

Exploratory Data Analysis

Daniel Lawson University of Bristol

Lecture 01.2 (v2.0.0)

Signposting

This Lecture on Exploratory Data Analysis is split into two short parts:

- ▶ Slides covering the (few) abstract notions
- ▶ An RStudio session covering the details

Intended Learning Outcomes

- ▶ ILO1 Be able to **use and apply basic machine learning** tools.
- ▶ ILO2 Be able to **make and report appropriate inferences** from the results of applying basic tools to data.

Dataset:

```
data("mtcars")
```

```
kable(table(mtcars[,c("vs", "gear")]))
```

Random Variables

- ▶ For a continuous RV, $E = \mathbb{R}$ defined via a probability density function f_X :

$$\Pr(X = x) = f_X(x)$$

- ▶ And for a discrete RV, a probability mass function f_X .
- ▶ Discrete RVs are important because:
 - ▶ data are discrete and
 - ▶ data analysis is primarily focussed on the empirical data,
 - ▶ rather than the model presumed to generate that data.

Summaries of distributions

- ▶ Important **positional summaries**:
 - ▶ Mean (`mean(x)`)
 - ▶ Median (`median(x)`)
 - ▶ Weighted Mean (`weighted.mean(x,w)`)
- ▶ Important additional summaries:
 - ▶ Sample variance (`var(x)`)
 - ▶ Sample standard deviation (s.d.) (`sd(x)`)
 - ▶ Quantiles
(`quantile(x, probs=c(0.05,0.25,0.5,0.75,0.95))`)

Summary and boxplots

The *five number summary* shows: $(\min, Q_1, Q_2, Q_3, \max)$

- ▶ **Outliers:**

- ▶ can be defined with respect to the Normal distribution.
- ▶ Define the interquartile range $IQR = Q_3 - Q_1$.
- ▶ **outliers** as those observations at least $3/2IQR$ above Q_3 or below Q_1 .
- ▶ This is just a heuristic for exploratory data analysis.

Standardization

- ▶ **Standardized variables** z_i are commonly defined from data x_i using the **sample mean** \bar{x} and the **sample s.d.** \hat{s}_x :

$$z_i = \frac{x_i - \bar{x}}{\hat{s}_x}$$

- ▶ The standardized variables have mean 0 and s.d. 1.
- ▶ z_i is also called the standard score, z-value, z-score, and the normal score.
- ▶ An individual z-score z_i gives the number of standard deviations an observation x_i is from the mean.
- ▶ The standardized score has no units.

Standardization against a reference

- ▶ In machine learning, we often use a **training** set, and a **test** set. It is essential that **both are standardized against the training data**:

$$z_i = \frac{x_i - \bar{x}_{train}}{\hat{s}_{train}}$$

- ▶ Test data may **not have** mean (close to) 0 and s.d. (close to) 1.

Types of Data

▶ Quantitative Variables

- ▶ Quantitative variables are those for which arithmetic operations like addition and differences make sense.
- ▶ Another name for quantitative variables is **features**.

▶ Categorical Variables

- ▶ Categorical variables partition the individuals into classes.
- ▶ Other names for categorical variables are levels or **factors**.

Further Types of Data

- ▶ Later we'll cover more complex data types, including:
 - ▶ relational tables
 - ▶ graphs
 - ▶ images
 - ▶ text
- ▶ This basic Exploratory Data Analysis still applies then, but to summaries:
 - ▶ Counts of nodes, edges
 - ▶ Tree depths
 - ▶ corpus size
 - ▶ etc

Categorical variables: Table

The most straightforward summary for categorical variables is to count them.

```
table(mtcars[, "gear"])  
## from ?mtcars :  
# gear  Number of forward gears
```

Var1	Freq
3	15
4	12
5	5

Two-way Table

Relationships between two categorical variables can be shown through a **two-way table** or **contingency table** (also known as cross tabulation):

```
table(mtcars[,c("vs", "gear")])  
#   vs      Engine (0 = V-shaped, 1 = straight)
```

	3	4	5
0	12	2	4
1	3	10	1

Types of plot

Some essential plots include¹:

- ▶ Bar Chart
 - ▶ Segmented Bar Chart
- ▶ Heatmap
 - ▶ Highlight table
- ▶ Histograms
 - ▶ Kernel Density estimates
- ▶ Cumulative Distribution Functions

¹Know what these are **for**. Applies to all plot we use in the course.

Empirical Cumulative Distribution Function

- ▶ The **empirical cumulative distribution** function:

$$F_X(x) = Pr(X \leq x),$$

- ▶ is, for a continuous RV:

$$F_X(x) = \int_{-\infty}^x f_X(t) dt$$

- ▶ where $f_X(t)$ is the density function of the Random Variable X .
- ▶ For a discrete RV

$$F_X(x) = \sum_{x_i \leq x} x_i$$

Empirical Cumulative Distribution Function

To create a graph of the empirical cumulative distribution function:

- ▶ **Sort the observations** from smallest to largest
- ▶ Next **match these up** with the integral multiples of the 1 over the number of observations
- ▶ Display it with the correct **type of line**.

Cumulative Distribution Function for categorical data

- ▶ Categorical data have a **natural ordering** too: by frequency. This allows the creation of key concepts such as $P(X < x)$.
- ▶ It is often useful to establish natural orderings, which may exist in other settings.
- ▶ One example is ordinal data.

Survival Function

- ▶ It is sometimes more convenient to work with the **fraction of samples that are larger than some value**.
- ▶ The **survival function** S_X is trivially related to the ECDF:

$$S_X(x) = Pr(X > x) = 1 - F_X(x)$$

Histograms

- ▶ Histograms are a common visual representation of a quantitative variable. Histograms visual the data using **rectangles of area** to display frequencies and proportions.
- ▶ In making a histogram, we
 - ▶ Divide the range of **data into bins** of equal width (usually, but not always)
 - ▶ **Count** the number of observations in each class.
 - ▶ Draw the histogram rectangles representing frequencies or percents by area

Scatterplots

- ▶ **Scatterplots** show the relationship for **pairs of observations**.
- ▶ The values of the first variable

$$\{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$$

are often assumed known.

- ▶ They are often called **explanatory**, predictor, or descriptor variables, and are displayed on the horizontal axis.
- ▶ The values of the second variable

$$\{y_1, \dots, y_n\}$$

are viewed as observations with input $\{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$.

- ▶ Called the **response** variable, they are displayed on the vertical axis.

Interpretation

Interpret plots considering:

- ▶ the overall **pattern**
- ▶ the **center**
- ▶ the **spread**
- ▶ the **shape** (symmetry, skewness, peaks)
- ▶ and **deviations** from the pattern
- ▶ **outliers**
- ▶ **gaps**

Scatterplots

In describing a scatterplot, take into consideration

- ▶ positive or negative association/**trend**
- ▶ **intercept**
- ▶ **clusters**
- ▶ the **form**, for example,
 - ▶ linear
 - ▶ curved relationships
 - ▶ (uni/multi)modal conditional distributions
- ▶ magnitude of the **noise**

Further reading

- ▶ R for Data Science by Hadley Wickham and Garrett Grolemund is an excellent resource!
- ▶ It uses R tidyverse. You don't have to, but look into it.
- ▶ EDA is an **art** not a science. There is no **right** way to do it.
- ▶ You should be proactive in exploring solutions that others use and keep experimenting to find a better way to represent the data.

Reflection

By the end of the course, you should:

- ▶ Be able to describe basic tools of EDA
- ▶ Be able to suggest appropriate EDA for a wide variety of data
- ▶ Be able to spot mistakes in an analysis from EDA plots
- ▶ Have practical experience to draw on to go beyond simple examples
- ▶ **However**, EDA is not proscriptive. Only general ideas are essential.

Signposting

- ▶ The Workshop Lecture 1.3.1 demonstrate these features.
- ▶ There are further workshops on background: working with RStudio, setting up a Data Science environment with GitHub, and understanding the Assessments.
- ▶ There are text notes and links in the Coursebook.
- ▶ Block 02 covers **Regression and correlations** where we say something more rigorous about the relationship between variables.