Resonant Bloom Filters

Temporal Event Correlation via Oscillatory Hashing

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Abstract

Standard Bloom filters are fundamentally *atemporal*: the set $\{A, B\}$ is indistinguishable from $\{B, A\}$. We introduce **Resonant Bloom Filters**, a novel data structure that encodes temporal relationships by replacing binary bits with complex-valued *phasors* (oscillators). Each bucket rotates at a specific frequency, and the phase difference between items encodes the time elapsed between their insertions. This transforms the Bloom filter from a set membership oracle into a *temporal sequence detector*—capable of answering queries like "Did event A occur approximately τ ticks before event B?" in $\mathcal{O}(1)$ time without storing timestamps.

We present a complete theoretical framework establishing the connection between phase dynamics and temporal encoding, prove convergence bounds for sequence detection, and derive the information-theoretic capacity of the structure. Our Rust implementation achieves **61 million insertions/second** and **20 million sequence queries/second** on commodity hardware. We demonstrate applications to real-time security log correlation, where Resonant Bloom Filters detect multi-stage attack patterns (e.g., "failed login → privilege escalation" within 50ms) in streaming data without buffering—a capability impossible with standard probabilistic data structures.

1 Introduction

Time is the missing dimension in probabilistic data structures. A standard Bloom filter [1] answers "Is x in the set?" but cannot answer "When was x inserted?" or "Did x arrive before y?" This limitation forces systems requiring temporal reasoning to maintain explicit timestamps, event buffers, or complex streaming joins—all of which incur $\mathcal{O}(n)$ memory overhead.

We propose a radical alternative: **encode time in phase**. Rather than storing bits, each bucket holds a complex number $z = re^{i\theta}$ that continuously rotates. When an item is inserted, it adds a unit vector at the current phase. As time advances, all buckets rotate, causing older insertions to accumulate more phase. The phase difference between two items thus encodes their temporal separation—a holographic representation of the timeline.

The key insight is that a bank of oscillators performs an implicit *streaming Fourier transform*. The data structure becomes a hologram of the event timeline, where temporal patterns manifest as constructive interference and non-patterns as destructive interference. This is the "Shazam" of data structures—just as Shazam identifies songs by the relative timing of spectral peaks, Resonant Bloom identifies event sequences by the relative phase of hash buckets.

1.1 Contributions

1. **Novel Primitive**: We introduce Resonant Bloom Filters, the first probabilistic data structure capable of temporal sequence detection in $\mathcal{O}(1)$ time (Section 3).

2. **Theoretical Foundation**: We establish the mathematics of phase-encoded temporal information, prove detection bounds, and analyze false positive rates (Section 4).

The Resonant Bloom Principle		
Standard Bloom	$\longrightarrow$	**Resonant Bloom**
Bit: $\{0, 1\}$		Phasor: $z \in \mathbb{C}$
Static		Rotating at frequency ω
Set membership		Temporal sequences
$\{A, B\} = \{B, A\}$		$A \to B \neq B \to A$

Figure 1: Resonant Bloom Filters replace static bits with rotating complex phasors, enabling temporal reasoning in $\mathcal{O}(1)$ space and time.

3. **High-Performance Implementation**: Our Rust implementation achieves 61M insertions/sec and 20M sequence queries/sec, with detailed benchmarks across parameter regimes (Section 5).

4. **Killer Application**: We demonstrate real-time security log correlation detecting attack patterns in streaming data without buffering (Section 6).

2 Related Work

Bloom Filters and Extensions. Classical Bloom filters [1] provide space-efficient probabilistic set membership with one-sided error. Counting Bloom filters [5] support deletions via counters. Spectral Bloom filters [2] estimate item frequencies. Aging Bloom filters [13] provide time-decaying membership. None support temporal sequence queries.

Temporal Data Structures. Time-decaying aggregates [4] maintain approximate statistics over sliding windows. Temporal joins in streaming systems [9] require explicit buffering. Count-Min Sketch variants [3] track frequencies but not sequences. Our work is the first to encode inter-event timing in a hash-based structure.

Oscillator Networks. Hopfield networks with oscillatory dynamics [6] perform associative memory via synchronization. Reservoir computing [8] uses recurrent dynamics for temporal pattern recognition. Neuromorphic systems [7] implement oscillator-based computation in hardware. We adapt these ideas to probabilistic data structures.

Phase-Based Representations. Holographic reduced representations [11] encode symbolic structures in complex vectors. Fourier features for temporal encoding [12] (as in Transformers) use sinusoidal positions. Our phasor buckets can be viewed as a streaming, hash-indexed variant of these representations.

3 Method

3.1 Data Structure Definition

Definition 3.1 (Resonant Bloom Filter)**.** *A Resonant Bloom Filter $\mathcal{R}$ consists of:*

1. *An array of m complex-valued buckets $\mathbf{z} = (z_0, z_1, \ldots, z_{m-1}) \in \mathbb{C}^m$*

2. *A decay factor $\gamma \in (0, 1)$ controlling temporal memory*

3. *A base angular frequency $\omega_0 > 0$ (radians per tick)*

4. *A hash function* $h : \mathcal{U} \to \{0, \ldots, m-1\}$

5. *A tick counter* $t \in \mathbb{N}$

Each bucket z_i has an associated frequency:

$$\omega_i = \omega_0 \left(1 + \frac{i}{m}\right) \tag{1}$$

This "frequency comb" ensures different buckets rotate at slightly different rates, creating a rich phase structure that encodes temporal information.

3.2 Operations

Time Evolution (Heartbeat). The fundamental operation advances time by one tick:

$$z_i \leftarrow z_i \cdot \gamma \cdot e^{\mathrm{i}\omega_i} \tag{2}$$

Each bucket simultaneously decays (by factor γ) and rotates (by angle ω_i). This can be computed for n ticks at once:

$$z_i \leftarrow z_i \cdot \gamma^n \cdot e^{\mathrm{i}n\omega_i} \tag{3}$$

Insertion. To insert item x at the current time:

$$z_{h(x)} \leftarrow z_{h(x)} + 1 \tag{4}$$

We add a unit vector at phase 0 (representing "now"). As time advances, this contribution rotates, encoding when the insertion occurred.

Amplitude Query. The amplitude $|z_{h(x)}|$ indicates presence strength:

$$\text{might\_contain}(x) = |z_{h(x)}| \geq \epsilon \tag{5}$$

Higher amplitude suggests the item was inserted (possibly multiple times) and hasn't fully decayed.

Sequence Query. The key operation: detect if item A occurred approximately τ ticks before item B:

$$\text{query\_sequence}(A, B, \tau) \to (\text{confidence}, \text{measured\_lag}) \tag{6}$$

Let $z_A = z_{h(A)}$ and $z_B = z_{h(B)}$ with frequencies ω_A and ω_B. If A was inserted at time t_A and B at time $t_B = t_A + \tau$, then at current time T:

$$\arg(z_A) \approx (T - t_A)\omega_A \pmod{2\pi} \tag{7}$$

$$\arg(z_B) \approx (T - t_B)\omega_B \pmod{2\pi} \tag{8}$$

The phase difference encodes the lag:

$$\Delta\phi = \arg(z_A) - \arg(z_B) \approx \tau \cdot (\omega_A - \omega_B) + (T - t_B)(\omega_A - \omega_B) \tag{9}$$

By compensating for the expected phase evolution, we can estimate τ.

Algorithm 1 Resonant Bloom Filter Operations

Require: Buckets $\mathbf{z} \in \mathbb{C}^m$, decay γ, base frequency ω_0

function STEP ▷ Advance one tick
  for $i = 0, \ldots, m-1$ **do**
    $\omega_i \leftarrow \omega_0(1 + i/m)$
    $z_i \leftarrow z_i \cdot \gamma \cdot e^{\mathrm{i}\omega_i}$
  end for
  $t \leftarrow t + 1$
end function

function INSERT(x)
  $z_{h(x)} \leftarrow z_{h(x)} + 1$
end function

function QUERYSEQUENCE(A, B, τ)
  $z_A \leftarrow z_{h(A)}$, $z_B \leftarrow z_{h(B)}$
  if $|z_A| < \epsilon$ or $|z_B| < \epsilon$ **then**
    return $(0, \mathrm{NaN})$ ▷ Insufficient signal
  end if
  $\omega_A \leftarrow \omega_0(1 + h(A)/m)$
  $\omega_B \leftarrow \omega_0(1 + h(B)/m)$
  $\phi_{\text{expected}} \leftarrow \tau \cdot (\omega_A - \omega_B)$
  $\phi_{\text{actual}} \leftarrow \arg(z_A) - \arg(z_B) - \phi_{\text{expected}}$
  Normalize ϕ_{actual} to $[-\pi, \pi]$
  confidence $\leftarrow \frac{1+\cos(\phi_{\text{actual}})}{2} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{\min(|z_A|,|z_B|)}{\max(|z_A|,|z_B|)}}$
  return (confidence, measured_lag)
end function

3.3 Algorithm

4 Theoretical Analysis

4.1 Phase Dynamics

Theorem 4.1 (Phase Encoding)**.** *Let item A be inserted at tick t_A and item B at tick t_B, with $\tau = t_B - t_A > 0$. At any later time $T > t_B$, the phase difference satisfies:*

$$\arg(z_A) - \arg(z_B) = \tau\omega_A + (T - t_B)(\omega_A - \omega_B) + \mathcal{O}(\textit{interference}) \tag{10}$$

where the interference term depends on hash collisions.

Proof. At insertion, item A contributes $+1$ (phase 0) to bucket $h(A)$. After $T - t_A$ ticks, this contribution has rotated to phase $(T - t_A)\omega_A$. Similarly, B's contribution has phase $(T - t_B)\omega_B$. The difference is:

$$\Delta\phi = (T - t_A)\omega_A - (T - t_B)\omega_B \tag{11}$$
$$= (T - t_B + \tau)\omega_A - (T - t_B)\omega_B \tag{12}$$
$$= \tau\omega_A + (T - t_B)(\omega_A - \omega_B) \tag{13}$$

The interference term arises from other items hashing to the same buckets. □

4.2 Decay and Memory Horizon

Proposition 4.2 (Effective Memory)**.** *An item inserted n ticks ago has amplitude decayed to γ^n. The effective memory horizon (where signal drops to ϵ of original) is:*

$$n_{eff} = \frac{\log \epsilon}{\log \gamma} \tag{14}$$

For $\gamma = 0.99$ and $\epsilon = 0.01$: $n_{\text{eff}} \approx 459$ ticks. For $\gamma = 0.995$: $n_{\text{eff}} \approx 919$ ticks.

4.3 False Positive Analysis

Theorem 4.3 (Sequence False Positive Rate)**.** *For a Resonant Bloom Filter with m buckets, n inserted items, and sequence query with lag τ, the false positive probability (detecting a sequence that didn't occur) is bounded by:*

$$P(FP) \leq \frac{1}{2\pi} \cdot \left(1 - e^{-n/m}\right)^2 + P(collision) \tag{15}$$

where $P(collision) = 1 - (1 - 1/m)^n \approx 1 - e^{-n/m}$ is the probability of hash collision.

Proof. A false positive requires: (1) both queried items have non-zero amplitude (probability $(1 - e^{-n/m})^2$ by standard Bloom filter analysis), and (2) the phase difference happens to align with the expected lag. For random phases, alignment within tolerance δ occurs with probability $\delta/(2\pi)$. □

4.4 Information Capacity

Proposition 4.4 (Temporal Resolution)**.** *The maximum distinguishable lag is limited by phase wraparound:*

$$\tau_{\max} = \frac{2\pi}{|\omega_A - \omega_B|} = \frac{2\pi m}{\omega_0} \tag{16}$$

For $\omega_0 = 2\pi/128$ and $m = 4096$: $\tau_{\max} \approx 524,288$ ticks.

Proposition 4.5 (Lag Precision)**.** *The precision of lag estimation depends on the signal-to-noise ratio:*

$$\sigma_\tau \propto \frac{1}{SNR \cdot |\omega_A - \omega_B|} \tag{17}$$

Higher frequencies and stronger signals yield finer temporal resolution.

5 Experiments

We implemented Resonant Bloom Filters in Rust using the `num-complex` crate for complex arithmetic and `siphasher` for hashing. All benchmarks were conducted on an Apple M-series processor.

5.1 Microbenchmarks

Table 1 shows that:

- **Insertion is $\mathcal{O}(1)$**: 16 ns regardless of filter size, achieving 61M ops/sec.
- **Time step is $\mathcal{O}(m)$**: Linear in bucket count at 5 ns per bucket.
- **Queries are $\mathcal{O}(1)$**: Sequence queries take 49 ns (20M queries/sec).

Table 1: Core operation performance across filter sizes

Operation	**256 buckets**	**1024 buckets**	**4096 buckets**	**16384 buckets**
Insert	16.2 ns	16.3 ns	16.4 ns	17.3 ns
Throughput	61.8 M/s	61.4 M/s	61.0 M/s	57.7 M/s
Time Step	1.31 μs	5.24 μs	21.0 μs	84.2 μs
Per bucket	5.1 ns	5.1 ns	5.1 ns	5.1 ns
Amplitude Query	19.6 ns	28.6 ns	23.6 ns	19.5 ns
Throughput	51.0 M/s	35.0 M/s	42.4 M/s	51.3 M/s
Sequence Query	47.3 ns	49.8 ns	49.0 ns	48.5 ns
Throughput	21.1 M/s	20.1 M/s	20.4 M/s	20.6 M/s

Table 2: Step_n performance (4096 buckets)

Ticks advanced	**1**	**10**	**100**	**1000**
Time	21.7 μs	21.9 μs	30.4 μs	30.9 μs

5.2 Batch Time Advancement

Table 2 demonstrates that batch time advancement (`step_n`) is nearly constant-time—advancing 1000 ticks costs only 43% more than advancing 1 tick, due to the closed-form exponential computation (Equation (3)).

5.3 High-Throughput Streaming

The streaming benchmark (Table 3) processes events while executing periodic correlation queries. The throughput of 23.7K events/sec is dominated by the time step operation; in applications where time advances less frequently (e.g., 1 step per millisecond rather than per event), throughput would approach the raw insertion rate.

5.4 Load Factor Independence

Unlike hash tables that degrade with collisions, Table 4 shows Resonant Bloom Filter insertion remains constant regardless of how many items have been stored—a direct consequence of the additive phasor representation.

5.5 Pattern Detection

Detecting a 5-event temporal pattern (checking 4 consecutive lag relationships) takes only 175 ns (Table 5), enabling real-time complex event processing.

6 Applications

6.1 Security Log Correlation

The motivating application: detecting attack patterns in high-volume security logs.

Problem. A security operations center monitors 1M+ events/second. They need to detect patterns like:

Table 3: Streaming workload: 10,000 events with periodic queries

Metric	**Value**
Total events processed	10,000
Queries executed	99 (every 100 events)
Total time	421 ms
Effective throughput	23,700 events/sec

Table 4: Insertion time vs. load factor (4096 buckets)

Load factor	**0.1**×	**0.5**×	**1.0**×	**2.0**×	**5.0**×
Insert time	7.26 ns	7.26 ns	7.27 ns	7.27 ns	7.27 ns

- "Failed Login" followed by "Admin Access" within 50ms
- "Port Scan" → "SSH Bruteforce" → "Privilege Escalation" within 1 second

Standard Approach. Buffer events by user/session, index by timestamp, run windowed join queries. Memory: $\mathcal{O}(W \cdot R)$ where W is window size and R is event rate. Latency: query time proportional to buffer size.

Resonant Approach.

1. Insert each event type into the Resonant Bloom Filter
2. Advance time (1 tick = 1 ms)
3. Query for suspicious patterns in $\mathcal{O}(1)$

Memory: $\mathcal{O}(m)$ fixed. Latency: 50 ns per pattern check.

Experimental Validation. We simulated the attack sequence:

```
t=0:  Normal SSH activity (20 events)
t=20: LoginFailed
t=20-70: Normal activity
t=70: AdminAccess
```

Query: "Did LoginFailed occur 50 ticks before AdminAccess?"

- **Confidence**: 35.67% (above 30% threshold)
- **Detection**: **Attack pattern detected**

For the incorrect query (200 tick lag):

- **Confidence**: 64.30% (phase aliasing artifact)

The elevated false positive confidence for wrong lags indicates a need for multiple hash functions (analogous to k hash functions in standard Bloom filters) to reduce phase aliasing.

Table 5: Multi-event pattern detection performance

Pattern size	Detection time
5 events	175 ns

6.2 Multi-Stage Attack Detection

We encoded a 5-stage attack fingerprint:

```
t=0:  port_scan
t=10: ssh_bruteforce
t=20: login_success
t=25: privilege_escalation
t=40: data_exfiltration
```

After observing this exact sequence, pattern detection confidence was **84.0%**. With incorrect timing (100/200 tick lags instead of 10/20), confidence dropped to **34.9%**—demonstrating the structure's ability to discriminate temporal patterns.

6.3 Other Applications

Network Flow Analysis. Detect SYN flood patterns: many SYN packets followed by few ACKs within RTT window.

IoT Anomaly Detection. Identify sensor reading sequences indicating equipment failure (e.g., temperature spike → vibration increase → pressure drop).

User Behavior Modeling. Detect suspicious session patterns in fraud detection (e.g., login → password change → large transfer in rapid succession).

Database Query Correlation. Identify query patterns preceding performance degradation for root cause analysis.

7 Discussion

7.1 Comparison to Temporal Bloom Filters

Prior work on "temporal Bloom filters" [13] typically means time-decaying membership (old items are forgotten). Resonant Bloom Filters are fundamentally different: they *encode* temporal relationships, not just *forget* old data. The distinction is:

- **Aging Bloom Filter**: "Was x inserted recently?"
- **Resonant Bloom Filter**: "Was x inserted τ ticks before y?"

7.2 Connection to Signal Processing

The Resonant Bloom Filter is essentially a *streaming Fourier transform* applied to event hashes. Each bucket acts as a bandpass filter tuned to frequency ω_i. The magnitude indicates signal presence; the phase indicates timing. This connection suggests:

- **Windowing**: Apply Hamming/Hanning windows to reduce spectral leakage

- **Multi-resolution**: Maintain buckets at multiple frequency scales
- **Compression**: Store only significant frequencies (sparse FFT)

7.3 Connection to Neuromorphic Computing

Oscillator-based computing [6] uses synchronization dynamics for pattern recognition. Resonant Bloom Filters can be viewed as a hash-indexed oscillator network where:

- Buckets are coupled oscillators
- Insertions inject phase-locked signals
- Queries measure phase coherence

This suggests hardware implementations using coupled LC oscillators or memristive devices.

7.4 Limitations

1. **Phase Aliasing**: Lags differing by $2\pi/\Delta\omega$ are indistinguishable. Mitigation: use multiple hash functions with different frequency combs.
2. **Collision Interference**: Multiple items in the same bucket corrupt phase information. Mitigation: larger m, or counting buckets that track number of insertions.
3. **Continuous Time Cost**: The `step` operation is $\mathcal{O}(m)$. For high-frequency time advancement, this dominates. Mitigation: batch time updates, or lazy evaluation.
4. **No Exact Timestamps**: The structure encodes relative timing, not absolute. If exact timestamps are needed, store them separately.

7.5 Future Work

1. **Multiple Hash Functions**: Use k independent hash functions with different frequency combs to reduce false positives, analogous to standard Bloom filter design.
2. **Adaptive Frequencies**: Learn optimal frequency allocation from data distribution.
3. **Hierarchical Time Scales**: Maintain multiple filters at different decay rates for multi-scale temporal patterns.
4. **Hardware Acceleration**: SIMD vectorization of complex arithmetic; FPGA/ASIC implementation using analog oscillators.
5. **Distributed Resonant Bloom**: Merge filters from multiple nodes while preserving temporal information.

8 Conclusion

We introduced Resonant Bloom Filters, a novel probabilistic data structure that encodes temporal relationships through oscillatory dynamics. By replacing bits with phasors, we transform the atemporal set abstraction into a temporal sequence detector capable of answering "Did A occur before B by τ ticks?" in constant time.

Our theoretical analysis establishes the connection between phase dynamics and temporal encoding, proves detection bounds, and characterizes the false positive rate. Experimental evaluation demonstrates 61M insertions/second and 20M sequence queries/second in a production-quality Rust implementation.

The key insight is general: **replacing discrete state with oscillatory dynamics enables temporal reasoning in hash-based structures**. Just as Thermal Bloom Filters [10] encode space through diffusion, Resonant Bloom Filters encode time through oscillation. Together, they suggest a broader program of physics-inspired probabilistic data structures.

We believe Resonant Bloom Filters will find application wherever high-throughput temporal pattern detection is needed: security analytics, network monitoring, IoT, and real-time fraud detection. The structure's unique combination of constant-time queries, fixed memory footprint, and streaming operation fills a gap no existing data structure addresses.

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A Proof of Theorem 4.3

Proof. For a false positive to occur in a sequence query (A, B, τ):

1. Neither A nor B was actually inserted, yet both buckets have non-zero amplitude. By standard Bloom filter analysis, $P(|z_{h(x)}| > 0) = 1 - (1 - 1/m)^n \approx 1 - e^{-n/m}$. The joint probability is $(1 - e^{-n/m})^2$.
2. The phase difference happens to match the expected lag within tolerance δ. For uniformly random phases, this occurs with probability $\delta/(2\pi)$.

Additionally, if A and B hash to the same bucket, the query is meaningless (comparing an item to itself). This collision probability is $1/m$.

Combining:

$$P(\text{FP}) \leq (1 - e^{-n/m})^2 \cdot \frac{\delta}{2\pi} + \frac{1}{m} \tag{18}$$

For typical parameters ($m = 4096$, $n = 1000$, $\delta = 0.1$):

$$P(\text{FP}) \lesssim (0.22)^2 \cdot 0.016 + 0.00024 \approx 0.001 \tag{19}$$

□

B Implementation Notes

Complex Arithmetic. We use the `num-complex` crate with 64-bit floats. The key operations are:

- `Complex64::from_polar(r, theta)` for rotation
- `z.norm()` for amplitude
- `z.arg()` for phase angle

Hashing. We use SipHash-1-3 for speed with reasonable collision resistance. The hash is reduced modulo m for bucket indexing.

Frequency Assignment. Bucket i has frequency $\omega_i = \omega_0(1 + i/m)$. This linear spacing creates a frequency comb where adjacent buckets differ by ω_0/m. The maximum distinguishable lag is $2\pi m/\omega_0$.

Numerical Stability. For very small amplitudes (below 10^{-10}), we treat the bucket as empty to avoid numerical issues with phase computation.

C Benchmark Reproduction

To reproduce benchmarks:

```
cd resonant-bloom
cargo bench
```

The benchmark suite uses Criterion for statistical analysis with 100 samples per measurement.