

## Sparse vs. Ensemble Approaches to Supervised Learning

Greg Grudic  
CSCI 4202

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## Goal of Supervised Learning?

- Minimize the probability of model prediction errors on **future** data
- Two Competing Methodologies
  - Build **one** really good model
    - Traditional approach
  - Build **many** models and average the results
    - Ensemble learning (more recent)

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## The Single Model Philosophy

- Motivation: Occam's Razor
  - “one should not increase, beyond what is necessary, the number of entities required to explain anything”
- Infinitely many models can explain any given dataset
  - Might as well pick the smallest one...

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## Which Model is Smaller?

$$\hat{y} = f_1(x) = \sin(x)$$

or

$$\hat{y} = f_2(x) = x - \frac{x^3}{3!} + \frac{x^5}{5!} - \frac{x^7}{7!} + \dots$$

- In this case  $f_1(x) \equiv f_2(x)$ 
  - Taylor series expansion!
- It's not always easy to define small!

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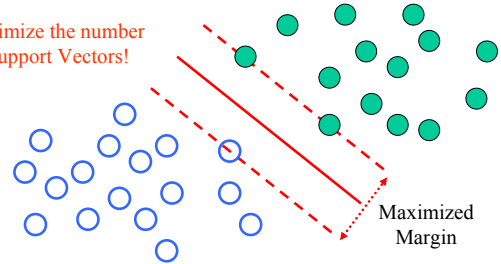
## Exact Occam's Razor Models

- Exact approaches find optimal solutions
- Examples:
  - Support Vector Machines
    - Find a model structure that uses the smallest percentage of training data (to explain the rest of it).
  - Bayesian approaches
    - Minimum description length

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## How Do Support Vector Machines Define Small?

Minimize the number of Support Vectors!



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## Approximate Occam's Razor Models

- Approximate solutions use a greedy search approach which is not optimal
- Examples
  - Kernel Projection Pursuit algorithms
    - Find a minimal set of kernel projections
  - Relevance Vector Machines
    - Approximate Bayesian approach
  - Sparse Minimax Probability Machine Classification
    - Find a minimum set of kernels and features

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## Other Single Models: **Not Necessarily Motivated by Occam's Razor**

- Minimax Probability Machine (MPM)
- Trees
  - Greedy approach to sparseness
- Neural Networks
- Nearest Neighbor
- Basis Function Models
  - e.g. Kernel Ridge Regression

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## Ensemble Philosophy

- Build many models and combine them
- Only through averaging do we get at the truth!
- It's too hard (*impossible?*) to build a single model that works best
- Two types of approaches:
  - Models that don't use randomness
  - Models that incorporate randomness

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## Ensemble Approaches

- Bagging
  - Bootstrap aggregating
- Boosting
- Random Forests
  - Bagging reborn

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## Bagging

- Main Assumption:
  - Combining many **unstable predictors** to produce a ensemble (stable) predictor.
  - **Unstable Predictor**: small changes in training data produce large changes in the model.
    - e.g. Neural Nets, trees
    - Stable: SVM (sometimes), nearest Neighbor.
- Hypothesis Space
  - Variable size (nonparametric):
    - Can model any function if you use an appropriate predictor (e.g. trees)

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## The Bagging Algorithm

Given data:  $D = \{(\mathbf{x}_1, y_1), \dots, (\mathbf{x}_N, y_N)\}$

For  $m = 1 : M$

- Obtain bootstrap sample  $D_m$  from the training data  $D$
- Build a model  $G_m(\mathbf{x})$  from bootstrap data  $D_m$

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## The Bagging Model

- Regression

$$\hat{y} = \frac{1}{M} \sum_{m=1}^M G_m(\mathbf{x})$$

- Classification:

– Vote over classifier outputs  $G_1(\mathbf{x}), \dots, G_M(\mathbf{x})$

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## Bagging Details

- Bootstrap sample of N instances is obtained by drawing N examples at random, with replacement.
- On average each bootstrap sample has 63% of instances
  - Encourages predictors to have uncorrelated errors
    - This is why it works

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## Bagging Details 2

- Usually set  $M \approx 30$ 
  - Or use validation data to pick  $M$
- The models  $G_m(\mathbf{x})$  need to be unstable
  - Usually full length (or slightly pruned) decision trees.

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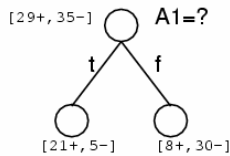
## Boosting

- Main Assumption:
  - Combining many weak predictors (e.g. tree stumps or 1-R predictors) to produce an ensemble predictor
  - The weak predictors or classifiers need to be **stable**
- Hypothesis Space
  - Variable size (nonparametric):
    - Can model any function if you use an appropriate predictor (e.g. trees)

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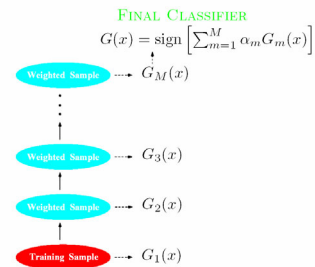
## Commonly Used Weak Predictor (or classifier)

A Decision Tree Stump (1-R)



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## Boosting



Each classifier  $G_m(x)$  is trained from a weighted Sample of the training Data

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## Boosting (Continued)

- Each predictor is created by using a biased sample of the training data
  - Instances (training examples) with high error are weighted higher than those with lower error
- **Difficult instances get more attention**
  - This is the motivation behind boosting

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## Background Notation

- The  $I(s)$  function is defined as:

$$I(s) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } s \text{ is true} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

- The  $\log(x)$  function is the natural logarithm

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## The AdaBoost Algorithm

(Freund and Schapire, 1996)

Given data:  $D = \{(\mathbf{x}_1, y_1), \dots, (\mathbf{x}_N, y_N)\}$

1. Initialize weights  $w_i = 1/N, i = 1, \dots, N$
2. For  $m = 1 : M$ 
  - a) Fit classifier  $G_m(\mathbf{x}) \in \{-1, 1\}$  to data using weights  $w_i$
  - b) Compute 
$$err_m = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N w_i I(y_i \neq G_m(\mathbf{x}_i))}{\sum_{i=1}^N w_i}$$
  - c) Compute  $\alpha_m = \log((1 - err_m) / err_m)$
  - d) Set  $w_i \leftarrow w_i \exp[\alpha_m I(y_i \neq G_m(\mathbf{x}_i))], \quad i = 1, \dots, N$

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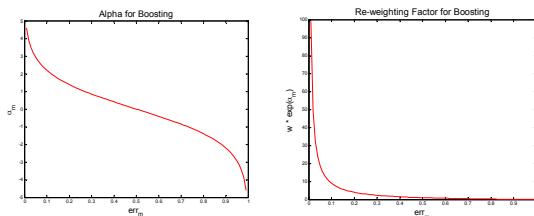
## The AdaBoost Model

$$\hat{y} = \text{sgn} \left[ \sum_{m=1}^M \alpha_m G_m(\mathbf{x}) \right]$$

AdaBoost is NOT used for Regression!

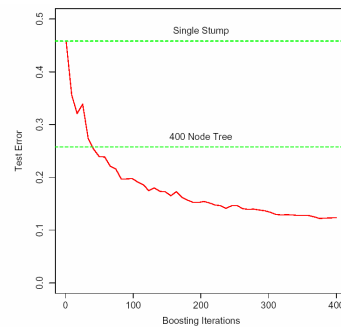
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## The Updates in Boosting



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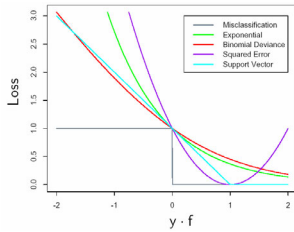
## Boosting Characteristics



Simulated data: test error rate for boosting with stumps, as a function of the number of iterations. Also shown are the test error rate for a single stump, and a 400 node tree.

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## Loss Functions for $y \in \{-1, +1\}, f \in \mathbb{R}$



- Misclassification  
 $I(\text{sgn}(f) \neq y)$
- Exponential (Boosting)  
 $\exp(-yf)$
- Binomial Deviance (Cross Entropy)  
 $\log(1 + \exp(-2yf))$
- Squared Error  
 $(y - f)^2$
- Support Vectors  
 $(1 - yf) \cdot I(yf > 1)$

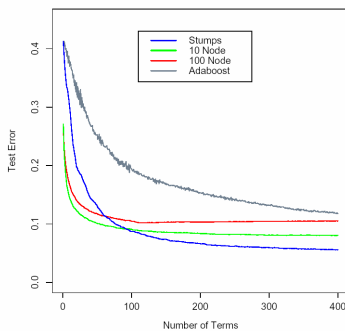
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## Other Variations of Boosting

- Gradient Boosting
  - Can use any cost function
- Stochastic (Gradient) Boosting
  - Bootstrap Sample: Uniform random sampling (with replacement)
  - Often outperforms the non-random version

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## Gradient Boosting



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## Boosting Summary

- Good points
  - Fast learning
  - Capable of learning any function (given appropriate weak learner)
  - Feature weighting
  - Very little parameter tuning
- Bad points
  - Can overfit data
  - Only for binary classification
- Learning parameters (picked via cross validation)
  - Size of tree
  - When to stop
- Software
  - <http://www-stat.stanford.edu/~jhf/R-MART.html>

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## Random Forests

(Leo Breiman, 2001)

<http://www.stat.berkeley.edu/users/breiman/RandomForests/>

- Injecting the right kind of randomness makes accurate models
  - As good as SVMs and sometimes better
  - As good as boosting
- **Very little playing with learning parameters is needed to get very good models**
- Traditional tree algorithms spend a lot of time choosing how to split at a node
  - Random forest trees put very little effort into this

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## Algorithmic Goal of Random Forests

- Create many trees (50-1,000)
- Inject randomness into trees such that
  - Each tree has maximal strength
    - i.e. a fairly good model on its own
  - Each tree has minimum correlation with the other trees
    - i.e. the errors tend to cancel out

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## RFs Use Out-of-Bag Samples

- Out-of-bag samples for tree  $T_i$  in a forest are those training examples that are NOT used to construct tree  $T_i$
- Out-of-bag samples can be used for model selection. They give unbiased estimates of:
  - Error on future data
    - **Often don't need to use other randomized tests**
  - Internal strength
  - Internal correlation

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## R.I. (Random Input) Forests

- For K trees:
  - Build each tree by:
    - Selecting, at random, at each node a small set of features (F) to split on. Common values of F are  $(M = \text{tot. number of features})$ 
$$F = 1$$
    - For each node split on the best of this subset
$$F = \log(M) + 1$$
    - Grow tree to full length

Regression: average over trees

Classification: vote

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## R.C. (Random Combination) Forests

- For K trees:
  - Build each tree by:
    - Create F random linear sums of L variables

$$A_1 = \sum_{i=1}^L b_{f1} x_{ind(i)}, \dots, A_F = \sum_{i=1}^L b_{fF} x_{ind(i)}$$

$$b_{fj} = \text{uniform random } [-1, 1]$$

- At each node split on the best of these linear boundaries
- Grow tree to full length

Regression: average over trees

Classification: vote

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## Classification Data:

Data set	Train size	Test size	Inputs	Classes
Glass	214	-	9	6
Breast cancer	699	-	9	2
Diabetes	768	-	8	2
Sonar	208	-	60	2
Vowel	990	-	10	11
Ionosphere	351	-	34	2
Vehicle	846	-	18	4
Soybean	685	-	35	19
German credit	1000	-	24	2
Image	2310	-	19	7
Ecoli	336	-	7	8
Votes	435	-	16	2
Liver	345	-	6	2
Letters	15000	5000	16	26
Sat-images	4435	2000	36	6
Zip-code	7291	2007	256	10
Waveform	300	3000	21	3
Twonorm	300	3000	20	2
Threennorm	300	3000	20	2
Ringnorm	300	3000	20	2

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## Results: RI

Data set	Adaboost	Selection	Forest-RI single input	One tree
Glass	22.0	20.6	21.2	36.9
Breast cancer	3.2	2.9	2.7	6.3
Diabetes	26.6	24.2	24.3	33.1
Sonar	15.6	15.9	18.0	31.7
Vowel	4.1	3.4	3.3	30.4
Ionosphere	6.4	7.1	7.5	12.7
Vehicle	23.2	25.8	26.4	33.1
German credit	23.5	24.4	26.2	33.3
Image	1.6	2.1	2.7	6.4
Ecoli	14.8	12.8	13.0	24.5
Votes	4.8	4.1	4.6	7.4
Liver	30.7	25.1	24.7	40.6
Letters	3.4	3.5	4.7	19.8
Sat-images	8.8	8.6	10.5	17.2
Zip-code	6.2	6.3	7.8	20.6
Waveform	17.8	17.2	17.3	34.0
Twonorm	4.9	3.9	3.9	24.7
Threennorm	18.8	17.5	17.5	38.4
Ringnorm	6.9	4.9	4.9	25.7

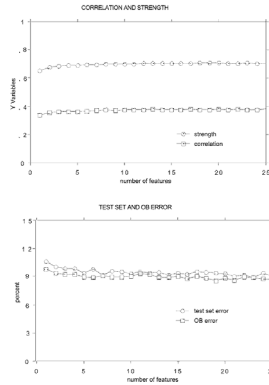
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## Results: RC

Data set	Adaboost	Forest-RC		
		Selection	Two features	One tree
Glass	22.0	24.4	23.5	42.4
Breast cancer	3.2	3.1	2.9	5.8
Diabetes	26.6	23.0	23.1	32.1
Sonar	15.6	13.6	13.8	31.7
Vowel	4.1	3.3	3.3	30.4
Ionosphere	6.4	5.5	5.7	14.2
Vehicle	23.2	23.1	22.8	39.1
German credit	23.5	22.8	23.8	32.6
Image	1.6	1.6	1.8	6.0
Ecoli	14.8	12.9	12.4	25.3
Votes	4.8	4.1	4.0	8.6
Liver	30.7	27.3	27.2	40.3
Letters	3.4	3.4	4.1	23.8
Sat-images	8.8	9.1	10.2	17.3
Zip-code	6.2	6.2	7.2	22.7
Waveform	17.8	16.0	16.1	33.2
Twonorm	4.9	3.8	3.9	20.9
Threennorm	18.8	16.8	16.9	34.8
Ringnorm	6.9	4.8	4.6	24.6

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## Strength, Correlation and Out-of-Bag Error



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## Adding Noise: random 5% of training data with outputs flipped

Percent  
increase  
in error

RFs robust  
To noise!

Data set	Adaboost	Forest-RI	Forest-RC
Glass	1.6	.4	-.4
Breast cancer	43.2	1.8	11.1
Diabetes	6.8	1.7	2.8
Sonar	15.1	-6.6	4.2
Ionosphere	27.7	3.8	5.7
Soybean	26.9	3.2	8.5
Ecoli	7.5	7.9	7.8
Votes	48.9	6.3	4.6
Liver	10.3	-.2	4.8

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## Random Forests Regression: The Data

Data set	Nr. inputs	#Training	#Test
Boston Housing	12	506	10%
Ozone	8	330	10%
Servo	4	167	10%
Abalone	8	4177	25%
Robot Arm	12	15,000	5000
Friedman#1	10	200	2000
Friedman#2	4	200	2000
Friedman#3	4	200	2000

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## Results: RC 25 Features 2 Random Inputs

Mean Square Test Error

Data set	Bagging	Adapt. bag	Forest
Boston Housing	11.4	9.7	10.2
Ozone	17.8	17.8	16.3
Servo $\times 10 - 2$	24.5	25.1	24.6
Abalone	4.9	4.9	4.6
Robot Arm $\times 10 - 2$	4.7	2.8	4.2
Friedman #1	6.3	4.1	5.7
Friedman #2 $\times 10 + 3$	21.5	21.5	19.6
Friedman #3 $\times 10 - 3$	24.8	24.8	21.6

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## Results: Test Error and OOB Error

Data Set	Test error	OB error	PE*(tree)	Cor.
Boston Housing	10.2	11.6	26.3	.45
Ozone	16.3	17.6	32.5	.55
Servo $\times 10 - 2$	24.6	27.9	56.4	.56
Abalone	4.6	4.6	8.3	.56
Robot Arm $\times 10 - 2$	4.2	3.7	9.1	.41
Friedman #1	5.7	6.3	15.3	.41
Friedman #2 $\times 10 + 3$	19.6	20.4	40.7	.51
Friedman #3 $\times 10 - 3$	21.6	22.9	48.3	.49

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## Random Forests Regression: Adding Noise to Output vs. Bagging

Data set	With bagging	With Noise
Boston Housing	10.2	9.1
Ozone	17.8	16.3
Servo $\times 10 - 2$	24.6	23.2
Abalone	4.6	4.7
Robot Arm $\times 10 - 2$	4.2	3.9
Friedman #1	5.7	5.1
Friedman #2 $\times 10 + 3$	19.6	20.4
Friedman #3 $\times 10 - 3$	21.6	19.8

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## Random Forests Summary

- Adding the right kind of noise is good!
- Inject randomness such that
  - Each model has maximal strength
    - i.e. a fairly good model on its own
  - Each model has minimum correlation with the other models
    - i.e. the errors tend to cancel out

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