

Digital Audio Processing and Synthesis

AGENDA

Monday, October 13th 2025

02:30PM – 06:30PM (4h)

October 2025

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

- Sound
- ~~Audio Signal~~
- ~~From Analog to Digital~~
- ~~Sampling~~
- ~~Quantization~~
- ~~Digital Audio Formats~~
- ~~Digital Audio Processing and Synthesis~~
- ~~The Faust programming language~~
- ~~Faust playground!~~

November 2025

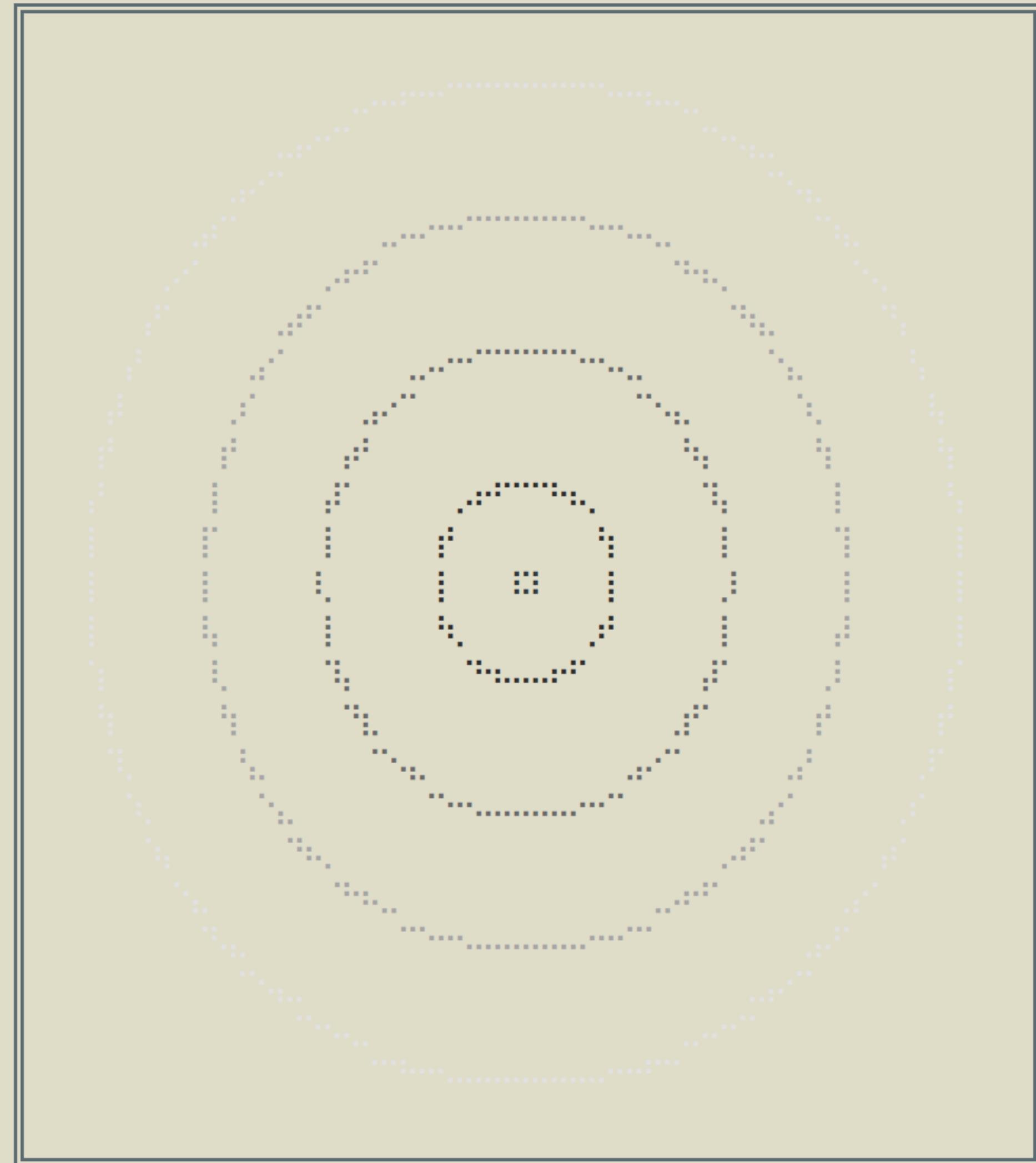
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

SOUND

[] Sound is a **pressure wave** that propagates through a **medium** (*gas, liquid or solid*).

[] Propagation is caused by the **oscillation** (*vibration*) of the medium's *particles*, around their **equilibrium** positions.

- Sound has the following **properties**:
 - **Speed**: ~343 m/s in **air**
 - **Amplitude**: in *Pascals (Pa)* or *Decibels (dB)*
 - **Period**: time between two oscillations
 - **Wavelength**: distance between two oscillations
 - **Frequency**: cycles/sec., in *Hertz (Hz, kHz, MHz)*
 - **Spectrum, or Timbre**



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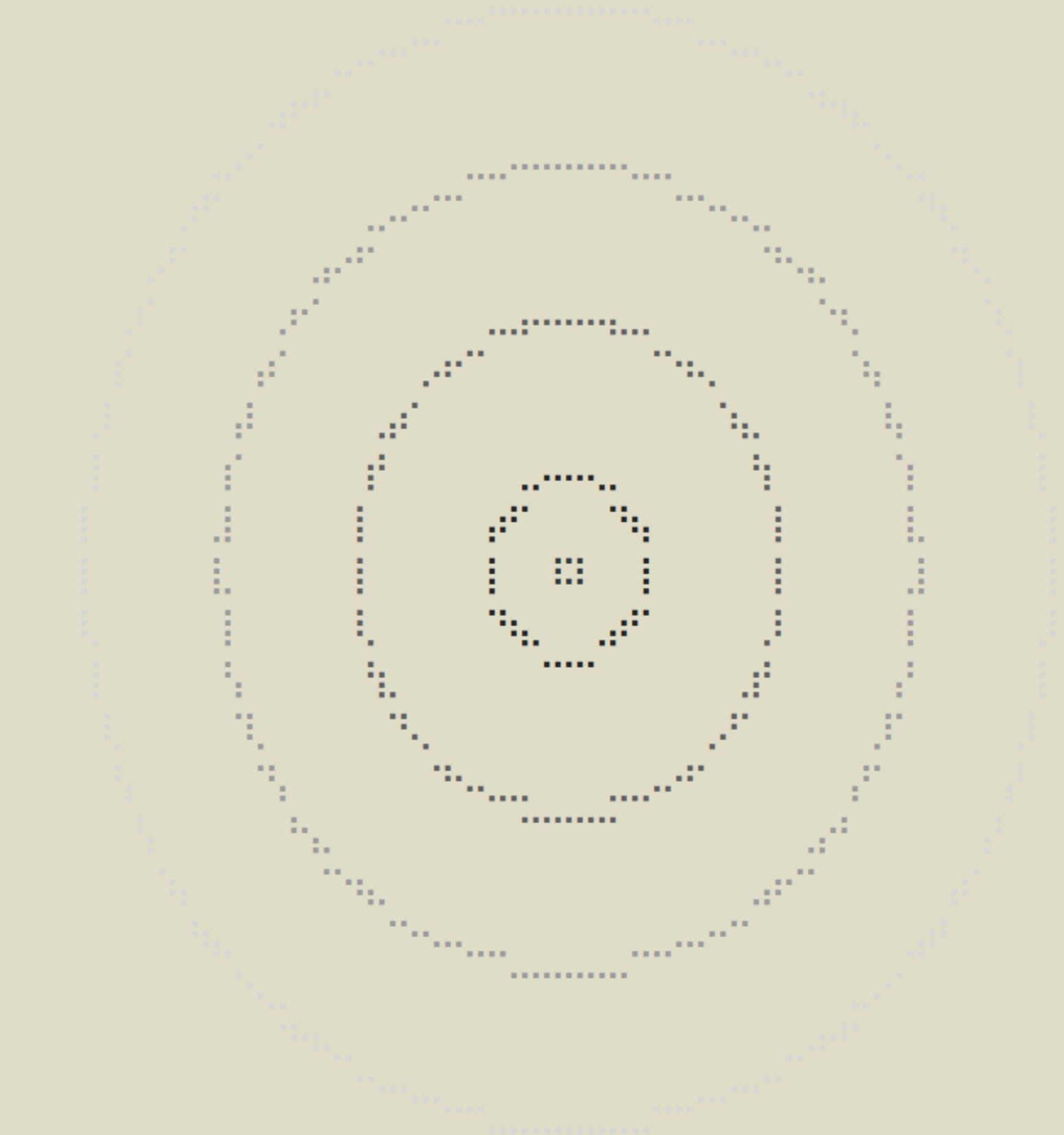
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SOUND

- Our **perception** of sound is made from the conversion of the vibrations reaching our **eardrums** to a *signal of nerve impulses*, transmitted and interpreted by **the brain**.
- Human ears can typically identify sounds **from 20 Hz to 20 kHz**.
 - **Bat:** 2000 to 110,000 Hz
 - **Porpoise:** 75 to 150,000 Hz
 - **Cat:** 45 to 64,000 Hz
 - **Dog:** 67 to 45,000 Hz
 - **Chicken:** 125 to 2,000 Hz

SIGNAL

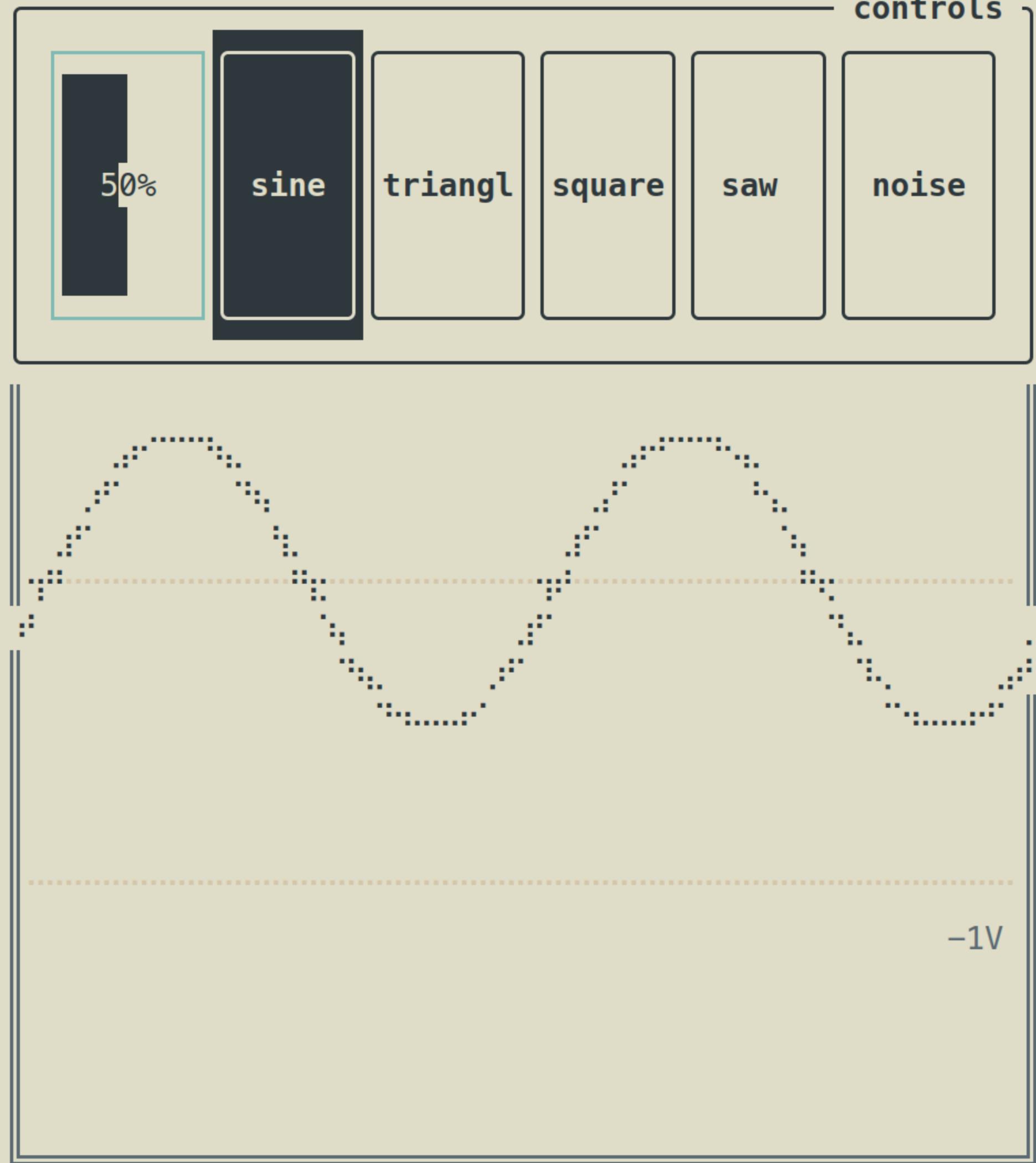
- A **signal** describes the evolution of data over time. In our case, the vibration of an entity (like the *membrane* of a *microphone*).
- Just like sound waves turning into nerve impulses, the analyzed data usually needs to be first converted to another *physical unit*, or *domain* (**transduction**) in order to adapt to measurement/processing tools.
- The vibration of a microphone's membrane is, for instance, usually converted to **continuous electrical current**, before it can be processed and/or analyzed. In this case, the signal is said to be "**analog**".

SIGNAL

[↳] With an oscilloscope, we can measure the **amplitude** of a signal at a given *point in time* (*time-domain*), through the visualisation of a **waveform**.

- An analog signal can already be processed as it is, with **analog effects**: *tape delay, distortion, chorus, reverberation (spring, plate)*, etc.

[↳] On the other hand, it is difficult to extract precise information about **frequency** and **spectrum**. For this purpose, it's far more efficient to switch to the **frequency domain**, which requires the analog signal to be turned into a **digital signal**...

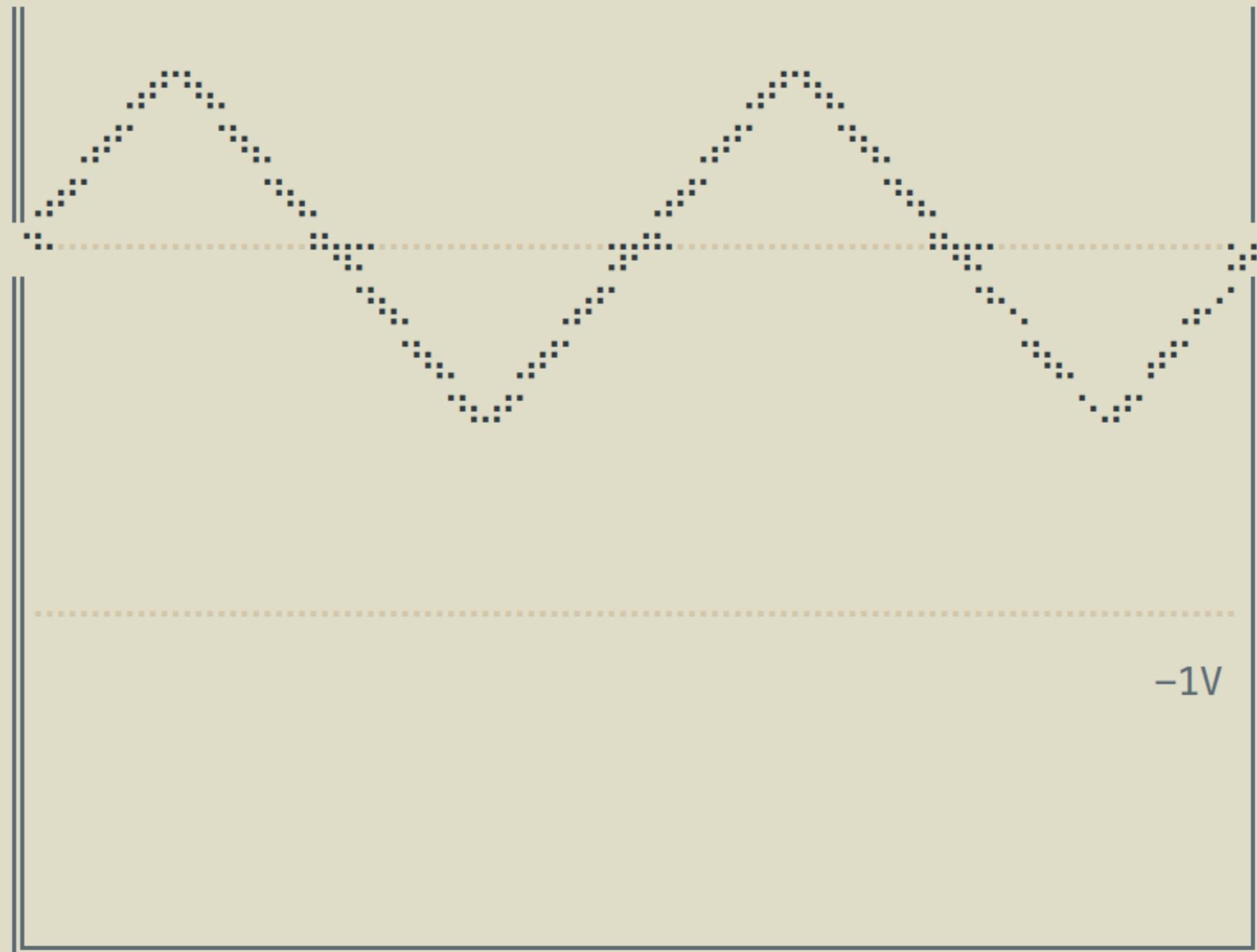
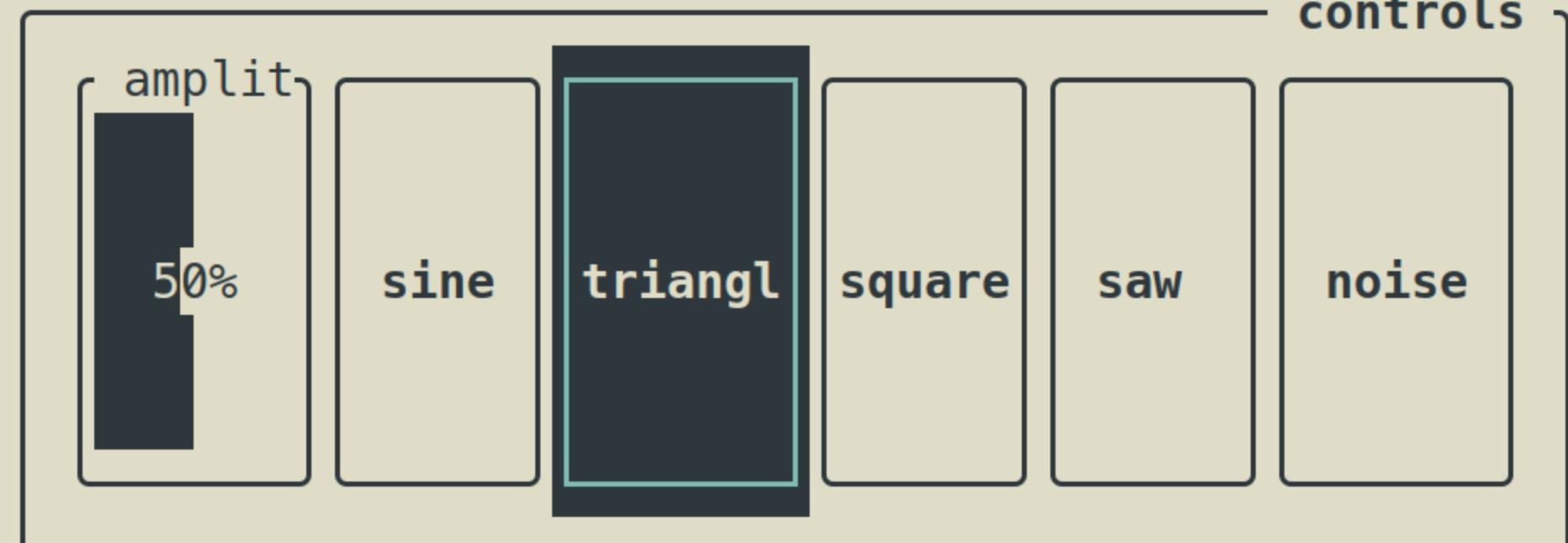


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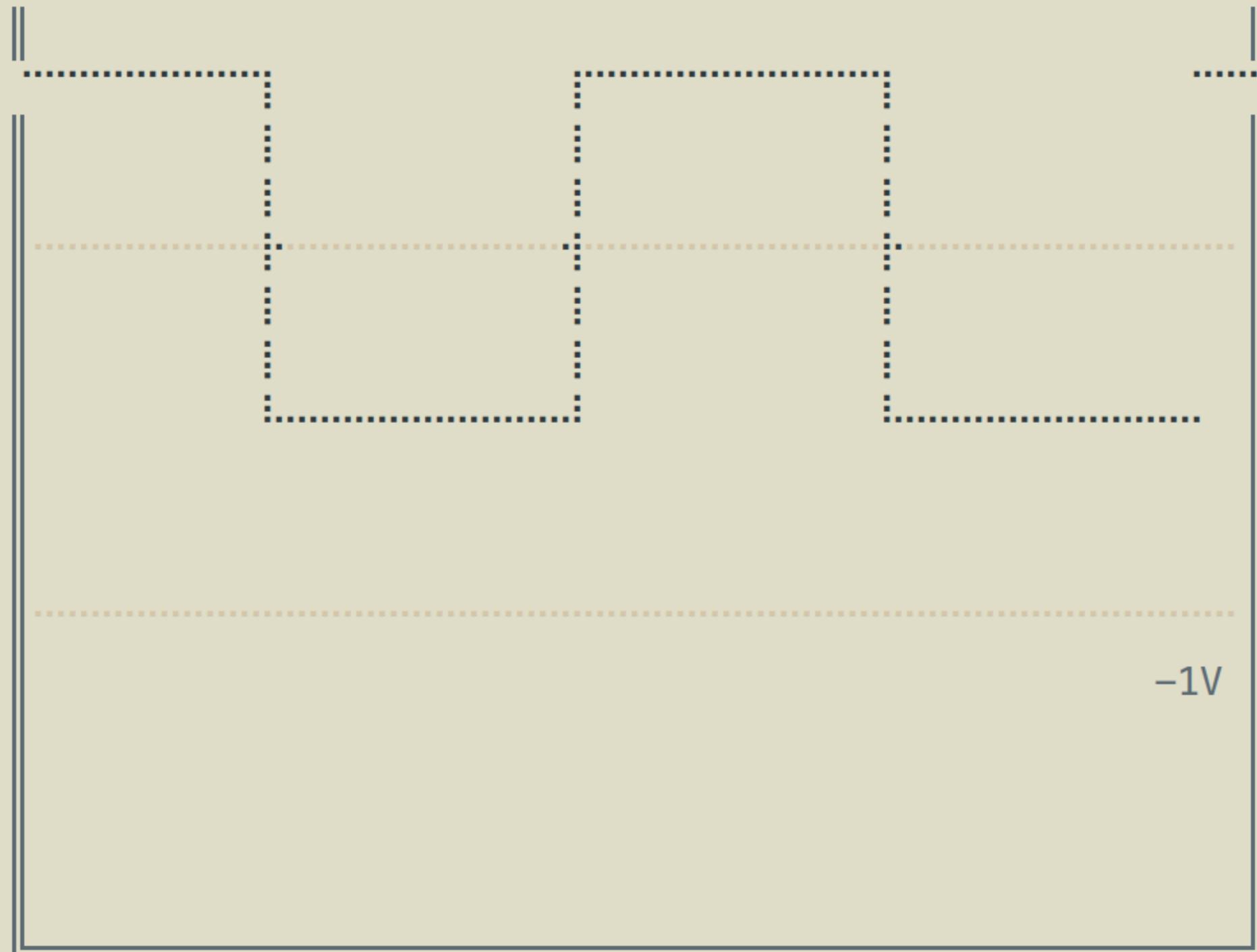
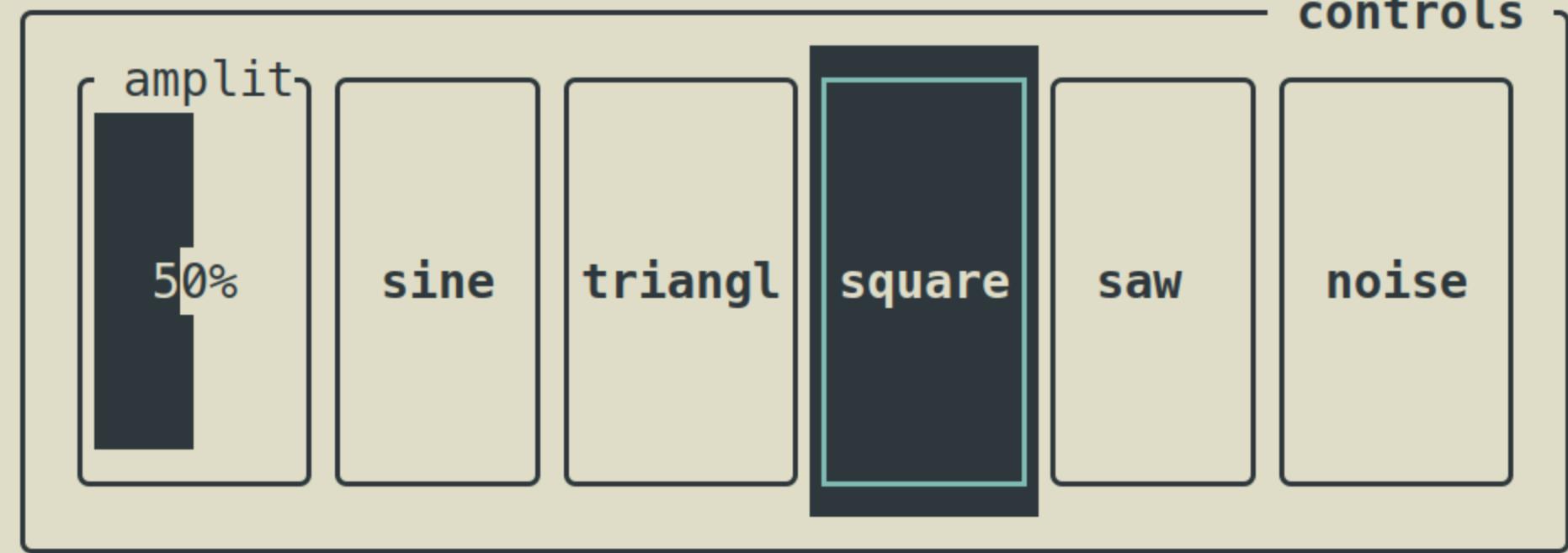


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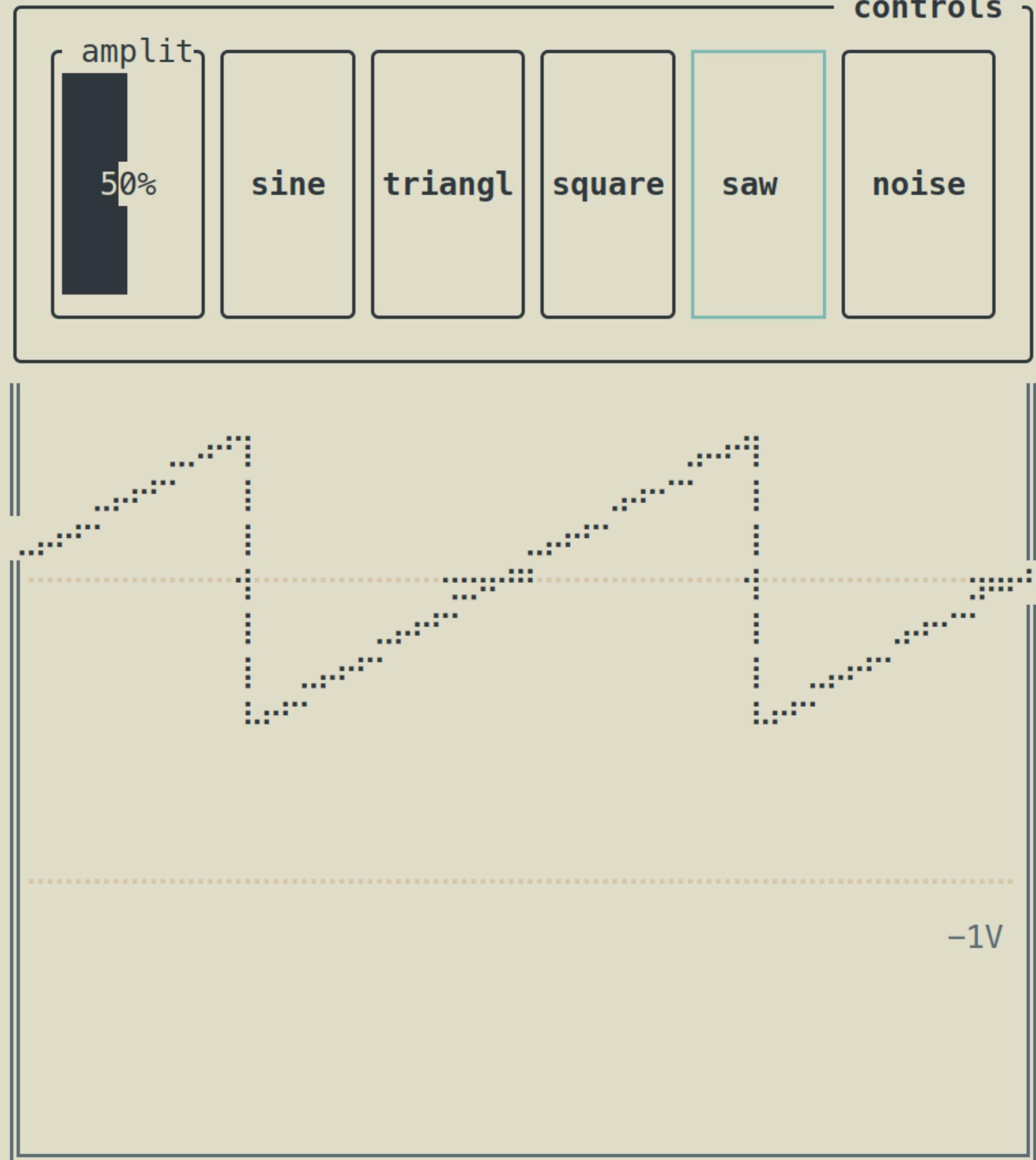


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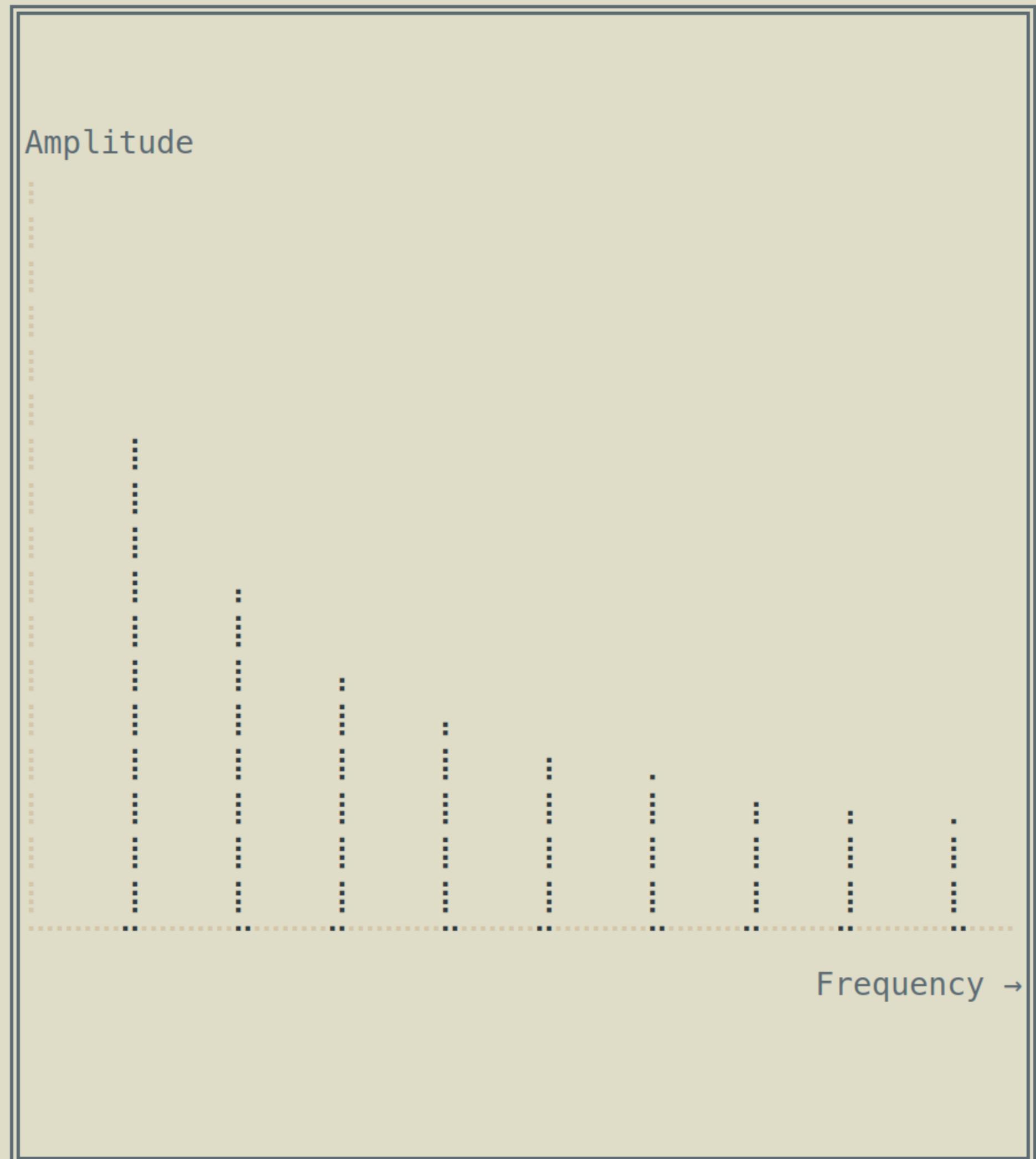


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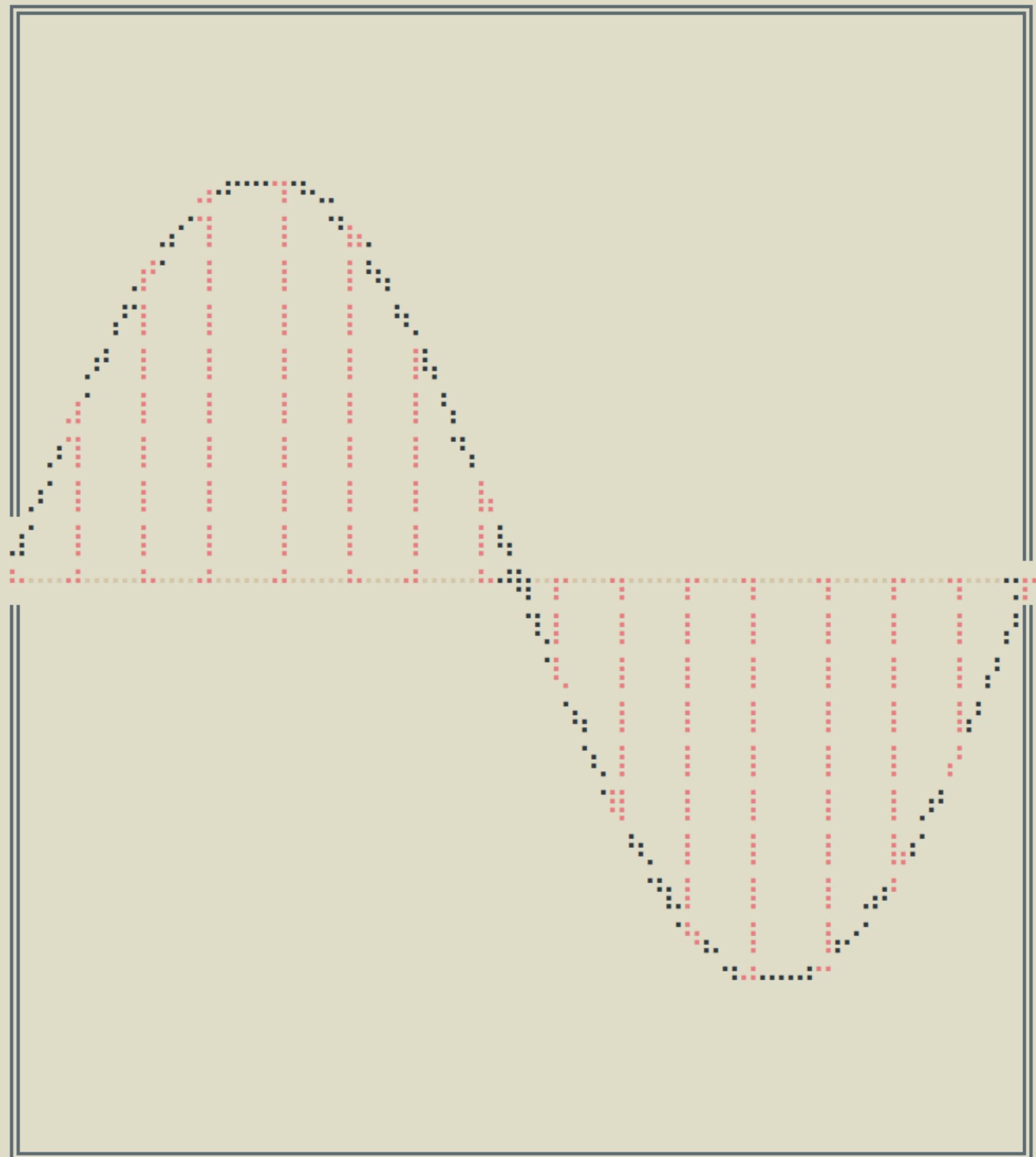
DIGITAL SIGNAL

- To **digitize** a continuous signal implies *discretizing* it. This is made possible by an *Analog-to-Digital Conversion (ADC)* process, which implies two key elements: **sampling** and **quantization**.

[↳] **Sampling** means taking a sample of a signal at a certain frequency/rate (**sample rate**).

- Audio CD: 44.1 kHz
- Pro Audio: 48/96 kHz
- MP3: 320/256/128/96/64 kbps

[↳] • Because of *aliasing*, the *sampling rate* must be **at least two times superior** to the **highest frequency** we want to represent (*Nyquist–Shannon*).



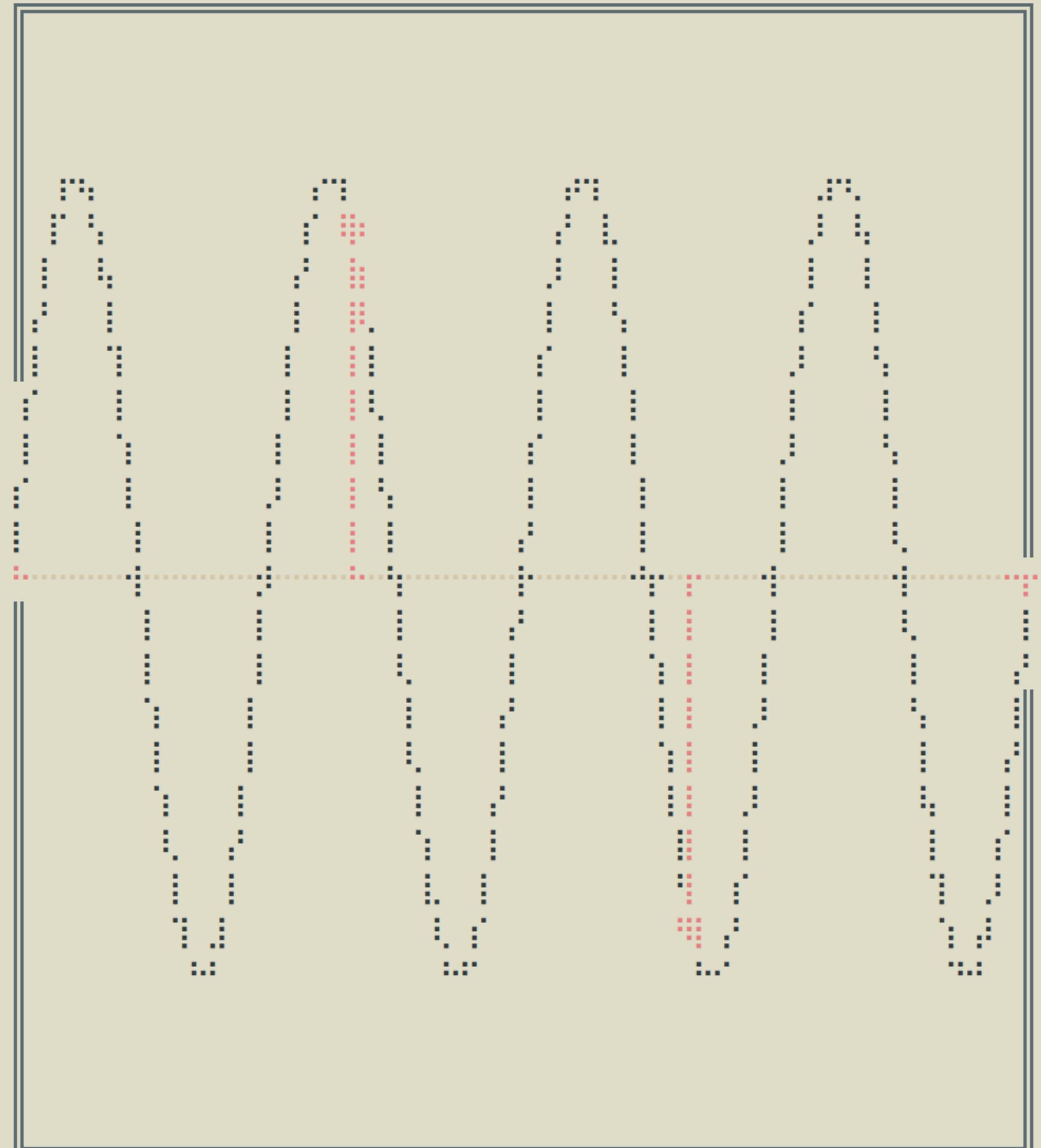
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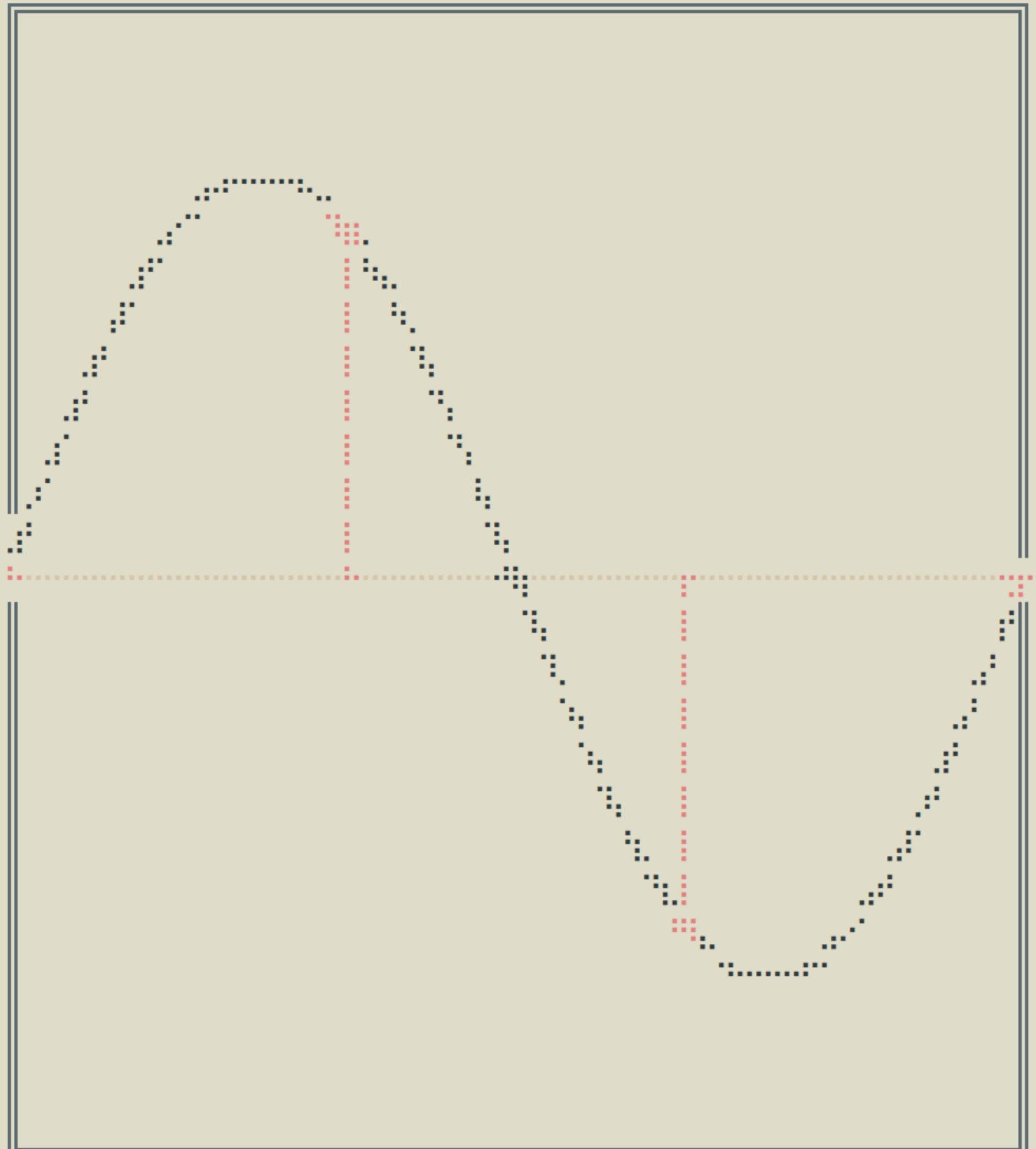
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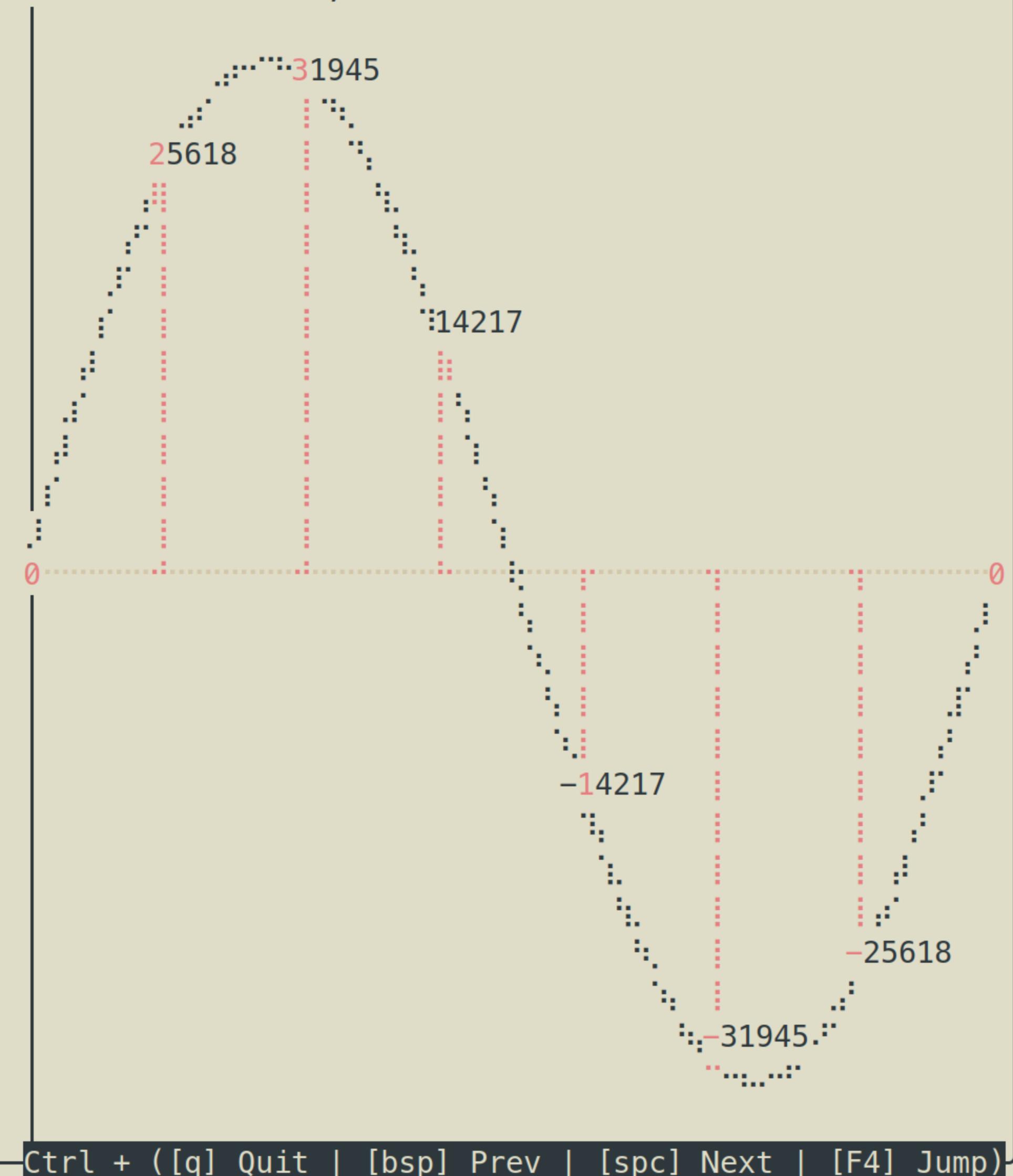
DIGITAL SIGNAL

- Once we take a sample of a signal at a given time, we need to determine the **scale of its value**, this is called **quantization**. Increasing the scale implies reducing the **quantization noise** (*quality vs. storage tradeoff*).

- **Audio CD:** 16-bits (65,536 values, 98 dB SNR)
- **Pro Audio:** 24-bits (~16,7 mil., 146 dB SNR)
- **DSP:** 32/64-bits float (~4,3 bil., 194 dB SNR)

• For DSP, it is easier to make computations in ***floating-point*** (decimal), and *normalize* the signal between **-1.0** and **1.0**.

• Finally, sending a digital signal to audio speakers involves the inverse process of an **ADC**: *Digital-to-Analog Conversion (DAC)*.



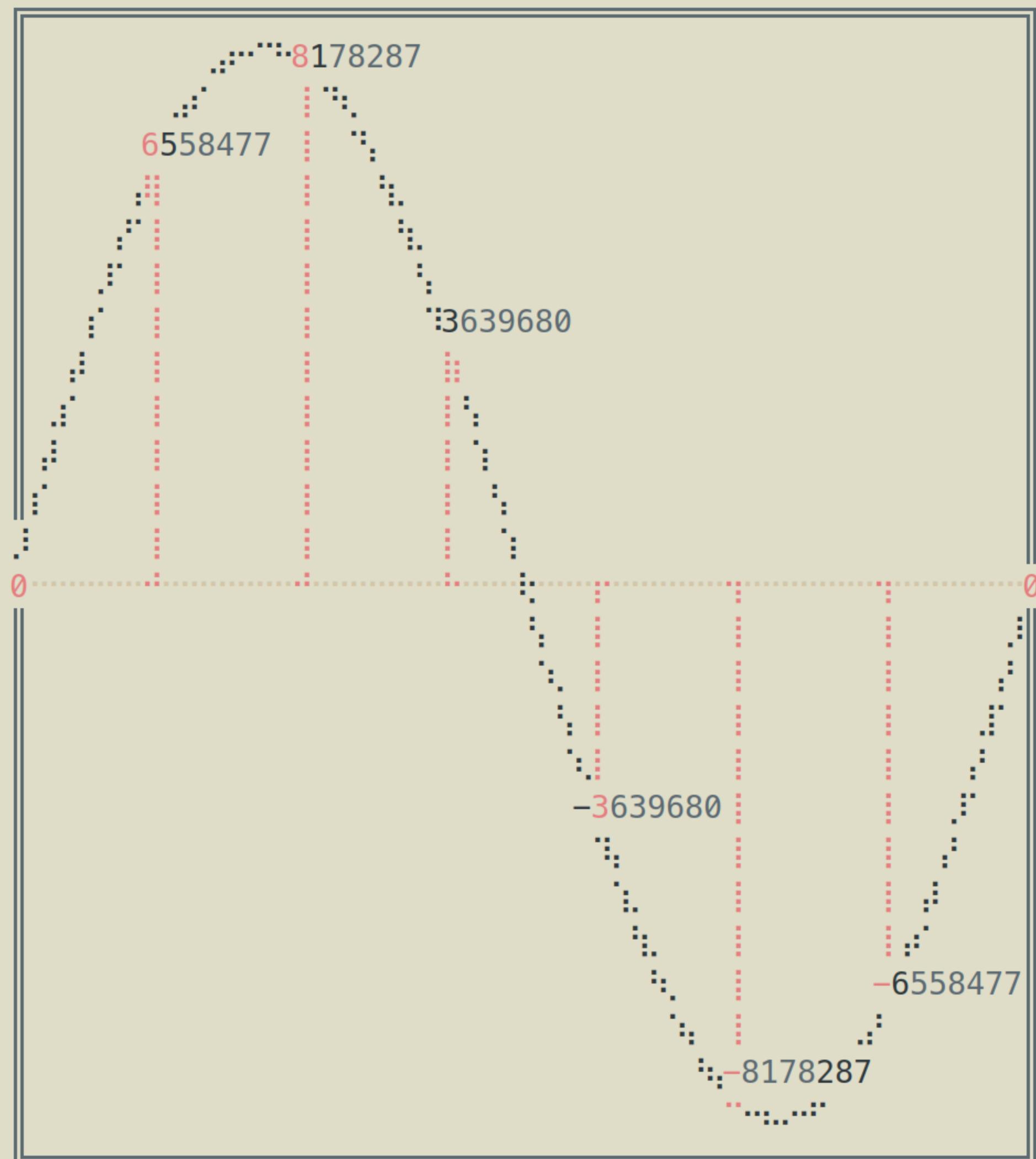
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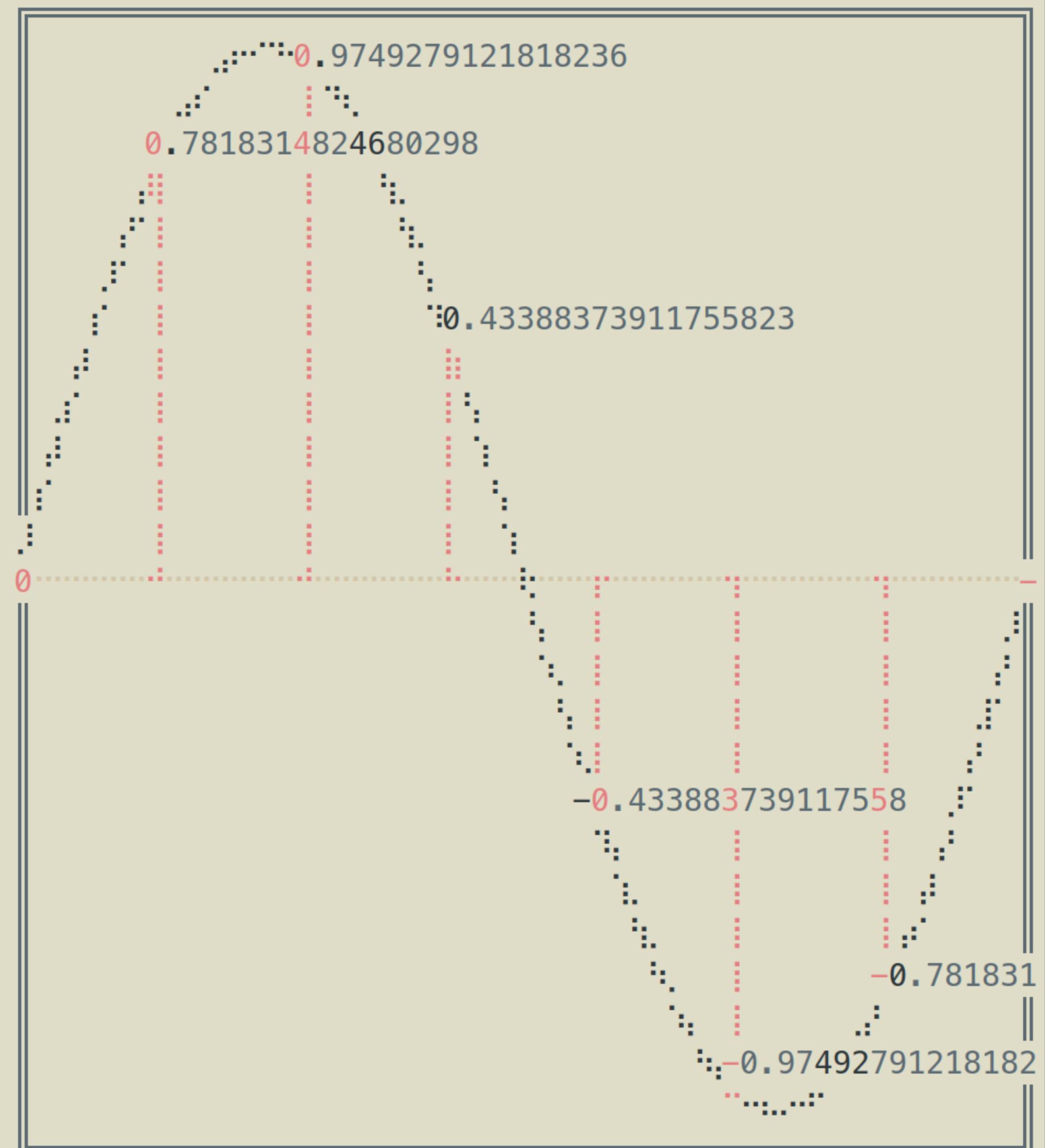
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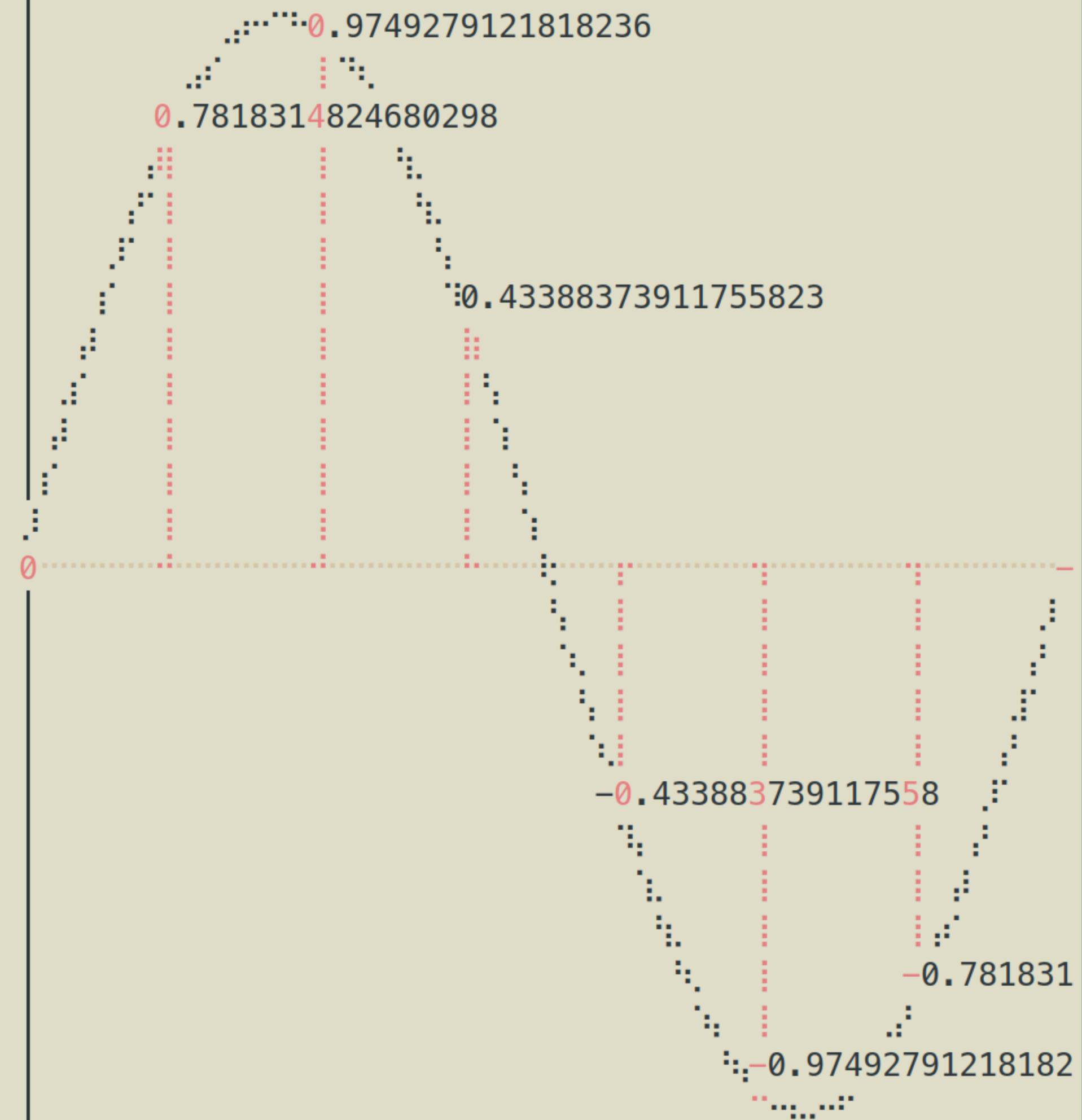
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ENTER FAUST

[↳] **Faust** (*Functional Audio Stream*) is a programming language specifically made for **audio DSP and synthesis**. It was created by **Yann Orlarey, Dominique Fober & Stéphane Letz** at **GRAME** in 2002.

- + *Functional paradigm*
- + Declarative, math-like syntax
- + Produces optimized code for many architectures
- Not recommended (yet) for multi-rate (FFT)

- **Plugins:** VST, CLAP, AudioUnit
- **Software:** Max, Pd, SuperCollider, Csound
- **OS:** Linux, macOS, Windows, Android, iOS
- **Embedded:** Bela, Teensy, Daisy, ESP32, FPGA
- **Code:** C/C++, Rust, WASM, Java...

[↳] Tutorials & documentation available at:
<https://faust.grame.fr>

[↳] Dedicated online IDE:
<https://faustide.grame.fr>

editor control graph wave spectrum

faust

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

process = os.oscrc(440) * 0.25;
```

Normal

BASICS

[↳] Basic program: ***import*** and ***process*** statements.

[↳] Use a *Sinewave Oscillator* from the library.

[↳] In DSP, we represent an audio signal with ***floating-point*** (decimal) numbers and scale its values ***between -1.0 and +1.0***.

[↳] ***Mixing*** two signals can be done using the '+' operator.

[↳] When multiplying two signals together, we can already make a simple DSP effect: ***Amplitude Modulation*** (or ***Ring Modulation***).

[↳] Faust can process ***multiple channels***, we can use the ',' symbol (***Parallel Operator***) to put signals *in parallel*.

[↳] We can declare ***custom variables*** (***functions***).

editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
// Import statement:  
// we import all of the faust libraries.  
import("stdfaust.lib");
```

```
// 'process' statement:  
// what your program will be processing/running:  
process = 0;
```

```
// /!\ IMPORTANT:  
// All the code expressions in Faust  
// end with a semicolon ;'
```

Normal

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```
// Import statement:  
// we import all of the faust libraries.  
import("stdfaust.lib");
```

```
// Here, we use the 'oscrc' function  
// from the 'os' (oscillators) library:  
process = os.oscrc(440) * 0.25;
```

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[↳] Basic program: ***import*** and ***process*** statements.

[↳] Use a ***Sinewave Oscillator*** from the library.

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```
import("stdfaust.lib");

// We run the oscillators at 440Hz (A440),
// we multiply its amplitude by 0.25,
// which means we divide its volume by 4:
process = os.oscrc(440) * 0.25;

// Which would be the same as:
process = os.oscrc(440) / 4;
```

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```
import("stdfaust.lib");

// Mixing two signals means adding them together,
// which can be done by using the '+' operator
process = (os.oscrc(440) + os.oscrc(880)) * 0.25;

// Here, we used parentheses because of
// operator precedence.
// Multiplications are always evaluated before
// additions or subtractions.
```

Normal

BASICS

[↳] Basic program: ***import*** and ***process*** statements.

[↳] Use a ***Sinewave Oscillator*** from the library.

[↳] In DSP, we represent an audio signal with ***floating-point*** (decimal) numbers and scale its values ***between -1.0 and +1.0***.

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```
import("stdfaust.lib");

// Basic amplitude modulation.
// no need for parentheses here, since we only
// use multiplications:
process = os.oscrc(440) * os.oscrc(10) * 0.25;
```

Normal

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editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

// Here, we use the Parallel Operator ','
// to put two signals in parallel:
process = (os.oscrc(440) * 0.25), (os.oscrc(880) *
0.25);
```

Normal

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- [↳] Use a ***Sinewave Oscillator*** from the library.
- [↳] In DSP, we represent an audio signal with ***floating-point*** (decimal) numbers and scale its values ***between -1.0 and +1.0***.
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editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

// We can declare our custom functions:
osc440 = os.oscrc(440) * 0.25;
osc880 = os.oscrc(880) * 0.25;

// And call them from anywhere:
process = osc440, osc880;
```

Normal

BASICS

[↳] In Faust, connecting DSP functions can be done using the **sequential operator** `':`.

[↳] The **split operator** `<:' and **cable operator** can also be used to connect a signal to multiple targets.

[↳] On the other hand, the **merge operator** `':>' can be used to merge (mix) signals together.

[↳] Graphical User Interface (**GUI**) elements can be added to **control parameters**: sliders (*hslider/vslider*), buttons, switches...

[↳] They can be used to make a proper **gain** control in **dB** for example.

[↳] **Decibels (dB)** are frequently used in audio to represent **volume**, but they are sometimes a bit confusing to deal with.

The screenshot shows the Faust graphical interface. At the top, there are tabs: editor, control, graph, wave, spectrum, and faust (which is highlighted). Below the tabs is a code editor containing the following Faust code:

```
import("stdfaust.lib");
process = os.sawtooth(440) : fi.lowpass(1, 440);
```

Below the code editor is a control panel with a single slider labeled "Normal". At the bottom of the interface is a status bar with the text "Normal".

BASICS

[↳] In Faust, connecting DSP functions can be done using the **sequential operator** `::`.

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saw_filter = os.sawtooth(440) : fi.lowpass(1, 440);

process = saw_filter <: __;
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[↳] **Decibels (dB)** are frequently used in audio to represent **volume**, but they are sometimes a bit confusing to deal with.

The screenshot shows the Faust IDE interface. At the top, there are tabs: editor, control, graph, wave, spectrum, and faust. The faust tab is selected. Below the tabs, the code is displayed:

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

osc = (os.oscrc(440), os.oscrc(880)) :> _;

process = osc * 0.25 <: _,_;
```

Below the code, there is a small window titled "Normal" containing a horizontal slider with a value of 0.000. The slider has a blue track and a white slider handle. The text "Normal" is centered above the slider.

BASICS

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- [↳] Graphical User Interface (**GUI**) elements can be added to **control parameters**: **sliders** (*hslider/vslider*), **buttons**, **switches**...
- [↳] They can be used to make a proper **gain control** in **dB** for example.
- [↳] **Decibels (dB)** are frequently used in audio to represent **volume**, but they are sometimes a bit confusing to deal with.

editor control graph wave spectrum **faust**

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

// hslider("name", default, min, max, step)
saw_freq = hslider("saw_freq", 440, 20, 10000, 1);
cutoff = hslider("cutoff", 440, 20, 10000, 1);

saw_filter = os.sawtooth(saw_freq) : fi.lowpass(1,
cutoff);

process = saw_filter <: ___, ___;
```

Normal

BASICS

- [↳] In Faust, connecting DSP functions can be done using the **sequential operator** `::`.
- [↳] The **split operator** `<:` and **cable operator** can also be used to connect a signal to *multiple targets*.
- [↳] On the other hand, the **merge operator** `::>` can be used to **merge (mix) signals together**.
- [↳] Graphical User Interface (**GUI**) elements can be added to **control parameters**: **sliders** (*hslider/vslider*), **buttons**, **switches**...
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editor control graph wave spectrum **faust**

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

// We add the '[style:knob]' metadata,
// and we also specify the unit:
gain = hslider("gain[style:knob][unit:dB]", -6, -96
, 6, 1) : ba.db2linear;

saw_freq = hslider("saw_freq[unit:Hz]", 440, 20, 10
000, 1);
cutoff = hslider("cutoff[unit:Hz]", 440, 20, 10000,
1);

saw_filter = os.sawtooth(saw_freq) : fi.lowpass(1,
cutoff);

process = saw_filter * gain <: __;
```

Normal

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editor control graph wave spectrum **faust**

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1);

saw_filter = os.sawtooth(saw_freq) : fi.lowpass(1,
cutoff);

process = saw_filter * gain <: __;
```

Normal

SYNTHESIS

[↳] Faust has in its libraries a good collection of '*basic*' **oscillators**, with different **waveforms**: *sine*, *triangle*, *sawtooth*, *square*, etc.

[↳] When a Faust program starts to be a little more complex, it's always good practice to *refactor code* by using **custom functions** with variable **parameters**.

[↳] In Faust, **functions** can take *any element of the language as parameters*, including **GUI elements**.

[↳] Finally, the **select** primitive (an equivalent to **switch** in Max), allow to select an input from a list. It can be used in this case to *switch between waveforms*

[↳] Our goal now will be to *apply this to our previous synthesizer*.

editor
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```

import("stdfaust.lib");

sine = os.osci(440) * 0.25;
triangle = os.triangle(440) * 0.25;
sawtooth = os.sawtooth(440) * 0.25;
square = os.square(440) * 0.25;

process = sine;
// process = triangle;
// process = sawtooth;
// process = square;

```

Normal

SYNTHESIS

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editor
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faust

```

import("stdfaust.lib");

// Declaring functions, with variable parameters:
sine(freq) = os.osci(freq);
triangle(freq) = os.triangle(freq);
sawtooth(freq) = os.sawtooth(freq);
square(freq) = os.square(freq);

// Passing arguments from function to function:
synth(osc, freq, gain) = osc(freq) * gain;

// This way, we can modify everything here:
process = synth(sine, 440, ba.db2linear(-16));

```

Normal

SYNTHESIS

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editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

sine(freq) = os.osci(freq);
triangle(freq) = os.triangle(freq);
sawtooth(freq) = os.sawtooth(freq);
square(freq) = os.square(freq);

synth(osc, freq, gain) = osc(freq) * gain : fi.lowpass(1, freq);

// Declare some controls:
freq_gui = nentry("frequency[unit:Hz]", 440, 20, 100, 1);
gain_gui = hslider("gain[style:knob][unit:dB]", -16, -32, 0, 1) : ba.db2linear;

// We can pass GUI elements to a function:
process = synth(square, freq_gui, gain_gui);
```

Normal

SYNTHESIS

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editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

wave1 = os.triangle(440);
wave2 = os.square(440);

switch_gui = nentry("waveform", 0, 0, 1, 1);

process = wave1, wave2 : select2(switch_gui) * 0.25
;
```

Normal

SYNTHESIS

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```

editor control graph wave spectrum
faust

import("stdfaust.lib");

sine(freq) = os.osci(freq);
triangle(freq) = os.triangle(freq);
sawtooth(freq) = os.sawtooth(freq);
square(freq) = os.square(freq);

oscillator(freq) = sine(freq), triangle(freq), sawtooth(freq), square(freq);

switch_gui = nentry(
    "waveform[style:menu{'Sine':0; 'Triangle':1; 'Sawtooth':2; 'Square':3}]",
    0, 0, 3, 1
);

switch(freq) = oscillator(freq) : ba.selectn(4, switch_gui);

freq_gui = nentry("frequency[unit:Hz]", 440, 20, 100, 1);
Normal

```

editor control graph wave spectrum

faust

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

sine(freq) = os.osci(freq);
triangle(freq) = os.triangle(freq);
sawtooth(freq) = os.sawtooth(freq);
square(freq) = os.square(freq);

oscillator(freq) = sine(freq), triangle(freq), sawtooth(freq), square(freq);

switch_gui = nentry(
    "waveform[style:menu{'Sine':0; 'Triangle':1; 'Sawtooth':2; 'Square':3}]",
    0, 0, 3, 1
);

switch(freq) = oscillator(freq) : ba.selectn(4, switch_gui);

freq_gui = nentry("frequency[unit:Hz]", 440, 20, 1000, 1);
gain_gui = hslider("gain[style:knob][unit:dB]", -16, -32, 0, 1) : ba.db2linear;

synth(freq, gain) = switch(freq) * gain : fi.lowpass(1, freq);
```

Normal

FUNCTIONS

- **Functions** in programming languages usually consist in pieces of code containing a **series of instructions to execute**. They can be called *once or multiple times, with or without variable parameters, and can return values.*

[↳] **Function definitions** in Faust have the syntax
`function(parameter1, parameter2, ...) =
expression;".`

[↳] In order to **call** (execute) that function, we need to **replace its parameters (arguments)** with the values we want to pass as parameters.

[↳] Arguments are only valid inside of the function definition, we say that they are *local to the scope of the function*. This also means that they **take precedence** over any other variable or expression that have the same name in the code.

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editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
// Here, we define the function 'add',
// which takes 2 arguments (or parameters)
// that we call 'a' and 'b'.
// Note: 'a' and 'b' are arbitrary names,
// we could have used any name we wanted.
add(a, b) = a + b;
```

Normal

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```
add(a, b) = a + b;

// If we want to call (execute) that function,
// we need to replace 'a' & 'b' by the parameters
// we want to pass to the function.
// Here, we also store the result into a 'variable'
// called "result".
result = add(1, 2);

// Under the hood, 'a' and 'b' are replaced by '1'
// and '2':
add(1, 2) = 1 + 2;
```

Normal

FUNCTIONS

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```
a = 31;
b = 47;

add(a, b) = a + b;
result = add(1, 2); // result will be 3, not 78!

// On the other hand, if we were to change
// the name of the arguments of the 'add' function,
// like so:
add(c, d) = a + b;
// The result would be 78 this time,
// because 'a' and 'b' now refer to
// the 'a = 31' and 'b = 47' expressions.
```

Normal

FUNCTIONS

[↳] In Faust, everything is a ***function of time***. When a function is called in a Faust program, it will be called ***for each computation of a sample***, e.g. 44100 times per second.

[↳] In the end, all functions produces a numerical value (integer or floating point). Therefore, anything can be passed as a ***function argument***...

[↳] ... including functions!

editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
// Example of a constant function,
// it will produce the same output no matter
// how many times it is called:
my_constant_function = 440;

// We define a function 'oscillator'
// which itself calls the 'os.osci' function.
// os.osci computes for each new sample in time
// a new sinewave value.
oscillator = os.osci(440);

// Here, we sum the values of the two 'os.osci'
// functions, sample-by-sample:
mix = os.osci(440) + os.osci(880);
```

Normal

FUNCTIONS

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[↳] ... including functions!

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```
// We can pass anything as a function argument in Faust:
add(a, b) = a + b;

// We call 'add' on two sinewave oscillators
// with different frequencies.
// This will sum the two signals together:
process = add(os.osci(440), os.osci(880));

// It also works for GUI elements, like sliders:
slider_a = hslider("slider_a", 5, 0, 10, 1);
slider_b = hslider("slider_b", 5, 0, 5, 1);

process = add(slider_a, slider_b);
```

Normal

FUNCTIONS

[+] In Faust, everything is a **function of time**. When a function is called in a Faust program, it will be called **for each computation of a sample**, e.g. 44100 times per second.

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[+] ... including functions!

```

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// And... other functions!
// Here we declare the function 'osc_a',
// that takes on argument called 'freq',
// which we are going to pass through to the os.osci function.
// And yes 'os.osci' is also a function, which takes one argument (frequency)
// and produces a sinewave at that frequency.
osc_a(freq) = os.osci(freq);

// Same here with a sawtooth, the name 'freq' doesn't conflict with the one
// from osc_a because they're only valid within their own scope:
osc_b(freq) = os.sawtooth(freq);

// We can call them like this:
process = osc_a(440) + osc_b(880);

// And what happens under the hood, if we unroll the function calls, will
// be this:
osc_a(440) = os.osci(440);
osc_b(880) = os.sawtooth(880);

// We can also do the same thing in function calls:
add(a, b) = a + b;
osc_a(freq) = os.osci(freq);
osc_b(freq) = os.sawtooth(freq);

process = add(osc_a(440), osc_b(880));

// If we unroll the calls, we get this:
osc_a(440) = os.osci(440);
osc_b(880) = os.sawtooth(880);
add(osc_a(440), osc_b(880)) = osc_a(440) + osc_b(880);

Normal

```

TIME

[↳] Faust has one final composition operator: the **recursive operator** ('~') which allows to **connect two signals recursively** (with a **delay of one sample**).

[↳] The recursive operator is typically used to implement **counters**, and/or **to represent time**. With it, we can count for instance up to 44100 or 48000 samples to **represent one second of audio time**.

[↳] When implementing **time-related functions**, it can prove very useful to **monitor values from the GUI**.

[↳] We can for example use a counter to **switch our synth's waveform automatically every second**.

editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
// We connect the signal '1' and an empty signal
// to the operator '+'.
// This expression has exactly one input
// and one output, same for an empty signal.
// Therefore, the two expressions can be
// mutually recursive:
process = (_ + 1) ~ _;
//           ( A ) ~ B
```

Normal

TIME

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editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

// We could use our previous definition
// of the counter, and wrap it around the
// value of the sample rate (using modulo)
// But there's going to be something wrong
// with it...
increment = (_ + 1) ~ _;
bad_counter = increment % 48000;

// This solution works:
counter = ((_ + 1) % 48000) ~ _;
//           (      A      ) ~ B

// We can put all of this in a function
// and make the limit of the counter variable:
counter(n) = ((_ + 1) % n) ~ _;

process = counter(ma.SR);
```

Normal

TIME

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editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
import("stdfaust.lib");

SR = 48000;
gui = vbargraph("value[style:numerical]", 0, SR);
counter(n) = ((_ + 1) % n) ~ _;

process = counter(SR): gui;
```

Normal

TIME

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```

import("stdfaust.lib");

SR = 48000;
gui = vbargraph("value[style:numerical]", 0, SR);

// We make the '1' (increment) variable:
counter(i, n) = ((_ + i) % n) ~ _;

// Outputs the value '1'
// whenever the counter reaches 48000
// (every second):
count1s = counter(1, SR) == 0;

process = counter(count1s, 4) : gui;

```

Normal

TIME

[↳] A counter can be used as a base for many many things. With it, we can for instance build a *ramp signal* that goes from 0 to 1 repeatedly at a certain rate.

- Notice anything? A *ramp* is very much like a *sawtooth oscillator*, only with a different range (0 to 1 instead of -1 to 1).

[↳] With a *ramp* (or *phasor*), we can pretty much already build *all of the simple waveform oscillators*, with a few operations...

[↳] Ramps are often used as *cursors* to read or write samples in a *buffer*. In Faust, buffers are implemented with the *rdtable* & *rwtable* primitives.

[↳] To playback a *sound file*, we also typically use a phasor as a *read cursor*.

editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
counter(i, n) = ((_ + i) % n) ~ _;
```

```
// We can put a decimal as increment value,  
// and wrap it around 0.0 and 1.0:  
process = counter(0.00195, 1.0);
```

```
// But it would be much better to  
// use the frequency unit in Hertz,  
// We know one second of time is the sample rate,  
// so to get the increment value, we can use:  
frequency = 440/ma.SR;
```

```
process = counter(frequency, 1.0);
```

Normal

TIME

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editor control graph wave spectrum faust

```
counter(i, n) = ((_ + i) % n) ~ _;
```

// We can put a decimal as increment value,
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```
process = counter(0.00195, 1.0);
```

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// use the frequency unit in Hertz,
// We know one second of time is the sample rate,
// so to get the increment value, we can use:
frequency = 440/ma.SR;

```
process = counter(frequency, 1.0);
```

Normal

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```

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import("stdfaust.lib");

counter(i, n) = ((_ + i) % n) ~ _;
phasor(f) = counter(f/ma.SR, 1.0);

// For sawtooth, we re-scale the signal to [-1, 1]
sawtooth(f) = phasor(f) * 2.0 - 1.0;

// Sine function has an input range
// of [0, 2*PI]:
sine(f) = sin(phasor(f) * 2.0 * ma.PI);

// For square, we can use a simple 'if' expression
// output -1.0 when phase is below 0.5
// and 1.0 when it's above:
square(f) = ba.if(
    phasor(f) > 0.5, // condition
    1.0, // then
    -1.0 // else
);

Normal

```