

# 02611 Optimization for Data Science (F25)

Convex sets and functions

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Martin S. Andersen

Technical University of Denmark

## Convex sets

- Definitions

- Convexity-preserving operations

- Examples of convex sets

- Generalized inequalities

## Convex functions

- Definitions

- Convexity-preserving operations

- Examples of convex functions

- Conjugate function

- Dual norm

# Affine combinations and sets

An **affine combination** of  $k$  points  $x_1, \dots, x_k \in \mathbb{R}^n$  is a linear combination of the form

$$y = \sum_{i=1}^k \theta_i x_i, \quad \mathbf{1}^T \theta = 1.$$

A set is an **affine set** if it contains all affine combinations of its points; can always be written as

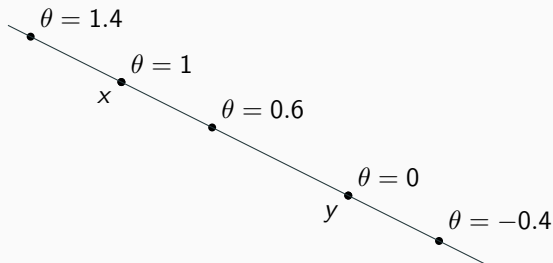
$$\mathcal{A} = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid Ax = b\}$$

The **affine hull** of a set  $\mathcal{S} \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ , denoted  $\text{aff } \mathcal{S}$ , is the smallest affine set containing  $\mathcal{S}$ .

## Affine combinations and sets (cont.)

Affine hull of two distinct points  $x$  and  $y$

$$\text{aff}\{x, y\} = \{\theta x + (1 - \theta)y \mid \theta \in \mathbb{R}\}$$

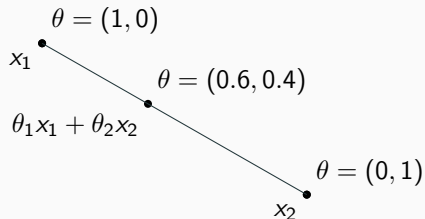
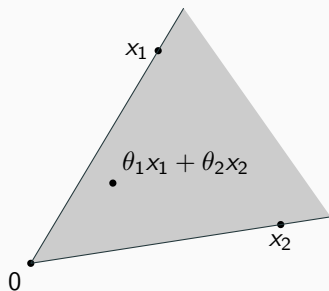


# Conic and convex combinations

A linear combination of  $x_1, \dots, x_k \in \mathbb{R}^n$ ,

$$y = \sum_{i=1}^k \theta_i x_i,$$

- is a **conic combination** if  $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^k$
- is a **convex combination** if  $\theta \in \Delta^k = \{\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^k \mid \mathbf{1}^T \theta = 1\}$

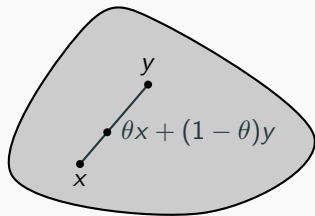


# Convex sets

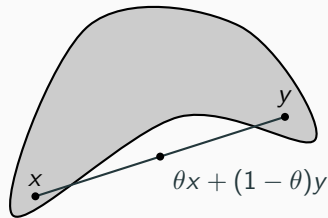
A set  $C \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  is **convex** iff for all  $x, y \in C$ ,

$$\theta x + (1 - \theta)y \in C, \quad \forall \theta \in [0, 1],$$

*i.e.*,  $C$  contains all line segments connecting points in  $C$ .



Convex set



Non-convex set

## Convex sets (cont.)

The **dimension** of a convex set  $C \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  is the dimension of its affine hull,

$$\dim C = \dim(\text{aff } C).$$

The **relative interior** of  $C$  is the interior of  $C$  within  $\text{aff } C$ ,

$$\text{relint } C = \{x \in C \mid \exists \epsilon > 0 \text{ such that } B_2(x, \epsilon) \cap \text{aff } C \subseteq C\},$$

where  $B_2(x, \epsilon)$  is the Euclidean ball centered at  $x$  with radius  $\epsilon$ .

The **convex hull** of a set  $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  is the smallest convex set that contains  $A$ ,

$$\text{conv } A = \cap \{S \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n \mid S \text{ is convex and } A \subseteq S\}.$$

# Convexity-preserving operations

- intersection
- affine transformation (image and preimage)
- perspective transformation



# Intersection

The intersection of convex sets is convex: if  $C_\tau$  is convex for all  $\tau \in T$ , then

$$C = \bigcap_{\tau \in T} C_\tau$$

is convex.

Proof follows from the definition of convexity:

$$x, y \in C \implies x, y \in C_\tau, \forall \tau \in T$$

and hence for all  $x, y \in C$  and  $\theta \in [0, 1]$ ,

$$\theta x + (1 - \theta)y \in C_\tau, \forall \tau \in T \implies \theta x + (1 - \theta)y \in C$$

# Affine transformation

Let  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^m$  be an affine function defined as  $f(x) = Ax + b$  with  $A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$  and  $b \in \mathbb{R}^m$ .

The **image** of a convex set  $C \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  under  $f$

$$f(C) = \{f(x) \mid x \in C\}$$

is convex.

The **preimage** of a convex set  $C \subseteq \mathbb{R}^m$  under  $f$

$$f^{-1}(C) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid f(x) \in C\}$$

is convex.

# Perspective transformation

The **perspective function**  $P: \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}_{++} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$  is defined as

$$P(u, s) = \frac{u}{s}.$$

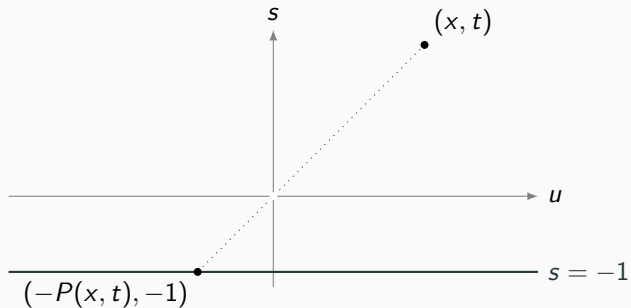
The **perspective** of a set  $C \subseteq \text{dom } P$  is the image of  $C$  under  $P$

$$P(C) = \{u/s \mid (u, s) \in C\}.$$

If  $C$  is convex, then  $P(C)$  is convex.

## Perspective transformation (cont.)

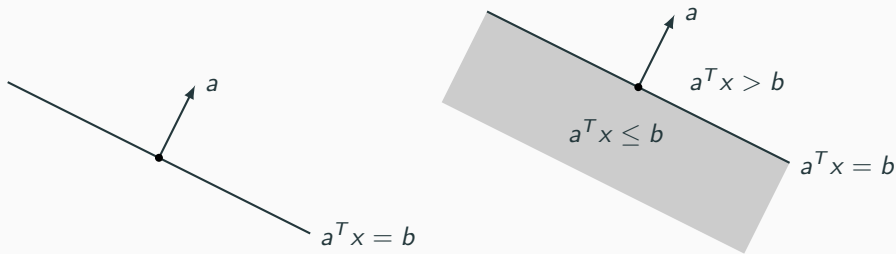
Interpretation: pinhole camera



# Hyperplanes and halfspaces

Given  $a \in \mathbb{R}^n$  ( $a \neq 0$ ) and  $b \in \mathbb{R}$

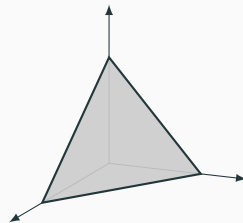
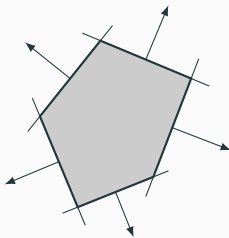
- the set  $\mathcal{H} = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid a^T x = b\}$  is called a **hyperplane**
- the set  $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid a^T x \leq b\}$  is called a (closed) **halfspace**



# Polyhedral set

A **polyhedral set** is the intersection of a finite number of halfspaces

$$\mathcal{P} = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid a_i^T x \leq b_i, \ i = 1, \dots, m\}$$



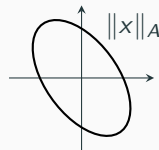
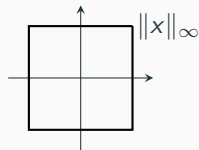
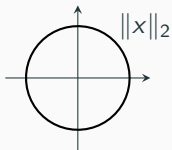
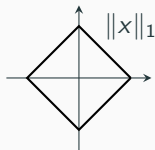
# Norm balls and ellipsoids

Given a norm  $\|\cdot\|$  on  $\mathbb{R}^n$ , the set

$$B(c, r) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid \|x - c\| \leq r\}$$

is a **norm ball** centered at  $c$  with radius  $r > 0$ .

An **ellipsoid** is a norm ball induced by a quadratic norm  $\|\cdot\|_A$  for some  $A \in \mathbb{S}_{++}^n$ .



# Convex cones

A set  $K \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  is a **cone** if  $x \in K \implies tx \in K$  for all  $t \geq 0$ .

- $K$  is **pointed** if  $K \cap (-K) = \{0\}$
- $K$  is **full-dimensional** if  $\text{aff } K = \mathbb{R}^n$  (or equivalently,  $\text{int } K \neq \emptyset$ )
- a **proper cone** is convex, closed, pointed, and full-dimensional
- a **polyhedral cone** is the intersection of a finite number of halfspaces

**Example**  $\mathbb{S}_+^n = \{A \in \mathbb{S}^n \mid x^T A x \geq 0 \ \forall x \in \mathbb{R}^n\}$  is a proper cone in  $\mathbb{S}^n$

$$A \in \mathbb{S}_+^n \implies tA \in \mathbb{S}_+^n \ \forall t \geq 0 \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbb{S}_+^n = \bigcap_{x \in \mathbb{R}^n} \{A \in \mathbb{S}^n \mid \langle A, xx^T \rangle \geq 0\}$$

i.e.,  $\mathbb{S}_+^n$  is the intersection of infinitely many closed halfspaces



# Norm cones

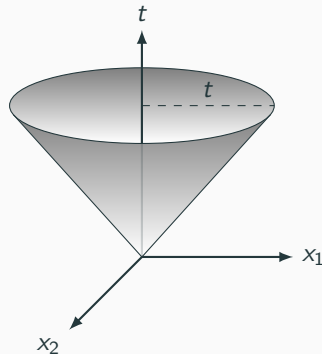
The **norm cone** associated with a norm  $\|\cdot\|$  on  $\mathbb{R}^{n-1}$  is the set

$$K = \{(x, t) \in \mathbb{R}^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R} \mid \|x\| \leq t\}$$

## Example

Second-order cone (Lorentz cone)

$$Q^n = \{(x, t) \in \mathbb{R}^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R} \mid \|x\|_2 \leq t\}$$

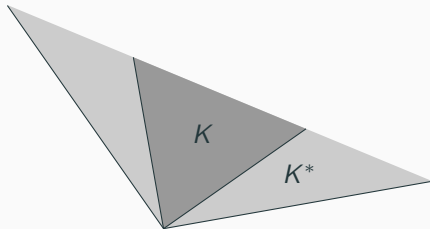


# Dual cone

The **dual cone** of a convex cone  $K \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  is the set

$$K^* = \{y \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid y^T x \geq 0 \ \forall x \in K\}$$

- $K^*$  is always convex and closed
- $K^{**} = K$  if  $K$  is a proper cone
- $K$  is **self-dual** if  $K^* = K$
- $-(K^*)$  is called the **polar cone** of  $K$



# Generalized inequalities

A proper cone  $K \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  defines a **relation**  $\succeq_K$  and a **generalized inequality** defined as

$$x \succeq_K y \iff x - y \in K \quad \text{and} \quad x \succ_K y \iff x - y \in \text{int } K$$

- $K = \mathbb{R}_+$  yields the usual inequality  $x \geq y$  for  $x, y \in \mathbb{R}$  ( $\geq$  is a **total order** on  $\mathbb{R}$ )
- $K = \mathbb{R}_+^n$  yields the componentwise inequality:  $x \succeq_K y \iff x_i \geq y_i$  for all  $i \in \mathbb{N}_n$
- $K = \mathbb{S}_+^n$  yields the **Loewner order**:  $A \succeq_K B \iff A - B \in \mathbb{S}_+^n$

The relation  $\succeq_K$  generally defines a **partial order** on  $\mathbb{R}^n$  with the following properties:

1.  $x \succeq_K x$  for all  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$  (reflexivity)
2. if  $x \succeq_K y$  and  $y \succeq_K x$ , then  $x = y$  (antisymmetry)
3. if  $x \succeq_K y$  and  $y \succeq_K z$ , then  $x \succeq_K z$  (transitivity)

## Generalized inequalities (cont.)

The strict relation  $\succ_K$  defines a **strict partial order** on  $\mathbb{R}^n$  with the following properties:

1. there is no  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$  such that  $x \succ_K x$  (irreflexivity)
2. if  $x \succ_K y$ , then  $y \not\succ_K x$  (asymmetry)
3. if  $x \succ_K y$  and  $y \succ_K z$ , then  $x \succ_K z$  (transitivity)

Transitivity implies that

$$a \succeq_K b, c \succeq_K d \implies a + c \succeq_K b + d$$

$$a \succ_K b, c \succ_K d \implies a + c \succ_K b + d$$

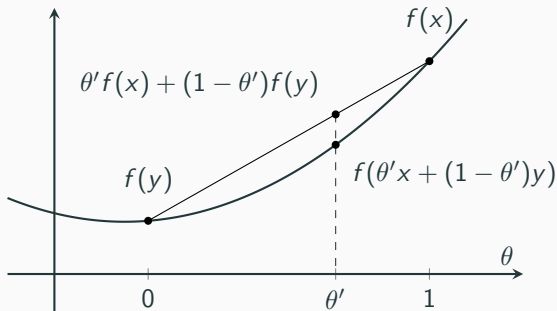
**Example** Define  $K = \mathbb{R}_+^2$ ,  $x = (3, 1)$ , and  $y = (0, 2)$ .

$$x \succ_K 0, \quad y \succeq_K 0, \quad x \not\succ_K y, \quad y \not\succ_K x$$

# Convex functions

$f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  is **convex** if its domain  $\text{dom } f$  is a convex set and for all  $x, y \in \text{dom } f$ ,

$$f(\theta x + (1 - \theta)y) \leq \theta f(x) + (1 - \theta)f(y), \quad \forall \theta \in [0, 1].$$

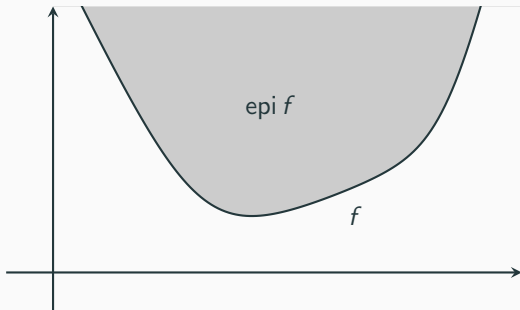


$f$  is **concave** if  $-f$  is convex

# Convex functions: epigraph characterization

$f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  is convex if and only if its epigraph is a convex set, *i.e.*, for all  $x, y \in \text{dom } f$

$$\theta \begin{bmatrix} x \\ f(x) \end{bmatrix} + (1 - \theta) \begin{bmatrix} y \\ f(y) \end{bmatrix} \in \text{epi } f, \quad \forall \theta \in [0, 1]$$



# Strict and strong convexity

$f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  is

- **strictly convex** if and only if for all  $x, y \in \text{dom } f$  with  $x \neq y$

$$f(\theta x + (1 - \theta)y) < \theta f(x) + (1 - \theta)f(y), \quad \forall \theta \in [0, 1]$$

- **strongly convex** with parameter  $\mu > 0$  if and only if for all  $x, y \in \text{dom } f$

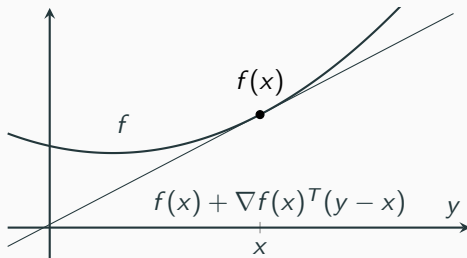
$$f(\theta x + (1 - \theta)y) \leq \theta f(x) + (1 - \theta)f(y) - \frac{\theta(1 - \theta)\mu}{2} \|x - y\|_2^2, \quad \forall \theta \in [0, 1]$$

equivalently,  $f$  is  $\mu$ -strongly convex if and only if  $g(x) = f(x) - (\mu/2)\|x\|_2^2$  is convex

## First-order condition for convexity

Suppose  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  is continuously differentiable and  $\text{dom } f$  is open and convex. Then  $f$  is convex if and only if

$$f(y) \geq f(x) + \nabla f(x)^T(y - x), \quad \forall x, y \in \text{dom } f$$



- first-order Taylor expansion of  $f$  provides a global affine lower bound
- $x$  is a global minimizer of  $f$  if and only if  $\nabla f(x) = 0$



## First-order condition for convexity (cont.)

**Strict convexity**  $f$  is strictly convex if and only if for all  $x, y \in \text{dom } f$  with  $x \neq y$

$$f(y) > f(x) + \nabla f(x)^T(y - x)$$

**Strong convexity**  $f$  is  $\mu$ -strongly convex if and only if for all  $x, y \in \text{dom } f$

$$f(y) \geq f(x) + \nabla f(x)^T(y - x) + \frac{\mu}{2}\|y - x\|_2^2$$

- a stationary point of  $f$  is a unique global minimizer of  $f$  if  $f$  is strictly or strongly convex
- strong convexity implies that sublevel sets of  $f$  are bounded

## Second-order condition for convexity

A twice continuously differentiable function  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  is convex on  $\text{dom } f$  if and only if

$$\nabla^2 f(x) \succeq 0, \quad \forall x \in \text{dom } f$$

- $\nabla^2 f(x) \succ 0$  for all  $x \in \text{dom } f$  implies that  $f$  is strictly convex (the converse is not true)
- $\nabla^2 f(x) \succeq \mu I$  for all  $x \in \text{dom } f$  and for some  $\mu > 0$  implies that  $f$  is  $\mu$ -strongly convex

# Convexity-preserving operations

- scaling, sums, and integrals
- pointwise maximum and supremum
- affine transformation
- perspective transformation
- partial infimum
- square of nonnegative convex function

**Nonnegative scaling** if  $f$  is convex, then so is  $\alpha f$  for  $\alpha \geq 0$

**Sum** if  $f$  and  $g$  are proper convex functions, then  $f + g$  is proper convex

**Integral** if  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^p \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  and  $f(x, y)$  is proper convex in  $x$  for each  $y \in \mathbb{R}^p$ , then

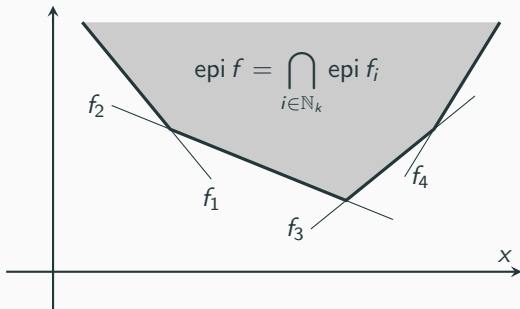
$$h(x) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^p} f(x, y) dy$$

is proper convex

# Pointwise maximum and supremum

The **pointwise maximum** of a family of convex functions  $f_i: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  for  $i \in \mathbb{N}_k$  is itself convex.

$$f(x) = \max_{i \in \mathbb{N}_k} f_i(x)$$



## Pointwise maximum and supremum (cont.)

The **pointwise supremum** of a family of uncountably many convex functions is itself convex.

Let  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^p \rightarrow (-\infty, +\infty]$  and suppose  $f(x, y)$  is convex in  $x$  for each  $y \in \mathcal{Y}$ . Then

$$h(x) = \sup_{y \in \mathcal{Y}} f(x, y)$$

is convex.

# Affine transformation

Suppose  $f: \mathbb{R}^m \rightarrow (-\infty, \infty]$  is convex and  $g: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow (-\infty, +\infty]$  is defined as

$$g(x) = f(Ax + b), \quad A \in \mathbb{R}^{m \times n}, \quad b \in \mathbb{R}^m.$$

Then  $g$  is convex since  $\text{epi } g$  is the preimage of  $\text{epi } f$  under an affine transformation, *i.e.*,

$$\text{epi } g = \{(x, t) \mid f(Ax + b) \leq t\} = \{(x, t) \mid (Ax + b, t) \in \text{epi } f\}.$$

If  $f$  is twice continuously differentiable, then by convexity of  $f$ ,

$$\nabla^2 g(x) = A^T \nabla^2 f(Ax + b) A \succeq 0.$$

# Perspective transformation

The perspective of a function  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow (-\infty, +\infty]$  is the function  $P_f: \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R} \rightarrow (-\infty, +\infty]$  defined as

$$P_f(x, t) = \begin{cases} tf(x/t), & t > 0, \\ +\infty, & t \leq 0. \end{cases}$$

If  $f$  is proper convex, then  $P_f$  is convex.

**Example** Suppose  $g(x, t) = x^T x / t$  with  $\text{dom } g = \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}_{++}$ .

We can write  $g$  as  $g(x, t) = P_f(x, t)$  for  $f(x) = x^T x$ , and hence  $g$  is convex.



The **partial infimum** of  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^p \rightarrow (-\infty, +\infty]$  is a function  $h: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow (-\infty, +\infty]$ , defined as

$$h(x) = \inf_y f(x, y).$$

If  $f$  is convex, then  $h$  is convex.

Let  $T: \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^p \times \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^p \times \mathbb{R}$  be the linear transformation defined as  $T(x, y, t) = (x, t)$ . Then

$$T(\{(x, y, t) \mid f(x, y) < t\}) = \{(x, t) \mid h(x) < t\}.$$

Interpretation: the **strict epigraph** of  $h$  is the image of that of  $f$  under  $T$ .

**Example** Let  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be defined as

$$f(x, y) = \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \end{bmatrix}^T \begin{bmatrix} A & B \\ B^T & C \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{where} \quad \begin{bmatrix} A & B \\ B^T & C \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{S}_{++}^n.$$

Convexity of  $f$  implies that the partial infimum

$$h(x) = \inf_y f(x, y) = x^T (A - BC^{-1}B^T)x$$

is convex, and hence the **Schur complement**  $A - BC^{-1}B^T$  must be positive semidefinite.

## Square of nonnegative convex function

Let  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_+$  be a nonnegative convex function. Then  $g = f^2$  is convex.

By convexity of  $f$ , we have for all  $x, y \in \mathbb{R}^n$  and  $\theta \in [0, 1]$ ,

$$f(\theta x + (1 - \theta)y) \leq \theta f(x) + (1 - \theta)f(y).$$

Squaring both sides yields

$$\begin{aligned} g(\theta x + (1 - \theta)y) &\leq \theta^2 f(x)^2 + (1 - \theta)^2 f(y)^2 + 2\theta(1 - \theta)f(x)f(y) \\ &= -\theta(1 - \theta)(f(x) - f(y))^2 + \theta f(x)^2 + (1 - \theta)f(y)^2 \\ &\leq \theta f(x)^2 + (1 - \theta)f(y)^2 \\ &= \theta g(x) + (1 - \theta)g(y). \end{aligned}$$

## Basic examples of convex and concave functions

- Linear and affine functions are both convex and concave.
- Absolute value:  $f(x) = |x|$  is convex on  $\mathbb{R}$ .
- Powers:  $f(x) = x^\alpha$  with  $\text{dom } f = \mathbb{R}_{++}$  is concave if  $\alpha \in [0, 1]$  and convex if  $\alpha \notin (0, 1)$ .
- Powers of absolute value:  $f(x) = |x|^\alpha$  is convex on  $\mathbb{R}$  if  $\alpha \geq 1$ .
- Exponential function:  $f(x) = \exp(x)$  is convex on  $\mathbb{R}$ .
- Logarithm:  $f(x) = \ln(x)$  with  $\text{dom } f = \mathbb{R}_{++}$  is concave.
- Negative entropy:  $f(x) = x \ln(x)$  with  $\text{dom } f = \mathbb{R}_+$  and  $f(0) = 0$  is convex.
- Quadratic-over-linear:  $f(x, y) = x^2/y$  with  $\text{dom } f = \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}_{++}$  is convex.
- One-sided square:  $f(x) = \max(0, x)^2$  is convex on  $\mathbb{R}$ .

All norms are convex functions, which is an immediate consequence of the triangle inequality.

Equivalently, if  $f(x) = \|x\|$  is a norm, then

$$\text{epi } f = \{(x, t) \mid \|x\| \leq t\}$$

is a norm cone, which is a convex set.

## Indicator and support functions

The **indicator function** of a set  $C \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  is the function  $I_C: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \{0, +\infty\}$  defined as

$$I_C(x) = \begin{cases} 0, & x \in C, \\ +\infty, & x \notin C. \end{cases}$$

This is convex function if and only if the set  $C$  is convex, and it is proper if  $C \neq \emptyset$ .

The **support function** of a nonempty set  $C \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$  is the function  $S_C: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  defined as

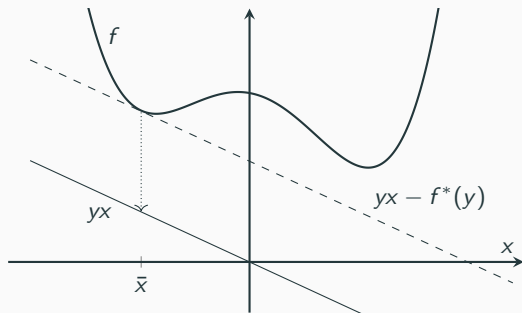
$$S_C(x) = \sup_{y \in C} x^T y.$$

This is always a convex function, even if  $C$  is not convex.

# Conjugate function

The **conjugate** of a function  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  is the function  $f^*: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$  defined as

$$f^*(y) = \sup_x \{y^T x - f(x)\}. \quad (1)$$



# Properties of the conjugate function

- $f^*$  is always convex, even if  $f$  is not convex.
- $f^*$  is closed (epi  $f^*$  is the intersection of closed halfspaces).
- $f^*(0) = \sup_x \{0 - f(x)\} = -\inf_x f(x)$  is the negative of the infimum of  $f$ .
- **Fenchel–Young inequality**: if  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow (-\infty, +\infty]$  is proper, then

$$f(x) + f^*(y) \geq y^T x, \quad \forall x, y,$$

with equality if the supremum of  $y^T x - f(x)$  is attained at  $x$ .

- The **biconjugate** of  $f$  is  $f^{**} = (f^*)^*$  and satisfies

$$f(x) \geq \sup_y \{x^T y - f^*(y)\} = f^{**}(x).$$

- $f^{**}$  is the (lower) **convex envelope** of  $f$
- **Fenchel–Moreau theorem**: if  $f$  is proper, then  $f^{**} = f$  if and only if  $f$  is convex and closed.



## Example: conjugate of strongly convex quadratic form

Let  $f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be defined as

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{2}x^T Px, \quad P \in \mathbb{S}_{++}^n.$$

The conjugate function is

$$f^*(y) = \sup_x \left\{ y^T x - \frac{1}{2}x^T Px \right\} = \frac{1}{2}y^T P^{-1}y.$$

The Fenchel–Young inequality yields

$$\frac{1}{2}x^T Px + \frac{1}{2}y^T P^{-1}y \geq y^T x$$

with equality iff  $y = Px$ .

## Example: conjugate of indicator function

Let  $I_C$  be the indicator function of a set  $C \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ . Then the conjugate function is

$$I_C^*(y) = \sup_x \{y^T x - I_C(x)\} = \sup_{x \in C} y^T x = S_C(y).$$

**Special case**  $C$  is a nonempty convex cone  $K \subset \mathbb{R}^n$

$$S_K(y) = \sup_{x \in K} y^T x = I_{-(K^*)}(y)$$

i.e.,  $I_K^* = I_{-(K^*)}$  is the indicator function of the polar cone  $-(K^*)$ .

# Dual norm

The **dual norm** of a norm  $\|\cdot\|$  on  $\mathbb{R}^n$  is defined as

$$\|y\|_* = \sup_{\|x\| \leq 1} y^T x = \sup_x \{y^T x - I_B(x)\} = I_B^*(y) = S_B(y)$$

where  $B = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid \|x\| \leq 1\}$ .

Alternatively, we can write

$$\|y\|_* = \sup_{x \neq 0} \frac{x^T y}{\|x\|}$$

which leads to a **generalized Cauchy–Schwartz inequality**

$$\|x\| \|y\|_* \geq |x^T y|, \quad \forall x, y \in \mathbb{R}^n.$$

# Dual of dual norm

The dual of the dual norm is  $\|\cdot\|_{**} = \|\cdot\|$ .

## Proof sketch

- $\|y\|_* > 1 \iff \exists x: x^T y / \|x\| > 1 \implies \sup_x \{y^T x - \|x\|\} = +\infty$
- $\|y\|_* \leq 1 \iff \nexists x: x^T y / \|x\| > 1 \implies \sup_x \{y^T x - \|x\|\} = 0$
- conjugate function of  $\|x\|$  is the indicator function  $I_{B_*}$  of the dual norm ball

$$B_* = \{y \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid \|y\|_* \leq 1\}$$

- $\|\cdot\|_{**} = I_{B_*}^* = \|\cdot\|$

## Dual norm examples

- Euclidean norm on  $\mathbb{R}^n$ :  $\|y\|_2 = \sqrt{y^T y}$

$$\|y\|_* = \sup_{\|x\|_2 \leq 1} y^T x = \|y\|_2$$

- $\ell_1$  norm on  $\mathbb{R}^n$ :  $\|y\|_1 = \sum_{i=1}^n |y_i|$

$$\|y\|_* = \sup_{\|x\|_1 \leq 1} y^T x = \|y\|_\infty$$

- $\ell_p$  norm ( $p \geq 1$ ) on  $\mathbb{R}^n$ :  $\|y\|_p = (\sum_{i=1}^n |y_i|^p)^{1/p}$

$$\|y\|_* = \sup_{\|x\|_p \leq 1} y^T x = \|y\|_q, \quad 1/p + 1/q = 1$$

- quadratic norm on  $\mathbb{R}^n$ :  $\|y\|_A = \sqrt{y^T A y}$  with  $A \in \mathbb{S}_{++}^n$

$$\|y\|_* = \sup_{\|x\|_A \leq 1} y^T x = \|y\|_{A^{-1}}$$

## Dual norm examples (cont.)

- Frobenius norm on  $\mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ :  $\|Y\|_F = \sqrt{\langle Y, Y \rangle}$

$$\|Y\|_* = \sup_{\|X\|_F \leq 1} \langle Y, X \rangle = \|Y\|_F$$

- Spectral norm on  $\mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ :  $\|Y\|_2 = \sigma_1(Y)$

$$\|Y\|_* = \sup_{\|X\|_2 \leq 1} \langle Y, X \rangle = \sum_{i=1}^{\min(m,n)} \sigma_i(Y)$$

(follows from von Neumann's trace inequality and unitary invariance of the spectral norm)