Model created in COMSOL Multiphysics 6.4

Inflation of a Square Airbag

Introduction

The numerical treatment of thin structures with a membrane model is much simpler than with a shell model due to the assumption of zero bending stiffness. However, for some load cases, this assumption is disadvantageous. For instance, when a membrane is subjected to compressive stresses, it may trigger wrinkling due to zero bending stiffness. This undesirable limitation can be overcome with the incorporation of a wrinkling model that removes these instabilities.

In this example, a squared airbag is inflated using an inner air pressure. The results are compared with the example presented in Ref. 1.

Model Definition

A squared airbag 6 mm in thickness and 1.2 m in diagonal length is inflated using a constant air pressure of 5 kPa. The membrane is modeled with an isotropic linear elastic material. The material properties given in Table 1 are taken from Ref. 1.

MATERIAL PROPERTIES

TABLE 1: MATERIAL PROPERTIES.

Property	Variable	Isotropic Model
Young's modulus	E	588 MPa
Poisson's ratio	ν	0.4

Only a quarter of the square airbag is analyzed due to the intrinsic symmetry of the model.

Results and Discussions

Figure 1 shows the wrinkled regions in the inflated airbag. Apart from the central region, wrinkles develop everywhere.

The transverse displacement in the inflated airbag is shown in Figure 2. The variation of the principal stresses at the end of the inflation process is shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4. The minimum value of the second principal stress is almost zero. Both figures show tensile principal stresses after inflation.

Figure 5 shows the displacement at various points versus the inflating pressure, these points are compared to the results given in Ref. 1. At the final pressure, the values match the reference values very well. Similarly, Figure 6 shows the variation of the first principal (tensile) stress at the midpoint versus the inflating pressure. The result also matches the reference value given in Ref. 1.

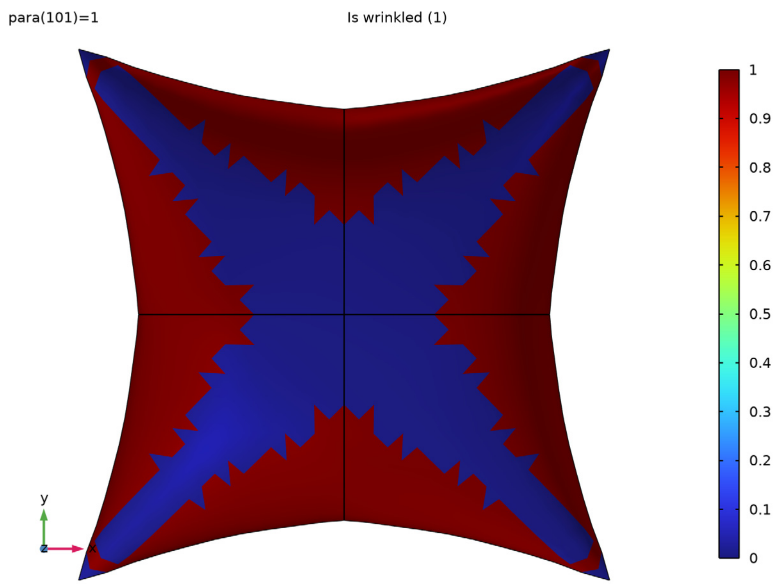

Figure 1: Wrinkled region in the inflated airbag.

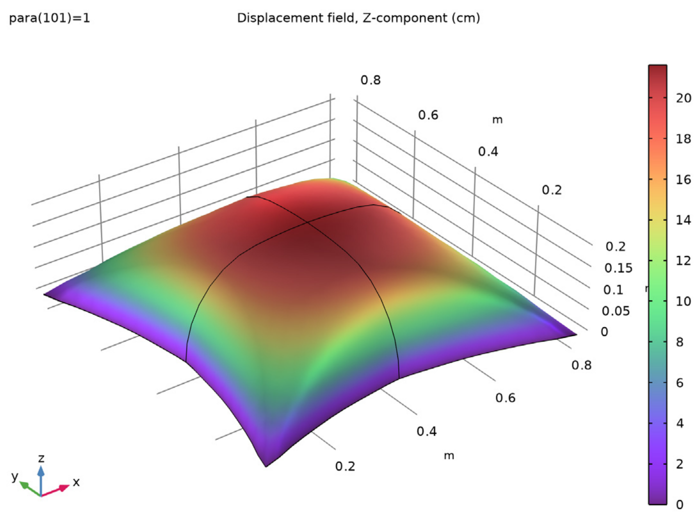

Figure 2: Transverse displacement after inflation.

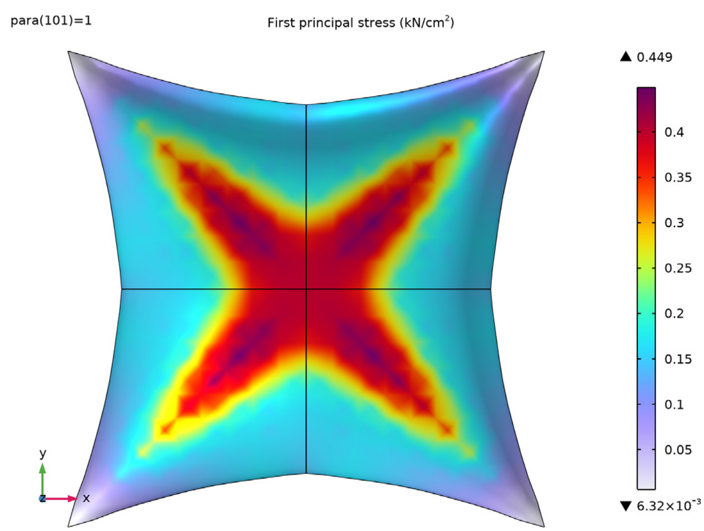

Figure 3: First principal stress after inflation.

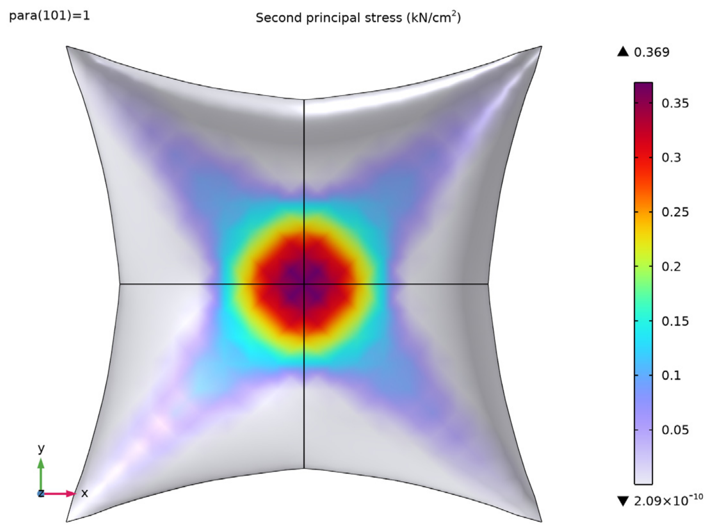

Figure 4: Second principal stress after inflation.

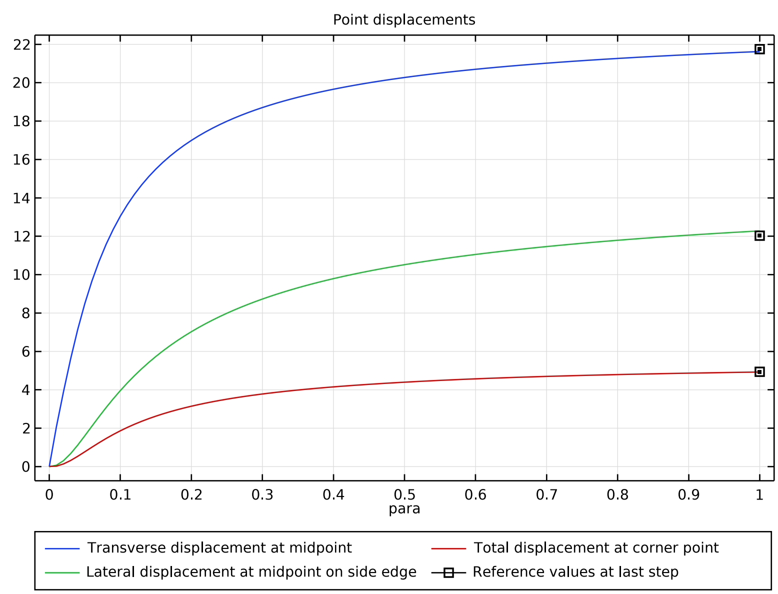

Figure 5: Displacements at different points after inflation.

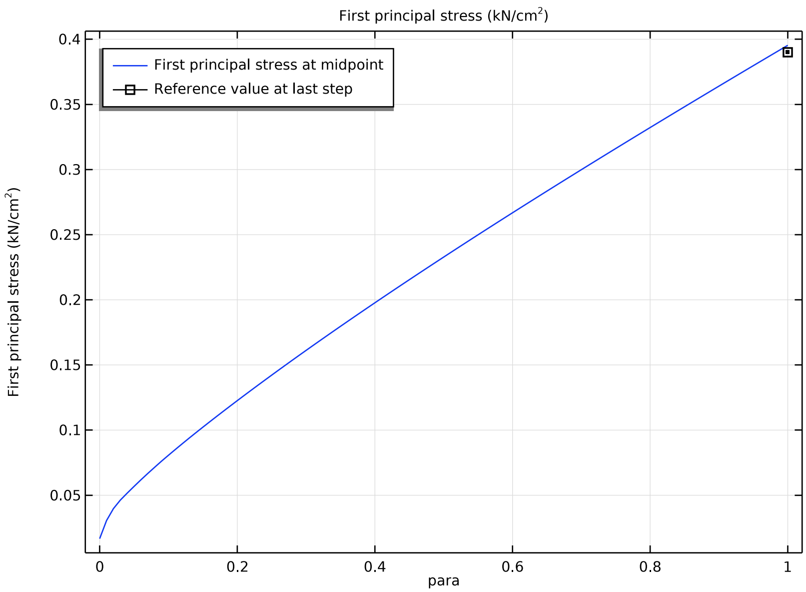

Figure 6: First principal stress at midpoint.

Notes About the COMSOL Implementation

A wrinkling model based on the modified deformation gradient is incorporated within the membrane theory using the **Wrinkling** feature, which solves a set of nonlinear equations with the Newton–Raphson method.

Since the unstressed membrane does not have any stiffness in the normal direction, the **Stabilization** feature is added in order to stabilize the model. To further improve the numerical stability, a spring support is provided in the form of an edge load which decreases parametrically as the model becomes stable.

Constant strain triangle (CST) elements are numerically stable for wrinkling problems. CST elements give constant strains, which in turn give constant stresses for homogeneous material properties, ensuring that the whole element is either wrinkled, slack, or taut. These types of elements are used for the analysis.

Reference

1. A. Jarasjarungkiat, R. Wuchner, and K.U.Bletzinger, “A wrinkling model based on material modification for isotropic and orthotropic membranes,” *Compt. Methods Appl. Mech. Engrg.*, vol. 197, pp. 773–788, 2008.

Application Library path: `Structural_Mechanics_Module/Buckling_and_Wrinkling/membrane_airbag_inflation`

Modeling Instructions

From the **File** menu, choose **New**.

NEW

In the **New** window, click **Model Wizard**.

MODEL WIZARD

1 In the **Model Wizard** window, click **3D**.

2 In the **Select Physics** tree, select **Structural Mechanics** > **Membrane (mbrn)**.

3 Click **Add**.

4 Click **Study**.

5 In the **Select Study** tree, select **General Studies** > **Stationary**.

6 Click **Done**.

GLOBAL DEFINITIONS

Model Parameters

1 In the **Model Builder** window, under **Global Definitions** click **Parameters 1**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Parameters**, type `Model Parameters` in the **Label** text field.

3 Locate the **Parameters** section. Click **Load from File**.

4 Browse to the model’s Application Libraries folder and double-click the file `membrane_airbag_inflation_parameters.txt`.

DEFINITIONS

Interpolation 1 (int1)

1 In the **Definitions** toolbar, click **Interpolation**.
2 In the **Settings** window for **Interpolation**, locate the **Definition** section.
3 In the **Function name** text field, type F.
4 In the table, enter the following settings:

t	f(t)
0	100
1	1

5 Locate the **Units** section. In the **Function** table, enter the following settings:

Function	Unit
F	N/m

6 In the **Argument** table, enter the following settings:

Argument	Unit
t	1

Variables 1

1 In the **Model Builder** window, right-click **Definitions** and choose **Variables**.
2 In the **Settings** window for **Variables**, locate the **Variables** section.
3 In the table, enter the following settings:

Name	Expression	Unit	Description
wmax_ref	21.75[cm]	m	Transverse displacement at midpoint, reference
vmax_ref	12.03[cm]	m	Lateral displacement at midpoint on side edge, reference
dispmax_ref	4.94[cm]	m	Total displacement at corner point, reference
sp1max_ref	0.39[kN/cm^2]	N/m^2	First principal stress at midpoint, reference

Due to symmetry only a quarter of the geometry is constructed.

GEOMETRY 1

Work Plane 1 (wp1)

1 In the **Model Builder** window, expand the **Component 1 (comp1)** > **Geometry 1** node.

2 Right-click **Geometry 1** and choose **Work Plane**.

Work Plane 1 (wp1) > Square 1 (sq1)

1 In the **Work Plane** toolbar, click **Square**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Square**, locate the **Size** section.

3 In the **Side length** text field, type `L/2`.

4 Locate the **Position** section. In the **xw** text field, type `L/2`.

5 In the **Work Plane** toolbar, click **Build All**.

MATERIALS

Material 1 (mat1)

In the **Model Builder** window, under **Component 1 (comp1)** right-click **Materials** and choose **Blank Material**.

When modeling wrinkling, constant strain triangular (CST) elements are a good choice due to their numerical stability. Use a triangular mesh and change the default **Quadratic** discretization to **Linear**.

MEMBRANE (MBRN)

1 In the **Settings** window for **Membrane**, click to expand the **Discretization** section.

2 From the **Displacement field** list, choose **Linear**.

Linear Elastic Material 1

In the **Model Builder** window, under **Component 1 (comp1)** > **Membrane (mbrn)** click **Linear Elastic Material 1**.

Wrinkling 1

In the **Physics** toolbar, click **Attributes** and choose **Wrinkling**.

Thickness and Offset 1

1 In the **Model Builder** window, under **Component 1 (comp1)** > **Membrane (mbrn)** click **Thickness and Offset 1**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Thickness and Offset**, locate the **Thickness and Offset** section.

3 In the d_0 text field, type `th`.

Symmetry 1

1 In the **Physics** toolbar, click **Edges** and choose **Symmetry**.

2 Select Edges 1 and 3 only.

Prescribed Displacement 1

1 In the **Physics** toolbar, click **Edges** and choose **Prescribed Displacement**.

2 Select Edges 2 and 4 only.

3 In the **Settings** window for **Prescribed Displacement**, locate the **Prescribed Displacement** section.

4 From the **Displacement in z direction** list, choose **Prescribed**.

Face Load 1

1 In the **Physics** toolbar, click **Boundaries** and choose **Face Load**.

2 Select Boundary 1 only.

3 In the **Settings** window for **Face Load**, locate the **Force** section.

4 From the **Load type** list, choose **Pressure**.

5 In the p text field, type `-Pmax*para`.

Add a parametrically decreasing edge load on the outer edges in the lateral direction as a form of spring support in order to achieve numerical stability for this problem.

Edge Load 1

1 In the **Physics** toolbar, click **Edges** and choose **Edge Load**.

2 Select Edges 2 and 4 only.

3 In the **Settings** window for **Edge Load**, locate the **Coordinate System Selection** section.

4 From the **Coordinate system** list, choose **Local edge system**.

5 Locate the **Force** section. Specify the $\mathbf{f}_L$ vector as

0	xl
-F(para)	yl
0	zl

Add a **Stabilization** feature in order to improve numerical stability.

Stabilization 1

In the **Physics** toolbar, click **Boundaries** and choose **Stabilization**.

MATERIALS

Material 1 (mat1)

1 In the **Model Builder** window, under **Component 1 (comp1)** > **Materials** click **Material 1 (mat1)**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Material**, locate the **Material Contents** section.

3 In the table, enter the following settings:

Property	Variable	Value	Unit	Property group
Young's modulus	E	Ey	Pa	Young's modulus and Poisson's ratio
Poisson's ratio	nu	Nu	1	Young's modulus and Poisson's ratio
Density	rho	0	kg/m³	Basic

MESH 1

Mapped 1

1 In the **Mesh** toolbar, click **More Generators** and choose **Mapped**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Mapped**, locate the **Boundary Selection** section.

3 From the **Selection** list, choose **All boundaries**.

Distribution 1

1 Right-click **Mapped 1** and choose **Distribution**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Distribution**, locate the **Edge Selection** section.

3 From the **Selection** list, choose **All edges**.

4 Locate the **Distribution** section. In the **Number of elements** text field, type 10.

Convert 1

1 In the **Mesh** toolbar, click **Modify** and choose **Convert**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Convert**, locate the **Element Split Method** section.

3 From the **Element split method** list, choose **Insert centerpoints**.

4 Click **Build All**.

Customize the study settings in order to achieve a better convergence.

STUDY 1

Step 1: Stationary

1 In the **Model Builder** window, under **Study 1** click **Step 1: Stationary**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Stationary**, click to expand the **Study Extensions** section.

3 Select the **Auxiliary sweep** checkbox.

4 Click **Add**.

5 In the table, enter the following settings:

Parameter name	Parameter value list	Parameter unit
para (Parameter)	`range(0,0.01,1)`	

Solution 1 (sol1)

1 In the **Study** toolbar, click **Show Default Solver**.

2 In the **Model Builder** window, expand the **Solution 1 (sol1)** node.

3 In the **Model Builder** window, expand the **Study 1** > **Solver Configurations** > **Solution 1 (sol1)** > **Stationary Solver 1** node, then click **Parametric 1**.

4 In the **Settings** window for **Parametric**, click to expand the **Continuation** section.

5 Select the **Tuning of step size** checkbox.

6 In the **Maximum step size** text field, type `0.01`.

7 From the **Predictor** list, choose **Linear**.

8 In the **Model Builder** window, under **Study 1** > **Solver Configurations** > **Solution 1 (sol1)** > **Stationary Solver 1** click **Fully Coupled 1**.

9 In the **Settings** window for **Fully Coupled**, click to expand the **Method and Termination** section.

10 From the **Nonlinear method** list, choose **Constant (Newton)**.

11 From the **Stabilization and acceleration** list, choose **Anderson acceleration**.

Before solving the study, add default plots in order to visualize the results while solving.

12 In the **Model Builder** window, click **Study 1**.

13 In the **Settings** window for **Study**, locate the **Study Settings** section.

14 Clear the **Generate default plots** checkbox.

15 In the **Study** toolbar, click **Show Default Plots**.

RESULTS

Mirror 3D 1

1 In the **Model Builder** window, expand the **Results** node.

2 Right-click **Results** > **Datasets** and choose **More 3D Datasets** > **Mirror 3D**.

3 In the **Settings** window for **Mirror 3D**, locate the **Plane Data** section.

4 From the **Plane** list, choose **XZ-planes**.

5 In the **Y-coordinate** text field, type `0.5*L`.

Mirror 3D 2

1 Right-click **Mirror 3D 1** and choose **Duplicate**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Mirror 3D**, locate the **Data** section.

3 From the **Dataset** list, choose **Mirror 3D 1**.

4 Locate the **Plane Data** section. From the **Plane** list, choose **yz-planes**.

5 In the **x-coordinate** text field, type `0.5*L`.

Set default units for result presentation.

Preferred Units 1

1 In the **Results** toolbar, click **Configurations** and choose **Preferred Units**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Preferred Units**, locate the **Units** section.

3 Click **Add Physical Quantity**.

4 In the **Physical Quantity** dialog, type `displa` in the text field.

5 In the tree, select **General** > **Displacement (m)**.

6 Click **OK**.

7 In the **Settings** window for **Preferred Units**, locate the **Units** section.

8 In the table, enter the following settings:

Quantity	Unit	Preferred unit
Displacement	m	cm

9 Click **Apply**.

RESULT TEMPLATES

1 In the **Results** toolbar, click **Result Templates** to open the **Result Templates** window.

2 Go to the **Result Templates** window.

3 In the tree, select **Study 1/Solution 1 (sol1)** > **Membrane (mbrn)** > **Displacement (mbrn)**.

4 Click the **Add Result Template** button in the window toolbar.

5 In the **Results** toolbar, click **Result Templates** to close the **Result Templates** window.

RESULTS

Transverse Displacement

1 In the **Settings** window for **3D Plot Group**, type `Transverse Displacement` in the **Label** text field.

2 Locate the **Data** section. From the **Dataset** list, choose **Mirror 3D 2**.

Surface 1

1 In the **Model Builder** window, expand the **Transverse Displacement** node, then click **Surface 1**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Surface**, locate the **Expression** section.

3 In the **Expression** text field, type `w`.

4 Click to expand the **Quality** section. From the **Smoothing threshold** list, choose **None**.

5 Click the **Zoom Extents** button in the **Graphics** toolbar.

6 In the **Transverse Displacement** toolbar, click **Plot**.

STUDY 1

Step 1: Stationary

1 In the **Model Builder** window, under **Study 1** click **Step 1: Stationary**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Stationary**, click to expand the **Results While Solving** section.

3 Select the **Plot** checkbox.

4 In the **Study** toolbar, click **Compute**.

RESULTS

First Principal Stress

1 Right-click **Transverse Displacement** and choose **Duplicate**.

2 Drag and drop **Transverse Displacement 1** below **Transverse Displacement**.

3 In the **Settings** window for **3D Plot Group**, type `First Principal Stress` in the **Label** text field.

4 Locate the **Color Legend** section. Select the **Show maximum and minimum values** checkbox.

Surface 1

1 In the **Model Builder** window, expand the **First Principal Stress** node, then click **Surface 1**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Surface**, click **Replace Expression** in the upper-right corner of the **Expression** section. From the menu, choose **Component 1 (comp1)** > **Membrane** > **Stress** > **Principal stresses** > **mbrn.sp1Gp - First principal stress - N/m²**.

3 Locate the **Expression** section. In the **Unit** field, type `kN/cm^2`.

4 Locate the **Coloring and Style** section. From the **Color table** list, choose **Prism**.

First Principal Stress

1 In the **Model Builder** window, click **First Principal Stress**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **3D Plot Group**, locate the **Plot Settings** section.

3 From the **View** list, choose **New view**.

4 In the **First Principal Stress** toolbar, click **Plot**.

5 Click the **Go to XY View** button in the **Graphics** toolbar.

6 Click the **Show Grid** button in the **Graphics** toolbar.

Second Principal Stress

1 Right-click **First Principal Stress** and choose **Duplicate**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **3D Plot Group**, type `Second Principal Stress` in the **Label** text field.

3 Drag and drop below **First Principal Stress**.

Surface 1

1 In the **Model Builder** window, expand the **Second Principal Stress** node, then click **Surface 1**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Surface**, click **Replace Expression** in the upper-right corner of the **Expression** section. From the menu, choose **Component 1 (comp1)** > **Membrane** > **Stress** > **Principal stresses** > **mbrn.sp2Gp - Second principal stress - N/m²**.

Second Principal Stress

1 In the **Model Builder** window, click **Second Principal Stress**.

2 In the **Second Principal Stress** toolbar, click **Plot**.

Wrinkled Region

1 Right-click **Second Principal Stress** and choose **Duplicate**.

2 Drag and drop **Second Principal Stress 1** below **Second Principal Stress**.

3 In the **Settings** window for **3D Plot Group**, type `Wrinkled Region` in the **Label** text field.

4 Locate the **Color Legend** section. Clear the **Show maximum and minimum values** checkbox.

Surface 1

1 In the **Model Builder** window, expand the **Wrinkled Region** node, then click **Surface 1**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Surface**, click **Replace Expression** in the upper-right corner of the **Expression** section. From the menu, choose **Component 1 (comp1)** > **Membrane** > **Wrinkling** > **mbrn.iswrinkled - Is wrinkled - 1**.

3 Locate the **Coloring and Style** section. From the **Color table** list, choose **Rainbow**.

4 Locate the **Quality** section. From the **Evaluation settings** list, choose **Manual**.

5 From the **Smoothing** list, choose **None**.

6 In the **Wrinkled Region** toolbar, click **Plot**.

Point Displacements

1 In the **Results** toolbar, click **1D Plot Group**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **1D Plot Group**, type `Point Displacements` in the **Label** text field.

Point Graph 1

1 Right-click **Point Displacements** and choose **Point Graph**.

2 Select Point 2 only.

3 In the **Settings** window for **Point Graph**, locate the **y-Axis Data** section.

4 In the **Expression** text field, type `w`.

5 Click to expand the **Legends** section. Select the **Show legends** checkbox.

6 From the **Legends** list, choose **Manual**.

7 In the table, enter the following settings:

Legends
`Transverse displacement at midpoint`

Point Graph 2

1 Right-click **Point Graph 1** and choose **Duplicate**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Point Graph**, locate the **Selection** section.

3 Click **Clear Selection**.

4 Select Point 1 only.

5 Locate the **y-Axis Data** section. In the **Expression** text field, type `v`.

6 Locate the **Legends** section. In the table, enter the following settings:

Legends
`Lateral displacement at midpoint on side edge`

Point Graph 3

1 Right-click **Point Graph 2** and choose **Duplicate**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Point Graph**, locate the **Selection** section.

3 Click **Clear Selection**.

4 Select Point 3 only.

5 Locate the **y-Axis Data** section. In the **Expression** text field, type `mbrn.disp`.

6 Locate the **Legends** section. In the table, enter the following settings:

Legends
`Total displacement at corner point`

Global 1

1 In the **Model Builder** window, right-click **Point Displacements** and choose **Global**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Global**, locate the **Data** section.

3 From the **Dataset** list, choose **Study 1/Solution 1 (sol1)**.

4 From the **Parameter selection (para)** list, choose **Last**.

5 Locate the **y-Axis Data** section. In the table, enter the following settings:

Expression	Unit	Description
`wmax_ref`	`cm`	`Transverse displacement at midpoint, reference`

6 Click to expand the **Coloring and Style** section. From the **Color** list, choose **From theme**.

7 Find the **Line markers** subsection. From the **Marker** list, choose **Square**.

8 From the **Positioning** list, choose **Interpolated**.

9 Set the **Number** value to **12**.

10 Click to expand the **Legends** section. From the **Legends** list, choose **Manual**.

11 In the table, enter the following settings:

Legends
`Reference values at last step`

Global 2

1 Right-click **Global 1** and choose **Duplicate**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Global**, locate the **y-Axis Data** section.

3 In the table, enter the following settings:

Expression	Unit	Description
vmax_ref	cm	Lateral displacement at midpoint on side edge, reference

4 Locate the **Legends** section. Clear the **Show legends** checkbox.

Global 3

1 Right-click **Global 2** and choose **Duplicate**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Global**, locate the **y-Axis Data** section.

3 In the table, enter the following settings:

Expression	Unit	Description
dispmax_ref	cm	Total displacement at corner point, reference

Point Displacements

1 In the **Model Builder** window, click **Point Displacements**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **1D Plot Group**, click to expand the **Title** section.

3 From the **Title type** list, choose **Manual**.

4 In the **Title** text area, type `Point displacements`.

5 Locate the **Legend** section. From the **Layout** list, choose **Outside graph axis area**.

6 From the **Position** list, choose **Bottom**.

7 In the **Number of rows** text field, type `2`.

8 In the **Point Displacements** toolbar, click **Plot**.

Point Stress

1 In the **Results** toolbar, click **1D Plot Group**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **1D Plot Group**, type `Point Stress` in the **Label** text field.

3 Locate the **Legend** section. From the **Position** list, choose **Upper left**.

Point Graph 1

1 Right-click **Point Stress** and choose **Point Graph**.

2 Select Point 2 only.

3 In the **Settings** window for **Point Graph**, locate the **y-Axis Data** section.

4 In the **Expression** text field, type `mbrn.sp1`.

5 In the **Unit** field, type `kN/cm^2`.

6 Locate the **Legends** section. Select the **Show legends** checkbox.

7 From the **Legends** list, choose **Manual**.

8 In the table, enter the following settings:

Legends
First principal stress at midpoint

Point Stress

1 In the **Model Builder** window, click **Point Stress**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **1D Plot Group**, locate the **Plot Settings** section.

3 Select the **y-axis label** checkbox.

Global 1

1 Right-click **Point Stress** and choose **Global**.

2 In the **Settings** window for **Global**, locate the **Data** section.

3 From the **Dataset** list, choose **Study 1/Solution 1 (sol1)**.

4 From the **Parameter selection (para)** list, choose **Last**.

5 Locate the **y-Axis Data** section. In the table, enter the following settings:

Expression	Unit	Description
sp1max_ref	kN/cm^2	First principal stress at midpoint, reference

6 Click to expand the **Title** section. From the **Title type** list, choose **None**.

7 Locate the **Coloring and Style** section. From the **Color** list, choose **From theme**.

8 Find the **Line markers** subsection. From the **Marker** list, choose **Square**.

9 From the **Positioning** list, choose **Interpolated**.

10 Locate the **Legends** section. From the **Legends** list, choose **Manual**.

11 In the table, enter the following settings:

Legends
Reference value at last step

Point Stress

1 In the **Model Builder** window, click **Point Stress**.

2 In the **Point Stress** toolbar, click **Plot**.