

# Image filters

**Anders Kaestner :: Laboratory for Neutron Scattering and Imaging**



**1 Defining filters****2 Low pass filters and denoising****3 Non-linear filters for denoising****4 High pass filters****5 Filters in the frequency domain****6 Summary**

# Defining filters

## Definition

A filter modifies the information in the image given a neighborhood.

Purpose: Enhance or suppress information.

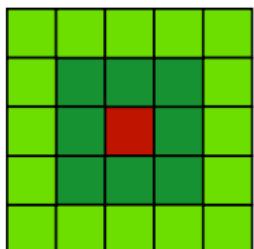
Mainly two classes of filters will be covered here:

- Linear spatially invariant filters. Computed with convolution
- Non-linear filters

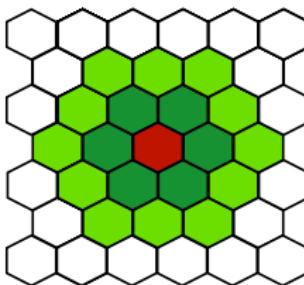
Books that cover filters are e.g. Jähne (2002) or Jain (1989)

## Definition

A neighborhood of a pixel/voxel are the adjacent pixels. Neighborhoods are defined differently on different grids



- █ Center pixel
- █ 3x3-neighborhood
- █ 5x5-neighborhood



- █ Center pixel
- █ 6-neighborhood
- █ 18-neighborhood

## Definitions

Continuous

$$g(x) = h * f(x) = \int_{\Omega_h} f(x - \tau) h(\tau) d\tau \quad (1)$$

Discrete

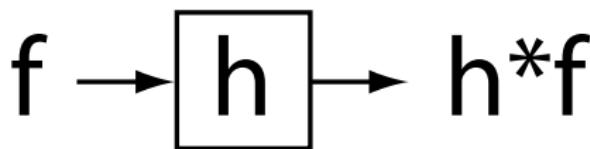
$$g[x] = h * f[x] = \sum_{p \in \Omega_h} f[x - p] h[p] \quad (2)$$

where

$f(x)$  is the image to filter

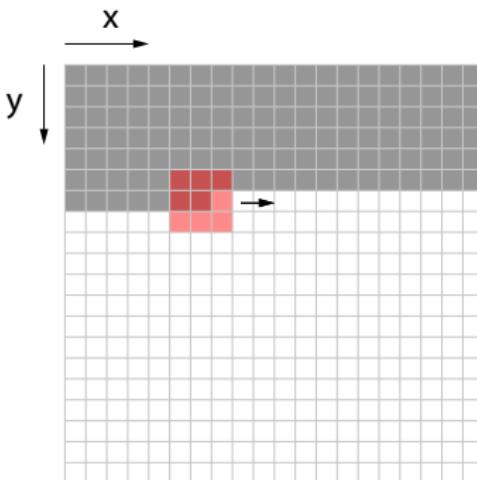
$h$  is the convolution kernel of the filter

## Block diagram



Discrete convolution is computed as :

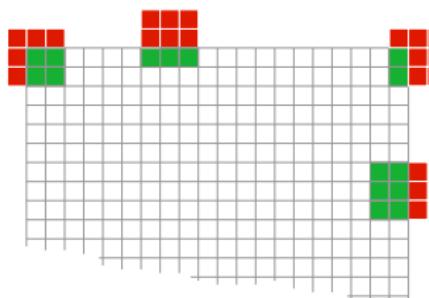
$$g[x] = f[x] * h = \sum_{\tau \in \Omega} f[x - \tau] h[\tau] \quad (3)$$



The convolution is defined for infinitely large images

## Problem

*Discrete images are finite. The convolution kernel has no image support on the edges*



## Edge processing strategies

- Ignore the edges
- Use only the supported part of the kernel
- Wrap around
- Mirror

**Commutative**  $(a * b) * c = a * (b * c)$

This property is useful if the kernel is separable

**Associative**  $a * (b + c) = a * b + a * c$

L.H.S. is computationally less expensive than R.H.S.

**Spatially invariant**

- Filter operation only depend on the intensities in  $f(p) \quad \forall p \in \Omega_h(x)$
- Independent of position

## Definition

A convolution kernel is called separable if it can be split in two or more parts:

$$\begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \hline \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \hline \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \cdot \\ \hline \cdot \\ \hline \cdot \\ \hline \end{array} * \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|} \hline \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \hline \end{array}$$

and Euclidean separable if each part only depends on one coordinate variable.

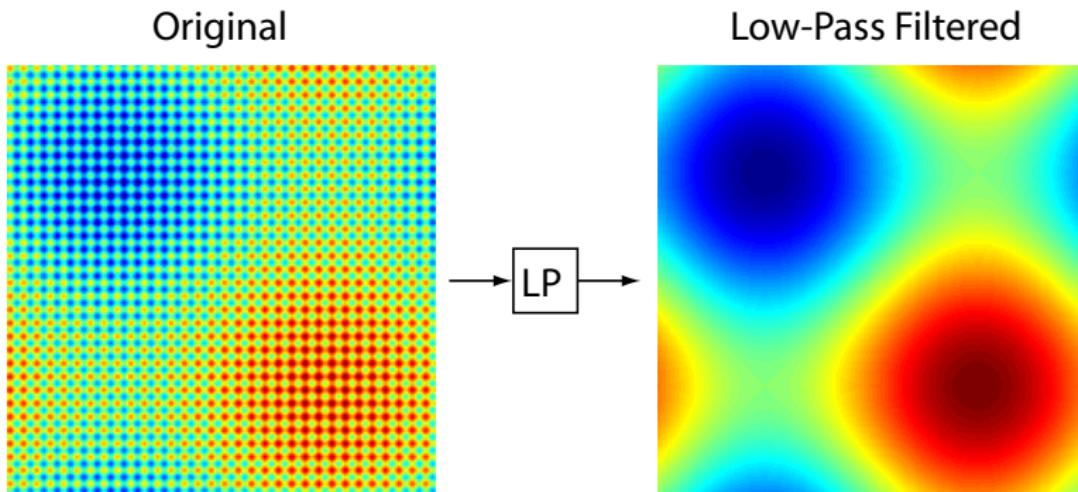
## Example

$$e^{-\frac{x^2+y^2}{2\sigma^2}} = e^{-\frac{x^2}{2\sigma^2}} * e^{-\frac{y^2}{2\sigma^2}}$$

# Low-pass filters and denoising

The effects of a *Low-Pass* filter are in general

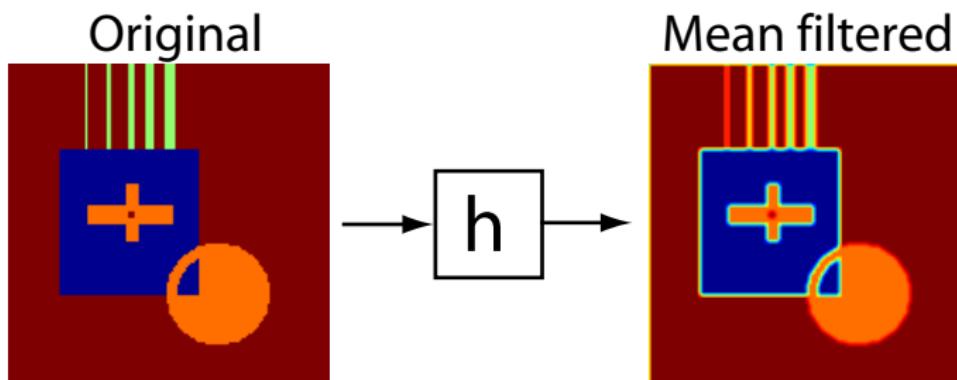
- slow changes are enhanced
- rapid changes are suppressed



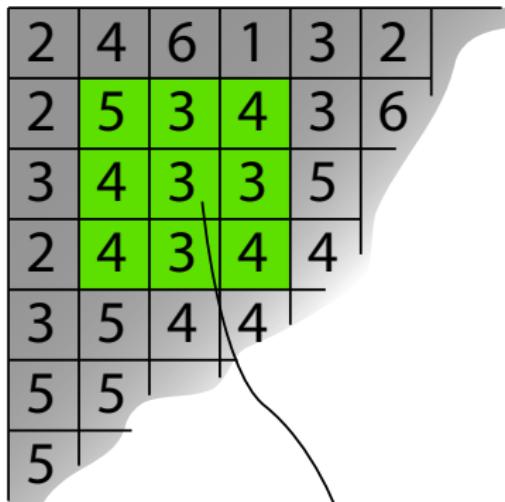
Computes the local average value of the pixel neighborhood  
A  $3 \times 3$  box filter is defined as

$$h = \frac{1}{9} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix} = h_x * h_y = \frac{1}{3} [ 1 \ 1 \ 1 ] * \frac{1}{3} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad (4)$$

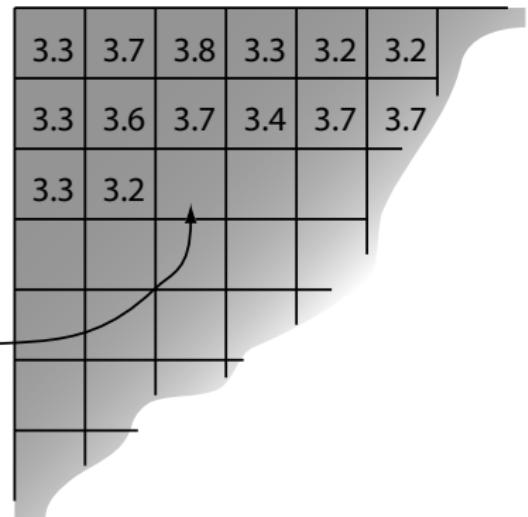
The mean filter is also called a *mean filter*



Observe: The edges are less sharp after the low-pass filter.



$$(5+3+4+4+3+3+4+3+4)/9=3.7$$



The two kernels  $B_x = \frac{1}{2} [ \begin{array}{cc} 1 & 1 \end{array} ]$  and  $B_y = \frac{1}{2} [ \begin{array}{c} 1 \\ 1 \end{array} ]$

1D filter coefficients are taken from Pascal's triangle

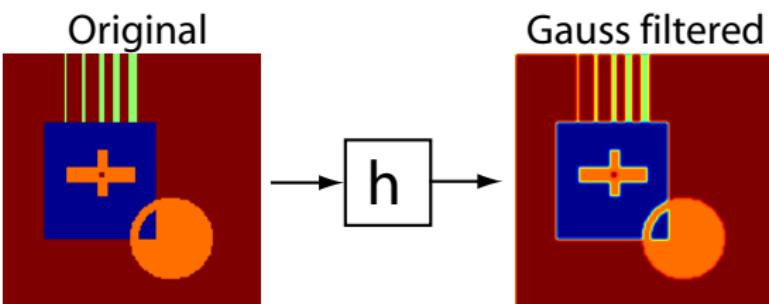
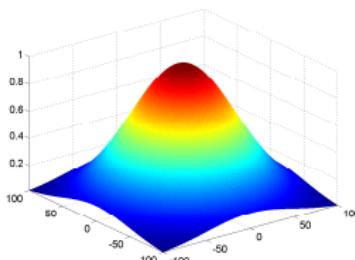
$$\begin{matrix} & & & 1 \\ & & 1 & & 1 \\ & 1 & & 2 & & 1 \\ 1 & & 3 & & 3 & & 1 \\ 1 & 4 & & 6 & & 4 & & 1 \end{matrix}$$

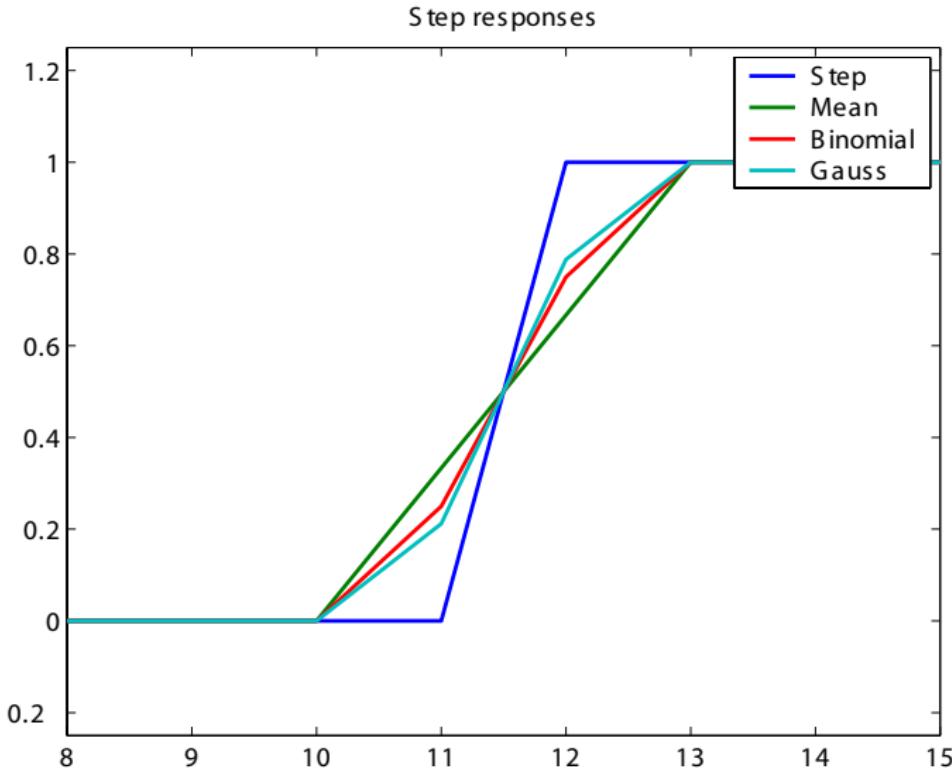
A  $3 \times 3$ -kernel is defined as

$$B = B_x * B_x * B_y * B_y = \frac{1}{16} \left[ \begin{array}{ccc} 1 & 2 & 1 \\ 2 & 4 & 2 \\ 1 & 2 & 1 \end{array} \right] \quad (5)$$

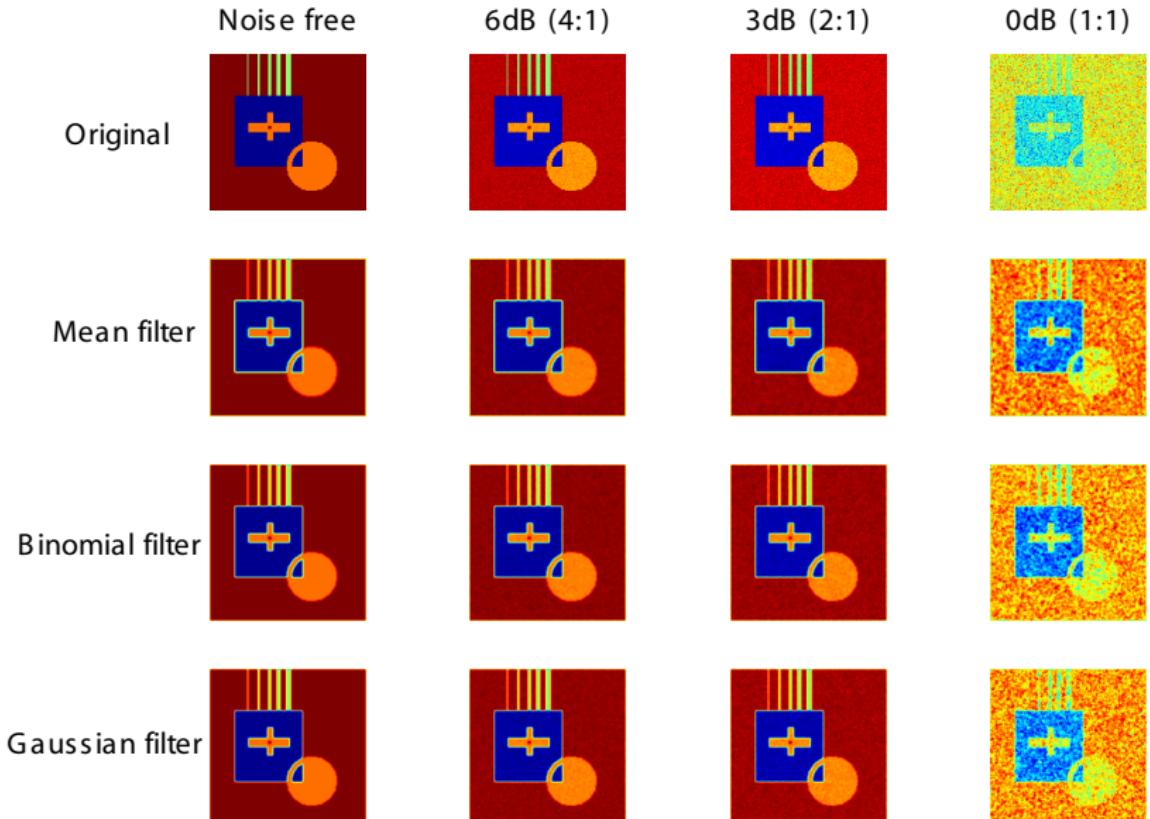
$$G_\sigma = \frac{1}{(2\pi\sigma)^2} e^{\left(-\frac{x^2+y^2}{2\sigma^2}\right)} \quad (6)$$

The Gaussian filter kernel size is determined by e.g.  $n\sigma$





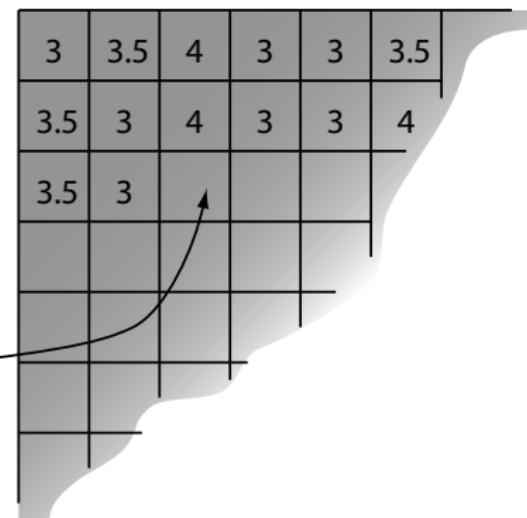
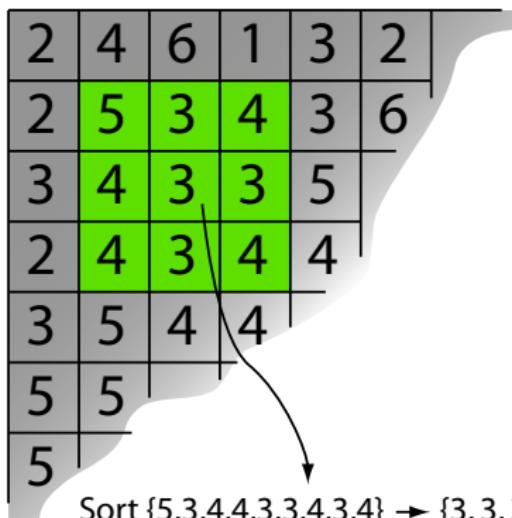
# Low-Pass Filters with noise



# Non-linear filters for denoising

The median filter is a low-pass type non-linear

- Removing outlier noise such as salt& pepper-noise
- Is gentler to edges than convolution at same smoothing



# Compare median and box filters

Gaussian noise, SNR=10:1



Box filter 3x3



Median filter 3x3



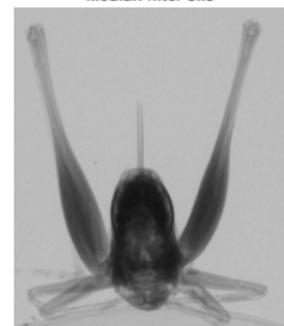
5% Salt n pepper noise



Box filter 3x3



Median filter 3x3



## The idea

Smoothing normally consider information from the neighborhood like

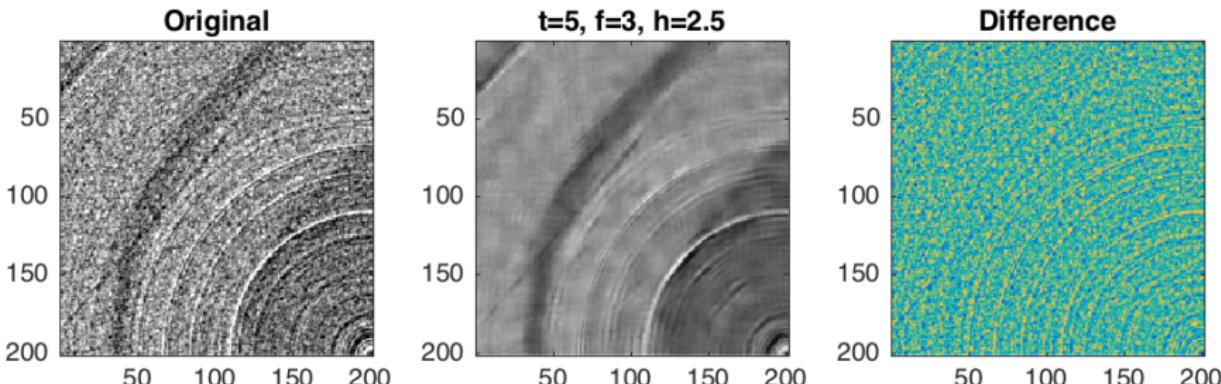
- Local averages (convolution)
- Gradients and Curvatures (PDE filters)

Non-local smoothing average similiar intensities in a global sense.

- Every filtered pixel is a weighted average of all pixels.
- Weights computed using difference between pixel intensities.

Draw-back the computational complexity  $O(N^2)$ . Approximate schemes exist.

Buades et al. (2005)



## Observations

- Good smoothing effect.
- Strong thin lines are preserved.
- Some patchiness related to filter parameter  $t$ , i.e. the size of  $\Omega_i$ .

## Non-linear diffusion

Smooth fine features first

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} = \underbrace{G(|\nabla_\sigma u|)}_{\text{Diffusivity}} \nabla^2 u$$

## Inverse scale space

Add wide features first

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} &= \operatorname{div} \left( \frac{\nabla u}{|\nabla u|} \right) + \lambda (u_0 - u + v) \\ \frac{\partial v}{\partial t} &= \alpha (u_0 - u)\end{aligned}$$

$\nabla_\sigma$  Gradient smoothed by a Gaussian

$\lambda$  Controls the strength of the filter

$\alpha$  Additional time scaling parameter (quality refinement)

$N$  Number of iterations

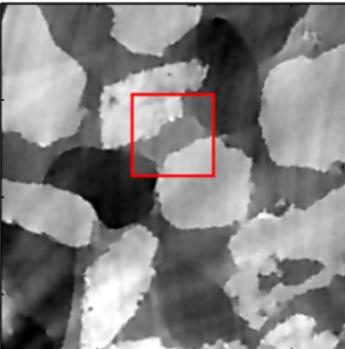
$\tau$  Time increment

# Comparing different filters

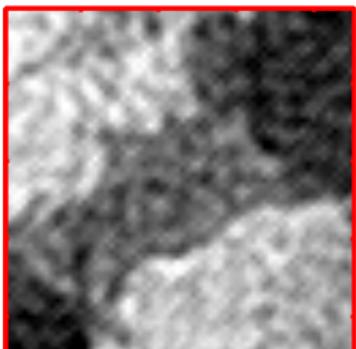
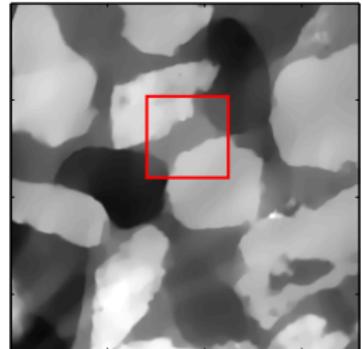
Original



Diffusion filter

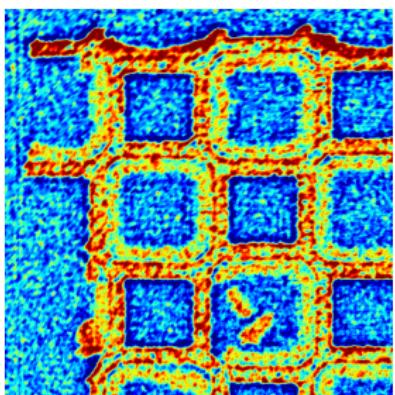


ISS filter

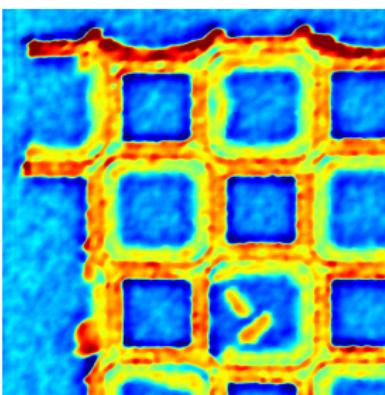


Kaestner *et al.*, AWR, 2008, Kaestner et al. (2008)

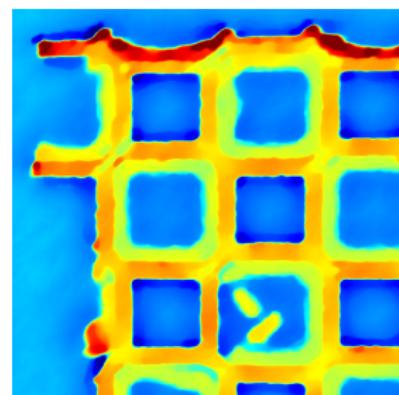
## Neutron CT of a diesel particulate filter



Original



100 iterations



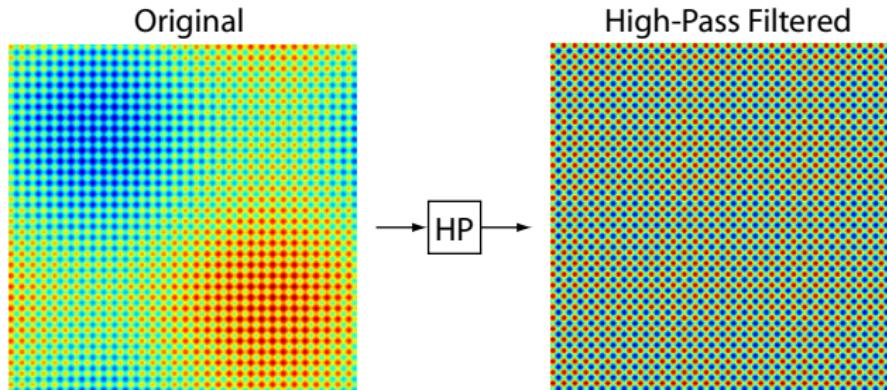
1000 iterations

Grünzweig *et al.*, MTZ, 2012, ?  
Kaestner *et al.*, WCNDT-18, 2012, Kaestner et al. (2012)

# High-pass filters and edge detection

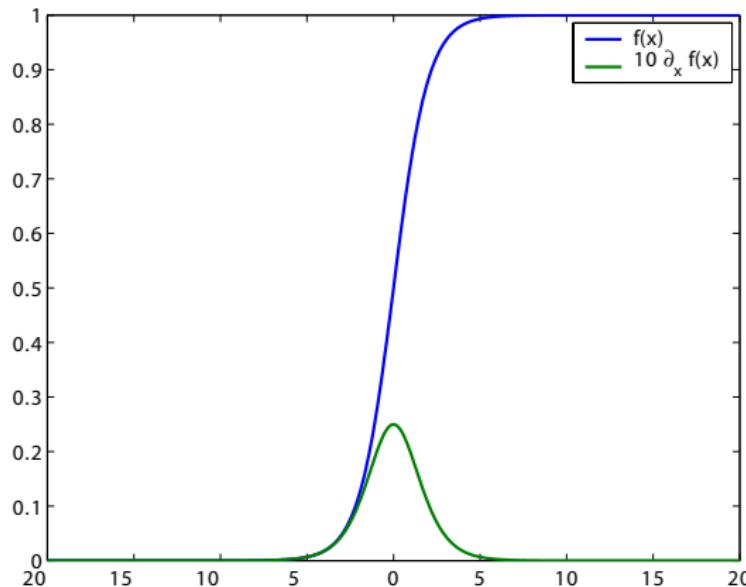
The effects of a *High-Pass* filter are in general

- rapid changes are enhanced
- slow changes are suppressed



Properties of the gradient:

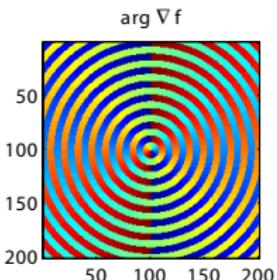
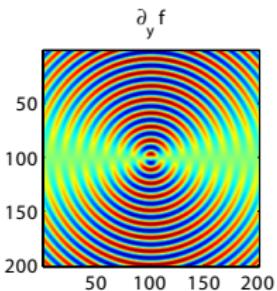
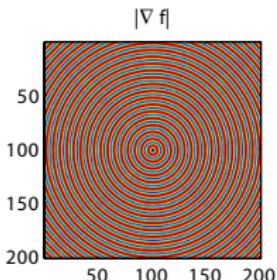
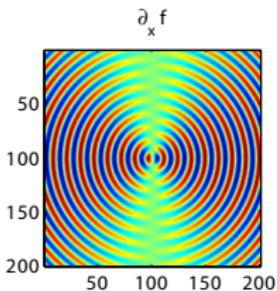
- Large response for step changes
- No response for constant levels



$$D_x = D_y^T = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

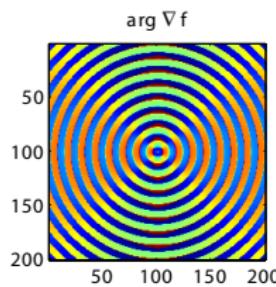
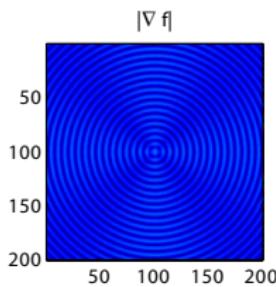
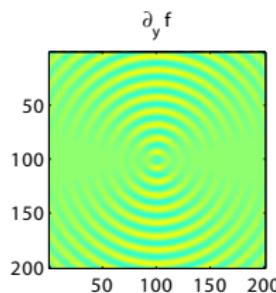
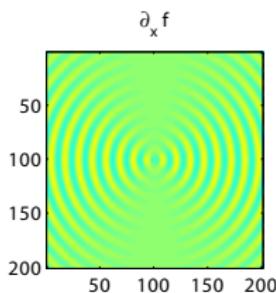
$$D_x = D_y^T = \frac{1}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$D_x = D_y^T = \frac{1}{32} \begin{bmatrix} 3 & 0 & -3 \\ 10 & 0 & -10 \\ 3 & 0 & -3 \end{bmatrix}$$



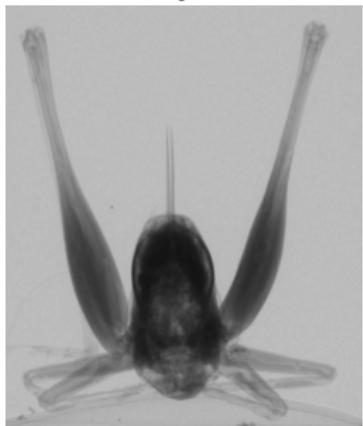
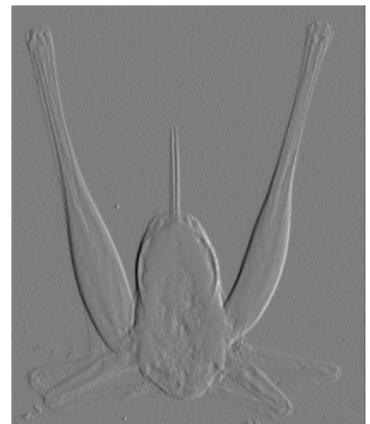
Jähne (2002)

$$L_x = \frac{1}{4} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -2 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad L_y = \frac{1}{4} \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ -2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$



# Gradient of a Real Image

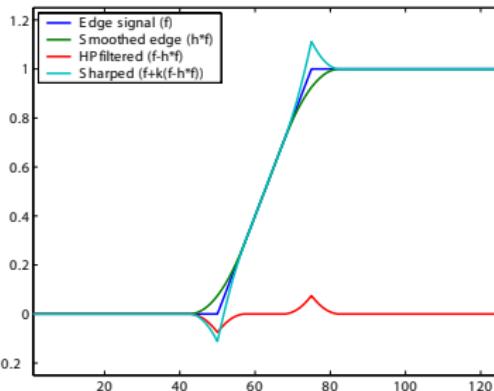
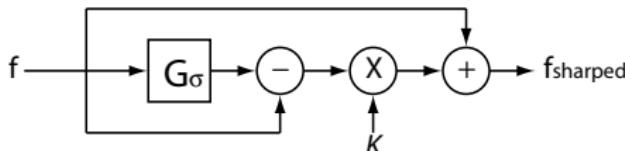
Original

 $\partial_y$  $\partial_x$ 

A way to enhance the edge contrast is the *unsharp mask* filter:

$$f_{\text{sharped}} = f + K(f - G_\sigma * f) \quad (11)$$

## Block diagram



# Sharpening Images – 2D Example

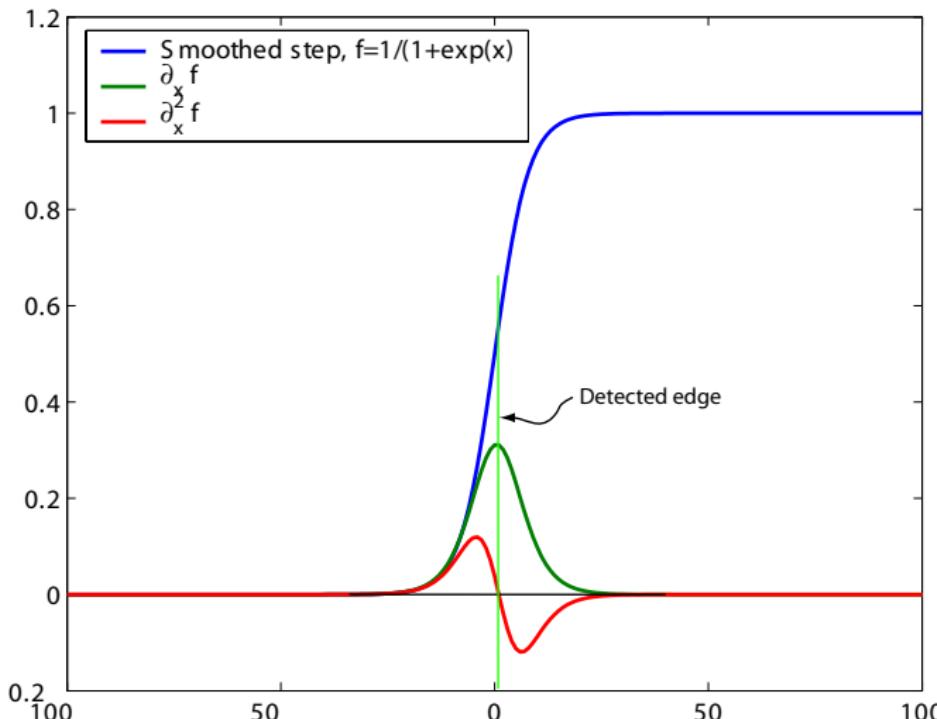
 $\sigma=1.5, K=15$  $\sigma=1.5, K=10$ 

Original

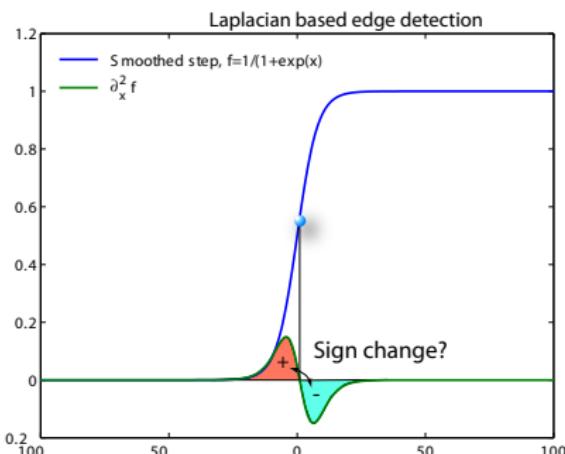
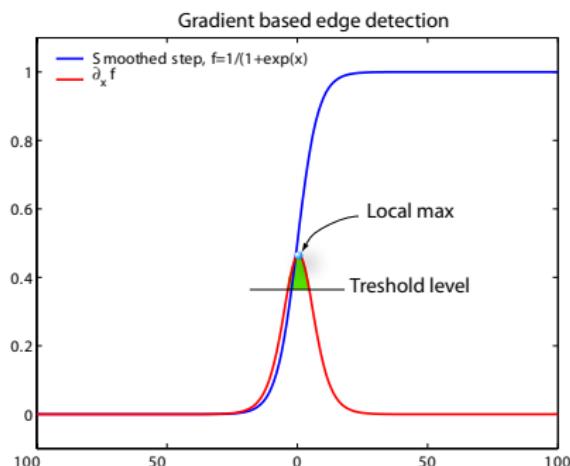
 $\sigma=10, K=15$  $\sigma=10, K=10$ 

The interesting features of an edge are.

- Edges have a large high frequency component
- The gradient has a larger amplitude at the edge



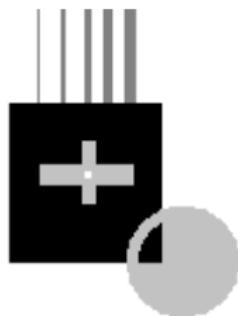
Edges can be detected with first and second derivatives



A simple Laplacian-based edge detector:

- Compute  $g = L_x * f + L_y * f$ , with  $L_x = L_y^T = [1 \ -2 \ 1]$
- Assign  $g \stackrel{\text{Background}}{\underset{\text{Edge}}{\gtrless}} 0$

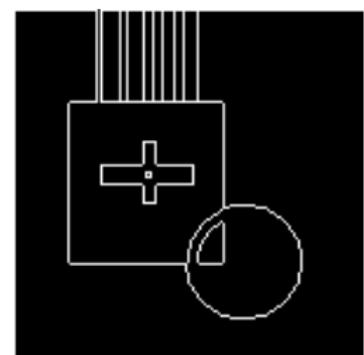
Original



$\nabla^2 f$



$\nabla^2 f < 0$



## Problem

*The large problem for an edge detector is noise, it can*

- *Hide relevant edges*
- *Result in undesired edges*

## Solutions

- Smooth image prior to edge detections
- Track edges

Edge detection robustness is improved by perpendicular smoothing.  
Popular edge detectors are:

### Sobel edge detector masks

-1	-2	-1
1	2	1

-1		1
-2		2
-1		1

### Prewitt edge detector masks

-1	-1	-1
1	1	1

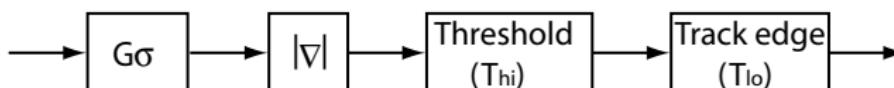
-1		1
-1		1
-1		1

See e.g. Haralik and Shapiro (1992)

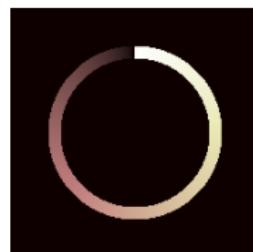
The edge detection performance can be improved by combining

- Smoothing
- Thresholding
- Tracking

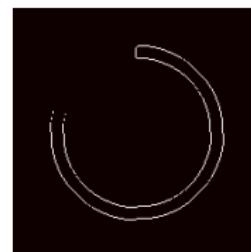
### Block diagram



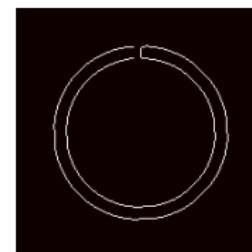
### Example



Original



Sobel



Canny

Canny (1986)

# Filters in the frequency domain

Changing the representation of an image by

- Mapping the image information to a new domain
- The spatial frequency components are explored

$$G(\xi_1, \xi_2) = \mathcal{F}\{g\} = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} g(x, y) e^{-i(\xi_1 x + \xi_2 y)} dx dy$$

### Some useful properties of the FT

- Addition

$$af(x) + bg(x) \Leftrightarrow aF(\omega) + bG(\omega)$$

- Convolution

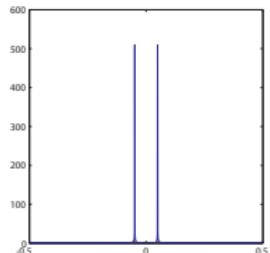
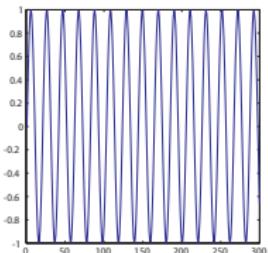
$$f * g(t) \Leftrightarrow F(\omega) \cdot G(\omega)$$

- Symmetry

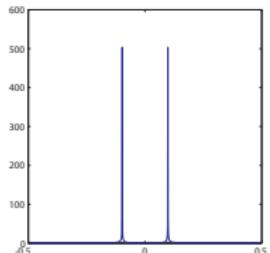
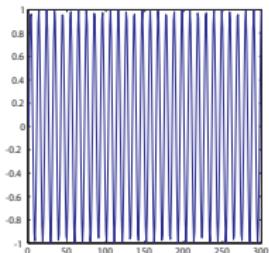
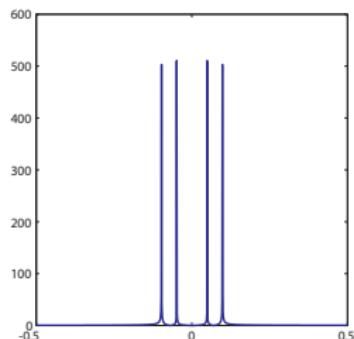
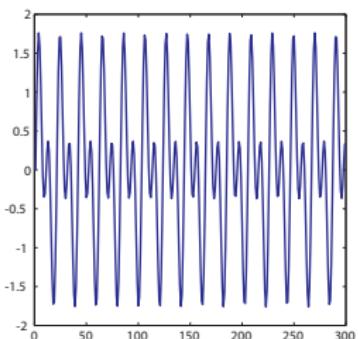
$$x \in \mathbf{R} \Rightarrow F(\omega) = F(-\omega)$$

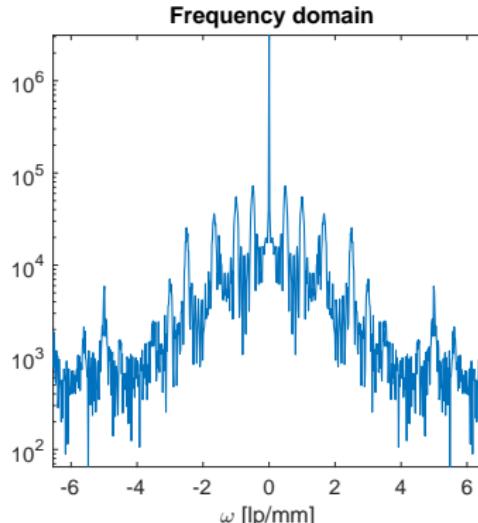
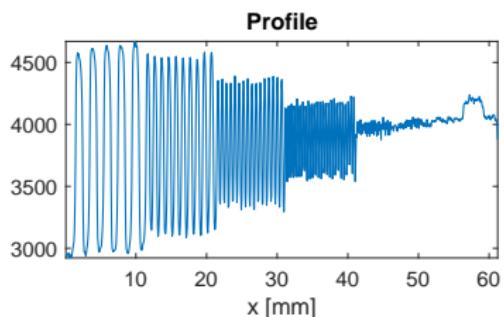
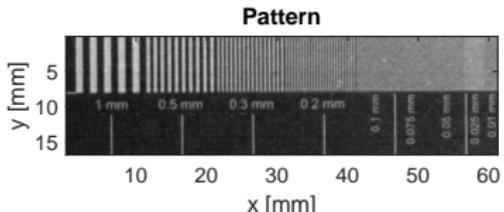
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General Jähne Jähne (2002) or Detailed Granlund Granlund and Knutsson (1995)

$f(t)$  and  $\mathcal{F}\{f\}$ 

+

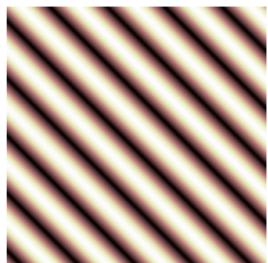
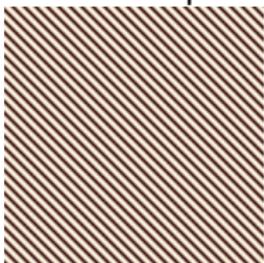
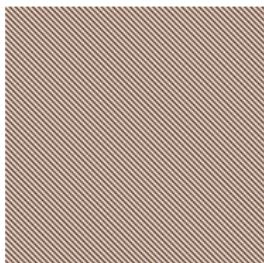
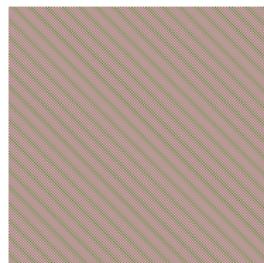
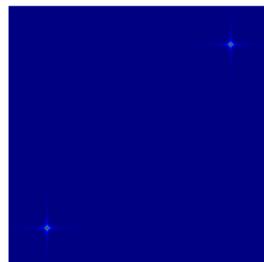
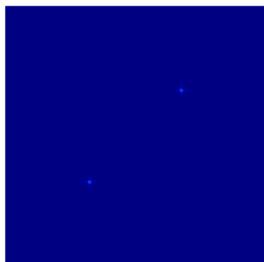
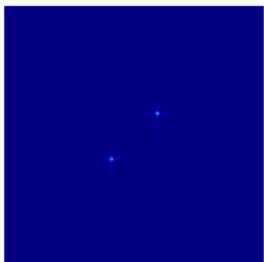
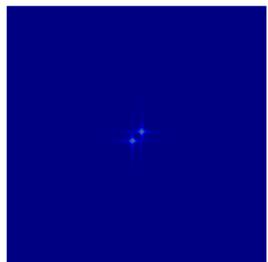
 $g(t)$  and  $\mathcal{F}\{g\}$  $f(t) + g(t)$  and  $\mathcal{F}\{f\} + \mathcal{F}\{g\}$ 



What we can see:

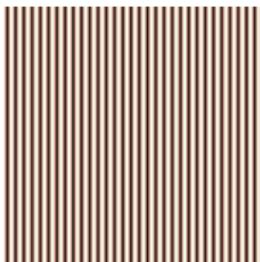
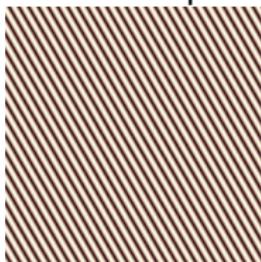
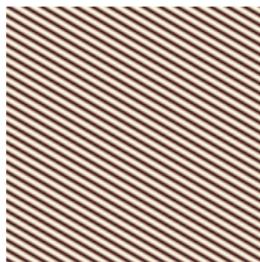
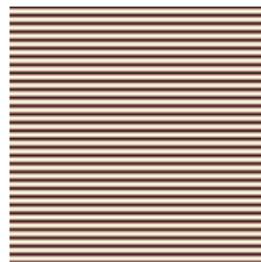
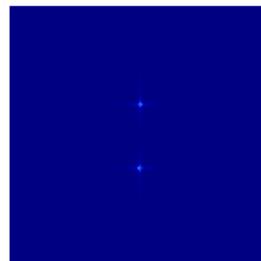
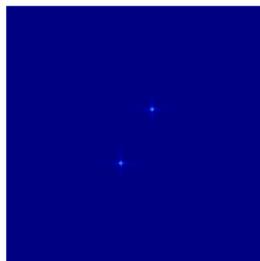
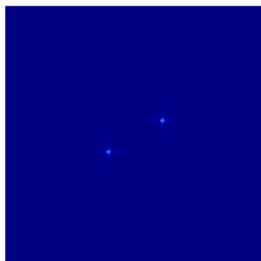
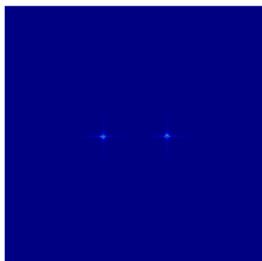
- Peaks for each line frequency
- Smoothing window
- Noise level

Spatial domain

 $\omega = 0.05$  $\omega = 0.25$  $\omega = 0.5$  $\omega = 1.0$ 

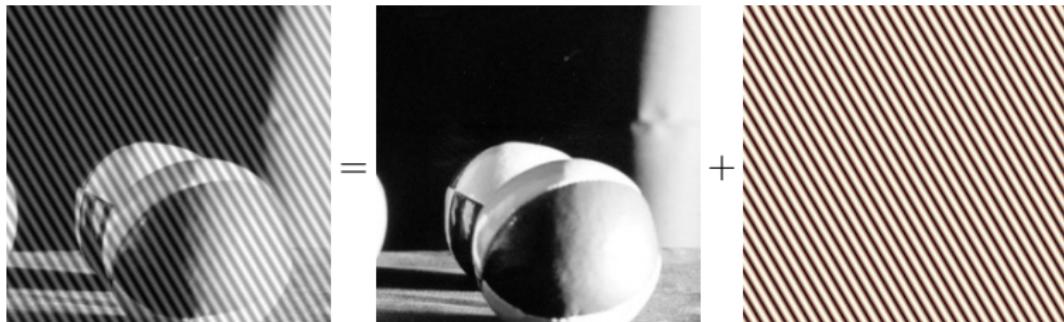
Frequency domain

Spatial domain

 $\theta = 0$  $\theta = 30^\circ$  $\theta = 60^\circ$  $\theta = 90^\circ$ 

Frequency domain

You have



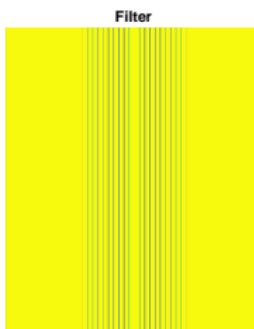
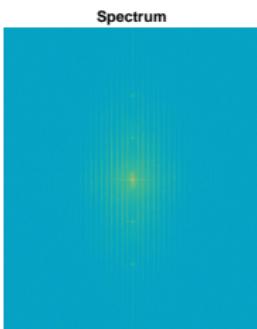
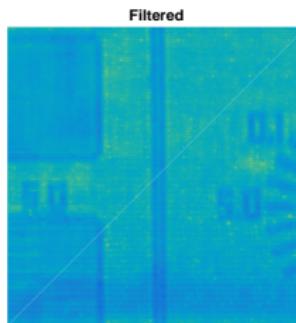
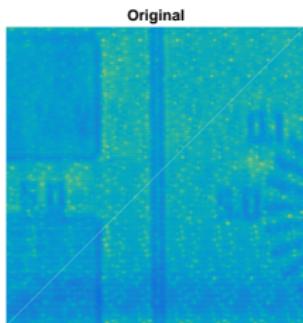
Filter with a band stop filter defined as

$$H(\omega_1, \omega_2) = \frac{1}{1 + Ae^{-\frac{((\omega_1 \pm \omega_c \cos(\alpha))^2 - (\omega_2 \pm \omega_c \sin(\alpha))^2)}{2\sigma^2}}} \quad (12)$$

The image is processed by

$$f_{filtered} = \mathcal{F}^{-1} \{ H \cdot \mathcal{F} \{ f_{raw} \} \}$$

# Filter cyclic patterns



This part mainly covered spatial filter such as

- Linear spatially invariant filter
  - Low-Pass filters for Smoothing
  - High-Pass filters for Edge enhancement and detection
- Non-linear filters

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