

Lecture 14 - Digital Circuits (III)

CMOS

April 3, 2001

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Reading assignment:

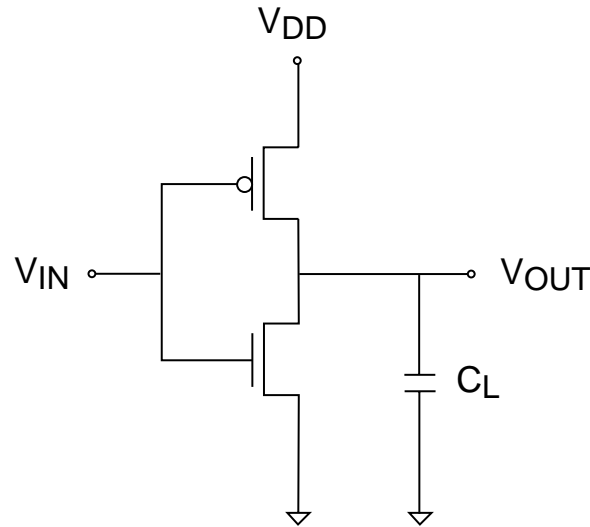
Howe and Sodini, Ch. 5, §5.4

Key questions

- How does CMOS work?
- What is special about CMOS as a logic technology?
- What are the key design parameters of a CMOS inverter?
- How can one estimate the propagation delay of a CMOS inverter?

1. Complementary MOS (CMOS) Inverter

Circuit schematic:



Basic operation:

- $V_{IN} = 0 \Rightarrow V_{OUT} = V_{DD}$

$$V_{GSn} = 0 < V_{Tn} \Rightarrow \text{NMOS OFF}$$

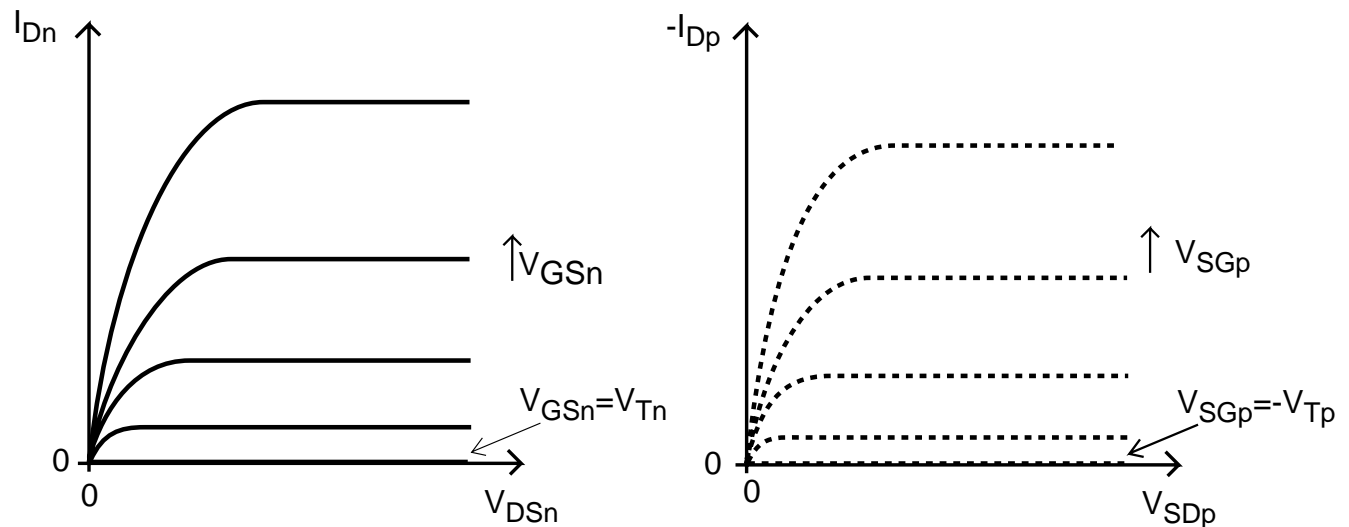
$$V_{SGp} = V_{DD} > -V_{Tp} \Rightarrow \text{PMOS ON}$$

- $V_{IN} = V_{DD} \Rightarrow V_{OUT} = 0$

$$V_{GSn} = V_{DD} > V_{Tn} \Rightarrow \text{NMOS ON}$$

$$V_{SGp} = 0 < -V_{Tp} \Rightarrow \text{PMOS OFF}$$

Output characteristics of both transistors:



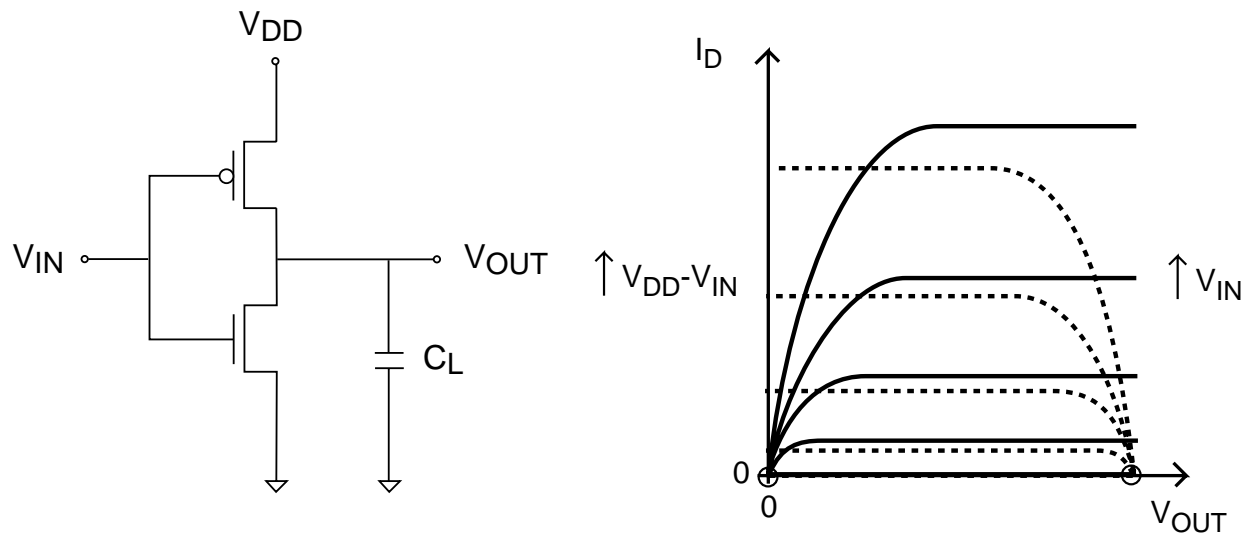
Note:

$$V_{IN} = V_{GSn} = V_{DD} - V_{SGp} \Rightarrow V_{SGp} = V_{DD} - V_{IN}$$

$$V_{OUT} = V_{DSn} = V_{DD} - V_{SDp} \Rightarrow V_{SDp} = V_{DD} - V_{OUT}$$

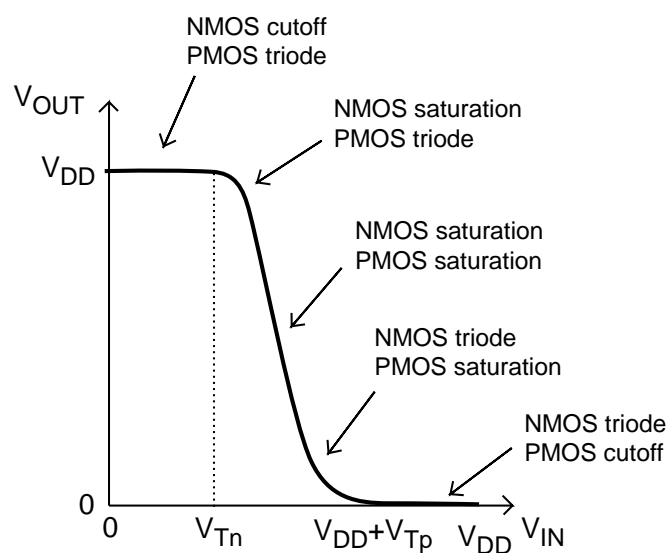
$$I_{Dn} = -I_{Dp}$$

Combine into single diagram of I_D vs. V_{OUT} with V_{IN} as parameter.



★ *no current while idling in any logic state.*

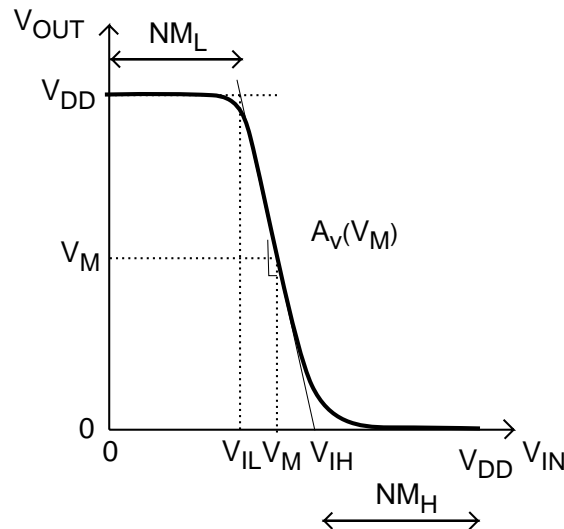
Transfer function:



★ *"rail-to-rail" logic: logic levels are 0 and V_{DD}*

★ *high $|A_v|$ around logic threshold \Rightarrow good noise margins*

2. CMOS inverter: noise margins



- Calculate V_M
- Calculate $A_v(V_M)$
- Calculate NM_L and NM_H

□ **Calculate** V_M ($V_M = V_{IN} = V_{OUT}$)

At V_M both transistors saturated:

$$I_{Dn} = \frac{1}{2} \frac{W_n}{L_n} \mu_n C_{ox} (V_M - V_{Tn})^2$$

$$-I_{Dp} = \frac{1}{2} \frac{W_p}{L_p} \mu_p C_{ox} (V_{DD} - V_M + V_{Tp})^2$$

Define:

$$k_n = \frac{W_n}{L_n} \mu_n C_{ox}, \quad k_p = \frac{W_p}{L_p} \mu_p C_{ox}$$

Since:

$$I_{Dn} = -I_{Dp}$$

Then:

$$\frac{1}{2}k_n(V_M - V_{Tn})^2 = \frac{1}{2}k_p(V_{DD} - V_M + V_{Tp})^2$$

Solve for V_M :

$$V_M = \frac{V_{Tn} + \sqrt{\frac{k_p}{k_n}}(V_{DD} + V_{Tp})}{1 + \sqrt{\frac{k_p}{k_n}}}$$

Usually, V_{Tn} and V_{Tp} fixed and $V_{Tn} = -V_{Tp}$

$\Rightarrow V_M$ engineered through k_p/k_n ratio

- Symmetric case: $k_n = k_p$

$$V_M = \frac{V_{DD}}{2}$$

This implies:

$$\frac{k_p}{k_n} = 1 = \frac{\frac{W_p}{L_p} \mu_p C_{ox}}{\frac{W_n}{L_n} \mu_n C_{ox}} \simeq \frac{\frac{W_p}{L_p} \mu_p}{\frac{W_n}{L_n} 2 \mu_p} \Rightarrow \frac{W_p}{L_p} \simeq 2 \frac{W_n}{L_n}$$

Since usually $L_p \simeq L_n \Rightarrow W_p \simeq 2W_n$.

- Asymmetric case: $k_n \gg k_p$, or $\frac{W_n}{L_n} \gg \frac{W_p}{L_p}$

$$V_M \simeq V_{Tn}$$

NMOS turns on as soon as V_{IN} goes above V_{Tn} .

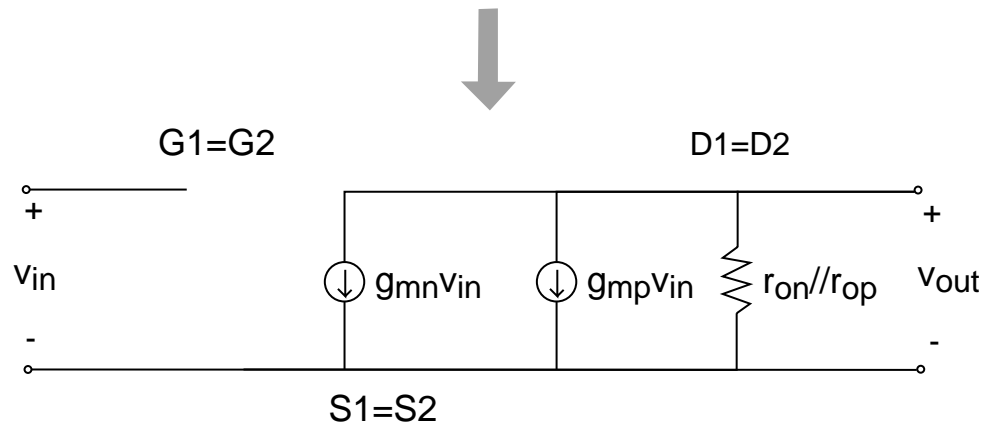
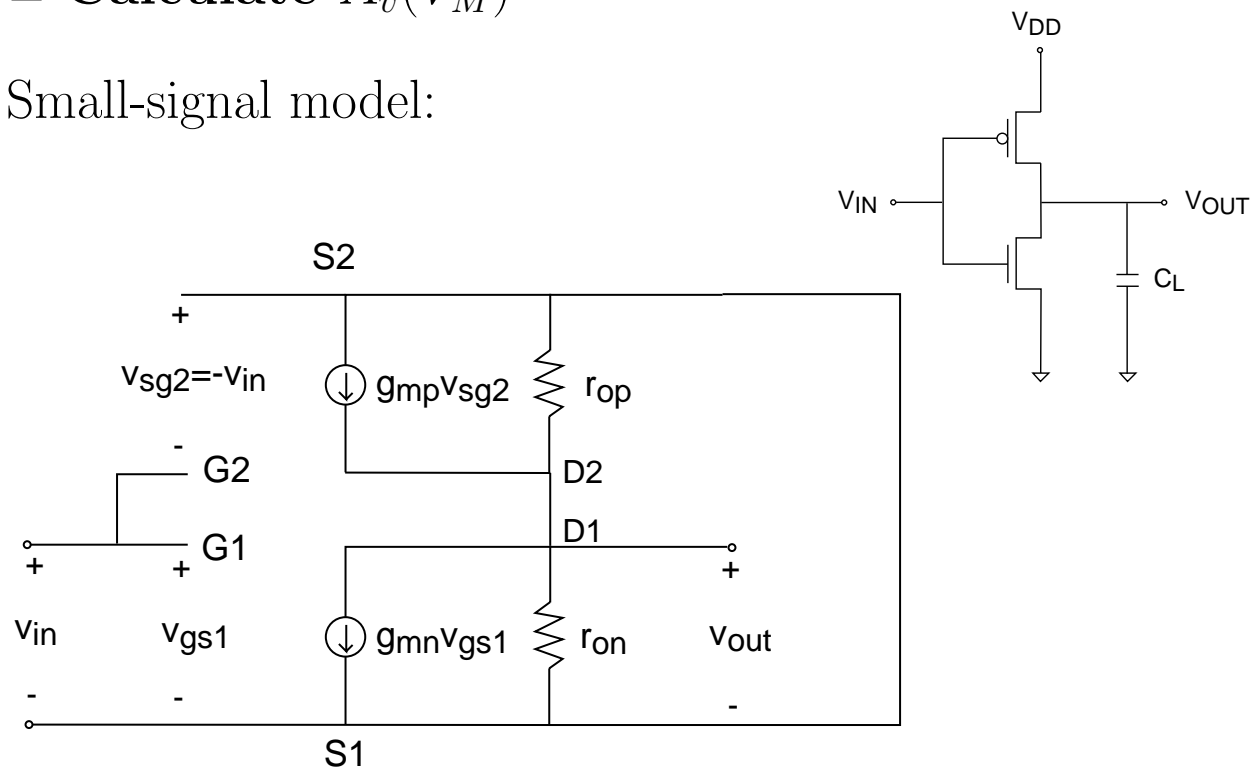
- Asymmetric case: $k_n \ll k_p$, or $\frac{W_n}{L_n} \ll \frac{W_p}{L_p}$

$$V_M \simeq V_{DD} + V_{Tp}$$

PMOS turns on as soon as V_{IN} goes below $V_{DD} + V_{Tp}$.

□ Calculate $A_v(V_M)$

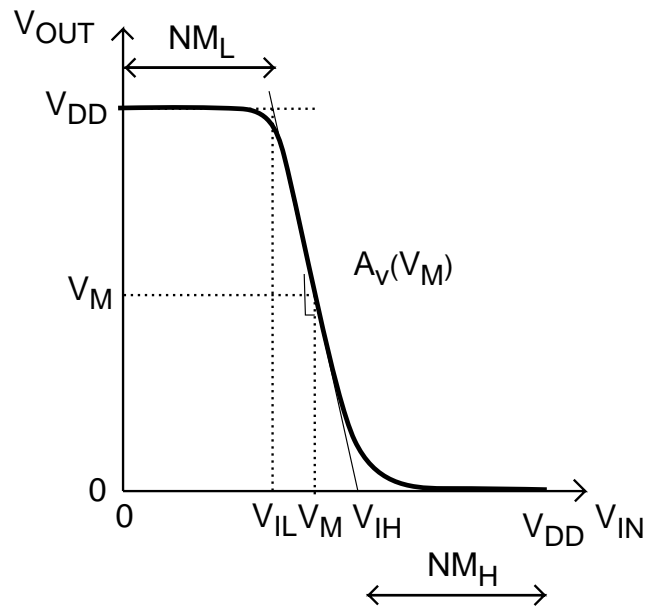
Small-signal model:



$$A_v = -(g_{mn} + g_{mp})(r_{on} // r_{op})$$

This can be rather large.

□ Noise margins



- Noise-margin-low:

$$V_{IL} = V_M - \frac{V_{DD} - V_M}{|A_v|}$$

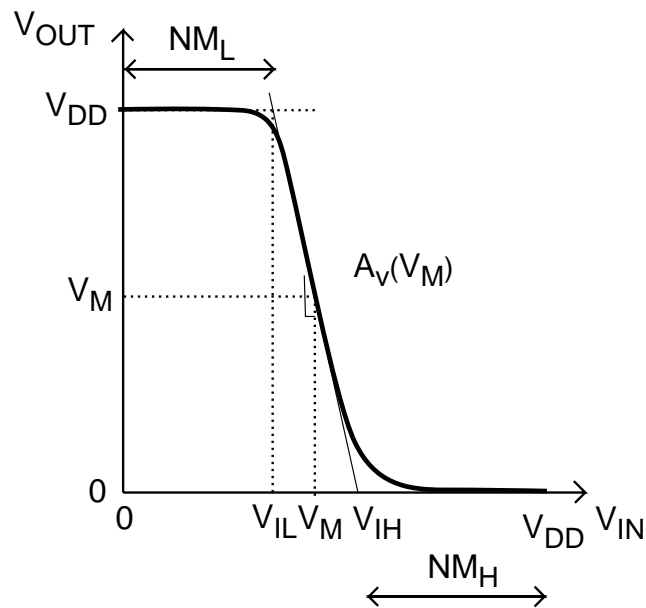
Therefore:

$$NM_L = V_{IL} - V_{OL} = V_{IL} = V_M - \frac{V_{DD} - V_M}{|A_v|}$$

In the limit of $|A_v| \rightarrow \infty$:

$$NM_L \rightarrow V_M$$

- Noise-margin-high:



$$V_{IH} = V_M \left(1 + \frac{1}{|A_v|} \right)$$

and

$$NM_H = V_{OH} - V_{IH} = V_{DD} - V_M \left(1 + \frac{1}{|A_v|} \right)$$

In the limit of $|A_v| \rightarrow \infty$:

$$NM_H \rightarrow V_{DD} - V_M$$

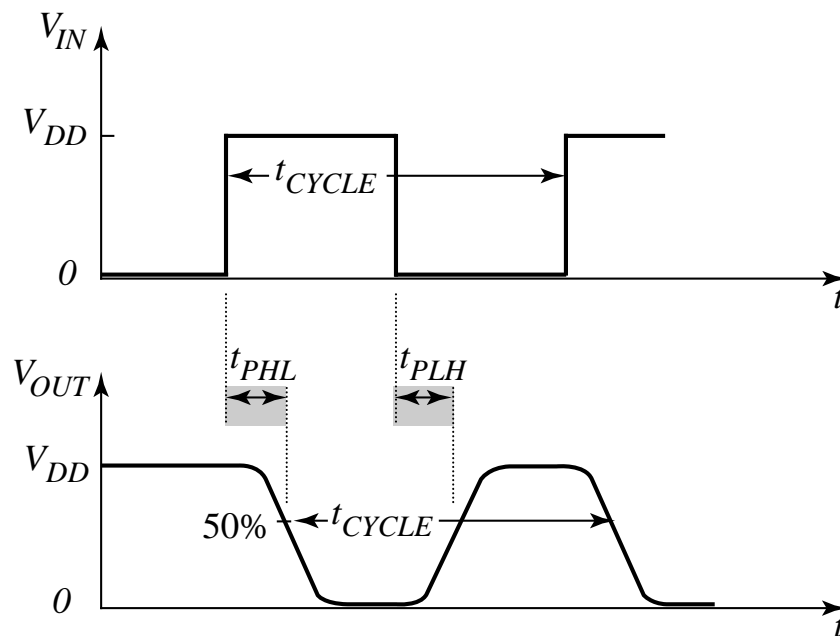
3. CMOS inverter: propagation delay

Inverter propagation delay: time delay between input and output signals; key figure of merit of logic speed.

Typical propagation delays: $< 1 \text{ ns}$.

Complex logic system has 20-50 propagation delays per clock cycle.

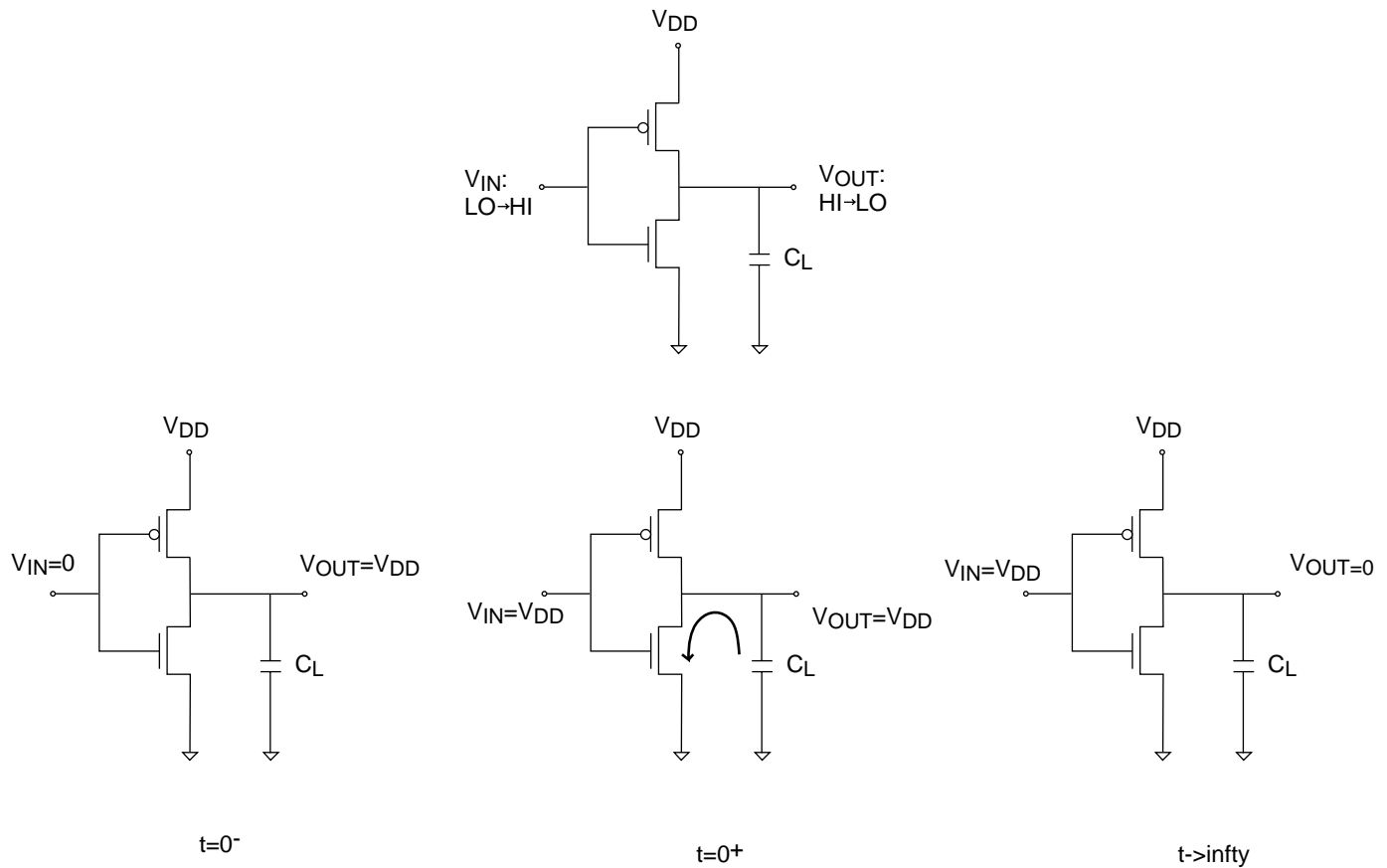
Estimation of t_p : use square-wave at input



Average propagation delay:

$$t_p = \frac{1}{2}(t_{PHL} + t_{PLH})$$

□ Propagation delay high-to-low:



During early phases of discharge, NMOS is saturated and PMOS is cut-off.

Time to discharge *half* of C_L :

$$t_{PHL} \simeq \frac{\frac{1}{2} \text{charge of } C_L @ t = 0^-}{\text{discharge current}}$$

Charge in C_L at $t = 0^-$:

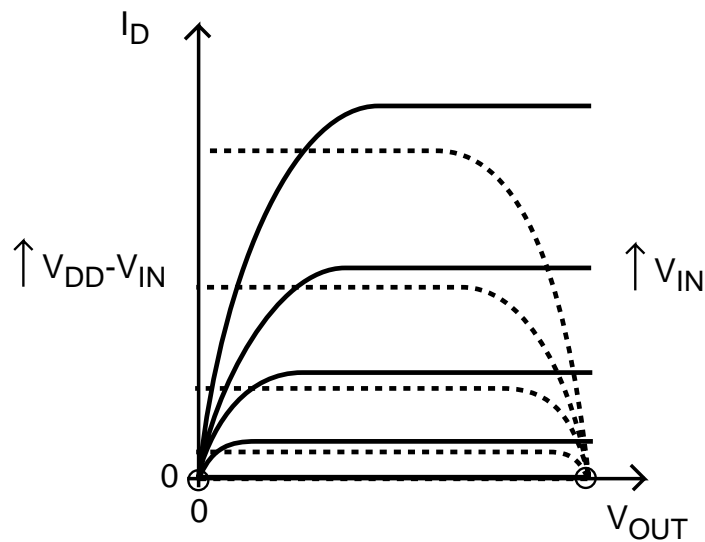
$$Q_L(t = 0^-) = C_L V_{DD}$$

Discharge current (NMOS in saturation):

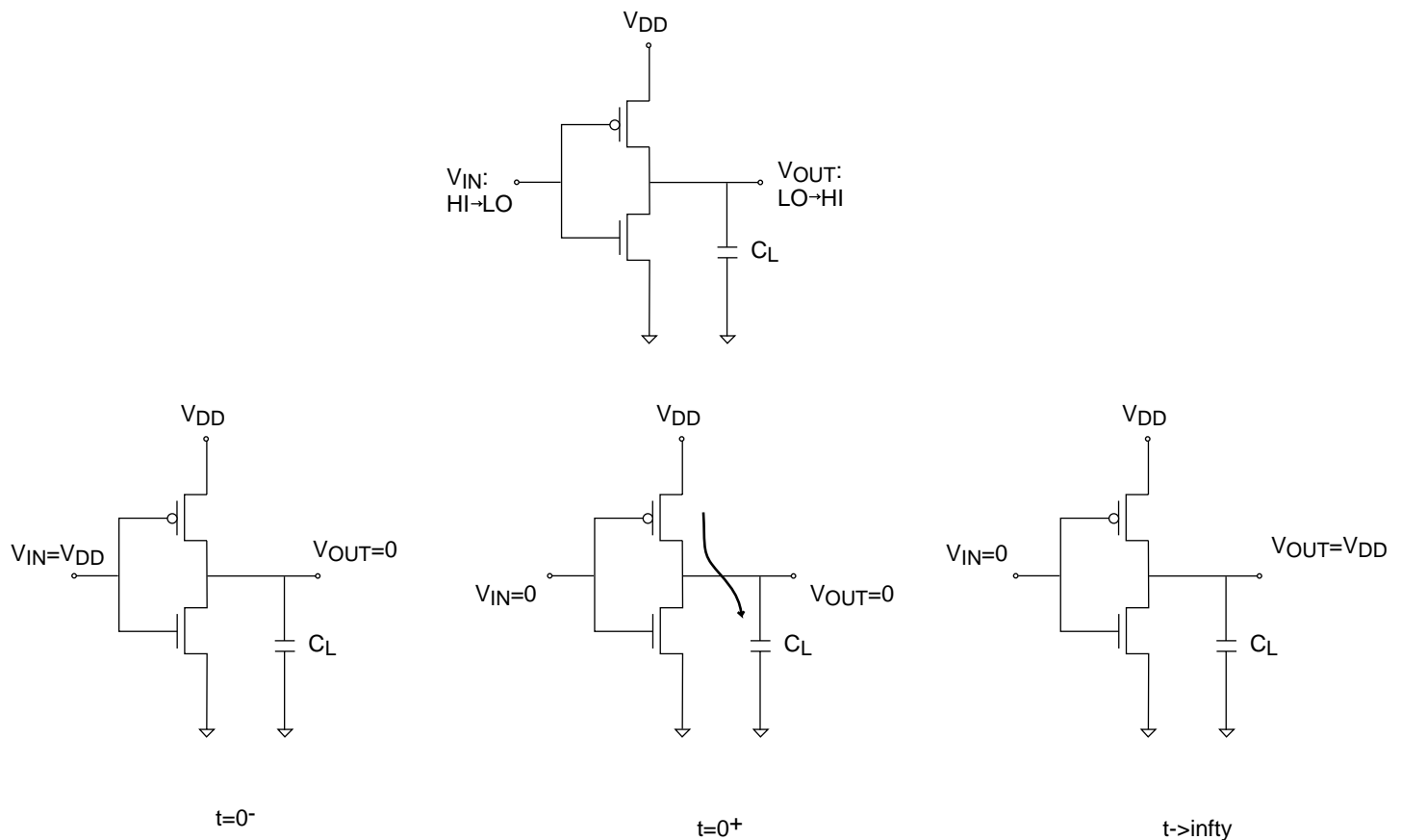
$$I_{Dn} = \frac{W_n}{2L_n} \mu_n C_{ox} (V_{DD} - V_{Tn})^2$$

Then:

$$t_{PHL} \simeq \frac{C_L V_{DD}}{\frac{W_n}{L_n} \mu_n C_{ox} (V_{DD} - V_{Tn})^2}$$



□ Propagation delay low-to-high:



During early phases of charge, PMOS is saturated and NMOS is cut-off.

Time to charge *half* of C_L :

$$t_{PLH} \simeq \frac{\frac{1}{2} \text{charge of } C_L @ t = \infty}{\text{charge current}}$$

Charge in C_L at $t = \infty$:

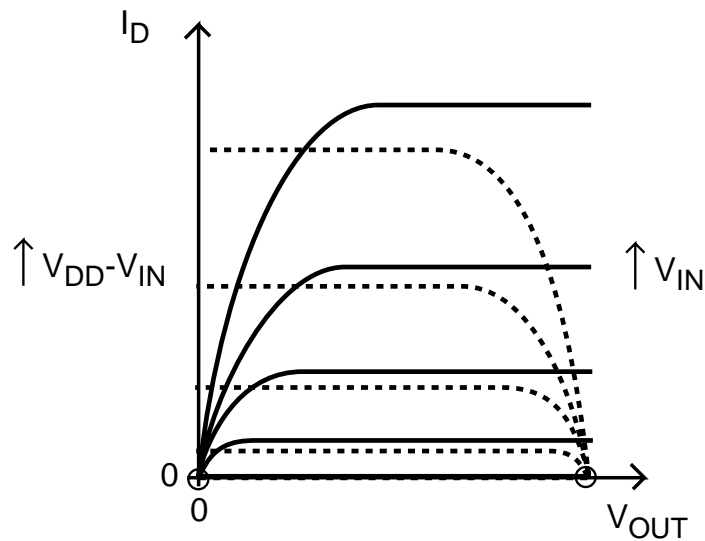
$$Q_L(t = \infty) = C_L V_{DD}$$

Charge current (PMOS in saturation):

$$-I_{Dp} = \frac{W_p}{2L_p} \mu_p C_{ox} (V_{DD} + V_{Tp})^2$$

Then:

$$t_{PLH} \simeq \frac{C_L V_{DD}}{\frac{W_p}{L_p} \mu_p C_{ox} (V_{DD} + V_{Tp})^2}$$



Key dependencies of propagation delays:

- $V_{DD} \uparrow \Rightarrow t_p \downarrow$.

Reason: $V_{DD} \uparrow \Rightarrow Q(C_L) \uparrow$, but also $I_D \uparrow \uparrow$

Trade-off: $V_{DD} \uparrow$, more power usage.

- $L \downarrow \Rightarrow t_p \downarrow$

Reason: $L \downarrow \Rightarrow I_D \uparrow$

Trade-off: manufacturing costs!

Components of load capacitance C_L :

- *following logic gates*: must add capacitance presented by each gate of every transistor the output is connected to
- *interconnect wire* that connects output to input of following logic gates
- *own drain-to-body capacitances*

$$C_L = C_G + C_{wire} + C_{DBn} + C_{DBp}$$

See details in Howe & Sodini §5.4.3

Key conclusions

Key features of CMOS inverter:

- no current while idling in any logic state
- "rail-to-rail" logic: logic levels are 0 and V_{DD}
- high $|A_v|$ around logic threshold \Rightarrow good noise margins

CMOS inverter logic threshold and noise margins engineered through W_n/L_n and W_p/L_p .

Key dependences of propagation delay:

- $V_{DD} \uparrow \Rightarrow t_p \downarrow$
- $L \downarrow \Rightarrow t_p \downarrow$