

Nikolaos Georgakarakos New York University Abu Dhabi, UAE

Orbital Stability of Circumbinary Systems

The formation and long-term evolution of circumbinary planetary systems across the H-R diagram

Florence, 15/01/2025

5788 exoplanets

Cumulative Counts vs Discovery Year

exoplanetarchive.ipac.caltech.edu, 2024-12-19

Credit: NASA Exoplanet Archive

More than 220 planets in binary systems

NASA EXOPLANET ARCHIVE NASA EXOPLANET SCIENCE INSTITUTE

Planetary Systems

Circumstellar configuration

(or S-type)

Circumbinary configuration

Circumbinary planets

We want to find out where a planet is allowed to be around the binary without its orbit being destabilized

Important for many processes:

planet formation planet detection habitability etc.

Celestial Mech Dyn Astr (2008) 100:151-168 DOI 10.1007/s10569-007-9109-2

Stability criteria for hierarchical triple systems

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Abstract In this paper, we give a summary of stability criteria that have been derived for hierarchical triple systems over the past few decades. We give a brief description and we discuss the criteria that are based on the generalisation of the concept of zero velocity surfaces of the restricted three body problem, to the general case. We also present criteria that have to do with escape of one of the bodies. Then, we talk about the criteria that have been derived using data from numerical integrations. Finally, we report on criteria that involve the concept of chaos. In all cases, wherever possible, we discuss advantages and disadvantages of the criteria and the methods their derivation was based on, and some comparison is made in several cases.

Keywords Celestial mechanics · Three body problem · Stability

Some historical background

VOLUME 82, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 1977

Planetary orbits in binary stars

Robert S. Harrington

U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, DC 20390 (Received 19 May 1977; revised 24 June 1977)

Numerical integrations of the general three-body problem, with one component having a planetary mass, indicate that stable planetary orbits can exist in binary stars. The limitation for stability is that the ratio of the periastron distance of the outer tertiary component to the semimajor axis of the close component be somewhere in the range 3–4, regardless of which of the components is the planet. For most known binaries, this region of stability includes the region of habitability for planets.

Harrington (1977)

Numerical simulations of HTS:

- 2 stars + planet (both S-type & P-type)
	- Planar systems
- Largest mass ratio not exceeding 100:1
	- Planet mass m_{p} = M_F, M_J
	- Binary eccentricity $e_b=0$, 0.5
	- Planetary eccentricity $e_p=0$
- Time of integrations: 10-20 outer revolutions
- Stability : semi-major axes and eccentricities showed no large changes

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$$
q_2/a_1 \ge F \equiv A \left\{ 1 + B \log \left[\frac{1 + m_3/(m_1 + m_2)}{3/2} \right] \right\} + K \qquad \frac{I}{0} \qquad \frac{A}{3.50} \qquad \frac{B}{0.70} \qquad \frac{C}{1} \qquad \frac{C}{1} \qquad \frac{D}{1} \qquad \frac{D}{2.75} \qquad \frac{D}{0.64}
$$

 $q₂$ outer pericenter distance a_1 inner pair semi-major axis K=0 mean fit K=2 upper limit

Critical orbits in the elliptic restricted three-body problem

R. Dvorak Institut für Astronomie, Universität Wien, Türkenschanzstrasse 17, A-1180 Wien, Austria

Received March 14 accented June 12 1986

Dvorak (1986)

Numerical simulations of HTS:

- 2 stars + planet (P-type)
	- Planar systems
	- Equal mass binary
	- Planet = massless
- Binary eccentricity $e_b = 0.9$
- Planetary eccentricity $e_p=0$
- Time of integrations: 500 binary periods
	- Stability : eccentricitiy < 0.3

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$$
UCO = 2.37 + 2.76 e - 1.04 e^2
$$

and

$$
LCO = 2.09 + 2.79 e - 2.07 e^2
$$

UCO : **U**pper **C**ritical **O**rbit **LCO** : **L**ower **C**ritical **O**rbit

- That work was extended to unequal mass binaries by Dvorak et al. (1989) and to retrograde orbits by Hong & van Putten (2021)
	- Rabl & Dvorak (1988) provided stability limits for S-type orbits.

LONG-TERM STABILITY OF PLANETS IN BINARY SYSTEMS

MATTHEW J. HOLMAN Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, 60 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

AND PAUL A. WIEGERT Department of Physics and Astronomy, York University, Toronto, Ontario M3J 3P1, Canada Received 1998 July 31; accepted 1998 September 23

Holman & Wiegert 1999 Fability : escape or close encounter with the stars

INITIAL CONDITIONS FOR THE BINARIES AND **TEST PARTICLES**

eccentricity is e, and its mass ratio $\mu = m_2$ / $(m_1 + m_2)$. A test particle's initial semimajor axis, eccentricity, inclination relative to the binary plane, longitude of the ascending node, argument of perihelion, and mean anomaly are designated by a, e_n , i, Ω , ω , and M, respectively.

Numerical simulations of HTS:

- 2 stars + planet (S-type & P-type)
	- Planar systems
	- Planet = massless
	- Planetary eccentricity $e_p=0$
- Time of integrations: 10⁴ binary periods
-

'At the end of the integrations, the semimajor axis at which the test particles at all initial longitudes survived the full integration time is determined. We call this the critical semimajor axis.'

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S-type

$$
a_c = [(0.464 \pm 0.006) + (-0.380 \pm 0.010)\mu
$$

+ (-0.631 \pm 0.034)e + (0,586 \pm 0.061)\mu e
+ (0.150 \pm 0.041)e² + (-0.198 \pm 0.074)\mu e²]a_b

P-type

$$
a_c = (1.60 \pm 0.04) + (5.10 \pm 0.05)e
$$

+ $(-2.22 \pm 0.11)e^2 + (4.12 \pm 0.09)\mu$
+ $(-4.27 \pm 0.17)e\mu + (-5.09 \pm 0.11)\mu^2$
+ $(4.61 \pm 0.36)e^2\mu^2$.

Same function as H&W but with adjusted coefficients.

Holman & Wiegert 1999

Comment: In many cases for P-type systems, "islands" of instability were noticed at values greater than the critical semimajor axis. This was due to the definition of the critical semimajor axis in H&W.

Kepler-16b (Chavez et al. 2015)

Tidal interactions in star cluster simulations

Rosemary A. Mardling^{1*} and Sverre J. Aarseth²

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Mardling & Aarseth (1999,2001)

Accepted 2000 August 23. Received 2000 May 26; in original form 1999 April 23

Similarities between escape in HTS and chaotic energy exchange in the binary – tides problem.

$$
R_p^{crit} = 2.8a_b \left[\left(1 + \frac{m_3}{m_1 + m_2} \right) \frac{1 + e_{out}}{\left(1 - e_{out} \right)^{\frac{1}{2}}} \right]^{\frac{2}{5}} \left(1 - 0.3 \frac{I_m}{180} \right)
$$

 $R_{\rho}^{\;\;crit}$ is the critical outer pericenter distance and I_m is the mutual inclination. If R_p^{crit} ≤ R_p^{out} then the system is stable.

The above equation was not tested for planetary mass bodies.

Stability of coorbital planets around binaries

Stefan Adelbert¹®, Anna B. T. Penzlin^{1,2}®, Christoph M. Schäfer¹®, Wilhelm Kley^{1,∗}, Billy Quarles³®, and Rafael Sfair^{1,4}

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¹ Institut für Astronomie und Astrophysik, Universität Tübingen, Auf der Morgenstelle 10, 72076 Tübingen, Germany
2 semili: **2 secara .ade Der tömis "cuebingen**, de eine Ballingen Landon, Prince Consort Rd, London, SW7 Received 23 June 2022 / Accepted 10 October 2023

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In previous hydrodynamical simulations, we found a mechanism for nearly circular binary stars, such as Kepler-413, to trap two planets in stable 1.1 resonance. Therefore, the stable of a started the parameters to study a binaries. Stable orbits for eccentric hörseshoe configurations exist with a pericentre closer than seven binary separations and, in the
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Adelbert et al. 2023

Numerical simulations of HTS:

- 2 stars + planet (P-type)
	- Coplanar systems
- Same binary mass ratio as H&W
	- Planet mass m_p = 10⁻⁴ M_b ?
	- Binary eccentricity $e_b = 0.5$
- Planetary eccentricity $e_p = 0.9$
- Time of integrations: $10⁵$ binary periods
- Stability : planetary semi-major axis < 20% change of its initial value

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$$
r_{c,peri}/a_{bin} = (1.36 \pm 0.05)
$$

+ (5.79 \pm 0.19)e_{bin} – (5.87 \pm 0.39)e²_{bin}
+ (1.99 \pm 0.32)\mu_{bin} – (3.14 \pm 0.52)\mu²_{bin}
+ [(1.85 \pm 0.05)
– (2.10 \pm 0.46)e²_{bin} + (3.00 \pm 0.52)e_{bin}\mu_{bin}]e_p.

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OPEN ACCESS

Empirical Stability Criteria for 3D Hierarchical Triple Systems. I. Circumbinary Planets

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² Center for Astrophysics and Space Science (CASS), New York University Abu Dhabi, PO Box 129188, Abu Dhabi, UAE ³ Department of Aerospace Engineering/Department of Astronomy/NCSA CAPS, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL, USA Received 2024 April 15; revised 2024 August 28; accepted 2024 August 28; published 2024 October 28

Abstract

In this work we revisit the problem of the dynamical stability of hierarchical triple systems with applications to circumbinary planetary orbits. We derive critical semimajor axes based on simulating and analyzing the dynamical behavior of 3×10^8 binary star-planet configurations. For the first time, three-dimensional and eccentric planetary orbits are considered. We explore systems with a variety of binary and planetary mass ratios, binary and planetary eccentricities from 0 to 0.9, and orbital mutual inclinations ranging from 0° to 180°. Planetary masses range between the size of Mercury and the lower fusion boundary (approximately 13 Jupiter masses). The stability of each system is monitored over 10^6 planetary orbital periods. We provide empirical expressions in the form of multidimensional, parameterized fits for two borders that separate dynamically stable, unstable, and mixed zones. In addition, we offer a machine learning model trained on our data set as an alternative tool for predicting the stability of circumbinary planets. Both the empirical fits and the machine learning model are tested for their predictive capabilities against randomly generated circumbinary systems with very good results. The empirical formulae are also applied to the Kepler and TESS circumbinary systems, confirming that many planets orbit their host stars close to the stability limit of those systems. Finally, we present a REST application programming interface with a web-based application for convenient access to our simulation data set.

Unified Astronomy Thesaurus concepts: Celestial mechanics (211)

Motivations for this work:

i) The above circumbinary stability criteria only cover parts of the parameter space.

ii) The various definitions of stability used in past works may result in misclassification of circumbinary planetary orbits as stable while they are actually unstable or vice versa.

Aims of this work:

i) To extend and homogenize the results of previous studies on the dynamical stability of circumbinary planetary orbits

ii) To remedy the limitations and inconsistencies that arise from combining stability estimates from different works by carrying out a self-consistent set of numerical simulations over long timescales.

Parameter Space:

Masses:

$$
M_b \in \{0.5, 0.3, 0.1, 0.05, 0.02, 0.01\}
$$

 $M_b = \frac{m_2}{m_1 + m_2}$ and $M_p = \frac{m_p}{m_1 + m_2}$ $M_p \in \{10^{-2}, 10^{-3}, 10^{-4}, 10^{-5}, 10^{-6}, 10^{-7}\}\$ $e_b, e_p \in \{0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.3, 0.4, 0.5, 0.6, 0.7, 0.8, 0.9\}$ Eccentricities: $I_m \in \{0^\circ, 18^\circ, 36^\circ, 54^\circ, 72^\circ, 90^\circ, 108^\circ,$ Mutual Inclination: 126° , 144° , 162° , 180° . Planetary slowly varying angles: $\overline{\omega}_p$, ω_p , $\Omega_p \in \{0^\circ, 90^\circ, 180^\circ\}$ $f_p \in \{0^\circ, 45^\circ, 90^\circ, 135^\circ, 180^\circ, 225^\circ, 270^\circ, 315^\circ\}$ Planetary true anomaly: Binary true anomaly: $f_b \in \{0,180^\circ\}$

Integration time=1000000 planetary orbital periods Semi-major axis resolution=0.1

New Astronomy 23-24 (2013) 41-48

The dependence of the stability of hierarchical triple systems on the orbital inclination

Nikolaos Georgakarakos*

 \in

Integration time=1000000 planetary orbital periods Semi-major axis resolution=0.1

Criteria for instability

For any initial position of the planet:

i) either of the binary or planetary orbital eccentricity becomes ≥ 1 ii) orbit crossing iii) $a_b \le 0.001$ or $a_b \ge 100$ iv) $a_p \ge 1000$

Looking for two critical borders:

Parameters involved in our problem:

masses, eccentricities, semi-major axes, coplanarity of the system, various orbital angles

and

the integration time!

 $NYUAD HPC \sim 50000$ cores

Results

Effect of each parameter on the stability borders:

- binary mass ratio: moderate effect
- planetary mass ratio: insignificant effect
- binary eccentricity: moderate effect
- planetary eccentricity: strongest effect
- mutual inclination: moderate effect
- planetary pericenter: small effect
- node: insignificant effect

Results

In agreement with Doolin & Blundell (2011), Chen et al. (2020)

Figure 5. Critical semimajor axis against mutual inclination for a system with $M_b = 0.05$, $M_p = 10^{-3}$, $e_b = 0.8$, and $e_p = 0$. The triangles represent the inner critical border while the circles indicate the outer one.

Georgakarakos et al. (2024)

Results

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- binary mass ratio: moderate effect
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- binary eccentricity: moderate effect
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- mutual inclination: moderate effect
- planetary pericenter: small effect
- node: insignificant effect

Figure 2. Mean and standard deviation of outer vs. inner stability borders in units of log_{10} of the binary semimajor axis. The color scale refers to the binary orbit eccentricity (top left), the planet's orbital eccentricity (top right), the binary mass ratio (bottom left), and the mutual inclination (bottom right). Stability limits depend strongly on the planetary orbital eccentricity, which accounts for most of the variance in the system. Stability borders also show roughly the same sensitivity to the orbital eccentricity of the binary star, the binary mass ratio, and the inclination of the system.

-2 -2 1.3 0.97 Outer Stability Border [log₁₀(a_b)] Outer Stability Border [log₁₀(a_b)] 1.2 0.965 -3 -3 1.1 0.96 -4 $\mathbf{1}$ 0.955 0.9 0.95 -5 -5 0.8 0.945 -6 0.94 -6 0.7 0.6 0.935 -7 0.2 1.2 0.81 0.4 0.6 0.8 1.4 0.82 0.83 0.84 0.85 0.86 0.87 Inner Stability Border [$log_{10}(a_b)$] Inner Stability Border [$log_{10}(a_b)$] Peri. $[deg]$
 $[180]$ Node $\begin{bmatrix} \text{deg} \\ \text{180} \end{bmatrix}$ 1.3 13 Outer Stability Border $[\log_{10}(a_b)]$ Outer Stability Border $[\log_{10}(a_b)]$ 1.2 1.2 1.1 1.1 $\mathbf{1}% \mathbf{1}_{B(0,R)} \qquad \mathbf{$ 1 0.9 90 90 0.9 $0.8\,$ 0.8 0.7 0.7 0.6 0.6 $^{0.5}_{0.2}$ 1.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1.2 1.4 0.4 0.8 1.4 0.6 Inner Stability Border [$log_{10}(a_b)$] Inner Stability Border [$log_{10}(a_b)$]

log₁₀ planet/binary mass ratio

Figure 3. Same as Figure 2, but for the planet to binary mass ratio $M_p = m_p/(m_1 + m_2)$ (top left), a zoomed-in plot of the same (top right), the pericenter (bottom left), and the longitude of the ascending node (bottom right). In the parameter regime we have chosen for this study, the planet's mass does not substantially affect the stability limits. Aligned pericenters lead to lower instability in a system. The relative position of the nodes does not significantly impact the location of stability limits.

log₁₀ planet/binary mass ratio

- For every set of values (M_b , M_p , e_b , e_p , I_m), we had 9 critical distance values for different combinations of (Ω_p, ω_p) . We retained the largest value for the outer critical border and the smallest value for the inner critical border (better markers for our borders – 2 variables down).

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- Planetary mass dropped.

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- Planetary mass dropped.
- Binary mass ratio and critical distances were rescaled using log_{10} . Mutual inclination in radians.

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- Third order polynomial fit selected. X^2 testing was used to control the quality of the fits.

- For every set of values (M_b , M_p , e_b , e_p , I_m), we had 9 critical distance values for different combinations of (Ω_p, ω_p) . We retained the largest value for the outer critical border and the smallest value for the inner critical border (better markers for our borders – 2 variables down).
- Planetary mass dropped.
- Binary mass ratio and critical distances were rescaled using log_{10} . Mutual inclination in radians.
- Third order polynomial fit selected. X^2 testing was used to control the quality of the fits.
- Two fits constructed: one for $e_p \le 0.8$ and one for all e_p .

B coefficient vector, *C* uncertainties vector, X parameter vector

 $a_i^{\text{cr}} = a_b \times 10^{(B_i \pm C_i) \cdot X_i}$ $a_o^{\text{cr}} = a_b \times 10^{(B_o \pm C_o) \cdot X_o}$ and

For $e_p \leq 0.8$

- $B_i = (0.20729, -0.32875, 0.10339, 0.58433, 0.36623,$ $-0.25569, -0.06425, -0.38387, 1.01951, 0.26910,$ $0.38912, -0.19863, -0.25361, -0.30333,$ $0.09080, -0.05955$,
- $C_i = (0.003763, 0.01015, 0.00224, 0.00922, 0.00978,$ 0.00982, 0.00069, 0.00947, 0.01176, 0.00687, 0.00759, 0.00420, 0.00735, 0.00913, $0.00129, 0.00280$,

 $X_i = (1, M_{lb}, I_m, e_b, e_p, M_{lb}^2, I_m^2, e_b^2, e_p^2, M_{lb}e_b,$ $M_{lb}e_p$, I_me_b , $M_{lb}e_b^2$, $M_{lb}e_n^2$, $I_m^2e_b$, M_{lb}^3).

Inner border and the Couter border of the Couter border

- $B₀ = (0.23612, -0.29377, 0.22710, 1.06753, 0.62109,$ $-0.21512, -0.06648, -1.52936, -0.4748, -0.31329$ $-0.00869, 0.11846, -0.03932, -0.00933,$ $0.87506, 1.25895$,
- $C₀ = (0.00317, 0.00927, 0.00313, 0.00905, 0.00975,$ 0.00910, 0.00202, 0.02330, 0.02893, 0.00389, 0.00116, 0.00119, 0.00260, 0.00041, $0.01699, 0.02373$,
- $X_o = (1, M_{lb}, I_m, e_b, e_p, M_{lb}^2, I_m^2, e_b^2, e_n^2, I_m e_b, I_m e_p, I_m^2 e_b,$ M_{lh}^3 , I_m^3 , e_h^3 , e_n^3).

Figure 8. Relative percentage error distribution from comparing our empirical fits against the results of numerical simulations. On the x-axis we have bins of relative percentage error between the results from the numerical simulations and the fits of Equations (10) , while on the y-axis we have the percentage of systems that fall into a specific error bin. The top row is for the $e_p \le 0.8$ case, while the bottom row plots represent the more eccentric case.

Figure 9. Critical semimajor axis against mutual inclination for a variety of systems. The orange color refers to the inner boundary, while the black color denotes the outer stability border. The continuous lines are our empirical fits as given in Section 3.2. The points are the output from the numerical simulations for the specific systems. Note that the majority of the points lie between the two curves, as they ideally should.

Fit performance against random simulations

In order to test the quality of our fitting formulae, we carried out a number of additional, randomly generated, simulations. We drew parameter values for our random systems from a uniform distribution within the ranges used for the creation of the simulation dataset. The planetary semi-major axis was sampled using rejection sampling upon distributions created from our simulation dataset.

50000 systems were created in total.

	Inner Border Distribution					
N.U.I.P.	Stable	Quantity per Zone Mixed	Unstable	Total		
0	12,148 (54.7%)	1826 (8.2%)	$1(0.0\%)$	13,975 (62.9%)	Success rates:	
$1 - 15$ 16	$216(1.0\%)$ 54 (0.2%)	$1825(8.2\%)$ 2245 (10.1%)	32 (0.1%) 3877 (17.5%)	2073 (9.3%) 6176 (27.8%)	$Inner = 80.4\% - 98.7\%$	
Total	12,418 (55.9%)	5896 (26.5%)	3910 (17.6%)	22,224 (100.0%)		
		Outer Border Distribution				
N.U.I.P.	Stable	Quantity per Zone Mixed	Unstable	Total		
0	14,905 (66.8%)	1712 (7.7%)	$2(0.0\%)$	16,619 (74.5%)		
$1 - 15$ 16	177 (0.8%) 37 (0.2%)	1468 (6.5%) 1685(7.5%)	18 (0.1%) 2320 (10.4%)	1663 (7.4%) 4042 (18.1%)	Success rates:	
Total	15119 (67.8%)	4865(21.8%)	2340 (10.5%)	22324 (100.0%)	Outer = 83.7% - 98.9%	

Classification of the Results of Random Simulations Using the Fits Given in Section 3.2

Notes. N.U.I.P: number of unstable initial positions of the planet on its initial orbit. The percentages refer to the number of individual cases over the total number of cases. For the interpretation of numbers in bold please see the main body of the paper.

Application to known circumbinary systems

Parameter Values of Circumbinary Systems Used for the Validation of the Empirical Stability Fits

Table 3. Critical planetary semimajor axis for Kepler-16, Kepler-34, Kepler-35, Kepler-38, Kepler-64 and Kepler 413. 'W', 'O', 'K13', 'S' and 'K14' stand for Welsh et al. (2012), Orosz et al. (2012b), Kostov et al. (2013) , Schwamb et al. (2013) and Kostov et al. (2014) , respectively.

System	Nominal (au)	Numerical (au)	Holman & Wiegert (au)	Mardling & Aarseth (au)	Published (au)
Kenler-16	0.7048	0.67 \mathbf{u}	000 0.0J	0.64	0.59 (W)
Kepler-34	1.0896	1.00	0.84	0.87	$0.88 \, (W)$
Kepler-35	0.603 45	0.52	0.50	0.53	0.49 (W)
Kepler-38	0.4644	0.43	0.39	0.43	0.37(0)
Kepler-64 $(K13)$	0.642	0.65	0.53	0.58	$-$ (K13)
Kepler-64 (S)	0.634	0.58	0.52	0.53	0.57(S)
Kepler-413	0.3553	0.31	0.26	0.35	$- (K14)$

Figure 3. Eccentricity e_p against pericentre distance q_p for Kepler-34b. The integration time is $10⁵$ yr. The open circle is the nominal position of the planet, and the light-grey lines correspond to the locations of certain mean motion resonances between the stellar and planetary orbits. From left to right the resonances shown here are: 5:1, 6:1, 7:1, 8:1, 9:1, 10:1, 11:1, 12:1, 13:1 and 14:1.

Chavez et al. (2015)

Comparison with other results

Figure 11. Comparison between different stability fits. Geo stands for the fits of the present work, Adel denotes the work by S. Adelbert et al. (2023), HW denotes the classification formula given in M. J. Holman & P. A. Wiegert (1999), and MA stands for the criterion developed by R. Mardling & S. Aarseth (1999) and R. A. Mardling & S. J. Aarseth (2001). As previously, the black color denotes the outer critical border, while the orange color represents the inner critical border. The circles are the results from our numerical simulations.

Lei & Gong (2024)

We have also trained a Machine Learning model with our simulation data (XGBRegressor model – Chen & Guestrin 2016).

Classification of the Results of Random Simulation Using the Machine Learning Model ($e_p \leqslant 0.8$)

The ML model was tested against the 50000 randomly chosen systems with very good results.

Online portal and Application Programmng Interface (API)

A software interface designed to facilitate interaction with large catalogs of numerical stability simulations such as constructed in this Work.

Summary

• We investigated the dynamical stability of circumbinary planets by carrying out a very large number of numerical simulations covering almost completely the parameter space

- We derived empirical formulae for the critical planetary distances
- We trained a Machine Learning model as an additional predictive tool
- We tested our tools against real and synthetic systems, as well as against older stability formulae with excellent results.
	- We provide an online portal and application programming interface for accessing our simulation dataset.

● More information can be found in Georgakarakos et al. (2024), AJ, 168, id.224.