doug, & hobs. “How to choose the number of hidden layers and nodes in a feedforward neural network?” *StackExchange*, StackOverflow, Aug. 2010 https://stats.stackexchange.com/ questions/181/how-to-choose-the-number-of-hidden-layers-and-nodes-in-a-feedforward-neural-netw Date Accessed Dec. 28 2018.

This source is a reply from a user under the alias “doug” that seeks to answer the question in the title. Specifically, he talks about how a standard amount of layers and nodes is generally set up, and then describes a few methods of optimization. User “hobs” further elaborates on doug’s answer and provides a function that is useful for determining the maximum number of layers that will not cause overfitting of the data.

The source is very useful for beginners in neural networks. Doug gives a well made explanation for optimizing neural networks and hobs provides supplementary help to achieve the results given by doug.

Two things should be noted about this source: it is on a public forum, and it is relatively dated. Although public forums like StackOverflow have gotten a better reputation because of the self-policing done by users, it is still possible that specific parts are not accurate. Secondly, the response was originally from 2010, and although there are more recent comments that agree with the post, in a field as quick growing as neural networks it should not be taken lightly that a better approach may have been developed.