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FLEXIBLE SUPERCAPACITORS

MATERIALS AND APPLICATIONS

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Table of Contents

[Cover](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Materials and Applications](#)

[Copyright Page](#)

[List of Contributors](#)

[Preface](#)

[1 Flexible Asymmetric Supercapacitors](#)

[1.1 Introduction](#)

[1.2 Configurations of AFSCs Device](#)

[1.3 Progress of Flexible AFSCs](#)

[1.4 Summary](#)

[References](#)

[2 Stretchable Supercapacitors](#)

[2.1 Overview of Stretchable Supercapacitors](#)

[2.2 Fabrication of Stretchable Supercapacitor](#)

[2.3 Multifunctional Supercapacitor](#)

[References](#)

[3 Fiber-shaped Supercapacitors](#)

[3.1 Introduction](#)

[3.2 Structure of FSSCs](#)

[3.3 Electrolyte](#)

[3.4 Electrode](#)

[3.5 Electrode Design of FSSCs](#)

[3.6 Functionalized FSSCs](#)

[3.7 Conclusion](#)

References

4 Flexible Fiber-shaped Supercapacitors:

4.1 Introduction to Fiber-Shaped Supercapacitors

4.2 Emerging Techniques for the Fabrication of Fiber-Shaped Electrodes

4.3 Structures and Design/Configuration of Fiber-Shaped Electrodes

4.4 Materials for Fiber-shaped Supercapacitors

4.5 Electrolytes for Fiber-Shaped Supercapacitors

4.6 Performance Evaluation Metrics for Fiber-Shaped Supercapacitors

4.7 Applications

4.8 Conclusion and Future Prospectus

Acknowledgments

References

5 Flexible Supercapacitors Based on Ternary Metal Oxide (Sulfide, Selenide) Nanostructures

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Ternary Metal Oxide

5.3 Metal Sulfide Electrodes

5.4 Metal Selenide Electrodes

5.5 Fiber-Shaped SCs

5.6 Summary and Perspectives

Declaration of Competing Interest

Acknowledgments

References

6 Transition Metal Oxide Based Electrode Materials for Supercapacitors

6.1 Introduction

[6.2 Co₃O₄ Electrode Materials](#)

[6.3 NiO Electrode Materials](#)

[6.4 Fe₂O₃ Electrode Materials](#)

[6.5 MnO₂ Electrode Materials](#)

[6.6 V₂O₅ Electrode Materials](#)

[References](#)

[7 Three-Dimensional Nanoarrays for Flexible Supercapacitors](#)

[List of Abbreviations](#)

[7.1 Introduction](#)

[7.2 Fabrication of 3D Nanoarrays](#)

[7.3 Typical Structural Engineering of 3D Nanoarrays for Flexible Supercapacitors](#)

[7.4 Evaluation of Flexible Supercapacitors](#)

[7.5 Conclusion](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[References](#)

[8 Metal Oxides Nanoarray Electrodes for Flexible Supercapacitors](#)

[8.1 Introduction](#)

[8.2 Synthesis Techniques of Metal Oxide Nanoarrays](#)

[8.3 The Flexible Support Substrate for Loading Nanoarrays](#)

[8.4 The Geometry of Nanostructured Arrays](#)

[8.5 Conclusions and Prospects](#)

[References](#)

[9 Printed Flexible Supercapacitors](#)

[List of Abbreviations](#)

[9.1 Overview of Printed Flexible Supercapacitor](#)

[9.2 Devices Structure of Printed SCs](#)

[9.3 Printable Materials for SCs](#)

[9.4 Fabrication of Flexible SCs Using Various Printing Methods](#)

[9.5 Printed Integrated System](#)

[9.6 Perspective](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[References](#)

[10 Printing Flexible On-chip Micro-Supercapacitors](#)

[10.1 Introduction](#)

[10.2 Printable Materials for On-chip MSCs](#)

[10.3 Printing Techniques](#)

[10.4 Summary](#)

[References](#)

[11 Recent Advances of Flexible Micro-Supercapacitors](#)

[11.1 Introduction](#)

[11.2 General Features of Flexible MSCs](#)

[11.3 Active Materials of Flexible MSCs](#)

[11.4 Integration of Flexible MSCs](#)

[11.5 Flexible Smart MSCs](#)

[11.6 Summary and Prospects](#)

[References](#)

[Index](#)

[End User License Agreement](#)

List of Illustrations

Chapter 1

[Figure 1.1 \(a, b\) Scheme and optical image of a flexible acoustic device....](#)

[Figure 1.2 \(a\) The equivalent circuit of an AFSC. \(b\) Schematic illustration...](#)

[Figure 1.3 \(a\) Schematic diagram illustrates the growth process for preparin...](#)

[Figure 1.4 \(a\) Schematic diagram of the CC activation process. \(b\) Galvanost...](#)

[Figure 1.5 \(a\) Schematic diagram illustrating the synthesis procedure of MnO](#)

[Figure 1.6 \(a\) Schematics of the fabrication processes of metal nitride cath...](#)

[Figure 1.7 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the design and fabrication of the a...](#)

[Figure 1.8 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the as-assembled fiber-shaped MnO₂@...](#)

[Figure 1.9 \(a\) Schematics illustration shows the fabrication process of an a...](#)

[Figure 1.10 \(a\) Schematic diagram of the fabrication procedure of an AFSC. \(...](#)

Chapter 2

[Figure 2.1 Summary of stretchable SCs and their application in integrated sy...](#)

[Figure 2.2 Structure and voltage, energy distribution of 1D fiber SCs: twist...](#)

[Figure 2.3 Typical fabrication methods of 1D parallel fiber SCs: \(a\) Schemat...](#)

[Figure 2.4 \(a\) Schematic illustration of fabricating twisted SCs by wrapping...](#)

[Figure 2.5 Schematics of the fabrication procedures for coaxial SCs and corr...](#)

[Figure 2.6 \(a\) Fabrication process of the stretchable SCs by buckling electr...](#)

[Figure 2.7 \(a\) Schematic illustration of steps for fabricating omnidirection...](#)

[Figure 2.8 \(a\) Schematics of the fabrication procedures for a MWNT/Mn₃O₄ bas...](#)

[Figure 2.9 \(a\) Schematics of fabricating a stretchable MSC array on a PDMS s...](#)

[Figure 2.10 \(a\) Schematics of the fabrication procedures of the stretchable ...](#)

[Figure 2.11 \(a\) Optical images of the stretchable cellular CNT film under in...](#)

[Figure 2.12 \(a\) Schematics of a 3D stretchable SC. \(b\) Optical images of the...](#)

[Figure 2.13 \(a\) Schematic diagram of synthesizing PANI@SWCNTs sponge composi...](#)

[Figure 2.14 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the self-healing process. \(b\) Sche...](#)

[Figure 2.15 \(a, b\) Schematic illustration and circuit diagram of 2D multifun...](#)

Chapter 3

[Figure 3.1 \(a\) Schematic diagram of parallel-like fiber supercapacitor.\(...](#)

[Figure 3.2 \(a\) Cross-sectional FE-SEM image of gPVAP\(20\) hydrogel polymer me...](#)

[Figure 3.3 \(a\) The cross-sectional SEM images of LSG film.\(b\) Side view ...](#)

[Figure 3.4 \(a\) Schematic diagram showing the fabrication process of the soli...](#)

[Figure 3.5 \(a\) Schematics of yarn fabrication and yarn modified by depositio...](#)

[Figure 3.6 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the fabrication process of the asym...](#)

[Figure 3.7 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the fabrication process of a symmet...](#)

[Figure 3.8 \(a\) Overview of GMF observed by SEM. Scale bar: 10 mm; \(b\) SEM cr...](#)

[Figure 3.9 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the fabrication of RGO/Ni cotton ya...](#)

[Figure 3.10 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the self-healable supercapacitor; ...](#)

[Figure 3.11 \(a\) Schematic illustration showing the fabrication of an ultra-s...](#)

[Figure 3.12 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the typical structure of electroch...](#)

[Figure 3.13 \(a\) Shape recovering process of a wire-shaped SMSC; \(b\) The reve...](#)

[Figure 3.14 \(a\) Photographs of the flexible asymmetric FSSC at different ben...](#)

Chapter 4

[Figure 4.1 \(a\) Schematic description for the structure of planar supercapaci...](#)

[Figure 4.2 \(a\) Schematic description for the experimental procedure of wet-s...](#)

[Figure 4.3 \(a\) Schematic depiction for the construction process of the NiCo ...](#)

[Figure 4.4 \(a\) Schematic illustration for the production method of the FFSC ...](#)

[Figure 4.5 \(a\) Design for the production procedure of a coaxial type FFSC. \(...](#)

[Figure 4.6 \(a\) Schematic diagram representing the construction process of PA...](#)

[Figure 4.7 \(a\) Schematic diagram representing the structure of composite fib...](#)

[Figure 4.8 \(a\) Schematic diagrams for the fabrication of MnNiCo-CH nanoneedl...](#)

[Figure 4.9 Summary of recent methodologies implemented to improve the energy...](#)

[Figure 4.10 \(a\) Schematic design of the combined wire-shaped device for phot...](#)

Chapter 5

[Figure 5.1 \(a\) Schematic illustrating the fabrication of the carbon textiles...](#)

[Figure 5.2 SEM images of Zn-Ni-Co TOH electrodes obtained using different hy...](#)

[Figure 5.3 Schematic of the fabrication process for 3D NiCo₂O₄@NiCo₂O₄ hiera...](#)

[Figure 5.4 \(a and b\) SEM images of MnCo₂O₄ nanoarrays on Ni foam. \(c and d\) ...](#)

[Figure 5.5 schematic for the preparation of FeCo₂S₄ hollow nanoneedle array/...](#)

[Figure 5.6 Schematic illustration of the design and fabrication of the CuCo₂](#)

[Figure 5.7 \(a\) SEM image of the NiCo₂O₄ nanorod arrays, \(b\) SEM image of NiC...](#)

[Figure 5.8 \(a\) SEM image of ZnCoS-NSs/CC, \(b\) TEM image of Ni\(OH\)₂@ZnCoS-NSs...](#)

[Figure 5.9 Schematic illustration of the two-step strategy for preparing net...](#)

[Figure 5.10 \(a\) Comparison of CV curves collected for Ni₃S₂/CoNi₂S₄/NF and A...](#)

[Figure 5.11 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the synthesis process of the compo...](#)

[Figure 5.12 SC fabrication.](#)

[Figure 5.13 \(a and b\) SEM images. \(c\) Charge-discharge cycles as a function ...](#)

[Figure 5.14 SEM images of the \(a\) Ni-Co-MOF solid spheres, \(b\) NiCo₂O₄, \(c-d...](#)

[Figure 5.15 \(a\) Schematic illustration, \(b\) photograph, \(c\) equivalent circu...](#)

[Figure 5.16 \(a\) Fabrication of thread-like ASC based on NiCo₂Se₄ nanosheets/...](#)

[Figure 5.17 \(a\) Schematic diagram of the assembly of solid-state flexible de...](#)

Chapter 6

[Figure 6.1 The schematic of 3D Co₃O₄@MnO₂ heterostructures grown on Ni foam....](#)

[Figure 6.2 \(a\) Areal capacitance and specific capacitance of the hybrid elec...](#)

[Figure 6.3 \(a\) CV curves of the electrodes \(b\) CV curves of ASC device withi...](#)

[Figure 6.4 electrochemical characterization of ASC devices \(a\) charge-discha...](#)

[Figure 6.5 Schematic of phosphate ion functionalized \$\text{Co}_3\text{O}_4\$ nanosheet arrays....](#)

[Figure 6.6 \(a\) CV curves at a scan rate of \$100 \text{ mV s}^{-1}\$ \(b\) CV curves of...](#)

[Figure 6.7 Schematic of the synthesis procedure, the inset shows different N...](#)

[Figure 6.8 electrochemical performances of electrodes.](#)

[Figure 6.9 \(a\) FESEM and \(b and c\) TEM images of NiCo-LDH tetragonal microtu...](#)

[Figure 6.10 \(a\) CV curves \(b\) Galvanostatic charge-discharge curves \(c\) Nyqu...](#)

[Figure 6.11 Schematic of \$\text{ZnCo}_2\text{O}_4/\text{MnO}_2\$ composite nanocone forests \(NCFs\).](#)

[Figure 6.12 Typical SEM images of \(a and b\) \$\text{ZnCo}_2\text{O}_4\$ NW arrays and \(c and d\) ...](#)

[Figure 6.13 Schematic of growth mechanism of \$\text{V}_2\text{O}_5\$ NWAs.](#)

Chapter 7

[Figure 7.1 Phase diagrams of K-Mn oxide systems at \$E = 1.2 \text{ V}\$. \(a\) \$\text{PH-}\mu_{\text{K}}\$](#)

[Figure 7.2 \(a and b\) Schematic and field-emission scanning electron microscop...](#)

[Figure 7.3 Schematic \(a\), FESEM \(b and c\), and TEM \(d and e\) images showing ...](#)

[Figure 7.4 \(a\) Schematic illustration of typical 3D nanowire arrays, nanotub...](#)

[Figure 7.5 \(a\) Digital photograph and schematic illustration of the symmetri...](#)

[Figure 7.6 \(a\) SEM image of \$\text{Co}_3\text{O}_4\$ nanowire arrays on nickel fibers. \(b\) The ...](#)

[Figure 7.7 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the synthesis process of the \$\text{Co}_9\text{S}_8\$...](#)

[Figure 7.8 \(a\) Structural evolution process from spinel \$\text{Mn}_3\text{O}_4\$ to birnessite-...](#)

[Figure 7.9 \(a, c, e, and g\) FESEM images of hybrid nanostructure of porous C...](#)

[Figure 7.10 \(a\) The experimental apparatus for different bending states: con...](#)

Chapter 8

[Figure 8.1 Schematic diagram of the metal oxide nanoarrays for supercapacito...](#)

[Figure 8.2 Solution-based method to synthesize metal oxide arrays. \(a\) SEM i...](#)

[Figure 8.3 \$\text{NiCo}_2\text{O}_4\$ nanoarrays with different structures synthesized by solut...](#)

[Figure 8.4 Electrodeposition to prepare metal oxide arrays. \(a-b\) SEM images...](#)

[Figure 8.5 Metal oxide-based nanoarrays synthesized by chemical vapor deposi...](#)

[Figure 8.6 3D graphene foam used as facile scaffolds and efficient current c...](#)

[Figure 8.7 Flexible carbon cloth for current collectors. \(a\) Schematic illus...](#)

[Figure 8.8 \(a\) Schematic illustration of fabrication procedure of 3D \$\text{MnO}_2\$ -Ni...](#)

[Figure 8.9 \(a\) Schematic illustration of fabrication process of CuO nanotube...](#)

[Figure 8.10 \(a\) Schematic preparation illustration of cyclic voltammetry oxi...](#)

[Figure 8.11 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the generation process of \$\text{Co}_3\text{O}_4\$ @Mn...](#)

[Figure 8.12 1D nanowire-based arrays. \(a\) SEM image of the \$\text{Co}_3\text{O}_4\$ nanowire ar...](#)

[Figure 8.13 1D nanotube-based arrays. \(a\) Schematic illustration of the synt...](#)

[Figure 8.14 2D metal oxide nanoarrays. \(a\) SEM image; \(b\) Galvanostatic char...](#)

[Figure 8.15 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the synthesis process of NiO nanof...](#)

[Figure 8.16 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the possible synthesis mechanism o...](#)

Chapter 9

[Figure 9.1 The main printing methods for flexible supercapacitors: inkjet \[1...](#)

[Figure 9.2 Common device configurations for printed SCs: sandwiched \(left\) a...](#)

[Figure 9.3 MXene is chosen here as an example to show the critical elements ...](#)

[Figure 9.4 Representative works of inkjet-printed flexible SCs. \(a\) Optical ...](#)

[Figure 9.5 Representative screen-printed flexible SCs: \(a\) Schematic illustr...](#)

[Figure 9.6 Representative transfer-printed flexible SCs. \(a\) Schematic illus...](#)

[Figure 9.7 Representative 3D-printed flexible SCs. \(a\) Schematic illustratio...](#)

[Figure 9.8 Representative printed integrated systems containing SCs. \(a\) Sch...](#)

Chapter 10

[Figure 10.1 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the electrochemical exfoliation of...](#)

[Figure 10.2 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the fabrication of MSCs using the ...](#)

[Figure 10.3 \(a\) Schematic illustration of direct ink-jet printing of MXene i...](#)

[Figure 10.4 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the fabrication of SnSe based supe...](#)

[Figure 10.5 \(a\) Optical image of the screen printing facility. \(b\) Schematic...](#)

[Figure 10.6 \(a\) Photograph of the EEG ink and PSSH ink. \(b\) Photograph of th...](#)

[Figure 10.7 \(a\) Schematic illustration of the stepwise fabrication procedure...](#)

[Figure 10.8 \(a\) Optical microscopy image of spray-printed patterns of GP-3.0...](#)

[Figure 10.9 \(a\) Schematic diagram of the screen printing process to on-chip ...](#)

[Figure 10.10 \(a\) Schematic diagram of the 3D printing process for MSCs. \(b-d...](#)

Chapter 11

[Figure 11.1 Schematics of \(a\) conventional SCs and \(b\) MSCs; Schematics o...](#)

[Figure 11.2 \(a\) The fabrication process of a highly transparent and flexible...](#)

[Figure 11.3 Schematic illustration of preparing RGO-based MSCs. \(a\) Fabricat...](#)

[Figure 11.4 \(a\) Schematic illustration of fabricating flexible RGO-based MSC...](#)

[Figure 11.5 Schematic illustration of fabricating the RGO and RGO/Mn₃O₄ elec...](#)

[Figure 11.6 \(a\) Schematic illustration and \(b\) SEM image of the MSCs based o...](#)

[Figure 11.7 Schematic illustration of the fabrication process and optical ph...](#)

[Figure 11.8 \(a\) Schematic illustration of fabricating interdigitated electro...](#)

[Figure 11.9 \(a\) The fabrication process of the flexible MSCs based on NPG/Mn...](#)

[Figure 11.10 Schematic illustration the fabrication process of the flexible ...](#)

[Figure 11.11 The schematic diagram of fabricating all-MXene printed MSCs....](#)

[Figure 11.12 \(a\) Optical image of the self-charging system containing MSCs a...](#)

[Figure 11.13 \(a\) A circuit diagram of the flexible photodetecting system wit...](#)

[Figure 11.14 \(a\) Schematic illustration of an all-in-one sensing system comp...](#)

[Figure 11.15 \(a\) The fabricating process and \(b\) self-healable mechanism of ...](#)

[Figure 11.16 \(a\) Optical image of a flexible photodetectable MSC; \(b\) Photoc...](#)

[Figure 11.17 \(a\) Schematic illustrations of the fabrication process of flexi...](#)

Flexible Supercapacitors

Materials and Applications

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WILEY

This edition first published 2022
© 2022 John Wiley & Sons, Inc

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Shen, Guozhen (Electrical engineer), editor. | Lou, Zheng, editor. | Chen, Di, editor.

Title: Flexible supercapacitors : materials and applications / edited by Guozhen Shen, State Key Laboratory for Superlattices and Microstructures, Beijing, China, Zheng Lou, State Key Laboratory for Superlattices and Microstructures, Beijing, China, Di Chen, University of Science and Technology, Beijing, China.

Description: First edition. | Hoboken, NJ : John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2022. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021052431 (print) | LCCN 2021052432 (ebook) | ISBN 9781119506164 (hardback) | ISBN 9781119506188 (obook) | ISBN 9781119506171 (epdf) | ISBN 9781119506157 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Supercapacitors. | Flexible electronics.

Classification: LCC TK7872.C65 F555 2022 (print) | LCC TK7872.C65 (ebook) | DDC 621.31/5-dc23/eng/20211207

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021052431>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021052432>

Cover Design: Wiley

Cover Image: © draganab/Getty Images

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Preface

As an emerging and exciting research field, flexible electronics have attracted tremendous interests from both the academic and industrial communities. Till now, many kinds of flexible electronic devices and systems have been developed, such as flexible displays, electronic skins, health monitoring bioelectronics, chemical and biosensors, wearable smart textile, and intelligent soft robots, etc. This area develops very fast and some flexible products are already commercially available. For example, flexible organic light-emitting diode displays have been widely used in smart phones, smart watches, and tablet personal computers.

The booming development of flexible electronics has driven the demand for compatible flexible energy storage devices, ideally to make the whole electronic system flexible. Although conventional energy storage devices, such as lithium-ion batteries, lead acid batteries, supercapacitors, have been widely used in our modern society and affected our daily life, their rigid shape, heavy weight, and thickness make them not suitable for flexible electronics. Among different energy storage devices, supercapacitors have the advantages of simple device structure, high power density, short charge and discharge time, long cycle life and wide operating temperature range. When making supercapacitor flexible, it will also possess the required features of excellent flexibility, portability, stretchability, miniaturized size, ultrathin thickness for flexible electronic devices. During the past several years, researches on flexible supercapacitors are very active and this field expanded very fast. Thus, it is considered timely to provide a survey of a number of important developments in this field.

This book provides an up-to-date survey of the state of flexible supercapacitors. It contains a selection of 11 chapters contributed by a number of research teams. All the contributors are active researchers in the field of flexible supercapacitors. The most important topics related to flexible supercapacitors are included in this book, ranging from the selection and design of different active electrode materials, the design of different device structures, suitable fabrication techniques, and different functions. I hope this book will be a source of inspiration for graduate students, researchers, and industrial engineers, and will stimulate new developments in this challenging but exciting field.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Shen', written in a cursive style.

Guozhen Shen, Professor
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1

Flexible Asymmetric Supercapacitors: Design, Progress, and Challenges

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1.1 Introduction

Recently, flexible electronic products, such as flexible microphones [1], elastic circuits [2-4], pressure and strain sensors [5-7], artificial skin sensors [8-10], intelligent garments [11], and wearable health monitoring devices have boomed as a new and important field of modern electronics (Figure 1.1). Therefore, the development of suitable energy storage devices, which can serve as an excellent power supply while sustaining high mechanical flexibility, are becoming increasingly necessary to power these electronics [13-21]. Supercapacitors (SCs), also known as electrochemical capacitors or ultracapacitors, have emerged as the bridge between batteries and traditional capacitors due to their promising merits of high power density (about 10 kW kg^{-1}), good reversibility, excellent cyclic stability (over 10^6 cycles), and safety [22, 23]. Meanwhile, accompanied with the advanced development of lightweight, foldable, and stretchable materials, substantial effort has been invested in the fabrication of flexible supercapacitors (FSCs) [24-28].

In order to satisfy the further demand for practical usage, the configuration of the two electrodes as well as the geometry of the devices are of vital importance and worth careful considerations [29]. The major obstacle of early designed FSCs is their relatively low energy density (E) to mismatch basic requirements of future applications. Thus, tremendous efforts have been denoted to optimize the overall performance of FSCs according to the [Eq. \(1.1\)](#), without sacrificing their power density and service life.

$$E = \frac{1}{2}CV^2 \quad (1.1)$$

In general, either enhanced capacitance (C) or enlarged operating voltage (V) of the device should make sense. Of which, the C of a FSC device can be equivalent to the negative electrode capacitance (C_n) and positive electrode capacitance (C_p) connected in series ([Figure 1.2a](#)), which can be calculated using [Eq. \(1.2\)](#).

$$\frac{1}{C} = \frac{1}{C_n} + \frac{1}{C_p} \quad (1.2)$$

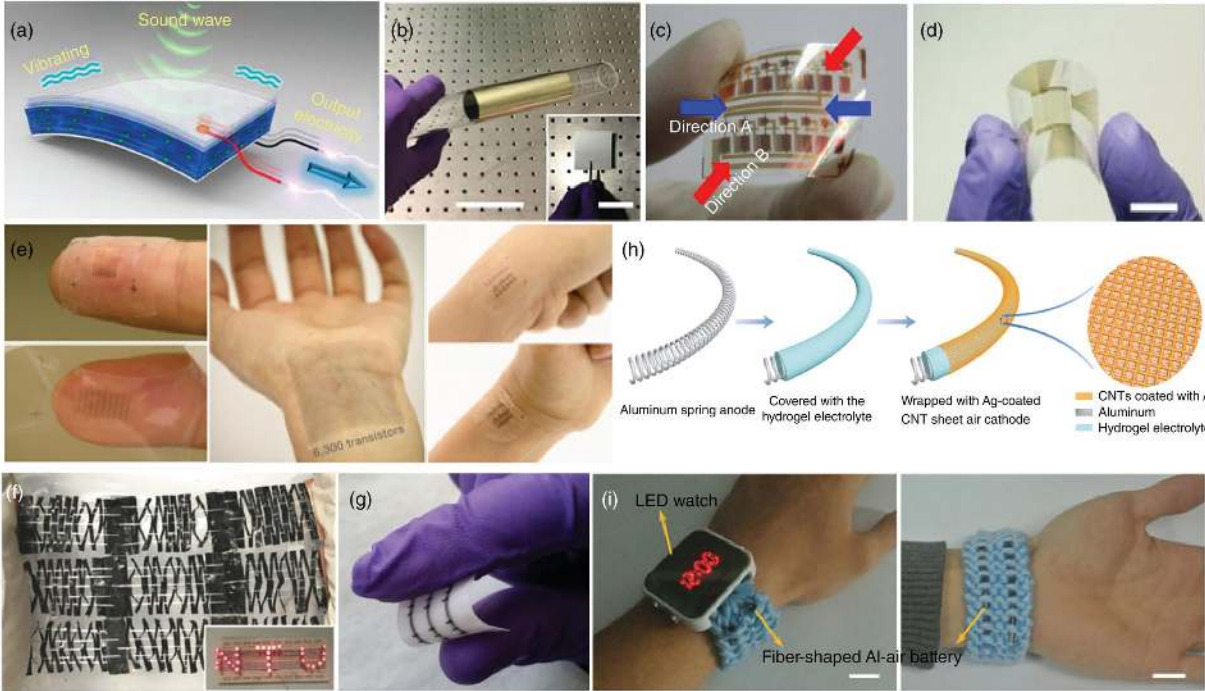


Figure 1.1 (a, b) Scheme and optical image of a flexible acoustic device.

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Optical image of (c) a flexible circuit

Source: Reproduced with permission from Ref. [2], © 2018, NPG

, (d) multiplexed fingerprint sensor. Scale bar, 1 cm.

Source: Reproduced with permission from Ref. [5], © 2018, NPG

and (e) artificial skin electronics

Source: Reproduced with permission from Ref. [8], © 2018, NPG.

(f) 3×3 honeycomb-like supercapacitor array powering LED panel.

Source: Reproduced with permission from Ref. [13], © 2017, Wiley.

(g) Image of an array of field-effect heterojunctions on textile.

Source: Reproduced with permission from Ref. [14], © 2017, NPG.

(h, i) Fabrication and optical image of the fiber-shaped Al-air battery.

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