

# VASP - Best Practices Seminar

Weine Olovsson

National Supercomputer Centre (NSC), Linköping University

NAISS training, online 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2025



<https://www.vasp.at/>

# NAIIS training

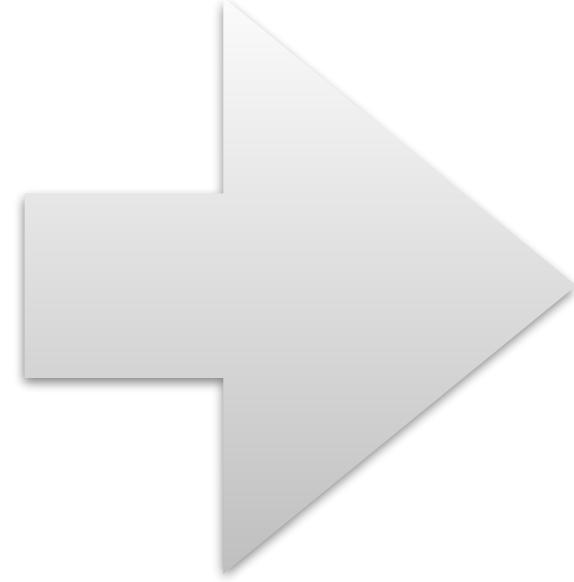
- Weine Olovsson (NSC) - presentation
- Diana Iusan (UPPMAX) - helper
- Pavlin Mitev (UPPMAX) - helper

<https://www.naiss.se/training/>

National Academic Infrastructure for  
Supercomputing in Sweden

///NAIIS

# Schedule



[https://www.nsc.liu.se/support/Events/VASP\\_seminar\\_2025/](https://www.nsc.liu.se/support/Events/VASP_seminar_2025/)

*Friday 3rd October*

**10:00 -11:00** Part 1.

**11:15 -12:00** Part 2.

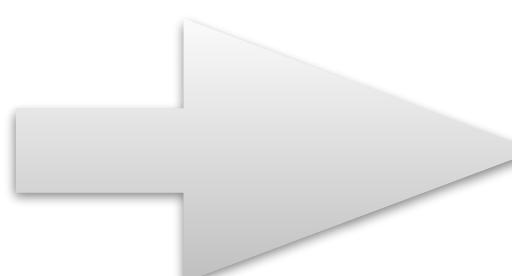
**12:00 -13:00** L u n c h

**13:00 -14:00** Q&A, discussion

- Seminar before lunch
- Questions, discussion, comments -> after lunch
- This presentation -> download .pdf at event page

# VASP - Best Practices Seminar

- Basic theory (PAW)
- General considerations ...at specific NAISS supercomputers
- Focus on practical aspects of running VASP
- Influential parameters, NPAR/NCORE, ALGO, NSIM, KPAR, ...
- Benchmarks, examples
- Common problems ... clickable links are underlined



...for utilities & helpful tools, check:

[https://www.nsc.liu.se/support/past-events/VASP\\_workshop\\_2024/s4-ws2024.pdf](https://www.nsc.liu.se/support/past-events/VASP_workshop_2024/s4-ws2024.pdf)

# 1. Basic Theory (very briefly)

# Schrödinger Equation

Time-independent SE

$$H\Psi = E\Psi,$$

Born-Oppenheimer approx.

$$= 0$$

$$\begin{aligned} H = T + T_n + V_{int} + V_{nn} + V_{ext} &= -\frac{\hbar^2}{2m_e} \sum_i \nabla_i^2 - \boxed{\sum_I \frac{\hbar^2}{2M_I} \nabla_I^2} + \\ &+ \sum_{i \neq j} \frac{e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_i - \mathbf{r}_j|} + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{I \neq J} \frac{Z_I Z_J \cdot e^2}{|\mathbf{R}_I - \mathbf{R}_J|} - \sum_{i,J} \frac{Z_J \cdot e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_i - \mathbf{R}_J|}, \end{aligned}$$

solid  $\sim 10^{23}$  particles...

# Density Functional Theory (DFT)

Use electron probability density  $n(\mathbf{r})$  instead of  $\Psi$ ...

- (1) The potential  $V_{\text{ext}}$  of a system is determined uniquely, except for a constant by the ground state density  $n(\mathbf{r})$
- (2) The total energy functional  $E[n]$ , for a given  $V_{\text{ext}}$ , assumes its minimal value for the correct electron density  $n(\mathbf{r})$  of the ground state

**Ansatz:** 
$$E_{KS}[n] = \int d^3r V_{\text{ext}}(\mathbf{r}) n(\mathbf{r}) + T_s[n] + E_{xc}[n] + \iint d^3r d^3r' \frac{n(\mathbf{r})n(\mathbf{r}')}{|\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'|},$$

for *independent* electrons (mean field theory)

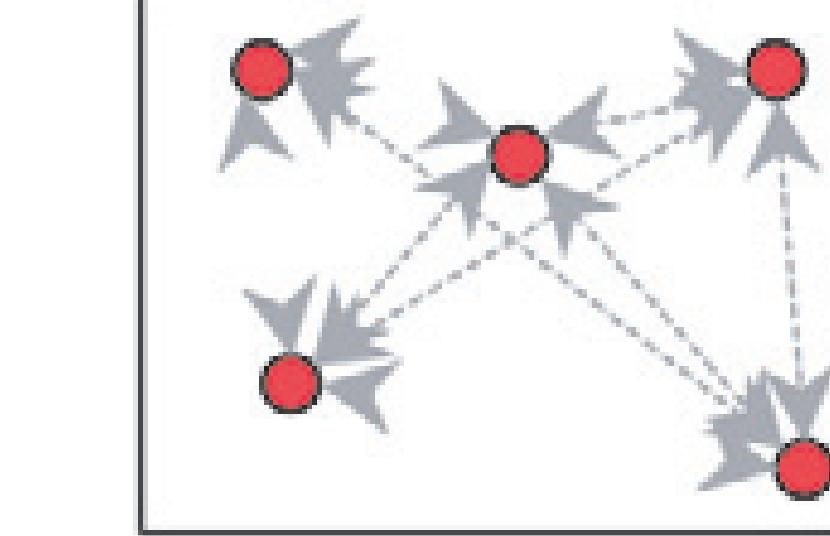
Hohenberg & Kohn, PRL 136, B864 (1964)

Kohn & Sham, PRL 140, A1133 (1965)

Properties of  
the system

Hard problem to solve

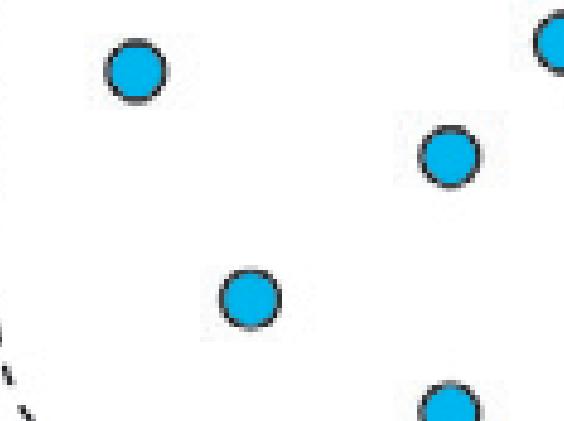
Schrödinger view



- electron
- ↔ interaction
- external potential

“Easy” problem to solve

DFT view



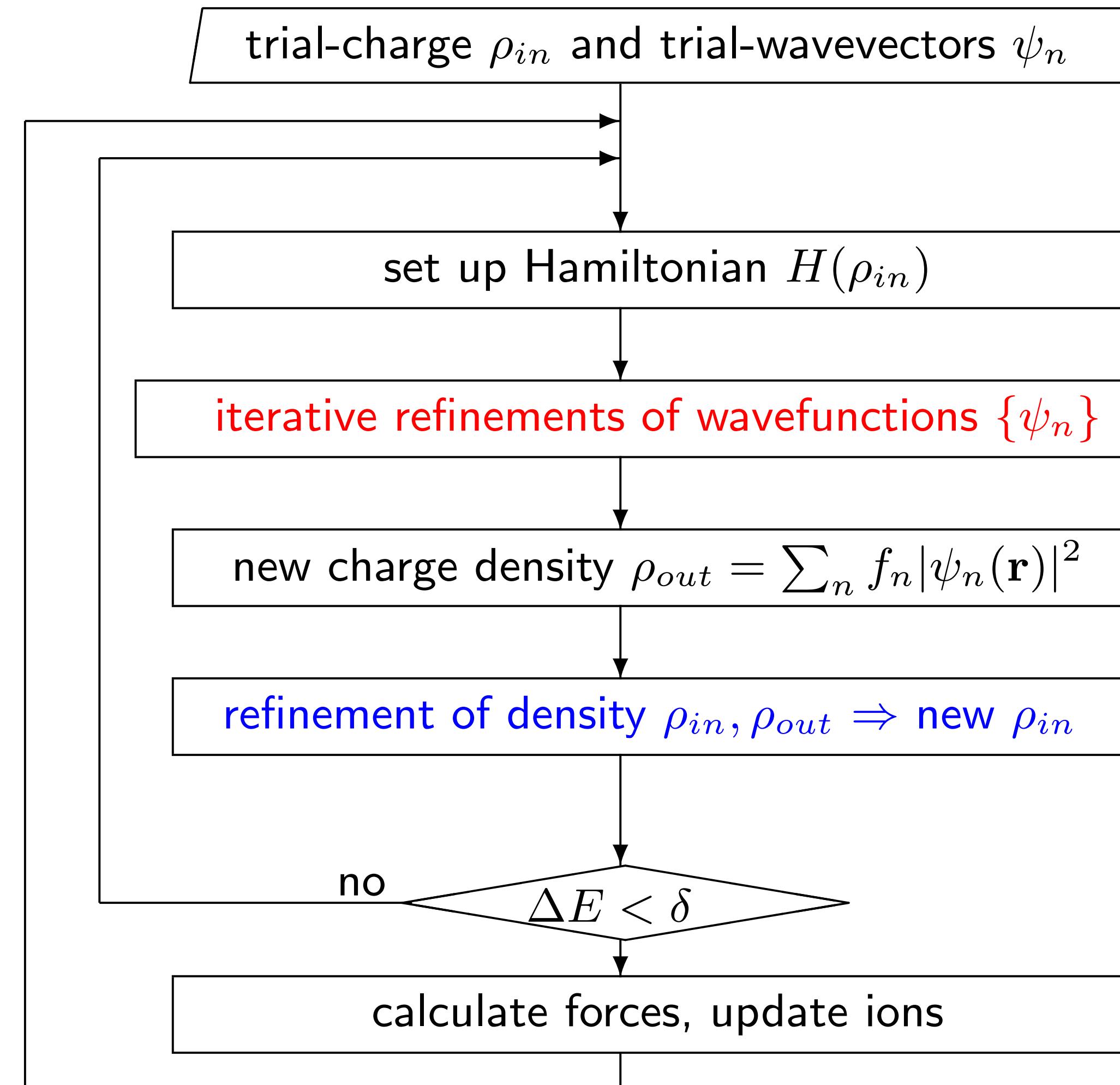
- Kohn-Sham particle  
(non-interacting)  
effective potential

Formally equivalent

$$v_{eff}(\mathbf{r}) = v(\mathbf{r}) + \int \frac{n(\mathbf{r}')}{|\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'|} d\mathbf{r}' + \frac{\delta E_{xc}[n(\mathbf{r})]}{\delta n(\mathbf{r})}$$

LDA, GGA,  
Meta-GGA,  
Hybrids, ...

# Self-consistent iterations



- two subproblems optimization of  $\{\psi_n\}$  and  $\rho_{in}$
- refinement of density: DIIS algorithm  
P. Pulay, Chem. Phys. Lett.  
73, 393 (1980)
- refinement of wavefunctions: DIIS or Davidson algorithm

# Why PAW?

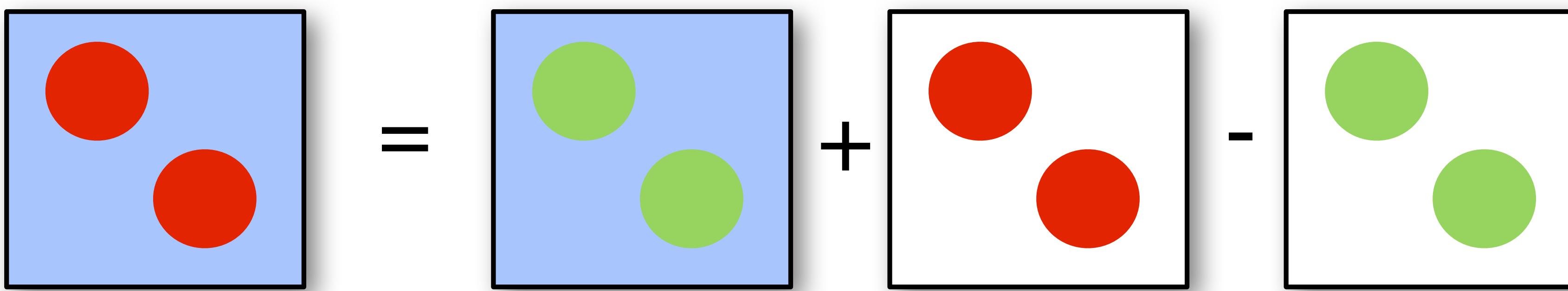
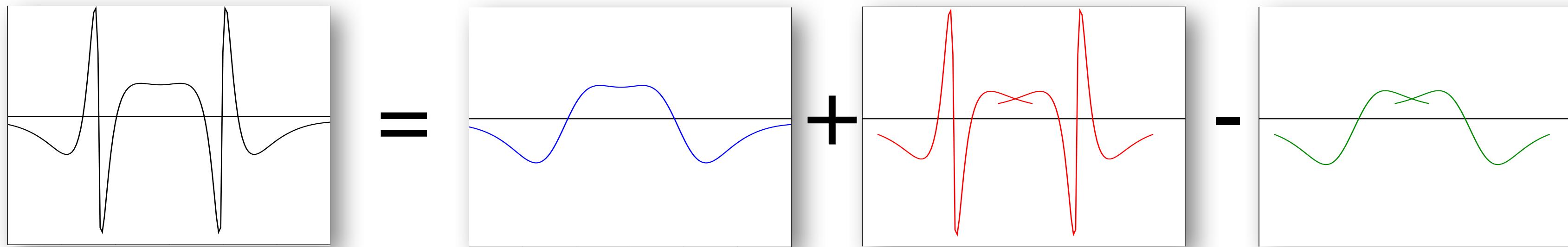
- **Goal:** both **accurate** (LAPW) and **fast** (e.g. USPP) method
- Want to *keep* all-electron (AE) wave function
- Focus on *valence electrons* (frozen core) - chemical bonding
- Fast calculation in *reciprocal space* using FFT (plane waves)
- **Solution:** Projector Augmented Wave (PAW) method

# Plane waves & Augmentation

- Rapid wave oscillations close to nucleus  
need too many plane waves!
- Strongly localised states at atoms  
therefore ->
- Split into *interstitial* and *augmentation* (sphere) regions  
smooth pw
- No overlap between spheres (one-centre expansion)
- PAW: Energy and potential *independent* wave functions

# PAW Augmentation

$$\underbrace{|\psi\rangle}_{\text{all-electron}} = \underbrace{|\tilde{\psi}\rangle}_{\text{pseudo}} + \underbrace{|\psi^1\rangle}_{\text{1-center, all-el.}} - \underbrace{|\tilde{\psi}^1\rangle}_{\text{1-center, pseudo}}$$
$$\sum_{\alpha} |\phi_{\alpha}\rangle \langle \tilde{p}_{\alpha}| \tilde{\psi} \rangle \quad \sum_{\alpha} |\tilde{\phi}_{\alpha}\rangle \langle \tilde{p}_{\alpha}| \tilde{\psi} \rangle$$



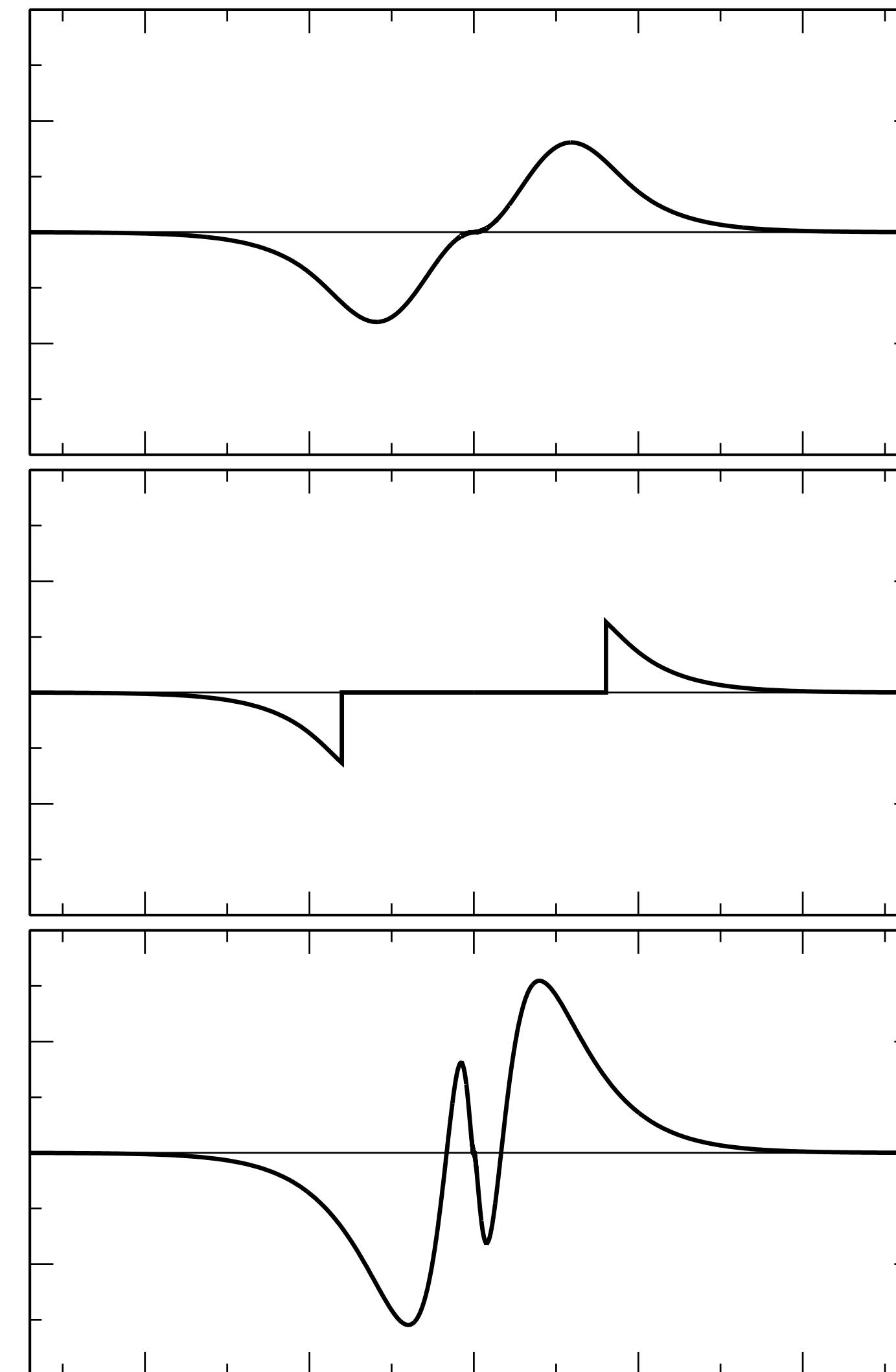
from Blöchl: [http://www2.pt.tu-clausthal.de/atp/downloads/lyngby2\\_paw.pdf](http://www2.pt.tu-clausthal.de/atp/downloads/lyngby2_paw.pdf)

# PAW Augmentation

$$|\tilde{\psi}_n\rangle$$

$$|\tilde{\psi}_n\rangle - \sum_i |\tilde{\phi}_i\rangle \langle \tilde{p}_i | \tilde{\psi}_n \rangle$$

$$|\tilde{\psi}_n\rangle - \sum_i |\tilde{\phi}_i\rangle \langle \tilde{p}_i | \tilde{\psi}_n \rangle + \sum_i |\phi_i\rangle \langle \tilde{p}_i | \tilde{\psi}_n \rangle$$

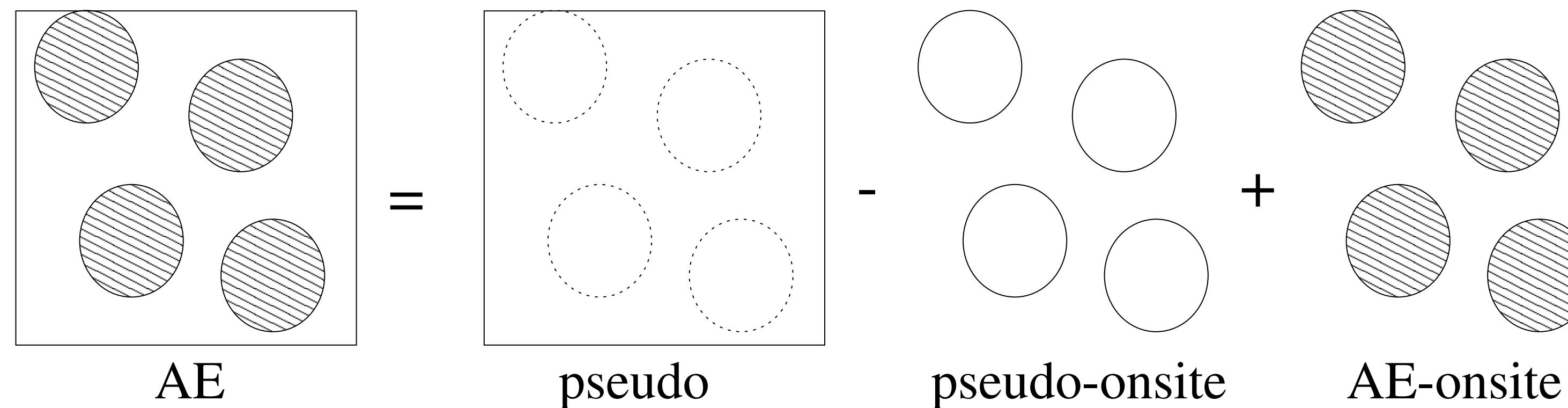


from Marsman: <https://www.vasp.at/mmars/day1.pdf>

# PAW Augmentation

- Character of wavefunction:  $c_{lme} = \langle \tilde{p}_{lme} | \tilde{\psi}_n \rangle$

$$|\psi_n\rangle = |\tilde{\psi}_n\rangle - \sum |\tilde{\phi}_{lm\epsilon}\rangle c_{lm\epsilon} + \sum |\phi_{lm\epsilon}\rangle c_{lm\epsilon}$$



- Same trick works for
    - Wavefunctions
    - Charge density
    - Kinetic energy
    - Exchange correlation energy
    - Hartree energy

*from Marsman: <https://www.vasp.at/mmars/day1.pdf>*

# Total Energy

$$E = \tilde{E} + E^1 - \tilde{E}^1$$

three terms

**PW grid**

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{E} = & \sum_n f_n \langle \tilde{\psi}_n | -\frac{1}{2} \Delta |\tilde{\psi}_n\rangle + E_{xc}[\tilde{\rho} + \hat{\rho} + \tilde{\rho}_c] + \\ & E_H[\tilde{\rho} + \hat{\rho}] + \int v_H[\tilde{\rho}_{Zc}] (\tilde{\rho}(\mathbf{r}) + \hat{\rho}(\mathbf{r})) d^3\mathbf{r} + U(\mathbf{R}, Z_{\text{ion}}) \end{aligned}$$

**local  
radial grid**

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{E}^1 = & \sum_{\text{sites}} \left\{ \sum_{(i,j)} \rho_{ij} \langle \tilde{\phi}_i | -\frac{1}{2} \Delta |\tilde{\phi}_j\rangle + \overline{E_{xc}[\tilde{\rho}^1 + \hat{\rho} + \tilde{\rho}_c]} + \right. \\ & \left. \overline{E_H[\tilde{\rho}^1 + \hat{\rho}]} + \int_{\Omega_r} v_H[\tilde{\rho}_{Zc}] (\tilde{\rho}^1(\mathbf{r}) + \hat{\rho}(\mathbf{r})) d^3\mathbf{r} \right\} \end{aligned}$$

**local  
radial grid**

$$\begin{aligned} E^1 = & \sum_{\text{sites}} \left\{ \sum_{(i,j)} \rho_{ij} \langle \phi_i | -\frac{1}{2} \Delta |\phi_j\rangle + \overline{E_{xc}[\rho^1 + \rho_c]} + \right. \\ & \left. \overline{E_H[\rho^1]} + \int_{\Omega_r} v_H[\rho_{Zc}] \rho^1(\mathbf{r}) d^3\mathbf{r} \right\} \end{aligned}$$

# What are the approximations?

- Frozen core can be relaxed: Marsman & Kresse, JCP 125, 104101 (2006)
- Plane wave expansion, energy cut-off  $\frac{1}{2}|\mathbf{G} + \mathbf{k}|^2 < E_{\text{cutoff}}$
- Partial wave expansion (1-2 per angular momentum)

# PAW: Things to note

- *All-electron method* (valence states orthogonal to core)
- Frozen core approximation
- Plane waves: FFT in reciprocal space, **fast calculations**
- **Forces** from total energy expression
- PAW point-of-view: LAPW *special case*, PP an *approximation*

# Accuracy

# Compare with FPLAPW method (WIEN2k)

| H   | He  |
|-----|-----|
| 0.1 | 0.0 |
| Li  | Be  |
| 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Na  | Mg  |
| 0.0 | 0.7 |
| K   | Ca  |
| Sc  | Ti  |
| V   | Cr  |
| Mn  | Fe  |
| Co  | Ni  |
| Cu  | Zn  |
| Ga  | Ge  |
| As  | Se  |
| Br  | Kr  |
| 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Rb  | Sr  |
| Y   | Zr  |
| Nb  | Mo  |
| Tc  | Ru  |
| Rh  | Pd  |
| Ag  | Cd  |
| In  | Sn  |
| Sb  | Te  |
| I   | Xe  |
| 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Cs  | Ba  |
| Lu  | Hf  |
| Ta  | W   |
| Re  | Os  |
| Ir  | Pt  |
| Au  | Hg  |
| Tl  | Pb  |
| Bi  | Po  |
| At  | Rn  |
| 0.3 | 0.7 |

|     |                       | AE  |          |                |                       |                |       |              |          |            |      |                |                 | PAW        |               |             |               |             |              |              |             |               |               |                 |           | USPP          |           |              |              |         |            |             |                |            |                 |                |                        | NCPP                   |                    |                        |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----|-----------------------|-----|----------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------|--------------|----------|------------|------|----------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|---------|------------|-------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-----|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|     |                       | Elk | exciting | FHI-aims/tight | FHI-aims/really_tight | FHI-aims/tier2 | FLEUR | FPLO/default | FPLO/T+F | FPLO/T+F+s | RSPT | WIEN2k/default | WIEN2k/enhanced | WIEN2k/acc | GBRV12/ABINIT | GPAW06/GPAW | GPAW09/ABINIT | GPAW09/GPAW | JTH01/ABINIT | JTH02/ABINIT | PSlib031/QE | VASP2007/VASP | VASP2012/VASP | VASPGW2015/VASP | GBRV12/QE | GBRV14/CASTEP | GBRV14/QE | OTFG7/CASTEP | OTFG9/CASTEP | SSSP/QE | Vdb/CASTEP | Vdb2/DACAPO | FHI98pp/ABINIT | HGH/ABINIT | HGH-NLCC/BigDFT | MBK2013/OpenMX | ONCVPPSP(PD0.1)/ABINIT | ONCVPPSP(SG15)1/CASTEP | ONCVPPSP(SG15)1/QE | ONCVPPSP(SG15)2/CASTEP |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| AE  | Elk                   | 0.3 | 0.6      | 0.6            | 0.3                   | 0.6            | 3.9   | 1.0          | 1.0      | 0.9        | 1.7  | 1.8            | 0.3             | 0.9        | 3.8           | 1.3         | 1.5           | 1.2         | 0.6          | 1.6          | 0.9         | 2.1           | 0.7           | 0.4             | 1.1       | 1.1           | 1.0       | 2.5          | 0.5          | 0.3     | 6.4        | 6.3         | 13.5           | 2.2        | 1.1             | 2.1            | 0.7                    | 1.5                    | 1.4                | 1.0                    |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | exciting              | 0.3 | 0.5      | 0.5            | 0.1                   | 0.5            | 3.9   | 1.0          | 0.9      | 0.8        | 1.7  | 1.8            | 0.2             | 0.8        | 3.8           | 1.3         | 1.5           | 1.2         | 0.6          | 1.6          | 0.8         | 2.1           | 0.6           | 0.4             | 1.0       | 1.1           | 1.0       | 2.5          | 0.5          | 0.3     | 6.4        | 6.3         | 13.4           | 2.2        | 1.1             | 2.1            | 0.7                    | 1.4                    | 1.3                | 1.0                    |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | FHI-aims/tight        | 0.6 | 0.5      | 0.0            | 0.5                   | 0.7            | 3.8   | 0.9          | 1.1      | 0.7        | 1.8  | 1.8            | 0.5             | 1.0        | 3.8           | 1.3         | 1.6           | 1.3         | 0.7          | 1.7          | 1.0         | 2.2           | 0.8           | 0.6             | 1.1       | 1.2           | 1.1       | 2.6          | 0.7          | 0.6     | 6.4        | 6.3         | 13.6           | 2.2        | 1.2             | 2.0            | 0.8                    | 1.5                    | 1.4                | 1.0                    |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | FHI-aims/really_tight | 0.6 | 0.5      | 0.0            | 0.5                   | 0.7            | 3.8   | 0.9          | 1.1      | 0.8        | 1.8  | 1.8            | 0.5             | 1.0        | 3.8           | 1.3         | 1.6           | 1.3         | 0.7          | 1.7          | 1.0         | 2.2           | 0.8           | 0.6             | 1.1       | 1.2           | 1.1       | 2.6          | 0.7          | 0.6     | 6.5        | 6.3         | 13.6           | 2.2        | 1.2             | 2.0            | 0.8                    | 1.5                    | 1.4                | 1.0                    |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | FHI-aims/tier2        | 0.3 | 0.1      | 0.5            | 0.5                   | 0.5            | 3.9   | 0.9          | 0.9      | 0.8        | 1.7  | 1.8            | 0.2             | 0.8        | 3.8           | 1.3         | 1.5           | 1.2         | 0.6          | 1.6          | 0.8         | 2.0           | 0.6           | 0.4             | 0.9       | 1.0           | 0.9       | 2.5          | 0.5          | 0.3     | 6.4        | 6.3         | 13.4           | 2.2        | 1.1             | 2.1            | 0.7                    | 1.4                    | 1.3                | 1.0                    |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | FLEUR                 | 0.6 | 0.5      | 0.7            | 0.7                   | 0.5            | 3.6   | 0.8          | 0.8      | 0.6        | 1.4  | 1.5            | 0.4             | 0.9        | 3.5           | 1.3         | 1.5           | 1.0         | 0.6          | 1.5          | 0.8         | 1.9           | 0.7           | 0.6             | 1.0       | 1.0           | 1.0       | 2.6          | 0.7          | 0.5     | 6.5        | 6.3         | 13.2           | 2.0        | 1.0             | 1.9            | 0.6                    | 1.3                    | 1.3                | 1.0                    |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | FPLO/default          | 3.9 | 3.9      | 3.8            | 3.8                   | 3.9            | 3.6   |              | 3.1      | 3.6        | 3.3  | 2.9            | 2.5             | 3.9        | 4.0           | 3.1         | 4.1           | 4.1         | 3.4          | 3.6          | 3.3         | 3.9           | 2.8           | 3.9             | 4.0       | 4.0           | 4.0       | 4.1          | 5.8          | 4.1     | 3.9        | 7.9         | 7.2            | 13.0       | 4.9             | 3.6            | 3.2                    | 3.7                    | 4.1                | 4.1                    | 4.0 |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | FPLO/T+F              | 1.0 | 1.0      | 0.9            | 0.9                   | 0.9            | 0.8   | 3.1          |          | 0.8        | 0.7  | 1.4            | 1.4             | 0.9        | 1.3           | 3.4         | 1.7           | 1.9         | 1.0          | 0.9          | 1.5         | 1.3           | 1.9           | 1.2             | 1.0       | 1.3           | 1.3       | 1.3          | 3.1          | 1.1     | 1.0        | 6.6         | 6.4            | 13.7       | 2.4             | 1.2            | 1.8                    | 1.0                    | 1.6                | 1.6                    | 1.0 |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | FPLO/T+F+s            | 1.0 | 0.9      | 1.1            | 1.1                   | 0.9            | 0.8   | 3.6          | 0.8      |            | 0.9  | 1.5            | 1.5             | 0.9        | 1.3           | 3.5         | 1.7           | 1.8         | 1.2          | 0.9          | 1.4         | 1.3           | 1.9           | 1.2             | 1.0       | 1.4           | 1.4       | 1.4          | 2.9          | 1.0     | 0.9        | 6.4         | 6.4            | 13.0       | 2.3             | 1.2            | 1.8                    | 1.0                    | 1.6                | 1.6                    | 1.0 |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | RSPT                  | 0.9 | 0.8      | 0.7            | 0.8                   | 0.8            | 0.6   | 3.3          | 0.7      | 0.9        |      | 1.3            | 1.3             | 0.8        | 1.1           | 3.4         | 1.5           | 1.7         | 0.9          | 0.7          | 1.6         | 1.1           | 1.9           | 1.0             | 0.8       | 1.2           | 1.3       | 1.3          | 3.0          | 1.0     | 0.8        | 6.7         | 6.5            | 13.2       | 2.2             | 1.1            | 1.8                    | 0.8                    | 1.5                | 1.5                    | 1.0 |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| PAW | WIEN2k/default        | 1.7 | 1.7      | 1.8            | 1.8                   | 1.7            | 1.4   | 2.9          | 1.4      | 1.5        | 1.3  |                | 0.9             | 1.7        | 1.9           | 3.2         | 2.2           | 2.3         | 1.3          | 1.5          | 1.8         | 1.8           | 1.7           | 1.8             | 1.8       | 1.9           | 1.9       | 3.8          | 1.8          | 1.6     | 7.1        | 7.0         | 13.0           | 2.8        | 1.7             | 1.9            | 1.6                    | 2.1                    | 2.1                | 2.0                    |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | WIEN2k/enhanced       | 1.8 | 1.8      | 1.8            | 1.8                   | 1.8            | 1.5   | 2.5          | 1.4      | 1.5        | 1.3  | 0.9            |                 | 1.8        | 2.0           | 2.6         | 2.1           | 2.2         | 1.1          | 1.5          | 1.6         | 1.8           | 1.4           | 1.9             | 2.0       | 2.0           | 2.0       | 2.0          | 3.8          | 2.0     | 1.7        | 6.9         | 6.9            | 12.3       | 2.8             | 1.6            | 1.5                    | 1.7                    | 1.9                | 1.9                    | 1.0 |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | WIEN2k/acc            | 0.3 | 0.2      | 0.5            | 0.5                   | 0.2            | 0.4   | 3.9          | 0.9      | 0.9        | 0.8  | 1.7            | 1.8             |            | 0.8           | 3.8         | 1.3           | 1.5         | 1.2          | 0.5          | 1.6         | 0.8           | 2.0           | 0.7             | 0.3       | 0.9           | 1.0       | 1.0          | 2.5          | 0.5     | 0.3        | 6.4         | 6.2            | 13.4       | 2.1             | 1.0            | 2.0                    | 0.6                    | 1.4                | 1.3                    | 1.0 |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | GBRV12/ABINIT         | 0.9 | 0.8      | 1.0            | 1.0                   | 0.8            | 0.9   | 4.0          | 1.3      | 1.3        | 1.1  | 1.9            | 2.0             | 0.8        |               | 4.1         | 1.5           | 1.6         | 1.5          | 1.1          | 2.0         | 1.1           | 2.3           | 1.0             | 0.9       | 0.7           | 0.8       | 0.7          | 2.8          | 1.0     | 0.7        | 6.4         | 6.3            | 15.1       | 2.5             | 1.5            | 2.4                    | 1.1                    | 1.8                | 1.7                    | 1.0 |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | GPAW06/GPAW           | 3.8 | 3.8      | 3.8            | 3.8                   | 3.8            | 3.5   | 3.1          | 3.4      | 3.5        | 3.4  | 3.2            | 2.6             | 3.8        | 4.1           |             | 3.6           | 3.5         | 3.2          | 3.5          | 3.0         | 3.8           | 2.8           | 3.7             | 3.8       |               | 4.0       | 3.8          | 4.0          | 5.6     | 3.9        | 3.6         | 7.4            | 7.6        | 12.3            | 4.5            | 3.0                    | 3.0                    | 3.6                | 3.7                    | 3.8 | 3.0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | GPAW09/ABINIT         | 1.3 | 1.3      | 1.3            | 1.3                   | 1.3            | 1.3   | 4.1          | 1.7      | 1.7        | 1.5  | 2.2            | 2.1             | 1.3        | 1.5           | 3.6         |               | 0.6         | 1.5          | 1.4          | 2.0         | 1.5           | 2.4           | 1.4             | 1.3       | 1.3           | 1.6       | 1.6          | 1.6          | 2.5     | 1.4        | 1.3         | 6.5            | 6.1        | 13.6            | 2.3            | 1.7                    | 2.3                    | 1.2                | 1.7                    | 1.7 | 1.0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | GPAW09/GPAW           | 1.5 | 1.5      | 1.6            | 1.6                   | 1.5            | 1.5   | 4.1          | 1.9      | 1.8        | 1.7  | 2.3            | 2.2             | 1.5        | 1.6           | 3.5         | 0.6           |             | 1.6          | 1.5          | 2.1         | 1.6           | 2.5           | 1.6             | 1.5       | 1.5           | 1.7       | 1.7          | 1.7          | 2.7     | 1.5        | 1.4         | 6.5            | 6.1        | 13.6            | 2.5            | 1.8                    | 2.3                    | 1.5                | 1.8                    | 1.8 | 1.0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | JTH01/ABINIT          | 1.2 | 1.2      | 1.3            | 1.3                   | 1.2            | 1.0   | 3.4          | 1.0      | 1.2        | 0.9  | 1.3            | 1.1             | 1.2        |               |             |               |             |              |              |             |               |               |                 |           |               |           |              |              |         |            |             |                |            |                 |                |                        |                        |                    |                        |     |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

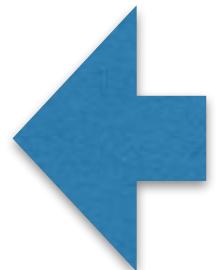
# DFT codes using PAW

- VASP license
  - Abinit free
  - Quantum Espresso free
  - GPAW free
  - + more
- Importance of good **potential database**

# Refs.

- Good presentations by [Marsman](#) and [Blöchl](#)
- Blöchl PRB **50**, 17953 (1994)
- Blöchl *et al.* <https://arxiv.org/abs/cond-mat/0201015v2>
- Kresse & Joubert PRB **59**, 1758 (1999)
- Holzwarth *et al.* PRB **55**, 2005 (1997)
- Martin, *Electronic Structure*, Chapter 11.1, 13.2

<https://vasp.at/>

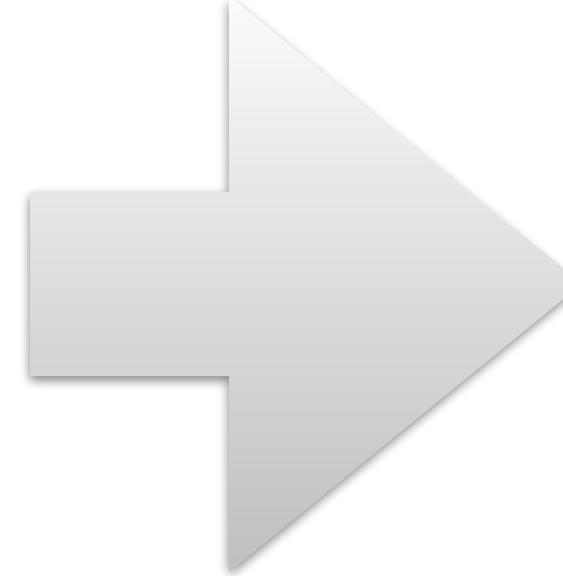


# 2. VASP - Basics

# VASP - Basics

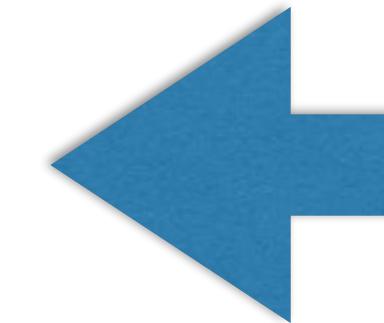
- Where to find information
  - VASP at different NAISS HPC clusters
- Starting files
- Important parameters
- Input/output
- Examples

# Short background

- Software license (not free!)  <https://vasp.at/>
- PAW-method
- DFT, post-DFT (HSE06, GW, ...)
- Born-Oppenheimer Molecular Dynamics
- widely used in Academia/Industry
  - Efforts from Intel & Nvidia for optimization
- 20-25% of Tetralith usage
- VASP6 is available since 2020

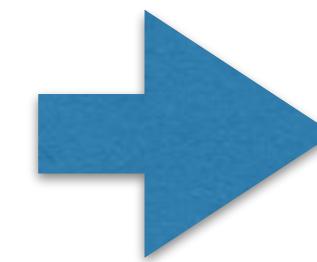
# Starting advice

- Read the [documentation](#)!
- VASP default settings
- Caution: “inherited” input files
- Avoid overly messy INCAR...
- Possible differences in installations & versions  
*refer to respective center webpages / documentation*

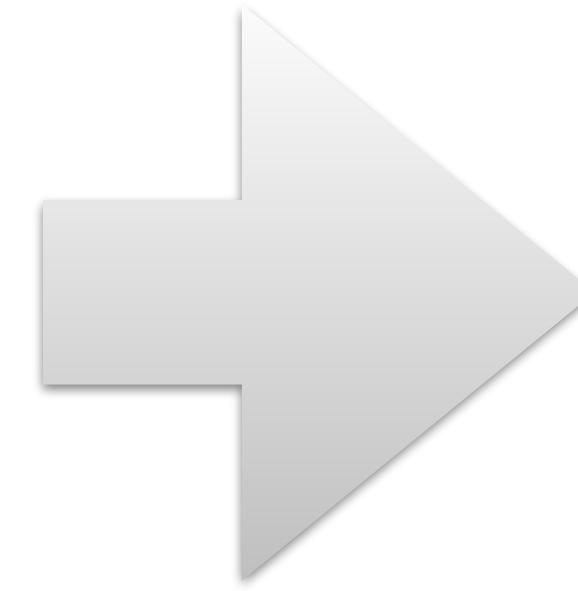


good starting point

# Resources



- Wiki and Manual  
**Check in detail!**
- Examples, tutorials
- Presentations
- Forum



Find all the links:  
<https://vasp.at/>

- Also other resources, materials and tools for VASP
- Peter Larsson's old blog at NSC: <https://www.nsc.liu.se/~pla/>
- Tetralith installations: <https://www.nsc.liu.se/software/docs/vasp/>
- Dardel installations: <https://support.pdc.kth.se/doc/applications/vasp/>

Questions / trouble @NAISSL clusters? <https://supr.naiss.se/support/>

VASP - Vienna Ab initio Simulation Package

SIGN IN WIKI PY4VASP LEARN INFO Search ...



The Vienna Ab initio Simulation Package: atomic scale materials modelling from first principles.

[Read more](#)

**Get a license**  
Not a license holder yet? Apply for a license [here](#)  
Unsure how to proceed? Have a look at the [FAQs](#)

**VASP Wiki**  
The user manual of VASP  
Documentation of input and output  
Advice on compiling the code

**Forum**  
Meet the **VASP Community**  
Ask questions to other users  
Get technical support from the VASP team

**Learn**  
Workshop, tutorials, lectures and more  
Get started today and learn how to use VASP

**py4vasp**  
Python tool to interface with VASP  
Analyze your calculations with ease

**Portal**  
Licensees please login here:  
**Username**   
**Password**   
**LOGIN**  
[Forgot my password/username](#)

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.vasp.at/py4vasp/latest/>. The page title is "py4vasp". The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with sections: "py4vasp" (selected), "Installation", "Quick start", "calculation" (selected), "raw", "data", and "exceptions". The main content area has a heading "py4vasp" and a paragraph describing it as a Python interface for VASP calculations. It mentions two user groups: those wanting a quick look at data and those wanting to write scripts. Below this is a section titled "Installation" with instructions for creating a separate environment and installing from PyPI or Conda. It includes code snippets for pip and conda installations. A "Important" note at the bottom states that running the command will print the installed version of py4vasp.

py4vasp

*py4vasp* is a python interface to extract data from VASP calculations. It is intended mainly to get a quick look at the data and provide the functionality to export it into common formats that can be used by other more sophisticated postprocessing tools. The second domain of application is for people that want to write python scripts based on the data calculated by VASP. This tool interfaces directly with the new HDF5 file format and thereby avoids parsing issues associated with the XML or OUTCAR files.

For these two groups of users, we provide a different level of access. The simple routines used in the tutorials will read the data from the file directly and then generate the requested plot. For script developers, we provide an expert interface where the data is lazily loaded as needed with some greater flexibility when the data file is opened and closed.

## Installation

While this is not required to be able to run *py4vasp*, you may want to consider creating a separate environment for installation to avoid interference with other installed packages.<sup>1</sup> You can then install *py4vasp* from [PyPI](#) using the pip package installer

```
pip install py4vasp
```

This will automatically download *py4vasp* as well as all the required dependencies. However, we noticed that this approach is not fail-safe, because the installation of the *mdtraj* dependency does not work on all operating systems. So in case the simple installation above fails, you may need to use *conda* to install *mdtraj*

```
conda install -c conda-forge mdtraj  
pip install py4vasp
```

If these commands succeed, you should be able to use *py4vasp*. You can make a quick test of your installation running the following command

```
python -c "import py4vasp; print(py4vasp.__version__)"
```

This should print the version of *py4vasp* that you installed.

**Important**

<https://www.vasp.at/>

...py4vasp useful tool for quick analysis!

VASP - Vienna Ab initio Simulation Package

SIGN IN WIKI PY4VASP LEARN INFO Search ...



The Vienna Ab initio Simulation Package: atomic scale materials modelling from first principles.

[Read more](#)

**Get a license** → **VASP Wiki** → **Forum**

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**VASP Wiki**  
The user manual of VASP  
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Python tool to interface with VASP  
Analyze your calculations with ease

**Portal**  
Licensees please login here:  
**Username**   
**Password**   
**LOGIN**  
[Forgot my password/username](#)

<https://www.vasp.at/>

...wiki important resource & also check forum

The VASP Manual - VASP Wiki

vasp.at/wiki/The\_VASP\_Manual

Log In ...

# The VASP Manual

Requests for technical support from the VASP team should be posted in the [VASP Forum](#).

Contents [hide]

Page Discussion Read View source View history

**Beginning**  
(Redirected from [Main page](#))

Featured topics

Support

Take a tour Install VASP Get a license ↗

Release notes VASP website and news ↗ Forum ↗

Learn ↗, examples, Wiki tutorials py4vasp ↗ Portal ↗

Known issues Tutorials ↗ Lectures ↗

Featured topics

| Category                           | subtopics (amongst others)   |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Theoretical background             | We collect <b>theory pages</b> from all the different areas VASP offers functionalities. These can also be found in the corresponding category of the topic. For instance, the article on the <a href="#">Blocked-Davidson algorithm</a> is also linked from the <a href="#">electronic minimization</a> page.   |
| Calculation setup                  | The <b>computational setup</b> considers the <a href="#">installation</a> , the <a href="#">input and output files</a> , <a href="#">performance</a> , etc. To learn how to set up your calculation, it is probably best to look for a <a href="#">how-to page</a> , e.g., <a href="#">setting up an electronic minimization</a> , <a href="#">band-structure calculation using hybrid functionals</a> , <a href="#">constructing Wannier orbitals</a> , <a href="#">structure optimization</a> , etc. |
| Electronic minimization            | <b>Electronic minimization</b> is the central task in many calculations. Here, you find pages describing the <a href="#">self-consistency cycle</a> , different algorithms, e.g., <a href="#">blocked-Davidson algorithm</a> , <a href="#">RMM-DIIS</a> , <a href="#">direct optimization of the orbitals</a> , and related topics like <a href="#">preconditioning</a> , <a href="#">density mixing</a> , etc.  |
| Electronic ground-state properties | Band structure, <a href="#">density of states</a> , partial DOS and on-site charge and magnetization ( <a href="#">LORBIT</a> ), <a href="#">electrostatics</a> , <a href="#">charge density</a> , <a href="#">potential</a> , etc.  |
| Spin degree of freedom             | Spin-orbit coupling, noncollinear magnetism, spin spirals, constrained magnetism, etc.   |

The VASP Manual - VASP Wiki

asp.at/wiki/The\_VASP\_Manual

Contents [hide]

Beginning

Featured topics

Support

Spin degree of freedom

Spin-orbit coupling, noncollinear magnetism, spin spirals, constrained magnetism, etc.

Exchange-correlation functionals

LDA, GGA, meta-GGA, DFT+U, hybrid functionals, van der Waals functionals.

Symmetry and structure

Crystal symmetry, reciprocal space, surfaces, pair-correlation function for liquids, etc.

Ionic minimization

Structure optimization, ionic-minimization methods, forces, transition states, etc.

Molecular dynamics

Barostats, thermostats, ensembles, etc.

Ensemble properties

Monitoring geometric parameters, pair-correlation function, thermal conductivity, diffusion, etc.

Advanced molecular-dynamics sampling

Interface pinning, constrained molecular dynamics, metadynamics, thermodynamic integration, etc.

Machine-learned force fields

Training and application of force fields.

Phonons

Lattice vibrations, finite differences, phonon dispersion relation.

Electron-phonon interactions

Band-structure renormalization, transport, stochastic sampling.

Response theory

Static and frequency-dependent dielectric properties, Berry phases, spectroscopy (UV, VIS, X-ray, NMR), phonons, etc.

Many-body perturbation theory

ACFDT, BSE, GW, MP2, cRPA.

Localized basis and projection

Obtaining Wannier functions, SCDM, partial DOS and on-site charge and magnetization (LORBIT), Constrained-random-phase approximation

Performance

Parallelization, memory management, profiling, etc.

## Support

If you have questions or run into trouble, please have a look at the [known issues](#) and/or post a question on the [VASP Forum](#).

**Mind:** We offer support on a courtesy basis only, not as a contractual service.

[Back to the top](#)

Category:Examples - VASP Wiki

vasp.at/wiki/Category:Examples

≡  Search VASP Wiki Log In ...

Requests for technical support from the VASP team should be posted in the [VASP Forum](#).

## Category:Examples

Category Discussion Read View source View history Help

All articles related to VASP example calculations

Contents

### Pages in category "Examples"

The following 80 pages are in this category, out of 80 total.

- A**
  - Adsorption of H<sub>2</sub>O on TiO<sub>2</sub>
  - Alpha-AlF<sub>3</sub>
  - Alpha-SiO<sub>2</sub>
  - At and mcl further
- B**
  - Band gap renormalization in diamond using one-shot method
  - Bandgap of Si in GW
  - Bandgap of Si using different DFT+HF methods
  - Bandstructure and CRPA of SrVO<sub>3</sub>
  - Bandstructure of Si in GW (VASP2WANNIER90)
  - Bandstructure of SrVO<sub>3</sub> in GW
  - Beta-tin Si
- C**
  - Calculate U for LSDA+U
  - Cd Si
  - Cd Si relaxation
  - Cd Si volume relaxation
  - CO
  - CO on Ni 111 surface
  - CO partial DOS
  - CO relaxation
- D**
  - Density of states of the diamond structure
- E**
  - Estimation of J magnetic coupling
- F**
  - Fcc Ni
  - Fcc Ni (revisited)
  - Fcc Ni DOS
  - Fcc Ni DOS with hybrid functional
  - Fcc Si
  - Fcc Si bandstructure
  - Fcc Si DOS
- G**
  - Graphite interlayer distance
  - Graphite MBD binding energy
  - Graphite TS binding energy
- H**
  - H<sub>2</sub>O
  - H<sub>2</sub>O molecular dynamics
  - H<sub>2</sub>O vibration
- I**
  - Improving the dielectric function
  - Including the Spin-Orbit Coupling
  - Ionic contributions to the frequency dependent dielectric function of NaCl
- J**
  - Job control
- K**
  - Kondo effect
- L**
  - Lattice constant
- M**
  - Magnetic moments
- N**
  - Ni 111 surface relaxation
  - NiO
  - NiO GGA
  - NiO GGA+U
  - NiO HSE06
  - NiO LSDA+U
  - Nucleophile Substitution CH<sub>3</sub>Cl - Standard MD
  - Nucleophile Substitution CH<sub>3</sub>Cl - BM
  - Nucleophile Substitution CH<sub>3</sub>Cl - mMD1
  - Nucleophile Substitution CH<sub>3</sub>Cl - mMD2
  - Nucleophile Substitution CH<sub>3</sub>Cl - mMD3
  - Nucleophile Substitution CH<sub>3</sub>Cl - SG
- O**
  - O atom
  - O atom spinpolarized
  - O atom spinpolarized low symmetry
  - O dimer
- P**
  - Partial DOS of CO on Ni 111 surface
  - Plotting the BSE fatband structure of Si
- S**
  - Si bandstructure

# VASP versions & utilities

- **Latest:** 6.5.1 (from March -25)  
- Check center [webpages](#) for details!
- [wannier90](#): maximally localized wannier functions
- [VTST](#): transition state tools for VASP
- [VASPsol](#): solvation model for VASP
- [Beef](#): Bayesian error estimation functionals
- constrained relaxation

# VASP 6

- New license (3y updates), after VASP 5.4.4
- Hybrid OpenMP & MPI parallelization
- OpenACC for GPU
- Cubic scaling RPA and GW
- Electron-phonon coupling using stochastic displacements of atoms
- 6.3: Machine learning force-fields for MD, 6.4 updates -> increased speed (at least 10x noticed)

# VASP & HPC centers

- **Tetralith (NAISS)** / Sigma, NSC, LiU **installed!**
- **Arrhenius (NAISS & EuroHPC)** <- to be **installed!**
- **Dardel (NAISS)**, PDC, KTH **installed!**
- Other systems/centers (e.g. Kebnekaise, HPC2N)  
**installed!**
- LUMI (EuroHPC & NAISS)
- LEONARDO (EuroHPC) + more EuroHPC

- Check for modules: \$ module avail vasp  
\$ module spider vasp

NSC NSC

https://www.nsc.liu.se

NSC

START SYSTEMS STORAGE SOFTWARE ABOUT USER AREA 



Welcome to  
**National Supercomputer Centre**  
at Linköping University

NSC is a provider of leading edge national supercomputing resources. We provide a wide range of high performance computing and data services to members of academic institutions throughout Sweden and to our partners SMHI, MET Norway, and Saab.

Photo: Thor Balkhed

## Announcement

Berzelius AI Symposium on February 9, 2022

### OUR PARTNERS



<https://www.nsc.liu.se/> Software > Installed software > Tetralith & Sigma software list > VASP  
<https://www.nsc.liu.se/software/docs/vasp/>

NSC VASP

https://www.nsc.liu.se/software/installed/tetralith/vasp/

# NSC

START SYSTEMS STORAGE SOFTWARE ABOUT USER AREA ▾

ABAQUS ABINIT AMBER ANSYS ANSYS-EM ASE ATAT Allinea Performance Reports Allinea-DDT

Allinea/ARM-MAP CASTEP CDO CESM COMSOL CP2K CPMD DL\_POLY Dalton/LSDalton EC-Earth

EPW Elk FERRET GPAW GROMACS Grace Gurobi Optimizer HDF5 Julia LAMMPS MATLAB

MOLDEN Mathematica NAMD NCO NCVIEW NorESM Open Babel OpenFOAM ParaView Pymatgen

Quantum ESPRESSO STAR-CCM+ Siesta USPEX VMD VisIt WEST WIEN2K Yambo ecCodes exciting

grib\_api netCDF p4vasp parallel phono3py phonopy vasptools Schrödinger suite VASP Clang

Gaussian and GaussView

NSC / Software / Installed software / Tetralith & Sigma Software / VASP

## VASP6 is available

VASP6 was released in beginning of 2020. This means e.g. that VASP5 license holders will need to update their license in order to access VASP6 installations at NSC. If you have a VASP license 5.4.4, you are probably covered for version up to 6.X.X already, check your license details.

The new features are described in [the VASP wiki](#).

## VASP Installations on Tetralith & Sigma

First of all, VASP is licensed software, your name needs to be included on a VASP license in order to use NSC's centrally installed VASP binaries. [Read more about how we handle licensing of VASP at NSC](#).

Some problems which can be encountered running VASP are described at the end of this page.

## How to run: quick start

A minimum batch script for running VASP looks like this:

```
#!/bin/bash
#SBATCH -J jobname
#SBATCH -N 4
#SBATCH --ntasks-per-node=32
#SBATCH -t 4:00:00
```

PDC | KTH x

www.pdc.kth.se

PDC Center for High Performance Computing

PDC User Support Area | PDC svensk webbplats

KTH  
VETENSKAP  
OCH KONST

PDC | User support | HPC services | HPC training | Academic users | Industry R&D | Research by PDC | About PDC

## PDC Center for High Performance Computing



Need help? Go to [PDC Support pages](#)

If you want to find out more, see

- [information for academic researchers](#)
- [information for industry/business research](#)
- [information for students](#)
- [job openings at PDC](#)
- [resources about PDC for press and media](#)

[PDC News & Events](#)  
[PDC Blog](#)  
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[Showcase: HPC Research via PDC](#)

**PDC News**

[Contract signed for new Arrhenius national supercomputer in Sweden](#)  
15 Jul 2025

[HPC system manager position at PDC](#)

**PDC Events**

[Introduction to PDC Systems Course](#)  
**6 Oct** Training and courses  
Mon 2025-10-06, 09:00 - Tue 2025-10-07, 12:00  
Participating: PDC Staff

**System Alerts**

2025-09-25  
[The login node is responsive again since a while...](#)

<https://www.pdc.kth.se/> User support > Applications > Physics > VASP

<https://support.pdc.kth.se/doc/applications/vasp/>

Information about vasp - PDC C X +

support.pdc.kth.se/doc/applications/vasp/

# User area

## PDC Center for High Performance Computing

PDC Support Software System statistics System status

Search

Available software ▾

- Applications
- How to use module to load different softwares into your environment
- Bioinformatics >
- Chemistry >
- Compilers and languages >
- Debugging tools >
- Finite element analysis >
- Fluid dynamics >
- Libraries >
- Mathematics >
- Molecular dynamics >
- Performance tools >
- Physics >
- Abinit
- Cp2k
- Elk
- Fleur
- Libint-cp2k
- Libxc
- Octopus
- Quantum-espresso
- Rspt
- Spglib
- Uppasd
- Vasp

# Vasp

## Installed versions

| Resource            | Version  |
|---------------------|--|
| Dardel/<br>cpe24.11 | 6.5.1-vanilla, 6.5.1-vanilla-xy, 6.5.1-wannier90, 6.4.3-vanilla, 6.4.3-vanilla-xy, 6.4.3-wannier90,<br>5.4.4-vanilla, 5.4.4-vanilla-xy, 5.4.4-wannier90        |
| Dardel/<br>cpe23.12 | 6.3.2-wannier90, 6.4.3-vanilla, 5.4.4-wannier90, 6.2.1-vanilla, 6.3.2-vanilla, 6.4.2-vanilla, 6.2.1-<br>wannier90, 6.2.1-vtst-dftd4, 5.4.4-vanilla, 5.4.4-vtst |

## General information

The Vienna Ab initio Simulation Package (VASP) is a computer program for atomic scale materials modelling, e.g. electronic structure calculations and quantum-mechanical molecular dynamics, from first principles. For more information see the VASP home page <https://vasp.at> and the [VASP wiki](#).

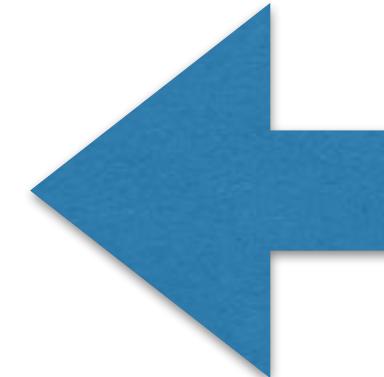
## Licenses

VASP is not free software and requires a software license. If you want to use VASP please contact us with information of the e-mail address that you have listed in the VASP global portal.

Installed versions  
General information

# Different types of calculations

- Structural relaxation (different ways)
- Regular  $E_{\text{tot}}$  scf run using PBE, HSE06, GW, ...
- Density of states, bandstructure, charge density, ...
- Born-Oppenheimer MD also see tutorial
- Used within a special framework (VTST, ...)
- See VASP wiki examples and tutorials



# Input files

- INCAR - input parameters
- POSCAR - structure (generate using e.g. cif2cell)
- POTCAR - PAW potentials (how to select?)
- KPOINTS - k-mesh (or list)
- + job script

SLURM batch queue system &  
settings used by NAISS centers

# INCAR parameters

- PREC - “precision”, ENCUT and FFT grids
- ENCUT - plane wave energy cutoff
- ALGO - wf optimisation
- NBANDS - if not set, auto-determined
- NSIM - for RMM-DIIS algorithm (ALGO)
- NCORE or NPAR - bands treated in parallel
- KPAR - k-point parallel

# INCAR parameters

accuracy /  
method

parallel  
calcs.

- PREC - “precision”, ENCUT and FFT grids
- ENCUT - plane wave energy cutoff Completeness of basis-set Recommended to set!
- ALGO - wf optimisation
- NBANDS - if not set, auto-determined Must be the same for Etot comparison!
- NSIM - for RMM-DIIS algorithm (ALGO)
- NCORE or NPAR - bands treated in parallel
- KPAR - k-point parallel
  - We will get back to these settings!

# INCAR defaults

- PREC = Normal      Might want “Accurate”
- ENCUT = ?            **Always set!** ENMAX  $\times 1.0 - \times 1.5$
- ALGO = Normal      **good tradeoff**  
Can use “Fast” and “VeryFast”
- NBANDS = ?          can be **overridden** by VASP  
- sometimes extra empty states needed
- NSIM = 4              Typically OK
- NCORE = 1            **Adjust** (if not hybrid-functional, HSE06, etc.)
- KPAR = 1              for k-point parallel calcs.

Will discuss in more detail later on...

# INCAR defaults

in very brief,  
refer to  
VASP wiki  
for details

- NSW = 0 max ionic steps, also MD steps
- NELM = 60 max electronic selfconsistency steps
- NELMIN = 2 min steps. For relaxation/MD set 4-8
- EDIFF = 1E-4 converge to 4 last digits, sometimes higher accuracy is needed
- EDIFFG = EDIFF x10 ionic relaxation break condition, if negative value, break if forces < IEDIFFGI
- ISMEAR = 1 how to treat partial electron occupancy:  
1 = metals, 0 = bandgap, -5 = for accurate  $E_{tot}$
- ISPIN = 1 2 = spin-polarized calc.
- IBRION = -1 (NSW=-1,0) or 0 how ions are updated & moved  
no update MD =2 ionic relaxation

# POSCAR

A simple case of fcc Ni, refer to the [VASP wiki example](#)

|                    |                          |   |   |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| (hopefully) useful | comment                  | Ni fcc                                    |   |
|                    |                          | 3.53                                      | lattice constant ( $\text{\AA}$ )                       |
|                    | lattice vectors          | 0.5 0.5 0.0<br>0.0 0.5 0.5<br>0.5 0.0 0.5 |   |
|                    | number of atoms per type | Ni<br>1                                   | element symbols   |
|                    | position for first atom  | Cartesian<br>0 0 0                        | optional, useful for clarity & plotting                 |
|                    |                          |   | Cartesian or Direct coordinates                         |
|                    |                          |   | First letter is sufficient, i.e.<br>“C” for “Cartesian” |

Direct coordinates: expressed in terms of the lattice vectors (no lattice constant, scaling)

Cartesian coordinate: expressed as (x,y,z) with the scaling factor included

# POSCAR

From one of my own examples, H and Si on Ag(111) surface:

```
'100% H on Si on Ag(111)
10.007900
1.00000000000000 0.00000000000000 0.00000000000000
0.50000000000000 0.866025403784439 0.00000000000000
0.00000000000000 0.00000000000000 4.352531500114909
H Si Ag
14 14 108
Selective dynamics
Direct
```

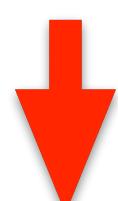
first H atom →

← Note order of atoms

← Relax for different directions

**Selective dynamics**  
always for Direct coord.  
T = relax  
F = fixed

Rest of H,  
Si & Ag atoms  
following



|                  |                  |                  |   |   |   |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|---|---|---|
| 0.75833800000000 | 0.05288160000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |
| 0.50524400000000 | 0.11823100000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |
| 0.05078450000000 | 0.19601700000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |
| 0.80035900000000 | 0.25190300000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |
| 0.33333333333333 | 0.33890200000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |
| 0.11419100000000 | 0.38624400000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |
| 0.61847400000000 | 0.49805800000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |
| 0.38126200000000 | 0.51131300000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |
| 0.88307100000000 | 0.62468400000000 | 0.60594500000000 | T | T | T |

# POSCAR

## Some useful resources:

### Crystallography Open Database

Database with published structures from experiment .cif

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Crystallography Open Database (COD). The page features a large logo 'COD' composed of three colored spheres (blue, green, and red) arranged in a triangular pattern. The main title 'Crystallography Open Database' is displayed below the logo. On the left, there is a sidebar with links for 'COD Home', 'Accessing COD Data', 'Add Your Data', and 'Documentation'. The main content area includes a brief description of the database, a statistics section showing 41385 entries, and a 'CIFs Dossiers' section. At the bottom, there is an 'Advisory Board' section with logos of various organizations.

### Bilbao Crystallographic Server

Many Crystallographic tools, e.g. check BZ of fcc cell

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Bilbao Crystallographic Server. The page has a header with the server's name and logos for UPV/EHU and IUPAC. The main menu includes 'Contact us', 'About us', 'Publications', and 'How to cite the server'. Below the menu, there is a sidebar titled 'Quick access to some tables' listing 'Space Groups', 'Plane Groups', 'Layer Groups', 'Rod Groups', 'Frieze Groups', '2D Point Groups', '3D Point Groups', and 'Magnetic Space Groups'. The central content area features several colored boxes with links to different sections: 'Space-group symmetry', 'Magnetic Symmetry and Applications', 'Group-Subgroup Relations of Space Groups', 'Representations and Applications', 'Solid State Theory Applications', 'Structure Utilities', 'Subperiodic Groups: Layer, Rod and Frieze Groups', 'Structure Databases', and 'Raman and Hyper-Raman scattering'. There are also news items and a 'New Article in J. Appl. Cryst.' section.

# POSCAR

A few examples on how to visualize and/or edit POSCAR:

## Atomic Simulation Environment (ASE)

Handle structures (and much more) using  
python scripts, also GUI

## cif2cell

Versatile script, reads .cif  
saves to many formats including  
POSCAR - also build supercells

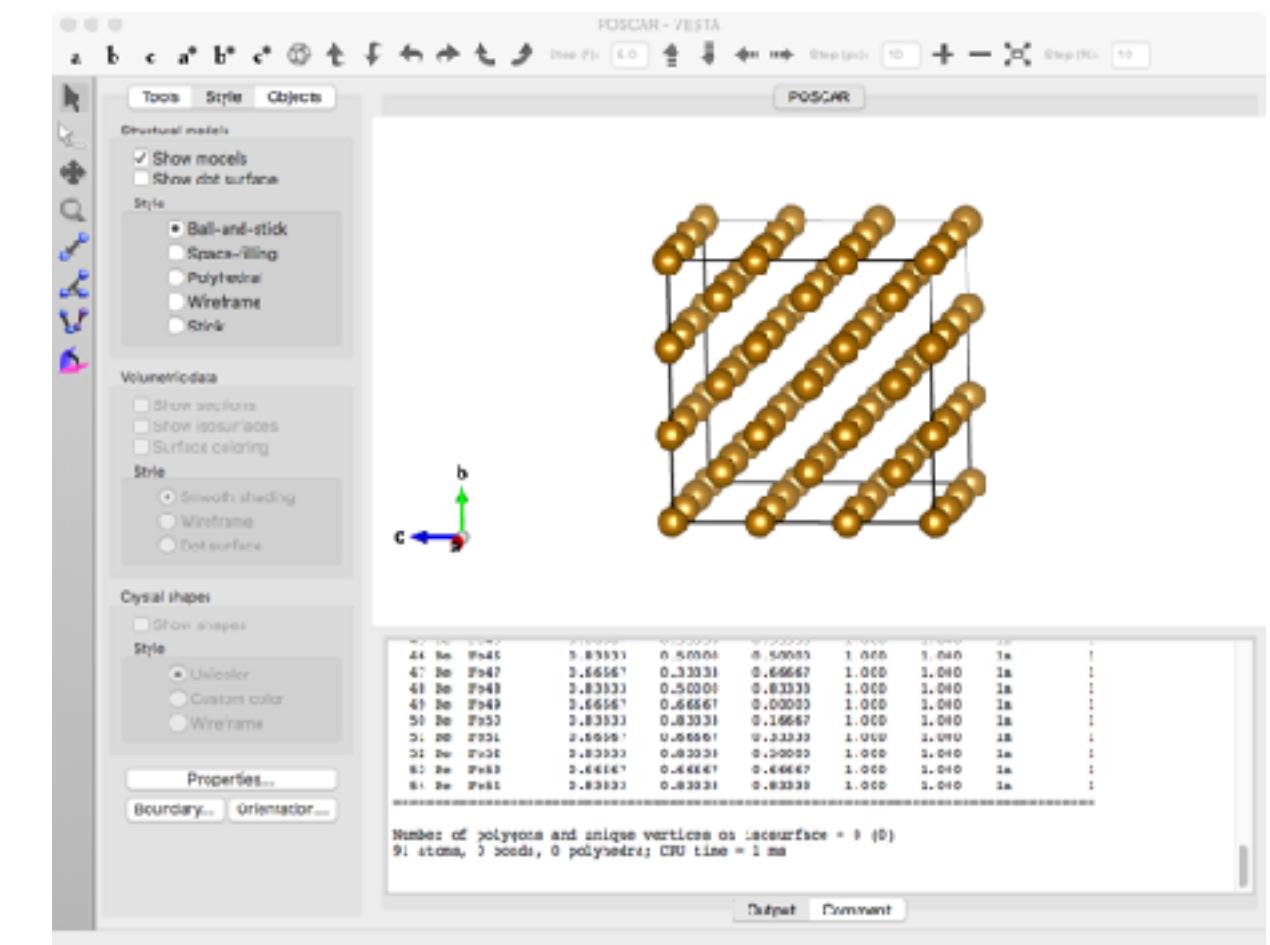
## Commercial software:

NanoLab

MedeA

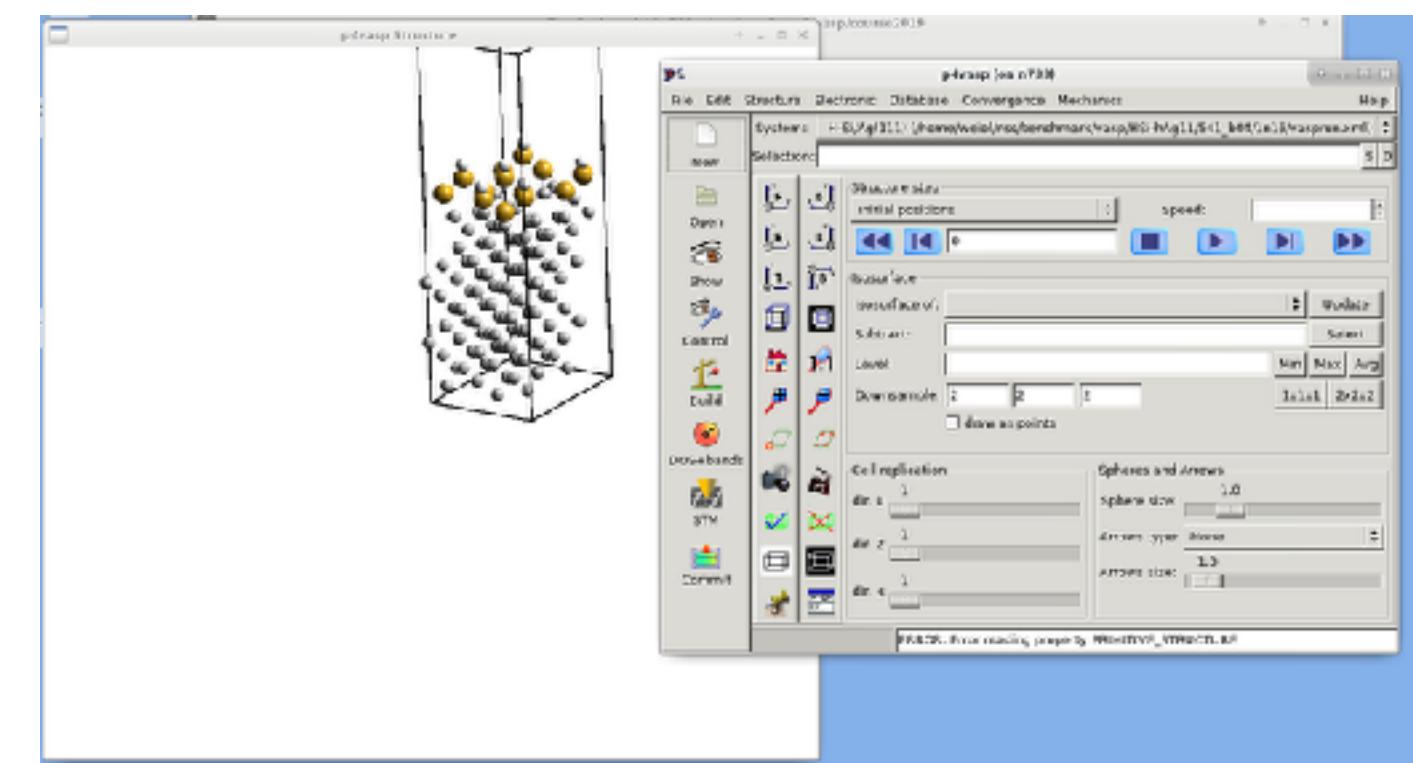
MaterialsStudio

## VESTA



Opens .cif displays structure, save as POSCAR

## p4vasp



Apart from analysis and visualization, also edit POSCAR

# POTCAR

PAW potentials - non-trivial to tailor, select with care

```
-----  
| PAW_PBE Cu 22Jun2005 ← type, element, date  
valence | 11.00000000000000 →  
| parameters from PSCTR are:  
| VRHFIN =Cu: d10 p1 ← atomic configuration  
XC-type | LEXCH = PE  
| EATOM = 1390.9808 eV, 102.2342 Ry  
  
| TITEL = PAW_PBE Cu 22Jun2005  
| LULTRA = F use ultrasoft PP ?  
| IUNSCR = 1 unscreen: 0-lin 1-nonlin 2-no  
| RPACOR = 2.000 partial core radius  
| POMASS = 63.546; ZVAL = 11.000 mass and valenz  
| RCORE = 2.300 outmost cutoff radius  
| RWIGS = 2.200; RWIGS = 1.164 wigner-seitz radius (au A)  
energy cutoff | ENMAX = 295.446; ENMIN = 221.585 eV ← smallest energy cutoff  
| ICORE = 3 local potential  
| LCOR = T correct aug charges  
| LPAW = T paw PP  
| EAUG = 586.980  
| DEXC = 0.000  
| RMAX = 2.344 core radius for proj-oper  
| RAUG = 1.300 factor for augmentation sphere  
| RDEP = 2.302 radius for radial grids  
| RDEPTH = 1.771 core radius for aug-charge
```

# POTCAR

- Check [recommendations](#), LDA, PBE
- for short bonds: \_h  
strong pressure
- for GW: \_GW
- States in valence: \_sv, \_pv, \_d
- “soft” (no short bonds): \_s
- Where?

**Note several choices, e.g.:**  
Ga, **Ga\_d**, Ga\_d\_GW,  
Ga\_GW, Ga\_h, Ga\_sv\_GW

**Useful commands:**  
\$ grep PAW POTCAR  
\$ grep ENMAX POTCAR

@Tetralith: /software/sse/manual/vasp/POTCARs  
/software/sse2/tetralith\_el9/manual/vasp/POTCARs

# KPOINTS

A simple case of fcc Ni, 1 atom

0 = automatic generation of mesh

k-point mesh

```
|-----|  
| k-points | ← comment  
| 0 |  
|-----|  
| Monkhorst Pack | ← Monkhorst-Pack method (M)  
| 11 11 11 |  
| 0 0 0 | ← optional shift of k-mesh  
|-----|
```

My example, H and Si on Ag(111) surface, 136 atoms

First letter is sufficient, i.e.  
“G” for “Gamma”

```
|-----|  
| Automatic mesh |  
| 0 |  
|-----|  
| Gamma | ← Gamma method (G)  
| 2 2 1 |  
| 0. 0. 0. |  
|-----|
```

- $\Gamma$ -point included by default
- hexagonal structures only use this!

# KPOINTS

For **bandstructure** calculations, provide a list of k-points, [see example](#)

| k-points for bandstructure L-G-X-U K-G |         |         |   |                           |
|--|---------|---------|---|---------------------------|
| k-points per line-segment              |         |         |   | 10                        |
| line                                   |         |         |   | k-points per line-segment |
| Reciprocal / Cartesian                 |         |         |   | Reciprocal                |
| 0.50000                                | 0.50000 | 0.50000 | 1 | symmetry point + weight   |
| 0.00000                                | 0.00000 | 0.00000 | 1 |                           |
| 0.00000                                | 0.00000 | 0.00000 | 1 |                           |
| 0.00000                                | 0.50000 | 0.50000 | 1 |                           |
| 0.00000                                | 0.50000 | 0.50000 | 1 |                           |
| 0.25000                                | 0.62500 | 0.62500 | 1 |                           |
| 0.37500                                | 0.7500  | 0.37500 | 1 |                           |
| 0.00000                                | 0.00000 | 0.00000 | 1 |                           |

# KPOINTS

- Metal - “many” k-pts
- Band gap materials - “few” k-pts
- Unit cell (few atoms) - more k-pts  
real vs. reciprocal space
- Supercell (100s atoms) - few/one, k-pt
- No guarantee for convergence...
- MP method popular, G “safest” to apply
- 1x1x3 cell geometry → 3x3x1 k-mesh  
real vs. reciprocal space

# VASP binaries

- `vasp_std` - regular version
- `vasp_gam` - one k-point (Gamma), **faster**
- `vasp_ncl` - noncollinear magnetism
- OpenACC GPU binaries, same names
- + modifications
  - e.g. constrained relaxation

# Slurm job script - Tetralith

Walltime limit:  
7 days

96 GB RAM / node

Note “mpprun”

```
#!/bin/bash
#SBATCH -A naiss2025-x-yz
#SBATCH -J vasp-run
#SBATCH -t 4:00:00
#SBATCH -N 1 --exclusive

module load VASP/6.5.1.10032025-omp-hpc1-intel-2023a-eb
mpprun vasp
```

Example: running on 1 node (32 cores) @Tetralith

To increase available memory (RAM), reduce cores/node, e.g:

```
#SBATCH --ntasks-per-node=16
#SBATCH --mem=0
```

Alternatively, use “fat” memory nodes (384 GB):

```
#SBATCH -C fat
```

# Slurm job script - Dardel

Walltime limits:

-p main

1 day max

-p long

7 day max

```
#!/bin/bash
#SBATCH -A naiss2025-x-xyz
#SBATCH -J vasp-run
#SBATCH -t 4:00:00
#SBATCH --nodes=1
#SBATCH --ntasks-per-node=128
#SBATCH -p main

module load PDC/24.11
module load vasp/6.5.1-vanilla
export OMP_NUM_THREADS=1

srun --hint=nomultithread vasp
```

256 GB RAM / node

Example: running on 1 node (128 cores) @Dardel

**Note:** queues for larger memory (512GB, 1TB, 2TB) + walltime (7 days) available!

# Output files

- OUTCAR - main, detailed output
- OSZICAR - iteration summary
- slurm-\*\*.out - stdout, iteration summary, warnings
- CONTCAR - updated structural data (at finish)  
structural relaxation / MD
- XDATCAR - positions at each ionic step
- ...

# Output files

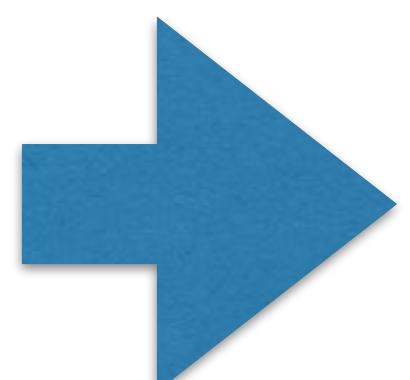
- DOSCAR - total, partial density of states (DOS)
- CHGCAR - charge density  
output can also be switched off
- WAVECAR - plane wave coefficients (for restart)
- ...

# OSZICAR

| Min.<br>algo | Step | Total free Energy                    | Energy diff.      | Eigenvalue diff. | Charge density<br>residual vector |           |           |
|--------------|------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|              | N    | E                                    | dE                | d eps            | ncg                               | rms       | rms (c)   |
| DAV:         | 1    | -0.189343666468E+01                  | -0.18934E+01      | -0.20040E+03     | 904                               | 0.422E+02 |           |
| DAV:         | 2    | -0.108926039335E+02                  | -0.89992E+01      | -0.87586E+01     | 1440                              | 0.554E+01 |           |
| DAV:         | 3    | -0.109805531666E+02                  | -0.87949E-01      | -0.87949E-01     | 1208                              | 0.675E+00 |           |
| DAV:         | 4    | -0.109807517982E+02                  | -0.19863E-03      | -0.19863E-03     | 1368                              | 0.313E-01 |           |
| DAV:         | 5    | -0.109807519113E+02                  | -0.11307E-06      | -0.11310E-06     | 1256                              | 0.684E-03 | 0.519E+00 |
| DAV:         | 6    | -0.108723496529E+02                  | 0.10840E+00       | -0.69164E-02     | 1064                              | 0.137E+00 | 0.317E+00 |
| DAV:         | 7    | -0.108218097854E+02                  | 0.50540E-01       | -0.13575E-01     | 1120                              | 0.205E+00 | 0.163E-01 |
| DAV:         | 8    | -0.108228444695E+02                  | -0.10347E-02      | -0.32972E-03     | 944                               | 0.419E-01 | 0.706E-02 |
| DAV:         | 9    | -0.108230614389E+02                  | -0.21697E-03      | -0.22028E-04     | 1312                              | 0.111E-01 | 0.557E-02 |
| DAV:         | 10   | -0.108230846187E+02                  | -0.23180E-04      | -0.25743E-05     | 560                               | 0.381E-02 |           |
|              | 1    | F= -.10823085E+02 E0= -.10823085E+02 | d E =-.431458E-08 |                  |                                   |           |           |

**Final total free energy**

Total steps: NELMIN to NELM



**Need to check if convergence is reached!**

In particular if NELM was reached (default = 60 steps)

# Stdout (slurm-\*\*\*.out)

```
running on    2 total cores
distrk: each k-point on    2 cores,    1 groups
distr: one band on    1 cores,    2 groups
using from now: INCAR
vasp.5.4.4.18Apr17-6-g9f103f2a35 (build Sep 13 2019 06:30:52) complex
```

```
POSCAR found type information on POSCAR Si
```

```
POSCAR found : 1 types and      2 ions
```

```
scaLAPACK will be used
```

```
LDA part: xc-table for Pade appr. of Perdew
```

```
POSCAR, INCAR and KPOINTS ok, starting setup
```

- Check for warnings!

```
FFT: planning ...
```

```
WAVECAR not read
```

```
entering main loop
```

|      | N  | E                   | dE           | d eps        | ncg  | rms       | rms(c)    |
|------|----|---------------------|--------------|--------------|------|-----------|-----------|
| DAV: | 1  | -0.189343666468E+01 | -0.18934E+01 | -0.20040E+03 | 904  | 0.422E+02 |           |
| DAV: | 2  | -0.108926039335E+02 | -0.89992E+01 | -0.87586E+01 | 1440 | 0.554E+01 |           |
| DAV: | 3  | -0.109805531666E+02 | -0.87949E-01 | -0.87949E-01 | 1208 | 0.675E+00 |           |
| DAV: | 4  | -0.109807517982E+02 | -0.19863E-03 | -0.19863E-03 | 1368 | 0.313E-01 |           |
| DAV: | 5  | -0.109807519113E+02 | -0.11307E-06 | -0.11310E-06 | 1256 | 0.684E-03 | 0.519E+00 |
| DAV: | 6  | -0.108723496529E+02 | 0.10840E+00  | -0.69164E-02 | 1064 | 0.137E+00 | 0.317E+00 |
| DAV: | 7  | -0.108218097854E+02 | 0.50540E-01  | -0.13575E-01 | 1120 | 0.205E+00 | 0.163E-01 |
| DAV: | 8  | -0.108228444695E+02 | -0.10347E-02 | -0.32972E-03 | 944  | 0.419E-01 | 0.706E-02 |
| DAV: | 9  | -0.108230614389E+02 | -0.21697E-03 | -0.22028E-04 | 1312 | 0.111E-01 | 0.557E-02 |
| DAV: | 10 | -0.108230846187E+02 | -0.23180E-04 | -0.25743E-05 | 560  | 0.381E-02 |           |

```
1 F= -.10823085E+02 E0= -.10823085E+02 d E =-.431458E-08
```

```
writing wavefunctions
```

# Warning/advice output

**Check stdout (slurm-\*\*\*.out)  
for warnings!**

Typical warnings:

Reminder to set (if applicable):  
[NCORE](#)

typically = used cores/nodes

For high accuracy (default) keep:  
[LREAL=.FALSE.](#)

```
|           W   W   AA    RRRRR  N   N  II  N   N   GGGG  !!!
|           W   W   A   A    R   R  NN   N  II  NN   N   G   G  !!!
|           W   W   A   A    R   R  N N   N  II  N N   N   G   !!!
|           W WW W  AAAAAA  RRRRR  N   N N  II  N   N N   G   GGG  !
|           WW  WW  A   A    R   R  N   NN  II  N   NN   G   G
|           W   W   A   A    R   R  N   N   N  II  N   N   N   GGGG  !!!
```

| For optimal performance we recommend to set  
| NCORE= 4 - approx SQRT( number of cores)  
| NCORE specifies how many cores store one orbital (NPAR=cpu/NCORE).  
| This setting can greatly improve the performance of VASP for DFT.  
| The default, NCORE=1 might be grossly inefficient  
| on modern multi-core architectures or massively parallel machines.  
| Do your own testing !!!!  
| Unfortunately you need to use the default for GW and RPA calculations.  
| (for HF NCORE is supported but not extensively tested yet)

---

ADVICE TO THIS USER RUNNING 'VASP/VAMP' (HEAR YOUR MASTER'S VOICE ...):

| You have a (more or less) 'large supercell' and for larger cells  
| it might be more efficient to use real space projection operators  
| So try LREAL= Auto in the INCAR file.  
| Mind: If you want to do a very accurate calculations keep the  
| reciprocal projection scheme (i.e. LREAL=.FALSE.)