

Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer

User's Guide

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Document Number: 321356-001US

Revision: 2.3

World Wide Web: http://www.intel.com

Document Number: 321356-001US

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1 Introduction

Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer helps you statically analyze the throughput of instruction sequences (kernels) on Intel® microarchitectures.

For a given binary, Intel Architecture Code Analyzer:

- Identifies the binding of the kernel instructions to the processor ports under ideal frontend, out-of-order engine and memory hierarchy conditions.
- Performs static analysis of the kernel throughput and reports its cycle count.
- Identifies the critical path.

1.1 Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer Accuracy

Intel Architecture Code Analyzer enables you to do a first order **estimate** of the relative performance of sections of code on different microarchitectures. It **does not** provide absolute performance numbers.

The performance data reported by the tool may significantly deviate from actual performance observed on an Intel® processor. You can achieve the most accurate throughput measurements by executing the analyzed code on the processor itself. The Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer complements such measured data with information on port binding, bottlenecks, and critical paths.

1.2 Processor Support

Intel Architecture Code Analyzer supports analysis for 1^{st} to 6^{th} generation Intel® CoreTM processors, which correspond to Intel® microarchitectures codenamed Sandy Bridge (2^{nd} gen), Ivy Bridge (3^{rd} gen), Haswell (4^{th} gen), Broadwell (5^{th} gen) and Skylake (6^{th} gen), including Skylake Server.

1.3 Platform Support

Intel Architecture Code Analyzer is a command-line utility that can analyze a binary file that contains code with special markers that delimit the analyzed code. The tool analyses Intel® 64 code including Intel® Advanced Vector Extensions (Intel® AVX), AVX2 and AVX3 instructions.

Intel Architecture Code Analyzer is available on Windows*, Linux*, Mac OS X* operating systems (for 64-bit editions).

NOTE:

Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer has been validated on 64-bit SUSE* 11, Mac OS X* 10.12.1 and Microsoft* Windows 8.1 64-bit. It should work on other versions of Linux*, Mac OS X* and Microsoft* Windows operating systems.

2 Analysis

2.1 Throughput Analysis

Throughput Analysis is used to analyze the throughput and bottlenecks of a loop body; it treats the contents of the analyzed block as an infinite loop, including considering interiteration dependencies between instructions within the analyzed block. The Throughput Analysis report provides the following information:

- Throughput of the whole analyzed block, counted in cycles. The block throughput is calculated as the maximum between:
 - o Throughput of the processor's ports
 - Maximum front-end throughput (4 micro-ops per cycle)
 - Divider unit throughput
- Bottleneck source that limited the throughput: front-end, port number, divider unit, or long dependency chains.
- Total number of cycles each processor port was bound by micro-ops.

The detailed section of the throughput analysis report contains one line for each instruction in the analyzed block. Each line contains:

- Number of the instruction micro-ops.
- Average number of cycles per iteration that the instruction was bound to each
 processor port. For most instructions this simply means the number of cycles the
 instruction was bound to each port. However, if a particular micro-op may execute
 on more than one port, the average number of cycles per iteration may be a partial
 cycle for each port because that micro-op may bind to a different port on each
 iteration.
- An indication whether the instruction is on the critical path of the analyzed code.
- Instruction disassembly in Intel® Software Developer's Manual (MASM) style

Some ports have both a regular pipe and a secondary pipe. These ports are separated by a hyphen, and look like two separate ports in the detailed report. Specifically:

- Port 0 has the Divider pipe split from it. In the first cycle they are both busy, then port 0 is available for the next micro-op and the Divider pipe is kept busy for the duration of the divide operation.
- Load ports 2 and 3 have an Address Generation Unit (AGU) split from them. For 256-bit load operations that keep the port busy for two cycles on SnadyBridge and IvyBridge micro-architectures, the AGU gets freed after the first cycle and can process a store address generation if such micro-op isavailable for execution.

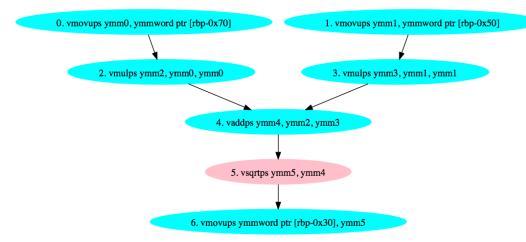
Following is an example Throughput Analysis report:

Throughput Analysis Report								
Block Throughput: 28.00 Cycles Throughput Bottleneck: Divider								
Port Binding In Cycles Per Iteration:								
Port 0 - DV 1 2 - D 3 - D 4 5								
Cycles 4.0 28.0 1.0 1.5 2.0 1.5 2.0 2.0 1.0								
N - port number or number of cycles resource conflict caused delay, DV - Divider pipe (on port 0) D - Data fetch pipe (on ports 2 and 3), CP - on a critical path								
F - Macro Fusion with the previous instruction occurred								
* - instruction micro-ops not bound to a port ^ - Micro Fusion happened								
# - ESP Tracking sync uop was issued								
<pre>@ - SSE instruction followed an AVX256/AVX512 instruction, dozens of cycles penalty is expected X - instruction not supported, was not accounted in Analysis</pre>								
Num Of Ports pressure in cycles								
Uops 0 - DV 1 2 - D 3 - D 4 5								
1 1.0 2.0 vmovups ymm0, [rbp-0x70]								
1								
1 1.0								
1								
2^ 0.5 0.5 2.0 vmovups [rbp-0x30], ymm5								

2.2 Graphs

Use the -graph option to set Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer to output the data dependency graph.

TIP: Graph files produced by Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer can be opened with graphviz.



2.3 Trace

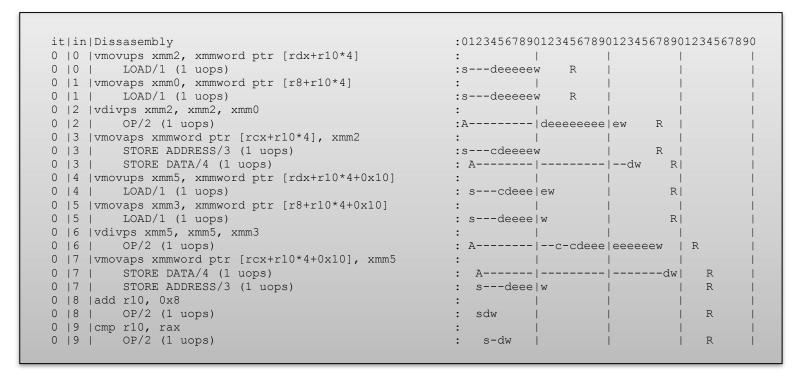
New in version 2.3

To generate a trace use `-trace <path>' option to generate an `.iacatrace' file in <path>.

Run 'pt.py <path-to-.iacatrace-file>' to generate a readable output.

NOTE: Iaca trace requires Python 2.7.5 or Python 3.6.1 to run.

Traces include in-depth information about different operation stages inside the processor. A trace can be used to identify bottlenecks and pressure points.



Above is an example of a trace output.

The kernel instructions are modeled, in order, from top to bottom while the processor's cycles run from left to right. The 'it' column shows the iteration count of the entire kernel, the 'in' column shows the instruction count within the kernel and the 'Disassembly' column shows the instruction's disassembly, along with the micro-architectural instruction fragment information. By default the first 150 cycles of the modeled execution are displayed; use the `--start-cycle` and `--start-iteration` options of the `pt.py` script to choose a different window to display.

Each instruction is represented by at most 4 instruction-fragments (OP, STORE DATA, STORE ADDRESS,LOAD). The trace displays the micro-architectural stage of each fragment inside the processor at any given cycle from allocation to retire. If two stages happen at the same cycle the most important one of is shown. Specifically when Alloc & sready stages happen in the same stage the sready stage is shown.

The stages are:

- [A] Allocated
- [s] Sources ready
- [d] Dispatched for execution
- [e] Execute
- [w] Writeback

 $\textit{Using Intel} \, \textbf{@} \, \textit{Architecture Code Analyzer}$

[R] - Retired[-] - Idle[+] - Idle (on critical path)

2.4 Analysis Report Notes

2.4.1 Unbound Instructions

Some instructions do not require a processor functional unit to complete their execution. For example, a xor eax, eax instruction does not require an execution port because the register is directly set to 0. As a result, their micro-ops are not bound to any port. Instructions that are not bound to a port are marked with a '*' character next to their number of micro-ops.

2.4.2 Combining 256-bit Intel® AVX and Legacy Intel® SSE

Transitioning between 256-bit Intel® AVX instructions and legacy Intel Streaming SIMD Extensions (Intel® SSE) instructions will cause performance penalties. Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer detects these transitions between 256-bit Intel® AVX and legacy Intel® SSE within the analyzed block, and **ignores** the associated performance penalty in the total throughput and total latency summary report. Instead, the summary report includes two additional lines at the top indicating that such sequence(s) exist in the analyzed block, and marks the first transition instruction with a '@' character in the Num of Uops columns.

For more information on transitions between Intel® AVX and Intel® SSE, see <u>Avoiding</u> AVX-SSE Transition Penalties.

2.4.3 Unsupported Instructions

Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer does not support a small subset of the Intel® Architecture Instruction Set. When it reaches an unsupported instruction in the analyzed block it ignores the instruction. It does not take the instruction into account in the port binding analysis or in the throughput calculations.

In such cases, the summary report includes two additional lines at the top indicating that such instruction(s) exist in your code, and marks the instruction with a 'X' character in all columns.

2.4.4 Bubbles in the execution of the front end

The Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer models some of the internal resources of the microarchitecture front end. It may report "front end bubbles" if some or any of these resources become a bottleneck.

2.4.5 VDIV / VSQRT Latency

For some values of their operands (e.g. zero or one) VDIV and VSQRT instructions can produce results earlier than their specified latency. The Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer does not model this behavior. As a result it could be more "pessimistic" for kernels that use these instructions.

3 Using Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer

This section explains how to build your binary so that the Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer can analyze it, and it lists the tool command-line options.

3.1 Building Your Binary

The file **iacaMarks.h** contains macros to denote the start (IACA_START) and end (IACA_END) of the code section for the Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer to evaluate. The Intel Architecture Code Analyzer is a static tool. It treats the analyzed code section as a single consecutive block of instructions. It does not follow branch instructions, not even unconditional branches.

When analyzing a loop construct, place the macros at the following locations:

```
while ( condition )
{
         IACA_START
         <loop body>
}
IACA_END
```

This placement skips the loop initialization and includes the loop-end branch instruction.

These macros modify the **rbx** register in IA-64 code. As a result, the compiler saves this register just before the macro and restores it immediately after the macro.

Once you insert the macros into your code, build your code into an executable file or an object file.

For Microsoft* Visual C++ compiler, 64-bit version, use **IACA_VC64_START** and **IACA_VC64_END**, instead.

NOTE: Input files generated with the Intel compiler option –Qipo are not supported.

3.2 Command Line Options

The following command runs the Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer:

iaca <options> <input file name>

<input file name> represents the name of the input file.

Available <options>:

-64	64-bit input file – For backward compatibility.
-arch <type></type>	Architecture type. These are the available types: NHM, WSM, SNB, IVB, HSW, BDW.
-o <file></file>	Specifies an output file. The default is stdout. To ensure your output appears correctly, specify an output file. The stdout output line width is limited to 80 characters, but output files have no line width limit.
-graph <file></file>	Specifies an output file for the analysis graph, which can be viewed with graphviz.
-ignore <boolean></boolean>	Ignores added pop ebx / push ebx due to Intel Architecture Code Analyzer Markers. true ignores, false does not (default: true).
-reduceout	Output is reduced.
-report	Generate error report.
-trace <file></file>	Generate a trace file to be consumed by IACA's pt.py tool.
-A	Version.

3.3 Analysis Errors

Should the analysis fail, the following error messages may appear:

Error message	Possible Cause
COULD NOT OPEN FILE - <file name=""></file>	The supplied path for the input or output file was incorrect, the input file is not readable or failed to create the output file.
ILLEGAL INSTRUCTION - <offset></offset>	Code contains an illegal instruction in the specified byte offset.
INCORRECT XED2 VERSION	Mixed files between multiple Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer releases.
COULD NOT FIND START_MARKER COULD NOT FIND END_MARKER	Code did not contain the proper marker(s). See section 3.1 for more details.

4 Examples

This section provides examples of how to analyze and optimize code using Intel® Architecture Code Analyzer.

4.1 Throughput Analysis – 4x4 Matrix Multiply

This example performs a multiply of two 4x4 matrices using Intel® AVX. The initial code and throughput analysis report for SandyBridge micro-architecture are shown below.

4.1.1 Initial Code Version

Throughput Analysis Report									
Block Throughput: 12.00 Cycles Throughput Bottleneck: Port5									
Port Binding In Cycles Per Iteration:									
Port 0 - DV 1 2 - D 3 - D 4 5									
Cycles	8.0 ().0 6.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	12	2.0
l Num ∩f	ı	Ports	nracciira	in ava	100			1 1	
Uops	0 - D1	7 1	2 - D	3	- D	4	5		
 2^	 		1.0 1.0						- vbroadcastf128 ymm9, xmmword ptr [rcx]
2^	l			1.0					vbroadcastf128 ymm10, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x10]
2^			1.0 1.0						vbroadcastf128 ymm11, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x20]
2^					1.0				vbroadcastf128 ymm12, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x30]
1 1		-	1.0 2.0						vmovaps ymm0, ymmword ptr [rax]
1 1	l								vpermilps ymm1, ymm0, 0x0 vpermilps ymm2, ymm0, 0x55
1 1	l İ								vpermilps ymm3, ymm0, 0xcc
1 1	 								vpermilps ymm4, ymm0, 0xff
1 1		-		1 1.0	2.0				vmovaps ymm0, ymmword ptr [rax+0x20]
1 1		- i - i		1 1.0	2.0				vpermilps ymm5, ymm0, 0x0
1 1		i i		i					vpermilps ymm6, ymm0, 0x55
1	i İ	i i		i					vpermilps ymm7, ymm0, 0xcc
1		1 1		1			1.0	CP	vpermilps ymm8, ymm0, 0xff
1	1.0	1 1						- 1	vmulps ymm1, ymm1, ymm9
1	1.0	1 1		1				- 1	vmulps ymm2, ymm2, ymm10
•	1.0	1 1							vmulps ymm3, ymm3, ymm11
•	1.0								vmulps ymm4, ymm4, ymm12
1		1.0							vaddps ymm1, ymm2
1		1.0							vaddps ymm3, ymm4
1		1.0		-					vaddps ymm1, ymm3
•	1.0								vmulps ymm5, ymm9
	1.0 1.0								vmulps ymm6, ymm6, ymm10 vmulps ymm7, ymm7, ymm11
	1.0								vmulps ymm8, ymm8, ymm12
1 1	1 1.0	11.0							vaddps ymm5, ymm5, ymm6
1 1		1 1.0		1					vaddps ymm7, ymm7, ymm8
1 1		1 1.0		i					vaddps ymm5, ymm5, ymm7
2^			1.0	i		2.0	·		vmovaps ymmword ptr [rdx], ymm1
2^				1.0		2.0			vmovaps ymmword ptr [rdx+0x20], ymm5

4.1.2 Optimization

The Throughput Analysis Report shows that the total throughput (Block Throughput) is 12 cycles, and port 5 was most pressured (Throughput Bottleneck), with 12 micro-ops allocated to it.

Examination of the instructions that bind to port 5 in the instruction analysis report shows that the instructions were broadcasts and vpermilps. The broadcasts can only execute on port 5, but replacing them with 128-bit loads followed by vinsertf128 instructions reduces the pressure on port 5 because vinsertf128 can execute on port 0. These changes reduced the throughput to 10 cycles.

lock Throughput: 10.00 Cycles Throughput Bottleneck: Port0, Port5										
ort Binding In Cycles Per Iteration:										
ort I	0 – [OV I 1	1 3	2 -	D I	з.	- D	1 4	1	5 I
	10.0 0.									
									l	I
Jops	0 - DV	1	2 -	- D	3 -	- D	4	5	l 	
1		1	1.0	1.0	l		l	I	I	vmovaps xmm9, xmmword ptr [rcx] vmovaps xmm10, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x10]
1					1.0	1.0				vmovaps xmm10, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x10]
- '			•	1.0						vmovaps xmm11, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x20] vmovaps xmm12, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x30]
	0 1		1 0		1.0	1.0				vmovaps xmm12, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x30]
	0.1		1.0	1.0						vinsertf128 ymm9, ymm9, xmmword ptr [rcx], 0x1
2 I	0.9		1 1.0	1.0		1.0				<pre> vinsertf128 ymm10, ymm10, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x10], vinsertf128 ymm11, ymm11, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x20], </pre>
2 1	1.0		l 1.0		1 1.0					vinsertf128 ymm12, ymm12, xmmword ptr [rcx+0x30],
1 1	1.0		1 1.0	2.0	•	1.0				vmovaps ymm0, ymmword ptr [rax]
1 1			1.0	2.0						vpermilps ymm1, ymm0, 0x0
1		i			İ					vpermilps ymm2, ymm0, 0x55
1		i								vpermilps ymm3, ymm0, 0xcc
1		1			I					vpermilps ymm4, ymm0, 0xff
1					1.0	2.0				vmovaps ymm0, ymmword ptr [rax+0x20]
1										vpermilps ymm5, ymm0, 0x0
1										vpermilps ymm6, ymm0, 0x55
1										vpermilps ymm7, ymm0, 0xcc
1	1 0									vpermilps ymm8, ymm0, 0xff
	1.0				l		l		I CP	vmulps ymm1, ymm1, ymm9 vmulps ymm2, ymm2, ymm10
	1.0									vmulps ymm2, ymm2, ymm10 vmulps ymm3, ymm3, ymm11
	1.0									vmulps ymm4, ymm4, ymm12
,	1.0	1 1.0								vaddps ymm1, ymm1, ymm2
1 1		1 1.0			ĺ		İ	i		vaddps ymm3, ymm3, ymm4
1 i		1.0			i		i	i '		vaddps ymm1, ymm1, ymm3
1	1.0	1	I		I		I	1	CP	vmulps ymm5, ymm5, ymm9
	1.0	1	l		I		I			vmulps ymm6, ymm6, ymm10
	1.0	1								vmulps ymm7, ymm7, ymm11
	1.0	1			l		l			vmulps ymm8, ymm8, ymm12
1		1.0								vaddps ymm5, ymm6
1		1.0								vaddps ymm7, ymm7, ymm8
1		1.0					1 0 0			vaddps ymm5, ymm7
2^ 2^			1.0		 1.0		2.0			vmovaps ymmword ptr [rdx], ymm1 vmovaps ymmword ptr [rdx+0x20], ymm5

5 Release Contents

This section lists the files required for running on Linux*, and Mac OS X^* operating systems to analyze Intel® 64 code. Each section also explains which environmental variables to modify.

5.1 Linux* OS

Add the bin/ directory to the PATH environment variable.

Add the lib/ directory to the LD_LIBRARY_PATH environment variable.

Include include/iacaMarks.h in your code.

Filename	Description
bin/iaca	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer command-line tool
bin/iaca.sh	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer invocation script
bin/pt.py	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer Pipetrace
lib/libiacaLoader.so	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer shared objects
lib/libiacaLogicSNB.so	
lib/libiacaLogicIVB.so	
lib/libiacaLogicHSW.so	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer shared objects for each
lib/libiacaLogicBDW.so	of the supported architectures
lib/libiacaLogicSKL.so	
lib/libiacaLogicSKX.so	
lib/libiacaArchDataSNB.so	
lib/libiacaArchDataIVB.so	
lib/libiacaArchDataHSW.so	Instruction databases for each of the supported
lib/libiacaArchDataBDW.so	architectures
lib/libiacaArchDataSKL.so	
lib/libiacaArchDataSKX.so	
lib/libXED2SNB.so	
lib/libXED2IVB.so	
lib/libXED2HSW.so	XED2 shared objects for each of the supported
lib/libXED2BDW.so	architectures
lib/libXED2SKL.so	
lib/libXED2SKX.so	
include/iacaMarks.h	Header file for the start/end markers

5.2 Mac OS X*

Add the bin/ directory to the PATH environment variable.

Add the lib/ directory to the DYLD_LIBRARY_PATH environment variable.

Include include/iacaMarks.h in your code.

Filename	Description
bin/iaca	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer command-line tool
bin/iaca.sh	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer invocation script
bin/pt.py	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer Pipetrace
lib/libiacaLoader.so	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer shared objects
lib/libiacaLogicSNB.so	
lib/libiacaLogicIVB.so	
lib/libiacaLogicHSW.so	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer shared objects for each
lib/libiacaLogicBDW.so	of the supported architectures
lib/libiacaLogicSKL.so	
lib/libiacaLogicSKX.so	
lib/libiacaArchDataSNB.so	
lib/libiacaArchDataIVB.so	
lib/libiacaArchDataHSW.so	Instruction databases for each of the supported
lib/libiacaArchDataBDW.so	architectures
lib/libiacaArchDataSKL.so	
lib/libiacaArchDataSKX.so	
lib/libXED2SNB.so	
lib/libXED2IVB.so	
lib/libXED2HSW.so	XED2 shared objects for each of the supported
lib/libXED2BDW.so	architectures
lib/libXED2SKL.so	
lib/libXED2SKX.so	
include/iacaMarks.h	Header file for the start/end markers

5.3 Windows* OS

 $Include \ {\tt iacaMarks.h} \ in \ your \ code.$

Filename	Description
iaca.exe	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer command-line tool
iacaLoader.dll	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer shared objects
pt.py	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer Pipetrace
iacaLogicSNB.dll	
iacaLogicIVB.dll	
iacaLogicHSW.dll	Intel Architecture Code Analyzer shared objects for each
iacaLogicBDW.dll	of the supported architectures
iacaLogicSKL.dll	
iacaLogicSKX.dll	
iacaArchDataSNB.dll	
iacaArchDataIVB.dll	
iacaArchDataHSW.dll	Instruction databases for each of the supported
iacaArchDataBDW.dll	architectures
iacaArchDataSKL.dll	
iacaArchDataSKX.dll	
iacaXED2SNB.dll	
iacaXED2IVB.dll	
iacaXED2HSW.dll	XED2 shared objects for each of the supported
iacaXED2BDW.dll	architectures
iacaXED2SKL.dll	
iacaXED2SKX.dll	
iacaMarks.h	Header file for the start/end markers