

The Thévenin Equivalent Circuit

A Thévenin equivalent circuit consists of a voltage source (V_{Th}) in series with a resistor (R_{Th}) and two terminals, **A** and **B**, as shown in figure 1.

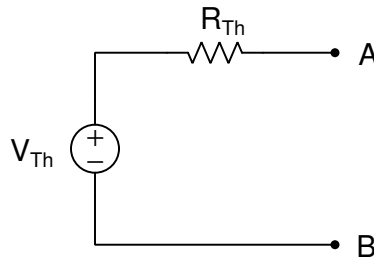


Figure 1: Thévenin equivalent circuit.

Two terminals, **A** and **B**, in an arbitrary circuit can be represented by a Thévenin equivalent circuit. To compute the Thévenin equivalent circuit:

1. Calculate the open circuit voltage (V_{AB}) between terminal **A** and terminal **B**. This calculation can be performed using KVL, KCL, Ohm's law, nodal analysis, mesh analysis, source transformations or any combination of these. The Thévenin equivalent voltage is equal to this open circuit voltage: $V_{Th} = V_{AB}$.
2. Deactivate all independent voltage sources and independent current sources in the circuit. Independent voltage sources are replaced with a short circuit; independent current sources are replaced with an open circuit. Calculate the Thévenin equivalent resistance (R_{Th}) by one of the two methods below:
 - (a) Attach an independent “test” voltage source or an independent “test” current source between terminal **A** and terminal **B**. Calculate the voltage across the “test” source (V_{test}) and the current through the “test” source (I_{test}). R_{Th} is the resistance seen by the “test” source: $R_{Th} = \frac{V_{test}}{I_{test}}$.
 - (b) If the circuit does not contain any dependent voltage sources or dependent current sources, calculate the equivalent resistance between terminal **A** and terminal **B**. R_{Th} is equal to this equivalent resistance.

The Norton Equivalent Circuit

A Norton equivalent circuit consists of a current source (I_N) in parallel with a resistor (R_N) and two terminals, **A** and **B**, as shown in figure 2.

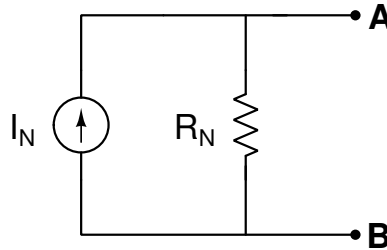


Figure 2: Norton equivalent circuit.

Two terminals, **A** and **B**, in an arbitrary circuit can be represented by a Norton equivalent circuit. To compute the Norton equivalent circuit:

1. Calculate the short circuit current (I_{AB}) between terminal **A** and terminal **B**. This calculation can be performed using KVL, KCL, Ohm's law, nodal analysis, mesh analysis, source transformations or any combination of these. The Norton equivalent current is equal to this short circuit current: $I_N = I_{AB}$.
2. The Norton equivalent resistance (R_N) is equal to the Thévenin equivalent resistance (R_{Th}). Calculate R_{Th} as described in step 2 in the Thévenin equivalent circuit.

Note:

The Norton equivalent circuit is the source transformation of the Thévenin equivalent circuit. Applying the source transformation: $I_N = \frac{V_{Th}}{R_{Th}}$ and $R_N = R_{Th}$.

The Thévenin equivalent circuit is the source transformation of the Norton equivalent circuit. Applying the source transformation: $V_{Th} = I_N R_{Th}$ and $R_{Th} = R_N$.