

$$e^{-\beta \sum_{i,j>i} \Phi_{ij}} = \prod_i \left(\prod_{j>i} (1 + f_{ij}) \right) = 1 + \sum_{i,j>i} f_{ij} + \sum_{\substack{i,j>i \\ k,l>k \\ k \geq i \\ (i,j) \neq (k,l)}} f_{ij} f_{kl} + O(f^3) \quad (1)$$

where

$$f_{ij} \equiv e^{-\beta \Phi_{ij}} - 1 \quad (2)$$

The f_{ij} will be small enough when T is very large or Φ_{ij} is small enough because you are in small density. What is important it is the ration between β and Φ_{ij} .

In the case $\Phi_{ij} \ll 1$ you keep other terms contributions. In the other cases you can keep the linear term.

The partition function is:

$$Q_N(V, T) = \int_V d\vec{r}_1 \dots d\vec{r}_N \left(1 + \sum_{i,j>i} f_{ij} + \dots \right) = V^N + V^{N-2} \sum_{i,j>i} \int d\vec{r}_i d\vec{r}_j f_{ij} + \dots \quad (3)$$

We are summing up over all configurations ij . Let us try to compute the term in the integral:

$$\int d\vec{r}_i d\vec{r}_j f_{ij} = \int d\vec{r}_i d\vec{r}_j f(|\vec{r}_i - \vec{r}_j|) = V \int_V d\vec{r} f(|\vec{r}|) \equiv -2b_2 V \quad (4)$$

so, what is important it is the relative distance. \vec{r} gives us the position from the center we have choosen.

$$b_2 \equiv -\frac{1}{2} \int_V d\vec{r} f(|\vec{r}|) \quad (5)$$

Rewrite again the partition function:

$$Q_N(V, T) = V^N - V^{N-1} N(N-1) b_2 \quad (6)$$

$$Z_N(V, T) = \left(\frac{V^N}{N! \Lambda^{3N}} \right) \left(1 - \frac{N^2}{V} b_2 + \dots \right) \quad (7)$$

Remark. I do not care about the $(N-1)$ term, because N is big enough!

The free energy is:

$$F_N = F_N^{il} - k_B T \ln \left[1 - \frac{N^2}{V} b_2 + \dots \right] \quad (8)$$

$$P_N = - \left(\frac{\partial F_N}{\partial V} \right)_{T,N} = \frac{N k_B T}{V} \left(1 + \frac{\frac{N}{V} b_2}{1 - \frac{N}{V} b_2} \right) \approx \frac{N k_B T}{V} \left(1 + \frac{N}{V} b_2 + \dots \right) \quad (9)$$

here you see the ideal gas and the correction to the ideal gas.

Therefore, it is important computing b_2 , because one time you have this ypu have the expansion. Or if you wish, by doing the fit of data at different temperature you obtain b_2 from the experiment and you see f_{ij} . You can use macroscopic to obtain information about the potential in the microscopic.

In principle, from the expansion I realized that for example in a generic expansion

$$(1-x)^{-1} = 1 + x + \dots \quad (10)$$

so, the our expansion is something like this.

$$\frac{PV}{N k_B T} \approx 1 + \rho b_2 \simeq \frac{1}{1 - b_2 \rho} \quad (11)$$