

What is Multiplexing?

Multiplexing is a technique used to combine and send the multiple data streams over a single medium. The process of combining the data streams is known as multiplexing and hardware used for multiplexing is known as a multiplexer.

Multiplexing is achieved by using a device called Multiplexer (**MUX**) that combines n input lines to generate a single output line. Multiplexing follows many-to-one, i.e., n input lines and one output line.

Demultiplexing is achieved by using a device called Demultiplexer (**DEMUX**) available at the receiving end. DEMUX separates a signal into its component signals (one input and n outputs). Therefore, we can say that demultiplexing follows the one-to-many approach.

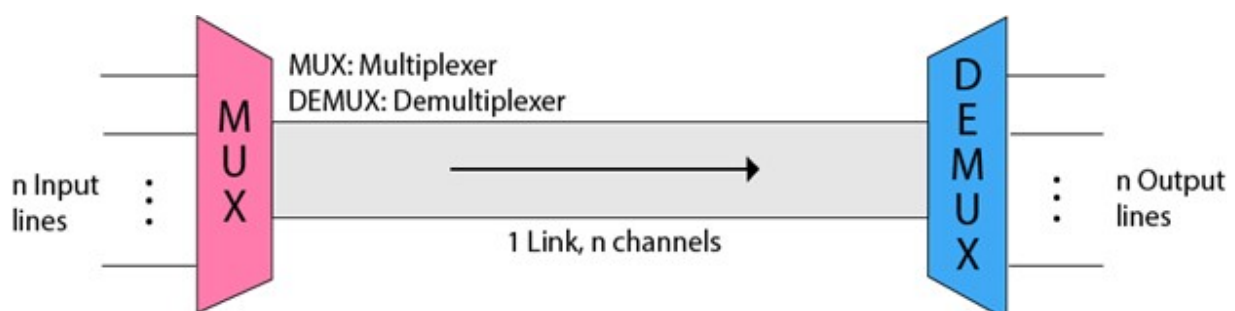
Why Multiplexing?

- The transmission medium is used to send the signal from sender to receiver. The medium can only have one signal at a time.
- If there are multiple signals to share one medium, then the medium must be divided in such a way that each signal is given some portion of the available bandwidth. For example: If there are 10 signals and bandwidth of medium is 100 units, then the 10 unit is shared by each signal.
- When multiple signals share the common medium, there is a possibility of collision. Multiplexing concept is used to avoid such collision.
- Transmission services are very expensive.

History of Multiplexing

- Multiplexing technique is widely used in telecommunications in which several telephone calls are carried through a single wire.
- Multiplexing originated in telegraphy in the early 1870s and is now widely used in communication.
- George Owen Squier developed the **telephone carrier multiplexing** in 1910.

Concept of Multiplexing



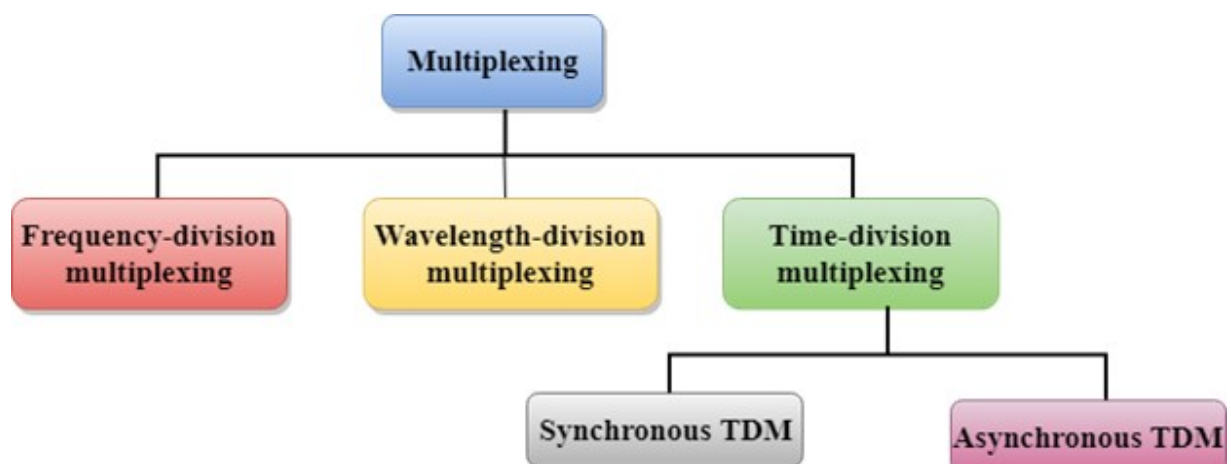
- The 'n' input lines are transmitted through a multiplexer and multiplexer combines the signals to form a composite signal.
- The composite signal is passed through a Demultiplexer and demultiplexer separates a signal to component signals and transfers them to their respective destinations.

Advantages of Multiplexing:

- More than one signal can be sent over a single medium.
- The bandwidth of a medium can be utilized effectively.

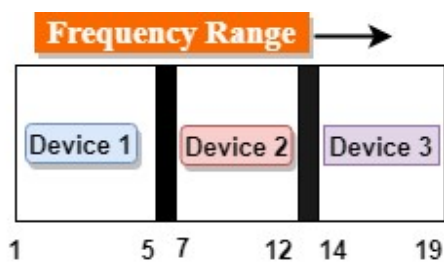
Multiplexing Techniques

Multiplexing techniques can be classified as:

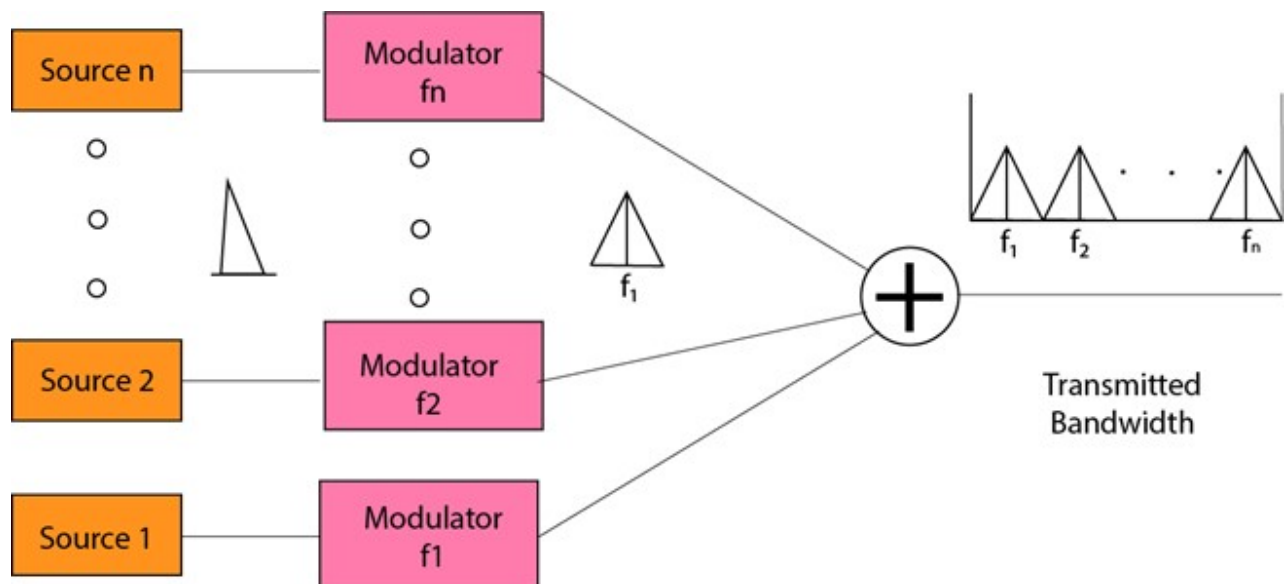


Frequency-division Multiplexing (FDM)

- It is an analog technique.
- **Frequency Division Multiplexing** is a technique in which the available bandwidth of a single transmission medium is subdivided into several channels.



- In the above diagram, a single transmission medium is subdivided into several frequency channels, and each frequency channel is given to different devices. Device 1 has a frequency channel of range from 1 to 5.
- The input signals are translated into frequency bands by using modulation techniques, and they are combined by a multiplexer to form a composite signal.
- The main aim of the FDM is to subdivide the available bandwidth into different frequency channels and allocate them to different devices.
- Using the modulation technique, the input signals are transmitted into frequency bands and then combined to form a composite signal.
- The carriers which are used for modulating the signals are known as **sub-carriers**. They are represented as f_1, f_2, \dots, f_n .
- **FDM** is mainly used in radio broadcasts and TV networks.



Advantages Of FDM:

- FDM is used for analog signals.
- FDM process is very simple and easy modulation.
- A Large number of signals can be sent through an FDM simultaneously.
- It does not require any synchronization between sender and receiver.

Disadvantages Of FDM:

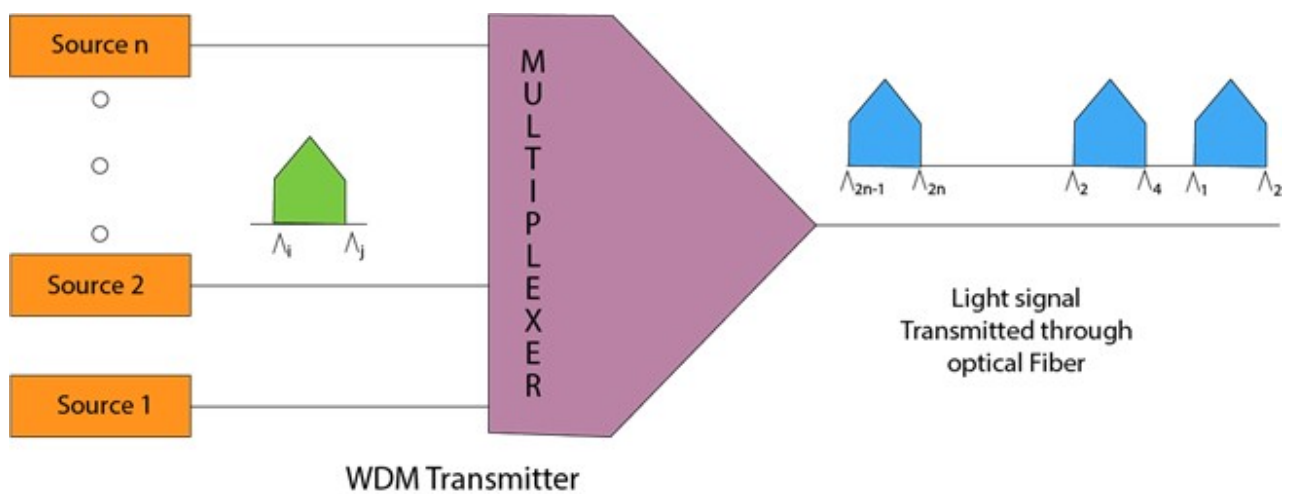
- FDM technique is used only when low-speed channels are required.
- It suffers the problem of crosstalk.
- A Large number of modulators are required.

- It requires a high bandwidth channel.

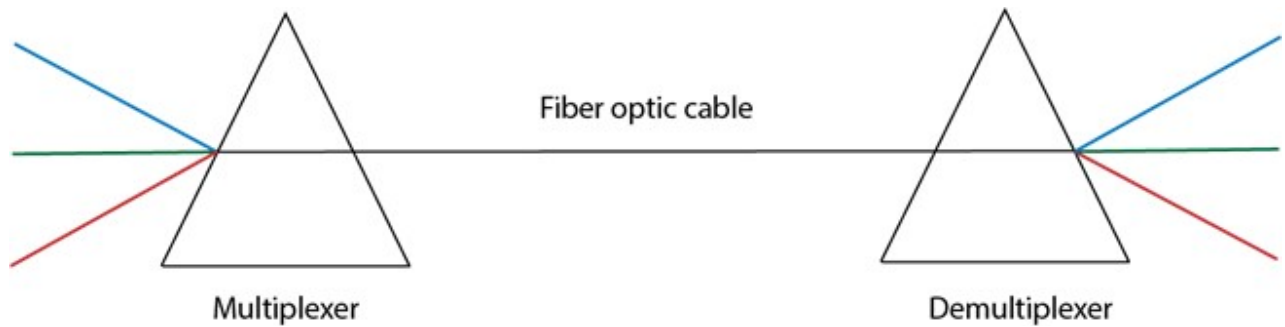
Applications of FDM:

- FDM is commonly used in TV networks.
- It is used in FM and AM broadcasting. Each FM radio station has different frequencies, and they are multiplexed to form a composite signal. The multiplexed signal is transmitted in the air.

Wavelength Division Multiplexing (WDM)



- Wavelength Division Multiplexing is same as FDM except that the optical signals are transmitted through the fibre optic cable.
- WDM is used on fibre optics to increase the capacity of a single fibre.
- It is used to utilize the high data rate capability of fibre optic cable.
- It is an analog multiplexing technique.
- Optical signals from different source are combined to form a wider band of light with the help of multiplexer.
- At the receiving end, demultiplexer separates the signals to transmit them to their respective destinations.
- Multiplexing and Demultiplexing can be achieved by using a prism.
- Prism can perform a role of multiplexer by combining the various optical signals to form a composite signal, and the composite signal is transmitted through a fibre optical cable.
- Prism also performs a reverse operation, i.e., demultiplexing the signal.



Time Division Multiplexing

- It is a digital technique.
- In Frequency Division Multiplexing Technique, all signals operate at the same time with different frequency, but in case of Time Division Multiplexing technique, all signals operate at the same frequency with different time.
- In **Time Division Multiplexing technique**, the total time available in the channel is distributed among different users. Therefore, each user is allocated with different time interval known as a Time slot at which data is to be transmitted by the sender.
- A user takes control of the channel for a fixed amount of time.
- In Time Division Multiplexing technique, data is not transmitted simultaneously rather the data is transmitted one-by-one.
- In TDM, the signal is transmitted in the form of frames. Frames contain a cycle of time slots in which each frame contains one or more slots dedicated to each user.
- It can be used to multiplex both digital and analog signals but mainly used to multiplex digital signals.

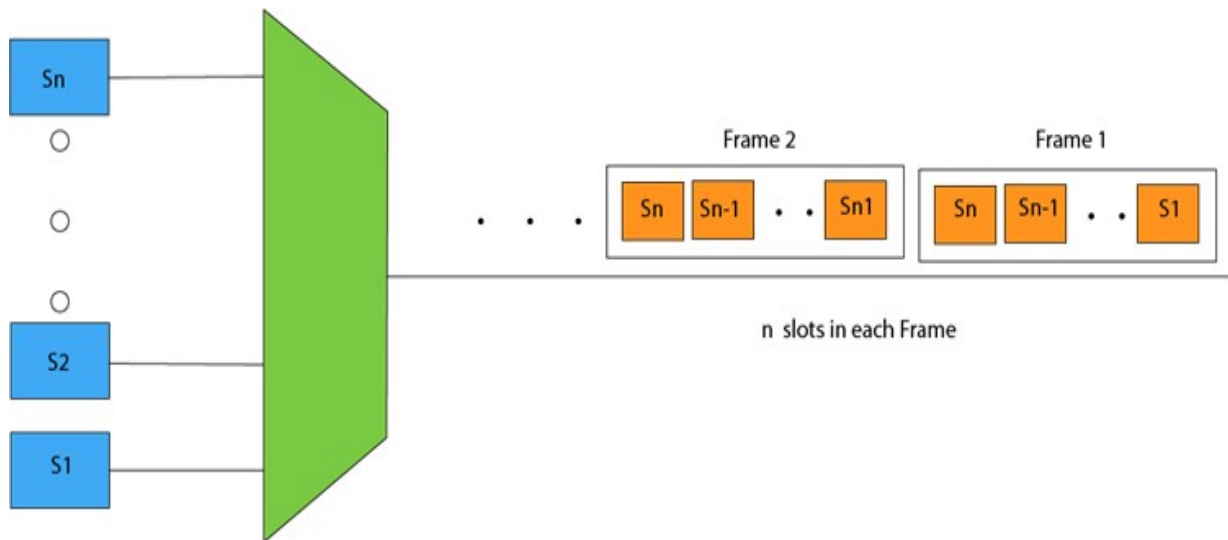
There are two types of TDM:

- Synchronous TDM
- Asynchronous TDM

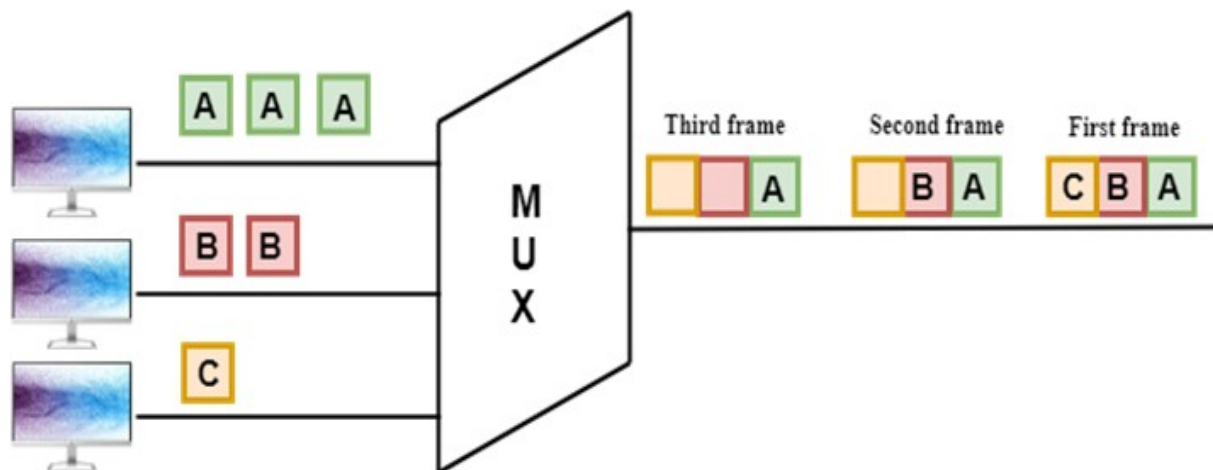
Synchronous TDM

- A Synchronous TDM is a technique in which time slot is preassigned to every device.
- In Synchronous TDM, each device is given some time slot irrespective of the fact that the device contains the data or not.
- If the device does not have any data, then the slot will remain empty.

- In Synchronous TDM, signals are sent in the form of frames. Time slots are organized in the form of frames. If a device does not have data for a particular time slot, then the empty slot will be transmitted.
- The most popular Synchronous TDM are T-1 multiplexing, ISDN multiplexing, and SONET multiplexing.
- If there are n devices, then there are n slots.



Concept Of Synchronous TDM



In the above figure, the Synchronous TDM technique is implemented. Each device is allocated with some time slot. The time slots are transmitted irrespective of whether the sender has data to send or not.

Disadvantages Of Synchronous TDM:

- The capacity of the channel is not fully utilized as the empty slots are also transmitted which is having no data. In the above figure, the first frame is completely filled, but in the last two frames, some slots are empty. Therefore, we can say that the capacity of the channel is not utilized efficiently.
- The speed of the transmission medium should be greater than the total speed of the input lines. An alternative approach to the Synchronous TDM is Asynchronous Time Division Multiplexing.

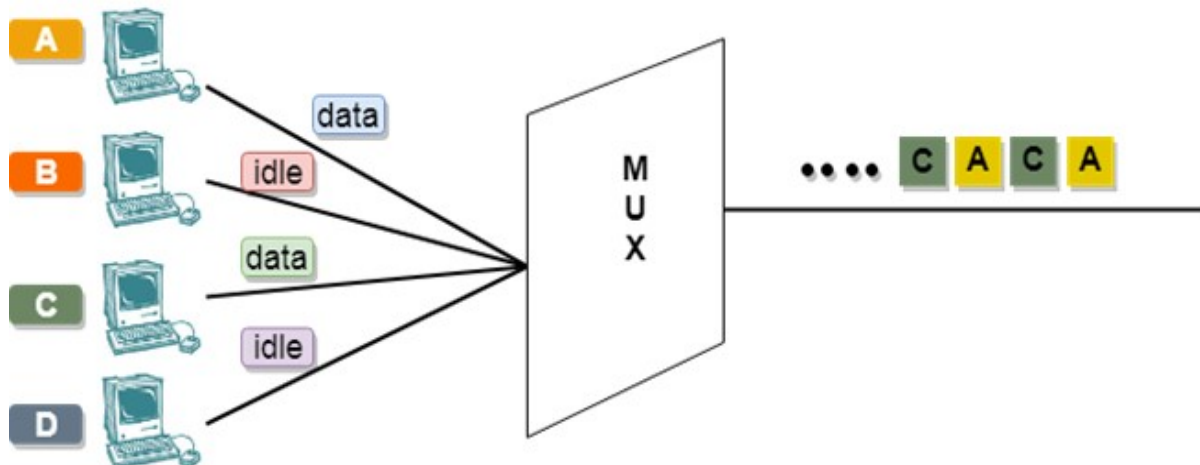
Asynchronous TDM

- An asynchronous TDM is also known as Statistical TDM.
- An asynchronous TDM is a technique in which time slots are not fixed as in the case of Synchronous TDM. Time slots are allocated to only those devices which have the data to send. Therefore, we can say that Asynchronous Time Division multiplexor transmits only the data from active workstations.
- An asynchronous TDM technique dynamically allocates the time slots to the devices.
- In Asynchronous TDM, total speed of the input lines can be greater than the capacity of the channel.
- Asynchronous Time Division multiplexor accepts the incoming data streams and creates a frame that contains only data with no empty slots.
- In Asynchronous TDM, each slot contains an address part that identifies the source of the data.

ADDRESS	DATA
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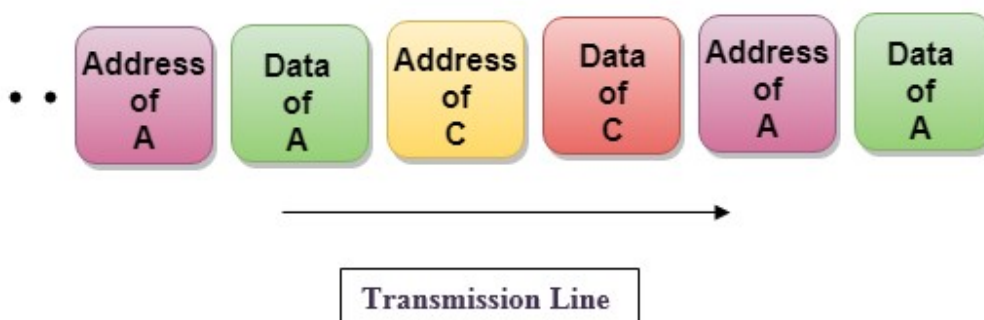
- The difference between Asynchronous TDM and Synchronous TDM is that many slots in Synchronous TDM are unutilized, but in Asynchronous TDM, slots are fully utilized. This leads to the smaller transmission time and efficient utilization of the capacity of the channel.
- In Synchronous TDM, if there are n sending devices, then there are n time slots. In Asynchronous TDM, if there are n sending devices, then there are m time slots where m is less than n ($m < n$).
- The number of slots in a frame depends on the statistical analysis of the number of input lines.

Concept of Asynchronous TDM



In the above diagram, there are 4 devices, but only two devices are sending the data, i.e., A and C. Therefore, the data of A and C are only transmitted through the transmission line.

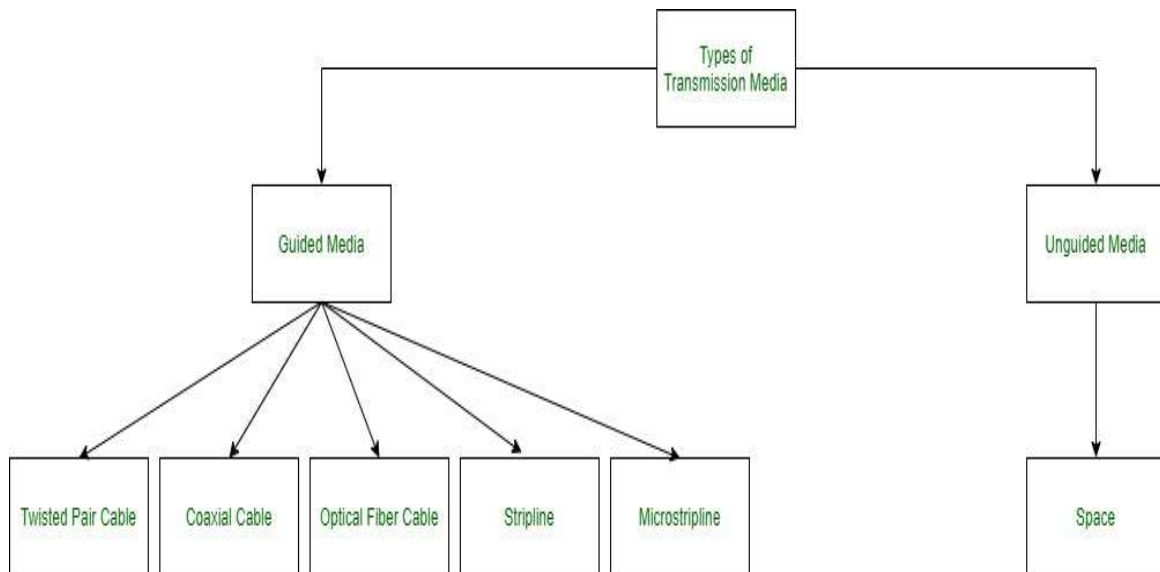
Frame of above diagram can be represented as:



The above figure shows that the data part contains the address to determine the source of the data.

Types of Transmission Media

In data communication terminology, a transmission medium is a physical path between the transmitter and the receiver i.e. it is the channel through which data is sent from one place to another. Transmission Media is broadly classified into the following types:



1. Guided Media: It is also referred to as Wired or Bounded transmission media. Signals being transmitted are directed and confined in a narrow pathway by using physical links.

Features:

- High Speed
- Secure
- Used for comparatively shorter distances

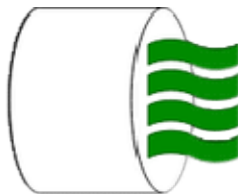
There are 3 major types of Guided Media:

(i) Twisted Pair Cable –

It consists of 2 separately insulated conductor wires wound about each other. Generally, several such pairs are bundled together in a protective sheath. They are the most widely used Transmission Media. Twisted Pair is of two types:

- **Unshielded Twisted Pair (UTP):**

UTP consists of two insulated copper wires twisted around one another. This type of cable has the ability to block interference and does not depend on a physical shield for this purpose. It is used for telephonic applications.



Unshielded Twisted Pair

Advantages:

- Least expensive
- Easy to install
- High-speed capacity

Disadvantages:

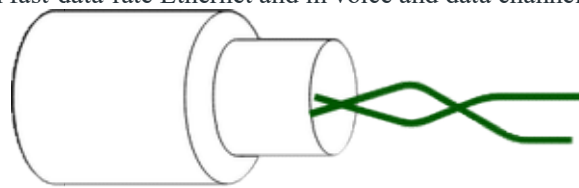
- Susceptible to external interference
- Lower capacity and performance in comparison to STP
- Short distance transmission due to attenuation

Applications:

Used in telephone connections and LAN networks

- **Shielded Twisted Pair (STP):**

This type of cable consists of a special jacket (a copper braid covering or a foil shield) to block external interference. It is used in fast-data-rate Ethernet and in voice and data channels of telephone lines.



Shielded Twisted Pair

Advantages:

- Better performance at a higher data rate in comparison to UTP
- Eliminates crosstalk
- Comparatively faster

Disadvantages:

- Comparatively difficult to install and manufacture
- More expensive
- Bulky

Applications:

The shielded twisted pair type of cable is most frequently used in extremely cold climates, where the additional layer of outer covering makes it perfect for withstanding such temperatures or for shielding the interior components.

(ii) Coaxial Cable –

It has an outer plastic covering containing an insulation layer made of PVC or Teflon and 2 parallel conductors each having a separate insulated protection cover. The coaxial cable transmits information in two modes: Baseband mode(dedicated cable bandwidth) and Broadband mode(cable bandwidth is split into separate ranges). Cable TVs and analog television networks widely use Coaxial cables.

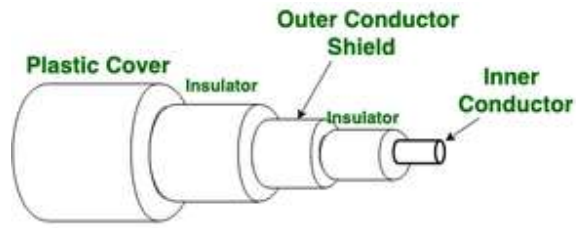


Figure of Coaxial Cable

Advantages:

- High Bandwidth
- Better noise Immunity
- Easy to install and expand
- Inexpensive

Disadvantages:

- Single cable failure can disrupt the entire network

Applications:

Radio frequency signals are sent over coaxial wire. It can be used for cable television signal distribution, digital audio (S/PDIF), computer network connections (like Ethernet), and feedlines that connect radio transmitters and receivers to their antennas.

(iii) Optical Fiber Cable –

It uses the concept of refraction of light through a core made up of glass or plastic. The core is surrounded by a less dense glass or plastic covering called the cladding. It is used for the transmission of large volumes of data. The cable can be unidirectional or bidirectional. The WDM (Wavelength Division Multiplexer) supports two modes, namely unidirectional and bidirectional mode.

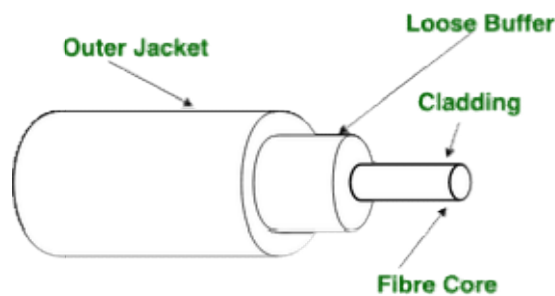


Figure of Optical Fibre Cable

Advantages:

- Increased capacity and bandwidth
- Lightweight
- Less signal attenuation
- Immunity to electromagnetic interference

- Resistance to corrosive materials

Disadvantages:

- Difficult to install and maintain
- High cost
- Fragile

Applications:

- Medical Purpose: Used in several types of medical instruments.
- Defence Purpose: Used in transmission of data in aerospace.
- For Communication: This is largely used in formation of internet cables.
- Industrial Purpose: Used for lighting purposes and safety measures in designing the interior and exterior of automobiles.

2. Unguided Media:

It is also referred to as Wireless or Unbounded transmission media. No physical medium is required for the transmission of electromagnetic signals.

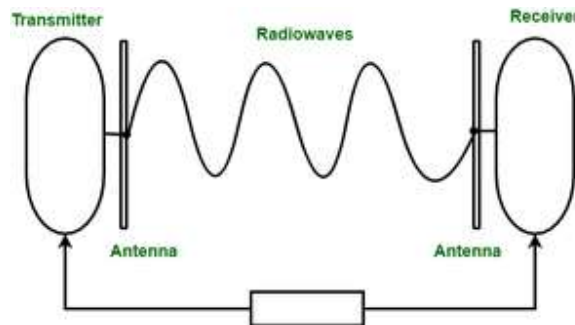
Features:

- The signal is broadcasted through air
- Less Secure
- Used for larger distances

There are 3 types of Signals transmitted through unguided media:

(i) Radio waves –

These are easy to generate and can penetrate through buildings. The sending and receiving antennas need not be aligned. Frequency Range: 3KHz – 1GHz. AM and FM radios and cordless phones use Radio waves for transmission.



Further Categorized as (i) Terrestrial and (ii) Satellite.

(ii) Microwaves –

It is a line of sight transmission i.e. the sending and receiving antennas need to be properly aligned with each other. The distance covered by the signal is directly proportional to the height of the antenna. Frequency Range: 1GHz – 300GHz. These are majorly used for mobile phone communication and television distribution.

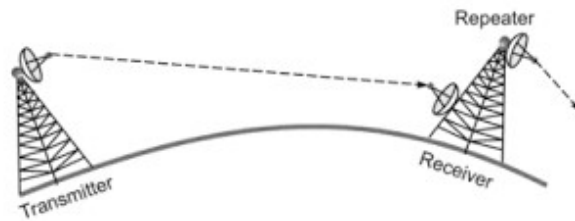


Fig: Microwave Transmission

Microwave Transmission

(iii) Infrared –

Infrared waves are used for very short distance communication. They cannot penetrate through obstacles. This prevents interference between systems. Frequency Range:300GHz – 400THz. It is used in TV remotes, wireless mouse, keyboard, printer, etc.



Television



Infrared Radiations



Remote