

The GFDL Finite-Volume Cubed-Sphere Dynamical Core Structure and Usage

Lucas Harris for the GFDL FV3 Team

AOS 575

3 November 2022

FV3 Reference Info

FV3 Portal: www.gfdl.noaa.gov/fv3



A Scientific Description of the GFDL Finite-Volume Cubed-Sphere Dynamical Core

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GFDL Weather and Climate Dynamics Division Technical Memorandum GFDL2021001



Harris et al. (2021) Comprehensive FV3 Scientific Documentation on GitHub and NOAA Institutional Repository

FV3 Community GitHub

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bensonr Merge pull requ	The GFDL atmos_cubed_sphere dynamical core code	
github	Adding Issue Templates 3 months ago	
GFDL_tools	merge of latest dev work from GFDL Weather and C 2 months ago	fortran climate physics
docs	FV3 Example Notebooks and cleanup of docs direct 2 months ago	model-component
driver	fix a few duplicate module uses and add back in a 3 months ago	🛱 Readme
model	remove empty if-test for renormalization last month	ৰ্বায় LGPL-3.0 License
tools	Makes the non-hydrostatic restart variables option 21 days ago	
CODE_STYLE.md	Adding Code Style guide to the repository. 3 months ago	Releases 15
LICENSE.md	Add LICENSE.md 2 years ago	🔿 2021 July Release (Late
README.md	FV3 Example Notebooks and cleanup of docs direct 2 months ago	on Jul 8
🗅 RELEASE.md	merge of latest dev work from GFDL Weather and C 2 months ago	+ 14 releases
E README.md		Packages
GFDL atmos	s cubed sphere	No packages published

github.com/NOAA-GFDL/GFDL_atmos_cubed_sphere

Official site for FV3 releases, examples, issue tracking, documentation, and more

	-GFDL/GFDL_atmos_cubed_sphere Public © Unwatch - 15 🟠 Star 18 💱 Fork 61
<> Code	🖸 Issues 17 👖 Pull requests 7 🕑 Actions 🔟 Projects 🖽 Wiki 🛈 Security 🗠 Insights
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532 lines	s (532 sloc) 87.4 KB 🕟 🖪 Raw Blame 🖵 🖉 û
In [1]: In [2]:	advected on a periodic domain of length nx for a certain length of time, either 4x times around the domain or for a few timesteps. All schemes use the Piecewise-Parabolic Method with a variety of constraints. This is intended to be an interactive notebook; see the options given in cell #2. It is fully self-contained so you can download and play as you would like. <i>#Libraries</i> <i>#InterplotLib</i> notebook <i>import</i> matplotLib.pyplot as plt <i>import</i> matplotLib.ticker as ticker <i>#User Options</i>
	<pre>#Solver ord = 5 # 5, 6, 8, 10 PD = False #Positivity constraint for ord = 5, 6 dt = 1</pre>

Examples directory: Jupyter notebooks demonstrating FV3 capabilities. Updates released regularly.

SHiELD and solo FV3 Container

- Convenient, portable, and reproducible SHiELD and FV3 demonstration
 - 35-km regional and nested domains
 - Includes idealized "solo_core" FV3 tests
- Docker and Singularity containers run on supercomputers, workstations, and laptops







shield.gfdl.noaa.gov/shield-in-a-box/

FV3: The GFDL Finite-Volume Cubed-Sphere Dynamical Core

Lin & Rood 1996 Efficient 2D high-order conservative FV transport

FV3 for the 2020s Rigorous Thermodynamics

Adaptable physics interface Variable-resolution techniques Regional & periodic domains Powerful initialization, DA, and nudging functions

Flexible dynamics



Lin & Rood 1997 FV horizontal solver focusing on nonlinear vorticity dynamics





Lin 2006, X Chen & Lin et al 2013 Consistent Lagrangian nonhydrostatic dynamics The FV3 Way

- Physical consistency
- ➤ Fully-FV numerics
- Component coupling
- Computational efficiency





Lin 1998–2004 FV core with "floating" Lagrangian vertical coordinate



Putman & Lin 2007 Scalable cubed-sphere grid, doubly-periodic domain

Harris & Lin 2013, 2016 Variable resolution with two-way nesting and Schmidt grid stretching





The Global FV3 Community Past, present, future earth and beyond





Finite-Volume Dynamical Cores

- All variables are 3D cell- or face-means...not gridpoint values
- We solve not the differential Euler equations but their cell-integrated forms using integral theorems
 - Everything is a flux, including the momentum equation. Fully FV!
 - Mass conservation ensured to rounding error
 - C-D grid: Vorticity computed *exactly*; accurate divergence computation
 - Mimetic: Physical properties recovered by discretization, particularly Newton's 3rd law
 - Fully compressible: calculation is horizontally local
 - Flow-following Lagrangian vertical coordinate
- FV3 is a fully forward-in-time solver with backwards PGF and acoustic terms

FV3 time integration sequence

- FV3 is a forward-in-time solver with multiple levels of timeintegration
 - Flux-divergence terms and physics tendencies evaluated forward-in-time
 - Pressure-gradient and sound-wave terms evaluated backward-in-time for stability
 - HEVI: Everything is *explicit* in the horizontal but *implicit* in the vertical
- Lagrangian vertical coordinate: flow constrained along time-evolving Lagrangian surfaces. This greatly simplifies the inner "acoustic" or "Lagrangian dynamics" timestep.



The Cubed-Sphere Grid

- Gnomonic cubed-sphere grid: coordinates are great circles but nonorthogonal
 - Solution winds are covariant, advection is by contravariant winds
- Winds u and v are defined internally in the local coordinate; output is *always* rotated to earth-relative coords
- Special handling at edges and corners





The Cubed-Sphere Grid and Arbitrary Grid Domains



a) Max surface wind speed

FV Adv

- "Reverse-engineered" scheme constructed fi 😤 70 Method (PPM) operat
 - Mass-conservative
 - Correlation-preserving ٠
 - Cancels splitting error ٠
 - Separate Courant numb ٠
 - Upwinding preserves h^v ٠
- Tracers are advected w • timestep using the accu
- *All* quasi-horizontal pr be represented as adv
- Highly adaptable: Posi advection greatly imp

FV3 Documentation

Chapter 4



The Piecewise-Parabolic Method: The cornerstone of FV numerics

- Extension to higher order of the Van Leer piecewise-linear method, itself an extension of Godunov's firstorder finite-volume scheme
- The internal variation of each grid cell is approximated by a parabola, from which the fluxes through each cell interface can be integrated

Literature

Collela & Woodward 1984 Van Leer 1971–1979



FV3 Documentation

Section 4.1

The Piecewise-Parabolic Method: The cornerstone of FV numerics

- "Vanilla" PPM reconstruction is formally 4^{th} order if Δx is constant.
- But you are free to do much more with your degrees of freedom. You can flatten or steepen or ...?
- This is useful for shape-preservation (monotonicity, positive-definite) or for simply eliminating undesirable 2∆x noise

"Imagine PPM as something akin to the Toll House chocolate chip cookie recipe. The cookies you get by following the package exactly are really, really good. At the same time, you can modify the recipe to produce something even better while staying true to the basic framework. The basic cookies will get you far, but with some modification you might just win contests or simply impress your friends. PPM is just like that."

wjrider.wordpress.com/2017/11/17/ the-piecewise-parabolic-method-ppm/

Which solution is the best?

"Accuracy" analyses assume continuous sinusoid modes. They cannot incorporate discontinuities.

Centered-differencing schemes produce a lot of noise at discontinuities!! And staggered grids *preserve* the junk!

Monotonic schemes are more diffusive—but PPM gives you the freedom to balance shapepreservation with accuracy



Lin and Rood 1996 X Chen et al. 2018

Notebooks

RHwave, tp_core



High-order Methods

Effect of advection options: 200-mb KE spectra



WARNING

Variance spectra depend on many factors, show case-to-case variability, and may not depict scientifically-credible features. Parental discretion is advised.



T-SHiELD Positive-Definite Advection: Rapid Intensification and Storm Structure

Hurricane Irma (2017) Forecast

Positive-definite (PD) tracer advection → successful rapid intensification (RI) predictions compared to monotonic (MONO)

PD advection enables more WV into eyewall, permitting better updraft and TC structure: may contribute to RI processes

> Literature Gao et al. 2021



Hurricane Dorian (2019) Forecast

Hurricane Lorenzo (2019) Forecast

1.8

1.2

0.6

0.0

Lin-Rood FV Advection

$$q^{n+1} = \frac{1}{\pi^{n+1}} \left\{ \pi^n q^n + F\left[q^n + \frac{1}{2}g(q^n)\right] + G\left[q^n + \frac{1}{2}f(q^n)\right] \right\}.$$

- F, G are flux-form PPM operators, ensuring mass conservation.
- f, g are **advective** form PPM operators.
- This "reverse-engineered" form cancels the leading-order deformation error. The Courant number restriction is then independent in both directions—a truly two-dimensional scheme
 - $max(C_x, C_y) \le 1$ instead of $C_x + C_y \le 1$



Tracer advection and sub-cycling

Section 4.2

- Tracers are advected with a longer timestep than the dynamics
 - $U_{max} \approx 200 \text{ m/s}$ but $U_{max}+c_s \approx 540 \text{ m/s}$
 - Split-explicit methods that assume $U \ll c_{\rm s}$ struggle in the stratosphere
- Free-stream preservation: FV3 accumulates mass fluxes during the acoustic timesteps. These fluxes are then used to advect the tracers.
 - One or two sub-cycled timesteps is usually enough for stability.
 - Adaptively determined timestep from domain-maximum wind speed
- Tracer advection is *always* monotone or positive definite to avoid new extrema. Explicit diffusion is not used.

Lagrangian Dynamics in FV3

- FV3 transforms the Euler equations of motion into a *Lagrangian vertical coordinate*, constraining the flow along quasi-horizontal surfaces
- Lagrangian surfaces deform during the integration. Vertical motion and advection is "free"
- Requires layer thickness δp (and δz for nonhydro) to be a prognostic variable

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \delta p^*}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\mathbf{V} \delta p^*) &= 0 \\ \frac{\partial \Theta_{\nu} \delta p^*}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\mathbf{V} \delta p^* \Theta_{\nu}) &= 0 \\ \frac{\partial w \delta p^*}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\mathbf{V} \delta p^* w) &= -\delta p' \\ \frac{\partial u}{\partial t} &= \Omega v - \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \mathcal{K} - \frac{1}{\rho} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \Big|_z \\ \frac{\partial v}{\partial t} &= -\Omega u - \frac{\partial}{\partial y} \mathcal{K} - \frac{1}{\rho} \frac{\partial p}{\partial y} \Big|_z \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{\mathrm{D}z}{\mathrm{D}t} = w = \frac{\mathrm{d}z}{\mathrm{d}t} + \mathbf{V} \cdot \nabla z,$$



Prognostic Variables

δρ	Total air mass (including vapor and condensates) Equal to <i>hydrostatic</i> pressure depth of layer
θ_v	Virtual potential temperature
u, v	Horizontal D-grid winds in local coordinate (defined on cell faces)
W	Vertical winds (nonhydrostatic)
δz	Geometric layer depth (nonhydrostatic)
q _i	Passive tracers

Cell-mean pressure, density, divergence, and specific heat are all *diagnostic* quantities All variables are layer-means in the vertical: **No vertical staggering**

Vorticity Dynamics

- Fluids are strongly vortical at all scales. Vortical motions are especially critical in geophysical flows
- FV3's discretization emphasizes vorticity dynamics:
 - Vector-invariant equations: vorticity computed *exactly*
 - C-D Grid Discretization
 - Consistent advection of derived vorticial quantities



Voyager 1, NASA, 1979 Reprocessed by Bjorn Jonsson

Planetary Circulations: 1. Barotropic Representation of Jovian and Terrestrial Turbulence

GARETH P. WILLIAMS Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory/NOAA, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08540 (Manuscript received 2 December 1975, in final form 13 April 1978)



Notebooks BTwave, BCwave, TornadicSupercell

Momentum equation

- FV3 solves nonlinear flux-form vector invariant equations using the absolute vorticity *fluxes* Ωv, -Ωu
- D-grid gives *exact* absolute vorticity Ω using Stokes' theorem—no averaging!
- Cell-mean vorticity is advected as a scalar, using the same fluxes as other variables.
 Products are also advected as scalars!
 - ex: Updraft helicity w Ω







The C-D grid solver

- Flux evaluation requires face-normal and time-mean fluxes.
- The C-grid winds are interpolated and then advanced a half-timestep. These are used to compute the fluxes.



- Upstream flux also allows consistent computation of the KE gradient term, avoiding the Hollingsworth-Kallberg instability
- Two-grid discretization and time-centered upwind fluxes avoid computational modes, giving FV3 high accuracy and low noise

FV3 DocumentationLiteratureSection 6.2Lin & Rood 1997

Backward horizontal pressure gradient force

- Computed from Newton's second and third laws, and Green's Theorem
- Errors lower, with much less noise, compared to traditional evaluations
 - Purely horizontal: no along-coordinate projection
 - PGF equal and opposite—3rd law! Momentum is conserved
 - Curl-free in the absence of density gradients



The pressure gradient (m s⁻²) computed by the Arakawa–Suarez method. Contour interval is 1×10^{-5} .



Figure 6. As in Fig. 5, but for the finite-volume method.

	1		Notebooks	
FV3 Documentation		Literature	mtn_rest_100km	
Section 6.6		Lin 1997	mtn_wave_tests	25

The Lagrangian Vertical Coordinate

Literature

Lin 2004

FV3 Documentation

Sec. 5.1, 5.3; Chap 7

- Vertical motion and advection is *implicit* through the deformation of quasi-horizontal layers.
 - No Courant number restriction or timesplitting
 - Computing δp and δz is sufficient for vertical advection.
- Periodically, a high-order conservative remapping back to the reference
 "Eulerian" coordinate is done to avoid δp → 0

for cosz calculations: nswr,deltim,deltsw,dtswh = 10 180.0000000000 1800000000 0.5000000000000 anginc,nstp = 1.30899693895747E-002 11 2016 8 4 5 0 0 ZS 6849.180 -412.0000 231.8707 PS max = 1054.338 min = 441.9276 Mean specific humidity (mg/kg) above 75 mb= 3.994439 Total surface pressure (mb) = 985.8600 mean dry surface pressure = 983.2388 Total Water Vapor (kg/m*2) = 26.56078 Micro Phys water substances (kg/m*2) Total cloud water= 6.7240514E-02 Total rain water= 2.4596382E-02 Total cloud ice = 3.9533786E-02 Total sow = 2.1293228E-02 Total graupel = 1.5756246E-02 Total graupel = 1.5756246E-02 Total graupel = 1.5756246E-02 Max = 144.7256 min = -52.63876 VA max = 81.54002 min = -75.08163 W max = 37.20443 min = -10.95220 Bottom W max = 6.904078 min = -8.178501 Bottom W dz max = 0.2614583 min = -0.3034391 D2 (mg/max = 20.60121 min = -32.27457 TA max = 317.2014 min = 175.0712 OM max = 94.72382 min = -140.0013 ZTOP 40.88114 34.03699 39.23885 SLP max = 1097.546 min = 928.5116 ATL SLP max = 1097.546 min = 928.5116 ATL SLP max = 1097.546 min = 928.5116 ATL SLP max = 1097.546 min = 52.47940 Surf_wind_speed max = 28.65420 min = 52.47940 Surf_wind_speed max = 28.65420 min = 52.47940 Surf_wind_speed max = 28.65420 min = 6.4052401E-05			
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3.25-km X-SHiELD: remap dt = 36 s → vertical courant number = [-10.9,9.36]

Semi-implicit nonhydrostatic solver

- Semi-implicit solver cleanly extends FV Lagrangian dynamics into nonhydrostatic regime
- Start with advected w*, z*
 - Consistent with other variables
- Vertical pressure gradient and non-advective changes to layer depth δz are solved by semi-implicit solver
 - Simultaneous solution for w and δz through diagnosed p^\prime
 - p' accurately interpolated to interfaces using cubic spline
- Vertically-propagating sound waves weakly damped. That's OK.

 $\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \delta z^* = \delta w^*.$ $\frac{\partial}{\partial t} (w^* \delta m) = \delta p',$ $\frac{\partial p'}{\partial t} = \gamma p \frac{\delta w^*}{\delta z^*}.$ $p = \left(\frac{\delta m}{\delta z} R_d \Theta_v\right)^{\gamma}$ $p = p^* + p'$

Lagrangian nonhydrostatic dynamics, how do they work?

- Recall that FV3 uses a hybrid-pressure coordinate. Cell mass δp is constant during sound wave processes.
- Nonhydrostaticity creates pressure perturbation
 - p computed by ideal gas law, incorporating heating
 - p^* computed through δp above
- Vertical gradients in p' create vertical accelerations, deforming the Lagrangian interfaces
- Elastic straining (expansion/compression) of the Lagrangian layers alters δz
- Adiabatic changes to δz changes $p^\prime...$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \delta z^* = \delta w^*.$$
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} (w^* \delta m) = \delta p',$$
$$\frac{\partial p'}{\partial t} = \gamma p \frac{\delta w^*}{\delta z^*}.$$
$$p = \left(\frac{\delta m}{\delta z} R_d \Theta_v\right)^{\gamma}$$

 $\mathfrak{p}=\mathfrak{p}^*+\mathfrak{p}'$

FV3 Documentation
Section 7.2
Notebook
DPsupercell

upercen

• MYTH: Numerical diffusion is evil, only used to cover for discretization deficiencies, and should be avoided at all costs.

•**TRUTH**: Numerical diffusion is a necessary part of any model used for environmental simulation.

Numerical Diffusion and Physical Dissipation

- All useful atmospheric models have grid-scale motions removed by numerical diffusion (whether they know it or not).
- Energy cascades to grid scales and **must** be removed since dissipative scales (O(1 cm)) are not explicitly resolved
- Models aren't perfect, noise and errors must be removed
 - C-grids produce particularly prodigious noise at discontinuities
- Diffusion is also a powerful tool to **improve** simulations
 - Tompkins and Semie 2017; Pressel et al. 2017; see also Implicit LES





The Turbulent Energy Cascade

"Big whirls have little whirls that feed on their velocity, And little whirls have lesser whirls and so on to viscosity"

–<u>Lewis F. Richardson</u>, 1922

Kinetic energy cascades from the large energy-containing scale to increasingly small-wavelength modes.

In a continuous fluid, the cascade continues until molecular diffusion can dissipate kinetic energy to heat.

In large-scale flows this is complicated by a second *upscale* turbulent cascade.



Ecke: "The Turbulence Problem" (2005)

Damping in FV3

FV3 Documentation

Sections 8.3, 8.4, 8.5

- FV3's physical consistency produces very few computational modes and thus can be minimally-diffusive.
 But well-configured diffusion can give *improved* results
- FV3 applies **no** direct implicit diffusion to divergent modes which cascade to grid scale *unimpeded*. Scale-selective divergence damping represents their physical dissipation.
- Rotational modes can be damped implicitly by monotonic advection or explicitly by vorticity damping.
 - For consistency also damps δp, δz, θ_ν, w.
 No explicit damping for tracers.
- Note that **all** implicit (except vertical remapping) and explicit diffusion is **along** Lagrangian surfaces.

The Upper Boundary

- FV3 has a *flexible* constant-pressure upper boundary, greatly reducing reflection of vertically-propagating gravity waves. So the sponge layer can be much shallower.
 - Much less problematic than constant-height rigid lid upper boundaries
- In FV3 the top two layers are reserved as sponge layers.
 - These layers are very deep (Δz), already implicitly dissipating vertically-propagating wave.
 - In these layers a much stronger, less scale-selective second-order damping is applied on the acoustic timestep.
- Tunable Rayleigh damping and a 2∆z filter are also available. Both convert damped KE to heat—energy conserving

Variable-resolution techniques

- Variable-resolution is the future of convectivescale modeling (C-SHiELD, HAFS-B)
- Stretched global grid is the easy, simple way to grid refinement.
- Two-way nesting is flexible and highly configurable.
 - Inflow BCs "baked-in" to numerics
 - Nesting methodology designed to be consistent with numerics
 - Concurrent nesting is extremely efficient: Run as many grids as you want at the same time!

FV3 Documentation Chapter 10



Telescoping Nesting

As many levels as you want





Literature

Mouallem et al. 2022



Tele-SHiELD: 1.4 km onto Northeast Corridor and Taiwan Rigorous Thermodynamics and Physics-Dynamics Coupling

- Mass δp in FV3 includes water vapor and all condensates. Condensate loading and moist-mass effects are baked-in.
- FV3 incorporates the heat content of water vapor and condensates in adiabatic processes and diabatic heating
- Diabatic heating is applied consistently with the dynamics
 - c_p in hydrostatic: δp constant, δz dependent on T (hypsometric equation)
 - c_{vm} in nonhydrostatic: δz constant, p dependent on T (ideal gas law)

Literature

Zhou et al. 2022abc

FV3 Documentation

Sec. 7.2, Chapter 9

LMARS horizontal solver and Duo-Grid

- Efficient Riemann solver allows accurate unstaggered solution to improve physics coupling
- Shows way to *true* total energy conservation
- Duo-grid eliminates grid imprinting and provides unified approach to cubed-sphere grid design





Al2 Pace Accelerating to km-scale

- The CPU-MPI era is (?) ending
- **GT4py Domain Specific Language (DSL)** Model re-written in Python and compiled to optimized code for any processor
 - GridTools in operations at MeteoSwiss
 - Evaluation underway by ECMWF and MPI
- Pace: GT4py implementation of FV3GFS
 Performance + Python Flexibility





Flowchart courtesy Oliver Elbert, AI2

GT4py FV3

2.6 km FV3 Dycore



Literature	
Ben-Nun et al. 2022	
Gibbon et al. 2022	



Socket-for-socket comparison on Piz Daint (CSCS Switzerland, Intel Haswell + NVIDIA P100)



Pinterest user Elizabeth Chambers