

# TensorInference: A Julia package for probabilistic inference through tensor-based technology




Martin Roa-Villescas<sup>1\*</sup> and Jin-Guo Liu<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eindhoven University of Technology <sup>2</sup> Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou)

\* These authors contributed equally.

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## Summary

TensorInference.jl is a Julia ([Bezanson et al., 2017](#)) library designed for performing probabilistic inference in discrete graphical models. It leverages the recent explosion of advances in the field of tensor networks to provide high-performance solutions for common inference tasks. These tasks include calculating: 1) the partition function or probability of evidence, 2) the marginal probability distribution over each variable given evidence, 3) the most likely assignment to all variables given evidence, and 4) the most likely assignment to the query variables after marginalizing out the remaining variables. The infrastructure based on tensor networks allows users to define the contraction ordering method, which is known to have a significant impact on the computational performance of these algorithms. A predefined set of state-of-the-art contraction ordering methods is made available to users. These methods include the *recursive multi-tensor contraction method* (TreeSA) ([Kalachev et al., 2022](#)), the *hyper-optimized tensor network contraction method* (KaHyParBipartite) ([Gray & Kourtis, 2021](#)), the *hierarchical partitioning with dynamic slicing method* (SABipartite) ([Pan & Zhang, 2021](#)), and a *greedy-based memory minimization method* (GreedyMethod) ([Liu et al., 2022](#)). Finally, TensorInference.jl harnesses the latest developments in computational technology, including a highly optimized set of BLAS routines and GPU technology.

## Statement of need

A major challenge in developing intelligent systems is the ability to reason under uncertainty, a challenge that appears in many real-world problems across various domains, including artificial intelligence, medical diagnosis, computer vision, computational biology, and natural language processing. Reasoning under uncertainty involves drawing global insights from local observations, a process known as *probabilistic inference*.

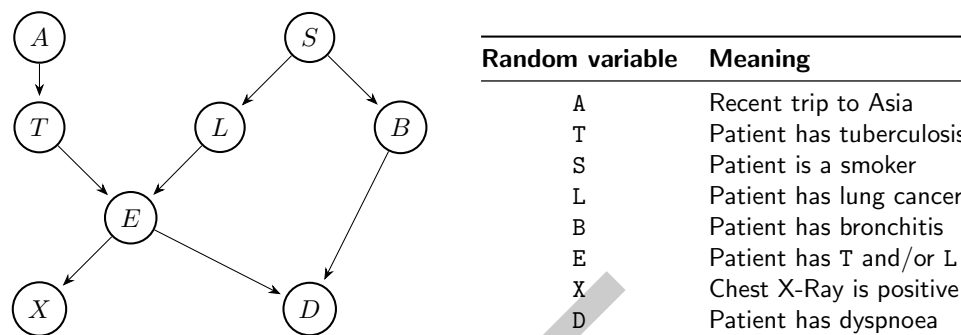
*Probabilistic graphical models* (PGMs) provide a unified framework to address these challenges. These models use graphs to concisely represent the joint probability distribution of complex systems by exploiting the conditional independence between variables in the model. Additionally, they form the foundation for various algorithms that enable efficient probabilistic inference.

However, performing probabilistic inference on many real-world problems remains intractable due to the intrinsic complexity of performing combinatorial optimization tasks in high dimensional spaces. To tackle these challenge, more efficient and scalable inference algorithms are needed.

We present TensorInference.jl, a Julia ([Bezanson et al., 2017](#)) package for probabilistic inference. This package combines the representational capabilities of PGMs with the computational power of tensor networks. By harnessing the best of both worlds, TensorInference.jl aims to enhance the performance of probabilistic inference, thereby expanding the tractability spectrum of exact inference for more complex models.

## Usage example

The graph below corresponds to the *ASIA network*, a simple Bayesian model used extensively in educational settings. It was introduced in Lauritzen & Spiegelhalter (1988).



**Figure 1:** The ASIA network: a simplified example of a Bayesian network from the context of medical diagnosis (Lauritzen & Spiegelhalter, 1988). It describes the probabilistic relationships between different random variables which correspond to possible diseases, symptoms, risk factors and test results.

We now demonstrate how to use `TensorInference.jl` for conducting a variety of inference tasks on this toy example.

```
# Import the TensorInference package, which provides the functionality needed
# for working with tensor networks and probabilistic graphical models.
using TensorInference

# Load the ASIA network model from the `asia.uai` file located in the examples
# directory. Refer to the documentation of this package for a description of the
# format of this file.
instance = read_instance(pkgdir(TensorInference), "examples", "asia", "asia.uai"))

# Create a tensor network representation of the loaded model.
tn = TensorNetworkModel(instance)

# Calculate the log10 partition function
probability(tn) |> first |> log10

# Calculate the marginal probabilities of each random variable in the model.
marginals(tn)

# Retrieve the variables associated with the tensor network model.
get_vars(tn)

# Set an evidence: Assume that the "X-ray" result (variable 7) is positive.
set_evidence!(instance, 7 => 0)

# Since setting an evidence may affect the contraction order of the tensor
# network, recompute it.
tn = TensorNetworkModel(instance)

# Calculate the maximum log-probability among all configurations.
maximum_logp(tn)
```

```
# Generate 10 samples from the probability distribution represented by the
# model.
sample(tn, 10)

# Retrieve both the maximum log-probability and the most probable
# configuration. In this configuration, the most likely outcomes are that the
# patient smokes (variable 3) and has lung cancer (variable 4).
logp, cfg = most_probable_config(tn)

# Compute the most probable values of certain variables (e.g., 4 and 7) while
# marginalizing over others. This is known as Maximum a Posteriori (MAP)
# estimation.
set_query!(instance, [4, 7])
mmap = MMAPModel(instance)

# Get the most probable configurations for variables 4 and 7.
most_probable_config(mmap)

# Compute the total log-probability of having lung cancer. The results suggest
# that the probability is roughly half.
log_probability(mmap, [1, 0]), log_probability(mmap, [0, 0])
```

## Acknowledgments

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