

# The Boussinesq Approximation

**Definition of buoyancy:** Buoyancy is the reduced gravity acceleration acting on a fluid parcel.

$$b = \frac{\rho - \rho_0}{\rho_0} g \approx \frac{T - T_0}{T_0} g \quad (\text{note that } T_0 \text{ must be expressed in Kelvin!})$$

$\rho(z)$  is density of the parcel of fluid at location  $z$ ;  $\rho_h(z)$  is the density of surrounding at height  $z$ ;  $\rho_0$  is a suitable reference density (eg.  $\rho_0 = \rho_h(z=0)$  is often used)

## Emptying Boxes (Simple case)

replenish source modelled as  $F$  (if there's any), no stratification

### Part 1: What Drives a flow?

#### 1. Temperature Difference creates Density Differences (Boussinesq)

According to the eqn of state (or known as The Boussinesq Approx.), fluid density depends on temperature:

$$b = \frac{\rho_0 - \rho}{\rho_0} g \approx \frac{T - T_0}{T_0} g \quad (\text{taking reference } \rho_0 \text{ and } T_0 \text{ as equal to surrounding})$$

$$\rho = \rho_0 - \rho_0 \left( \frac{T - T_0}{T_0} \right) \rightarrow \rho = \rho_0 (1 - \beta(T - T_0)) \rightarrow \text{hotter fluid } (T > T_0) \text{ is lighter } (\rho < \rho_0)$$

#### 2. Density Differences create Hydrostatic Pressure Differences. (Hydrostatic)

When the fluid is at rest (but not necessarily in equilibrium), pressure is determined by the height of fluid column above it.

$$\frac{dp}{dz} = -\rho g \quad \begin{cases} \text{high density: pressure decreases rapidly with height} \\ \text{low density: pressure decreases slowly with height.} \end{cases}$$

(if question starts by asking how temp. diff. drives flow?)

$$\frac{dp}{dz} = -\rho_0 g + \frac{\rho_0}{T_0} (T - T_0) g \rightarrow \text{pressure changes is proportional to } T - T_0$$

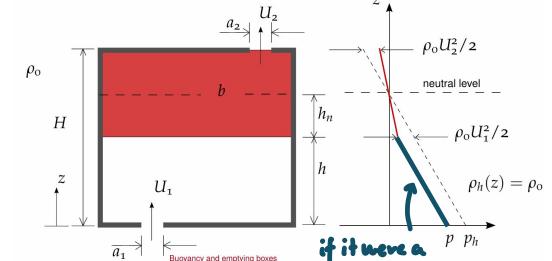
Because pressure drops at different rates outside and inside (or left and right), a pressure difference ( $\Delta p$ ) develops between it at any given height (except at neutral level)

#### 3. Pressure differences drives flow. (Bernoulli)

Fluids move from areas of high pressure to area of low pressure. The magnitude of this pressure difference determines the velocity of the air through the opening.

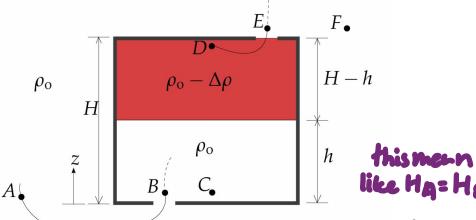
$$\Delta p = \frac{1}{2} \rho U^2 \rightarrow \text{potential energy (pressure) converts into kinetic energy (velocity)}$$

### Part 2: Sketch the Pressure Distribution.



if it were a left room right room qm, this line's gradient (p) can be different from surrounding ( $\rho_0$ )

### Part 3: Calculate Flow Rate (Q)



$$\text{Bernoulli's: } \rho_0 \frac{U^2}{2} + p + \int_0^z \rho(x) g dz = \text{constant}$$

kinetic pressure potential

1. A-B, D-E:  $\rho_0 \frac{U^2}{2} + p = \text{constant}$  ( $\rho_0$  constant  $\rightarrow$  same height)
2. C-D:  $p + \int_0^z \rho(x) g dz = \text{constant}$  ( $\rho_0$  constant  $\rightarrow U=0$  is the box)

3. B-C doesn't follow bernoulli's as there is energy lost (due to vena contracta). Hence:  
B-C:  $p = \text{constant}$  (pressure balance assumption)

By solving all these equations, we get the formula:

$$Q = A^* \sqrt{2b(H-h)}, A^* = \sqrt{\frac{a_1^2 a_2^2}{a_1^2 + a_2^2}}$$

$F$  (buoyancy flux) =  $Qb$

for one opening (well-mixed box):  

$$Q = \frac{k}{3} w \sqrt{bd^3} \quad \begin{cases} k \approx 0.5 \text{ vertical opening} \\ k \approx 0.25 \text{ horizontal opening.} \end{cases}$$

### Part 4: Transient vs Steady State.

no sources replenishing the 'heated' layer  
there's a replenishing source of buoyancy.  
Replenish =  $F_{\text{out}} = Qb$

#### 1. Transient: How long to empty the box?

$$\frac{dh}{dt} = \frac{Q(t)}{S}, \quad \frac{db}{dt} = -\frac{b(t) \cdot Q(t)}{V}$$

solution:  

$$\frac{h}{H} = 1 - \left(1 - \frac{t}{t_e}\right)^b, \quad t_e = \left(\frac{2S}{A^*}\right) \left(\frac{H}{2b}\right)^{1/b}$$

2. Steady:  $F_{\text{replenish}} = F_{\text{out}} = Qb$  ( $F, Q, b$  given, find the other 2)

$$F = Qb, \quad Q = A^* \sqrt{2b(H-h)} \quad \begin{cases} F = Qb \\ Q = \frac{k}{3} w \sqrt{bd^3} \end{cases} \quad \text{solve simultaneously.}$$

e.g. if given  $F$ , solve for  $Q$  and  $b$ : (treat  $F$  as a constant)

$$Q = (2A^* \cdot F)^{1/3}$$

$$b = \left(\frac{F^2}{2A^* \cdot H}\right)^{1/3}$$

## ACTIVE SCALAR

| Source condition                | Continuous (in time)            | Discontinuous (in time) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Momentum flux                   | Jet                             | Puff                    |
| Buoyancy flux                   | Lazy $\rightarrow$ pure plume   | Thermal                 |
| Momentum flux and buoyancy flux | Forced $\rightarrow$ pure plume | Buoyant puff            |

Introduction to Dimensional Analysis.  
using thermal as example (cause it is simple)

Every phenomenon has a driver and obey conservation laws.  
For thermal, the driver is the discontinuous source of buoyancy flux,  $F_0$

And total buoyancy,  $B = bV$  is conserved.  
(even though  $b(t)$  and  $V(t)$  changes with time)

Question: How  $R(t)$ ,  $b(t)$ , and  $z(t)$  changes with time?

$$[R] = L, [b] = LT^{-2}, [B] = L^4 T^{-2}, [t] = T$$

$$\rightarrow R(t) \sim B^{1/4} t^{1/2}, b(t) \sim B^{1/4} t^{-3/2}, z \sim B^{1/4} t^{1/2} \quad (\text{and if wind blow horizontally: } x \sim t, z \sim \sqrt{t})$$

### Turbulent Jets vs Plumes

#### Part I: Turbulent Jets vs. Turbulent Plumes.

\* characteristic quantity:

$$W_m = \frac{M}{Q}, r_m = \sqrt{\frac{Q}{M}}, b_m = \frac{F}{Q} \quad (\text{plumes only})$$

### Turbulent Jets

#### 1. Driver

A continuous source of momentum ( $M_0$ ) with zero buoyancy ( $b=0$ )

#### 2. Physics

Driven by inertia (initial kick)  
Scale with Momentum flux ( $M$ )

#### 3. Conservation Laws

Volume flux INCREASED ( $\frac{dQ}{dz} > 0$ ) due to entrainment.

Momentum flux CONSERVED ( $\frac{dm}{dz} = 0$ ). No external forces acting on it.

Buoyancy Flux ( $F$ ) is zero. No buoyancy ( $b=0$ )

(everything that is not conserved can be found as a function of time by using dimensional analysis)

### Part 2: Dimensional Analysis

#### Turbulent Jets cause $M_0$ is constant

The only quantity that are known:  $[M] = L^4 T^{-2}, [z] = L$

we can hence solve for:

1. Volume flux,  $Q$ :  $[Q] = [M]^{1/2} [z]^{1/2} \rightarrow Q \propto M_0^{1/2} z$
2. Velocity,  $W_m$ :  $[w] = [M]^{1/2} [z]^{-1} \rightarrow W_m \propto M_0^{1/2} z^{-1}$
3. Radius,  $r_m$ :  $[r] = [Q] [M]^{-1/2} \rightarrow r_m \propto z$

(although  $W_m, r_m, b_m$  can be found using dimensional analysis,  
in exam it is more practical to calculate  $Q$  (and  $M$  for plume) and then use characteristic eqn.)

(Note that if it is planar jets/plume:  $Q, M, F$  are all per unit length, e.g.  $[Q] = L^2 T^{-1}$ )

#### Turbulent Plumes cause $F_0$ is constant

The only quantity that are known:  $[F] = L^4 T^{-3}, [z] = L$

we can hence solve for:

1. Volume flux:  $[Q] = [F]^{1/3} [z]^{5/3} \rightarrow Q \propto F_0^{1/3} z^{5/3}$
2. Momentum flux:  $[M] = [F]^{2/3} [z]^{4/3} \rightarrow M \propto F_0^{2/3} z^{4/3}$
3. Velocity,  $W_m$ :  $[w] = [F]^{1/3} [z]^{-1/3} \rightarrow W_m \propto F_0^{1/3} z^{-1/3}$
4. Buoyancy,  $b_m$ :  $[b] = [F]^{2/3} [z]^{-5/3} \rightarrow b_m \propto F_0^{2/3} z^{-5/3}$

$$\frac{dU}{dt} = Q_{\text{plume}}(h) - Q_{\text{out}} \quad \frac{d(bV)}{dt} = F_{\text{source}} - Q_{\text{out}} \cdot b$$

### Part 3: Emptying Filling Box (turbulent plume sources)

#### 1. One isolated point source of buoyancy (Turbulent Plume)

$$\frac{dV}{dt} = \frac{CF^{1/3} h^{5/3}}{Q_{\text{plume}}(h)} - \frac{A^* \sqrt{2b(H-h)}}{Q_{\text{out}}} = 0$$

STEADY STATE

$$\frac{d(bV)}{dt} = \frac{F - b A^* \sqrt{2b(H-h)}}{Q_{\text{source}} Q_{\text{out}} \cdot b} = 0$$

Fsource      Qout      b

Trying to solve for: What gives steady-state?

Unknown:  $F, b, A^*, h, H$  ( $A^*$  and  $H$  are constants)

$\rightarrow 3 \text{ unknowns, 2 eqns...}$

$\rightarrow$  remember characteristic eqn:  $b = \frac{F}{Q} = \frac{F}{Q_{\text{plume}}} = \frac{F}{CF^{1/3} h^{5/3}} = \frac{F^{2/3}}{Ch^{5/3}}$

$$\text{solution: } \frac{\sqrt{2} A^*}{H^2 c^{5/3}} = \left(\frac{F}{1-s}\right)^{1/2} \quad (\text{use numerical method}) \quad (A^* T, S \uparrow)$$

#### 2. Multiple equal isolated point source

Single turbulent plume:  $Q \propto F^{1/3}$   
n small turbulent plume:  $Q \propto n \left(\frac{F}{n}\right)^{1/3}$   
(total buoyancy flux still equal to  $F$ )

$$\text{solution: } \frac{\sqrt{2} A^*}{n^2 c^{5/3}} = \left(\frac{F}{1-s}\right)^{1/2} \quad \text{any power that's because } Q_{\text{out}} \propto (A^*)^{2/3}$$

$\therefore n^{2/3} \propto (A^*)^{2/3}$

3. Multiple unequal isolated point source

$Q = A^* \sqrt{2b(h_1 - h_2) + 2b_2(H - h_2)}$

can be used even if no turbulent plume point source  
e.g. transient state emptying box replace  $Q$  in  $\frac{dh}{dt}$  with  $\frac{Q}{A^*}$

if it is multiple layer:  
 $Q = A^* \left( \int_0^H b(z) dz \right)^{1/2}$

\* If stratified instead of layers: