

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

ETCHING METHOD

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to an etching method.

2. Description of the Related Art

Etching methods for etching a silicon
10 oxide film using an etching gas including CH₂F₂ gas
at low temperatures are known (e.g., see Japanese
Unexamined Patent Publication No. 2015-159308).
Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication No. 2015-
159308 describes an etching gas for forming a
15 contact hole pattern having a high aspect ratio.

Also, an etching method is known that
involves exciting a gas containing hydrogen gas,
hydrogen bromide gas, nitrogen trifluoride gas, and
at least one of hydrocarbon gas, fluorocarbon gas,
20 and hydrofluorocarbon gas, and etching a multilayer
film in the layering direction from its surface down
to a midpoint position to form a hole in the
multilayer film (e.g., see Japanese Unexamined
Patent Publication No. 2015-153941).

25 However, the above-described techniques do
not address controlling where reaction products
generated during plasma etching are to be deposited
on a mask film through selection of the appropriate
combination of gases. Thus, according to the above-
30 described techniques, it is difficult to the control
the position where reaction products are to be
deposited on the mask film by controlling a gas to
be added to the etching gas.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In view of the above-problems of the related art, one aspect of the present invention is directed to providing an etching method that enables etching while adjusting the profile of an opening formed in a mask film.

According to one embodiment of the present invention, an etching method for etching a silicon oxide film is provided that includes generating a plasma from a gas including a hydrogen-containing gas and a fluorine-containing gas using a high frequency power for plasma generation, and etching the silicon oxide film using the generated plasma. The fluorine-containing gas includes a hydrofluorocarbon gas, and the sticking coefficient of radicals generated from the hydrofluorocarbon gas is higher than the sticking coefficient of radicals generated from carbon tetrafluoride (CF_4).

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a cross-sectional view of an etching apparatus according to an embodiment of the present invention;

25 FIG. 2 is a diagram showing example etching results of etching a silicon oxide film using H_2 gas and CF_4 gas;

FIG. 3 is a diagram showing example etching results of etching the silicon oxide film using H_2 gas and CHF_3 gas according to an embodiment of the present invention;

30 FIG. 4 is a diagram showing example etching results of etching the silicon oxide film

using H_2 gas and CH_2F_2 gas according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 5 is a diagram showing example etching results of etching the silicon oxide film using H_2 gas and CH_3F gas according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 6A and 6B are graphs indicating etch rates of the silicon oxide film and a mask film when the flow rate of CF_4 gas or CH_2F_2 gas is controlled to be constant and the flow rate of H_2 gas is varied according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 7A-7D are diagrams showing example profiles of an opening formed by an etching method according to an embodiment of the present invention; and

FIGS. 8A-8D are diagrams showing example profiles of deposited reaction products for controlling the profile of an opening formed by an etching method according to an embodiment of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In the following, embodiments of the present invention will be described with reference to the accompanying drawings. Note that elements illustrated in the drawings and described below that have substantially the same functions and/or features are given the same reference numerals and overlapping descriptions thereof may be omitted.

[Overall Configuration of Etching Apparatus]

First, the overall configuration of an etching apparatus 1 according to an embodiment of

the present invention will be described. FIG. 1 is a cross-sectional view of the etching apparatus 1 according to the present embodiment.

5 The etching apparatus 1 includes a cylindrical processing chamber 10 made of aluminum having an alumite-treated (anodized) surface, for example. The processing chamber 10 is grounded.

10 A mounting table 17 is arranged within the processing chamber 10. The mounting table 17 may be made of aluminum (Al), titanium (Ti), or silicon carbide (SiC), for example, and is supported on a support 16 via an insulating cylindrical holder 14. In this way, the mounting table 17 is arranged at a bottom portion of the processing chamber 10.

15 An exhaust pipe 26 is arranged at the bottom portion of the processing chamber 10 and is connected to an exhaust device 28. The exhaust device 28 may include a vacuum pump, such as a turbo-molecular pump or a dry pump (not shown). The
20 exhaust device 28 is configured to depressurize a processing space within the processing chamber 10 to a predetermined vacuum level and direct gas within the processing chamber 10 towards an exhaust path 20 and an exhaust port 24 to discharge the gas. A
25 baffle plate 22 for controlling the gas flow is arranged in the exhaust path 20.

A gate valve 30 is arranged at a side wall of the processing chamber 10. A wafer W may be loaded into or unloaded from the processing chamber
30 10 by opening/closing the gate valve 30.

A first high frequency power supply 31 for generating plasma is connected to the mounting table 17 via a matching unit 33, and a second high

frequency power supply 32 for drawing ions from within the plasma onto the wafer W is connected to the mounting table 17 via a matching unit 34. For example, the first high frequency power supply 31
5 may be configured to apply to the mounting table 17, a first high frequency power HF (high frequency power for plasma generation) with a first frequency (e.g., 60 MHz) that is suitable for generating a plasma within the processing chamber 10. The second
10 high frequency power supply 32 may be configured to apply to the mounting table 17, a second high frequency power LF (high frequency power for biasing) with a second frequency (e.g. 13.56 MHz) that is lower than the first frequency and is
15 suitable for drawing ions from the plasma onto the wafer W placed on the mounting table 17. In this way, the mounting table 17 supports the wafer W and also acts as a lower electrode.

An electrostatic chuck 40 configured to
20 hold the wafer W by an electrostatic attractive force is provided on a top surface of the mounting table 17. The electrostatic chuck 40 includes an electrode 40a that is made of a conductive film and is arranged between a pair of insulating layers 40b
25 (or insulating sheets). A DC voltage supply 42 is connected to the electrode 40a via a switch 43. The electrostatic chuck 40 electrostatically attracts and holds the wafer W by a Coulomb force that is generated when a voltage is applied thereto from the
30 DC voltage supply 42. A temperature sensor 77 that detects the temperature of the electrostatic chuck 40 is arranged at the electrostatic chuck 40. In this way, the temperature of the electrostatic chuck

40 may be measured.

A focus ring 18 is arranged at the outer edge of the electrostatic chuck 40 to surround the mounting table 17. The focus ring 18 may be made of
5 silicon or quartz, for example. The focus ring 18 is provided to improve in-plane etching uniformity.

A gas shower head 38 is arranged at a ceiling portion of the processing chamber 10. The gas shower head 38 acts as an upper electrode at a
10 ground potential. In this way, the first high frequency power from the first high frequency power supply 31 is capacitively applied between the mounting table 17 and the gas shower head 38.

The gas shower head 38 includes an
15 electrode plate 56 having multiple gas holes 56a and an electrode support 58 configured to detachably hold the electrode plate 56. A gas supply source 62 is configured to supply processing gas to the gas shower head 38 from a gas inlet 60a via a gas supply
20 pipe 64. The processing gas supplied to the gas shower head 38 is diffused at a gas diffusion chamber 57 to be introduced into the processing chamber 10 from the multiple gas holes 56a. A magnet 66 is arranged to extend annularly or concentrically
25 around the processing chamber 10 so that the plasma generated within a plasma generation space of the processing chamber 10 may be controlled by the magnetic force of the magnet 66.

A heater 75 is embedded within the
30 electrostatic chuck 40. Note that in some embodiments, the heater 75 may be attached to a backside face of the electrostatic chuck 40 instead of being embedded within the electrostatic chuck 40,

for example. A current output by an AC power supply 44 is supplied to the heater 75 via a feeder. In this way, the heater 75 may be able to heat the mounting table 17.

5 A coolant path 70 is formed within the mounting table 17. A coolant (hereinafter also referred to as "brine") supplied from a chiller unit 71 may be circulated through the coolant path 70 and coolant circulation pipes 73 to thereby cool the
10 mounting table 17.

 With the above-described configuration, the mounting table 17 may be heated by the heater 75 and cooled by the brine that is adjusted to a predetermined temperature and is circulated through
15 the coolant path 70 within the mounting table 17. In this way, the temperature of the wafer W may be adjusted to a desired temperature. Also, a heat transfer gas such as helium (He) is supplied between the backside surface of the wafer W and the top
20 surface of the electrostatic chuck 40 through a heat transfer gas supply line 72.

 A control unit 50 is configured to control the individual components of the etching apparatus 1, such as the exhaust device 28, the AC power supply
25 44, the DC voltage supply 42, the switch 43 for the electrostatic chuck, the first high frequency power supply 31, the second high frequency power supply 32, the matching units 33 and 34, a heat transfer gas supply source (not shown), the gas supply source 62,
30 and the chiller unit 71. The control unit 50 also acquires a sensor temperature detected by a temperature sensor 77 attached to the backside surface of the heater 75. Note that the control unit

50 may be connected to a host computer (not shown).

The control unit 50 includes a CPU (Central Processing Unit) 51, a ROM (Read Only Memory) 52, a RAM (Random Access Memory) 53, and an
5 HDD (Hard Disk Drive) 54. The CPU 51 executes a plasma process, such as etching, according to various recipes stored in a storage unit that may be implemented by the ROM 52, the RAM 53, or the HDD 54, for example. Note that the storage unit also stores
10 various types of data, such as a data table (described below). The control unit 50 is configured to control the temperatures of a heating mechanism implemented by the heater 75 and a cooling mechanism implemented by brine, for example.

15 When performing an etching process using a plasma generated by the etching apparatus 1 having the above-described configuration, the gate valve 30 is opened, and a wafer W is loaded into the processing chamber 10 and placed on the
20 electrostatic chuck 40. After the wafer W is loaded, the gate valve 30 is closed. Then, the internal pressure of the processing chamber 10 is reduced to a predetermined pressure by the exhaust device 28. Then, a voltage from the DC voltage supply 42 is
25 applied to the electrode 40a of the electrostatic chuck 40 so that the wafer W may be electrostatically attracted to the electrostatic chuck 40.

Then, a predetermined gas is introduced
30 into the processing chamber 10 from the shower head 38, and the first high frequency power HF for plasma generation with a predetermined power is applied to the mounting table 17. The first high frequency

power HF causes ionization and dissociation of the gas that has been introduced into the processing chamber 10 to thereby cause plasma generation within the processing chamber 10. The wafer W is etched by
5 ions and radicals included in the generated plasma. Also, the second high frequency power LF for biasing may be applied to the mounting table 17 in order to draw ions in the plasma towards the wafer W. After the plasma etching is completed, the wafer W is
10 unloaded from the processing chamber 10.

[Etching Method]

In the following, an etching method for etching a wafer W using the etching apparatus 1 having the above-described configuration according
15 to one embodiment of the present invention is described with reference to FIGS. 2-5. Note that an initial state of a layered film is shown at the leftmost side of FIGS. 2-5. Specifically, a silicon oxide (SiO_2) film 200, a silicon nitride (SiN) film
20 190, and a polysilicon mask film 180 are stacked on the wafer W to form the layered film subject to etching. Note that when the etch rate (hereinafter also referred to as "E/R") of the silicon oxide film 200 increases, the etch rate of the mask film 180
25 decreases relative to the etch rate of the silicon oxide film 200 such that a hole with a high aspect ratio may be formed in the silicon oxide film 200. In this case, the etching profile can be adjusted to a desired profile by controlling the profile of the
30 mask film 180.

Thus, in an etching method according to an embodiment of the present invention, etching is performed while adjusting the profile of an opening

formed in the mask film 180. At this time, the temperature of the chiller (chiller unit) is set to -60°C such that the temperature of the wafer W may be controlled to be less than or equal to -35°C , and the silicon oxide film 200 is etched at a high etch rate under such extremely low temperature environment. The wafer W may be a silicon wafer, for example. The mask film 180 is preferably made of polysilicon or tungsten (W) but may also be an organic film, an amorphous carbon film, or a titanium nitride film, for example.

In the following, example etching results that were obtained when a polysilicon film was used as the mask film 180 are described.

<Process Conditions 1 (FIG. 2)>

Chiller Temperature	-60°C
Gas	Hydrogen (H_2)/Carbon Tetrafluoride (CF_4)
Gas Flow Rate	H_2 Varied/ CF_4 Constant
First High Frequency Power HF	2500 W, Continuous Wave
Second High Frequency Power LF	4000 W, Pulse Wave (Frequency: 5 kHz), Duty Cycle: 50% (Effective Value of Second High Frequency Power LF: 2000 W)

Under the above process conditions 1, a plasma was generated from H_2 gas and CF_4 gas, and the generated plasma was used to etch the silicon oxide film 200 via the mask film 180 and the silicon nitride film 190. In this process, the flow rate of CF_4 gas was controlled to be constant, and the flow rate of H_2 gas was controlled to be 0 sccm in (a) of

FIG. 2, 50 sccm in (b) of FIG. 2, 100 sccm in (c) of FIG. 2, 150 sccm in (d) of FIG. 2, and 300 sccm in (e) of FIG. 2.

As a result, the mask selectivity (etch rate of silicon oxide film 200/etch rate of mask film 180) was 1.0 in (a) of FIG. 2, 9.0 in (b) of FIG. 2, 6.9 in (c) of FIG. 2, 8.0 in (d) of FIG. 2, and 4.1 in (e) of FIG. 2. It can be appreciated from these results that higher mask selectivity can be achieved by including a hydrogen-containing gas, such as H₂ gas, in a fluorine-containing gas as compared with the case of not including a hydrogen-containing gas in the fluorine-containing gas.

<Process Conditions 2 (FIG. 3)>

Chiller Temperature	-60°C
Gas	Hydrogen (H ₂)/Fluoroform (CHF ₃)
Gas Flow Rate	H ₂ Varied/CHF ₃ Constant
First High Frequency Power HF	2500 W, Continuous Wave
Second High Frequency Power LF	4000 W, Pulse Wave (Frequency: 5 kHz), Duty Cycle: 50% (Effective Value of Second High Frequency Power LF: 2000 W)

Under the above process conditions 2, a plasma was generated from H₂ gas and CHF₃ gas, and the generated plasma was used to etch the silicon oxide film 200 via the mask film 180 and the silicon nitride film 190. In this process, the flow rate of CHF₃ gas was controlled to be 0 sccm in (a) of FIG. 3, 25 sccm in (b) of FIG. 3, 50 sccm in (c) of FIG. 3, and 100 sccm in (d) of FIG. 3.

As a result, the mask selectivity was 9.7

in (a) of FIG. 3, 16.9 in (b) of FIG. 3, 12.8 in (c) of FIG. 3, and 9.5 in (d) of FIG. 3. It can be appreciated from these results that the amount of reaction products deposited on the mask film 180 increases and the mask selectivity increases when the etching gas is switched from a combination of H₂ gas and CF₄ gas to a combination of H₂ gas and CHF₃ gas.

10 <Process Conditions 3 (FIG. 4)>

Chiller Temperature	-60°C
Gas	Hydrogen (H ₂)/Difluoromethane (CH ₂ F ₂)
Gas Flow Rate	H ₂ Varied/CH ₂ F ₂ Constant
First High Frequency Power HF	2500 W, Continuous Wave
Second High Frequency Power LF	4000 W, Pulse Wave (Frequency: 5 kHz), Duty Cycle: 50% (Effective Value of Second High Frequency Power LF: 2000 W)

Under the above process conditions 3, a plasma was generated from H₂ gas and CH₂F₂ gas, and the generated plasma was used to etch the silicon oxide film 200 via the mask film 180 and the silicon nitride film 190. In this process, the flow rate of CH₂F₂ gas was controlled to be constant, and the flow rate of H₂ gas was controlled to be 0 sccm in (a) of FIG. 4, 50 sccm in (b) of FIG. 4, 100 sccm in (c) of FIG. 4, and 200 sccm in (d) of FIG. 4.

As a result, the mask film 180 was not etched in (a) of FIG. 4, thereby making the mask selectivity infinite. Also, the mask selectivity was 22.7 in (b) of FIG. 4, 20.6 in (c) of FIG. 4, and 26.2 in (d) of FIG. 4. It can be appreciated from

these results that the mask selectivity upon etching the silicon oxide film 200 can be increased by switching the etching gas from a combination of H₂ gas and CF₄ gas to a combination of H₂ gas and CH₂F₂ gas.

<Process Conditions 4 (FIG. 5)>

Chiller Temperature	-60°C
Gas	Hydrogen (H ₂)/Monofluoromethane (CH ₃ F)
Gas Flow Rate	H ₂ Varied/CH ₃ F Constant
First High Frequency Power HF	2500 W, Continuous Wave
Second High Frequency Power LF	4000 W, Pulse Wave (Frequency: 5 kHz), Duty Cycle: 50% (Effective Value of Second High Frequency Power LF: 2000 W)

Under the above process conditions 4, a plasma was generated from H₂ gas and CH₃F gas, and the generated plasma was used to etch the silicon oxide film 200 via the mask film 180 and the silicon nitride film 190. In this process, the flow rate of CH₃F gas was controlled to be constant, and the flow rate of H₂ gas was controlled to 0 sccm in (a) of FIG. 5, 25 sccm in (b) of FIG. 5, 50 sccm in (c) of FIG. 5 (c), and 100 sccm in (d) of FIG. 5.

As a result, the mask selectivity was 18.0 in (a) of FIG. 5, 13.7 in (b) of FIG. 5, 12.9 in (c) of FIG. 5, and 21.8 in (d) of FIG. 5. It can be appreciated from these results that the mask selectivity upon etching the silicon oxide film 200 can be increased by switching the etching gas from a combination of H₂ gas and CF₄ gas to a combination

of H_2 gas and CH_3F gas.

Based on the above, when polysilicon is used as the mask film 180, the mask selectivity upon performing etching can be increased by adding at least one of CHF_3 gas, CH_2F_2 gas, and CH_3F gas to an etching gas including a hydrogen-containing gas and a fluorine-containing gas as compared to the case of supplying only H_2 gas and CF_4 gas. For example, by adding at least one of CHF_3 gas, CH_2F_2 gas, and CH_3F gas to an etching gas including H_2 gas and CF_4 gas, the mask selectivity can be increased to at least 5, and more preferably to at least 9.

Further, in an etching method according to one embodiment, H_2 gas may be supplied as an example of a hydrogen-containing gas, and CF_4 gas may be supplied as an example of a fluorine-containing gas. Also, H_2O is produced as a reaction product as a result of the silicon oxide film 200 being etched by the H_2 gas contained in the etching gas. According to a general vapor pressure curve, H_2O has a relatively low saturated vapor pressure. Note that liquid and vapor can coexist along the vapor pressure curve. Accordingly, when the temperature of the chiller is set to an extremely low temperature of about $-60^\circ C$, H_2O on the surface of the silicon oxide film 200 may presumably be saturated to some extent and exist in the form of liquid. The liquid existing on the surface of the silicon oxide film 200 as reaction products also include HF-based radicals produced by a reaction from CF_4 gas. As a result, hydrofluoric acid (HF) is generated by the HF-based radicals and H_2O (water). In this way, etching may be promoted mainly by a chemical

reaction resulting from the hydrofluoric acid (HF) being dissolved in water at the surface of the silicon oxide film 200, and the etch rate may be substantially increased as a result. Thus, in the etching method according to the present embodiment, etching of the silicon oxide film 200 may not be substantially hampered even when at least one of CHF_3 gas, CH_2F_2 gas, and CH_3F gas is added to an etching gas including H_2 gas and CF_4 gas. That is, in the etching method according to an embodiment of the present invention, etching of the silicon oxide film 200 is promoted by actions of liquid hydrofluoric acid existing on the surface of the silicon oxide film 200 under a low temperature environment in which the temperature of the wafer W is controlled to be less than or equal to -35°C , and in this way, a high etch rate may be maintained.

Note that according to the above process conditions 1-4, the second high frequency power LF is output in the form of a pulse wave. In the following, the on-time of the second high frequency power LF is referred to as "Ton", and the off-time of the second high frequency power LF is referred to as "Toff". In this case, a pulse wave of the second high frequency power LF with a frequency of $1/(\text{Ton}+\text{Toff})$ is applied. Also, the duty cycle of the second high frequency power LF, corresponding to the ratio of the on-time Ton with to the total time of the on-time Ton and the off-time Toff, may be expressed as $\text{Ton}/(\text{Ton}+\text{Toff})$.

According to the above etching results, by outputting the second high frequency power LF as a pulse wave, heat input from plasma may be suppressed

during the off-time T_{off} of the second high frequency power LF, and in this way, a temperature increase in the wafer W may be prevented to thereby improve temperature controllability. As a result, the temperature of the wafer W may be controlled to be less than or equal to -35°C , and the silicon oxide film 200 may be etched at a high etch rate in a low temperature environment.

Note that in some embodiments, not only the second high frequency power LF but also the first high frequency power HF may be output as a pulse wave, for example. Also, in some embodiments, the second high frequency power LF may not be applied during the etching process, and only the first high frequency power HF may be applied, for example. In the case where the second high frequency power LF is not applied, the high frequency power for biasing is turned off such that the deposition of reaction products on the mask film 180 upon etching the silicon oxide film 200 can be promoted.

[Etching Results when using Tungsten as Mask Film]

In the following, example etching results that were obtained in a case where tungsten (W) was used in place of polysilicon as the mask layer 180 are described. In the present embodiment, a tungsten (W) blanket ("W blanket") and the silicon oxide film 200 were etched.

FIGS. 6A and 6B are graphs indicating the etch rate of the silicon oxide film 200 ("Ox E/R") on the vertical axis on the left side and the etch rate of the W blanket ("W Blanket E/R") on the vertical axis on the right side. The horizontal axis

of FIG. 6A represent the flow rate of H₂ gas in a case where the flow rate of CF₄ gas is controlled to be constant and the flow rate of H₂ gas is controlled to vary. The horizontal axis of FIG. 6B represent the flow rate of H₂ gas in a case where the flow rate of CH₂F₂ gas is controlled to be constant and the flow rate of H₂ gas is controlled to vary. Process conditions other than those related to the etching gas were as follows.

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Chiller Temperature	-60°C
First High Frequency Power HF	2500 W, Continuous Wave
Second High Frequency Power LF	4000 W, Pulse Wave (Frequency: 5 kHz), Duty Cycle: 50% (Effective Value of Second High Frequency Power LF: 2000 W)

By referring to the etching results of FIGS. 6A and 6B, it can be appreciated that the etch rate of the silicon oxide film 200 is sufficiently low relative to the etch rate of the tungsten (W) blanket regardless of whether CF₄ gas is used or CH₂F₂ gas is used, and regardless of the flow rate of H₂ gas. Also, as can be appreciated from the etching results of FIG. 6B, a high mask selectivity (at least 10) can be achieved by using a gas including H₂ gas and CH₂F₂ gas as an etching gas and using tungsten (W) as the mask film 180.

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[Profile Control of Opening in Silicon Oxide Film]

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In the following, profile control of the opening formed in the silicon oxide film 200 using a

hydrofluorocarbon gas is described with reference to FIGS. 7A-7D. FIG. 7A illustrates an initial state of the silicon oxide film 200. Note that there is no mask film arranged on top of the silicon oxide film 200 in FIG. 7A. The silicon oxide film 200 has a hole formed therein. In the present example, etching was performed under the following process conditions.

Gas	FIG. 7B: H_2/CF_4 FIG. 7C: H_2/CH_2F_2
First High Frequency Power HF	2500 W, Continuous Wave
Second High Frequency Power LF	Not Applied

It can be appreciated from FIGS. 7B and 7C that reaction products are gradually deposited on the silicon oxide film 200 by performing etching under the above process conditions. In FIG. 7B, reaction products 202 are deposited on the silicon oxide film 200 to a certain height after time t_1 , and reaction products 202 are further deposited on the deposited reaction products 202 after time t_2 ($t_2 > t_1$).

Similarly, in FIG. 7C, reaction products 203 are deposited on the silicon oxide film 200 to a certain height after time t_3 , and reaction products 203 are further deposited on the deposited reaction products 203 after time t_4 ($t_4 > t_3$, $t_4 < t_2$). Also, it can be appreciated that the profile of the reaction products 202 shown in FIG. 7B and the profile of the reaction products 203 shown in FIG. 7C are different. Specifically, the narrowest portion (wd_1) of the hole formed in the reaction product 203 is

positioned higher relative to the position of the narrowest portion (wd2) of the hole formed in the reaction products 202. That is, the reaction products 203 tend to be deposited towards the top side of the hole as compared with the reaction products 202.

Further, note that although FIG. 7B and FIG. 7C are cross-sections of the reaction products 202 and the reaction products 203 when they have been deposited up to the same height, the deposition rate of the reaction products 203 is higher than the deposition rate of the reaction products 202.

The reaction products 202 are formed by the deposition of CF_3 radicals (CF_3^*) within the plasma generated from the CF_4 gas of the etching gas including H_2 gas and CF_4 gas supplied to the processing chamber 10. On the other hand, the reaction products 203 are formed by the deposition of CH_2F radicals (CH_2F^*) and CHF_2 radicals (CHF_2^*) within the plasma generated from the CH_2F_2 gas of the etching gas including H_2 gas and CH_2F_2 gas supplied to the processing chamber 10.

Note that the sticking coefficient of CF_3 radicals is lower than the sticking coefficients of CH_2F radicals and CHF_2 radicals. Thus, the CF_3 radicals with the lower sticking coefficient are more likely to travel deeper into the hole before sticking to a side wall face of the hole, for example. On the other hand, the CH_2F radicals and the CHF_2 radicals with higher sticking coefficients are more likely to stick to a side wall face toward the opening of the hole (towards the top side of the hole) or on top of the deposited reaction products,

for example. As a result, the reaction products 202 are more easily deposited on a side wall face towards the deeper side of the opening of the hole as compared with the reaction products 203, and the
5 reaction products 203 are more easily deposited on a side wall face near the opening (top side) of the hole or on top of the deposited reaction products as compared with the reaction products 202.

Also, because the sticking coefficients of
10 CH_2F radicals and CHF_2 radicals are higher than the sticking coefficient of CF_3 radicals, the deposition rate of the reaction products 203 is higher than the deposition rate of the reaction products 202. As a result, higher mask selectivity can be achieved when
15 the reaction products 203 are generated by supplying the etching gas including H_2 gas and CH_2F_2 gas as compared with the case where the reaction products 202 are generated by supplying the etching gas including H_2 gas and CF_4 gas. Additionally, the
20 reaction products 203 that are generated upon supplying the etching gas including H_2 gas and CH_2F_2 gas are more easily deposited near the opening (top side) of the hole and on top of deposited reaction products as compared with the reaction products 202
25 that are generated upon supplying the etching gas including H_2 gas and CF_4 gas. Therefore, the profile of the hole formed in the deposited reaction products 203 may be more easily controlled to have a substantially vertical configuration as compared
30 with the case of controlling the profile of the hole formed in the deposited reaction products 202 (see FIG. 7D).

Based on the above, in an etching method

according to an embodiment of the present invention,
a plasma may be generated from H_2 gas, CF_4 gas, and
 CH_2F_2 gas using the first high frequency power HF
for plasma generation, and the generated plasma may
5 be used to etch the silicon oxide film 200. In this
case, radicals generated from the CH_2F_2 gas has a
higher sticking coefficient as compared with the
sticking coefficient of the radicals generated from
the CF_4 gas. Thus, the profile of the reaction
10 products 203 deposited on the mask film 180 may be
controlled by controlling the flow rates of the CF_4
gas and the CH_2F_2 gas, for example. In this way,
fine adjustments may be made to the profile of the
opening forming in the mask film 180 while
15 performing plasma etching to thereby control the
hole etched in the silicon oxide film 200 to have a
more vertical configuration, for example.

[Types of Hydrofluorocarbon Gas]

In etching methods according to
20 embodiments of the present invention, the gas
supplied along with H_2 gas and CF_4 gas is not
limited to CH_2F_2 gas and may be some other type of
hydrofluorocarbon gas. Note, however, that the
sticking coefficient of radicals generated from the
25 hydrofluorocarbon gas has to be higher than the
sticking coefficient of radicals generated from the
fluorine-containing gas.

For example, in an etching method
according to one embodiment, at least three types of
30 gases are used, including H_2 gas and CF_4 gas, and a
hydrofluorocarbon gas, which may be at least one of
 CH_2F_2 gas, CH_3F gas, and CHF_3 gas, for example. In
some embodiments, two or more types of

hydrofluorocarbon gases may be added to the H₂ gas and CF₄ gas, for example. In such case, further fine adjustments may be made to the profile of the reaction products 203 deposited on the mask film 180 by controlling the respective flow rates of the plurality of types of hydrofluorocarbon gases added to the H₂ gas and CF₄ gas, for example.

Also, in an etching method according to one embodiment of the present invention, a step of performing plasma etching by supplying H₂ gas and CF₄ gas, and a step of performing plasma etching by supplying H₂ gas, CF₄ gas, and a hydrofluorocarbon gas may be alternately executed.

[Etching Results]

FIGS. 8A-8D illustrate etching results obtained by implementing etching methods according to embodiments of the present invention under the above process conditions using different types of hydrofluorocarbon gases and different flow rates as indicated below. Note that in FIGS. 8A-8D, the etching gases were supplied for the requisite time (i.e., 96 sec, 60 sec, 39 sec, and 30 sec) such that reaction products would be deposited up to the same height.

FIG. 8A: H₂/CF₄ = 150 sccm/100 sccm
FIG. 8B: H₂/CHF₃ = 100 sccm/100 sccm
FIG. 8C: H₂/CH₂F₂ = 100 sccm/100 sccm
FIG. 8D: H₂/CH₃F = 0 sccm/100 sccm

As shown in FIGS. 8A-8D, reaction products 202, 204, 203, and 205 were respectively deposited on the silicon oxide film 200 by performing etching

while maintaining the temperature of the wafer W to a low temperature less than or equal to -35°C . It can be appreciated from these results that the reaction products 203-205 that are generated upon performing etching using a gas including H_2 gas and at least one type of hydrofluorocarbon gas (CH_2F_2 gas, CH_3F gas, or CHF_3 gas) are more likely to be deposited on the top side of the opening formed in the reaction products as compared with the reaction products 202 that are generated upon performing etching using a gas containing H_2 gas and CF_4 gas. That is, the reaction products 203-205 are less likely to be deposited on a side wall face of the opening, and as such, the profile of the opening can be controlled to have a more vertical configuration.

Also, with respect to the deposition rate, the highest deposition rate was achieved in FIG. 8D where the etching gas $\text{H}_2/\text{CH}_3\text{F}$ was supplied at 0/100 sccm, followed by FIG. 8C where the etching gas $\text{H}_2/\text{CH}_2\text{F}_2$ was supplied at 100/100 sccm, and then FIG. 8B where the etching gas H_2/CHF_3 was supplied at 100/100 sccm. It can be appreciated from the above that the deposition rate becomes higher as the number x of H atoms in the hydrofluorocarbon gas CH_xF_y increases, and the mask selectivity also increases in this case.

As described above, according to an aspect of an etching method of the present embodiment, by adding to the etching gas including H_2 gas and CF_4 gas, a hydrofluorocarbon gas that generates radicals with a sticking coefficient that is higher than the sticking coefficient of radicals generated from a fluorine-containing gas, etching can be performed

while adjusting the profile of an opening formed in the mask film 180. In this way, the etching profile of the silicon oxide film 200 arranged under the mask film 180 may be controlled to have a more
5 vertical configuration.

Note that CF_4 gas is an example of a first fluorine-containing gas. Hydrofluorocarbon gas is an example of a second fluorine-containing gas. The second fluorine-containing gas may be at least one
10 of difluoromethane (CH_2F_2) gas, monofluoromethane (CH_3F) gas, and fluoroform (CHF_3) gas, for example.

Although an etching method according to the present invention have been described above with respect to certain illustrative embodiments, the
15 etching method according to the present invention is not limited to the above embodiments, and various modifications and improvements may be made within the scope of the present invention. Also, features of the embodiments described above may be combined
20 to the extent practicable.

For example, the etching method according to the present invention is not limited to being applied to a capacitively coupled plasma (CCP) etching apparatus as represented by the etching
25 apparatus 1 but may also be implemented in other various types of plasma processing apparatuses. Examples of other types of plasma processing apparatuses include an inductively coupled plasma (ICP) processing apparatus, a plasma processing
30 apparatus using a radial line slot antenna, a helicon wave plasma (HWP) processing apparatus, an electron cyclotron resonance plasma (ECR) processing apparatus, and the like.

Also, although a semiconductor wafer W is described above as an example object to be etched, the etching method according to the present invention may also be implemented on a substrate
5 used in a liquid crystal display (LCD) or a flat panel display (FPD), a photomask, a CD substrate, or a printed circuit board, for example.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

5

1. An etching method for etching a
silicon oxide film, the etching method comprising:
generating a plasma from a gas including a
hydrogen-containing gas and a fluorine-containing
10 gas using a high frequency power for plasma
generation; and
etching the silicon oxide film using the
generated plasma;
wherein the fluorine-containing gas
15 includes a hydrofluorocarbon gas; and
wherein a sticking coefficient of radicals
generated from the hydrofluorocarbon gas is higher
than a sticking coefficient of radicals generated
from carbon tetrafluoride (CF₄).

20

2. The etching method according to claim
25 1, wherein the hydrofluorocarbon gas includes at
least one of difluoromethane (CH₂F₂) gas,
monofluoromethane (CH₃F) gas, and fluoroform (CHF₃)
gas.

30

3. An etching method for etching a

silicon oxide film, the etching method comprising:

generating a plasma from a gas including a hydrogen-containing gas, a first fluorine-containing gas, and a second fluorine-containing gas using a

5 high frequency power for plasma generation; and

etching the silicon oxide film using the generated plasma;

wherein the second fluorine-containing gas includes a hydrofluorocarbon gas; and

10 wherein a sticking coefficient of radicals generated from the hydrofluorocarbon gas is higher than a sticking coefficient of radicals generated from the first fluorine-containing gas.

15

4. The etching method according to claim 3, wherein the etching is performed in a low
20 temperature environment in which a temperature of a wafer is less than or equal to -35°C .

25

5. The etching method according to claim 3 or 4, wherein

the hydrogen-containing gas is hydrogen (H_2) gas;

30 the first fluorine-containing gas is carbon tetrafluoride (CF_4) gas; and

the second fluorine-containing gas includes at least one of difluoromethane (CH_2F_2) gas,

monofluoromethane (CH_3F) gas, and fluoroform (CHF_3) gas.

5

6. The etching method according to any one of claims 3-5, wherein the silicon oxide film is etched via a mask film; and when the mask film comprises tungsten (W), a mask selectivity is greater than or equal to 10.

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7. The etching method according to any one of claims 3-6, wherein the silicon oxide film is etched via a mask film; and when the mask film comprises polysilicon, a mask selectivity is greater than or equal to 5.

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