CS 211: Intro to Computer Architecture 11.1: Digital Logic and Boolean Algebra

Minesh Patel

Spring 2025 – Tuesday 8 April

Announcements

- Ongoing
 - Extra Credit: replaces WA6, due Friday (April 11) @ 11:59 pm
 - WA7: due Wednesday (April 9) @ 11:59 pm
 - PA4: due Next Friday (April 18) @ 11:59 pm
- Upcoming
 - WA8: TBA after WA7
 - PA5: TBA after PA4

Note on PA6

- PA6 is too ambitious
- Tentative plan: reweight PA1-PA5 to cover a missing PA6
 - **Programming Assignments (53%)**: We will have 6 programming assignments weighted as follows.

```
5% • [3%] PA1: Intro to Linux

12% • [10%] PA2: C Development + Integers

12% • [10%] PA3: Pointers, Arrays, Strings, Structs and Explicit Memory Management

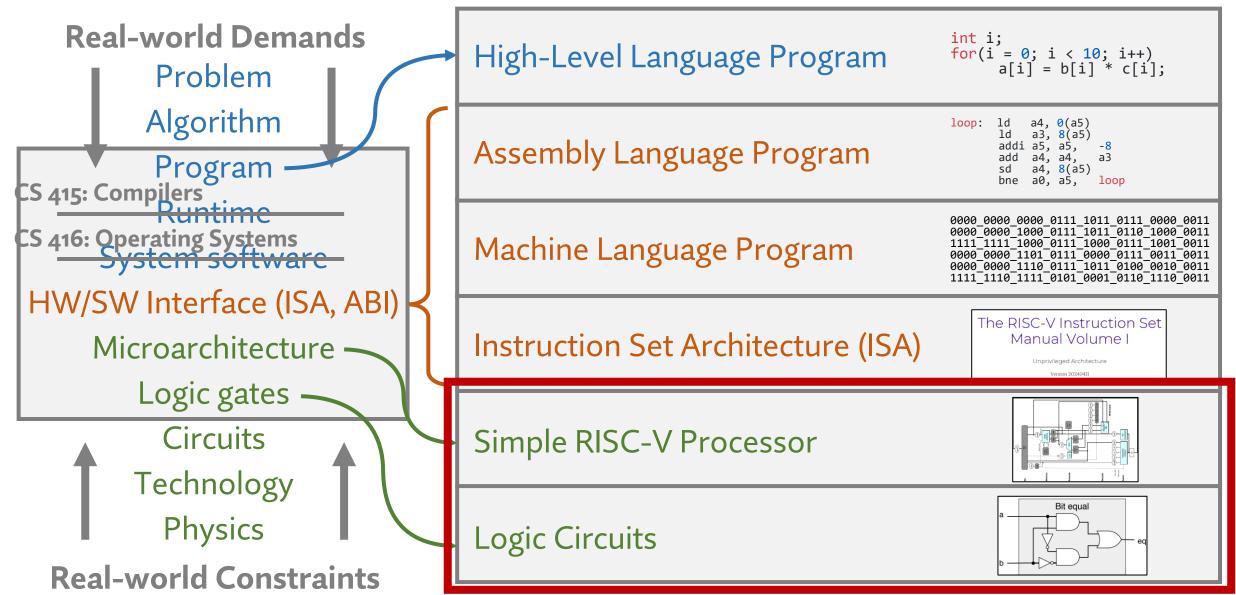
12% • [10%] PA4: Assembly Programming

12% • [10%] PA5: Single-cycle CPU Emulation

• [10%] PA6: Extension with Memory + Caches
```

•We will announce our final decision when we make it

Layers of Abstraction for CS 211



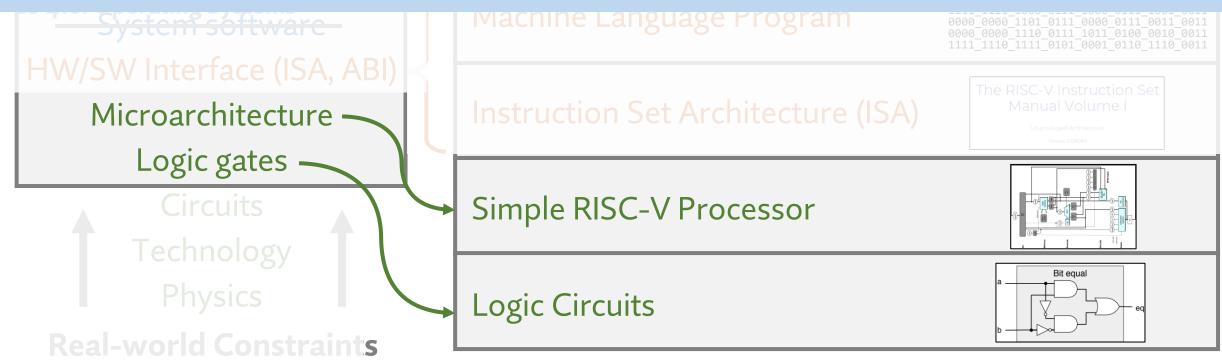
Layers of Abstraction for CS 211

Real-world Demands

int i

Next ~2-3 weeks:

How a CPU executes machine language code



Recap: Computer Organization

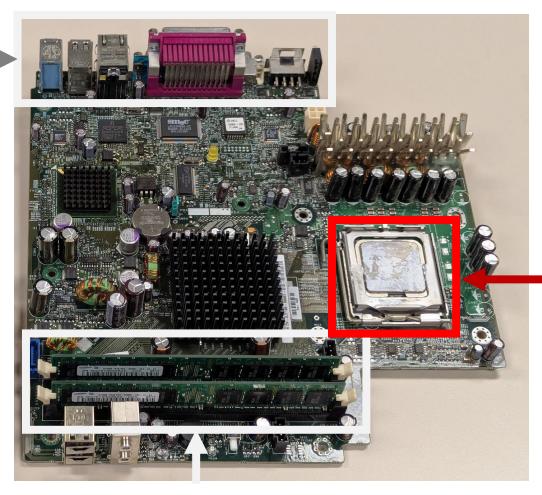
Input/Output

(network, USB, etc.)

Storage

(big, slow, cheap memory)





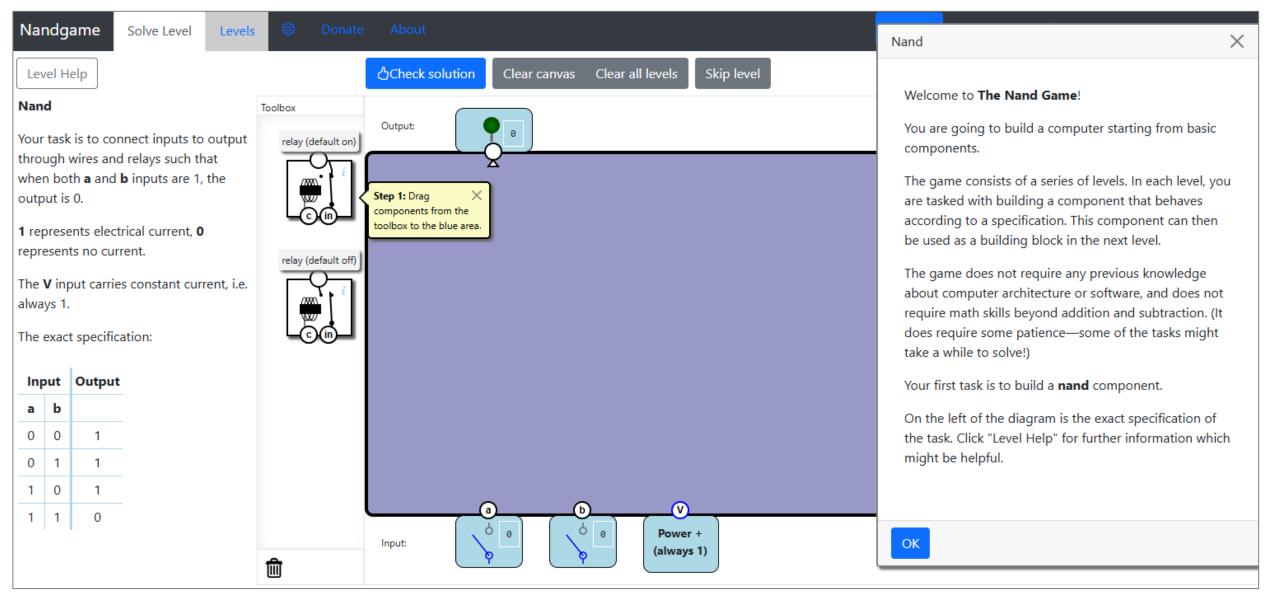
Processor

(where code runs)

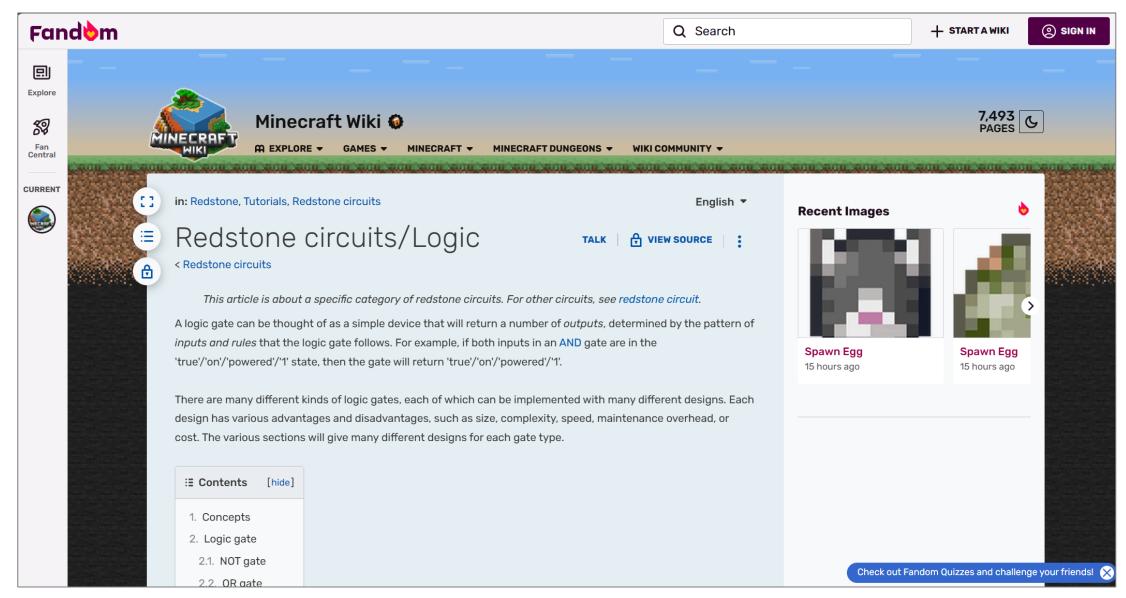
Main Memory

(small, fast, expensive)

nandgame.com



Minecraft Redstone



Nand to Tetris

DOI:10.1145/3626513

CS course walks students through a stepby-step construction of a complete, generalpurpose computer system—hardware and software—in one semester.

BY SHIMON SCHOCKEN

Nand to Tetris: Building a Modern Computer **System from First Principles**

suppose you were asked to design an abridged computer science (CS) program consisting of just three courses. How would you go about it? The

Several reasonable options come to mind. One is a hands-on overview of applied CS, building on the programming skills and theoretical knowledge acquired in the first two courses. Such a course could survey key topics in computer architecture, compilation, operating systems, and software engineering, presented in one cohesive framework. Ideally, the course would engage students in significant programming assignments, have them implement classical algorithms and widely used data structures, and expose them to a range of optimization and complexity issues. This hands-on synthesis could benefit students who seek an overarching understanding of computing systems, as well as self-learners and non-majors who cannot commit to more than a few core CS courses.

Software

Demos

License

Cool Stuff

Stay in Touch

Team

ABQ

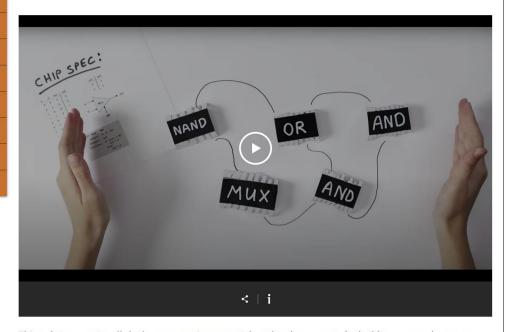
18, 2025

This article describes such a course, called Nand to Tetris, which walks students through a step-bystep construction of a complete, general-purpose computer systemhardware and software-in one semester. As it turns out, construction of the computer system built during the course requires exposure to, and application of, some of the most per-

» key insights

- In the early days of computers, any curious person could gain a gestalt understanding of how the machine works. As digital technologies became increasingly more complex, this clarity is all but lost: The most fundamental ideas and techniques in applied computer science are now hidden under many layers of obscure interfaces and proprietary implementations.
- Starting from NAND gates only, students build a hardware platform comprising a CPU, RAM, datapath, and a software hierarchy consisting of an assemble

From Nand to Tetris Building a Modern Computer From First Principles The official website of Nand to Tetris courses Projects And of the book The Elements of Computing Systems, By Noam Nisan and Shimon Schocken (MIT Press) Book



This website contains all the lectures, project materials and tools necessary for building a general-purpose computer system and a modern software hierarchy from the ground up.

The materials are aimed at students, instructors, and self-learners. Everything is free and open-source, as long as you operate in a non-profit setting. Here is a recent CACM article about the course: text / video.

Agenda

The Digital Logic Abstraction

- Boolean Algebra
 - Truth Tables
 - Equations and Identities

Digital Logic Gates

Digital Logic

- Digital logic is a convenient abstraction for how circuits work
- 1-bit input/output signals (high/low = 1/0)

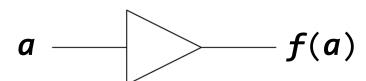
Example Logic Circuit: "Buffer"

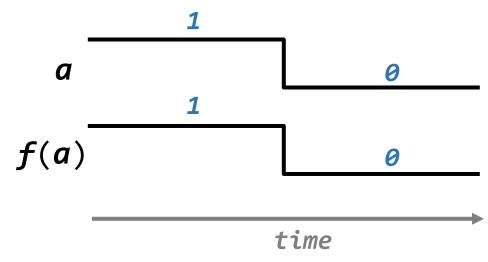
Algebraic Representation

Graphical Representation

Input/Output Signal Representation

$$f(a) = a$$





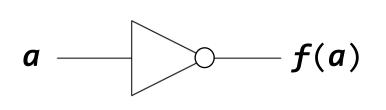
Digital Logic Abstraction

- Digital logic abstracts away the hardware
 - Can work with mathematical equations (instead of resistors, capacitors, etc.)
 - Unfortunately, hard to say whether you can actually build a given circuit

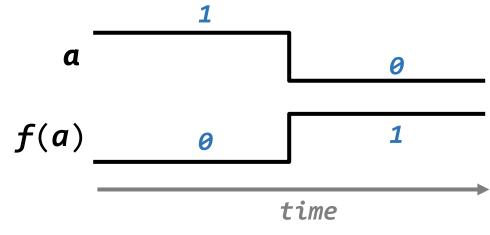
Algebraic Representations

Example Logic Circuit: "Inverter"

Graphical Representation



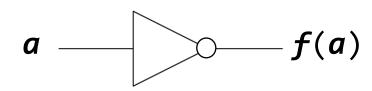
Input/Output Signal Representation

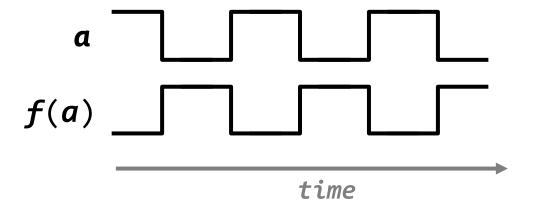


Abstraction vs. Reality

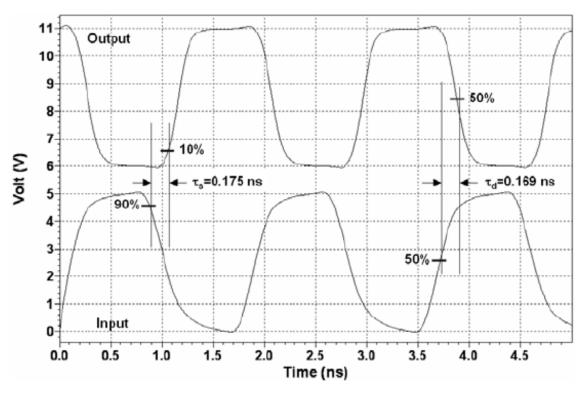
Voltage cannot change instantaneously

Abstraction





Reality



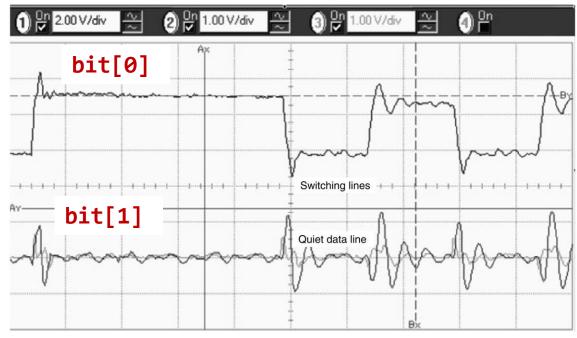
Sandoval-Ibarra, F., and E. S. Hernández-Bernal. "Ring CMOS NOT-based oscillators: Analysis and design." Journal of applied research and technology, 2008.

Example: Electrical Wires

- Real circuit behavior is highly non-ideal
 - Circuit design (e.g., density, error-mitigation mechanism)
 - Manufacturing defects (e.g., thinner/thicker wires)
 - Environment (e.g., temperature, altitude)
 - Operating conditions (e.g., voltage, frequency)

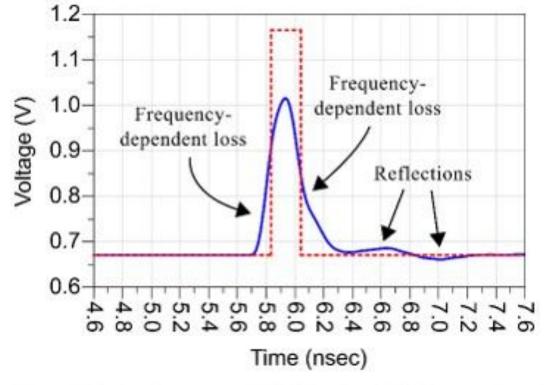
• ..

Two Adjacent Wires



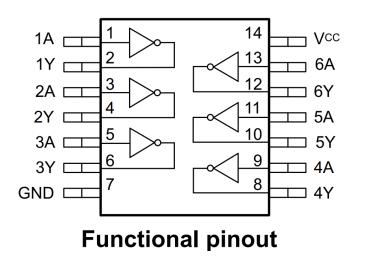
Eric Bogatin, "Signal and Power Integrity 2/E," 2010.

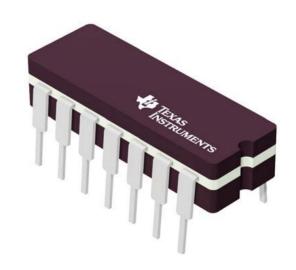
DDR5 Read/Write Interface



Example: Real Inverter Circuits

Performance heavily depends on voltage and temperature





-	PARAMETER	FROM	то	V _{cc}	Operating free-air temperature (T _A)						
					25°C			-40°C to 85°C			UNIT
					MIN	TYP	MAX	MIN	TYP	MAX	
t _{pd}	Propagation delay	А	Y	2 V		45	95			120	
				4.5 V		9	19			24	ns
				6 V		8	16			20	

Circuit Design is a Game of Tradeoffs

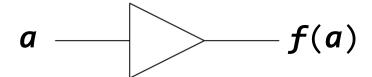
- Cost: typically proportional to the physical circuit size (area)
- Performance: depends on size, complexity, etc.
- Power / Energy: worse with larger circuits, higher voltage/frequency
- Design effort: circuit designers are expensive in time and money

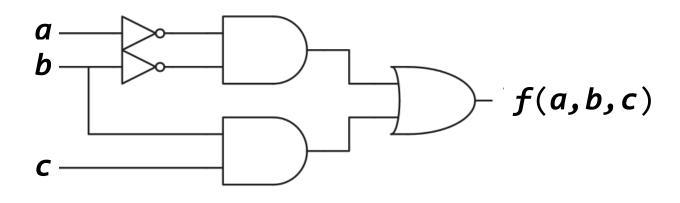
No single approach: depends on goals and requirements



Digital Logic Abstractions for CS 211

Graphical Circuit





Algebraic Equation

$$f(a) = a$$

$$f(a,b,c) = a'b' + bc$$

Agenda

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- Boolean Algebra
 - Truth Tables
 - Equations and Identities

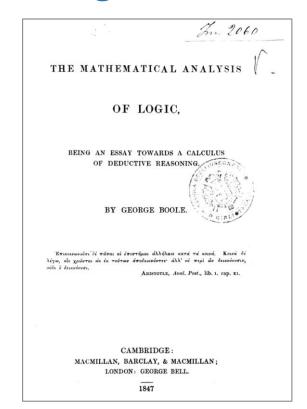
Digital Logic Gates

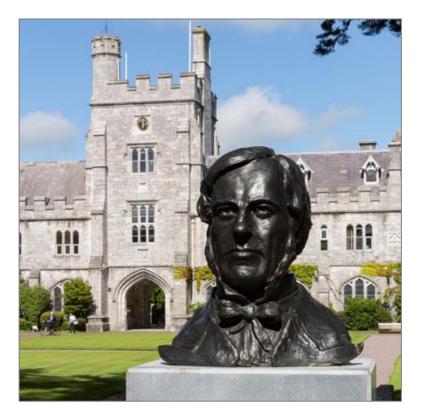
Boolean Algebra

Mathematical framework for binary values

a,
$$b \in \{0, 1\}$$

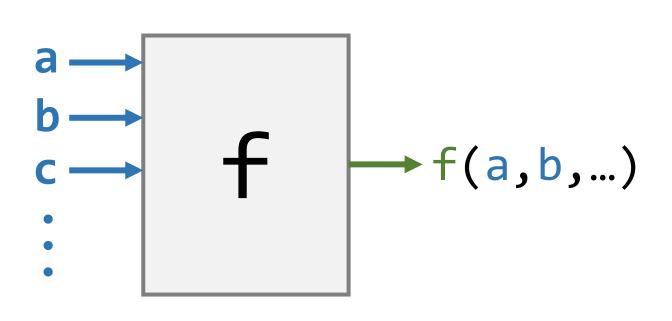
• Formalized by George Boole in the mid-1800s





Boolean Functions

• We can define functions and equations over Boolean variables



Example Function

$$f(a) = \begin{cases} 1 & a = 0 \\ 0 & a = 1 \end{cases}$$

$$\frac{a}{0} = \frac{1}{1}$$

Example: Binary Addition

Adding two unsigned one-bit numbers

$$f(a,b) = a + b + b + b$$

$$f(a,b)$$

$$+ 0 + 1 + 0 + 1$$

$$+ 1 + 0 + 1$$

Truth Table Representation

Fully defines the function (all possible inputs)

"Truth Table"

inputs		outputs		
a	b	f(a,b)		
0	0	99		
0	1	01		
1	0	01		
1	1	10		

Truth Tables: Examples

$$a - NOT \bigcirc f(a)$$

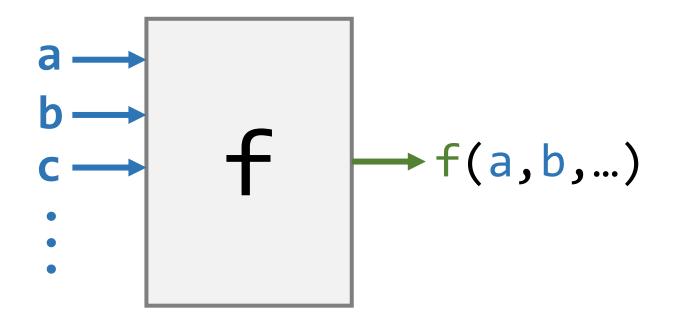
$$a$$
 b
 $OR2$
 $f(a,b)$

$$\begin{array}{c}
a \\
b \\
c
\end{array}$$
AND3 $-f(a,b,c)$

a	f(a)
0	1
1	a

abc	f(a,b,c)
000	0
001	0
010	0
011	0
100	0
101	0
110	0
111	1

Truth Tables (Generalized)



inputs	outputs
abc	f(a,b,c)
000	f(0,0,0)
001	f(0,0,1)
010	f(0,1,0)
011	f(0,1,1)
100	f(1,0,0)
101	f(1,0,1)
110	f(1,1,0)
111	f(1,1,1)

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Digital Logic Gates

Boolean Algebra Representations

Functional Completeness

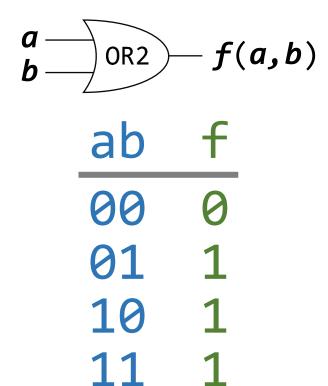
We can express any Boolean function in terms of {NOT, AND, OR}

$$\begin{array}{c|cccc}
a & f \\
\hline
0 & 1 \\
1 & 0
\end{array}$$

$$a - NOTO - f(a)$$
 $a - AND2 - f(a,b)$
 $a - AN$

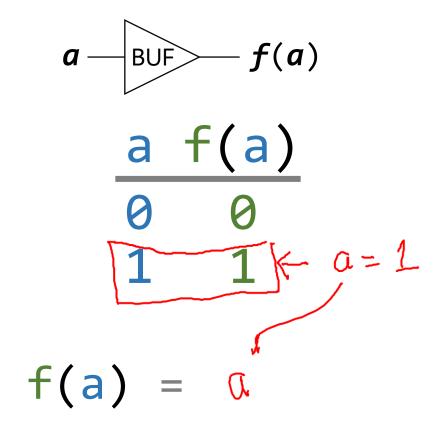
$$f(a) = a' = \alpha f(a,b) = a * b$$

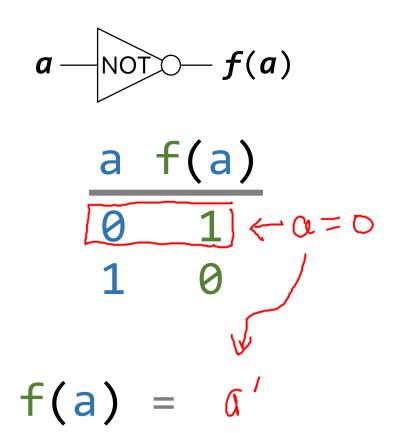
= $ab = \alpha \wedge b$



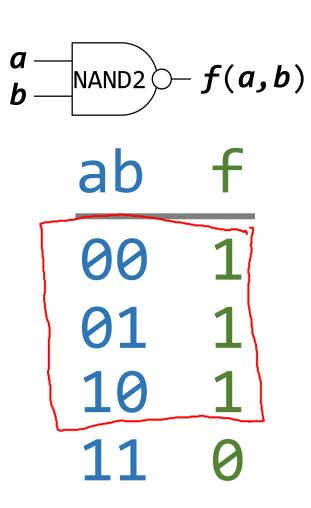
$$f(a,b) = a + b$$

Example: Buffer and Inverter





Example: NAND2

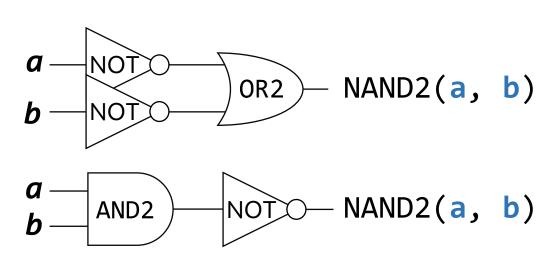


$$f(a,b) = (ab = 200) / (ab = -01) / (ab = 10)$$

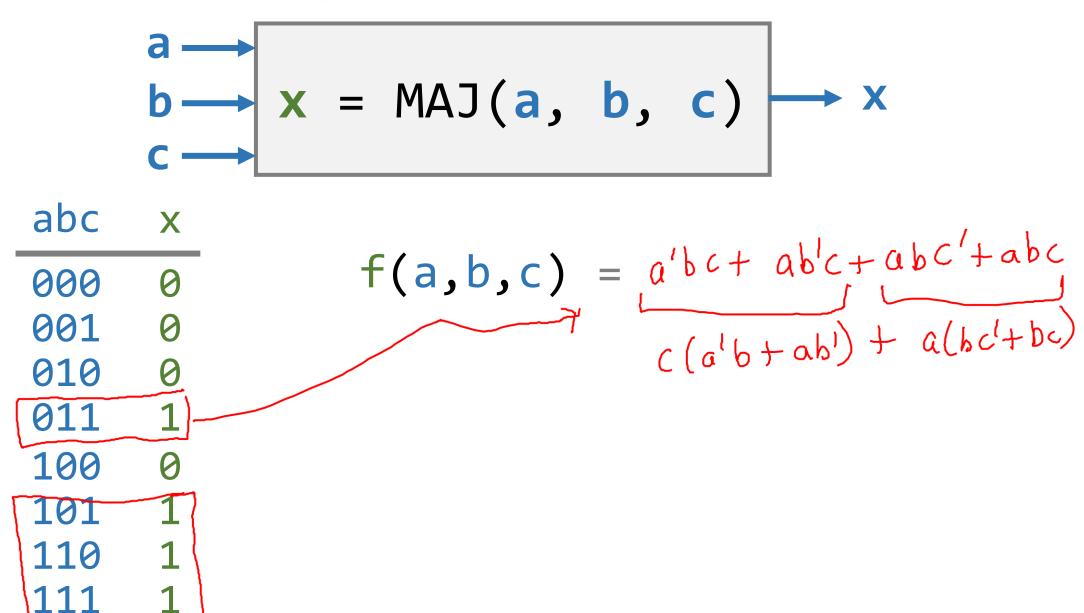
$$= a'b' + a'b + ab'$$

Example: NAND2

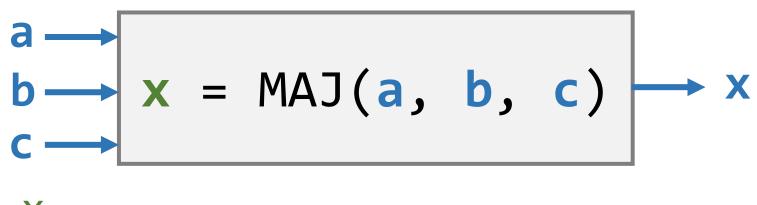
```
f(a,b,c) = a' + b'
= (ab)'
```

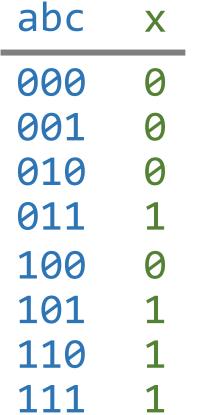


Example: Majority Function

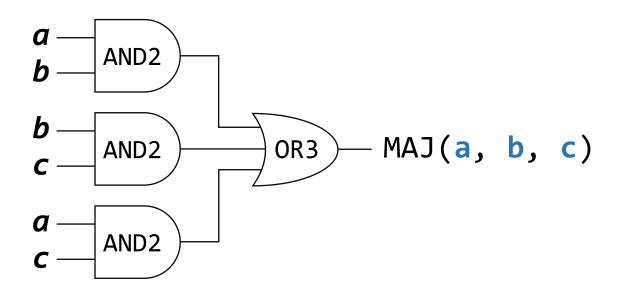


Example: Majority Function





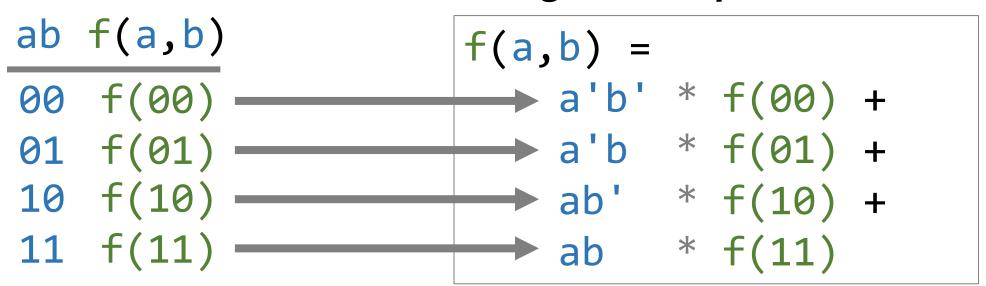
$$f(a,b,c) = ab + bc + ac$$

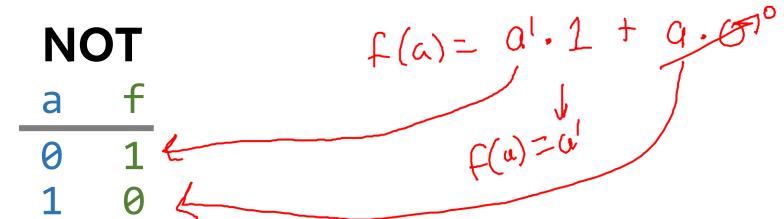


Truth Table to Algebraic Equation

Truth Table

Algebraic Representation





Truth Table to Algebraic Equation

Truth Table ab f(a,b) f(a,b) = 00 f(00) f(01) + 01 f(10) f(10) + 01 f(11) f(11) + 01 f(11)Algebraic Representation f(a,b) = 0 f(a,b) =

Example: AND

$$f = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{iff ab} == 11 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Algebraic Representation

Example: XOR

$$f = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{iff ab} == 01 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

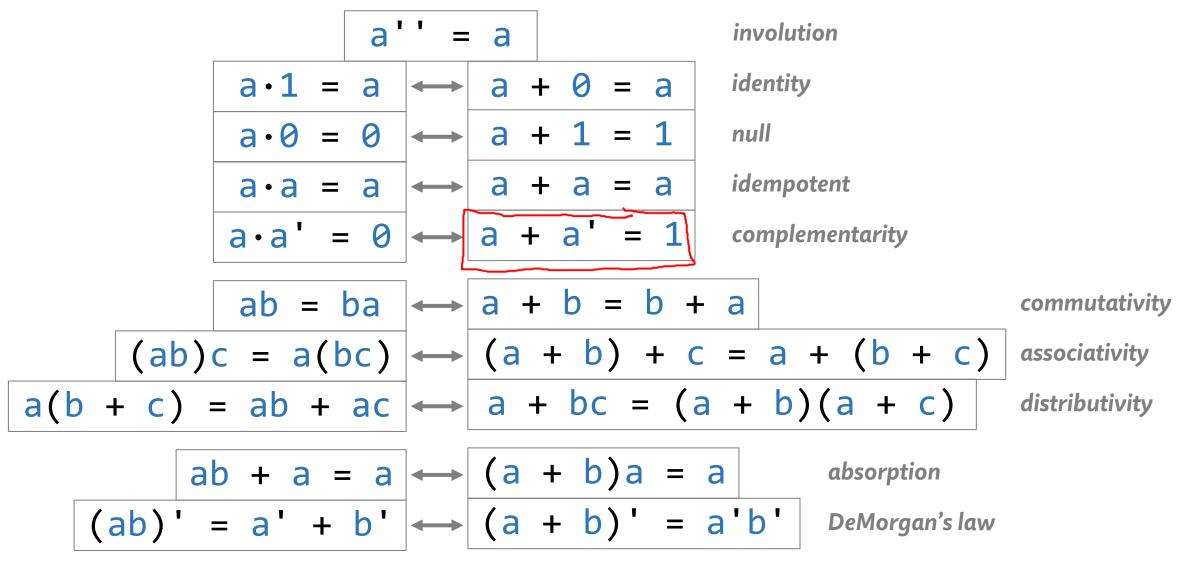
Algebraic Representation

Standard Logic Blocks

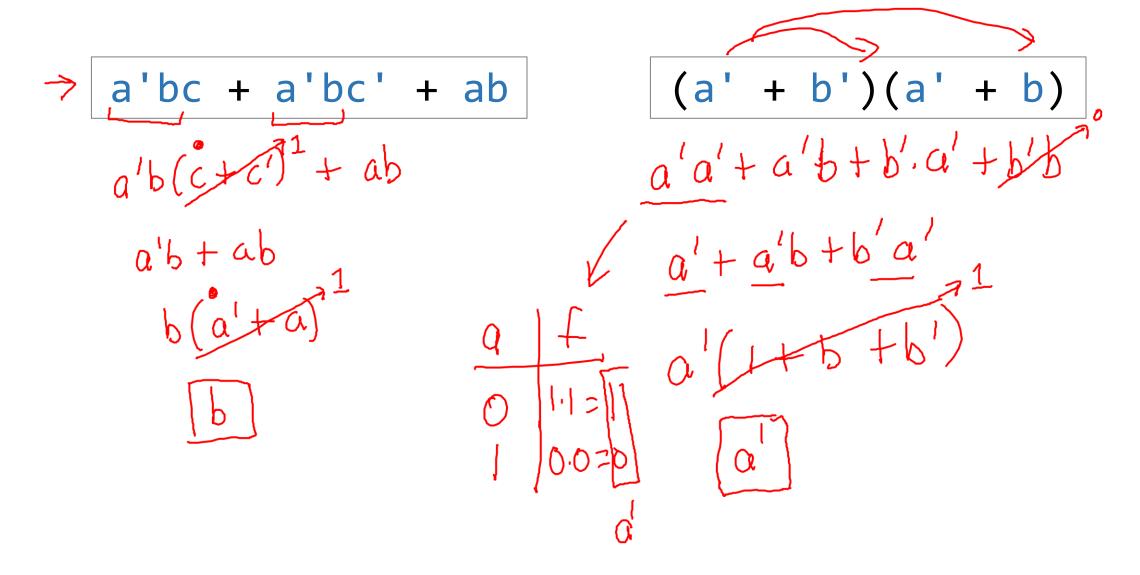
Name	AND			OR		Inverter		Buffer		1	NAND			NOR			Exclusive- OR (XOR)			Exclusive- NOR or equivalence			
Graphic Symbol				F x y			F		F			F y			F y			F × y			F Y		
Algebraic Function	F=xy		F=x+y		F=x'		F=x		F=	F=(xy)'		F=(x+y)'			F=(x⊕y)		F=(x⊕y)'						
	×	у	F	×	у	F	×	F	x	F	x	У	F	x	У	F	x	у	F	×	у	F	
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Truth Table	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	
Table	1	0	0	1	0	1		N.		ŀ	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	
	1	1	1	1	1	1					1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	
													500			9.					0.5		

Basic Identities of Boolean Algebra

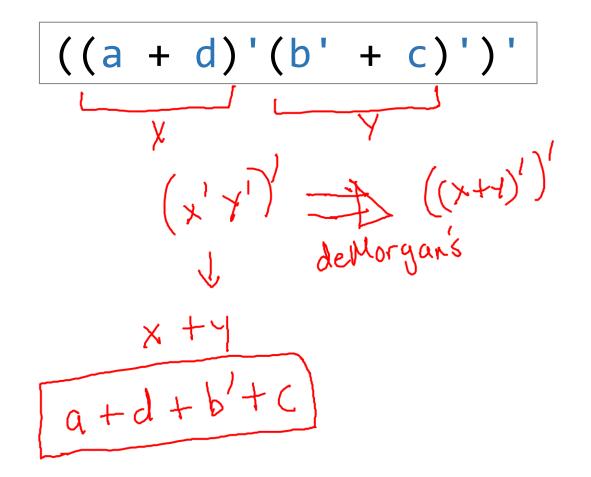
Used to simplify complex equations

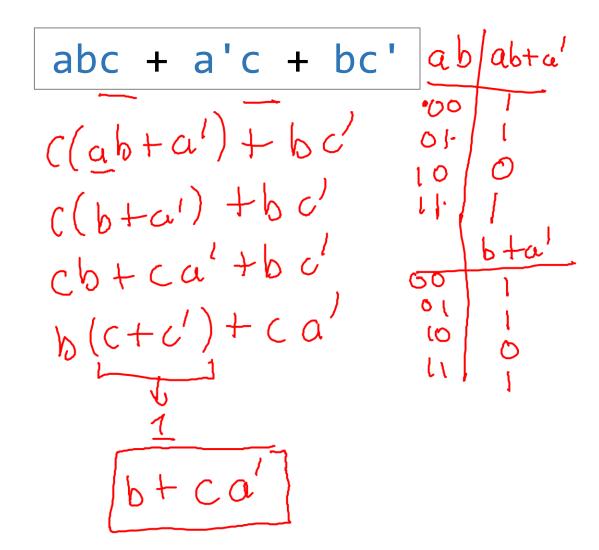


Exercise: Simplify the Expressions



Exercise: Simplify the Expressions





Example: OR

$$a \longrightarrow OR2 \longrightarrow f(a,b)$$

Boolean algebra (simplification using identities)

$$f = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{iff ab} == 01 \\ & \text{OR ab} == 10 \\ & \text{OR ab} == 11 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Algebraic Representation

Example: Majority Function

```
abc
000
001
010
100
```

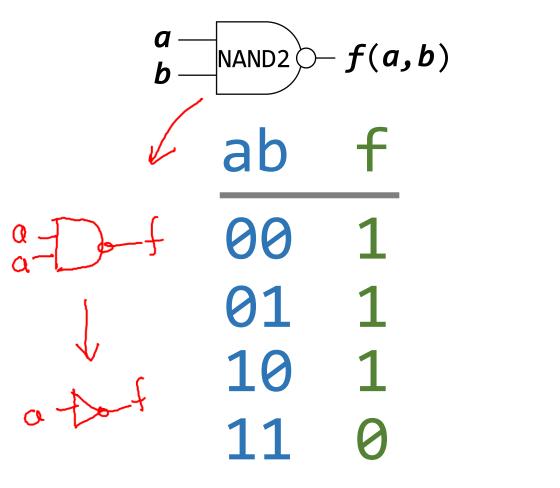
Algebraic Representation

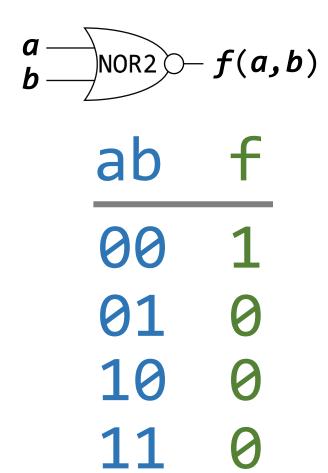
```
f(a,b,c) = a'bc + ab'c + abc' + abc
= ...
= ac + ab + ac
```

Simplification left as an exercise ©

Aside: Functional Completeness

• {NAND} and {NOR} are functionally complete singleton sets





Agenda

The Digital Logic Abstraction

- Boolean Algebra
 - Truth Tables
 - Equations and Identities

Digital Logic Gates

Representations of Boolean Logic

Any two-state system can represent Boolean values

Truth Table

Boolean Equation

$$f(a) = a'$$



Switch up/down



Lever up/down



State clipped/unclipped



Color red/black



Line width narrow/wide



Pixel color Black/white

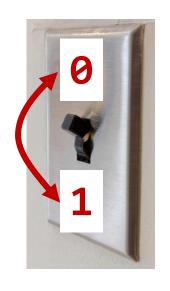
https://www.smithsonianmag.com/artsculture/how-the-telegraph-went-from-semaphoreto-communication-game-changer-1403433/



Sound Length Long/short tap

Building a Logic Gate: Mechanical Switches

Mechanical switches controlled manually

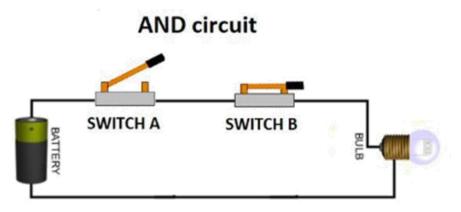


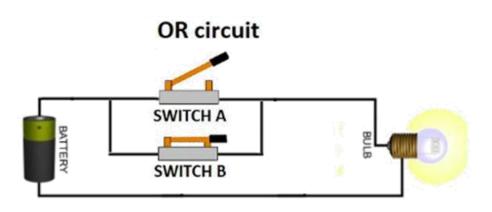
Truth Table

switch	<u>ligh</u> t
0	1
1	0

Boolean Equation

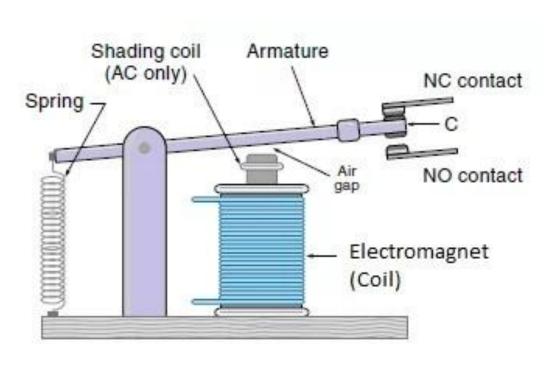
$$light(sw) = sw'$$





Building a Logic Gate: Electromechanical Switches

Mechanical switches controlled by electricity



https://www.electricalandcontrol.com/electromechanical-relays-emr/

Truth Table

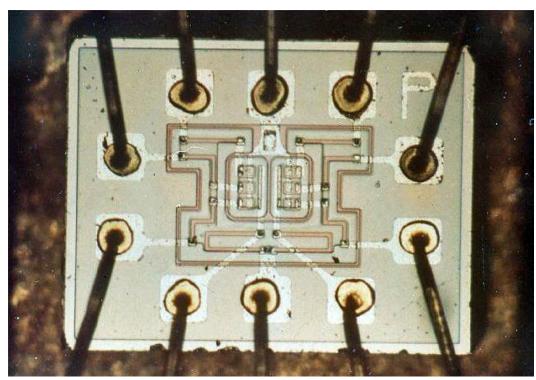
electromagnet contact

off NC
on NO

Building a Logic Gate: Electrical Switches

• Fully electronic switch (transistor): no mechanical/moving parts

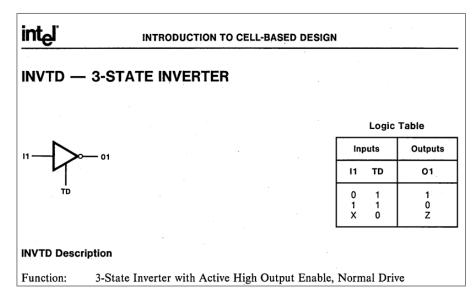
NOR3 Gate from the Apollo Guidance Computer (1960s)

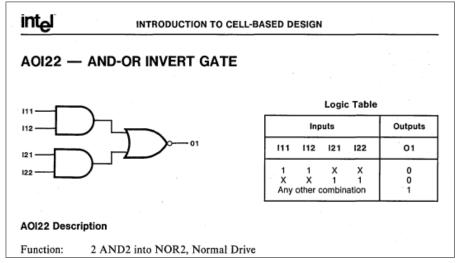


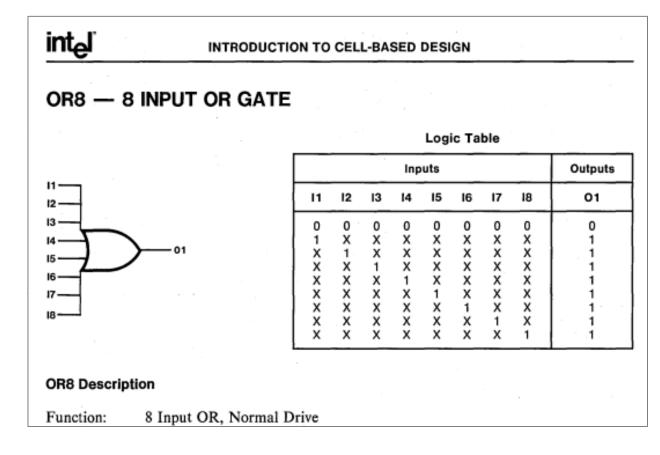
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aqc_nor2.jpg

abc	NOR3(a,b,c)
000	1
001	0
010	0
011	0
100	0
101	0
110	0
111	0

Example: "Standard Cell" Library for Chip Design







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Minesh Patel

Spring 2025 – Tuesday 8 April