Getting Started with SPIM

The rest of this appendix contains a complete and rather detailed description of SPIM. Many details should never concern you; however, the sheer volume of information can obscure the fact that SPIM is a simple, easy-to-use program. This section contains a quick tutorial on SPIM that should enable you to load, debug, and run simple MIPS programs.

SPIM comes in multiple versions. One version, called spim, is a command-line-driven program and requires only an alphanumeric terminal to display it. It operates like most programs of this type:you type a line of text, hit the enter key, and spim executes your command.

A fancier version, called xspim, runs in the X-windows environment of the Unix system and therefore requires a bit-mapped display to run it. xspim, however, is a much easier program to learn and use because its commands are always visible on the screen and because it continually displays the machine's registers. Another version, PCSpim, is compatible with Windows 3.1, Windows 95, and Windows NT. The Unix, Windows, and DOS versions of SPIM are available through www.mkp.com/cod2e.htm. This section of the document describes PCSpim, the Windows version of SPIM under Windows 95.

Installation and Graphic Interface Description

To install the Windows version of SPIM, you can download the installation file, *spimwin.exe*, through www.mkp.com/cod2e.htm. Execute the installation file and follow the installation procedure. In Windows 95, you can simply activate the icon associated with the file just like any Windows program, or you can select Start->Run and type in the directory path and filename. The installation program will execute and inform you when the installation process is complete. When the installation is complete, a group folder with executable file, help files, and uninstaller program is created.

To start PCSpim for Windows, you simply activate the icon labeled *PCSpim for Windows* like any other Windows program. For example, in Windows 95, you can use select *Start->Programs->PCSpim for Windows ->PCSpim for Windows* from the Windows 95 task bar. In Windows 3.1, you can select the application from the File Manager.

When PCSpim starts up, it brings up a large window on your screen (see Figure A.1). The application window is divided into four parts:

- The top section is the menu bar. The menu bar allows you to select *File* operations, set *Simulator* settings, select *Windows* views, and obtain online *Help* information.
- The next section below the menu bar is the toolbar. The toolbar provides quick mouse access to many tools used in PCSpim for Windows.
- The large section in the middle of the application window is the window display section. There are four display windows: Registers, Text Segment, Data Segment, and Messages. To change the view of these four windows, you can select a tiled view from the menu bar: Windows->Tile. All of the display windows will be empty when you first execute the program. The following list describes each display window.
 - The Register window display shows the values of all registers in the MIPS CPU and FPU.
 - The Text Segment window display shows instructions both from your program and the system code that is loaded automatically when PCSpim is running.
 - The Data Segment window display shows the data loaded into your program's memory and the data of the program's stack.
 - The Messages window display is the where PCSpim uses to write messages. This is where error messages appear.

When selected, PCSpim for Windows will record the position of its windows when you exit, and restore them to the same location the next time you run PCSpim.

Bare machine

When selected, you can simulate a bare MIPS machine without pseudoinstructions or the additional addressing modes provided by the assembler.

Allow pseudo instructions

If this setting is selected, pseudoinstructions are allowed in your program; otherwise, if the setting is not selected, they are not allowed.

· Load trap file

If this setting is selected, the standard exception handler and start-up code is loaded. When an exception occurs, SPIM jumps to location 80000080hex, which must contain code to service the exception. In addition, the trap handler contains start-up code that invokes the routine main. Without the start-up routine, SPIM begins execution at the instruction labeled __start. The default trap file comes with PCSpim, but you can choose another using Browse button.

Mapped I/O

If this setting is selected, the memory-mapped I/O facility is enabled. Programs that use SPIM syscalls to read from the terminal cannot also use memory-mapped I/O.

Quiet

When this setting is enabled, PCSpim does not print a message at exceptions; otherwise, a message is printed when an exception occurs.

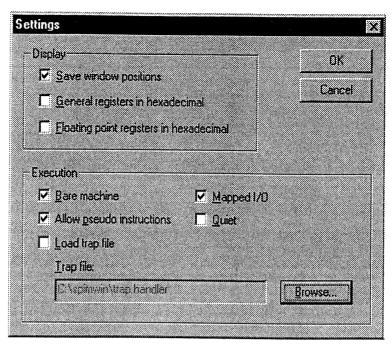


Figure A.2. PCSpim simulator setting dialog box

PCSpim performs other functions that are occasionally useful. When you are more comfortable with PCSpim, you should look at the description in the online help to see what they do and how they can save you time and effort. You can view the online help available with the simulator by selecting *Help->Help_topics* from the menu bar.

Simulator Setting

PCSpim has a graphical interface to view the current setting of the simulator (see FigureA.2). When you start PCSpim, you do not have to enter with any command line parameters. However, you should check your simulator settings either on PCSpim's status bar or the simulator setting dialog box before you load your program. To view or change PCSpim settings in the simulator setting dialog box, select Simulator>Settings from the menu bar.

It is very important to set the simulator in the correct setting for your program. PCSpim determines how to load and how your program executes from these settings, so an incorrect setting may cause errors when you run your program. If the simulator setting is incorrect and the program is unable to load correctly, PCSpim allows you to change the simulator settings and reload your program. If you want to change PCSpim settings after you load your program, you should reload your program by selecting Simulator>Reload from the menu bar.

The following paragraphs describes the operation of each of the settings in the simulator setting dialog box shown in Figure A.2. Most of the functions are similar to SPIM, its counterparts in the terminal interface version without the graphical interface.

• Display

You can select to view the register contents in decimal or hexidecimal notation. If the check boxes for general registers or floating point registers are selected, a check mark will appear and the register contents will be displayed in hexidecimal notation.

Save window positions

The first number on the line, in square brackets, is the hexadecimal memory address of the instruction. The second number is the instruction's numerical encoding, again displayed as a hexadecimal number. The third item is the instruction's mnemonic description. Everything following the semicolon is the actual line from your assembly file that produced the instruction. The number 89 is the line number in that file. Sometimes nothing is on the line after the semicolon. This means that the instruction was produced by SPIM as part of translating a pseudoinstruction.

To run your program, click on the Go button in the toolbar. Alternatively, you can select Simulator->Go from the menu bar. Your program will begin execution. If you want to stop the execution of your program, select Simulator->Break from the menu bar. Alternatively, you can type Control-C when PCSpim application window is in focus. A dialog box will appear and ask if you want to continue execution. Select No to break the execution. Before doing anything, you can look at memory and registers contents in the Register display window to find out what your program was doing. When you understand what happened, you can either continue the program by selecting Simulator->Continue or stop your program by selecting Simulator->Break from the menu bar.

If your program reads or writes from the terminal, PCSpim pops up another window called the console. All characters that your program writes appear on the console, and everything that you type as input to your program should be typed in this window.

Suppose your program does not do what you expect. What can you do? SPIM has two features that help debug your program. The first, and perhaps the most useful, is single-stepping, which allows you to run your program an instruction at a time. Select <code>Simulator->Single_Step</code> to execute only one instruction. Alternatively, you can press the F10 function key to single step. Each time you step through a program, PCSpim will execute the next instruction in your program, updates the display, and returns control to you. You can also choose the number of instructions in your program to step by selecting <code>Simulator->Multiple_Step</code> instead of single stepping through your program. A dialog box will appear and ask you the number of instructions to step.

What do you do if your program runs for a long time before the bug arises? You could single-step until you get to the bug, but that can take a long time, and it is easy to get so bored and inattentive that you step past the problem. A better alternative is to use a breakpoint, which tells PCSpim to stop your program immediately before it executes a particular instruction. Select Simulator->Breakpoints from the menu bar. The PCSpim program pops up a dialog box window with two boxes. The top box is for you to enter breakpoint address and the second box is a list of active breakpoints. Type in the first box the address of the instruction at which you want to stop. Or, if the instruction has a global label, you can just type the name of the label. Labeled breakpoints are a particularly convenient way to stop at the first instruction of a procedure. To actually set the breakpoint, and click on the button labeled Add. When you are done adding breakpoints, click on the button labeled Close. You can then run your program.

When the simulator is about to execute the breakpointed instruction, PCSpim pops up a dialog box with the instruction's address and asks if you want to continue the execution. The Yes button continues running your program and the No button stops your program. If you want to delete a breakpoint, you can select Simulator->Breakpoints from the menu bar, click on the address in the dialog box, and click on the button labeled Remove.

Single-stepping and setting breakpoints will probably help you find a bug in your program quickly. How do you fix it? Go back to the editor that you used to create your program and change your source file. After you have made the changes to your source file, simply reload it into PCSpim for Windows by choosing Simulator->Reload<filename> from the menu bar. This causes PCSpim to clear its memory and registers and return the processor to the state it was in when PCSpim first started. Once the simulator has reinitialized itself, it will reload your recently modified file.

-asm Simulate the virtual MIPS machine provided by the assembler. This is the default.

-pseudo Allow the input assembly code to contain pseudoinstructions. This is the default.

-nopseudo Do not allow pseudoinstructions in the input assembly code.

-notrap Do not load the standard exception handler and start-up code. This exception handler

handles exceptions. When an exception occurs, SPIM jumps to location $80000080_{\rm hex}$, which must contain code to service the exception. In addition, this file contains startup code that invokes the routine main. Without the start-up routine, SPIM begins exe-

cution at the instruction labeled __start.

-trap Load the standard exception handler and start-up code. This is the default.

-noquiet Print a message when an exception occurs. This is the default.

-quiet Do not print a message at exceptions.

-nomapped_io Disable the memory-mapped I/O facility. This is the default.

-mapped_io Enable the memory-mapped I/O facility. Programs that use SPIM syscalls to read

from the terminal cannot also use memory-mapped I/O.

-file Load and execute the assembly code in the file.

-execute Load and execute the code in the MIPS executable file a.out. This command is only

available when SPIM runs on a system containing a MIPS processor.

-s <seg> size Sets the initial size of memory segment seg to be size bytes. The memory segments

are named:text, data, stack, ktext, and kdata. The text segment contains instructions from a program. The data segment holds the program's data. The stack segment holds its runtime stack. In addition to running a program, SPIM also executes system code that handles interrupts and exceptions. This code resides in a separate part of the address space called the *kernel*. The ktext segment holds this code's instructions, and kdata holds its data. There is no kstack segment since the system code uses the same stack as the program. For example, the pair of arguments -sdata 2000000 starts the

user data segment at 2,000,000 bytes.

-1 <seg> size Sets the limit on how large memory segment seg can grow to be size bytes. The mem-

ory segments that can grow are data, stack, and kdata.

Loading and Running a Program

Let's see how to load and run a program. The first thing to do is to select the open file icon from the toolbar. Alternatively, you can select from the menu bar: File->Open. A file open dialog box will appear for you to select the appropriate assembly file. Select the appropriate assembly file and click on the button labeled Open in the dialog box. If simulator settings are not correct for the file, and it fails to load, PCSpim will provide you an opportunity to change simulator settings and automatically reload the file.

If you change your mind, click on the button labeled *Cancel*, and PCSpim removes the dialog box. When you load an assembly file, PCSpim removes dialog box, then loads your program and redraws the screen to display its instructions and data. If you have not done so, change the view of the four display windows to a tiled format by selecting from the menu bar: *Windows->Tile*. You should be able to see the program in the Text segment window display.

Each instruction in the Text segment window display is shown on a line that looks like

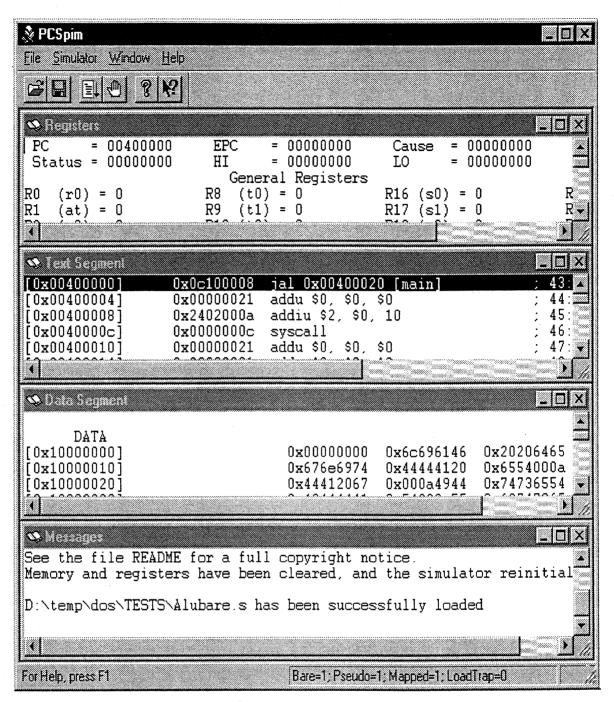


Figure A.1. PCSpim's window interface

• The Status bar section is at the bottom of the application window. The status bar provides information and the current settings of the simulator.

SPIM Command-Line Options

The Windows version of SPIM accepts the following command-line options:

-bare Simulate a bare MIPS machine without pseudoinstructions or the additional addressing modes provided by the assembler. Implies quiet.

SPIM S20: A MIPS R2000 Simulator*

" $\frac{1}{25}$ " the performance at none of the cost"

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1 SPIM

SPIM S20 is a simulator that runs programs for the MIPS R2000/R3000 RISC computers.¹ SPIM can read and immediately execute files containing assembly language. SPIM is a self-contained system for running these programs and contains a debugger and interface to a few operating system services.

The architecture of the MIPS computers is simple and regular, which makes it easy to learn and understand. The processor contains 32 general-purpose 32-bit registers and a well-designed instruction set that make it a propitious target for generating code in a compiler.

However, the obvious question is: why use a simulator when many people have workstations that contain a hardware, and hence significantly faster, implementation of this computer? One reason is that these workstations are not generally available. Another reason is that these machine will not persist for many years because of the rapid progress leading to new and faster computers. Unfortunately, the trend is to make computers faster by executing several instructions concurrently, which makes their architecture more difficult to understand and program. The MIPS architecture may be the epitome of a simple, clean RISC machine.

In addition, simulators can provide a better environment for low-level programming than an actual machine because they can detect more errors and provide more features than an actual computer. For example, SPIM has a X-window interface that is better than most debuggers for the actual machines.

^{*}I grateful to the many students at UW who used SPIM in their courses and happily found bugs in a professor's code. In particular, the students in CS536, Spring 1990, painfully found the last few bugs in an "already-debugged" simulator. I am grateful for their patience and persistence. Alan Yuen-wui Siow wrote the X-window interface.

¹For a description of the real machines, see Gerry Kane and Joe Heinrich, MIPS RISC Architecture, Prentice Hall. 1992.

Finally, simulators are an useful tool for studying computers and the programs that run on them. Because they are implemented in software, not silicon, they can be easily modified to add new instructions, build new systems such as multiprocessors, or simply to collect data.

1.1 Simulation of a Virtual Machine

The MIPS architecture, like that of most RISC computers, is difficult to program directly because of its delayed branches, delayed loads, and restricted address modes. This difficulty is tolerable since these computers were designed to be programmed in high-level languages and so present an interface designed for compilers, not programmers. A good part of the complexity results from delayed instructions. A delayed branch takes two cycles to execute. In the second cycle, the instruction immediately following the branch executes. This instruction can perform useful work that normally would have been done before the branch or it can be a nop (no operation). Similarly, delayed loads take two cycles so the instruction immediately following a load cannot use the value loaded from memory.

MIPS wisely choose to hide this complexity by implementing a *virtual machine* with their assembler. This virtual computer appears to have non-delayed branches and loads and a richer instruction set than the actual hardware. The assembler *reorganizes* (rearranges) instructions to fill the delay slots. It also simulates the additional, *pseudoinstructions* by generating short sequences of actual instructions.

By default, SPIM simulates the richer, virtual machine. It can also simulate the actual hardware. We will describe the virtual machine and only mention in passing features that do not belong to the actual hardware. In doing so, we are following the convention of MIPS assembly language programmers (and compilers), who routinely take advantage of the extended machine. Instructions marked with a dagger (†) are pseudoinstructions.

1.2 SPIM Interface

SPIM provides a simple terminal and a X-window interface. Both provide equivalent functionality, but the X interface is generally easier to use and more informative.

spim, the terminal version, and xspim, the X version, have the following command-line options:

-bare

Simulate a bare MIPS machine without pseudoinstructions or the additional addressing modes provided by the assembler. Implies -quiet.

-asm

Simulate the virtual MIPS machine provided by the assembler. This is the default.

-pseudo

Accept pseudoinstructions in assembly code.

-nopseudo

Do not accept pseudoinstructions in assembly code.

-notrap

Do not load the standard trap handler. This trap handler has two functions that must be assumed by the user's program. First, it handles traps. When a trap occurs, SPIM jumps to location 0x80000080, which should contain code to service the exception. Second,

this file contains startup code that invokes the routine main. Without the trap handler, execution begins at the instruction labeled __start.

-trap

Load the standard trap handler. This is the default.

-trap_file

Load the trap handler in the file.

-noquiet

Print a message when an exception occurs. This is the default.

-quiet

Do not print a message at an exception.

-nomapped_io

Disable the memory-mapped IO facility (see Section 5).

-mapped_io

Enable the memory-mapped IO facility (see Section 5). Programs that use SPIM syscalls (see Section 1.5) to read from the terminal should not also use memory-mapped IO.

-file

Load and execute the assembly code in the file.

- -s seg size Sets the initial size of memory segment seg to be size bytes. The memory segments are named: text, data, stack, ktext, and kdata. For example, the pair of arguments -sdata 2000000 starts the user data segment at 2,000,000 bytes.
- -lseg size Sets the limit on how large memory segment seg can grow to be size bytes. The memory segments that can grow are: data, stack, and kdata.

1.2.1 Terminal Interface

The terminal interface (spim) provides the following commands:

exit

Exit the simulator.

read "file"

Read file of assembly language commands into SPIM's memory. If the file has already been read into SPIM, the system should be cleared (see reinitialize, below) or global symbols will be multiply defined.

load "file"

Synonym for read.

run <addr>

Start running a program. If the optional address addr is provided, the program starts at that address. Otherwise, the program starts at the global symbol __start, which is defined by the default trap handler to call the routine at the global symbol main with the usual MIPS calling convention.

step <N>

Step the program for N (default: 1) instructions. Print instructions as they execute.

continue

Continue program execution without stepping.

print \$N

Print register N.

print \$fN

Print floating point register N.

print addr

Print the contents of memory at address addr.

print_sym

Print the contents of the symbol table, i.e., the addresses of the global (but not local) symbols.

reinitialize

Clear the memory and registers.

breakpoint addr

Set a breakpoint at address addr. addr can be either a memory address or symbolic label.

delete addr

Delete all breakpoints at address addr.

list

List all breakpoints.

Rest of line is an assembly instruction that is stored in memory.

<n1>

A newline reexecutes previous command.

?

Print a help message.

Most commands can be abbreviated to their unique prefix e.g., ex, re, 1, ru, s, p. More dangerous commands, such as reinitialize, require a longer prefix.

1.2.2 X-Window Interface

The X version of SPIM, xspim, looks different, but should operate in the same manner as spim. The X window has five panes (see Figure 1). The top pane displays the contents of the registers. It is continually updated, except while a program is running.

The next pane contains the buttons that control the simulator:

quit

Exit from the simulator.

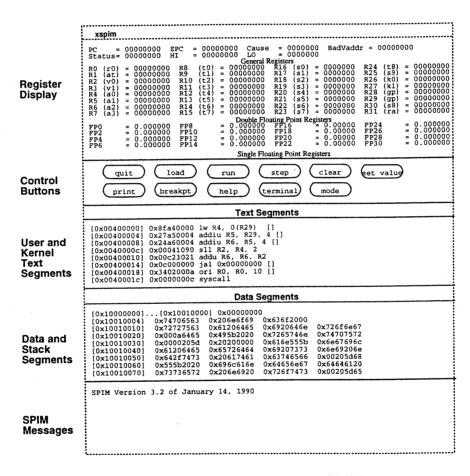


Figure 1: X-window interface to SPIM.

load

Read a source file into memory.

run

Start the program running.

step

Single-step through a program.

clear

Reinitialize registers or memory.

set value

Set the value in a register or memory location.

print

Print the value in a register or memory location.

breakpoint

Set or delete a breakpoint or list all breakpoints.

help

Print a help message.

terminal

Raise or hide the console window.

mode

Set SPIM operating modes.

The next two panes display the memory contents. The top one shows instructions from the user and kernel text segments.² The first few instructions in the text segment are startup code (_start) that loads argc and argv into registers and invokes the main routine.

The lower of these two panes displays the data and stack segments. Both panes are updated as a program executes.

The bottom pane is used to display messages from the simulator. It does not display output from an executing program. When a program reads or writes, its IO appears in a separate window, called the Console, which pops up when needed.

1.3 Surprising Features

Although SPIM faithfully simulates the MIPS computer, it is a simulator and certain things are not identical to the actual computer. The most obvious differences are that instruction timing and the memory systems are not identical. SPIM does not simulate caches or memory latency, nor does it accurate reflect the delays for floating point operations or multiplies and divides.

Another surprise (which occurs on the real machine as well) is that a pseudoinstruction expands into several machine instructions. When single-stepping or examining memory, the instructions that you see are slightly different from the source program. The correspondence between the two sets of instructions is fairly simple since SPIM does not reorganize the instructions to fill delay slots.

²These instructions are real—not pseudo—MIPS instructions. SPIM translates assembler pseudoinstructions to 1-3 MIPS instructions before storing the program in memory. Each source instruction appears as a comment on the first instruction to which it is translated.

1.4 Assembler Syntax

Comments in assembler files begin with a sharp-sign (#). Everything from the sharp-sign to the end of the line is ignored.

Identifiers are a sequence of alphanumeric characters, underbars (_), and dots (.) that do not begin with a number. Opcodes for instructions are reserved words that are **not** valid identifiers. Labels are declared by putting them at the beginning of a line followed by a colon, for example:

.data

item: .word 1
 .text

.globl main

Must be global

main: lw \$t0, item

Strings are enclosed in double-quotes ("). Special characters in strings follow the C convention:

newline \n tab \t quote \"

SPIM supports a subset of the assembler directives provided by the MIPS assembler:

.align n

Align the next datum on a 2^n byte boundary. For example, .align 2 aligns the next value on a word boundary. .align 0 turns off automatic alignment of .half, .word, .float, and .double directives until the next .data or .kdata directive.

.ascii str

Store the string in memory, but do not null-terminate it.

_.asciiz str

Store the string in memory and null-terminate it.

.byte b1, ..., bn

Store the n values in successive bytes of memory.

.data <addr>

The following data items should be stored in the data segment. If the optional argument addr is present, the items are stored beginning at address addr.

.double d1, ..., dn

Store the n floating point double precision numbers in successive memory locations.

.extern sym size

Declare that the datum stored at sym is size bytes large and is a global symbol. This directive enables the assembler to store the datum in a portion of the data segment that is efficiently accessed via register \$gp.

.float f1, ..., fn

Store the n floating point single precision numbers in successive memory locations.

.globl sym

Declare that symbol sym is global and can be referenced from other files.

Service	System Call Code	Arguments	Result
print_int	1	\$a0 = integer	
print_float	2	\$f12 = float	
print_double	3	f12 = double	
print_string	4	\$a0 = string	
read_int	5		integer (in \$v0)
read_float	6		float (in \$f0)
read_double	7		double (in \$f0)
read_string	8	\$a0 = buffer, \$a1 = length	
sbrk	9	\$a0 = amount	address (in \$v0)
exit	10		

Table 1: System services.

.half h1, ..., hn

Store the n 16-bit quantities in successive memory halfwords.

.kdata <addr>

The following data items should be stored in the kernel data segment. If the optional argument addr is present, the items are stored beginning at address addr.

.ktext <addr>

The next items are put in the kernel text segment. In SPIM, these items may only be instructions or words (see the .word directive below). If the optional argument addr is present, the items are stored beginning at address addr.

.space n

Allocate n bytes of space in the current segment (which must be the data segment in SPIM).

.text <addr>

The next items are put in the user text segment. In SPIM, these items may only be instructions or words (see the .word directive below). If the optional argument addr is present, the items are stored beginning at address addr.

.word w1, ..., wn

Store the n 32-bit quantities in successive memory words.

SPIM does not distinguish various parts of the data segment (.data, .rdata, and .sdata).

1.5 System Calls

SPIM provides a small set of operating-system-like services through the system call (syscall) instruction. To request a service, a program loads the system call code (see Table 1) into register \$v0 and the arguments into registers \$a0...\$a3 (or \$f12 for floating point values). System calls that return values put their result in register \$v0 (or \$f0 for floating point results). For example, to print "the answer = 5", use the commands:

.data

str: .asciiz "the answer = "

.text

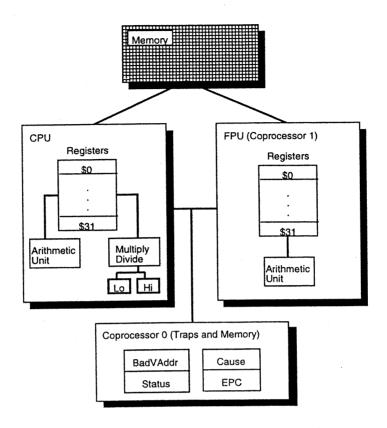


Figure 2: MIPS R2000 CPU and FPU

```
li $v0, 4  # system call code for print_str
la $a0, str  # address of string to print
syscall  # print the string

li $v0, 1  # system call code for print_int
li $a0, 5  # integer to print
syscall  # print it
```

print_int is passed an integer and prints it on the console. print_float prints a single floating point number. print_double prints a double precision number. print_string is passed a pointer to a null-terminated string, which it writes to the console.

read_int, read_float, and read_double read an entire line of input up to and including the newline. Characters following the number are ignored. read_string has the same semantics as the Unix library routine fgets. It reads up to n-1 characters into a buffer and terminates the string with a null byte. If there are fewer characters on the current line, it reads through the newline and again null-terminates the string. Warning: programs that use these syscalls to read from the terminal should not use memory-mapped IO (see Section 5).

sbrk returns a pointer to a block of memory containing n additional bytes. exit stops a program from running.

Register Name	Number	Usage
zero	0	Constant 0
at	1	Reserved for assembler
v0	2	Expression evaluation and
v1	3	results of a function
a0	4	Argument 1
al	5	Argument 2
a2	6	Argument 3
a3	7	Argument 4
t0	8	Temporary (not preserved across call)
t1	9	Temporary (not preserved across call)
t2	10	Temporary (not preserved across call)
t3	11	Temporary (not preserved across call)
t4	12	Temporary (not preserved across call)
t5	13	Temporary (not preserved across call)
t6	14	Temporary (not preserved across call)
t7	15	Temporary (not preserved across call)
s0	16	Saved temporary (preserved across call)
s1	17	Saved temporary (preserved across call)
s2	18	Saved temporary (preserved across call)
s3	19	Saved temporary (preserved across call)
s4	20	Saved temporary (preserved across call)
s5	21	Saved temporary (preserved across call)
s6	22	Saved temporary (preserved across call)
s7	23	Saved temporary (preserved across call)
t8	24	Temporary (not preserved across call)
t9	25	Temporary (not preserved across call)
k0	26	Reserved for OS kernel
k1	27	Reserved for OS kernel
gp	28	Pointer to global area
sp	29	Stack pointer
fp	30	Frame pointer
ra	31	Return address (used by function call)

Table 2: MIPS registers and the convention governing their use.

2 Description of the MIPS R2000

A MIPS processor consists of an integer processing unit (the CPU) and a collection of coprocessors that perform ancillary tasks or operate on other types of data such as floating point numbers (see Figure 2). SPIM simulates two coprocessors. Coprocessor 0 handles traps, exceptions, and the virtual memory system. SPIM simulates most of the first two and entirely omits details of the memory system. Coprocessor 1 is the floating point unit. SPIM simulates most aspects of this unit.

2.1 CPU Registers

The MIPS (and SPIM) central processing unit contains 32 general purpose 32-bit registers that are numbered 0-31. Register n is designated by n. Register n always contains the hardwired value 0. MIPS has established a set of conventions as to how registers should be used. These suggestions are guidelines, which are not enforced by the hardware. However a program that

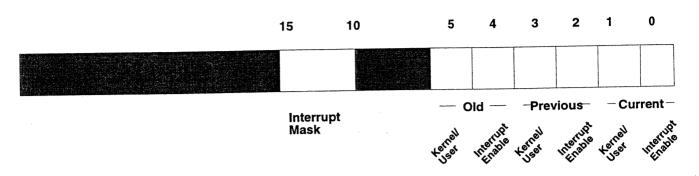


Figure 3: The Status register.

violates them will not work properly with other software. Table 2 lists the registers and describes their intended use.

Registers \$at (1), \$k0 (26), and \$k1 (27) are reserved for use by the assembler and operating system.

Registers \$a0-\$a3 (4-7) are used to pass the first four arguments to routines (remaining arguments are passed on the stack). Registers \$v0 and \$v1 (2, 3) are used to return values from functions. Registers \$t0-\$t9 (8-15, 24, 25) are caller-saved registers used for temporary quantities that do not need to be preserved across calls. Registers \$s0-\$s7 (16-23) are caller-saved registers that hold long-lived values that should be preserved across calls.

Register \$sp (29) is the stack pointer, which points to the last location in use on the stack.³ Register \$fp (30) is the frame pointer.⁴ Register \$ra (31) is written with the return address for a call by the jal instruction.

Register \$gp (28) is a global pointer that points into the middle of a 64K block of memory in the heap that holds constants and global variables. The objects in this heap can be quickly accessed with a single load or store instruction.

In addition, coprocessor 0 contains registers that are useful to handle exceptions. SPIM does not implement all of these registers, since they are not of much use in a simulator or are part of the memory system, which is not implemented. However, it does provide the following:

Register Name	Number	Usage
BadVAddr	8	Memory address at which address exception occurred
Status	12	Interrupt mask and enable bits
Cause	13	Exception type and pending interrupt bits
EPC	14	Address of instruction that caused exception

These registers are part of coprocessor 0's register set and are accessed by the lwc0, mfc0, mtc0, and swc0 instructions.

Figure 3 describes the bits in the Status register that are implemented by SPIM. The interrupt mask contains a bit for each of the five interrupt levels. If a bit is one, interrupts at that level are allowed. If the bit is zero, interrupts at that level are disabled. The low six bits of the Status register implement a three-level stack for the kernel/user and interrupt enable bits. The kernel/user bit is 0 if the program was running in the kernel when the interrupt occurred and 1 if it was in user mode. If the interrupt enable bit is 1, interrupts are allowed.

⁴The MIPS compiler does not use a frame pointer, so this register is used as callee-saved register \$s8.

³In earlier version of SPIM, \$sp was documented as pointing at the first free word on the stack (not the last word of the stack frame). Recent MIPS documents have made it clear that this was an error. Both conventions work equally well, but we choose to follow the real system.

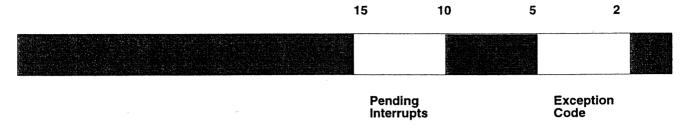


Figure 4: The Cause register.

If it is 0, they are disabled. At an interrupt, these six bits are shifted left by two bits, so the current bits become the previous bits and the previous bits become the old bits. The current bits are both set to 0 (i.e., kernel mode with interrupts disabled).

Figure 4 describes the bits in the Cause registers. The five pending interrupt bits correspond to the five interrupt levels. A bit becomes 1 when an interrupt at its level has occurred but has not been serviced. The exception code register contains a code from the following table describing the cause of an exception.

Number	Name	Description
0	INT	External interrupt
4	ADDRL	Address error exception (load or instruction fetch)
5	ADDRS	Address error exception (store)
6	IBUS	Bus error on instruction fetch
7	DBUS	Bus error on data load or store
8	SYSCALL	Syscall exception
9	BKPT	Breakpoint exception
10	RI	Reserved instruction exception
12	OVF	Arithmetic overflow exception

2.2 Byte Order

Processors can number the bytes within a word to make the byte with the lowest number either the leftmost or rightmost one. The convention used by a machine is its *byte order*. MIPS processors can operate with either *big-endian* byte order:

or *little-endian* byte order:

SPIM operates with both byte orders. SPIM's byte order is determined by the byte order of the underlying hardware running the simulator. On a DECstation 3100, SPIM is little-endian, while on a HP Bobcat, Sun 4 or PC/RT, SPIM is big-endian.

2.3 Addressing Modes

MIPS is a load/store architecture, which means that only load and store instructions access memory. Computation instructions operate only on values in registers. The bare machine provides only one memory addressing mode: c(rx), which uses the sum of the immediate

(integer) c and the contents of register rx as the address. The virtual machine provides the following addressing modes for load and store instructions:

Format	Address Computation	
(register)	contents of register	
imm	immediate	
imm (register)	immediate + contents of register	
symbol	address of symbol	
symbol ± imm	address of symbol + or - immediate	
$ $ symbol \pm imm (register)	address of symbol + or - (immediate + contents of register)	

Most load and store instructions operate only on aligned data. A quantity is *aligned* if its memory address is a multiple of its size in bytes. Therefore, a halfword object must be stored at even addresses and a full word object must be stored at addresses that are a multiple of 4. However, MIPS provides some instructions for manipulating unaligned data.

2.4 Arithmetic and Logical Instructions

In all instructions below, Src2 can either be a register or an immediate value (a 16 bit integer). The immediate forms of the instructions are only included for reference. The assembler will translate the more general form of an instruction (e.g., add) into the immediate form (e.g., addi) if the second argument is constant.

abs Rdest, Rsrc Absolute Value †
Put the absolute value of the integer from register Rsrc in register Rdest.

add Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

addi Rdest, Rsrc1, Imm

Addition (with overflow)

Addition Immediate (with overflow)

Addition (without overflow)

Addition Immediate (without overflow)

Addition Immediate (without overflow)

Put the sum of the integers from register Rsrc1 and Src2 (or Imm) into register Rdest.

and Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

andi Rdest, Rsrc1, Imm

AND Immediate

Put the logical AND of the integers from register Rsrc1 and Src2 (or Imm) into register Rdest.

div Rsrc1, Rsrc2Divide (signed)divu Rsrc1, Rsrc2Divide (unsigned)

Divide the contents of the two registers. divu treats is operands as unsigned values. Leave the quotient in register 10 and the remainder in register hi. Note that if an operand is negative, the remainder is unspecified by the MIPS architecture and depends on the conventions of the machine on which SPIM is run.

div Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

divu Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Divide (signed, with overflow) †

Divide (unsigned, without overflow) †

Put the quotient of the integers from register Rsrc1 and Src2 into register Rdest. divu treats is operands as unsigned values.

mul Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

mulo Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Multiply (without overflow) †

Multiply (with overflow) †

mulou Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Unsigned Multiply (with overflow) †

Put the product of the integers from register Rsrc1 and Src2 into register Rdest.

mult Rsrc1, Rsrc2

Multiply

multu Rsrc1, Rsrc2

Unsigned Multiply

Multiply the contents of the two registers. Leave the low-order word of the product in register lo and the high-word in register hi.

neg Rdest, Rsrc

Negate Value (with overflow) †

negu Rdest, Rsrc

Negate Value (without overflow) †

Put the negative of the integer from register Rsrc into register Rdest.

nor Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

NOR

Put the logical NOR of the integers from register Rsrc1 and Src2 into register Rdest.

not Rdest, Rsrc

 NOT^{\dagger}

Put the bitwise logical negation of the integer from register Rsrc into register Rdest.

or Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

OR

ori Rdest, Rsrc1, Imm

OR Immediate

Put the logical OR of the integers from register Rsrc1 and Src2 (or Imm) into register Rdest.

rem Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Remainder †

remu Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Unsigned Remainder †

Put the remainder from dividing the integer in register Rsrc1 by the integer in Src2 into register Rdest. Note that if an operand is negative, the remainder is unspecified by the MIPS architecture and depends on the conventions of the machine on which SPIM is run.

rol Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Rotate Left †

ror Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Rotate Right †

Rotate the contents of register Rsrc1 left (right) by the distance indicated by Src2 and put the result in register Rdest.

sll Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Shift Left Logical

sllv Rdest, Rsrc1, Rsrc2

Shift Left Logical Variable

sra Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Shift Right Arithmetic

srav Rdest, Rsrc1, Rsrc2

Shift Right Arithmetic Variable

srl Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Shift Right Logical

srlv Rdest, Rsrc1, Rsrc2

Shift Right Logical Variable

Shift the contents of register Rsrc1 left (right) by the distance indicated by Src2 (Rsrc2) and put the result in register Rdest.

sub Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Subtract (with overflow)

subu Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Subtract (without overflow)

Put the difference of the integers from register Rsrc1 and Src2 into register Rdest.

xor Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

XOR

xori Rdest, Rsrc1, Imm

XOR Immediate

Put the logical XOR of the integers from register Rsrc1 and Src2 (or Imm) into register Rdest.

2.5 Constant-Manipulating Instructions

li Rdest, imm

Load Immediate †

Move the immediate imm into register Rdest.

lui Rdest, imm

Load Upper Immediate

Load the lower halfword of the immediate imm into the upper halfword of register Rdest. The lower bits of the register are set to 0.

2.6 Comparison Instructions

In all instructions below, Src2 can either be a register or an immediate value (a 16 bit integer).

seq Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Equal †

Set register Rdest to 1 if register Rsrc1 equals Src2 and to be 0 otherwise.

sge Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Greater Than Equal †

sgeu Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Greater Than Equal Unsigned †

Set register Rdest to 1 if register Rsrc1 is greater than or equal to Src2 and to 0 otherwise.

sgt Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Greater Than †

sgtu Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Greater Than Unsigned †

Set register Rdest to 1 if register Rsrc1 is greater than Src2 and to 0 otherwise.

sle Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Less Than Equal †

sleu Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Less Than Equal Unsigned †

Set register Rdest to 1 if register Rsrc1 is less than or equal to Src2 and to 0 otherwise.

slt Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Less Than

slti Rdest, Rsrc1, Imm

Set Less Than Immediate

sltu Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Less Than Unsigned

sltiu Rdest, Rsrc1, Imm

Set Less Than Unsigned Immediate

Set register Rdest to 1 if register Rsrc1 is less than Src2 (or Imm) and to 0 otherwise.

sne Rdest, Rsrc1, Src2

Set Not Equal †

Set register Rdest to 1 if register Rsrc1 is not equal to Src2 and to 0 otherwise.

2.7 Branch and Jump Instructions

In all instructions below, Src2 can either be a register or an immediate value (integer). Branch instructions use a signed 16-bit offset field; hence they can jump $2^{15} - 1$ instructions (not bytes) forward or 2^{15} instructions backwards. The jump instruction contains a 26 bit address field.

b label

Branch instruction †

Unconditionally branch to the instruction at the label.

bczt label

Branch Coprocessor z True

bczf label

Branch Coprocessor z False

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if coprocessor z's condition flag is true (false).

beq Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on Equal

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of register Rsrc1 equals Src2.

beqz Rsrc, label

Branch on Equal Zero †

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of Rsrc equals 0.

bge Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on Greater Than Equal †

bgeu Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on GTE Unsigned †

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of register Rsrc1 are greater than or equal to Src2.

bgez Rsrc, label

Branch on Greater Than Equal Zero

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of Rsrc are greater than or equal to 0.

bgezal Rsrc, label

Branch on Greater Than Equal Zero And Link

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of Rsrc are greater than or equal to 0. Save the address of the next instruction in register 31.

bgt Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on Greater Than †

bgtu Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on Greater Than Unsigned †

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of register Rsrc1 are greater than Src2.

bgtz Rsrc, label

Branch on Greater Than Zero

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of Rsrc are greater than 0.

ble Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on Less Than Equal †

bleu Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on LTE Unsigned †

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of register Rsrc1 are less than or equal to Src2.

blez Rsrc, label

Branch on Less Than Equal Zero

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of Rsrc are less than or equal to 0.

bgezal Rsrc, label

Branch on Greater Than Equal Zero And Link

bltzal Rsrc, label

Branch on Less Than And Link

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of Rsrc are greater or equal to 0 or less than 0, respectively. Save the address of the next instruction in register 31.

blt Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on Less Than †

bltu Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on Less Than Unsigned †

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of register Rsrc1 are less than Src2.

bltz Rsrc, label

Branch on Less Than Zero

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of Rsrc are less than 0.

bne Rsrc1, Src2, label

Branch on Not Equal

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of register Rsrc1 are not equal to Src2.

bnez Rsrc, label

Branch on Not Equal Zero †

Conditionally branch to the instruction at the label if the contents of Rsrc are not equal to 0.

i label

Jump

Unconditionally jump to the instruction at the label.

jal label

Jump and Link

jalr Rsrc

Jump and Link Register

Unconditionally jump to the instruction at the label or whose address is in register Rsrc. Save the address of the next instruction in register 31.

jr Rsrc

Jump Register

Unconditionally jump to the instruction whose address is in register Rsrc.

2.8 Load Instructions

la Rdest, address

Load Address †

Load computed address, not the contents of the location, into register Rdest.

lb Rdest, address

Load Byte

lbu Rdest, address

Load Unsigned Byte

Load the byte at *address* into register Rdest. The byte is sign-extended by the 1b, but not the 1bu, instruction.

ld Rdest, address

Load Double-Word †

Load the 64-bit quantity at address into registers Rdest and Rdest + 1.

lh Rdest, address

 $Load\ Halfword$

lhu Rdest, address

Load Unsigned Halfword

Load the 16-bit quantity (halfword) at address into register Rdest. The halfword is sign-extended by the 1h, but not the lhu, instruction

lw Rdest, address

Load Word

Load the 32-bit quantity (word) at address into register Rdest.

lwcz Rdest, address

Load Word Coprocessor

Load the word at address into register Rdest of coprocessor z (0-3).

lwl Rdest, address

Load Word Left

lwr Rdest, address

Load Word Right

Load the left (right) bytes from the word at the possibly-unaligned address into register Rdest.

ulh Rdest, address

Unaligned Load Halfword †

ulhu Rdest, address

Unaligned Load Halfword Unsigned †

Load the 16-bit quantity (halfword) at the possibly-unaligned address into register Rdest. The halfword is sign-extended by the ulh, but not the ulhu, instruction

ulw Rdest, address

Unaligned Load Word †

Load the 32-bit quantity (word) at the possibly-unaligned address into register Rdest.

2.9 Store Instructions

sb Rsrc, address

Store Byte

Store the low byte from register Rsrc at address.

sd Rsrc, address

Store Double-Word †

Store the 64-bit quantity in registers Rsrc and Rsrc + 1 at address.

sh Rsrc, address

Store Halfword

Store the low halfword from register Rsrc at address.

sw Rsrc, address

Store Word

Store the word from register Rsrc at address.

swcz Rsrc, address

Store Word Coprocessor

Store the word from register Rsrc of coprocessor z at address.

swl Rsrc, address

Store Word Left

swr Rsrc, address

Store Word Right

Store the left (right) bytes from register Rsrc at the possibly-unaligned address.

ush Rsrc, address

Unaligned Store Halfword †

Store the low halfword from register Rsrc at the possibly-unaligned address.

usw Rsrc, address

Unaligned Store Word †

Store the word from register Rsrc at the possibly-unaligned address.

2.10 Data Movement Instructions

move Rdest, Rsrc

Move †

Move the contents of Rsrc to Rdest.

The multiply and divide unit produces its result in two additional registers, hi and lo. These instructions move values to and from these registers. The multiply, divide, and remainder instructions described above are pseudoinstructions that make it appear as if this unit operates on the general registers and detect error conditions such as divide by zero or overflow.

mfhi Rdest

Move From hi

mflo Rdest

Move From lo

Move the contents of the hi (lo) register to register Rdest.

mthi Rdest
mtho Rdest

Move To hi
Move To lo

Move the contents register Rdest to the hi (lo) register.

Coprocessors have their own register sets. These instructions move values between these registers and the CPU's registers.

mfcz Rdest, CPsrc

Move From Coprocessor z

Move the contents of coprocessor z's register CPsrc to CPU register Rdest.

mfc1.d Rdest, FRsrc1

Move Double From Coprocessor 1[†]

Move the contents of floating point registers FRsrc1 and FRsrc1 + 1 to CPU registers Rdest and Rdest + 1.

mtcz Rsrc, CPdest

Move To Coprocessor z

Move the contents of CPU register Rsrc to coprocessor z's register CPdest.

2.11 Floating Point Instructions

The MIPS has a floating point coprocessor (numbered 1) that operates on single precision (32-bit) and double precision (64-bit) floating point numbers. This coprocessor has its own registers, which are numbered \$f0-\$f31. Because these registers are only 32-bits wide, two of them are required to hold doubles. To simplify matters, floating point operations only use even-numbered registers—including instructions that operate on single floats.

Values are moved in or out of these registers a word (32-bits) at a time by lwc1, swc1, mtc1, and mfc1 instructions described above or by the l.s, l.d, s.s, and s.d pseudoinstructions described below. The flag set by floating point comparison operations is read by the CPU with its bc1t and bc1f instructions.

In all instructions below, FRdest, FRsrc1, FRsrc2, and FRsrc are floating point registers (e.g., \$f2).

abs.d FRdest, FRsrc

abs.s FRdest, FRsrc

Floating Point Absolute Value Double

Floating Point Absolute Value Single

Compute the absolute value of the floating float double (single) in register FRsrc and put it in register FRdest.

add.d FRdest, FRsrc1, FRsrc2

add.s FRdest, FRsrc1, FRsrc2

Floating Point Addition Double
Floating Point Addition Single
Compute the sum of the floating float doubles (singles) in registers FRsrc1 and FRsrc2 and put it in register FRdest.

c.eq.d FRsrc1, FRsrc2

c.eq.s FRsrc1, FRsrc2

Compare Equal Double

Compare Equal Single

Compare the floating point double in register FRsrc1 against the one in FRsrc2 and set the floating point condition flag true if they are equal.

c.le.d FRsrc1, FRsrc2

c.le.s FRsrc1, FRsrc2

Compare Less Than Equal Double

Compare Less Than Equal Single

Compare the floating point double in register FRsrc1 against the one in FRsrc2 and set the

floating point condition flag true if the first is less than or equal to the second.