

## Remote sensing across the spectrum

$\gamma$ -rays	X-rays	UV	Visible	IR	Microwave	Radio
Wavelength: 0.01 nm	30 nm	400 nm	700 nm	1000 $\mu$ m	100 mm	

- Remote sensing covers the EM spectrum
  - passive sensing** – detection of what is naturally emitted
    - main source of emission is blackbody radiation (from ground or Sun)
    - on planets/moons without atmosphere  $\gamma$ -rays can be detected in orbit from radioactivity in rocks
  - active sensing** involves generation of signal by satellite (or plane) and observation of reflected signal

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## Distance detection



Meteorological radar  
[http://www.bom.gov.au/reguser/by\\_prod/radar/radarexp.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/reguser/by_prod/radar/radarexp.shtml)



<http://badc.nerc.ac.uk/graphics/logos/small.dish.gif>

- Pulse sent: takes time  $t$  to return
- Distance away of reflection is  $d = v \times t/2$ 
  - $v$  is speed of propagation of pulse  $\approx c$ 
    - e.g.  $t = 20 \mu\text{s}$ ,  $d = 3 \times 10^8 \times 20 \times 10^{-6} / 2 = 3 \times 10^3 \text{ m} \approx 3 \text{ km}$
- If the object is moving with speed  $s$  away from the radar, the return frequency,  $f'$ , is less than the sending frequency,  $f$ 
  - $f' = f(1-s/v)$
  - this effect is called the Doppler shift
    - e.g. if  $f = 10 \text{ GHz}$  and  $f - f' = 1 \text{ kHz}$ , then  $s = 30 \text{ ms}^{-1}$

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## Microwaves

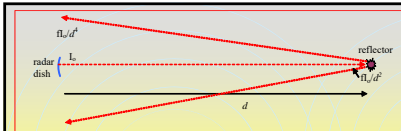
Common microwave band designations

Band	Frequencies (GHz)
S	2 – 4
C	4 – 8
X	8 – 12
K <sub>u</sub>	12 – 18
K	18 – 27
Ka	27 – 40
Q	36 – 46
V	46–56
W	56–100

- Wavelength: 1 mm – 100 mm
  - corresponding frequencies 3 GHz – 300 GHz
    - some people take 1 GHz to 100 GHz
  - spectrum divided into 'bands' by convention
    - unfortunately, not everyone agrees on band boundaries
  - (microwave cookers:  $\sim 2 \rightarrow 3 \text{ GHz}$ , in S Band)

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## Returning signal falls off as $1/d^4$

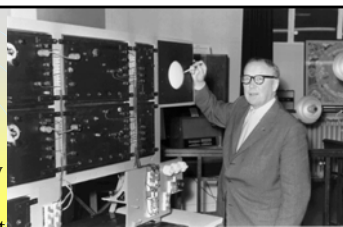


- Signal radiated with intensity  $I_0$  at unit distance
- Signal reaching a particular object  $I = I_0/d^2$
- Signal re-radiated =  $f I_0/d^2$ ,  $f$  is the fraction reflected
- Signal received back at transmitter =  $(f I_0/d^2)/d^2 = f I_0/d^4$ 
  - e.g. how much is the signal reduced when the reflecting object is 3 km away instead of 1 km?
    - answer: the signal is reduced to  $1/3^4 = 1/81 = 0.0124$
  - A sideways looking radar detects similar objects at distances from 10 km to 100 km. How much weaker are the signals from 100 km compared with those from 10 km?
    - answer: weaker by a factor of  $(100/10)^4 = 10^4$

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## Radar

- Radio detection and ranging**
- Developed for military purposes by 'famous NE man' Watson-Watt from 1935



'Father of Radar': Sir Robert Watson-Watt (1892 – 1973)  
Courtesy: <http://www.wdc.rl.ac.uk/ionosondes/history/watsonwatt.gif>

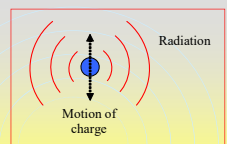
- All early work was aimed at how far away objects were
- Radar is an example of **active** remote sensing



<http://www.linuxgazette.com/issue42/gm/images/radar.jpg>

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## The basis of electromagnetic radiation

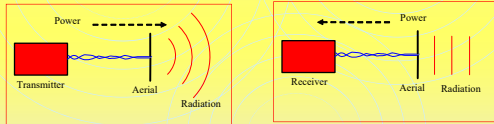


- Electromagnetic radiation is produced by an oscillating electric charge
  - the radiation is at the same frequency as the oscillation
- Since currents are moving charges, to generate a radio wave, you need to generate an oscillating electric current at the desired frequency

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## Transmitting & receiving

- An aerial is a device that converts electrical power to EM radiation and vice-versa

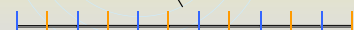
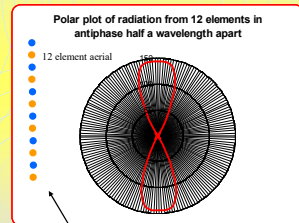


- with a good aerial, there is no reflection of power at the aerial
- a given aerial is as good at receiving as it is at transmitting

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## Many elements improve an aerial's directionality

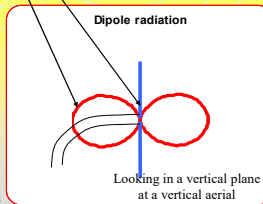
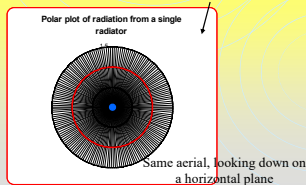
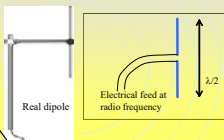
- Calculations here are for a 12-element array
- Such an aerial is called a **phased array**



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- Efficient aerials are at least half-a-wavelength ( $\lambda/2$ ) long
- Consider a 'half-wave dipole'
- In plane containing the aerial
  - no radiation parallel to aerial
  - maximum radiation  $\perp$  aerial
- In plane  $\perp$  to aerial

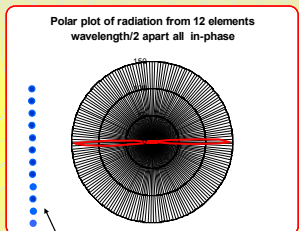
## Aerial considerations



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## Changing the phase of a phased array

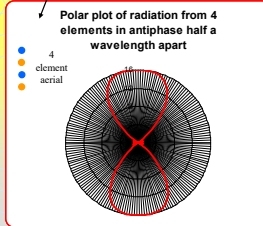
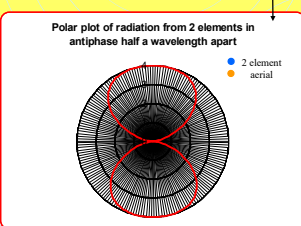
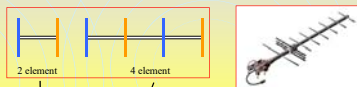
- In the plot on the right, all the elements are in-phase
  - the direction of maximum transmission has changed by  $90^\circ$
  - making less drastic changes enables the directional response of the aerial to be changed



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## Making the aerial more directional

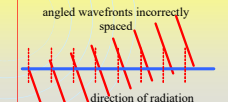
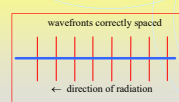
- Adding more elements side by side gives a vertical aerial directionality in a horizontal plane



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## Yagis and parasitic elements

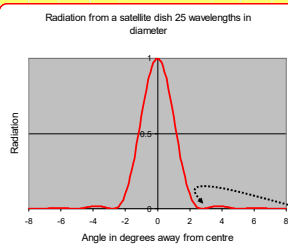
- Receiving aerials like this are called **yagis**
  - they usually have one signal element and the rest are *parasitic* elements that act in sympathy
  - the parasitic elements re-radiate so that they re-inforce the signal at the active element
  - this does not happen for reception of angled waves



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## Parabolic reflectors

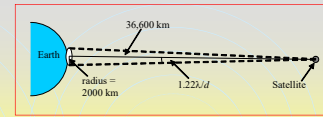
- Microwaves have a sufficiently small wavelength that they usually use parabolic or spherical reflectors fed at the focal point



- If the signal falls by 50%  $1.5^\circ$  away from the axis of the dish, how accurately must the dish be mounted to keep the signal within 50% of the maximum?
  - Answer: within  $1.5^\circ$  of the direction of the satellite
- If the diameter of the dish is  $d$ , then the signal falls to zero at an angle  $\sim 1.22\lambda/d$  (in radians)

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## Satellite coverage works the same way

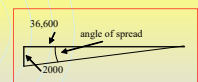


Japanese GMS



- A satellite operator wants their signal to cover an area of radius 2000 km below their geostationary satellite. How many wavelengths diameter does their satellite dish need to be?

- $\tan(\text{angle of spread}) = 2000/36600$
- angle of spread  $= 3.13^\circ = 3.13 \times \pi/180$  radians  $= 0.0546$  radians (also  $= 2000/36600$ )
- therefore  $1.22\lambda/d = 0.0546$ , giving  $d/\lambda = 22.4$ 
  - at 10 GHz this is 67 cm, a manageable size
  - at mobile phone frequency of 1.5 GHz, the size needed would be 4.5 m



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## A really big dish!

- The 76 m wide dish of the Lovell Telescope at Jodrell Bank



<http://www.jb.man.ac.uk/tech/lovell/>

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## A modern communications satellite

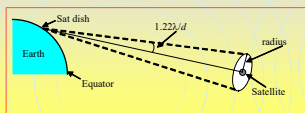
Courtesy: EADS Astrium



- Inmarsat-4
  - a modern communications satellite providing broad-band services across continents
- 3 similar geostationary satellites
  - £200 million each
  - mainly built in the UK by EADS Astrium
  - 7 m high, 6 tonnes weight, 45 m wingspan of solar panels, 13 year anticipated mission life

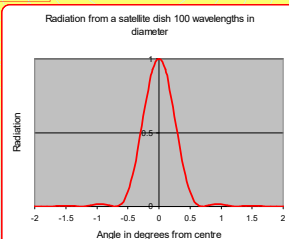
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## The bigger the dish, the more directive it is



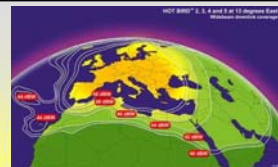
<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/mhx/tour/dish.html>

- A satellite dish is 100 wavelengths in diameter at 10 GHz
  - how big is it?
    - $\lambda = 3$  cm, therefore  $d = 3$  m
  - what radius of circle does it 'see' at the distance of a geostationary satellite 40,000 km away
    - $\lambda/d = 1/100$
    - angular radius is  $1.22 \lambda/d = 0.0122$  rad ( $\approx 0.7^\circ$ )
    - linear radius  $= 40,000 \times 0.0122 = 488$  km



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## Relative performance is measured in dB



Comms satellite coverage from 13° E  
[http://rsat.com/digital\\_platforms.htm](http://rsat.com/digital_platforms.htm)

- dB stands for **decibel**
- dB measures the ratio of two powers  $P_1$  and  $P_2$
- Measure in dB  $= 10 \log_{10}(P_1/P_2)$ 
  - $P_2$  may be a standard power, such as 1W
  - e.g.  $P_1/P_2 = 10$ , dB  $= 10 \times 1 = 10$
  - e.g.  $P_1/P_2 = 100$ , dB  $= 10 \times 2 = 20$ 
    - remember that  $x = 10^{(\log_{10} x)}$
- Illustration shows how signal strengths are plotted

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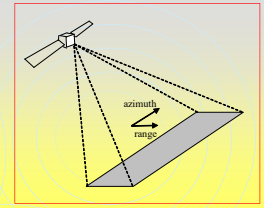
## Sending from GEO and LEO



- Geostationary satellite may be 40,000 km from target area
- Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites variable, say 800 km
- Signals at different distances from transmitter obey **inverse square law**
  - power received  $P \propto 1/r^2$
  - $P_{LEO}/P_{GEO} = r_{GEO}^2/r_{LEO}^2 = 40000^2/800^2 = 50^2 = 2500$
  - therefore dB gain from LEO is = 34 dB

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## Real aperture radar imaging (RAR)



- Single transmitter with swept beam
- Resolution depends on beam width at object distance
- Fixed transmitter with dish
  - $1.22\lambda/d$  gives for a 3 m diameter dish operating at 10 GHz a spread of  $0.7^\circ \approx 122$  m at 10 km
  - OK for rain radar
  - ~10 km at 800 km
- Sweep in 2D achieved by motion of satellite

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## Radar Imaging

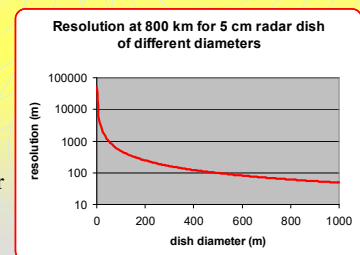
- Black body radiation
  - produced by random motion of atoms (heat)
  - at long wavelengths, energy density  $\propto T/\lambda^4$
  - 10 mm microwaves are  $10^4$  longer in wavelength than waves where maximum emission takes place ( $\sim 1 \mu\text{m}$  for  $T = 300$  K)
  - Earth at microwave frequencies is very, very dark
    - radio receivers tend to be tuned – not broad-band
- Microwave imaging requires illumination by man-made sources
  - satellites may use several kW transmitter

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## How big a dish for a resolution of 25 m from 800 km height?

- Take a wavelength of 5 cm
- 1 km diameter dish has resolution of 50 m

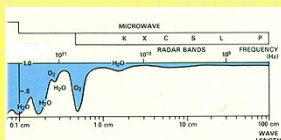
- couldn't be launched!
- 25 m resolution needs a dish 2 km in diameter



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## Atmospheric transmission

- Why microwaves?
  - atmosphere is transparent to microwaves

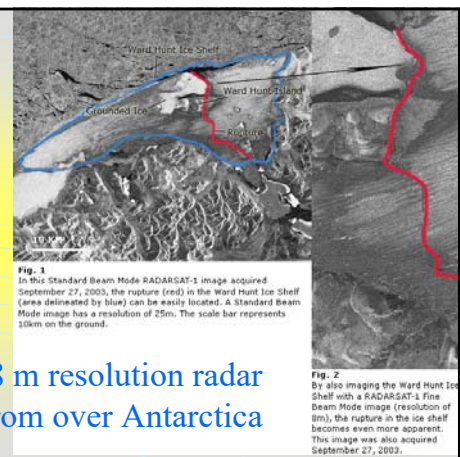


Sketch from  
[http://rst.gsfc.nasa.gov/Intro/Part2\\_4.html](http://rst.gsfc.nasa.gov/Intro/Part2_4.html)

- Rain, fog, haze, dust are all due to particles with size  $\ll$  wavelength of microwaves used for terrain imaging (typically C band  $\lambda \sim 5$  cm)
- Landscape images can be made, whatever the weather, day or night and clouds don't appear

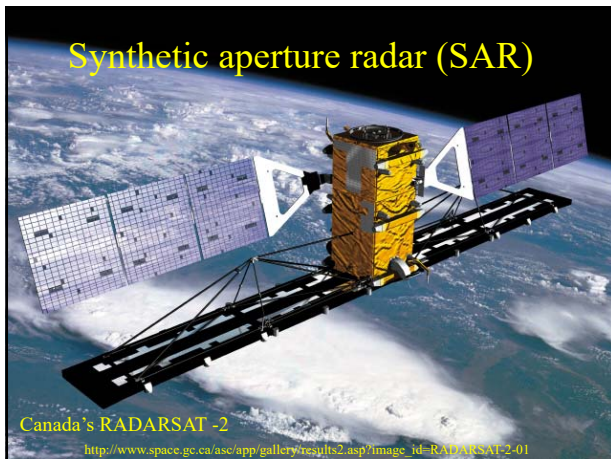
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- How is it done?

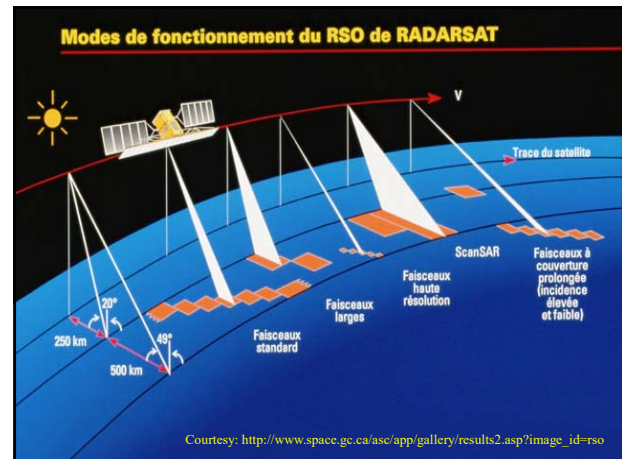


25 m & 8 m resolution radar picture from over Antarctica

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### Combining together 2 observations

- Observation at point A is treated as part of reception from a large dish
- If observation from B is combined with that of A, can reconstruct a signal with the resolution appropriate to a large dish
- Method achieves the spatial resolution of a large dish but not the signal gathering power
  - complication that signal at B is recorded later
  - satellite moves at  $\sim 7.4 \text{ km s}^{-1}$

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### Information in the image

Fig courtesy: <http://southport.jpl.nasa.gov/desc/imagingradarv3.html>

- Echo signal depends on surface texture on scale of wavelength (5.66 cm for RADARSAT)
- Echo depends on dielectric properties of surface (microwave equivalent of refractive index)
  - ice and water are easily distinguished

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### Sending & receiving

- Stream of pulses sent (blue in diag.)
- Aerial is a *phased array*
- Direction can be changed by altering signal phase at aerial elements
- Echo (red in diag.) continuously recorded

[http://www.space.gc.ca/asc/img/trans\\_sar\\_diagram1.gif](http://www.space.gc.ca/asc/img/trans_sar_diagram1.gif)

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### Features of radar images

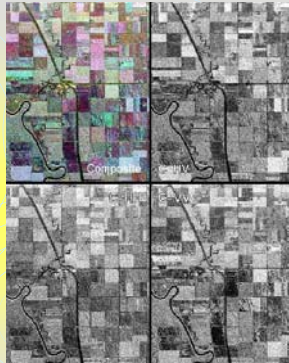
- RADARSAT is in sun-synchronous, dawn/dusk polar orbit
- Constant wavelength, constant angle of illumination means that reflection signatures of surfaces are constant
  - unlike looking at sunlight surfaces
- Illumination is *coherent*, resulting in speckle like a laser
- Additional information can be obtained using polarisation as a variable
  - RADARSAT uses HH configuration, i.e. **sending and receiving** horizontal polarisation
  - single frequency/polarisation image is monochromatic

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## Polarisation gives extra information

- Polarisation measures the direction of the electric field of the radiation
- 3 C-band pictures
  - HV – Horizontal sent Vertical received
  - HH and VV
- False colour composite shows range of crops



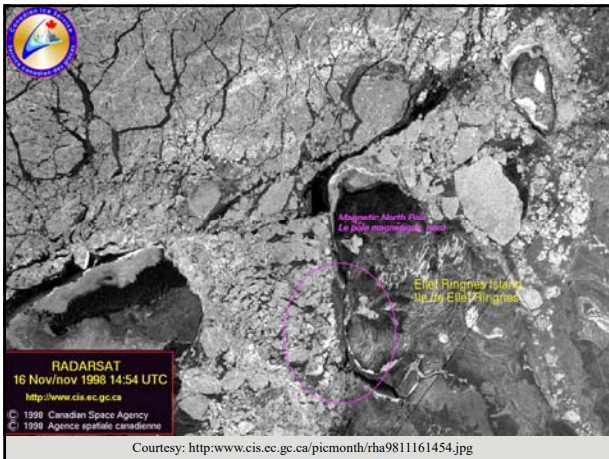
[http://www.space.gc.ca/asc/img/multipol11\\_b.jpg](http://www.space.gc.ca/asc/img/multipol11_b.jpg)

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<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/radar/sirexsar/dublin.html>

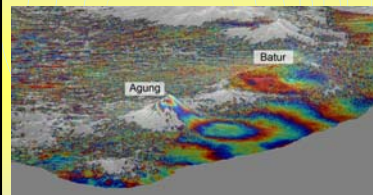
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## [InSAR]

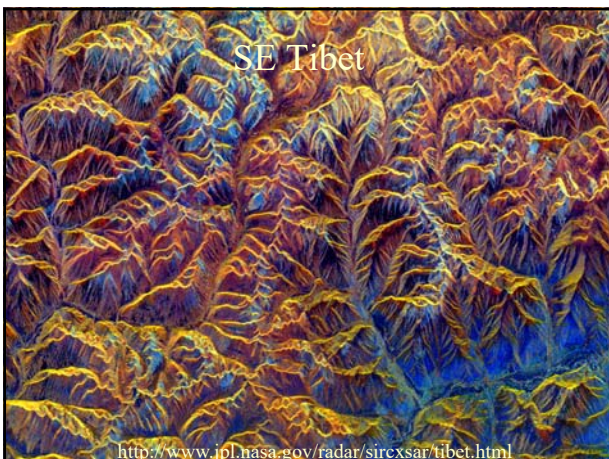
- Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar
- showing ground deformations



(Coloured) ground deformations from InSAR due to magma flow prior to eruption of Mt Agung in Bali. Courtesy: [https://www.esa.int/SpaceImages/Images/2019/02/Volcanic\\_uplift](https://www.esa.int/SpaceImages/Images/2019/02/Volcanic_uplift)

Aerial picture of Mts Agung & Batur, courtesy Google maps

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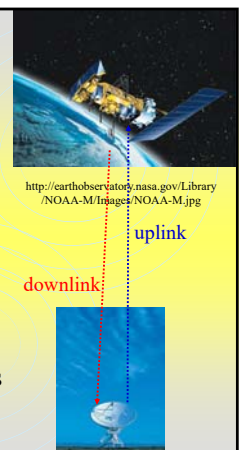


<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/radar/sirexsar/tibet.html>

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## Communications

- A vital part of remote sensing
- The satellite communications business is the lucrative side of space technology
  - technological side is well developed
- Introduction to some concepts and jargon

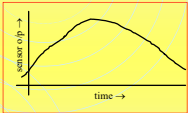
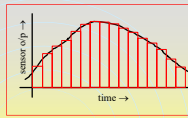


<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Library/NOAA-M/Images/NOAA-M.jpg>

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## The digital age

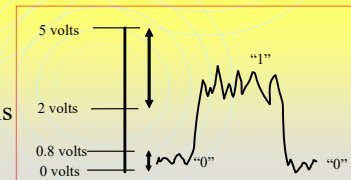
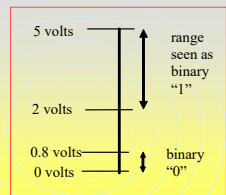
- Many sensors return an **analog signal**
  - the signal varies in proportion to what is being measured
- Digitally, the signal is measured at equal time intervals
- The signal is measured in discrete steps
  - each step is numbered in binary
  - e.g. 256 steps can be represented as an 8-bit binary number such as 00011011 (step  $1 + 2 + 8 + 16 = 27$ )



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## TTL signals

- TTL is the logic used in many digital circuits
  - the operating voltage may be as low as 2.4 volts
- Modest random fluctuations in voltage make no difference to the "1" and "0" signals
  - this is **noise immunity**



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## ADCs

- Analogue signals are converted to digital signals by Analogue-to-Digital Converters
  - need to specify the number of bits each conversion has
    - e.g. 12 bits gives  $2^{12}$  steps = 4096
  - specify the speed of conversion
    - e.g. 100,000 conversions per second or 1 every 10  $\mu$ s

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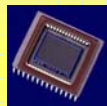
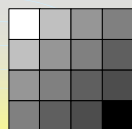
## What happens if the noise is too big?

- The signals are corrupted in transit
  - the message arrives with wrong characters, a wrong reading or the wrong level in a picture
  - e.g. 0001 sent arrives 0011 if there is one error
    - 0001 could arrive as 1011 with 2 errors
- How can you detect the presence of an error?
  - you need to transmit extra information
  - one error can be detected by a **parity check**

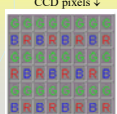
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## Pictures are divided into pixels

- Grey levels may be represented by an 8-bit binary number (1 byte)
  - e.g. range 00000000 for black to 11111111 for white
  - e.g. pictures could be transmitted by rows
- Why is binary better than analogue?
  - NOISE IMMUNITY**



Example of colour CCD pixels



156 157 161 166 ← 4 grey levels

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## Parity

00101011 – even parity  
00001011 – odd parity

- Parity is the number of "1"s present
  - even parity is an even number of "1"s
  - odd parity is an odd number of "1"s
- Add a parity bit to a word or packet, either first or last
- Two operational schemes
  - common scheme: whole word, including the parity bit, has the parity expected
- E.g. sending 0001 with even parity, send 00011
  - if 00111 arrives, then a parity check spots the error
- Parity checks can't determine what the error is
  - they can initiate request for a re-send

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## Long distance signals are noisy



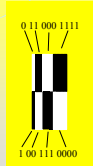
- E.g. the Sojourner Mars rover broadcast with only a few watts of power
  - comparable with an ordinary torch bulb
  - signal is very weak on arrival
  - can't ask for a re-send
  - need error code that allows errors to be detected **and** corrected

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## Examples for you to investigate



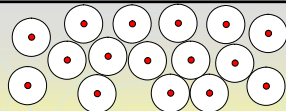
- There are error correction codes in
  - ISBN numbers – 9 digits + checksum to base 11
  - UPC numbers – 13 digits + checksum to base 10
  - airline tickets – checksum to base 7
  - barcodes – each digit represented by 7 bits
  - banknote numbers
  - coding of tracks on CDs and DVDs



Barcodes: width of a section tells the number of bits

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## What is the problem?



16 separate code words

- With compact coding using minimum of bits, an error will produce an alternative valid code
  - need *distance* between valid codes
- Distance** between codes is the number of different symbols they have
  - e.g. 00000111 and 00101011 have distance 3 between them
- Richard Hamming showed that if the distance between all code words in a message is  $n$  then you can correct up to  $(n - 1)/2$  errors per word
  - minimum Hamming distance to correct for 1 error is 3



Richard W. Hamming 1915 - 1998

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## Some error correction strategies

- Forward error correction (FEC)
  - inclusion of extra information allowing transmission errors to be corrected
    - last slide showed example
    - good for noisy and long-distance channels
- Automatic repeat request (ARR)
  - message divided into packets whose integrity is checked
  - integrity failure triggers re-send request
- Stop and wait (SW)
  - sender requires acknowledgement of each packet

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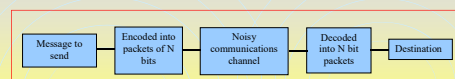
## How can error correction work?

- In the 7-bit code words on right, there is a Hamming distance of at least 3 between any 2 words
  - first 4 bits are normal binary codes
  - send 7 bits, not 4
    - e.g. 0011010 for 3
    - if 0111010 arrives, nearest acceptable code word is 0011010, distance only 1 away hence single bit error is corrected and interpretation is 3
- All codes a distance 1 away from a given number refer to the same number

0 - 0000000  
 1 - 0001101  
 2 - 0010111  
 3 - 0011010  
 4 - 0100011  
 5 - 0101110  
 6 - 0110100  
 7 - 0111001  
 8 - 1000110  
 9 - 1001011  
 10 - 1010001  
 11 - 1011100  
 12 - 1100101  
 13 - 1101000  
 14 - 1110010  
 15 - 1111111

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## The communications limit



- There is a fundamental limit on the rate of transmission of error-free information
  - this is a law of nature
  - applies to every form of communication
- Discovered by Claude Shannon and published in 1948
  - Shannon's (noisy channel) law



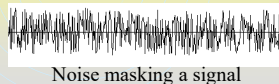
Claude E. Shannon 1916 - 2001

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## What determines communication rates?

- Bandwidth, B in Hertz
  - the range of frequencies available for the communication
    - e.g. telephone line might be ~5 kHz
    - the communications channel allows a wide range of signal strengths (an analogue channel)
- Signal to noise ratio, S/N
  - measured as a ratio of the signal power to the noise power



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## Approaching the limit

- 21<sup>st</sup> century engineers are finally learning how to get the maximum error free transmissions
  - this has enormous practical impact
- LDPC – Low Density Parity Check coding
  - large code words (e.g. > 1000 bits)
  - a large no. of parity bits for selected sums of bits within the word are included in a code word
  - easy to code
  - needs multi-processor electronics to decode
  - gets close to the Shannon capacity limit

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## Shannon's law

- The capacity of the communications channel, C, is the maximum number of bits per second
- $$C = B \times \log_2(1 + S/N)$$

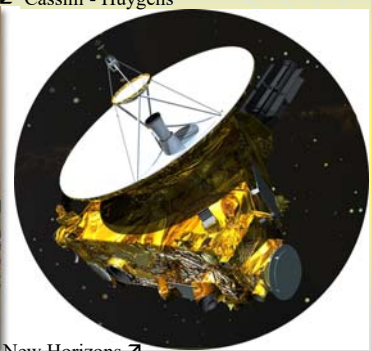
$$\log_2 = 3.322 \times \log_{10}$$
  - this is a natural limit
    - with suitable error correcting means you can in principle transmit error-free messages up to the capacity limit C
    - errors may accumulate without limit above C
  - real systems generally do a lot worse than C
- e.g. B = 5 kHz; S/N = 100;  $C = 5000 \log_2(101) = 33.3 \text{ kbits s}^{-1}$ 
  - if S/N = 1,  $C = 5000 \log_2 2 = 5 \text{ kbits s}^{-1}$

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## Communications are important



↖ Cassini - Huygens



New Horizons ↗

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## Pushing for the limit

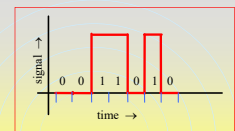
- The limit determines
  - the usable range of mobile phones from transmitters
  - the power needed at mobile phone masts
  - the range of wireless networks **hotspot**
  - the communications power needed by satellites and space probes
  - much more!



The MESSENGER spacecraft that uses new generation error coding communication

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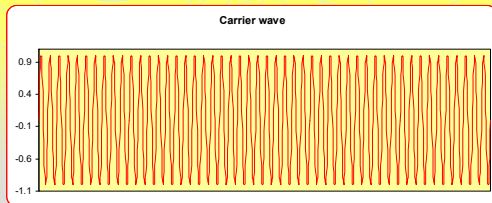
## Transmitting the signal



- Early morse telegraphy just switched off and on the current with the morse key
- Nowadays the signal is impressed on a **carrier wave**
- This process is called **modulation**
  - extracting the signal is called **demodulation**
  - a **modem** is a **modulator/demodulator**

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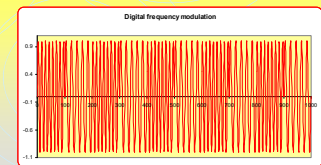
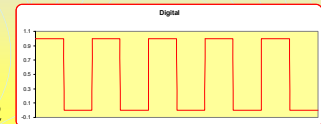
- Signals are sent on a **carrier wave** consisting of a sinusoidal wave of definite frequency
- The sketch shows 50 periods of a carrier wave
- The carrier contains no information



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## Digital frequency modulation

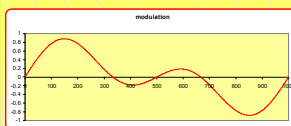
- The frequency is changed according to the signal size
- A digit signal has just 2 values
  - 2 frequencies present
    - effect is exaggerated in the sketch
  - traditionally known as **FSK** (frequency shift keying)



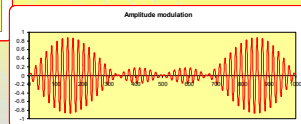
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## Amplitude modulation

- Amplitude modulation (AM) involves changing the amplitude of the carrier in proportional to the information signal you want to send



← Signal to be sent

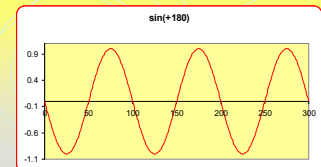
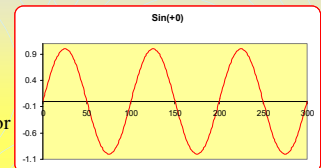


Amplitude modulated result →

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## Phase modulation

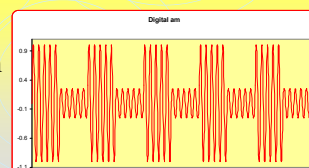
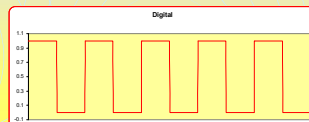
- Most digital communications uses **phase modulation**
  - top signal can be used for "0"
  - bottom signal for "1"
  - neither frequency nor amplitude change
- There are phase jumps every time digital input changes



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## Digital amplitude modulation

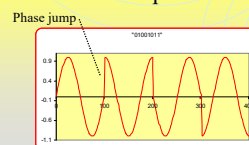
- The digital signal consists of "1"s and "0"s
  - example here is 1010101010
- A digital AM version is shown below



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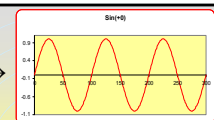
## QPSK

- QPSK – **quadrature phase shift keying**
- 2 bits sent at a time
  - known as a **dibit**
- Each pair of bits is represented by a signal of different phase



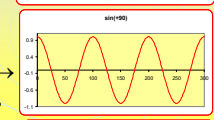
dibit 01 →

Phase 0°



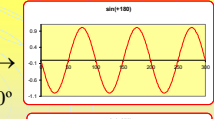
dibit 00 →

Phase 90°



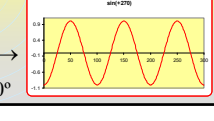
dibit 10 →

Phase 180°



dibit 11 →

Phase 270°



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## Demodulation

- Demodulation means extracting the superimposed information from the carrier
- **Modem** (modulator/demodulator)
  - a modem modulates the uplink and demodulates the downlink
  - each type of modulation has its corresponding technique of demodulation
  - Demodulating QPSK is not difficult

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## A final word or two on graphics

- On a 'full-colour' computer screen, each pixel is determined by the intensity of a **red**, **green** and **blue** component
  - each component is specified by 1 byte (containing 8 bits)
    - total 24 bits per pixel
- Example in next slides

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## Demodulating QPSK

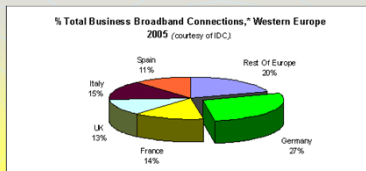
- Multiply the incoming signal at frequency  $\omega$  ( $\sin(\omega t + \phi)$ ) by a signal of the same frequency
- **For the mathematical:**
  - $\sin(\omega t + \phi) \times \sin(\omega t) = \frac{1}{2}\cos\phi - \frac{1}{2}\cos(2\omega t + \phi)$
- The result is a signal that depends on  $\cos\phi$  plus a signal at twice the frequency (which is discarded)
  - doing the same but multiplying by  $\cos(\omega t)$  gives  $\sin\phi$
- Once you know both  $\cos\phi$  and  $\sin\phi$  you can find  $\phi$
- When you know  $\phi$ , you know the dibit 01, 00, 10, 11

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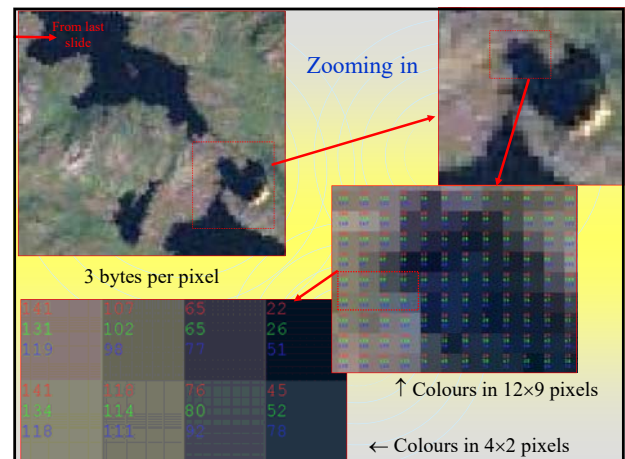
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## Aside on Broadband



- ADSL – asymmetric digital subscriber line
  - typically up to 2 Mbit s<sup>-1</sup> across copper wire
  - downlink is faster than uplink
    - 512 kb s<sup>-1</sup>; 256 kb s<sup>-1</sup> upstream
  - built-in forward error correction

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## Jpeg compression

- JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group)
- Reduces file size from bit-map proportions
  - intrinsically lossy but .....
  - factor 10 compression with hardly noticeable loss
- Optimised to human visual system
  - works on 24 bit pixels
  - preserves intensity, sacrifices some colour
  - not so good on sharp edges
    - e.g. small text
  - user selectable compression factor, trading file size and lossiness

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## Summary

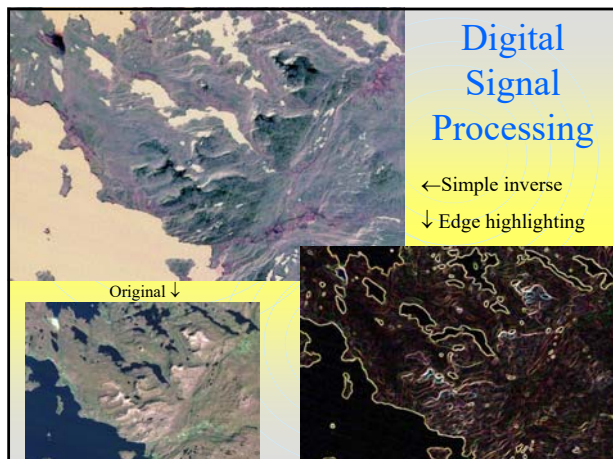
- Course has taken a wide view of space science with a particular eye on remote sensing as one application
  - many will meet detailed applications of remote sensing in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year courses
- Many of the subjects you've met with are not dealt with in any other BSc courses at Aberdeen yet are very relevant to 21<sup>st</sup> century life
  - I originally planned to repeat some *light science* from that course relevant to false colour maps but have omitted it
- Good luck with revision and future courses!

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## Gif compression

- Gif – Graphics Interchange Format
  - compression technique and standard format
- No loss of detail
- Compacts repeated strings of data
- Uses 1 byte (8 bits) per pixel
  - ideal for black, grey and white images
  - can only handle 256 colour palette
  - does preserve sharp edges
  - good for diagrammatic material
  - can include transparent background
  - can be made animated

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