On-shell methods in gauge theories Part 2: Loops

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The plan:

Yesterday:	 tree amplitudes 	

- same for susy and non-susy theories
- Today: (mostly 1-)loop amplitudes
 - focus on maximal supersymmetry

Main message: It pays to stay on-shell Tree-level amplitudes determine "everything" Structure of 1-loop amplitudes in any D = 4 theory

$$A_n^{(1)} = \sum_i d_i \operatorname{Box}_i + \sum_i c_i \operatorname{Triangle}_i + \sum_i b_i \operatorname{Bubble}_i + \operatorname{Rat}$$

◊ justified by integral reduction: given any Feynman diagram, one may bring it to this form by a sequence of transformations:

- decompose numerator tensors constructed from loop momenta in a basis of external momenta
- construct inverse propagators
- reduce scalar integrals using

$$1 = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{5} b_i (p_i^2 + m^2)}{\sum_{i=1}^{5} b_i (p_i^2 + m^2)} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{5} b_i (l+p_i)^2 + m^2}{\sum_{i=1}^{5} b_i (p_i^2 + m^2)}$$

- reduce pentagons to boxes by other means (van Neerven/Vermasseren)
- ♦ SUSY restricts coefficients

Pre-twistor perturbative analytic results in $\mathcal{N}=4$ SYM



Current perturbative analytic results in $\mathcal{N}=4$ SYM



The "old" unitarity

 $1 = SS^{\dagger} \Rightarrow 2\Im T = TT^{\dagger}$ Unitarity: relation between discontinuity of amplitude at some loop order and lower loop amplitudes

Knowing all cuts of an amplitude allows its reconstruction - up to rational functions of momenta

$$\Re T = \frac{1}{\pi} P \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} dw \frac{\Im T}{w - s} - C_{\infty}$$

♦ A question:

MHV vertices work at tree-level. Do they also work at loop level? If so, is there a relation to existing methods?

◊ Various arguments for negative answers across the board

- MHV vertices are nonlocal; unitarity will be messed up
- Twistor string has extra states
 Berkovits, Witten
- MHV vertices suggest localization on lines; Cachazo, Svrček and Witten studied the twistor space structure of available loop amplitudes and found deviations from such localization
- $i\epsilon$ prescription is unclear; needs to be "prescribed"
- twistor formulation is intrinsic to d = 4; regularization?
- off-shell spinors were "invented"; potential problems?

♦ Post factum: MHV rules have Lagrangian origin

General prescription:

- # of MHV vertices equals # of negative helicity gluons
- similarly to tree amplitudes, sum over possible assignments of external legs consistent with cyclic ordering; sum over internal helicity
- momentum integral
- on-shell and transverse w/ η ; phase-space and dispersion integral

$$L_{a\dot{a}} = l_a \tilde{l}_{\dot{a}} + z \eta_a \tilde{\eta}_{\dot{a}} \rightarrow \frac{d^4 L}{L^2} = \frac{dz}{z} \left[\langle ldl \rangle d^2 \tilde{l} - [\tilde{l}d\tilde{l}] d^2 l \right] = 4i \frac{dz}{z} d^4 l \delta^{(+)} (l^2)$$

- one dispersion int. per propagator; use l_a and $\tilde{l}_{\dot{a}}$ in MHV vertices
- dimensionally-regularize phase-space integral

$$- i\epsilon \text{ prescription: } \frac{dz}{z} \rightarrow \frac{dz}{z+i\epsilon}$$





$$A = \int \frac{d^4 L_1}{L_1^2} \frac{d^4 L_2}{L_2^2} \delta^4(L_1 + L_2 + p_{i+1,\dots,j}) A_L(L_2, i+1,\dots,j,L_1) A_R(-L_1, j+1,\dots,i,-L_2)$$

• reorganization of cuts of box integrals



- Identify IR divergences: only if 4-point MHV vertices are present Bena, Bern, Kosower, RR
- Transform to (λ, μ) : exp. disconnected structure + subtleties
- Interesting open problem: derive 6-point NMHV using this method

The (generalized) unitarity-based method

 $1 = SS^{\dagger} \Rightarrow 2\Im T = TT^{\dagger}$ Unitarity: relation between discontinuity of amplitude at some loop order and lower loop amplitudes

- Knowing all cuts of an amplitude allows its reconstruction up to rational functions of momenta
- Another way: use unitarity in d dimensions
 - rational functions related to $(d-4) \times ($ multivalued functions)
- susy theories: rational and multivalued functions come together
- re-interpretation of the meaning of unitarity cut

Various statements and "theorems": Bern, Dixon, Dunbar, Kosower Bern, Morgan

• Any amplitude in any massless theory is fully determined from *D*-dimensional tree amplitudes to all loop orders; no off-shell formulation is necessary

• At 1-loop, any amplitude in a massless supersymmetric field theory is fully constructible from 4-dimensional tree amplitudes, regardless potential UV and IR singularities

• Amplitudes of $\mathcal{N} = 4$ super-Yang-Mills theory are simpler than they should be. Any 1-loop amplitude is a linear combination of box integrals

Example: 1-loop 4-point gluon amplitude in $\mathcal{N} = 4$ super-Yang-Mills Bern, Dixon, Dunbar, Kosower



• at least one cut involves a nontrivial sum over all $\mathcal{N} = 4$ states



 both cuts contain the same information – even though only one of them involves a nontrivial sum; consequence of susy



The generalized unitarity-based method

- cut more than 2 propagators
 Interpretation: cut propagators = not canceling
- In the past primarily used at higher loops
- Use at 1-loop in conjunction with structure of amplitudes
 - $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM: amplitudes are sums of box integrals
 - e.g. these functions are sufficient to account for all factorization properties



Bern, Dixon, Kosower

Britto, Cachazo, Feng

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Bern, Dixon, Kosower Britto, Cachazo, Feng



Further restrictions on the amplitude:

 $A = \sum (\text{coefficients}) \times (\text{box integrals})$

• IR equation – important guide – simplifies life

$$A_n^{1 \text{ loop}} \Big|_{\text{singular}} = \frac{\Gamma(1+\epsilon)\Gamma(1-\epsilon)^2}{\epsilon^2 (4\pi)^{2-\epsilon}\Gamma(1-2\epsilon)} A_n^{\text{tree}}$$

relations between coefficients and tree-level amplitudes

 box integrals are multi-valued function; position of branch cuts depend on invariants; no overlap!
 e.g.

$$I_{2me}[i, n_1, n_2] \propto \dots + \operatorname{Li}_2 \left(1 - \frac{t_i^{[n_1]}}{t_{i-1}^{[n_1+1]}} \right) + \operatorname{Li}_2 \left(1 - \frac{t_i^{[n_1]}}{t_i^{[n_1+1+1]}} \right) + \dots$$
$$I_{2mh}[i, n_1, n_2] \propto \dots + \frac{1}{2} \ln^2 \left(\frac{t_{i-2}^{[2]}}{t_{i-1}^{[n_1+1]}} \right) + \operatorname{Li}_2 \left(1 - \frac{t_i^{[n_1]}}{t_{i-1}^{[n_1+1]}} \right) + \operatorname{Li}_2 \left(1 - \frac{t_i^{[n_1+2]}}{t_{i-1}^{[n_1+1]}} \right) + \dots$$

More observations

■ ∃! one box integral whose external momenta correspond to each decomposition of the ordered external legs in four groups

 $(1, \ldots, n) \mapsto [(i, \ldots, i+n_1-1), (i+n_1 \ldots i+n_{12}-1), (i+n_{12} \ldots i+n_{123}-1), \text{rest}]$

Localization

on-shell condition on the 4 internal propagators of the box integral \mapsto freezes loop momentum up to (sum over) discrete choices

$$l^{2} = 0$$
 $(l - K_{1})^{2} = 0$ $(l - K_{1} - K_{2})^{2} = 0$ $(l + K_{4})^{2} = 0$

- Useful and forgotten:
- (very) complicated solutions; luckily, often not needed explicitly
- 1,2,3-mass boxes solution exists only for complex momenta $-p_{a\dot{a}} = \lambda_a \tilde{\lambda}_{\dot{a}}$ with $\tilde{\lambda}_{\dot{a}} \neq (\lambda_a)^*$ i.e. $A(++-) \neq 0$ and $A(++-) \neq 0$

 Feynman diagrams underlie all amplitudes → on each side of generalized cut there is a tree-level amplitude

The algorithm:

1) start with ansatz

$$A_{n} = \sum \begin{bmatrix} c_{i,n-3}I_{1m}[i, n-3] \\ + c_{i,n_{1},n_{2}}^{e}I_{2me}[i, n_{1}, n_{2}] + c_{i,n_{1},n_{2}}^{h}I_{2mh}[i, n_{1}, n_{2}] \\ + c_{i,n_{1},n_{2},n_{3}}I_{3m}[i, n_{1}, n_{2}, n_{3}] + c_{i,n_{1},n_{2},n_{3}}I_{4m}[i, n_{1}, n_{2}, n_{3}, n_{4}] \end{bmatrix}$$

2) Isolate one coefficient via the appropriate quadruple cut



3) compute the coefficient by multiplying the appropriate tree amplitudes (complex momenta are implicitly used if one encounters3-point tree amplitudes)

sum over different allowed helicity assignments for internal lines



$$c_{i,n_{K_1},n_{K_2},n_{K_3},n_{K_4}} = \frac{1}{\#\text{sol}} \sum_{\text{hel's}} (A_1)(A_2)(A_3)(A_4) \Big|_{\text{sol. to on-shell condition}}$$

- cancellation of Jacobian from integral of on-shell condition
- extract one coefficient at a time
- tree-level simplicity translates into 1-loop simplicity

(Not too many) tips for solving the on-shell condition

- if possible, find spinors
- solve conditions at 3-point corners (up to scale freedom)
- choose representation of tree amplitudes; expose loop momenta(?)
- search for inconsistencies implied by these solutions
 - \rightarrow vanishing contributions (or vanishing coefficients)
- turn holomorphic spinor into antiholomorphic spinor (or vice versa) $-\langle lX\rangle = \frac{[i|l|X\rangle}{[il]}$ for some external line *i*
- ratios of the type $\frac{\langle lX\rangle}{\langle lY\rangle}$ may sometimes be simplified
- coffee might help

. . .

• If nothing works, reconstruct loop momenta; use explicit sol.

Example: 5-points MHV amplitude: five I_{1m} (incoming momenta)



$$\left(\frac{\langle 1l_2\rangle^3}{\langle l_2l_1\rangle\langle l_11\rangle}\right)\left(\frac{[l_3l_2]^3}{[l_22][2l_3]}\right)\left(\frac{[3l_4]^3}{[l_4l_3][l_33]}\right)\left(\frac{\langle l_1l_4\rangle^3}{\langle l_44\rangle\langle 45\rangle\langle 5l_1\rangle}\right)$$



$$\left(\frac{[l_2l_1]^3}{[1l_2][l_11]}\right)\left(\frac{\langle 2l_2\rangle^3}{\langle 2l_3\rangle\langle l_3l_2\rangle}\right)\left(\frac{[3l_4]^3}{[l_4l_3][l_33]}\right)\left(\frac{\langle l_1l_4\rangle^3}{\langle l_44\rangle\langle 45\rangle\langle 5l_1\rangle}\right)$$

a) $[l_1 l_2] = [l_1 1] = [l_2 1] = 0$ $\langle l_2 l_3 \rangle = \langle l_2 2 \rangle = \langle 2 l_3 \rangle = 0$ $\langle l_3 l_4 \rangle = \langle l_3 3 \rangle = \langle 3 l_4 \rangle = 0$

$$\lambda_{l_1} \propto \lambda_1$$
; $\lambda_{l_2} \propto \lambda_1$
 $\lambda_{l_2} \propto \lambda_2$; $\lambda_{l_3} \propto \lambda_2$
 $\lambda_{l_3} \propto \lambda_3$; $\lambda_{l_4} \propto \lambda_3$

inconsistent

b) $\langle l_1 l_2 \rangle = \langle l_1 1 \rangle = \langle l_2 1 \rangle = 0$ $\lambda_{l_1} \propto \lambda_1 ; \lambda_{l_2} \propto \lambda_1$ $[l_2 l_3] = [l_2 2] = [2l_3] = 0$ $\tilde{\lambda}_{l_2} \propto \tilde{\lambda}_2 ; \tilde{\lambda}_{l_3} \propto \tilde{\lambda}_2$ $\langle l_3 l_4 \rangle = \langle l_3 3 \rangle = \langle 3 l_4 \rangle = 0$ $\lambda_{l_3} \propto \lambda_3 ; \lambda_{l_4} \propto \lambda_3$

proceed

Reorganize factors using momentum conservation:

$$b) \quad \overset{4^{+} \overbrace{l_{4}}^{5^{+} I_{1}}}{\underset{3^{+} \overbrace{l_{3}}^{4^{+}}}{\overset{4^{+} I_{2}}{\overset{4^{+} I_{2}}{\overset{4^{+} I_{2}}{\overset{4^{+} I_{2}}{\overset{4^{+} I_{2}}}}}} \quad \left(\frac{[l_{2}l_{1}]^{3}}{[1l_{2}][l_{1}1]}\right) \left(\frac{\langle 2l_{2}\rangle^{3}}{\langle 2l_{3}\rangle\langle l_{3}l_{2}\rangle}\right) \left(\frac{[3l_{4}]^{3}}{[l_{4}l_{3}][l_{3}3]}\right) \left(\frac{\langle l_{1}l_{4}\rangle^{3}}{\langle l_{4}4\rangle\langle 45\rangle\langle 5l_{1}\rangle}\right)$$

 $\langle 2l_2 \rangle [l_2l_1] = \langle 2|l_1 + 1|l_1] = \langle 21 \rangle [1l_1]$ $\langle l_3l_2 \rangle [l_21] = \langle l_3|l_3 + 2|1] = \langle l_32 \rangle [21]$ $c_{123(45)} = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\langle 12 \rangle^3 [1l_1]^2 \langle l_1|(4+5)|3]^3}{[12] \langle 34 \rangle \langle 45 \rangle \langle 2l_3 \rangle^2 [3l_3]^2 \langle 5l_1\rangle }$ $\langle l_1l_4 \rangle [l_43] = \langle l_1|l_1 - 4 - 5|3] = -\langle l_1|(4+5)|3]$ $\langle 4l_4 \rangle [l_4l_3] = \langle 4|l_3 + 3|l_3] = -\langle 43 \rangle [3l_3]$

Last: leftover spinors \leftrightarrow momentum conservation and constraints

$$\lambda_{l_1} = \alpha_1 \lambda_1 \ \tilde{\lambda}_{l_3} = \beta_2 \tilde{\lambda}_2$$
$$\lambda_{l_1} \tilde{\lambda}_{l_1} = \lambda_1 \tilde{\lambda}_1 + \lambda_{l_2} \tilde{\lambda}_{l_2} \qquad \qquad \alpha_1 \tilde{\lambda}_{l_1} = \tilde{\lambda}_1 + \beta_1 \tilde{\lambda}_{l_2}$$
$$\lambda_{l_3} \tilde{\lambda}_{l_3} = \lambda_2 \tilde{\lambda}_2 + \lambda_{l_2} \tilde{\lambda}_{l_2} \qquad \qquad \beta_2 \lambda_{l_3} = \lambda_2 + \alpha_2 \lambda_{l_2} = \lambda_2 + \alpha_2 \beta_1 \lambda_1$$

Homogeneity (no α and β): $c_{123(45)} = -\frac{1}{2}s_{12}s_{23}\left[\frac{\langle 12 \rangle^3}{\langle 23 \rangle \langle 34 \rangle \langle 45 \rangle \langle 51 \rangle}\right]$

A general vanishing result:

 The coefficient of a 1-mass box integral vanishes if there are two adjacent corners with the same helicity configuration



$$\begin{split} [l_1 l_2] &= [l_1 1] = [l_2 1] = 0 \qquad \tilde{\lambda}_{l_1} \propto \tilde{\lambda}_1 \ ; \ \tilde{\lambda}_{l_2} \propto \tilde{\lambda}_1 \\ \langle l_2 l_3 \rangle &= \langle l_2 2 \rangle = \langle 2 l_3 \rangle = 0 \qquad \lambda_{l_2} \propto \lambda_2 \ ; \ \lambda_{l_3} \propto \lambda_2 \\ \langle l_3 l_4 \rangle &= \langle l_3 3 \rangle = \langle 3 l_4 \rangle = 0 \qquad \lambda_{l_3} \propto \lambda_3 \ ; \ \lambda_{l_4} \propto \lambda_3 \end{split}$$

cannot solve on-shell conditions for generic external momenta



•
$$(12345) \rightarrow (51234)$$

Remaining nonvanishing coefficients





$$c_{345(12)} = -\frac{1}{2}s_{34}s_{45} \left[\frac{\langle 12 \rangle^3}{\langle 23 \rangle \langle 34 \rangle \langle 45 \rangle \langle 51 \rangle}\right]$$

Comments

- Algorithmic; yields any 1-loop amplitude in $\mathcal{N}=4$ SYM
- Simplicity due to new structures: $[a|b\dots c|d\rangle$
- IR equations feed this simplicity back to trees \rightarrow rec. rel.
- Existing explicit results:
 - all MHV amplitudes Bern, Dixon, Dunbar, Kosower
 - all \leq 7-point amplitudes Britto, Cachazo, Feng Bern, del Duca, Dixon, Kosower
 - all split-helicity NMHV amplitudes
 Bern, Dixon, Kosower
- other fields of $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM on external lines
- Extension to reduced susy and no susy; phenomenology

On to higher loops...

Brief comparison – or "Why are higher-loop calculations hard?"

1-loop	higher loops
technology: quadruple cuts freeze integral	no general analog; too few propagators
very efficient complete basis	over-completeorunder-complete
same basis for any number of external legs	limited experience; 4pt \rightarrow 5pt new integrals
	new structures: $\mathcal{O}(\epsilon)$ and $\mathcal{O}(\epsilon^2)$ in 1-loop amplitude are relevant
cuts easy to disentangle (even without quadruple cuts)	(very) nontrivial zeroes; many ways to reorganize cuts hard to choose; some more use- ful than others
4d algebra suffices	unclear; safety requires $D-dim$.

Generalized unitarity continues to work; strategy:

- cut at least L + 1 and at most 4L 1 propagators
- recognize integral functions containing the cut propagators
- test all relevant cuts for missed terms
- Cross-check against all sources of information
 - (partial) localization (Buchbinder, Cachazo)
 - IR properties (Sterman, Magnea; Catani)
 - collinear, soft and multi-particle factorization
- declare victory (invoking *D*-dimensional nature of calculation)

Case by case discussion: 4-point amplitudes seem the simplest

work toward a effective rules capturing cut calculation



An observation: for 4-particle amplitudes, 2-particle cuts iterate to all orders (Bern, Rozowsky, Yan)



similar in the *t*-channel



2-particle cuts \leftrightarrow add all possible rungs and corresponding numerator factor (total momentum crossing the rung) (Bern, Rozowsky, Yan)



- at 3-loops gives the complete answer (6 diagrams plus cyclic)
- similar methods yield the 5-point 2-loop amplitude

Comments and summary:

- 1-loop S-matrix is analytically known in any massless gauge theory
- Unitarity-based calculations can produce analytic expressions for the integrands of higher loop scattering amplitudes
- Overcomplete basis; Care is needed to avoid overcounting

Tomorrow: Some of the implications of these results the state of the art for multi-leg and multi-loop calcu

Summary: 5-gluon 2-loop amplitude in $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM



