Announcements

Thursday Extras: CS Commons on Thursdays @ 4:00 pm

- Monday Extra, Oct. 8, 4:15 pm, Science 2022
  - Careers in CS and Informal Talk by Grinnell CS Alumni
- Thursday: CS Student Research Group

External Reviewers on campus: Thursday/Friday

CSC 161 Schedule

- Today: Floating point representation
- Wednesday:
  - Data representation and its consequences: TO BE DONE
  - Machine-level ops: optional

Floating point numbers

- questions
- clicker questions

In a single-precision (`float`) representation, what is the binary representation of the <u>exponent</u> for

$0.75_{10} = 1.1 \times 2^{-1}$

A. 10000001
B. 11111110
C. 11111111
D. 01111110
E. None of the above

In a single-precision (`float`) representation, what is the binary representation of the mantissa for

$6.875_{10} = 110.111_2$

23 bits

A. `11011100...00`
B. `10111000...00`
C. `00...00110111`
D. `00...00010111`
E. None of the above

Math != Computer Engineering

$2.00000\text{x}10^{0} + 6.00000\text{x}10^{-5} + 6.00000\text{x}10^{-5} = 2.000012\text{x}10^{0}$

$(2.00000\text{x}10^{0} + 6.00000\text{x}10^{-5}) + 6.00000\text{x}10^{-5}$

$2.000006 \quad + 6.00000\text{x}10^{-5}$

round

truncate

$2.00001\text{x}10^{0}$ $\quad$ $2.00000\text{x}10^{0}$

round

truncate

$2.00001\text{x}10^{0} + 6.00000\text{x}10^{-5} = 2.000016\text{x}10^{0}$

round

$= 2.00002\text{x}10^{0}$

$2.00000\text{x}10^{0} + 6.00000\text{x}10^{-5} = 2.000006\text{x}10^{0}$

truncate

$= 2.00000\text{x}10^{0}$

Why precision matters

Between 1981 and 1983, the Vancouver Stock Exchange Index was computed with each trade of stock. The computation used four decimal places in the computation, but the result was then truncated (not rounded) to three places of accuracy. This computation was then repeated with each of the approximately 3000 trades that occurred daily. As a result of the truncation of the calculation to three decimal places, the index lost about 1 point a day, or about 20 points per month. Thus, to correct this consistent numerical error, the index was recomputed and corrected over the weekend of November 26, 1983. Specifically, when trading concluded on November 25, the Vancouver Stock Exchange Index was quoted as 524.811; the corrected figure used to open on Monday morning was 1098.892. The correction for 22 months of compounded error caused the Index to increase by by 574.081 over a weekend without any changes in stock prices. In this example, computations began with correct data, but subsequent processing introduced a significant error in the result.

Source: Walker, H. M. (1994) *The limits of computing*, pp. 100–101.