Hypothesis Representation

We could approach the classification problem ignoring the fact that y is discrete-valued, and use our old linear regression algorithm to try to predict y given x. However, it is easy to construct examples where this method performs very poorly. Intuitively, it also doesn't make sense for $h_\theta(x)$ to take values larger than 1 or smaller than 0 when we know that y ∈ {0, 1}. To fix this, let's change the form for our hypotheses $h_\theta(x)$ to satisfy $0 \leq h_\theta(x) \leq 1$. This is accomplished by plugging $\theta^T x$ into the Logistic Function.

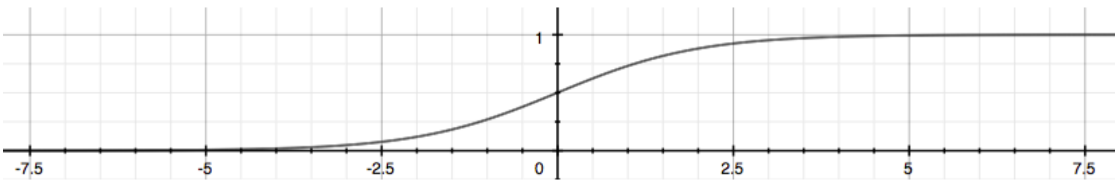
Our new form uses the "Sigmoid Function," also called the "Logistic Function":

$$h_\theta(x) = g(\theta^T x)$$

$$z = \theta^T x$$

$$g(z) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-z}}$$

The following image shows us what the sigmoid function looks like:



The function g(z), shown here, maps any real number to the (0, 1) interval, making it useful for transforming an arbitrary-valued function into a function better suited for classification.

$h_\theta(x)$ will give us the **probability** that our output is 1. For example, $h_\theta(x) = 0.7$ gives us a probability of 70% that our output is 1. Our probability that our prediction is 0 is just the complement of our probability that it is 1 (e.g. if probability that it is 1 is 70%, then the probability that it is 0 is 30%).

$$h_\theta(x) = P(y = 1 | x; \theta) = 1 - P(y = 0 | x; \theta)$$
$$P(y = 0 | x; \theta) + P(y = 1 | x; \theta) = 1$$

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