

Computational Chemistry I

Text book Cramer: Essentials of Quantum Chemistry, Wiley (2 ed.)

Chapter 3. Post Hartree-Fock methods (Cramer: chapter 7)

There are many ways to improve the HF method. Most of them are very technical and in this course, the main ideas behind them are given. We can first "define" the correlation energy. The best (lowest) non-relativistic total energy within the Born-Oppenheimer approximation of the system is E_{tot} , the correlation energy is the difference

$$E_{\text{corr}} = E_{\text{tot}} - E_{\text{HF}} < 0$$

As such, this is not very useful definition but if we have different well defined methods and basis sets to compute the correlation energy, the one which have **lowest energy is the best**. The variational principle works also here.

The conceptually simplest post HF method is the Configuration Interaction (CI) method. In this method the wave functions is built from several determinants

$$\Psi(r_1, \dots, r_N) = a_0 \Psi^0 + \sum_{i,a} a_i^a \Psi_i^a + \sum_{ij,ab} a_{ij}^{ab} \Psi_{ij}^{ab} + \dots$$

The new determinants are built from the HF orbitals but the electrons are also placed on excited states. The notation Ψ_i^a means that one electron is excited from state i to state a , similarly Ψ_{ij}^{ab} means that two electrons are excited from states i and j to states a and b . This wave functions is denoted as CISD (CI with singlet and double excitations). The Ψ^0 is the Slater determinant (or the HF wave functions). All the excited determinants are **orthogonal** to the HF wf (and to each other).
Exercise: Show this.

In the CI calculations the HF orbitals are kept constant and the **a** coefficients are optimized. Again, the variational method can be used

$$E_{CIS} = \min_a (\langle \Psi^0 | H | \Psi^0 \rangle + \sum_{i,a} a_i^a \langle \Psi^0 | H | \Psi_i^a \rangle)$$

Or the matrix formalism can be used

$$H_{IJ} = \langle \Psi_i | H | \Psi_j \rangle$$

Where Ψ_j mean any level of excited determinant. The matrix is very big but mostly empty (sparse) and efficient handling of it requires methods of sparse matrixes.

The CISD method is a reasonable solution for the correlation energy for small molecules but for larger molecules, it become rather inefficient. Also for larger molecules CISD is not very accurate and higher terms would be useful but methods like CISDT become computationally very expensive. There will be a huge amount of excitations to be computed. In general the pure CI type methods become too expensive when the molecules size is increasing. The best CI method is called Full CI or FCI. In principle, it is an exact method but it is doable only for small molecules.

For Full CI the number of determinant can be computed as

$$N_{det} = \binom{n}{k}^2$$

Where n is the number of orbital and k the number of electrons. This grows very rapidly, when n=2k (and k is big)

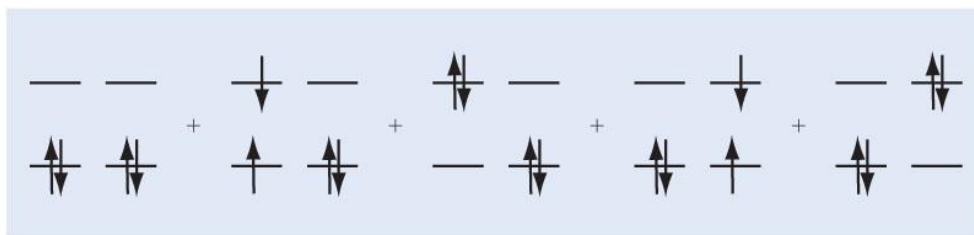
$$N_{det} = \binom{2k}{k}^2 \approx \frac{16^k}{k\pi}$$

if k=10 $N_{det} = 3.4 \cdot 10^{10}$!! This is impossible to compute.

The formal computational scaling of different correlation methods. BUT with new codes like Orca (Turbomole, etc) this has changed a lot and both MP2 and CCSD(T) can be done with similar computational cost as HF.

Scaling	Method
N^4	HF
N^5	MP2
N^6	MP3, CISD, CCSD
N^7	MP4, CCSD(T)
N^8	(MP5), CISDT, CCSDT
N^{10}	(MP7), CISDTQ, CCSDTQ

The CI has also a **size consistency problem**. This can be illustrated with an example of He dimer. The He atom have only two electrons and thus CISD is an exact method for it (CISD=FCI). When the He_2 is studied at CISD level the theory is not exact since the triple and quadrupole excitation are missing, (CISDTQ=FCI).



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In general finite-CI accuracy reduce with the size of the molecule and any calculation which deals with molecules association is biased with the size consistency. This is a rather large problem for computational binding energies and an unfortunately feature for many Post-HF methods.

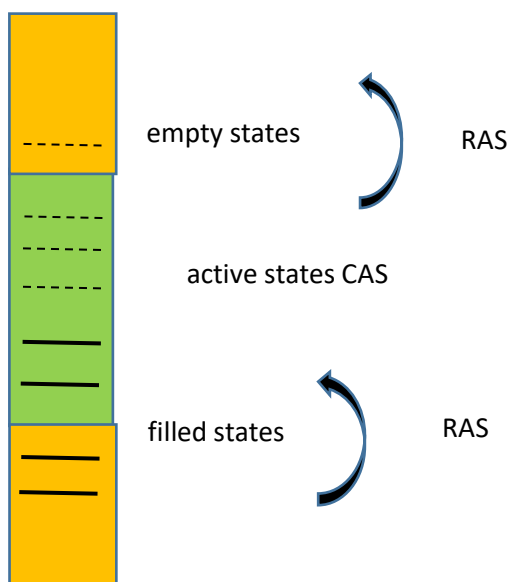
[Active Space SCF](#)

Another approach to correlation is Active Space SCF. The first assumption is that not all possible excitations are needed. One can define limited amount of electrons and states in where all excitation are considered. This is called Complete Active Space (CAS). Then for larger amount electrons and states only N excitations are allowed. This is Restricted Active Space (RAS).

Then also the orbitals can be optimized for each excitation. This is called as Multi Reference method (MRSCF) (Note in CI the orbitals are not optimized). This causes more work but can significantly improve the total electronic energy.

In general, the CAS methods are not easy to use. The good CAS depend strongly from the system. There also numerical problems related to the orbital optimizations. The CASSCF methods are not recommended for non-experts.

On can also combine the CI and the MR approach. The MRCI methods, like MRCISD, are not much used. They are expensive and difficult to use.



Coupled Cluster method.

The Coupled Cluster Methods is an advanced method to solve the CI wave functions. The CC wave function is computed as

$$\Psi_{CC} = e^T \Psi_{HF}$$

where $T=1+T_1+T_2+T_3+\dots$, T_n is an operator that makes n times excited states. For example

$$T_2 = \sum_{ij,ab} t_{ij,ab} \tau_a^i \tau_b^j,$$

will make a determinant that have two excited electrons. The exponent of an operator is mathematically very complicated but the main point is that the CC wave functions are more complete than the CI wf's. The CC wave functions have contributions like

$$\hat{C} \Psi_{HF} = e^T \Psi_{HF}$$

$$C_0 = 1, C_1 = T_1, C_2 = T_2 + \frac{1}{2} T_1^2, C_3 = T_3 + T_1 T_2 + \frac{1}{6} T_1^3$$

$$C_4 = T_4 + T_1 T_3 + \frac{1}{2} T_2^2 + \frac{1}{2} T_1^2 T_2 + \frac{1}{24} T_1^4$$

For example at CCSD level we have only operators T_1 and T_2 we will have higher order terms in the C_3 and C_4 etc. level. The solution of the amplitudes is the trick. It can be done effectively. Also the CC is size consistent which is also a bonus compared to CI.

A good but far from easy presentation of CC can be found from *Helgaker, Jorgensen and Olsen: Molecular Electronic-Structure Theory* (Willey). For practical point of view the CC is the best "black box" quantum chemistry methods there exists. CCSD is a good method and CCSDT and CCSDTQ are excellent methods but the later are expensive. Using perturbation method the triplet excitations can be treated more effectively and the CCSD(T) method is also a very reliable methods. In practice, it is often even better than CCSDT due to slight overestimation of the correlation. Today the CCSD(T) is considered the "**golden standard**" of quantum chemistry. This means that it is almost as accurate (for medium size molecules) as FCI or any super accurate method but much cheaper. Compared to MRSCR methods the CC methods are easy to use and almost always reliable. Naturally the CCSD(T) is not cheap but the new DLPNO-CCSD(T) is for larger systems as fast as HF, so there is no reason not to do CCSD calculations !!

Perturbation methods

Another approach to correlation is the perturbation methods. The idea is very general and it can be used to several other quantum chemical problems. We assume that we can solve Hamiltonian $H^{(0)}$ and the full Hamiltonian have a small perturbation V . The perturbation will be scale with parameter λ .

$$H = H^{(0)} + \lambda V$$

We can next write the energy and wave functions as a power series of λ .

$$E = E^{(0)} + \lambda E^{(1)} + \lambda^2 E^{(2)} + \dots \quad \Psi_0 = \Psi_0^{(0)} + \lambda \Psi_0^{(1)} + \lambda^2 \Psi_0^{(2)} + \dots$$

Now we can write hierarchical equation for each power of λ

$$\begin{aligned} H^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(0)} &= E^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(0)} \\ H^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + V\Psi_0^{(0)} &= E^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + E^{(1)}\Psi_0^{(0)} \\ H^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(2)} + V\Psi_0^{(1)} &= E^{(0)}\Psi_0^{(2)} + E^{(1)}\Psi_0^{(1)} + E^{(2)}\Psi_0^{(0)} \end{aligned}$$

Note that notation $\Psi_0^{(n)}$ means the ground state wave function at perturbation level n . The different level wave functions are orthogonal $\langle \Psi_0^{(n)} | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle = \delta_{n0}$.

So we can solve $E^{(1)}$, $\Psi_0^{(1)}$, $E^{(2)}$ etc.

$$E^{(1)} = \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | V | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle \quad E^{(2)} = \langle \Psi_0^{(0)} | V | \Psi_0^{(1)} \rangle \quad \Psi_0^{(1)} = \sum_{n>0} \frac{\langle \Psi_n^{(0)} | V | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle}{E_0^{(0)} - E_n^{(0)}} \Psi_n^{(0)}$$

$$E^{(2)} = \sum_{n>0} \frac{\langle \Psi_n^{(0)} | V | \Psi_0^{(0)} \rangle^2}{E_0^{(0)} - E_n^{(0)}}$$

($\Psi_n^{(0)}$ means non-ground state wave function at iteration level 0).

The perturbation theory can be applied to correlation energy. This is called Moller-Plesset theory (MPn). Then the $H^{(0)}$ is the HF theory and the perturbation is

$$V = \sum_{i < j} \frac{1}{|r_i - r_j|} - \sum_{nm} (J_{nm} - \frac{1}{2} K_{nm})$$

This is clever since it corrects the HF error. The level (2) correction is

$$E^{(2)} = \sum_{i < j, a < b} \frac{[(ij|ab) - (ia|jb)]^2}{\epsilon_i + \epsilon_j - \epsilon_a - \epsilon_b}$$

The i, j denote occupied state and a, b unoccupied states. This is the first real correction and it is called the MP2 theory. (The $E^{(0)} + E^{(1)}$ is in fact the HF energy). The perturbation theory can be computed to arbitrary level. The different levels are denoted as MPn. Of these, the most important is the MP2. It is rather fast and causes a significant correction to HF. The MP3 is a disappointment since it does not correct much the MP2. The MP4 is somewhat better but it is already very expensive. The higher terms are not used and in some model systems, it has been shown that the MPn series do not converge.

Below are convergence of the HF molecule with respect of the MPn series. The energies are related to the FCI energy. (Picture from Helgaker et al, Molecular Electronic-Structure Theory). The molecule eq distance is R_e (so $2.5 R_e$ is stretched molecule). As one can see the results are strange.

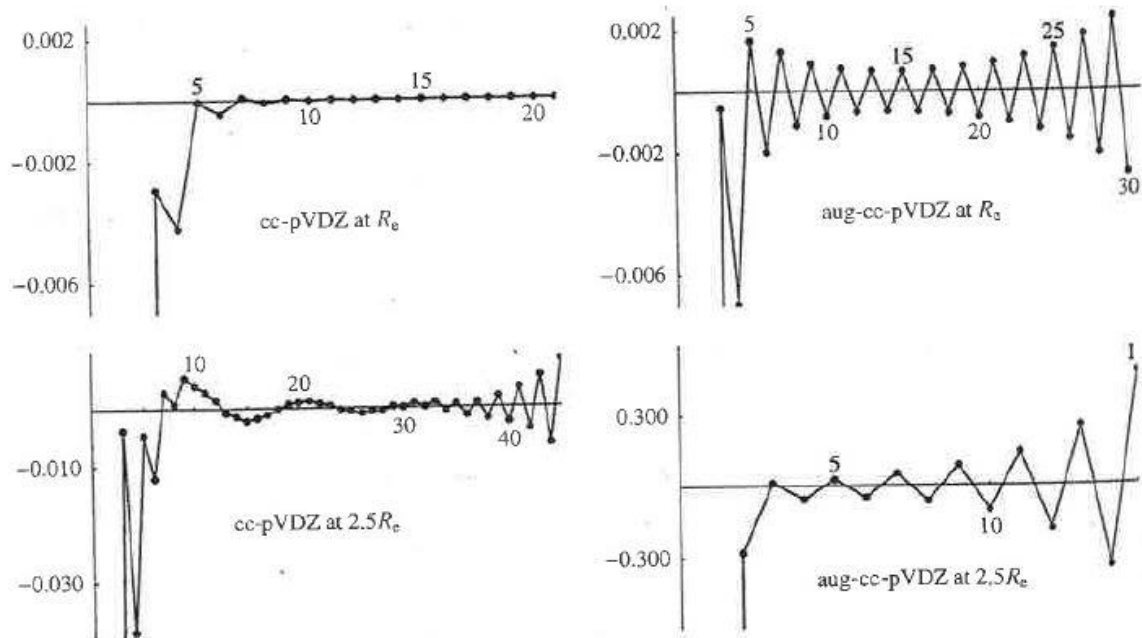


Fig. 14.6. Møller-Plesset expansions for the HF molecule. For each order in the perturbation series, we have plotted the difference between the Møller-Plesset energy and the corresponding FCI energy (in E_h).

Note the CC perturbation behaves better.

RI-approximation

Computationally the MP2 with small approximations can be implemented very effectively. The RI-MP2 method is much faster than and essentially as accurate as the true MP2. All practical MP2 calculations for larger systems are done with RI-MP2 (or its variants). In big RI-MP2 calculations the time consuming part is the HF.

The basic idea behind RI-MP2 is to fit the expensive double wave functions $(ia|$ to new basis functions $|P\rangle$ (auxiliary basis). Now the expensive $(ij|ab)$ term can be approximated

$(ij|ab) \approx \sum_{PQ} (ij|P)V_{PQ}(Q|ab)$ this is more complex but computationally faster. The details are complex but the main point is that RI methods need an additional basis.

The Orca input is simple (version 4)

```
! RHF RI-MP2 TZVP AutoAux Opt
```


See also Orca Manual (3.0 page 41 to 42)

“You see that nothing is lost in the optimized geometry through the RI approximation thanks to the efficient and accurate RI-auxiliary basis sets of the Karlsruhe group (in general the deviations in the geometries between standard MP2 and RI-MP2 are very small). Thus, RI-MP2 really is a substantial improvement in efficiency over standard MP2.”

The perturbation method is very general and it can be used in several quantum chemical problems. One application is the CI and CC methods where the higher order excitations can be solved with perturbation theory. The CCSD(T) method is the golden standard of quantum chemistry and it has the same scaling behavior as MP4.

Last, the basis set needed for well converged CI and MPn methods is larger than in the HF calculations. This is bad news since these post-HF methods have poorer scaling behavior than HF so the computations become quickly very time consuming.

Summary: **the MP2 method is a very important method for correlation.** It can be used for large molecules and it is a significant improvement to HF. The RI-method speeds up the MP2 significantly. In Orca also the DLPNO-MP2 has been implemented. For medium size molecules it is roughly as fast as RI-MP2 and for large molecules faster than RI-MP2.

DLPNO-CCSD(T) approximation

There is a lot of research focusing on development of the computational methods. In traditional quantum chemistry one area is on development fast computational algorithms for the known methods. The RI-type methods have improved the MP2 calculations a lot. The very new DLPNO-CCSD(T) development of Orca team is very interesting, it makes CCSD(T) level calculations possible for large molecules. (See more from Orca manual.) The latest implementation (2016, in Orca 4.0) is linear scaling !! For large systems (around 500 atoms) it is even faster than the HF. **So one can really use RI-MP2 (or DLPNO-MP2) or DLPNO-CCSD(T) for real problems.**

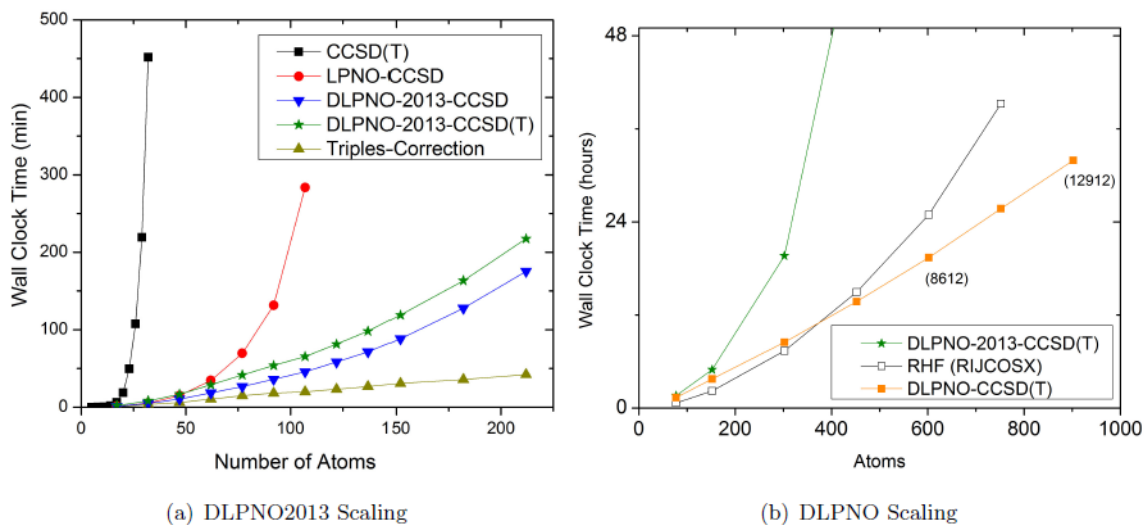


Figure 8.5: a) Scaling behaviour of the canonical CCSD, LPNO-CCSD and DLPNO2013-CCSD(T) methods. It is obvious that only DLPNO2013-CCSD and DLPNO2013-CCSD(T) can be applied to large molecules. The advantages of DLPNO2013-CCSD over LPNO-CCSD do not show before the system has reached a size of about 60 atoms. b) Scaling behaviour of DLPNO2013-CCSD(T), DLPNO-CCSD(T) and RHF using RIJCOSX. It is obvious that only DLPNO-CCSD(T) can be applied to truly large molecules, is faster than the DLPNO2013 version, and even has a crossover with RHF at about 400 atoms.

Multilevel methods

The systematic single method approach to solve the correlation problem is usually very time consuming (both human and computer time) so several multilevel extrapolation methods have been proposed. The multilevel methods are very complex looking but the main idea is to extrapolate both the correlation and basis. Below is the G2 and G3 multilevel methods. Note that Orca do not have the multilevel methods. It utilizes the F12-methods.

Table 7.6 Steps in G2 and G3 theory for molecules^{a,b}

Step	G2	G3
(1)	HF/6-31G(d) geometry optimization	HF/6-31G(d) geometry optimization
(2)	ZPVE from HF/6-31G(d) frequencies	ZPVE from HF/6-31G(d) frequencies
(3)	MP2(full)/6-31G(d) geometry optimization (all subsequent calculations use this geometry)	MP2(full)/6-31G(d) geometry optimization (all subsequent calculations use this geometry)
(4)	$E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(\text{d},\text{p})] - E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(\text{d},\text{p})]$	$E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(\text{d})] - E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(\text{d})]$
(5)	$E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(2\text{df},\text{p})] - E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(\text{d},\text{p})]$	$E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(2\text{df},\text{p})] - E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(\text{d})]$
(6)	$E[\text{QCISD}(\text{T})/6\text{-}311\text{G}(\text{d})] - E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(\text{d})]$	$E[\text{QCISD}(\text{T})/6\text{-}31\text{G}(\text{d})] - E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(\text{d})]$
(7)	$E[\text{MP2}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(3\text{df},2\text{p})] - E[\text{MP2}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(2\text{df},\text{p})] - E[\text{MP2}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(\text{d},\text{p})] + E[\text{MP2}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(\text{d},\text{p})]$	$E[\text{MP2}(\text{full})/\text{G3large}^c] - E[\text{MP2}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(2\text{df},\text{p})] - E[\text{MP2}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(\text{d})] + E[\text{MP2}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(\text{d})]$
(8)	$-0.00481 \times (\text{number of valence electron pairs}) - 0.00019 \times (\text{number of unpaired valence electrons})$	$-0.006386 \times (\text{number of valence electron pairs}) - 0.002977 \times (\text{number of unpaired valence electrons})$
$E_0 =$	$0.8929 \times (2) + E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}311\text{G}(\text{d},\text{p})] + (4) + (5) + (6) + (7) + (8)$	$0.8929 \times (2) + E[\text{MP4}/6\text{-}31\text{G}(\text{d})] + (4) + (5) + (6) + (7) + (8)$

^aFor atoms, G3 energies are defined to include a spin-orbit correction taken either from experiment or other high-level calculations. In addition, different coefficients are used in step (8).

^bIn the G2 method, the 6-311G basis set and its derivatives are not defined for second-row atoms; instead, a basis set optimized by McLean and Chandler (1980) is used.

^cAvailable at <http://chemistry.anl.gov/compmat/g3theory.htm>. Defined to use canonical 5 d and 7 f functions.

F12-method

The multilevel methods are messy and they contain empirical parameters so a more systematic way is to extrapolate the correlation energy from smaller basis sets. The best extrapolation method for correlation energy at the moment is the F12-method. It clearly outperforms the old extrapolation methods. But nothing comes for free. The additional effort for the F12-MP2 calculation is rather high, a DZ F12 calculation is roughly as expensive as normal QZ calculation. This can be improve with RI-KJ methods.

```
#
# Correlation energies of the water molecule: extrapolation versus F12
#
# cc-pVDZ MP2: -0.201 380 894
```

```

# T:          -0.261 263 141
# Q:          -0.282 661 311
# T/Q:        -0.298 276 192 (normal extrapolation)
# Q/5:        -0.300 598 282 (normal extrapolation)
# F12-DZ:     -0.295 775 804
# RI-F12-DZ:  -0.295 933 560 (cc-pVDZ/C note: basis for RI)
#             -0.295 774 489 (cc-pVTZ/C)
# F12-TZ:     -0.299 164 006
# RI-F12-TZ:  -0.299 163 478 (cc-pVQZ/C)
# F12-QZ:     -0.300 130 086

```

Note that F12-method is also available for CCSD(T). There the F12 is much more efficient than the traditional extrapolation.

Density Functional Theory

The traditional Quantum Chemical methods will approach systematically the exact wave functions and thus the solution of the correlation energy but they will lead to very heavy computational procedures. The Density Functional Theory will utilize another approach. In its heart is a proof that the ground state of an electronic system depend only on the electron density $\rho(r)$.

$$\Psi(r_1, r_2, \dots, r_N) \mapsto \Psi[\rho(r)]$$

This wave function is much much simpler than the true wf. The problem is that we do not know the equations to solve the wf. The basic ideas are from Kohn, Hohenberg and Sham (1963, 1964, Kohn Nobel prize 1998). Even we do not know the correct equation, it is useful to try to find a good approximation for it. Kohn and Sham showed that a single Slater determinant type wf with simple model for the Exchange and Correlation (XC) energy will give good results. The formulation is quite similar to the HF:

$$FC = \varepsilon SC$$

$$F_{nm} = H_{nm} + J_{nm} - F_{nm}^{xc}$$

$$H_{nm} = \int \xi_n(r) \left[-\frac{\hbar^2}{2m_e} \nabla^2 - \frac{e^2}{4\pi\epsilon} \sum_I \frac{Z}{|r-R_I|} \right] \xi_m(r) d\tau$$

$$E^{XC} = \int f(\rho, \nabla\rho(r), \dots) d\tau; \quad F^{XC} = \frac{\delta E^{XC}}{\delta \rho(r)}$$

$$J = \frac{1}{2} \iint \frac{\rho(r_1)\rho(r_2)}{|r_1 - r_2|} dr_1 dr_2 \quad \rho(r) = \sum_{n,i} |c_{n,i} \xi_n(r)|^2$$

The difficult part is **the XC energy**. It is not known but several approximation are done. Formally the E^{xc} can be written as

$$E^{xc}[\rho] = \langle T \rangle - T_s[\rho] + \langle W \rangle - J[\rho]$$

Where $\langle T \rangle$ is the exact kinetic energy, T_s is the DFT K.E. $\langle W \rangle$ is the exact electron-electron interaction energy and J is the Coulomb energy of the electron density.

The is often expressed as an integral $E^{xc}[\rho] = \int \rho(r) \epsilon_{xc}[\rho] dr$

The simplest Local Density Approximation (LDA) depend only on density, $E^{XC, LDA}[\rho(r)]$. The exchange part is easy ($\alpha = 1$)

$$\epsilon_x[\rho] = -\frac{9\alpha}{8} \left(\frac{3}{\pi}\right)^{\frac{1}{3}} \rho^{\frac{1}{3}}(r)$$

But the correlation is more complex. This functional can be obtained from **exact calculations** of homogenous electron gas.

The LDA work reasonably well and it is a bit better than HF (with few exceptions) but electrons are NOT homogeneously spread in molecules. The next level is the **Generalized Gradient** Approximation, $E^{XC, GGA}[\rho(r), \nabla\rho(r)]$. The GGA models are much better but there is no simple (or even non-simple) procedure to build the GGA functionals. For this reason there are a huge amount of different GGA models. There is a very extensive library of the XC functionals. The Libxc which is implemented to many codes (but not Orca, see the Orca manual)

<http://www.tddft.org/programs/octopus/wiki/index.php/Libxc>

The most common are BLYP and PBE. Even there are far too many GGA models, the DFT-GGA method have one very strong advantage. **It scales as N^3** . It is much more accurate than HF but it is much faster. With DFT we cannot get systematic improvement of the accuracy but it can be applied to big systems are the results are almost always good (same level as MP2).

One can also mix the HF and DFT theories. These are called **hybrid methods** and they are also very accurate. The most common of them is the B3LYP model also PBE0 model is good.

$$E_{xc}^{hyb} = aE_x^{HF} + (1-a)E_x^{GGA} + bE_c^{GGA}$$

For example PBE0, $a=1/4$, $b=1$. $GGA=PBE$;

$$E_{xc}^{hyb} = aE_x^{HF} + (1-a)E_x^{LDA} + b(E_x^{GGA} - E_x^{LDA}) + cE_c^{GGA} + (1-c)E_c^{LDA}$$

B3LYP is more complex: $a=0.2$, $b=0.72$, $c=0.81$.

The next GGA level is **meta-GGA** where the kinetic energy density is included to the GGA, $\tau(r) = 1/2 \sum_n |\nabla \varphi_n(r)|^2$

$$E_{xc, m-GGA}[\rho(r), \nabla \rho(r), \tau(r)].$$

Good meta-GGA's are TPSS (implemented to Orca), HCTC, M06L.

Last one can also combine MP2 and GGA. These are called **double hybrids**. In Orca B2PLYP is implemented.

One key defect of simple DFT method is the lack of dispersion interactions. There are included to the present HF either. On the other hand, quite accurate semi-empirical corrections can be used. The most used model is the Grimme D3 method. It is available for most of the GGA.

In Orca the usage is easy. (The D3BJ is Grimme version 3 corrections with Beck-Jonson damping model)

! PBE D3BJ TZVP opt ...

As DFT cannot be improved systematically the results matters. The DFT wf's are variational but the models are not, so we cannot judge the quality of results with the correlation energy. The results can be compared to experiments or to more accurate quantum chemical methods.

Below there are few tables.

TABLE 16.11

Homolytic Bond Dissociation Energies (kJ/mol)

Bond Dissociation Reaction	Hartree-Fock		B3LYP	MP2	Experiment
	3-21G	6-31G*	6-31G*	6-31G*	
$\text{CH}_3\text{—CH}_3 \rightarrow \text{CH}_3\cdot + \text{CH}_3\cdot$	285	293	406	414	406
$\text{CH}_3\text{—NH}_2 \rightarrow \text{CH}_3\cdot + \text{NH}_2\cdot$	247	243	372	385	389
$\text{CH}_3\text{—OH} \rightarrow \text{CH}_3\cdot + \text{OH}\cdot$	222	247	402	410	410
$\text{CH}_3\text{—F} \rightarrow \text{CH}_3\cdot + \text{F}\cdot$	247	289	473	473	477
$\text{NH}_2\text{—NH}_2 \rightarrow \text{NH}_2\cdot + \text{NH}_2\cdot$	155	142	293	305	305
$\text{HO—OH} \rightarrow \text{OH}\cdot + \text{OH}\cdot$	13	0	226	230	230
$\text{F—F} \rightarrow \text{F}\cdot + \text{F}\cdot$	-121	-138	176	159	159
Mean absolute error	190	186	9	2	—

TABLE 16.17

Absolute Activation Energies for Organic Reactions (kJ/mol)

Reaction	Hartree-Fock		B3LYP	MP2		Experiment
	3-21G	6-31G*	6-31G*	6-31G*	6-311+G**	
$\text{CH}_3\text{NC} \longrightarrow \text{CH}_3\text{CN}$	238	192	172	180	172	159
$\text{HCO}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3 \longrightarrow \text{HCO}_2\text{H} + \text{C}_2\text{H}_4$	259	293	222	251	234	167, 184
	192	238	142	117	109	151
	176	205	121	109	105	130
	126	167	84	50	38	84
	314	356	243	251	230	—
$\text{HCNO} + \text{C}_2\text{H}_2 \longrightarrow$	105	146	50	33	38	—
	230	247	163	159	142	—
	176	197	151	155	142	—
	247	251	167	184	172	—
	205	205	92	105	92	—
Mean absolute deviation from MP2/6-311+G**	71	100	17	13	—	—

Table 8.3 Mean and maximum absolute errors (kcal mol⁻¹) in enthalpies of activation and forward reaction for different methods

Level of theory	Activation		Reaction	
	Mean	Maximum	Mean	Maximum
Reaction set 1^{a,b}				
MNDO	23.4	51.8	10.9	57.7
AM1	9.3	34.2	7.5	22.1
HF/6-31G(d) ^c	13.6	30.6	10.5	24.8
MP2	9.9	28.8	6.3	26.0
BLYP	5.9	21.9	5.9	13.0
BLYP/6-311G(2df,2pd)			5.8	16.0
B3LYP			5.0	9.4
B3LYP/6-311G(2df,2pd)			3.7	8.5
B3PW91	3.7	12.9	6.8	17.7
OLYP			4.6	12.7
OLYP/6-311G(2df,2pd)			3.6	10.6
O3LYP			4.6	11.6
O3LYP/6-311G(2df,2pd)			2.8	7.1
Reaction set 2^d				
HF	12.4		149.5	
MP2	5.5	←	24.4	←
QCISD	3.9		38.6	
QCISD(T)	3.1		32.3	
CBS-Q	0.8		1.3	
MC-QCISD	0.9		1.1	
MCG3	0.8		0.8	
BB95	8.3		8.2	
BLYP	8.3		6.8	
BP86	9.4		13.0	
G96LYP	6.9		11.1	
HCTH	5.4		5.3	
<i>m</i> PWPW91	8.6		7.2	
OLYP	6.0	←	3.4	←
PBE	9.5		12.1	
PWPW91	9.8		12.1	
VSXC	5.1		3.4	
B1B95	3.7		3.4	
B97-1	4.2		5.8	
B97-2	3.1		3.9	
B98	4.1		6.3	
KMLYP	2.9		1.0	
<i>m</i> PW1PW91	3.9		8.0	
MPW1K	1.4		14.9	
PBE1PBE	4.6		7.1	
B3LYP	5.0	←	7.2	←

(continued overleaf)

They show that OLYP and B3LYP method is usually as good as MP2. Unfortunately the results depend a (quite) bit from the property we are looking but in most cases the DFT methods are as good as or better than MP2. There are much more tables in the Cramers book. Almost all methods the bond distances are quite good. For energies the HF or LDA are not reliable whereas most GGA's and correlated quantum chemistry methods are good. The reaction barriers are challenging for computational methods and in them the GGA methods work rather well.

Very crudely one can say that

Double hybrid < Meta-GGA ~ Hybrid < pure GGA << LDA

Naturally the GGA methods have some problems. The most obvious one is the difficulty to improve the XC-functionals. Another is the van der Waals interactions (or dispersion) which is important in **weakly bonded systems**. HF and by far most of the GGAs do not have them and they have to be added using additional (empirical) terms. In most cases the Grimme's D3 model works well. DFT have also problems to describe the hydrogen correctly. This is due to the **Self Interaction Error** (SIE). In DFT the density is the basic quantity and hydrogen sees its own density. This is not correct (think the Schrödinger equation of H atom). A good GGA will almost cancel this but not exactly. There are several Self Interaction Corrections (SIC) but they are difficult to use. Note that HF is exact for hydrogen so the hybrid functionals have smaller SIE and this is one reason of their success.

Like HF the DFT models do not give good HOMO-LUMO gap or absolute energy levels for electronic states.

Summary: It does not matter whether we like or dislike DFT, its **accuracy compared to computational cost is superior** to any of the traditional quantum chemistry methods. For large systems we need to use DFT until we get very efficient MP2-type methods.

In DFT the development is rather slow. Now there is quite a bit of interest of beyond-DFT methods. Like RPA, MP2 etc.

On the other hand, both these methods have enormous amount of applications covering almost all fields of chemistry. DFT can be used to model single molecules, clusters of atoms, surfaces, solid systems and liquids. Systems up to 100.000 valence electrons can be computed. An emerging research field is quantum mechanical materials screening where properties of materials (or molecules) will be evaluated computationally and this information is used to help the synthetic work.

Practical quantum chemistry calculations

The first choice is the DFT with modern GGA or hybrid method. The basis should be TZ level. If possible test calculations (very often single point calculations are enough) with MP2 at least TZ basis should be done. The state-of-the-art basis set extrapolation methods like F12-RI-MP2 are efficient to estimate the infinite basis set limit. CCSD calculations are usually too expensive, but the DLPNO-CCSD(T) method looks very promising.