

Basic Calculations of a 4 Switch Buck-Boost Power Stage

Hagedorn, Julian

ABSTRACT

This application note gives the equations to calculate the power stage of a non-inverting buck-boost converter built with an IC with integrated switches and operating in continuous conduction mode. See the references at the end of this document if more detail is needed.

For a design example without description, see [appendix A](#).

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1 Basic Configuration of a Buck-Boost Converter

Figure 1, shows the basic configuration of a buck-boost converter where the switches are integrated in the IC. Many of the Advanced Low Power buck-boost converters (TPS63xxx) have all four switches integrated in the IC. This reduces solution size and eases the difficulty of the design.

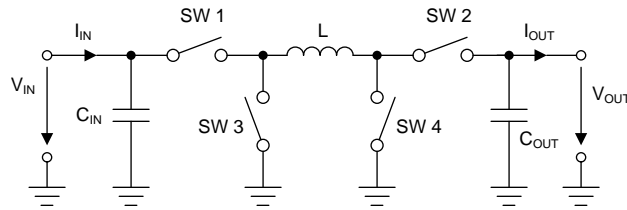


Figure 1. Buck-Boost Converter Schematic

1.1 Necessary Parameters of the Power Stage

The following four parameters are needed to calculate the power stage:

1. Input voltage range: $V_{IN\ min}$ and $V_{IN\ max}$
2. Nominal output voltage: V_{OUT}
3. Maximum output current: I_{OUT}
4. Integrated circuit used to build the buck-boost converter. This is necessary because some parameters for the calculations must be derived from the data sheet.

If these parameters are known, the power stage can be calculated.

2 Duty Cycle Calculation

The first step after selecting the operating parameters of the converter is to calculate the minimum duty cycle for buck mode and maximum duty cycle for boost mode. These duty cycles are important because at these duty cycles the converter is operating at the extremes of its operating range. The duty cycle is always positive and less than 1.

$$D_{Buck} = \frac{V_{OUT}}{V_{IN\max} \times \eta} \quad (1)$$

$$D_{Boost} = 1 - \frac{V_{IN\max} \times \eta}{V_{OUT}}$$

where

- $V_{IN\ max}$ = maximum input voltage
 - $V_{IN\ min}$ = minimum input voltage
 - V_{OUT} = desired output voltage
 - D_{Buck} = minimum duty cycle for buck mode
 - D_{Boost} = maximum duty cycle for boost mode
 - η = estimated efficiency at calculated V_{IN} , V_{OUT} , and I_{OUT}
- (2)

3 Inductor Selection

Data sheets often give a range of recommended inductor values. If this is the case, choose an inductor from this range. The higher the inductor value, the higher is the possible maximum output current because of the reduced ripple current.

Normally, the lower the inductor value, the smaller is the solution size. Note that the inductor must always have a higher current rating than the largest value of current given from Equation 5 and Equation 8; this is because the peak current increases with decreasing inductance.

For device datasheets where no inductor range is given, an inductor that satisfies both buck and boost mode conditions must be chosen. Follow both [Section 3.1](#) and [Section 3.2](#) to find the right inductance. Select the largest value of inductance calculated from either [Equation 3](#) and [Equation 4](#).

3.1 Buck Mode

For buck mode the following equation is a good estimate for the right inductance:

$$L > \frac{V_{OUT} \times (V_{INmax} - V_{OUT})}{K_{ind} \times F_{SW} \times V_{INmax} \times I_{OUT}}$$

where

- V_{INmax} = maximum input voltage
- V_{OUT} = desired output voltage
- I_{OUT} = desired maximum output current
- F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter
- K_{ind} = estimated coefficient that represents the amount of inductor ripple current relative to the maximum output current.

(3)

A good estimation for the inductor ripple current is 20% to 40% of the output current, or $0.2 < K_{ind} < 0.4$.

3.2 Boost Mode

For boost mode the following equation is a good estimate for the right inductance:

$$L > \frac{V_{INmin}^2 \times (V_{OUT} - V_{INmin})}{F_{SW} \times K_{ind} \times I_{OUT} \times V_{OUT}^2}$$

where

- V_{INmin} = minimum input voltage
- V_{OUT} = desired output voltage
- I_{OUT} = desired maximum output current
- F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter
- K_{ind} = estimated coefficient that represents the amount of inductor ripple current relative to the maximum output current.

(4)

A good estimation for the inductor ripple current is 20% to 40% of the output current, or $0.2 < K_{ind} < 0.4$.

4 Calculating Maximum Switch Current

To calculate the maximum switch current the duty cycle must be derived as done in [Section 2](#) of this application note. There are two operating cases to consider for these calculations: buck and boost mode. Derive the maximum switch current for both cases. Use the greater of the two switch currents for remainder of this application note.

4.1 Buck Mode

In buck mode, the maximum switch current is when the input voltage is at its maximum. Using [Equation 5](#) and [Equation 6](#), the maximum switch current can be calculated.

$$I_{SWmax} = \frac{\Delta I_{max}}{2} + I_{OUT}$$

(5)

$$\Delta I_{max} = \frac{(V_{INmax} - V_{OUT}) \times D_{Buck}}{F_{SW} \times L}$$

where

- V_{INmax} = maximum input voltage

- V_{OUT} = desired output voltage
- I_{OUT} = desired output current
- ΔI_{max} = maximum ripple current through the inductor
- $I_{SW\ max}$ = maximum switch current
- D_{Buck} = minimum duty cycle for buck mode
- F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter
- L = selected inductor value

(6)

To obtain the switching frequency, refer to the datasheet for the given converter.

Before continuing, verify that the converter can deliver the maximum current using Equation 7. $I_{max\ out}$ must be greater than I_{out} .

$$I_{max\ out} = I_{LIM} - \frac{\Delta I_{max}}{2}$$

where

- $I_{max\ out}$ = maximum deliverable current through inductor by the converter
- I_{LIM} = switch current limit, specified in converter datasheet
- ΔI_{max} = Ripple current through the inductor calculated in equation 6.

(7)

4.2 Boost Mode

In boost mode, the maximum switch current is when the input voltage is at its minimum. Using Equation 8 and Equation 9, the maximum switch current can be calculated.

$$I_{SW\ max} = \frac{\Delta I_{max}}{2} + \frac{I_{OUT}}{1 - D_{Boost}}$$

(8)

$$\Delta I_{max} = \frac{V_{IN\ min} \times D_{Boost}}{F_{SW} \times L}$$

where

- $V_{IN\ min}$ = minimum input voltage
- V_{OUT} = desired output voltage
- I_{OUT} = desired output current
- ΔI_{max} = maximum ripple current through the inductor
- $I_{SW\ max}$ = maximum switch current
- D_{Boost} = maximum duty cycle for boost mode
- F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter
- L = selected inductor value

(9)

To obtain the switching frequency, refer to the datasheet for the given converter.

Before continuing, verify that the converter can deliver the maximum current using Equation 10. $I_{max\ out}$ must be greater than $I_{out\ max}$. $I_{out\ max}$ is specified as the maximum output current required by the application.

$$I_{max\ out} = \left(I_{LIM} - \frac{\Delta I_{max}}{2} \right) \times (1 - D_{Boost})$$

where

- $I_{max\ out}$ = maximum deliverable current through inductor by the converter
- D_{Boost} = maximum duty cycle for boost mode
- I_{LIM} = switch current limit, specified in converter datasheet
- ΔI_{max} = Ripple current through the inductor calculated in Equation 9.

(10)

5 Output Voltage Setting

Most converters set the output voltage with a resistive divider network. This is integrated if the converter is a fixed output voltage converter. In this case, the external voltage divider described in this section is not used.

With the given feedback voltage, V_{FB} , and feedback bias current, I_{FB} , the voltage divider can be calculated.

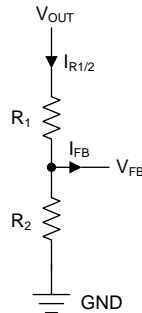


Figure 2. Feedback Circuit

The current through the resistive divider must be at least 100 times the size of the feedback bias current. [SLYT469](#) is also available for a detailed discussion on resistive feedback divider design.

$$I_{R1/2} \geq 100 \times I_{FB}$$

where

- $I_{R1/2}$ = current through the resistive divider to GND
 - I_{FB} = feedback bias current from data sheet
- (11)

This adds less than 1% inaccuracy to the voltage measurement. For the calculation of the feedback divider, the current into the feedback pin can be neglected. The disadvantage of using smaller resistor values than computed from [Equation 12](#) and [Equation 13](#) is a higher power loss in the resistive divider and thus lower efficiency at light loads, but the accuracy does increase. Again, for a more detailed discussion on this subject matter see the [SLYT469](#).

Neglecting the current into the FB pin, the resistors are calculated as followed:

$$R2 = \frac{V_{FB}}{I_{R1/2}} \tag{12}$$

$$R1 = R2 \times \left(\frac{V_{OUT}}{V_{FB}} - 1 \right)$$

where

- $R1, R2$ = resistive divider values, see [Figure 2](#).
 - V_{FB} = feedback voltage from the datasheet
 - $I_{R1/2}$ = current through the resistive divider to GND, calculated in [Equation 11](#)
 - V_{OUT} = desired output voltage
- (13)

6 Input Capacitor Selection

The minimum value for the input capacitor is normally given in the datasheet. This minimum value is necessary to stabilize the input voltage due to the peak current requirement of a switching power supply. The best practice is to use low-equivalent series resistance (ESR) ceramic capacitors. The dielectric material must be X5R or better. Otherwise, the capacitor loses much of its capacitance due to dc bias or temperature.

The value can be increased if the input voltage is noisy.

7 Output Capacitor Selection

The best practice is to use low-ESR capacitors to minimize the ripple on the output voltage. Ceramic capacitors are a good choice if the dielectric material is X5R or better.

If the converter has external compensation, any capacitor value above the recommended minimum in the datasheet can be used, but the compensation has to be adjusted for the used output capacitance.

With internally compensated converters, the recommended inductor and capacitor values must be used, or the recommendations in the datasheet for adjusting the output capacitors to the application must be followed. This usually involves keeping the same ratio of $L \times C$ as the recommended values.

With external compensation, a solution that satisfies both buck and boost mode must be chosen. Follow both [Section 7.1](#) and [Section 7.2](#) to develop minimum output capacitance for both buck and boost mode operations. Select output capacitance that is larger than both minimum required output capacitance for buck and boost mode operation. Always account for DC bias capacitance drop and derate the capacitance of the output capacitors for the design calculations.

7.1 Buck Mode

For buck mode, and [Equation 16](#) are used to calculate the minimum output capacitor value for a desired output voltage ripple. For the minimum output capacitance use the maximum value from and [Equation 16](#).

$$C_{OUT\min1} = \frac{K_{ind} \times I_{OUT}}{8 \times F_{SW} \times V_{OUT\text{ripple}}}$$

where

- $C_{OUT\min1}$ = minimum output capacitance required
- F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter
- $V_{OUT\text{ripple}}$ = desired output voltage ripple
- I_{OUT} = desired maximum output current
- K_{ind} = estimated coefficient that represents the amount of inductor ripple current relative to the maximum output current.

(14)

The ESR of the output capacitor adds some more ripple, which can be calculated with [Equation 15](#):

$$\Delta V_{OUT\text{esr}} = ESR \times K_{ind} \times I_{OUT}$$

where

- $\Delta V_{OUT\text{esr}}$ = additional output voltage ripple due to capacitors ESR
- ESR = equivalent series resistance of the used output capacitor

(15)

Often the selection of the output capacitor is not driven by the steady-state ripple, but by the output transient response. The output voltage deviation is caused by the time it takes the inductor to catch up with the increased or reduced output current needs.

The following formula can be used to calculate the necessary output capacitance for a desired maximum overshoot caused by the removal of the load current.

$$C_{OUT\min2} = \frac{(K_{ind} \times I_{OUT})^2 \times L}{2 \times V_{OUT} \times \Delta V_{OUT}}$$

where

- $C_{OUT\min2}$ = minimum output capacitance required for a desired overshoot
- I_{OUT} = desired maximum output current
- K_{ind} = estimated coefficient that represents the amount of inductor ripple current relative to the maximum output current
- V_{OUT} = desired output voltage
- ΔV_{OUT} = desired output voltage change due to the overshoot

(16)

7.2 Boost Mode

With external compensation, the following equations can be used to adjust the output capacitor values for a desired output voltage ripple:

$$C_{\text{OUTmin}} = \frac{I_{\text{OUT}} \times D_{\text{Boost}}}{F_{\text{SW}} \times \Delta V_{\text{OUT}}}$$

where

- C_{OUTmin} = minimum output capacitance
- I_{OUT} = maximum output current of the application
- D_{Boost} = duty cycle calculated with [Equation 7](#)
- F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter
- ΔV_{OUT} = desired output voltage ripple (17)

The ESR of the output capacitor adds some more ripple, given with the [Equation 18](#). Be sure to account for this V_{OUT} ESR ripple.

$$\Delta V_{\text{OUTesr}} = \text{ESR} \times \left(\frac{I_{\text{OUT}}}{1 - D_{\text{Boost}}} + \frac{K_{\text{ind}} \times I_{\text{OUT}} \times V_{\text{OUT}}}{2 \times V_{\text{IN}}} \right)$$

where

- ΔV_{OUTesr} = additional output voltage ripple due to capacitors ESR
- ESR = equivalent series resistance of the used output capacitor
- I_{out} = maximum output current of the application
- D_{Boost} = duty cycle calculated with [Equation 7](#)
- K_{ind} = estimated coefficient that represents the amount of inductor ripple current relative to the (18)

8 References

- Basic Calculation of a Boost Converter's Power Stage ([SLVA372B](#))
- Basic Calculation of a Buck Converter's Power Stage ([SLVA477](#))

Design Example Using TPS63802

A.1 System Requirements

$$V_{OUT} = 3.3 \text{ V}$$

$$I_{OUT} = 2 \text{ A}$$

$$V_{IN \text{ min}} = 2.6 \text{ V}$$

$$V_{IN \text{ max}} = 5.0 \text{ V}$$

$$\text{Efficiency } (V_{OUT} = 3.3 \text{ V @ } V_{IN} = 5.0 \text{ V}_N) = 93\%$$

$$\text{Efficiency } (V_{OUT} = 3.3 \text{ V @ } V_{IN} = 2.6 \text{ V}) = 85\%$$

A.2 Duty Cycle

For buck mode duty cycle use [Equation 1](#), $D_{Buck} = 0.614$. For boost mode duty cycle use [Equation 2](#), $D_{Boost} = 0.330$.

A.3 Inductor Selection

Buck	Boost
Using Equation 3 :	Using Equation 4 :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $L = 0.881 \mu\text{H}$, (assuming $K_{ind} = 0.3$) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $L = 0.341 \mu\text{H}$, (assuming $K_{ind} = 0.3$)
Inductor Selected: 1.0 μH	

A.4 Maximum Switch Current

Buck	Boost
Using Equation 5 through Equation 7 :	Using Equation 8 through Equation 10 :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $D_{Buck} = 0.614$ • $\Delta I_{max} = 492 \text{ mA}$ • $I_{SW \text{ max}} = 2.24 \text{ A}$ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $D_{Boost} = 0.330$ • $\Delta I_{max} = 405 \text{ mA}$ • $I_{SW \text{ max}} = 3.19 \text{ A}$
• $I_{\text{max out}} = 4.25 \text{ A}$ which is greater than 2 A	• $I_{\text{max out}} = 2.88 \text{ A}$ which is greater than 2 A

A.5 Output Voltage Setting

Using [Equation 11](#) and assuming $I_{FB} = 0.01 \mu\text{A}$, $I_{R1/2}$ minimum is found to be 1 μA . By assuming 5 μA for $I_{R1/2}$, 100 $\text{k}\Omega$ is calculated from [Equation 12](#) for R2. 91 $\text{k}\Omega$ is chosen for R2 as per datasheet recommendation. [Equation 13](#) then yields 509 $\text{k}\Omega$ for R1 which, 511 $\text{k}\Omega$ is chosen for R1. The typical output voltage with these values of resistors is 3.308 V.

A.6 Input Capacitor Selection

A single 10 μF , 6.3 V, X5R ceramic capacitors are chosen for the design.

A.7 Output Capacitor Selection

Using [Equation 14](#), [Equation 16](#), and [Equation 17](#), the minimum capacitance required is calculated by taking the maximum of these values. [Equation 14](#), [Equation 16](#), and [Equation 17](#) yield 0.71 μF , 0.55 μF , and 3.11 μF . The maximum was the result from [Equation 17](#), 3.11 μF . A single 22 μF , 6.3 V, X5R, +/- 20% ceramic capacitor, (Murata, GRM188R60J226MEA0), was chosen for the output capacitance. This capacitor is commonly chosen in low power DC/DC applications by Texas Instruments due to its enhanced DC-bias performance. By using the manufacture's provided information, the derated value of the output capacitor is 8.2 μF which is sufficient for the minimum output capacitance calculated in [Equation 17](#).

Formulas to Calculate the Power Stage of a 4-Switch Buck-Boost Converter

B.1 Formula Summary

Table 1.

Buck	Boost	Parameter
Duty Cycle Calculation		
$D_{\text{Buck}} = \frac{V_{\text{OUT}}}{V_{\text{INmax}} \times \eta} \quad (19)$	$D_{\text{Boost}} = 1 - \frac{V_{\text{INmax}} \times \eta}{V_{\text{OUT}}} \quad (20)$	where <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $V_{\text{IN max}}$ = maximum input voltage • $V_{\text{IN min}}$ = minimum input voltage • V_{OUT} = desired output voltage • D_{Buck} = minimum duty cycle for buck mode • D_{Boost} = maximum duty cycle for boost mode • η = estimated efficiency at calculated V_{IN}, V_{OUT}, and I_{OUT}
Inductor Selection		
$L > \frac{V_{\text{OUT}} \times (V_{\text{INmax}} - V_{\text{OUT}})}{K_{\text{ind}} \times F_{\text{SW}} \times V_{\text{INmax}} \times I_{\text{OUT}}} \quad (21)$	$L > \frac{V_{\text{INmin}}^2 \times (V_{\text{OUT}} - V_{\text{INmin}})}{F_{\text{SW}} \times K_{\text{ind}} \times I_{\text{OUT}} \times V_{\text{OUT}}^2} \quad (22)$	where <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $V_{\text{IN max}}$ = maximum input voltage • $V_{\text{IN min}}$ = minimum input voltage • V_{OUT} = desired output voltage • I_{OUT} = desired maximum output current • F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter • K_{ind} = estimated coefficient that represents the amount of inductor ripple current relative to the maximum output current.
Calculating Maximum Switch Current		
$I_{\text{SWmax}} = \frac{\Delta I_{\text{max}}}{2} + I_{\text{OUT}} \quad (23)$	$I_{\text{SWmax}} = \frac{\Delta I_{\text{max}}}{2} + \frac{I_{\text{OUT}}}{1 - D_{\text{Boost}}} \quad (24)$	where <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $V_{\text{IN max}}$ = maximum input voltage • $V_{\text{IN min}}$ = minimum input voltage • V_{OUT} = desired output voltage • I_{OUT} = desired output current • ΔI_{max} = maximum ripple current through the inductor • $I_{\text{SW max}}$ = maximum switch current • D_{Buck} = minimum duty cycle for buck mode • D_{Boost} = maximum duty cycle for boost mode • F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter • L = selected inductor value • $I_{\text{max out}}$ = maximum deliverable current through inductor by the converter • I_{LIM} = switch current limit, specified in converter datasheet
$\Delta I_{\text{max}} = \frac{(V_{\text{INmax}} - V_{\text{OUT}}) \times D_{\text{Buck}}}{F_{\text{SW}} \times L} \quad (25)$	$\Delta I_{\text{max}} = \frac{V_{\text{INmin}} \times D_{\text{Boost}}}{F_{\text{SW}} \times L} \quad (26)$	
$I_{\text{max out}} = I_{\text{LIM}} - \frac{\Delta I_{\text{max}}}{2} \quad (27)$	$I_{\text{max out}} = \left(I_{\text{LIM}} - \frac{\Delta I_{\text{max}}}{2} \right) \times (1 - D_{\text{Boost}}) \quad (28)$	

Table 1. (continued)

Buck	Boost	Parameter
Output Voltage Setting		
$I_{R1/2} \geq 100 \times I_{FB}$	(29)	where <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $I_{R1/2}$ = current through the resistive divider to GND • I_{FB} = feedback bias current from data sheet • R1,R2 = resistive divider values, see Figure 2. • V_{FB} = feedback voltage from the datasheet • $I_{R1/2}$ = current through the resistive divider to GND, calculated in Equation 11 • V_{OUT} = desired output voltage
$R2 = \frac{V_{FB}}{I_{R1/2}}$	(30)	
$R1 = R2 \times \left(\frac{V_{OUT}}{V_{FB}} - 1 \right)$	(31)	
Output Capacitor Selection		
$C_{OUTmin1} = \frac{K_{ind} \times I_{OUT}}{8 \times F_{SW} \times V_{OUTripple}}$	(32)	where <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C_{OUTmin} = minimum output capacitance • $C_{OUTmin1}$ = minimum output capacitance required • $C_{OUTmin2}$ = minimum output capacitance required for a desired overshoot • I_{OUT} = maximum output current of the application • D_{Boost} = duty cycle calculated with Equation 7 • F_{SW} = switching frequency of the converter • V_{OUT} = desired output voltage • ΔV_{OUT} = desired output voltage ripple • $V_{OUTripple}$ = desired output voltage ripple • K_{ind} = estimated coefficient that represents the amount of inductor ripple current relative to the maximum output current. • ΔV_{OUTesr} = additional output voltage ripple due to capacitors ESR • ESR = equivalent series resistance of the used output capacitor
$\Delta V_{OUTesr} = ESR \times K_{ind} \times I_{OUT}$	(34)	
$C_{OUTmin2} = \frac{(K_{ind} \times I_{OUT})^2 \times L}{2 \times V_{OUT} \times \Delta V_{OUT}}$	(36)	
	$C_{OUTmin} = \frac{I_{OUT} \times D_{Boost}}{F_{SW} \times \Delta V_{OUT}}$	(33)
	$\Delta V_{OUTesr} = ESR \times \left(\frac{I_{OUT}}{1 - D_{Boost}} + \frac{K_{ind} \times I_{OUT} \times V_{OUT}}{2 \times V_{IN}} \right)$	(35)

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