

Terminology

Before we dive in, there are a few terms that you should know:

Items (also known as documents)

The entities a system recommends. For the Google Play store, the items are apps to install. For YouTube, the items are videos.

Query (also known as context)

The information a system uses to make recommendations. Queries can be a combination of the following:

- user information
 - the id of the user
 - items that users previously interacted with
- additional context
 - time of day
 - the user's device

Embedding

A mapping from a discrete set (in this case, the set of queries, or the set of items to recommend) to a vector space called the embedding space. Many recommendation systems rely on learning an appropriate embedding (/machine-learning/glossary#embeddings) representation of the queries and items.

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