

Introduction to Machine Learning

Problems Unit 2: Simple Linear Regression

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1. A university admissions office wants to predict the success of students based on their application material. They have access to past student records to learn a good algorithm.
 - (a) To formulate this as a supervised learning problem, identify a possible target variable. This should be some variable that measures success in a meaningful way and can be easily collected (in an automated manner) by the university. There is no one correct answer to this problem.
 - (b) Is the target variable continuous or discrete-valued?
 - (c) State at least one possible variable that can act as the predictor for the target variable you chose in part (a).
 - (d) Before looking at the data, would a linear model for the data be reasonable? If so, what sign do you expect the slope to be?
2. Suppose that we are given data samples (x_i, y_i) :

x_i	0	1	2	3	4
y_i	0	2	3	8	17

- (a) What are the sample means, \bar{x} and \bar{y} ?
 - (b) What are the sample variances and co-variances s_x^2 , s_y^2 and s_{xy} ?
 - (c) What are the least squares parameters for the regression line
- (d) Using the linear model, what is the predicted value at $x = 2.5$?
3. A medical researcher wants to model, $z(t)$, the concentration of some chemical in the blood over time. She believes the concentration should decay exponentially in that

$$z(t) \approx z_0 e^{-\alpha t}, \tag{1}$$

for some parameters z_0 and α . To confirm this model, and to estimate the parameters z_0, α , she collects a large number of time-stamped samples $(t_i, z(t_i))$, $i = 1, \dots, N$. Unfortunately, the model (1) is non linear, so she can't directly apply the linear regression formula.

- (a) Taking logarithms, show that we can rewrite the model in a form where the parameters z_0 and α appear linearly.

- (b) Using the transform in part (a), write the least-squares solution for the best estimates of the parameters z_0 and α from the data.
 - (c) Write a few lines of python code that you would compute these estimates from vectors of samples \mathbf{t} and \mathbf{z} .
4. Consider a linear model of the form,

$$y \approx \beta x,$$

which is a linear model, but with the intercept forced to zero. This occurs in applications where we want to force the predicted value $\hat{y} = 0$ when $x = 0$. For example, if we are modeling y = output power of a motor vs. x = the input power, we would expect $x = 0 \Rightarrow y = 0$.

- (a) Given data (x_i, y_i) , write a cost function representing the residual sum of squares (RSS) between y_i and the predicted value \hat{y}_i as a function of β .
- (b) Taking the derivative with respect to β , find the β that minimizes the RSS.