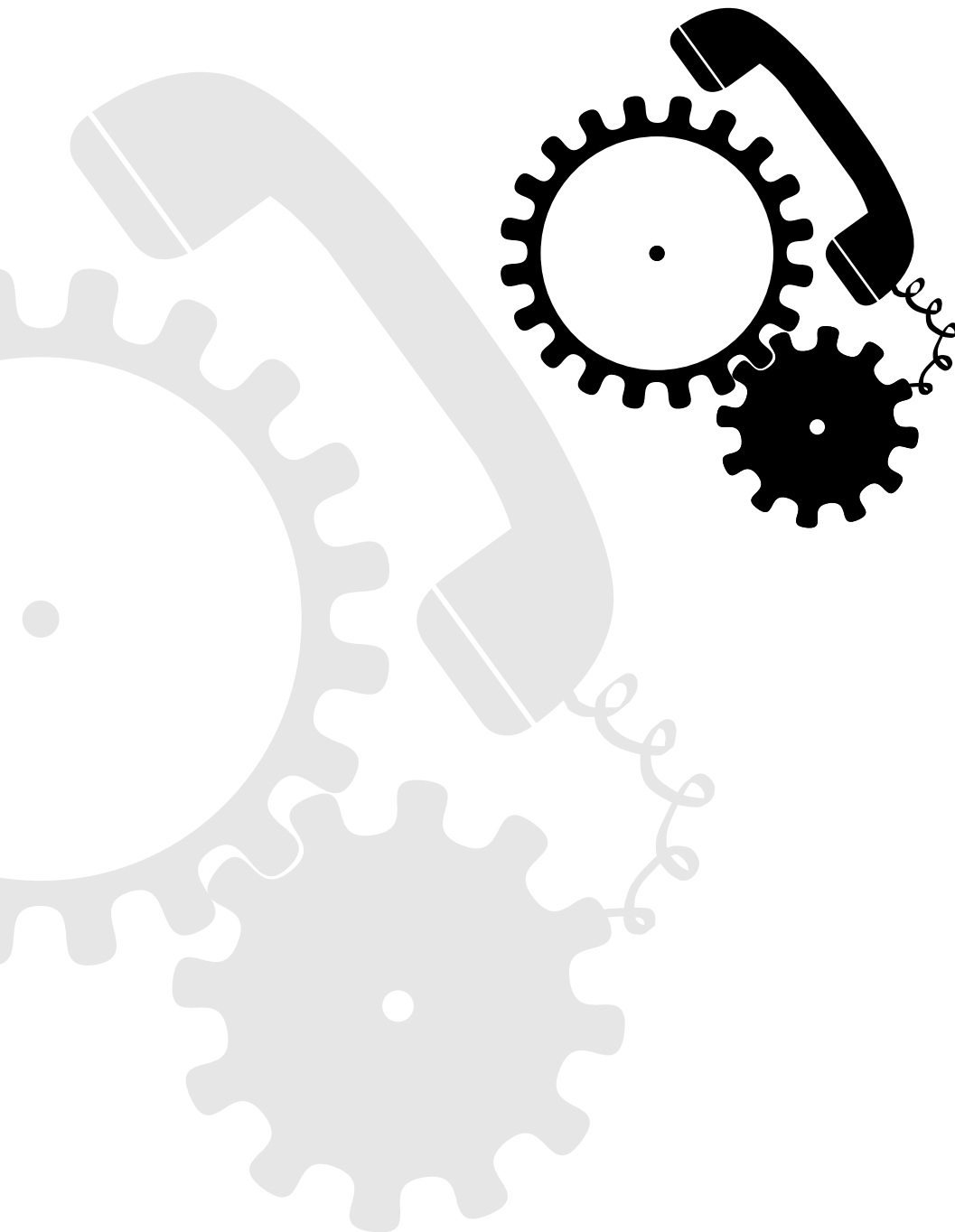


# dyncall

Version 1.3

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# 1 Motivation

Interoperability between programming languages is a desirable feature in complex software systems. While functions in scripting languages and virtual machine languages can be called in a dynamic manner, statically compiled programming languages such as C, C++ and Objective-C lack this ability. The majority of systems use C function interfaces as their system-level interface. Calling these (foreign) functions from within a dynamic environment often involves the development of so called "glue code" on both sides, the use of external tools generating communication code, or integration of other middleware fulfilling that purpose. However, even inside a completely static environment, without having to bridge multiple languages, it can be very useful to call functions dynamically. Consider, for example, message systems, dynamic function call dispatch mechanisms, without even knowing about the target.

The *dyncall* library project provides a clean and portable C interface to dynamically issue calls to foreign code using small call kernels written in assembly. Instead of providing code for every bridged function call, which unnecessarily results in code bloat, only a modest number of instructions are used to invoke all the calls.

## 1.1 Static function calls in C

The C programming language and its direct derivatives are limited in the way function calls are handled. A C compiler regards a function call as a fully qualified atomic operation. In such a statically typed environment, this includes the function call's argument arity and type, as well as the return type.

## 1.2 Anatomy of machine-level calls

The process of calling a function on the machine level yields a common pattern:

1. The target function's calling convention dictates how the stack is prepared, arguments are passed, results are returned and how to clean up afterwards.
2. Function call arguments are loaded in registers and on the stack according to the calling convention that take alignment constraints into account.
3. Control flow transfer from caller to callee.
4. Process return value, if any. Some calling conventions specify that the caller is responsible for cleaning up the argument stack.

The following example depicts a C source and the corresponding assembly for the X86 32-bit processor architecture.

```
extern void f(int x, double y, float z);
void caller()
{
    f(1, 2.0, 3.0f);
}
```

Listing 1: C function call

```
.global f                ; external symbol 'f'
caller:
    push    40400000H    ; 3.0f (32 bit float)
                        ; 2.0 (64 bit float)
    push    40000000H    ; low DWORD
    push    0H           ; high DWORD
    push    1H           ; 1 (32 bit integer)
    call    f            ; call 'f'
    add     esp, 16      ; cleanup stack
```

Listing 2: Assembly X86 32-bit function call



## 2 Overview

The *dyncall* library encapsulates architecture-, OS- and compiler-specific function call semantics in a virtual

*bind argument parameters from left to right and then call*

interface allowing programmers to call C functions in a completely dynamic manner. In other words, instead of calling a function directly, the *dyncall* library provides a mechanism to push the function parameters manually and to issue the call afterwards.

Since the idea behind this concept is similar to call dispatching mechanisms of virtual machines, the object that can be dynamically loaded with arguments, and then used to actually invoke the call, is called CallVM. It is possible to change the calling convention used by the CallVM at run-time. Due to the fact that nearly every platform comes with one or more distinct calling conventions, the *dyncall* library project intends to be a portable and open-source approach to the variety of compiler-specific binary interfaces, platform specific subtleties, and so on...

The core of the library consists of dynamic implementations of different calling conventions written in assembler. Although the library aims to be highly portable, some assembler code needs to be written for nearly every platform/compiler/OS combination. Unfortunately, there are architectures we just don't have at home or work. If you want to see *dyncall* running on such a platform, feel free to send in code and patches, or even to donate hardware you don't need anymore. Check the **supported platforms** section for an overview of the supported platforms and the different calling convention sections for details about the support.

### 2.1 Features

- A portable and extendable function call interface for the C programming language.
- Ports to major platforms including Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, BSD derivatives, iPhone and embedded devices and more, including lesser known and/or older platforms like Plan 9, Playstation Portable, Nintendo DS, etc..
- Add-on language bindings to Python, R, Ruby, Go, Erlang, Java, Lua, sh, ...
- High-level state machine design using C to model calling convention parameter transfer.
- One assembly *hybrid* call routine per calling convention.
- Formatted call, vararg function API.
- Comprehensive test suite.

## 2.2 Showcase

### Foreign function call in C

This section demonstrates how the foreign function call is issued without, and then with, the help of the *dyncall* library and scripting language bindings.

```
double call_as_sqrt(void* funptr, double x)
{
    return ( ( double (*)(double) )funptr)(x);
}
```

Listing 3: Foreign function call in C

### Dyncall C library example

The same operation can be broken down into atomic pieces (specify calling convention, binding arguments, invoking the call) using the *dyncall* library.

```
#include <dyncall.h>
double call_as_sqrt(void* funptr, double x)
{
    double r;
    DCCallVM* vm = dcNewCallVM(4096);
    dcMode(vm, DC_CALL_C_DEFAULT);
    dcReset(vm);
    dcArgDouble(vm, x);
    r = dcCallDouble(vm, funptr);
    dcFree(vm);
    return r;
}
```

Listing 4: Dyncall C library example

This is more code than a direct, hardcoded function call, however it's completely dynamic. Also, despite this coming with an overhead of more executed code per single function call, compared to function interface wrapper tools that generate per call glue-code less code is used overall, .

The following are examples from script bindings:

### Python example

```
import pydc
def call_as_sqrt(funptr,x):
    return pydc.call(funptr,"d)d", x)
```

Listing 5: Dyncall Python bindings example

### R example

```
call.as.sqrt <- function(funptr,x)
  .dyncall(funptr,"d)d", x)
```

Listing 6: Dyncall R bindings example

## 2.3 Supported platforms/architectures

The feature matrix below gives a brief overview of the currently supported platforms. Different colors are used, where a green cell indicates a supported platform, yellow a platform that might work (but is untested) and red a platform that is currently unsupported. Gray cells are combinations that don't exist at the time of writing, or that are not taken into account.

Light green cells mark complete feature support, as in dyncall and dyncallback. Dark green means basic support but lacking features (e.g. dyncall support, but not dyncallback). Please note that a green cell (even a light-green one) doesn't imply that all existing calling conventions/features/build tools are supported for that platform (but the most important). For detailed info about a platform's support consult the calling convention appendix.

		Windows family	Linux	macOS / iOS / Darwin	FreeBSD	NetBSD	OpenBSD	DragonFlyBSD	Solaris / SunOS	Plan 9 / 9front	Haiku / BeOS	Minix	Playstation Portable	Nintendo DS
ARM	EB													
	EL													
ARM64	EB													
	EL													
MIPS	EB													
	EL													
MIPS64	EB													
	EL													
SuperH	EB													
	EL													
PowerPC	EB													
	EL													
PowerPC64	EB													
	EL													
m68k														
m88k														
x86														
x64														
Itanium														
SPARC														
SPARC64														
RISC-V														
RISC-V 64														

Table 1: Supported platforms

## 2.4 Build Requirements

The library needs at least a c99 compiler with additional support for anonymous structs/unions (which were introduced officially in c11). Given that those are generally supported by pretty much all major c99 conforming compilers (as default extension), it should build fine with a c99 toolchain.



## 3 Building the library

The library has been built and used successfully on several platform/architecture configurations and build systems. Please see notes on specific platforms to check if the target architecture is currently supported.

### 3.1 Requirements

The following tools are supported directly to build the *dyncall* library. However, as the number of source files to be compiled for a given platform is small, it shouldn't be difficult to build it manually with another toolchain.

- C compiler to build the *dyncall* library (GCC, Clang, SunPro or Microsoft C/C++ compiler)
- C++ compiler to build the optional test cases (GCC, Clang, SunPro or Microsoft C/C++ compiler)
- BSD make, GNU make, Microsoft nmake or mk (on Plan9) as automated build tools
- Python (optional - for generation of some test cases)
- Lua (optional - for generation of some test cases)
- CMake (optional support)

### 3.2 Supported/tested platforms and build systems

Building *dyncall* is a straightforward two-step process, first configure, then make. The library should be able to be built with the default operating systems' build tools, so BSD make on BSD and derived systems, GNU make on GNU and compatible, mk on Plan9, nmake on Windows, etc.. This is a detailed overview of platforms and their build tools that are known to build *dyncall*:

Platform	Build Tool(s)	Compiler, SDK
<b>Windows</b>	nmake, Visual Studio	cl, cygwin (gcc), mingw (gcc)
<b>Unix-like</b>	GNU/BSD/Sun make	gcc, clang, sunc
<b>Plan9</b>	mk	8c
<b>Haiku/BeOS</b>	GNU make	gcc
<b>iOS/iPhone</b>	GNU make	gcc and iPhone SDK on Mac OS X
<b>Nintendo DS</b>	nmake	devkitPro[42] tools on Windows
<b>Playstation Portable</b>	GNU make	psptoolchain[43] tools

### 3.3 Build instructions

1. Configure the source (not needed for Makefile.embedded)

#### \*nix flavour

```
./configure [--option ...]
```

Available options (omit for defaults):

--help	display help
--prefix= <i>path</i>	specify installation prefix (Unix shell)
--target= <i>platform</i>	MacOSX,iOS,iPhoneSimulator,PSP,...
--sdk= <i>version</i>	SDK version

#### Windows flavour, and cross-build from Windows (PSP, NDS, etc.)

```
.\configure [/option ...]
```

Available options:

/?	display help
/prefix <i>path</i>	set installation prefix (GNU make only)
/prefix-bd <i>path</i>	set build directory prefix (GNU make only)
/target-x86	build for x86 architecture (default)
/target-x64	build for x64 architecture
/target-psp	build for PlayStation Portable (homebrew SDK)
/target-nds-arm	build for Nintendo DS (devkitPro, ARM mode)
/target-nds-thumb	build for Nintendo DS (devkitPro, THUMB mode)
/tool-msvc	use Microsoft Visual C++ compiler (default)
/tool-gcc	use GNU Compiler Collection
/asm-ml	use Microsoft Macro Assembler (default)
/asm-as	use the GNU Assembler
/asm-nasm	use NASM Assembler
/config-release	build release version (default)
/config-debug	build debug version

#### Plan 9 flavour

```
./configure.rc [--option ...]
```

Available options (none, at the moment):

--help display help

2. Build the static libraries *dyncall*, *dynload* and *dyncallback*

```
make          # for {GNU,BSD} Make
nmake /f Nmakefile  # for NMake on Windows
mk            # for mk on Plan9
```

3. Install libraries and includes (supported for GNU and BSD make based builds, only)

```
make install
```

#### 4. Optionally, build the test suite

```
make tests           # for {GNU,BSD} Make
nmake /f Nmakefile tests # for NMake on Windows
mk tests             # for mk on Plan9
```

### 3.4 Build-tool specific notes

Some platforms require some manual tweaks:

Problem: Build fails because CC and/or related are not set, or different compiler, linker, etc. should be used.

Solution: Set the 'CC' and other environment variables explicitly to the desired tools. E.g.:

```
CC=gcc make
```

Problem: On windows using mingw and msys/unixutils 'Make', the make uses 'cc' for C compilation, which does not exist in mingw.

Solution: Set the 'CC' environment variable explicitly to 'gcc' (as in the example above).

### 3.5 Build with CMake

```
cmake -DCMAKE_INSTALL_PREFIX=<location>
make
```

## 4 Bindings to programming languages

Through binding of the *dyncall* library into a scripting environment, the scripting language can gain system programming status to a certain degree.

The *dyncall* library provides bindings to Erlang[1], Java[2], Lua[3], Python[4], R[5], Ruby[6], Go[7] and the shell/command line.

However, please note that some of these bindings are work-in-progress and not automatically tested, meaning it might require some additional work to make them work.

### 4.1 Common Architecture

The binding interfaces of the *dyncall* library to various scripting languages share a common set of functionality to invoke a function call.

#### 4.1.1 Dynamic loading of code

The helper library *dynload* which accompanies the *dyncall* library provides an abstract interface to operating-system specific mechanisms for loading and accessing executable code out of, but not limited to, shared libraries.

#### 4.1.2 Functions

All bindings are based on a common interface convention providing a common set of the following 4 functions (exact spelling depending on the binding's scripting environment):

**load** - load a module of compiled code

**free** - unload a module of compiled code

**find** - find function pointer by symbolic names

**call** - invoke a function call



### 4.1.3 Signatures

A signature is a character string that represents a function's arguments and return value types. It is used in the scripting language bindings invoke functions to perform automatic type-conversion of the languages' types to the low-level C/C++ data types. This is an essential part of mapping the more flexible and often abstract data types provided in scripting languages to the strict machine-level data types used by C-libraries. The high-level C interface functions `dcCallF()`, `dcVCallF()`, `dcArgF()` and `dcVArgF()` of the *dyncall* library also make use of this signature string format.

The format of a *dyncall* signature string is as depicted below:

#### **dyncall signature string format**

*<input parameter type signature character>\* ' )' <return type signature character>*

The *<input parameter type signature character>* sequence left to the *)'* is in left-to-right order of the corresponding C function parameter type list.

The special *<return type signature character>* *'v'* specifies that the function does not return a value and corresponds to void functions in C.

Signature character	C/C++ data type
'v'	void
'B'	_Bool, bool
'c'	char
'C'	unsigned char
's'	short
'S'	unsigned short
'i'	int
'I'	unsigned int
'j'	long
'J'	unsigned long
'l'	long long, int64_t
'L'	unsigned long long, uint64_t
'f'	float
'd'	double
'p'	void*
'Z'	const char* (pointing to C string)

Table 2: Type signature encoding for function call data types

Please note that using a *'(* at the beginning of a signature string is possible, although not required. The character doesn't have any meaning and will simply be ignored. However, using it prevents annoying syntax highlighting problems with some code editors.

Calling convention modes can be switched using the signature string, as well. A '\_' in the signature string is followed by a character specifying what calling convention to use, as this affects how arguments are passed. This makes only sense if there are multiple co-existing calling conventions on a single platform. Usually, this is done at the beginning of the string, except in special cases, like specifying where the varargs part of a variadic function begins. The following signature characters exist:

Signature character	Calling Convention
'.'	platform's default calling convention
'e'	vararg function
'.'	vararg function's variadic/ellipsis part (...), to be specified before first vararg
'c'	only on x86: cdecl
's'	only on x86: stdcall
'F'	only on x86: fastcall (MS)
'f'	only on x86: fastcall (GNU)
'+'	only on x86: thiscall (MS)
'#'	only on x86: thiscall (GNU)
'A'	only on ARM: ARM mode
'a'	only on ARM: THUMB mode
'\$'	syscall

Table 3: Calling convention signature encoding

## Examples of C function prototypes

	C function prototype	dyncall signature
void	f1();	"v"
int	f2(int, int);	"ii)i"
long long	f3(void*);	"p)L"
void	f3(int**);	"p)v"
double	f4(int, bool, char, double, const char*);	"iBcdZ)d"
void	f5(short a, long long b, ...)	"_es1_.di)v" (for (promoted) varargs: double, int)

Table 4: Type signature examples of C function prototypes

## 4.2 Erlang language bindings

The OTP library application `erlde` implements the Erlang language bindings.

Signature character	accepted Erlang data types
'v'	no return type
'B'	atoms 'true' and 'false' converted to bool
'c', 'C'	integer cast to (unsigned) char
's', 'S'	integer cast to (unsigned) short
'i', 'I'	integer cast to (unsigned) int
'j', 'J'	integer cast to (unsigned) long
'l', 'L'	integer cast to (unsigned) long long
'f'	decimal cast to float
'd'	decimal cast to double
'p'	binary (previously returned from <code>call_ptr</code> or <code>callf</code> ) cast to void*
'z'	string cast to void*

Table 5: Type signature encoding for Erlang bindings

### 4.3 Go language bindings

A Go binding is provided through the `godc` package. Since Go's type system is basically a superset of C's, the type mapping from Go to C is straightforward.

Signature character	accepted Go data types
'v'	no return type
'B'	bool
'c', 'C'	int8, uint8
's', 'S'	int16, uint16
'i', 'I'	int, uint
'j', 'J'	int32, uint32
'l', 'L'	int64, uint64
'f'	float32
'd'	float64
'p', 'Z'	uintptr, unsafe.Pointer

Table 6: Type signature encoding for Go bindings

Note that passing a Go-string directly to a C-function expecting a pointer is not directly possible. However, the binding comes with two helper functions, `AllocCString(value string) unsafe.Pointer` and `FreeCString(value unsafe.Pointer)` to help with converting a string to an `unsafe.Pointer` which then can be passed to `ArgPointer(value unsafe.Pointer)`. Once you are done with this temporary string, free it using `FreeCString(value unsafe.Pointer)`.

### 4.4 Python language bindings

The python module `pydc` implements the Python language bindings, namely `load`, `find`, `free`, `call`.

Signature character	accepted Python 2 types	accepted Python 3 types
'v'	no return type	no return type
'B'	bool	bool
'c', 'C'	int, string (with single char)	int, string (with single char)
's', 'S'	int	int
'i', 'I'	int	int
'j', 'J'	int	int
'l', 'L'	int, long	int
'f'	float	float
'd'	double	double
'p'	bytearray, int, long	bytearray (mutable in C), int
'Z'	string, unicode, bytearray	string, bytearray (all immutable)

Table 7: Type signature encoding for Python bindings

For more details, refer to the `README.txt` file of the binding.

## 4.5 R language bindings

The R package `rdyncall` implements the R language bindings providing the function `.dyncall()`.

Signature character	accepted R data types
'v'	no return type
'B'	coerced to logical vector, first item
'c'	coerced to integer vector, first item truncated char
'C'	coerced to integer vector, first item truncated to unsigned char
's'	coerced to integer vector, first item truncated to short
'S'	coerced to integer vector, first item truncated to unsigned short
'i'	coerced to integer vector, first item
'I'	coerced to integer vector, first item casted to unsigned int
'j'	coerced to integer vector, first item
'J'	coerced to integer vector, first item casted to unsigned long
'l'	coerced to numeric, first item casted to long long
'L'	coerced to numeric, first item casted to unsigned long long
'f'	coerced to numeric, first item casted to float
'd'	coerced to numeric, first item
'p'	external pointer or coerced to string vector, first item
'z'	coerced to string vector, first item

Table 8: Type signature encoding for R bindings

Some notes on the R Binding:

- Unsigned 32-bit integers are represented as signed integers in R.
- 64-bit integer types do not exist in R, therefore we use double floats to represent 64-bit integers (using only the 52-bit mantissa part).

## 4.6 Ruby language bindings

The Ruby gem `rbdc` implements the Ruby language bindings.

Signature character	accepted Ruby data types
'v'	no return type
'B'	TrueClass, FalseClass, NilClass, Fixnum casted to bool
'c', 'C'	Fixnum cast to (unsigned) char
's', 'S'	Fixnum cast to (unsigned) short
'i', 'I'	Fixnum cast to (unsigned) int
'j', 'J'	Fixnum cast to (unsigned) long
'l', 'L'	Fixnum cast to (unsigned) long long
'f'	Float cast to float
'd'	Float cast to double
'p', 'Z'	String cast to void*

Table 9: Type signature encoding for Ruby bindings



## 5 Library Design

### 5.1 Design considerations

The *dyncall* library encapsulates function call invocation semantics that depend on the compiler, operating system and architecture. The core library is driven by a function call invocation engine, named *CallVM*, that encapsulates a call stack to foreign functions and manages the following three phases that constitute a truly dynamic function call:

1. Specify the calling convention. Some run-time platforms, such as Microsoft Windows on a 32-bit X86 architecture, even support multiple calling conventions.
2. Specify the function call arguments in a specific order. The interface design dictates a *left to right* order for C and C++ function calls in which the arguments are bound.
3. Specify the target function address, expected return value and invoke the function call.

The calling convention mode entirely depends on the way the foreign function has been compiled and specifies the low-level details on how a function actually expects input parameters (in memory, in registers or both) and how to return its result(s).



## 6 Developers

### 6.1 Noteworthy files in the project root

<code>configure</code>	pre-make configuration tool (unix-shell)
<code>configure.bat</code>	pre-nmake configuration tool (windows batch)
<code>configure.rc</code>	pre-mk configuration tool (Plan 9's rc)
<code>CMakeLists.txt</code>	top-level project information for CMake
<code>Makefile</code>	GNU/BSD makefile (output of <code>./configure</code> )
<code>Nmakefile</code>	MS nmake makefile
<code>mkfile</code>	Plan 9 mkfile
<code>LICENSE</code>	license information
<code>README</code>	quickstart doc
<code>buildsys/</code>	build system details and extras
<code>doc/</code>	platform specific readme's and manual
<code>dyncall/</code>	dyncall library source code
<code>dyncallback/</code>	dyncallback library source code
<code>dynload/</code>	dynload library source code
<code>test/</code>	test suites

### 6.2 Test suites

**plain** Simple, identity, unary function calls for all supported return types and calling conventions.

**plain.c++** Similar to plain, but for C++ thiscalls (GNU and MS calling convention).

**suite** All combinations of parameter types and counts are tested on void function calls. A script written in Python (`mkcase.py`) generates the tests up to an upper MAXARG limit.

**suite.floats** Based on suite. Test double/float variants with up to 10 arguments.

**suite.x86win32std** All combinations of parameter types and counts are tested on `__stdcall` void function calls. A script written in Python (`mkcase.py`) generates the tests up to an upper MAXARG limit. This is a x86/Windows only test.

**suite.x86win32fast** All combinations of parameter types and counts are tested on `__fastcall` (MS or GNU, depending on the build tool) void function calls. A script written in Python (`mkcase.py`) generates the tests up to an upper MAXARG limit. This is a x86/Windows only test.

**ellipsis** All combinations of parameter types and counts are tested on void ellipsis function calls. A script written in Python (`mkcase.py`) generates the tests up to an upper MAXARG limit.

**suite2** Designed mass test suite for void function calls. Tests individual void functions with a varying count of arguments and type.

**suite2.win32std** Designed mass test suite for `__stdcall` void function calls. Tests individual void functions with a varying count of arguments and type. This is a x86/Windows only test.

**suite2.win32fast** Designed mass test suite for `__fastcall` (MS or GNU, depending on the build tool) void function calls. Tests individual void functions with a varying count of arguments and type. This is a x86/Windows only test.

**suite3** All combinations of parameter types integer, long long, float and double and counts are tested on void function calls. A script written in Python (`mkcase.py`) generates the tests up to an upper MAXARG limit. This is a modified version of suite.

**call.suite** General purpose test suite combining aspects from all others suites (usually enough for testing non-callback calls). A script written in Lua generates the tests.



**callf** Tests the *formatted call dyncall* C API.

**malloc\_wx** Tests *writable and executable memory allocation* used by the *dyncallback* C API.

**thunk** Tests *callbacks* for the *dyncallback* C API.

**callback\_plain** Simple callback function test (useful for easy debugging of new ports).

**callback\_suite** Mass test suite for callback function testing. Uses random function argument number and type. A script written in Lua generates the tests up to a given number of calls and type combinations.

**resolv\_self** Test for dynload library to resolve symbols from application image itself.



## 7 Epilog

### 7.1 Stability and security considerations

Since the *dyncall* library doesn't know anything about the called function itself (except its address), no parameter-type validation is done. This means that in order to avoid crashes, data corruption, etc., the user is required to ascertain the number and types of parameters. It is strongly advised to double check the parameter types of every function to be called, and not to call unknown functions at all.

Consider a simple program that issues a call by directly passing some unchecked command line arguments to the call itself, or even worse, by indirectly choosing a library to load and a function to call without verification. Such unchecked input data can quite easily be used to intentionally crash the program or to take over control of the program flow.

If not used with care, programs depending on the *dyncall*, *dyncallback* and *dynload* libraries, can be exploited as arbitrary function call dispatchers through manipulation of their input data. Successful exploits of badly formed programs like outlined above can be misused as powerful tools for a wide variety of malicious attacks, ...

### 7.2 Embedding

The *dyncall* library strives to have a minimal set of dependencies, meaning no required runtime dependencies and usually only the necessary tools to build the library as build-time dependencies, like a compiler and assembler, linker, etc.. The library uses some heap-memory to store the CallVM and uses by default the platform's `malloc()` and `free()` calls. However, providing custom `dcAllocMem` and `dcFreeMem` C-preprocessor definitions will override the default behaviour. See `dyncall/dyncall_alloc.h` for details.

### 7.3 Multi-threading

The *dyncall* library is thread-safe and reentrant, by means that it works correctly during execution of multiple threads if, and only if there is at most a single thread pushing arguments to one CallVM. Since there's no limitation on the number of created CallVM objects, it is recommended to keep a copy per thread if multiple threads make use of *dyncall* in parallel. Invoking the call should always be thread-safe, however, whether the called function is thread-safe is up to the programmer to verify, of course.

### 7.4 Supported types

Currently, the *dyncall* library supports all of ANSI C's integer, floating point and pointer types as function call arguments and return values. Additionally, C++'s `bool` and C99's `_Bool` types are supported. Due to the still rare and often incomplete support of the `long double` type on various platforms, the latter is currently not officially supported.

### 7.5 Roadmap

The *dyncall* library should be extended by a wide variety of other calling conventions and ported to other and more esoteric platforms. With its low memory footprint it surely comes in handy on embedded systems. Furthermore, the authors plan to provide more scripting language bindings, examples, and other projects based on *dyncall*.

Besides *dyncall* and *dyncallback*, the *dynload* library needs to be extended with support for other shared library formats (e.g. AmigaOS `.library` or GEM [44] files).

## 7.6 Related libraries

Besides the *dyncall* library, there are other free and open projects with similar goals. The most noteworthy libraries are libffi [45], C/Invoke [46] and libffcall [47].



## A Dyncall C library API

The library provides low-level functionality to make foreign function calls from different run-time environments. The flexibility is constrained by the set of supported types.

### C interface style conventions

This manual and the *dyncall* library's C interface "dyncall.h" use the following C source code style.

Subject	C symbol	Details	Example
Types	DC< <i>type name</i> >	lower-case	DCint, DCfloat, DClong, ...
Structures	DC< <i>structure name</i> >	camel-case	DCCallVM
Functions	dc< <i>function name</i> >	camel-case	dcNewCallVM, dcArgInt, ...

Table 10: C interface conventions

### A.1 Supported C/C++ argument and return types

Type alias	C/C++ data type
DCbool	_Bool, bool
DCchar	char
DCshort	short
DCint	int
DClong	long
DClonglong	long long
DCfloat	float
DCdouble	double
DCpointer	void*
DCvoid	void

Table 11: Supported C/C++ argument and return types

## A.2 Call Virtual Machine - CallVM

This *CallVM* is the main entry to the functionality of the library.

### Types

```
typedef void DCCallVM; /* abstract handle */
```

### Details

The *CallVM* is a state machine that manages all aspects of a function call from configuration, argument passing up the actual function call on the processor.

## A.3 Allocation

### Functions

```
DCCallVM* dcNewCallVM (DCsize size);  
void      dcFree(DCCallVM* vm);
```

`dcNewCallVM` creates a new *CallVM* object, where `size` specifies the max size of the internal stack that will be allocated and used to bind arguments to. Use `dcFree` to destroy the *CallVM* object.

This will allocate memory using the system allocators or custom ones provided custom `dcAllocMem` and `dcFreeMem` macros are defined to override the default behaviour. See `dyncall_alloc.h` for details.

## A.4 Error Reporting

### Function

```
DCint dcGetError(DCCallVM* vm);
```

Returns the most recent error state code out of the following:

### Errors

Constant	Description
DC_ERROR_NONE	No error occurred.
DC_ERROR_UNSUPPORTED_MODE	Unsupported mode, caused by <code>dcMode()</code>

Table 12: CallVM calling convention modes

## A.5 Configuration

### Function

```
void dcMode (DCCallVM* vm, DCint mode);
```

Sets the calling convention to use. Note that some mode/platform combination don't make any sense (e.g. using a PowerPC calling convention on a MIPS platform) and are silently ignored.

### Modes

Constant	Description
DC_CALL_C_DEFAULT	C default function call for current platform
DC_CALL_C_ELLIPSIS	C ellipsis function call (named arguments (before '...'))
DC_CALL_C_ELLIPSIS_VARARGS	C ellipsis function call (variable/unnamed arguments (after '...'))
DC_CALL_C_X86_CDECL	C x86 platforms standard call
DC_CALL_C_X86_WIN32_STD	C x86 Windows standard call
DC_CALL_C_X86_WIN32_FAST_MS	C x86 Windows Microsoft fast call
DC_CALL_C_X86_WIN32_FAST_GNU	C x86 Windows GCC fast call
DC_CALL_C_X86_WIN32_THIS_MS	C x86 Windows Microsoft this call
DC_CALL_C_X86_WIN32_THIS_GNU	alias for DC_CALL_C_X86_CDECL (GNU thiscalls identical to cdecl)
DC_CALL_C_X86_PLAN9	C x86 Plan9 call
DC_CALL_C_X64_WIN64	C x64 Windows standard call
DC_CALL_C_X64_SYSV	C x64 System V standard call
DC_CALL_C_PPC32_DARWIN	C ppc32 Mac OS X standard call
DC_CALL_C_PPC32_OSX	alias for DC_CALL_C_PPC32_DARWIN
DC_CALL_C_PPC32_SYSV	C ppc32 SystemV standard call
DC_CALL_C_PPC32_LINUX	alias for DC_CALL_C_PPC32_SYSV
DC_CALL_C_PPC64	C ppc64 SystemV standard call
DC_CALL_C_PPC64_LINUX	alias for DC_CALL_C_PPC64
DC_CALL_C_ARM_ARM	C arm call (arm mode)
DC_CALL_C_ARM_THUMB	C arm call (thumb mode)
DC_CALL_C_ARM_ARM_EABI	C arm eabi call (arm mode)
DC_CALL_C_ARM_THUMB_EABI	C arm eabi call (thumb mode)
DC_CALL_C_ARM_ARMHF	C arm call (arm hardfloat - e.g. raspberry pi)
DC_CALL_C_ARM64	C arm64 call (AArch64)
DC_CALL_C_MIPS32_EABI	C mips32 eabi call
DC_CALL_C_MIPS32_PSPSDK	alias for DC_CALL_C_MIPS32_EABI (deprecated)
DC_CALL_C_MIPS32_O32	C mips32 o32 call
DC_CALL_C_MIPS64_N64	C mips64 n64 call
DC_CALL_C_MIPS64_N32	C mips64 n32 call
DC_CALL_C_SPARC32	C sparc32 call
DC_CALL_C_SPARC64	C sparc64 call
DC_CALL_SYS_DEFAULT	C default syscall for current platform
DC_CALL_SYS_X86_INT80H_BSD	C syscall for x86 BSD platforms
DC_CALL_SYS_X86_INT80H_LINUX	C syscall for x86 Linux
DC_CALL_SYS_X64_SYSCALL_SYSV	C syscall for x64 System V platforms
DC_CALL_SYS_PPC32	C syscall for ppc32
DC_CALL_SYS_PPC64	C syscall for ppc64

Table 13: CallVM calling convention modes

## Details

DC\_CALL\_C\_DEFAULT is the default standard C call on the target platform. It uses the standard C calling convention. DC\_CALL\_C\_ELLIPSIS is used for C ellipsis calls which allow to build up a variable argument list. On many platforms, there is only one C calling convention. The X86 platform provides a rich family of different calling conventions.

## A.6 Machine state reset

```
void dcReset(DCCallVM* vm);
```

Resets the internal stack of arguments and prepares it for a new call. This function should be called after setting the call mode (using dcMode), but prior to binding arguments to the CallVM (except for when setting mode DC\_SIGCHAR\_CC\_ELLIPSIS\_VARARGS, which is used prior to binding varargs of variadic functions). Use it also when reusing a CallVM, as arguments don't get flushed automatically after a function call invocation.

Note: you should also call this function after initial creation of the a CallVM object, as dcNewCallVM doesn't do this, implicitly.

## A.7 Argument binding

### Functions

```
void dcArgBool      (DCCallVM* vm, DCbool      arg);
void dcArgChar      (DCCallVM* vm, DCchar      arg);
void dcArgShort     (DCCallVM* vm, DCshort     arg);
void dcArgInt       (DCCallVM* vm, DCint       arg);
void dcArgLong      (DCCallVM* vm, DClong      arg);
void dcArgLongLong  (DCCallVM* vm, DClonglong  arg);
void dcArgFloat     (DCCallVM* vm, DCfloat     arg);
void dcArgDouble    (DCCallVM* vm, DCdouble    arg);
void dcArgPointer   (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer   arg);
```

## Details

Used to bind arguments of the named types to the CallVM object. Arguments should be bound in *left-to-right* order regarding the C function prototype.

## A.8 Call invocation

### Functions

```
DCvoid      dcCallVoid      (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
DCbool      dcCallBool      (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
DCchar      dcCallChar      (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
DCshort     dcCallShort     (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
DCint       dcCallInt       (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
DClong      dcCallLong      (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
DClonglong  dcCallLongLong  (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
```

```
DCfloat      dcCallFloat   (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
DCdouble     dcCallDouble  (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
DCpointer     dcCallPointer (DCCallVM* vm, DCpointer funcptr);
```

### Details

Calls the function specified by *funcptr* with the arguments bound to the *CallVM* and returns. Use the function that corresponds to the dynamically called function's return value.

After the invocation of the foreign function call, the argument values are still bound and a second call using the same arguments can be issued. If you need to clear the argument bindings, you have to reset the *CallVM*.

## A.9 Formatted argument binding and calls (ANSI C ellipsis interface)

### Functions

```
void dcArgF (DCCallVM* vm, const DCsigchar* signature, ...);
void dcVArgF (DCCallVM* vm, const DCsigchar* signature, va_list args);
void dcCallF (DCCallVM* vm, DCValue* result, DCpointer funcptr,
              const DCsigchar* signature, ...);
void dcVCallF (DCCallVM* vm, DCValue* result, DCpointer funcptr,
               const DCsigchar* signature, va_list args);
```

### Details

These functions can be used to operate *dyncall* via a printf-style functional interface, using a signature string encoding the argument types and return type (and optionally also the calling convention used). *dcArgF()* and *dcVArgF()* just bind arguments to the *DCCallVM* object, so any return value specified in the signature is ignored. *dcCallF()* and *dcVCallF()* also take a function pointer to call after binding the arguments. The return value will be stored in what *result* points to. For more information about the signature format, refer to 2.



## B Dyncallback C library API

This library extends *dyncall* with function callback support, allowing the user to dynamically create a callback object that can be called directly, or passed to functions expecting a function-pointer as argument.

Invoking a *dyncallback* calls into a user-defined unified handler that permits iteration and thus dynamic handling over the called-back-function's parameters.

The flexibility is constrained by the set of supported types, though.

For style conventions and supported types, see *dyncall* API section. In order to use *dyncallback*, include "dyncall\_callback.h".

### B.1 Callback Object

The *Callback Object* is the core component to this library.

#### Types

```
typedef struct DCCallback DCCallback;
```

#### Details

The *Callback Object* is an object that mimics a fully typed function call to another function (a generic callback handler, in this case).

This means, a pointer to this object is passed to a function accepting a pointer to a callback function *as the very callback function pointer itself*. Or, if called directly, cast a pointer to this object to a function pointer and issue a call.

### B.2 Allocation

#### Functions

```
DCCallback* dcbNewCallback(const char*      signature ,  
                           DCCallbackHandler* funcptr ,  
                           void*           userdata);  
void dcbFreeCallback(DCCallback* pcb);
```

*dcbNewCallback* creates and initializes a new *Callback* object, where *signature* is the needed function signature (format is the one outlined in the language bindings-section of this manual, see Table 2) of the function to mimic, *funcptr* is a pointer to a callback handler, and *userdata* a pointer to custom data that might be useful in the handler. Use *dcbFreeCallback* to destroy the *Callback* object.

As with *dcNewCallVM/dcFree*, this will allocate memory using the system allocators or custom overrides.

### B.3 Callback handler

The unified callback handler's declaration used when creating a *DCCallback* is:

```
char cbHandler(DCCallback* cb,  
              DCArgs*      args,  
              DCValue*     result,  
              void*        userdata);
```

cb is a pointer to the DCCallback object in use, args allows for dynamic iteration over the called-back-function's arguments (input) and result is a pointer to a DCValue object in order to store the callback's return value (output, to be set by handler).

Finally, userdata is a pointer to some user defined data that can be set when creating the callback object. The handler itself returns a signature character (see Table 2) specifying the data type used for result.



## C Dynload C library API

The *dynload* library encapsulates dynamic loading mechanisms and gives access to functions in foreign dynamic libraries and code modules.

### C.1 Loading code

```
DLLib* dLLoadLibrary(const char* libpath);  
void dLFreeLibrary(void* libhandle);
```

`dLLoadLibrary` loads a dynamic library at `libpath` and returns a handle to it for use in `dLFreeLibrary` and `dLFindSymbol` calls. Passing a null pointer for the `libpath` argument is valid, and returns a handle to the main executable of the calling code. Also, searching libraries in library paths (e.g. by just passing the library's leaf name) should work, however, they are OS specific. Returns a null pointer on error.

`dLFreeLibrary` frees the loaded library with handle `pLib`.

### C.2 Retrieving functions

```
void* dLFindSymbol(void* libhandle, const char* symbol);
```

This function returns a pointer to a symbol with name `pSymbolName` in the library with handle `pLib`, or returns a null pointer if the symbol cannot be found. The name is specified as it would appear in C source code (mangled if C++, etc.).

### C.3 Misc functions

```
int dLGetLibraryPath(DLLib* pLib, char* sOut, int bufSize);
```

This function can be used to get a copy of the path to the library loaded with handle `pLib`. The parameter `sOut` is a pointer to a buffer of size `bufSize` (in bytes), to hold the output string. The return value is the size of the buffer (in bytes) needed to hold the null-terminated string, or 0 if it can't be looked up. If `bufSize`  $\geq$  return value  $>1$ , a null-terminated string with the path to the library should be in `sOut`. If it returns 0, the library name wasn't able to be found. Please note that this might happen in some rare cases, so make sure to always check.

### C.4 Symbol iteration

```
DLSyms* dLSymsInit(const char* libPath);  
void dLSymsCleanup(DLSyms* pSyms);  
int dLSymsCount(DLSyms* pSyms);  
const char* dLSymsName(DLSyms* pSyms, int index);  
const char* dLSymsNameFromValue(DLSyms* pSyms, void* value); /* symbol must be loaded
```

These functions can be used to iterate over symbols. Since they can be used on libraries that are not linked, they are made for symbol name lookups, not to get a symbol's address. For that refer to `dLFindSymbol`. `dLSymsInit` will return a handle (or a null pointer on error) to the shared object specified by `libPath`, to be used with the other `dLSyms*` functions. Note that contrary to loading and linking libraries, no (OS-specific) rules for searching libraries in library paths, etc. apply. The handle must be freed with `dLSymsCleanup`. `dLSymsCount` returns the number of symbols in the shared object, `dLSymsName` and `dLSymsNameFromValue` are used to lookup symbol names using an index or symbol's address, respectively, returning a null pointer on error. The names are returned as they would appear in C source code (mangled if C++, etc.). The address passed to `dLSymsNameFromValue` must point to a loaded symbol.

## D Calling Conventions

### Before we go any further...

It is important to understand that this section isn't a general purpose description of the present calling conventions. It merely explains the calling conventions **for the parameter/return types supported by dyncall**, not for aggregates (structures, unions and classes), SIMD data types (`__m64`, `__m128`, `__m128i`, `__m128d`), etc.

We strongly advise the reader not to use this document as a general purpose calling convention reference.

### D.1 x86 Calling Conventions

#### Overview

On this processor, a word is defined to be 16 bits in size, a dword 32 bits and a qword 64 bits.

There are numerous different calling conventions on the x86 processor architecture, like `cdecl` [8], MS `fastcall` [10], GNU `fastcall` [11], Borland `fastcall` [12], Watcom `fastcall` [13], Win32 `stdcall` [9], MS `thiscall` [14], GNU `thiscall` [15], the pascal calling convention [16] and a `cdecl`-like version for Plan9 [17] (dubbed `plan9call` by us), etc.

Name	# of regs for params	# regs to # preserve	push order	cleanup by	64bit args via regs?
<code>cdecl</code>	0	4	←	caller	-
MS <code>fastcall</code>	2	4	←	callee	Y
GNU <code>fastcall</code>	2	4	←	callee	N
Borland <code>fastcall</code>	3	4	→	callee	N
Watcom <code>fastcall</code>	4	2-6	←	callee	N
win32 <code>stdcall</code>	0	4	←	callee	-
MS <code>thiscall</code>	1	4	←	callee	N
GNU <code>thiscall</code>	0	4	←	caller	-
pascal	0	4	→	callee	-
<code>plan9call</code>	0	0	←	caller	-

Table 14: short x86 calling convention comparison

#### dyncall support

Currently `cdecl`, `stdcall`, `fastcall` (MS and GNU), `thiscall` (MS and GNU) and `plan9call` are supported. *Dyncall* can also be used to issue syscalls on Linux and \*BSD by using the syscall number as target parameter and selecting the correct mode.

### D.1.1 cdecl

#### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>ebx</b>	preserve
<b>ecx</b>	scratch
<b>edx</b>	scratch, return value
<b>esi</b>	preserve
<b>edi</b>	preserve
<b>ebp</b>	preserve
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 15: Register usage on x86 cdecl calling convention

#### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack
- all arguments are pushed onto the stack

#### Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32$  bits) are returned via the `eax` register
- integers  $> 32$  bits are returned via the `eax` and `edx` registers
- return values  $> 64$  bits (e.g. structures) are returned by the caller allocating the space and passing a pointer to the callee as a new, implicit first parameter (this means, on the stack)
- floating point types are returned via the `st0` register (except on Minix, where they are returned as integers are)

#### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

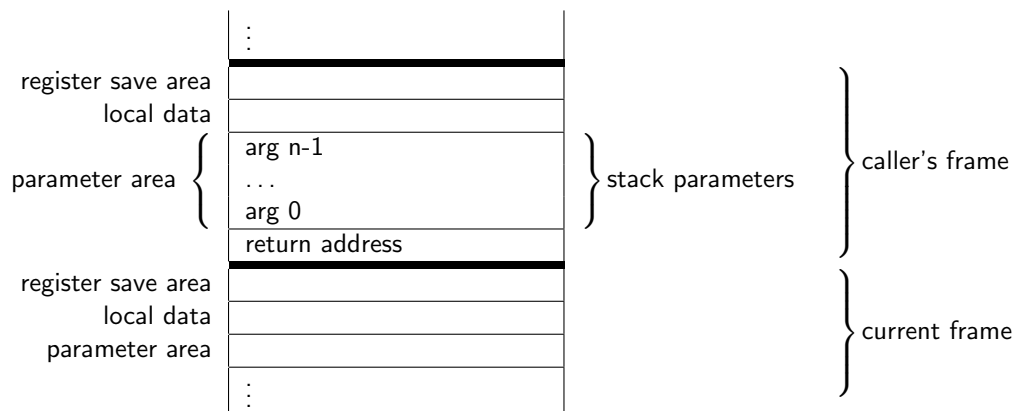


Figure 1: Stack layout on x86 cdecl calling convention

### D.1.2 MS fastcall

#### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>ebx</b>	preserve
<b>ecx</b>	scratch, parameter 0
<b>edx</b>	scratch, parameter 1, return value
<b>esi</b>	preserve
<b>edi</b>	preserve
<b>ebp</b>	preserve
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 16: Register usage on x86 fastcall (MS) calling convention

#### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- called function cleans up the stack
- first two integers/pointers ( $\leq 32\text{bit}$ ) are passed via ecx and edx (even if preceded by other arguments)
- if first argument is a 64 bit integer, it is passed via ecx and edx
- all other parameters are pushed onto the stack

#### Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32\text{ bits}$ ) are returned via the eax register
- integers  $> 32\text{ bits}$  are returned via the eax and edx registers@@@verify

- floating point types are returned via the st0 register@@@ really ?

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

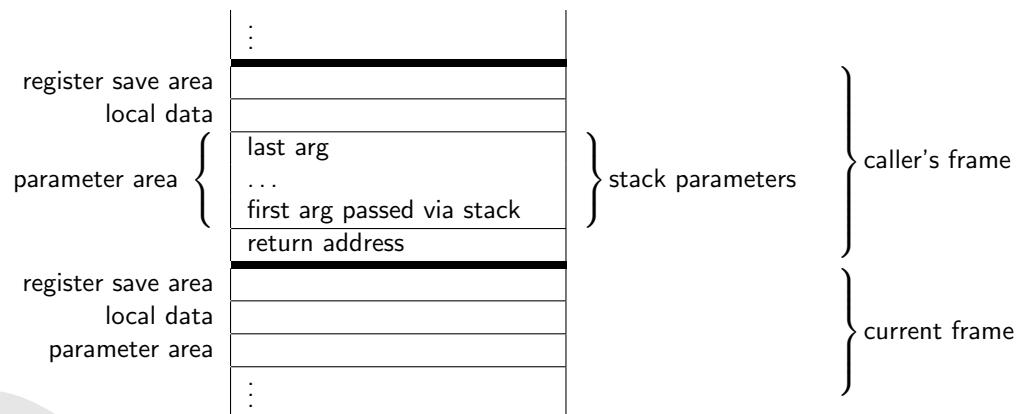


Figure 2: Stack layout on x86 fastcall (MS) calling convention

### D.1.3 GNU fastcall

#### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>ebx</b>	preserve
<b>ecx</b>	scratch, parameter 0
<b>edx</b>	scratch, parameter 1, return value
<b>esi</b>	preserve
<b>edi</b>	preserve
<b>ebp</b>	preserve
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 17: Register usage on x86 fastcall (GNU) calling convention

#### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- called function cleans up the stack
- first two integers/pointers ( $\leq 32$ bit) are passed via ecx and edx (even if preceded by other arguments)
- if first argument is a 64 bit integer, it is pushed on the stack and the two registers are skipped
- all other parameters are pushed onto the stack

#### Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32$  bits) are returned via the eax register.
- integers  $> 32$  bits are returned via the eax and edx registers.
- floating point types are returned via the st0.



## Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

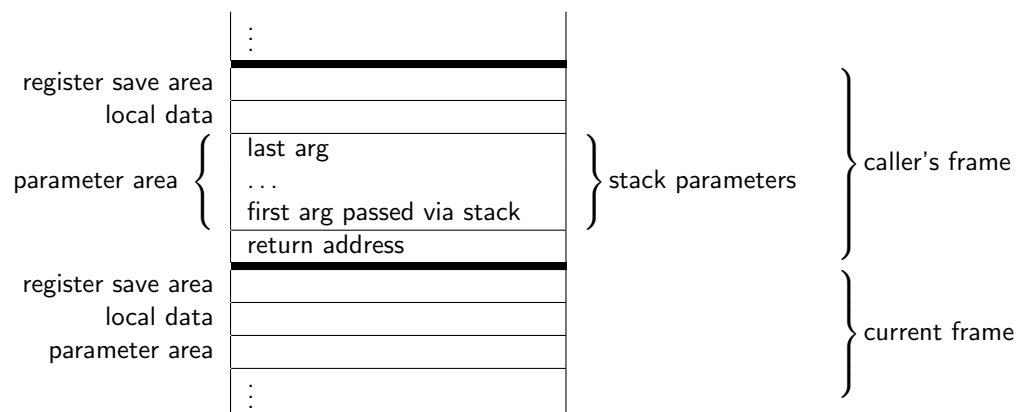


Figure 3: Stack layout on x86 fastcall (GNU) calling convention

### D.1.4 Borland fastcall

Also called **register convention** by Borland.

#### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, parameter 0, return value
<b>ebx</b>	preserve
<b>ecx</b>	scratch, parameter 2
<b>edx</b>	scratch, parameter 1, return value
<b>esi</b>	preserve
<b>edi</b>	preserve
<b>ebp</b>	preserve
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 18: Register usage on x86 fastcall (Borland) calling convention

#### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: left-to-right
- called function cleans up the stack
- first three integers/pointers (with exception of method pointers) ( $\leq 32\text{bit}$ ) are passed via `eax`, `ecx` and `edx` (even if preceded or interleaved by other arguments)
- all other parameters are pushed onto the stack

## Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32$  bits) are returned via the `eax` register
- integers  $> 32$  bits are returned via the `eax` and `edx` registers
- floating point types are returned via the `st0` register
- all others (e.g. all structs, return values  $> 64$  bits, ...) are returned by the caller allocating the space and passing a pointer to the callee as a new, implicit first parameter

## Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

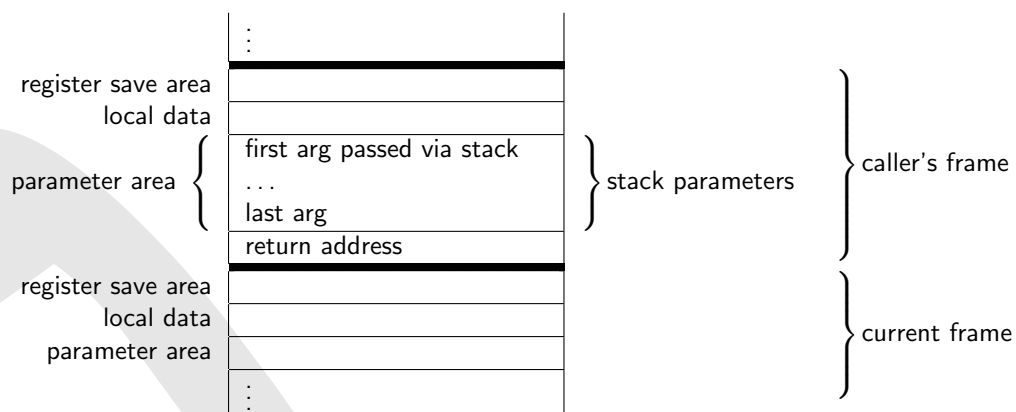


Figure 4: Stack layout on x86 fastcall (Borland) calling convention

## D.1.5 Watcom fastcall

### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, parameter 0, return value
<b>ebx</b>	scratch when used for parameter, otherwise preserve, parameter 2
<b>ecx</b>	scratch when used for parameter, otherwise preserve, parameter 3
<b>edx</b>	scratch when used for parameter, otherwise preserve, parameter 1, return value
<b>esi</b>	scratch when used for return pointer, otherwise preserve
<b>edi</b>	preserve
<b>ebp</b>	preserve
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 19: Register usage on x86 fastcall (Watcom) calling convention

## Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- called function cleans up the stack
- first four integers/pointers ( $\leq 32$ bit) are passed via `eax`, `edx`, `ebx` and `ecx` (even if preceded by other arguments)
- arguments  $> 32$  bits, as well as all subsequent arguments, are passed via the stack
- all other parameters are pushed onto the stack
- `varargs` are always passed via the stack

### Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32$  bits) are returned via the `eax` register
- integers  $> 32$  bits are returned via the `eax` and `edx` registers@@@ verify
- floating point types are returned via the `st0` register@@@ really ?

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

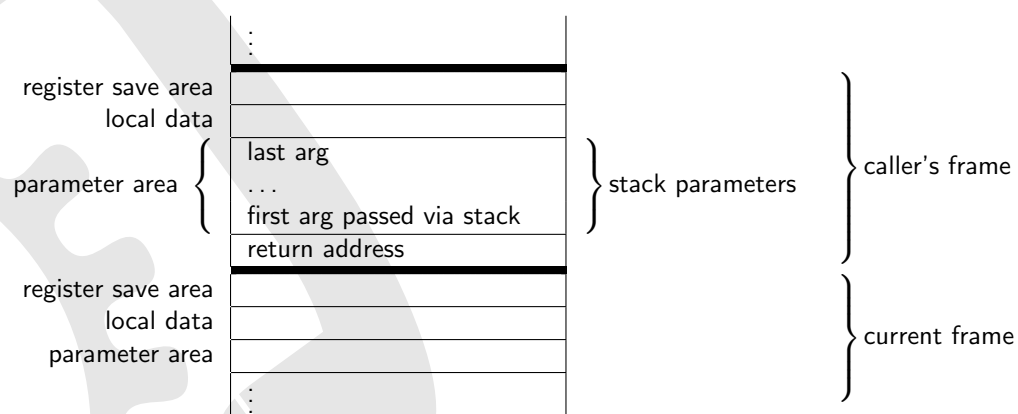


Figure 5: Stack layout on x86 fastcall (Watcom) calling convention

### D.1.6 win32 stdcall

#### Registers and register usage

#### Parameter passing

- Stack parameter order: right-to-left
- Called function cleans up the stack
- All parameters are pushed onto the stack

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>ebx</b>	preserve
<b>ecx</b>	scratch
<b>edx</b>	scratch, return value
<b>esi</b>	preserve
<b>edi</b>	preserve
<b>ebp</b>	preserve
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 20: Register usage on x86 stdcall calling convention

- Stack is usually 4 byte aligned (GCC  $\geq 3.x$  seems to use a 16byte alignment)
- the direction flag is clear on entry and must be returned clear

### Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32$  bits) are returned via the eax register
- integers  $> 32$  bits are returned via the eax and edx registers
- floating point types are returned via the st0 register

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

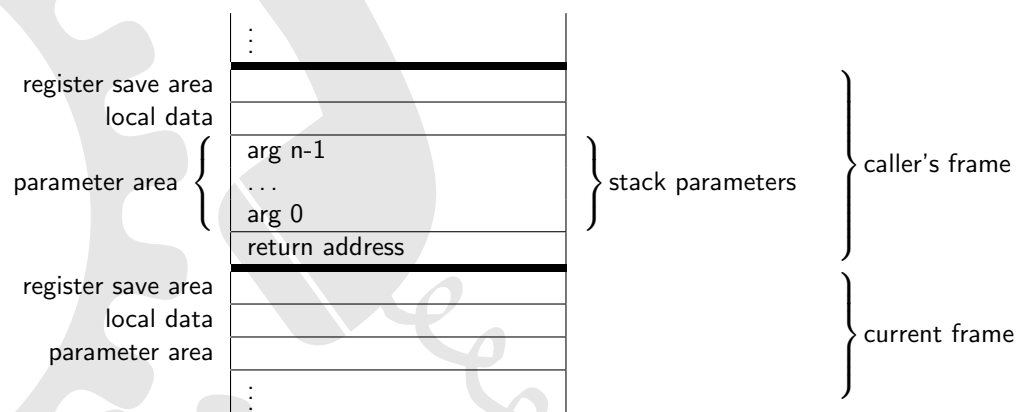


Figure 6: Stack layout on x86 stdcall calling convention

## D.1.7 MS thiscall

### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>ebx</b>	preserve
<b>ecx</b>	scratch, parameter 0
<b>edx</b>	scratch, return value
<b>esi</b>	preserve
<b>edi</b>	preserve
<b>ebp</b>	preserve
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 21: Register usage on x86 thiscall (MS) calling convention

### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- called function cleans up the stack
- first parameter (this pointer) is passed via ecx
- all other parameters are pushed onto the stack

### Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32$  bits) are returned via the eax register
- integers  $> 32$  bits are returned via the eax and edx registers@@@verify
- floating point types are returned via the st0 register@@@ really ?

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

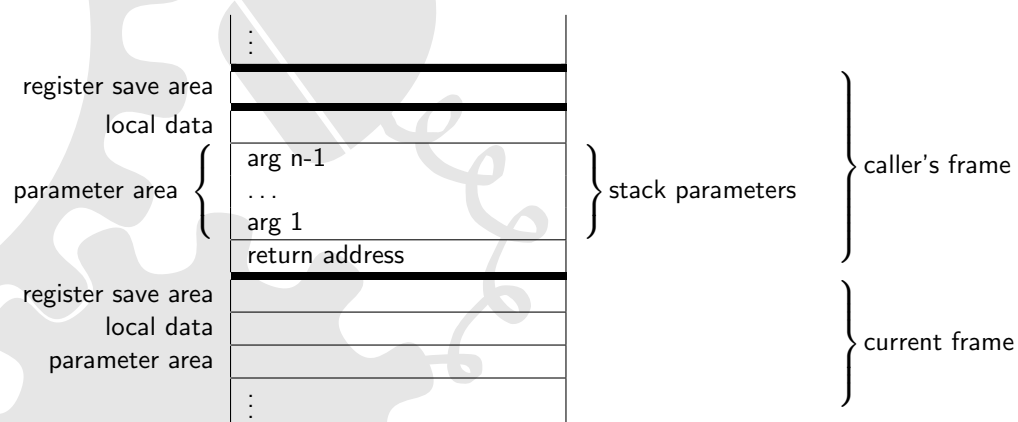


Figure 7: Stack layout on x86 thiscall (MS) calling convention

### D.1.8 GNU thiscall

This is equivalent to the cdecl calling convention, with the first parameter being the this pointer.

### D.1.9 pascal

The best known uses of the pascal calling convention are the 16 bit OS/2 APIs, Microsoft Windows 3.x and Borland Delphi 1.x.

#### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>ebx</b>	preserve
<b>ecx</b>	scratch
<b>edx</b>	scratch, return value
<b>esi</b>	preserve
<b>edi</b>	preserve
<b>ebp</b>	preserve
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 22: Register usage on x86 pascal calling convention

#### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: left-to-right
- called function cleans up the stack
- all parameters are pushed onto the stack

#### Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32$  bits) are returned via the eax register
- integers  $> 32$  bits are returned via the eax and edx registers
- floating point types are returned via the st0 register

#### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

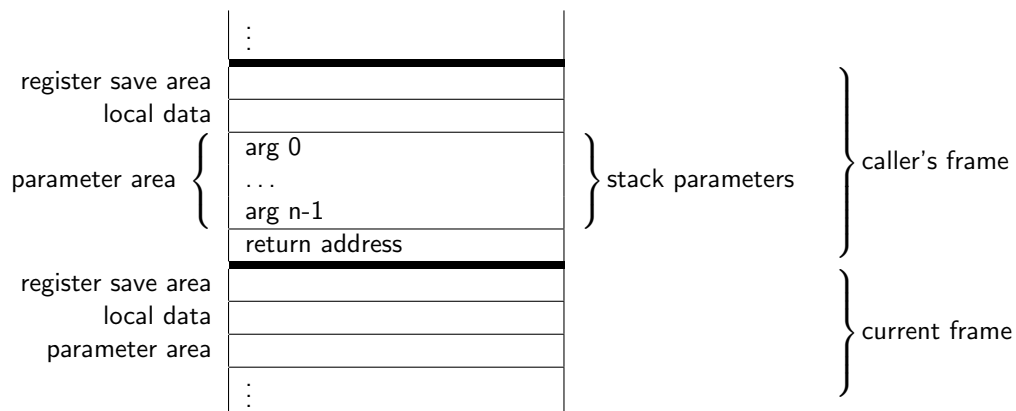


Figure 8: Stack layout on x86 pascal calling convention

### D.1.10 plan9call

#### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>eax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>ebx</b>	scratch
<b>ecx</b>	scratch
<b>edx</b>	scratch
<b>esi</b>	scratch
<b>edi</b>	scratch
<b>ebp</b>	scratch
<b>esp</b>	stack pointer
<b>st0</b>	scratch, floating point return value
<b>st1-st7</b>	scratch

Table 23: Register usage on x86 plan9call calling convention

#### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack
- all parameters are pushed onto the stack

## Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 32$  bits) are returned via the `eax` register
- integers  $> 32$  bits or structures are returned by the caller allocating the space and passing a pointer to the callee as a new, implicit first parameter (this means, on the stack)
- floating point types are returned via the `st0` register (called `F0` in plan9 8a's terms)

## Stack layout

Note there is no register save area at all. Stack directly after function prolog:

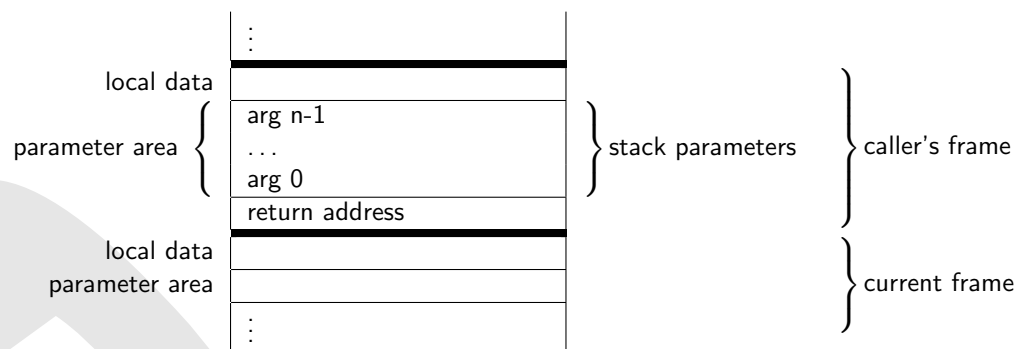


Figure 9: Stack layout on x86 plan9call calling convention



### D.1.11 Linux syscalls

#### Parameter passing

- syscall is issued by triggering *interrupt 80h*
- syscall number is set in `eax`
- params are passed in the following registers in this order: `ebx`, `ecx`, `edx`, `esi`, `edi`, `ebp`
- for more than six arguments, `ebx` points to the list of further arguments (not used in practice, as Linux syscalls use a maximum of 5 arguments)
- register `eax` holds the return value

### D.1.12 \*BSD syscalls

#### Parameter passing

- syscall is issued by triggering *interrupt 80h*
- syscall number is set in `eax`
- params are passed on the stack as with the `cdecl` calling convention

## D.2 x64 Calling Conventions

### Overview

The x64 (64bit) architecture designed by AMD is based on Intel's x86 (32bit) architecture, supporting it natively. It is sometimes referred to as x86-64, AMD64, or, cloned by Intel, EM64T or Intel64. On this processor, a word is defined to be 16 bits in size, a dword 32 bits and a qword 64 bits. Note that this is due to historical reasons (terminology didn't change with the introduction of 32 and 64 bit processors).

The x64 calling convention for MS Windows [25] differs from the SystemV x64 calling convention [26] used by Linux/\*BSD/... Note that this is not the only difference between these operating systems. The 64 bit programming model in use by 64 bit windows is LLP64, meaning that the C types `int` and `long` remain 32 bits in size, whereas `long long` becomes 64 bits. Under Linux/\*BSD/... it's LP64.

Compared to the x86 architecture, the 64 bit versions of the registers are called `rax`, `rbx`, etc.. Furthermore, there are eight new general purpose registers `r8-r15`.

### dyncall support

Currently, the MS Windows and System V calling conventions are supported.

*Dyncall* can also be used to issue syscalls on System V platforms by using the syscall number as target parameter and selecting the correct mode.

#### D.2.1 MS Windows

##### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>rax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>rbx</b>	permanent
<b>rcx</b>	scratch, parameter 0 if integer or pointer
<b>rdx</b>	scratch, parameter 1 if integer or pointer
<b>rdi</b>	permanent
<b>rsi</b>	permanent
<b>rbp</b>	permanent, may be used as frame pointer
<b>rsp</b>	stack pointer
<b>r8-r9</b>	scratch, parameter 2 and 3 if integer or pointer
<b>r10-r11</b>	scratch, permanent if required by caller (used for syscall/sysret)
<b>r12-r15</b>	permanent
<b>xmm0</b>	scratch, floating point parameter 0, floating point return value
<b>xmm1-xmm3</b>	scratch, floating point parameters 1-3
<b>xmm4-xmm5</b>	scratch, permanent if required by caller
<b>xmm6-xmm15</b>	permanent

Table 24: Register usage on x64 MS Windows platform

##### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack

- first 4 integer/pointer parameters are passed via rcx, rdx, r8, r9 (from left to right), others are pushed on stack (there is a spill area for the first 4)
- float and double parameters are passed via xmm0l-xmm3l
- first 4 parameters are passed via the correct register depending on the parameter type - with mixed float and int parameters, some registers are left out (e.g. first parameter ends up in rcx or xmm0, second in rdx or xmm1, etc.)
- parameters in registers are right justified
- parameters < 64bits are not zero extended - zero the upper bits containing garbage if needed (but they are always passed as a qword)
- parameters > 64 bit are passed by reference
- if callee takes address of a parameter, first 4 parameters must be dumped (to the reserved space on the stack) - for floating point parameters, value must be stored in integer AND floating point register
- caller cleans up the stack, not the callee (like cdecl)
- stack is always 16byte aligned - since return address is 64 bits in size, stacks with an odd number of parameters are already aligned
- ellipsis calls take floating point values in int and float registers (single precision floats are promoted to double precision as required by ellipsis calls)
- if size of parameters > 1 page of memory (usually between 4k and 64k), chkstk must be called

### Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 64$  bits) are returned via the rax register
- floating point types are returned via the xmm0 register
- for types > 64 bits, a secret first parameter with an address to the return value is passed

### Stack layout

Stack frame is always 16-byte aligned. Stack directly after function prolog:

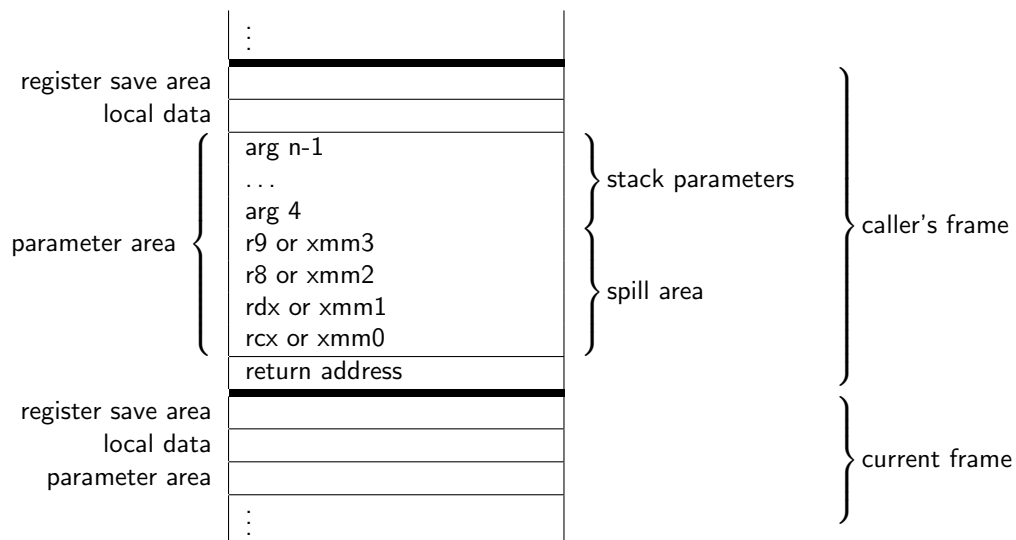


Figure 10: Stack layout on x64 Microsoft platform

## D.2.2 System V (Linux / \*BSD / MacOS X)

### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>rax</b>	scratch, return value
<b>rbx</b>	permanent
<b>rcx</b>	scratch, parameter 3 if integer or pointer
<b>rdx</b>	scratch, parameter 2 if integer or pointer, return value
<b>rdi</b>	scratch, parameter 0 if integer or pointer
<b>rsi</b>	scratch, parameter 1 if integer or pointer
<b>rbp</b>	permanent, may be used as frame pointer
<b>rsp</b>	stack pointer
<b>r8-r9</b>	scratch, parameter 4 and 5 if integer or pointer
<b>r10-r11</b>	scratch
<b>r12-r15</b>	permanent
<b>xmm0</b>	scratch, floating point parameters 0, floating point return value
<b>xmm1-xmm7</b>	scratch, floating point parameters 1-7
<b>xmm8-xmm15</b>	scratch
<b>st0-st1</b>	scratch, 16 byte floating point return value
<b>st2-st7</b>	scratch

Table 25: Register usage on x64 System V (Linux/\*BSD)

### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack
- first 6 integer/pointer parameters are passed via rdi, rsi, rdx, rcx, r8, r9
- first 8 floating point parameters  $\leq 64$  bits are passed via xmm0l-xmm7l

- parameters in registers are right justified
- parameters that are not passed via registers are pushed onto the stack
- parameters  $< 64$ bits are not zero extended - zero the upper bits containing garbage if needed (but they are always passed as a qword)
- integer/pointer parameters  $> 64$  bit are passed via 2 registers
- if callee takes address of a parameter, number of used xmm registers is passed silently in `al` (passed number mustn't be exact but an upper bound on the number of used xmm registers)
- stack is always 16byte aligned - since return address is 64 bits in size, stacks with an odd number of parameters are already aligned
- no spill area is used on stack, iterating over `varargs` requires a specific `va_list` implementation

## Return values

- return values of pointer or integral type ( $\leq 64$  bits) are returned via the `rax` register
- floating point types are returned via the `xmm0` register
- for types  $> 64$  bits, a secret first parameter with an address to the return value is passed - the passed in address will be returned in `rax`
- floating point values  $> 64$  bits are returned via `st0` and `st1`

## Stack layout

Stack frame is always 16-byte aligned. Stack directly after function prolog:

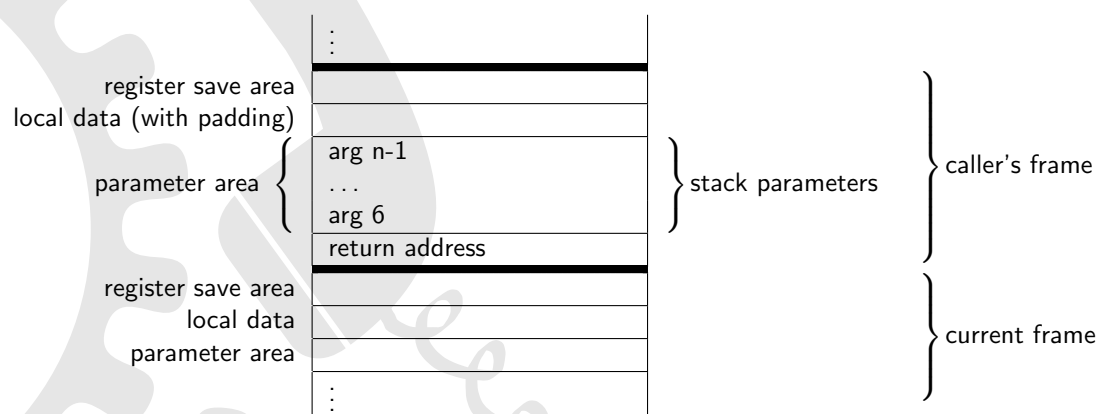


Figure 11: Stack layout on x64 System V (Linux/\*BSD)

### D.2.3 System V syscalls

#### Parameter passing

- syscall is issued via the *syscall* instruction
- kernel destroys registers *rcx* and *r11*
- syscall number is set in *rax*
- params are passed in the following registers in this order: *rdi*, *rsi*, *rdx*, *rcx*, *r8*, *r9*
- no stack in use, meaning syscalls are in theory limited to six arguments
- register *rax* holds the return value (values in between -4095 and -1 indicate errors)



## D.3 PowerPC (32bit) Calling Conventions

### Overview

- Word size is 32 bits
- Big endian (MSB) and little endian (LSB) operating modes.
- Processor operates on floats in double precision floating point arithmetic (IEEE-754) values directly (single precision is converted on the fly)
- Apple macOS/Mac OS X/Darwin PPC is specified in "Mac OS X ABI Function Call Guide" [31]. It uses Big Endian (MSB)
- Linux PPC 32-bit ABI is specified in "LSB for PPC" [32] which is based on "System V ABI". It uses Big Endian (MSB)
- PowerPC EABI is defined in the "PowerPC Embedded Application Binary Interface 32-Bit Implementation" [33]
- There is also the "PowerOpen ABI" [35], a nearly identical version of it is used in AIX

### dyncall support

*Dyncall* and *dyncallback* are supported for PowerPC (32bit) Big Endian (MSB), for Darwin's and System V's calling convention.

*Dyncall* can also be used to issue syscalls by using the syscall number as target parameter and selecting the correct mode.

#### D.3.1 Mac OS X/Darwin

### Registers and register usage

#### Parameter passing

- stack grows down
- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack
- the first 8 integer parameters are passed in registers gpr3-gpr10
- the first 13 floating point parameters are passed in registers fpr1-fpr13
- 64 bit arguments are passed as if they were two 32 bit arguments, without skipping registers for alignment (this means passing half via a register and half via the stack is allowed)
- if a float parameter is passed via a register, gpr registers are skipped for subsequent integer parameters (based on the size of the float - 1 register for single precision and 2 for double precision floating point values)
- the caller pushes subsequent parameters onto the stack
- for every parameter passed via a register, space is reserved in the stack parameter area (in order to spill the parameters if needed - e.g. varargs)

Name	Brief description
<b>gpr0</b>	scratch
<b>gpr1</b>	stack pointer
<b>gpr2</b>	scratch
<b>gpr3,gpr4</b>	return value, parameter 0 and 1 for integer or pointer, scratch
<b>gpr5-gpr10</b>	parameter 2-7 for integer or pointer parameters, scratch
<b>gpr11</b>	preserve
<b>gpr12</b>	branch target for dynamic code generation
<b>gpr13-31</b>	preserve
<b>fpr0</b>	scratch
<b>fpr1</b>	floating point return value, floating point parameter 0 (always double precision)
<b>fpr2-fpr13</b>	floating point parameters 1-12 (always double precision)
<b>fpr14-fpr31</b>	preserve
<b>v0-v1</b>	scratch
<b>v2-v13</b>	vector parameters
<b>v14-v19</b>	scratch
<b>v20-v31</b>	preserve
<b>lr</b>	link-register, scratch
<b>ctr</b>	count-register, scratch
<b>cr0-cr7</b>	conditional register fields, each 4-bit wide (cr0-cr1 and cr5-cr7 are scratch)

Table 26: Register usage on Darwin PowerPC 32-Bit

- ellipsis calls take floating point values in int and float registers (single precision floats are promoted to double precision as required by ellipsis calls)
- all nonvector parameters are aligned on 4-byte boundaries
- vector parameters are aligned on 16-byte boundaries
- composite parameters with size of 1 or 2 bytes occupy low-order bytes of their 4-byte area. INCONSISTENT with other 32-bit PPC binary interfaces. In AIX and mac OS 9, padding bytes always follow the data structure
- composite parameters 3 bytes or larger in size occupy high-order bytes
- integer parameters < 32 bit are right-justified (meaning occupy higher-address bytes) in their 4-byte slot on the stack, requiring extra-care for big-endian targets

### Return values

- return values of integer <= 32bit or pointer type use gpr3
- 64 bit integers use gpr3 and gpr4 (hiword in gpr3, loword in gpr4)
- floating point values are returned via fpr1
- structures <= 64 bits use gpr3 and gpr4
- for types > 64 bits, a secret first parameter with an address to the return value is passed

### Stack layout

Stack frame is always 16-byte aligned. Prolog opens frame with additional, fixed space for a linkage area, to hold a number of values (not all of them are required to be saved, though). Stack directly after function prolog:



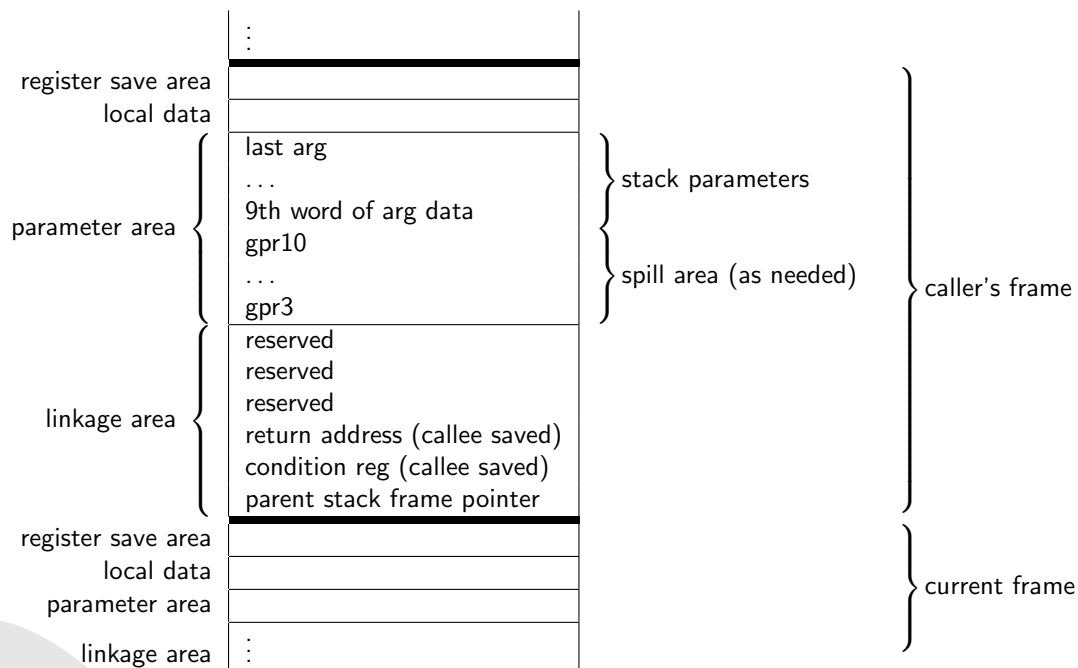


Figure 12: Stack layout on ppc32 Darwin

### D.3.2 System V PPC 32-bit

#### Status

#### Registers and register usage

#### Parameter passing

- Stack pointer (r1) is always 16-byte aligned. The EABI differs here - it is 8-byte alignment.
- 8 general-purpose registers (r3-r10) for integer and pointer types.
- 8 floating-point registers (f1-f8) for float (promoted to double) and double types.
- Additional arguments are passed on the stack directly after the back-chain and saved return address (8 bytes structure) on the callers stack frame.
- 64-bit integer data types are passed in general-purpose registers as a whole in two 32-bit general purpose registers (an odd and an even e.g. r3 and r4), skipping an even integer register or passed on the stack; they are never splitted into a register and stack part
- Ellipsis calls set CR bit 6
- integer parameters < 32 bit are right-justified (meaning occupy high-order bytes) in their 4-byte area, requiring extra-care for big-endian targets
- no spill area is used on stack, iterating over varargs requires a specific va\_list implementation

#### Return values

Name	Brief description
<b>r0</b>	scratch
<b>r1</b>	stack pointer, preserve
<b>r2</b>	system-reserved
<b>r3-r4</b>	parameter passing and return value, scratch
<b>r5-r10</b>	parameter passing, scratch
<b>r11-r12</b>	scratch
<b>r13</b>	small data area pointer register
<b>r14-r30</b>	local variables, preserve
<b>r31</b>	used for local variables or <i>environment pointer</i> , preserve
<b>f0</b>	scratch
<b>f1</b>	parameter passing and return value, scratch
<b>f2-f8</b>	parameter passing, scratch
<b>f9-13</b>	scratch
<b>f14-f31</b>	local variables, preserve
<b>cr0-cr7</b>	conditional register fields, each 4-bit wide (cr0-cr1 and cr5-cr7 are scratch)
<b>lr</b>	link register, scratch
<b>ctr</b>	count register, scratch
<b>xer</b>	fixed-point exception register, scratch
<b>fpscr</b>	floating-point Status and Control Register

Table 27: Register usage on System V ABI PowerPC Processor

- 32-bit integers use register r3, 64-bit use registers r3 and r4 (hiword in r3, loword in r4).
- floating-point values are returned using register f1.

### Stack layout

Stack frame is always 16-byte aligned. Stack directly after function prolog:

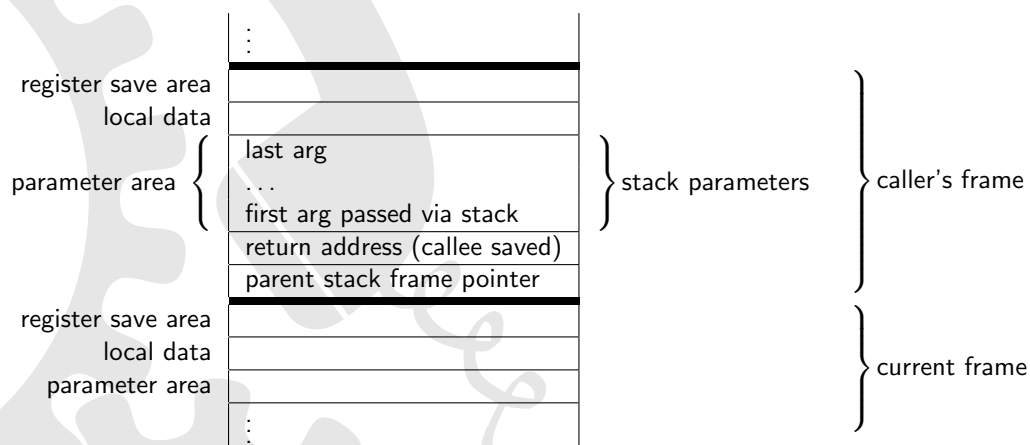


Figure 13: Stack layout on System V ABI for PowerPC 32-bit calling convention

### D.3.3 System V syscalls

#### Parameter passing

- syscall is issued via the `sc` instruction
- kernel destroys registers `r13`
- syscall number is set in `r0`
- params are passed in registers `r3` through `r10`
- no stack in use, meaning syscalls are in theory limited to eight arguments
- register `r3` holds the return value, overflow flag in conditional register `cr0` signals errors in syscall



## D.4 PowerPC (64bit) Calling Conventions

### Overview

- Word size is 32 bits for historical reasons
- Big endian (MSB) and little endian (LSB) operating modes.
- Apple Mac OS X/Darwin PPC is specified in "Mac OS X ABI Function Call Guide" [31]. It uses Big Endian (MSB).
- Linux PPC 64-bit ABI is specified in "64-bit PowerPC ELF Application Binary Interface Supplement" [36] which is based on "System V ABI".

### dyncall support

*Dyncall* and *dyncallback* are supported for PowerPC (64bit) Big Endian and Little Endian ELF ABIs on System V systems. Mac OS X is not supported.

*Dyncall* can also be used to issue syscalls by using the syscall number as target parameter and selecting the correct mode.

### D.4.1 PPC64 ELF ABI

#### Registers and register usage

Name	Brief description
<b>gpr0</b>	scratch
<b>gpr1</b>	stack pointer
<b>gpr2</b>	TOC base ptr (offset table and data for position independent code), scratch
<b>gpr3</b>	return value, parameter 0 for integer or pointer, scratch
<b>gpr4-gpr10</b>	parameter 1-7 for integer or pointer parameters, scratch
<b>gpr11</b>	env pointer if needed, scratch
<b>gpr12</b>	used for exception handling and glink code, scratch
<b>gpr13</b>	used for system thread ID, preserve
<b>gpr14-31</b>	preserve
<b>fpr0</b>	scratch
<b>fpr1-fpr4</b>	floating point return value, floating point parameter 0-3 (always double precision)
<b>fpr5-fpr13</b>	floating point parameters 4-12 (always double precision)
<b>fpr14-fpr31</b>	preserve
<b>v0-v1</b>	scratch
<b>v2-v13</b>	vector parameters
<b>v14-v19</b>	scratch
<b>v20-v31</b>	preserve
<b>lr</b>	link-register, scratch
<b>ctr</b>	count-register, scratch
<b>xer</b>	fixed point exception register, scratch
<b>fpscr</b>	floating point status and control register, scratch
<b>cr0-cr7</b>	conditional register fields, each 4-bit wide (cr0-cr1 and cr5-cr7 are scratch)

Table 28: Register usage on PowerPC 64-Bit ELF ABI

### Parameter passing

- stack grows down
- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack
- stack is always 16 byte aligned
- the stack pointer must be atomically updated (to avoid any timing window in which an interrupt can occur with a partially updated stack), usually with the `stdu` (store doubleword with update) instruction
- the first 8 integer parameters are passed in registers `gpr3-gpr10`
- the first 13 floating point parameters are passed in registers `fpr1-fpr13`
- preserved registers are saved using a defined order (from high to low addresses): `fpr*` (64bit aligned), `gpr*`, `VRSAVE` save word (32 bits), padding for alignment (4 or 12 bytes), `v*` (128bit aligned)
- if a floating point parameter is passed via a register, a `gpr` register is skipped for subsequent integer parameters
- the caller pushes subsequent parameters onto the stack
- single precision floating point values use the second word in a doubleword
- a quad precision floating point argument is passed as two consecutive double precision ones
- integer types  $< 64$  bit are sign or zero extended and use a doubleword
- ellipsis calls take floating point values in `int` and `float` registers (single precision floats are promoted to double precision as required by ellipsis calls)
- space for all potential `gpr*` register passed arguments is reserved in the stack parameter area (in order to spill the parameters if needed - e.g. `varargs`), meaning a minimum of 64 bytes to hold `gpr3-gpr10`
- all nonvector parameters are aligned on 8-byte boundaries
- vector parameters are aligned on 16-byte boundaries
- integer parameters  $< 64$  bit are right-justified (meaning occupy higher-address bytes) in their 8-byte slot on the stack, requiring extra-care for big-endian targets

### Return values

- return values of integer  $\leq 32$ bit or pointer type use `gpr3` and are zero or sign extended depending on their type
- 64 bit integers use `gpr3`
- floating point values are returned via `fpr1`
- character arrays  $\leq 8$  bytes use `gpr3`, and are right justified
- for all structs/unions (regardless of size) or character arrays  $> 8$  bytes, a secret first parameter with an address to a caller allocated space is passed as first argument to the function (meaning in `gpr3`), which is written to by the callee

### Stack layout

Stack frame is always 16-byte aligned. Stack directly after function prolog:

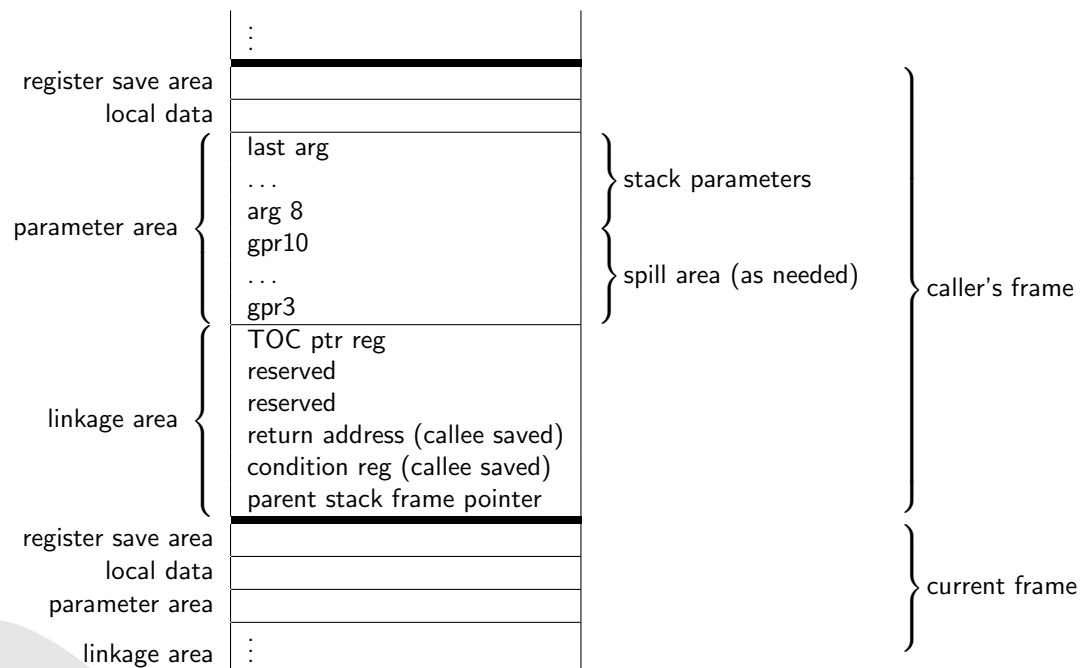


Figure 14: Stack layout on ppc64 ELF ABI

#### D.4.2 System V syscalls

##### Parameter passing

- syscall is issued via the `sc` instruction
- kernel destroys registers `r13`
- syscall number is set in `r0`
- params are passed in registers `r3` through `r10`
- no stack in use, meaning syscalls are in theory limited to eight arguments
- register `r3` holds the return value, overflow flag in conditional register `cr0` signals errors in syscall

## D.5 ARM32 Calling Conventions

### Overview

The ARM32 family of processors is based on the Advanced RISC Machines (ARM) processor architecture (32 bit RISC). The word size is 32 bits (and the programming model is LLP64). Basically, this family of microprocessors can be run in 2 major modes:

Mode	Description
<b>ARM</b>	32bit instruction set
<b>THUMB</b>	compressed instruction set using 16bit wide instruction encoding

For more details, take a look at the ARM-THUMB Procedure Call Standard (ATPCS) [18], the Procedure Call Standard for the ARM Architecture (AAPCS) [19], as well as Debian's ARM EABI port [23] and hard-float [24] wiki pages.

### dyncall support

Currently, the *dyncall* library supports the ARM and THUMB mode of the ARM32 family (ATPCS [18], EABI [23], the ARM hard-float (armhf) [23] variant, as well as Apple's calling convention based on the ATPCS), excluding manually triggered ARM-THUMB interworking calls.

Also supported is armhf, a calling convention with register support to pass floating point numbers. FPA and the VFP (scalar mode) procedure call standards, as well as some instruction sets accelerating DSP and multimedia application like the ARM Jazelle Technology (direct Java bytecode execution, providing acceleration for some bytecodes while calling software code for others), etc., are not supported by the *dyncall* library.

### D.5.1 ATPCS ARM mode

#### Registers and register usage

In ARM mode, the ARM32 processor has sixteen 32 bit general purpose registers, namely r0-r15:

Name	Alias	Brief description
<b>r0</b>	<b>a1</b>	parameter 0, scratch, return value
<b>r1</b>	<b>a2</b>	parameter 1, scratch, return value
<b>r2,r3</b>	<b>a3,a4</b>	parameters 2 and 3, scratch
<b>r4-r9</b>	<b>v1-v6</b>	permanent
<b>r10</b>	<b>sl</b>	permanent
<b>r11</b>	<b>fp</b>	frame pointer, permanent
<b>r12</b>	<b>ip</b>	scratch
<b>r13</b>	<b>sp</b>	stack pointer, permanent
<b>r14</b>	<b>lr</b>	link register, permanent
<b>r15</b>	<b>pc</b>	program counter (note: due to pipeline, r15 points to 2 instructions ahead)

Table 29: Register usage on arm32

### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack
- first four words are passed using r0-r3
- subsequent parameters are pushed onto the stack (in right to left order, such that the stack pointer points to the first of the remaining parameters)
- if the callee takes the address of one of the parameters and uses it to address other parameters (e.g. varargs) it has to copy - in its prolog - the first four words to a reserved stack area adjacent to the other parameters on the stack
- parameters  $\leq 32$  bits are passed as 32 bit words
- 64 bit parameters are passed as two 32 bit parts (even partly via the register and partly via the stack, although this doesn't seem to be specified in the ATPCS)
- structures and unions are passed by value (after rounding up the size to the nearest multiple of 4), as a sequence of words
- if return value is a structure, a pointer pointing to the return value's space is passed in r0, the first parameter in r1, etc... (see **return values**)
- keeping the stack eight-byte aligned can improve memory access performance and is required by LDRD and STRD on ARMv5TE processors which are part of the ARM32 family, so, in order to avoid problems one should always align the stack (tests have shown, that GCC does care about the alignment when using the ellipsis)

### Return values

- return values  $\leq 32$  bits use r0
- 64 bit return values use r0 and r1
- if return value is a structure, the caller allocates space for the return value on the stack in its frame and passes a pointer to it in r0

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:



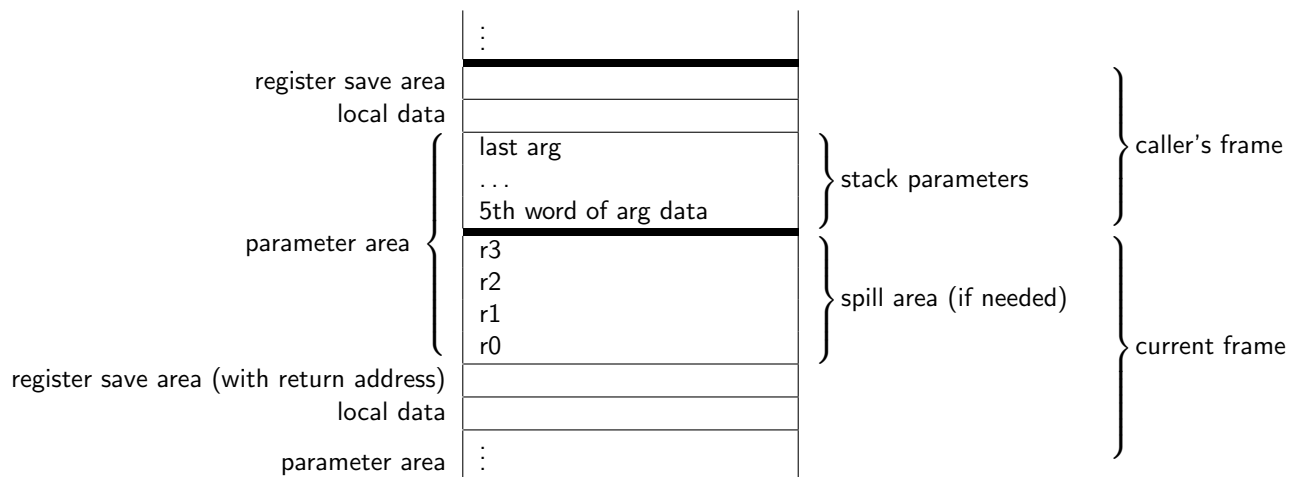


Figure 15: Stack layout on arm32

## D.5.2 ATPCS THUMB mode

### Status

- The ATPCS THUMB mode is untested.
- Ellipsis calls may not work.
- C++ this calls do not work.

### Registers and register usage

In THUMB mode, the ARM32 processor family supports eight 32 bit general purpose registers r0-r7 and access to high order registers r8-r15:

Name	Alias	Brief description
<b>r0</b>	<b>a1</b>	parameter 0, scratch, return value
<b>r1</b>	<b>a2</b>	parameter 1, scratch, return value
<b>r2,r3</b>	<b>a3,a4</b>	parameters 2 and 3, scratch
<b>r4-r6</b>	<b>v1-v3</b>	permanent
<b>r7</b>	<b>v4</b>	frame pointer, permanent
<b>r8-r11</b>	<b>v5-v8</b>	permanent
<b>r12</b>	<b>ip</b>	scratch
<b>r13</b>	<b>sp</b>	stack pointer, permanent
<b>r14</b>	<b>lr</b>	link register, permanent
<b>r15</b>	<b>pc</b>	program counter (note: due to pipeline, r15 points to 2 instructions ahead)

Table 30: Register usage on arm32 thumb mode

### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left

- caller cleans up the stack
- first four words are passed using r0-r3
- subsequent parameters are pushed onto the stack (in right to left order, such that the stack pointer points to the first of the remaining parameters)
- if the callee takes the address of one of the parameters and uses it to address other parameters (e.g. varargs) it has to copy - in its prolog - the first four words to a reserved stack area adjacent to the other parameters on the stack
- parameters  $\leq 32$  bits are passed as 32 bit words
- 64 bit parameters are passed as two 32 bit parts (even partly via the register and partly via the stack), although this doesn't seem to be specified in the ATPCS)
- structures and unions are passed by value (after rounding up the size to the nearest multiple of 4), as a sequence of words
- if return value is a structure, a pointer pointing to the return value's space is passed in r0, the first parameter in r1, etc. (see **return values**)
- keeping the stack eight-byte aligned can improve memory access performance and is required by LDRD and STRD on ARMv5TE processors which are part of the ARM32 family, so, in order to avoid problems one should always align the stack (tests have shown, that GCC does care about the alignment when using the ellipsis)

### Return values

- return values  $\leq 32$  bits use r0
- 64 bit return values use r0 and r1
- if return value is a structure, the caller allocates space for the return value on the stack in its frame and passes a pointer to it in r0

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

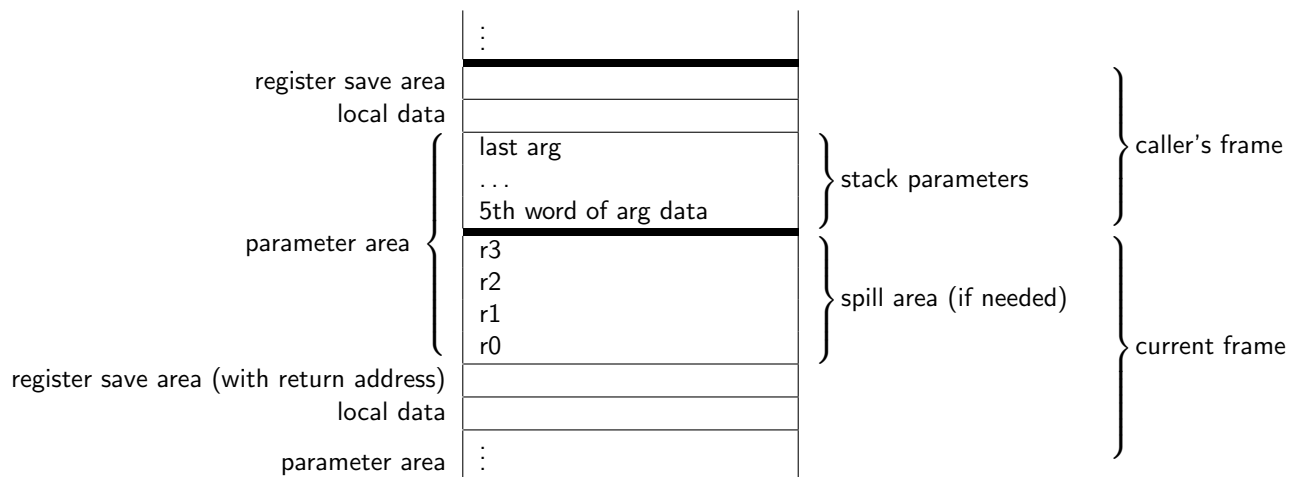


Figure 16: Stack layout on arm32 thumb mode

### D.5.3 EABI (ARM and THUMB mode)

The ARM EABI is very similar to the ABI outlined in ARM-THUMB procedure call standard (ATPCS) [18] - however, the EABI requires the stack to be 8-byte aligned at function entries, as well as for 64 bit parameters. The latter are aligned on 8-byte boundaries on the stack and 2-registers for a parameter passed via register. In order to achieve such an alignment, a register might have to be skipped for parameters passed via registers, or 4-bytes on the stack for parameters passed via the stack. Refer to the Debian ARM EABI port wiki for more information [23].

#### Status

- The EABI THUMB mode is tested and works fine (contrary to the ATPCS).
- Ellipsis calls do not work.
- C++ this calls do not work.

#### D.5.4 ARM on Apple's iOS (Darwin) Platform (ARM and THUMB mode)

The iOS runs on ARMv6 (iOS 2.0) and ARMv7 (iOS 3.0) architectures. Both, ARM and THUMB are available, code is usually compiled in THUMB mode.

##### Register usage

Name	Alias	Brief description
<b>r0</b>		parameter 0, scratch, return value
<b>r1</b>		parameter 1, scratch, return value
<b>r2,r3</b>		parameters 2 and 3, scratch
<b>r4-r6</b>		permanent
<b>r7</b>		frame pointer, permanent
<b>r8</b>		permanent
<b>r9</b>		permanent (iOS 2.0) / scratch (since iOS 3.0)
<b>r10-r11</b>		permanent
<b>r12</b>		scratch, intra-procedure scratch register (IP) used by dynamic linker
<b>r13</b>	<b>sp</b>	stack pointer, permanent
<b>r14</b>	<b>lr</b>	link register, permanent
<b>r15</b>	<b>pc</b>	program counter (note: due to pipeline, r15 points to 2 instructions ahead)
<b>cpsr</b>		program status register
<b>d0-d7</b>		scratch, aliases s0-s15, on ARMv7 also as q0-q3; not accessible from Thumb mode on ARMv6
<b>d8-d15</b>		permanent, aliases s16-s31, on ARMv7 also as q4-q7; not accesible from Thumb mode on ARMv6
<b>d16-d31</b>		only available in ARMv7, aliases q8-q15
<b>fpscr</b>		VFP status register

Table 31: Register usage on ARM Apple iOS

##### Parameter passing and Return values

The ABI is based on the AAPCS but with the following important differences:

- in ARM mode, r7 is used as frame pointer instead of r11 (so both, ARM and THUMB mode use the same convention)
- r9 does not need to be preserved on iOS 3.0 and greater

##### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

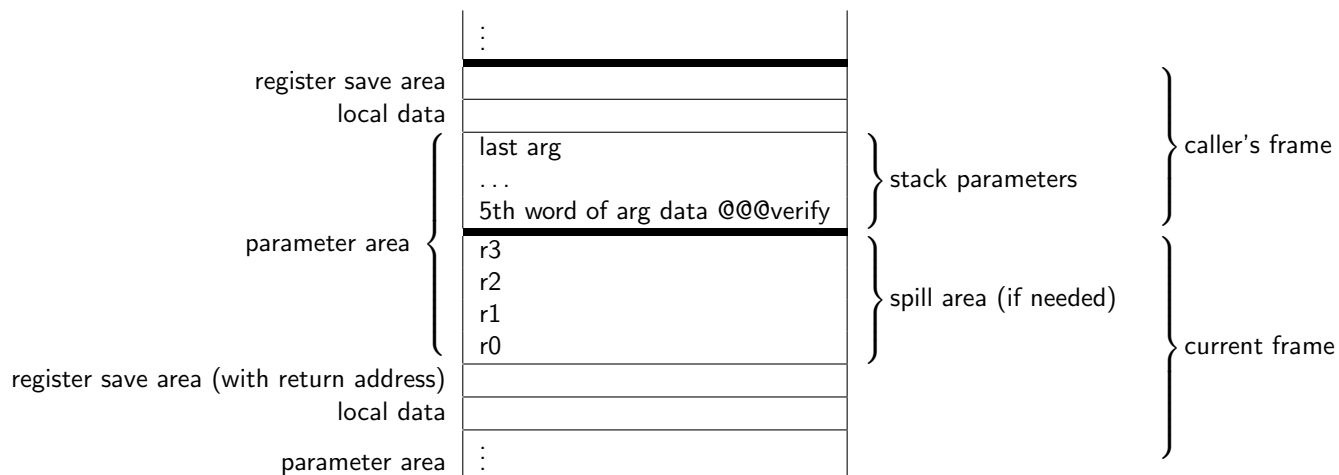


Figure 17: Stack layout on arm32

### D.5.5 ARM hard float (armhf)

Most debian-based Linux systems on ARMv7 (or ARMv6 with FPU) platforms use a calling convention referred to as armhf, using 16 32-bit floating point registers of the FPU of the VFPv3-D16 extension to the ARM architecture. Refer to the debian wiki for more information [24].

Code is little-endian, rest is similar to EABI with an 8-byte aligned stack, etc..

#### Register usage

Name	Alias	Brief description
<b>r0</b>	<b>a1</b>	parameter 0, scratch, non floating point return value
<b>r1</b>	<b>a2</b>	parameter 1, scratch, non floating point return value
<b>r2,r3</b>	<b>a3,a4</b>	parameters 2 and 3, scratch
<b>r4-r9</b>	<b>v1-v6</b>	permanent
<b>r10</b>	<b>sl</b>	permanent
<b>r11</b>	<b>fp</b>	frame pointer, permanent
<b>r12</b>	<b>ip</b>	scratch, intra-procedure scratch register (IP) used by dynamic linker
<b>r13</b>	<b>sp</b>	stack pointer, permanent
<b>r14</b>	<b>lr</b>	link register, permanent
<b>r15</b>	<b>pc</b>	program counter (note: due to pipeline, r15 points to 2 instructions ahead)
<b>cpsr</b>		program status register
<b>s0</b>		floating point argument, floating point return value, single precision
<b>d0</b>		floating point argument, floating point return value, double precision, aliases s0-s1
<b>s1-s15</b>		floating point arguments, single precision
<b>d1-d7</b>		aliases s2-s15, floating point arguments, double precision
<b>fpscr</b>		VFP status register

Table 32: Register usage on armhf

#### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack

- first four non-floating-point words are passed using r0-r3
- out of those, 64bit parameters use 2 registers, either r0,r1 or r2,r3 (skipped registers are left unused)
- first 16 single-precision, or 8 double-precision arguments are passed via s0-s15 or d0-d7, respectively (note that since s and d registers are aliased, already used ones are skipped)
- subsequent parameters are pushed onto the stack (in right to left order, such that the stack pointer points to the first of the remaining parameters)
- note that as soon one floating point parameter is passed via the stack, subsequent single precision floating point parameters are also pushed onto the stack even if there are still free S\* registers
- float and double vararg function parameters (no matter if in ellipsis part of function, or not) are passed like int or long parameters, vfp registers aren't used
- if the callee takes the address of one of the parameters and uses it to address other parameters (e.g. varargs) it has to copy - in its prolog - the first four words (for first 4 integer arguments) to a reserved stack area adjacent to the other parameters on the stack
- parameters  $\leq 32$  bits are passed as 32 bit words
- structures and unions are passed by value (after rounding up the size to the nearest multiple of 4), as a sequence of words
- if return value is a structure, a pointer pointing to the return value's space is passed in r0, the first parameter in r1, etc. (see **return values**)
- callee spills, caller reserves spill area space, though

### Return values

- non floating point return values  $\leq 32$  bits use r0
- non floating point 64-bit return values use r0 and r1
- single precision floating point return value uses s0
- double precision floating point return value uses d0
- if return value is a structure, the caller allocates space for the return value on the stack in its frame and passes a pointer to it in r0

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

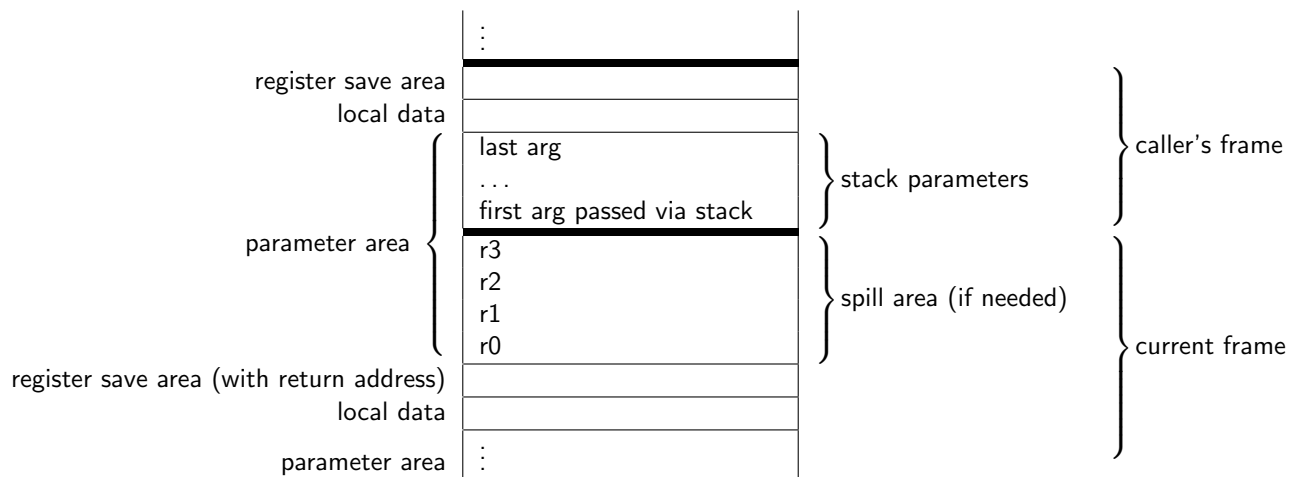


Figure 18: Stack layout on arm32 armhf

### D.5.6 Architectures

The ARM architecture family contains several revisions with capabilities and extensions (such as thumb-interworking, more vector registers, ...) The following table sums up the most important properties of the various architecture standards, from a calling convention perspective.

Arch	Platforms	Details
ARMv4		
ARMv4T	ARM 7, ARM 9, Neo FreeRunner (OpenMoko)	
ARMv5	ARM 9E	BLX instruction available
ARMv6		No vector registers available in thumb
ARMv7	iPod touch, iPhone 3GS/4, Raspberry Pi 2	VFP, armhf convention on some platforms
ARMv8	iPhone 6 and higher	64bit support

Table 33: Overview of ARM Architecture, Platforms and Details

## D.6 ARM64 Calling Conventions

### Overview

ARMv8 introduced the AArch64 calling convention. ARM64 chips can be run in 64 or 32bit mode, but not by the same process. Interworking is only intra-process.

The word size is defined to be 32 bits, a dword 64 bits. Note that this is due to historical reasons (terminology didn't change from ARM32).

For more details, take a look at the Procedure Call Standard for the ARM 64-bit Architecture [20].

### dyncall support

The *dyncall* library supports the ARM 64-bit AArch64 PCS ABI, as well as Apple's and Microsoft's conventions which are derived from it, for both, calls and callbacks.

#### D.6.1 AAPCS64 Calling Convention

##### Registers and register usage

ARM64 features thirty-one 64 bit general purpose registers, namely **r0-r30**, which are referred to as either **x0-x30** for 64bit access, or **w0-w30** for 32bit access (with upper bits either cleared or sign extended on load).

Also, there is **sp/xzr/wzr**, a register with restricted use, used for the stack pointer in instructions dealing with the stack (**sp**) or a hardware zero register for all other instructions **xzr/wzr**, and **pc**, the program counter. Additionally, there are thirty-two 128 bit registers **v0-v31**, to be used as SIMD and floating point registers, referred to as **q0-q31**, **d0-d31** and **s0-s31**, respectively (in contrast to AArch32, those do not overlap multiple narrower registers), depending on their use:

Name	Brief description
<b>x0-x7</b>	parameters, scratch, return value
<b>x8</b>	indirect result location pointer
<b>x9-x15</b>	scratch
<b>x16</b>	permanent in some cases, can have special function (IP0), see doc
<b>x17</b>	permanent in some cases, can have special function (IP1), see doc
<b>x18</b>	reserved as platform register, advised not to be used for handwritten, portable asm, see doc
<b>x19-x28</b>	permanent
<b>x29</b>	permanent, frame pointer
<b>x30</b>	permanent, link register
<b>sp</b>	permanent, stack pointer
<b>pc</b>	program counter
<b>v0</b>	scratch, first float parameter, float return value
<b>v1-v7</b>	scratch, float parameters
<b>v8-v15</b>	lower 64 bits are permanent, scratch
<b>v16-v31</b>	scratch

Table 34: Register usage on arm64

##### Parameter passing

- stack parameter order: right-to-left



- caller cleans up the stack
- first 8 integer arguments are passed using x0-x7
- first 8 floating point arguments are passed using d0-d7
- subsequent parameters are pushed onto the stack
- if the callee takes the address of one of the parameters and uses it to address other parameters (e.g. varargs) it has to copy - in its prolog - the first 8 integer and 8 floating-point registers to a reserved stack area adjacent to the other parameters on the stack (only the unnamed integer parameters require saving, though)
- structures and unions up to 16 bytes in size are passed by value (after rounding up the size to the nearest multiple of 8), as a sequence of dwords
- for a structure or union larger than 16 bytes in size, a pointer to it is passed
- if return value is a structure, a pointer pointing to the return value's space is passed in r0, the first parameter in r1, etc... (see **return values**)
- stack is required to be throughout eight-byte aligned

### Return values

- integer return values use x0
- floating-point return values use d0
- otherwise, the caller allocates space, passes pointer to it to the callee through x8, and callee writes return value to this space

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

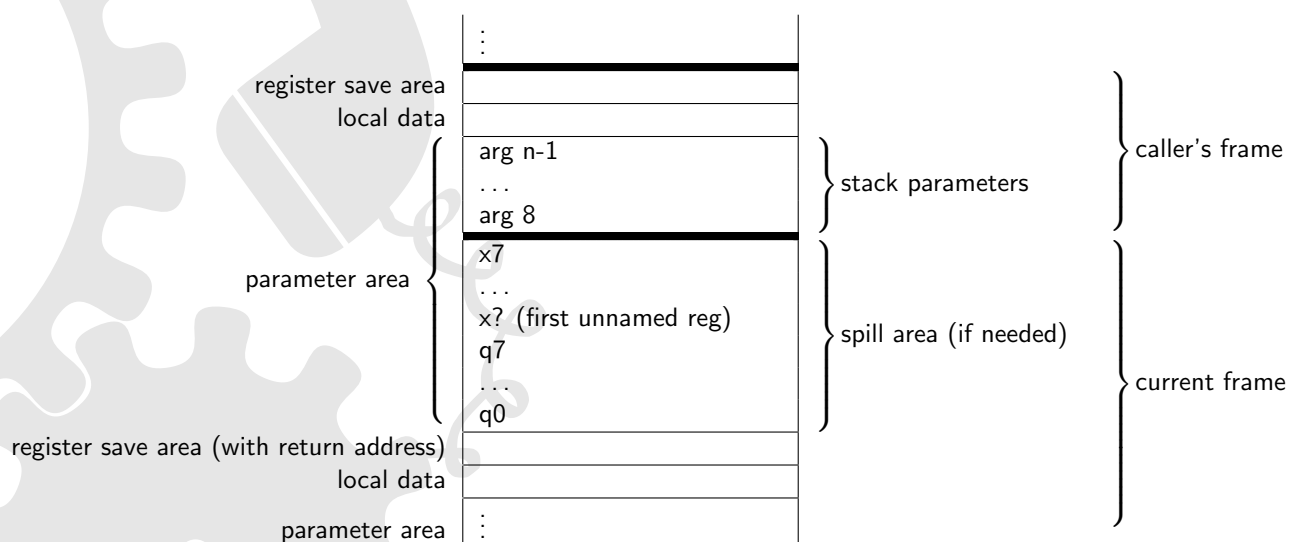


Figure 19: Stack layout on arm64

## D.6.2 Apple's ARM64 Function Calling Convention

### Overview

Apple's ARM64 calling convention is based on the AAPCS64 standard, however, diverges in some ways. Only the differences are listed here, for more details, take a look at Apple's official documentation [21].

- arguments passed via stack use only the space they need, but are subject to type alignment requirements (which is 1 byte for char and bool, 2 for short, 4 for int and 8 for every other type)
- caller is required to sign and zero-extend arguments smaller than 32bits

## D.6.3 Microsoft's ARM64 Function Calling Convention

### Overview

Microsoft's ARM64 calling convention is based on the AAPCS64 standard, however, diverges for variadic functions. Only the differences are listed here, for more details, take a look at Microsoft's official documentation [22].

- variadic function calls do not use any SIMD or floating point registers (for fixed and variable args), meaning first 8 params are passed via x0-x7, the rest via the stack

## D.7 MIPS32 Calling Conventions

### Overview

Multiple revisions of the MIPS Instruction set exist, namely MIPS I, MIPS II, MIPS III, MIPS IV, MIPS32 and MIPS64. Nowadays, MIPS32 and MIPS64 are the main ones used for 32-bit and 64-bit instruction sets, respectively.

Given MIPS processors are often used for embedded devices, several add-on extensions exist for the MIPS family, for example:

**MIPS-3D** simple floating-point SIMD instructions dedicated to common 3D tasks.

**MDMX** (MaDMaX) more extensive integer SIMD instruction set using 64 bit floating-point registers.

**MIPS16e** adds compression to the instruction stream to make programs take up less room (allegedly a response to the THUMB instruction set of the ARM architecture).

**MIPS MT** multithreading additions to the system similar to HyperThreading.

Unfortunately, there is actually no such thing as "The MIPS Calling Convention". Many possible conventions are used by many different environments such as *O32*[37], *O64*[38], *N32*[39], *N64*[39], *EABI*[40] and *NUBI*[41].

### dyncall support

Currently, dyncall supports for MIPS 32-bit architectures the widely-used O32 calling convention (for all four combinations of big/little-endian, and soft/hard-float targets), as well as EABI (little-endian/hard-float, which is used on the Homebrew SDK for the Playstation Portable). *dyncall* currently does not support MIPS16e (contrary to the like-minded ARM-THUMB, which is supported). Both, calls and callbacks are supported.

### D.7.1 MIPS EABI 32-bit Calling Convention

#### Register usage

Name	Alias	Brief description
<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$zero</b>	hardware zero, scratch
<b>\$1</b>	<b>\$at</b>	assembler temporary, scratch
<b>\$2-\$3</b>	<b>\$v0-\$v1</b>	integer results, scratch
<b>\$4-\$11</b>	<b>\$a0-\$a7</b>	integer arguments, or double precision float arguments, scratch
<b>\$12-\$15,\$24</b>	<b>\$t4-\$t7,\$t8</b>	integer temporaries, scratch
<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$t9</b>	integer temporary, address of callee for PIC calls (by convention), scratch
<b>\$16-\$23</b>	<b>\$s0-\$s7</b>	preserve
<b>\$26,\$27</b>	<b>\$kt0,\$kt1</b>	reserved for kernel
<b>\$28</b>	<b>\$gp</b>	global pointer, preserve
<b>\$29</b>	<b>\$sp</b>	stack pointer, preserve
<b>\$30</b>	<b>\$s8/\$fp</b>	frame pointer (some assemblers name it \$fp), preserve
<b>\$31</b>	<b>\$ra</b>	return address, preserve
<b>hi, lo</b>		multiply/divide special registers
<b>\$f0,\$f2</b>		float results, scratch
<b>\$f1,\$f3,\$f4-\$f11,\$f20-\$f23</b>		float temporaries, scratch
<b>\$f12-\$f19</b>		single precision float arguments, scratch

Table 35: Register usage on MIPS32 EABI calling convention

#### Parameter passing

- Stack grows down
- Stack parameter order: right-to-left
- Caller cleans up the stack
- first 8 integers ( $\leq 32\text{bit}$ ) are passed in registers \$a0-\$a7
- first 8 single precision floating point arguments are passed in registers \$f12-\$f19
- 64-bit stack arguments are always aligned to 8 bytes
- 64-bit integers or double precision floats are passed in two general purpose registers starting at an even register number, skipping one odd register
- if either integer or float registers are used up, the stack is used
- if the callee takes the address of one of the parameters and uses it to address other unnamed parameters (e.g. varargs) it has to copy - in its prolog - the the argument registers to a reserved stack area adjacent to the other parameters on the stack (only the unnamed integer parameters require saving, though)
- float registers don't seem to ever need to be saved that way, because floats passed to an ellipsis function are promoted to doubles, which in turn are passed in a? register pairs, so only \$a0-\$a7 are need to be spilled
- results are returned in \$v0 (32-bit), \$v0 and \$v1 (64-bit), \$f0 or \$f0 and \$f2 ( $2 \times 32\text{ bit float}$  e.g. complex)

## Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

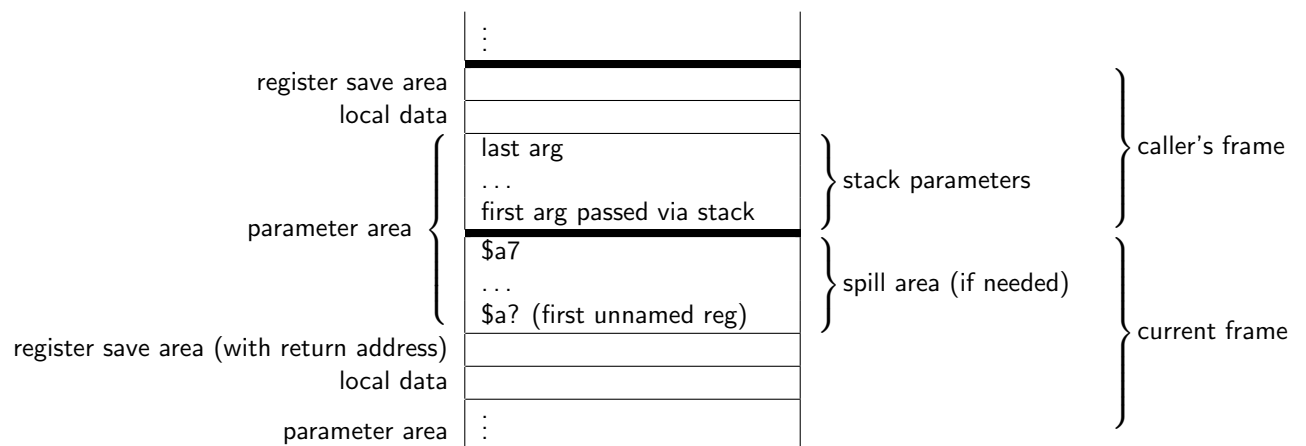


Figure 20: Stack layout on MIPS EABI 32-bit calling convention

## D.7.2 MIPS O32 32-bit Calling Convention

### Register usage

Name	Alias	Brief description
<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$zero</b>	hardware zero
<b>\$1</b>	<b>\$at</b>	assembler temporary
<b>\$2-\$3</b>	<b>\$v0-\$v1</b>	return value (only integer on hard-float targets), scratch
<b>\$4-\$7</b>	<b>\$a0-\$a3</b>	first arguments (only integer on hard-float targets), scratch
<b>\$8-\$15,\$24</b>	<b>\$t0-\$t7,\$t8</b>	temporaries, scratch
<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$t9</b>	temporary, holds address of called function for PIC calls (by convention)
<b>\$16-\$23</b>	<b>\$s0-\$s7</b>	preserved
<b>\$26,\$27</b>	<b>\$k0,\$k1</b>	reserved for kernel
<b>\$28</b>	<b>\$gp</b>	global pointer, preserved by caller
<b>\$29</b>	<b>\$sp</b>	stack pointer, preserve
<b>\$30</b>	<b>\$s8/\$fp</b>	frame pointer (some assemblers name it \$fp), preserve
<b>\$31</b>	<b>\$ra</b>	return address, preserve
<b>hi, lo</b>		multiply/divide special registers
<b>\$f0-\$f3</b>		only on hard-float targets: float return value, scratch
<b>\$f4-\$f11,\$f16-\$f19</b>		only on hard-float targets: float temporaries, scratch
<b>\$f12-\$f15</b>		only on hard-float targets: first floating point arguments, scratch
<b>\$f20-\$f31</b>		only on hard-float targets: preserved

Table 36: Register usage on MIPS O32 calling convention

### Parameter passing

- Stack grows down
- Stack parameter order: right-to-left
- Caller cleans up the stack
- Caller is required to always leave a 16-byte spill area for \$a0-\$a3 at the end of **its** frame, to be used and spilled to by the callee, if needed
- The different stack areas (local data, register save area, parameter area) are each aligned to 8 bytes
- generally, first four 32bit arguments are passed in registers \$a0-\$a3, respectively (only on hard-float targets: see below for exceptions if first arg is a float)
- subsequent parameters are passed via the stack
- 64-bit params passed via registers are passed using either two registers (starting at an even register number, skipping an odd one if necessary), or via the stack using an 8-byte alignment
- only on hard-float targets: if the very first call argument is a float, up to 2 floats or doubles can be passed via \$f12 and \$f14, respectively, for first and second argument
- only on hard-float targets: if any arguments are passed via float registers, skip \$a0-\$a3 for subsequent arguments as if the values were passed via them
- only on hard-float targets: note that if the first argument is not a float, but the second, it'll get passed via the \$a? registers

- results are returned in \$v0 and \$v1, with \$v0 for all values < 64bit (only integer on hard-float targets)
- only on hard-float targets: floating point results are returned in \$f0 (32-bit float), or \$f0 and \$f3 (64bit float)
- single precision float parameters (32 bit) are right-justified in their 8-byte slot on the stack on big endian targets, as they aren't promoted @@@

## Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

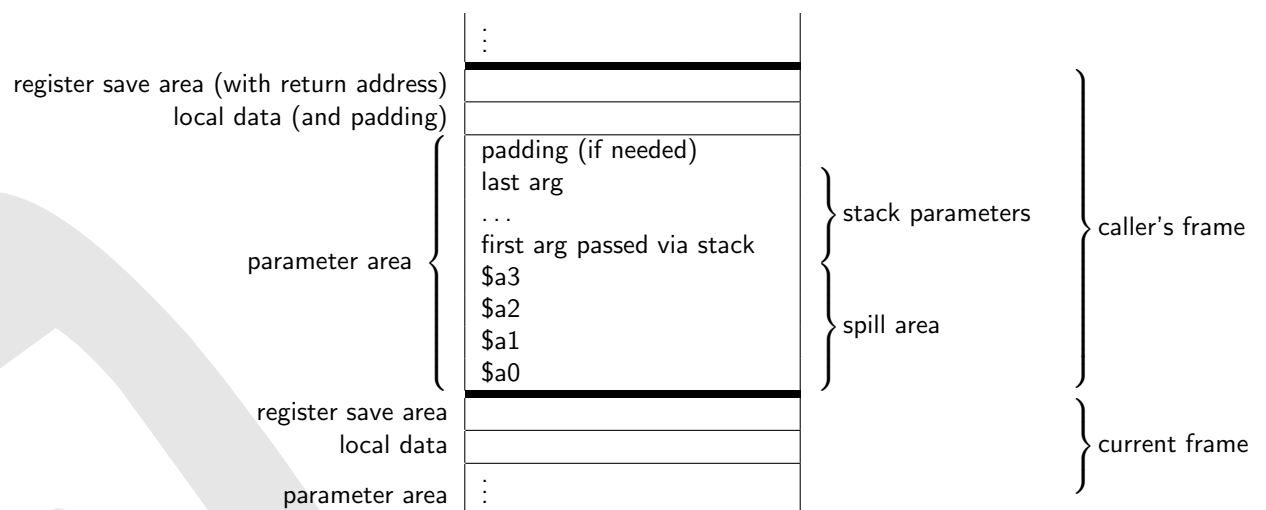


Figure 21: Stack layout on MIPS O32 calling convention

## D.8 MIPS64 Calling Conventions

### Overview

There are two main ABIs in use for MIPS64 chips, *N64*[39] and *N32*[39]. Both are basically the same, except that N32 uses ILP32 as programming model (32-bit pointers and long integers), whereas N64 uses LP64 (64-bit pointers and long integers). All registers of a MIPS64 chip are considered to be 64-bit wide, even for the N32 calling convention.

The word size is defined to be 32 bits, a dword 64 bits. Note that this is due to historical reasons (terminology didn't change from MIPS32).

Other than that there are corresponding 64-bit versions other MIPS32 ABIs, e.g. the EABI[40] and O64[38].

### dyncall support

For MIPS 64-bit machines, dyncall supports the N64 calling conventions for calls and callbacks (for all four combinations of big/little-endian, and soft/hard-float targets). The N32 calling convention might work - it used to, but hasn't been tested, recently.

#### D.8.1 MIPS N64 Calling Convention

##### Register usage

Name	Alias	Brief description
<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$zero</b>	hardware zero
<b>\$1</b>	<b>\$at</b>	assembler temporary, scratch
<b>\$2-\$3</b>	<b>\$v0-\$v1</b>	return value (only integer on hard-float targets), scratch
<b>\$4-\$11</b>	<b>\$a0-\$a7</b>	first arguments (only integer on hard-float targets), scratch
<b>\$12-\$15,\$24</b>	<b>\$t4-\$t7,\$t8</b>	temporaries, scratch
<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$t9</b>	temporary, address callee for all PIC calls (by convention), scratch
<b>\$16-\$23</b>	<b>\$s0-\$s7</b>	preserve
<b>\$26,\$27</b>	<b>\$kt0,\$kt1</b>	reserved for kernel
<b>\$28</b>	<b>\$gp</b>	global pointer, preserve
<b>\$29</b>	<b>\$sp</b>	stack pointer, preserve
<b>\$30</b>	<b>\$s8</b>	frame pointer, preserve
<b>\$31</b>	<b>\$ra</b>	return address, preserve
<b>hi, lo</b>		multiply/divide special registers
<b>\$f0,\$f2</b>		only on hard-float targets: float results, scratch
<b>\$f1,\$f3,\$f4-\$f11</b>		only on hard-float targets: float temporaries, scratch
<b>\$f12-\$f19</b>		only on hard-float targets: float arguments, scratch
<b>\$f20-\$f23</b>		only on hard-float targets: float temporaries, scratch
<b>\$f24-\$f31</b>		only on hard-float targets: preserved

Table 37: Register usage on MIPS N64 calling convention

##### Parameter passing

- Stack grows down
- Stack parameter order: right-to-left
- Caller cleans up the stack



- generally, first 8 params  $\geq$  64-bit are passed via registers
- for hard-float targets: register arguments are passed via \$a0-\$a7 for integers and \$f12-\$f19 for floats - with mixed float and int parameters, some registers are left out (e.g. first parameter ends up in \$a0 or \$f12, second in \$a1 or \$f13, etc.)
- for soft-float targets: register arguments are passed via \$a0-\$a7
- subsequent arguments are pushed onto the stack
- all stack entries are 64-bit aligned
- all stack regions are 16-byte aligned
- results are returned in \$v0, and for a second one \$v1 is used
- only on hard-float targets: floating point results are returned in \$f0
- if the callee takes the address of one of the parameters and uses it to address other unnamed parameters (e.g. varargs) it has to copy - in its prolog - the the argument registers to a reserved stack area adjacent to the other parameters on the stack (only the unnamed integer parameters require saving, though)
- float arguments passed in the variable part of a vararg call are passed like integers, meaning float registers don't ever need to be saved that way, so only \$a0-\$a7 are need to be spilled
- quad precision float arguments are passed in even-odd register pairs, skipping one register if needed
- integer parameters  $< 64$  bit are right-justified (meaning occupy higher-address bytes) in their 8-byte slot on the stack, requiring extra-care for big-endian targets
- single precision float parameters (32 bit) are left-justified in their 8-byte slot on the stack, but are right justified in fp-registers on big endian targets, as they aren't promoted (actually, official docs says "undecided", but real world implementations seem to use what is described here)

## Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

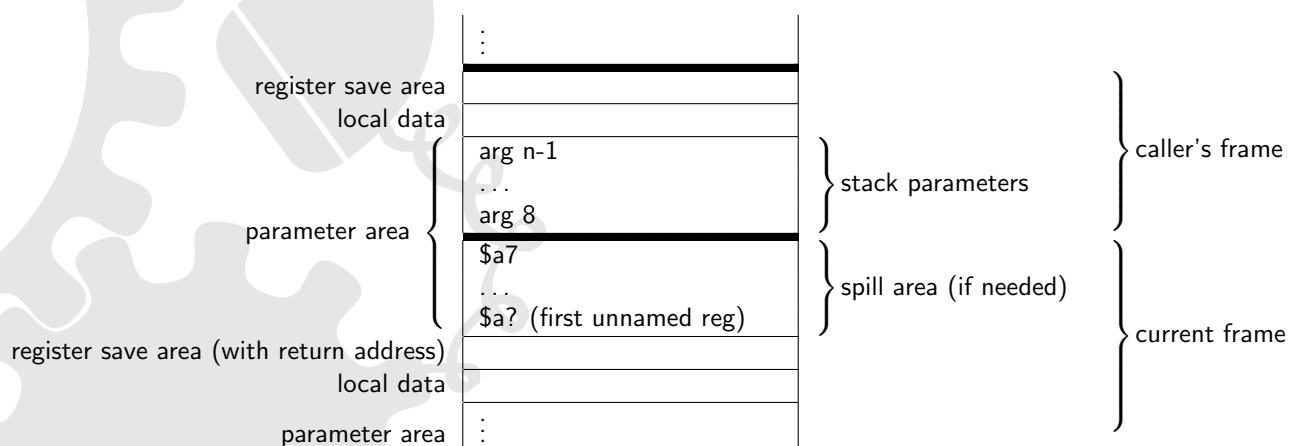


Figure 22: Stack layout on MIPS N64 calling convention

### D.8.2 MIPS N32 Calling Convention

Despite what one might think given the name, this is a MIPS 64-bit calling convention. As mentioned in the overview of this chapter, it is nearly identical to the N64 one, the differences being:

- uses ILP32 as programming model instead of LP64
- floating point registers \$f20-\$f23 are to be preserved



## D.9 SPARC Calling Conventions

### Overview

The SPARC family of processors is based on the SPARC instruction set architecture, which comes in basically three revisions, V7, V8[29][27] and V9[30][28]. The former two are 32-bit whereas the latter refers to the 64-bit SPARC architecture (see next chapter). SPARC uses big endian byte order. The word size is defined to be 32 bits.

### dyncall support

*dyncall* fully supports the SPARC 32-bit instruction set (V7 and V8), for calls and callbacks.

#### D.9.1 SPARC (32-bit) Calling Convention

##### Register usage

- 32 single floating point registers (f0-f31, usable as 8 quad precision q0,q4,q8,...,q28, 16 double precision d0,d2,d4,...,d30)
- 32 32-bit integer/pointer registers out of a bigger (vendor/model dependent) number that are accessible at a time (8 are global ones (g\*), whereas the remaining 24 form a register window with 8 input (i\*), 8 output (o\*) and 8 local (l\*) ones)
- calling a function shifts the register window, the old output registers become the new input registers (old local and input ones are not accessible anymore)

Name	Alias	Brief description
%g0	%r0	Read-only, hardwired to 0
%g1-%g7	%r1-%r7	Global
%o0,%o1 and %i0,%i1	%r8,%r9 and %r24,%r25	Output and input argument registers, return value
%o2-%o5 and %i2-%i5	%r10-%r13 and %r26-%r29	Output and input argument registers
%o6 and %i6	%r14 and %r30, %sp and %fp	Stack and frame pointer
%o7 and %i7	%r15 and %r31	Return address (caller writes to o7, callee uses i7)
%l0-%l7	%r16-%r23	preserve
%f0,%f1		Floating point return value
%f2-%f31		scratch

Table 38: Register usage on sparc calling convention

##### Parameter passing

- stack grows down
- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack
- stack always aligned to 8 bytes
- first 6 integers and floats are passed independently in registers using %o0-%o5
- for every other argument the stack is used

- all arguments  $\leq 32$  bit are passed as 32 bit values
- 64 bit arguments are passed like two consecutive  $\leq 32$  bit values (which allows for an argument to be split between the stack and `%i5`)
- minimum stack size is 64 bytes, b/c stack pointer must always point at enough space to store all `%i*` and `%l*` registers, used when running out of register windows
- if needed, register spill area is adjacent to parameters

## Return values

- results are expected by caller to be returned in `%o0/%o1` (after reg window restore, meaning callee writes to `%i0/%i1`) for integers
- `%f0/%f1` are used for floating point values
- structs/unions are returned in a space allocated by the caller, with a pointer to it passed as a **additional**, hidden stack parameter (see below)

## Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

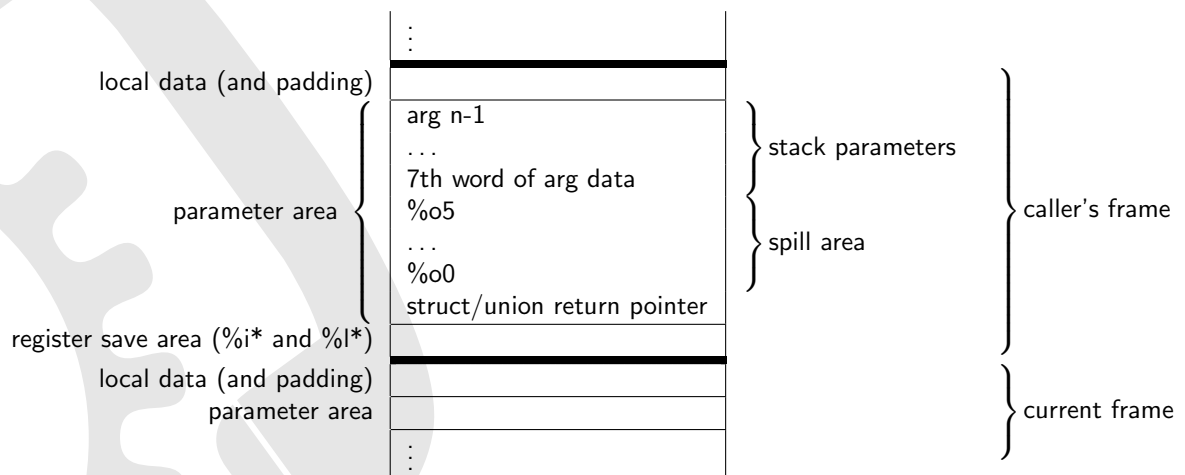


Figure 23: Stack layout on sparc32 calling convention

## D.10 SPARC64 Calling Conventions

### Overview

The SPARC family of processors is based on the SPARC instruction set architecture, which comes in basically three revisions, V7, V8[29][27] and V9[30][28]. The former two are 32-bit (see previous chapter) whereas the latter refers to the 64-bit SPARC architecture. SPARC uses big endian byte order, however, V9 supports also little endian byte order, but for data access only, not instruction access.

There are two proposals, one from Sun and one from Hal, which disagree on how to handle some aspects of this calling convention.

### dyncall support

*dyncall* fully supports the SPARC 64-bit instruction set (V9), for calls and callbacks.

#### D.10.1 SPARC (64-bit) Calling Convention

- 32 double precision floating point registers (d0,d2,d4,...,d62, usable as 16 quad precision ones q0,q4,q8,...,q60, and also first half of them are usable as 32 single precision registers f0-f31)
- 32 64-bit integer/pointer registers out of a bigger (vendor/model dependent) number that are accessible at a time (8 are global ones (g\*), whereas the remaining 24 form a register window with 8 input (i\*), 8 output (o\*) and 8 local (l\*) ones)
- calling a function shifts the register window, the old output registers become the new input registers (old local and input ones are not accessible anymore)
- stack and frame pointer are offset by a BIAS of 2047 (see official doc for reasons)

Name	Alias	Brief description
%g0	%r0	Read-only, hardwired to 0
%g1-%g7	%r1-%r7	Global
%o0-%o3 and %i0-%i3	%r8-%r11 and %r24-%r27	Output and input argument registers, return value
%o4,%o5 and %i4,%i5	%r12,%r13 and %r28,%r29	Output and input argument registers
%o6 and %i6	%r14 and %r30, %sp and %fp	Stack and frame pointer (NOTE, offset with a BIAS of 2047)
%o7 and %i7	%r15 and %r31	Return address (caller writes to o7, callee uses i7)
%l0-%l7	%r16-%r23	preserve
%d0,%d2,%d4,%d6		scratch, Floating point arguments, return value
%d8,%d10,...,%d14		scratch, Floating point arguments
%d16,%d18,...,%d30		scratch (preserve for Hal), Floating point arguments
%d32,%d34,...,%d62		scratch (preserve for Hal)

Table 39: Register usage on sparc64 calling convention

### Parameter passing

- stack grows down
- stack parameter order: right-to-left
- caller cleans up the stack
- stack frame is always aligned to 16 bytes

- first 6 integers are passed in registers using %o0-%o5
- first 8 quad precision floating point args (or 16 double precision, or 32 single precision) are passed in floating point registers (%q0,%q4,...,%q28 or %d0,%d2,...,%d30 or %f0-%f31, respectively)
- for every other argument the stack is used
- single precision floating point args are passed in odd %f\* registers, and are "right aligned" in their 8-byte space on the stack
- for every argument passed, corresponding %o\*, %f\* register or stack space is skipped (e.g. passing a double as 3rd call argument, %d4 is used and %o2 is skipped)
- all arguments <= 64 bit are passed as 64 bit values
- minimum stack size is 128 bytes, b/c stack pointer must always point at enough space to store all %i\* and %l\* registers, used when running out of register windows
- if needed, register spill area (both, integer and float arguments are spilled in order) is adjacent to parameters

### Return values

- results are expected by caller to be returned in %o0-%o3 (after reg window restore, meaning callee writes to %i0-%i3) for integers
- %d0,%d2,%d4,%d6 are used for floating point values
- the fields of structs/unions up to 32b are returned via the respective registers mentioned in the previous bullet points
- structs/unions >= 32b are returned in a space allocated by the caller, with a pointer to it passed as first parameter to the function called (meaning in %o0)

### Stack layout

Stack directly after function prolog:

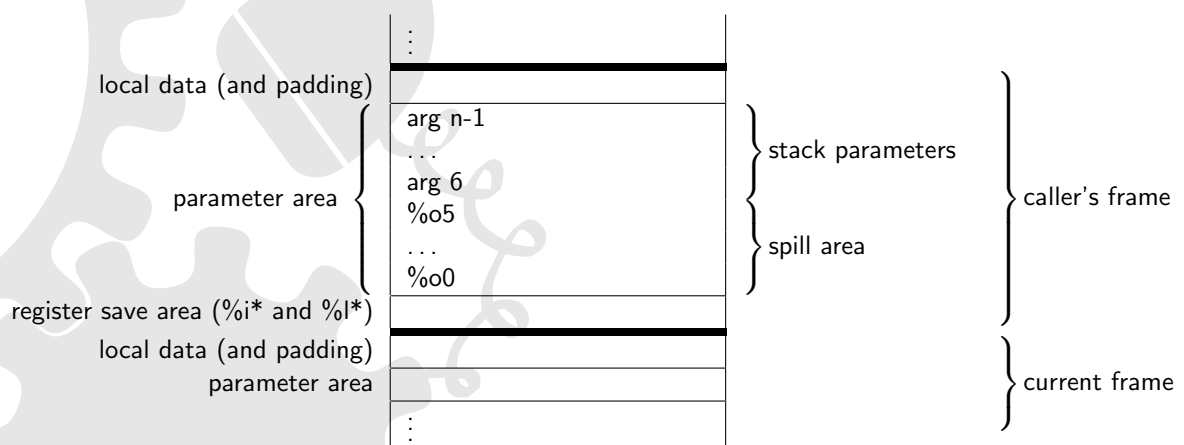


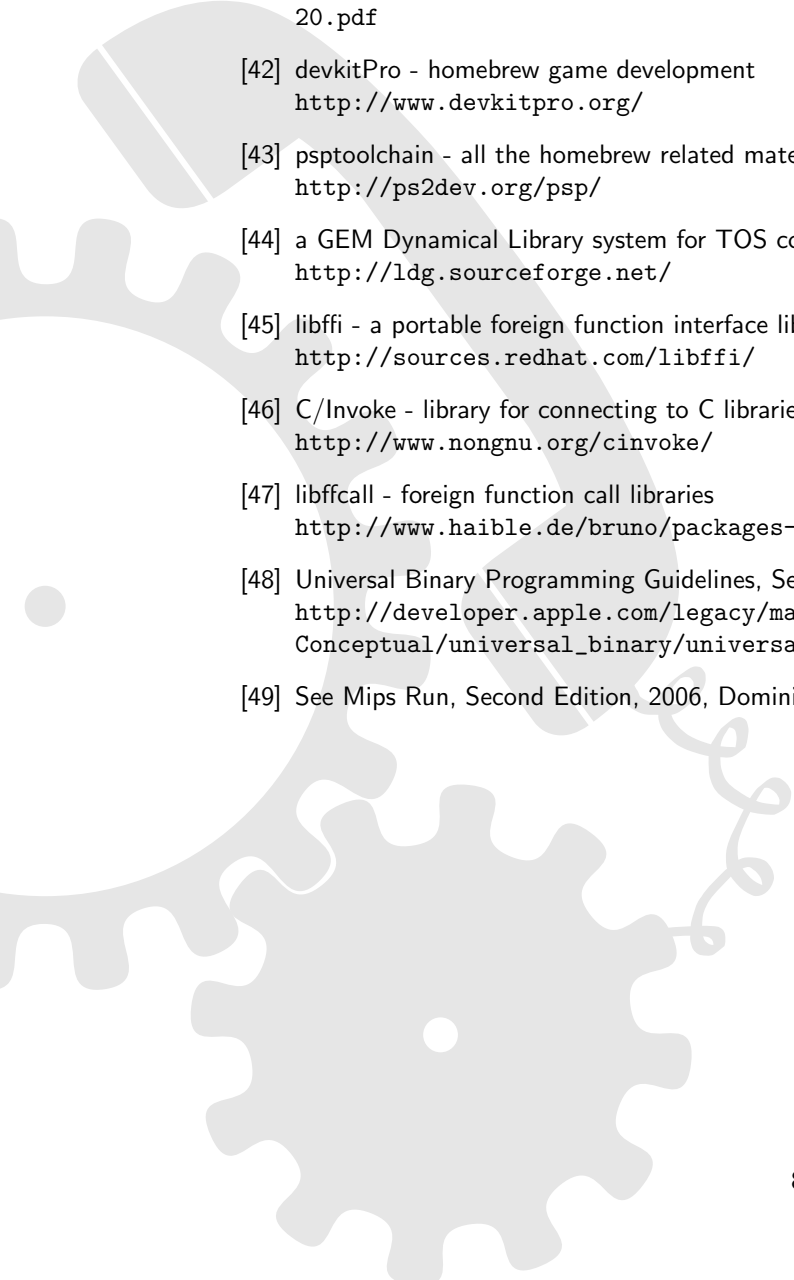
Figure 24: Stack layout on sparc64 calling convention

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  - [47] libffcall - foreign function call libraries  
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  - [48] Universal Binary Programming Guidelines, Second Edition  
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  - [49] See Mips Run, Second Edition, 2006, Dominic Sweetman