

Course 1: Implementing basic solving algorithms for robot path planning

Exercise 1: Formalisation

Example 1 (Grid World) *An agent is in the bottom left cell of a grid $n \times p$. There are some uncrossable walls in the grid, one goal cell and a negative-rewarded well. The agents can move up, right, down and left. But! Things can go wrong — sometimes the effects of the actions are not what we want:*

- *the agent moves to the direction she intended to, with probability 0.7;*
- *the agent moves to one of the three other possible directions with probability 0.1;*
- *if the agent tries to go in a wall or if she slips (condition above, case that happens with probability 0.1), the agent stays where she is.*

The task is to navigate from the start cell in the bottom left to maximise the expected reward. What would the best sequence of actions be for this problem?

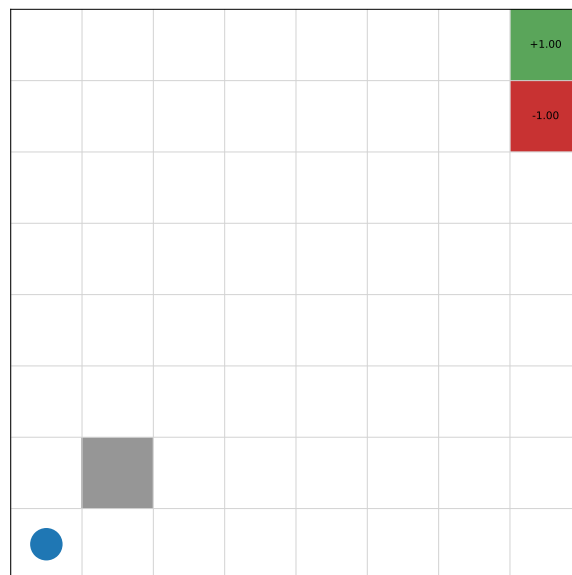


Figure 1: Illustration of the grid world environment

1. Propose a MDP formalism for this problem, when $n = p = 3$.

2. An implementation of the Grid World environment is given the github repository. **Note that, in this implementation, the agent *can not slip in the opposite direction from the one prescribed by the action*** Start implementing your own custom policy, *e.g.*:

```

1 from gridworld import *
2
3 mdp = GridWorld()
4
5 print("states:", mdp.get_states())
6 print("terminal states:", mdp.get_goal_states())
7 print("actions:", mdp.get_actions())
8 print(mdp.get_transitions(mdp.get_initial_state(), mdp.UP))
9
10 def policy_custom(state):
11     return mdp.UP
12
13 while(1):
14     state=mdp.get_initial_state()
15     new_state,_ = mdp.execute(state, policy_custom(state))
16     mdp.initial_state=new_state
17     mdp.visualise()

```

Remark: the environment defines a “terminal state” (i.e the goal state).

Exercise 2: Solving algorithms

Recall that the dynamic programming algorithm implements the following scheme:

Algorithm 1: Dynamic Programming

Input: $\epsilon > 0$;

Initialize $V, \tilde{V} : S \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$

do

$\tilde{V} \leftarrow V$;

for $s \in S$ **do**

$V(s) \leftarrow \max_a \left\{ r(s, a) + \gamma \sum_{s'} P(s, a, s') \tilde{V}(s') \right\}$ /* $r(s, a) = \sum_{s'} P(s, a, s') r(s, a, s')$ */

end

while $\|V - \tilde{V}\|_\infty \geq \epsilon$;

return V

1. Implement the dynamic programming algorithm to learn optimal paths

2. TD/Q-learning

(a) Q-learning generates episodes. When does the episode stop?

(b) Implement Q-learning. Do you observe something?

i. tips: use the “defaultdict” library in Python;

```
1 from collections import defaultdict
```

ii. tips: a pair (s, a) can be represented by a tuple in Python and given as a key of a defaultdict.

3. (bonus) The environment provides visualisation tools for value function and policy. For dynamic programming, create classes “*value_function*” and “*policy*”, which should respectively implement “*get_value(states)*” and “*select_action(states)*”. Then, call the visualisation tool of the environment with:

```

1 mdp.visualise_value_function(value_function)
2 mdp.visualise_policy(policy)

```

4. (bonus) Visualise the Q-learning & MC q-value function. To do so, create classes “*q_function*”. Then, call the visualisation tool for the q-function:

```
1 mdp.visualise_q_function(q_function)
```

Exercise 3: Analysis

Now that the algorithms are running - and hopefully learning something -, an important step is to analyze (i) their learning process and (ii) the resulting policy after reaching the time-limit budget for the learning process.

1. Implement adequate tools for analyzing the learning process.
2. Compare the policies obtained for all three algorithms after different time budgets.