Essential Radio Astronomy Lecture Note

Renkun Kuang

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Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction to Radio Astronomy

1.1 Related links

- https://www.cv.nrao.edu/course/astr534/PDFnewfiles/Introradastro.pdf
- https://www.astron.nl/eris2017/Documents/ERIS2017_L1_McKean.pdf
  2017 European Radio Interferometry School, a week of lectures and tutorials on how to achieve scientific results from radio interferometry.
  Topics covered:
  1. Calibration and imaging of continuum, spectral line, and polarisation data;
  2. Low-freq. (LOFAR domain), high-freq. (ALMA/IRAM domain), and VLBI-interferometry;
  3. Extracting information from the data and interpreting the results;
  4. Choosing the most suitable array and observing plan for your project.
- http://www.radio-astronomy.org/pdf/sara-beginner-booklet.pdf
- http://egg.astro.cornell.edu/alfalfa/ugradteam/pdf12/radio_lecture_jess_uat12.pdf
- http://www.jb.man.ac.uk/ tob/course/radio2.html
- SKA Shanghai 2018

1.2 Software Preparation

ref: 2017 European Radio Interferometry School.
Examples will be drawn from m-, cm- and mm-wave instruments such as LOFAR,

JVLA, EVN, eMERLIN and ALMA.

CDs for advanced users may include tutorials on using the proposal preparation tools (the Proposal Submission Tool for the VLA, GBT, and VLBA, and the Observing Tool for ALMA) and data reduction software (CASA for the VLA and ALMA, GBTIDL for the GBT, and AIPS for VLBA). nrao-cd

1.2.1 AIPS

- 1996 The AIPSview Astronomy Visualization Tools, PDF
  AIPSview is a set of two new software tools for visual data analysis being developed by the radio astronomy group at the University of Illinois as part of the AIPS++ project. The tools provide a wide range of functionality for the display and analysis of 2D and 3D astronomical data sets. In this paper we describe how to obtain further information about AIPSview on the WWW including how to obtain executable and source code, and discuss the current functionality of AIPSview and future development plans.

- http://www.aips.nrao.edu/index.shtml
  What is AIPS
  The Astronomical Image Processing System is a software package for calibration, data analysis, image display, plotting, and a variety of ancillary tasks on Astronomical Data. It comes from the National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

  Download install.pl via ftp and the "perl install.pl -n" to install the software.
  ftp host website: ftp://ftp.aoc.nrao.edu/pub/software/aips
  linux下登陆FTP

In terminal, using following command to login:
lftp ftp://ftp.aoc.nrao.edu/pub/software/aips
Download files:
要下载文件首先得设置用于存放下载文件的本地目录。
命令：lcd 本地目录
然后进入待下载文件的目录。根据下载文件类型的不同，命令也不同。
单个文件
命令：get file
get -c file 可以进行断点续传
批量文件
命令： mget *.txt 批量下载目录下的txt文件
mget -c *.txt 断点续传加上批量下载
整个目录
命令：mirror aaa/

```
lftp ftp.aoc.nrao.edu:/pub/software/aips> lcd ./
lcd ok, local cwd=/home/anything/THU/astro/softwares/aips
lftp ftp.aoc.nrao.edu:/pub/software/aips> mirror 31DEC19
`31DEC19.tar.gz' at 1206184 (0%) 47.0K/s eta:58m [Receiving data]
[0] 0:lftp*                                                          "ar
```

```
==================== AIPS 31DEC19 Install Wizard====================

Screen 11: FINAL REVIEW before installing!
-------------------------------------------
This is your last, best hope for checking the settings before
committing to the install.  Please check these settings, and
make sure they are what you want:

   AIPS_ROOT (screen 3): /home/anything/THU/astro/softwares/aips/31DEC19
       Group (screen 4): anything
 Group Write (screen 4): YES
Architecture (screen 5): LNX64
   Site name (screen 5): ANY
  AIPS hosts (screen 6): LOCALHOST
  Data areas (screen 7): /home/anything/THU/astro/softwares/aips/31DEC19/DATA/LOCALHOST_1
    Printers (screen 8):   Paper type (screen 8): A4
 Tape drives (screen 9):
  Tape hosts (screen 9): 127.0.0.1
   Advanced (screen 10): (not listed here)
```

```
/home/anything/THU/astro/softwares/aips/31DEC19/31DEC19/LNX64/SYSTEM/ANY/MAKE.MNJ: 69: /home/anything/
THU/astro/softwares/aips/31DEC19/31DEC19/LNX64/SYSTEM/ANY/MAKE.MNJ: /opt/local/compilers/gcc-6/bin/gcc
: not found
MAKE.MNJ -   UPDLSTDAT compiled
MAKE.MNJ - all .OLD files created
MAKE.MNJ - LAST*.DAT files created with begin date of 20190903.000000
MAKE.MNJ - Done.
MAKE.MNJ - The MNJ now uses cvs (http://www.cvshome.org) for updates;
MAKE.MNJ - looking to see if I can find a copy of it....
MAKE.MNJ - I can not seem to find it, either it is not here or it is
MAKE.MNJ - here, but it is installed in a place that is not in your
MAKE.MNJ - search path. If it is not here, you should install it and
MAKE.MNJ - run MAKE.MNJ again. Otherwise, please tell me where you
MAKE.MNJ - put it.
MAKE.MNJ - Full path to cvs: : |
```

install cvs: http://www.cvshome.org, instruction

installing AIPS failed.
2019 install instruction

Installation instructions for Training Week 1

Installation instructions for Training Week 1

There are two courses in training week 1: radio astronomy and telescope systems, and radio interferometry. Both of these have a hands-on component, and software should be pre-installed on laptops beforehand. The software packages needed are IPython for the IPython notebook component of the radio astronomy course, and AIPS or CASA for radio interferometry. Either MacOS or Linux is needed (i.e. **not Windows**). On Windows laptops or PCs it should be possible to install a VirtualBox `https://www.virtualbox.org/` with Linux as the guest operating system, or alternatively have Linux as a dual boot if you are planning to use it a lot.

1. Radio astronomy

This course uses IPython notebooks, so IPython is needed. On Linux systems with `pip`, you may be able to get and install IPython with `pip install ipython`. (IPython does run on Windows in theory, but we have not tested the notebooks with Windows, and MacOS/Linux is needed in any case for part 2).

Probably the easiest (and on some systems the only) way to install IPython is via the installation of Jupyter, which is available on

`jupyter.readthedocs.org/en/latest/install.html`

This installs without problems provided that at least Python 2.7 is present. If you do not have Python 2.7, then the best course is to install `anaconda` - a link to installation instructions for this is given on the same webpage. Once you have anaconda, any other packages can be installed with the `conda install` command. In some cases (e.g. jupyter) this can be done directly: `conda install jupyter`. In other cases, all you should need to do is to google `conda [package-name]` for any package that appears to be missing.

You can test your installation by downloading the file

`http://www.jb.man.ac.uk/~njj/test.ipynb`

and running it with `jupyter notebook test.ipynb`. You should get a cell of commands with a blue line to the left. Clicking inside the cell and then selecting `cell` and then `Run cell` should produce a plot with blue dots.

2. Radio interferometry

2.1 Major packages

There are currently two major software packages for radio interferometry, AIPS and CASA. AIPS is an older, Fortran-based system; CASA is a newer, C++/Python-based system which will eventually supersede AIPS. CASA has a fuller suite of imaging features, including much better wide-field mapping and imaging algorithms, but AIPS has some features useful for long-baseline interferometry.

AIPS is the primary software package for VLBI, e-MERLIN and LOFAR (long baselines). CASA, or CASA-based, systems are the primary system for LOFAR (other than long baselines), the JVLA, and ALMA. The syntax of the two packages is not hugely different, and there is a translation available on `https://casaguides.nrao.edu/index.php?title=aips-to-casa_Cheat_Sheet`.

The course will be bilingual (in AIPS and CASA!) so you can choose which one to install. Both are interoperable with Python: CASA natively, and AIPS by an interface (ParselTongue, which is not covered in the first week's course).

Both are distributed as binaries and should be relatively straightforward to install on any version of Linux or any version of MacOS. Please install and test one (or both) as below if you are intending to follow the course. **Note: neither AIPS nor CASA runs on Windows.**

Both packages are available as binary installations for MacOS and Linux. AIPS can be downloaded from

`http://www.aips.nrao.edu/install.shtml`

and CASA from

`http://casa.nrao.edu/casa_obtaining.shtml`

In both cases, the installation should be relatively painless. For CASA, the installation comes as a unix tar file, which can be unzipped in any desired directory. If you start the executable `casapy`, which should be in the top directory, this should start CASA and produce a log window.

For AIPS, the installation is slightly more complicated, but a Perl install wizard guides you through the steps. If you start the executable `START_AIPS`, which should be in the top directory, AIPS should start up and invite you to type in an AIPS number - any number larger than 10 should be fine. If you start it with the argument `tv=local`, then a black TV window should pop up as well.

2.2 Difmap

There is also a third useful package which does only some tasks in radio interferometry, but does them very well and very interactively. It is particularly useful for long-baseline interferometry. It's available from `ftp://ftp.astro.caltech.edu/pub/difmap/difmap.html` . It requires the plotting package PGPLOT, which is available from `http://www.astro.caltech.edu/~tjp/pgplot/`.

If there are any problems, I'm happy to try and help: `neal.jackson@manchester.ac.uk` although I may need to consult the local IT support here in complicated cases. Please forward screenshots and/or as much detail of error messages as possible in these cases.

- 天文博客
- How to build AIPS on Ubuntu
- The AIPS++ Project

Finally successfully installed:

```
AipsWiz:  =====> We're DONE!  Let's have a nice Banana Split! <======

AipsWiz: ***************** READ CAREFULLY **************************

AipsWiz: ***************** READ CAREFULLY **************************

AipsWiz: Services should be defined either in /etc/services
 oryour YP/NIS services map (all tcp services)
This may require sudo or root privileges

AipsWiz: ***************** READ CAREFULLY **************************

AipsWiz: Here are the final setup instructions for running AIPS

        1.  Reference the LOGIN.SH file in your .profile file
              or perhaps your .bashrc file
              (dot it now too, via ". ./LOGIN.SH")

        2.  Check that it works:

                aips notv tpok

              (this will not start a TV or tape servers).
            Try 'print 2 + 2' for a very basic test.

        3.  Make a cron entry for the do_daily.LOCALHOST file
              that the MAKE.MNJ created, so you can run the
              AIPS 'midnight job'.  This is optional but
              strongly recommended.

AipsWiz: That's it.  You should now have the latest AIPS!  Enjoy.

# anything @ anything-ThinkPad-E470c in ~/.aips [13:40:30]
$ |
```

```
# anything @ LOCALHOST in ~/.aips [13:48:17]
$ aips notv tpok
START_AIPS: Your initial AIPS printer is the
START_AIPS:  - system name , AIPS type

START_AIPS: User data area assignments:
DADEVS.PL: This program is untested under Perl version 5.026
  (Using global default file /home/anything/.aips/DA00/DADEVS.LIST for DADEVS.PL)
   Disk 1 (1) is /home/anything/.aips/DATA/LOCALHOST_1

Tape assignments:
   Tape 1 is REMOTE
   Tape 2 is REMOTE

START_AIPS: Assuming TPMON daemons are running or not used (you said TPOK)
Starting up 31DEC18 AIPS with normal priority
Begin the one true AIPS number 1 (release of 31DEC18) at priority =   0
AIPS 1: You are NOT assigned a TV device or server
AIPS 1: You are NOT assigned a graphics device or server
AIPS 1: Enter user ID number
?2
AIPS 1:                          31DEC18 AIPS:
AIPS 1:      Copyright (C) 1995-2019 Associated Universities, Inc.
AIPS 1:            AIPS comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY;
AIPS 1:                 for details, type HELP GNUGPL
AIPS 1: This is free software, and you are welcome to redistribute it
AIPS 1: under certain conditions; type EXPLAIN GNUGPL for details.
AIPS 1: Previous session command-line history recovered.
AIPS 1: TAB-key completions enabled, type HELP READLINE for details.
AIPS 1: Recovered POPS environment from last exit
>print 2+2
AIPS 1:      4
>|
```

TWO VLBI TUTORIALS

From http://www.aips.nrao.edu/index.shtml
Two extensive tutorials on VLBI data reduction in AIPS have been prepared, complete with data sets, introductory material about AIPS, and detailed instructions. They are:

- simple VLBA project including self-calibration
- spectral-line VLBA project plus astrometry

Users new to, or rusty in, VLBI data reduction are encouraged to try these tutorials. Appendix C and Chapter 9 of the AIPS CookBook are also recommended.

1.2.2 CASA

CASA-obtaining

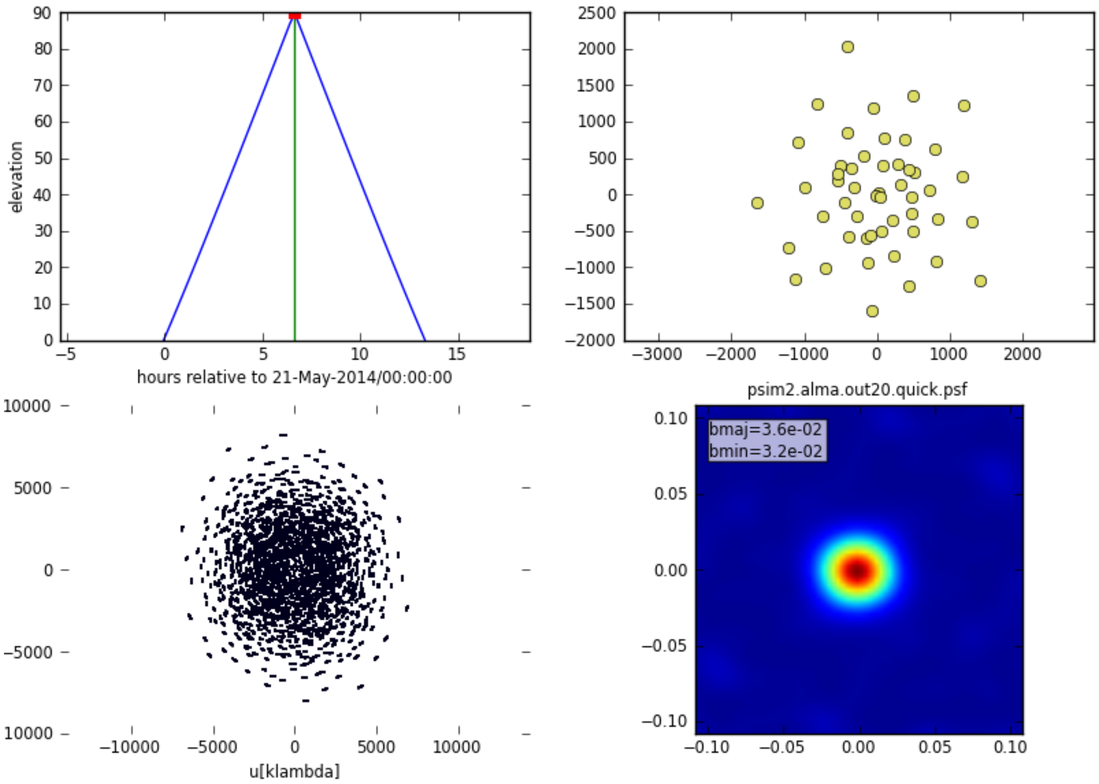
CASA Documentation Homepage

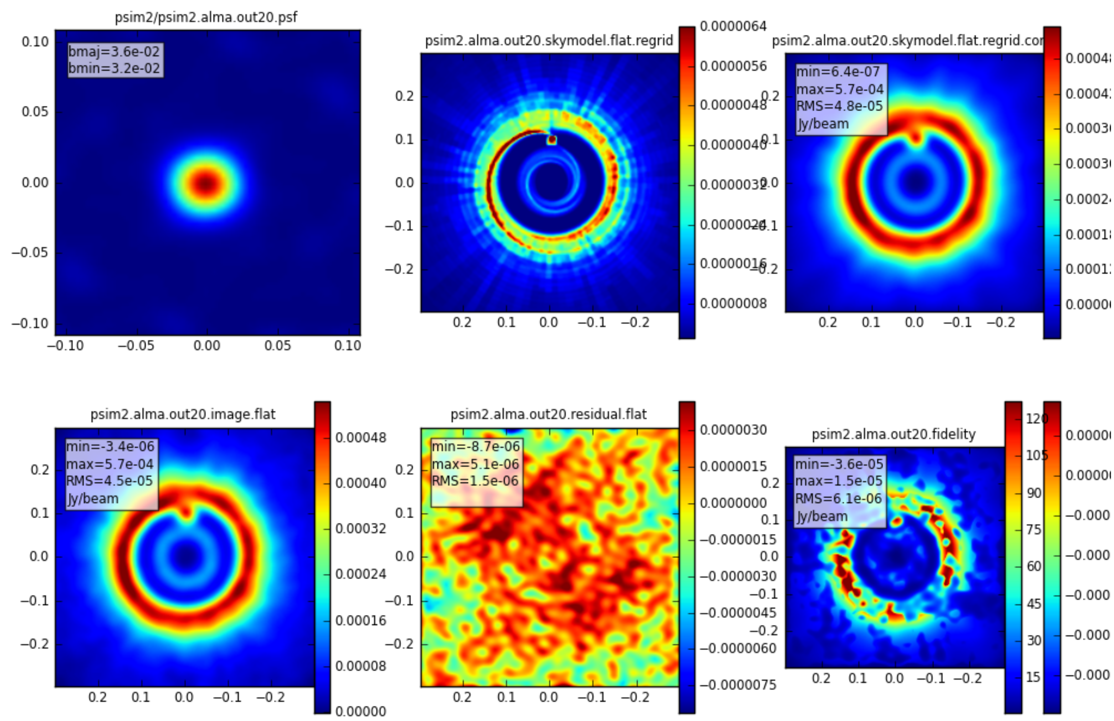
CASA homepage

CASA Guides

Protoplanetary Disk Simulation Using CASA

Reference





1.3 Introduction to Radio Astronomy

The following of this note file is mainly center on 2017 European Radio Interferometry School(which aims to give a general introduction to radio astronomy, focusing on the issues that you must consider for single element telescopes that make up an interferometer) materials.

1.3.1 The Radio Window

$\nu \sim 10^7 Hz - 10^{12} Hz, \;\; \lambda \sim 10m - 0.1mm$

The observing window is constrained by atmospheric absorption / emission and refraction.

1. Charged particles in the ionosphere reflects radio waves back into space at < 10 MHz.

2. Vibrational transitions of molecules have similar energy to infra-red photons and absorb the radiation at > 1 GHz (completely by ~ 300 GHz)

1.3.2 The low-frequency cut-off

The ionosphere consists of a plasma of charged particles (conducting layers), that has an effective refractive index of,

$$n^2 = 1 - \frac{\omega_p^2}{\omega^2} = 1 - \frac{\lambda^2}{\lambda_p^2}$$

where, the plasma frequency is defined as,

$$\nu_p[Hz] = \frac{\omega_p}{2\pi} = (\frac{N_e e^2}{4\pi^2 \epsilon_0 m})^{1/2} = 8.97 \times 10^3 \sqrt{\frac{N_e}{[cm^{-3}]}}$$

when $\omega < \omega_p \rightarrow n^2 < 0$, there is no propagation, i.e. total reflection. (i.e. low-frequency cutoff)

Worked example: What is the cut-off frequency for LOFAR observations carried out when the electron density is $N_e = 2.5 \times 10^5 cm^{-3}$ (night time)
and $N_e = 1.5 \times 10^6 cm^{-3}$ (day time)?
ν_p[Hz] = 4.5 MHz (night time)
ν_p[Hz] = 11 MHz (day time)
(at night, the observable frequency by LOFAR can be lower)

At frequencies,

1. $\omega < \omega_p$: $n^2 < 0$, reflection ($\nu < 10MHz$),
2. $\omega > \omega_p$: $n^2 > 0$, refraction ($10MHz < \nu < 10GHz$),
3. $\omega \gg \omega_p$: $n^2 \rightarrow 1$ ($\nu > 10GHz$).

The observing conditions are dependent on the electron density, i.e. the solar conditions (space weather), since the ionisation is due to the ultra-violet radiation field from the Sun,

$$O_2 + h\nu \rightarrow O_2^{+*} + e^-$$
$$O_2 + h\nu \rightarrow O^+ + O + e^-$$

1.3.3 The high-frequency cut-off (absorption)

1. Molecules in the atmosphere can absorb the incoming radiation, but also emit radiation (via thermal emission).

2. Mass absorption co-efficient (k): From atomic and molecular physics, define for various species, i,

$$k_i = \frac{\sigma n_i}{r_i \rho_0}$$

where: k_i is Mass attenuation coefficient ($cm^2 g^{-1}$), σ Cross-section (cm^2), n_i is Number density of particles (cm^{-3}), ρ_0 is Mass density of air (gcm^{-3}), r_i is Mixing ratio($= \rho_i/\rho_0$)

3. Optical depth (τ): A measure of the absorption/ scattering (attenuation) of electromagnetic radiation in a medium (probability of an interaction),

$$\tau_i(\lambda, z_0) = \int_{z_0}^{\infty} n_i(z)\sigma dz = \int_{z_0}^{\infty} r_i(z)\rho_0(z)k_i(\lambda)dz$$

or, in terms of the linear absorption co-efficient (κ)

$$\tau_i(\lambda, z_0) = \int_{z_0}^{\infty} \kappa(\lambda, z)dz$$

where $\kappa(\lambda, z) = k_i(\lambda)\rho_i(z)$,
$\kappa(\lambda, z)$: linear absorption coefficient (cm^{-1})
$k_i(\lambda)$: Mass attenuation coefficient ($cm^2 g^{-1}$)
$\rho_i(z)$: Mass density of species i (gcm^{-3})
$\rho_i(z) = r_i(z)\rho_0(z)$

The attenuation of an incident ray of intensity I_0, received at altitude z_0, summed over all absorbing species is,

$$I(z_0) = I_0 exp[-\sum_i \tau(\lambda, z_0)] = I_0 exp[-\tau(z)]$$

Where, for convenience, we consider all species together and define the optical depth as a function of zenith angle, $\tau(z)$

> Worked example: What is the optical depth for sky transparencies of 0.5, 0.1 and 0.01?
> Rearrange, in terms of τ, and evaluate, $\tau = -ln(\frac{I(z_0)}{I_0})$
> $tau_{0.5} = -ln(0.5) = 0.69$
> $tau_{0.1} = -ln(0.1) = 2.3$
> $tau_{0.01} = -ln(0.01) = 4.6$
> The smaller the transparancy, the larger the optical depth τ

Note that the opacity changes with the path length, and so depends on the airmass X(z), which assuming a plane parallel atmosphere,

$$\tau(z) = \tau_0 X(z), X(z) = sec(z)$$

where τ_0: Optical depth at Zenith, $X(z)$: Airmass, z: Zenith angle

The atmosphere is not completely transparent at radio wavelengths, but $\tau(z)$ varies with frequency ν.

Zenith opacity is the sum of several component opacities at cm λ.

- Broadband (continuum) opacity: dry air. $\tau_z \approx 0.01$ and almost independent of ν
- Molecular absorption: O_2 has rotational transitions that absorb radio waves and are opaque ($\tau_z \gg 1$) at 52 to 60 GHz.
- Hydrosols: Water droplets ($radius \leq 0.1mm$) suspended in clouds absorb radiation (proportional to λ^{-2}).
- Water vapor: Emission line at $\nu \approx 22.235$ GHz is pressure broadened to $\Delta\nu \sim 4GHz$ width + "continuum" absorption from the "line-wings" of very strong H_2O emission at infrared wavelengths (proportional to λ^{-2}).

  The zenith optical depth is dependent on the path length through the material.

  - Higher altitude: Move above the water vapour layer ($>$ 4 km).
  - Drier locations: Move to regions with low water vapour.

1.3.4 The high-frequency cut-off (emission)

A partially absorbing atmosphere also emits radio noise that can de-grade ground based observations. We can define the total system noise power as an equivalent noise temperature

$$P = \frac{E}{\Delta t} = kT\Delta\nu$$

in terms of spectral power,

Spectral power (W Hz^{-1})

System temperature (Receivers; Sky, Ground; etc)

$$P_\nu = k\,T_{\rm sys}$$

Boltzmann constant = 1.38 x 10^{-23} m^2 kg s^{-2} K^{-1}

where,

Noise from Radio background (Galaxy, CMB, etc)

Noise from ground emission

Noise from injected noise

Noise from the receiver (Dominates)

$$T_{\rm sys} = T_{\rm bg} + T_{\rm sky} + T_{\rm spill} + T_{\rm loss} + T_{\rm cal} + T_{\rm rx}$$

Noise from atmospheric emission

Noise from losses at receiver

The contribution from the sky opacity to the sky temperature is,

Atmospheric kinetic temperature (≡ 300 K)

Emitted sky temperature (K)

$$T_{\rm sky} = T_{\rm atm}\left[1 - \exp(-\tau_\nu)\right]$$

Optical depth

Don't want T_{sky} to dominate our noise budget, need to minimise T_{atm} and τ_ν by observing in cold and dry locations (winter; high alt), especially at high frequencies

---

Worked example: Using the total opacity data for the Green Bank Telescope (West Virginia; USA; 2800 m) and $T_{atm} = 288$ K, what is T_{sky} at $\nu = 5$ GHz, 22 GHz and 115 GHz?
How does this compare with the typical receiver temperature, $T_{rx} \sim 30$ K?

- At $\nu = 5$ GHz, $\tau_z \sim 0.007$, $T_{sky} = 288[1 - exp(-0.007)] \sim 2K$ (Good)
- At $\nu = 22$ GHz, $\tau_z \sim 0.15$, $T_{sky} = 288[1 - exp(-0.15)] \sim 40K$ (Bad)
- At $\nu = 115$ GHz, $\tau_z \sim 0.8$, $T_{sky} = 288[1 - exp(-0.8)] \sim 160K$ (Bad)

Key concept: The partially transparent atmosphere allows radio waves to be detected from ground-based telescopes, but also attenuates the signal due to absorption/scattering, and also adds noise to the measured signal

1.3.5 Early Radio Astronomy