System Calls (TRAPS) and Subroutines
Certain operations require specialized knowledge and protection:

- specific knowledge of I/O device registers and the sequence of operations needed to use them
- I/O resources shared among multiple users/programs; a mistake could affect lots of other users!

Not every programmer knows (or wants to know) this level of detail.

Provide service routines or system calls (part of operating system) to safely and conveniently perform low-level, privileged operations.
Mac < 

restart

/o memory location

6
System Call
(service routines)

1. User program invokes system call.
2. Operating system code performs operation.
3. Returns control to user program.

In LC-3, this is done through the TRAP mechanism.
LC-3 TRAP Mechanism

1. A set of service routines.
   - part of operating system -- routines start at arbitrary addresses
   - System code by convention is typically below address x3000
   - up to 256 routines

2. Table of starting addresses.
   - stored at x0000 through x00FF in memory
   - called “System Control Block” or “Vector Table” in some architectures

3. TRAP instruction.
   - used by user program to transfer control to operating system
   - 8-bit trap vector names one of the 256 service routines

4. A linkage back to the user program.
   - want execution to resume immediately after the TRAP instruction
TRAP Instruction

• Trap vector (trapvect8)
  – identifies which system call to invoke
  – 8-bit index into table of service routine addresses
    • in LC-3, this table is stored in memory at 0x0000 – 0x00FF
    • 8-bit trap vector is zero-extended into 16-bit memory address

• Where to go
  – lookup starting address from table; goes to that location

• How to get back
  – saves address of next instruction (current PC) in R7 before changing PC
RET (JMP R7)

How do we transfer control back to instruction following the TRAP?

• Save old position in R7.
  – JMP R7 gets us back to the user program at the right spot.
  – LC-3 assembly language lets us use RET (return) in place of “JMP R7”.

• Must make sure that service routine does not change R7, or it won’t know where to return.
TRAP Mechanism Operation

1. Lookup starting address.
2. Transfer to service routine.
3. Return (JMP R7).
Example: Using the TRAP Instruction

; This code just takes upper case characters and converts
; to lower case and prints them. Terminates with a "7"

.ORIG x3000
LD R2, TERM ; Load negative ASCII '7'
LD R3, ASCII ; Load ASCII difference
AGAIN
TRAP x23 ; input character
ADD R1, R2, R0 ; Test for terminate: =7?
BRz EXIT ; Exit if done
ADD R0, R0, R3 ; Change to lowercase
TRAP x21 ; Output to monitor...
BRnzp AGAIN ; ... again and again...
TERM
.FILL xFFC9 ; -'7'in 2SC
ASCII
.FILL x0020 ; lowercase offset
EXIT
TRAP x25 ; halt
.END
The OUT Service Routine

.ORIG x0430 ; syscall address

ST R7, SaveR7 ; save R7 & R1
ST R1, SaveR1

; ----- Write character
TryWrite LDI R1, CRTSR ; get status
BRzp TryWrite ; look for bit [15] on
WriteIt STI R0, CRTDR ; write char

; ----- Return from TRAP
Return LD R1, SaveR1 ; restore R1 & R7
LD R7, SaveR7
RET ; back to user

CRTSR .FILL xF3FC
CRTDR .FILL xF3FF
SaveR1 .FILL 0
SaveR7 .FILL 0
.END

stored in table, location x21

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TRAP Routines and their Assembler Names

\[ \text{putc} == \text{out} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vector</th>
<th>symbol</th>
<th>routine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x20</td>
<td>GETC</td>
<td>read a single character (no echo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x21</td>
<td>OUT</td>
<td>output a character to the monitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x22</td>
<td>PUTS</td>
<td>write a string to the console</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x23</td>
<td>IN</td>
<td>print prompt to console, read and echo character from keyboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x25</td>
<td>HALT</td>
<td>halt the program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Saving and Restoring Registers

Must save the value of a register if:
- Its value will be destroyed by service routine, and
- We will need to use the value after that action.

Who saves?
- caller of service routine?
  - knows what it needs later, but may not know what gets altered by called routine
- called service routine?
  - knows what it alters, but does not know what will be needed later by calling routine
Saving and Restoring Registers

*Called routine -- “calleesave”*
- Before start, save any registers that will be altered (unless altered value is desired by calling program!)
- Before return, restore those same registers

Calling routine -- “callersave”
- Save registers destroyed by own instructions or by called routines (if known), if values needed later
  - save R7 before TRAP
  - save R0 before TRAP x23 (input character)
- Or avoid using those registers altogether

Values are saved by storing them in memory.
Question

Can a service routine call another service routine?  

If so, is there anything special the calling service routine must do?

1. Puts Out
2. Save R7
What about User Code?

Service routines provide three main functions:
1. Shield programmers from system-specific details.
2. Write frequently-used code just once.
3. Protect system resources from malicious/clumsy programmers.

Are there any reasons to provide the same functions for non-system (user) code?
Subroutines

A subroutine is a program fragment that:
- lives in user space
- performs a well-defined task
- is invoked (called) by another user program
- returns control to the calling program when finished

Like a service routine, but not part of the OS
- not concerned with protecting hardware resources
- no special privilege required

Reasons for subroutines:
- reuse useful (and debugged!) code without having to keep typing it in
- divide task among multiple programmers
- use vendor-supplied library of useful routines
JSR Instruction

Jumps to a location (like a branch but unconditional), and saves address (or label) of next instruction in R7.

- saving the return address is called "linking"
JSRR Instruction

Trap

Just like JSR, except **Register addressing** mode.

– target address is Base Register

What important feature does JSRR provide that JSR does not?
Returning from a Subroutine

RET (JMP R7) gets us back to the calling routine.

- just like TRAP does it

  JSR MULT

  ADD
Example: Negate the value in R0

\[ \begin{align*}
2s\text{Comp} & \quad \text{NOT} \quad R0, \ R0 \quad ; \quad \text{flip bits} \\
\text{ADD} & \quad R0, \ R0, \ #1 \quad ; \quad \text{add one} \\
\text{RET} & \quad ; \quad \text{return to caller}
\end{align*} \]

; need to compute \( R4 = R1 - R3 \)
\[ \begin{align*}
\text{ADD} & \quad R0, \ R3, \ #0 \quad ; \quad \text{copy R3 to R0} \\
\text{JSR} & \quad 2s\text{Comp} \quad ; \quad \text{negate} \\
\text{ADD} & \quad R4, \ R1, \ R0 \quad ; \quad \text{add to R1}
\end{align*} \]

Note: Caller should save R0 if we’ll need it later!

\[ \text{HALT} \quad \text{(subroutine)} \]

\[ \text{.END} \]

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Passing Information to/from Subroutines

**Arguments**
- A value passed in to a subroutine is called an argument.
- This is a value needed by the subroutine to do its job.
- Examples:
  - In 2sComp routine, R0 is the number to be negated
  - In OUT service routine, R0 is the character to be printed.
  - In PUTS routine, R0 is *address* of string to be printed.

**Return Values**
- A value passed out of a subroutine is called a return value.
- This is the value that you called the subroutine to compute.
- Examples:
  - In 2sComp routine, negated value is returned in R0.
  - In GETC service routine, character read from the keyboard is returned in R0.
Using Subroutines

In order to use a subroutine, a programmer must know:

- its address (or at least a label that will be bound to its address)
- its function (what does it do?)

• NOTE: The programmer does not need to know how the subroutine works, but what changes are visible in the machine’s state after the routine has run.
- its arguments (where to pass data in, if any)
- its return values (where to get computed data, if any)
\[
x / 36 \quad x \times 4 \\
\text{long time} \quad \text{short}
\]

\[
x + 34567234 \\
\text{fast math} \quad \text{a}
\]

\[
x \times 136 \\
x \times 137
\]
Saving and Restore Registers

Since subroutines are just like service routines, we also need to save and restore registers, if needed.

Generally use “callee-save” strategy, except for return values.

– Save anything that the subroutine will alter internally that shouldn’t be visible when the subroutine returns.
– It’s good practice to restore incoming arguments to their original values (unless overwritten by return value).

*Remember:* You MUST save R7 if you call any other subroutine or service routine (TRAP).
– Otherwise, you won’t be able to return to caller.
Example

(1) Write a subroutine **FirstChar** to:

- find the **first** occurrence of a particular **character** (in **R0**)
- in a **string** (pointed to by **R1**);
- return **pointer** to character or to end of string (NULL) in **R2**.

(2) Use **FirstChar** to write **CountChar**, which:

- counts the **number** of occurrences of a particular **character** (in **R0**)
- in a **string** (pointed to by **R1**);
- return **count** in **R2**.

Can write the second subroutine first, without knowing the implementation of **FirstChar**!
CountChar Algorithm (using FirstChar)

10 = 0 = NULL

save regs

R1 <- R2 + 1

call FirstChar

R3 <- M[R2]

R3=0

save R7, since we're using JSR

restore regs

return
The Lazy dog napped in the sun.
CountChar Implementation

; CountChar: subroutine to count occurrences of a char

CountChar

ST   R3, CCR3  ; save registers
ST   R4, CCR4
ST   R7, CCR7
ST   R1, CCR1
AND  R4, R4, #0  ; use for count
JSR  FirstChar  ; JSR alters R7
LDR  R3, R2, #0  ; save original string ptr
          ; initialize count to zero
BRz   CC2  ; find next occurrence (ptr in R2)
ADD  R4, R4, #1  ; see if char or null
ADD  R1, R2, #1  ; if null, no more chars
BRnzp CC1  ; increment count
          ; point to next char in string
CC2   ADD  R2, R4, #0  ; move return val (count) to R2
LD    R3, CCR3  ; restore regs
LD    R4, CCR4
LD    R1, CCR1
LD    R7, CCR7
RET   ; and return
FirstChar Algorithm

R0 - char
R1 - address of string
R2 - address of 1st char

- save regs

R2 <- R1

R3 <- M[R2]

R3=0

R3=R0

R2 <- R2 + 1

restore regs

return

- no

- yes

- no

- yes
FirstChar Implementation

; FirstChar: subroutine to find first occurrence of a char

FirstChar

ST R3, FCR3 ; save registers
ST R4, FCR4 ; save original char
NOT R4, R0 ; negate R0 for comparisons
ADD R4, R4, #1
ADD R2, R1, #0 ; initialize ptr to beginning of string
LDR R3, R2, #0 ; read character
BRz FC2 ; if null, we’re done
ADD R3, R3, R4 ; see if matches input char
BRz FC2 ; if yes, we’re done
ADD R2, R2, #1 ; increment pointer
BRnzp FC1

LD R3, FCR3 ; restore registers
LD R4, FCR4 ;
RET ; and return
Library Routines

Vendor may provide object files containing useful subroutines
  – don’t want to provide source code -- intellectual property
  – assembler/linker must support EXTERNAL symbols (or starting address of
    routine must be supplied to user)

```
...                  SQR T
...                .EXTE R NAL
           SQR T
LD    R2, SQAddr    ; load SQR T addr
JSRR   R2
...  SQAddr  .FI L L  SQR T
```

Using JSRR, because we don’t know whether SQR T is within 1024 instructions.