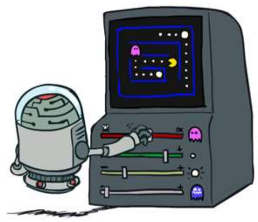
Reinforcement Learning II



Steve Tanimoto

[These slides were created by Dan Klein and Pieter Abbeel for CS188 Intro to AI at UC Berkeley. All CS188 materials are available at http://ai.berkeley.edu.]

Reinforcement Learning

- We still assume an MDP:
  - A set of states $s \in S$
  - A set of actions (per state) A
  - A model T(s,a,s')
  - A reward function R(s,a,s')
- Still looking for a policy $\pi(s)$
- New twist: don't know T or R, so must try out actions
- Big idea: Compute all averages over T using sample outcomes

The Story So Far: MDPs and RL

Known MDP: Offline Solution

Goal	Technique
Compute V*, Q*, π*	Value / policy iteration
Evaluate a fixed policy π	Policy evaluation

Unknown MDP: Model-Based

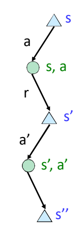
Goal	Technique
Compute V*, Q*, π*	VI/PI on approx. MDP
Evaluate a fixed policy π	PE on approx. MDP

Unknown MDP: Model-Free

Goal	Technique
Compute V*, Q*, π*	Q-learning
Evaluate a fixed policy π	Value Learning

Model-Free Learning

- Model-free (temporal difference) learning
  - Experience world through episodes
    $$(s, a, r, s', a', r', s'', a'', r'', s''''\ldots)$$
  - Update estimates each transition (s, a, r, s')
  - Over time, updates will mimic Bellman updates



Q-Learning

- We'd like to do Q-value updates to each Q-state:
  $$Q_{k+1}(s,a) \leftarrow \sum_{s'} T(s,a,s') \left[R(s,a,s') + \gamma \max_{a'} Q_k(s',a')\right]$$
  - But can't compute this update without knowing T, R
- Instead, compute average as we go
  - Receive a sample transition (s,a,r,s')
  - This sample suggests
    $$Q(s,a) \approx r + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s',a')$$
  - But we want to average over results from (s,a) (Why?)
  - So keep a running average
    $$Q(s,a) \leftarrow (1-\alpha)Q(s,a) + (\alpha)\left[r + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s',a')\right]$$

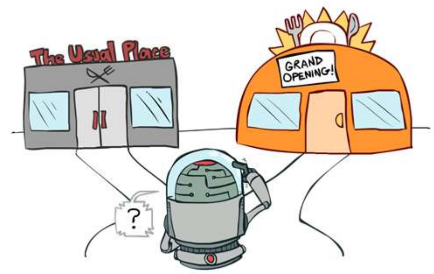
Q-Learning Properties

- Amazing result: Q-learning converges to optimal policy -- even if you're acting suboptimally!
- This is called off-policy learning
- Caveats:
  - You have to explore enough
  - You have to eventually make the learning rate small enough
  - … but not decrease it too quickly
  - Basically, in the limit, it doesn't matter how you select actions (!)

[Demo: Q-learning – auto – cliff grid (L11D1)]

Video of Demo Q-Learning Auto Cliff Grid

Exploration vs. Exploitation



How to Explore?

- Several schemes for forcing exploration
  - Simplest: random actions (ε-greedy)
    - Every time step, flip a coin
    - With (small) probability ε, act randomly
    - With (large) probability 1-ε, act on current policy
  - Problems with random actions?
    - You do eventually explore the space, but keep thrashing around once learning is done
    - One solution: lower ε over time
    - Another solution: exploration functions

[Demo: Q-learning – manual exploration – bridge grid (L11D2)]
[Demo: Q-learning – epsilon-greedy -- crawler (L11D3)]

Video of Demo Q-learning – Manual Exploration – Bridge Grid

Video of Demo Q-learning – Epsilon-Greedy – Crawler

Exploration Functions

- When to explore?
  - Random actions: explore a fixed amount
  - Better idea: explore areas whose badness is not (yet) established, eventually stop exploring

- Exploration function
  - Takes a value estimate u and a visit count n, and returns an optimistic utility, e.g. $f(u,n) = u + k/n$

    Regular Q-Update: $Q(s,a) \leftarrow_\alpha R(s,a,s') + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s',a')$

    Modified Q-Update: $Q(s,a) \leftarrow_\alpha R(s,a,s') + \gamma \max_{a'} f(Q(s',a'), N(s',a'))$

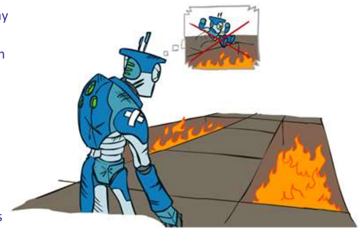
  - Note: this propagates the “bonus” back to states that lead to unknown states as well!

[Demo: exploration – Q-learning – crawler – exploration function (L11D4)]

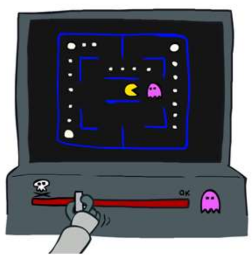
Video of Demo Q-learning – Exploration Function – Crawler

Regret

- Even if you learn the optimal policy, you still make mistakes along the way
- Regret is a measure of your total mistake cost: the difference between your (expected) rewards, including youthful suboptimality, and optimal (expected) rewards
- Minimizing regret goes beyond learning to be optimal – it requires optimally learning to be optimal
- Example: random exploration and exploration functions both end up optimal, but random exploration has higher regret

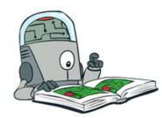


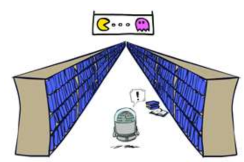
Approximate Q-Learning



Generalizing Across States

- Basic Q-Learning keeps a table of all q-values
- In realistic situations, we cannot possibly learn about every single state!
  - Too many states to visit them all in training
  - Too many states to hold the q-tables in memory
- Instead, we want to generalize:
  - Learn about some small number of training states from experience
  - Generalize that experience to new, similar situations
  - This is a fundamental idea in machine learning, and we'll see it over and over again

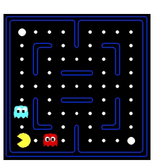




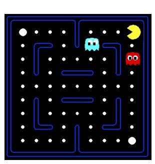
[demo – RL pacman]

Example: Pacman

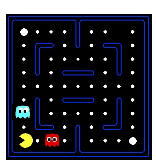
Let's say we discover through experience that this state is bad:



In naïve q-learning, we know nothing about this state:



Or even this one!



[Demo: Q-learning – pacman – tiny – watch all (L11D5)]
[Demo: Q-learning – pacman – tiny – silent train (L11D6)]
[Demo: Q-learning – pacman – tricky – watch all (L11D7)]

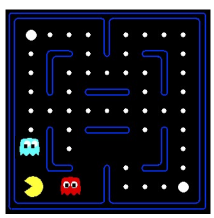
Video of Demo Q-Learning Pacman – Tiny – Watch All

Video of Demo Q-Learning Pacman – Tiny – Silent Train

Video of Demo Q-Learning Pacman – Tricky – Watch All

Feature-Based Representations

- Solution: describe a state using a vector of features (properties)
  - Features are functions from states to real numbers (often 0/1) that capture important properties of the state
  - Example features:
    - Distance to closest ghost
    - Distance to closest dot
    - Number of ghosts
    - 1 / (dist to dot)^2
    - Is Pacman in a tunnel? (0/1)
    - …… etc.
    - Is it the exact state on this slide?
  - Can also describe a q-state (s, a) with features (e.g. action moves closer to food)



Linear Value Functions

- Using a feature representation, we can write a q function (or value function) for any state using a few weights:

$$V(s) = w_1 f_1(s) + w_2 f_2(s) + \ldots + w_n f_n(s)$$

$$Q(s,a) = w_1 f_1(s,a) + w_2 f_2(s,a) + \ldots + w_n f_n(s,a)$$

- Advantage: our experience is summed up in a few powerful numbers
- Disadvantage: states may share features but actually be very different in value!

Approximate Q-Learning

$$Q(s,a) = w_1 f_1(s,a) + w_2 f_2(s,a) + \ldots + w_n f_n(s,a)$$

- Q-learning with linear Q-functions:

transition $= (s, a, r, s')$

difference $= \left[r + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s',a')\right] - Q(s,a)$

$Q(s,a) \leftarrow Q(s,a) + \alpha$ [difference] Exact Q's

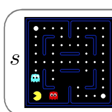
$w_i \leftarrow w_i + \alpha$ [difference] $f_i(s,a)$ Approximate Q's

- Intuitive interpretation:
  - Adjust weights of active features
  - E.g., if something unexpectedly bad happens, blame the features that were on: disprefer all states with that state's features
- Formal justification: online least squares

Example: Q-Pacman

$$Q(s,a) = 4.0 f_{DOT}(s,a) - 1.0 f_{GST}(s,a)$$

s

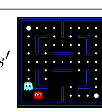


$f_{DOT}(s, \text{NORTH}) = 0.5$

$f_{GST}(s, \text{NORTH}) = 1.0$

$a = \text{NORTH}$
$r = -500$

s'



$Q(s, \text{NORTH}) = +1$

$r + \gamma \max_{a'} Q(s', a') = -500 + 0$

$Q(s', \cdot) = 0$

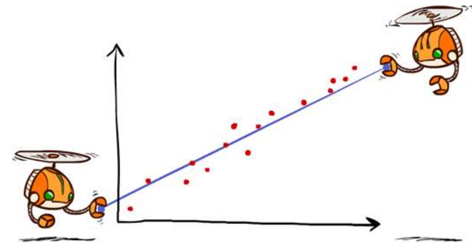
difference $= -501$ $\Rightarrow$ $w_{DOT} \leftarrow 4.0 + \alpha\,[-501]\,0.5$
$w_{GST} \leftarrow -1.0 + \alpha\,[-501]\,1.0$

$$Q(s,a) = 3.0 f_{DOT}(s,a) - 3.0 f_{GST}(s,a)$$

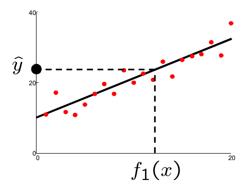
[Demo: approximate Q-learning pacman (L11D10)]

Video of Demo Approximate Q-Learning -- Pacman

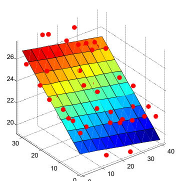
Q-Learning and Least Squares



Linear Approximation: Regression*



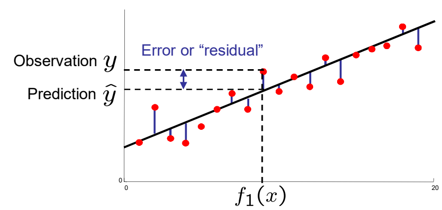
Prediction:
$\hat{y} = w_0 + w_1 f_1(x)$



Prediction:
$\hat{y}_i = w_0 + w_1 f_1(x) + w_2 f_2(x)$

Optimization: Least Squares*

$$\text{total error} = \sum_i (y_i - \hat{y}_i)^2 = \sum_i \left(y_i - \sum_k w_k f_k(x_i)\right)^2$$



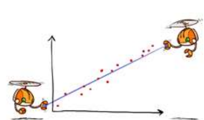
Minimizing Error*

Imagine we had only one point x, with features f(x), target value y, and weights w:

$$\text{error}(w) = \frac{1}{2}\left(y - \sum_k w_k f_k(x)\right)^2$$

$$\frac{\partial\ \text{error}(w)}{\partial w_m} = -\left(y - \sum_k w_k f_k(x)\right) f_m(x)$$

$$w_m \leftarrow w_m + \alpha \left(y - \sum_k w_k f_k(x)\right) f_m(x)$$

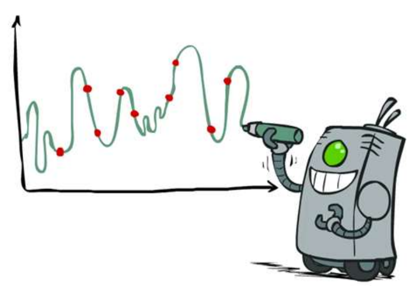


Approximate q update explained:

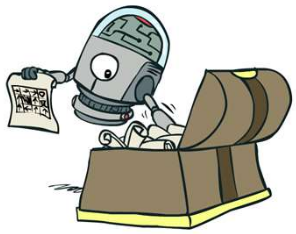
$$w_m \leftarrow w_m + \alpha \left[r + \gamma \max_a Q(s', a') - Q(s, a)\right] f_m(s, a)$$

"target" "prediction"

Overfitting: Why Limiting Capacity Can Help*



Policy Search



Policy Search

- Problem: often the feature-based policies that work well (win games, maximize utilities) aren't the ones that approximate V / Q best
  - E.g. your value functions from project 2 were probably horrible estimates of future rewards, but they still produced good decisions
  - Q-learning's priority: get Q-values close (modeling)
  - Action selection priority: get ordering of Q-values right (prediction)
  - We'll see this distinction between modeling and prediction again later in the course
- Solution: learn policies that maximize rewards, not the values that predict them
- Policy search: start with an ok solution (e.g. Q-learning) then fine-tune by hill climbing on feature weights

Policy Search

- Simplest policy search:
  - Start with an initial linear value function or Q-function
  - Nudge each feature weight up and down and see if your policy is better than before
- Problems:
  - How do we tell the policy got better?
  - Need to run many sample episodes!
  - If there are a lot of features, this can be impractical
- Better methods exploit lookahead structure, sample wisely, change multiple parameters…

Policy Search

[Andrew Ng] [Video: HELICOPTER]

Conclusion

- We're done with Part I: Search and Planning!
- We've seen how AI methods can solve problems in:
  - Search
  - Constraint Satisfaction Problems
  - Games
  - Markov Decision Problems
  - Reinforcement Learning
- Next up: Part II: Uncertainty and Learning!