

# RC Circuits

↳ We are learning how to solve diff eqns of the form:

$$\frac{dx(t)}{dt} + ax(t) = b(t)$$

2 cases so far

①  $b(t) = 0$  (no input)

$$\frac{dx(t)}{dt} + ax(t) = 0$$

Solutions  $x_h(t)$  are known as homogeneous solutions.

②  $b(t) = b = \text{const.}$

$$\frac{dx(t)}{dt} + ax(t) = b$$

Why do we care about  $x_h(t)$ ?

↳ Suppose we find any particular  $x_p$

Solution  $x_p(t)$  that solves it.

$$\frac{d}{dt} x_p(t) + a x_p(t) = b \quad \checkmark$$

Not done!

$$\left(\frac{d}{dt} + a\right) x_p(t) = b$$

$$+ \left(\frac{d}{dt} + a\right) x_h(t) = 0 \quad \leftarrow \text{"fancy"}$$

---

$$\left(\frac{d}{dt} + a\right) (x_p(t) + x_h(t)) = b$$

$x = x_p(t) + x_h(t)$  is also a sln!

$$x_g(t) = x_p(t) + C x_h(t)$$

general solutions

By linearity.

Familiar? Consider linear algebra

$$A \vec{x} = \vec{b}$$

$$A \vec{x}_p = \vec{b}$$

$$A \vec{x}_{h1} = \vec{0}$$

$$A \vec{x}_{h2} = \vec{0}$$

$$\vec{x}_g(t) = \vec{x}_p(t) + \sum c_i \vec{x}_{h_i}$$

Deep connection b/w DE and linear algebra

$$\left( \frac{d}{dt} + a \right) \leftarrow \underline{\underline{\text{linear operator}}}$$

What are the solutions?

① Homogeneous

$$\frac{dx(t)}{dt} = -ax(t)$$

Proof 1: Separation of Variables  
(Calculus)

$$\int \frac{dx}{x} = \int -a dt$$

$$\ln x = -at + C$$

$$|x| = e^{-at}$$

$$\boxed{X_h = C^1 e^{-at}}$$

Proof 2: Guess and check  
(~ linear algebra)

linear operator  $\frac{d}{dt} X_h(t) = -a X(t)$

$\frac{d}{dt} (X_h) = -a X_h$  eigenvalue

$$\boxed{X_h(t) = C^1 e^{-at}}$$

In both cases, the solution is not unique!

Reason:  $C^1$  could be any const  
Add additional constraint, initial conditions

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} X(0) = X_0 \\ X_h(t) = C^1 e^{-at} \\ X_h(0) = C^1 e^0 = C^1 = X_0 \end{array} \right\} \rightarrow \boxed{X_h(t) = X_0 e^{-at}}$$

## ② Constant Input

Proof 1: Calculus way  
(sep. of variables)

$$\frac{dx}{dt} = -ax + b = -a \left( \frac{-b}{a} + x \right)$$

$$\int \frac{dx}{x - \frac{b}{a}} = \int -a dt$$

Use a table!

$$x(t) = \frac{b}{a} + C e^{-at}$$

*(Red arrows point from  $x_p$  and  $x_h$  labels to the terms  $\frac{b}{a}$  and  $C e^{-at}$  respectively.)*

Proof 2: Linear algebra way  
(guess and check)

$$\left( \frac{d}{dt} + a \right) x(t) = b$$

$$x_p = \frac{b}{a}$$

Guess as particular solution

$$\left(\frac{d}{dt} + a\right) \frac{b}{a} = 0 + b = b \quad \checkmark$$

Done? NO! Need homog. sln.

$$x_h(t) = C' e^{-at}$$

$$\boxed{\begin{aligned} X_j(t) &= \frac{b}{a} + C' e^{-at} \\ &= x_p(t) + C' x_h(t) \end{aligned}}$$

Proof 3: Math trick  
(change of variables)

$$\frac{dx}{dt} = -ax + b = -a\left(x - \frac{b}{a}\right)$$

Change of vars:  $\tilde{x} = x - \frac{b}{a}$

Notice:  $\frac{d\tilde{x}}{dt} = \frac{dx}{dt} - \frac{d}{dt}\left(\frac{b}{a}\right) = \frac{dx}{dt}$

$\begin{matrix} dx & d\tilde{x} & & & \\ & & / & \backslash & \\ & & & & \end{matrix}$

$$\frac{dx}{dt} - \frac{b}{a} = -a \left( x - \frac{b}{a} \right) = -a \tilde{x}$$

eigenvalue or homogeneous eqn

$$\tilde{x}(t) = C' e^{-at}$$
$$x - \frac{b}{a} = C' e^{-at}$$

$$x(t) = \frac{b}{a} + C' e^{-at}$$

Don't forget initial condition!

$$x(0) = x_0$$

$$x(t) = \frac{b}{a} + C' e^{-at} \Big|_{t=0} \Big|_{t=0}$$

$$\Rightarrow x_0 = \frac{b}{a} + C' \Rightarrow C' = x_0 - \frac{b}{a}$$

$$x(t) = \frac{b}{a} + \left( x_0 - \frac{b}{a} \right) e^{-at}$$

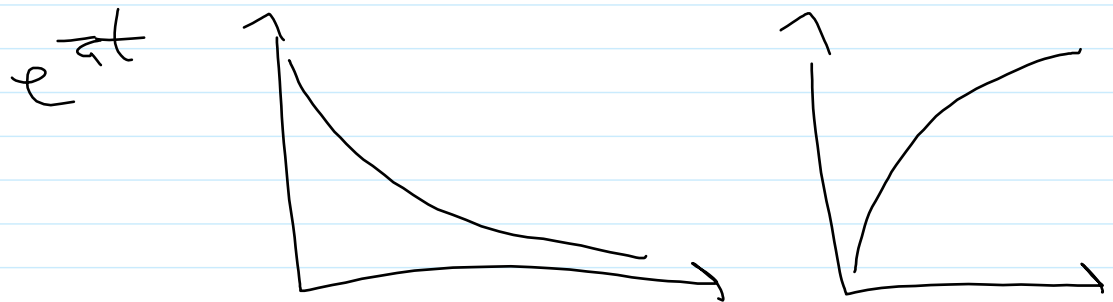
Nuclear option  $\rightarrow$  plug in values

Why so many methods?

- 1) Many ways to look at the same problem!
- 2) Pick whichever makes the most sense to you!

$e^{-at}$  → pop up all the time  
(all engineering, physical sciences)

→ transient behavior





# Dis 1D Worksheet

Thursday, June 25, 2020 12:53 PM

## 1 RC Circuits

In this problem, we will be using differential equations to find the voltage across a capacitor over time in an RC circuit. We set up our problem by first defining three functions over time:  $I(t)$  is the current at time  $t$ ,  $V(t)$  is the voltage across the circuit at time  $t$ , and  $V_C(t)$  is the voltage across the capacitor at time  $t$ .

Recall from 16A that the voltage across a resistor is defined as  $V_R = RI_R$  where  $I_R$  is the current across the resistor. Also, recall that the voltage across a capacitor is defined as  $V_C = \frac{Q}{C}$  where  $Q$  is the charge across the capacitor.

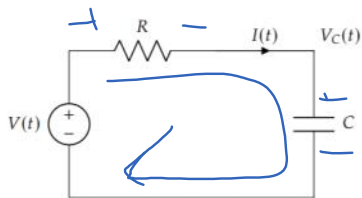


Figure 1: Example Circuit

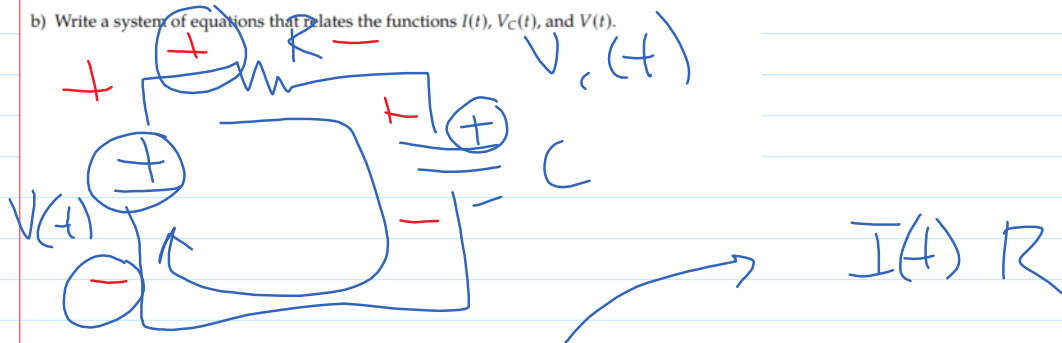
a) First, find an equation that relates the current across the capacitor  $I(t)$  with the voltage across the capacitor  $V_C(t)$ .

$$i_c(t) = C \frac{dV_C(t)}{dt} \quad \leftarrow \text{derivation}$$

$$\frac{d}{dt}(Q = CV) \quad \leftarrow \text{capacitor}$$

$$I = \frac{dQ}{dt} = C \frac{dV}{dt}$$

b) Write a system of equations that relates the functions  $I(t)$ ,  $V_C(t)$ , and  $V(t)$ .



$$-V(t) + V_R(t) + V_C(t) = 0$$

$$\boxed{-V(t) + I(t)R + V_C(t) = 0}$$

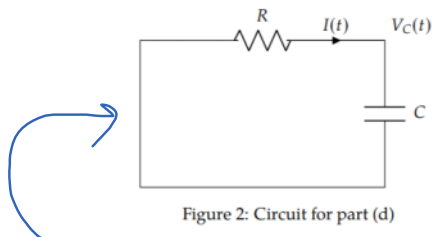
$$-V(t) + I(t)R + V_c(t) = 0$$

c) Rewrite the previous equation in part (b) in the form of a differential equation involving only  $V_c(t)$  and  $V(t)$ .

$$I(t) = C \frac{dV_c(t)}{dt}$$

$$V(t) = RC \frac{dV_c(t)}{dt} + V_c(t)$$

$$\frac{dx}{dt} = -ax(t) + b(t)$$



$$V_c(0) = V_{DD}$$

$$V(t) = 0$$

d) Let's suppose that at  $t = 0$ , the capacitor is charged to a voltage  $V_{DD}$  ( $V_c(0) = V_{DD}$ ). Let's also assume that  $V(t) = 0$  for all  $t \geq 0$ . Solve the differential equation for  $V_c(t)$  for  $t \geq 0$ .

$$\frac{dV_c(t)}{dt} = -\frac{1}{RC} V_c(t)$$

⇒ Guess and check!

$$V_c(t) = V_c(0) e^{-t/RC} \quad \checkmark$$

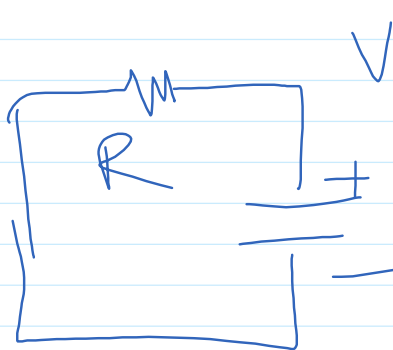
$$\frac{dV_c}{dt} = V_c(0) \times -\frac{1}{RC} e^{-t/RC} = \frac{V_c(t)}{-RC}$$

dt

RC

-RC

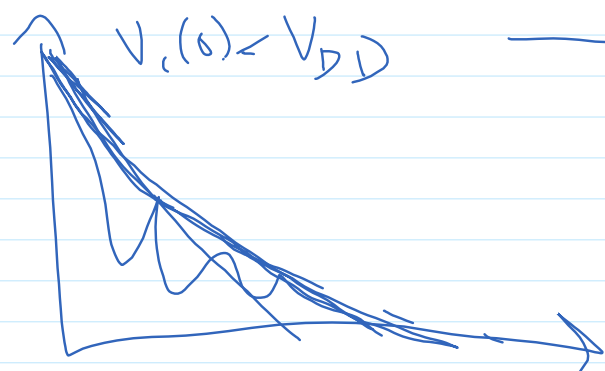
$$V_c(t) = V_{DD} e^{-t/RC}$$



$V_c(t)$

$V_c(0) = V_{DD}$

→ initially, cap is fully charged  
 → expect current to flow



→ Cap discharging

$$Q = CV$$

Expect  $V_c(\infty) = 0$



$$i = \frac{V_c}{R}$$

$$t=0, V_c(0) = V_{DD}, i = \frac{V_{DD}}{R}$$

$$t=\infty, V_c(\infty) = 0, i = 0$$

$$i = C \frac{dV_c}{dt} \rightarrow \text{slope of } V_c(t)$$

$V_c(0) = 0$   
 $V(t) = V_{DD}$

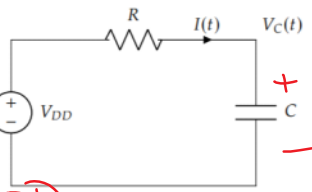
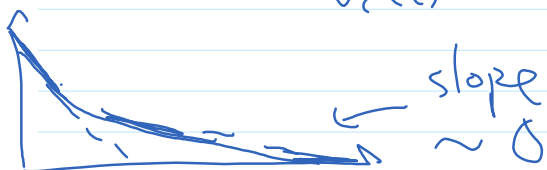


Figure 3: Circuit for part (e)

slope  $\frac{V_{DD}}{R}$



slope  $\sim 0$

e) Now, let's suppose that we start with an uncharged capacitor  $V_c(0) = 0$ . We apply some constant voltage  $V(t) = V_{DD}$  across the circuit. Solve the differential equation for  $V_c(t)$  for  $t \geq 0$ .

\* Cap initially uncharged  $\rightarrow t=0, i = \frac{V_{DD}}{R}$

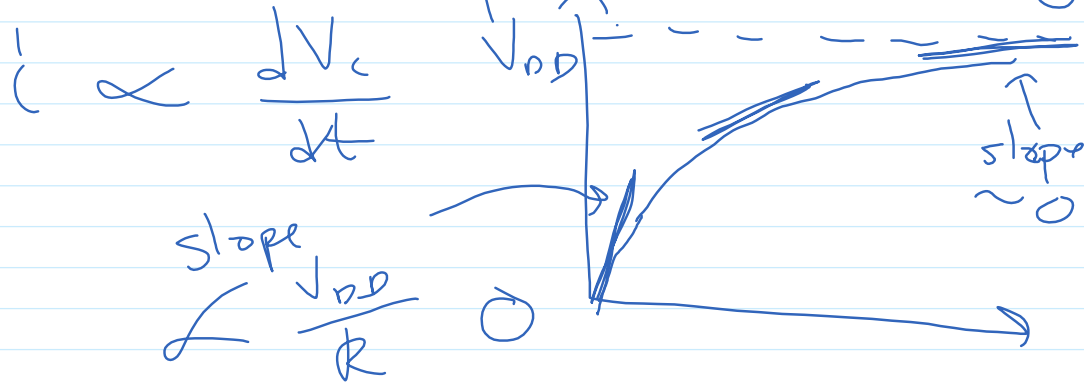
In summary,

$$V_c \downarrow \rightarrow i \downarrow \rightarrow \frac{dV_c}{dt} \downarrow$$

\* Cap initially

short  $V_c \downarrow \rightarrow i \downarrow \rightarrow \frac{dV_c}{dt}$   
 $I(0) = \frac{V_{DD}}{R}$

\* cap charged  $\rightarrow t = \infty$ , open  $\rightarrow I(\infty) = 0$



$$V_{DD} = RC \frac{dV_c}{dt} + V_c(t)$$

Ⓘ Guess and check

$$X_g(t) = X_p(t) + X_h(t)$$

$$V_c(t) = B + A e^{-t/RC}$$

$$V_{DD} = RC \frac{d}{dt} \left( \underbrace{B + A e^{-t/RC}}_{V_c(t)} \right) + V_c(t)$$

$$= \cancel{RC} \times A \times \cancel{-\frac{1}{RC}} e^{-t/RC}$$

$$+ B + \cancel{A e^{-t/RC}}$$

$$\Rightarrow B = V_{DD}$$

Initial condition:  $V_c(0) = 0$

Initial condition:  $V_c(0) = 0$

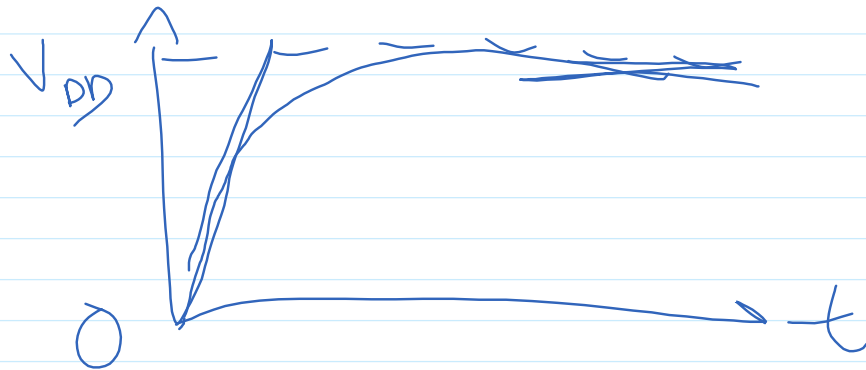
$$V_c(0) = 0 = V_{DD} + A e^{-0/RC}$$

$$A = -V_{DD}$$

$$V_c(t) = V_{DD} (1 - e^{-t/RC})$$

$$V_c(0) = V_{DD} (1 - 1) = 0 \quad \checkmark$$

$$V_c(\infty) = V_{DD} (1 - 0) = V_{DD} \quad \checkmark$$



\* Change of variables

$$RC \frac{dV_c}{dt} + V_c = V_{DD}$$

$$\rightarrow \frac{dV_c}{dt} = \frac{V_{DD} - V_c(t)}{RC} = -\frac{1}{RC} (V_c - V_{DD})$$

$$\frac{d\tilde{V}}{dt} = \frac{dV_c}{dt} \rightarrow \text{homog. eqn}$$

~ . . . . . ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

$$\tilde{V}_c = V_c(t) - V_{DD} \Rightarrow \frac{d\tilde{V}_c}{dt} = \frac{dV_c}{dt}$$

$$\frac{d\tilde{V}_c}{dt} = -\frac{1}{RC} \tilde{V}_c \Rightarrow \tilde{V}_c(t) = \tilde{V}_c(0) e^{-t/RC}$$

$$\tilde{V}_c(0) = V_c(0) - V_{DD} = -V_{DD}$$

$$\tilde{V}_c(t) = -V_{DD} e^{-t/RC} = V_c(t) - V_{DD}$$

## 2 Graphing RC Responses

Consider the following RC Circuit with a single resistor  $R$ , capacitor  $C$ , and voltage source  $V(t)$ .

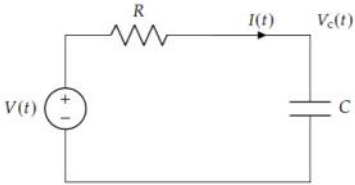
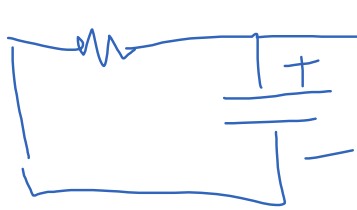
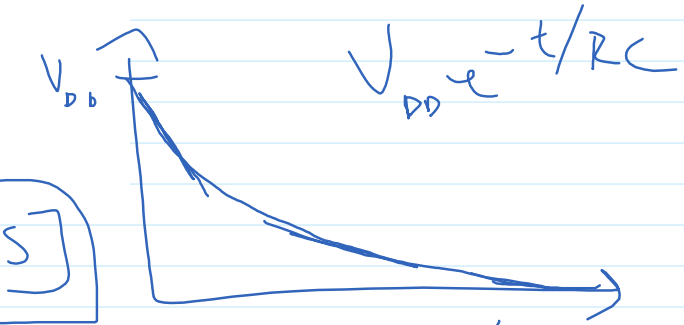


Figure 4: Example Circuit

- a) Let's suppose that at  $t = 0$ , the capacitor is charged to a voltage  $V_{DD}$  ( $V_c(0) = V_{DD}$ ) and that  $V(t) = 0$  for all  $t \geq 0$ . Plot the response  $V_c(t)$ .



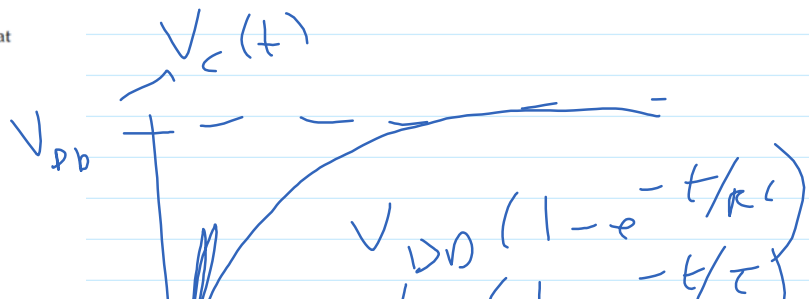
$$V_c(0) = V_{DD}$$

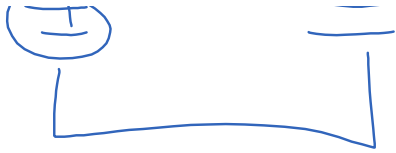


$$\tau = RC = [s]$$

$$V_c(t) = V_{DD} e^{-t/RC} = V_{DD} e^{-t/\tau} \quad \text{unitless}$$

- b) Now let's suppose that at  $t = 0$ , the capacitor is uncharged ( $V_c(0) = 0$ ) and that  $V(t) = V_{DD}$  for all  $t \geq 0$ . Plot the response  $V_c(t)$ .





$$V_{DD} (1 - e^{-t/\tau}) = V_{DD} (1 - e^{-t/\tau})$$

To better understand our responses, we now define a **time constant** which is a measure of how long it takes for the capacitor to charge or discharge. Mathematically, we define  $\tau$  as the time at which  $V_C(\tau)$  is  $\frac{1}{e} = 36.8\%$  away from its steady state value.

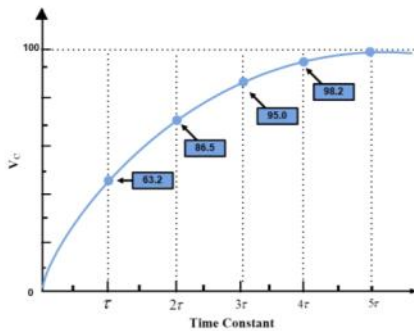


Figure 5: Different values of capacitor voltage at different times, relative to  $\tau$ .

c) Suppose that  $V_{DD} = 5\text{ V}$ ,  $R = 100\ \Omega$ , and  $C = 10\ \mu\text{F}$ . What is the time constant  $\tau$  for this circuit?

$$\tau = RC = 100\ \Omega \times 10\ \mu\text{F} = 1000\ \mu\text{s} = 1\ \text{ms}$$

} settling time, charge/discharge time

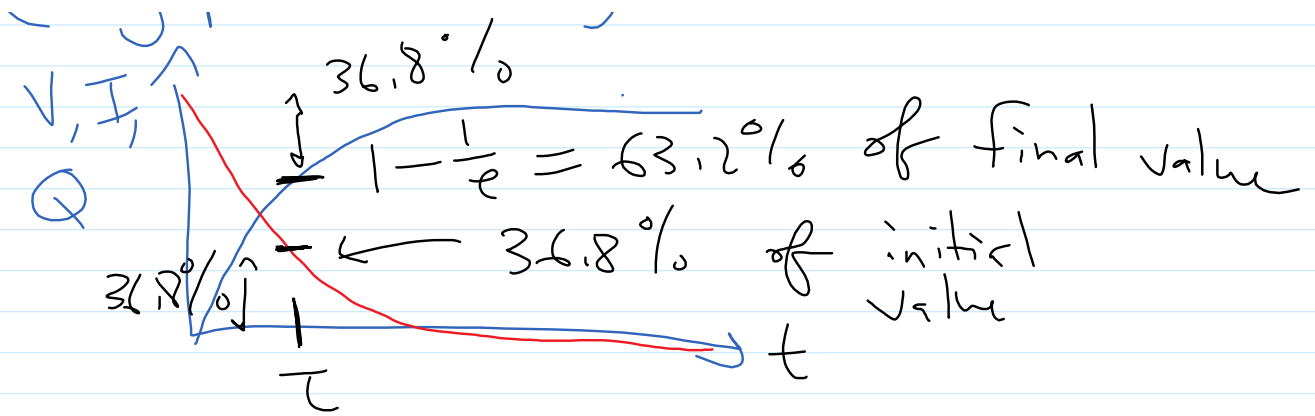
After  $1\tau$ , we are  $\frac{1}{e} \approx 37\%$  away from our steady-state (asymptotic value)

$\uparrow$  36.8%

$\tau$

- useful engineering tool
- measure of how "fast" your ckt is

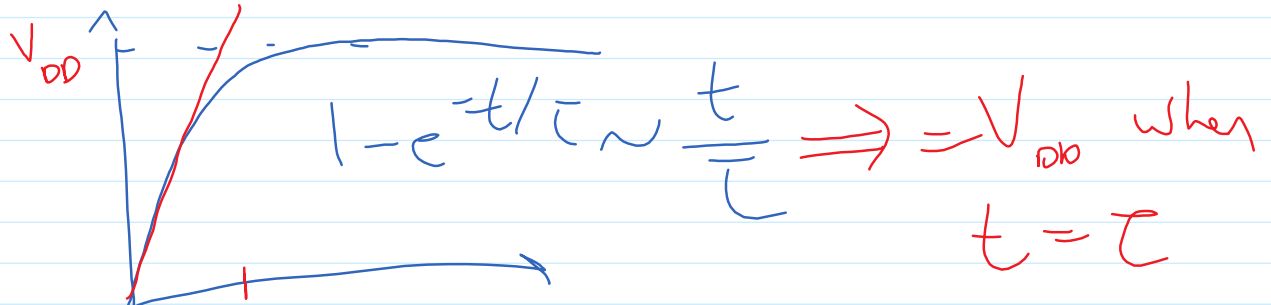
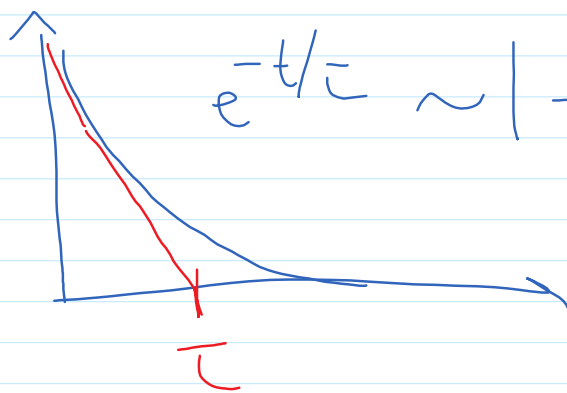
settling time, charge/discharge time



t	$\tau$	$3\tau$	$5\tau$
% from initial value	63%	95%	99%

How long is "long enough"?

$\tau \rightarrow$  natural timescale





d) Going back to part (b), on what order of magnitude of time (nanoseconds, milliseconds, 10's of seconds, etc.) does this circuit settle ( $V_c$  is  $> 95\%$  of its value as  $t \rightarrow \infty$ )?

$\tau = 1 \text{ ms} \rightarrow$  order of magnitude is ms

explicitly:  $3\tau = 3 \text{ ms}$

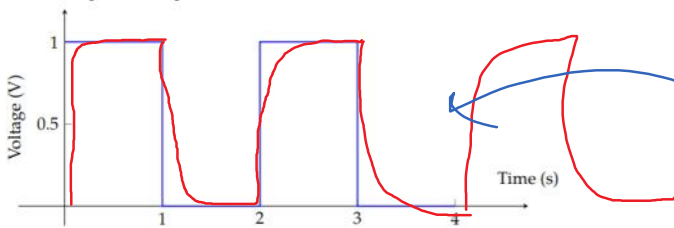
e) Give 2 ways to reduce the settling time of the circuit if we are allowed to change one component in the circuit.

reduce  $R$

reduce  $C$

Which one is better? HW 1, Q5

f) Suppose we have a source  $V(t)$  that alternates between 0 and  $V_{DD} = 1 \text{ V}$ . Given  $RC = 0.1 \text{ s}$ , plot the response  $V_c$  if  $V_c(0) = 0$ .

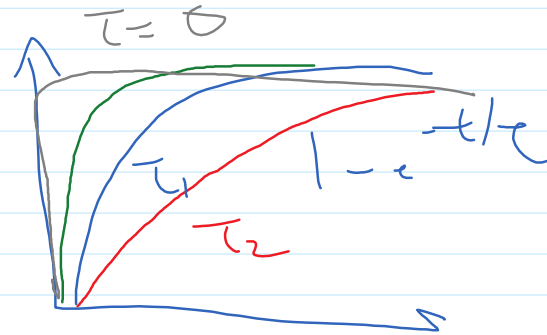


$\tau = 0.1 \text{ s}$

$$\tau = 0.1 \text{ s}$$

$$\Delta T = 1 \text{ s} = 10\tau$$

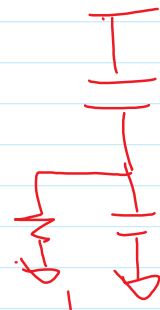
$\rightarrow$



$$\tau_2 > \tau_1?$$

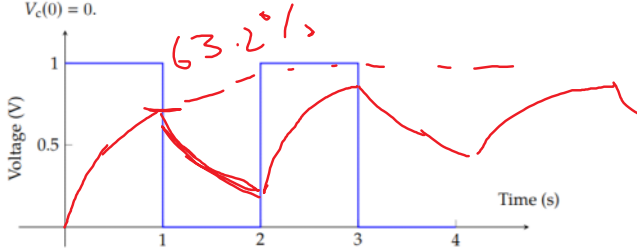
$$\tau_3 < \tau_1?$$

Xstar model:



Careful about  $\tau$ !  
 $> 1$  capacitor

g) Now suppose we have the same source  $V(t)$  but  $RC = 1$  s, plot the response  $V_c$  if  $V_c(0) = 0$ .



$$\tau = 1 \text{ s}$$

$$\Delta T = 1 \text{ s} = \tau$$

36.8%

After 2s :  $V_{DD} \left(1 - \frac{1}{e}\right) \frac{1}{e} \approx 0.28 V_{DD}$

$$V_c(\tau) = V_{DD} \left(1 - \frac{1}{e}\right)$$