Education of Embedded Systems Programming in C and Assembly Based on ARM's Cortex-M Microprocessors

ARM

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Install Software and Driver

- Each of you should have
  - STM32L4 Discovery Kit
  - USB Cable
  - USB Flash Drive

- Let's get the installation started before the presentation
  - Step 1: Insert the USB flash to the laptop
  - Step 2: Install Keil µVision. *Keil can only run Windows or Windows VM!*
    - If you have a Windows laptop, please run "MDK520.EXE" to install Keil µVision v5.20
    - If you have a Mac or Linux, please (1) Download VirtualBox from www.virtualbox.org and install it, and (2) Import the Window image from the USB flash drive

Do not plug in the STM32L4 discovery kit into your laptop until instructed to do so.

Experiential Learning

"*I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.*"

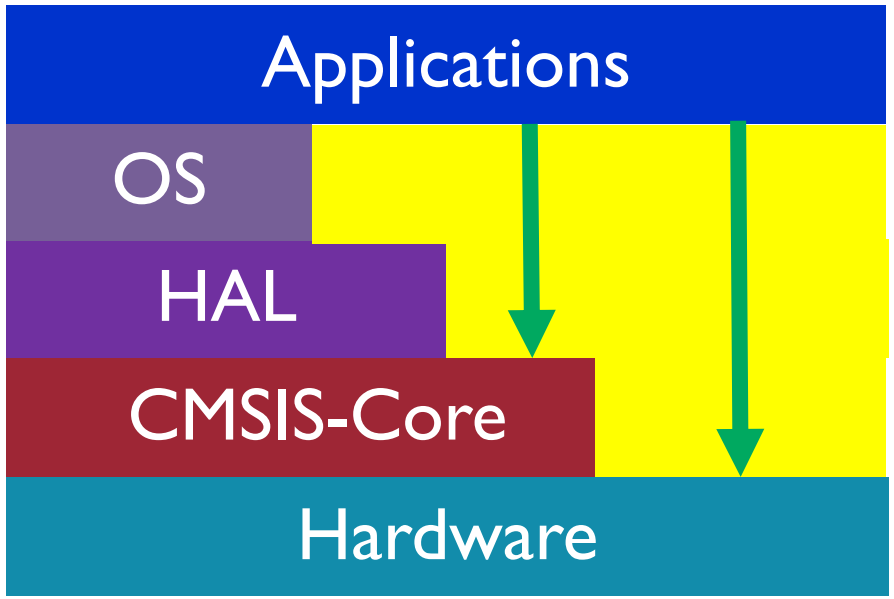
-- Confucius (Chinese philosopher, 551–479 BC)

"*Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I will learn.*"

-- Benjamin Franklin, 1706-1790

Teach at Which Level?

- Visual wizard tools (such as STMCubeMX)
- HAL (Hardware Abstraction Layer) libraries
- Bare-metal



Bare-metal: Bypass OS, HAL and possibly CMSIS-Core

HAL Level

```
; Initialize the Red LED pin (PB.2)
static GPIO_InitTypeDef  GPIO_InitStruct;
GPIO_InitStruct.Mode  = GPIO_MODE_OUTPUT_PP;
GPIO_InitStruct.Pull  = GPIO_PULLUP;
GPIO_InitStruct.Speed = GPIO_SPEED_FREQ_VERY_HIGH;
GPIO_InitStruct.Pin   = GPIO_PIN_2;

HAL_GPIO_Init(GPIOB, &GPIO_InitStruct);

HAL_GPIO_TogglePin(LED4_GPIO_PORT, LED4_PIN);
```

- Pros
  - Simplify implementation
  - Better portability
  - Many examples
- Cons
  - Very complex to understand
  - Cannot meet students' curiosity
  - Does not facilitate deep learning

```
void HAL_GPIO_Init(GPIO_TypeDef  *GPIOx, GPIO_InitTypeDef *GPIO_Init){
  uint32_t position = 0x00;
  uint32_t iocurrent = 0x00;
  uint32_t temp = 0x00;
  ...
}
```

130 lines

Learning to see the forest and the trees!

ARM

Bare-Metal Level in C

```
#define LED_PIN 2

// GPIO Mode: Input(00), Output(01), AlterFunc(10), Analog(11, reset)
GPIOB->MODER &= ~(3<<(2*LED_PIN));
GPIOB->MODER |=   1<<(2*LED_PIN);    // Output(01)

// GPIO Speed: Low speed (00), Medium speed (01), Fast speed (10), High speed (11)
GPIOB->OSPEEDR &= ~(3<<(2*LED_PIN));
GPIOB->OSPEEDR |=   2<<(2*LED_PIN);  // Fast speed

// GPIO Output Type: Output push-pull (0, reset), Output open drain (1)
GPIOB->OTYPER &= ~(1<<LED_PIN);      // Push-pull

// GPIO Push-Pull: No pull-up pull-down (00), Pull-up (01), Pull-down (10),
Reserved (11)
GPIOB->PUPDR &= ~(3<<(2*LED_PIN));  // No pull-up, no pull-down

// Toggle up the LED
GPIOB->ODR ^= 1 << LED_PIN;
```

- Focus on directly interfacing with hardware.
- Do not use any libraries!

Bare-Metal Level in Assembly

Bare-metal level programming helps learning assembly programming

Set Pin B.2 as GPIO output

```
#define LED_PIN 2

// GPIO Mode: Input(00), Output(01), AlterFunc(10), Analog(11, reset)
GPIOB->MODER &= ~(3<<(2*LED_PIN));
GPIOB->MODER |=   1<<(2*LED_PIN);     // Output(01)
```

C implementation

Translate naturally

```
LED_PIN EQU 2

    LDR r0, =GPIOB_BASE
    LDR r1, [r0, #GPIO_MODER]
    EOR r1, r1, #(0x03<<(2*LED_PIN))
    ORR r1, r1, #(1<<LED_PIN)
    STR r1, [r0, #GPIO_MODER]
```

Assembly implementation

Why assembly?

- Help write efficient programs in high-level languages
- Best for performance-critical or latency-sensitive applications
- Understanding hardware–software interactions
- Basic ingredients for computer architecture and operating systems courses

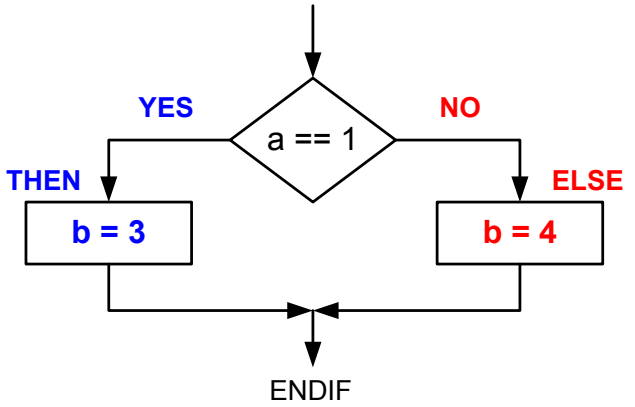
A Structured Approach in Assembly Programming

- Assembly is not a structured programming language
  - No high-level control constructs to avoid GOTOs (unconditional branches)
  - Difficulty to learn and program
  - Prone to create spaghetti codes

A Structured Approach in Assembly Programming

Methods of teaching structured programming in assembly

- Use of flowcharts
  - Separate program structuring from code writing



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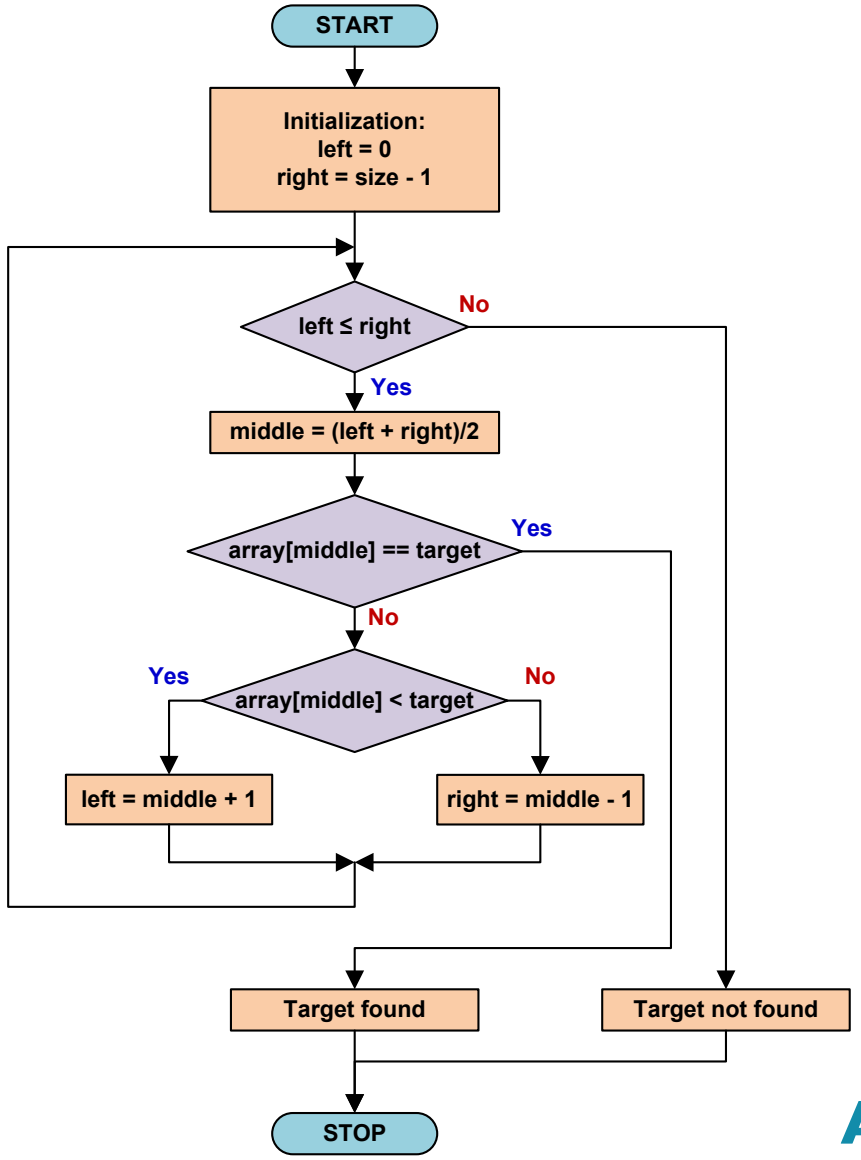

Flowchart of Binary Search

A Structured Approach in Assembly Programming

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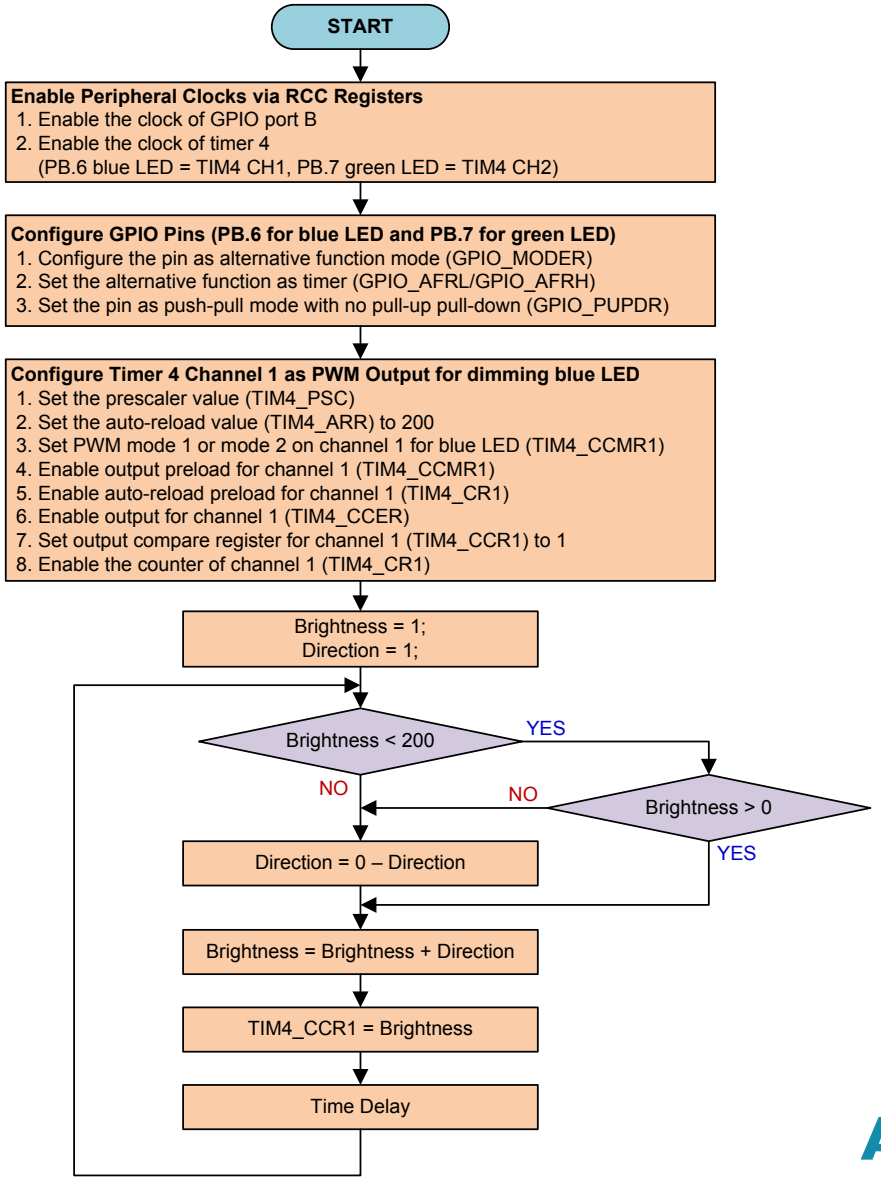
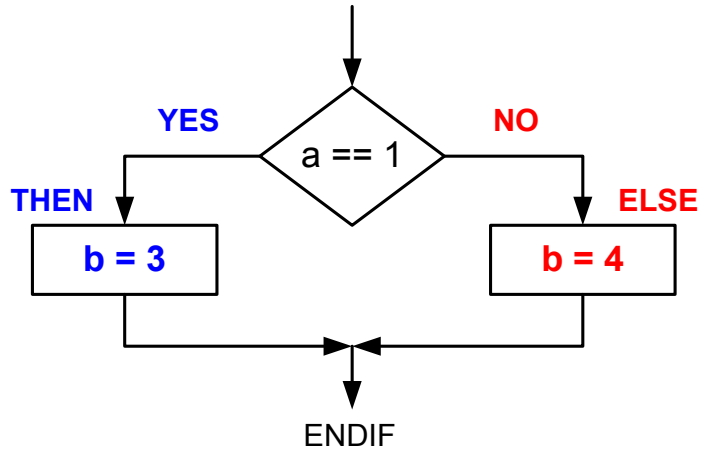


Diming LED by using timer PWM output

A Structured Approach in Assembly Programming

Methods of teaching structured programming in assembly

- Use of flowcharts
  - Separate program structuring from code writing
- C-Assembly line-by-line comparison
  - Relate an unstructured to a structured

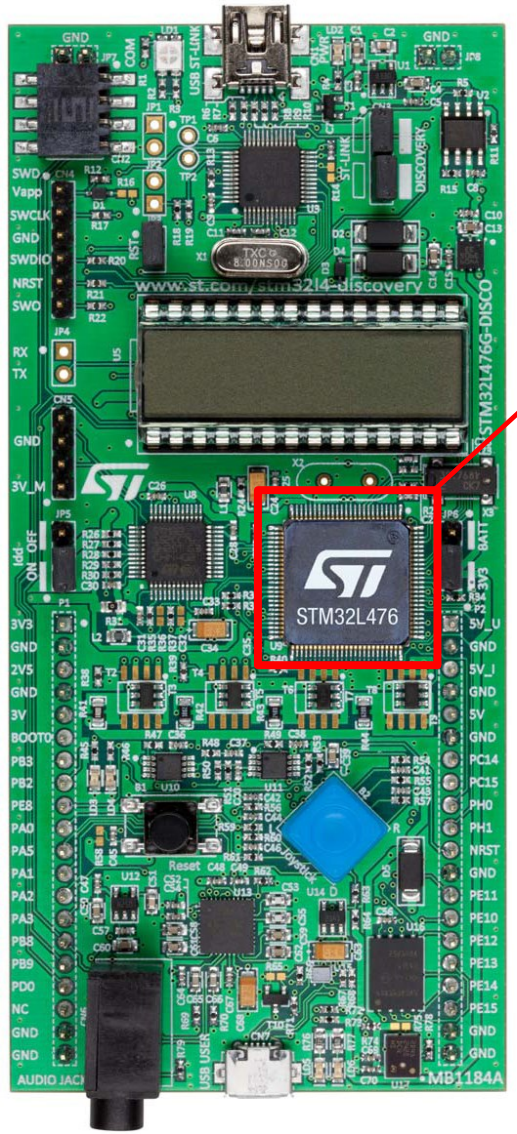


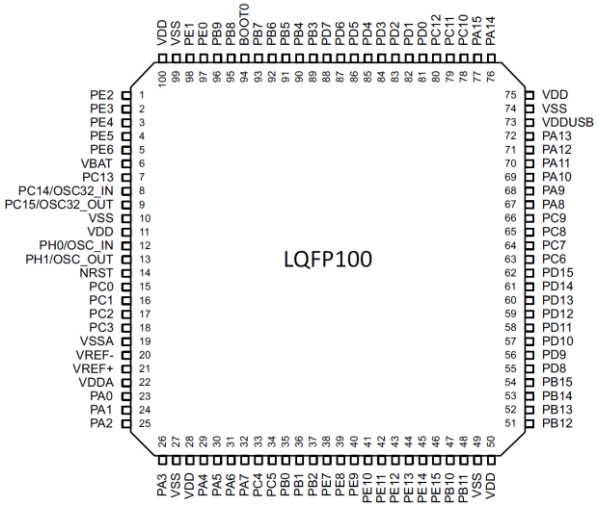
C Program	Assembly Program

`if (a == 1)`
`  b = 3`
`else`
`  b = 4;`
	`; r1 = a, r2 = b`
	`  CMP r1, #1`
	`  BNE else`
	`then MOV r2, #3`
	`  B endif`
	`else MOV r2, #4`
	`endif`

Selecting a Platform: Hardware Component

- Low cost
  - ~$20 each
- Hands-on experiences
  - develop and test real systems
- Rewarding and engaging
  - immediately enjoy the fruit of labor
- Convenient
  - mobile lab without time and location constrains
- Versatile
  - pins are extended for easy access



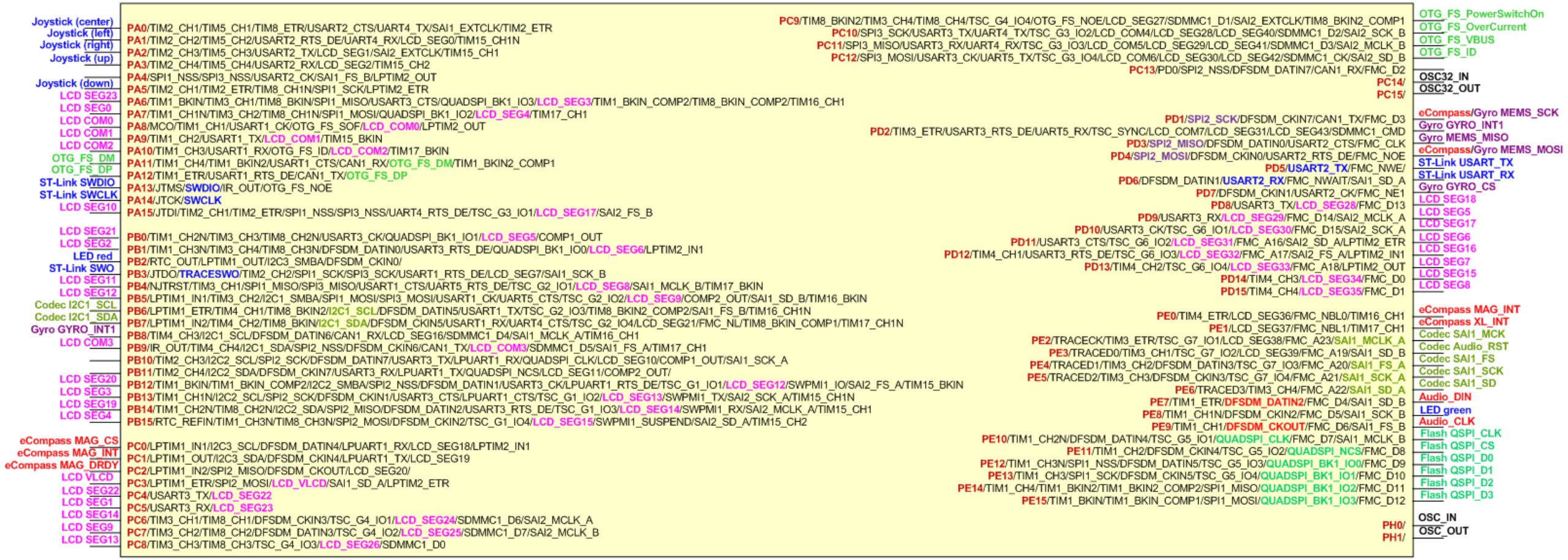


STM32L4 Discovery Kit @STMicroelectronics

ARM

STM32L476G

Joystick (MT-008A): Center = PA0, Left = PA1, Right = PA2, Up = PA3, Down = PA5
User LED: Red = PB2, Green = PE8
Analog Outputs: PA3 (OPAMP1_OUT), PA5 (DAC1_OUT2). *Note: PA4 (DAC1_OUT1) is not extended out, thus we use OPAMP1_OUT.*



STM32L476VG Discovery Kit Pin Connection

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Integrated ST-Link/V2 programming and debugging tool

Mini B Type A

STM32L4 Discovery Kit @STMicroelectronics

ARM

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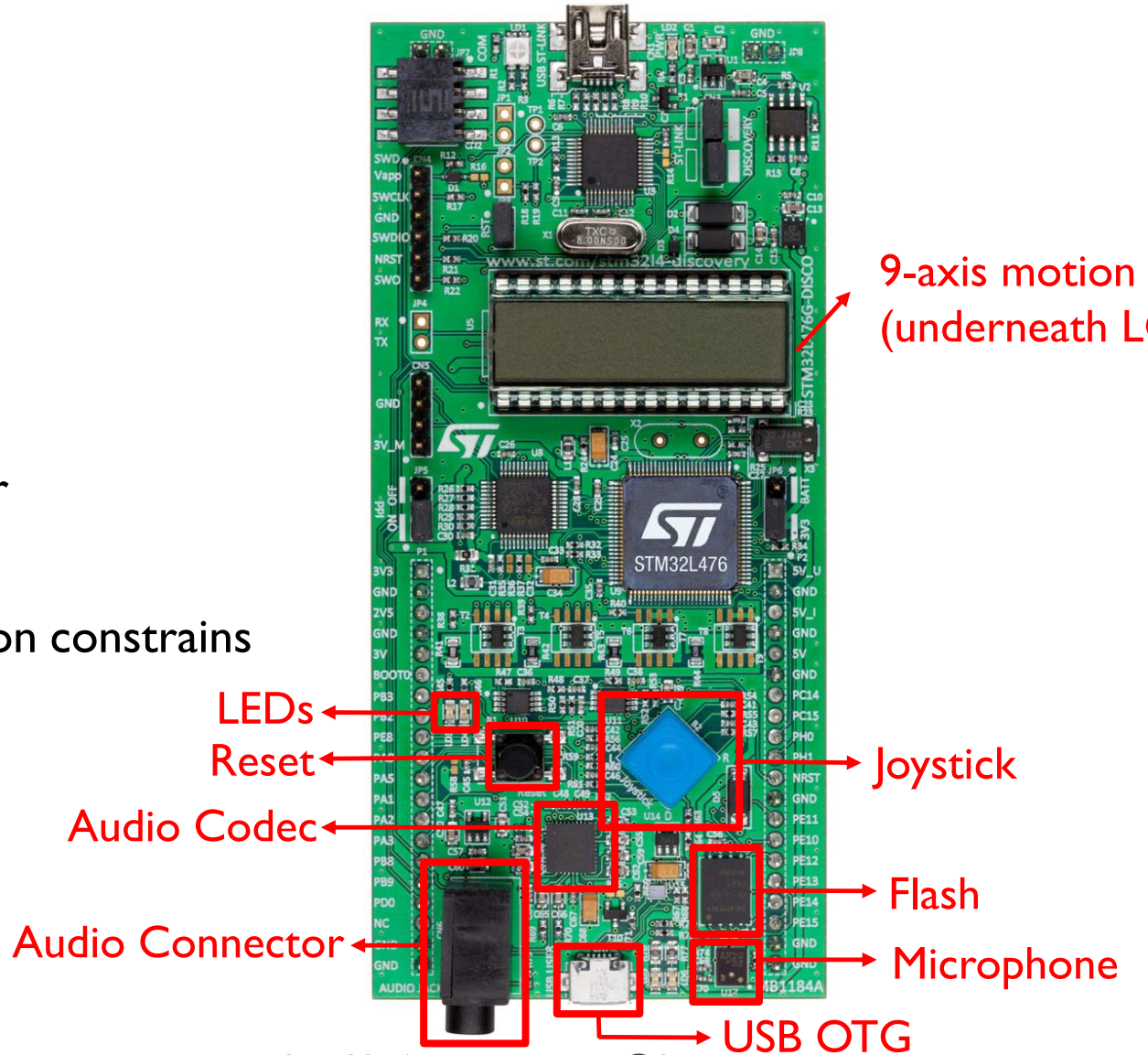

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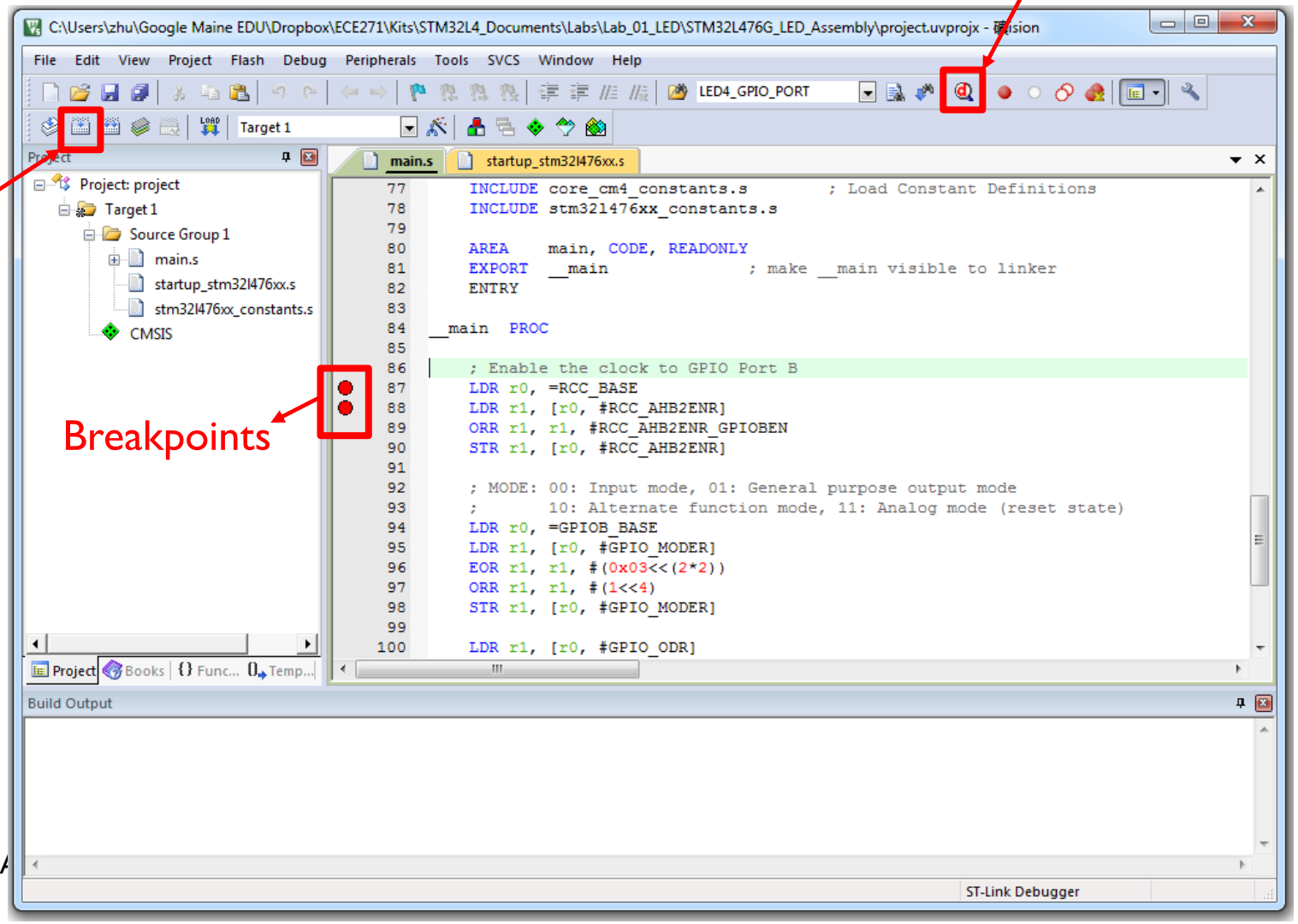
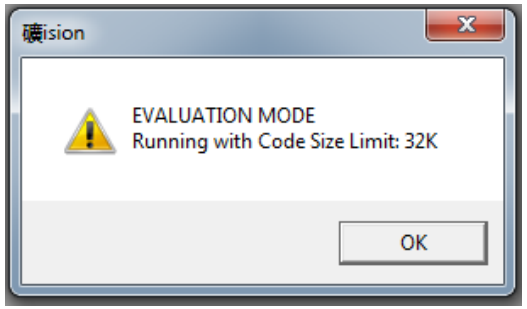
Selecting a Platform: Software Component

- Keil uVision Development Tools

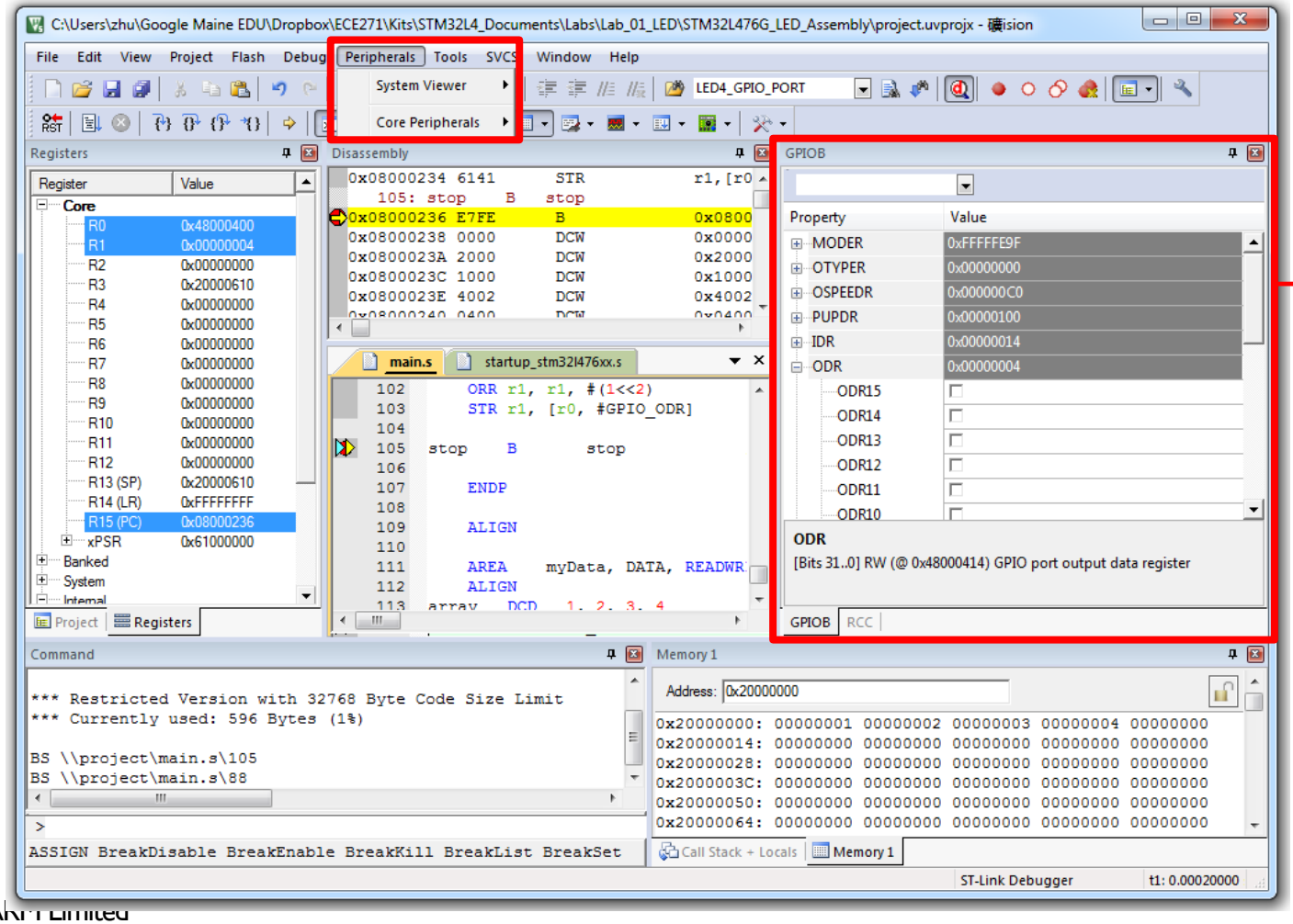




But this has not been a problem.

Selecting a Platform: Software Component

- Keil uVision Development Tools



Monitor or modify peripheral registers

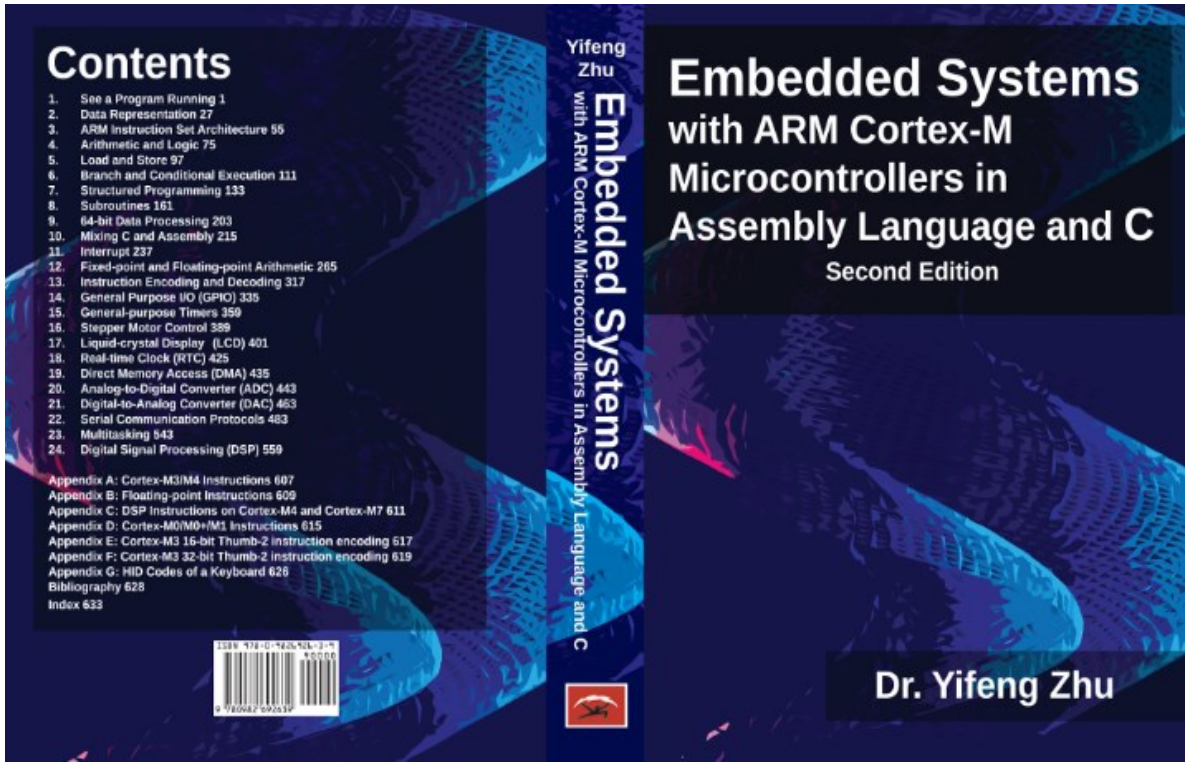
Students found this very helpful!

Free version limited the code size to 32 KB. But this has not been a problem.

ARM

Book

- Lab-centered learning
- State-of-the-art content
- Bare-metal programming in C and assembly to facilitate deep learning
- Line-by-line translation between C and Cortex assembly for most examples
- Mixture of C and assembly languages
- Suitable for all levels of undergraduate courses



Contact me if you want an evaluation copy!

ISBN: 0982692633
660 pages, $69.50

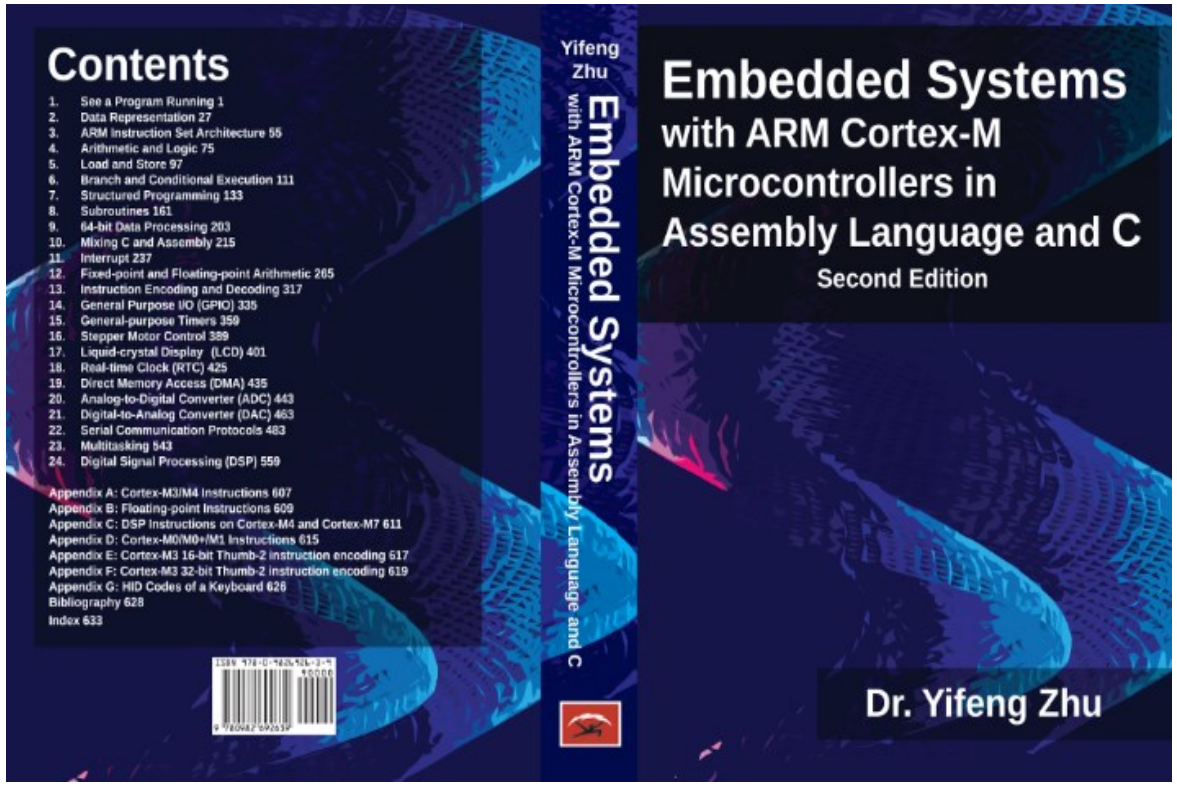
USB drive contains:

- Lecture slides
- Lab description and solutions
- Instructor manual

ARM

Teaching Modules

- Data representation
- Assembly instructions and programming
- Mixing C and assembly
- Fixed-point & floating-point numbers
- FPU
- GPIO
- Interrupt service routines
- Timers
- DMA
- ADC and DAC
- I2C, SPI, UART, USB
- DSP



Strike the balance between theoretical foundations and technical practices

ARM

Example Labs

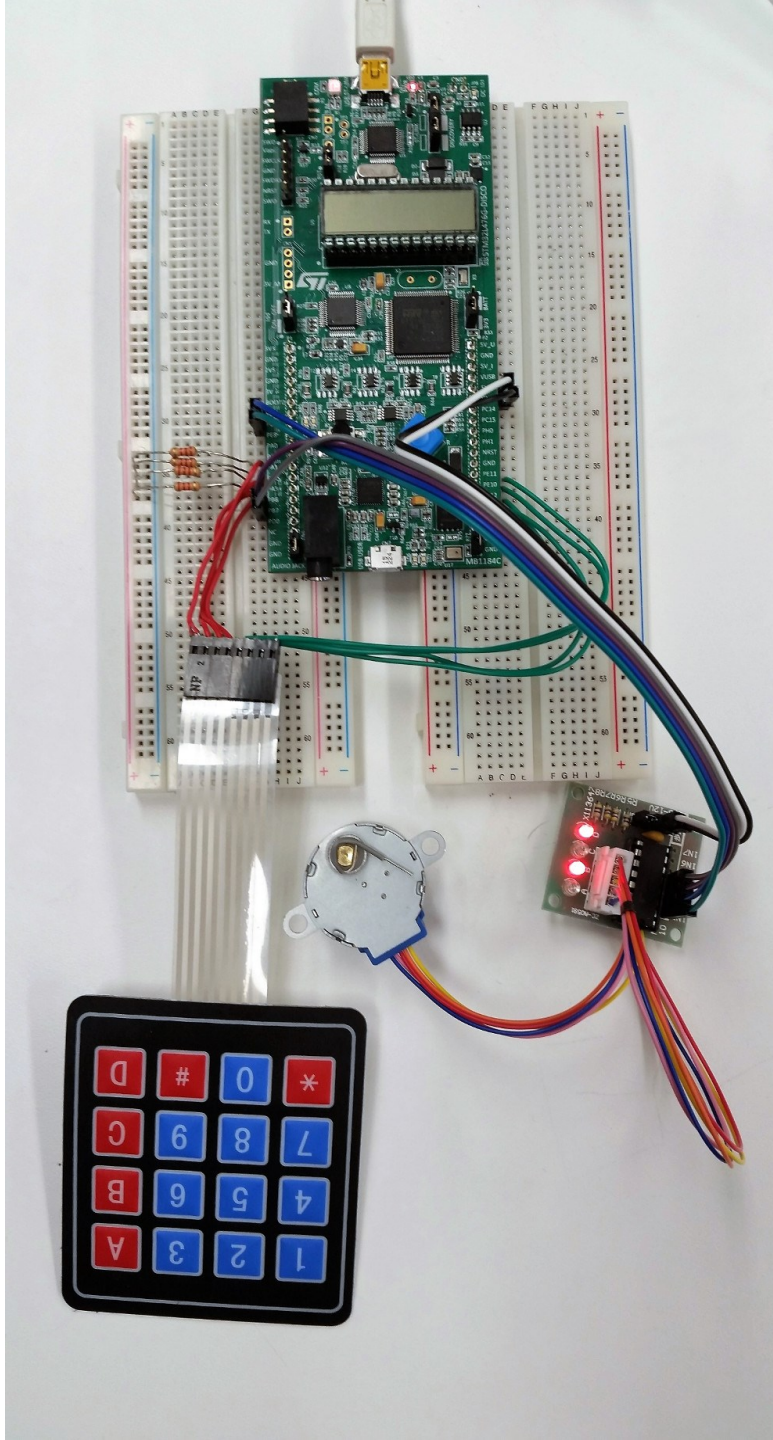
Lab descriptions and solutions are in the USB drive

Lower-division Course

1. Push buttons and LEDs
2. Matrix keypad
3. LCD display
4. Stepper motor
5. System timer (SysTick)
6. Timer PWM output
7. Timer input capture
8. ADC (polling)
9. DAC (polling)
10. Music synthesizing

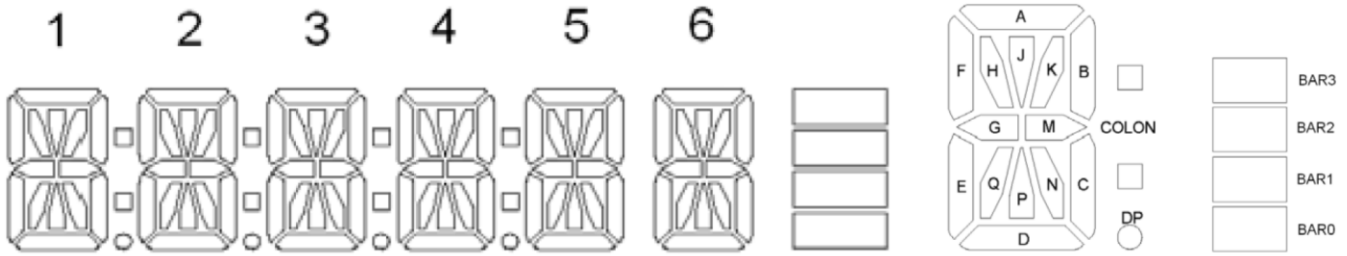
Upper-division Course

1. UART debugging
2. External interrupts
3. System timer (SysTick)
4. RGB LED Strip
5. ADC (DMA and/or interrupts)
6. DAC (DMA and/or interrupts)
7. DH22 temperature/humidity sensor
8. Gyro and accelerometer
9. nRF2401 wireless communication
10. Microphone & CODEC



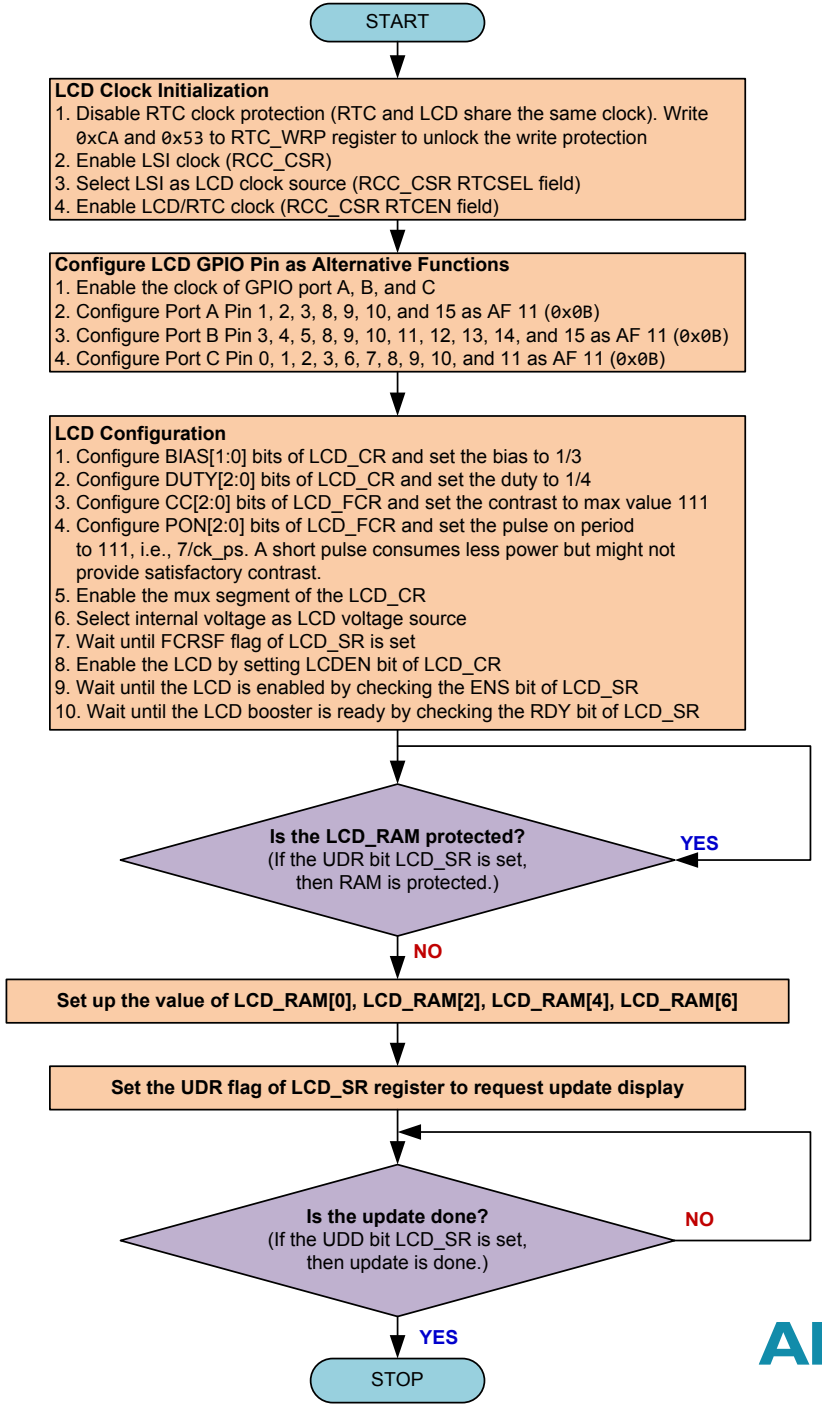
Example Lab: LCD Display

Write down your last name, and complete the following table.

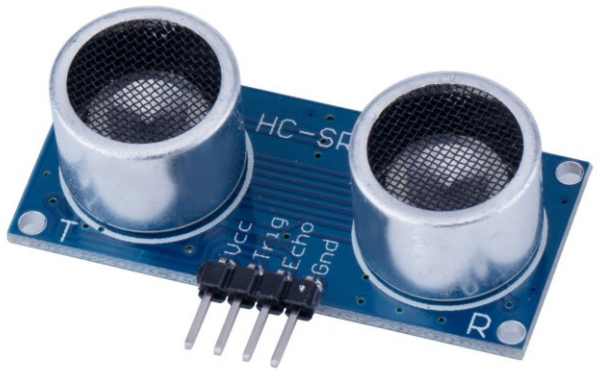


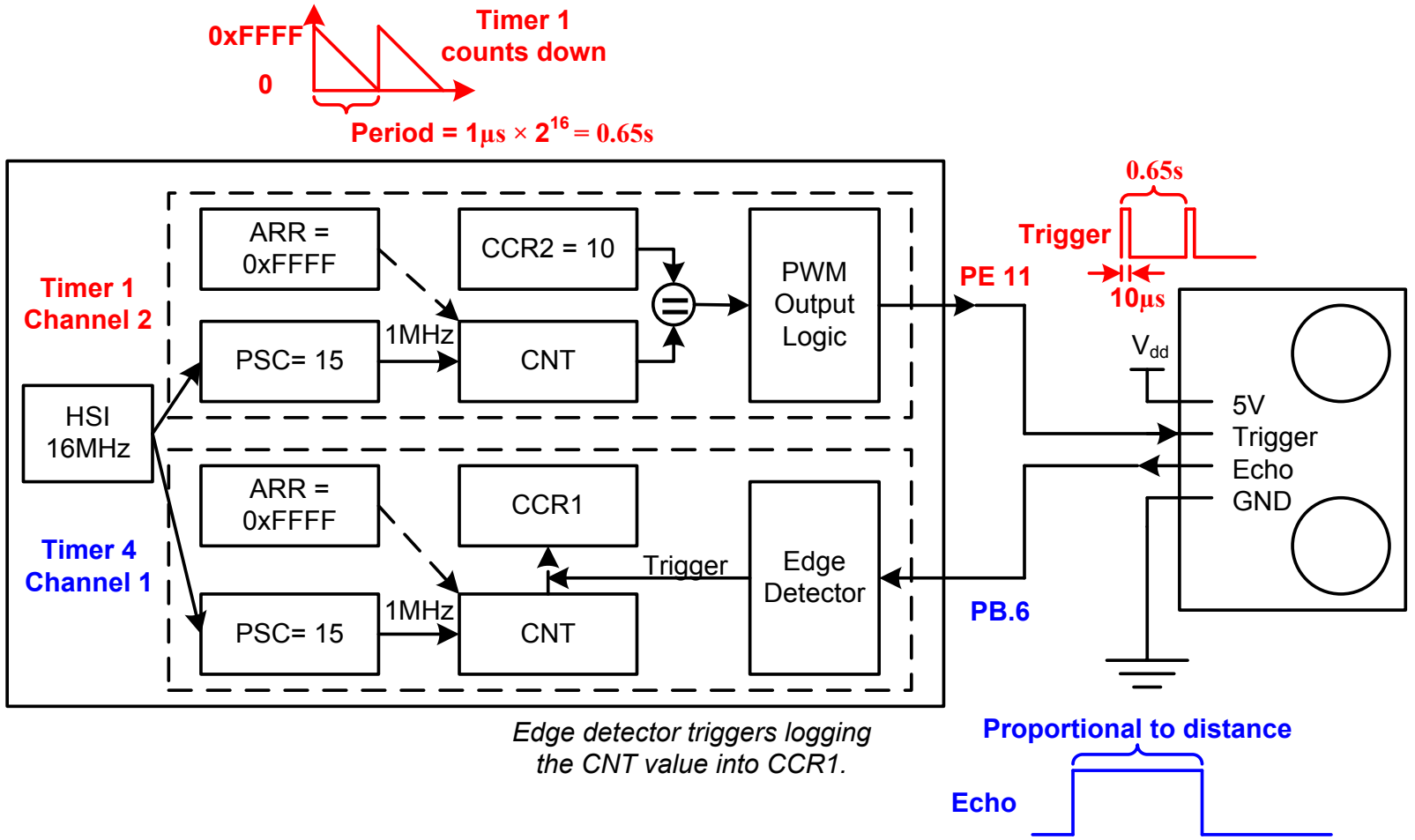
Your Last Name: _____ (First Six Characters)

	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
LCD_RAM[0]	4E	4G	3M	3B		6G	5M	5B	1M	1B					6E		3E	3G	2M	2B			6B	6M		2E	2G	1E	1G			
LCD_RAM[1]																													5E	5G	4M	4B
LCD_RAM[2]	4D	4F	3C	3A		6F	5C	5A	1C	1A					6D		3D	3F	2C	2A			6A	6C		2D	2F	1D	1F			
LCD_RAM[3]																													5D	5F	4C	4A
LCD_RAM[4]	4P	4Q	3 Col	3K		6Q	3 Bar	5K	1 Col	1K					6P		3P	3Q	2 Col	2K			6K	1 Bar		2P	2Q	1P	1Q			
LCD_RAM[5]																													5P	5Q	4 Col	4K
LCD_RAM[6]	4N	4H	3 DP	3J		6H	2 Bar	5J	1 DP	1J					6N		3N	3H	2 DP	2J			6J	0 Bar		2N	2H	1N	1H			
LCD_RAM[7]																													5N	5H	4 DP	4J



Example Lab: Ultrasonic Distance Measurement





Edge detector triggers logging the CNT value into CCR1.

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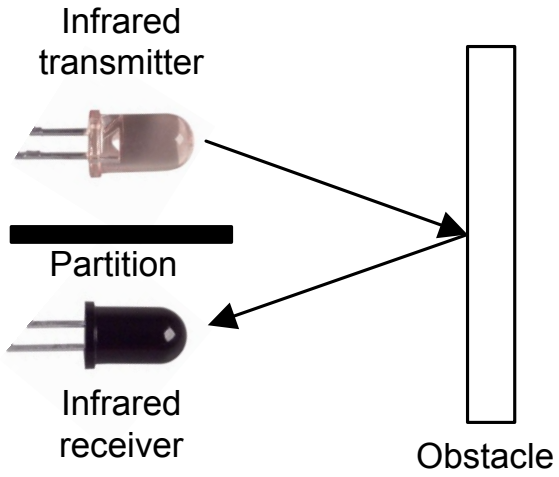
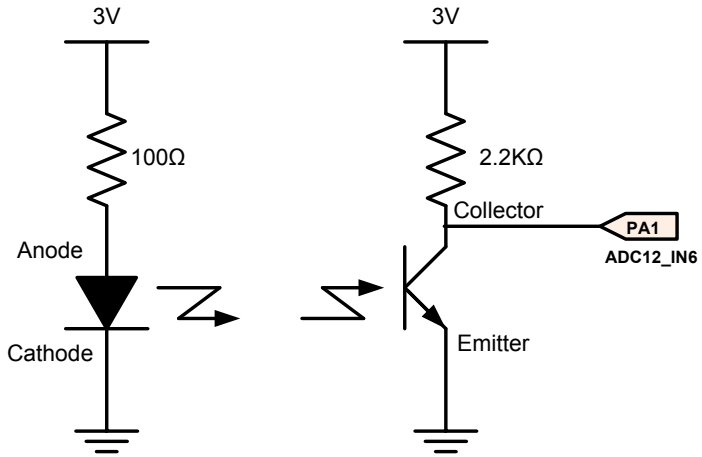
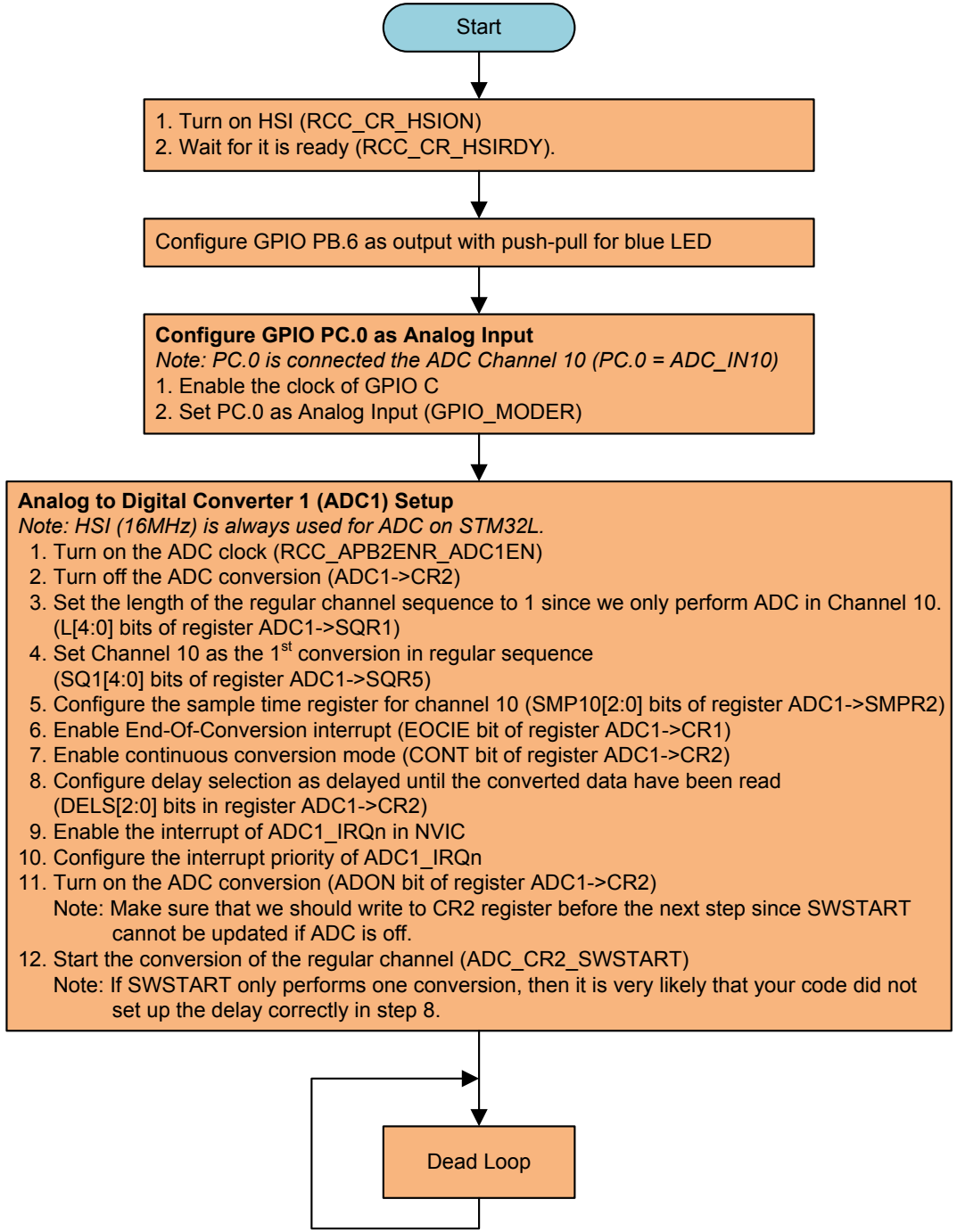
Example Lab: ADC

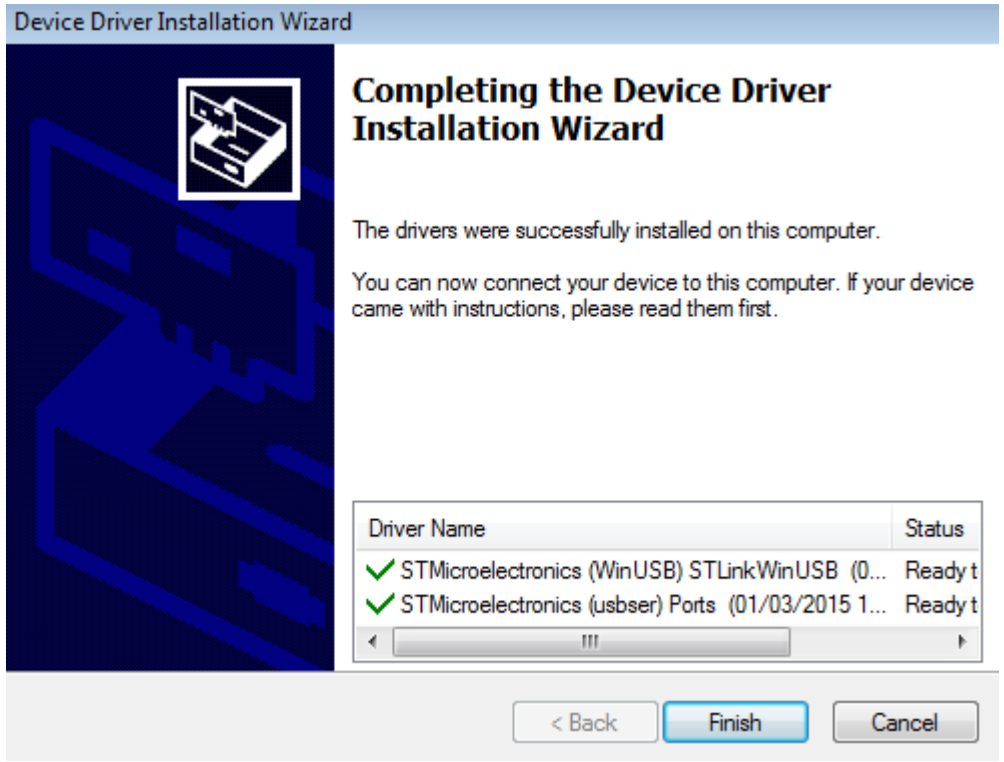






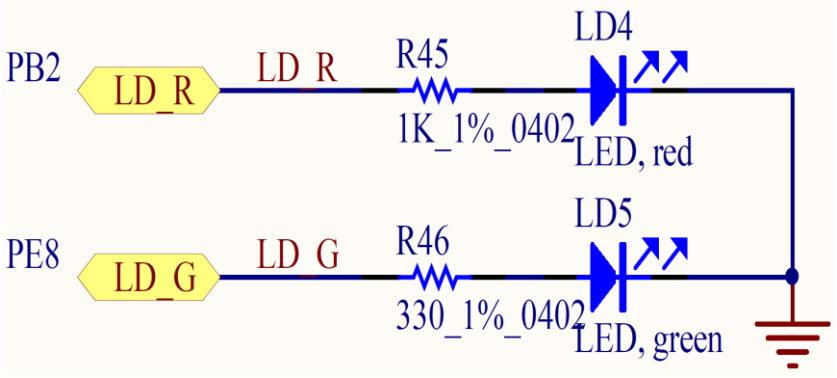
Install USB Driver

- Install ST-Link USB device driver
  - Go to the directory C:\Keil_v5\ARM\STLink\USBDriver and run stlink_winusb_install.bat



Hands-on Lab #1

Light up an LED in 100% assembly



Pre-Lab Assignment

1. **Enable the clock of GPIO Port A (for joy stick), Port B (for Red LED) and Port E (for Green LED)**

Register	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
AHB2ENR														RNGEN		AESEN			ADCEN	OTGFSEN					GPIOHEN	GPIOPGEN	GPIOPFEN	GPIOPEEN	GPIOPDEN	GPIOPCEN	GPIOPBEN	GPIOPAEN
Mask																																
Value																																

a. **Configure PB 2 as Output**

GPIO Mode: Input (00), Output (01), Alternative Function (10), Analog (11, default)

Register	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
MODER	MODER15[1:0]		MODER14[1:0]		MODER13[1:0]		MODER12[1:0]		MODER11[1:0]		MODER10[1:0]		MODER9[1:0]		MODER8[1:0]		MODER7[1:0]		MODER6[1:0]		MODER5[1:0]		MODER4[1:0]		MODER3[1:0]		MODER2[1:0]		MODER1[1:0]		MODER0[1:0]	
Mask																																
Value																																

b. **Configure PB 2 Output Type as Push-Pull**

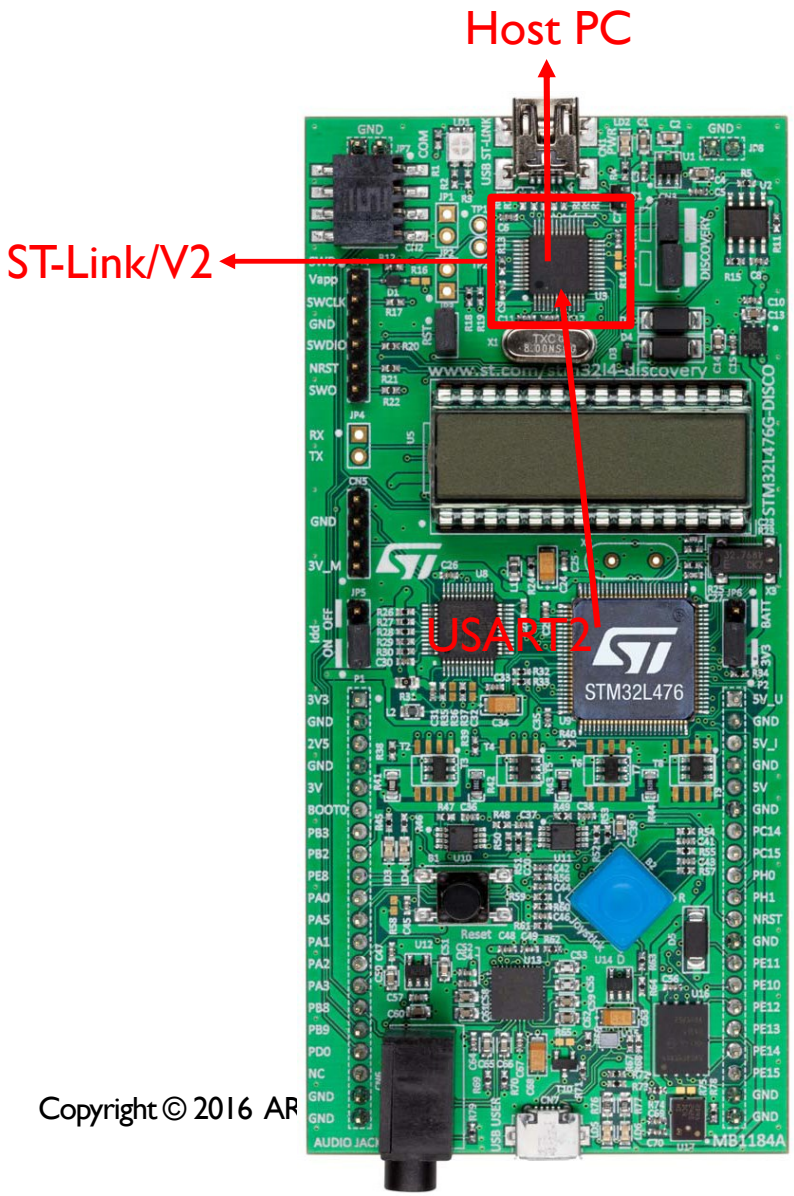
Push-Pull (0, reset), Open-Drain (1)

Register	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
OTYPER	Reserved																OT15	OT14	OT13	OT12	OT11	OT10	OT9	OT8	OT7	OT6	OT5	OT4	OT3	OT2	OT1	OT0
Mask																																
Value																																

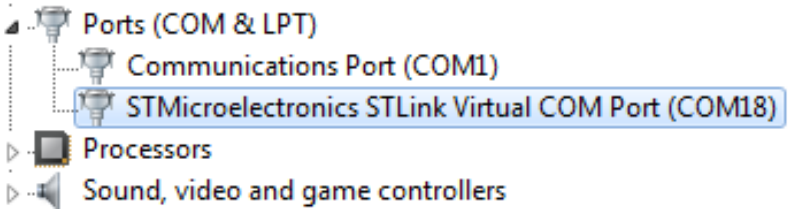
Hands-on Lab #2

Printing messages via UART through ST-Link V2

No extra cable or devices are required!



- USART2 (PD5 TX, PD6 RX) is connected to ST-Link's UART
- ST-Link has virtual-COM port
- Setting USART2 as Asynchronous, 9600, 8/N/1
- Need terminal emulator (such as Tera Term for Windows, and MacWise for Mac)



Find the com port # from device manager

More Resources

- Book Website: FAQ, lab parts, example codes
  - http://web.eece.maine.edu/~zhu/book/
- Tutorial 1: Create a project in Keil
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t_Myn4UYUw
- Tutorial 2: Debug in Keil
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4gPcYRk9o8
- Tutorial 3: Clock configuration of STM32L4 processors
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4gPcYRk9o8
- Tutorial 4: Printing messages via UART through ST-Link V2.1
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9vUyRjtG3Y

Conclusions

- Teaching students both C and Assembly is important
- Emphasize the balance between theoretical foundations and technical practices
- Hand-on experiences based on lab-in-a-box platforms are effective

Acknowledge

Thank ARM and STMicroelectronics
for sponsoring this workshop!