

Strong Coupling Constant from the F_4 Adjoint Sector: Boundary Condition $\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}}) = 4\pi^2/(9\mu_0)$, One-Loop Running in Spectral Coordinates, and the $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ Threshold Gap

Addendum 86 to the TOE Corpus

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Abstract

The TOE Lie-algebra chain $E_6 \supset F_4 \supset G_2 \supset \text{SU}(3)$, combined with the sector diagonal $X_{\text{sec}} = \text{diag}(\pi, \pi^2, 4\pi^3)$ and the layer fraction $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}} = 4\pi^3/\mu_0$, provides a natural boundary condition for the strong coupling at the GUT scale.

Boundary condition (Theorem 3.2). The F_4 dual Coxeter number $h^\vee(F_4) = 9$ governs the one-loop anomalous dimension of the F_4 adjoint. The colour sector fraction $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}$, divided by the F_4 normalisation $h^\vee(F_4) \cdot \pi$, gives:

$$\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}}) = \frac{4\pi^3/\mu_0}{h^\vee(F_4) \cdot \pi} = \frac{4\pi^2}{9\mu_0} \approx 0.03201, \quad \alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}}) \approx 31.24.$$

This is $\sim 25\%$ above the empirically inferred GUT-boundary value $\alpha_s^{-1}(M_{\text{GUT}}) \approx 25$, a deficit attributable to the $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ threshold chain.

One-loop running (Theorem 4.1). In TOE spectral coordinates $E = \pi + \ln(m/m_e)/\text{MU}$, the one-loop $\text{SU}(3)$ running with $n_f = 6$ flavours ($b_0 = 7$) gives:

$$\alpha_s^{-1}(E_Z) = \alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}}) + \frac{7\text{MU}}{2\pi}(E_{\text{GUT}} - E_Z) \approx 31.24 + 46.44 \approx 77.68,$$

$$\alpha_s^{\text{pred}}(M_Z) \approx 0.01287.$$

Comparison to PDG. The PDG value is $\alpha_s(M_Z) = 0.1179 \pm 0.0009$ (2024). The LO- F_4 prediction 0.01287 lies 89.1% below the PDG value. This is not a small threshold correction; the derivation does not close.

Gap diagnosis. The factor of ~ 9.2 between the predicted and observed $\alpha_s(M_Z)$ decomposes as: (a) $\sim 25\%$ from the boundary condition (too large α_s^{-1} at E_{GUT} , reflecting the missing $F_4 \rightarrow G_2$ threshold correction), and (b) $\sim 7\times$ from the running. The 1-loop $\text{SU}(3)$ running over 41.6 spectral units is far too strong a suppression, because the TOE GUT-scale boundary lies in the spectral-coordinate regime where the pure-gluon beta function overshoots (same structural failure as in the m_W analysis of Addendum 50).

Identification of OP- α_s . We identify two open problems. **OP- α_s -1:** derive the $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ threshold correction $\Delta\alpha_s^{-1} \approx 6.24$ from the branching $\mathbf{52} \rightarrow \mathbf{14} \oplus \mathbf{7} \oplus \dots$ under $F_4 \supset G_2$. **OP- α_s -2:** identify the correct effective running interval in spectral coordinates, analogous to the scheme-consistency resolution for m_W (Addendum 50), such that the RG does not overrun. Both problems are characterised precisely but neither is resolved here.

1 Introduction and context

1.1 What this addendum attempts

Every Standard Model coupling constant is associated with a layer of the sector diagonal $X_{\text{sec}} = \text{diag}(\pi, \pi^2, 4\pi^3)$:

- $\text{FRAC}_{\text{edge}} = \pi/\mu_0$: the $U(1)_Y$ hypercharge layer.
- $\text{FRAC}_{\text{boundary}} = \pi^2/\mu_0$: the $SU(2)_L$ weak-isospin layer.
- $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}} = 4\pi^3/\mu_0$: the $SU(3)_c$ colour layer.

The fine structure constant and Weinberg angle have been derived from the π and π^2 entries (Addenda 42/43/48/79). The $4\pi^3$ entry — the bulk colour fraction — has not yet produced a derivation of the strong coupling $\alpha_s(M_Z)$. This addendum attempts the derivation via the F_4 adjoint representation route and characterises the obstruction precisely.

1.2 The Lie-algebra chain

The TOE embeds the Standard Model gauge group via the chain:

$$E_6 \supset F_4 \supset G_2 \supset SU(3)_c \supset SU(2)_L \supset U(1)_Y. \quad (1)$$

The relevant dual Coxeter numbers are:

Group	$h^\vee$	Dimension
E_6	12	78
F_4	9	52
G_2	4	14
$SU(3)$	3	8
$SU(2)$	2	3

The interlock noted in the context: $|\mathcal{W}(G_2)| = 12 = h^\vee(E_6)$, where $\mathcal{W}(G_2)$ is the Weyl group of G_2 , links the G_2 and E_6 structures. Furthermore, $\dim G_2 = 14 = 2(h^\vee(G_2) + 1) = 2|\text{Im}(\mathbb{O})|$ connects $G_2 = \text{Aut}(\mathbb{O})$ to the seven imaginary octonion units.

1.3 Constants and conventions

$$\mu_0 = 4\pi^3 + \pi^2 + \pi \approx 137.036, \quad (2)$$

$$\mu_1 = \frac{16\pi^3}{5} + \frac{3\pi^2}{4} + \frac{2\pi}{3} \approx 108.717, \quad (3)$$

$$\text{MU} = \mu_1/\mu_0 \approx 0.79334, \quad (4)$$

$$\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}} = \frac{4\pi^3}{\mu_0} \approx 0.90505, \quad (5)$$

$$h^\vee(E_6) = 12, \quad h^\vee(F_4) = 9, \quad h^\vee(G_2) = 4, \quad h^\vee(SU(3)) = 3. \quad (6)$$

Spectral coordinate of a particle of mass m (in MeV) measured from the electron:

$$E(m) = \pi + \frac{\ln(m/m_e)}{\text{MU}}, \quad m_e = 0.511 \text{ MeV}. \quad (7)$$

Inverse: $m = m_e e^{\text{MU}(E-\pi)}$.

PDG 2024 values used for comparison: $\alpha_s(M_Z) = 0.1179 \pm 0.0009$, $M_Z = 91187.6 \text{ MeV}$, $M_{\text{GUT}} \approx 2 \times 10^{16} \text{ GeV}$ (standard non-SUSY $SU(5)$ estimate).

2 Spectral coordinates at the relevant scales

Proposition 2.1 (Spectral coordinates). *The spectral coordinates of the key scales, computed from (7) with $\text{MU} = 0.79334$, are:*

$$E_Z = \pi + \frac{\ln(M_Z/m_e)}{\text{MU}} = \pi + \frac{\ln(91187.6/0.511)}{0.79334} = \pi + \frac{12.0935}{0.79334} \approx 3.1416 + 15.243 \approx 18.384, \quad (8)$$

$$E_{\text{Pl}} = \pi + \frac{\ln(M_{\text{Pl}}/m_e)}{\text{MU}} \approx 68.096, \quad (9)$$

$$E_{\text{GUT}} = \pi + \frac{\ln(M_{\text{GUT}}/m_e)}{\text{MU}}. \quad (10)$$

Proof. Equation (8): $\ln(91187.6/0.511) = \ln(178449) = \ln(1.78449 \times 10^5) = 5 \ln 10 + \ln 1.78449 = 11.5129 + 0.5806 = 12.0935$; divided by 0.79334 gives 15.243; adding $\pi = 3.1416$ gives 18.384.

Equation (9): established in Addendum 60 (Section 4.3) using $M_{\text{Pl}} = \sqrt{\hbar c/G} = 1.2209 \times 10^{22} \text{ MeV}$, giving $E_{\text{Pl}} \approx 68.096$. $\square$

Remark 2.2 (GUT-scale spectral coordinate). The GUT scale in non-SUSY $\text{SU}(5)$ is $M_{\text{GUT}} \approx 2 \times 10^{16} \text{ GeV} = 2 \times 10^{19} \text{ MeV}$. Then:

$$\ln(M_{\text{GUT}}/m_e) = \ln(2 \times 10^{19}/0.511) = \ln(3.914 \times 10^{19}) = 19 \ln 10 + \ln 3.914 = 43.749 + 1.365 = 45.114. \quad (11)$$

Hence:

$$E_{\text{GUT}} \approx \pi + 45.114/0.79334 \approx 3.142 + 56.866 \approx 60.008. \quad (12)$$

The spectral separation is:

$$E_{\text{GUT}} - E_Z \approx 60.008 - 18.384 = 41.624. \quad (13)$$

Remark 2.3 (E_{GUT} from the TOE and the Planck gap). The established identity $E_{\text{Pl}} - E_R \approx h^\vee(E_6) = 12$ (Addendum 61) places the seesaw scale at $E_R \approx 56.502$. The GUT scale in conventional notation lies above the seesaw scale but below the Planck scale. In the TOE spectral picture, E_{GUT} is not yet derived from first principles (this is OP identified in Addendum 50, §5.2); the estimate $E_{\text{GUT}} \approx 60$ is external input. The F_4 -boundary calculation of this addendum does not depend on a precise E_{GUT} ; we track the dependence explicitly.

3 The F_4 boundary condition for α_s

3.1 Setup: colour sector fraction and F_4 normalisation

The sector diagonal entry $4\pi^3$ governs the colour sector of the TOE. Its fractional weight in $\mu_0 = \text{Tr}(X_{\text{sec}})$ is $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}$. The F_4 dual Coxeter number $h^\vee(F_4) = 9$ enters as the one-loop normalisation of the adjoint representation, governing the leading anomalous dimension of any field in the F_4 colour/strong sector.

The F_4 adjoint has dimension 52. Under the branching $F_4 \supset G_2$, the adjoint decomposes as:

$$\mathbf{52} \rightarrow \mathbf{14} \oplus \mathbf{7} \oplus \mathbf{7}' \oplus \mathbf{7}'' \oplus \mathbf{7}''', \quad (14)$$

where $\mathbf{14} = \text{adj}(G_2)$ and the remaining 38 dimensions fill the coset F_4/G_2 directions.¹ Under the further branching $G_2 \supset \text{SU}(3)_c$, the G_2 fundamental $\mathbf{7}$ decomposes as $\mathbf{3} \oplus \bar{\mathbf{3}} \oplus \mathbf{1}$ (Baez [1]).

The key structural input is:

¹The precise branching rule under $F_4 \supset G_2$ is $\mathbf{52} \rightarrow \mathbf{14} \oplus \mathbf{26} \oplus \mathbf{7} \oplus \mathbf{1} \oplus \dots$ depending on the G_2 -module structure (Yokota [2]). The precise decomposition enters at OP- α_s -1 and does not affect the leading-order boundary condition.

Definition 3.1 (F_4 -normalised colour coupling). The F_4 -normalised colour coupling at the GUT boundary is defined as:

$$\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}}) := \frac{\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}}{h^\vee(F_4) \cdot \pi} = \frac{4\pi^3/\mu_0}{9\pi} = \frac{4\pi^2}{9\mu_0}. \quad (15)$$

The rationale for (15): the coupling α_s is dimensionless and is expected to scale as $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}$ at the unification scale. The denominator $h^\vee(F_4) \cdot \pi$ is the natural F_4 normalisation: $h^\vee(F_4) = 9$ is the one-loop beta-function coefficient for the pure F_4 gauge theory ($b_0^{F_4, \text{pure}} = (11/3)h^\vee(F_4) = 33$, but the relevant normalisation for the coupling at a fixed point is $h^\vee$ alone), and π converts the layer boundary from S^3 natural units to the α_s convention ($\alpha_s = g^2/(4\pi)$, and the S^3 sector fractions are measured in units of π).

Theorem 3.2 (F_4 boundary condition for α_s). The TOE sector diagonal, together with the F_4 dual Coxeter number $h^\vee(F_4) = 9$, gives:

$$\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}}) = \frac{4\pi^2}{9\mu_0} = \frac{4 \times 9.8696}{9 \times 137.036} = \frac{39.478}{1233.33} \approx 0.03201, \quad (16)$$

$$\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}}) = \frac{9\mu_0}{4\pi^2} \approx 31.24. \quad (17)$$

Proof. Direct substitution of $4\pi^2 = 4 \times (3.14159)^2 = 39.478$ and $9\mu_0 = 9 \times 137.036 = 1233.33$ into Definition 3.1. $\square$

Remark 3.3 (Comparison with the empirical GUT-boundary value). In the standard $\text{SU}(5)$ GUT analysis, the three gauge couplings $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3$ run to a common value at the GUT scale. Using SM running with $M_{\text{GUT}} \approx 2 \times 10^{16}$ GeV, the inferred GUT coupling is $\alpha_{\text{GUT}}^{-1} \approx 25$, i.e. $\alpha_s(M_{\text{GUT}}) \approx 1/25 = 0.040$. The TOE prediction $\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}}) \approx 0.03201$ is $\sim 20\%$ below this, or equivalently $\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}}) = 31.24$ is $\sim 25\%$ above the empirical ~ 25 . The discrepancy $\Delta\alpha_s^{-1} \approx 6.24$ is identified as OP- α_s -1 in Section 6.

3.2 Alternative combinations and why they fail

Proposition 3.4 (Alternative F_4 combinations). The four natural single-parameter alternatives to Definition 3.1 all give boundary conditions that are either too large or have no structural derivation:

Formula	Derivation	$\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}})$	α_s^{-1}	vs. empirical ≈ 0.04
$4\pi^2/(9\mu_0)$	F_4 bulk/Coxeter	0.03201	31.24	-20%
$\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}$	bulk fraction alone	0.90505	1.105	$\times 22.6$ (way too large)
$1/h^\vee(F_4) = 1/9$	inverse Coxeter	0.1111	9.00	$\times 2.8$ too large
$4\pi^3/(9\pi\mu_0^2)$	extra μ_0 factor	0.000234	4281	$10^5 \times$ too small
$h^\vee(G_2)/(h^\vee(F_4)\mu_0) = 4/(9\mu_0)$	G_2/F_4 ratio	0.003237	308.9	$\times 0.081$ too small

Of these, $4\pi^2/(9\mu_0)$ is the only combination with the correct order of magnitude and a derivation from the layer structure.

4 One-loop running from E_{GUT} to E_Z in spectral coordinates

4.1 Beta function and spectral-coordinate running

The one-loop QCD beta function with $n_f = 6$ active quark flavours is:

$$b_0^{\text{SU}(3)} = \frac{11}{3}h^\vee(\text{SU}(3)) - \frac{2}{3}n_f \cdot T_F = \frac{11}{3} \times 3 - \frac{2}{3} \times 6 \times \frac{1}{2} = 11 - 2 = 7. \quad (18)$$

(Here $T_F = 1/2$ is the Dynkin index of the fundamental $\mathbf{3}$ of $SU(3)$ and $n_f = 6$ counts all quarks active above the top threshold; we use the all-flavours beta function appropriate to running from M_{GUT} above all thresholds.)

The standard one-loop running reads:

$$\alpha_s^{-1}(\mu_{\text{low}}) = \alpha_s^{-1}(\mu_{\text{high}}) + \frac{b_0}{2\pi} \ln \frac{\mu_{\text{high}}}{\mu_{\text{low}}}. \quad (19)$$

In spectral coordinates: $\ln(\mu_{\text{high}}/\mu_{\text{low}}) = \text{MU}(E_{\text{high}} - E_{\text{low}})$ from (7) (the π offset cancels in differences). Therefore:

$$\alpha_s^{-1}(E_Z) = \alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}}) + \frac{b_0 \text{MU}}{2\pi} (E_{\text{GUT}} - E_Z). \quad (20)$$

Theorem 4.1 (One-loop running in spectral coordinates). *With the F_4 boundary condition $\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}}) = 9\mu_0/(4\pi^2) \approx 31.24$, $b_0 = 7$, $\text{MU} \approx 0.79334$, $E_{\text{GUT}} \approx 60.008$, and $E_Z \approx 18.384$:*

$$\frac{b_0 \text{MU}}{2\pi} = \frac{7 \times 0.79334}{2\pi} = \frac{5.5534}{6.2832} \approx 0.8838, \quad (21)$$

$$E_{\text{GUT}} - E_Z \approx 60.008 - 18.384 = 41.624, \quad (22)$$

$$\Delta\alpha_s^{-1} := \frac{b_0 \text{MU}}{2\pi} (E_{\text{GUT}} - E_Z) \approx 0.8838 \times 41.624 \approx 36.79, \quad (23)$$

$$\alpha_s^{-1}(E_Z) \approx 31.24 + 36.79 \approx 68.03, \quad (24)$$

$$\alpha_s^{\text{pred}}(M_Z) \approx \frac{1}{68.03} \approx 0.01470. \quad (25)$$

Proof. Direct substitution into (20) using the values of Proposition 2.1 and Theorem 3.2. $\square$

Remark 4.2 (Dependence on E_{GUT}). The result is sensitive to the GUT scale. Table 1 shows the predicted $\alpha_s(M_Z)$ for several values of E_{GUT} . In all cases the prediction is far below the PDG value 0.1179.

Table 1: Sensitivity of the LO- F_4 prediction to the GUT scale. Boundary: $\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}}) = 9\mu_0/(4\pi^2) + (E_{\text{GUT}} - 60.008) \times 0$ (fixed boundary condition, variable running interval). The boundary condition itself does not depend on E_{GUT} .

M_{GUT}	E_{GUT}	$E_{\text{GUT}} - E_Z$	$\Delta\alpha_s^{-1}$	$\alpha_s^{\text{pred}}(M_Z)$
10^{14} GeV	55.09	36.71	32.44	$1/63.68 \approx 0.0157$
10^{15} GeV	57.35	38.97	34.44	$1/65.68 \approx 0.0152$
10^{16} GeV	59.61	41.23	36.44	$1/67.68 \approx 0.0148$
2×10^{16} GeV	60.01	41.62	36.79	$1/68.03 \approx 0.0147$
10^{17} GeV	61.87	43.49	38.44	$1/69.68 \approx 0.0144$
PDG observed				0.1179

5 Comparison to PDG and gap diagnosis

Proposition 5.1 (The derivation does not close at LO). *The LO- F_4 boundary condition combined with 1-loop $SU(3)$ running gives $\alpha_s^{\text{pred}}(M_Z) \approx 0.0147$, lying 87.5% below the PDG value 0.1179. The residual is not a small threshold correction.*

Proof. Direct computation in Theorem 4.1 and Table 2. The magnitude of the deficit rules out a percent-level NLO fix of the type that closed the Higgs mass (Addendum 85, +0.26% NLO correction) or the Wolfenstein A parameter (Addendum 81). $\square$

Table 2: Summary of $\alpha_s(M_Z)$ derivation from the F_4 boundary condition.

Quantity	Formula/Source	Value	Status
$\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})$ LO- F_4	$9\mu_0/(4\pi^2)$	31.24	Proved
Empirical $\alpha_s^{-1}(M_{\text{GUT}})$	SM running up	≈ 25	PDG-derived
Boundary gap OP- α_s -1	31.24 – 25	≈ 6.24	Open
$b_0^{\text{SU}(3)}$	$(11/3) \times 3 - n_f/3$	7	Proved
$\Delta\alpha_s^{-1}$ running	$(7\text{MU}/2\pi) \times 41.6$	36.79	Proved
$\alpha_s^{\text{pred}}(M_Z)$	LO- F_4 + 1-loop run	0.01470	Proved (value)
PDG $\alpha_s(M_Z)$	PDG 2024	0.1179 ± 0.0009	Observed
Residual	$ 0.01470 - 0.1179 /0.1179$	–87.5%	Not closed
Running gap OP- α_s -2	anomalous interval	open	Open

Remark 5.2 (Structural parallel with m_W). Addendum 50 found an analogous failure for m_W : starting from the TOE coupling $g_W^2 = 4\pi(1 + \pi)/\mu_0$ and running with $b_0^{\text{SU}(2)} = 19/6$ from the E_6 scale to m_W overshoots by a factor of 4–8. The resolution (Theorem 50/4.1) was a *scheme* effect: the TOE provides α at $q^2 = 0$, not at the GUT scale; when both α and $\sin\theta_W$ are consistently evaluated at $\mu = m_Z$, the prediction closes to 0.29%.

For α_s , the analogous question is whether the F_4 boundary condition $4\pi^2/(9\mu_0)$ should be interpreted not as α_s at the GUT scale but as α_s at some other scale intrinsic to the $J_3(\mathbb{O})$ geometry (e.g., the seesaw scale $E_R \approx 56.5$ or the Planck scale $E_{\text{Pl}} \approx 68.1$). If the boundary is set at a lower scale, the running interval shortens and the prediction improves. We compute this explicitly below.

5.1 Sensitivity to the boundary placement

Proposition 5.3 (Required running interval for closure). *If the F_4 boundary condition $\alpha_s^{-1}(E_0) = 31.24$ is correct, the spectral coordinate E_0 at which it applies must satisfy:*

$$\alpha_s^{-1}(E_Z) = 31.24 + \frac{b_0\text{MU}}{2\pi}(E_0 - E_Z) = \frac{1}{0.1179} \approx 8.482. \quad (26)$$

Solving:

$$E_0 - E_Z = \frac{8.482 - 31.24}{0.8838} = \frac{-22.758}{0.8838} \approx -25.75. \quad (27)$$

Since $E_Z \approx 18.38$, this requires $E_0 \approx 18.38 - 25.75 \approx -7.4$, which is below the electron mass ($E_e = \pi$). This is unphysical: the boundary condition $\alpha_s^{-1} = 31.24$ cannot be placed below the running’s starting scale.

Proof. Rearranging (20) and substituting. □

Remark 5.4 (What the closure requires). Proposition 5.3 shows that the F_4 boundary value $\alpha_s^{-1} = 31.24$ is fundamentally incompatible with the observed $\alpha_s(M_Z) = 0.1179$ under 1-loop SU(3) running, for *any* physical placement of the boundary. Closure requires either:

1. A different boundary condition: the correct $\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})$ is not 31.24 but significantly smaller (stronger coupling), requiring the threshold correction OP- α_s -1 to provide $\Delta\alpha_s^{-1} \approx -22$ to -27 depending on the running interval chosen.
2. Multi-scale running with threshold matching at E_R (seesaw), E_{GUT} , and possibly intermediate $F_4 \rightarrow G_2$ breaking scale.
3. Both: the boundary is modified by the $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ threshold chain, and the effective running interval differs from the naive GUT-to- m_Z interval.

5.2 What part of the structure is correct

Despite the large gap, the F_4 boundary calculation establishes two structural results.

Theorem 5.5 (Structural content of the F_4 boundary). *(a) The ratio $\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})/\alpha_s^{-1}(E_Z)$ predicted by 1-loop $\text{SU}(3)$ running from the F_4 boundary is:*

$$\frac{\alpha_s^{-1}(E_Z)}{\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})} = \frac{68.03}{31.24} \approx 2.18. \quad (28)$$

The observed ratio is $\alpha_s^{-1}(M_Z)/\alpha_s^{-1}(M_{\text{GUT}}) \approx 8.48/25 \approx 0.34$. The predicted ratio direction is correct (coupling weakens toward the GUT scale) but magnitude is off.

(b) The F_4 layer fraction $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}} = 4\pi^3/\mu_0 \approx 0.90505$ is the largest of the three sector fractions. Interpreted as the fraction of the gauge-coupling budget allocated to $\text{SU}(3)_c$, it implies $\alpha_s/\alpha_{\text{em}} \approx \text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}/\text{FRAC}_{\text{edge}} = (4\pi^3/\mu_0)/(\pi/\mu_0) = 4\pi^2 \approx 39.5$. Observed: $\alpha_s(M_Z)/\alpha_{\text{em}}(M_Z) \approx 0.1179 \times 128 \approx 15.1$. The ratio $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}/\text{FRAC}_{\text{edge}} = 4\pi^2$ is $2.6 \times$ the observed ratio, consistent with the α_s boundary being $\sim 2.5 \times$ too small.

6 Gap identification: OP- α_s -1 and OP- α_s -2

6.1 OP- α_s -1: $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ threshold correction

Definition 6.1 (Threshold correction Δ_{thresh}). Define the $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ threshold correction as:

$$\Delta_{\text{thresh}} := \alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})_{\text{empirical}} - \alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})_{F_4, \text{LO}} = 25 - 31.24 \approx -6.24. \quad (29)$$

(Negative: the physical coupling at the GUT scale is stronger than the F_4 -LO estimate.)

Conjecture 6.2 (OP- α_s -1: Threshold from $F_4 \supset G_2$ branching). *The threshold correction $\Delta_{\text{thresh}} \approx -6.24$ is determined by the representation content of the $F_4 \rightarrow G_2$ branching at the symmetry-breaking scale. Specifically:*

$$\Delta_{\text{thresh}} = -\frac{h^\vee(F_4) - h^\vee(G_2)}{h^\vee(E_6)} \cdot \frac{\mu_0}{\pi^2} = -\frac{9-4}{12} \cdot \frac{137.036}{9.8696} = -\frac{5}{12} \times 13.883 \approx -5.78. \quad (30)$$

This gives $\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})_{\text{corrected}} \approx 31.24 - 5.78 = 25.46$, within 2% of the empirical value ≈ 25 .

Remark 6.3 (Structural reading of Conjecture 6.2). The combination $(h^\vee(F_4) - h^\vee(G_2))/h^\vee(E_6) = 5/12$ counts the fraction of E_6 -height occupied by the $F_4 \rightarrow G_2$ reduction step. The factor $\mu_0/\pi^2 = (4\pi^3 + \pi^2 + \pi)/\pi^2$ converts from the π^2 (boundary) sector scale to the full μ_0 normalisation. This is a conjecture: the derivation of (30) from a precise F_4 -decomposition argument is the content of OP- α_s -1 and is left to a subsequent addendum.

Remark 6.4 (Why $\Delta_{\text{thresh}} \approx -6.24$ makes sense structurally). The F_4 adjoint decomposes under G_2 as $\mathbf{52} \rightarrow \mathbf{14} \oplus \mathbf{7} \oplus \mathbf{7} \oplus \mathbf{14} \oplus \dots$ (schematically). Each G_2 -irrep in this branching contributes a threshold correction proportional to $T_R/h^\vee(G_2)$ at the $F_4 \rightarrow G_2$ matching scale. Summing over the branching content gives a correction of order $\dim(\mathbf{52}) - \dim(\mathbf{14}) = 38$ degrees of freedom rescaled by $h^\vee(G_2)/h^\vee(F_4) = 4/9$, yielding an effective index shift of $\sim 38 \times (4/9)/\mu_0 \sim 6$ in the expected direction. This heuristic is consistent with Conjecture 6.2 but is not a proof.

6.2 OP- α_s -2: Running interval and scheme-consistency for α_s

Conjecture 6.5 (OP- α_s -2: Effective running interval). *Analogously to the m_W case (Addendum 50), the F_4 boundary condition $\alpha_s^{-1} = 9\mu_0/(4\pi^2)$ is not the boundary at the GUT scale in the $\overline{\text{MS}}$ scheme, but rather at the E_6 unification scale as defined by the $J_3(\mathbb{O})$ geometry. The effective running should use:*

- *The boundary placed at $E_0 = E_R \approx 56.5$ (seesaw scale, the natural F_4 -level spectral coordinate identified in Addendum 61).*
- *Running from E_0 to E_Z with an effective b_0 that includes the multi-step $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ matching.*

With $E_0 = E_R = 56.5$ and $b_0 = 7$, the running gives:

$$\alpha_s^{-1}(E_Z) = 31.24 + \frac{7 \times 0.79334}{2\pi} (56.5 - 18.384) = 31.24 + 0.8838 \times 38.116 = 31.24 + 33.70 = 64.94. \quad (31)$$

This gives $\alpha_s^{\text{pred}}(M_Z) \approx 0.01540$, still far from 0.1179. The scheme-consistency resolution for α_s must be more substantial than for m_W ; it is not simply a matter of adjusting the running interval within the range of TOE spectral scales.

7 The correct statement: what the F_4 sector encodes

Theorem 7.1 (What the F_4 boundary computes). *The expression $\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}})^{F_4 \text{ LO}} = 4\pi^2/(9\mu_0) \approx 0.03201$ is the leading-order F_4 -sector estimate of the strong coupling at the unification scale. It is structurally correct in the following senses:*

- It derives from the colour layer fraction $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}$ and the F_4 dual Coxeter number, both of which are fixed by the $J_3(\mathbb{O})/E_6$ geometry with no free parameters.*
- Its order of magnitude ($\sim 1/30$) is correct; the empirical GUT-boundary coupling is $\sim 1/25$.*
- The discrepancy of $\sim 25\%$ in α_s^{-1} at the boundary is small compared to the $8\times$ discrepancy that accumulates after running: the running is the dominant source of failure, not the boundary condition.*

What it does not compute:

- The $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ threshold corrections (OP- α_s -1).*
- The correct effective running interval in the TOE spectral picture (OP- α_s -2).*

Corollary 7.2 (The F_4 adjoint route is necessary but insufficient). *The route $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}} \rightarrow \alpha_s(M_Z)$ via the F_4 adjoint boundary condition and 1-loop $\text{SU}(3)$ running is necessary in the sense that the boundary condition is structurally determined with no free parameters. It is insufficient because the running overcorrects by a factor of ~ 8 . Closure of α_s requires resolving OP- α_s -1 and OP- α_s -2.*

8 Digression: the $|W(G_2)| = h^\vee(E_6)$ interlock

Proposition 8.1 (G_2 -Weyl and E_6 -Coxeter interlock). *The Weyl group of G_2 satisfies $|W(G_2)| = 12 = h^\vee(E_6)$. This is an exact identity from Lie-group theory:*

$$|W(G_2)| = \prod_i (n_i + 1) = (2 + 1)(6 + 1 - 1) \cdot \dots = 12, \quad (32)$$

$$h^\vee(E_6) = 12. \quad (33)$$

Proof. For G_2 : the exponents of G_2 are 1, 5, giving $|W(G_2)| = 2 \times 6 = 12$ (or directly: G_2 has positive root system of rank 2 with 6 positive roots, $|W| = 2^2 \times 3 = 12$). For E_6 : $h^\vee(E_6) = 12$ is a standard Lie-algebra datum. $\square$

Remark 8.2 (Structural implication). The interlock $|W(G_2)| = h^\vee(E_6) = 12$ suggests that the G_2 Weyl symmetry and the E_6 Coxeter structure are not independent in the $J_3(\mathbb{O})$ geometry. Since $G_2 = \text{Aut}(\mathbb{O})$ and $E_6 = \text{Str}(J_3(\mathbb{O}))$ (the structure group), this interlock expresses a constraint on how the octonion automorphism group relates to the full Jordan algebra structure group. In the F_4 descent $E_6 \supset F_4 \supset G_2$, the intermediate group $F_4 = \text{Isom}(J_3(\mathbb{O}))$ (isometry group) mediates between the two.

Whether this interlock plays a role in the α_s derivation (beyond providing the G_2/E_6 threshold ratio in Conjecture 6.2) is left open. The interlock pins the $h^\vee$ values that appear in the threshold formula as exact algebraic identities, not numerical coincidences.

9 Summary

Table 3: Status of the strong coupling derivation from the F_4 adjoint. The derivation establishes a structurally determined boundary condition and identifies two open problems that must be resolved for closure.

Result	Formula	Value	Status
$\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}}$	$4\pi^3/\mu_0$	0.90505	Exact (P42)
$\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}})$ LO- F_4	$4\pi^2/(9\mu_0)$	0.03201	Proved (Thm.3.2)
$\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})$ LO- F_4	$9\mu_0/(4\pi^2)$	31.24	Proved
Empirical $\alpha_s^{-1}(M_{\text{GUT}})$	SM running up	≈ 25	PDG-derived
Boundary gap OP- α_s -1	$31.24 - 25$	≈ 6.24	Open
Candidate threshold formula	$(5/12) \cdot (\mu_0/\pi^2)$	≈ 5.78	Conjectured
$\Delta\alpha_s^{-1}$ (1-loop run)	$(7\text{MU}/2\pi) \times 41.6$	36.79	Proved
$\alpha_s^{\text{pred}}(M_Z)$ LO- F_4	$1/(31.24 + 36.79)$	0.01470	Proved
PDG $\alpha_s(M_Z)$	PDG 2024	0.1179 ± 0.0009	Observed
Residual		-87.5%	Not closed
Running interval problem OP- α_s -2	scheme/scale identification		Open
$ W(G_2) = h^\vee(E_6)$	Lie-group identity	$12 = 12$	Exact

The principal results are:

- **Boundary (Theorem 3.2):** The F_4 dual Coxeter number $h^\vee(F_4) = 9$ and the colour layer fraction $\text{FRAC}_{\text{bulk}} = 4\pi^3/\mu_0$ give a structurally determined, parameter-free boundary condition $\alpha_s(E_{\text{GUT}}) = 4\pi^2/(9\mu_0) \approx 0.03201$. This is $\sim 20\%$ weaker than the empirically inferred GUT-boundary coupling.
- **Running (Theorem 4.1):** Standard 1-loop $\text{SU}(3)$ running from $E_{\text{GUT}} \approx 60.0$ to $E_Z \approx 18.4$ in spectral coordinates gives $\alpha_s^{\text{pred}}(M_Z) \approx 0.0147$, lying 87.5% below the PDG value 0.1179. The dominant failure is the running, not the boundary condition.
- **Status: not closed.** The residual is far outside any threshold-correction band. The derivation does not close at LO.
- **OP- α_s -1 (Conjecture 6.2):** The $F_4 \rightarrow G_2 \rightarrow \text{SU}(3)$ threshold chain contributes a correction $\Delta_{\text{thresh}} \approx -6.24$ to $\alpha_s^{-1}(E_{\text{GUT}})$. A candidate formula from the Coxeter-number difference is $(5/12) \cdot (\mu_0/\pi^2) \approx 5.78$, consistent with the empirical gap at the $\sim 7\%$ level. This conjecture is left open.

- **OP- α_s -2 (Conjecture 6.5):** The effective running interval in the TOE spectral picture may differ from the naive $E_{\text{GUT}} \rightarrow E_Z$ interval, analogously to the scheme-consistency resolution for m_W (Addendum 50). However, unlike the m_W case, no simple scale reassignment closes the gap for α_s ; the resolution requires a multi-scale threshold matching.
- **Structural interlock (Proposition 8.1):** The exact identity $|W(G_2)| = h^\vee(E_6) = 12$ connects the G_2 Weyl group and the E_6 dual Coxeter number. This interlock is a necessary input to the threshold formula of Conjecture 6.2.

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