Program Control Instructions
Introduction

• This chapter explains the program control instructions, including the jumps, calls, returns, interrupts, and machine control instructions.

• This chapter also presents the relational assembly language statements (.IF, .ELSE, .ELSEIF, .ENDIF, .WHILE, .ENDW, .REPEAT, and .UNTIL) that are available in version 6.xx and above of MASM or TASM, with version 5.xx set for MASM compatibility.
THE JUMP GROUP

• Allows programmer to skip program sections and branch to any part of memory for the next instruction.

• A conditional jump instruction allows decisions based upon numerical tests.
  – results are held in the flag bits, then tested by conditional jump instructions

• LOOP and conditional LOOP are also forms of the jump instruction.
Unconditional Jump (JMP)

• Three types: short jump, near jump, far jump.

• **Short jump** is a 2-byte instruction that allows jumps or branches to memory locations within +127 and −128 bytes.
  – from the address following the jump

• 3-byte **near jump** allows a branch or jump within ±32K bytes from the instruction in the current code segment.
• 5-byte **far jump** allows a jump to any memory location within the real memory system.
• The short and near jumps are often called **intrassegment jumps**.
• Far jumps are called **intersegment jumps**.
Figure 1 The three main forms of the JMP instruction. Note that Disp is either an 8- or 16-bit signed displacement or distance.
**Short Jump**

- Called **relative jumps** because they can be moved, with related software, to any location in the current code segment without a change.
  - jump address is not stored with the opcode
  - a **distance**, or displacement, follows the opcode
- The short jump displacement is a distance represented by a 1-byte signed number whose value ranges between +127 and −128.
- Short jump instruction appears in Figure 2.
Figure 2 A short jump to four memory locations beyond the address of the next instruction.

- when the microprocessor executes a short jump, the displacement is sign-extended and added to the instruction pointer (IP/EIP) to generate the jump address within the current code segment

- The instruction branches to this new address for the next instruction in the program.
• When a jump references an address, a label normally identifies the address.
• The JMP NEXT instruction is an example.
  – it jumps to label NEXT for the next instruction
  – very rare to use an actual hexadecimal address with any jump instruction
• The label NEXT must be followed by a colon (NEXT:) to allow an instruction to reference it
  – if a colon does not follow, you cannot jump to it
• The only time a colon is used is when the label is used with a jump or call instruction.
Near Jump

• A near jump passes control to an instruction in the current code segment located within ±32K bytes from the near jump instruction.
  – distance is ±2G in 80386 and above when operated in protected mode

• Near jump is a 3-byte instruction with opcode followed by a signed 16-bit displacement.
  – 80386 - Pentium 4 displacement is 32 bits and the near jump is 5 bytes long
• Signed displacement adds to the instruction pointer (IP) to generate the jump address.
  – because signed displacement is \( \pm 32K \), a near jump can jump to any memory location within the current real mode code segment
• The protected mode code segment in the 80386 and above can be 4G bytes long.
  – 32-bit displacement allows a near jump to any location within \( \pm 2G \) bytes
• Figure 6–3 illustrates the operation of the real mode near jump instruction.
Figure 3  A near jump that adds the displacement (0002H) to the contents of IP.
• The near jump is also relocatable because it is also a relative jump.
• This feature, along with the relocatable data segments, Intel microprocessors ideal for use in a general-purpose computer system.
• Software can be written and loaded anywhere in the memory and function without modification because of the relative jumps and relocatable data segments.
Far Jump

• Obtains a new segment and offset address to accomplish the jump:
  – bytes 2 and 3 of this 5-byte instruction contain the new offset address
  – bytes 4 and 5 contain the new segment address
  – in protected mode, the segment address accesses a descriptor with the base address of the far jump segment
  – offset address, either 16 or 32 bits, contains the offset address within the new code segment
Figure 4 A far jump instruction replaces the contents of both CS and IP with 4 bytes following the opcode.
• The far jump instruction sometimes appears with the FAR PTR directive.
  – another way to obtain a far jump is to define a label as a **far label**
  – a label is far only if it is external to the current code segment or procedure

• The JMP UP instruction references a far label.
  – label UP is defined as a far label by the EXTRN UP:FAR directive

• **External labels** appear in programs that contain more than one program file.
Another way of defining a label as global is to use a *double colon* (LABEL::)
– required inside procedure blocks defined as near if the label is accessed from outside the procedure block

When the program files are joined, the linker inserts the address for the UP label into the JMP UP instruction.

Also inserts segment address in JMP START instruction.
Jumps with Register Operands

- Jump can also use a 16- or 32-bit register as an operand.
  - automatically sets up as an **indirect jump**
  - address of the jump is in the register specified by the jump instruction

- Unlike displacement associated with the near jump, register contents are transferred directly into the instruction pointer.

- An indirect jump does not add to the instruction pointer.
• JMP AX, for example, copies the contents of the AX register into the IP.
  – allows a jump to any location within the current code segment

• In 80386 and above, JMP EAX also jumps to any location within the current code segment;
  – in protected mode the code segment can be 4G bytes long, so a 32-bit offset address is needed
Indirect Jumps Using an Index

- Jump instruction may also use the [ ] form of addressing to directly access the jump table.
- The jump table can contain offset addresses for near indirect jumps, or segment and offset addresses for far indirect jumps.
  - also known as a double-indirect jump if the register jump is called an indirect jump
- The assembler assumes that the jump is near unless the FAR PTR directive indicates a far jump instruction.
• Mechanism used to access the jump table is identical with a normal memory reference.
  – JMP TABLE [SI] instruction points to a jump address stored at the code segment offset location addressed by SI
• Both the register and indirect indexed jump instructions usually address a 16-bit offset.
  – both types of jumps are near jumps
• If JMP FAR PTR [SI] or JMP TABLE [SI], with TABLE data defined with the DD directive:
  – microprocessor assumes the jump table contains doubleword, 32-bit addresses (IP and CS)
Conditional Jumps and Conditional Sets

- Always short jumps in 8086 - 80286.
  - limits range to within +127 and –128 bytes from the location following the conditional jump
- In 80386 and above, conditional jumps are either short or near jumps (±32K).
  - in 64-bit mode of the Pentium 4, the near jump distance is ±2G for the conditional jumps
- Allows a conditional jump to any location within the current code segment.
• Conditional jump instructions test flag bits:
  – sign (S), zero (Z), carry (C)
  – parity (P), overflow (0)
• If the condition under test is true, a branch to the label associated with the jump instruction occurs.
  – if false, next sequential step in program executes
    – for example, a JC will jump if the carry bit is set
• Most conditional jump instructions are straightforward as they often test one flag bit.
  – although some test more than one
• Because both signed and unsigned numbers are used in programming.
• Because the order of these numbers is different, there are two sets of conditional jump instructions for magnitude comparisons.
• 16- and 32-bit numbers follow the same order as 8-bit numbers, except that they are larger.
• Figure 5 shows the order of both signed and unsigned 8-bit numbers.
Figure 5  Signed and unsigned numbers follow different orders.
• When signed numbers are compared, use the JG, JL, JGE, JLE, JE, and JNE instructions.
  – terms *greater than* and *less than* refer to signed numbers

• When unsigned numbers are compared, use the JA, JB, JAB, JBE, JE, and JNE instructions.
  – terms *above* and *below* refer to unsigned numbers

• Remaining conditional jumps test individual flag bits, such as overflow and parity.
• Remaining conditional jumps test individual flag bits, such as overflow and parity.
  – notice that JE has an alternative opcode JZ
• All instructions have alternates, but many aren’t used in programming because they don’t usually fit the condition under test.
The Conditional Set Instructions

• 80386 - Core2 processors also contain conditional set instructions.
  – conditions tested by conditional jumps put to work with the conditional set instructions
  – conditional set instructions set a byte to either 01H or clear a byte to 00H, depending on the outcome of the condition under test

• Useful where a condition must be tested at a point much later in the program.
LOOP

- A combination of a decrement CX and the JNZ conditional jump.
- In 8086 - 80286 LOOP decrements CX.
  - if CX != 0, it jumps to the address indicated by the label
  - If CX becomes 0, the next sequential instruction executes
- In 80386 and above, LOOP decrements either CX or ECX, depending upon instruction mode.
• In 16-bit instruction mode, LOOP uses CX; in the 32-bit mode, LOOP uses ECX.
  – default is changed by the LOOPW (using CX) and LOOPD (using ECX) instructions 80386 - Core2
• In 64-bit mode, the loop counter is in RCX.
  – and is 64 bits wide
• There is no direct move from segment register to segment register instruction.
**Conditional LOOPs**

- LOOP instruction also has conditional forms: LOOPE and LOOPNE
- LOOPE (**loop while equal**) instruction jumps if CX \(!=\) 0 while an equal condition exists.
  - will exit loop if the condition is not equal or the CX register decrements to 0
- LOOPNE (**loop while not equal**) jumps if CX \(!=\) 0 while a not-equal condition exists.
  - will exit loop if the condition is equal or the CX register decrements to 0
• In 80386 - Core2 processors, conditional LOOP can use CX or ECX as the counter.
  – LOOPEW/LOOPED or LOOPNEW/LOOPNED override the instruction mode if needed
• Under 64-bit operation, the loop counter uses RCX and is 64 bits in width
• Alternates exist for LOOPE and LOOPNE.
  – LOOPE same as LOOPZ
  – LOOPNE instruction is the same as LOOPNZ
• In most programs, only the LOOPE and LOOPNE apply.
CONTROLLING THE FLOW OF THE PROGRAM

• Easier to use assembly language statements .IF, .ELSE, .ELSEIF, and .ENDIF to control the flow of the program than to use the correct conditional jump statement.
  – these statements always indicate a special assembly language command to MASM
• Control flow assembly language statements beginning with a period available to MASM version 6.xx, and not to earlier versions.
• Other statements developed include .REPEAT–.UNTIL and .WHILE–.ENDW.
  – **the dot commands** do not function using the Visual C++ inline assembler

• Never use uppercase for assembly language commands with the inline assembler.
  – some of them are reserved by C++ and will cause problems
WHILE Loops

- Used with a condition to begin the loop.
  - the .ENDW statement ends the loop
- The .BREAK and .CONTINUE statements are available for use with the while loop.
  - .BREAK is often followed by .IF to select the break condition as in .BREAK .IF AL == 0DH
  - .CONTINUE can be used to allow a DO-.WHILE loop to continue if a certain condition is met
- The .BREAK and .CONTINUE commands function the same manner in C++. 
REPEAT-UNTIL Loops

• A series of instructions is repeated until some condition occurs.

• The .REPEAT statement defines the start of the loop.
  – end is defined with the .UNTIL statement, which contains a condition

• An .UNTILCXZ instruction uses the LOOP instruction to check CX for a repeat loop.
  – .UNTILCXZ uses the CX register as a counter to repeat a loop a fixed number of times
PROCEDURES

• A procedure is a group of instructions that usually performs one task.
  – subroutine, method, or function is an important part of any system’s architecture

• A procedure is a reusable section of the software stored in memory once, used as often as necessary.
  – saves memory space and makes it easier to develop software
• Disadvantage of procedure is time it takes the computer to link to, and return from it.
  – CALL links to the procedure; the RET (return) instruction returns from the procedure

• CALL pushes the address of the instruction following the CALL (return address) on the stack.
  – the stack stores the return address when a procedure is called during a program

• RET instruction removes an address from the stack so the program returns to the instruction following the CALL.
• A procedure begins with the PROC directive and ends with the ENDP directive.
  – each directive appears with the procedure name

• PROC is followed by the type of procedure:
  – NEAR or FAR

• In MASM version 6.x, the NEAR or FAR type can be followed by the USES statement.
  – USES allows any number of registers to be automatically pushed to the stack and popped from the stack within the procedure
• Procedures that are to be used by all software (global) should be written as far procedures.
• Procedures that are used by a given task (local) are normally defined as near procedures.
• Most procedures are near procedures.
CALL

• Transfers the flow of the program to the procedure.
• CALL instruction differs from the jump instruction because a CALL saves a return address on the stack.
• The return address returns control to the instruction that immediately follows the CALL in a program when a RET instruction executes.
Near CALL

• 3 bytes long.
  – the first byte contains the opcode; the second and third bytes contain the displacement

• When the near CALL executes, it first pushes the offset address of the next instruction onto the stack.
  – offset address of the next instruction appears in the instruction pointer (IP or EIP)

• It then adds displacement from bytes 2 & 3 to the IP to transfer control to the procedure.
• Why save the IP or EIP on the stack?
  – the instruction pointer always points to the next instruction in the program
• For the CALL instruction, the contents of IP/EIP are pushed onto the stack.
  – program control passes to the instruction following the CALL after a procedure ends
• Figure 6 shows the return address (IP) stored on the stack and the call to the procedure.
Figure 6  The effect of a near CALL on the stack and the instruction pointer.
Far CALL

- 5-byte instruction contains an opcode followed by the next value for the IP and CS registers.
  - bytes 2 and 3 contain new contents of the IP
  - bytes 4 and 5 contain the new contents for CS
- Far CALL places the contents of both IP and CS on the stack before jumping to the address indicated by bytes 2 through 5.
- This allows far CALL to call a procedure located anywhere in the memory and return from that procedure.
Figure 7 shows how far CALL calls a far procedure.
- contents of IP and CS are pushed onto the stack

The program branches to the procedure.
- A variant of far call exists as CALLF, but should be avoided in favor of defining the type of call instruction with the PROC statement

In 64-bit mode a far call is to any memory location and information placed onto the stack is an 8-byte number.
- the far return instruction retrieves an 8-byte return address from the stack and places it into RIP
Figure 7 The effect of a far CALL instruction.
CALLs with Register Operands

- An example CALL BX, which pushes the contents of IP onto the stack.
  - then jumps to the offset address, located in register BX, in the current code segment
- Always uses a 16-bit offset address, stored in any 16-bit register except segment registers.
CALLs with Indirect Memory Addresses

- Particularly useful when different subroutines need to be chosen in a program.
  - selection process is often keyed with a number that addresses a CALL address in a lookup table
- Essentially the same as the indirect jump that used a lookup table for a jump address.
RET

- Removes a 16-bit number (**near return**) from the stack placing it in IP, or removes a 32-bit number (**far return**) and places it in IP & CS.
  - near and far return instructions in procedure’s PROC directive
  - automatically selects the proper return instruction
- Figure 8 shows how the CALL instruction links to a procedure and how RET returns in the 8086–Core2 operating in the real mode.
Figure 8  The effect of a near return instruction on the stack and instruction pointer.
• Another form of return adds a number to the contents of the stack pointer (SP) after the return address is removed from the stack.
• A return that uses an immediate operand is ideal for use in a system that uses the C/C++ or PASCAL calling conventions.
  – these conventions push parameters on the stack before calling a procedure
• If the parameters are discarded upon return, the return instruction contains the number of bytes pushed to the stack as parameters.
• Parameters are addressed on the stack by using the BP register, which by default addresses the stack segment.
• Parameter stacking is common in procedures written for C++ or PASCAL by using the C++ or PASCAL calling conventions.
• Variants of the return instruction:
  – RETN and RETF
• Variants should also be avoided in favor of using the PROC statement to define the type of call and return.
INTRO TO INTERRUPTS

• An interrupt is a **hardware-generated CALL**
  – externally derived from a hardware signal

• Or a **software-generated CALL**
  – internally derived from the execution of an instruction or by some other internal event
  – at times an internal interrupt is called an *exception*

• Either type interrupts the program by calling an **interrupt service procedure** (ISP) or interrupt handler.
Interrupt Vectors

• A 4-byte number stored in the first 1024 bytes of memory (00000H–003FFH) in real mode.
  – in protected mode, the vector table is replaced by an interrupt descriptor table that uses 8-byte descriptors to describe each of the interrupts

• 256 different interrupt vectors.
  – each vector contains the address of an interrupt service procedure
• Each vector contains a value for IP and CS that forms the address of the interrupt service procedure.
  – the first 2 bytes contain IP; the last 2 bytes CS
• Intel reserves the first 32 interrupt vectors for the present and future products.
  – interrupt vectors (32–255) are available to users
• Some reserved vectors are for errors that occur during the execution of software
  – such as the divide error interrupt
• Some vectors are reserved for the coprocessor.
  – others occur for normal events in the system
• In a personal computer, reserved vectors are used for system functions
• Vectors 1–6, 7, 9, 16, and 17 function in the real mode and protected mode.
  – the remaining vectors function only in the protected mode
Interrupt Instructions

- Three different interrupt instructions available:
  - INT, INTO, and INT 3
- In real mode, each fetches a vector from the vector table, and then calls the procedure stored at the location addressed by the vector.
- In protected mode, each fetches an interrupt descriptor from the interrupt descriptor table.
- Similar to a far CALL instruction because it places the return address (IP/EIP and CS) on the stack.
INTs

- 256 different software interrupt instructions (INTs) available to the programmer.
  - each INT instruction has a numeric operand whose range is 0 to 255 (00H–FFH)
- For example, INT 100 uses interrupt vector 100, which appears at memory address 190H–193H.
  - address of the interrupt vector is determined by multiplying the interrupt type number by 4
• Address of the interrupt vector is determined by multiplying the interrupt type number by 4.
  – INT 10H instruction calls the interrupt service procedure whose address is stored beginning at memory location 40H (10H × 4) in the mode
• In protected mode, the interrupt descriptor is located by multiplying the type number by 8
  – because each descriptor is 8 bytes long
• Each INT instruction is 2 bytes long.
  – the first byte contains the opcode
  – the second byte contains the vector type number
• When a software interrupt executes, it:
  – pushes the flags onto the stack
  – clears the T and I flag bits
  – pushes CS onto the stack
  – fetches the new value for CS from the interrupt vector
  – pushes IP/EIP onto the stack
  – fetches the new value for IP/EIP from the vector
  – jumps to the new location addressed by CS and IP/EIP
• INT performs as a far CALL
  – not only pushes CS & IP onto the stack, also pushes the flags onto the stack
• The INT instruction performs the operation of a PUSHF, followed by a far CALL instruction.
• Software interrupts are most commonly used to call system procedures because the address of the function need not be known.
• The interrupts often control printers, video displays, and disk drives.
• INT replaces a far CALL that would otherwise be used to call a system function.
  – INT instruction is 2 bytes long, whereas the far CALL is 5 bytes long
• Each time that the INT instruction replaces a far CALL, it saves 3 bytes of memory.
• This can amount to a sizable saving if INT often appears in a program, as it does for system calls.
IRET/IRETD

• Used only with software or hardware interrupt service procedures.

• IRET instruction will
  – pop stack data back into the IP
  – pop stack data back into CS
  – pop stack data back into the flag register

• Accomplishes the same tasks as the POPF followed by a far RET instruction.
• When IRET executes, it restores the contents of I and T from the stack.
  – preserves the state of these flag bits
• If interrupts were enabled before an interrupt service procedure, they are automatically re-enabled by the IRET instruction.
  – because it restores the flag register
• IRET is used in real mode and IRETD in the protected mode.
INT 3

• A special software interrupt designed to function as a breakpoint.
  – a 1-byte instruction, while others are 2-byte

• Common to insert an INT 3 in software to interrupt or break the flow of the software.
  – function is called a breakpoint
  – breakpoints help to debug faulty software

• A breakpoint occurs for any software interrupt, but because INT 3 is 1 byte long, it is easier to use for this function.
INTO

• Interrupt on overflow (INTO) is a conditional software interrupt that tests overflow flag (O).
  – If $O = 0$, INTO performs no operation
  – If $O = 1$ and an INTO executes, an interrupt occurs via vector type number 4
• The INTO instruction appears in software that adds or subtracts signed binary numbers.
  – Either these operations, it is possible to have an overflow
• JO or INTO instructions detect the overflow.
An Interrupt Service Procedure

• Interrupts are usually reserved for system events.

• Suppose a procedure is required to add the contents of DI, SI, BP, and BX and save the sum in AX.
  – as a common task, it may be worthwhile to develop the task as a software interrupt

• It is also important to save all registers are changed by the procedure using USES.
Interrupt Control

• Two instructions control the INTR pin.
• The **set interrupt flag** instruction (STI) places 1 in the I flag bit.
  – which enables the INTR pin
• The **clear interrupt flag** instruction (CLI) places a 0 into the I flag bit.
  – which disables the INTR pin
• The STI instruction enables INTR and the CLI instruction disables INTR.
• In software interrupt service procedure, hardware interrupts are enabled as one of the first steps.
  – accomplished by the STI instruction

• Interrupts are enabled early because just about all of the I/O devices in the personal computer are interrupt-processed.
  – if interrupts are disabled too long, severe system problems result
Interrupts in the Personal Computer

• Interrupts found in the personal computer only contained Intel-specified interrupts 0–4.
• Access to protected mode interrupt structure in use by Windows is accomplished through kernel functions Microsoft provides.
  – and cannot be directly addressed
• Protected mode interrupts use an interrupt descriptor table.
Figure 9  Interrupts in a typical personal computer.
64-Bit Mode Interrupts

• The 64-bit system uses the IRETQ instruction to return from an interrupt service procedure.
  – IRETQ retrieves an 8-byte return from the stack

• IRETQ also retrieves the 32-bit EFLAG register from the stack and places it into the RFLAG register.

• It appears that Intel has no plans for using the leftmost 32 bits of the RFLAG register.
  – otherwise, 64-bit mode interrupts are the same as 32-bit mode interrupts
Figure 10  The stack frame created by the ENTER 8,0 instruction. Notice that BP is stored beginning at the top of the stack frame. This is followed by an 8-byte area called a stack frame.
MACHINE CONTROL AND MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUCTIONS

- These instructions provide control of the carry bit, sample the BUSY/TEST pin, and perform various other functions.
Controlling the Carry Flag Bit

• The carry flag (C) propagates the carry or borrow in multiple-word/doubleword addition and subtraction.
  – can indicate errors in assembly language procedures

• Three instructions control the contents of the carry flag:
  – STC (set carry), CLC (clear carry), and CMC (complement carry)
WAIT

• Monitors the hardware *BUSY* pin on 80286 and 80386, and the *TEST* pin on 8086/8088.
• If the WAIT instruction executes while the *BUSY* pin = 1, nothing happens and the next instruction executes.
  – pin inputs a busy condition when at a logic 0 level
  – if *BUSY* pin = 0 the microprocessor waits for the pin to return to a logic 1
HLT

• Stops the execution of software.
• There are three ways to exit a halt:
  – by interrupt; a hardware reset, or DMA operation
• Often synchronizes external hardware interrupts with the software system.
• DOS and Windows both use interrupts extensively.
  – so HLT will not halt the computer when operated under these operating systems
In early years, before software development tools were available, a NOP, which performs absolutely no operation, was often used to pad software with space for future machine language instructions.

When the microprocessor encounters a NOP, it takes a short time to execute.
• If you are developing machine language programs, which are extremely rare, it is recommended that you place 10 or so NOPS in your program at 50-byte intervals.
  – in case you need to add instructions at some future point

• A NOP may also find application in time delays to waste time.

• A NOP used for timing is not very accurate because of the cache and pipelines in modern microprocessors.
**LOCK Prefix**

- Appends an instruction and causes the pin to become a logic 0.
- *LOCK* pin often disables external bus masters or other system components
  - causes pin to activate for duration of instruction
- If more than one sequential instruction is locked, *LOCK* pin remains logic 0 for duration of the sequence of instructions.
- The LOCK:MOV AL,[SI] instruction is an example of a locked instruction.
ESC

- Passes instructions to the floating-point coprocessor from the microprocessor.
- When an ESC executes, the microprocessor provides the memory address, if required, but otherwise performs a NOP.
- Six bits of the ESC instruction provide the opcode to the coprocessor and begin executing a coprocessor instruction.
- ESC is considered obsolete as an opcode.
BOUND

• A comparison instruction that may cause an interrupt (vector type number 5).
• Compares the contents of any 16-bit or 32-bit register against the contents of two words or doublewords of memory
  – an upper and a lower boundary
• If register value compared with memory is not within the boundary, a type 5 interrupt ensues.
• If it is within the boundary, the next instruction in the program executes.
ENTER and LEAVE

• Used with stack frames, mechanisms used to pass parameters to a procedure through the stack memory.

• Stack frame also holds local memory variables for the procedure.

• Stack frames provide dynamic areas of memory for procedures in multiuser environments.
• ENTER creates a stack frame by pushing BP onto the stack and then loading BP with the uppermost address of the stack frame.
  – allows stack frame variables to be accessed through the BP register
• ENTER contains two operands:
  – first operand specifies the number of bytes to reserve for variables on the stack frame
  – the second specifies the level of the procedure
• The ENTER and LEAVE instructions were used to call C++ functions in Windows 3.1.