

# Lecture 10: Computational Learning Theory Winter 2018

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# Announcement

- ❖ Hw 2: Problem 1-3. Due 11/1 (no late submission).
- ❖ Solutions of Hw1&2 will be released on 11/2.
- ❖ Past exam is in CCLE.

# This lecture: Computational Learning Theory

- ❖ The Theory of Generalization
- ❖ Probably Approximately Correct (PAC) learning
- ❖ Shattering and the VC dimension

# Learning protocol

Provide the learning examples

Learn the model



# Learning Monotone Conjunctions

## ❖ Hypothesis class:

$$\begin{array}{lll} f = x_1? & f = x_2? & f = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3? \\ & f = x_1 \wedge x_2? & f = x_2 \wedge x_3? \end{array}$$

## ❖ Target function in the hindsight

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

# Learning Monotone Conjunctions

## ❖ Protocol 1: (supervised learning)

Teacher provides a set of example  $(x, f(x))$

- ❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,1,\dots,1,1), 1 \rangle$
- ❖  $\langle (1,1,1,0,0,0,\dots,0,0), 0 \rangle$
- ❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,0,\dots,0,1,1), 1 \rangle$
- ❖  $\langle (1,0,1,1,1,0,\dots,0,1,1), 0 \rangle$
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- ❖  $\langle (0,1,0,1,0,0,\dots,0,1,1), 0 \rangle$

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

# Learning Monotone Conjunctions

- ❖ Student: Elimination algorithm
- ❖ Start with the set of all literals as candidates
- ❖ Eliminate a literal that is not active (0) in a positive example

$$f = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge \dots \wedge x_{100}$$

❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,1,\dots,1,1), 1 \rangle$

Learn nothing

❖  $\langle (1,1,1,0,0,0,\dots,0,0), 0 \rangle$

Learn nothing

❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,0,\dots,0,1,1), 1 \rangle$

$$f = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{99} \wedge x_{100}$$

❖  $\langle (1,0,1,1,1,0,\dots,0,1,1), 0 \rangle$

Learn nothing

❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,0,\dots,0,0,1), 1 \rangle$

$$f = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

❖  $\langle (1,0,1,0,0,0,\dots,0,1,1), 0 \rangle$

❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,1,\dots,0,1), 1 \rangle$

❖  $\langle (0,1,0,1,0,0,\dots,0,1,1), 0 \rangle$

We can determine the **# of mistakes** we'll make before reaching the exact target function, but not **how many examples** are needed to guarantee good performance.

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

# Learning Monotone Conjunctions

- ❖ Protocol 2: (Active Learning) Alternatively, we can have the learner to propose instances as queries to the teacher
- ❖ Since we know we have a Monotone conjunction:
- ❖ Is  $x_{100}$  in?  $\langle (1, 1, 1, \dots, 1, 0), ? \rangle$   $f(x)=0$  (conclusion: Yes)
- ❖ Is  $x_{99}$  in?  $\langle (1, 1, \dots, 1, 0, 1), ? \rangle$   $f(x)=1$  (conclusion: No)
- ❖ Is  $x_1$  in ?  $\langle (0, 1, \dots, 1, 1, 1), ? \rangle$   $f(x)=1$  (conclusion: No)
- ❖ A straight forward algorithm requires  $n=100$  queries, and will produce as a result the hidden conjunction (exactly).



# Exercise

- ❖ If we know the target function is in the class of monotone disjunction

$$\text{E.g, } f = x_1 \vee x_2 \vee x_3 ?$$

- ❖ What example we should use to query the labeler? (says, we have 100 variables)

# Two Models for How good is our learning algorithm?

- ❖ Analyze the probabilistic intuition
  - ❖ Never saw a feature in positive examples, maybe we'll never see it
  - ❖ And if we do, it will be with small probability, so the concepts we learn may be *pretty good*
    - ❖ *Pretty good*: In terms of performance on future data
  - ❖ **PAC framework**
- ❖ *Mistake Driven* Learning algorithms
  - ❖ Update your hypothesis only when you make mistakes
  - ❖ Define *good* in terms of how many mistakes you make before you stop
  - ❖ **Online learning**

# The mistake-bound approach

- ❖ The **mistake bound model** is a theoretical approach
  - ❖ We can determine the number of mistakes the learning algorithm can make before converging
- ❖ But no answer to “*How many examples do you need before converging to a good hypothesis?*”
- ❖ Because the mistake-bound model makes no assumptions about the order or distribution of training examples
  - ❖ Both a strength and a weakness of the mistake bound model

# PAC learning

- ❖ A model for *batch learning*
  - ❖ Train on a fixed training set
  - ❖ Then deploy it in the wild
- ❖ How well will your learning algorithm do on *future* instances?

# The setup

- ❖ **Instance Space:**  $X$ , the set of examples
- ❖ **Concept Space:**  $C$ , the set of possible target functions:  
 $f \in C$  is the hidden target function
  - ❖ Eg: all  $n$ -conjunctions; all  $n$ -dimensional linear functions, ...
- ❖ **Hypothesis Space:**  $H$ , the set of possible hypotheses
  - ❖ This is the set that the learning algorithm explores
- ❖ **Training instances:**  $S \times \{-1, 1\}$ : positive and negative examples of the target concept. ( $S$  is a finite subset of  $X$ )

$$\langle x_1, f(x_1) \rangle, \langle x_2, f(x_2) \rangle, \dots, \langle x_n, f(x_n) \rangle$$

- ❖ **What we want:** A hypothesis  $h \in H$  such that  $h(x) = f(x)$ 
  - ❖ A hypothesis  $h \in H$  such that  $h(x) = f(x)$  for all  $x \in S$  ?
  - ❖ A hypothesis  $h \in H$  such that  $h(x) = f(x)$  for all  $x \in X$  ?

# Learning monotone Conjunctions

## ❖ Protocol 1:

Teacher provides a set of example  $(x, f(x))$

- ❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,1,\dots,1,1), 1 \rangle$
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- ❖  $\langle (0,1,0,1,0,0,\dots,0,1,1), 0 \rangle$

Guess what would  $f$  look like?

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

❖ **Assumption: data are sample from a fixed distribution**

# PAC Learning – Intuition

- ❖ The assumption of **fixed distribution** is important:
  1. What we learn on the training data will be meaningful on future examples
  2. Also gives a well-defined notion of the error of a hypothesis according to the target function

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

# Learning Conjunctions

## ❖ Protocol 1:

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- ❖  $\langle (0, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0, \dots, 0, 1, 1), 0 \rangle$

What would  $f$  look like?

Whenever the output is 1,  $x_1$  is present

With the given data, we only learned an *approximation* to the true concept.  
Is it good enough?



# *“The future will be like the past”:*

- ❖ We have seen many examples  
(drawn according to the distribution  $D$ )
- ❖ Since in all the positive examples  $x_1$  was active, it is very **likely** that it will be active in future positive examples
- ❖ Otherwise,  $x_1$  is active only in a small percentage of the examples so our error will be small

# Error of a hypothesis

## *Definition*

Given a distribution  $D$  over examples, the *error* of a hypothesis  $h$  with respect to a target concept  $f$  is

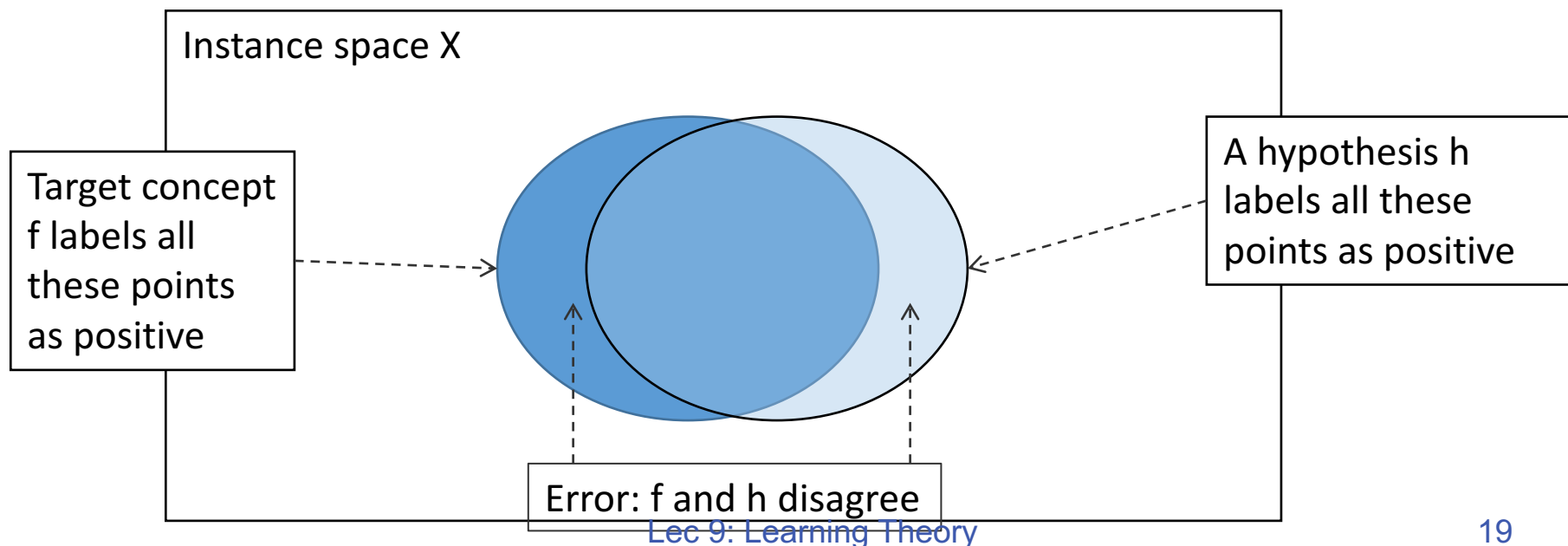
$$\text{err}_D(h) = \Pr_{x \sim D}[h(x) \neq f(x)]$$

# Error of a hypothesis

## *Definition*

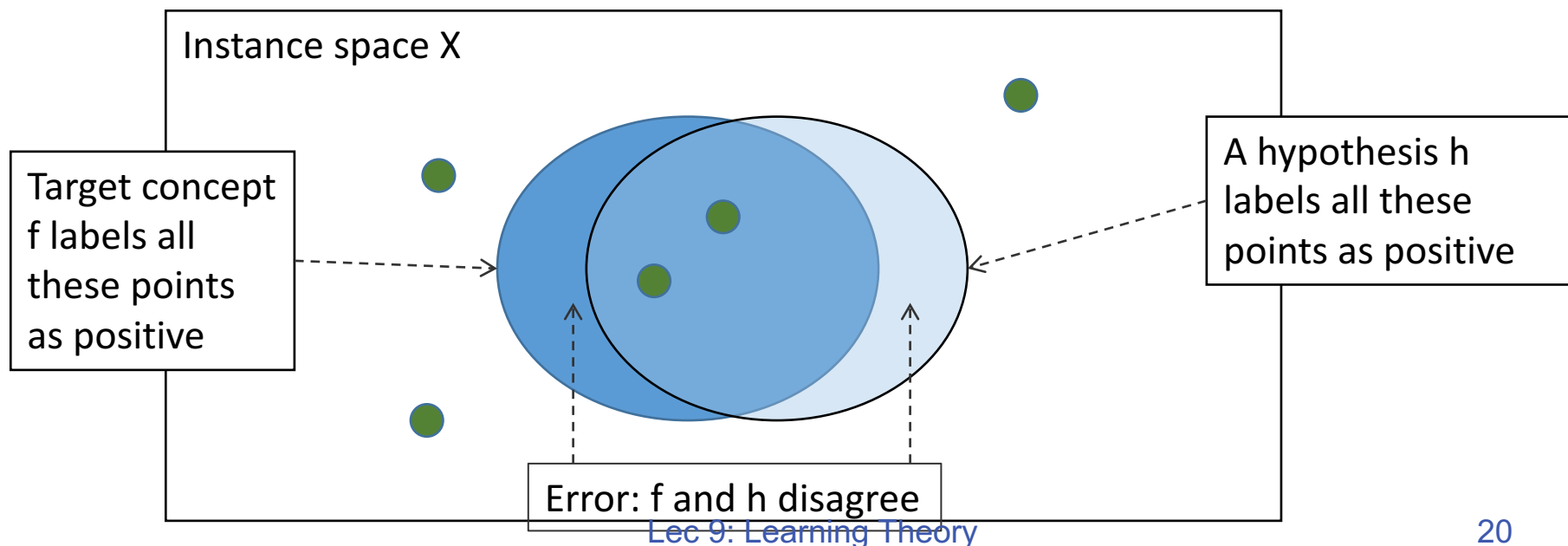
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$$\text{err}_D(h) = \Pr_{x \sim D}[h(x) \neq f(x)]$$



# Error of a hypothesis

*Overfitting: You may have a learned model that is consistent with the training data but still makes mistakes.*



# Error of a hypothesis

With the IID sampling assumption, we either have seen this example in the training phase, or it is unlikely to see it in the test time.

Instance space  $X$

Target concept  $f$  labels all these points as positive

A hypothesis  $h$  labels all these points as positive

Error:  $f$  and  $h$  disagree

# Requirements of Learning

- ❖ Cannot expect a learner to learn a concept *exactly*
- ❖ There will generally be multiple concepts consistent with the available data
- ❖ Unseen examples could *potentially* have any label
- ❖ We “agree” to misclassify *uncommon* examples that do not show up in the training set

# PAC Learnability

Turing Award: [Leslie Valiant](#).

Consider a concept class  $C$  defined over an instance space  $X$  (containing instances of length  $n$ ), and a learner  $L$  using a hypothesis space  $H$

The concept class  $C$  is **PAC learnable** by  $L$  using  $H$  if for all  $f \in C$ , for all distribution  $D$  over  $X$ , and fixed  $\epsilon > 0$ ,  $\delta < 1$ , given  $m$  examples sampled i.i.d. according to  $D$ , the algorithm  $L$  produces, with probability at least  $(1 - \delta)$ , a hypothesis  $h \in H$  that has error at most  $\epsilon$ , where  $m$  is **polynomial** in  $1/\epsilon$ ,  $1/\delta$ ,  $n$  and  $\text{size}(H)$

# Intuition of PAC Learnability

With the IID sampling assumption, if a concept is reasonable. After, we saw enough samples, it is unlikely to have many these red points

Instance space  $X$

Target concept  $f$  labels all these points as positive

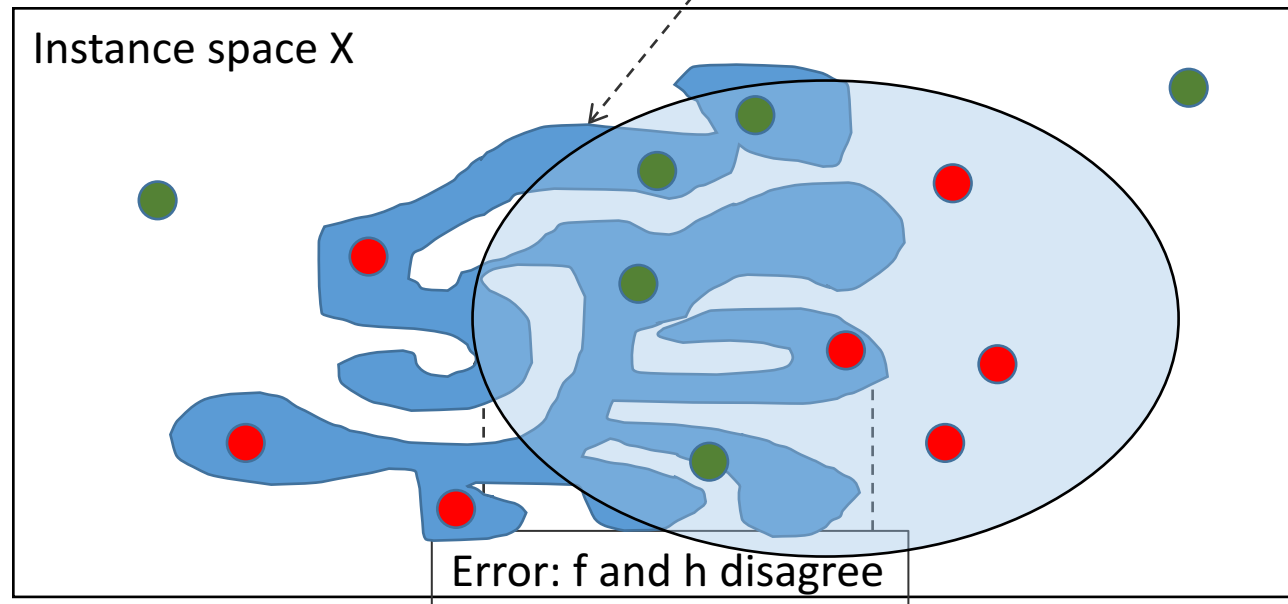
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Error:  $f$  and  $h$  disagree



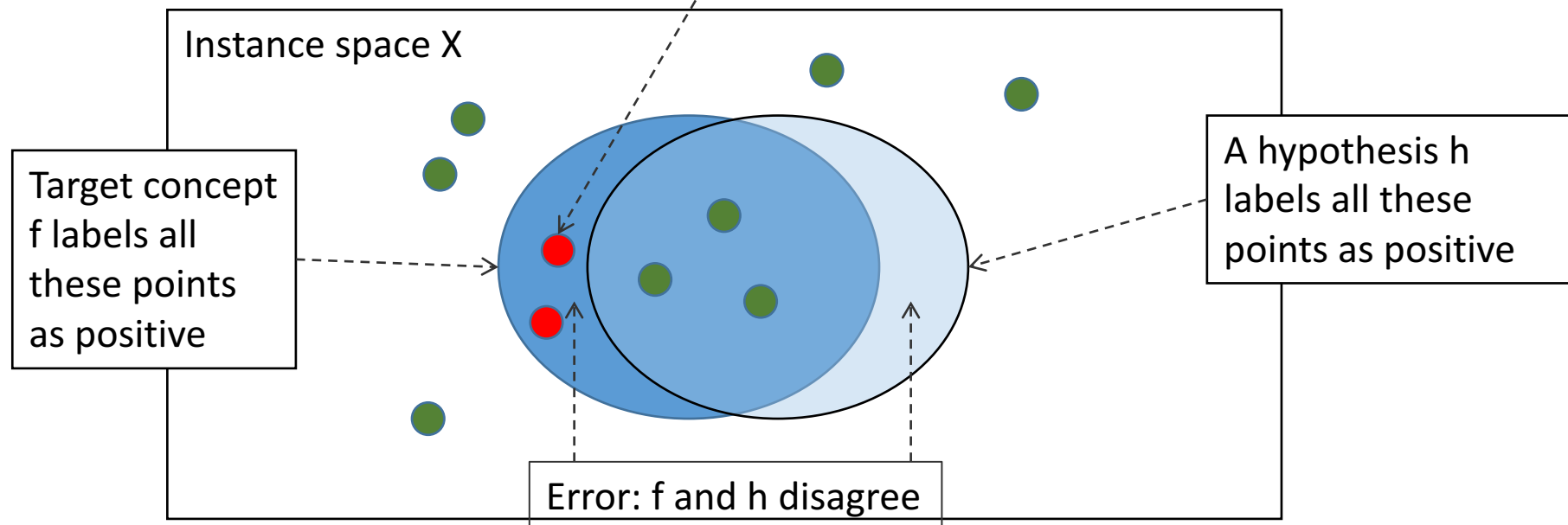
# Intuition of PAC Learnability

With the IID sampling assumption, if a concept is too complicated. We need to see exponential number of samples, such that we can rule out those red points



# Intuition of PAC Learnability

If a concept is simple:



# Example: Learning Monotone Conjunctions

*The true function*  $f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$

## Training data

- ❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,1,\dots,1,1), 1 \rangle$
- ❖  $\langle (1,1,1,0,0,0,\dots,0,0), 0 \rangle$
- ❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,0,\dots,0,1,1), 1 \rangle$
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# Learning Conjunctions

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

## Training data

❖  $\langle (1,1,1,1,1,1,\dots,1,1), 1 \rangle$

~~❖  $\langle (1,1,1,0,0,0,\dots,0,0), 0 \rangle$~~

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A simple learning algorithm (*Elimination*)

• Discard all negative examples

# Learning Conjunctions

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

## Training data

- ❖  $\langle (1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, \dots, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$
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A simple learning algorithm (*Elimination*)

- Discard all negative examples
- Build a conjunction using the features that are common to all positive conjunctions

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

# Learning Conjunctions

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

## Training data

- ❖  $\langle (1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, \dots, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$
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A simple learning algorithm (*Elimination*)

- Discard all negative examples
- Build a conjunction using the features that are common to all positive conjunctions

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

Positive examples *eliminate* irrelevant features

# Learning Conjunctions

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

## Training data

- ❖  $\langle (1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, \dots, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$
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A simple learning algorithm:

- Discard all negative examples
- Build a conjunction using the features that are common to all positive conjunctions

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

Clearly this algorithm produces a conjunction that is consistent with the data, that is  $\text{err}_S(h) = 0$ , if the target function is a monotone conjunction

# Learning Conjunctions

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

## Training data

- ❖  $\langle (1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, \dots, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$
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  - ❖  $\langle (1, 1, \dots, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$
  - ❖  $\langle (0, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0, \dots, 0, 1, 1), 0 \rangle$
- A simple learning algorithm:
- Discard all negative examples
  - Build a conjunction using the features
- Does the true error  $\text{err}_D(h)$  also 0?
- $x_5 \wedge x_{100}$

Clearly this algorithm produces a conjunction that is consistent with the data, that is  $\text{err}_S(h) = 0$ , if the target function is a monotone conjunction



# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

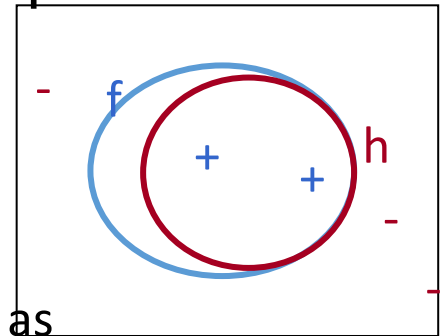
$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

**Claim 1:** Any hypothesis consistent with the training data will only make mistakes on positive future examples

A mistake will occur only if some literal  $z$  (in our example  $x_1$ ) is present in  $h$  but not in  $f$

This mistake can cause a positive example to be predicted as negative by  $h$



Specifically:  $x_1 = 0, x_2 = 1, x_3 = 1, x_4 = 1, x_5 = 1, x_{100} = 1$

The reverse situation can never happen

For an example to be predicted as positive in the training set, every relevant literal must have been present

# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

**Theorem:** Suppose we are learning a conjunctive concept with  $n$  dimensional Boolean features using  $m$  training examples. If

$$m > \frac{n}{\epsilon} \left( \log(n) + \log \left( \frac{1}{\delta} \right) \right)$$

then, with probability  $> 1 - \delta$ , the error of the learned hypothesis  $\text{err}_D(h)$  will be less than  $\epsilon$ .

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Poly in  $n, 1/\delta, 1/\epsilon$

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$n$ : # literals

If we see these many training examples, then the algorithm will produce a conjunction that, with high probability, will make few errors

# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

**Theorem:** Suppose we are learning a conjunctive concept with  $n$  dimensional Boolean features using  $m$  training examples. If

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Poly in  $n, 1/\delta, 1/\epsilon$

then, with probability  $> 1 - \delta$ , the error of the learned hypothesis  $\text{err}_D(h)$  will be less than  $\epsilon$ .

*Let's prove this assertion*

# Proof Intuition

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

What kinds of examples would drive a hypothesis to make a mistake and update?

Positive examples, where  $x_1 = 0$

h would say true and f would say false

None of these examples appeared during training

Otherwise  $x_1$  would have been eliminated

If they never appeared during training, maybe their appearance in the future would also be rare!

Let's quantify our surprise at seeing such examples

# Proof Intuition

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

What kinds of examples would drive a hypothesis to make a mistake and update?

Positive  
h wo  
None of

Key idea: If they never appeared during training, they are not likely to appear in test as well

Otherwise  $x_1$  would have been eliminated

If they never appeared during training, maybe their appearance in the future would also be rare!

Let's quantify our surprise at seeing such examples

# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

Let  $p(z)$  be the probability that, in an example drawn from  $D$ , the feature  $z = 0$  but the example has a positive label

- ❖ In the training – this is an example that can help we learn the right  $h$
- ❖ In the test – this is an example that make an error

$\langle (1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, \dots, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$

$\langle (1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0, \dots, 0, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$

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$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

Let  $p(z)$  be the probability that, in an example drawn from  $D$ , the feature  $z=0$  but the example has a positive label

- ❖ i.e., after training is done,  $p(z)$  is the probability that in a randomly drawn example, the literal  $z$  causes a mistake
- ❖ For any  $z$  in the target function,  $p(z) = 0$

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

$$\langle (0, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0, \dots, 0, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$$

$p(x_1)$ : Probability that this situation occurs



# How likely we find $h$ is wrong

Let  $p(z)$  be the probability that, in an example drawn from  $D$ , the feature  $z$  is absent but the example has a positive label

$$f = x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

$$h = x_1 \wedge x_2 \wedge x_3 \wedge x_4 \wedge x_5 \wedge x_{100}$$

We know that  $err_D(h) \leq \sum_{z \in h} p(z)$



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Via direct application of the union bound

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## Union bound

For a set of events, probability that at least one of them happens < the sum of the probabilities of the individual events

# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

$n$  = dimensionality

- ❖ Call a literal  $z$  **bad** if  $p(z) > \frac{\epsilon}{n}$
- ❖ Intuitively, a **bad literal** is one that has a **significant probability** of not appearing with a positive example
- ❖ (And, if it appears in all positive training examples, it can cause errors)

$$err_D(h) \leq \sum_{z \in h} p(z)$$

If there are no bad literals, then  $err_D(h) \leq \epsilon$

- ❖ Because  $p(z) \leq \frac{\epsilon}{n}$  and  $err_D(h) \leq \sum_{z \in h} p(z)$

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$$err_D(h) \leq \sum_{z \in h} p(z)$$

## What if there are bad literals?

Let  $z$  be a bad literal

What is the probability that it will not be eliminated by one training example?

There was one example of this kind

$\langle (1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0, \dots, 0, 1, 1), 1 \rangle$

# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

What we know so far:

$n$  = dimensionality

$$\Pr(\text{A bad literal is not eliminated by one example}) < 1 - \frac{\epsilon}{n}$$

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There are at most  $n$  bad literals. So

$$Pr(\text{Any bad literal survives } m \text{ examples}) < n \left(1 - \frac{\epsilon}{n}\right)^m$$

# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

$$\Pr(\text{Any bad literal survives } m \text{ examples}) < n \left(1 - \frac{\epsilon}{n}\right)^m$$

We want this probability to be small

Why? So that we can choose enough training examples so that the probability that any  $z$  survives all of them is less than some  $\delta$



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Or equivalently,

$$m > \frac{n}{\epsilon} \left( \log(n) + \log\left(\frac{1}{\delta}\right) \right)$$

# Learning Conjunctions: Analysis

**Theorem:** Suppose we are learning a conjunctive concept with  $n$  dimensional Boolean features using  $m$  training examples. If

$$m > \frac{n}{\epsilon} \left( \log(n) + \log \left( \frac{1}{\delta} \right) \right)$$

then, with probability  $> 1 - \delta$ , the error of the learned hypothesis  $\text{err}_D(h)$  will be less than  $\epsilon$ .

# Probably Approximately Correct (PAC) learning

1. Analyze a simple algorithm for learning conjunctions
2. Define the PAC model of learning

# Formulating the theory of prediction

All the notation we have so far on one slide

In the general case, we have

- ❖  $X$ : instance space,  $Y$ : output space =  $\{+1, -1\}$
- ❖  $D$ : an unknown distribution over  $X$
- ❖  $f$ : an unknown target function  $X \rightarrow Y$ , taken from a concept class  $C$
- ❖  $h$ : a hypothesis function  $X \rightarrow Y$  that the learning algorithm selects from a hypothesis class  $H$
- ❖  $S$ : a set of  $m$  training examples drawn from  $D$ , labeled with  $f$
- ❖  $\text{err}_D(h)$ : The true error of any hypothesis  $h$
- ❖  $\text{err}_S(h)$ : The empirical error or training error or observed error of  $h$

# Theoretical questions

- ❖ Can we describe or bound the true error ( $\text{err}_D$ ) given the empirical error ( $\text{err}_S$ )?
- ❖ Is a concept class  $C$  learnable?
- ❖ Is it possible to learn  $C$  using only the functions in  $H$  using the supervised protocol?
- ❖ How many examples does an algorithm need to guarantee good performance?

# Requirements of Learning

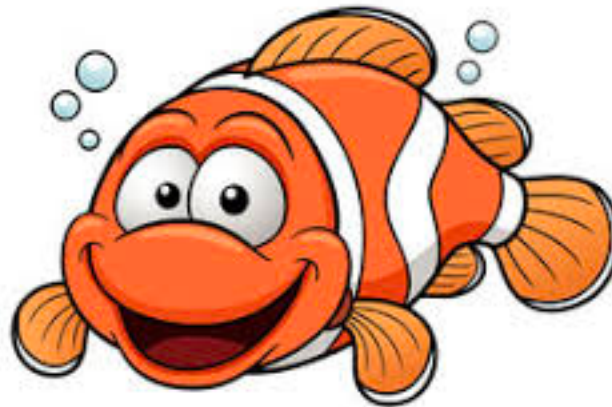
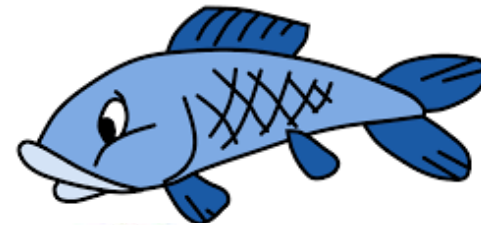
- ❖ Cannot expect a learner to learn a concept *exactly*
- ❖ There will generally be multiple concepts consistent with the available data
- ❖ Unseen examples could *potentially* have any label
- ❖ We “agree” to misclassify *uncommon* examples that do not show up in the training set

# Example





## Example 2



# Requirements of Learning

- ❖ Cannot expect a learner to learn a concept *exactly*
  - ❖ There will generally be multiple concepts consistent with the available data
  - ❖ Unseen examples could *potentially* have any label
  - ❖ We “agree” to misclassify *uncommon* examples that do not show up in the training set
- ❖ Cannot always expect to learn a *close approximation* to the target concept
  - ❖ Sometimes the training set will not be representative

# Probably approximately correctness

- ❖ The only realistic expectation of a good learner is that *with high probability* it will learn a *close approximation* to the target concept
- ❖ In Probably Approximately Correct (PAC) learning, one requires that
  - ❖ given small parameters  $\epsilon$  and  $\delta$ ,
  - ❖ With probability at least  $1 - \epsilon$ , a learner produces a hypothesis with error at most  $\delta$
- ❖ The reason we can hope for this is the *consistent distribution assumption*

# PAC Learnability

Consider a concept class  $C$  defined over an instance space  $X$  (containing instances of length  $n$ ), and a learner  $L$  using a hypothesis space  $H$

The concept class  $C$  is **PAC learnable** by  $L$  using  $H$  if for all  $f \in C$ , for all distribution  $D$  over  $X$ , and fixed  $\epsilon > 0$ ,  $\delta < 1$ , given  $m$  examples sampled i.i.d. according to  $D$ , the algorithm  $L$  produces, with probability at least  $(1 - \delta)$ , a hypothesis  $h \in H$  that has error at most  $\epsilon$ , where  $m$  is **polynomial** in  $1/\epsilon$ ,  $1/\delta$ ,  $n$  and  $\text{size}(H)$

# *efficiently learnability*

- ❖ The concept class  $C$  is *efficiently learnable* if  $L$  can produce the hypothesis in time that is polynomial in  $1/\epsilon$ ,  $1/\delta$ ,  $n$  and  $\text{size}(H)$

# PAC Learnability

- ❖ We impose two limitations
- ❖ Polynomial *sample complexity* (information theoretic constraint)
  - ❖ Is there enough information in the sample to distinguish a hypothesis  $h$  that approximate  $f$  ?
- ❖ Polynomial *time complexity* (computational complexity)
  - ❖ Is there an efficient algorithm that can process the sample and produce a good hypothesis  $h$  ?

**Worst Case definition:** the algorithm must meet its accuracy

- ❖ for every distribution (The distribution free assumption)
- ❖ for every target function  $f$  in the class  $C$

# Example: Learning Conjunctions

Suppose we are learning a conjunctive concept with  $n$  dimensional Boolean features using  $m$  training examples. If

$$m > \frac{n}{\epsilon} \left( \log(n) + \log \left( \frac{1}{\delta} \right) \right)$$

This term is often related to  $\log(\text{size}(H))$  if the learner is consistent

then, with probability  $> 1 - \delta$ , the error of the learned hypothesis  $\text{err}_D(h)$  will be less than  $\epsilon$ .

$m$  is *polynomial* in  $1/\epsilon$ ,  $1/\delta$ ,  $n$  and  $\text{size}(H)$

# A general result

Let  $H$  be any hypothesis space.

With probability  $1 - \delta$  a hypothesis  $h \rightarrow H$  that is **consistent** with a training set of size  $m$  will have an error  $< \epsilon$  on future examples if

$$m > \frac{1}{\epsilon} \left( \ln(|H|) + \ln \frac{1}{\delta} \right)$$

1. Expecting lower error increases sample complexity (i.e more examples needed for the guarantee)

2. If we have a larger hypothesis space, then we will make learning harder (i.e higher sample complexity)

3. If we want a higher confidence in the classifier we will produce, sample complexity will be higher.



# A general result

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It expresses a preference towards smaller hypothesis spaces.

Complicated/larger hypothesis spaces are not necessarily bad. But simpler ones are unlikely to fool us by being consistent with many examples!

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It expresses a preference towards smaller hypothesis spaces

Next question: What if  $\text{size}(H)$  is infinity?

Complicated/larger hypothesis spaces are not necessarily bad. But simpler ones are unlikely to fool us by being consistent with many examples!

# This lecture: Computational Learning Theory

- ❖ The Theory of Generalization
- ❖ Probably Approximately Correct (PAC) learning
- ❖ Shattering and the VC dimension

# Infinite Hypothesis Space

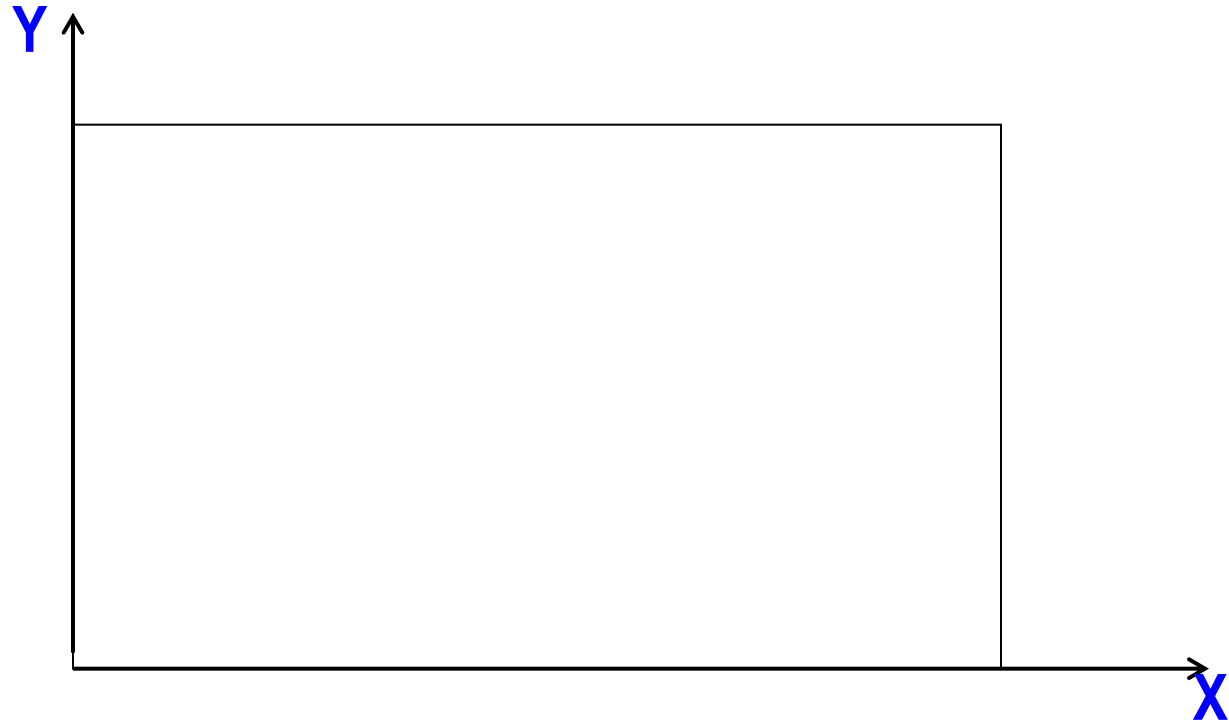
- ❖ The previous analysis was restricted to finite hypothesis spaces
- ❖ Some infinite hypothesis spaces are more expressive than others
  - ❖ Linear threshold function vs. a combination of LTUs
- ❖ Need a measure of the expressiveness of an infinite hypothesis space other than its size

# Vapnik-Chervonenkis dimension

- ❖ The Vapnik-Chervonenkis dimension (**VC dimension**) provides such a measure
- ❖ “What is the expressive *capacity* of a set of functions?”
- ❖ Analogous to  $|H|$ , there are bounds for sample complexity using  $VC(H)$

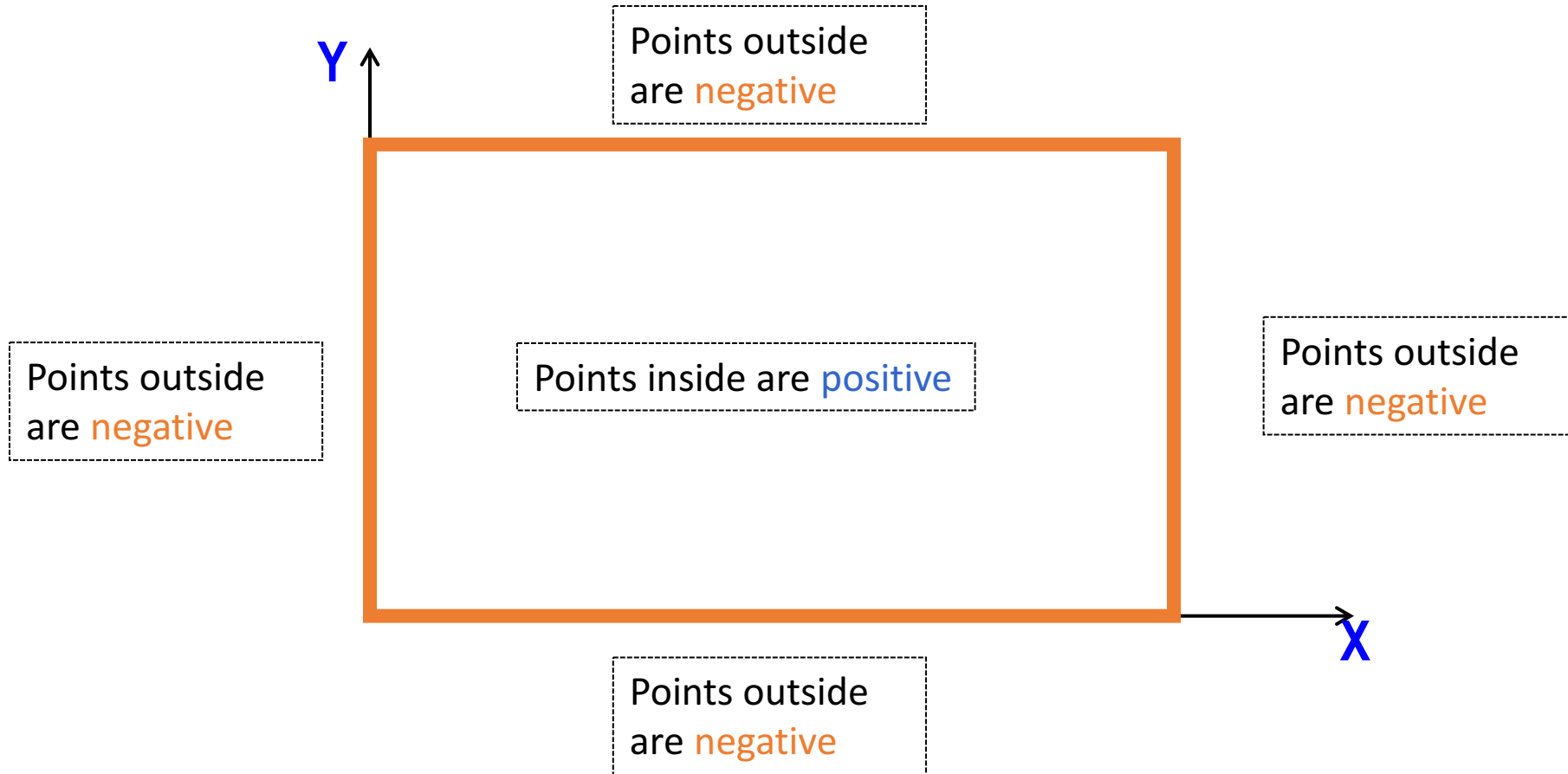
# Learning Rectangles

Assume the target concept is an axis parallel rectangle



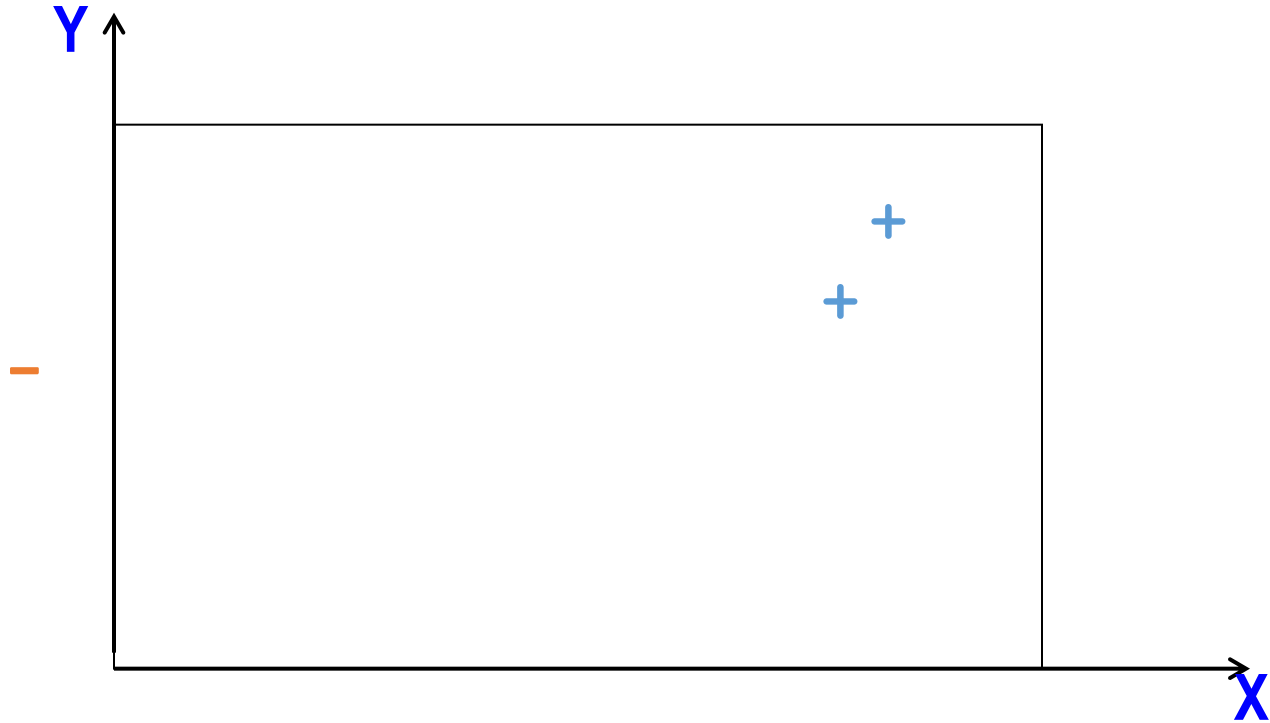
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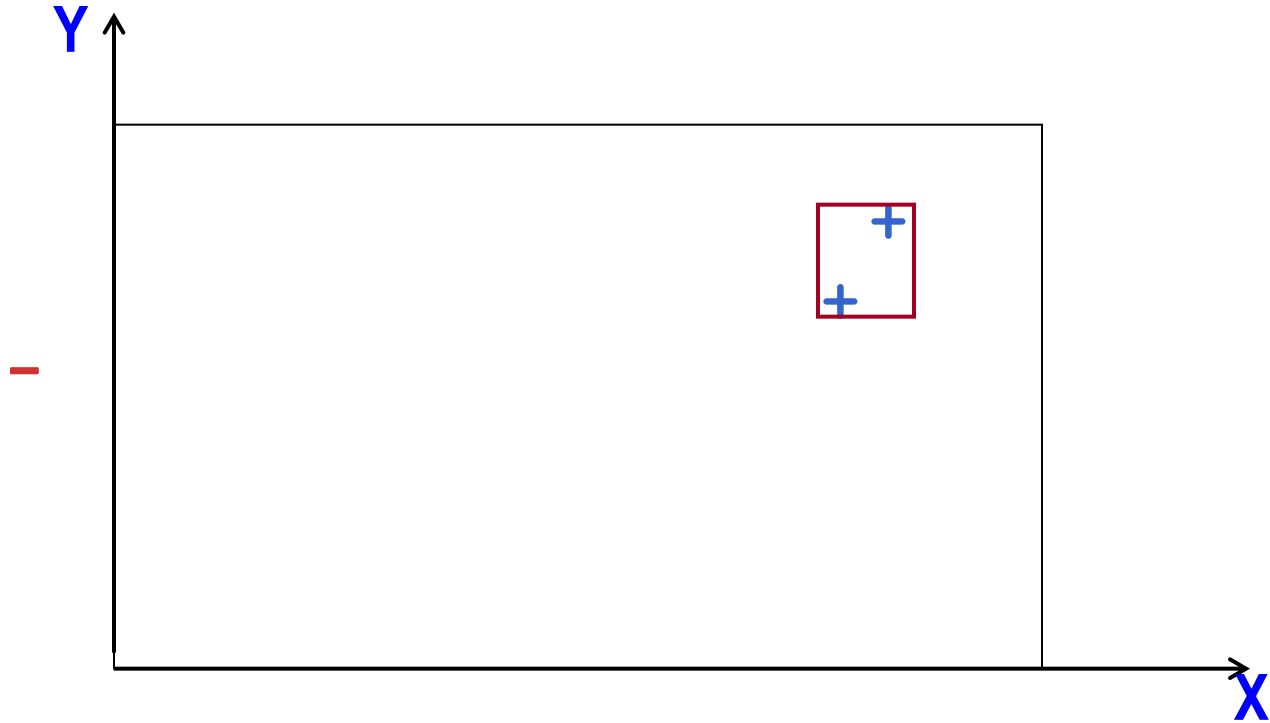
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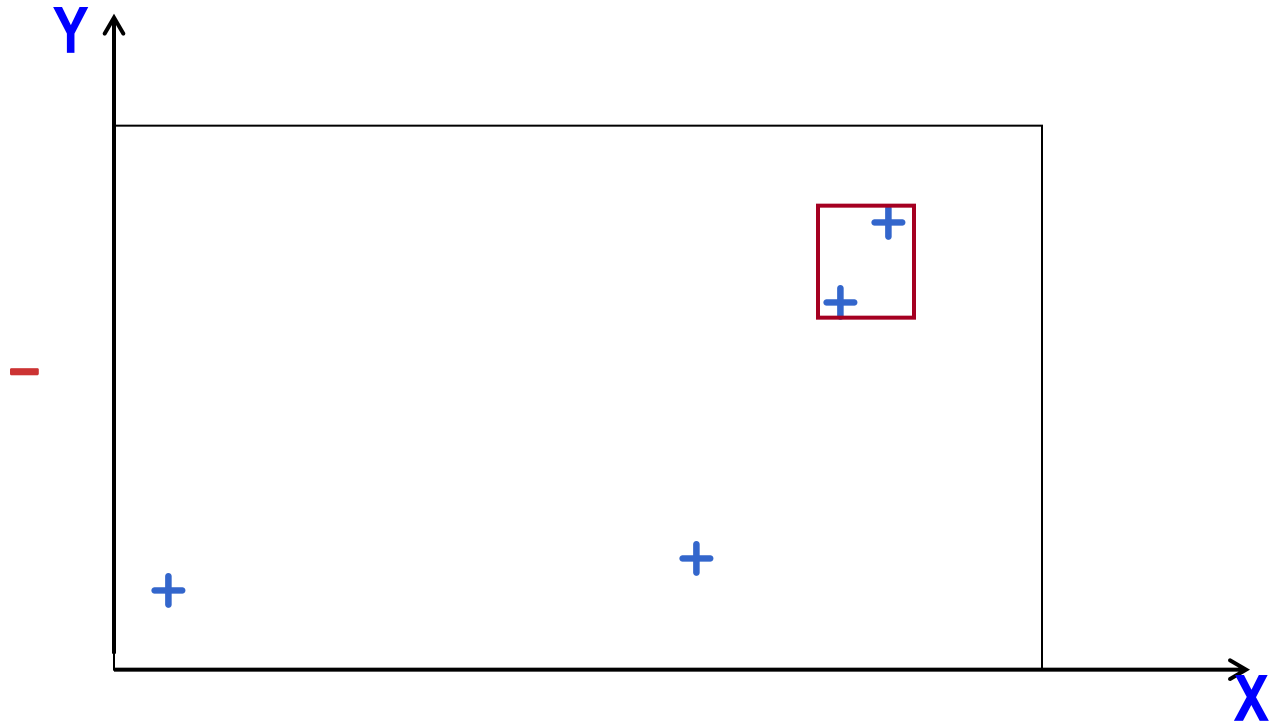
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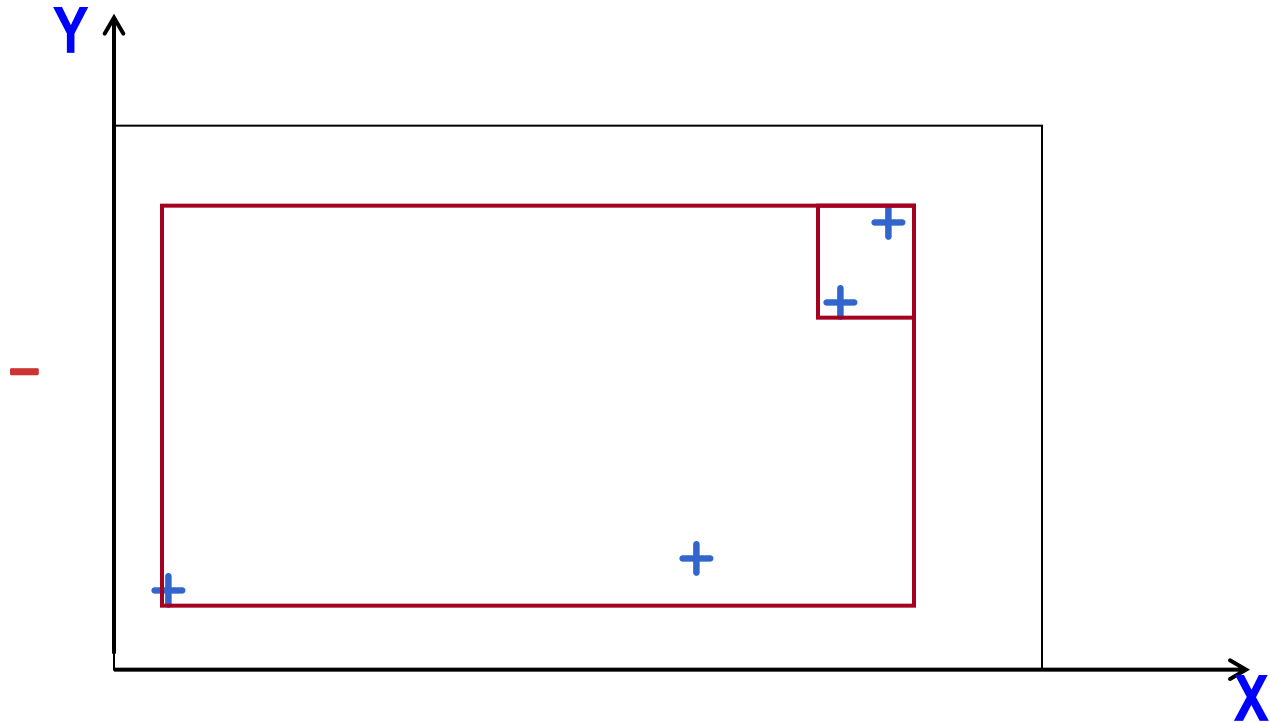
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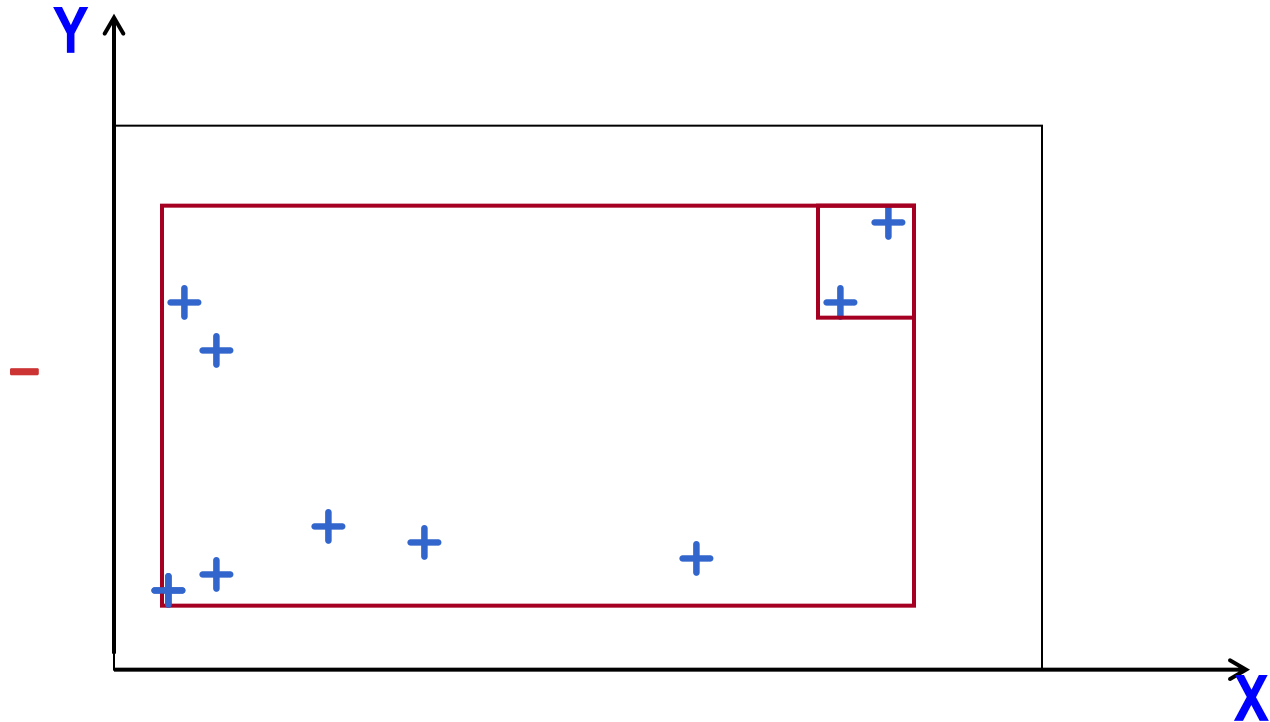
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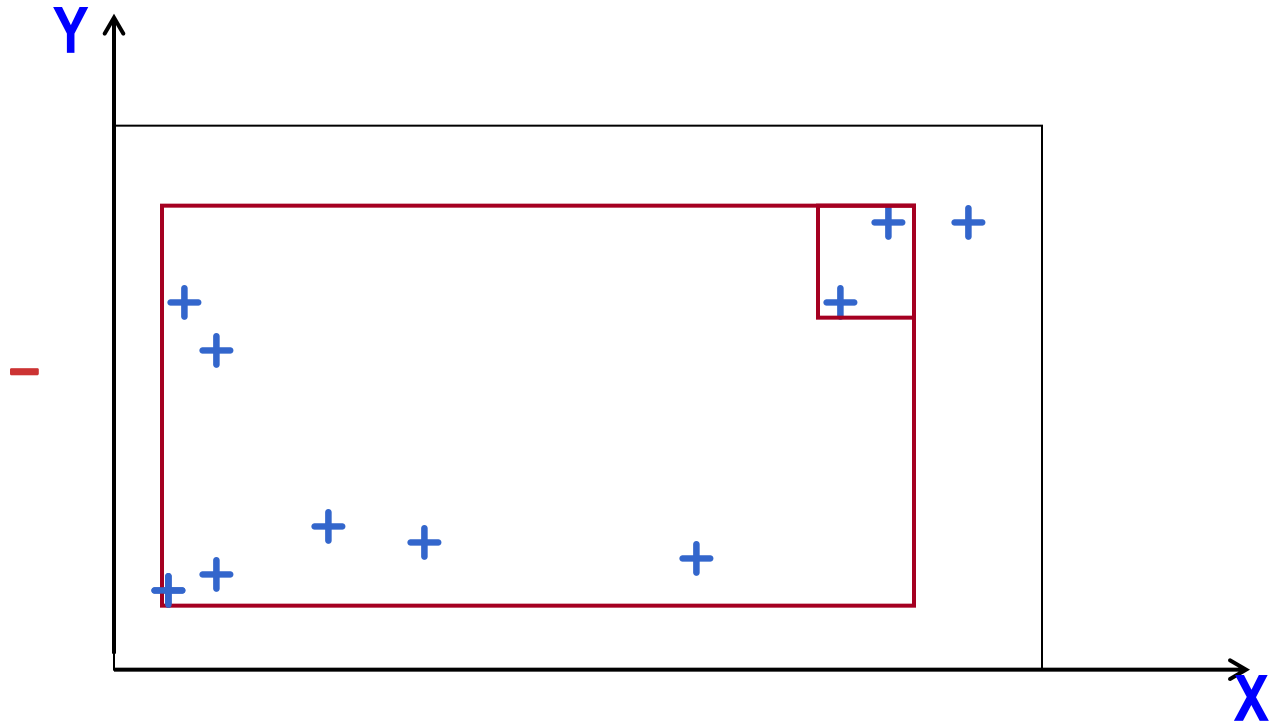
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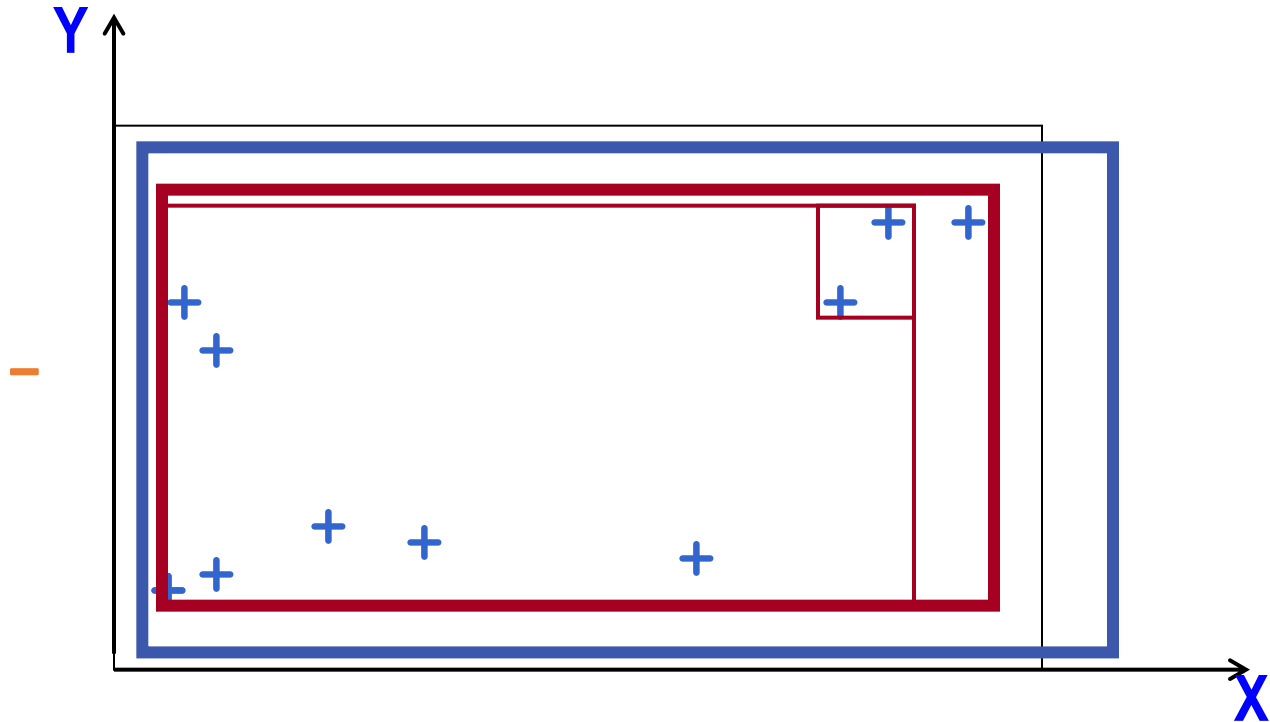
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# Learning Rectangles

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Key observation: Despite there are infinite # hypothesis  
The blue & red rectangles have the same predictions

Can we come close?

# Let's think about expressivity of functions

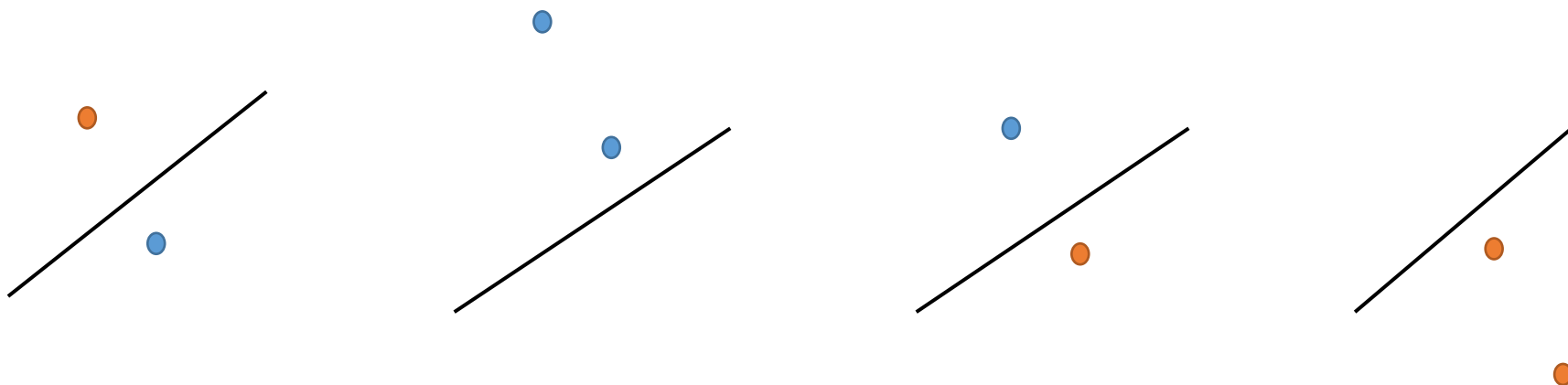


Suppose we have two points.

Can linear classifiers correctly classify any labeling of these points?

Linear functions are expressive enough to *shatter* 2 points

# Let's think about expressivity of functions



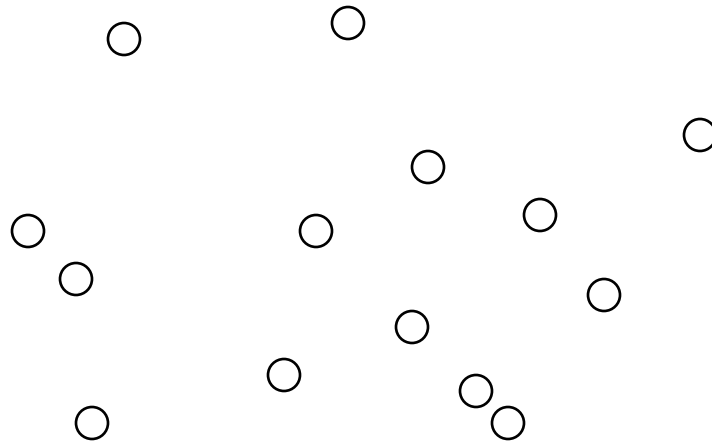
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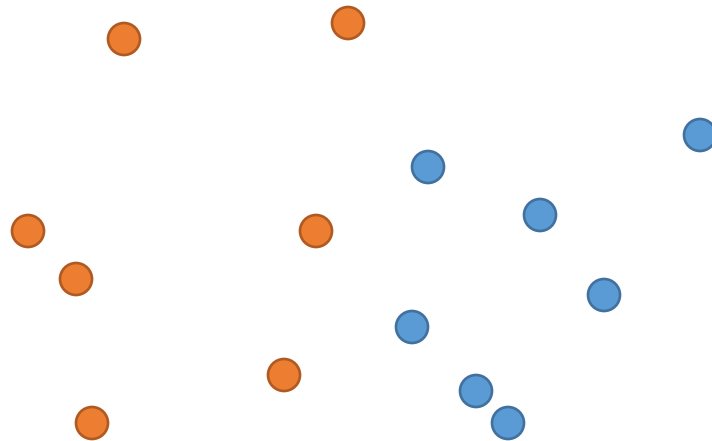
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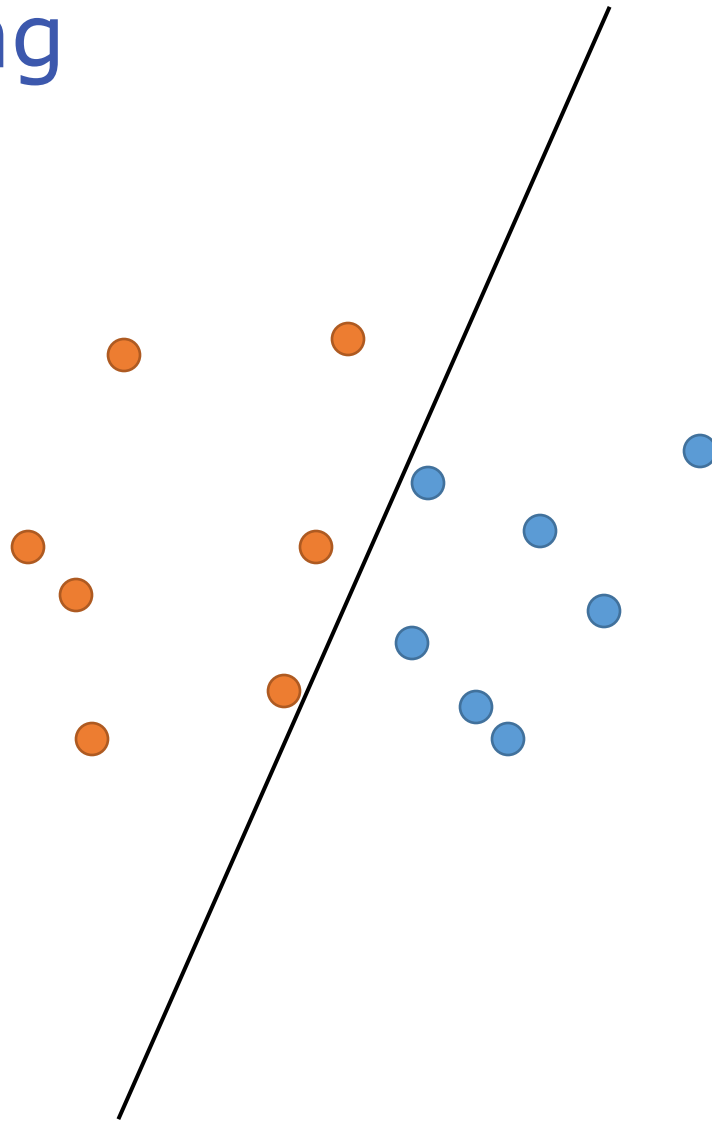
# Shattering



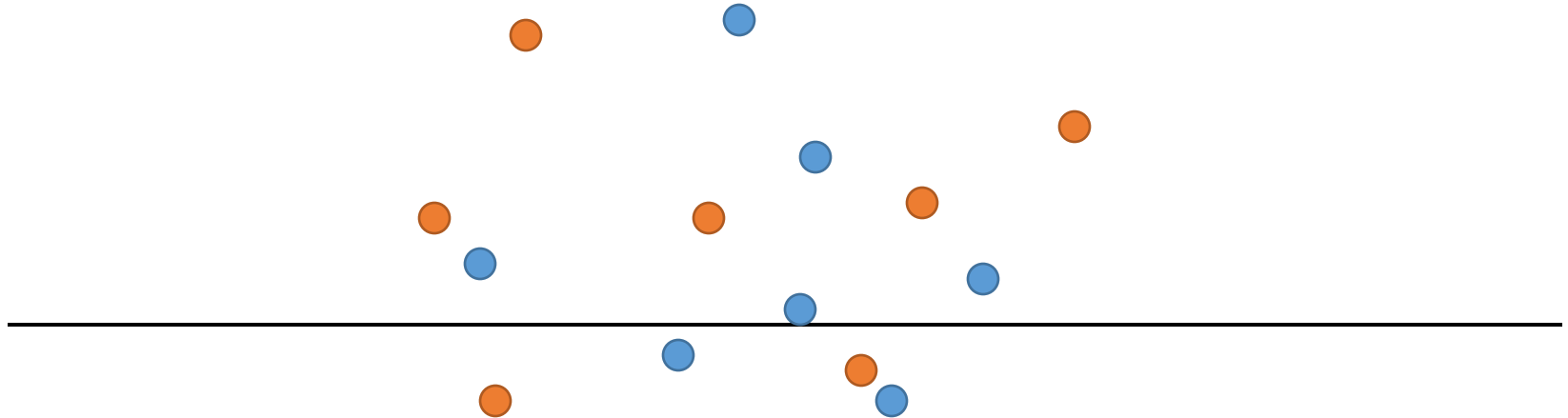
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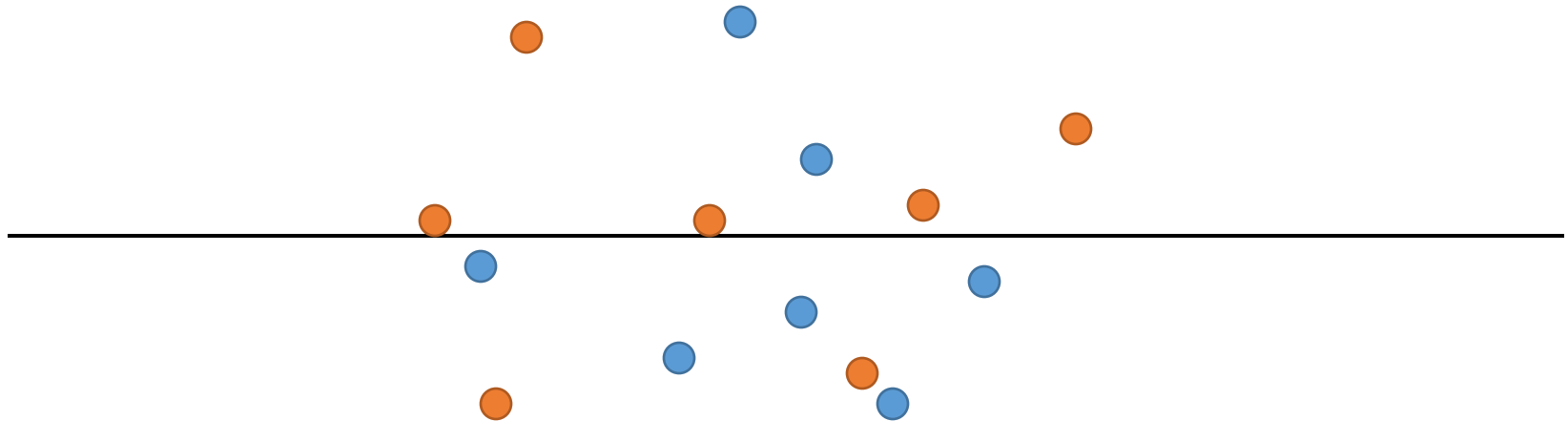


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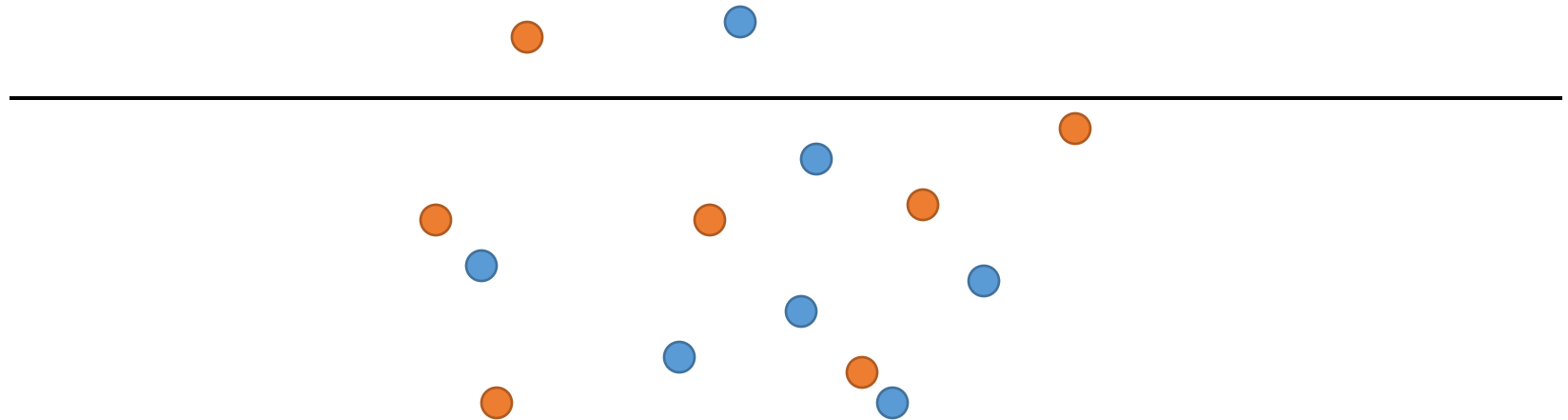
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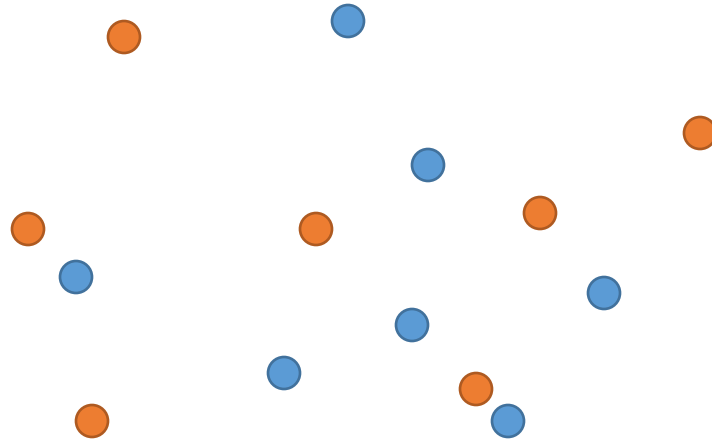
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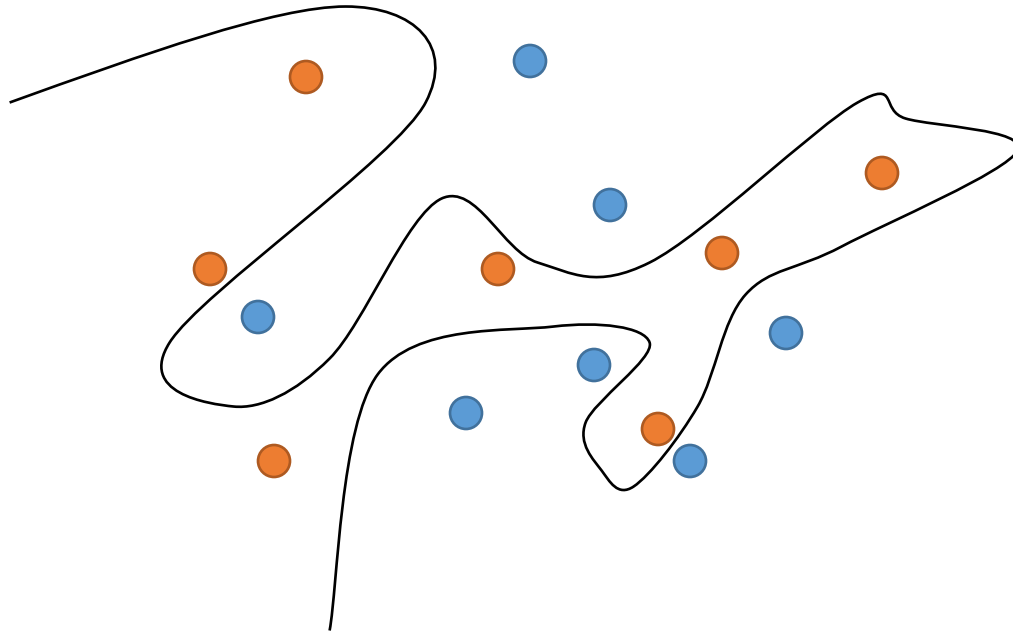
# Shattering

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This particular labeling of the points can not be separated by *any* line

# Shattering



Linear functions are not expressive to shatter fourteen points

Because there is a labeling that can not be separated by them

Of course, a more complex function could separate them



# Shattering

**Definition:** A set  $S$  of examples is **shattered** by a set of functions  $H$  if **for every** partition of the examples in  $S$  into positive and negative examples **there is** a function in  $H$  that gives exactly these labels to the examples

**Intuition:** A rich set of functions shatters large sets of points

# Left bounded intervals

**Example 1:** Hypothesis class of left bounded intervals on the real axis:  $[0, a)$  for some real number  $a > 0$

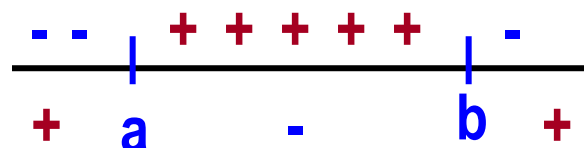


Sets of **two** points **cannot** be shattered

That is: given two points, you can label them in such a way that no concept in this class will be consistent with their labeling

# Real intervals

**Example 2:** Hypothesis class is the set of intervals on the real axis:  $[a,b]$ , for some real numbers  $b > a$



All sets of one or two points can be shattered

But some sets of **three** points **cannot** be shattered