Clustering

Clustering or cluster analysis is a machine learning technique, which groups the unlabelled dataset. It can be defined as **"A way of grouping the data points into different clusters, consisting of similar data points. The objects with the possible similarities remain in a group that has less or no similarities with another group."**

It does it by finding some similar patterns in the unlabelled dataset such as shape, size, color, behavior, etc., and divides them as per the presence and absence of those similar patterns.

It is an unsupervised learning method, hence no supervision is provided to the algorithm, and it deals with the unlabeled dataset.

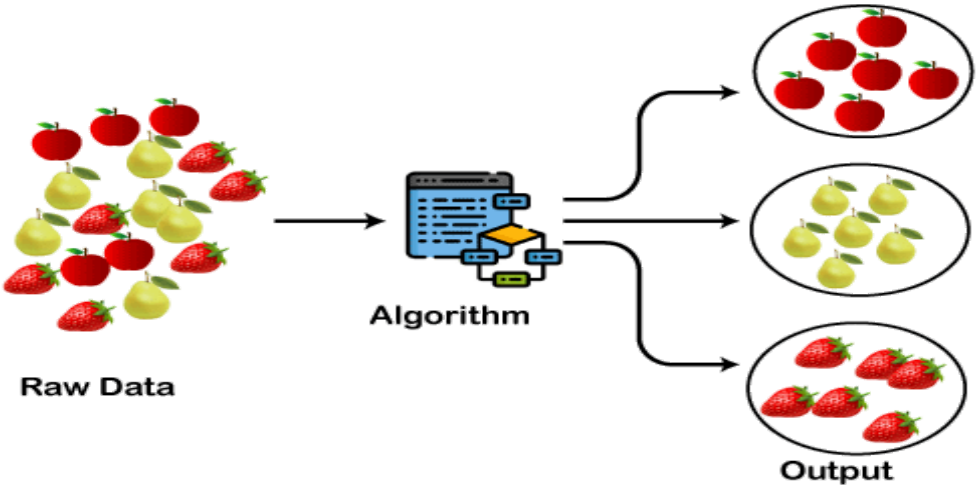
After applying this clustering technique, each cluster or group is provided with a cluster-ID. ML system can use this id to simplify the processing of large and complex datasets.

Example: Let's understand the clustering technique with the real-world example of Mall: When we visit any shopping mall, we can observe that the things with similar usage are grouped together. Such as the t-shirts are grouped in one section, and trousers are at other sections, similarly, at vegetable sections, apples, bananas, Mangoes, etc., are grouped in separate sections, so that we can easily find out the things. The clustering technique also works in the same way. Other examples of clustering are grouping documents according to the topic.

The clustering technique can be widely used in various tasks. Some most common uses of this technique are

- Market Segmentation
- Statistical data analysis
- Social network analysis
- Image segmentation
- Anomaly detection, etc.

The below diagram explains the working of the clustering algorithm. We can see the different fruits are divided into several groups with similar properties.



Types of Clustering Methods

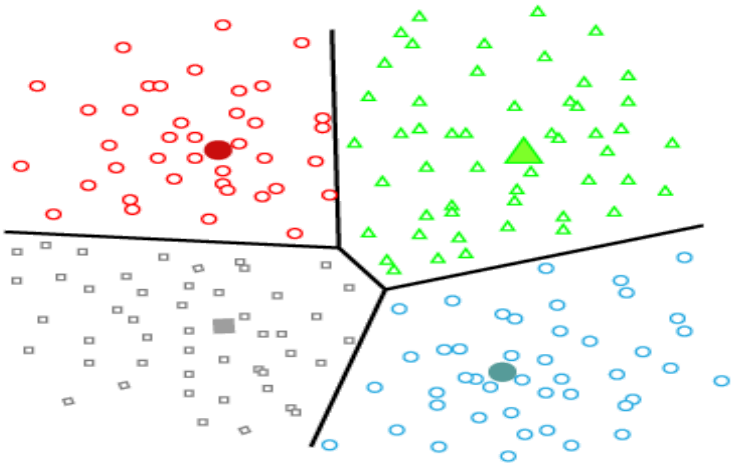
The clustering methods are broadly divided into **Hard clustering** (datapoint belongs to only one group) and **Soft Clustering** (data points can belong to another group also). But there are also other various approaches of Clustering exist. Below are the main clustering methods used in Machine learning:

1. **Partitioning Clustering**
2. **Density-Based Clustering**
3. **Distribution Model-Based Clustering**
4. **Hierarchical Clustering**
5. **Fuzzy Clustering**

Partitioning Clustering

It is a type of clustering that divides the data into non-hierarchical groups. It is also known as the **centroid-based method**. The most common example of partitioning clustering is the **K-Means Clustering algorithm**.

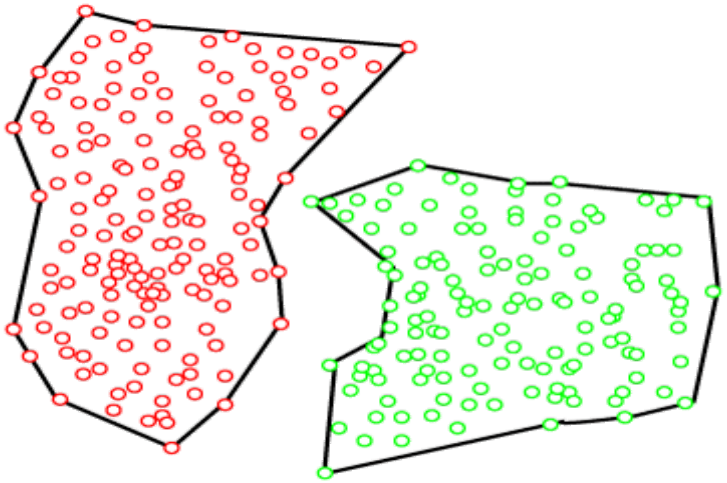
In this type, the dataset is divided into a set of k groups, where K is used to define the number of pre-defined groups. The cluster center is created in such a way that the distance between the data points of one cluster is minimum as compared to another cluster centroid.



Density-Based Clustering

The density-based clustering method connects the highly-dense areas into clusters, and the arbitrarily shaped distributions are formed as long as the dense region can be connected. This algorithm does it by identifying different clusters in the dataset and connects the areas of high densities into clusters. The dense areas in data space are divided from each other by sparser areas.

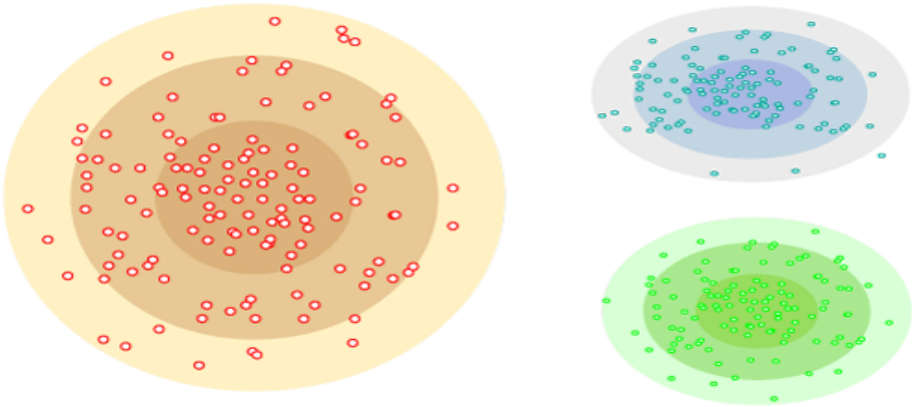
These algorithms can face difficulty in clustering the data points if the dataset has varying densities and high dimensions.



Distribution Model-Based Clustering

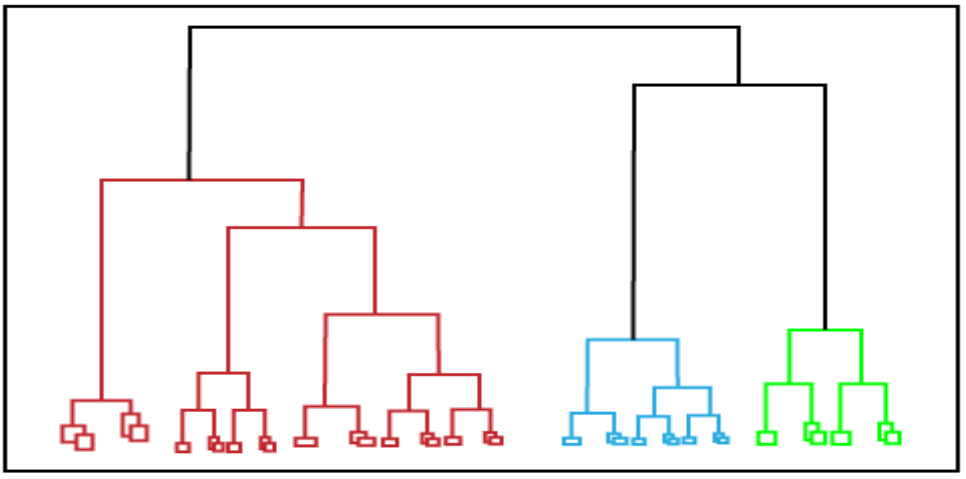
In the distribution model-based clustering method, the data is divided based on the probability of how a dataset belongs to a particular distribution. The grouping is done by assuming some distributions commonly **Gaussian Distribution**.

The example of this type is the **Expectation-Maximization Clustering algorithm** that uses Gaussian Mixture Models (GMM).



Hierarchical Clustering

Hierarchical clustering can be used as an alternative for the partitioned clustering as there is no requirement of pre-specifying the number of clusters to be created. In this technique, the dataset is divided into clusters to create a tree-like structure, which is also called a **dendrogram**. The observations or any number of clusters can be selected by cutting the tree at the correct level. The most common example of this method is the **Agglomerative Hierarchical algorithm**.



Fuzzy Clustering

Fuzzy clustering is a type of soft method in which a data object may belong to more than one group or cluster. Each dataset has a set of membership coefficients, which depend on the degree of membership to be in a cluster. **Fuzzy C-means algorithm** is the example of this type of clustering; it is sometimes also known as the Fuzzy k-means algorithm.

Clustering Algorithms

The Clustering algorithms can be divided based on their models that are explained above. There are different types of clustering algorithms published, but only a few are commonly used. The clustering algorithm is based on the kind of data that we are using. Such as, some

algorithms need to guess the number of clusters in the given dataset, whereas some are required to find the minimum distance between the observation of the dataset.

1. **K-Means algorithm:** The k-means algorithm is one of the most popular clustering algorithms. It classifies the dataset by dividing the samples into different clusters of equal variances. The number of clusters must be specified in this algorithm. It is fast with fewer computations required, with the linear complexity of **O(n).**
2. **Mean-shift algorithm:** Mean-shift algorithm tries to find the dense areas in the smooth density of data points. It is an example of a centroid-based model, that works on updating the candidates for centroid to be the center of the points within a given region.
3. **DBSCAN Algorithm:** It stands **for Density-Based Spatial Clustering of Applications with Noise**. It is an example of a density-based model similar to the mean-shift, but with some remarkable advantages. In this algorithm, the areas of high density are separated by the areas of low density. Because of this, the clusters can be found in any arbitrary shape.
4. **Expectation-Maximization Clustering using GMM:** This algorithm can be used as an alternative for the k-means algorithm or for those cases where K-means can be failed. In GMM, it is assumed that the data points are Gaussian distributed.
5. **Agglomerative Hierarchical algorithm:** The Agglomerative hierarchical algorithm performs the bottom-up hierarchical clustering. In this, each data point is treated as a single cluster at the outset and then successively merged. The cluster hierarchy can be represented as a tree-structure.

Genetic Algorithm

A genetic algorithm is an adaptive heuristic search algorithm inspired by "Darwin's theory of evolution in Nature." It is used to solve optimization problems in machine learning. It is one of the important algorithms as it helps solve complex problems that would take a long time to solve

Genetic Algorithms are being widely used in different real-world applications, for example, **Designing electronic circuits, code-breaking, image processing, and artificial creativity.**In this topic, we will explain Genetic algorithm in detail, including basic terminologies used in Genetic algorithm, how it works, advantages and limitations of genetic algorithm, etc.

What is a Genetic Algorithm?

Before understanding the Genetic algorithm, let's first understand basic terminologies to better understand this algorithm:

- **Population:** Population is the subset of all possible or probable solutions, which can solve the given problem.
- **Chromosomes:** A chromosome is one of the solutions in the population for the given problem, and the collection of gene generate a chromosome.
- **Gene:** A chromosome is divided into a different gene, or it is an element of the chromosome.

- **Allele:** Allele is the value provided to the gene within a particular chromosome.
- **Fitness Function:** The fitness function is used to determine the individual's fitness level in the population. It means the ability of an individual to compete with other individuals. In every iteration, individuals are evaluated based on their fitness function.
- **Genetic Operators:** In a genetic algorithm, the best individual mate to regenerate offspring better than parents. Here genetic operators play a role in changing the genetic composition of the next generation.
- **Selection**

After calculating the fitness of every existent in the population, a selection process is used to determine which of the individualities in the population will get to reproduce and produce the seed that will form the coming generation.

Types of selection styles available

- **Roulette wheel selection**
- **Event selection**
- **Rank- grounded selection**

So, now we can define a genetic algorithm as a heuristic search algorithm to solve optimization problems. It is a subset of evolutionary algorithms, which is used in computing. A genetic algorithm uses genetic and natural selection concepts to solve optimization problems.

How Genetic Algorithm Work?

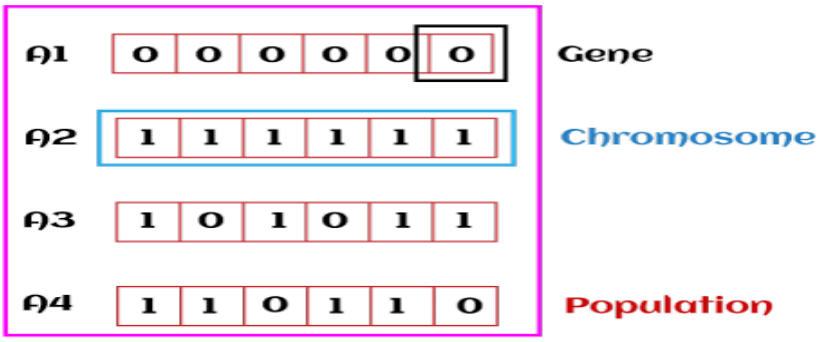
The genetic algorithm works on the evolutionary generational cycle to generate high-quality solutions. These algorithms use different operations that either enhance or replace the population to give an improved fit solution.

It basically involves five phases to solve the complex optimization problems, which are given as below:

- **Initialization**
- **Fitness Assignment**
- **Selection**
- **Reproduction**
- **Termination**

1. Initialization

The process of a genetic algorithm starts by generating the set of individuals, which is called population. Here each individual is the solution for the given problem. An individual contains or is characterized by a set of parameters called Genes. Genes are combined into a string and generate chromosomes, which is the solution to the problem. One of the most popular techniques for initialization is the use of random binary strings.



2. Fitness Assignment

Fitness function is used to determine how fit an individual is? It means the ability of an individual to compete with other individuals. In every iteration, individuals are evaluated based on their fitness function. The fitness function provides a fitness score to each individual. This score further determines the probability of being selected for reproduction. The high the fitness score, the more chances of getting selected for reproduction.

3. Selection

The selection phase involves the selection of individuals for the reproduction of offspring. All the selected individuals are then arranged in a pair of two to increase reproduction. Then these individuals transfer their genes to the next generation.

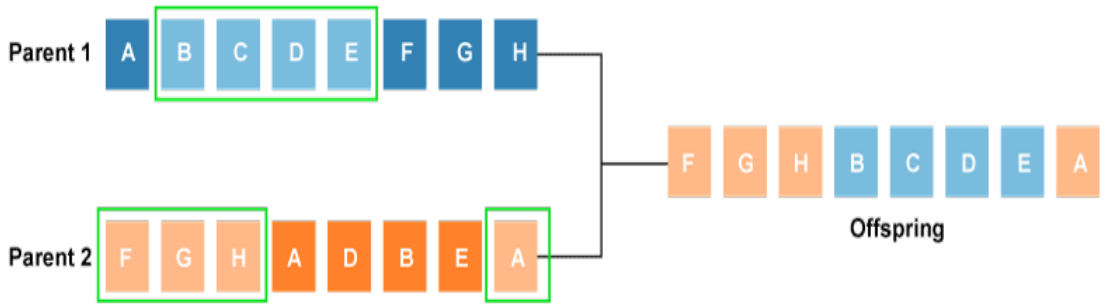
There are three types of Selection methods available, which are:

- Roulette wheel selection
- Tournament selection
- Rank-based selection

4. Reproduction

After the selection process, the creation of a child occurs in the reproduction step. In this step, the genetic algorithm uses two variation operators that are applied to the parent population. The two operators involved in the reproduction phase are given below:

- **Crossover:** The crossover plays a most significant role in the reproduction phase of the genetic algorithm. In this process, a crossover point is selected at random within the genes. Then the crossover operator swaps genetic information of two parents from the current generation to produce a new individual representing the offspring.



The genes of parents are exchanged among themselves until the crossover point is met. These newly generated offspring are added to the population. This process is also called or crossover. Types of crossover styles available:

- One point crossover
- Two-point crossover
- Livery crossover
- Inheritable Algorithms crossover

- **Mutation**

The mutation operator inserts random genes in the offspring (new child) to maintain the diversity in the population. It can be done by flipping some bits in the chromosomes.

Mutation helps in solving the issue of premature convergence and enhances diversification. The below image shows the mutation process:

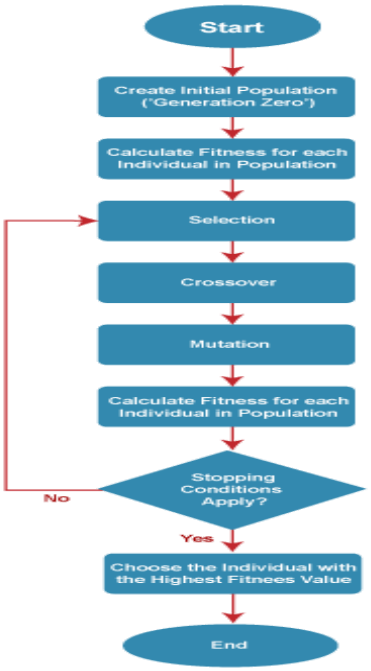
Types of mutation styles available,

- **Flip bit mutation**
- **Gaussian mutation**
- **Exchange/Swap mutation**

5. Termination

After the reproduction phase, a stopping criterion is applied as a base for termination. The algorithm terminates after the threshold fitness solution is reached. It will identify the final solution as the best solution in the population.

General Workflow of a Simple Genetic Algorithm



Advantages of Genetic Algorithm

- The parallel capabilities of genetic algorithms are best.
- It helps in optimizing various problems such as discrete functions, multi-objective problems, and continuous functions.
- It provides a solution for a problem that improves over time.
- A genetic algorithm does not need derivative information.

Limitations of Genetic Algorithms

- Genetic algorithms are not efficient algorithms for solving simple problems.
- It does not guarantee the quality of the final solution to a problem.
- Repetitive calculation of fitness values may generate some computational challenges.

Difference between Genetic Algorithms and Traditional Algorithms

- A search space is the set of all possible solutions to the problem. In the traditional algorithm, only one set of solutions is maintained, whereas, in a genetic algorithm, several sets of solutions in search space can be used.
- Traditional algorithms need more information in order to perform a search, whereas genetic algorithms need only one objective function to calculate the fitness of an individual.
- Traditional Algorithms cannot work parallelly, whereas genetic Algorithms can work parallelly (calculating the fitness of the individualities are independent).
- One big difference in genetic Algorithms is that rather of operating directly on seeker results, inheritable algorithms operate on their representations (or rendering), frequently appertained to as chromosomes.

- One of the big differences between traditional algorithm and genetic algorithm is that it does not directly operate on candidate solutions.
- Traditional Algorithms can only generate one result in the end, whereas Genetic Algorithms can generate multiple optimal results from different generations.
- The traditional algorithm is not more likely to generate optimal results, whereas Genetic algorithms do not guarantee to generate optimal global results, but also there is a great possibility of getting the optimal result for a problem as it uses genetic operators such as Crossover and Mutation.
- Traditional algorithms are deterministic in nature, whereas Genetic algorithms are probabilistic and stochastic in nature.