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## The nature of the binding of Au, Ag, and Pd to Benzene, Coronene, and Graphene: From benchmark CCSD(T) to Plane-Wave DFT calculations

*Petr Lazar, Jaroslav Granatier, Michal Otyepka, Pavel Hobza*



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## Outline

- › **Introduction**
- › **Accurate quantum-mechanical calculations**
- › **Results for model systems:**
  - metal-benzene
  - metal-coronene
  - metal-graphene
- › **Conclusions**



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## *Graphene-metal interfaces*

### › **Important for nanoelectronics**

metals are necessary as interfaces between graphene and conventional electronics

### › **Metal nanoparticles on graphene**

biosensors

highly active catalyst

energy storage devices

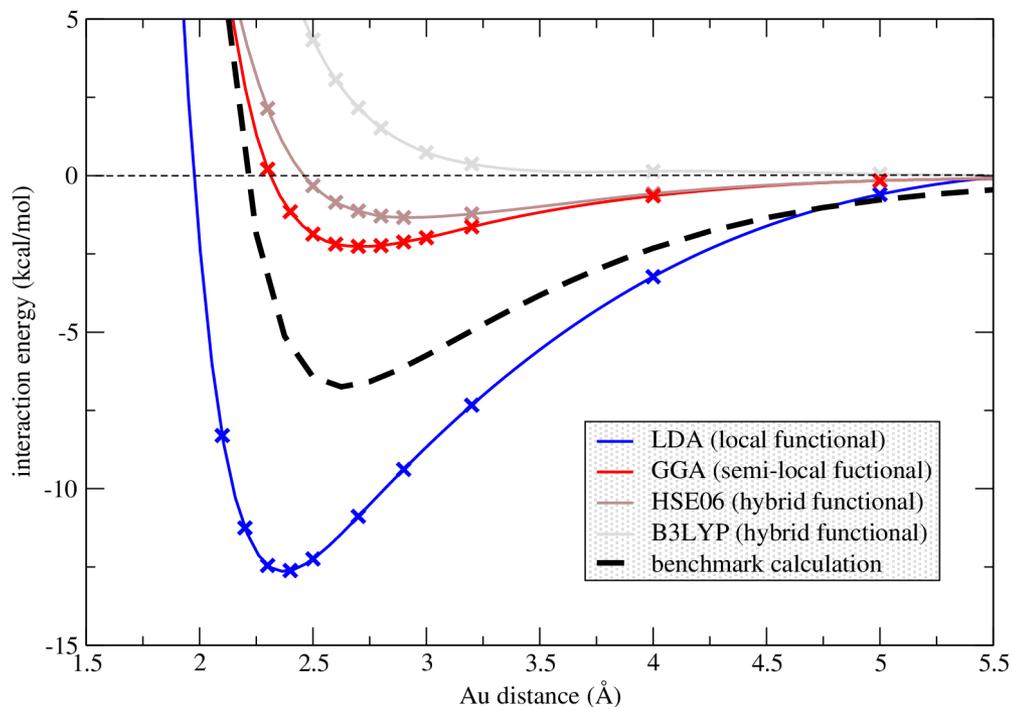
### › **Theoretical description difficult and challenging**

## Motivation

Graphene...Au complex

gold positioned over carbon atom

Plane-wave DFT calculation with various functionals



-no functional really works  
-missing van der Waals interaction  
-no binding by B3LYP!



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## *Modeling of graphene-metal interfaces*

- **Obstacles for theoretical modeling**
  - Graphene sheet infinite – periodic boundary conditions
  - Interaction involves van der Waals bonding
  
- **Quantum-chemical methods**
  - highly accurate
  - limited to small systems
  
- **Density functional theory (DFT) methods**
  - applicable to extended systems
  - depend on underlying functional



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## *Quantum-chemical methods*

### ➤ **Hartree-fock (HF) method**

- classical treatment of many-body problem
- no electron correlation

### ➤ **Moeller-Plesset perturbation theory**

- adds electron correlation to the HF method
- perturbation up to second (MP2) or fourth (MP4) order

### ➤ **Coupled-cluster (CC) method**

- contains all basic physics
- CCSD(T)...'the gold standard' in quantum chemistry
- all excitations&complete basis set ⇒ **exact solution**
- computationally very expensive



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## *Density functional theory*

- **Ground-state energy is unique functional of the electron density**

Interacting electrons  
Many-body problem



Noninteracting electrons in an effective potential

- ➔ Coulomb repulsion
- ➔ **Exchange-correlation**

### **Exchange-correlation potential**

**-comprises many-body character of a system**

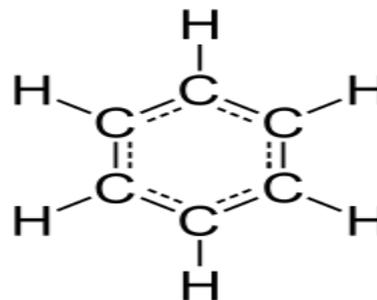
**-several approximations available**

- ➔ LDA (local density approximation): *xc energy of homogeneous electron gas*
- ➔ GGA (generalized gradient approximation): *gradient correction of LDA*
- ➔ hybrid functionals (BLYP, HSE ...): *mixture with 'exact' HF exchange*

## Scheme of calculations

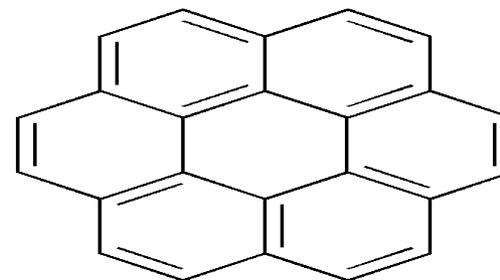
### **Benzene...metal complex**

Benchmark CCSD(T) method applicable  
Find the best MP2 (for coronene)  
DFT (for graphene)



### **Coronene...metal complex**

Coronene as a model of the graphene sheet  
Analysis of bonding

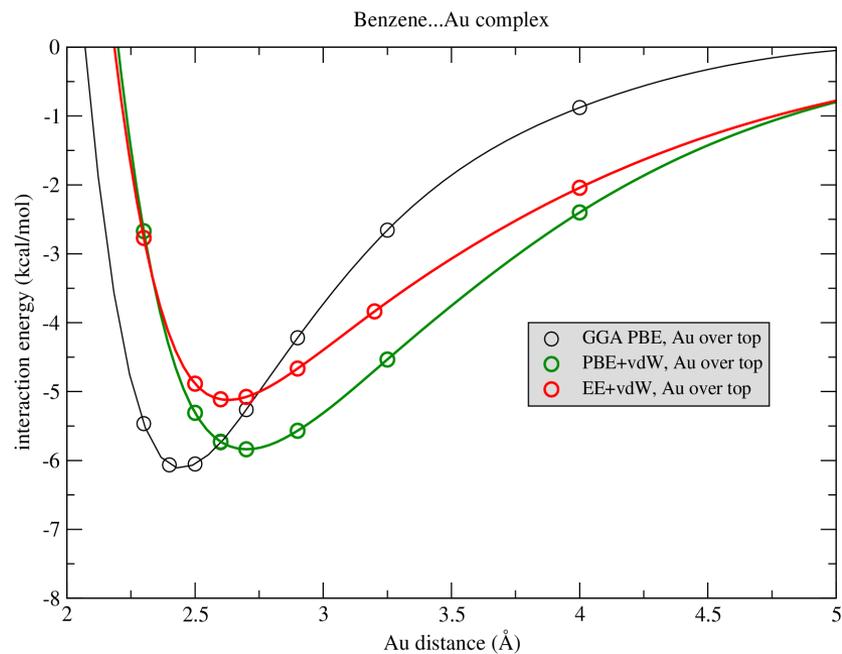
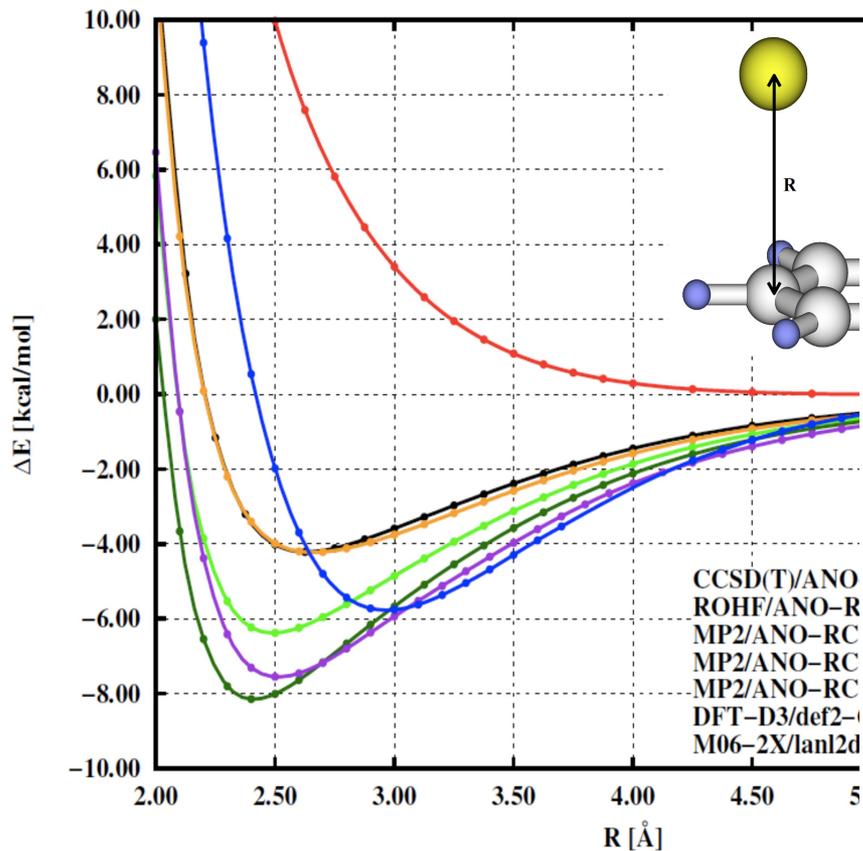


### **Graphene...metal complex**

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# Benzene...Au complex

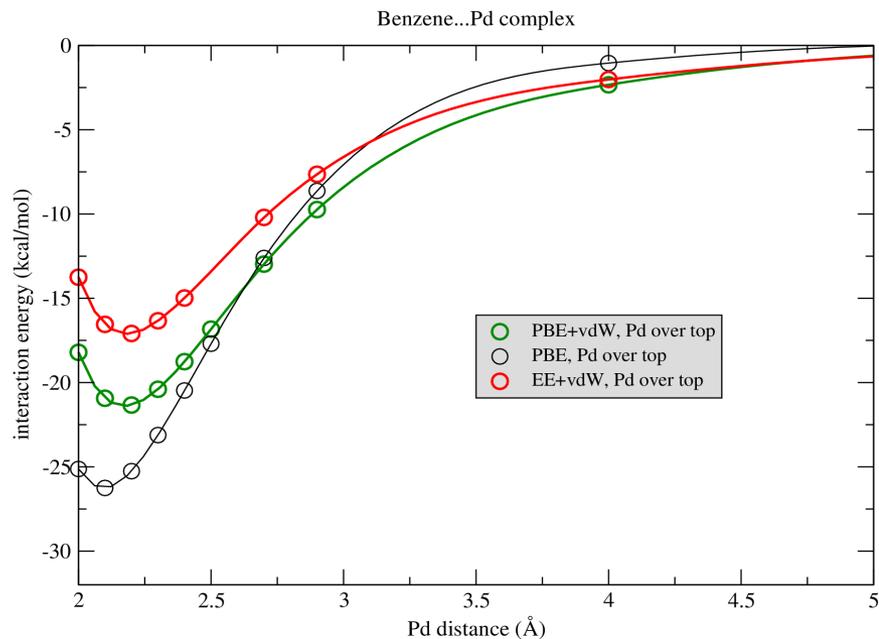
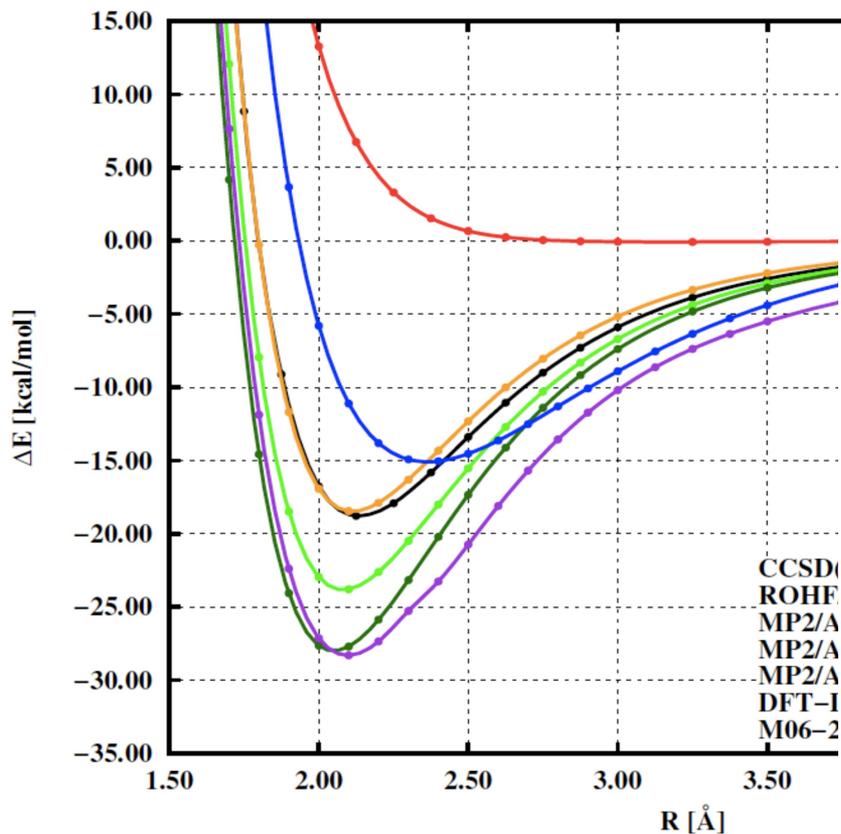
Au in top position (above C atom)



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# Benzene...Pd complex

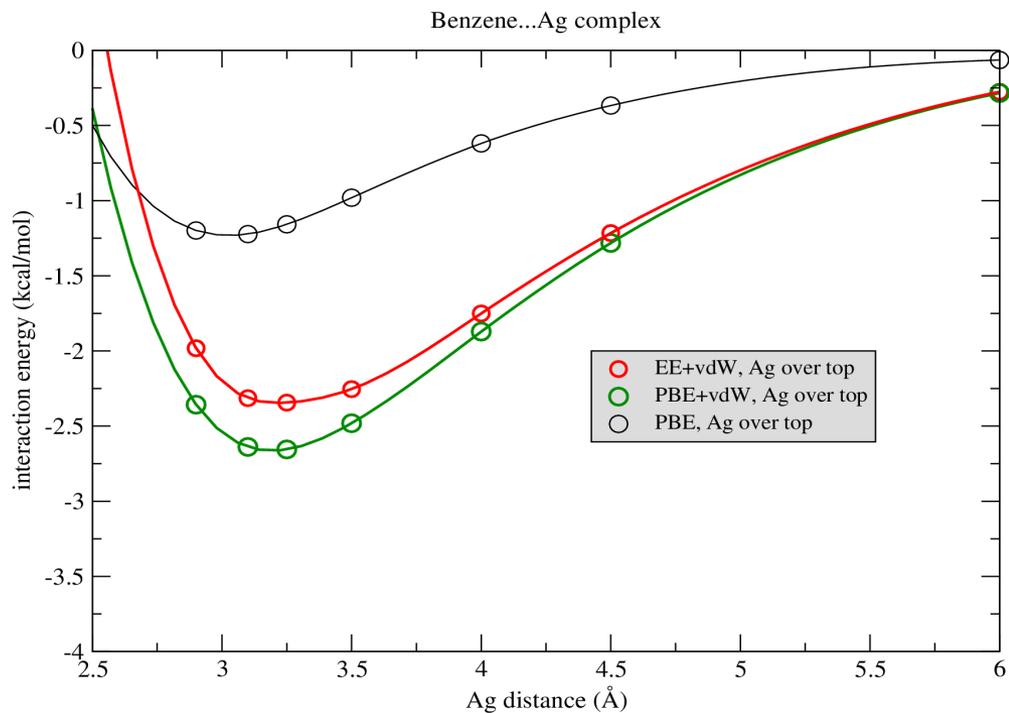
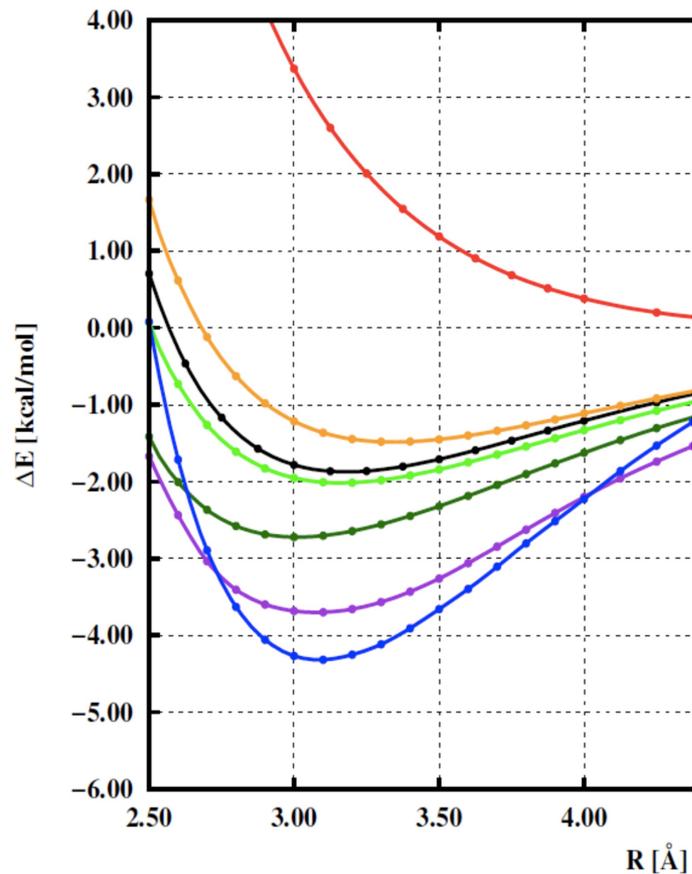
Pd in top position (above C atom)



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## Benzene...Ag complex

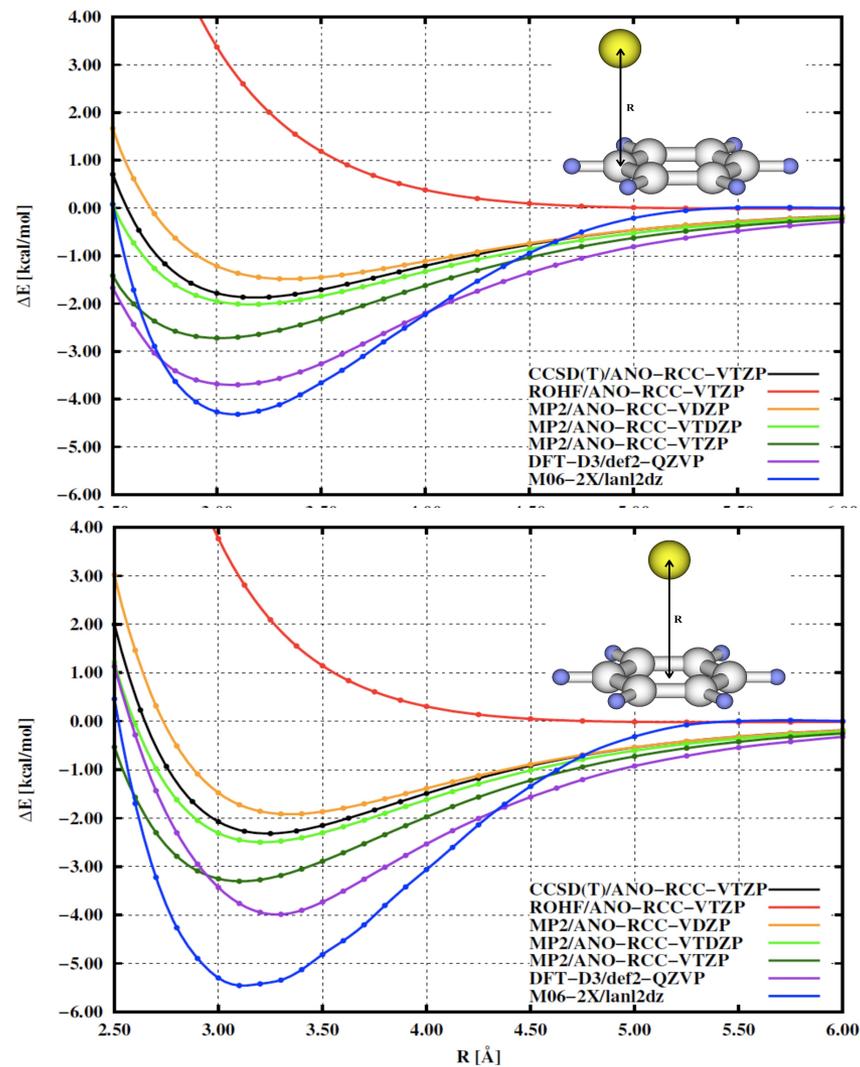
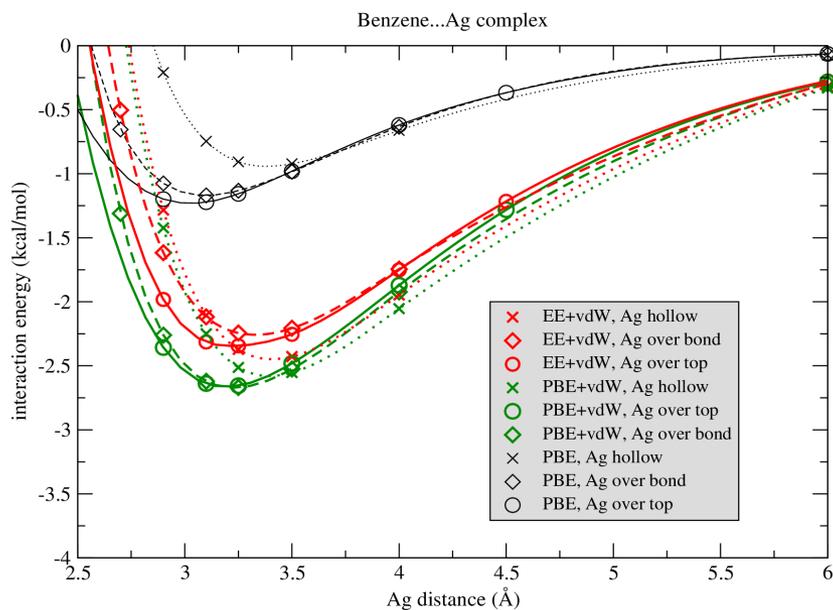
Ag in top position (above C atom)



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# Benzene...Ag complex

Top vs. hollow position  
EE+vdW correctly predicts site preference





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## *Conclusions – benzene complexes*

### › **Bonding of Pd,Ag, and Au differs**

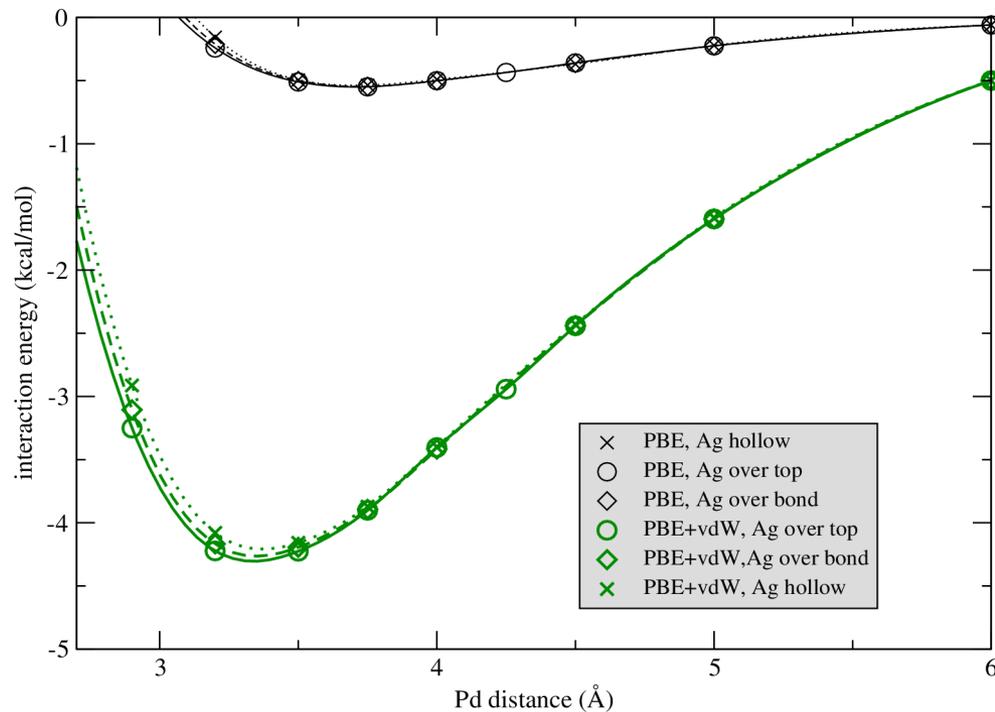
- Pd bonding has covalent character
- Ag binds through dispersion interactions
- Au combines charge transfer, dispersion and relativity

### › **Plane-wave DFT calculations**

- neither LDA nor GGA work
- van der Waals term (vdW) improves results
- a combination with HF exchange yields excellent agreement
- empirical dispersion terms (DFT+D2) doubtful

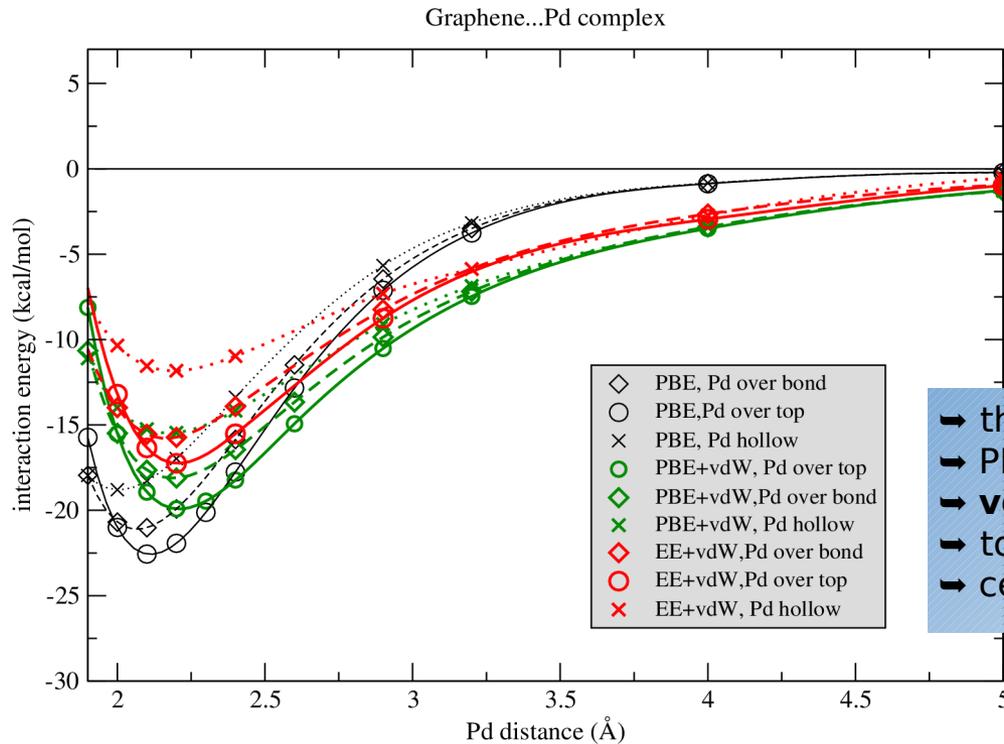
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## Graphene...Ag complex



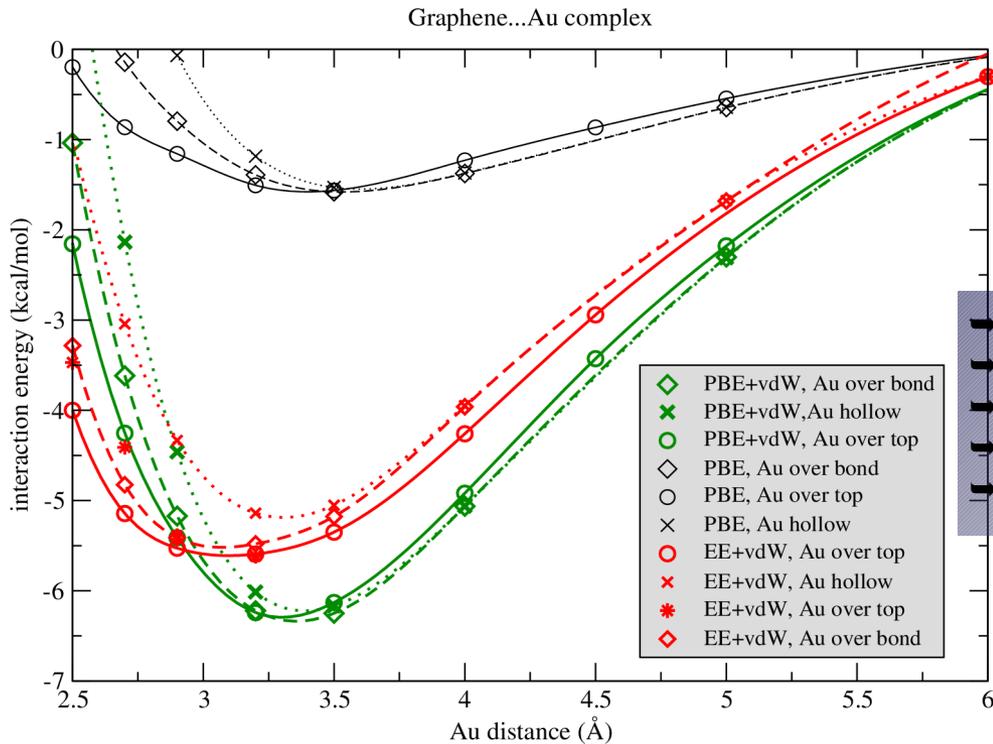
- negligible bonding by PBE
- **van der Waals forces dominant**
- all positions equal  
silver glides easily on graphene surface

# Graphene...Pd complex



- ➔ the strongest bonding (covalent character)
- ➔ PBE overestimates bonding energy
- ➔ **vdW term repulsive**
- ➔ top position preferred
- ➔ center site the least favorable

# Graphene...Au complex



- the strongest bonding (covalent character)
- PBE overestimates bonding energy
- vdW term repulsive**
- top position preferred
- center site the least favorable



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## Conclusions

### **Bonding of Pd,Ag, and Au**

- Pd has the strongest bonding
- Ag binds weakly through dispersion interactions
- Au combines charge transfer and dispersion; relativistic effects important

### **Absorption on graphene within plane-wave DFT**

- neither LDA nor GGA work (sufficiently)
- van der Waals term (vdW) necessary
- HF exchange improves absorption energies and site preference
- silver and gold should glide at graphene surface

### **Trends benzene-coronene-graphene consistent**

- bond lengths are becoming longer (greater exchange repulsion)
- van der Waals interactions more important (greater polarizability)