



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

The Standard Model

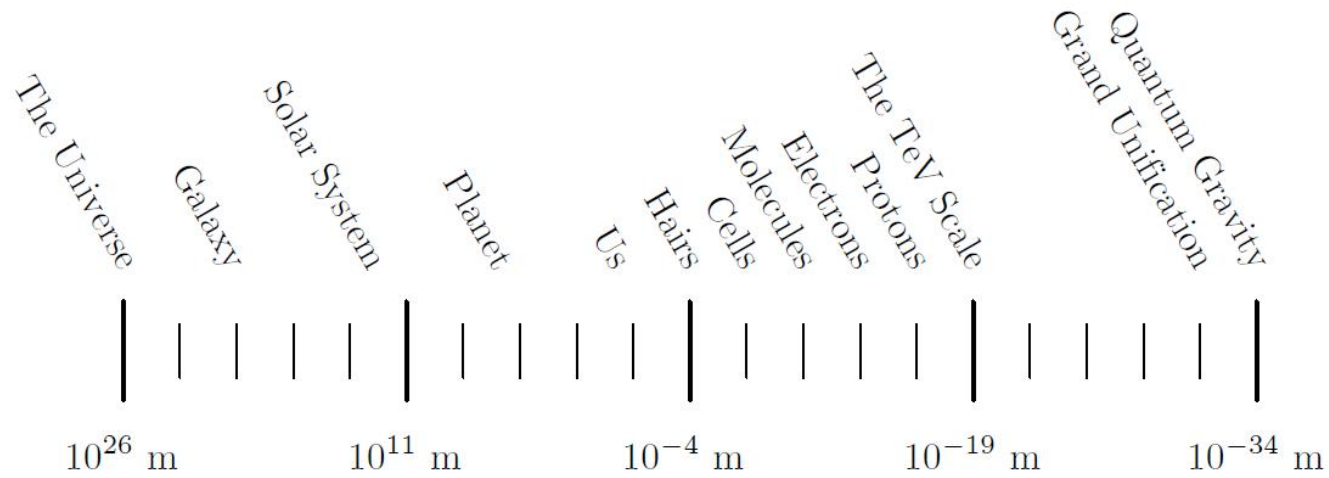
Mehul G Depala, University of Liverpool

19th August 2025

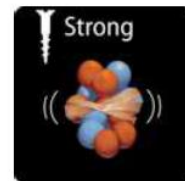
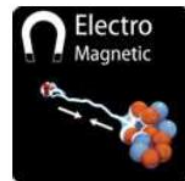


1. Context and Objective
2. Language and Key Ideas
3. The Standard Model Revisited
4. How do we do it?
5. What do we not know?

- 1. Context and Objective**
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— The Standard Model —



4 fundamental forces

- Naïve overview – Physics is the only subject that spans a huge variety of phenomena over vast distance scale
- The Standard Model plays a central role over a large spectrum

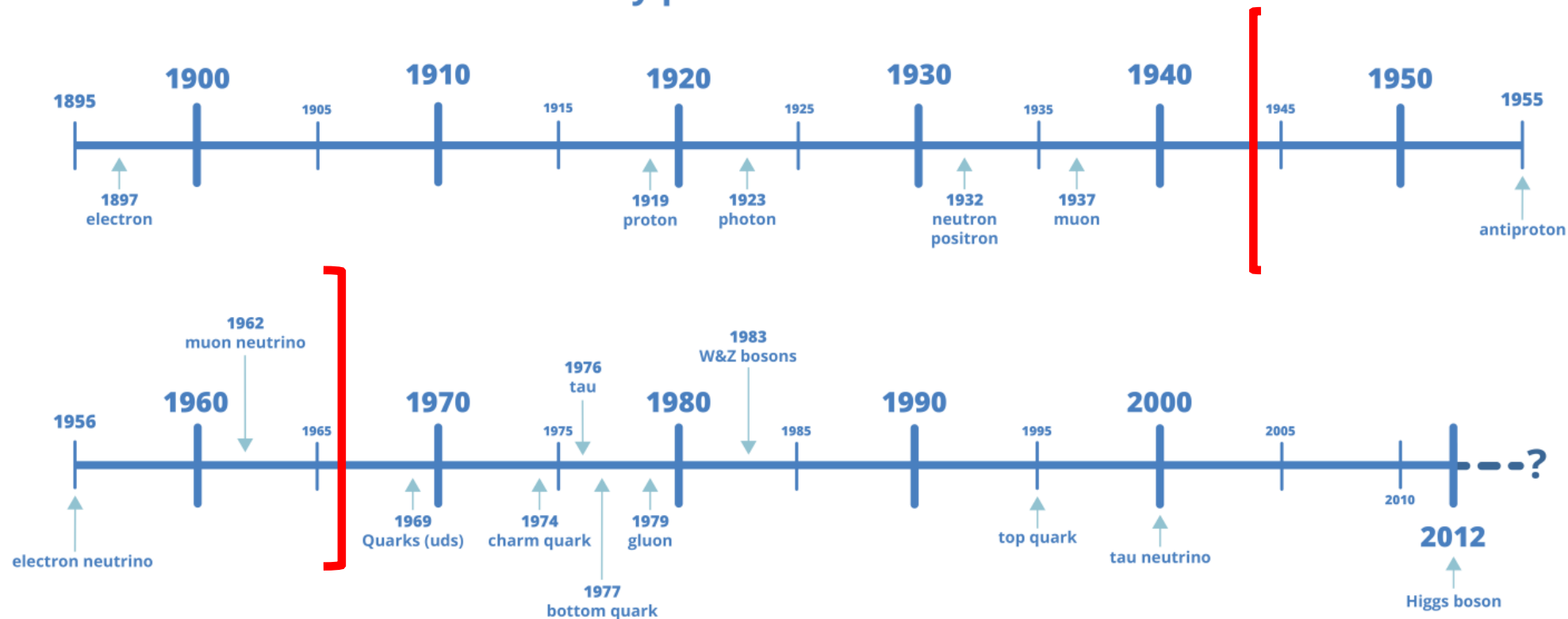
Standard Model of Elementary Particles

three generations of matter (fermions)			interactions / force carriers (bosons)	
I	II	III		
mass charge spin ≈2.16 MeV/c ² 2/3 1/2 u up	≈1.273 GeV/c ² 2/3 1/2 c charm	≈172.57 GeV/c ² 2/3 1/2 t top	0 0 1 g gluon	≈125.2 GeV/c ² 0 0 0 H higgs
≈4.7 MeV/c ² -1/3 1/2 d down	≈93.5 MeV/c ² -1/3 1/2 s strange	≈4.183 GeV/c ² -1/3 1/2 b bottom	0 0 1 γ photon	SCALAR BOSONS
≈0.511 MeV/c ² -1 1/2 e electron	≈105.66 MeV/c ² -1 1/2 μ muon	≈1.77693 GeV/c ² -1 1/2 τ tau	≈91.188 GeV/c ² 0 0 1 Z Z boson	
<0.8 eV/c ² 0 1/2 ν_e electron neutrino	<0.17 MeV/c ² 0 1/2 ν_μ muon neutrino	<18.2 MeV/c ² 0 1/2 ν_τ tau neutrino	≈80.3692 GeV/c ² ±1 1 W W boson	

$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathcal{L} = & -\frac{1}{2}\text{Tr} G_{\mu\nu}G^{\mu\nu} - \frac{1}{2}\text{Tr} W_{\mu\nu}W^{\mu\nu} - \frac{1}{4}F_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu} \\
 & + (D_\mu\phi)^\dagger D^\mu\phi + \mu^2\phi^\dagger\phi - \frac{1}{2}\lambda(\phi^\dagger\phi)^2 \\
 & + \sum_{f=1}^3 \left(\bar{\ell}_L^f i \not{D} \ell_L^f + \bar{\ell}_R^f i \not{D} \ell_R^f + \bar{q}_L^f i \not{D} q_L^f + \bar{d}_R^f i \not{D} d_R^f + \bar{u}_R^f i \not{D} u_R^f \right) \\
 & - \sum_{f=1}^3 y_\ell^f \left(\bar{\ell}_L^f \phi \ell_R^f + \bar{\ell}_R^f \phi^\dagger \ell_L^f \right) \\
 & - \sum_{f,g=1}^3 \left(y_d^{fg} \bar{q}_L^f \phi d_R^g + (y_d^{fg})^* \bar{d}_R^g \phi^\dagger q_L^f + y_u^{fg} \bar{q}_L^f \tilde{\phi} u_R^g + (y_u^{fg})^* \bar{u}_R^g \tilde{\phi}^\dagger q_L^f \right)
 \end{aligned}$$

- Spoiler alert: This is **The Standard Model**
- A consistent model to describe matter content of the universe
 - Contains 19 free parameters
- We will try and understand some of the central ideas behind the model

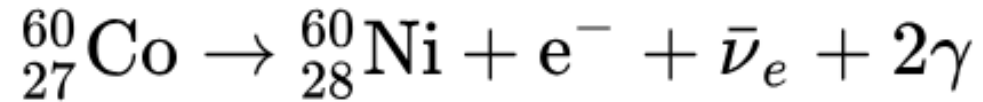
Key particle discoveries



- Journey has taken a long time to find, validate and organize
- Particularly the 1950's and 1960's and the "Particle Zoo"
- **"the finder of a new elementary particle used to be rewarded by a Nobel Prize, but such a discovery now ought to be punished by a \$10,000 fine" – Willis Lamb (1955 Nobel Prize in Physics)**

Parity Violation - 1956

- Wu measured beta decay in the process:



- She measured the spin direction of the emitted electron
- She found that the spin of the electron is emitted preferentially in a certain direction and therefore the Weak interaction violates “parity”
 - Particles have a property called “Left” or “Right” handedness
- This is very important. Left handed particles interact differently to Right handed particles
 - The Standard Model is Chiral
 - This can help in solving the matter/anti-matter asymmetry problem



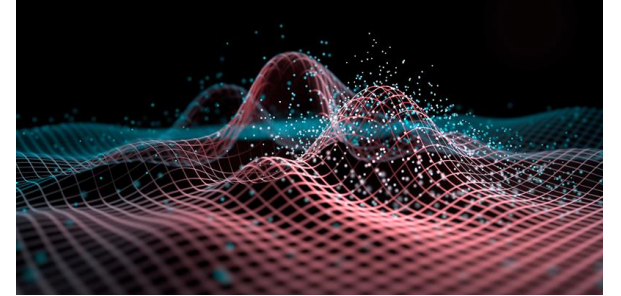
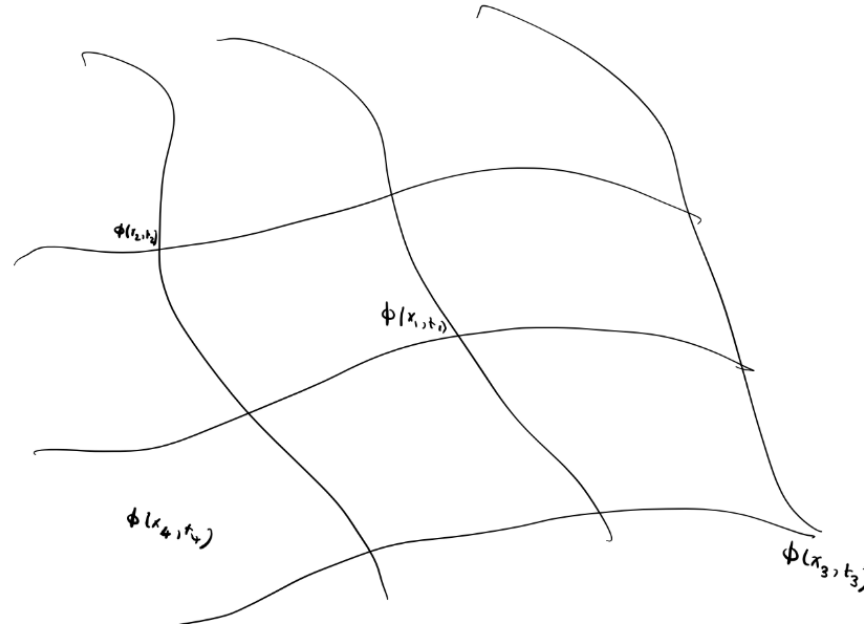
Chien-Shiung Wu – Not awarded Nobel Prize which went to her two colleagues Lee and Yang instead

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What is a Quantum Field Theory?

- A field is a mathematical function which has a value at every point in space-time

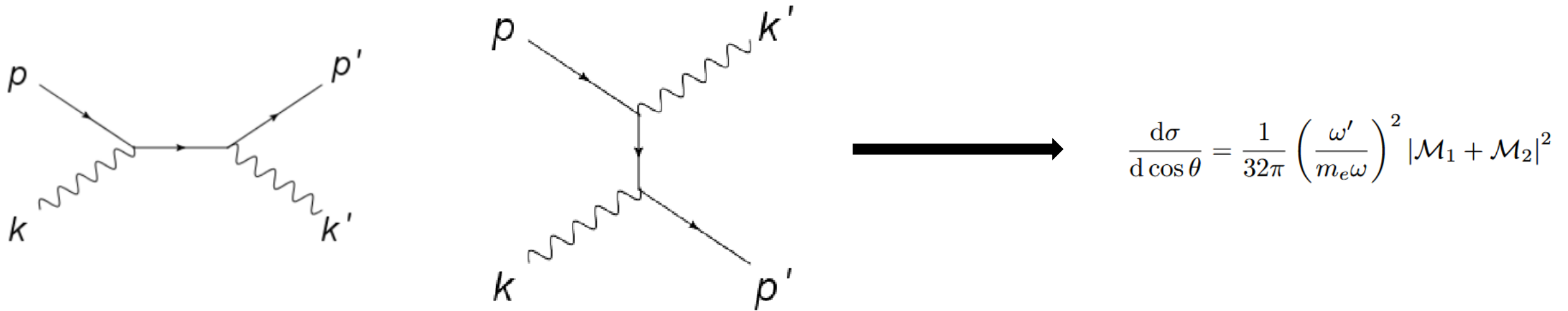
$$\phi(\vec{x}, t)$$



- A quantum field will have “discretized” excitations/lumps which correspond to particles
- A quantum field theory is the theoretical framework that mathematically describes quantum fields and their interactions in a unique way that incorporates Quantum Mechanics and Special Relativity

What do we calculate with Quantum Field Theory?

- Our universe is Quantum \rightarrow therefore we can only calculate probabilities of events occurring



- The probabilities of processes can be represented by Feynmann diagrams
 - We can calculate the cross section of an events, etc

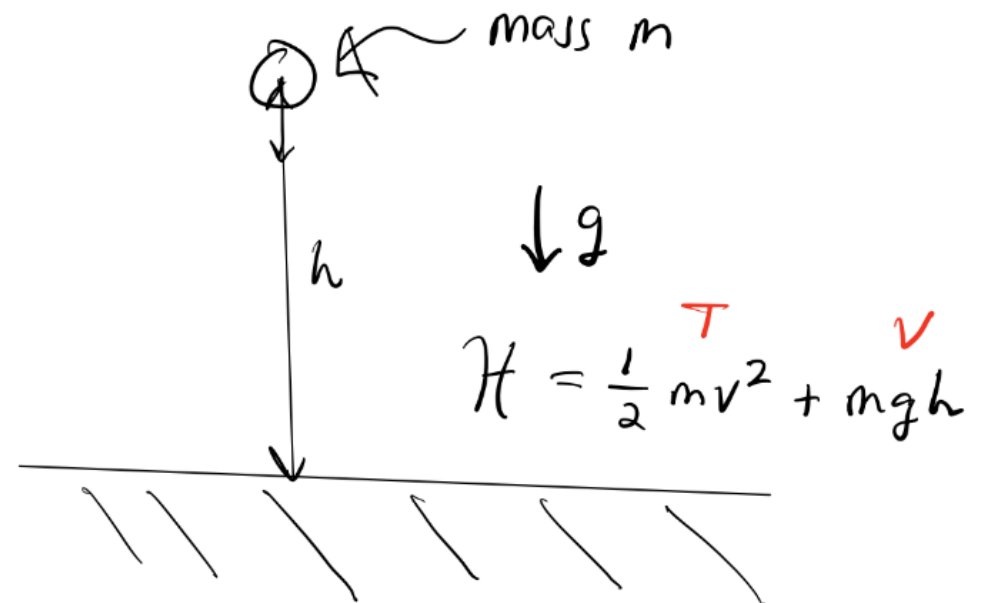
A Brief Chat About Classical Physics

- You can describe a theory/ system if you know the energy \rightarrow we call this the “Hamiltonian”:

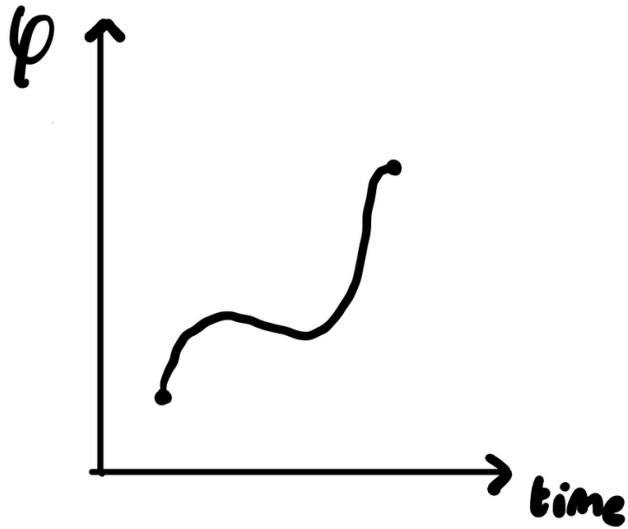
$$\mathcal{H} = T + V$$

- This is related to something called a “Lagrangian”

$$\mathcal{L}(\phi, \partial_\mu \phi) = \pi(x) \dot{\phi}(x) - \mathcal{H}(\phi, \pi), \quad \pi(x) = \frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial \dot{\phi}(x)}$$



- Using the Lagrangian we can derive the “equations of motion” of a particle/field



$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial \phi} - \partial_\mu \left(\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial (\partial_\mu \phi)} \right) = 0$$

- Great! We can determine the evolution of the system!
 - (Note: moving to quantum systems add a level of complexity and abstraction, but the essence of the idea is the same)
- What else can we do?
 - The Lagrangian is also powerful because it is “invariant” under its symmetries

What are symmetries?

- A transformation to the system/theory such that the equations of motions of the system/theory are unchanged
- Why are they powerful?
 - Noethers' Theorem: Every **continuous symmetry** is associated with a corresponding **conservation law**
- Examples:
 - Translation symmetry \leftrightarrow Conservation of Energy and Momentum
 - Rotational symmetry \leftrightarrow Conservation of Angular Momentum



Emmy Noether published her seminal work in 1918

How will we use Symmetries?

- The Classification of Particles:
 - Particles are defined/characterized by: mass, spin, charge, lepton number, ...
 - These quantum numbers are all a consequence of some symmetry (Wigner's theorem)

- The interactions of Particles:
 - Abstract mathematical symmetries called "gauge symmetries" uniquely determine the allowed interactions of particles



Eugene Wigner

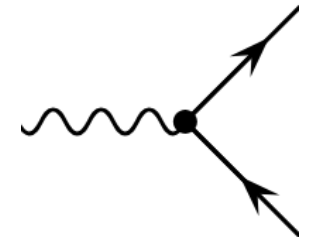
An Example: QED



Paul Dirac

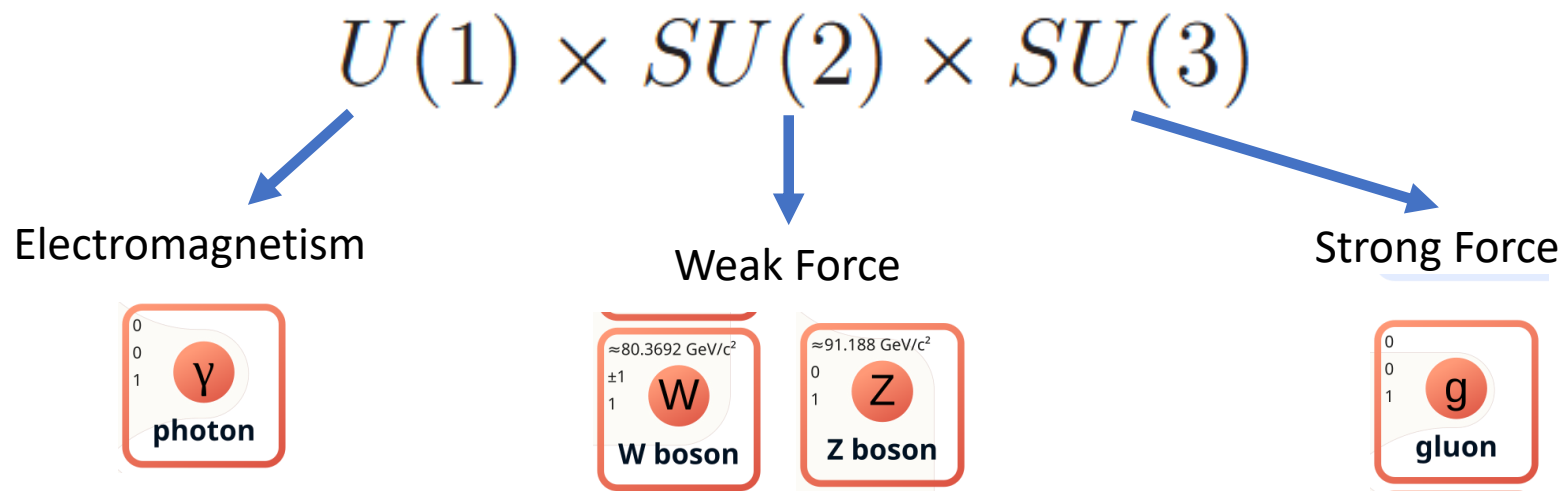
$$\mathcal{L} = \underbrace{-\hbar c \bar{\psi} \left(\gamma_{\mu} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_{\mu}} + \frac{mc}{\hbar} \right) \psi}_{\text{T}} - \underbrace{\frac{1}{4} F_{\mu\nu} F_{\mu\nu} - ie \bar{\psi} \gamma_{\mu} A_{\mu} \psi}_{\text{V}}$$

- **V** corresponds to an interaction term between the photon and electron
- This interaction is a direct consequence of the abstract “gauge symmetry”
 - For QED this is called the “U(1) gauge symmetry”
- All interactions in the SM are determined by gauge symmetries



Symmetry and Forces

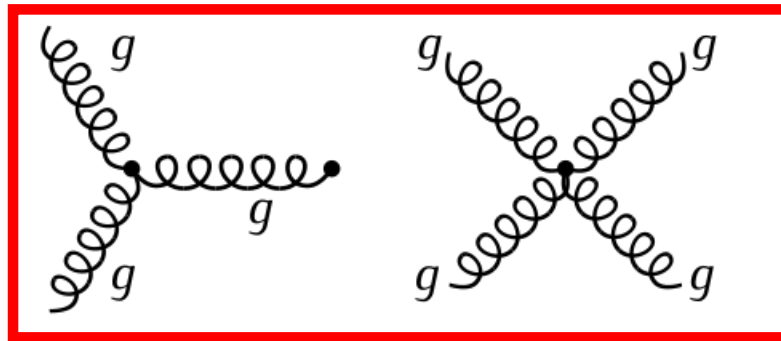
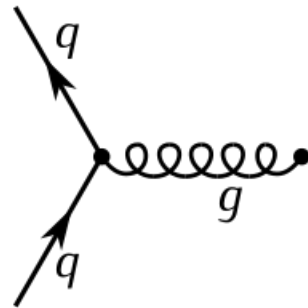
- For QED the symmetry group was called $U(1)$ and this led to an interaction between the photon and electron
- The mediating particle for QED is the photon and this we call the “force carrier” of the electromagnetic force
- Similarly, for the full Standard Model the associated symmetry is called:



Feynmann Diagrams, revisited ...

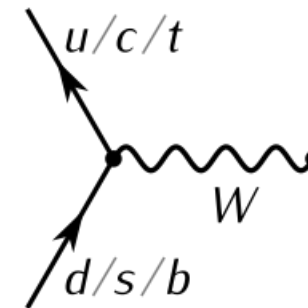
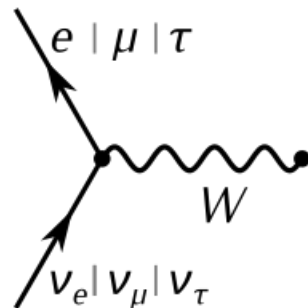
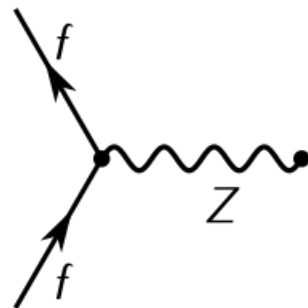
- Diagrammatic way of representing all possible interactions

STRONG VERTICES

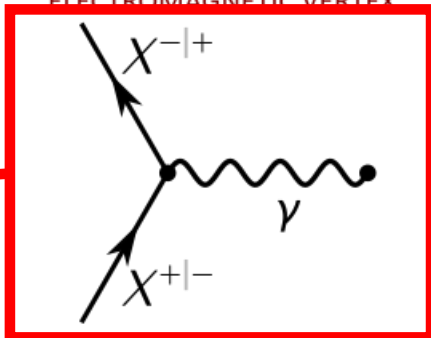


$$-\frac{1}{2} \text{Tr } G_{\mu\nu} G^{\mu\nu}$$

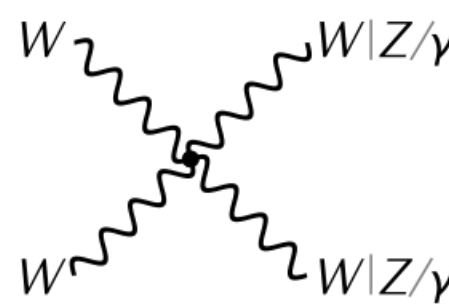
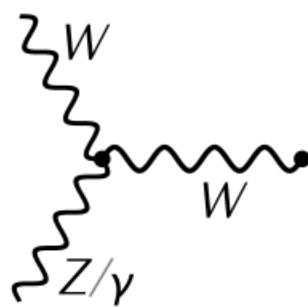
WEAK VERTICES



ELECTROMAGNETIC VERTEX



ELECTROWEAK VERTICES



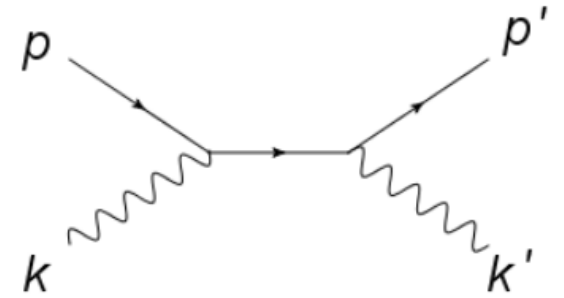
$$ie\bar{\psi}\gamma_{\mu}A_{\mu}\psi$$

The Story So Far ...

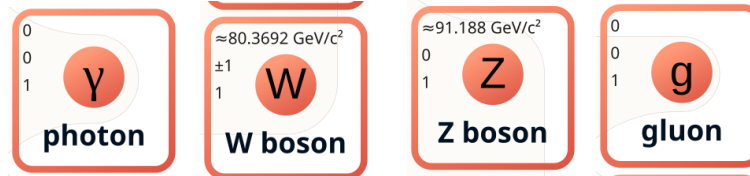
- The Standard Model is a Quantum Field Theory

$$\Phi(\vec{x}, t)$$

- Feynman diagrams describe the allowed processes of the Standard Model
 - Calculating these give the probabilities of the process

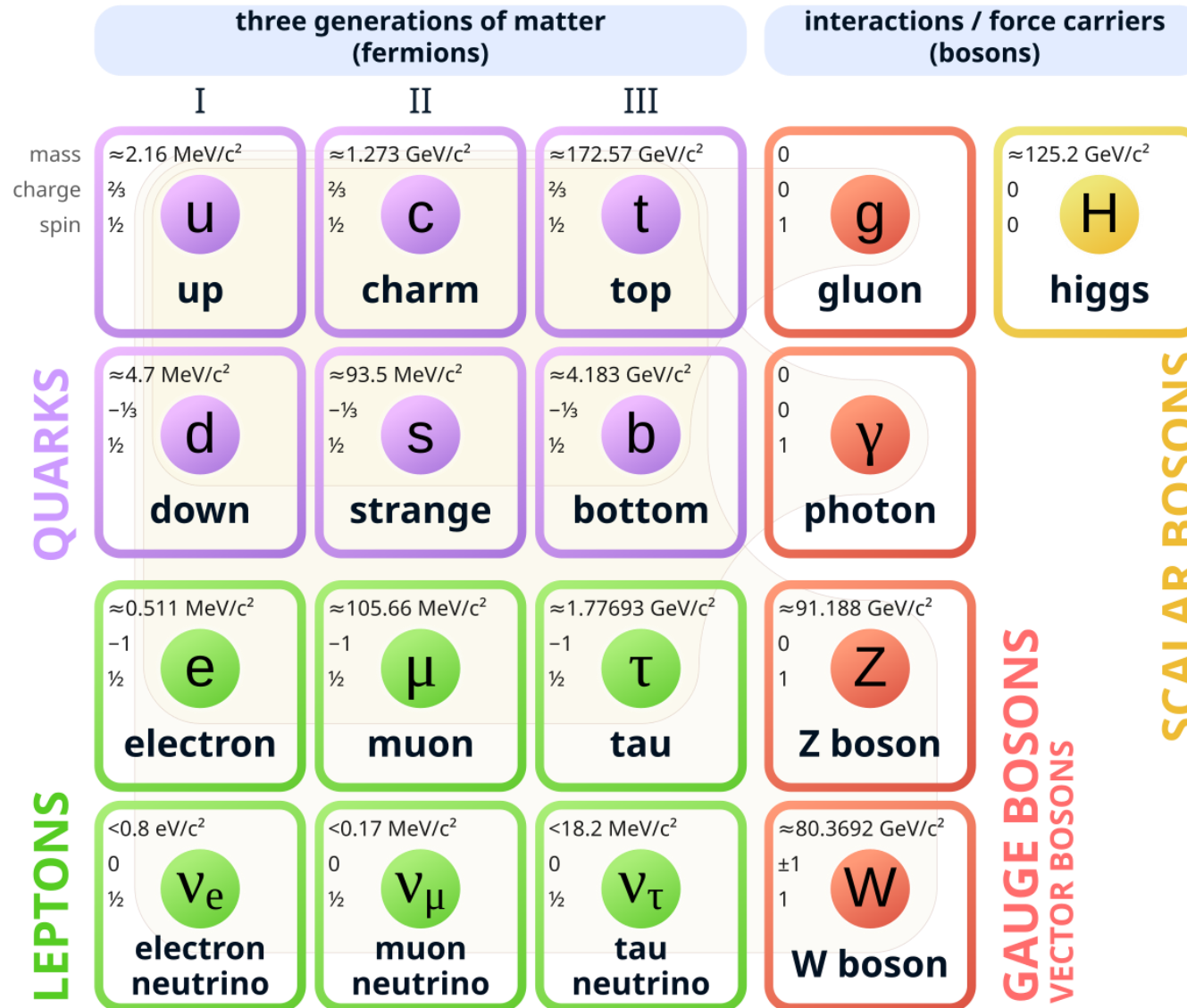


- Symmetries are responsible for the Strong, Weak, Electromagnetic force and also responsible for the allowed interactions of these forces



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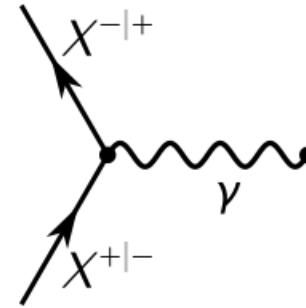
Standard Model of Elementary Particles



Overview of the Forces

- **Electromagnetic:**

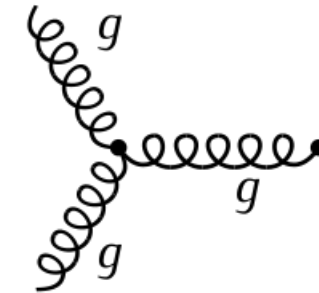
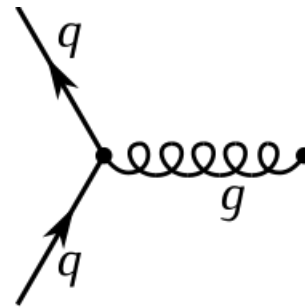
- Responsible for light
- Interacts with particles that have electric charge
- Carried by the photon



0	
0	
1	
photon	

- **Strong Nuclear Force:**

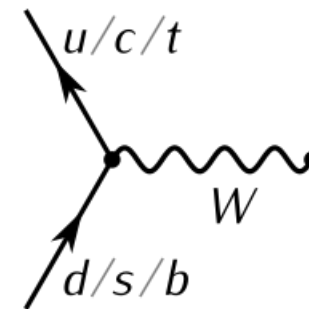
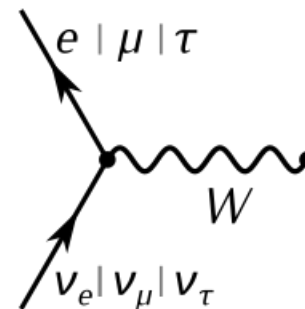
- Responsible for the binding of quarks \rightarrow binds protons/neutrons together
- Interacts with particles that have “colour” charge \rightarrow these come in Red, Green and Blue
- Carried by the Gluon



0	
0	
1	
gluon	

- **Weak Nuclear Force**

- Responsible for the decay of particles (i.e beta decay)
- Interacts with only Left Handed particles
- Carried by the W and Z bosons



$\approx 91.188 \text{ GeV}/c^2$	
0	
1	
Z boson	

$\approx 80.3692 \text{ GeV}/c^2$	
± 1	
1	
W boson	

Overview of the Leptons

- Each generation comes in a doublet of a charged and neutral lepton
 - i.e electron, electron-neutrino
- Fermions \rightarrow spin $\frac{1}{2}$ \rightarrow matter particle
- Interacts with weak and electromagnetic force
 - Does not interact with strong force
- Each generation has sequentially higher mass
- Neutrinos have a very small mass
 - Due to neutrino oscillation experiments
 - Origin of masses is unknown

LEPTONS

$\approx 0.511 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ e electron	$\approx 105.66 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ μ muon	$\approx 1.77693 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ τ tau
$< 0.8 \text{ eV}/c^2$ 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ ν_e electron neutrino	$< 0.17 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ ν_μ muon neutrino	$< 18.2 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ ν_τ tau neutrino

Overview of the Quarks

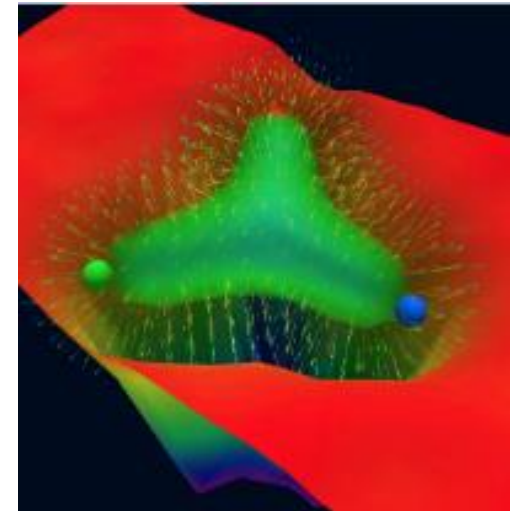
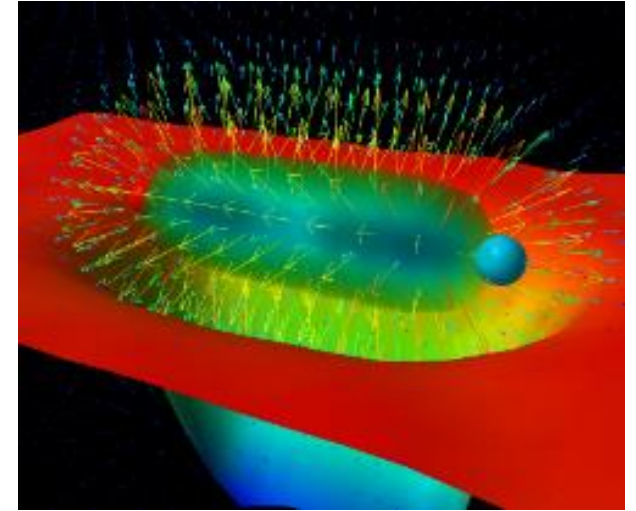
- Each generation comes in a doublet of an “up” type quark with charge $+2/3$ and “down” type quark with electric charge $-1/3$
- Fermions \rightarrow spin $1/2 \rightarrow$ matter particle
- Interacts with strong, weak and electromagnetic force
- Each generation has sequentially higher mass

	-	--	---
mass	$\approx 2.16 \text{ MeV}/c^2$	$\approx 1.273 \text{ GeV}/c^2$	$\approx 172.57 \text{ GeV}/c^2$
charge	$2/3$	$2/3$	$2/3$
spin	$1/2$	$1/2$	$1/2$
	u	c	t
	up	charm	top
	$\approx 4.7 \text{ MeV}/c^2$	$\approx 93.5 \text{ MeV}/c^2$	$\approx 4.183 \text{ GeV}/c^2$
	$-1/3$	$-1/3$	$-1/3$
	$1/2$	$1/2$	$1/2$
	d	s	b
	down	strange	bottom

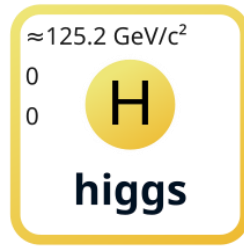
QUARKS

Bound states of the Quarks

- Quarks interact with strong force and therefore gluons
- Due to a feature of the strong force called “confinement”
 - Free quarks cannot exist
 - Quarks can form “colourless” bound states
 - 2 quarks \rightarrow “meson”
 - 3 quarks \rightarrow “baryon”
 - “baryon” + “meson” = “hadron”
- Examples are: protons, neutrons, pions, kaons, etc..
The so called “particle zoo” originated from this

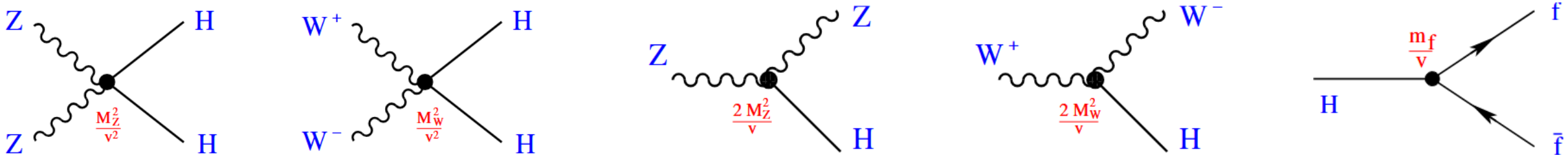


The Higgs Boson

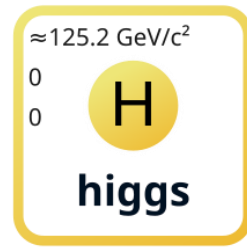


- The Higgs Boson is a spin-0 particle
- Due to this, the possible interactions are not as restricted as the other particles
- This is why most of the SM lagrangian has terms coupling to the Higgs.
 - There are more allowed interactions

$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathcal{L} = & -\frac{1}{2}\text{Tr} G_{\mu\nu}G^{\mu\nu} - \frac{1}{2}\text{Tr} W_{\mu\nu}W^{\mu\nu} - \frac{1}{4}F_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu} \\
 & + (D_\mu\phi)^\dagger D^\mu\phi + \mu^2\phi^\dagger\phi - \frac{1}{2}\lambda(\phi^\dagger\phi)^2 \\
 & + \sum_{f=1}^3 \left(\bar{\ell}_L^f i \not{D} \ell_L^f + \bar{\ell}_R^f i \not{D} \ell_R^f + \bar{q}_L^f i \not{D} q_L^f + \bar{d}_R^f i \not{D} d_R^f + \bar{u}_R^f i \not{D} u_R^f \right) \\
 & - \sum_{f=1}^3 y_\ell^f \left(\bar{\ell}_L^f \phi \ell_R^f + \bar{\ell}_R^f \phi^\dagger \ell_L^f \right) \\
 & - \sum_{f,g=1}^3 \left(y_d^{fg} \bar{q}_L^f \phi d_R^g + (y_d^{fg})^* \bar{d}_R^g \phi^\dagger q_L^f + y_u^{fg} \bar{q}_L^f \tilde{\phi} u_R^g + (y_u^{fg})^* \bar{u}_R^g \tilde{\phi}^\dagger q_L^f \right)
 \end{aligned}$$

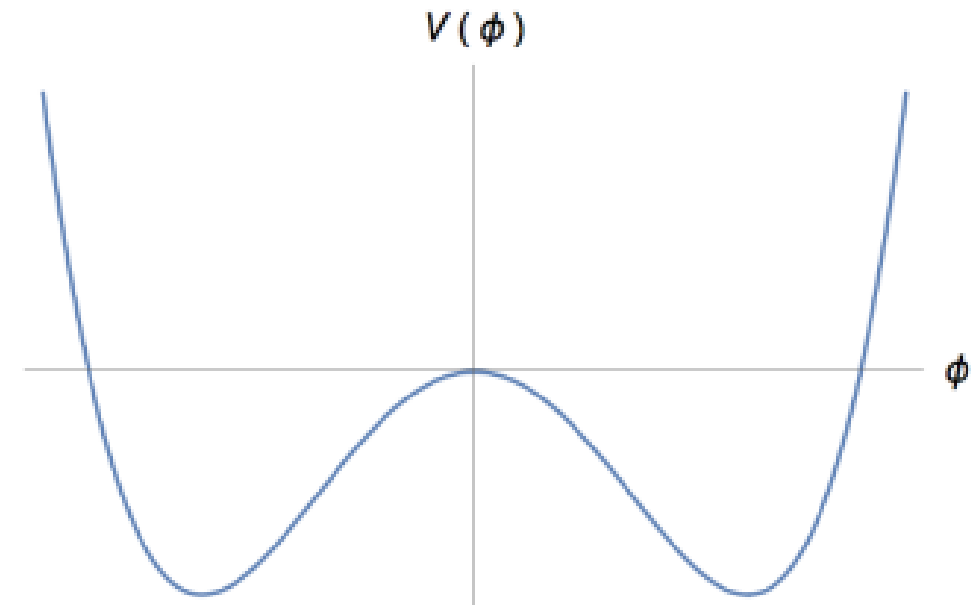


The Higgs Boson



$$\mu^2 \phi^\dagger \phi - \frac{1}{2} \lambda (\phi^\dagger \phi)^2$$

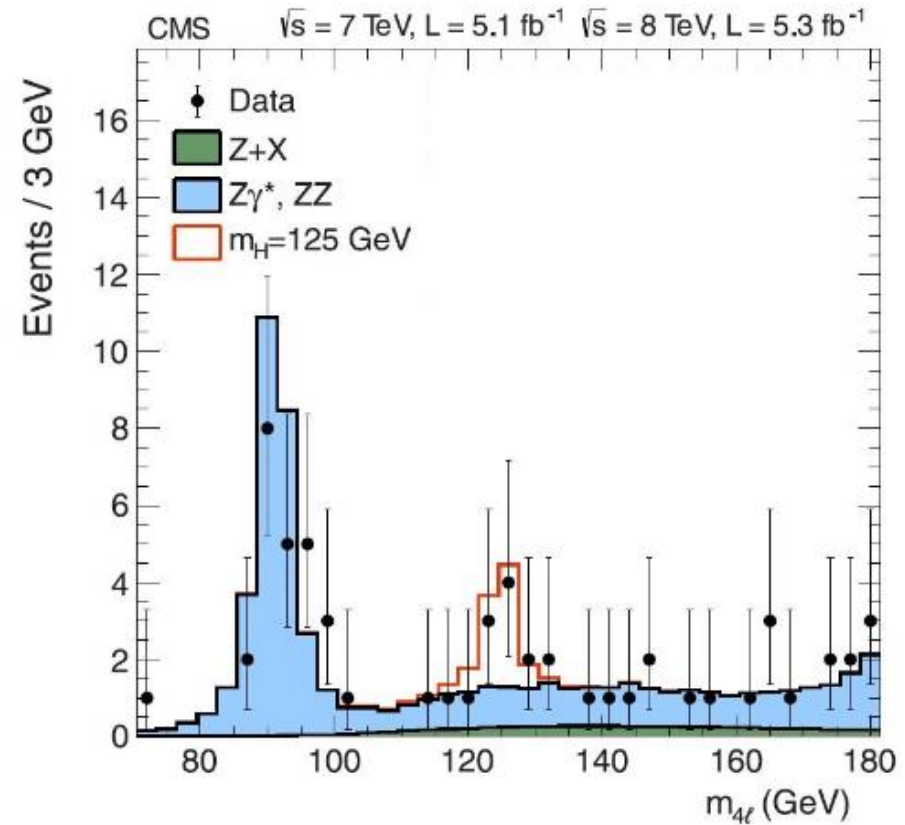
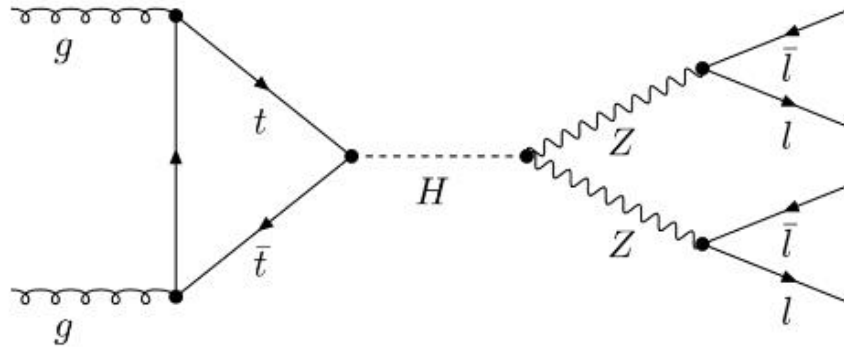
- Because the Higgs is spin-0 it can have a non-zero value in vacuum
- This leads to “spontaneous symmetry breaking”
- And hence the origin of masses for gauge bosons and fermions



- Mass $m_H \approx 125$ GeV
- Condensate $\langle \phi \rangle \approx 246$ GeV

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How do we do it?

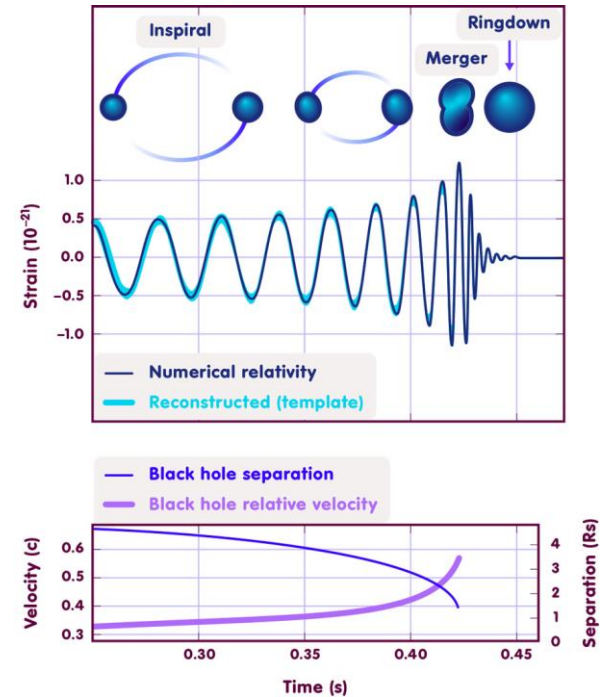
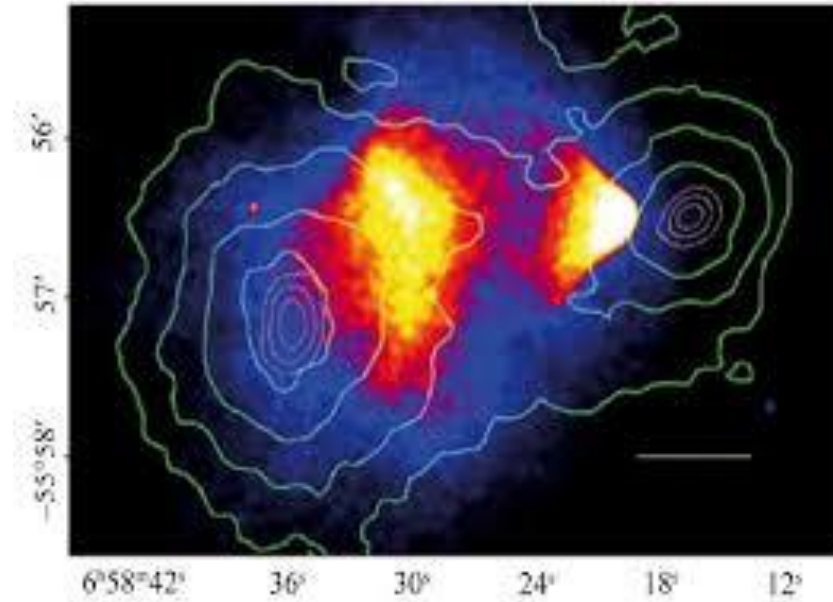
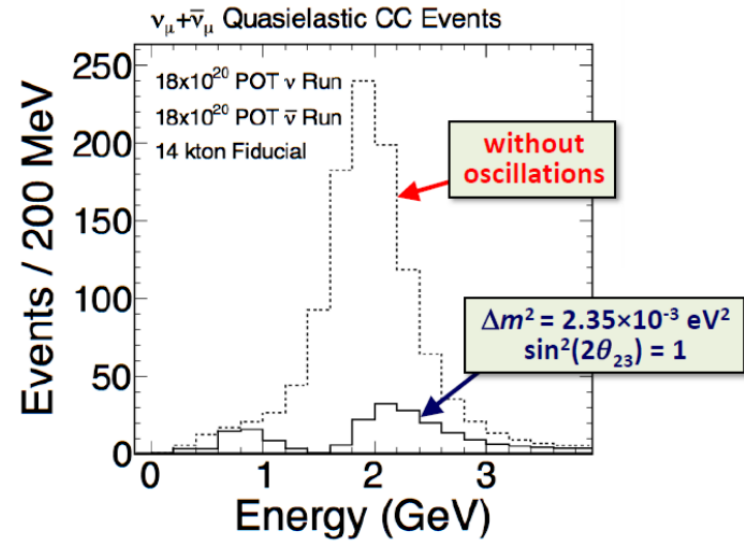


- Choose a process and channel to look for your signal in
- Find and model the background processes which give the same final state
- Count the number of events observed in data and compare to the expectations and make a statistically significant conclusion

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What do we not know?

- Neutrino masses
- Dark Matter
- Quantum Gravity
- Much more



Thank you for Listening! Questions?