Signals And Systems by Alan V. Oppenheim: Notes

Malcolm

Started 17 April 2025

Contents

0.1 Introduction

0.1.1 Signal Energy and Power

Motivation and definition
In many but not all, applications, the signals considered directly related to physical quantities capturing power and energy in a physical system. (for instance v^2/R for the power across a resistor)

As such it is a common and worthwhile convention to use similar terminology for power and energy for *any* continuous-time signal, denoted $x(t)$, or any discrete-time signal $x[n]$. In this case, the total energy over the time interval $t_1 \leq t \leq t_2$ in a continuous signal $x(t)$ is defined as

$$\int_{t_1}^{t_2} |x(t)|^2 dt$$

where $|x|$ denotes the magnitude of the (possibly complex) number x; see that the time-averaged signal can be obtained by dividing by $(t_2 - t_1)$. Similarly for a discrete signal $x[n]$ over the interval $n_1 \leq n \leq n_2$ the total energy is

$$\sum_{n=n_1}^{n_2} |x[n]|^2$$

with the average power calculated by dividing by $(n_2 - n_1 + 1)$.

It is important to remember that the terms 'power' and 'energy' are used here *independently* of their relation to physical energy (they clearly don't correlate since their units or scalings would differ). Nevertheless we will find it convenient to use these terms in a general fashion.

Power and energy over infinite intervals
Considering signals over an infinite time interval, meaning for $-\infty < t < +\infty$ or $-\infty < n < +\infty$. Here we define the total energy as the limits of the aforementioned equations increase without bound; in continuous time,

$$E_\infty \triangleq \lim_{T\to\infty} \int_{-T}^{T} |x(t)|^2 dt = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} |x(t)|^2 dt$$

and in discrete time,

$$E_\infty \triangleq \lim_{N\to\infty} \sum_{n=-N}^{+N} |x[n]|^2 = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{+\infty} |x[n]|^2$$

Note that these expressions may not converge; for instance say $x(t)$ or $x[n]$ equal some nonzero constant for all time: such signals have infinite energy, while signals with $E_\infty < \infty$ have finite energy.
(next page)

Cont.
Analagously, we can define the time-averaged power over an infinite interval as

$$P_\infty \triangleq \lim_{T\to\infty} \frac{1}{2T}\int_{-T}^{T} |x(t)|^2 dt$$

and

$$P_\infty \triangleq \lim_{N\to\infty} \frac{1}{2N+1}\sum_{n=-N}^{+N} |x[n]|^2$$

In continuous and discrete time respectively.

Intuition
See that with these definitions, we can identify three classes of signals: first those with finite total energy, meaning $E_\infty < \infty$. See that such a signal would have zero average power:

$$P_\infty = \lim_{T\to\infty} \frac{E_\infty}{2T} = 0$$

Second would be signals with finite average power P_∞; see from the above expression that for $P_\infty > 0$, this requires that $E_\infty = \infty$.

Last would be signals for which neither P_∞ nor E_∞ are finite. An example of this might be $x(t) = t$.

Note on discrete signals
It is omportant to note that the discrete-time signal $x[n]$ is defined *only* for *integer* values of the independent variable.

0.1.2 Even and Odd signals

Definition

A continuous-time signal is *even* if

$$x(-t) = x(t)$$

while a discrete-time signal is *even* if

$$x[-n] = x[n]$$

These signals are referred to as *odd* if

$$x(-t) = -x(t)$$
$$x[-n] = -x[n]$$

Note that an odd signal must be 0 at $t = 0$ or $n = 0$ since the equations require that $x(0) = -x(0)$ and $x[0] = -x[0]$.

Decomposition

An important fact is that any signal can be broken into a sum of two signals, where one is even and the other odd. To see this, consider

$$\mathrm{Ev}\{x(t)\} = \frac{1}{2}[x(t) + x(-t)]$$

which is referred to as the *even part* of $x(t)$. Similarly, the *odd part* of $x(t)$ is given by

$$\mathrm{Od}\{x(t)\} = \frac{1}{2}[x(t) - x(-t)]$$

See that $x(t)$ is the sum of the two. Exactly analagous definitions hold in the discrete time case.

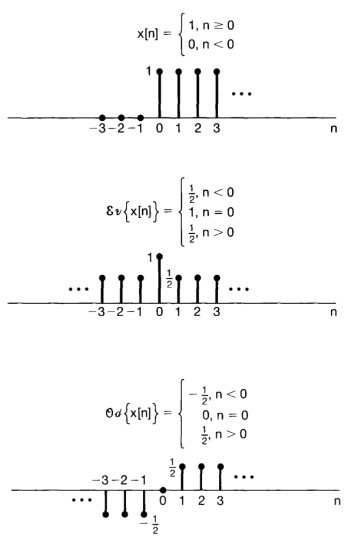

Figure 1.18 Example of the even-odd decomposition of a discrete-time signal.

0.1.3 Differences between continuous and discrete periodic complex exponentials

The continuous-time *complex exponential signal* is of the form

$$x(t) = Ce^{at}$$

where C and a are, in general, complex numbers. An important class of complex exponentials is obtained by constraining a to be purely imaginary:

$$x(t) = e^{i\omega t}$$

Periodicity and harmonic relations (purely imaginary power)
An important property of this signal is that it is periodic; recall that $x(t)$ will be periodic with period T if

$$e^{i\omega t} = e^{i\omega(t+T)}$$

this means

$$e^{i\omega(t+T)} = e^{i\omega t}e^{i\omega T} \implies e^{i\omega T} = 1$$

If $\omega = 0$ then this is satisfied for any T. If $\omega \neq 0$, see that the *fundamental period* T_0 of $x(t)$—that is, the smallest positive value of T for which this holds—is

$$T_0 = \frac{2\pi}{|\omega|}$$

(the signals $e^{i\omega 0t}$ and $e^{-i\omega t}$ have the same fundamental period) Naturally, there is a set of exponentials periodic to a common period T_0. These are said to be *harmonically related* complex exponentials; the necessary condition they satisfy is

$$e^{i\omega T_0} = 1$$

which implies that

$$\omega T_0 = 2\pi k, \quad k = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \ldots$$

(next page)

Cont.
We had

$$\omega T_0 = 2\pi k, \quad k = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \ldots$$

if we define

$$\omega_0 = \frac{2\pi}{T_0}$$

this means that the harmonic frequencies ω must be integer multiples of ω_0:

$$\phi_k(t) = e^{ik\omega_0 t}, \quad k = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \ldots$$

For $k = 0$, $\phi_k(t)$ is a constant, while for any other value of k, $\phi_k(t)$ is periodic with fundamental frequency $|k|\omega_0$ and fundamental period

$$\frac{2\pi}{|k|\omega_0} = \frac{T_0}{|k|}$$

Each $\phi_k(t)$ itself defines a fundamental frequency and a corresponding fundamental period. (see that $|k|\omega_0 \cdot T_0/|k| = 2\pi$, so this scaled down period is the corresponding period for this scaled up frequency)

Note that the kth harmonic $\phi_k(t)$ is still periodic with T_0; it goes through exactly $|k|$ of its fundamental periods during any time interval of length T_0. (the term 'harmonic' is consistent with its use in music, where it refers to tones resulting from variations in acoustic pressure at frequencies that are integer multiples of a fundamental frequency)
(next page)

Discrete case
As in continuous time, an important signal in discrete time is the *complex exponential signal*, defined as

$$x[n] = C\alpha^n$$

where C and α are, in general, complex numbers. See that this could also be expressed as

$$x[n] = Ce^{\beta n}$$

where $\alpha = e^{\beta}$. See that we can constrain β to be purely imaginary:

$$x[n] = e^{i\omega_0 n}$$

Periodicity properties of Discrete-time complex exponentials
While there are many similarities between continuous and discrete-time signals, there are a number of important differences. For the continuous time signal $e^{i\omega_0 t}$, we know that

- The larger the magnitude of ω_0, the higher the rate of oscillation of the signal
- $e^{i\omega_0 t}$ is periodic for any value of ω_0

These properties are different in the discrete-time case.

Given the first property, consider the discrete-time complex exponential with frequency $\omega_0 + 2\pi$:

$$e^{i(\omega_0+2\pi)n} = e^{i2\pi n}e^{i\omega_0 n} = e^{i\omega_0 n}$$

(see that this is a direct result of the fact that we iterate through discrete time as integers) The exponential at frequency $\omega_0 + 2\pi$ is the *same* as that at frequency ω_0. This is unlike the continuous-time case where each distinct ω_0 represents a distinct signal.

In discrete time, the signal with frequency ω_0 is identical to the signals with frequencies $\omega_0 \pm 2\pi, \omega_0 \pm 4\pi$, and so on. Therefore when considering discrete time complex exponentials, see that we need only consider a frequency interval of length 2π in which to choose ω_0, such as $0 \leq \omega_0 < 2\pi$ or $-\pi \leq \omega_0 < \pi$.

Also see that because of this the discrete exponential $e^{i\omega_0 n}$ does *not* have a continually increasing rate of oscillation as ω_0 increases in magnitude; the signals will oscillate faster until we reach $\omega_0 = \pi$, after which the rate of oscillation decreases until we reach $\omega_0 = 2\pi$, at which the same constant sequence as $\omega_0 = 0$ is produced.
(next page)

Cont.
The second property we wish to consider concerns the periodicity of the discrete time complex exponential. In order for the signal $e^{i\omega_0 n}$ to be periodic with period $N > 0$ we must have

$$e^{i\omega_0(n+N)} = e^{i\omega_0 n}$$

or equivalently

$$e^{i\omega_0 N} = 1$$

For this to hold, $\omega_0 N$ must be a multiple of 2π. That is, there must be an integer m such that

$$\omega_0 N = 2\pi m$$

or equivalently

$$\frac{\omega_0}{2\pi} = \frac{m}{N}$$

The signal $e^{i\omega_0 n}$ is periodic if $\omega_0/2\pi$ is a rational number and is not periodic otherwise.

Fundamental period
Recall the idea of a *fundamental period*; in this case it would mean the smallest N such that $\omega_0 N = 2\pi m$ holds (this is unlike the continuous case where there is always some T where $\omega_0 T = 2\pi$); see that this occurs when m and N do not have any factors in common.

See that from this we can derive a *fundamental frequency* as

$$\frac{2\pi}{N} = \frac{\omega_0}{m}$$

(see that this frequency is always equal or lower—intuitively, to have a different wave that completes one oscillation in N time, its frequency will either be equal or lower)

To summarize

TABLE 1.1 Comparison of the signals $e^{j\omega_0 t}$ and $e^{j\omega_0 n}$.

$e^{j\omega_0 t}$	$e^{j\omega_0 n}$
Distinct signals for distinct values of ω_0	Identical signals for values of ω_0 separated by multiples of 2π
Periodic for any choice of ω_0	Periodic only if $\omega_0 = 2\pi m/N$ for some integers $N > 0$ and m.
Fundamental frequency ω_0	Fundamental frequency* ω_0/m
Fundamental period $\omega_0 = 0$: undefined $\omega_0 \neq 0$: $\frac{2\pi}{\omega_0}$	Fundamental period* $\omega_0 = 0$: undefined $\omega_0 \neq 0$: $m\left(\frac{2\pi}{\omega_0}\right)$

*Assumes that m and N do not have any factors in common.