

Second midterm FYS4480

Quantum mechanics for many-particle systems

August Femtehjell & Oskar Idland

November 2024

Introduction

We present a simplified Hamiltonian consisting of an unperturbed Hamiltonian and a so-called pairing interaction term. It is a model which to a large extent mimicks some central features of atomic nuclei, certain atoms and systems which exhibit superfluidity or superconductivity. To study this system, we will use a mix of many-body perturbation theory (MBPT), Hartree-Fock (HF) theory and full configuration interaction (FCI) theory. The latter will also provide us with the exact answer. When setting up the Hamiltonian matrix you will need to solve an eigenvalue problem.

We define first the Hamiltonian, with a definition of the model space and the single-particle basis. Thereafter, we present the various exercises.

The Hamiltonian acting in the complete Hilbert space (usually infinite dimensional) consists of an unperturbed one-body part, \hat{H}_0 , and a perturbation \hat{V} . We limit ourselves to at most two-body interactions, our Hamiltonian is then represented by the following operators

$$\hat{H} = \sum_{\alpha\beta} \langle \alpha | h_0 | \beta \rangle a_{\alpha}^{\dagger} a_{\beta} + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{\alpha\beta\gamma\delta} \langle \alpha\beta | V | \gamma\delta \rangle a_{\alpha}^{\dagger} a_{\beta}^{\dagger} a_{\delta} a_{\gamma},$$

where a_{α}^{\dagger} and a_{α} etc. are standard fermion creation and annihilation operators, respectively, and $\alpha\beta\gamma\delta$ represent all possible single-particle quantum numbers. The full single-particle space is defined by the completeness relation $\hat{\mathbf{1}} = \sum_{\alpha=1}^{\infty} |\alpha\rangle\langle\alpha|$. In our calculations we will let the single-particle states $|\alpha\rangle$ be eigenfunctions of the one-particle operator \hat{h}_0 . Note that the two-body part of the Hamiltonian contains anti-symmetrized matrix elements.

The above Hamiltonian acts in turn on various many-body Slater determinants constructed from the single-basis defined by the one-body operator \hat{h}_0 . As an example, the two-particle model space \mathcal{P} is defined by an operator

$$\hat{P} = \sum_{\alpha\beta=1}^m |\alpha\beta\rangle\langle\alpha\beta|,$$

where we assume that $m = \dim(\mathcal{P})$ and the full space is defined by

$$\hat{P} + \hat{Q} = \hat{\mathbf{1}},$$

with the projection operator

$$\hat{Q} = \sum_{\alpha\beta=m+1}^{\infty} |\alpha\beta\rangle\langle\alpha\beta|,$$

being the complement of \hat{P} .

Our specific model consists of N doubly-degenerate and equally spaced single-particle levels labelled by $p = 1, 2, \dots$ and spin $\sigma = \pm 1$. These states are schematically portrayed in Fig. 1. The first two single-particle levels define a possible model space, indicated by the label \mathcal{P} . The remaining states span the excluded space \mathcal{Q} .

We write the Hamiltonian as

$$\hat{H} = \hat{H}_0 + \hat{V},$$

where

$$\hat{H}_0 = \xi \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}$$

and

$$\hat{V} = -\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}.$$

Here, H_0 is the unperturbed Hamiltonian with a spacing between successive single-particle states given by ξ , which we will set to a constant value $\xi = 1$ without loss of generality. The two-body operator \hat{V} has one term only. It represents the pairing contribution and carries a constant strength g .

The indices $\sigma = \pm$ represent the two possible spin values. The interaction can only couple pairs and excites therefore only two particles at the time, as indicated by the rightmost four-particle state in Fig. 1. There one of the pairs is excited to the state with $p = 9$ and the other to the state $p = 7$. The two middle possibilities are not possible with the present model. We label single-particle states within the model space as hole-states. The single-particle states outside the model space are then particle states.

In our model we have kept both the interaction strength and the single-particle level as constants. In a realistic system like an atom or the atomic nucleus this is not the case.

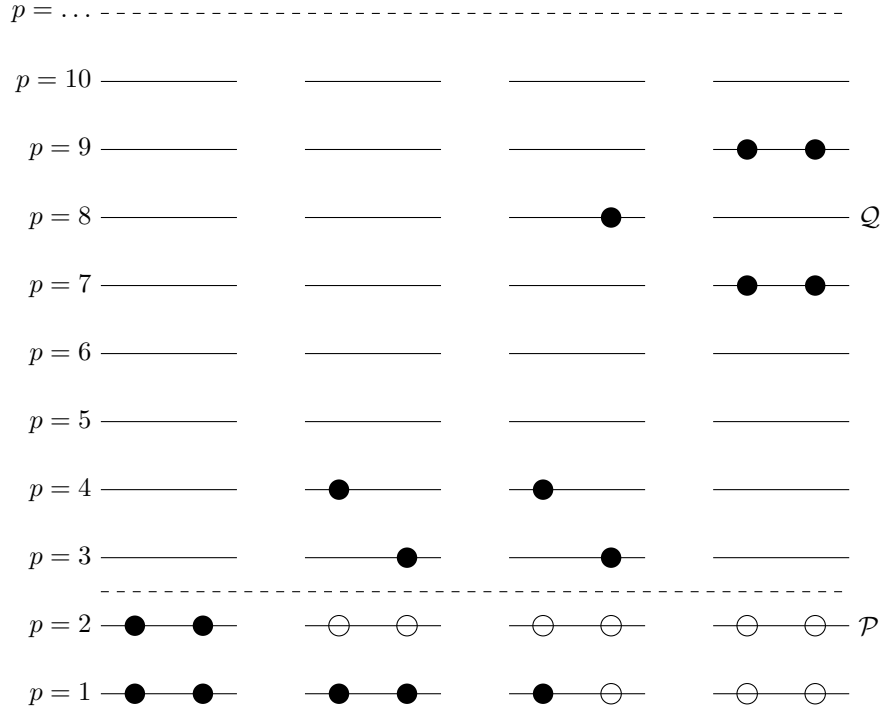


Figure 1: Schematic plot of the possible single-particle levels with double degeneracy. The filled circles indicate occupied particle states while the empty circles represent vacant particle (hole) states. The spacing between each level p is constant in this picture. The first two single-particle levels define our possible model space, indicated by the label \mathcal{P} . The remaining states span the excluded space \mathcal{Q} . The first state to the left represents a possible ground state representation for a four-fermion system. In the second state to the left, one pair is broken. This possibility is however not included in our interaction.

Exercise 1)

Show that the unperturbed Hamiltonian \hat{H}_0 and \hat{V} commute with both the spin projection \hat{S}_z and the total spin \hat{S}^2 , given by

$$\hat{S}_z := \frac{1}{2} \sum_{p\sigma} \sigma a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma} \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{S}^2 := \hat{S}_z^2 + \frac{1}{2}(\hat{S}_+ \hat{S}_- + \hat{S}_- \hat{S}_+),$$

where

$$\hat{S}_\pm := \sum_p a_{p\pm}^\dagger a_{p\mp}.$$

This is an important feature of our system that allows us to block-diagonalize the full Hamiltonian. We will focus on total spin $S = 0$. In this case, it is convenient to define the so-called pair creation and pair annihilation operators

$$\hat{P}_p^+ = a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{P}_p^- = a_{p-} a_{p+},$$

respectively.

Show that you can rewrite the Hamiltonian (with $\xi = 1$) as

$$\hat{H} = \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma} - \frac{1}{2} g \sum_{pq} \hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^-.$$

Show also that pair creation operators commute among themselves.

In this midterm we focus only on a system with no broken pairs. This means that the Hamiltonian can only link two-particle states in so-called spin-reversed states.

Solution

We firstly need to show that the unperturbed Hamiltonian \hat{H}_0 and the two-body operator \hat{V} commute with the spin projection \hat{S}_z . We have, being careful with the summation indices,

$$\begin{aligned} [\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_z] &= \left[\sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}, \frac{1}{2} \sum_{q\tau} \tau a_{q\tau}^\dagger a_{q\tau} \right] \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) \sum_{q\tau} \tau [a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}, a_{q\tau}^\dagger a_{q\tau}] \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) \sum_{q\tau} \tau [\hat{n}_{p\sigma}, \hat{n}_{q\tau}], \end{aligned}$$

where we have defined the number operator $\hat{n}_{p\sigma} = a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}$. As the number operator commutes with itself, we have that $[\hat{n}_{p\sigma}, \hat{n}_{q\tau}] = 0$, and thus $[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_z] = 0$.

Next, we show that the two-body operator \hat{V} commutes with the spin projection \hat{S}_z . We have, again being careful with the summation indices,

$$\begin{aligned} [\hat{V}, \hat{S}_z] &= \left[-\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, \frac{1}{2} \sum_{r\sigma} \sigma a_{r\sigma}^\dagger a_{r\sigma} \right] \\ &= -\frac{1}{4}g \sum_{pqr\sigma} \sigma \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r\sigma}^\dagger a_{r\sigma} \right] \\ &= -\frac{1}{4}g \sum_{pqr\sigma} \sigma \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right]. \end{aligned}$$

Using the commutation identity

$$[AB, C] = A[B, C] + [A, C]B,$$

we have

$$\left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right] = a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger \left[a_{q-} a_{q+}, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right] + \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right] a_{q-} a_{q+}, \quad (1)$$

and then need to find expressions for

$$\left[a_{q-} a_{q+}, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right] \quad \text{and} \quad \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right].$$

Changing the indices for brevity in the intermediate steps, we need to find

$$\left[a_p a_q, \hat{n}_r \right] \quad \text{and} \quad \left[a_p^\dagger a_q^\dagger, \hat{n}_r \right],$$

noting that

$$\left[a_p a_q, \hat{n}_r \right] = a_p \left[a_q, \hat{n}_r \right] + \left[a_p, \hat{n}_r \right] a_q.$$

As

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_q, \hat{n}_r \right] &= \left[a_q, a_r^\dagger a_r \right] = \left[a_q, a_r^\dagger \right] a_r + a_r^\dagger \left[a_q, a_r \right] \\ &= \delta_{qr} a_r + a_r^\dagger \cdot 0 = \delta_{qr} a_r = a_q, \end{aligned}$$

We have

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_p a_q, \hat{n}_r \right] &= a_p \left[a_q, \hat{n}_r \right] + \left[a_p, \hat{n}_r \right] a_q \\ &= a_p a_q + a_p a_q = 2a_p a_q. \end{aligned}$$

Similarly, for the creation operators, we have

$$\left[a_p^\dagger, \hat{n}_r \right] = \left[a_p^\dagger, a_r^\dagger a_r \right] = \left[a_p^\dagger, a_r^\dagger \right] a_r + a_r^\dagger \left[a_p^\dagger, a_r \right] = -\delta_{pr} a_r^\dagger = -a_p^\dagger,$$

and thus

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_p^\dagger a_q^\dagger, \hat{n}_r \right] &= a_p^\dagger \left[a_q^\dagger, \hat{n}_r \right] + \left[a_p^\dagger, \hat{n}_r \right] a_q^\dagger \\ &= -a_p^\dagger a_q^\dagger - a_p^\dagger a_q^\dagger = -2a_p^\dagger a_q^\dagger. \end{aligned}$$

Returning to Eq. (1) with the correct labels, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right] &= a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger \left[a_{q-} a_{q+}, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right] + \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right] a_{q-} a_{q+} \\
&= 2a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+} - 2a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+} \\
&= 0,
\end{aligned}$$

meaning that

$$\left[\hat{V}, \hat{S}_z \right] = -\frac{1}{4}g \sum_{pq r \sigma} \sigma \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, \hat{n}_{r\sigma} \right] = 0.$$

We have thus shown that the unperturbed Hamiltonian \hat{H}_0 and the two-body operator \hat{V} commute with the spin projection \hat{S}_z .

Next, we want to show the commutations of \hat{H}_0 and \hat{V} with the total spin \hat{S}^2 . Starting with \hat{H}_0 , we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}^2 \right] &= \left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_z^2 + \frac{1}{2}(\hat{S}_+ \hat{S}_- + \hat{S}_- \hat{S}_+) \right] \\
&= \left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_z^2 \right] + \left[\hat{H}_0, \frac{1}{2}(\hat{S}_+ \hat{S}_- + \hat{S}_- \hat{S}_+) \right].
\end{aligned}$$

As we have shown that \hat{H}_0 commutes with \hat{S}_z , we also have $\left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_z^2 \right] = 0$, and thus only need to place our attention on

$$\left[\hat{H}_0, \frac{1}{2}(\hat{S}_+ \hat{S}_- + \hat{S}_- \hat{S}_+) \right] = \frac{1}{2} \left(\left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_+ \hat{S}_- \right] + \left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_- \hat{S}_+ \right] \right).$$

We will only show the commutation of \hat{H}_0 with $\hat{S}_+ \hat{S}_-$, as the other commutation is analogous. Breaking the expression down further, we have

$$\left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_\pm \hat{S}_\mp \right] = \left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_\pm \right] \hat{S}_\mp + \hat{S}_\pm \left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_\mp \right].$$

We then have

$$\begin{aligned}
\left[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_\pm \right] &= \left[\sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}, \sum_q a_{q\pm}^\dagger a_{q\mp} \right] \\
&= \sum_{pq\sigma} (p-1) \left[a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}, a_{q\pm}^\dagger a_{q\mp} \right].
\end{aligned}$$

Considering the commutation, using the number operator, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\left[\hat{n}_{p\sigma}, a_{q\pm}^\dagger a_{q\mp} \right] &= a_{q\pm}^\dagger \left[\hat{n}_{p\sigma}, a_{q\mp} \right] + \left[\hat{n}_{p\sigma}, a_{q\pm}^\dagger \right] a_{q\mp} \\
&= -a_{q\pm}^\dagger a_{q\mp} + a_{q\pm}^\dagger a_{q\mp} = 0,
\end{aligned}$$

and thus

$$[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}_\pm] = 0.$$

We have thus shown that $[\hat{H}_0, \hat{S}^2] = 0$.

Next, we show that \hat{V} commutes with \hat{S}^2 . We have

$$\begin{aligned} [\hat{V}, \hat{S}^2] &= \left[-\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, \hat{S}_z^2 + \frac{1}{2}(\hat{S}_+ \hat{S}_- + \hat{S}_- \hat{S}_+) \right] \\ &= [\hat{V}, \hat{S}_z^2] + \left[\hat{V}, \frac{1}{2}(\hat{S}_+ \hat{S}_- + \hat{S}_- \hat{S}_+) \right]. \end{aligned}$$

Again, as we've already shown that \hat{V} commutes with \hat{S}_z , we only need to consider the commutation with $\hat{S}_\pm \hat{S}_\mp$. We analogously again have

$$[\hat{V}, \hat{S}_\pm \hat{S}_\mp] = [\hat{V}, \hat{S}_\pm] \hat{S}_\mp + \hat{S}_\pm [\hat{V}, \hat{S}_\mp],$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} [\hat{V}, \hat{S}_\pm] &= \left[-\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, \sum_r a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] \\ &= -\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pqr} \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right]. \end{aligned}$$

Breaking the expression down further, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] &= a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger \left[a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] \\ &\quad + \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] a_{q-} a_{q+}. \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

Considering the two contractions separately, starting with the first one:

$$\left[a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] = a_{q-} \left[a_{q+}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] + \left[a_{q-}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] a_{q+}.$$

These expressions follow the same pattern, so we only consider $q\pm \mapsto q$.

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_q, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] &= \left[a_q, a_{r\pm}^\dagger \right] a_{r\mp} + a_{r\pm}^\dagger \left[a_q, a_{r\mp} \right] \\ &= \delta_{q,r\pm} a_{r\mp} + a_{r\pm}^\dagger \cdot 0 = \delta_{q,r\pm} a_{r\mp}. \end{aligned}$$

We thus only get a contribution when $q = r$ and the spin parities match. We then have

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] &= a_{q-} \left[a_{q+}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] + \left[a_{q-}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] a_{q+} \\ &= a_{q-} \delta_{q+,r\pm} a_{r\mp} + \delta_{q-,r\pm} a_{r\mp} a_{q+} \\ &= \delta_{q+,r\pm} a_{q-} a_{r\mp} - \delta_{q-,r\pm} a_{q+} a_{r\mp} \end{aligned}$$

Continuing with the second contraction, we have

$$\left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] = a_{p+}^\dagger \left[a_{p-}^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] + \left[a_{p+}^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] a_{p-}^\dagger,$$

which again follow the same pattern. Writing $p\pm \mapsto p$ we have

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_p^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] &= \left[a_p^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger \right] a_{r\mp} + a_{r\pm}^\dagger \left[a_p^\dagger, a_{r\mp} \right] \\ &= 0 \cdot a_{r\mp} - a_{r\pm}^\dagger \delta_{p,r\mp} = -a_{r\pm}^\dagger \delta_{p,r\mp}. \end{aligned}$$

Inserting the expressions back into the commutator, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] &= a_{p+}^\dagger \left[a_{p-}^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] + \left[a_{p+}^\dagger, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] a_{p-}^\dagger \\ &= -a_{p+}^\dagger a_{r\pm}^\dagger \delta_{p-,r\mp} - a_{r\pm}^\dagger \delta_{p+,r\mp} a_{p-}^\dagger \\ &= -\delta_{p-,r\mp} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{r\pm}^\dagger + \delta_{p+,r\mp} a_{p-}^\dagger a_{r\pm}^\dagger. \end{aligned}$$

As the results are getting quite wily, we summarize the different cases of spin parities in the commutator.

$$\begin{aligned} \left[a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r+}^\dagger a_{r-} \right] &= \delta_{q+,r+} a_{q-} a_{r-} = 0 \\ \left[a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r-}^\dagger a_{r+} \right] &= -\delta_{q-,r-} a_{q+} a_{r+} = 0 \\ \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, a_{r+}^\dagger a_{r-} \right] &= -\delta_{p-,r-} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{r+}^\dagger = 0 \\ \left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, a_{r-}^\dagger a_{r+} \right] &= \delta_{p+,r+} a_{p-}^\dagger a_{r-}^\dagger = 0. \end{aligned}$$

We thus have that that Eq. (2) simplifies to

$$\left[a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}, a_{r\pm}^\dagger a_{r\mp} \right] = 0,$$

which means that $[\hat{V}, \hat{S}_\pm] = 0$, giving us that

$$[\hat{V}, \hat{S}^2] = 0.$$

We have thus shown that both \hat{H}_0 and \hat{V} commute with the total spin \hat{S}^2 .

With $\xi = 1$, the one-body operator \hat{H}_0 is defined as

$$\hat{H}_0 = \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}.$$

For the two-body operator \hat{V} , we have, substituting $\hat{P}_p^+ = a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger$ and $\hat{P}_q^- = a_{q-} a_{q+}$,

$$\hat{V} = -\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} \hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^-.$$

This leaves us with the rewritten Hamiltonian

$$\hat{H} = \hat{H}_0 + \hat{V} = \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma} - \frac{1}{2} g \sum_{pq} \hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^-.$$

Finally, we want to show that the pair creation operators commute among themselves.

$$\begin{aligned} [\hat{P}_p^+, \hat{P}_q^+] &= [a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger, a_{q+}^\dagger a_{q-}^\dagger] \\ &= a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q+}^\dagger a_{q-}^\dagger - a_{q+}^\dagger a_{q-}^\dagger a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger \\ &= a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q+}^\dagger a_{q-}^\dagger - (-1)^2 a_{p+}^\dagger a_{q+}^\dagger a_{q-}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger \\ &= a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q+}^\dagger a_{q-}^\dagger - (-1)^4 a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q+}^\dagger a_{q-}^\dagger \\ &= 0. \end{aligned}$$

Similarly, one can show that the pair annihilation operators also commute among themselves.

Exercise 2)

Construct thereafter the Hamiltonian matrix for a system with no broken pairs and total spin $S = 0$ for the case of the four lowest single-particle levels indicated in the Fig. 1. Our system consists of four particles only. Our single-particle space consists of only the four lowest levels $p = 1, 2, 3, 4$. You need to set up all possible Slater determinants. Find all eigenvalues by diagonalizing the Hamiltonian matrix. Vary your results for values of $g \in [-1, 1]$. We refer to this as the exact calculation. Comment the behavior of the ground state as function of g .

Solution

Due to the requirement of no broken pairs, total spin $S = 0$, and the fact that we have four particles, the number of possible Slater determinants is quite limited. We choose our ansatz $|\Phi_0\rangle$ to be the Slater determinant with all four particles below the Fermi level of $p = 2$. The possible Slater determinants are shown in Fig. 2.

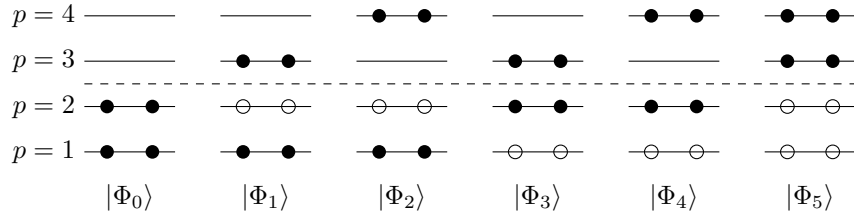


Figure 2: Schematic representation of the six possible Slater determinants for a system with four particles, under the constraint of no broken pairs, total spin $S = 0$, considering only the four lowest levels $p = 1, 2, 3, 4$.

Setting up the Slater determinants in second quantization, we set the ground state to be

$$|\Phi_0\rangle = a_{1+}^\dagger a_{1-}^\dagger a_{2+}^\dagger a_{2-}^\dagger |0\rangle,$$

or equivalently with the pair creation operators

$$|\Phi_0\rangle = \hat{P}_1^+ \hat{P}_2^+ |0\rangle.$$

The other Slater determinants are then

$$\begin{aligned} |\Phi_1\rangle &= \hat{P}_1^+ \hat{P}_3^+ |0\rangle, & |\Phi_2\rangle &= \hat{P}_1^+ \hat{P}_4^+ |0\rangle, \\ |\Phi_3\rangle &= \hat{P}_2^+ \hat{P}_3^+ |0\rangle, & |\Phi_4\rangle &= \hat{P}_2^+ \hat{P}_4^+ |0\rangle, \\ |\Phi_5\rangle &= \hat{P}_3^+ \hat{P}_4^+ |0\rangle. \end{aligned}$$

Equivalently, we can write these relative to the ground state as

$$\begin{aligned} |\Phi_1\rangle &= \hat{P}_3^+ \hat{P}_2^- |\Phi_0\rangle, \\ |\Phi_2\rangle &= \hat{P}_4^+ \hat{P}_2^- |\Phi_0\rangle, & |\Phi_3\rangle &= \hat{P}_3^+ \hat{P}_1^- |\Phi_0\rangle, \\ |\Phi_4\rangle &= \hat{P}_4^+ \hat{P}_1^- |\Phi_0\rangle, & |\Phi_5\rangle &= \hat{P}_4^+ \hat{P}_3^+ \hat{P}_1^- \hat{P}_2^- |\Phi_0\rangle. \end{aligned}$$

Note that as the pair creation and annihilation operators commute, the order of the operators in the Slater determinants is not important.

We define an arbitrary four-particle state $|\Phi\rangle_{\alpha,\beta}$, with $\alpha < \beta$, as

$$|\Phi\rangle_{\alpha,\beta} = \hat{P}_\alpha^+ \hat{P}_\beta^+ |0\rangle$$

in order to simplify the computation for the Hamiltonian matrix. For $\langle \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} | \hat{H}_0 | \Phi_{\gamma,\delta} \rangle$, we only need to consider the terms where $(\alpha, \beta) = (\gamma, \delta)$, as the other terms vanish due to the orthogonality of the Slater determinants.

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} | \hat{H}_0 | \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} \rangle &= \langle \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} | \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma} | \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} \rangle \\ &= \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) \langle \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} | a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma} | \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} \rangle \\ &= \sum_{\substack{p=\alpha,\beta \\ \sigma=\pm}} (p-1) \\ &= 2(\alpha-1) + 2(\beta-1) \\ &= 2(\alpha + \beta - 2). \end{aligned}$$

Next, we consider $\langle \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} | \hat{V} | \Phi_{\gamma,\delta} \rangle$.

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} | \hat{V} | \Phi_{\gamma,\delta} \rangle &= -\frac{1}{2} g \sum_{pq} \langle \Phi_{\alpha,\beta} | \hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^- | \Phi_{\gamma,\delta} \rangle \\ &= -\frac{1}{2} g \sum_{pq} \langle 0 | \hat{P}_\beta^- \hat{P}_\alpha^- \hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^- \hat{P}_\gamma^+ \hat{P}_\delta^+ | 0 \rangle \end{aligned}$$

The possible contractions are then

$$\begin{aligned} (1) \quad & \left\langle 0 \left| \overbrace{\hat{P}_\beta^- \hat{P}_\alpha^-} \overbrace{\hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^-} \overbrace{\hat{P}_\gamma^+ \hat{P}_\delta^+} \right| 0 \right\rangle = \delta_{\beta\delta} \delta_{\alpha p} \delta_{q\gamma} \\ (2) \quad & \left\langle 0 \left| \overbrace{\hat{P}_\beta^- \hat{P}_\alpha^-} \overbrace{\hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^-} \overbrace{\hat{P}_\gamma^+ \hat{P}_\delta^+} \right| 0 \right\rangle = -\delta_{\beta\gamma} \delta_{\alpha p} \delta_{q\delta} \\ (3) \quad & \left\langle 0 \left| \overbrace{\hat{P}_\beta^- \hat{P}_\alpha^-} \overbrace{\hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^-} \overbrace{\hat{P}_\gamma^+ \hat{P}_\delta^+} \right| 0 \right\rangle = \delta_{\beta p} \delta_{\alpha\gamma} \delta_{q\delta} \\ (4) \quad & \left\langle 0 \left| \overbrace{\hat{P}_\beta^- \hat{P}_\alpha^-} \overbrace{\hat{P}_p^+ \hat{P}_q^-} \overbrace{\hat{P}_\gamma^+ \hat{P}_\delta^+} \right| 0 \right\rangle = -\delta_{\beta p} \delta_{\alpha\delta} \delta_{q\gamma} \end{aligned}$$

From this, we can then calculate the matrix elements of the Hamiltonian matrix based on the number of matched pairs. When two pairs match, i.e. along the

diagonal, we get contributions from (1) and (3). When one pair matches and the other differs, we get contributions from *either* (2) or (4). When no pairs match, the matrix element is zero.

From this, we can set up the Hamiltonian matrix for the system, ordered as $|\Phi_0\rangle, |\Phi_1\rangle, \dots, |\Phi_5\rangle$.

$$\begin{aligned}
H &= H_0 + V \\
&= \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 4 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 6 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 6 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 8 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 10 \end{bmatrix} - \frac{g}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 2 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 2 & 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 & 2 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 2 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \\
&= \begin{bmatrix} 2-g & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & 0 \\ -\frac{g}{2} & 4-g & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & 0 & -\frac{g}{2} \\ -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & 6-g & 0 & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} \\ -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & 0 & 6-g & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} \\ -\frac{g}{2} & 0 & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & 8-g & -\frac{g}{2} \\ 0 & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & -\frac{g}{2} & 10-g \end{bmatrix}
\end{aligned}$$

We diagonalize this matrix for varying values of $g \in [-1, 1]$ with NumPy, computed in the script `b.py`. Plotted as a function of g , the eigenvalues are shown in Fig. 3, while the ground state energy is shown in Fig. 4.

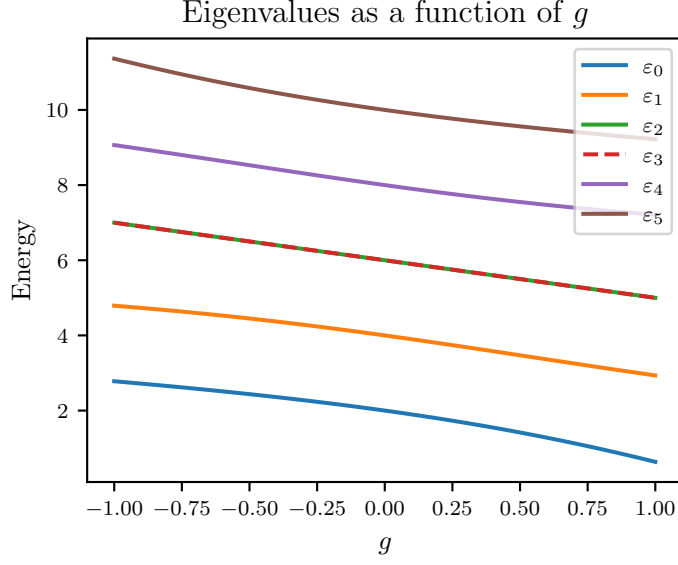


Figure 3: Eigenvalues of the Hamiltonian matrix for the four-particle system with no broken pairs and total spin $S = 0$, as a function of the pairing strength g .

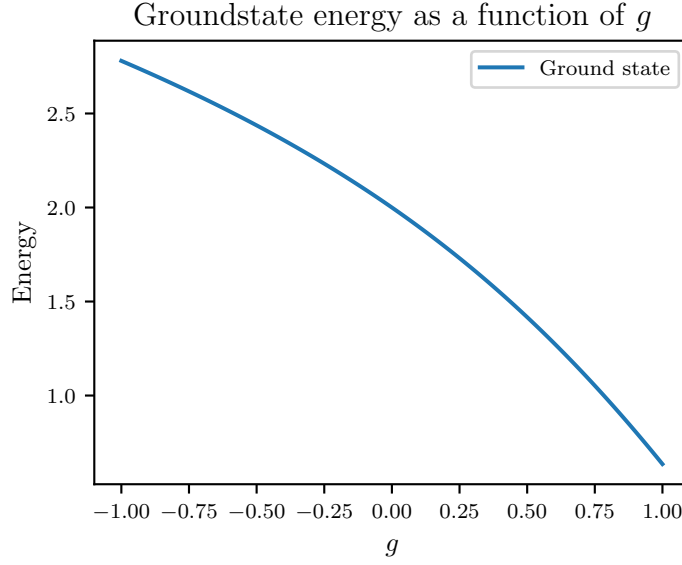


Figure 4: Ground state energy of the Hamiltonian matrix for the four-particle system with no broken pairs and total spin $S = 0$, as a function of the pairing strength g .

Exercise 3)

Instead of setting up all possible Slater determinants, construct only an approximation to the ground state (where we assume that the four particles are in the two lowest single-particle orbits only) which includes at most two-particle-two-hole excitations. Diagonalize this matrix and compare with the exact calculation and comment your results. Can you set up which diagrams this approximation corresponds to?

Solution

From Fig. 2 we see that all states except $|\Phi_5\rangle$, has states with at most one pair of electrons above the $p = 2$. Our new approximation of the ground state is then shown in Fig. 5.

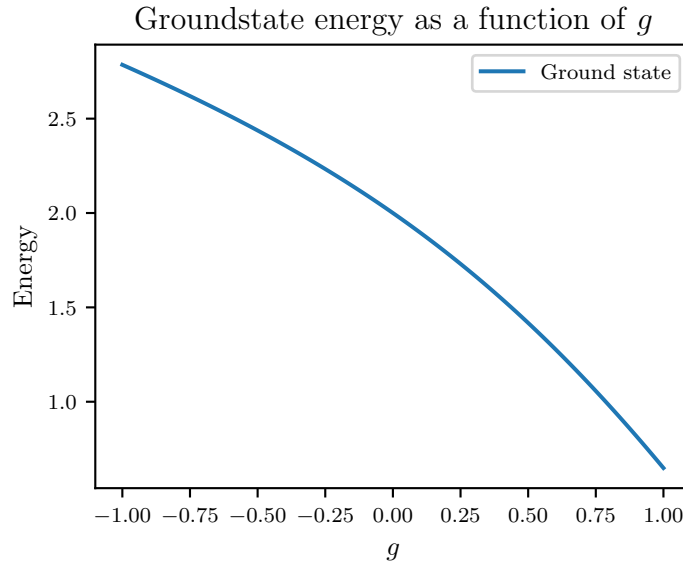


Figure 5: Ground state energy of the Hamiltonian matrix for the four-particle system with no broken pairs and total spin $S = 0$, as a function of the pairing strength g . Truncated to only include at most two-particle-two-hole excitations.

As the figure shows, the approximate energies are very close, regardless of whether we include the four-particle state $|\Phi_5\rangle$ or not.

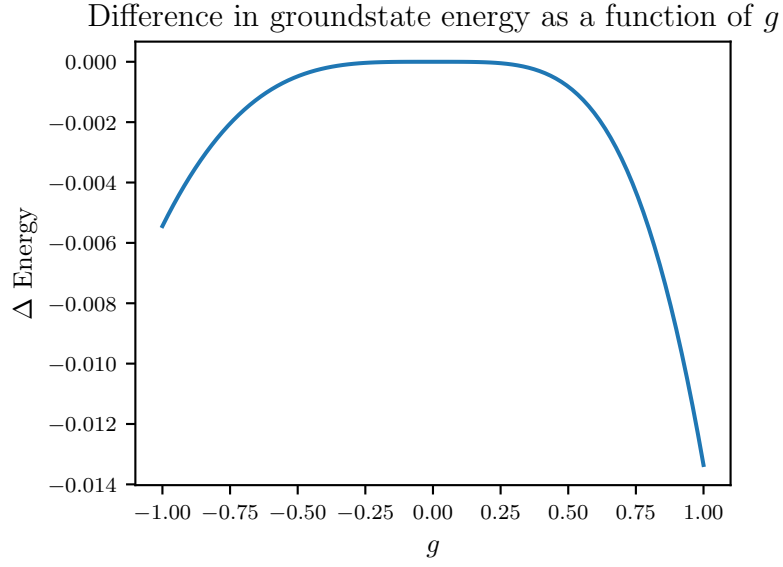


Figure 6: Difference in ground state energy of the Hamiltonian with all states below $p = 4$ and the Hamiltonian with $|\Phi_5\rangle$ removed, as a function of the pairing strength g . Truncated to only include at most two-particle-two-hole excitations.

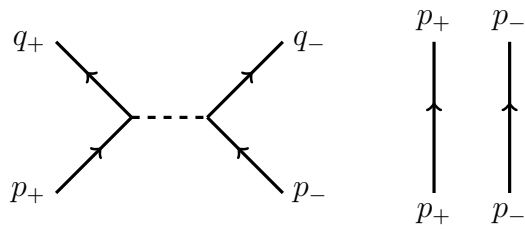


Figure 7: Diagrams corresponding to the approximation of the ground state with at most two-particle-two-hole excitations.

Exercise 4)

We switch now to approximative methods, in our case Hartree-Fock theory and many-body perturbation theory. Hereafter we will define our model space to consist of the single-particle levels $p = 1, 2$. The remaining levels $p = 3, 4$ define our excluded space. This means that our ground state Slater determinant consists of four particles which can be placed in the doubly degenerate orbits $p = 1$ and $p = 2$. Our first step is to perform a Hartree-Fock calculation with the pairing Hamiltonian. Write first the normal-ordered Hamiltonian with respect to the above reference state given by four spin 1/2 fermions in the single-particle levels $p = 1, 2$. Write down the normal-ordered Hamiltonian and set up the standard Hartree-Fock equations for the above system (often called restricted Hartree-Fock due to the fact that we have an equal number of spin-orbitals). These equations are sometimes also called the canonical Hartree-Fock equations. They are the same as those that we discussed earlier. This means that we have a Hartree-Fock Hamiltonian $\hat{h}^{\text{HF}}|p\rangle = \epsilon^{\text{HF}}|p\rangle$, where p are both hole and particle states.

Solution

We begin by writing the normal-ordered form of the single-particle term of the Hamiltonian with respect to the reference state $|\Phi_0\rangle$,

$$\hat{H}_0 = \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}.$$

We have that

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{H}_0 &= \langle \Phi_0 | \hat{H}_0 | \Phi_0 \rangle + \hat{H}_0^N \\ \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma} &= \langle \Phi_0 | \hat{H}_0 | \Phi_0 \rangle + \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) \{a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}\}. \end{aligned}$$

Next, we have the two-body term of the Hamiltonian,

$$\hat{V} = -\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}.$$

For the annihilation and creation operators in the two-body term, we have the possible contractions

$$\begin{aligned} \overline{a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}} &= \delta_{pq} n_{p+} a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-}, \\ a_{p+}^\dagger \overline{a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}} &= \delta_{pq} n_{p-} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{q+}, \\ \overline{a_{p+}^\dagger \overline{a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}}} &= \delta_{pq} n_{p+} n_{p-} a_{p+}^\dagger a_{q+} a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-}, \end{aligned}$$

where $n_{p\sigma} = 1$ if $p = 1, 2$ and $n_{p\sigma} = 0$ otherwise. Note that as we have terms $n_{p\pm} a_{p\mp}^\dagger a_{p\mp}$, we only get contributions when both spins at a given level is occupied, i.e., from unbroken pairs.

We switch now to particle-hole formalism, where we denote states below the Fermi level as $i, j, \dots \in \{1, 2\}$, states above the Fermi level as $a, b, \dots \in \{3, 4\}$, and unrestricted indices as p, q, \dots . The normal-ordered form of the two-body term is then

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{V} &= -\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} \{a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}\} - \frac{1}{2}g \sum_i \left[a_{p-}^\dagger a_{p-} + a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p+} \right] \\ &\quad - \frac{1}{2}g \sum_i 1 \\ &= -\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} \{a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}\} - \frac{1}{2}g \sum_{i\sigma} a_{i\sigma}^\dagger a_{i\sigma} - g.\end{aligned}$$

Grouping the terms of parts involving no particles, one particle, and two particles respectively, we have the normal-ordered Hamiltonian as

$$\hat{H} = E_0^{\text{Ref}} + \hat{H}_0^N + \hat{V}^N,$$

where

$$\begin{aligned}E_0^{\text{Ref}} &= 2 - g \\ \hat{H}_0^N &= \sum_{p\sigma} (p-1) \{a_{p\sigma}^\dagger a_{p\sigma}\} - \frac{1}{2}g \sum_{i\sigma} \{a_{i\sigma}^\dagger a_{i\sigma}\} \\ \hat{V}^N &= -\frac{1}{2}g \sum_{pq} \{a_{p+}^\dagger a_{p-}^\dagger a_{q-} a_{q+}\}.\end{aligned}$$

We begin by defining the single-particle operator \hat{f} , which in the general case is given by

$$\langle p | \hat{f} | q \rangle = \langle p | \hat{H}_0 | q \rangle + \sum_j \langle pj | \hat{V} | qj \rangle.$$

For our case, we have that

$$\begin{aligned}\langle p | \hat{f} | q \rangle &= (p-1)\delta_{pq} - \frac{1}{2}g \sum_j \langle pj | \hat{V} | qj \rangle \\ &= (p-1)\delta_{pq} - \frac{1}{2}g \sum_j \langle pj | \hat{V} | qj \rangle \\ &= (p-1)\delta_{pq} - \frac{1}{2}g \sum_j \langle pj | \hat{V} | qj \rangle.\end{aligned}$$