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MC68HC11 EEPROM Error Correction Algorithms in C

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Introduction

This application note describes a technique for correcting 1-bit errors and detecting 2-bit errors in a block of data ranging from 1 to 11 bits in length. The technique applied is a modified version of a Hamming code and has been implemented entirely in C. Additional functions have been provided to program and read the EEPROM (electrically erasable programmable read-only memory) on an M68HC11 microcontroller unit using the error encoding and decoding algorithms.

Encoding and Decoding Algorithms

Some texts (see [References](#) [1] and [2]) describe the use of simultaneous equations to calculate check bits in Hamming distance-3 error correcting codes. These codes are so named because there are at least three bit differences between each valid code in the set of available codes. The codes are relatively easy to generate and can be used to correct 1-bit errors. However, their main drawback is that if 2-bit errors occur, then the correction will be made erroneously. This is because the condition of 2-bit errors corresponds exactly with a 1-bit error from another valid code.

The technique described here is based on an algorithmic strategy which produces Hamming distance-4 codes over the range of 1 to 11 data bits. This type of code is capable of correcting single-bit errors and detecting 2-bit errors.

Alternatively, if the errors are only to be detected, without correction, then up to three bit errors can be detected. The reason for this is that the condition of a 3 bit error in one code corresponds to a 1-bit error from an adjacent valid code. The implication of this is that if the algorithms are used to correct errors, then a 3-bit error will be corrected erroneously and flagged as a 1-bit error.

The C program is divided into three modules, plus one header file. For example:

1. EECOR1.C — This is the main program segment and serves only to illustrate the method of calling and checking the algorithms.
2. HAMMING.C — This module contains the functions which encode and decode the data.
3. EEPROG.C — This module contains the EEPROM programming functions tailored for an M68HC11 MCU.
4. HC11REG.H — This is the header file which contains the M68HC11 input/output (I/O) register names defined as a C structure.

Implementation of Error Correction Strategy

The basic principle of decoding the error correcting codes is to use a parity check matrix, H, to generate a syndrome word which identifies the error. The H matrix can be generated as follows:

1. Identify how many data bits are needed. For example: 8 data bits
2. Use the standard equation to derive the number of check bits required: If k is the number of check bits and m the number of data bits, then for the Hamming bound to be satisfied:

$$2^k \geq m + k + 1$$

A simple way to understand why this equation holds true is as follows: If one can generate a check code which is able to identify where a single error occurs in a bit stream, then the check code must have at least the same number of unique combinations as there are bits in the bit stream, plus one extra combination to indicate that no error has occurred. For example, if the total number of data plus check bits were seven, then the check code must consist of three bits to cover the range one to seven plus one extra (0) to indicate no error at all.

In this example, if $m = 8$, then by rearranging the earlier equation:

$$2^k - k - 1 \geq 8$$

One way to solve for k is to just select values of k starting at, say, 1 and evaluating until the bound is reached. This method is implemented by algorithm in function `InitEncode()` in [Module HAMMING.C](#).

For $m = 8$, the solution is $k = 4$. Note that this value exceeds the Hamming bound, which means that additional data bits can be added to the bit stream, thus increasing the efficiency of the code. In fact, the maximum number of data bits is 11 in this case.

3. A parity matrix, H , is created from a "horizontally oriented" binary table. The number of columns (b1 to b12) in the matrix correspond to the total number of data and check bits and the number of rows (r1 to r4) to the number of check bits.

i.e.	b1	b2	b3	b4	b5	b6	b7	b8	b9	b10	b11	b12
r1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
r2	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
r3	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
r4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1

Because the H matrix in this form is simply a truncated 4-bit binary table, it can easily be generated by algorithm.

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- The position of all the check bits (C1 to C4) within the encoded word is the position of the single 1s in the columns of H. The remaining bits correspond to the data bits (D1 to D8).

i.e.

C1	C2	D1	C3	D2	D3	D4	C4	D5	D6	D7	D8
1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1

- Each check bit is generated by taking each row of H in turn and modulo-2 adding all bits with a 1 in them except the check bit positions.

i.e.

$$C1 = D1 + D2 + D4 + D5 + D7$$

$$C2 = D1 + D3 + D4 + D6 + D7$$

$$C3 = D2 + D3 + D4 + D8$$

$$C4 = D5 + D6 + D7 + D8$$

- The syndrome, s, is the binary weighted value of all check bits.

i.e.

$$s = 1 \cdot C1 + 2 \cdot C2 + 4 \cdot C3 + 8 \cdot C4$$

The error position (i.e. column) is determined by the value of the syndrome word, provided it is not zero. A zero syndrome means no error has occurred. Note that this error correction technique can correct errors in either data or check bits, which is not necessarily the case with certain other error correction strategies.

The advantage of this method, where the check bits are interspersed in a binary manner throughout the code word, is that the error position can be calculated by algorithm.

An important point to note is that the parity check matrix described earlier generates Hamming distance-3 codes, which means that two errors will cause erroneous correction. This can be fixed by adding an extra parity check bit, C5, which is the modulo-2 addition of all data and check bits together.

i.e.

$$C5 = C1 + C2 + D1 + C3 + D2 + D3 + D4 + C4 + D5 + D6 + D7 + D8$$

The code word then becomes:

C1 C2 D1 C3 D2 D3 D4 C4 D5 D6 D7 D8 C5

To determine if an uncorrectable error has occurred (i.e. two errors) in the received word, the extra parity bit is tested. If the syndrome is non-zero and the parity bit is wrong, then a correctable error has occurred. If the syndrome is non-zero and the parity bit is correct, then an uncorrectable error has occurred.

Efficiency

The following table lists the relative efficiencies of this algorithm, against data size.

Data Bits	Encoded Bits	Efficiency %
1	4	25
2	6	33
3	7	43
4	8	50
5	10	50
6	11	55
7	12	58
8	13	62
9	14	64
10	15	67
11	16	69

The implementation of these techniques are given in [Module HAMMING.C](#).

In order to maintain orthogonality in the EEPROM algorithms, the encoded data used by the functions in [Module EEPROG.C](#) are forced to either 1-byte or 2-byte (word) sizes. This also eliminates the complexities of packing and unpacking data in partially filled bytes.

Conclusions

In this application note, the encoding algorithm's generator matrix is the same as the parity check matrix.

The C functions <read> and <write> in [Module HAMMING.C](#) return a status value — 0, 1, or 2 — which indicates whether the data has no errors, one corrected error, or two erroneously corrected errors. This means that if the status value is 0 or 1, then the data can be assumed good. If the status value is 2, then the data will be bad.

Alternatively, the functions can be used for error detection only, without correction. In this case, a status value of 1 corresponds to either 1- or 3-bit errors, while a status value of 2 indicates that 2-bit errors have occurred.

By using the C functions listed in this application note, the encoded data size can easily be changed dynamically. To do this, the function <InitEncode> must be called with the required new data size. The global variables used by all the encoding, decoding, and EEPROM programming and reading functions are automatically updated. This allows the encoding and error correction process to be virtually transparent to the user. In addition, the functions <write> and <read> will automatically increment the address pointer by the correct encoded data size set up by <InitEncode>. This simplifies the structure of loops to program and read back data. Example code is provided in [Module EECOR1.C](#).

The encoding and decoding algorithms listed here may be applied to other forms of data, such as that used in serial communications or for parallel data transfers.

By incorporating the error correction or detection-only schemes described in this application note, the integrity of data storage and transfer can be greatly improved. The impact on EEPROM usage is to increase its effective reliability and extend its useful life beyond the manufacturer's guaranteed specifications.

References

[1] Carlson, *Communication Systems*, Chapter 9, McGraw-Hill.

[2] Harman, *Principles of the Statistical Theory of Communication*, Chapter 5, McGraw-Hill.

Module EECOR1.C

Tests EEPROM error detection using a modified hamming encoding scheme.

```
typedef unsigned char byte;
typedef unsigned int word;

/* Global variables used by main () */
byte *ee_addr,*start_addr,*end_addr,i,Error;
word data;

/*****

/*External global variables */
extern byte CodeSize;                                /* = number of bits in encoded data */

/* External Functions */
extern byte read(word *data,byte **addr);             /* Function returns error status */
extern byte write(word data,byte **addr);             /* " */
/* Table of Status returned by read and write functions
      Returned Status                                Condition
      0                                No errors detected or corrected.
      1                                One error detected and corrected.
      2                                Two errors detected, but correction is erroneous.

Notes:
1/ When the returned value is 2, the function <read> will returned a bad value in variable <data> due to
the inability to correctly correct two errors. <read> also automatically increments the address pointer
passed to it, to the next memory space. The incremented value takes into account the actual size of the
encoded data. i.e. either 1 or 2 byte increment.
2/ Function <write> also performs a read to update and return an error status. This gives an immediate
indication of whether the write was successful. <write> also automatically increments the address
pointer passed to it, to the next free memory space. The incremented value takes into account the actual
size of the encoded data. i.e. either 1 or 2 byte increment.
*/

*****/

int main ()
{
    CodeSize=InitEncode(11);                                /* Get code size (less 1) needed */
                                                            /* by 11 data bits */

    ee_addr=(byte *)0xb600;                                /* Initialise EEPROM start address */
    for(i=1;i<=0x10;i++)                                    /* and 'erase' EEPROM */
        Error=write(0x7ff,&ee_addr);                        /* Function successful if Error<>2 */

    ee_addr=(byte *)0xb600;                                /* Reset EEPROM address */

    Error=write(0x5aa,&ee_addr);                            /* Write 0x5aa & increment ee_addr */
}
```

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```

Error=write(0x255,&ee_addr);          /* Write 0x255 at next available address */

CodeSize=InitEncode(4);                /* Change number of data bits to 4 */
start_addr=ee_addr;                    /* Save start address for this data */

for(i=1;i<0x10;i<=1)                  /* Program 'walking 1s' */
    Error=write(i,&ee_addr);
end_addr=ee_addr;                      /* Save end address */

ee_addr=start_addr;
while (ee_addr<end_addr)               /* Read back all the 4 bit data */
    Error=read(&data,&ee_addr);        /* <data> good if Error=0 or 1 */

} /* main */

```

Module HAMMING.C

/* Modules to Generate hamming codes of distance 4, for data sizes in the range 1 bit to 11 bits. The upper bound is limited by the encoded word type bit range (16 bits).

Corrects 1 bit error in any position (check or data), and detects 2 bit errors in any position.

After execution of the <Decode> function, the global variable <ErrFlag> is updated to indicate level of error correction.

i.e.	ErrFlag	Condition
	0	No errors detected or corrected.
	1	One error detected and corrected.
	2	Two errors detected, but correction is erroneous.

Note that when ErrFlag is 2, function <Decode> will return a bad value, due to its inability to correctly correct two errors.

```

#define TRUE 1
#define FALSE 0
typedef unsigned char byte;
typedef unsigned int word;

byte DataSize,CodeSize,EncodedWord,ErrFlag;

/* Function prototypes */
byte OddParity(word Code);
word Power2(byte e);
byte InitEncode(byte DataLength);
word MakeCheck(word Data);
word Encode(word Data);
word Decode(word Code);

byte OddParity(Code)
word Code;
/*
Returns TRUE if Code is odd parity, otherwise returns FALSE
*/

{
    byte p;

    p=TRUE;
    While (Code!=0)

```



```

{
    if (Code & 1) p=!p;
    Code>>=1;
}
return(p);
}

word Power2(e)
byte e;
/*
    Returns 2^e
*/

{
word P2;
signed char i;

P2=1;
if ((signed char) (e)<0)
    return(0);
else

{
    for (i=1;i<=(signed char) (e);i++)
        P2<<=1;
    return(P2);
}
}

byte InitEncode(DataLength)
byte DataLength;
/*
Returns the minimum number of total bits needed to provide
Hamming distance 3 codes from a data size defined by passed
variable <DataLength>. This value also updates global variable <DataSize>.
i.e. finds the minimum solution of (k+m) for the inequality:
 $2^k \geq k + m + 1$ 

In addition, updates global variable <EncodedSize> to reflect number of bytes
per encoded data. <EncodedSize> will be either 0 or 1.
*/

{
    byte CheckLength,i;

    DataSize=DataLength; /* DataSize used by other functions in this module */
    CheckLength=1;
    while ((Power2(CheckLength)-CheckLength-1)<DataLength)
        CheckLength++;
    i=CheckLength+DataLength;
    EncodedWord=i / 8; /* =0 if byte sized, =1 if word sized */
    return(CheckLength+DataLength);
}

word MakeCheck(Data)
word Data;
/*
Returns a check word for Data, based on global variables <DataSize>
and <CheckSize>. The H parity matrix is generated by a simple for loop.
*/

{
    byte i,H,CheckSize,CheckValue,Check,CheckMask;
    word DataMask;

```

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```

Check=0;
CheckMask=1;
CheckSize=CodeSize-DataSize;
for (i=1;i<=CheckSize;i++)
{
    CheckValue=FALSE;
    DataMask=1
    for (H=1;H<=CodeSize;H++)
    {
        if ((0x8000 % H)!=0)                                /* Column with single bit set */
        {
            if ((H & CheckMask !=0)
                CheckValue^=((DataMask & Data) !=0);
            DataMask<<=1;
        }
    }
    if (CheckValue) Check|=CheckMask;
    CheckMask<<=1;
}
return(Check);
}
word Encode (Data)
word Data;
/*
Returns an encoded word, consisting of the check bits
concatenated on to the most significant bit of <Data>.
A single odd parity bit is concatenated on to the Encoded word to
increase the hamming bound from 3 to 4, and provide 2 bit error
detection as well as 1 bit correction.
Uses global variables <DataSize> and <CodeSize> to determine the
concatenating positions.
*/
{
    word Code;

    Code=Data | (MakeCheck(Data)<<DataSize);
    if (OddParity(Code))
        Code|=Power2(CodeSize);
    return(Code);
}

word Decode(Code)
word Code;
/*
Returns the error corrected data word, decoded from <Code>.
Uses global variable <DataSize> to determine position of the
check bits in <Code>.
Updates global variable <ErrFlag> to indicate error status i.e.:
    ErrFlag      Status
    0             No errors found
    1             Single error corrected
    2             Double error - invalid correction
*/

{
    word ParityBit,Data,Check,ErrorCheck,Syndrome,DataMask;
    byte DataPos,CheckSize,CheckPos,H,DataBit;

    ErrFlag=0;
    ParityBit=Code & Power2(CodeSize);                /* Extract parity bit */
    DataMask=Power2(DataSize)-1;                        /* Make data mask */
    Data=Code & DataMask;                               /* Extract parity bits. */
    CheckSize=CodeSize-DataSize;                       /* Extract check bits, */

```

```

Check=(Code>>DataSize) & (Power2(CheckSize)-1);          /* ignoring parity.  */
ErrorCheck=MakeCheck(Data);
Syndrome=Check ^ ErrorCheck;
if (Syndrome>0) ErrFlag++;
H=0;
DataPos=0;
CheckPos=DataSize;
DataBit=TRUE;

while ((H!=Syndrome) & (DataPos<DataSize))                /* Identify which data or  */
{
    H++;
    DataBit=(0x8000 % H);
    if (DataBit) DataPos++;
    else        CheckPos++;
}
if (DataBit) Code^=Power2(DataPos-1);
else        Code^=Power2(CheckPos-1);
Code|=ParityBit;
if (OddParity(Code)) ErrFlag++;
return(Code & DataMask);

```

Module EEPORG.C

/*Module to program MC68HC11 EEPROM

Contains <read> and <write> functions to encode and decode data
formatted by modified hamming scheme.

*/

```
#include <HC11REG.H>
```

```
#define regbase (*(struct HC11IO *) 0x1000)
```

```
#define eras 0x16
```

```
#define writ 0x02
```

```
typedef unsigned char byte;
```

```
typedef unsigned int word;
```

```
union twobytes
```

```
{
```

```
word w;
```

```
byte b[2];
```

```
} udata;
```

/* Word stored as MSB, LSB

*/

```
extern byte EncodedWord,ErrFlag;
```

/* Function prototypes */

```
extern word Encode(word Data);
```

```
extern word Decode(word Code);
```

```
void delay(word count);
```

```
void eeprog(byte val,byte byt,byte *addr,word count);
```

```
void program(byte byt,byte *addr);
```

```
byte read(word *data,byte **addr);
```

```
byte write(word data,byte **addr);
```

```
void delay(count)
```

```
word count;
```

```
{
```

```
regbase.TOC1=regbase.TCNT+count;
```

/* Set timeout period on OC1 and

*/

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```

    regbase.TFLG1=0x80;
    do;while ((regbase.TFLG1 & 0x80)==0);
}

/* clear any pending OC1 flag.
/* Wait for timeout flag.
*/
*/

void eeprog(val,byt,addr,count)
byte val;
byte byt;
byte *addr;
word count;
{
    regbase.PPROG=val;
    *addr=byt;
    ++regbase.PPROG;
    if (count<100) count=100;
    delay(count);
    -regbase.PPROG;
    regbase.PPROG=0;
}
/* val determines Erase or Write operation
/* byt is byte to be programmed
/* addr is address of encoded byte in EEPROM
/* count is number of E clock delays
*/
*/

void program(byt,addr)
byte byt;
byte *addr;
{
    eeprog(eras,byt,addr,20000);
    eeprog(writ,byt,addr,20000);
}
/* First erase byte
/* Then write value
*/
*/

byte read(data,addr)
word *data;
byte **addr;
{
    udata.b[1]=>(*addr)++;
    if (EncodedWord)
        udata.b[0]=(*addr)++;
    else
        udata.b[0]=0;
    *data=Decode(udata.w);
    return(ErrFlag);
}
/* Read back data LSB first, and inc address
/* If word stored then read MSB
/* Inc address for next call to this function
/* else only byte stored, so clear MSB
*/
*/

byte write(data,addr)
word data;
byte **addr;
{
    byte *oldaddr;

    udata.w=Encode(data);
    oldaddr=*addr;
    program(udata.b[1],(*addr)++);
    if (EncodedWord)
        program(udata.b[0],(*addr)++);
    return(read(&udata.w,&oldaddr));
}
/* Encode data.
/* Save initial address for verification.
/* Program LSB first to allow for either
/* 1 or 2 byte encoded data
/* MSB of word sized data,& inc address
/* Return <ErrFlag> to calling segment
*/
*/

```

HC11REG.H

```

/*  HC11 structure - I/O registers for MC68HC11 */
struct HC11IO {
    unsigned char    PORTA;                /* Port A - 3 input only, 5 output only */
    unsigned char    Reserved;
    unsigned char    PIOC;                /* Parallel I/O control */
    unsigned char    PORTC;                /* Port C */
    unsigned char    PORTB;                /* Port B - Output only */
    unsigned char    PORTCL;              /* Alternate port C latch */
    unsigned char    Reserved1;
    unsigned char    DDRC;                /* Data direction for port C */
    unsigned char    PORTD;                /* Port D */
    unsigned char    DDRD;                /* Data direction for port D */
    unsigned char    PORTE;                /* Port E */

/*  Timer Section */

    unsigned char    CFORC;                /* Compare force */
    unsigned char    OC1M;                /* Oc1 mask */
    unsigned char    OC1D;                /* Oc1 data */
    int              TCNT;                /* Timer counter */
    int              TIC1;                /* Input capture 1 */
    int              TIC2;                /* Input capture 2 */
    int              TIC3;                /* Input capture 3 */
    int              TOC1;                /* Output compare 1 */
    int              TOC2;                /* Output compare 2 */
    int              TOC3;                /* Output compare 3 */
    int              TOC4;                /* Output compare 4 */
    int              TOC5;                /* Output compare 5 */
    unsigned char    TCTL1;                /* Timer control register 1 */
    unsigned char    TCTL2;                /* Timer control register 2 */
    unsigned char    TMSK1;                /* Main timer interrupt mask 1 */
    unsigned char    TFLG1;                /* Main timer interrupt flag 1 */
    unsigned char    TMSK2;                /* Main timer interrupt mask 2 */
    unsigned char    TFLG2;                /* Main timer interrupt flag 2 */

/*  Pulse Accumulator Timer Control */

    unsigned char    PACTL;                /* Pulse Acc control */
    unsigned char    PACNT;                /* Pulse Acc count */

/*  SPI registers */

    unsigned char    SPCR;                /* SPI control register */
    unsigned char    SPSR;                /* SPI status register */
    unsigned char    SPDR;                /* SPI data register */

/*  SCI registers */

    unsigned char    BAUD;                /* SCI baud rate control */
    unsigned char    SCCR1;                /* SCI control register 1 */
    unsigned char    SCCR2;                /* SCI control register 2 */
    unsigned char    SCSR;                /* SCI status register */
    unsigned char    SCDR;                /* SCI data register */

/*  A to D registers */

    unsigned char    ADCTL;                /* AD control register */
    unsigned char    ADR[4];              /* Array of AD result registers */

/*  Define each result register */

```

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```
#define      adr1      ADR[0]
#define      adr2      ADR[1]
#define      adr3      ADR[2]
#define      adr4      ADR[3]

    unsigned char    Rsrv[4];                                /* Reserved for A to D expansion

/*    System Configuration    */

    unsigned char    OPTION;                                /* System configuration options          */
    unsigned char    CPRST;                                /* Arm/Reset COP timer circuitry        */
    unsigned char    PPROG;                                /* EEPROM programming control reg       */
    unsigned char    HPRI0;                                /* Highest priority i-bit int & misc    */
    unsigned char    INIT;                                  /* RAM - I/O mapping register          */
    unsigned char    TEST1;                                /* Factory TEST control register       */
    unsigned char    CONFIG;                               /* EEPROM cell - COP,ROM,& EEPROM en    */

};

/* End of structure HC11 */
```



Application Note

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