

# What is Machine Learning?

Two definitions of Machine Learning are offered.

Arthur Samuel described it as: "The field of study that gives computers the ability to learn without being explicitly programmed." This is an older, informal definition.

Tom Mitchell provides a more modern definition: "A computer program is said to learn from experience  $E$  with respect to some class of tasks  $T$  and performance measure  $P$ , if its performance at tasks in  $T$ , as measured by  $P$ , improves with experience  $E$ ."

Example: playing checkers.

$E$  = the experience of playing many games of checkers

$T$  = the task of playing checkers.

$P$  = the probability that the program will win the next game.

In general, any machine learning problem can be assigned to one of two broad classifications:

Supervised learning and Unsupervised learning.