

Current Regulation

The current through the motor windings is regulated by a fixed-frequency PWM current regulation, or current chopping. When an H-bridge is enabled, current rises through the winding at a rate dependent on the DC voltage and inductance of the winding. Once the current hits the current chopping threshold, the bridge disables the current until the beginning of the next PWM cycle.

In stepping motors, current regulation is used to vary the current in the two windings in a semi-sinusoidal fashion to provide smooth motion.

The PWM chopping current is set by a comparator which compares the voltage across a current sense resistor connected to the xISEN pins, multiplied by a factor of 5, with a reference voltage. The reference voltage is input from the xVREF pins.

The full-scale (100%) chopping current is calculated in [Equation 1](#).

$$I_{CHOP} = \frac{V_{REFX}}{5 \cdot R_{ISENSE}} \Leftrightarrow V = 5 \cdot R \cdot I \quad (1)$$

Example:

If a 0.25-Ω sense resistor is used and the VREFx pin is 2.5 V, the full-scale (100%) chopping current will be 2.5 V / (5 x 0.25 Ω) = 2 A.

The reference voltage is scaled by an internal DAC that allows fractional stepping of a bipolar stepper motor, as described in the microstepping indexer section below.

Decay Mode

During PWM current chopping, the H-bridge is enabled to drive current through the motor winding until the PWM current chopping threshold is reached. This is shown in [Figure 3](#) as case 1. The current flow direction shown indicates positive current flow.

Once the chopping current threshold is reached, the H-bridge can operate in two different states, fast decay or slow decay.

In fast decay mode, once the PWM chopping current level has been reached, the H-bridge reverses state to allow winding current to flow in a reverse direction. As the winding current approaches zero, the bridge is disabled to prevent any reverse current flow. Fast decay mode is shown in [Figure 3](#) as case 2.

In slow decay mode, winding current is re-circulated by enabling both of the low-side FETs in the bridge. This is shown in [Figure 3](#) as case 3.

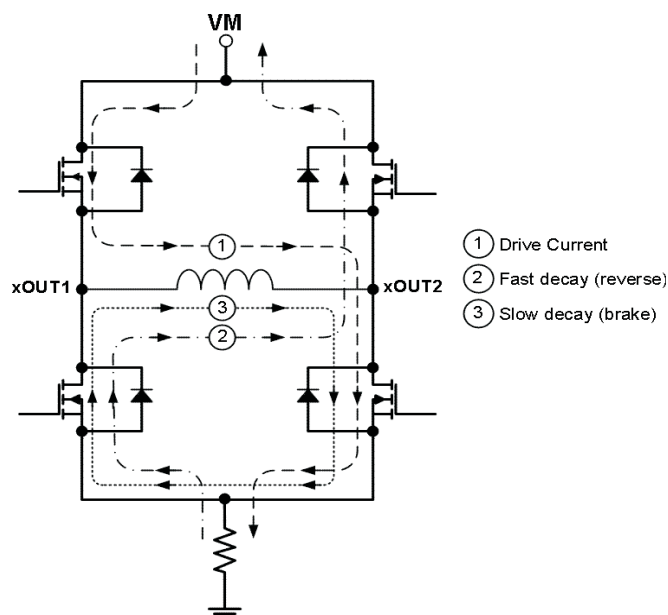


Figure 3. Decay Mode