

# Conversions between Binary to Octal and Hexadecimal (and vice-versa)

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Let us assume a  $n$ -bit number,  $N$ , in binary format. Let it be represented as follows:

$$N = x_n x_{n-1} \dots x_1$$

Here,  $x_1$  is the LSB (least significant bit) and  $x_n$  is the MSB (most significant bit). For simplicity let us assume that  $n$  is a multiple of 3 and 4. We have:

$$N = x_n 2^{n-1} + x_{n-1} 2^{n-2} + \dots + x_2 2^1 + x_1 2^0 \quad (1)$$

Here,  $x_1 \dots x_n$  are binary digits. They can either be 0 or 1. We can subsequently write:

$$\begin{aligned} N &= x_n 2^{n-1} + x_{n-1} 2^{n-2} + \dots + x_2 2^1 + x_1 2^0 \\ &= \underbrace{(x_n \times 2^2 + x_{n-1} \times 2^1 + x_{n-2} \times 2^0)}_{y_{n/3}} 2^{n-3} + \dots + \underbrace{(x_6 \times 2^2 + x_5 \times 2^1 + x_4 \times 2^0)}_{y_2} \times 2^3 + \\ &\quad \underbrace{(x_3 \times 2^2 + x_2 \times 2^1 + x_1 \times 2^0)}_{y_1} \times 2^0 \\ &= y_{n/3} \times 8^{(n-3)/3} + \dots + y_2 \times 8^1 + y_1 \times 8^0 \\ &= y_{n/3} \dots y_2 y_1 \quad (\text{in octal}) \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

We thus have a method of converting a binary number into the octal (base 8) format by grouping bits in blocks of 3. We start from the LSB,

move leftward, group bits in a block of 3, and replace them by an octal digit.

Example:

Convert (110 001) in binary to base 8. Answer: 0 61

Example:

Convert (0 74) in base 8 to binary. Answer: 111 100

We can use the reverse technique to convert a number in base 8 to binary.

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To convert a binary number to the hexadecimal format and vice-versa, we can follow the same logic and design a proof that says that we need to group bits starting from the LSB in groups of 4.

Example:

Convert (1100 0011) in binary to base 16. Answer: 0x C3

Example:

Convert (0x FE) in hex to binary. Answer: 1111 1110