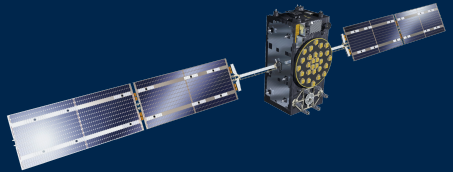


GNSS positioning

DIY Oceanography BZH

Pierre Bosser, Clémence Chupin

Mai 2025





1. GNSS principles
2. Positioning methods
3. Devices

This presentation is based on Bosser, 2015

GNSS principles

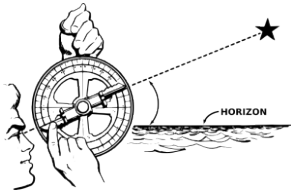


How to calculate a position on Earth?

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Ancestral techniques

Using stars



Conventional techniques

Using georeferenced points and topography



Space techniques

Using satellites and stars



In the 1970s, searching for positioning techniques $\pm$ accurate (10-meters to cm), all over the globe, weather independent, not too expensive...



The GPS (Global Positioning System), launched in the early 1980s, was succeeded by the GNSS.

⇒ **GNSS** (Global Navigation Satellite System): Positioning system based on signals emitted from satellites orbiting the Earth and providing global coverage.



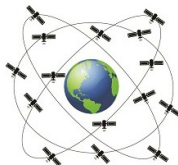
GPS

6 Orbital planes
24 Satellite + Spare
55° Inclination Angle
Altitude 20,200 km



Galileo

3 Orbital planes
27 Satellite + 3 Spares
56° Inclination Angle
Altitude 23,616 km



GLONASS

3 Orbital planes
21 Satellite + 3 Spares
64.8° Inclination Angle
Altitude 19,100 km



BeiDou

6 Orbital planes
35 Satellite + 3 GEO + 27 MEO + 3 IGSO
55° Inclination Angle
Altitude 38,300 km, 21,500 km



How does it work ?

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- GNSS satellites know and emit their positions.
- Receivers receive the satellite's position and **deduce their distance** from it by measuring the propagation delay.
- Accurate propagation delay measurements require perfect time synchronization between all the satellites and with the receivers.
⇒ Estimation of a **clock error parameter** to account for receiver and satellite clocks **desynchronization**.

Trilateration



3 unknowns (X,Y,Z) → Need of 3 satellites

Multilateration



4 unknowns (X,Y,Z, δt_r) → Need of 4 satellites

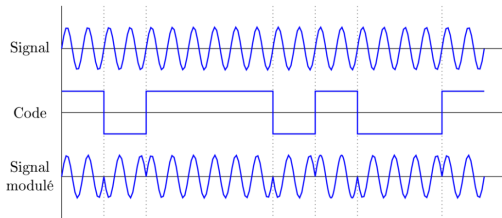


- Signal emitted in band L: $\sim 1200 - 1600$ MHz, i.e., a wavelength of about 20 cm.

Some examples :

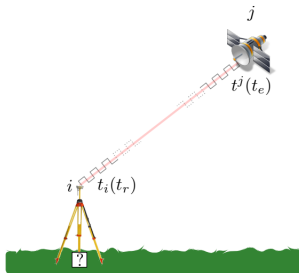
- ▶ *GPS: 2 frequencies, a third is setting up (1207 - 1602 MHz)*
- ▶ *GLONASS: 2 frequencies, a third is setting up (1207 - 1602 MHz)*
- ▶ *Galileo: 4 frequencies (1176 - 1575 MHz)*
- ▶ *BeiDou: 4 frequencies (1191 - 1575 MHz)*

- Information transferred using **phase modulation of carrier wave**, realized using **positioning code** and **navigation message**.





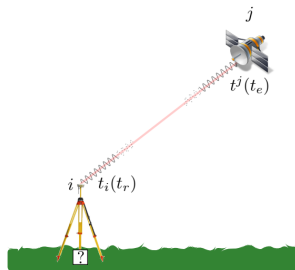
Code



Synchronization code generated by satellites

- Native GNSS measurement for positioning
- Accuracy: from 50 cm to 5 m

Carrier-based



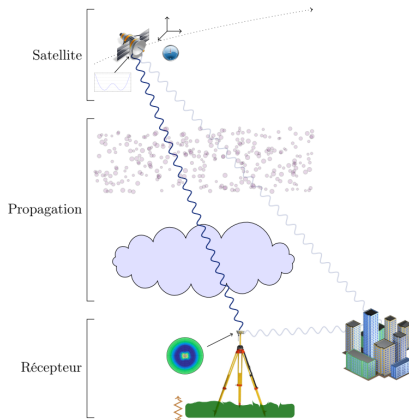
Phase difference measurement

- Performed on the different carriers
- Accuracy: a few mm ... **modulo one ambiguity**



- **At the satellite level**
 - Satellite orbit and clock → From m to 5mm
 - Satellite phase center
- **During the signal propagation**
 - Ionosphere → From meters to mm
 - Troposphere → From 1m to 2-10mm
- **At the receiver and ground antenna level**
 - Multipath → From 1m to 2-15mm
 - Antenna phase center
 - Ground motion → From 50cm to 1mm
 - Jamming and spoofing

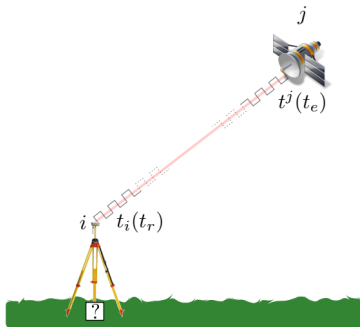
⇒ Correction using models, external data, observation process (spatial errors)



Positioning methods

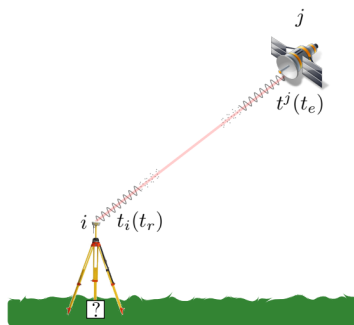


Code



- ⊕ Low-cost receiver, computation simplicity
- ⊖ Metric observation quality

Phase



- ⊕ Observable quality
- ⊖ Advanced and expansive receivers

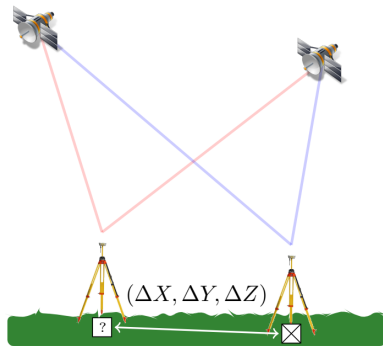


Absolute



- ⊕ Autonomous and direct positioning
- ⊖ Require accurate errors modelling

Relative



- ⊕ Reduction of spatial correlated errors (atmosphere) satellite systematics (orbit, clocks)
- ⊖ Requires a nearby station, communication link



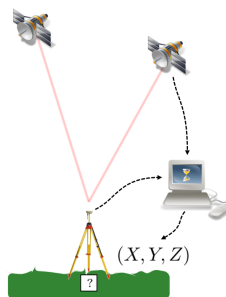
Real-time



⊕ Instantaneous

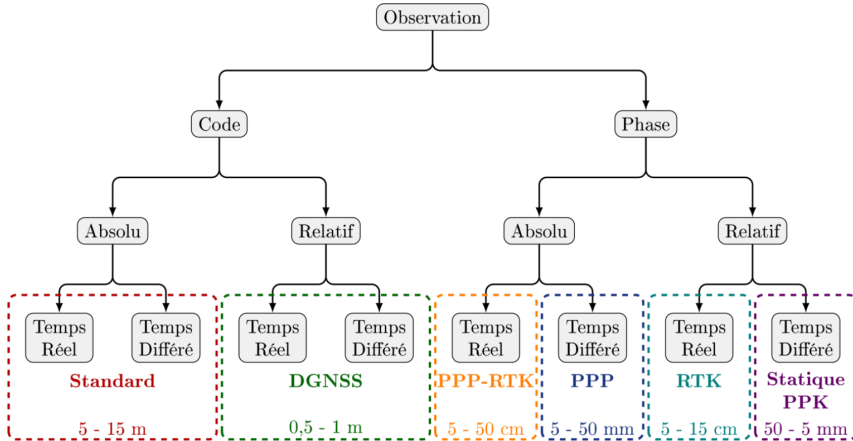
⊖ Medium/poor quality instant products

Post-processed

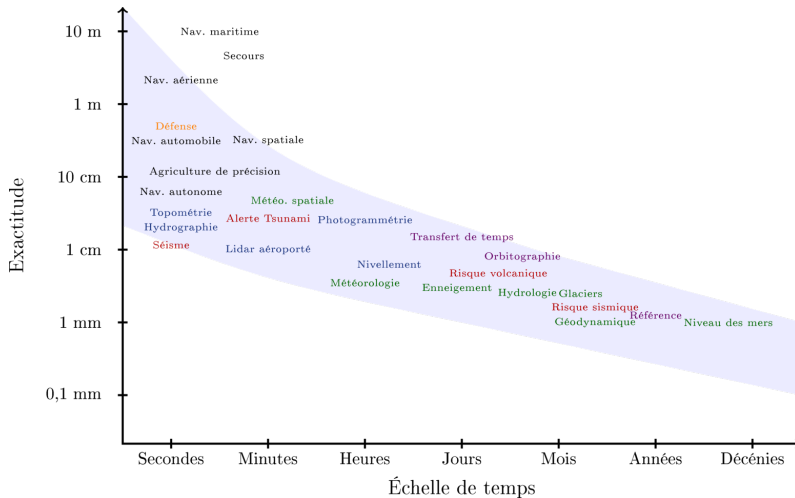


⊕ Refined product

⊖ Long delay for positioning with ultimate accuracy (14 days)



Some applications : Marine navigation assistance / USV guiding / GNSS buoy / Permanent station

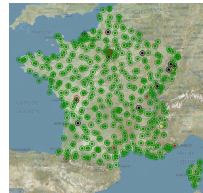




Networks of permanent stations have been developed to support these applications:

- Management of GNSS infrastructures (satellites, signals, etc.).
- Estimation of products required for precise positioning (orbits, reference frame, etc.).
- Surface monitoring (earthquake, volcano, landslide)
- Real time applications (RTK)
- Archiving and providing access to the data.

→ Public ([IGS](#), [RGP](#)), private ([Teria](#), [Satinfo](#), [Orpheon](#)), open & collaborative ([Centipede-RTK](#)).



Devices



Acquisition systems

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General public	Professional		
	Topographic systems	Geodesic systems	
		Antenna	Receiver
Géonavigateur (« GPS »)  Garmin®  TomTom® 	 Leica GPS1200®  Spectra SP80®	 Trimble Zephyr 2®  Leica AR20® Choke-Ring	 Trimble Net R9®  Leica GR25®
Hiking, route navigation	Survey, mobile mapping, reference point positioning, implantation	Survey, permanent GNSS stations, geodesic studies	
< 200€	8 000/10 000 € (complete system)	800 – 3 000 €	10 000 €



			Main characteristics	Performance	Cost
Receivers	<i>simpleRTK2B Budget</i> platform based on U-blox ZED-F9P receiver		→ Multifrequency, multiconstellation → Multiband (L1, L2, E5b) → Update rate: 1Hz > 10Hz → Output in UBX format	From meter to cm level precision (standard or RTK)	~170 €
	<i>simpleRTK3B Budget</i> platform based on Unicore UM980		→ Multifrequency, multiconstellation → Multiband (L1, L2, L5) → Update rate: 1Hz > 50Hz → Output in Unicore format, NMEA, RTCM v3 → Galileo HAS	From meter to mm level precision (standard or RTK)	~230€
	<i>simpleRTK3B Pro</i> platform based on Septentrio Mosaic-X5		→ Multifrequency, multiconstellation → Multiband (L1, L2, E5b) → Update rate: 1Hz > 100Hz → Output: SBF, NMEA, RINEX, ...	From meter to mm level precision (standard or RTK)	~580€
Antennas	U-blox, ANN-MB		→ Multi-band (L1, L2/E5b/B2I) → Multiconstellation → 82.0 x 60.0 x 22.5mm → Weight: 173g	-	~55€
	AS-ANT2B-OEM-L1L2-02SMA-00		→ Multi-band (L1, L2/E5b/B2I) → Multiconstellation → Maximum length: 76mm → Weight: 80g	-	55-60€
	AS-ANT2B-CAL-L1L2-15SMA-00		→ Multi-band (L1, L2/E5b/B2I) → Multiconstellation → Maximum length: 152mm → Weight: 400g → Calibration file available	-	~150€

⇒ Low-cost retailers : [ardusimple](#), [drotek](#)



- **Metric precision**
 - **Standard** (SPP) positioning (real-time)
 - Very low-cost receivers/antennas (~ 10 euros) or Smartphone + logger
- **Centimetric precision**
 - **RTK** (real-time), **PPK** / **PPP-PPK** (post-processing) for a static or moving antenna
 - Low-cost or survey/geodetic devices, with logger (embedded)
- **Sub-centimetric precision:**
 - Static antenna only
 - Post-processing methods : **static relative** or **precise point positioning**
 - Low-cost or geodetic devices
- Additional requirements for post-processing:
 - Logging of GNSS raw data
 - Post-processing software (e.g. **RTKlib**, **PRIDE PPP-AR**)



- ▶ The wiki platform for Global Navigation Satellite Systems : [Navipedia](#)
- ▶ An accessible book on GNSS : *GNSS - Global Navigation Satellite Systems* by Hofmann-Wellenhof, B. ; Lichtenegger, H. & Wasle, E., 2008
- ▶ **THE reference book** for GNSS : *Springer Handbook of Global Navigation Satellite Systems* by Teunissen, P. J. G. & Montenbruck, O., 2017.
- ▶ Bosser, P. (2015). GNSS : *Systèmes globaux de positionnement par satellite* (Cours de l'École Nationale Supérieure de Techniques Avancées Bretagne).