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Observation of Long-Range Elliptic Azimuthal Anisotropies in $\sqrt{s} = 13$ and 2.76 TeV $pp$ Collisions with the ATLAS Detector

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ATLAS has measured two-particle correlations as a function of the relative azimuthal angle, $\Delta \phi$, and pseudorapidity, $\Delta \eta$, in $\sqrt{s} = 13$ and 2.76 TeV $pp$ collisions at the LHC using charged particles measured in the pseudorapidity interval $|\eta| < 2.5$. The correlation functions evaluated in different intervals of measured charged-particle multiplicity show a multiplicity-dependent enhancement at $\Delta \phi \approx 0$ that extends over a wide range of $\Delta \eta$, which has been referred to as the “ridge.” Per-trigger-particle yields, $Y(\Delta \phi)$, are measured over $2 < |\Delta \eta| < 5$. For both collision energies, the $Y(\Delta \phi)$ distribution in all multiplicity intervals is found to be consistent with a linear combination of the per-trigger-particle yields measured in collisions with less than 20 reconstructed tracks, and a constant combinatoric contribution modulated by $\cos(2\Delta \phi)$. The fitted Fourier coefficient, $v_2$, exhibits factorization, suggesting that the ridge results from per-event $\cos(2\phi)$ modulation of the single-particle distribution with Fourier coefficients $v_2$. The $v_2$ values are presented as a function of multiplicity and transverse momentum. They are found to be approximately constant as a function of multiplicity and to have a $p_T$ dependence similar to that measured in $p + Pb$ and $Pb + Pb$ collisions. The $v_2$ values in the 13 and 2.76 TeV data are consistent within uncertainties. These results suggest that the ridge in $pp$ collisions arises from the same or similar underlying physics as observed in $p + Pb$ collisions, and that the dynamics responsible for the ridge has no strong $\sqrt{s}$ dependence.

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Measurements of two-particle angular correlations in high-multiplicity proton-proton ($pp$) collisions at a center-of-mass energy $\sqrt{s} = 7$ TeV at the LHC showed an enhancement in the production of pairs at small azimuthal-angle separation, $\Delta \phi$, that extends over a wide range of pseudorapidity differences, $\Delta \eta$, and which is often referred to as the “ridge” [1]. The ridge has also been observed in proton-lead ($p + Pb$) collisions [2–7], where it is found to result from a global sinusoidal modulation of the per-event single-particle azimuthal angle distributions [3–6]. While many theoretical interpretations of the ridge, including those based on hydrodynamics [8–12], saturation [13–23], or other mechanisms [24–30], have been, or could be applied to both $pp$ and $p + Pb$ collisions, it has not yet been demonstrated that the ridge in $pp$ collisions results from single-particle azimuthal anisotropies. Testing whether the ridges in $pp$ and $p + Pb$ collisions arise from the same underlying features of the single-particle distributions may provide insight into the physics responsible for the phenomena. Separately, a study of the $\sqrt{s}$ dependence of the ridge in $pp$ collisions may help distinguish between competing explanations.

This Letter uses 14 nb$^{-1}$ of $\sqrt{s} = 13$ TeV data and 4.0 pb$^{-1}$ of $\sqrt{s} = 2.76$ TeV data recorded during LHC run 2 and run 1, respectively, to address these issues. The maximum number of inelastic interactions per crossing was 0.04 and 0.5 for the 13 and 2.76 TeV data, respectively. Two-particle angular correlations are measured as a function of $\Delta \eta$ and $\Delta \phi$ in different intervals of the measured charged-particle multiplicity and different $p_T$ intervals spanning $0.3 < p_T < 5$ GeV: $0.3–0.5$ GeV, $0.5–1$ GeV, $1–2$ GeV, $2–3$ GeV, $3–5$ GeV. Separate $p_T$-integrated results use $0.5 < p_T < 5$ GeV. Per-trigger-particle yields are obtained from the long-range ($|\Delta \eta| > 2$) component of the correlation. A new template-fitting method is applied to these yields to test for sinusoidal modulation similar to that observed in $p + Pb$ collisions.

The measurements were performed using the ATLAS inner detector (ID), minimum-bias trigger scintillators (MBTSs), forward calorimeter (FCal), and the trigger and data acquisition systems [31]. The ID detects charged particles within $|\eta| < 2.5$ using a combination of silicon pixel detectors, silicon microstrip detectors (SCTs), and a straw-tube transition radiation tracker (TRT), all immersed in a 2 T axial magnetic field [32,33]. The MBTS system detects charged particles using two hodoscopes of counters positioned at $z = \pm 3.6$ m. The FCal covers $3.1 < |\eta| < 4.9$ and uses tungsten and copper absorbers with liquid argon.

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The ATLAS two-particle correlation measurements in Pb + Pb collisions [4,6,42–44]. Two-particle correlations for charged particle pairs with transverse momenta $p_T^a$ and $p_T^b$ are measured as a function of $\Delta \phi \equiv \phi^a - \phi^b$ and $\Delta \eta \equiv \eta^a - \eta^b$, with $|\Delta \eta| \leq 5$, determined by the acceptance of the ID. The particles a and b are conventionally referred to as the “trigger” and “associated” particles, respectively. The correlation function is defined as

$$C(\Delta \eta, \Delta \phi) = \frac{S(\Delta \eta, \Delta \phi)}{B(\Delta \eta, \Delta \phi)},$$

(1)

as the active medium. Between run 1 and run 2, an additional, innermost pixel layer was added to the ID and the MBTS was replaced.

The ATLAS trigger system [34] consists of a level-1 (L1) trigger implemented using a combination of dedicated electronics and programmable logic, and a software-based high-level trigger (HLT). Charged-particle tracks were reconstructed in the HLT using methods similar to those applied in the offline analysis, allowing triggers that select on the number of tracks with $p_T > 0.4$ GeV associated with a single vertex. For the 13 TeV measurements, a minimum-bias L1 trigger required one or more signals in the MBTS while the high-multiplicity trigger (HMT) required at least 900 SCT hits and at least 60 HLT-reconstructed tracks. For the 2.76 TeV data, the minimum-bias trigger selected random crossings at L1 and applied a threshold to the number of SCTs and pixel hits in the HLT, while several HMT triggers were formed by applying thresholds on the total FCal transverse energy at L1 and different thresholds on the number of HLT-reconstructed tracks. HMT triggers are only used where their multiplicity selection is more than 90% efficient. The inefficiency of the HMT triggers does not affect the measured multiplicity relative to the $p_T^a > 0.4$ GeV charged-particle multiplicity by approximately multiplicity-independent factors of $1.18 \pm 0.05$ and $1.22 \pm 0.05$ for the 13 and 2.76 TeV data, respectively.

The present analysis follows methods used in previous ATLAS two-particle correlation measurements in Pb + Pb and $p + Pb$ collisions [4,6,42–44]. Two-particle correlations for charged particle pairs with transverse momenta $p_T^a$ and $p_T^b$ are measured as a function of $\Delta \phi \equiv \phi^a - \phi^b$ and $\Delta \eta \equiv \eta^a - \eta^b$, with $|\Delta \eta| \leq 5$, determined by the acceptance of the ID. The particles a and b are conventionally referred to as the “trigger” and “associated” particles, respectively. The correlation function is defined as

$$C(\Delta \eta, \Delta \phi) = \frac{S(\Delta \eta, \Delta \phi)}{B(\Delta \eta, \Delta \phi)},$$

(1)
where $S$ and $B$ represent the same event and “mixed event” pair distributions, respectively [45]. When constructing $S$ and $B$, pairs are weighted by the inverse product of their reconstruction efficiencies $1/[e(p_T^a, \eta^a) e(p_T^b, \eta^b)]$. Detector acceptance effects largely cancel in the $S/B$ ratio.

Examples of correlation functions in the 13 TeV data are shown in Fig. 2 for $N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}}$ intervals $0–20$ (left) and $\geq 120$ (right), respectively, for $0.5 < p_T^{a,b} < 5 \text{ GeV}$. The $C(\Delta \eta, \Delta \phi)$ distributions have been truncated at different maximum values to suppress a strong peak at $\Delta \eta = \Delta \phi = 0$ that arises primarily from jets. The correlation functions also show a $\Delta \eta$-dependent enhancement centered at $\Delta \phi = \pi$, which is understood to result primarily from dijets. In the higher $N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}}$ interval, a ridge is observed as the enhancement near $\Delta \phi = 0$ that extends over the full $\Delta \eta$ range of the measurement.

One-dimensional correlation functions, $C(\Delta \phi)$, are obtained by integrating the numerator and denominator of Eq. (1) over the long-range part of the correlation function, $2 < |\Delta \eta| < 5$. These are converted into “per-trigger-particle yields,” $Y(\Delta \phi)$, according to [4,6,45]

$$Y(\Delta \phi) = \left( \frac{\int B(\Delta \phi) d\Delta \phi}{\int N^a d\Delta \phi} \right) C(\Delta \phi),$$

where $N^a$ denotes the efficiency-corrected total number of trigger particles. Results are shown in Fig. 3 for selected $N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}}$ intervals in the 13 and 2.76 TeV data, for the $p_T^{a,b}$ ranges $0.5 < p_T^{a,b} < 5 \text{ GeV}$. Panel (a) in the figure shows $Y(\Delta \phi)$ for $0 \leq N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} < 20$ for both collision energies; these exhibit a minimum at $\Delta \phi = 0$ and a broad peak at $\Delta \phi \sim \pi$ that is understood to result primarily from dijets but may also include contributions from low-$p_T$ resonance decays and global momentum conservation. The higher $Y(\Delta \phi)$ values for the 2.76 TeV data are due to the relative inefficiency of the 2.76 TeV triggers for the lowest multiplicity events, which results in larger $\langle N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \rangle$ for the 2.76 TeV data in this $N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}}$ interval. Panels (b), (d), and (f) show results from the 13 TeV data for the 40–50, 60–70, and $\geq 90 N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}}$ intervals, respectively. Panels (c) and (e) show the results from the 2.76 TeV data for 50–60 and 70–80 $N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}}$ intervals, respectively. With increasing $N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}}$, the minimum at $\Delta \phi = 0$ fills in, and a peak appears and increases in amplitude.

To separate the ridge from angular correlations present in low-multiplicity $pp$ collisions, a template fitting procedure is applied to the $Y(\Delta \phi)$ distributions. Motivated by the peripheral subtraction method applied in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions [4], the measured $Y(\Delta \phi)$ distributions are assumed to result from a superposition of a “peripheral” $Y(\Delta \phi)$ distribution, scaled up by a multiplicative factor and a constant modulated by $\cos(2\Delta \phi)$. The resulting template fit function,

$$Y^{\text{templ}}(\Delta \phi) = FY^{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) + Y^{\text{ridge}}(\Delta \phi),$$

has two free parameters, $F$ and $v_{2,2}$. The coefficient, $G$, which represents the magnitude of the combinatoric component of $Y^{\text{ridge}}(\Delta \phi)$, is fixed by requiring that $\int_0^\pi d\Delta \phi Y^{\text{templ}} = \int_0^\pi d\Delta \phi Y$. The peripheral distribution is obtained from the $0 \leq N_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} < 20$ interval. In the fitting procedure, the $\chi^2$ is calculated accounting for statistical uncertainties in both $Y(\Delta \phi)$ and $Y^{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi)$ distributions.
Some results of the template fitting procedure are shown in panels (b)–(f) of Fig. 3; a complete set of fit results is provided in Ref. [46]. The scaled $Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi)$ distributions shifted up by $G$ are shown with open points; the $Y_{\text{ridge}}(\Delta \phi)$ functions shifted up by $F Y_{\text{periph}}(0)$ are shown with the dashed lines, and the full fit function is shown by the solid curves. The function in Eq. (3) successfully describes the measured $Y(\Delta \phi)$ distributions in all $N_{\text{rec}}$ intervals. In particular, it simultaneously describes the ridge, which arises from an interplay of the concave $Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi)$ and the cosine function, the height of the peak in the $Y(\Delta \phi)$ at $\Delta \phi \sim \pi$, and the narrowing of that peak which results from a negative contribution of the $2v_{2,2}\cos (2\Delta \phi)$ term in the region near $\Delta \phi = \pi/2$. The agreement between the template functions and the data allows for no significant $N_{\text{rec}}$-dependent variation in the width of the dijet peak at $\Delta \phi = \pi$ except for that accounted for by the sinusoidal component of the fit function. Including additional $\cos (3\Delta \phi)$ and $\cos (4\Delta \phi)$ terms in Eq. (4) produces changes in the extracted $v_{2,2}$ values that are negligible compared to their statistical uncertainties.

Previous analyses of two-particle angular correlations in pp, $p + \text{Pb}$, and $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions have traditionally relied on the “zero yield at minimum” (ZYAM) hypothesis to separate the ridge from the dijet peak at $\Delta \phi \sim \pi$. In the ZYAM method, the ridge is functionally defined to be $Y(\Delta \phi) - Y_{\text{min}}$ over the restricted range $|\Delta \phi| < \phi_{\text{min}}$, where

\[ Y(\Delta \phi) = Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) + G, \]

\[ Y_{\text{ridge}}(\Delta \phi) = Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) + F Y_{\text{periph}}(0), \]

\[ Y_{\text{templ}}(\Delta \phi) = Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) + G + F Y_{\text{periph}}(0). \]
\( \phi_{\text{min}} \) is the location of the minimum of \( Y(\Delta \phi) \) and \( Y_{\text{min}} = Y(\phi_{\text{min}}) \). However, the \( Y(\Delta \phi) \) distributions measured in low-\( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) bins are concave in the region near \( \Delta \phi \sim 0 \). As a result, if the ridge and dijet correlations add—an assumption that is implicit in all previous analyses using the ZYAM method and is explicit in the template method used here—then the ZYAM method will both underestimate the ridge yield and produce \( \phi_{\text{min}} \) values that vary, unphysically, with the ridge amplitude. In contrast, the template method used here explicitly accounts for the concave shape of the peripheral \( Y(\Delta \phi) \). Thus, the template fitting procedure, for example, extracts a nonzero ridge amplitude from the \( \sqrt{s} = 2.76 \text{ TeV}, 50 \leq \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \leq 60 \) \( Y(\Delta \phi) \) distribution (middle left panel of Fig. 3) which is approximately flat near \( \Delta \phi \sim 0 \), and would, as a result, have approximately zero ridge signal using the ZYAM method.

Previous \( p + \text{Pb} \) analyses used the peripheral-subtraction method, but applied the ZYAM procedure to the peripheral reference and, so, subtracted \( Y(0) \) from \( Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) \). Such a subtraction will necessarily change the \( v_{2,2} \) values, and, when applied to the 13 TeV data, it reduces the measured \( v_{2,2} \) by a multiplicative factor that varies from 0.4 to 0.8 over \( 30 \leq \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \leq 130 \) [46]. However, if, as suggested by the data, \( Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) \) contains not only a hard component, \( Y_{\text{hard}}(\Delta \phi) \), but also a modulated soft component,

\[
Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) = Y_{\text{hard}}(\Delta \phi) + G_0 [1 + 2v_{2,2}^0 \cos(2\Delta \phi)],
\]

the peripheral ZYAM method will subtract \( 2FG_0v_{2,2}^0 \cos(2\Delta \phi) \) as part of the template fit, thereby reducing the extracted \( v_{2,2} \). In contrast, the procedure used in this analysis subtracts \( FG_0 [1 + 2v_{2,2}^0 \cos(2\Delta \phi)] \), which reduces \( G \) in Eq. (4) but has less impact on \( v_{2,2} \). In particular, if \( v_{2,2}^0 \) is equal to the real \( v_{2,2} \) in a given \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) interval, there will be no bias. Since the measured \( v_{2,2} \) is approximately \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) independent, the bias resulting from the presence of \( v_{2,2} \) in the peripheral sample is expected to be small. Thus, the use of the nonsubtracted peripheral reference is preferred over the more strongly biased ZYAM-subtracted reference.

If the \( \cos(2\Delta \phi) \) dependence of \( Y(\Delta \phi) \) arises from modulation of the single-particle \( \phi \) distributions, then \( v_{2,2} \) should factorize such that \( v_{2,2}(p_T^1, p_T^2) = v_{2,2}(p_T^1) v_{2,2}(p_T^2) \) [42–44], where \( v_2 \) is the \( \cos(2\phi) \) Fourier coefficient of the single-particle anisotropy. To test this, the analysis was performed using three \( p_T \) intervals: 0.5–5, 0.5–1, and 2–3 GeV with \( 0.5 < p_T^0 \) < 5 GeV; results from the 2.76 TeV data for the 2–3 GeV interval were obtained using wider \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) intervals to improve statistics. Results are shown in the top panels of Fig. 4; the left and right panels show the 2.76 and 13 TeV data, respectively. A significant \( p_T^0 \) dependence is seen. Separately, the same analysis was applied requiring both \( p_T^0 \) and \( p_T^2 \) to fall within the above intervals. If factorization holds, the \( v_2 \) values calculated using

\[
v_2(p_T^1, p_T^2) = v_{2,2}(p_T^1, p_T^2) / \sqrt{v_{2,2}(p_T^1) v_{2,2}(p_T^2)},
\]

where \( p_T^1 \) and \( p_T^2 \) indicate which of the three intervals, 0.5–5, 0.5–1, and 2–3 GeV, \( p_T^1 \) and \( p_T^2 \) are required to lie within, should be independent of \( p_T \). The \( v_2 \) values obtained using Eq. (6) are shown in the middle panels of Fig. 4. For both collision energies, the three sets of \( v_2 \) values agree within uncertainties, indicating that \( v_{2,2} \) factorizes.

This analysis is sensitive to potential \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \)-dependent changes in the shape of the peripheral reference. For example, the \( \text{PYTHIA} \) 8 sample shows a modest \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \)-dependent change in the width of the dijet peak for small \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \). Also, the \( v_{2,2} \) could vary with \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) over the \( 0 < \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} < 20 \) range. To test the sensitivity of the results presented here to such shape changes, the analysis was repeated using 0–5, 0–10, and 10–20 \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) intervals to form \( Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) \). The largest resulting change in \( v_{2,2} \) was taken as a systematic uncertainty. The relative uncertainty varies from 6% at \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} = 30 \) to 2% for \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \geq 60 \) in the 13 TeV data, and is less than \( 6\% \) for all \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) for the 2.76 TeV data. When using the 0–5 \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) interval for \( Y_{\text{periph}}(\Delta \phi) \), \( v_{2,2} \) values consistent with those shown in Fig. 4 are measured in \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) intervals 5–10, 10–15 and 15–20.

Potential systematic uncertainties on \( v_{2,2} \) due to a residual \( \Delta \phi \) dependence of the two-particle acceptance that does not cancel in the \( S/B \) ratio are evaluated following Ref. [47] and are found to be less than 1%. The effect of the uncertainty on the tracking efficiency on \( v_{2,2} \) is determined to be less than 1%. A separate systematic on \( v_{2,2} \) due to the \( \phi \) and \( p_T \) resolution of the charged-particle measurement is estimated to be 2% (6%) for \( p_T > 0.5 \) GeV (\( p_T < 0.5 \) GeV). Events with unresolved multiple vertices decrease the measured \( v_{2,2} \) by increasing the combinatoric pedestal in \( Y(\Delta \phi) \) without increasing the modulation. The resulting systematic on \( v_{2,2} \) increases with \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) and is estimated to be less than 0.25% and 5% for the 13 and 2.76 TeV data, respectively. The combined systematic uncertainties on \( v_{2,2} \) and on \( v_2 \) are shown by the shaded boxes in Fig. 4. The total \( v_{2,2} \) systematic uncertainty for \( 0.5 < p_T^{2,0} < 5 \) GeV varies between \( \sim 5\% \) at low \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) to \( \sim 3\% \) at high \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) in the 13 TeV data, while in the 2.76 TeV data the uncertainty is 8% for all \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \). The systematic uncertainty on \( v_2 \) is approximately half that for \( v_{2,2} \).

As shown in Fig. 4, the measured \( v_2 \) are independent of \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) and are consistent between the two collision energies within uncertainties. The \( p_T \) dependence of \( v_2 \) for the 50–60 \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) interval, shown in the bottom left panel of Fig. 4, is similar for both collision energies to that previously measured in \( p + \text{Pb} \) and \( \text{Pb} + \text{Pb} \) collisions. It increases with \( p_T \) at low \( p_T \), reaches a maximum between 2 and 3 GeV, and then decreases at higher \( p_T \). The bottom right panel of Fig. 4 shows the \( p_T \) dependence of \( v_2 \) for different \( \text{N}_{\text{ch}}^{\text{rec}} \) intervals; no significant dependence is observed.
In summary, ATLAS has measured the multiplicity and $p_T$ dependence of two-charged-particle correlations in $\sqrt{s} = 13$ and 2.76 TeV $pp$ collisions at the LHC. The correlation functions at both energies show a ridge whose strength increases with multiplicity. A new template fitting procedure shows that the per-trigger-particle yields for $|\Delta\eta| > 2$ are described well by a superposition of the yields measured in a low-multiplicity interval and a constant modulated by $\cos(2\Delta\phi)$. Thus, as observed in $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions [4], the $pp$ data presented here are
compatible with both a “near-side” ridge centered at $\Delta \phi = 0$ and an “away-side” ridge centered at $\Delta \phi = \pi$ that both result from a sinusoidal component of the two-particle correlation. The extracted Fourier coefficients, $t_{2,2}$, exhibit factorization, which is characteristic of a global modulation of the per-event single-particle distributions also seen in $p + \text{Pb}$ and $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions. The amplitudes, $v_2$, of the single-particle modulation are $N_{\text{ch}}$ independent and agree between 2.76 and 13 TeV within uncertainties. They increase with $p_T$ for $p_T \lesssim 3$ GeV and then decrease at higher $p_T$, following a trend similar to that observed in $p + \text{Pb}$ and $\text{Pb} + \text{Pb}$ collisions. These results suggest that the ridges in $pp$ and $p + \text{Pb}$ collisions may arise from a similar physical mechanism which does not have a strong $\sqrt{s}$ dependence.

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Note added.—Recently, we became aware of a related work [48].

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[33] ATLAS uses a right-handed coordinate system with its origin at the nominal interaction point (IP) in the center of the detector and the z axis along the beam pipe. The x-axis points from the IP to the center of the LHC ring, and the y-axis points upward. Cylindrical coordinates (r, φ) are used in the transverse plane, φ being the azimuthal angle around the beam pipe. The pseudorapidity is defined in terms of the polar angle θ as η = −ln tan(θ/2).


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