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NEC Protocol

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Universal Controllers

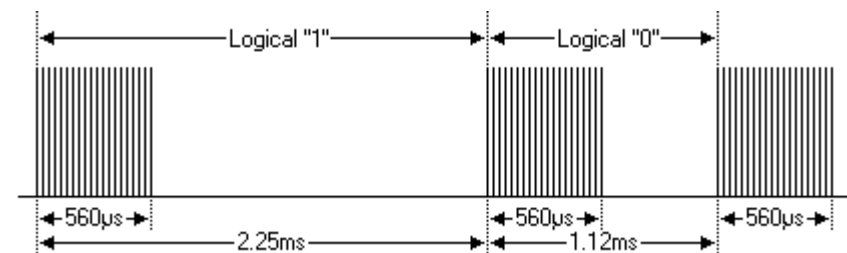
To my knowledge the protocol I describe here was developed by NEC. I've seen very similar protocol descriptions on the internet, and there the protocol is called Japanese Format. I do admit that I don't know exactly who developed it. What I do know is that it is used in my late VCR produced by Sanyo and was marketed under the name of Fisher. NEC manufactured the remote control IC.

This description was taken from the VCR's service manual. Those were the days, when service manuals were filled with useful information!

Features

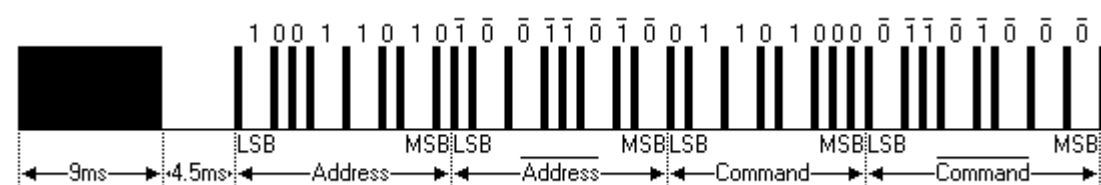
- 8 bit address and 8 bit command length
- Address and command are transmitted twice for reliability
- Pulse distance modulation
- Carrier frequency of 38kHz
- Bit time of 1.12ms or 2.25ms

Modulation

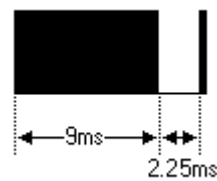


The NEC protocol uses pulse distance encoding of the bits. Each pulse is a 560μs long 38kHz carrier burst (about 21 cycles). A logical "1" takes 2.25ms to transmit, while a logical "0" is only 1.12ms. The recommended carrier duty-cycle is 1/4 or 1/3.

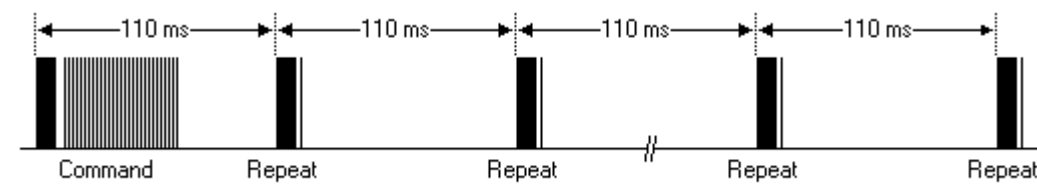
Protocol



The picture above shows a typical pulse train of the NEC protocol. With this protocol the LSB is transmitted first. In this case Address \$59 and Command \$16 is transmitted. A message is started by a 9ms AGC burst, which was used to set the gain of the earlier IR receivers. This AGC burst is then followed by a 4.5ms space, which is then followed by the Address and Command. Address and Command are transmitted twice. The second time all bits are inverted and can be used for verification of the received message. The total transmission time is constant because every bit is repeated with its inverted length. If you're not interested in this reliability you can ignore the inverted values, or you can expand the Address and Command to 16 bits each!



A command is transmitted only once, even when the key on the remote control remains pressed. Every 110ms a repeat code is transmitted for as long as the key remains down. This repeat code is simply a 9ms AGC pulse followed by a 2.25ms space and a 560μs burst.



Example Commands

The table below lists the messages sent by the remote control of my late Fisher 530 VCR (it served us well during its 20 years long life).

NEC Message	Key Function
\$68-\$00	Play
\$68-\$01	Rec
\$68-\$02	Audio Dub
\$68-\$03	Frame Adv
\$68-\$04	Slow
\$68-\$05	Quick
\$68-\$06	Cue
\$68-\$07	Review
\$68-\$08	FF
\$68-\$09	Rew
\$68-\$0A	Stop
\$68-\$0B	Pause/Still
\$68-\$0C	Up key
\$68-\$1E	Down key

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