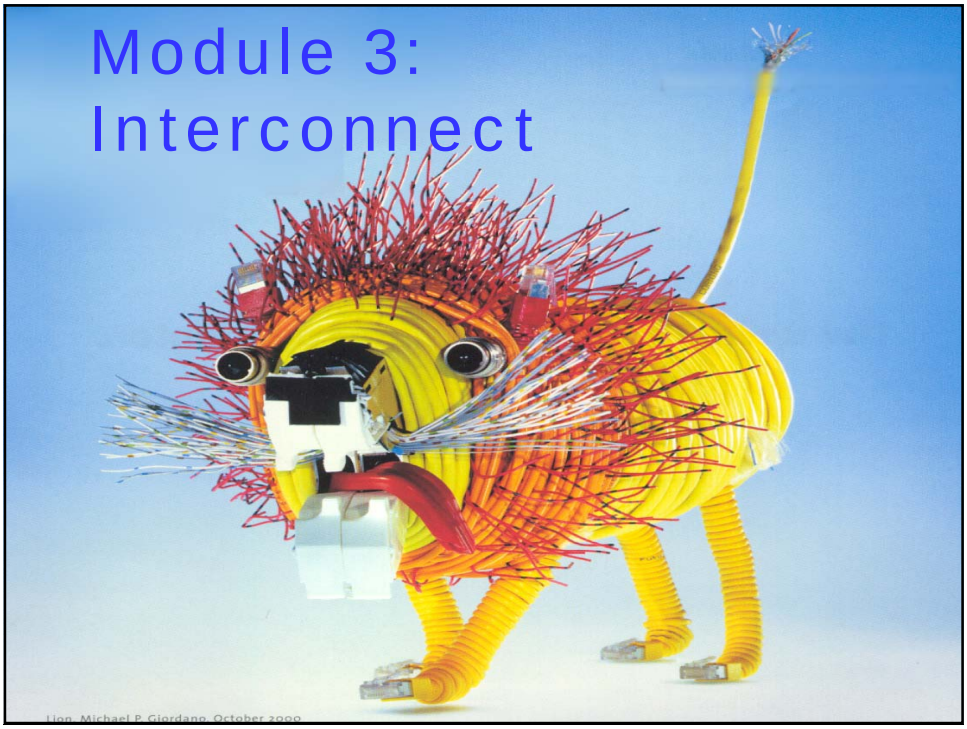
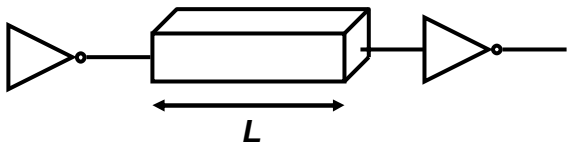
Module 3: Interconnect

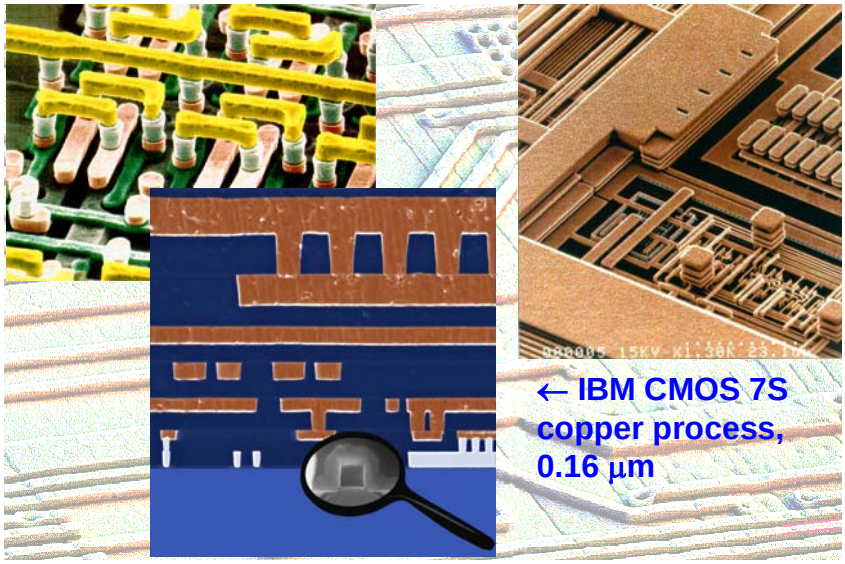


Interconnect



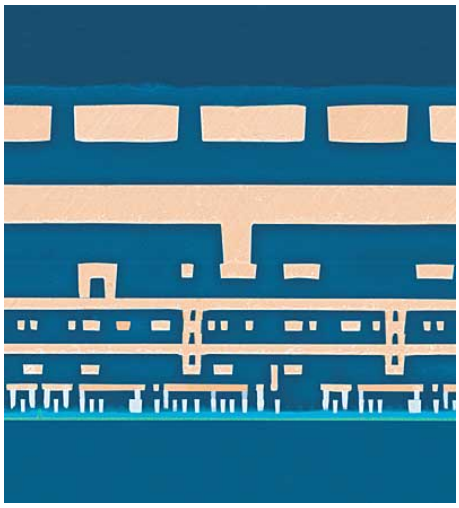
- Wires are not ideal interconnections
- They may have non-negligible capacitance, resistance, inductance
- These are called wire parasitics
- Can dominate performance of chip
- Must be accounted for during design
- Using approximate models
- Detailed post-layout verification also necessary

Wires

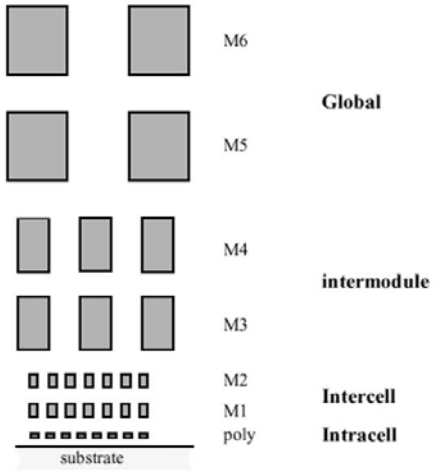


← IBM CMOS 7S copper process, 0.16 µm

Interconnect Hierarchy



Cross-section of IBM 0.13 µ process



Example Interconnect Hierarchy for typical 0.25µ process (Layer Stack)

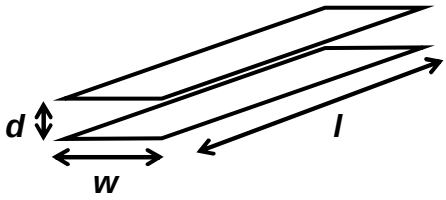
Outline

- **Capacitance**
  Area/perimeter model, coupling
- **Resistance**
  Sheet resistance
- **Interconnect delay**
  Delay metrics, rc delay, Elmore delay

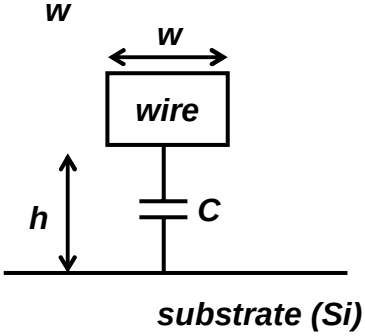
Capacitance

- **Area/perimeter model, coupling**

Wire Capacitance – Parallel Plate



$$C = \frac{\varepsilon_0 \varepsilon_r w l}{d}$$

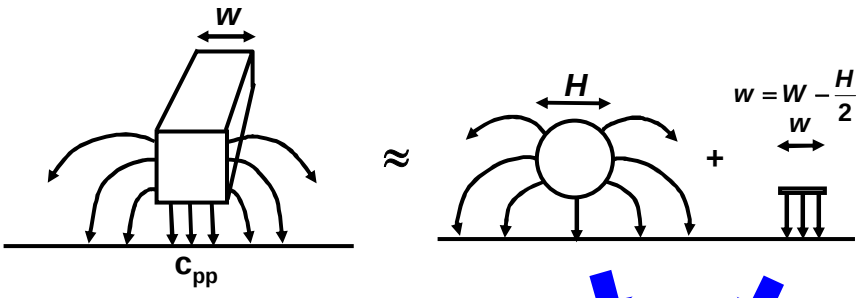


$$\frac{C}{l} = \varepsilon_0 \varepsilon_r \frac{w}{h}$$

ε_0 = 8.85 pF/m

ε_r = 3.9 (SiO_2)

Wire Capacitance – Fringing Fields



$$c_{wire} = c_{fringe} + c_{pp} = \frac{2\pi\varepsilon_{di}}{\log(t_{di}/H)} + \frac{w\varepsilon_{di}}{t_{di}}$$

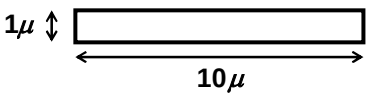
- Works reasonably well in practice
- Not directly applicable for interconnects with varying widths

Wire Capacitance – Area/Perimeter Model

- C_a was calculated with modified wire width
- Formula inapplicable for irregular interconnects (non-constant width)

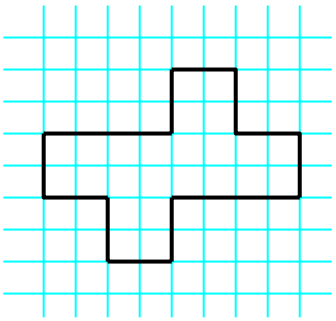
- More practical approximation

$C = A \times C_a + P \times C_p$	*units*	*alternative*
A = Area	m^2	μm^2
C_a = Area capacitance	F / m^2	$aF / \mu m^2$
P = Perimeter	m	μm
C_p = Perimeter capacitance	F / m	$aF / \mu m$



$C = \square \times C_a + \square \times C_p$

Area / Perimeter Capacitance Model

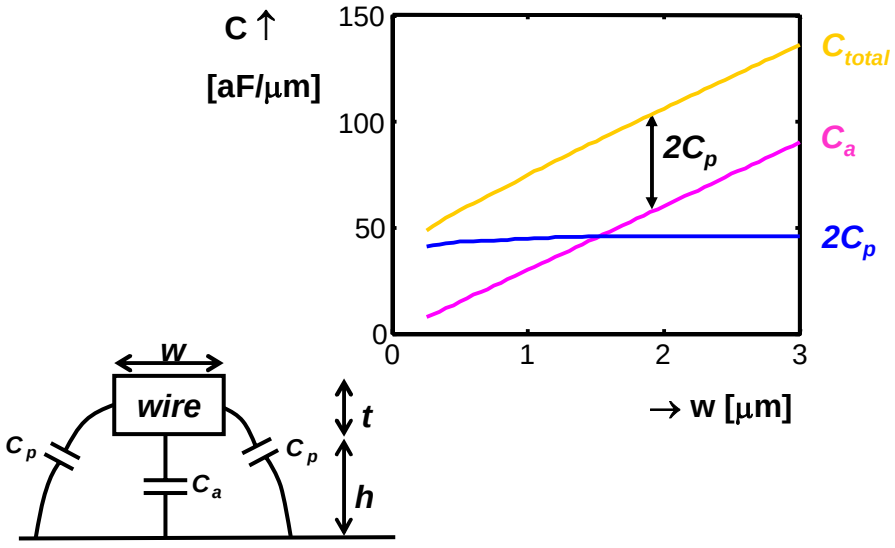


$C = \square \times C_a + \square \times C_p$

- **Question**: How to derive C_a, C_p ?

  How accurate is this model?

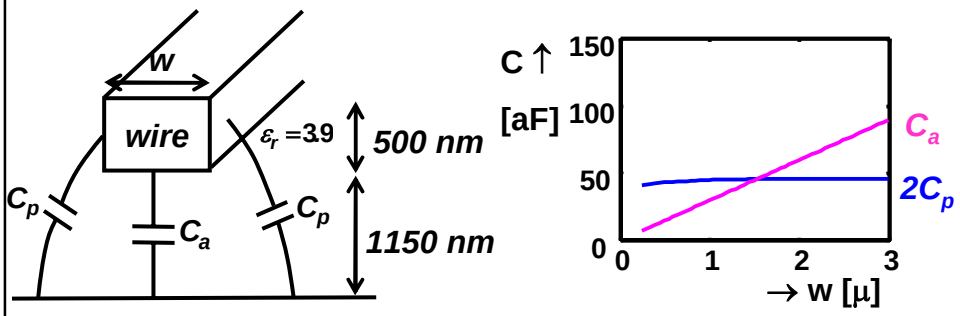
Derivation of C_a, C_p



Derivation of C_a, C_p

- 2D (cross-section) numerical computation (or measurement)
- C_l : total wire capacitance per unit length
- $C_a = \varepsilon_0 \varepsilon_r / h$
- $C_p = 1/2 (C_l - C_a \times w)$
- C_p depends on t, h ➔ determined by technology, layer
- C_p would depend slightly on w (see previous graph), this dependence is often ignored in practice

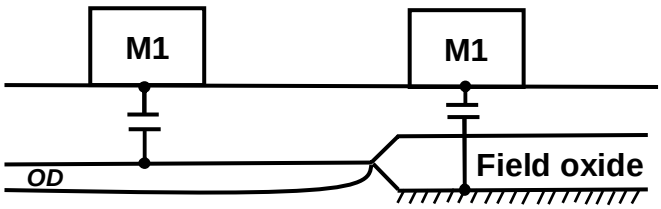
Area / Perimeter Capacitance



- C_p dominates for many wires
- C_p may not be neglected
- A constant value for C_p is usually a good approximation
- C_p is sometimes called C_f (fringe capacitance)

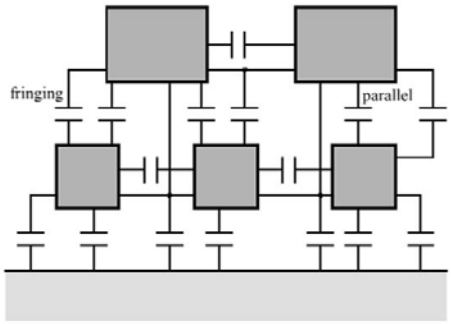
Interconnect Capacitance Design data

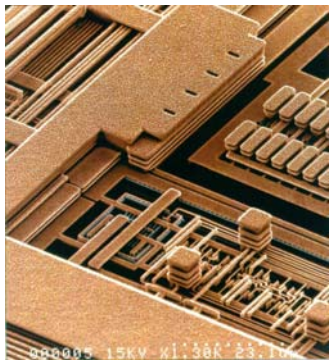
- See Table 4.2 (or inside backside cover)
- Example: M1 over Field vs. M1 over Active (hypothetical)



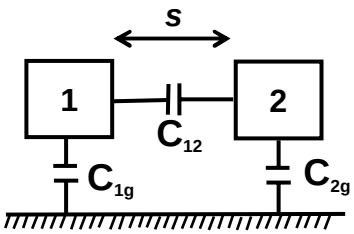
M1 over Active	M1 over Field	Unit
$C_a = 41$	$C_a = 30$	$aF/\mu m^2$
$C_p = 47$	$C_p = 40$	$aF/\mu m$

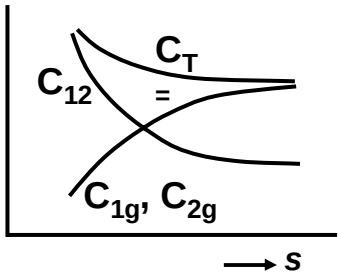
Coupling Capacitances





Coupling Capacitances (2)

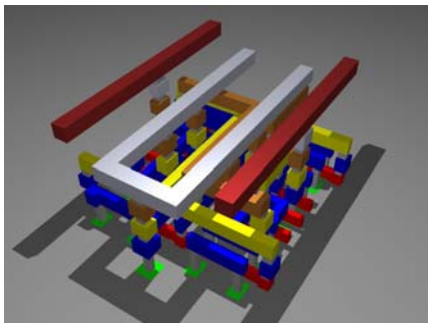




- $C_T = C_{1g} + C_{12} = C_{2g} + C_{12}$ fairly constant
- Use that as first order model
- Interconnect capacitance design data (e.g. Table 4.3)

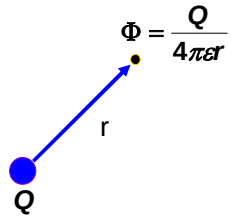
Field Solvers

- Numerical, physics based technique for accurately computing capacitances
- Based on 3D geometry
- Finite element method
- Finite difference method
- Boundary element method



Solve huge sets of equations, fast

BEM for Capacitance Computation



Electrostatic potential due to point charge

$$\Phi(p) = \int_{\text{all charge}} G(p,q)\xi(q)dq$$

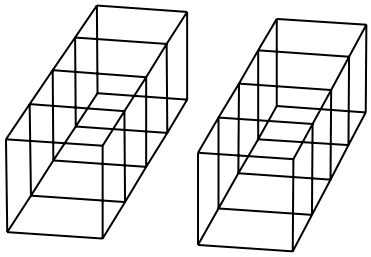
Electrostatic potential due to charge distribution

Green's function G(p,q):
potential at a point in space (x_p,y_p,z_p) due to unit point charge at other point (x_q,y_q,z_q).

Boundary Element Method, Discretization

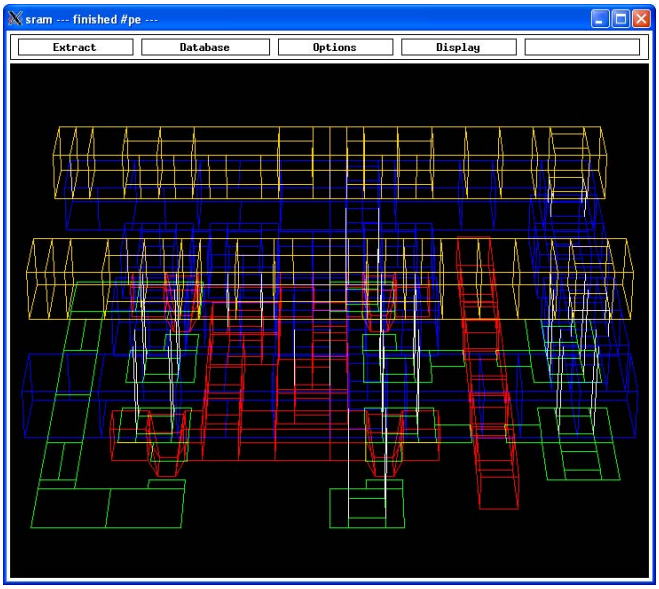
$$Q = F^T G^{-1} F \Phi$$

$$C_S = F^T G^{-1} F$$

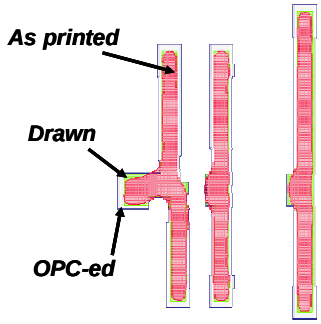


- Q: vector of conductor charges
- Φ: vector of conductor potentials
- Q: vector of panel (discretization element) charges
- ϕ: vector of panel potentials
- F: incidence matrix relating panels to conductors ($Q = F^T q$ and $\phi = F\Phi$)
- G_{ij}: potential of panel i due to charge at panel j
- C_S short-circuit capacitance matrix to be obtained

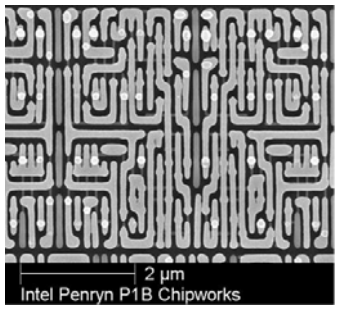
Demo

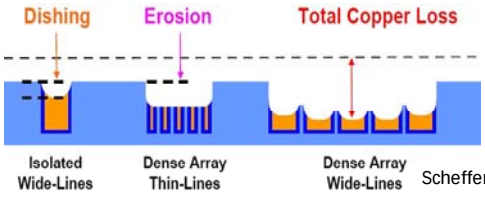


Manufacturing Variability – Field Solving needs Next Level....



Ren, 2006





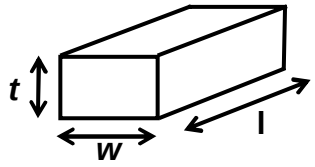
Scheffer, 2006

- Manufactured dimensions ≠ drawn dimensions
- Both **systematic** and **stochastic** variations
- Need for inclusion in **verification flow**

Resistance

- **Sheet resistance**

Wire Resistance



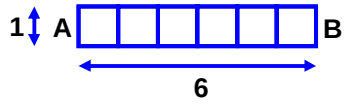
- Proportional to l
- Inversely proportional to w and t (cross-sectional area)
- Proportional to ρ: specific resistance, material property [Ωm]
- R = ρl/wt
- Aluminum: $\rho = 2.7 \times 10^{-8}$ Ωm
  Copper: $\rho = 1.7 \times 10^{-8}$ Ωm

Sheet Resistance

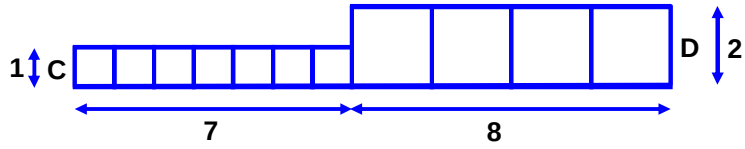
- R = ρl/wt
- t, ρ constant for layer, technology
- R = R l/w
- R : sheet resistance [Ω/]
  resistance of a square piece of interconnect
  other symbol: R_s
- Interconnect resistance design data e.g. Table 4.5 (or inside back-cover)

Interconnect Resistance

- Assume $R_{\square} = 40\ \Omega$
- Estimate the resistance between A and B in the wire below.



$R_{AB} \approx 6 \times 40 = 240\ \Omega$



$R_{CD} \approx 11 \times 40 = 440\ \Omega$

Engineering is about making controlled approximations to something that is too complicated to compute exactly, while ensuring that the approximate answer still leads to a working (functional, safe, …) system

Exercise

An interconnect line is made from a material that has a resistivity of $\rho = 4\ \mu\Omega$-cm. The interconnect is 1200 Å thick, where 1 Angstrom (Å) is 10^{-10} m. The line has a width of 0.6 μm.

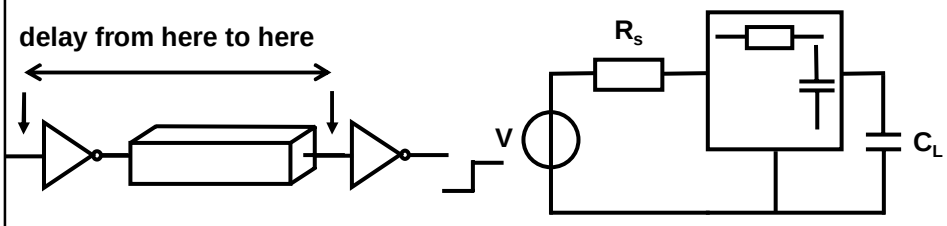
a) Calculate the sheet resistance $R_{\square}$ of the line.

b) Find the line resistance for a line that is 125 μm long.

Interconnect delay

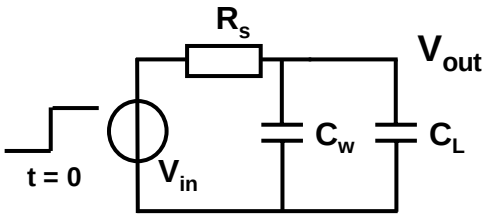
- **Delay metrics, rc delay, Elmore delay**

Delay



- **Model driver as linearized Thevenin source V, R_s, assume step input**
- **Model load as C_L**
- **Wire is an RC network (two-port)**

Wire Capacitance



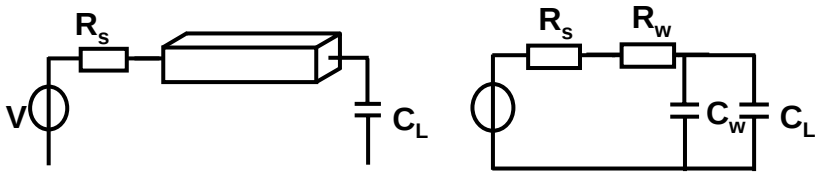
Assume wire behaves purely capacitive

$$(C_w + C_L)\frac{dV_{out}}{dt} + \frac{V_{out} - V_{in}}{R_s} = 0$$

$$V_{out} = V_{in} - \tau\frac{dV_{out}}{dt} \qquad \tau = R_s(C_w + C_L)$$

$$V_{out} = \left(1 - e^{-t/\tau}\right)V_{in}$$

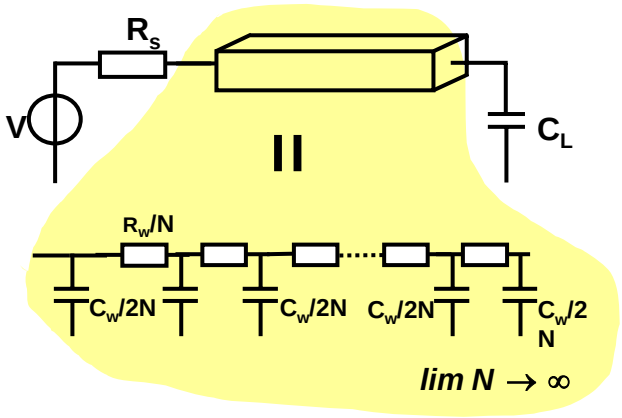
Wire Resistance



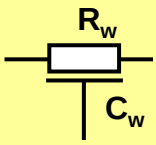
Now, assume wire capacitance *and resistance*

- $\tau = (R_s + R_w)(C_w + C_L)$
- **Not a good model**
- **R and C are distributed along the wire**

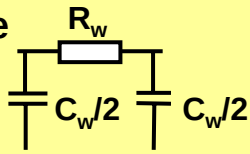
Uniform RC Line



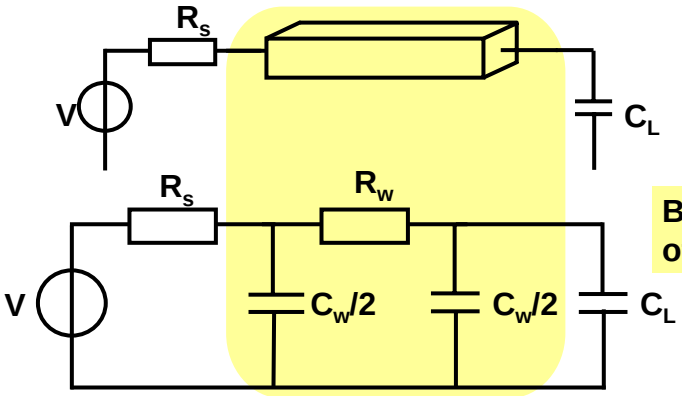
Symbol



[Always] use first order model



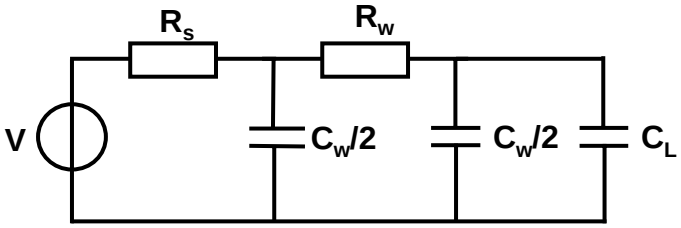
RC Delay (Uniform RC Line)



Basic π-model of wire

- **Not 1 τ**
- **Elmore delay: equivalent effective τ**

Equivalent Time Constant



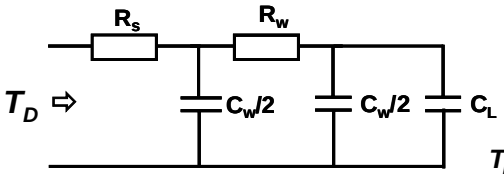
- Multiple time-constants
- Need for one "equivalent" number
- Offered by ***Elmore Delay*** T_D

$$T_D = R_S C_W/2 + (R_S + R_W)(C_W/2 + C_L)$$

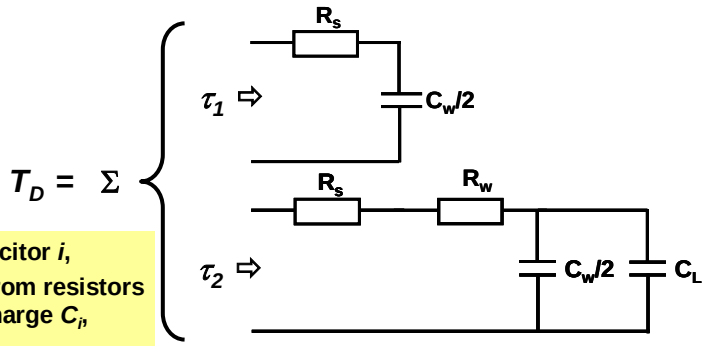
How to compute Elmore Delay?

- Effective "one number" model for delay

Equivalent Time Constant

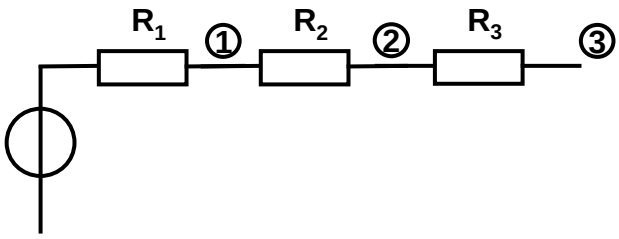


$$T_D = R_S C_W/2 + (R_S + R_W)(C_W/2 + C_L)$$



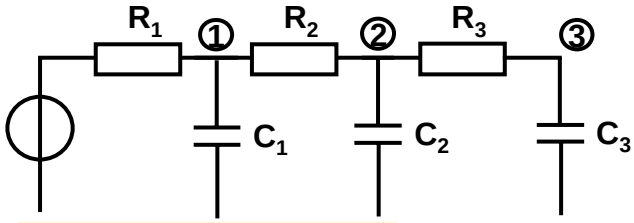
For each capacitor *i*,
Determine τ_i from resistors that (dis)charge C_i,
Sum these τ_i

Shared Path Resistance



- Define: R_{ii} = Resistance from node i to input
- Example: $R_{11} = R_1 \quad R_{22} = R_1 + R_2 \quad R_{33} = R_1 + R_2 + R_3$
- Define: R_{ik} = Shared path resistance to input for node i and k
- $R_{12} = R_1 \quad R_{13} = R_1 \quad R_{23} =$ ☐

Elmore Delay for RC ladders



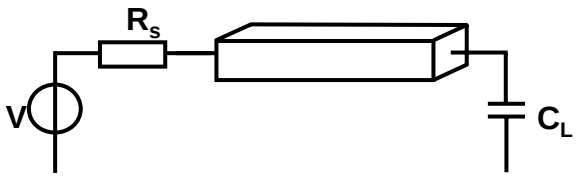
- Define: $T_{Di} = \sum_{k=1}^{N} R_{ik} C_k$

Elmore Delay

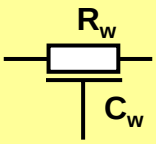
We will use $0.69 \times T_{di}$ as approximation of wire delay ($t_{50\%}$)

- $T_{D1} = R_{11}C_1 + R_{12}C_2 + R_{13}C_3 =$
  $= R_1C_1 + R_1C_2 + R_1C_3$
  $T_{D_3} = R_{31}C_1 + R_{32}C_2 + R_{33}C_3 =$
  $= R_1C_1 + (R_1 + R_2)C_2 + (R_1 + R_2 + R_3)C_3$
- $T_{D_2} =$ ☐

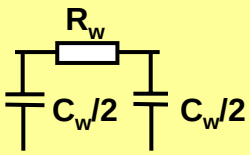
Elmore Delay for Distributed RC Lines



Symbol

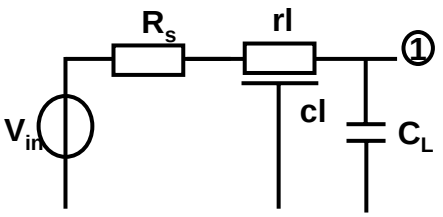


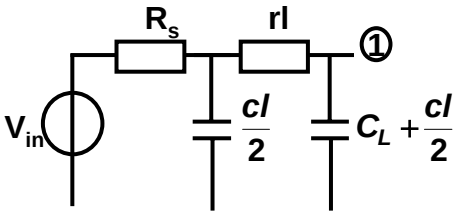
Symmetric π-model



- **Theorem:** For Elmore Delay calculations, each uniform distributed RC section is equivalent to a symmetric π-model

Canonical Driver-Line-Load





- $T_{D_1} = R_s \frac{cl}{2} + (R_s + rl)\left(C_L + \frac{cl}{2}\right)$

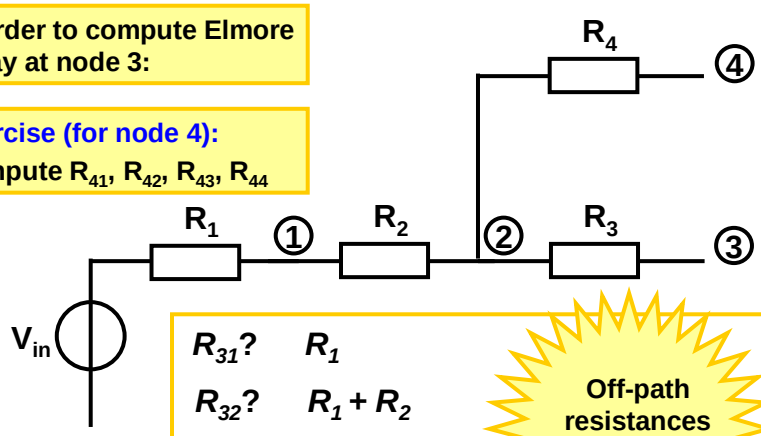
$$= R_s(cl + C_L) + rlC_L + \frac{1}{2}rcl^2$$

- **Delay quadratic in line length**

Shared Path Resistance for Tree Structures

In order to compute Elmore Delay at node 3:

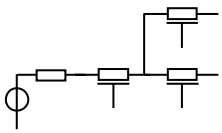
Exercise (for node 4):
Compute R_{41}, R_{42}, R_{43}, R_{44}



R_{31}?	R_1
R_{32}?	$R_1 + R_2$
R_{33}?	$R_1 + R_2 + R_3$
R_{34}?	$R_1 + R_2$

Off-path resistances don't count

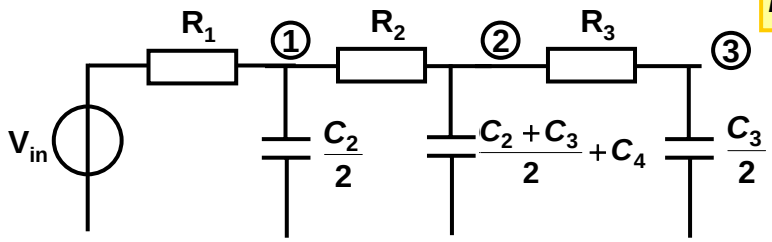
Elmore Delay for Tree Structures



Exercise: Compute T_{D1}, T_{D2}, T_{D3}, T_{D4}

- **Replace RC lines by π-sections**
- **Given observation node i, then only resistances along the path from input to node i can possibly count**
- **Make others zero**
- **Compute as if RC ladder**

T_{D3}?



Summary

- **Capacitance**
  Area/perimeter model, coupling
- **Resistance**
  Sheet resistance
- **Interconnect delay**
  Delay metrics, rc delay, Elmore delay