

HW: Softmax

The "softmax" function takes a list $[x_1, \dots, x_n]$ of real numbers and an index $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$:

$$\text{softmax}([x_1, \dots, x_n], i) = \frac{e^{x_i}}{\sum_{j=1}^n e^{x_j}}$$

It's called softmax because it usually turns the largest element of the list to something close to 1, and the others to something close to zero

e.g. $\text{softmax}([-4, 1.5, 5], 1) = 0.00012$

$$\text{softmax}([-4, 1.5, 5], 2) = 0.029$$

$$\text{softmax}([-4, 1.5, 5], 3) = 0.971$$

(a) Show for any real number b :

$$\text{softmax}([x_1 + b, \dots, x_n + b], i) = \text{softmax}([x_1, \dots, x_n], i)$$

(b) Express the sigmoid function $\sigma(x)$ in terms of softmax:

$$\sigma(x) = \text{softmax} \left(\begin{bmatrix} x \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \right)$$

(c) Suppose we try to compute $\sigma(-740)$ directly, using Python. What happens?

(d) How can we exploit result (a) to compute $\sigma(-740)$? Show an implementation of $\sigma(x)$:

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def stabler_sigmoid(x):
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