

# UC5

# Two-Particle Systems and quantum applications

## UC5 contents:

- Identical particles and introduction to two-particle systems.
- Exchange interactions and covalent bonds
- Atoms and the periodic table
- Applications of quantum mechanics

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Two-particle systems:

For a *single* particle,  $\Psi(\mathbf{r}, t)$  is a function of the spatial coordinates,  $\mathbf{r}$ , and the time,  $t$  (we'll ignore spin, for the moment).

The state of a *two*-particle system is a function of the coordinates of particle one ( $\mathbf{r}_1$ ), the coordinates of particle two ( $\mathbf{r}_2$ ), and the time:

$$\Psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, t).$$

Its time evolution is determined by the Schrödinger equation:

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial \Psi}{\partial t} = \hat{H} \Psi,$$

where  $H$  is the Hamiltonian:

$$\hat{H} = -\frac{\hbar^2}{2m_1} \nabla_1^2 - \frac{\hbar^2}{2m_2} \nabla_2^2 + V(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, t)$$

the subscript on  $\nabla$  indicates differentiation with respect to the coordinates of particle 1 or particle 2, as the case may be.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Two-particle systems:

The statistical interpretation indicates: the probability of finding particle 1 in the volume  $d^3\mathbf{r}_1$  and particle 2 in the volume  $d^3\mathbf{r}_2$

$$|\Psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, t)|^2 d^3\mathbf{r}_1 d^3\mathbf{r}_2$$

$\Psi$  must be normalised:

$$\int |\Psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, t)|^2 d^3\mathbf{r}_1 d^3\mathbf{r}_2 = 1.$$

For time-independent potentials, we obtain a complete set of solutions by separation of variables:

$$\Psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, t) = \psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) e^{-iEt/\hbar},$$

where the spatial wave function ( $\psi$ ) satisfies the time-independent Schrödinger equation:

$$-\frac{\hbar^2}{2m_1} \nabla_1^2 \psi - \frac{\hbar^2}{2m_2} \nabla_2^2 \psi + V \psi = E \psi,$$

where  $E$  is the total energy of the system.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Two-particle systems:

Solving this is difficult, but two special cases can be reduced to one-particle problems:

**1. Noninteracting particles:** Suppose the particles do not interact with one another, but each is subject to some external force. For example, they might be attached to two different springs. In that case the total potential energy is the *sum* of the two:

$$V(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = V_1(\mathbf{r}_1) + V_2(\mathbf{r}_2),$$

Using separation of variables:  $\psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = \psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2)$ .

we find that  $\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)$  and  $\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2)$  each satisfy the one-particle Schrödinger equation:

$$\begin{aligned} -\frac{\hbar^2}{2m_1}\nabla_1^2\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1) + V_1(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1) &= E_a\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1), \\ -\frac{\hbar^2}{2m_2}\nabla_2^2\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2) + V_2(\mathbf{r}_2)\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2) &= E_b\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2), \end{aligned}$$

and  $E = E_a + E_b$ .

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Two-particle systems:

In this case the two-particle wave function is a simple *product* of one-particle wave functions:

$$\begin{aligned}\Psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, t) &= \psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2)e^{-i(E_a+E_b)t/\hbar} \\ &= \left(\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)e^{-iE_at/\hbar}\right) \left(\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2)e^{-iE_bt/\hbar}\right) = \Psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1, t)\Psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2, t),\end{aligned}$$

It makes sense to say that particle 1 is in state  $a$ , and particle 2 is in state  $b$ .

Any linear combination of such solutions will still satisfy the (time-dependent) Schrödinger:

$$\Psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, t) = \frac{3}{5}\Psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1, t)\Psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2, t) + \frac{4}{5}\Psi_c(\mathbf{r}_1, t)\Psi_d(\mathbf{r}_2, t).$$

The state of particle 1 depends on that of particle 2, and vice versa. If we measured the energy of particle 1, we might get  $E_a$  (with probability 9/25), then the energy of particle 2 is definitely  $E_b$ , or you might get  $E_c$  (probability 16/25), in which case the energy of particle 2 is  $E_d$ .

We say that the two particles are **entangled** (Schrödinger's lovely term). An entangled state is one that *cannot* be written as a product of single-particle states.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Two-particle systems:

**2. Central potentials:** Suppose the particles interact *only* with one another, via a potential that depends on their separation:

$$V(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) \rightarrow V(|\mathbf{r}_1 - \mathbf{r}_2|).$$

The hydrogen atom would be an example, if you include the motion of the proton. In this case the two-body problem reduces to an equivalent one-body problem.

In general, though, the two particles will be subject both to external forces *and* to mutual interactions, and this makes the analysis more complicated.

**Example:** potential of the two electrons in a helium atom: each feels the Coulomb attraction of the nucleus (charge  $2e$ ), and at the same time they repel one another:

$$V(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( -\frac{2e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_1|} - \frac{2e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_2|} + \frac{e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_1 - \mathbf{r}_2|} \right).$$

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Bosons and Fermions

Suppose we have two noninteracting particles, number 1 in the (one-particle) state  $\psi_a(\mathbf{r})$ , and number 2 in the state  $\psi_b(\mathbf{r})$ . In that case  $\psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$  is the product:

$$\psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = \psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2).$$

This assumes that we can tell the particles apart—otherwise it wouldn't make any sense to claim that number 1 is in state  $\psi_a$  and number 2 is in state  $\psi_b$ ; all we could say is that *one* of them is in the state  $\psi_a$  and the other is in state  $\psi_b$ , but we wouldn't know which is which.

All electrons are *utterly identical*, in a way that no two classical objects can ever be. It's not just that we don't know which electron is which.

**Quantum mechanics** neatly accommodates the existence of particles that are *indistinguishable in principle*: We simply construct a wave function that is *noncommittal* as to which particle is in which state. There are actually two ways to do it:

$$\psi_{\pm}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = A [\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2) \pm \psi_b(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_2)];$$

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Bosons and Fermions

$$\psi_{\pm}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = A [\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2) \pm \psi_b(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_2)];$$

(Symmetrisation requirement)

The theory admits two kinds of identical particles:

- **bosons** (the plus sign), and
- **fermions** (the minus sign).

Boson states are **symmetric** under interchange,  $\psi_+(\mathbf{r}_2, \mathbf{r}_1) = \psi_+(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$ ; fermion states are **antisymmetric** under interchange,  $\psi_-(\mathbf{r}_2, \mathbf{r}_1) = -\psi_-(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)$ . It so happens that:

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{all particles with } \textit{integer} \text{ spin are bosons, and} \\ \text{all particles with } \textit{half integer} \text{ spin are fermions.} \end{array} \right.$$

This **connection between spin and statistics** (bosons and fermions have quite different statistical properties) can be *proved* in *relativistic* quantum mechanics.



# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Bosons and Fermions

*Two identical fermions (for example, two electrons) cannot occupy the same state.*

For if  $\psi_a = \psi_b$ , we are left with no wave function at all:

$$\psi_{-}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = A [\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_2) - \psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_2)] = 0,$$

This is the **Pauli exclusion principle**, which is a consequence of the rules for constructing two-particle wave functions, applying to *all* identical fermions.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Exchange Forces

Suppose one particle is in state  $\psi_a(x)$ , and the other is in state  $\psi_b(x)$ , and these two states are orthogonal and normalised.

If the two particles are distinguishable, and number 1 is the one in state  $\psi_a$ , then the combined wave function is:

$$\psi(x_1, x_2) = \psi_a(x_1)\psi_b(x_2);$$

**Identical bosons:** 
$$\psi_+(x_1, x_2) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} [\psi_a(x_1)\psi_b(x_2) + \psi_b(x_1)\psi_a(x_2)];$$

**Identical fermions:** 
$$\psi_-(x_1, x_2) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} [\psi_a(x_1)\psi_b(x_2) - \psi_b(x_1)\psi_a(x_2)].$$

The expectation value of the square of the separation distance between the two particles:

$$\langle (x_1 - x_2)^2 \rangle = \langle x_1^2 \rangle + \langle x_2^2 \rangle - 2\langle x_1 x_2 \rangle.$$

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Exchange Forces:

**Case 1: Distinguishable particles.**

$$\langle x_1^2 \rangle = \int x_1^2 |\psi_a(x_1)|^2 dx_1 \int |\psi_b(x_2)|^2 dx_2 = \langle x^2 \rangle_a$$

(the expectation value of  $x^2$  in the one-particle state  $\psi_a$ ),

$$\langle x_2^2 \rangle = \int |\psi_a(x_1)|^2 dx_1 \int x_2^2 |\psi_b(x_2)|^2 dx_2 = \langle x^2 \rangle_b,$$

and

$$\langle x_1 x_2 \rangle = \int x_1 |\psi_a(x_1)|^2 dx_1 \int x_2 |\psi_b(x_2)|^2 dx_2 = \langle x \rangle_a \langle x \rangle_b.$$

In this case, then,

$$\left\langle (x_1 - x_2)^2 \right\rangle_d = \langle x^2 \rangle_a + \langle x^2 \rangle_b - 2 \langle x \rangle_a \langle x \rangle_b.$$

(Incidentally, the answer would—of course—be the same if particle 1 had been in state  $\psi_b$ , and particle 2 in state  $\psi_a$ .)

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Exchange Forces:

**Case 2: Identical particles.**

$$\begin{aligned}\langle x_1^2 \rangle &= \frac{1}{2} \left[ \int x_1^2 |\psi_a(x_1)|^2 dx_1 \int |\psi_b(x_2)|^2 dx_2 \right. \\ &\quad + \int x_1^2 |\psi_b(x_1)|^2 dx_1 \int |\psi_a(x_2)|^2 dx_2 \\ &\quad \pm \int x_1^2 \psi_a(x_1)^* \psi_b(x_1) dx_1 \int \psi_b(x_2)^* \psi_a(x_2) dx_2 \\ &\quad \left. \pm \int x_1^2 \psi_b(x_1)^* \psi_a(x_1) dx_1 \int \psi_a(x_2)^* \psi_b(x_2) dx_2 \right] \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \left[ \langle x^2 \rangle_a + \langle x^2 \rangle_b \pm 0 \pm 0 \right] = \frac{1}{2} \left( \langle x^2 \rangle_a + \langle x^2 \rangle_b \right).\end{aligned}$$

Similarly,

$$\langle x_2^2 \rangle = \frac{1}{2} \left( \langle x^2 \rangle_b + \langle x^2 \rangle_a \right).$$

(Naturally,  $\langle x_2^2 \rangle = \langle x_1^2 \rangle$ , since you can't tell them apart.) But

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Exchange Forces:

**Case 2: Identical particles.**

$$\begin{aligned}\langle x_1 x_2 \rangle &= \frac{1}{2} \left[ \int x_1 |\psi_a(x_1)|^2 dx_1 \int x_2 |\psi_b(x_2)|^2 dx_2 \right. \\ &\quad + \int x_1 |\psi_b(x_1)|^2 dx_1 \int x_2 |\psi_a(x_2)|^2 dx_2 \\ &\quad \pm \int x_1 \psi_a(x_1)^* \psi_b(x_1) dx_1 \int x_2 \psi_b(x_2)^* \psi_a(x_2) dx_2 \\ &\quad \left. \pm \int x_1 \psi_b(x_1)^* \psi_a(x_1) dx_1 \int x_2 \psi_a(x_2)^* \psi_b(x_2) dx_2 \right] \\ &= \frac{1}{2} (\langle x \rangle_a \langle x \rangle_b + \langle x \rangle_b \langle x \rangle_a \pm \langle x \rangle_{ab} \langle x \rangle_{ba} \pm \langle x \rangle_{ba} \langle x \rangle_{ab}) \\ &= \langle x \rangle_a \langle x \rangle_b \pm |\langle x \rangle_{ab}|^2,\end{aligned}$$

where

$$\langle x \rangle_{ab} \equiv \int x \psi_a(x)^* \psi_b(x) dx.$$

Thus

$$\left\langle (x_1 - x_2)^2 \right\rangle_{\pm} = \langle x^2 \rangle_a + \langle x^2 \rangle_b - 2\langle x \rangle_a \langle x \rangle_b \mp 2|\langle x \rangle_{ab}|^2.$$

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Exchange Forces:

### Case 2: Identical particles.

Distinguishable particles:

$$\left\langle (x_1 - x_2)^2 \right\rangle_d = \langle x^2 \rangle_a + \langle x^2 \rangle_b - 2 \langle x \rangle_a \langle x \rangle_b.$$

Identical particles.:

$$\left\langle (x_1 - x_2)^2 \right\rangle_{\pm} = \langle x^2 \rangle_a + \langle x^2 \rangle_b - 2 \langle x \rangle_a \langle x \rangle_b \mp 2 |\langle x \rangle_{ab}|^2.$$

Difference:

$$\left\langle (\Delta x)^2 \right\rangle_{\pm} = \left\langle (\Delta x)^2 \right\rangle_d \mp 2 |\langle x \rangle_{ab}|^2;$$

**Identical bosons** (the upper signs) tend to be somewhat closer together, and **identical fermions** (the lower signs) somewhat farther apart, than distinguishable particles in the same two states.

$\langle x \rangle_{ab}$  *vanishes* unless the two wave functions actually *overlap*.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Exchange Forces:

### Case 2: Identical particles.

The *interesting* case is when the overlap integral is *not* zero.

The system behaves as though there were:

a “**force of attraction**” between identical bosons, **pulling them closer together**, and

a “**force of repulsion**” between identical fermions, **pushing them apart**.

We call it an **exchange force**, although it’s not really a force at all—no physical agency is pushing on the particles. **What is it then?**

It is a purely *geometrical* consequence of the symmetrisation requirement. It is also a strictly quantum mechanical phenomenon, with no classical counterpart.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Spin:

The *complete* state of an electron (say) includes not only its position wave function, but also a **spinor**, describing the orientation of its **spin**:

$$\psi(\mathbf{r})\chi.$$

In the absence of coupling between spin and position, we are free to assume that the state is *separable* in its spin and spatial coordinates.

The probability of getting spin up is independent of the *location* of the particle.

In the presence of coupling, the general state would take the form of a linear combination:

$$\psi_+(\mathbf{r})\chi_+ + \psi_-(\mathbf{r})\chi_-.$$

The two-particle state is:

$$\psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)\chi(1, 2)$$

Where  $\chi(1,2)$  stand for the combined spin state. in Dirac notation it is some linear combination of the states  $|s_1 s_2 m_1 m_2\rangle$ . We assume that the state is again a simple product of a position state and a spin state.



# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Spin:

The two-particle state is:

$$\psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)\chi(1, 2)$$

And it has to be antisymmetric with respect to exchange:

$$\psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2)\chi(1, 2) = -\psi(\mathbf{r}_2, \mathbf{r}_1)\chi(2, 1).$$

Thus, the Pauli principle actually allows *two* electrons in a given position state, as long as their spins are in the singlet configuration (but they could not be in the same position state *and* in the same spin state—say, both spin up).

$$\left\{ |0\ 0\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} (|\uparrow\downarrow\rangle - |\downarrow\uparrow\rangle) \right\} \quad s = 0 \text{ (singlet)}$$

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} |1\ 1\rangle = |\uparrow\uparrow\rangle \\ |1\ 0\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} (|\uparrow\downarrow\rangle + |\downarrow\uparrow\rangle) \\ |1\ -1\rangle = |\downarrow\downarrow\rangle \end{array} \right\} \quad s = 1 \text{ (triplet)}$$

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Generalised Symmetrisation Principle

For the sake of simplicity, we have assumed that:

- the particles are noninteracting,
- the spin and position are decoupled (with the combined state a product of position and spin factors), and
- the potential is time-independent.

But the fundamental symmetrisation/antisymmetrisation requirement for identical bosons/fermions is much more general.

Let us define the **exchange operator**,  $\hat{P}$ , which interchanges the two particles:

$$\hat{P} |(1, 2)\rangle = |(2, 1)\rangle.$$

$\hat{P}$  switches the particles ( $1 \leftrightarrow 2$ ), exchanging their positions, their spins, and any other properties they might possess.

Here,  $\hat{P}^2 = 1$ , and the eigenvalues of  $\hat{P}$  are  $\pm 1$ . If the two particles are identical, the Hamiltonian must treat them the same:

$$m_1 = m_2 \text{ and } V(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, t) = V(\mathbf{r}_2, \mathbf{r}_1, t).$$

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Generalised Symmetrisation Principle

It follows that  $\hat{P}$  and  $\hat{H}$  are compatible observables,  $[\hat{P}, \hat{H}] = 0$ ,

and hence:  $\frac{d\langle\hat{P}\rangle}{dt} = 0$ .

If the system starts out in an eigenstate of  $\hat{P}$ , **symmetric**  $\langle\hat{P}\rangle = 1$  or **antisymmetric**  $\langle\hat{P}\rangle = -1$ , it will stay that way forever.

The **symmetrisation axiom** says that for identical particles the state is not merely *allowed*, but *required* to satisfy:

$$|(1, 2)\rangle = \pm |(2, 1)\rangle,$$

with the plus sign for bosons, and the minus sign for fermions.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Generalised Symmetrisation Principle

If you have  $n$  identical particles, of course, the state must be symmetric or antisymmetric under the interchange of *any two*:

$$|(1, 2, \dots, i, \dots, j, \dots, n)\rangle = \pm |(1, 2, \dots, j, \dots, i, \dots, n)\rangle,$$

This is the **generalised symmetrisation principle**, of which the following equation is a special case.

$$\psi_{\pm}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = A [\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_b(\mathbf{r}_2) \pm \psi_b(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_a(\mathbf{r}_2)]$$

It is perfectly possible to imagine a system of two **distinguishable particles** (say, an electron and a positron) for which the Hamiltonian is symmetric, and yet there is no requirement that the state be symmetric (or antisymmetric).

**Identical particles** have to occupy symmetric or antisymmetric states, and this is a *new fundamental law*—on a par, logically, with Schrödinger's equation and the statistical interpretation.

Quantum mechanics allows for the *possibility* of identical particles.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Atoms:

A neutral atom, of atomic number  $Z$ , consists of a heavy (assumed stationary) nucleus, with electric charge  $Ze$ , surrounded by  $Z$  electrons (mass  $m$  and charge  $-e$ ).

The Hamiltonian for this system is:

$$\hat{H} = \sum_{j=1}^Z \left\{ -\frac{\hbar^2}{2m} \nabla_j^2 - \left( \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \right) \frac{Ze^2}{r_j} \right\} + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \right) \sum_{j \neq k}^Z \frac{e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_j - \mathbf{r}_k|}$$

The term in curly brackets represents the kinetic plus potential energy of the  $j$ th electron, in the electric field of the nucleus.

The second sum (which runs over all values of  $j$  and  $k$  except  $j = k$ ) is the potential energy associated with the mutual repulsion of the electrons (the factor of  $1/2$  in front corrects for the fact that the summation counts each pair twice).

The problem is to solve Schrödinger's equation for the wave function  $\psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, \dots, \mathbf{r}_Z)$ :

$$\hat{H}\psi = E\psi,$$

This cannot be solved exactly, except for the very simplest case,  $Z = 1$  (hydrogen). We must resort to elaborate approximation methods (you will study them in QM II).

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Helium:

After hydrogen, the simplest atom is helium ( $Z = 2$ ).

The Hamiltonian consists of two hydrogenic Hamiltonians (with nuclear charge  $2e$ ), one for electron 1 and one for electron 2, together with a final term describing the repulsion of the two electrons.

$$\hat{H} = \left\{ -\frac{\hbar^2}{2m} \nabla_1^2 - \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{2e^2}{r_1} \right\} + \left\{ -\frac{\hbar^2}{2m} \nabla_2^2 - \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{2e^2}{r_2} \right\} + \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_1 - \mathbf{r}_2|},$$

It is this last term that causes all the trouble.

If we simply *ignore* it, the Schrödinger equation separates, and the solutions can be written as products of *hydrogen* wave functions:

$$\psi(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = \psi_{n\ell m}(\mathbf{r}_1) \psi_{n'\ell' m'}(\mathbf{r}_2),$$

only with half the Bohr radius and four times the Bohr energies.

The total energy would be:

$$E = 4(E_n + E_{n'}),$$

where:  $E_n = -13.6/n^2$  eV.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Helium:

The ground state would be:

$$\psi_0(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2) = \psi_{100}(\mathbf{r}_1)\psi_{100}(\mathbf{r}_2) = \frac{8}{\pi a^3} e^{-2(r_1+r_2)/a},$$

and its energy would be:

$$E_0 = 8 (-13.6 \text{ eV}) = -109 \text{ eV}.$$

Because  $\psi_0$  is a symmetric function, the spin state has to be *antisymmetric*, so the ground state of helium should be a *singlet* configuration, with the spins “oppositely aligned.”

The *actual* ground state of helium is indeed a singlet, but the experimentally determined energy is  $-78.975 \text{ eV}$ , so the agreement is not very good as we ignored electron–electron repulsion, which is certainly *not* a small contribution.

The excited states of helium consist of one electron in the hydrogenic ground state, and the other in an excited state:

$$\psi_{n\ell m} \psi_{100}$$

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Helium:

If we try to put *both* electrons in excited states, one immediately drops to the ground state, releasing enough energy to knock the other one into the continuum ( $E > 0$ ), leaving you with a helium *ion* ( $\text{He}^+$ ) and a free electron.

We can construct both symmetric and antisymmetric combinations. The former go with the *antisymmetric* spin configuration (the singlet)—they are called **parahelium**—while the latter require a *symmetric* spin configuration (the triplet)—they are known as **orthohelium**.

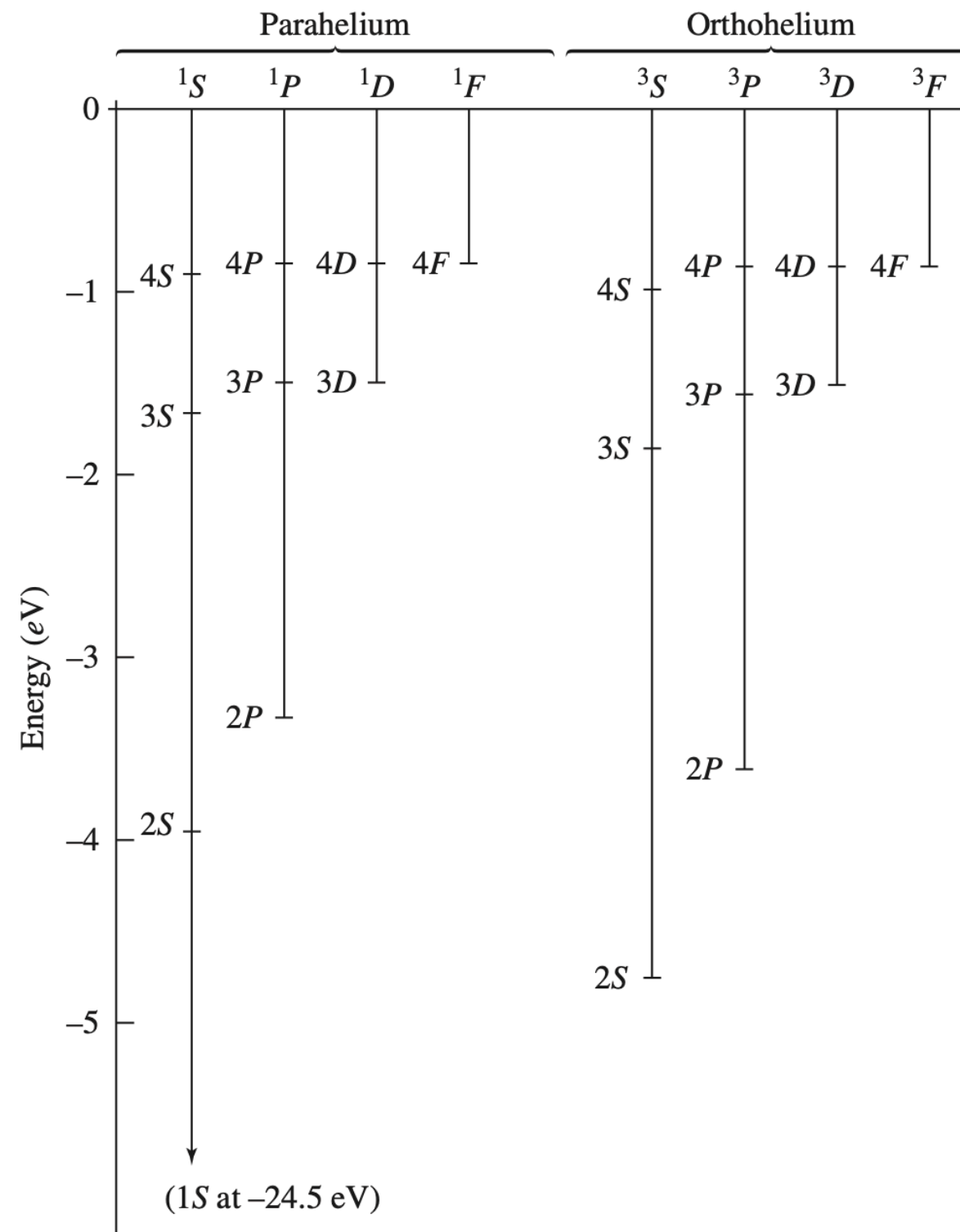
**The ground state is necessarily parahelium; the excited states come in both forms.**

Because the symmetric spatial state brings the electrons closer together, we expect a higher interaction energy in parahelium, and indeed, it is experimentally confirmed that the parahelium states have somewhat higher energy than their orthohelium counterparts.



# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## Helium:



**Figure 5.1:** Energy level diagram for helium (the notation is explained in Section 5.2.2). Note that parahelium energies are uniformly higher than their orthohelium counterparts. The numerical values on the vertical scale are relative to the ground state of ionized helium ( $\text{He}^+$ ):  $4 \times (-13.6) \text{ eV} = -54.4 \text{ eV}$ ; to get the *total* energy of the state, subtract 54.4 eV.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## The Periodic Table:

The ground state electron configurations for heavier atoms can be pieced together in much the same way.

To first approximation (ignoring their mutual repulsion altogether) the individual electrons occupy one-particle hydrogenic states  $(n, l, m)$ , called **orbitals**, in the Coulomb potential of a nucleus with charge  $Ze$ .

If electrons were bosons (or distinguishable particles) they would all shake down to the ground state  $(1, 0, 0)$ , but electrons are in fact identical fermions, subject to the Pauli exclusion principle, so only *two* can occupy any given orbital (one with spin up, and one with spin down—or, more precisely, in the singlet configuration).

There are  $n^2$  hydrogenic wave functions (all with the same energy  $E_n$ ) for a given value of  $n$ , so the  $n = 1$  **shell** has room for two electrons, the  $n = 2$  shell holds eight,  $n = 3$  takes 18, and in general the  $n$ th shell can accommodate  $2n^2$  electrons.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## The Periodic Table:

Qualitatively, the horizontal rows on the **Periodic Table** correspond to filling out each shell (if this were the whole story, they would have lengths 2, 8, 18, 32, 50, etc., instead of 2, 8, 8, 18, 18, etc.; we'll see in a moment how the electron–electron repulsion throws the counting off).

Group Period	→ 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1	1 H																	2 He
2	3 Li	4 Be											5 B	6 C	7 N	8 O	9 F	10 Ne
3	11 Na	12 Mg											13 Al	14 Si	15 P	16 S	17 Cl	18 Ar
4	19 K	20 Ca	21 Sc	22 Ti	23 V	24 Cr	25 Mn	26 Fe	27 Co	28 Ni	29 Cu	30 Zn	31 Ga	32 Ge	33 As	34 Se	35 Br	36 Kr
5	37 Rb	38 Sr	39 Y	40 Zr	41 Nb	42 Mo	43 Tc	44 Ru	45 Rh	46 Pd	47 Ag	48 Cd	49 In	50 Sn	51 Sb	52 Te	53 I	54 Xe
6	55 Cs	56 Ba	* 71 Lu	72 Hf	73 Ta	74 W	75 Re	76 Os	77 Ir	78 Pt	79 Au	80 Hg	81 Tl	82 Pb	83 Bi	84 Po	85 At	86 Rn
7	87 Fr	88 Ra	* 103 Lr	104 Rf	105 Db	106 Sg	107 Bh	108 Hs	109 Mt	110 Ds	111 Rg	112 Cn	113 Nh	114 Fl	115 Mc	116 Lv	117 Ts	118 Og
			* 57 La	58 Ce	59 Pr	60 Nd	61 Pm	62 Sm	63 Eu	64 Gd	65 Tb	66 Dy	67 Ho	68 Er	69 Tm	70 Yb		
			* 89 Ac	90 Th	91 Pa	92 U	93 Np	94 Pu	95 Am	96 Cm	97 Bk	98 Cf	99 Es	100 Fm	101 Md	102 No		

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## The Periodic Table:

With helium, the  $n = 1$  shell is filled, so the next atom, lithium ( $Z = 3$ ), has to put one electron into the  $n = 2$  shell. Now, for  $n = 2$  we can have  $\ell = 0$  or  $\ell = 1$ ; which of these will the third electron choose?

In the absence of electron–electron interactions, they have the same energy (the Bohr energies depend on  $n$ , remember, but not on  $\ell$ ). But the effect of electron repulsion is to favor the lowest value of  $\ell$ , for the following reason.

Angular momentum tends to throw the electron outward, and the farther out it gets, the more effectively the inner electrons **screen** the nucleus (roughly speaking, the innermost electron “sees” the full nuclear charge  $Ze$ , but the outermost electron sees an effective charge hardly greater than  $e$ ).

Within a given shell, therefore, the state with lowest energy (which is to say, the most tightly bound electron) is  $\ell = 0$ , and the energy increases with increasing  $\ell$ . Thus the third electron in lithium occupies the orbital (2,0,0). The next atom (beryllium, with  $Z = 4$ ) also fits into this state (only with “opposite spin”), but boron ( $Z = 5$ ) has to make use of  $\ell = 1$ .

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## The Periodic Table:

For reasons known best to nineteenth-century spectroscopists:

$\ell = 0$  is called *s* (for “sharp”)

$\ell = 1$  is *p* (for “principal”),

$\ell = 2$  is *d* (“diffuse”),

$\ell = 3$  is *f* (“fundamental”).

It continues alphabetically (*g, h, i*, skip *j, k, l*, etc.)

The state of a particular electron is represented by the pair  $n\ell$ , with  $n$  (the number) giving the shell, and  $\ell$  (the letter) specifying the orbital angular momentum.

The magnetic quantum number  $m$  is not listed, but an exponent is used to indicate the number of electrons that occupy the state in question. Thus the configuration:

$$(1s)^2 (2s)^2 (2p)^2$$

There are two electrons in the orbital (1,0,0), two in the orbital (2,0,0), and two in some combination of the orbitals (2,1,1), (2,1,0), and (2,1,-1). This happens to be the ground state of carbon.

# IDENTICAL PARTICLES

## The Periodic Table:

The carbon configuration:  $(1s)^2 (2s)^2 (2p)^2$

There are two electrons in the orbital (1,0,0), two in the orbital (2,0,0), and two in some combination of the orbitals (2,1,1), (2,1,0), and (2,1,-1). This happens to be the ground state of carbon.

There exist rituals, known as **Hund's Rules** for figuring out what *total* orbital angular momentum quantum number,  $L$ , the *total* spin quantum number  $S$ , and the *grand* total (orbital plus spin),  $J$ , will be, for a particular atom.

The result is recorded as the following:

$$^{2S+1}L_J,$$

The ground state of carbon happens to be  $^3P_0$ : the total spin is 1 (hence the 3), the total orbital angular momentum is 1 (hence the  $P$ ), and the *grand* total angular momentum is zero (hence the 0).