Lecture2:
Basic physics of semiconductor (2)

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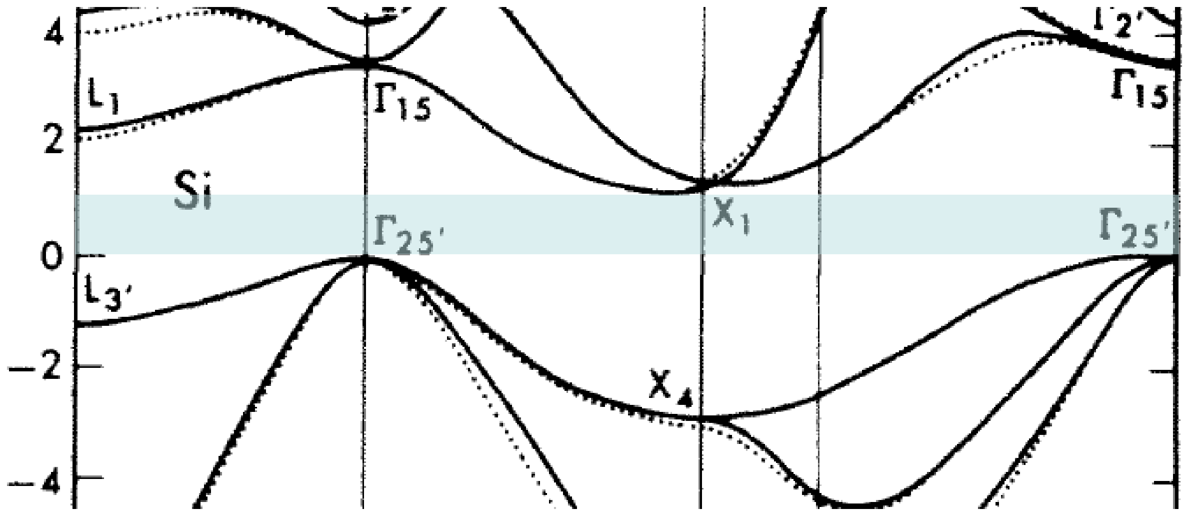
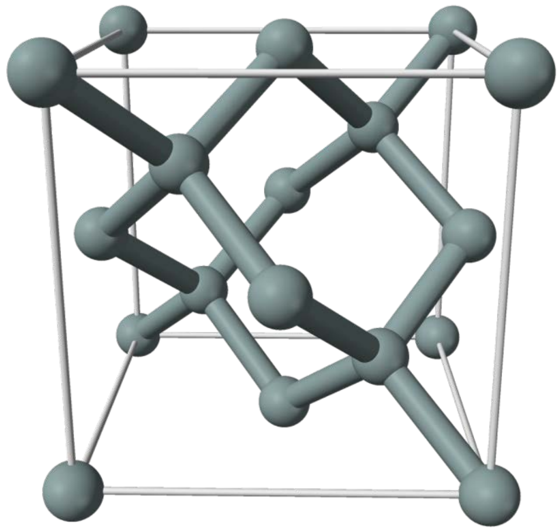
Review

- Why semiconductor technology?
- Silicon has the diamond crystal structure.
- Its band structure (Band gap ~ 1.12 eV)





- At 0K, valence bands are completely filled.
  - Upper ones (conduction bands) are completely empty.

I-680 (a <u>*free*</u>way in California)

- (Google image)

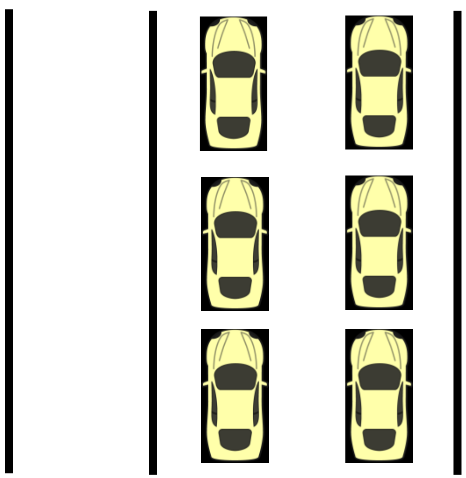
NOT free.
Almost empty.
Fast.

Free.
Crowed.
Slow.

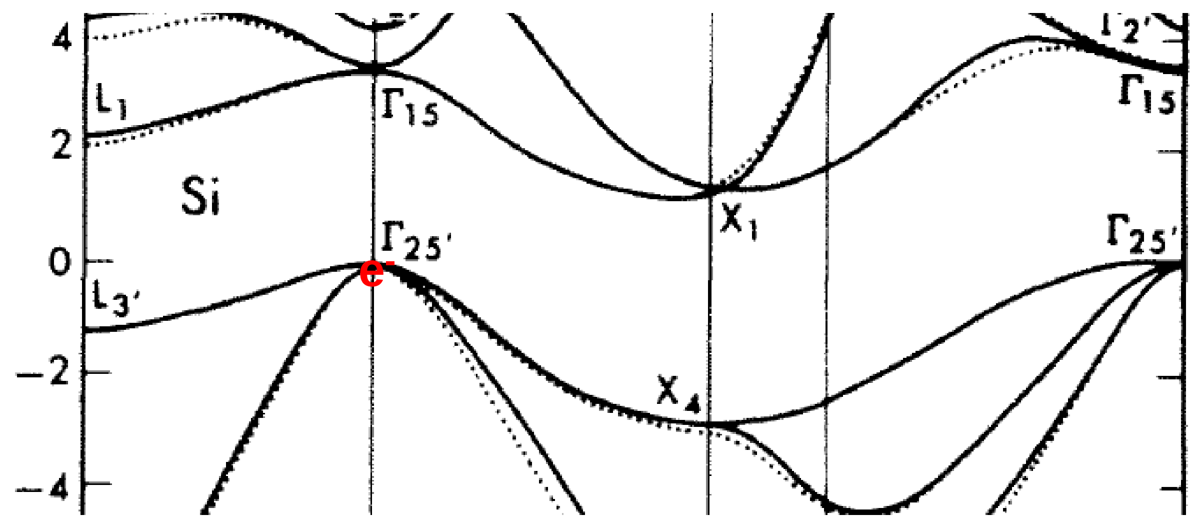
- Once again, in this analogy, fare = energy
  - Then, who pays?

Thermal energy

- At higher temperatures, electrons gain thermal energy.
  - The covalent bonds are broken.
  - They act as free charge carriers.



(Google Image)



Go-stones

- Concept of holes
  - When freed from a covalent bond, an electron leaves a “void” behind.
  - It – the void – is called a “hole.”

Go-stones
(Google Image)

- Electrons and holes are charge-carriers.

Intrinsic carrier density

- At higher temperatures,
  - There will be a certain amount of electrons and holes.
  - How many “free” electrons? (Assume the intrinsic material.)
  - It is the meaning of the intrinsic carrier density, n_i.

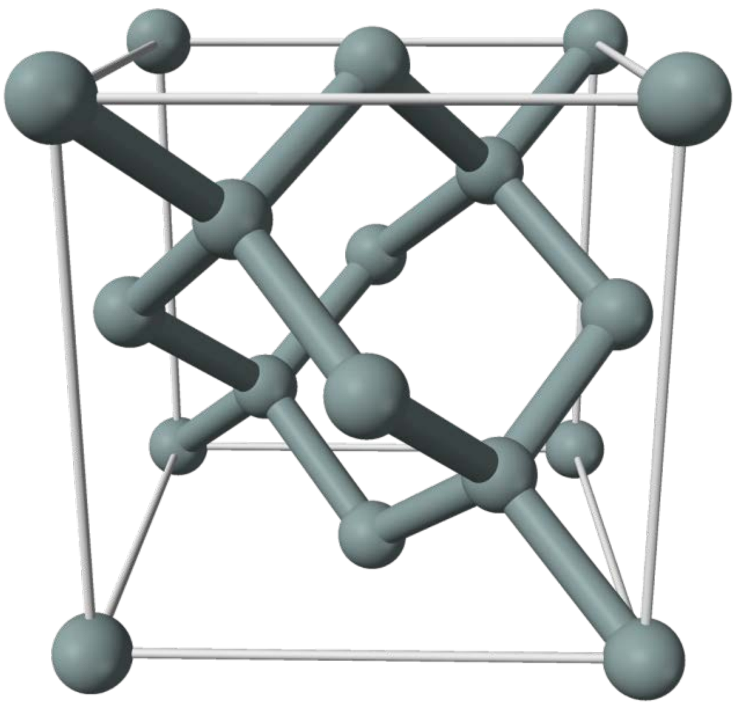
- Expression of n_i

$$n_i = 5.2 \times 10^{15}\, T^{1.5} \exp \frac{-E_g}{2k_B T} \quad [electrons/cm^3]$$

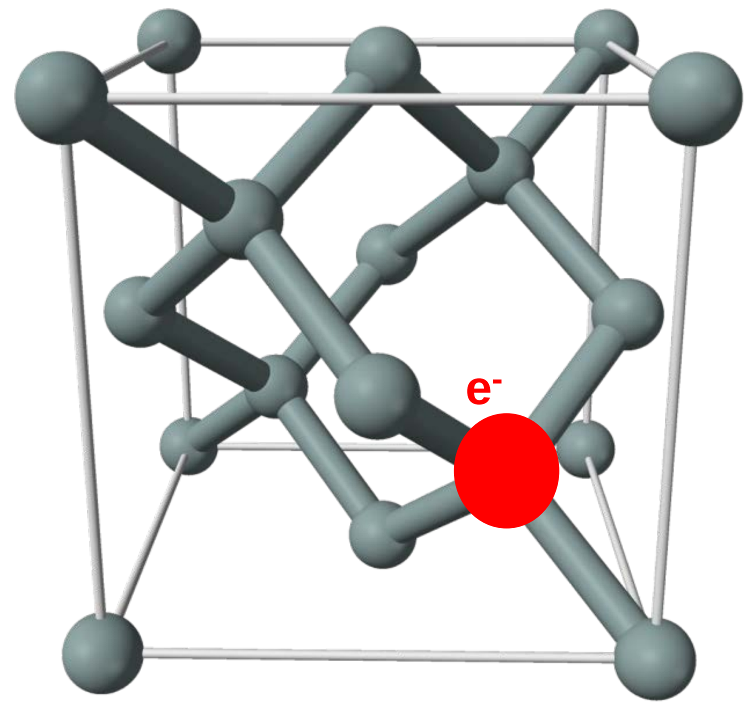
  - Boltzmann constant, k_B
  - At 300K, n_i is roughly 10^{10} $[electrons/cm^3]$.

Impurity atom

- The phosphorus atom has 5 valence electrons.
  - Additional electron (**e⁻** in the right figure) serves as a charge carrier.



Pure silicon



Silicon with “impurity” atom
(For example, phosphorus)

Impurity atoms

- One impurity atom contributes a "free" electron.
  – If 2 (, 3, 4, 5, …) phosphorus atoms are introduced?
  – 2 (, 3, 4, 5, …) additional electrons will be generated!
- More specifically,
  – When the density of the phosphorus atom is $N\ [atoms/cm^3]$,
  – The electron density becomes $N\ [electrons/cm^3]$.
- Typical value? (Feeling about the numbers)
  – $10^{15}\ [atoms/cm^3]$: Almost no impurity
  – $10^{17}\ [atoms/cm^3]$: Low (or moderate) impurity density
  – $10^{19}\ [atoms/cm^3]$: High impurity density (Not extremely high)
- What is it good for?
  – Conductivity can be changed drastically.

n-type? p-type?

- Phosphorus has 5 valence electrons.
  - Therefore, it contributes an electron.
  - n-type
- Boron has 3 valence electrons.
  - It cannot provide 4 valence electrons to complete 4 bonds.
  - Instead, it contributes a hole.
  - p-type

Minority carrier density

- Majority vs. minority
  - In the n-type semiconductor, electrons are majority carriers.
  - On the other hand, holes are minority carriers.

  - At equilibrium,

$$np = n_i^2$$

Nonequilibrium

- Up to now, we have considered the equilibrium case.

- Various ways to generate the nonequilibrium cases:
  - Electric potential difference
  - Others?

- Result?
  - Flow of charged particles!