

Transistor ratings

General

TRANSISTOR RATINGS

Voltage ratings

COLLECTOR TO BASE

V_{CBmax} The maximum permissible instantaneous voltage between collector and base terminals. The collector voltage is negative with respect to base in PNP transistors and positive with respect to base in NPN types.

V_{CBmax}
($I_E = 0$) The maximum permissible instantaneous voltage between collector and base terminals when the emitter terminal is open-circuit.

EMITTER TO BASE

V_{EBmax} The maximum permissible instantaneous voltage between emitter and base terminals. The emitter voltage is negative with respect to base in PNP transistors and positive with respect to base in NPN types.

V_{EBmax}
($I_C = 0$) The maximum permissible instantaneous voltage between emitter and base terminals when the collector terminal is open-circuit.

COLLECTOR TO EMITTER

V_{CEmax} The maximum permissible instantaneous voltage between collector and emitter terminals. The collector voltage is negative with respect to emitter in PNP transistors and positive with respect to emitter in NPN types. This rating is very dependent on circuit conditions and collector current, and it is necessary to refer to the curve of V_{CE} versus I_C for the appropriate circuit condition in order to obtain the correct rating.

V_{CEmax}
(Cut-off) The maximum permissible instantaneous voltage between collector and emitter terminals when the emitter current is reduced to zero by means of a reverse emitter base voltage, i.e. the base voltage is normally positive with respect to emitter for PNP transistors and negative with respect to emitter for NPN types. The term '(Cut-off)' is sometimes replaced by $V_{BE} > x V$, or $R_B/R_E \leq y$, which are equivalent conditions under which the transistor may be cut off.

V_{CEmax}
($I_C = x \text{ mA}$) The maximum permissible instantaneous voltage between collector and emitter terminals when the collector current is at a high value, often the maximum rated value.

V_{CEmax}
($I_B = 0$) The maximum permissible instantaneous voltage between collector and emitter terminals when the base terminal is open-circuit or when a very high resistance is in series with the base terminal. Special care must be taken to ensure that thermal runaway due to excessive collector leakage current does not occur in this condition.

Due to the current dependency of V_{CE} it is usual to present this information as a voltage rating chart, a curve of collector current as a function of collector-to-emitter voltage (see Fig.1). The permissible area of operation under all conditions of base drive (provided the dissipation rating is not exceeded) is shown as area 1 and operation under certain specified conditions is shown as area 2.

To assist in determining the rating in area 2, further curves can relate the voltage rating to external circuit conditions, for example: R_B/R_E , R_B , Z_{Bg} , V_{BE} , I_B or V_{BB}/R_B . An example of this type of curve is given in Fig.2 with V_{CE} as a function of R_B/R_E for two values of collector current.

It should be noted that when R_E is shunted by a capacitor, during switching, the collector voltage V_{CE} must be restricted to a value that does not rely on the effect of R_E .

In the case of an inductive load, when an energy rating is given, it may be safe to operate outside the rated area provided the specified energy rating is not exceeded.

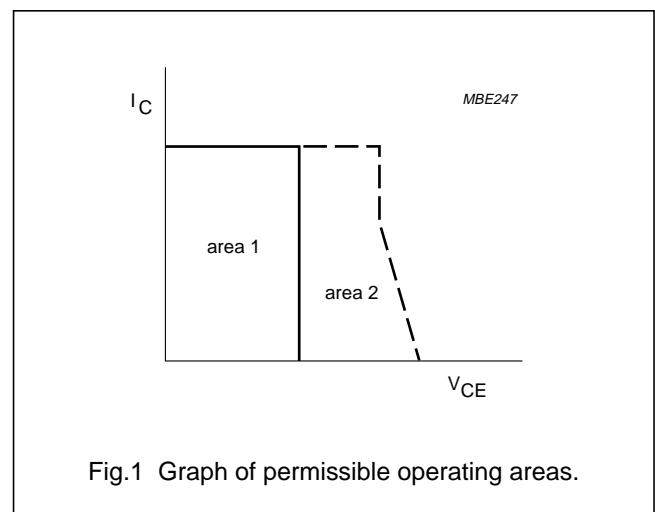
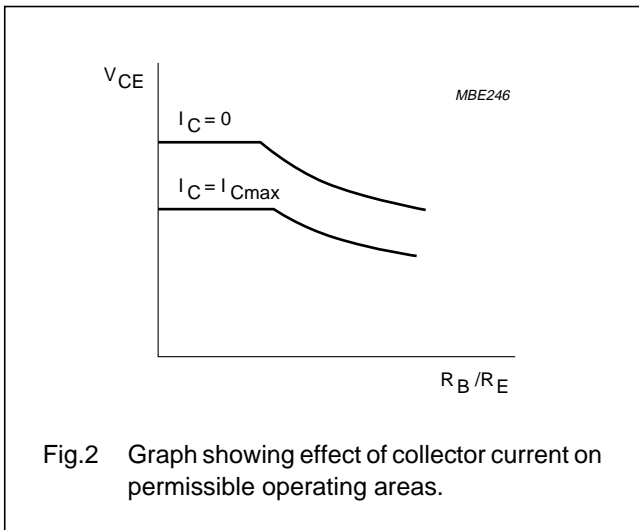


Fig.1 Graph of permissible operating areas.



- $I_{BR(AV)max}$ The maximum permissible average value of the total base current when operating in the reverse breakdown region.
- I_{BM} The maximum permissible instantaneous value of the total base current. The rating also includes the switch-off current.
- I_{BRM} The maximum permissible instantaneous value of the total reverse current allowable in the reverse breakdown region.

Power ratings

The total maximum permissible continuous power dissipation in the transistor, $P_{tot max}$, includes collector-base dissipation and emitter-base dissipation. Under steady state conditions, the total power is given as:

$$P_{tot} = V_{CE} \times I_C + V_{BE} \times I_B.$$

In order to distinguish between 'steady state' and 'pulse' conditions, the terms 'steady state power (P_S)' and 'pulse power (P_P)' can be used. The permissible total power dissipation is dependent on temperature; this relationship is shown in Fig.3.

The temperature may be the ambient, the case or the mounting base temperature. Where a cooling clip or heatsink is attached to the device, the allowable power dissipation is also dependent on the efficiency of the heatsink.

The efficiency of this clip or heatsink is measured in terms of its thermal resistance ($R_{th h}$) normally expressed in degrees Kelvin per Watt (K/W). For mounting-base rated devices, the added effect of the contact resistance ($R_{th i}$) must be taken into account.

Current ratings

COLLECTOR

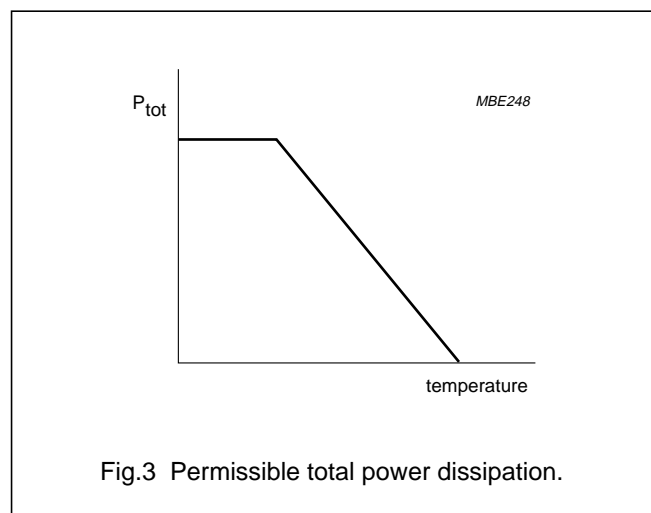
- I_{Cmax} The maximum permissible collector current. Without further qualification, the DC value is implied.
- $I_{C(AV)max}$ The maximum permissible average value of the total collector current.
- I_{CM} The maximum permissible instantaneous value of the total collector current.

Emitter

- I_{Emax} The maximum permissible emitter current. Without further qualification, the DC value is implied.
- $I_{E(AV)max}$ The maximum permissible average value of the total emitter current.
- $I_{ER(AV)max}$ The maximum permissible average value of the total emitter current when operating in the reverse emitter-base breakdown region.
- I_{EM} The maximum permissible instantaneous value of the total emitter current.
- I_{ERM} The maximum permissible instantaneous value of the total emitter current when operating in the reverse breakdown region.

BASE

- I_{Bmax} The maximum permissible base current. Without further qualification, the DC value is implied.
- $I_{B(AV)max}$ The maximum permissible average value of the total base current.



The effect of heatsinks of various thermal and contact resistance is often included in the graph of permissible total power dissipation.

The relationship between maximum power dissipation, ambient temperature and thermal heatsink resistance is given by:

$$P_{tot} = \frac{T_j - T_{amb}}{R_{thj-a}}$$

where R_{thj-a} is the thermal resistance from the transistor junction to the ambient. For case rated or mounting-base rated devices, the thermal resistance R_{thj} is made up of the thermal resistance junction to case or mounting-base (R_{thj-mb}), the contact thermal resistance (R_{thi}) and the heatsink thermal resistance (R_{thh}).

For the calculation of pulse power operation, the maximum pulse power is obtained using a graph as shown in Fig.4

The general expression from which the maximum pulse power dissipation can be calculated is:

$$P_p = \frac{T_j - T_{amb} - P_s \times R_{thj-a}}{Z_{tht} + \delta (R_{thc-a})}$$

where Z_{tht} and δ are given in Fig.4 and R_{thc-a} is the thermal resistance between case and ambient for a case rated device. For a mounting-base rated device, it is equal to $R_{thh} + R_{thi}$ and is zero for a free-air rated device because the effect of the temperature rise of the case over the ambient for a pulse train is already included in Z_{tht} .

Temperature ratings

T_{jmax} The maximum permissible junction temperature which is used as the basis for the calculation of power ratings. Unless otherwise stated, the continuous value is implied.

T_{jmax} (continuous operation): indicates the maximum permissible continuous value.

T_{jmax} (intermittent operation): indicates the maximum permissible instantaneous junction temperature usually allowed for a total duration of 200 hours.

T_{mb} The temperature of the surface in contact with the heatsink. This is confined to devices where a flange or stud for fixing onto a heatsink forms an integral part of the package.

T_{case} The temperature of the package. This is confined to devices that may have a clip-on cooling fin attachment.

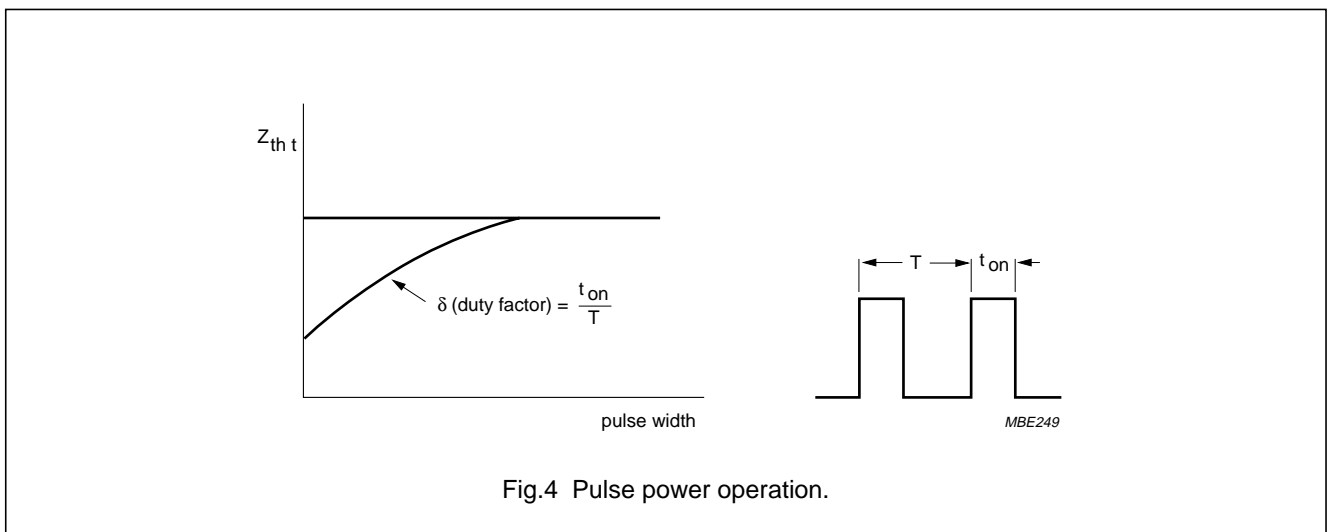


Fig.4 Pulse power operation.

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