Gravitational Waves: Generation and Sources

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Lecture content

- Generation problem
- Applications

Binaries Pulsars Supernovae Stochastic background

References

Landau & Lifshitz: Field Theory, Chap. 11, 13

B. Schutz: A first course in general relativity, Chap. 8, 9

S. Weinberg: Gravitation and Cosmology, Chap. 7, 10

C. Misner, K.S. Thorne & A. Wheeler: Gravitation, Chap. 8

S. Carroll, Spacetime and Geometry: An Introduction to GR, Chap. 7

Course by K.S. Thorne available on the web: Lectures 4, 5 & 6

M. Maggiore: Gravitational waves: Theory and Experiments (2007)

Relativistic units:

 $G=1=c \quad \Rightarrow$ Mass, space and time have same units $1 \sec \sim 3 \times 10^{10} \, {\rm cm}$

 $1M_{\odot} \sim 5 \times 10^{-6} \,\mathrm{sec}$

Multipolar decomposition of waves in linear gravity

• Multipole expansion in terms of mass moments (I_L) and mass-current moments (J_L) of the source



Quadrupolar wave generation in linearized theory

$$\begin{split} \partial_{\rho} \partial^{\rho} \bar{h}_{\mu\nu} &= -\frac{16\pi G}{c^4} T^{\mu\nu} \qquad \partial_{\nu} \bar{h}^{\mu\nu} = 0 \quad \Rightarrow \\ \text{like retarded potentials in EM:} \\ \bar{h}_{\mu\nu}(\mathbf{x}) &= \frac{4G}{c^4} \int T_{\mu\nu}(\mathbf{y}, t - \frac{R}{c}) \frac{d^3y}{|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}|} \\ R &= |\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}| = \sqrt{r^2 + R_0^2 - 2\mathbf{r} \cdot \mathbf{R}_0} = R_0 \sqrt{1 - \frac{2\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{y}}{R_0} + \frac{r^2}{R_0^2}} \\ \text{expanding in} \quad \mathbf{y}/R_0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad R \simeq R_0 \left(1 - \frac{\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{y}}{R_0}\right) = R_0 - \mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{y} \\ \bar{h}_{\mu\nu} \simeq \frac{4G}{c^4} \frac{1}{R_0} \int T_{\mu\nu}(\mathbf{y}, t - \frac{R_0}{c} + \frac{\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{y}}{c}) d^3y \end{split}$$

Quadrupolar wave generation in linearized theory [continued]

• $\frac{\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{y}}{c}$ can be neglected if source mass distribution

doesn't vary much during this time.

If T typical time of variation of source



 $\Rightarrow \quad \frac{\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{y}}{c} \sim \frac{a}{c} \ll T \sim \frac{\lambda_{GW}}{c} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \lambda_{GW} \gg a$

• Since $T \sim \frac{a}{v} \implies \frac{a}{c} \ll \frac{a}{v} \implies \frac{v}{c} \ll 1$ slow-motion approximation

First term in a multipolar expansion (radiative zone $\lambda_{GW} \ll R_0$):

$$\bar{h}_{\mu\nu} \simeq \frac{4G}{c^4} \frac{1}{R_0} \int T_{\mu\nu}(\mathbf{y}, t - \frac{R_0}{c}) d^3y$$

Quadrupolar wave generation in linearized theory [continued]

For systems with significant self-gravity:

$$\bar{h}_{\mu\nu} \simeq \frac{4G}{c^4} \frac{1}{R_0} \int (T_{\mu\nu} + \tau_{\mu\nu}) (\mathbf{y}, t - \frac{R_0}{c}) d^3y$$
$$t^{\mu\nu} = T^{\mu\nu} + \tau^{\mu\nu}$$

Here, we disregard $\tau_{\mu\nu}$, impose $\partial_{\nu}T^{\mu\nu} = 0$ and show that

 $\int T_{ij} dV$ can be expressed *only* in terms of T^{00}

Derivation of quadrupole formula

Eq. (1): $\frac{\partial T_{0i}}{\partial x^{i}} - \frac{\partial T_{00}}{\partial x^{0}} = 0$ Eq. (2): $\frac{\partial T_{ji}}{\partial x^{i}} - \frac{\partial T_{j0}}{\partial x^{0}} = 0$

multiplying Eq. (2) by x^k and integrating on all space

$$\int x^k \frac{\partial T_{ji}}{\partial x^i} dV = \int x^k \frac{\partial T_{j0}}{\partial x^0} dV = \frac{\partial}{\partial x^0} \int x^k T_{j0} dV$$

integrating by parts the LHS and assuming that the source decays sufficiently fast at ∞

$$-\int T_{ji}\,\delta_i^k\,dV = \frac{\partial}{\partial x^0}\int x^k\,T_{j0}dV$$

symmetrizing $\Rightarrow \int T_{kj} dV = -\frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial x^0} \int (x_k T_{j0} + x_j T_{k0}) dV$

Derivation of quadrupole formula [continued]

Eq. (1):
$$\frac{\partial T_{0i}}{\partial x^i} - \frac{\partial T_{00}}{\partial x^0} = 0$$

Eq. (2):
$$\frac{\partial T_{ji}}{\partial x^i} - \frac{\partial T_{j0}}{\partial x^0} = 0$$

multiplying Eq. (1) by $x_k x_j$ and integrating on all space

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x^0} \int T_{00} x_k x_j dV = \int \frac{\partial T_{0i}}{\partial x^i} x_k x_j dV$$

integrating by parts the RHS and assuming that the source decays sufficiently fast at ∞

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x^0} \int T_{00} x_k x_j dV = -\int (x_k T_{j0} + x_j T_{k0}) dV$$

combining $\Rightarrow \int T_{kj} dV = \frac{1}{2c^2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial t^2} \int T_{00} x_k x_j dV$

Derivation of quadrupole formula [continued]

$$T^{00} = \mu c^2 \quad \Rightarrow \quad \bar{h}_{ij} = \frac{2G}{c^4} \frac{1}{R_0} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial t^2} \int \mu x_k x_j \, dV$$

Other components of $\bar{h}_{\mu\nu}$ are non-radiative fields:

$$\bar{h}_{00} = \frac{4G}{c^2} \frac{1}{R_0} \underbrace{\int \mu dV}_{M} \qquad \bar{h}_{0k} = \frac{4G}{c^3} \frac{1}{R_0} \underbrace{\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \int \mu x_k dV}_{P}$$

In TT gauge:
$$h_{ij}^{\mathrm{TT}} = \frac{2G}{c^4} \frac{1}{R_0} \mathcal{P}_i^k \mathcal{P}_j^l \ddot{Q}_{kl}$$

with
$$Q_{kl} = \int d^3x \rho \left(x_k x_l - \frac{1}{3} x^2 \delta_{kl} \right)$$
 $\mathcal{P}^{ik} = \delta^{ik} - n^i n^k$

\bar{h}_{0k} component

Eq. (1):
$$\frac{\partial T_{0i}}{\partial x^{i}} - \frac{\partial T_{00}}{\partial x^{0}} = 0$$

Eq. (2):
$$\frac{\partial T_{ji}}{\partial x^{i}} - \frac{\partial T_{j0}}{\partial x^{0}} = 0$$

multiplying Eq. (1) by x_k and integrating on all space

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x^0} \int T_{00} \, x_k \, dV = \int \frac{\partial T_{0i}}{\partial x^i} \, x_k \, dV$$

integrating by parts the RHS and assuming that the source decays sufficiently fast at ∞

$$\int T_{0k}dV = -\frac{\partial}{\partial x^0} \int T_{00} x_k dV$$

Total power radiated in GWs

Power radiated per unit solid angle in the direction n:

$$\begin{split} \frac{dP}{d\Omega} &= R_0^2 n^i \tau^{i0} \quad \text{with} \quad \tau^{i0} = \frac{c^4}{32\pi G} \partial_0 \bar{h}^{\beta}_{\alpha} \partial_i \bar{h}^{\alpha}_{\beta} \\ \bullet \frac{dP}{d\Omega} &= \frac{G}{8\pi c^5} \left(\ddot{Q}_{ij} \, \epsilon^{ij} \right)^2 \quad \text{for a given polarization} \\ \epsilon^{kk} &= 0 \quad \epsilon^{kl} n_k = 0 \quad \epsilon^{kl} \epsilon_{kl} = 0 \\ \bullet \mathcal{L}_{\text{GW}} &\equiv P = \frac{G}{5c^5} \left(\ddot{Q}_{ij} \right)^2 \quad \text{averaging over polarizations} \end{split}$$

Useful relations

$$\overline{n_i n_j} = \frac{1}{3} \delta_{ij}$$

$$\overline{n_i n_j n_k n_l} = \frac{1}{5} (\delta_{ij} \delta_{kl} + \delta_{ik} \delta_{jl} + \delta_{il} \delta_{jk})$$

$$2 \overline{\epsilon_{ij} \epsilon_{kl}} = 2 \frac{1}{4} \{ n_i n_j n_k n_l + n_i n_j \delta_{kl} + n_k n_l \delta_{ij} - (n_i n_k \delta_{jl} + n_j n_k \delta_{il} + n_i n_l \delta_{jk} + n_j n_l \delta_{ik}) - \delta_{ij} \delta_{kl} + \delta_{ik} \delta_{jl} + \delta_{jk} \delta_{il} \}$$

Comparison between GW and EM luminosity

$$\mathcal{L}_{\rm GW} = \frac{G}{5c^5} \left(\begin{array}{c} I \\ I \end{array} \right)^2 \qquad I_2 \sim \epsilon \, M \, R^2$$

 $R \to$ typical source's dimension, $M \to$ source's mass, $\epsilon \to$ deviation from sphericity

$$\ddot{I}_2 \sim \omega^3 \, \epsilon \, M \, R^2$$
 with $\omega \sim 1/P \quad \Rightarrow \quad \mathcal{L}_{\rm GW} \sim \frac{G}{c^5} \, \epsilon^2 \, \omega^6 \, M^2 \, R^4$

$$\mathcal{L}_{\rm GW} \sim \frac{c^5}{G} \epsilon^2 \left(\frac{G M \omega}{c^3}\right)^6 \left(\frac{R c^2}{G M}\right)^4 \Rightarrow \frac{c^5}{G} = 3.6 \times 10^{59} \text{ erg/sec (huge!)}$$

• For a steel rod of M = 490 tons, R = 20 m and $\omega \sim 28$ rad/sec: $GM\omega/c^3 \sim 10^{-32}, Rc^2/GM \sim 10^{25} \rightarrow \mathcal{L}_{GW} \sim 10^{-27}$ erg/sec $\sim 10^{-60} \mathcal{L}_{sun}^{EM}$!

• As Weber noticed in 1972, if we introduce $R_S = 2GM/c^2$ and $\omega = (v/c) (c/R)$

$$\mathcal{L}_{\rm GW} = \frac{c^5}{G} \epsilon^2 \left(\frac{v}{c}\right)^6 \left(\frac{R_S}{R}\right) \qquad \Longrightarrow_{v \sim c, R \sim R_S} \qquad \mathcal{L}_{\rm GW} \sim \epsilon^2 \frac{c^5}{G} \sim 10^{26} \, \mathcal{L}_{\rm sun}^{\rm EM}!$$

GWs on the Earth: comparison with other kind of radiation

Supernova at 20 kpc:

- From GWs: $\sim 400 \frac{\text{erg}}{\text{cm}^2 \text{ sec}} \left(\frac{f_{\text{GW}}}{1 \text{kHz}}\right)^2 \left(\frac{h}{10^{-21}}\right)^2$ during few msecs
- \bullet From neutrino: $\sim 10^5 \frac{\rm erg}{\rm cm^2\,sec}$ during 10 secs
- \bullet From optical radiation: $\sim 10^{-4} \frac{\rm erg}{\rm cm^2\,sec}$ during one week



Detecting GWs from comparable-mass BHs with LIGO $M_{\rm BH}=5{-}20M_{\odot}$ or larger masses if IMBH exists



Gravitational waves from compact binaries

• Mass-quadrupole approximation: $h_{ij} \sim \frac{G}{rc^4} \ddot{I}_{ij}$ $I_{ij} = \mu \left(X_i X_j - R^2 \delta_{ij} \right)$

 $h \propto \frac{M^{5/3} \omega^{2/3}}{r} \cos 2\Phi$ for quasi-circular orbits: $\omega^2 \sim \dot{\Phi}^2 = \frac{GM}{R^3}$ <u>Chirp</u>: The signal continuously changes its frequency and the power emitted

$$h \sim rac{M^{5/3} \, f^{2/3}}{r}$$
 for $f \sim 100$ Hz, $M = 20 M_{\odot}$

 $r \ {\rm at} \ 20 \ {\rm Mpc} \quad \Rightarrow \quad h \sim 10^{-21}$

at any frequency is very small!



Typical features of coalescing black-hole binaries

•Inspiral: quasi-circular orbits

Throughout the inspiral $T_{\rm RR} \gg T_{\rm orb} \Rightarrow$ natural *adiabatic parameter* $\frac{\dot{\omega}}{\omega^2} = \mathcal{O}\left(\frac{v^5}{c^5}\right)$ For compact bodies $\frac{v^2}{c^2} \sim \frac{GM}{c^2r} \Rightarrow$ PN approximation: slow motion and weak field "Chirping" if $T_{\rm obs} \gtrsim \omega/\dot{\omega}$ 0.05 Inspiral: spin-precessing orbits $T_{
m RR} \gg T_{
m prec} \gg T_{
m orb}$; $\omega_{
m GW} = \{\omega_{
m prec}, 2\omega\}$ **⇒**⁷ 0.00 •Inspiral: eccentric orbits -0.05 $T_{\rm RR} \gg T_{\rm peri\,prec} \gg T_{\rm orb}$; $\omega_{\rm GW} = \{N \, \omega, \cdots \}$ (from Pretorius 06) 150 200 250 300 50 100 •Last cycles-plunge-merger-ringdown t/M

Numerical relativity; close-limit approx.; PN resummation techniques



Inspiral signals are "chirps"

- GW signal: "chirp" [duration ~ seconds to years] ($f_{\rm GW} \sim 10^{-4} \, {\rm Hz-1 kHz}$)
- NS/NS, NS/BH and BH/BH
- MACHO binaries ($m < 1 M_{\odot}$) [MACHOs in galaxy halos $\leq 3-5\%$]

GW frequency at end-of-inspiral (ISCO):

- $f_{\rm GW} \sim 4400 \frac{M_\odot}{M} \text{ Hz}$
- LIGO/VIRGO/... : $M = 1-50M_{\odot}$
- LISA: $M = 10^2 10^7 M_{\odot}$



Radial potential in black-hole spacetime



GW templates through 2PN order for binaries moving along circular orbits

$$\tilde{h}(f) = \mathcal{A} f^{-7/6} e^{i\psi(f)}$$

$$\begin{split} \psi(f) &= 2\pi f t_c - \phi_c + \frac{3}{128} (\pi \mathcal{M} f)^{-5/3} \left\{ 1 - \frac{5\hat{\alpha}^2}{336\omega_{\text{BD}}} \eta^{2/5} (\pi \mathcal{M} f)^{-2/3} - \frac{128}{3} \frac{\pi^2 D \mathcal{M}}{\lambda_g^2 (1+z)} (\pi \mathcal{M} f)^{2/3} \right. \\ \left. + \left(\frac{3715}{756} + \frac{55}{9} \eta \right) \eta^{-2/5} (\pi \mathcal{M} f)^{2/3} - 16\pi \eta^{-3/5} (\pi \mathcal{M} f) + 4\beta \eta^{-3/5} (\pi \mathcal{M} f) \right. \\ \left. + \left(\frac{15293365}{508032} + \frac{27145}{504} \eta + \frac{3085}{72} \eta^2 \right) \eta^{-4/5} (\pi \mathcal{M} f)^{4/3} - 10\sigma \eta^{-4/5} (\pi \mathcal{M} f)^{4/3} \right\} \end{split}$$

$$\beta = \frac{1}{12} \sum_{i=1}^{2} \chi_{i} \left[113 \frac{m_{i}^{2}}{M^{2}} + 75\eta \right] \widehat{\boldsymbol{L}} \cdot \widehat{\boldsymbol{S}}_{i}, \qquad \sigma = \frac{\eta}{48} \chi_{1} \chi_{2} \left(-27 \widehat{\boldsymbol{S}}_{1} \cdot \widehat{\boldsymbol{S}}_{2} + 721 \widehat{\boldsymbol{L}} \cdot \widehat{\boldsymbol{S}}_{1} \widehat{\boldsymbol{L}} \cdot \widehat{\boldsymbol{S}}_{2} \right)$$

Inspiral: number of GW cycles predicted by PN theory

$$M=(15+15)M_{\odot}$$

 $f_{
m in}=40$ Hz; $f_{
m fin}=147$ Hz $\chi=|{f S}|/m^2$

Number of cycles

| 302 |
|--------------------------------|
| +39 |
| -37 |
| $+11.7\chi_{1}+11.7\chi_{2}$ |
| +3.3 |
| $-1.7\chi_1\chi_2$ |
| $-6.2 + 3.6\chi_1 + 3.6\chi_2$ |
| +2 |
| -0.8 |
| |

Binary coalescence time

$$E = \frac{1}{2}\mu v^2 - \frac{G\mu M}{r} = -\frac{G\mu M}{2r} \quad \Rightarrow \quad r = -\frac{G\mu M}{2E}$$

$$\dot{r} = \frac{dr}{dE} \frac{dE}{dt} = -\frac{64}{5} \frac{G\mu M^2}{r^3} \quad \text{integrating} \quad \Rightarrow \quad r(t) = \left(r_0^4 - \frac{256}{5} G\mu M^2 \Delta \tau_{\text{coal}}\right)^{1/4}$$

$$\text{If} \quad r(t_f) \ll r_0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad \Delta \tau_{\text{coal}} = \frac{5}{256} \frac{r_0^4}{G\mu M^2}$$

Examples:

- LIGO/VIRGO/GEO/TAMA source: $M = (10 + 10)M_{\odot}$ at $r_0 \sim 500$ km, $f_{\rm GW} \sim 40$ Hz, $T_0 \sim 0.05$ sec $\Rightarrow \Delta \tau_{\rm coal} \sim 1$ sec
- LISA source: $M = (10^6 + 10^6) M_{\odot}$ at $r_0 \sim 200 \times 10^6 \text{ km}$, $f_{\text{GW}} \sim 4.5 \times 10^{-5} \text{ Hz}$, $T_0 \sim 11 \text{ hours} \Rightarrow \Delta \tau_{\text{coal}} \sim 1 \text{ year}$

NR simulations for equal-mass binaries: quasi-circular evolution







How well the Newtonian quadrupole formula works



Comparison NR and PN-adiabatic model

• The initial frequency $\omega_{\rm NR} \sim 0.0325/m$ (e.g., for a $(15+15)M_{\odot}$, $f_{\rm GW} \sim 70$ Hz)





Comparison NR and PN-adiabatic model: 16 cycles

[Baker et al. 06 (NASA)]



Comparison NR and effective-one-body model

• $M_{
m end}=0.97\,m$ and $a_{
m end}/M_{
m end}=0.78$

[AB, Cook & Pretorius 06]

• Fundamental mode and two overtones included



Detectability for ground-based detectors

[AB, Cook & Pretorius 06; Baker et al. 06]



Gravitational waves from pulsars

• Body rotating rigidly around the x_3 principal axis with frequency ω_s

$$\{x'_1, x'_2, x'_3\}$$
 coordinate system fixed to the body
 $x'_1 = x_1 \cos \omega_s t + x_2 \sin \omega_s t$
 $x'_2 = x_1 \sin \omega_s t - x_2 \cos \omega_s t$



$$Q_{ij} = \int \rho \, x_i \, x_j \, d^3 x \quad \text{and} \quad I_{ij} = \int \rho \, (R^2 \, \delta^{ij} - x_i \, x_j) \, d^3 x'$$
$$Q_{11} = -Q_{22} = -\frac{1}{2} \left(I_1 - I_2 \right) \, \cos 2\omega_s t$$
$$Q_{12} = -\frac{1}{2} \left(I_1 - I_2 \right) \, \sin 2\omega_s t$$
$$Q_{33} = I_3, Q_{13} = Q_{23} = 0$$

$$h \sim \frac{2\omega_s^2}{r} \left(I_1 - I_2 \right) \cos 2\omega_s t \quad \epsilon \equiv (I_1 - I_2)/I_3$$

Gravitational waves from spinning neutron stars: pulsars

• GW signal: (quasi) "periodic" $(f_{GW} \sim 10 \text{ Hz}-1 \text{ kHz})$ Pulsars: non-zero ellipticity (or oblateness)

$$h_{\rm GW} \simeq 7.7 \times 10^{-26} \left(\frac{\epsilon}{10^{-6}}\right) \left(\frac{I_3}{10^{45}\,{\rm g\,cm}^2}\right) \left(\frac{10\,{\rm kpc}}{r}\right) \left(\frac{f_{\rm GW}}{1\,{\rm kHz}}\right)^2$$

$$\epsilon = \frac{I_1 - I_2}{I_3} \rightarrow \text{ellipticity}$$

-The crust contributes only 10% of total moment of inertia $\Rightarrow \epsilon_C$ is low -Magnetic fields could induce stresses and generate $\epsilon_M \neq 0$

Expected ellipticity rather low $\leq 10^{-7}$, unless *exotic* EOS are used

- search for known spinning neutron stars: Vela, Crab, ...
- all sky search

Einstein@Home (screensaver)

Partecipate in LIGO pulsar data analysis by signing up!

http://www.einsteinathome.org (B Allen, Univ. of Winsconsin, Milwakee)



Gravitational waves from stellar collapse

• GW signal: "bursts" [~ few mseconds] or (quasi) "periodic" ($f_{\rm GW} \sim 1 \, \rm kHz-10 \, kHz$) Supernovae:

- Non-axisymmetric core collapse
- Material in the stellar core may form a rapidly rotating bar-like structure
- Collapse material may fragment into clumps which orbit as the collapse proceeds
- Pulsation modes of new-born NS; ring-down of new-born BH

Dynamics of star very complicated

- GW amplitude and frequency estimated using mass- and current-quadrupole moments
- Numerical simulations

Correlations with neutrino flux and/or EM counterparts Event rates in our galaxy and its companions $\lesssim 30$ yrs

Gravitational-wave strain from non-axisymmetric collapse

$$h_{\rm GW} \simeq 2 \times 10^{-17} \sqrt{\eta_{\rm eff}} \left(\frac{1\,{\rm msec}}{\tau}\right)^{1/2} \left(\frac{M}{M_{\odot}}\right)^{1/2} \left(\frac{10\,{\rm kpc}}{r}\right) \left(\frac{1\,{\rm kHz}}{f_{\rm GW}}\right)$$

au
ightarrow duration of emission

efficiency
$$\eta_{\text{eff}} = \frac{\Delta E}{M c^2} \sim 10^{-10} - 10^{-7}$$

Summary of sources with first-generation ground-based detectors



Upper bound for NS-NS (BH-BH) coalescence with LIGO: $\sim 1/3 {
m yr}$ (1/yr)

Advanced LIGO/VIRGO

- Higher laser power \Rightarrow lower photon-fluctuation noise
- \bullet Heavier test masses $\sim 40~{\rm Kg} \Rightarrow$ lower radiation-pressure noise
- Better optics to reduce thermal noise
- Better suspensions and seismic isolation systems
- Signal-recycling cavity: reshaping noise curves



Summary of sources for second-generation ground-based detectors

Sensitivity improved by a factor $\sim 10 \Rightarrow$ event rates by $\sim 10^3$



Upper bound for NS-NS binary with Advanced LIGO: a few/month

GWs in curved space-time

- $S = \frac{1}{16\pi G_N} \int d^4x \sqrt{|g|} \,\mathcal{R} + S_{\text{matter}}$
- Isotropic and spatially homogenous FLRW background

$$ds^{2} = g_{\mu\nu} dx^{\mu} dx^{\nu} = -dt^{2} + a^{2}(t) d\vec{x}^{2} = a^{2}(\eta) \left(-d\eta^{2} + d\vec{x}^{2}\right)$$

• Metric perturbations ($\delta g_{\mu\nu} = h_{\mu\nu}$):

$$h_k''(\eta) + \frac{2a'}{a}h_k'(\eta) + k^2h_k(\eta) = 0$$

Introducing the "canonical field" $\psi_k(\eta) = a h_k(\eta)$:

$$\psi_k'' + \left[k^2 - U(\eta)\right] \psi_k = 0 \qquad U(\eta) = \frac{a''}{a}$$

Semiclassical point of view

Introducing the "canonical field" $\psi_k(\eta) = a h_k(\eta)$:

 $\psi_k'' + \left[k^2 - U(\eta)\right] \,\psi_k = 0 \qquad U(\eta) = \frac{a''}{a}$

"deSitter-like" inflationary era: $a = -1/(\eta H_{dS}) \left[|U(\eta)| \sim 1/\eta^2, (a H_{dS}) \sim 1/\eta \right]$

- If $k^2 \gg |U(\eta)|$ $[k\eta \gg 1, k/a \gg H_{dS}, \lambda_{phys} \ll H_{dS}^{-1} \rightarrow \text{the mode is inside the Hubble radius}]$ $\psi_k \sim e^{\pm ik \eta} \Rightarrow h_k \sim \frac{1}{a} e^{\pm ik \eta}$
- If $k^2 \ll |U(\eta)|$: $[k\eta \ll 1, k/a \ll H_{dS}, \lambda_{phys} \gg H_{dS}^{-1} \rightarrow \text{the mode is outside the Hubble radius}]$ $\psi_k \sim a \left[A_k + B_k \int \frac{d\eta}{a^2(\eta)}\right] \Rightarrow h_k \sim A_k + B_k \int \frac{d\eta}{a^2(\eta)}$

Amplification of quantum-vacuum fluctuations: semiclassical point of view

Example: Stochastic GW background from slow-roll inflation

• Too low to be detected by first generations GW interferometers

