

Systems of Non-interacting Particles

Conor Brolly
40400295

In this report we produce a graph of the average energy of a system of 10 particles against temperature. In our system, each particle can be in one of two discrete states, with energy levels of +1 and -1, shown in the diagram:

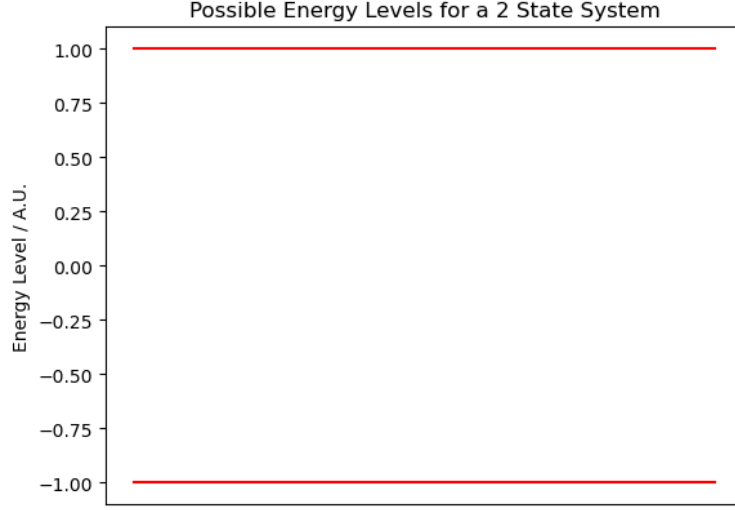


Figure 1: Available energy levels for particles in our system. The energy values are +1 and -1.

Enumerating over every possible microstate for a given temperature can allow us to compute the average energy as:

$$\langle E \rangle = \frac{1}{Z} \sum_j E_j e^{-\beta E_j} \quad Z = \sum_j e^{-\beta E_j} \quad (1)$$

where E_j is the index of the j^{th} microstate and β is defined as $1/k_b T$, where k_b is Boltzmann's constant, which we set to 1, and T the temperature. Applying this for various values of T allows us to produce a graph showing the relationship between the average energy and temperature.

It is possible to derive an analytic solution for this problem, which gives the average energy for a system of n particles as:

$$\langle E \rangle = -n \cdot \tanh(\beta) \quad (2)$$

where again β is equal to $1/k_b T$.

Plotting the enumerated points and the function on the same graph shows that the methods agree:

Average Energy as a function of Temperature for a system of 10 particles

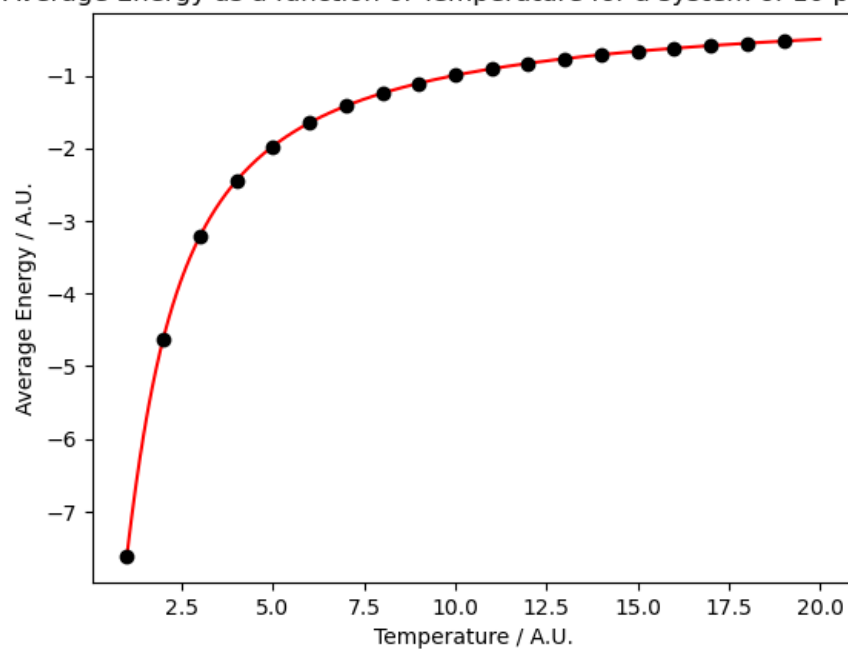


Figure 2: Average energy against temperature for a system of 10 particles which can exist in discrete states with energies of $+1$ and -1 .