

Making 10^{-18} fractional frequency measurements with ytterbium optical lattice clocks

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We describe the design and operation of an optical lattice clock based on ytterbium. Exploiting a combination of narrowline laser cooling on the $1S_0-3P_1$ transition and quenched sideband cooling on the $1S_0-3P_0$ clock transition, we realize lattice-trapped ytterbium with temperatures ≤ 1 uK. By using large atom number ensembles to reduce quantum projection fluctuation in atomic state measurements, we measure clock stability levels at the 1×10^{-18} level over long timescales. By operating two atomic systems in an interleaved interrogation scheme to achieve a composite system with zero dead time, we explore similar levels of instability on faster timescales. Finally, we report on recent efforts towards a full evaluation of systematic shift uncertainties at the 10^{-18} level, including a detailed study of high-order lattice Stark effects.

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