15-213

"The course that gives CMU its Zip!"

Machine-Level Programming III: Procedures Sept 18, 2001

Topics

- IA32 stack discipline
- Register saving conventions
- Creating pointers to local variables

IA32 Stack

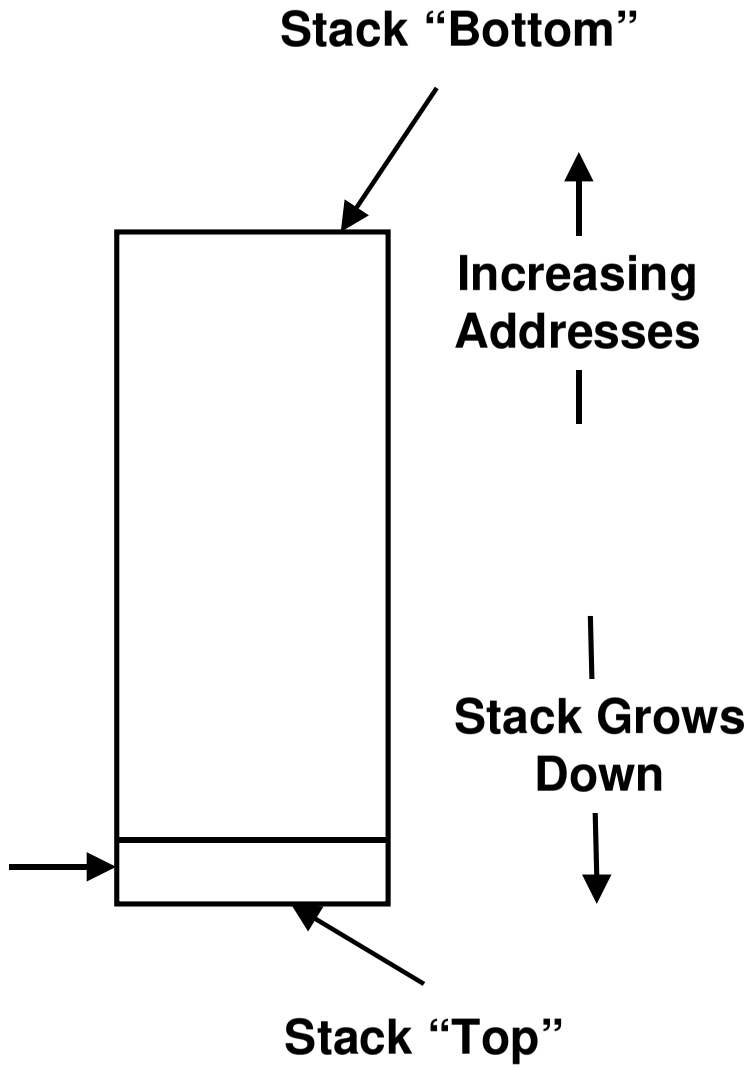
- **Region of memory managed with stack discipline**
- **Register `%esp` indicates lowest allocated position in stack**
  - i.e., address of top element

Pushing

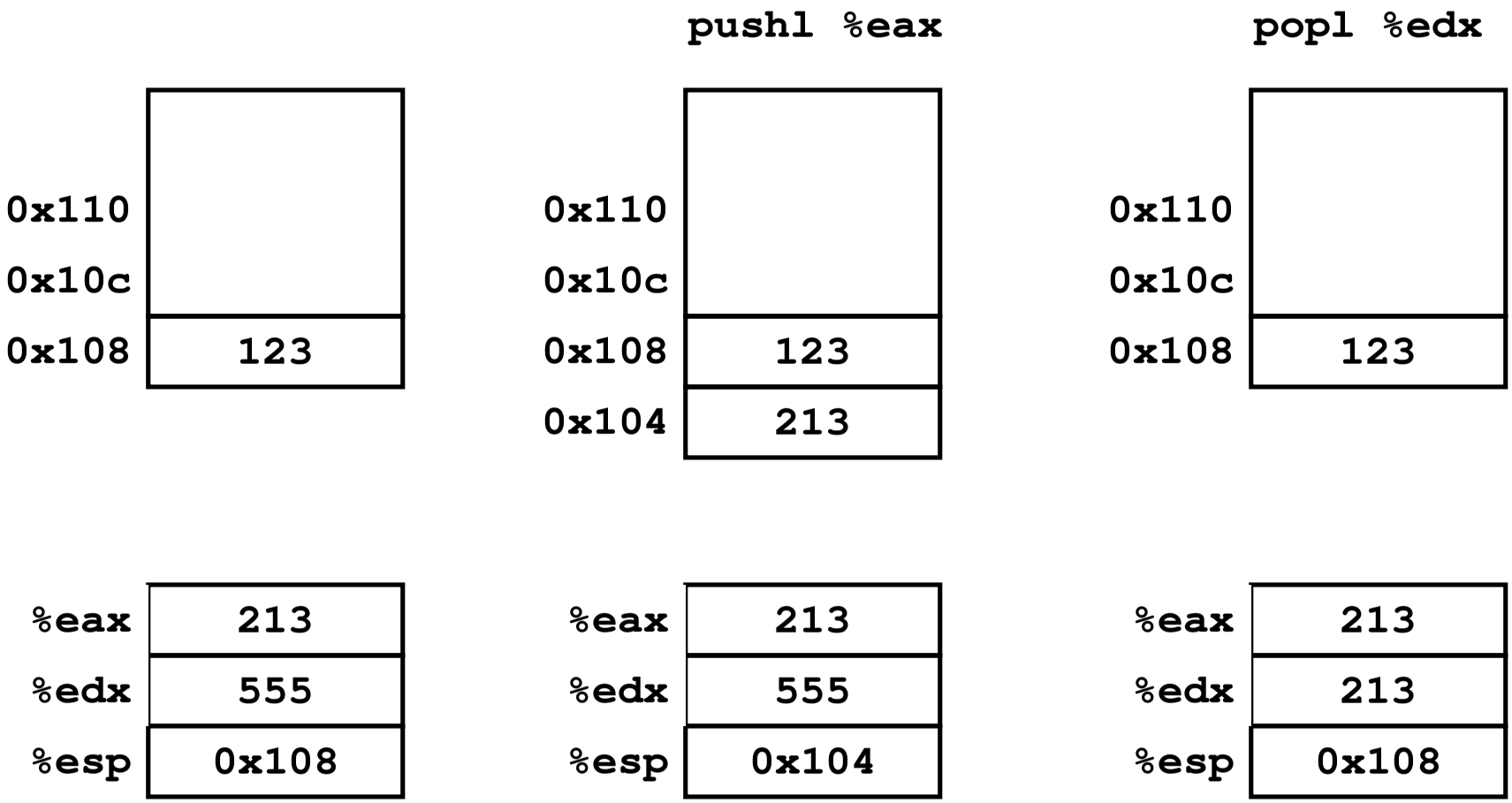
- **`pushl` *Src***
- **Fetch operand at *Src***
- **Decrement `%esp` by 4**
- **Write operand at address given by `%esp`**

Popping

- **`popl` *Dest***
- **Read operand at address given by `%esp`**
- **Increment `%esp` by 4**
- **Write to *Dest***



Stack Operation Examples



Procedure Control Flow

Use stack to support procedure call and return

Procedure call:

`call` ***`label`*** Push return address on stack; Jump to ***`label`***

Return address value

- **Address of instruction beyond `call`**
- **Example from disassembly**

```
804854e:   e8 3d 06 00 00   call   8048b90 <main>
8048553:   50               pushl  %eax
```

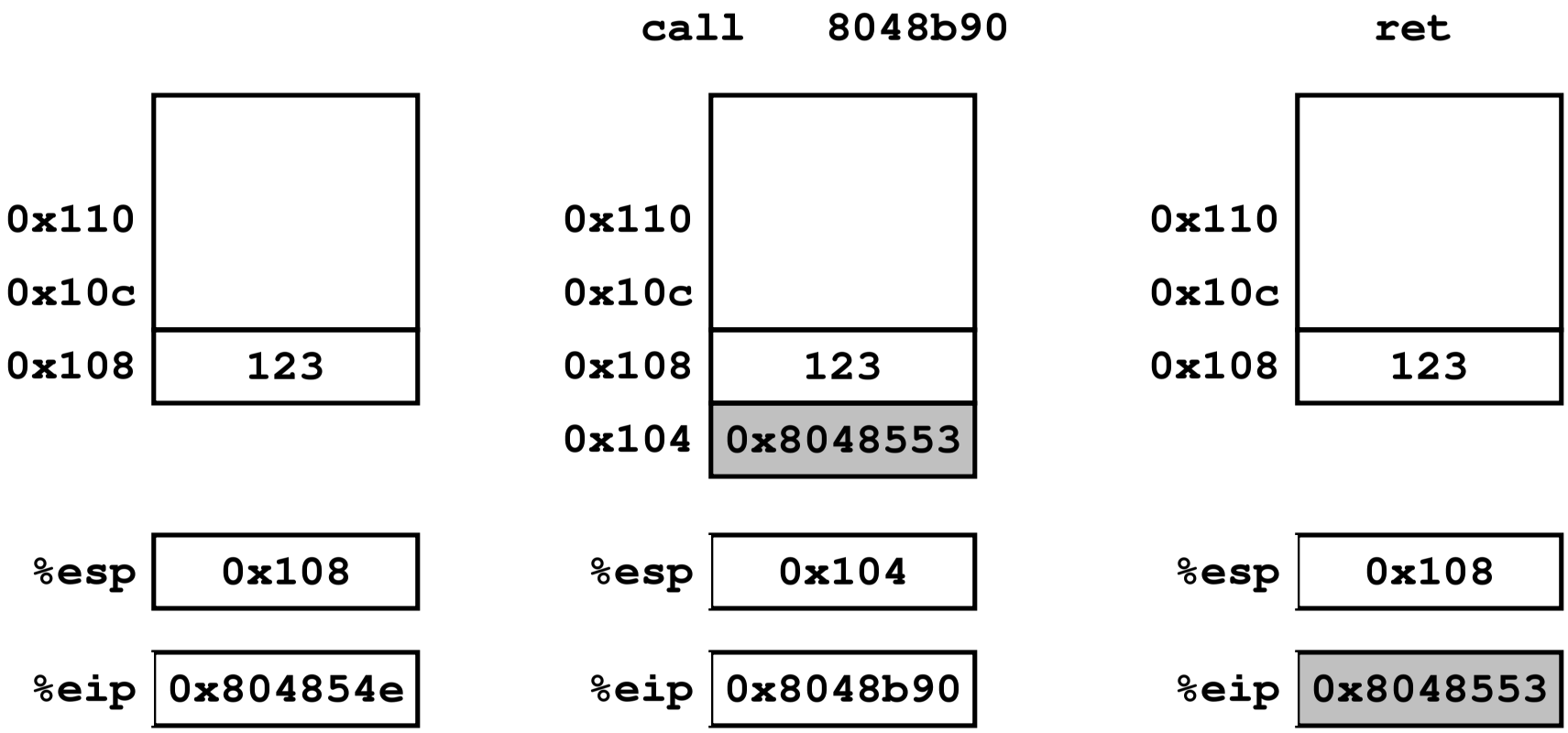
  - Return address = **`0x8048553`**

Procedure return:

- **`ret`** Pop address from stack; Jump to address

Procedure Call / Return Example

```
804854e:  e8 3d 06 00 00        call   8048b90 <main>
8048553:  50                    pushl  %eax
```



`%eip` is program counter

Stack-Based Languages

Languages that Support Recursion

- **e.g., C, Pascal, Java**
- **Code must be "*Reentrant*"**
  - Multiple simultaneous instantiations of single procedure
- **Need some place to store state of each instantiation**
  - Arguments
  - Local variables
  - Return pointer

Stack Discipline

- **State for given procedure needed for limited time**
  - From when called to when return
- **Callee returns before caller does**

Stack Allocated in *Frames*

- **state for single procedure instantiation**

Call Chain Example

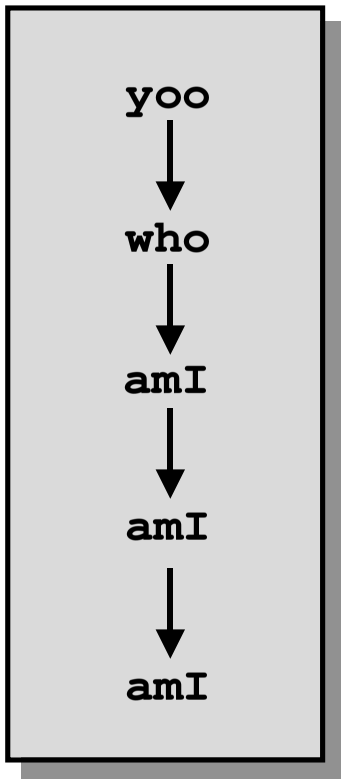
Code Structure

```
yoo(…)
{
    •
    •
    who();
    •
    •
}
```

```
who(…)
{
    •
    •
    amI();
    •
    •
}
```

```
amI(…)
{
    •
    •
    amI();
    •
    •
}
```

Call Chain



- Procedure `amI` recursive

IA32 Stack Structure

Stack Growth

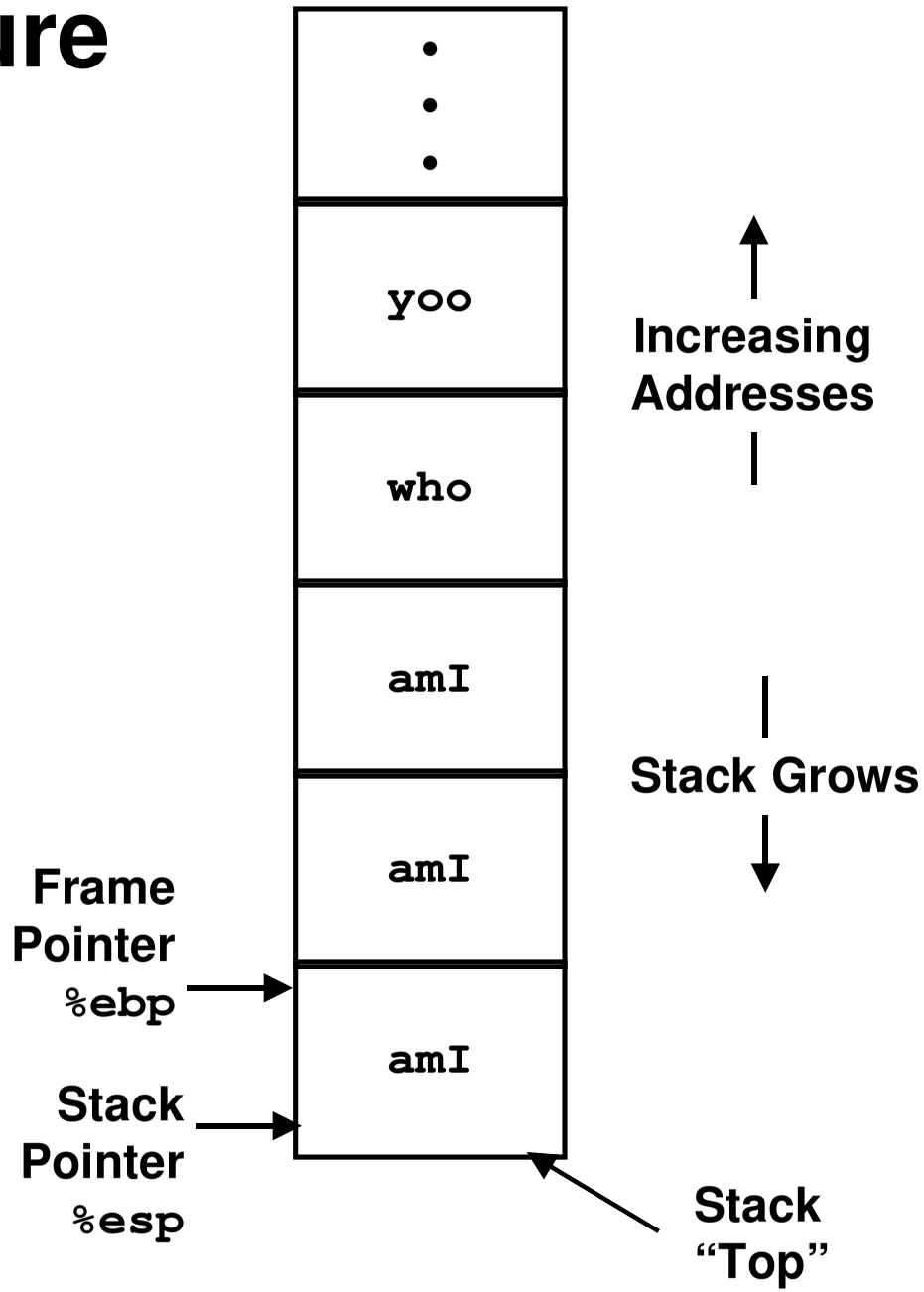
- Toward lower addresses

Stack Pointer

- Address of next available location in stack
- Use register `%esp`

Frame Pointer

- Start of current stack frame
- Use register `%ebp`



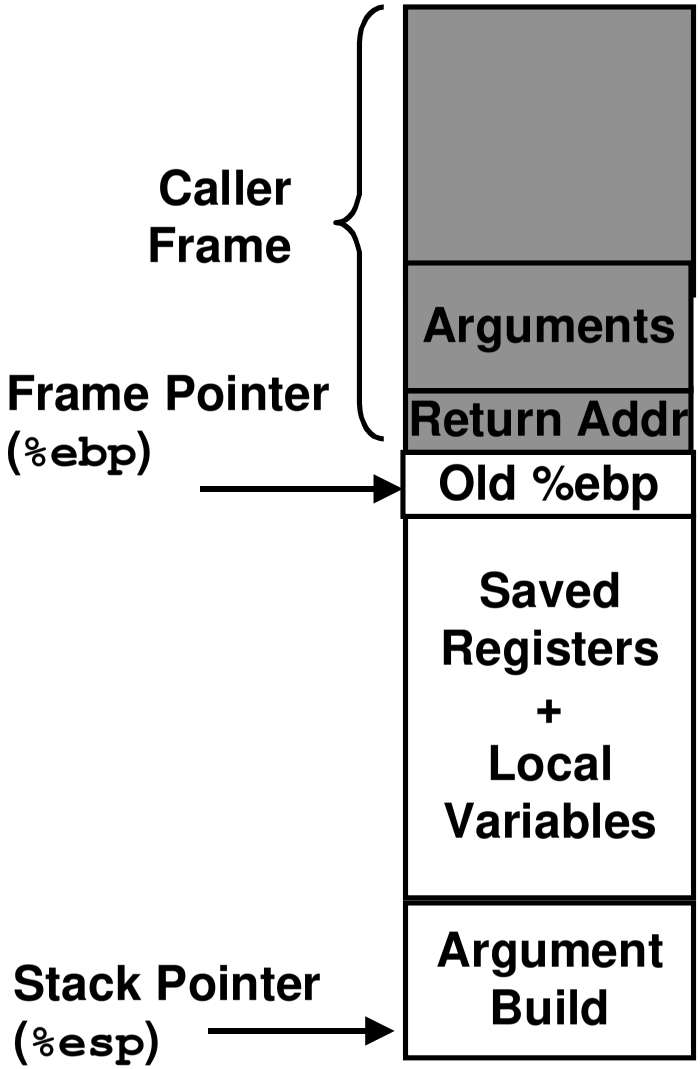
IA32/Linux Stack Frame

Callee Stack Frame ("Top" to Bottom)

- **Parameters for called functions**
- **Local variables**
  - If can't keep in registers
- **Saved register context**
- **Old frame pointer**

Caller Stack Frame

- **Return address**
  - Pushed by `call` instruction
- **Arguments for this call**



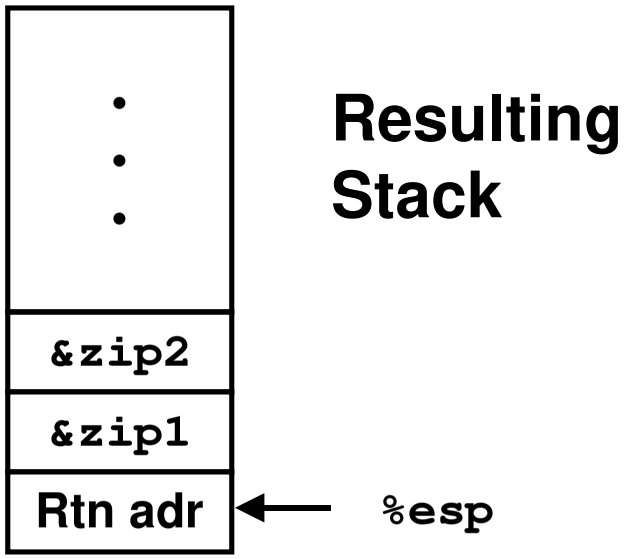
Revisiting `swap`

```
int zip1 = 15213;
int zip2 = 91125;

void call_swap()
{
  swap(&zip1, &zip2);
}
```

```
void swap(int *xp, int *yp)
{
  int t0 = *xp;
  int t1 = *yp;
  *xp = t1;
  *yp = t0;
}
```

```
call_swap:
    . . .
    pushl $zip2   # Global Var
    pushl $zip1   # Global Var
    call swap
    . . .
```



Resulting Stack

Revisiting `swap`

```
void swap(int *xp, int *yp)
{
  int t0 = *xp;
  int t1 = *yp;
  *xp = t1;
  *yp = t0;
}
```

```
swap:
    pushl %ebp
    movl %esp,%ebp
    pushl %ebx

    movl 12(%ebp),%ecx
    movl 8(%ebp),%edx
    movl (%ecx),%eax
    movl (%edx),%ebx
    movl %eax,(%edx)
    movl %ebx,(%ecx)

    movl -4(%ebp),%ebx
    movl %ebp,%esp
    popl %ebp
    ret
```

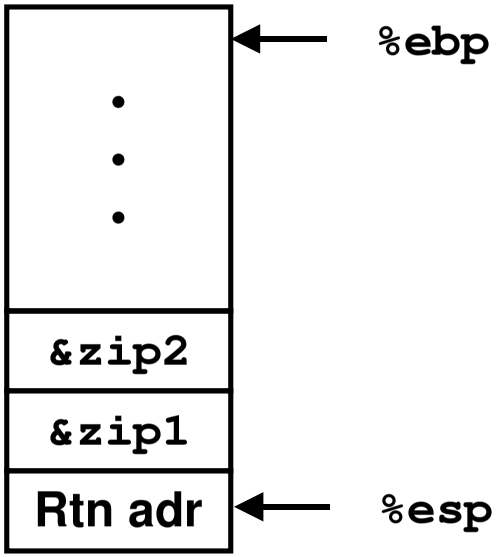
Set Up

Body

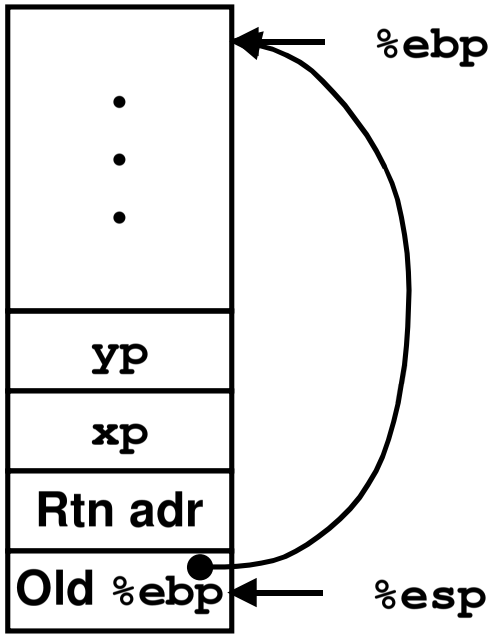
Finish

swap Setup #1

Entering Stack

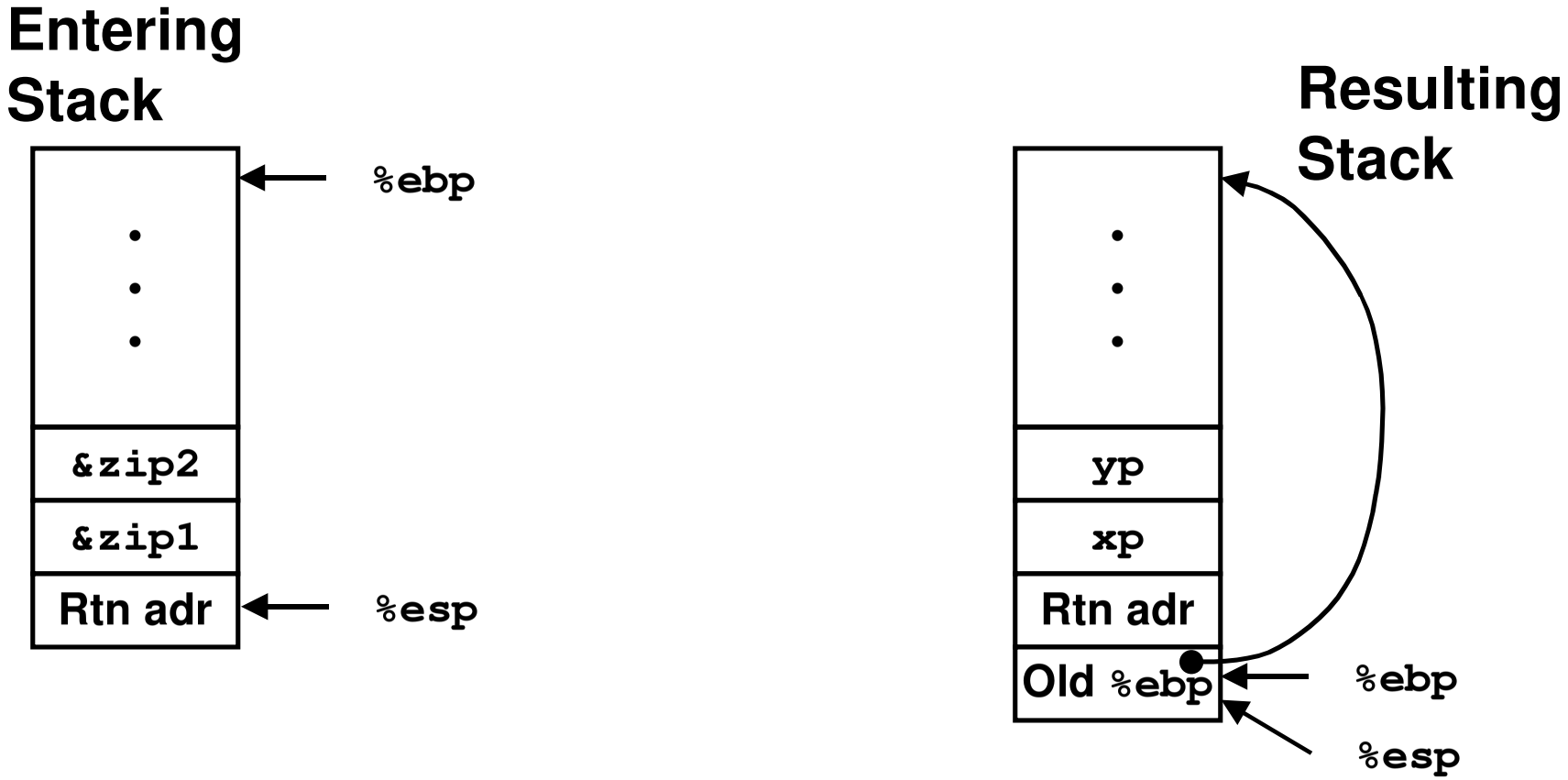


Resulting Stack




```
swap:
    pushl %ebp
    movl %esp,%ebp
    pushl %ebx
```

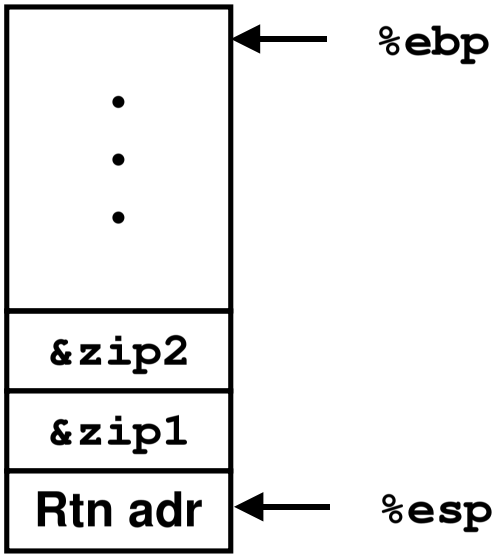
swap Setup #2



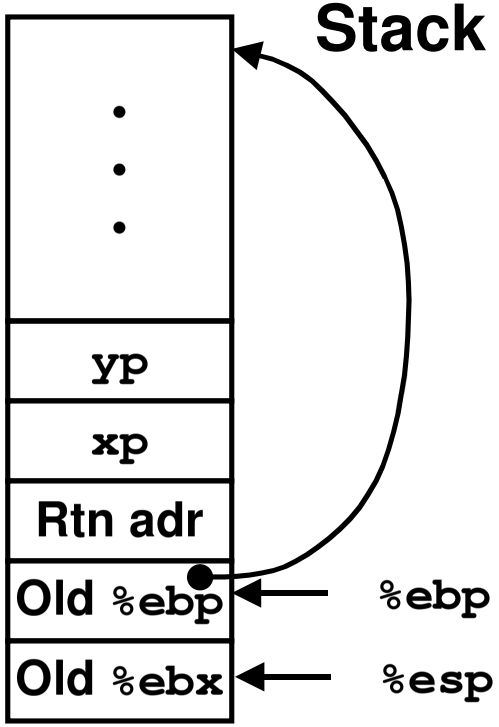

```
swap:
    pushl %ebp
    movl %esp,%ebp
    pushl %ebx
```

swap Setup #3

Entering Stack

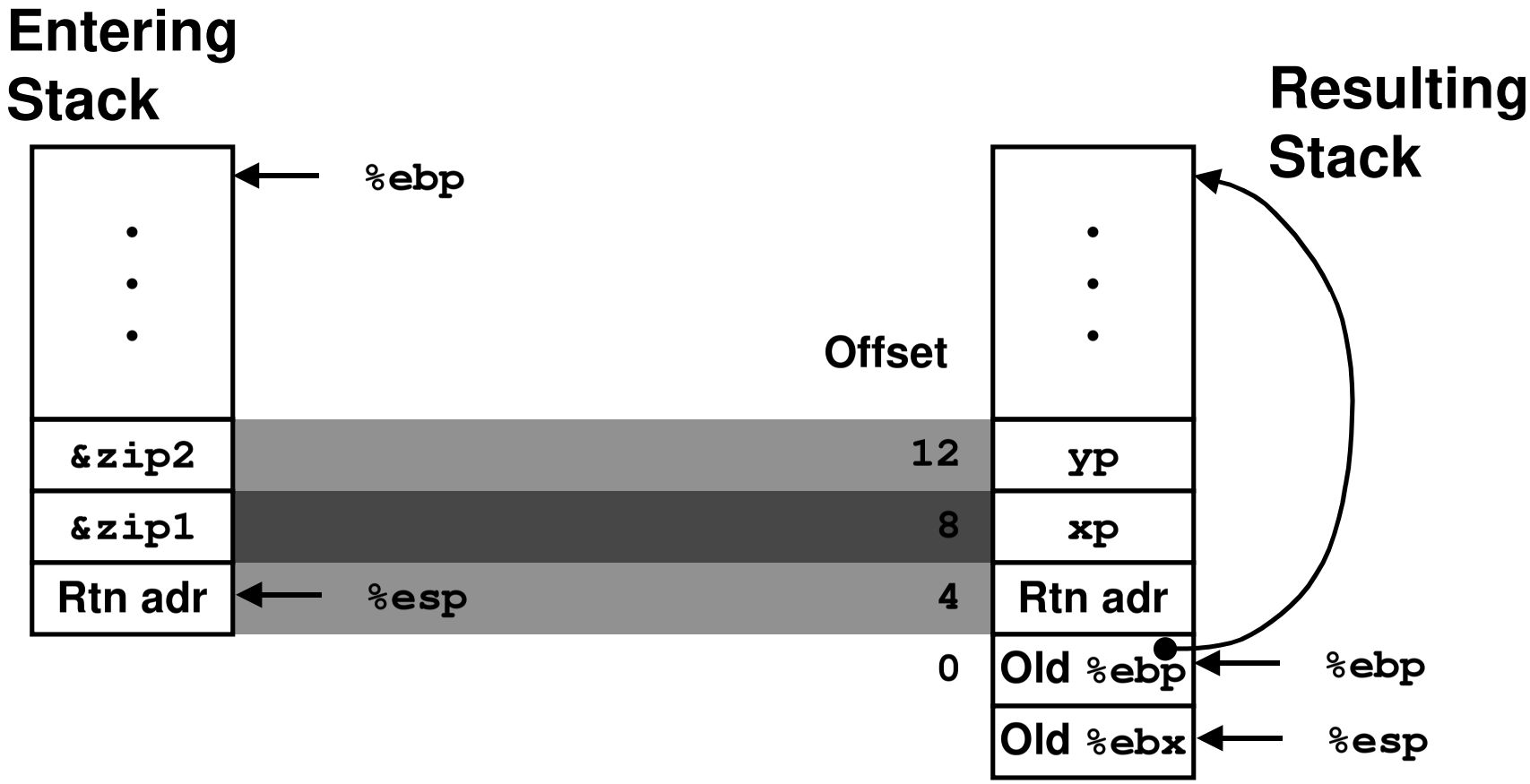


Resulting Stack



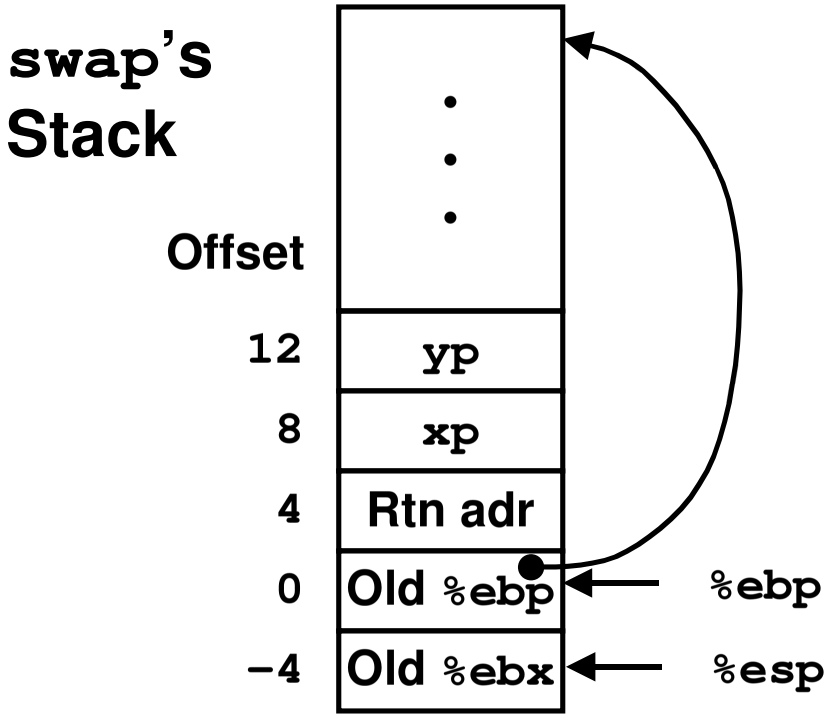

```
swap:
    pushl %ebp
    movl %esp,%ebp
    pushl %ebx
```

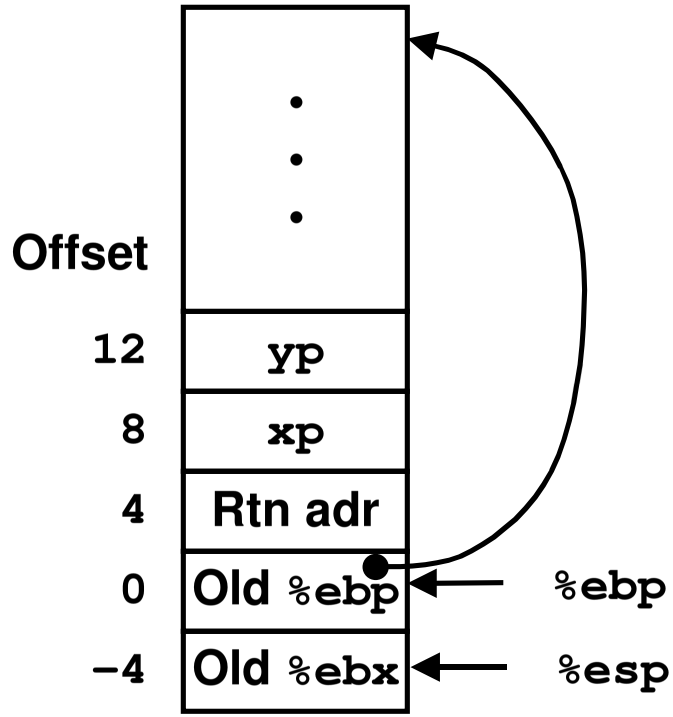
Effect of `swap` Setup




```
swap:
    pushl %ebp
    movl %esp,%ebp
    pushl %ebx
```

swap Finish #1



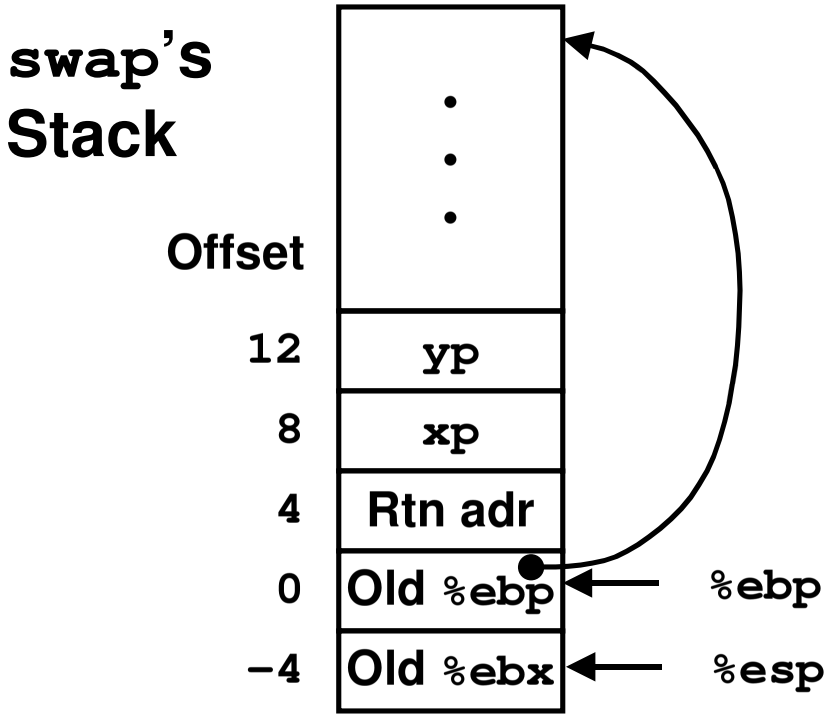


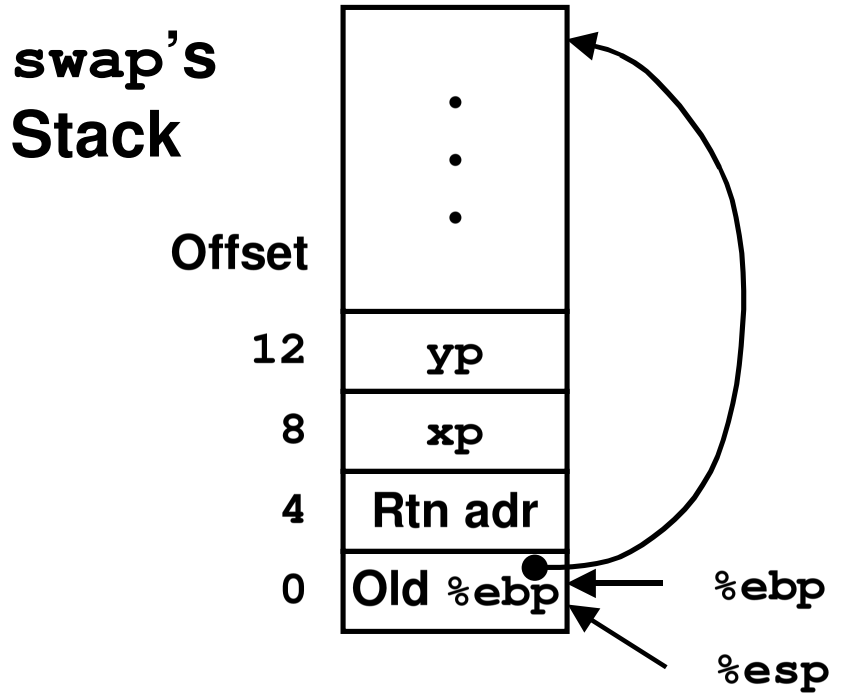

```
movl -4(%ebp),%ebx
movl %ebp,%esp
popl %ebp
ret
```

Observation

- Saved & restored register `%ebx`

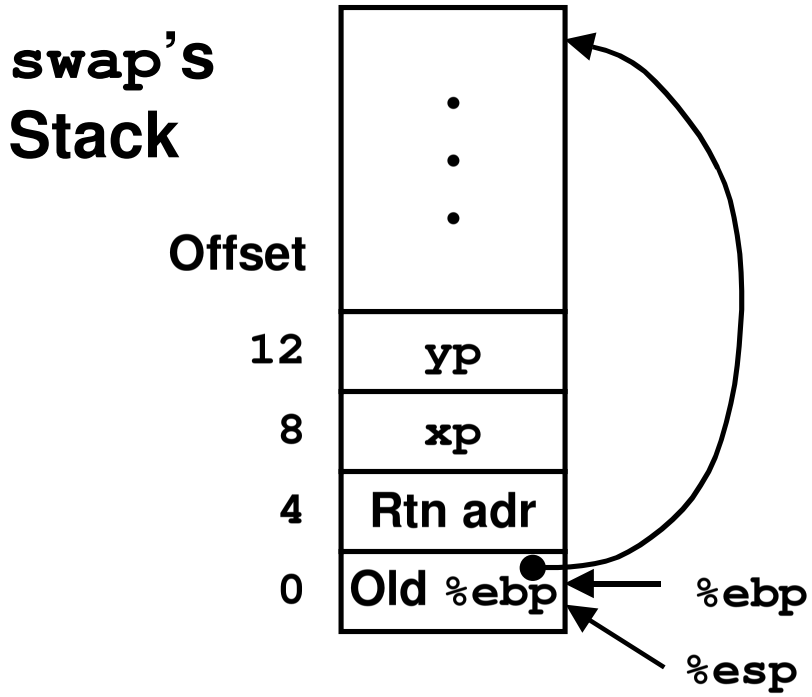
swap Finish #2

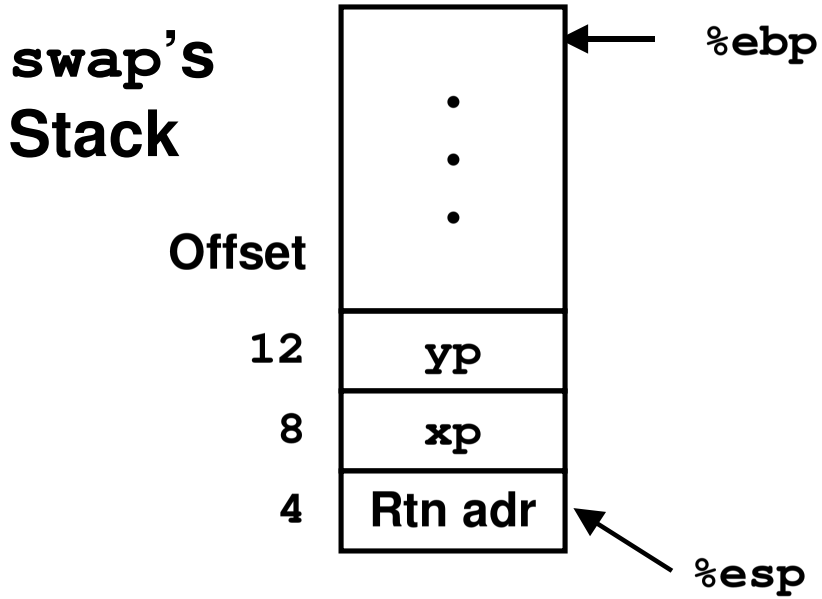





```
movl -4(%ebp),%ebx
movl %ebp,%esp
popl %ebp
ret
```

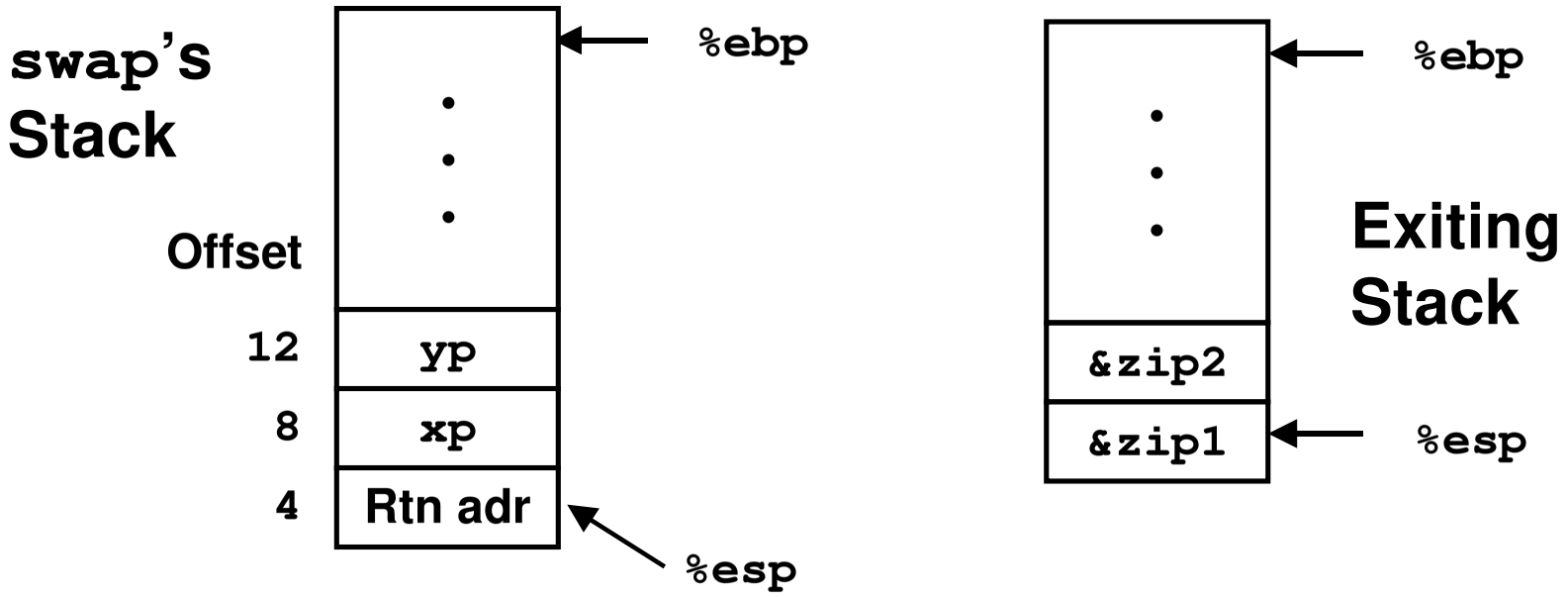
swap Finish #3






```
movl -4(%ebp),%ebx
movl %ebp,%esp
popl %ebp
ret
```

swap Finish #4




```
movl -4(%ebp),%ebx
movl %ebp,%esp
popl %ebp
ret
```

Observation

- Saved & restored register `%ebx`
- Didn't do so for `%eax`, `%ecx`, or `%edx`

Register Saving Conventions

When procedure `yoo` calls `who`:

- `yoo` is the *caller*, `who` is the *callee*

Can Register be Used for Temporary Storage?

```
yoo:
    • • •
    movl $15213, %edx
    call who
    addl %edx, %eax
    • • •
    ret
```

```
who:
    • • •
    movl 8(%ebp), %edx
    addl $91125, %edx
    • • •
    ret
```

- Contents of register `%edx` overwritten by `who`

Conventions

- "**Caller Save**"
  - Caller saves temporary in its frame before calling
- "**Callee Save**"
  - Callee saves temporary in its frame before using

IA32/Linux Register Usage

- **Surmised by looking at code examples**

Integer Registers

- **Two have special uses**

  `%ebp`, `%esp`

- **Three managed as callee-save**

  `%ebx`, `%esi`, `%edi`

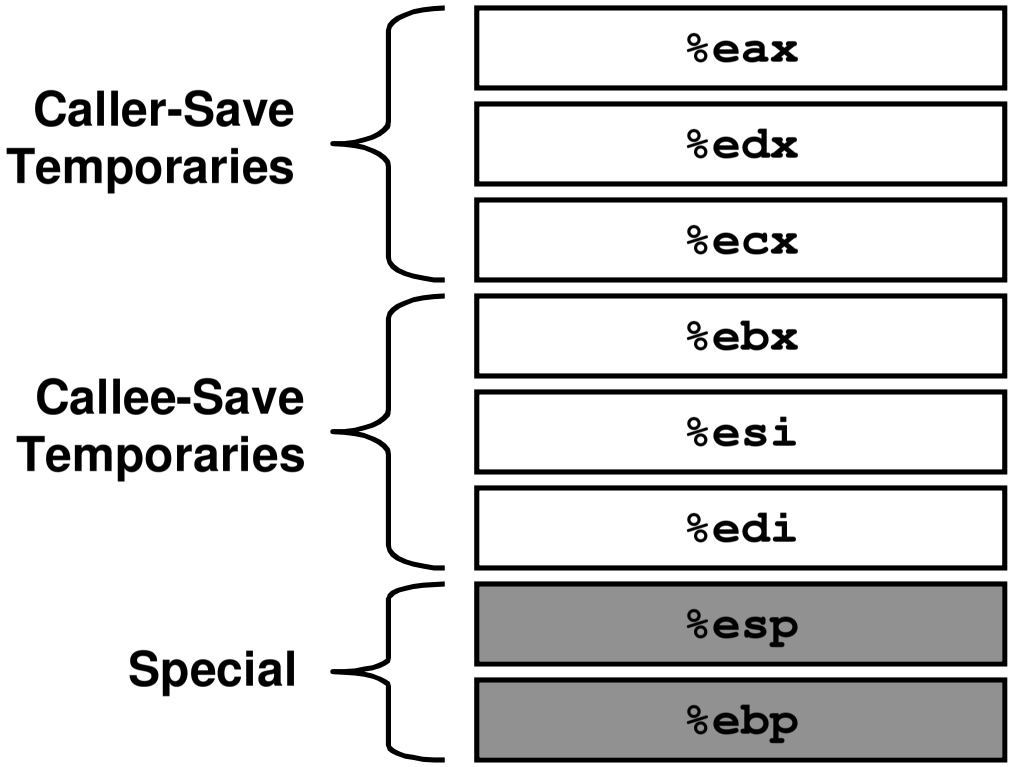
  – Old values saved on stack prior to using

- **Three managed as caller-save**

  `%eax`, `%edx`, `%ecx`

  – Do what you please, but expect any callee to do so, as well

- **Register `%eax` also stores returned value**



Recursive Factorial

```
int rfact(int x)
{
  int rval;
  if (x <= 1)
    return 1;
  rval = rfact(x-1);
  return rval * x;
}
```

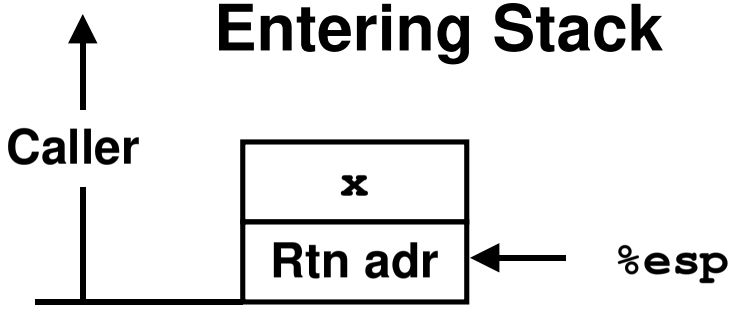
Complete Assembly

- **Assembler directives**
  - Lines beginning with "."
  - Not of concern to us
- **Labels**
  - **.Lxx**
- **Actual instructions**

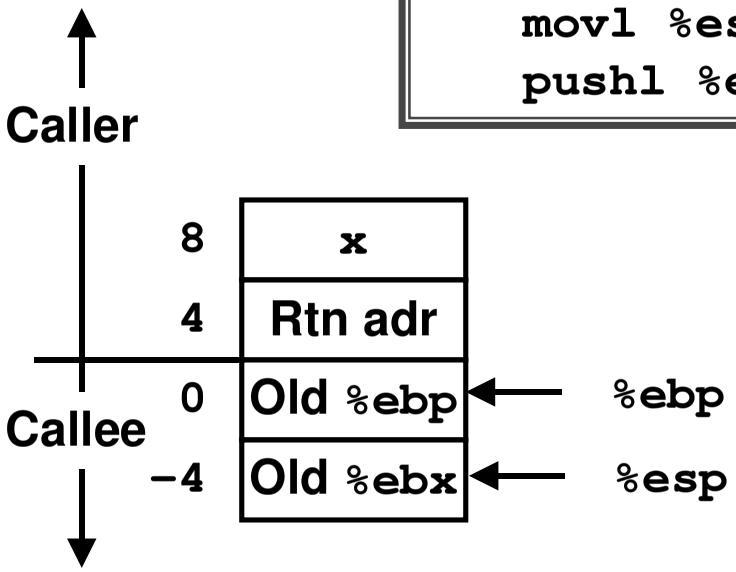
```
.globl rfact
    .type
rfact,@function
rfact:
    pushl %ebp
    movl %esp,%ebp
    pushl %ebx
    movl 8(%ebp),%ebx
    cmpl $1,%ebx
    jle .L78
    leal -1(%ebx),%eax
    pushl %eax
    call rfact
    imull %ebx,%eax
    jmp .L79
    .align 4
.L78:
    movl $1,%eax
.L79:
    movl -4(%ebp),%ebx
    movl %ebp,%esp
    popl %ebp
    ret
```

Rfact Stack Setup

Entering Stack




```
rfact:
    pushl %ebp
    movl %esp,%ebp
    pushl %ebx
```



Rfact Body

Recursion

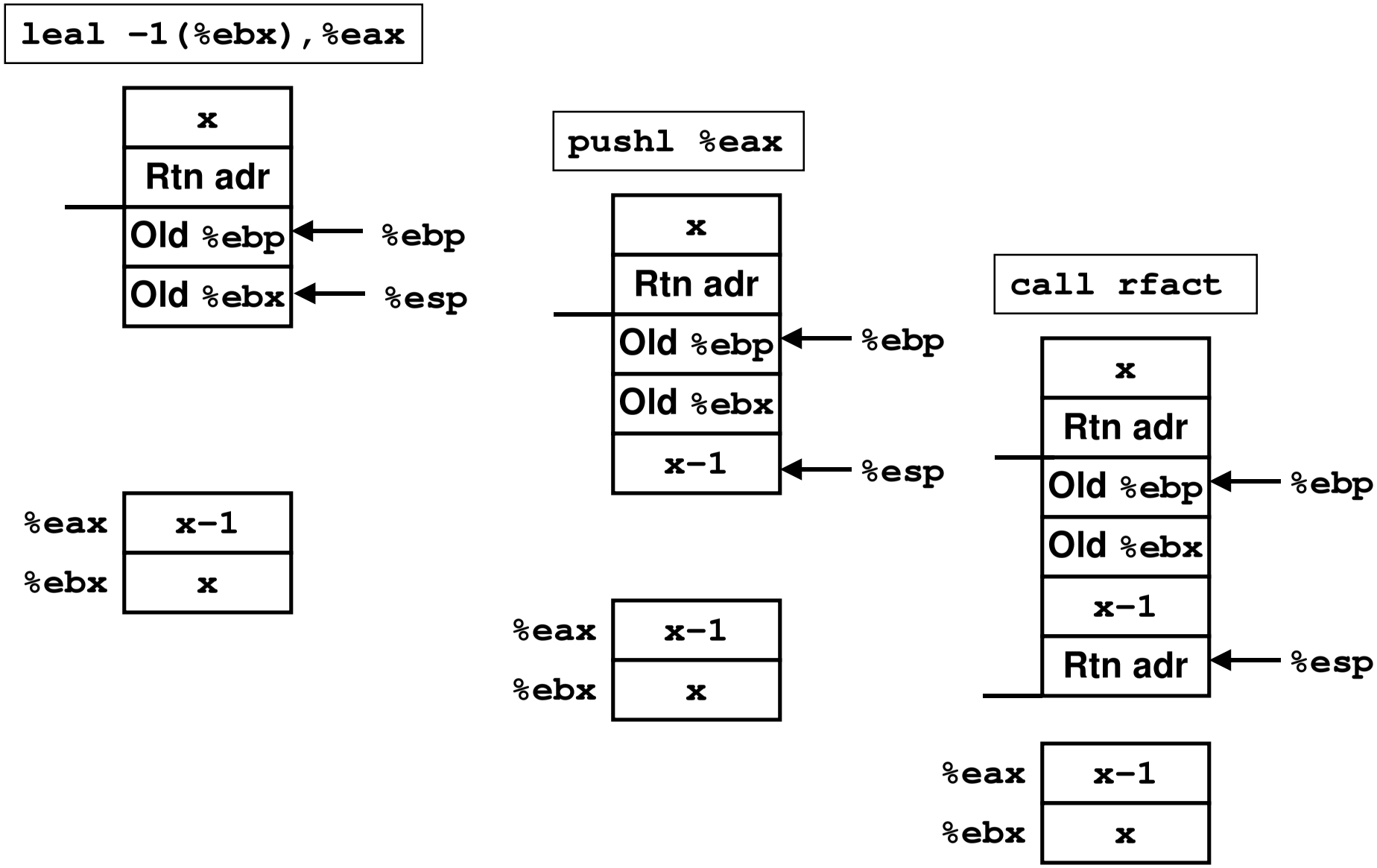
```
  movl 8(%ebp),%ebx    # ebx = x
  cmpl $1,%ebx         # Compare x : 1
  jle .L78             # If <= goto Term
  leal -1(%ebx),%eax   # eax = x-1
  pushl %eax           # Push x-1
  call rfact           # rfact(x-1)
  imull %ebx,%eax      # rval * x
  jmp .L79             # Goto done
.L78:                # Term:
  movl $1,%eax         # return val = 1
.L79:                # Done:
```

```
int rfact(int x)
{
  int rval;
  if (x <= 1)
    return 1;
  rval = rfact(x-1);
  return rval * x;
}
```

Registers

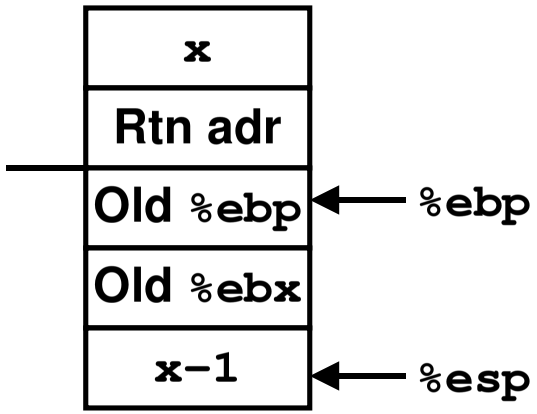
- `$ebx` **Stored value of x**
- `$eax`
  - Temporary value of `x-1`
  - Returned value from `rfact(x-1)`
  - Returned value from this call

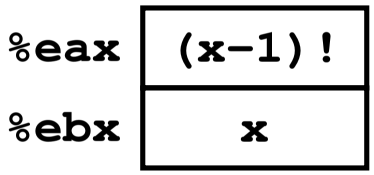
Rfact Recursion



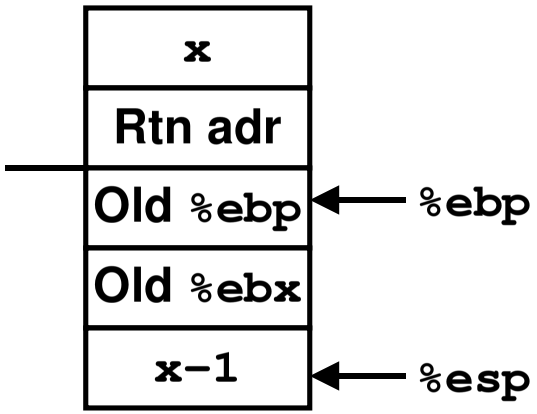
Rfact Result

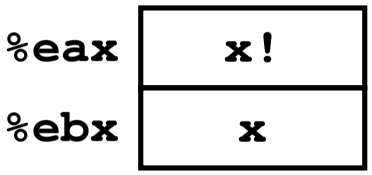
Return from Call



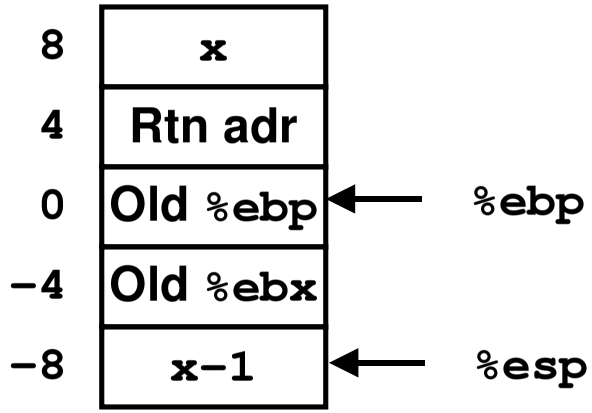


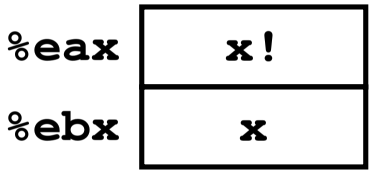

```
imull %ebx,%eax
```



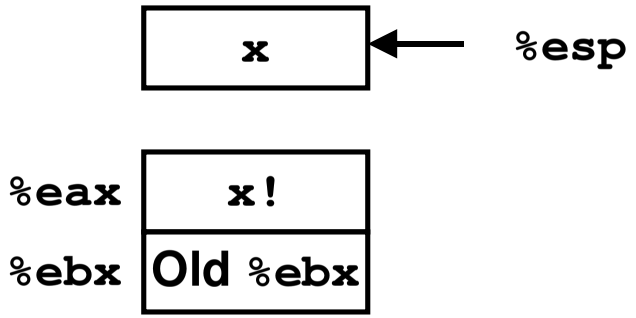


Rfact Completion






```
movl -4(%ebp),%ebx
movl %ebp,%esp
popl %ebp
ret
```



Pointer Code

Recursive Procedure

```
void s_helper
   (int x, int *accum)
{
  if (x <= 1)
    return;
  else {
    int z = *accum * x;
    *accum = z;
    s_helper (x-1,accum);
  }
}
```

Top-Level Call

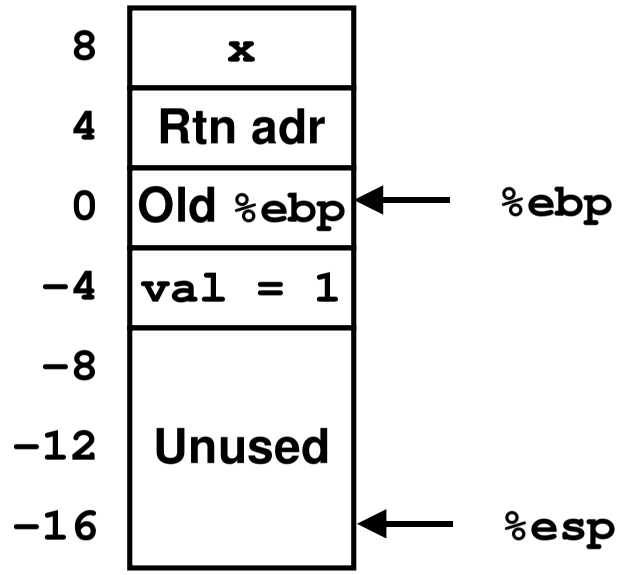
```
int sfact(int x)
{
  int val = 1;
  s_helper(x, &val);
  return val;
}
```

- **Pass pointer to update location**
- **Uses tail recursion**
  - But GCC only partially optimizes it

Creating & Initializing Pointer

Initial part of `sfact`

```
_sfact:
   pushl %ebp           # Save %ebp
   movl %esp,%ebp       # Set %ebp
   subl $16,%esp        # Add 16 bytes
   movl 8(%ebp),%edx    # edx = x
   movl $1,-4(%ebp)     # val = 1
```



Using Stack for Local Variable

- **Variable `val` must be stored on stack**
  - Need to create pointer to it
- **Compute pointer as `-4(%ebp)`**
- **Push on stack as second argument**

```
int sfact(int x)
{
  int val = 1;
  s_helper(x, &val);
  return val;
}
```

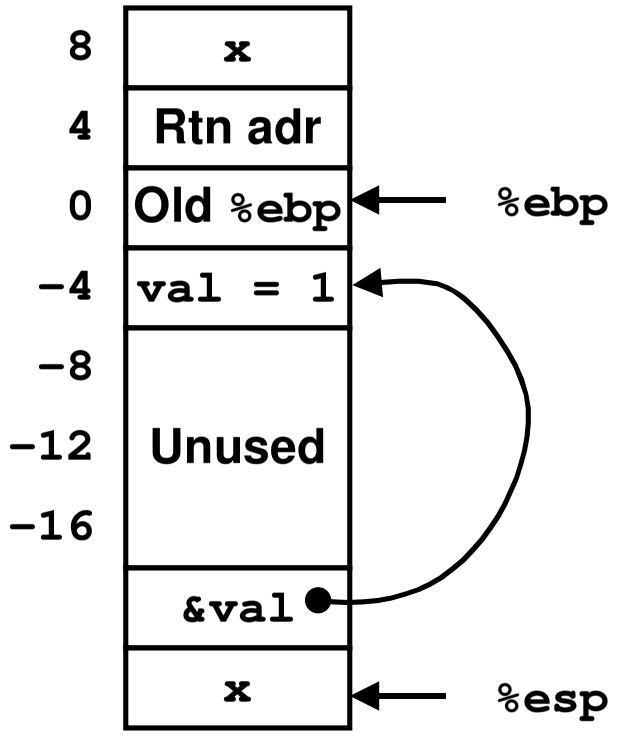
Passing Pointer

Calling `s_helper` from `sfact`

```
leal -4(%ebp),%eax  # Compute &val
pushl %eax          # Push on stack
pushl %edx          # Push x
call s_helper       # call
movl -4(%ebp),%eax  # Return val
• • •               # Finish
```

```
int sfact(int x)
{
  int val = 1;
  s_helper(x, &val);
  return val;
}
```

Stack at time of call



Using Pointer

```
void s_helper
   (int x, int *accum)
{
   • • •
     int z = *accum * x;
     *accum = z;
   • • •
}
```

```
   • • •
   movl %ecx,%eax     # z = x
   imull (%edx),%eax  # z *= *accum
   movl %eax,(%edx)   # *accum = z
   • • •
```

- **Register `%ecx` holds `x`**
- **Register `%edx` holds `accum`**
  - Use access `(%edx)` to reference memory

Tail Recursion

Tail Recursive Procedure

```
int t_helper
   (int x, int val)
{
  if (x <= 1)
    return val;
  return
    t_helper(x-1, val*x);
}
```

General Form

```
t_helper(x, val)
{
    • • •
  return
   t_helper(Xexpr, Vexpr)
}
```

Top-Level Call

```
int tfact(int x)
{
  return t_helper(x, 1);
}
```

Form

- Directly return value returned by recursive call

Consequence

- Can convert into loop

Removing Tail Recursion

Optimized General Form

```
t_helper(x, val)
{
 start:
   • • •
  val = Vexpr;
  x = Xexpr;
  goto start;
}
```

Resulting Code

```
int t_helper
   (int x, int val)
{
 start:
  if (x <= 1)
    return val;
  val = val*x;
  x = x-1;
  goto start;
}
```

Effect of Optimization

- **Turn recursive chain into single procedure**
- **No stack frame needed**
- **Constant space requirement**
  - Vs. linear for recursive version

Generated Code for Tail Recursive Proc.

Optimized Form

```
int t_helper
   (int x, int val)
{
 start:
  if (x <= 1)
    return val;
  val = val*x;
  x = x-1;
  goto start;
}
```

Code for Loop

```
   # %edx = x
   # %ecx = val
L53:                  # start:
   cmpl $1,%edx           # x : 1
   jle L52                # if <= goto done
   movl %edx,%eax         # eax = x
   imull %ecx,%eax        # eax = val * x
   decl %edx              # x--
   movl %eax,%ecx         # val = val * x
   jmp L53             # goto start
L52:                      # done:
```

Registers

$edx x

$ecx val

Summary

The Stack Makes Recursion Work

- **Private storage for each *instance* of procedure call**
  - Instantiations don't clobber each other
  - Addressing of locals + arguments can be relative to stack positions
- **Can be managed by stack discipline**
  - Procedures return in inverse order of calls

IA32 Procedures Combination of Instructions + Conventions

- **Call / Ret instructions**
- **Register usage conventions**
  - Caller / Callee save
  - `%ebp` and `%esp`
- **Stack frame organization conventions**