Electrical Properties

Necessary to understand basic electrical properties of the MOS transistor to design useful circuits

- Deal with non-ideal devices
- Ensure that the circuits are robust
- Create working layouts
- Predict delays and power consumption

As circuit dimensions scale down, electrical effects become more important, even for digital circuits

1.65 GHz square wave from an HDMI Interface (Source: Dunnihoo, EE Times Asia, 8/25/2005)
The nMOS Transistor

Terminal Voltages

- Modes of operation depend on $V_g$, $V_d$, $V_s$
  - $V_{gs} = V_g - V_s$
  - $V_{gd} = V_g - V_d$
  - $V_{ds} = V_d - V_s = V_{gs} - V_{gd}$
- Source and drain are symmetric diffusion terminals
  - By convention, source is terminal at lower voltage, so $V_{ds} \geq 0$
- nMOS body is grounded for simple designs; assume source is 0
- Three regions of operation: Cutoff, Linear, Saturated

Modes in nMOS Structure

ACCUMULATION

DEPLETION

INVERSION
4. CMOS Transistor Theory

nMOS Transistor Operation

Positive voltage on Gate produces electric field across substrate – attracts electrons to the Gate and repels holes

- With sufficient voltage, region under Gate changes from p- to n-Type – conducting path between the Source and Drain
- Inversion layer is field-induced junction, unlike a PN junction which is metallurgical
- Horizontal component of electric field associated with $V_{ds} > 0$ is responsible for sweeping electrons from channel to drain

Threshold Voltage

- The gate voltage at which conduction takes place is the **Threshold Voltage**, $V_t$
- Current flow occurs when the drain to source voltage $V_{ds} > 0$, and consists almost entirely of majority-carriers (electrons), that flow through the channel
- A depletion region insulates the channel from the substrate

Conducting nMOS Transistor

- Conduction when $V_{gs} > V_t$ and $V_{ds} > 0$
  - No significant current through the substrate because of reverse biased PN junction with the channel
  - As the voltage from drain to source is increased, the resistive drop along the channel begins to change the shape of the channel characteristic
  - At source end of the channel, the full gate voltage is effective in inverting the channel
  - At drain end of the channel, only the difference between the gate and the drain voltage is effective
- If $V_{ds} > V_{gs} - V_t$, then $V_{gd} < V_t$, and the channel is “pinched down” (the inversion layer no longer reaches the drain)
  - In this case, conduction is brought about by the drift mechanism of electrons under the influence of positive drain voltage; as the negative electrons leave the channel, they are accelerated towards the drain
  - Voltage across the pinchdown channel tends to remain fixed at $(V_{gs} - V_t)$, and the channel current remains constant with increasing $V_{ds}$
nMOS Device Behavior

\[ V_{gs} > V_t, \ V_{ds} = 0 \]

Saturated Mode
\( (V_{ds} > V_{gs} - V_t) \)

Nonsaturated Mode
\( V_{ds} < V_{gs} - V_t \)

The pMOS Transistor

Moderately doped n-type substrate (or well) in which two heavily doped p+ regions, the Source and Drain, are diffused

- Application of a negative gate voltage (w.r.t. source) draws holes into the region below the gate; channel changes from n to p-type (source-drain conduction path)
- Conduction due to holes; negative \( V_d \) sweeps holes from source (through channel) to drain
Current in the Channel

In the Linear region, \( I_{ds} \) depends on how much charge there is in the channel and how fast the charge is moving.

Channel Charge
- MOS structure looks like parallel plate capacitor while operating in inversion (Gate – Oxide – Channel)
- \( Q_{\text{channel}} = CV \)
- \( C = C_g = \epsilon_{ox} W L / t_{ox} = C_{ox} W L \) (\( C_{ox} = \epsilon_{ox} / t_{ox} \))
- \( V = V_{gc} - V_t = (V_{gs} - V_{ds}/2) - V_t \)

Carrier Velocity
- Charge is carried by electrons
- Carrier velocity \( \nu \) proportional to lateral E-field between source and drain
- \( \nu = \mu E \)
  - \( \mu \) is called mobility
- \( E = V_{ds}/L \)
- Time for carrier to cross channel: \( t = L/\nu \)
I-V Characteristics

nMOS Linear I-V

Current can be obtained from the charge in the channel and the time each carrier takes to cross:

\[ I_{ds} = \frac{Q_{\text{channel}}}{t} = \mu C_{ox} \frac{W}{L} \left( V_{gs} - V_t - V_{ds}/2 \right) V_{ds} \]

\[ = \beta \left( V_{gs} - V_t - V_{ds}/2 \right) V_{ds} \]

nMOS Saturation I-V

- If \( V_{gd} < V_t \), channel pinches off near drain
  - when \( V_{ds} > V_{dsat} = V_{gs} - V_t \)
- Now drain voltage no longer increases with current

\[ I_{ds} = \beta \left( V_{gs} - V_t - V_{dsat}/2 \right) V_{dsat} \]

\[ = \frac{\beta}{2} (V_{gs} - V_t)^2 \]

nMOS I-V Summary

Shockley First Order transistor models

\[ I_{ds} = \begin{cases} 
0 & V_{gs} < V_t \\
\beta \left( V_{gs} - V_t - V_{ds}/2 \right) V_{ds} & V_{ds} < V_{dsat} \\
\frac{\beta}{2} (V_{gs} - V_t)^2 & V_{ds} > V_{dsat} 
\end{cases} \]

- Cutoff
- Linear
- Saturation
All dopings and voltages are inverted for pMOS (compared with nMOS)

- Mobility $\mu_p$ is determined by holes
  - Typically 2x-3x lower than that of electrons $\mu_n$
- Thus pMOS must be wider to provide the same current
  - Simple assumption, $\frac{\mu_n}{\mu_p} = 2$

Capacitance

Capacitance in CMOS circuits

- Two conductors separated by an insulator have capacitance
- Gate to channel capacitor is very important
  - Creates channel charge necessary for operation
- Source and drain have capacitance to body
  - Across reverse-biased diodes
  - Called diffusion capacitance because it is associated with source/drain diffusion
- Interconnection wires also have (distributed) capacitance

Gate Capacitance

- Approximate channel as connected to source
  - $C_{gs} = \epsilon_{ox}WL/t_{ox} = C_{ox}WL = C_{permicron}W$
  - Typical $C_{permicron} \approx 2fF/\mu m$
Device Capacitances

The dynamic response (switching speed) of a CMOS circuit is very dependent on parasitic capacitances associated with the circuit. Use a simple approximation for quick estimates of capacitances; use tools for extraction of more accurate values from actual layouts. Consider the capacitances seen during the different regions of operation.

Off Region

- $V_{gs} \leq V_t$; when the MOS device is off, only $C_{gb}$ (due to the series combination of gate oxide and depletion layer capacitance) is non-zero.
- $C_{gb} = C_{ox} = \epsilon A / t_{ox}$, where $A$ is the gate area, and
  - $\epsilon = \epsilon_0 \epsilon_{SiO_2}$
    - $\epsilon_0$ is the permittivity of free space ($8.854 \times 10^4 \, \text{F/m}$), and $\epsilon_{SiO_2}$ is the dielectric constant of $SiO_2$ (about 3.9)

Linear Region

- Depletion region exists, forming dielectric of depletion capacitance, $C_{dep}$ in series with $C_{ox}$
- As the device turns on, $C_{gb}$ reduces to 0
- The gate capacitance is now a function of the gate voltage
Device Capacitances, Cont’d

Saturated Region
- Region under the gate is heavily inverted, and drain region of channel pinched off, with $C_{gd}$ reducing to zero
- Gate capacitance is now less than $C_{ox}$

Approximation of Gate Capacitance
- For simplicity, we can assume the gate capacitance to be constant, $C_g = \epsilon A / t_{ox}$

Diffusion (Source/Drain) Capacitance
- Capacitance at the drain ($C_{db}$) or source ($C_{sb}$) of a device, or when diffusion is used as a wire
  - Two components:
    - An Area component
    - A Peripheral (sidewall) component
  - The peripheral component comes from the depth of the diffusion
    - Assume diffusion capacitance is approximately $C_g$ for contacted diffusion
    - It is $1/2C_g$ for uncontacted diffusion
Pass Transistors

Have assumed that source is grounded

What happens if source $> 0$?
- Example, pass transistor passing $V_{DD}$
- $V_g = V_{DD}$
  - If $V_s > V_{DD} - V_t$, $V_{gs} < V_t$
  - Hence, transistor would turn itself off

nMOS pass transistors pull no higher than $V_{DD} - V_t$
- Called a degraded “1”
- Degraded value reached slowly in a transition (low $I_{ds}$)

pMOS pass transistors pull no lower than $V_{tp}$
- Degraded “0”

Pass Transistor Circuits

What would be the voltages on the different nodes?

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Pass Transistor Circuits

What would be the voltages on the different nodes?

\[ V_s = V_D - V_i \]

\[ V_s = |V_i| \]

\[ V_s = 2V_i \]
Example 1

Assumption: initial voltage on each node is 2.5 volts

Relevant transistor parameters are, $V_{dd} = 5V$, $V_{tn} = 1V$ and $|V_{tp}| = 0.7V$

Example 1, Cont’d

$V_{dd} = 5V$, $V_{tn} = 1V$ and $|V_{tp}| = 0.7V$
Example 2

Assume: initial voltage of 0.5V on all the internal nodes

\[ V_{dd} = 1.0V, \ V_{tn} = 0.2V \text{ and } |V_{tp}| = 0.2V \]

Example 2, Cont’d

Assume: initial voltage of 0.5V on all the internal nodes

\[ V_{dd} = 1.0V, \ V_{tn} = 0.2V \text{ and } |V_{tp}| = 0.2V \]
Effective Resistance

Resistance of a bar of uniform material

- \[ R = \frac{\rho L}{A} = (\frac{L}{W}) \times (\frac{t}{W}) \]
  - where \( \rho \) = resistivity of the material
  - \( A \) = cross-section of the resistor
  - \( t, W \) = thickness, width of the material

- The channel resistance of a MOS transistor in the linear region, \( R_c = k \left( \frac{L}{W} \right) \).
  - where \( k = \frac{1}{\mu C_{ox} (V_{gs} - V_t)} \)

Resistance values depend on the technology

- Obtain the information from the technology files
- **Sheet resistance** (\( \Omega/\square \))
  - Lowest for metal, increases for poly, active, highest for Well
- **Contact (via) resistance** becomes more important as processes scale down
- **Channel (turned-on transistor)** on the order of 1000 \( \Omega/\square \)

Example of Process Parameters and Simulation

Example: TSMC 0.18\( \mu \) process

http://www.mosis.com/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/umosis/swp/params/tsmc-018/

Look at one process

Example of SPICE simulation
Resistance on a Turned-On Transistor

Circuit delay depends on resistance and capacitance – delay depends on $RC$

- Need to deal with the resistance of conducting transistors and interconnects
- Shockley models have limited value for obtaining resistance
  - Not accurate enough for modern transistors
  - Too complicated for much hand analysis
- Simplification: treat transistor as resistor
  - Replace $I_{ds}(V_{ds},V_{gs})$ with effective resistance $R$
  - $I_{ds} = \frac{V_{ds}}{R}$
  - $R$ averaged across switching of digital gate
- Too inaccurate to predict current at any given time, but good enough to predict RC delay
- More accurate values of delay obtained from detailed design using the tools

RC Delay Model

Use equivalent circuits for MOS transistors

- Ideal switch + capacitance and ON resistance
  - Unit nMOS has resistance $R$, capacitance $C$
  - Unit pMOS has resistance $2R$, capacitance $C$
- Capacitance proportional to width
- Resistance inversely proportional to width
Inverter Delay Estimate

Estimate the delay of a fanout-of-1 inverter

\[ d = 6RC \]