
Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Density functional theory	5
2.1	Hohenberg-Kohn theorems	6
2.2	Kohn-Sham equations	7
2.3	The local spin-density approximation	9
2.4	Summary	10
3	The KKR Green function method	13
3.1	The Green function approach	14
3.1.1	Obtaining physical quantities from Green functions	14
3.1.2	Relation between the Green function of perturbed and unperturbed system	16
3.2	Single-site scattering	18
3.3	KKR as a Green function method	20
3.4	Full-potential treatment within the KKR method	23
3.5	Screened KKR	27
3.6	Self-consistency Cycle in the KKR method	28
3.7	Summary	29
4	Multiple Scattering Theory	33
4.1	KKR wavefunctions and band structure calculations	34
4.1.1	The KKR wavefunctions $\psi_{\mathbf{k}}(\mathbf{r})$	34
4.1.2	Normalization of the wavefunctions	37
4.1.3	The KKR secular equation in terms of the reference system	39
4.1.4	The Fermi surface	43
4.2	Impurity scattering	43

4.2.1	Impurity scattering in the atomic sphere approximation	44
4.2.2	Impurity scattering in the case of a full potential	45
4.3	The scattering matrix $T_{\mathbf{k}\mathbf{k}'}$	46
4.3.1	Spherical potential	47
4.3.2	Full potential	48
4.4	Wigner delay time	49
4.5	The lifetime $\tau_{\mathbf{k}}$	49
4.6	Residual resistivity	50
4.7	Summary	51
5	Spin-orbit coupling	53
5.1	Theory of spin-orbit coupling	53
5.2	Evaluation of the spin-orbit Hamiltonian	55
5.2.1	The spin-orbit coupling parameter $\xi(\mathbf{r})$	56
5.2.2	Evaluation of $\mathbf{L} \cdot \mathbf{S}$ in terms of real spherical harmonics	57
5.3	Spin-orbit coupling in KKR formalism	60
5.3.1	The spin-dependent Lippmann-Schwinger equation	60
5.3.2	The spinor wavefunctions including spin-orbit coupling	64
5.4	The coefficients $c_{\mathbf{k}L}^{n,\uparrow}$ and $c_{\mathbf{k}L}^{n,\downarrow}$	65
5.5	Expectation values of the spin operators	69
5.6	The coefficients $c_{\mathbf{k}}$ for the case of Kramers degeneracy	70
5.6.1	The spin-expectation value S^{tot} of copper and gold	74
5.6.2	Inequivalence of $S^z = \text{max.}$ and $S^x = S^y = 0$ in a simple model	77
5.7	Impurity scattering within the presence of spin-orbit coupling	80
5.8	The spin-dependent scattering matrix $T_{\mathbf{k}\mathbf{k}'}^{\sigma\sigma'}$	83
5.9	Momentum-relaxation time τ and spin-relaxation time T_1	84
5.10	Summary	85
6	Implementation and testing of the spin-orbit coupling	87
6.1	Computational details	87
6.2	Test of the atomic scattering matrix	90
6.3	Conclusion	92
7	Spin relaxation in noble metals	95
7.1	Dominant mechanisms of spin relaxation in noble metals	96
7.1.1	Elliott-Yafet mechanism	96
7.1.2	Spin-flip scattering due to impurity spin-orbit coupling	97

7.2	Unexpected deviations	98
7.3	Comparison to other numerical and experimental data	100
7.4	Relation of T_1 to Wigner delay times t_D	106
7.5	Momentum- and spin-relaxation times for impurities in Cu and Au bulk	110
7.5.1	Scattering at single impurities	110
7.5.2	Correlation between proximity of impurities and scattering	114
7.6	Conclusion	115
8	Lifetime reduction of surface states caused by impurity scattering	119
8.1	Computational and numerical aspects of the calculations	121
8.1.1	Fermi surfaces of copper, silver and gold (111) films	121
8.1.2	The optical theorem	123
8.1.3	Comparison of ASA and FP calculations	125
8.1.4	Convergence with cluster size	128
8.2	Analysis of surface-state lifetimes for adatoms	128
8.2.1	Scattering to bulk and surface states	132
8.3	Surface-state lifetimes for Cu, Ag and Au films	136
8.4	Scattering at magnetic impurities	138
8.5	Residual resistivity	138
8.5.1	Residual resistivity in copper bulk	140
8.5.2	Surface resistivity	141
8.6	Conclusion	143
9	Effects of spin-orbit coupling in noble metal thin films	145
9.1	Spin-orbit coupling effects in systems without structural inversion symmetry	146
9.1.1	The Rashba effect	146
9.1.2	The D'yakonov-Perel' mechanism	148
9.2	Symmetric films	150
9.2.1	Elliott-Yafet spin-mixing parameter $ b ^2$	150
9.2.2	Spin-flip and spin-conserving lifetimes	154
9.3	Asymmetric films	162
9.3.1	Spin-orbit fields of ultrathin Cu and Au (111) and (001) films	162
9.3.2	Estimate of D'yakonov-Perel spin-dephasing times	168
9.4	Conclusion	170
10	Conclusion	175
A	Some details on the KKR-formalism	179

A.1 Derivation of the Dyson equation for an arbitrary reference system	179
A.2 Practical calculation of the band structure	180
A.2.1 The Fermi surface	183
A.3 The radial Lippmann-Schwinger equation for non-spherical potential	185
A.4 The Δt_l^n -Matrix	186
A.5 Impurity scattering	187
A.5.1 Atomic sphere approximation	188
A.5.2 Full potential	190
A.6 Calculation of the Green function $G_{LL'}^{imp,nn'}$ at E_F	192
B Evaluation of $L \cdot S$ in terms of real spherical harmonics	195
C Tight-binding formalism for spin-flip scattering	201
C.1 Basic ideas	201
C.1.1 The spin-orbit Hamiltonian in the tight-binding formalism	201
C.1.2 Impurity scattering	203
C.2 Test results	204
C.3 Conclusion	207
Bibliography	209
Acknowledgment	215