

Cosmic Ray Data Acquisition with Arduino-Based Systems v.3 March 2026

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Module I

What Are Cosmic Rays?

Cosmic rays are high-energy particles from outer space that travel through the universe and strike the Earth's atmosphere. Despite the name, they are not rays (like light rays), but rather subatomic particles — mostly protons.

Sources of Cosmic Rays

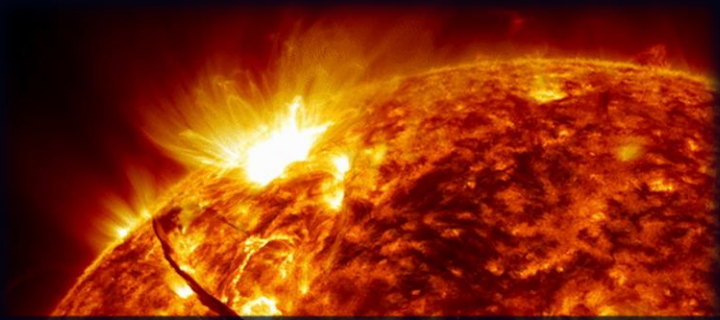


Figure 1.01 – Solar Flares



Figure 1.02 – Supernovae

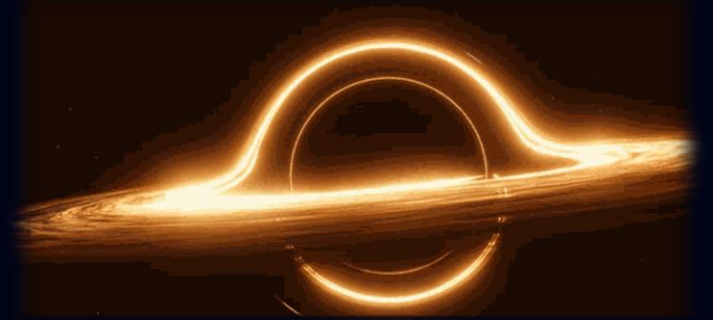


Figure 1.03 – Black Holes

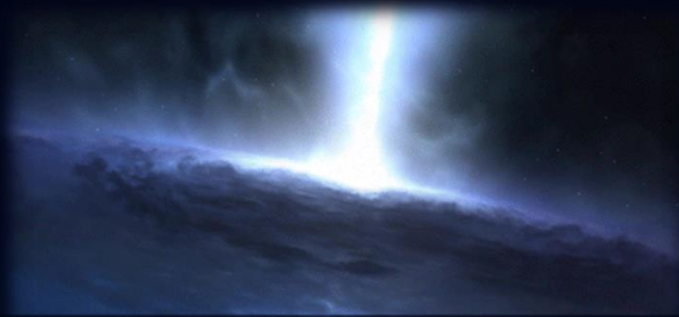


Figure 1.04 – Quasars



Figure 1.05 – Pulsars

Cosmic Ray Showers

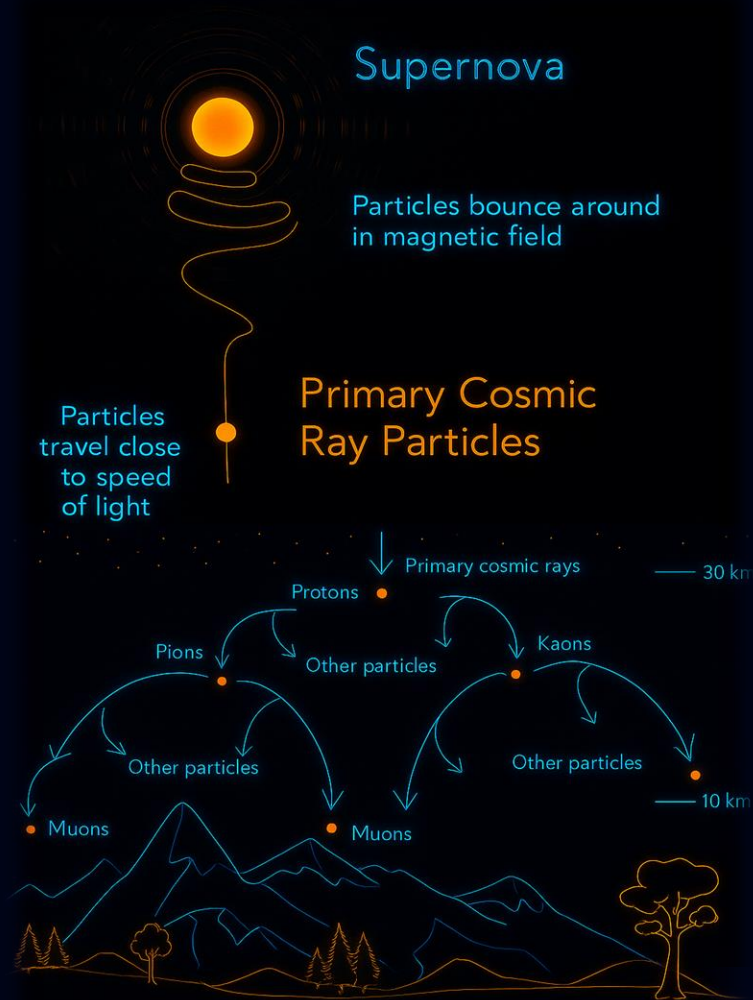


Figure 1.06 – Cosmic Ray Shower

Atmospheric Interactions

When cosmic ray protons collide with molecules in Earth's atmosphere, they initiate extensive air showers that generate a cascade of secondary particles. Many of these secondary particles rapidly decay into muons and neutrinos.

Because muons travel quickly and interact only weakly with matter, they can penetrate all the way to the ground, where they are the primary particles detected by our cosmic ray detectors.

In general, the higher the energy of the incoming cosmic ray, the larger the air shower and the greater the number of secondary particles it produces.

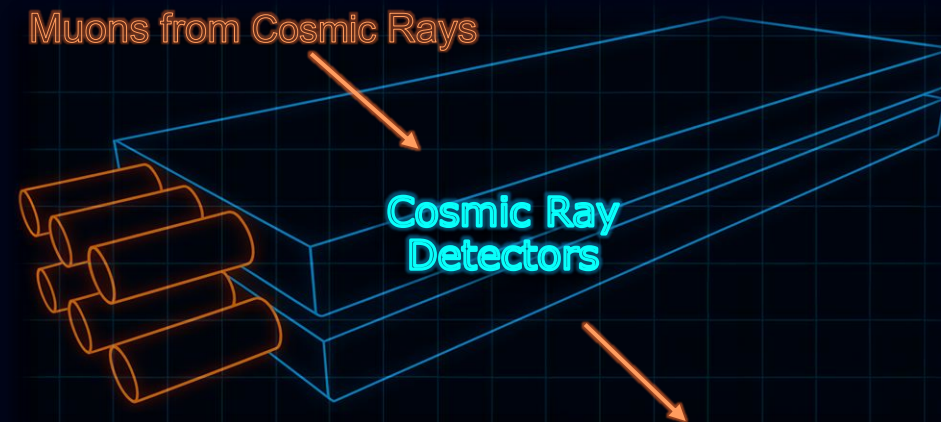


Figure 1.07 – Cosmic Ray Detector

Muon-Induced Photons

Photon emission process

When a muon passes through the scintillation material in the detector, it interacts with the atoms in the material, transferring energy to them.

The scintillator material then releases this excess energy in the form of photons (light).

The amount of light emitted is proportional to the energy deposited by the muon as it passes through the material.

The light guides capture this light and internally reflect it with minimal loss, funneling it efficiently towards the photomultiplier tubes.

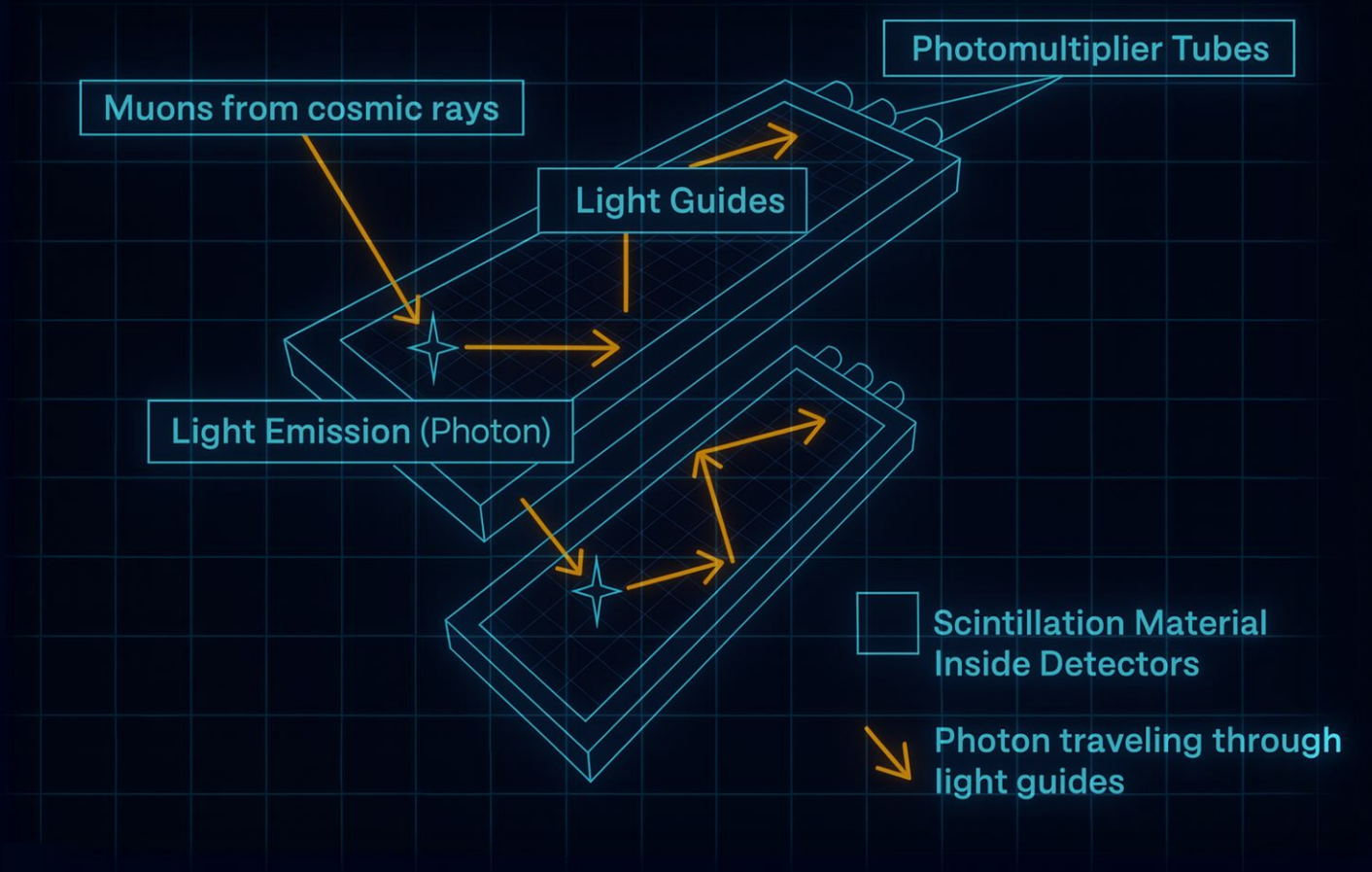


Figure 1.08 – Photon Emission Process

Photomultiplier Tubes (PMTs)

Photon to Electron Conversion & Amplification

The photomultiplier tubes (PMTs), which receive the photons generated by the scintillator material, are responsible for converting it into a measurable electric current. Here's how:

1. A muon passes through the scintillator in the detector.
2. The muon deposits energy, causing the scintillator to produce a brief flash of light (photons).
3. Photons travel into the photomultiplier tube (PMT).
4. A photon strikes the photocathode, ejecting an electron (photoelectric effect).
5. The electron is accelerated toward a chain of dynodes.
6. Each dynode impact releases additional electrons, creating an amplifying cascade.
7. The amplified electron pulse is collected at the anode.
8. The anode outputs a measurable electrical current/pulse.
9. This signal is then sent to the signal processing module.

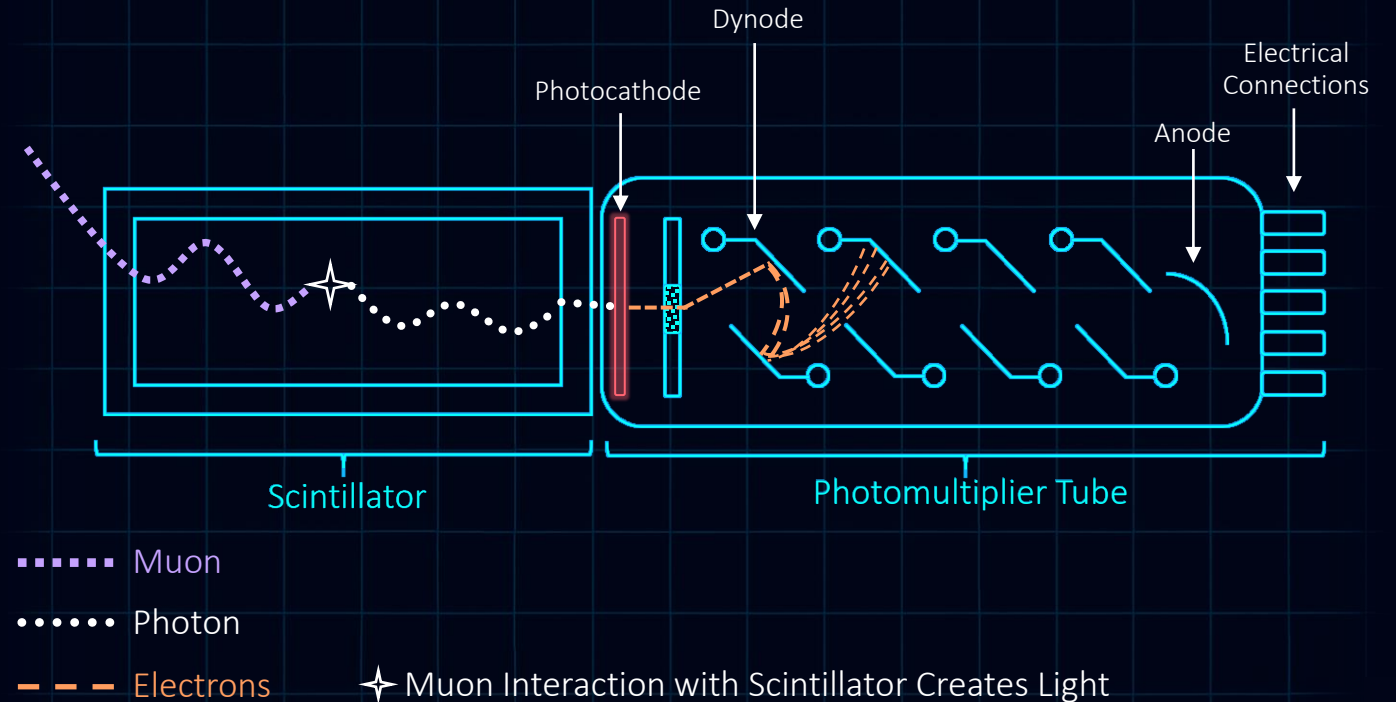


Figure 1.10 – Photomultiplier Tube (not drawn to scale)

Cosmic Ray Detector Setup

Coincidence Detection

However, a single detector cannot reliably confirm a true particle interaction, as random noise or background radiation may produce false triggers.

To address this, we use two detectors stacked atop one another. Each detector then sends their signal, through the PMT to our signal processing module.

This setup enables our signal processing module to check for signals that arrive from both detectors within a narrow time frame and reject false signals, the ones only appearing on one detector, since random noise usually affects only one detector at a time.

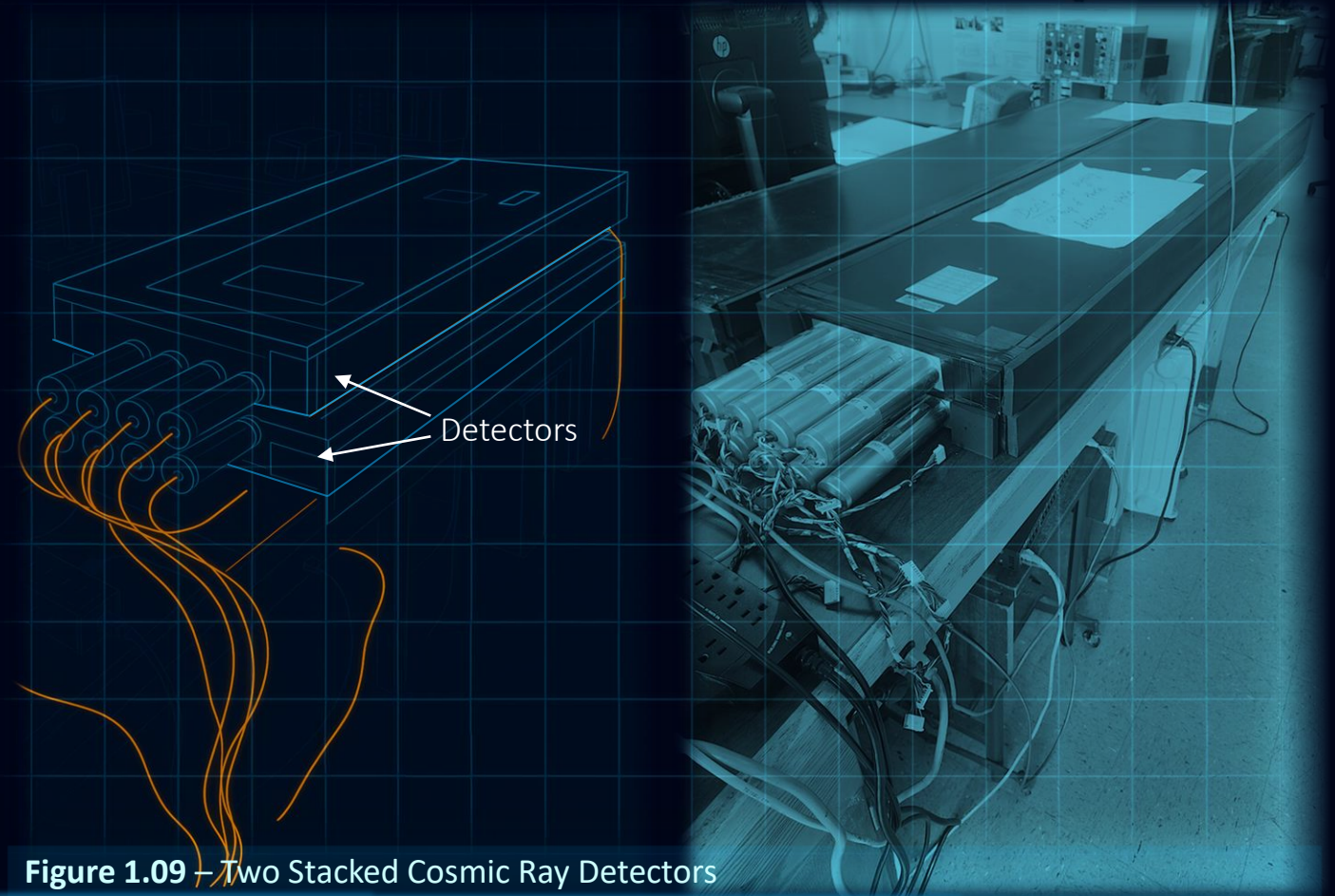


Figure 1.09 – Two Stacked Cosmic Ray Detectors

Signal Processing Module

Noise Filtering

The signal processing module compares the signals from the two stacked detectors. Because valid cosmic ray events (like passing muons) trigger both detectors at nearly the same time, the system uses this coincidence to filter out random noise or background radiation.

Amplification

Amplifies the weak output signal generated by the photomultiplier tube (PMT).

Pulse Shaping

The voltage pulses from the PMT are extremely brief—only about 20 to 40 nanoseconds wide. To accurately measure their peak voltage, each pulse is stretched using an RC integrator circuit with an operational amplifier (op-amp). This makes the pulse easier to analyze and measure.

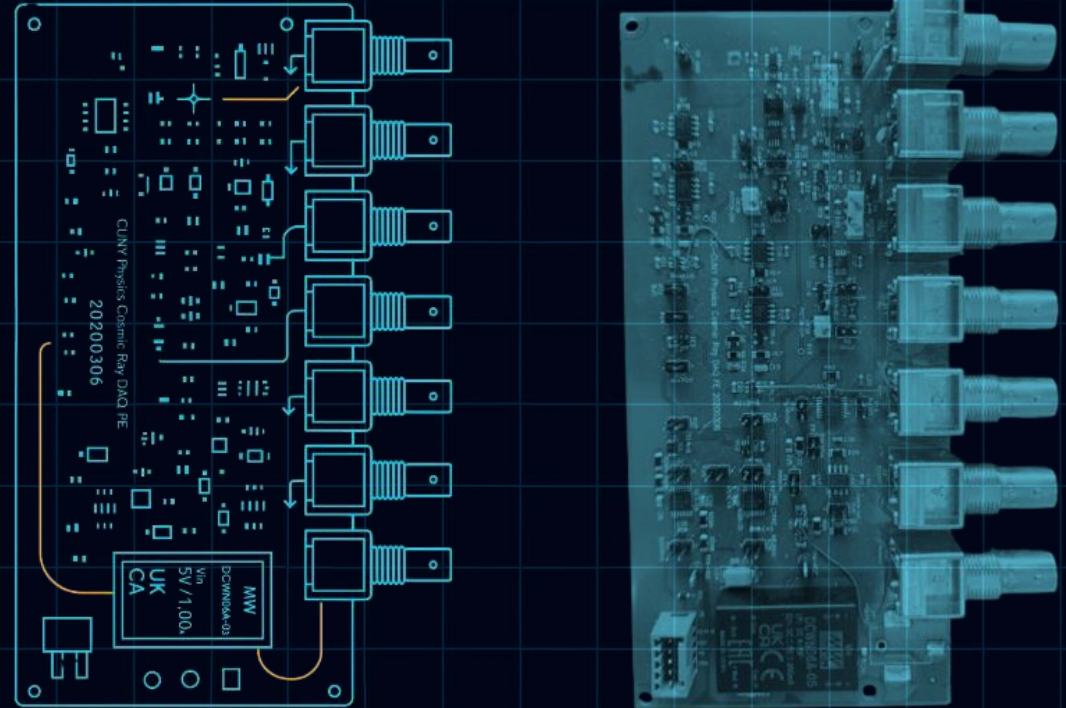


Figure 1.11 – Signal Processing Module

Arduino ATmega 2560

Timestamping

After passing through the Signal Processing Module, the signal is sent to the Arduino ATmega2560. When a muon passes through the detector the microcontroller records the exact moment the signal arrives as a timestamp.

This allows us to track when each event occurred, measure time intervals between them, and analyze event patterns over time.

Voltage Measurements

We also use the ATmega2560 to measure the voltage signal generated when a muon passes through our detector. Each time a muon interacts with the scintillator, it produces a flash of light that's converted into a small voltage pulse by the photomultiplier tube.

The microcontroller reads this voltage, allowing us to capture and analyze the amount of energy deposited by the muon.

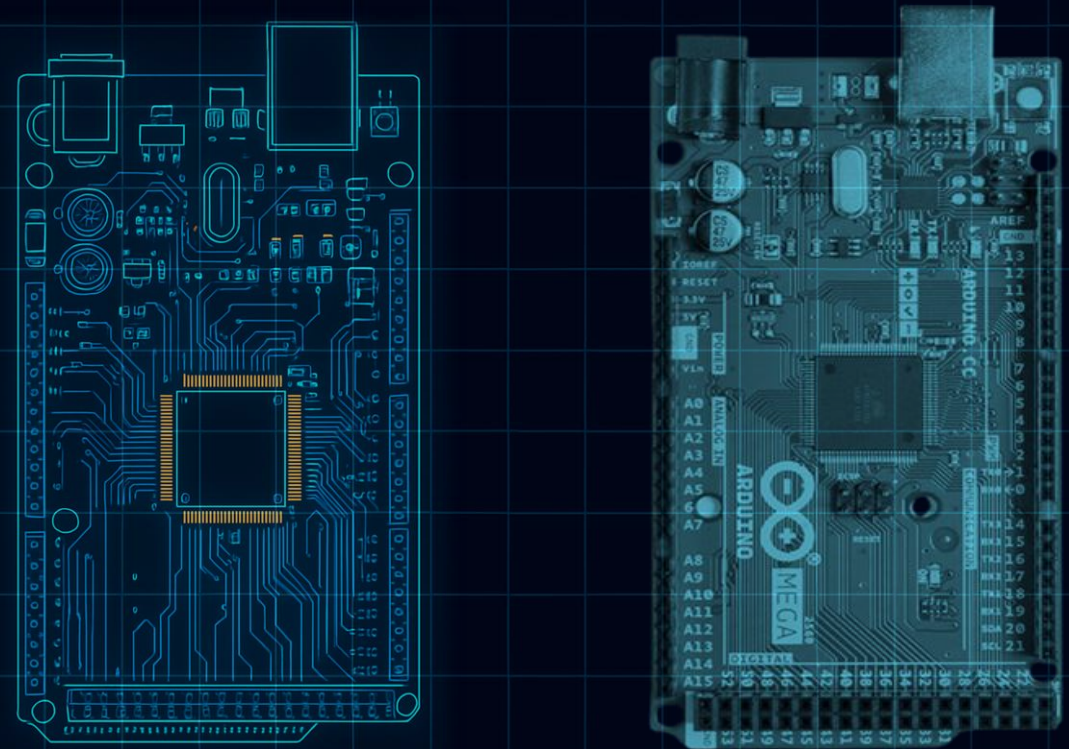


Figure 1.12 – Arduino ATmega 2560 Microcontroller

Analog to Digital Converter (ADC)

Signal Types

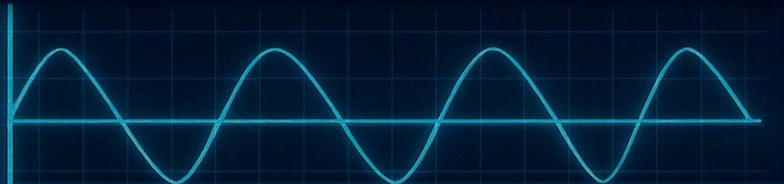


Figure 1.13 – Analog Signal

Analog signals vary smoothly and continuously over time, taking on any voltage within a given range.

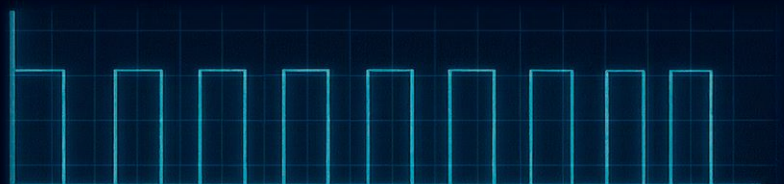


Figure 1.14 – Digital Signal

Digital signals use only two states, representing 0 or 1, which makes them easier for digital systems to process.

Conversion

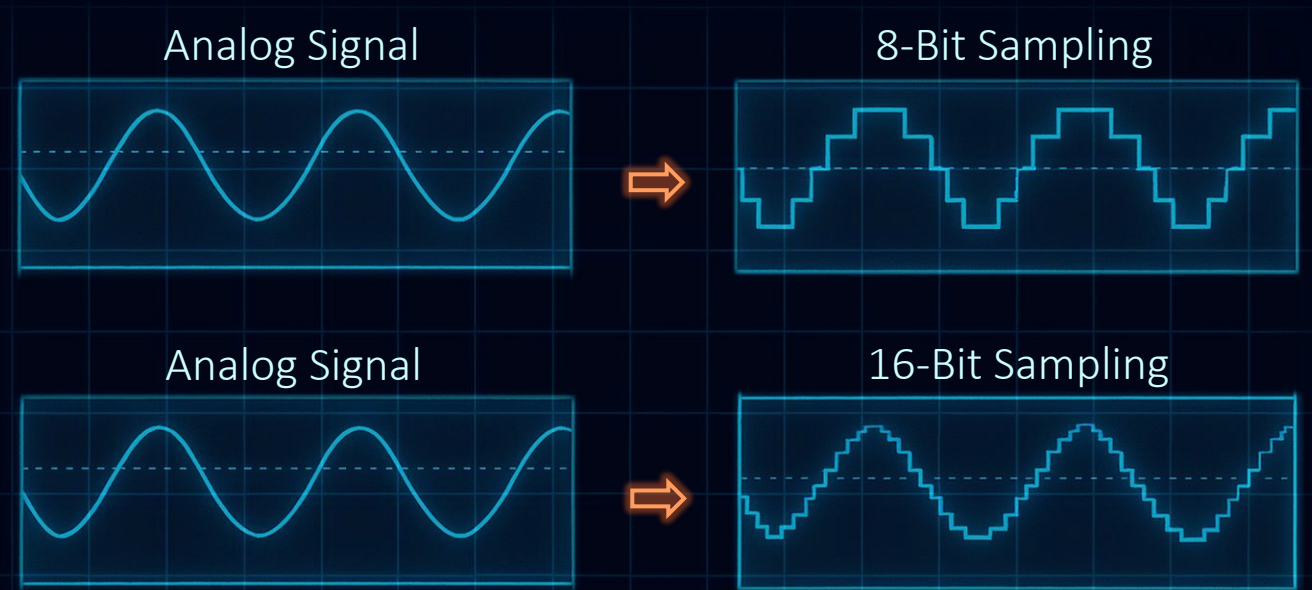


Figure 1.15 – Analog to Digital Conversion Process

To convert an analog signal, the ADC performs a series of checks to determine whether the signal is higher or lower than reference voltages, building a digital (binary) value that approximates the original signal. The precision of this approximation depends on the ADC's bit resolution; on the ATmega2560, the ADC provides 10 bits of resolution.

Raspberry Pi

Timestamping

After passing through the Signal Processing Module, the signal is sent to the Arduino ATmega2560. When a muon passes through the detector the microcontroller records the exact moment the signal arrives as a timestamp.

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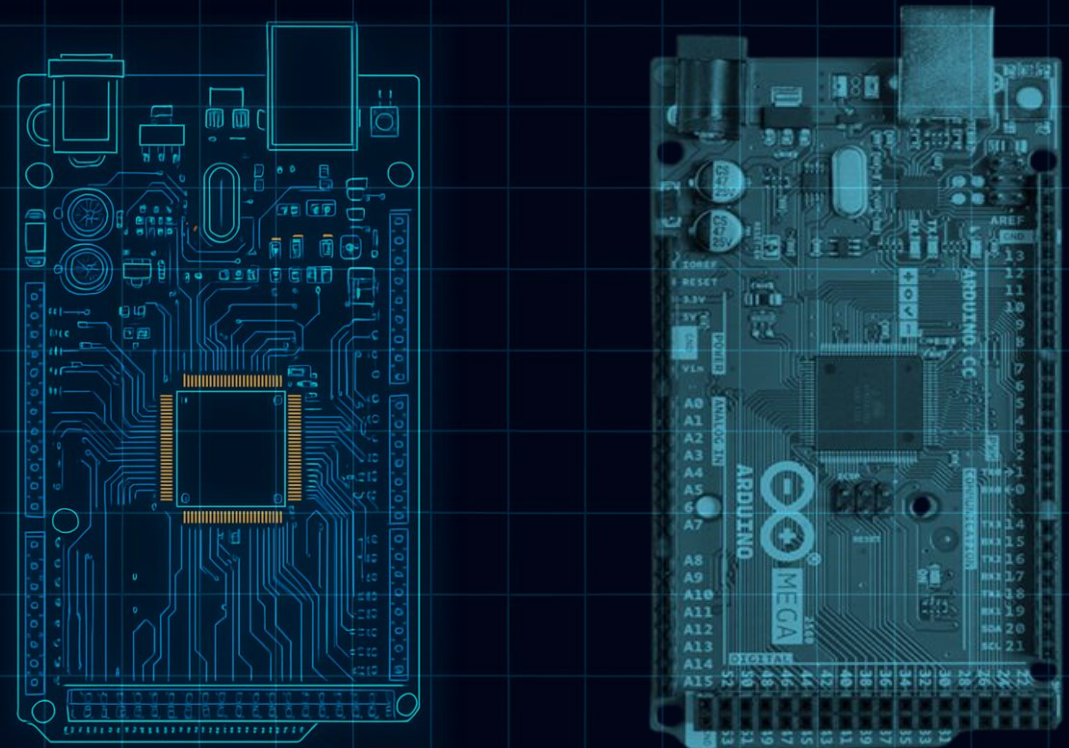


Figure 1.13 – Arduino ATmega 2560 Microcontroller

Applications

Intercollegiate Detection Array

In collaboration with colleges, we plan to create a multi-point detection array capable of capturing wide-area cosmic ray events.

Shower Size & Density

By comparing muon detections across multiple detectors in different boroughs, we can estimate the lateral spread and intensity of an air shower.

Estimating Primary Cosmic Ray Energy

The size and density of detected muon showers serve as indirect indicators of the primary cosmic ray's energy. A wider, denser shower suggests a higher-energy origin, possibly indicating ultra-high-energy cosmic rays (UHECRs).

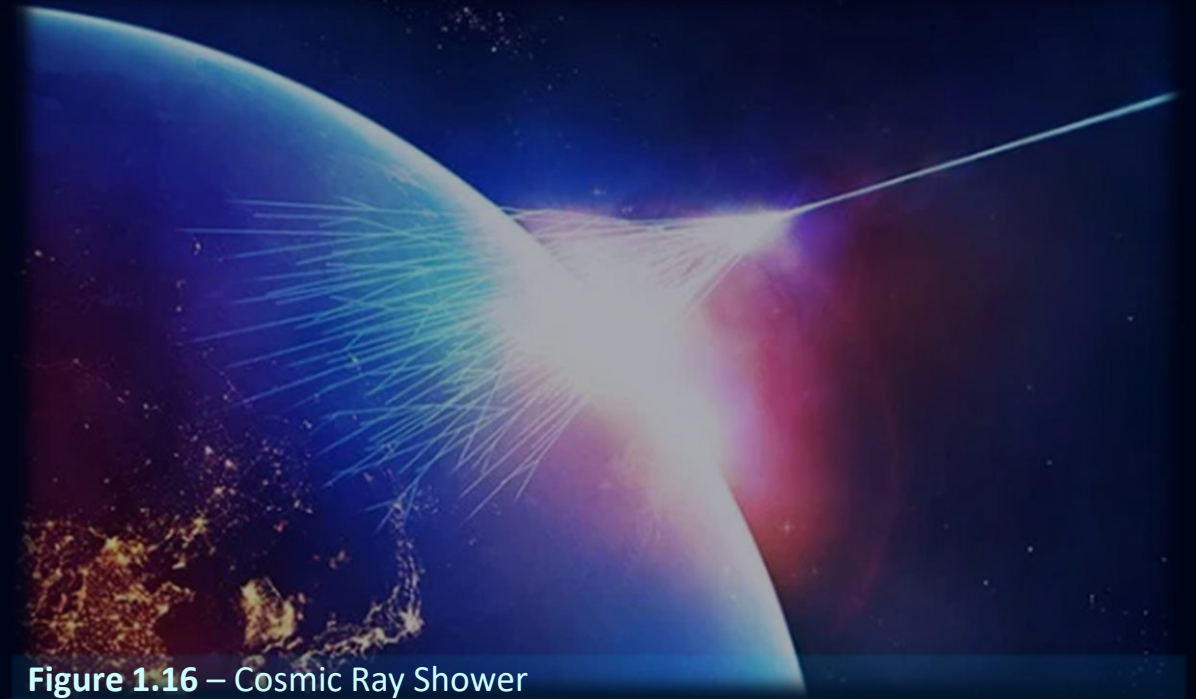


Figure 1.16 – Cosmic Ray Shower

UHECRs have energies exceeding anything we can generate in particle accelerators like the large hadron collider. Studying them allows us to probe fundamental physics at extreme energies, possibly revealing new particles or interactions.

Module II

Hardware Overview

What is Arduino?

Arduino is an open-source electronics platform that combines hardware and software to create interactive projects. It utilizes a variety of microcontroller-based boards, which can be programmed using the Arduino IDE (Integrated Development Environment), a software application where you write the code that sends the Arduino microcontroller instructions.

Data Exchange

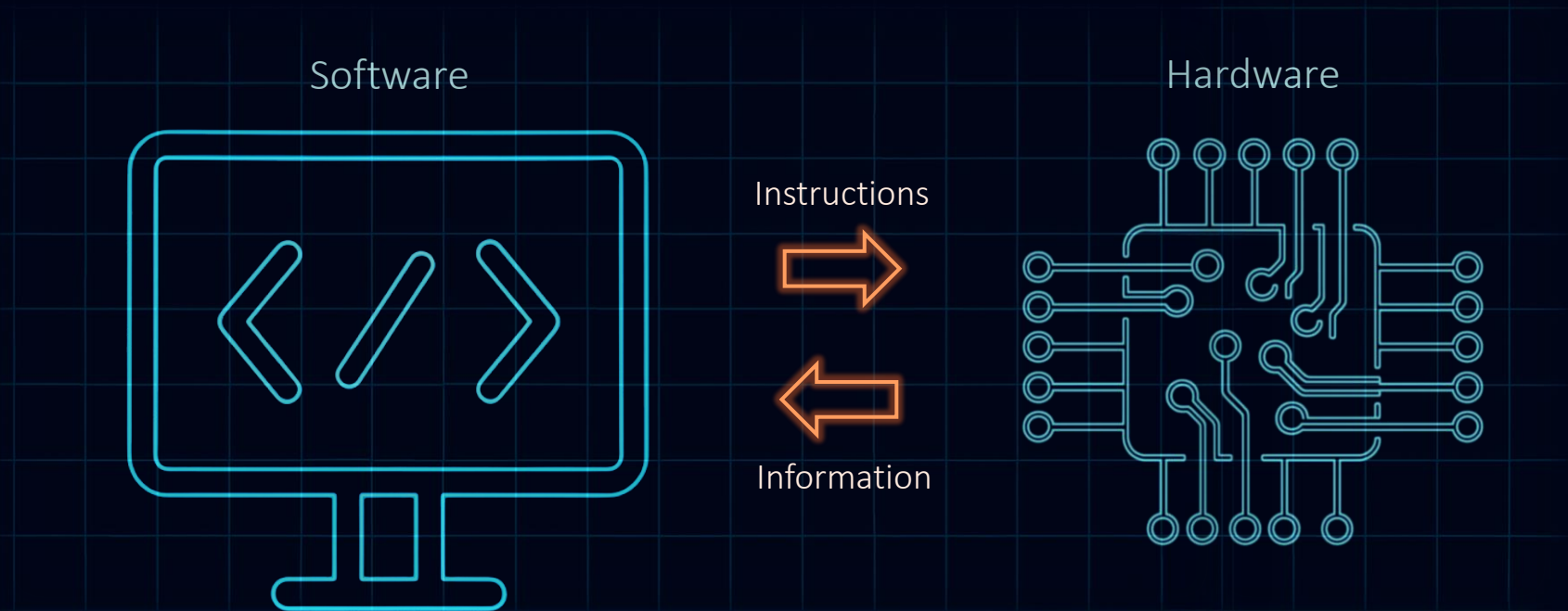


Figure 2.01 – Communication Diagram

Components & Accessories

Your first step should be to familiarize yourself with the hardware you'll be using. Understanding the purpose and function of each component is important for resolving troubleshooting issues and designing effective circuits. It also helps prevent damage by ensuring safe connections and simplifies the integration of components into your projects.

Hardware List:

- Raspberry Pi
- Arduino ATmega 2560
- Adafruit LED Backpack Counter
- Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3
- Adafruit BMP280 Pressure & Temperature Sensor
- XBee3 Radio Module
- XBee Dongle
- Jumper Wires
- Breadboard

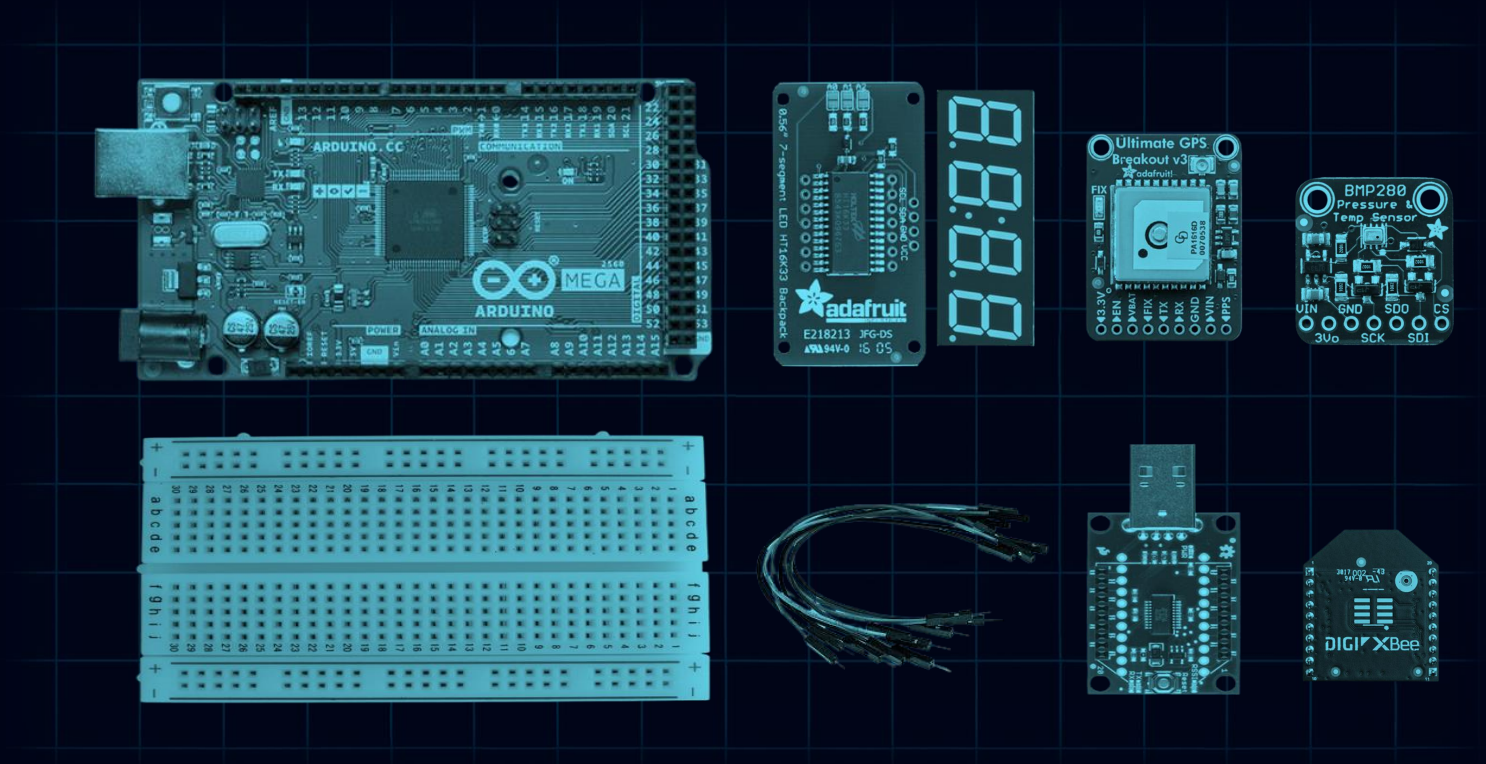


Figure 2.02 – Experiment Hardware

Arduino ATmega2560 Microcontroller

The Arduino ATmega 2560 is a type of microcontroller, which is a small computer on a single circuit board. It is used to control various electronic devices and projects. Imagine it as the "brain" that tells other parts what to do.

Purpose

Inputs:

It can read digital or analog signals (via an onboard ADC) from external equipment, GPS modules, sensors, etc.

Processing:

The microcontroller runs your C++ code. That code can do calculations, filter signals, apply logic decisions, and manage timing — for example, counting pulses or interpreting sensor measurements.

Outputs:

It can also control things like LEDs or motors by sending signals to them.

Refer to the appendix for a full pin breakdown.

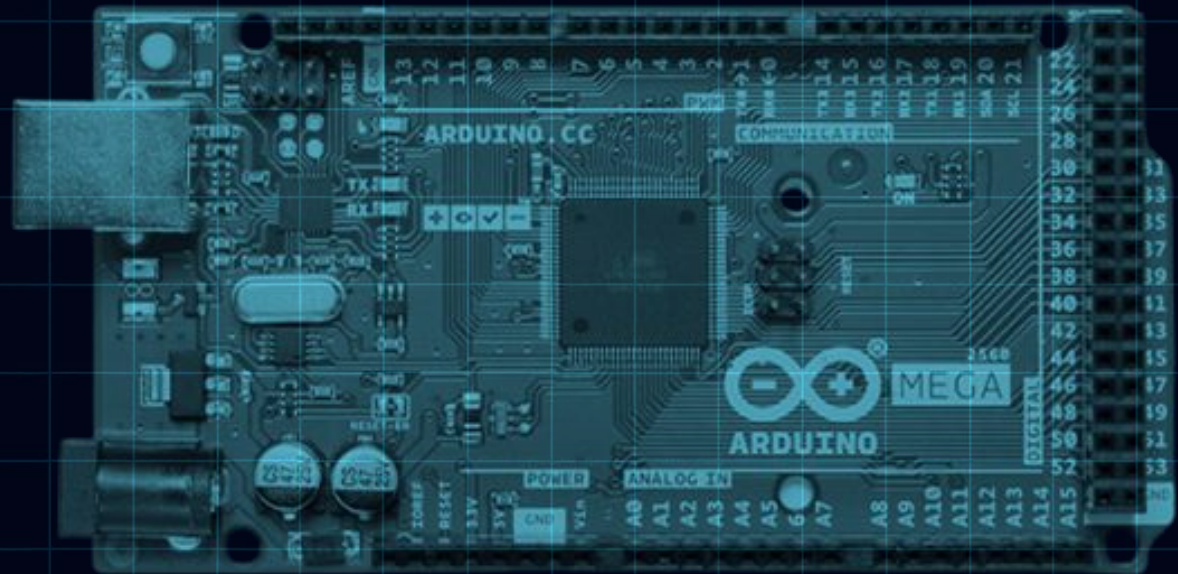


Figure 2.03 – Arduino ATmega 2560 Microcontroller

Adafruit BMP280 Pressure & Temperature Sensor

The BMP280 is a combined barometric pressure and temperature sensor designed for precise environmental measurements. It can measure atmospheric pressure and temperature while also estimating altitude by calculating changes in air pressure. Communicating over I²C or SPI, the BMP280 integrates easily with microcontrollers like Arduino.

Purpose

- Combines barometric pressure and temperature sensing in a compact package
- Measures atmospheric pressure with high precision (± 1 hPa)
- Measures temperature with accuracy of around ± 1 °C

Refer to the appendix for a full pin breakdown.

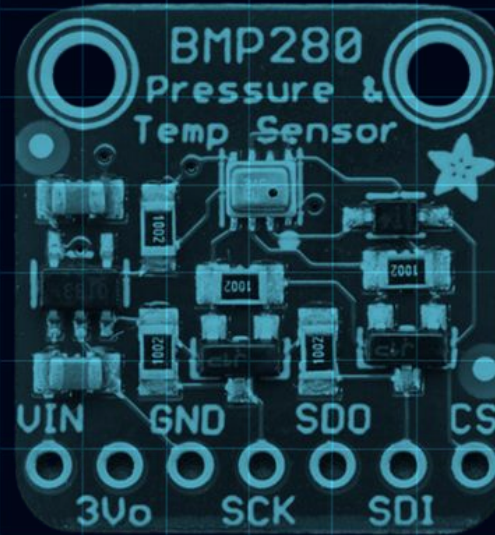


Figure 2.04 – Adafruit BMP280 Pressure & Temperature Sensor

Adafruit LED Backpack Counter

The Adafruit LED Backpack Counter is a display module. It can show numbers, symbols, or simple characters and is commonly used for counters, timers, or status indicators. The LED Backpack Counter offers a simple way to add visual feedback to your circuit designs.

Purpose

- I²C interface for easy wiring with Arduino or other microcontrollers
- Integrated LED driver chip simplifies control of 7-segment or matrix displays
- Supported by Adafruit's open-source libraries for fast setup and coding

Refer to the appendix for a full pin breakdown.

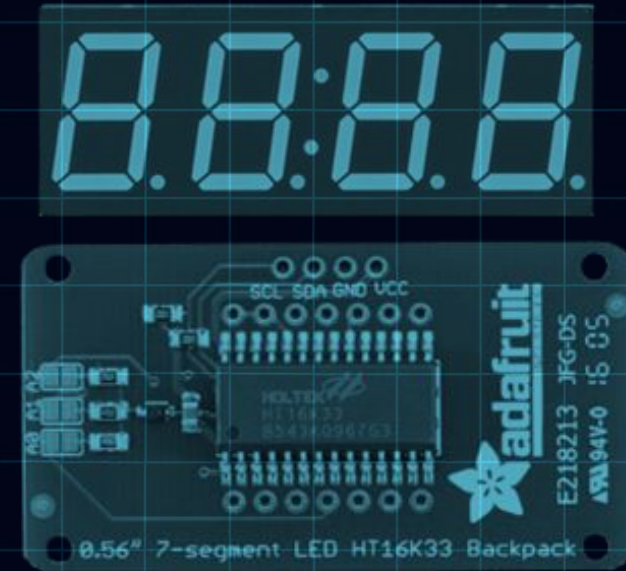


Figure 2.05 – Adafruit LED Backpack Counter

Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3

The Adafruit GPS module is a compact and highly accurate positioning device that uses signals from global satellite networks to determine location, speed, and time data. Provides precise time data and includes features like built-in antenna support for reliable operation even in challenging environments.

Purpose

- Provides precise location information, including latitude, longitude, and altitude.
- Outputs data in standard NMEA format for easy integration with microcontrollers like Arduino.
- Offers accurate time data based on GPS signals, including UTC (Coordinated Universal Time).

Refer to the appendix for a full pin breakdown.

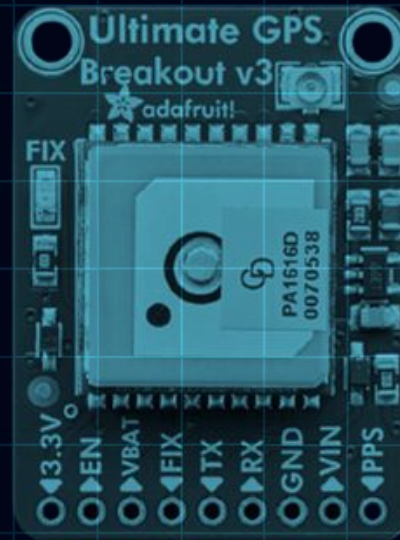


Figure 2.06 – Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3

XBee Dongle

The XBee dongle is a simple plug-and-play USB device that allows a computer to communicate with XBee radio modules. It acts as a bridge between your PC and an XBee network, enabling configuration, data monitoring, and testing. With built-in drivers and compatibility with tools like XCTU, it offers a way to integrate wireless communication without complicated wiring.

Purpose

- USB plug-and-play interface for simple PC-to-XBee communication
- Works seamlessly with XCTU software for configuration and testing
- Allows wireless programming, debugging, and data monitoring of XBee modules

Refer to the appendix for a full pin breakdown.

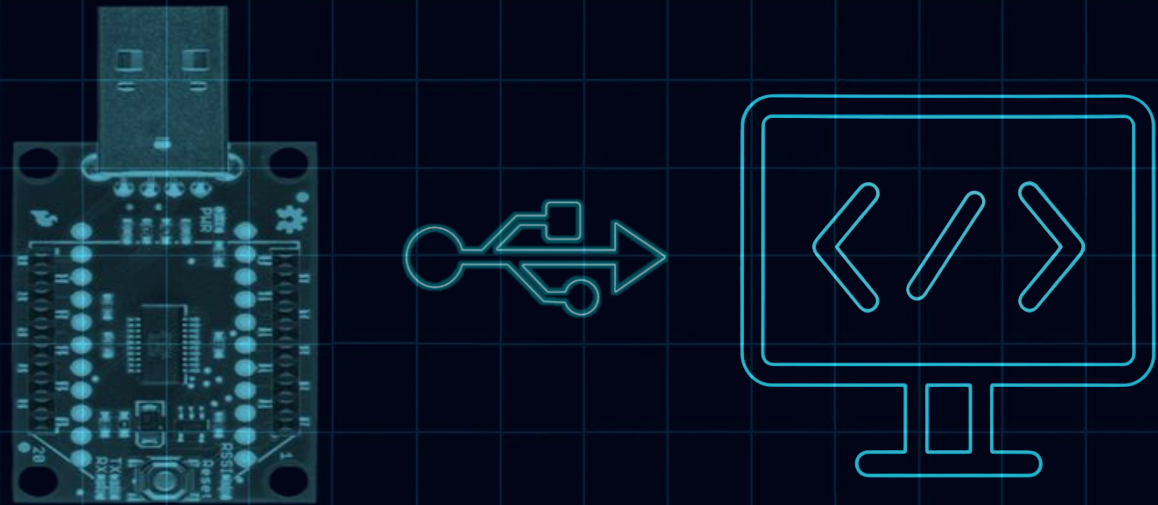


Figure 2.07 – XBee Dongle

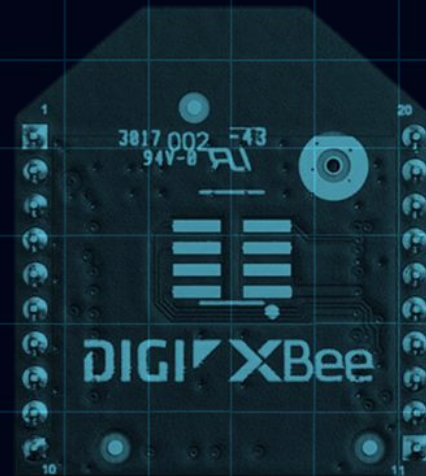
XBee3 Transceiver

The XBee3 is a powerful, compact wireless communication module. It offers secure, low-power networking with flexible configuration options, allowing devices to communicate over short to medium distances. Paired with tools like XCTU for configuration and diagnostics, the XBee3 makes it easy to integrate wireless connectivity with minimal effort.

Purpose

- Built-in MicroPython interpreter for simple edge processing without extra microcontrollers
- Offers reliable wireless data transfer
- Easily configured and diagnosed using Digi XCTU software
- Standard serial interface for easy Arduino integration

Refer to the appendix for a full pin breakdown.



Wireless Communication

Figure 2.08 – XBee3 Transceiver

Breadboard & Jumper Wires

Breadboards provide a platform for rapidly prototyping electronic circuits. Their internal metal clips connect rows of holes, allowing easy insertion and rearrangement of components without permanent connections. Paired with male-to-male or female-to-male jumper wires, breadboards enable flexible routing of signals and power, supporting experimentation with sensors and microcontrollers.

Purpose

- Internal metal clips connect the rows of holes horizontally (a-e) & (f-j) but not across the middle divider
- Internal metal clips connect the rows along the positive and negative rails at the edge of the breadboard vertically
- Jumper wires are used to access the pins inserted into the breadboard, transmitting the signals from their respective connections

Figure 2.09 illustrates the breadboard slots that are electrically connected internally, indicated by the color-coded lines running along the rows. Any signal applied to one slot within a connected group will be distributed across all slots that share that internal connection.

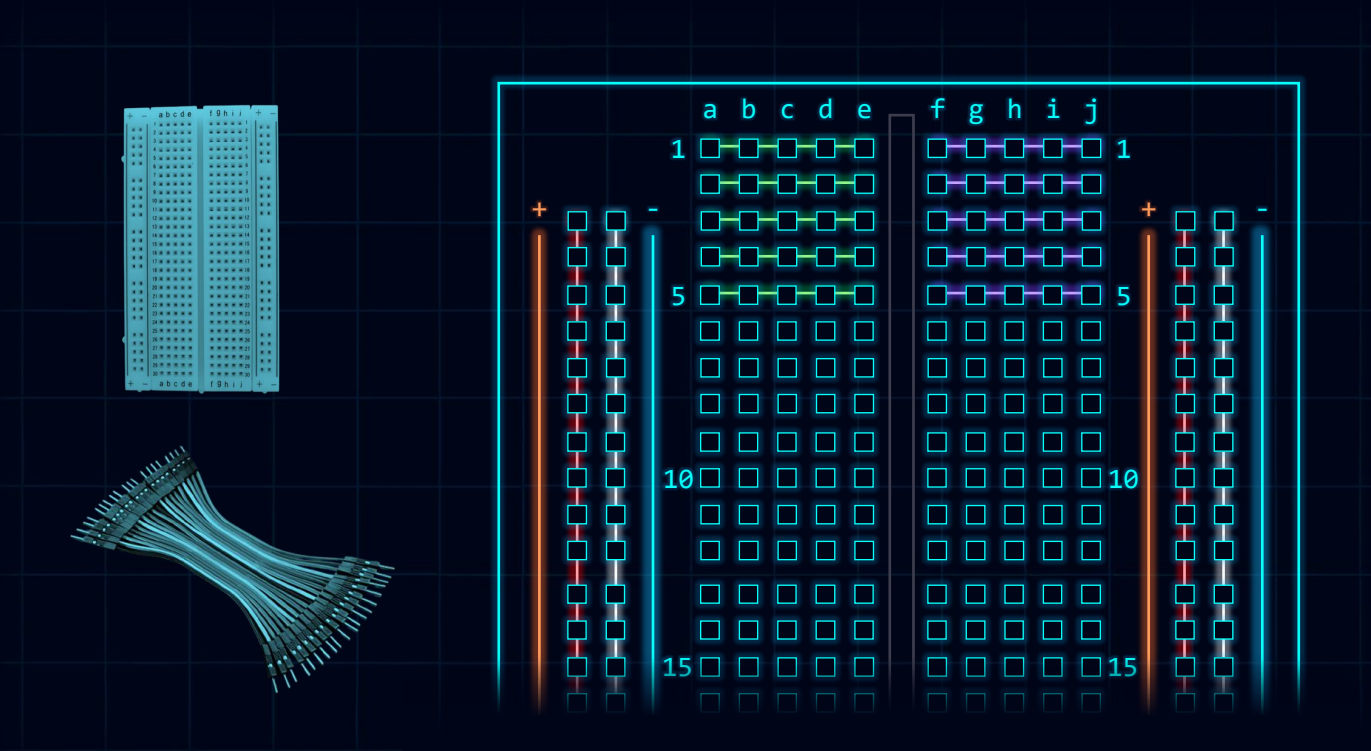


Figure 2.09 – Breadboard Internal Metal Clip Connections

Module III

Software Overview

Required Software

This experiment relies on a suite of essential software tools to enable effective programming, configuration, and communication. Together, these tools form a cohesive environment that supports efficient development, robust configuration, and reliable data exchange across the entire experimental workflow.

Application List:

- Arduino Integrated Development Environment
- Digi XCTU Configuration & Test Utility Software
- Microsoft Excel
- PuTTY

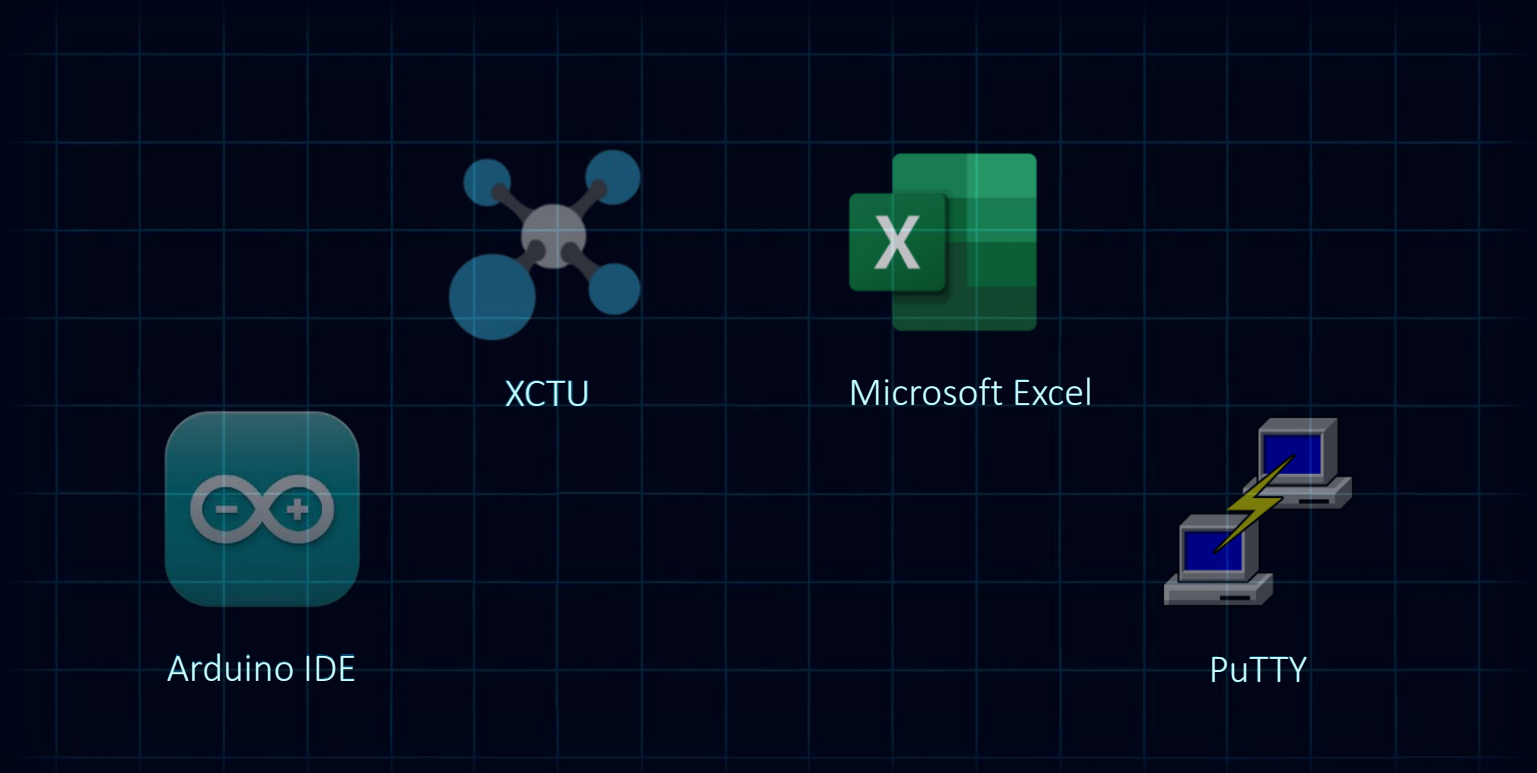


Figure 3.01 – Software Suite

Arduino IDE

The Arduino Integrated Development Environment (IDE) is a free software application used to develop programs for Arduino boards. It provides a code editor, compiler, and a serial monitor to observe data from the board.

Features:

- Supports writing, compiling, and uploading C/C++ code to Arduino boards
- Includes a built-in serial monitor for real-time data observation
- Simplifies managing libraries and third-party board packages
- Provides an intuitive editor with syntax highlighting and basic error checking

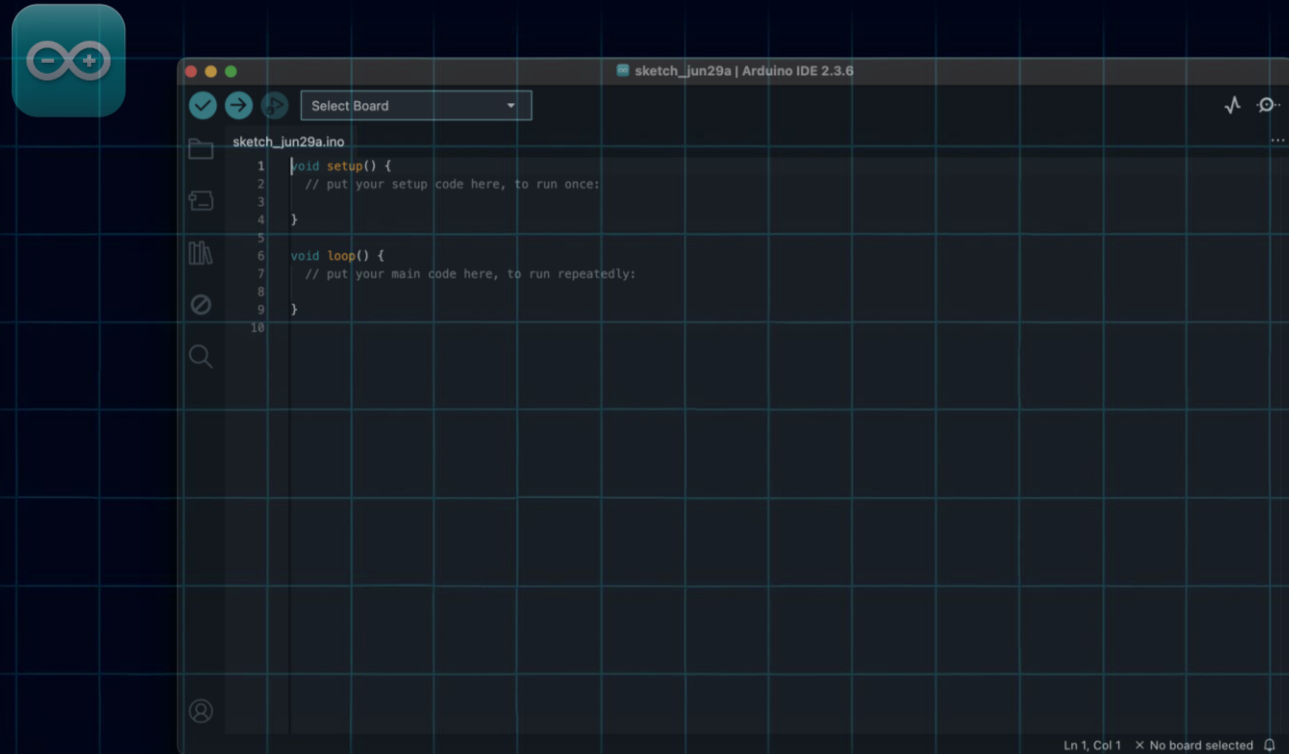


Figure 3.02 – Arduino IDE Interface

Digi XCTU

XCTU is a configuration and testing utility developed by Digi for managing XBee wireless modules. It provides a user-friendly interface to configure device parameters, update firmware, and establish communication settings. XCTU also includes tools for network mapping, range testing, and frame analysis, making it easier to diagnose connection issues and validate wireless performance.

Features:

- Supports firmware updates and parameter adjustments
- Includes network mapping and range-testing tools
- Offers frame analysis for detailed packet inspection
- Simplifies diagnosing and resolving wireless communication issues

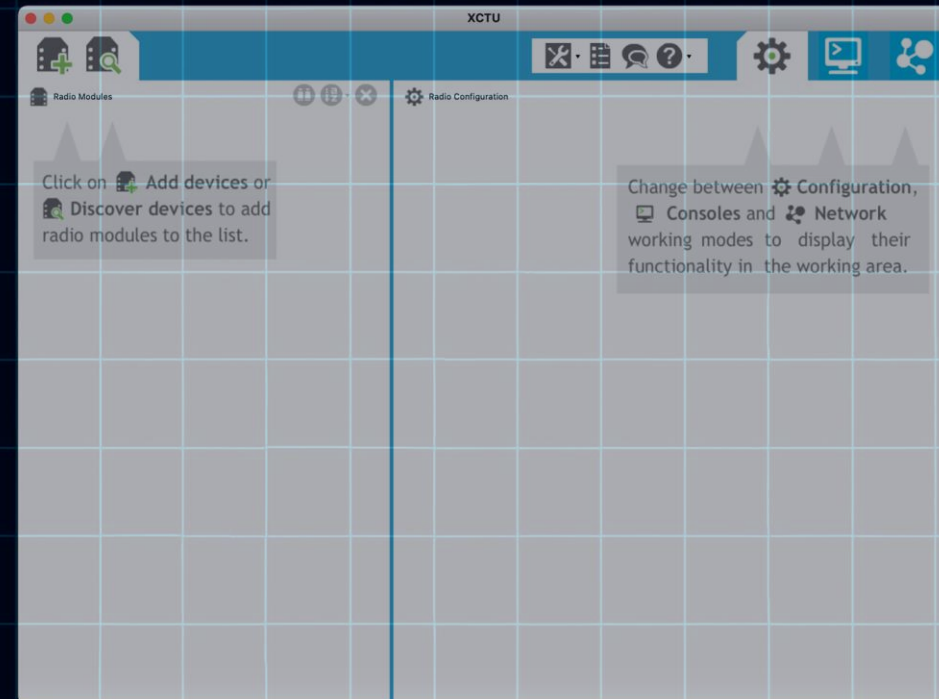


Figure 3.03 – XCTU Interface

Putty

PuTTY is a lightweight, open-source terminal emulator commonly used for serial and network communications. PuTTY can capture and log output from the Arduino IDE or other serial sources to a text file, providing a simple and effective way to archive test data for later analysis.

Features:

- Provides a simple interface for quickly testing bidirectional serial communication with your board.
- Supports multiple protocols but for Arduino, you'll mainly use the serial (COM port) mode.
- Handy for saving serial data to a text file for later analysis or debugging.

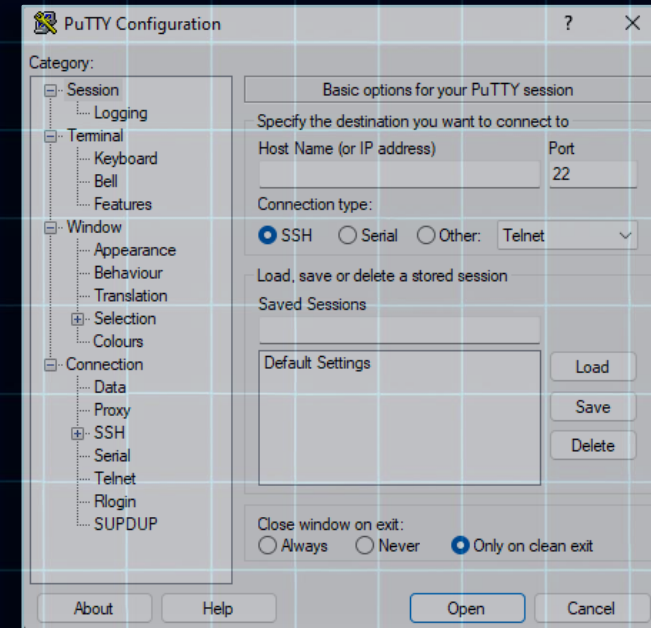


Figure 3.04 – PuTTY Interface

Microsoft Excel

We use Excel to analyze our data because it makes it easy to organize, visualize, and interpret the information we collect. After recording muon detection events, we import the raw data directly from PuTTY into Excel. From there we can plot trends and identify patterns in the timing of events.

Features:

- Easy Data Import:

Copy raw output from PuTTY directly into Excel for quick access and organization.

- Graphing Tools:

Create scatter plots, line graphs, and histograms to visualize event patterns.

- Text Manipulation & Math Formulas:

Enables users to process text and perform mathematical calculations directly within cells for efficient data analysis and formatting.

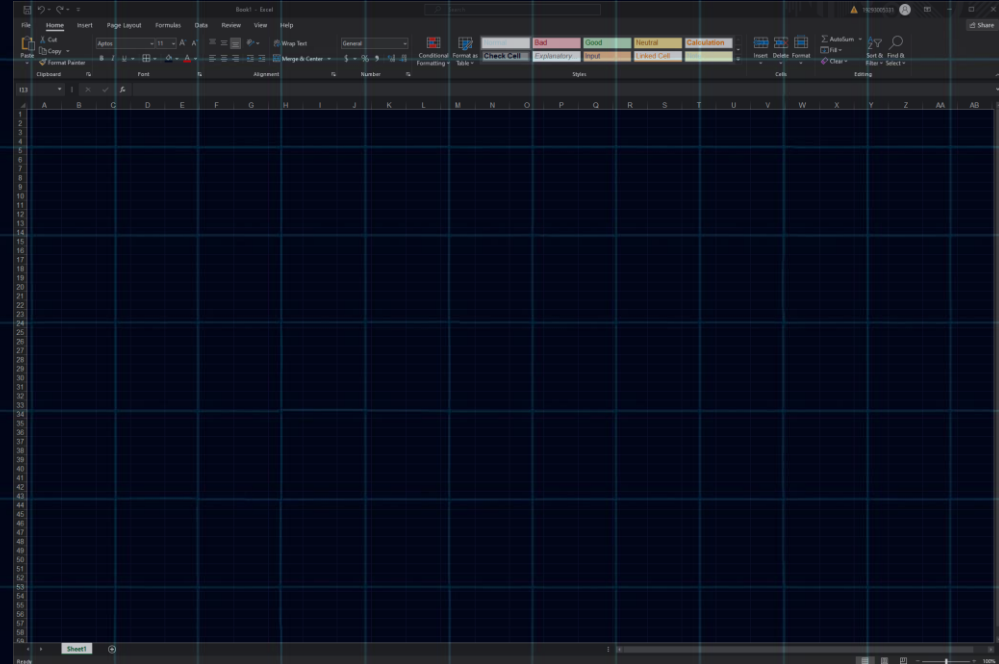


Figure 3.05 – Microsoft Excel Interface

Module IV

Arduino IDE Setup

Arduino to PC USB Connection

Connecting the USB Type-B cable between your computer and the Arduino board establishes a bidirectional communication link, allowing your computer to upload code to the microcontroller while also enabling the Arduino to send data back to the computer.

Connect the USB Type-B cable to your computer and the Arduino board.

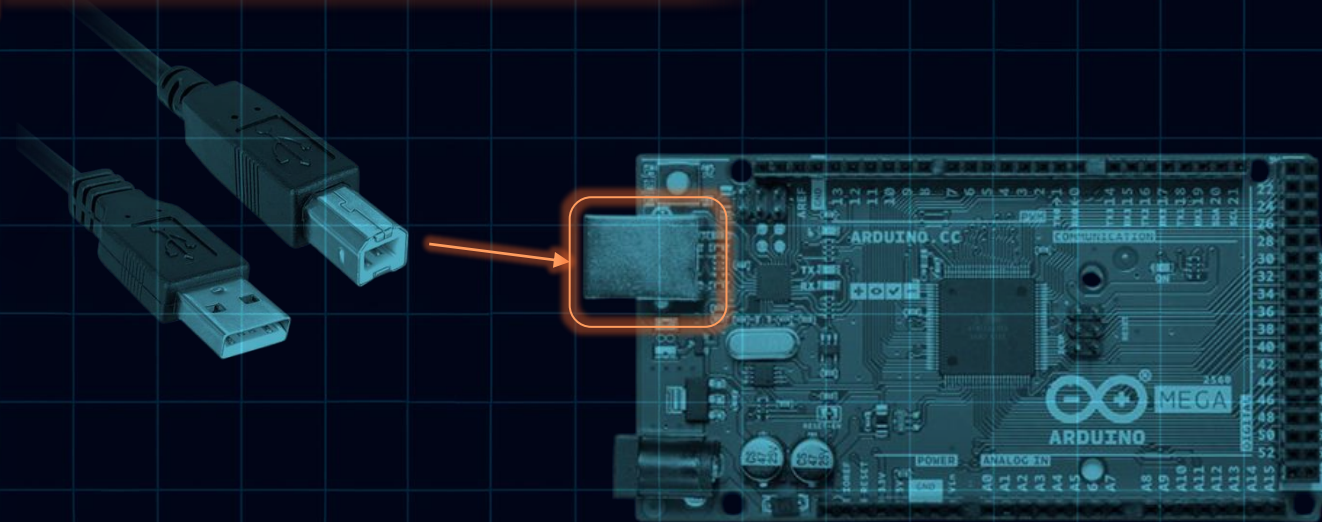


Figure 4.01 – Arduino-PC USB Connection

sketch_jul1a | Arduino IDE 2.3.6

File Edit Sketch Tools Help

✓

→

🔍

Select Board

sketch_jul1a.ino

1 void setup() {

2 // put your setup code here, to run once:

3

4 }

5

6 void loop() {

7 // put your main code here, to run repeatedly:

8

9 }

10

Launch Program

Locate the Arduino IDE icon on your desktop and launch the program



Sketches

The code you write in the Arduino IDE is called a sketch, and the Arduino compiler within the program handles all the setup to convert it into machine language for the microcontroller. It utilizes a simplified subset of C++ with a few custom libraries simplifying C++ to be more accessible for prototyping and hardware interaction.

Arduino IDE 2.3.6

File Edit Sketch Tools Help

✓ → ↻

Arduino Mega or Meg...

LIBRARY MANAGER

Filter your search...

Type: All Topic: All

📖

🔍

AIPLC_Opta by Arduino

Arduino IDE PLC runtime library for Arduino Opta This is the runtime library and plugins for supporting the Arduino Opta in the Arduino PLC... More info

1.2.0 INSTALL

AIPLC_PMC by Arduino

Arduino IDE PLC runtime library for Arduino Portenta Machine Control This is the runtime library and plugins for supporting the Arduino... More info

1.0.6 INSTALL

Arduino Cloud Provider Examples by Arduino

Examples of how to connect various Arduino boards to cloud providers More info

1.2.1 INSTALL

Arduino Low Power by Arduino

Power save primitives features for SAMD and nRF52 32bit boards With this library you can manage the low power states of newer Arduino... More info

1.2.2 INSTALL

Arduino SigFox for MKRFox1200 by Arduino

sketch_jul1a.ino

1 void setup() {
2 // put your setup code here, to run once:
3 }
4
5
6 void loop() {
7 // put your main code here, to run repeatedly:
8 }
9
10

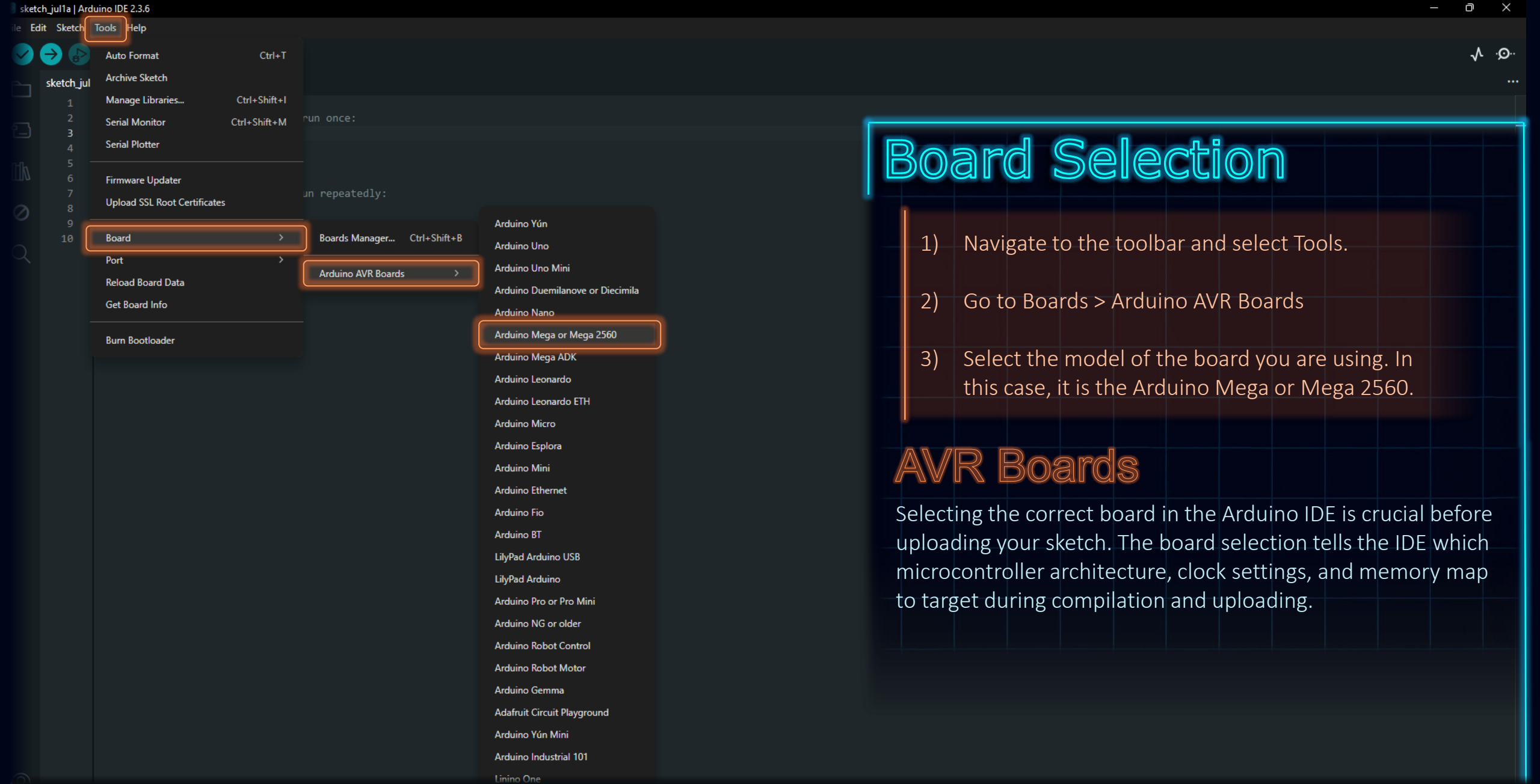
Essential Libraries

- 1) Click on the Libraries icon in the left-hand panel of the Arduino IDE.
- 2) Use the search bar to find and install the latest versions of the following libraries:
 - Adafruit BMP280 Library
 - Adafruit GPS Library
 - Adafruit LED Backpack
 - TimerOne

What are Libraries?

Arduino libraries are packaged collections of functions and drivers that extend the Arduino's capabilities to work with specific hardware or features.

Be sure to select **Install All** when prompted about dependencies.

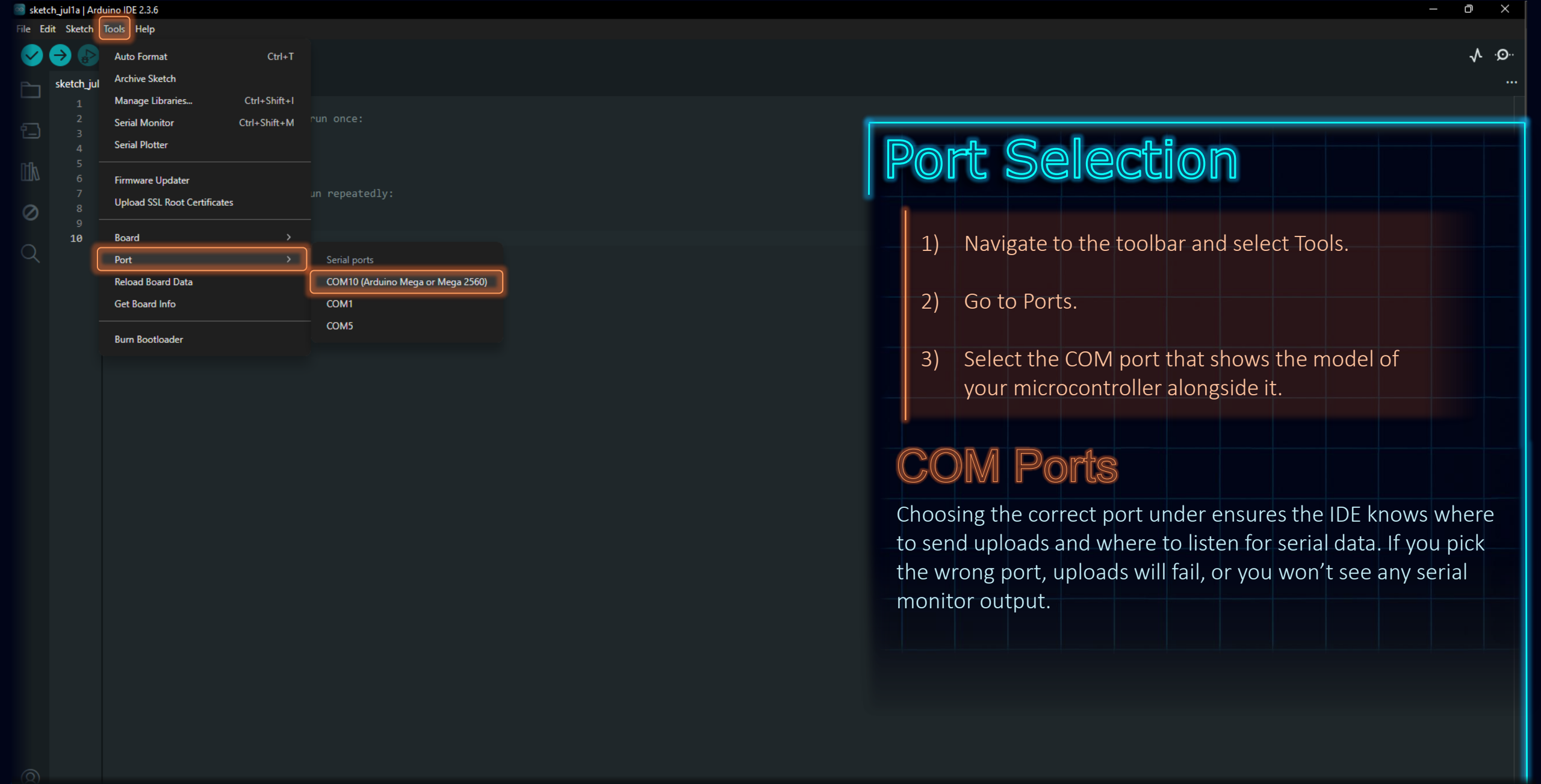


Board Selection

- 1) Navigate to the toolbar and select Tools.
- 2) Go to Boards > Arduino AVR Boards
- 3) Select the model of the board you are using. In this case, it is the Arduino Mega or Mega 2560.

AVR Boards

Selecting the correct board in the Arduino IDE is crucial before uploading your sketch. The board selection tells the IDE which microcontroller architecture, clock settings, and memory map to target during compilation and uploading.



Port Selection

- 1) Navigate to the toolbar and select Tools.
- 2) Go to Ports.
- 3) Select the COM port that shows the model of your microcontroller alongside it.

COM Ports

Choosing the correct port under ensures the IDE knows where to send uploads and where to listen for serial data. If you pick the wrong port, uploads will fail, or you won't see any serial monitor output.



sketch_jul1a.ino

```
1 void setup() {  
2   // put your setup code here, to run once:  
3  
4 }  
5  
6 void loop() {  
7   // put your main code here, to run repeatedly:  
8  
9 }  
10
```



Serial Monitor Interface

Baud Rate

The baud rate defines how fast data is sent between your Arduino and the Serial Monitor.

If the baud rate in the Serial Monitor does not match the speed set in your code, you will see garbled or unreadable text.

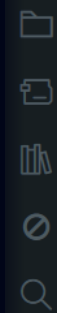
i.e., `Serial.begin(115200)`

Serial Monitor ×

Message (Enter to send message to 'Arduino Mega or Mega 2560' on 'COM10')

Both NL & CR ▾

115200 baud ▾



sketch_jul1a.ino

```
1 void setup() {  
2   // put your setup code here, to run once:  
3  
4 }  
5  
6 void loop() {  
7   // put your main code here, to run repeatedly:  
8  
9 }  
10
```

Serial Monitor Interface



Toggle Autoscroll

The IDE autoscroll feature automatically keeps the latest serial or console output in view as new data arrives.



Toggle Timestamps

Adds or removes computer-generated time-stamps on each line of serial output.



Clear Output

Erases the current serial display, removing all data for a clean debugging view.

Serial Monitor ✕

Message (Enter to send message to 'Arduino Mega or Mega 2560' on 'COM10')

Both NL & CR ▾

115200 baud ▾



Module V

Adafruit BMP280 Temperature & Pressure Sensor

BMP280 Operational Test

Follow the instructions provided to complete an operational test, verifying that the BMP280 sensor is functioning correctly, returning valid environmental data, and properly integrated into the system. Successful completion of this test confirms the sensor is ready for use in your application.

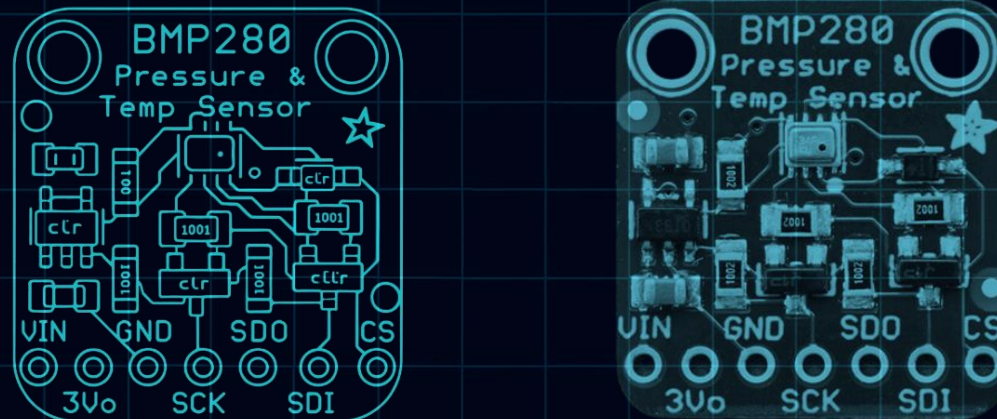
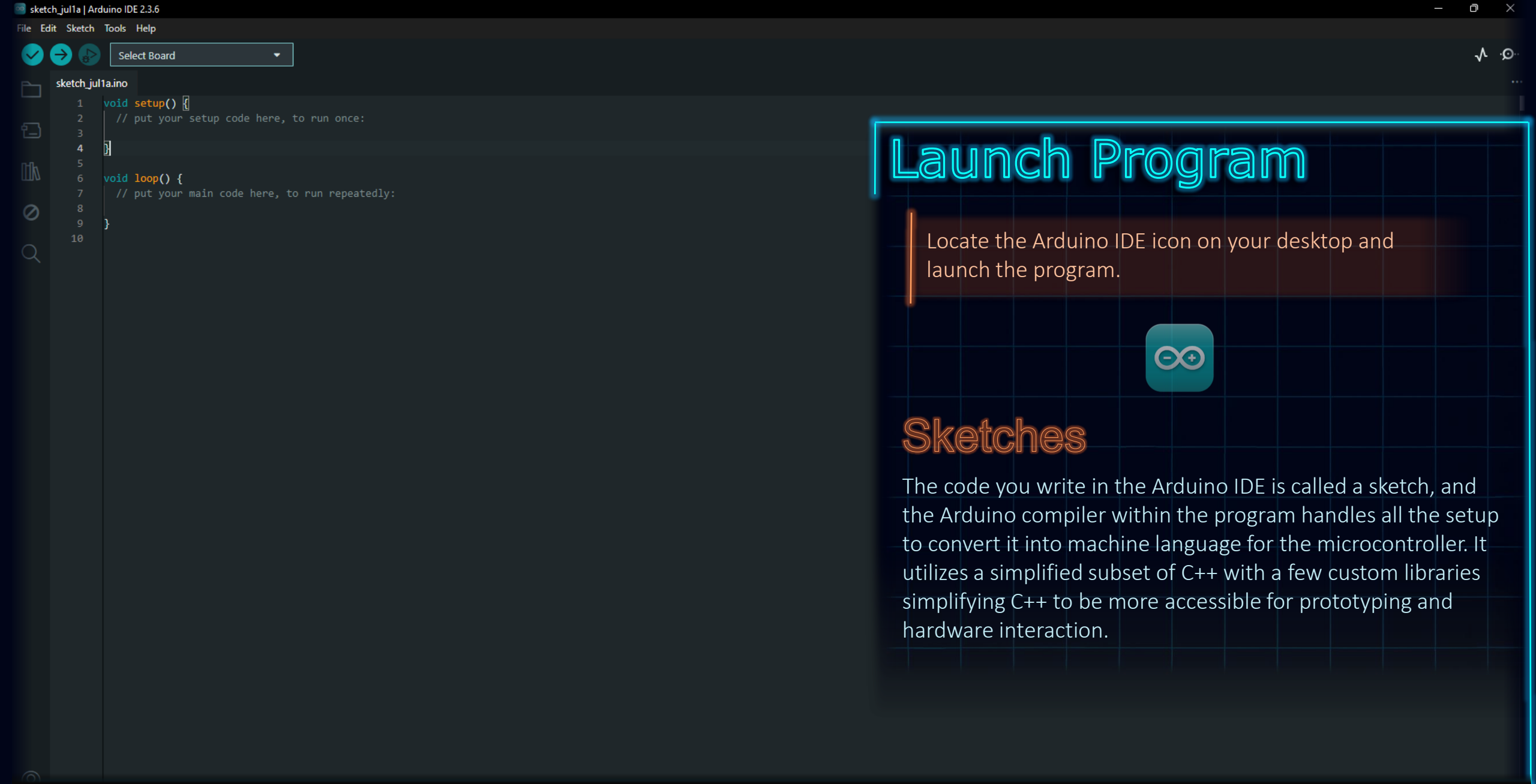


Figure 5.01 – BMP280 Pressure & Sensor Module



File Edit Sketch Tools Help

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sketch_jul1a.ino

1 void setup() {
2 // put your setup code here, to run once:
3 }
4
5
6 void loop() {
7 // put your main code here, to run repeatedly:
8 }
9
10

Essential Libraries

- 1) Click on the Libraries icon in the left-hand panel of the Arduino IDE.
- 2) Use the search bar to find and install the latest versions of the following library:
 - Adafruit BMP280 Library

What are Libraries?

Arduino libraries are packaged collections of functions and drivers that extend the Arduino's capabilities to work with specific hardware or features.

Be sure to select **Install All** when prompted about dependencies.

Arduino to PC USB Connection

Connecting the USB Type-B cable between your computer and the Arduino board establishes a bidirectional communication link, allowing your computer to upload code to the microcontroller while also enabling the Arduino to send data back to the computer.

Connect the USB Type-B cable to your computer and the Arduino board.

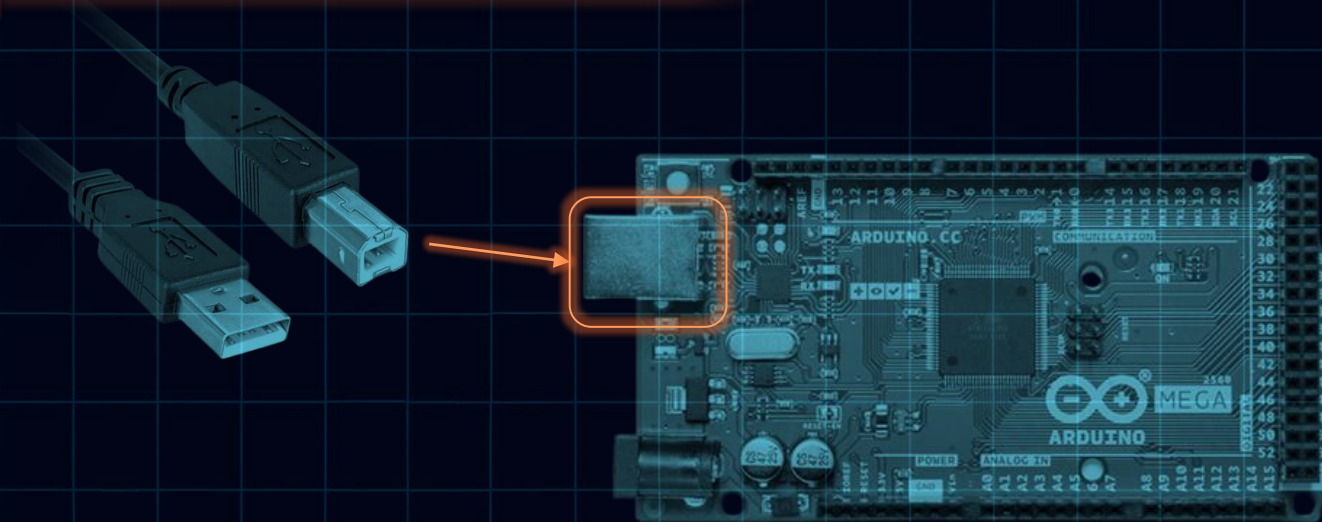


Figure 5.02 – Arduino-PC USB Connection

BMP280 Wiring Setup

The BMP280 uses SPI (Serial Peripheral Interface) to communicate with the Arduino ATmega 2560. SPI is a fast, synchronous protocol ideal for high-speed sensor data transfer. It allows the microcontroller to exchange data with the sensor using a master-slave architecture over just four data lines.

Connections

Arduino	BMP280
3.3V	VIN
GND	GND
Pin 52	SCK
Pin 50	SDO
Pin 51	SDI
Pin 53	CS

Attach the BMP280 sensor to the breadboard using the jumper wires to make the following connections.

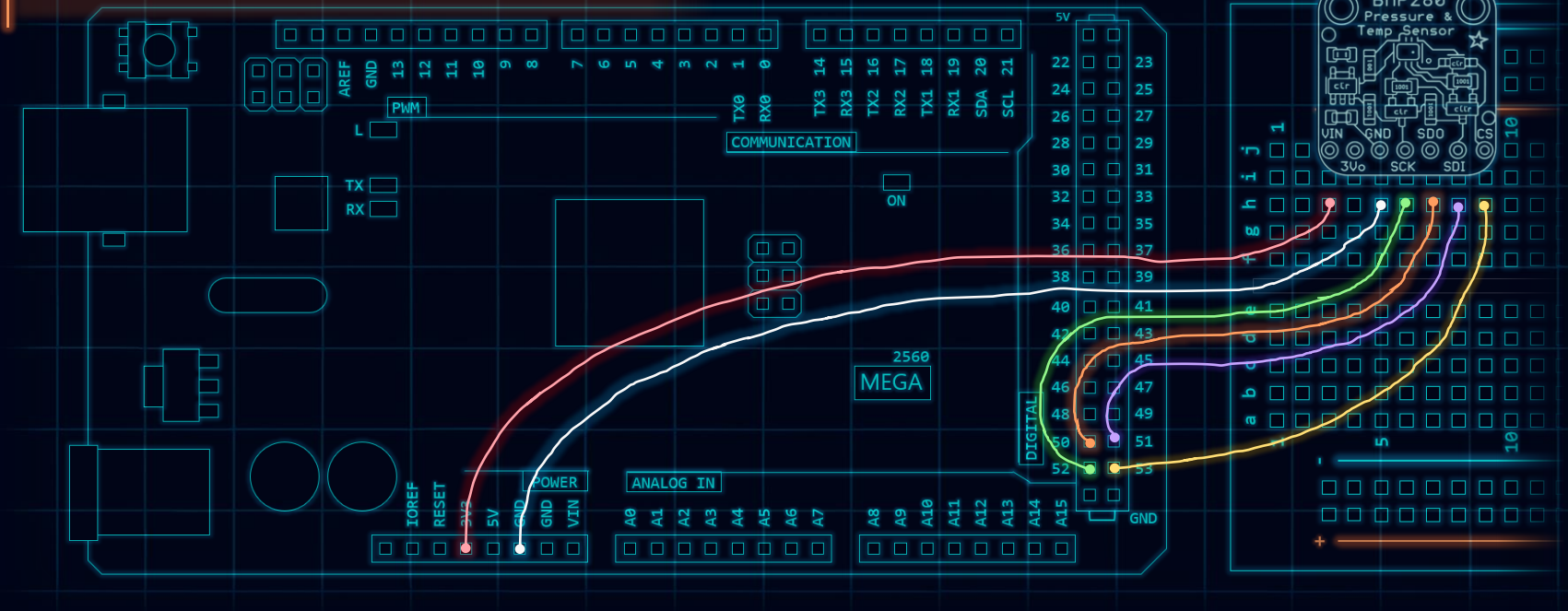


Figure 5.03 – Arduino ATmega2560 - BMP280 Sensor Wiring Setup

BMP280 Wiring Setup

This photo shows the BMP280 connected via SPI to the Arduino Mega 2560. Verify that the sensor is powered with 3.3V and grounded properly. Take a moment to check that all four SPI lines—MISO, MOSI, SCK, and CS—are cleanly connected and not loose, as even small wiring issues can lead to failed communication or corrupted sensor readings.

Connections

Arduino	BMP280
3.3V	VIN
GND	GND
Pin 52	SCK
Pin 50	SDO
Pin 51	SDI
Pin 53	CS

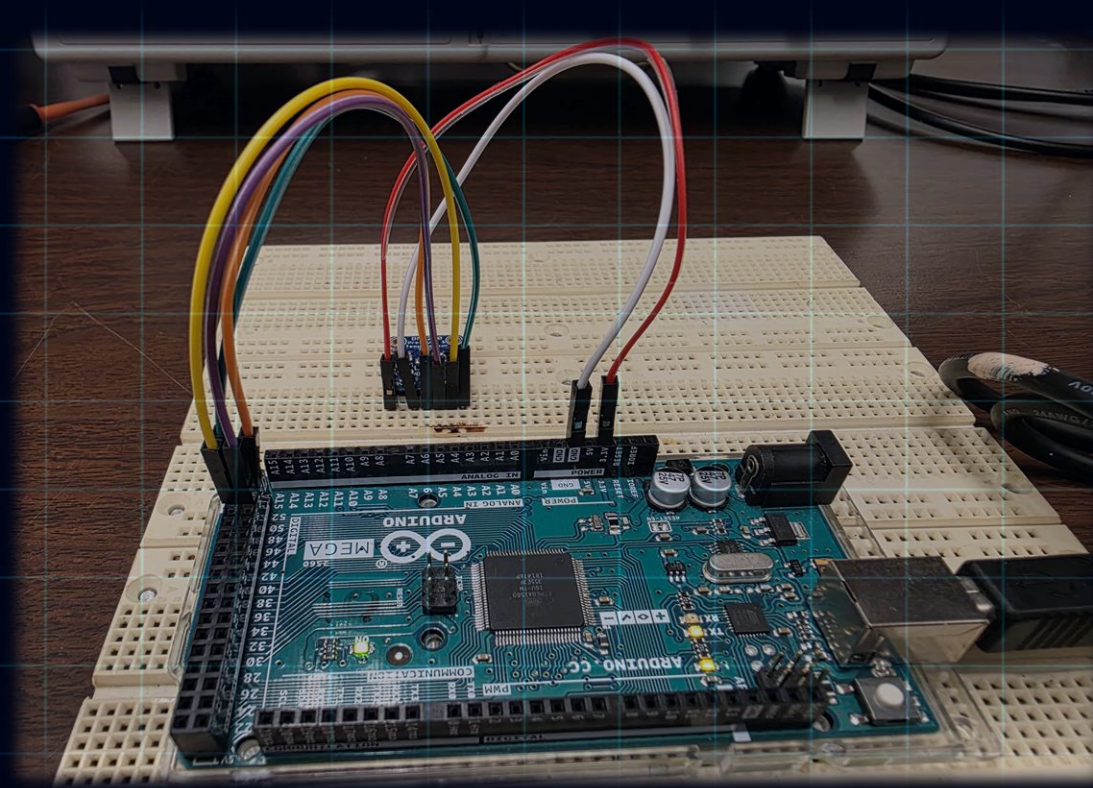


Figure 5.04 – Arduino-BMP280 Sensor Wiring Setup

BMP280 Test Sketch

Code Block

Read through the following code and try understanding the instructions being given to the Arduino.

Once done, paste the following Arduino sketch into the IDE and upload it to verify that the module is functional.

Make sure the baud rate in the Serial Monitor matches the one defined in your code. Here, it is set to 9600 as shown in:

```
Serial.begin(9600)
```

```
#include <SPI.h>
#include <Adafruit_BMP280.h>

#define BMP_CS 53
constexpr float seaLevelPressure_hPa = 1015.0f; // Barometric Pressure for Queens, NY

Adafruit_BMP280 bmp(BMP_CS); // Hardware SPI, CS only

void setup() {
  Serial.begin(9600);
  pinMode(BMP_CS, OUTPUT); // Required for SPI on Mega

  if (!bmp.begin()) {
    Serial.println(F("BMP280 not found. Check wiring."));
    while (true) delay(10);
  }

  // FORCED mode: manual one-shot measurement
  bmp.setSampling(Adafruit_BMP280::MODE_FORCED,
                  Adafruit_BMP280::SAMPLING_X1, // Temp oversampling
                  Adafruit_BMP280::SAMPLING_X1, // Pressure oversampling
                  Adafruit_BMP280::FILTER_OFF,   // No IIR filter
                  Adafruit_BMP280::STANDBY_MS_1); // Not used in FORCED
}

void loop() {
  bmp.takeForcedMeasurement(); // A function created by the Adafruit BMP280 library

  float temp = bmp.readTemperature();
  float press = bmp.readPressure();
  float alt = bmp.readAltitude(seaLevelPressure_hPa);

  Serial.print(F("T: ")); Serial.print(temp); Serial.print(F(" *C | ")); // Prints temperature
  Serial.print(F("P: ")); Serial.print(press); Serial.print(F(" Pa | ")); // Prints pressure
  Serial.print(F("Alt: ")); Serial.print(alt); Serial.println(F(" m")); // Prints approximate altitude

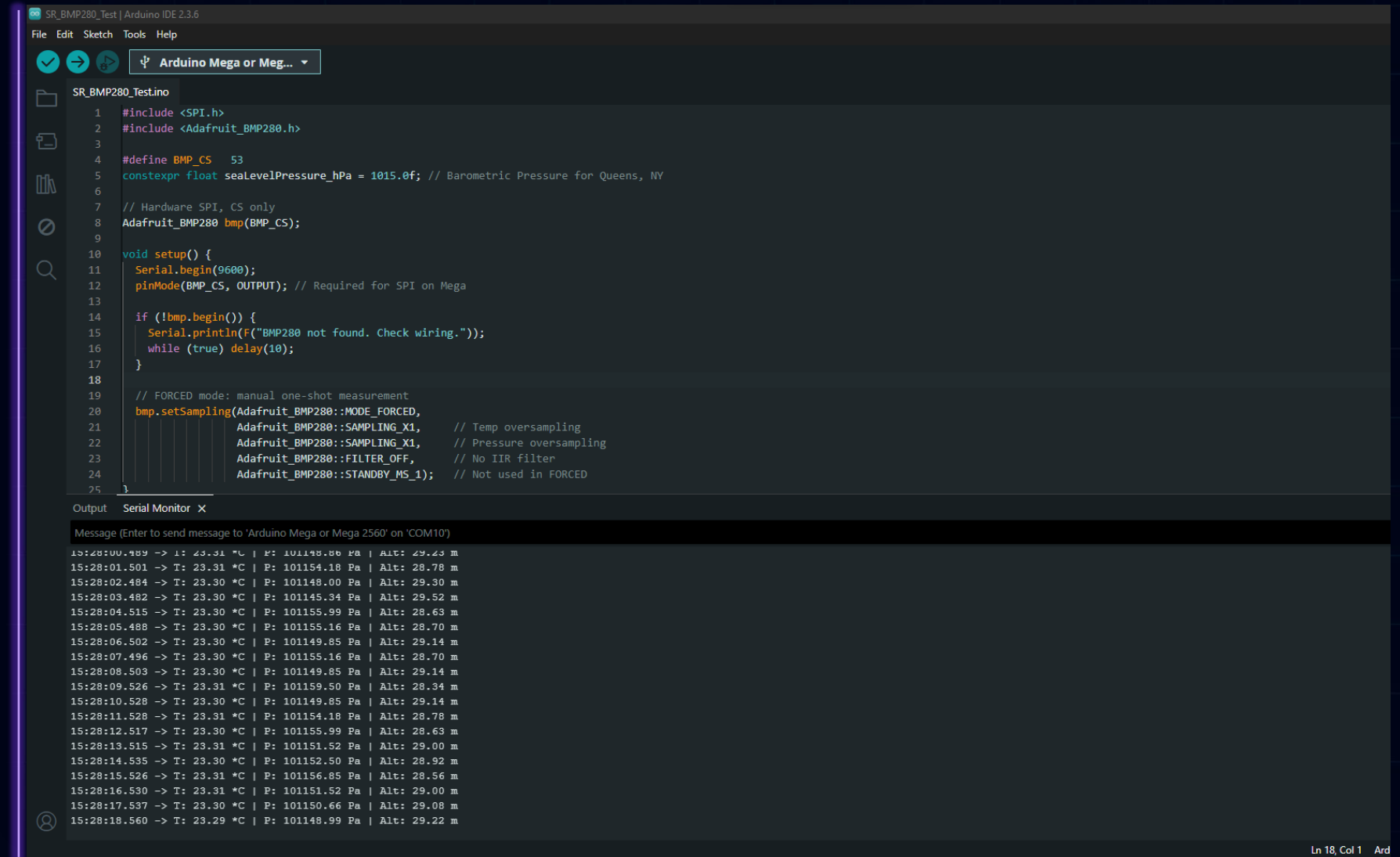
  delay(1000); // Optional: set based on desired logging rate (ms)
}
```


BMP280 Test Results

Serial Output

The Serial Monitor should display temperature, pressure, and altitude readings once every second, as shown in the example.

If the readings appear consistently and update at the expected one second interval, the sensor is operating correctly.



The screenshot displays the Arduino IDE interface with the 'SR_BMP280_Test' sketch loaded. The sketch includes headers for SPI and Adafruit_BMP280, defines the chip select pin (BMP_CS = 53), and sets the sea level pressure for Queens, NY. It configures the BMP280 sensor in forced mode with 1x oversampling for temperature and pressure, no IIR filter, and a 5ms standby time. The setup function initializes the serial port at 9600 baud and configures the chip select pin. The main loop checks if the sensor is found and prints temperature, pressure, and altitude readings every second.

```
1 #include <SPI.h>
2 #include <Adafruit_BMP280.h>
3
4 #define BMP_CS 53
5 constexpr float seaLevelPressure_hPa = 1015.0f; // Barometric Pressure for Queens, NY
6
7 // Hardware SPI, CS only
8 Adafruit_BMP280 bmp(BMP_CS);
9
10 void setup() {
11   Serial.begin(9600);
12   pinMode(BMP_CS, OUTPUT); // Required for SPI on Mega
13
14   if (!bmp.begin()) {
15     Serial.println(F("BMP280 not found. Check wiring."));
16     while (true) delay(10);
17   }
18
19   // FORCED mode: manual one-shot measurement
20   bmp.setSampling(Adafruit_BMP280::MODE_FORCED,
21                  Adafruit_BMP280::SAMPLING_X1, // Temp oversampling
22                  Adafruit_BMP280::SAMPLING_X1, // Pressure oversampling
23                  Adafruit_BMP280::FILTER_OFF,   // No IIR filter
24                  Adafruit_BMP280::STANDBY_MS_1); // Not used in FORCED
25 }
```

The Serial Monitor shows the following output:

```
15:28:00.489 -> T: 23.31 °C | P: 101148.86 Pa | Alt: 29.23 m
15:28:01.501 -> T: 23.31 °C | P: 101154.18 Pa | Alt: 28.78 m
15:28:02.484 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101148.00 Pa | Alt: 29.30 m
15:28:03.482 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101145.34 Pa | Alt: 29.52 m
15:28:04.515 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101155.99 Pa | Alt: 28.63 m
15:28:05.488 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101155.16 Pa | Alt: 28.70 m
15:28:06.502 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101149.85 Pa | Alt: 29.14 m
15:28:07.496 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101155.16 Pa | Alt: 28.70 m
15:28:08.503 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101149.85 Pa | Alt: 29.14 m
15:28:09.526 -> T: 23.31 °C | P: 101159.50 Pa | Alt: 28.34 m
15:28:10.528 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101149.85 Pa | Alt: 29.14 m
15:28:11.528 -> T: 23.31 °C | P: 101154.18 Pa | Alt: 28.78 m
15:28:12.517 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101155.99 Pa | Alt: 28.63 m
15:28:13.515 -> T: 23.31 °C | P: 101151.52 Pa | Alt: 29.00 m
15:28:14.535 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101152.50 Pa | Alt: 28.92 m
15:28:15.526 -> T: 23.31 °C | P: 101156.85 Pa | Alt: 28.56 m
15:28:16.530 -> T: 23.31 °C | P: 101151.52 Pa | Alt: 29.00 m
15:28:17.537 -> T: 23.30 °C | P: 101150.66 Pa | Alt: 29.08 m
15:28:18.560 -> T: 23.29 °C | P: 101148.99 Pa | Alt: 29.22 m
```


Module VI

Adafruit LED Backpack Counter

LED Backpack Counter Operational Test

Follow the instructions to complete a functional test of the LED Backpack Counter. This will verify that the display is operating correctly, showing accurate values, and properly communicating with the system. Once the test passes, the display is ready for use in your project.

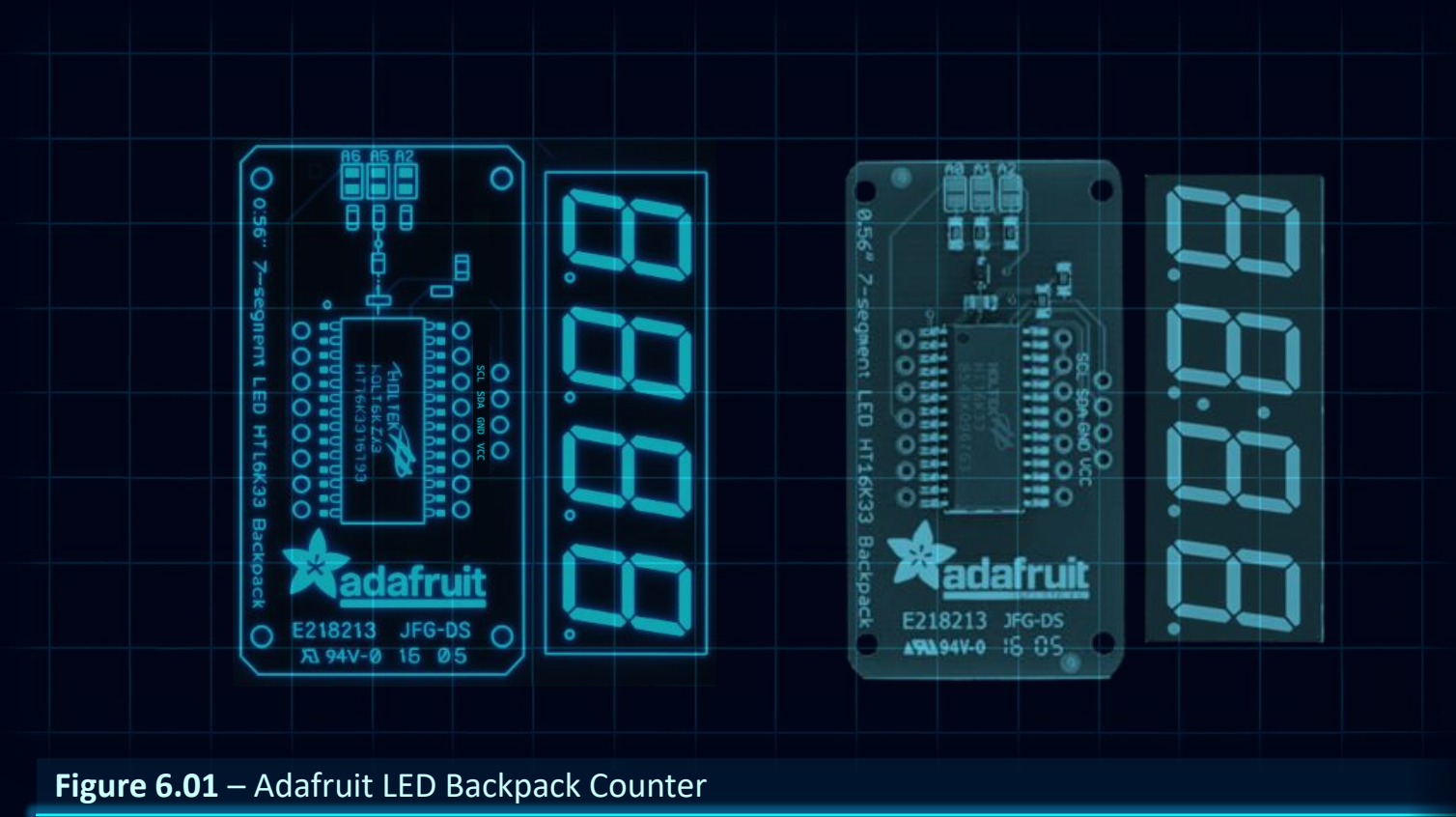


Figure 6.01 – Adafruit LED Backpack Counter

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```
1 void setup() {
2   // put your setup code here, to run once:
3
4
5
6 void loop() {
7   // put your main code here, to run repeatedly:
8
9 }
10
```

Launch Program

Locate the Arduino IDE icon on your desktop and launch the program



Sketches

The code you write in the Arduino IDE is called a sketch, and the Arduino compiler within the program handles all the setup to convert it into machine language for the microcontroller. It utilizes a simplified subset of C++ with a few custom libraries simplifying C++ to be more accessible for prototyping and hardware interaction.

Arduino IDE 2.3.6

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Arduino SigFox for MKRFox1200 by Arduino

sketch_jul1a.ino

1 void setup() {
2 // put your setup code here, to run once:
3
4 }
5
6 void loop() {
7 // put your main code here, to run repeatedly:
8
9 }
10

Essential Libraries

- 1) Click on the Libraries icon in the left-hand panel of the Arduino IDE.
- 2) Use the search bar to find and install the latest versions of the following library:
 - o Adafruit LED Backpack
 - o TimerOne

What are Libraries?

Arduino libraries are packaged collections of functions and drivers that extend the Arduino's capabilities to work with specific hardware or features.

Be sure to select **Install All** when prompted about dependencies.

Arduino to PC USB Connection

Connecting the USB Type-B cable between your computer and the Arduino board establishes a bidirectional communication link, allowing your computer to upload code to the microcontroller while also enabling the Arduino to send data back to the computer.

Connect the USB Type-B cable to your computer and the Arduino board.

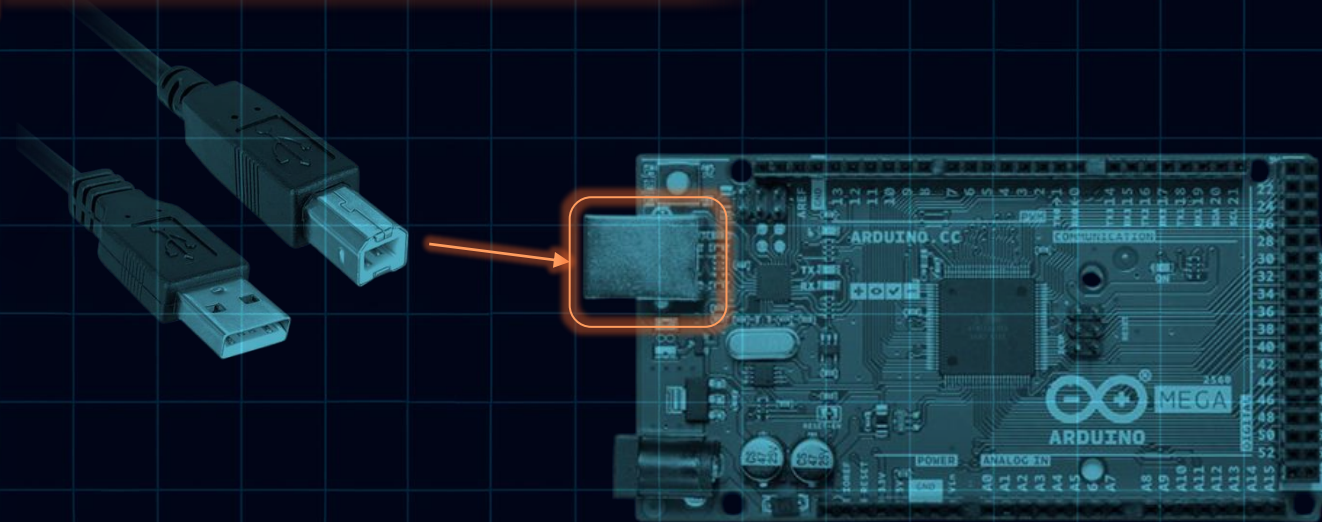


Figure 6.02 – Arduino-PC USB Connection

LED Backpack Counter Wiring Setup

The LED Backpack Counter communicates with the Arduino ATmega 2560 via I2C (Inter-Integrated Circuit). It uses SDA (data) and SCL (clock) lines, which on the Mega 2560 correspond to pins 20 and 21. This setup allows the microcontroller to send numeric data to the display efficiently, with additional connections for power (5V) and ground (GND) to complete the circuit.

Connections

Arduino	Counter
5V	+
GND	-
SCL1	C (SCL)
SDA1	D (SDA)

SCL1 and SDA1 are not labeled on the board surface like the other pins. Instead, their labels are printed directly on the black socket connector.

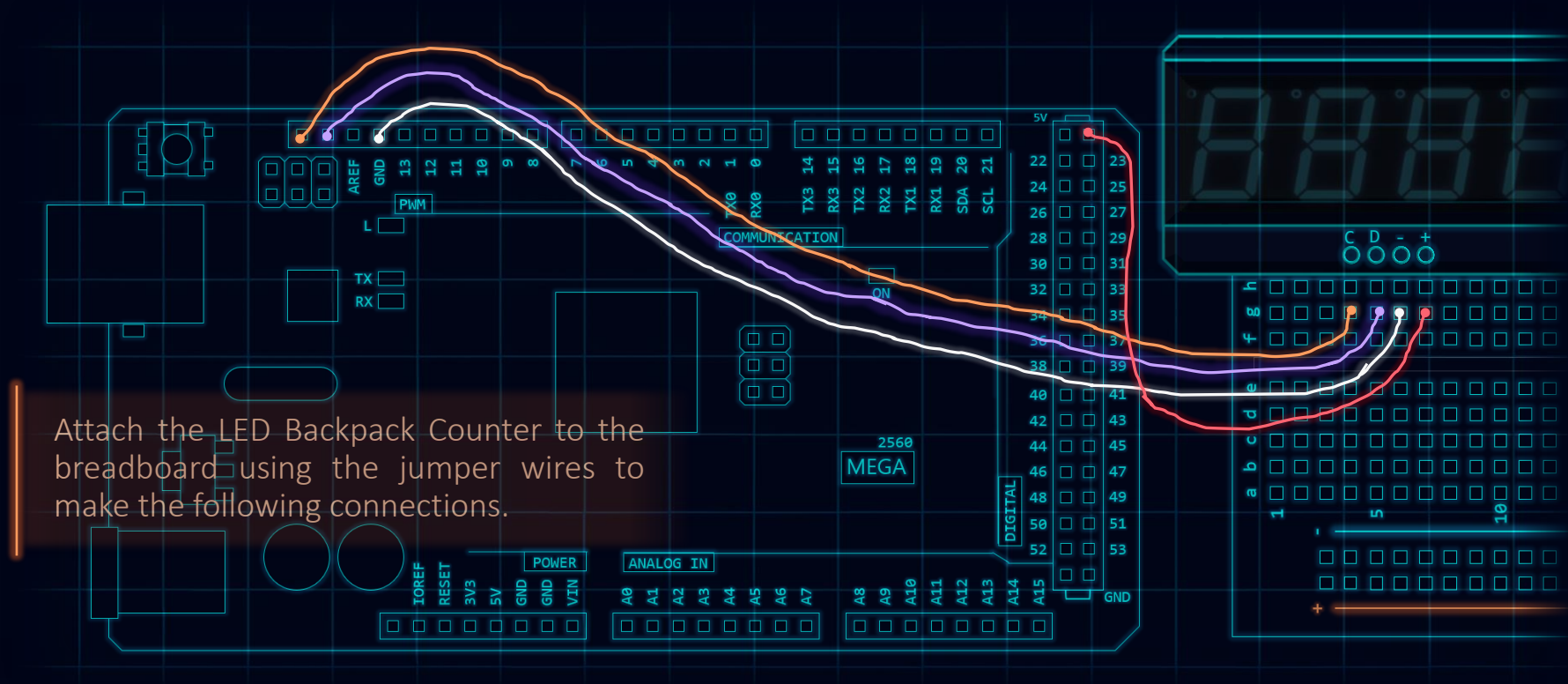


Figure 6.03 – Arduino ATmega2560 - LED Backpack Counter Wiring Setup

LED Backpack Counter Wiring Setup

This photo shows the physical wiring of the LED Backpack Counter connected to the Arduino Mega 2560. Verify that the jumper wires are correctly placed and securely connected. Also make sure the 5V and GND lines are properly seated as any loose power connection can cause the display to flicker or fail to initialize.

Connections

Arduino	Counter
5V	+
GND	-
SCL1	C (SCL)
SDA1	D (SDA)

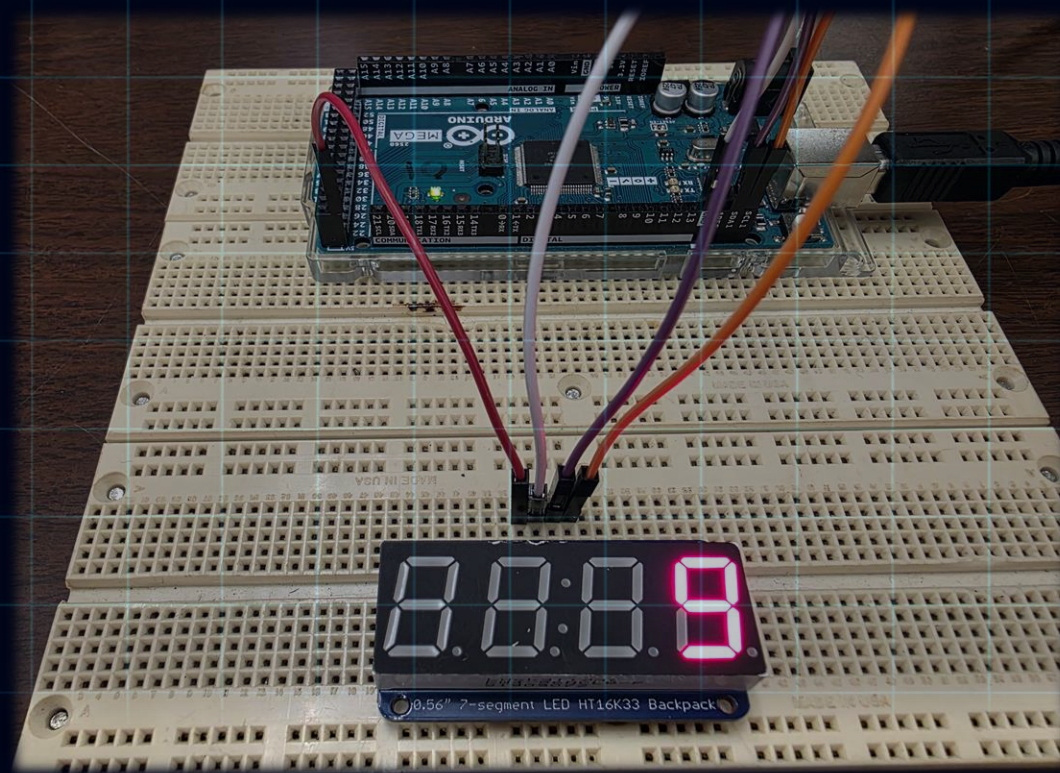


Figure 6.04 – Arduino ATmega2560 - LED Backpack Counter Wiring Setup

LED Backpack Counter Test Sketch

Code Block

Read through the following code and try to understand the instructions being given to the Arduino.

Once done, paste the following Arduino sketch into the IDE and upload it to verify that the module is functional.

Make sure the baud rate in the Serial Monitor matches the one defined in your code. Here, it is set to 9600 as shown in:

```
Serial.begin(9600)
```

```
#include <Wire.h>
#include <TimerOne.h>
#include <Adafruit_LEDBackpack.h>

Adafruit_7segment matrix;

volatile uint16_t timerCount = 0; // use uint16_t, saves RAM unless you exceed 65535

void secondElapsed() {
    timerCount++; // fast, atomic on AVR for uint16_t
}

void setup() {
    Serial.begin(9600);
    matrix.begin(0x70); // HT16K33 default I2C address
    matrix.print(0);    // show initial value
    matrix.writeDisplay();

    Timer1.initialize(1000000); // 1 second in microseconds
    Timer1.attachInterrupt(secondElapsed); // ISR triggers every 1 second
}

void loop() {
    static uint16_t lastCount = 0;
    uint16_t currentCount;

    noInterrupts(); // safely copy volatile variable
    currentCount = timerCount;
    interrupts();

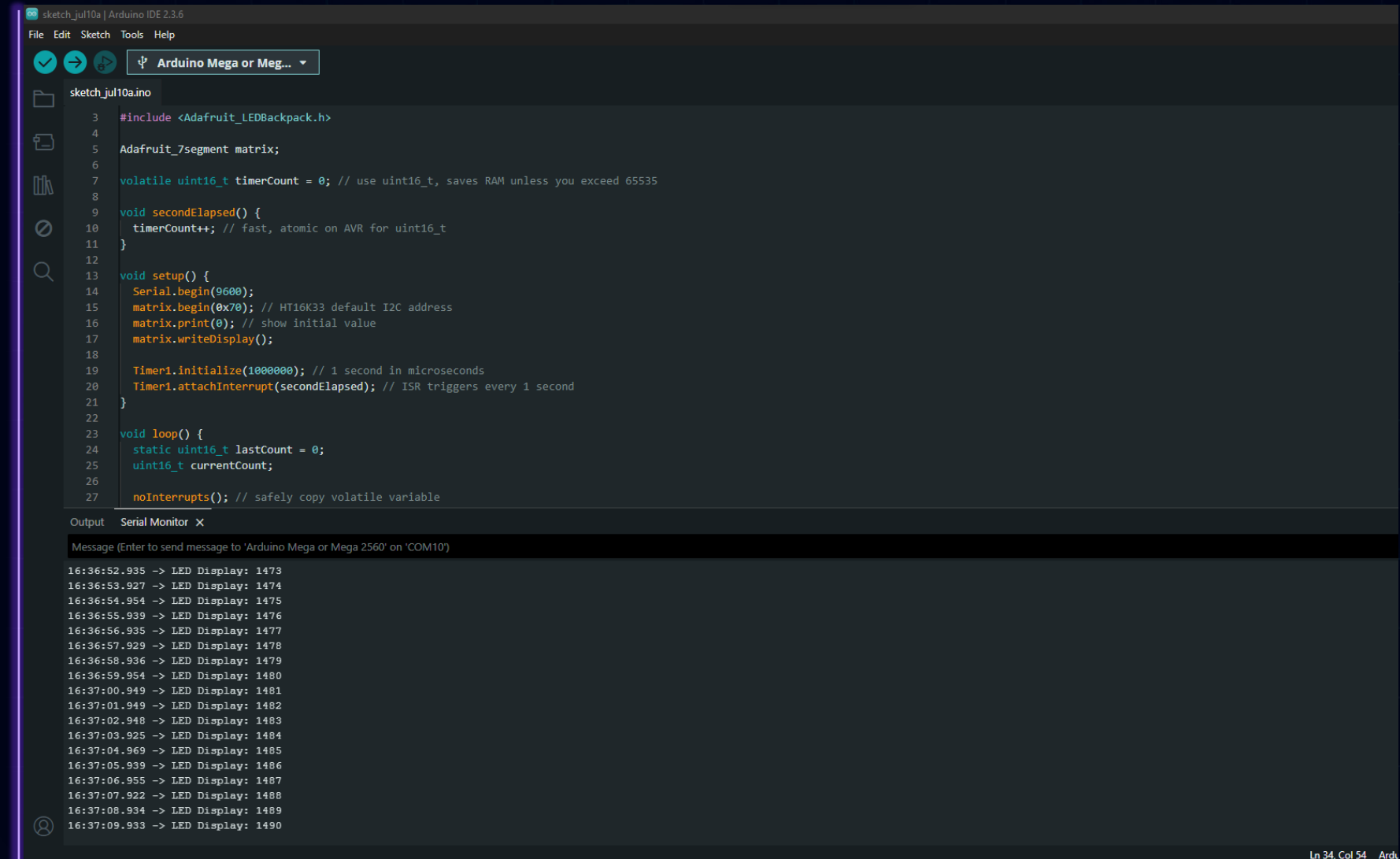
    if (currentCount != lastCount) {
        lastCount = currentCount;
        matrix.print(currentCount);
        matrix.writeDisplay(); // update only when needed
        Serial.print(F("LED Display: "));
        Serial.print(currentCount);
    }
}
```


LED Backpack Counter Test Results

Serial Output

The LED display should show a count that increases by 1 every second, and the Serial Monitor should display the same count shown on the LED Backpack Counter.

If both displays are synchronized and updating as expected, the system is functioning correctly and ready for use.



The screenshot displays the Arduino IDE interface. The top menu bar includes 'File', 'Edit', 'Sketch', 'Tools', and 'Help'. Below the menu is a toolbar with icons for saving, running, and uploading. The main editor area shows the sketch 'sketch_jul10a.ino' with the following code:

```
3 #include <Adafruit_LEDBackpack.h>
4
5 Adafruit_7segment matrix;
6
7 volatile uint16_t timerCount = 0; // use uint16_t, saves RAM unless you exceed 65535
8
9 void secondElapsed() {
10   timerCount++; // fast, atomic on AVR for uint16_t
11 }
12
13 void setup() {
14   Serial.begin(9600);
15   matrix.begin(0x70); // HT16K33 default I2C address
16   matrix.print(0); // show initial value
17   matrix.writeDisplay();
18
19   Timer1.initialize(1000000); // 1 second in microseconds
20   Timer1.attachInterrupt(secondElapsed); // ISR triggers every 1 second
21 }
22
23 void loop() {
24   static uint16_t lastCount = 0;
25   uint16_t currentCount;
26
27   noInterrupts(); // safely copy volatile variable
```

Below the code editor is the 'Serial Monitor' window, which is currently empty. The status bar at the bottom right indicates 'Ln 34, Col 54'.

Module VII

Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3

Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 Operational Test

Follow the instructions to complete a functional test of the GPS Module. This will verify that the GPS is acquiring a signal, providing accurate location data, and communicating properly with the system. Once the test passes, the module is ready for integration into your project.

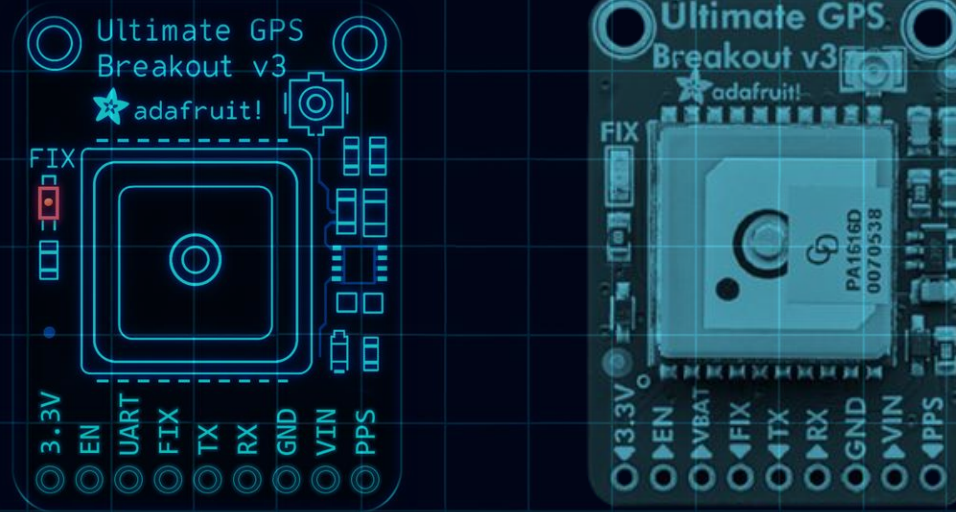


Figure 7.02 – Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3

Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 Satellite Fix Indicator

The FIX LED indicates the GPS module's lock status. When the module is searching for satellites, the LED blinks rapidly (about once per second). Once it obtains a valid position fix—using signals from at least 3 satellites—the LED slows down and begins blinking once every 15 seconds. This change in blink rate lets you know that the GPS has a reliable location fix and is actively tracking satellites.

The FIX LED will flash once every 15 seconds after acquiring your position.

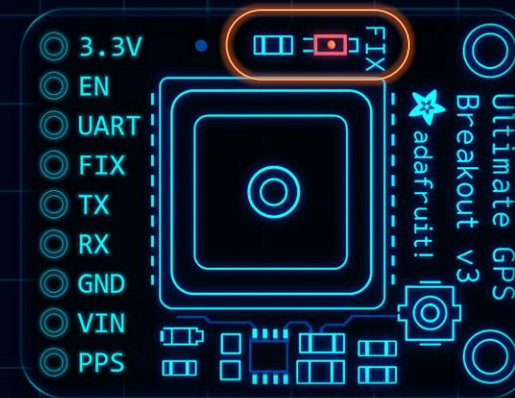


Figure 7.01 – Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 Data Output Pins

Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 Output

The GPS module outputs data using the NMEA (National Marine Electronics Association) standard—readable ASCII text sentences sent over a serial connection. These sentences include key information such as time, latitude, longitude, altitude, speed, fix status, and satellite count.

In addition to serial data, the module features a PPS (Pulse Per Second) pin, which outputs a precise 1 Hz pulse aligned with the start of each second. This pulse is highly accurate and is used for time synchronization in applications requiring precise timing.

GPS data is sent through the TX pin using the NMEA format, while the PPS pin outputs a 1Hz pulse (one pulse per second) for accurate time sync.



Figure 7.01 – Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 Data Output Pins

NMEA Format Sentence Types

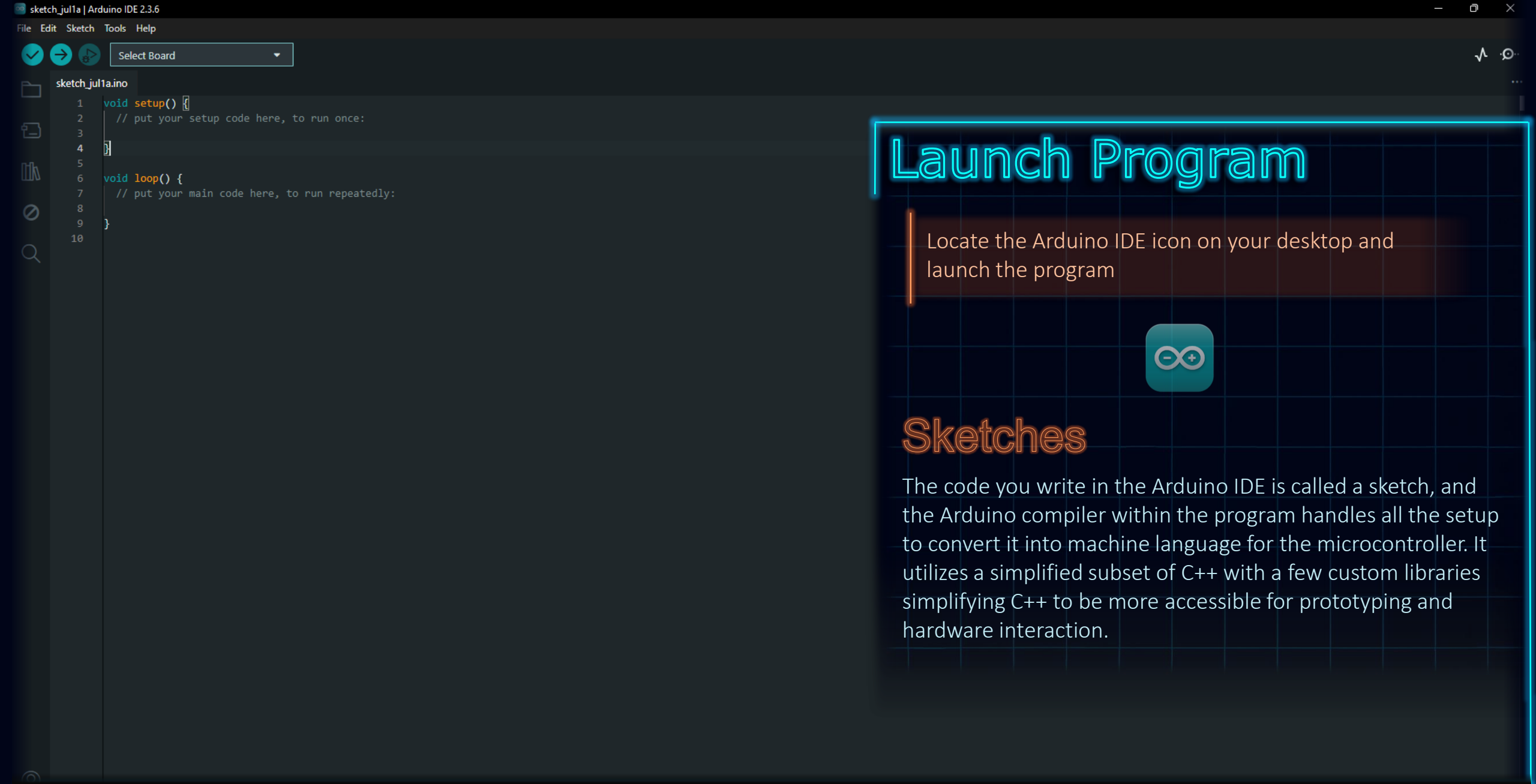
The GPS module outputs data in standard NMEA sentences, each beginning with a \$ symbol and carrying specific types of information. Sentence types include:

- \$GPGGA – Provides essential fix data including time, latitude, longitude, fix status, number of satellites, and altitude.
- \$GPGSA – Lists which satellites are used in the fix and provides Dilution of Precision (DOP) values that indicate GPS accuracy.
- \$GPGSV – Describes the satellites currently in view, including their elevation, azimuth, and signal strength.
- \$GPRMC – Offers the minimum recommended navigation data: time, date, fix validity, speed over ground, and course over ground.
- \$GPVTG – Reports the actual ground track angle and speed in both knots and kilometers per hour.

Each sentence is updated once per second by default and can be selectively enabled or disabled for performance tuning or bandwidth reduction.

Sentence Types	Data Type
GGA	Global Positioning System Fixed Data
GSA	GNSS DOP and Active Satellites
GSV	GNSS Satellites in View
RMC	Recommended Minimum Specific Data
VTG	Course Over Ground and Ground Speed

Refer to the appendix for full sentence breakdowns.



Launch Program

Locate the Arduino IDE icon on your desktop and launch the program



Sketches

The code you write in the Arduino IDE is called a sketch, and the Arduino compiler within the program handles all the setup to convert it into machine language for the microcontroller. It utilizes a simplified subset of C++ with a few custom libraries simplifying C++ to be more accessible for prototyping and hardware interaction.

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Arduino SigFox for MKRFox1200 by Arduino

sketch_jul1a.ino

1 void setup() {
2 // put your setup code here, to run once:
3 }
4
5
6 void loop() {
7 // put your main code here, to run repeatedly:
8 }
9
10

Essential Libraries

- 1) Click on the Libraries icon in the left-hand panel of the Arduino IDE.
- 2) Use the search bar to find and install the latest versions of the following library:
 - o Adafruit GPS Library

What are Libraries?

Arduino libraries are packaged collections of functions and drivers that extend the Arduino's capabilities to work with specific hardware or features.

Be sure to select **Install All** when prompted about dependencies.

Arduino to PC USB Connection

Connecting the USB Type-B cable between your computer and the Arduino board establishes a bidirectional communication link, allowing your computer to upload code to the microcontroller while also enabling the Arduino to send data back to the computer.

Connect the USB Type-B cable to your computer and the Arduino board.

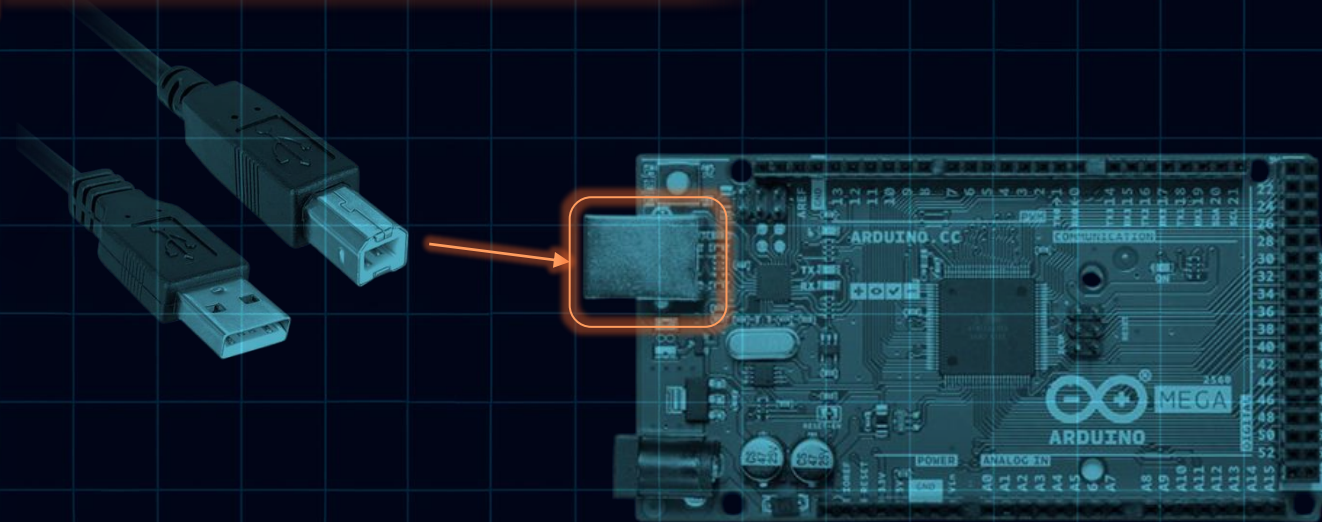


Figure 7.03 – Arduino-PC USB Connection

Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - PPS Wiring

The GPS module provides a PPS (Pulse Per Second) output, which emits a square pulse precisely once per second. This pulse is synchronized to GPS satellite time, which is maintained by atomic clocks onboard the satellites. When connected to the Arduino ATmega 2560, the PPS pin provides a highly accurate time reference.

Connections

Arduino	GPS
GND	GND
5V	VIN
Pin 49	PPS

The cable plugged into the socket at the top right of the GPS module is the satellite antenna. It must be connected for the module to receive satellite signals and provide GPS data.

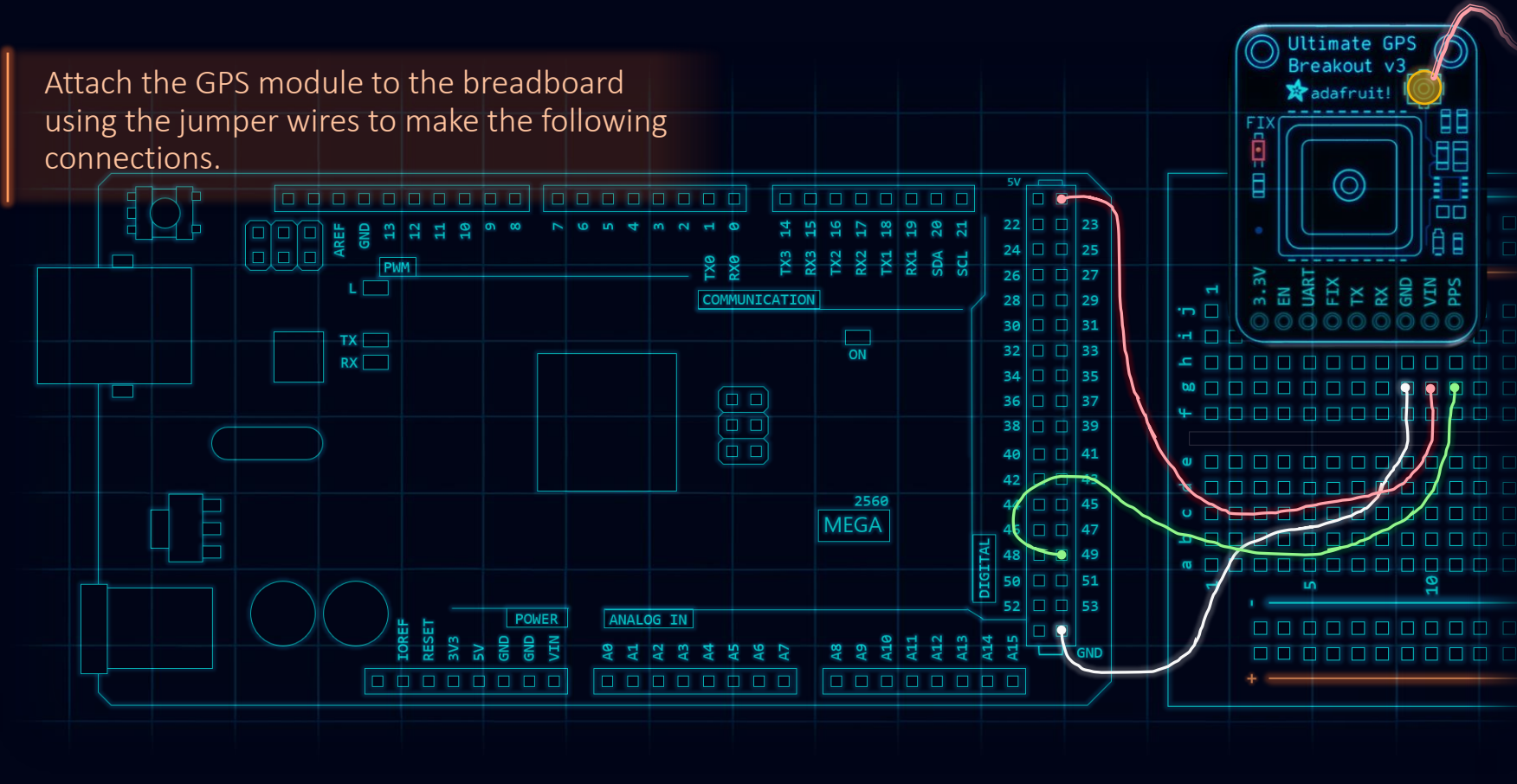


Figure 7.04 – Arduino ATmega2560 - Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - PPS Wiring Setup

Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - PPS Wiring

This photo shows the PPS wiring connected to the Arduino Mega 2560. The PPS output from the GPS module is wired directly to digital pin 49, which serves as the input capture pin for Timer 4. Verify that power and ground are securely connected, as unstable power can disrupt signal accuracy. Lastly, ensure the GPS antenna is properly attached, since the PPS signal is only valid when the module has a satellite fix.

Connections

Arduino	GPS
GND	GND
5V	VIN
Pin 49	PPS

When you power on the GPS module, the FIX LED will start blinking. This indicates that it is searching for satellites. Once a position fix is acquired, the module will begin transmitting NMEA data.

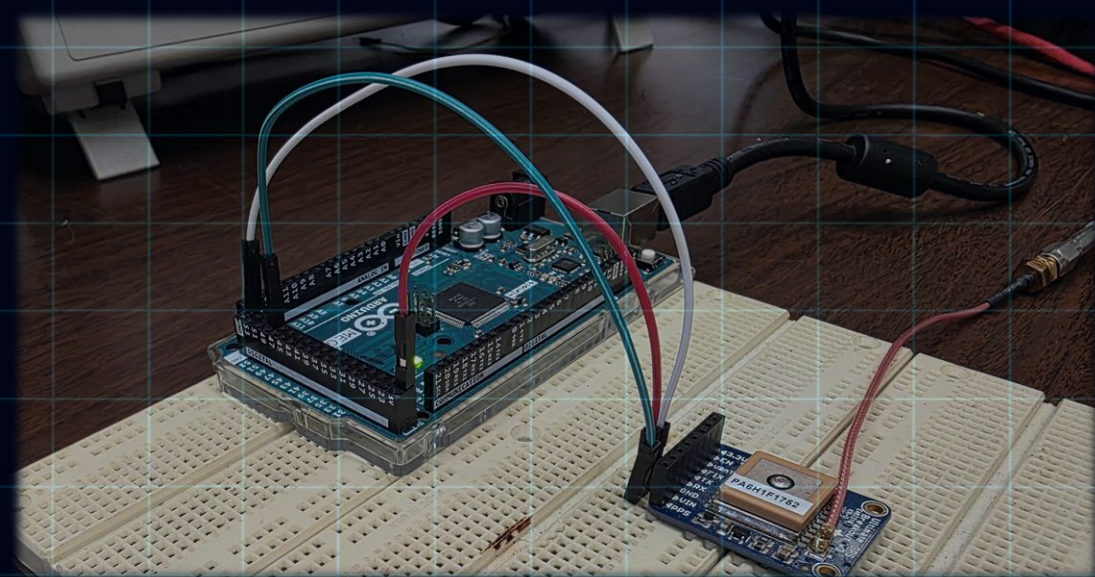


Figure 7.05 – Arduino ATmega2560 - Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 Wiring Setup

Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - PPS Test Sketch

Code Block

Read through the following code and try to understand the instructions being given to the Arduino.

Once done, paste the following Arduino sketch into the IDE and upload it to verify that the module is functional.

Make sure the baud rate in the Serial Monitor matches the one defined in your code. Here, it is set to 115200 as shown in:

```
Serial.begin(115200)
```

```
#define PPS_PIN 49 // ICP4 on ATmega2560

volatile bool ppsDetected = false;

// Interrupt Service Routine for Timer 4 Input Capture
ISR(TIMER4_CAPT_vect) {
  ppsDetected = true;
}

void setup() {
  Serial.begin(115200);
  pinMode(PPS_PIN, INPUT);

  // Configure Timer 4 for Input Capture on rising edge, no prescaler
  TCCR4A = 0;
  TCCR4B = _BV(ICES4) | _BV(CS40); // ICES4: rising edge, CS40: no prescaler
  TIMSK4 = _BV(ICIE4); // Enable Timer 4 Input Capture interrupt
}

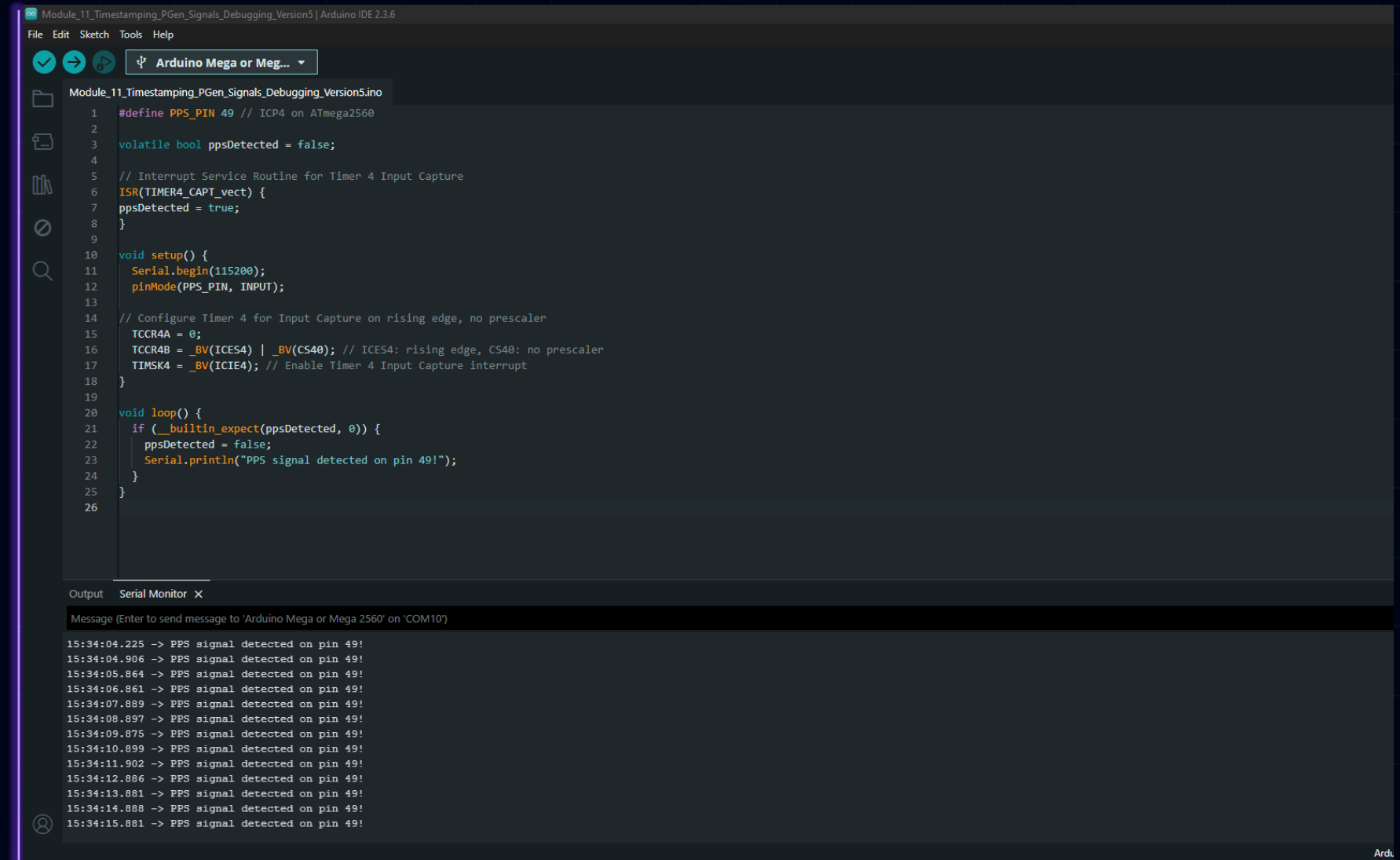
void loop() {
  if (__builtin_expect(ppsDetected, 0)) {
    ppsDetected = false;
    Serial.println("PPS signal detected on pin 49!");
  }
}
```


Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - PPS Test Results

Serial Output

The Serial Monitor should display a message each time the GPS module sends a PPS pulse, confirming that a rising edge was successfully detected on pin 48.

If the messages appear once per second, aligning with the GPS's 1 Hz pulse, the PPS signal is being received and processed correctly.



```
Module_11_Timestamping_PGen_Signals_Debugging_Version5.ino
1  #define PPS_PIN 49 // ICP4 on ATmega2560
2
3  volatile bool ppsDetected = false;
4
5  // Interrupt Service Routine for Timer 4 Input Capture
6  ISR(TIMER4_CAPT_vect) {
7    ppsDetected = true;
8  }
9
10 void setup() {
11   Serial.begin(115200);
12   pinMode(PPS_PIN, INPUT);
13
14   // Configure Timer 4 for Input Capture on rising edge, no prescaler
15   TCCR4A = 0;
16   TCCR4B = _BV(ICES4) | _BV(CS40); // ICES4: rising edge, CS40: no prescaler
17   TIMSK4 = _BV(ICIE4); // Enable Timer 4 Input Capture interrupt
18 }
19
20 void loop() {
21   if (__builtin_expect(ppsDetected, 0)) {
22     ppsDetected = false;
23     Serial.println("PPS signal detected on pin 49!");
24   }
25 }
26
```

Output Serial Monitor X

Message (Enter to send message to 'Arduino Mega or Mega 2560' on 'COM10')

```
15:34:04.225 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:04.906 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:05.864 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:06.861 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:07.889 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:08.897 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:09.875 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:10.899 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:11.902 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:12.886 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:13.881 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:14.888 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:15.881 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
```

Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - NMEA Wiring

The GPS module connects to the Arduino Mega 2560 through a UART (Universal Asynchronous Receiver-Transmitter) interface. It uses the TX (transmit) and RX (receive) lines to send and receive serial data, allowing the microcontroller to receive NMEA sentences from the GPS in real time.

Connections

Arduino	GPS
Pin 19 (RX1)	TX
Pin 18 (TX1)	RX
GND	GND
5V	VIN

The cable plugged into the socket at the top right of the GPS module is the satellite antenna. It must be connected for the module to receive satellite signals and provide GPS data.

Attach the GPS module to the breadboard using the jumper wires to make the following connections.

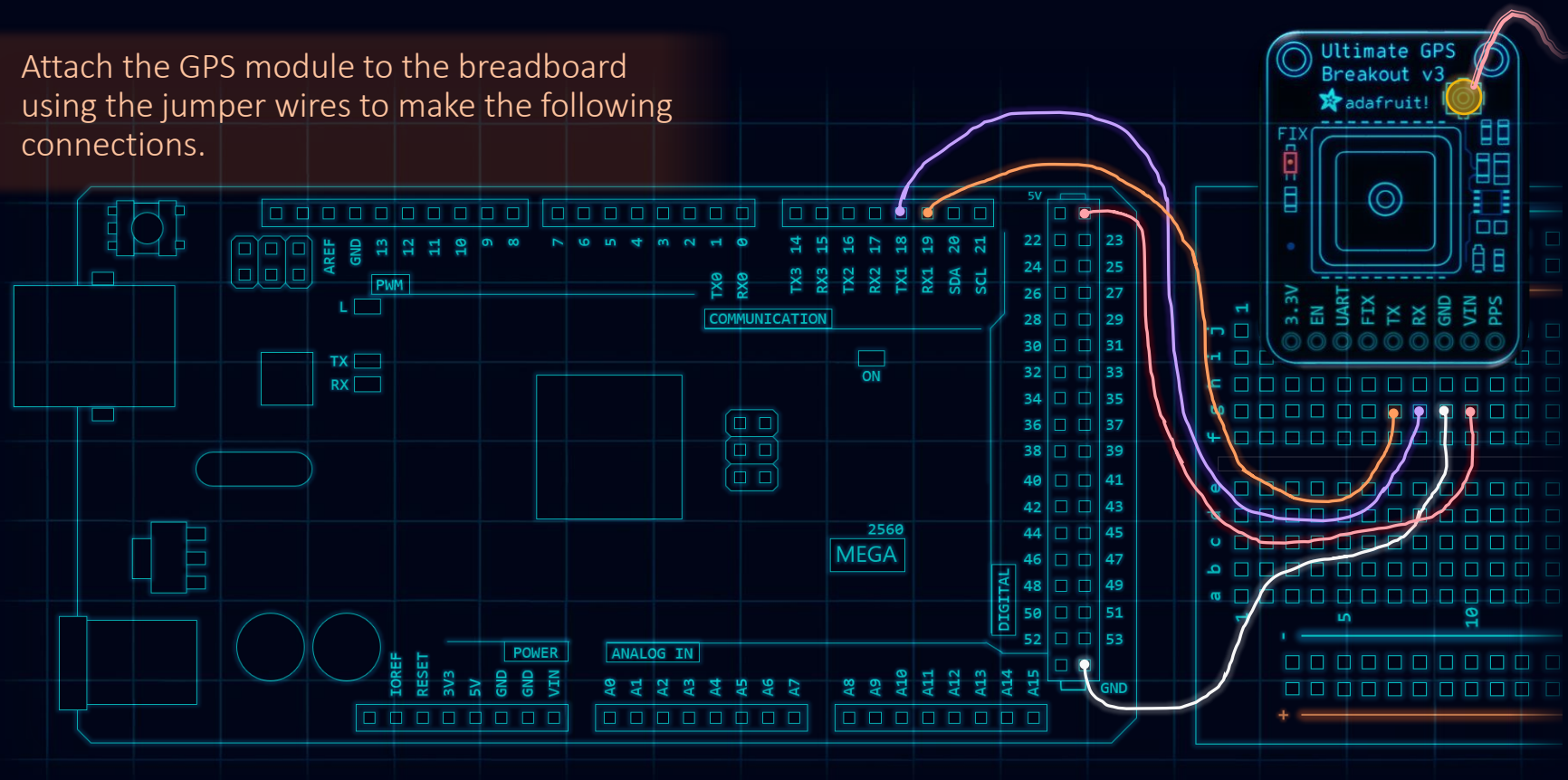


Figure 7.06 – Arduino ATmega2560 - Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 Wiring Setup

Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - NMEA Wiring

This photo illustrates the wiring based on the connection chart. Ensure that all jumper wires follow the correct orientation and are firmly seated. Pay special attention to the TX/RX crossover and the power/ground lines, as improper connections can prevent the GPS from sending data or powering up.

Connections

Arduino	GPS
Pin 19 (RX1)	TX
Pin 18 (TX1)	RX
GND	GND
5V	VIN

When you power on the GPS module, the FIX LED will start blinking. This indicates that it is searching for satellites. Once a position fix is acquired, the module will begin transmitting NMEA data.

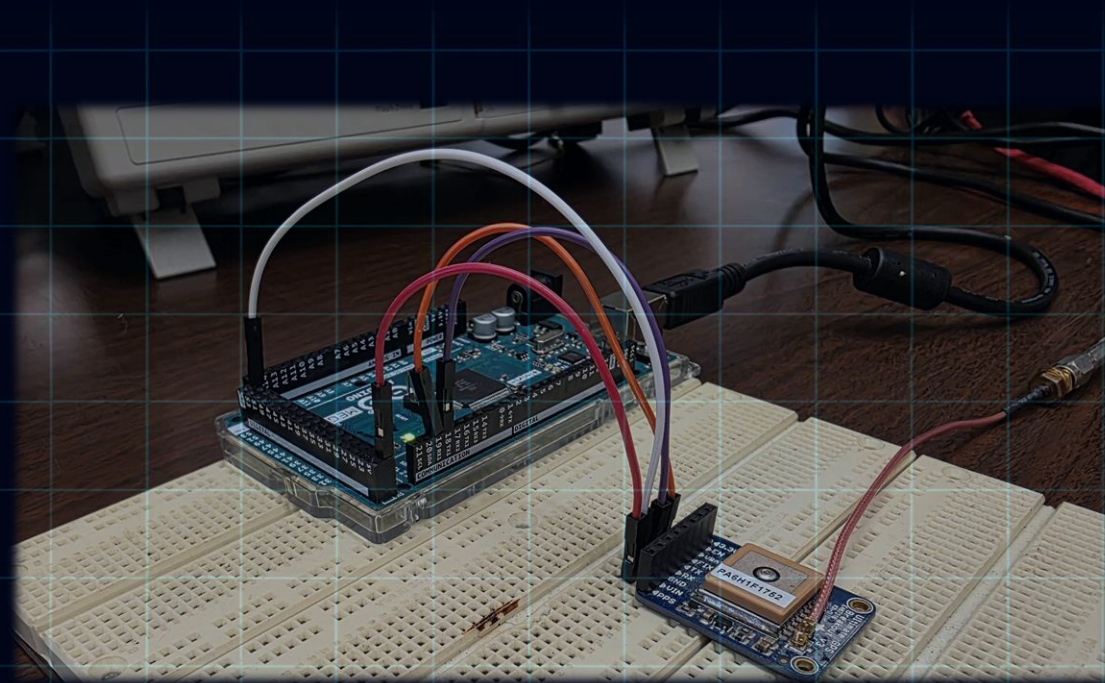


Figure 7.07 – Arduino ATmega2560 - Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 Wiring Setup

Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - NMEA Test Sketch

Code Block

Read through the following code and try to understand the instructions being given to the Arduino.

Once done, paste the following Arduino sketch into the IDE and upload it to verify that the module is functional.

Make sure the baud rate in the Serial Monitor matches the one defined in your code. Here, it is set to 9600 as shown in:

```
Serial.begin(9600)
```

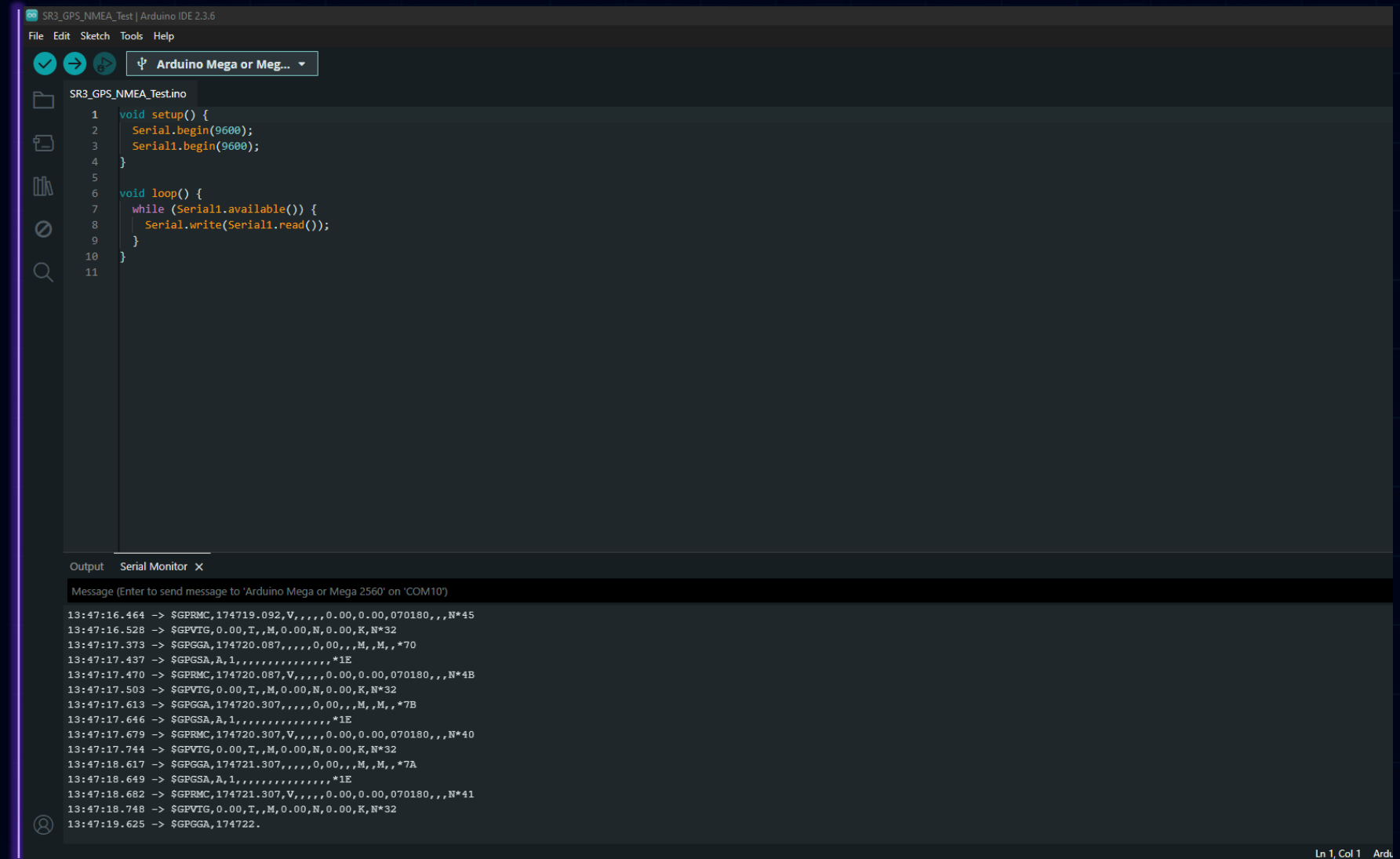
```
void setup() {  
  Serial.begin(9600);  
  Serial1.begin(9600);  
}  
  
void loop() {  
  while (Serial1.available()) {  
    Serial.write(Serial1.read());  
  }  
}
```


Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - NMEA Test Results

Serial Output

The Serial Monitor should display NMEA sentences from the GPS receiver, like the example shown here.

If NMEA sentences appear continuously and update once per second, the GPS module is communicating properly with the microcontroller and is ready for use in your application.



The screenshot displays the Arduino IDE interface. The top menu bar includes File, Edit, Sketch, Tools, and Help. Below the menu is a toolbar with icons for running, uploading, and other functions. The main editor area shows the sketch 'SR3_GPS_NMEA_Testino' with the following code:

```
1 void setup() {  
2   Serial.begin(9600);  
3   Serial1.begin(9600);  
4 }  
5  
6 void loop() {  
7   while (Serial1.available()) {  
8     Serial.write(Serial1.read());  
9   }  
10 }  
11
```

Below the code editor is the 'Serial Monitor' window, which is currently open. It shows a list of NMEA sentences received from the GPS module, each preceded by a timestamp and a status indicator (e.g., '13:47:16.464 -> \$GPRMC,174719.092,V,0.00,0.00,070180.00,N*45'). The sentences include \$GPRMC, \$GPVTG, \$GPGGA, and \$GPGSA, providing real-time data on the GPS module's status and location.

Module VIII

XBee3 Transceivers

XBee3 Transceiver Operational Test

Use the following instructions to perform a functional test of the XBee3 transceivers. This will confirm that both devices are correctly configured, paired, and capable of wirelessly transmitting data to the Arduino.

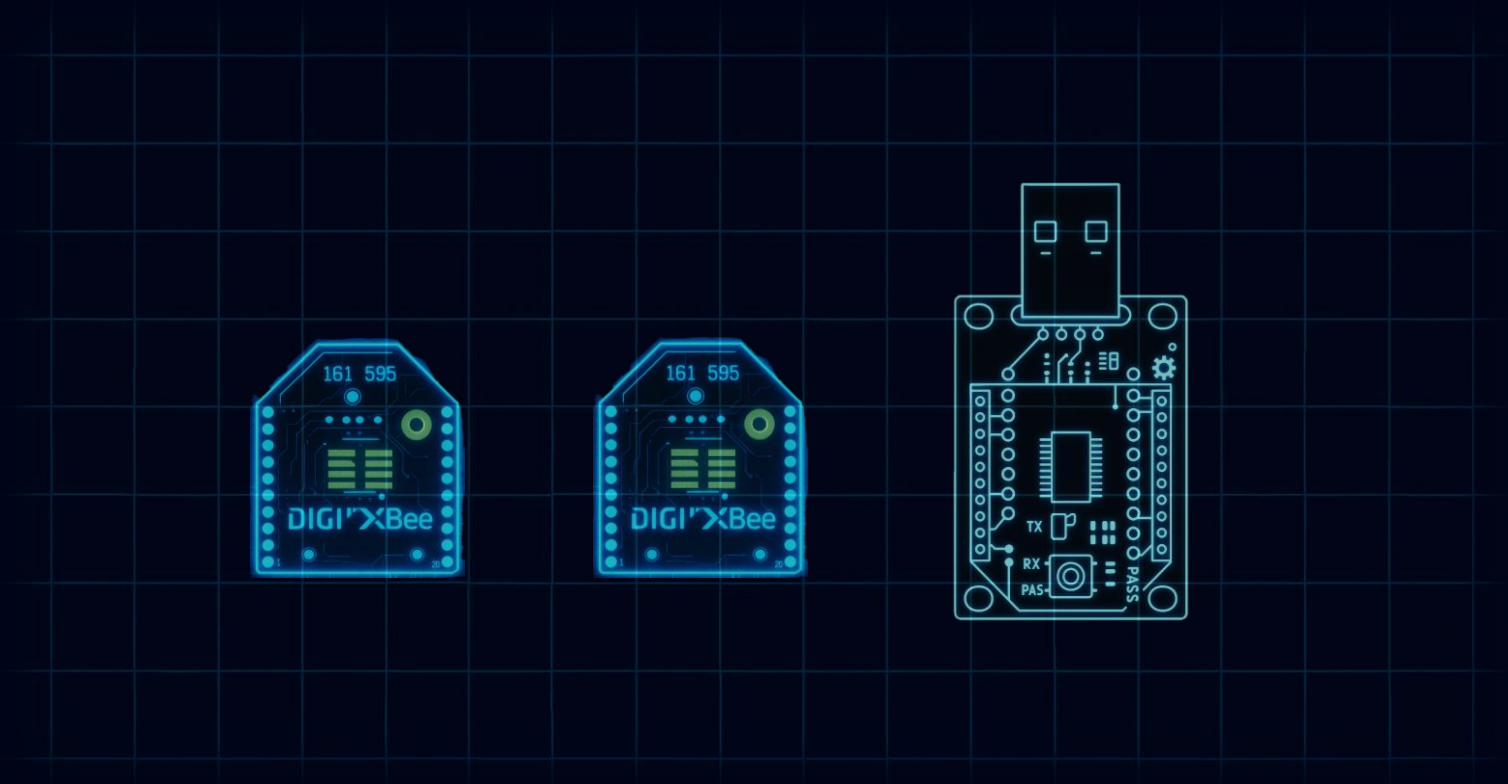


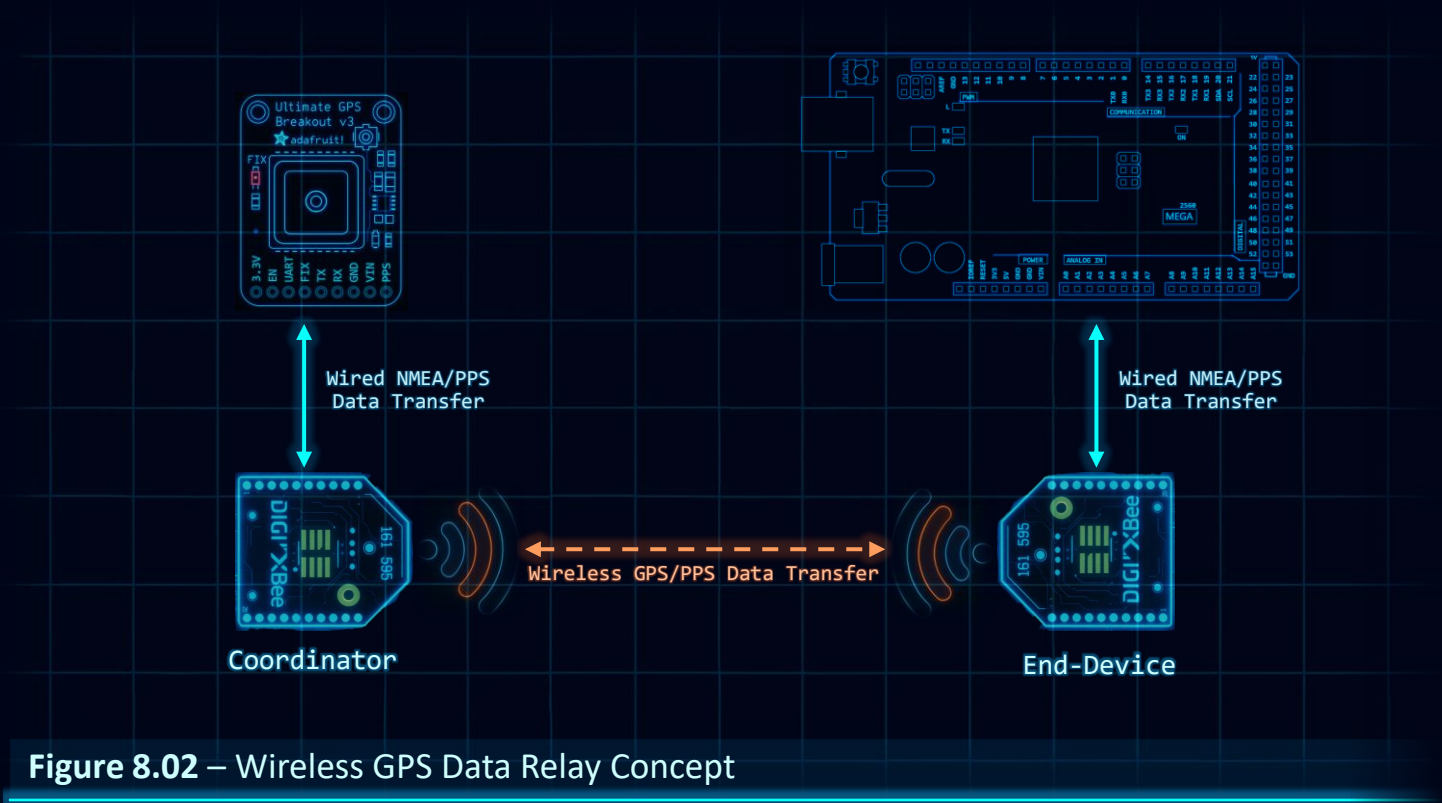
Figure 8.01 – XBee3 Transceivers and XBee Dongle

Wireless GPS Data Relay System

The XBee3 functions as a transceiver, capable of both sending and receiving wireless data. Although the hardware is identical, the device's behavior will differ based on its configuration. To establish communication, one XBee3 is configured as the Coordinator, which starts and manages the wireless network. The other is set as an End Device, which joins the network and communicates with the Coordinator.

Data Flow

- In our circuit, the Adafruit GPS module outputs real-time NMEA data and a PPS (Pulse Per Second) signal through a wired connection to an XBee3 Coordinator.
- The Coordinator then transmits both the NMEA data and the PPS signal wirelessly to a paired XBee3 End Device.
- The End Device then sends the received NMEA data and PPS Signal via a wired connection to the ATmega2560.



XBee3 Dongle Connection

To begin configuration, the XBee3 module must first be securely mounted onto an XBee Dongle as shown in the image below. This dongle provides both power and a serial interface, allowing the module to communicate with a computer. Once connected to your PC, you can launch the configuration software (Digi XCTU) to detect the device, view its settings, and modify its parameters.

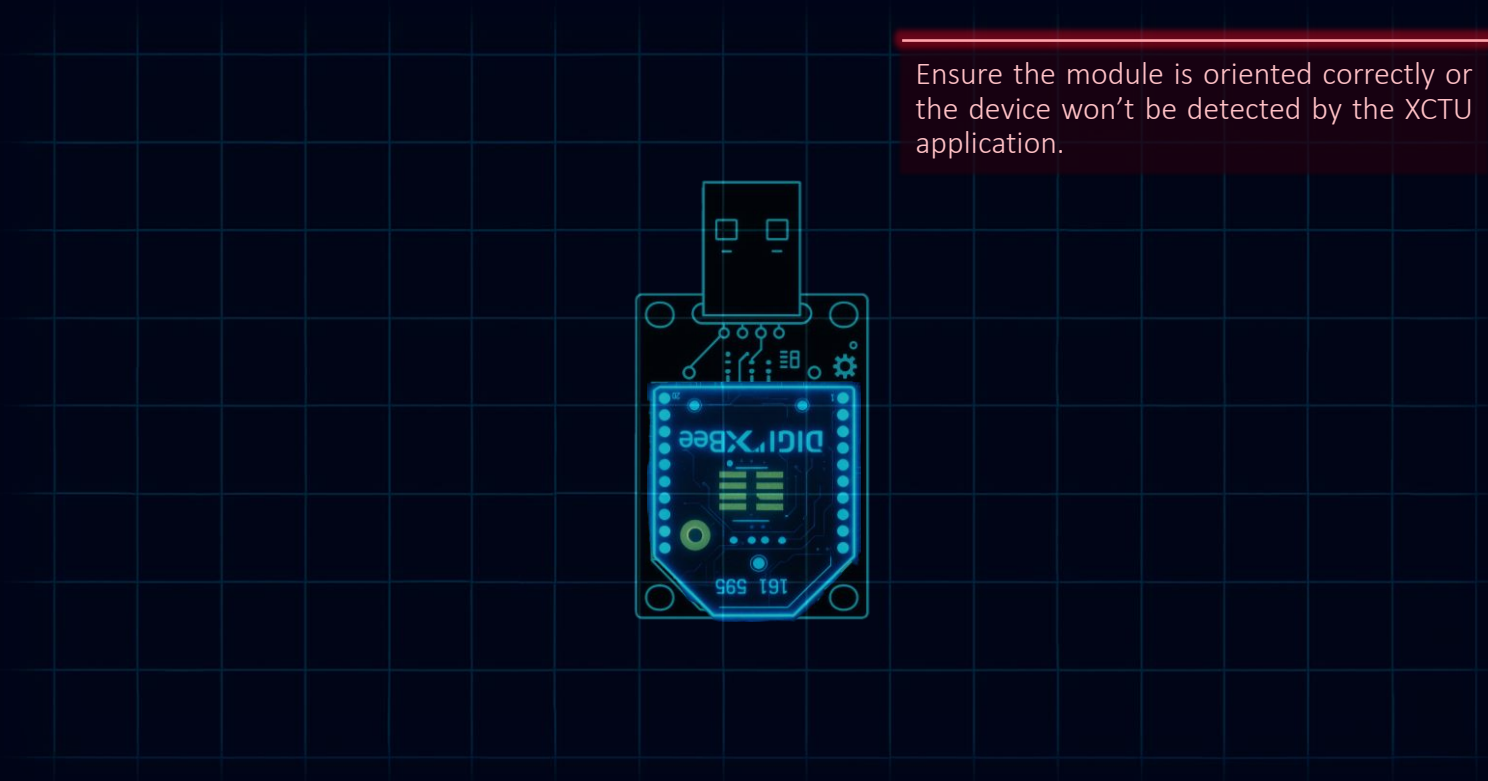
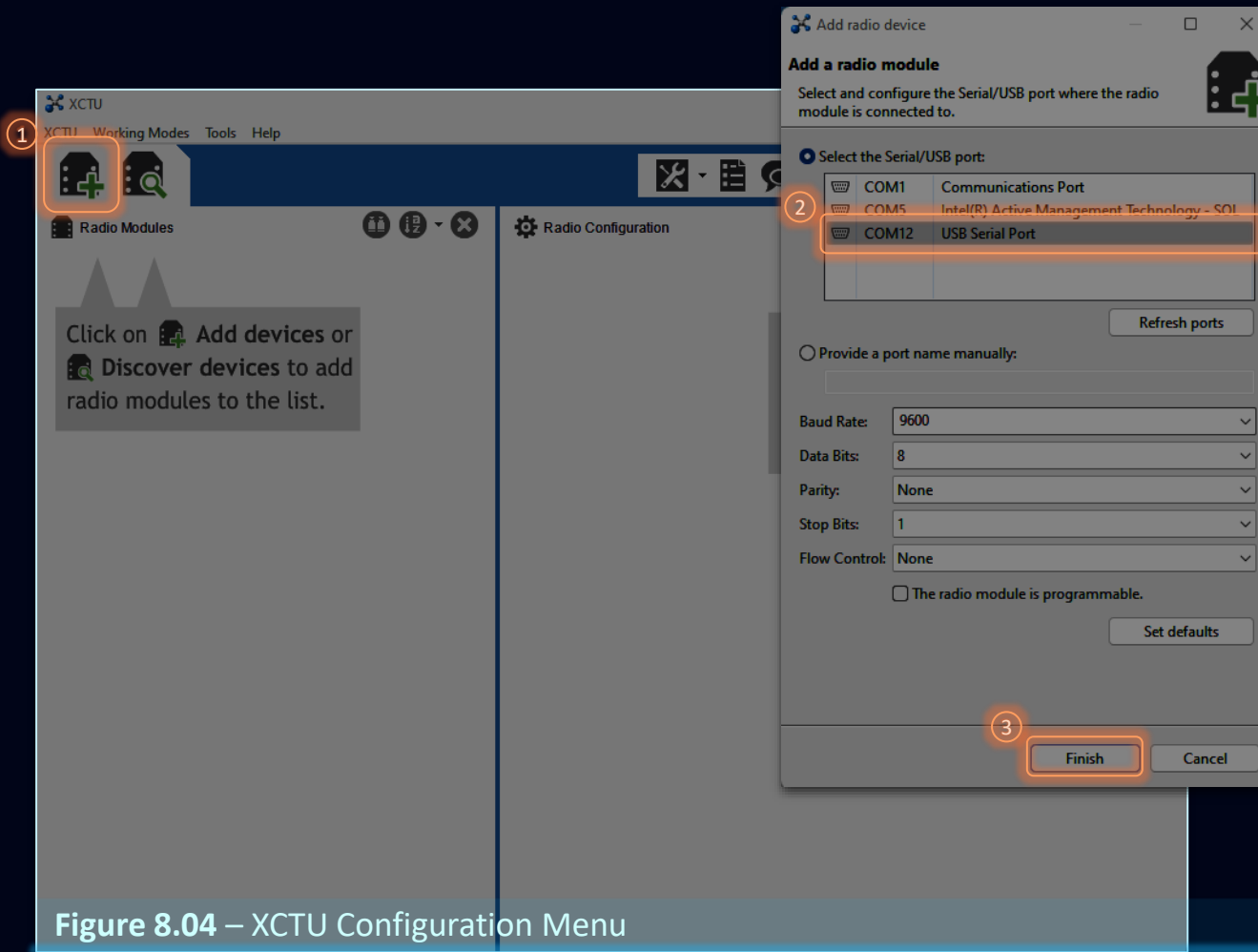


Figure 8.03 – XBee3 Mounted Dongle

XCTU Hardware Detection



Getting Started

- Locate the XCTU icon on your desktop and launch the program.



- Click on the Add Devices icon in the top left corner.
- In the pop up window, select the COM port listed as your USB Serial Port and click on Finish.
- Wait a few seconds as your computer detects your hardware.

XBee3 Firmware Updates

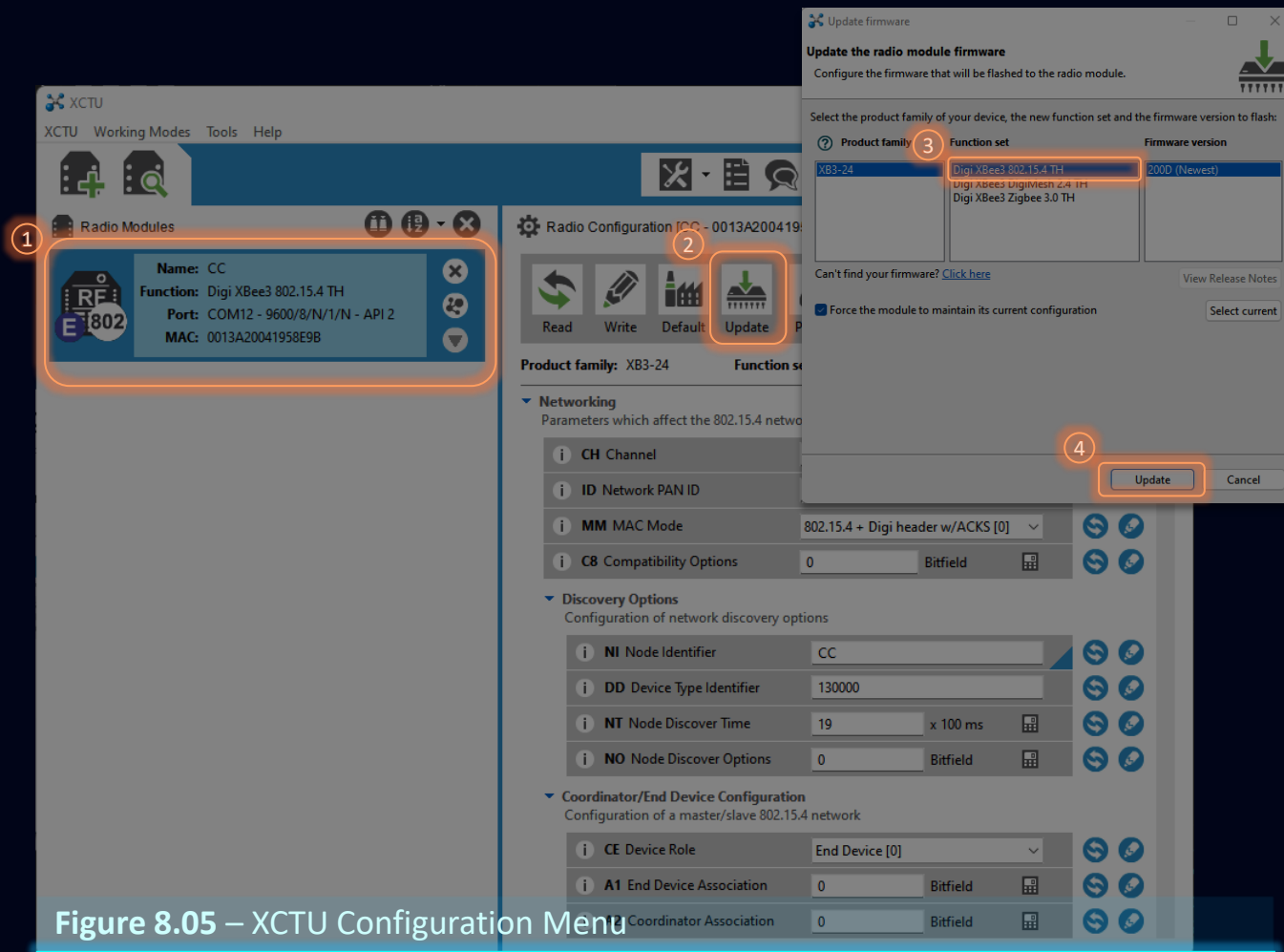
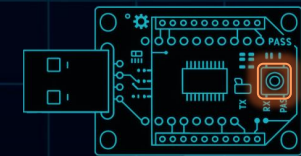
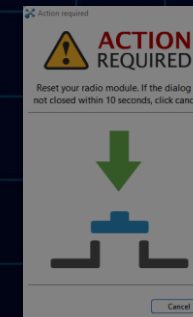


Figure 8.05 – XCTU Configuration Menu

Protocol Selection

- Select the XBee3 Device detected by XCTU.
- Click on update from the configuration menu.
- Then in the pop-up window make sure to choose the Digi XBee3 802.15.4 TH option before proceeding with the update.



If you receive this prompt while executing the update, you can find the reset button on the XBee dongle identified in the image above.

XBee3 Address Mapping

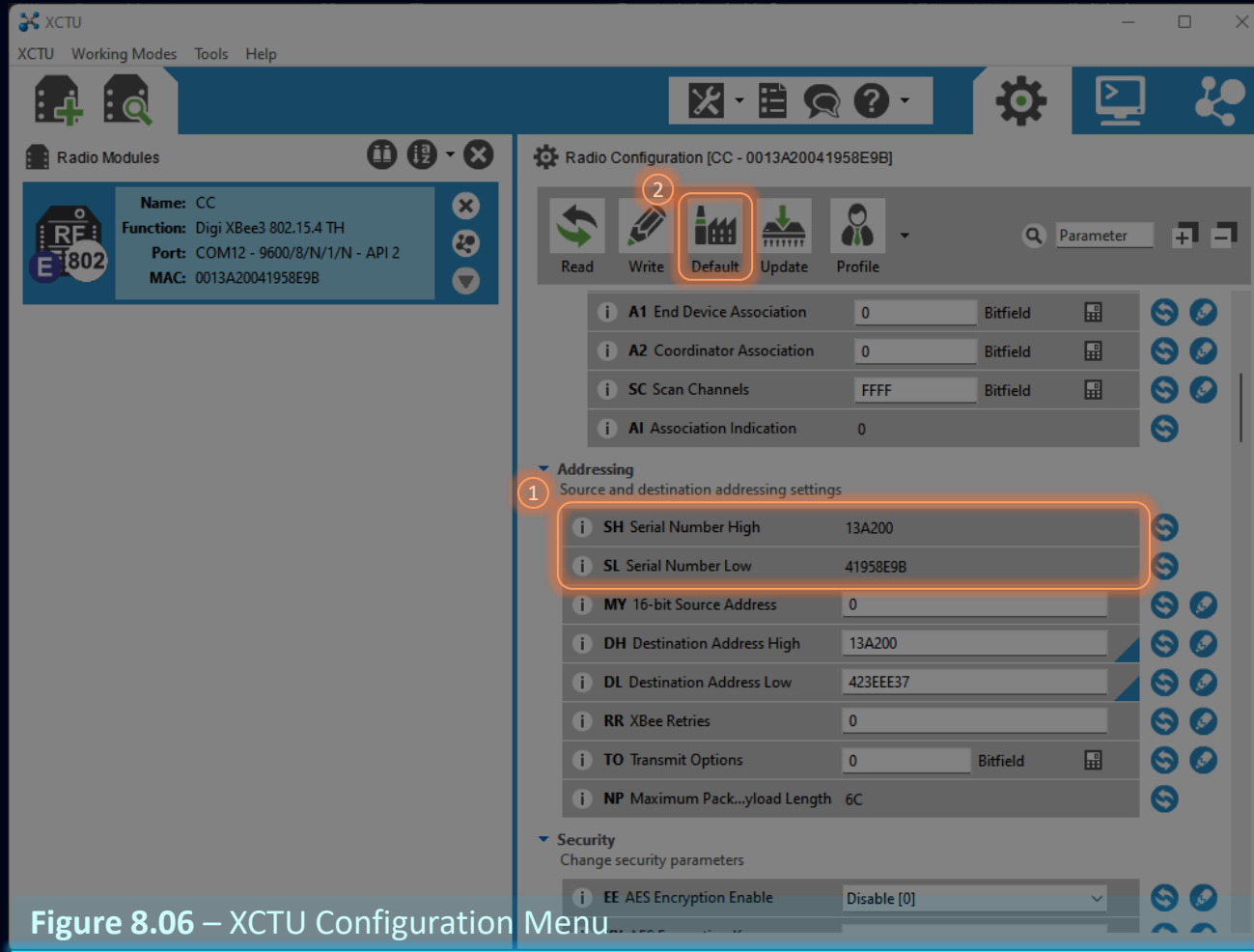


Figure 8.06 – XCTU Configuration Menu

Serial Numbers

- Locate the fields labeled Serial Number High and Serial Number Low in the configuration menu.
- Write down both values with their corresponding labels on a notepad for later use. Then repeat this step for the other radio module.
- These serial numbers will be needed when entering the Destination Addresses during configuration.
- Finally, reset the module to default settings and click on write to save the changes.

To establish reliable communication between the Coordinator and End Device, each XBee module must know the unique serial address of its counterpart. This allows the Coordinator to direct data specifically to the intended End Device, and vice versa, enabling point-to-point communication within the wireless network.

XCTU Radio Module Parameters

Configuration

Now that the Serial Numbers for both devices are recorded, go into the settings for each radio module and update the configuration using the values provided in the tables.



Be sure to click the Write icon after making any changes so that your updates are saved to the device.

Coordinator Settings

Setting	Configuration
CE Device Role	[1] Coordinator
DH Destination Address High	* Enter value from Serial Number High field of the End-Device
DL Destination Address Low	* Enter value from Serial Number Low field of the End-Device
D0 DIO0/AD0/Commissioning Button Config.	[3] Digital Input
IC Digital I/O Change Detection	1
IA I/O Input Address	* Enter the MAC Address of the End-Device

End-Device Settings

Setting	Configuration
CE Device Role	[0] End-Device
DH Destination Address High	* Enter value from Serial Number High field of the Coordinator
DL Destination Address Low	* Enter value from Serial Number Low field of the Coordinator
D0 DIO0/AD0/Commissioning Button Config.	[4] Digital Output, Low
IC Digital I/O Change Detection	1
IA I/O Input Address	FFFF

XBee3 Coordinator Wiring

The GPS module provides NMEA data over its TX/RX lines and a Pulse-Per-Second (PPS) signal for timing. The GPS TX and RX are connected to the XBee3 DIN and DOUT respectively, enabling bidirectional serial communication. The PPS output from the GPS is wired to the XBee3 DIO0 pin, allowing the PPS signal to be mirrored wirelessly to a remote device for accurate time sync. Both devices share a common power supply via the breadboard.

Connections

XBee3	GPS
DIN	TX
DOUT	RX
DIO0	PPS

The cable plugged into the socket at the top right of the GPS module is the satellite antenna. It must be connected for the module to receive satellite signals and provide GPS data.

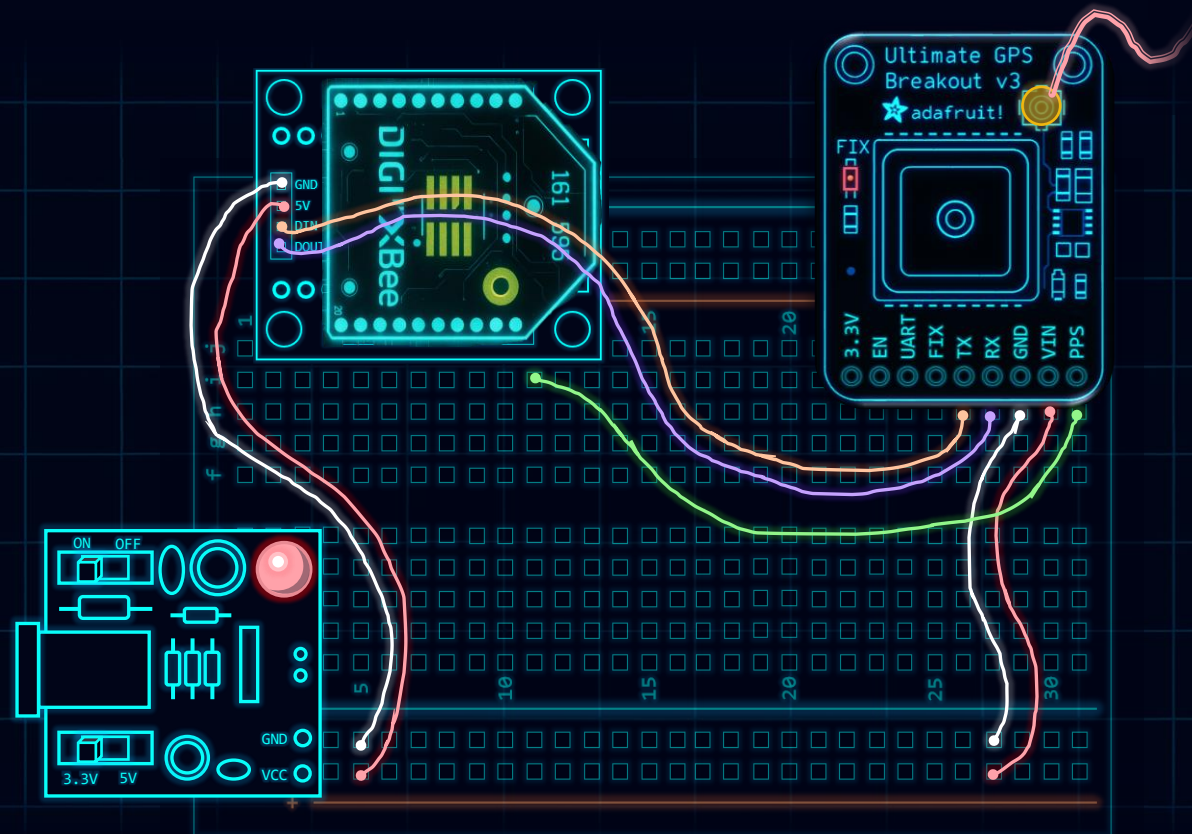


Figure 7.06 – XBee3 Coordinator - GPS Module Wiring

XBee3 End-Device Wiring

The XBee3 End Device receives GPS data and the PPS signal wirelessly. Its DIO0 pin mirrors the signal changes on the Coordinator and is then sent to the Arduino. The XBee3 DIN and DOUT are connected to the Arduino's TX1 and RX1 pins, enabling serial communication for GPS NMEA data. Power and ground are supplied from the Arduino's 5V and GND pins to the XBee3, completing the connection.

Connections

Arduino	XBee3
TX1	DIN
RX1	DOUT
Pin 49	PPS
GND	GND
5V	5V

The End-Device receives all of its data wirelessly from the Coordinator.

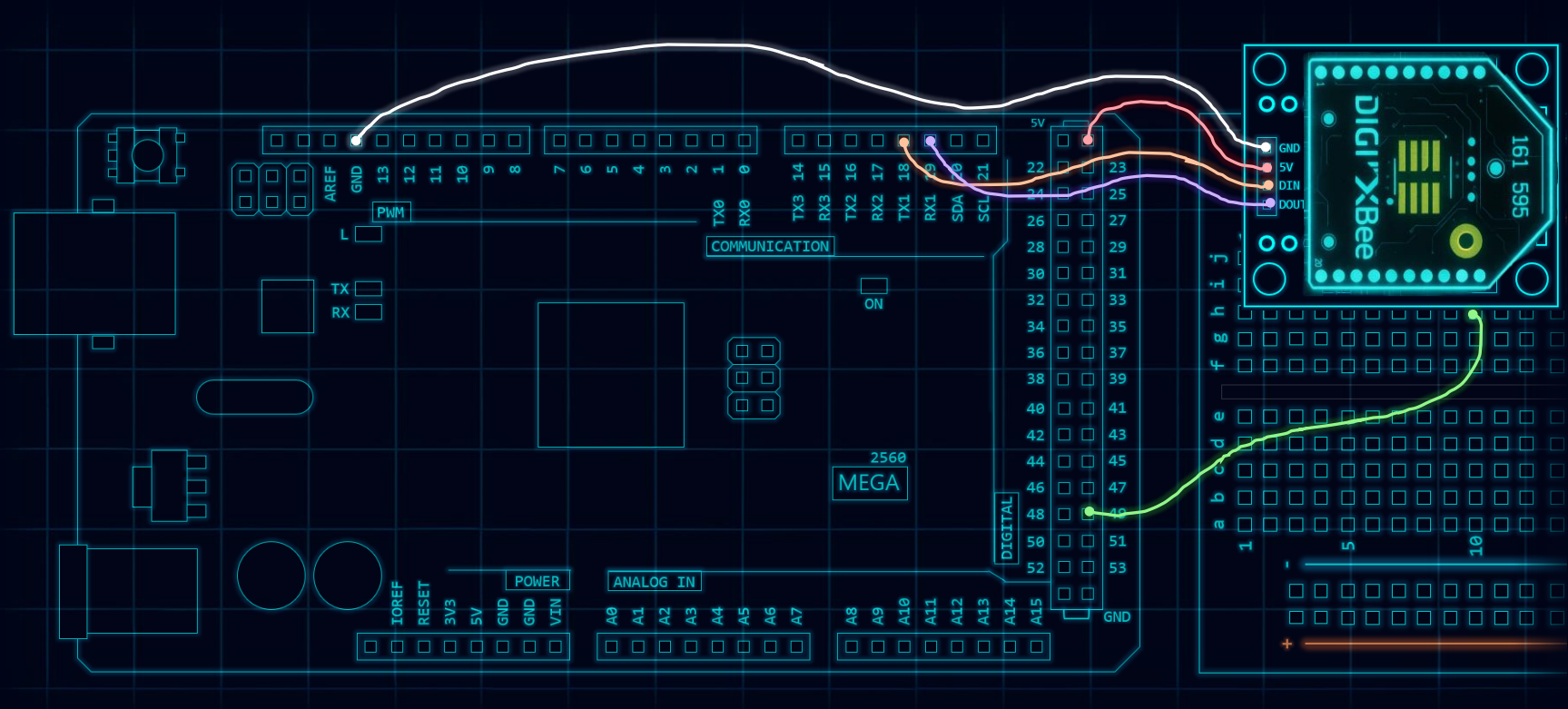


Figure 7.04 – Arduino ATmega2560 - Adafruit Ultimate GPS Breakout V3 - PPS Wiring Setup

XBee3 PPS Test Sketch

Code Block

Read through the following code and try to understand the instructions being given to the Arduino.

Once done, paste the following Arduino sketch into the IDE and upload it to verify that the module is functional.

Make sure the baud rate in the Serial Monitor matches the one defined in your code. Here, it is set to 115200 as shown in:

```
Serial.begin(115200)
```

```
#define PPS_PIN 49 // ICP4 on ATmega2560

volatile bool ppsDetected = false;

// Interrupt Service Routine for Timer 4 Input Capture
ISR(TIMER4_CAPT_vect) {
  ppsDetected = true;
}

void setup() {
  Serial.begin(115200);
  pinMode(PPS_PIN, INPUT);

  // Configure Timer 4 for Input Capture on rising edge, no prescaler
  TCCR4A = 0;
  TCCR4B = _BV(ICES4) | _BV(CS40); // ICES4: rising edge, CS40: no prescaler
  TIMSK4 = _BV(ICIE4); // Enable Timer 4 Input Capture interrupt
}

void loop() {
  if (__builtin_expect(ppsDetected, 0)) {
    ppsDetected = false;
    Serial.println("PPS signal detected on pin 49!");
  }
}
```

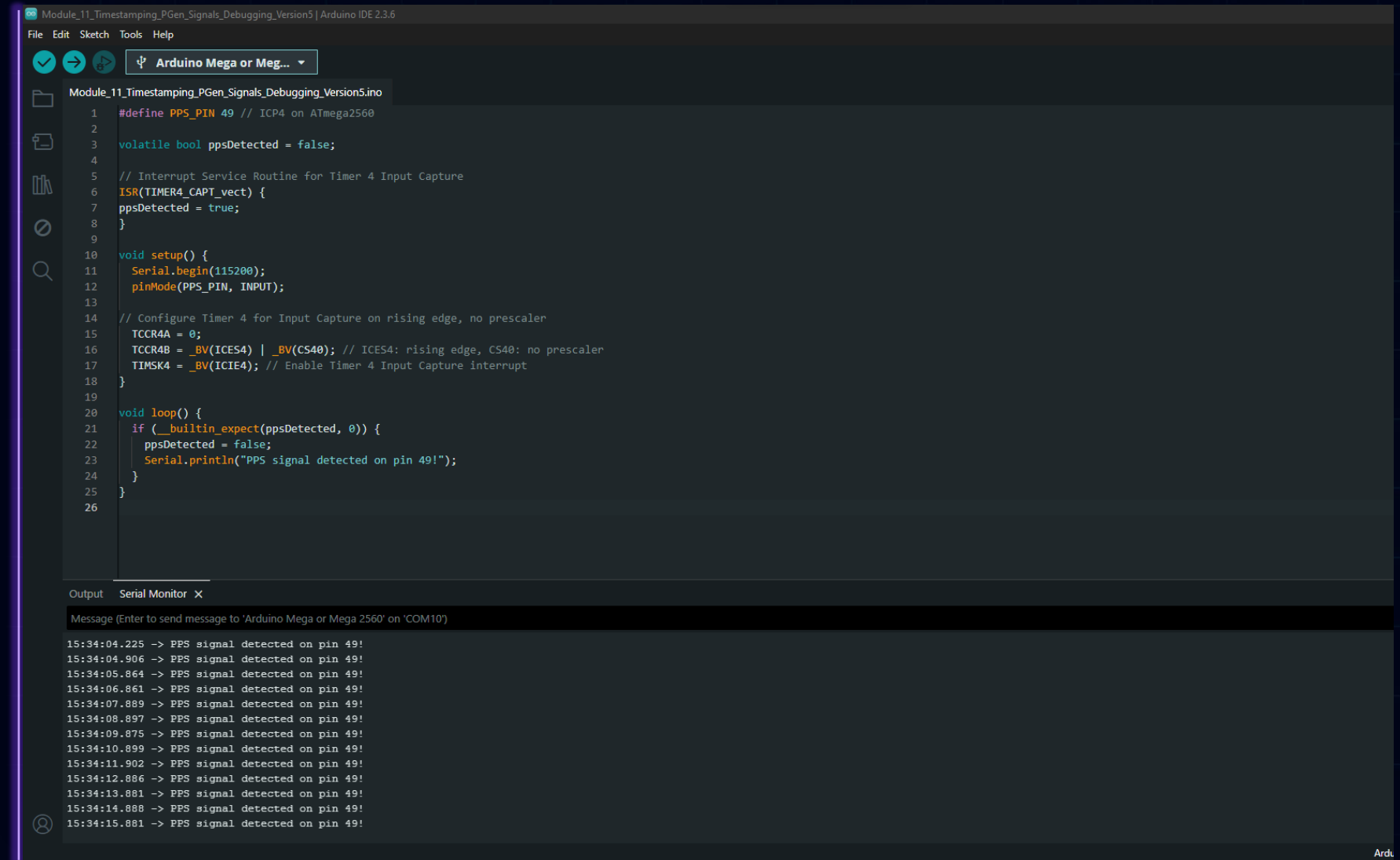

XBee3 PPS Test Results

Serial Output

The Serial Monitor should display a message each time the GPS module sends a PPS pulse, confirming that a rising edge was successfully detected on pin 48.

If the messages appear once per second, aligning with the GPS's 1 Hz pulse, the wireless PPS signal is being transmitted properly.

Let us move on to test if the NMEA data is being transmitted now.



The screenshot displays the Arduino IDE interface. The top menu bar includes File, Edit, Sketch, Tools, and Help. The toolbar shows icons for running, uploading, and saving. The dropdown menu for the board is set to 'Arduino Mega or Mega 2560'. The code editor shows the following code:

```
Module_11_Timestamping_PGen_Signals_Debugging_Version5.ino
1  #define PPS_PIN 49 // ICP4 on ATmega2560
2
3  volatile bool ppsDetected = false;
4
5  // Interrupt Service Routine for Timer 4 Input Capture
6  ISR(TIM4_CAPT_vect) {
7    ppsDetected = true;
8  }
9
10 void setup() {
11   Serial.begin(115200);
12   pinMode(PPS_PIN, INPUT);
13
14   // Configure Timer 4 for Input Capture on rising edge, no prescaler
15   TCCR4A = 0;
16   TCCR4B = _BV(ICES4) | _BV(CS40); // ICES4: rising edge, CS40: no prescaler
17   TIMSK4 = _BV(ICIE4); // Enable Timer 4 Input Capture interrupt
18 }
19
20 void loop() {
21   if (__builtin_expect(ppsDetected, 0)) {
22     ppsDetected = false;
23     Serial.println("PPS signal detected on pin 49!");
24   }
25 }
26
```

The Serial Monitor window is open, showing a list of messages received from the Arduino. The messages are timestamped and indicate that a PPS signal was detected on pin 49 at regular intervals.

```
Output Serial Monitor X
Message (Enter to send message to 'Arduino Mega or Mega 2560' on 'COM10')
15:34:04.225 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:04.906 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:05.864 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:06.861 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:07.889 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:08.897 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:09.875 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:10.899 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:11.902 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:12.886 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:13.881 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:14.888 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
15:34:15.881 -> PPS signal detected on pin 49!
```

XBee3 NMEA Test Sketch

Code Block

Read through the following code and try to understand the instructions being given to the Arduino.

Once done, paste the following Arduino sketch into the IDE and upload it to verify that the module is functional.

Make sure the baud rate in the Serial Monitor matches the one defined in your code. Here, it is set to 9600 as shown in:

```
Serial.begin(9600)
```

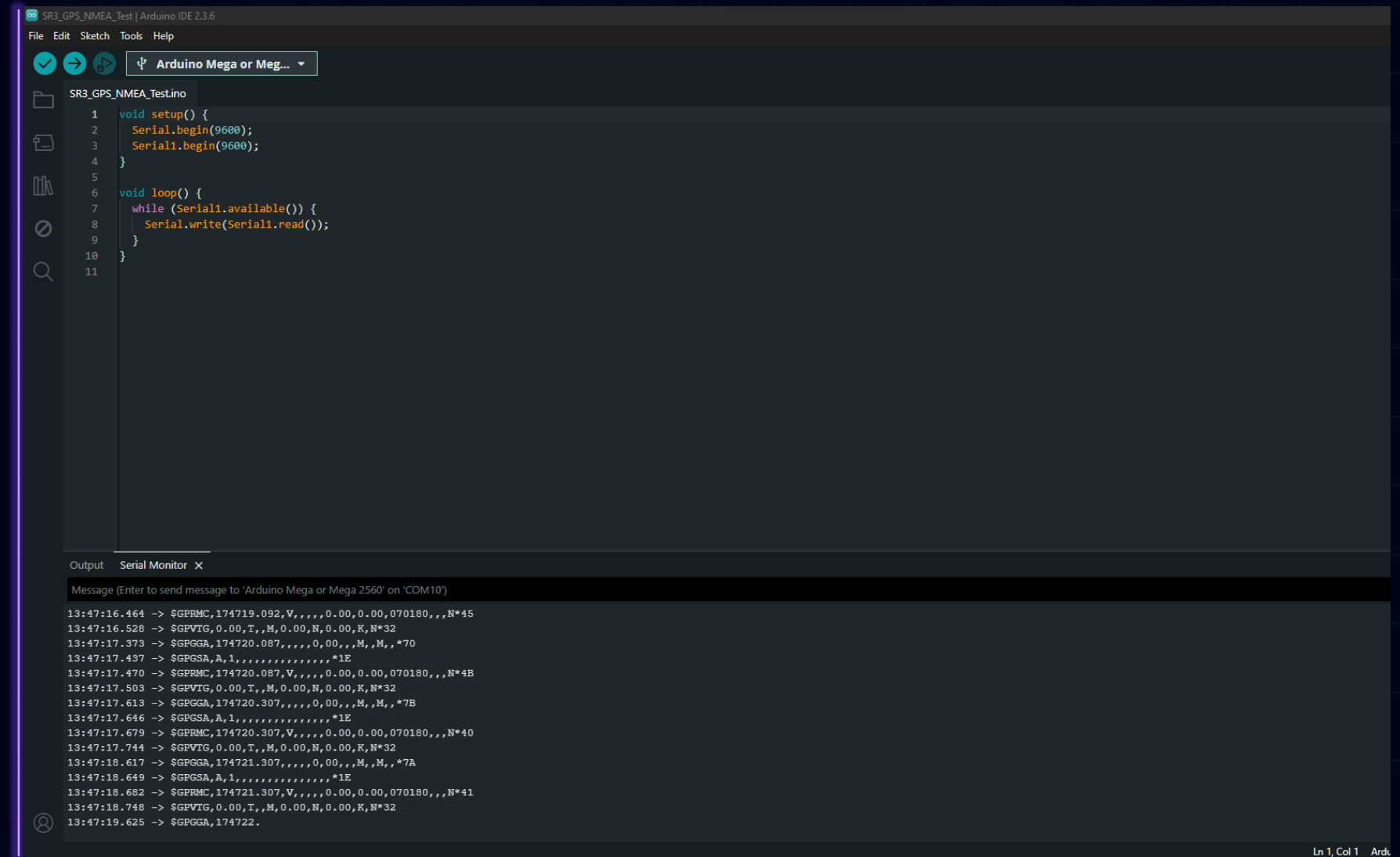
```
void setup() {  
  Serial.begin(9600);  
  Serial1.begin(9600);  
}  
  
void loop() {  
  while (Serial1.available()) {  
    Serial.write(Serial1.read());  
  }  
}
```

XBee3 NMEA Test Results

Serial Output

The Serial Monitor should display NMEA sentences from the GPS receiver, like the example shown here.

If NMEA sentences appear continuously and update once per second, your wireless XBee network is now fully set up and you are ready to go.



The screenshot displays the Arduino IDE interface. The top menu bar includes File, Edit, Sketch, Tools, and Help. Below the menu is a toolbar with icons for running, uploading, and saving, along with a dropdown menu for the board type, currently set to 'Arduino Mega or Mega2560'. The main editor area shows the sketch 'SR3_GPS_NMEA_Test.ino' with the following code:

```
1 void setup() {  
2   Serial.begin(9600);  
3   Serial1.begin(9600);  
4 }  
5  
6 void loop() {  
7   while (Serial1.available()) {  
8     Serial.write(Serial1.read());  
9   }  
10 }  
11
```

Below the code editor is the 'Serial Monitor' tab, which is active. It shows a message input field and a list of received NMEA sentences from the GPS receiver, timestamped with the time and a right arrow indicating the direction of the message:

```
13:47:16.464 -> $GPRMC,174719.092,V,,,,,0.00,0.00,070180,,,N*45  
13:47:16.528 -> $GPVTG,0.00,T,M,0.00,N,0.00,K,N*32  
13:47:17.373 -> $GPGGA,174720.087,,,,,0.00,,,M,,M,,*70  
13:47:17.437 -> $GRGSA,A,1,,,,,,,,,,,,,*1E  
13:47:17.470 -> $GPRMC,174720.087,V,,,,,0.00,0.00,070180,,,N*4B  
13:47:17.503 -> $GPVTG,0.00,T,M,0.00,N,0.00,K,N*32  
13:47:17.613 -> $GPGGA,174720.307,,,,,0.00,,,M,,M,,*7B  
13:47:17.646 -> $GRGSA,A,1,,,,,,,,,,,,,*1E  
13:47:17.679 -> $GPRMC,174720.307,V,,,,,0.00,0.00,070180,,,N*40  
13:47:17.744 -> $GPVTG,0.00,T,M,0.00,N,0.00,K,N*32  
13:47:18.617 -> $GPGGA,174721.307,,,,,0.00,,,M,,M,,*7A  
13:47:18.649 -> $GRGSA,A,1,,,,,,,,,,,,,*1E  
13:47:18.682 -> $GPRMC,174721.307,V,,,,,0.00,0.00,070180,,,N*41  
13:47:18.748 -> $GPVTG,0.00,T,M,0.00,N,0.00,K,N*32  
13:47:19.625 -> $GPGGA,174722.
```

The status bar at the bottom right indicates 'Ln 1, Col 1' and 'Ardu...'.

Module IX

Pulse Generator & Oscilloscope

Pulse Generator Overview

A pulse generator is an electronic instrument that produces electrical pulses. It allows you to simulate digital signals and real-world conditions in a repeatable way.

Adjustable Parameters

Parameter	Description
Amplitude	The voltage level of the pulse.
Frequency	The number of pulses generated per second, measured in hertz (Hz). Determines how often the pulse repeats.
Duty Cycle	The percentage of one complete cycle during which the signal is in the high (active) state.

Additional parameters are available on the pulse generator, but these are the primary settings you will use most frequently.



Figure 9.01 – Pulse Generator (Model: RIGOL DG1022)

Pulse Generator Parameters

Frequency is the number of complete cycles a signal produces each second, measured in hertz (Hz), where 1 Hz equals one cycle per second. The time required for one complete cycle is called the **period**. These two quantities are inversely related, meaning that as frequency increases, the period decreases, and as frequency decreases, the period increases. This relationship can be expressed mathematically as shown below.

Frequency & Period

Frequency (f)

- Number of cycles per second
- Measured in hertz (Hz)
- 1 Hz = 1 cycle per second

Period (T)

- The time it takes for one cycle to complete
- Measured in seconds (s)
- Measured from one rising edge to the next

Frequency (f) - Period (T) Relationship

- Lower frequency → Longer period
- Higher frequency → Shorter period

Period Formula

$$T = \frac{1}{f}$$

Frequency Formula

$$f = \frac{1}{T}$$

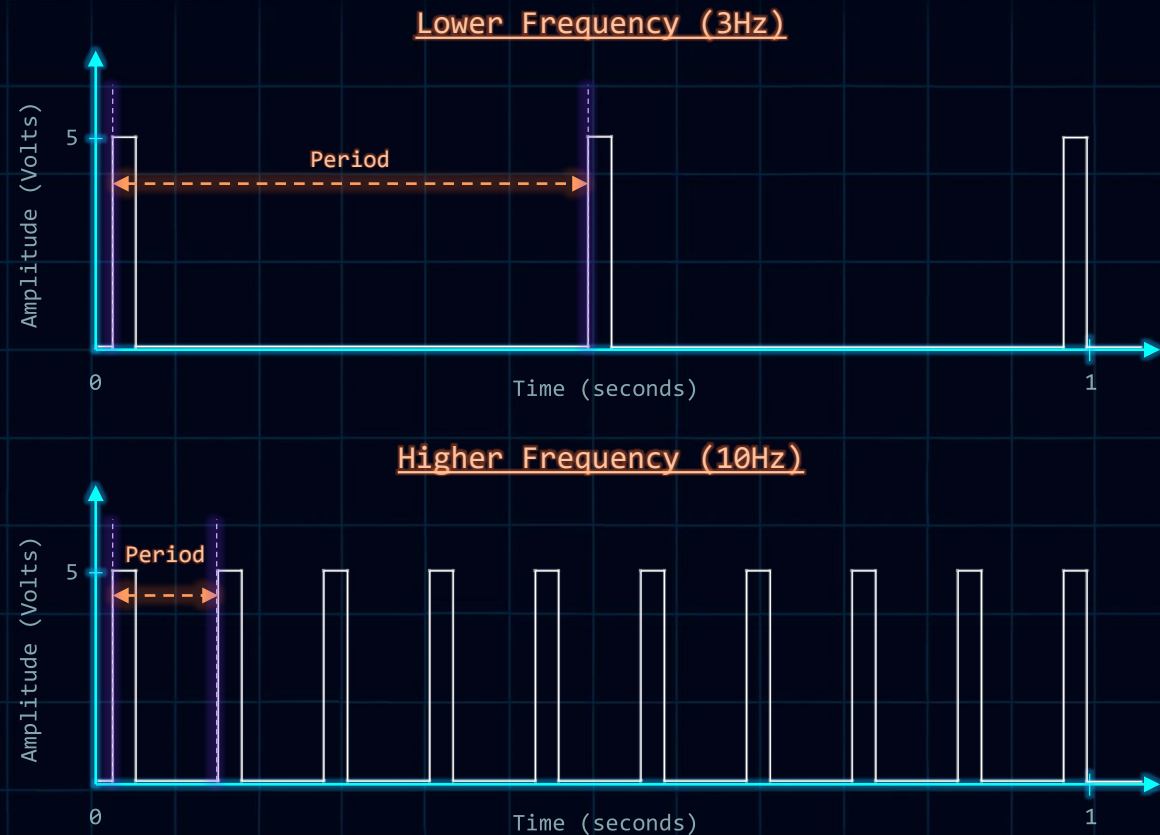


Figure 9.02 – Low Frequency vs High Frequency

Pulse Generator Parameters

Adjusting Frequency / Period

To adjust the frequency on a pulse generator:

1. Press the **Frequency** button. This is the blue softkey located directly beneath the “Freq” label on the display, as shown in the image below.

2. Enter the desired frequency using the numeric keypad, then press the blue softkey that matches the appropriate units (Hz, kHz, MHz, etc.) to confirm the value. For this exercise, enter 10 Hz.

3. The updated frequency value should now appear on the pulse generator’s display.

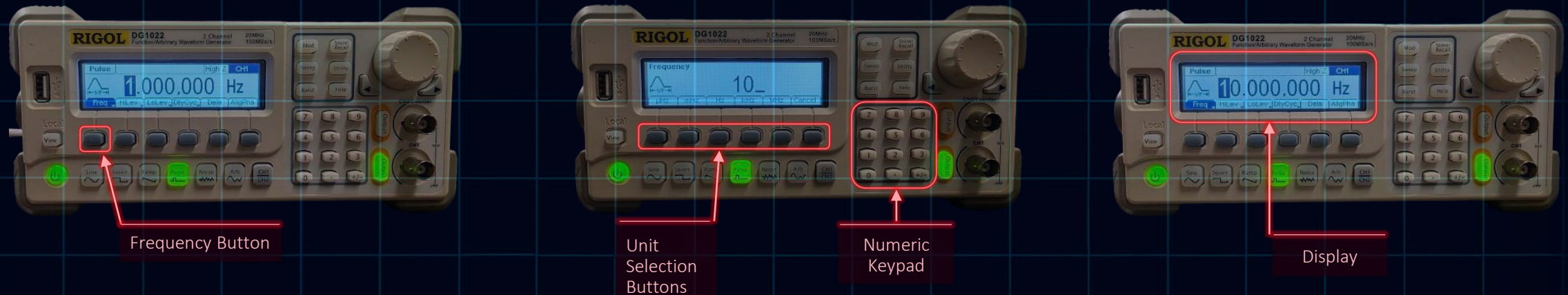


Figure 9.03 – Adjusting Frequency on a Pulse Generator

Pulse Generator Parameters

Amplitude describes the size (strength) of an electrical signal—how far its voltage rises and falls relative to a reference level.

Amplitude

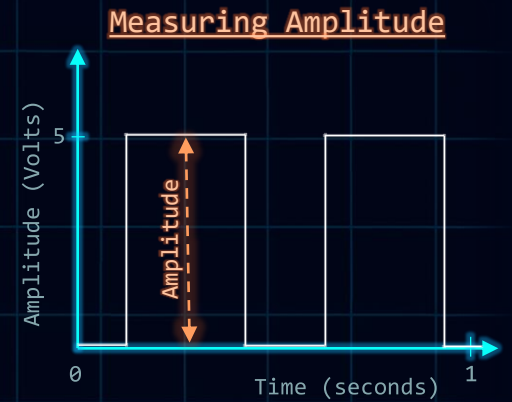


Figure 9.04 – Low Frequency vs High Frequency

ATmega2560 – Ceramic Resonators

Ceramic resonators are electronic components that generate stable oscillating signals for clocking microcontrollers and digital systems. They use a piezoelectric ceramic element to create mechanical vibrations at a specific frequency when voltage is applied. These vibrations are converted into an electrical signal that serves as the system clock.

Rated Clock Frequency

The ATmega2560 microcontroller is designed to operate at a rated **clock frequency** of 16MHz (16 megahertz) when powered at 5V.

This means that the CPU completes 16 million cycles per second which directly influences how fast it can process instructions and handle time-critical tasks.

Think of the ceramic resonator as the microcontroller's heart that beats 16 million times per second to drive every operation.

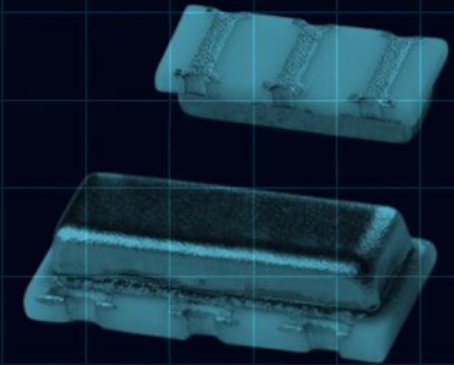
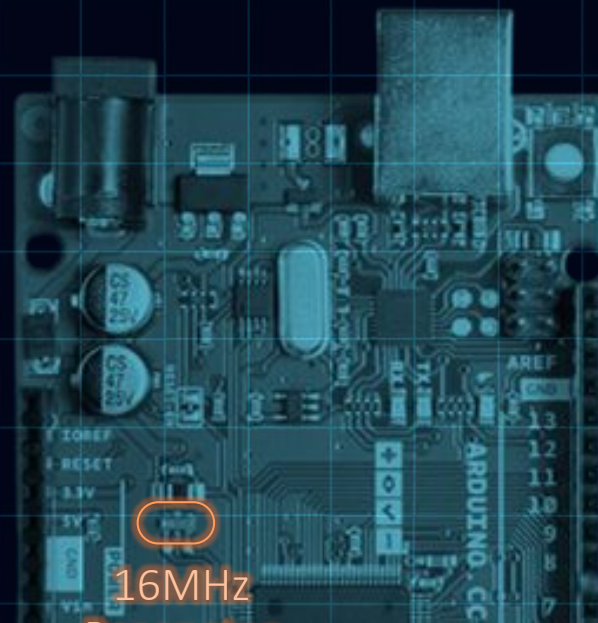


Figure 8.01 – Ceramic Resonators

ATMega2560 – Timing Fundamentals

A **clock cycle** is a single tick of the microcontroller's internal clock. It marks the smallest measurable unit of time in which the processor can begin or complete an action, such as moving data or executing an instruction. All internal operations are paced by these repeated clock cycles.

Clock Period

The **clock period** is the amount of time that one clock cycle takes to complete.

It is measured in seconds (usually nanoseconds or microseconds). The clock period is directly related to the clock frequency — the higher the frequency, the shorter each period.

A clock with a rated frequency of 16MHz will take 62.5ns (nanoseconds) to complete one cycle.

Finding the Clock Period for a 16MHz Frequency:

$$\frac{1 \text{ second}}{16,000,000 \text{ cycles}} = .000000625 \text{ seconds per cycle}$$

Note: 16MHz = 16,000,000 cycles per second
.000000625 seconds = 62.5 nanoseconds

Clock Period Calculation

$$\frac{1 \text{ second}}{\text{Frequency}} = \text{Clock Period}$$

Figure 8.02 – Clock Period Calculation

ATMega2560 Frequency Characterization

To characterize the clock frequency of the microcontroller we will compare it against a known accurate reference signal— the PPS (pulse-per-second) output from the GPS module. Since the PPS signal generated by the GPS module is calibrated by atomic clocks aboard satellites and is accurate to within ± 30 nanoseconds, any pattern or deviation from the expected cycle count will reveal various characteristics of the microcontroller's clock such as its center frequency, drift, jitter, etc.

Terminology Recap

- Clock Frequency (Hz):
The number of clock cycles the CPU is capable of performing per second, measured in hertz (Hz).
- Clock Cycle:
A single tick of the clock frequency. It represents the smallest unit of time in which an instruction or operation can begin or complete.
- Clock Period (s):
The duration of one clock cycle, measured in seconds.

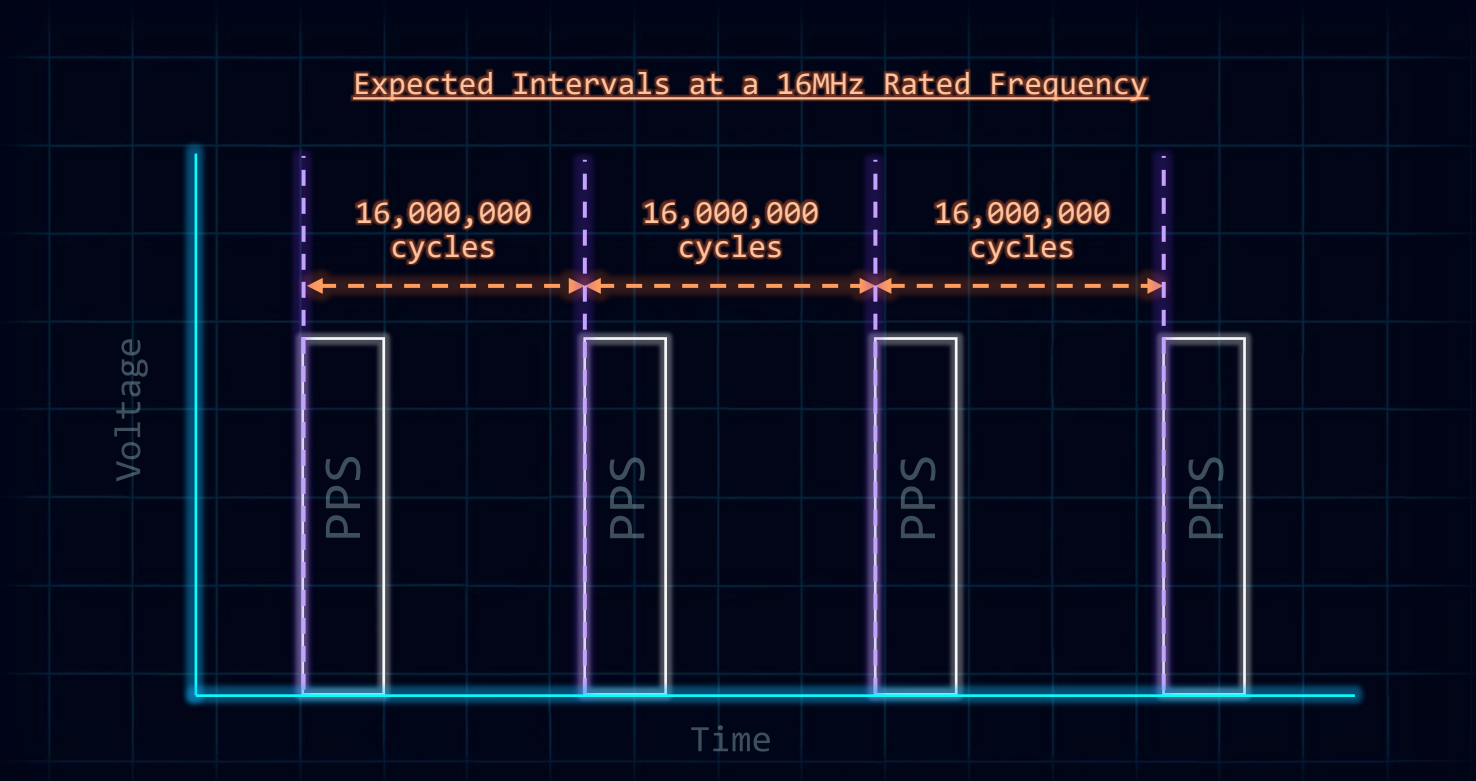


Figure 8.04 – PPS Signal with Expected Interval Timing

ATMega2560 - Oscillator Drift

Oscillator drift refers to small, gradual changes in the frequency output of a ceramic resonator over time. While ceramic resonators are compact and convenient for clock generation, they are more sensitive to external influences. Factors such as temperature fluctuations, supply voltage variations, mechanical vibration, and material aging can cause the output frequency to deviate from its rated value. For instance, a ceramic resonator rated at 16MHz might oscillate at 16,000,100 Hz or 15,999,800 Hz depending on its environment. Though the drift is typically small (measured in parts per million, or ppm), it can affect long-term timing accuracy in systems that depend on precise intervals.

External Influences

- Supply voltage fluctuations
- Temperature/humidity changes
- Aging of the material
- Mechanical stress or vibration

Knowing the actual frequency — accounting for oscillator drift — is essential before using the Arduino in precise timing applications.



Figure 8.03 – External Influences on Rated Frequency

Timing Implications of Wireless Transmission

While GPS modules generate a highly accurate Pulse Per Second (PPS) signal synchronized to atomic satellite clocks, wirelessly transmitting this signal using XBee3 modules introduces latency. Unlike a direct electrical connection, the PPS signal must be detected, queued, and packetized by the XBee3 Coordinator and then transmitted to the paired XBee3 End-Device which must decode and regenerate the signal.

This entire process can result in a variable delay influenced by factors such as RF interference, signal strength, protocol overhead, and the internal processing time of the radio system. While the general shape and rising edge of the PPS signal may be preserved, its precise alignment with the true UTC second may drift slightly when delivered wirelessly as seen in the chart below.

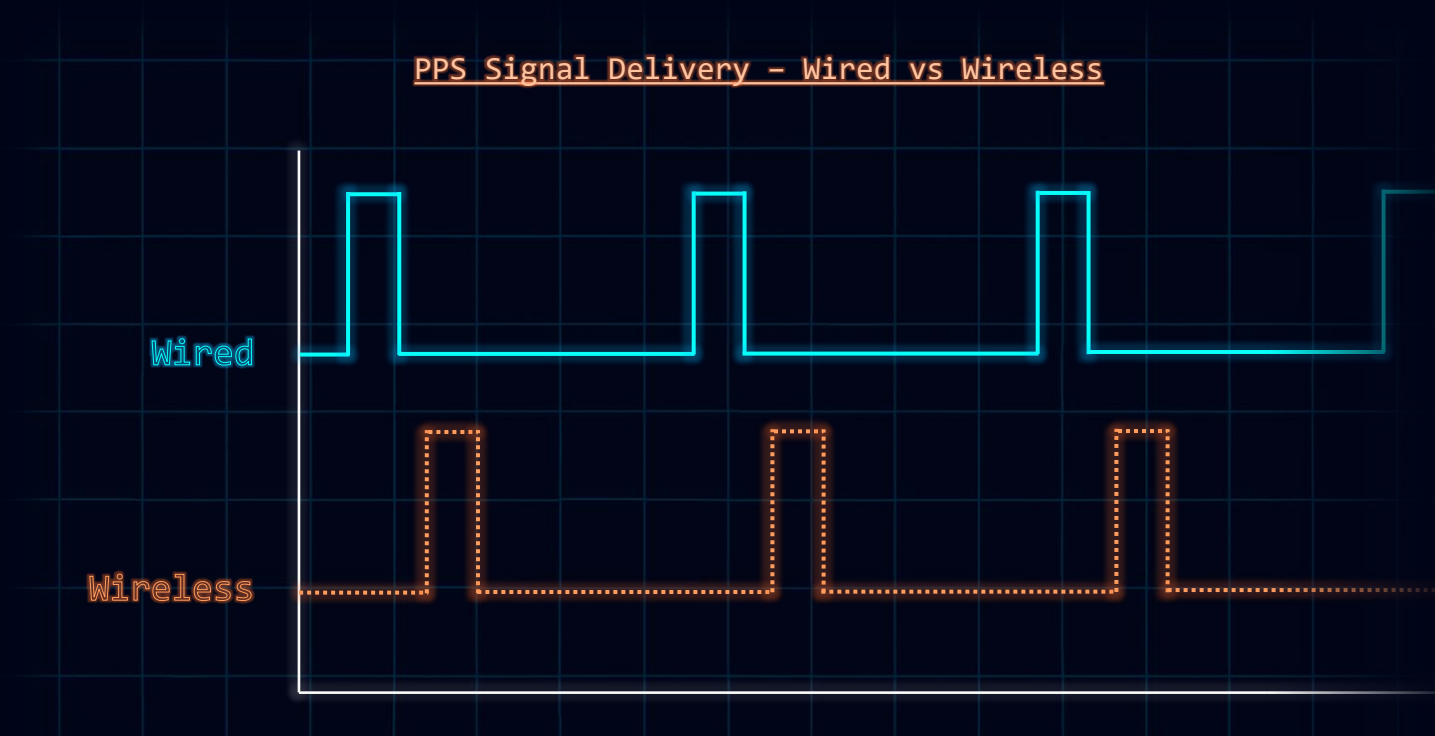


Figure 9.01 – Comparison of Wired vs. Wireless PPS Signal Delivery

Quantifying Wireless Transmission Latency

While GPS modules generate a highly accurate Pulse Per Second (PPS) signal synchronized to atomic satellite clocks, wirelessly transmitting this signal using XBee3 modules introduces latency. Unlike a direct electrical connection, the PPS signal must be detected, queued, and packetized by the XBee3 Coordinator and then transmitted to the paired XBee3 End-Device which must decode and regenerate the signal.

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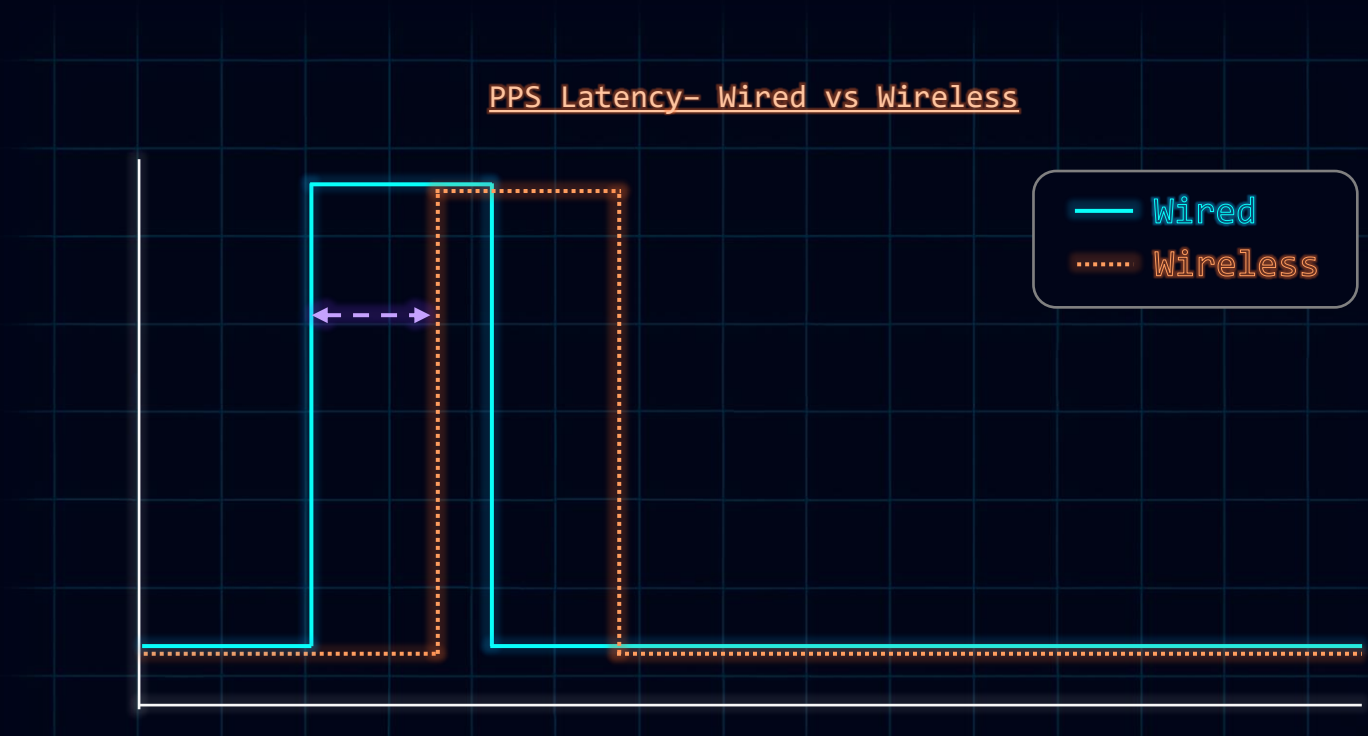


Figure 9.01 – Quantifying Latency in PPS Signals