Gearing - General

Function:
- reduce rotational speed & increase torque
- transmit rotational motion between shafts with different locations and/or orientation
- high efficiency ⇒ output power ≈ input power
- power = T(torque) • ω (angular speed)
- torque multiplication $T_{out} \approx T_{in}\, \omega_{in}/\omega_{out}$

Gear types

Spur:
- "simplest' gear
- teeth cut on cylindrical surface, parallel to axis of rotation
- used to transmit rotational motion between parallel shafts

(see Fig. 13-1)

Helical:
- teeth cut on cylindrical surface, at fixed angle to axis of rotation
- (usually) used to transmit rotational motion between parallel shafts -- may also be used as "crossed" helical gears for non-parallel shafts
- cause thrust as well as radial loads on shafts -- can use "herringbone" gears(p.546) to avoid this problem
- provide smoother & quieter operation than spur gears at high speed (due to more gradual engagement of teeth)

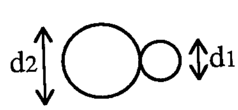
(see Fig. 13-2)

Bevel:
- tapered teeth cut on conical surface
- used to transmit motion between non-parallel (usually perpendicular and intersecting) shafts
- variants -- spiral bevel gear, etc.

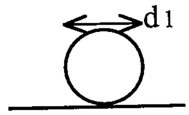
(see Fig. 13-3)

Worm:
- "worm" (similar to a screw) drives "worm wheel" (similar to a helical gear)
- used to transmit motion between non-intersecting (usually perpendicular) shafts
- achieve large speed reduction & torque multiplication
- greater contact & strength if "single-enveloping" or "double enveloping" forms used (worm and/or worm wheel wrap around each other in "hourglass" shape)
- involve greater sliding of teeth than other gear types -- higher frictional losses and heat generation

Spur gear terminology (see Fig. 13-5)
- smaller gear = the **pinion**; larger gear = the **gear**
- imagine replacing spur gears in mesh by circular disks that roll without slipping against each other, diameter d_1, d_2 of disks = pitch diameters of gears



- **pitch diameter** depends on spacing between gear centers -- it is not an intrinsic dimension of each individual gear
- the **speed ratio** is given by $\omega_2/\omega_1 = -d_1/d_2$ (minus sign since gears rotate in **opposite** senses)
- a rack can be thought of as a spur gear with infinite pitch diameter ($d = \infty$). $\omega_2/\omega_1 = 0$ -- the rack does not rotate; it **translates**



- an **internal** or **annular** gear (inside teeth) can be thought of as a spur gear with negative pitch diameter ($d < 0$). ω_2/ω_1 is positive since the gears rotate in the *same* sense.

- **circular pitch,** $p = \pi d/N$ = distance along pitch circle between corresponding points on adjacent teeth. (N = number of teeth)
- **diametral pitch**, $P = N/d$ = number of teeth per inch of pitch diameter
- $P = \pi/p$
- meshing spur gears must have *identical* diametral pitch P (hence also the same circular pitch p) $\Rightarrow d_1/d_2 = N_1/N_2$
- **addendum,** a = height of teeth above pitch circle
- **dedendum,** b = depth of teeth below pitch circle
- **whole depth** of teeth is $h = a+b$
- design must allow for *clearance* and *backlash* to avoid jamming of gears in mesh
- **clearance:** (dedendum of one gear) - (addendum of other gear)
- **backlash:** (space width of one gear) - (tooth thickness of other gear)
- standard tooth systems use $a = 1/P$ and $b = 1.25/P$
- the tooth thickness and width of space between teeth are measured on the pitch circle

Conjugate action (see Fig. 13-6)

- tooth shape must be such as to give a strictly constant output/input angular velocity ratio for meshing gears: it must be the same at each instant, not just "on average"
- this is called **conjugate action** -- it can be achieved by using **involutes of circles** to define the tooth shapes
- without proper conjugate action, gears would suffer severe vibration, impact and noise problems.
- involute teeth are constructed from the **base circle** (not the pitch circle) of the gear -- base-circle diameter is an intrinsic gear dimension, whereas pitch diameter depends on spacing between gear centers
- the teeth of meshing spur gears contact and exert force against each other along a line that is tangent o both base circles, known as **pressure line** or **line of action**
- the pressure line cuts the line connecting the gear centers at **pitch point**

This chapter addresses gear geometry, the kinematic relations, and the forces transmitted by the four principal types of gears: spur, helical, bevel, and worm gears. The forces transmitted between meshing gears supply torsional moments to shafts for motion and power transmission and create forces and moments that affect the shaft and its bearings. The next two chapters will address stress, strength, safety, and reliability of the four types of gears.

13–1 Types of Gears

Spur gears, illustrated in Fig. 13–1, have teeth parallel to the axis of rotation and are used to transmit motion from one shaft to another, parallel, shaft. Of all types, the spur gear is the simplest and, for this reason, will be used to develop the primary kinematic relationships of the tooth form.

Helical gears, shown in Fig. 13–2, have teeth inclined to the axis of rotation. Helical gears can be used for the same applications as spur gears and, when so used, are not as noisy, because of the more gradual engagement of the teeth during meshing. The inclined tooth also develops thrust loads and bending couples, which are not present with spur gearing. Sometimes helical gears are used to transmit motion between nonparallel shafts.

Bevel gears, shown in Fig. 13–3, have teeth formed on conical surfaces and are used mostly for transmitting motion between intersecting shafts. The figure actually illustrates *straight-tooth bevel gears. Spiral bevel gears* are cut so the tooth is no longer straight, but forms a circular arc. *Hypoid gears* are quite similar to spiral bevel gears except that the shafts are offset and nonintersecting.

Figure 13–1

Spur gears are used to transmit rotary motion between parallel shafts.

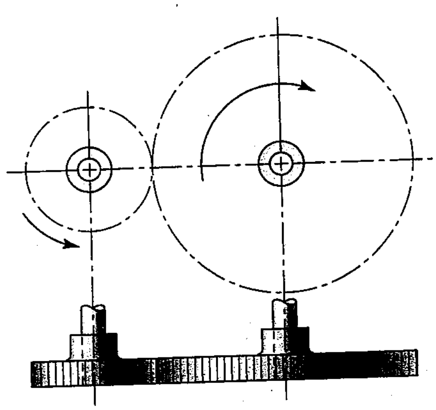
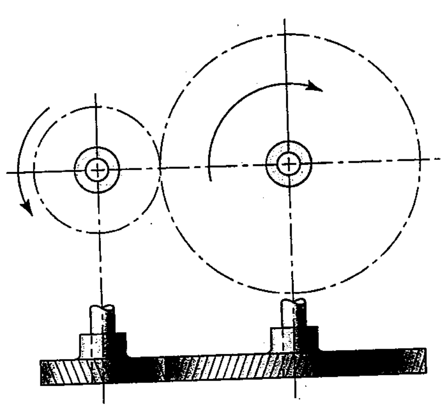


Figure 13–2

Helical gears are used to transmit motion between parallel or nonparallel shafts.



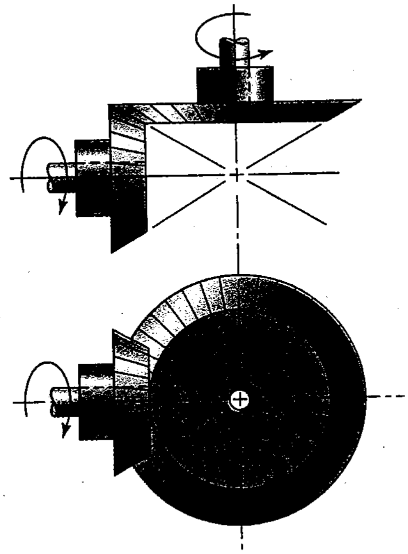


Figure 13–3

Bevel gears are used to transmit rotary motion between intersecting shafts.

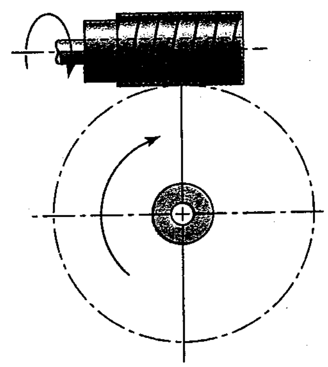


Figure 13–4

Worm gearsets are used to transmit rotary motion between nonparallel and nonintersecting shafts.

Worms and *worm gears,* shown in Fig. 13–4, represent the fourth basic gear type. As shown, the worm resembles a screw. The direction of rotation of the worm gear, also called the worm wheel, depends upon the direction of rotation of the worm and upon whether the worm teeth are cut right-hand or left-hand. Worm-gear sets are also made so that the teeth of one or both wrap partly around the other. Such sets are called *single-enveloping* and *double-enveloping* worm-gear sets. Worm-gear sets are mostly used when the speed ratios of the two shafts are quite high, say, 3 or more.

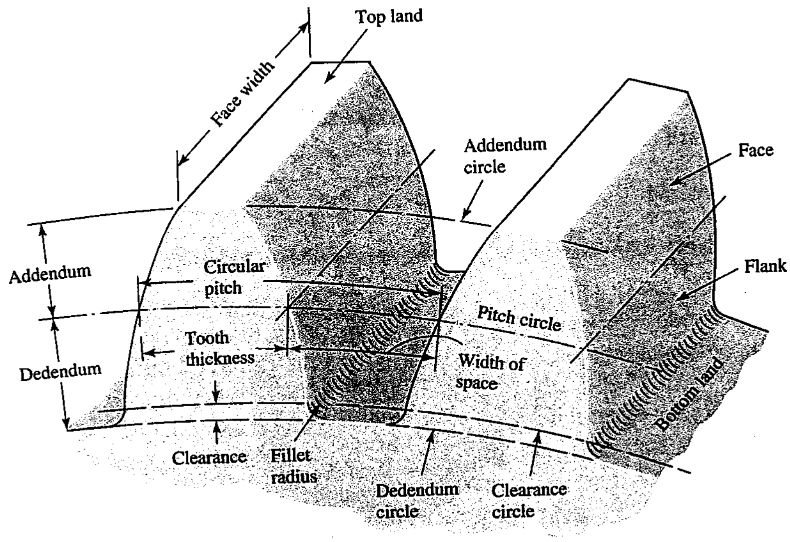
13–2 Nomenclature

The terminology of spur-gear teeth is illustrated in Fig. 13–5. The *pitch circle* is a theoretical circle upon which all calculations are usually based; its diameter is the *pitch diameter.* The pitch circles of a pair of mating gears are tangent to each other. A *pinion* is the smaller of two mating gears. The larger is often called the *gear.*

The *circular pitch p* is the distance, measured on the pitch circle, from a point on one tooth to a corresponding point on an adjacent tooth. Thus the circular pitch is equal to the sum of the *tooth thickness* and the *width of space.*

Figure 13–5

Nomenclature of spur-gear teeth.



The *module m* is the ratio of the pitch diameter to the number of teeth. The customary unit of length used is the millimeter. The module is the index of tooth size in SI.

The *diametral pitch P* is the ratio of the number of teeth on the gear to the pitch diameter. Thus, it is the reciprocal of the module. Since diametral pitch is used only with U.S. units, it is expressed as teeth per inch.

The *addendum a* is the radial distance between the *top land* and the pitch circle. The *dedendum b* is the radial distance from the *bottom land* to the pitch circle. The *whole depth* h_t is the sum of the addendum and the dedendum.

The *clearance circle* is a circle that is tangent to the addendum circle of the mating gear. The *clearance c* is the amount by which the dedendum in a given gear exceeds the addendum of its mating gear. The *backlash* is the amount by which the width of a tooth space exceeds the thickness of the engaging tooth measured on the pitch circles.

You should prove for yourself the validity of the following useful relations:

$$P = \frac{N}{d} \tag{13–1}$$

$$m = \frac{d}{N} \tag{13–2}$$

$$p = \frac{\pi d}{N} = \pi m \tag{13–3}$$

$$pP = \pi \tag{13–4}$$

where P = diametral pitch, teeth per inch

N = number of teeth

d = pitch diameter, in

m = module, mm

d = pitch diameter, mm

p = circular pitch

13-3 Conjugate Action

The following discussion assumes the teeth to be perfectly formed, perfectly smooth, and absolutely rigid. Such an assumption is, of course, unrealistic, because the application of forces will cause deflections.

Mating gear teeth acting against each other to produce rotary motion are similar to cams. When the tooth profiles, or cams, are designed so as to produce a constant angular-velocity ratio during meshing, these are said to have *conjugate action*. In theory, at least, it is possible arbitrarily to select any profile for one tooth and then to find a profile for the meshing tooth that will give conjugate action. One of these solutions is the *involute profile,* which, with few exceptions, is in universal use for gear teeth and is the only one with which we should be concerned.

When one curved surface pushes against another (Fig. 13–6), the point of contact occurs where the two surfaces are tangent to each other (point c), and the forces at any instant are directed along the common normal ab to the two curves. The line ab, representing the direction of action of the forces, is called the *line of action*. The line of action will intersect the line of centers O-O at some point P. The angular-velocity ratio between the two arms is inversely proportional to their radii to the point P. Circles drawn through point P from each center are called *pitch circles,* and the radius of each circle is called the *pitch radius*. Point P is called the *pitch point.*

Figure 13–6 is useful in making another observation. A pair of gears is really pairs of cams that act through a small arc and, before running off the involute contour, are replaced by another identical pair of cams. The cams can run in either direction and are configured to transmit a constant angular-velocity ratio. If involute curves are used, the gears tolerate changes in center-to-center distance with *no* variation in constant angular-velocity ratio. Furthermore, the rack profiles are straight-flanked, making primary tooling simpler.

To transmit motion at a constant angular-velocity ratio, the pitch point must remain fixed; that is, all the lines of action for every instantaneous point of contact must pass through the same point P. In the case of the involute profile, it will be shown that all points of contact occur on the same straight line ab, that all normals to the tooth profiles at the point of contact coincide with the line ab, and, thus, that these profiles transmit uniform rotary motion.

Figure 13–6

Cam *A* and follower *B* in contact. When the contacting surfaces are involute profiles, the ensuing conjugate action produces a constant angular-velocity ratio.

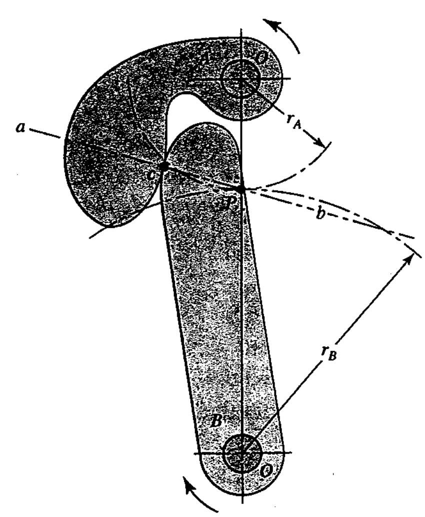
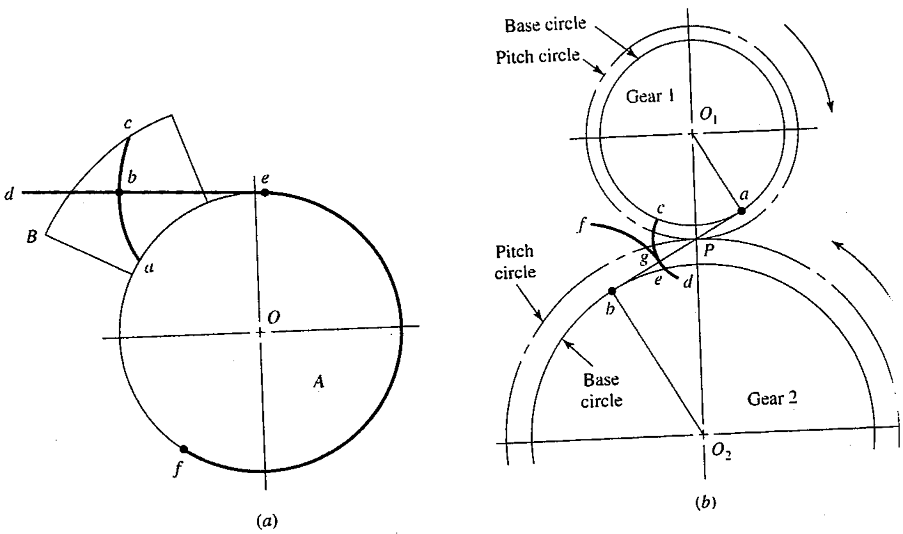


Figure 13–7

(a) Generation of an involute;
(b) involute action.



13–4 Involute Properties

An involute curve may be generated as shown in Fig. 13–7*a*. A partial flange B is attach… to the cylinder A, around which is wrapped a cord *def*, which is held tight. Point b on th… cord represents the tracing point, and as the cord is wrapped and unwrapped about th… cylinder, point b will trace out the involute curve ac. The radius of the curvature of the in… volute varies continuously, being zero at point a and a maximum at point c. At point b th… radius is equal to the distance be, since point b is instantaneously rotating about point … Thus the generating line de is normal to the involute at all points of intersection and, a… the same time, is always tangent to the cylinder A. The circle on which the involute i… generated is called the *base circle*.

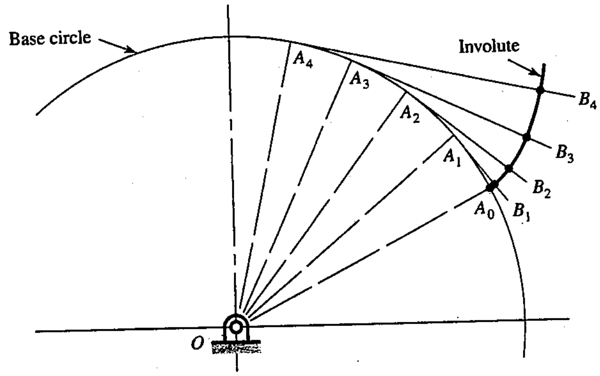
Let us now examine the involute profile to see how it satisfies the requirement fo… the transmission of uniform motion. In Fig. 13–7*b*, two gear blanks with fixed centers a… O_1 and O_2 are shown having base circles whose respective radii are O_1a and O_2b. W… now imagine that a cord is wound clockwise around the base circle of gear 1, pulle… tight between points a and b, and wound counterclockwise around the base circle o… gear 2. If, now, the base circles are rotated in different directions so as to keep the cor… tight, a point g on the cord will trace out the involutes cd on gear 1 and ef on gear 2. Th… involutes are thus generated simultaneously by the tracing point. The tracing poin… therefore, represents the point of contact, while the portion of the cord ab is the gene… ating line. The point of contact moves along the generating line; the generating line do… not change position, because it is always tangent to the base circles; and since the gen… erating line is always normal to the involutes at the point of contact, the requirement fo… uniform motion is satisfied.

13–5 Fundamentals

Among other things, it is necessary that you actually be able to draw the teeth on a pair o… meshing gears. You should understand, however, that you are not doing this for manu… facturing or shop purposes. Rather, we make drawings of gear teeth to obtain an under… standing of the problems involved in the meshing of the mating teeth.

Figure 13–8

Construction of an involute curve.



First, it is necessary to learn how to construct an involute curve. As shown in Fig. 13–8, divide the base circle into a number of equal parts, and construct radial lines OA_0, OA_1, OA_2, etc. Beginning at A_1, construct perpendiculars A_1B_1, A_2B_2, A_3B_3, etc. Then along A_1B_1 lay off the distance A_1A_0, along A_2B_2 lay off twice the distance A_1A_0, etc., producing points through which the involute curve can be constructed.

To investigate the fundamentals of tooth action, let us proceed step by step through the process of constructing the teeth on a pair of gears.

When two gears are in mesh, their pitch circles roll on one another without slipping. Designate the pitch radii as r_1 and r_2 and the angular velocities as ω_1 and ω_2, respectively. Then the pitch-line velocity is

$$V = |r_1\omega_1| = |r_2\omega_2|$$

Thus the relation between the radii on the angular velocities is

$$\left|\frac{\omega_1}{\omega_2}\right| = \frac{r_2}{r_1} \tag{13–5}$$

Suppose now we wish to design a speed reducer such that the input speed is 1800 rev/min and the output speed is 1200 rev/min. This is a ratio of 3:2; the gear pitch diameters would be in the same ratio, for example, a 4-in pinion driving a 6-in gear. The various dimensions found in gearing are always based on the pitch circles.

Suppose we specify that an 18-tooth pinion is to mesh with a 30-tooth gear and that the diametral pitch of the gearset is to be 2 teeth per inch. Then, from Eq. (13–1), the pitch diameters of the pinion and gear are, respectively,

$$d_1 = \frac{N_1}{P} = \frac{18}{2} = 9 \text{ in} \qquad d_2 = \frac{N_2}{P} = \frac{30}{2} = 15 \text{ in}$$

The first step in drawing teeth on a pair of mating gears is shown in Fig. 13–9. The center distance is the sum of the pitch radii, in this case 12 in. So locate the pinion and gear centers O_1 and O_2, 12 in apart. Then construct the pitch circles of radii r_1 and r_2. These are tangent at P, the *pitch point*. Next draw line ab, the common tangent, through the pitch point. We now designate gear 1 as the driver, and since it is rotating counterclockwise, we draw a line cd through point P at an angle ϕ to the common tangent ab. The line cd has three names, all of which are in general use. It is called the *pressure line*, the *generating line*, and the *line of action*. It represents the direction in which the resultant force acts between the gears. The angle ϕ is called the *pressure angle*, and it usually has values of 20 or 25°, though $14\frac{1}{2}°$ was once used.

Figure 13–9

Circles of a gear layout.

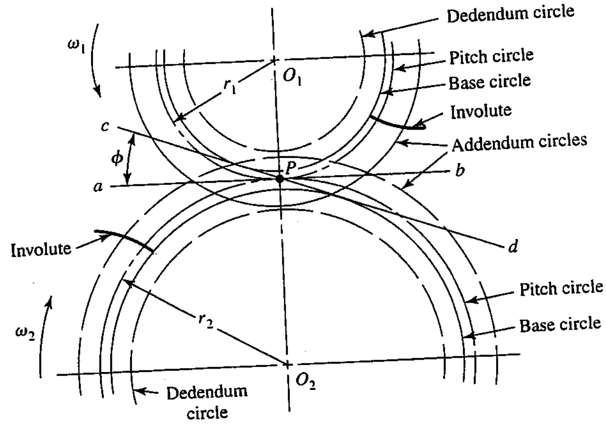
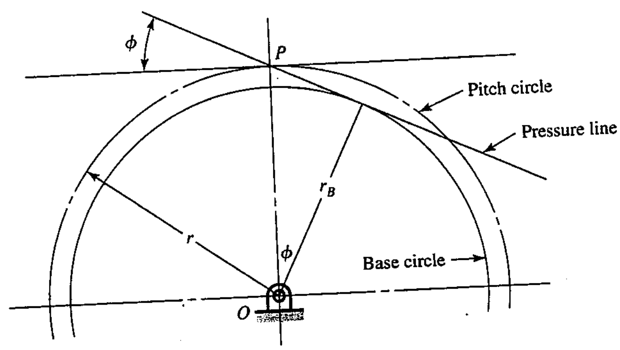


Figure 13–10

Base circle radius can be related to the pressure angle ϕ and the pitch circle radius by $r_b = r\cos\phi$.



Next, on each gear draw a circle tangent to the pressure line. These circles are the *base circles*. Since they are tangent to the pressure line, the pressure angle determines their size. As shown in Fig. 13–10, the radius of the base circle is

$$r_b = r\cos\phi \tag{13-6}$$

where r is the pitch radius.

Now generate an involute on each base circle as previously described and as shown in Fig. 13–9. This involute is to be used for one side of a gear tooth. It is not necessary to draw another curve in the reverse direction for the other side of the tooth, because we are going to use a template which can be turned over to obtain the other side.

The addendum and dedendum distances for standard interchangeable teeth are, as we shall learn later, $1/P$ and $1.25/P$, respectively. Therefore, for the pair of gears we are constructing,

$$a = \frac{1}{P} = \frac{1}{2} = 0.500 \text{ in} \qquad b = \frac{1.25}{P} = \frac{1.25}{2} = 0.625 \text{ in}$$

Using these distances, draw the addendum and dedendum circles on the pinion and on the gear as shown in Fig. 13–9.

Next, using heavy drawing paper, or preferably, a sheet of 0.015- to 0.020-in clear plastic, cut a template for each involute, being careful to locate the gear centers properly with respect to each involute. Figure 13–11 is a reproduction of the template used to create some of the illustrations for this book. Note that only one side of the tooth profile is formed on the template. To get the other side, turn the template over. For some problems you might wish to construct a template for the entire tooth.

Figure 13–11

A template for drawing gear teeth.

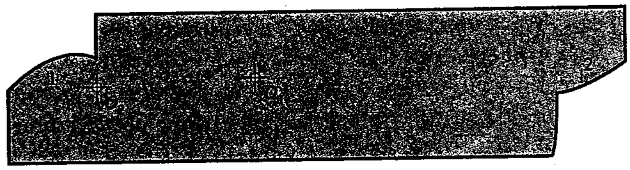
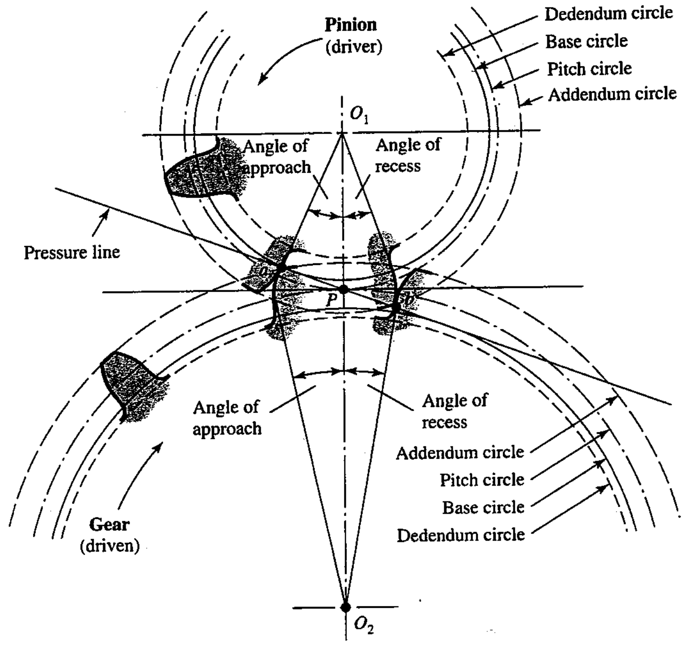


Figure 13–12

Tooth action.



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To draw a tooth, we must know the tooth thickness. From Eq. (13–4), the circular pitch is

$$p = \frac{\pi}{P} = \frac{\pi}{2} = 1.57 \text{ in}$$

Therefore, the tooth thickness is

$$t = \frac{p}{2} = \frac{1.57}{2} = 0.785 \text{ in}$$

measured on the pitch circle. Using this distance for the tooth thickness as well as the tooth space, draw as many teeth as desired, using the template, after the points have been marked on the pitch circle. In Fig. 13–12 only one tooth has been drawn on each gear. You may run into trouble in drawing these teeth if one of the base circles happens to be larger than the dedendum circle. The reason for this is that the involute begins at the base circle and is undefined below this circle. So, in drawing gear teeth, we usually draw a radial line for the profile below the base circle. The actual shape, however, will depend upon the kind of machine tool used to form the teeth in manufacture, that is, how the profile is generated.

The portion of the tooth between the clearance circle and the dedendum circle includes the fillet. In this instance the clearance is

$$c = b - a = 0.625 - 0.500 = 0.125 \text{ in}$$

The construction is finished when these fillets have been drawn.

Referring again to Fig. 13–12, the pinion with center at O_1 is the driver and turns counterclockwise. The pressure, or generating, line is the same as the cord used in Fig. 13–7*a* to generate the involute, and contact occurs along this line. The initial contact will take place when the flank of the driver comes into contact with the tip of the driven tooth. This occurs at point *a* in Fig. 13–12, where the addendum circle of the driven gear crosses the pressure line. If we now construct tooth profiles through point *a* and draw radial lines from the intersections of these profiles with the pitch circles to the gear centers, we obtain the *angle of approach* for each gear.

As the teeth go into mesh, the point of contact will slide up the side of the driving tooth so that the tip of the driver will be in contact just before contact ends. The final point of contact will therefore be where the addendum circle of the driver crosses the pressure line. This is point *b* in Fig. 13–12. By drawing another set of tooth profiles through *b*, we obtain the *angle of recess* for each gear in a manner similar to that of finding the angles of approach. The sum of the angle of approach and the angle of recess for either gear is called the *angle of action.* The line *ab* is called *the line of action.*

We may imagine a *rack* as a spur gear having an infinitely large pitch diameter. Therefore, the rack has an infinite number of teeth and a base circle which is an infinite distance from the pitch point. The sides of involute teeth on a rack are straight lines making an angle to the line of centers equal to the pressure angle. Figure 13–13 shows an involute rack in mesh with a pinion. Corresponding sides on involute teeth are parallel curves; the *base pitch* is the constant and fundamental distance between them along a common normal as shown in Fig. 13–13. The base pitch is related to the circular pitch by the equation

$$p_b = p_c \cos\phi \qquad (13\text{–}7)$$

where p_b is the base pitch.

Figure 13–14 shows a pinion in mesh with an *internal,* or *ring, gear.* Note that both of the gears now have their centers of rotation on the same side of the pitch point. Thus the positions of the addendum and dedendum circles with respect to the pitch circle are reversed; the addendum circle of the internal gear lies *inside* the pitch circle. Note, too, from Fig. 13–14, that the base circle of the internal gear lies inside the pitch circle near the addendum circle.

Another interesting observation concerns the fact that the operating diameters of the pitch circles of a pair of meshing gears need not be the same as the respective design pitch diameters of the gears, though this is the way they have been constructed in Fig. 13–12. If we increase the center distance, we create two new operating pitch circles having larger diameters because they must be tangent to each other at the pitch point.

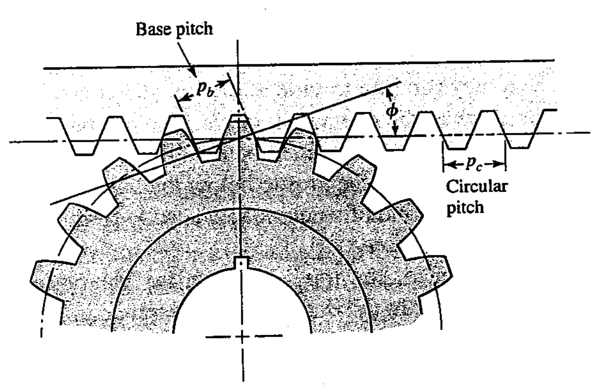
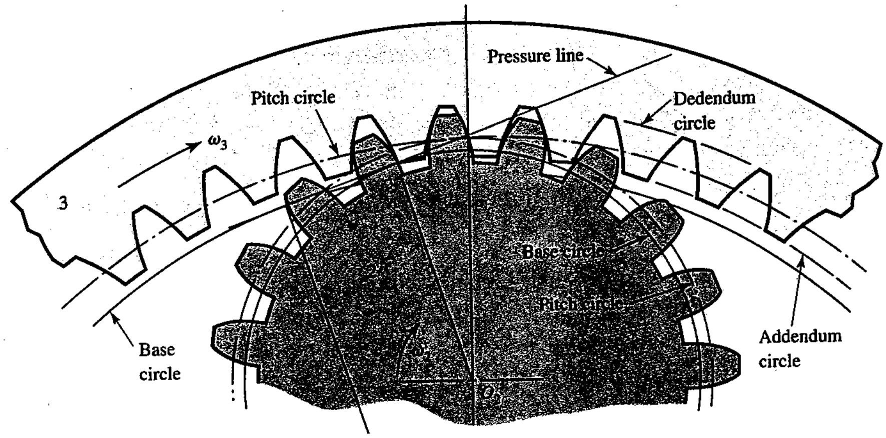


Figure 13–13

Involute-toothed pinion and rack.

Figure 13–14
Internal gear and pinion.



Thus the pitch circles of gears really do not come into existence until a pair of gears are brought into mesh.

Changing the center distance has no effect on the base circles, because these were used to generate the tooth profiles. Thus the base circle is basic to a gear. Increasing the center distance increases the pressure angle and decreases the length of the line of action, but the teeth are still conjugate, the requirement for uniform motion transmission is still satisfied, and the angular-velocity ratio has not changed.

EXAMPLE 13–1

A gearset consists of a 16-tooth pinion driving a 40-tooth gear. The diametral pitch is 2, and the addendum and dedendum are $1/P$ and $1.25/P$, respectively. The gears are cut using a pressure angle of 20°.

(*a*) Compute the circular pitch, the center distance, and the radii of the base circles.

(*b*) In mounting these gears, the center distance was incorrectly made $\frac{1}{4}$ in larger. Compute the new values of the pressure angle and the pitch-circle diameters.

Solution

Answer (*a*)

$$p = \frac{\pi}{P} = \frac{\pi}{2} = 1.57 \text{ in}$$

The pitch diameters of the pinion and gear are, respectively,

$$d_P = \frac{16}{2} = 8 \text{ in} \qquad d_G = \frac{40}{2} = 20 \text{ in}$$

Therefore the center distance is

$$\frac{d_P + d_G}{2} = \frac{8 + 20}{2} = 14 \text{ in}$$

Since the teeth were cut on the 20° pressure angle, the base-circle radii are found to be, using $r_b = r \cos \phi$,

Answer

$$r_b \text{ (pinion)} = \frac{8}{2} \cos 20° = 3.76 \text{ in}$$

Answer

$$r_b \text{ (gear)} = \frac{20}{2} \cos 20° = 9.40 \text{ in}$$

(*b*) Designating d'_P and d'_G as the new pitch-circle diameters, the $\frac{1}{4}$-in increase in the center distance requires that

$$\frac{d'_P + d'_G}{2} = 14.250 \tag{1}$$

Also, the velocity ratio does not change, and hence

$$\frac{d'_P}{d'_G} = \frac{16}{40} \tag{2}$$

Solving Eqs. (1) and (2) simultaneously yields

Answer
$$d'_P = 8.143 \text{ in} \qquad d'_G = 20.357 \text{ in}$$

Since $r_b = r\cos\phi$, the new pressure angle is

Answer
$$\phi' = \cos^{-1}\frac{r_b\text{ (pinion)}}{d'_P/2} = \cos^{-1}\frac{3.76}{8.143/2} = 22.56°$$

13–6 Contact Ratio

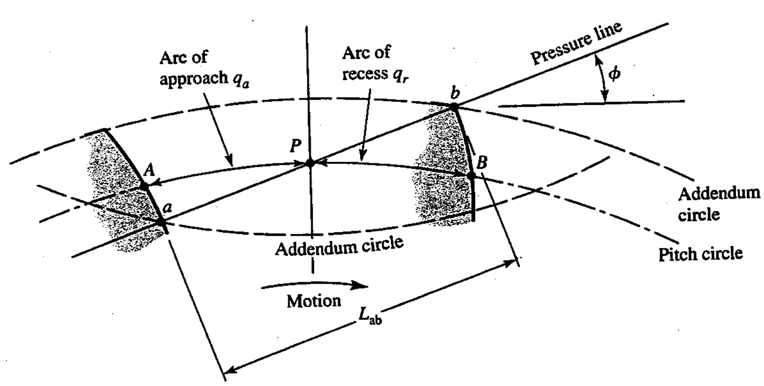
The zone of action of meshing gear teeth is shown in Fig. 13–15. We recall that tooth contact begins and ends at the intersections of the two addendum circles with the pressure line. In Fig. 13–15 initial contact occurs at a and final contact at b. Tooth profiles drawn through these points intersect the pitch circle at A and B, respectively. As shown, the distance AP is called the *arc of approach* q_a, and the distance PB, the *arc of recess* q_r. The sum of these is the *arc of action* q_t.

Now, consider a situation in which the arc of action is exactly equal to the circular pitch, that is, $q_t = p$. This means that one tooth and its space will occupy the entire arc AB. In other words, when a tooth is just beginning contact at a, the previous tooth is simultaneously ending its contact at b. Therefore, during the tooth action from a to b, there will be exactly one pair of teeth in contact.

Next, consider a situation in which the arc of action is greater than the circular pitch, but not very much greater, say, $q_t \doteq 1.2p$. This means that when one pair of teeth is just entering contact at a, another pair, already in contact, will not yet have reached b. Thus,

Figure 13–15

Definition of contact ratio.



for a short period of time, there will be two teeth in contact, one in the vicinity of A and another near B. As the meshing proceeds, the pair near B must cease contact, leaving only a single pair of contacting teeth, until the procedure repeats itself.

Because of the nature of this tooth action, either one or two pairs of teeth in contact, it is convenient to define the term *contact ratio* m_c as

$$m_c = \frac{q_t}{p} \tag{13-8}$$

a number that indicates the average number of pairs of teeth in contact. Note that this ratio is also equal to the length of the path of contact divided by the base pitch. Gears should not generally be designed having contact ratios less than about 1.20, because inaccuracies in mounting might reduce the contact ratio even more, increasing the possibility of impact between the teeth as well as an increase in the noise level.

An easier way to obtain the contact ratio is to measure the line of action ab instead of the arc distance AB. Since ab in Fig. 13–15 is tangent to the base circle when extended, the base pitch p_b must be used to calculate m_c instead of the circular pitch as in Eq. (13–8). If the length of the line of action is L_{ab}, the contact ratio is

$$m_c = \frac{L_{ab}}{p \cos \phi} \tag{13-9}$$

in which Eq. (13–7) was used for the base pitch.

13–7 Interference

The contact of portions of tooth profiles that are not conjugate is called *interference*. Consider Fig. 13–16. Illustrated are two 16-tooth gears that have been cut to the now obsolete $14\frac{1}{2}°$ pressure angle. The driver, gear 2, turns clockwise. The initial and final points of contact are designated A and B, respectively, and are located on the pressure line. Now notice that the points of tangency of the pressure line with the base circles C and D are located *inside* of points A and B. Interference is present.

The interference is explained as follows. Contact begins when the tip of the driven tooth contacts the flank of the driving tooth. In this case the flank of the driving tooth first makes contact with the driven tooth at point A, and this occurs *before* the involute portion of the driving tooth comes within range. In other words, contact is occurring below the base circle of gear 2 on the *noninvolute* portion of the flank. The actual effect is that the involute tip or face of the driven gear tends to dig out the noninvolute flank of the driver.

In this example the same effect occurs again as the teeth leave contact. Contact should end at point D or before. Since it does not end until point B, the effect is for the tip of the driving tooth to dig out, or interfere with, the flank of the driven tooth.

When gear teeth are produced by a generation process, interference is automatically eliminated because the cutting tool removes the interfering portion of the flank. This effect is called *undercutting;* if undercutting is at all pronounced, the undercut tooth is considerably weakened. Thus the effect of eliminating interference by a generation process is merely to substitute another problem for the original one.

The smallest number of teeth on a spur pinion and gear,[1] one-to-one gear ratio, which can exist without interference is N_P. This number of teeth for spur gears is

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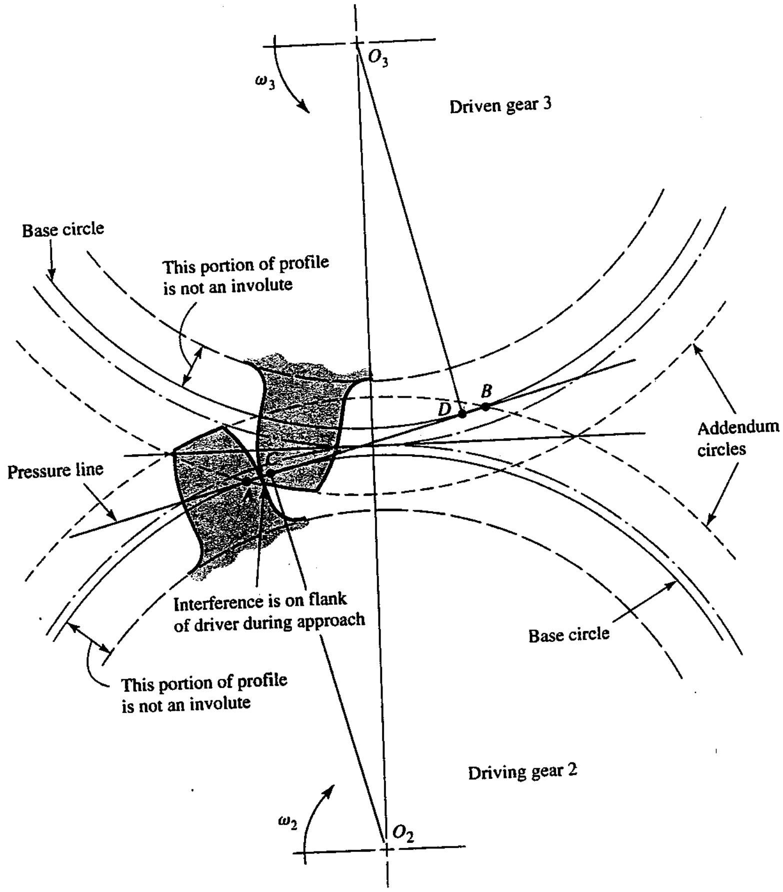
[1]Robert Lipp, "Avoiding Tooth Interference in Gears," *Machine Design*, Vol. 54, No. 1, 1982, pp. 122, 124.

Figure 13–16

Interference in the action of gear teeth. (This is actually a rather poor figure; J. E. Shigley drew the tooth shape using circular arcs, which is incorrect, to answer a student's question many years ago.)



given by

$$N_P = \frac{4k}{6\sin^2\phi}\left(1+\sqrt{1+3\sin^2\phi}\right) \tag{13-10}$$

where $k = 1$ for full-depth teeth, 0.8 for stub teeth and ϕ = pressure angle.

For a 20° pressure angle, with $k = 1$,

$$N_P = \frac{4(1)}{6\sin^2 20°}\left(1+\sqrt{1+3\sin^2 20°}\right) = 12.3 = 13 \text{ teeth}$$

Thus 13 teeth on pinion and gear are interference-free. Realize that 12.3 teeth is poss[ible] in meshing arcs, but for fully rotating gears, 13 teeth represents the least numb[er]. For a $14\frac{1}{2}°$ pressure angle, $N_P = 23$ teeth, so one can appreciate why few $14\frac{1}{2}°$-too[th] systems are used, as the higher pressure angles can produce a smaller pinion wi[th] accompanying smaller center-to-center distances.

If the mating gear has more teeth than the pinion, that is, $m_G = N_G/N_P = m$ [is] more than one, then the smallest number of teeth on the pinion without interference [is] given by

$$N_P = \frac{2k}{(1+2m)\sin^2\phi}\left(m+\sqrt{m^2+(1+2m)\sin^2\phi}\right) \tag{13-11}$$

If $m = 4, \phi = 20°$,

$$N_P = \frac{2(1)}{(1 + 2[4])\sin^2 20°}\left[4 + \sqrt{4^2 + (1 + 2[4])\sin^2 20°}\right] = 15.4 = 16 \text{ teeth}$$

Thus a 16-tooth pinion will mesh with a 64-tooth gear without interference.

The smallest spur pinion that will operate with a rack without interference is

$$N_P = \frac{4(k)}{2\sin^2\phi} \tag{13–12}$$

For a 20° pressure angle full-depth tooth the smallest number of pinion teeth is

$$N_P = \frac{4(1)}{2\sin^2 20°} = 17.1 = 18 \text{ teeth}$$

The largest gear with a specified pinion that is interference-free is

$$N_G = \frac{N_P^2 \sin^2\phi - 4k^2}{4k - 2N_P \sin^2\phi} \tag{13–13}$$

For a 13-tooth pinion with a pressure angle ϕ of 20°,

$$N_G = \frac{13^2 \sin^2 20° - 4(1)^2}{4(1) - 2(13)\sin^2 20°} = 16.45 = 16 \text{ teeth}$$

For a 13-tooth spur pinion, the maximum number of gear teeth possible without interference is 16.

Since gear-shaping tools amount to contact with a rack, and the gear-hobbing process is similar, the minimum number of teeth to prevent interference to prevent undercutting by the hobbing process is equal to the value of N_P when N_G is infinite.

The importance of the problem of teeth that have been weakened by undercutting cannot be overemphasized. Of course, interference can be eliminated by using more teeth on the pinion. However, if the pinion is to transmit a given amount of power, more teeth can be used only by increasing the pitch diameter.

Interference can also be reduced by using a larger pressure angle. This results in a smaller base circle, so that more of the tooth profile becomes involute. The demand for smaller pinions with fewer teeth thus favors the use of a 25° pressure angle even though the frictional forces and bearing loads are increased and the contact ratio decreased.

13–8 The Forming of Gear Teeth

There are a large number of ways of forming the teeth of gears, such as *sand casting, shell molding, investment casting, permanent-mold casting, die casting,* and *centrifugal casting*. Teeth can also be formed by using the *powder-metallurgy process;* or, by using *extrusion,* a single bar of aluminum may be formed and then sliced into gears. Gears that carry large loads in comparison with their size are usually made of steel and are cut with either *form cutters* or *generating cutters*. In form cutting, the tooth space takes the exact form of the cutter. In generating, a tool having a shape different from the tooth profile is moved relative to the gear blank so as to obtain the proper tooth shape. One of the newest and most promising of the methods of forming teeth is called *cold forming,* or *cold rolling,* in which dies are rolled against steel blanks to form the teeth. The mechanical properties of the metal are greatly improved by the rolling process, and a high-quality generated profile is obtained at the same time.