Systems I

Machine-Level Programming VIII: Structured Data

Topics

- Alignment
- Unions
- Buffer bounds checking and overflow

Alignment

Aligned Data

- Primitive data type requires K bytes
- Address must be multiple of K
- Required on some machines; advised on IA32
  - treated differently by Linux and Windows!

Motivation for Aligning Data

- Memory accessed by (aligned) double or quad-words
  - Inefficient to load or store datum that spans quad word boundaries
  - Virtual memory very tricky when datum spans 2 pages

Compiler

- Inserts gaps in structure to ensure correct alignment of fields

Specific Cases of Alignment

Size of Primitive Data Type:

- 1 byte (e.g., `char`)
  - no restrictions on address
- 2 bytes (e.g., `short`)
  - lowest 1 bit of address must be 0_2
- 4 bytes (e.g., `int`, `float`, `char *`, etc.)
  - lowest 2 bits of address must be 00_2
- 8 bytes (e.g., `double`)
  - Windows (and most other OS's & instruction sets):
    - » lowest 3 bits of address must be 000_2
  - Linux:
    - » lowest 2 bits of address must be 00_2
    - » i.e., treated the same as a 4-byte primitive data type
- 12 bytes (`long double`)
  - Linux:
    - » lowest 2 bits of address must be 00_2
    - » i.e., treated the same as a 4-byte primitive data type

Satisfying Alignment with Structures

Offsets Within Structure

- Must satisfy element's alignment requirement

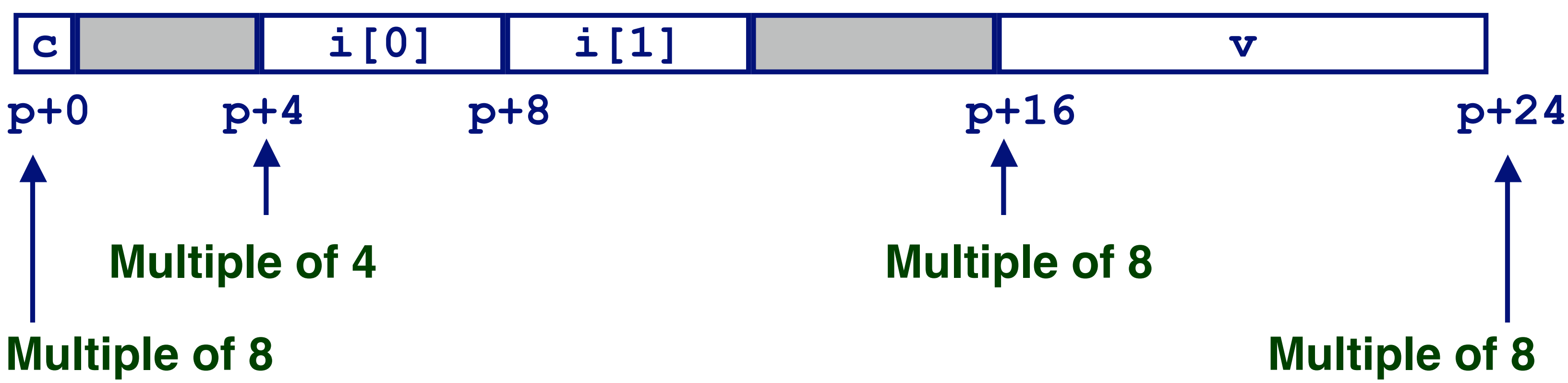
```
struct S1 {
  char c;
  int i[2];
  double v;
} *p;
```

Overall Structure Placement

- Each structure has alignment requirement K
  - Largest alignment of any element
- Initial address & structure length must be multiples of K

Example (under Windows):

- K = 8, due to `double` element

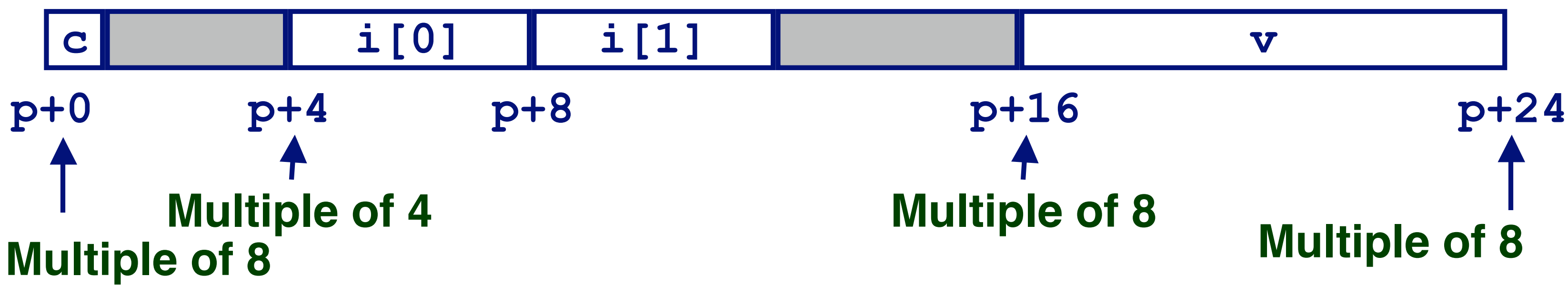


Linux vs. Windows

```
struct S1 {
  char c;
  int i[2];
  double v;
} *p;
```

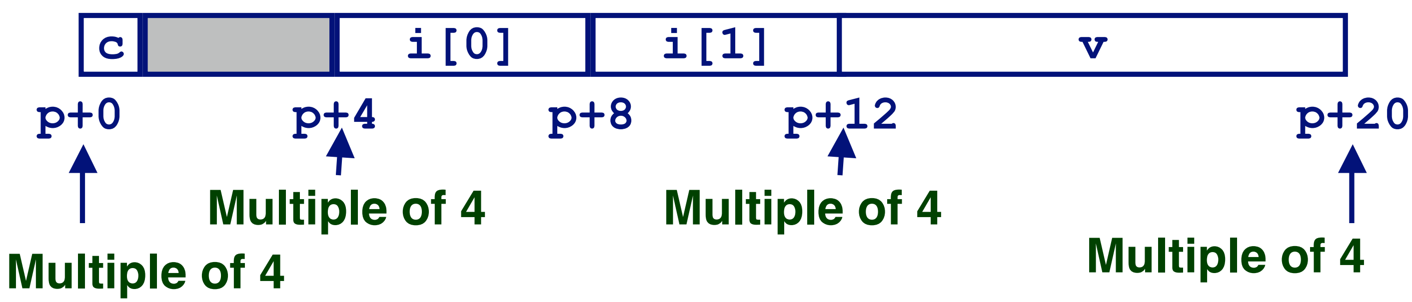
Windows (including Cygwin):

- K = 8, due to `double` element



Linux:

- K = 4; `double` treated like a 4-byte data type

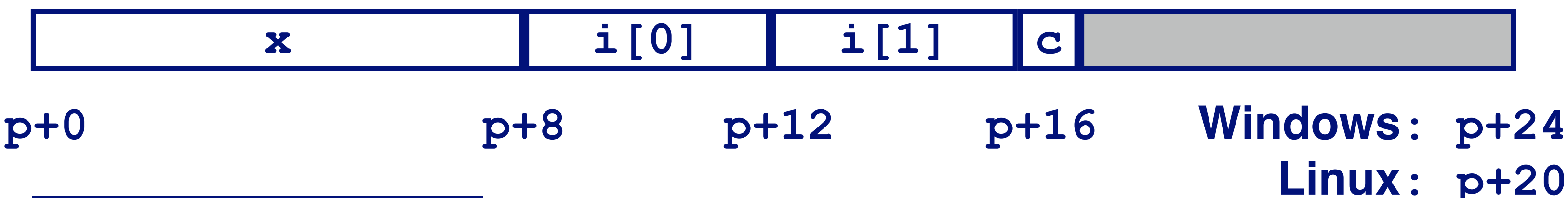


Overall Alignment Requirement

```
struct S2 {
  double x;
  int i[2];
  char c;
} *p;
```

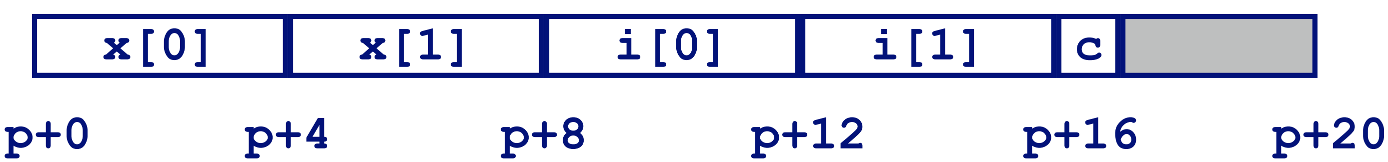
`p` must be multiple of:

- 8 for Windows
- 4 for Linux




```
struct S3 {
  float x[2];
  int i[2];
  char c;
} *p;
```

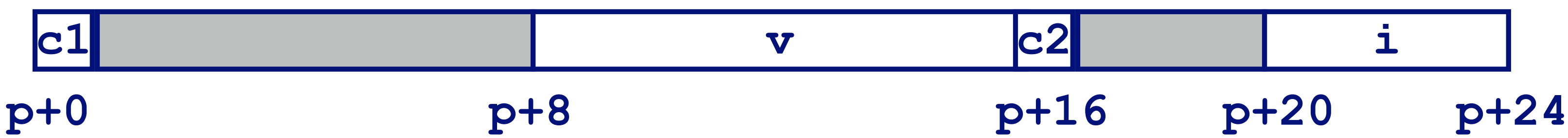
`p` must be multiple of 4 (in either OS)



Ordering Elements Within Structure

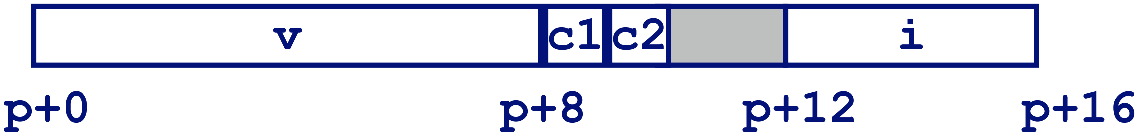
```
struct S4 {
  char c1;
  double v;
  char c2;
  int i;
} *p;
```

10 bytes wasted space in Windows




```
struct S5 {
  double v;
  char c1;
  char c2;
  int i;
} *p;
```

2 bytes wasted space

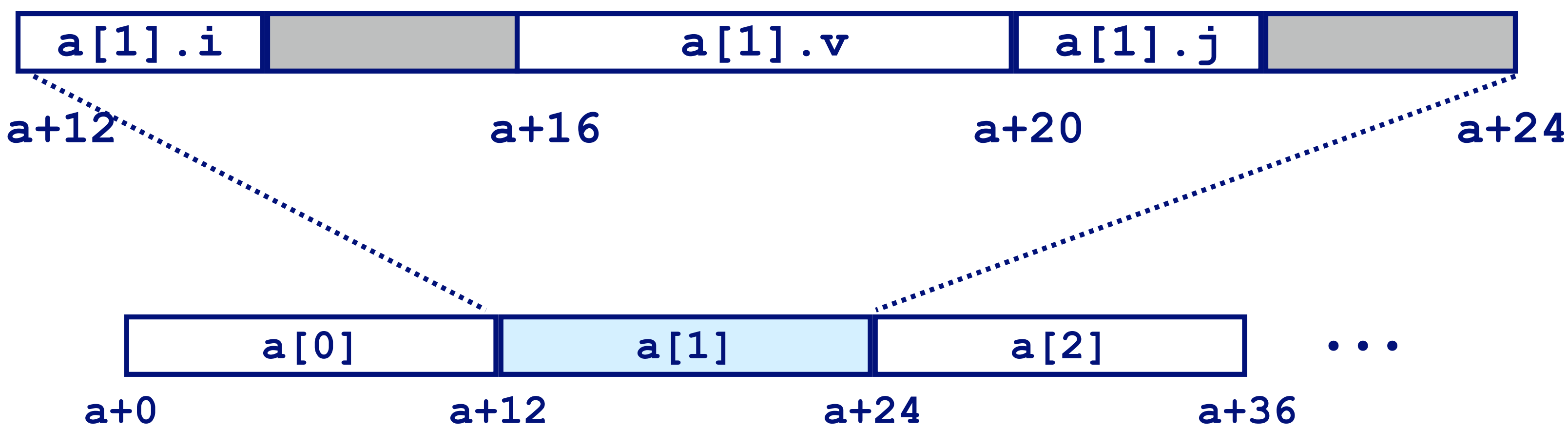


Arrays of Structures

Principle

- Allocated by repeating allocation for array type
- In general, may nest arrays & structures to arbitrary depth

```
struct S6 {
  short i;
  float v;
  short j;
} a[10];
```



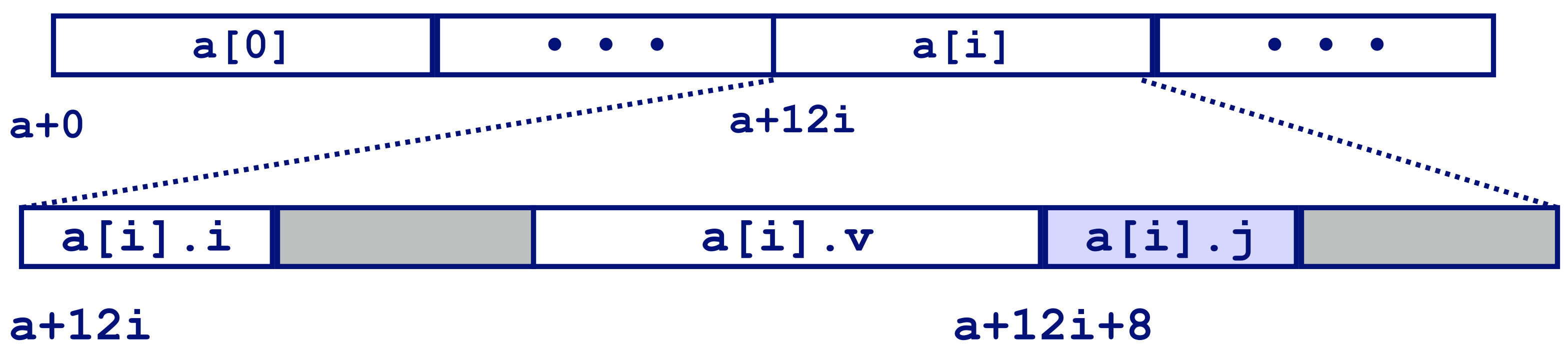
Accessing Element within Array

- Compute offset to start of structure
  - Compute 12*i as 4*(i+2i)
- Access element according to its offset within structure
  - Offset by 8
  - Assembler gives displacement as a + 8
    - » Linker must set actual value

```
struct S6 {
  short i;
  float v;
  short j;
} a[10];
```

```
short get_j(int idx)
{
  return a[idx].j;
}
```

```
# %eax = idx
leal (%eax,%eax,2),%eax # 3*idx
movswl a+8(,%eax,4),%eax
```

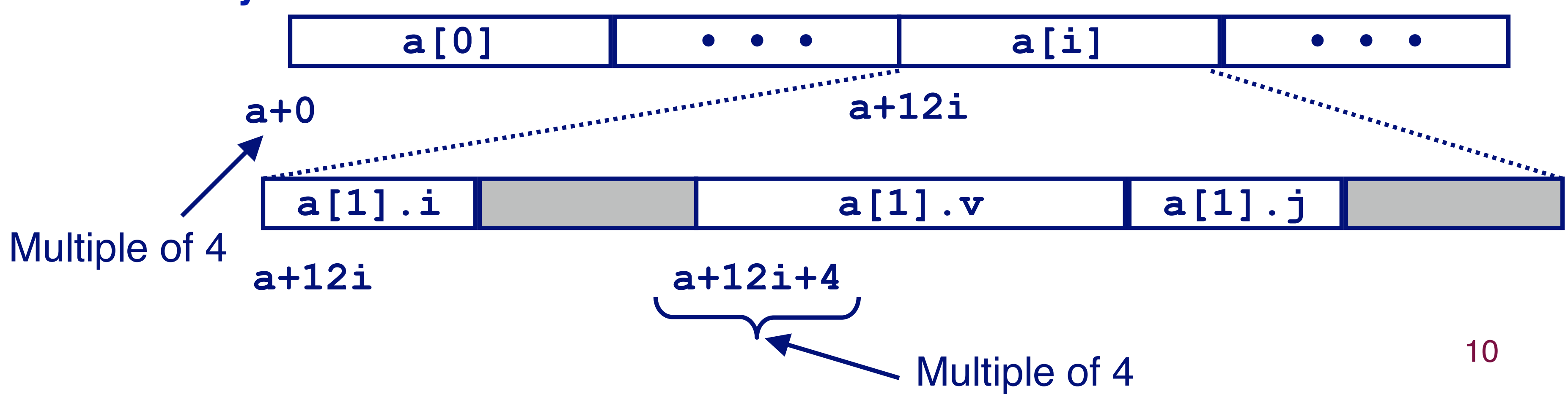


Satisfying Alignment within Structure

Achieving Alignment

- Starting address of structure array must be multiple of worst-case alignment for any element
  - `a` must be multiple of 4
- Offset of element within structure must be multiple of element's alignment requirement
  - `v`'s offset of 4 is a multiple of 4
- Overall size of structure must be multiple of worst-case alignment for any element
  - Structure padded with unused space to be 12 bytes

```
struct S6 {
  short i;
  float v;
  short j;
} a[10];
```

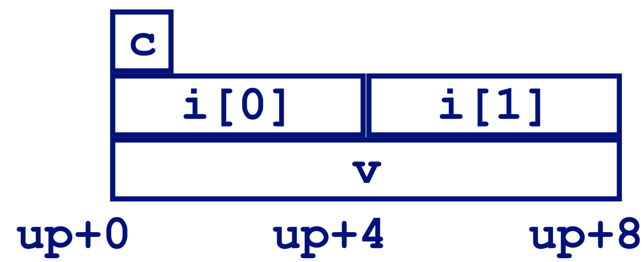


Union Allocation

Principles

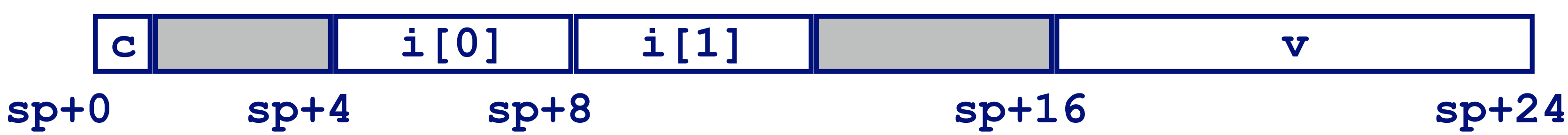
- Overlay union elements
- Allocate according to largest element
- Can only use one field at a time

```
union U1 {
  char c;
  int i[2];
  double v;
} *up;
```



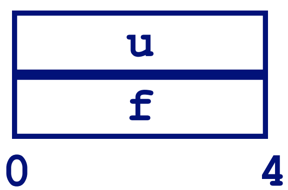

```
struct S1 {
  char c;
  int i[2];
  double v;
} *sp;
```

(Windows alignment)



Using Union to Access Bit Patterns

```
typedef union {
  float f;
  unsigned u;
} bit_float_t;
```



- Get direct access to bit representation of float
- `bit2float` generates float with given bit pattern
  - NOT the same as `(float) u`
- `float2bit` generates bit pattern from float
  - NOT the same as `(unsigned) f`

```
float bit2float(unsigned
u) {
  bit_float_t arg;
  arg.u = u;
  return arg.f;
}
```

```
unsigned float2bit(float
f) {
  bit_float_t arg;
  arg.f = f;
  return arg.u;
}
```

Byte Ordering Revisited

Idea

- Short/long/quad words stored in memory as 2/4/8 consecutive bytes
- Which is most (least) significant?
- Can cause problems when exchanging binary data between machines

Big Endian

- Most significant byte has lowest address
- PowerPC, Sparc

Little Endian

- Least significant byte has lowest address
- Intel x86, Alpha

Byte Ordering Example

```
union {
  unsigned char c[8];
  unsigned short s[4];
  unsigned int i[2];
  unsigned long l[1];
} dw;
```

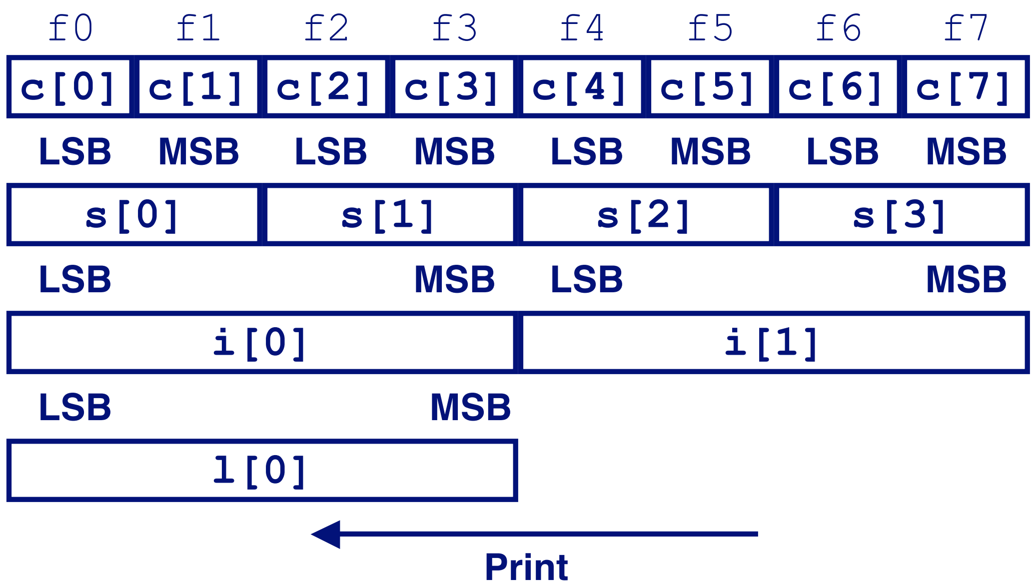
<table>
<tr><td>c[0]</td><td>c[1]</td><td>c[2]</td><td>c[3]</td><td>c[4]</td><td>c[5]</td><td>c[6]</td><td>c[7]</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">s[0]</td><td colspan="2">s[1]</td><td colspan="2">s[2]</td><td colspan="2">s[3]</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">i[0]</td><td colspan="4">i[1]</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">l[0]</td><td colspan="4"></td></tr>
</table>

Byte Ordering Example (Cont).

```
int j;
for (j = 0; j < 8; j++)
dw.c[j] = 0xf0 + j;

printf("Characters 0-7 ==
[0x%x,0x%x,0x%x,0x%x,0x%x,0x%x,0x%x,0x%x]\n",
    dw.c[0], dw.c[1], dw.c[2], dw.c[3],
    dw.c[4], dw.c[5], dw.c[6], dw.c[7]);

printf("Shorts 0-3 ==
[0x%x,0x%x,0x%x,0x%x]\n",
    dw.s[0], dw.s[1], dw.s[2], dw.s[3]);

printf("Ints 0-1 == [0x%x,0x%x]\n",
    dw.i[0], dw.i[1]);

printf("Long 0 == [0x%lx]\n",
    dw.l[0]);
```

Byte Ordering on x86

Little Endian

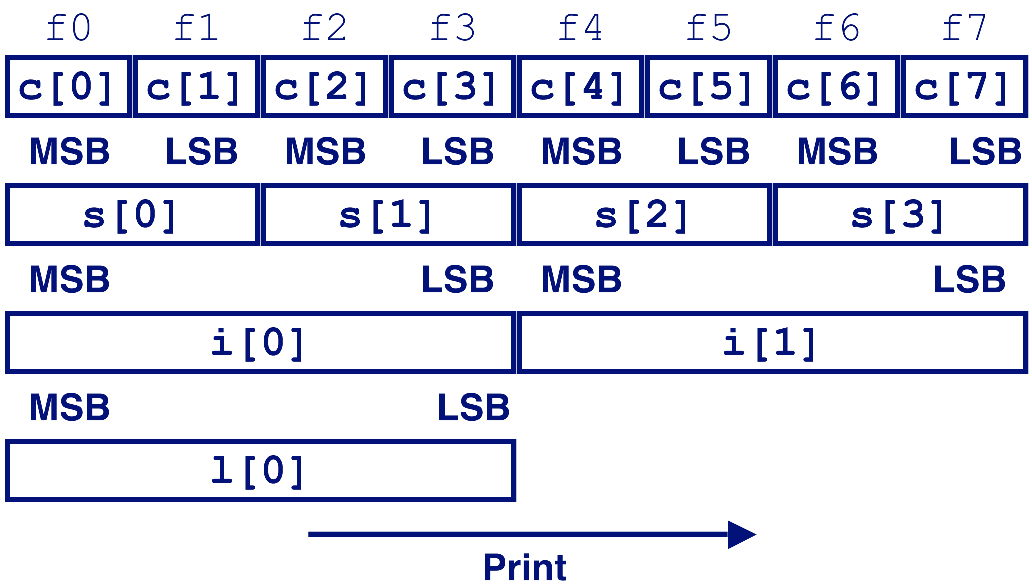


Output on Pentium:

```
Characters 0-7 == [0xf0,0xf1,0xf2,0xf3,0xf4,0xf5,0xf6,0xf7]
Shorts     0-3 == [0xf1f0,0xf3f2,0xf5f4,0xf7f6]
Ints       0-1 == [0xf3f2f1f0,0xf7f6f5f4]
Long       0   == [0xf3f2f1f0]
```

Byte Ordering on Sun

Big Endian

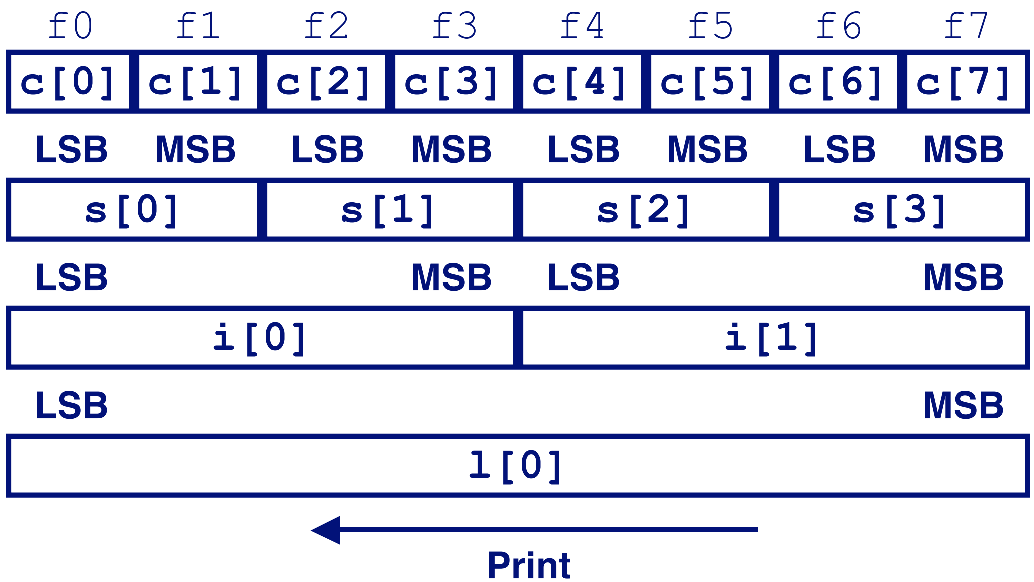


Output on Sun:

```
Characters 0-7 == [0xf0,0xf1,0xf2,0xf3,0xf4,0xf5,0xf6,0xf7]
Shorts     0-3 == [0xf0f1,0xf2f3,0xf4f5,0xf6f7]
Ints       0-1 == [0xf0f1f2f3,0xf4f5f6f7]
Long       0   == [0xf0f1f2f3]
```

Byte Ordering on Alpha

Little Endian



Output on Alpha:

```
Characters 0-7 == [0xf0,0xf1,0xf2,0xf3,0xf4,0xf5,0xf6,0xf7]
Shorts     0-3 == [0xf1f0,0xf3f2,0xf5f4,0xf7f6]
Ints       0-1 == [0xf3f2f1f0,0xf7f6f5f4]
Long       0   == [0xf7f6f5f4f3f2f1f0]
```

Summary

Arrays in C

- Contiguous allocation of memory
- Pointer to first element
- No bounds checking

Compiler Optimizations

- Compiler often turns array code into pointer code (`zd2int`)
- Uses addressing modes to scale array indices
- Lots of tricks to improve array indexing in loops

Structures

- Allocate bytes in order declared
- Pad in middle and at end to satisfy alignment

Unions

- Overlay declarations
- Way to circumvent type system

Extra slides

Dynamic Nested Arrays

Strength

- Can create matrix of arbitrary size

Programming

- Must do index computation explicitly

Performance

- Accessing single element costly
- Must do multiplication

```
int * new_var_matrix(int n)
{
  return (int *)
    calloc(sizeof(int), n*n);
}
```

```
int var_ele
  (int *a, int i,
   int j, int n)
{
  return a[i*n+j];
}
```

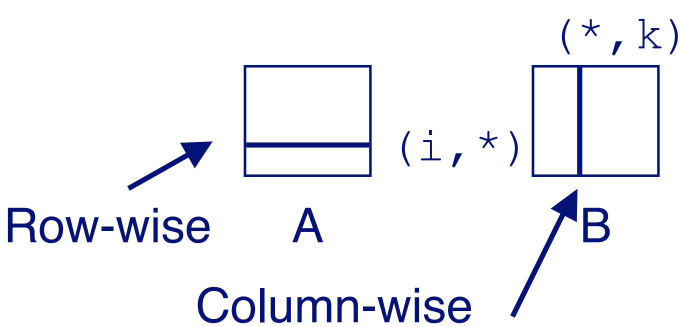
```
movl 12(%ebp),%eax        # i
movl 8(%ebp),%edx         # a
imull 20(%ebp),%eax       # n*i
addl 16(%ebp),%eax        # n*i+j
movl (%edx,%eax,4),%eax   # Mem[a+4*(i*n+j)]
```

Dynamic Array Multiplication

Without Optimizations

- **Multiplies**
  - 2 for subscripts
  - 1 for data
- **Adds**
  - 4 for array indexing
  - 1 for loop index
  - 1 for data

```
/* Compute element i,k of
   variable matrix product */
int var_prod_ele
  (int *a, int *b,
   int i, int k, int n)
{
  int j;
  int result = 0;
  for (j = 0; j < n; j++)
    result +=
      a[i*n+j] * b[j*n+k];
  return result;
}
```



Optimizing Dynamic Array Mult.

Optimizations

- Performed when set optimization level to `-O2`

Code Motion

- Expression `i*n` can be computed outside loop

Strength Reduction

- Incrementing `j` has effect of incrementing `j*n+k` by `n`

Performance

- Compiler can optimize regular access patterns

```
{
  int j;
  int result = 0;
  for (j = 0; j < n; j++)
    result +=
      a[i*n+j] * b[j*n+k];
  return result;
}
```

```
{
  int j;
  int result = 0;
  int iTn = i*n;
  int jTnPk = k;
  for (j = 0; j < n; j++) {
    result +=
      a[iTn+j] * b[jTnPk];
    jTnPk += n;
  }
  return result;
}
```