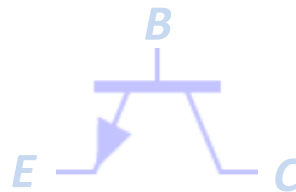
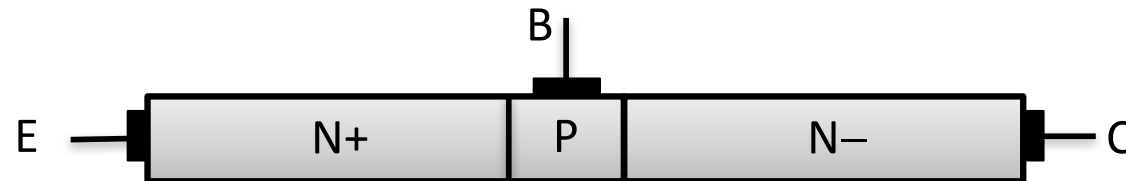


# Chapter 5

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## Electronics I - Physics of Bipolar Transistors



*Fall 2017*

# Types of Bipolar Transistors

source: Sedra & Smith

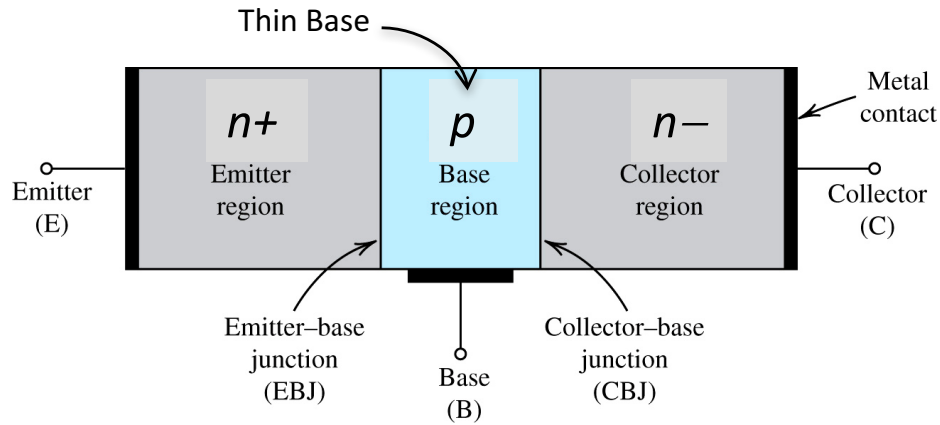


Figure - A simplified structure of the npn transistor

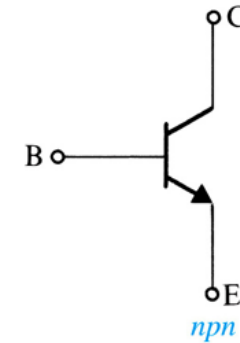


Figure - Symbol of the npn transistor

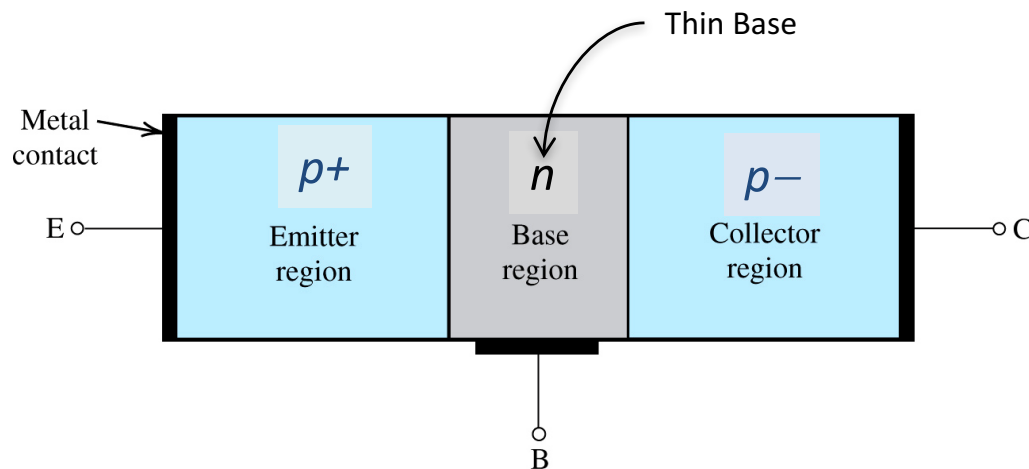


Figure - A simplified structure of the pnp transistor.

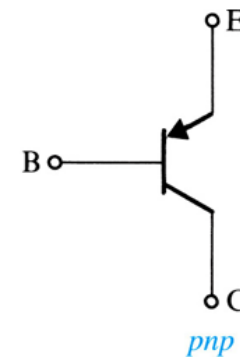


Figure - Symbol of the pnp transistor

# Physical structure of an npn BJT

source: Sedra & Smith

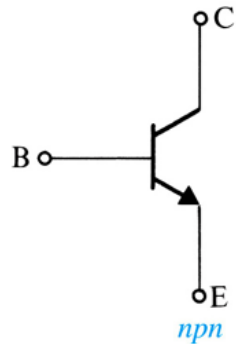


Figure - npn BJT symbol

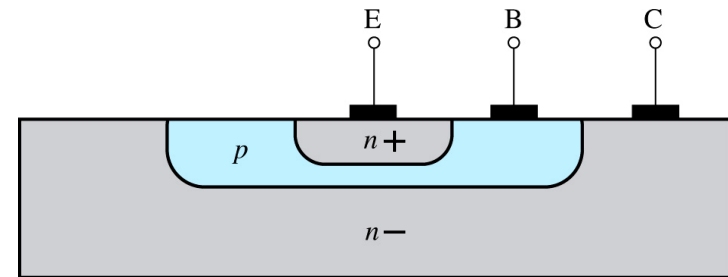
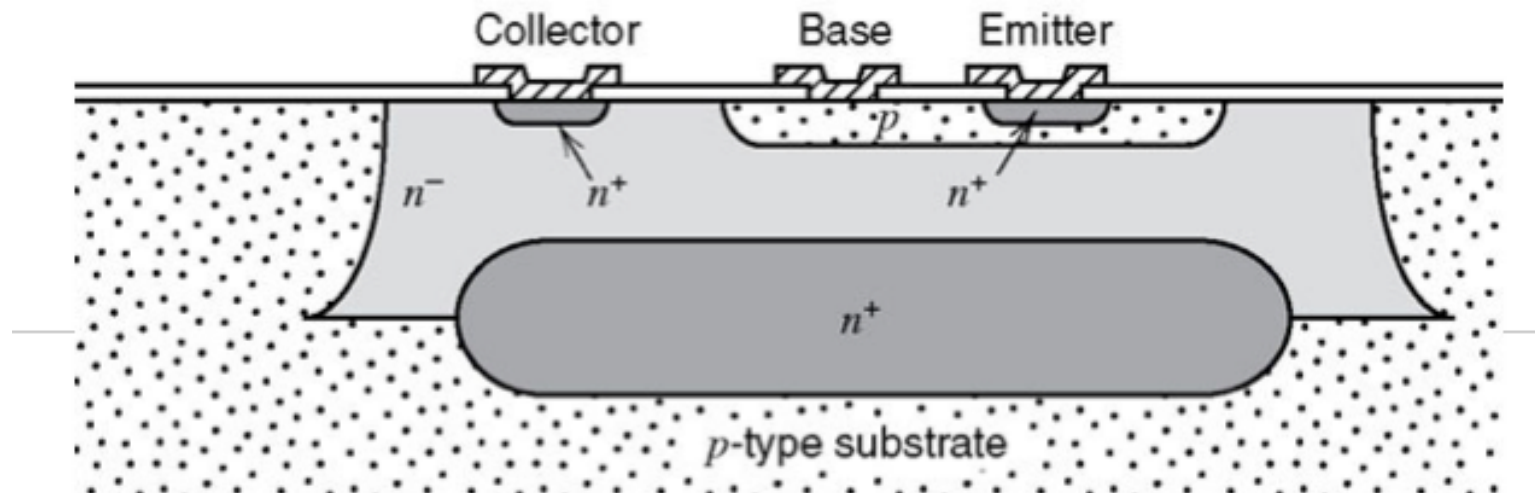


Figure - Simplified Cross-section of an npn BJT.

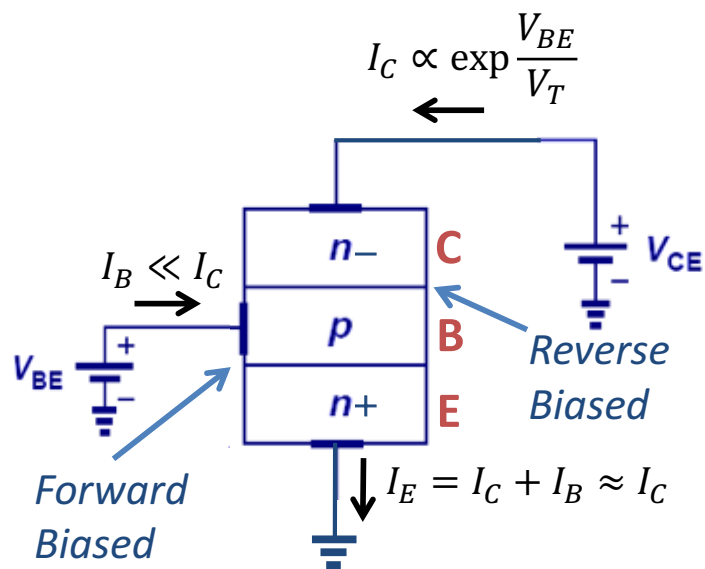
source: Gray & Meyer



# NPN BJT operating in “Forward” Active Mode

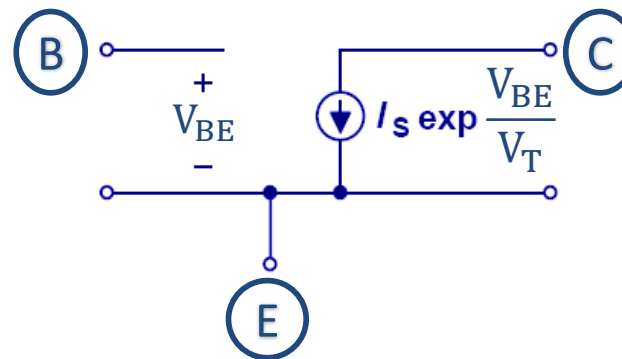
source: B. Murmann

## Conceptual View:

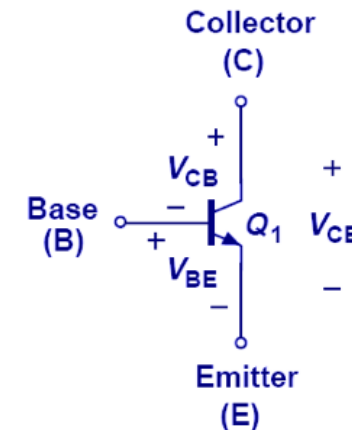


$$V_{CB} = V_{CE} - V_{BE}$$

- Device acts as a voltage controlled current source
  - $V_{BE}$  controls  $I_C$

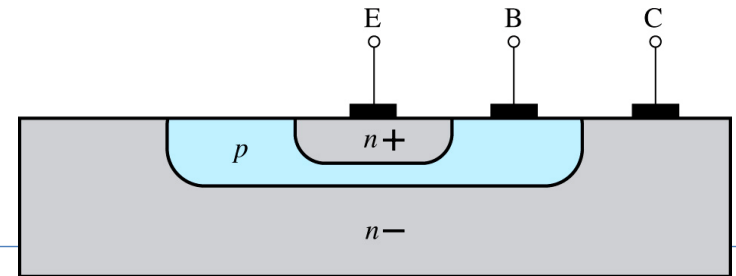


- The BE junction is forward biased ( $V_{BE} > 0$ ) and the BC junction is reverse biased ( $V_{BC} < 0 \leftrightarrow V_{CB} > 0$ )



- The device is built such that:
  - The BASE region is very thin
  - The EMITTER doping is much higher than the BASE doping ( $N_E(\text{donors}) \gg N_B(\text{acceptors})$ )
  - The COLLECTOR doping is much lower than the BASE doping ( $N_B(\text{acceptors}) \gg N_C(\text{donors})$ )

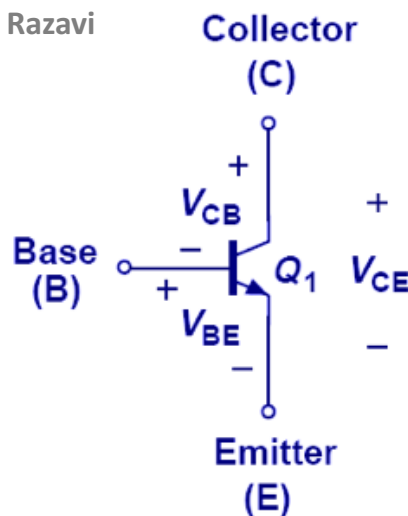
# Outline of discussion for NPN BJT in Active mode



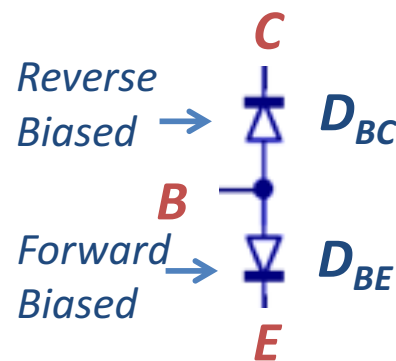
source: B. Murmann

- To understand the operation of the NPN BJT in active mode, we will look at:
  - Properties of forward biased  $PN^+$  junction (BE)
  - Properties of reverse biased  $PN^-$  junction (BC)
  - The idea of combining the two junctions by a very thin P-type region (B)

source: Razavi



*Although the device contains two PN junctions it cannot be modeled as two back to back diodes.*



*The doping levels and dimensions of E and C are quite different ( $N_E \gg N_C$  and  $A_C \gg A_E$ ). The device is not symmetric: E and C cannot be interchanged*

# Main idea

---

- Make the P-region (B) of the PN<sup>+</sup> junction (BE junction) very thin and forward bias it
  - This way the electrons injected from the N<sup>+</sup> side (E) into the P side (B) cannot recombine much
- Attach an N<sup>-</sup> region (C) to the P-region (B) and reverse bias the resulting PN<sup>-</sup> junction (BC junction)
  - This way most of the electrons injected into the P-region (B) are swept into the N<sup>-</sup> region (C) before there is any significant amount of recombination occurring
- Final Result: most of the electrons emitted in E will make it through B and get collected in C

# Voltage polarities for BJTs in active mode

source: Razavi

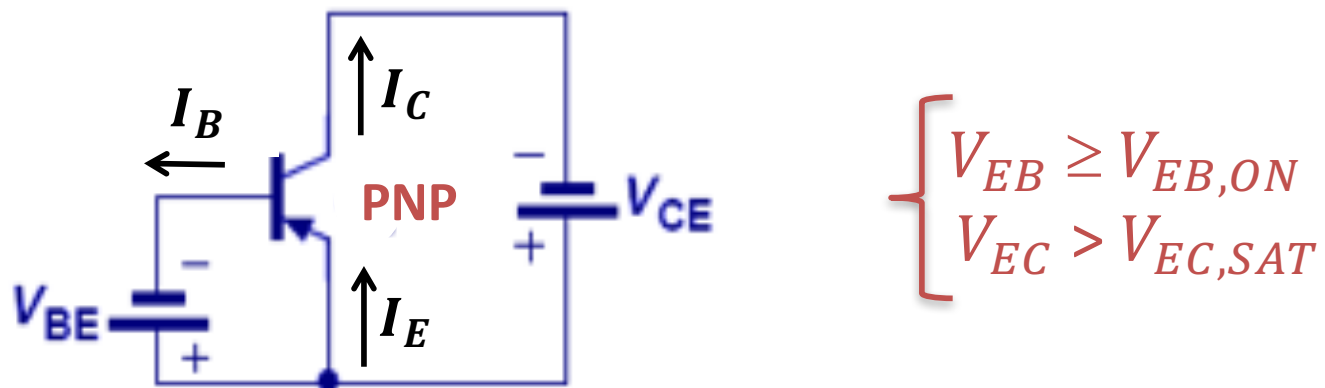
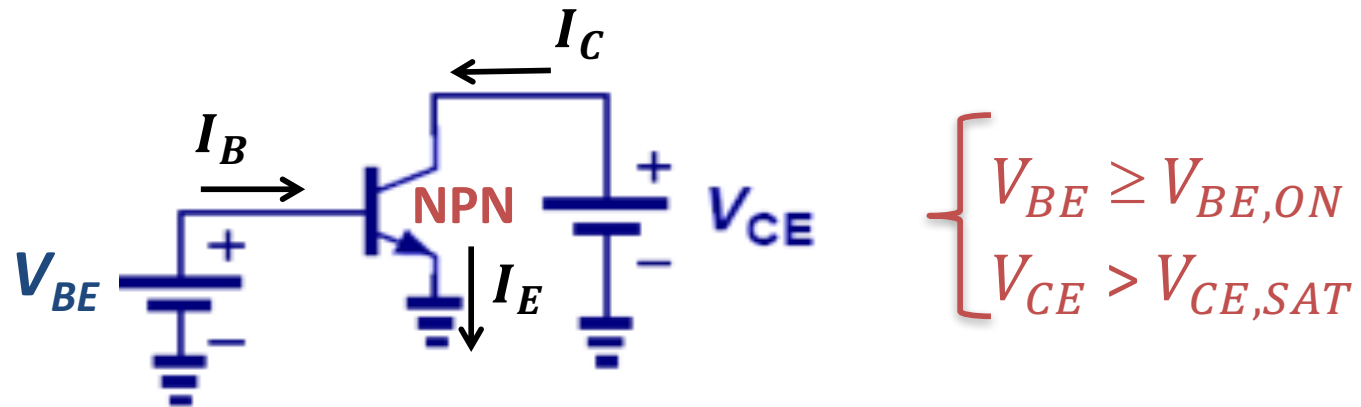
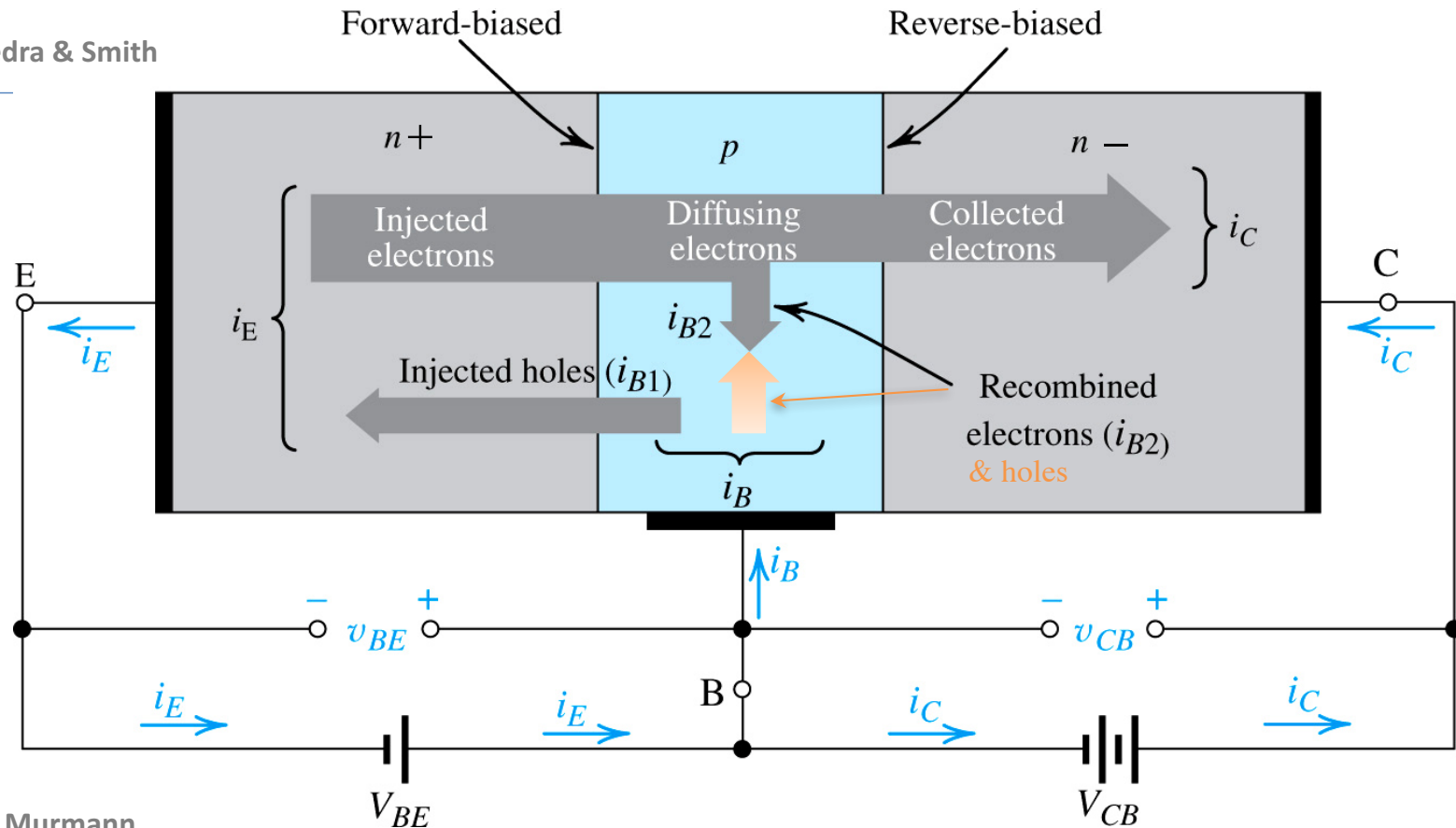


Figure – Voltage polarities and current flow in bipolar transistors biased in the active mode

# Currents for NPN BJT in active mode

source: Sedra & Smith



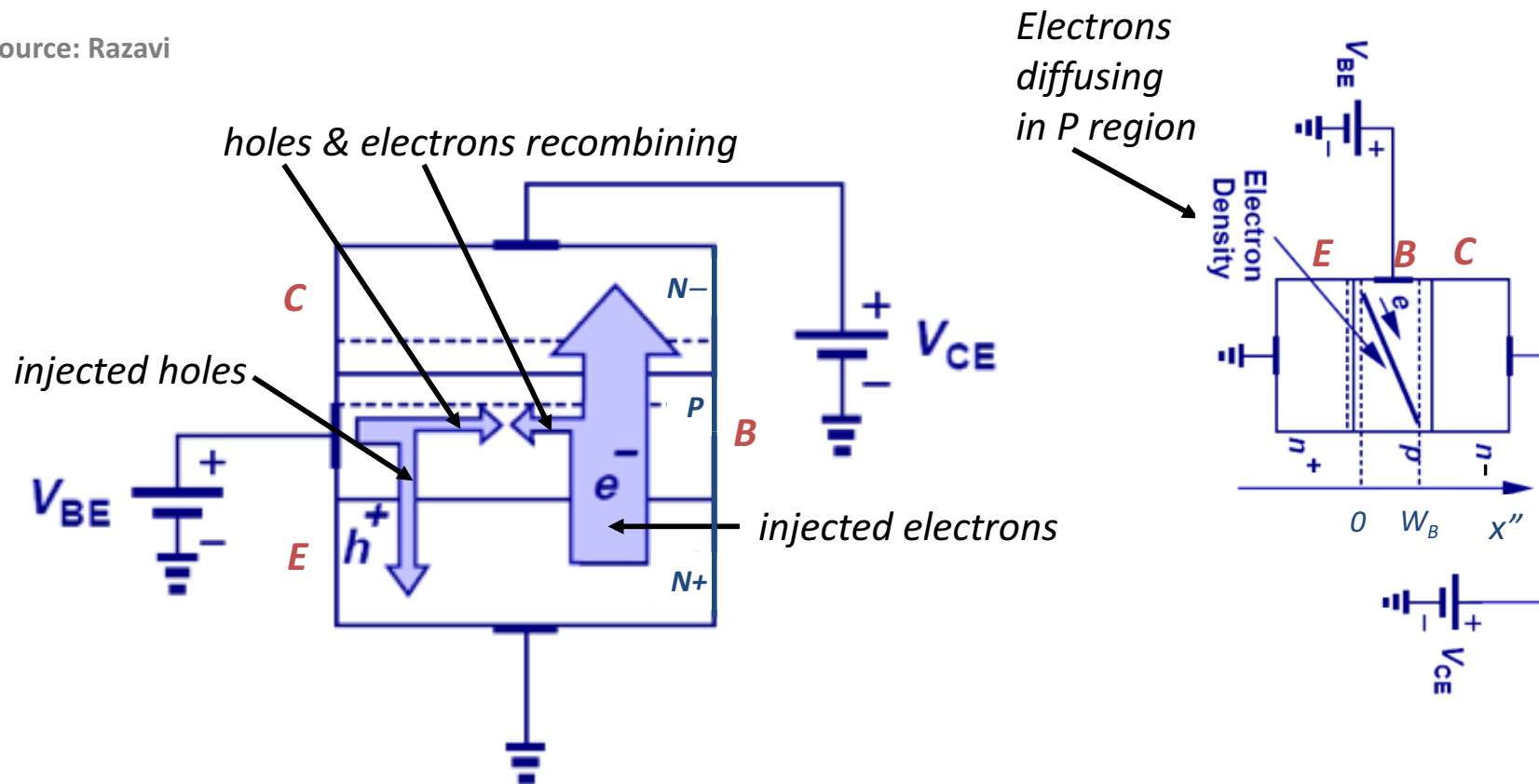
source: B. Murmann

- Primary current is due to electrons captured by the collector
- Two (undesired) base current components
  - Hole injection into emitter ( $\rightarrow 0$  for infinite emitter doping)
  - Recombination in base ( $\rightarrow 0$  for base width approaching 0)



# Currents for NPN BJT in active mode

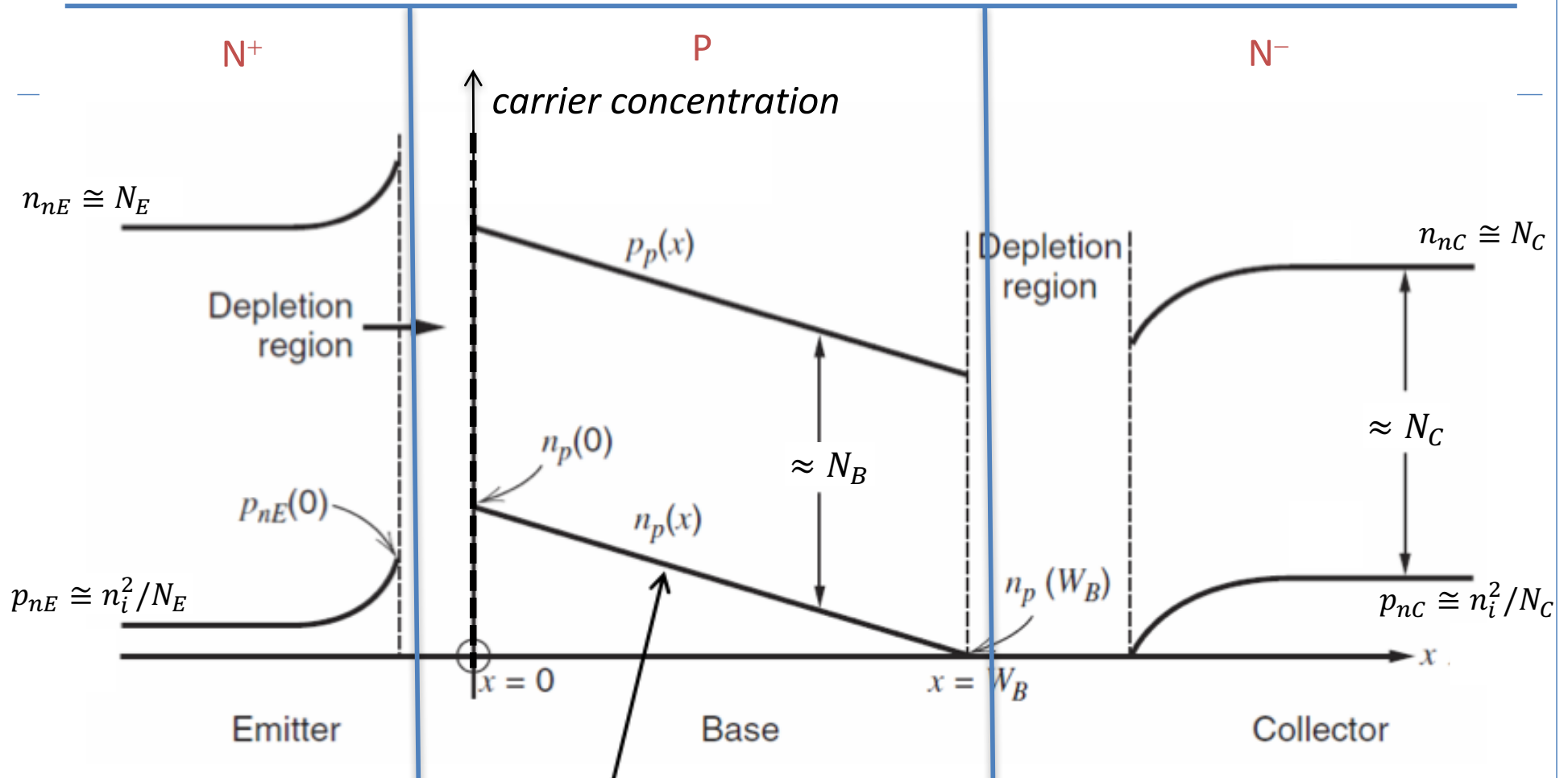
source: Razavi



- There a lot of electrons injected into the P region, not that many holes injected in N+ region ( $N_E \gg N_B$ )
- The electrons injected in the P region causes a diffusion current decaying in the  $x''$  direction due to recombination (recombination necessitate a flow of holes to balance out the flow of electrons)

# Carrier Concentrations

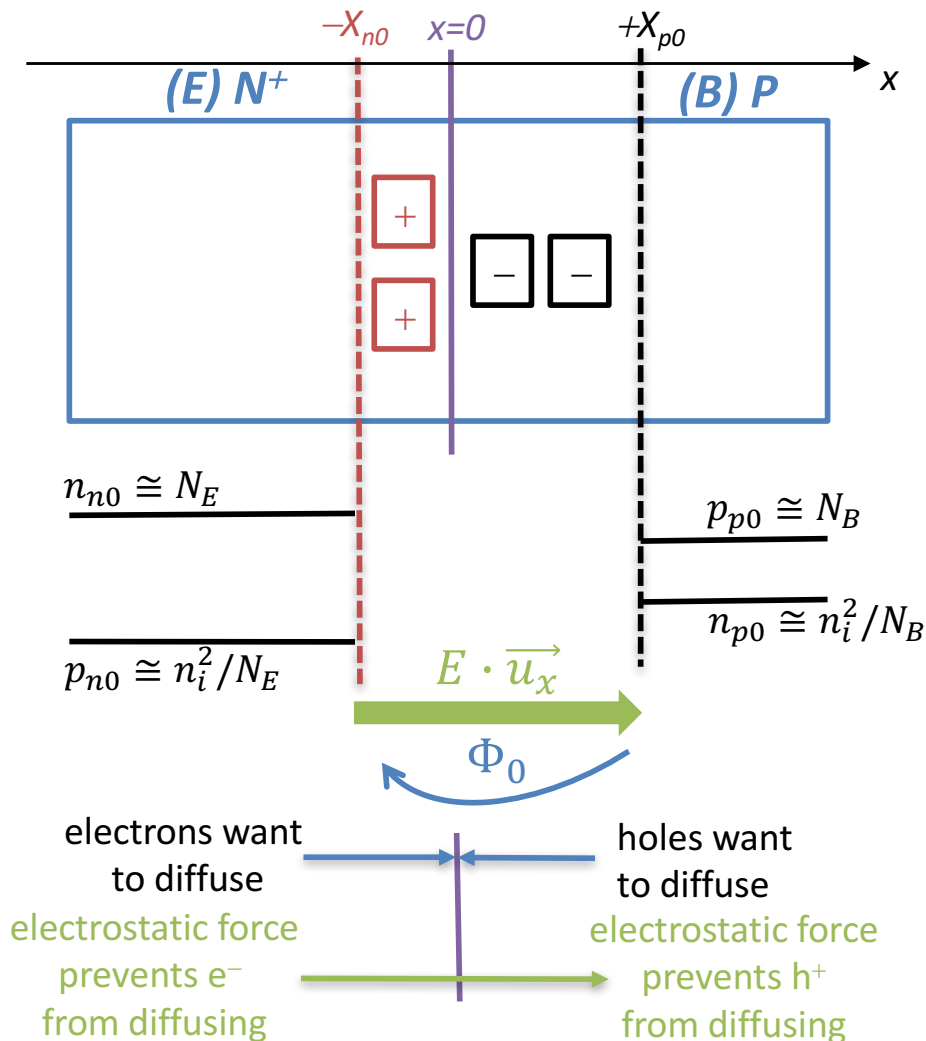
source: Gray & Meyer



**Straight line because base is thin; negligible recombination ("short base" electron profile)**

# BE (PN<sup>+</sup>) junction

- Built-in Potential (PN<sup>+</sup> junction at equilibrium:  $V_{BE}=0$ )



Electrostatic force and diffusion balance out:

$$(drift) \quad q\mu_p p E = qD_p \frac{dp}{dx} \quad (\text{diffusion})$$

$$-\int_{V(-X_{n0})}^{+V(X_{p0})} dV = \frac{D_p}{\mu_p} \int_{p_{n0}}^{p_{p0}} \frac{dp}{p}$$

$\underbrace{\hspace{10em}}_{\equiv \Phi_0} \qquad \underbrace{\hspace{10em}}_{\equiv V_T}$

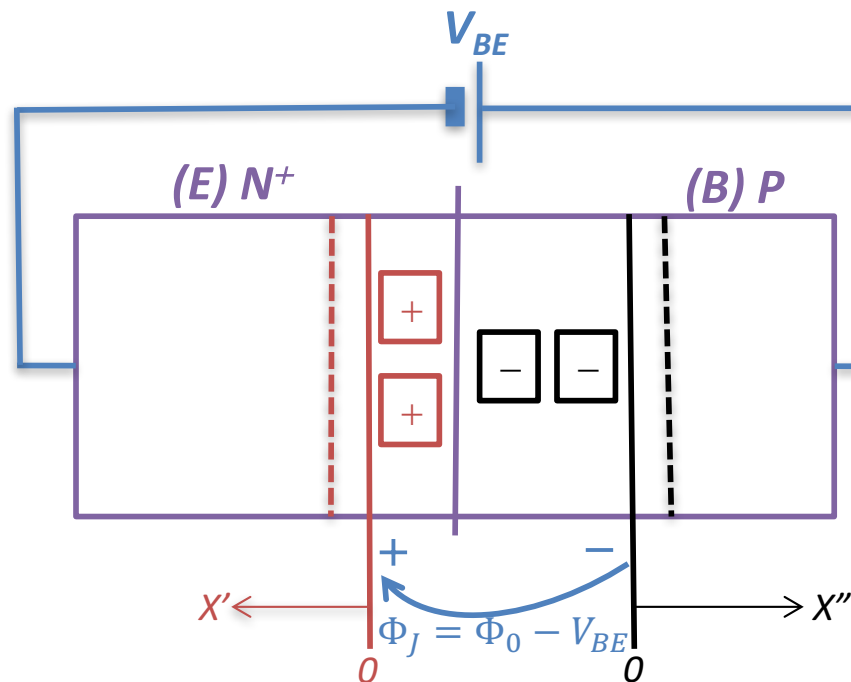
$$\frac{p_{p0}}{p_{n0}} = \exp\left(\frac{\Phi_0}{V_T}\right) = \frac{n_{n0}}{n_{p0}}$$

$$\Phi_0 = V_T \cdot \ln\left(\frac{n_{n0}}{n_{p0}}\right) = V_T \cdot \ln\left(\frac{p_{p0}}{p_{n0}}\right) \approx$$

$$\approx V_T \cdot \ln\left(\frac{N_E N_B}{n_i^2}\right)$$

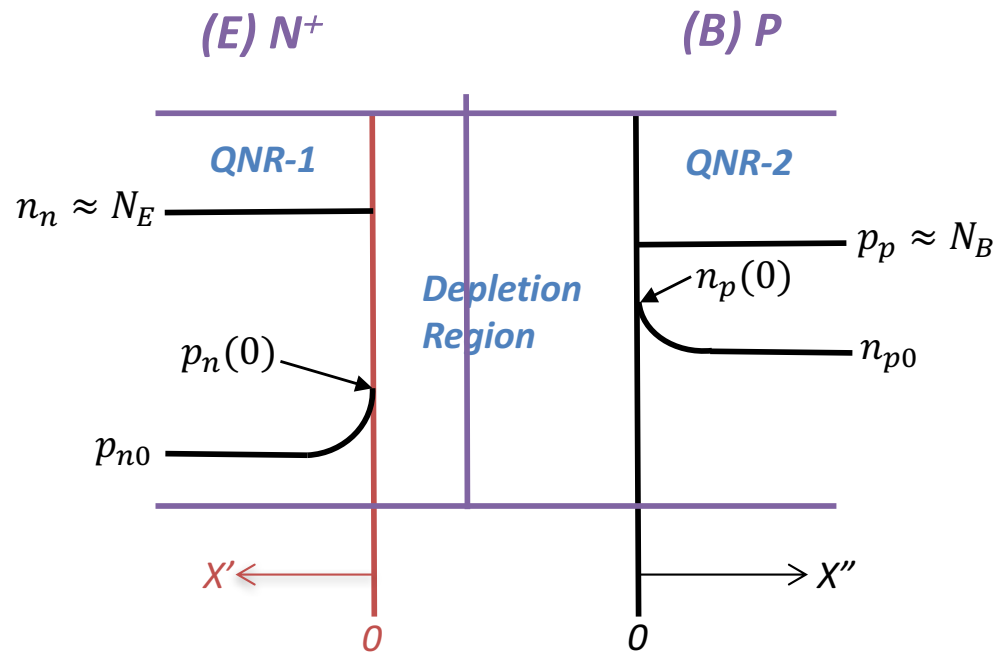
# BE (PN<sup>+</sup>) junction with forward bias

- The depletion region narrows and diffusion processes are no longer balanced by electrostatic forces



- With a forward bias applied some electrons can now diffuse from the N<sup>+</sup> side (where they are majority carriers) to the P side (where they become minority carriers). Similarly, some holes diffuse from the P side into the N<sup>+</sup> side
- This migration of carriers from one side to another is called INJECTION
- As a result of injections the concentration of minority carriers at the edges of the depletion region ( $x' = 0$  and  $x'' = 0$ ) is “significantly” increased

# BE (PN<sup>+</sup>) junction with forward bias



- Important result to remember

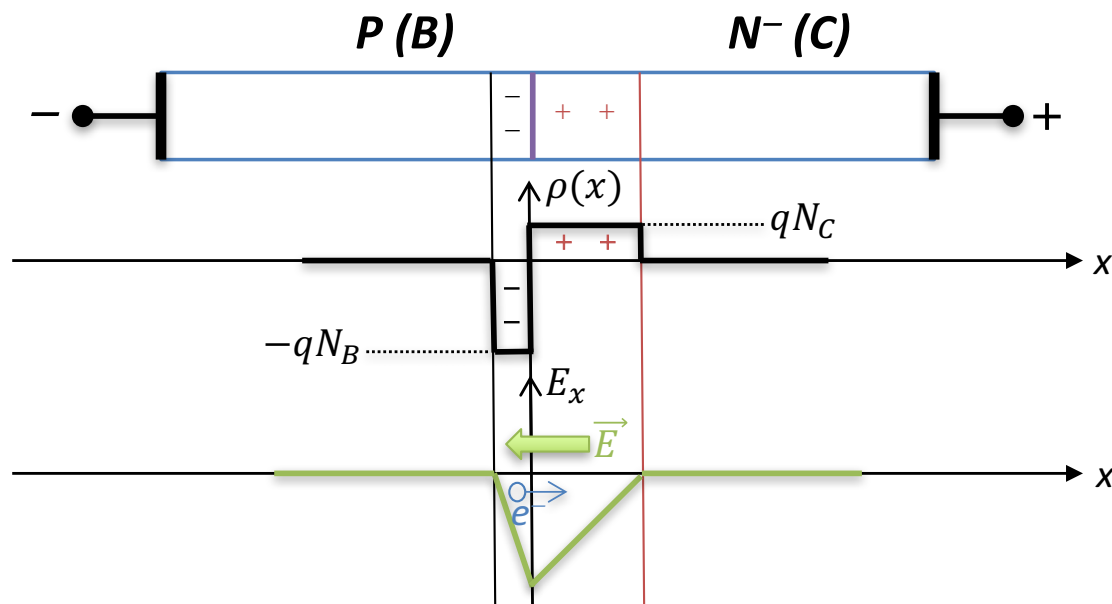
- Forward Bias increases the concentration of electrons at the P side's edge of depletion region by a factor  $\exp(V_{BE}/V_T)$   
(Law of the Junction)

$$\begin{aligned}
 n_p(0) &= \frac{n_{n0}}{\exp\left(\frac{\Phi_0 - V_{BE}}{V_T}\right)} = \\
 &= \frac{n_{n0}}{\exp(\Phi_0/V_T)} \exp\left(\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}\right) \approx \\
 &\approx n_{p0} \cdot \exp\left(\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}\right) \approx \frac{n_i^2}{N_B} \exp\left(\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}\right)
 \end{aligned}$$

- Since outside the depletion region there must be charge neutrality, the concentrations of the majority carriers at the edges of the depletion region must also increase of the same amount the minority carriers increased
- However if we assume low level of injection the increase in majority carriers is not significant and can be neglected
- The carriers injected would like to diffuse into the neutral regions, but quickly fall victim of recombination
- The number of minority carriers decay exponentially and drops to 1/e at the so called diffusion length ( $L_p$  and  $L_n$  are on the order of microns)

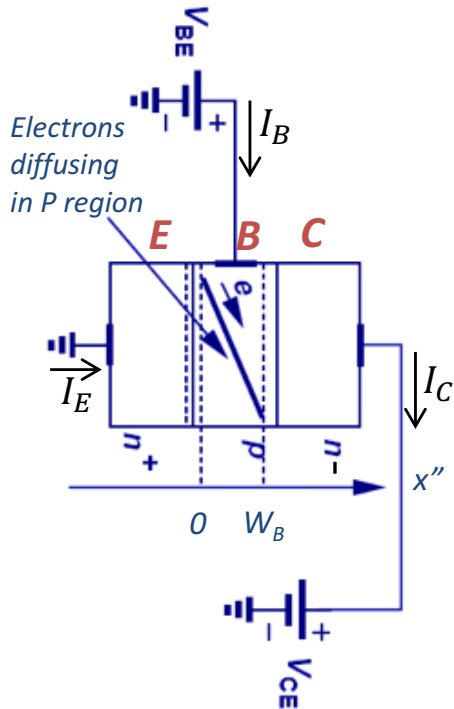
# Reverse Biased BC ( $PN^-$ ) junction

- Reverse bias increases the width of the depletion region and increases the electric field
- Depletion region extends mostly in  $N^-$  side
- Any electron that “somehow” make it into the depletion region is swept through by the electric field, into the N- region



# Collector Current for an NPN BJT in active mode

source: Razavi



- First order expression:

- The electrons injected from the emitter into base diffuse through base and then get swept into collector:

$$J_n = qD_n \left. \frac{dn_p}{dx} \right|_0 \cong qD_n \frac{\Delta n_p}{\Delta x} = qD_n \frac{n_p(0) - n_{p0}}{0 - W_B} =$$

$$= -\frac{qD_n}{W_B} n_{p0} (e^{V_{BE}/V_T} - 1) \approx -\frac{qD_n}{W_B} \frac{n_i^2}{N_B} e^{V_{BE}/V_T}$$

- Multiplying by the emitter area and changing the sign to obtain the conventional current

$$I_C \approx A_E \frac{qD_n}{W_B} \frac{n_i^2}{N_B} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} = I_S \cdot e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}}$$

The device operates as a voltage controlled current source (it performs voltage-current conversion)

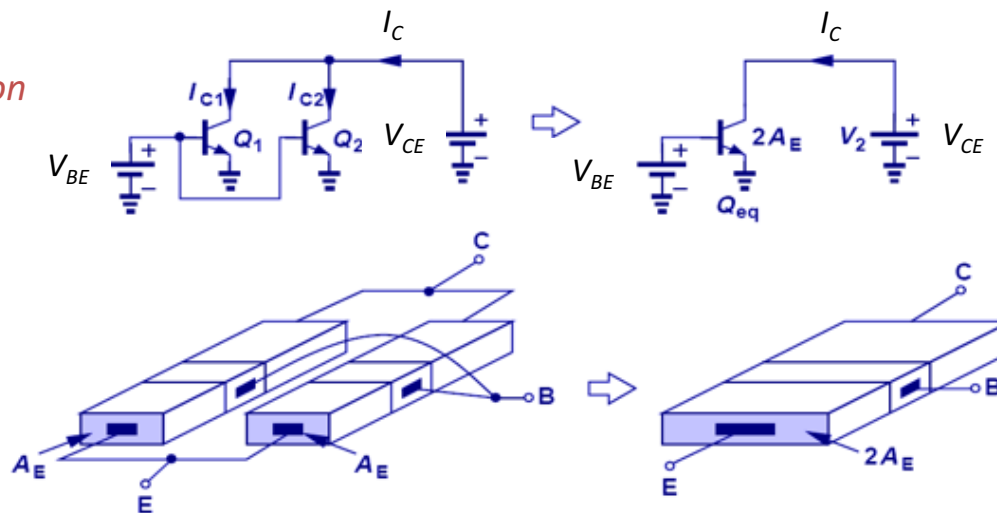
$I_{SE}$  to be picky

# Relation between collector current and emitter area

source: Razavi

- When two transistors are put in parallel and experience the same potential across all three terminals, they can be thought of as a single transistor with twice the emitter area.

*Parallel combination of two transistors*

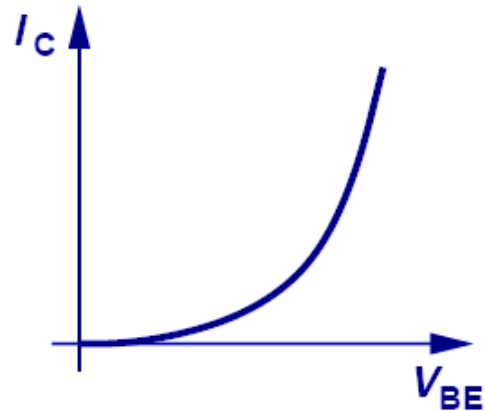
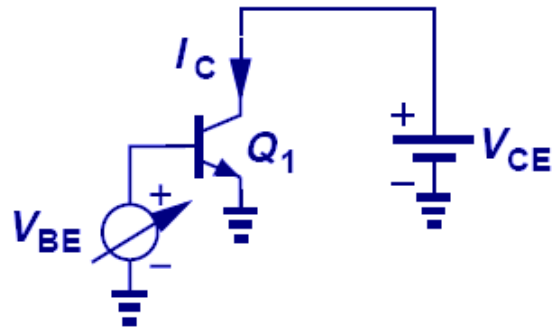


$$I_C \cong 2A_E \times \frac{qD_n n_i^2}{W_B N_B} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}}$$

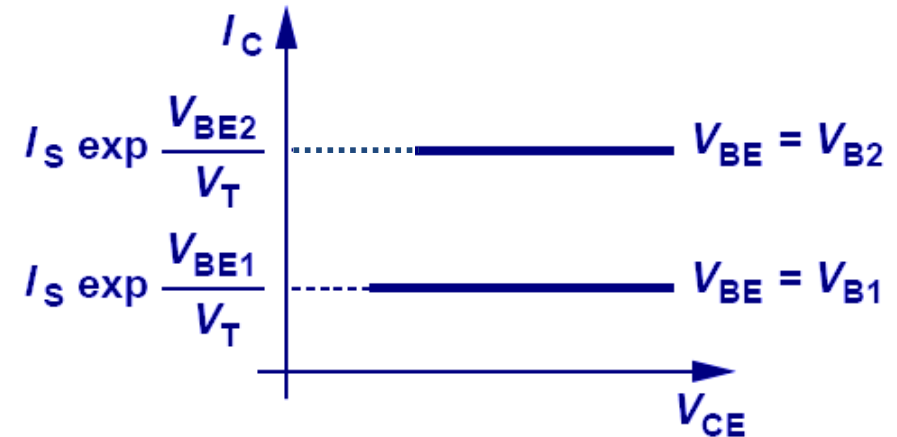
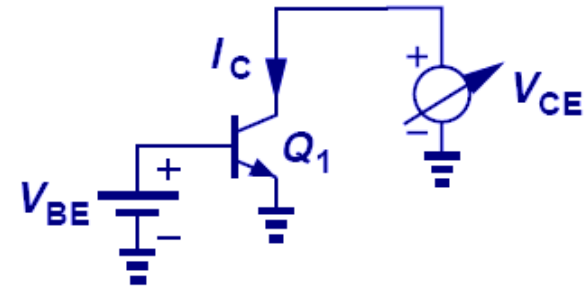


# Characteristics of NPN BJT in active mode

source: Razavi



(a)

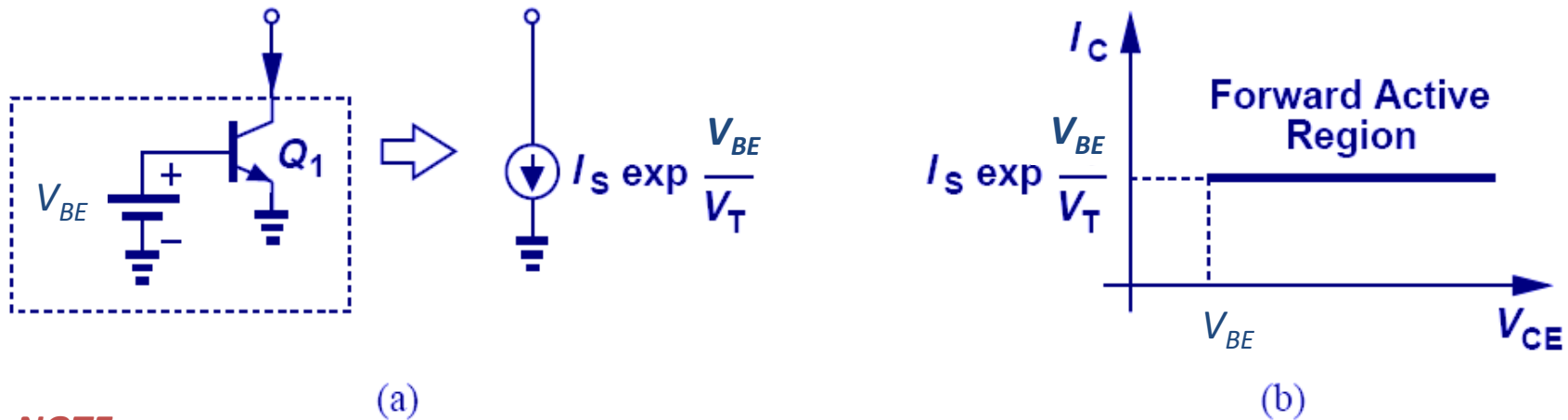


(b)

# NPN BJT in active mode behaves as a constant current source

- **Ideally**, the collector current does not depend on the collector to emitter voltage. This property allows the transistor to behave as a constant current source when its base-emitter voltage is fixed.

source: Razavi



**NOTE:**

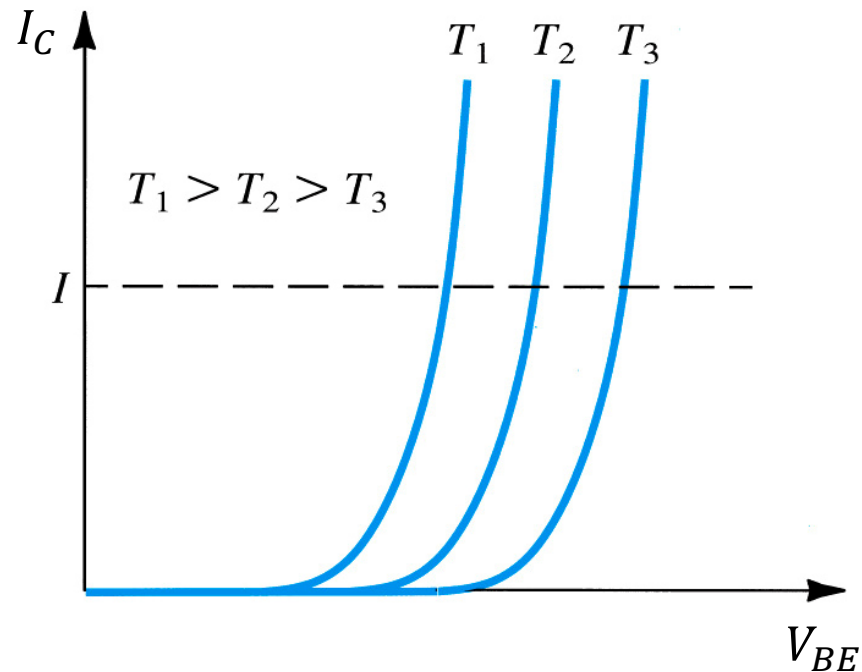
don't forget the BC (PN<sup>-</sup>) junction must be reverse biased ( $V_{BC} \leq 0$ ):

$$V_{CB} = V_{CE} - V_{BE} \leftrightarrow V_{BC} = V_{BE} - V_{CE}$$

so  $V_{CE}$  must not go below  $V_{BE}$

# Effect of temperature on $I_C$ vs. $V_{BE}$ characteristics for NPN BJT in active mode

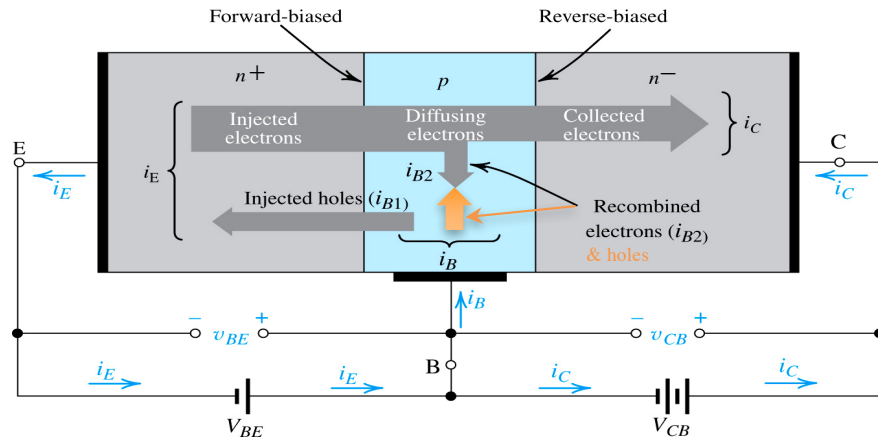
source: Sedra and Smith



*Figure - Effect of temperature on the  $I_C$ - $V_{BE}$  characteristics. At constant  $I_C$  the  $V_{BE}$  changes by about  $-2\text{mV}/\text{Celsius}$*

# Base current for NPN BJT in active mode (1)

source: Sedra & Smith



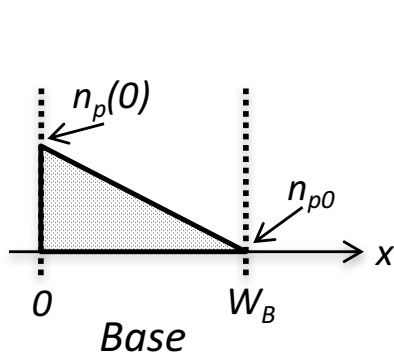
- Primary current is due to electrons captured by the collector
- Two (undesired) base current components
  - Hole injection into emitter ( $\rightarrow 0$  for infinite emitter doping)
  - Recombination in base ( $\rightarrow 0$  for base width approaching 0)

holes injected in emitter  $\rightarrow I_{B1}$

recombination in base  $\rightarrow I_{B2}$

In modern narrow-base transistors  $I_{B1} \gg I_{B2}$

$$I_B = I_{B1} + I_{B2} \approx I_{B1}$$



Charge of minority carriers (electrons) in BASE

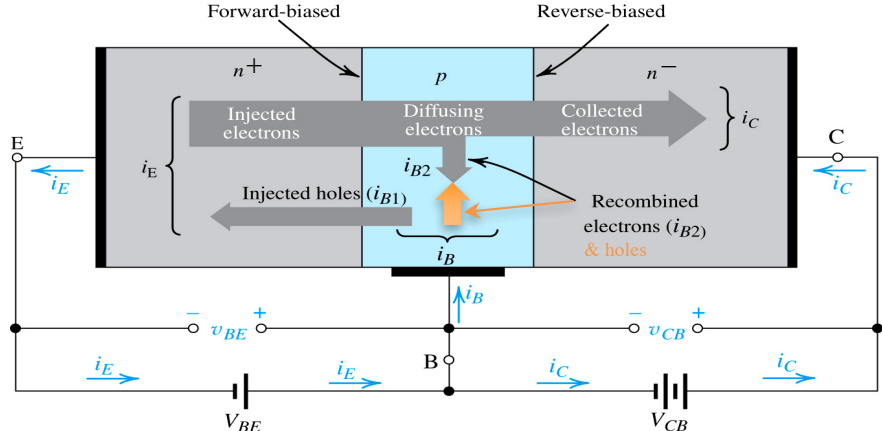
life time electrons

$$I_{B2} = \frac{Q_{e,BASE}}{\tau_{BASE}} \approx \frac{\frac{1}{2} n_p(0) q A_E W_B}{\tau_n} \cong \frac{1}{2} \frac{q A_E W_B}{\tau_n} \frac{n_i^2}{N_B} e^{V_{BE}/V_T}$$

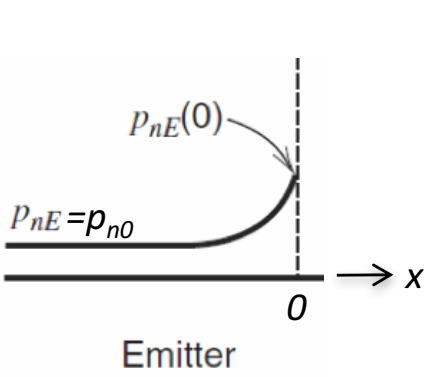
$n_p(0) - n_{p0} \cong n_p(0)$

# Base current for NPN BJT in active mode (2)

source: Sedra & Smith



holes injected in emitter  $\rightarrow I_{B1}$   
 recombination in base  $\rightarrow I_{B2}$   
 $I_B = I_{B1} + I_{B2}$   
 In modern narrow-base transistors  $I_{B1} \gg I_{B2} \approx I_{B1}$



current due to holes diffusing in emitter

$$I_{B1} = -qA_E D_p \left. \frac{dp_n(x)}{dx} \right|_0 \cong -qA_E D_p \left. \frac{d}{dx} \left( \frac{n_i^2}{N_E} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} e^{\frac{-x}{L_p}} \right) \right|_0 =$$

$$= qA_E \frac{D_p}{L_p} \frac{n_i^2}{N_E} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}}$$

- Primary current is due to electrons captured by the collector
- Two (undesired) base current components
  - Hole injection into emitter ( $\rightarrow 0$  for infinite emitter doping)
  - Recombination in base ( $\rightarrow 0$  for base width approaching 0)

# Base current for NPN BJT in active mode (3)

holes injected in emitter      recombination in base      In modern narrow-base transistors  $I_{B1} \gg I_{B2}$

$$I_B = I_{B1} + I_{B2} \approx I_{B1}$$

current due to holes diffusing in emitter      recombination current in base

$$I_B = I_{B1} + I_{B2} = \left( qA_E \frac{D_p}{L_p} \frac{n_i^2}{N_E} + \frac{1}{2} \frac{qA_E W_B}{\tau_n} \frac{n_i^2}{N_B} \right) e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}}$$

$$I_C \approx A_E \frac{qD_n}{W_B} \frac{n_i^2}{N_B} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} = I_S \cdot e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}}$$

$$\beta_F = \frac{I_C}{I_B} = \frac{1}{\frac{W_B^2}{2\tau_n D_n} + \frac{D_p W_B N_B}{D_n L_p N_E}}$$

- Primary current is due to electrons captured by the collector
- Two (undesired) base current components
  - Hole injection into emitter ( $\rightarrow 0$  for infinite emitter doping)
  - Recombination in base ( $\rightarrow 0$  for base width approaching 0)

As expected:

$\beta_F$  is maximized by minimizing  $W_B$  and maximizing  $N_E/N_B$

*Important result:  $I_B$  is a constant fraction of  $I_C$  ( $\rightarrow \beta_F = I_C/I_B$ )*

# Large signal (DC) model of NPN BJT in active region

source: Gray and Meyer

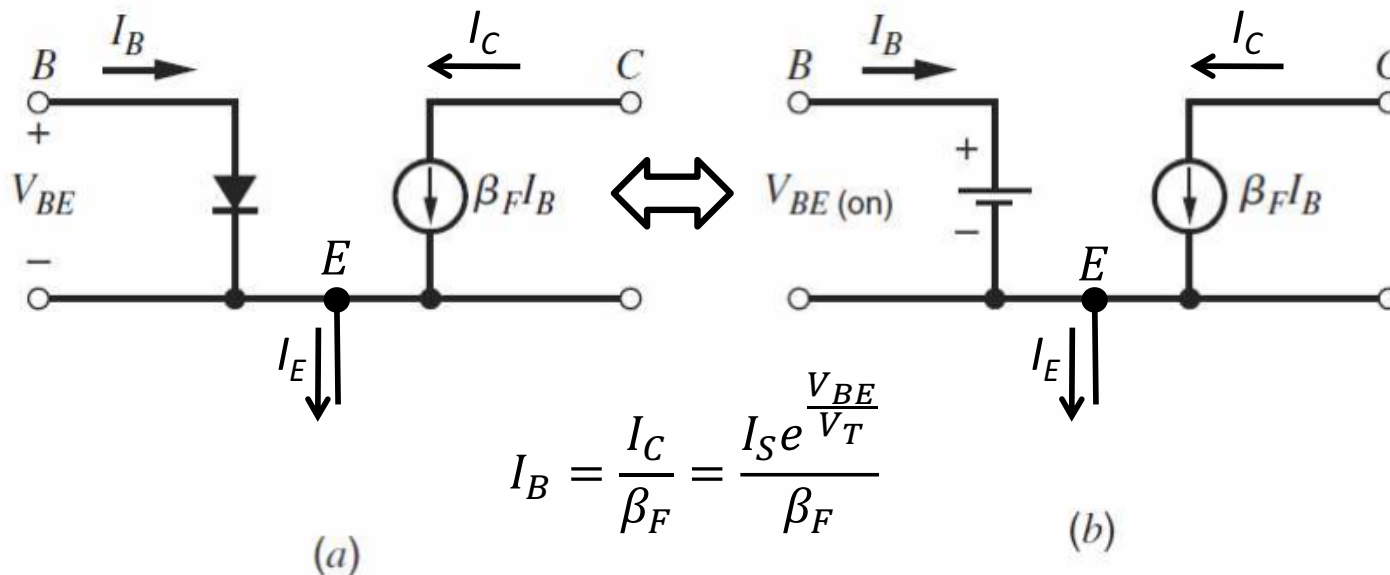


Figure - Simplified model; very useful for bias point calculations (assuming e.g.  $V_{BE(on)} = 0.8V$ )

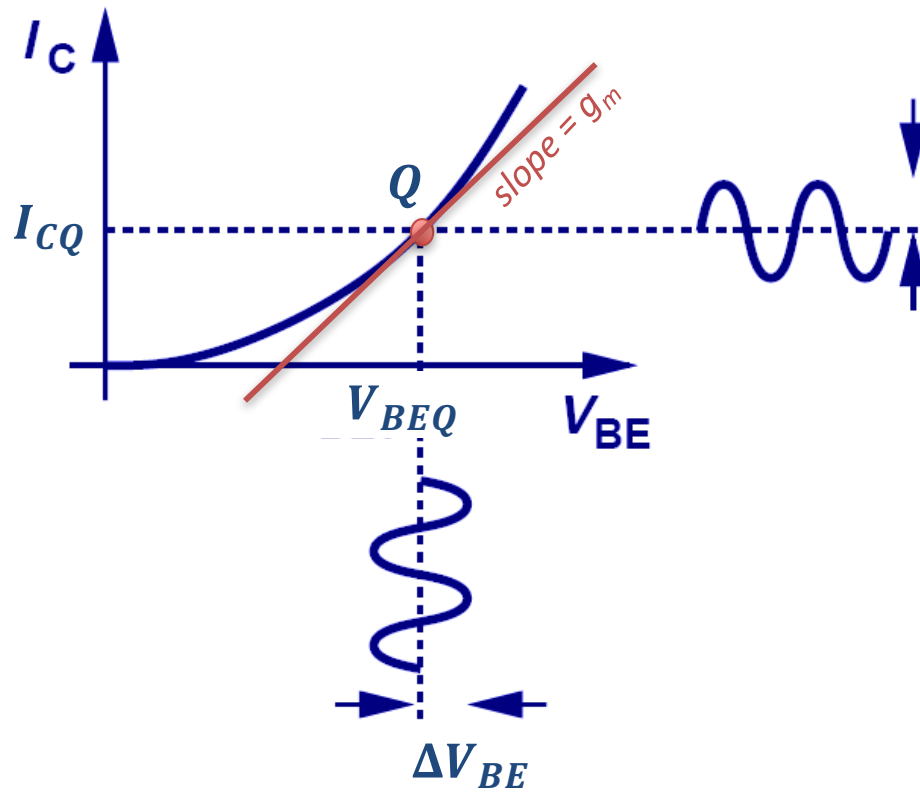
$$\beta_F \therefore \frac{I_C}{I_B} \quad (\text{ideally infinite: } I_B=0)$$

$$\alpha_F \therefore \frac{I_C}{I_E} = \frac{I_C}{I_B + I_C} = \frac{\beta_F}{\beta_F + 1} \quad (\text{ideally one})$$

- The subscript “F” indicates that the device is assumed to operate in the forward active region (BE junction forward biased, BC reverse biased, as assumed so far)
  - More on other operating regions soon ...

# Small signal (AC) model of NPN BJT in active mode

source: Razavi



$$\Delta I_C \cong g_m \Delta V_{BE}$$

- The *transconductance*  $g_m$  expresses the “strength of the device (how well the controlling voltage is converted in a current)”

$$g_m = \frac{dI_C}{dV_{BE}} = \frac{d}{dV_{BE}} \left( I_S e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} \right) = \frac{I_C}{V_T}$$

$$g_\pi = \frac{dI_B}{dV_{BE}} = \frac{d(I_C/\beta_F)}{dV_{BE}} = \frac{g_m}{\beta_f}$$

Common notations:

$$\Delta V_{BE} \equiv v_{be} \equiv v_\pi$$

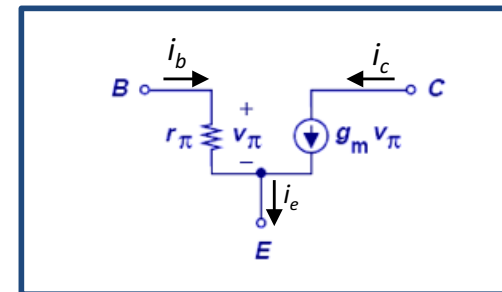
$$\Delta V_{CE} \equiv v_{ce}$$

$$\Delta I_C \equiv i_c$$

$$r_\pi = 1/g_\pi \equiv h_{ie}$$

$$\Delta I_B \equiv i_b$$

$$\beta_f \equiv h_{fe} \cong \beta_F \equiv h_{FE}$$





# Flavors of $\beta$ (with BJT in forward active mode)

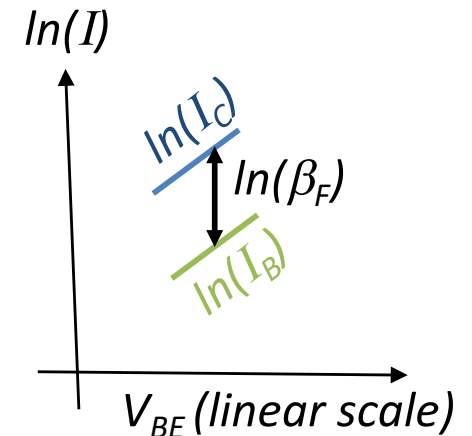
$$\frac{I_C}{I_B} \equiv \beta_F \equiv h_{FE} \leftarrow \text{DC beta}$$

$$\frac{\Delta I_C}{\Delta I_B} \equiv \beta_f \equiv h_{fe} \leftarrow \text{AC beta}$$

To first order we assume  $\beta_{DC} \approx \beta_{AC}$



In other words we assume  $\beta_F$  is constant  
(we'll see later that is not always accurate)

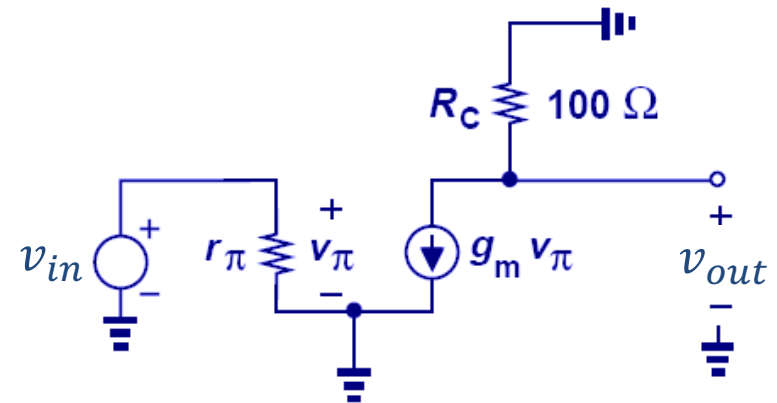
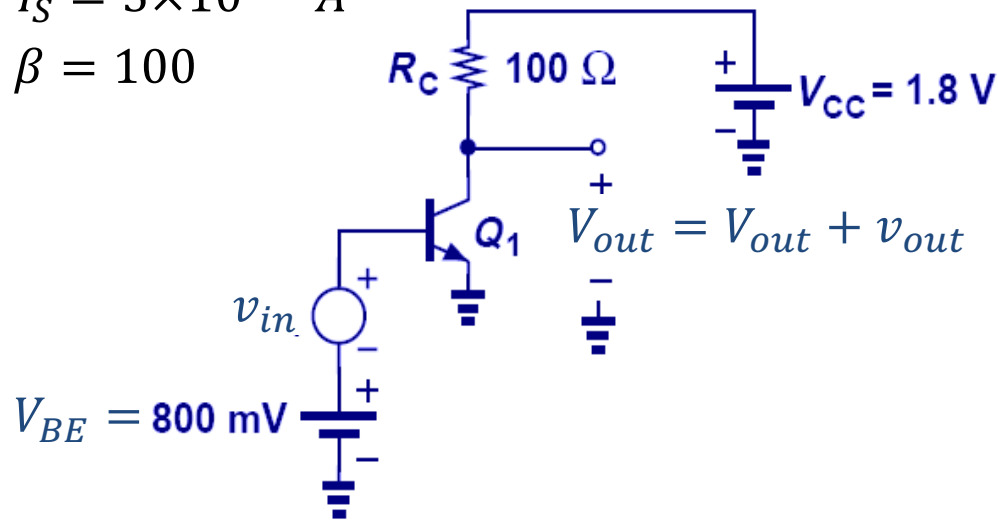


# Let's finally build an amplifier !

$$I_S = 3 \times 10^{-16} A$$

$$\beta = 100$$

source: Razavi



$$I_C = I_S e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} \cong 6.92 \text{ mA}$$

$$g_m = \frac{I_C}{V_T} \cong 266 \text{ mS}$$

$$r_\pi = \frac{\beta}{g_m} \cong 376 \Omega$$

$$A_V = \frac{v_{out}}{v_{in}} = -g_m R_C \cong -26.6$$

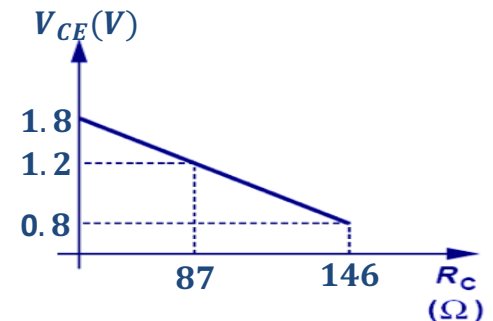
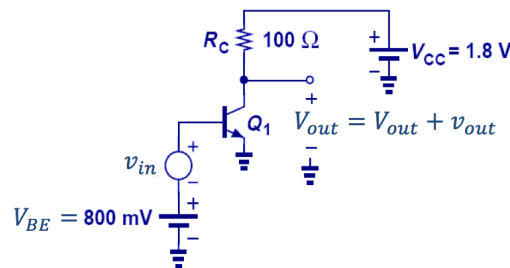
*It looks like by increasing  $R_C$  we can get whatever gain we want. This sounds too good to be true ! There must be limitations we are missing !*

# Practical Limitations

- First of all for the device to behave as a voltage controlled current source we must operate in forward active mode (BE must be forward biased and BC reverse biased)
  - As  $R_C$  increases,  $V_{CE}$  drops and eventually forward biases the collector-base junction. This will force the transistor out of forward active region.
  - Therefore, there exists a maximum tolerable collector resistance

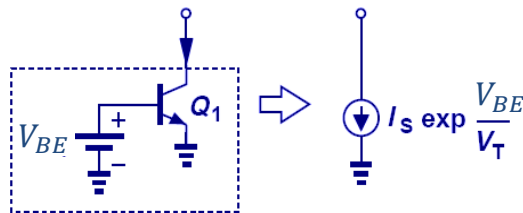
$$V_{CE} = V_{CC} - R_C I_C \geq V_{BE}$$

$$R_C \leq \frac{V_{CC} - V_{BE}}{I_C} \therefore R_{C,MAX}$$

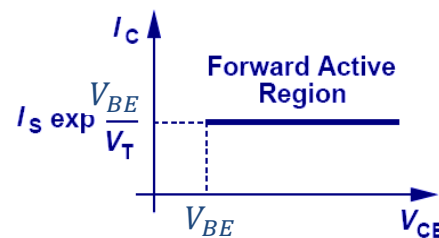


- Second, I am very skeptical we can build anything that behave exactly as an **ideal** current source

source: Razavi



(a)

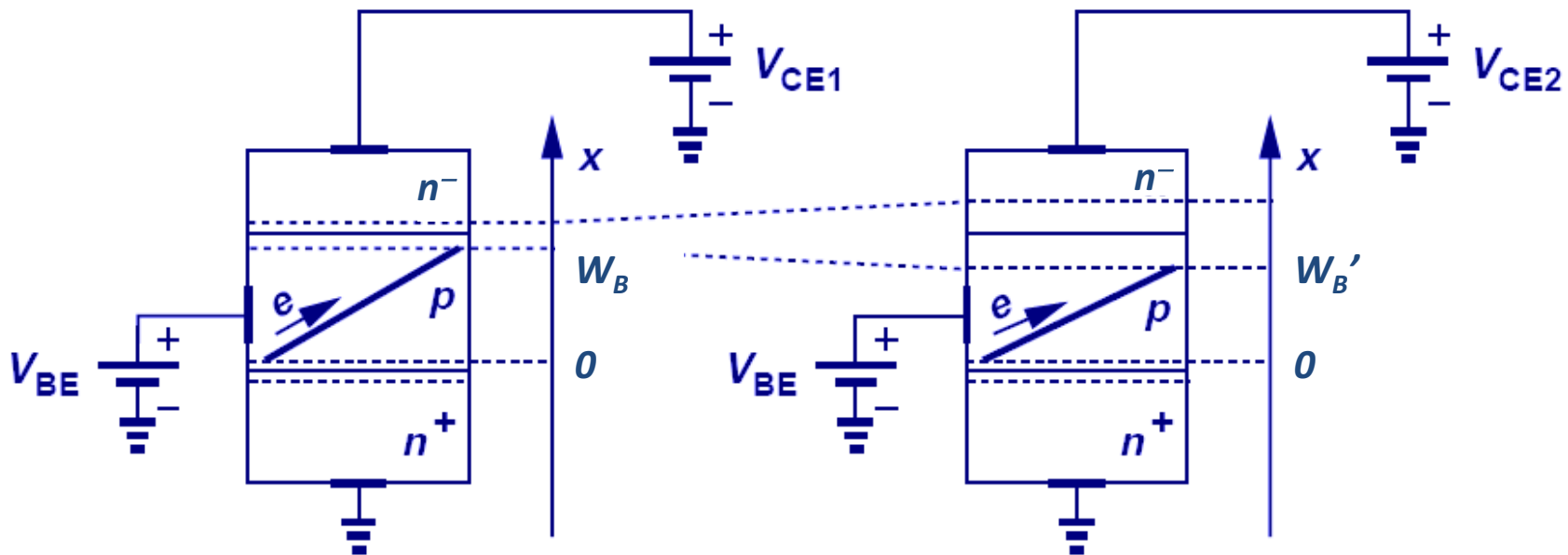


(b)

$$I_C \approx A_E \frac{qD_n n_i^2}{W'_B N_B} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} = I_S \cdot e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{V_{CE}}{V_A}\right)$$

# Early Effect (1)

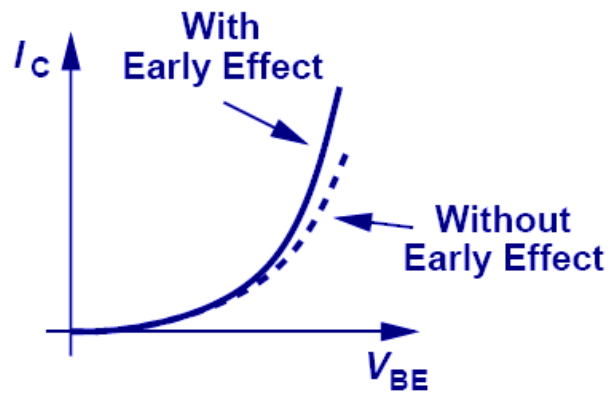
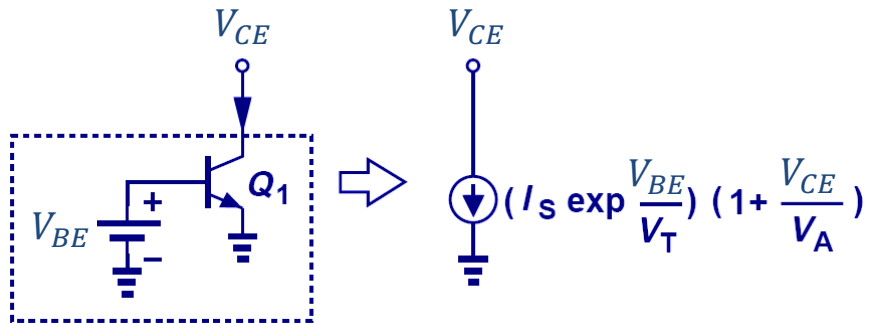
source: Razavi



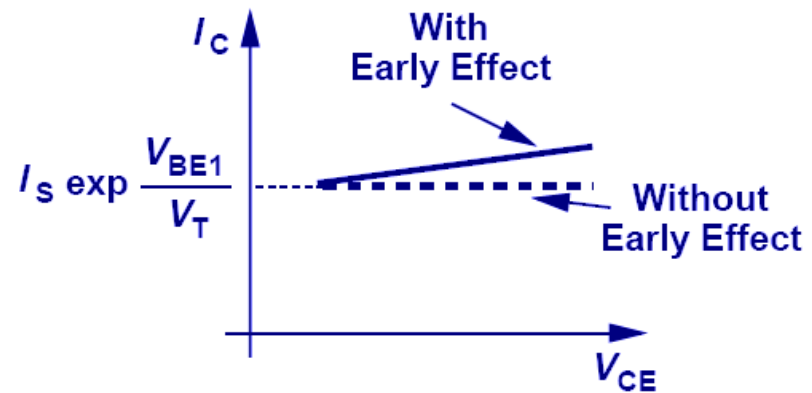
- The claim that collector current does not depend on  $V_{CE}$  is not accurate
- As  $V_{CE}$  increases, the depletion region between base and collector increases. Therefore, the effective base width decreases, which leads to an increase in the collector current.

# Early Effect (2)

source: Razavi



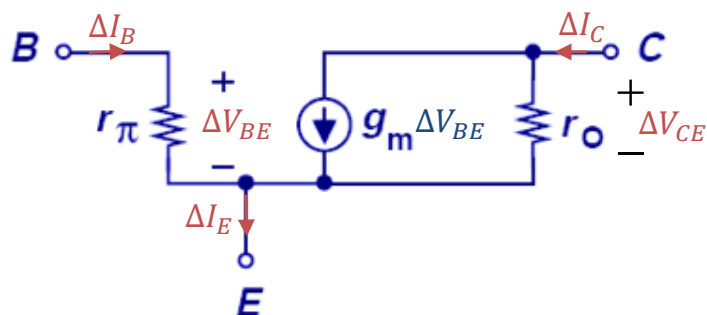
(a)



(b)

# Small-signal model including Early effect

source: Razavi



$$g_o = \frac{1}{r_o} = \frac{dI_C}{dV_{CE}} = \frac{d}{dV_{CE}} \left( I_S \cdot e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} \cdot \left( 1 + \frac{V_{CE}}{V_A} \right) \right) = I_S \cdot e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} \cdot \frac{1}{V_A} = \frac{I_C}{\left( 1 + \frac{V_{CE}}{V_A} \right)} \cdot \frac{1}{V_A} \stackrel{V_{CE} \ll V_A}{\cong} \frac{I_C}{V_A}$$

$$g_m = \frac{dI_C}{dV_{BE}} \cong \frac{I_C}{V_T}$$

$$r_\pi = 1/g_\pi \equiv h_{ie}$$

$$g_o = 1/r_o \equiv h_{oe}$$

$$g_\pi = \frac{dI_B}{dV_{BE}} = \frac{d(I_C/\beta_F)}{dV_{BE}} \cong \frac{I_C/\beta_f}{V_T} = \frac{g_m}{\beta_f}$$

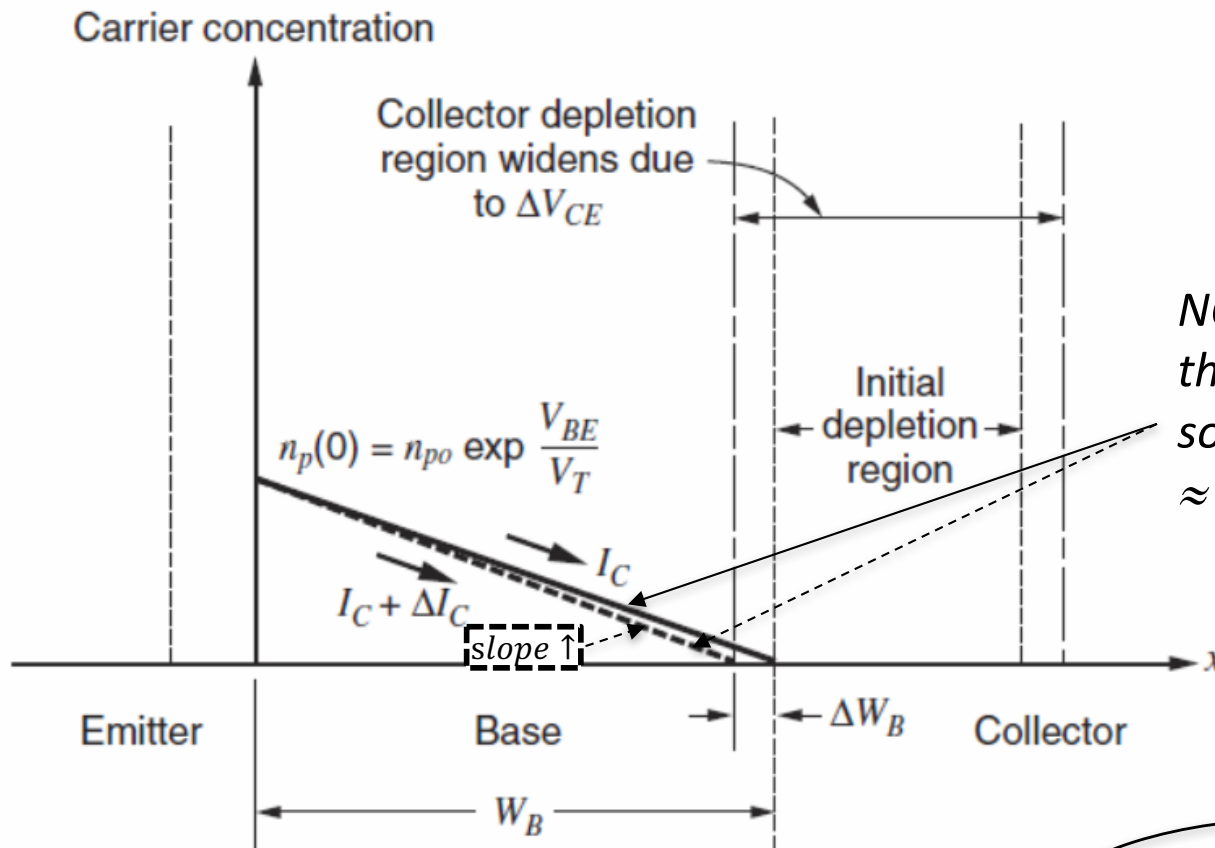
$$\beta_f \equiv h_{fe} \cong \beta_F \equiv h_{FE}$$

*intrinsic gain*  $\therefore g_m r_o \approx \frac{V_A}{V_T}$   $\longleftarrow$  max gain the device can provide

# Base modulation and Early voltage

source: Gray & Meyer

$I_C = \text{diffusion current of electrons in base} \propto \text{gradient of electrons in base} = \Delta n_p(x)/\Delta x$



NOTE:  
the slope changes very little,  
so it is reasonable to assume it  
 $\approx$  constant)

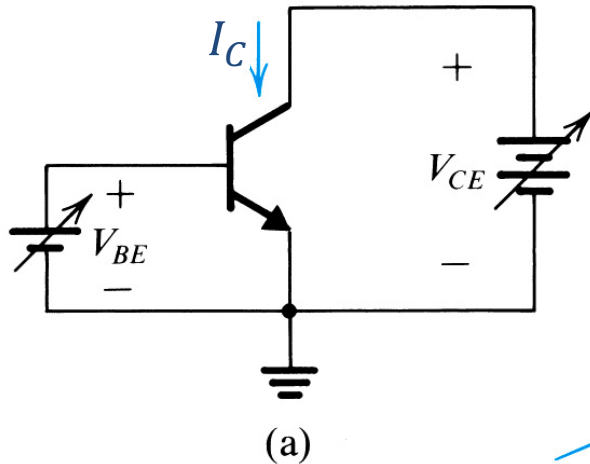
since  $\Delta W_B$  is negative  
we need a minus  
sign in the equation

$$\Delta V_{CE} \uparrow \Rightarrow \Delta I_C \uparrow \Rightarrow \Delta W_B \downarrow$$

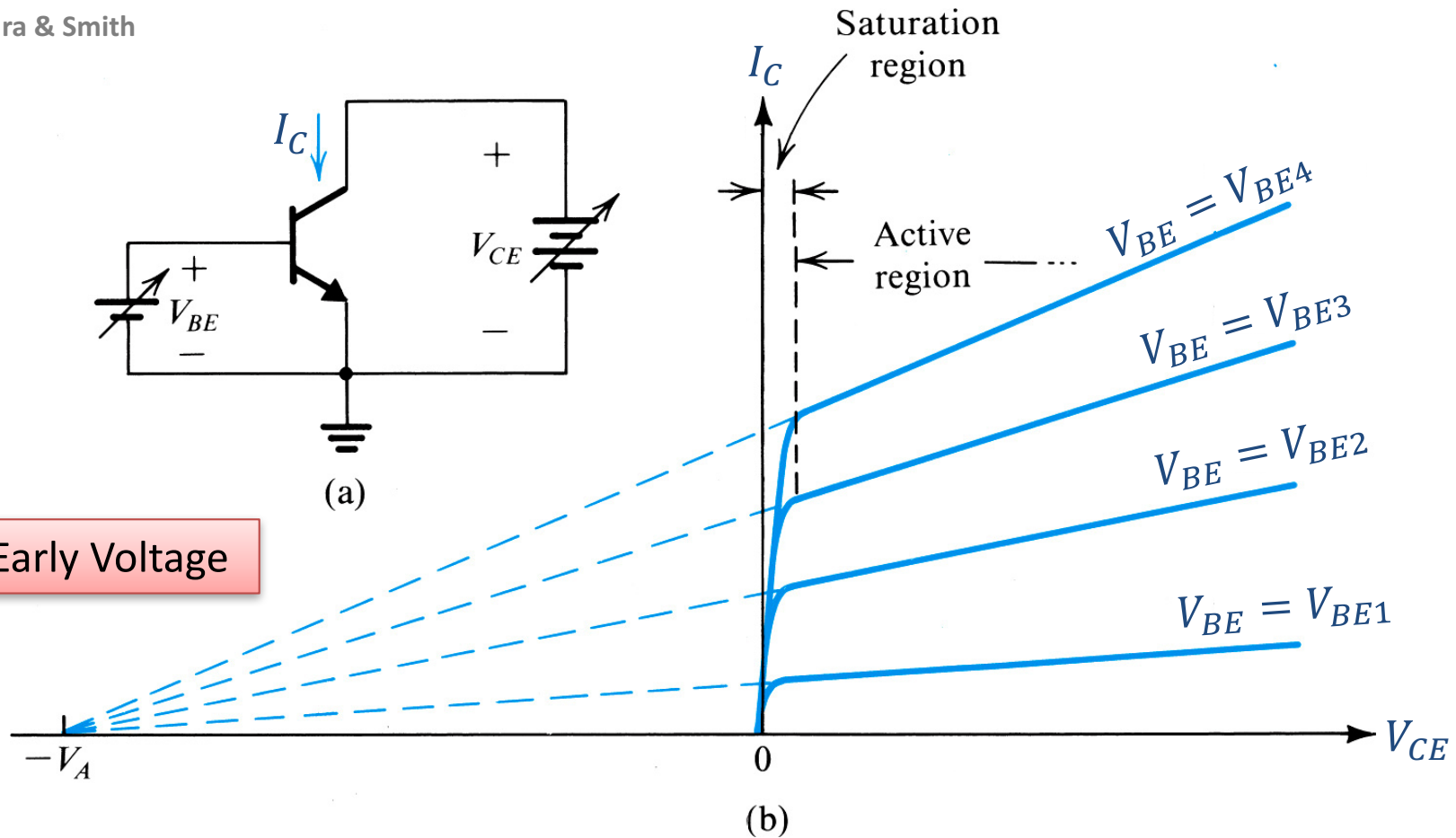
$$V_A \therefore \frac{I_C}{\frac{\partial I_C}{\partial V_{CE}}} = \frac{W_B}{-\frac{dW_B}{dV_{CE}}} \approx \text{const.}$$

# Dependence of $I_C$ on $V_{CE}$

source: Sedra & Smith



$V_A = \text{Early Voltage}$



In Forward active region: 
$$I_C \approx A_E \frac{qD_n n_i^2}{W'_B N_B} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} = I_S \cdot e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{V_{CE}}{V_A}\right)$$



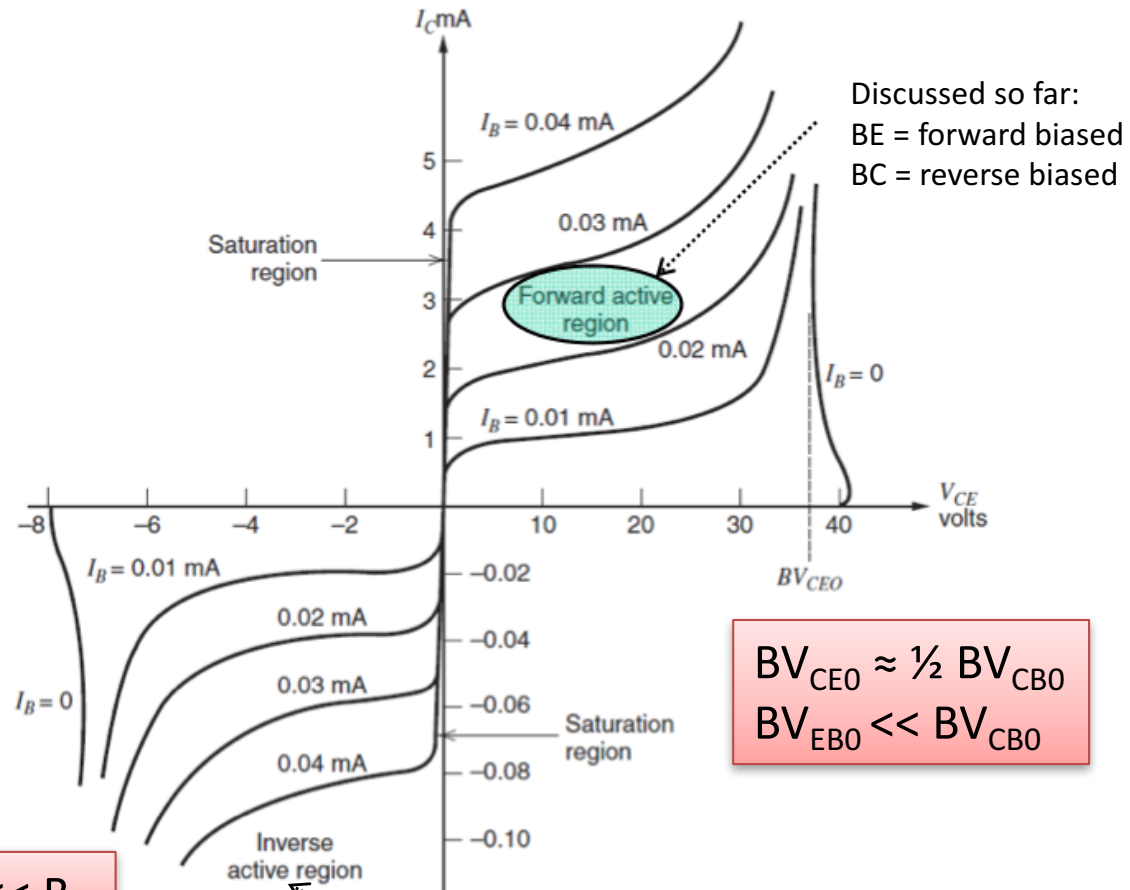
# Model Extensions

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- Complete picture of BJT operating regions
- Dependence of  $\beta_F$  on operating conditions

# NPN BJT operating regions

source: Gray & Meyer

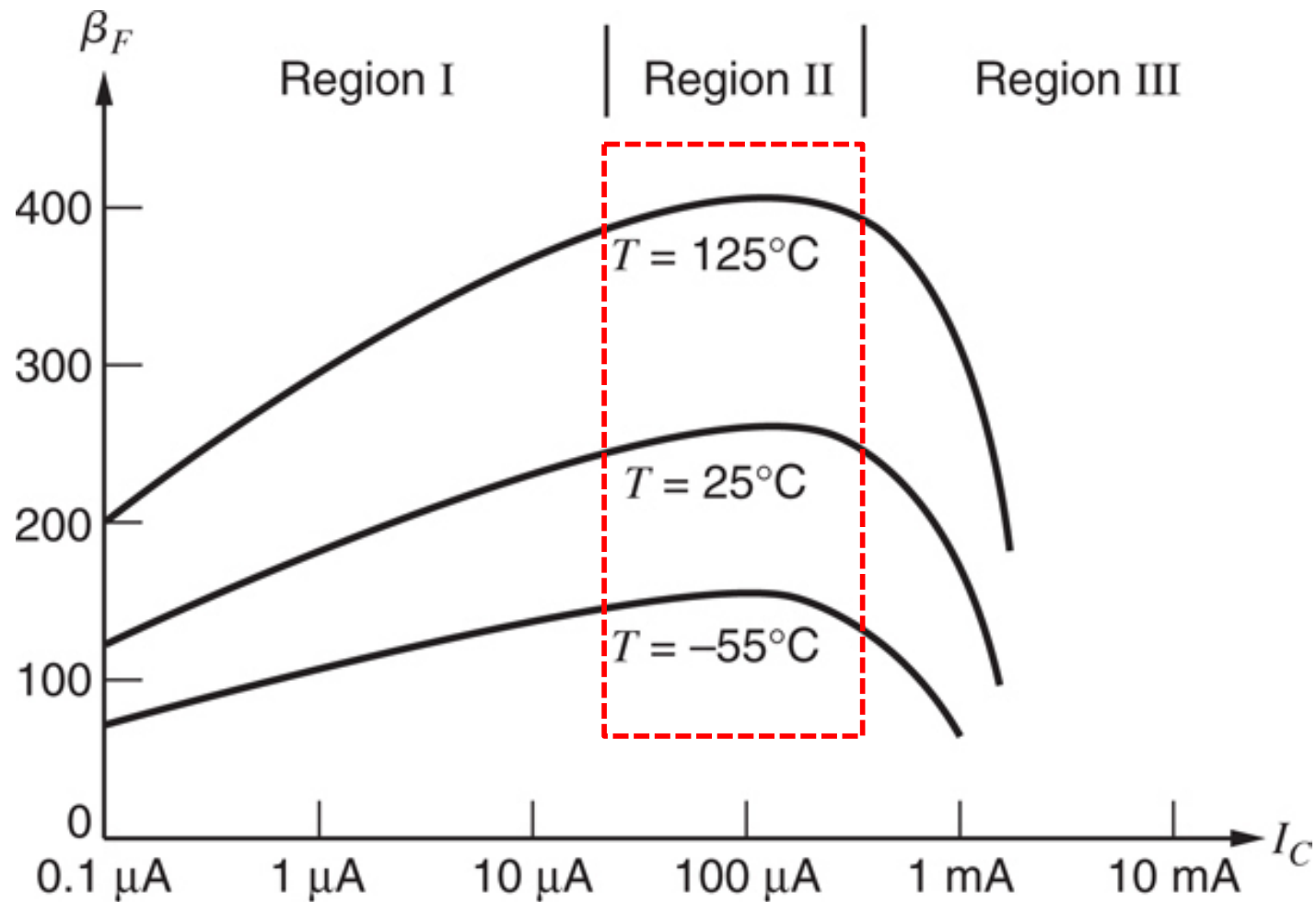


BE = reverse biased, BC = forward biased  
 the collector injects electrons in base and  
 the emitter collect them

# Dependence of $\beta_F$ on operating conditions (and temperature)

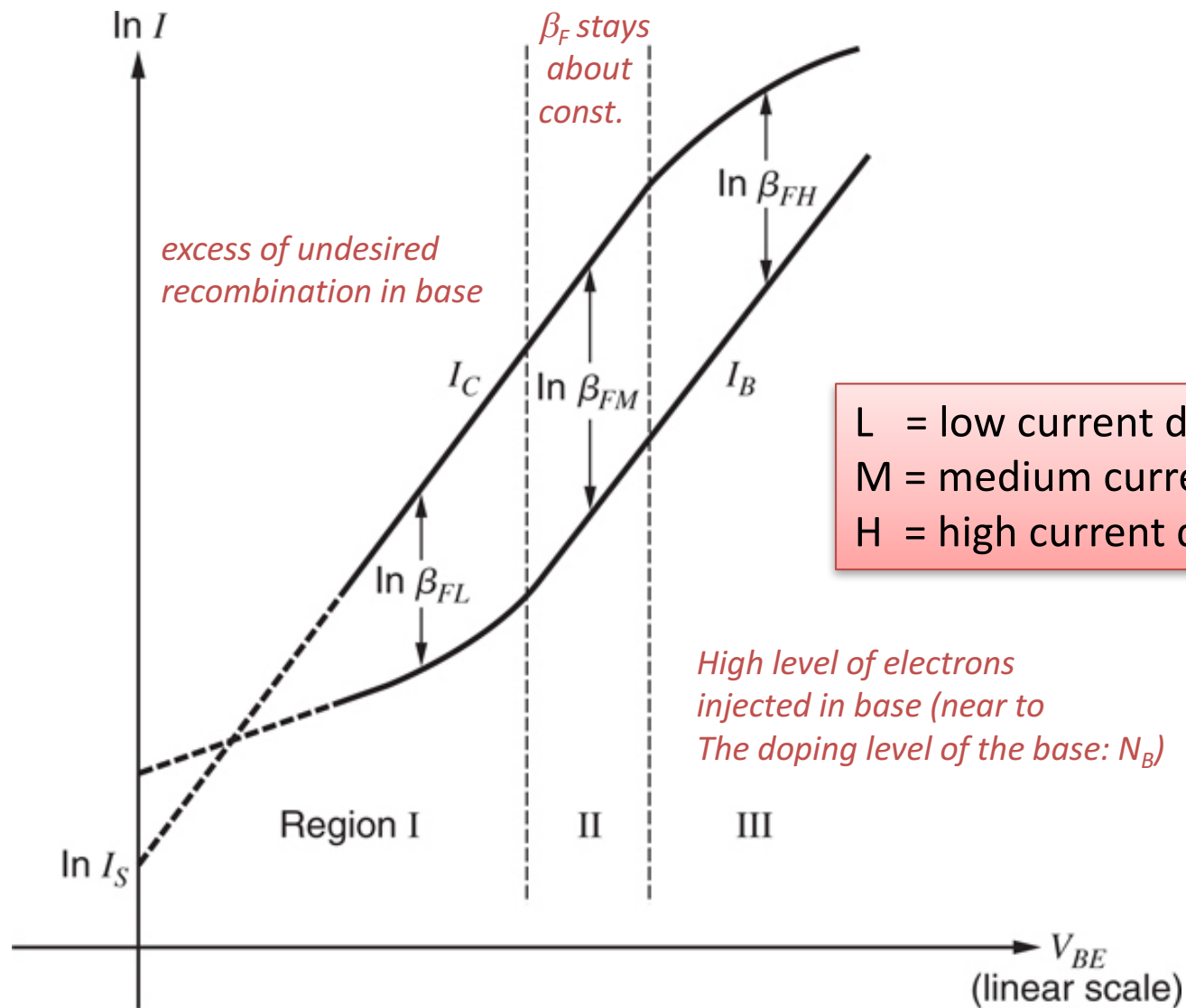
source: Gray & Meyer

*A typical temperature coefficient for  $\beta_F$  is about +7000 ppm/°C*



# Gummel Plot ( $I_C$ and $I_B$ vs. $V_{BE}$ )

source: Gray & Meyer



# $\beta_F$ fall-off

source: B. Murmann

- Region II (medium current density)  
 $\beta_F$  is about constant (as desired)
- Region I (low current density)  
there is an excess of undesired recombination in base
- Region III (high current density)  
the level of electrons injected in base is extremely high near the level of doping of the base ( $N_B$ ). It can be shown that for this case:

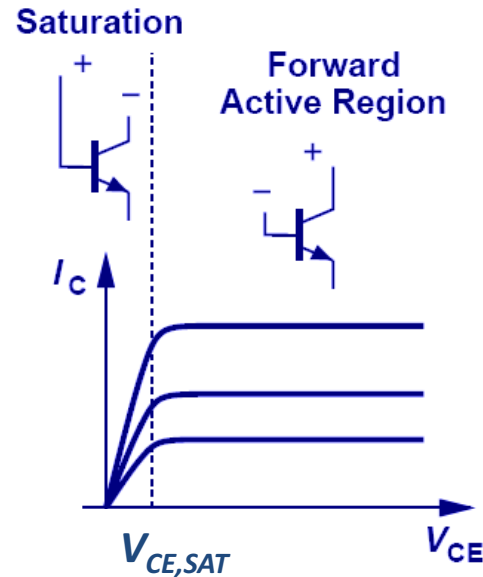
$$I_C \approx I_S e^{\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}}$$

# NPN BJT in saturation mode

source: Razavi

saturation mode:

$$\begin{cases} V_{BE} \geq V_{BE,ON} \\ V_{CE} \leq V_{CE,SAT} \end{cases}$$



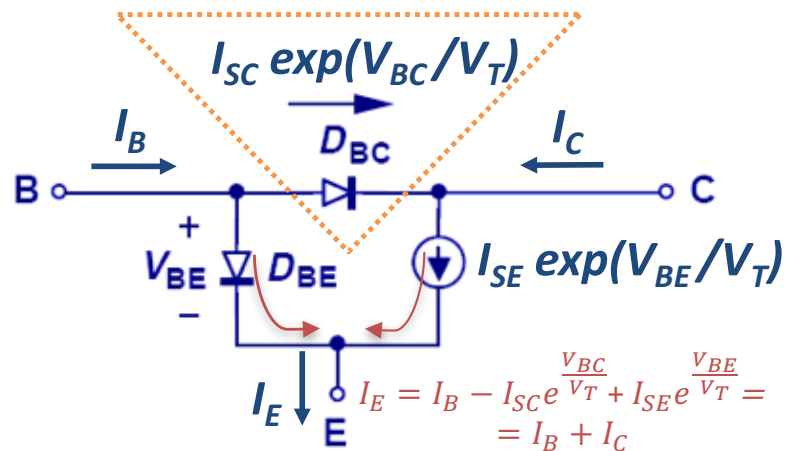
The term “saturation” is used because increasing the base current in this region of operation leads to little change in collector current (there is a significant drop in  $\beta$  compared to active mode)

- In active mode  $I_C$  is almost independent of  $V_{CE}$  (and  $V_{CB} \leftrightarrow V_{CB} = V_{CE} - V_{BE}(on) \cong V_{CE} - 0.8$ )
- In saturation not only the BE junction is forward biased, but also the BC junction is forward biased
  - As a result,  $I_C$  must also strongly depends on  $V_{CB}$  (and  $V_{CE} \leftrightarrow V_{BC} = V_{BE}(on) - V_{CE} = 0.8 - V_{CE}$ )

# NPN BJT in Saturation mode

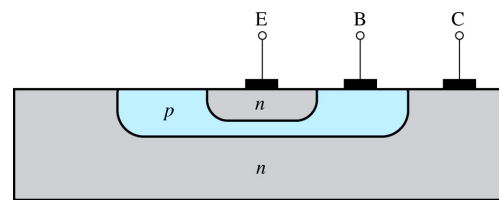
source: Razavi

Add the BC forward diode to the previous model



$I_{SC}$  = saturation current of the BC (PN<sup>-</sup>) diode

$I_{SE} \equiv I_S$  = saturation current of the BE (PN<sup>+</sup>) diode



$$A_E < A_C \leftrightarrow I_{SC} > I_{SE}$$

The BC junction area is larger than the BE junction area therefore the ON voltage of the BC diode is smaller than the ON voltage of the BE diode (typically  $V_{BC,on} < V_{BE,on}$  by 0.4 V)

In saturation the *collector current is reduced* by  $I_{SC} \cdot \exp(V_{BC}/V_T)$ :

$$I_C = I_{SE} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} - I_{SC} e^{\frac{V_{BC}}{V_T}}$$

while the *base current is increased* by  $I_{SC} \cdot \exp(V_{BC}/V_T)$ :

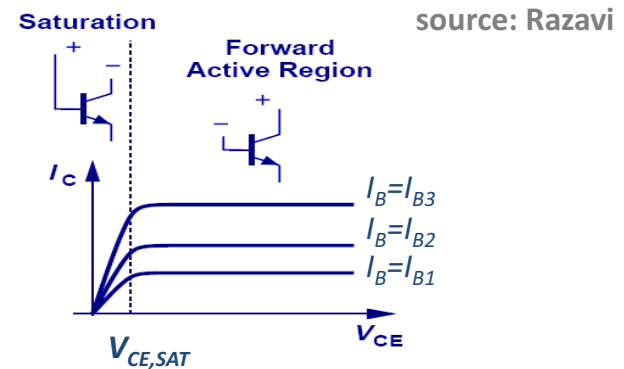
$$I_B = \frac{I_{SE}}{\beta_{active}} e^{\frac{V_{BE}}{V_T}} + I_{SC} e^{\frac{V_{BC}}{V_T}}$$

# NPN BJT in Saturation mode

- Since in saturation  $I_C$  decreases and  $I_B$  increases the beta of the transistor decreases significantly:

$$\beta_{sat} \equiv \beta_{forced} = \left. \frac{I_C}{I_B} \right|_{sat} \leq \beta \equiv \beta_{active}$$

- By adjusting  $V_{BC}$  (i.e.  $V_{CE}$ ) the beta of a transistor in saturation ( $\beta_{forced}$ ) can be set to any value lower than  $\beta_{active}$





# “Soft” Saturation

source: Razavi

- For  $V_{CE} = V_{BE}$ , the BC junction sustain a zero voltage difference ( $V_{BC} = V_{BE} - V_{CE} = 0$ ), and its depletion region still absorbs most of the electrons injected by the emitter into the base
  - We consider this condition as the edge between active mode and saturation mode

- What happens if  $V_{CE} < V_{BE}$ , i.e.  $V_{BC} > 0$ ?  
 Not much until  $V_{BC} \geq V_{BC,ON}$ . Up to  $V_{BC,ON}$  the current carried by the BC forward biased diode is still extremely small, so assume the behavior of the device still acceptable:

- As a rule of thumb we permit “soft” saturation:

$$V_{BC} < 400 \text{ mV} \leftrightarrow V_{CB} > -400 \text{ mV}$$

$$(V_{CB} = V_{CE} - V_{BE} > -400 \text{ mV} \leftrightarrow$$

$$\leftrightarrow V_{CE} > V_{BE} - 400 \text{ mV} \leftrightarrow V_{CE} > 400 \text{ mV})$$

Typically assume:

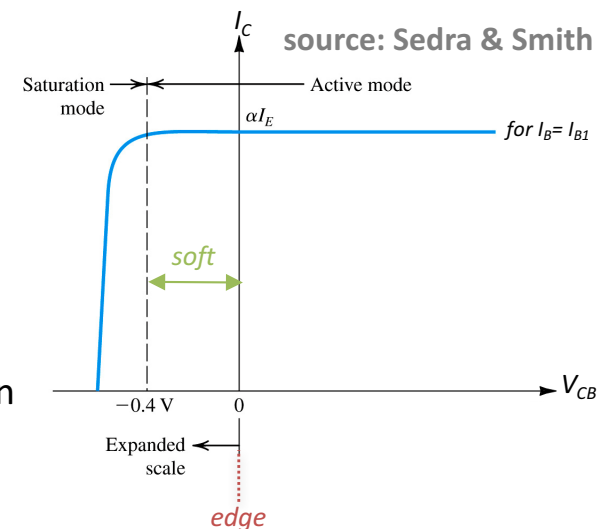
$$V_{CE}(\text{edge}) = 800 \text{ mV}$$

$$V_{CE,SAT}(\text{soft}) = V_{CB,ON} + V_{BE,ON} \cong 400 \text{ mV}$$

$$V_{CE,SAT}(\text{deep}) \equiv V_{CE,SAT} \cong 200 \text{ mV}$$

edge between active region  
saturation region:

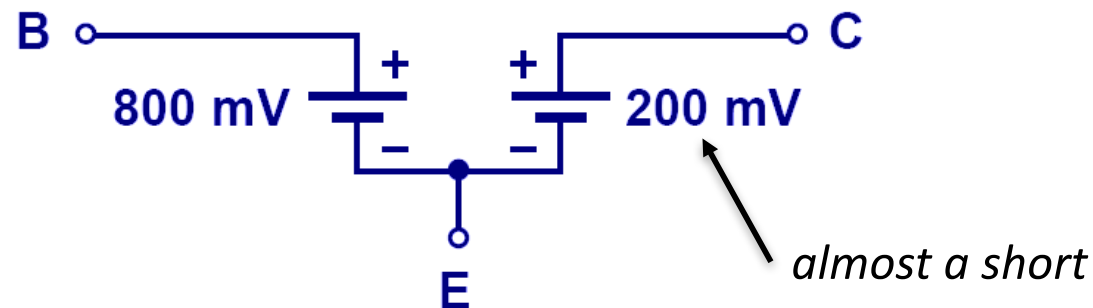
$$V_{CB} = 0 \leftrightarrow V_{CE} = V_{BE}$$



# “Deep” Saturation

source: Razavi

- In deep saturation the BC diode carries a significant amount of current, so the transistor bear no longer any resemblance to a controlled current source.
- The collector-emitter voltage approaches a constant value called  $V_{CE, SAT}$  and the transistor can be modeled as follows:

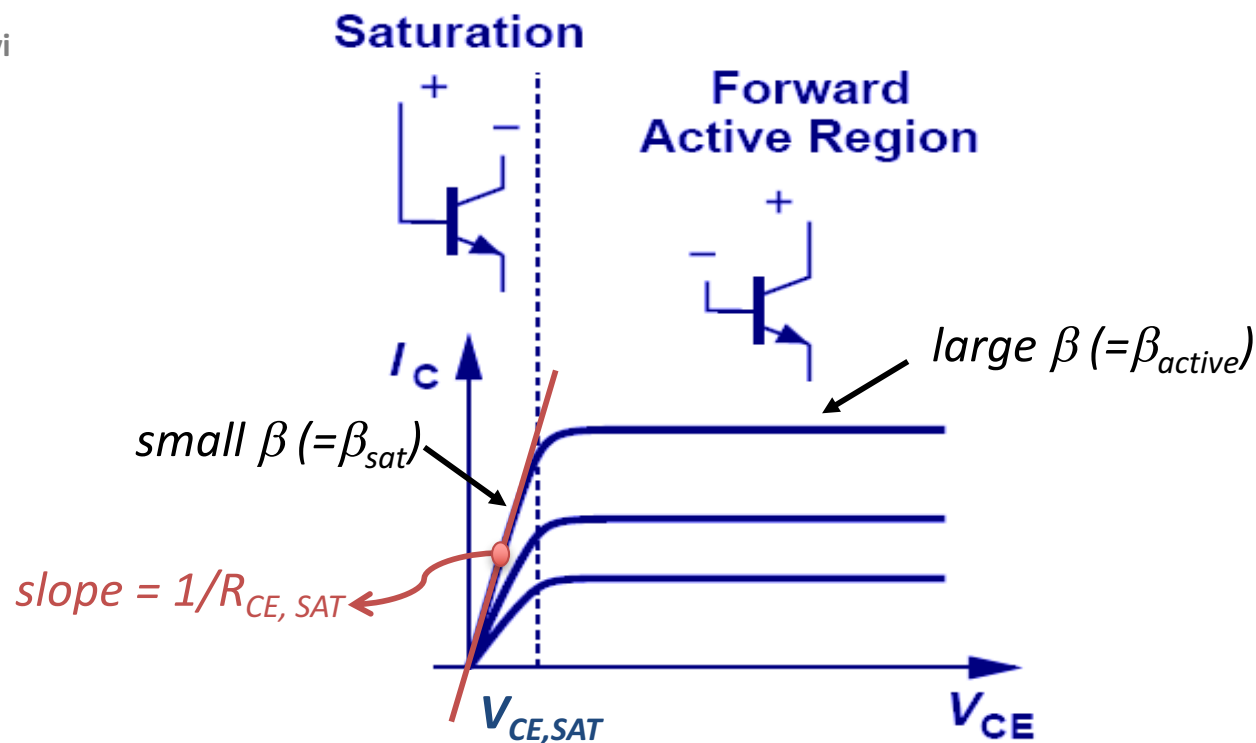


# NPN BJT in Saturation mode

source: Sedra & Smith

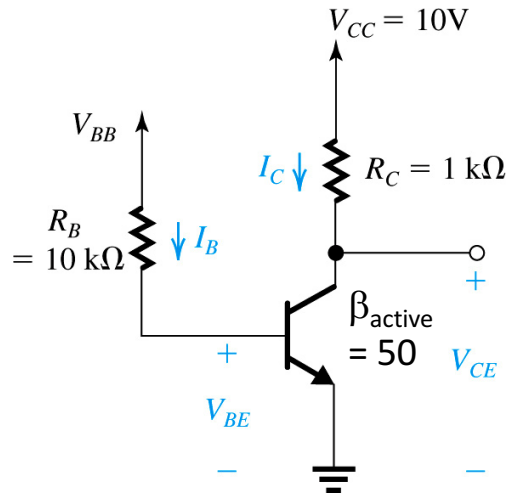
- In saturation the  $I_C$  vs.  $V_{CE}$  curves are rather steep indicating that the saturated BJT exhibits a low resistance ( $R_{CE,SAT}$  ranges from a few ohms to a few tens of ohms). This result was to be expected from the fact that between C and E we have two forward biased diodes

source: Razavi



# Example

source: Sedra & Smith



Find  $V_{BB}$  to set the transistor in:

(a) Active mode with  $V_{CE} = 5V$

(b) Edge of saturation

(c) Deep in saturation with

$$\beta_{\text{forced}} = 10$$

a)

$$V_{CE} = V_{CC} - R_C I_C \rightarrow I_C = \frac{V_{CC} - V_{CE}}{R_C} = 5\text{mA} \rightarrow I_B = \frac{I_C}{\beta_{\text{active}}} = 100\mu\text{A} \rightarrow V_{BB} = V_{BE} + R_B I_B = 0.8 + 10\text{k} \times 100\mu = 1.8\text{V}$$

b)

$$I_C = \frac{V_{CC} - V_{CE}(\text{edge})}{R_C} = \frac{10 - 0.8}{1000} = 9.2\text{mA} \rightarrow I_B = \frac{I_C}{\beta_{\text{active}}} = 184\mu\text{A} \rightarrow V_{BB} = V_{BE} + R_B I_B = 0.8 + 10\text{K} \times 184\mu \approx 2.64\text{V}$$

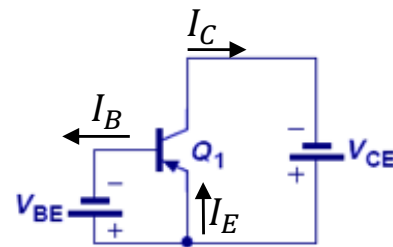
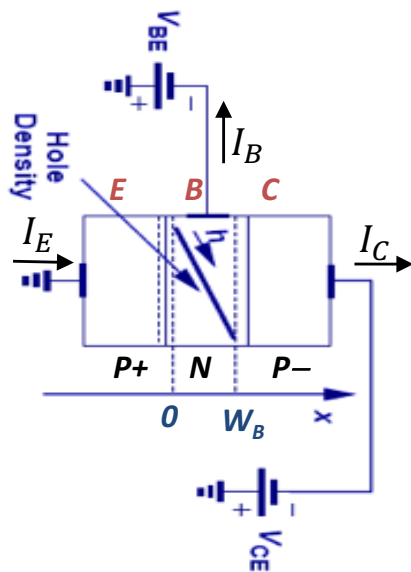
c)

$$I_C = \frac{V_{CC} - V_{CE}(\text{deep})}{R_C} = \frac{10 - 0.2}{1000} = 9.8\text{mA} \rightarrow I_B = \frac{I_C}{\beta_{\text{forced}}} = 980\mu\text{A} \rightarrow V_{BB} = V_{BE} + R_B I_B = 0.8 + 10\text{K} \times 980\mu \approx 10.6\text{V}$$

# PNP transistor

- All the principles that applied to NPN also apply to PNP, with the exception that emitter is at a higher potential than base and base at a higher potential than collector.

source: Razavi



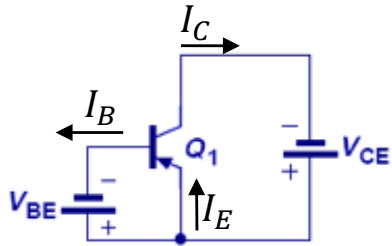
**NOTE:**

Use the currents directions shown in figure and  $V_{BE}$  and  $V_{CE}$  to get all positive values

# PNP transistor

source: Razavi

- Equations for PNP in active mode



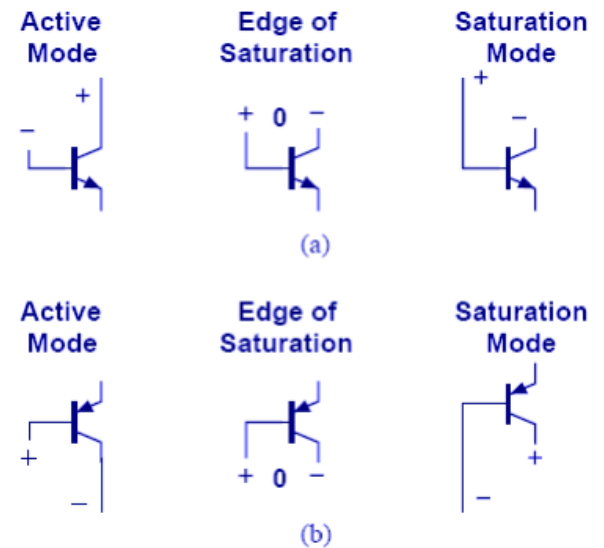
$$I_C = I_S \exp \frac{V_{EB}}{V_T}$$

$$I_B = \frac{I_S}{\beta} \exp \frac{V_{EB}}{V_T}$$

$$I_E = \frac{\beta + 1}{\beta} I_S \exp \frac{V_{EB}}{V_T}$$

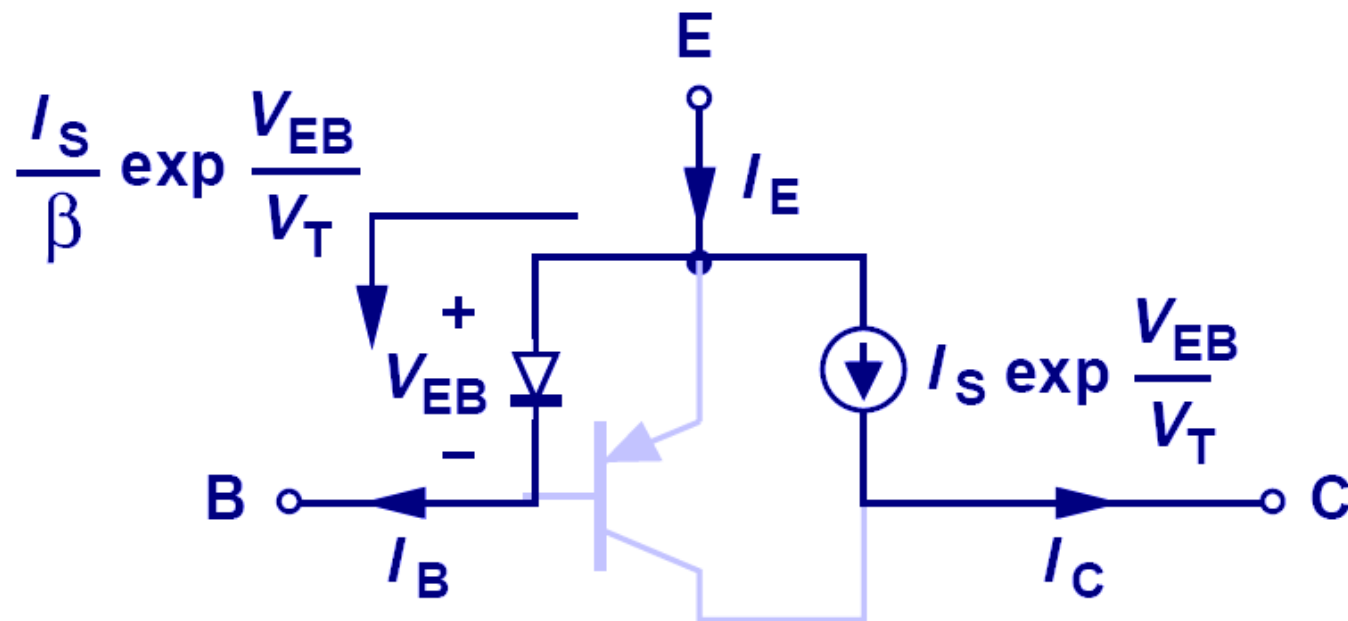
$$I_C = \left( I_S \exp \frac{V_{EB}}{V_T} \right) \left( 1 + \frac{V_{EC}}{V_A} \right)$$

- A comparison between NPN (a) and PNP (b)



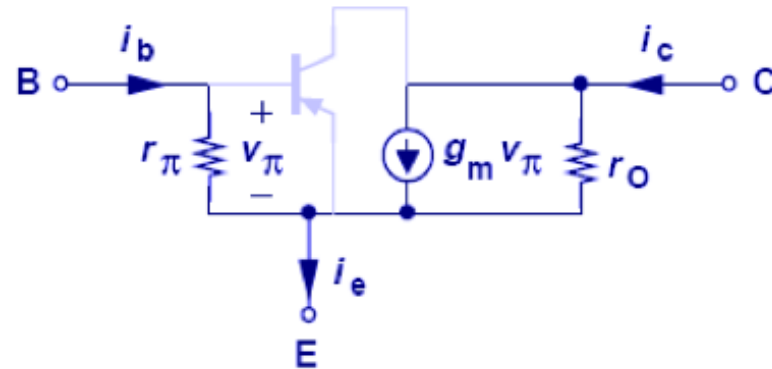
# PNP BJT in active mode: large signal (DC) model

source: Razavi



# PNP BJT in active mode: small signal (AC) model

source: Razavi

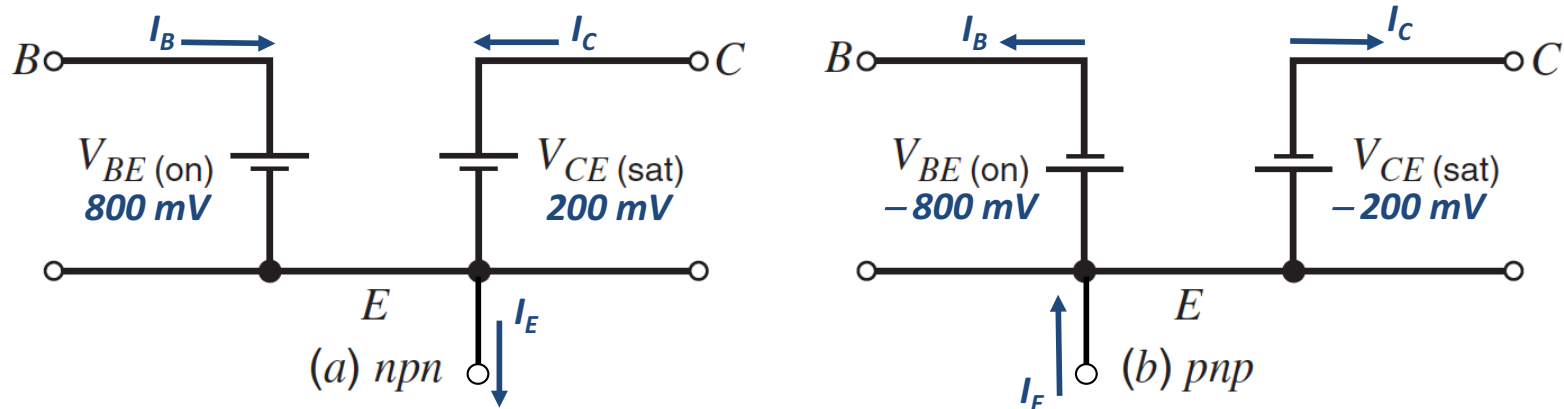


- The small signal model for the PNP transistor is exactly IDENTICAL to that of the NPN. This is not a mistake !



# PNP BJT is deep saturation

source: Gray & Meyer



**Figure 1.13** Large-signal models for bipolar transistors in the saturation region.

# Summary of operating regions

## *NPN Bipolar Transistor*

<b>Region</b>	<b><math>V_{BE}</math></b>	<b><math>V_{BC}</math></b>
Cutoff	$< V_{BE(on)}$	$< V_{BC(on)}$
Forward Active	$\geq V_{BE(on)}$	$< V_{BC(on)}$
Reverse Active	$< V_{BE(on)}$	$\geq V_{BC(on)}$
Saturation	$\geq V_{BE(on)}$	$\geq V_{BC(on)}$

## *PNP Bipolar Transistor*

<b>Region</b>	<b><math>V_{EB}</math></b>	<b><math>V_{CB}</math></b>
Cutoff	$< V_{EB(on)}$	$< V_{CB(on)}$
Forward Active	$\geq V_{EB(on)}$	$< V_{CB(on)}$
Reverse Active	$< V_{EB(on)}$	$\geq V_{CB(on)}$
Saturation	$\geq V_{EB(on)}$	$\geq V_{CB(on)}$