

Chapter 2. Signals and Signal Space

Communication Theory - 2026

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Definition: Signal and System

Signal

A signal is a set of information or data.

The signals are functions of the independent variable **time t**.

- Examples: Audio signals, video signals, sensor data, etc.

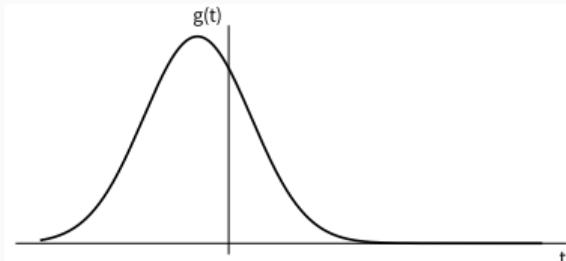
System

Signals may be processed further by systems, which may modify them or extract additional information from them.

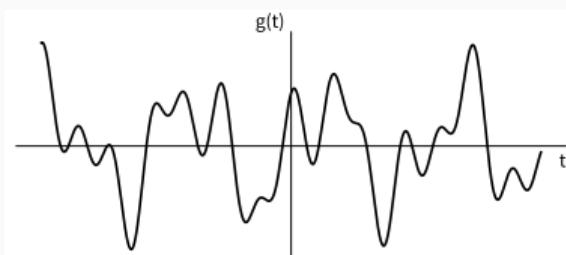
Thus, a system is an entity that processes signals (**inputs**) to yield another set of signals (**outputs**).

- For example, an antiaircraft radar system processes the received signals (inputs) to determine the position and velocity of an aircraft (outputs).
- More examples: Amplifiers, filters, modulators, demodulators, etc.

Energy vs Power Signals



(a) Signal with finite energy



(b) Signal with finite power

Figure 2.1: Examples of signals

Energy Signal

A signal is said to be an energy signal if its energy is finite and its average power approaches zero.

$$E = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} |g(t)|^2 dt < \infty, \quad P \rightarrow 0$$

Power Signal

A signal is said to be a power signal if its average power is finite and its energy approaches infinite.

$$P = \lim_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \int_{-T/2}^{T/2} |g(t)|^2 dt < \infty, \quad E \rightarrow \infty$$

Units of Signal Power

- The standard units of signal energy and power are the "joule" and the "watt".
- However, in practice, it is often customary to use logarithmic scales to describe signal power.
- A signal with average power of P watts has power of either P_{dBW} or P_{dBm} .

$$P_{dBW} = [10 \cdot \log_{10} P] \text{ dBW}$$

$$P_{dBm} = [30 + 10 \cdot \log_{10} P] \text{ dBm}$$

- For example,

$$P_{dBm} = -30 \text{ dBm} = 10^{-6} \text{ W.}$$

Example 2.1

Determine the suitable measures of the signals in the left Figure.

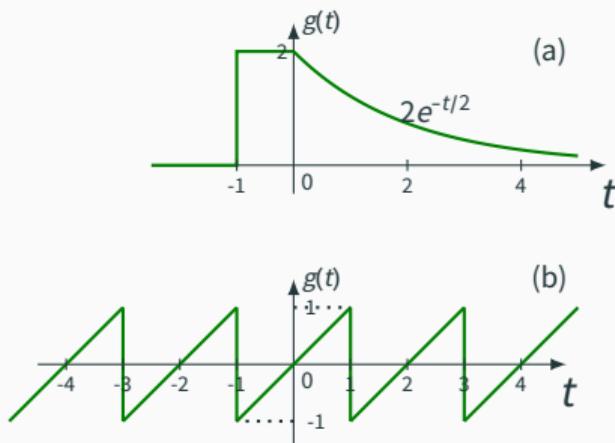


Figure 2.2: Signal for Example

(a) Energy signal

Energy signal. Power approaches 0 as $|t| \rightarrow \infty$.

$$E_g = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} |g(t)|^2 dt = \int_{-1}^{0} (2)^2 dt + \int_{0}^{\infty} 4e^{-t} dt = 4 + 4 = 8$$

(b) Power signal

Averaging $g^2(t)$ over an infinitely large interval is equivalent to averaging it over one period (2 seconds).

$$\begin{aligned} P_g &= \lim_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \int_{-T/2}^{T/2} |g(t)|^2 dt = \frac{1}{T} \int_{-T/2}^{T/2} |g(t)|^2 dt \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \int_{-1}^{1} t^2 dt = \frac{1}{3} \end{aligned}$$

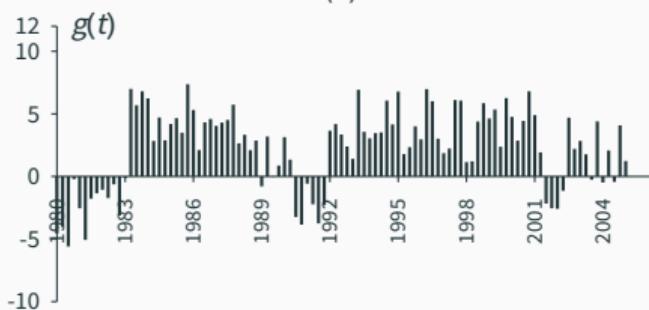
Classification of Signals

1. Continuous time and discrete time signals
2. Analog and digital signals
3. Periodic and aperiodic signals
4. Energy and power signals
5. Deterministic and probabilistic signals

Figure 2.3 Continuous vs Discrete Time Signals



(a)



Annualized U.S. GDP quarterly percentage growth

(b)

(a) Continuous Time Signal

Continuous time signals are specified for every value of time t . Many examples including:

- Audio recordings in analog media like LP, magnetic cassette, or reel-to-reel tapes.
- Signals received through AM/FM radio channel.

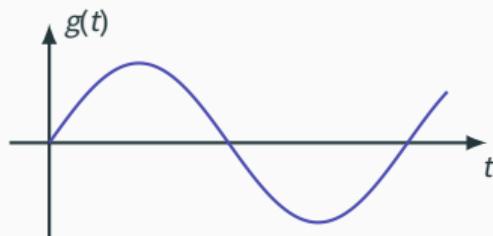
(b) Discrete Time Signal

Discrete time signals are specified only at discrete points of $t = nT$. Many examples including:

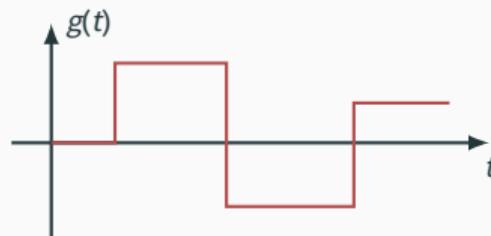
- The quarterly gross domestic product (GDP), stock market daily averages, and monthly sales of a corporation.
- Audio signals formatted by MP3, HE-AAC, FLAC, or ALAC.

Figure 2.3: Continuous vs Discrete Time Signals

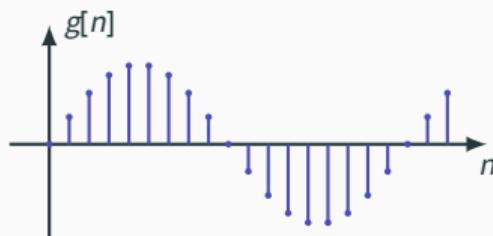
Figure 2.4 Classification of Signals



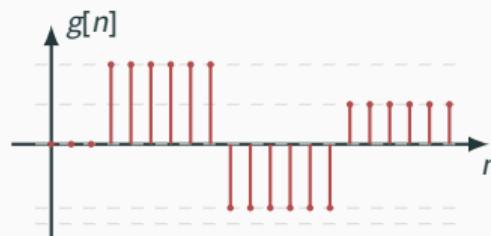
(a) Analog, Continuous-time



(b) Digital, Continuous-time



(c) Analog, Discrete-time



(d) Digital, Discrete-time

Figure 2.4: Classification of signals based on amplitude and time domains

Summary

- **Unit Step $u(t)$:** 인과성(Causality) 표현의 핵심
- **Operations:** $x(at - b)$ 꼴의 변환을 자유자재로 다뤄야 함
- **Correlation:** 통신 시스템에서 수신 신호를 검출(Detection)하는 기본 원리