# Calypsi C compiler guide for the 6502

***Release 5.18***

**Håkan Thörngren**

**Jul 15, 2026**

# Contents


1 Introduction 1
- 1.1 Using this guide . . . 1
- 1.2 Copyright notice . . . 1
- 1.3 Disclaimer . . . 2

2 Installation 3
- 2.1 macOS . . . 3
- 2.2 Debian Linux . . . 4
- 2.3 Fedora Linux . . . 4
- 2.4 Arch and Manjaro Linux . . . 5
- 2.5 Windows . . . 5
- 2.6 Using multiple versions . . . 6

3 Tutorial 7
- 3.1 Simulator . . . 7
- 3.2 Commodore 64 . . . 8
- 3.3 MEGA65 . . . 9

4 Getting started 13
- 4.1 C language . . . 13
- 4.2 File extensions . . . 14
- 4.3 Building applications . . . 14
- 4.4 Configuring . . . 15
- 4.5 Low level control . . . 16
- 4.6 Example projects . . . 17

5 Data storage 19
- 5.1 Ways to store data . . . 19
- 5.2 Address spaces . . . 20

6 Placing code and data 23
- 6.1 Sections . . . 23
- 6.2 Data initialization . . . 26
- 6.3 Stack . . . 26

7 C language 27
- 7.1 Overview . . . 27

7.2 Extensions . . . 27

8 Efficient coding 29
8.1 Data types . . . 29
8.2 Use prototypes . . . 30
8.3 Use tables . . . 31

9 Target specifics 33
9.1 Board support . . . 33
9.2 Commodore 64 . . . 34
9.3 MEGA65 . . . 36
9.4 Commander X16 . . . 39
9.5 Linking . . . 41
9.6 Banked linking . . . 41

10 Running the compiler 43
10.1 Basic invocation . . . 43
10.2 Include search path . . . 44
10.3 Compiler output . . . 44
10.4 Diagnostics . . . 46
10.5 Command line options . . . 48

11 Data representation 57
11.1 Basic types . . . 57
11.2 Structure types . . . 60
11.3 Union types . . . 60
11.4 Enumeration types . . . 61
11.5 Type qualifiers . . . 62
11.6 Type definitions . . . 64
11.7 Alignment . . . 64

12 Extended attributes 65
12.1 Overview . . . 65
12.2 Using attributes . . . 65
12.3 Attribute reference . . . 66

13 Language extensions 71
13.1 Overloaded functions . . . 71
13.2 Statement expressions . . . 71
13.3 Auto type . . . 72
13.4 Typeof . . . 73
13.5 Generics . . . 73

14 Pragma directives 75
14.1 Pragma directives reference . . . 75

15 Intrinsic functions 79
15.1 Intrinsic functions reference . . . 79

16 Preprocessor 85
16.1 Overview . . . 85

17 Section reference 91
17.1 Section overview . . . 91
17.2 Sections used by the compiler . . . 92

18 Runtime library 97
18.1 Design considerations . . . 97
18.2 Using the library . . . 98
18.3 Provided library files . . . 98
18.4 Stubs interface . . . 99
18.5 Examine use of library . . . 103
18.6 Library on a diet . . . 104
18.7 Override library functions . . . 105
18.8 C startup . . . 105
18.9 Time and date . . . 106
18.10 Rebuilding the C library . . . 107

19 The optimizer 109
19.1 Overview . . . 109
19.2 Function inlining . . . 110
19.3 Cross call . . . 113

20 Assembly language interface 115
20.1 Intrinsic functions . . . 115
20.2 Assembly functions . . . 115
20.3 Calling convention . . . 118
20.4 Inline assembler . . . 119

21 Assembler 123
21.1 Overview . . . 123
21.2 Syntax . . . 123
21.3 6502 assembly . . . 124
21.4 Sections . . . 125
21.5 Expressions . . . 126
21.6 Numeric constants . . . 127
21.7 Location counter . . . 127
21.8 Local labels . . . 127
21.9 Directives . . . 128
21.10 Relocations . . . 133
21.11 Macro language . . . 136

22 Running the assembler 139
22.1 Basic invocation . . . 139
22.2 Include search path . . . 140
22.3 Assembler output . . . 140
22.4 Command line options . . . 147

23 Linker 151
23.1 Running the linker . . . 151
23.2 Linking process . . . 152
23.3 Simplified placement rules . . . 152
23.4 ROM based systems . . . 153
23.5 Host based systems . . . 154
23.6 Objects . . . 154
23.7 Memory . . . 156
23.8 Linker rules file . . . 157
23.9 Scatter . . . 160
23.10 Linker list files . . . 161
23.11 Output formats . . . 165
23.12 More on linker rules . . . 167

23.13 Command line options . . . 167

24 Librarian 175
24.1 Creating a library . . . 175
24.2 File format . . . 175
24.3 Command line options . . . 175

25 Debugger introduction 177
25.1 Command line debugger . . . 177
25.2 Running the debugger . . . 178
25.3 Command line options . . . 178

26 Console command line 183
26.1 Command structure . . . 183
26.2 A simple debugging session . . . 184

27 Remote debugging 189
27.1 Serial port . . . 189

28 Visual Studio Code 191
28.1 Installation . . . 192
28.2 Project setup . . . 193
28.3 Building . . . 193
28.4 Running the debugger . . . 193

29 Lua scripting 197
29.1 Running a script . . . 197
29.2 Lua environments . . . 198
29.3 Command interpreters . . . 198
29.4 Console commands . . . 198
29.5 MI commands . . . 199
29.6 Adapted MI commands . . . 199
29.7 Choosing a command set . . . 199
29.8 Arrays and Lua . . . 199
29.9 Debugger API . . . 199

30 Lua data types reference 201
30.1 Address . . . 201
30.2 Adapted MI functions . . . 202

31 Lua function reference 203
31.1 Execution . . . 203
31.2 Breakpoint . . . 203

Index 205

CHAPTER 1

# Introduction

Welcome to the Calypsi C compiler tool chain for the 6502. This guide provides reference information to help you optimize your use of the compiler toolchain suite. It also offers coding technique suggestions and insights into design and implementation choices made for this C compiler.

## 1.1 Using this guide

This guide is aimed for those programming the 6502 and provides in depth reference information on how to use the the Calypsi C compiler tool chain.

You should have a working knowledge of:

- The 6502 architecture
- The C programming language
- The operating system of your computer
- The text editor or IDE of your choice

## 1.2 Copyright notice

Copyright Håkan Thörngren.

This document is under copyright and may not be reproduced without the written consent from Håkan Thörngren.

The Calypsi C compiler tool chain is licensed and must be used according to its terms.

The C library runtime is based on NuttX, which is under the Apache license. The license can be found in `"Licenses/C Library License"` within the installation directory. Assembly-written runtime parts are covered by the the Calypsi C compiler tool chain license, imposing no royalties or obligations when used with this product.

The Calypsi C compiler tool chain internally uses several open source components. Their licenses are in the `"Licenses/Internal component licenses/"` directory within the installation directory. These licenses do not impose obligations on any application built with the Calypsi C compiler tool chain.

The 64-bit floating-point library routines are implemented using the Berkeley SoftFloat library. Its license is found in `Licenses/Berkeley SoftFloat License` in the installation directory. This license applies only when using the `long double` type or the `--64bit-doubles` command-line option. It carries the obligation to include its copyright and license with any product that uses the Berkeley SoftFloat library.

---

Note: The runtime library does not contain any GPL licensed code and does not impose any royalty. Some components as outlined above do carry some obligations, e.g. to mention that they are included in a final product.

---

## 1.3 Disclaimer

What is described in this document is subject to change without notice and does not represent any commitments. While what is described in this document is believed to be accurate, Håkan Thörngren takes no responsibility for any errors or omissions.

In no event shall Håkan Thörngren, its employees, its contractors, or the authors of this document be liable for special, direct, indirect, or consequential damage, losses, costs, charges, claims, demands, claim for lost profits, fees, or expenses of any nature or kind.

CHAPTER 2

# Installation

This section contains installation information for supported platforms.

## 2.1 macOS

The macOS installer places the tools under `/usr/local`. Simply double-click the installation package to install the software.

After installation, files are in `/usr/local/calypsi-6502-5.18`, where `5.18` is the installed version. Each the Calypsi C compiler tool chain release creates a new directory, preventing overwrites of previous installations.

To simplify tool invocation, the installer script adds symbolic links from `/usr/local/bin` to the installation directory. Ensure `/usr/local/bin` is in your `PATH` environment variable to use the most recent installed version of the Calypsi C compiler tool chain. The installer also creates a symbolic link from `/usr/local/lib/calypsi-6502` to the installation directory, making it easy to refer to the installation without a version number.

### 2.1.1 Setting the PATH

To set the `PATH` environment variable on macOS, edit `/etc/paths` and add `/usr/local/bin`.

### 2.1.2 Uninstalling

To uninstall the Calypsi C compiler tool chain, run the uninstall script:

```
$ sudo /usr/local/lib/calypsi-6502-5.18/uninstall
```

This will remove the installation and the links in `/usr/local/bin`.

## 2.2 Debian Linux

The Debian package (`.deb` extension) is built and tested on Ubuntu 20.04. Installation on other Debian-based systems may be possible, but remains untested.

The package can be installed from the command line using:

```
$ sudo gdebi calypsi-6502-5.18.deb
```

Note: Download the Debian package to a local file before installation. `gdebi` does not fetch packages from a server.

If you do not have `gdebi` installed already, install it using:

```
$ sudo apt install gdebi-core
```

This installs the Calypsi C compiler tool chain in `/usr/local/lib/calypsi-6502-5.18`, where `5.18` is the installed version number.

To simplify tool invocation, the installer script adds symbolic links from `/usr/local/bin` to the installation directory. Ensure `/usr/local/bin` is in your `PATH` to use the latest the Calypsi tool chain. The installer also creates a symbolic link from `/usr/local/lib/calypsi-6502` to the installation directory. This allows referring to the installation without a version number.

It is also possible to install using `dpkg` in the following way:

```
$ sudo dpkg -i calypsi-6502-5.18.deb
```

This may fail if package dependencies are missing. The output will advise on necessary steps before retrying installation.

After installing any requested dependencies, retry the sudo dpkg installation command.

### 2.2.1 Uninstalling

To uninstall the Calypsi C compiler tool chain, use `dpkg` with the `-r` flag:

```
$ sudo dpkg -r calypsi-6502
```

## 2.3 Fedora Linux

The Fedora package (`.rpm` extension) is built and tested with Fedora version 40. Installation on other `.rpm` (Red Hat) based Linux systems may be possible, but remains untested.

The package file can be installed from the command line using:

```
$ sudo dnf install calypsi-6502-5.18-1.x86_64.rpm
```

Note: Download the package file to your local file system before installation.

This installs the Calypsi C compiler tool chain in `/usr/local/lib/calypsi-6502-5.18`, where `5.18` is the installed version number.

To simplify tool invocation, the installer script adds symbolic links from `/usr/local/bin` to the installation directory. Ensure `/usr/local/bin` is in your `PATH` to use the latest the Calypsi tool chain. The installer also creates a symbolic link from `/usr/local/lib/calypsi-6502` to the installation directory. This allows referring to the installation without a version number.

### 2.3.1 Uninstalling

To uninstall the Calypsi C compiler tool chain, use:

```
$ sudo dnf remove calypsi-6502-5.18-1.x86_64
```

## 2.4 Arch and Manjaro Linux

Manjaro is based on Arch Linux and uses `pacman`. Install the package file from the command line using:

```
$ sudo pacman -U calypsi-6502-5.18-x86_64.pkg.tar.zst
```

---

Note: Download the package file to your local file system before installation. `pacman -U` does not fetch packages from a server.

---

This installs the Calypsi C compiler tool chain in `/usr/local/lib/calypsi-6502-5.18`, where `5.18` is the installed version number.

To simplify tool invocation, the installer script adds symbolic links from `/usr/local/bin` to the installation directory. Ensure `/usr/local/bin` is in your `PATH` to use the latest the Calypsi tool chain. The installer also creates a symbolic link from `/usr/local/lib/calypsi-6502` to the installation directory. This allows referring to the installation without a version number.

### 2.4.1 Uninstalling

To uninstall the Calypsi C compiler tool chain, use `pacman` with the `-R` flag:

```
$ sudo pacman -R calypsi-6502
```

## 2.5 Windows

Extract the Windows product `calypsi-6502-5.18.zip` to a suitable location. It will expand into a folder `calypsi-6502-5.18`, allowing easy management of multiple versions.

### 2.5.1 Setting the PATH

To use the tools, add the bin folder inside the extracted archive to your system's search path. Search for "path" in the Start menu, then select "Edit the system environment variables - control panel".

### 2.5.2 Uninstalling

Uninstall by deleting the extracted archive via file explorer or command line.

## 2.6 Using multiple versions

On Linux, upgrading the software removes previous versions. On macOS, previously installed versions remain.

Sometimes it can be useful to have access to multiple versions of the software product. This can be done by copying the entire installation directory hierarchy to another location.

Use such copied installations by locally adjusting your `PATH` environment variable or by using an explicit path in the command line.

To remove a copied product, simply delete it. Do not run the `uninstall` script, as it will affect the normally installed copy.

---

Note: The software product is licensed under terms that govern copying and how it can be used.

---

# CHAPTER 3

# Tutorial

This chapter shows how to build and run a simple "Hello World" application on different targets.

The command line examples offer a clear understanding of the process. Tools can also be used with an IDE, but setup varies.

Beyond the Calypsi C compiler tool chain, you will need Make to control builds and Git to obtain projects. An internet connection is also required to download example projects.

## 3.1 Simulator

The `db6502` contains a simulator mode which is enabled by default. It mimics the 6502 architecture and allows the application to run on your host machine.

From a terminal or command line, copy the example project from the internet using:

```
$ git clone https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-6502-hello-world.git
```

Change to the newly cloned project directory:

```
$ cd calypsi-6502-hello-world
```

Build the project with:

```
$ make
cc6502 --core=6502 --debug --list-file=obj/main-debug.lst -o obj/main-debug.o src/main.c
ln6502 --debug -o hello.elf obj/main-debug.o linker.scm clib-6502.a --list-file=hello-debug.lst --cross-
↪reference --rtattr printf=reduced --semi-hosted
```

This will create an output file `hello.elf`. To run the application you can load it into the debugger using:

```
$ db6502 hello.elf
Calypsi debugger for 6502
(db6502)
```

By default, the debugger enters interactive command mode. Run the application using the `run` command:

```
(db6502) run
running
Hello World!
program exited normally
(db6502)
```

When you are done with the debugger, you can leave it using the `quit` command:

```
(db6502) quit
$
```

You can also run the program directly from the command prompt, without entering interactive mode. You need to provide the debugger with additional command-line options to run and terminate automatically:

```
$ db6502 hello.elf -e run --terminate-on-program-exit
Calypsi debugger for 6502
run
running
Hello World!
program exited normally
$
```

This tells the debugger to execute the command `run` and that termination of the application also means termination of the debugger.

## 3.2 Commodore 64

This section shows how to build the "Hello World" application for a Commodore 64 and run it on an emulator like VICE or on actual Commodore 64 hardware.

To create an application suitable to run on the Commodore 64, the linker need output the application in the PRG format. The provided `Makefile` is already configured to do this.

If you have not previously cloned the project, you can do so using:

```
$ git clone https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-6502-hello-world.git
```

Change directory to the just cloned project:

```
$ cd calypsi-6502-hello-world
```

When you are standing in the project folder, you can build the application for the Commodore 64 using:

```
$ make hello.prg
```

This will result in a program file `hello.prg`. In order to run it on a real Commodore 64 you will need to put it on some suitable storage media for the Commodore 64. To run it on the VICE emulator it can be specified on the command line:

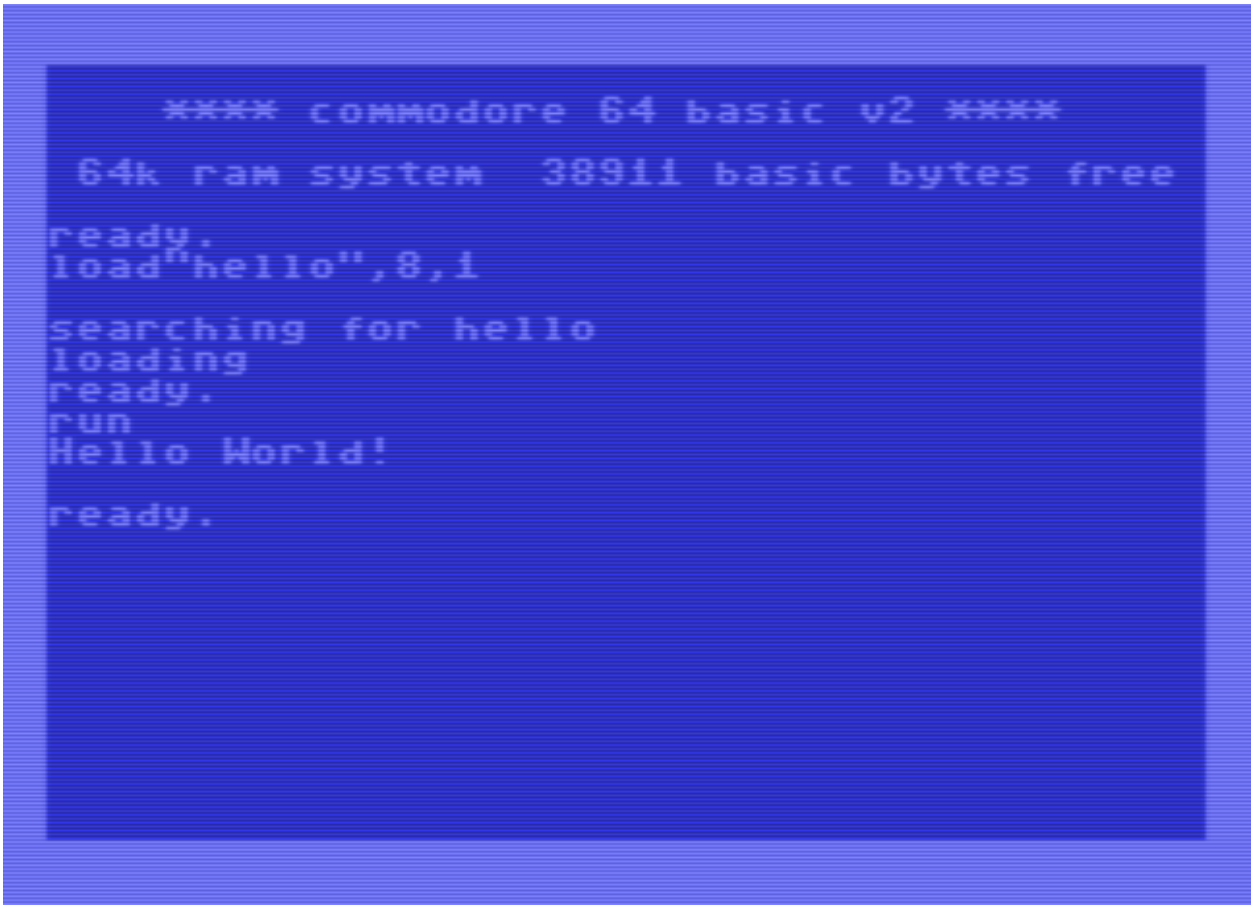
```
$ x64sc $(PWD)/hello.prg
```

This will put the application on a simulated drive and auto execute it from there. You can also load it as a program into memory with:

```
$ x64sc -autostartprgmode 1 $(PWD)/hello.prg
```

The `$(PWD)/` prefix is needed with some versions of VICE on macOS. You can try without it and it may work depending on the version of VICE used:

```
$ x64sc -autostartprgmode 1 hello.prg
```




Note: You may need to press the Shift and TAB keys to switch the Commodore 64 emulator into shifted PETSCII mode.

## 3.3 MEGA65

This section shows how to build the "Hello World" application for the MEGA65 and run it with the `xemu` emulator or actual MEGA65 hardware.

Note: You need to use ROM release version is 920395 and the 0.96 CORE (or later) for it to work.

To create an application suitable to run on the MEGA65, the linker need output the application in the PRG format. The provided `Makefile` is already configured to do this. You can clone the project in the following way:

```
$ git clone https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-MEGA65-hello-world.git
```

Change directory to the just cloned project:

```
$ cd Calypsi-MEGA65-hello-world
```

When you are standing in the project folder, you can build the application for the MEGA65 using:

```
$ make
```

This will result in application file named `hello.prg`. In order to run it on a real MEGA65 you will need to put it on some suitable storage media for the MEGA65. To run it on the `x16emu` emulator you can specify it on the command line:

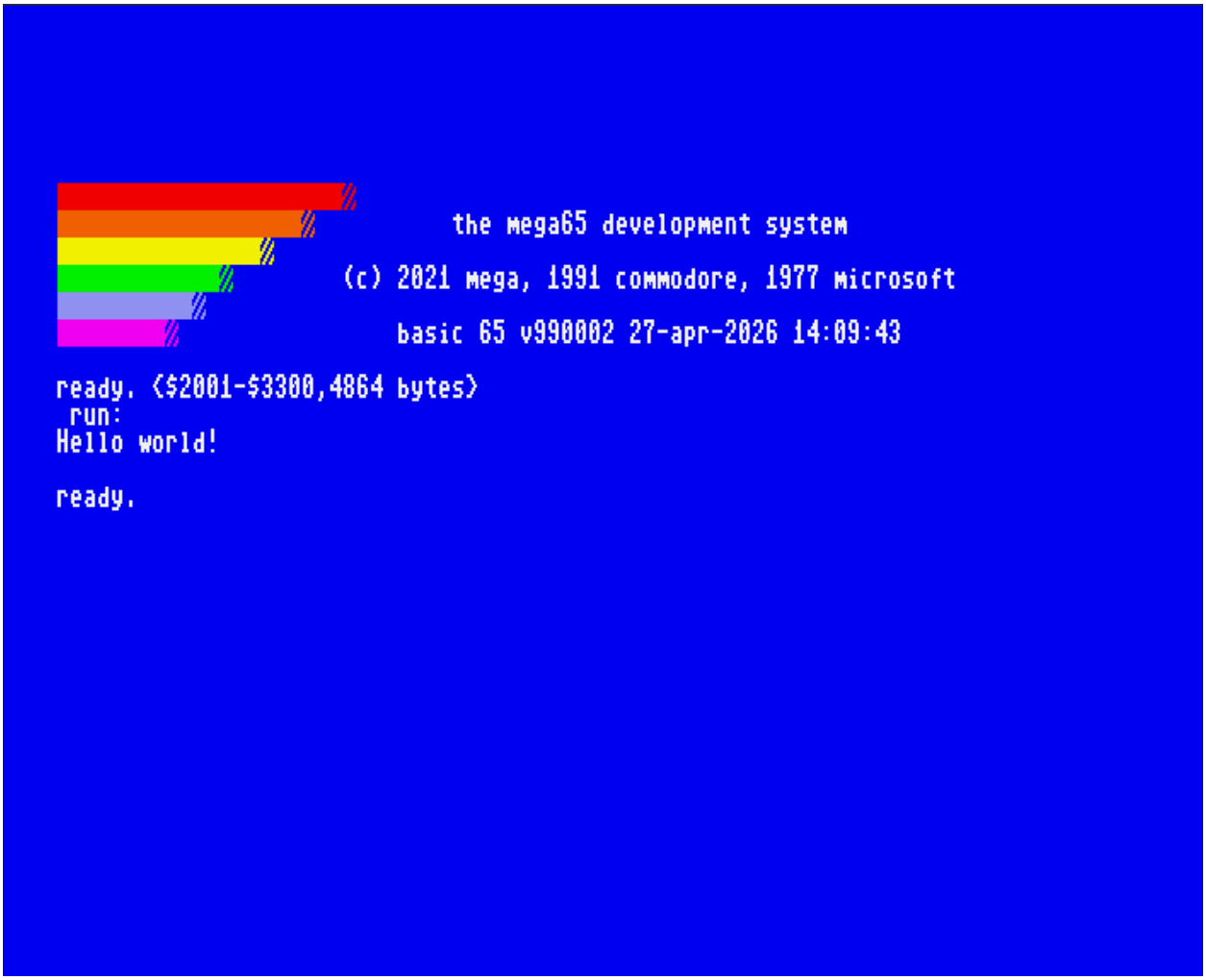
```
$ xemu -prg hello.prg
```

This will start the emulator and auto load the application. Type `run` to run the application.

---

Note: The application is actually a BASIC application which has a single `SYS` command that gives control to the C application.

---



Note: You may need to press the Shift and Alt keys to switch the MEGA65 emulator into shifted PETSCII mode.

# CHAPTER 4

# Getting started

This chapter provides an overview of using the compiler and its related tools.

## 4.1 C language

C is a widely used programming language. It is well-suited for hardware-level programming and also functions as a powerful, generic high-level language. It offers powerful abstractions over target machines, enabling efficient application development and precise control.

This implementation uses the ISO/IEC 9899:1999 standard, commonly known as C99. In this guide, it is referred to as Standard C.

### 4.1.1 Cross compiler

The compiler is a cross-compiler, running on a modern workstation but producing applications for more constrained target machines.

### 4.1.2 Supported devices

This Calypsi C compiler tool chain supports the standard MOS Technology 6502, the Sunplus 65B02, the Western Design Center 65C02 (with and without Rockwell extensions) and the 45GS02 in the MEGA65 8-bit computer. There have been other 6502 derivatives produced which can also be used by selecting one that matches its instruction set. As they all tend to have the base 6502 in common, the 6502 can be used a lowest common denominator.

## 4.2 File extensions

The following table shows the file extensions normally used with the Calypsi C compiler tool chain.

Table 4.1: File extensions

| Extension | Purpose |
|---|---|
| `.c` | C source |
| `.h` | C header source |
| `.s` | Assembler source |
| `.o` | ELF/DWARF object file |
| `.a` | Library (collection of object files) |
| `.lst` | List file |
| `.scm` | Linker rules |
| `.elf` | ELF/DWARF output (executable file) |
| `.hex` | Intel-hex output |
| `.srec` | Motorola S-record output |
| `.s19` | Motorola S-record output, 16-bit address records |
| `.s28` | Motorola S-record output, 24-bit address records |
| `.s37` | Motorola S-record output, 32-bit address records |
| `.raw` | Raw output |
| `.pgz` | Foenix binary format |
| `.prg` | Commodore 64 binary format |

## 4.3 Building applications

Applications can be built from source files and libraries. Source files, written in C or assembly language, are compiled into object files: C source files use `cc6502`, and assembly source files use `as6502`.

A library is a collection of object files produced by the `nlib` tool, combining them with an index into a single file. The C runtime library is provided as an example; third-party libraries are also supported.

The `ln6502` takes object files, libraries, and placement rules as input to construct the executable application.

### 4.3.1 Compiler

The compiler command-line interface processes a single source file to produce an object file:

```
$ cc6502 source.c
```

The object file produced will have the same base name as the input but with a `.o` file extension.

Note: You typically need command-line options to select the CPU core, runtime models, and other settings.

### 4.3.2 Assembler

C projects do not require knowledge of assembly language. C simplifies programming and enables portability across architectures.

However, for highly specific target code, deep-level control, or critical routines, the assembler is indispensable.

The assembler command-line interface is similar to the compiler, with the main difference being the file extension:

```
$ as6502 source.s
```

The produced object file has the same `.o` extension as the compiler.

---

Note: You may need to provide a `--core` option for the assembler to recognize the target exact machine instructions.

---

### 4.3.3 Linker

The linker combines object files and libraries to create an executable application.

A rules file is required by the linker to describe the memory system, including placement rules for code and data. Stack and heap sizes can also be specified in this file.

You can run the linker from the command line as:

```
$ ln6502 myfile1.o myfile2.o rules.scm
```

This simplified command produces `aout.elf`, an ELF binary.

There are many ways to tailor the output:

- Using hex output, in either Intel HEX or Motorola S-record file format
- RAW output, which is just plain binary output of a single memory area
- Commodore program files are similar to RAW but prefixed by a load address
- The `--debug` option includes DWARF debugging information in the ELF executable.

The linker can produce a list file with cross-reference information, showing memory usage, placement, and why certain library contents were included.

## 4.4 Configuring

Tune compiler code generation using various command-line options.

The most basic settings to consider are:

- The CPU core (`--core`) in use. This controls the exact instruction set.
- The data model, which affects how data are placed and accessed in memory.
- The size of the `double` floating point type.
- Optimization settings.

### 4.4.1 Core

The toolchain supports various 6502 variants, including the original 6502, Sunplus 65B02, WDC 65C02 (with or without Rockwell extensions), and the MEGA65 45GS02 cores.

### 4.4.2 Size of double

The `double` floating-point type uses IEEE 754 format and can be set to either 32 or 64 bits using `--32bit-doubles` or `--64bit-doubles`. It defaults to 32 bits if not specified.

The `float` type is always 32 bits, and the `long double` type is always 64 bits.

### 4.4.3 Optimization

Select the optimization level using the `-O` command-line option, which accepts a numeric argument of `1` or `2`.

The compiler applies a number of techniques to reduce the width of expressions, select efficient code sequences and dead code elimination, regardless of optimization settings.

The `-O` option enables further optimization to reduce the code memory footprint and typically increase execution speed.

## 4.5 Low level control

This section provides a brief overview of controlling access to specific memory and built-in functions, also known as intrinsics.

### 4.5.1 Extended keywords

The 6502 features a zero page short address area, offering more efficient access than arbitrary memory addresses.

You can specify zero page allocation using extension keywords like `__zpage` or `__attribute__((zpage))`.

### 4.5.2 Intrinsics

Intrinsics functions appear as ordinary calls but are special compiler constructs, emitting specific instruction sequences. To enable them, include the `calypsi/intrinsics6502.h` header file.

### 4.5.3 Assembly code

You can write functions in assembly language by following the C calling convention. These functions can be called from C in the same way as any C function.

## 4.6 Example projects

You can find some simple example projects in the `examples` sub-directory of the installation directory. For more information about the installation, see the Installation chapter.

There are a couple of "hello world" projects using different approaches, the `printf()` function typically adds quite a bit of overhead. There is also a minimal application to demonstrate that it is possible to get very small applications. The expression example is mainly intended to make it easy to play with variables in the debugger.

On Github you can find a work in progress board support package for the Commodore 64[1] and a hello project[2] which makes use of it.

[1] https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-6502-Commodore.git
[2] https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-6502-hello-world.git

CHAPTER 5

# Data storage

This chapter discusses controlling data placement and its impact on application efficiency.

The 6502 features a 64K address range for code and data. A key feature is the zero page, the first 256 bytes of memory, which the 6502 can address more quickly and efficiently than arbitrary addresses within the full 64K memory space.

Since the 6502 has only three single-byte registers, it quickly needs to use external resources for data storage, traditionally the stack. However, due to the small stack size and lack of efficient access to it, the C compiler allocates a 48-byte fast-access register area in the zero page. This area is evenly divided into two parts: one that survives a function call and one that does not.

Consequently, the compiler has ample fast pseudo-registers and rarely needs to allocate auto variables on the stack. This results in excellent performance, as most auto variable accesses occur in the fast zero page. All functions are also fully reentrant.

The downside is that some functions need to call a small runtime library routine to move data between the register area and the data stack to provide reentrant code.

This data stack is separate from the 6502 small hardware stack and can be as large as addressable memory (64K). However, you are still limited by the hardware stack for function return addresses, permitting function call nesting to a depth of about 100 levels.

## 5.1 Ways to store data

Data can be allocated as auto, static, or on the heap. Variable scope and the need for allocation during runtime determine placement.

As a general rule, use auto-allocated variables whenever possible. This offers the compiler maximum flexibility for resource allocation closest to the core, which typically results in the most efficient data access.

### 5.1.1 Auto variables

Auto variables include function parameters and local variables not defined with `static`. The compiler attempts to allocate these in processor registers or zero page pseudo registers; otherwise, the stack is used.

Auto variables are allocated only when used. Their registers can be reused for other auto variables or temporary data once no longer needed. This reuse also applies to stack locations.

Auto variables can have multiple live ranges; a variable with the same name might be used in distinct parts of a function. Internally, these are treated as different variables and may be allocated to various locations, potentially not existing between live ranges.

All auto variables associated with a function are deallocated upon function exit.

---

Note: If you take the address of an auto variable, you can pass its pointer to other functions, which is useful for temporary storage. However, avoid using such pointers outside their scope, as auto variables are deallocated on function exit. Be aware that taking an address allocates the variable on the stack, potentially increasing access cost compared to other auto variables.

---

### 5.1.2 Static variables

Global, module, or function static variables are allocated in global memory, occupying space for the application's duration.

Their visibility varies. A global variable is universally visible but requires `extern` for use. A module static variable, declared with `static` at file scope, is visible within one compilation unit. A static local variable within a function's scope is only visible there, retaining its value across function calls. Use `static` to differentiate it from an auto variable.

### 5.1.3 Dynamically allocated

A dynamically allocated variable is retrieved from a heap using the malloc function. This is useful when the required data size is unknown at program startup.

---

Note: Dynamically allocated variables are a potential problem in memory constrained systems if the program is left running for a long time due to heap fragmentation.

---

## 5.2 Address spaces

The compiler provides multiple address spaces, which are addressable memory areas with specific properties:

- Address width for pointers
- Width of the associated integral index type
- Different instruction sequences for accessing various address spaces
- An extension keyword or type attribute name
- Section names tied to the address space for linking control

Address space attributes are always active in the compiler.

The Calypsi C compiler tool chain provides two address spaces, zero page and the default 16 bits memory that can point to any address in the full 64K range.

All unqualified pointers are 16 bits wide. There is no keyword or address space attribute provided to explicitly describe them.

### 5.2.1 Zero page

The zero page address space is the lowest 256 bytes of memory, using the address range `0x00-0xff`. A zero page pointer is 8 bits wide and occupies a single byte when stored in memory.

As it is only 256 bytes and shared with pseudo-registers, storage in the zero page is somewhat limited. However, careful use of the zero page can produce a more efficient application.

### 5.2.2 Default memory

The default memory address space is the full 64K address range `0x0000-0xffff`. A default memory pointer is 16 bits and occupies two bytes when stored to memory.

### 5.2.3 Far memory

The Far memory address space addresses the full memory range beyond 64K and is available on the MEGA65 target.

### 5.2.4 Huge memory

The Huge memory address space addresses the full memory range beyond 64K and is available on the MEGA65 target.

The size of a data object is limited only by available memory.

### 5.2.5 Summary

The following table summarizes the available address spaces.

Table 5.1: Address spaces

| Memory type | Keyword | Address range | Pointer size | Index type |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Zero page | `__zpage` | `0x00-0xff` | 8 bits | `int8_t` |
| Default | N/A | `0x0000-0xffff` | 16 bits | `int16_t` |

When the 45GS02 for the MEGA65 is enabled, the following additional data pointers are available:

Table 5.2: Additional MEGA65 address spaces

| Memory type | Keyword | Address range | Pointer size | Index type |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Far | `__far` | `0x00000000-0xffffffff` | 32 bits | `int16_t` |
| Huge | `__huge` | `0x00000000-0xffffffff` | 32 bits | `int32_t` |

### 5.2.6 Syntax

An address space attribute keyword such as `__zpage` is a type qualifier. Syntactically it works the same as other C language defined type qualifier, e.g. `const` and `volatile`.

The following declaration defines four variables in the Zero page address space:

```
__zpage int a, b;
int __zpage c, d;
```

The `__zpage` type qualifier applies to the closest type, `int` in this example. In C, the order between type qualifiers and types does not matter; they convey the same meaning.

### 5.2.7 Pointers

A pointer in C points to something in memory. Both the pointer itself and what it points to have types. As an example, the type `char *` is a pointer to a `char`.

Pointer types are easier to understand if you read them from right to left. The `*` is a pointer, so `char *` reads from right to left as "pointer to char". This order of reading is especially useful when you mix in type qualifiers in pointer types, as it makes it a lot easier to read and understand what the type means.

```
int __attribute__((zpage)) * p1;
long * __attribute__((zpage)) p2;
```

Here, `p1` is a pointer stored in default memory that points to an `int` in Zero page memory. `p2` is a pointer stored in Zero page memory that points to a `long` in default memory.

### 5.2.8 Structures

You can place a structure in a specified address space. This means that all its members are in that address space. You cannot override individual structure members using an address space keyword. It is however possible to have members of the structure that point to a different address space.

```
struct tag {
  int __zpage * p;
  int value;
};

struct tag __zpage myTag;
```

This is however not allowed:

```
struct tag {
  int * __zpage p;     /* incorrect */
  int __zpage value;   /* incorrect */
};
```

CHAPTER 6

# Placing code and data

When compiling for modern computers, code and data placement often requires minimal attention, as tools handle it effectively for same-machine targets.

Cross-compilation is more complex, requiring knowledge of the target system. Embedded systems are even more challenging, with widely varying memory systems necessitating precise control over code and data placement.

Effective embedded system tools provide control over code and data placement. This is achieved using building blocks that offer placement flexibility and control. The compiler assists by providing abstractions through type qualifiers, initializers, and runtime model settings, which simplify configuring the memory system.

## 6.1 Sections

A section is a unit of code or data. The compiler will place code and data into different sections which are saved as separate sections in the object file.

The compiler places data objects and functions into suitable sections following specific rules. For data objects, it considers if the object is `const`, its address space, and explicit initializers.

Table 6.1: Sections

| Section name | Type | Memory kind | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| code | text | ROM | Executable code |
| zdata | bss | RAM | Zero-initialized (bss) data |
| data | data | RAM | Initialized data |
| cdata | rodata | ROM | Constant data |
| zzpage | bss | RAM | Zero-initialized (bss) zero page data |
| zpage | data | RAM | Initialized zero page data |
| switch | rodata | ROM | Switch tables |
| izpage | rodata | ROM | Data initializers for zpage section |
| idata | rodata | ROM | Data initializers for data section |
| data_init_table | rodata | ROM | Data initializer table |
| registers | noinit | RAM | Pseudo registers in zero page |
| reset | text | ROM | Reset vector, when used |
| heap | noinit | RAM | Heap memory, for malloc() |
| stack | noinit | RAM | CPU stack, always in page 1 on the 6502 |
| cstack | noinit | RAM | C stack, simulated stack, anywhere in memory |
| zpsave | noinit | RAM | Commodore targets, save area for registers section |
| zfar | bss | RAM | Zero-initialized (bss) far data, MEGA65 only |
| far | data | RAM | Initialized far data, and MEGA65 only |
| cfar | rodata | ROM | Constant far data, MEGA65 only |
| ifar | rodata | ROM | Data initializers for far section, MEGA65 only |
| zhuge | bss | RAM | Zero-initialized (bss) huge data, MEGA65 only |
| huge | data | RAM | Initialized huge data, MEGA65 only |
| chuge | rodata | ROM | Constant huge data, MEGA65 only |
| ihuge | rodata | ROM | Data initializers for huge section, MEGA65 only |

The sections izpage, idata, ifar, ihuge, and data_init_table in the table above are linker generated.

Note: It is assumed that no ROM exists in the zero page. Consequently, constants placed in the zero page are placed in zpage (the normal RAM initialized zero page section), and the const attribute only affects the object type.

Note: The table assigns sections to ROM and RAM for ROM-based applications that start on power-up. For hosted systems loading from storage to RAM, this distinction is not applicable. Always consider ROM-marked sections as read-only.

Section types are derived from the UNIX world; see Section kinds in the assembler reference for details.

Note: When generating a ROM-executable application, the linker separates an initialized data section into two. Initializers go into a new i-prefixed section (placed in ROM); the data section is placed in RAM. The C runtime startup module copies initializers from ROM to RAM before giving control to the main() function.

### 6.1.1 Linking process

The linker reads object files with sections and a placement rules file. This file describes available memory areas and their permitted sections, optionally with additional placement constraints.

Memories containing actual value bits (program code or initialized data) are emitted in the executable.

An executable can serve as input for ROM or FLASH programmers, be loaded by the target machine, or be used by a debugger that connects to or simulates the target. Various executable formats are available to suit different execution environments.

---

Note: Although code and data are entirely separated into different sections, placing these sections together in the same memory may be desirable. This can be achieved at the link stage.

---

### 6.1.2 Placing sections in memory

The linker rules file uses file extension `.scm`, which is actually a source file in the Scheme language. However, you do not need to learn Scheme in order to use it, as it just a simple description of available memories and their associated properties. Sections are then bound to the memories. You can also define the size of the stack and heap in this file.

A simple example of such linker rules file is:

```
(define memories
  '((memory program (address (#x801 . #xbfff))  (type ROM))
    (memory data    (address (#xc000 . #xcfff)) (type RAM))
    ))
```

The Scheme interpreter evaluates the rules file, which defines a single global `memories` object. This object lists `memory` and block objects. Sections can be bound to memories either by specifying the memory type or by listing the sections within each memory.

The example simplifies memory system description. The linker deduces where compiler and linker-generated sections are placed; this requires specifying the memory type. To prevent automatic section placement in a memory, omit its type specification.

---

Note: You can specify a memory type and manually place custom sections. This is useful for sections requiring specific placement.

---

---

Note: Since the linker rules file is a Scheme program, it can theoretically construct the `memories` object via functions or macros. After evaluation, the Scheme interpreter is expected to leave a `memories` object in its global environment. However, a simple file like the example is usually sufficient.

---

## 6.2 Data initialization

A startup routine is performed before the `main()` function is called. This startup routine takes care of preparing the execution environment for the C program by initializing the stack pointer, initialize global variables and prepare system resources such as file streams and the heap, if used by the application.

### 6.2.1 Static data

Static data that needs to be initialized comes in two forms, zero initialized and those that have non-zero initializers. Zero initialization is done by filling such memory ranges with zero. Explicit initialization is done by copying an initializer section in ROM to its corresponding RAM area.

This process is table driven using a section named `data_init_table` which should be placed in the same memory as the `cdata` section, which holds constants.

---

Note: In a hosted environment, the linker provides the `--hosted` command-line option. This assumes the program image loads directly into RAM from external media. Variable initialization is done in-place via the load action; therefore, separate initializers are not required.

The `--target` option also has the effect of enabling running in a hosted environment.

---

## 6.3 Stack

The 6502 has a small 256-byte built-in stack for saving return addresses and registers. C variables are managed on a separate stack in the larger default memory, with arbitrary size up to 64K. Its stack pointer is a pseudo-register named `_Vsp` in the zero page.

These stacks help track the current execution state and enable the implementation of reentrant and recursive functions.

### 6.3.1 Stack size considerations

The stack sizes are defined in the linker rules file. The stack size should be set low as possible, but not any lower. If given too much space you are wasting RAM space not being used for anything. However, if set too small it will cause corruption of other data.

Exact stack use can be hard to predict and it is better to err on the side of some safety. Also during development of your application you may want to use a bit oversized stack if possible, to allow you to focus on other issues. In the end, you are most likely constrained by some fixed amount of RAM and need to balance how much you can use for the stack with the optional heap and statically allocated data.

CHAPTER 7

# C language

This chapter details the C language implementation, supporting the ISO/IEC 9899:1999 standard (C99).

## 7.1 Overview

For those accustomed to older C versions, C99 introduces several useful features:

- Declarations and statements can be mixed in the same block scope
- A declaration can be placed in the initialization expression of a `for` loop
- The `bool` datatype, available as `_Bool` or as `bool` after the `stdbool.h` header file has been included
- The `long long` data type
- C++ style comments
- Use of incomplete array at end of a structure
- Variable length arrays
- Initialization of compound objects by the use of designated initializers improve readability

## 7.2 Extensions

Language extensions are always enabled, encompassing various qualifier keywords, intrinsic functions, and additional library features.

CHAPTER 8

# Efficient coding

The Calypsi C compiler tool chain is designed for coding in memory-constrained environments, typically embedded systems. This chapter explores proper data type usage and considerations for both smaller and larger targets.

Even if your current coding targets a specific system, the code may evolve and migrate to different system sizes. This chapter discusses trade-offs between such environments.

## 8.1 Data types

Data type selection significantly impacts overall program size and execution speed. Here are some rules of thumb:

- Generally, use the smallest possible types.
- Floating-point operations are typically inefficient, consuming space and often executing slowly.
- Use variables with the narrowest possible scope.
- Avoid taking a variable's address. If necessary, limit its use as much as possible. The compiler cannot allocate such variables in registers (registers have no addresses), which prevents the optimizer from fully understanding how function calls affect the variable.

### 8.1.1 Integer types

While smallest types are recommended, for larger targets, `int` and `unsigned int` can be more efficient, often being the sweet spot.

The `stdint.h` header provides integer types useful for selecting appropriate sizes, optimizing efficiency, and ensuring portability.

A type like `uint_fast16_t` defines an unsigned integer of at least 16 bits, optimized for speed. An 8-bit target will use a 16-bit type, while a 32-bit target might choose a 32-bit type if its instruction set handles 32-bit operations more efficiently than 16-bit operations.

### 8.1.2 Floating point types

Floating-point operations are often implemented using assembly or C library routines, which consume code space and incur execution overhead.

Alternatively, use fixed-point integers (Q notation). For instance, a Q24.8 number has 24 integer bits and 8 fractional bits, allowing manipulation with standard integer operations. This requires scaling values, which is straightforward.

### 8.1.3 Implicit conversions

C's conversion rules aim to convert integers to `int` and `float` to `double`. This can introduce extra code. If this is a concern, you must understand these rules or examine the compiler's generated code.

---

Note: While studying generated assembly code may seem daunting, a basic understanding of its mechanics can be highly beneficial. The compiler can generate a list file (`-l` or `--list-file`) showing C code intermixed with the resulting assembly.

---

## 8.2 Use prototypes

Functions can be declared using two styles. Traditional C, which lacks prototypes, is not recommended as it hinders compiler error detection. Prototypes offer safer, more efficient code generation by avoiding certain type promotion rules that introduce extra code. Traditional style is supported only for compatibility with older code. In this style, a declaration does not specify parameters:

```
/* Traditional style */
int foo();   /* declaration */

int foo(c, i)   /* definition */
  char c;
  int i;
{
  return i - c;
}
```

In this case, the function takes a `char` parameter, which is promoted to `int` during the function call, introducing additional code.

Using prototypes with Standard C you specify parameters in the declaration:

```
/* Standard C prototype style */
int foo(char c, int i);   /* declaration */

int foo(char c, int i)   /* definition */
{
  return i - c;
}
```

In this case the `char` parameter is not promoted to `int` and is passed as a `char` type.

## 8.3 Use tables

Consider the trade-off between calculating a value and using a table for knowledge or operation encoding. For example, a sine operation in Q (fixed-point) notation can be approximated with a table lookup instead of calculation, making it very fast and compact.

# CHAPTER 9

# Target specifics

This chapter describes the built-in target-specific support.

The support is enabled using the `--target` option which has the following effects:

- Select a suitable default `--core`.
- Enable preprocessor macros to identify the target and core used. This can be used for conditional compilation, in both the compiler and the assembler.
- Additional target specific header files can be included using `#include <file.h>`.
- Enable certain language extensions to suit the target, if applicable. This will also affect certain aspects of the code generator to take advantage of extensions and capabilities of the target.
- When using `--target` the linker will assume a RAM based system where a program is loaded into memory and data sections are initialized by loading the data in place. This is a sensible default, but can be controlled using the `--rom-code` and `--copy-initialize` options.

The installation comes with header files, pre-built target specific board support link libraries and linker control files.

## 9.1 Board support

Enabling board support in the linker requires two conditions: First, specify the appropriate `--target` option. Second, use a supplied linker control file whose name corresponds to the board support.

For example, this means that to select to link with a Commander X16 board support you need to specify:

```
$ ln6502  --target=x16  cx16-plain.scm  [object-files]
```

For a MEGA65 target you would specify:

```
$ ln6502  --target=mega65  mega65-plain.scm  [object-files]
```

Note: If you need to alter the supplied linker rules file or create your own, name it with the same prefix name as the board support one. The linker will first look in the current directory for the `.scm` file, then in the installation directory.

The following table gives an overview of the board support definition.

Table 9.1: Board support definitions

| `--target` | name | core | kernel/OS | `.scm` prefix | PRG entry |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C64 | Commodore 64 | 6502 | Kernal | `c64-` | `0x801` |
| MEGA65 | MEGA65 | 45GS02 | Kernel | `mega65-` | `0x2001` |
| CX16 | Commander X16 | 65C02 | Kernel | `cx16-` | `0x801` |

## 9.2 Commodore 64

The Commodore 64 is a well-known classic computer using the 6502 core. The Calypsi C compiler tool chain supports creating Commodore 64 friendly interrupt functions using the `kernal_interrupt` attribute. While the Commodore 64 has the ability to swap in and out overlayed ROMs, it is otherwise a plain 64K addressed machine.

### 9.2.1 Board support

The board support includes C header files, a link library and linker control files. They originate from Commodore 64 board support[3] project. The current variant is built from commit hash `35aea85a36c5b1fa79eabc1de895c053aae2cf55`.

The header files come from the LLVM MOS SDK[4] project. The current variant is built from commit hash `a1ae3437888ef0a597f69019611390eb8159c2e4`.

### 9.2.2 Header files

The supplied header files are:

Table 9.2: Commodore 64 header files

| include path | description |
|---|---|
| `#include <c64.h>` | Includes all Commodore 64 headers |
| `#include <_6526.h>` | 6526 Complex Interface Adapter |
| `#include <_sid.h>` | SID sound chip |
| `#include <_vic2.h>` | VIC-II graphics chip |

[3] https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-6502-Commodore
[4] https://github.com/hth313/llvm-mos-sdk

### 9.2.3 Pre-built library

The Commodore 64 library, which includes startup code, exit handling, and I/O adaption between the C library and the C64 Kernal, comes pre-built. Your application is automatically linked with it if you specify `--target=64` and use a linker rules file starting with the `c64-` prefix:

```
$ ln6502  --target=c64  c64-plain.scm  [object-files]
```

The installation provides several library variants to accommodate different compiler settings, such as `double` size. The linker automatically selects a compatible variant for your application.

### 9.2.4 Linker rules

The linker rules use the `c64-` prefix. If you create your own linker rules file, naming it with this prefix ensures automatic linking with the supplied pre-built Commodore 64 library.

`c64-plain.scm`

```
(define memories
  '((memory program
            (address (#x801 . #x9fff)) (type any)
            (section (programStart #x801) (startup #x80e)))
    (memory zeroPage (address (#x2 . #xff)) (type ram) (qualifier zpage))
    (memory stackPage (address (#x100 . #x1ff)) (type ram))
    (memory freeSpace (address (#x02a7 . #x02ff)) (section zpsave))
    (memory upperdata
            (address (#xc000 . #xcfff))
            (section cstack zdata heap))
    ))
```

This memory system uses the full BASIC RAM area, allowing data to reside in the `0xc000` to `0xcfff` area.

### 9.2.5 Preserving the zero page

The C compiler runtime reserves approximately 50 bytes of zero page space. On a Commodore 64, the BASIC runtime reserves most of the zero page. Returning to BASIC with a corrupted state can make the BASIC runtime unstable.

If your application needs to return safely to BASIC, request these zero page locations be preserved. To enable preserving the C runtime zero page area, add the following line to your application:

```
#pragma require __preserve_zp
```

---

Note: If you run the application multiple times in RAM, non-zero static storage variables are left with their previous value and are not reinitialized when the `--target=c64` option is used. To properly initialize such variables on each run, you need to also use the `--rom-code` option.

---

## 9.3 MEGA65

The MEGA65 is a new 8 bit computer inspired by the Commodore 65. It comes with a 45GS02 instruction set which is a superset of the 6502 instruction set. The 45GS02 provides both additional instructions as well as new addressing modes.

The cc6502 compiler can generate code for the 45GS02 instruction set and it can also make use of its additional addressing modes. The 45GS02 provides 32 bit addressing modes to allow access the full memory space. The alternative bank system provided by the MEGA65 is not used by cc6502 compiler when accessing data beyond 64K.

Code banking on the other hand makes use of an 8K slot and the `MAP` instruction of the 45GS02.

The math co-processor on the MEGA65 is supported by the compiler which means it will inline integer multiply and unsigned divide. While the math unit is used, interrupts are disabled to prevent a potential race condition if an interrupt function also uses the math unit.

### 9.3.1 Board support

The board support includes C header files, a link library and linker control files. They originate from MEGA65 board support[5] project. The current variant is built from commit hash `35aea85a36c5b1fa79eabc1de895c053aae2cf55`.

The header files come from the LLVM MOS SDK[6] project. The current variant is built from commit hash `a1ae3437888ef0a597f69019611390eb8159c2e4`.

### 9.3.2 Header files

The supplied header files are:

Table 9.3: MEGA65 header files

| include path | description |
|---|---|
| `#include <mega65.h>` | Includes all MEGA65 headers |
| `#include <_sid.h>` | SID sound chip |
| `#include <_vic2.h>` | VIC-II graphics chip |
| `#include <_vic3.h>` | VIC-III graphics chip |
| `#include <_vic4.h>` | VIC-IV graphics chip |
| `#include <_6526.h>` | 6526 Complex Interface Adapter |
| `#include <_45E100.h>` | 45E100 Fast Ethernet controller |

[5] https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-6502-Commodore
[6] https://github.com/hth313/llvm-mos-sdk

### 9.3.3 Pre-built library

The MEGA65 library includes startup code, exit handling and I/O adaption between the C library and the MEGA65 kernel. It comes pre-built and your application will automatically be linked with it if you specify `--target=mega65` and use a linker rules file starting with the `mega65-` prefix:

```
$ ln6502  --target=mega65  mega65-plain.scm  [object-files]
```

The installation provides several library variants to accommodate different compiler settings, such as `double` size. The linker automatically selects a compatible variant for your application.

### 9.3.4 Linker rules

The linker rules are named with the `mega65-` prefix. If you create your own linker rules file, it is a good idea to name it with this prefix, as this will make the linker automatically link with the supplied pre-built MEGA65 library.

mega65-plain.scm

```
(define memories
  '((memory program
            (address (#x2001 . #x9fff)) (type any)
            (section (programStart #x2001) (startup #x200e)))
    (memory zeroPage (address (#x2 . #x7f)) (type ram) (qualifier zpage)
        (section (registers #x2)))
    (memory stackPage (address (#x100 . #x1ff)) (type ram))
    (memory freeSpace (address (#x1600 . #x1eff)) (section zpsave))
    ))
```

This describes memory system that uses the full BASIC memory area and keeps everything in the first 64K bank.

mega65-banked.scm

```
(define memories
  '((memory program
            (address (#x2001 . #x9fff)) (type any)
            (section (programStart #x2001) (startup #x200e)))
    (memory zeroPage (address (#x2 . #x7f)) (type ram) (qualifier zpage)
        (section (registers #x2)))
    (memory stackPage (address (#x100 . #x1ff)) (type ram))
    (memory freeSpace (address (#x1600 . #x1eff)) (section zpsave))
    (memory bank1  (address (#x10000 . #x1ffff)) (type data) (qualifier far))
    (memory bank45 (address (#x40000 . #x5ffff)) (type data) (qualifier far))
    ))
```

This describes memory system that uses the full BASIC memory area and allows Far data to be located in bank 1, 4 and 5.

### 9.3.5 Notes on 45GS02 instruction set

The assembler syntax used mostly follows the MEGA65 book. The 45GS02 uses some overloaded opcodes, e.g. for `NOP` and `NEG` instructions which may change the meaning depending of the instruction that follows. This is recognized and handled by the Calypsi tools.

Conditional long branch instruction deviates from the MEGA65 book in that they are prefixed by an `L` character, e.g. `LBCC` for a long branch on carry clear. This is done to distinguish them from the normal short form.

### 9.3.6 Data beyond 64K

The memory space attributes provided by the cc6502 compiler allows transparent access to the full memory. There are two pointer attributes `far` and `huge` which allows access to the full system memory. They differ in that `far` limits the object size to a single bank which is 64K. Any `far` C object is allocated into one such bank and is not allowed to cross a bank boundary.

If you need to use larger objects, then you can use the `huge` memory space. A `huge` object can be as large as the system memory allows.

Accessing data beyond 64K with either `far` or `huge` comes with some additional cost in terms of code space and execution time.

---

Note: The reason that `far` uses fictive 64K banks is to give better code generation as pointers arithmetics only need to update the lower 16 bits rather than the full 32-bit address.

---

### 9.3.7 Code beyond 64K

To access code outside the 64K memory the `MAP` instruction in the 45GS02 is used. This allows for memory blocks to be mapped into the 64K address space, but it has to be done with manually as no automatic tool support is provided.

### 9.3.8 Preserving the zero page

The C compiler runtime reserves roughly 50 bytes of zero page space. On a MEGA65 the zero page is mostly reserved by the BASIC runtime. Returning to BASIC with a corrupted state can make the BASIC runtime unstable.

If your application needs to return safely to BASIC, request these zero page locations be preserved. To enable preserving the C runtime zero page area, add the following line to your application:

```
#pragma require __preserve_zp
```

---

Note: If you run the application multiple times in RAM, non-zero static storage variables are left with their previous value and are not reinitialized when the `--target=mega65` option is used. To properly initialize such variables on each run, you need to also use the `--rom-code` option.

---

## 9.4 Commander X16

The Commander X16 system is based around a 64K memory space with RAM and ROM banking. The VERA graphics chip holds the keeps the video memory in a separate memory that is not directly addressable by the 65C02 CPU.

The Commander X16 board support currently do not provide mechanisms to automatically handle banked memory or the VERA video RAM.

The kernel used is based on the Commodore 64 kernel. There is support for creating kernel friendly interrupt functions using the `kernal_interrupt` attribute.

### 9.4.1 Board support

The board support includes C header files, a link library and linker control files. They originate from Commander X16 board support[7] project. The current variant is built from commit hash `35aea85a36c5b1fa79eabc1de895c053aae2cf55`.

The header files come from the LLVM MOS SDK[8] project. The current variant is built from commit hash `a1ae3437888ef0a597f69019611390eb8159c2e4`.

### 9.4.2 Header files

The supplied header files are:

Table 9.4: Commander X16 header files

| include path | description |
|---|---|
| `#include <cx16.h>` | Includes all Commander X16 headers |
| `#include <_6522.h>` | 6522 Versatile Interface Adapter |

### 9.4.3 Pre-built library

The Commander X16 library includes startup code, exit handling and I/O adaption between the C library and the Commander X16 kernel. It comes pre-built and your application will automatically be linked with it if you specify `--target=x16` and use a linker rules file starting with the `cx16-` prefix:

```
$ ln6502  --target=cx16  cx16-plain.scm  [object-files]
```

The installation provides several library variants to accommodate different compiler settings, such as `double` size. The linker automatically selects a compatible variant for your application.

[7] https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-6502-Commodore
[8] https://github.com/hth313/llvm-mos-sdk

### 9.4.4 Linker rules

The linker rules are named with the `cx16-` prefix. If you create your own linker rules file, it is a good idea to name it with this prefix, as this will make the linker automatically link with the supplied pre-built Commander X16 library.

`cx16-plain.scm`

```
(define memories
  '((memory program
            (address (#x801 . #x9fff)) (type any)
            (section (programStart #x801) (startup #x80e)))
    (memory zeroPage (address (#x2 . #x7f)) (type ram) (qualifier zpage)
        (section (registers #x2)))
    (memory stackPage (address (#x100 . #x1ff)) (type ram))
    (memory VRAM (address (#x00000 . #x1ffff))
        (section zvram vram))
    ))
```

This describes memory system that uses the full BASIC memory area.

`cx16-banked.scm`

```
(define memories
  '((memory program
            (address (#x801 . #x9fff)) (type any)
            (section (programStart #x801) (startup #x80e)))
    (memory zeroPage (address (#x2 . #x7f)) (type ram) (qualifier zpage)
        (section (registers #x2)))
    (memory stackPage (address (#x100 . #x1ff)) (type ram))
    (memory VRAM (address (#x00000 . #x1ffff))
        (section zvram vram))
    (memory bankSlotRAM
        (address (#xa000 . #xbfff))
        (scatter-to RAM-banks)
        :generate-instances
        (section bankedcode))
    (memory bankedRAM (address (#x2000 . #x1fffff))
        (section RAM-banks))
    ))
```

This describes memory system that uses the full BASIC memory area and allows for banked code in the `0xa000`–`0xbfff` slot.

## 9.5 Linking

When linking for a system like the Commodore 64, MEGA65 or Commander X16 you will normally use a binary load format such as PRG, PGZ or RAW.

Such file is typically loaded from some storage media and doing this can initialize data sections by as part of the load process. This is enabled by either specifying the `--target` or the `--hosted` command-line option.

You may want to place the application in a ROM or flash memory so that it can be started either by turning on the computer or having it act like a resident application invoked by some call mechanism from the operating system. Use the `--rom-code` command-line option to get this bevaior. This creates a ROM section with initializers that are copied over to RAM as part of the initialization process before the `main()` function is called.

---

Note: Loading a program from media that is compiled with `--hosted` (or `--target`) and then restarting the program again will not re-initialize static variables that are non-zero. They will keep their values after the previous run. If you want to be able to restart a loaded program, consider linking with the `--rom-code` command-line option.

---

## 9.6 Banked linking

Banked memory can be set up using the scatter-to property of a memory. See Scatter for an overview.

To map in a memory bank in a slot in the 64K memory area the compiler translates the scatter-to (storage) address of the bank in a way that works with the bank system. This is done using a target dependent relocation operator. The low portion of the address are formed by combining the address of the slot and low portion of the address.

Somewhat simplified, once properly linked, the compiler runtime handles the bank system automatically.

### 9.6.1 Custom bank systems

Using scatter-to combined with manual manipulation of the bank mechanism also allows for making your own bank system. In such situations you probably need to control where functions are placed, which can be done using custom sections. see Description of pragma directives.

Clever management of section names allows for placing code together with data so that they appear in the same bank and are visible together when mapped into a block.

---

Note: For advanced custom bank system function inlining may cause problems. This is because functions may be inlined in other functions that belong in different sections. If data is being stored together, you may want to prevent such inlining from happening. You can use the `--inline-on-matching-custom-text-section` command-line option to prevent it, see Controlling inline expansion.

---

# CHAPTER 10

# Running the compiler

The compiler is run from the command line, or from an IDE that interfaces with the compiler using the command line.

## 10.1 Basic invocation

The compiler is invoked in the following way:

```
$ cc6502 [options] sourcefile [options]
```

As an example, to compile a source file with debugging information and a list file, you can use:

```
$ cc6502 --debug source.c -l
```

Command line options are optional arguments that tune the behavior of the compiler. They always start with a dash character. There are two variants, single letter options (`-l` to instruct the compiler to create a list file) starts with a single dash. The other variant is long descriptive options that starts with two dashes.

Some options require arguments. These follow the option, separated by a space or an equals sign (`=`). For single-argument options, the separator is optional:

```
$ cc6502 -Iinclude source.c -D VERBOSE=2 --list-file=tiny-source.lst
```

In this case the `-I` option adds `include` as a directory to scan for header files. The symbol `VERBOSE` is defined in the preprocessor with value 2. A list file with a specific name is also produced.

The order in which the options appear normally do matter, except for the `-I` option that adds directories to search for header files. Such directories are searched in the order in which they appear on the command line.

To display the version of the compiler, use `--version`:

```
$ cc6502 --version
Calypsi ISO C compiler for 6502 version 5.18
```

Command line options are described in Command line options.

## 10.2 Include search path

Header files are included by surrounding the filename with either double quotes or angled brackets:

```
#include "myheader.h"
#include <stdio.h>
```

Angled brackets are typically for system header files, while double quotes are for application-specific header files.

The search order for include files is as follows:

1. Relative to compilation directory (double quote include only)
2. In directories specified in the `-I` option in the order they appear on the command line
3. The system directory, which is the installation directory

Header files specified in angle brackets are not searched relative to the compilation directory. Otherwise, they behave identically. The system header file directory is located within the installation directory.

---

Note: More precisely, the system header file directory is relative to the cc6502 executable. If an installation is moved, it will still find the correct system header file directory.

---

## 10.3 Compiler output

The compiler outputs one or two files, an object file that can be linked with other object files and libraries by `ln6502` to produce an executable file, and optionally a list file.

### 10.3.1 Object file

The object file is in ELF format, optionally including DWARF debugging information if `--debug` (or `-g`) is specified.

It contains:

- A symbol table
- Relocatable sections for code and data
- Relocations, allowing linker to modify address values after section placement
- DWARF-formatted source-level debugging information (if `--debug` was specified)
- Vendor-specific data, including runtime attributes and additional the Calypsi C compiler tool chain-specific information not covered by ELF/DWARF, used by the linker and debugger, with section types `0x8000000a` and `0x8000000b`.

---

Note: DWARF version 5 is used. The implementation covers the needs of the Calypsi C compiler tool chain and includes vendor extensions.

---

### 10.3.2 List file

The list file is a text file meant to be shown with a fixed width font. It contains a header that shows compiler, version, time when it was created and the command line used. The C source file follows intermixed with generated assembly code. Finally there is a summary of the code and data sizes.

The following simple summation function:

```
int sum(int a, int b, int c) {
  if (a < b) {
    return a + c;
  } else {
    return b + c;
  }
}
```

Compiling with the `-l` option produces a list file:

```
###############################################################################
#                                                                             #
# Calypsi ISO C compiler for 6502                              version 5.18 #
#                                                        15/Jul/2026  16:45:44 #
# Command line: sum.c -l                                                      #
#                                                                             #
###############################################################################

    \ 0000                      .rtmodel version,"1"
    \ 0000                      .rtmodel codeModel,"plain"
    \ 0000                      .rtmodel core,"6502"
    \ 0000                      .rtmodel target,"none-specified"
    \ 0000                      .extern _Vfp
    \ 0000                      .extern _Vsp
    \ 0000                      .extern _Zp
0001                int sum(int a, int b, int c) {
    \ 0000                      .section code,text
    \ 0000                      .public sum
    \ 0000          sum:
0002                  if (a < b) {
    \ 0000 a5..                 lda     zp:_Zp
    \ 0002 c5..                 cmp     zp:_Zp+2
    \ 0004 a5..                 lda     zp:_Zp+1
    \ 0006 e5..                 sbc     zp:_Zp+3
    \ 0008 5002                 bvc     `?L9`
    \ 000a 4980                 eor     #-128
    \ 000c 1010     `?L9`:      bpl     `?L4`
0003                    return a + c;
    \ 000e a5..                 lda     zp:_Zp+4
    \ 0010 18                   clc
    \ 0011 65..                 adc     zp:_Zp
    \ 0013 85..                 sta     zp:_Zp
    \ 0015 a5..                 lda     zp:_Zp+5
    \ 0017 65..                 adc     zp:_Zp+1
    \ 0019 85..                 sta     zp:_Zp+1
    \ 001b 4c....               jmp     `?L3`
    \ 001e          `?L4`:
0004                  } else {
0005                    return b + c;
    \ 001e a5..                 lda     zp:_Zp+4
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
    \ 0020 18                   clc
    \ 0021 65..                 adc     zp:_Zp+2
    \ 0023 85..                 sta     zp:_Zp
    \ 0025 a5..                 lda     zp:_Zp+5
    \ 0027 65..                 adc     zp:_Zp+3
    \ 0029 85..                 sta     zp:_Zp+1
    \ 002b          `?L3`:
0006                  }
0007                }
    \ 002b 60                   rts

#########################
#                       #
# Memory sizes (decimal) #
#                       #
#########################

Executable  (Text): 44 bytes
```

### 10.3.3 Assembly source

The compiler can generate assembly source output, which is similar to a list file, except that this output file is actual source code that can be given to the assembler. This can be used to generate a starting point for an assembly source file. By providing suitable declarations and simplified C functions you can study what the compiler does and build upon it.

## 10.4 Diagnostics

Compiler diagnostic messages identify problems that either must or should be addressed.

### 10.4.1 Errors

An error identifies a problem in the code that prevents the compiler from producing a valid output file.

### 10.4.2 Warnings

A warning identifies a potential problem in the code that you probably want to take a look at and possibly rectify. The compiler is still able to produce a valid output file.

### 10.4.3 Internal errors

An internal error indicates an unexpected problem within the compiler product.

### 10.4.4 Controlling warnings

Diagnostic can be controlled using the `-W` option that takes a wide range of possible alternatives. It is beyond the scope of this guide to list them all. A complete reference can be found at https://clang.llvm.org/docs/DiagnosticsReference.html as the parser and diagnostics engine is the same as in the Clang project.

Consider the following code:

```
int test(int x)
{
  if (x = 6) {
    return 10;
  } else {
    return 0;
  }
}
```

In the code, an assignment is used in a comparison, a common C error. While legally testing a non-zero assignment expression, this often indicates an intended use of `==`. The compiler cannot know your intent, but flags a potential problem. Compiling this code results in warnings:

```
w.c:3:10: warning: using the result of an assignment as a condition without parentheses [-Wparentheses]
   if (x = 6) {
       ~~^~~
w.c:3:10: note: place parentheses around the assignment to silence this warning
   if (x = 6) {
         ^
       (    )
w.c:3:10: note: use '==' to turn this assignment into an equality comparison
   if (x = 6) {
         ^
         ==
```

The warnings point out that there may be a problem in the code. The name of the warning that triggered is also given (`-Wparentheses`). Finally, it makes suggestions on how you can change the code.

If you think the warning is of no use to you and you do not want to see this particular warning again, you can add the option `-Wno-parentheses` to the command line to silence it.

Adding an extra pair of parentheses around the assignment is a common way to indicate an intentional assignment within a test expression:

```
int test(int x)
{
  if ((x = 6)) {
    return 10;
  } else {
    return 0;
  }
}
```

Finally, if the intention with the code was to use the equality operator, you should change it to use the correct operator:

```
int test(int x)
{
  if (x == 6) {
    return 10;
  } else {
    return 0;
  }
}
```

## 10.5 Command line options

This section covers the `cc6502` command-line options in detail.

### 10.5.1 Options overview

If you run the compiler from the command line without any arguments it will complain that the input source file is missing and then shows a short form help:

```
$ cc6502
Missing: FILE

Usage: cc6502 [--version] [-o|--output-file OUTPUT-FILE] [-l]
              [--list-file LIST-FILE] [-I DIRECTORY] [-D IDENTIFIER]
              [-U IDENTIFIER] [-g|--debug] ([--32bit-doubles] |
              [--64bit-doubles]) ([--char-is-signed] | [--char-is-unsigned])
              [-E] [--print-macro-definitions] [--align-functions ALIGNMENT]
              [-O LEVEL] ([--space] | [--speed]) [--no-cross-call]
              [--no-interprocedural-cross-jump] ([--no-inline] |
              [--always-inline]) [--only-marked-as-inline] [--strong-inline]
              [--inline-on-matching-custom-text-section] [--rtattr NAME=VALUE]
              [--weak-symbols] [--no-vector-sections] [-c]
              [--assembly-source ASSEMBLY-FILE] [-S] [--force-switch STRATEGY]
              [-W ARG] [--dependencies] [-M ARG] [--pedantic-errors]
              [--include-system DIRECTORY] [--include-system-after DIRECTORY]
              [--core CORE] [--target TARGET] [--string-literals ENCODING] FILE
  use 'cc6502 --help' for detailed help
```

For more detailed help, use the `--help` option:

```
$ cc6502 --help
Calypsi ISO C compiler for 6502 version 5.18

Usage: cc6502 [--version] [-o|--output-file OUTPUT-FILE] [-l]
              [--list-file LIST-FILE] [-I DIRECTORY] [-D IDENTIFIER]
              [-U IDENTIFIER] [-g|--debug] ([--32bit-doubles] |
              [--64bit-doubles]) ([--char-is-signed] | [--char-is-unsigned])
              [-E] [--print-macro-definitions] [--align-functions ALIGNMENT]
              [-O LEVEL] ([--space] | [--speed]) [--no-cross-call]
              [--no-interprocedural-cross-jump] ([--no-inline] |
              [--always-inline]) [--only-marked-as-inline] [--strong-inline]
              [--inline-on-matching-custom-text-section] [--rtattr NAME=VALUE]
              [--weak-symbols] [--no-vector-sections] [-c]
              [--assembly-source ASSEMBLY-FILE] [-S] [--force-switch STRATEGY]
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
              [-W ARG] [--dependencies] [-M ARG] [--pedantic-errors]
              [--include-system DIRECTORY] [--include-system-after DIRECTORY]
              [--core CORE] [--target TARGET] [--string-literals ENCODING] FILE
  use 'cc6502 --help' for detailed help

Available options:
  --version                Display version number
  -o,--output-file OUTPUT-FILE
                           Name of output file
  -l                       Generate a list file, named by appending '.lst' to
                           input file
  --list-file LIST-FILE    Generate list file, using given name
  -I DIRECTORY             Include directory
  -D IDENTIFIER            Predefine a macro
  -U IDENTIFIER            #undef a predefined macro
  -g,--debug               Produce debugging information
  --32bit-doubles          Make the 'double' data type 32-bits (this is the
                           default)
  --64bit-doubles          Make the 'double' data type 64-bits
  --char-is-signed         Treat 'char' as a signed type
  --char-is-unsigned       Treat 'char' as an unsigned type (this is the
                           default)
  -E                       Stop after preprocessing
  --print-macro-definitions
                           Print macro definitions in -E mode in addition to
                           normal output
  --align-functions ALIGNMENT
                           Align the start of functions to given alignment
  -O LEVEL                 Enable optimizer, -O0, -O1 or -O2
  --space                  Optimize for space (this is the default, use together
                           with -O)
  --speed                  Optimize for speed (use together with -O)
  --no-cross-call          Disable cross call optimization
  --no-interprocedural-cross-jump
                           Disable interprocedural cross jump optimization
  --no-inline              Disable all function inlining
  --always-inline          Always inline functions
  --only-marked-as-inline  Only consider inlining functions marked as 'inline'
  --strong-inline          Always (try to) inline functions marked as 'inline'
  --inline-on-matching-custom-text-section
                           Only inline custom text section functions when the
                           section names match
  --rtattr NAME=VALUE      Define a runtime attribute (identifier or quoted
                           string value accepted)
  --weak-symbols           Make all public symbols entries weak
  --no-vector-sections     Discard auto generated interrupt vector sections
  -c                       Generate object file and do not try to link
  --assembly-source ASSEMBLY-FILE
                           Generate an assembly source file, using given name
  -S                       Generate an assembly source file, named by appending
                           '.s' to input file
  --force-switch STRATEGY  Switch strategy, one of 'if-else', 'jump-table' or
                           'value-table'
  -W ARG                   Warning control
  --dependencies           Generate dependencies to stdout
  -M ARG                   Dependency file control
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
  --pedantic-errors        Error on language extensions
  --include-system DIRECTORY
                           Add system include directory
  --include-system-after DIRECTORY
                           Add system include directory after
  --core CORE              Core, one of '6502', '65b02', '65c02', '65cnr02' or
                           '45gs02' (defaults to '6502')
  --target TARGET          Target system, one of 'C64' or 'MEGA65' (defaults to
                           embedded/ROM use, if omitted)
  --string-literals ENCODING
                           String literal encoding, one of 'no-translation' or
                           'shifted-petscii' (defaults to no-translation if not
                           specified)'
  -h,--help                Show this help text
```

### 10.5.2 Options in detail

`--version`

Displays the name and version of the compiler.

`--output-file, -o`

Specify the output object file name. If omitted, the output file is derived from the input file name (excluding path) with a `.o` extension, written to the current directory by default.

This option can also alter the output file name and provide a directory path. The specified directory must already exist.

`-l`

Generate a list file. The name used is the name of the input file (ignoring any directory path) with a `.lst` file extension. See also `--list-file`.

`--list-file`

Generate a list file. The name of the list file is given as argument to this option. See also `-l` to generate a list file based on the source filename.

`-I`

Add a directory to the current include search path. This option can be used multiple times on a command line. The order in which they appear specifies the search order between the directories.

The system include directory is always added last to the search order list.

`--include-system`

Add a directory to the current system include search path before the provided system include directories. This option can be used multiple times on a command line. The order in which they appear specifies the search order between the directories.

`--include-system-after`

Add a directory to the current system include search path after the provided system include directories. This option can be used multiple times on a command line. The order in which they appear specifies the search order between the directories.

`-D`

Define a macro. This takes an argument with the symbol name and optionally an assignment value `-Dsymbol[=value]`. If no value is given, the macro is given the value 1.

`-U`

Undefine a macro. This takes an argument with the symbol name to be undefined.

`--debug`

Generate DWARF symbolic debugging information. In order to get debugging information all the way to the debugger, the linker must also be given this option.

When debugging information is enabled the `__CALYPSI_DEBUG__` macro is also defined and set to 1.

`-g`

Synonym for `--debug`.

`-S`

Generate an assembly source file as output. The name used is the name of the input file (ignoring any directory path) with a `.s` file extension. No object file is generated. See also `--assembly-source`.

`--assembly-source`

Generate an assembly source file as output. The name of the output file is given as an argument to this option. See also `-S` to generate an assembly source file based on the C source filename. No object file is generated.

`--32bit-doubles`

The `double` floating point data type has 32 bits precision.

`--64bit-doubles`

The `double` floating point data type has 64 bits precision.

`--char-is-signed`

Makes the `char` data type signed. The default is unsigned.

`--char-is-unsigned`

Makes the `char` data type unsigned. This is also the default.

`-E`

Stop after running the preprocessor. The output from the preprocessor is written to standard output (`stdout`).

`--print-macro-definitions`

This is used together with the `-E` option to also write out all macro definitions.

`-O`

Runs the optimizer, expecting an argument of 0, 1, or 2. `-O0` (the default) performs no additional optimization passes but still produces good code. `-O1` enables additional passes to further improve code, and `-O2` enables all optimizer passes.

`--space`

Optimize for space, this is the default. Use `-O` to enable optimizations.

`--speed`

Optimize for speed. Use `-O` to enable optimizations. This option controls decisions about tradeoffs and will balance towards making the code run faster at the expense of additional code space. See also `--no-cross-call` below.

`--no-cross-call`

Disables the cross-call optimizer, normally enabled at `-O2`. The cross-call optimizer extracts common code sequences into small subroutines, which can significantly reduce code space, so it is also enabled by default with `--speed`.

`--no-inline`

Disable all function inlining which is normally enabled at `-O1`.

`--always-inline`

Enable function inlining regardless of optimization level setting.

`--only-marked-as-inline`

Only considers functions marked with the `inline` keyword for inlining. This disregards small functions and single-use static functions for inlining.

`--strong-inline`

Regard functions marked with the `inline` keyword as a strong hint that they should be inlined. The compiler may still decide not to do it.

`--rtattr NAME=VALUE`

This defines a runtime attribute which is written to the object file. This is used to specify runtime attribute value that can be used in the linker for checking object file consistency.

`--weak-symbols`

Makes all public symbols in the object file weak. This is normally not needed, but can provide a default library function implementation that is used if no replacement is provided.

`--no-vector-sections`

Do not generate vector table entries for interrupt functions. This is useful when writing interrupt functions that are going to be installed using some other mechanism.

`-c`

Generate an object file without linking. This is a no-operation, as the compiler always generates an object file. This option is provided due to its common use with many compilers.

`--force-switch`

Forces the compiler to use a specific strategy for generating switch tables. The compiler normally uses heuristics, but this option overrides them to force a particular variant.

Available variants are: series of "if-else" tests, a jump table, or a table with value and label pairs. "If-else" is often best for very small switches. A jump table is typically fastest for a decent number of close entries. Value and label pairs work well for larger tables with spread-out values, using a binary search lookup that scales fairly well.

In big O notation: "if-else" is O(n), a jump table is O(1), and value and label pairs are O(log(n)).

`-MD`

Write a dependency file that contains user and system headers.

`--dependencies`

Like `-MD`, but also implies `-E` and writes to `stdout` by default.

`-MF<file>`

Write dependency file output from `-MMD`, `-MD`, `-MM`, or `-M` to `<file>`.

`-MG`

Add missing headers to the dependency file.

`-MJ<arg>`

Write a compilation database entry for each input.

`-MM`

Like `-MMD`, but also implies `-E` and writes to `stdout` by default.

`-MMD`

Write a dependency file containing user headers.

`-MP`

Create phony target for each dependency (other than main file).

`-MQ<arg>`

Specify name of main file output to quote in dependency file.

`-MT<arg>`

Specify name of main file output in dependency file.

`-MV`

Use NMake/Jom format for the dependency file.

`-W`

Control warnings, see Controlling warnings.

`--pedantic-errors`

Generates errors when language extensions are used. The supported language includes relaxations to the strict C standard for increased flexibility; use this option to disable such extensions.

`--align-functions`

Aligns the start of all functions to the provided alignment.

`--core`

Selects the 6502 core (e.g., 6502, 65B02, 65C02, 65CNR02, or 45GS02). This affects available instructions and defaults to 6502 if not specified.

`--target`

Specifies the target platform for the code. Supported platforms include MEGA65 and C64 (Commodore 64).

The `--target=mega65` option implies `--core=45gs02`, enabling instructions to access data in the full 32-bit address space, and defines the `__CALYPSI_TARGET_SYSTEM_MEGA65__` macro.

The `--target=c64` option solely defines the `__CALYPSI_TARGET_SYSTEM_C64__` macro.

`--string-literals`

This option accepts the argument `shifted-petscii` which translates string literals into the shifted PETSCII counterpart. This is intended for Commodore 64 and MEGA65 to give mixed case letters. The computer needs to be in shifted PETSCII character set mode for proper display.

For completeness, the argument `no-translation` is also accepted. It results in no translation of string literals and this is the default.

# CHAPTER 11

# Data representation

This chapter describes the available data types in detail.

## 11.1 Basic types

All standard integer types are supported. The following table lists the built-in integer types and their ranges.

Table 11.1: Integer types

| Type name | Size | Range |
|---|---|---|
| `bool` | 8 bits | 0 to 1 |
| `char` | 8 bits | 0 to 255 |
| `signed char` | 8 bits | -128 to 127 |
| `unsigned char` | 8 bits | 0 to 255 |
| `short` | 16 bits | -32768 to 32767 |
| `signed short` | 16 bits | -32768 to 32767 |
| `unsigned short` | 16 bits | 0 to 65535 |
| `int` | 16 bits | -32768 to 32767 |
| `signed int` | 16 bits | -32768 to 32767 |
| `unsigned int` | 16 bits | 0 to 65535 |
| `long` | 32 bits | $-2^{31}$ to $2^{31}-1$ |
| `signed long` | 32 bits | $-2^{31}$ to $2^{31}-1$ |
| `unsigned long` | 32 bits | 0 to $2^{32}-1$ |
| `signed long long` | 64 bits | $-2^{63}$ to $2^{63}-1$ |
| `long long` | 64 bits | $-2^{63}$ to $2^{63}-1$ |
| `unsigned long long` | 64 bits | 0 to $2^{64}-1$ |

### 11.1.1 bool

To use the `bool` data type, include `stdbool.h`, which also defines `true` and `false`. The boolean data type is also available as `_Bool` without requiring `stdbool.h`.

### 11.1.2 char

The `char` type is unsigned by default. To enable signed `char`, compile with the `--char-is-signed` option. Note that the supplied C library uses unsigned `char`.

---

Note: The `char` type differs from `short`, `int` and `long` in that it defaults to being unsigned in this compiler. Standard C allows it to be either signed or unsigned. The rationale for making `char` unsigned is that it is meant to represent a character code and in encoding standards like ASCII, ISO-8859-1 and Unicode, character values are unsigned entities.

If you intend to use 8 bits data types in expressions, you should consider using `int8_t` or `uint8_t` instead. They are defined in `stdint.h`.

---

### 11.1.3 wchar_t

The wide character type `wchar_t` is defined if you include `stddef.h`.

### 11.1.4 Bit fields

Bit fields are supported based on any integer type. A bit field value has the same type (and signedness) as the integer base type it is defined in and are subject to the usual conversion rules when used in expressions.

A bit field is allocated starting from the least significant available bitposition in its container. If there are not enough bits available in the container to represent the bit field, a new container is allocated.

Consider the following declaration:

```
struct bf {
  uint16_t  a:7;
  int16_t   b:5;
  uint32_t  c:24;
  uint8_t   d:4;
  uint8_t   e:2;
  int8_t    f:3;
};
```

The two bit fields `a` and `b` are allocated in the same 16 bits container. Bit field `c` gets a 32 bits container of its own. Finally, `d` and `e` will share the same 8 bits container while `f` is allocated in a separate 8 bits container as there is not room to store it together with `d` and `e`.

Bit fields should be used with care. They can be a convenient way to pack several small values into some structure when data space is limited. However, accessing bit fields is in general more costly in terms of produced code, compared to using normal integer types.

---

Note: Sometimes it can be tempting to try and map bit fields to hardware registers. This can work, but it makes the code more sensitive to using a particular compiler. It may also require some thinking to get it

right. The alternative way of accessing hardware registers in its intended access width and manually apply shift and mask operations is often more robust.

### 11.1.5 Floating-point types

Floating point values follows the IEEE 754 format and is supported in two different sizes.

Table 11.2: Floating-point types

| Type name | Size | Approximate range (normal values) |
|---|---|---|
| `float` | 32 bits | $\pm 1.18 \times 10^{-38}$ to $\pm 3.40 \times 10^{38}$ |
| `double` | 32/64 | as `float` or `long double` |
| `long double` | 64 bits | $\pm 2.23 \times 10^{-308}$ to $\pm 1.80 \times 10^{308}$ |

Floating point numbers are represented in binary floating point form. The size of `double` is 32 bits by default. This can be changed to 64 bits by using the command-line option `--64bit-doubles`. The runtime library comes both in variants compiled with `double` set to 32 bits as well as 64 bits.

Subnormal numbers, infinity and NaN (not a number) are supported. The ranges stated in the table are for normal floating point numbers. Subnormal floating-point numbers extends the range of the exponent further at the cost of gradual loss of precision in the mantissa.

Floating point exceptions and changing the rounding mode are not supported.

#### 32 bits format

In the 32 bits format the exponent is 8 bits and the mantissa is 23 bits. The precision is between 6 and 7 decimal digits.

#### 64 bits format

In the 64 bits format the exponent is 11 bits and the mantissa is 52 bits. The precision is between 15 and 16 decimal digits.

### 11.1.6 Function pointer types

For the 6502 architecture function pointers are always 16 bits.

### 11.1.7 Data pointer types

The following data pointers are available:

Table 11.3: Data pointers

| Name or keyword | Size | Index type | Address range |
|---|---|---|---|
| Zero page `__zpage` | 8 bits | signed char | `0x00-0xff` |
| Default | 16 bits | signed int | `0x0000-0xffff` |

When the 45GS02 for the MEGA65 is enabled, the following additional data pointers are available:

Table 11.4: Additional data pointers on the MEGA65

| Name or keyword | Size | Index type | Address range |
|---|---|---|---|
| `__far` | 32 bits | signed int | `0x00000000-0xffffffff` |
| `__huge` | 32 bits | signed long | `0x00000000-0xffffffff` |

Each data pointer has an associated index type, always a signed integer type. This type is used in address calculations, such as array access with an index or advancing a pointer by adding or subtracting an integer value.

### 11.1.8 Pointer conversions

Function and data pointers are treated as being unsigned values. In general, casting to a type that has fewer bits means a pointer value gets truncated. Casting to a wider type results in zero extension.

### 11.1.9 size_t

This unsigned integer type holds the maximum size of an object. On the 6502 the size of `size_t` is 16 bits.

### 11.1.10 ptrdiff_t

This signed integer type represents a distance within the largest possible object. On the 6502 the size of `ptrdiff_t` is 16 bits.

Subtracting two data pointers (within the same object) yields a `ptrdiff_t` value, representing the number of elements between the pointers, not the number of bytes.

---

Note: Standard C allows referring to an element one beyond the actual object. Subtracting the end address from the start address may result in a negative result if the value exceeds the ranfe of `ptrdiff_t`.

---

## 11.2 Structure types

Structure types are fully supported and can be nested. Structure members are stored sequentially in the order they appear in the declaration.

## 11.3 Union types

Union types are fully supported. The compiler also supports a useful extension that allows anonymous unions within a structure. Consider the following code:

```
struct Scope {
  union {
    char alpha;
    int num;
  } u;
  int b;
};
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
int main() {
  struct Scope x;
  x.u.num = 65;
  x.u.alpha = 'A';
  return 0;
}
```

The use of a declarator on the union within the structure requires an extra step to access its members. This was relaxed in the C11 standard, allowing you to write:

```
struct Scope {
  // Anonymous union
  union {
    char alpha;
    int num;
  };
  int b;
};

int main() {
  struct Scope x;
  x.num = 65;
  x.alpha = 'A';
  return 0;
}
```

This C11 extension, enabled by default, allows anonymous unions to be compiled without diagnostic messages, even though the compiler actually supports C99.

You can enable warnings for such extensions using the `-Wc11-extensions` or `-Wpedantic` command-line options.

You can also disable such extensions with the command-line option `--pedantic-errors`. In that case you will get an error instead.

## 11.4 Enumeration types

Enumeration types are represented as `int`. To use a smaller storage representation, choose a smaller integral type. For a better name, use a typedef:

```
enum fruit { apple, orange, banana };

typedef char fruit_t;

fruit_t active;

void citrus(void)
{
  active = orange;
}
```

## 11.5 Type qualifiers

Standard C provides two type qualifiers: `volatile` and `const`.

### 11.5.1 Volatile objects

C has the concept of volatile objects, typically used for hardware access. Both writing and reading volatile objects are considered side effects that will occur.

Related is the concept of sequence points in a program. A volatile access between two sequence points occurs between those points and cannot be moved past a sequence point. To ensure ordered memory accesses, make them volatile and separate them with a sequence point. The semicolon after a statement is an example of a sequence point:

```
uint8_t volatile * mem1;
uint8_t volatile * mem2;

void foo () {
   *mem1 = 2;
   *mem2;
}
```

In this case the write to `mem1` is guaranteed to be performed before the read of `mem2`. The read of `mem2` will also occur even if the result of the read is not used.

If multiple volatile accesses are done between two sequence points the order they happen in is undefined:

```
uint8_t volatile * mem1;
uint8_t volatile * mem2;

int foo () {

   return *mem1 + *mem2;
}
```

In this case both `mem1` and `mem2` are read, but the order in which they are read is undefined.

#### Access size

Accessing a volatile object wider than the natural register size on the target results in access performed in several steps, as dictated by the natural register size.

Reading and using only a portion of a scalar volatile object still results in the entire object being read:

```
volatile uint64_t wide;

uint16_t foo () {
   return wide;
}
```

Here the volatile object is 64 bits, but we are only interested in the lower 16 bits. In this case all 64 bits are read, the upper 48 bits are then discarded and the function returns the lower 16 bits.

If `wide` was not volatile, the compiler may instead choose to only read the lower 16 bits of the 64-bit `wide` variable.

#### Assignment results

Assignments in C has an expression value. Consider:

```
volatile int var;

int foo () {
   return var = 4;
}
```

The assignment writes `4` to the volatile variable, but the function return value (either `4` or the value read from `var` after the assignment) is implementation-defined.

Avoid such constructs in your programs. Be more explicit about your intent. To force a read after the assignment:

```
volatile int var;

int foo () {
   var = 4;
   return var;
}
```

If you want to be sure the function returns `4`:

```
volatile int var;

int foo () {
   var = 4;
   return 4;
}
```

This clarifies the intent and ensures consistent behavior across C compilers.

#### Bit fields

Accessing volatile bit fields has undefined behavior. A bit field describes a subset of bits within its storage unit. Adjacent bits may be accessed depending on layout. Using volatile bit fields is discouraged.

---

Note: Rather than using bit fields, define normal scalar values so that they cover hardware registers, following the defined or intended size of hardware register access. Then use expressions to extract or manipulate the part of the register you want.

---

### 11.5.2 Const objects

The `const` type qualifier indicates a read-only object. It can be applied to data objects and pointers.

When a static object is defined as `const`, the compiler attempts to place it in a read-only memory section.

A pointer to a `const` object can point to both read-only and writable objects. Such a pointer signifies that its user should not attempt to alter memory. This can aid the optimizer and is considered good practice, as it prevents unintended data alteration by parts of the application.

## 11.6 Type definitions

Using type definitions (the `typedef` keyword) is highly recommended, offering several benefits:

1. Code becomes more readable with meaningful type names. For instance, `speed_t` is clearer than `long`. Should the type definition change, only one location requires modification, preventing the need to search and selectively update `long` instances that represent speed.
2. A `struct fish` can be concisely named `fish_t`, which also hides its structure, if desired.

`typedef` incurs no cost; the generated code remains identical.

## 11.7 Alignment

The 6502 imposes no data alignment. Data objects can start at any address, and no padding is introduced between structure elements.

CHAPTER 12

# Extended attributes

An attribute is a property attachable to functions, data objects, or types, specified as a keyword. Standard C includes built-in keywords like `const` and `volatile`.

Extended attributes provide access to behaviors or properties beyond Standard C. They are either target-specific or useful for embedded systems.

## 12.1 Overview

Attributes can be applied with either keyword syntax (e.g., `__zpage`) or attribute syntax (e.g., `__attribute__((zpage))`). Both are functionally equivalent, but the C parser may not accept the keyword form in some situations.

Usage is largely a matter of preference. Preprocessor macros can rename attributes for portability, enabling them to be toggled off for other targets or renamed to match different compilers or targets.

Note: The C parser sometimes produces unexpected errors with the keyword form of attributes (e.g., `__zpage`). If this occurs, use the `__attribute__((zpage))` form instead.

## 12.2 Using attributes

Type attributes can be applied to type declarations, following the same syntax as type qualifiers like `const` and `volatile`.

### 12.2.1 Syntax for data objects

You can apply attributes to data objects as follows:

```
__attribute__((zpage)) int a, b;
int __zpage c, d;
```

When applied to an object, the attribute's location is irrelevant. The example above applies the Zero page attribute to all defined objects (`a`, `b`, `c`, and `d`).

### 12.2.2 Syntax for pointer types

Attributes can also be applied to pointer types, where their location is significant. This determines whether the pointer itself is constant or what it points to is constant.

The easiest way to decipher attributes in function types is to read the type from right to left.

```
int __attribute__((zpage)) * p1;
long * __attribute__((zpage)) p2;
```

Here, `p1` is a pointer stored in default memory that points to an `int` in Zero page memory. `p2` is a pointer stored in Zero page memory that points to a `long` in default memory.

## 12.3 Attribute reference

This section goes through all available extension keywords and attributes.

### 12.3.1 Summary of attributes

The following table summarizes available attributes. For the keyword form, prefix with two underscores (e.g., `__zpage`). For attribute syntax, use the attribute name with `__attribute__` (e.g., `__attribute__((zpage))`).

Table 12.1: Extended attributes summary

| Attribute name | Description |
|---|---|
| `aligned(nn)` | Specify alignment of data object, function or a record member |
| `section("name")` | Specifies the section name for a data object or function |
| `zpage` | Controls storage of data objects to the zero page |
| `interrupt` | Defines an interrupt function |
| `kernal_interrupt` | Defines a Commodore 64 kernal-friendly interrupt |
| `intrinsic` | Declares an intrinsic function |
| `task` | Relaxes preserving registers |
| `far` | Controls storage of data objects to far memory (MEGA65 only) |
| `huge` | Controls storage of data object to huge memory (MEGA65 only) |

### 12.3.2 Description of attributes

This section describes each attribute in detail.

#### aligned

This attribute can be applied to functions, individual record members and data objects to force a certain minimal alignment.

The `aligned` attribute takes an argument which is the alignment to use:

```
__attribute__((aligned(16))) struct sprite ship;
```

---

Note: Certain data types may impose an alignment by themselves. The actual alignment is choosen so that all alignment constraints are satisfied.

---

#### section

This attribute can be applied to functions, global and static data objects to control the name of the section it is placed in.

The `section` attribute takes an argument which is the section name to use:

```
// Place in vram
__attribute__((section("vram")))
const char tiles[256] = { .. };

__attribute__((section("trueCode")))
long foo () {
  return 42;
}
```

See Description of pragma directives for how you can specify a section for multiple functions, global and static data objects.

#### zpage

Specifies a data object or a pointer to a data object residing in the zero page. Zero page addressing yields shorter, faster code and is particularly efficient for 6502 pointer operations.

---

Note: Auto variables are typically allocated to registers or zero page pseudo-registers, automatically providing the benefits of zero page addressing. The `zpage` attribute is best suited for smaller, frequently used static data objects.

---

### far

The `far` attribute specifies data in memory beyond the 64K provided by the base 6502. It is available only when the MEGA65 is enabled.

On the MEGA65, the 45GS02 CPU provides additional addressing capabilities. The amount of `far` data objects is limited only by available memory. A single `far` object can be at most 65535 bytes large.

### huge

The `huge` attribute specifies data in memory beyond the 64K provided by the base 6502. It is available only when the MEGA65 is enabled.

On the MEGA65, the 45GS02 CPU provides additional addressing capabilities. The amount of `huge` data objects is limited only by available memory.

---

Note: The `huge` attribute typically generates larger applications than the `far` attribute. Use `huge` only if absolutely necessary.

---

### interrupt

An interrupt function serves as an interrupt handler and has the following effects:

1. An interrupt function cannot take parameters
2. It preserves all registers used.
3. Exiting the interrupt function uses a different instruction sequence than normal functions
4. The interrupt attribute may optionally be given a vector address as an argument

The interrupt vector is specified as an argument to the interrupt attribute:

```
int counter;

__attribute__((interrupt(0xfffe)))
void irq () {
  counter++;
}
```

---

Note: The vector argument is optional. Omitting it results in no vector section entry being generated for that interrupt function. All vector sections can also be suppressed using the `--no-vector-sections` command-line option.

---

---

Note: It is strongly recommended to keep interrupt functions small and simple. Avoid making function calls from an interrupt function, as this requires preserving scratch registers, which is costly. If function calls are necessary, consider forcing them to be inline expanded. See Function inlining for more information.

---

### kernal_interrupt

The `kernal_interrupt` attribute defines an interrupt function for the Commodore 64 kernal. It can also be used by Commander X16, as they share the same mechanism.

Kernal interrupt functions must be installed using the `_Kernal_set_interrupt_handler()` function, included in the C library.

```
#include <kernal/interrupt.h>

__attribute__((kernal_interrupt))
void myirq () {
  counter++;
}

int main () {
  __kernal_vector_t old_vector;

  old_vector = _Kernal_set_interrupt_handler(myirq);

  ... application code

  _Kernal_restore_interrupt_handler(old_vector);
  return 0;
}
```

Installing a new vector writes it to location `0x0314` and saves the previous one in a library-internal variable. The kernal interrupt function exits by jumping via this saved pointer.

Before exiting your application, restore the old vector.

### intrinsic

The `intrinsic` attribute declares built-in functions. This applies only to intrinsic functions already known to the compiler. Typically, you use this by including the `calypsi/intrinsics6502.h` file, which contains all such valid declarations.

### task

The `task` attribute can be applied to functions like `main`, which mark the application entry point. Such functions are typically not called from C code. Applying the `task` attribute relaxes register preservation, potentially saving stack space and reducing application size by a small amount.

CHAPTER 13

# Language extensions

The Calypsi C compiler supports several C language extensions that can be convenient. However, consider their portability implications.

## 13.1 Overloaded functions

The overloaded functions support provides overloading of functions in C similar to C++. Overloading in C is introduced using the `overloadable` attribute. For example, you might provide several overloaded versions of a `sine` function that invokes the appropriate standard function computing the sine of a value with `float`, `double`, or `long double` precision:

```
#include <math.h>

float __attribute__((overloadable)) sine(float x) { return sinf(x); }
double __attribute__((overloadable)) sine(double x) { return sin(x); }
long double __attribute__((overloadable)) sine(long double x) { return sinl(x); }
```

The compiler calls the most suitable function based on argument types. Overloaded functions are name mangled as C uses a single global namespace.

## 13.2 Statement expressions

This GCC extension allows a statement to appear where an expression is expected. Use it to allow loops, switches, and local variables within an expression.

A compound statement is a sequence of statements enclosed by braces. In the example below, parentheses around the braces create a statement expression:

```
({ int y = foo (); int z;
   if (y > 0) z = y;
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
  else z = - y;
  z; })
```

The last statement in a statement expression is an expression followed by a semicolon. In this case, the variable z is used as the result of the entire statement expression.

### 13.2.1 Safe macros

Statement expressions can also implement safe macros that evaluate their parameters only once.

Recall the well known max macro:

```
#define max(a,b)  ((a) > (b) ? (a) : (b))
```

When used, this expands the largest value twice, which may be undesirable if it has side effects or represents an expensive computation.

With a statement expression this can be expressed as:

```
#define maxint(a,b) \
    ({int _a = (a), _b = (b); _a > _b ? _a : _b; })
```

While this solves the double-evaluation issue, it introduces other subtle problems. First, you need to specify the type (see also __auto_type extension below), and it may cause variable shadowing.

In most cases, inline functions offer a better alternative to statement expressions. Inline functions avoid subtle variable shadowing problems, result in more readable code, and generate equally efficient code when inlined. The minor caveat is that inline functions may not be inlined, while statement expressions are always expanded in place.

## 13.3 Auto type

The auto type extension allows specifying a type that is automatically selected, using the __auto_type keyword. The declaration must declare only one variable, whose declarator must be an identifier. The declaration must be initialized, and the variable type is determined by the initializer type.

Using ___auto_type, the “max” macro in the previous section can be written to select the type automatically:

```
#define max(a,b) \
    ({__auto_type _a = (a); \
      __auto_type _b = (b); \
      _a > _b ? _a : _b; })
```

## 13.4 Typeof

Refer to the type of an expression using `__typeof`. The syntax resembles `sizeof`, but semantically, it acts like a typename defined with `typedef`.

Similar to `sizeof`, there are two ways to write the argument to `__typeof`: with an expression or with a type. For example, with an expression:

```
__typeof (x)
```

This creates a type identical to the identifier `x` in the current context.

You can also use a typename as an argument:

```
__typeof (int *)
```

In this case, the type is simply a pointer to `int`.

Typeof can also be used to implement the "max" macro:

```
#define max(a,b) \
    ({__typeof (a) _a = (a); \
      __typeof (b) _b = (b); \
      _a > _b ? _a : _b; })
```

## 13.5 Generics

C11 style `_Generic` is now supported. This allows expressions to expand to different outcomes based on a controlling expression. For example:

```
extern void stringFunc(char*);
extern void otherStringFunc(char*);
extern void string4Func(char[4]);

#define F(X) _Generic(&(X),        \
  default: otherStringFunc,        \
  char**: stringFunc,              \
  char(*)[4]: string4Func,         \
  char const**: stringFunc,        \
  char const(*)[4]: string4Func    \
  )(X)

void foo(char *p) {
  F(p);
  F("foo");
  F("longer string");
}
```

The macro `F` calls different functions based on its input. For example, a string literal `"foo"` (3 characters plus null terminator) is treated as a `char` array of 4 bytes, leading to a call to `string4Func()`. The `p` parameter, an ordinary `char*`, results in a call to `stringFunc()`. Finally, `"longer string"` is treated as a `char` array with a length other than four, matching the `default:` alternative and resulting in a call to `otherStringFunc()`.

CHAPTER 14

# Pragma directives

Pragma directives are a standard C mechanism allowing vendor-specific extensions to the C language while maintaining portability.

You can use pragma directives to control compiler behavior, such as suppressing warnings or placing objects in specific memory areas using custom sections.

Pragma directives are always enabled and can be used with either the `#pragma` preprocessor directive or the `_Pragma` preprocessor operator.

## 14.1 Pragma directives reference

This section details all available pragma directives.

### 14.1.1 Summary of pragmas

The following table summarizes the recognized pragma directives:

| Pragma directive | Description |
|---|---|
| `#pragma clang section` | Control custom section for code or data |
| `#pragma message` | Generate custom warning |
| `#pragma GCC warning` | Generate custom warning |
| `#pragma GCC error` | Generate custom error |
| `#pragma clang diagnostic` | Control diagnostic messages inside a source file |
| `#pragma require` | Force inclusion of other module |
| `#pragma rtattr` | Define a runtime attribute |

Note: Since Clang is the C front end, some pragmas are inherited and function similarly. This simplifies compiler switching, despite pragmas being vendor-specific extensions.

### 14.1.2 Description of pragma directives

#### section

The `#pragma clang section` directive assigns section names to functions, global, and static objects.

The compiler typically places global and static objects into predefined sections, but you can override this to control placement to a specific memory area.

The section names can be specified as:

```
#pragma clang section bss="myBSS" data="myData" rodata="myRodata" text="myText"
```

The section names can be reverted back to default name by supplying an empty string to the section kind, for example:

```
#pragma clang section bss="" data="" text="" rodata=""
```

The new section name applies to all functions, global and static objects that follow from the pragma directive.

You are not required to define a name for every section category. If you omit some, the most recently specified one is used.

The `section` attribute takes precedence over the `clang section` pragma directive; a section name specified with `__attribute__((section("myname")))` has precedence.

---

Note: Section names are not interpreted. For example, naming a section `.bss.mySec` does not mean it will be a BSS section name.

---

#### message

You can generate a custom warning with `message` pragma. In addition there are a couple of GCC variants of this supported:

```
// The following will generate warning messages
#pragma message "my own diagnostic message"
#pragma GCC warning "my own diagnostic message"

// This will give and error
#pragma GCC error "not supported"
```

#### diagnostics

You can control diagnostic messages in source code using pragmas, which is useful for temporarily disabling specific warnings in a section of code.

The pragma controls any command-line-configurable warning. Warnings can be set to ignored, warning, error, or fatal.

You can also push and pop the current warning state. This is useful when writing a header file that others will compile, as their warning flags are unknown.

In the example below, `-Wextra-tokens` is ignored for a few lines; diagnostics then revert to their previous state.

```
#if foo
#endif foo // warning: extra tokens at end of #endif directive

#pragma clang diagnostic push
#pragma clang diagnostic ignored "-Wextra-tokens"

#if foo
#endif foo // no warning

#pragma clang diagnostic pop
```

The push and pop pragmas will save and restore the full diagnostic state, regardless of how it was set.

#### require

The `#pragma require` directive ensures that a module is included at the link stage, even if no functions or data objects within it are called or referenced.

This is primarily for libraries that request code slices or objects. For example, the C library's heap system uses a `require` pragma in its `malloc()` module to enable heap initialization during system startup:

```
#pragma require __call_heap_initialize
```

#### rtattr

The `#pragma rtattr` directive defines a runtime attribute within a C source file.

This is primarily for building libraries with alternative modules. While runtime attributes can be defined using the `--rtattr` command-line option, defining them in the source file may simplify build rules.

```
#pragma rtattr myAttribute "someValue"
```

CHAPTER 15

# Intrinsic functions

This chapter covers predefined intrinsic and built-in functions.

Intrinsics functions appear as ordinary calls but are special compiler constructs, emitting specific instruction sequences. To enable them, include the `calypsi/intrinsics6502.h` header file.

Built-in functions are similar, but they are not declared in `calypsi/intrinsics6502.h`.

## 15.1 Intrinsic functions reference

The `calypsi/intrinsics6502.h` file appears as follows:

```
/**************************************************************************
 *
 * Copyright Håkan Thörngren
 *
 * This file is part of the Calypsi C library.
 * Permission to use with the Calypsi tool chain is hereby granted.
 *
 **************************************************************************/

#ifndef __INTRINSICS_6502_H
#define __INTRINSICS_6502_H

#ifdef __CALYPSI_TARGET_6502__

typedef unsigned char __interrupt_state_t;
typedef void (*__return_address_t)(void);
typedef unsigned short __return_address16_t;

__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __disable_interrupts(void);
__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __enable_interrupts(void);
__attribute__((intrinsic)) __interrupt_state_t __get_interrupt_state(void);
__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __restore_interrupt_state(__interrupt_state_t);
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
__attribute__((intrinsic)) __return_address_t __get_return_address(void);
__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __set_return_address(__return_address_t);
__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __set_return_address_low16(__return_address16_t);

__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __no_operation(void);

__attribute__((intrinsic)) _Bool __kernel_call_failed(_Bool);

#ifndef __CALYPSI_CORE_65B02__
__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __break_instruction(void);
__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __break_with(unsigned char);
#endif

#ifdef __CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__
__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __wait_for_interrupt(void);
__attribute__((intrinsic)) void __stop_processor(void);
#endif // __CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__

#endif // __CALYPSI_TARGET_6502__

#endif // __INTRINSICS_6502_H
```

### 15.1.1 Summary of intrinsic functions

Table 15.1: Intrinsic functions summary

| Function name | Description |
|---|---|
| `__disable_interrupts` | Disable interrupts |
| `__enable_interrupts` | Enable interrupts |
| `__get_interrupt_state` | Get the current interrupt state |
| `__restore_interrupt_state` | Restore to a previous interrupt state |
| `__get_return_address` | Gets the return address of the current function |
| `__set_return_address` | Alters the return address of the current function |
| `__break_instruction` | Generates a `BRK` instruction (not available on 65B02) |
| `__break_with` | Generates a `BRK` instruction with an argument |
| `__no_operation` | Generates a `NOP` instruction |
| `__wait_for_interrupt` | Waits for an interrupt (65C02 and 65CNR02 cores only) |
| `__stop_processor` | Stops the processor (65C02 and 65CNR02 cores only) |
| `__builtin_clz` | Counts leading zeroes in an `int` |
| `__builtin_clzl` | Counts leading zeroes in a `long` |
| `__builtin_clzll` | Counts leading zeroes in a `long long` |
| `__builtin_signbit` | Gets the value of the sign bit |
| `__kernel_call_failed` | Checks for failure after a system call in a kernel, returning status in the carry flag |

### 15.1.2 Description of intrinsic functions

This section details each intrinsic function.

`__disable_interrupts`

Emits a machine instruction that disables interrupts.

`__enable_interrupts`

Emits a machine instruction that enables interrupts.

`__get_interrupt_state`

Returns the current interrupt state as a `__interrupt_state_t` value, which can be used as follows:

```
int global;

void safe_increment () {
  __interrupt_state_t state = __get_interrupt_state();
  __disable_interrupts;
  global++;
  __restore_interrupt_state(state);
}
```

In the example the current state of interrupts is obtained and saved Returns the current interrupt state as a `__interrupt_state_t` value, do the real work. Finally, the interrupt state is restored to what it was when the function was entered.

`__restore_interrupt_state`

Restores to a previous interrupt state, see example above.

`__get_return_address`

Reads the return address of the current function from its stack frame.

`__set_return_address`

Replaces the current function return address with the address provided in the argument to `__set_return_address()`.

`__no_operation`

Emits a `NOP` machine instruction.

`__break_instruction`

Emits a machine instruction that causes a break exception.

`__break_with`

Emits a break exception instruction. This variant takes an opcode argument for the `BRK` instruction second byte.

`__wait_for_interrupt`

Emits an instruction that causes the 65C02 (or 65CNR02) to wait for an interrupt. Execution then resumes with the interrupt, followed by normal execution. This functionality is not available on the plain 6502.

`__stop_processor`

Emits an instruction that causes the 65C02 (or 65CNR02) to halt execution. This functionality is not available on the plain 6502.

`__builtin_clz`

Count the number of leading zeroes in a provided `int` value. Returns an undefined result if input is zero.

`__builtin_clzl`

Count the number of leading zeroes in a provided `long` value. Returns an undefined result if input is zero.

`__builtin_clzll`

Count the number of leading zeroes in a provided `long long` value. Returns an undefined result if input is zero.

`__builtin_signbit`

Returns the value (`0` or `1`) of the signbit of its input.

`__kernel_call_failed`

This intrinsic wraps a Commodore-style kernel system call, testing the carry flag return value. It can be used as follows:

```
#include <microkernel.h>

void bcd_time() {
  if (__kernel_call_failed(MicroKernelGetTime())) {
    // Handle failure
    ...
  } else {
    // Success
    ...
  }
}
```

Note: This intrinsic assumes that it surrounds a MicroKernel call expression, if that is not the case the result is unpredictable.

CHAPTER 16

# Preprocessor

This chapter briefly describes the preprocessor and covers commonly used macros.

## 16.1 Overview

The preprocessor adheres to Standard C, providing:

1. Predefined macros for inspecting the compilation environment, allowing application tuning based on compiler properties.
2. User-defined macros, specified via the command line or within C source files.
3. The ability to dump the preprocessor environment for inspection.
4. The ability to dump the source file after preprocessing.

### 16.1.1 Predefined macros

The following describes the macros which are the ones you are most likely to use in conditional builds.

`__STDC__`

This macro is set to 1, indicating that this compiler adheres to Standard C.

__STDC_HOSTED__

This macro is defined as 0, indicating a cross-compiler. You can test this as follows:

```
#if defined(__STDC_HOSTED__) && __STDC_HOSTED__ == 0
```

__STDC_VERSION__

This macro is set to 199901L to indicate that this compiler adheres to the ISO/IEC 9899:1999 standard.

__CALYPSI__

This macro is set to 1, indicating that either the assembler or compiler in use is from Calypsi.

__CALYPSI_CC__

This is set to 1, indicating that this is a Calypsi C compiler.

__CALYPSI_ASSEMBLER__

This macro is set to 1 when a Calypsi assembler is used.

__CALYPSI_DEBUG__

This macro is defined and set to 1 when compiling with debug information enabled, i.e. --debug or -g command-line option used.

__CALYPSI_VERSION_MAJOR__

This macro is set to the first number of the version.

__CALYPSI_VERSION_MINOR__

This macro is set to the second number of the version.

__BIG_ENDIAN__

This macro is defined if the target has big-endian byte order.

`__LITTLE_ENDIAN__`

This macro is defined if the target has little-endian byte order.

`__BYTE_ORDER__`

This macro defines the byte order, taking the value of `__ORDER_LITTLE_ENDIAN__`, `__ORDER_BIG_ENDIAN__`, or `__ORDER_PDP_ENDIAN__`.

It is usually simpler to use `__BIG_ENDIAN__` or `__LITTLE_ENDIAN__` macros for conditional inclusion of endian-dependent source code.

`__ORDER_LITTLE_ENDIAN__`

This macro is defined to 1234 to describe the byte order in memory for a little-endian target.

`__ORDER_BIG_ENDIAN__`

This macro is defined as 4321, describing the byte order in memory for a big-endian target.

`__ORDER_PDP_ENDIAN__`

This macro is defined as 3412, describing the byte order in memory for a PDP-endian target.

`__FILE__`

This macro expands to the name of the current source file.

`__LINE__`

This macro expands to the current line number in the source file.

`__DATE__`

This macro expands to the current date.

`__TIME__`

This macro expands to the current time of the day.

`__COUNTER__`

This macro expands to a number that increments every time the macro is used.

`__CALYPSI_TARGET_6502__`

Set to 1 when the target is the 6502 family.

`__CALYPSI_CORE_6502__`

Set to 1 when the 6502 core is selected. Undefined for other cores. You can test for this core using `#ifdef __CALYPSI_CORE_6502__`.

`__CALYPSI_CORE_65B02__`

Set to 1 when the 65B02 core is selected. Undefined for other cores. You can test if the core is 6502 using `#ifdef __CALYPSI_CORE_65B02__`.

`__CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__`

Set to 1 when the 65C02 core with Rockwell extensions is selected. Undefined for other cores. You can test if the core is 65C02 using `#ifdef __CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__`.

`__CALYPSI_CORE_65CNR02__`

Set to 1 when the 65CNR02 core without Rockwell extensions is selected. Undefined for other cores. You can test if the core is 65CNR02 using `#ifdef __CALYPSI_CORE_65CNR02__`.

`__CALYPSI_CORE_45GS02__`

Set to 1 when the 45GS02 core (used in the MEGA65 8-bit computer) is selected. Undefined for other cores. You can test if the core is 45GS02 using `#ifdef __CALYPSI_CORE_45GS02__`.

`__CALYPSI_TARGET_SYSTEM_EMBEDDED__`

Set to 1 when the compiler is configured for an embedded system, generating code suitable for flash or ROM memory. You can test if the compiler is configured for an embedded system using `#ifdef __CALYPSI_TARGET_SYSTEM_EMBEDDED__`.

`__CALYPSI_TARGET_SYSTEM_C64__`

Set to 1 when the compiler is configured for the Commodore 64 target.

`__CALYPSI_TARGET_SYSTEM_MEGA65__`

Set to 1 when the compiler is configured for the MEGA65 target.

`__CALYPSI_CODE_MODEL_PLAIN__`

Set to 1 if the compiler uses the Plain code model.

`__CALYPSI_CODE_SLOT__`

This macro is defined for the MEGA65 target and holds the value of the selected data slot, possible values are 0–7.

CHAPTER 17

# Section reference

Compiler-generated code and data objects are organized into sections within the object file. Understanding these sections is crucial for writing linker placement files and interpreting compiler and linker list files.

## 17.1 Section overview

Code and data objects occupy space in target memory, either as program-bits (actual data written to memory) or no-bits (sections represented only by their size in the ELF object file).

The Calypsi C compiler tool chain has adapted names that trace back to the origins to the early days of computing. These may not always be the best possible names, but they are widely known and familiar to many.

Sections are broadly categorized into three groups: text, data, and bss. Text sections are read-only program-bits. Data sections are read-write program-bits. BSS sections are read-write no-bits.

---

Note: If you ever wondered about what bss section stands for, it originally is block started by symbol, a pseudo operation in an assembler for IBM 704 from the mid fifties. Some people suggest it is easier to remember as better save space, as it is a way to save space in the output file by just storing the size of the section without any explicit data bits.

---

### 17.1.1 Section names

Each section has a name, and multiple section fragments can share the same name. Section names serve two purposes:

- To provide a descriptive identifier for the section.
- To control memory placement through rules that reference these names.

### 17.1.2 Section types

Each section has a type: text, data, or bss. For embedded systems, rodata (read-only data) and no-init sections are also available. Read-only data sections are similar to text sections but identify data rather than executable code. No-init sections resemble bss but lack the memory-clearing mechanism.

### 17.1.3 Data sections

From the compiler's perspective, data sections are read-write program-bits sections, meaning they have initializer values that reside in memory. In a hosted environment, such sections are loaded into memory before program execution. This approach is unsuitable for programs stored in flash memory where execution is expected to begin immediately upon power-on.

To address this, the linker clones data sections. The initializers for the original data section are moved and placed in the clone. The clone has a section name with an "`i`" prepended (e.g., `idata` for `data`) and is intended for flash (read-only) memory.

To initialize data sections on power-on, a copy routine is inserted before the `main()` function. This routine copies initializers from flash to RAM, initializing data memory and clearing bss sections.

The linker generates a `data-init_table` describing data to be copied and cleared.

---

Note: For some targets, the Calypsi C compiler tool chain can cross-compile executables for OS loading. The `--hosted` option prevents data section cloning, avoiding duplication. However, the table-driven initializer is still needed for BSS sections in such environments.

---

## 17.2 Sections used by the compiler

The following sections are sections used by the Calypsi C compiler tool chain.

Table 17.1: Sections

| Section name | Type | Memory kind | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| code | text | ROM | Executable code |
| zdata | bss | RAM | Zero-initialized (bss) data |
| data | data | RAM | Initialized data |
| cdata | rodata | ROM | Constant data |
| zzpage | bss | RAM | Zero-initialized (bss) zero page data |
| zpage | data | RAM | Initialized zero page data |
| switch | rodata | ROM | Switch tables |
| izpage | rodata | ROM | Data initializers for zpage section |
| idata | rodata | ROM | Data initializers for data section |
| data_init_table | rodata | ROM | Data initializer table |
| registers | noinit | RAM | Pseudo registers in zero page |
| reset | text | ROM | Reset vector, when used |
| heap | noinit | RAM | Heap memory, for malloc() |
| stack | noinit | RAM | CPU stack, always in page 1 on the 6502 |
| cstack | noinit | RAM | C stack, simulated stack, anywhere in memory |
| zpsave | noinit | RAM | Commodore targets, save area for registers section |
| zfar | bss | RAM | Zero-initialized (bss) far data, MEGA65 only |
| far | data | RAM | Initialized far data, and MEGA65 only |
| cfar | rodata | ROM | Constant far data, MEGA65 only |
| ifar | rodata | ROM | Data initializers for far section, MEGA65 only |
| zhuge | bss | RAM | Zero-initialized (bss) huge data, MEGA65 only |
| huge | data | RAM | Initialized huge data, MEGA65 only |
| chuge | rodata | ROM | Constant huge data, MEGA65 only |
| ihuge | rodata | ROM | Data initializers for huge section, MEGA65 only |

The sections izpage, idata, ifar, ihuge, and data_init_table in the table above are linker generated.

Note: It is assumed that no ROM exists in the zero page. Consequently, constants placed in the zero page are placed in zpage (the normal RAM initialized zero page section), and the const attribute only affects the object type.

Note: The table assigns sections to ROM and RAM for ROM-based applications that start on power-up. For hosted systems loading from storage to RAM, this distinction is not applicable. Always consider ROM-marked sections as read-only.

### 17.2.1 The vector section

An interrupt function will have an associated vector. This is a specially named section for the purpose of holding a single vector. The name looks something like $$interruptVector_0xfffe. The intended address of the vector is encoded in the section name and the linker recognizes these and will place the vector at the address specified. This is handled without the help of any section placement rules.

### 17.2.2 Section reference

The following goes through the available sections in detail.

`code`

Holds program code for the address range `0x0000-0xffff`. This section is intended for placement in flash or ROM memory.

`zdata`

Holds zero-initialized (bss) data in main memory, address range `0x0000-0xffff`.

`data`

Holds non-zero initialized data in the main memory, address range `0x0000-0xffff`.

`cdata`

Holds initialized constant data in main memory, address range `0x0000-0xffff`. This section is intended for placement in flash or ROM memory.

`zzpage`

Holds zero-initialized (bss) data in the zero page, address range `0x00-0xff`.

`zpage`

Holds non-zero initialized data in the zero page memory, address range `0x00-0xff`.

`switch`

Holds switch tables in main memory, address range `0x0000-0xffff`. This section is intended for placement in flash or ROM memory.

`izpage`

Holds initializers for the zpage section. The linker creates this section by cloning the zpage section provided by the compiler. It is placed in main memory, address range `0x0000-0xffff`, and must be placed in flash or ROM. This section is not used when linking for a hosted system.

`idata`

Holds initializers for the `data` section. The linker creates this section by cloning the `data` section provided by the compiler. It is placed in main memory, address range `0x0000-0xffff`, and must be placed in flash or ROM. This section is not used when linking for a hosted system.

`data_init_table`

The linker creates this section and populates it with information for the C startup code, detailing how to copy and clear memory regions to properly initialize data objects before transferring control to `main()`. It is placed in main memory, address range `0x0000-0xffff`, and must reside in read-only memory, such as flash or ROM.

# CHAPTER 18

# Runtime library

This chapter describes the supplied C runtime library, adapted from the Apache NuttX library.

## 18.1 Design considerations

The original Apache NuttX library is a collection of routines from the C standard library, POSIX standard, and other components common in real-time operating systems.

It is a scalable and highly configurable runtime library that works in both 8-bits and 32-bits environments.

The adapted version becomes a Standard C library, with POSIX and RTOS-style components either removed or disabled.

Apart from that, the following are the key changes:

- Replaced header files closely related to the compiler (e.g., `stddef.h`, `stdarg.h`, `setjmp.h`, `stdint.h`).
- Internal names are changed to start with either double underscores or a single underscore followed by a capital letter. This avoids namespace pollution, as such identifiers are reserved for the compiler vendor.
- The stub interface uses names prefixed by `_Stub` instead of `up_` for clarity and to avoid namespace pollution.

---

Note: The Apache NuttX library's configuration utility, designed for environmental tailoring, is not used here; the build system is different. This allows the library to be used without extensive configuration, as the compiler is known and target-board-specific matters are excluded. Some library functions have different versions to reduce memory footprint by making certain capabilities optional (e.g., formatters; see Library on a diet).

---

## 18.2 Using the library

The C library consists of header files that are immediately available to use by the compiler and can be included:

```
#include <stdio.h>

int main () {
  printf("Hello World!\n");
  return 0;
}
```

When linking, the C library does not need to be explicitly added on the command line, as the linker automatically finds the correct C runtime library by examining the settings used during C object file compilation:

$ ln6502 main.o linker-rules.scm

C library variants matching different compiler settings are provided in the installation directory; the appropriate one is automatically selected.

The linker detects mixing object files compiled with different settings or incompatible third-party libraries. This relies on matching runtime attributes in object files. A mismatch results in a descriptive linker error.

## 18.3 Provided library files

The following table lists the provided ready to use library files:

Table 18.1: Library variants

| Library name | Processor core | Size of double | Code model | Target system |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| clib-6502.a | 6502 | 32 bits | Plain | Generic |
| clib-6502-double64.a | 6502 | 64 bits | Plain | Generic |
| clib-65b02.a | 65B02 | 32 bits | Plain | Generic |
| clib-65b02-double64.a | 65B02 | 64 bits | Plain | Generic |
| clib-65c02.a | 65C02 | 32 bits | Plain | Generic |
| clib-65c02-double64.a | 65C02 | 64 bits | Plain | Generic |
| clib-65cnr02.a | 65CNR02 | 32 bits | Plain | Generic |
| clib-65cnr02-double64.a | 65CNR02 | 64 bits | Plain | Generic |
| clib-6502-c64.a | 6502 | 32 bits | Plain | Commodore 64 |
| clib-6502-double64-c64.a | 6502 | 64 bits | Plain | Commodore 64 |
| clib-45gs02-mega65.a | 45GS02 | 32 bits | Plain | MEGA65 |
| clib-45gs02-double64-mega65.a | 45GS02 | 64 bits | Plain | MEGA65 |

Note: There is normally no need to specify the C library to use when linking. The linker is able to automatically pick the correct C library by inspecting the C object files.

## 18.4 Stubs interface

How do you provide functions such as `fopen()`, `fprintf()`, or `assert()` when using a cross-compiler that may not know the final execution environment of an application, or even have a file system?

Functions like `fprintf()` pass through several library layers, handling formatting, buffered I/O, and stream interfaces. Ultimately, they output characters to a display or file. This is managed by a simple stubs API defined in the `calypsi/stubs.h` header file.

### 18.4.1 Semi-hosting

Semi-hosting is the concept where the debugger implements operations, such as I/O, on behalf of the target. This involves using a single breakpoint where the target temporarily stops to exchange data with the debugger, which performs the actual operation on the host. After the operation, any return value is passed back, and execution resumes on the target.

The Calypsi C compiler tool chain includes a semi-hosted debug implementation of the stubs API within the standard C library. To enable semi-hosting, add the `--semi-hosted` command-line option to the linker.

File operations are performed in the host filesystem by the debugger in a directory specified by the `--semi-hosted-root` command-line option, which defaults to the current directory.

The standard streams `stdin`, `stdout` and `stderr` are fully supported. Depending on your IDE you may have a console window for these streams.

Semi-hosting can be used during development for tracing or prototyping before a real I/O system is implemented in the application. In a final application, you will most likely use target-specific stub functions, not semi-hosted variants.

---

Note: Even if you implement some stub actions, you can still link with `--semi-hosted` for partial semi-hosted support. This allows you to implement a file system while retaining `assert()` through the semi-hosted mechanism. The C library's semi-hosted stubs are compiled with `--weak-symbols`, so your implementations take precedence. Unimplemented stubs will use their weak semi-hosted variants.

---

### 18.4.2 Stubs header

The `calypsi/stubs.h` file looks as follows:

```
/*****************************************************************************
 *
 * Copyright Håkan Thörngren
 *
 * This file is part of the Calypsi C library.
 * Permission to use with the Calypsi tool chain is hereby granted.
 *
 *****************************************************************************/

#ifndef __INCLUDE_CALYPSI_STUBS_H
#define __INCLUDE_CALYPSI_STUBS_H

#include <calypsi/config.h>
#include <stddef.h>
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
/* Currently not implemented. */
#define __noreturn_function

/*****************************************************************************
 * Public Data
 *****************************************************************************/

#if defined(__cplusplus)
extern "C"
{
#endif

/*****************************************************************************
 * Debug interfaces exported by the architecture-specific logic
 *****************************************************************************/

/*****************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_open
 *
 * Description:
 *   Open a file.
 *   The oflag argument are POSIX style mode flags, e.g O_RDONLY which
 *   are defined in fcntl.h.
 *   This function is variadic as it optionally can take a mode_t that
 *   are permissions, e.g 0666. If the file system does not handle
 *   permissions you can ignore that this function is variadic.
 *   The return file descriptor shall be a positive number, larger
 *   than 2 (as 0-2 are used for stdin, stdout and stderr).
 *   The actual number does not matter and they need not to be
 *   consequtive, multiple numeric series with gaps between can be used.
 *
 * Return the obtained file descriptor or the desired errno value negated
 * if there is an error.
 *
 *****************************************************************************/

int _Stub_open(const char *path, int oflag, ...);

/*****************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_close
 *
 * Description:
 *   Close a file
 *
 * Return 0 if operation was OK or the desired errno value negated
 * if there is an error.
 * Note: This will only be invoked for streams opened by _Stub_open(),
 *       there is no need to check for the standard descriptor 0-2.
 *
 *****************************************************************************/

int _Stub_close(int fd);

/*****************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_lseek
 *
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
 * Description:
 *   Change position in a file
 *
 * Returns the new position in the file in bytes from the beginning of the
 * file, or the desired errno value negated if there is an error.
 *
 ******************************************************************************/

long _Stub_lseek(int fd, long offset, int whence);

/******************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_fgetpos
 *
 * Description:
 *   Get current position in a file
 *
 * Returns 0 on success, or the desired errno value negated if there is an error.
 *
 ******************************************************************************/

int _Stub_fgetpos(int fd, fpos_t *pos);

/******************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_fsetpos
 *
 * Description:
 *   Change position in a file
 *
 * Returns 0 on success, or the desired errno value negated if there is an error.
 *
 ******************************************************************************/

int _Stub_fsetpos(int fd, const fpos_t *pos);

/******************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_read
 *
 * Description:
 *   Read from a file
 *
 * Returns the number of characters read or the desired errno value negated
 * if there is an error.
 *
 ******************************************************************************/

size_t _Stub_read(int fd, void *buf, size_t count);

/******************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_write
 *
 * Description:
 *   Write to a file
 *
 * Returns the number of characters actually written or the desired errno
 * value negated if there is an error.
 *
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
 ****************************************************************************/

size_t _Stub_write(int fd, const void *buf, size_t count);

/****************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_rename
 *
 * Description:
 *   Rename a file or directory
 *
 * Return 0 on success or the desired errno value negated if there is an error.
 *
 ****************************************************************************/

int _Stub_rename(const char *oldpath, const char *newpath);

/****************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_remove
 *
 * Description:
 *   Remove a file or directory
 *
 * Return 0 on success  or the desired errno value negated if there is an error.
 *
 ****************************************************************************/

int _Stub_remove(const char *path);

/****************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_exit
 *
 * Description:
 *   Terminate the program with an exit code, exit clean-ups are done
 *   before this function is (finally) called.
 *
 ****************************************************************************/

void _Stub_exit(int exitCode) __noreturn_function;

/****************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_environ
 *
 * Description:
 *   Get the environment. On UNIX this is typically a global variable
 *   'environ', but in order to make it more flexible and avoid having
 *   such global variable (which is not part of the C standard) it is
 *   obtained using the stub interface.
 *
 * Note:
 *   This stub function is not implemented by the semi-hosted debug stub
 *   interface.
 *
 ****************************************************************************/

char** _Stub_environ(void);
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
/*****************************************************************************
 * Name: _Stub_assert
 *
 * Description:
 *   Handle an assertion
 *
 *****************************************************************************/

void _Stub_assert(const char *filename, int linenum) __noreturn_function;

#if defined(__cplusplus)
}
#endif


#endif /* __INCLUDE_CALYPSI_STUBS_H */
```

### 18.4.3 Custom I/O

You can provide your own low-level I/O stubs. File descriptors are integers indexing an internal lookup table (typically an array). If the I/O system is used, the library statically allocates the first three streams: `stdin`, `stdout`, and `stderr`. Additional file streams are dynamically allocated from the heap.

### 18.4.4 Error handling

If a stub action encounters an error, it should return the negated `errno` value. The calling C library function then performs appropriate error handling, setting `errno` to the corresponding positive error code.

## 18.5 Examine use of library

When working with a memory-constrained system, the risk of running out of memory is always present. To help you understand memory usage, the linker can generate a list file with cross-reference information. This valuable tool details what is placed in memory, its location, and why it occupies that space.

You can tell the linker to provide a list file in the following way:

```
$ ln6502 main.o clib-6502.a linker-rules.scm --list-file=project.lst --cross-reference
```

This will result in a list file names `project.lst` which contains several parts showing things such as:

- A summary of the memories
- An overview of sections and where they take space in the memories
- The object files used and from which library they have been extracted from
- Complete cross reference, showing where every section fragment is located with its size, together with:
  - What symbols are defined
  - What symbols are referenced
  - Who is referencing me
- An overall summary of total memory size

## 18.6 Library on a diet

If you use the C library in a memory-constrained system, you may find it rapidly consumes code space. This is because the C library provides substantial functionality, with many functions acting as simple facades to complex underlying implementations.

There are ways to tune things to reduce the memory footprint. However, first understand the current memory usage before making changes.

### 18.6.1 Formatters

The C library provides various `printf()` and `scanf()` variants, each with different capabilities and memory requirements.

While you can specify a format function, the compiler inspects used format strings and outputs this information to the object file. The linker then automatically selects the smallest variant compatible with those format strings.

---

Note: Automatic format function selection requires using string literals in calls. This is good practice, as it also allows the compiler to validate argument list consistency with the format string.

---

If you for some reason have to override the formatter used and dictate a specific one, you can do so using the `--rtattr` attribute which for `printf()` would be:

```
$ ln6502 --rtattr printf=nofloat files...
```

The default print formatter as mentioned above, is selected automatically to match your needs. The following table describes the available print formatters:

Table 18.2: Print formatters

| Capability | printf=reduced | printf=medium | printf=nofloat | printf=float |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| basics, `c d i o p s u X x %` | yes | yes | yes | yes |
| format flag, `0 + - #` | no | yes | yes | yes |
| field width | no | yes | yes | yes |
| long long | no | no | yes | yes |
| float, `e f g E F G` | no | no | no | yes |

The `scanf()` function exits in three variants, mainly depending on if you want support for floating point numbers or not:

Table 18.3: Read formatters

| Capability | scanf=medium | scanf=nofloat | scanf=float |
|---|---|---|---|
| basics, `c d i o p s u X x %` | yes | yes | yes |
| long long | no | yes | yes |
| float, `e f g E F G` | no | no | yes |

---

Note: An appropriate default formatter for `scanf()` is automatically picked by the linker based on the needs of your application.

---

### 18.6.2 Reduced exit

Terminating an application involves closing open files and executing `atexit()` functions. For embedded applications, which may never exit, termination code can be redundant; closing files also adds related code. An implicit call to `exit()` occurs when `main()` returns. If proper exit code is undesirable, you can exclude it.

The simplest way to reduce exit code overhead is to add `--rtattr exit=simplified` to the linker command line. This prevents closing files or calling `atexit()` handlers. Instead, `exit()` will immediately jump to `_Stub_exit()`, the lowest-level termination routine.

### 18.6.3 Consider alternatives

If the library still occupies too much space, consider replacing certain functions with smaller, less flexible alternatives.

## 18.7 Override library functions

You may sometimes need to override a library function. Consider using an alternative function with a different name rather than replacing a standard one. Replacing a library function is appropriate if you have a more suitable application-specific implementation, especially when other library functions call it.

To replace a library function, add a new source file to your project using the same function name and prototype, then build your application normally.

---

Note: Function replacement works because library functions use weak symbols. Your replacement functions are non-weak by default, taking precedence over library functions during linking.

---

## 18.8 C startup

The initial system configuration is performed by the C startup object which is included in the standard C library.

The C startup is responsible for setting up the execution environment before giving control to the `main()` function. This typically includes setting up the stack pointer and providing initial values to static variables.

The C startup object also contains a couple of small optional sections that are only included if needed. They are responsible for initializing optional parts of the runtime system, such as the heap and the file streams.

If you do not use functions such as `malloc()`, the heap is not needed and the code to initialize the heap memory system is omitted. The same happens for file streams. If there are no file streams used, the code related to initializing and terminating them are omitted. This is done in order to reduce the memory footprint of the final application.

In case you want to study the source code of the C startup it can be found at `src/lib/lowlevel/cstartup.s` under the installation directory.

### 18.8.1 Customizing the startup

In many cases the default C startup will work fine without any changes. However, there are a couple of typical situations when some custom configuration is needed. One example is that the memory system needs to be configured immediately at power on, or if your application is going to run under an operating system that may impose special rules on initialization and termination.

If you only need to run some code to perform early initialization of the hardware you can provide your own `__low_level_init()` function which is called early in the C startup object, before any static C variables are given their start values.

If you need to make actual changes to the C startup object the easiest way is to copy the existing one to your project, make changes as required and include it in your build system.

To be able to properly suppress the C startup object in the C library you need to provide a different value for the `cstartup` runtime attribute in your own `cstartup.s`. The `cstartup.s` assembly source file starts with:

```
;;; C startup variant, change attribute value if you make your own
        .rtmodel cstartup,"normal"
```

You need to change the value `normal` to something else. What value you use does not matter so much, but using a descriptive value is probably a good idea:

```
;;; C startup variant, change attribute value if you make your own
        .rtmodel cstartup,"mycustom"
```

The modified C startup source file needs to be included in your build system. The linker also needs to be informed that it should use a specific C startup object, which is done using the `--cstartup` command line option:

```
% ln6502 <object-files> <your-startup.o> clib-6502.a --cstartup=mycustom
```

---

Note: The C startup object has been carefully crafted to have a small footprint and to properly initialize the C runtime system. Even though it makes calls to handle the file system, initialize data areas and the heap, it is done in such way that the actual code is only included in the final application if these subsystems are used.

A good understanding of the tools and the provided C runtime is needed in order to make non-trivial changes to the C startup object. Incorrectly made changes may cause linker errors, unused subsystem being pulled in, or result in a runtime that is not properly initialized.

---

## 18.9 Time and date

The provided C library implements the functions and definitions in the `time.h` system header file. The time related types are defined as 64-bit types to avoid the year 2038 problem and reduce issues with overflow.

### 18.9.1 Providing a time

C defines two functions `clock()` and `time()` that provides a concept of a time. The library provides a default implementation for them that returns a value with all bits set, which means that the time is not available.

To use actual times you will need to provide your own implementation of `clock()` or `time()` and include it in your project.

The `CLOCKS_PER_SEC` macro is set to `1000` by the `stdint.h` header file.

## 18.10 Rebuilding the C library

The C library is designed to allow for a great deal of configuration without resorting to rebuild it. Situations where you may need to rebuild the C library are when you need a specific variant build, or to enable debug information to debug the library itself.

For the most part, building the library is straightforward, but there are certain files that needs to be built in certain ways, e.g. variants of `printf()`. To make it easier to build a variant C library there are build scripts provided in the `library-build` folder in the installation directory.

There is one build file for each library variant that are included in the installation. Select one that has a similar configuration as a starting point. It is a good idea to make copy of the build script and modify it to suit your needs.

# CHAPTER 19

# The optimizer

The compiler applies various optimizations to reduce code size and increase performance. This chapter describes how to control optimizations and highlights useful aspects, rather than detailing every optimization applied.

## 19.1 Overview

By default, the compiler performs basic rewrites, optimizes code selection for efficient instruction set utilization, and makes good use of the CPU's internal registers.

The resulting application is generally well-suited for debugging, as many optimization passes are disabled by default.

### 19.1.1 General settings

Optimizations can be broadly enabled using the following command-line options.

`-O1`

Enable some optimization passes.

`--O2`

Enable all provided optimization passes.

`--speed`

Allow application size to grow in order to make the application run faster.

`--space`

Tune optimizations more towards making the application small. This is the default.

## 19.2 Function inlining

Function inlining expands a function's body at its call site, typically increasing performance but potentially increasing code size.

Function inlining may be beneficial on code size for small functions as the inserted function body becomes tailored to the particular code surrounding it. Normally when making a function call there is a calling convention that has to be followed which puts restrictions on how registers are used.

Inlining is enabled by specifying at least `-O1`.

### 19.2.1 The inline keyword

The `inline` keyword in C is sometimes misunderstood. Its purpose is to expose a function body to many compilation units and hint that the function may be inline expanded instead of making an ordinary call to it. There is no guarantee that a function marked as `inline` is actually inlined, this decision is taken by the compiler. Futhermore, the compiler may also choose to inline functions that are not marked as `inline`.

### 19.2.2 Using the inline keyword

A function marked as `inline` is normally placed in a header file to allow it to be used by multiple compilation units:

```
inline max (int a, int b) {
  if (a > b) {
    return a;
  } else {
    return b;
  }
}
```

An inline function can also be marked as `static inline` in a similar way:

```
static inline max (int a, int b) {
  if (a > b) {
    return a;
  } else {
    return b;
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
  }
}
```

You can use functions marked as `inline` or `static inline` in the same way as any other function. They can be called and in that case they may be subject to inline expansion and you can store it as a function pointer and make calls to it using that function pointer.

There are two cases when a function marked as `inline` or `static inline` requires a separate copy of the function. First, the compiler may choose to make an ordinary function call to it. Second, a function marked as `inline` may be stored in a function pointer.

### 19.2.3 Variants of inline functions

As hinted in the previous section, there are two kinds of inline functions, plain `inline` and `static inline`. As long as the compiler chose to do inline expansion these two variants work identically. They differ when the compiler choose to not inline expand it and make an ordinary function call instead.

#### `inline`

A function is marked as `inline` does not cause the compiler to generate a separate definition of the function. If such separate function is needed, it is assumed that one compilation unit provides the definition using the `extern` keyword:

```
extern inline max (int a, int b);
```

This should be placed in an ordinary C source file, not a header file.

In most cases you will need to tell the compiler to actually generate such separate function using an `extern` declaration somewhere. If you do not do this and the function is required by the application, a linker error will result that tells you that the function is not defined.

The main benefit of using `inline` rather than `static inline` is that you are ensured that there will be at most one separate definition of the function.

---

Note: One subtle benefit which `inline` has over `static inline` is that if you really must expand the function inline, then you can omit the `extern` declaration of the function. The linker will then let you know that the required inline expansion did not happen. In this case you most likely want to specify the command-line option `--always-inline` to ensure that the inliner is always used.

---

#### `static inline`

The compiler will generate a `static` standalone version of a `static inline` function whenever there is a need for it. Being `static` it is local to the compilation unit with no external linkage.

This means that if you make use of the same `static inline` function in several compilation units, there may be multiple copies of the same function.

---

Note: If you take the address of the same `static inline` function in different translation units then the result will not compare equal.

---

Note: While it is slightly easier to use a `static inline` function as you do not need to provide a single `extern` declaration, it comes with the cost of potentially having duplicate code in the final application.

### 19.2.4 Controlling inline expansion

The compiler will apply it own decisions on what to inline and when to use normal function calls. Small simple functions and static functions with only a single use are prime candidates for inline expansion.

There are a couple of command-line options that allow for tuning which functions are considered for inlining:

`--always-inline`

Always enable the inliner, no matter which optimization level is used.

This is useful if you have functions that you always want to be inlined.

`--no-inline`

Do not perform any inlining at all.

`--only-marked-as-inline`

Only consider functions that have the `inline` keyword. This prevents functions not marked as `inline` from being considered for inlining.

`--strong-inline`

Try to obey the `inline` keyword. This relaxes some of the requirements, such as that the function must be small enough. This is a strong hint that we really want functions marked for inlining to be inlined. The compiler may still refuse to inline a function.

Note: There are a number of reasons why the compiler may refuse to inline a function, e.g. used recursively, there is no prototype, it uses a variable argument list or it uses variable length arrays.

`--inline-on-matching-custom-text-section`

Functions being placed in a custom section (using `#pragma clang section`) are only allowed to be inlined into a function that belongs to the same custom section.

This is useful in situations when the memory system is being manipulated and functions are placed in a custom section to control placement to obey the memory setup. Especially if you have several such configurations you may want to prevent functions from being inlined cross custom sections as they may make assumptions on which section (memory placement) they are being executed from.

## 19.3 Cross call

This optimization pass can sometimes result in quite significant savings on the application size. It examines the almost final program looking for instruction sequences that are identical. Such sequences are lifted out to separate subroutines which are called instead. This takes in account the size of the code sequences as well as how many times they appear.

### 19.3.1 Controlling cross call

Cross call is enabled by specifying at least `-O2`. Even though cross call is focusing on the application size, it is enabled also when the `--speed` command-line option is specified, as the savings on code space can sometimes be quite significant.

`--no-cross-call`

This option disables the cross call optimization. This can be used with `-O2` when you want to avoid the subroutine call overhead that cross call will introduce.

`--no-interprocedural-cross-jump`

This option disables the cross jump between functions optimization. This can be used if you are manually mapping in functions by some bank mechanism in a way so that not all functions in the same compilation are visible at the same time.

CHAPTER 20

# Assembly language interface

Assembly language provides symbolic access to target machine instructions. You might need this control for specific instructions unrepresentable in C, precise hardware interaction, exception stack frame manipulation, exact timing sequences, or performance-critical routines.

## 20.1 Intrinsic functions

The compiler provides intrinsic functions (declared in the calypsi/intrinsics6502.h file) that resemble ordinary functions. Instead of a function call, an intrinsic generates a specific instruction sequence. For example, `__disable_interrupts()` emits machine instructions to disable normal interrupts. See Intrinsic functions for details.

## 20.2 Assembly functions

You can implement functions in assembly language and call them from C like any other function. An assembly function must adhere to the C calling convention, which dictates how values are passed to the called function and where the return value is placed.

You can choose between a separate assembly source file or inline assembly; each has pros and cons. Assembly functions offer better separation between C and assembly, aiding portability. However, function call overhead and adherence to calling conventions may be undesirable.

Minimal boilerplate assembly code is required to place the routine in a suitable section and declare public symbols. This assembly code resides in a separate file, which must be added to the build system.

Assembly language files typically use the `.s` or `.asm` extension; however, this varies due to the lack of standardization in assembly language itself.

The assembler provided by the Calypsi C compiler tool chain, similar to UNIX assemblers, uses directives starting with a dot. This avoids name clashes with instructions, whose naming conventions vary widely across targets, ensuring consistent directive names.

As a minimum, you must declare the section and export your function name using the `.public` directive:

```
              .section code
              .public myFunction    ; export myFunction
              .extern _Zp           ; pseudo zero page registers
myFunction:   clc
              adc     zp:_Zp
              rts
```

To call this function correctly, you must provide a prototype in C:

```
#include <stdint.h>

extern int8_t myFunction(int8_t a, int8_t b);

int caller(int8_t param) {
  return myFunction(5, param);
}
```

### 20.2.1 Generate skeleton code

The easiest way to generate an assembly source file is to have the compiler create it using the `--assembly-source` command-line option. A simplified C source file containing the desired functions and declarations can be used for this purpose.

You can provide desired function definitions with simple parameter uses to study how they are passed:

```
extern int intvar;
extern char charvar;

extern void externalFunction(int*);

int myFunction(int i, char c) {
  int local = i;
  intvar = i;
  charvar = c;
  externalFunction(&local);
  return local;
}

int main() {
  myFunction(intvar, charvar);
  return 0;
}
```

```
$ cc6502 skeleton.c --assembly-source=skeleton.s
```

```
; Generated by Calypsi ISO C compiler for 6502

            .rtmodel version,"1"
            .rtmodel codeModel,"plain"
            .rtmodel core,"6502"
            .rtmodel target,"none-specified"
            .extern _AllocStack
            .extern _DeallocStack
            .extern _Vfp
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
            .extern _Vsp
            .extern _Zp
            .extern charvar
            .extern externalFunction
            .extern intvar
;  extern int intvar;
;  extern char charvar;
;
;  extern void externalFunction(int*);
;
;  int myFunction(int i, char c) {
            .section code,text
            .public myFunction
myFunction: ldx     #254
            jsr     _AllocStack
            sta     zp:_Zp+2
;    int local = i;
            ldy     #0
            lda     zp:_Zp
            sta     (_Vsp),y
            iny
            lda     zp:_Zp+1
            sta     (_Vsp),y
;    intvar = i;
            lda     zp:_Zp
            sta     intvar
            lda     zp:_Zp+1
            sta     intvar+1
;    charvar = c;
            lda     zp:_Zp+2
            sta     charvar
;    externalFunction(&local);
            lda     zp:_Vsp
            sta     zp:_Zp
            lda     zp:_Vsp+1
            sta     zp:_Zp+1
            jsr     externalFunction
;    return local;
            ldy     #0
            lda     (_Vsp),y
            sta     zp:_Zp
            iny
            lda     (_Vsp),y
            sta     zp:_Zp+1
;  }
            ldx     #2
            jmp     _DeallocStack
;
;  int main() {
            .section code,text
            .public main
main:
;    myFunction(intvar, charvar);
            lda     intvar
            sta     zp:_Zp
            lda     intvar+1
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
            sta     zp:_Zp+1
            lda     charvar
            jsr     myFunction
;    return 0;
            lda     #0
            sta     zp:_Zp
            lda     #0
            sta     zp:_Zp+1
;  }
            rts
```

## 20.3 Calling convention

The default calling convention is complex in detail, but straightforward in most common scenarios.

If parameters are passed on the stack, the caller is responsible for cleanup. The called function may use any register resource but must preserve certain registers, saving and restoring them before returning.

Parameters are passed in register A and pseudo-registers `_Zp[0-7]`. Registers X, Y, and pseudo-registers 0–23 are destroyed by a function call, while pseudo-registers 24–47 must be preserved.

Table 20.1: Parameter registers

| Register | Size | Types |
|---|---|---|
| A | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[0]` | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[1]` | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[2]` | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[3]` | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[4]` | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[5]` | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[6]` | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[7]` | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[0-1]` | 16 | `int`, `short`, pointer |
| `_Zp[2-3]` | 16 | `int`, `short`, pointer |
| `_Zp[4-5]` | 16 | `int`, `short`, pointer |
| `_Zp[6-7]` | 16 | `int`, `short`, pointer |
| `_Zp[0-3]` | 32 | `long`, `float` |
| `_Zp[4-7]` | 32 | `long`, `float` |
| `_Zp[0-3]` | 32 | `far` and `huge` pointers (MEGA65 target) |
| `_Zp[4-7]` | 32 | `far` and `huge` pointers (MEGA65 target) |

Parameters are bound to registers left-to-right on a first-fit basis. If a parameter register is skipped, it will be considered again for later parameters. Parameters that do not fit into registers are passed on the stack.

Table 20.2: Return values

| Register | Size | Types |
|---|---|---|
| A | 8 | `char`, zero page pointer |
| `_Zp[0-1]` | 16 | `int`, `short`, pointer |
| `_Zp[0-3]` | 32 | `long`, `float` |
| `_Zp[0-3]` | 32 | `far` and `huge` pointers (MEGA65 target) |

### 20.3.1 64 bit values

The above tables do not mention 64 bit values. A 64 bit value such as `long long` and `long double` is passed by reference, that is, as a 16 bits pointer to the value.

If a function returns a 64 bit value, the caller is responsible for allocating space. An extra 'invisible' parameter, a pointer to this space, is added to the function. The called function is expected to return this pointer.

### 20.3.2 Structure passing

Structure parameters are passed on the stack. Structure return values are handled like 64 bit values. The caller allocates space and adds an extra 'invisible' parameter (a pointer to that space) to the function call. The called function is expected to return this pointer.

## 20.4 Inline assembler

The inline assembler allows you to insert and interface assembly code slices within a C function. This avoids call overhead and can improve parameter adaptation. However, the optimizer must be more cautious, which may affect the performance of the surrounding C code.

### 20.4.1 Basic inline assembly

You can insert a slice of assembly code using an `__asm` block:

```
int counter;

void foo(char xx) {
  __asm(" sei\n"
        " inc counter\n"
        " bne skip\n"
        " inc counter+1\n"
        "skip: cli\n"
        );
}
```

Each line without a label requires at least one leading space and must be terminated by a newline character (`\n`).

The inline assembler supports the full assembly instruction set, including literal bytes, volatile operations, local labels, and register allocation for parameters and return values.

Goto labels and most assembler directives are currently not supported by the inline assembler. If you need better control with placement, use a separate assembly source file instead.

When inline assembly is inserted, the compiler adapts it to fit the generated C code. Variables can be passed as parameters, and a single result variable is supported. The compiler reasonably understands the inserted assembly, mixing it with C-generated code. Inline assembly is subject to low-level optimizations when the optimizer is enabled.

### 20.4.2 Volatile

An assembly block can be marked as `volatile`:

```
__asm volatile { ... }
```

This has the effect that all memory accesses in the assembly slice are treated as side effects. Otherwise the optimizer may remove reads from memory when the value read is not used.

### 20.4.3 Local labels

Local labels can be used and their names will not clash with C identifiers. When an inline assembly slice is inserted, local labels are converted to internal C labels, preventing name clashes with C identifiers.

### 20.4.4 External symbols

Inline assembly can refer to symbols defined outside its code slice, provided such symbols are visible at the C level within the same compilation unit.

### 20.4.5 Constraints

An inline assembly code slice can refer to C variables and return a value. The inline assembly construct optionally accepts three lists:

1. Output variable: Specifies a C variable to represent the returned value and a register class where the assembly code block places it. The result is prefixed by = in its single-value list.
2. Input expressions: Typically variables. The compiler evaluates the expression and places it in the specified register class.
3. Clobbered registers: Any register resource clobbered by the inline assembly must be specified here.

Multiple entries in a list are comma-separated.

#### Register classes

A register class is a register resource that can represent either a single register or a set of equivalent registers. They are used for allocating parameters and determining the return value location.

The following register classes are defined:

Table 20.3: Register classes

| Register class | Description |
|---|---|
| a | A accumulator |
| x | X index register |
| y | Y index register |
| index | X or Y index register |
| zp8 | An 8-bit zero page pseudo register |
| zp16 | A 16-bit zero page pseudo register |
| zp32 | A 32-bit zero page pseudo register |
| z | Z index register (45GS02 only) |
| q | 32-bit Q register (45GS02 only) |

Note: Register classes are used internally during code generation. Internal code generator rules ensure safe register allocation by adhering to specific rules and invariants. Rather than attempting to diagnose inline assembly constraints or impose conservative limitations, the compiler trusts you. Overusing resources or violating internal invariants may lead to a register allocation error. In such cases, ease the register resources to find a working allocation.

### Registers and constraints

The following code shows how constraints for an inline assembly code slice are defined:

```
char foo(char xx) {
  char out;
  __asm(" inx\n"
        " inx\n"
        " inx\n"
        " inx\n"
        " txa\n"
        : "=Ka" (out)
        : "Kx"  (xx)
        : "a", "x"
      );
  return out;
}
```

Currently, the only supported constraint is 'K', followed by a register class.

An empty list can be entered by using a colon character followed by nothing.

The first list is the optional output parameter, describing the C variable where the output is visible after the inline assembly slice executes. The inline assembly slice must leave the result in the specified register class; the compiler will automatically insert code to store this value in the C variable.

The second constraint specifies input variables and their register classes. The compiler ensures these variables are available in the specified register classes before passing control to the inline assembly code slice.

The third list specifies the actual registers clobbered by the inline assembly code slice. These must be register classes describing a single register.

### Substitutions

A register class may specify a register resource with multiple alternatives. The register allocator selects the actual register used. You can refer to the register resource using substitutions, given by the `%N` syntax, where N is the position of the result followed by the inputs, starting with `%0`.

A result always has position `%0`. If there is no result, the first input becomes `%0`. After this the inputs follow in order as `%1`, `%2` and so on:

```
int foo(char xx, char yy) {
  int out;
  __asm(" ldy %1\n"
        " iny\n"
        " tya\n"
        " clc\n"
        " adc %2\n"
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
        " sta %0\n"
        " lda #0\n"
        " adc #0\n"
        " sta %0+1\n"
        : "=Kzp16"(out)
        : "Kzp8"(xx), "Kzp8"(yy)
        : "a", "y"
      );
  return out;
}
```

If you find substitutions using numbers to be unreadable, you can specify a symbol for each substitution:

```
int foo(char xx, char yy) {
  int out;
  __asm(" ldy %[xx]\n"
        " iny\n"
        " tya\n"
        " clc\n"
        " adc %[second]\n"
        " sta %[result]\n"
        " lda #0\n"
        " adc #0\n"
        " sta %[result]+1\n"
        : [result] "=Kzp16"(out)
        : [xx] "Kzp8"(xx), [second] "Kzp8"(yy)
        : "a", "y"
      );
  return out;
}
```

CHAPTER 21

# Assembler

The assembler enables writing assembly source files for C projects or standalone assembly language projects.

## 21.1 Overview

Unlike Standard C, there is no standard assembly language. The syntax for assembly instructions used by the 6502 assembler mostly follows what is outlined in guides made by the vendor of the instruction set.

Assembly source expressions are heavily inspired by C-style operators and precedence rules.

The assembler processes assembly source code using the C preprocessor, allowing C comments, include files, and conditional inclusion.

Directives are largely specific to the Calypsi C compiler tool chain, appearing consistent across products from Calypsi. Directive names begin with a leading dot, a common practice in many, but not all, assemblers.

Note: The dot prefix is used to prevent potential future conflicts where a mnemonic name might clash with a commonly used directive in the product line. This also makes directives stand out in the source code.

## 21.2 Syntax

### 21.2.1 Source file format

Assembly source lines follow the traditional format: a label field in the first column, followed by an instruction that may take one or more operands. Comments are preceded by a semicolon:

```
[label[:]]   [instruction  [operands]]  [; comment]
```

A label typically starts in the first column. If leading spaces are present, a label must be followed by a colon or enclosed in back quotes (see Symbol syntax below).

An instruction can be a mnemonic (target instruction name) or a directive. All directives begin with a leading dot as part of their name.

A label, a symbol describing a location, is defined by placing it in the first column of a source line, optionally followed by a colon.

Labels can also be declared by importing them with the `.extern` directive or by value using the `.equlab` directive.

Predefined words in instructions (mnemonics and operands) are case insensitive, while symbols are case sensitive. Some examples follow:

```
; Assembler comments start with a semicolon
;
Loop:         dex         ; assembler comment
              nop
              BNE  Loop
```

Predefined words are case-insensitive because both uppercase and lowercase assembly styles are commonly used.

### 21.2.2 Symbol syntax

Symbols are case sensitive and can be of arbitrary length. A symbol starts with a letter or underscore, followed by letters, underscores, and digits. Examples: `_4`, `a_symbol`, `abc`, `Test1`.

Any character is permitted in a symbol, provided the symbol is quoted with a back-tick. Examples: `` `another symbol` `` and `` `Table: 5` ``.

Intermixing symbols with the same name but different cases is possible, though considered poor style. Symbols in `as6502` are case-sensitive primarily to support the C compiler, which also has case-sensitive symbols. This also encourages consistent mixed-case symbols in assembly source code, which is considered good practice.

### 21.2.3 Preprocessor

The assembler uses a full-featured C preprocessor for input source files. It provides standard C preprocessor features, including header file inclusion, macro expansions, conditional compilation, and C-style comments.

For an introduction with examples on using the C preprocessor[9], refer to Wikipedia.

See Predefined macros for available macros, most of which are also relevant to the assembler.

## 21.3 6502 assembly

The use of zero page is quite central on the 6502 target. If you have an operand that cannot be solved at assembly time, the assembler will use the longer absolute addressing. You can prefix an operand with `zp:` to force the shorter zero page addressing, the following example taken from a list file shows how it works:

```
0001                            .extern foo
0002  0000 ad....                lda foo
0003  0003 a50a                  lda 10
0004  0005 a5..                  lda zp:foo
```

[9] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C_preprocessor

Individual address bytes can be loaded using relocation operators like `.byte0` and `.byte1` (see Relocation operators). Unlike many 6502 assemblers that use angle brackets (`<` and `>`), these operators use a more uniform, readable notation.

```
0001                            .extern foo, bar
0002  0000 a9..                 lda     #.byte0 foo
0003  0002 85..                 sta     zp:bar
0004  0004 a9..                 lda     #.byte1 foo
0005  0006 85..                 sta     zp:bar+1
```

## 21.4 Sections

The assembly source file is divided into sections using the `.section` directive. Each section, an indivisible unit of code or data, is laid out in memory by the linker according to rules from a placement rules file.

If no `.section` directive is specified, the assembler defaults to a `.section code` in the source file, meaning you start in a section named `code` unless otherwise directed.

Multiple sections enable more flexible placement of code and data by the linker than a single section. A section name can be used multiple times, with each instance creating an individual section fragment.

All sections are relocatable due to the ELF file format and must be defined in the linker rules file.

### 21.4.1 Section kinds

The following table describes the supported section kinds. If unspecified, the section defaults to `text`.

Section kinds and modifiers are case-insensitive.

| Section kind | Description |
|---|---|
| `text` | Executable code. |
| `data` | An initialized read/write data section in memory (RAM). |
| `rodata` | An initialized read-only data section in memory (ROM). |
| `bss` | "Block Started by Symbol"; holds zero initialized variables and variables not given an initializer value. The C runtime normally zero fill such area before calling `main()`. |

### 21.4.2 Section modifiers

Section modifiers describe further behavior and can be specified as positive or negative.

| Section modifier | Description |
|---|---|
| `noreorder` | Maintains the relative order of section fragments with the same name within a translation unit. |
| `reorder` | Allows section fragments of the same name to be placed arbitrarily, regardless of other fragments with the same name. This is the default. |
| `root` | Always include this section fragment in the program. This is the default for object files. |
| `noroot` | Only include this section fragment in the program if someone refers to a label inside it. This is the default for library files. |

Note: Section fragments with the same name and the `noreorder` modifier are combined by the linker into a single placement group, ensuring contiguous placement. The absence of `noreorder` (or explicit `reorder`) allows the linker to place each section fragment arbitrarily, regardless of other fragments with the same name.

### 21.4.3 Section alignment

The `.align` directive specifies an alignment in address units. It advances the location counter and inserts fillers if needed, ensuring the next location has the specified alignment.

```
; Ensure that "table" label is placed at an address that can be
; evenly divided by 4.
        .section data
        .align   4
table:  ...
```

## 21.5 Expressions

Numeric expressions operate in signed (2-complement) mode. A range check occurs based on value usage; exceeding the possible range results in an error. The Operators table lists standard operators, supplemented by specialized relocation and section operators (see Relocation operators and Section operators).

You can optionally use spaces between values and operators in an expression.

Table 21.1: Operators

| Operator | Precedence | Purpose |
|---|---|---|
| ~ | 9 | Unary bit-wise not |
| ! | 9 | Unary logical not |
| - | 9 | Unary negate |
| + | 9 | Unary plus |
| * | 8 | Multiply |
| / | 8 | Divide |
| % | 8 | Modulo |
| + | 7 | Add |
| - | 7 | Subtract |
| << | 6 | Bit shift left |
| >> | 6 | Bit shift right |
| > | 5 | Greater than |
| < | 5 | Less than |
| >= | 5 | Greater than or equal |
| <= | 5 | Less than or equal |
| == | 4 | Equal |
| != | 4 | Not equal |
| & | 3 | Bit-wise and |
| ^ | 2 | Bit-wise exclusive or |
| \| | 1 | Bit-wise or |

## 21.6 Numeric constants

Integer constants can be entered in decimal, binary, octal, or hexadecimal. Decimal integers are sequences of digits not starting with zero. Prefixes `0x` indicate hexadecimal, `0b` binary, and `0` (followed by digits) octal.

Character constants are also supported, replaced by their ASCII value.

Some examples:

```
table:      .byte   0x1ff           ; hexadecimal number
            .byte   077             ; octal number (corresponds to decimal 63)
            .byte   65              ; decimal 65
            .byte   'A'             ; ASCII 65 (decimal)
            .byte   0b1011          ; binary (corresponds to decimal 11)
            .byte   0               ; zero (actually octal, but it is written
                                    ;       the same way in decimal)
```

## 21.7 Location counter

The assembler converts source programs into machine code for the 6502 processor. Instructions occupy consecutive memory locations until the next `.section` directive or end of file. The current instruction address is accessed by a single period (.), often called "dot".

The dot label, representing the current instruction location, is the location counter. It increments after each instruction, always holding the start address of the current instruction.

The location counter address is resolved by the linker but can be used in expressions. Short branches can use the location counter:

```
test:       ldx     #0
            lda     (table),y
            bpl     .+3             ; skip next instruction of positive
            dex
```

However, using labels or local labels is often preferred (see below).

## 21.8 Local labels

Local labels are useful for local branch destinations in assembly source files and come in two variants, dollar-postfix alphanumeric and plus/minus sign character labels.

### 21.8.1 Dollar postfix style

Local labels end with a single `$`; the name can be an identifier or numeric (e.g., `loop$` or `3$`). A local label is active only between two non-local labels and cannot be exported to the linker. They serve as temporary locations for short-distance branching, typically for skips or local loops.

```
loop$:          lda   (ptr),y
                beq   15$
                iny
                dex
                bne   loop$
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
            bra   50$
15$:        lda   #7
```

After a non-local label, you can no longer refer to any local label before it. Consider if the following code is added below the one above, the presence of the non-local label `foo` resets the local labels:

```
foo:        ldx   #5
            bne   loop$         ; error, loop$ above no longer visible
```

As an alternative, you can use ordinary labels related to the context and add a number to make it unique. What you do is mostly a matter of taste.

### 21.8.2 Sign style

Local labels can also be created using sequences of `+` or `-` characters. The entire label name must use the same character, and its length is used for matching. References to labels with minus characters go backwards to the closest match, while plus characters go forward to the closest match.

This allows easy determination of whether the destination label is before or after an instruction. Sign-style local labels can pass over non-local labels.

```
+           bne     +           ; this one goes to first + below
--
            beq     --          ; backward
+:          beq     ++++        ; goes over foobar
foobar:                         ; I am not in the way
            nop
++++:
```

Note: Sign-style local labels are only usable with branch-style instructions. They are not allowed in more elaborate operands where an ordinary label is allowed.

## 21.9 Directives

All directives start with a single dot character.

The following table summarizes the directives known to the assembler:

| Directive | Purpose |
|---|---|
| `.section` section-name, argument-list | Generate code for given section |
| `.equ` expr | Define a symbol value |
| `.equlab` expr | Define a symbol value that corresponds to a memory location |
| `.public` symbol-list | Export symbols to the linker |
| `.global` symbol-list | Synonym to `.public` |
| `.globl` symbol-list | Synonym to `.public` |
| `.pubweak` symbol-list | Export weak symbols to the linker |
| `.extern` symbol-list | Import symbol from other module |
| `.require` symbol-list | Require symbol from other module |
| `.incbin` filepath | Include a binary file as data |
| `.rtmodel` symbol, string | Define a runtime model attribute |
| `.byte` expr-list | Emit 8-bit values |
| `.word` expr-list | Emit 16-bit values |
| `.long` expr-list | Emit 32-bit values |
| `.quad` expr-list | Emit 64-bit values |
| `.ascii` text | Emit the given string |
| `.asciz` text | Emit the given string with a terminating 0 (C string) |
| `.fillto` address [, value] | Fill memory with value |
| `.space` count [, value] | Fill memory with value |
| `.align` value | Specify alignment |
| `.macro` parameter-list | Define a macro |
| `.endm` | End a macro definition |
| `.argdelim` delimiters | Define delimiters for macro arguments that contains a comma |
| `.end` | Stop processing the source file |

A symbol-list is a list of symbols separated by commas. An expr-list is a list of expressions separated by commas.

### 21.9.1 Directives in detail

`.section`

The `.section` directive takes the name of the section as the first argument. It can optionally be followed by a kind and modifiers to describe the section further.

```
; A code section named "code" (text)
        .section code

; A code section named "code" (text) that are not stored
; in relative order to other "code" section fragments in
; the same compilation unit.
        .section code, reorder

; A data section named "storage"
        .section storage, data

; A constant area in ROM that are always included in output,
; even when put in a library (provided that anything
; in the compilation unit is referenced).
       .section table, rodata, root
```

### .equ

Introduces a new symbol and gives it a value. The symbol appears in the label column and may have an optional colon after it:

```
BufNo       .equ  7
BufSize:    .equ  2 + ContentSize
```

Any expression can be used as a value, however using external symbols is subject to certain limitations imposed by relocations in the ELF object file format. In the case of valid expressions with external symbols, the value will be resolved by the linker.

### .equlab

Constants can also be defined with the `.equlab` directive. This is similar to the `.equ` directive, with the difference that it defines a label, which describes a location, rather than a plain number:

```
MyLocation:   .equlab  0xD7
```

Where this matters is in the interpretation of the debugging information. Labels defined using `.equlab` are treated the same as other location labels. The debugger will understand that a symbol defined using `.equlab` can be used as a location when generating disassembly listings, while symbols defined using `.equ` will not be used for locations in the disassembly listing.

### .public

Exports a symbol in the current file and makes in visible to other modules. Symbols are local to the file being assembled by default.

For shared definitions, an alternative is to put them in an include file and define them using the `.equ` directive.

### .global

Synonym to `.public` for compatibility with other assemblers.

### .globl

Synonym to `.public` for compatibility with other assemblers.

### .pubweak

A weak symbol is created using the `.pubweak` directive in a similar way to `.public`. The difference is that a weak symbol may exist in multiple copies. Of these potentially multiple copies, one is selected by the linker. If there is a non-weak symbol among the weak ones, it will be picked by the linker.

Weak symbols serve a couple of purposes. They can be used for library replaceable objects where you can override a default library object using a non-weak public symbol. They are also useful for tools that generate assembly code where an identical construct may be generated multiple times, though only one is needed in the end.

### .extern

Imports a symbol that is defined in some other module and make it visible in the current source file.

### .require

A required symbol can be specified with the `.require` directive. It works similar to the `.extern` directive, with the difference that you do not need to actually use the symbol in any expression, it is being pulled in by the linker regardless.

This is mostly of interest when building modular software using libraries.

The typical use of this is that you have initialization code somewhere else built up using section fragments with the no-reorder property. The no-reorder property ensures that the code fragments appear next to each other. A section fragment is only active if someone actually refers to it. In this case the `.require` directive can be used to refer to it without actually using it. The result is that code which relies on that initialization code fragment exists can request that such code fragment becomes active.

### .incbin

Include a binary file as embedded data directly into the program. This is useful if you have binary data assets as you can include them in the program without having to convert them to suitable source code.

```
my_data:
              .incbin  "rawdata.bin"
```

### .rtmodel

It is possible to define runtime model attributes using the `.rtmodel` directive. Such attributes are checked at link time to ensure object file consistency. The attribute is an identifier and its value is a string:

```
; activities suitable for winter
              .rtmodel season, "winter"
```

Another source file could specify `season` to have another value:

```
; activities suitable for summer
              .rtmodel season, "summer"
```

If you try to link these two modules together will result in an error message describing that runtime model attribute `season` has a mismatch.

Source files that do not define the `season` attribute can be linked with either. It is also possible to use the special `*` value which also means it works with either. It is an explicit way of saying that I aware of this attribute and it works with whatever value it has:

```
; I can work with either season
              .rtmodel season, "*"
```

Functionally it is equivalent to not having the attribute defined. The difference is more in the eye of the reader, you have actively considered the attribute and concluded it works with whatever interpretation there may be.

Note: A defined runtime attribute affects the entire compilation unit it appears in. If you need to have a more narrow scope for some runtime model attribute, you need to break up the source file into smaller pieces.

`.byte`

Define one or more 8 bit values expressed as a list of comma separated expressions.

`.word`

Define one or more 16 bit values expressed as a list of comma separated expressions.

`.long`

Define one or more 32 bit values expressed as a list of comma separated expressions.

`.quad`

Define one or more 64 bit values expressed as a list of comma separated expressions.

`.ascii`

Take a string arguments and emit the bytes.

`.asciz`

Take a string arguments and emit the bytes followed by a terminating zero byte.

`.fillto`

Take an address offset and an optional filler value. The address value is relative to the start of the current section fragment. Emits the filler value until the location counter is equal address offset.

If the current section is bss, the filler value cannot be non-zero.

`.space`

Take an `count` value and an optional filler value. Emits `count` number of filler values in the output. If the current section is bss, the filler value cannot be non-zero and it only advances the location counter by `count`.

`.align`

Emit zero fillers to bring the location counter in alignment with the specified alignment argument. To long word align a table, use:

```
            .align 4
table       .byte  1,2,3,4
```

Note: The `.align` directive also have the effect of applying alignment on the section itself in the object file which forces the linker to place the section according to the alignment. If there are multiple `.align` directives with different alignment values in a section, the assembler will determine the overall alignment needed and emit that as the alignment of the section.

`.end`

End the source file and stop processing any further input. This directive is optional and processing will otherwise stop when the input file has been fully consumed.

`.macro`

Define a macro, see Macro language.

`.endm`

End a macro definition.

`.argdelim`

This directive defines delimiter characters that can be used include commas in an argument, see Macro language.

## 21.10 Relocations

The assembler and the C compiler produces relocatable output, which means that the program output does not have fixed addresses. The linker is responsible for placing sections at suitable memory addresses.

The compiler may need to refer to addresses that are unknown at compiler time. Such references are represented by relocations which are part of the object file. The linker processes the relocations after section placement to finalize the program.

Relocations are automatically generated by the assembler and C compiler when it encounters expressions or values that depend on final section placement.

### 21.10.1 Relocation operators

In certain contexts some additional prefix operators are available. They can be seen as relocation operators as they can be used to optionally introduce a relocation.

As they are relocations, they allow the operator to be executed at link time when the final addresses are known. However, they have the limitation that they must appear at the top level of the expression.

On the 6502, you often need to load byte parts of an address. This can be done with the `.byte0`, `.byte1`, and `.byte2` operators. The `.word0` operator takes the low 16 bits of an expression.

```
; Set up a pointer
             lda   #.byte0 table
             sta   zp:ptr
             lda   #.byte1 table
             sta   zp:ptr+1
```

Note: Relocation operators have high precedence like other unary prefix operators. If you want to access an address with an offset, you need to surround the expression by parentheses.

`.byte0`

The `.byte0` operator returns the first byte (0-indexed) and can be resolved at link time.

`.byte1`

The `.byte1` operator returns the second byte (0-indexed) and can be resolved at link time.

`.byte2`

The `.byte2` operator returns the third byte (0-indexed) and can be resolved at link time.

`.word0`

The `.word0` operator returns the lower 16 bits word and can be resolved at link time.

`.word2`

The `.word2` operator gives a 16 bits word that is the upper half of a 32 bits value and is allowed to be resolved at link time.

`.swap`

The `.swap` operator takes a 16 bits word and swaps the bytes. This can be useful with the `PHW` instruction on the MEGA65 to push an address suitable for the `RTS` instruction. The bytes need to be swapped in this case as `PHW` pushes the bytes in the opposite byte order compared to `JSR`.

```
; Push a return address
          .extern foo
          phw     #.swap (foo - 1)
```

In this example the return address for the label `foo` is pushed in a way that suits the `RTS` instruction.

`.scatterTo28`

The `.scatterTo28` operator is intended for the MEGA65 when using scatter load. In this case a symbol is located in the absolute address space and is meant to be mapped into the 64K address space by using the `MAP` instruction. Normally when referencing such symbol you get the address where it is meant to be during execution. With the `.scatterTo28` operator you can obtain its storage address instead.

### 21.10.2 Section operators

Section operators makes it possible to get hold of where a section is placed in memory.

Section names must be known to the assembler. If you want to refer to a section that is not used otherwise in the current assembly source file, simply declare it without inserting any code below it.

```
;;; Forward declaration
              .section elsewhere

              .section code
              ...
```

All these operators are resolved by the linker as placement is not known before link time. An error is given if a section spans multiple memories.

Table 21.2: Section operators

| Operator | Precedence | Purpose |
|---|---|---|
| `.sectionStart` sectionName | 9 | The first address of the given section. |
| `.sectionEnd` sectionName | 9 | The last address of the given section. |
| `.sectionSize` sectionName | 9 | The size of the given section. |

Note: Section size corresponds to `1 + end - start`.

Warning: If you allow the linker to intermix different sections in the same allocation range, these operators will base their values on the first and last section fragment of the given name. Different sections that are interleaved inside are silently included in the address range given by these operators.

## 21.11 Macro language

The `.macro` directive allows you to generate new commands that can create assembler output. A simple example follows:

```
foo           .macro  a, b
              .byte   \a
              .word   \b - 1
              .long   0
              .endm
```

This creates a new macro named `foo` which takes two arguments `a` and `b`. To use an argument inside the macro, prefix the parameter name with a backslash `\`.

### 21.11.1 Rules for argument substitutions

When looking for argument substitutions, the longest match is favored. This means if you have parameters called `a` and `aa`, substituting the longer name is always tried before shorter names. As there is no way to explicitly specify the end of a parameter name inside the body, a parameter may accidently try to match characters that comes after the parameter. A good rule of thumb is to make use of space to separate entities whenever possible. This also tends to improve readability.

### 21.11.2 Use of local labels

Each macro expansion will create a new unique context for local labels inside the macro body. Any previous local label context is restored after the macro is expanded. Thus, local labels inside a macro will not clash or interfere with any local labels surrounding the use of the macro.

This also works when using nested macro expansions. If a macro uses another macro inside its body, that inner macro expansion will have its own private local label context, and the previous context of the outer macro expansion will be restored when the inner macro has been expanded.

Thus, you are able to use the same label name inside a macro and in the code that uses it without any clash:

```
waitreg       .macro  reg
1$:           de\reg
              bne     1$
              .endm

              ldx     #100
              waitreg x
1$:           lda     #0
```

Which would create the following list file:

```
##############################################################################
#                                                                            #
# Calypsi assembler for 6502                                  version 5.18 #
#                                                  15/Jul/2026  16:45:45 #
# Command line: example/macro-local.s -l                                     #
#                                                                            #
##############################################################################

0001                waitreg       .macro  reg
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
0002                1$:           de\reg
0003                              bne     1$
0004                              .endm
0005
0006  0000 a264                   ldx     #100
0007                              waitreg x
    \ 0002 ca       `1$`:       dex
    \ 0003 d0fd                 bne     `1$`
0008  0005 a900     1$:           lda     #0

#########################
#                       #
# Memory sizes (decimal) #
#                       #
#########################

Executable  (Text): 7 bytes
```

### 21.11.3 Arguments with comma

Arguments to a macro are comma separated. This poses a problem in a situation where you want an argument to contain a comma character. The `.argdelim` directive defines a start and stop character that can be used to create an argument that contains a comma character.

```
              .argdelim <>
access        .macro  arg1, arg2
              ...
              .endm

              access  0, <2,a>
```

Here `arg1` is bound to `0` and `arg2` is bound to the value `2,a`.

The delimiter can be either one or two characters and you can pick any suitable character combination. By default there are no delimiter characters defined.

If a single character combination is not suitable, you can use two characters, e.g. `<-` and `->` which would be defined as follows:

```
              .argdelim <-->
access        .macro  arg1, arg2
              ...
              .endm

              access  0, <-2,a->
```

All delimiter characters are stripped and `arg2` is bound to `2,a` here as well.

# CHAPTER 22

# Running the assembler

The assembler is run from the command line, or from an IDE that interfaces with the assembler using the command line.

## 22.1 Basic invocation

The assembler is invoked in the following way:

```
$ as6502 [options] sourcefile [options]
```

As an example, to assemble a source file with debugging information and a list file, you can use:

```
$ as6502 --debug source.c -l
```

Command line options are optional arguments that tune the behavior of the assembler. They always start with a dash character. There are two variants, single letter options (`-l` to instruct the assembler to create a list file) starts with a single dash. The other variant is long descriptive options that starts with two dashes.

Some options require arguments. These follow the option, separated by a space or an equals sign (`=`). For single-argument options, the separator is optional:

```
$ as6502 -Iinclude source.c -D VERBOSE=2 --list-file=tiny-source.lst
```

In this case the `-I` option adds `include` as a directory to scan for header files. The symbol `VERBOSE` is defined in the preprocessor with value 2. A list file with a specific name is also produced.

The order in which the options appear normally do matter, except for the `-I` option that adds directories to search for header files. Such directories are searched in the order in which they appear on the command line.

To display the version of the assembler, use `--version`:

```
$ as6502 --version
Calypsi assembler for 6502 version 5.18
```

Command line options are described in Command line options.

## 22.2 Include search path

Header files are included by surrounding the filename with either double quotes or angled brackets:

```
#include "myheader.h"
#include <system.h>
```

Angled brackets are typically for system header files, while double quotes are for application-specific header files.

Note: The installation provides no system header files for the as6502 assembler. However, the preprocessor retains its standard behavior of supporting angled include files and searching the installation directory.

The search order for include files is as follows:

1. Relative to compilation directory (double quote include only)
2. In directories specified in the `-I` option in the order they appear on the command line
3. The system directory, which is the Calypsi installation directory

Header files specified in angle brackets are not searched relative to the compilation directory. Otherwise, their behavior is identical.

Note: More precisely, the system header file directory is relative to the as6502 executable. If you move an installation, it will still find the correct system header file directory.

Note: No header files are currently provided with the assembler. The preprocessor search path exists for consistency with the C compiler.

## 22.3 Assembler output

The assembler outputs one or two files, an object file that can be linked with other object files and libraries by `ln6502` to produce an executable file, and optionally a list file.

### 22.3.1 Object file

The object file is in ELF format, optionally including DWARF debugging information if `--debug` (or `-g`) is specified.

It contains:

- A symbol table
- Relocatable sections for code and data
- Relocations, allowing linker to modify address values after section placement
- DWARF-formatted source-level debugging information (if `--debug` was specified)

- Vendor-specific data, including runtime attributes and additional the Calypsi C compiler tool chain-specific information not covered by ELF/DWARF, used by the linker and debugger, with section types `0x8000000a` and `0x8000000b`.

---

Note: DWARF version 5 is used. The implementation covers the needs of the Calypsi C compiler tool chain and includes vendor extensions.

---

---

Note: DWARF debug information from the assembler includes source line information. The object file also contains a symbol table.

---

### 22.3.2 List file

The list file is a text file meant to be shown with a fixed width font. It contains a header that shows assembler, version, time when it was created and the command line used. The assembly source is shown with corresponding hex machine code. It also shows macro expansions and includes a summary of code and data sizes.

The following example is the `builtin` source file from the C runtime library:

```
/*******************************************************************************
 *
 * Copyright Håkan Thörngren
 *
 * This file is part of the Calypsi C library.
 * Permission to use with the Calypsi tool chain is hereby granted.
 *
 *******************************************************************************/

;;; ------------------------------------------------------------------------
;;;
;;; Builtin support.
;;;
;;; ------------------------------------------------------------------------

              .rtmodel version, "1"
              .rtmodel cpu, "*"

              .extern _Zp

;;; ***************************************************************************
;;;
;;; _CLZ - count leading zeroes
;;;
;;; In: _Zp0-1 - 16 bit integer value
;;;
;;; Out: _Zp0-1 - number of leading zeroes
;;;
;;; Uses: Y
;;;
;;; Result is undefined if input is 0.
;;;
;;; ***************************************************************************
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
                .public _CLZ
                .section code
_CLZ:           ldy     #0
                lda     zp:_Zp+1
                bne     10$
                ldy     #8
                lda     zp:_Zp+0
                beq     20$             ; zero
10$:            asl     a
                bcs     20$
                iny
                bcc     10$
20$:            sta     zp:_Zp+0
#if defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__) || defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65CNR02__)
                stz     zp:_Zp+1
#else
                lda     #0
                sta     zp:_Zp+1
#endif
                rts

;;; ****************************************************************************
;;;
;;; _CLZL - count leading zeroes
;;;
;;; In: _Zp0-3 - 32 bit integer value
;;;
;;; Out: _Zp0-1 - number of leading zeroes
;;;
;;; Uses: Y
;;;
;;; Result is undefined if input is 0.
;;;
;;; ****************************************************************************

                .public _CLZL
                .section code
_CLZL:          ldy     #0
                lda     zp:_Zp+3
                bne     10$
                ldy     #8
                lda     zp:_Zp+2
                bne     10$
                ldy     #16
                lda     zp:_Zp+1
                bne     10$
                ldy     #24
                lda     zp:_Zp+0
                beq     20$

10$:            asl     a
                bcs     20$
                iny
                bcc     10$
20$:            sty     zp:_Zp+0
#if defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__) || defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65CNR02__)
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
                stz     zp:_Zp+1
#else
                lda     #0
                sta     zp:_Zp+1
#endif
                rts

;;; ****************************************************************************
;;;
;;; _CLZLL - count leading zeroes
;;;
;;; In: _Zp0-7 - 64 bit integer value
;;;
;;; Out: _Zp0-1 - number of leading zeroes
;;;
;;; Uses: A, Y
;;;
;;; Result is undefined if input is 0.
;;;
;;; ****************************************************************************

                .public _CLZLL
                .section code
_CLZLL:         ldy     #0
                lda     zp:_Zp+7
                bne     10$
                ldy     #8
                lda     zp:_Zp+6
                bne     10$
                ldy     #16
                lda     zp:_Zp+5
                bne     10$
                ldy     #24
                lda     zp:_Zp+4
                bne     10$
                ldy     #32
                lda     zp:_Zp+3
                bne     10$
                ldy     #40
                lda     zp:_Zp+2
                bne     10$
                ldy     #48
                lda     zp:_Zp+1
                bne     10$
                ldy     #56
                lda     zp:_Zp+0
                beq     20$

10$:            asl     a
                bcs     20$
                iny
                bcc     10$
20$:            sty     zp:_Zp+0
#if defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__) || defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65CNR02__)
                stz     zp:_Zp+1
#else
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
            lda     #0
            sta     zp:_Zp+1
#endif
            rts
```

Compiling with the `-l` option produces a list file:

```
################################################################################
#                                                                              #
# Calypsi assembler for 6502                                    version 5.18 #
#                                                          15/Jul/2026  16:45:45 #
# Command line: builtin.s -l                                                   #
#                                                                              #
################################################################################

0001                /*******************************************************************************
0002                 *
0003                 * Copyright Håkan Thörngren
0004                 *
0005                 * This file is part of the Calypsi C library.
0006                 * Permission to use with the Calypsi tool chain is hereby granted.
0007                 *
0008                 *******************************************************************************/
0009
0010                ;;; -----------------------------------------------------------------------
0011                ;;;
0012                ;;; Builtin support.
0013                ;;;
0014                ;;; -----------------------------------------------------------------------
0015
0016                            .rtmodel version, "1"
0017                            .rtmodel cpu, "*"
0018
0019                            .extern _Zp
0020
0021                ;;; ***************************************************************************
0022                ;;;
0023                ;;; _CLZ - count leading zeroes
0024                ;;;
0025                ;;; In: _Zp0-1 - 16 bit integer value
0026                ;;;
0027                ;;; Out: _Zp0-1 - number of leading zeroes
0028                ;;;
0029                ;;; Uses: Y
0030                ;;;
0031                ;;; Result is undefined if input is 0.
0032                ;;;
0033                ;;; ***************************************************************************
0034
0035                            .public _CLZ
0036                            .section code
0037  0000 a000     _CLZ:       ldy     #0
0038  0002 a5..                 lda     zp:_Zp+1
0039  0004 d006                 bne     10$
0040  0006 a008                 ldy     #8
0041  0008 a5..                 lda     zp:_Zp+0
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
0042  000a f006                beq     20$           ; zero
0043  000c 0a       10$:       asl     a
0044  000d b003                bcs     20$
0045  000f c8                  iny
0046  0010 90fa                bcc     10$
0047  0012 85..     20$:       sta     zp:_Zp+0
0048                #if defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__) || defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65CNR02__)
0049                           stz     zp:_Zp+1
0050                #else
0051  0014 a900                lda     #0
0052  0016 85..                sta     zp:_Zp+1
0053                #endif
0054  0018 60                  rts
0055
0056                ;;; ****************************************************************************
0057                ;;;
0058                ;;; _CLZL - count leading zeroes
0059                ;;;
0060                ;;; In: _Zp0-3 - 32 bit integer value
0061                ;;;
0062                ;;; Out: _Zp0-1 - number of leading zeroes
0063                ;;;
0064                ;;; Uses: Y
0065                ;;;
0066                ;;; Result is undefined if input is 0.
0067                ;;;
0068                ;;; ****************************************************************************
0069
0070                           .public _CLZL
0071                           .section code
0072  0000 a000     _CLZL:     ldy     #0
0073  0002 a5..                lda     zp:_Zp+3
0074  0004 d012                bne     10$
0075  0006 a008                ldy     #8
0076  0008 a5..                lda     zp:_Zp+2
0077  000a d00c                bne     10$
0078  000c a010                ldy     #16
0079  000e a5..                lda     zp:_Zp+1
0080  0010 d006                bne     10$
0081  0012 a018                ldy     #24
0082  0014 a5..                lda     zp:_Zp+0
0083  0016 f006                beq     20$
0084
0085  0018 0a       10$:       asl     a
0086  0019 b003                bcs     20$
0087  001b c8                  iny
0088  001c 90fa                bcc     10$
0089  001e 84..     20$:       sty     zp:_Zp+0
0090                #if defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__) || defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65CNR02__)
0091                           stz     zp:_Zp+1
0092                #else
0093  0020 a900                lda     #0
0094  0022 85..                sta     zp:_Zp+1
0095                #endif
0096  0024 60                  rts
0097
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
0098                ;;; ****************************************************************************
0099                ;;;
0100                ;;; _CLZLL - count leading zeroes
0101                ;;;
0102                ;;; In: _Zp0-7 - 64 bit integer value
0103                ;;;
0104                ;;; Out: _Zp0-1 - number of leading zeroes
0105                ;;;
0106                ;;; Uses: A, Y
0107                ;;;
0108                ;;; Result is undefined if input is 0.
0109                ;;;
0110                ;;; ****************************************************************************
0111
0112                                .public _CLZLL
0113                                .section code
0114  0000 a000     _CLZLL:       ldy     #0
0115  0002 a5..                   lda     zp:_Zp+7
0116  0004 d02a                   bne     10$
0117  0006 a008                   ldy     #8
0118  0008 a5..                   lda     zp:_Zp+6
0119  000a d024                   bne     10$
0120  000c a010                   ldy     #16
0121  000e a5..                   lda     zp:_Zp+5
0122  0010 d01e                   bne     10$
0123  0012 a018                   ldy     #24
0124  0014 a5..                   lda     zp:_Zp+4
0125  0016 d018                   bne     10$
0126  0018 a020                   ldy     #32
0127  001a a5..                   lda     zp:_Zp+3
0128  001c d012                   bne     10$
0129  001e a028                   ldy     #40
0130  0020 a5..                   lda     zp:_Zp+2
0131  0022 d00c                   bne     10$
0132  0024 a030                   ldy     #48
0133  0026 a5..                   lda     zp:_Zp+1
0134  0028 d006                   bne     10$
0135  002a a038                   ldy     #56
0136  002c a5..                   lda     zp:_Zp+0
0137  002e f006                   beq     20$
0138
0139  0030 0a       10$:          asl     a
0140  0031 b003                   bcs     20$
0141  0033 c8                     iny
0142  0034 90fa                   bcc     10$
0143  0036 84..     20$:          sty     zp:_Zp+0
0144                #if defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65C02__) || defined(__CALYPSI_CORE_65CNR02__)
0145                                stz     zp:_Zp+1
0146                #else
0147  0038 a900                   lda     #0
0148  003a 85..                   sta     zp:_Zp+1
0149                #endif
0150  003c 60                     rts

##########################
#                       #
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
# Memory sizes (decimal) #
#                        #
##########################

Executable  (Text): 123 bytes
```

## 22.4 Command line options

This section covers the `as6502` command-line options in detail.

### 22.4.1 Options overview

Running the assembler from the command line without arguments results in a missing input file error, followed by a short help message:

```
$ as6502
Missing: FILE

Usage: as6502 [--version] [-o|--output-file OUTPUT-FILE] [-l]
              [--list-file LIST-FILE] [-I DIRECTORY] [-D IDENTIFIER]
              [-U IDENTIFIER] [-g|--debug] [--rtattr NAME=VALUE]
              [--weak-symbols] [--core CORE] [--target TARGET] FILE
  use 'as6502 --help' for detailed help
```

For more detailed help, use the `--help` option:

```
$ as6502 --help
Calypsi assembler for 6502 version 5.18

Usage: as6502 [--version] [-o|--output-file OUTPUT-FILE] [-l]
              [--list-file LIST-FILE] [-I DIRECTORY] [-D IDENTIFIER]
              [-U IDENTIFIER] [-g|--debug] [--rtattr NAME=VALUE]
              [--weak-symbols] [--core CORE] [--target TARGET] FILE
  use 'as6502 --help' for detailed help

Available options:
  --version               Display version number
  -o,--output-file OUTPUT-FILE
                          Name of output file
  -l                      Generate a list file, named by appending '.lst' to
                          input file
  --list-file LIST-FILE   Generate list file, using given name
  -I DIRECTORY            Include directory
  -D IDENTIFIER           Predefine a macro
  -U IDENTIFIER           #undef a predefined macro
  -g,--debug              Produce debugging information
  --rtattr NAME=VALUE     Define a runtime attribute (identifier or quoted
                          string value accepted)
  --weak-symbols          Make all public symbols entries weak
  --core CORE             Core, one of '6502', '65b02', '65c02', '65cnr02' or
                          '45gs02' (defaults to '6502')
  --target TARGET         Target system, one of 'C64' or 'MEGA65' (defaults to
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
                        embedded/ROM use, if omitted)
  -h,--help             Show this help text
```

### 22.4.2 Options in detail

`--version`

Displays the name and version of the assembler.

`--output-file, -o`

Specify the output object file name. If omitted, the output file is derived from the input file name (excluding path) with a `.o` extension, written to the current directory by default.

This option can also alter the output file name and provide a directory path. The specified directory must already exist.

`-l`

Generate a list file. The name used is the name of the input file (ignoring any directory path) with a `.lst` file extension. See also `--list-file`.

`--list-file`

Generate a list file. The name of the list file is given as argument to this option. See also `-l` to generate a list file based on the source filename.

`-I`

Add a directory to the current include search path. This option can be used multiple times on a command line. The order in which they appear specifies the search order between the directories.

The system include directory is always added last to the search order list.

`--include-system`

Add a directory to the current system include search path before the provided system include directories. This option can be used multiple times on a command line. The order in which they appear specifies the search order between the directories.

`--include-system-after`

Add a directory to the current system include search path after the provided system include directories. This option can be used multiple times on a command line. The order in which they appear specifies the search order between the directories.

`-D`

Define a macro. This takes an argument with the symbol name and optionally an assignment value `-Dsymbol[=value]`. If no value is given, the macro is given the value 1.

`-U`

Undefine a macro. This takes an argument with the symbol name to be undefined.

`--debug`

Generate DWARF symbolic debugging information. In order to get debugging information all the way to the debugger, the linker must also be given this option.

When debugging information is enabled the `__CALYPSI_DEBUG__` macro is also defined and set to 1.

`-g`

Synonym for `--debug`.

`--rtattr NAME=VALUE`

This defines a runtime attribute, written to the object file, that the linker can use for object file consistency checks.

`--weak-symbols`

Make all public symbols in the object file weak. This is normally not needed, but can provide a default library function implementation that is used if no replacement is provided.

In the assembler you can also specify symbols to be exported weak individually using the `.pubweak` directive.

`--core`

Selects the 6502 core (e.g., 6502, 65B02, 65C02, 65CNR02, or 45GS02). This affects available instructions and defaults to 6502 if not specified.

`--target`

This option is provided for symmetry with the compiler and sets the corresponding target preprocessor macro.

CHAPTER 23

# Linker

The linker combines object files from the C compiler and assembler into an executable. Object files can also originate from libraries, such as the provided C runtime library.

Cross compilers need information about the target system, and these systems can differ significantly. A host linker, in contrast, is already tailored for its system.

## 23.1 Running the linker

Like other tools, the linker is command-line based and can also be used from an IDE. The IDE runs the linker via its command-line interface.

### 23.1.1 Basic invocation

The linker is invoked in the following way:

```
$ ln6502 [options] [object-files] [library-files] rules-file
```

A rules file is required to describe the target. This `.scm` file contains information about the target system's memory and section placement rules.

Command-line options and input files can appear in any order.

Command-line options are optional arguments that tune linker behavior. They always start with a dash. Two variants exist: single-letter options (e.g., `-l` for a list file) begin with a single dash, while long descriptive options start with two dashes.

Some options require an argument, which appears after the option. It can be separated by a space or an equal (=) sign. For single-argument options, the argument may appear without a separator:

```
$ ln6502 --debug file.o clib-6502.a placement.scm -o rocket.elf
```

In this example debugging information is retained in the output executable which is also named `rocket.elf`.

To display the version of the linker, use `--version`:

```
$ ln6502 --version
Calypsi linker for 6502 version 5.18
```

## 23.2 Linking process

The goal of the linker is to combine object files produced by the compiler and the assembler. Object files have the file extensions `.o`. From now on we will refer to object files as "objects" as that is how they are seen by the linker once have been read from the file system.

The linker selects and combines objects in several stages:

1. Objects are selected for inclusion in the application.
2. Objects are placed at memory addresses by the linker following placement rules.
3. After placement the final address of each object is known. Using this knowledge the linker resolves relocations. This fixes all address references in the application.
4. The final program is emitted as an executable file.

## 23.3 Simplified placement rules

Understanding the linker process can be daunting due to its flexibility and numerous operations. Fortunately, it can often be used without in-depth knowledge, as it automatically derives placement rules from internal tool knowledge.

The linker cannot know available memory ranges or their types. This section describes placement in a simplified way; for more details, refer to Memory.

### 23.3.1 Minimal rules

A minimal (or simplified) linker rules file primarily specifies memory locations:

```
(define memories
  '((memory flash (address (#x8000 . #xffff)) (type ROM))
    (memory zeroPage (address (#x0 . #xff)) (type RAM))
    (memory RAM (address (#x0100 . #x7fff)) (type RAM))
    ))
```

Note: The linker will automatically create memory areas for the zero page and stack page (`0x100` to `0x1ff`) if left out.

Each memory has a name, address range, and type.

The available types are shown in the following table.

| Memory type | Description |
|---|---|
| RAM | This roughly corresponds to bss, and also includes the data area in an embedded system. |
| ROM | This is a combination of executable code, read-only variables, and everything else that should go into read-only memory, e.g. switch tables, string literals and constants. |
| ANY | This can be used in a hosted environment when the application is loaded into a single RAM memory. It combines allocation of RAM and ROM sections in the same memory range. |
| rodata | This type describes constants that are stored in read-only memory. |
| data | Initialized data area. Only exists when building for hosted use. |
| text | This type describes executable code. |
| bss | This is the data area for an embedded system or bare metal system. In a hosted system this holds the zero initialized data. |

An error message will be given if the linker fails to automatically bind sections to memory, indicating the the sections which are causing problems. In such case you can bind those sections to a memory using a section rule. See Section placement.

In some cases you may have areas that need specific placement. This may be due to API jump tables or entry points. In such case you can explicitly place such sections using a section rule with an explicit address.

---

Note: If you have a special memory, such as a video memory that requires special access methods and cannot handle normal code or data, you may want to prevent the linker from doing automatic section binding there. This can be done by not specifying any type for it. In such case only sections with explicit binding will be placed in that memory.

---

## 23.4 ROM based systems

A ROM based system is typically an embedded or bare-metal system that runs without an operating system, taking control at power-on. The Calypsi linker assumes a ROM based system unless configured otherwise.

On a ROM based system, the application provides the reset vector. The C runtime configures itself by initializing static variables, setting up the stack, the heap (if used), and the C runtime itself. The I/O system is also initialized, but requires you to provide stubs for low-level stream-style I/O operations; see Stubs interface for more information.

If the hardware for your application has specific initialization needs, these must be provided by the application.

Initializing variables are done by clearing memory and filling in non-zero initializers using information stored in the ROM. The linker will split the initialized variables into two parts: the value part is stored in ROM and is copied to RAM during initialization before main() is called.

## 23.5 Host based systems

The alternative to a ROM based system is a hosted system that uses an operating system to load the application. Such operating systems vary from simple kernels to more elaborate systems.

Support for some hosted systems is provided, but given the vast number of alternatives, you may need to provide your own support.

The `--target` and `--hosted` command-line options configure the linker for hosted builds. Selecting a suitable application output file format is also part of this process.

When building for a hosted system, variables are initialized by loading their values in place. This avoids the duplication found in ROM based systems where initializers are stored in ROM and copied to RAM. The downside is that initialization occurs only once, during loading. If the application restarts, variables are not reinitialized. Linker options can override this behavior for detailed control, if needed.

See Target specifics for details about the targets for which there are built-in support provided.

### 23.5.1 Simple hosted placement

The combination of an often simple executable file format and an application being loaded into RAM with both code and data gives certain problems. An application consists of both "bits" areas (code, tables and constant data) and "nobits" which is typically zero initialized data areas. In addition there are "data" areas where initializers are loaded in place, so they are a form of "bits" memory as well. Due to limitations in executable file formats, it is desirable to group "bits" and "nobits" separated, as the latter is often not represented in the executable file.

This can be solved by using a combined memory of type "any". The linker creates placement groups in that memory for different areas, one for each memory type. Placement is tailored for the executable file format.

#### Specific address placement

Using placement groups clashes with restricting a section to a specific address or limited memory area. If bits sections are placed first, then nobits sections, and there are also sections with address restrictions in the same memory, conflicts can arise.

To avoid conflicts, the linker forbids section rules with arbitrary restrictions when placement groups are used. However, some specific placement may be desirable, such as stub code placed first in memory. Such fixed address placement is allowed, but it must be specified in the memory that contains the placement groups.

## 23.6 Objects

This section looks at the objects being linked, how they are selected and how to control it.

### 23.6.1 C startup

In a C program the `main()` function starts the application. Before `main()` is called, code initializes the C runtime. This prebuilt system startup can be customized in rare cases; see C startup for details.

Although the C startup is a small module, it is intricate. Knowledge of how Calypsi handles its C runtime is necessary to modify it.

In general the C startup handles hardware initialization, stack setup, heap initialization and configuring the I/O system. It may also do things related to the `exit()` handling.

The startup code is written so that subsystems which are not used by the application are omitted. This selection process is a combination of the C startup, the linker and the C library.

### 23.6.2 Libraries

Multiple object files can be combined into a library file with a `.a` extension. This extension stands for archive, the common name for link libraries on UNIX.

The standard C library is provided as a library file.

---

Note: There are several variants of such library files provided to handle different compiler settings. You will normally not need to specify it as the linker in almost every situation is able to pick a suitable library automatically based on the provided object files.

---

### 23.6.3 Selected objects

Objects are selected from object files specified on the linker command line. All mentioned object files are included in the linker process.

Libraries also contribute objects as needed. The linker includes only objects from a library that are actually used by the application, which helps reduce the application size.

### 23.6.4 Object selection process

The linker selects object based on a tree shake algorithm. This is a worklist algorithm that starts with a root object. The root object references one or more external symbols. These symbols are placed in the work list. The linker will then process the first symbol in the work list and try to fulfill it using the available objects. Doing so may produce further external symbol which are placed in the work list unless they have already been processed.

This process continues until the work list is empty. If there are unresolved symbols they will be emitted as undefined symbol error messages.

When all symbols have been processed, the linker knows which objects are needed for the application.

### 23.6.5 The root

The actual root is a symbol named `__program_root_section` which identifies the section that must be included first. For a ROM based bare metal system, this is typically the section that holds the reset vector. For an operating system based system startup, it may be some stub or simply the section that contans the first executable code.

---

Note: If you study the system startup code you will find the `__program_start` symbol which can be seen as a close relative to the `__program_root_section` symbol. The purpose of the `__program_start` symbol is to tell the debugger about the first executable instruction of the application. It has no special meaning to the linker.

---

### 23.6.6 Placement

The actual placement of objects is described in Section placement.

### 23.6.7 Relocations

Consider a function in your application. This is described by a symbol with the same name as the function. In order to make a function call, the compiler needs to emit an instruction to transfer control to the function. How can the compiler know the address of the function when it does not know where the function is located? The answer is that it emits a relocation, which instructs the linker to adjust the application code when the final address is known.

Somewhat simplified, the relocation describes a location inside the object code that has to be altered. The called function is mentioned by its symbol. With this relocation information, the linker can figure out the location in the application to alter, and what to put there, to allow the actual call to be correctly made.

Relocating the program can be done by the linker once all objects have been given their final locations in the memory space of the application.

---

Note: In some supported operating systems relocations are only done partially by the linker and a further relocation is done when the operating system loads the application to memory.

---

## 23.7 Memory

When describing the target system, the linker uses memories. A memory is a named entity specifying a continuous range of storage locations. Memory descriptions have the following attributes:

**name** The memory name identifies a particular memory area.

**address range** The start and end addresses (inclusive) specify the memory's address range.

**section** Names of sections to bind to the current memory.

**placement group** A memory can only hold sections of one type; mixing code with zero- initialized data within a single memory is disallowed. In some output formats, it may be desirable to place different types of areas immediately adjacent within a single memory range. Placement groups function as sub-memories within a parent memory, each capable of holding sections of a distinct type. For example, one placement group can hold code sections, another data sections, and a third BSS sections. The

parent memory defines the overall range, and placement groups allocate memory within this range flexibly, allowing one group to begin immediately after the previous one concludes.

**type** Specifies which section types can be placed in this memory. See Minimal rules for more information.

**qualifier** Defines the address spaces that can be placed in this memory.

### 23.7.1 Memory qualifier

You can optionally specify an address space qualifier that is to be tied to a memory. For the 6502 this can be used to specify that a memory is the zero page.This is done using the `qualifier` attribute:

```
(define memories
  '((memory zeroPage (address (#x0000 . #x00ff)) (type ram) (qualifier zpage))
    (memory RAM (address (#x0200 . #xbfff)) (type any))
    ))
```

**fill word** Value used to fill unused locations in the memory, defaults to zero.

## 23.8 Linker rules file

The rules file (extension `.scm`) describes the available memory areas and defines rules for section placement. Sections can be explicitly bound to memory areas, or implicitly placed by omitting a binding rule. Implicit placement requires specifying a type for the memory; see Minimal rules.

You can often use a simplified rules file as described in Simplified placement rules. This section details linker rules. These rules can be elaborate and often unnecessary. You can intermix simplified and detailed rules to gain control without over-complicating the file. This approach helps you balance memory and placement requirements.

A full rules file can look as follows:

```
(define memories
  '((memory flash (address (#x8000 . #xffff))
            (section code switch idata izpage
                     cdata data_init_table (reset #xfffc)))
    (memory zeroPage
            (address (#x0 . #xff))
            (section registers zzpage zpage))
    (memory RAM (address (#x0100 . #x7fff))
            (section (stack (#x100 . #x1ff))
                     cstack heap data zdata))
    (block cstack (size #x800))               ; C stack size
    (block stack  (size #x100))               ; machine stack size
    (block heap   (size #x800))               ; heap size
    ))
```

The use of spacing for indentation here is unimportant to the linker tool, it is used it to make the file easier to read.

### 23.8.1 Section placement

Sections are bound to a specific memory by being mentioned after the `section` keyword. Placement of a section may be further restricted as described below.

#### Free placement

The `code` and `switch` sections appear alone (no surrounding parentheses). Sections with these names can be placed anywhere in the memory they belong to.

#### Restricted placement

The `stack` section appears with a specified range (`(#x100 . #x1ff)`). If the range is larger than the size of the section, the section is place somewhere inside the allowed range.

#### Fixed placement

The `reset` section is placed at a fixed address `0xfffc` by having only a given address, not a range.

### 23.8.2 Block rule

Most sections are created by the compiler or the assembler and passed to the linker in the object file. It is also possible to create a section to represent a memory block in the linker rules file. Such blocks are used for the stack and the heap.

A block rule is defined among the memory rules. It has a name which is its section name and a size:

```
(define memories
  '((memory flash (address (#x8000 . #xffff))
    ...
    (block stack  (size #x800))
    (block heap   (size #x800))
```

You can omit mentioning blocks as the linker will attempt to create them automatically if left out. They are typically used for dynamic memory areas, such as heap and stack. There are some of these built in and the desired size can be specified on the command line. There is also a default size that the linker will fall back if it is not specified.

### 23.8.3 Stack size

The stack keeps track of the dynamic execution state, which includes how to return from function calls and local variables that are not held in registers. It also provides temporary storage during execution. The size needed depends on the application and the stack size can be defined in the linker rules files using a `block` rule:

```
(define memories
  '((memory RAM (address (#x0000 . #x7fff))
        (section (registers (#x0 . #xff))
                 (stack (#x100 . #x1ff))
                 cstack data zdata heap))
    (block cstack (size #x800))
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
   (block stack  (size #x100))
  ))
```

Here the C stack (`cstack` section) size is set to hex `800` (2048 bytes decimal) and is bound to the memory area named `RAM`. The CPU stack is set to fill page `1` (the CPU stack page on the 6502) and is given the size hex `100` (256 bytes decimal).

Note: You can override a stack size defined in the linker rules file using the `--stack-size` command-line option. This is often the preferred method.

### 23.8.4 Heap size

The heap is the area from which memory is obtained when using library functions such as `malloc()`. You only need to define a heap if your application actually uses functions such as `malloc()` or `calloc()`. It is perfectly fine for an application to run without a heap, and it may in some cases be desirable to do so.

If you decide to use a heap in your application you need to define its size in the linker rules file using a `block` rule:

```
(define memories
  '((memory RAM (address (#x0000 . #x7fff))
         (section (registers (#x0 . #xff))
                  (stack (#x100 . #x1ff))
                  cstack data zdata heap))
 (block cstack (size #x800))
 (block stack  (size #x100))
 (block heap   (size #x200))
  ))
```

Here the heap size is set to hex `200` (512 bytes decimal) and is bound to a memory area named `RAM`.

Note: You can override or define the heap size in the linker rules file using the `--heap-size` command-line option. This is often the preferred method.

### 23.8.5 Placement groups

ELF output format limitations prevent mixing section types within a single memory. However, placement groups allow flexible organization.

When an application changes, varying section sizes within a memory range can be cumbersome, requiring frequent adjustments to memory ranges. Placement groups resolve this by dynamically allocating within the overall parent memory address range.

A placement group acts as a sub-memory within a parent, each holding sections of a single type. Multiple placement groups of different types can exist within one parent memory. Sections are filled one at a time. Once a group is placed, the linker continues allocation from the next free address, maximizing memory utilization without manual range specification for each group.

You can define placement groups in the following way:

```
(define memories
  '(...
    (memory custom-bank (address (#x10000 . #x1ffff))
            (placement-group custom-bits (section custom ccustom))
            (placement-group custom-nobits (section zcustom)))
```

In this example the `custom-bank` memory contains two placement groups `custom-bits` and `custom-nobits`. The `custom-bits` placement group contains two sections `custom` and `ccustom`. The `custom-nobits` placement group has a single section `zcustom` which is a zero initialized BSS section.

Note: The use of `custom` and `ccustom` makes sense when compiling for a hosted environment where a writable `custom` section and a read-only `ccustom` section can be placed next to each other as both are loaded into system RAM memory. On a ROM based embedded system they would go into separate memories.

Note: The names `custom-bits` and `custom-nobits` have no special meaning to the linker.

## 23.9 Scatter

In some situations you have a memory bound to a given address range at runtime, but that is stored at a different address in the application image.

Examples of this are an overlay system, a banking system, or a ROM that is located at some address, but parts of it is copied to RAM at a different location.

The linker implements this using scatter-to which is a property that can be given to a memory:

```
(memory bankSlotRAM
        (address (#xa000 . #xbfff))
        (scatter-to RAM-banks)
        :generate-instances
        (section bankedcode))
```

In this case the `bankSlotRAM` memory has an address range `A000-BFFF`. Sections of type `bankedcode` are bound to it.

Using the `scatter-to` property, the entire memory is converted to a new section named `RAM-banks`. This section can be placed in another memory:

```
(memory bankedRAM (address (#x2000 . #x1fffff))
        (section RAM-banks))
```

The optional `:generate-instances` is useful when implementing an overlay system. It indicates that once the `bankSlotRAM` memory is full, a new empty instance can be generated to accommodate further `bankedcode` sections. Thus, memory is created on the fly and each instance is scattered to the `bankedRAM` memory.

If `:generate-instances` is not specified then only one instance of the memory is allowed.

Note: Relocations in the memory are done towards the runtime address, which is `bankSlotRAM` in the example above. This is the address area where the memory is intended to appear at runtime.

## 23.10 Linker list files

A list file can be generated from the linker using the `--list-file` (or `-l`) command-line option.

The list file is a valuable tool if you want to see how much memory your application actually needs. It can also answer questions about what objects are included from libraries, why they are included and where they are placed.

This is especially useful if want to understand how your application uses memory and can give insights to have it may be tuned.

As an example, consider the following example program:

```
#include <calypsi/stubs.h>

__task int main () {
  return 0;
}
```

This is intended to be a minimal program, but with debug support to allow the debugger to catch the call to `exit()`.

If built and linked with the standard library and you specify the command-line options "`-l --cross-reference --rtattr exit=simplified`" you will get a list file which contains something like:

```
####################
#                  #
# Memories summary #
#                  #
####################

Name                 Range     Size    Used    Checksum  Largest unallocated
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------
ZeroPage             0000-00ff 0100     21.1%  none      00ca
  > ZeroPage-nobits  0000-0035 0036    100.0%  none      00ca
Stack                0100-01ff 0100    100.0%  none      none
  > RAM-11-21-nobits 0000-0fff 1000    100.0%  none      7000
RAM-11-21            0200-7fff 7e00     12.7%  none      7000
flash                8000-ffff 8000      0.5%  none      7f6a
  > flash-text       8000-8095 0096    100.0%  none      7f6a


####################
#                  #
# Sections summary #
#                  #
####################

Name      Range      Size    Memory           Fragments
-------------------------------------------------------
registers 0000-0035  0036    ZeroPage-nobits  1
cstack    0000-0fff  1000    RAM-11-21-nobits 1
stack     0100-01ff  0100    Stack            1
code      8000-8001  0002    flash-text       2
reset     8002-8003  0002    flash-text       1
code      8004-8095  0092    flash-text       7
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
##################
#                #
# Placement rules #
#                #
##################

Name               Address range  Key
-------------------------------------------------------------------------
RAM-11-21          0200-7fff
  RAM-11-21-nobits 0200-7fff      BSS
    >
    > cstack
Stack              0100-01ff      Plain
  > stack
  Stack-nobits     0100-01ff      Plain and BSS
    >
    > cstack
ZeroPage           0000-00ff      ZPage
  ZeroPage-nobits  0000-00ff      ZPage and BSS
    > registers
flash              8000-ffff
  flash-text       8000-ffff      TEXT
    > reset and code

Name   Size Align
-----------------
stack  0100 no
cstack 1000 no

################
#              #
# Object files #
#              #
################

Unit Filename          Archive
-----------------------------------
  0  main.o            -
         >  code 0005
  2  cstartup.o        clib-65c02.a
         # picked based on cstartup=normal (built-in default)
         >  code  001b
         >  reset 0002
  4  simplified_exit.o clib-65c02.a
         # picked based on exit=simplified (specified on the command line)
         >  code 0004
  6  debug_exit.o      clib-65c02.a
         # picked based on stubs=semi_hosted (due to configured to use semi-hosting)
         >  code 0022
  7  enter.o           clib-65c02.a
         >  code 004d
  8  pseudoRegisters.o clib-65c02.a
         >  registers 0036
  9  debug_break.o     clib-65c02.a
         # picked based on stubs=semi_hosted (due to configured to use semi-hosting)
         >  code 0001
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
###################
#                 #
# Cross reference #
#                 #
###################

Section 'cstack'  placed at address 0000-0fff of size 1000 (linker generated)

Section 'stack'  placed at address 0100-01ff of size 0100 (linker generated)

_Zp in section 'registers'  placed at address 0000-0035 of size 0036
(pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
    Defines:
        _Zp = 0000
        _Vsp = 0030
        _Vfp = 0032
        _Temp = 0034
    Referenced from:
        main (main.o unit 0 section index 2)
        __program_start (cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 2)
        (cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 6)
        _Stub_exit (debug_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 6 section index 2)
        _AllocStackSave (enter.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 7 section index 2)
        _DeallocStackRestore (enter.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 7 section index 4)

__low_level_init in section 'code'  placed at address 8000-8000 of size 0001
(cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 7)
    Defines:
        __low_level_init = 8000
    Referenced from:
        __program_start (cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 2)

_DebugBreak in section 'code'  placed at address 8001-8001 of size 0001
(debug_break.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 9 section index 2)
    Defines:
        _DebugBreak = 8001
    Referenced from:
        _Stub_exit (debug_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 6 section index 2)

__program_root_section in section 'reset'
 placed at address 8002-8003 of size 0002
(cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 8)
    Defines:
        __program_root_section = 8002
    References:
        __program_start in (cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 2)

exit in section 'code'  placed at address 8004-8007 of size 0004
(simplified_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 4 section index 2)
    Defines:
        exit = 8004
    References:
        _Stub_exit in (debug_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 6 section index 2)
    Referenced from:
        (cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 6)
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
main in section 'code'  placed at address 8008-800c of size 0005
(main.o unit 0 section index 2)
    Defines:
        main = 8008
    References:
        _Zp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
    Referenced from:
        (cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 6)

__program_start in section 'code'  placed at address 800d-801a of size 000e
(cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 2)
    Defines:
        __program_start = 800d
    References:
        .sectionEnd(cstack)
        .sectionEnd(stack)
        _Vsp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
        __low_level_init in (cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 7)
    Referenced from:
        __program_root_section (cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 8)

Section 'code'  placed at address 801b-8026 of size 000c
(cstartup.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 2 section index 6)
    References:
        _Zp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
        exit in (simplified_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 4 section index 2)
        main in (main.o unit 0 section index 2)

_DeallocStackRestore in section 'code'
 placed at address 8027-8047 of size 0021
(enter.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 7 section index 4)
    Defines:
        _RestoreRegisters = 802a
        _DeallocStackRestore = 8027
        _DeallocStack = 8038
    References:
        _DeallocStack in (enter.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 7 section index 4)
        _Vsp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
        _Zp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
    Referenced from:
        _Stub_exit (debug_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 6 section index 2)
        _DeallocStackRestore (enter.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 7 section index 4)

_Stub_exit in section 'code'  placed at address 8048-8069 of size 0022
(debug_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 6 section index 2)
    Defines:
        _Stub_exit = 8048
    References:
        _AllocStack in (enter.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 7 section index 2)
        _DeallocStack in (enter.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 7 section index 4)
        _DebugBreak in (debug_break.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 9 section index 2)
        _Vsp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
        _Zp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
    Referenced from:
        exit (simplified_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 4 section index 2)
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
_AllocStackSave in section 'code'  placed at address 806a-8095 of size 002c
(enter.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 7 section index 2)
    Defines:
        _AllocStackSave = 806a
        _AllocStack = 8084
    References:
        _Vsp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
        _Zp in (pseudoRegisters.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 8 section index 2)
    Referenced from:
        _Stub_exit (debug_exit.o (from clib-65c02.a) unit 6 section index 2)

#########################
#                       #
# Memory sizes (decimal) #
#                       #
#########################

Executable       (Text):  150 bytes
Non-initialized        : 4406 bytes
```

The linker list file displays how section fragments are distributed across memories and the total allocated memory size.

The `Memories summary` area summarizes the application's memories, including the size, usage, largest unallocated block, and an optional checksum of each memory.

The `Sections summary` area summarizes section placement and fragment counts.

The `Object files` area lists object files, their originating libraries (if any), and their section and overall size contributions.

The `Cross reference` area provides detailed information for each code segment, including its entry point, name, address range, size, defined symbols, referenced symbols, and referencing code segments. This offers full bi-directional reference information for all application code segments.

Finally, the `Memory sizes` area summarizes the total memory used. Note that memory amounts are given in decimal here; elsewhere in the list file hexadecimal numbers are used.

## 23.11 Output formats

Additional executable output format can be selected with the `--output-format` command-line option.

Note: The linker will always produce an ELF output which is the format used by the `db6502` debugger.

### 23.11.1 ELF/DWARF

This is the base output format of the executable file. It contains an ELF program image of the executable application. If you specify `--debug` all DWARF debugging information sections found in the object files are passed on to the final executable image. The output file has file extension `.elf`.

### 23.11.2 Intel hex

The Intel hex file format contains the output binary as ASCII text. Output files have the `.hex` extension.

### 23.11.3 Motorola S-record

This is the Motorola S-record, sometimes called SREC. The output binary is expressed in ASCII text form. The output file has file extension `.srec`.

The S-record format has variants: S19, S28, and S37, corresponding to 16, 24, and 32-bit addresses. Using these formats forces the linker to output in a specific address size. The output file extension used corresponds to the format variant choosen, `.s19`, `.s28` or `.s37`.

### 23.11.4 Raw

The `raw` format represents program memory as a raw binary image file. Output files use the `.raw` file extension.

---

Note: In the default setting only one memory area can be emitted in Raw format. Multiple areas can be emitted by specifying the `--raw-multiple-memories` command-line option, this also has the effect of changing the name of the output file(s). When this option is active the output file names are based on the name of the memory areas in the `.scm` file.

---

### 23.11.5 Commodore program file

This format, named `prg` (based on its file extension), is similar to `raw` but includes a 16 bits load address at the beginning of the file. The default start address is `0x801` for Commodore 64 and Commander X16. For MEGA65, the start address is `0x2001`, which is used when linking with a MEGA65 linker rules file (e.g., `mega65-plain.scm`).

If needed you can override the start address using the `--load-address` command-line option. If the `--load-address` is not specified, the linker will attempt to base the start address on the target board support used. If neither is specified it will fall back to the symbol defined by `--program-root` which defaults to `__program_root_section`.

## 23.12 More on linker rules

The linker rules file is a Scheme programming language source file, hence the `.scm` extension.

You do not need to be familiar with Scheme to specify linker rules, simply follow the examples to set things up.

The examples present a Scheme "program" with a single `memories` variable bound to a data structure. The linker reads the file with a Scheme interpreter, then examines the `memories` variable's contents. This has two implications: a) the file's syntax is Scheme-dictated, based on s-expressions[10]; and b) more elaborate programs using Scheme macros are possible. generate the memory rules.

## 23.13 Command line options

This section details `ln6502` command-line options.

### 23.13.1 Options overview

If the linker is run without command-line arguments, it will indicate that object files are required:

```
$ ln6502
the linker requires some object files to work with (use --help for help)
Terminating due to errors
```

A more detailed help message can be requested with the `--help` option:

```
$ ln6502 --help
Calypsi linker for 6502 version 5.18

Usage: ln6502 [--version] [-o|--output-file OUTPUT-FILE] [-g|--debug]
              [--semi-hosted] [--no-data-init-table-section]
              [--override IDENTIFIER] ([--cross-reference] |
              [--no-cross-reference]) [--rtattr NAME=VALUE] [--verbose] [-l]
              [--list-file LIST-FILE] [--memories-expression EXPRESSION]
              [--program-root SYMBOL] [--root-symbol SYMBOL]
              [--program-start SYMBOL] [--copy-initialize SECTION]
              [--no-copy-initialize SECTION] [--no-automatic-placement-rules]
              [--raw-multiple-memories] [--no-merge-raw-memories]
              [--force-output] [--no-auto-libraries] [--cstartup VALUE]
              [--no-tree-shaking] [--output-format FORMAT] [--cstack-size SIZE]
              [--stack-size SIZE] [--heap-size SIZE] [--load-address ADDRESS]
              ([--hosted] | [--rom-code]) [--initialize-large-data]
              [--core CORE] [--target TARGET] [FILE...]
  use 'ln6502 --help' for detailed help

Available options:
  --version               Display version number
  -o,--output-file OUTPUT-FILE
                          Name of output file
  -g,--debug              Produce debugging information
  --semi-hosted           Enable debug stubs for semi-hosting
  --no-data-init-table-section
```

(continues on next page)

[10] https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/S-expression

(continued from previous page)

```
                        Do not generate any data_init_table section (mainly
                        useful for assembly projects)
--override IDENTIFIER   Override symbol in archive library (treat it as weak)
--cross-reference       Include cross reference and map information in the
                        list file (this is the default)
--no-cross-reference    Do not include cross reference and map information in
                        the list file
--rtattr NAME=VALUE     Specify runtime attribute to select specific
                        alternative from library (e.g. printf=float,
                        scanf=nofloat)
--verbose               Generate more detailed output
-l                      Generate a list file, defaults to 'ln6502.lst'
--list-file LIST-FILE   Generate list file, using given name
--memories-expression EXPRESSION
                        Expression that extracts the list of memory
                        descriptions from the .scm file, defaults to
                        'memories'
--program-root SYMBOL   Program root point, defaults to
                        '__program_root_section'
--root-symbol SYMBOL    Add a root symbol
--program-start SYMBOL  Program start symbol, defaults to '__program_start'
--copy-initialize SECTION
                        Override default and initialize this section by
                        copying
--no-copy-initialize SECTION
                        Override default and do not initialize this section
                        by copying
--no-automatic-placement-rules
                        Do not add rules to a .scm linker rules file
--raw-multiple-memories Allow multiple memories for raw style output format
--no-merge-raw-memories Never attempt to merge raw memories
--force-output          Ignore (some) errors and attempt to generate output
--no-auto-libraries     Do not automatically add runtime libraries
--cstartup VALUE        Define the C startup to be used, synonym to '--rtattr
                        cstartup=VALUE'
--no-tree-shaking       Do not perform tree shaking and keep unused section
                        fragment in output
--output-format FORMAT  Format, one of 'intel-hex', 'S-record', 'S19', 'S28',
                        'S37', 'raw', 'prg' or 'pgz' (in addition to the
                        ELF/DWARF output)
--cstack-size SIZE      C stack size override (overrides size defined in the
                        .scm file)
--stack-size SIZE       Stack size override (overrides size defined in the
                        .scm file)
--heap-size SIZE        Heap size override (size normally defined in the .scm
                        file)
--load-address ADDRESS  Load address for the 'prg' file format
--hosted                Initialize data sections in place by loading
                        executable (hosted enviroment)
--rom-code              Run from ROM/Flash, initialize data sections by
                        copying from ROM
--initialize-large-data Enable initialization of data areas that can span
                        over 64K boundaries
--core CORE             Core, one of '6502', '65b02', '65c02', '65cnr02' or
                        '45gs02' (defaults to '6502')
--target TARGET         Target system, one of 'C64' or 'MEGA65' (defaults to
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
                        embedded/ROM use, if omitted)
 -h,--help              Show this help text
```

### 23.13.2 Options in detail

`--output-file, -o`

Use this option to specify the name of the output executable file. If not given, the output file is `aout` with a file extension based on the format of the file, e.g. `aout.elf` or `aout.hex`.

`--debug`

Merge DWARF symbolic debugging information from the object file and output that in ELF executable file.

`-g`

Synonym for `--debug`.

`--semi-hosted`

Enable debug stubs for semi-hosting support. The program is linked with stubs for semi-hosting in the debugger. This allows the debugger to support standard I/O on behalf of the target and various other low level operations, such as capture `exit()` and implement `assert()`.

`--no-data-init-table-section`

Do not create any data initialization sections. This is mainly intended for assembly projects, but it can also be used for C if you do not want any initialization of static data objects to be done.

`--override`

Treat specified symbol as weak when taken from a library. This can be used if you want to replace a specific routine in a library with your own variant.

`--cross-reference`

Also include cross reference information in the list file. This is enabled by default.

`--no-cross-reference`

Do not include cross reference information in the list file.

`--rtattr NAME=VALUE`

Used to control selection of a specific variant of a module that exists in multiple weak versions. A typical situation is to select a custom C startup module or other variant of `exit()`.

It can also be used to override the automatic selection of `printf()` and `scanf()` formatter capability.

`--cstartup=VALUE`

Select a specific custom C startup module to be used. This is a slightly easier way than using the `--rtattr` option.

`--verbose`

Ask the linker to be more talkative. Mainly useful in cases where you run into errors. This option will generate a lot more information about the situation.

`-l`

Generate a list file. The name used is the name of the input file (ignoring any directory path) with a `.lst` file extension. See also `--list-file`.

`--list-file`

Generate a list file. The name of the list file is given as argument to this option. See also `-l` to generate a list file based on the source filename.

`--memories-expression`

This is the expression used to extract the memory description after reading a `.scm` rules file. This is set to `memories` by default and that should suffice in almost every situation.

`--program-root`

This is the root of the application and everything referenced from this section, directly or indirectly is part of the application.

If you are building a normal C project you should not change this.

`--root-symbol`

Add a root symbol that is regarded as something to always include in the build. This can be used to override a specific symbol, or if you have a root inside a library as they are otherwise ignored.

`--program-start`

This symbol defines the first actual executable instruction in the program. This is used as the entry point which is defined in some output formats.

If you are building a normal C project you should not change this.

`--output-format`

With this option you specify an additional file format for the produced executable application. An ELF executable is always produced.

`--raw-multiple-memories`

This option enables output to multiple files in the Raw file format. By default only one area is allowed and an error will result if the application uses more than one program area. Specifying this option will also result in different output filenames that are based on the memory areas in the `.scm` file.

`--no-merge-raw-memories`

The linker will attempt to merge memories when emitting in the Commodore PRG format for memories in the first bank (address `0x0000-0xffff`). This is to generate as few memories as possible due to limitations in the PRG format. You can avoid this automatic merging by specifying the `--no-merge-raw-memories` command-line option. This option also controls whether adjacent memories are merged in the RAW output format.

`--heap-size`

The heap size can be defined in the linker control file (`.scm`). This option makes it possible to override the heap size and is useful if you use a common linker control file and want to avoid modifying the `.scm` file.

---

Note: The heap is completely removed if you set the size to `0`. If the application tries to use the heap in that situation, the linker will complain that the heap section is undefined.

---

`--cstack-size`

The C stack size can be defined in the linker control file (`.scm`). The C stack keeps track of local variables, temporaries and function arguments. This option makes it possible to override the C stack size and is useful if you use a common linker control file and want to avoid modifying the file.

`--stack-size`

The stack size can be defined in the linker control file (`.scm`). This option makes it possible to override the stack size and is useful if you use a common linker control file and want to avoid modifying the file.

`--hosted`

Specifies a hosted environment. Data object initialization by copying from ROM is omitted; instead, the application is loaded into memory, and initialized data objects receive values during the load action.

`--rom-code`

This is the opposite of `--hosted`. Data objects gets initialized by copying from ROM. This is the default and allows the application to be written to ROM or flash and started by turning the device on.

`--copy-initialize`

This option takes a data section name as argument. You can use this option to override the default of whether the section is initializated by copying or by loading.

This option can be used together with the `--hosted` option to make an exception for a given data section and have that initialized by copying. It can be used when the load mechanism is unable to load directly into a memory area. You can specify this option multiple times.

`--no-copy-initialize`

This option takes a data section name as argument. It is used to override the default of whether the section is initializated by copying or by loading. This option mostly exists for symmetry reasons. You can specify this option multiple times.

`--load-address`

Specifies the load address to used with Commodore program file output (option `--output-format prg`). On the Commodore 64 and the Commander X16 platforms this should be `0x801`. On the MEGA65 it should be `0x2001`. See Commodore program file for more information.

`--core`

Specifies the core used.

`--target`

Specifies a target system. This option may affect `--hosted` or `--rom-code` settings, and is preferred for supported targets.

`--no-automatic-placement-rules`

Do not attempt to add any rules, like section placments or missing blocks to a linker rules file. This is useful if you want to state everything explicitly, as it will result in errors if the linker rules (`.scm`) file is incomplete. In most cases you want to allow the linker to complete a partial linker rules file and this option should not be specified in such case.

`--force-output`

Ignore certain errors and allow output to be generated anyway. This is mainly intended for getting a list file to help understanding the cause of errors for troubleshooting.

`--no-auto-libraries`

The linker will attempt to pick a suitable C library based on the input. This command-line option disables this mechanism. If given you will need to specify the C library explicitly on the command line.

`--initialize-large-data`

Data initialization is limited to Far objects, meaning they cannot be allocated across 64K address banks. Use this option for custom data objects, such as graphics data, that require such allocation.

When enabled two things happens. The data initializer table the is generated by the linker will use 32-bit size instead of 16-bit. The runtime attribute `initialize` is given the value `"large"` (rather than `"normal"` which is default). The result is that the linker will use a different data initialization module that can handle the larger initialization.

---

Note: This is intended for the 45GS02 (MEGA65 target) which can handle data outside the ordinary 64K area.

---

CHAPTER 24

# Librarian

The `nlib` tool builds libraries (also called archives), which are single files containing multiple object files and a symbol index.

## 24.1 Creating a library

To create a library, list all object files (`.o` extension) and a single output file (`.a` extension).

```
$ nlib lib.a obj1.o obj2.o ashfx.o xtoal.o
```

The created library is typically used as input to the `ln6502` by specifying it on the command line. When linking with a library, only used objects are included in the final output.

## 24.2 File format

The file format is identical to `ar` on UNIX System V and GNU. The archive includes an index for faster object selection.

## 24.3 Command line options

Only `--version` and `--help` command-line options are supported.

To display the version of the linker, use `--version`:

```
$ nlib --version
Calypsi librarian for none version 5.18
```

CHAPTER 25

# Debugger introduction

The Calypsi tool chain debugger is a source code debugger that enables you to observe program execution. It offers both interactive and script-based control. Modeled after command-line debuggers like GDB and LLDB, it shares many similarities, making it familiar to users of those tools.

## 25.1 Command line debugger

A command-line debugger provides powerful commands that are easy to remember and understand. You can use descriptive commands like `step`, `break` and `continue` rather than a set of bindings to function keys and other more or less cryptic key bindings. Thanks to short forms and repeating the last command with a return key press, you can execute common and repetitive actions with single or few keystrokes.

The debugger also supports various front-ends like Visual Studio Code, Eclipse, and Emacs, leveraging the GNU project's MI (Machine Interface) protocol for this integration.

The debugger also provides powerful scripting abilities via the Lua language. You can use Lua to configure debugging sessions, create your own commands and even make your own debugger plug-ins. The debugger offers powerful scripting via Lua. You can use Lua to configure debugging sessions, create custom commands, and develop debugger plug-ins. This is possible because the complete debugger functional API is exposed to Lua. The Lua API further extends capabilities by allowing definition of new console commands and subscription to internal debugger event notifications.

Thus, with the Calypsi debugger, you gain the advantages of both the command-line environment and integrated graphical development environments.

## 25.2 Running the debugger

The debugger's interface is command-line based, allowing use from a terminal or connection to an IDE.

### 25.2.1 Basic invocation

The debugger is started in the following way:

```
$ db6502 [options] [debug-file] [options]
```

As everything on the command line is optional you can start the debugger without arguments. This will put you in an interactive debugger session:

```
$ db6502
```

Typically, specify the application program to debug on the command line:

```
$ db6502 application.elf
```

Command line options and the application to debug can appear in any order on the command line.

Command line options are optional arguments that tune debugger behavior, always starting with a dash. Two variants exist: single- letter options with one dash, and long descriptive options with two.

To display the version of the debugger, use `--version`:

```
$ db6502 --version
Calypsi debugger for 6502 version 5.18
```

## 25.3 Command line options

This section covers the `db6502` command-line options in detail.

### 25.3.1 Options overview

Use the `--help` option to display the available command-line options.

```
$ db6502 --help
Calypsi debugger for 6502 version 5.18

Usage: db6502 [--version] [-i|--interpreter INTERPRETER] [--nh] [--nx]
              [-e|--eval-command COMMAND] [-t|--tty TTY] [--batch]
              [--logging-enable] [--logging-to-file PATH] [--logging-overwrite]
              [--silent] [--extra-memory HEX-RANGE] [--stop-on-program-run]
              [--terminate-on-program-exit] [--exit-breakpoint] [--core CORE]
              [--target TARGET] [--program-start SYMBOL]
              [--semi-hosted-root PATH] [--target-remote DEVICE]
              [--serial-speed SPEED] [FILE]
  use 'db6502 --help' for detailed help

Available options:
  --version               Display version number
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
-i,--interpreter INTERPRETER
                        Select command interpreter, one of 'Console', 'MI' or
                        'MI2' (defaults to 'Console')
--nh                    Do not read '~/.db6502'
--nx                    Do not read any '.db6502' file in any directory
-e,--eval-command COMMAND
                        Execute a single command (can be specified many
                        times)
-t,--tty TTY            Use TTY for input/output by the program being
                        debugged
--batch                 Exit after processing options
--logging-enable        Enable logging from start
--logging-to-file PATH  Enable logging from start to specified file
--logging-overwrite     Enable logging from start and overwrite the file
--silent                Generate less messages
--extra-memory HEX-RANGE Additional memory ranges to create (simulator use)
--stop-on-program-run   Stop and take control immediately when program is
                        started
--terminate-on-program-exit
                        Terminate execution of debugger if debuggee exits
                        (implies --exit-breakpoint)
--exit-breakpoint       Insert a breakpoint at 'exit()' to detect program
                        termination
--core CORE             Core, one of '6502', '65b02', '65c02', '65cnr02' or
                        '45gs02' (defaults to '6502')
--target TARGET         Target system, one of 'C64' or 'MEGA65' (defaults to
                        embedded/ROM use, if omitted)
--program-start SYMBOL  Program start symbol, defaults to '__program_start'
--semi-hosted-root PATH Root directory of the semi-hosted file system
--target-remote DEVICE  Use remote device to communicate with target
--serial-speed SPEED    Set serial speed, one of 9600, 19200, 38400, 57600 or
                        115200 (defaults to 115200)
-h,--help               Show this help text
```

### 25.3.2 Options in detail

`--interpreter, -i`

Use this option to specify the interpreter to use. The debugger can execute either with a console interpreter or a machine interface (MI) interpreter. The console interpreter is suitable for interactive debugger sessions from the command line, which is the default. The machine interface interpreter is used when the debugger is controlled by an IDE.

`--eval-command, -e`

This option specifies a command to execute before the interactive session gains control. It can be used multiple times to specify multiple commands.

`--batch`

Terminate the debugger session after all `--eval-command` commands have been processed. This is useful for automated debugger execution from scripts.

`--tty, -t`

Specifies the application's console `tty`. If the application writes to or reads from the standard stream, this provides the `tty` device for that operation.

If not specified, console output from the application is written to the console interaction. In MI mode such console output is marked so that the IDE can see that it is stream output from the application.

`--semi-hosted-root`

Specifies the host-side directory serving as the target's semi-hosted file system. Defaults to the current directory. See Semi-hosting for details.

`--logging-enable`

Enables logging at debugger startup.

`--logging-to-file`

Specifies the logging output file.

`--logging-overwrite`

Specifies whether logging to the file should append or overwrite previously existing log file content.

`--extra-memory`

Specifies additional memory areas not part in the application that exists on a simulated target.

Memories in the simulator are normally created based on the memories found in the debug application image. This option allows additional memory regions to be created.

`--stop-on-program-run`

When the program starts, immediately take control and stop execution. This enables debugging from the very beginning (before `main()` is reached) without needing to set a breakpoint.

`--terminate-on-program-exit`

If the application exits, the debugger session also terminates. The default behavior is for the debugger to notify of the exit and remain active.

`--exit-breakpoint`

Insert a breakpoint at the `exit()` function. This option is not needed if you link with debug stubs, as exit handling is provided.

`--target-remote`

Specifies the communications device to connect to a target for debugging. This disables the built-in simulator and configures the debugger for remote debugging via the gdbserver protocol, typically used for debugging on real hardware.

`--serial-speed`

Set the speed of the target remote communications serial port defined with `--target-remote`. The speed defaults to 115200.

`--program-start`

This symbol defines the program's first executable instruction. For a standard C project, avoid changing this setting.

`--core`

Specifies the core used.

`--target`

Specifies a certain target system.

CHAPTER 26

# Console command line

The console interpreter provides an interactive command line with powerful features, including command completion, history, and editing.

Your command-line history is also saved between sessions in `~/.db6502/db6502.history`.

## 26.1 Command structure

Commands consist of one or more space-separated words. If a word is a unique match, it does not need to be fully spelled out.

An argument specific to the command (e.g., a string, file path, or boolean value) may follow the command.

### 26.1.1 Command completion

Command completion is available via the `TAB` key. Pressing `TAB` directly at the prompt lists all words that can start a command:

```
(db6502) <TAB>
b                enable           n                s
break            exec-file        next             set
c                file             nexti            show
cd               frame            ni               si
clear            ignore           p                source
complete         info             platform         step
condition        interpreter-exec plug-in          stepi
continue         interrupt        print            thread
delete           kill             pwd              tty
directory        lua              quit
disable          maintenance      r
disassemble      module           run
(db6502)
```

Pressing TAB completes the command to the left of the cursor as far as possible. If the word can be partially completed, the first TAB fills in as much as possible:

```
(db6502) int<TAB>
```

Results in:

```
(db6502) inter
```

Pressing TAB a second time results in:

```
(db6502) inter<TAB>
interpreter-exec  interrupt
(db6502) inter
```

## 26.2 A simple debugging session

To get a feeling for how to run a very simple debugging session here is how it can look.

```
$ db6502 program.elf
Calypsi debugger for 6502
(db6502) b main
breakpoint 1
(db6502) info breakpoints
Num      Type            Disp  Enb  Lua/plug-in   Address     What
1        breakpoint      keep  y    no            0x80f1      main
(db6502)
```

Note: A command requires enough characters to be unique. For `info breakpoints`, `i b` suffices, as the interpreter considers all words for multi-word commands. The completer operates left of the cursor: `i<TAB>` shows all commands starting with 'i'. To complete to `info`, type `inf<TAB>` followed by `b<TAB>`. However, `i b<TAB>` expands directly to `i breakpoints` because no other command matches this two-word prefix.

To start debugging, use the `run` command (abbreviated to `r`), which begins execution from the start. The program will stop almost immediately upon hitting the breakpoint at the beginning of the `main()` function.

```
(db6502) r
running
   12 int const cglob_int = 12;
   13
   14 size_t fossasas;
   15
-> 16 int main () {
   17   basic_expr(glob_int + 21, 2, 3);
   18   int xx = fact(4);
   19   int b = vla1(4);
   20   int c = struct1(2);
0x80f1 in main() at main.c:16
(db6502)
```

The breakpoint is hit at address `0x80f1` in `main.c:16`. Source lines are shown as context, with the current line indicated.

You can now perform a couple of single steps:

```
(db6502) s
   13
   14 size_t fossasas;
   15
   16 int main () {
-> 17   basic_expr(glob_int + 21, 2, 3);
   18   int xx = fact(4);
   19   int b = vla1(4);
   20   int c = struct1(2);
   21   int d = struct11(2);
0x80f8 in main() at main.c:17
(db6502)
   10 int bar (long* p) {
   11   return *p + 2;
   12 }
   13
-> 14 long basic_expr (long a, long a2, int a3) {
   15   char cglob_int = 0; // block a variable in global scope
   16   if (a) {
   17     int b = 10;
   18     a = foo(b + cglob_int);
0x8000 in basic_expr() at basic_expr.c:14
(db6502)
```

The `step` command (abbreviated as `s`) steps one source line. Subsequent steps can be performed by simply pressing `RETURN`, which repeats the most recent command.

Each step advances us one line, updating the source context shown.

The step command steps into functions, as demonstrated by entering `basic_expr()`.

You can inspect variables with `info locals`.

```
(db6502) info locals
(int) a3 = 3
(long) a2 = 2
(long) a = 21
(db6502)
```

To trace your current position, use the `backtrace` (or `bt`) command.

```
(db6502) backtrace
#0 0x8000 in basic_expr() at basic_expr.c:14
#1 0x8137 in main() at main.c:17
(db6502)
```

To stop at a specific line further down the source code, use:

```
(db6502) b basic_expr.c:18
breakpoint 2
(db6502) c
running
program hit breakpoint 2
   14 long basic_expr (long a, long a2, int a3) {
   15   char cglob_int = 0; // block a variable in global scope
   16   if (a) {
   17     int b = 10;
-> 18     a = foo(b + cglob_int);
```

(continues on next page)

(continued from previous page)

```
   19     a += bar(&a2);  // take address of a2, forcing it to stack.
   20   }
   21   if (a > 2) {
   22     // Make the variable in global scope visible
0x8030 in basic_expr() at basic_expr.c:18
(db6502)
```

The `continue` command (or `c`) resumes execution (unlike `run`, which starts from the beginning).

Lets take a look at the local variables again.

```
(db6502) info locals
(int) b = 10
(char) cglob_int = 0
(int) a3 = 3
(long) a2 = 2
(long) a - value not available, reason: "a" has no valid value here
(db6502)
```

The local context now includes two additional variables: `b` and `cglob_int`. At this point, `a` has no value because its last use was on line 16, and it will receive a new value on the current line. Thus, the debugger knows about `a` but it currently holds no examinable value.

Step over two function calls and inspect the value of `a` using the `print` command, which can be entered as `p`:

```
(db6502) n
   15   char cglob_int = 0; // block a variable in global scope
   16   if (a) {
   17     int b = 10;
   18     a = foo(b + cglob_int);
-> 19     a += bar(&a2);  // take address of a2, forcing it to stack.
   20   }
   21   if (a > 2) {
   22     // Make the variable in global scope visible
   23     extern int const cglob_int;
0x8050 in basic_expr() at basic_expr.c:19
(db6502)
   17     int b = 10;
   18     a = foo(b + cglob_int);
   19     a += bar(&a2);  // take address of a2, forcing it to stack.
   20   }
-> 21   if (a > 2) {
   22     // Make the variable in global scope visible
   23     extern int const cglob_int;
   24     a = foo(cglob_int);
   25   }
0x8082 in basic_expr() at basic_expr.c:21
(db6502) p a
(long) $8 = 8
(db6502)
```

The variable `a` now holds a value from the function calls.

The local `char cglob_int` shadows a global variable of the same name. Stepping to line 24 makes the global `cglob_int` visible:

```
(db6502) n
   20   }
   21   if (a > 2) {
   22     // Make the variable in global scope visible
   23     extern int const cglob_int;
-> 24     a = foo(cglob_int);
   25   }
   26   return a + a3;   // a3 alive and on the stack
   27 }
   28
0x8098 in basic_expr() at basic_expr.c:24
(db6502) p cglob_int
(int const) $9 = 12
(db6502)
```

The global variable is now visible again, with a different value and type.

If you no longer need the first breakpoint, you can disable it using the `disable` command, rather than deleting it:

```
(db6502) disable 1
(db6502) info breakpoints
Num      Type            Disp  Enb  Lua/plug-in   Address     What
1        breakpoint      keep  n    no            0x80f1      main
         breakpoint already hit 1 time
2        breakpoint      keep  y    no            0x8030      basic_expr.c:18
         breakpoint already hit 1 time
(db6502)
```

The first breakpoint still exists but is not enabled (`n` in the `Enb` column). The debugger also tracks breakpoint statistics.

CHAPTER 27

# Remote debugging

This chapter describes how to set up remote debugging to a target. In this scenario, the debugger runs on the host and connects to, controlling, an application on actual hardware.

The gdbserver protocol is used for communication. It can be implemented by a small agent on the target or a bridge process on the host that translates between gdbserver and hardware-specific protocols.

## 27.1 Serial port

Target debug support can be implemented by placing a small debug agent software on the target. The RS-232 serial port can be used for this. Since most host computers lack these ports, a USB-to-serial converter (e.g., FTDI USB-RS232, often with bare wires requiring a soldered connector) can be used.

Most major operating systems include drivers for the FTDI USB-RS232 cable. If you choose other cables, you may need to install a driver, which you can obtain from the USB-RS232 cable vendor.

### 27.1.1 Finding the device

On Linux and macOS, the serial port is typically found in `/dev/ttyUSBn`, `/dev/ttySn`, or similar. Use the `dmesg` command to query for USB devices:

```
$ sudo dmesg | grep USB
...
[109191.143623] ftdi_sio 1-1:1.0: FTDI USB Serial Device converter detected
[109191.151619] usb 1-1: FTDI USB Serial Device converter now attached to ttyUSB1
```

Here you can see that a FTDI serial device is attached to `/dev/ttyUSB1`.

Note: If you solder a serial port connector, be careful about which pin numbering. Also note that a DB-25 connector has the receive and transmit pins (numbers 2 and 3) are wired oppositely compared to a DE-9 connector.

### 27.1.2 Setting the speed

The speed can be set with the `--serial-speed` command-line option, which defaults to 115200 if not specified.

### 27.1.3 Testing the port

If you have the `screen` utility program installed it can be started with parameters to test that the serial port works:

```
$ screen /dev/ttyUSB1 115200
```

Once started, you can verify debugger agent responsiveness by pressing any character; a `$S13#b7` packet reply confirms it.

You can exit by pressing Control-A followed by a backslash (`c-a \`). Some screen versions require Control-A followed by Control-backslash.

### 27.1.4 Installing the agent

The Calypsi remote debugger agent for the serial port must be downloaded, built, and executed on the target hardware. Download it from https://github.com/hth313/Calypsi-remote-debug.

### 27.1.5 Starting the debugger

Once the debugger agent runs on the hardware and the communications channel is configured, you can start the Calypsi `db6502` using:

```
$ db6502 --target-remote /dev/ttyUSB1 application.elf
```

# CHAPTER 28

## Visual Studio Code

Visual Studio Code[11] is a lightweight, yet powerful source code editor that runs on multiple platforms.

With the C/C++ for Visual Studio Code extension[12] it is possible to use the Calypsi C compiler tool chain in Visual Studio Code.

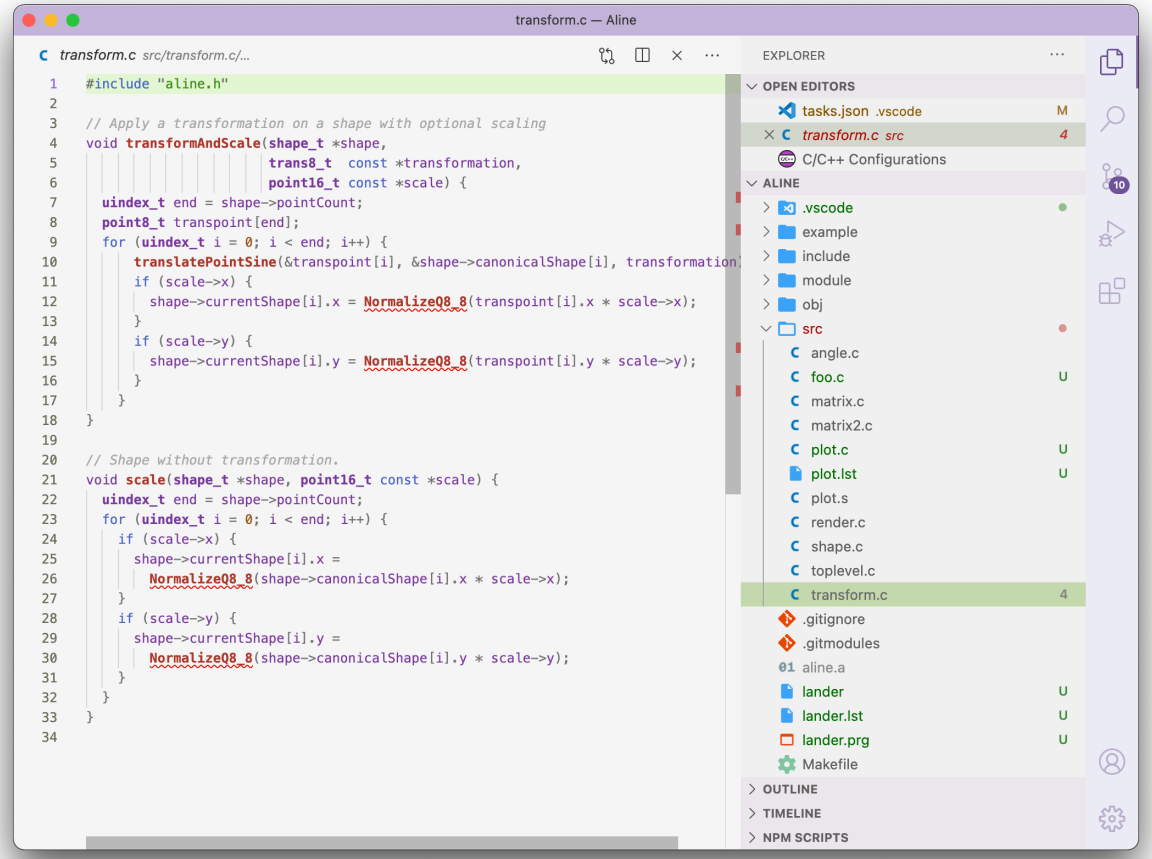
Visual Studio Code can be tailored to use various build and debugger tools. Its debugger integration, based on MI (Machine Interface), is supported by the Calypsi `db6502` debugger.

Visual Studio Code is an excellent GUI choice for Calypsi, being actively developed, lightweight, responsive, and highly configurable.

This guide does not fully document Visual Studio Code. For detailed information, refer to the official documentation[13].

Some basics on getting started are covered here, as its operation may differ from traditional IDEs.

[11] https://code.visualstudio.com/
[12] https://marketplace.visualstudio.com/items?itemName=ms-vscode.cpptools/
[13] https://code.visualstudio.com/docs




## 28.1 Installation

Installation is easy to do by downloading it from the official site. After that you can update from inside Visual Studio Code itself.

---

Note: If you use Arch Linux or a derivative like Manjaro, install VS Code via its package system. The community `code` package currently cannot install the vscode-cpptools extension due to licensing. To make it work, install the Microsoft-branded `visual-studio-code-bin` from the AUR.

---

## 28.2 Project setup

In contrast to many IDEs you will not find any project setup in the menus.

To create a new project from scratch, use `File>Open` and create a new folder for your project and then press `Open`. You now have an empty project directory.

For an existing project, select `File>Open`, browse to its top folder, and press `Open` to load.

Project-specific files are stored in a `.vscode` directory within the project. Initially, this directory is empty.

## 28.3 Building

Once the project is populated and a `Makefile` created, add a build task. Select `Tasks>Configure Tasks...`, then `Create tasks.json file from template`, and `Others`. Edit the resulting `tasks.json` file, which may resemble:

```
{
    "version": "0.2.0",
    "tasks": [
        {
            "label": "build",
            "type": "shell",
            "command": "make -k",
            "options": {
                "cwd": "${workspaceRoot}"
            },
            "problemMatcher": [
                "$gcc"
            ]
        },
        {
        "label": "clean",
        "type": "shell",
        "command": "make -k clean",
        "problemMatcher": [],
        }
    ]
}
```

## 28.4 Running the debugger

The `db6502` debugger can be used inside Visual Studio Code. For basic use it uses a 6502 simulator and a memory system that is configured based on the executable image.

### 28.4.1 Configuration

Before starting the debugger, add a launch configuration.

```
{
    "version": "0.2.0",
    "configurations": [
        {
            "name": "C++ Launch",
            "type": "cppdbg",
            "request": "launch",
            "program": "${workspaceRoot}/src/myproject",
            "args": [],
            "stopAtEntry": false,
            "cwd": "${workspaceRoot}/src",
            "environment": [],
            "externalConsole": false,
            "linux": {
                "MIMode": "lldb"
                "miDebuggerPath": "/usr/local/bin/db6502",
                "launchCompleteCommand": "exec-run",
                "setupCommands": []
            },
            "osx": {
                "MIMode": "lldb",
                "miDebuggerPath": "/usr/local/bin/db6502",
                "launchCompleteCommand": "exec-run",
                "setupCommands": []
            },
            "windows": {
                "MIMode": "lldb"
            }
        },
    ]
}
```

There are a couple of things to specify here.

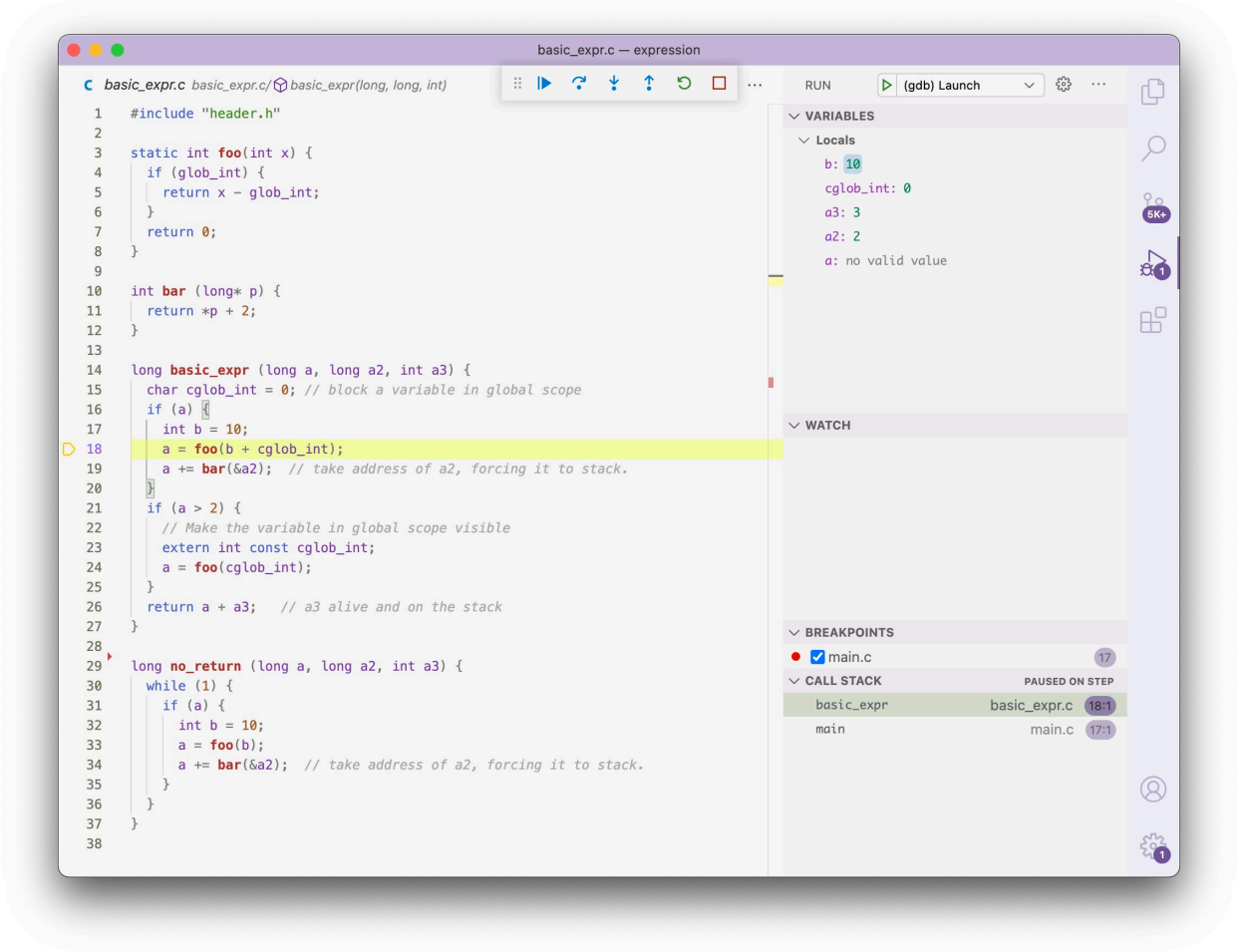
1. You need to specify that you are using `/usr/local/bin/db6502` as the debugger using `miDebuggerPath`
2. You also need to tell that you want to use `lldb` as `MIMode`[14]

The launch configuration is a text file stored in `.vscode/launch.json`.

[14] Even though `db6502` is much closer to `gdb` than `lldb` at the command level, you need to specify `lldb` as the MI mode. The reason is that in the `gdb` mode, Visual Studio Code works around a bug on UNIX style platforms for the MI command `-exec-interrupt` (which interrupts execution). The work around is to send a signal to a real UNIX process to interrupt it. This does not work with db6502 as the application being debugged is not a UNIX process at all. Instead you need to use the `lldb` mode, where the MI command `-exec-interrupt` works properly, just as it does in `db6502`.
Reference https://sourceware.org/bugzilla/show_bug.cgi?id=20035

### 28.4.2 Running the application

Once configured, run your application using `Run >> Start Debugging` (`F5`). Consider inserting a breakpoint or interrupting execution once started. If debugger windows (variables, call stack, etc.) don't appear, click the bug icon to switch to the debugger view.



# CHAPTER 29

# Lua scripting

The debugger can be controlled and extended using the Lua language[15]. Scripting allows you to write programs that execute inside the debugger, from simple batch-like scripts to advanced plug-ins that add custom commands, listen to internal events, and control execution.

From a high-level perspective, Lua and the debugger enable various tasks:

- Perform setup tasks to prepare your debug session
- Simplify repetitive tasks
- Run fully automated tests
- Extend functionality; for instance, to introspect the state and behavior of an operating system or protocol stack. These commands integrate into the existing set and share a command-line interface.

You can choose any automation level, from running the entire session under script control to providing high-level functionality with commands.

## 29.1 Running a script

To get started, this simple Lua program just displays the registers:

```
local db = require('db')

print(db.consoleCommand('info registers'))
```

If saved in `script-name.lua` (in the current directory), you can run the script with:

```
(db) source script-name.lua
```

Debugger functionality is provided in the `db` table which is created before the script is started. To access it, you need to use `require`. Here we store the debugger table in the local variable `db`.

[15] https://www.lua.org/

Note: Use the `--eval-command` (can also be used as `-e`) to invoke a Lua script from the command line and to make it execute automatically when the debugger starts. The `--eval-command` works with any command and can be specified multiple times on the command line.

## 29.2 Lua environments

Each time you run a Lua script, a new fresh Lua state is created. This means you will start out with the standard Lua and debugger libraries available imported, but not anything else. If you create a global variable, it will not normally be present the next time you run the script.

However, if a script provides new debugger functions (e.g., console commands), the Lua state is saved with the command. Subsequent invocations of that command reuse the same state, retaining global variables and closures. This allows commands to operate within their established state and depend on prior actions within that state, including previous uses of the same or other commands created by the script.

A Lua plug-in typically registers functions with the debugger for specific circumstances. These functions always execute in the state in which they were installed.

It is good practice to provide related functionality (e.g., a command set and plug-in behavior) in its own script. Multiple plug-ins can be installed via source invocation, allowing each to have its private shared state while co-existing separately.

## 29.3 Command interpreters

The debugger provides two sets of command interpreters, console commands and MI commands.

Console commands are intended for humans, provide command completion when being entered and formatted output that is easy to read.

The Machine Interface (or MI for short), was introduced by GDB to provide a more precise and stable command protocol, intended for (graphical) debugger front-ends. The GDB MI command set is supported by the debugger, allowing existing graphical debugger front-ends to be used.

Many commands can be accessed from either of these command sets, while some commands are only available in one of them.

The Lua interface allows both command sets to be used. In addition, adapted MI commands and additional functionality are also provided.

## 29.4 Console commands

The `db` table allows sending console commands to the debugger. These commands execute as if typed at the terminal, and their string results are passed back to Lua.

If you need to process the result beyond displaying or ignoring it, parsing is required. However, writing such parsers quickly becomes tedious, as the text output is primarily for display.

## 29.5 MI commands

MI commands offer precise interaction for debugger front-ends, making them well-suited for Lua scripts. Although commands are string-based, results are converted to nested Lua tables with basic types (booleans, numbers, strings).

This significantly simplifies interpreting results from Lua-to-debugger calls.

## 29.6 Adapted MI commands

Adapted MI commands are basically MI commands converted to be a more natural fit for Lua. This is done in two ways. The actual commands take arguments like any ordinary function in Lua. A return values is the value returned or a failure, instead of the MI style result table hierarchy.

## 29.7 Choosing a command set

In most cases you will probably want to use the adapted MI command set as it provides the most natural Lua experience.

The console and MI command set may be useful if you have familiarity with either or prefer the alternative output form provided.

## 29.8 Arrays and Lua

Lua array indices start at 1, unlike C. This mismatch has implications when working with debugger C expressions from Lua.

To simplify working with C expressions, array results can start at 0 in Lua, mirroring C behavior. However, the ipairs iterator (designed for Lua's 1-based indexing) will skip the element at index 0.

Shifting the index in expressions is an alternative, but it would likely be more confusing and error-prone, especially given the context of C expressions.

## 29.9 Debugger API

**`db:stepInstruction()`**
: Single step once at instruction level. This function will quickly return an indication of whether it was successful in starting the target. Actual progress of execution will be posted as notifications

  Corresponding MI instruction is `-exec-step-instrucion`.

# CHAPTER 30

# Lua data types reference

This section describes the data structures used. Complex types (beyond booleans, numbers, or strings) are represented by tables.

## 30.1 Address

The debugger uses internal addresses, composed of a numeric value, memory type, and optional bank number. In Lua, addresses are represented by a table with these fields:

Table 30.1: Address type

| field | type | description |
|---|---|---|
| formatted | string | The complete print value of the address location. |
| address | integer | The raw address bits of the location. |
| memory | string | The kind of the memory the address points to, can typically be “code” or “data” (string). |
| bank | integer | The bank number, or nil if this address location does not have any bank associated with it. |

The `formatted` field is set when the value is returned to Lua. If you provide an address as an argument to a function call in the API, you do not need to provide a `formatted` field.

## 30.2 Adapted MI functions

Many Lua functions are adapted from machine interface (MI) commands, used for communication between a debugger front end (like VS Code) and the debugger.

Functions are available in the db table. The Lua interface translates arguments for these functions and passes them to the debugger command handler.

Results are passed back and translated to Lua. As the underlying mechanism is a command protocol, the result table is a bit more elaborate than what might be expected.

A top-level result has the following fields:

| field | type | description |
|---|---|---|
| class | string | The result class (e.g., done for success, `error` for failures). A complete list is below. |
| value | integer | The result, which depends on the function called. |
| type | string | The reply type. For function calls, this is `result`. |

# CHAPTER 31

# Lua function reference

This section covers functions provided by the debugger module, grouped by family for easy reference.

## 31.1 Execution

### 31.1.1 db:stepInstruction()

Steps once at the instruction level.

The result indicates only if the target was notified to start. An error result means the target is not in a state to start.

To monitor progress and result of execution, you need to listen to notifications.

## 31.2 Breakpoint

### 31.2.1 db:breakDelete(number(s))

Removes one or more breakpoints.

The argument is the breakpoint number(s) to remove (an integer or array of integers).

### 31.2.2 db:breakInsert(location, &callBack)

Inserts a new breakpoint.

The first argument, a Lua table, may contain breakpoint attributes:

Table 31.1: Breakpoint attributes

| field | type | description |
|---|---|---|
| temporary | boolean | set a temporary (one-time) breakpoint |
| hardware | boolean | Use a hardware breakpoint. |
| pending | boolean | Allow pending breakpoint. |
| disabled | boolean | Start with the breakpoint disabled. |
| tracePoint | boolean | This is a tracepoint. |
| condition | expr | Set a conditional expression. |
| ignore | integer | Set initial ignore count. |
| thread | integer | Breakpoint is valid for a given thread. |

The second argument describes the breakpoint's location, which can be:

Table 31.2: Breakpoint location

| kind | type | |
|---|---|---|
| address | table | an address table |
| file and line | table | { file : string, line : integer |
| function | string | function name or symbol |

The third if present should be a Lua function. This function will be called as followed when the breakpoint is hit:

```
cont = callBack(object, breakpointNumber)
```

The callBack's first argument is the object table used during breakpoint creation; the second is the breakpoint number. If callBack returns boolean false, the breakpoint is not taken, and execution resumes silently, without user interface feedback.

The callback occurs in the execution thread and blocks execution. If you intend to continue, return as quickly as possible.

If execution stops, you can process it within the callback or detect the stop via notifications. Be aware that processing in the callback will prevent user feedback until it returns.

# Index


## A

address space
  default page, 21
  far, 21
  huge, 21
  syntax, 21
  zero page, 21
address spaces, 20, 21
.align
  directive, 132
aligned
  attribute, 67
alignment, 55, 64, 67
  of sections, 126
allocated memory, 160
Arch Linux
  installation, 5
  uninstalling, 5
archive, 173
.ascii
  directive, 132
.asciz
  directive, 132
assembler, 123
  6502 specifics, 124
  constants, 126
  directives, 128
  expressions, 126
  invocation, 139
  labels, 124
  local labels, 127
  numbers, 126
  operators, 126
  symbols, 124
  syntax, 123
assembly language, 123
assembly source
  generated by compiler, 46
assembly source file
  option, 51
attribute
  aligned, 67
  far, 67
  huge, 68
  interrupt, 68
  intrinsic, 69
  kernal_interrupt, 68
  section, 67
  task, 69
  zpage, 67
attributes, 65
auto variables, 19
auto_type, 72

## B

back quoted symbols, 124
banking, 41
bare metal, 153
bit fields, 58
  volatile, 63
block
  section in linker, 158
board support
  enabling, 33
bool type, 57
bss section, 91, 125
building
  C library, 107
built-in, 77
built-in functions, 77
.byte
  directive, 132
byte order
  macros, 86
.byte0
  relocation operator, 134
.byte1
  relocation operator, 134
.byte2
  relocation operator, 134

## C

C language, 13, 26
C library, 98
  building, 107
  errno, 103
  replace function, 105
C startup, 105
  replacing, 105
calling convention, 118
cdata
  section, 23, 92, 94
character type, 58
code
  section, 23, 92, 94
code banking, 41
command
  structure, 183
command completion, 183

Commander X16, 38
    interrupt, 68
comments
    assembly, 123
Commodore 64, 34
    example, 8
    interrupt, 68
Commodore program
    output, 166
compiler
    dependency file, 54
    diagnostics, 46
    errors, 46
    generate assembly source, 46
    invocation, 43
    list file, 44
    options, 48
    warnings, 46
conditional assembly, 124
const
    qualifier, 63
constants
    assembler, 126
constraints
    inline assembler, 120
context
    program, 184
conversions
    implicit, 30
core selection
    option, 55, 149
cross call
    optimization, 112
    option, 52
cross compiler, 13
cross reference, 160
customizing
    system startup, 105

## D

data
    section, 23, 92, 94
data banking, 41
data initialization, 25
    omitting, 169
data pointer, 59
data section, 91, 125
    initialization, 92
data stack, 19
data_init_table
    section, 23, 92, 95
Debian
    installation, 3
    uninstalling, 4
debug library, 98
debugger
    command interpreter, 179
    logging, 180
    starting, 177
debugging information
    macros, 86
    option, 51, 149
default address space, 21
dependency file
    compiler, 54
devices
    supported, 13
diagnostics
    compiler, 46
    pragma directive, 76
directive
    .align, 132
    .ascii, 132
    .asciz, 132
    .byte, 132
    .equ, 129, 130
    .equlab, 130
    .extern, 130
    .fillto, 132
    .global, 130
    .globl, 130
    include binary, 131
    .long, 132
    .macro, 133, 135
    .public, 130
    .quad, 132
    runtime model, 131
    .section, 125, 129
    .space, 132
    .word, 132
directives
    assembler, 128
distribution
    installation, 2
DWARF
    output, 165

## E

ELF
    output, 165
embedded systems, 153
enabling
    board support, 33
endian
    macros, 86
enumeration type, 61
.equ directive, 129, 130
.equlab directive, 130
errno
    C library, 103
error
    pragma directive, 76
errors
    compiler, 46
    internal, 46
example
    Commodore 64, 8
    Hello World, 6
    MEGA65, 9
exit, 104
expressions
    assembler, 126
extended attributes, 65
.extern directive, 130

## F

far
    address space, 21
    attribute, 67
Fedora
    installation, 4
    uninstalling, 5
file extensions, 14
file inclusion, 124

file streams
    initialization, 25
fill word, 157
.fillto
    directive, 132
floating point
    precision, 59
    setting, 16
    types, 16, 59
floating point types, 29
formatter
    printf, 104
    scanf, 104
function pointer
    size, 59
function prototypes, 30
functions, 77
    nesting depth, 19

## G

global variables, 20

## H

hardware stack, 19
headers
    search path, 44
heap
    initialization, 25
    specify size, 159
Hello World
    example, 6
host based systems. operating system, 153
huge
    address space, 21
    attribute, 68

## I

idata
    section, 23, 92
IDE
    Visual Studio Code, 190
IEEE 754, 59
include binary
    directive, 131
include files, 124
include search
    option, 50, 148
include search path, 44
index type
    pointer, 59
initialization
    of data, 25, 92
inline assembler, 119
    constraints, 120
    substitutions, 121
    volatile, 119
inlining
    optimization, 110
inlining functions
    not inlined, 112
    option, 53
installation, 2
    Arch Linux, 5
    Debian, 3
    Fedora, 4
    Linux, 35
    macOS, 3
    Manjaro, 5
    multiple, 6
    multiple versions, 6
    Ubuntu, 3
    Windows, 5
integer types, 29, 57
Intel hex
    output, 166
internal errors, 46
interrupt
    attribute, 68
    Commodore 64 kernal, 68
    vector, 68
intrinsic, 77
    attribute, 69
intrinsic functions, 77
intrinsics, 16
invocation
    assembler, 139
    compiler, 43
izpage
    section, 94

## K

kernal
    interrupt, 68
Kernel
    kernel call, 82
kernel call
    Commodore, 82
    MicroKernel, 82
keywords
    address spaces, 21

## L

labels
    assembler, 124
    global, 130
    location counter, 127
    weak, 130
language extensions
    auto_type, 72
    overloaded functions, 71
    statement expression, 71
    typeof, 72
librarian, 173
library
    building, 107
    files, 98
    replace function, 105
linker, 150
    cross reference, 160
    scatter, 160
linker rules, 25, 152, 157
Linux
    installation, 35
    uninstalling, 4, 5
list file
    compiler, 44
    option, 50, 148
list files
    linker, 160
load address
    option, 172
local labels
    assembler, 127

local labels inside macro, 136
local variables, 19
location counter, 127
.long
    directive, 132
Lua, 195
lua
    adapted MI functions, 201
    address type, 201
    breakpoints, 203
    execution control, 203

## M

macOS
    installation, 3
    uninstalling, 3
.macro, 135
    directive, 133
macro, 135
    local label, 136
macro definition
    option, 51, 149
macro definitions
    showing, 52
macro language, 135
macros
    byte order, 86
    debugging information, 86
    endian, 86
    predefined, 85
    version, 86
Manjaro
    installation, 5
    uninstalling, 5
MEGA65, 35
    example, 9
memory, 156
    address range, 156
    fill, 157
    name, 156
    placement group, 159
    size, 160
message
    pragma directive, 76
Motorola S-record
    output, 166

## N

nesting depth
    functions, 19
no-init
    section, 92
numbers
    assembler, 126

## O

omit data initialization, 169
operator
    .sectionEnd, 135
    .sectionSize, 135
    .sectionStart, 135
operators
    assembler, 126
    relocation, 133
    section, 135
optimization
    cross call, 112
    inlining, 110
optimizer, 16
    option, 52
    tuning, 52, 53
option
    core selection, 55, 149
    cross call, 52
    debugging information, 51, 149
    function inlining, 53
    include search, 50, 148
    list file, 50, 148
    load address, 172
    macro definition, 51, 149
    optimizer level, 52
    output file, 50, 148
    runtime attribute, 53, 149
    signed char, 52
    size of double, 51
    switch control, 54
    system include search, 50, 148
    target selection, 55, 149, 172
    unsigned char, 52
    vector sections, 53
    version, 50, 148
    weak symbols, 53, 149
option: assembly source file, 51
options
    compiler, 48
output
    Commodore program, 166
    DWARF, 165
    ELF, 165
    Intel hex, 166
    Motorola S, 166
    raw, 166
    S19, 166
    S28, 166
    S37, 166
    SREC, 166
output file
    option, 50, 148
output format
    ELF/DWARF, 165
    Intel hex, 165
    Motorola S-record, 165
    raw, 165
overloaded functions, 71

## P

placement control, 25
placement group
    memory, 159
pointer
    index type, 59
    types, 59
pointers, 22
pragma directive
    diagnostics, 76
    error, 76
    message, 76
    require, 77
    rtattr, 77
    runtime attribute, 77
    section, 76
    warning, 76
precision

floating point, 59
predefined
macros, 85
preprocess, 52
preprocessor, 83
print formatter, 104
program context, 184
prototypes
function, 30
pseudo registers, 19
ptrdiff_t type, 60
.public directive, 130

## Q

.quad
directive, 132
quoted symbols, 124

## R

raw
output, 166
read only
data section, 125
read-only
section, 92
record type, 60
registers
pseudo, 19
relocation operators, 133
relocations, 133
replace function
in C library, 105
require
pragma directive, 77
required symbols, 131
rodata section, 92
ROM based systems, 153
rtattr
pragma directive, 77
rules for linking, 152, 157
runtime attribute
option, 53, 149
pragma directive, 77
runtime library, 98
runtime model directive, 131

## S

S19
output, 166
S28
output, 166
S37
output, 166
scan formatter, 104
scatter
linker, 160
search path
headers, 44
.section
directive, 125
section, 23, 125
alignment, 126
attribute, 67
block, 158
bss, 91, 125
cdata, 23, 92, 94
code, 23, 92, 94
data, 23, 91, 92, 94, 125
data_init_table, 23, 92, 95
directive, 129
fragments, 125, 160
idata, 23, 92
izpage, 94
kinds, 125
modifiers, 125
no-init, 92
operators, 135
placement, 25, 157
pragma directive, 76
read only data, 125
read-only, 92
stack, 158
switch, 23, 92, 94
text, 91, 125
types, 92
zdata, 23, 92, 94
zpage, 23, 92, 94
zzpage, 23, 92, 94
.section directive, 129
.sectionEnd
operator, 135
.sectionSize
operator, 135
.sectionStart
operator, 135
semi-hosted, 99
sequence point, 62
signed char
option, 52
simulated I/O, 98
size
of double, 16
of float, 16
size of double
option, 51
size_t type, 60
.space
directive, 132
SREC
output, 166
stack
data, 19
hardware, 19
section, 158
size considerations, 26
specify size, 158
usage, 26
startup, 105
custom, 105
statement expression, 71
static variables, 20
streams, 103
structure type, 60
stubs interface, 98
substitutions
inline assembler, 121
supported devices, 13
switch
section, 23, 92, 94
switch control
option, 54
symbols
assembler, 124
global, 130

quoted, 124
required, 131
syntax, 124
weak, 130
syntax
assembler, 123
system include search
option, 50, 148
system startup, 105
customizing, 105


## T


target selection
option, 55, 149, 172
task
attribute, 69
termination
simplification, 104
text section, 91, 125
time
functions; date; functions, 106
type
enumeration, 61
ptrdiff_t, 60
size_t, 60
structure, 60
union, 60
type definitions, 63
type qualifier, 21
type qualifiers, 61
typedef, 63
typeof, 72
types
bool, 57
character, 58
integer, 57
wide character, 58


## U


Ubuntu
installation, 3
uninstalling, 4
uninstalling
Arch Linux, 5
Debian, 4
Fedora, 5
Linux, 4, 5
macOS, 3
Manjaro, 5
Ubuntu, 4
Windows, 6
union type, 60
unsigned char
option, 52
used memory, 160


## V


variables
auto, 19
dynamic, 20
global, 20
local, 19
static, 20
vector sections
option, 53
version
macros, 86
option, 50, 148
Visual Studio Code, 190
volatile
access size, 62
inline assembler, 119
volatile objects, 62


## W


warning
pragma directive, 76
warnings
compiler, 46
controlling, 47
weak symbols, 130
option, 53, 149
wide character type, 58
Windows
installation, 5
uninstalling, 6
.word
directive, 132
.word0
relocation operator, 134


## Z


zdata
section, 23, 92, 94
zero page, 19, 67
address space, 21
assembler, 124
pseudo registers, 19
zpage
attribute, 67
section, 23, 92, 94
zzpage
section, 23, 92, 94