

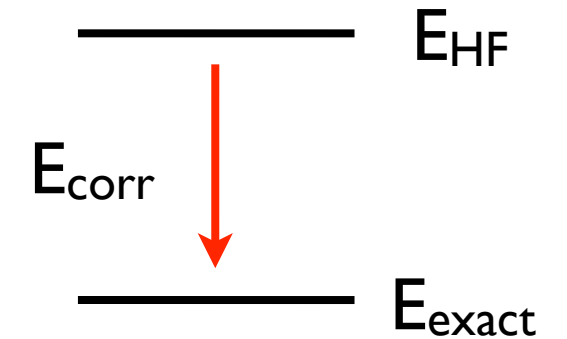
Configuration Interaction

Correlated wave function based methods

or sometimes “*Post Hartree Fock*”

- Three types of methods

- ✓ Configuration Interaction
- ✓ Perturbation theory
- ✓ Coupled Cluster



$$E_{corr} = E_{exact} - E_{HF}$$

- Two different starting points

- ✓ Hartree Fock: Single reference methods
- ✓ Multireference methods (MR) like CASSCF

CISD	MRCI
MP2, MP4, ...	CASPT2, NEVPT2, ...
CCSD, CCSD(T), ...	MR-CC (in development)

Configuration Interaction

- Slater Determinant for a system with k electrons

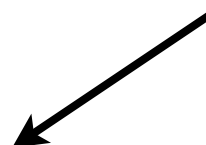
$$\Phi_0 = |\phi_1 \phi_2 \dots \phi_i \phi_j \dots \phi_k\rangle$$

The molecular orbitals ϕ are constructed by making linear combinations of basis functions χ

$$\phi_p = a_1^p \chi_1 + a_2^p \chi_2 + \dots + a_m^p \chi_m = \sum_q^m a_q^p \chi_q$$

there are 'm' of these molecular orbitals

Hartree-Fock considers the Slater Determinant in which the electrons occupy the MOs with the lowest energy but there are many other ways to distribute the electrons over the MOs

$$\frac{m!}{k!(m-k)!}$$


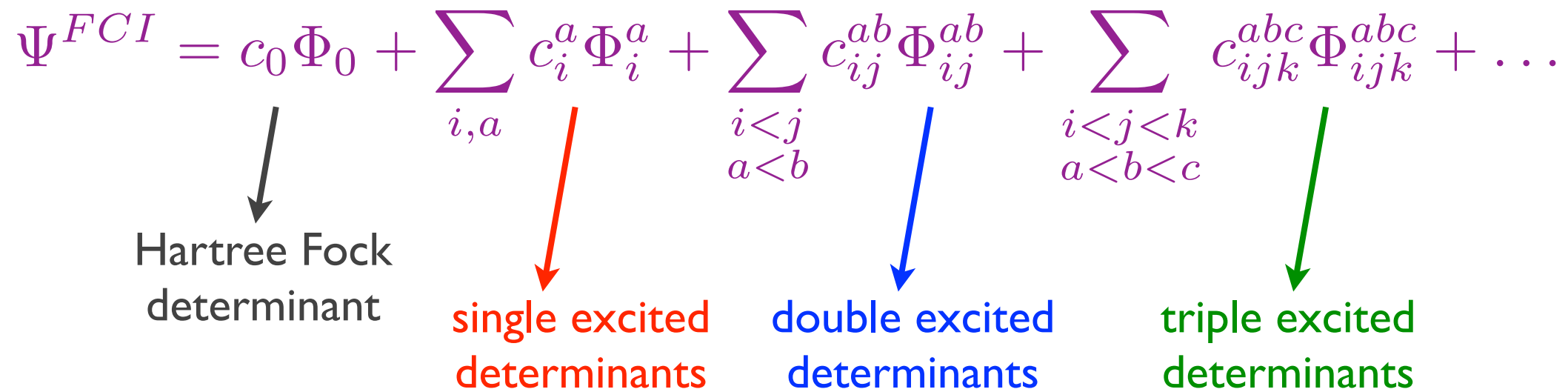
$$\Phi_i^a = |\phi_1 \phi_2 \dots \phi_j \dots \phi_k \phi_a\rangle$$

$$\Phi_{ij}^{ab} = |\phi_1 \phi_2 \dots \phi_k \phi_a \phi_b\rangle$$

$$\Phi_{ijk}^{abc} = |\phi_1 \phi_2 \dots \phi_a \phi_b \phi_c\rangle$$

Configuration Interaction

$$\Psi^{FCI} = c_0 \Phi_0 + \sum_{i,a} c_i^a \Phi_i^a + \sum_{\substack{i < j \\ a < b}} c_{ij}^{ab} \Phi_{ij}^{ab} + \sum_{\substack{i < j < k \\ a < b < c}} c_{ijk}^{abc} \Phi_{ijk}^{abc} + \dots$$



Hartree Fock determinant single excited determinants double excited determinants triple excited determinants

In theory:

- Full CI gives the exact solution for $m \rightarrow \infty$

In practice:

- Full CI is the exact solution within a finite basis
- Normally, CI expansion is truncated at doubles or quadruples

Notation:

- lower case (ϕ and χ) refer to one-electron functions
- upper case (Φ and Ψ) make reference to N-electron functions
- Φ is a determinant, not necessarily an N-electron state
- Ψ describes an N-electron state

CISD matrix

$$|\Psi\rangle = c_0|\Phi_0\rangle + c_S|S\rangle + c_D|D\rangle + c_T|T\rangle + c_Q|Q\rangle + \dots$$

Hamiltonian is hermitian



Hermitian matrix 

\hat{H}	$ \Phi_0\rangle$	$ S\rangle$	$ D\rangle$	$ T\rangle$	$ Q\rangle$...
$ \Phi_0\rangle$	$ E_0\rangle$	0	H_{0D}	0	0	...
$ S\rangle$	0	$ E_S\rangle$	H_{SD}	H_{ST}	0	...
$ D\rangle$	H_{D0}	H_{DS}	$ E_D\rangle$	H_{DT}	H_{DQ}	...
$ T\rangle$	0	H_{TS}	H_{TD}	$ E_T\rangle$	H_{TQ}	...
$ Q\rangle$	0	0	H_{QD}	H_{QT}	$ E_Q\rangle$...
...

No direct interaction of $|S\rangle$ with Φ_0 . Only through interaction with the doubles, the single excitations gain importance in the CISD wave function

An example of Full CI

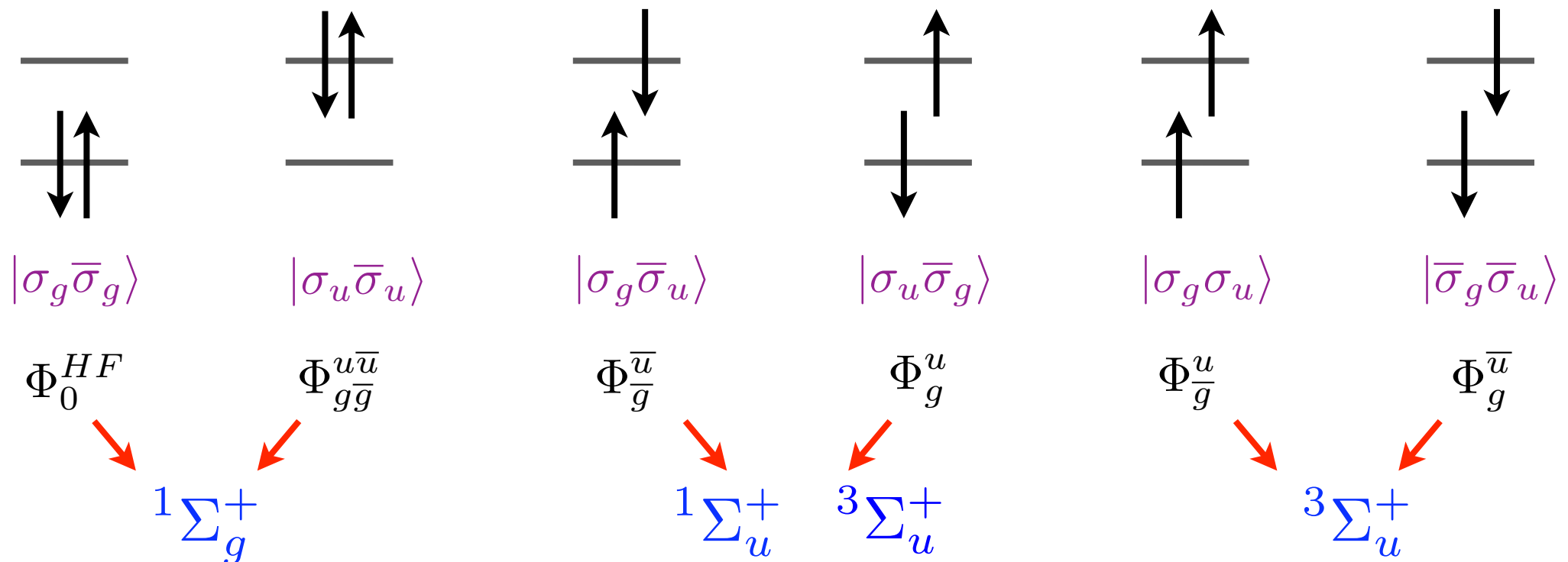
- H₂ ground state in minimal basis

$$\sigma_g = N_g(1s_A + 1s_B)$$

$$\sigma_u = N_u(1s_A - 1s_B)$$

Hartree Fock: $\Phi_0^{HF} = |\sigma_g \bar{\sigma}_g\rangle$ $E_0^{HF} = 2\langle \sigma_g | \hat{h} | \sigma_g \rangle + J_{gg}$

Generation of all determinants



Only determinants with same spatial and spin symmetry interact

An example of Full CI

$$\Psi_0^{FCI} = \Phi_0^{HF} + c\Phi_{g\bar{g}}^{u\bar{u}} = \Phi_0 + c_D\Phi_D$$

Hamiltonian matrix:

$$\begin{bmatrix} \langle \Phi_0 | \hat{H} | \Phi_0 \rangle & \langle \Phi_0 | \hat{H} | \Phi_D \rangle \\ \langle \Phi_0 | \hat{H} | \Phi_D \rangle & \langle \Phi_D | \hat{H} | \Phi_D \rangle \end{bmatrix}$$

Matrix elements with Slater Condon rules

$$\langle \Phi_0 | \hat{H} | \Phi_0 \rangle = E_0^{HF} = 2\langle \sigma_g | \hat{h} | \sigma_g \rangle + J_{gg}$$

$$\langle \Phi_D | \hat{H} | \Phi_D \rangle = E_D = 2\langle \sigma_u | \hat{h} | \sigma_u \rangle + J_{uu}$$

$$\langle \Phi_0 | \hat{H} | \Phi_D \rangle = \langle \sigma_g \bar{\sigma}_g | \sigma_u \bar{\sigma}_u \rangle = \langle \sigma_g \bar{\sigma}_g | \sigma_u \bar{\sigma}_u \rangle - \langle \sigma_g \bar{\sigma}_g | \bar{\sigma}_u \sigma_u \rangle = J_{gu}$$

Secular CI equation:

$$\begin{pmatrix} E_0 & J_{gu} \\ J_{gu} & E_D \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ c_D \end{pmatrix} = E \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ c_D \end{pmatrix} \xrightarrow{-E_0}$$

Secular determinant:

$$\begin{vmatrix} 0 - E & J_{gu} \\ J_{gu} & 2\Delta - E \end{vmatrix} = 0$$



$$E = \Delta - \sqrt{\Delta^2 + J_{gu}^2}$$

$$2\Delta = E_D - E_0 = 2\langle \sigma_u | \hat{h} | \sigma_u \rangle - 2\langle \sigma_g | \hat{h} | \sigma_g \rangle + J_{uu} - J_{gg}$$

Size consistency

$$E_A + E_B = E_{AB}(r \rightarrow \infty)$$

$$E(A_n) = n \times E(A)$$

	2 x H ₂ O	(H ₂ O) ₂	Binding energy	(H ₂ O) ₂ (r → ∞)
MP2	-152.49204 au	-152.49975 au	4.8 kcal/mol	-152.49204 au
CISD	-152.49144 au	-152.47869 au	-8.0 kcal/mol	-152.47186 au

- Importance of core-valence correlation: Ar(8 el.) versus Ar(18 el.)
- Comparing reaction energies: R-AB → R-A + B for different R-groups

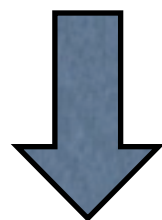
Separability of Full CI

Two non-interacting H₂ molecules

$$\Psi = \Phi_0 + c_{D_1} \Phi_{g_1 \bar{g}_1}^{u_1 \bar{u}_1} + c_{D_2} \Phi_{g_2 \bar{g}_2}^{u_2 \bar{u}_2} + c_Q \Phi_{g_1 \bar{g}_1 g_2 \bar{g}_2}^{u_1 \bar{u}_1 u_2 \bar{u}_2}$$

Hamiltonian matrix:

$$\begin{bmatrix} E_0 & J_{gu} & J_{gu} & 0 \\ J_{gu} & E_0 + 2\Delta & 0 & J_{gu} \\ J_{gu} & 0 & E_0 + 2\Delta & J_{gu} \\ 0 & J_{gu} & J_{gu} & E_0 + 4\Delta \end{bmatrix}$$



$$E_{corr} = 2 \left(\Delta - \sqrt{\Delta^2 + J_{gu}^2} \right)$$

$$E = E_0 + 2 \left(\Delta - \sqrt{\Delta^2 + J_{gu}^2} \right) = 2E_1$$

$$c_{D_1} = c_{D_2} \quad c_Q = c_{D_1}^2$$

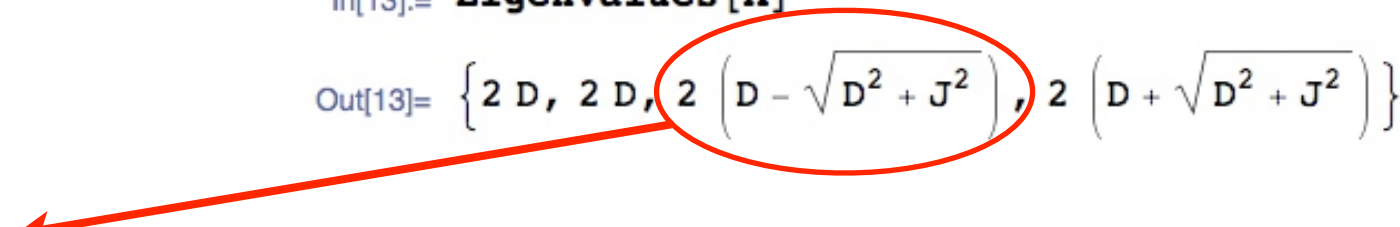
In[12]:=

$$\mathbf{A} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & J & J & 0 \\ J & 2D & 0 & J \\ J & 0 & 2D & J \\ 0 & J & J & 4D \end{pmatrix}$$

Out[12]= {{0, J, J, 0}, {J, 2D, 0, J},
{J, 0, 2D, J}, {0, J, J, 4D}}

In[13]:= **Eigenvalues[A]**

Out[13]= {2D, 2D, 2(D - √(D² + J²)), 2(D + √(D² + J²))}



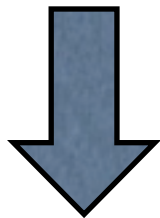
Separability of SDCI

Two non-interacting H₂ molecules

$$\Psi = \Phi_0 + c_{D_1} \Phi_{g_1 \bar{g}_1}^{u_1 \bar{u}_1} + c_{D_2} \Phi_{g_2 \bar{g}_2}^{u_2 \bar{u}_2} + c_Q \Phi_{g_1 \bar{g}_1 g_2 \bar{g}_2}^{u_1 \bar{u}_1 u_2 \bar{u}_2}$$

Hamiltonian matrix:

$$\begin{bmatrix} E_0 & J_{gu} & J_{gu} \\ J_{gu} & E_0 + 2\Delta & 0 \\ J_{gu} & 0 & E_0 + 2\Delta \end{bmatrix}$$



$$E_{corr} = \Delta - \sqrt{\Delta^2 + 2J_{gu}^2}$$

$$E = E_0 + \Delta - \sqrt{\Delta^2 + 2J_{gu}^2} \neq 2E_1$$

```
In[7]:= A =  $\begin{pmatrix} 0 & J & J \\ J & 2D & 0 \\ J & 0 & 2D \end{pmatrix}$ 
```

```
Out[7]= {{0, J, J}, {J, 2D, 0}, {J, 0, 2D}}
```

```
In[9]:= Eigenvalues[A]
```

```
Out[9]= {2D,  $D - \sqrt{D^2 + 2J^2}$ ,  $D + \sqrt{D^2 + 2J^2}$ }
```



Truncated CI - size consistency corrections

$$E_{AB}^{CISD} \neq E_A^{CISD} + E_B^{CISD}$$

Solutions to the size consistency error

- Complete Active Space (CAS) = Full CI in a limited number of MO's and e⁻
- Davidson correction

$$E_{corr} = E_{corr}^{SDCI} + \Delta E_{Dav} \quad \Delta E_{Dav} = (1 - c_0^2) E_{corr}^{SDCI} \quad \Psi = c_0 \Psi_0 + \sum_{I=S,D} c_I \Psi_I$$

- Selected CI, including the most 'significant' contributions, estimated by PT
- Other methods as Perturbation theory and Coupled Cluster

Perturbation theory

Configuration Interaction or Perturbation Theory?

Configuration Interaction:

- Advantages
- Variational procedure, upper bound to the exact energy
 - Invariance under rotations of the MOs
 - Higher order interactions are included
- Disadvantages
- Size-consistency in truncated CI
 - Computation requirements, CPU time, disk storage, memory

Perturbation theory:

- Advantages
- Size-consistent
 - Relatively cheap computationally
- Disadvantages
- Non-variational, unknown sign error
 - Convergence problems
 - Intruder states may appear
 - No interaction between excited configurations at 2nd order

Rayleigh-Schrödinger Perturbation Theory

Electronic Hamiltonian: $\hat{H} = \sum_i \hat{h}_i + \sum_i \sum_{j>i} \frac{1}{r_{ij}}$

Schrödinger equation: $\hat{H}\Psi_i = E_i\Psi_i$ where E_i and Ψ_i are the exact energy and wave function of state i

The perturbative treatment is based on the partition of the Hamiltonian

$$\hat{H} = \hat{H}^{(0)} + \hat{V}$$

Hamiltonian of a model system with known solutions

Perturbation operator

$$\hat{H}^{(0)}\Psi_k^{(0)} = E_k^{(0)}\Psi_k^{(0)}$$

The zeroth-order solution

Rayleigh-Schrödinger Perturbation Theory

$$\hat{H}\Psi_i = E_i\Psi_i$$

Complicated system without analytical solution

$$\hat{H} = \hat{H}^{(0)} + \lambda\hat{V}$$

$$\hat{H}^{(0)}\Psi_i^{(0)} = E_i^{(0)}\Psi_i^{(0)}$$

Simple, well-known system

$$\langle\Psi_i^{(0)}|\Psi_j^{(0)}\rangle = \delta_{ij}$$

$$E_0 = E_0^{(0)} + \lambda E_0^{(1)} + \lambda^2 E_0^{(2)} + \dots$$

$$\Psi_0 = \Psi_0^{(0)} + \lambda\Psi_0^{(1)} + \lambda^2\Psi_0^{(2)} + \dots$$

subscript '0' refers to the ground state

$$\hat{H}^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(0)} = E_0^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(0)}$$

$$\hat{H}^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + \hat{V}\Psi_0^{(0)} = E_0^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + E_0^{(1)}\Psi_0^{(0)}$$

$$\hat{H}^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(2)} + \hat{V}\Psi_0^{(1)} = E_0^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(2)} + E_0^{(1)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + E_0^{(2)}\Psi_0^{(0)}$$

Rayleigh-Schrödinger Perturbation Theory

First-order correction to the energy

$$\hat{H}^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + \hat{V}\Psi_0^{(0)} = E_0^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + E_0^{(1)}\Psi_0^{(0)}$$

↓ *Multiply by $\Psi_0^{*(0)}$ and integrate*

$$E_0^{(1)} = \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{H}^{(0)} | \Psi_0^{(1)} \rangle + \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{V} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle - E_0^{(0)} \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \Psi_0^{(1)} \rangle$$

↓ *Expand $\Psi_0^{(1)}$ in functions of the unperturbed system and substitute*

$$\Psi_0^{(1)} = \sum_{i \neq 0} a_i \Psi_i^{(0)}$$

orthogonal to $\Psi_0^{(0)}$

$$E_0^{(1)} = \sum_{i \neq 0} \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{H}^{(0)} | \Psi_i^{(0)} \rangle + \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{V} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle - \sum_{i \neq 0} E_0^{(0)} \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \Psi_i^{(0)} \rangle$$

$$E_0^{(1)} = \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{V} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle$$

Rayleigh-Schrödinger Perturbation Theory

First-order correction to the wave function

$$\hat{H}^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + \hat{V}\Psi_0^{(0)} = E_0^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + E_0^{(1)}\Psi_0^{(0)}$$

$$\Psi_0^{(1)} = \sum_{i \neq 0} a_i \Psi_i^{(0)}$$

↓ Substitute $\Psi_0^{(1)}$, multiply by $\Psi_k^{*(0)}$ and integrate

$$\sum_{i \neq 0} a_i \langle \Psi_k^{(0)} | \hat{H}^{(0)} | \Psi_i^{(0)} \rangle + \langle \Psi_k^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle =$$

$$\sum_{i \neq 0} a_i \langle \Psi_k^{(0)} | \Psi_i^{(0)} \rangle E_0^{(0)} + \langle \Psi_k^{(0)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle E_0^{(1)}$$

$$a_k E_k^{(0)} + \langle \Psi_k^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle = a_k E_0^{(0)} + 0$$

$$a_k = \frac{\langle \Psi_k^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle}{E_k^{(0)} - E_0^{(0)}}$$



$$\Psi^{(1)} = \sum_{i \neq 0} \frac{\langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle}{E_i^{(0)} - E_0^{(0)}} \Psi_i^{(0)}$$

Rayleigh-Schrödinger Perturbation Theory

Second-order correction to the energy

$$E^{(2)} = \sum_{i \neq 0} \frac{\langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_i^{(0)} \rangle}{E_i^{(0)} - E_0^{(0)}}$$

Expressions for $\Psi^{(2)}$, $E^{(3)}$, etc. get more complicated very rapidly

Many Body Perturbation theory: Møller Plesset

If the Hartree-Fock solution is known, the zeroth-order Hamiltonian can be defined as the sum of the Fock operators:

$$\hat{H}^{(0)} = \sum_i^N \hat{f}(i)$$

The perturbation operator is:

$$\hat{V} = \hat{H} - \hat{H}^{(0)} = \sum_i \hat{h}_i + \sum_i \sum_{j>i} \frac{1}{r_{ij}} - \sum_i \hat{f}(i)$$

since, $\hat{f}(i) = \hat{h}(i) + \sum_k \left(\hat{J}_k(i) - \hat{K}_k(i) \right) = \hat{h}(i) + \hat{g}(i)$

$$\hat{V} = \left(\sum_i \sum_{j>i} \frac{1}{r_{ij}} \right) - \left(\sum_i \hat{g}(i) \right)$$

electron-electron interaction

Mean-field Coulomb and exchange interactions

Møller Plesset Perturbation theory

The zeroth-order (known) solutions:

$$\hat{H}^{(0)} \Psi_k^{(0)} = E_k^{(0)} \Psi_k^{(0)}$$

$$\Psi_0^{(0)} = \Phi_{HF} = |\phi_1 \phi_2 \dots \phi_i \phi_j \dots \phi_N\rangle$$

$$\Psi_j^{(0)} = |\phi_1 \phi_2 \dots \phi_j \dots \phi_N \dots \phi_a\rangle = \Phi_i^a$$

$$\Psi_k^{(0)} = |\phi_1 \phi_2 \dots \phi_N \dots \phi_a \phi_b\rangle = \Phi_{ij}^{ab}$$

$$E_0^{(0)} = \sum_m^N \epsilon_m$$

$$E_j^{(0)} = E_0^{(0)} - \epsilon_i + \epsilon_a$$

$$E_k^{(0)} = E_0^{(0)} - \epsilon_i - \epsilon_j + \epsilon_a + \epsilon_b$$

The first-order correction to the energy:

$$E_0^{(1)} = \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{V} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle = \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \sum_i \sum_{j>i} \frac{1}{r_{ij}} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle - \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | - \sum_i \hat{g}(i) | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle$$

$$= \frac{1}{2} \sum_i \langle i | \sum_j \left(\hat{J}_j - \hat{K}_j \right) | i \rangle - \sum_i \langle i | \sum_j \left(\hat{J}_j - \hat{K}_j \right) | i \rangle$$

$$= -\frac{1}{2} \sum_i \langle i | \sum_j \left(\hat{J}_j - \hat{K}_j \right) | i \rangle$$

Møller Plesset Perturbation theory

Energy at first-order:

$$E_0 = E_0^{(0)} + E_0^{(1)} = \sum_i \epsilon_i - \frac{1}{2} \sum_i \langle i | \sum_j (\hat{J}_j - \hat{K}_j) | i \rangle = E_{HF}$$

First-order wave function correction:

$$\Psi_0^{(1)} = \sum_{i \neq 0} \frac{\langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle}{E_i^{(0)} - E_0^{(0)}} \Psi_i^{(0)}$$
$$= \langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \hat{H} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle - \langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \hat{H}^{(0)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle = \langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \hat{H} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle - E_0^{(0)} \langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle = \langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \hat{H} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle$$

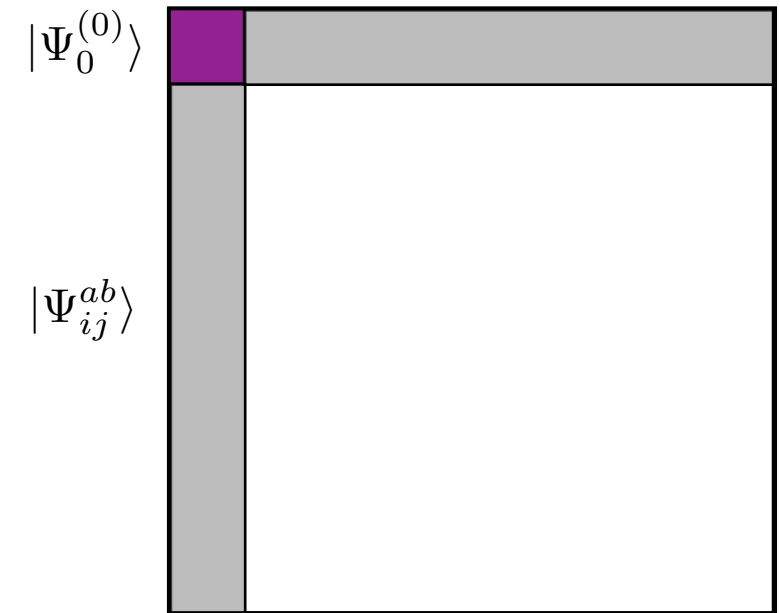
- zero for single excitations (Brillouin theorem)
- zero for more than two electron replacements
- only double excitations need to be considered

Møller Plesset Perturbation theory

Second-order correction to the energy:

$$E^{(2)} = \sum_{i \neq 0} \frac{\langle \Psi_i^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{V}^{(1)} | \Psi_i^{(0)} \rangle}{E_i^{(0)} - E_0^{(0)}}$$

At second-order only doubles,
no interaction between doubles

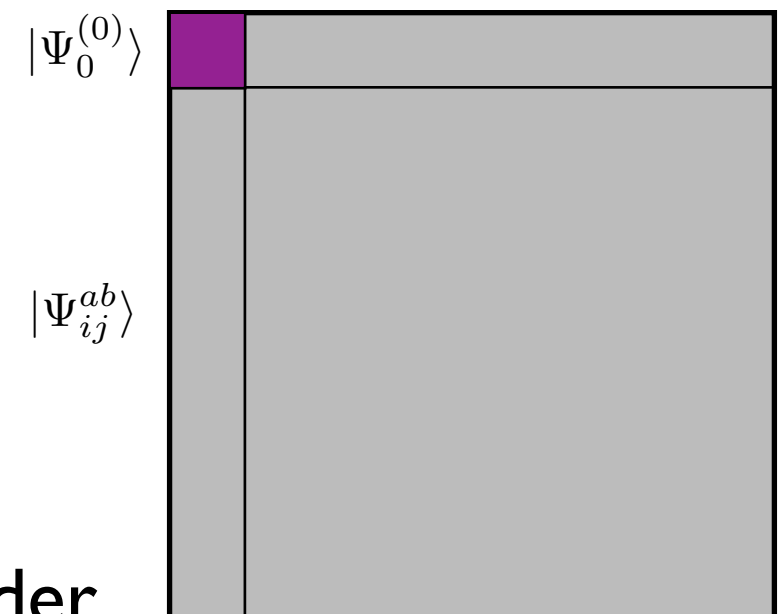


CISD matrix

Third-order correction to the energy:

$$E_0^{(3)} = \sum_{\substack{a < b \\ i < j}} \sum_{\substack{c < d \\ k < l}} \frac{\langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{H} | \Psi_{ij}^{ab} \rangle \langle \Psi_{ij}^{ab} | \hat{V} | \Psi_{kl}^{cd} \rangle \langle \Psi_{kl}^{cd} | \hat{H} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle}{(\epsilon_a + \epsilon_b - \epsilon_i - \epsilon_j)(\epsilon_c + \epsilon_d - \epsilon_k - \epsilon_l)}$$

$$- E_0^{(1)} \sum_{\substack{a < b \\ i < j}} \frac{|\langle \Psi_0 | \hat{V} | \Psi_{ij}^{ab} \rangle|^2}{(\epsilon_a + \epsilon_b - \epsilon_i - \epsilon_j)^2}$$



CISD matrix

Interaction between doubles at third-order

Møller Plesset Perturbation theory

☞ Intruder states

In case of quasi-degenerate occupied and virtual orbitals (e.g. dissociation), very small denominators can appear, leading to a breakdown of the perturbation theory

$$E_i^{(0)} - E_0^{(0)} = \epsilon_a + \epsilon_b - \epsilon_i - \epsilon_j$$

Example: H₂ in minimal basis

$$\sigma_g = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(1s_a + 1s_b)$$

$$\sigma_u = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(1s_a - 1s_b)$$

zeroth-order $\Psi_0^{(0)} = |\sigma_g \bar{\sigma}_g\rangle$

$$E_0^{(0)} = 2\epsilon_g$$

first-order $\Psi_0^{(1)} = |\Psi_{ij}^{ab}\rangle = |\sigma_u \bar{\sigma}_u\rangle$

$$E_0^{(1)} = -J_{gg}$$

$$E_0 = E_0^{(0)} + E_0^{(1)} = 2\epsilon_g - J_{gg} = E_{HF}$$

second-order
$$E_0^{(2)} = \frac{|\langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | \hat{V} | \Psi_0^{(1)} \rangle|^2}{E_i^{(0)} - E_0^{(0)}} = \frac{|\langle \sigma_g \bar{\sigma}_g | \hat{H} | \sigma_u \bar{\sigma}_u \rangle|^2}{2(\epsilon_u - \epsilon_g)}$$

tends to zero for large distances

Møller Plesset Perturbation theory

☞ Separability

$$E_{AB}(r \rightarrow \infty) = E_A + E_B$$

The separability is preserved at all perturbation orders.

Easy to demonstrate up to second-order

Consider an AB system of non-interaction A and B subsystems

$$\hat{H}_{AB} = \hat{H}_A + \hat{H}_B \quad \hat{H}_{AB}^{(0)} = \hat{H}_A^{(0)} + \hat{H}_B^{(0)} \quad \hat{V}_{AB} = \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B$$

zeroth-order $\Psi_{AB}^{(0)} = \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \quad E_{AB}^{(0)} = E_A^{(0)} + E_B^{(0)}$

first-order $\Psi_{AB}^{(1)} = \{ \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)}, \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)}, \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bk}^{(0)} \}$

$$E_{AB}^{(1)} = \langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle = \langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle \\ + \langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \rangle = E_A^{(1)} + E_B^{(1)}$$

Labels: *i* ground state; *j,k* excited state

Møller Plesset Perturbation theory

second-order

$$\begin{aligned}
 E_{AB}^{(2)} = & \sum_{j \neq i} \frac{\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle}{E_{Ai}^{(0)} + E_{Bi}^{(0)} - (E_{Ai}^{(0)} + E_{Bj}^{(0)})} \\
 & + \sum_{j \neq i} \frac{\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle}{E_{Ai}^{(0)} + E_{Bi}^{(0)} - (E_{Aj}^{(0)} + E_{Bi}^{(0)})} \\
 & + \sum_{j \neq i} \frac{\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle}{E_{Ai}^{(0)} + E_{Bi}^{(0)} - (E_{Aj}^{(0)} + E_{Bj}^{(0)})}
 \end{aligned}$$

zero due to the orthogonality of the zeroth-order solutions of each fragment

$$\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \rangle = 0$$

$$\langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} \rangle = 0$$

Labels: *i* ground state; *j,k* excited state

Møller Plesset Perturbation theory

$$\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} \rangle =$$

$$\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} \rangle + \langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \rangle = \langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} \rangle$$

zero

$$\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A + \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle =$$

$$\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A | \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle + \langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} \rangle \langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \rangle = \langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A | \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \rangle$$

zero

$$E_0^{(2)} = \sum_{j \neq i} \frac{|\langle \Psi_{Ai}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_A | \Psi_{Aj}^{(0)} \rangle|^2}{E_{Ai}^{(0)} - E_{Aj}^{(0)}} + \sum_{j \neq i} \frac{|\langle \Psi_{Bi}^{(0)} | \hat{V}_B | \Psi_{Bj}^{(0)} \rangle|^2}{E_{Bi}^{(0)} - E_{Bj}^{(0)}} = E_A^{(2)} + E_B^{(2)}$$

Labels: i ground state; j, k excited state

Coupled Cluster

Coupled Cluster

- Introduced by Sinanoğlu and Čížek in the 1960's
- Main feature: The wave function is generated through an exponential development (exponential Ansatz)
- **Advantage:** correct separability and size-extensivity
- **Disadvantage:** non-linear equations, non-variational, CPU time-consuming
- In general, only for single configurational reference wave functions

The exponential Ansatz

$$\Psi = \hat{\Omega} \Phi_0$$

Configuration
Interaction

Coupled
Cluster

$$\hat{\Omega}^{CI} = 1 + \hat{C}_1 + \hat{C}_2 + \hat{C}_3 + \dots$$

$$\hat{\Omega}^{CC} = e^{\hat{T}}$$

$$\hat{C}_1 = \sum_{i,a} c_i^a \hat{a}_a^\dagger \hat{a}_i$$

$$\hat{T} = \hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \hat{T}_3 + \dots$$

$$\hat{C}_2 = \sum_{\substack{a < b \\ i < j}} c_{ij}^{ab} \hat{a}_a^\dagger \hat{a}_b^\dagger \hat{a}_i \hat{a}_j$$

$$\hat{T}_1 = \sum_{i,a} t_i^a \hat{a}_a^\dagger \hat{a}_i$$

$$\hat{T}_2 = \sum_{\substack{a < b \\ i < j}} t_{ij}^{ab} \hat{a}_a^\dagger \hat{a}_b^\dagger \hat{a}_i \hat{a}_j$$

$$\hat{C}_3 = \sum_{\substack{a < b < c \\ i < j < k}} c_{ijk}^{abc} \hat{a}_a^\dagger \hat{a}_b^\dagger \hat{a}_c^\dagger \hat{a}_i \hat{a}_j \hat{a}_k$$

$$\hat{T}_3 = \sum_{\substack{a < b < c \\ i < j < k}} t_{ijk}^{abc} \hat{a}_a^\dagger \hat{a}_b^\dagger \hat{a}_c^\dagger \hat{a}_i \hat{a}_j \hat{a}_k$$

CI coefficients

Cluster amplitudes

The exponential Ansatz

Taylor expansion: $\hat{\Omega}^{CC} = e^{\hat{T}} = 1 + \hat{T} + \frac{1}{2!}\hat{T}^2 + \frac{1}{3!}\hat{T}^3 + \frac{1}{4!}\hat{T}^4 + \dots$

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{\Omega}^{CC} &= 1 + (\hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \hat{T}_3 + \dots) + \frac{1}{2!}(\hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \hat{T}_3 + \dots)^2 \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{3!}(\hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \hat{T}_3 + \dots)^3 + \frac{1}{4!}(\hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \hat{T}_3 + \dots)^4 + \dots \\ &= 1 + (\hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \hat{T}_3 + \dots) + \frac{1}{2}(\hat{T}_1^2 + \hat{T}_2^2 + \hat{T}_3^2 + 2\hat{T}_1\hat{T}_2 + 2\hat{T}_1\hat{T}_3 + \dots) \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{6}(\hat{T}_1^3 + \hat{T}_2^3 + \hat{T}_3^3 + 3\hat{T}_1^2\hat{T}_2 + 3\hat{T}_1^2\hat{T}_3 + \dots) + \dots\end{aligned}$$

The exponential Ansatz

Ordering by excitation level

$$\hat{\Omega}^{CC} = 1$$

$$+\hat{T}_1$$

→ Singles

$$+\hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_1^2$$

→ Doubles

$$+\hat{T}_3 + \hat{T}_1\hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{6}\hat{T}_1^3$$

→ Triples

$$+\hat{T}_4 + \hat{T}_1\hat{T}_3 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_2^2 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_1^2\hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{24}\hat{T}_1^4$$

→ Quadruples

$$+\dots$$

→ Higher excitations

- Quadruple excitations are generated by five different mechanisms

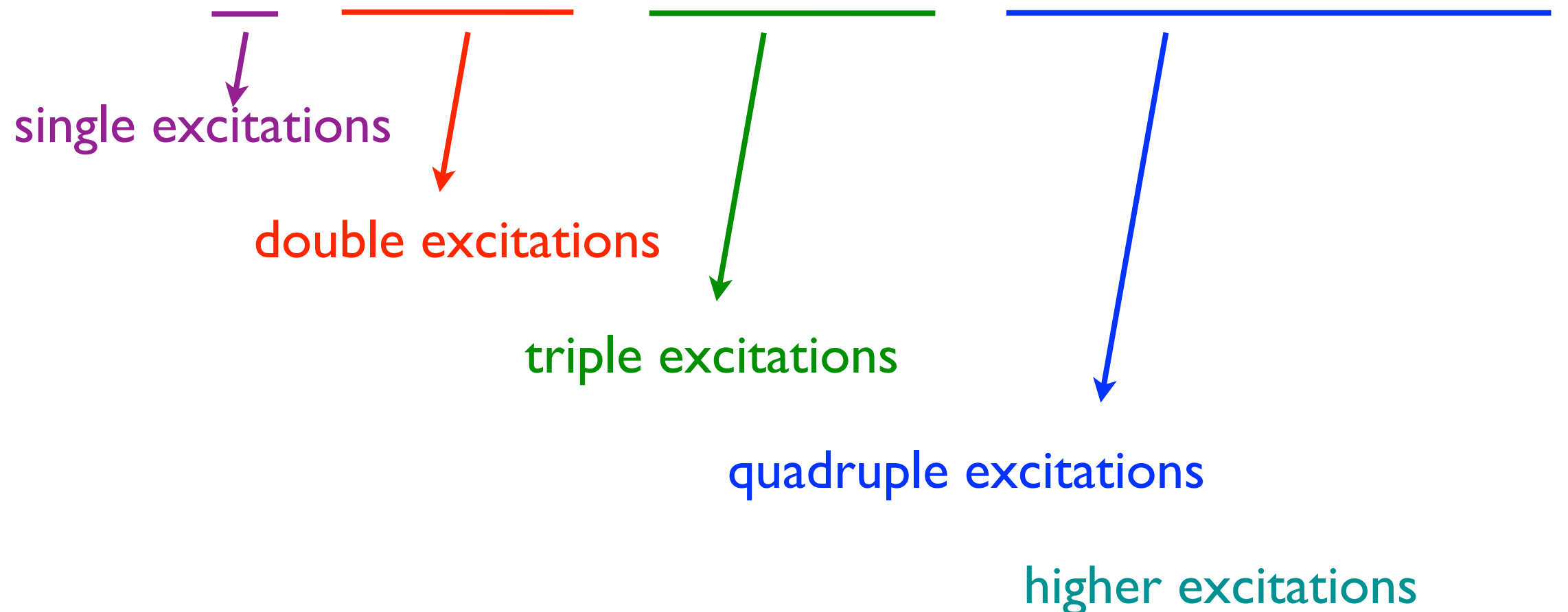
↓
Simultaneous interaction of four electrons – Connected terms

↘
Interaction of two independent electron pairs – Disconnected terms

The exponential Ansatz

The CCSD wave function operator

$$\hat{\Omega}^{CCSD} = e^{\hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2}$$
$$= 1 + \hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_1^2 + \hat{T}_1\hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{6}\hat{T}_1^3 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_2^2 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_1^2\hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{24}\hat{T}_1^4 + \dots$$

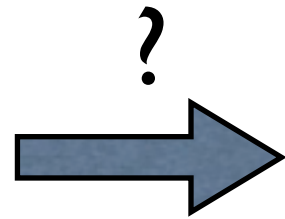


The separability of the CC wave function

Two non-interacting fragments A and B:

$$\hat{T}_{AB} = \hat{T}_A + \hat{T}_B$$

$$\Psi_A^{CC} = e^{\hat{T}_A} \Psi_{0,A}$$



$$\Psi_{AB}^{CC} = \Psi_A^{CC} \Psi_B^{CC}$$

$$\Psi_B^{CC} = e^{\hat{T}_B} \Psi_{0,B}$$

$$e^{\hat{T}_{AB}} = e^{(\hat{T}_A + \hat{T}_B)} = e^{\hat{T}_A} \cdot e^{\hat{T}_B}$$

$$\Psi_{AB}^{CC} = e^{\hat{T}_{AB}} \Psi_{0,AB}$$

$$\Psi_{0,AB} = \Psi_{0,A} \Psi_{0,B}$$

$$e^{\hat{T}_{AB}} \Psi_{0,AB} = e^{\hat{T}_A} \cdot e^{\hat{T}_B} \Psi_{0,A} \Psi_{0,B} = \Psi_A^{CC} \Psi_B^{CC}$$

$$E_{AB}^{CC} = \langle \Psi_{AB}^{CC} | \hat{H}_A + \hat{H}_B | \Psi_{AB}^{CC} \rangle = \langle \Psi_A^{CC} \Psi_B^{CC} | \hat{H}_A + \hat{H}_B | \Psi_A^{CC} \Psi_B^{CC} \rangle$$

$$= \langle \Psi_A^{CC} | \hat{H}_A | \Psi_A^{CC} \rangle + \langle \Psi_B^{CC} | \hat{H}_B | \Psi_B^{CC} \rangle = E_A^{CC} + E_B^{CC}$$

The CCSD energy and amplitudes

Energy and amplitudes are obtained by projecting onto $\{\Psi_0, \Psi_i^j, \Psi_{ij}^{ab}, \dots\}$

$$\hat{H}|e^{(\hat{T}_1+\hat{T}_2)}\Psi_0\rangle = E^{CCSD}|e^{(\hat{T}_1+\hat{T}_2)}\Psi_0\rangle$$

● Projection on $\langle\Psi_0|$ gives the CCSD energy

$$\langle\Psi_0|\hat{H}|(1 + \hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_1^2 + \dots)\Psi_0\rangle = E\langle\Psi_0|(1 + \hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_1^2 + \dots)\Psi_0\rangle$$

Because of the bielectronic character of the Hamiltonian, all higher excitations disappear

$$\langle\Psi_0|\hat{H}|(1 + \hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{2}\hat{T}_1^2)\Psi_0\rangle = E$$

Only singles and doubles cluster amplitude contribute directly to the CC energy (at any level of truncation)

The CCSD energy and amplitudes

- Projection on $\langle \Psi_i^a |$ gives the cluster amplitudes of the single excitations

$$\langle \Psi_i^a | \hat{H} | (1 + \hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{2} \hat{T}_1^2 + \hat{T}_1 \hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{6} \hat{T}_1^3) \Psi_0 \rangle = t_i^a E$$

- Projection on $\langle \Psi_{ij}^{ab} |$ gives the cluster amplitudes of the double excitations

$$\langle \Psi_{ij}^a | \hat{H} | \left[1 + \hat{T}_1 + \hat{T}_2 + \frac{1}{2} (\hat{T}_1^2 + \hat{T}_2^2 + 2\hat{T}_1 \hat{T}_2) + \frac{1}{6} (\hat{T}_1^3 + 3\hat{T}_1^2 \hat{T}_2) + \frac{1}{24} \hat{T}_1^4 \right] \Psi_0 \rangle = t_{ij}^{ab} E$$

Set of non-linear equations \longrightarrow Iterative solutions

All amplitudes are coupled \longrightarrow Indirect influence of higher cluster amplitudes on E^{CCSD}

Beyond CCSD

CCSD (and CISD) O^2V^4 (N^6 scaling)

CCSDT O^3V^5 (N^8 scaling)

computationally expensive

Perturbative estimates of the connected triples \hat{T}_3

- CCSD+T(MP4)

$$T(MP4) = \sum_{\substack{i < j < k \\ a < b < c}} \frac{|\frac{1}{4} \hat{\mathcal{P}}_{ijk}^{abc} \{ \sum_d \langle bc || dk \rangle t_{ij}^{ad} - \sum_l \langle lc || jk \rangle t_{il}^{ab} \}|^2}{\epsilon_i + \epsilon_j + \epsilon_k - \epsilon_a - \epsilon_b - \epsilon_c}$$

↗ permutation operator
↗ two-electron integrals
↘ first-order estimate of the doubles amplitudes

- CCSD+T(CCSD): replace $t_{ij}^{ab}(1)$ by the CCSD amplitudes

- CCSD(T): add a perturbative correction of a fifth-order term involving singles amplitudes

Multiconfigurational methods

Approximations to full CI

● HF, CC, MP2, SDCl, etc → all approximations to full CI

A. How to select the most important configurations in the wave function?

B. How to choose the molecular orbitals?

For one dominant electronic configuration:

- Optimize molecular orbitals by HF
- Add effect of other electronic configurations by CC, MP2, etc.

→ Typical case: Ground state of molecules near equilibrium geometry

Approximations to full CI

What to do when more electronic configurations are essential?

Example I: Bond breaking H₂

$$\Psi = c_1 |\sigma_g \bar{\sigma}_g\rangle + c_2 |\sigma_u \bar{\sigma}_u\rangle$$

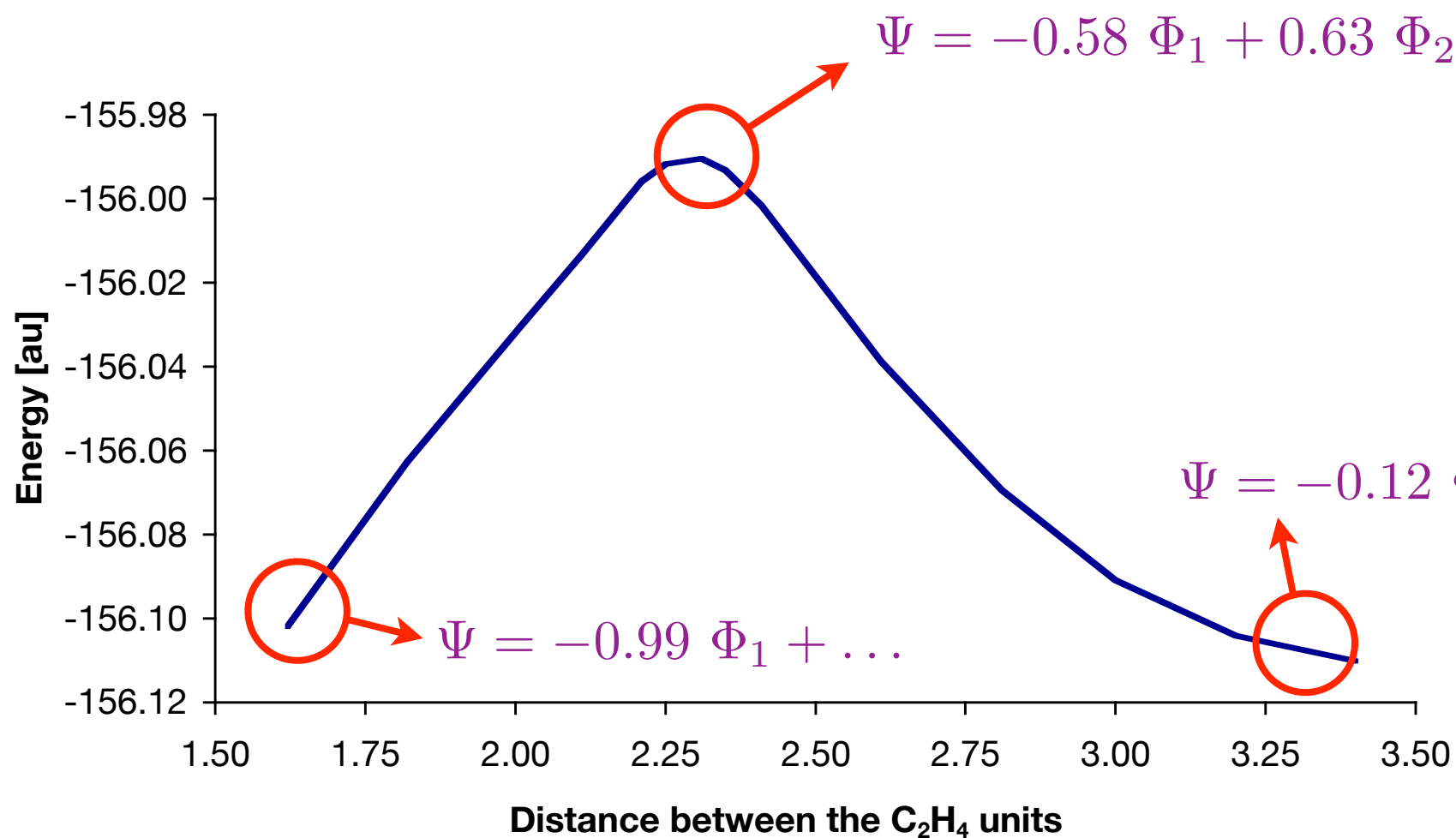
$$\sigma_g = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} [H_1(1s) + H_2(1s)]$$

$$\sigma_u = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} [H_1(1s) - H_2(1s)]$$

R(H-H)	$ \sigma_g \bar{\sigma}_g\rangle$	$ \sigma_u \bar{\sigma}_u\rangle$
0.7 Å	0.995	-0.102
1.0 Å	0.987	-0.167
1.4 Å	0.962	-0.274
2.0 Å	0.881	-0.473
5.0 Å	0.710	-0.705
10 Å	0.707	-0.707

Examples of multiconfigurational situations

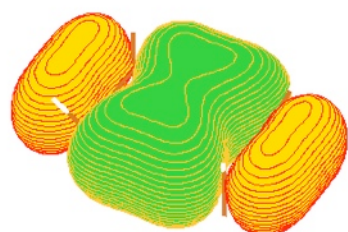
Example 2: Transition state of $2 \text{C}_2\text{H}_4 \rightarrow \text{C}_4\text{H}_4$



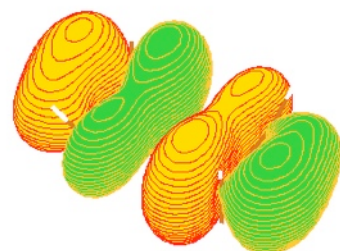
$$\Phi_1 = |\phi_1^2 \phi_2^2|$$

$$\Phi_2 = |\phi_1^2 \phi_3^2|$$

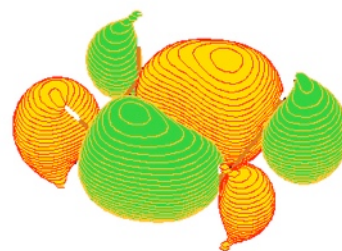
$$\Phi_3 = |\phi_1^2 \phi_2^1 \phi_3^1|$$



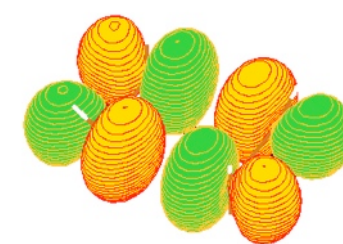
$$\phi_1 = \pi + \pi$$



$$\phi_2 = \pi - \pi$$



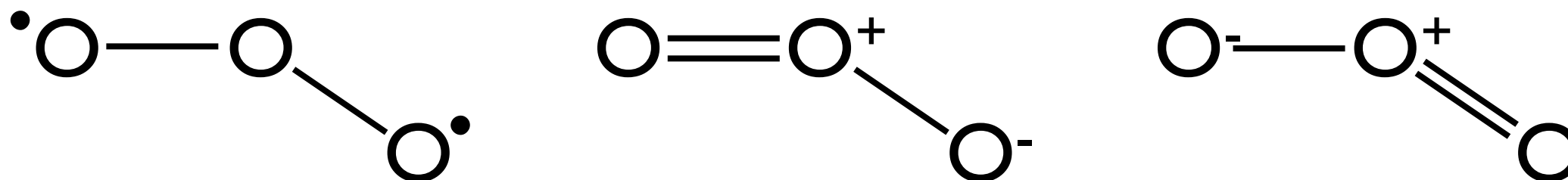
$$\phi_3 = \pi^* + \pi^*$$



$$\phi_4 = \pi^* - \pi^*$$

Examples of multiconfigurational situations

Example 3: Unsaturated valencies O₃



Molecular orbitals

$$\pi_1 = c_{11}\pi_A + c_{12}(\pi_b + \pi_c)$$

$$\pi_2 = c_{21}(\pi_b - \pi_c)$$

$$\pi_3 = c_{31}\pi_a - c_{32}(\pi_b + \pi_c)$$

Electronic configurations

$$\Phi_{HF} = |\pi_1^2 \pi_2^2|$$

$$\Phi_2 = |\pi_1^2 \pi_3^2|$$

$$\Phi_3 = |\pi_2^2 \pi_3^2|$$

$$\Phi_4 = |\pi_1^2 \pi_2^1 \pi_3^1|$$

Multiconfigurational wave function: $\Psi = -0.89 \Phi_{HF} + 0.45 \Phi_2 + \dots$

Examples of multiconfigurational situations

Other examples

- Transition metal systems: $3d^n4s^2$, $3d^{n+1}4s^1$, $3d^{n+2}$ configurations can give rise to different multiplets with similar energy
- Excited states (important in photochemistry)
- Weak bonds (famous example: Cr_2)

Multiconfigurational Self-Consistent Field methods

General considerations:

* Starting point: choice of configurations $\Psi = \sum_i C_i |\Phi_i\rangle$

depends on the physics of the system.

* Energy mean-value: $\langle E \rangle = E(c_\mu, C_i)$

depends on the shape of the MO's (c_μ) and the

configuration expansion (C_i)

* Variational method: minimization with respect to both sets of parameters

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial c_\mu} \langle E \rangle = 0, \quad \frac{\partial}{\partial C_i} \langle E \rangle = 0$$

- Orbitals adapted to the double optimization process
- Minimal energy with respect to all parameters
- Orbital occupations are no longer integers

CASSCF

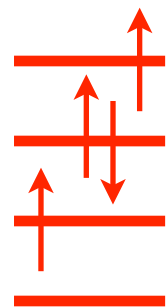
☞ In general not evident how to choose the configuration space

➔ Complete Active Space SCF

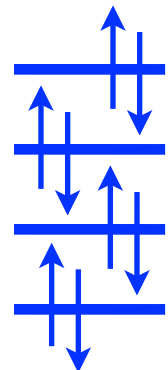
Full CI in a limited set of MO's



Virtual orbitals
empty in all configurations



Active orbitals
variable occupation



Inactive orbitals
doubly occupied in all configurations

The MC space includes the configurations –allowed by spin and spatial symmetry– generated by all the possible occupations of a set of orbitals by a given number of electrons.

typically, the valence orbitals

typically, the valence electrons


Notation: CAS(n_{el}, n_{orb})

CASSCF

How to choose the active space: No universal recipe!

Need for *chemical knowledge* of the system

Examples:

- Single bond dissociation → σ_g and σ_u → CAS(2,2)  from our chemical knowledge on H₂
- Ethylene cycloaddition - minimal active space: CAS(2,2) ($\phi_2 = \pi - \pi$
 $\phi_3 = \pi^* + \pi^*$)
 - better, full π space: CAS(4,4)
 - best, adding 2 σ and 2 σ^* orbitals: CAS(8,8)
- Transition metal atoms: 3d and 4s orbitals (*eventually adding 4p and 4d*)

Advice:

- Read the literature to see what active spaces have been applied in related systems
- Check (if possible) with larger active spaces

Beyond CASSCF

Starting point, Reference wave function

HF	CASSCF
CISD	MRCI
MP2, MP4, ...	CASPT2, NEVPT2, ...
CCSD, CCSD(T), ...	MR-CC (in development)

MRCI: configuration interaction for MC systems

CASPT2: multiconfigurational equivalent of MP2

- CASPT2 is generally applicable, precision of ~ 0.15 eV in the relative energies of electronically excited states.
- Suffers the intruder state problem

- MR-CISD computationally very demanding, only applicable for small molecules.
- Variants: **DDCI** and **SORCI**

difference dedicated CI

spectroscopy oriented CI

CASPT2

Basic notions

- Definition of the zeroth-order Hamiltonian

$$\hat{H}^{(0)} = \hat{P}_0 \hat{F} \hat{P}_0 + \hat{P}_K \hat{F} \hat{P}_K + \hat{P}_{SD} \hat{F} \hat{P}_{SD} + \hat{P}_X \hat{F} \hat{P}_X$$

$$\hat{P}_0 = |0\rangle\langle 0| \quad \hat{F} = \sum_{pq\sigma} f_{pq\sigma} \hat{E}_{pq} \quad f_{pq\sigma} = -\langle 0 | [[\hat{H}, \hat{a}_{q\sigma}^\dagger], \hat{a}_{p\sigma}]_+ | 0 \rangle$$

- Construction of the first-order wave function

Uncontracted: $\Psi^{(1)} = \sum_i C_i |\Psi_i^{SD}\rangle \longrightarrow$ simple, but huge amount of parameters

Contracted: $\Psi^{(1)} = \sum_{pqrs} c_{pqrs} \hat{E}_{pq} \hat{E}_{rs} |0\rangle \longrightarrow$ complicated, but less parameters, once programmed, very fast!

Important:

Due to the contracted nature of the first-order wave function, the ratio of the different configuration in the CAS cannot change under the influence of dynamical electron correlation.

CASPT2

Intruder state problem

$$\Psi = \Psi^{(0)} + \Psi^{(1)}$$

Reference weight: $\omega = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^M |C_i|^2$

Order of magnitude: $\omega \sim (1 + \alpha)^{-\frac{N}{2}}$ $\alpha \approx 0.015$

N = number of electrons

N = 10 $\rightarrow \omega \sim 0.93$

N = 100 $\rightarrow \omega \sim 0.47$

N = 200 $\rightarrow \omega \sim 0.23$

- Compare the reference weight of the different states!!!

👉 For low reference weight: $c_j = \frac{\langle \Phi_j | \hat{V} | \Psi^{(0)} \rangle}{E^{(0)} - E_j}$ is huge

1. External configuration has a large matrix element \rightarrow add Φ_j to the CAS

2. $\langle \Phi_j | \hat{V} | \Psi^{(0)} \rangle$ is small; $E_j \approx E^{(0)} \rightarrow$ Intruder state

Apply level-shifted CASPT2

CASPT2

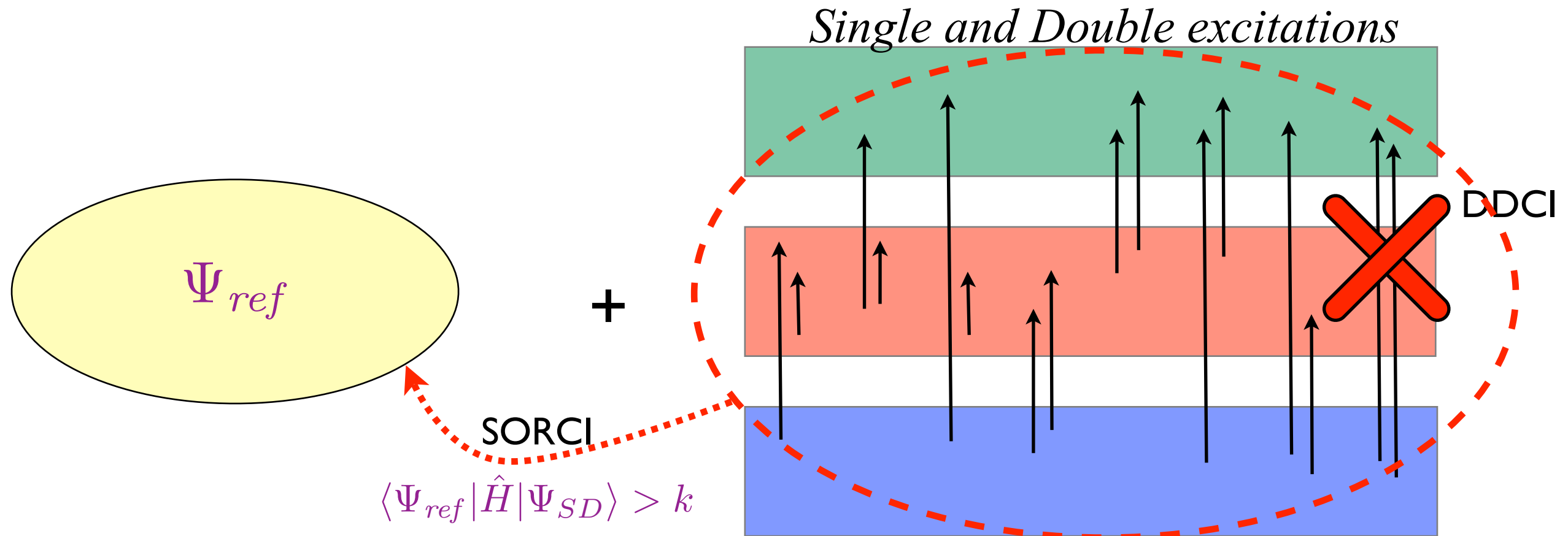
Intruder state problem: Add an arbitrary shift to the expectation values of $\hat{H}^{(0)}$ of the external configurations to avoid the near-degeneracy

$$\tilde{c}_j = \frac{\langle \Phi_j | \hat{V} | \Psi^{(0)} \rangle}{E^{(0)} - E_j + \mu}$$

$$\tilde{E}^{(2)} = \sum_j \frac{\langle \Psi^{(0)} | \hat{V} | \Phi_j \rangle \langle \Phi_j | \hat{V} | \Psi^{(0)} \rangle}{E^{(0)} - E_j + \mu}$$

$$E^{(2)} = \tilde{E}^{(2)} + \mu \left(1 - \frac{1}{\omega} \right)$$

DDCI and SORCI



DDCI

- Eliminating the double excitations from inactive to virtual orbitals
- Based on perturbation theory arguments that show that these configurations do not affect the energy difference between states
- Good for vertical excitations, no geometries

SORCI

- Excited configurations are ordered by importance based on the interaction with the reference wave function
- CI is performed between Ψ_{ref} and the most important excited configurations