

# Digital System Design

## IAIK Open Flow

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DSD Team

06.03.2024

Digital System Design  
Graz University of Technology

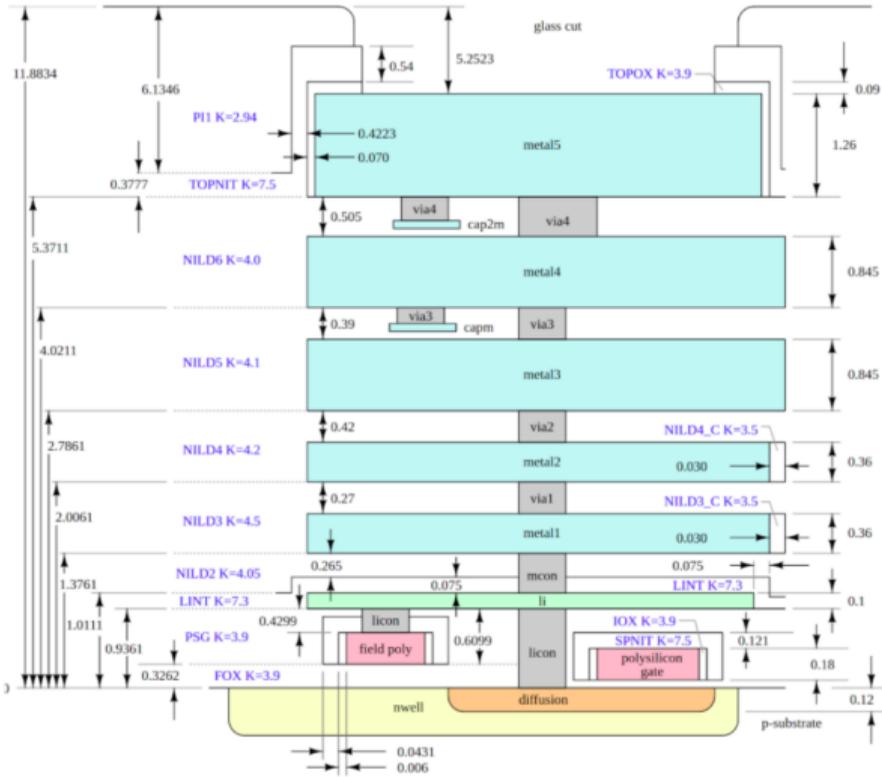
# Introduction

With the recent release of several open source Process Design Kits (PDKs) such as SKY130 and advances in open source EDA tools, it is now possible to design manufacturable chips without the need to sign NDAs.

This document shows how to use the IAIK Open Flow to develop, test and integrate your cipher into a chip.

The goal of the IAIK Open Flow is to provide students with the tools and framework to develop their cipher locally on their own computer.

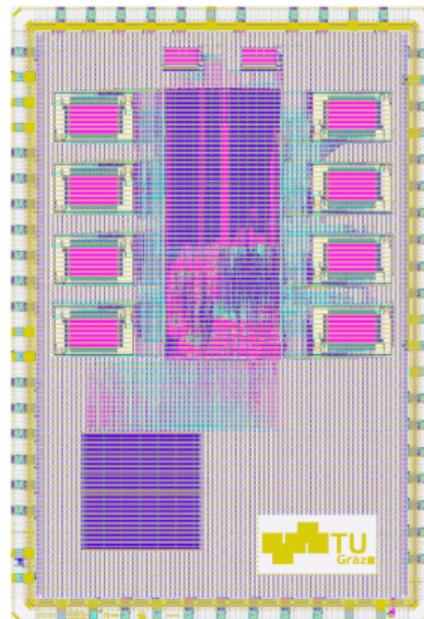
# Sky130 Stackup



Layer Stackup Sky130

# Open Flow ASIC

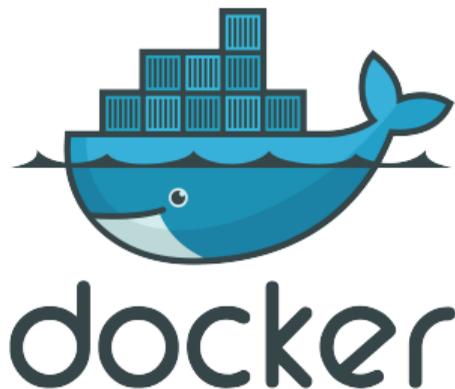
- Acts as a harness for your cipher
- SoC with Ibex RISC-V Core
  - 8 kB ROM
  - 16 kB SRAM
- Various peripherals
- Repository: [open-flow-asic](https://open-flow-asic.github.io)



Open Flow ASIC

- Container with open source tools
- Make sure to *install docker*
- List of tools: *open-flow-docker*
- Pull the image via:

```
$ docker pull \  
extgit.iaik.tugraz.at:8443/  
sesys/iaik-open-flow/open-flow-docker
```



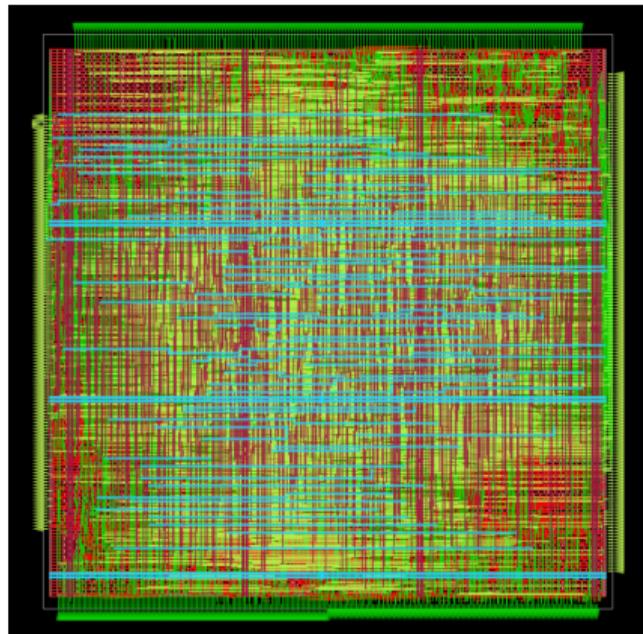
- Your working template for the DSD course
- Tasks are split into
  - ex1/ - Files for exercise 1: cipher\_core
  - ex2/ - Files for exercise 2: cipher\_peripheral
  - open-flow/tapeout/ - Integration into harness
- Repository: [open-flow-template](#)

- The Open Flow ASIC has already been pre-hardened
- For now, a placeholder-macro is used instead of your cipher
  - Your goal: Create your cipher in 1000x1000 um
  - Communicate with the SoC over bus interfaces
  - Harden your cipher as a hard macro
  - Replace the empty wrapper in the final tapeout step
- This solution was chosen so that development of your cipher is possible on lightweight hardware such as laptops

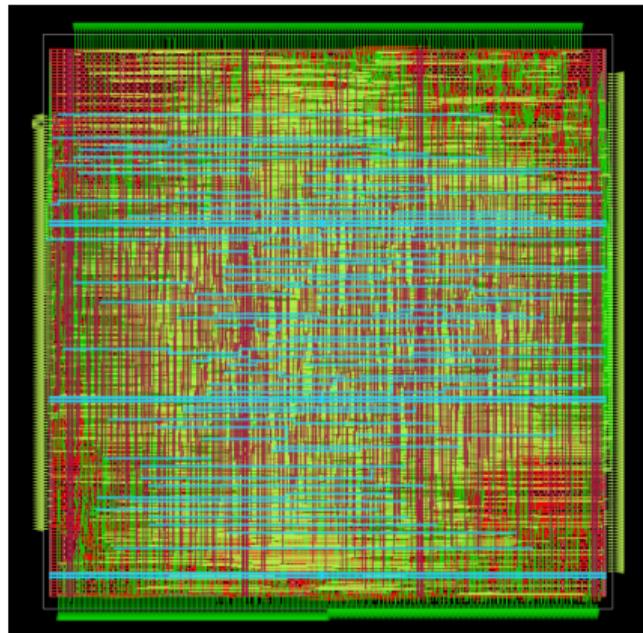
## Exercise 1

---

- All source files under ex1/
  - ex1/src/ – RTL files
  - ex1/tb/ – testbench
  - open-flow/ex1\_aux/config.json – config for OL2
  - open-flow/ex1\_aux/pins.cfg – pin config for OL2



- Output directories
  - results/ex1\_runs/
    - OL2 output files
  - results/ex1\_macro/
    - Most recent OL2 output
  - ex1/tb/sim\_build/
    - Simulation output



# Make Targets

- ex1-lint
- ex1-openlane
- ex1-openroad
- ex1-klayout
- ex1-cocotb
- ex1-cocotb-gl

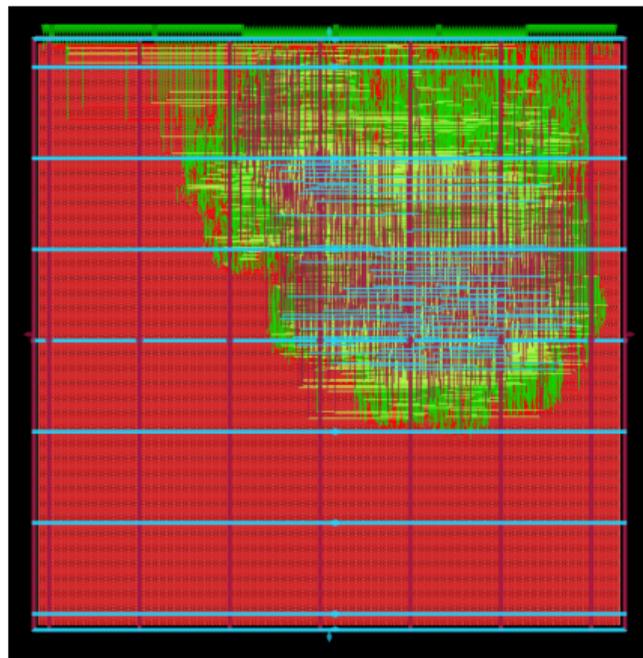
To add additional source files to your cipher, just place them into the src/ folder! All files ending in .sv are automatically picked up for the implementation and the simulation.

- ex1/src/\*.sv

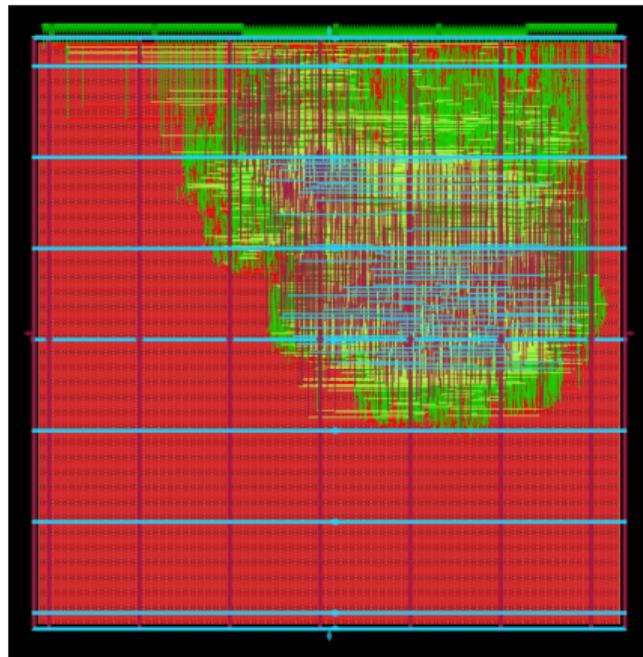
## Exercise 2

---

- All source files under ex2/
  - ex2/src/ – RTL files
  - ex2/tb/ – testbench
  - ex2/sw/ – software for the ibex core
  - open-flow/ex2\_aux/config.json  
– config for OL2



- Output directories
  - results/ex2\_runs/
    - OL2 output files
  - results/ex2\_macro/
    - Most recent OL2 output
  - ex2/tb/sim\_build/
    - Simulation output



- `ex2-lint`
- `ex2-openlane`
- `ex2-openroad`
- `ex2-klayout`
- `ex2-cocotb`
- `ex2-cocotb-gl`

To add additional source files to your cipher, just place them into the `src/` folder! All files ending in `.sv` are automatically picked up for the implementation and the simulation.

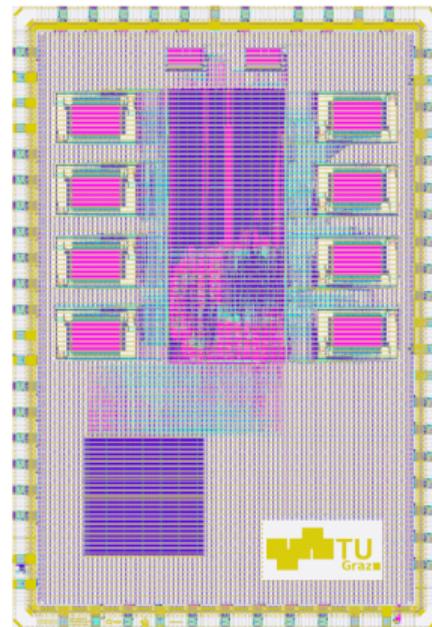
- `ex2/src/*.sv`

# Tapeout

---

To complete the tapeout:

- Harden your cipher\_peripheral
- Generate the ROMs for your program
- (Optionally) Update the chip art
  - `open-flow/tapeout/chip_art/chip_art.png`
- Merge everything!



# Make Targets

- `tapeout-chip_art` – generate the macro for your chip art
- `tapeout-rom` – generate both ROM macros
  - Set `$PROGRAM` env variable to active program
- `tapeout-final` – perform the final merging of the layouts
  - Cipher, ROM and chip art must be hardened first
- `tapeout-klayout` – open the final layout using KLayout

## Set the active \$PROGRAM

To change the program that is compiled, set the \$PROGRAM environment variable.

To create a new program, just copy the whole folder `ex2/sw/hello-world` and rename it, for example `ex2/sw/cipher-test`.

This is necessary for:

- `ex2-sw`
- `ex2-cocotb`
- `ex2-cocotb-gl`
- `tapeout-rom`

Execute make targets like this:

```
$ PROGRAM=cipher-test ex2-cocotb
```

## General Makefile Targets

---

## \$ make interactive

This command starts the docker container in interactive mode.

You will find yourself in a command prompt and have access to all the tools installed in the docker container.

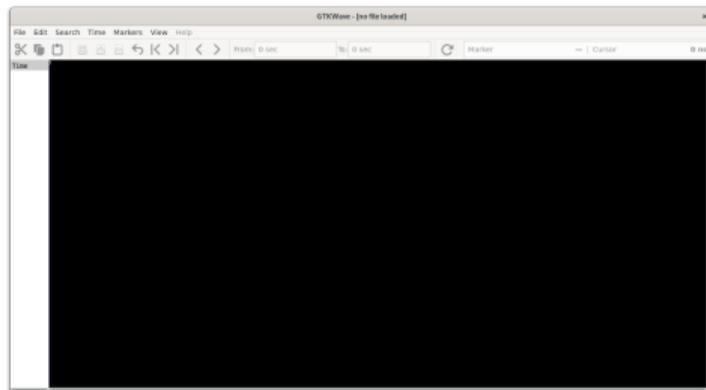
Normally this should not be necessary for the course, but can be used for troubleshooting.

```
/foss/designs > ls
ex1 ex2 ex2-def LICENSE Makefile README.md tapeout
/foss/designs > cd ex1/
/foss/designs/ex1 > ls
config.json pins.cfg runs src tb
/foss/designs/ex1 > cd src/
/foss/designs/ex1/src > ls
cipher_core.sv cipher_core.v cipher_pkg.sv cipher_wrapper_ex1.sv
/foss/designs/ex1/src > cd ../../
/foss/designs > ls
ex1 ex2 ex2-def LICENSE Makefile README.md tapeout
/foss/designs > █
```

# \$ make gtkwave

This command starts GTKWave using the docker container without a waveform loaded.

With it you can view the simulation results for your cipher.



# \$ make klayout

This command starts KLayout using the docker container without a design loaded.

Klayout is a capable layout viewer and will be used to visualize the layout of your cipher and the final chip.



## **Makefile Targets - Exercise 1**

---

Runs verilator in linting mode over your design to detect issues that can lead to problems.

Make sure to fix all warnings. Otherwise this might lead to problems later on.

```
%Error: ex1/src/cipher_core.sv:36:20: Can't find definition of variable: 'test123'  
36 |     assign tag_o = test123;  
   |                   ^~~~~~  
%Error: ex1/src/cipher_core.sv:37:21: Can't find definition of variable: 'test234'  
   |                   : ... Suggested alternative: 'test123'  
37 |     assign busy_o = test234;  
   |                   ^~~~~~  
%Error: ex1/src/cipher_core.sv:38:23: Can't find definition of variable: 'test345'  
   |                   : ... Suggested alternative: 'test234'  
38 |     assign finish_o = test345;  
   |                       ^~~~~~  
%Error: Exiting due to 3 error(s)  
make: *** [Makefile:52: ex1-lint] Fehler 1
```

# \$ make ex1-openlane

Starts the physical process of hardening cipher\_core using the sky130A PDK.

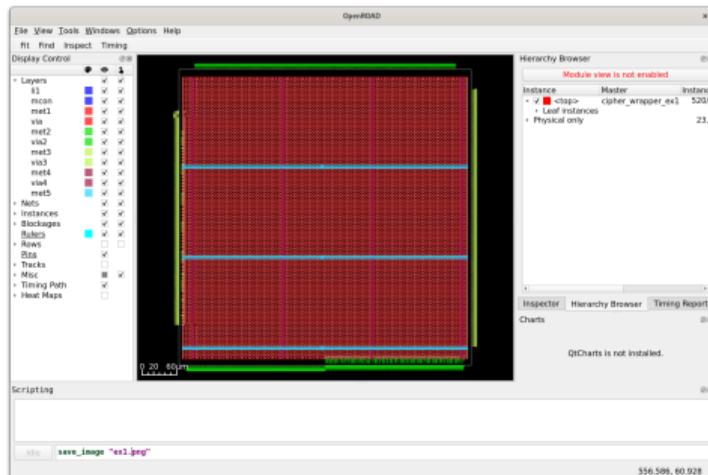
Actually, OpenLane 2 is used to harden your cipher. OpenLane 2 is the successor to OpenLane.

```
Elapsed: 0.000s Memory: 943.00M
"merged" in: sky130A_ar.drc:439
Polygons (row): 538 (Flat) 938 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.000s Memory: 943.00M
"outside part" in: sky130A_ar.drc:439
Edges: 0 (Flat) 0 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.010s Memory: 943.00M
"space" in: sky130A_ar.drc:441
Edge pairs: 0 (Flat) 0 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.040s Memory: 950.00M
"output" in: sky130A_ar.drc:441
Edge pairs: 0 (Flat) 0 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.009s Memory: 943.00M
"separation" in: sky130A_ar.drc:443
Edge pairs: 0 (Flat) 0 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.020s Memory: 950.00M
"space" in: sky130A_ar.drc:443
Edge pairs: 0 (Flat) 0 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.020s Memory: 943.00M
"l" in: sky130A_ar.drc:443
Edge pairs: 0 (Flat) 0 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.000s Memory: 943.00M
"output" in: sky130A_ar.drc:443
Edge pairs: 0 (Flat) 0 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.010s Memory: 943.00M
"input" in: sky130A_ar.drc:447
Polygons (row): 50570 (Flat) 2546 (hierarchical)
Elapsed: 0.010s Memory: 943.00M
"enclosing" in: sky130A_ar.drc:449
Classic - Stage 56 - Design Rule Check (KLayout) 55/66 0:02:02
```

# \$ make ex1-openroad

Loads the latest stage from „ex1-openlane“ into OpenROAD to visualize the design. This can be useful if the hardening process fails due to routing congestion etc.

To save an image of your design execute „save\_image image.png“ in the tcl command line.





# \$ make ex1-cocotb

Runs RTL simulation of your design using cocotb as the testbench environment.

You can write your testbench in Python under ex1/tb/.

For RTL simulation, Verilator is used as the simulator.

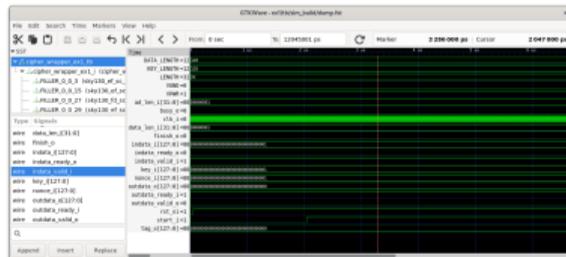
```
0.88s INFO cocotb Running on Verilator version 5.010-2025-10-30
0.88s INFO cocotb Running tests with cocotb v1.8.1 from /usr/local/lib/python3.10/dist-packages/cocotb
0.88s INFO cocotb Seeding Python random module with 1707099355
/usr/lib/python3/dist-packages/_pytest/assertion/rewrite.py:171: UserWarning: Python warnings and associated APIs are an experimental feature and subject to change.
  kwictric, media_dict_)
0.88s INFO cocotb.regression Found test tb.cocotb.single_test
0.88s INFO cocotb.regression -> tb.single_test (1/1)
1000 simple test for c1par_core
Result summary
-----
testdata_ready_o: #
outdata_o: #
outdata_valid_o: #
log_n: #
busy_n: #
finish_o: #
-----
testdata_ready_o: #
outdata_o: #
outdata_valid_o: #
log_n: #
busy_n: #
finish_o: #
Test finished!
Simple test passed
-----
** TEST **
-----
** tb.cocotb.single_test PASSED ** 12845.00 0.00 07087.45 **
-----
** TESTSUITE PASSED! FAILURE 0CUPed ** 12845.00 0.00 07087.11 **
-----
```



# \$ make ex1-gtkwave

After running RTL or GL simulation for exercise 1 the resulting waveform „dump.fst“ is saved under ex1/tb/sim\_build.

This make target starts GTKWave with „dump.fst“ loaded.



## **Makefile Targets - Exercise 2**

---

Runs verilator in linting mode over your design to detect issues that can lead to problems.

Make sure to fix all warnings. Otherwise this might lead to problems later on.

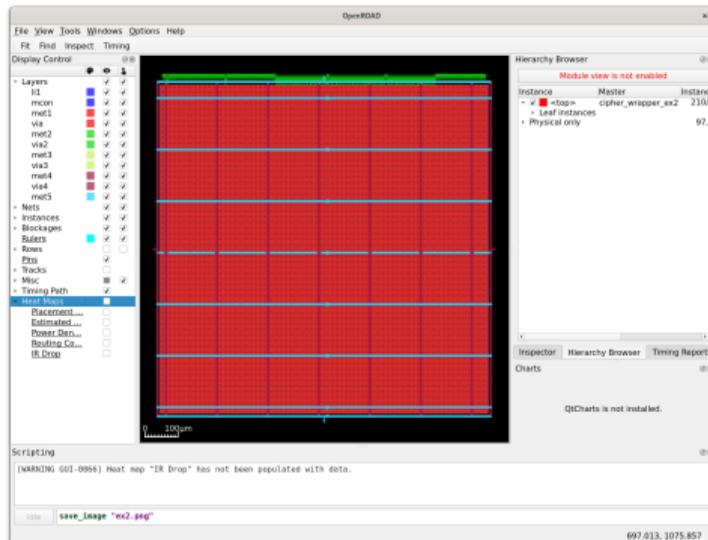
```
^-----  
Error: ex2/src/cipher_peripheral.sv:23:29: Can't find definition of variable: 'test123'  
23 | assign bus_master.req = test123;  
   | ^-----  
Error: ex2/src/cipher_peripheral.sv:24:38: Can't find definition of variable: 'test234'  
   | ... Suggested alternative: 'test123'  
24 | assign bus_master.addr = test234;  
   | ^-----  
Error: ex2/src/cipher_peripheral.sv:25:28: Can't find definition of variable: 'test345'  
   | ... Suggested alternative: 'test234'  
25 | assign bus_master.we = test345;  
   | ^-----  
Error: Exiting due to 3 error(s)  
make: *** [Makefile:129: ex2-lint] Fehler 1
```



# \$ make ex2-openroad

Loads the latest stage from „ex2-openlane“ into OpenROAD to visualize the design. This can be useful if the hardening process fails due to routing congestion etc.

To save an image of your design execute „save\_image image.png“ in the tcl command line.



# \$ make ex2-klayout

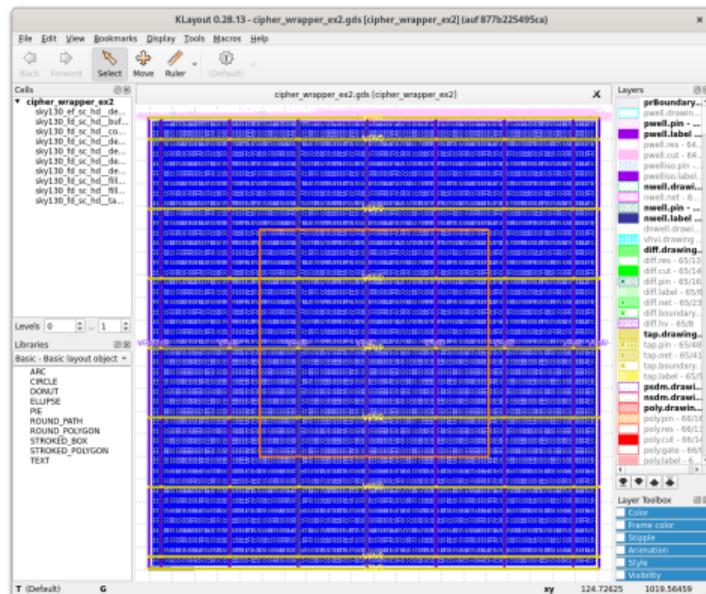
Opens the layout of your design from ex2/results in Klayout.

To save a high-resolution image, open:

Macros → Macro Development

Then execute in the console:

```
RBA::Application.instance  
.main_window.current_view  
.save_image("image.png",2000,2000)
```





# \$ make ex2-cocotb-gli

Runs GL simulation of your design using cocotb as the testbench environment.

Same as ex2-cocotb, but \$GL is set to 1 and the gate level files for cipher\_peripheral are used.

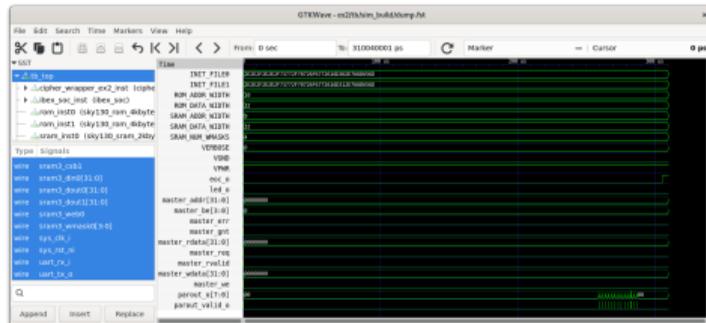
For GL simulation, Icarus Verilog is used as the simulator.

```
INFO: Running command vcs -M /usr/local/lib/python3.10/dist-packages/cocotb/libs -m libcocotb_icarus /foss/designs/ex2/tb/sim_build/sim_vcs
Pst in directory /foss/designs/ex2/tb/sim_build
--no INFO gpi ..mbed/gpi_embed.cpp:176 in set_program_name_in_venv Did not detect Python venv
in environment, using system-wide Python interpreter
--no INFO gpi ../gpi/GpiCommon.cpp:101 in gpi_print_registered_impl VPI registered
0.00% INFO cocotb Running on Icarus Verilog version 13.9 (dev61)
0.00% INFO cocotb Running tests with cocotb v1.8.1 from /usr/local/lib/python3.10/dist-packages/cocotb
0.00% INFO cocotb Seeding Python random module with 170398661
/usr/lib/python3/dist-packages/_pytest/assertion/rewrite.py:179: UserWarning: Python runners and associated APIs are an experimental feature and
subject to change.
execinfo module _dict_
0.00% INFO cocotb.regression Found test tb_cocotb_simple_test
0.00% INFO cocotb.regression cocotb simple test [1/1]
This test runs the program under sv/
Loading ROM content from ../sw/program1.mem
Loading ROM content from ../sw/program1.mem
PST info: dumpfile.dump.fst opened for output.
0.00% INFO cocotb.tb.top Reset done
Simulation output:
Hello World!
318640.00% INFO cocotb.regression simple test passed
318640.00% INFO cocotb.regression
** TEST STATUS SIM TIME (ns) REAL TIME (s) RATIO (ns/s) **
*****
** tb_cocotb_simple_test PASSED 318640.00 0.62 46091.28 **
*****
** TESTS:1 PASSED FAIL=0 SKIP=0 318640.00 0.65 42582.26 **
*****
```

# \$ make ex2-gtkwave

After running RTL or GL simulation for exercise 2 the resulting waveform „dump.fst“ is saved under ex2/tb/sim\_build.

This make target starts GTKWave with „dump.fst“ loaded.



## **Makefile Targets - Tapeout**

---

# \$ make tapeout-chip\_art

Starts a Klayout Python script to convert the PNG image under tapeout/chip\_art/chip\_art.png to .gds. A tcl script for Magic creates a .lef file.

Feel free to change the image, but make sure to keep the resolution.

```
Creating macro of size 1000 µm x 500 µm
Magic 8.3 revision 452 - Compiled on Mon Feb 12 03:05:47 PM CET 2024.
Starting magic under Tcl interpreter
Using the terminal as the console.
Using NULL graphics device.
Processing system .magicrc file
Sourcing design .magicrc for technology skyl30A ...
2 Magic internal units = 1 Lambda
Input style skyl30(): scaleFactor=2, multiplier=2
The following types are not handled by extraction and will be treated as non-electrical types:
  ubn
Scaled tech values by 2 / 1 to match internal grid scaling
Loading skyl30A Device Generator Menu ...
Loading "gds2lef.tcl" from command line.
Input style skyl30(vendor): scaleFactor=2, multiplier=2
CIF input style is now "skyl30(vendor)"
Warning: Calma reading is not undoable! I hope that's OK.
Library written using GDS-II Release 6.0
Library name: LIB
Reading "chip_art".
Generating LEF output chip_art.lef for cell chip_art:
Diagnostic: Write LEF header for cell chip_art
Diagnostic: Writing LEF output for cell chip_art
Diagnostic: Scale value is 0.005000
```

# \$ make tapeout-rom

Starts OpenRAM (or you could say OpenROM) to create a ROM macro for your program.

Set \$PROGRAM to the active program e.g. hello-world.

```
=====
OpenRAM v1.2.4B
=====
VLSI Design and Automation Lab
Computer Science and Engineering Department
University of California Santa Cruz
=====
Usage help: openram-user-group@ucsc.edu
Development help: openram-dev-group@ucsc.edu
See LICENSE for license info
=====
** Start: 02/14/2024 09:41:52
Output files are:
/foss/designs/tapeout/rom/macro/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0.sp
/foss/designs/tapeout/rom/macro/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0.v
/foss/designs/tapeout/rom/macro/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0.lcf
/foss/designs/tapeout/rom/macro/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0.gds
create rom of word size 4 with 1024 num of words
```

# \$ make tapeout-final

The final step to complete tapeout!

This target calls a Klayout Python script to merge the layouts of your cipher, the ROMs and the chip\_art with the pre-hardened chip.

Congratulations, your design is finished!

```
Replacing instance CH_cipher_wrapper_ex2 with GDS ex2/results/gds/cipher_wrapper_ex2.gds
Replacing instance CH_sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0 with GDS tapeout/rom/macro/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst0.gds
Replacing instance CH_sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst1 with GDS tapeout/rom/macro/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst1/sky130_rom_4kbyte_32_inst1.gds
Replacing instance CH_chip_art with GDS tapeout/chip_art/chip_art.gds

.....
Congratulations! Your tapeout is complete!
.....
```

# \$ make tapeout-klayout

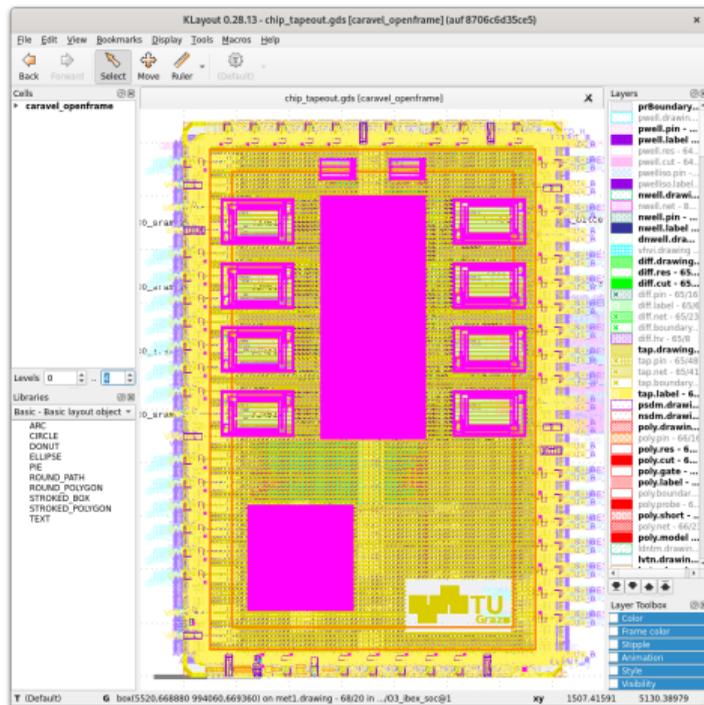
Opens the layout of your design  
chip\_tapeout.gds in Klayout.

To save a high-resolution image, open:

Macros → Macro Development

Then execute in the console:

```
RBA::Application.instance  
.main_window.current_view  
.save_image("image.png",2000,2000)
```



# Open Source Tools

---

Verilator is a free and open-source software tool which converts Verilog to a cycle-accurate behavioral model in C++ or SystemC. Verilator is the fastest Verilog/SystemVerilog simulator.

Website: `https:`

`//www.veripool.org/verilator/`



Icarus Verilog is an implementation of the Verilog hardware description language compiler that generates netlists in the desired format. It supports the 1995, 2001 and 2005 versions of the standard, portions of SystemVerilog, and some extensions.

Repository: <https://github.com/steveicarus/iverilog>



cocotb is an open source coroutine-based cosimulation testbench environment for verifying VHDL and SystemVerilog RTL using Python.

Website: <https://www.cocotb.org/>



GTKWave is an open source waveform viewer and can read various formats such as fst and vcd files.

Repository:

<https://github.com/gtkwave/gtkwave>



OpenROAD's unified application  
implementing an RTL-to-GDS Flow.

Repository: [https://github.com/  
The-OpenROAD-Project/OpenROAD](https://github.com/The-OpenROAD-Project/OpenROAD)

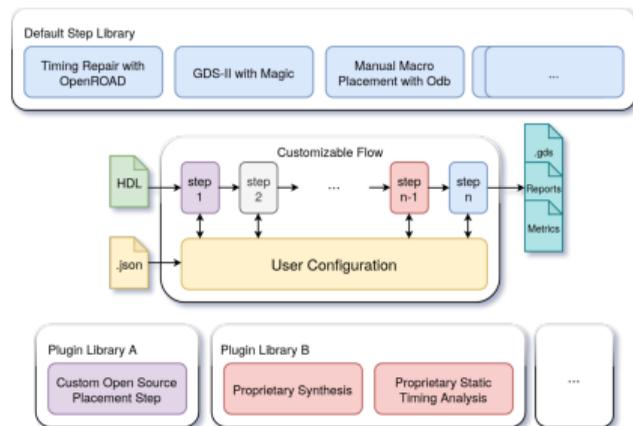
Documentation: [https://openroad.  
readthedocs.io/en/latest/](https://openroad.readthedocs.io/en/latest/)



The next generation of OpenLane,  
rewritten from scratch with a modular  
architecture

Repository: <https://github.com/efabless/openlane2>

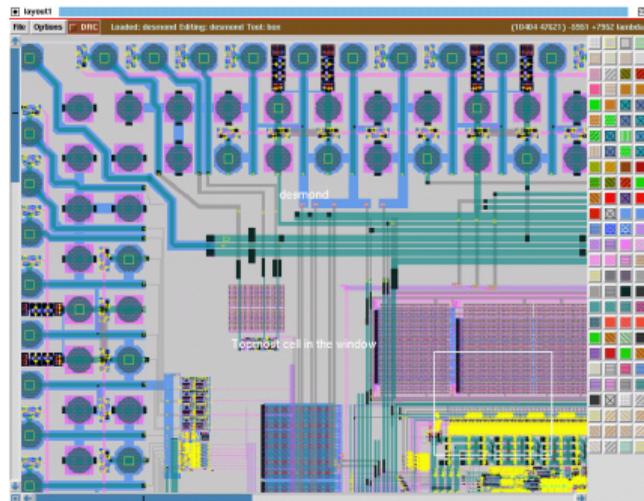
Documentation: <https://openlane2.readthedocs.io/en/latest/>



# Magic VLSI Layout Tool

Magic is a venerable VLSI layout tool, written in the 1980's at Berkeley by John Ousterhout. With well thought-out core algorithms, Magic is a powerful yet simple tool for circuit layout and validation.

Repository: <https://github.com/RTimothyEdwards/magic>





An open-source static random access memory (SRAM) compiler.

Website: <https://openram.org/>

Repository:

<https://github.com/VLSIDA/OpenRAM>



## Further Links

- *IAIK Open Flow*
- *Skywater SKY130 PDK*
- *GlobalFoundries GF180MCU PDK*
- *IHP SG13G2 PDK*
- *Qflow*
- *Coriolis*
- *LunaPnR*
- *Place & route on silicon*
- *Tiny Tapeout*

# Digital System Design

## IAIK Open Flow

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DSD Team

06.03.2024

Digital System Design  
Graz University of Technology