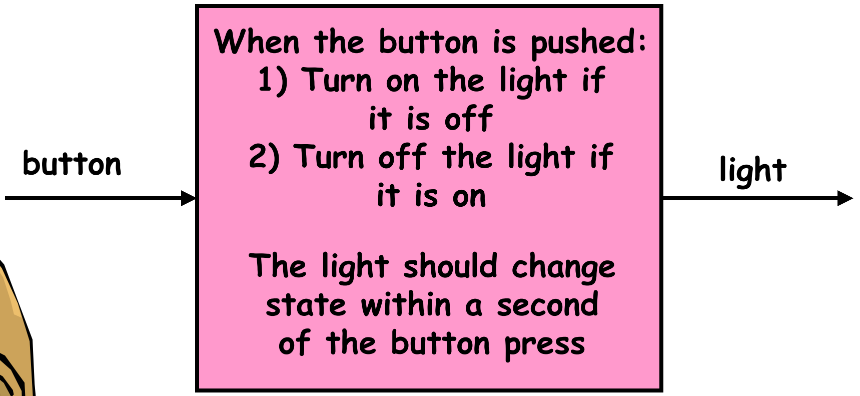
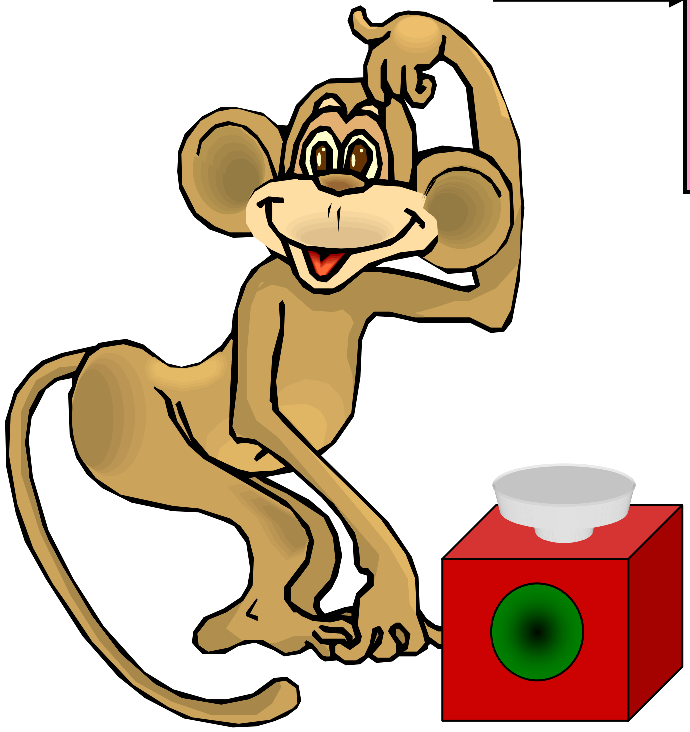
# Something We Can't Build (Yet)

What if you were given the following design specification:


button
When the button is pushed:
1) Turn on the light if it is off
2) Turn off the light if it is on
The light should change state within a second of the button press
light

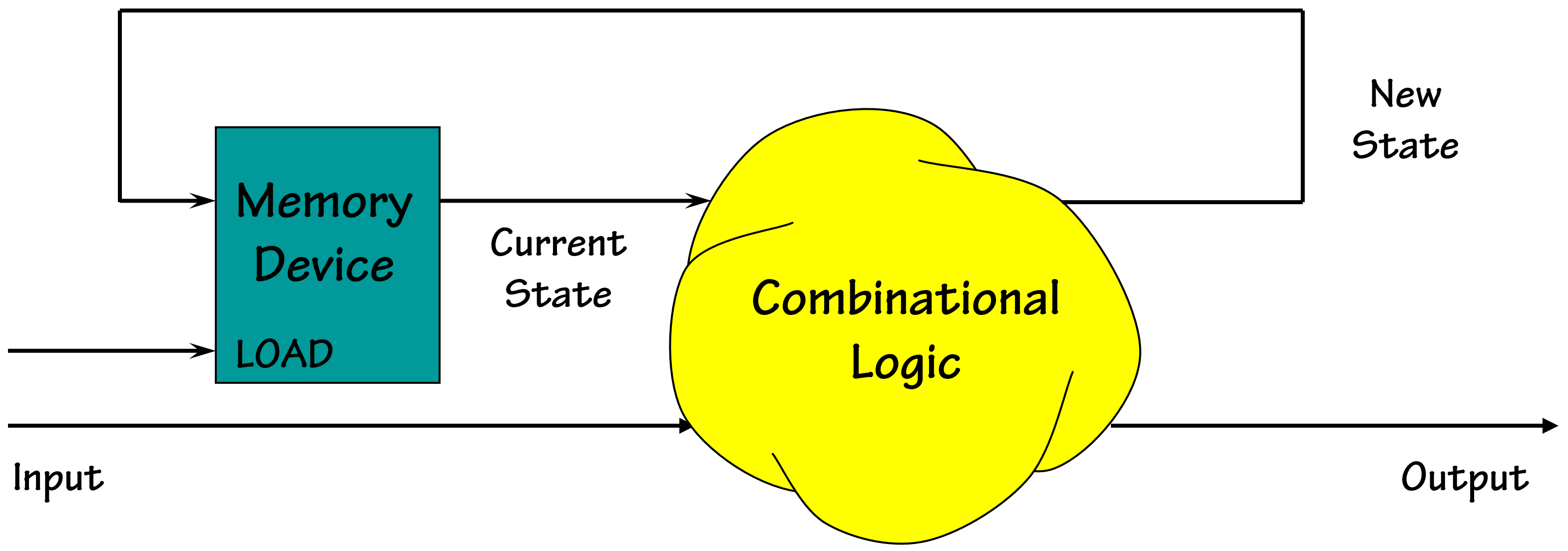


What makes this circuit so different from those we've discussed before?

1. "State" – i.e. the circuit has memory
2. The output was changed by a input "event" (pushing a button) rather than an input "value"

# Digital State

*One model of what we'd like to build*

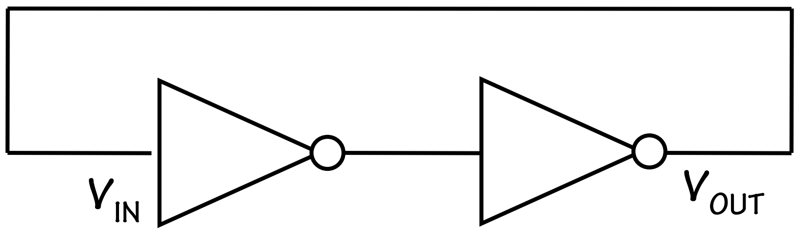


Plan: Build a Sequential Circuit with stored digital STATE –

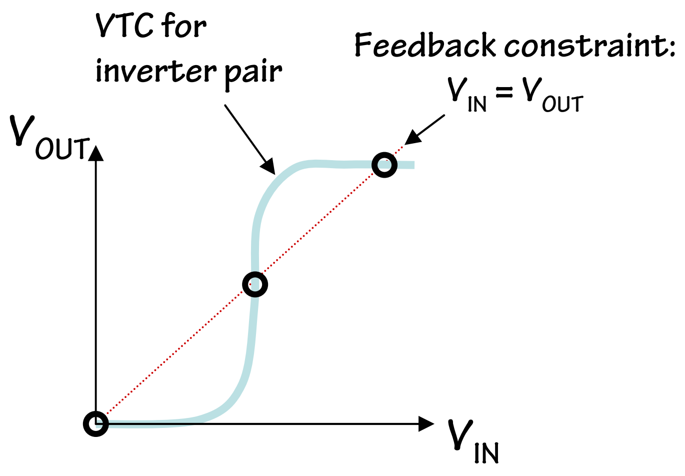
- Memory stores CURRENT state, produced at output
- Combinational Logic computes
  - NEXT state (from input, current state)
  - OUTPUT bit (from input, current state)
- State changes on LOAD control input

# Storage: Using Feedback

IDEA: use positive feedback to maintain storage indefinitely. Our logic gates are built to restore marginal signal levels, so noise shouldn't be a problem!



Result: a bistable storage element



Not affected by noise

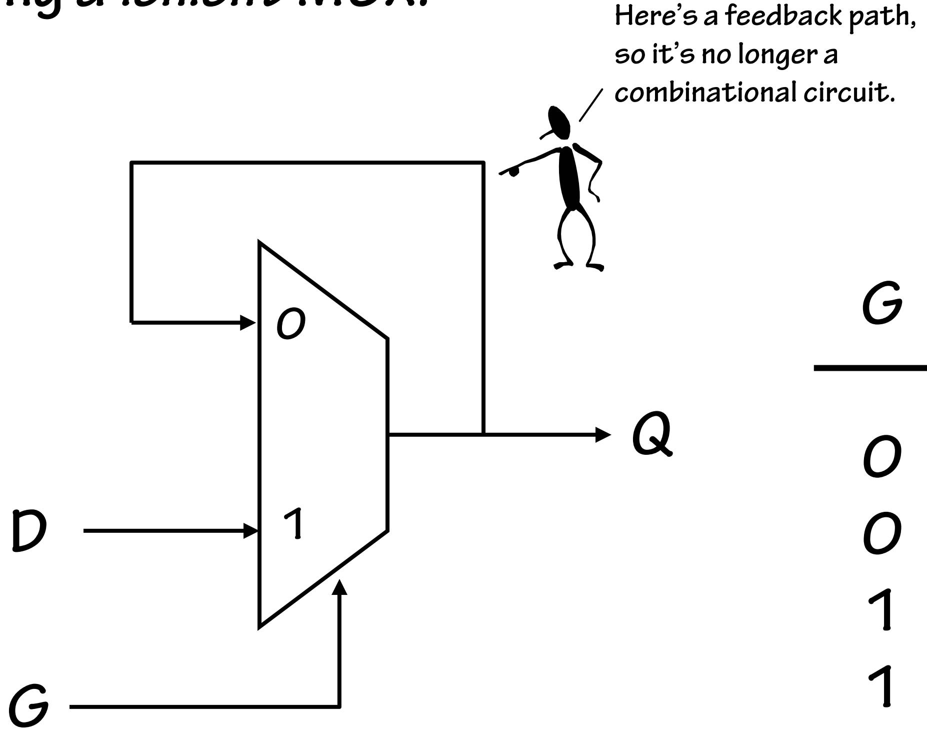
Three solutions:

- two end-points are stable
- middle point is unstable

We'll get back to this!

# Settable Storage Element

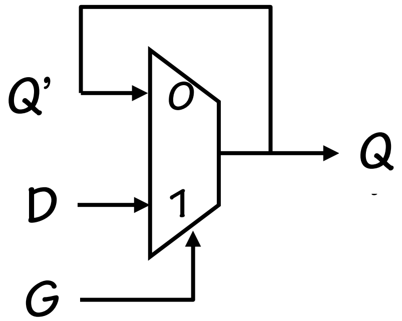
It's easy to build a settable storage element (called a latch) using a *lenient* MUX:

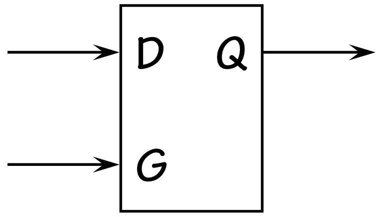

Here's a feedback path, so it's no longer a combinational circuit.
0
1
D
G
Q

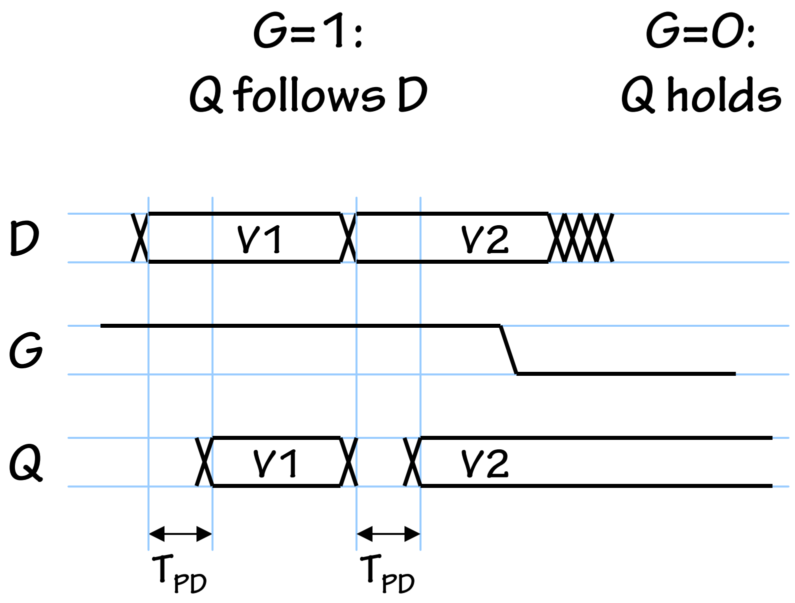
"state" signal appears as both input and output

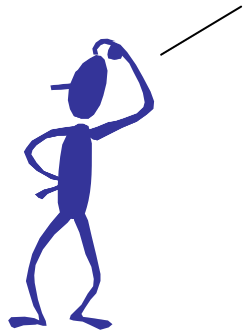
| G | D | $Q_{IN}$ | $Q_{OUT}$ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | -- | 0 | 0 | Q stable |
| 0 | -- | 1 | 1 | |
| 1 | 0 | -- | 0 | Q follows D |
| 1 | 1 | -- | 1 | |

# New Device: D Latch







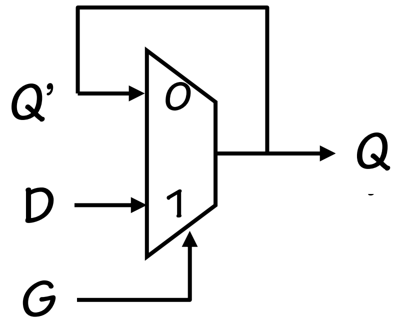


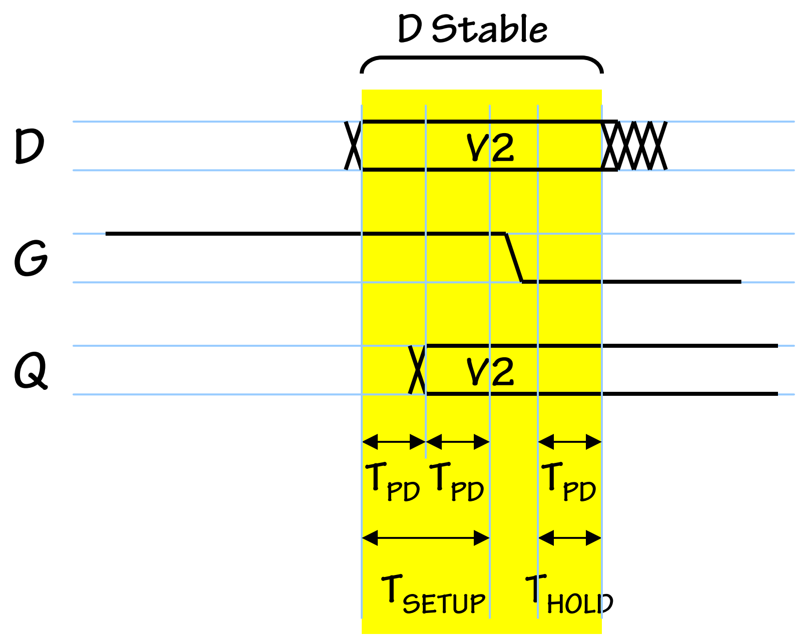
*BUT… A change in D or G contaminates Q, hence Q' … how can this possibly work?*

G=1: Q Follows D, *independently of Q'*

G=0: Q Holds stable Q', *independently of D*

# D-Latch timing





***To reliably latch V2:***

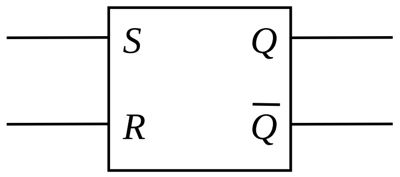
- Apply V2 to D, holding G=1
- After $T_{PD}$, V2 appears at Q=Q'
- After another $T_{PD}$, Q' & D both valid for $T_{PD}$; *will hold Q=V2 independently of G*
- Set G=0, while Q' & D hold Q=D
- After another $T_{PD}$, G=0 and Q' are sufficient to hold Q=V2 *independently of D*

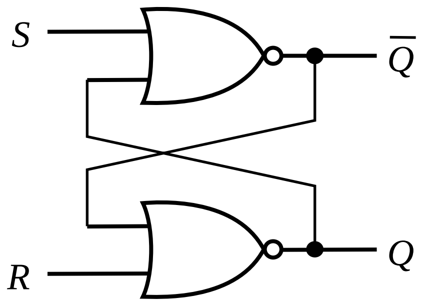
***Dynamic Discipline*** **for our latch:**

$T_{SETUP} = 2T_{PD}$: interval *prior to G* transition for which D must be stable & valid

$T_{HOLD} = T_{PD}$: interval *following G* transition for which D must be stable & valid

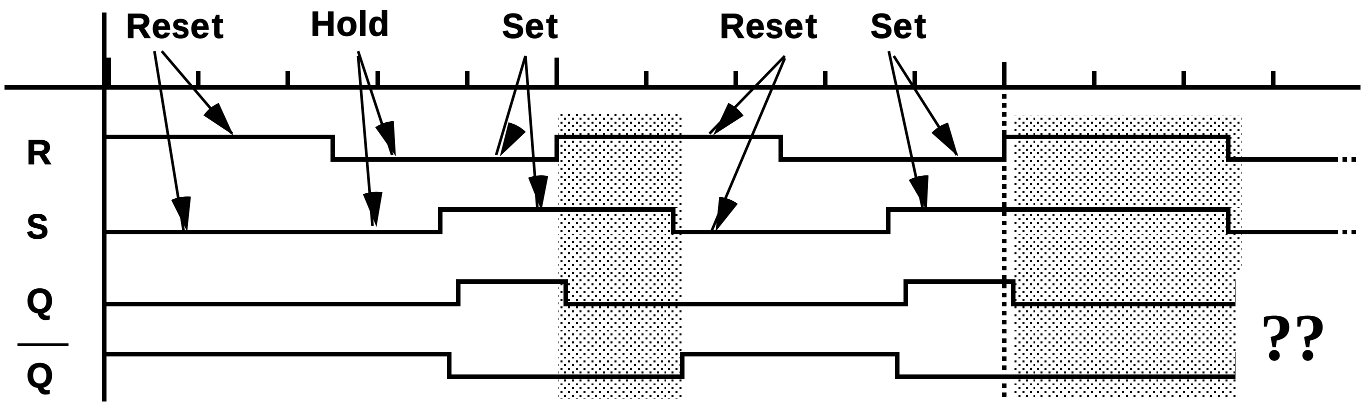
# NOR-based Set-Reset (SR) Flipflop





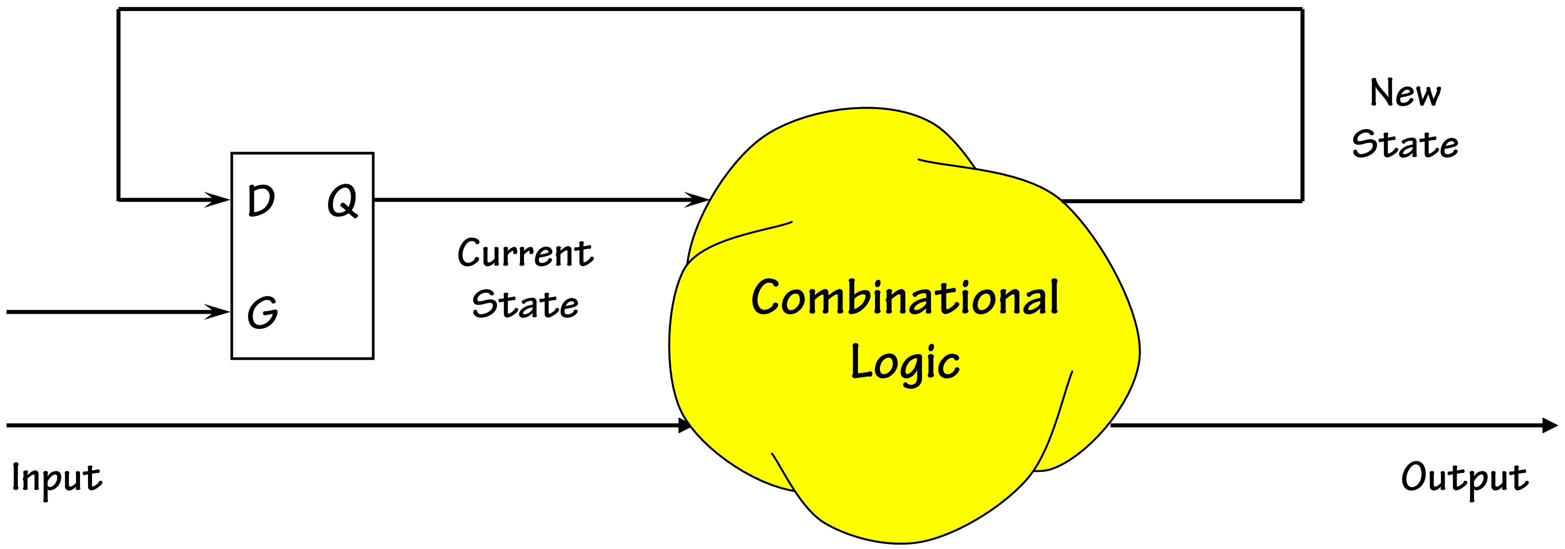
| S | R | Q | $\overline{Q}$ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | Q | $\overline{Q}$ |
| 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| $\boxed{1}$ | $\boxed{1}$ | $\boxed{0}$ | $\boxed{0}$ |

Forbidden State



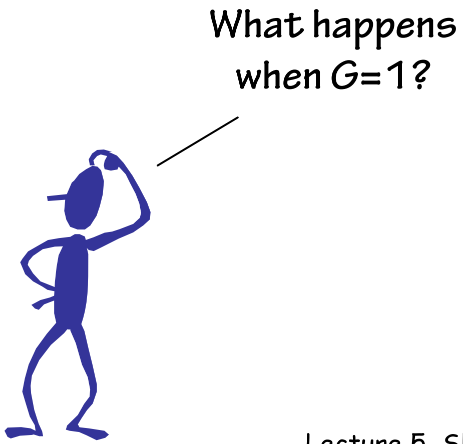
Flip-flop refers to a bi-stable element

# Lets try using the D-Latch…

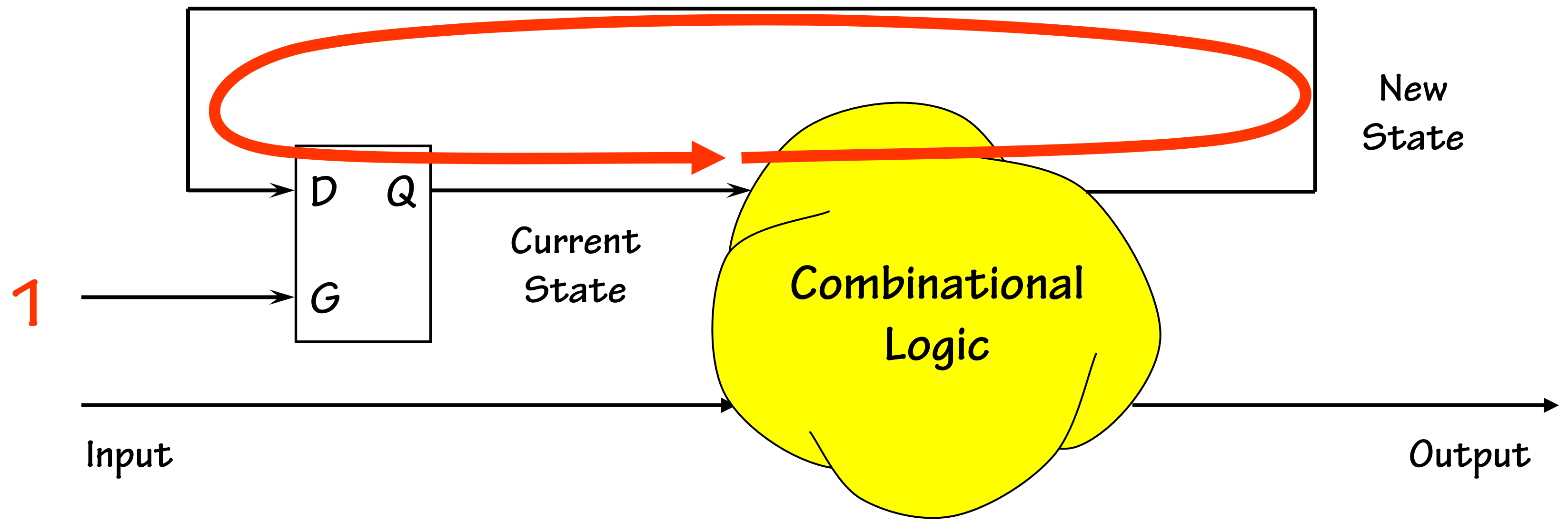


Plan: Build a Sequential Circuit with one bit of STATE –

- Single latch holds CURRENT state
- Combinational Logic computes
  - NEXT state (from input, current state)
  - OUTPUT bit (from input, current state)
- State changes when $G = 1$ (briefly!)



# Combinational Cycles



When G=1, latch is *Transparent…*

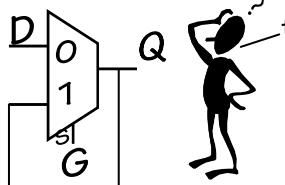
… provides a combinational path from D to Q.

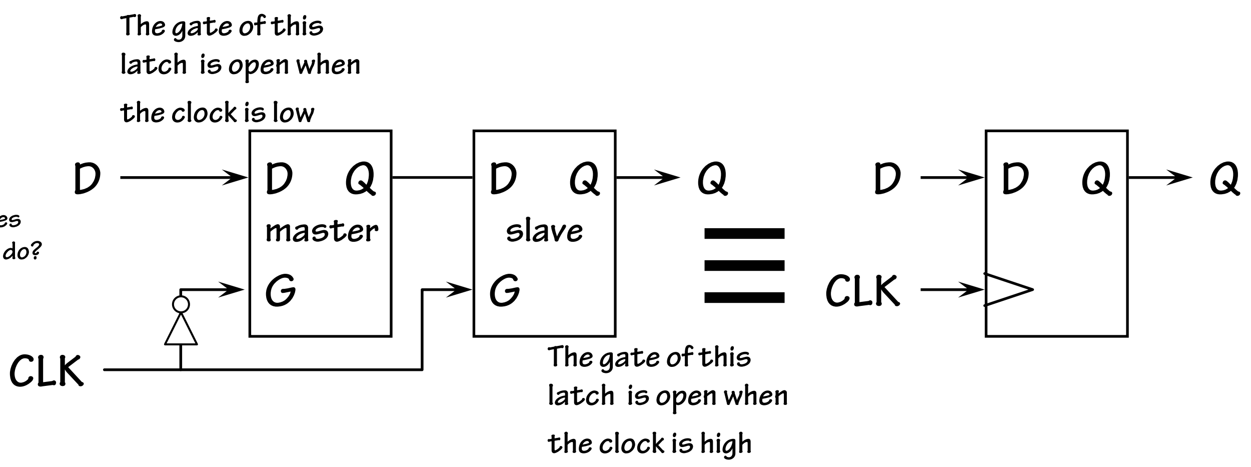
Can't work without tricky timing constrants on G=1 pulse:

- Must fit within contamination delay of logic
- Must accommodate latch setup, hold times

*Want to signal an INSTANT, not an INTERVAL…*

# Edge-triggered D-Register



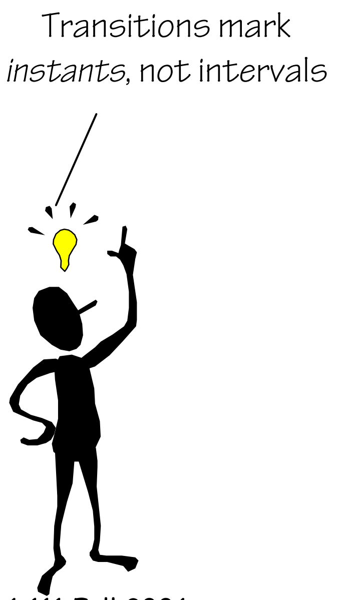

The gate of this latch is open when the clock is low
D
D
Q
master
G
CLK
D
Q
slave
G
Q
The gate of this latch is open when the clock is high
≡
D
D
Q
Q
CLK

## Observations:

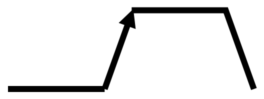
- only one latch "transparent" at any time:
  - master closed when slave is open
  - slave closed when master is open

→ no combinational path through flip flop

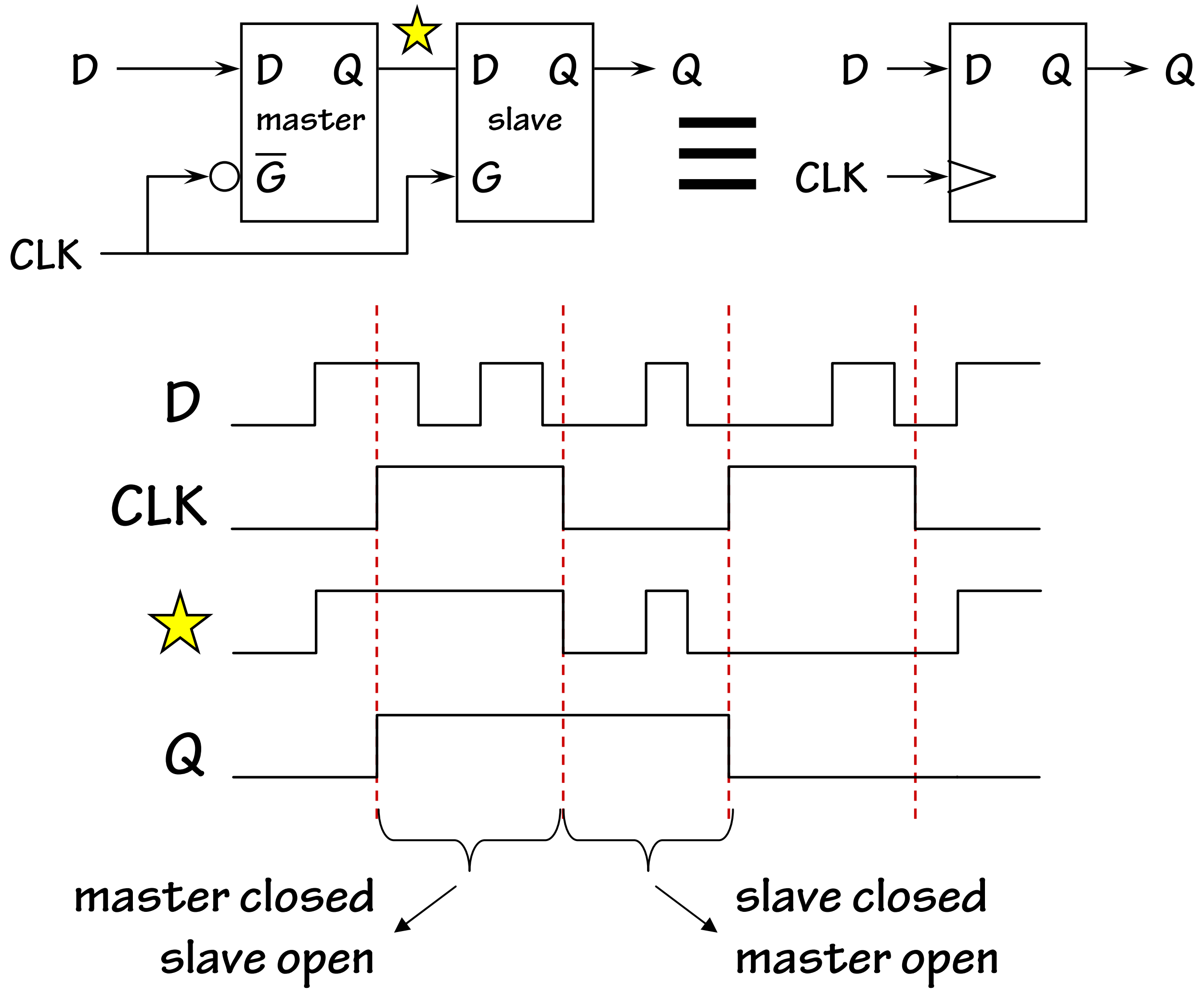
(the feedback path in one of the master or slave latches is always active)



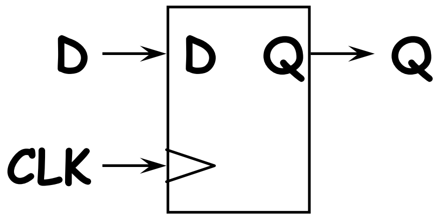
- Q only changes shortly after 0 →1 transition of CLK, so flip flop appears to be "triggered" by rising edge of CLK

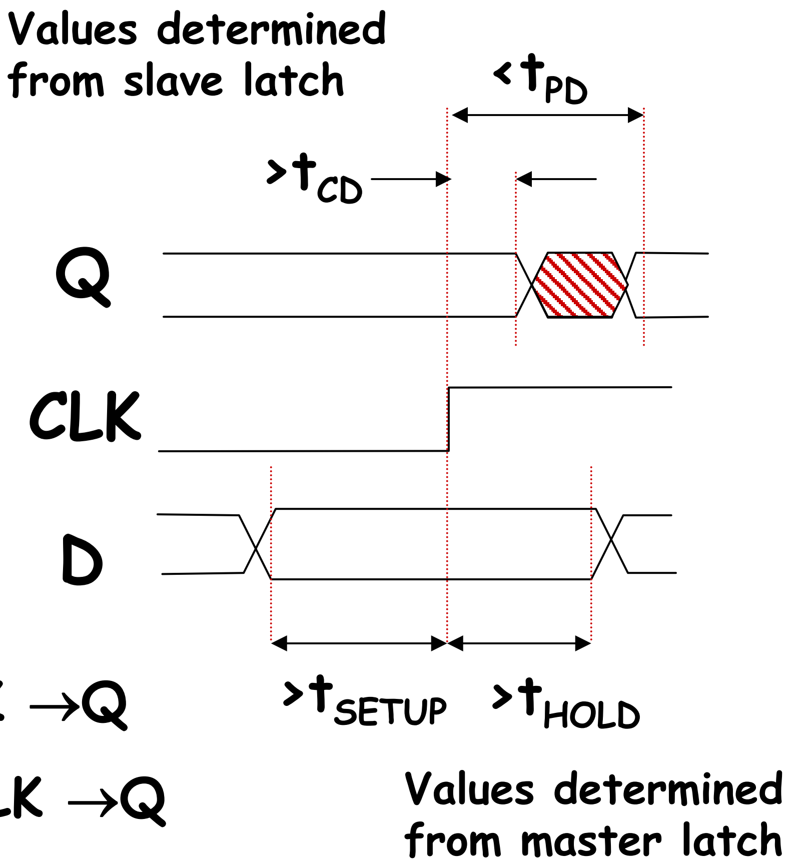


# D-Register Waveforms



# D-Register Timing - I





Values determined from slave latch
<$t_{PD}$
>$t_{CD}$
Q
CLK
D
>$t_{SETUP}$
>$t_{HOLD}$
Values determined from master latch

$t_{PD}$: maximum propagation delay, CLK $\rightarrow$Q

$t_{CD}$: minimum contamination delay, CLK $\rightarrow$Q

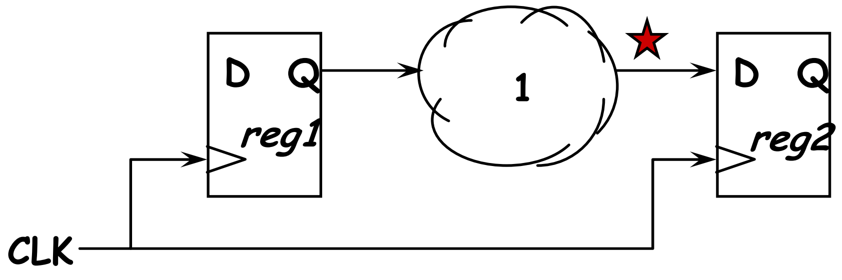
$t_{SETUP}$: setup time

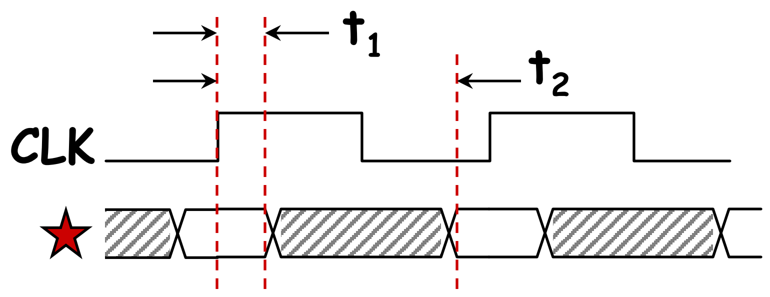
*guarantee that D has propagated through feedback path before master closes*

$t_{HOLD}$: hold time

*guarantee master is closed and data is stable before allowing D to change*

# D-Register Timing - II





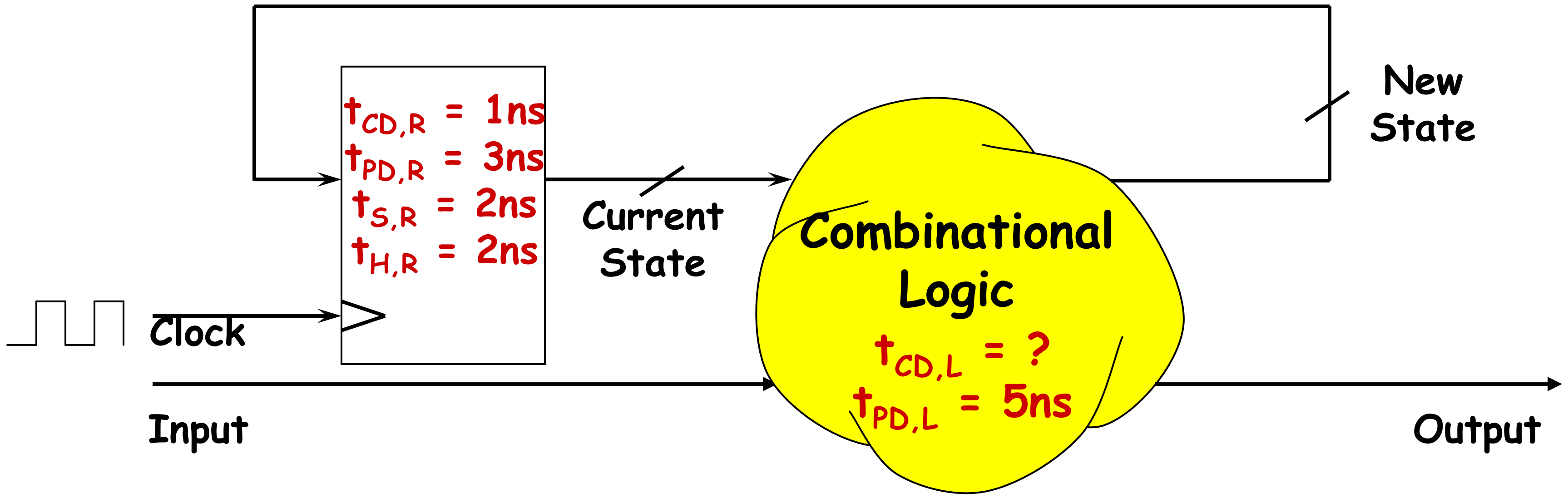
$t_1 = t_{CD,reg1} + t_{CD,1} > t_{HOLD,reg2}$

$t_2 = t_{PD,reg1} + t_{PD,1} < t_{CLK} - t_{SETUP,reg2}$

Questions for register-based designs:

- how much time for useful work (i.e. for combinational logic delay)?
- does it help to guarantee a minimum $t_{CD}$? How about designing registers so that $t_{CD,reg} > t_{HOLD,reg}$?
- what happens if CLK signal doesn't arrive at the two registers at exactly the same time (a phenomenon known as "clock skew")?

## Sequential Circuit Timing



Questions:

- Constraints on $T_{CD}$ for the logic? > 1 ns
- Minimum clock period? > 10 ns ($T_{PD,R}+T_{PD,L}+T_{S,R}$)
- Setup, Hold times for Inputs? $T_S = T_{PD,L} + T_{S,R}$
  $T_H = T_{H,R} - T_{CD,L}$

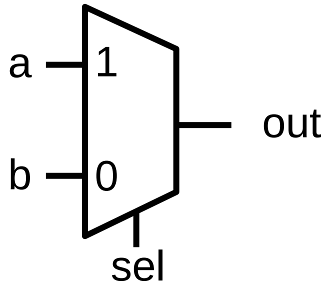
This is a simple *Finite State Machine* … more on next time!

# The Sequential `always` Block

- Edge-triggered circuits are described using a sequential `always` block

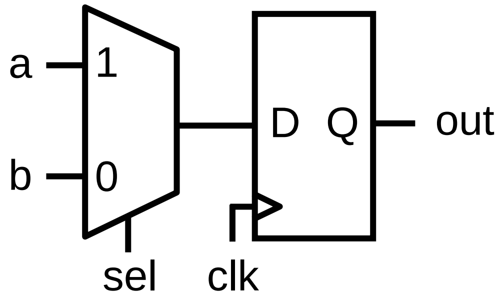
**Combinational**

```
module combinational(a, b, sel,
                            out);
  input a, b;
  input sel;
  output out;
  reg out;

  always @ (a or b or sel)
  begin
    if (sel) out = a;
    else out = b;
  end

endmodule
```



**Sequential**

```
module sequential(a, b, sel,
                       clk, out);
  input a, b;
  input sel, clk;
  output out;
  reg out;

  always @ (posedge clk)
  begin
    if (sel) out <= a;
    else out <= b;
  end

endmodule
```



# Importance of the Sensitivity List

- The use of `posedge` and `negedge` makes an `always` block sequential (edge-triggered)
- Unlike a combinational `always` block, the sensitivity list **does** determine behavior for synthesis!

*D Flip-flop with synchronous clear*

```
module dff_sync_clear(d, clearb,
clock, q);
input d, clearb, clock;
output q;
reg q;
always @ (posedge clock)
begin
  if (!clearb) q <= 1'b0;
  else q <= d;
end
endmodule
```

`always` block entered only at each positive clock edge

*D Flip-flop with asynchronous clear*

```
module dff_async_clear(d, clearb, clock, q);
input d, clearb, clock;
output q;
reg q;

always @ (negedge clearb or posedge clock)
begin
  if (!clearb) q <= 1'b0;
  else q <= d;
end
endmodule
```

`always` block entered immediately when (active-low) clearb is asserted

Note: The following is **incorrect** syntax: `always @ (clear or negedge clock)`

If one signal in the sensitivity list uses posedge/negedge, then all signals must.

- **Assign any signal or variable from <u>only one</u> always block, Be wary of race conditions: always blocks execute in parallel**

## Blocking vs. Nonblocking Assignments

- Verilog supports two types of assignments within `always` blocks, with subtly different behaviors.
- *Blocking assignment:* evaluation and assignment are immediate

```
always @ (a or b or c)
begin
   x = a | b;
   y = a ^ b ^ c;
   z = b & ~c;
end
```

**1. Evaluate *a* | *b*, assign result to *x***
**2. Evaluate *a*^*b*^*c*, assign result to *y***
**3. Evaluate *b*&(~*c*), assign result to *z***

- *Nonblocking assignment:* all assignments deferred until all right-hand sides have been evaluated (end of simulation timestep)

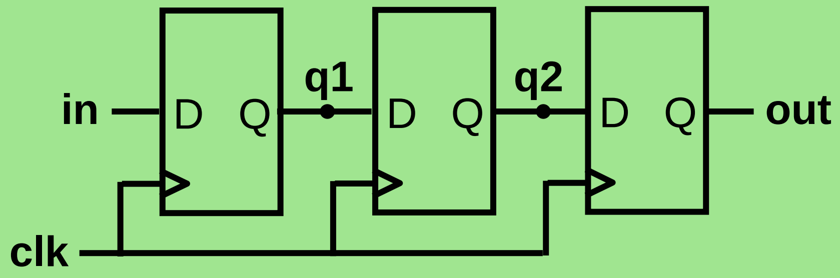
```
always @ (a or b or c)
begin
   x <= a | b;
   y <= a ^ b ^ c;
   z <= b & ~c;
end
```

**1. Evaluate *a* | *b* but defer assignment of *x***
**2. Evaluate *a*^*b*^*c* but defer assignment of *y***
**3. Evaluate *b*&(~*c*) but defer assignment of *z***
**4. Assign *x*, *y*, and *z* with their new values**

- Sometimes, as above, both produce the same result. Sometimes, not!

# Assignment Styles for Sequential Logic

***Flip-Flop Based Digital Delay Line***



- Will nonblocking and blocking assignments both produce the desired result?

```
module nonblocking(in, clk, out);
  input in, clk;
  output out;
  reg q1, q2, out;
  always @ (posedge clk)
  begin
    q1 <= in;
    q2 <= q1;
    out <= q2;
  end
endmodule
```

```
module blocking(in, clk, out);
  input in, clk;
  output out;
  reg q1, q2, out;
  always @ (posedge clk)
  begin
    q1 = in;
    q2 = q1;
    out = q2;
  end
endmodule
```

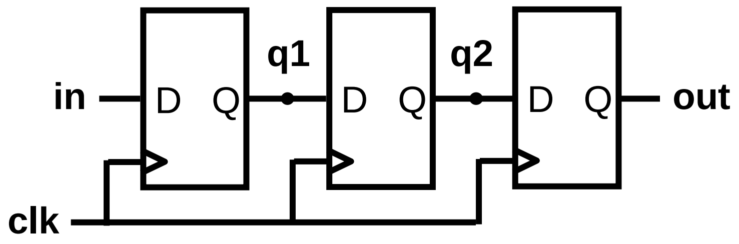
# Use Nonblocking for Sequential Logic

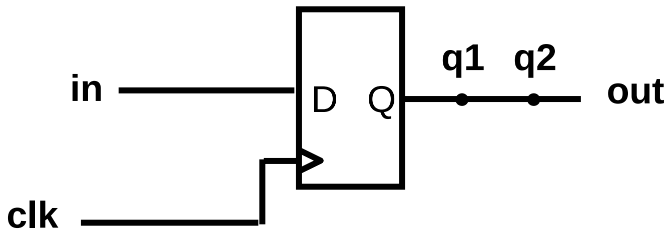
```
always @ (posedge clk)
begin
  q1 <= in;
  q2 <= q1;
  out <= q2;
end
```

“At each rising clock edge, *q1*, *q2*, and *out* simultaneously receive the old values of *in*, *q1*, and *q2*.”

```
always @ (posedge clk)
begin
  q1 = in;
  q2 = q1;
  out = q2;
end
```

“At each rising clock edge, *q1* = *in*.
After that, *q2* = *q1* = *in*.
After that, *out* = *q2* = *q1* = *in*.
Therefore *out* = *in*.”

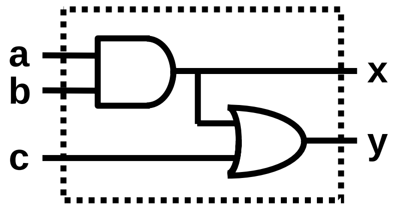




- Blocking assignments do not reflect the intrinsic behavior of multi-stage sequential logic
- **Guideline: use nonblocking assignments for sequential `always` blocks**

# Use Blocking for Combinational Logic

| *Blocking Behavior* | a b c x y |
|---|---|
| (Given) Initial Condition | 1 1 0 1 1 |
| *a* changes; `always` block triggered | 0 1 0 1 1 |
| `x = a & b;` | 0 1 0 0 1 |
| `y = x \| c;` | 0 1 0 0 0 |



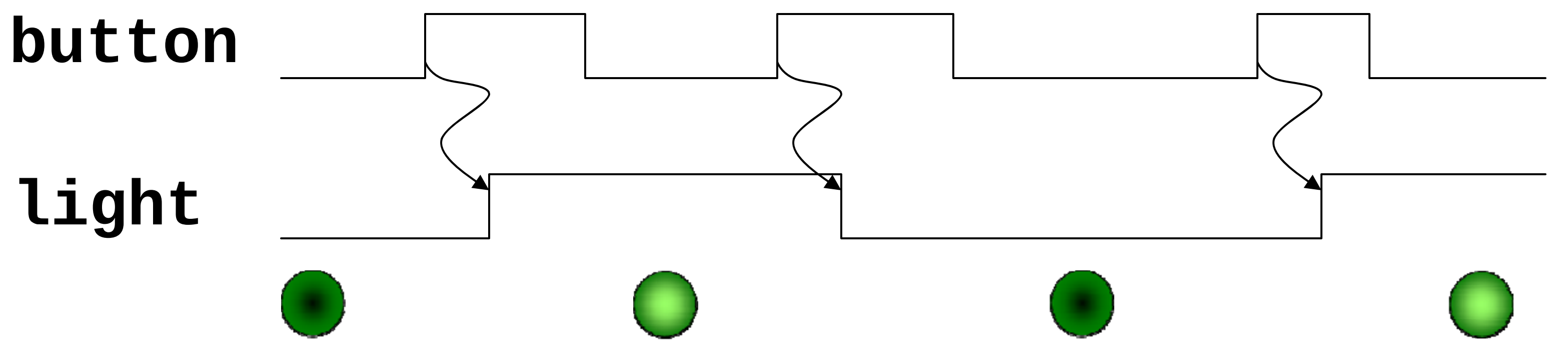
```
module blocking(a,b,c,x,y);
  input a,b,c;
  output x,y;
  reg x,y;

  always @ (a or b or c)
  begin
    x = a & b;
    y = x | c;
  end

endmodule
```

| *Nonblocking Behavior* | a b c x y | *Deferred* |
|---|---|---|
| (Given) Initial Condition | 1 1 0 1 1 | |
| *a* changes; `always` block triggered | 0 1 0 1 1 | |
| `x <= a & b;` | 0 1 0 1 1 | x<=0 |
| `y <= x \| c;` | 0 1 0 1 1 | x<=0, y<=1 |
| Assignment completion | 0 1 0 0 1 | |

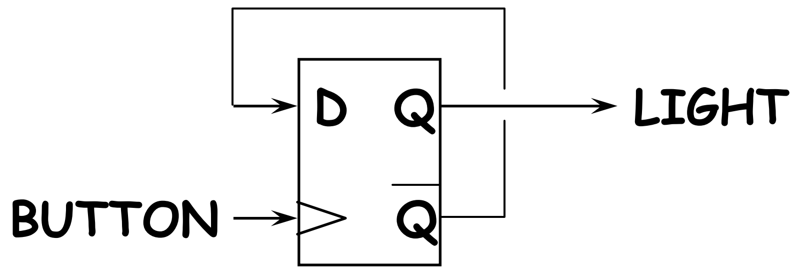
```
module nonblocking(a,b,c,x,y);
  input a,b,c;
  output x,y;
  reg x,y;

  always @ (a or b or c)
  begin
    x <= a & b;
    y <= x | c;
  end

endmodule
```

- Nonblocking and blocking assignments will synthesize correctly. Will both styles simulate correctly?
- Nonblocking assignments do not reflect the intrinsic behavior of multi-stage combinational logic
- While nonblocking assignments can be hacked to simulate correctly (expand the sensitivity list), it's not elegant
- Guideline: use blocking assignments for combinational `always` blocks

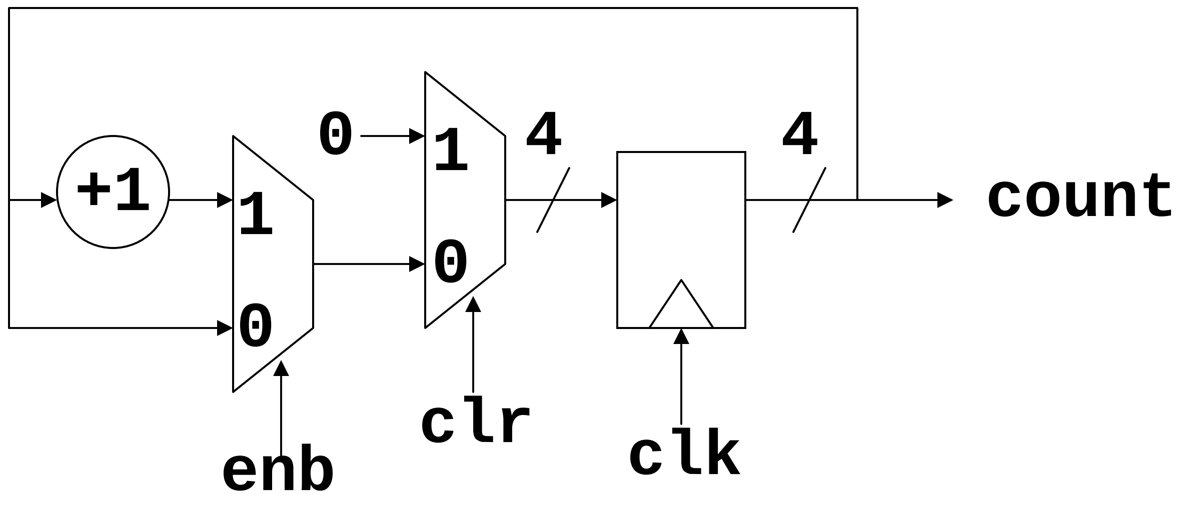
# Implementation for on/off button



```
module onoff(button,light);
  input button;
  output light;
  reg light;
  always @ (posedge button)
  begin
    light <= ~light;
  end
endmodule
```



# A Simple Counter



```
# 4-bit counter with enable and synchronous clear
module counter(clk,enb,clr,count);
  input clk,enb,clr;
  output [3:0] count;
  reg [3:0] count;

  always @ (posedge clk) begin
    count <= clr ? 4'b0 : (enb ? count+1 : count);
  end
endmodule
```