

Optimization methods for ℓ_0 -problems

Théo Guyard

CIRRELT, Montréal, Canada – March 6th, 2025

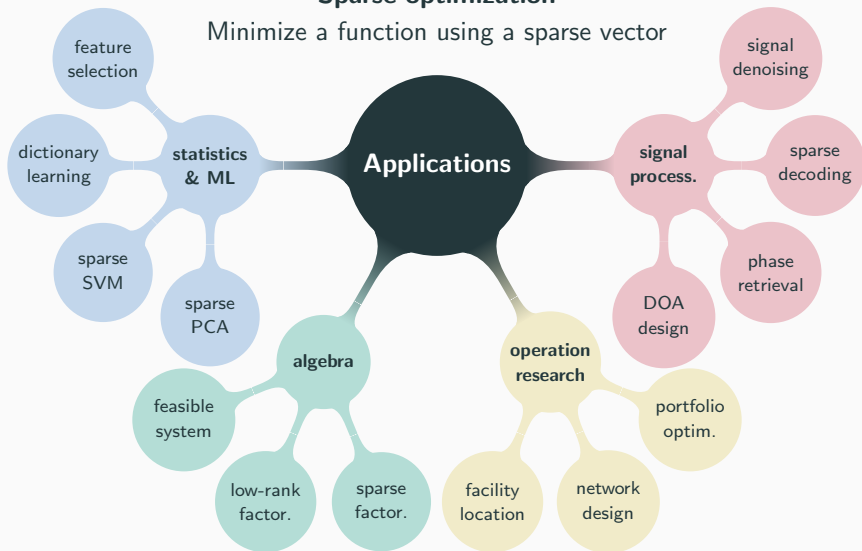
Sparse optimization

Minimize a function using a sparse vector

Sparse optimization

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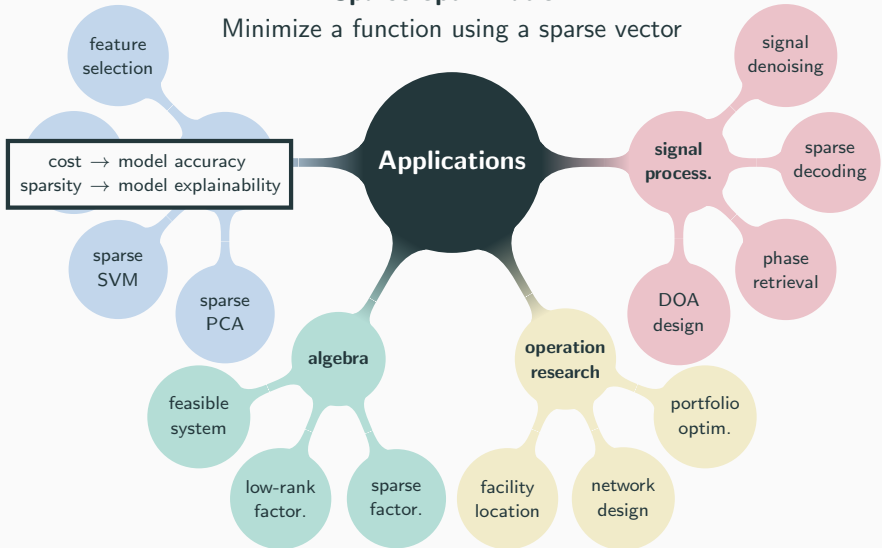
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Sparse optimization

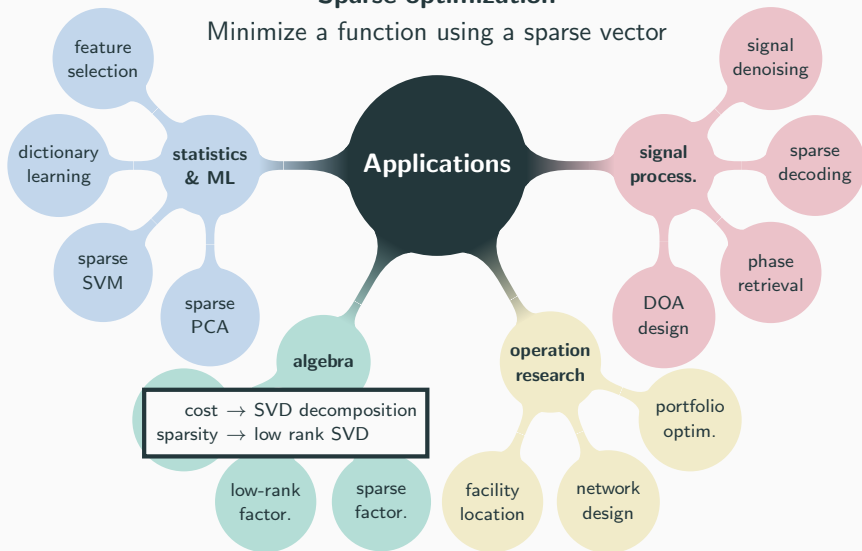
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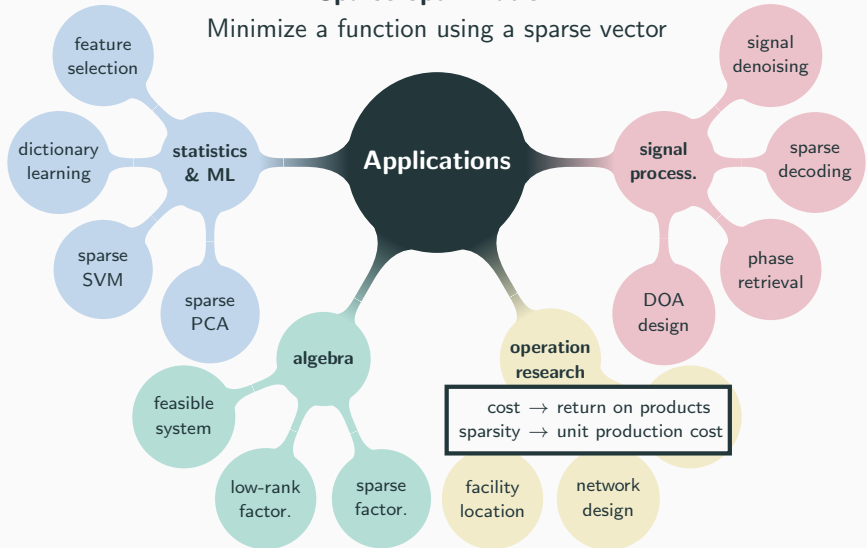
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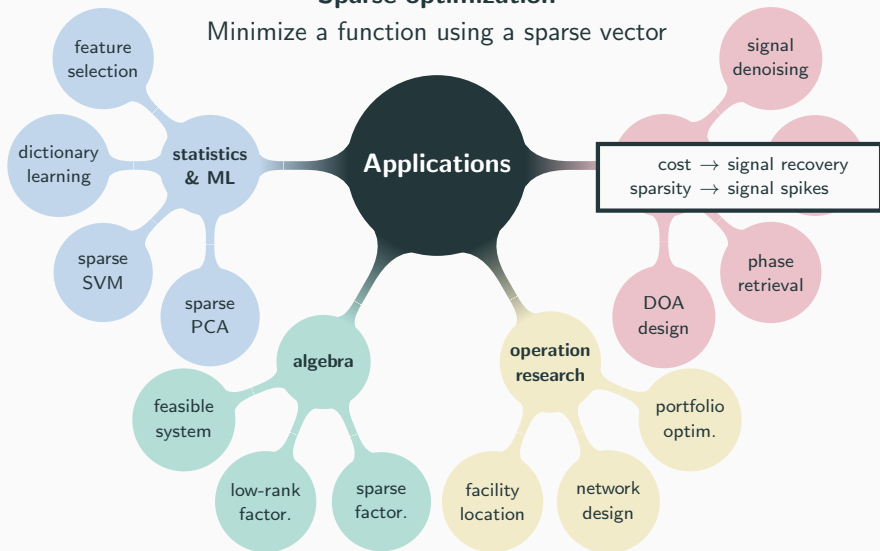
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Minimized, constrained, or regularized problem ?

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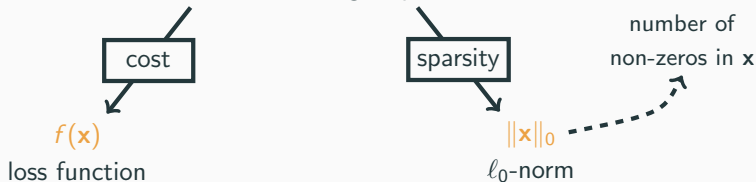
$f(\mathbf{x})$

loss function

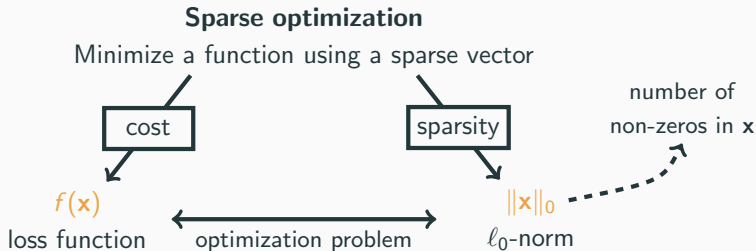
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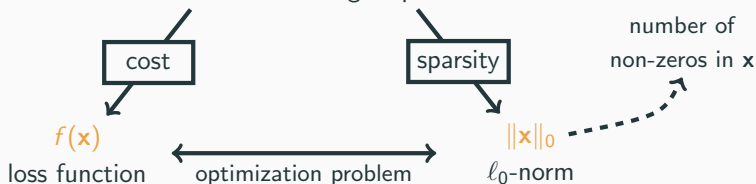
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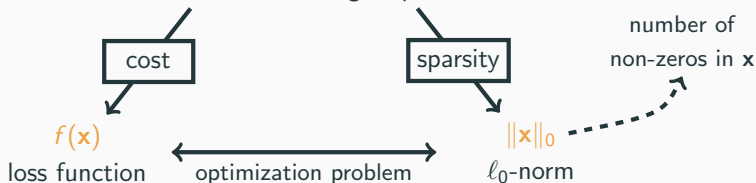
Constrained problem

$$\begin{array}{ll} \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} & f(\mathbf{x}) \\ \text{subject to} & \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 \leq s \end{array}$$

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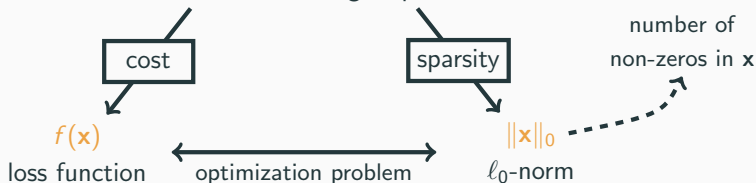
Minimized problem

$$\begin{array}{ll} \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} & \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 \\ \text{subject to} & f(\mathbf{x}) \leq \epsilon \end{array}$$

Minimized, constrained, or regularized problem ?

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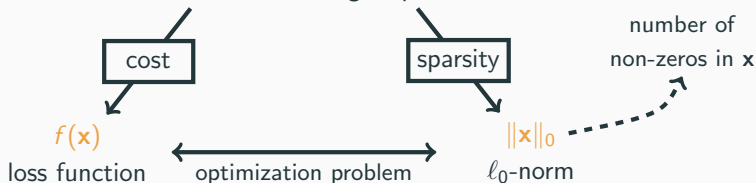
Regularized problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0$$

Minimized, constrained, or regularized problem ?

Sparse optimization

Minimize a function using a sparse vector



Constrained problem

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} \quad & f(\mathbf{x}) + h(\mathbf{x}) \\ \text{subject to} \quad & \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 \leq s \end{aligned}$$

Minimized problem

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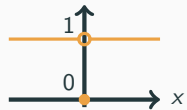
Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

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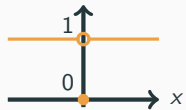
ℓ_0 -norm in 1d



Problem

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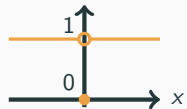
non-convex, non-smooth,
non-continuous, ...

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

NP-hard to solve

ℓ_0 -norm in 1d



non-convex, non-smooth,
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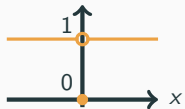
A bit of history

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

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1995

Heuristics

MP, OMP, ...

S. Mallat (1993)



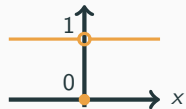
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Recovery cond.

RIP, NSP, ...

E. Candes (2004)

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○ ○ ●

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\mathbf{x}^1 \mathbf{x}^2 \mathbf{x}^3

Heuristics solve

ℓ_0 -problem

under some

(strong)

conditions

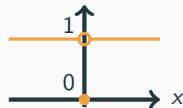
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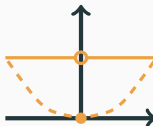
Convex approx.

Lasso, Elastic-Net, ...

R. Tibshirani (2005)

○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○
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 \mathbf{x}^1 \mathbf{x}^2 \mathbf{x}^3

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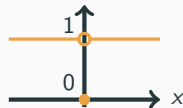
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2010

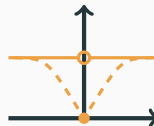
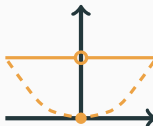
Concave approx.

SCAD, MCP, ...

C. Zhang (2010)



Heuristics solve
 ℓ_0 -problem
under some
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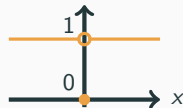
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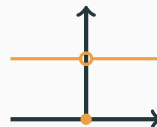
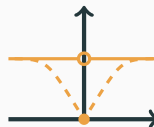
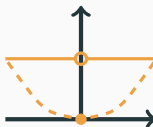
2015

Exact methods

MIP, BnB, ...
D. Bertsimas (2016)



Heuristics solve
 ℓ_0 -problem
under some
(strong)
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Topic of this talk

Ok, ℓ_0 -problems can
be addressed exactly!



(you)

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(you)

What are the solution
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(also you if you're an optim. nerd)

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1) MIP-based methods

Based on off-the-shelf solvers

Poor numerical performances

Topic of this talk

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(you)

What are the solution
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(also you if you're an optim. nerd)

1) MIP-based methods

Based on off-the-shelf solvers

Poor numerical performances

2) BnB-based methods

Tailored solution method

Better numerical performances

Mixed-Integer Programming

Application

ML, Stats, Signal, Operation Research, ...



Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

MIP – Pipeline

Application

ML, Stats, Signal, Operation Research, ...



Problem

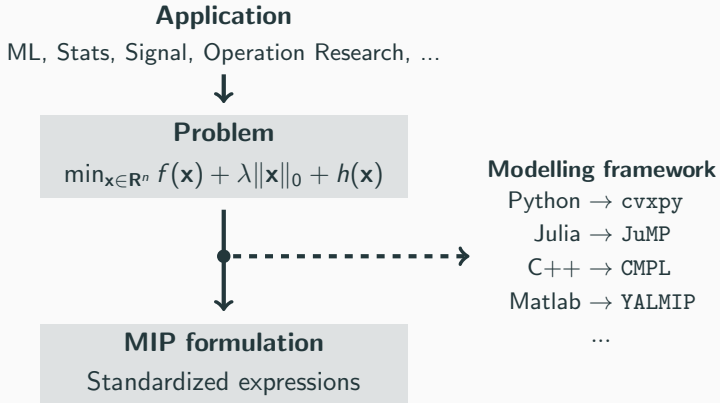
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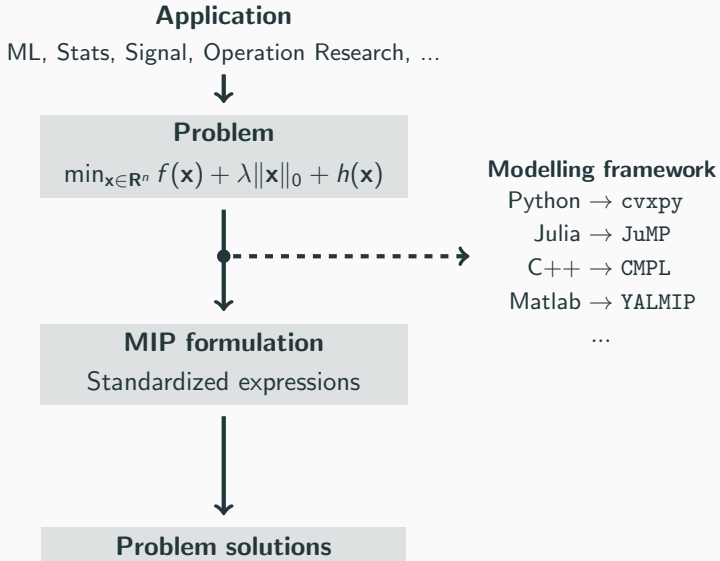
MIP formulation

Standardized expressions

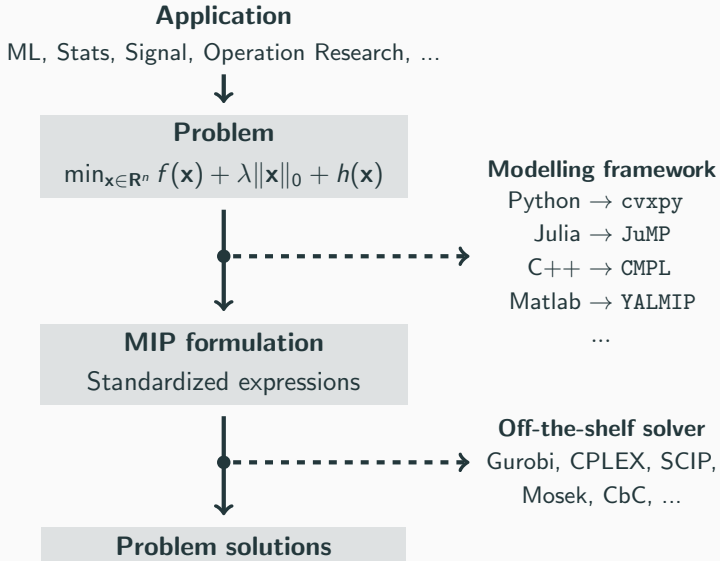
MIP – Pipeline



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MIP – Pipeline



MIP – Formulation

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

MIP formulation

Use standardized expressions
linear, quadratic, conic, ...

MIP – Formulation

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MIP formulation

Use standardized expressions
linear, quadratic, conic, ...

Linearize the ℓ_0 -norm

We have $\|\mathbf{x}\|_0 = \mathbf{1}^T \mathbf{z}$ whenever

$$z_i = 0 \iff x_i = 0, \forall i$$

$$z_i = 1 \iff x_i \neq 0, \forall i$$

for all $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n$ and $\mathbf{z} \in \{0, 1\}^n$

MIP – Formulation

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

linearize the ℓ_0 -norm

Linearized formulation

$$\begin{cases} \min & f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \mathbf{1}^T \mathbf{z} + h(\mathbf{x}) \\ \text{s.t.} & z_i = 0 \implies x_i = 0, \forall i \\ & \mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n, \mathbf{z} \in \{0, 1\}^n \end{cases}$$

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Avoid logical constraint

$$\tilde{h}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{z}) = \begin{cases} h(\mathbf{x}) & \text{if } z_i = x_i = 0 \text{ or } z_i = 1, \forall i \\ +\infty & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

MIP – Formulation

Problem

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avoid logical cstr.

MIP formulation

$$\begin{cases} \min & f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \mathbf{1}^T \mathbf{z} + \tilde{h}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{z}) \\ \text{s.t.} & \mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n, \mathbf{z} \in \{0, 1\}^n \end{cases}$$

MIP formulation

Use standardized expressions
linear, quadratic, conic, ...

Linearize the ℓ_0 -norm

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Two existing strategies to design $\tilde{h}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{z})$

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Big-M strategy

$$h(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^n \text{Cstr}(|x_i| \leq M) \\ \text{with } M > 0$$

MIP – Penalty function

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ℓ_2 -norm strategy

$$h(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^n \gamma x_i^2 \\ \text{with } \gamma > 0$$

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ℓ_2 -norm strategy

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Linear expressions

ℓ_2 -norm strategy

$$h(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^n \gamma x_i^2 \\ \text{with } \gamma > 0$$



$$\tilde{h}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{z}) = \sum_{i=1}^n \gamma \frac{x_i^2}{z_i}$$

Conic expressions



Standard for off-the-shelf MIP solvers

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Pipeline

- 1) Introduce binary variable $\mathbf{z} \in \{0, 1\}^n$
- 2) Linearize ℓ_0 -norm as $\|\mathbf{x}\|_0 = \mathbf{1}^T \mathbf{z}$
- 3) Transform $h(\mathbf{x})$ into $\tilde{h}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{z})$
- 4) Use generic MIP solvers

MIP – Let's sum up

Problem

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Pros

- ✓ Rich MIP literature
- ✓ Black-box solvers
- ✓ Straightforward pipeline

MIP – Let's sum up

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- ✓ Rich MIP literature
- ✓ Black-box solvers
- ✓ Straightforward pipeline

Cons

- ✗ Mostly commercial solvers
- ✗ Only for $h = \text{big-M}/\ell_2\text{-norm}$
- ✗ Performance issues

Branch-and-Bound Algorithms

Application

ML, Stats, Signal, Operation Research, ...



Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

BnB – Pipeline

Application

ML, Stats, Signal, Operation Research, ...



Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$



Implement BnB solver

Specialized mechanisms

BnB – Pipeline

Application

ML, Stats, Signal, Operation Research, ...



Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$



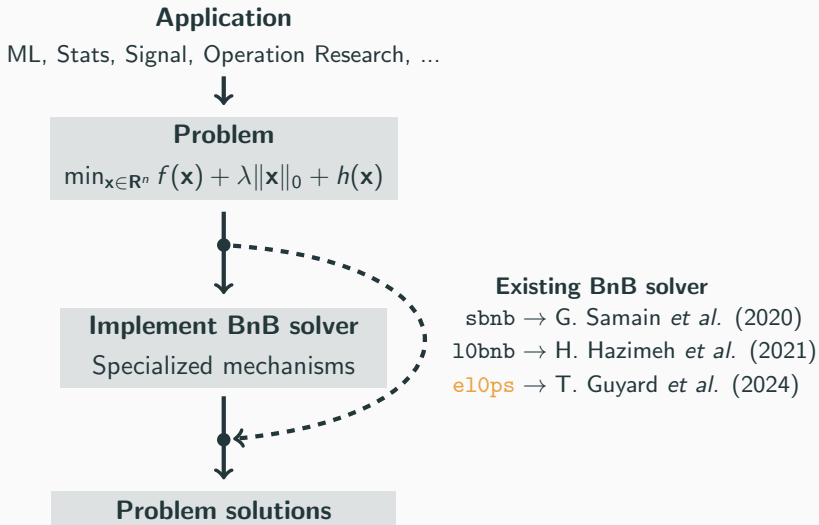
Implement BnB solver

Specialized mechanisms



Problem solutions

BnB – Pipeline



BnB – Pipeline

Application
ML, Stats, Signal, Operation Research, ...



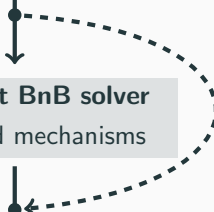
Problem
$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$



Implement BnB solver
Specialized mechanisms



Problem solutions



Existing BnB solver

sbnb → G. Samain *et al.* (2020)
10bnb → H. Hazimeh *et al.* (2021)
el0ps → T. Guyard *et al.* (2024)

Why using el0ps?

Is is free, fast and flexible!

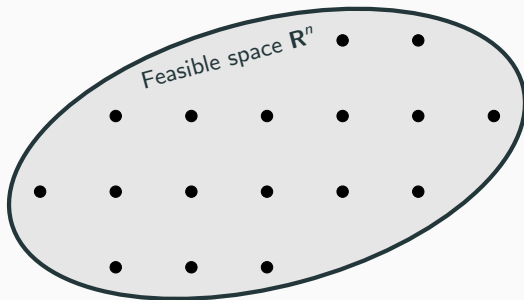


BnB – Algorithmic principle

Explore **regions** in the feasible space and **prune** those that cannot contain any optimal solution.

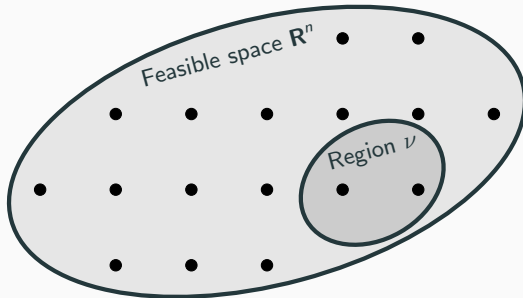
BnB – Algorithmic principle

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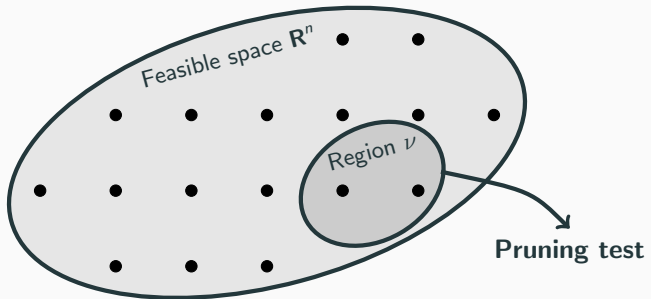
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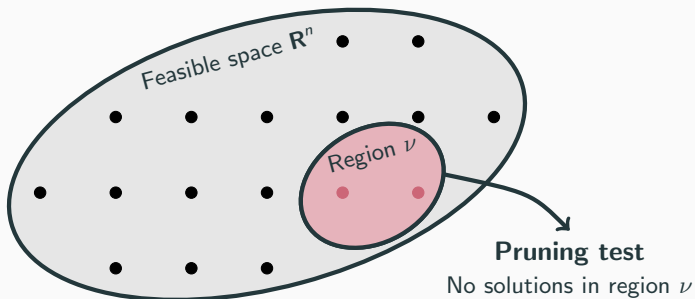
BnB – Algorithmic principle

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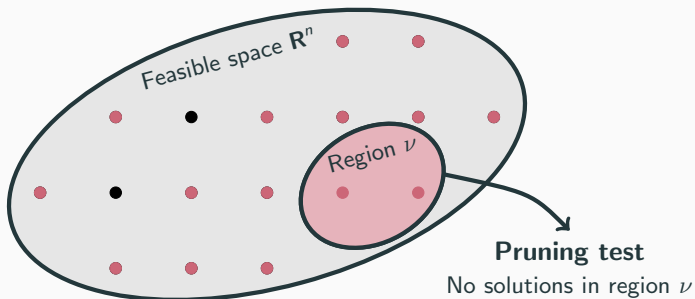
BnB – Algorithmic principle

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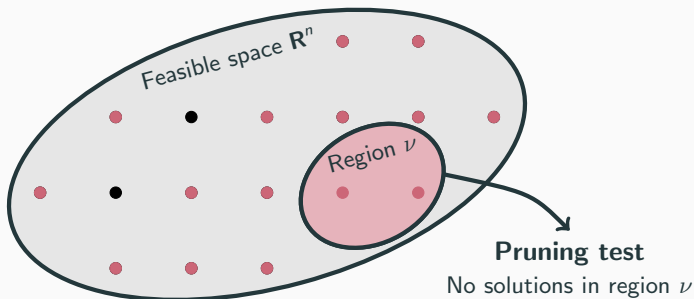
BnB – Algorithmic principle

Explore **regions** in the feasible space and **prune** those that cannot contain any optimal solution.



BnB – Algorithmic principle

Explore **regions** in the feasible space and **prune** those that cannot contain any optimal solution.



Branching step – Region design and exploration

Bounding step – Pruning test evaluation

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

BnB – Branching step

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Observation

Solutions are expected
to be sparse

BnB – Branching step

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Observation

Solutions are expected
to be sparse

Method

Drive the sparsity of the
optimization variable

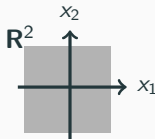
BnB – Branching step

Problem

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Method

Drive the sparsity of the
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BnB – Branching step

Problem

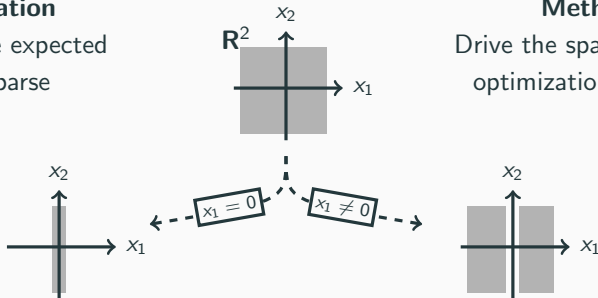
$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Observation

Solutions are expected
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Method

Drive the sparsity of the
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BnB – Branching step

Problem

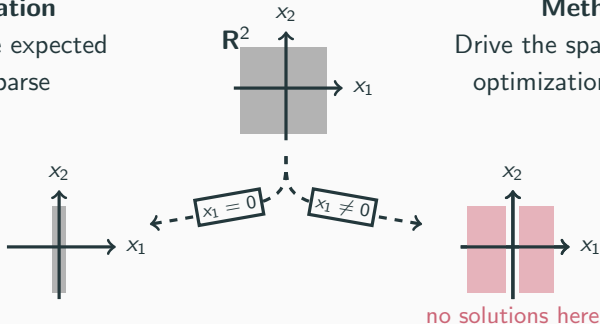
$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

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Method

Drive the sparsity of the
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BnB – Branching step

Problem

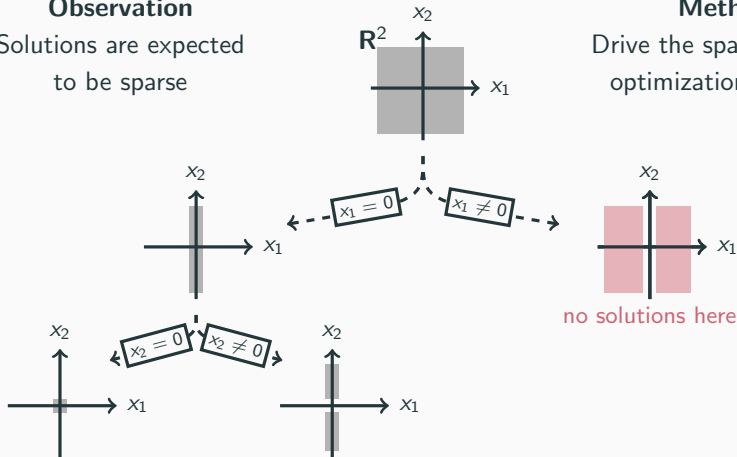
$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Observation

Solutions are expected to be sparse

Method

Drive the sparsity of the optimization variable



BnB – Branching step

Problem

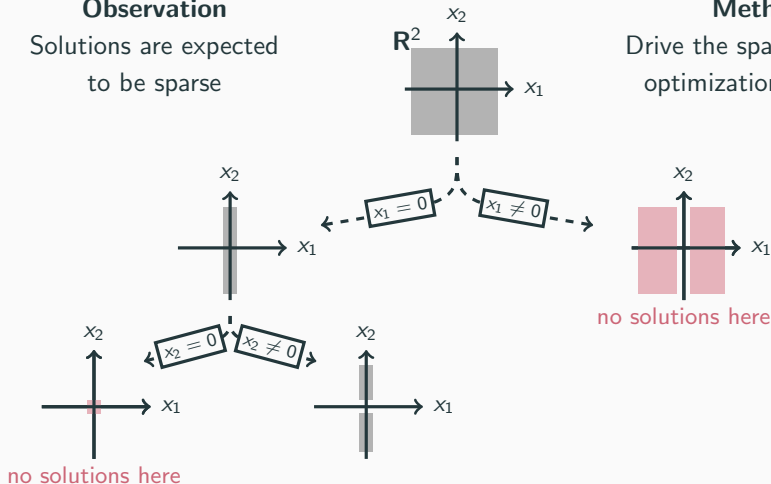
$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Observation

Solutions are expected to be sparse

Method

Drive the sparsity of the optimization variable



BnB – Branching step

Problem

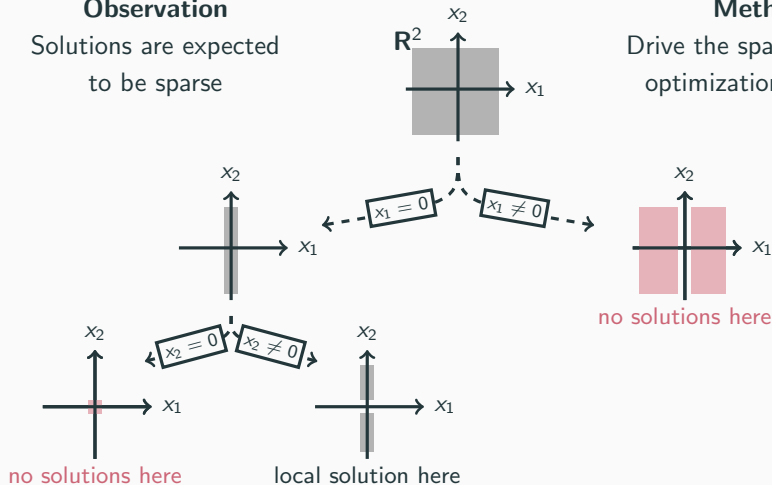
$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Observation

Solutions are expected to be sparse

Method

Drive the sparsity of the optimization variable



BnB – Branching step

Problem

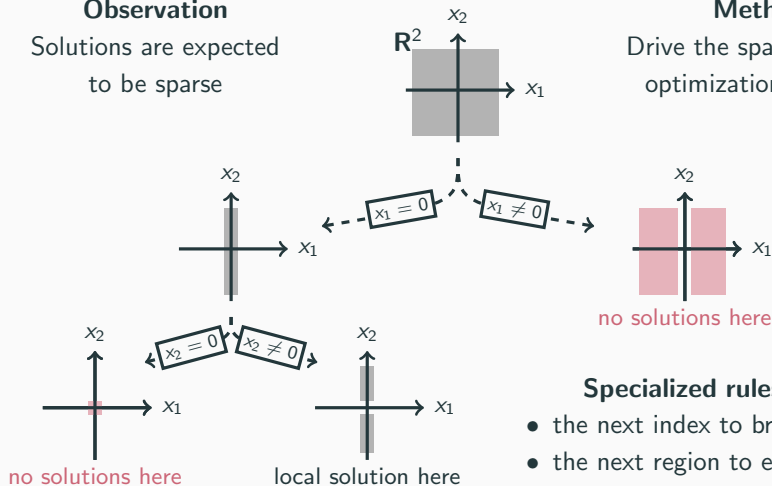
$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Observation

Solutions are expected to be sparse

Method

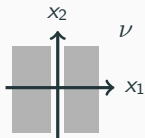
Drive the sparsity of the optimization variable



Specialized rules for

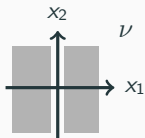
- the next index to branch on
- the next region to explore

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

BnB – Bounding step

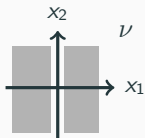


Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

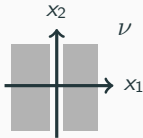
$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

restrict to ν

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

restrict to ν

Restriction to region ν

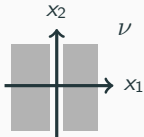
$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

compare

Pruning test

$$p^\nu > p^*$$

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

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Restriction to region ν

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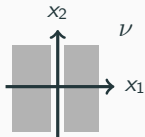
compare

Pruning test

$$p^\nu > p^*$$

→ prune ν

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

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Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

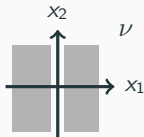
compare

Pruning test

$$p_{\text{lb}}^\nu > p_{\text{ub}}^*$$

→ prune ν

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

restrict to ν

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

compare

Pruning test

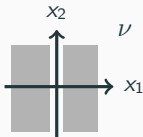
$$p_{\text{lb}}^\nu > p_{\text{ub}}^*$$

→ prune ν

Easy task

Compute an upper bound on p^*

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

restrict to ν

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

compare

Pruning test

$$p_{\text{lb}}^\nu > p_{\text{ub}}^*$$

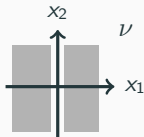
→ prune ν

Easy task

Compute an upper bound on p^*

Construct and evaluate
a feasible vector in each
region explored to refine p_{ub}^*

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

restrict to ν

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

compare

Pruning test

$$p_{\text{lb}}^\nu > p_{\text{ub}}^*$$

→ prune ν

Easy task

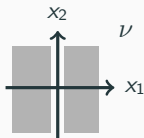
Compute an upper bound on p^*

Construct and evaluate
a feasible vector in each
region explored to refine p_{ub}^*

Main challenge

Compute a lower bound on p^ν

BnB – Bounding step



Does region ν contains optimal solutions ?

Problem

$$p^* = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

restrict to ν

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

compare

Pruning test

$$p_{lb}^\nu > p_{ub}^*$$

→ prune ν

Easy task

Compute an upper bound on p^*

Construct and evaluate
a feasible vector in each
region explored to refine p_{ub}^*

Main challenge

Compute a lower bound on p^ν

Construct and
solve a **relaxation**

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

seek **tight/tractable** lower bound on p^ν

BnB – Building relaxations

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

reformulation

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g^\nu(\mathbf{x})$$

seek **tight/tractable** lower bound on p^ν

with g^ν proper and closed

BnB – Building relaxations

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \nu} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

reformulation

Restriction to region ν

$$p^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g^\nu(\mathbf{x})$$

$$g_{\text{lb}}^\nu \leq g^\nu, g_{\text{lb}}^\nu \text{ convex}$$

Relaxation for region ν

$$p_{\text{lb}}^\nu = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^\nu(\mathbf{x})$$

seek **tight/tractable** lower bound on p^ν

with g^ν proper and closed

set g_{lb}^ν set as the **convex envelope** of g^ν

Convex envelope of $g(\mathbf{x}) = \lambda\|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$ with $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n$

Convex envelope of $g(\mathbf{x}) = \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$ with $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n$



h separable and coercive



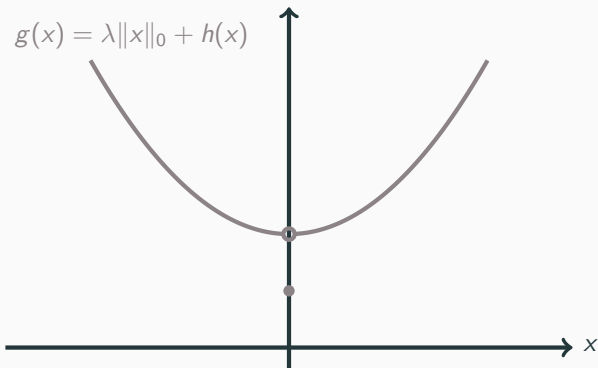
Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}$

BnB – Geometrical intuition

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$



Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}$

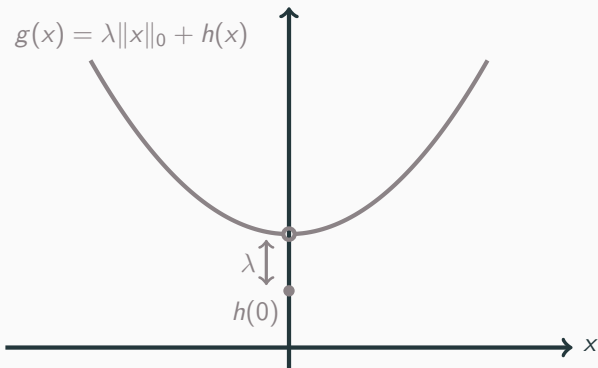


BnB – Geometrical intuition

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$

h separable and coercive

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}$

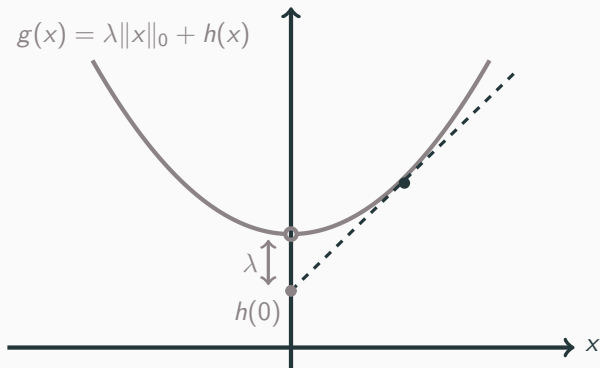


BnB – Geometrical intuition

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$

h separable and coercive

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}$

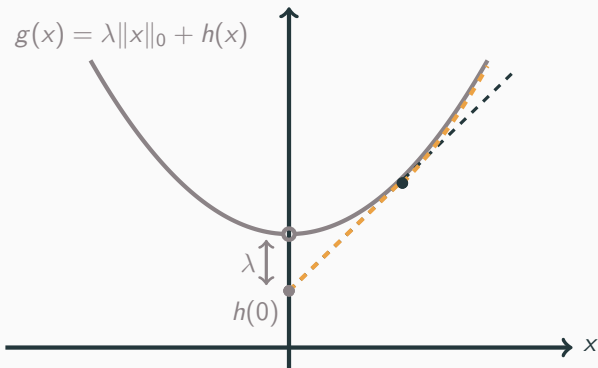


BnB – Geometrical intuition

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$

h separable and coercive

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda \|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}$

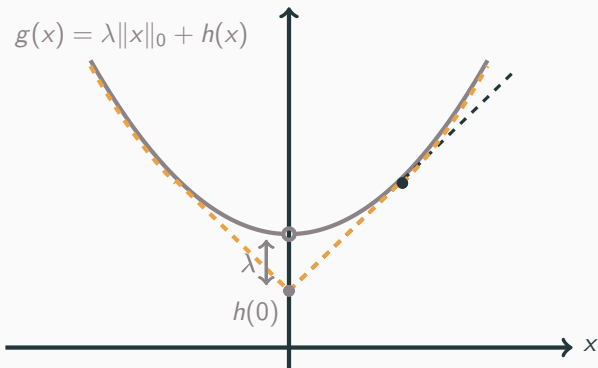


BnB – Geometrical intuition

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda\|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$

h separable and coercive

Convex envelope of $g(x) = \lambda\|x\|_0 + h(x)$ with $x \in \mathbb{R}$




Solve time

region processing time \times number of regions processed

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

region processing time × number of regions processed




Relaxation for region ν

$$\rho_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

Solve time

region processing time × number of regions processed



Relaxation for region ν


$$\rho_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

g_{lb}^{ν} is proper, closed, convex,
separable, and non-smooth at $\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{0}$

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

region processing time × number of regions processed



Relaxation for region ν

$$\rho_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

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This is a **convex** sparse
optimization problem

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

region processing time × number of regions processed



Relaxation for region ν

$$p_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

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This is a **convex** sparse
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→ first-order methods

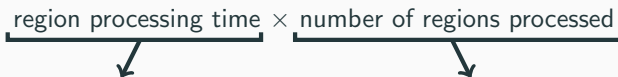
proximal gradient, coordinate descent, ...

→ acceleration strategies

working set, screening tests, ...

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

$$\underbrace{\text{region processing time}} \times \underbrace{\text{number of regions processed}}$$


Relaxation for region ν

$$p_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

Simultaneous pruning

g_{lb}^{ν} is proper, closed, convex,
separable, and non-smooth at $\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{0}$



This is a **convex** sparse
optimization problem

→ first-order methods

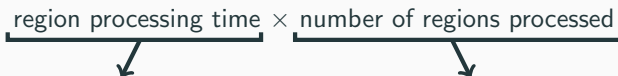
proximal gradient, coordinate descent, ...

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working set, screening tests, ...

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

$$\underbrace{\text{region processing time}} \times \underbrace{\text{number of regions processed}}$$


Relaxation for region ν

$$\rho_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

g_{lb}^{ν} is proper, closed, convex,
separable, and non-smooth at $\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{0}$



This is a **convex** sparse
optimization problem

→ first-order methods

proximal gradient, coordinate descent, ...

→ acceleration strategies

working set, screening tests, ...

Simultaneous pruning



processing region ...

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

$$\underbrace{\text{region processing time}} \times \underbrace{\text{number of regions processed}}$$

Relaxation for region ν

$$\rho_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

g_{lb}^{ν} is proper, closed, convex,
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This is a **convex** sparse
optimization problem

→ first-order methods

proximal gradient, coordinate descent, ...

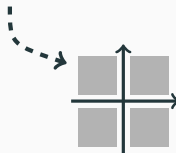
→ acceleration strategies

working set, screening tests, ...

Simultaneous pruning



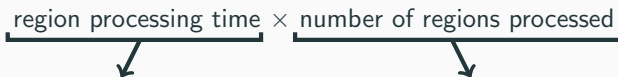
processing region ...



perform **degraded** but
low-cost pruning test

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

$$\underbrace{\text{region processing time}} \times \underbrace{\text{number of regions processed}}$$


Relaxation for region ν

$$\rho_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

g_{lb}^{ν} is proper, closed, convex,
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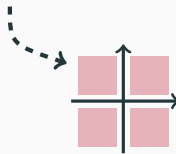
→ acceleration strategies

working set, screening tests, ...

Simultaneous pruning



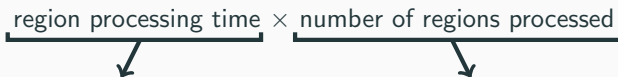
processing region ...



perform **degraded** but
low-cost pruning test

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

$$\underbrace{\text{region processing time}} \times \underbrace{\text{number of regions processed}}$$


Relaxation for region ν

$$\rho_{\text{lb}}^{\nu} = \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + g_{\text{lb}}^{\nu}(\mathbf{x})$$

g_{lb}^{ν} is proper, closed, convex,
separable, and non-smooth at $\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{0}$



This is a **convex** sparse
optimization problem

→ first-order methods

proximal gradient, coordinate descent, ...

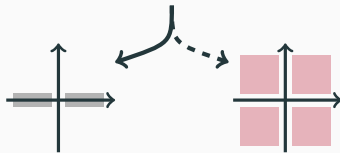
→ acceleration strategies

working set, screening tests, ...

Simultaneous pruning



processing region ...



continue
processing

perform **degraded** but
low-cost pruning test

BnB – The secrete sauce

Solve time

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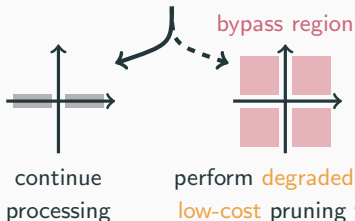
→ acceleration strategies

working set, screening tests, ...

Simultaneous pruning



processing region ...



Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

Pipeline

- 1a) Implement a BnB solver
- 1b) Use an existing BnB solver
- 2) Solve the problem

BnB – Let's sum up

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Pros

- ✓ Numerical efficiency
- ✓ Open-source softwares
- ✓ Any h separable and coercive

BnB – Let's sum up

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Pros

- ✓ Numerical efficiency
- ✓ Open-source softwares
- ✓ Any h separable and coercive

Cons

- ✗ Less standard pipeline

Numerical Illustration

Numerics – Feature Selection Problem

Problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

MIP solvers:  cplex  mosek

BnB solvers:  10bnb  e10ps

Numerics – Feature Selection Problem

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Instance 1

- $f(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{1}{2} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{Ax}\|_2^2$
- $h(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{\gamma}{2} \|\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \text{Cstr}(\|\mathbf{x}\|_\infty \leq M)$
- riboflavin dataset with $\mathbf{A} \in \mathbf{R}^{71 \times 4088}$

Numerics – Feature Selection Problem

Problem

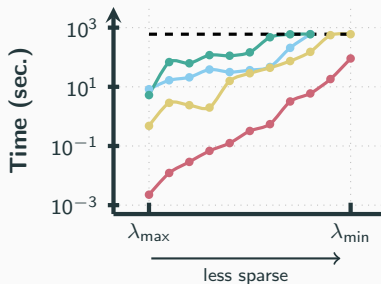
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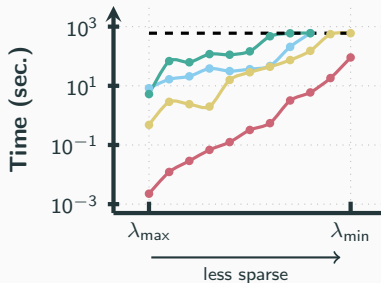
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Instance 2

- $f(\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{1}^T \log(1 + \exp(-\mathbf{y} \odot \mathbf{Ax}))$
- $h(\mathbf{x}) = \gamma \|\mathbf{x}\|_1 + \text{Cstr}(\|\mathbf{x}\|_\infty \leq M)$
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Numerics – Feature Selection Problem

Problem

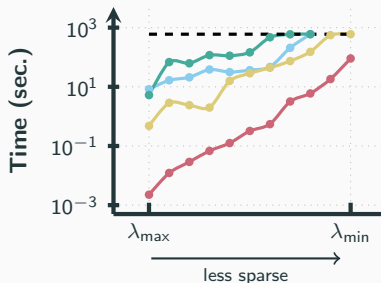
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MIP solvers: cplex mosek

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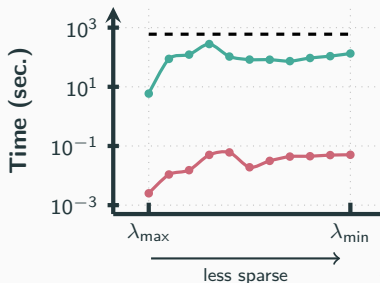
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Instance 2

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Conclusion

A community with a bunch of people

Non-exhaustive list

A community with a bunch of people

Non-exhaustive list

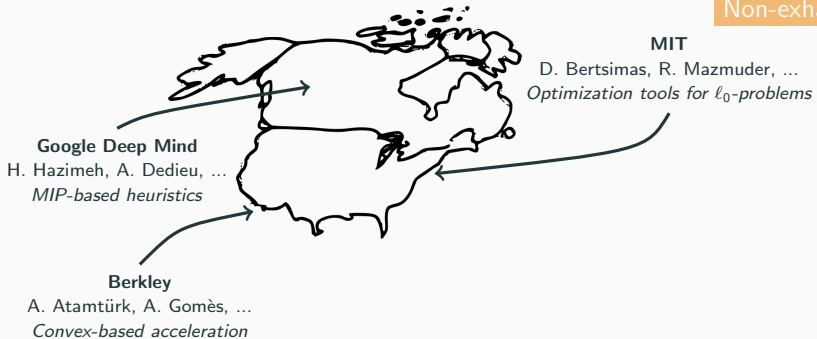


MIT

D. Bertsimas, R. Mazmuder, ...
Optimization tools for ℓ_0 -problems

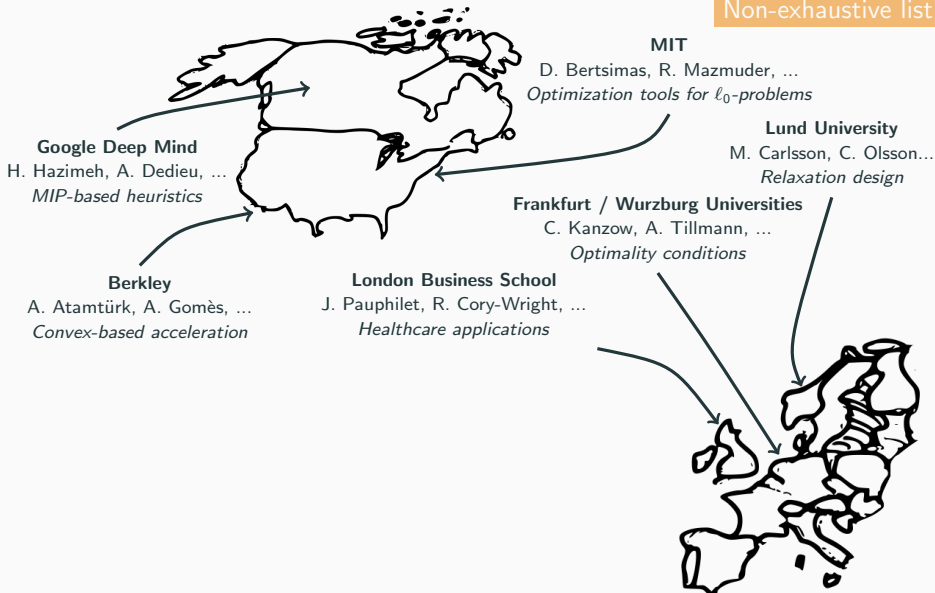
A community with a bunch of people

Non-exhaustive list



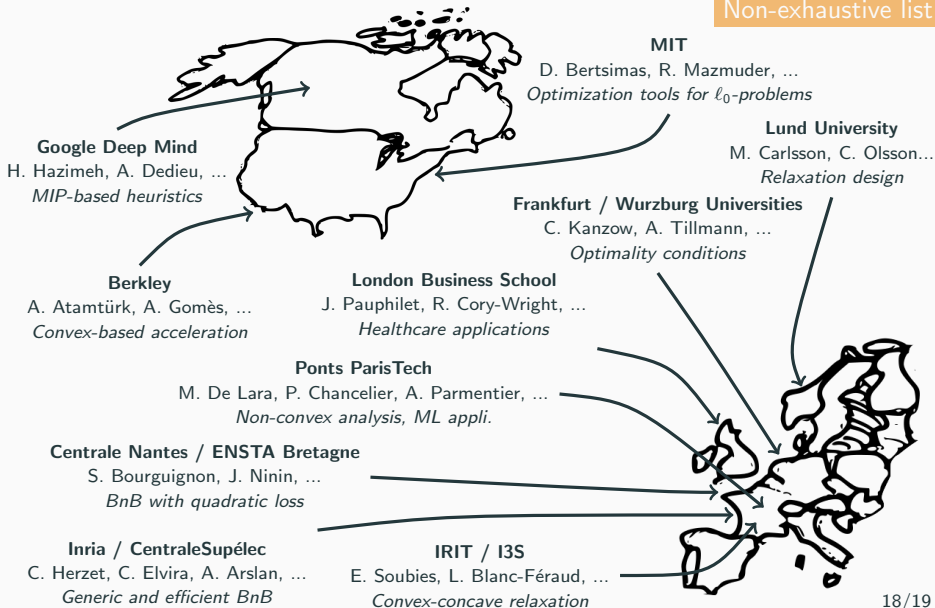
A community with a bunch of people

Non-exhaustive list



A community with a bunch of people

Non-exhaustive list



Take-home messages

- Although NP-hard, ℓ_0 -problems are of practical interest
- There exists methods to tackle them exactly
 - MIP-based formulation and off-the-shelf solvers
 - BnB-based specialized algorithms
 - Structure-exploitation is key for numerical efficiency
- It's an active research area
 - Theoretical and methodological developments still missing
 - Need to reach the application world

Question time !



Compressed sensing

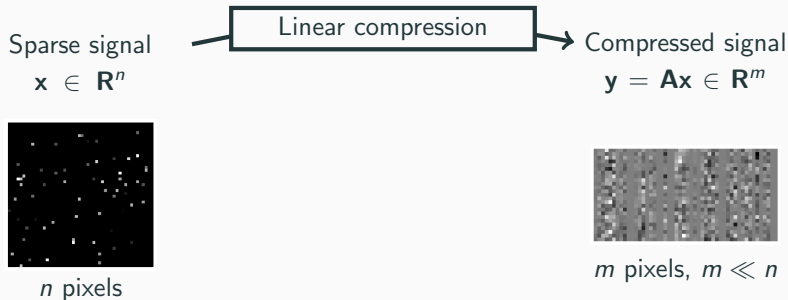
Sparse signal

$$\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n$$

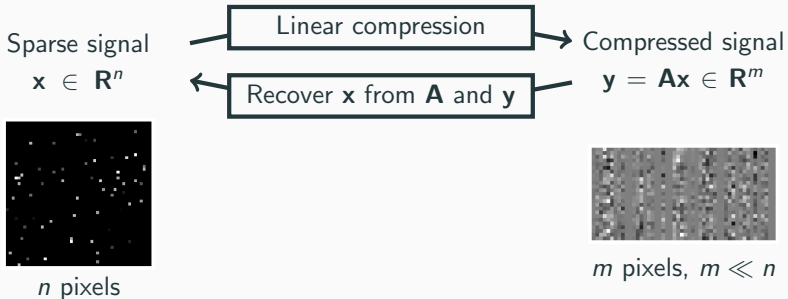


n pixels

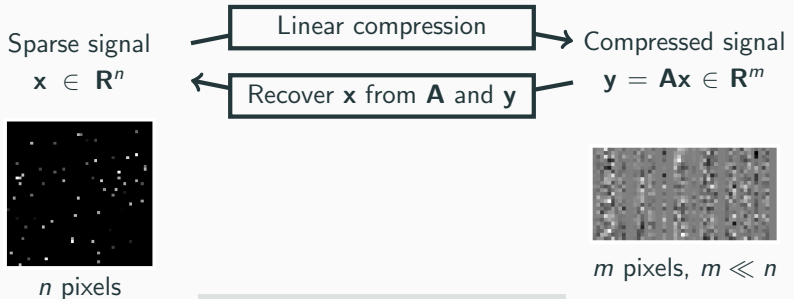
Compressed sensing



Compressed sensing



Compressed sensing



Goal

Find \mathbf{x} such that $\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}$

Compressed sensing

Sparse signal

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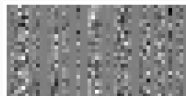
n pixels

Linear compression

Compressed signal

$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^m$$

Recover \mathbf{x} from \mathbf{A} and \mathbf{y}



m pixels, $m \ll n$

Goal

Find \mathbf{x} such that $\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}$

no unique solution

Goal

Find \mathbf{x} **sparse** such that $\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}$

Feature selection

	Feature 1	Feature 2	...	Feature n	Target
Sample 1	$a_{1,1}$	$a_{1,2}$...	$a_{1,n}$	y_1
Sample 2	$a_{2,1}$	$a_{2,2}$...	$a_{2,n}$	y_2
Sample 3	$a_{3,1}$	$\mathbf{A \in R^{m \times n}}$...	$a_{3,n}$	$\mathbf{y \in R^m}$
...
Sample m	$a_{m,1}$	$a_{m,2}$...	$a_{m,n}$	y_m

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Features $\mathbf{A} \in \mathbf{R}^{m \times n}$ \longleftrightarrow Target $\mathbf{y} = \phi(\mathbf{Ax})$
weights $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n$

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Model accuracy

Loss $\mathcal{L}_\phi(\mathbf{Ax}, \mathbf{y})$

Model explainability

Use few features

Feature selection

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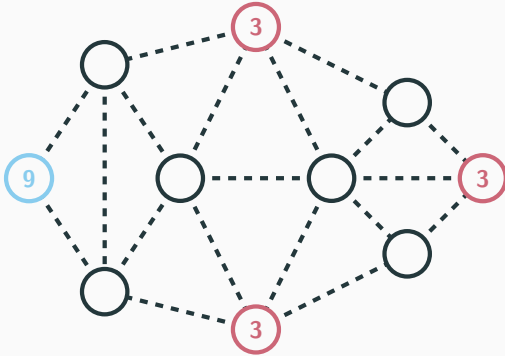
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Goal

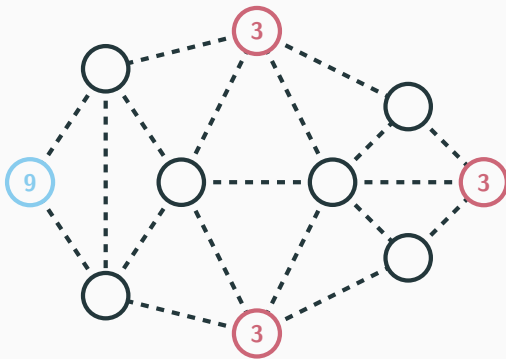
Find \mathbf{x} **sparse** such that $\mathcal{L}_\phi(\mathbf{Ax}, \mathbf{y})$ is small

Network design



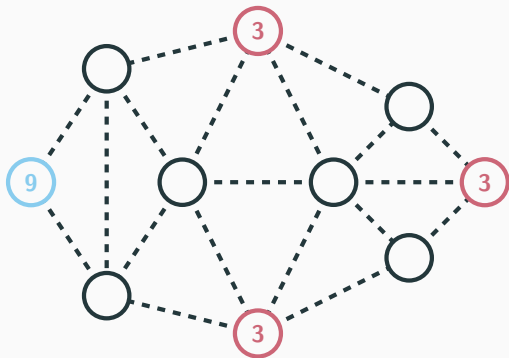
Which edges to build to transport products from **source** to **sink** nodes ?

Network design



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Network design

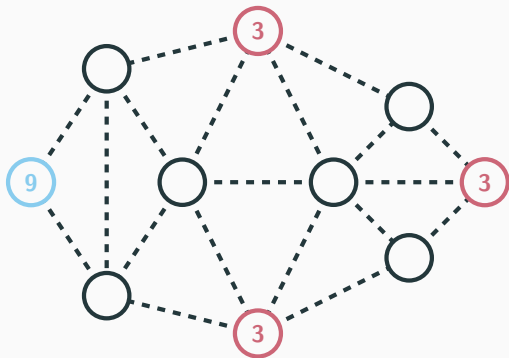


Which edges to build to transport products from **source** to **sink** nodes ?



construct edge $i \in I$ if $x_i > 0$
pay construction cost c

Network design



Which edges to build to transport products from **source** to **sink** nodes ?

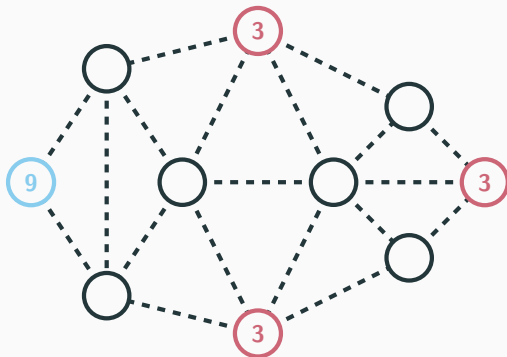


construct edge $i \in I$ if $x_i > 0$
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Question

How to construct the least number of edges to satisfy transportation needs ?

Network design



Which edges to build to transport products from **source** to **sink** nodes ?



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pay construction cost c

Question

How to construct the least number of edges to satisfy transportation needs ?



Find $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^{\text{card}(I)}$ **sparse**
such that $Q(\mathbf{x}) = 0$

Balancing solution quality and problem hardness

Riboflavin dataset - P. Bühlmann *et al.* (2014)

Colony	AADK	AAPA	ABFA	ABH	...	ZUR	B2 prod.
#1	8.49	8.11	8.32	10.28	...	7.42	-6.64
#2	7.29	6.39	11.32	9.42	...	6.99	-5.43
...
#71	6.85	8.27	7.98	8.04	...	6.65	-7.58

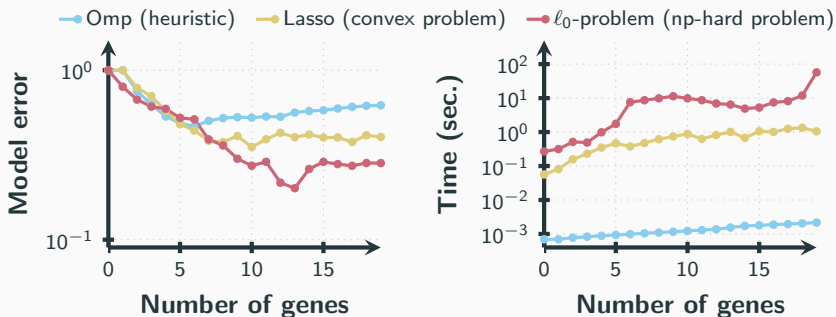
4,088 genes

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Sparse regression

Find \mathbf{x} sparse such
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Optimization problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

- $f(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{1}{2} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{Ax}\|_2^2$
- $h(\mathbf{x}) = \text{Cstr}(-M \leq \mathbf{x} \leq M)$

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MIP formulation

$$\begin{cases} \min \frac{1}{2} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{Ax}\|_2^2 + \lambda \mathbf{1}^T \mathbf{z} \\ \text{s.t. } -M \mathbf{z} \leq \mathbf{x} \leq M \mathbf{z} \\ \mathbf{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n, \mathbf{z} \in \{0, 1\}^n \end{cases}$$

```
$ pip install cvxpy
```

Sparse regression

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MIP – Hands-on with cvxpy

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```
import cvxpy as cp
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```
# Generate sparse regression data  
A, y = make_regression()
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Sparse regression

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MIP – Hands-on with cvxpy

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# Define objective and constraints
obj = cp.Minimize(
    cp.sum_squares(A @ x - y) +
    0.01 * cp.sum(z)
)
cst = [-5.0 * z <= x, x <= 5.0 * z]
```

MIP – Hands-on with cvxpy

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cst = [-5.0 * z <= x, x <= 5.0 * z]

# Solve the problem using Gurobi
problem = cp.Problem(obj, cst)
problem.solve(solver=cp.GUROBI)
```

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$ pip install e10ps
```

Sparse regression

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Optimization problem

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Optimization problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

- $f(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{1}{2} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{Ax}\|_2^2$
- $h(\mathbf{x}) = \text{Cstr}(-M \leq \mathbf{x} \leq M)$

```
from el0ps.datafits import LeastSquares
from el0ps.penalties import Bigm
from el0ps.solvers import BnbSolver
```

```
# Generate sparse regression data
A, y = make_regression()
```

```
$ pip install el0ps
```

Sparse regression

Find \mathbf{x} sparse such
that $\mathbf{y} \simeq \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}$



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from el0ps.solvers import BnbSolver
```

```
# Generate sparse regression data
A, y = make_regression()
```

```
# Instantiate the loss and penalty
f = LeastSquares(A, y)
h = Bigm(M=5.0)
```

```
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```

Sparse regression

Find \mathbf{x} sparse such
that $\mathbf{y} \simeq \mathbf{Ax}$



Optimization problem

$$\min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} f(\mathbf{x}) + \lambda \|\mathbf{x}\|_0 + h(\mathbf{x})$$

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```

```
# Solve the problem with el0ps' solver
solver = BnbSolver()
solver.solve(f, h, lmbd=0.01)
```