0) and [Figure 8](#page-139-1) show the integer execution resources and the pipeline stages, which are described in the following sections.

Figure 8. Integer Pipeline Stages

- **Cycle 8-EXEC** In the execution (EXEC) pipeline stage, the OP and its associated operands are processed by an integer pipe (either the IEU or the AGU). If addresses must be calculated to access data necessary to complete the operation, the OP proceeds to the next stages, ADDGEN and DCACC.
- **Cycle 9-ADDGEN** In the address generation (ADDGEN) pipeline stage, the load or store OP calculates a linear address, which is sent to the data cache TLBs and caches.
- **Cycle 10-DCACC** In the data cache access (DCACC) pipeline stage, the address generated in the previous pipeline stage is used to access the data cache arrays and TLBs. Any OP waiting in the scheduler for this data snarfs this data and proceeds to the EXEC stage (assuming all other operands were available).
- **Cycle 11-RESP** In the response (RESP) pipeline stage, the data cache returns hit/miss status and data for the request from DCACC.

Floating-Point Pipeline Stages

The floating-point unit (FPU) is implemented as a coprocessor that has its own out-of-order control in addition to the data path. The FPU handles all register operations for x87 instructions, all 3DNow! operations, and all MMX operations. The FPU consists of a stack renaming unit, a register renaming unit, a scheduler, a register file, and three parallel execution units. [Figure 9](#page-141-0) shows a block diagram of the dataflow through the FPU.

Figure 9. Floating-Point Unit Block Diagram

The floating-point pipeline stages 7–15 are shown in [Figure 10](#page-141-1) and described in the following sections. Note that the floating-point pipe and integer pipe separates at cycle 7.

Figure 10. Floating-Point Pipeline Stages

Execution Unit Resources

Terminology

The execution units operate with two types of register values *operands* and *results*. There are three operand types and two result types, which are described in this section.

Integer Pipeline Operations

[Table 2](#page-144-0) shows the category or type of operations handled by the integer pipeline. [Table 3](#page-144-1) shows examples of the decode type.

Table 2. Integer Pipeline Operation Types

Category	Execution Unit	
Integer Memory Load or Store Operations	L/S	
Address Generation Operations	AGU	
Integer Execution Unit Operations	IFU	
Integer Multiply Operations	IMUL	

Table 3. Integer Decode Types

As shown in [Table 2,](#page-144-0) the MOV instruction early decodes in the DirectPath decoder and requires two OPs—an address generation operation for the indirect address and a data load from memory into a register. The ADD instruction early decodes in the DirectPath decoder and requires a single OP that can be executed in one of the three IEUs. The CMP instruction early decodes in the VectorPath and requires three OPs—an address generation operation for the indirect address, a data load from memory, and a compare to CX using an IEU. The final JZ instruction is a simple operation that early decodes in the DirectPath decoder and requires a single OP. Not shown is a load-op-store instruction, which translates into only one MacroOP (one AGU OP, one IEU OP, and one L/S OP).

Floating-Point Pipeline Operations

[Table 4](#page-145-0) shows the category or type of operations handled by the floating-point execution units. [Table 5](#page-145-1) shows examples of the decode types.

Table 4. Floating-Point Pipeline Operation Types

Table 5. Floating-Point Decode Types

x86 Instruction	Decode Type	OPs
FADD ST, ST(i)	DirectPath	FADD
FSIN	VectorPath	various
PFACC	DirectPath	FADD
PFRSQRT	DirectPath	FMUL

As shown in [Table 4](#page-145-0), the FADD register-to-register instruction generates a single MacroOP targeted for the floating-point scheduler. FSIN is considered a VectorPath instruction because it is a complex instruction with long execution times, as compared to the more common floating-point instructions. The MMX PFACC instruction is DirectPath decodeable and generates a single MacroOP targeted for the arithmetic operation execution pipeline in the floating-point logic. Just like PFACC, a single MacroOP is early decoded for the 3DNow! PFRSQRT instruction, but it is targeted for the multiply operation execution pipeline.

Load/Store Pipeline Operations

The AMD Athlon processor decodes any instruction that references memory into primitive load/store operations. For example, consider the following code sample:

As shown in [Table 6,](#page-146-0) the load/store unit (LSU) consists of a three-stage data cache lookup.

Table 6. Load/Store Unit Stages

Stage 1 (Cycle 8)	Stage 2 (Cycle 9)	Stage 3 (Cycle 10)
Address Calculation / LS1	Transport Address to Data	Data Cache Access / LS2
Scan	Cache	Data Forward

Loads and stores are first dispatched in order into a 12-entry deep reservation queue called LS1. LS1 holds loads and stores that are waiting to enter the cache subsystem. Loads and stores are allocated into LS1 entries at dispatch time in program order, and are required by LS1 to probe the data cache in program order. The AGUs can calculate addresses out of program order, therefore, LS1 acts as an address reorder buffer.

When a load or store is scanned out of the LS1 queue (Stage 1), it is deallocated from the LS1 queue and inserted into the data cache probe pipeline (Stage 2 and Stage 3). Up to two memory operations can be scheduled (scanned out of LS1) to access the data cache per cycle. The LSU can handle the following:

- Two 64-bit loads per cycle or
- One 64-bit load and one 64-bit store per cycle or
- Two 32-bit stores per cycle

Code Sample Analysis

The samples in [Table 7 on page 133](#page-148-0) and [Table 8 on page 134](#page-149-0) show the execution behavior of several series of instructions as a function of decode constraints, dependencies, and execution resource constraints.

The sample tables show the x86 instructions, the decode pipe in the integer execution pipeline, the decode type, the clock counts, and a description of the events occurring within the processor. The decode pipe gives the specific IEU used (see [Figure 7 on page 124](#page-139-0)). The decode type specifies either VectorPath (VP) or DirectPath (DP).

The following nomenclature is used to describe the current location of a particular operation:

- D—Dispatch stage (Allocate in ICU, reservation stations, load-store (LS1) queue)
- I—Issue stage (Schedule operation for AGU or FU execution)
- E—Integer Execution Unit (IEU number corresponds to decode pipe)
- &—Address Generation Unit (AGU number corresponds to decode pipe)
- M—Multiplier Execution
- S—Load/Store pipe stage 1 (Schedule operation for load/store pipe)
- A—Load/Store pipe stage 2 (1st stage of data cache/LS2 buffer access)
- \$—Load/Store pipe stage 3 (2nd stage of data cache/LS2 buffer access)
- *Note: Instructions execute more efficiently (that is, without delays) when scheduled apart by suitable distances based on dependencies. In general, the samples in this section show poorly scheduled code in order to illustrate the resultant effects.*

Table 7. Sample 1 – Integer Register Operations

Comments for Each Instruction Number

- 1. The IMUL is a VectorPath instruction. It cannot be decode or paired with other operations and, therefore, dispatches alone in pipe 0. The multiply latency is four cycles.
- 2. The simple INC operation is paired with instructions 3 and 4. The INC executes in IEU0 in cycle 4.
- 3. The MOV executes in IEU1 in cycle 4.
- 4. The ADD operation depends on instruction 3. It executes in IEU2 in cycle 5.
- 5. The SHL operation depends on the multiply result (instruction 1). The MacroOP waits in a reservation station and is eventually scheduled to execute in cycle 7 after the multiply result is available.
- 6. This operation executes in cycle 8 in IEU1.
- 7. This simple operation has a resource contention for execution in IEU2 in cycle 5. Therefore, the operation does not execute until cycle 6.
- 8. The ADD operation executes immediately in IEU0 after dispatching.

Table 8. Sample 2 – Integer Register and Memory Load Operations

Comments for Each Instruction Number

1. The ALU operation executes in IEU0.

- 2. The load operation generates the address in AGU1 and is simultaneously scheduled for the load/store pipe in cycle 3. In cycles 4 and 5, the load completes the data cache access.
- 3. The load-execute instruction accesses the data cache in tandem with instruction 2. After the load portion completes, the subtraction is executed in cycle 6 in IEU2.
- 4. The shift operation executes in IEU0 (cycle 7) after instruction 3 completes.
- 5. This operation is stalled on its address calculation waiting for instruction 2 to update EDI. The address is calculated in cycle 6. In cycle 7/8, the cache access completes.
- 6. This simple operation executes quickly in IEU2
- 7. The address for the load is calculated in cycle 5 in AGU0. However, the load is not scheduled to access the data cache until cycle 6. The load is blocked for scheduling to access the data cache for one cycle by instruction 5. In cycles 7 and 8, instruction 7 accesses the data cache concurrently with instruction 5.
- 8. The load execute instruction accesses the data cache in cycles 10/11 and executes the 'OR' operation in IEU1 in cycle 12.

Appendix C

Implementation of Write Combining

Introduction

This appendix describes the memory write-combining feature as implemented in the AMD Athlon™ processor family. The AMD Athlon processor supports the memory type and range register (MTRR) and the page attribute table (PAT) extensions, which allow software to define ranges of memory as either writeback (WB), write-protected (WP), writethrough (WT), uncacheable (UC), or write-combining (WC).

Defining the memory type for a range of memory as WC or WT allows the processor to conditionally combine data from multiple write cycles that are addressed within this range into a merge buffer. Merging multiple write cycles into a single write cycle reduces processor bus utilization and processor stalls, thereby increasing the overall system performance.

To understand the information presented in this appendix, the reader should possess a knowledge of K86™ processors, the x86 architecture, and programming requirements.

Write-Combining Definitions and Abbreviations

This appendix uses the following definitions and abbreviations.

- UC—Uncacheable memory type
- WC—Write-combining memory type
- WT—Writethrough memory type
- WP—Write-protected memory type
- WB—Writeback memory type
- One Byte—8 bits
- One Word—16 bits
- Longword—32 bits (same as a x86 doubleword)
- Quadword—64 bits or 2 longwords
- Octaword—128 bits or 2 quadwords
- Cache Block—64 bytes or 4 octawords or 8 quadwords

What is Write Combining?

Write combining is the merging of multiple memory write cycles that target locations within the address range of a write buffer. The AMD Athlon processor combines multiple memory-write cycles to a 64-byte buffer whenever the memory address is within a WC or WT memory type region. The processor continues to combine writes to this buffer without writing the data to the system, as long as certain rules apply (see [Table 9 on page 138](#page-153-0) for more information).

Programming Details

The steps required for programming write combining on the AMD Athlon processor are as follows:

1. Verify the presence of an AMD Athlon processor by using the CPUID instruction to check for the instruction family code and vendor identification of the processor. Standard function 0 on AMD processors returns a vendor identification string of "AuthenticAMD" in registers EBX, EDX, and ECX. Standard function 1 returns the processor

signature in register EAX, where EAX[11–8] contains the instruction family code. For the AMD Athlon processor, the instruction family code is six (6).

- 2. In addition, the presence of the MTRRs is indicated by bit 12 and the presence of the PAT extension is indicated by bit 16 of the extended features bits returned in the EDX register by CPUID function 8000_0001h. See the *AMD Processor Recognition Application Note, order# 20734* for more details on the CPUID instruction.
- 3. Write combining is controlled by the MTRRs and PAT. Write combining should be enabled for the appropriate memory ranges. The AMD Athlon processor MTRRs and PAT are compatible with the Pentium[®] II.

Write-Combining Operations

In order to improve system performance, the AMD Athlon processor aggressively combines multiple memory-write cycles of any data size that address locations within a 64-byte write buffer that is aligned to a cache-line boundary. The data sizes can be bytes, words, longwords, or quadwords.

WC memory type writes can be combined in any order up to a full 64-byte sized write buffer.

WT memory type writes can only be combined up to a fully aligned quadword in the 64-byte buffer, and must be combined contiguously in ascending order. Combining may be opened at any byte boundary in a quadword, but is closed by a write that is either not "contiguous and ascending" or fills byte 7.

All other memory types for stores that go through the write buffer (UC and WP) cannot be combined.

Combining is able to continue until interrupted by one of the conditions listed in [Table 9 on page 138.](#page-153-0) When combining is interrupted, one or more bus commands are issued to the system for that write buffer, as described by [Table 10 on](#page-154-0) [page 139.](#page-154-0)

Event	Comment
Non-WB write outside of current buffer	The first non-WB write to a different cache block address closes combining for previous writes. WB writes do not affect write combining. Only one line-sized buffer can be open for write combining at a time. Once a buffer is closed for write combining, it cannot be reopened for write combining.
I/O Read or Write	Any IN/INS or OUT/OUTS instruction closes combining. The implied memory type for all IN/OUT instructions is UC, which cannot be combined.
Serializing instructions	Any serializing instruction closes combining. These instructions include: MOVCRx, MOVDRx, WRMSR, INVD, INVLPG, WBINVD, LGDT, LLDT, LIDT, LTR, CPUID, IRET, RSM, INIT, HALT.
Flushing instructions	Any flush instruction causes the WC to complete.
Locks	Any instruction or processor operation that requires a cache or bus lock closes write combining before starting the lock. Writes within a lock can be combined.
Uncacheable Read	A UC read closes write combining. A WC read closes combining only if a cache block address match occurs between the WC read and a write in the write buffer.
Different memory type	Any WT write while write-combining for WC memory or any WC write while write combining for WT memory closes write combining.
Buffer full	Write combining is closed if all 64 bytes of the write buffer are valid.
WT time-out	If 16 processor clocks have passed since the most recent write for WT write combining, write combining is closed. There is no time-out for WC write combining.
WT write fills byte 7	Write combining is closed if a write fills the most significant byte of a quadword, which includes writes that are misaligned across a quadword boundary. In the misaligned case, combining is closed by the LS part of the misaligned write and combining is opened by the MS part of the misaligned store.
WT Nonsequential	If a subsequent WT write is not in ascending sequential order, the write combining completes. WC writes have no addressing constraints within the 64-byte line being combined.
TLB AD bit set	Write combining is closed whenever a TLB reload sets the accessed (A) or dirty (D) bits of a Pde or Pte.

Table 9. Write Combining Completion Events

Sending Write-Buffer Data to the System

Once write combining is closed for a 64-byte write buffer, the contents of the write buffer are eligible to be sent to the system as one or more AMD Athlon system bus commands. [Table 10](#page-154-0) lists the rules for determining what system commands are issued for a write buffer, as a function of the alignment of the valid buffer data.

Table 10. AMD Athlon™ System Bus Commands Generation Rules

- 1. If all eight quadwords are either full (8 bytes valid) or empty (0 bytes valid), a Write-Quadword system command is issued, with an 8-byte mask representing which of the eight quadwords are valid. If this case is true, do not proceed to the next rule.
- 2. If all longwords are either full (4 bytes valid) or empty (0 bytes valid), a Write-Longword system command is issued for each 32-byte buffer half that contains at least one valid longword. The mask for each Write-Longword system command indicates which longwords are valid in that 32-byte write buffer half. If this case is true, do not proceed to the next rule.
- 3. Sequence through all eight quadwords of the write buffer, from quadword 0 to quadword 7. Skip over a quadword if no bytes are valid. Issue a Write-Quad system command if all bytes are valid, asserting one mask bit. Issue a Write-Longword system command if the quadword contains one aligned longword, asserting one mask bit. Otherwise, issue a Write-Byte system command if there is at least one valid byte, asserting a mask bit for each valid byte.

Appendix D

Instruction Dispatch and Execution Timing

This chapter describes the MacroOPs generated by each decoded instruction, along with the relative static execution latencies of these groups of operations. Tables [11](#page-157-0) through [16](#page-188-0) starting on [page 142](#page-157-0) define the integer, MMX™, MMX extensions, floating-point, 3DNow!™, and 3DNow! extensions instructions, respectively.

The first column in these tables indicates the instruction mnemonic and operand types with the following notations:

- *reg8*—byte integer register defined by instruction byte(s) or bits 5, 4, and 3 of the modR/M byte
- *mreg8*—byte integer register defined by bits 2, 1, and 0 of the modR/M byte
- *reg16/32*—word and doubleword integer register defined by instruction byte(s) or bits 5, 4, and 3 of the modR/M byte
- *mreg16/32*—word and doubleword integer register defined by bits 2, 1, and 0 of the modR/M byte
- *mem8*—byte memory location
- *mem16/32*—word or doubleword memory location
- *mem32/48*—doubleword or 6-byte memory location
- *mem48*—48-bit integer value in memory
- mem64-64-bit value in memory
- *imm8*/16/32—8-bit, 16-bit or 32-bit immediate value
- disp8-8-bit displacement value

- *disp16/32*—16-bit or 32-bit displacement value
- *disp32/48*—32-bit or 48-bit displacement value
- *eXX—register width depending on the operand size*
- *mem32real*—32-bit floating-point value in memory
- *mem64real*—64-bit floating-point value in memory
- *mem80real*—80-bit floating-point value in memory
- *mmreg*—MMX/3DNow! register
- *mmreg1*—MMX/3DNow! register defined by bits 5, 4, and 3 of the modR/M byte
- *mmreg2*—MMX/3DNow! register defined by bits 2, 1, and 0 of the modR/M byte

The second and third columns list all applicable encoding opcode bytes.

The fourth column lists the modR/M byte used by the instruction. The modR/M byte defines the instruction as register or memory form. If mod bits 7 and 6 are documented as mm (memory form), mm can only be 10b, 01b, or 00b.

The fifth column lists the type of instruction decode— DirectPath or VectorPath (see ["DirectPath Decoder" on page](#page-128-0) [113](#page-128-0) and ["VectorPath Decoder" on page 113](#page-128-1) for more information). The AMD Athlon™ enhanced processor decode logic can process three instructions per clock.

The FPU, MMX, and 3DNow! instruction tables have an additional column that lists the possible FPU execution pipelines available for use by any particular DirectPath decoded operation. Typically, VectorPath instructions require more than one execution pipe resource.

Instruction Mnemonic	First Byte	Second Byte	ModR/M Byte	Decode Type
AAA	37h			VectorPath
AAD	D ₅ h	0Ah		VectorPath
AAM	D4h	0Ah		VectorPath
AAS	3Fh			VectorPath

Table 11. Integer Instructions

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Table 12. MMX™ Instructions

1. Bits 2, 1, and 0 of the modR/M byte select the integer register.

Table 12. MMX™ Instructions (continued)

1. Bits 2, 1, and 0 of the modR/M byte select the integer register.

Table 12. MMX™ Instructions (continued)

1. Bits 2, 1, and 0 of the modR/M byte select the integer register.

Table 12. MMX™ Instructions (continued)

1. Bits 2, 1, and 0 of the modR/M byte select the integer register.

Table 13. MMX™ Extensions

1. For the PREFETCHNTA/T0/T1/T2 instructions, the mem8 value refers to an address in the 64-byte line that will be prefetched.

1. For the PREFETCHNTA/T0/T1/T2 instructions, the mem8 value refers to an address in the 64-byte line that will be prefetched.

Table 14. Floating-Point Instructions

Table 14. Floating-Point Instructions (continued)

Instruction Mnemonic	First Byte	Second Byte	ModR/M Byte	Decode Type	FPU Pipe(s)	Note
FIADD [mem32int]	DAh		mm-000-xxx	VectorPath		
FIADD [mem16int]	DEh		mm-000-xxx	VectorPath		
FICOM [mem32int]	DAh		mm-010-xxx	VectorPath		
FICOM [mem16int]	DEh		mm-010-xxx	VectorPath		
FICOMP [mem32int]	DAh		$mm-011$ -xxx	VectorPath		
FICOMP [mem16int]	DEh		$mm-011-xxxx$	VectorPath		
FIDIV [mem32int]	DAh		$mm-110$ - xxx	VectorPath		
FIDIV [mem16int]	DEh		$mm-110$ -xxx	VectorPath		
FIDIVR [mem32int]	DAh		$mm-111-xxxx$	VectorPath		
FIDIVR [mem16int]	DEh		$mm-111-xxxx$	VectorPath		
FILD [mem16int]	DFh		mm-000-xxx	DirectPath	FSTORE	
FILD [mem32int]	DBh		mm-000-xxx	DirectPath	FSTORE	
FILD [mem64int]	DFh		$mm-101-xxxx$	DirectPath	FSTORE	
FIMUL [mem32int]	DAh		mm-001-xxx	VectorPath		
FIMUL [mem16int]	DEh		$mm-001-xxxx$	VectorPath		
FINCSTP	D9h	F7h		DirectPath	FADD/FMUL/FSTORE	
FINIT	DBh	E3h		VectorPath		
FIST [mem16int]	DFh		mm-010-xxx	DirectPath	FSTORE	
FIST [mem32int]	DBh		mm-010-xxx	DirectPath	FSTORE	
FISTP [mem16int]	DFh		$mm-011$ - xxx	DirectPath	FSTORE	
FISTP [mem32int]	DBh		$mm-011$ -xxx	DirectPath	FSTORE	
FISTP [mem64int]	DFh		mm-111-xxx	DirectPath	FSTORE	
FISUB [mem32int]	DAh		mm-100-xxx	VectorPath		
FISUB [mem16int]	DEh		mm-100-xxx	VectorPath		
FISUBR [mem32int]	DAh		mm-101-xxx	VectorPath		
FISUBR [mem16int]	DEh		mm-101-xxx	VectorPath		
FLD ST(i)	D9h		11-000-xxx	DirectPath	FADD/FMUL	1
FLD [mem32real]	D9h		mm-000-xxx	DirectPath	FADD/FMUL/FSTORE	
FLD [mem64real]	DDh		mm-000-xxx	DirectPath	FADD/FMUL/FSTORE	
FLD [mem80real]	DBh		mm-101-xxx	VectorPath		
FLD1	D9h	E8h		DirectPath	FSTORE	
Notes: 1. The last three bits of the modR/M byte select the stack entry ST(i).						

Table 14. Floating-Point Instructions (continued)

Table 14. Floating-Point Instructions (continued)

Instruction Mnemonic	First Byte	Second Byte	ModR/M Byte	Decode Type	FPU Pipe(s)	Note
FSTCW [mem16]	D9h		$mm-111-xxxx$	VectorPath		
FSTENV [mem14byte]	D9h		$mm-110$ -xxx	VectorPath		
FSTENV [mem28byte]	D ₉ h		mm-110-xxx	VectorPath		
FSTP [mem32real]	D9h		$mm-011$ -xxx	DirectPath	FADD/FMUL	
FSTP [mem64real]	DDh		$mm-011$ -xxx	DirectPath	FADD/FMUL	
FSTP [mem80real]	D9h		$mm-111-xxx$	VectorPath		
FSTP ST(i)	DDh		$11 - 011 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD/FMUL	
FSTSW AX	DFh	E0h		VectorPath		
FSTSW [mem16]	DDh		$mm-111$ - xxx	VectorPath	FSTORE	
FSUB [mem32real]	D ₈ h		mm-100-xxx	DirectPath	FADD	
FSUB [mem64real]	DCh		mm-100-xxx	DirectPath	FADD	
FSUB ST, ST(i)	D ₈ h		$11 - 100 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD	$\mathbf{1}$
FSUB ST(i), ST	DCh		$11 - 101 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD	$\mathbf{1}$
FSUBP ST, ST(i)	DEh		$11 - 101 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD	1
FSUBR [mem32real]	D8h		mm-101-xxx	DirectPath	FADD	
FSUBR [mem64real]	DCh		mm-101-xxx	DirectPath	FADD	
FSUBR ST, ST(i)	D ₈ h		$11 - 100 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD	$\mathbf{1}$
FSUBR ST(i), ST	DCh		$11 - 101 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD	$\mathbf{1}$
FSUBRP ST(i), ST	DEh		$11 - 100 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD	1
FTST	D9h	E ₄ h		DirectPath	FADD	
FUCOM	DDh		$11 - 100 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD	
FUCOMI ST, ST(i)	DB	E8-EFh		VectorPath	FADD	
FUCOMIP ST, ST(i)	DF	E8-EFh		VectorPath	FADD	
FUCOMP	DDh		$11 - 101 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD	
FUCOMPP	DAh	E9h		DirectPath	FADD	
FWAIT	9Bh			DirectPath		
FXAM	D9h	E5h		VectorPath		
FXCH	D9h		$11 - 001 - XXX$	DirectPath	FADD/FMUL/FSTORE	
FXTRACT	D9h	F4h		VectorPath		
FYL2X	D9h	F ₁ h		VectorPath		
FYL2XP1	D9h	F9h		VectorPath		
Notes: 1. The last three bits of the modR/M byte select the stack entry ST(i).						

Table 14. Floating-Point Instructions (continued)

Table 15. 3DNow!™ Instructions

1. For the PREFETCH and PREFETCHW instructions, the mem8 value refers to an address in the 64-byte line that will be prefetched.

2. The byte listed in the column titled 'imm8' is actually the opcode byte.

Table 15. 3DNow!™ Instructions (continued)

Notes:

1. For the PREFETCH and PREFETCHW instructions, the mem8 value refers to an address in the 64-byte line that will be prefetched.

2. The byte listed in the column titled 'imm8' is actually the opcode byte.

Table 16. 3DNow!™ Extensions

Appendix E

DirectPath versus VectorPath Instructions

Select DirectPath Over VectorPath Instructions

Use DirectPath instructions rather than VectorPath instructions. DirectPath instructions are optimized for decode and execute efficiently by minimizing the number of operations per x86 instruction, which includes 'register←register op memory' as well as 'register←register op register' forms of instructions.

DirectPath Instructions

The following tables contain DirectPath instructions, which should be used in the AMD Athlon processor wherever possible:

- [Table 17, "DirectPath Integer Instructions," on page 176](#page-191-0)
- Table 18, "DirectPath MMX[™] Instructions," on page 183 and [Table 19, "DirectPath MMX™ Extensions," on page 184](#page-199-0)
- Table 20, "DirectPath Floating-Point Instructions," on [page 185](#page-200-0)
- All 3DNow! instructions, including the 3DNow! Extensions, are DirectPath and are listed in [Table 15, "3DNow!™](#page-186-0) [Instructions," on page 171](#page-186-0) and [Table 16, "3DNow!™ Exten](#page-188-0)[sions," on page 173](#page-188-0).

Table 17. DirectPath Integer Instructions

Table 18. DirectPath MMX™ Instructions

Table 18. DirectPath MMX™ Instructions (continued)

Table 19. DirectPath MMX™ Extensions

Table 20. DirectPath Floating-Point Instructions

Table 20. DirectPath Floating-Point Instructions

VectorPath Instructions

The following tables contain **VectorPath** instructions, which should be **avoided** in the AMD Athlon processor:

- [Table 21, "VectorPath Integer Instructions," on page 187](#page-202-0)
- Table 22, "VectorPath MMX[™] Instructions," on page 190 and [Table 23, "VectorPath MMX™ Extensions," on](#page-205-1) [page 190](#page-205-1)
- Table 24, "VectorPath Floating-Point Instructions." on [page 191](#page-206-0)

Table 21. VectorPath Integer Instructions

Table 21. VectorPath Integer Instructions (continued)

Table 22. VectorPath MMX™ Instructions

Table 23. VectorPath MMX™ Extensions

Table 24. VectorPath Floating-Point Instructions

Appendix F

Performance Monitoring Counters

This chapter describes how to use the AMD Athlon™ processor performance monitoring counters.

Overview

The AMD Athlon processor provides four 48-bit performance counters, which allows four types of events to be monitored simultaneously. These counters can either count events or measure duration. When counting events, a counter is incremented each time a specified event takes place or a specified number of events takes place. When measuring duration, a counter counts the number of processor clocks that occur while a specified condition is true. The counters can count events or measure durations that occur at any privilege level. [Table 26 on page 196](#page-211-0) lists the events that can be counted with the performance monitoring counters.

Performance Counter Usage

The performance monitoring counters are supported by eight MSRs— PerfEvtSel[3:0] are the performance event select MSRs, and PerfCtr[3:0] are the performance counter MSRs.

These registers can be read from and written to using the RDMSR and WRMSR instructions, respectively.

The PerfEvtSel[3:0] registers are located at MSR locations C001_0000h to C001_0003h. The PerfCtr[3:0] registers are located at MSR locations C001_0004h to C0001_0007h and are 64-byte registers.

The PerfEvtSel[3:0] registers can be accessed using the RDMSR/WRMSR instructions only when operating at privilege level 0. The PerfCtr[3:0] MSRs can be read from any privilege level using the RDPMC (read performance-monitoring counters) instruction, if the PCE flag in CR4 is set.

PerfEvtSel[3:0] MSRs (MSR Addresses C001_0000h–C001_0003h)

The PerfEvtSel[3:0] MSRs, shown in [Figure 11](#page-209-0), control the operation of the performance-monitoring counters, with one register used to set up each counter. These MSRs specify the events to be counted, how they should be counted, and the privilege levels at which counting should take place. The functions of the flags and fields within these MSRs are as are described in the following sections.


```
31 30 29 28 27 26 25 24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9876543210
```
Figure 11. PerfEvtSel[3:0] Registers

Event Select Field (Bits 0—7)

These bits are used to select the event to be monitored. See [Table 26 on page 196](#page-211-0) for a list of event masks and their 8-bit codes.

greater than or equal to the counter mask. Otherwise if this field is zero, then the counter increments by the total number of events.

Table 26. Performance Monitoring Counters (continued)

Event Number	Source Unit	Notes / Unit Mask (bits 15-8)	Event Description
D5h	FR.		ICU full
D6h	FR		Reservation stations full
D7h	FR		FPU full
D8h	FR		LS full
D9h	FR		All quiet stall
DAh	FR		Far transfer or resync branch pending
DCh	FR		Breakpoint matches for DR0
DDh	FR		Breakpoint matches for DR1
DEh	FR		Breakpoint matches for DR2
DFh	FR		Breakpoint matches for DR3

Table 26. Performance Monitoring Counters (continued)

PerfCtr[3:0] MSRs (MSR Addresses C001_0004h–C001_0007h)

The performance-counter MSRs contain the event or duration counts for the selected events being counted. The RDPMC instruction can be used by programs or procedures running at any privilege level and in virtual-8086 mode to read these counters. The PCE flag in control register CR4 (bit 8) allows the use of this instruction to be restricted to only programs and procedures running at privilege level 0.

The RDPMC instruction is not serializing or ordered with other instructions. Therefore, it does not necessarily wait until all previous instructions have been executed before reading the counter. Similarly, subsequent instructions can begin execution before the RDPMC instruction operation is performed.

Only the operating system, executing at privilege level 0, can directly manipulate the performance counters, using the RDMSR and WRMSR instructions. A secure operating system would clear the PCE flag during system initialization, which disables direct user access to the performance-monitoring counters but provides a user-accessible programming interface that emulates the RDPMC instruction.

The WRMSR instruction cannot arbitrarily write to the performance-monitoring counter MSRs (PerfCtr[3:0]). Instead, the value should be treated as 64-bit sign extended, which

allows writing both positive and negative values to the performance counters. The performance counters may be initialized using a 64-bit signed integer in the range -2^{47} and $+2^{47}$. Negative values are useful for generating an interrupt after a specific number of events.

Starting and Stopping the Performance-Monitoring Counters

The performance-monitoring counters are started by writing valid setup information in one or more of the PerfEvtSel[3:0] MSRs and setting the enable counters flag in the PerfEvtSel0 MSR. If the setup is valid, the counters begin counting following the execution of a WRMSR instruction, which sets the enable counter flag. The counters can be stopped by clearing the enable counters flag or by clearing all the bits in the PerfEvtSel[3:0] MSRs.

Event and Time-Stamp Monitoring Software

For applications to use the performance-monitoring counters and time-stamp counter, the operating system needs to provide an event-monitoring device driver. This driver should include procedures for handling the following operations:

- Feature checking
- Initialize and start counters
- Stop counters
- Read the event counters
- Reading of the time stamp counter

The event monitor feature determination procedure must determine whether the current processor supports the performance-monitoring counters and time-stamp counter. This procedure compares the family and model of the processor returned by the CPUID instruction with those of processors known to support performance monitoring. In addition, the procedure checks the MSR and TSC flags returned to register EDX by the CPUID instruction to determine if the MSRs and the RDTSC instruction are supported.

The initialization and start counters procedure sets the PerfEvtSel0 and/or PerfEvtSel1 MSRs for the events to be
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counted and the method used to count them and initializes the counter MSRs (PerfCtr[3:0]) to starting counts. The stop counters procedure stops the performance counters. (See ["Starting and Stopping the Performance-Monitoring Counters"](#page-215-0) [on page 200](#page-215-0) for more information about starting and stopping the counters.)

The read counters procedure reads the values in the PerfCtr[3:0] MSRs, and a read time-stamp counter procedure reads the time-stamp counter. These procedures can be used instead of enabling the RDTSC and RDPMC instructions, which allow application code to read the counters directly.

Monitoring Counter Overflow

The AMD Athlon processor provides the option of generating a debug interrupt when a performance-monitoring counter overflows. This mechanism is enabled by setting the interrupt enable flag in one of the PerfEvtSel[3:0] MSRs. The primary use of this option is for statistical performance sampling.

To use this option, the operating system should do the following:

- Provide an interrupt routine for handling the counter overflow as an APIC interrupt
- Provide an entry in the IDT that points to a stub exception handler that returns without executing any instructions
- Provide an event monitor driver that provides the actual interrupt handler and modifies the reserved IDT entry to point to its interrupt routine

When interrupted by a counter overflow, the interrupt handler needs to perform the following actions:

- Save the instruction pointer (EIP register), code segment selector, TSS segment selector, counter values and other relevant information at the time of the interrupt
- Reset the counter to its initial setting and return from the interrupt

An event monitor application utility or another application program can read the collected performance information of the profiled application.

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