Quantum Physics 1

Some notes on the topics angular momentum and spin

Here not the derivation of equations or the physics, but a summary of rules and various notations

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From classical mechanics, basics you should already be able to dream..²

$$\vec{L} = \vec{r} \times \vec{p}$$

$$\vec{L} = \begin{vmatrix} \vec{e}_{x} & \vec{e}_{y} & \vec{e}_{z} \\ x & y & z \\ p_{x} & p_{y} & p_{z} \end{vmatrix} = \vec{e}_{x} (yp_{z} - zp_{y}) + \vec{e}_{y} (zp_{x} - xp_{z}) + \vec{e}_{z} (xp_{y} - yp_{x})$$

$$= L_x \vec{e}_x + L_y \vec{e}_y + L_z \vec{e}_z$$

where the \vec{e}_x etc. are unit vectors,

and where L_x , L_y , L_z are scalars (not vectors).

 $(\vec{L})^2 = \vec{L} \cdot \vec{L} = L_x^2 + L_y^2 + L_z^2$ is also a scalar (not a vector) which characterizes the length of \vec{L} .

The previous slide can be used to show that

for angular momentum as an operator $\,L\,$

$$\begin{split} \begin{bmatrix} \hat{L}_x, \hat{L}_y \end{bmatrix} &= i\hbar \hat{L}_z \\ \begin{bmatrix} \hat{L}_z, \hat{L}_x \end{bmatrix} &= i\hbar \hat{L}_y \\ \begin{bmatrix} \hat{L}_y, \hat{L}_z \end{bmatrix} &= i\hbar \hat{L}_x \\ \begin{bmatrix} \hat{L}^2, \hat{L}_x \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} \hat{L}^2, \hat{L}_y \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} \hat{L}^2, \hat{L}_z \end{bmatrix} = 0 \end{split}$$

You can derive this with the previous slide, while filling in

$$\hat{x}, \hat{y}, \hat{z}, \text{ and } \hat{p}_x = -i\hbar \frac{\partial}{\partial x}$$
 etc.

and using

$$[\hat{x}, \hat{p}_x] = i\hbar$$
 etc., $[\hat{x}, \hat{y}] = 0$ etc., $[\hat{x}, \hat{p}_y] = 0$ etc., $[\hat{p}_x, \hat{p}_y] = 0$

etc.

In turn, the commutation relations on the previous slide can be used to derive that the eigenvalue equations for angular momentum are ALWAYS in the following form (sec. 4.3 Griffiths book),

with l and m integer or half-integer numbers, as further introduced on the remaining slides

$$\hat{L}_{z} | l, m \rangle = \hbar m | l, m \rangle$$
$$\hat{L}^{2} | l, m \rangle = \hbar^{2} l(l+1) | l, m \rangle$$

Many different symbols used for angular momentum

Symbol	Often used for
Ĺ	The orbital angular momentum of an electron in an atom
\vec{S}	The spin angular momentum of an electron
$\vec{J} = \vec{L} + \vec{S}$	The sum of spin and orbital angular momentum of an electron in an atom
\vec{I}	The spin angular momentum of a nucleus
$\vec{F} = \vec{J} + \vec{I}$	The total angular momentum of an atom (with one electron) from the nucleus and the electron
$\vec{L} = \vec{L}_1 + \vec{L}_2$ $\vec{S} = \vec{S}_1 + \vec{S}_2$	The total orbital angular momentum of an atom with two electrons
$\vec{S} = \vec{S}_1 + \vec{S}_2$	The total electronic spin angular momentum of an atom with two electrons

L

Eigenvalue equations for angular momentum

for
$$ec{L},ec{S},ec{J}$$
 etc. ALWAYS have the same structure
Here worked out for $ec{J}$.

Eigenvalue equation for **length of the angular momentum vector**, also called **total angular momentum**:

$$\hat{J}^{2} \left| j, m_{jz} \right\rangle = \hbar^{2} \left| j (j+1) \right| j, m_{jz} \right\rangle$$

where the length is then in fact

$$\hbar \sqrt{j(j+1)}.$$

 \dot{J} is the quantum number for the length of the angular momentum vector.

The widely used convention is to work with \hat{J}^2 , but you could also introduce an operator that directly gives you the length (see next slide).

Note: For the notation of the ket states $|j, m_{jz}\rangle$ you may also see $|j m_{jz}\rangle$ or $|\varphi_{j,m_{jz}}\rangle$ etc.

Eigenvalue equations for angular momentum - continued

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Eigenvalue equation for **length of the angular momentum vector**, also called **total angular momentum**.

The widely used convention is to work with \hat{J}^2 ,

but you could also introduce an operator that directly gives you the length.

If you define that the operator $\widehat{|J|}$ represents the length of $\,\vec{J}$, then its eigenvalue equation obeys

$$\widehat{\left|J\right|} \quad \left|j,m_{jz}\right\rangle = \hbar \sqrt{j(j+1)} \quad \left|j,m_{jz}\right\rangle$$

Eigenvalue equations for angular momentum - continued

Eigenvalue equations for the **x**, **y** and **z** component of the angular momentum vector:

$$\hat{J}_{z}|j,m_{jz}\rangle = \hbar m_{jz}|j,m_{jz}\rangle$$

 m_{jz} is the quantum number for the z component of the angular momentum vector (sometimes called the z magnetic quantum number).

In the same way, for the x and y components:

$$\hat{J}_{x} \left| j, m_{jx} \right\rangle = \hbar m_{jx} \left| j, m_{jx} \right\rangle$$
$$\hat{J}_{y} \left| j, m_{jy} \right\rangle = \hbar m_{jy} \left| j, m_{jy} \right\rangle$$

Eigenvalue equations for angular momentum - continued

The quantum numbers only appear with these values:

If J represents an orbital angular momentum j can take on these values

If J represents the intrinsic angular momentum of a particle (called spin) j can appear with these values

$$j = 0, \frac{1}{2}, 1, \frac{3}{2}, 2, \frac{5}{2}, \dots$$

For both cases, given a certain value for j, the values for m_{iz} must obey

$$m_{jz} = -j, -(j-1), -(j-2), \dots +(j-1), +j$$

and similarly for m_{jx} and m_{jy}

$$m_{jx} = -j, -(j-1), -(j-2), \dots + (j-1), +j$$

$$m_{jy} = -j, -(j-1), -(j-2), \dots + (j-1), +j$$

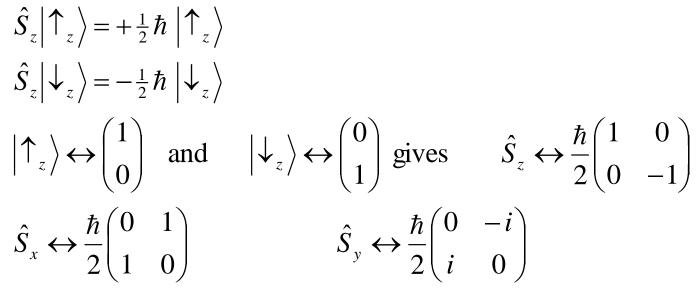
Symbols used for the quantum numbers

Angular momentum vector	\vec{L}	\vec{S}	$ec{J}$	\vec{I}	$ec{F}$	$ec{S}_1$
Quantum number for length	l	S	j	i	f	<i>S</i> ₁
Quantum number for x component	m_{lx}	$m_{_{SX}}$	m_{jx}	m_{ix}	m_{fx}	m_{s1x}
Quantum number for y component	m_{ly}	<i>m</i> _{sy}	m_{jy}	m _{iy}	m _{fy}	m_{s1y}
Quantum number for z component	m_{lz}	<i>m</i> _{sz}	m_{jz}	<i>m</i> _{iz}	m_{fz}	m_{s1z}

Note: for the *m* quantum numbers the subscript indices are often not used in cases where leaving them away will not give confusion. For example, instead of m_{iz} you will often simply see *m*, m_i or m_z .

Summary of spin-1/2 operators and eigenstates

(using Griffith book Eqs. [4.136], [4.139]-[4.152])



 \Leftrightarrow

 \Leftrightarrow

$$\begin{cases} \left|\uparrow_{x}\right\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(\left|\uparrow_{z}\right\rangle + \left|\downarrow_{z}\right\rangle\right) \\ \left|\downarrow_{x}\right\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(\left|\uparrow_{z}\right\rangle - \left|\downarrow_{z}\right\rangle\right) \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{cases} \left|\uparrow_{y}\right\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(\left|\uparrow_{z}\right\rangle + i\left|\downarrow_{z}\right\rangle\right) \\ \left|\downarrow_{y}\right\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(\left|\uparrow_{z}\right\rangle - i\left|\downarrow_{z}\right\rangle\right) \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{cases} \left|\uparrow_{z}\right\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(\left|\uparrow_{x}\right\rangle + \left|\downarrow_{x}\right\rangle\right) \\ \left|\downarrow_{z}\right\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(\left|\uparrow_{x}\right\rangle - \left|\downarrow_{x}\right\rangle\right) \\ \left|\uparrow_{z}\right\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(\left|\uparrow_{y}\right\rangle + \left|\downarrow_{y}\right\rangle\right) \\ \left|\downarrow_{z}\right\rangle = \frac{1}{i\sqrt{2}} \left(\left|\uparrow_{y}\right\rangle - \left|\downarrow_{y}\right\rangle\right) \end{cases}$$

Addition of angular momentum

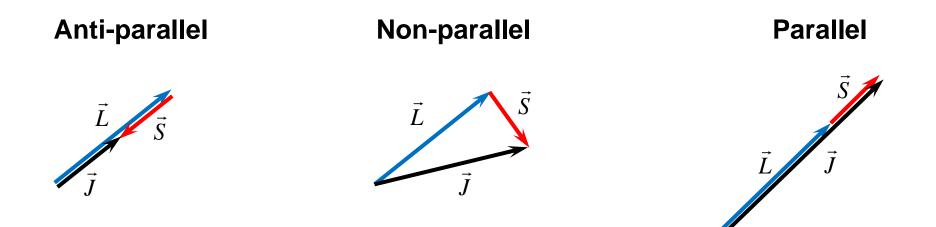
Say, we consider the addition $\vec{J} = \vec{L} + \vec{S}$, in a system that combines two parts, where one part has angular momentum \vec{L} and the other part angular momentum \vec{S} .

Is the physics that you want/need to describe a function of \vec{J} or \vec{L} or \vec{S} ?

If you do a measurement of angular momentum on this system, do you measure \vec{J} or \vec{L} or \vec{S} ?

In case that the answer is \vec{J} , what is its behavior?

For intuitively understanding the next slide (range of j and m_j quantum numbers), consider these cases, with for each case the same lengths of \vec{L} and \vec{S} .



Addition of angular momentum

Say, we consider the addition $\ \vec{J}=\vec{L}+\vec{S}$.

What are now the eigenvalues and eigenstates of $\,J\,$?

1) As ALWAYS, the eigenvalues and states of J must obey the usual structure:

$$\hat{J}^{2} \left| j, m_{jz} \right\rangle = \hbar^{2} j(j+1) \left| j, m_{jz} \right\rangle$$
$$\hat{J}_{z} \left| j, m_{jz} \right\rangle = \hbar m_{jz} \left| j, m_{jz} \right\rangle$$

2) What are the possible quantum numbers j, given certain values for l and s ?

$$j = |l-s|, |l-s|+1, |l-s|+2, \dots (l+s-2), (l+s-1), (l+s)$$

3) What are the possible quantum numbers for m_{jz} , given a certain value for j?

$$m_{jz} = -j, -(j-1), -(j-2), \dots +(j-1), +j$$

Note that only 2) is something new. Also note that the range of j values can be seen as ranging from \vec{L} and \vec{S} being fully parallel to fully anti-parallel.

NOTE!

The following (all remaining) slides are added at the request of the students after we used them in a lecture.

They may be handy will working on problems or checking theory, but don't read them as if they are core study material.

Expectation values and uncertainties for x-, y-, and z-components of spin for a spin- $\frac{1}{2}$ system in the spin-up or spin-down state

First we list the states and operators expressed as vectors and matrices in a representation that uses the spin-up state $|\uparrow_z\rangle$ and spin-down state $|\downarrow_z\rangle$ along the z-direction as basis states. We also define expression for the quantum uncertainties.

$$\begin{split} |\uparrow_{z}\rangle \leftrightarrow \begin{pmatrix} 1\\0 \end{pmatrix} \\ |\downarrow_{z}\rangle \leftrightarrow \begin{pmatrix} 0\\1 \end{pmatrix} \\ \hat{S}_{x} \leftrightarrow \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1\\1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ \hat{S}_{y} \leftrightarrow \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i\\i & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ \hat{S}_{z} \leftrightarrow \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0\\0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \\ \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \leftrightarrow \frac{1}{4} \hbar^{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0\\0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \\ \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \leftrightarrow \frac{1}{4} \hbar^{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0\\0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \\ \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \leftrightarrow \frac{1}{4} \hbar^{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0\\0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \\ \hat{S}^{2} = \hat{S}_{x}^{2} + \hat{S}_{y}^{2} + \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \leftrightarrow \frac{3}{4} \hbar^{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1\\0 \\ \Delta S_{x} = \sqrt{\langle \hat{S}_{x}^{2} \rangle - \langle \hat{S}_{x} \rangle^{2}} \\ \Delta S_{z} = \sqrt{\langle \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \rangle - \langle \hat{S}_{z} \rangle^{2}} \\ \Delta S_{z} = \sqrt{\langle \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \rangle - \langle \hat{S}_{z} \rangle^{2}} \end{split}$$

 $\begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$

The entries to the table (next slide) are calculated as follows.

$$\langle \uparrow_z | \hat{S}_x | \uparrow_z \rangle = \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} = \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = 0, \text{ etc.}$$

Values for
$$\left|\uparrow_{z}\right\rangle \leftrightarrow \begin{pmatrix}1\\0\end{pmatrix}$$

Values for
$$\left|\downarrow_{z}\right\rangle \leftrightarrow \begin{pmatrix} 0\\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\left\langle \begin{array}{l} \left\langle \downarrow_{z} \left| \hat{S}_{x} \right| \downarrow_{z} \right\rangle = 0 \\ \left\langle \downarrow_{z} \left| \hat{S}_{y} \right| \downarrow_{z} \right\rangle = 0 \\ \left\langle \downarrow_{z} \left| \hat{S}_{z} \right| \downarrow_{z} \right\rangle = -\frac{\hbar}{2} \\ \left\langle \downarrow_{z} \left| \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \right| \downarrow_{z} \right\rangle = \frac{1}{4} \hbar^{2} \\ \left\langle \downarrow_{z} \left| \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \right| \downarrow_{z} \right\rangle = \frac{1}{4} \hbar^{2} \\ \left\langle \downarrow_{z} \left| \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \right| \downarrow_{z} \right\rangle = \frac{1}{4} \hbar^{2} \\ \left\langle \downarrow_{z} \left| \hat{S}_{z}^{2} \right| \downarrow_{z} \right\rangle = \frac{3}{4} \hbar^{2} \\ \left\langle \Delta S_{x} = \frac{\hbar}{2} \\ \Delta S_{z} = 0 \\ \end{array}$$

Matrices in z-basis for angular momentum in x-, y-, and z-direction for $j = \frac{1}{2}$ and j = 1

$$\hat{J}_{z} \text{ for } j = \frac{1}{2}$$

$$\hat{J}_{z} = \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$m_{z} = +\frac{1}{2} \qquad \qquad \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} = +\frac{1}{2} \hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$m_{z} = -\frac{1}{2} \qquad \qquad \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} = -\frac{1}{2} \hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\begin{split} \hat{J}_{x} & \text{for } j = \frac{1}{2} \\ \hat{J}_{x} &= \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{x} &= +\frac{1}{2} \\ m_{x} &= -\frac{1}{2} \\ \end{split} \qquad \begin{aligned} \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} &= +\frac{1}{2} \hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{x} &= -\frac{1}{2} \\ \begin{aligned} \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} &= -\frac{1}{2} \hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} \end{split}$$

$$\begin{split} \hat{J}_{y} & \text{for } j = \frac{1}{2} \\ \hat{J}_{y} &= \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{y} &= +\frac{1}{2} \\ m_{y} &= -\frac{1}{2} \\ \end{split} \qquad \begin{aligned} \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{i}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} &= +\frac{1}{2} \hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{i}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{y} &= -\frac{1}{2} \\ \end{split} \qquad \begin{aligned} \frac{\hbar}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{i}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} &= -\frac{1}{2} \hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{-i}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} \end{split}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{J}_{z} & \text{for } j = 1 \\ \hat{J}_{z} &= \hbar \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{z} &= +1 & & \hbar \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} &= +\hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{z} &= 0 & & \hbar \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} &= & 0 \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{z} &= -1 & & \hbar \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ -1 \end{pmatrix} &= & -\hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

$$\hat{J}_{x} \text{ for } j = 1$$
$$\hat{J}_{x} = \frac{\hbar}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\hat{J}_{y} \text{ for } j = 1$$

$$\hat{J}_{y} = \frac{\hbar}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i & 0 \\ i & 0 & -i \\ 0 & i & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

 $m_y = 0$

$$\begin{split} m_{y} &= +1 & \qquad \frac{\hbar}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i & 0 \\ i & 0 & -i \\ 0 & i & 0 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{2} \\ \frac{i}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{2} \end{pmatrix} & = +\hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{2} \\ \frac{i}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{2} \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{y} &= 0 & \qquad \frac{\hbar}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i & 0 \\ i & 0 & -i \\ 0 & i & 0 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ 0 \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} & = & 0 \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ 0 \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} \\ m_{y} &= -1 & \qquad \frac{\hbar}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i & 0 \\ i & 0 & -i \\ 0 & i & 0 \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} & = -\hbar \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{2} \\ -\frac{i}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{2} \end{pmatrix} \end{split}$$