

Premier density functional theory program to simulate the properties of solids, interfaces, and surfaces

Advanced *ab initio* quantum mechanical calculations for chemicals and materials research

Increase your understanding of the electronic, optical, and structural properties of systems

CASTEP

CASTEP is an *ab initio* quantum mechanical program employing density functional theory (DFT) to simulate the properties of solids, interfaces, and surfaces for a wide range of materials classes such as ceramics, semiconductors, and metals. First principle calculations allow researchers to investigate the nature and origin of the electronic, optical, and structural properties of a system without the need for any experimental input. CASTEP is thus well suited to research problems in solid state physics, materials science, chemistry, and chemical engineering where empirical models are lacking and experimental data may be sparse. In these areas, researchers can employ computer simulations to perform virtual experiments, leading to tremendous savings in costly experiments and shorter developmental cycles.

What Does CASTEP Do?

Researchers in chemistry and materials science may be tasked with a number of challenging goals like the development of new compounds, such as a stronger light-weight alloy or a semiconductor that will make a faster computer chip; or they may need to improve a manufacturing process that uses atomic layer deposition; or they may be faced with simply understanding and describing fundamental processes, explaining why one particular material is better than another. Modeling can address all of these challenges, provided that the method is fast, accurate, and works at the atomic scale. CASTEP is just such a method.

Originally developed in the Theory of Condensed Matter Group at Cambridge University, UK, CASTEP uses quantum mechanical calculations to study problems in chemicals and materials research. A large number of academic and commercial partners assures that the program incorporates the latest technologies and has been well-validated for the types of problems faced by research scientists in the fields mentioned above.

CASTEP is able to predict the structure of a material as well as many essential

properties. In particular, it can predict electronic properties such as band gaps and Schottky barriers; optical properties such as phonon dispersion curves, polarizability and dielectric constants; or physical properties such as elastic constants. Put these all together to get a tool for the rapid and accurate design of new materials *in silico*.

Key features include a transition state search algorithm that greatly facilitates determination of reaction profiles and energy barriers, essential to an understanding of kinetics. The full 6x6 tensor of the elastic constants can be predicted for a periodic structure of any symmetry. Recent advances in the ability to compute phonon frequencies makes it possible to predict thermodynamic properties such as free energy and heat capacity for any material. Moreover, the ability to make thermodynamic predictions of solid-state systems enables the simulation of many condensed matter properties such as the phase stability of structural modifications.

Based on total energy pseudopotential methods, CASTEP requires as input only the number and type of atoms in a system and predicts properties such as lattice constants, molecular geometry, elastic constants, bandstructures, density-of-states, charge

densities and wave functions, and optical properties. The pseudopotential plane-wave technology underlying CASTEP is well validated, with hundreds of scientific publications written each year demonstrating new applications of the code. Efficient parallel versions of the code are also available for large systems involving hundreds of atoms.

CASTEP has been applied to a wide range of research problems such as surface chemistry, physi- and chemisorption, heterogeneous catalysis, defects in semiconductors, grain boundaries, stacking faults, nanotechnology, molecular crystals, polymorphic studies, diffusion mechanisms, and molecular dynamics of liquids.

The Materials Studio Advantage

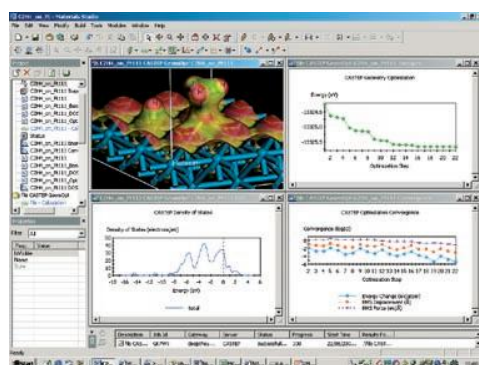
CASTEP is part of the Materials Studio® software environment. Materials Studio provides a user-friendly interface, complying with Windows® standards. Materials Visualizer, the core Materials Studio product, offers a wide range of model building and visualization tools that allow you to construct rapidly models of the systems of interest, easily select

the CASTEP module, and run an advanced quantum mechanical calculation. The simple user interface together with Accelrys's training programs ensure that even new users will be able to use the program with confidence.

A flexible client-server architecture means that calculations can be run on servers located anywhere on your network. Results are returned to your PC, where they may be displayed and analyzed. You can easily produce high-quality graphics of geometric structures, molecular orbitals, electrostatic potentials, or charge densities. Structures, graphs, and other data such as video clips produced from CASTEP output can be instantly exchanged with other PC applications, assisting you when sharing them with colleagues or when analyzing your results using spreadsheets and other packages.

How Does CASTEP Work?

CASTEP¹⁻³ uses a total energy plane-wave pseudopotential method. In the mathematical model of the material, CASTEP replaces core electrons with effective potentials acting only on the valence electrons in the system. Electronic wavefunctions are expanded through a plane-wave basis set, and exchange and correlation effects can be included within either the local density (LDA) or generalized gradient (GGA) approximations. Combining the use of pseudopotentials and plane wave basis sets enables extremely efficient geometry optimizations of molecules, solids, surfaces, and interfaces. The primary reason that CASTEP has become so powerful is that the numerical methods used to solve the underlying quantum mechanical calculations are both computationally efficient and extremely accurate.



C₂H₄ absorption on a Pt(111) surface showing the electrostatic potential projected on the electronic density isosurface. Density of states, energy evolution, and energy convergence graphs are also shown.

CASTEP is capable of computing many electronic and optical properties using density functional perturbation theory (DFPT), also known as the linear response method. This approach makes possible a wider variety of properties than are possible using the so-called finite difference approaches, which require repeated computations on a series systems. Using DFPT, CASTEP can predict a number of significant observables including the phonon density of states, phonon dispersion, optical polarizability, IR spectra, and dielectric functions.

The Future

Over the last ten years, there has been staggering progress in the application of QM techniques to materials science. These codes are now widely and routinely used, accessible from the desktop personal computers of thousands of scientists. CASTEP is uniquely positioned in this community of researchers. It is available as commercial-quality software, supported by a world-wide team of scientists, maintained in regular high-quality software releases, and seamlessly integrated with a comprehensive range of model-building and simulation tools..

Features and Capabilities

Calculation Tasks

- Total energies, forces, and stresses
- Geometry optimizations (including unit cell parameters)
- Molecular dynamics using NVE, NVT, NPH, and NPT ensembles
- Transition state search based on the linear and quadratic synchronous transit methodology (LST/QST)
- Elastic constants
- Phonon frequencies using linear response or finite displacements

General Capabilities

- Choice of local, gradient-corrected, and screened-exchange functionals for approximating exchange and correlation effects
- Ultra soft and norm-conserving pseudopotentials for the entire periodic table

Job Control Options

- Choice of parallelization strategy to optimize computational performance
- Choose number of CPU's
- Specify server machine
- Monitor output and status reports including text or graphs of energy and gradient during geometry optimization
- Live updates of the model geometry and job status
- Halt jobs on remote server via the Materials Visualizer

Properties

- Optical properties: frequency dependent dielectric function polarizability, reflectivity, refractive index, UV spectra
- IR spectra
- Mulliken population analysis for atoms and bonds
- Static elastic constants
- Phonon dispersion
- Band structures
- Total and projected phonon density of states
- Thermodynamic properties in quasiharmonic approximations (free energy, enthalpy, entropy, heat capacity, Debye temperature)

Graphical Displays with MS Visualizer

- Charge, spin, and deformation densities
- 3-D contours and 2-D slices
- Simulated scanning tunneling microscopy (STM) images
- Overlay multiple plots and color surfaces by property maps

Miscellaneous Options

- Real or reciprocal space pseudopotential representation
- Full use of space-group symmetry
- Multiple options for accelerating SCF convergence: DIIS, density mixing, smearing

References

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