

31 May 2000

A Damascene Structure With Reduced Capacitance
Using a Carbon Nitride, Boron Nitride, or Boron Carbon Nitride
Passivation Layer, Etch Stop Layer, and/or Cap Layer

Background of Invention

1) Field of the Invention

5 This invention relates generally to fabrication of a semiconductor device and more particularly to a method and structure for forming a damascene structure with reduced capacitance by using carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride to form a low-K passivation layer, etch stop layer, and/or cap layer.

10 2) Description of the Prior Art

As semiconductor dimensions continue to shrink and device density continues to increase, capacitance between conductive structures becomes increasingly important. With a smaller amount of dielectric material separating conductive structures, the

dielectric constant must be increased to provide the same capacitance. However, materials for a passivation layer, an etch stop layer, and a cap layer are typically chosen for their etch selectivity properties.

5 The importance of overcoming the various deficiencies noted above is evidenced by the extensive technological development directed to the subject, as documented by the relevant patent and technical literature. The closest and apparently more relevant technical developments in the patent literature can be gleaned by considering the following patents.

10 U.S. 5,834,845 (Stolmeijer) shows a damascene interconnect method which discloses a BN etch stop layer, but states that a silicon nitride etch stop layer is preferred. This invention does not show a passivation layer or a cap layer, nor does it disclose any method for forming a BN etch stop layer.

15 U.S. 5,821,169 (Nguyen et al.) shows a dual damascene process with a hard mask (cap layer) material selected from a group of insulating materials including BN. This invention teaches that the hard mask material should be selected for etch selectivity to the inter level dielectric layer, and does not disclose any method for forming a BN hard mask layer.

U.S. 5,904,565 (Nguyen et al.) shows a dual damascene process with various cap, etch stop, and barrier layers.

U.S. 5,708,559 (Brabozon et al.) teaches a damascene capacitor process with a dielectric layer of BN.

Summary of the Invention

It is an object of the present invention to provide a method for forming a damascene structure with reduced capacitance.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a method for forming a damascene structure with reduced capacitance using passivation layer, etch stop layer and/or cap layer comprising carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a method for forming a passivation layer, an etch stop layer, and/or a cap layer using materials having a low dielectric constant (≈ 3) which is compatible with existing semiconductor fabrication processes and equipment.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a damascene structure with reduced capacitance using passivation layer, etch stop layer and/or cap layer comprising carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride.

5 To accomplish the above objectives, the present invention provides a method for forming a damascene structure with reduced capacitance by forming one or more of: the passivation layer, the etch stop layer, and the cap layer using a low dielectric constant material comprising carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride. The method begins by providing a semiconductor structure having a first conductive layer thereover.

10 A passivation layer is formed on the first conductive layer. A first dielectric layer is formed over the passivation layer, and an etch stop layer is formed over the first dielectric layer. A second dielectric layer is formed over the etch stop layer, and an optional cap layer can be formed over the second dielectric layer. The cap layer, the second dielectric layer, the etch stop layer, and the first dielectric layer are patterned to form a via opening

15 stopping on said passivation layer and a trench opening stopping on said etch stop layer. A carbon nitride passivation layer, etch stop layer, or cap layer can be formed by magnetron sputtering from a graphite target in a nitrogen atmosphere. A boron nitride passivation layer, etch stop layer, or cap layer can be formed by PECVD using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen. A boron carbon nitride passivation layer, etch stop layer, or cap

20 layer can be formed by magnetron sputtering from a graphite target in a nitrogen and B_2H_6

atmosphere.

The present invention provides considerable improvement over the prior art.

One or more of: the passivation layer, the etch stop layer, and the cap layer can be formed
5 comprising carbon nitride or carbon boron nitride using a magnetron sputtering process,
or comprising boron nitride using a PECVD process. The invention therefore provides a
method of forming a damascene structure with a reduced capacitance by allowing one or
more layers to be formed using a material having a low dielectric constant using existing
equipment and process. Also, by selecting which layers are formed using a low dielectric
10 constant material, the present invention provides a method for forming a damascene
structure which optimizes performance, reliability and fabrication cost.

The present invention achieves these benefits in the context of known process
technology. However, a further understanding of the nature and advantages of the present
15 invention may be realized by reference to the latter portions of the specification and
attached drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

20 The features and advantages of a semiconductor device according to the present

invention and further details of a process of fabricating such a semiconductor device in accordance with the present invention will be more clearly understood from the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which like reference numerals designate similar or corresponding elements, regions and portions and in which:

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Figures 1 through 5 illustrate sequential sectional views of a process for forming a damascene structure using carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride to form the passivation layer, the etch stop layer, and/or the cap layer according to the invention.

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Figure 6 illustrates a single damascene structure using carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride to form the passivation layer and/or the cap layer according to the invention.

Detailed Description of the Invention

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The present invention will be described in detail with reference to the accompanying drawings. The present invention provides a method for forming a damascene structure with reduced capacitance using a low dielectric constant material for one or more of: the passivation layer, the etch stop layer, and the cap layer.

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Referring to Fig. 1, the preferred embodiment of the present invention begins by providing a semiconductor structure (11) having a conductive layer (20) thereover. Semiconductor structure (11) should be understood to include a substrate or wafer comprising a semiconducting material such as silicon or germanium, or a silicon-on-insulator (SOI) structure as is known in the art. Semiconductor structure (11) should be understood to possibly further include one or more layers of insulating material, dielectric material, and/or conductive material and one or more active and/or passive devices formed in or over the substrate or the like. The conductive layer (20) can comprise a metal, most preferably copper, or any other conductive material such as doped silicon. Typically, the first conductive layer (20) is an interconnect pattern or line.

Still referring to Fig. 1, a passivation layer (30) is formed on the first conductive layer (20). The passivation layer (30) can comprise silicon nitride, which has a dielectric constant of about 7. However, a passivation layer (30) comprising carbon nitride (dielectric constant between about 1.8 and 3.6), boron nitride (dielectric constant between about 2.5 and 3.8), or boron carbon nitride (dielectric constant between about 1.8 and 3.5) reduces capacitance between conductive structures. Reduced capacitance provides a key advantage in performance and reliability for sub-micron devices.

A passivation layer (30) can comprise carbon nitride having a thickness of between

about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms can be formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas. The passivation layer is formed using a power of between about 1 kw and 10 kw, a magnetic field of between about 50 gauss and 200 gauss, a temperature of between about 20°C and 500°C, and a pressure of between about 0.1 mTorr and 500 mTorr. The deposited carbon nitride can be amorphous or crystalline C_xN_y ($0.5 < X < 4$, $0.5 < Y < 5$).

Alternatively, the passivation layer (30) can comprise boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen. The boron nitride can be deposited at a pressure of between about 0.5 Torr and 100 Torr, at a temperature of between about 100°C and 500°C, and an RF power of between about 100 watts and 2000 watts at an RF frequency of about 13.56 MHz. The B_2H_6 to ammonia flow rate ratio is between about 1 B_2H_6 :1 ammonia and 1 B_2H_6 :200 ammonia, and the B_2H_6 to nitrogen flow rate ratio is between about 1 B_2H_6 :1 nitrogen and 1 B_2H_6 :200 nitrogen. Alternatively, borazine ($B_2N_3H_6$) and nitrogen, without ammonia, can be used to form the a boron nitride passivation layer (30) using the same processing conditions and flow rate described immediately above.

Yet another alternative is to form a passivation layer (30) comprising boron carbon

nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 . The flow rate ratio of B_2H_6 to nitrogen is between about 1 B_2H_6 :1 nitrogen and 1 B_2H_6 :200 nitrogen. A boron carbon nitride passivation layer (30) can be formed using a power of between about 1 kw and 10 kw, a magnetic field of between about 50 gauss and 200 gauss, a temperature of between about 20°C and 500°C, and a pressure of between about 0.1 mTorr and 500 mTorr. Alternatively, borazine ($B_3N_3H_6$) can be used in place of B_2H_6 .

Still referring to Fig 1, a first dielectric layer (40) is formed over the passivation layer (30). The first dielectric layer (40) is comprising an insulating material, such as silicon dioxide, hydrogen-doped silicon dioxide, fluorine-doped silicon dioxide, carbon-doped silicon dioxide, an organic polymer (comprising carbon and hydrogen), or a fluorine-doped organic polymer. The first dielectric layer preferably has a thickness of between about 2000 Angstroms and 10,000 Angstroms.

Still referring to Fig. 1, an etch stop layer (50) is formed over the first dielectric layer (40). The etch stop layer (50) can be comprising silicon nitride, which has a dielectric constant of about 7. However, an etch stop layer (50) comprising carbon nitride (dielectric constant between about 1.8 and 3.6), boron nitride (dielectric constant between

about 2.5 and 3.8), or boron carbon nitride (dielectric constant between about 1.8 and 3.5) reduces capacitance between conductive structures. The etch stop layer (50) can be formed comprising carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride using one of the methods described hereabove. It is important to note that the either the passivation layer (30), or the etch stop layer (50), or both may comprise carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride, in order to optimize the performance, reliability and fabrication cost.

Still referring to Fig. 1, a second dielectric layer (60) is formed over the etch stop layer (50). The second dielectric layer (60) is comprised of an insulating material, such as silicon dioxide, hydrogen-doped silicon dioxide, fluorine-doped silicon dioxide, carbon-doped silicon dioxide, an organic polymer (comprising carbon and hydrogen), or a fluorine-doped organic polymer. The second dielectric layer preferably has a thickness of between about 2000 Angstroms and 10,000 Angstroms.

Still referring to Fig. 1, an optional cap layer (70) may be formed over the second dielectric layer (60). The cap layer (70) can comprise silicon nitride, which has a dielectric constant of about 7. However, a cap layer (70) comprising carbon nitride (dielectric constant between about 1.8 and 3.6), boron nitride (dielectric constant between about 2.5 and 3.8), or boron carbon nitride (dielectric constant between about 1.8 and 3.5) reduces capacitance between conductive structures. The cap layer (70) can be comprised of

carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride using one of the methods described
hereabove. The cap layer (70), when comprising one of the three aforementioned
insulators, provides an effective stop layer for a subsequent chemical-mechanical polishing
process. Again, it is important to note that the cap layer alone can comprise carbon
5 nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride; either the passivation layer (30) or the etch
stop layer (50) and the cap layer can comprise carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron
carbon nitride; or the the passivation layer (30), the etch stop layer (50), and the cap layer
(70) can all comprise carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride in order to
optimize the performance, reliability and fabrication cost.

10 Referring to Figs. 2 and 3, the cap layer (70), the second dielectric layer (60), the
etch stop layer (50), and the first dielectric layer (40) are patterned to form a via opening
(45) stopping on the passivation layer and a trench opening (65) stopping on the etch stop
layer. The patterning can be performed using any of a number of methods known in the
15 art. A preferred method is described herebelow, however it should be understood that the
present invention is not limited to this preferred method.

For example, as shown in Fig. 2, a first photoresist mask (46) with an optional
bottom anti-reflective coating layer, and having an opening over the intended location for
20 a via can be formed over the cap layer (70) and second dielectric layer (60). The cap layer

(70), the second dielectric layer (60), the etch stop layer (50), and the first dielectric layer (40) are etched through the opening in the first photoresist mask (46) to form a via opening (45), and the first photoresist mask (46) is removed.

5 A cap layer (70) comprising carbon nitride can be etched using a mixture of hydrogen and nitrogen (forming gas); or oxygen and nitrogen; or chlorine and boron trichloride at a pressure of between about 5 mTorr and 500 mTorr, at a top power of between about 50 Watts and 2000 Watts, and at a bottom power of between about 50 Watts and 2000 Watts. For the hydrogen and nitrogen chemistry, the gas flow rates are
10 between about 5 sccm and 500 sccm of hydrogen and between about 5 sccm and 2000 sccm of nitrogen, although it is understood by those skilled in the art that the flow rates can be scaled up or down depending on chamber size provided that the molar ratios are maintained. For the oxygen and nitrogen chemistry, the gas flow rates are between about 5 sccm and 1000 sccm of oxygen and between about 5 sccm and 2000 sccm nitrogen,
15 although again the flow rates can be scaled. For the chlorine and boron trichloride chemistry, the flow rates are between about 10 sccm and 200 sccm of chlorine, between about 10 sccm and 200 sccm of boron trichloride, and between about 5 sccm and 100 sccm of nitrogen, although again the flow rates can be scaled. Each of these etch chemistries provide a selectivity of carbon nitride to silicon dioxide of greater than 2:1, a
20 selectivity of carbon nitride to silicon nitride (a high-K dielectric material) of greater than

2:1.

A cap layer (70) comprising boron nitride can be etched using a mixture of hydrogen and nitrogen (forming gas) or oxygen and nitrogen using the conditions and flow rates as described hereabove. Each of these etch chemistries provide a selectivity of boron nitride to silicon dioxide of greater than 2:1, and a selectivity of boron nitride to silicon nitride (a high-K dielectric material) of greater than 2:1. A cap layer (70) comprising boron carbon nitride can be etched using a mixture of hydrogen and nitrogen (forming gas) or oxygen and nitrogen using the conditions and flow rates as described hereabove. Each of these etch chemistries provide a selectivity of boron carbon nitride to silicon dioxide of greater than 2:1, and a selectivity of boron carbon nitride to silicon nitride (a high-K dielectric material) of greater than 2:1.

The Second dielectric layer (60) can then be etched using a reactive ion etch with a CF_4/CHF_3 chemistry (for doped or undoped silicon dioxide) or a N_2H_2 chemistry (for organic polymer or fluoride-doped organic polymer), stopping on the etch stop layer (50). This CF_4/CHF_3 etch chemistry provides a selectivity of silicon dioxide to carbon nitride of greater than 2:1, a selectivity to silicon dioxide to boron nitride of greater than 3:1, and a selectivity of silicon dioxide to boron carbon nitride of greater than 2:1.

An etch stop layer (50) comprising carbon nitride can be etched using a mixture of hydrogen and nitrogen; oxygen and nitrogen; or chlorine and boron trichloride as described hereabove. An etch stop layer (50) comprising boron nitride can be etched using a mixture of hydrogen and nitrogen; or oxygen and nitrogen as described hereabove.

5 An etch stop layer (50) comprising boron carbon nitride can be etched using a mixture of hydrogen and nitrogen; or oxygen and nitrogen as described hereabove.

The first dielectric layer (40) can be etched using a CF_4/CHF_3 (for doped or undoped silicon dioxide) or N_2H_2 (for organic polymer or fluorine-doped organic polymer).

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As shown in Fig. 3, a second photoresist mask (66) having an opening over the intended location for a trench can be formed over the cap layer (70) and the second dielectric layer (60). The cap layer (70) exposed through the opening in the second photoresist mask (66) is etched using a reactive ion etch with a the chemistry and conditions described hereabove (e.g. hydrogen and nitrogen; oxygen and nitrogen; or chlorine and boron trichloride). Then, a trench opening (65) is etched in the second dielectric layer (60) using a reactive ion etch with a CF_4/CHF_3 or N_2H_2 chemistry, stopping on the etch stop layer (50). The second photoresist mask (66) is removed. Either before or after the second photoresist mask (66) is removed, a further etching using CF_4/CHF_3 is

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performed to open the via opening (45) through the passivation layer (30) contacting the conductive layer (20). Other photolithography and etch methods can be used to form a trench opening (65) and a via opening (45), and the invention is not limited to the method shown in Figs. 2 & 3 and described above.

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Referring to Fig. 4, a barrier layer (80) is formed on the bottoms and sidewalls of the via opening (45) and the trench opening (65). The barrier layer (80), which prevents migration of the subsequently formed second metal layer (90) and provides good adhesion for the subsequently formed second metal layer (90), can comprise, but is not limited to:

10 TaN, WN, TaSiN, or Ta having a thickness of between about 50 and 2000 Angstroms.

Still referring to Fig. 4, a second metal layer (90) is formed on the barrier layer (80). The second metal layer (90) is preferably copper, and has a sufficient thickness to completely fill the via opening (45) and the trench opening (65).

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Referring to Fig. 5, the second metal layer (90) and the barrier layer (80) are planarized to form a damascene structure. Preferably, the second metal layer (90) and the barrier layer (80) are planarized using a chemical mechanical polishing process.

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Fig. 6 shows an alternate damascene structure formed according to the present

invention. A single damascene structure can be formed using only one dielectric layer and a single damascene opening. A passivation layer (30) is formed on a conductive layer (20) overlying a semiconductor structure (11). A first dielectric layer (40) is formed on the passivation layer. An optional cap layer (70) can be formed on the first dielectric layer (40). The optional cap layer (70) and the first dielectric layer (40) are patterned to form a damascene opening (105). A passivation layer (80) is formed on the bottom and sidewalls of the damascene opening (105), and the damascene opening is filled with a second metal layer (90) to form a contact to the conductive layer (20) through the first dielectric layer (40). The passivation layer (30) and/or the optional cap layer (70) comprise carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride deposited and etched using the processes described herein.

While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to the preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes in form and details may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. For example, although a via first, dual damascene process is described for illustrative purposes, the invention can also be used for other damascene processes.



CLAIMS

1 1. A method of forming a damascene structure using a low dielectric constant
2 passivation layer or etch stop layer, comprising the steps of:

3 a. providing a semiconductor structure having a first conductive layer thereover;

5 b. forming a passivation layer on said first conductive layer;

6 c. forming a first dielectric layer over said passivation layer;

7 d. forming an etch stop layer over said first dielectric layer;

8 e. forming a second dielectric layer over said etch stop layer; and

9 f. patterning said second dielectric layer, said etch stop layer, and said first
10 dielectric layer to form a via opening stopping on said passivation layer and a trench
11 opening stopping on said etch stop layer;

12 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and
13 said etch stop layer comprise carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride.



2. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said etch stop layer comprises carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas, and said etch stop layer comprises carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron nitride



having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said etch stop layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhance chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein said etch stop layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhance chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhance chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen, and said etch stop layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhance chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by



plasma enhance chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen, and said etch stop layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhance chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 .

12. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein said etch stop layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 .



14. The method of claim 1 wherein said etch stop layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 , and said etch stop layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 .

16. The method of claim 1 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$, and said etch stop layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$.

1 17. A Method of forming a damascene structure using a low dielectric constant cap



layer, comprising the steps of:

a. providing a semiconductor structure having a first conductive layer thereover;

b. forming a passivation layer on said first conductive layer;

c. forming a first dielectric layer over said passivation layer;

d. forming an etch stop layer over said first dielectric layer;

e. forming a second dielectric layer over said etch stop layer;

f. forming a cap layer on said second dielectric layer; said cap layer comprising carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride;

g. patterning said cap layer, said second dielectric layer, said etch stop layer, and said first dielectric layer, to form a via opening stopping on said passivation layer and a trench opening stopping on said etch stop layer;

h. etching said passivation layer to extend said via opening, stopping on said



15 conductive layer;

16 i. forming a barrier layer over said semiconductor structure;

17 j. forming a second conductive layer on said barrier layer; and

18 k. planarizing said second conductive layer and said barrier layer

19 to form a damascene structure.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said cap layer comprises carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas.

19. The method of claim 17 wherein said cap layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen.

20. The method of claim 17 wherein said cap layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen.



21. The method of claim 17 wherein said cap layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed using magnetron sputtering with a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 .
22. The method of claim 17 wherein said cap layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed using magnetron sputtering with a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$.
23. The method of claim 18 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas.
24. The method of claim 19 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen.



25. The method of claim 19 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen.

26. The method of claim 20 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 .

27. The method of claim 20 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$.

1 28. A damascene structure comprising:

2 a passivation layer formed on a conductive layer overlying a semiconductor
3 structure;



4 a first dielectric layer formed on said passivation layer; said first dielectric layer
5 having a via opening therein stopping on said passivation layer;

6 an etch stop layer formed on said first dielectric layer;

7 a second dielectric layer formed on said etch stop layer; said second dielectric layer
8 having a trench opening therein stopping on said etch stop layer; and

9 a second metal layer formed in said trench opening and said via opening;

10 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and
11 said etch stop layer comprise carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride.

29. The damascene structure of claim 28 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise carbon nitride formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas.

30. The damascene structure of claim 28 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise boron nitride formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen.



31. The damascene structure of claim 28 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise boron nitride formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen.

32. The damascene structure of claim 28 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise boron carbon nitride formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 .

33. The damascene structure of claim 28 wherein said passivation layer, said etch stop layer, or said passivation layer and said etch stop layer comprise boron carbon nitride formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$.

34. The damascene structure of claim 28 which further comprises a cap layer overlying said second dielectric layer; and wherein one or more of: said cap layer, said etch stop layer and said passivation layer comprise carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride.

1 35. A method of forming a damascene structure using a low dielectric constant



2 passivation layer or etch stop layer, comprising the steps of:

3 a. providing a semiconductor structure having a first conductive layer thereover;

5 b. forming a passivation layer on said first conductive layer; said passivation layer
6 comprising carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride.

7 c. forming a first dielectric layer over said passivation layer;

8 d. patterning said second dielectric layer, said etch stop layer, and said first
9 dielectric layer to form a via opening stopping on said passivation layer and a trench
10 opening stopping on said etch stop layer; and

11 e. etching said passivation layer to extend said via opening stopping on said
12 conductive layer.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein said passivation layer comprises carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas.



37. The method of claim 35 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen.

38. The method of claim 35 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen.

39. The method of claim 35 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 .

40. The method of claim 35 wherein said passivation layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 3000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$.

1 41. A method of forming a damascene structure using a low dielectric constant
2 passivation layer or etch stop layer, comprising the steps of:



- 3 a. providing a semiconductor structure having a first conductive layer thereover;
- b. forming a passivation layer on said first conductive layer; said passivation layer;
- 5 c. forming a first dielectric layer over said passivation layer; and
- 6 d. forming a cap layer on said first dielectric layer; said cap layer comprising
- 7 carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride;
- 8 e. patterning said second dielectric layer, said etch stop layer, and said first
- 9 dielectric layer to form a via opening stopping on said passivation layer and a trench
- 10 opening stopping on said etch stop layer; and
- 11 f. etching said passivation layer to extend said via opening, stopping on said
- 12 conductive layer.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein said cap layer comprises carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed by magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a nitrogen sputtering gas.



43. The method of claim 41 wherein said cap layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhance chemical vapor deposition using B_2H_6 , ammonia, and nitrogen.
44. The method of claim 41 wherein said cap layer comprises boron nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed by plasma enhance chemical vapor deposition using $B_3N_3H_6$ and nitrogen.
45. The method of claim 41 wherein said cap layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and B_2H_6 .
46. The method of claim 41 wherein said cap layer comprises boron carbon nitride having a thickness of between about 50 Angstroms and 7000 Angstroms formed magnetron sputtering using a graphite target and a sputtering gas comprising nitrogen and $B_3N_3H_6$.
47. The method of claim 41 wherein said passivation layer comprises carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride.



- 1 48. A damascene structure comprising:
- 2 a passivation layer comprising carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon
- 3 nitride formed on a conductive layer overlying a semiconductor structure;
- 4 a first dielectric layer formed on said passivation layer; said first dielectric layer
- 5 having a damascene opening therein; and
- 6 a second metal layer formed in said damascene opening.
- 1 49. A damascene structure comprising:
- 2 a passivation layer formed on a conductive layer overlying a semiconductor
- 3 structure;
- 4 a first dielectric layer formed on said passivation layer; said first dielectric layer
- 5 having a damascene opening therein;
- 6 a cap layer formed on said first dielectric layer; said cap layer comprising carbon
- 7 nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride; and



8 a second metal layer formed in said damascene opening.

50. The damascene structure of claim 49 wherein said passivation layer comprises carbon nitride, boron nitride, or boron carbon nitride.