# Neural Networks: <br> Optimization \& Regularization 

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Machine Learning

## Outline

## (1) Optimization

- Momentum \& Nesterov Momentum
- AdaGrad \& RMSProp
- Batch Normalization
- Continuation Methods \& Curriculum Learning
- NTK-based Initialization


## (2) Regularization

- Cyclic Learning Rates
- Weight Decay
- Data Augmentation
- Dropout
- Manifold Regularization
- Domain-Specific Model Design


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- NN a complex function:

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- What are the challenges of solving this problem with SGD?


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- Prior to the success of SGD (in roughly 2012), NN cost function surfaces were generally believed to have many non-convex structure
- However, studies [2, 4] show SGD seldom encounters critical points when training a large NN


## III-Conditioning

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- SGD has slow progress at valleys or plateaus


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- But not actually reaching zero
- SGD may proceed along a direction forever
- Initialization is important



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(2) Early stop if the validation error does not continue decreasing
- Prevents overfitting


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## Momentum

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\Theta^{(t+1)} \leftarrow \Theta^{(t)}-\eta g^{(t)}
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where $\boldsymbol{g}^{(t)}=\nabla_{\Theta} C\left(\Theta^{(t)}\right)$


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- Gets stuck in local minima or saddle points

- Momentum: make the same movement $\boldsymbol{v}^{(t)}$ in the last iteration, corrected by negative gradient:

$$
\begin{gathered}
\boldsymbol{v}^{(t+1)} \leftarrow \lambda \boldsymbol{v}^{(t)}-(1-\lambda) \boldsymbol{g}^{(t)} \\
\Theta^{(t+1)} \leftarrow \Theta^{(t)}+\eta \boldsymbol{v}^{(t+1)}
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Negative Gredient

- $\boldsymbol{v}^{(t)}$ is a moving average of $-\boldsymbol{g}^{(t)}$


## Nesterov Momentum

- Make the same movement $\boldsymbol{v}^{(t)}$ in the last iteration, corrected by lookahead negative gradient:
Lookahead
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- Faster convergence to a minimum
- Not helpful for NNs that lack of minima




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## Where Does SGD Spend Its Training Time?



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(1) Detouring a saddle point of high cost

- Better initialization
(2) Traversing the relatively flat valley
- Adaptive learning rate


## SGD with Adaptive Learning Rates



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- How?


## AdaGrad

- Update rule:

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\begin{gathered}
\boldsymbol{r}^{(t+1)} \leftarrow \boldsymbol{r}^{(t)}+\boldsymbol{g}^{(t)} \odot \boldsymbol{g}^{(t)} \\
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- We have

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(1) Smaller learning rate along all directions as $t$ grows
(2) Larger learning rate along more gently sloped directions

## Limitations



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- In AdaGrad, $\boldsymbol{r}^{(t+1)}$ accumulates squared gradients from the beginning of training
- Results in premature adaptivity


## RMSProp

- RMSProp changes the gradient accumulation in $\boldsymbol{r}^{(t+1)}$ into a moving average:

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\begin{gathered}
\boldsymbol{r}^{(t+1)} \leftarrow \lambda \boldsymbol{r}^{(t)}+(1-\lambda) \boldsymbol{g}^{(t)} \odot \boldsymbol{g}^{(t)} \\
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- A popular algorithm Adam (short for adaptive moments) [7] is a combination of RMSProp and Momentum:

$$
\begin{gathered}
\boldsymbol{v}^{(t+1)} \leftarrow \lambda_{1} \boldsymbol{v}^{(t)}-\left(1-\lambda_{1}\right) \boldsymbol{g}^{(t)} \\
\boldsymbol{r}^{(t+1)} \leftarrow \lambda_{2} \boldsymbol{r}^{(t)}+\left(1-\lambda_{2}\right) \boldsymbol{g}^{(t)} \odot \boldsymbol{g}^{(t)} \\
\boldsymbol{\Theta}^{(t+1)} \leftarrow \boldsymbol{\Theta}^{(t)}+\frac{\eta}{\sqrt{\boldsymbol{r}^{(t+1)}}} \odot \boldsymbol{v}^{(t+1)}
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- With some bias corrections for $\boldsymbol{v}^{(t+1)}$ and $\boldsymbol{r}^{(t+1)}$


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- Can we modify the model to ease the optimization task?
- What are the difficulties in training a deep NN?


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\hat{y}=f(x)=x w^{(1)} w^{(2)} \cdots w^{(L)}
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- The output $\hat{y}$ is a linear function of $x$, but not of weights
- The curvature of $f$ with respect to any two $w^{(i)}$ and $w^{(j)}$ is

$$
\frac{\partial f}{\partial w^{(i)} \partial w^{(j)}}=\left(w^{(i)}+w^{(j)}\right) \cdot x \prod_{k \neq i, j} w^{(k)}
$$

- Very small if $L$ is large and $w^{(k)}<1$ for $k \neq i, j$
- Very large if $L$ is large and $w^{(k)}>1$ for $k \neq i, j$


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- Time consuming
- Does not take into account high-order effects


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- Let $\Theta=\left[w^{(1)}, w^{(2)}, \cdots, w^{(L)}\right]^{\top}$ and $\boldsymbol{g}^{(t)}=\nabla_{\Theta} C\left(\Theta^{(t)}\right)$
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- The gradient $\boldsymbol{g}_{i}^{(t)}=\frac{\partial C}{\partial w^{(i)}}\left(\Theta^{(t)}\right)$ is calculated individually by fixing $C\left(\Theta^{(t)}\right)$ in other dimensions ( $w^{(j)}$ 's, $j \neq i$ )
- However, $\boldsymbol{g}^{(t)}$ updates $\Theta^{(t)}$ in all dimensions simultaneously in the same iteration
- $C\left(\Theta^{(t+1)}\right)$ will be guaranteed to decrease only if $C$ is linear at $\Theta^{(t)}$
- Wrong assumption: $\Theta_{i}^{(t+1)}$ will decrease $C$ even if other $\Theta_{j}^{(t+1)}$,s are updated simultaneously
- Second-order methods?
- Time consuming
- Does not take into account high-order effects
- Can we change the model to make this assumption not-so-wrong?


## Batch Normalization I

$$
\hat{y}=f(x)=x w^{(1)} w^{(2)} \cdots w^{(L)}
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- Why not standardize each hidden activation $a^{(k)}, k=1, \cdots, L-1$ (as we standardized $x$ )?


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- Similarly, if $a^{(k-1)}$ is standardized, $\boldsymbol{g}_{k}^{(t)}=\frac{\partial C}{\partial w^{(k)}}\left(\boldsymbol{\Theta}^{(t)}\right)$ is more likely to decrease $C$


## Batch Normalization II

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- Can be readily extended to NNs having multiple neurons at each layer


## Standardizing Nonlinear Units

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- A hidden unit now looks like:



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- The "wrong assumption" of gradient-based optimization is made valid
- But at the cost of expressiveness
- Normalizing $a^{(k)}$ or $z^{(k)}$ limits the output range of a unit
- Observe that there is no need to insist a $\tilde{z}^{(k)}$ to have zero mean and unit variance
- We only care about whether it is "fixed" when calculating the gradients for other layers


## Expressiveness II

Hidden Unit


- During training time, we can introduce two parameters $\gamma$ and $\beta$ and back-propagate through

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\text { - } \tilde{z}^{(k)}=\frac{z^{(k)}-\mu^{(k)}}{\sigma^{(k)}}, \text { so } \gamma \tilde{z}^{(k)}+\beta=\sigma \tilde{z}^{(k)}+\mu=z^{(k)}
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- $\tilde{z}^{(k)}=\frac{z^{(k)}-\mu^{(k)}}{\sigma^{(k)}}$, so $\gamma \tilde{z}^{(k)}+\beta=\sigma \tilde{z}^{(k)}+\mu=z^{(k)}$
- The weights $\boldsymbol{W}^{(k)}, \gamma$, and $\beta$ are now easier to learn with SGD


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## Parameter Initialization

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- How to better initialize $\Theta^{(0)}$ ?
(1) Train an NN multiple times with random initial points, and then pick the best
(2) Design a series of cost functions such that a solution to one is a good initial point of the next
- Solve the "easy" problem first, and then a "harder" one, and so on


## Continuation Methods I

- Continuation methods: construct easier cost functions by smoothing the original cost function:

$$
\tilde{C}(\Theta)=\mathrm{E}_{\tilde{\Theta} \sim \mathscr{N}\left(\Theta, \sigma^{2}\right)} C(\tilde{\Theta})
$$

- In practice, we sample several ${ }^{\text {En's }}$ to approximate the expectation
- Assumption: some non-convex functions become approximately convex when smoothen



## Continuation Methods II

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- Cost function might not become convex, no matter how much it is smoothen
- Designed to deal with local minima; not very helpful for NNs without minima


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- Curriculum learning (or shaping) [1]: make the cost function easier by increasing the influence of simpler examples
- E.g., by assigning them larger weights in the new cost function
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- Learn simple concepts first, then learn more complex concepts that depend on these simpler concepts
- Just like how humans learn
- Knowing the principles, we are less likely to explain an observation using special (but wrong) rules


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## Prior Predictions of NTK-GP

- Prior (unconditioned) mean predictions for training set:

$$
\hat{\boldsymbol{y}}_{N}=\left(\boldsymbol{I}-e^{-\eta \boldsymbol{T}_{N, N} t}\right) \boldsymbol{y}_{N}
$$

- Prior mean predictions for test set:

$$
\hat{\boldsymbol{y}}_{M}=\boldsymbol{T}_{M, N} \boldsymbol{T}_{N, N}^{-1}\left(\boldsymbol{I}-e^{-\eta \boldsymbol{T}_{N, N} t}\right) \boldsymbol{y}_{N}
$$

- Given a training set, the $\boldsymbol{T}_{N, N}$ and $\boldsymbol{T}_{M, N}$ depends only on the network structure and hyperparameters of initial weights


## Trainability

- Prior (unconditioned) mean predictions for training set:

$$
\hat{\boldsymbol{y}}_{N}=\left(\boldsymbol{I}-e^{-\eta \boldsymbol{T}_{N, N} t}\right) \boldsymbol{y}_{N}
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- where $\eta<\frac{2}{\lambda_{\text {max }}+\lambda_{\text {min }}} \approx \frac{2}{\lambda_{\text {max }}}$
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- Let $\boldsymbol{T}_{N, N}=\boldsymbol{U}^{\top}\left[\begin{array}{lll}\lambda_{\max } & & \\ & \ddots & \\ & & \lambda_{\text {min }}\end{array}\right] \boldsymbol{U}$, we have

$$
\left(\boldsymbol{U} \hat{\boldsymbol{y}}_{N}\right)_{i} \approx\left(\left(\boldsymbol{I}-e^{-2 \frac{\lambda_{i}}{\lambda_{\max }} t}\right) \boldsymbol{U} \boldsymbol{y}_{N}\right)_{i}
$$

- It follows that if the conditioning number $\kappa=\frac{\lambda_{\text {max }}}{\lambda_{\text {min }}}$ diverges, the NN becomes untrainable


## Generalization

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- If $\boldsymbol{T}_{M, N} \boldsymbol{T}_{N, N}^{-1}$ is a data-independent constant matrix, then the NN will fail to generalize
- Constant rows $\Rightarrow$ independent with $\mathbb{X}$
- Constant columns $\Rightarrow$ independent with $\boldsymbol{X}_{M}$
- If $\boldsymbol{y}_{N}$ has zero mean, this implies that $\boldsymbol{T}_{M, N} \boldsymbol{T}_{N, N}^{-1} \boldsymbol{y}_{N}=\mathbf{0}$


## Results

- The training and test accuracy (color) of a fully-connected NN trained with SGD
- (a) The NN is untrainable because $\kappa$ is too large
- (b) The NN is ungeneralizable because $\boldsymbol{T}_{M, N} \boldsymbol{T}_{N, N}^{-1} \boldsymbol{y}_{N}$ is too small



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- By encoding prior knowledge


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- In these domains, the best fitting model (with lowest generalization error) is usually a larger model regularized appropriately


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- A deep NN is likely to separable a dataset and has the similar issue


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- SGD gradients may not be representative in the beginning (and in the end)



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- Use a small learning rate in the very beginning [10]


Triangular schedule with fixed decay


Triangular schedule with exponential decay


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- Limiting column norms $\Omega\left(\boldsymbol{W}_{: j}^{(k)}\right), \forall j, k$, is preferred [5]
- Prevents any one hidden unit from having very large weights and $z_{j}^{(k)}$


## Explicit Weight Decay I

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- Advantage?


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- To solve the problem, we can use the projective SGD:
- At each step $t$, update $\Theta^{(t+1)}$ as in SGD
- If $\Theta^{(t+1)}$ falls out of the feasible set, project $\Theta^{(t+1)}$ back to the tangent space (edge) of feasible set
- Advantage?
- Prevents dead units that do not contribute much to the behavior of NN due to too small weights
- Explicit constraints does not push weights to the origin


## Explicit Weight Decay II



- Also prevents instability due to a large learning rate
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- Hinton et al. [5] recommend using:
explicit constraints + reprojection + large learning rate
to allow rapid exploration of parameter space while maintaining numeric stability


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- E.g., in OCR tasks, avoid:
- Horizontal flips for 'b' and 'd'
- $180^{\circ}$ rotations for ' 6 ' and ' 9 '


## Noise and Adversarial Data

- NNs are not very robust to the perturbation of input ( $\boldsymbol{x}^{(i)}$ 's)
- Noises [12]
- Adversarial points [3]
$\boldsymbol{x}$

$$
\begin{gathered}
y=\text { "panda" } \\
\text { w/ } 57.7 \% \\
\text { confidence }
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$$



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\begin{array}{cc}
\operatorname{sign}\left(\nabla_{\boldsymbol{x}} C(\boldsymbol{\theta}, \boldsymbol{x}, y)\right) & \boldsymbol{x}+ \\
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- How to improve the robustness?


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- Already done in probabilistic models


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- Similar to bagging, but much more efficient
- No need to retrain unmasked units
- Exponential number of voters


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- The better one is problem dependent


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- For example, in face image recognition:
- If there is a unit that detects nose
- Dropping the unit encourages the model to learn mouth (or nose again) in another unit


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- In many applications, data of the same class concentrate around one or more low-dimensional manifolds
- A manifold is a topological space that are linear locally



## Manifolds II

- For each point $\boldsymbol{x}$ on a manifold, we have its tangent space spanned by tangent vectors
- Local directions specify how one can change $\boldsymbol{x}$ infinitesimally while staying on the manifold



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- Suppose we have the tangent vectors $\left\{\boldsymbol{v}^{(i, j)}\right\}_{j}$ for each example $\boldsymbol{x}^{(i)}$
- Tangent Prop [9] trains an NN classifier $f$ with cost penalty:

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\Omega[f]=\sum_{i, j} \nabla_{\boldsymbol{x}} f\left(\boldsymbol{x}^{(i)}\right)^{\top} \boldsymbol{v}^{(i, j)}
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- Or learned automatically (to be discussed later)


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## Domain-Specific Prior Knowledge

- If done right, incorporating the domain-specific prior knowledge into a model is a highly effective way the improve generalizability
- Better $f$ that "makes sense"
- May also simplify optimization problem


## Word2vec

- Weight-tying leads to simpler model



## Convolution Neural Networks

- Locally connected neurons for pattern detection at different locations



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