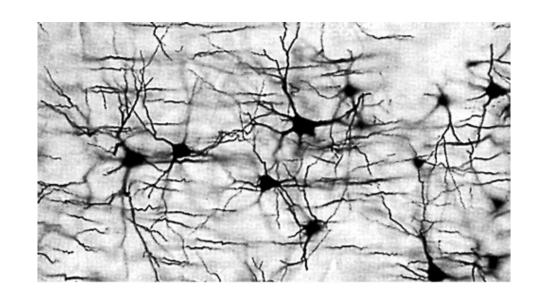


# 02456 – Week 2 Learning

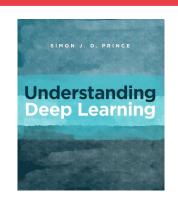
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Technical University of Denmark

08 September 2025



#### Menu of the day

- Week 1: Neural nets
- Week 2: Learning
- Week 3: Tricks of The Trade
- Week 4: CNNs
- Week 5: RNNs
- Week 6: Transformers
- Week 7: Unsupervised
- Week 8: Mini-project



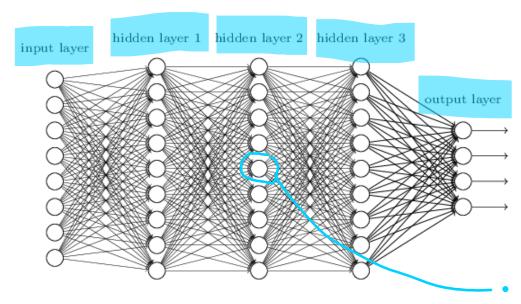
#### Lecture

- Loss functions (ch 5)
- Fitting models (ch 6)
- Gradients and initial. (c 7)

#### **Exercises**

- Notebook:
  - 2.1 FNN AutoDif Nanograd.ipynb
  - Try to code autodiff yourself
- **Problems:** 5.9, 6.5, 7.10

#### Recap: Neural networks

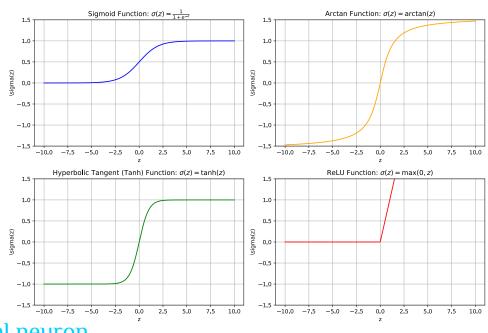


We can write the **output of layer**  $\ell$  as

$$f^{(\ell)}(\mathbf{h}) = \sigma(W^{(\ell)}\mathbf{h} + \mathbf{b}^{(\ell)}).$$

The **joint function** is then

$$f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{y} = f^{(4)} \left( f^{(3)} \left( f^{(2)} \left( f^{(1)}(\mathbf{x}) \right) \right) \right)$$



Artificial neuron

Node

#### **Terminology:**

- Fully connected neural network
- Feed forward neural network (FFN)
- Multilayer perceptron (MLP)

#### Training criterion

• For training data  $\{(\mathbf{x}_i, \mathbf{y}_i)\}_i$ , we want to find neural net parameters

$$\phi = \left\{ W^{(\ell)}, \mathbf{b}^{(\ell)} \right\}_{\ell}$$

s.t. we minimize the mismatch between  $f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}_i)$  and  $y_i$ 

• We defined a loss function  $L(\phi)$  capturing this mismatch

$$\hat{\phi} = \underset{\phi}{\operatorname{argmin}} L(\phi)$$

- How do we define such a loss function?
  - Last week we saw mean squared error  $L(\phi) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left( f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}_i) y_i \right)^2$
  - Is there some principled framework we can use?

## Maximum likelihood estimation (MLE)

Find parameters that maximises the probability of the data  $\{(\mathbf{x}_i, \mathbf{y}_i)\}_i$ 

$$\widehat{\phi} = \arg\max_{\phi} \prod_{i} p(y_{i}|\mathbf{x}_{i},\phi)$$
 We parametrize the probability with a neural net  $p(y_{i}|f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}_{i}))$ 

Normally we do this in log-space

$$\hat{\phi} = \arg\max_{\phi} \sum_{i} \log p(y_i | f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}_i))$$

We can use the **negative log-likelihood** as a loss

$$\frac{L(\phi)}{\hat{\phi}} = -\sum_{i} \log p(y_i|f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}_i))$$

$$\hat{\phi} = \underset{\phi}{\operatorname{arg \, min}} L(\phi)$$

#### Why is MLE a good framework?

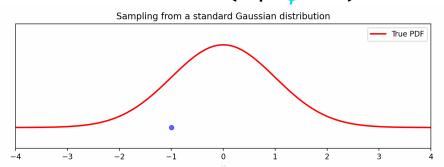
- Strong theoretical foundation, e.g.,
- Consistency: converges to the true parameter value as  $n \to \infty$
- **Efficient**: Achieving the lowest possible variance as  $n \to \infty$

## Probabilistic inference (predictions)

- For learned  $\hat{\phi}$ , how can I make predictions using  $p(y|f_{\hat{\phi}}(\mathbf{x}))$ ?
- For a given **x**, I my predictions can be:

Mostly used

- The most probable value:  $\hat{y} = \arg \max_{y} p(y|f_{\hat{\phi}}(\mathbf{x}))$
- The expected value:  $\hat{y} = \mathbb{E}_{y \sim p(y|f_{\hat{\phi}}(\mathbf{X}))}[y]$
- A sample:  $y \sim p(y|f_{\vec{o}}(x))$



For a Gaussian  $\mathcal{N}(y|\mu,\sigma)$ these are both  $\mu$ 

So, if  $\mu = f_{\overline{\phi}}(\mathbf{x})$ , what would the prediction be?



 $h_5$ 

 $h_4$ 

## Gaussian distribution (regressions)

• If we assume *y* is Gaussian distributed

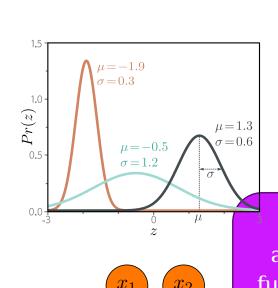
$$p(y|\mu,\sigma) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma^2}} e^{-\frac{(y-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}}$$

• The loss (negative log-likelihood) becomes

$$L(\phi) = -\sum_{i} \log p(y_{i}|f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}), \sigma)$$
$$= -\sum_{i} \left(-\frac{(y_{i} - \mu)^{2}}{2\sigma^{2}} - \frac{1}{2}\log 2\pi\sigma^{2}\right)$$

• Assuming,  $\mu = f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x})$  we have

$$\hat{\phi} = \arg\min_{\phi} L(\phi) = \sum_{i} (y_{i} - f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}))^{2}$$

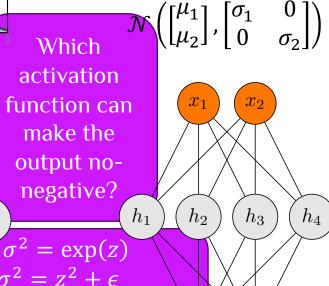


 $h_2$ 

 $h_3$ 

 $\sigma^2 = \text{softplus}(z)$ 

 $= \log(1 + \exp(z))$ 



 $(\mu, \sigma^2) = f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x})$ 

Mean squared error!

# Categorial distribution (multiclass classification)

If y categorial and is one-hot encoded then

$$p(\mathbf{y}|\pi) = \prod_{d} \pi_d^{y_d}$$

where  $\pi = f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x})$ 

• The loss (negative log-likelihood) becomes

$$L(\phi) = -\sum_{i} y_{id} \log \pi_{d}$$
 Sum over data points Sum over dimensions

 Softmax activation function converts neural network outputs into probabilities

$$\pi = \frac{\exp(z_d)}{\sum_d \exp(z_d)}$$

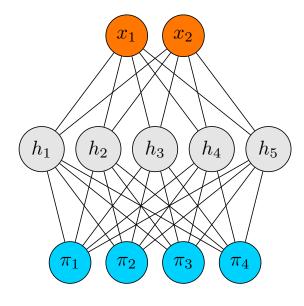
For four classes this is

 $0 \to (1,0,0,0)^T$ 

 $1 \to (0,1,0,0)^T$ 

 $2 \rightarrow (0,0,1,0)^T$ 

 $3 \rightarrow (0,0,0,1)^T$ 



Also know as **cross-entropy**, which is between p and q

$$H(p,q) = \sum_{x} p(x) \log q(x)$$

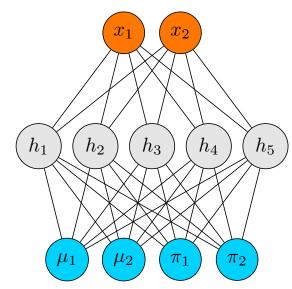
#### Combinations: Multiple outputs

• If y is multiple dimensional and dimensions are independent given x,

$$p(\mathbf{y}|f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x})) = \prod_{d} p(y_{d}|f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x})_{d})$$

and the loss becomes

$$L(\phi) = -\sum_{i} \sum_{d} p(y_{id} | f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x}_{i})_{d})$$



$$p(\mathbf{y}|f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x})) = \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{y}_{1:2}|f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x})_{1:2}, \operatorname{diag}(\sigma_{1}, \sigma_{2})^{T}) \cdot \operatorname{Cat}(\mathbf{y}_{3:4}|f_{\phi}(\mathbf{x})_{3:4})$$

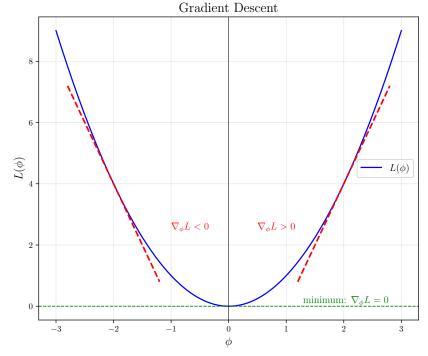
#### Learning: gradient decent

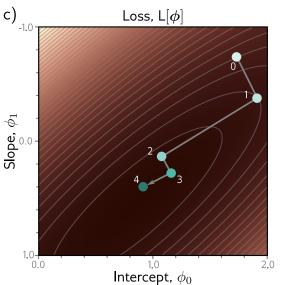
We want to find  $\hat{\phi} = \arg\min L(\phi)$ 

- Initialise  $\phi^{(0)}$  randomly (more about this later)
- Iterate (for  $t \in 1, ..., k$ )
  - Step 1 (gradient): Iterate  $\nabla_{\phi} L(\phi^{(t)}) = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{\partial L}{\partial \phi_1} \\ \vdots \\ \frac{\partial L}{\partial \phi_D} \end{pmatrix}$  Step 2 (update parameters):  $\phi^{(t+1)} = \phi^{(t)} \eta \nabla_{\phi} L(\phi^{(t)})$

#### Where

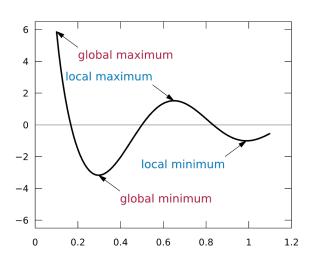
- *k* is the number of iterations (steps)
- $\eta$  is the step-size or learning rate

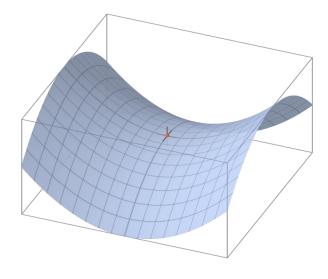




#### Local minima and saddle points

- Learning staps a critical points  $\phi$ , for which  $\nabla_{\phi} L(\phi) = 0$ 
  - Local minimal
    - All eigenvalues of Hessian  $H_L$  are positive
  - Saddle point
    - Hessian  $H_L$  has both positive and negative eigenvalues
- Gradient decent can get stuck in local minima
- Can escape saddle points
  - Local minima dominate in low-dimensional
  - Saddle points dominate in high dimensions (Dauphin et al., 2014, Choromanska et al., 2015)



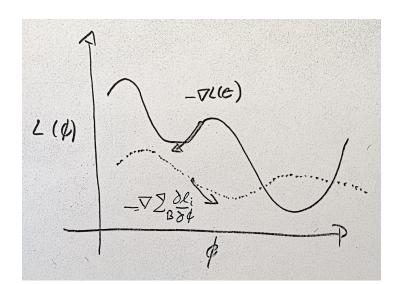


## Stochastic gradient descent (minibatch)

• At each step, the gradient is calculated on a minibatch

$$\phi^{(t+1)} = \phi^{(t)} - \sum_{i \in \mathcal{B}_t} \frac{\partial l_i(\phi^{(t)})}{\partial \phi}$$

- The batch  $\mathcal{B}_t \subseteq \{1, ..., n\}$  index-set is drawn stochasticallys
  - Usually w/o replacement and a full pass of the data is called an epoch
- $l_i(\phi^{(t)})$  is the loss on  $(\mathbf{x}_i, y_i)$  assuming that  $L(\phi) = \sum_{i=1}^n l_i(\phi)$
- Properties:
  - Uses an unbiased estimate of the gradient
    - The gradient is correct on average
    - Each training point contribute equally
  - Less computation expensive
  - Can escape local minima and saddle points
  - May help the network **generalise** better



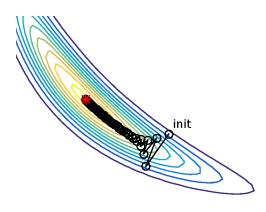
#### Momentum

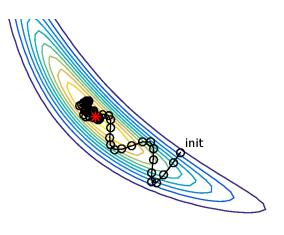
• We can use a weighted (decaying) average of previous gradients

• 
$$m^{(t+1)} = \beta m^{(t)} + (1 - \beta) \sum_{i \in \mathcal{B}_t} \frac{\partial l_i(\phi^{(t)})}{\partial \phi}$$

•  $\phi^{(t+1)} = \phi^{(t)} - \eta m^{(t+1)}$ where  $\beta \in [0,1)$  controls the smoothing

- Smoother the trajectory
- Reduces oscillations





## Adam (Adaptive moment estimation)

- In Adam, we normalise the gradients by their variance
- Estimate the first and second moments (weighted) of the gradients

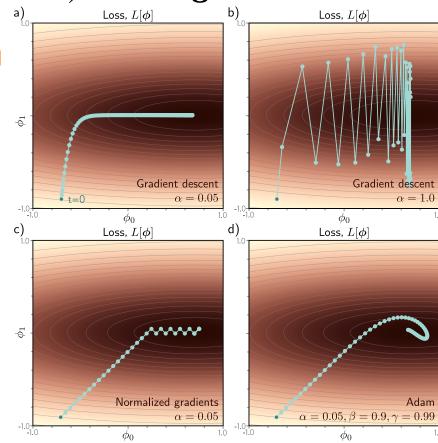
• 
$$m^{(t+1)} = \beta m^{(t)} + (1-\beta)\nabla_{\phi}L(\phi^{(t)})$$
  
•  $v^{(t+1)} = \gamma v^{(t)} + (1-\gamma)\left(\nabla_{\phi}L(\phi^{(t)})\right)^2$  Mini-batched

Compensate for initial values close to zero

• 
$$\widetilde{m}^{(t+1)} = \frac{m^{(t+1)}}{1-\beta^{t+1}}$$
 and  $\widetilde{v}^{(t+1)} = \frac{v^{(t)}}{1-\gamma^{t+1}}$ 

Update the parameters

• 
$$\phi^{(t+1)} = \phi^{(t)} - \eta \frac{\tilde{m}^{(t+1)}}{\sqrt{\tilde{v}^{(t+1)}} + \epsilon}$$
 Acts as signal-to-noise ratio



#### Hyperparameters

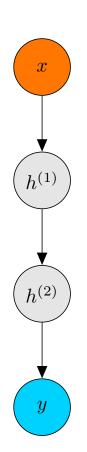
- Hyperparameters are distinct from the model parameters  $\phi$
- Architecture hyperparameters
  - Size of the hidden layers
  - Number of hidden layers
- Training algorithm hyperparameters
  - Choices of learning algorithm
  - Batch size
  - Learning rate (schedule)
- Next week will will talk about tuning them

#### Computing derivatives

- We use (stochastic) gradient decent to find arg min  $L(\phi)$ 
  - Each step in the algorithm requires  $\nabla_{\phi} L(\phi)$

• We use backpropagation to calculate gradients  $\nabla_{\phi} L(\phi)$ 

#### Backpropagation: scalar architecture



Consider a scalar only architecture

$$h^{(1)} = \sigma_1(w_1 x)$$
  

$$h^{(2)} = \sigma_2(w_2 x)$$
  

$$y = w_3 h^{(2)}$$

and some loss function

- We can calculate these values in a **forward pass**
- Using the chain rule, calculate derivative in a backward pass

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial w_3} = \frac{\partial L}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial w_3} \qquad \frac{\partial L}{\partial h^{(2)}}$$

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial w_2} = \frac{\partial L}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial h^{(2)}} \frac{\partial h^{(2)}}{\partial w_2}$$

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial w_1} = \frac{\partial L}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial h^{(2)}} \frac{\partial h^{(2)}}{\partial h^{(1)}} \frac{\partial h^{(1)}}{\partial w_1}$$

Recall chain rule for

$$z = f(y)$$
and
$$y = f(x)$$
is
$$\frac{\partial z}{\partial x} = \frac{\partial z}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial x}$$

#### Parameter initialisation

- We random initialise the weights, e.g.,  $\phi_i \sim \mathcal{N}(0, \sigma^2)$
- How to choose  $\sigma^2$ ?
  - If  $\sigma^2$  is too small, the signal vanishes as it passes thought the network
  - If  $\sigma^2$  is too big, the signal grows as it passes thought the network
- A reasonable criterion for keeping the information flow for all i, i'

$$\operatorname{Var}\left[h_{i}^{(\ell)}\right] = \operatorname{Var}\left[h_{i'}^{(\ell-1)}\right]$$

• Fr ReLU activation, this implies that

$$\sigma^2 = \frac{2}{D}$$

where *D* is the dimension of the layer

## Today's exercises!

- A Python notbook (2.1 FNN AutoDif Nanograd.ipynb)
  - Implement AutoDiff yourself
- Three problems from to book on covered material

# Thank you!