











The dynamics of the yield curve

Suppose the initial yield curve is flat at 10%. In the next period, the term structure is either flat at 12% or flat at 8%. Is such a representation of yield curve dynamics fesible?

Bond prices can easily be computed under the term structures at date 0 and at date 1. For example, at date 0, the price of a 1-year bond is $P(0, 1) = e^{-0.10} = 0.9048374$.

In year 1, there are two possible bond prices. Let $P^+(1, 1+t) = e^{-0.12 \times t}$ be the price of a bond that has t years to maturity, and let $P^-(1, 1+t) = e^{-0.08 \times t}$ be the prices if rates decrease.

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Local Expectations Hypothesis

Assume the true probability of an up jump is 0.5 and that the local expectation hypothesis holds.¹ Let $P_{ij}(m)$ represent the price of an *m*-period bond at node (i, j). Then,

The forward price $F_0[2,3] = P_0(3)/P_0(2) = 0.9056$. This implies that the forward rate $f_0[2,3] = 9.92\%$. Notice that this is not equal to the expected future spot rate which is 10%.²



























- The high interest rate in the next period is ru
- Here $u = e^{2\sigma}$ where the volatility σ =0.20. The bigger the volatility the greater the gap.
- Now, given the two interest rates, we can compute the two one period discount factors and the date 0 two period price. Rather than guess and check we solve:

 $P(0,2) = P(0,1)[0.5e^{-r} + 0.5e^{-2r\sigma}].$

for r

- The solution is r = 0.07236;
- Hence the upper interest rate is ru = 0.1079

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We now can compute the two discount factors in period 1. They are 0.93019 for the low state and 0.8977 for the high state.

We now guess the lowest interest rate in period 2. Let r_2 represent this rate. The three possible interest rates are r_2 , r_2u_2 , and $r_2u_2^2$, where $u_2 = e^{2\sigma_2}$, and σ_2 is the volatility of the one period rate in the second period. In our example, the spot rate volatility stays constant at 20%, so $\sigma_2 = 0.20$. We want to choose r_2 such that the bond price, computed on the lattice, P(0,3)equals its market value.

State Prices

To compute r_2 it is helpful to price each state security. State price for High state in Period 1 is A(1,1) = ? State Price for Low state in Period 1 is A(1,0) = ?

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