

Equipartition Theorem - Classical systems only

Suppose the Hamiltonian is quadratic in
some particular degree of freedom x_j (x_j is either
a coord or a momentum)

$$H[g_i, p_i] = H'[g_i, p_i] + \alpha_j x_j^2$$

↑
depends on all degrees of freedom
except x_j

$$\text{Then } \langle H \rangle = \langle H' \rangle + \alpha_j \langle x_j^2 \rangle$$

↑
Contribution to total average
energy from the degree of
freedom x_j

$$\langle x_j^2 \rangle = \frac{\prod_i \int dg_i dp_i x_j^2 e^{-\beta(H' + \alpha_j x_j^2)}}{\prod_i \int dg_i dp_i e^{-\beta(H' + \alpha_j x_j^2)}}$$

$$= \frac{\left(\prod'_i \int dg_i dp_i e^{-\beta H'} \right) \int dx_j x_j^2 e^{-\beta \alpha_j x_j^2}}{\left(\prod'_i \int dg_i dp_i e^{-\beta H'} \right) \int dx_j e^{-\beta \alpha_j x_j^2}}$$

where $\prod'_i$ is over all degrees of freedom except x_j

$$\langle x_j^2 \rangle = \frac{\int dx_j x_j^2 e^{-\beta \alpha_j x_j^2}}{\int dx_j e^{-\beta \alpha_j x_j^2}} = \frac{1}{2\beta \alpha_j} = \frac{1}{2} \frac{k_B T}{\alpha_j}$$

$$\left(\text{follows from } \int dx e^{-x^2/2\sigma^2} = \sqrt{2\pi\sigma^2} \text{ and } \frac{\int dx e^{-x^2/2\sigma^2} x^2}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma^2}} = \sigma^2 \right)$$

So the contribution to $\langle H \rangle$ from the degree of freedom x_j

$$\text{is } \alpha_j \langle x_j^2 \rangle = \alpha_j \frac{1}{2} \frac{k_B T}{\alpha_j} = \frac{1}{2} k_B T$$

$\Rightarrow$ each quadratic degree of freedom in the Hamiltonian contributes $\frac{1}{2} k_B T$ to the total average energy.

Ideal gas: $H = \sum_{i=1}^N \frac{|\vec{p}_i|^2}{2m}$

There are $3N$ quadratic degrees of freedom:
the three momenta $\vec{p}_i$ components for each particle

$$\Rightarrow E = \langle H \rangle = \frac{3N}{2} k_B T$$

or average energy per particle

$$\langle \epsilon \rangle = \frac{E}{N} = \frac{3}{2} k_B T$$

as we saw earlier from the simple kinetic theory of the ideal gas

Elastic vibrations of a solid

We can imagine the Hamiltonian for the periodic array of atoms in a solid to be

$$H = \sum_i \frac{\vec{p}_i^2}{2M} + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i \neq j} U(\vec{r}_i - \vec{r}_j)$$

↑
pair wise interactions between the atoms.

The position of atom ~~can~~ ^{can} be written as

$$\vec{r}_i = \vec{R}_i + \vec{u}_i \quad \text{where } \vec{R}_i \text{ is its position in the perfect periodic array, and } \vec{u}_i \text{ is a small displacement from this position due to thermal fluctuations}$$

then we can expand

$$\begin{aligned} U(\vec{r}_i - \vec{r}_j) &= U(\vec{R}_i - \vec{R}_j + \vec{u}_i - \vec{u}_j) \\ &= U(\vec{R}_i - \vec{R}_j) + \vec{\nabla} U \cdot (\vec{u}_i - \vec{u}_j) + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{\alpha, \beta} \frac{\partial^2 U}{\partial r_{i\alpha} \partial r_{j\beta}} (u_{i\alpha} - u_{j\alpha})(u_{i\beta} - u_{j\beta}) \end{aligned}$$

Now, assuming the positions $\vec{R}_i$ describe a stable equilibrium in the mechanical sense (i.e. the net force on each atom is zero), then

$$\sum_{i \neq j} \vec{\nabla} U \cdot (\vec{u}_i - \vec{u}_j) = 0$$

The Hamiltonian is then

$$H = \sum_i \frac{p_i^2}{2M} + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i \neq j} \sum_{\alpha \beta} \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2 U(\vec{R}_i, \vec{R}_j)}{\partial r_{i\alpha} \partial r_{j\beta}} (u_{i\alpha} - u_{j\alpha})(u_{i\beta} - u_{j\beta}) + \text{constant}$$

We see that H is quadratic in the displacements $\vec{u}_i$.
We can rewrite the above as

$$H = \sum_i \frac{p_i^2}{2M} + \sum_{i \neq j} \sum_{\alpha \beta} D_{ij}^{\alpha \beta} u_{i\alpha} u_{j\beta}$$

where the "dynamical matrix" D is related to the $\frac{\partial^2 U}{\partial r_{i\alpha} \partial r_{j\beta}}$.
One can show that it is always possible to choose "normal coordinates", $\tilde{u}_{i\alpha} = \sum_{j\beta} C_{ij}^{\alpha\beta} u_{j\beta}$, such that the above quadratic form is diagonalized.

(see Ashcroft + Mermin for details)

$$\sum_{i \neq j} \sum_{\alpha \beta} D_{ij}^{\alpha \beta} u_{i\alpha} u_{j\beta} = \sum_{i\alpha} \tilde{D}_i^{\alpha} \tilde{u}_{i\alpha}^2$$

Equipartition Theorem then says that each momentum $p_{i\alpha}$ gives $\frac{1}{2} k_B T$, and each normal coord $\tilde{u}_{i\alpha}$ also gives $\frac{1}{2} k_B T$.

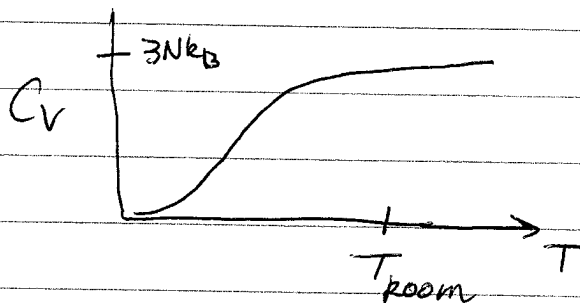
$\Rightarrow$ each of the $6N$ degrees of freedom gives $\frac{1}{2} k_B T$ towards the total average internal energy

$$\Rightarrow E = \langle H \rangle = (6N) \frac{1}{2} k_B T = \boxed{3N k_B T = E}$$

The contribution to the specific heat of a solid, due to atomic vibrations, is therefore

$$C_V = \frac{\partial E}{\partial T} = 3Nk_B \quad \text{Law of Dulong + Petit}$$

The classical result predicts a C_V that is independent of temperature. In real life however, one finds



at low T , see a clear decrease from Dulong-Petit prediction. Unexplainable classically

It was one of the early successes of quantum mechanics to explain why the Law of Dulong Petit fails at low T . This is an interesting example where the effects of quantum mechanics can be observed, not in atomic phenomena, but in the thermodynamics of macroscopic solids!

We will see the solution to this problem later when we discuss the statistics of bosons

Paramagnetism - Classical spins

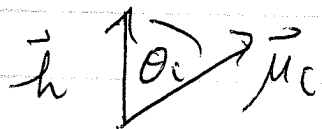
N distinguishable spins, we ignore interaction between spins and consider only the interaction of each spin with an external magnetic field $\vec{H}$.

This could be a model for fixed magnetic impurities in a solid. The "spin" is the intrinsic magnetic dipole moment of the magnetic atom, that is fixed to sit at a particular spatial position (that the atoms cannot move is why we consider them distinguishable).

Hamiltonian of the N -spins is

$$H = - \sum_{i=1}^N \vec{\mu}_i \cdot \vec{H} \quad \leftarrow \begin{array}{l} \text{spin of atom } i \\ \text{energy is lowest when it is } \parallel \text{ to } \vec{H} \end{array} \quad \leftarrow \begin{array}{l} \text{spins are} \\ \text{non-interacting} \end{array}$$
$$= -\mu H \sum_{i=1}^N \cos \theta_i$$

where $\mu = |\vec{\mu}_i|$ is fixed and θ_i is angle of $\vec{\mu}_i$ with respect to $\vec{H}$



Spins are distinguishable

$$\Rightarrow Q_N = (Q_1)^N \quad \text{no factor } \frac{1}{N!}$$

$$Q_1 = \int_0^{2\pi} d\varphi \int_0^{\pi} d\theta \sin\theta e^{\beta\mu h \cos\theta}$$

integrate over all possible states of the single spin $\vec{\mu}$, i.e. over all possible orientations of the vector $\vec{\mu}$.

$$Q_1 = 2\pi \int_0^{\pi} d\theta \sin\theta e^{\beta\mu h \cos\theta}$$

make substitution of variables

$$x = -\cos\theta$$

$$dx = d\theta \sin\theta$$

$$\theta = 0 \rightarrow x = -1$$

$$\theta = \pi \rightarrow x = +1$$

$$Q_1 = 2\pi \int_{-1}^1 dx e^{\beta\mu h x} = \frac{2\pi}{\beta\mu h} \left[e^{\beta\mu h} - e^{-\beta\mu h} \right]$$

$$= \frac{4\pi}{\beta\mu h} \sinh(\beta\mu h)$$

↑
hyperbolic sin

$$\sinh x = \frac{e^x - e^{-x}}{2}$$