

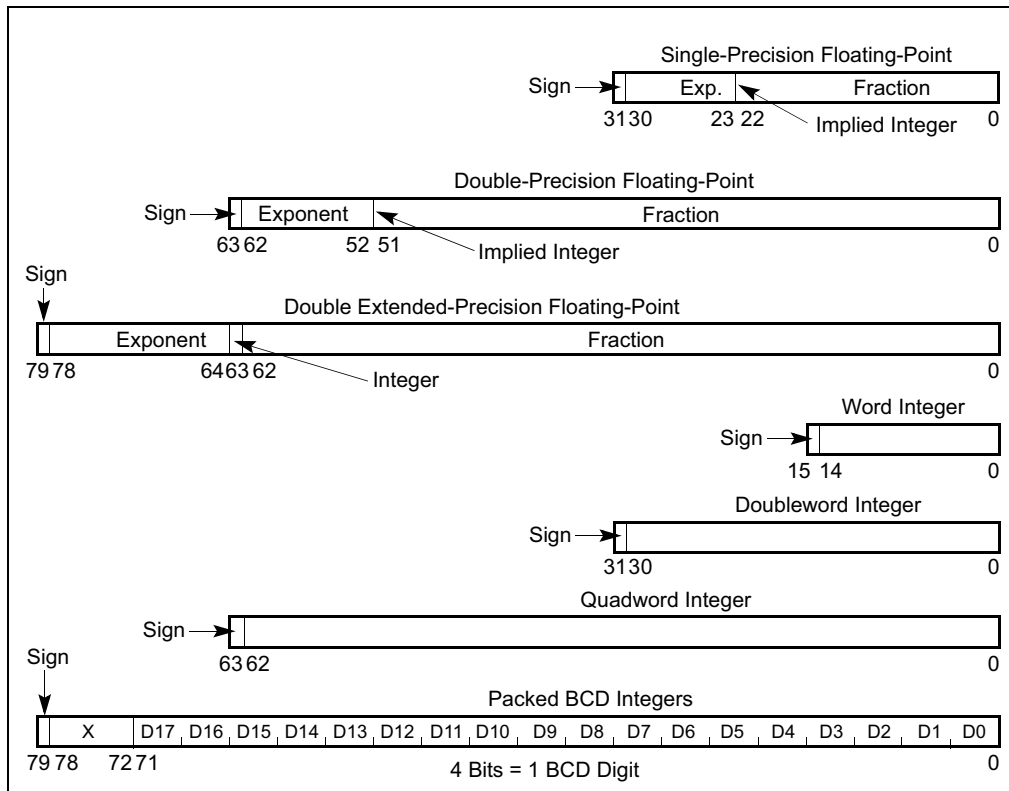


Figure 8-13. x87 FPU Data Type Formats

As a general rule, values should be stored in memory in double-precision format. This format provides sufficient range and precision to return correct results with a minimum of programmer attention. The single-precision format is useful for debugging algorithms, because rounding problems will manifest themselves more quickly in this format. The double extended-precision format is normally reserved for holding intermediate results in the x87 FPU registers and constants. Its extra length is designed to shield final results from the effects of rounding and overflow/underflow in intermediate calculations. However, when an application requires the maximum range and precision of the x87 FPU (for data storage, computations, and results), values can be stored in memory in double extended-precision format.

8.2.1 Indefinites

For each x87 FPU data type, one unique encoding is reserved for representing the special value **indefinite**. The x87 FPU produces indefinite values as responses to some masked floating-point invalid-operation exceptions. See Tables 4-1, 4-3, and