Glossary

Introduction to the Operational Amplifier

Buffer: See voltage follower.

Closed-loop gain: The gain of an op amp circuit when there is a signal path connecting the op amp's output terminal to the op amp's inverting input.

Gain: The ratio of the signal at one node to the signal at another node. The signal can be a voltage or a current.

Input resistance: The Thévenin equivalent resistance seen at an input terminal.

Inverting input: The input terminal of an op amp, that is out of phase with the op amp's output.

Loading: The change in voltage at a device's terminal, due to the flow of current.

Non-inverting input: The input terminal of an op amp that is in phase with the op amp's output.

Op amp: See operational amplifier.

Operational amplifier: A direct-coupled stable high-gain amplifier.

Output resistance: The Thévenin equivalent resistance seen at an output terminal.

Virtual short: A condition in a circuit where two nodes are forced to have the same potential, but no current flows directly between the two nodes.

Voltage follower: An amplifier with a voltage gain of unity or almost unity. Voltage followers are typically characterized by a high input resistance and low output resistance.