

1 Chapter 9 Top-Level Nuisance Variables and Ambiguity

Problem 8.2 *In each of the following forms of behavior, mention one nuisance variable:*

- (a) **(Vision)** Estimating how heavy an object is that you are about to pick up.
 - (b) **(Vision)** Estimating the time it will take for an approaching car to reach you.
 - (c) **(Olfaction)** Determining whether food has gone bad.
 - (d) **(Cognition)** Estimating how someone will respond to your criticism.
 - (e) **(Cognition)** Estimating your capabilities based on your success in a particular task.
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- (a) *Nuisance variable:* Object material (e.g., metal vs. plastic) — appearance might not indicate actual mass.
 - (b) *Nuisance variable:* Lighting conditions or shadow length — can affect perception of speed and distance.
 - (c) *Nuisance variable:* Temperature at which the food was stored — affects the rate of spoilage and odor intensity.
 - (d) *Nuisance variable:* The person's current mood or emotional state — it modulates response but is not directly observable.
 - (e) *Nuisance variable:* Task difficulty — success may reflect ease of task rather than actual capability.