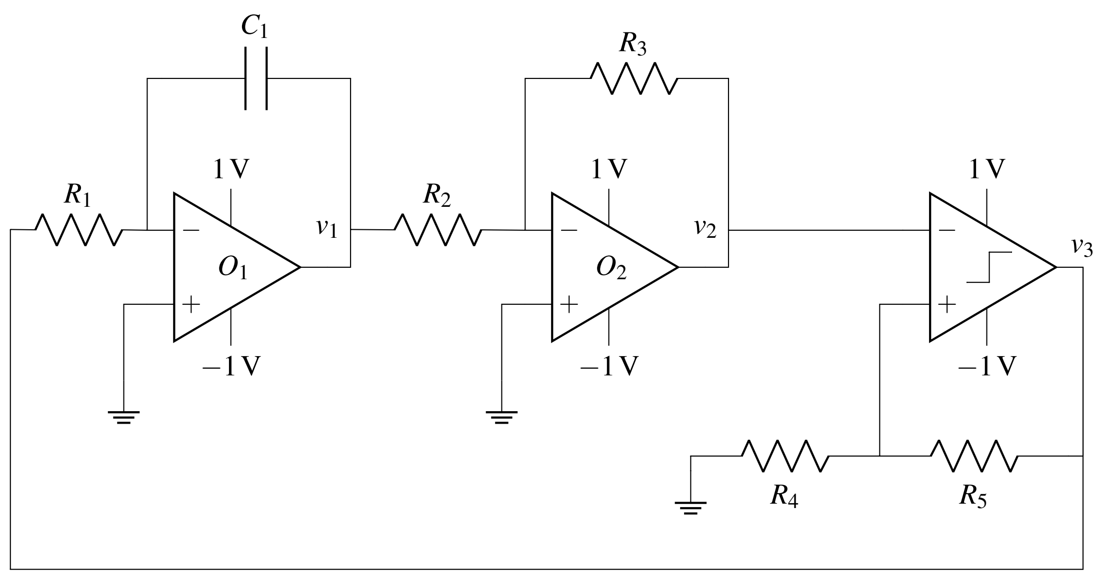
EECS 16A Designing Information Devices and Systems I
Summer 2020 Discussion 5C

1. Timer Circuit

In this problem, we will walk through another useful, real-world circuit, the timer circuit. The circuit is shown below. All resistors have a resistance of $1\,\mathrm{k\Omega}$ and $C_1 = 1\,\mu\mathrm{F}$.



(a) Find the current through the capacitor C_1 in terms of the voltage V_3 and the resistor R_1.

Answer:

For an op-amp, no current flows into the input terminals. Therefore, all the current through R_1 must flow through C_1. Applying the Golden Rules, we know that $v_+ = v_- = 0\,\mathrm{V}$.

$$i_{R_1} = i_{C_1} = \frac{v_3}{R_1}$$

(b) Suppose that at time $t = 0$, C_1 is uncharged. Find the voltage v_1 in terms of t, v_3, and R_1. What is the maximum $|v_1|$ could be?

Answer:

Recall the voltage across a capacitor is related to the charge on the capacitor, that is $Q = CV$. Current is related to charge with the equation $I = \frac{dQ}{dt}$.

$$v_{C_1} = \frac{Q}{C_1} = \frac{It}{C_1} = \frac{v_3}{R_1 C_1} t = \frac{v_3}{1\,\mathrm{ms}} t$$

Note that a $\Omega\mathrm{F}$ is a second. Using the formula for v_{C_1} from above and the fact that $v_- = v_+ = 0$, the voltage at node v_1 can be calculated as:

$$v_{C_1} = 0 - v_1 \implies v_1 = -\frac{v_3}{1\,\mathrm{ms}} t$$

The maximum or minimum for v_1 is the top or bottom supply rail, so either $+1\,\text{V}$ or $-1\,\text{V}$. Therefore, the maximum $|v_1| = 1\,\text{V}$.

(c) How is v_2 related to v_1? What is the voltage v_2?

Answer:

O_2 is an inverting amplifier. The output voltage v_2 is equal to $-v_1$.

$$v_2 = \frac{v_3}{1\,\text{ms}} t$$

Now, let's independently analyze the circuit in the two possible outputs of the comparator, when $v_3 = 1\,\text{V}$ and when $v_3 = -1\,\text{V}$.

(d) Assume that the output of the comparator v_3 has railed to the top rail. With this value of v_3, what is v_2 as a function of time? What is the voltage at the positive input of the comparator? At what time will the two inputs of the comparator be equal?

Answer:

With v_3 at the top rail, v_2 is $\frac{t}{1\,\text{ms}}\,\text{V}$. The voltage at the positive input of the comparator is $0.5\,\text{V}$ because of R_5 and R_4. Therefore, when $t = 0.5\,\text{ms}$, $v_2 = 0.5\,\text{V}$.

(e) Now assume that the reverse occurs, that is, the output of the comparator has railed to the bottom rail. Repeat part (d) with this value of v_3.

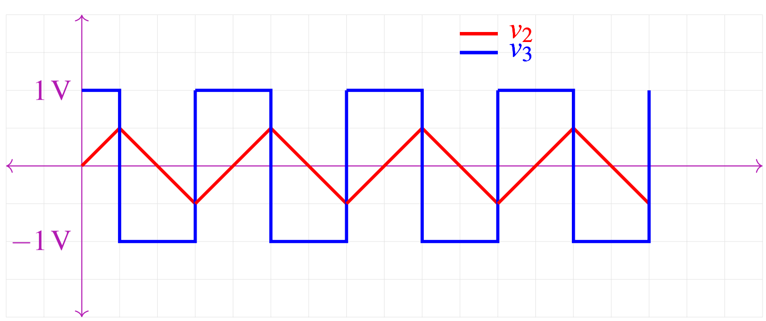
Answer:

With v_3 at the bottom rail, v_2 is $-\frac{t}{1\,\text{ms}}\,\text{V}$. Similar to part (d), the voltage at the positive input is $-0.5\,\text{V}$. Therefore, when $t = 0.5\,\text{ms}$, $v_2 = -0.5\,\text{V}$.

(f) What is v_3 as a function of time? Draw a graph of v_3 and v_2. Since the graph is periodic, find its period and frequency.

Answer:

Notice that in each of the above cases, once v_2 was equal to v_+, the output of the comparator would flip. This leads to a periodic function, where v_3 is either $+1\,\text{V}$ or $-1\,\text{V}$. The period of this function is $T = 2\,\text{ms}$. Notice that in each of the above cases we analyzed, we always assumed that the capacitor was initially uncharged. However, when v_3 switches, the capacitor will already have some charge built up on it, so it must first be drained. This is why the period is twice what we expect.



(g) Suppose that we changed the value of C_1 to be $2\,\mu\text{F}$? What is the new period? Suppose that we change R_5 to be $2\,\text{k}\Omega$. What is the new period? What if we change R_5 to be $0\,\Omega$? Will this circuit still operate?

Answer:

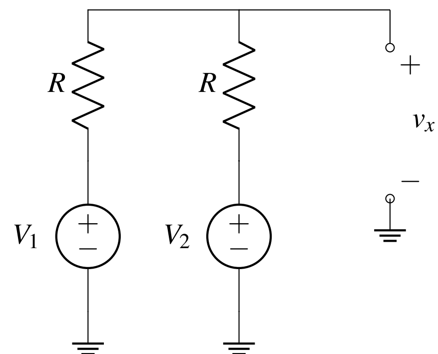
Notice above we got the constant $1\,\text{ms}$ by multiplying R_1 and C_1 together. If we double C_1, the effective period would double because it would take longer to charge C_1 to the same voltage with the same current.

Changing R_5 affects the "flip" threshold because v_+ is at a different voltage. Increasing R_5 decreases the voltage at v_+, so we would expect the flip voltage to decrease. In fact, the new period is $\frac{4}{3}$ms.

The circuit would not operate if $R_5 = 0\,\Omega$. The inverting input needs to be able to go above and below the non-inverting input, which is not possible if the non-inverting input is constant at the rail.

2. Practice: Dividers for Days

(a) Solve the following circuit for v_x.



Answer:

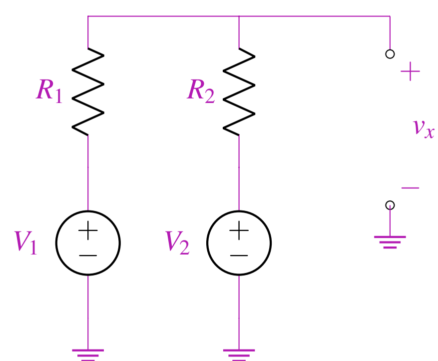
$$v_x = \frac{1}{2}V_1 + \frac{1}{2}V_2$$

(b) You have access to two voltage sources, V_1 and V_2. You can use two resistors (as long as $0 \le R < \infty$). How would you design a circuit that produces a voltage $v_x = \frac{1}{3}V_1 + \frac{2}{3}V_2$?

Answer:

Use superposition. Even if you know the voltage summer, make sure you know the analysis with KVL/KCL. Using any nonzero values for R:

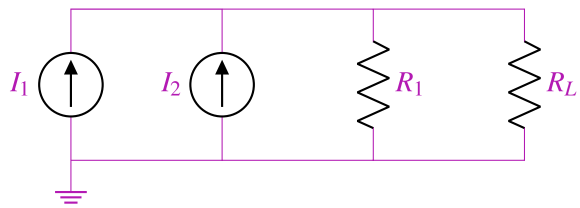
$$R_1 = 2R \qquad R_2 = R$$



(c) You have two current sources I_1 and I_2. You also have a load resistor $R_L = 6\,\mathrm{k}\Omega$. Similar to the first part, you can use whatever resistors you want (as long as they are finite integer values). How would you design a circuit such that the current running through R_L is $I_L = \frac{2}{5}(I_1 + I_2)$?

Answer:

Use superposition, so think of the two currents as one summed current. Use KCL to determine how to divide the currents.



$$R_L = 6\,\mathrm{k}\Omega, R_1 = 4\,\mathrm{k}\Omega$$

